AN

EXPOSITION,

WITH

Practical Obſervations

Upon the BOOK of

JOB.

VOLUME I.

By *JOSEPH CARYL*, ſometime Preacher to the Honourable Society of LINCOLNS-INN, and more lately of St. MAGNUS near LONDON-BRIDGE.

JAMES 5. Verſ. 10, 11.

Take my Brethren, the Prophets, who have ſpoken in the Name of the Lord, *for an Example of ſuffering Affliction, and of Patience.*

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the Patience of Job, *and have ſeen the end of the* Lord: *that the* Lord *is very Pitiful, and of tender Mercy.*

LONDON,
Printed by *Samuel Simmons*, and to be Sold at his Houſe next Door to the
Golden-Lion in *Alderſgate-Street*. *Anno Dom.* MDCLXXVI.

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TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

To thoſe Eſpecially of this CITY, Who have been the Movers and Promoters OF THIS WORK.

This Book of Job *bears the* Image *of theſe times, and preſents us with a reſemblance of the paſt, preſent, and (much hoped for) future condition of this* Nation. *As the perſonal proſperity of* Job, *ſo his troubles look like our National troubles; and why may not the parallel be made up, by a likeneſs in our Reſtauration?* Job *was the moſt flouriſhing, the greateſt man of all the men of the Eaſt. We are the greateſt, and lately were the moſt flouriſhing* Nation, *of all the* Nations *of the* North. Our Oxen (*like his*) were ſtrong to labour, our Sheep brought forth Thouſands and Ten thouſands in our Streets, our Garners were full, affording all manner of Store; our Sons (*like his*) as plants grown up in their Youth, our Daughters as Corner-ſtones poliſhed after the ſimilitude of a Palace. There was no breaking-in, nor going-out, no complaining (*in reference to outward wants*) in our Streets. We waſhed our ſteps with Butter, and the Rock poured us out Rivers of Oyl. The Candle of God ſhined upon our Heads, and the ſecret of God was upon our Tabernacles: Our Roots were ſpread out by the Waters, and the dew (*of bleſſings*) lay all night upon our Branches. Unto us the Nations gave ear and waited, and kept ſilence at our Counſel; after our words, they ſpake not again, and our ſpeech dropped upon them: If we laughed on them, they believed it not: our glory was freſh in us, and the light of our countenance they caſt not down: we choſe out their way, and ſat chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army, as one that comforteth the Mourners. *Surely, a happy* people *were we, being in ſuch a* caſe, *yea moſt* happy were we, *having the Lord (many wayes declaring himſelf) for our God. And had we (as theſe* mercies *did oblige us) fill'd up, or labour'd to fill up th'other part, the* better part *of* Job's character; *Had we been a* People perfect *and* upright, fearing God and eſchewing evil: *We might (according to the promis'd, and often experienc'd* tenour *of* Gods dealing *with his* people) *have continued and encreaſed in all that happineſs unto this day.*

But we (herein unlike to Job, *and, like a* fooliſh Nation *and* unwiſe) *have* ill-requited the Lord, *yea, we have requited the* Lord with evil, *for, and in the midſt of all this* Goodneſs: *Our* Provocations *have been* many, *and our* Backſlidings *have been* multiplied. *Our* ſins *have put a* Sword *into the* Hand *of God: And God in* Juſtice, *hath put a* Sword *into the* Hands *of men* ſkilful to deſtroy. Our young men are ſlain by the edge of the Sword, *and the* ſtink of our Camps comes up into our Noſtrils. *How many* ſad Meſſengers *have* haſtened *unto us (as unto* Job) *with the* Reports *of* Cities Surrendred *and* Plundred, *of* Towns Fired *and* Pillaged, *of* Villages *and* Countries laid Waſte, *and almoſt* Deſolate! *Now ſeeing all this is* come upon us, *is it not time for us (with* Job) *to* rent our Garments (*yea* our hearts with godly ſorrow) *and falling upon the* ground, worſhip God, *and ſay,* The Lord hath (*freely*) given, and the Lord hath (*juſtly*) taken; Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord? *Our* ſins *have brought theſe* ſorrows, *let not our* ſorrows *bring in more* ſin, *by cauſing us to* murmur *againſt,* or charge God fooliſhly.

God never ſends ſuch Troubles *upon a Nation (he doth ſometimes upon a* Perſon, *and did upon* Job) *without* cauſe; *that is, without reſpecting ſin as a cauſe.* Job *might ſay (in one ſence)* My Uprightneſs and my Integrity have procured theſe things unto me; *But we muſt ſay,* our way and our doings have procured theſe things unto us: This is our wickedneſs.

Yet (though all this evil *hath been* done by us, *though all theſe* evils *are* come upon us, *yet*) there is hope in our *Iſrael* concerning this thing; *yea, I believe, there is* mercy *in and from all theſe evils, to us and all the* Iſrael of our God. *Only what* Integrity we have, *let us ſtill* hold it ſtedfaſtly; *what* evils *are (and what evils almoſt are not?) amongſt us, let us reform them* ſpeedily: *Without this, at leaſt, without* hearty deſires, *and* faithful endeavours *after this, we may* preſume, *but we cannot* believe or hope *our* Deliverance. *I grant, that whenſoever* God reſtores us, *he muſt* reſtore us freely; *and muſt both make us* good, *and do us* good, *for his own Name ſake, in* Jeſus Chriſt. *For as he hath* puniſhed *us* leſs *then our* ſins deſerve, *ſo whenſoever, or in what degree ſoever he reſtores us, it will be more then any, or all our* Repentings *and* Reformings *can deſerve: yet he commands us to* Repent *and* Reform, *that we may be* reſtored. *God never* delivered *any people for their* Repentance, *and rarely any (if any) without* Repentance. *Yea, I may ſay it plainly, that he never* delivered *any (in* Mercy) *without* Repentance; *for either he gave them* Repentance *before they were* delivered, *or* Repentance (*which is far the greater bleſſing of the two*) *with the* Deliverance. *Better have our* Troubles *continue, then our* Sins *continue. To have* Peace return, *and our* Hearts unturn'd, *were infinitely worſe then* War.

And as Repentance *is better then* Peace, *ſo it will be an Argument, that we ſhall have* Peace: *May we not well conclude that God is upon the* giving-hand, *when he gives* a new Heart? *And that he hath ſomewhat elſe to give, when he hath given* a love *unto, and a* longing after *his* Truth?

When God feeds us with (and we have a right taſte *of) this* Manna *in our* Wilderneſs, *we may reſt aſſured that God hath* humbled us *all this while (and all the while his* Wiſdom *ſhall ſee fit to* humble us *yet, will be) only to* prove us, *that he may* do us good at our latter end, *and make this* Nation *(at leaſt) like* Job, *in the end which he will make.*

Ye *have heard of the* Patience *of* Job, *and what* end *the Lord made: Could we but hear of the* Repentance *of* England, *all the world (I am perſwaded) ſhould* hear *and* wonder *at the* end, *which the Lord would make: Even ſuch an end as he made for* Job, *if not better; he would give us twice as much in* Temporals, *double* Riches, *double* Oxen *and* Sheep, *double* Bracelets *and* Ear-rings, *double* Gold *and* Silver, *double* Sons *and* Daughters: *And he would give us (which is not ſpecified in the* Inventory *of* Job's repair) ſeven-fold *more in* Spirituals, ſeven-fold *more* Knowledge *of his* Truth, Purity *in his* Worſhip, Order *in his* Houſe; *he would make the light of our* Moon *to be like the light of the* Sun, *and the light of our* Sun *to be* ſeven-fold, *as the light of ſeven dayes, in the day wherein he binds up our outward* breaches, *and* heals *the ſtroak of our* wound. *Thus, we may look to be reſtored (* not only as Job *) to more in* kind, *but to better in* kind, *I am ſure to better in* degree: *We may look, that, for* Braſs *we ſhall have* Gold, *or our* Gold *more* refined; *that, for* Iron *we ſhall have* Silver, *or our* Silver *more* purified; *that, for* Wood *we ſhall have* Braſs, *or our* Braſs *better* furbiſhed; *that, for* Stones *we ſhall have* Iron, *or our* Iron *better* tempered; *We may look, that, our* Officers *ſhall be* Peace, *and our* Exactors righteouſneſs, *that* Violence *ſhall no more be* heard *in our* Land, waſting *nor* deſtruction *within our borders, but* men *ſhall call our* Walls Salvation *and our* Gates Praiſe:

When theſe glorious iſſues *of our* Troubles *ſhall be, is in his* Hand, *who held* Job's Eſtate *in his Hand, ſo faſt, that Satan could not touch a* Sheep *or a* Shoo-latchet, *till himſelf willed; and who, when his* time *came,* reſtored Job's *Eſtate double, to a* Sheep *and a* Shoo-latchet, *whether Satan and his* Sabeans *would or no. We have already ſeen, in* Job, *an* Epitome *of our former* proſperity *and of our* preſent Troubles: *the good Lord haſten the* latter part *of our* National likeneſs *unto him, in the doubled (and O that it might be a ſeven-fold)* reſtauration *of our* Peace *and* Truth.

In the mean time theſe Meditations *upon this Scripture, well digeſted and taken-in, may be (through the* bleſſing *of God upon them) a help to our* Patience, *in bearing thoſe afflictions upon the* Land, *a help to our* Faith *in be-*

lieving, and to our hope *in waiting for the* Salvations of the Lord. What-ſoever things were written afore-time, were written for our Learning *(but this Book was purpoſely written)* that we through patience *and comfort of this Scripture* might have hope. *Nor do I doubt, but that the* Providence *of God (without which* a Sparrow falls not to the ground *) directed my thoughts to this Book, as (not only* profitable *for all times, but) ſpecially ſeaſonable for theſe* times. *It is* a word in ſeaſon, *and therefore ſhould, as a* word upon the Wheels, *make a* ſpeedy paſſage *into all our* Hearts: *And how ſhould it not? While we remember that theſe* Wheels *are* Oyl'd *with* Blood, *even with the* Heart-blood *of* Thouſands *of our* deareſt Friends *and* Brethren.

I find, that this is not the firſt time, that this Book *hath been* undertaken *by way of* Expoſition, *in ſuch a time as this.* Lavater *a faithful Miniſter of the* Tygurine *Church, opened* this Scripture *in* Preaching, *and Printed it in the* German Tongue, *which was afterwards publiſhed in* Latine *by* Hartmanus Sprunglius *(as himſelf expreſſes in the Title) to* ſupport *and* refreſh *the afflicted minds of the godly in that laſt (as he then ſuppoſed) and ſaddeſt declining* Age *of the world.*

An. 1552 Ferus *(a* Popiſh Fryer, *but very* devout *according to the* Devotion *of that* Religion *) Preacher at* Mentz, *choſe this* Scripture *in the time of* War *and* publick Calamity *(as the* Title *alſo of his Book holds forth) to* Comfort *his* Citizens. *In his fourth Sermon he makes this obſervable digreſſion.* You know *(ſaith he to his Hearers)* that I began to Expound this Hiſtory of JOB, to the end I might Comfort and Exhort you to Patience in theſe troubleſom times. *This was and is my* Intendment, *this moved me to* Handle *and* Explain *this Book. But now in my very* Entrance *upon it, the* Storm *grows ſo* black, *that I ſee you* amazed, dejected, *and almoſt* deſperate: *Some are* flying, *others are* preparing to flye; *and in this great* Calamity, *no man is found to comfort his* Brother: *But every one increaſes his* Neighbours *fear, by his own fearfulneſs. He preſcribes (as far as their* Principles *will admit)* Cordials *for the Reviving of their* Spirits, *and* Medicine *for the Cure of theſe* Diſtempers. *The whole Book of* JOB, *is a* Sacred Shop, ſtor'd *with* Plenty *and* Variety *of both: that you may open your* Hearts *to* Receive, *and with* Wiſdom *to Apply the* Conſolations *and* Inſtructions *here tender'd from this part of it, is (and through the* ſtrength *of* Chriſt *) ſhall be, the Deſire and Prayer of*

Novemb. 8. 1643. Your very Loving Friend and

Servant for the Help of your Faith

JOSEPH CARYL.

THE
INTRODUCTION,

Opening the NATURE, PARTS and SCOPE of the whole BOOK.

1 Cor. 14. 19. IT was the perſonal wiſh and reſolution of the Apoſtle *Paul, I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, then ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue.* And ſurely it is far better to ſpeak or hear *five words* of Scripture with our underſtandings, then *ten thouſand words*, yea, then the whole Scriptures, while we underſtand them not. Now, what *an unknown tongue*, about which the Apoſtle diſputeth, is in reference unto all, the ſame is the Scripture unto moſt, even in their own tongue, that which they underſtand not. For as an unknown tongue doth always hide the meaning of words from us; ſo do oft-times the ſpiritualneſs and myſteriouſneſs of the matter. While a man ſpeaks in a ſtrange language, we hear a ſound, but know not the words; and while a man ſpeaks in our own language, though we know the words, yet we may not underſtand the meaning; and then he that ſpeaks, is to us in that reference (ſo the Apoſtle calls him) *a Barbarian.* While the Leafs of the Book are opened, and read to ſuch, or by ſuch, the ſence is ſhut up and ſealed.

Acts 8. 30 When the Apoſtle *Philip* heard the *Æthiopian Eunuch* read the Prophet *Iſaiah* as he travelled in his Chariot, he ſaid to him, *Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt?* The *Eunuch* anſwered, *How ſhould I, unleſs ſome man would guide me?* He underſtood the Language; but the meaning was under a vail. The very ſame may we ſay to many, who read the Scriptures, *Underſtand you what you read?* And they may anſwer as the *Eunuch* did, *How can we, except we have ſome man to guide us?* Yea, and alas, for all the guiding of man, they may anſwer, how can we, except we have the Spirit of God to guide us? *He hath his Pulpit in heaven, who teacheth hearts the heart of Scripture.*

Paul (we know) was a learned *Phariſee*, and much vers'd in the Law, and yet he ſaith of himſelf before his converſion, That he was *without the Law:* but when Chriſt came to him, then the Commandment came to him. *I was once without the Law, but when the Commandment came,* that is, *when Chriſt came,* and his Spirit came in or after my converſion, and expounded the Commandment to my heart, *then the Commandment came,* ſc. to my heart in the power of it, and I underſtood to purpoſe what the Law was. So that the teachings of the Spirit, the teachings of God himſelf, are chiefly to be looked after, and prayed for, that we may know the mind of the Spirit, the Will of God in Scripture. Rom. 7. 9.

But he hath ſet up this Ordinance, the Ordinance of Interpretation to do it by; both that the Scripture might be tranſlated out of the Original, into the common language of every Nation (which the Apoſtle calls Interpreting in that place before cited) and alſo that the original ſence of the Scripture might be tranſlated into the mind and underſtanding of every man; which is the work we aim at, and now have in hand. 1 Cor. 14. 13.

Before I begin that, give me leave to beſeech you in the name of Chriſt, to take care for the carrying on of this work, a degree further: I mean, to tranſlate the ſence of Scripture into your lives, and to expound the Word of God by your works; *Interpret it by your feet, and teach it by your fingers* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks in another ſence) that is, let your workings and your walkings be Scripture explications. It is indeed a very great honour unto this City, that you take care for a *Commentary* on the Scripture in writing; but if you will be careful and diligent to make a *Commentary* upon the Scripture by living, or to make your lives the *Commentary* of Scripture, this will make your City glorious indeed. Prov. 6. 13.

It is the Apoſtles teſtimony of his *Corinthians*, *Ye* (ſaith he) *are our Epiſtle, foraſmuch as ye are manifeſtly declared to be the Epiſtle of Chriſt, miniſtred by us, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in Tables of Stone, but in fleſhly Tables of the Heart.* Give us, we beſeech you, the ſame occaſion of glorying on your behalf, that we may ſay, *You are our Expoſition*, foraſmuch as you are manifeſtly declared in your practice to be the Expoſition of the mind of Chriſt miniſtred unto you by us. A walking, a breathing *Commentary* goeth infinitely beyond the written, or ſpoken *Commentary.* And as the Apoſtle makes his Concluſion (before noted) I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, then ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue: So I ſay, I had rather know five words of Scripture by my own practice and experience, then ten thouſand words of Scripture, yea, then the whole Scripture, by the bare expoſition of another. And therefore let the words of Chriſt by theſe verbal Explications, dwell richly in your underſtandings in all wiſdom: And by a practical Application, let it be held forth plentifully in your lives in all holineſs. Add Commentary to Commentary, and Expoſition to Expoſition: Add the Comment of works to this Comment of words; and an Expoſition by your lives, to this Expoſition by our labours. Surely if you do not, theſe Exerciſes will be coſtly indeed, and will come to a deep account againſt you before the Lord. *If you are lifted up to Heaven by the opening of the Scripture* (which is either a carrying you up to Heaven, or a bringing of Heaven down to you) and then walk groveling upon the earth; how ſore will the Judgment be! But it is to me an Argument and an Evidence from Heaven, that God hath put it into your hearts to be more glorious in the practice of holineſs, becauſe he hath put it into your hearts to deſire more the knowledge of holineſs. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3.

To draw in my ſpeech nearer to the buſineſs. Having a Book full of very various matter before me, give me leave to premiſe ſome things in the general, and ſomething more particularly by way of *Preface*, concerning the Book, before we come to the handling of the Text.

First, For the general. That which God ſpeaks concerning the whole work of Creation, we may ſpeak concerning the whole Book of Scripture, *It is very good. Solomon* obſerves, That *whereſoever the wiſdom of God ſpake, it ſpake of excellent things.* And *David*, to quicken our endeavours, and excite our diligence to the ſtudy of the Word, preferreth it in worth above *thouſands of Gold and Silver, and in ſweetneſs above the honey and the honey-comb.* And when he ceaſeth to compare, he beginneth to admire, *Wonderful are thy Teſtimonies.* And well may that be called Wonderful, which proceedeth from the God of Wonders. *All Scripture is given by divine inſpiration*, or by inſpiration from God; and I need not ſtay to ſhew you the excellency of any part, when I have but pointed at ſuch an Original of the whole. Gen. 1. 31. Prov. 8. 6. 2 Tim. 3. 16.

As therefore the whole Scripture (whether we reſpect the Majeſty of the Author, the height and purity of the matter, the depth or perſpicuity of the ſtile, the dignity or variety of occurrences; whether we conſider the art of compiling, or the ſtrength of arguing) diſdains the very mention of *compariſon* with any other humane Author whatſoever; ſo are *compariſons* in it ſelf, as Book with Book, Chapter with Chapter, dangerous. There is not in this great Volume of holy counſel; any one *Book* or *Chapter, Verſe* or *Section*, of greater power or authority then other. *Moſes* and *Samuel*, the writings of *Amos* the Shepherd, and of *Iſaiah* a Deſcendant of the blood Royal; the writings of the Prophets and Evangeliſts, the Epiſtles of *Paul*, and this Hiſtory of *Job*, muſt be received (to uſe the words of the *Trent Councel* in the fifth Seſſion, but to far better purpoſe) *Pari pietatis affectu, with the ſame holy reverence and affection.* They uſe it about Traditions, matching Traditions with the Scriptures; but we may fully match all Scripture together, and ſay, all muſt be received with the ſame devotion and affection.

Yet notwithſtanding, as the parts of Scripture were penned by divers Secretaries, publiſhed in divers places, in divers ages, on divers occaſions, for divers ends; ſo the argument and ſubject matter, the method and manner of compoſing, the texture and the ſtile of writing, are likewiſe different. Some parts of Scripture were delivered in Proſe, others in Verſe or Numbers: ſome parts of the Scripture are Hiſtorical, ſhewing what hath been done; ſome are Prophetical, ſhewing what ſhall be done; others are Dogmatical or Doctrinal, ſhewing what we muſt do, what we muſt believe. Again, ſome parts of Scripture are clear and eaſie, ſome are obſcure and very knotty: ſome parts of Scripture ſhew what God made us, others, how ſin ſpoiled us: a third, how Chriſt reſtored us. Some parts of Scripture ſhew forth acts of mercy to keep us from ſinking; others record acts of judgment to keep us from preſuming. And becauſe the way to Heaven is not ſtrewed with Roſes, but, like the the Crown of Chriſt here upon earth, ſet with thorns; becauſe not ſmiles and loving imbracements from the world, but wounds, and ſtroaks, and temptations, do await all thoſe that have received *the preſs-money of the Spirit, and are enrolled for the Chriſtian warfare:* becauſe every *true Iſraelite* muſt expect that which *Jacob* upon his death-bed ſpake of *Joſeph*, *that the Archers will ſhoot at him, hate him, and grieve him:* In a word, becauſe many are the troubles of the righteous; therefore the Scripture doth preſent us with ſundry platforms of the righteous conflicting with many troubles.

Gen 49.23

Now theſe conſiderations that are ſcattered ſeverally thorough the whole Scripture, ſeem all concentred, and united together in this Book of *Job:* which if we conſider in the ſtile and form of writing, is in ſome part of it Proſe, as the two firſt Chapters and part of the laſt, and the reſt is Verſe. If we conſider it in the manner of delivery, it is both dark and clear: If we conſider the ſubject matter of it, it is both Hiſtorical, Prophetical, and Doctrinal. In it is a mixture of mercy tendred unto, of judgments threatned againſt, and inflicted upon the wicked: In it is a mixture of the greateſt outward bleſſings, and the greateſt outward afflictions upon the godly, concluding in the greateſt deliverances of the godly from affliction. In this laſt the Book is chief; there was never any man under a *warmer Sun* of outward proſperity then *Job* was; neither was there ever any man in a *hotter fire* of outward affliction then *Job* was, God ſeeming to give charge concerning this trial of *Job*, as King *Nebuchadnezzer* did concerning the three children, to have the *furnace heated ſeven times hotter then ordinary*. This is the general concerning the Book.

Now more particularly; I will not detain you in that Proemial diſquiſition about the Author and Penman of this Book; there is great variety of Judgment about it, ſome ſay it was one of the Prophets, but they know not who; ſome aſcribe it to *Solomon*, ſome to *Elihu*, not a few to *Job* himſelf; but moſt give it to *Moſes*. That reſolution of *Beza* in the point ſhall ſerve me, and may ſatisfie you. It is very uncertain who was the Writer of this Book (ſaith he) and whatſoever can be ſaid concerning it, is grounded but upon very light conjecture. And therefore, where the Scripture is ſilent, it can be of no great uſe for us to ſpeak, eſpecially ſeeing there is ſo much ſpoken as will find us work, and be of uſe for us: neither need we trouble our ſelves (being aſſured that the *Spirit of God* indited the Book) who it was that held the pen. Only take this, that it is conceived to be the firſt piece of Scripture that was written; take it to be written by *Moſes*, and then it is moſt probable that he writ it before the deliverance of the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, while he was in *Midian*.

Quis libri ſcriptor fuit incertum eſt, nec niſi leviſſimis conjecturis nititur quicquid de eo re dici poteſt. Beza.

Neither will I ſtay you in the ſecond place about the inquiry into, or rather about the refutation of that fancy; that this whole Book is a Parable rather then a Hiſtory, like that of *Lazarus* in the Goſpel, not a thing really acted, but only a repreſentation of it. Now this (which was the dream of many of the *Jews* and *Talmudiſts*, and is faſtned with no ſmall clamor upon *Luther* by the *Jeſuites*) may clearly be convinced both by the names of places and perſons (which we ſhall have occaſion to open when we come to the Book it ſelf) and alſo by thoſe allegations of the Prophets and of the Apoſtles concerning *Job*; the Prophet *Ezekiel* quoting him with *Noah* and *Daniel*, two men that unqueſtionably were extant, and acted glorious parts in the world, and therefore *Job* alſo. All that I will ſay in particular, ſhall be in theſe three things.

Luk. 15. & 16.

Ezek. 14. 14.

First, to ſhew you more diſtinctly the ſubject of this Book.

Secondly, The parts and diviſion of it.

Thirdly, The uſe or ſcope and intendment of it.

Firſt, For the ſubject of this Book, we may conſider it, either as principal, or as collateral.

The main and principal ſubject of this Book is contained (and I may give it you) in *Pſal.* 34. 1. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of all.*

Pſal. 34. 19

Concerning this ſubject, there are two great *Queſtions* handled and diſputed fully and clearly in this Book. The firſt is this, *Whether it doth conſiſt with the Juſtice and goodneſs of God to afflict a righteous and ſincere perſon, to ſtrip him naked, to take away all his outward comforts.* Or, *Whether it doth conſiſt with the Juſtice and goodneſs of God, that it ſhould go ill with thoſe that are good, and that it ſhould go well with thoſe that are evil.* This is one great debate, the main Queſtion thoroughout the Book. And then ſecondly, here is another great diſpute in reference to the former; Namely, *whether we may judge of the righteouſneſs, or unrighteouſneſs, of the ſincerity or hypocriſie of any perſon, by the outward dealings and preſent diſpenſations of God towards him.* That is a ſecond Queſtion here debated.

The friends of *Job* maintained the firſt Queſtion Negatively, the latter Affirmatively. They denied that God in Juſtice could afflict a righteous and a holy man. They affirmed, that any man ſo afflicted is unrighteous, and may ſo be judged, becauſe afflicted. And ſo the whole argument and diſpute, which the friends of *Job* brought, may be reduced to this one Syllogiſm. *He that is afflicted and greatly afflicted, is certainly a great open ſinner or a notorious hypocrite: But* Job, *thou art afflicted, and thou art great afflicted; therefore certainly thou art, if not, a great open ſinner, yet a notorious hypocrite.*

Job, as conſtantly and as vehemently maintaineth both thoſe queſtions in the contrary ſence. He acknowledged himſelf to be a *ſinner*, yet he ſtiffly denied that he was a hypocrite; he diſclaimed his own righteouſneſs in point of Juſtification, yet he juſtified himſelf in point of uprightneſs. And as for the ſinfulneſs of his nature and of his life, he was willing (except known or wilful, in ſincerity) to own both, and charge himſelf faſter then his friends could, appealing to, and triumphing in free grace for full pardon.

This one Syllogiſm (I ſay) is the ſum of all the diſpute, between *Job* and his three friends; this is (as it were) the hinge upon which the whole matter turned.

But beſides theſe, there are many diſcourſes falling in *collaterally*, which concur to make up the ſubject of this book: For, as it is with thoſe that ſtudy the *Philoſophers-ſtone*, the great thing they aim at, is to make Gold, &c. that's the principal, the chief end: yet collaterally they find out many excellent things, many profitable experiments have been made, many rare ſecrets have been diſcovered in proſecuting of that great deſign. So although this be the principal ſubject of the Book, yet collaterally for the carrying on of theſe diſputes, many other rare and excellent, heavenly, ſpiritual and uſeful truths are handled and diſcovered. As to give you ſome particular inſtances.

Firſt, We have the *Character* of a diſcreet and faithful Maſter and Father in a family, and the ſpecial duties which concern thoſe relations; the doctrine of the Oeconomicks is often touched in this Book.

Secondly, We have here the *Character* of a faithful, zealous and juſt Magiſtrate in the Common-wealth, how he ought to behave himſelf, and what his duty is, ſet down alſo plainly and clearly by occaſion of this diſpute.

Thirdly, We have a great diſcovery made in the ſecrets of nature. The bowels of nature are as it were ript open, and the great works of Creation are here diſplayed. In this you have diſcourſes of the Heavens, of the Earth, of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; of thoſe Meteors, the Hail, the Snow, the Froſt, the Ice, the Lightning and the Thunder. In this you have diſcourſes of Jewels, of Minerals, and of Metals; in this, of Beaſts, and Birds, and Creeping things. So that by occaſion of this diſpute, a diſcourſe is carried about all the world, in the whole circuit of natural knowledge or Philoſophy.

Fourthly, Here are diſcourſes of Chriſtian Morals, of the duties of equity from man to man: Of the duties of piety which man oweth to God, of the duties of ſobriety and temperance towards a mans own ſelf. Yea here we find the great duty of *Faith, the matter of believing in the Redeemer of the world, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*.

Laſtly, Here are many diſcoveries made of *God*, in Himſelf and his Attributes; in his Power, Wiſdom, Juſtice, Goodneſs and Faithfulneſs; yea, whatſoever may be known of God in any of theſe, is ſome way or other here diſcovered. So then, all being ſummed up together, it may well be ſaid concerning this Book, that it is Βίβλος πανάρετος, a Book containing all excellencies, of Wiſdom and Holineſs; and what (as ſome of the Jews and Rabbins ſay of it) in other Books, is *here a little and there a little*, is all plentifully gathered together in this. In a word, it is a *Summary*, a *Compendium* of all Knowledge, both Humane and Divine, both concerning our ſelves, and concerning God. So much of the ſubject of this Book, both Principal and Collateral.

The ſecond general to be conſidered is the diviſion of this Book. We may conſider it in reference to the diviſion; Firſt, as it a Dialogue (for ſo ſome call the whole Book) which is an interchangeable diſcourſe concerning any ſubject or matter whatſoever. And taking it in that notion, we may divide it by the *Collocutors* or *Speakers*, and by the ſeveral ſpeeches which they made.

The Collocutors or Speakers in this Book, are Eight.

1. *God*.
2. *Satan*.
3. *Job*.
4. *Job's Wife*.
5. *Eliphaz*.
6. *Bildad*.
7. *Zophar*.

} *Job's* three Friends.

8. *Elihu*, Who cometh in as a Moderator of that diſpute.

Their Speeches which they make, are in the whole compaſs of the Book, thirty two diſtinctions.

There are two Dialogues between God and Satan. One between *Job* and his Wife. Three between *Job* and *Eliphaz*. Three between *Job* and *Bildad*. Two between *Job* and *Zophar*. Two between God and *Job*. And then we have *Elihu* making four diſtinct Speeches or Orations which have no Anſwer. And laſtly, two ſeveral Speeches or Parables (as they are called) of *Job*, one in *Chap*. 27. 1. and the other in *Chap*. 29. 1. So that, ſum up all theſe together, and you may divide the whole Book into thirty two diſtinct or ſeveral Speeches, either by way of poſition, or anſwer, or reply, or determination. God ſpeaks four times, Satan twice, *Job's* wife once, *Job* thirteen times, *Eliphaz* thrice, *Bildad* thrice, *Zophar* twice, *Elihu* four times.

Or if we ſhould conſider the Book as a *Diſputation* (which is higher then a *Dialogue*) ſo you may diſtinguiſh it, by the *Opponents*, by the *Reſpondents*, and by the *Moderators*.

The *Opponents* are three. *Job's* three friends.

Job himſelf is *Reſpondent*. The *Moderators* are,

Firſt, *Elihu*, he cometh in firſt as an *Umpire* between them.

Secondly, God himſelf at laſt, out of the whirle-wind giveth the deciſive determinative voice and ſentence. He ſtates the queſtion fully for *Job*, and reproveth *Job's* friends, as not having diſputed and argued aright concerning him.

Yet further, We may divide the Book into five Sections, whereof

The firſt doth ſet forth the happineſs and fulneſs of *Job's outward eſtate*; and the integrity and perfection of his *ſpiritual eſtate*. And that is contained in the firſt five *verſes*.

The ſecond preſents *Job's affliction*, *Job's* fall, the great and ſore calamity which in a moment did overtake him, with the occaſion of it. And this you have ſet forth from *verſ*. 5. excluſively to *verſ*. 9. of *Chap*. 2.

Thirdly, We have the queſtions, the debates and diſputes which did ariſe upon and about the fall of *Job* into that ſad condition: which are contained from *verſ*. 9. of *Chap*. 2. to the end of *Chap*. 31.

Fourthly, We have the moderation or determination of this diſpute and of this argument, firſt by *Elihu*, and then by God himſelf, from the beginning of *Chap*. 32. to *verſ*. 7. of *Chap*. 42. All which is but as a determination or ſtating of the Queſtion.

Fifthly and laſtly, We have the reſtitution of *Job*, his reſtoring and ſetting up again, and the repairing of his eſtate, and making of it double to what formerly it had been. And that is begun and continued from *verſ*. 7. of *Chap*. 42. to the end of the Book. So here you have a five-fold diviſion of the Book.

Once more, We may divide the Book into three parts. And ſo it ſets forth,

Firſt, *Job's* happy condition, both in regard of Externals and Internals, in the firſt five *verſes*.

Secondly, *Job's* fall, *Job's* calamity, *Job's* trouble, from that, to *verſ*. 7. of *Chap*. 42.

Thirdly, *Job's* reſtitution or reſtoring, from thence to the end.

Take the Book in this diviſion, and it ſeems to hold forth to us ſuch a repreſentation of *Job*, as is given us in the three firſt Chapters of *Geneſis* concerning man. In thoſe three firſt Chapters, we have man ſet forth,

Firſt, In the excellency and dignity of his Creation, being Lord and Soveraign of all, adorn'd with that integrity and purity of nature which God had planted in, and ſtamped upon him at his Creation. And in the beginning of this Book, we have *Job* like a man in innocency, ſhining in all his dignity, compaſs'd about with bleſſings of all ſorts, bleſſings of the body, bleſſings of the ſoul, bleſſings of this life and of that which is to come.

Secondly, There we find the Devil plotting the ruine of man, and we find his plot taking for a while, and in a great meaſure prevailing. So here in this Book we have the Devil begging *Job's* ruine, and having obtained leave, ſo far as concerned his outward eſtate and body, quickly puts it in execution.

Thirdly, There we have *Adam* by Gods free mercy and promiſe reſtored to a better eſtate in Chriſt through the grace of Redemption, then he had before in himſelf, by the goodneſs of Creation. So here we have *Job*, through the mercy, power, and faithfulneſs of God, reſtored to all he had, and more; we ſee him repaired and ſet up again after his breaking, not only with a new ſtock, but a greater: his eſtate being doubled, and his very loſſes proving beneficial to him. This may ſuffice for the diviſion or parts of the Book, which, I conceive, may ſhed ſome light into the whole.

Now for the third thing which I propoſed, which was the uſe, or ſcope, or intendment of this Book. For that is a ſpecial thing we are to carry before us in our eye in the reading of Scripture. It is poſſible for one to underſtand the ſubject, and to know the parts, and yet not to be attentive to find out, or diſtinctly to find out what the mind of God is, or whereat he ſpecially drives and aimeth. Therefore it will be very profitable to us likewiſe to conſider what the tendency and intendment, or (as I may ſo ſpeak) the Uſes of this Book are.

Firſt, It aims at our Inſtruction, and that in divers things.

Firſt, (Which much concerns every Chriſtian to learn,) it inſtructeth us *how to handle a Croſs*: How to behave our ſelves when we are in a conflict, whether outward or inward: What the poſtures of the Spiritual War are; and with what patience we ought to bear the hand of God, and his dealings with us. This, I ſay, is ſet forth by the Scripture in other places to be the main, and one of the principal ends or intendments or Uſes of this Book. This the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks of, *You have heard of the patience of* Job; as if he ſhould ſay, do you not know why the Book of *Job* was written? Why God in his providence did bring ſuch a thing to paſs concerning *Job*? It was that all men ſhould take notice of his patience, and might *learn the wiſdom of ſuffering, that noble art of induring*.

Jam. 5. 11

Job was full of many other excellent graces, and indeed he had all the graces of the Spirit of God in him. But the *Patience of* Job was the principal grace. As it is with natural men, they have every ſin in them; but there are ſome ſins which are the *Maſter ſins*, or ſome one ſin it may be doth denominate a wicked man; ſometimes he is a proud man, ſometimes he is covetous, ſometimes he is a deceiver, ſometimes he is an oppreſſor, ſometimes he is unclean, ſometimes he hath a profane ſpirit, and ſo the like; ſome one great Maſter luſt doth give the denomination to the man: he hath all other ſins in him, and they are all reigning in him; but one as it were reigneth above the reſt, and ſits uppermoſt in his heart. So it is with the Saints of God (and here with *Job*) every Saint and ſervant of God hath all grace in him, every grace in ſome degree or other, for all the limbs and lineaments of the new man are formed together in the ſoul of thoſe that are in Chriſt. But there is ſome ſpecial grace which doth give (as it were) the denomination to a ſervant of God. As that which gave the denomination to *Abraham*, was Faith; and that which gave the denomination to *Moſes*, was Meekneſs; and ſo this which giveth the denomination to *Job*, is Patience; and ſo the denomination too of this whole Hiſtory, as if that were the *great leſſon* that were to be taken out, the leſſon of ſuffering and of patience: So that what the Apoſtle makes to Rom. 14.4. be the Uſe of all Scripture, *Whatſoever* (ſaith he) *were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* That, I ſay, which the Apoſtle there makes to be the end and ſcope of the whole Scripture, doth ſeem to be in ſpecial the principal and chief end of writing this Book of *Job*.

Secondly, Another Inſtruction which we are to take from the whole Book, is this; God would have us learn, that, *Afflictions come not by chance, that they are all ordered by providence*; in the matter, in the manner, and the meaſure; both for the kinds and for the degrees, they are all ordered, even the very leaſt, by the wiſdom, by the hand and providence of God.

Thirdly, Another thing which we are to learn generally from this Book, is this, *The Soveraignty of God*; that he hath power over us, over our eſtates, and over our bodies, and over our families, and over our ſpirits; *that he may uſe us as he pleaſeth, and we muſt be quiet under his hand*; when he cometh and will take all from us, all our comforts, we muſt give all glory to him. This Book is written for this eſpecially, to teach us the *Soveraignty of God, and the ſubmiſſion of the creature.*

Fourthly, It teacheth us, *That God doth ſometimes afflict his children out of prerogative*; that though there be no ſin in them which he makes the occaſion of afflicting them (ſuch was *Job's* caſe) yet for exerciſe of his graces in them, for trial of their graces, or to ſet them up for patterns to the world, God may and doth afflict them. *Though no man be without ſin, yet the afflictions of many are not for their ſins.*

Fifthly, There is this general Inſtruction which God would have us learn out of this Book, namely, that *the beſt, begotten, and the beſt founded eſtate in outward things, is uncertain*; that there is no truſting to any creature-comforts. God would unbottom us quite from the creature, by holding forth this Hiſtory of *Job* unto us.

Sixthly, God would alſo ſhew forth this for our learning, *viz.* The ſtrength, the unmoveableneſs of faith, how unconquerable it is, what a kind of omnipotency there is in grace. God would have all the world take notice of this in the Book of *Job*, that a godly perſon is in vain aſſaulted by friends or enemies, by Men or Devils, by wants or wounds: Though he be even benighted in his ſpirit, though God himſelf take away the light of his countenance from him, yet God would have us learn and know, that over all theſe a true believer is more then a conqueror. For here is one of the greateſt battels fought, that ever was between man and man, between man and Hell, yea between God and man: yet *Job* went away with the victory; *True grace is often aſſaulted, it never was or ever ſhall be overthrown.*

Seventhly, This alſo we may learn, *That God never leaves or forſakes his totally or finally.*

Eighthly, Laſtly, The book teacheth this general leſſon: *That the judgments of God are often times very ſecret, but they are never unjuſt.* That though the creature be not able to give a reaſon of them, yet there is infinite reaſon for them.

Theſe are the general Uſes from the general ſcope and intendment of this Book by way of inſtruction.

Secondly, This Book ſerves to convince and reprove that ſlander of worldly men and of Satan, who ſay that the people of God ſerve him for their own ends, that they *follow him for loaves*, that they attend upon him for an eſtate, for creature-comforts and concernments. The Lord did on purpoſe cauſe theſe things to be acted, and this Hiſtory to be penned, for ever *to ſtop the mouth of Satan and all iniquity*, and to ſhew that his people *follow him for love*, for the excellency they find in him and in his ſervice. Though he ſtrip them naked of all they have, yet they will cleave to him. Here is one Confutation.

Secondly, It is to convince and reprove all thoſe, who judge of the ſpiritual eſtate of thoſe that are under the hand of God in ſore afflictions by ſome unbecoming and raſh ſpeeches, which may fall from them in the time of thoſe their conflicts, when troubles and ſufferings are upon them.

Thirdly, To convince and confute thoſe who judge of mens ſpiritual eſtates, by Gods dealing with them in their outward eſtates.

Fourthly, To convince and confute that curſed opinion, that a man may fall finally and totally away from grace and from the favour of God. God hath ſhewed by this Hiſtory, that ſuch an opinion is a lye. If ever any man were in danger of falling quite away from grace received, or might ſeem to have loſt the favour of God, formerly ſhewed, ſurely it was *Job*: and if he were upheld in the grace of holineſs, and continued in the grace of Gods love, notwithſtanding all that came upon him; certainly God would have all the world know that free grace will uphold his for ever.

Fifthly, To convince all thoſe of pride and extream preſumption, who think to find out and to trace the *ſecrets of Gods counſel, the ſecrets of Gods eternal decrees, the ſecrets of all his works of providence:* Whereas God ſheweth them in this Book, that they are not able to find out, or comprehend his ordinary works, thoſe which we call the works of nature, the things of creation, the things that are before them, which they converſe with every day, which they ſee and feel, and have in their ordinary uſe. They are not able to find out the ſecrets of the Air, of the Meteors, of the Waters, of the Earth, of Beaſts or Birds; every one of theſe puts the underſtanding of man to a ſtand, and poſe his reaſon; they are not able to comprehend the works of Creation, how are they able then to find out the counſels of God in his Decrees and purpoſes and judgements? And for that end it is that God ſets forth here ſo much of the works of nature, that all men may be ſtopp'd in that preſumptuous way of ſearching too far into his counſels. Here is another Uſe or ſcope of this Book.

Thirdly, There is much for Conſolation.

Firſt, That all things do work for the good of thoſe that love God.

Second Conſolation is this, That no temptation ſhall ever take hold of us, but ſuch as God will either make us able to bear, or make a way to eſcape out of it. We can be in no condition caſt ſo low, but the hand of God can reach us, find us out, ſend in deliverance, and raiſe us up again.

Laſtly, Here are two general Exhortations.

Firſt, We are exhorted to the Meditation and Admiration of the power and wiſdom of God from all the Creatures. This is a duty which this Book leads us unto, for that is the end why ſo much is ſpoken concerning the works of Creation, that (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *The inviſible things of him from the Creation of the world, may be clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power* Rom. 1,20 *and Godhead.*

Secondly, To glorifie God in every condition, to have good thoughts of God, to ſpeak good words for God in every condition. We are drawn to this, by conſidering how *Job* (though ſometimes in vehemency of ſpirit he over-ſhot himſelf, yet he recovers again, and) breaths ſweetly concerning God, ſhewing that his ſpirit was full of ſweetneſs towards God, even when God was writing bitter things againſt him; as when he ſaith, *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him*; then which, what could expreſs a more holy and ſubmiſſive frame of heart, in reference to the dealings of God with him? Surely he thought God was very good to him, who had that good thought of God, *To truſt him, even while he ſlew him.*

Theſe things being propoſed concerning the Book in general, will help to caſt a light thorough the whole at one view. And though at this time I ſhall not enter upon expounding of the Text it ſelf, yet you have had in ſome ſence, the Expoſition of the whole Text. If you carefully lay up theſe Rules, they will much advantage and advance your profit, when we come to the Explication of any part.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE THREE FIRST CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. 1. Verſ. 1, 2.

There was a man in the Land of Uz, *whoſe Name was* JOB, *and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eſchewed evil.*

And there were born unto him ſeven ſons and three daughters.

THis Chapter may be divided into three Parts; whereof the firſt contains a Deſcription of *JOB* in his proſperous eſtate; from the firſt, to the end of the fifth Verſe.

In the ſecond, we have the firſt part of *JOB*'s Affliction; ſet down from the ſixth verſe, to the end of the nineteenth.

In the third, *JOB*'s Carriage and Behaviour in, or his Conqueſt and Victory over that firſt Trial, are diſcovered; this concludes in the three laſt verſes of the Chapter.

The Deſcription of his proſperous Eſtate is given us in three Points.

Firſt, What he was in perſon, *Verſe* 1.

Secondly, What in his Poſſeſſions: We have an Inventory of his Goods, *Verſe* 2, 3, 4.

Thirdly, What in his Practice of Holineſs, *Verſe* 5. Where one Example or Inſtance is ſet down for all the reſt.

The Book begins with the Deſcription of his Perſon, in the firſt Verſe; where *JOB* is deſcribed by that which is Accidental, and by that which is Eſſential.

By Accidentals; ſo he is deſcribed;

1. By the Place where he dwelt; *There was a man in the Land of* Uz.

2. By his Name; *whoſe Name was* JOB.

The Eſſentials are four qualifications, which were eſſential to him, not as a Rational man, but as a Holy man; *And that man was,*

1. *Perfect.* 2. *Upright.*
3. *One that feared God.* 4. *Eſchewed evil.*

As they who write the Acts or Stories of great men, uſually give us ſome Deſcription of their Perſons, before they ſet down their Undertakings or Atchievments (as you ſee in 1 *Sam.* 17. 4, 5, 6, 7. how the great Giant *Goliah* is deſcribed) ſo here, the Holy Ghoſt, by the Pen-man of this Book, being to record a glorious Combat, a Combat not with Fleſh and Blood alone, but with Principalities and Powers, a wreſtling with mighty and ſtrong temptations, firſt gives us (if we may ſo ſpeak) the *Proſopography of this Divine Hero's Soul, the Lineaments and Abilities of his Spirit.* This was the height, and this the ſtature of the Combatant; ſuch were his Limbs, and ſuch his Weapons; there he dwelt, and this was his Name.

There was a man in the Land of Uz, whoſe name was JOB.

There was] That refers us either to the truth of the Story, or to the time of the Story. Such a man there was, that's certain. Such a man there was, but the time when is uncertain. It refers us to the time only indefinitely: *There was* ſuch a man, but when, is not exactly and preciſely ſet down. The Scripture (we know) doth often keep an exact account of years (the Scripture is the Guide and Key of all Chronologie) and ſometimes it leaves things in general for the time, and only ſaith thus much, ſuch a thing was, and ſuch a perſon was; ſo here. Yet ſome have undertaken to define (what the Spirit of God hath left at large) the preciſe time wherein *JOB* lived *; and tell us in what year of the world theſe things were done: But I deſire not to be ſo accurate, unleſs the Rule were ſo too. Only thus much

* *An.* 2236 from the Creation, 574 years after the Flood; 282 years after *Abraham. Bolduc.* in loc.

we may ſafely ſay, that *JOB* lived between the times of *Abraham* and *Moſes*; and nearer *Moſes* then *Abraham*; and for that, I conceive, there is ground ſufficient. There are theſe two ſpecial Reaſons, why it ſhould be circumſcribed within that limit.

1. Becauſe *JOB* offered Sacrifice at that time in his own Countrey; which, after the giving of the Law, and ſetting up of a publick worſhip, was forbidden all, both Jews and Proſelytes. They that were acquainted with the wayes of God, knew they muſt not worſhip, by Sacrifice, any where but before the Tabernacle, or (after the Temple was built) at the Temple.

2. Becauſe in the whole Book, there is not the leaſt print, or the leaſt mention of any thing, which did concern thoſe great and glorious paſſages of God's providence towards the people of *Iſrael*, either in their going out of *Egypt*, or in their journey through the Wilderneſs to *Canaan*. Now in a Diſpute of this nature (ſuch as was between *JOB* and his Friends) there would have been frequent occaſion to have conſidered and inſtanced ſome of thoſe things. There is ſcarce any Book in Scripture, that bears date after that great and wonderful Diſpenſation of God, but it makes mention of, or refers to ſome paſſages concerning them.

Again, for the time; that which ſome collect to clear it, is from the Genealogie of *JOB*: There are three ſpecial opinions concerning the Line of his Pedigree.

One, That he deſcended from *Nahor*, who was Brother to *Abraham*, Gen. 22. 21. *It was told Abraham, behold Milcah ſhe hath born Children to thy Brother Nahor, Uz his firſt-born, and Buz his Brother*, &c. This *Uz* who was the firſt-born of *Nahor*, *Abraham*'s Brother, is conceived to have given denomination to the Land of *Uz*, and ſo from him *JOB* to be deſcended.

Another opinion there is (maintained by many) that *JOB* was of the Line of *Eſau*, and that he was called *Jobab* by *Moſes*, Gen. 36. 33. *And Bela died, and Jobab the Son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his ſtead.* This *Jobab*, who was a Deſcendant, or one of the Dukes of the Line of *Eſau*, they ſay was *JOB*. But why the name *Jobab* ſhould be contracted into *JOB*, I ſee little reaſon offered.

A third Opinion for his Deſcent is, that he came from the Children of *Abraham* by his ſecond Wife *Keturah*, *Gen.* 25. Where it is ſaid, that *Abraham* by her had divers ſons, and that he gave them Portions, and *ſent them Eaſtward into the Eaſt-Country*; and from *Midian* (who was the fourth Son of *Abraham* by that ſecond Marriage) our Genealogies do poſitively and directly affirm, that *JOB* was deſcended.

That may ſuffice for the time: for bringing of him within a narrower limit, I have no grounds but conjectural.

A man.] He is not called *A man* (here) barely as the Philoſophers *Animal rationale*, &c. as Man is oppoſed to a Beaſt; nor barely is he called a Man to diſtinguiſh his Sex, as a *Man* is oppoſed to a *Woman*: but there is ſomewhat more in the expreſſion; he is called a Man by way of excellency. And for the clearing and opening of that, we may conſider that there are three words in Scripture-Original by which man is expreſs'd.

אדם

1. Man is called *Adam*. That was the proper name of the firſt man, and it became the common name for all men ſince. So man was called from the matter of which he was made; *Adam* from *Adamah*, becauſe (as the reaſon is given, *Gen.* 2. 7.) *God made man duſt out of the Earth*, or, (as we tranſlate) *of the duſt of the Earth.*

אנש

2. Man is called *Enoſh*: So he is called in regard of the infirmities, weakneſſes and ſorrows which he hath contracted by ſin, ſince the Fall. Sin made the red earth weak and brittle earth indeed, earth moiſtned with tears, and mixt with troubles.

איש

3. He is called *Iſh*, which the Criticks in that Language, ſay, comes from, and hath alliance with two words; one ſignifying *Being* or *Exiſtence*, and the other *Heat or Fire.* So that the excellency of man's being, the heat, courage and ſpirit that flames in him, is ſet forth in that word; and that's the word here in the Text, *There was a man*; it is *Iſh*, an excellent, a worthy man, a man of an excellent ſpirit, a man of men, a man fitted to honour God, and govern men. And that it is ſo uſed in Scripture I will give you an Inſtance or two, that you may ſee it is not a bare conjecture.

בני אדם

בני איש

In the forty ninth Pſalm, *David*, as it were, ſummons and divides Mankind. In the firſt verſe he ſummons; *Hear this, all ye people, give ear all ye inhabitants of the world.* In the ſecond verſe he divides; *Both low and high, rich and poor together.* The word in the Hebrew for *high*, is *Bene-Iſh*, Sons of *Iſh*; and the word for *low*, is *Bene-Adam*, Sons of *Adam*. If we ſhould tranſlate the Text directly, according to the Letter, the words muſt run, *ſons of men and ſons of men*; for ſons of *Adam*, and ſons of *Iſh*, are both tranſlated ſons of men; yet when they are ſet together in a way of oppoſition, the one ſignifieth *low*, and the other *high*; and ſo our Tranſlators render it according to the ſence, not Sons of men and Sons of men, but *low* and *high*. *Junius* tranſlates to this ſence, though in more words; *as well they who are born of mean men, as they who are born of the honourable.*

A like Inſtance we have, *Iſa.* 2. 9. *The mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himſelf.* The *mean man*, that is, the *Son* of *Adam*; and the *great man*, that is, the *Son* of *Iſh*; the *great man*, in regard of his excellency, is by ſuch a circumlocution deſcribed to be more then a man: not only the ſon of man, but the ſon of an honourable and great man. So I find the word divers times uſed, to ſignifie the excellency and greatneſs of the perſon.

Then further, it ſignifieth, not only a man that is great; but it ſignifieth *a man in authority*. *There was a man*, that is, an excellent man, a man of worth: *There was a man*, that is, a man in authority. It ſignifies a *Magiſtrate*; and ſo in divers places of Scripture, *Man* is put for a *Magiſtrate*; eſpecially, when it is expreſt as here, by *Iſh*; Gen. 43. 11. *Carry a Preſent to the man*; *ſcil.* to the Governour of the Countrey. *Jer.* 5. 1. *Go through Jeruſalem, and ſearch, and ſee if you can find a man.* What, were men ſo ſcarce in *Jeruſalem* at that time? Was there ſuch a dearth of men, that a man could not be found? Surely no; *Jeruſalem* had throngs of men in every Street. The meaning is then explained in the words following; *if there be any that executeth judgment*: that is, if there be a *Magiſtrate*, a publick man, that's the man I mean.

So in *Numb.* 27. 16. We find the word to ſignifie a *Magiſtrate.* *Let the Lord, the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, ſet a man over the Congregation.* *A man*, that is, a *Magiſtrate*; for there, that's the buſineſs; if you read the Text, you will find it, *a man in authority, a man fit to rule.* And that is it which is meant in *Acts* 17. 31. concerning Chriſt, *God* (ſaith he) *hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained.* It noteth Chriſt the man in power, in authority, becauſe all power in Heaven and in Earth is committed to him. So you know it was uſual among the *Romans* to call their Magiſtrates by the Names of *The men*; as the *Triumviri*, the *Septemviri*, the *Decemviri*; to call them ſometimes the *Three men*; ſometimes the *Seven men*, ſometimes the *Ten men.* Thoſe who were the ſpecial men in authority, that were men in place and eminency, they carried away the name of men (as it were) from all men, as if they were the only men.

Homer begins with ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε μοῦσα. *Virgil* like him, *Arma virumq; cano.*

So that we have theſe two things to take notice of, when it is ſaid here that *JOB* was a man; you muſt carry it further then the word is ordinarily taken: He was a great man, he was a man in Authority, a Magiſtrate. Some carry the Magiſtracy ſo high, as to *ſet him on a Throne*; affirming that he was a King, a point very much contended for by divers Expoſitors: but that he was a Magiſtrate in authority, a Chief in his Countrey, is clear by that which is expreſs'd of him in *Chap.* 29. Where he ſpeaks of his deciding mens rights, and executions of Juſtice.

In the Land of Uz.] I will not trouble you with any Geographical Diſcourſe: In a word, we may conſider three things about *Uz*.

1. Why it was called ſo.
2. Where it was ſeated.
3. What manner of People they were that dwelt in *Uz*.

Firſt, For the Name; let it be taken from *Uz*, the name of a Man. And there were three called by that Name in Scripture, *Gen.* 10. 23. *Gen.* 22. 21. *Gen.* 36. 28. From either of theſe *JOB*'s Countrey might derive its Name; but from which of theſe, would be (I think) a nice debate; yet it is rather aſcribed to *Uz* or *Huz*, the eldeſt ſon of *Nahor*, Gen. 22. 21.

Secondly, For the place where it was ſeated; it is clear that it was upon the Borders of the *Sabeans*, and of the *Caldeans*, and of the *Arabians*, thoſe Eaſtern People. Some affirm that the Lot of the half Tribe of *Manaſſes* on the other ſide *Jordan*, which was ſet forth for them when the People of *Iſrael* came into *Canaan*, was the very place where *JOB* lived, and that was called *Vz*. It is clear, that it was near thoſe Parts above-mentioned. Firſt, from *Lam.* 4. 21. There the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaking of *Vz*, ſaith, *Rejoyce and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, that dwelleſt in the Land of Vz.* And *Jer.* 25. 20. He ſpeaks again of the Land of *Vz*: *All the mingled people, and all the Kings of the Land of Vz, they ſhall drink of the Cup.* He mentions the Cup alſo in that place, *Lam.* 4. *Rejoyce and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, that dwelleſt in the Land of Vz; the Cup alſo ſhall paſs through unto thee.* Secondly, *Vz* bordered upon thoſe Countries; for theſe People made out their Parties, invaded, ſlew and took away *JOB*'s Eſtate, Cattel and Servants; therefore the place, in all probability, lay near theſe Countries.

For the Condition and Manners of the People; it is generally received, that they were a People prophane in their Lives, and ſuperſtitious, at leaſt, in their Worſhip: *Edumeans* and *Edomites*, the Deſcendants of *Eſau*, hear ill all the Scripture over. Among theſe *JOB* lived, among theſe *JOB* governed; there he exerciſed thoſe precious Graces, and practiſed thoſe excellent Duties both of Holineſs toward God, and of Juſtice toward men. It was in the midſt of a ſinful and perverſe Nation, in the Land of *Vz*.

Thence obſerve, Firſt, *God hath his Servants in all places, in the worſt places.*

There was never any Air ſo bad, but that a Servant of God might breath in it. Here God had a choice piece, even in the Land of *Vz*, a place of prophaneneſs; here was *Bethel* in *Bethaven*, a Houſe of God in a Land of wickedneſs. *Lot* dwelt in *Sodom*, *Joſeph* in *Egypt*, *David* in *Meſech* and in *Kedar*, there were Saints in *Cæſar's* (wicked *Nero*'s) Houſhold. *Babylon* holds many of God's people; yet let them not make ſuch places their refuge, much leſs their election: but remember the Call, *Come out of her my people.*

Secondly, We may obſerve from hence (this being ſpoken of *JOB*, to ſet him forth in the excellency of his ſpiritual condition, that he lived in the Land of *Vz*) That

It is a great honour and a high commendation to be good, and do good amongſt thoſe that are evil.

You ſhall be recorded for it. This was one reaſon why the place is named, that the Honour of *JOB* might be lifted up; that he was good, not by the example and encouragement, but againſt the example of others; he was a leading-man himſelf: though he lived amongſt thoſe that were ſcoffers and wicked, yet *JOB* was holy. As they ſay concerning the Affection of Love, it is moſt unnatural for a man to hate thoſe that love him; it is civil for men to love thoſe that love them; but this is truly Chriſtian, for a man to love thoſe that hate him and do him wrong. So in regard of living and converſing, as of loving and affecting, we may ſay, it is a moſt wicked thing to be naught among thoſe that are good; that aggravateth a man's ſinfulneſs, to be unholy while he converſeth with thoſe that are holy: It is a good thing to be good with the good, to take example by them; but it is a moſt excellent thing, a glorious thing to be good among thoſe that are ſtark naught, to worſhip God aright among Idolaters, to fear God among thoſe that have no fear of God before their eyes, to be perfect among hypocrites, to be upright among thoſe that are unjuſt, to eſchew evil among thoſe that are altogether wrapt about with evil: this was the honour and commendation of *JOB*. For a man to be as *LOT* in *Sodom*, never touched with *Sodom*'s wickedneſs, to keep himſelf pure and ſincere, and without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Generation, to ſhine as a light in the midſt of darkneſs; this brings honour both to God and man. Phil. 2. 15.

Thirdly, From the place where *JOB* lived, we may obſerve,

Grace will preſerve it ſelf in the midſt of the greateſt oppoſition.

It is ſuch a Fire as no water can wholly quench or put out. True Grace will keep it ſelf ſound and clean among thoſe who are leprous and unclean; it is ſuch a thing as overcomes and maſters all the evil that is about it: God hath put ſuch a mighty power into Grace, that if it once poſſeſs the heart in truth, though there be but a little of it, though there be but as much as a grain of Muſtard-ſeed, not all the wickedneſs in the world, no nor all the Devils in Hell can diſpoſſeſs it. As all the water in the ſalt Sea cannot make the Fiſh ſalt, but ſtill the Fiſh retains its freſhneſs; ſo all the wickedneſs and filthineſs that is in the world, cannot deſtroy, cannot defile true Grace; that will bear up its head, and hold up it ſelf for ever.

And this man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eſchewed evil.

Perfect] Not that he had a *Legal Perfection*; ſuch a perfection as the *Papiſts* now contend for, and aſſert poſſibly attainable, yea, actually attained by many in this life: *For what is man that he ſhould be clean?* And *JOB* himſelf profeſſeth, *Chap.* 9. 20. *If I ſay I am perfect; it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.* He acknowledgeth, *Chap.* 7. 20. *I have ſinned.* The perfection therefore here ſpoken of, is not an abſolute, a legal perfection. תם

For the clearing of the word, we may conſider there is a twofold perfection aſcribed to the Saints in this life; a perfection of Juſtification, a perfection of Sanctification.

The firſt of theſe, in a ſtrict ſence, is a compleat perfection. The Saints are compleat in Chriſt, they are perfectly juſtified; there is not any ſin left uncovered, nor any guilt left unwaſhed in the blood of Chriſt, not the leaſt ſpot, but is taken away: His Garment is large enough to cover all our nakedneſs and deformities. In this reſpect they may be called perfect, they are perfectly juſtified: *By one Offering Chriſt hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*, Heb. 10. 14.

Then there is a perfection of holineſs or of ſanctification; and that is called ſo, either in regard of the beginnings of, or in regard of deſires after, and aims at perfection.

The Saints even in this life have a perfect beginning of Holineſs, becauſe they are begun to be ſanctified in every part; they are ſanctified *throughout, in ſoul, and body, and ſpirit*, as the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23. Though every part be not throughout ſanctified, yet they are ſanctified in every part throughout; and this is a perfection. When the work of ſanctification is begun in all parts, it is a perfect work beginning.

They are likewiſe perfect in regard of their Deſires and intendments. Perfect Holineſs is the aim of the Saints on earth; it is the reward of the Saints in heaven. The thing which they drive at here, is perfection, therefore they themſelves are called perfect. As God accepts of the will for the deed, ſo he expreſſeth the deed by the will; he interpreteth him to be a perfect man, who would be perfect; and calls that perſon perfect, who deſires to have all his imperfections cured. That is a ſecond underſtanding how *JOB* was perfect.

A third way is this; He was perfect comparatively, comparing him with thoſe who were either openly wicked, or but openly holy; he was a perfect man, he was a man without ſpot, compared with thoſe that were either all over ſpotted with filthineſs, or only painted with godlineſs.

Or thus, We may ſay the perfection here ſpoken of, is the perfection of ſincerity. *JOB* was ſincere, he was *ſound at the heart.* He did not act a part, or perſonate Religion, but was a religious perſon. *He was not guilded, but Gold.* So the word is interpreted. Some render it, *JOB* was a *ſimple man*, not as *ſimple* is put for weak and fooliſh, but as *ſimple* is put for *plain-hearted*, one that is not (as the Apoſtle *James* phraſeth it) *a double-minded man*; *JOB* was a *ſimple-minded man*, or *a ſingle-minded man*, one that had not a *heart* and *a heart*; he was not a compound, ſpeaking one thing, and meaning another; he meant what he ſpake, and he would ſpeak his mind. It is the ſame word that is uſed in *Jacob*'s Character, *Gen.* 25. 27. *Eſau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, and*

Jacob was Iſh Tam, *a plain man.* So that to be a perfect man, is to be a plain man; one whoſe heart you may know by his Tongue, and read the man's ſpirit in his actions. Some are *ſuch Juglers*, that you can ſee little of their ſpirits in their lives, you can learn but little of their minds by their words; *Jacob* was a plain man, and ſo was *JOB*; ſome tranſlate it, a *ſound man.* It is the ſame Expreſſion that is given of *Noah*; *He was* [Tamim] *in his generation*; or, *he was ſound*, upright-hearted or perfect with God, *Gen.* 6. 9. And it is that which God ſpeaks to *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 2. *Walk before me, and be thou* [Tamim,] *be thou perfect, or ſound, or upright, or plain in thy walking before me.* In *Exod.* 28. 30. We read of the *Urim* and *Thummim* on the Breaſtplate of the High-Prieſt. *Thummim* comes from this Root, and ſignifies the *integrity of heart* and life required in the High-Prieſt, as *Urim* did the light and clearneſs of his knowledge.

ישר **And upright.**] The former word which was tranſlated perfect, in other Texts is rendered *upright*; but when we have both the Expreſſions together, as here, we muſt diſtinguiſh the ſence: It is not a Tautologie. Then the former being taken for inward ſoundneſs, plainneſs and ſincerity; this latter (*to be upright*) may be taken for outward Juſtice, righteouſneſs and equity, reſpecting all his dealings in the world. He was a perfect man, that is, he was plain-hearted, and he was plain-dealing too, which is the meaning of *He was upright*: So the one refers to the integrity of his ſpirit, the other to the honeſty of his wayes; *His heart was plain, and his dealings were ſquare.* This he expreſſeth fully in the 29 and 31 Chapters of this Book; which are, as it were, a Comment upon this word *upright.* There you may read what is meant by uprightneſs; his fairneſs in all parts, both of Commutative and Diſtributive Juſtice. In thoſe things that concerned Commutative Juſtice, when *JOB* bought or ſold, traded or bargained, promiſed or covenanted, he ſtood to all uprightly. Take him as he was a Magiſtrate; when *JOB* ſate in Judgment, or had any Buſineſs brought before him, he gave every one his due; he did not ſpare or ſmite upon Ends: he did neither at any time juſtifie the wicked, or condemn the godly; but was upright in Judgment: He was not byaſs'd by Affection or Intereſt; he was not carried away by hopes or fears; but kept the path of Juſtice in all his diſpenſations toward that people among whom he lived. This is to be an upright man; and ſo the Prophet tells us, *Iſa.* 26. 7. *The way of the juſt is uprightneſs*; that is, they are upright in their wayes; and more, uprightneſs in the abſtract. We have a like expreſſion, *Prov.* 29. 27. *Thoſe that are upright in the way, are an abomination to the wicked.* Uprightneſs doth refer to the way wherein a man goes in his outward dealings and diſpenſations towards men. There is a twofold Uprightneſs of our wayes. 1. Uprightneſs of words. 2. Of works. So upright walking is expounded and branched forth, *Pſal.* 15. 2, 3. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteouſneſs, and ſpeaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his Tongue.* This is the ſecond part of *JOB*'s deſcription; *He was perfect and upright.*

Thirdly, He was *One that feared God.*

Fearing God.] The Fear of God is taken two wayes. Either for that natural and inward worſhip of God; and ſo *the fear* of God is a holy filial affection, awing the whole man to obey *the whole will of God*: That is Fear as it is an Affection. Or the Fear of God is put for the external or inſtituted worſhip of God. So that a man fearing God, is as much as this; a man worſhipping God according to his own will, or according to his mind and direction. Now whenas *JOB* is ſaid to be a man *fearing God*, you muſt take it both theſe wayes: He had that holy affection of fear with which we muſt worſhip God (as we are taught, *Heb.* 12. 28. *Let us have Grace whereby we may ſerve God with reverence and godly fear.* And, *ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce before him with trembling*, Pſ. 2. Fear is that affection with which we muſt worſhip and ſerve God.) And *JOB* likewiſe did perform that worſhip to God which he required; that is called Fear, and the exerciſe of it, fearing God. Fearing God, is worſhipping God; as you may ſee clearly by two Texts of Scripture compared together In the Fourth of *Matthew*, *verſe* 10. Chriſt ſaith to the Devil, *It is written, thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* Compare this with *Deut.* 6. 13. And there you ſhall have it thus expreſt; *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God*: That which in one place is *worſhip*, in the other is *fear*. Again, *Mat.* 15. 9. *In vain* (ſaith Chriſt) *do they worſhip me, teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of men.* Now the Prophet *Iſaiah* (from whence that is taken) *Chap.* 29. 14. expreſſeth it thus; *Foraſmuch as their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men.* They worſhip me according to the precepts of men, ſaith Chriſt. Their Fear is taught by the precepts of men, ſaith the Prophet: So that Fear and Worſhip are the ſame. Fearing God doth include both the Affection of a Worſhipper, and the Duty or Act of worſhipping.

The fourth part or line of *JOB*'s Character, is, his *Eſchewing evil.*

Evil is here taken for the evil of ſin. Before ſin came into the world, there was no evil in the world: *God ſaw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* But when ſin came, which was the firſt, and is the chiefeſt evil, it brought in with it all other evils. Sin hath in it the whole nature of evil, and all the degrees of evil; and from it proceed all evil effects: Hence it is eminently called evil. Sickneſs, and Death, and Hell, are called evil; how much rather that, but for which theſe evils had never been? how much rather that, with which theſe compared, may be called good? Further; Evil is put here indefinitely: He was one that *eſchewed evil*; not this or that evil; but evil, that is, all evil; this indefinite is univerſal. And then further, we are to take evil here, as himſelf afterward expounds it in his practice, not only for the acts of evil, but all the occaſions, the appearances, the provocations and incentives of, or unto evil, or whatſoever might lead him into evil; for thus he inſtanceth in one particular; *I made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?* Chap. 31. 1.

Eſchewed.] In this word the prudence of *JOB* ſhines as bright as his holineſs; who, having received a great *ſtock and treaſure of Grace*, now watches to preſerve it, and oppoſes whatſoever was deſtructive to the life or growth of the inner man. That man ſhews he hath both Money, and his wits about him, who ſuſpects and provides againſt Thieves.

JOB **eſchewed evil.**] There is much in that expreſſion. It is more to ſay a man doth *eſchew evil*, then to ſay a man doth not *commit evil*. It had been too bare an expreſſion, to ſay, *JOB* did not *commit evil*; but when it is ſaid, *JOB eſchewed evil*, this ſhews that not only the hand and tongue of *JOB* did not meddle with evil, but that his heart was turned from evil. For *eſchewing* is a turning aſide with reluctancy and abhorrency; ſo the Hebrew (*Sar*) imports; *JOB* did abhor evil, as well as not commit evil. As there is a great deal of difference between theſe two, the doing of good, and a delight in doing good; between being at peace, and following of peace. A man may do good, and not be a lover of good, a lover of the Commandments of God, a delighter in them; he may be at peace, and not be a lover and follower of peace. So a man may be one that commits not ſuch and ſuch ſins; he may do no hurt, and yet in the mean time, he may be one that loves thoſe ſins he commits not: Such an one is not preſently a man that eſchews thoſe ſins; for to eſchew evil, noteth the activity of the ſpirit againſt thoſe evils: That is the ſpiritualneſs and ſtrength of holineſs: *JOB*'s heart did (as it were) riſe againſt evil. Some expound it by *war*; as if under this expreſſion, were meant the enmity that *JOB* did bear againſt evil; that it was ſuch an eſchewing, as when a man hateth his enemy, and makes war againſt him, and doth by all means oppoſe him; ſo there was, as it were, a deadly feud, an irreconcileable enmity between *JOB* and evil. *He was a man that feared God, and eſchewed evil.* So much for the opening of that firſt Verſe; wherein you have the firſt part of the Deſcription of *JOB*'s proſperous eſtate; and that is, what he was in his Perſon.

That man was perfect and upright.

We will obſerve hence ſomewhat in the general firſt, and then ſomewhat more particularly.

You ſee here, when God comes to deſcribe a man, and to ſet him forth in his Glory and Excellency, where the

Spirit of God begins, what is the chief and firſt thing which God takes notice of; it is his Grace. When he would ſet forth what a man *JOB* was, how bleſſed and how happy; here he ſets his Pen firſt, to deſcribe what his ſpiritual eſtate was. Hence then this in the general:

First, *Gracious Habits and Spiritual Bleſſings are the choiceſt of all Bleſſings.*

If God have given a man Grace, he hath the beſt and the choiceſt of all that which God can give. God hath given us his Son, and God hath given us his Spirit, and God hath given us the Graces of his Spirit; theſe are the fineſt of the Flower, and the Honey out of the Rock of Mercy. Though you ſhould not come to Children, though you ſhould not come to the other part of the Inventory, to Sheep, and Camels, and Oxen, and Aſſes; if you are in the firſt part of the Deſcription, that you have a perfect heart, and upright life, and the fear of God in your inward parts, and a holy turning againſt every evil, your lot is fallen in a fair place, and you have a goodly heritage: they that have this, need not be diſcontented at their own, nor envious at the condition of any other; they have the principal Verb, the one thing neceſſary.

Again, When God deſcribeth a gracious man, you ſee he goes thorough; he ſets him forth in every thing that concerns his ſpiritual eſtate; *Perfect and upright, fearing God, and eſchewing evil.* From hence, this alſo in the general.

Secondly, *Where one Grace is, there is every Grace.*

Grace is laid into the Soul in all the parts of it, and there is ſomewhat of every Grace laid into the Soul. We have not one man one Grace, and another man another Grace; but every man hath every Grace that hath any Grace at all. I do not ſay that every man hath every Grace, or that the ſame man hath every Grace in the ſame height and degree: Grace in ſome is more eminent then in others; and the ſame man may have one Grace more eminent then another; he may have one Grace (like *Saul* among the people) higher by head and ſhoulders then the reſt in his throng of Graces; yet that man hath ſomewhat of every Grace, that hath any Grace; all Grace goes together. Thus in the general.

Particularly; This man was *perfect*. That is (as we have explained it) he was ſincere and plain-hearted. Obſerve from hence,

First, *It is Sincerity that eſpecially commends us unto God.*

As *JOB*'s Graces are preferred in his Deſcription, before his Riches, ſo ſincerity is preferred before all his other Graces.

Sincerity is that which makes us ſo acceptable and pleaſing unto God: He was a man that was perfect; you ſee that is put in the firſt place. And indeed, whatſoever a man hath beſides, be a man never ſo juſt in his dealings, could you ſuppoſe a man worſhipping God in all his Ordinances, and avoiding all manner of evil, yet if there be doubling and falſneſs in his ſpirit, all is caſt off, all is rejected of God as abominable. Therefore here the foundation is laid, here is the bottom-Grace, Perfection, Sincerity. Whether it be a diſtinct Grace, or whether it be that which doth accompany every Grace, and gives it life and beauty in the eye of God (for my own part I conceive Sincerity is not properly a diſtinct Grace, but the perfection of every Grace) it is that which doth commend a man unto God. Chriſt tells the Angel of the Church of *Sardis, I have not found thy works perfect. Not full*; ſaith the Greek Text. There wanted ſomewhat within. Sincerity is the filling up of all our Duties: Without that, they are but empty ſounds, *as ſounding braſs, and as a tinkling Cymbal.*

He was perfect; that is, he was ſincere. Obſerve then,

Secondly, *Sincere and ſound-hearted perſons are in God's eſteem perfect perſons.*

It is not all that you can do, or all that you can ſay, or all that you can ſuffer, or all that you can loſe, that can make you perfect in the eſteem of God, without ſincerity; add ſincerity but to the leaſt, and it gives you the denomination of perfect. God accepts the very Goats-hair, the leaſt offering from one that is ſincere; he accounts it a rich Preſent, and calls the Preſenter perfect; but he will not receive the greateſt Riches, whole Droves of Cattel for Offerings, the greateſt and mightieſt Services, from one that is unſound. Truth of Grace is our perfection here; in Heaven we ſhall have Perfection as well as Truth.

Further, In that upon this perfectneſs and plainneſs of heart, there is preſently added uprightneſs: Obſerve from thence,

First, *Where the heart is ſincere towards God, the wayes are juſt and honeſt before men.*

And Secondly, *It is a great honour and an ornament unto our Profeſſion of Godlineſs, to be juſt and upright in our dealings toward men.*

This is put as a ſpecial part of *JOB*'s excellency, that he was upright, *ſcil.* in his dealings. There is much ſcandal caſt upon the Profeſſion of the Name of God, through a defect in this. The world ſaith, theſe men profeſs, they take the Name of God upon them, but they are as unanſwerable to their promiſes, as unjuſt in their tradings, *&c.* as any other. Then make proof of your perfection in profeſſion, by the uprightneſs of your converſation.

Perfect and upright, one that feared God.

Here we have fearing God added to perfect and upright. Obſerve hence,

First, *Moral Integrity and Moral Honeſty, without the Fear of God, can never render us acceptable unto God.*

There are ſome that pleaſe themſelves in this, that they are plain-hearted. (It is poſſible for a man in a fence to be ſo, and yet not to fear God) or they give every man his due, *&c.* Theſe are good; but in *JOB* we may learn, on what theſe muſt be founded, whence they come, when we pleaſe God in them; they come from the Fear of God; that muſt be the ſpring of uprightneſs and perfection, elſe they are only Heathen-Virtues, and not Chriſtian-Graces.

God delights in nothing we do, unleſs we do it in his fear. As *Joſeph* ſaid to his Brethren when they feared ſome hard meaſure from him; *I fear God.* When this fear of God ties our hands, it ſhews the love of God fills our hearts. Not to wrong man becauſe we fear God, is an argument of more than man.

Gen.42.18.

Fearing God.] Hence obſerve,

Secondly, *Holy Fear contains in it every Grace we receive from God, and all the worſhip we tender up to God.*

Fear is a comprehenſive word; it is more then a particular Grace. When *Abraham* had offered up his Son *Iſaac*, that was a work of mighty Faith, and the Faith of *Abraham* is wonderfully commended by it; but God ſpeaks thus, *Now I know thou feareſt me.* Fear containeth Faith, and Fear containeth Love too. Though *perfect love caſt out tormenting fear*, 1 John 4. 18. *yet perfect love calls in obeying fear. Hear the Concluſion of all*, ſaith the Preacher, *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. *Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole duty of man:* or, *this is whole man.* Fear is all duty, and every Grace.

Fearing God, and eſchewing evil.

Hence this from the Connexion. Thirdly, *Holy Fear keeps the Heart and Life clean.*

The Fear of the Lord is clean, ſaith *David*; Pſal. 19. Clean, not only in it ſelf, formally clean; but *effective*: it makes clean, and keeps clean the Heart and Life. Fear is an armed man at the Gate, which examines all, and ſtops every one from entring that is unfit. It ſtands as a watchman on the Tower, and it looks every way, to ſee what's coming to the Soul; if evil come, fear will not admit it. And therefore in Scripture you ſhall have theſe two often put together, *fearing God, and eſchewing evil.* Nay eſchewing evil is not only put as an effect of the fear of God, but it is put into the very definition it ſelf of the fear of God. *The Fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.*

He eſchewed evil.

From hence obſerve alſo, First, *Godly perſons do not only forbear ſin, but they abhor ſin.*

They have not only their hands bound from it, but they have their hearts ſet againſt it. Holy enmity againſt ſin, is the temper of a godly man's heart; he eſchews evil.

Secondly, *A Godly man's oppoſition of ſin is univerſal; it is againſt all ſin.*

JOB eſchewed evil, all evil; there was no picking of this or that particular evil to oppoſe, but whatſoever came under the name and notion of ſin, *Job's* ſpirit turned againſt it. *Enmity is againſt the kind.*

Thirdly, *Godly perſons do not only avoid the acts of evil, but all the occaſions of evil.*

JOB eſchewed evil, whatſoever led him to evil, all the *appearance of evil*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. We cannot avoid the ſin, if we will not avoid the occaſion. When *Solomon* cautions to take heed of the path of the wicked, he uſeth four expreſſions, and all to the ſame purpoſe; *Avoid it,* Prov.4.15. ſaith he, *paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away*; to ſhew unto us, that if we would keep from the acts of ſin, we muſt keep from the way of ſin.

The ſecond thing whereby his proſperous eſtate is ſet out unto us, is what his Poſſeſſions were. You have a particular Inventory of his Eſtate in the ſecond and third Verſes; and you have the total ſum caſt up after all the particulars are ſet down; and it amounts to thus much, that *Job* was the greateſt of all the men in the *Eaſt*. In the Second verſe, you have the firſt part of his Goods ſet down, his Jewels, his Children.

Verſe 2. **And there were born unto him ſeven Sons, and three Daughters.**

This Verſe contains the firſt part of *Job's* outward happineſs; the Bleſſings of Children. Concerning whom, we have three things offered. 1. Their Number; *Ten*. . The diſtinction of Sexes; *Sons and Daughters*. 3. Their mutual Love and Concord, *v.* 4.

There is little in the words that needs explication; therefore where the Scripture is plain and clear, I will not ſpend time.

There were born unto him.] His Children were not born againſt him, but born unto him, given as Comforts and Bleſſings to him.

Seven Sons and three Daughters.] * The number ſeven, and the number three, are numbers of perfection. Some trouble themſelves much about them: But I will not ſtay upon Numbers.

* The word *Banim*, ſons, comes from *Banah*, to build; becauſe ſons and daughters build up their Fathers houſe, and continue the Family; or, becauſe they are (as it were) built and framed out of their parents.

There were born unto him ſeven Sons and three Daughters.

Here obſerve,

Firſt, *Children are the Bleſſings of the Lord.*

They are put here as a part of his inheritance: Psa.127.13. *Children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* They are ſpecial Bleſſings. Children (as it is obſerved) are a reſemblance of our Immortality, becauſe a man revives again, lives anew (as it were) in every Child; he is born again (in a Civil ſence) when others are born to him. There are ſome who account their Children *but Bills of Charges*; but God puts them upon the account of our Mercies: How holily and piouſly ſpeaks *Jacob* concerning his Children? *Theſe* (ſaith he) *are the Children which* Gen. 33.5. *God hath graciouſly given thy ſervant.*

Secondly, Obſerve this; *Children as they are Bleſſings, and great Bleſſings; ſo they are greater Bleſſings then any outward thing elſe whatſoever.*

When a deſcription is made of *Job's* Goods, the beſt is put firſt. Firſt, his ſpiritual Bleſſings are ſet down, then comes his outward; now Children are put in the very next degree to his Graces. What our Saviour Chriſt ſaith of a Mat.16.26. man's Soul, may be ſaid of Children: *What* (ſaith he) *ſhall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* It is true, that is ſpoken there of a man's own Soul, that it is more to himſelf then the world; but it is a truth here too, if one have a Soul given him (and to have a Child, is to have a Soul beſtowed on us) for the preſent, it is more then to have the whole world beſtowed on him. A whole world of riches is not ſo good, not ſuch goods, as one Child; therefore Children are put in the firſt place, as his choiceſt and chiefeſt outward Bleſſings.

Then from the number of his Children, he had many Children; he had *ſeven Sons and three Daughters.*

Obſerve, Thirdly, *To have many Children is a great Bleſſing; and the more Children the greater the Bleſſing.*

Some think themſelves bleſſed, if they may have one or two Children; one to inherit their Eſtates, one or two to delight themſelves in, to play with, or to bear their name; but if they come to a number, to a great number, then they think themſelves exceedingly burdened, then they are troubles. When God caſts up the eſtate of a bleſſed man in outward things, he ſaith not only that he hath a Child, that he is not barren; but that he hath many Children, that he hath his Quiver full of ſuch Arrows, as the expreſſion is, *Pſal.* 127.5. And that is made the bleſſedneſs of a man there, *Happy is the man* (ſaith he) *that hath his Quiver full of them*; that hath many arrows, ſuch are children of the youth, *V.* 4. There are ſome rich and covetous men, that are in this point beyond others, rich in folly: You ſhall hear them pride themſelves that they have no Children, or but few; this they conceive ſets them off in the opinion of the world, for the richer men; whereas one Child is more riches then all the things that are in the world. And we know it is an ordinary thing (though indeed it is a very ſinful thing) to ſay, 'tis true, ſuch an one is a rich man, he hath a fair eſtate, but he hath a great charge, a great many Children, as if that did take off from his riches, or make him leſs happy; as if he were the poorer, becauſe he hath a larger ſhare of that ancient firſt Bleſſing upon man, *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the Earth.* Gen.1.28.

Fourthly, Note this, *To have many Sons, to have moſt Sons amongſt our Children, is the greater outward Bleſſing.*

JOB is deſcribed here in the moſt exact method of outward Bleſſings; he had Sons, and his Sons out-number his Daughters; he had ſeven Sons, and but three Daughters. And the reaſon why moſt Sons among Children are the greater Bleſſing, is clear; becauſe Sons bear up the Name, and are a greater ſupport unto the Family.

Fifthly, *To have many Sons and Daughters too, is yet a compleater Bleſſing.*

For by Daughters the Family is encreas'd, and other Families are joyned, and knit, and united to that Family. And to have Sons and Daughters both, is the perfection of that Natural Bleſſing; becauſe man was ſo made at the firſt; he was made male and female. As it is with the Soul and the Body, though the Soul be more excellent then the Body, yet the Soul alone is not ſo perfect, as when Soul and Body are together; becauſe though the Body be not ſo ſtrong in conſtitution, and noble in condition, as the Soul, yet Body and Soul in Creation were joyned together, therefore their greateſt perfection conſiſts in their union. So likewiſe it is in a Family; though Sons, in nature are more perfect, yet becauſe it was the firſt inſtitution of a Family, male and female, therefore the fulneſs and compleatneſs of the Bleſſing is in the union of both. *JOB* had many Sons and Daughters likewiſe; this made the Bleſſing more compleat.

And then laſtly obſerve this, *Children, many Children in the Family, are in themſelves, no impediments, either of Piety toward God, or Juſtice toward man.*

As ſoon as *Job* was deſcribed in all his Perfections, it is added, he had ſo many ſons and ſo many daughters; though he had ſo many children to look to & provide for, yet he omitted neither duty towards God, nor duty towards man. There are many who think it ſome excuſe, if not excuſe enough for their neglect, for their ſlighting holy duties, or ſlightneſs in the holy duties of Hearing, Praying, and the like; Oh, they have a great many Children, and they muſt riſe early, and they muſt work late, they can ſpare no time, or but little for the publick or private, or ſecret worſhip of God; ſpecially for any thing that is extraordinary: ſo that theſe Cares ſteal away, not only thoſe times that might be beſtowed in an extraordinary manner upon their Souls, but even the ordinary times are ſtollen away by them alſo. Further, Some think themſelves by this in part excuſed for their injuſtice toward men; they have a great Family, and if they deal ſomewhat hardly, and ſtick as cloſe as they can in all buſineſſes, they may be born with, for they have a great many Children; and they muſt look to provide for them, they elſe were *worſe then Infidels*; and hence they take liberty to do what honeſt Infidels were aſhamed of. *Job* you ſee was upright, though he had ſo many Sons, and ſo many Daughters to provide for. It is ill with thoſe, whoſe gain for their Children is loſs to their ſouls; but wo, when any to gain for their Children, loſe their ſouls; doing like thoſe in *Nahum* 2. 12. *The Lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and ſtrangled for his Lioneſſes, and filled his holes with prey, and his Dens with rapine.* By the *Lion*, there, is meant thoſe *Oppreſſors* that lived in *Nineveh*; and by their *Whelps*, are meant their *Children*; and by *Lioneſſes*, their *Wives*; they had Wives and Children, and they muſt have Means and Eſtates for them. *Job*, as I may ſay, had Whelps and a Lioneſs, Wife and Children, yet he doth not tear for them. Nay, though he had ſo many to provide for, yet he rather giveth out to others. What hungry belly was not filled with his meat? and what naked back was not cloathed with his wool? He did not ſay, I have Children to feed and to cloath, and therefore you can have nothing. You ſee though he had many Children and a great Charge, yet how compleat he was in his duty to God, and in his duty to man; he failed not either in the duties of worſhip and holineſs, nor in the duties of Juſtice and Uprightneſs.

VERS. 3, 4, 5.

His ſubſtance alſo was ſeven thouſand Sheep, and three thouſand Camels, and five hundred yoke of Oxen, and five hundred She-Aſſes, and a very great Houſhold; ſo that this man was the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt.

And his Sons went and feaſted in their houſes, every one his day, and ſent and called for their three Siſters, to eat and to drink with them.

And it was ſo, when the days of their feaſting were gone about, that Job **ſent and ſanctified them, and roſe up early in the morning, and offered burnt Offerings according to the number of them all,** &c.

Pſal. 127. 4, 5.

THe *Holy Ghoſt* having ſhewed us the *qualities of* Job's *perſon*, in the firſt Verſe, the *Olive-plants round about his Table* (being the firſt outward Bleſſing) in the ſecond; now proceeds to ſhew alſo his outward eſtate, his ſtock of Cattel: *His Subſtance was ſeven thouſand ſheep*, &c.

Concerning the outward Eſtate of *Job*, we may note in this third verſe,

1. The ſeveral kinds of his Stock, *Sheep*, *Camels*, *Oxen* and *Aſſes*.

2. The ſeveral numbers of each of theſe kinds; *Seven thouſand Sheep, three thouſand Camels*, &c.

It is ſaid, *His ſubſtance was ſeven thouſand Sheep*, &c. We in our Language, call the Eſtate of a man *his Subſtance*; and a rich man we call him a *ſubſtantial man*; though indeed riches are but external and accidental, yet they are called the *ſubſtance* of a man, becauſe they make him ſubſiſt and ſtand by himſelf, he needs not the prop and help of others.

מקנהו

ϗ ἦν τὰ κτήνη αὐτοῦ Septuagin.

The word here in the Hebrew which we tranſlate *ſubſtance*, is indifferent to ſignifie any poſſeſſion; but eſpecially it ſignifies poſſeſſion or ſubſtance by Cattel. Therefore in thoſe times wherein the eſtates of the great men of the earth were moſt in Cattel, this expreſſion was chiefly uſed; The *Septuagint* renders it, *And his Cattel were ſeven thouſand ſheep*, &c. So then *his ſubſtance*, ſcil. *of Cattel*, *was ſeven thouſand Sheep.*

Sheep.] Sheep for meat, and Sheep for cloathing; the fleſh and the fleece, both are of great uſe.

And three thouſand Camels*.] Camels were uſed in thoſe Countries for burdens, and for travel, eſpecially in long journeys. Merchants travelled with Camels; as you may read, *Gen.* 37. 25. *Joſeph*'s Brethren beheld a company of *Iſhmaelites* which came from *Gilead with their Camels*, and theſe were very ſtrong for travel, being able to abide much hunger and thirſt (as the Natural Hiſtory affirms.) Some affirm they will travel ſix days together in thoſe hot Countries without drink; and therefore thoſe Eaſtern parts are ſtock'd and ſtored with Camels, beaſts ſo fit for ſervice there.

And five hundred yoke of Oxen.] Oxen for the tillage of the ground. *Their Oxen are ſtrong to labour*, Pſal. 144.

The Aſſes were for ordinary travel, and for ordinary burdens about the houſe.

But you may ſay, We read in the Inventory which here is made of *Job*'s Eſtate, that he had Sheep and Camels, Oxen and Aſſes; but where was the Silver and the Gold? where was the goodly Houſhold-ſtuff, the Jewels and the Plate? here is no mention made of theſe.

I anſwer, *Firſt*, That without doubt *Job* had Silver and Gold, and precious things: It is clear that he had, when he ſaith (*Chap.* 31. 24.) *If I have made Gold my hope, or have ſaid to the fine Gold, thou art my Confidence*; it had not been proper for him to deny that Gold was his hope (in this ſence) if he had not had Gold in his poſſeſſion; or to ſay, he did not confide in fine Gold, when he had no Gold to confide in: Then he had Gold and Silver. And for Jewels, the holy Story tells us (*Chap.* 42. 12.) That *God gave* Job *twice as much as he had before.* And a part of what was reſtored to him, was Jewels and Ear-rings; *Every man gave him a piece of Money, and every one an Ear-ring of Gold*; therefore he had Jewels alſo in his poſſeſſion at firſt, or elſe they could not be doubled to him in the day of his Deliverance.

We find frequent mention in thoſe ancient times, of the riches of the Patriarchs and others, in Gold and Silver. It is expreſs'd concerning *Abraham*, Gen. 13. 2. *That Abraham was very rich in Cattel, in Silver and in Gold.* And *Abraham*'s Servant, *Gen.* 24. 35. ſaith of him, *The Lord hath bleſſed my Maſter greatly, and he hath given him flocks and herds, and ſilver and gold:* And *v.* 53. *The Servant brought forth Jewels of ſilver and gold, and gave them to Rebekah; he gave alſo to her Brother and to her Mother precious things.* And *Gen.* 23. 16. We read of *Abraham*'s *paying four hundred ſhekels of ſilver unto Ephron the Hittite*; which was called *currant money with the Merchants.* So that it is plain, in thoſe days Gold and Silver and Jewels were ſubſtance.

But here the Eſtate of *Job* is reckoned and caſt up by Cattel; there is no mention of Gold, and Silver, and Jewels, and precious Stones, and the like. *His Subſtance was ſeven thouſand ſheep*, &c. Two Reaſons may be given for this Accompt.

The firſt is this, becauſe thoſe ancient times were ſo much given to, and employed in the feeding of Cattel; therefore they did reckon their Eſtates by Cattel, as we now do by Money, by Gold, and by Silver, or by yearly Rents and Revenues. If a man had ſo many Cattel, ſo many Sheep, ſo many Oxen, *&c.* they knew his Eſtate, what Gold and Silver, or other Riches he might have. When the Sons of *Jacob* came before *Pharaoh*, Gen. 46. 32. they are called Shepherds; *The men are Shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed Cattel*: They are men of Cattel; as if he ſhould ſay, the ſpecial Commodity, the main thing theſe trade in, is about Cattel, and that gives denomination: They had Gold and Silver, but they are *men of Cattel.*

אנשי מקנה

And then again, for this reaſon; Cattel are living Subſtance; Gold and Silver are dead ſubſtance. Cattel, in their own nature, are more excellent then Gold and Silver; becauſe they have Life. Every thing that hath Life, is better in its degree then that which hath no Life. The loweſt Creature that hath Life, is better then the beſt without Life; the loweſt of a ſuperiour order, is better then the higheſt of an inferiour. Now all things without Life, are put into a degree, into a claſſis or form below and inferiour to thoſe that have Life. It is true, that *Money anſwereth all things*: Money is equivalently Sheep, and Oxen, and Aſſes, and Camels. Money is equivalently Bread, and Meat, and Drink, and Cloathing, and whatſoever you need; it is virtually all that you may and can receive; ſo that by way of commutation and exchange, Money is all things; but formally, and in it ſelf, ſo theſe things are the life, and ſuſtenance, and ſupport of man; therefore theſe go away with the name and the title of the Eſtate; the Eſtate or Subſtance of *Job* was in theſe natural and living Riches,

Eccl. 10. 19

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* The Hebrew word גמל comes from the root *Gamal*, to render and make recompence; for this creature being uſed much for burden and travel, doth abundantly recompence his Maſter for his keeping. From this Hebrew word *Gamal*, the Greeks derive the name κάμηλος; the Chaldeans *Gamla*, the Latines *Camelus*, and we in our Engliſh *Camel.*

Riches, not in artificial or dead Riches. Hence it was that the *Ancients* gave the name *Pecunia* to Money; which comes *a Pecude*, from Cattel (ſo the Criticks obſerve) becauſe they ſtamp'd the form of a Sheep or an Oxe upon Money, noting that Cattel were the riches and the eſtate of a man properly and chiefly. This may ſuffice for the reaſons why the eſtate or riches of *Job* is ſet forth by Cattel, and not by Gold and Silver, and other-like Poſſeſſions.

Further, with this abundance of Cattel that *Job* had, we muſt underſtand (though it is not expreſt) that he had Land ſutable to ſuch a Stock.

Pauperis eſt numerare pecus.

And when theſe Numbers are ſet down (becauſe we uſually ſay, he is but poor, that can number his Cattel) we are not to ſtand ſtrictly upon the preciſe number of ſeven thouſand, or five hundred, *&c.* But here are great quantities mentioned; to note, that *Job* had not only many, very many Cattel, but that he had great numbers of all theſe.

ועבדה רבה *ὑπηρεσία, Miniſterium* Sep. *δουλεία, Servitium,* Aqu. *οἰκετεία, famulitium.* Sym.

Then it follows, He had theſe, **and a very great Houſhold.** The words in the Original, do ſignifie Servants, or Tillage and Husbandry. Concerning *Iſaac*, Gen. 26. it is ſaid that *he had poſſeſſions of flocks and of heards, and great ſtore of ſervants*; ſo ſome read it; others, that he had great ſtore of husbandry. It comes all to one purpoſe; for the greatneſs of the Houſhold, or multitude of Servants, were for thoſe uſes, to mannage and order thoſe Flocks, that Tillage and Eſtate that God had bleſſed him with. He had a very great Houſhold, many attendants upon the ſeveral ſervices of his Eſtate.

Laſtly, We have the ſum and reſult (as it were) of all his Eſtate, in the cloſe of the Verſe.

So that this man was the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt.

He was the greateſt divers ways; greateſt in riches, greateſt in power, greateſt in honour, greateſt in grace, which is the beſt greatneſs of all. He was greateſt all theſe wayes; but that which is here ſpecially meant, is the greatneſs of his honour and riches: He was the greateſt man in outward eſtate of all the men of the Eaſt.

Of all the men of the Eaſt.] Heb. *Sons of the Eaſt.* In *Gen.* 25. 6. *Abraham gave gifts to his Sons by the Concubines, and ſent them away from his Son Iſaac Eaſtward into the Eaſt Countrey.* Doubtleſs the Bleſſing of God followed theſe Sons of *Abraham* his Friend, and they waxed great, but among them all *Job was greateſt.* It had been much to ſay, he was a great man amongſt the men of the *Eaſt*; for the men of the *Eaſt* were very great men, and very rich men. As to ſay, one is a rich man in the City of *London*, where there are ſo many rich men; one that goeth for a rich man there, is a rich man indeed. But here is more in this; he was not only a rich man, or a great man amongſt the men of the Eaſt; but he was the greateſt, he was the richeſt of them: as to ſay, that one is the richeſt in the whole City, cries a man up to the height of riches. This expreſſion then heightens the ſence of the Text concerning *Job's* greatneſs, he was not only great among the men of the *Eaſt*, but the greateſt man of them: as if the Holy Ghoſt ſhould have ſaid, I will not ſtay reckoning up Particulars, or tell you this and that *Job* had; you know the Eaſt was a large Countrey, and full of rich men; his eſtate was the largeſt, and himſelf the richeſt of all the men of the Eaſt.

A Queſtion may here be raiſed, Why the Holy Ghoſt ſpends ſo many words, and is thus accurate in the ſetting forth of *Job's* outward eſtate?

I ſhall touch three Reaſons for it.

1. He is deſcribed to be a man of a very *great eſtate*, to the end that the greatneſs of his affliction might appear afterward. The meaſure of a loſs is taken by the greatneſs of a mans enjoyment. If a man have but little, his affliction cannot be great; but if a man have much, if he have abundance, then the affliction doth abound. After great enjoyments, want is greateſt: Emptineſs preſſes thoſe moſt, who once were full. *I went out full* (ſaith *Naomi*, Ruth 1. 21.) *and the Lord hath brought me home empty; therefore call me not* Naomi (which is *pleaſant*) *but* Marah, which is *bitter*; *for the Almighty hath done very bitterly with me.*

2. *The greatneſs of his Eſtate* is ſet forth, that the greatneſs of his Patience might appear. For a man to be made poorer, that was but poor and mean before, it is no great matter though he bear it; for a man to have but little, that never had much, is no great trial of his patience: but for a man to have nothing at all, that had, as it were, all things, and to be patient under it, this ſhews the proof of Patience. To a man that is born a Slave or a Captive, Captivity and Bondage is no trouble; it doth never exerciſe his patience, he is ſcarce ſenſible of the evil, becauſe he never knew better: But for a King, that is born free, and hath power over others, for a King that is in the height of freedom and liberty, to become a Slave and a Captive, in ſuch a one patience hath a perfect work, if he bear it. So for *Job*, a man that once abounded in all manner of good things, to be outted and emptied of all, that tried his patience to the full.

Scimus quia majorem dolorem commovent damna majora. Greg.

Multo facilius eſt non habita repudiare, quam poſſeſſa amittere. Aug.

3. It was to give all the world a teſtimony, that *Job was a thorough godly and holy man*; that he was a man of extraordinary ſtrength of Grace: Why? Becauſe he held his integrity, and kept up his ſpirit in the way of Holineſs, notwithſtanding he was lifted up with abundance of outward Bleſſings. To be very great, and very good, ſhews that a man is good indeed: *Great and Good, Rich and Holy, are happy conjunctions, and they are rare conjunctions.* Uſually Riches impoveriſh the Soul, and the World eats out all care of Heaven; therefore *Job* was one of a thouſand, being at once thus great in Riches, and thus rich in Goodneſs. He was *Rich in Grace*, that was ſo gracious in the midſt of ſo much Riches; the Godlineſs of *Job* was enriched by his Riches. It argued that *Job's* Godlineſs was very great, and very right, becauſe he continued right in the midſt of all his Greatneſs. How often do Riches cauſe forgetfulneſs of God, yea, kicking againſt God? How often are they made the Bellows of Pride, the Fewel of Uncleanneſs, the Inſtruments of Revenge? How often do rich men contemn, deſpiſe and oppreſs their weak and poor Brethren? but to make Riches the fewel of our Graces, and the inſtruments of Duty both to God and man, to have the houſe full of Riches, and the heart full of holineſs, theſe united are admirable. *Extreams are very dangerous*; to be extream poor, or extream rich, is an extream temptation. There the wiſe man *Agur*, Prov. 30. *v.* 8. prayes, *Give me neither poverty nor riches.* Lord (ſaith he) I would not be in any of the extreams: It is a ſore temptation to be far on either hand; to be far on the hand of riches, or far on the hand of poverty. To be very poor, and very holy, is a rare thing: That man hath great treaſures and riches of Grace, who is ſo. I remember the ſpeech of a poor woman, who having a Child about eight or nine years of age, and being once in ſuch a ſtreight, that hunger began to pinch them both; the Child looking upon the Mother, ſaid, *Mother, do you think that God will ſtarve us? No Child, anſwers the Mother:* The Child replied, *If he do, yet muſt we love him and ſerve him.* Such Language from the heart, becomes and argues more then a Child in Grace, a *grown Chriſtian. They are filled with Chriſt, who can ſtarve, and ſerve him: So likewiſe are they, who being full-fed, yet ſerve him*; and Temptations are greater upon the full, then upon the empty, upon the rich, then upon the poor: The reaſon of it is, becauſe as Riches do ſtir up Luſt, ſo they give fewel, and adminiſter inſtruments for the obtaining and taking in of that which Luſt calls for; this Poverty doth not do.

Ex ingentibus Jobi *divitiis valde locupletatur ejus Sanctitas.* Pined. *in loc.*

Deut. 32.

The poor (ſaith Chriſt) *receive the Goſpel; the lame and the blind make moſt ſpeed, and ſee their way cleareſt into the Kingdom of Heaven*; but for rich men (he ſaith) *It is eaſier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* We ſee now the Miracle acted in *Job*; the Camel is got through the Needle's eye; *Job*, a rich man, is got through the Needle's eye with three thouſand Camels, *&c.* And the reaſon was, becauſe all his Camels, Cattel, and Riches, did not take up ſo much room in his heart, they were not ſo thick in his ſpirit, as one ſingle thred. *All his outward eſtate was kept without*; not a ſhred, not a thred got into his ſpirit. Take this for a third Reaſon, why the Holy Ghoſt doth thus exactly ſet forth the eſtate of *Job*; *ſcil.* that he might appear to be an exact holy man.

Mat. 19. 24.

From the whole, take theſe Obſervations:

Firſt, We ſee here *Job* a holy man, very full of Riches: Thence obſerve,

That Riches are the good Bleſſings of God.

God would never have beſtowed them upon his *Job* elſe. Leſt we ſhould think Riches *evil*, they are given to thoſe

Divitiæ, ne malæ putentur, dantur bonis; ne magnæ vel ſummæ, dantur & malis. Aug.

who are good: And leſt Riches ſhould be thought the *chiefeſt good*, they are given to thoſe that are evil. *It is a certain Truth, that God never gives any thing in it ſelf evil to thoſe that are good; nor doth he ever give the chiefeſt good to thoſe that are evil.* Therefore it ſhews, that Riches are good, becauſe the Godly have them; and it ſhews, that they are not the chiefeſt good, becauſe the wicked have them. When the Goſpel calls us to renounce the world, to caſt off the world; it calls us to caſt the world out of our affections, not out of our poſſeſſion. To hold and poſſeſs great riches, is not evil; it is evil to ſet our hearts upon them.

Secondly, *Job* was deſcribed before, a juſt man, an upright man, that is, a man juſt in his dealing, a man that gave every one his own; he did not decline, no not a hairs breadth (if poſſibly he could) from the Line of Juſtice, Commutative or Diſtributive; yet this *Job* is exceeding rich. Hence obſerve, That

Plain and honeſt dealing is no hinderance to the gaining or preſerving of an Eſtate.

Honeſt dealing is no ſtop, no bar to getting. There is a curſed Proverb amongſt us, which ſome uſe; and it is to be feared, ſome walk by it; *That he which uſeth plain dealing, ſhall die a Beggar.* You ſee *Job*, that was a plain man, a juſt-dealing man, yet is full of Riches. The nigheſt and the ſafeſt way to riches, is the way of Juſtice. Wo to thoſe, who by getting riches, get a wound in their own Conſciences. What will it advantage any one to gather many goods, when in the mean time, his heart tells him, that all have a *bad Maſter*? What will it advantage any to load and fraight his Ship by trading on forbidden Coaſts, when by doing this, he ſplits and makes ſhipwrack of his Soul? If you would go the ready way to attain the things of this life, walk in the wayes of God. Honeſty and Juſtice, Uprightneſs and Truth, will lead you to the higheſt and greateſt eſtate, with Gods Bleſſing. All other riches are poverty, all other gain is loſs; there is a fire in an eſtate ill gotten, which will at laſt conſume it. A man builds with timber that hath fire in it, that layes the foundation of his eſtate by ſin; *he lays up iniquity for his Children.* And ſo doth God, *Job* 21. 19.

It is commonly ſaid likewiſe, *Dives aut iniquus, aut iniqui hæres*; *A rich man is either an unjuſt man, or heir of an unjuſt man.* In *Pſal.* 82. The wicked are put for the rich: *How long will you judge unjuſtly, and accept the perſon of the wicked?* That is, the perſons (*Divitum aut Potentum*) of rich or great men, ſo it is to be underſtood; for Judges would never accept the perſons of wicked men, if they were poor, if they be in equal ballance with others, in regard of outward things: and then the oppoſition that is made in the next words, *Defend the poor and fatherleſs*, ſhews that the rich are there meant. Theſe *great ones* are called wicked, becauſe (ſaith the gloſs) they uſually get and uphold their greatneſs by wickedneſs. Such is the courſe of the world, and it is the ſhame of the world, much more of Chriſtians. We ſee in *Job*'s practice, that riches may be attained and maintained too by righteouſneſs; *Job was rich and juſt.*

Thirdly, In that *Job*, a man fearing God, was thus rich, thus great; ſee here the *truth of the Promiſes.* God will make good his *Promiſe* concerning outward things to his people. *Godlineſs hath the promiſes of this Life, as well as of that which is to come.* As it hath promiſes made to it, ſo it hath promiſes performed to it; *Job*, a man fearing God, a godly man, is very rich. Indeed, *not many rich, not many mighty, not many honourable, not many great ones are called*: and ſo not many of thoſe that are called, are mighty, and rich, and great, and noble; yet ſome ſuch are, that the truth of the promiſes may appear ſometime in the very Letter to the eye of ſence, as it alwayes doth to the eye of Faith.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

1 Cor. 1. 26

Do not fear that you ſhall be poor, if you turn godly; for Godlineſs hath the promiſes of this life; and there was a rich *Job*, a rich *Abraham*, a rich *Iſaac*, a rich *David*, and many other godly rich. God will perform when it is good for them, the promiſes of outward good things to his Children outwardly.

Fourthly, Here is another Obſervation from this place; *Job* was frequent in holy duties; he was a man fearing God, that is (as we explained in the firſt verſe) he was much verſt in the wayes of holy worſhip; he did not ſerve God by fits, or at his leiſure, but *continually*; yet he was very rich. Note hence,

Time ſpent in holy duties is no loſs, no hinderance to our ordinary Callings, or to our thriving in them.

Job ſerves God ſo frequently, that it is called continually; yet he grows in wealth abundantly. The time that he ſpent in the ſervice of God did not rob his purſe, impoveriſh his family, or hinder him in his dealings and buſineſſes of the world. *Job* maintained both his Callings; he maintained his general Calling in the wayes and ſervice of God, and his ſpecial or particular Calling in his relations unto men; both went on together, and they were no hindrance one to another, but a furtherance rather. The time we ſpend in ſpiritual duties, is time gained for ſecular. The time we ſpend in Prayer, &c. whets our tools, and oils our wheels, promotes all we go about, and getteth a bleſſing upon all.

This meets with another Blaſphemy very frequent in the world. If a man profeſſing Godlineſs, go backward in his Eſtate, eſpecially a man that is taken notice of for his extraordinary zeal and conſtancy in holy duties; then the clamour is, O you ſee what hearing of Sermons hath brought him unto; you ſee what comes of his praying and faſting; he hath followed theſe things you ſee, till he is undone. I ſay two things unto theſe men.

Firſt, Many are thought to go backward in their outward eſtate, becauſe they do ſo much in ſpiritual duties, when indeed they are ſo far from doing too much, that they do too little, and that rather is the reaſon why they thrive not. The Body may be exerciſed often, when the Spirit works but ſeldom, if at all in holy things; and this indeed provokes God many times to blaſt an outward eſtate. It is a common fault, that when we ſee thoſe whom we conceive godly, falling in outward things, we are taken up only in finding out anſwers how to acquit the Juſtice of God in his promiſes. What ſhall we ſay to ſuch a promiſe, *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you?* We trouble our ſelves often to ſatisfie the point in reference to the Juſtice of God, and the truth of his promiſe: We ſeldom ſuſpect whether or how they have performed the condition of the Promiſe. We ſhould rather doubt that they have not evangelically performed the condition, then trouble our ſelves ſo much with ſeeking how to ſatisfie the Juſtice of God in anſwering the Engagement and Promiſe on his part. For without all queſtion, they that do ſeek according to the tenour of that Condition, God will adminiſter all things unto them.

Or ſecondly, We ſhould ſay thus rather, that they who are ſo much exerciſed in wayes of Communion with God, have ſurely gained a great ſpiritual eſtate; and that now God brings them to the proof of it by loſſes in their temporal eſtates. Theſe or the like interpretations we ought to make, if we ſee them going backward in outward things, who have been very forward in ſpiritual things.

And ſo much concerning *Job*'s outward eſtate, in regard of his Riches, both what they were in the kind, and in the number.

In the next place, his outward happineſs is deſcribed by the unity and concord of his Children.

Verſe 4. **And his Sons went and feaſted in their houſes, every one his day, and ſent and called for their three Siſters to eat and to drink with them.**

This Verſe ſets forth a third part of *Job*'s happineſs in reſpect of his outward eſtate. He had Children, and many Children in the ſecond Verſe: Here in the fourth, we find all theſe Children, Sons and Daughters agreeing and feaſting one with another. We may note from the words four things concerning this feaſting.

1. Their *Alacrity* and *Chearfulneſs*, which moſt do obſerve out of that expreſſion, *they went and feaſted*; which phraſe in the Hebrew, ſignifies, the doing of a thing with chearfulneſs and readineſs.

2. Their *Unanimity*: It is not ſaid that ſome two or three of his Sons feaſted, but his Sons indefinitely, all his Sons; and not only his Sons, but his Daughters; the three Siſters were called too. So that they were all of one mind,

they all met together in love; though they were ten in number, they were but one in heart, the ſame in ſpirit.

3. *The Place* where they feaſted; *it was in their houſes*; they did not go to ſuſpected places, but in their own private houſes and families, where it was moſt convenient, and where they might celebrate thoſe meetings with moſt ſecurity, both for their Bodies, and for their Souls.

4. *The frequency of that feaſting*; it was not only once, but *every one his day*. They did not meet at every one of their houſes upon a ſpecial and a ſet day: *Every one his day*; ſome make the ſence thus, *they feaſted in their houſes one every day*; as if it had been a continual Feaſt with them; they feaſted all the week long, and they would ſeem to allow it by the moderation uſed in their feaſting; but the words, *every one his day*, note a courſe, a certain time wherein they did feaſt, not a continued feaſting. Some conceive it was upon their *Birth-days*; whether that be ſo or no, there is nothing appears from the Text; only it is ſaid, *They feaſted every one his day*.

And they ſent and called for their three Siſters to eat and to drink with them.

In that we may obſerve three things.

1. *The Humanity of the Brethren*; they would not banquet alone and leave out their Siſters; but they ſent and called them.

2. *The Modeſty of the Siſters*; that they would not come but upon ſpecial invitation; they were not forward of themſelves, but they were ſent and called for.

3. *The end of this Invitation*; it was *to eat and to drink with them*. As under the notions of Bread and Water, or Bread and Wine, all neceſſaries for food are comprized; ſo under the actions of eating and drinking, the whole buſineſs of feaſting is contained, *Luke* 12. 19. *Iſa.* 22. 15. *Eccl.* 2. 24.

There is nothing further in the words, that we need ſtay longer in opening or clearing of them: We ſhall only give you ſome few Notes out of them.

His Sons went and feaſted in their houſes, every one his Day.

This is ſet forth as the third part of *Job*'s outward happineſs. Then note we firſt, That

The Love and mutual Agreement of Children is one of the greateſt Bleſſings to a Parent.

The Love of Children is the Fathers bleſſing, and it is a great bleſſing. How many Fathers have their hearts rent and divided by the *rents and diviſions* that are amongſt their Children? It doth blaſt and wither all the comfort the parent hath, to ſee that there is no agreement of Love, no correſpondency of affection, amongſt thoſe that come all from the ſame Bowels, from the ſame loins. This is a bleſſing which was not common in the world, no not in thoſe times. *Adam* had not this bleſſing. *Adam*, when he had only two Sons, they could not agree; but one murdereth the other. *Abraham* enjoyed not this bleſſing; when he had but two Sons, one is *mocking the other*; *Iſhmael* is mocking *Iſaac*. *Iſaac* failed of the bleſſing; he had but two ſons, and one threatned to murder the other: *The days of mourning for my Father are at hand, then will I ſlay my Brother Jacob*. This was not *Jacob*'s bleſſing; he had twelve ſons, there was one of them, *Joſeph*, the common Butt of all his Brethrens envie; they did ſpight him; *The Archers did ſhoot at him, and grieved him ſorely, and hated him*. They could not all agree, there were diviſions among them. It is no ordinary bleſſing then. You ſee *David*, a holy man; yet what diviſions were there among his Children? one murdereth another; *Abſolom* cauſed *Amnon* to be murdered; *Adonijah* riſeth up againſt *Solomon*; he cannot bear it, that his Brother ſhould have the Crown. You ſee then that it is a bleſſing, and it is an extraordinary bleſſing: Therefore take notice of it, you that have an agreeing family, children that live together in love and unity; look upon it as a ſpecial bleſſing from God.

Fratrum quoque gratia rara eſt. Ovid.

Gen. 4.

Gen. 21. 9.

Gen. 27. 41.

Gen. 37. 4.

Gen. 49. 23

2 Sam. 13. 28.

1 King. 1.

Secondly, We may obſerve, That

It is a very comely thing for Brethren and Siſters to live together in unity.

In *Job*s children, we have that of *Pſal.* 133. fulfilled; *Behold* (he calls all to look upon it) *how good and pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* Such a ſight may draw all eyes after it. *Job*'s Children were many in number, in heart but one, in love the ſame. And as there is nothing more troubleſome, ſo nothing more uncomely and unnatural, then rents and diviſions in a Family.

Numero plurimi erant, conſenſu autem & concordia quaſi unus, unanimitate atq; dilectione quaſi idem. Orig.

Thirdly, We may note, That

It is lawful to uſe feaſting.

The Children of *Job* here went and feaſted at their ſeveral houſes, *every one his day*. The Chriſtians in the Primitive Churches had their ἀγάπας, *Love-feaſts*. In a *Feaſt* there are two things; extraordinary proviſion, and extraordinary company; both are lawful. God hath given us the Creature, not only for neceſſity, but for delight; and it is a clear argument that ſuch uſing of the creatures in feaſting, is lawful, becauſe God hath made more creatures ſerving for the delight of man, then he hath made for the neceſſity of man. If God had meant that men ſhould do nothing, but ſerve their own neceſſity, and maintain their lives, ſo as they might go on in their places and callings, one half of the creatures might have been ſpared: But God made nothing in vain: therefore he is willing we ſhould uſe the creatures for moderate delight. *Abraham made a great Feaſt at the weaning of* Iſaac; and *Iſaac* makes a Feaſt for *Abimelech* and *Phicol* the chief Captain of his Army, *Gen.* 26. 30. And the like examples we have in divers other places: And our Saviour Chriſt himſelf was at a Feaſt in *Cana* of *Galilee*; where, when wine failed, he ſupplied it by Miracle, *John* 2.

Tert. *Apol.* c. 39.

Deus multo plura condidit, quibus facile carere poſſemus, quam quibus neceſſario nobis opus eſt. Bez. *in loc.*

Gen. 21. 8.

But becauſe Feaſting is ſo often abuſed, and many turn this liberty into wantonneſs; being then moſt wicked, when they ſhould be moſt thankful; and grieving God moſt, when he gives them means or occaſion of rejoycing. I ſhall therefore briefly diſcover the abuſes of Feaſting: which will alſo hint rules for the right ordering of it; *That we may* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *eat and drink, and do all to the Glory of God*.

1. Then Feaſting is ſinful, when any overcharge their Eſtates, and laviſh out what will but ſerve their neceſſities, or conveniencies, upon delights and ſuperfluities; to ſuch, *Feaſting* is a ſin.

2. When the rich *feaſt* the rich, and never think upon the poor, *Luke* 14. 12, 13. *When thou makeſt a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, neither thy kinſmen, nor thy rich neighbours*. Obſerve here, this is not an abſolute denial of calling Brethren, and Kinsfolks, and friends, or rich; for brethren may, yea, ought to be called; but (ſaith he) *when thou makeſt a Feaſt, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind*; that is, when thou makeſt a Feaſt, be ſure to remember theſe; do not bid thy brethren, or the rich alone, let the poor have a portion with thee, and be refreſhed at or from thy Table. When the rich feaſt one another, and let the poor ſtarve or pine, this is very ſinful.

3. When there is a ſtudied *curioſity* and *exactneſs in feaſting*. When all things that can be thought on, muſt be fetch'd in, ſtrange meats and foreign ſauces; when there is a luſting after Quails, when men muſt have meat for their Luſts. Though we may have feaſting for our delight, yet we muſt not have feaſting for our luſts: *Such make their Belly their god*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; when there is ſo much Art uſed, as deſtroys the nature of the Meat, this is a ſin and an errour. I remember *Bernard* ſpeaks of his times, *That a man might be at a Fiſh-feaſt, and yet ſhould not know whether he had eaten any Fiſh or no*; all things were prepared with ſo much Art, that the very nature of the Creature was loſt. This is a ſinful Vanity.

4. When there is *Intemperance in feaſting* (whatſoever the proviſion be) when there is exceſs, an overcharging of Nature, which is *ſurfetting and drunkenneſs*. As by the former, man overthrows the nature of meats and drinks, ſo by this, meat and drink overthrow the nature of man. A man may feaſt himſelf into a Beaſt; and we uſually ſay of ſuch men, *They are diſguiſed*: For ſuch feaſting the Land mourns.

5. When *Feaſtings are frequent*. Feaſts are not for every day; that was the thing taxed in the Glutton, *Luke* 16. *That he fared deliciouſly every day*.

6. When we *ſpend too much of the day at any time, or too*

much time any day in feaſting; when we dine till night, and ſup all or a great part of the night; this is *chambering* and *wantonneſs*, this is a woful expence and waſte of time; and the expence of time is worſe by far then the expence of money: you may regain the expence of your money; but you can never call back the expence of your time; you may be at greater charges in your feaſting for the waſte of time, then for the waſte of Eſtate. All the world cannot give you back again the expence of an hour. Indeed we often hear men complain they have ſpent too much money in Feaſting and Entertainments; but it is very rare, that any complain they have ſpent too much time; which is, as if a man having received a wound in his Body, ſhould only be troubled for the hole which the Sword made in his Doublet. Prodigality of time is the worſt and moſt dangerous prodigality.

7. *Feaſting is ſinful when unſeaſonable.* I ſpeak in regard of occaſions and opportunities: there are ſpecial times wherein it is unlawful to feaſt, though we ſhould ſpend but very little time in feaſting, *Iſa.* 22. 12, 13. *In that day did the Lord God of Hoſts call to weeping and mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloth; and behold joy and gladneſs, ſlaying oxen and killing ſheep, eating fleſh; and drinking wine.* In the next Verſe it is ſaid, *It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hoſts, ſurely this iniquity ſhall not be purged from you till you die.* To feaſt in that day was ſinful, and a ſin that left ſuch a ſtain as could not be got out; it ſhall not be purged from you. What time was this wherein their feaſting was ſo ſinful? What made this ſin ſo deep-grain'd? You ſhall find a reſolution in the beginning of the Chapter: *It was a day of trouble and perplexity, and of treading down by the Lord God of Hoſts in the valley of Viſion, breaking down the walls, and crying to the mountains.* It is a day of trouble and perplexity, and will you now be feaſting? (ſaith God.) Is this a time for you to feaſt in, when my wrath is breaking forth amongſt you? This feaſting with men, is a daring of God, a ſending (as it were) defiance unto Heaven. And ſuch feaſting as this *Amos* reproves, *Chap.* 6. 4, 5. *They did eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the midſt of the ſtall; they chaunt to the ſound of the Viol, and invent to themſelves Inſtruments of Muſick, like* David; *they drink wine in Bowls, and annoint themſelves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of* Joſeph.

Then at this time feaſting is unſeaſonable; for *Joſeph*, the People and Churches of God are in affliction: and this is ſuch a day as the Prophet deſcribes, *a day of perplexity from the Lord.* The Kingdom is full of trouble, and we are full of fears; therefore now Faſting is in ſeaſon, not Feaſting; now humbling is in ſeaſon, not rejoycing: Or if any feaſt now, let them feaſt as if they feaſted not, and rejoyce as if they rejoyced not; let them feaſt, as remembring the affliction and bonds, the hunger and wants of our diſtreſſed Brethren. Therefore in thoſe feaſtings which have a kind of neceſſity in them, you ſhould labour to have your hearts exceedingly above your feaſting, not to lie ſo low as the Creature; it is ever very ſinful to have your hearts drowned in the creature; but now eſpecially, when you hear the voice of the Sword threatning to take the creature from us, and ſee God claſhing them together, as if he meant to ſtain the beauty, and ſowr the pleaſures of them all.

Verſe 5. **And it was ſo, when the days of their feaſting were gone about, that Job ſent and ſanctified them, &c.**

This Verſe contains the holy practice of *Job*. You ſaw before that he had Grace in his heart; now you may ſee Grace in his Life. *Holy Practice makes Grace viſible.* There it lay in the *habit*, here it came forth in the *act*. Concerning this holy practice of *Job*, we may note theſe three things for the diviſion of the Verſe.

1. The Actions about which this holy care of *Job* was exerciſed: They are two.
   1. *He ſent and ſanctified them.* And,
   2. *Offered burnt Offerings according to the number of them all.*
2. The Ground of this holy practice of his, what moved *Job* after their feaſting, thus *to ſend and ſanctifie them.* The ground was this; *For* Job *ſaid, it may be that my Sons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts.*
3. The Conſtancy of *Job* in this his holy practice; he did not this by fits, now and then; but *thus did* Job *continually.*

And it was ſo, that when the days of their feaſting were gone about, that Job ſent and ſanctified them.

That is the firſt thing that we are to explain and open unto you; Job *ſent and ſanctified them.* How could *Job* ſanctifie his ſons or his daughters? A Parent indeed may provide Riches for his children, but can he provide Grace alſo? A Parent may put Money in their purſes, but can he put holineſs in their hearts too, that it is ſaid here, that Job *ſent and ſanctified them?* Is not ſanctification the proper work of the Spirit of God? Doth not the Holy Ghoſt alone ſanctifie?

For the clearing of this; Whereas it is ſaid that *Job ſent and ſanctified them*: *Firſt*, Some expound the meaning thus; that *Job* ſent up prayers to God to ſanctifie them. And indeed *Prayer is a ſanctifying Ordinance.* As Prayer requireth a holy heart, ſo Prayer will make a holy heart, make the heart that prayes holy; yea, many times get holineſs into anothers heart. *Secondly*, Others ſay, *He ſent and ſanctified them*; that is, he ſent them to the place that was appointed for Sacrifice, where he intended to ſanctifie them; or where, in the holy duty of calling upon the Name of God, and of offering Sacrifice, they *were to be ſanctified*: *He ſent and ſanctified them*; he ſent them to the place where the Sacrifice ſhould be offered, that ſo they might *be ſanctified.* But *Thirdly*, I rather take it thus; *He ſent and ſanctified them*; that is, he ſent a Meſſage to them, to command them to prepare and to fit themſelves for the holy Duty of offering the burnt offering, or ſacrificing. For to *ſanctifie*, in Scripture notes two things.

1. The infuſion of a holy habit, the infuſion of a new principle into the ſoul.
2. A preparation of the ſoul to holy duties.

Now when it is ſaid, that *Job ſent and ſanctified them*, it is not meant, as if *Job* did infuſe holy habits into his Children, as if it were in his power to make them gracious; Indeed that is impoſſible; it is only the work of the Spirit of God; no man can come at the Spirit of another, but the Spirit of God. But this is it, he ſent to them to prepare themſelves, to adviſe and warn them to prepare themſelves, that they might be ready for that holy duty, for the duty of ſacrificing. And this *preparation* to holy duties, is often called *ſanctifying*; as, *Gen.* 35. When *Jacob* was called to *Bethel*, *to offer ſacrifice, and to build an Altar*, he ſaid to his Houſhold, *v.* 2. *Put away the ſtrange gods that are among you, and be clean* (that is, ſanctifie you, or be you ſanctified) *and let us ariſe and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an Altar unto God*, &c. The preparation to the Sacrifice, was a cleanſing or a ſanctifying of them. So *Exod.* 19. 20. When the People were to be prepared to receive the Law, the Lord ſaith unto *Moſes*, *Go unto the People, and ſanctifie them to day and to morrow*; that is, prepare the people, or warn the people, that they prepare themſelves for the receiving of the Law. And likewiſe in 1 *Sam.* 16. 5. It is ſaid, that *Samuel did that which the Lord ſpake, and came to Bethlehem, and the Elders of the Town trembled at his coming, and ſaid, comeſt thou peaceably? And he ſaid, Peaceably; I am come to ſacrifice unto the Lord; ſanctifie your ſelves, and come with me to the Sacrifice*; that is, prepare your ſelves to come to the Sacrifice. So ſanctification is preparation. And, *John* 11. 55. (to name no more) *The Jews Paſover was nigh at hand, and many went out of the Countrey up to Hieruſalem before the Paſover, to purifie themſelves*, or to ſanctifie themſelves, that they might be fit and ready for the Sacrifice. So then this ſanctifying of them, was a preparing of them for the Sacrifice. There were ſolemn Rules given afterward, when the form of the Church-Order and Diſcipline was eſtabliſhed by *Moſes*; but even now before that, the Law and Light of Nature taught this, beſides the teaching of God, that they muſt be ſanctified, before they came to ſacrifice. *Job ſent and ſanctified them, and then they came to that holy Service.*

This is the firſt Act of *Job*. We may here obſerve, firſt, the time when *Job* ſent to ſanctifie them; it was *when the dayes of their feaſting were gone about.* *Job* did not take them off from their feaſting, or deny them the liberty of their feaſting; but when the dayes of their feaſting were gone about, then *he ſent and ſanctified them.* The Point we may note from hence, is this,

That, *It doth well become godly Parents to give their Children leave to take moderate refreſhing and recreation one with another.*

Job did not ſeverely and auſterely forbid them, and ſay, What do you feaſting and ſpending your time idly one with another? why do you ſpend ſo many days in feaſting? He never interrupted them till the dayes of their feaſting were gone about: It becometh Parents to looſe the reins of Government ſo far as to give them leave for their refreſhing, to let themſelves out in honeſt wayes of recreation by their mutual ſociety. *Job* did not call them to this holy ſervice from their feaſting; *but when the dayes of their feaſting were gone about.*

Secondly, *Job* ſent to ſanctifie his Children. Though they were in their own houſes, though they were at their own diſpoſing (for it appears they had families and houſholds of their own) though they were men and women grown; yet *Job* ſent to ſanctifie them. Obſerve hence,

That, *Parents muſt not caſt off the care of their Children, though they are grown up, though they are men and women.*

Some think, that if they look to their Children at School, and breed them up a while, and have given them ſome inſtructions in their youth, they need not then trouble themſelves any further: whereas the care of Parents ought to live as long as they and their Children live together. *Job*'s care went after his Children to their houſes: *He ſent to them to bid them prepare themſelves.*

Thirdly, Though theſe were (as we ſay) men and women grown, yet as ſoon as their Father ſends the meſſage to them, they all ſubmit and all obey: then obſerve,

That, *Children that are grown up, or have Houſes and Families of their own, ought yet to yield all reverence and ſubmiſſion to the lawful commands, counſels and directions of their Parents.*

Do not think you have outgrown obedience and honour to Parents, when you are grown in years; ſtill we ſee theſe thought themſelves under their Fathers command and counſel; there is not one of them replies, what need my Father trouble himſelf about us? No; but all willingly prepared themſelves and came; for he offered *burnt Offerings according to the number of them all*; therefore certainly they all came.

Fourthly, From the matter of this Act, what it was that *Job* did; the Text ſaith, *He ſent and ſanctified them after their feaſting*: He did not ſend a Meſſenger to them, to aſk how they were in health, whether they had not ſurfetted themſelves, or had got any diſtemper; he did not ſend to know how the accounts went in their Families, whether they had not ſpent too much; but the matter that he had his eye and his heart upon, was, that they might be ſanctified and fitted for holy Duties. From hence obſerve,

That, *A Parents main and ſpecial care ſhould be for the Souls of his Children.*

The care of many Parents is only to enrich their children, to make them great and honourable, to leave them full Portions and Eſtates, to provide Matches for them; but for ſanctifying their children, there is no thought of that. Nay, many are affraid their Children ſhould be ſanctified; ſome Parents cannot abide their Children, becauſe they ſuſpect them ſanctified: *Such Parents are the Devil's Children.* *Job*'s greateſt care was, that his children ſhould be ſanctified. And every Parent ought to ſay of his Natural Children, as the Apoſtle *John* doth of his ſpiritual Children (*Eph.* 3. 4.) *I have no greater joy, then to hear that my Children walk in the Truth.*

Fifthly, *Job* was a holy perſon, and you ſee which way his care lies; that his children may be holy: Then take this Note in the general.

He that is a holy perſon himſelf, deſires to make others holy too.

Holy *Job* would have all his Children holy. As it is with the wicked, a wicked man would fain have all wicked with him; he would fain ſcatter his wickedneſs, and diffuſe his poyſon unto others: The Drunkard would fain have companions with him in his Drunkenneſs, &c. And ſo the man that is truly godly, would make others godly too. As *Paul* ſaid to King *Agrippa*, *I would to God, that not only thou, but alſo all that hear me this day, were both almoſt and altogether ſuch as I am.* Act. 26.29. Grace is attractive: It deſires to draw others into fellowſhip. A good man would not be happy alone.

Sixthly, Sanctification you ſee here, is aſcribed unto *Job*; *he ſent and ſanctified them*; and all that he did, was but to give them counſel and warning to ſanctifie themſelves; as if he ſhould have ſaid, Go to my Children, and bid them prepare themſelves; warn them that they may be ready againſt the Sacrifice, that they fit themſelves for it; yet the Text ſaith, that *Job ſanctified them.* Then we may obſerve from this,

That, *the good which others do by our advice and counſel, is reckoned as done by our ſelves.*

While we provoke others to goodneſs, that good which they do, is ſet upon our account, as if we had done it. As the wickedneſs, the ſin which another commits by the advice and counſel of any man, is ſet upon the ſcore of that man: If another do ill by thy advice, the ill is reckoned to thee. If one ſhould come and ſay as *Abſolom* ſaid to his Servants, *Mark ye now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I ſay unto you, ſmite Amnon, then kill him, fear not, have not I commanded you?* Not only did the ſervants kill *Amnon*, but *Abſolom* killed *Amnon*, becauſe he commanded them to kill him. You know what is ſaid of *David*; he did but ſend a Letter concerning the death of *Uriah*; and the Charge cometh, *Thou haſt ſlain Uriah with the Sword of the Children of Ammon.* All the evil others commit by thy counſel, direction, advice, command or conſent, is as done by thy ſelf. So (on the other ſide) all the good others do by our counſel, advice, promotion, admonition, inſtruction, and the like, that good ſhall all be reckoned to us. If another be holy by thy advice, it will be ſaid thou haſt made him holy, thou haſt ſanctified him.

Laſtly, Obſerve, That *Holy Duties call for Holy Preparation.*

We muſt not touch holy things with unholy hands, or with unholy hearts: *I will waſh my hands in innocency, and ſo will I compaſs thine Altar, O Lord*, was *David*'s reſolution, *Pſal.* 26. 6. Therefore *Job* intending a ſolemn duty, a Sacrifice, which did contain the ſum of all Religion concerning the external worſhip of God, ſends ſolemnly to his children to prepare themſelves: O come not to the Sacrifice except you be ſanctified. It is a point ſo clear, that I ſhall need but only to name it to you. How and wherein they ſhould ſanctifie themſelves, and what courſe they took for the ſanctifying and preparing of themſelves for that Duty, doth not appear in this place; but afterwards, when God gave them the Law, he preſcribed them a rule, what they muſt do that they might be ſanctified: the *Jews* had ſpecial directions for their preparations. Some things were outward, and ſome inward. I will but touch them.

For the outward, they were commanded to waſh their cloaths, *Exod.* 19. that place before quoted; *Sanctifie them to day and to morrow, and let them waſh their cloaths:* Not that God regarded cloaths, but he aimed at ſomewhat further; if the cloaths muſt be waſhed, certainly then the heart muſt be waſhed; he pointed at that in the waſhing of their cloaths. In *Leviticus* and *Numbers*, other outward preparations are commanded; as the *abſtaining from all things that were unclean; they muſt not touch any thing that was unclean*: and then ſometimes they were not only to waſh their cloths, but to change their cloaths: you have the expreſſion in that place concerning *Jacob*; *Be clean* (ſaith he,) *and change your garments*: It might be a changing by waſhing; but I rather conceive, that it was a change by putting on of other cloaths. There was alſo another external requiſite to the preparing and ſanctifying of themſelves; and that was by abſtaining for a time from the lawful uſe of the *Marriage-bed*: You have the command expreſly in that of *Exod.* 19. 15. *Be ready againſt the third day, come not at your wives*; and there are other the like places, 1 Sam. 21. 4. The Prieſt ſaid, *There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread*; *if the young men have kept themſelves at leaſt from women*; if they have but the outward preparation; the meaning is, if they had kept themſelves from their Wives: *David* affirms it was ſo, in the words following. The Apoſtle giveth the ſame Rule, in 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. Speaking of that point; *Defraud not one another* (ſaith he) *except it be with conſent for a time, that you may give your ſelves to faſting and prayer.* So that the Holy Ghoſt therein intimates ſuch an abſtaining as was preparatory to ſolemn duties, *that you may give your ſelves to faſting and prayer.* Extraordinary duties call for extraordinary preparations. Theſe outward preparations were ſo neceſſary, that when the people failed in them, *Hezekiah* prayed for pardon, 2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19. *The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to ſeek God, the Lord God of his Fathers, though he be not cleanſed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.* Though their hearts were upright, though they had hearts rightly prepared, yet he prayeth that God wou'd pardon the want of thoſe outward preparations. The principal preparation is of the heart, and the waſhing of our wayes: therefore we find how the Lord contendeth with them, in *Iſa.* 1. 10, 11, *&c.* where he ſpeaks of thoſe Oblations, and great Services of the *Jews*: *I hate your ſolemn feaſts, bring no more vain oblations*, &c. Why? *Your hands* (*ſcil.* your lives) *are full of blood. Waſh ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes*; *ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well*, &c. As if he ſhould ſay, Why do you come to me in theſe holy duties, except you prepare and fit your ſelves accordingly; I cannot abide that unholy perſons ſhould come about holy things.

Jer. 7. 8, 9.

The very Heathen had this Notion, they would not admit any to come to their religious ſervices unleſs they were prepared. That ſaying of *Æneas* in the Poet, to his Father, when he came from the War, is a clear proof; *Tu genitor*, &c. Father, do you meddle with the Sacrifices; but as for me it is a ſinful thing to touch them, —till I have waſhed my ſelf in the fountain. This was an outward external Rite amongſt them for cleanſing themſelves. The very Heathen ſaw they muſt not meddle with their holy things till they were cleanſed; therefore they had one cried out to the people when they came to ſacrifice; *All you that are unclean and prophane, go far away from theſe Sacrifices.* Not only the word of God, but the very light of Nature taught them, not to meddle with holy things till they were ſanctified.

Tu Genitor cape ſacra manu patrioſque penates. Me bello extento digreſſum & cæde recenti attrectare nefas, donec me flumine vivo abluero. Virg. Æn. —*Procul, hinc procul eſte prophani, conclamat vates totoque abſiſtite luco.*

Therefore ſpecially look to this, when you have any ſacrifice, any duty to perform; be prepared and ſanctified within and without, before you come to the duty. It is true, that the duty ſanctifies, but it is ſeldom that the duty ſanctifies us, unleſs we be ſanctified for the duty: They get moſt holineſs from the duty, who are moſt holy when they come to the duty: beſides the great danger of coming unprepared. *Take heed how you hear*; not only hear, but take heed to prepare your ſelves for hearing: So, *look to thy feet* (it hath the ſame ſence) *when thou comeſt into the houſe of God*; prepare thy ſelf, be not haſty, leſt thine be counted but the *Sacrifice of Fools.* So much of the firſt act of *Job*'s holy care; *He ſent and ſanctified them.*

Part of VERS. 5. & V. 6.

And roſe up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all. For Job ſaid, It may be that my Sons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Now there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord, and Satan came alſo among them.

NOw follows the ſecond Act of *Job*'s holy Care; *He roſe up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all.*

It is ill to perform a holy duty with neglect of preparation; it is as bad to make preparation, and then neglect the duty. We ſee both joyned in *Job*; he is careful to prepare, and he is as diligent to perform.

He roſe up early.] This notes the extraordinary diligence and zeal of *Job* toward God in this duty: He was ſo zealous, that he riſes not only in *the morning*, but *early in the morning*. In Scripture, to do a thing in the *morning*, and to do a thing *diligently*, are the ſame; *Pſ.* 101. 8. *I will early deſtroy the wicked of the Land*; the word is, *I will deſtroy the wicked of the Land in the morning*; and the meaning is only this, I will with all diligence and all care root out of the Land all wicked perſons. So there is an expreſſion, *Prov.* 7. 15. which illuſtrates this; where the wicked woman, the Harlot, tells the young man, *that ſhe came forth to meet him, and diligently to ſeek his face*: The Original word there, is, *to ſeek thy face in the morning*; and yet we know, that in Verſe 9. it was in the *twi-light, in the evening that ſhe met him.* But the Hebrew phraſe is, *I came forth in the morning to ſeek thy face*; that is (as it is rendred) *I came forth diligently to ſeek thy face.* So this coming forth of *Job* in the morning, beſides the time, that it was at ſuch an hour, the beginning of the day; notes the great diligence and exceeding care of *Job* about this work.

Yet more exactly, it is not only ſaid, *he roſe in the morning* (for there is a great latitude in the morning, there are divers hours which all are called morning) but it is ſaid, he roſe *early in the morning*, in the very beginning or firſt of the morning; as it is commanded, *Exod.* 23. 19. *The firſt of the firſt-fruits of the Land thou ſhalt bring into the houſe of the Lord.* God would not only have the *firſt-fruits, but the firſt of the firſt-fruits*; if there were any ripe ſooner then others, God would have them; ſome fruits that ripened after, were firſt-fruits; but God would have the very firſt of them. So here, *Job* gave God not only the firſt fruits of the day, but the earlieſt time, in the morning, which is the firſt of the firſt fruits of the day.

Early in the morning.

Thence obſerve,

> Firſt, *That it is Gods due and our duty, to dedicate the morning, the firſt and beſt of every day unto God.*

Pſalm. 5. 3. *My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, in the morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee, and will look up.* We have a ſaying among us, that *the morning is a friend to the Muſes*; that is, the morning is a good ſtudying time. I am ſure it is as true, that *the morning is a great friend to the Graces*; the morning is the beſt praying time.

Again, In that *Job* did riſe ſo early in the morning to offer ſacrifice, and did this becauſe he was affraid that his ſons had ſinned (as we ſhall ſee afterward.) Hence obſerve,

> Secondly, *That it is not ſafe for any to let ſin lie a moment unrepented of or unpardoned, upon their own Conſciences, or the Conſciences of others.*

If a man's houſe be on fire, he will not only riſe in the morning, or early in the morning, but he will riſe at midnight to quench it. Certainly when you have guilt on your ſouls, you have a fire in your ſouls, your ſouls are on a flame; therefore you had need riſe, and riſe early, and get up as ſoon in the morning as you can, to get it quenched and put out.

And offered burnt-offerings.] There were divers ſorts of Sacrifices among the *Jews*, when the Law or Rules of ſacrificing were eſtabliſhed. There were, Firſt, *Whole burnt-offerings.* Secondly, *Treſpaſs-offerings.* Thirdly, *Sin-offerings.* Fourthly, *Peace-offerings.* That which *Job* is here ſaid to offer, was a *burnt-offering*, an *Holocoſt* or whole burnt-offering, ſo called, becauſe it was altogether conſumed; there was no part of it reſerved for the Prieſt, or for the people; but all was offered up unto God. Of other Sacrifices, as the Sin-offering, and Treſpaſs-offering, there were parts and portions reſerved for the Prieſt, and part of the Peace-offerings for the People; as you may ſee by that expreſſion of the Harlot, *Prov.* 7. 14. I have at my houſe *Shelamim, Peace-offerings*; now they did feaſt upon the Peace-offering, for ſhe invited him to a Feaſt. But the *Burnt-offering* was wholly conſumed; the word in the *Hebrew* doth ſignifie an *Aſcenſion*, or a thing lifted up. He offered

Lev. 1, c. 2. c. 3, *&c.*
עלה
חטאת
אשם
שלמים

העלה עלות

offered burnt-offerings, word for word out of the Hebrew, it is, *He lifted up an elevation*, he cauſed an *Aſcenſion to aſcend*; *elevabat elevationem*, or *aſcendere fecit aſcenſionem*; and it was ſo called, becauſe the Sacrifice which was a whole burnt-offering, was all conſumed upon the Altar, and did, as it were, evaporate or aſcend up unto God.

It was called a *lifting up*, or a thing *lifted up*, for three Reaſons.

1. Becauſe when the *Sacrifice* was offered, the Smoke of it did aſcend; and beſides there were *ſweet Odours* put upon the Altar, which did fume up alſo with the Sacrifice towards Heaven, and ſo the Sacrifice took its denomination from aſcending and going upwards.

2. Becauſe the Prieſt, when he offered the Sacrifice, did lift it up upon the Altar, and hold it toward Heaven, to God.

3. Becauſe at that time when the Sacrifice was a burning, all the People that were preſent, did *lift up their hands and their eyes*, but eſpecially *their ſouls and their ſpirits*, heaven-wards, and powred themſelves forth in Prayer unto God. That of *David*, in *Pſal.*141.2. will give ſome light to this; *Let* (ſaith he) *my Prayer be ſet forth before thee as incenſe, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening-Sacrifice.* *David* at that time (as Interpreters note upon the Pſalm) was barred the enjoyment of the *Publick Ordinances*; he could not come to ſacrificing as formerly he had done: now he ſeeks unto the Lord that he would accept of the lifting up of his hands and heart, inſtead of Sacrifice; as if he ſhould ſay, *Lord, I have not a Sacrifice now to offer unto thee, I am hindered from that work, I cannot lift that up; but I will lift up what I have, and what will pleaſe thee better then a Bullock that hath horns and hoofs; I will lift up my hand and my heart unto thee, and let theſe be accepted for Sacrifice and all.* Prayer (which is a Sacrifice of the Goſpel) it is nothing elſe but *a lifting up of the Soul, an elevation of the ſpirit unto God*: So ſome of the Ancients call Prayer, an *aſcending of the Soul unto God*; and in alluſion unto this, *Hezekiah*, when he ſent to *Iſaiah* the Prophet to pray for him in that time of diſtreſs, and day of trouble, ſaith, *Go and deſire the Prophet to lift up his Prayer for the remnant that are left*; alluding to the ſacrifices which were wont to be lifted up. The like expreſſion of Prayer you have, *Pſal.*25.1. *Lord* (ſaith *David*) *I lift up my Soul unto thee.* Hence Prayers not anſwered, not accepted, are ſaid to be ſtopt from aſcending, *Lam.*3.44. *Thou haſt covered thy ſelf with a Cloud, that our Prayer ſhould not paſs through.* When you meet with ſuch expreſſions in the Old Teſtament, concerning Prayer, you muſt ſtill underſtand them to be alluſions to the Sacrifices, becauſe the Sacrifices were lifted up and did aſcend. That for the Act.

2 Kings.19.4.

For the Perſon, It is ſaid that *Job* offered theſe *Sacrifices*, Job *roſe up early and offered*, &c. Was not this to uſurp upon the Prieſt's Office? Was it not this for which King *Uzziah* was reprehended, and told by the Prieſts, *It appertaineth not to thee to burn Incenſe unto the Lord, but to the Prieſts, the Sons of Aaron?* and was he not ſmitten with *Leproſie* for doing of it?

2 Chr. 26. 18.

I anſwer in a word, by that rule of the Ancients, *Diſtinguiſh the times, and Scriptures will agree*: It was *Job* that offered, and *Job* had right to offer. The *time* wherein *Job* offered Sacrifice doth *reconcile* this; it was before the giving of the Law (as we have ſhewed in the opening of the former points about the time when *Job* lived) now in thoſe times the *Father*, or the *Elder of a Family* was as a Prieſt to the whole Family; and he had the power and the right to perform all holy Family-duties; as the duty of Sacrificing, and the like: this you may ſee carried along in all the times before the Law was given, in the holy Stories of the Patriarchs, they ſtill offered up the Sacrifice.

But it may be here further enquired, If it were before the Law was given, who taught *Job* to offer Sacrifice? where had he the Rule for it?

I anſwer; This was not *will-worſhip*, though it was not *written worſhip*: For howſoever *Job* did offer Sacrifice before the *Law of Sacrificing was written*, yet he did not offer a Sacrifice *before the Law of Sacrificing was given*; for the Law of Sacrificing was given from the beginning, as all the other parts of worſhip uſed from the beginning, were. God could never bear it, that men ſhould contrive him a Service; therefore *Job* did not offer up an offering unto God according to his own will, a thing that he had invented to pacifie and pleaſe God with: God had been ſo far from accepting, that he could not have born ſuch a deviſed worſhip. God doth never truſt man with the making of holy Inſtitutions. There is nothing doth pleaſe him in any act of worſhip, unleſs he ſees himſelf obeyed; *Obedience is better then Sacrifice*; and therefore a Sacrifice which is not out of obedience, cannot be accepted: He that ſacrificeth, doth but *offer up a Beaſt*; but he that obeyeth, *offereth up himſelf*; ſacrificeth his own will. It could not be therefore, but that *Job* had a word, a word as all the world had at that time; a word given by God, and ſo carried down from one to another by tradition (as it was for more then two thouſand years.) All the will that God would reveal, or had revealed to them, was carried from *hand to hand*, and from *heart to heart*, from the Fathers to the Children, till at laſt the Law was written, and the Scripture penned by *Moſes*. So then *Job* offered Sacrifice according to an Inſtitution; though it was not an Inſtitution written, yet it was an Inſtitution ſent forth and given by God himſelf.

Yet there is a third *Query* upon it; Suppoſe that there was an Inſtitution of God for ſacrificing, why did God call for Sacrifices? What is his meaning? *Doth God delight in the blood of Bulls and Goats? Thou delighteſt not in Sacrifices* (ſaith *David*) *thou deſireſt not burnt offerings.* And what was the Sacrifice unto *Job*, or unto his Sons? Could the killing of a Beaſt take away ſin? Why then doth *Job*, when he feareth that his Sons had ſinned, go preſently and offer Sacrifice?

Pſal.51.16.

For Anſwer: It is true that the Sacrifices in themſelves were nothing, either to God or man; they could do no good, they had no power in them, either to *pacifie God*, or to *purge the Souls of men*. But look upon the Sacrifice, as it was an Inſtitution, and then God ſaw his Son Jeſus Chriſt in it, and was well pleaſed; and likewiſe man beheld and believed Chriſt in it, and was purged. When the Sacrifice was offering, man ſaw Chriſt ſuffering; this took away his ſin, and pacified his Conſcience. A Sacrifice in it ſelf, as it was the killing or burning of a Beaſt, had no virtue in it, but as it had reſpect unto Chriſt; ſo God ſaw the death of his Son, and that ſatisfied him; and man ſaw the death of his Saviour, and that juſtified him.

Again, It was not the bare Sacrifice that was effectual, but the Faith of *Job*, and the faith of his Sons carried up in Prayer; theſe mingled with the Sacrifice, wrought the cure: Therefore we find in the time of the Sacrifice, ſtill the people were at prayer; they knew the Sacrifice, the Incenſe, could do nothing, but as joyned with the Faith of the Sacrificer in Prayer. We read, *Luke* 1.10. when *Zacharias* the Prieſt was offering the Incenſe within the Temple, the Text ſaith, *that the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of Incenſe.* The Incenſe might burn long enough, and yet the Anger of God burn too; the Incenſe might burn, and yet the people not be purified, but conſumed. But while the Incenſe was burning, while the Sacrifice was offering, the people were praying and believing. Theſe actings of Faith, and powrings out of Prayer made the Sacrifice, as effectual for man, ſo acceptable unto God.

Then in that he offered *burnt-offerings*, which burnt-offerings were made when he feared that his Sons had ſinned; theſe offerings typing out and leading them to Chriſt and his Death; we may note this,

That, *Chriſt was ever the only remedy and cure of ſin.*

As ſoon as ever there was any fear of ſin, preſently they had recourſe to a Sacrifice; and what was that? They went to *Chriſt*. *Chriſt* hath been the help againſt ſin in all the generations of the world from the firſt, and will be to the laſt. *If any man ſin* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John*) *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins*; he is the *Propitiatory Sacrifice for our ſins*. It follows,

1 Joh.2.1.

According to the number of them all.] That is, he offered for each of his Sons a Sacrifice. There were ſome Sacrifices, which did ſerve for the *whole Congregation*; as we may ſee in *Lev.* 4.13,14. and in divers other Chapters of that Book. Beſides theſe, there were *perſonal Sacrifices*,

fices, Lev. 1. Where the Laws about Sacrifices are ſet forth; If any Soul had ſinned, that particular Soul muſt come to the Prieſt, and bring a ſacrifice for his ſin. So here, *Job* doth not offer only one *general family-ſacrifice* for them all, but he offereth up a *diſtinct particular ſacrifice* for every particular Son. This teacheth us,

Firſt, *That every one is ſaved and pardoned by the ſpecial and particular actings of his own Faith: Every Soul muſt believe for it ſelf.*

Every one muſt have a Sacrifice. We have Congregational prayers, and we have perſonal prayers; now it is not enough for people to pray in publick with the Miniſter, or for the Miniſter (who is the mouth of the Congregation to God) to offer up a prayer for the pardon of the people; but every one muſt apart and by himſelf ſue out his own pardon; which is, as it were, his own ſacrifice, by offering up and tendering of Jeſus Chriſt unto God for the pardon of his ſins.

Then again you may note, in that *Job* offered a Sacrifice for every one of his ſons,

That, *it is not enough for Parents to pray in general for their Children, but they ought to pray particularly for them.*

As Parents who have many Children, provide portions according to the number of them all, and proportion out their care perſonally, according to the number of them all; and in the Family they provide meat and cloathing according to the particular number of them all: So likewiſe they ought to be at a proportionable expence in ſpirituals, to lay out and lay up prayers and interceſſions, *according to the number of them all*; not only to pray in general, that God would bleſs their Children and Family, but even to ſet them *one by one* before God, and ſo beg and ſue out a bleſſing upon the head of every one of them, as, without all queſtion *Job* did, when the ſacrifice for every ſon was made; he ſent up a Prayer to God for the pardon and acceptance of every ſon. That for the opening of the ſecond Act in the Text; firſt, *He ſent and ſanctified them*; and ſecondly, *He offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all.*

Now follows the Ground or the Reaſon of this Act of *Job*, both in ſanctifying them, and in offering Sacrifices for them. **For Job ſaid, it may be that my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts.**

Holy Duties muſt be grounded upon reaſon. There muſt be a reaſon why we pray, before we pray; we muſt ſee cauſe for it, and great cauſe too. To pray out of cuſtom and formality, to offer ſacrifice, only becauſe it is a day of Sacrifice, is not praying nor ſacrificing. *Job* had a ſpecial reaſon; *for* Job *ſaid, it may be my ſons have ſinned.*

Let us examine the Reaſon a little; *It may be my ſons have ſinned.* What is it come to an *It may be* with *Job*, that his ſons have ſinned? What ſons had *Job?* Surely they were more then men, that the Father is but at a Queſtion whether his ſons have ſinned or no. *Solomon* after an *If*, concerning ſin, reſolves it into a concluſion, 1 *King.* 8. 46. *If* (ſaith he) *they ſin againſt thee* (here he makes a ſuppoſition; but you ſee he goes not one ſtep from it, before he makes a direct aſſertion) *for* (ſaith he) *there is no man that ſinneth not*; and yet *Job* puts it with an uncorrected *If*; or, *it may be, my ſons have ſinned.*

For the opening of this; Without all queſtion *Job* was fully and throughly ſtudied in that point of the univerſal corruption of man; his *Diſputings* (as we ſhall ſee afterwards in this Book) ſufficiently evince it. *What is man,* (ſaith he) *that he ſhould be perfect, or he that is born of a woman, that he ſhould be clean?* Here, by ſinning then, we are to underſtand ſomething more then ordinary ſinning. To ſin, ſometime is put for common and daily infirmities, ſuch as do inſeparably and inevitably cleave unto us; ſuch as, conſidering the ſtate and condition wherein we are, *having corrupt fleſh and blood about us*, we cannot be freed from. As a man who in the morning waſheth his hands, and goes abroad about his buſineſs and affairs in the world, though he doth not puddle in the mire, or rake among dunghils, yet when he returns home again to dinner, or at night, if he waſh, he finds that he hath contracted ſome uncleanneſs, and that his hands are foul: we cannot converſe in an unclean and dirty world with our bodies, but ſome uncleanneſs will faſten upon them. So it is with the Soul; the ſouls of the beſt, of the pureſt, of the holieſt, though they do not rake in the dunghil, and wallow in the mire of ſin baſely and filthily, yet they do from day to day, yea from moment to moment, contract ſome filth and uncleanneſs. And in this ſenſe it is that *there is no man that liveth and ſinneth not.* Every man hath a *Fountain of uncleanneſs in him*; and there will be ever ſome ſin, ſome filthineſs, bubling and boiling up, if not flowing forth.

Secondly, To ſin, is put for ſome ſpecial act of ſin, that which in Scripture is called a Fall; *If any man be overtaken with a fault, you that are ſpiritual, reſtore him.* And in this ſenſe the Apoſtle *John* ſaith (which is a clear anſwer to this doubt, and doth open the term) *I write unto you little Children, that you ſin not.* He did not write to them an impoſſible thing; he wrote to them about that, which in a *Goſpel-ſenſe*, they might attain unto. 1 Joh. 2.1.

There are three degrees of ſinning.

1. There is one kind of ſinning, which is called a *daily infirmity*; which the Saints of God, the beſt in this life, are not freed from.

2. There is another kind of ſinning, which is to *ſin wilfully and with pure delight*; and thus, *he that is born of God, cannot ſin.* 1 Joh. 3.9.

3. There is another kind of ſinning, which is called *falling into ſin*, or *the falls of the Saints*; and ſometimes they have fallen into great and ſcandalous ſins: In this ſenſe it is that the Apoſtle ſaith, *Little Children, I write unto you, that you ſin not*; that is, though you have daily infirmities, yet take heed of ſcandalous ſinnings. So here in the Text, where it is ſaid, *It may be my ſons have ſinned*; it is not meant either in the firſt or ſecond ſenſe; it is not meant, as if he thought his Sons were without infirmities, nor is it meant, that he did ſuſpect them of thoſe ſins (which are indeed incompatible with the ſtate of Grace) ſins of perfect wilfulneſs, and of malice, or the like; but it is of thoſe ſins in the middle ſort. *It may be my ſons have ſinned*; that is, have ſinned ſo, as to provoke God, and ſcandalize men in this their feaſting, in their meeting together. We may note from that,

Firſt, *He that liveth without groſs ſins, in a Goſpel-ſence, liveth without ſin.*

To be without great and groſs ſin, is our holineſs upon earth; to be without any ſin, is the holineſs of heaven. He that liveth without fault, *ſine querela* (as it is ſaid of *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, that *they lived blameleſly*) in *Goſpel-account*, is ſaid to live without any ſin at all.

Another Point we may collect from this [*It may be my ſons have ſinned.*]

Certainly then Job's *ſons were godly.*

If *Job* be at a queſtion whether they have ſinned, they were godly without queſtion.

When a man lives ſo, that he leaves only a ſuſpition that he hath ſinned, we may be at a concluſion that he is ſanctified. For other perſons can do nothing elſe but ſin, even in holy actions, much more in civil or natural.

Again, [*It may be my ſons have ſinned.*] It was a ſuſpition in *Job* concerning his children. Hence obſerve,

It is no breach of Charity to ſuſpect ill of others, while we intend their good.

Indeed upon an *It may be*, upon a peradventure, to accuſe and charge another, is very uncharitable; but upon a *Peradventure*, or an *It may be*, ſuch a one, my Child, or my Friend, or my Brother hath ſinned, to be put to pray for him, this is very charitable. A good heart turns its ſuſpitions of others ſinnings and failings, into prayers and interceſſions, that they may be pardoned; not into accuſations and ſlanders, that they may be defamed. The uſe which *Job* made here of his ſuſpition of his ſons ſinning, was to turn it into prayer and ſupplication for the pardon of their ſin.

One thing further from this [*It may be my ſons have ſinned.*] *Job* knew of no evil that his ſons had committed; he had no report, that we read of, that his ſons had behaved themſelves unſeemly in their Meetings and Feaſtings; he only doubteth, he only is jealous and affraid that they had;

yet at this time he prayeth, and ſacrificeth, and laboureth a reconcilement for them. Note from hence,

A ſuſpition that we our ſelves or others have ſinned againſt God, is ground enough for us to ſeek a reconcilement for our ſelves or others with God.

If you that are tender Parents, have but a ſuſpition, if there be but an *It may be*, that your Child hath the Plague, or taken the infection, will it not be ground enough for you to go preſently and give your Child a good Medicine? If any of you have but a ſuſpition, that either your ſelves, or your friends have taken *poyſon*, though you be not certain of it, will it not be ground enough for you to take or give an Antidote preſently? Sin is as a *Plague*, it is as a *Poyſon*; therefore while you have but a ſuſpition, either of your ſelves or of others, that you have ſinned or failed thus or thus; here is ground enough for you to take an Antidote, to take a Preſervative, to ſeek all the means you can to heal your ſouls, and to make your peace with God.

And if *Job* prayed thus, when he only ſuſpected his ſons had ſinned; what ſhall we ſay of thoſe Parents, who are little troubled, when they ſee and know their ſons have ſinned?

It is ſafeſt to repent even of thoſe ſins we only fear we have committed; for then we ſhall be ſure to repent of thoſe we have committed. A ſcrupulous Conſcience grieves for what it ſuſpects; a ſeared Conſcience is not grieved for what it is *certain either it ſelf or others have done amiſs.*

Laſtly, Where had *Job*'s ſons been that he is thus ſuſpitious? Had they been in any ſuſpected place? No, it was only in their own houſes. Had they been about any unlawful thing? No, it was only a friendly meeting, feaſting of Brothers and Siſters together. Yet *Job* is affraid leſt his ſons had ſinned. Hence obſerve,

That, *we may quickly offend and break the Law, while we are about things in their own nature lawful, eſpecially in feaſting.*

It is an eaſie matter to ſin, while the thing you are about is not ſinful; nay, while the thing you are about is holy. We may ſuſpect our ſelves that we have ſinned, when we have been praying; much more when we have been feaſting. We may ſuſpect our ſelves that we have ſinned, when we have been hearing the Word, ſpeaking the Word; juſt cauſe then much more we have to ſuſpect our ſelves, when we have been trading, buying or ſelling, and working abroad in the world. Lawful things are oftentimes the occaſion of unlawful. All the ſins of the world are deſcribed thus; *they ate, they drank, they bought, they ſold, they planted*, &c. There is not one of theſe an act evil in it ſelf; yet they ſinned away their peace, and ſinned away their ſouls, in dealing about theſe things. Therefore as you muſt be affraid of all things in their own nature unlawful; ſo be jealous of your ſelves in things that are lawful.

Luke 17. 27, 28.

It follows,

And curſed God in their hearts.

Interpreters are much divided about the ſenſe of theſe words.

Firſt, Some obſerve that the Hebrew word *Barach*, doth ſignifie not only to *bleſs*, but to *bow the knee*: So it is uſed, 2 *Chron.* 6. 13. *Solomon* at the Dedicating of the Temple, *had made a Brazen Scaffold, and upon it he ſtood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the Congregation.* The word there, *kneeled down upon his knees*, in the Original, is the ſame here uſed. But,

Then further, the word *Elohim*, is uſed in Scripture, not only for the true God, for God himſelf; but it is applied ſometimes to *Angels*, and ſometimes to *Idols*, to *Devil-gods*, to *falſe gods*, Exod. 18. 11. *Now I know that the Lord is greater then all gods*; *ſc.* then all the Idols that the *Egyptians* did truſt upon.

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They obſerve further, that the Hebrew word *Leb*, [in their hearts, *Bilebabbam*] doth ſignifie not only the *Heart*, but the middle or center of a thing: As when it is ſaid in the Scripture, *They went down into the midſt of the Sea*; the word is, *They went down into the heart of the Sea*; and in the *midſt of the Earth*, it is the *heart of the Earth*; and ſo when it is ſaid, that *Abſolom was hanging in the midſt of the Oak*, the Original word is, he was left hanging in the *heart of the Oak*. From all theſe acceptions of the ſingle terms, the ſenſe is made up thus; *It may be my ſons have ſinned*, &c. that is, *It may be my ſons have ſinned, bowing down to the falſe gods that are in the midſt of them.* I confeſs Feaſting and Falſe worſhip, Senſuality and Idolatry go often together, *Exod.* 32. 6. When the *Golden Calf* was made, they *ſate down to eat*, &c. And *Moſes* foretels, *Deut.* 31. 20. *When they ſhall have eaten, and filled themſelves, and waxen fat, then will they turn unto other gods.* Yet I cannot admit this of *Job*'s Children; ſurely he who had beſtowed ſo much care in their inſtitution, and had them ſtill under his eye, could not ſuſpect them in degenerating ſo ſoon into ſuch palpable Idolatry.

לב

Pſal. 46. 2.

2 Sam. 18. 13.

Secondly, Others take the word [*Barach*] in the Original, in its proper ſenſe, *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and bleſſed God*; and they expound and open it thus: *It may be my ſons have ſinned*, and inſtead of being humbled and ſeeking to God for the pardon of their ſins, they have *rejoyced and bleſſed God.* Juſt as if a Thief that hath ſped well, and hath got a good prey, ſhould thank God that he hath proſpered ſo well in his wickedneſs: So here (as if *Job* ſhould ſay) *My ſons have done ill in their feaſtings, and they are ſo far from being humbled, that they have bleſſed God in their hearts; they have been lifted up; they have given God thanks for the plenty of Creatures, but have not repented for their abuſe of the Creatures.* So we may interpret it by that place, *Zech.* 11. 4. where there is ſuch an expreſſion; the Lord ſpeaking to Chriſt, ſaith, *Feed the flock of the ſlaughter; whoſe poſſeſſors ſlay them, and hold themſelves not guilty.* (They that ſhould have been the feeders of the flock, inſtead of feeding of them, have deſtroyed them; yea, they do this, and hold themſelves not guilty) *and they that ſell them, ſay, bleſſed be the Lord, for I am rich.* They grew rich by ſelling ſouls (as many ſince have lived by the ſame Trade, ſtarving the people, to feed themſelves) the juſt character of an idle Idol-ſhepherd; and then they ſaid, *Bleſſed be God we are grown very rich, and have got much goods, though we have done little good.* This is a ſecond interpretation, and a clear one; only methinks it layes too high a ſtain of wickedneſs on *Job*'s ſons. *It is one of the greateſt wickedneſſes for a man to bleſs himſelf in his ſins; but for a man to bleſs God in his ſins, is far worſe.*

Thirdly, Others interpret *Benedicere* by *Valedicere*, bleſſing by departing. Thus, *It may be my ſons have ſinned and departed from God in their hearts*; and they bring ſome Texts of Scripture, wherein the word [*Barach*] ſignifies to *depart*, or to take leave, and go away; as, *Gen.* 47. 10. *Jacob bleſſed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh*; he bleſſed him, and departed. So it is ſaid likewiſe of *Joab*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 22. When he had obtained what he deſired, *he fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himſelf, and thanked* (or *bleſſed*) *the King, and went out.* Now they would interpret this, *bleſſed God in their hearts*, to the ſame ſenſe; *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and bleſſed God in their hearts*, that is, have departed from God in their hearts. Indeed every ſin is a departure from God; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; *Take heed leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God.* Sin is a turning away from God; yet every ſin is not, nay, few ſins are a farewel to God. But I ſhall lay by this interpretation; for the proofs come not home, no, nor near the point. In both thoſe places, bleſſing is not put barely for departing; and beſides, departing in thoſe Texts, is taken in a good ſence; *Jacob* departed from *Pharaoh*, not in a way of *deſerting* him, but in a way of *ſaluting* him; ſo *Joab* departed from the King, not that he did revolt from him (as they would have the word to import a kind of revolting and apoſtatizing from God) but only he did obeiſance, and went away about his buſineſs; therefore this interpretation cannot ſtand.

Heb. 3. 12.

There is a fourth Expoſition much laboured by *Zanchius* (and would it hold, it were an excellent expoſition) according to the Letter of the Text: thus; *It may be my Sons have ſinned, and not bleſſed God in their hearts*; and ſo he makes thoſe words to be *exegetical*, the explication of the former, what the ſin of *Job*'s ſons was; *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and if you would know what they have ſinned in, I fear they have forgot to give God the glory for* the

Zanchius.

the refreſhing they have had by the Creatures, they have not bleſſed God. This were an excellent and clear ſence; but the way he takes to make it out, is very obſcure: For he doth it only by this Rule; When (ſaith he) there is a negative Particle in the former, a negative is likewiſe to be underſtood in the following Clauſe. His Rule he clears by divers Inſtances. But we find in this place no negative Particle, as *Non* or *Ne*, or the like, in the former part of the *Verſe*; and how there ſhould be a negative in the latter, I cannot underſtand according to his Rule: *Ne forte,* (It is here ſaid) *It may be* my ſons have ſinned (that is a word of doubting, not denial; rather an affirmative, then a negative) and have not bleſſed; now ſaith he, though that Particle *(not)* be not in the Hebrew, yet it muſt be underſtood of *courſe*, becauſe there is a negative Particle in the former part: How he can make *(ne forte)* peradventure, a negative particle, I do not well apprehend; yet the ſence in it ſelf is very good; *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and not bleſſed God in their hearts.*

Some would read it with an Interrogation (though I queſtion whether the Grammar will allow it) Thus, *It may be my ſons have ſinned; and have they bleſſed God in their hearts?* As if he had ſaid, I fear they have not bleſſed God, or not bleſſed him cordially; neglect of, or ſlightneſs in ſuch a Duty, calls for ſacrifice.

Laſtly, That meaning which our Tranſlation leads unto, is moſt commonly taken by Interpreters both ancient and modern; name'y, that here in this Text the word [*Barach*] is to be expounded by curſing; *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts.* I ſhall preſent you with the grounds of this Interpretation, and how it is made good; and then leave it to the Readers Judgment, whether to chuſe this, or thoſe former which have had any countenance ſhewed them. For in a Scripture which may without impeachment of any Truth, admit divers ſences, I would not be ſo poſitive in one, as to reject all others.

Now this Tranſlation is maintained by a Figure, either by an *Antiphraſis*, which is the ſpeaking of a thing ſounding one way, when it is meant another way, when there is an oppoſition between the Letter of the word, and the Meaning of the word. Thus, 1 *Kings* 21. 13. *Naboth* is charged for *bleſſing God and the King*; *ſc. curſing.* Or, by an *Euphemiſmus*; that is, when ſome filthy or execrable matter is expreſſed by a word of a fairer ſignification. So in Scripture, the uncleanneſs of ſome things is covered with a word, that ſo the offenſiveneſs of it may be removed both from the Ear and Phanſie: As for example, that Veſſel wherein Nature doth unburden it ſelf, it is called *A Veſſel wherein there is no pleaſure*; and ſo the word that the *Hebrews* uſe for a *Harlot*, ſignifies properly a *holy woman*; as, *Gen.* 38. When *Judah* asked whether they ſaw the *Harlot?* the word in the Hebrew *(Kedeſah)* ſignifies a *holy woman*, by an *Antiphraſis*, or by an *Euphemiſmus.* Yet ſome think a *Harlot*, ſo called, becauſe (holineſs being the dedication of a thing or perſon) ſuch dedicate and give themſelves up to, or are poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of uncleanneſs. But to the Text; take it by an *Euphemiſmus*, or fair ſpeaking: *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts*; they even *abhorring* to uſe ſuch a word concerning God, expreſs it by *bleſſing*; *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and bleſſed God in their hearts.* So the *Latines* uſe the word, *Sacrum pro execrando*, that which is the moſt execrable thing, they call a ſacred thing.

Jer. 22. 28.

Hoſ. 8. 8.

קדשה

Auri ſacra fames.

Now taking it thus according to the common ſtream of Expoſitors upon the place, it may yet be doubted, how *Job* could ſuſpect his ſons of this, that they ſhould curſe God?

I anſwer to that; Here we are not to take curſing either for that abominable act (at which Heathens bluſh) the caſting of open reproach upon the Name of God; or for a malicious and virulent, though ſecret blaſpheming of God, and ſending defiance to Heaven in their hearts. But to *curſe God in the heart*, doth ſignifie an irreverent, undue, unfit, unholy thought of God, any thought unbecoming the Glory and Majeſty of ſo great a God; which, how quickly the heart may ſend out at a Feaſt, who feels not, who finds not? God is ſaid to be curſed, when he hath not that reverence and honour which belongs to him, *whoſe Name is Holy and Reverent.* In that ſence only we are to underſtand the word *curſing* here. And Mr. *Broughton* gives a Tranſlation which lets in ſome light to this; *It may be my ſons have ſinned, and little bleſſed God in their hearts*; that is, they have not had ſuch high, ſuch holy thoughts of God as became them; *they have little bleſſed God:* careleſs thoughts of God are *little bleſſing* of God, and both amount to a curſing of God.

So that the Senſe which reſults, is this. As if *Job* ſhould have ſaid, *I am well enough ſatisfied concerning my ſons, that they have not broadly blaſphemed God, that they have not been ſuch as have torn his Name with Oaths, Curſings and Execrations; yet notwithſtanding I know the heart is a deceitful thing, there are many ſtarting-holes in it; it quickly conceives, and cloſely conceals a ſin; and therefore I am very doubtful; though my ſons have carried it fairly and well in their actions and words while they feaſted, that yet their hearts have been looſe, and their affections vain, I am affraid they have curſed, lightly regarded, or little bleſſed God in their hearts.*

Obſerve Firſt, *That we ought to keep our hearts with all manner of keeping in every thing we go about.*

If your hearts are diſorderly, it is a kind of curſing God. Remember not only to keep your hearts, when you are praying, and when you are hearing, and when you are in holy duties; but remember to keep your hearts when you are feaſting and refreſhing your ſelves, when you are in your callings, when you are buying and ſelling, *&c.*

Note, Secondly, That *Sins of the heart, ſinful thoughts are very dangerous ſins.*

Job could not accuſe his ſons of loud blaſphemies, he only ſuſpected the ſilent ſins of the heart; yet he offereth ſacrifice for them.

Again, When *Job* hath nothing to charge his Sons with, but only ſins of the heart, you ſee it is with an *It may be my ſons have curſed God in their hearts*; he doth not ſpeak directly or poſitively that they have done ſo.

Whence note, *That no man can poſitively conclude what is wrought in the heart of another.*

The Heart is God's Peculiar; as he only hath the Lock and Key of the Heart, to ſhut or open it, ſo he only hath a Window to look into it; we may gueſs at the heart, we may ſay, *It may be*, further we cannot go. The hearts of men often come forth at their mouths, and appear in their actions, and then indeed we may conclude their hearts are naught; *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh, and the hand worketh*, but unleſs we have that teſtimony, unleſs the heart give that witneſs againſt it ſelf, we can only ſuſpect it; it may be thus or thus; God alone can tell when we curſe him in our hearts; and (if we go on impenitently in them) irreverent thoughts will be interpreted a curſing of God.

Thus did Job continually.

This is the third thing to be opened in this *Verſe*; to wit, the Conſtancy of *Job*. We have ſeen the Acts of his ſpiritual care, and the ground of it, his fear leſt his Sons had ſinned. Now we have the conſtancy of this duty. *Thus did* Job *continually.*

Continually.] The Original is, *all the dayes thus did* Job; *Cunctis diebus*, all dayes, that is, all the dayes that this occaſion did offer it ſelf. When his Sons went to feaſting, then ever *Job* went to praying and to ſacrificing. Continually, or all the dayes, doth not import that *Job* did offer ſacrifice every day; this *continually* is to be underſtood in the renewed ſeaſons; all the dayes are thoſe dayes wherein occaſion was given. We are then ſaid to do a thing continually, when we do it ſeaſonably; ſo thoſe places of Scripture are to be underſtood; *Pray without ceaſing*; not that a man ſhould do nothing elſe but pray, but that he ſhould labour to have his heart in a praying frame alwayes, and ſhould actually pray as often as Duty requires; ſuch an one *prayes alwayes.* So here; *Job*'s offering ſacrifice continually, noteth only the conſtancy and perſeverance of *Job* in the Duty, that ſo often as there was an occaſion renewed, *Job* renewed this ſervice and holy care concerning his ſons, for reconciling them unto God. *Job* had many other things to do in the world; he had a calling, yet he offered ſacrifice continually.

כל הימים

1 Theſ. 5. 17.
Eph. 6. 28.

It is an excellent point of ſpiritual wiſdom, to drive the two Trades for Heaven and Earth ſo, as that one ſhall not intrench upon another; for a man to pray ſo, as that it may be ſaid he prayes *continually*; and for a man to follow his Calling ſo, as that it may be ſaid, he follows his Calling *continually*. In that he offered ſacrifice as oft as his Sons did feaſt, Obſerve this,

That, *the heart of man is continually evil.*

Do not think that one Sacrifice will ſerve the heart of man; when it hath failed once in a Duty, and thou haſt humbled thy Soul for that, think not thus, now my heart will forbear, when I come to ſuch a duty, or ſuch a buſineſs again, now I have taken order with my heart, I need not fear any more: no, *the heart will ſin over the ſame ſin a thouſand times*, it will ſin continually. You ſee here *Job* ſacrificing every time his Sons feaſted, he knew their hearts were apt to conceive thoſe ſins at any time, therefore he ſeeks God for them at all times.

Further obſerve, That, *Renewed Sins muſt have renewed Repentance.*

Thus did Job **continually.**] Till you have done ſinning, you muſt never give over repenting. If there be a Leak in the Ship, that lets in water continually, the Pump muſt work continually to carry it out: We are leaking Veſſels all of us, ſin cometh in, ſin is renewed, there muſt be the Pump of Repentance to carry it out again.

Laſtly, We may note this, *Job* did it continually; *Job* was not good by fits.

That which a man doth out of Conſcience, he will do with perſeverance.

Nature will have *good moods*, but *Grace is ſteddy. Thus did* Job *continually*; whatſoever his affairs or buſineſſes were, whatſoever was laid by, he would not lay by this duty of ſacrificing.

Let this ſuffice for the Fifth Verſe, containing the care of *Job* over the ſouls of his Children. And ſo in theſe five *Verſes* already opened, we have Firſt, ſeen the dignity and ſincerity of *Job's Perſon*. Secondly, The fulneſs and proſperity of his *Condition*. Thirdly, The holineſs and piety of his *Life*. Certainly a man thus raiſed, thus glorious, ſet up thus in *Temporals and in Spirituals*, thus furniſhed with *Subſtantials*, and adorned with *Circumſtantials*, abounding in whatſoever could make a man great and happy, both in the eye of God and man; ſurely ſuch a man as this, a man thus compleat, wanted nothing but ſome *want*, to try his ſincerity in this fulneſs. And now behold this haſtening upon him: God having thus fitted and qualified him, will now try him, try him like Gold in the Furnace of affliction. You may ſee matter gathering for this, and the fire kindling in the next part of the Chapter.

Verſe 6. **Now there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord,** &c.

Take this in the General, from the connection of the two parts.

Vſually where God gives much Grace, he tries Grace much.

To whom God hath given ſtrong ſhoulders, on him, for the moſt part, he layeth heavy burdens. As ſoon as *Job* is ſpoken of thus prepared, the next thing that follows is an affliction.

Now there was a day, &c.] And ſo we are come to the ſecond main Diviſion of the Chapter; which is, the *Affliction of Job*; and that is ſet forth from this *verſe* 6, to the end of *verſe* 19. And leſt we ſhould conceive it to have come upon him by chance, it is punctually deſcribed four wayes,

1. *By the Cauſes of it*, verſe 6, 7, &c.
2. *By the Inſtruments of it*, verſe 15, 16, &c.
3. *By the Manner of it*, verſe 14, 15, 16, &c.
4. *By the Time of it*, verſe 13.

Firſt, His *Afflictions* are ſet forth in their Cauſes; and that is done from the ſixth verſe to the end of the twelfth. And the Cauſes are threefold.

Firſt, The *Efficient Cauſes*, and they were two.

1. *The ſupreme and principal efficient Cauſe*, and that was *God*, ordering and diſpoſing the affliction of *Job*.
2. *The ſubordinate efficient Cauſe*, and that was *Satan*; he was an efficient but under God: Satan found out other Inſtruments and Tools to do it by; but he was an efficient ſubordinate unto God; and the Text diſcovers him three ways.

1. *By his Diligence in tempting*, verſe 7.
2. *By his Malice in ſlandering*, verſe 9, 10, 11.
3. *By his Cruelty, in ſoliciting the overthrow and affliction of* Job, verſe 11.

Secondly, We have the *Material Cauſe* of *Job's* Affliction; or, in what manner he was afflicted; and that is laid down, firſt, *poſitively*, in thoſe words, *All that he hath is in thy power*; that is, his outward Eſtate; that was the matter wherein he was afflicted. Then it is laid down *negatively*, in thoſe words, *Only upon himſelf put not forth thy hand*. God doth ſet him out how far the affliction ſhall go: in the things that he hath, thou ſhalt afflict him; but thou ſhalt not meddle with his Perſon, with his Body, or with his Soul.

Thirdly, The *Final Cauſe* of *Job's* Affliction; and that is, the practical and experimental determination, deciſion, or ſtating of a great Queſtion that was between *God* and *Satan* concerning *Job's* ſincerity. God tells Satan that *Job* was a good and juſt man; Satan he denies it, and ſaith that *Job* was an hypocrite. Now the determination of this Queſtion was the general *Final Cauſe* of *Job's* affliction. When on the one ſide, God affirms it, and on the other ſide, Satan denies; how ſhall it be tried? Who ſhall be the *Moderator* and *Vmpire* between them; Satan will not believe God, and God had no reaſon to believe Satan: How then ſhould this be made out? It is as if Satan had ſaid, *Here is your Yea, and my Nay; this queſtion will never be ended or decided between us, unleſs you will admit ſome courſe to have* Job *ſoundly afflicted: This will quickly diſcover what metal the man is made of; therefore let him come to the trial*, ſaith Satan. *Let him*, ſaith God, *behold all that he hath, is in thy power; do thy worſt to him, only upon his perſon put not forth thy hand.* So that, I ſay, the general final cauſe of *Job's* affliction, is the determination of the Queſtion, and deciſion of the Diſpute between God and Satan, whether *Job* was a ſincere and holy man, or no.

And all this (to give you the ſum of thoſe ſix verſes a little further) is here ſet forth and deſcribed unto us after the manner of men, by an *Anthropopathy*; which is, when God expreſſes himſelf in his actions and diſpenſations with and toward the world, as if he were a man. So God here; he preſents himſelf in the buſineſs after the manner of ſome *Great King* ſitting upon his Throne, having his Servants attending him, and taking an account of them, what they had done, or giving Inſtructions and Commiſſions to them what they ſhall do. This, I ſay, God doth here after the manner of men; for otherwiſe we are not to conceive, that God doth make certain dayes of Seſſion with his Creatures, wherein he doth call the good and bad Angels together about the affairs of the world; we muſt not have ſuch groſs conceits of God; for he needs receive no information from them, neither doth he give them, or Satan, any formal Commiſſion; neither is Satan admitted into the preſence of God, to come ſo near God at any time; neither is God moved at all by the ſlanders of Satan, or by his accuſations, to deliver up his ſervants and children into his hands for a moment. But only the Scripture ſpeaks thus, to teach us how God carries himſelf in the affairs of the world, even as if he ſate upon his Throne, and call'd every Creature before him, and gave each a direction, what and when and where to work, how far, and which way to move in every action.

So that in theſe ſix verſes following, which contain the cauſes of *Job's* affliction, are (as we may ſo ſpeak) the *Scheme or Draught of Providence* (that may be the Title of them.) If a man would *delineate Providence*, he might do it thus; ſuppoſe God upon his Throne, with Angels good and bad, yea, all creatures about him, and he directing, ſending, ordering every one, as a Prince doth his Subjects, or as a Maſter his Servants, do you this, and do you that, *&c.* So all is ordered according to his *Dictate*.

Thus all things in Heaven and Earth are diſpoſed by the unerring wiſdom, and limited by the Almighty power of God.

Such a repreſentation as this we read in 1 *Kings* 22. 19. Where *Micaiah* ſaid to *Ahab*, *Hear thou the word of the Lord; I ſaw the Lord ſiting upon his Throne, and all the Hoſt of heaven ſtanding by him.* And ſo he goeth on to ſhew how a Spirit came and offered himſelf to be a *lying Spirit* in the mouth of *Ahab's Prophets*. This is only a ſhadow of Providence; there was no ſuch thing really acted; God did not convene or call together a Synod of Spirits to adviſe with (*de Arduis Regni*) about hard, doubtful caſes; nor are wicked Spirits admitted into his preſence; only by this we are inſtructed and aſſured that God doth as exactly order all things in heaven and earth, as if he ſtood queſtioning or interrogating good Angels, Men, and Devils, concerning thoſe matters.

Having thus given ſome light about theſe ſix Verſes in general, I ſhall open the Particulars.

Now there was a day.] The Jewiſh Rabbins trouble themſelves much to find out what day this was: They ſay it was the firſt day of the year. Others, that it was the Sabbath day. But I account it a diſadvantage to a clear Truth, when it is proved by an obſcure Text. The Sabbath hath proof enough before the Law, though this be ſpared. The holy Ghoſt hath told us only that there was a day, or a certain time.

Hic locus refellit Chryſoſt. *qui negat Angelos unquam vocari filios Dei.* Druſ. Read more of this Point, *c.* 2. 1. where the whole Verſe is repeated.

When the Sons of God.] In *Gen.* 6. 2. The poſterity of *Seth* (who were the Viſible Church at that time) are called the *Sons of God*. The unanimous conſent of all Expoſitors (I have met with) is, that here the Sons of God are the good Angels; ſo alſo they are called, *chap.* 38. 7. of this Book. Some, it may be, will object againſt this Expoſition that of the Apoſtle in *Heb.* 1. 5. *To which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, thou art my Son?* How then do you interpret here, that the Sons of God are the Angels, whenas the Apoſtle hath expreſt, *To which of the Angels*, &c.

I anſwer, that the *Angels* are not the *Sons of God*, as the Apoſtle there expreſſeth; they are *not the Sons of God* by *eternal Generation*; but they are the *Sons of God* by *temporal Creation*; for ſo he ſpeaks there; *To which of the Angels ſaid he, thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee?* They are not the *begotten ſons of God*, but they are the *created ſons of God*. And the *Angels* are called the *ſons of God* in three reſpects.

Firſt, Becauſe of their great and mighty power; therefore *Eph.* 1. 21. they are called *Principalities and Powers*; *far above principalities and powers, and might and dominions*; that is, far above all Angels. They are called the *ſons of God,* becauſe they are like God in power and dignity.

Then again they are called the *ſons of God*, becauſe they ſerve God as *ſons*, chearfully, willingly, readily. They do not obey as ſlaves, as ſervants, as the beſt of ſervants, they obey better then the beſt of ſervants; they obey as *Children*; they go about their work with *filial and ſonlike* chearfulneſs and delight.

Thirdly, They are called *ſons,* becauſe of the great *priviledge* that God doth vouchſafe them; he doth uſe them as his *Children*, as his *ſons*, they are his *Courtiers*, they are near him, alwayes attending him, and continually ſee his face; they have the priviledge of *ſons*.

Came to preſent themſelves before the Lord.] Not that the *Angels* are at any time out of the preſence of God, for Chriſt is expreſs in that, *Mat.* 18. 10. *Their Angels do alwayes behold the face of my Father.* But they are then ſaid to come and preſent themſelves before God, when they come upon ſome ſpecial buſineſs, or upon ſome ſpecial occaſion. As it is with us here upon the earth, we are never out of the preſence of God; for *Pſal.* 139. *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?* Yet when we come to pray, and are in other holy duties, we are ſaid to *preſent our ſelves before God, and to draw near unto God, and God is ſaid to draw near unto us* at ſuch a time, and yet God is ever with us, and we ever with him. So when it is ſaid here, that the *Angels came and preſented themſelves before the Lord*, it noteth only this, their readineſs, either to give an account of what they had done, or to receive directions from God what to do. The Angels are moſt willing to go about the ſervice and work of God, and that is all that is here meant by their preſenting themſelves before the Lord, for otherwiſe they are ever in his preſence: as, *Luke* 1. 19. *The Angel anſwered and ſaid, I am Gabriel that ſtand in the preſence of God, and am ſent to ſpeak unto thee.* I am *Gabriel* that ſtand; he ſpeaks in the preſent time, even now while I am ſpeaking unto thee, *I ſtand in the preſence of God*. The Angel while he goeth into the world, is not abſent from God, he beholdeth the face of God *alwayes*. The Schoolmen have an odd diſtinction, they ſay, there are *aſſiſting Angels*, and *miniſtring Angels:* Thoſe Angels that are aſſiſtants, ſtand alwayes before God, and never are ſent out about the world upon any occaſion; Others are miniſtring Spirits; as, *Heb.* 1. 14. *Are they not miniſtring Spirits ſent forth to miniſter for them who are the heirs of ſalvation?* This is School-Doctrine. But there needs no ſuch diſtinction of ſome to be aſſiſting or attending, and ſome to be miniſtring Angels; for whereſoever they are, they are alwayes in the preſence of God; and their preſenting themſelves before God, notes only their preparedneſs to attend the Lords Service in whatſoever he ſhall employ them.

And Satan came alſo among them.] That is, the chief of the evil Angels. The word [*Satan*] ſignifieth an *Adverſary*; and ſo it is oftentimes applied to men; as, concerning *Solomon*, it is ſaid, that while he did walk exactly with God, *there was neither Adverſary nor evil occurrant*; the word in the Original is, there was no *Satan* in his Kingdom. And in 1 *Kings* 11. 14. it is ſaid, *The Lord ſtirred up Satan an Adverſary againſt* Solomon. And that accuſation which thoſe wretches in *Ezra* 4. ſent againſt the building of *Jeruſalem*, is called *Sitna*; they ſent *Sitna*, an accuſation, or an oppoſing Letter. It comes from the ſame Root; any kind of oppoſition is called *Sitna*, from Satan, who is an Oppoſer. It is ſometimes uſed more generally concerning any oppoſition; as the Angel that came to oppoſe *Balaam*, Numb. 22. 34. *I wiſt not* (ſaith *Balaam*) *that there was an Adverſary that ſtood in the way.*

1 Kin. 5. 4.

But how can it be ſaid that Satan ſhould come among the ſons of God?

I ſaid before, that it was but an alluding ſpeech to the dealings of men in their Seſſions and Aſſemblies, and there is no neceſſity to make every Particular of it hold. We may conceive it thus,

Satan came alſo among them.] It is not ſaid that the ſons of God and Satan came and preſented themſelves before the Lord; Satan did not joyn himſelf in with them, Satan did not offer himſelf for any good ſervice; but thither he came, being ſo ordered by the over-ruling power of God.

But can Satan come into the preſence of God?

No otherwiſe then a blind man can come into the Sun; he comes into the Sun, and the Sun ſhineth upon him, but he ſees not the Sun. Satan comes ſo into the preſence of God, that he is alwayes ſeen of God; he is never ſo in the preſence of God, as to ſee God. It is queſtion'd whether the lapſed Angels ever ſaw God at all while they ſtood; becauſe if they had ſeen God, it is conceived that Viſion would have been their confirmation: But it is moſt certain, that the lapſed *Angels*, ſince their fall, never ſaw *God*, nor ever ſhall; though it be ſaid here, Satan came among the *ſons of God*: you know what the Apoſtle *Jude* teacheth, *That the Devils kept not their place, but are reſerved in Chains of darkneſs againſt the judgment of the great day:* We ſhall open that afterward, when we come to ſpeak of his compaſſing the earth, how he doth compaſs the earth, and yet is reſerved in chains of darkneſs. But I ſay, there is his ſeat, there is his place, and all that is ſpoken of him in this, doth not infer any the leaſt glimpſe or fruition of God or communion with the Angels. In regard of his nature, he is ſtill a Spirit; but in regard of his ſin, he is a miſerable Spirit; he hath loſt his excellency, though he hath not his Nature. And being a Spirit, he hath power to paſs and repaſs, to go up and down the world, to aſcend and deſcend at his pleaſure (as good Angels may and can) when God doth permit them.

We ſee here the good Angels are called the *Sons of God*; in this learn the priviledge of Believers; they partake with the Angels in this Title: The Apoſtle ſaith, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath ſhewed, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God.* If you would know what manner of love it is, it is as great as the Angels in Heaven have: Chriſt took not upon him the nature of Angels, but hath given us the honour of Angels. Fallen Angels could not ſhare with us in the benefit of redemption, but we ſhare with the Angels that ſtand in the priviledge of Sonſhip. We are the Sons of God as well as they, and in ſomewhat beyond them; they are created Sons, but not (as we) adopted ſons.

Came and preſented themſelves before God.] This ſhould teach us *to imitate Angels.* This we pray for; *That the will of God ſhould be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven.* The Angels alwayes preſent themſelves, they alwayes ſtand before God, ready to do his will; we ſhould be ever in the preſence of God in this ſence, that is, preſenting our ſelves, ſtanding as in the preſence of God, ready to take and receive inſtruction, to do his will, whatever it is. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do,* is as it were the voyce of an Angel ſtanding before the Throne of God. It ſhould be the voice of every Soul, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* This is the preſenting of the Soul before God.

Then conſider here, who Satan was; Satan was as good in his Creation, as any of thoſe who are called *the Sons of God.* They are called the *ſons of God*; and he is now called nothing but *Satan*, an Adverſary. His condition was once as good as theirs. Note hence,

> *There is no created excellency, but if it be left to it ſelf, will quickly undo it ſelf.*

Theſe Angels were as good at the firſt as any of thoſe that were here called the *ſons of God.* They were not confirmed, they ſtood upon their own bottom, they fell, and had no tempter at all; they turned about upon the freedom of their own will, and *left their habitation* (ſaith the Scripture.) *There is no truſting to any eſtate out of Chriſt.*

Further, note this, what was the difference between thoſe *ſons of God*, and this *Satan?* Only ſin; One was as good as the other in the Creation; nothing elſe made an Angel a Devil, but only ſin.

> *Sin deſpoiles the Creature of all its comfort and honour at once.*

Again, note this, The Angel falling, and becoming ſinful, hath his name preſently changed, he is called *Satan*, an *Adverſary*; an *Adverſary* to God, an *Adverſary* to man.

> *He that is wicked himſelf, will quickly be an adverſary, an oppoſer of all goodneſs; no ſooner a Sinner, but a Satan.*

Laſtly, note this;

> *To be an oppoſer of good, is to be conformable to the Devil.*

The Devil is the Adverſary, the Satan; and ſo proportionably, as any one is an oppoſer of good, ſo much of Satan, ſo much of the Devil he hath in him: Therefore Chriſt ſaid to a *chief Apoſtle*, when he did oppoſe him in that greateſt good of all, *the working out of our Redemption in dying for us*; *get thee behind me Satan*, Mat. 16. *All oppoſition of goodneſs is a ſpice of the Devil.* So the Apoſtle *Paul, Acts* 13. 10. when he ſpeaks to *Elymas* the *Sorcerer*, ſaith, *O thou Child of the Devil, thou enemy of all goodneſs.* To be an enemy of goodneſs, is to be the child of the Devil; it is the very Character of the Devil: He is a Satan in reſpect of all goodneſs and good perſons.

And ſurely (my Brethren) if this be a character of the Devil, and to be conformable unto Satan, how conſpicuous is that conformity in this age? How many thouſands bear this *Mark of the Devil*, not only in their *hands* cloſely, but in their *foreheads* openly? How many viſible *walking Satans* are there among us, enemies of all goodneſs, oppreſſors of all righteouſneſs, oppoſers of our peace, oppoſers of our liberty, oppoſers of the Goſpel, oppoſers of Chriſt? Theſe are all as ſo many Satans in the world, ſo many enemies. Now is a time that *Satans* are let looſe in the world; the Devil, now, if ever, *works mightily in the hearts and ſpirits*, in the *hands and tongues* of theſe *children of Diſobedience.* It becometh us then, that as there are many adverſaries and oppoſers of goodneſs, to ſhew our ſelves friends and patrons of goodneſs. Chriſt hath many Challengers, let him find ſome Champions. Now it is time to raiſe your ſpirits, not only to love the Truth, but to maintain the Truth. *As it is the height of wickedneſs, not only to do evil, but to oppoſe good; ſo it is the height of holineſs, not only to do good, but to oppoſe evil.* This is juſt to be on the contrary point to Satan; he doth wickedneſs, and oppoſeth good; let us do good, and oppoſe all evil: *To be a Satan againſt Satan, is the glory of a Chriſtian.* Now ſet your ſelves againſt the Satans, be Adverſaries to that Adverſary, and all his adherents, ſo ſhall you approve your ſelves the friends of Chriſt.

VERS. 7, 8.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, whence comeſt thou? Then Satan anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, from going to and fro in the earth; and from walking up and down in it.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth? a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil?

IN the former Verſe we ſhewed you that *great and glorious Seſſion*, the *Lord* with his *holy Angels* about him, and *Satan* too coming among them. In the Verſes following, to the end of the twelfth, we have the buſineſs or acts of the Seſſion recorded. *God* interrogates, *Satan* anſwers; *Satan* moves, *God* grants. This is the *ſum* of all the buſineſs that paſs'd in this *Seſſion. God* puts two *Interrogatories* to *Satan*, one concerning his Travels, or where he had been? *ver.* 7. The other, concerning his obſervations, or what he had done? *ver.* 8.

In *ver.* 7. we have the firſt Queſtion, the Lord beginneth with Satan; **And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, whence comeſt thou?**

How the *Lord ſpeaks*, is a point almoſt *unſpeakable.* There are many Diſputes about it, I will not ſtay upon them; only to open this, that you may take in all Scripture of the like kind, wherein the Lord is ſaid to ſpeak. We muſt know, that as in Scripture, God is ſaid to have a *mouth*, and a *voice*, alluding unto man by that common *Figure*; ſo likewiſe, when the Lord ſpeaks, we muſt underſtand it by the ſame figure; it is but an alluſion to the manner of men. God is ſaid to ſpeak, as men are ſaid to ſpeak; but God doth not ſpeak as men ſpeak, forming a voice by ſuch Organs or Inſtruments of ſpeech: but when the *Lord* ſpeaks, it is either by *forming and creating* a voice in the *ayr*; ſo God is ſaid to ſpeak ſometimes; as when Chriſt was *baptized*, there *came a voice from heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son,* &c. So *John* 12. 28. *There came a voice from heaven, ſaying, I have glorified thee*; which all the People heard ſounding in the ayr. Secondly, God is ſaid to ſpeak, when he manifeſts and declares himſelf, either to the *Spirits of men*, or unto *Angels*, who are Spirits. God doth ſpeak unto the ſpirits of men, ſometimes without any forming of a voice; ſo the phraſe is uſual in the Prophets, *The word of the Lord came unto me*; which is to be underſtood, that the Lord did ſecretly reveal himſelf to the ſpirits of his Prophets, and not by any external *audible* voice; it was an inward, not an outward word. So when the Lord ſpeaks unto Spirits or Angels, be they good or evil Angels, you muſt not underſtand it of a voice formed or faſhioned into audible words and ſyllables; but it is a manifeſtation and declaration of Gods will and mind unto the Angels mind, good or bad, as God willeth. For the will of God to declare himſelf unto an Angel, is the ſpeech of God unto an Angel. So much as God intendeth of his mind ſhould be known to the Devil, is a ſpeaking to the Devil. The intention of one Spirit is as plain to another Spirit, as the voice of one man is to another man, there is the very ſame proportion. So here in this place where it is ſaid, *The Lord ſaid unto Satan*, this was only a manifeſtation of Gods will, as he willed unto Satan; God did manifeſt himſelf thus far to Satan, that it was his pleaſure to know of him whence he came; this will was his ſpeech.

Mat. 3. 17.

To paſs from the manner of ſpeaking, we will look upon the matter ſpoken, *And the Lord ſaid unto Satan*, **whence comeſt thou?** That's the firſt Queſtion.

This Queſtion is here put, not for information; as if the Lord did not know whence he came, as men uſually queſtion, that they may be informed. But Queſtions in Scripture (eſpecially when the Lord putteth them) are to be underſtood in ſome of theſe ſences.

Firſt, To exact a Confeſſion from the mouth of the party. He ſaid unto Satan, *Whence comeſt thou?* Not that he needed an information, but that he might receive a confeſſion from the mouth of Satan. So he queſtioned *Adam*, *Gen.* 3. *Adam, where art thou? who told thee that thou waſt naked? Haſt thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee, thou ſhalt not eat?* Theſe Queſtions were not to inform God, but only that *Adam* might give a confeſſion out of his own mouth concerning thoſe things. So he queſtioned *Cain*, Gen. 4. *Where is Abel thy Brother?* It was a Queſtion only to draw a confeſſion from *Cain* of what he had done. There is a like Queſtion of *Eliſha* to his Servant *Gehazi*, when he had run after *Naaman*, and had got a reward from him, 2 *Kings* 5. 25. *Eliſha* ſaith to him, *Whence comeſt thou?* or, *Where haſt thou been?* He asked him this, only to draw a confeſſion from him; for ſaith he afterward, *Went not my Spirit with thee, when the man turned again from his Chariot to meet thee?* He knew before where his Servant had been; God had revealed the thing unto him; only he queſtions him to make him acknowledge it. So here the Lord queſtions Satan, *whence comeſt thou?* that he might have a confeſſion from himſelf. *Though the Lord doth know all the actions, wayes and thoughts of every Creature, yet God at the laſt will queſtion every man, that he may judge every man upon his own confeſſion.*

Secondly, This Queſtion may be underſtood, as intimating a diſlike of the thing or of the buſineſs that Satan had been about. Queſtions are many times put, not out of ignorance or neſcience of what hath been done, but out of a diſlike or abhorrence of the thing done. When the man or the thing is not approved, then God carrieth himſelf toward him and his action, as if he knew not what he had been doing, and he muſt have it out by confeſſion. Thus *Hiram*, 1 *King*. 9. 13. puts the Queſtion upon *Solomon*: *What Cities are theſe which thou haſt given me, my Brother?* He ſaw and knew before what Cities they were; but thus he queſtion'd, becauſe they *pleaſed him not*, ver. 12. In *Hoſ*. 8. 4. God is ſaid not to know that they ſet up Kings; *They have ſet up Kings, but not by me; they have made Princes, and I knew it not*: that is, I did not like them, I took no notice of them by way of approbation. So God queſtions about things, as if he did not know them, when he doth not like them; and we may conclude that this Queſtion holds out to us Gods diſlike of the wayes and works of Satan.

Thirdly, Queſtions, and this Queſtion may be underſtood in a way of *objurgation* or chiding; *Satan, whence comeſt thou?* Thou haſt been a tempting, thou art come now from murders, and thefts, and adulteries, and blaſphemies, from provoking men to all theſe wickedneſſes. As that Queſtion, *Jonah* 4. 4. was a chiding of *Jonah*; *Doſt thou well to be angry?* So, *whence comeſt thou?* As many times when you are angry with your ſervants, you ask, *where have you been?* There is a reprehenſion in the Queſtion: So God full of wrath toward Satan, ſaith, *Whence comeſt thou? Thou haſt been doing all the miſchief thou canſt abroad in the world I am ſure.*

Laſtly, For the better conceiving of the matter of this Queſtion propoſed, *whence comeſt thou?* there is more to be underſtood then is expreſſed; for God doth not only enquire here concerning the *places* where he had been, but concerning the *buſineſs* and the work which he had done; all is included in it: *Whence comeſt thou?* what haſt thou been doing in the world? what hath thy buſineſs been abroad? Every man, every Creature, every Angel, good or bad, muſt give an account of themſelves unto God. So much of the Lords Queſtion; now let us examine Satans Anſwer.

Then Satan anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

If I am enquired (ſaith Satan) whence I come; I anſwer, *I come from walking up and down in the earth, from going to and fro in it.* Here again it may be doubted, how Satan ſpeaks to the Lord; as before it was about the Lords ſpeaking unto Satan. The ſpeaking of Satan and all Spirits, is according to the manner before explained of Gods ſpeaking. Then Angels ſpeak one to another, or unto God, when they direct or intend ſuch or ſuch things to be known. As a thought, a conception in the mind, is a word in the mind; ſo the directing or putting forth, or an intending to put forth that word or that thought, is the ſpeaking of the mind, then the mind ſpeaks. As we know in our ſelves, a man meditates, he conceives ſuch and ſuch things, he forms them all in his ſpirit under ſome words into ſuch notions; and he can put forth theſe by deſires, though he doth not ſpeak. And ſo we are ſaid often in Scripture to ſpeak unto God in our hearts, when the mouth doth not ſpeak at all. As *Moſes, Exod.* 14. 15. is ſaid to *cry unto God*; that was nothing but the directing, or actual intending of ſuch and ſuch ſecret deſires unto God; that was a crying unto God. So it is ſaid of *Hannah* (1 Sam. 1. 13.) that *ſhe ſpake to the Lord in her heart.* After this manner do Angels and Spirits ſpeak. As we can ſpeak to God in our ſpirits, by our hearts, when we intend or lift up ſuch and ſuch thoughts unto God; ſo they ſpeak in the ſame manner by making known and revealing ſo much of their minds to God, as they deſire he ſhould take notice of: For if a man have ſuch and ſuch thoughts, and only reſerve them to himſelf, he is ſaid to ſpeak to himſelf, to ſpeak within himſelf: So Angels, though they have ſuch & ſuch thoughts, they do ſpeak to themſelves, and not to God, while they keep thoſe thoughts within themſelves; however God knows them all before, yet an Angel is ſaid to ſpeak no more to God, then he doth intentionally and obedientially (as ſome expreſs it) make known and declare to God his deſire, that God may take notice of it. So here Satan anſwereth and ſaith unto God, or he ſpeaks to God theſe things; that is, he doth actually intend that God ſhould know thus much of him, what he had been about; that he was come now *from going to and fro in the earth, from walking up and down in it.*

From going to and fro, &c.

It may be doubted, how Satan can be ſaid to *go to and fro in the earth, and to walk up and down in it*; whereas it is expreſs in the Epiſtle of *Jude*, ver. 6. that *the Angels which kept not their firſt eſtate, but left their own habitation, he hath reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day.* Now if Satan, if the Angels that fell, be in *chains*, and in *chains of everlaſting darkneſs*, and *reſerved unto the judgment of the great day*, how doth Satan here ſpeak of himſelf, as being at liberty, *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it?*

I anſwer, That though the Devil goeth up and down, yet he is ever in *chains*. He is in a *double chain*, even when he goes and circuits the whole earth abroad, he is in a *chain of Juſtice*, and in a *chain of Providence*. He is in a *chain of Juſtice*, that is, under the *wrath of God*; and he is in a *chain of Providence*, that is, under the *eye of God*; he can go no further then God gives him leave, then God lets out and lengthens his chain. So that ſtill he is reſerved under chains, even chains of darkneſs; when he goes abroad, he goes like a Priſoner, with his fetters upon his heels.

But it may be here enquired further, if Satan be thus under the wrath of God, and be a condemned ſpirit, if he be in ſuch darkneſs, how can he intend or attempt, plot or execute thoſe deſigns of temptation for the overthrow of ſouls, and diſturbance of the Churches of God throughout the world? Will not ſuch torment and horrour of darkneſs, diſable and unfit him for ſuch curious methods of doing miſchief? can he have his thoughts upon any thing but upon his own woful condition, and miſerable eſtate?

For this likewiſe (to clear it) we may conceive, that Satan, although he be, at preſent, under the *wrath of God*, yet he is not under the fulneſs of the *wrath of God*; he is not yet in *extremity*, he is not yet in that *degree* of judgment which hereafter he ſhall receive. Satan is now as full of *Diſcontent* as he can be, but he is not ſo full of *Torment* as he can be; this we ſee expreſly in *Mat*. 8. 29. where the Devils ſay to Chriſt, *Art thou come to torment us before our time?* as noting that there will be a time wherein they ſhall have more torment, their fill of torment, ſuch torment, as what they now endure, compared with it, may paſs for no torment, if not for pleaſure. Then they ſhall drink the very dregs of the cup of Gods wrath; now they do (as it were) but ſip, or taſte it. The devils, though they are already caſt down from their glorious eſtate, yet they are not caſt into ſuch a woful ſtate as hereafter they ſhall be; therefore they may walk up and down in the world, and unceſſantly ſet themſelves about the deſtruction of others.

For the words, *From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.* Satan here ſpeaks like a *Prince*; therefore ſome conceive, that this is the Prince of devi's that is here mentioned in this Text, *Beelzebub*, the chief of the devils; for here he ſpeaks of himſelf as ſome great Prince, that had gone about his Countries to view his Provinces, his Kingdoms, and Cities; I come, ſaith he, from viſiting my ſeveral Places and Dominions; *I come from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*

These expreſſions are not to be underſtood properly; for properly Spirits, ſuch as Satan is, cannot be ſaid *to go or to walk: A Spirit moveth*, that is proper to a Spirit: but properly a Spirit doth not walk or go, that is proper only to bodies: But the word which we tranſlate, *from going to and fro,* is tranſlated by ſome, *from compaſſing the earth*, or *from compaſſing about in the world*, and then it is proper; the Original ſignifying to compaſs or circuit about by any kind of motion, as well as by going.

משוט בארץ

Further, For the underſtanding of *Satans going to and fro in the earth*; we muſt not conceive that this is all that Satan doth, to walk up and down in the world, to go to and fro; he is no idle *Peripatetick*; but by going to and fro in the earth, is noted,

First, The exact diſcovery which Satan makes of all things in the earth. For the word [*Shut*] ſignifieth to enquire, to ſearch diligently into a thing. It is not a bare going about, but it is a going about as a ſpie, to ſearch, to enquire, to obſerve and conſider diligently all things as one paſſeth along. The ſame word is uſed (*Dan.* 12.4.) for diſcourſing; we tranſlate it thus, *Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be encreaſed*; now, we may wonder how knowledge ſhould be encreaſed by running to and fro, up and down; they that would encreaſe knowledge, ſhould rather ſit ſtill and conſider, and debate things; but the word (ſo ſome tranſlate it) ſignifies to diſcourſe or diſpute of things; they ſhall diſcourſe or go about to enquire into things, and knowledge ſhall be encreaſed. Thus Satans going to and fro in the earth, is a diſcourſing upon every thing, a diſputing upon every point and perſon; he doth, as it were, debate every mans condition as he goeth, and every mans eſtate, every mans temper, and every mans calling; he conſiders what is fitteſt to be done againſt him, and how he may aſſault him with greateſt advantage. That is the running or going to and fro which is here meant in the Text, it is a going to and fro to encreaſe his knowledge, and inform himſelf of all things as he goeth. The ſame word is uſed concerning the good Angels, *Zech.* 1.10. It is ſaid there, that they were ſent *to walk to and fro through the earth.* It was not a bare paſſing through the earth, but a curious obſerving and prying into all things as they went; we tranſlate it a walking to and fro; but it is a walking ſo as to bring God intelligence; for theſe were ſent out as Chriſts Intelligencers, to bring him in a report of the ſtate of things abroad: for ſo there in the Viſion it is expreſt after the manner of men. Though Chriſt needs none to inform him about the eſtate of his Church and People, yet he alludes to the cuſtom of Princes, who maintain Intelligencers in all Courts and Kingdoms, to adviſe them how the affairs of other Nations are tranſacted. The very ſame Original word is uſed of God himſelf (*Zech.* 4.10.) *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth*; he is his own Intelligencer, exactly diſcovering and taking notice of every thing that is done in the world. So then this is the meaning, I have been *going to and fro in the earth*, ſaith Satan; that is, I have fully and throughly taken notice of all paſſages, of all perſons in all places, of all conditions and ſorts of men; that is the thing I have been doing: Thus Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *from ſearching to and fro in the earth*, noting his exactneſs of enquiry in his travels.

Proprie eſt attente diſcurrere, circumſpicere, & explorare.

Then Secondly, It noteth the *unquietneſs of Satan.* He is an unquiet, a reſtleſs Spirit, being caſt out of heaven, he can reſt no where. A Soul that is once diſplaced, and out of the favour of God, hath no place to repoſe in afterward. Now, ſaith he, all my buſineſs is walking to and fro, going up and down: *Satan hath no reſt.* As the Sentence of *Cain* was, *Gen.* 4. when God had caſt him out of his preſence, *Thou ſhalt be a fugitive and a vagabond*; thou ſhalt do nothing but run up and down the world as long as thou liveſt. Satan is ſuch a fugitive, a vagabond, one that runs up and down in the world; he is an unſetled, an unquiet Spirit. *They who are once departed from God, can never find reſt in any Creature*; but running to and fro is their condition and their curſe.

Thirdly, Some underſtand it thus, that Satan makes (as it were) a recreation of his tempting and drawing men to Hell. Satan cannot poſſibly in a proper ſenſe, take any comfort, or be refreſhed; but as one doth well expreſs it, he himſelf being loſt, undone and damned, ſeeks to comfort himſelf by undoing and damning others. It is a joy to ſome to have companions in ſorrow. All Satans delight (if we may conceive he hath any delight) is in this, in making others as bad and miſerable as himſelf: therefore, it may be, he calls his trade of ſeduction and deſtruction, *walking up and down in the earth*; as men are ſaid to walk up and down for refreſhing and recreation; he ſpeaks of it, not as of ſome toilſome hard journey, but as of walking for delight. But I conceive the former to be more proper. Take two or three Notes from this. Here we may obſerve,

Ipſe perditus perdendis hominibus ſolatia quærit.

First, That, *there is no place in the world that can ſecure a man from temptation, or be a ſanctuary from Satans aſſaults.*

For Satan goeth to and fro through the earth; he is an ubiquitary, he ſtayes no where, but runs every where. It is the folly of *Popiſh Votaries*, that think to ſhut themſelves up in walls from the temptations of *Satan:* Cloyſters are as open to Satan as the open field. *Satan walketh to and fro through the earth.*

Secondly, We may note here *the wonderful diligence of Satan.*

Satan is very active to do miſchief.

He walketh to and fro; as *Peter* expreſſeth it, 2 *Pet.* 5.8. *He goeth about as a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour.* There is his diligence, and there is his intent. Satan ſpeaks nothing of his intent here, he conceals that; he ſpeaks only as if he went about like a pilgrim, walking through the earth: his main buſineſs, that he went about, to devour ſouls is kept in ſilence; but the Holy Ghoſt unmasks him, and diſcovers the deſign of his walking to and fro; *He ſeeks whom he may devour.* If Satan be thus diligent going about to tempt, we ought to be as diligent, ſtanding alwayes upon our watch, to prevent his temptations. Mr. *Latimer*, in one of his Sermons, where he taxes the Clergy, eſpecially the Biſhops of thoſe times, for their idleneſs, propoſeth to them the example of the Prophets and Apoſtles, and of Chriſt himſelf; their diligence in going about to preach, ſhould quicken thoſe Idlers: But (ſaith he) if you will not follow their example, follow the example of Satan; he goeth about in his *Dioceſs* to and fro continually. Take example from him in doing evil, how to do good: we may take example thus far from Satan, to be as forward to do good, as he is to do hurt; to be as watchful againſt him, as he is watchful againſt us. If this be his buſineſs to go to and fro through the earth, and his intent be to devour ſouls, then where-ever we go in the world up and down, we ought to be careful to keep our own ſouls, and gain the ſouls of others.

Thirdly, We may obſerve from it,

That, *Satan is confined in his buſineſs to the earth.*

He can get no farther then the earth, or to the ayerial part: he is called the *Prince of the Ayr.* Satan being once caſt out of Heaven, can never get into Heaven more. There is no tempter in heaven; there is no *Serpent* ſhall ever come into the *Celeſtial Paradiſe*; there was one in the earthly Paradiſe, but there ſhall never be any in the Celeſtial. Therefore when we are once beyond the earth, we are beyond the reach of all temptations; we are then at reſt from Satans ſnares and practices, as well as from our own labours.

Let us now conſider what the Lord replieth, or his ſecond Queſtion to *Satan.* Well, thou haſt been walking to and fro in the earth, ſaith God; *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job?* Tell me, haſt thou taken notice of ſuch an one?

Haſt thou conſidered?] The word is, *Haſt thou put thy heart upon* Job? So it is word for word in the Original; haſt thou laid *Job* to thy heart? haſt thou ſeriouſly, fully, and exactly conſidered my ſervant *Job?* And ſo it is rendred it out of the *Septuagint*; *Haſt thou attended with thy mind upon my ſervant* Job? To put a thing upon the heart, is to have ſerious and ſpecial regard to it; as when the Scripture ſpeaks of not putting a thing upon the heart, it noteth a ſlighting and neglecting of it. When the wife of *Phi-*

השמת לבך

προσέσχες τῆ διανόια σου κατὰ τοῦ παιδός μου ἰωβ.

neas was delivered, and they told her that ſhe had brought 1 Sam. 4. 20 forth a ſon, the Text ſaith, *ſhe anſwered not, neither did ſhe regard*; the Hebrew is, *neither did ſhe put her heart upon it*: the ſame word is here in the Text. Thus *Abigail* ſpeaks 1 Sam. 25. 25. unto *David, As for this ſon of* Belial, *let not my Lord put his heart upon him*, or (as it is tranſlated) *let not my Lord regard this man of* Belial; take no notice of ſuch an one as he is, *he is a fool, name and thing*, do not regard him, do not put him upon thy heart. There are divers ſuch expreſſions, where putting upon the heart is expreſſed by regarding; and not putting upon the heart, by not regarding. Then here, haſt thou put *Job* upon thy heart? That is; haſt thou ſeriouſly weighed and conſidered *Job*? As if God had ſaid, *I am ſure in thy travels and wandrings about the world, thou couldſt not chooſe but take notice of* Job, *he is my jewel, my darling, a ſpecial man among all the ſons of men: He is is ſuch a ſpectacle as may juſtly draw all eyes and hearts after him: when thou walkedſt, didſt thou not make a ſtand at* Jobs *door? I cannot but look upon him my ſelf and conſider him, therefore ſurely thou haſt conſidered him. The eyes of the* Pſal. 34. 15. *Lord are upon the righteous, and his heart is upon them too. A wicked man hath not the eye of God: a godly man hath his heart, and ſhall have it to all eternity.* The ſum is,

This Queſtion teacheth us, *That amongſt all the men that dwelt on the face of the earth,* Job *was the moſt conſiderable.*

Haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant Job?

It is as if one ſhould ſay to a man come from this City into the Country, were you at Court, or have you ſeen the King? Becauſe he is the moſt eminent and conſiderable perſon. So God here ſpeaks to Satan upon his account of walking about the earth, haſt thou taken notice of *Job? A godly man is the moſt conſiderable man in the world.* But then you *muſt put your heart* upon him, not your *eye* only, for then, as it was ſaid of Chriſt, (*Iſa.* 53. 3.) you may perhaps *ſee no beauty in him*: his inſide is the moſt conſiderable thing in the world. As a wicked man is the moſt unconſiderable, not worthy the looking unto, though he be 2 King. 3. 14 never ſo great: as *Eliſha* ſaid to the King of *Iſrael, Surely as the Lord of hoſtes liveth, before whom I ſtand, were it not that I regard the preſence of* Jehoſaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee nor ſee thee*; thou art not a man ſaith he, that deſerveth ſo much as to be looked upon: A Pſal. 15. 4. godly man is therefore deſcribed to be one, in whoſe eyes a vile perſon, a wicked man, is deſpiſed.

But ſecondly, in reference to Satan. Some read theſe words not by way of Queſtion, but by way of Affirmation, thus; Thou haſt conſidered my ſervant *Job*. Thou haſt been abroad in the world, ſurely then thou haſt taken notice of my ſervant *Job*, thou haſt conſidered him; that is, of all men in the world, thou haſt ſet thy ſelf about *Job* to tempt him and to try him: when thou cameſt to *Jobs* houſe, there thou madeſt an aſſault, there thou tryedſt the uttermoſt of thy ſtrength to overcome him; thou conſidereſt him, what to do againſt him, how to overthrow him: and tell me, haſt thou not found him a tuff piece? Didſt thou ever meet with ſuch an one in the world before? To conſider a thing, is to try all wayes how to gain it, or how to compaſs 1 Sam. 9. 20 ſuch a thing: as *Samuel* ſaid to *Saul*, when he was ſeeking his fathers Aſſes, *As for thine Aſſes that were loſt, ſet not thy mind on them*; that is, do not trouble thy ſelf, do not beat thy brains to conſider which way to go to find them, or where it is moſt probable to get them. So here, thou haſt ſet thy mind or conſidered my ſervant *Job*, that is, thou haſt beat thy brains, and ſet all thy wits on work, what courſe to take with greateſt advantage to deſtroy my ſervant *Job*.

Take the words in that ſenſe, and they yield us this Inſtruction.

That Satans main temptations, his ſtrongeſt batteries are planted againſt the moſt eminent godly perſons.

When Satan ſees a man that is eminent in grace, againſt him he makes his hotteſt and ſubtileſt aſſaults: he ſets his heart upon ſuch a man, yea and vexeth his heart too about him. Satan is moſt buſie at holy duties (one ſaid he ſaw in a viſion ten Devils at a Sermon, and but one at the Market) and about holy perſons. As for others, he doth not trouble himſelf about them, for they (as the Apoſtle 2 Tim. 2. 26 ſhews) *are led captive by the Devil at his will*; if he do but *whiſtle* (as it were) they eaſily follow him, and come after him preſently, ſo that he needs not ſet his heart or vex himſelf about them. But when he cometh to a *Job*, he ſets all his wits and all his ſtrength a work, bends all his thoughts to conſider what courſe to take to aſſault ſuch a *ſtrong hold of grace.* If he can get ſuch a man down, then there is triumph indeed, he ſings *victoria*; then (if we may ſo ſpeak) there is joy in Hell. *As there is joy indeed in Heaven at the converſion of a ſinner; ſo there is a kind of joy in Hell, when one ſins that is converted.* If any thing can make the Devils merry, it is this, to give a godly man the foyl; though they ſee he is paſt their reach to deſtroy him, yet if they can but blemiſh or diſgrace him, if they can but trouble and diſquiet him; this is their delight. Hence it is that *General Satan* with his legions of darkneſs, thoſe infernal ſpirits, encamp about ſuch perſons with deadly hatred. As when an Army meets with a ſtrong Caſtle, or City, they ſit down, and there conſider what courſe to take for the beſiedging and gaining of it.

Haſt thou conſidered [my Servant Job.] The title which God gives *Job* is very obſervable, *My ſervant* Job. A Servant (you know) is one, that is not at his own diſpoſe, but at the call and beck of another; ſo the Centurion deſcribes a ſervant; *For* (ſaith he) *I am a man under authority, and I have ſervants, and I ſay to this man go, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh.* Servants are at the word of another, they are not (*ſui juris*) in their own power; therefore *Ariſtotle* calleth Servants, *living tools*, or *living inſtruments*, breathing inſtruments, becauſe they ζῶντα ὄργανα. are at the will of another, to be uſed and imployed at the diſcretion of their Maſter. Here God calleth *Job* his ſervant: And he calleth him ſo, Firſt, by way of diſtinction or difference; *my ſervant*, that is, mine, not his own. Many are their own ſervants, they ſerve themſelves, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *They ſerve not the Lord Jeſus, but their own bel-* Rom. 16. *lies*, they ſerve their own luſts, divers luſts and pleaſures; *Job* is not ſuch an one, he is my ſervant.

Many are Satans ſervants; as if God ſhould have ſaid to Satan here; Satan thou haſt gone about the world, and thou haſt found a great family of thine own, thou haſt found many ſervants in all places, but *haſt thou conſidered my ſervant?* There is one, I am ſure, that oweth thee no ſervice, and by his good will, will do thee none; haſt thou not found my ſervant?

Some are the ſervants of men; but *Job* is my ſervant; not a ſervant of men, to ſubject himſelf to their luſts, either for hope or fear: *He is not* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *the ſervant of men* (in that ſenſe) to pleaſe men, with ſinning againſt and provoking God.

Secondly, *My ſervant*, by way of ſpecial right and property; So *Job* and all godly perſons are called Gods ſervants. Firſt, By the right of election they are Gods choſen ſervants, as *Paul* is called *a choſen veſſel*, that is, a choſen ſervant, to carry the name of God. Secondly, They are Gods ſervants by the right of purchaſe; my ſervant whom I have bought and purchaſed: ſo in the 1 *Cor.* 6. *You are bought with a price, be not the ſervants of men*; that is, you are bought with a price to be my ſervants, therefore be not the ſervants of men in oppoſition to me, or to my diſſervice in any thing. So *Job* was Gods ſervant by way of purchaſe; *God buyeth every one of his ſervants with the blood of his Son.*

Thirdly, *My ſervant*, by way of Covenant. *Job* was Gods Covenant ſervant, God and he had (as it were) *ſealed Indentures. Job* entred into Covenant with God, that he would perform the duty of a ſervant; and God entred into Covenant with him, that he ſhould enjoy the priviledge of a ſervant. Now that which is Gods by right of Covenant, is his by ſpecial right.

Then again, We may further underſtand this, and all ſuch like expreſſions: When God ſaith, *my ſervant*, he doth as it were glory in his ſervant. God ſpeaks of him, as of his *treaſure, my ſervant*; as a man doth of that which he glorieth in. As the Saints glory in God, when they uſe this expreſſion, *my God*, and *my Lord, my Maſter*, and *my Chriſt*, this is a kind of glorying and triumphing in God. So this expreſſion carryeth ſuch a ſenſe in it, *Haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant* Job; there is one that I have honour by, one that I rejoyce and glory in, one that I can ſpeak of with much more then content, even with triumph, *my ſervant* Job: There's a man.

It is a mans honour to be Gods ſervant, and God thinks himſelf honoured by the ſervice of man.

It was once a curſe, and it is a great curſe ſtill to be the *ſervant of ſervants,* as it is ſaid of *Cham*; but it is an honour, the *greateſt honour* of the creature to be a ſervant to God. He that is a ſervant of Chriſt, is not onely free, but noble. And Chriſt reckoneth that he hath not onely work done him, but honour done him by *his willing people,* and therefore he glories in any ſuch, *my ſervant.*

Gen. 9.

My ſervant Job.] There is ſomewhat alſo to be conſidered in that. When God ſpeaks of his people by name, it noteth two things in Scripture.

Firſt, A ſpecial care that God hath over them.

Secondly, A ſpecial love that God hath to them, *John* 10. 3. *He calleth his own Sheep by name*; this noteth a ſpecial care Chriſt hath of his Sheep, and a ſpecial love that he beareth to them. So *Iſa.* 49. 1. *The Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name*; it noteth the ſpecial care, and the ſpecial love that God had of, and bare to Chriſt. See it eminently in that place, *Exod.* 33. 12. where *Moſes* ſpeaks thus unto God, *Yet thou haſt ſaid, I know thee by name*; now what it is to know by name, is by way of Expoſition added in the end of the verſe, *And thou haſt alſo found grace in my ſight.* So that to be known by name, is in a ſpecial manner to find grace in the ſight of God: When it is ſaid here, *My ſervant* Job, it ſhews that God did take an extraordinary care of, and did in an extraordinary manner love *Job* above all that were upon the Earth.

There is a great deal of difference between theſe two expreſſions; to know *the name of a man,* and to know *a man by name.* It is a truth, that God knoweth all your names, and the names of all the men in the world, but he doth not know all *by name.* Therefore the Scripture aſſures us, that God hath the names of none written, but the names of his own, as *Moſes* ſaith in the former Chapter, *If thou wilt not forgive the ſin of this people, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy Book which thou haſt written.* Thou knoweſt me by name, my name is written in thy Book: So *Luke* 10. Chriſt bad his Diſciples that they ſhould not *rejoyce ſo much that they had the ſpirits ſubject unto them; but in this they ſhould rejoyce, that their names were written in Heaven.* Note from hence,

That God doth take care of his elect children and ſervants in a ſpecial manner above all other men in the world.

The names of Princes, or Emperors, or Potentates, if they belong not to God, are not vouchſafed a place in his Book, but the names of the meaneſt of his Saints, are recorded for ever, and ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance.

Haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, &c.

We read before at the end of the 3. verſe, that *Job* in reference to his riches was *the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt:* Now he goeth beyond that, in reference to his holineſs, he is *the greateſt upon the Earth,* there is none like him in the Earth.

This we may underſtand, firſt, as a cauſe or reaſon why *Job* fell under the ſpecial conſideration or obſervation of Satan, *Haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant* Job, *becauſe* (ſo ſome render that particle) *or in as much, or for that, there is not the like to him in the Earth.* As if God ſhould ſay, there is reaſon why he muſt needs be taken into thy conſideration; becauſe there is not ſuch another man as he in the Earth. You know that a man is quickly taken notice of, when there are none like unto him, in the Place or Company where he is. If a man walk in the Streets, or come into a Houſe, who is of an extraordinary tallneſs; ſome will ask the queſtion, did you not obſerve ſuch a man, for there was never a man in the Company, never a man in the Street ſo tall as he? So one that is extraordinary in Beauty, or extraordinary in rich Apparrel, every one hath an Eye upon ſuch. The reaſon why many are obſerved, is, becauſe they are not *like to others,* they are beyond others in quality or in habit. So here, *Haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there is none like unto him in the Earth,* thou muſt needs take notice of him.

Or again, It may be underſtood thus; as the matter which Satan ſhould conſider and obſerve in *Job. Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job, *ſc.* in this thing, that there is not a man upon the Earth like to him? Haſt thou not taken notice of this in him? Thou who haſt looked over all men, and haſt (as it were) ſifted all mens manners, haſt thou not obſerved thus much, that there is not ſuch a man upon the Earth as *Job*? Hath not that fallen under thy obſervation?

So now in the words [**There is none like him**] there is a ſecret advancing of the praiſe of *Job.* For there is nothing that can be ſpoken more to the praiſe of man then this, to ſay that there is none like him. Though you ſay no more, you have ſaid all. As the Scripture (we know) ſets forth the wonderful praiſes of God, *Exod.* 15. 11. *Who is like unto thee O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee?* Which is reſolved into the negative, there is none amongſt the gods like unto thee, there is none like unto thee. *This is the high praiſe of God,* Mic. 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity?* It is the higheſt commendation of God to ſay, there is none like him, to ſet him above all creatures. In like manner here in the Text, when it is affirmed, that there was none like *Job*; this ſetteth him up in all praiſes and excellencies to the higheſt: though particulars be concealed, yet whatſoever may make for the honour of a man is included in this, that there is none like him.

Eſt quaſi quædam Apoſiopeſis maximarum laudum.

But how ſhould we underſtand this of *Job,* that there was none like to him upon the Earth?

We muſt underſtand it, not only in reference to wicked men, that there was no meer natural man, no wicked man like unto him: as if God had ſaid to Satan, there is none in the Earth which is thy inheritance, no earthly man *like my ſervant* Job; look over all thy ſervants, thou haſt not ſuch an one in the Earth. That's too low. We will take it therefore in reference to all the Saints that were then upon the Earth, there was not ſuch a godly man upon the Earth, none like unto him; and then we muſt expound *likeneſs* by a diſtinction. There is a double *likeneſs*; there is a *likeneſs of Quality*; and there is a *likeneſs of Equality.* When it is ſaid here, that in the Earth there was none like to *Job,* you muſt not underſtand it of a likeneſs of quality, as if there were no man that had ſuch qualities as *Job* had: for all the Saints that are in the Earth, have the ſame kind of qualities, they are all alike in the main and in the general; namely, in the *conformity of their nature to the will of God, which is holineſs,* that is the general quality; and thus all the Saints upon the Earth are alike; there is not any man can have any other likeneſs upon him then this; it is impoſſible. I ſay in this regard, the meaneſt and loweſt Saint upon the Earth, is like to the higheſt and greateſt Saint upon Earth: yea not only ſo, but the meaneſt Saint upon Earth, is like to Jeſus Chriſt *in Heaven,* in regard of quality; he hath the ſame quality, the ſame nature, he is *made partaker of the divine nature:* And the Apoſtle *Paul* exhorts the *Philippians, Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt.* The meaneſt Saint hath the ſame mind and the ſame quality, in reference to his new nature, that is in God himſelf or in Chriſt, he is like to God, *God begetteth all his own children in his own likeneſs.* But in regard of the *likeneſs of equality*; thus *Job* was ſuch a man as there was *none like him in the Earth*; no man like him in the degrees of thoſe qualities, they were not equal to him in this or that or the other grace. *Job* was a man above them all. As we know it is with wicked and natural men, all wicked men upon the Earth are as like one to another as can be, *As face anſwereth to face in water, ſo doth the heart of man to man*; the heart of one natural man to the other: but yet there are ſome wicked men ſo wicked, that there is *none like them in the Earth.* We have the very ſame words applied to *Ahab* in wickedneſs, 1 *King.* 21. 25. *But there was none like to* Ahab, *which did ſell himſelf to work wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord.* None like unto him, I ſay not (as in the former) that there were no wicked men that had the ſame ſinful qualities, for all have the ſame ſinful qualities; but there was none like him in equality of wickedneſs, *Ahab was a None-ſuch,* he was a Giant in wickedneſs, none were grown to ſuch a ſtature of wickedneſs as *Ahab.* In the ſame manner we muſt underſtand this concerning *Job,* none did reach to him in the *equality of his graces,* in the ſtature of the inward man; *Job had out-grown all the world in grace at that time.*

2 Pet. 1. 4.

Phil. 2. 5.

Prov. 27. 19

Yet a little further, for the underſtanding of this: We find ſometimes when the Scripture ſaith of a man, that there is none like to him, the ſpeech is to be reſtrained to ſome one particular. And it may be a *Queſtion*, whether we are to underſtand this of *Job's* preheminence in the general, or in regard of ſome one particular grace? We read of *Solomon* that there was none like him, *Neh.* 13. 26. *Among many Nations was there no King like him who was beloved of his God.* There was no King like to *Solomon*, but he reſtrained it to this, *who was beloved of his God*, none to whom God did ſo much communicate himſelf as to *Solomon*, none like to *Solomon* in wiſdom and knowledge, in thoſe revelations and intimate communions that God had with him, he was, as it were, *Gods darling*, as his other name *Jedediah* importeth. Then it is ſaid of *Hezekiah* (ſee another inſtance) 2 *King.* 18. 5. *That he truſted in the Lord God of* Iſrael, *ſo that after him was none like him among all the Kings of* Judah. Now this we muſt underſtand of ſome one particular eſpecially, that is, *of his truſting in the Lord*; in regard of his truſting ſo firmly in God, he went beyond all the Kings that came after him, there was none did ſo perfectly truſt in God: for it is ſaid, he *brake in pieces the braſen Serpent that* Moſes *had made, and ſtamped it to powder, truſting in the Lord.* Though ſome of his Counſellors might tell him, *If you do thoſe things you may bring a world of trouble upon your ſelf and the Kingdom*; *if you change theſe ancient cuſtoms you will make your people mutiny: this Serpent was of God, it was made in the wilderneſs*, &c. Yet ſaith he, I ſee it is abuſed to Idolatry, I care not for all that you ſay, *I will truſt in the Lord however it go.* Here was an high, an unparalel'd act of confidence. Yet afterward it was ſaid concerning *Joſiah*, 2 King. 23. 25. *That like unto him was there no King before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his ſoul, and with all his might.* Here it is ſaid after *Hezekiah*, that *Joſiah* was ſuch a King as there was none before him; and it was ſaid of *Hezekiah* that was before him, that he was ſuch a one, that after him there ſhould be none like him. How ſhall we reconcile theſe two? Only by applying thoſe expreſſions to ſuch and ſuch particulars: *Hezekiah* was ſuch a man, as there was no King after him for *truſting in God*; and *Joſiah* was ſuch a man, as there was no King before him, *for deſire, care, and zeal in reforming the Church of God*: *Joſiah's* reformation was the moſt perfect reformation that was made by all the Kings of *Judah*; and ſo in that particular, in regard of his great zeal for God, there was no King before him, like him. How ſhall we underſtand this then concerning *Job*?

2 King. 18. 4.

I anſwer in two Concluſions. Firſt, When it is ſaid, *there was none like to* Job, we are to underſtand it in reference to that generation. Doubtleſs God had as great ones in grace as *Job*, both before and afterward; *Noah* and *Abraham* before him, were eminent ones; and afterward, *Moſes*, and *Joſhua*, and *David*, and *Samuel*. But take *Job* in the time and the age wherein he lived, ſo there was none like unto him in equality, we may underſtand it ſo; For *Job* is conceived to be in the darker times, between *Abraham* and *Moſes*, about the time that the people of *Iſrael* were in captivity in *Egypt*; ſo that in reference to that time *Job* lived in, he was the only man, the chief man, the greateſt for grace in that age: As it is ſaid of *Noah*, he was *a juſt man, and perfect in his generations*; he was the juſteſt man of all that age, the moſt righteous of all that generation: ſo was *Job* in his.

Secondly, We may underſtand it, not only concerning ſome particular grace wherein he was moſt eminent: although it be a truth, that he had one grace, for which he was *cryed up* in Scripture more then for others, to wit, *Patience*; *Have you not heard of the patience of* Job? But we may take it for the whole latitude of *Job's* holineſs and graces, and there was not at that time ſuch a man upon the earth as *Job*: And ſo God himſelf ſeemeth to expound it, he doth not confine this to ſome one point, but ſaith, *Haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil?* God addeth this by way of expoſition, what he meaneth by a man to whom there was none like, who had no match upon the Earth. In thoſe words the whole ſum of godlineſs is compriſed; whatſoever goes, or may be conceived to go, toward the making up of a godly man, falls under one of thoſe four members: And God ſaith there is none like him, take him in any, or in all theſe.

I ſhall only give you two or three brief Obſervations from hence. *There is none like unto him in the Earth.* Learn,

Firſt, *That God hath ſervants of all ſtatures and degrees.*

All his ſervants come not to the like pitch, to the like height, here is one that is beyond them all, *My ſervant* Job, not a man like him upon the Earth.

Secondly, note this, *We ought not to ſet up our reſt in low degrees of grace; or content our ſelves to be like others in grace.*

We ſhould labour (if it be poſſible) to go beyond all others in grace. It did not ſatisfie *Job* that he had gotten to ſuch a degree, to ſuch a frame and temper of heart, to ſuch a courſe of holineſs, as his neighbours or brethren that were good, had attained unto, but he laboured to go beyond them all; *Not ſuch a man upon the Earth as* Job. It is an *holy ambition* to labour to exceed all others in grace and goodneſs. We have a great many in the world that deſire to be ſo rich, as none ſhould be like them; to be ſo gay in their apparel, as none ſhould be like them; ſo beautiful, as none ſhould be like them: but where are they that deſire and endeavour to have ſuch a portion or ſtock of grace, that none ſhould be like them; to be above others in holineſs, as *Job* was? True grace never reſts in any degrees or meaſures of grace, but labours to increaſe: he that hath any grace would have more: do not think it enough when you are like others; you ought to labour to be beyond others.

Then ſee the *Character* that God giveth of *Job*, *A perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil.* Theſe have been already opened in the firſt verſe, and theſe are but a report of the Hiſtory before going, therefore I ſhall not need to ſtay upon this place; only take theſe two Obſervations from it.

Firſt, *God hath a perfect Character of every ſoul.*

He knoweth fully and clearly what the tempers of your hearts and ſpirits are: juſt as the hiſtory and relation of *Job* was, ſuch is Gods teſtimony of him to a tittle.

Secondly, *God will give to every man a teſtimony according to his utmoſt worth.*

God will not conceal any of your graces, or obſcure your goodneſs, he will make it known to the world to the full, what you are. When God cometh to give teſtimony, he giveth it ſo, as his Saints can never looſe by it. Oftentimes man gives a teſtimony ſhort of his Brothers goodneſs, and draweth a curtain before another mans worth; but God will draw the curtain quite back, and unveil every ſoul to the whole world. You ſhall ſee and hear a teſtimony from God before men and Angels concerning your ſelves to the uttermoſt, what you are in all godly and gracious perfections.

Job was an excellent man, a man commended indeed, who was commended of God: as the Apoſtle concludes it, *Not he that commendeth himſelf is approved, but he whom God commendeth.* It is good for us to have our *Letters Teſtimonial from God*, to have our Letters Commendatory from Heaven. It is not what a man ſaith in his own heart, what he flattereth himſelf: It is not what your Neighbours or others flatter you, and ſay of you, but what God ſaith of you, what teſtimony he giveth of you. He is not approved that commendeth himſelf, or that other men commend only, but he whom the Lord commendeth. *And if God ſpeak well of us, no matter though all the world be ſilent, or ſlander.*

VERS. 9, 10, 11.

Then Satan anſwered the Lord and ſaid, doth Job fear God for nought?

Haſt not thou made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the Land.

But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.

IN the former verſe *Job* receiveth teſtimony from God himſelf; in this, though Satan cannot deny it, yet he calumniates, and miſ-interprets what he cannot contradict.

Satan grants indeed that *Job* fears God, but the latter words embaſe the former, and faſten inſincerity upon all his ſervices. *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* Fear is worth nothing unleſs in this ſenſe it be for nought. I have already ſhewed you what it is to fear God, I ſhall now clear the other term, and ſhew how much evil Satan charges *Job* with, when he queſtions, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?*

Satan accuſeth with a queſtion, *doth* Job *fear God for nought?* The queſtion may be reſolved into this Accuſation: *Job* doth not fear God for nought. The word which we tranſlate *for nought*, hath a threefold ſenſe from the Hebrew.

חִנָּם Firſt, Some render it *in vain*. *Doth* Job *fear God* (*fruſtra*) *in vain*. We are then ſaid to do a thing in vain, when we cannot attain the end which we propoſe in doing of it. The Egyptians *help in vain*, that is, they cannot procure that ſalvation and deliverance which was deſired or intended: and ſo the ſenſe here may be, *doth* Job *fear God in vain?* No, he doth not, he hath his end, he looked for riches, that he intended in taking up the ſervice of God, and that he hath attained.

Secondly, It is interpreted by, *without cauſe*, *Doth* Job *fear God without cauſe?* ſo the word is tranſlated, *Pſal.* 35.7. where *David* complaining of his enemies, ſaith, *Without cauſe have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cauſe they have digged for my ſoul.* As if he ſhould ſay, I never gave them any cauſe why they ſhould lay ſnares for me, I never wronged or hurt any of them. According to this ſenſe, when Satan ſaith, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* namely, without cauſe, it is as if he had ſaid, The Lord hath given *Job* reaſon enough, he hath given him cauſe enough to do what he doth; *Job* ſeeth reaſon in his Flocks and in his Heards, in his many Children, and in his great Houſhold, in his Subſtance, and in his Honour, he ſeeth reaſon in all theſe, why he ſhould fear God, and be a very obedient ſervant, having ſo bountiful a Maſter. *Doth* Job *fear God without cauſe?*

Or Thirdly, The word is tranſlated by *Gratis* (as we expreſs it.) To do a thing *gratis*, that is to do a thing without any reward, without any price, or without pay. I ſhall inſtance Scriptures wherein the word is rendred in that ſenſe, *Gen.* 29. 15. *Laban* ſaith to *Jacob*, when he was come to him to ſerve him, *Thou art my kinſman, ſhouldſt thou therefore ſerve me for nought?* that is, ſhouldſt thou ſerve me *gratis*, or without wages, as he explains his meaning in the next words, *Tell me what ſhall thy wages be?* So that to do a thing for nought, is to do a thing without wages, without price. And ſo there is the ſame interpretation of the word, *Exod.* 21. 11. where *Moſes* ſpeaking of the Maid that was taken into the family and was not married, ſaith, *If he do not theſe three unto her, then ſhe ſhall go out free without money*, ſhe ſhall pay nothing, ſhe ſhall go out *gratis*, or for nought. So here we may take in this ſenſe to fill up the form: doth *Job* ſerve God *gratis?* doth he ſerve God without price, or without pay? Surely no, thou haſt given him ſufficient hire, wages ſufficient for all his ſervice; *Job* doth not ſerve thee *gratis*, out of good-will and affection to thee, but he ſerveth thee for hire, becauſe thou payeſt him ſo plentifully.

So the general ſenſe of the words, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* is as if Satan had beſpoken the Lord in ſuch words as theſe: Lord thou doſt enquire of me whether *I had conſidered thy ſervant* Job? *I confeſs I have, and I muſt needs acknowledge that he is a man very diligent and zealous in thy worſhip and ſervice; neither do I wonder that he is ſo, ſeeing thou haſt out-bid all his labours and endeavours by heaps of benefits. There is no queſtion but thou mayeſt have ſervants enough upon ſuch terms, at ſuch rates as theſe: no marvail if* Job *be willing to do whatſoever thou commandeſt, whenas thou beſtoweſt upon* Job *whatſoever he deſireth. Thou ſeemeſt, as it were, to neglect all other men, and only to intend the ſafety and proſperity of thy darling* Job. *Is it any great matter, that he who hath received a flock of ſeven thouſand Sheep from thee, ſhould offer a few, ſeven, or ten, to thee in ſacrifice? Is it any great matter that he ſhould give ſome of his fleeces to cloath the poor, who hath received from thee ſo many thouſands to cloath and enrich himſelf? Is it a ſtrange thing that he ſhould feed a few, that hath five hundred yoak of Oxen? Is not* Job *well hired to work for thee? doth he fear God for nought, who hath received all theſe?*

Yet a little more diſtinctly for the opening of this expreſſion, I ſhall give you Satans ſenſe in three notable falſities or lyes, which he twiſts up together in this one ſpeech, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?*

Firſt, That riches will make any man ſerve God, that it is no great matter to be holy when we have abundance; a man that proſpers in the world cannot chuſe but be good. This Satan implyes in theſe words, and this is an extream lye; for as there is no affliction, ſo there is no outward bleſſing can change the heart or bring it about unto God, *They did not ſerve the Lord in the abundance of all things*, *Deut.* 28. 47. Abundance doth not draw the heart unto God: Yet Satan would infer that it doth. This might well be retorted upon Satan himſelf: Satan why didſt not thou ſerve God then? thou didſt once receive more outward bleſſings from God then ever *Job* did, the bleſſedneſs of an Angel; yet that glorious Angelical eſtate wherein thou waſt created, could not keep thee in the compaſs of obedience, thou didſt rebel in the abundance of all bleſſings, and didſt leave thy habitation; Satan thou ſhouldeſt not have ſerved God for nought. Why then didſt not thou ſerve him? thine own Apoſtacy refutes thy error in making ſo little of *Job*'s obedience, becauſe he had received ſo much.

Secondly, There is this in it; *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* Satan intimates, that God could have no ſervants for love, none unleſs he did pay them extreamly; That, God is ſuch a Maſter, and his work ſuch as none would meddle with, unleſs allured by benefits. As if Satan ſhould ſay, you have indeed one eminent ſervant, but you ſhould not have had him unleſs you had been at double coſt with him. Here is another lye Satan windeth up cloſely in this ſpeech; For the truth is, Gods ſervants follow him for himſelf: the very excellencies of God, and ſweetneſs of his wayes, are the argument and the wages by which his people are chiefly moved and hired to his ſervice. God indeed makes many promiſes to thoſe that ſerve him, but he never makes any bargains with them: His obey him freely. Satan makes bargains to hire men to his ſervice, as he did with Chriſt, *Mat.* 4. 9. *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* God makes many large and gracious promiſes, but he never makes any ſuch bargain and agreement with men for their obedience.

Then there is a third ſenſe full of falſhood, which Satan caſteth upon *Job*, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* that is, *Job* hath a byas in all that he doth, he is carried by the gain of godlineſs, not by any delight in godlineſs, thus to ſerve God. *Job* is mercenary, he ſerveth God for hire; *Job* hath not any deſire to pleaſe God, but to benefit himſelf; *Job* doth not ſeek the glory of God, but he ſeeks his own advantage. This is the ſenſe which the words have in reference to the perſon of *Job*; that as once Satan accus'd God unto man, ſo, now he accuſeth this man unto God. He accus'd God unto man, *Gen.* 3. when God had forbidden him to eat of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, and told him that in the day he did eat thereof he ſhould ſurely die; *You ſhall not ſurely die*, ſaith Satan, *for God knoweth, that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing good and evil.* As if he ſhould ſay, God hath not forbidden this tree, becauſe it will do you any hurt, but becauſe he would be God alone, he would have all the knowledge to himſelf, he hath an ill intent: he knows, that if you eat of it, you will be like him, as gods knowing good and evil. So here he accuſeth man to God, *Job* ſerveth you indeed, and offereth you ſacrifice, and obeyeth you, but it is that he may get by you, that he may receive more and more from you, he likes the pay, the reward, not the work; he cares not for God, but for the good that cometh from him. This is the accuſation which here the ſlanderer caſteth upon all the holy ſervices and duties of *Job*.

Thus in brief you ſee the ſenſe, I ſhall give you ſome obſervations from it.

Firſt, *It is an argument of a moſt malignant ſpirit, when a mans actions are fair, then to accuſe his intentions.*

The Devil hath nothing to ſay againſt the actions of *Job*, but goes down into his heart and accuſeth his intentions. Malice miſ-interprets the faireſt actions, but love puts the faireſt interpretation it can upon foul actions. Malice will ſay when a man doth well, it is true he doth it, but it is for vain glory, it is to be ſeen of men, it is for his own ends, it is for gain: But when a man doth ill, love will

ſay

Luk.23.24.

ſay, this he hath done through ignorance, or inadvertency, or violent temptations, love covers a multitude of ſins as fairly as poſſibly it may with wiſdom and with juſtice. How fair a cover did Chriſt himſelf put upon the fouleſt act that ever was in the world, upon his own crucifying, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*; they do it indeed, but they do it ignorantly. So *Peter* afterward, *I wot* (ſaith he) *that through ignorance you did it, as did alſo your Rulers.* Love excuſeth what is ill done in another, and malice accuſeth what others do well. Let ſuch men learn from hence, that in ſo doing they are the mouth and tongue of Satan.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That it is an argument of a baſe and an unworthy ſpirit to ſerve God for ends.*

Had this been true of *Job* in Satans ſenſe, it had indeed ſpoiled and blemiſhed all that he had done. Thoſe that come unto God upon ſuch terms, they are not holy, but crafty; they make a trade with God, they do not ſerve God; it is not *Obedientia*, but *Mercatura*, as one expreſſeth it, it is merchandizing with God, not obeying him. There is reward enough in God himſelf, there is reward enough in the very duties themſelves; work and wages go together. Therefore for any to be carried out to the ſervice of God upon outward things, argues a baſe and an earthy ſpirit. As ſin is puniſhment enough unto it ſelf; though there were no other puniſhment, though there were no hell to come after, yet to do evil is or will be hell enough unto it ſelf: So to do good is reward enough unto it ſelf. A Heathen Poet obſerved it as a brand of infamy upon the age wherein he lived, that moſt did repent that they had done good, or were good *gratis*, or for nought, that the price of all good actions fell in their eſteem, unleſs they could raiſe themſelves. If a Heathen condemn'd this, how damnable is it among Chriſtians?

Nec facile invenies multis in millibus unum virtutem pretium qui putet eſſe ſui.----Et gratis pœnitet eſſe probum. Ovid *de* Pont.

But here a Queſtion will ariſe, and I ſhall a little debate it, becauſe it doth further clear the main point, *May we not have reſpect to our own good, or unto the benefit we ſhall receive from God?* Is it unlawful to have an eye to our own advantage, while we do our duty? Muſt we ſerve God for nought in that ſtrict ſenſe, or elſe will God account nothing of all our ſervices?

I ſhall clear that in five brief Concluſions, and theſe will (I ſuppoſe) fully ſtate the ſenſe of this Text and of this ſpeech.

The firſt is this, There is no man doth, or poſſibly can, ſerve God for nought: God hath by benefits already beſtowed, and by benefits promiſed, out-vyed and out-bid all the endeavours and ſervices of the creature. If a man had a thouſand pair of hands, a thouſand tongues, and a thouſand heads, and ſhould ſet them all on work for God, he were never able to anſwer the ingagements and obligations which God hath already put upon him. Therefore this is a truth, that no man can in a ſtrict ſenſe ſerve God for nought. God is not beholden to any creature for any work or ſervice that is done unto him.

Again ſecondly, this is further to be conſidered. The more outward bleſſings any one doth receive, the more he ought to ſerve God, and the more ſervice God looks for at his hands. That is another Concluſion. Therefore we find ſtill, that when God hath beſtowed many outward bleſſings upon any, either Perſons or Nations, he chargeth an acknowledgment upon them, Hoſ. 2. 8. *She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplied her ſilver and gold, which ſhe beſtowed upon* Baal; *therefore I will come and recover it*, ſaith *God.* You having received this, you ought to have ſerved me with it. You ſee how God upbraideth *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8. *I annointed thee King of Iſrael, and I delivered thee out of the hand of* Saul, *and I gave thee thy Maſters houſe, and thy Maſters wives into thy boſom; and if this had been too little, I would moreover have given thee ſuch and ſuch things. How is it then that thou haſt deſpiſed the Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his ſight?* As if he ſhould ſay, the more I beſtowed upon thee, the more obligations thou ſhouldſt feel thy ſelf under to obey me faithfully.

In the third place, it is lawful to have ſome reſpect to benefits both received and promiſed by way of Motive and incouragement to ſtir us up and quicken us, either in doing or in ſuffering for God. *Moſes*, Heb. 11. 26. *had reſpect to the recompence of reward*; therefore it is not unlawful. And *Chriſt* himſelf, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Looking at the joy that was ſet before him.* Theſe are examples beyond all exceptions, that reſpect may be had to benefits and bleſſings received or expected.

Fourthly, Then reference unto benefit is ſinful, when we make it either the ſole and only cauſe, or the ſupream and chief cauſe of our obedience. This makes any thing we do ſmell ſo of our ſelves that God abides it not: when we reſpect our ſelves, either alone or above God, God hath no reſpect at all to us. As Chriſt taxes thoſe, *Joh.* 6. *You did not ſeek me, but the loaves.* To have reſpect to the loaves more then to Chriſt, or as much as to Chriſt, is to have no reſpect at all to Chriſt.

Thus when the *Sichemites, Gen.* 34. 23. admitted of Circumciſion, and ſo gave up themſelves as a Covenant-people to God, here was all the argument they propoſed to themſelves, *Shall not their cattel, and their ſubſtance, and every beaſt of theirs be ours?* what beaſts were theſe *Sichemites*, what ſhadows of Religion, who would take upon them this badge of Religion for the gain of beaſts and worldly ſubſtance? Such pure reſpects to our ſelves, defile all our ſervices, and render our perſons odious unto God.

Therefore in all our duties and holy ſervices, we muſt ſet the glory of God in the Throne, that muſt be above; and then we may ſet our deſires of Heaven and glory on the right hand, we may ſet the fear of hell and the avoiding of miſery on the left hand, we may ſet our deſires of enjoying outward comforts here in the world at the foot-ſtool. Thus we muſt marſhal and rank reſpects to God and our ſelves. And thus we may look upon outward things, as motives and incouragements; we muſt not make them ends and cauſes; we may make them as occaſions, but not as grounds of our obedience.

Laſtly, We may look upon them as fruits and conſequents of holineſs, yea as incouragements unto holineſs, but not as cauſes of our holineſs; or we may eye theſe as *media*, through which to ſee the bounty and goodneſs of God, not as *objecta* on which to fix and terminate our deſires. So much for the clearing of the firſt part of Satans anſwer, *Doth* Job *ſerve God for nought?* Wherein you ſee he caſts dirt upon *Job*'s ſincereſt duties, and how we may carry our reſpects in the ſervice of God to outward bleſſings, whether received or promiſed. It followeth,

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Verſe 10. **Haſt thou not made an hedge about him and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land.**

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Here Satan more fully expounds himſelf, and what he meaneth by *Job*'s not ſerving God for nought. You ſhall ſee it is not for nought. He caſts up the particulars of Gods benefits conferred on *Job*, and they amount to a great ſum. 1. He hath an *hedge* about him, that is ſomewhat. 2. He hath *bleſſed* him, that's more. 3. He doth *increaſe* and *multiply*, there's the higheſt degree of outward happineſs. Here are three degrees of Gods dealing with *Job*. Theſe Satan reckons up in this verſe, that he may make *Job*'s goodneſs of no account, and leave his perſon in no degree of acceptance with God.

Here is firſt *Protection* in the *hedge*, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?*

Secondly, Here is a *Benediction* upon that which was protected. It was not a bare keeping of that from ſpoiling, *but it was a bleſſing of it.*

Thirdly, Here is alſo an *increaſe* or multiplication; he was not only bleſſed to keep himſelf and all he had in the ſtate and plight wherein he ſtood, but there was a daily increaſe and an augmentation. Thou protecteſt him, thou bleſſeſt him, and thou doſt increaſe all that he hath, *he is increaſed in the Land.* That is the ſum and ſenſe of the words. I ſhall now open them a little more diſtinctly.

שׂכת

Firſt, He ſpeaks here of his protection; *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* Some render it, *Haſt thou not made a wall about him?* Or, *Haſt thou not made a trench about him?* It is an elegant Metaphor frequent in Scripture, ſhewing that as when a Field is well hedg'd, or a Town well wall'd and entrench'd, then it is ſafe. So when God is ſaid to make an hedge or a wall about a man, or about a nation, the ſafety of that man or nation is aſſured by it, *Iſa.* 5. 2. We have this word uſed, where God ſpeaks of his vineyard, *He planted a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it, or he made a wall or an hedge about it.* So *verſ.* 5. when God is angry with his vineyard and will deſtroy it, it is thus expreſt, *I will* (ſaith he) *take away the hedge thereof*, that is, I will take away my protection from it. In the ſame ſenſe, *Zac.* 2. 5. *I will be* (ſaith God) *a wall of fire round about*; that is, I will be a defence unto it. So when it is ſaid here, that *God* had made an *hedge about* Job, it notes Divine Protection, he was under the wing and ſafegard of the Almighty.

Deus ipſe arx eſt quæ virum innoxium ambit. Pondus habet immenſum pronomen illud Tu, *cujus ſenſus mirus ac arcanus eſt, Deum ipſum eſſe ſepem, &c. non hanc curam ſolis demandaſti angelis.*

This hedge of protection is twofold. It is ſaid God made this hedge, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* Firſt, There is an hedge which is made immediately by the hand of God: Sometimes God makes the hedge immediately, yea ſometimes God expreſſeth himſelf to be the hedge or wall, as *Zac.* 2. 5. So *Pſal.* 18. (all thoſe are words of protection) *verſ.* 2. *Thou art my rock and my fortreſs, my deliverer, my ſtrength, my buckler, the horn of my ſalvation, and my high Tower,* &c. There God was the hedge, here God makes the hedge: God hath not put out this hedge to others to make, but he makes it himſelf; Satan obſerves as much: *Haſt not thou made an hedge about him?*

Secondly, Sometime the hedge of protection is made by the hands of others. God ſends out his Angels to guard his people, *Pſal.* 34. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.* Encamping and hedging are to the ſame purpoſe: Gods hedge is as ſtrong for ſafety as any wall, as any trench. Sometime God doth make one man to be an hedge or a defence to another. The ſervants of *Nabal* ſaid of *David*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 16. *That he had been a wall unto them both by night and day*; that is, he had been a protection and a guard to them, he had defended them all the while his Army was quartered in thoſe parts. God makes a good man to be as a wall to a wicked man. How much more will he make men and Angels to be walls and hedges for the ſecurity of his own people?

The Text further goes on and ſhews the compaſs of this hedge, what ground it takes in, how far it reacheth: and here we ſhall find that it was a very large hedg of a great extent. We know there are ſome Cities that have not only a ſingle wall, but a double wall, yea ſome ſtrong Cities and places have a treble wall about them: So we find a threefold hedg made about *Job*, and they are all expreſt here in this Text.

Here was an hedg, firſt, about his *Perſon*, that was the inmoſt hedg, or the inmoſt wall, in theſe words, *Haſt thou not made an hedg about him?* That is, an hedg about the very perſon of *Job*, an hedg about his body, leſt any ſickneſs, diſeaſes or dangers ſhould invade it; and an hedg about his ſoul, leſt ſnares and temptations ſhould take hold of, or prevail againſt that; thou haſt made an hedg about him, ſo that I cannot come at the perſon of *Job* to hurt him.

Again, Beſides this inmoſt wall, and the neereſt about his perſon, there is a ſecond wall or hedg, and that is expreſt to be about his family. *Haſt thou not made an hedg about him, and about his houſe?* By houſe, we are not to underſtand the material houſe of ſtone or timber, the edifice in which *Job* dwelt, but by the houſe we are to underſtand the houſhold, *Job* and his family, as oftentimes in Scripture, the houſe is put for the family. *This day* (ſaith Chriſt to *Zacheus*) *is ſalvation come to thy houſe*; and it is ſaid of the Jaylor, *that he believed and all his houſe*, that is, all his houſehold. So here, thou haſt made an hedg about him, and about his houſe, that is, about his family, about his children eſpecially: hence the Hebrew word for a child, for a ſon, doth ſignifie an houſe, becauſe children build up the houſe or keep up the name of their fathers. So that the houſe hedg'd about, is the children, the family and the followers and ſervants of *Job*; as if Satan ſhould ſay, thou haſt made an hedg not only about his perſon, but about all that belong unto him, about his children and ſervants, I may not meddle with them neither. There is the ſecond hedg.

Act. 16.

Jobus *nihil tam vile & exile habet, quod non cuſtodiendum in tuam ſuſceperis tutelam.* Lavat. *in loc.*

Laſtly, There is an hedg or wall, *Haſt thou not made an hedg about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath?* That is about his goods, about his cattel, and about his lands: ſo far as ever any thing of *Jobs* doth extend, ſo far the hedge goeth; if *Job* have but the leaſt thing abroad, God doth make an hedge about it, he hath not the meaneſt thing belonging unto him but is under guard and protection. That is the meaning of it.

There is yet another thing to be obſerved in the words to make it more full. *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide?* It is not only ſaid, thou haſt made an hedge about him, but thou haſt made an hedge about him *on every ſide*, which is a *pleonaſm* or redundancy of ſpeech. It was a ſign of Gods care of *Job*, when he made an hedge about him; but to ſay he made an *hedge about him on every ſide*, here is expreſt an extraordinary care, that God had not left the leaſt gap for Satan, or for any annoyance, to come in unto *Job*. There is not the leaſt breach, the leaſt hole, thou haſt hedged him round about on every ſide; whereby the wonderful ſafety of *Job*, his family and eſtate, is ſet out under the protection of God. That for the opening of thoſe words.

Illud quod per circuitum vallatur, ex nulla parte poteſt pati inſultum.

Per circuitum circumcirca.

Firſt, We may obſerve from the manner of this ſpeech, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* Satan ſpeaks very angerly. Queſtions as they ever expreſs quickneſs of ſpirit, ſo they, many times, expreſs much paſſion and trouble of ſpirit. Here Satan in queſtioning, ſpeaks as if he were vext, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* Hence note,

That the protection which God gives to his people and ſervants, is the vexation of Satan and of all his Inſtruments.

It troubleth them extreamly that God doth ſo regard and hedge up his people, that they cannot come at them. No man can endure to ſee that defended, which he wiſheth were deſtroyed.

Then again, if we conſider the matter of Satans ſpeech, it is a truth, and a moſt comfortable truth, a truth full of conſolation to the people of God, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide?* We may note hence,

That Satan, the father of lyes, ſometimes ſpeaks truth for his own advantage.

For, as it is ſaid concerning *Judas* about his care for the poor, when he would have had the oyntment ſold and given to the poor, *This he ſaid* (ſaith the Text) *not that he cared for the poor, but becauſe he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.* So we may ſay here, Satan ſets forth the care of God over his people in moſt exact terms; And why doth he do this? Not that he cares to ſpeak well of God, or to advance God in the eyes of his people, by telling his people and ſervants how watchful he is over them: but he doth this only for his own advantage, that hereby he may leſſen the ſervice, and blemiſh the obedience of *Job*, becauſe he received ſo much care and love from God. As it is many times with ungodly men, they will do good, not that they care to do good, but only for ſome by-end: So Satan will ſometime ſpeak that which is true, not that he regards the truth, or that he would ſpeak a word of truth (for he hath nothing but lyes in his heart; there is a lye in his heart when there is truth in his mouth.) He never ſpeaks truth, but to deceive and do hurt by it.

Thirdly, we may obſerve this, which lieth plain in the words,

That the people and ſervants of God dwell in the midſt of enemies, in the midſt of dangers.

Why elſe need there be an hedge, a wall about them? What need there be a guard about them, unleſs there were dangers about them? There are none in the world ſo envyed and ſpighted, ſo aimed at and perſecuted as the people and ſervants of God; you may ſee it by the wall that is made about them; God will not beſtow coſt and care in preſerving and guarding where there is no danger of invading. If you ſhould come to a City and ſee it mightily fortified, and ſee men make wall after wall about it, and bulwark after bulwark, you will preſently conjecture, that City ſtands in great danger, and is in the midſt of enemies: So when we read that God was fain to make wall after wall, to make hedge after hedge about the perſon, the family, the eſtate of *Job*, it ſheweth that the devil had an ill eye upon *Job* and upon all that was *Jobs*; Satan and his inſtruments, had it not been for this hedge, would quickly have fallen upon him. No godly man ſhould live a quiet moment, did not the Lord ſtretch forth his hand to ſave and protect him.

Fourthly, *That God himſelf doth undertake the guarding and protecting of his people.*

Thou haſt made an hedg about him, and about all that he hath.

God himſelf either doth it immediately, or he doth put thoſe to do it to whom he giveth his power, ſtrength and wiſdom. There is no meer creature could be ſtrength and ſecurity enough for us againſt our great malicious and mighty enemies, therefore God himſelf either is or makes the hedge. There is no ſtrength in man but Satan can over-match it; Satan can over-power all the ſtrength, and out-wit all the wiſdom that is in the creature. Fleſh and blood are no match for a ſpirit. *And we wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt Principalities and Powers and ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places*, Epheſ. 6. 12. But if God makes an hedge about us, it is not in the power of all the enemies in the world, whether men or devils, to make a gap in it; they are ſure that are under the protection of God. *They that dwell in the ſecret place of the moſt high, they ſhall abide (ſafe) under the ſhadow of the Almighty*, Pſa. 91. 1.

Fifthly, You ſee here how far the hedge goeth, an hedge not only about his perſon and houſhold, but about all that he hath. Take the meaneſt thing that *Job* hath, God protects it and hedgeth it about. Then we may note this, *That God hath an eſpecial care, and doth exceedingly prize even the meaneſt thing that belongs to one of his ſervants.* God would not beſtow an hedge about it, if he did not prize it: A man will not hedge or wall that about, which he doth not value. God highly values the meaneſt thing that belongs to one of his ſervants. The *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* But not only is the blood, the life of the Saints, precious in the ſight of God, but every member, every hair of their head is precious: God numbers theſe. Not only are their children precious, but every thing that's called theirs, their ſervants, their houſehold, their cattel, their Oxen, their Aſſes, whatſoever they have, is all precious in the ſight of God.

Pſal. 116.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *That Satan hath a deadly ſpight, not only againſt the perſons of the godly, but againſt every thing that belongs unto a godly man.*

Satan would not only hurt and annoy them in their perſons, but in every thing that's theirs. If God (if we may ſo ſpeak with reverence) ſhould leave but a dog that belongs unto one of his ſervants unguarded, Satan would do it a miſchief; Satan would be doing at the leaſt thing, rather then not do miſchief. If he cannot deſtroy our ſouls he would be at the very hair of our heads; therefore Chriſt to comfort the Diſciples in the time of trouble, aſſures them, *that the very hairs of their heads were numbred*: As if he ſhould ſay, God will have an account of every hair, the enemies cannot pull off a hair, but God will call them to a reckoning for it.

Mat. 10. 30.

And it notes too that the enemies will take hold of any thing that belongs to the people of God; if they cannot get all, they will get a hair if they can, why elſe is it expreſt that the very hairs of their heads are numbred? Thoſe words at once intimate, *Gods care of all, and Satans malice againſt all.*

It followeth, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him*, &c. **Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the Land.**

Thou haſt bleſſed.] The root *Barac*, which from the word here uſed, doth ſignifie to bow the knee as well as to bleſs, becauſe men uſed to bow the knee in bleſſing God or man. Bleſſings are carryed three wayes.

Firſt, From man to man; one man bleſſeth another. There were Prophetical or extraordinary bleſſings, as *Iſaac* bleſſed *Jacob*, and *Jacob* bleſſed his ſons upon his death-bed; and there is a popular or ordinary bleſſing, to wiſh well to another is to bleſs another, every time we pray for our friends, we bleſs our friends. So man from man.

Secondly, Man bleſſeth God; and then man bleſſeth God when he praiſeth God, when he takes notice of and returns thanks for the bleſſings received from God. *Bleſs the Lord O my ſoul*, &c. (Pſal. 103. 2.) *and forget not all*, (that is,) *forget not any of his benefits.* Thankfully to remember benefits, is to bleſs the Lord. The Cup in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, is called the *Cup of bleſſing*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. becauſe therein we commemorate the death of Chriſt, and render thanks to the Name of the Lord, for the unſpeakable benefits conveighed to us by his blood.

Thirdly, as here in the Text, God bleſſeth man. Now God bleſſeth man, when he cauſeth that to proſper which man undertakes. Mans bleſſing unto man, it is only a wiſh, an optative bleſſing: but Gods bleſſing unto man is an operative bleſſing, as *Aquinas* expreſſeth it, *Dei benedicere eſt benefacere*, when God wiſheth us good he doth us good.

So then the ſenſe is, Thou haſt bleſſed, that is, thou haſt cauſed him to proſper and thrive in what he undertakes, as we ſhall ſee in the object of the bleſſing, *Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands.*

The work of his hands.] We are not to underſtand it ſtrictly for manual or hand labours, as if *Job* were a man imployed in ordinary manual ſervices, in the labour of his hands; but according to an ordinary uſe of ſpeech among the *Hebrews*, and likewiſe amongſt other Nations, by the *work of the hands*, is underſtood any kind of labour, any kind of buſineſs whatſoever. As it is ſaid of Chriſt, *Iſaiah* 53. 10. *that the pleaſure of the Lord did proſper in his hands.* Now the work that Chriſt had to do was not a handy work, yet it did proſper in his hands, that is, he managing and going about it, it did proſper and took ſucceſs; it was effectual for the redemption and ſalvation of his people; This was proſpering of the work in his hands. In this ſenſe the work of the head may be called the work of the hands; the work of the tongue, the work of the hands; any work, any buſineſs that a man doth, may be called the work of his hands. So then, *Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands*, that is, thou haſt bleſſed every thing that *Job* goeth about, as a Magiſtrate, as a Miniſter, or as a Maſter of a Family, in any of, in all his relations, thou haſt cauſed his endeavours to proſper. In the 28. of *Deuteronomy*, an univerſal bleſſing is thus promiſed, verſ. 6. *Bleſſed thou ſhalt be when thou comeſt in, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be when thou goeſt out:* between thoſe two are contained all the labours and undertakings of that people: by their going forth is meant the beginning of their labours, and by their coming in is meant the end and concluſion of their labours; ſo that beginning and ending, when they ſet their hands to a buſineſs, and when they took their hands from a buſineſs, they ſhould be bleſſed, that is, they ſhould have a thorough bleſſing upon all their labours. So here, *Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands*, that is, every thing he putteth his hands unto.

And his ſubſtance is increaſed in the Land.] That is the third thing which Satan doth obſerve here concerning *Job*, that he was not only bleſſed in the eſtate wherein he was, but God did mightily increaſe and multiply his eſtate. *He is increaſed in the Land.* The word we tranſlate *increaſed*, ſignifieth not an ordinary increaſe, but ſuch an increaſe as breaks the bounds; it ſignifieth ſo to increaſe in ſuch an abundance, as that the former place where thoſe things were, cannot contain nor hold them, but they muſt ſeek ſome new place, more room for them: ſuch a kind of increaſe is here meant. So the word is uſed, *Exod.* 1. 12. concerning the people of *Iſrael* when they were in *Egypt*, when they were afflicted, the Text ſaith, *The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew*; the ſame word is there uſed, to ſhew the wonderful increaſe of the people of *Iſrael* when they were in their affliction: It was ſuch as did break the bounds. As it is with a river, the more it is ſtopped, the more it ſwelleth and breaks all the banks and bays, whatſoever is ſet to hinder the courſe of it: So much is meant in that place of *Moſes*, when the people of *Iſrael* were ſtopped and hindered from their increaſe, they like a river did ſwell over all, they did increaſe ſo as they did break all the bounds. Thus of *Job*, *his ſubſtance is increaſed*, it is as if we ſhould ſay in our Language, he had ſo much that there was no end of, no room for his ſubſtance: as the rich fool ſaid, *Luk.* 12. when his eſtate was increaſed, what ſhall I do, my barns are not big enough? I muſt pull them down and build larger, that they may hold my eſtate. So *Jobs* eſtate was ſo increaſed, that the compaſs he had for that preſent could not contain it, he muſt make new folds for his Sheep, they increaſed ſo; and he muſt make greater barns for his Corn, his fields brought forth ſuch plentiful crops; he muſt make larger ſtalls for his Oxen, he muſt build bigger houſes for his family; *he is increaſed*, he is broken forth in the Land, *Gen.* 38. 29. When *Tamar* brought forth twins, the Text ſaith, that one put out his hand, and

פרץ

In immenſum excreſcere.

Hebraica vox Paraz *ſignificat non ſolum creſcere, ſed præ copia & abundantia diſrumpi*, Merc. *Ruperunt horrea meſes.* Virg.

as he drew it back, his brother came out, and therefore they called his name *Pharez* (the ſame Original word that is here uſed) becauſe of the breach that he made. So this ſignifieth the breaking forth of the eſtate of *Job* in the Land, he increaſed wonderfully and exceedingly. Thus Satan, by the moſt emphatical words, ſtill heightens the dealings of God with *Job*, that he may the more debaſe the ſervices of *Job* towards God.

Thou haſt bleſſed (ſaith he) *the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the Land.* We may obſerve here,

First, That, *All ſucceſs in buſineſs is from the bleſſing of the Lord.*

Satan ſpeaks very good Divinity here; *Thou haſt bleſſed:* It is from the Lord. It is ſaid of *Joſeph*, Gen. 39. 23. That, *whatſoever he did, the Lord made it to proſper.* We may do much, we may ſet our hands to do many things, but we cannot proſper any thing. Working is our part, but proſpering is the Lords part. As it was with the Diſciples, they could fiſh all night; but till Chriſt came, they could not catch; when Chriſt came, the bleſſing came; and when the bleſſing came, there was not only fiſhing, but catching; and there was catching in abundance. So it is in all the works of mens Callings; men may be labouring, and ſweating, and toyling, but there is no proſpering, no ſucceeding, till God come with a bleſſing. *Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands.* Some take all to themſelves, and thank their own labours, their own wiſdom, policy and parts: Others aſcribe all to their good Fortune, &c. We ſee Satan himſelf here preacheth a truth, that will confute them; he is more orthodox then theſe practical Atheiſts: Satan acknowledgeth, *Thou haſt bleſſed.*

Luke 5.

Then again, we may obſerve, *Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands.*

Every one ought to be a man of employment.

Every one ought to have ſome buſineſs to turn his hand unto. In the former part of this Chapter, we read of *Job*'s piety and holineſs, and of his zeal in the worſhip of God: Here now we ſee *Job*'s care and diligence in his place and calling wherein God had ſet him, which is called the *work of his hands.* Every one muſt have two callings, and the one helpeth forward the other; *Job* feared God, and *Job* went on in the buſineſs which God ſet him. *Job* is ſaid to ſerve God continually, and yet *Job* did work continually. Theſe two continuals may well ſtand together; for both the continuals are taken for their ſeaſons; continually, that is, ſeaſonably, according to the ſeveral opportunities God called him to, and put into his hands. This rebukes thoſe who have no labour, who can ſhew no work of their hands. It was ſaid to *Adam*, and in him to mankind, not only as a curſe, but as a command, *In the ſweat of thy face thou ſhalt eat thy bread, till thou return to earth*; this is laid upon all, *In the ſweat of thy face thou ſhalt eat thy bread*: Not that every man is bound to labour in ſuch an employment as cauſeth the face to ſweat; but thereby is meant ſerious labour and employment in ſome honeſt calling: ſo here, the work of the hands, is taken, not ſtrictly, but for any employment wherein *Job* was ſerviceable to God and his Countrey.

Gen. 3. 19.

Put theſe two together; *Thou haſt bleſſed*, and, *thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands*; and we may obſerve from both,

That the Lord delighteth to bleſs thoſe who are induſtrious.

It is ſeldom that there is an induſtrious hand, but there is a bleſſing of God upon it: Hence, as we find in one place, *The diligent hand maketh rich*; ſo in another, *The bleſſing of God maketh rich.* The bleſſing of God maketh rich, and the diligent hand maketh rich; neither of them alone, but both conjoyned; the bleſſing of God upon a diligent hand makes rich: a diligent hand cannot make rich, without God; and God doth not uſually make rich without a diligent hand: Therefore it is ſaid here, *that God bleſſed the work of* Job's *hands. Up, and be doing, and the Lord ſhall be with you.* God will not be with us unleſs we be doing. God doth not love to bleſs thoſe that are idle; if we be doing, God will be bleſſing; his being with us, is put for his aſſiſting and proſpering of us: So it is indeed in all things. God doth not work, that we ſhould ſit ſtill; nor bleſs, to the intent that we ſhould do nothing; as it is in *Judges* 6. They proclaimed *the Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*; thoſe two muſt go together. Would you be bleſſed with protection? you muſt labour to protect your ſelves. Do not think that the Lord will protect you with your hands in your pockets, and your Swords ruſting in your ſheaths: while you labour in theſe times of danger, to defend your ſelves, you may expect defence from the Lord: How unbecoming is it for you now to ſtand ſtill, and ſay, *Lord help us.* We muſt indeed *ſtand ſtill* (as *Moſes* counſelled the people, *Exod.* 14. 13.) in regard of fear and diffidence, but beware of ſtanding ſtill in regard of care and diligence, as ever you hope to *ſee the ſalvation of the Lord. The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon* muſt be cried up at once; thoſe two muſt go together.

Prov. 10. 4. Prov. 10. 22.

There is a fourth point that we muſt obſerve alſo from the connection of the two ſentences in the Text. *Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is encreaſed in the Land.*

The Bleſſing of God where it falleth, is effectual.

If God doth but bleſs, we ſhall encreaſe, there is no queſtion of it; if God doth but bleſs, we ſhall encreaſe mightily. *Thou haſt bleſſed him, and he is encreaſed*: It is the word that followed the firſt bleſſing after the Creation, *Gen.* 1. 28. *God bleſſed them, and ſaid unto them, be fruitful and multiply.* Bleſſing and multiplying go together: The bleſſing of God is a powerful bleſſing; *it is mighty in operation*, and carrieth all before it. You know what a ſtrong opinion *Balak* had concerning the bleſſing of *Balaam*, Num. 22. 6. *I wot* (ſaith he) *that he whom thou bleſſeſt, is bleſſed, and he whom thou curſeſt, is curſed*; a ſtrong conceit, and but a conceit. As there are many at this day, as ſtrongly conceited of the bleſſing of that *Balaam of the ſeven hills*, that bleſſing, but curſed Prophet: If they can but get a bleſſing from the *Pope*, they think all is ſafe; if they can but get a bleſſed Sword (ſuch ſome have obtained) to do a curſed act, to cut the throat of Gods people, or of their Prince, it muſt needs be effectual. You know there was a bleſſed Standard or Banner given to them that came againſt us in Eighty eight: and when that Standard was lifted up, that Banner diſplayed, with the Popes ſpecial bleſſing, they accounted, nay called themſelves *Invincible*: Such was their invincible ignorance, till they were taught better with *Briars and Thorns*, or rather with ſtorms and winds fighting againſt them. And though they have been often cozened, yet ſtill they retain ſuch an eſteem of the Popes bleſſing, that they travel and throng for it, as for their lives, more then for all manner of riches. I may ſay to them, as once that great Cardinal did on the ſame occaſion; *Seeing this people will be deceived, let them be deceived.* But I deſire to raiſe your eſteem of Gods bleſſing; for it is a certain truth, that whom God bleſſeth, they are bleſſed: Gods bleſſings are fixed and effectual bleſſings; if he bleſs, we ſhall be bleſſed indeed: His bleſſings are irreverſible bleſſings, as *Balaam* was forced to confeſs; *Behold, he hath bleſſed, and I cannot reverſe it.* If once God hath bleſſed, it is not in Satan, nor in all his lying Prophets, nor in all the power of the Creature to alter it, no nor to retard or hinder it for a moment.

Judg. 8. 16.

If God now give us the mercy of Protection, if he make the hedge about us, and bleſs us in theſe times, we ſhall be continued and eſtabliſhed in the Land; yea, we ſhall be increaſed in the Land, we ſhall break forth abundantly, to the amazement of all hearers and beholders. Though *Rome* curſe, though *Hell* plot, yet if *God* bleſs, we are ſafe.

This is the thing therefore that we ſhould labour for, to be under the influence of the bleſſing of God. If we have but that, we have all; let means be what they will, great or little, or none at all, if God bleſs, he can make any thing ſerve the turn; any thing with a bleſſing, will do it; any thing with a bleſſing, will make us encreaſe; yea, make us a ſtrong, a mighty, an invincible people; ſo that Satan, and his inſtruments, for very envie, ſhall be forced to acknowledge that there is a hedge about us, which they cannot break through, that there is a wall about us, which they can neither ſcale, nor batter with all their Engines and Artillery.

In theſe two Verſes, we have the Anſwer which Satan makes to the Lords Queſtion; *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job; You ſee the ſlander that is in it, and how he doth advance the bleſſings of God upon *Job*, that he may debaſe the ſervices of *Job* toward God. Now leſt God ſhould take him off preſently with a denial, and tell him that all this is falſe; that *Job* is no ſuch man as he repreſents him to be, that he hath moſt preſumptuouſly intruded into Gods peculiar, namely, the ſecrets of the heart (for Satan had nothing to accuſe him of, that was in ſight, only he gueſſeth at his heart) leſt God, I ſay, ſhould preſently come and check him thus, for his boldneſs and impudence, both in contradicting his teſtimony, and in charging *Job* with inſincerity: Satan makes a motion in the next Verſe; *Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face*: as if Satan ſhould have ſaid, Lord, if you be not ſatisfied that thus it is with your ſervant *Job*, if you will not take my word that he is an hypocrite, and that he doth ſerve you only for ends; *do but ſtretch forth your hand*, &c. do but take away that which you have given him, and you ſhall ſee preſently he will take away that which he hath given you; if you will withdraw his riches, he will quickly withdraw his ſervice.

VERS. 11, 12.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thée to thy face.
And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.

THis eleventh Verſe contains Satans motion, which he ſubjoynes to his Anſwer, *ver.* 10. *But put forth thine hand now.* By his Anſwer before, he had wounded all the holy ſervices of *Job*, and now he ſeeks to wound his eſtate and poſſeſſions. His Anſwer was full of malice, and his motion is as full of cruelty. Whom before he had falſly accuſed, he (in theſe words) deſireth may be cauſleſly afflicted. *Put forth thine hand now*: As if he ſhould have ſaid, There is great queſtion concerning *Job*'s integrity, this one *Experiment* will quickly decide and determine it; *Touch all that he hath*, &c. This motion is grounded (as was before noted) upon a feared denial of his Anſwer in the former words: For there Satan had argued after this manner; That is an unſound and hypocritical profeſſion, which is grounded only upon outward benefits; but all the profeſſion of *Job* is grounded only upon outward benefits: therefore it is unſound. *Doth* Job *ſerve God for nought?* This is the ſtrength of Satans Argument. Now he perceiving the weakneſs, or rather indeed the falſeneſs, the extream Lie that was in the *Minor*, in the Aſſumption (namely, that the profeſſion and holineſs of *Job* was grounded only upon outward things) he (I ſay) perceiving that) ſeeks to confirm what he had affirm'd by his motion. If you doubt (ſaith he) whether it be ſo or no with *Job*, let that come to the trial; *touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* The ſtrength of the reaſon that lies in the motion, may be thus conceived: That profeſſion is grounded upon outward things, which a man layes down, when outward things are removed and taken away; but if thoſe outward things be removed and taken away from *Job*, he will quickly lay down his profeſſion; yea, he will take up Blaſphemy, he will curſe thee to thy face: therefore the profeſſion of *Job* is grounded upon outward things. This now is the Logick or the reaſon, upon which Satan bottoms and infers this motion, that ſo he may bring *Job* upon a further trial.

שלח Put forth thine hand now.] The Hebrew is, *ſend forth thy hand.* To put forth the hand, ſignifies, ſometimes to help, and ſometimes to hurt. So in *Pſal.* 144.7. *Send forth thine hand, and deliver me.* There is a ſending forth the hand in a way of mercy. And ſo, *Acts* 4. 30. There *Peter* prayeth that Chriſt would *ſtretch forth his hand to heal.* So that ſtretching forth, or ſending forth, or putting forth the hand (for the words are all uſed in common to the ſame ſence) ſignifie to do a thing for our good and preſervation: But uſually this *putting forth, or ſtretching forth of the hand*, notes ſome affliction, ſome puniſhment. A man that ſtandeth with his hand ſtretched out, is in a poſture to ſtrike. And ſo God himſelf is often deſcribed, by having his hand ſtretched forth, when he is about to puniſh; as, in the Propheſie of *Iſaiah* divers times, *Chap.* 5.25. *Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled againſt his people, and he hath ſtretched forth his hand againſt them, and hath ſmitten* Ezek. 6.4. *them*: And *Chap.* 9. three times; *ver.* 12. *For all this, his anger is not turned away; but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill*: and ſo at *verſ.* 17. and *verſ.* 21. *His anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill*; that is, the Lord is ſtill ſmiting and afflicting them. In *Eſther* 6. 2. Two men were found in the Chronicle, who ſought to lay (or put forth) their hands on King *Ahaſuerus*, ſcil. *they would have ſlain him.* Then the meaning of Satan here is, ſtretch forth thine hand, let him feel the weight of thine hand in ſmitings and ſore afflictions.

Thy hand.] The hand of God in Scripture ſignifies, Firſt, The purpoſe of God; as that, *Acts* 4. 28. *They have done whatſoever thy hand and thy counſel determined before to be done*; that is, whatſoever according to thy purpoſe, thou didſt determine. Secondly, The hand of God ſignifies the Spirit of God, in the mighty actings and workings of it; ſo a Spirit of Propheſie is called the hand of God, *Ezek.* 1. 3. *The hand of the Lord was there upon me*: And, *Ezek.* 37. 1. *The hand of the Lord was upon me*; that is, the Spirit of the Lord, a mighty power of Propheſie was upon me. So likewiſe a Spirit of ſtrength that is upon a man, is called the hand of God, 1 *Kings* 18. ult. *The hand of the Lord was upon Elijah, and he girt up his loins, and ran before Ahab.* Here the hand of the Lord is put for the power of the Lord; *Put forth thy hand*, that is, *put forth thy power:* and ſo the hand of the Lord is uſed often, *Iſa.* 59. 1. *The hand of the Lord is not ſhortned*; that is, the power of the Lord is not abated. The Lord hath a long hand, and his hand is alwayes of the ſame length. So, *ſtretch forth thy hand now*, that is, do thou put forth thy mighty power.

This hand of the Lords power (to clear that a little further) is taken three wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, For his *protecting power.* There is a protecting hand; as, *John* 10. 28. *No man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand*; ſaith *Chriſt.* God hath his ſheep in his hand, and he will protect and ſafeguard them ſo, that none ſhall be able to pluck them away. This hand God put forth before for *Job*.

Again, It is put for his *correcting power*; as, *Pſal.* 32.4. *His hand was heavy upon me*; that is, *the afflicting hand of God was heavy upon me. Let us fall into the hand of God:* (*David* choſe that, 2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) that is, into the afflicting hand of God, *rather then into the hands of men.*

Thirdly, It is put for a *revenging hand*, for a wrathful hand, by which he doth deſtroy and break in pieces thoſe who are his enemies, *Heb.* 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. David* deſireth to fall into the hands of God, *ſcil.* into his correcting hand, becauſe he knew there was mercy; but it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God, when he cometh in wrath to take vengeance on thoſe who contemptuouſly deſpiſe his mercy, as is there expreſſed.

Now here, when Satan ſaith, *Put forth thy hand*, that is, thine hand of power; Satan intendeth not, that God ſhould put forth the hand of his power, to protect, nor barely to correct: He deſireth more then barely a correcting or chaſtiſing hand upon *Job*; he would have his revenging hand, his breaking, his deſtroying hand, as we ſhall ſee afterward.

Further, *Thy hand*; that is, Gods own hand: as if he did deſire that God himſelf would take *Job* into his own hand to chaſten and puniſh him.

The hand of God, his correcting or chaſtiſing hand, ſometimes is an immediate, and ſometimes a mediate hand. Sometimes it is immediate, when God by himſelf doth chaſten, or puniſh, or afflict, when no ſecond cauſe doth appear or intervene. So it may ſeem Satan here means, when he ſaith, *put forth thine hand*, that is, do it thine own ſelf, let no other have the handling of *Job*, but thy ſelf. God doth ſend ſuch immediate afflictions; a man is afflicted in his body, in his eſtate, and many other wayes, and he cannot find any thing in the Creature, whence it ſhould come; it is an immediate ſtroke of God, he cannot ſee how or which way, or at what door this evil came in upon him; therefore it is called a *creating of evil*, Iſa. 45. 7. *I make peace, and create evil.* Now creation is out of nothing; there is nothing

thing out of which it is wrought. So many times God bringeth evil upon a people or perſon, when there is no appearance of ſecond cauſes, no matter out of which it is made, but it comes as a creature, formed by the only hand of God. Sometimes likewiſe it is called Gods hand, when it is the hand of a creature, it is Gods hand in a creatures hand; Gods hand when it is the hand of wicked men, Gods hand when it is Satans hand. So that place is tranſlated, Pſal.17.14. *Deliver my ſoul from the wicked which is thy Sword* (you ſee a wicked man is Gods Sword) *and from men which are thy hand.* So that *thy hand* may be underſtood of an inſtrument; Satan himſelf is Gods hand to puniſh in that ſence, as wicked men here are ſaid to be Gods hand; *from the men that are thy hand.* Though there be other readings of that place, ſome read it, *Deliver me from men by thy hand*; and others, *Deliver me from men of thy hand:* but our tranſlation may very well carry the ſence of the Original in it, *from men which are thy hand*, as *Nebuchadnezzar* that wicked King is called *Gods ſervant*, Jer. 43. 10. *I will ſend and take* Nebuchadnezzar *my ſervant*; God ſpeaks of him as his ſervant, or as his hand in the thing. So then, *Put forth thy hand*, it may be underſtood (I ſay) either immediately, do it by thy ſelf, or do it by Inſtruments, ſtrike him thy ſelf, or give me Commiſſion, or give others Commiſſion to ſtrike.

נא *Particula obſecrantis.* There is one thing further in this expreſſion, *Put forth thine hand now. Now.* Some read it, *Put forth thine hand a little*; and ſome read it, *I pray thee put forth thy hand.* The Original word is tranſlated to all theſe ſences; we tranſlate it, referring to the preſent importunity and inſtancy of Satan, *Put forth thine hand now*, let not this buſineſs ſleep, let it not be deferred a minute, a moment, let commiſſion go out ſpeedily to afflict *Job.*

And touch all that he hath.

To Touch] Notes ſometime a heavy and a ſore affliction, and ſometime a light and a ſmall affliction. In the Scripture we find it both wayes uſed. Sometime (I ſay) *to Touch*, doth ſignifie, the greateſt and the ſoreſt affliction or puniſhment that can be; and ſo *Job* doth expreſs all the afflictions that fell upon him at the laſt only by touching, *Job* 19. 21. *Have pitty upon me, have pitty upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* Whereas *Job* at that time lay under the ſoreſt and heavieſt affliction that could be, all his eſtate was gone, and his body was full of diſeaſes, and his ſoul was full of horrour, and all this he doth expreſs by this, *The hand of the Lord hath Touched me.* So *Pſalm* 73. 14. To be Touched ſignifies the greateſt affliction, *All the day long* (ſaith *David*) *have I been plagued.* That which we tranſlate *plagued*, is the ſame Original word which we tranſlate *Touch*, in the Text; *All the day long have I been Touched*, that is, *I have been Touched with the ſoreſt plagues*, heavy afflictions have been laid continually upon me. So that to *Touch* ſignifies ſometimes the greateſt, or the ſoreſt ſtrokes of trouble.

Sometimes again, we ſhall find it ſignifies only a *light affliction*, as *Gen.* 26. in two places of that Chapter, at the 11. verſ. *Abimelech charged all his people, ſaying, he that toucheth this man or his wife, ſhall ſurely be put to death*, that is, he that doth them the leaſt *hurt* or *wrong*. So at verſe 19. in that agreement between *Abimelech* and *Iſaac*, they conclude thus, *That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good.* So that to touch, notes the leaſt ill or hurt that can be, *we have not touched thee*, that is, we have *done nothing to thee but good:* Any thing on this ſide doing of good to them, had been touching of them. We find the like expreſſion in *Pſal.* 105. 15. where the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of Gods extraordinary care of his people. *He ſuffered no man to do them wrong, he rebuked Kings for their ſakes, ſaying, touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm. Touch not* mine annointed people, that is the meaning of that place. Though in many other places we know Princes are called the annointed of God: yet here it is meant of the people of God in general, they are Gods annoynted (as the context clearly carries it) for they have all received Unction from God, an Unction of Grace, an Unction of the Spirit, and an Unction of Priviledge. *Touch not mine annointed*, that is, do them not the leaſt hurt. And the ſence that theſe words may bear, *Put forth thy hand now and touch all that he hath*, might be carried, as if Satan here intended only a touch in the latter ſence; Give him but the leaſt ſtroak, lay but the lighteſt affliction upon him, do but touch him; you are ſo confident of your ſervant *Job*, that he is ſuch a man, do but give him the leaſt touch, and you ſhall ſee how he will diſcover himſelf. So ſome expound it.

He doth not ſay, *wound him, ſmite him, break him to pieces*, but *touch him* only. Neither ſaith he, touch him, but his: And if thou give him but a touch with the top of thy little finger, thou ſhalt preſently find the rottenneſs of his heart. In that ſence the word imports, an extenuation of *Jobs* ſincerity, or heightning of *Jobs* hypocriſie: as if he had been ſo rotten in his profeſſion, that the leaſt touch would overthrow him, and make him diſcover himſelf to be ſtark nought. Like the Apples growing about *Sodom*, which have fair out-ſides, but if you touch them, they moulder away into duſt and aſhes. *Si vel extremo digitulo leviſſime tangas bona ſua, ejus fictum animum & ſimulatam probitatem manifeſte comperies.*

Though the words have this ſence in them, and Satan carries it cunningly, expreſſing himſelf in ſuch ambiguous terms, yet certainly Satan had a further intendment, whatſoever his language may bear: he had an intention that *Job* ſhould be touched in the former ſence, namely that he ſhould have a touch to the quick, as we ſay, that he ſhould have the ſoreſt and deepeſt wound that his eſtate was capable of: he would have him whipt, not with cords, but with Scorpions; he would have the little finger of God heavier upon him, then his loyns upon others.

Deſtroy him, undo him by your *touching*. He ſpeaks by the figure μειώσις, which is when we go leſs in our expreſſions then in our intentions, when our words are lower then our ſpirits: and that is proper for Satan, who is the great deceiver, the great jugler in word and deed; to deſire that *Job* ſhould only be touched, when he meant he ſhould be utterly undone and ruined. *Touch all that he hath*, that is, all his Eſtate, all his Poſſeſſions, his Children, his Family, his Cattel, whatſoever belongeth unto *Job*, let all feel an undoing ſtroak from thy hand.

Before I come to that which he undertakes upon the affliction, I ſhall obſerve two or three things from the words, thus far opened,

Put forth Now thine hand.] We may note from that,

The extream importunity of Satan to do miſchief.

He would not give God a minutes, not a moments reſpite to conſider this thing, but do it now preſently, let him preſently be afflicted; he makes *haſte to deſtroy*, he makes *haſte to ſhed blood*; *their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks. So Satan, his feet are ſwift to ſhed blood; when Satan would have God to afflict us, do it preſently, ſaith he; when Satan, would have us ſin againſt God, do it preſently, ſaith he; now ſin, now provoke God, do not ſtay till the next day: but when we are called to give up our ſelves to God, then to morrow will ſerve the turn, and next year will ſerve to repent, yea when you are old 'tis time enough to repent; when he tempteth to do any miſchief, any ſin, then now, now ſin; but 'tis time enough to do good hereafter, to morrow will ſerve for that.

Put forth now thine hand, and touch all that he hath.

It is a truth which Satan here ſpeaks concerning the hand of God; *That if God do but touch the higheſt and greateſt eſtate in the world, it will fall to pieces quickly.* There is a truth in it, take it in the eaſieſt ſence that can be, if God do but lightly touch the eſtate of a man, it will ſoon fall in pieces. God is not put to any ſtreſs to afflict and puniſh, as *Pſal.* 81. 14. *I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their enemies, and have turned my hand againſt their adverſaries:* God expreſſeth the utter over-throw of the enemies of his people, but by the *turning of a hand:* if God do but turn his hand, they are all gone preſently, ſoon ſubdued; if he do but touch the might, the pomp, the greatneſs, the riches and the power of all thoſe in the world that are oppoſers of his Church, preſently they fall to the ground: A touch from the hand of God will end our Wars. If he touch the Mountains they ſmoak (as it is in the *Pſalm*) and conſume to aſhes: they that are the mighty and great ones of the World, the Mountains, by one touch of his hand fall as it were to nothing. So if God do but touch our eſtates, they moulder away, no creature can uphold them.

Then again obſerve here, the cunning impoſture of Satan that puts ſuch ſore, ſuch heavy afflictions into ſuch light and eaſie expreſſions; he cloatheth his malice, his utmoſt malice here in very fair words, do but touch him, ſaith this enemy; but you ſee what Satans touches are, *touch all that he hath.* Why Satan, would nothing have made a tryal, but only a touching of all? For *Job* to have loſt ſomewhat had been a tryal, a touch: for *Job* to have loſt half his flocks of Sheep, or his Oxen, had been a tryal, and no very light one neither; for *Job* to have loſt a ſon, to have found one of his children ſuddenly ſtruck dead, had been an affliction, and a heavy one too; ſuch a touch as that might well have touched the fathers heart: Would it not ſerve Satan that a ſon ſhould dye, or that ſome of his Cattel ſhould be deſtroyed, but he muſt have all touched, *all that he hath?* The malice of Satan is unſatiable, there is nothing will ſerve him, unleſs he may devour all.

This touch of Satan, which he deſireth might be laid upon *Job*, is like the touch that many have given to thoſe, who have come into their hands amongſt us; they would but touch them, but they would touch them in all; when they put forth their hands (as they pretended) in the wayes of Juſtice, in their Courts, they would touch men in all, touch them in their liberties by impriſonment, and touch them in their eſtates by extream vaſt fines, and touch them in their names by diſgrace, touch them in their bodies by whipping and cutting, and touch them in their relations, by keeping all friends from ſight of them: No moderation, no bounds, but touch them in all that they had. And (O exactneſs of Juſtice) when God came to touch that power, he gave them a touch, juſt after the rate and proportion of their own touches; for when thoſe Courts and perſons came to have their power and actions ſcanned, it was not moderating, or regulating, or reſtraining, or abating, or limiting their power, that ſatisfied, they muſt quite down, and be taken away. God gave them a touch, juſt as they touched others before: So that a man may ſay certainly, there is a God that judgeth the Earth. Theſe are the touches of Satan, and the touches of mercileſs men are as like his as themſelves are, they think there is nothing done unleſs men be undone: they never give over touching till they come to ruining.

אם לא

Touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.

Some render it thus, *Touch all that he hath, if he curſe thee not to thy face:* So it is word for word out of the Original, *niſi*, unleſs, or *Si non, Touch all that he hath, and ſee if he do not curſe thee to thy face.* We give the ſence of it in a direct affirmation, *Touch all that he hath, and he will,* &c. Others put the force of an imprecation to it, *Touch all that he hath, and ſee if he do not curſe thee to thy face*; that is, as if he had ſaid, let me never be believed, and never be truſted. Indeed Satan is ſo far diſgraced and damned already, that he hath nothing to looſe, he cannot damn himſelf further, he cannot wiſh any thing to himſelf worſe then he already is; but yet here is a kind of execration or imprecation upon himſelf in it; Do this, and if he do not curſe thee to thy face, let me never be accounted of, or (as many uſe to ſay) let me never be truſted; or as ſome wretched helliſh ones, *Let me be damned*, if ſuch or ſuch a thing be not. There is ſuch an *emphaſis* in that manner of ſpeaking uſed in the Text. But we tranſlate it by a direct affirmation, and that is a good ſence too, *Touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face,* that's certain, ſo ſaith Satan, he will do it, it is as ſure as done already.

In particula ſi aliquid ſubaudiendum, ut ubi legimus, Si Davidi *mentiar, ſi introibunt in requiem meam, hic ſubintelligitur, Sim vanus aut aliquid tale.* Dru. *in loc.*

Curſe thee.] It is the ſame word which is uſed before, *ver.* 5. *It may be my children have curſed God.* The word ſignifies properly to bleſs. It was ſhewed that probably in that place, it might be tranſlated *Curſe*; but in this Text there is a neceſſity of tranſlating it ſo, ſeeing a clear ſence cannot be made out, taking the word properly. In curſing another theſe three things concur. Firſt, An ill opinion or conceit of that perſon. Secondly, Hatred or malice againſt him. Thirdly, A deſire that ſome evil may befall him. This Satan means when he undertakes that *Job* being afflicted will Curſe God. So then, to Curſe God is to blaſpheme God in our thoughts and words, to think or ſpeak unworthily of God, and the wayes of God; ſee, if he Curſe thee not to thy face, that is, ſee if his heart be not imbittered againſt thee, ſee if his tongue be not ſharpned to wound thy honour, to reproach thy goodneſs, to accuſe thy providence: As it is ſaid of thoſe, *Iſa.* 8.21. *They ſhall be hungry and hard beſtead*; And what then? *They ſhall fret themſelves, and Curſe their King, and their God, and look upward*; that is, they ſhall ſpeak baſely of their King and of their God, in whom they have truſted, and whom they have followed; he ſpeaks of thoſe wretches that did ſeek to falſe gods, or worſhip the true God falſly, they ſhall Curſe their King and their God. It is the very ſame, that here Satan promiſeth himſelf and undertakes with God that *Job* will do; Do but make him hungry (ſaith he) and hard beſtead, and he will fret himſelf, and Curſe thee.

It was very ordinary among the Heathen to do ſo: when their gods did not pleaſe them, then they would Curſe their gods. The Poets bring them in often raging againſt their gods; as he ſpeaks of the mother that found her ſon dead; ſhe calls the gods and the Stars cruel, ſhe flies in the face of Heaven preſently, who would ſerve ſuch gods as theſe are, that thus ſlay my ſon, *&c.* Satan interprets *Job* to be a man of the ſame temper.

Cum complexa ſui corpus miſerabile nati: Atque deos, atque aſtra vocat crudelia mater. Virg. *Eclog.* 5.

Quem non incuſavit amens hominumque deumque: Id. *lib.* 2. Æneid.

Aquinas takes the word properly, *Touch all that he hath, and he will bleſs thee to thy face*: And endeavours to make out the ſence thus, *Touch all that he hath,* and *thou ſhalt ſee he hath bleſſed thee to thy face*; he reads it in the *Preterperfect tenſe*; that is, if thou afflict him, thou ſhalt find that all his former Religion was nothing but meer outſide formality, that he ſerved thee only from the teeth outward, ſerved thee to thy face; he bleſſed thee, pray'd unto thee, and honoured thee only to thy face. He had no regard to thy worſhip in his heart; he did not worſhip thee, *ex animo*, becauſe he loved thee, or delighted in thee, but gave thee an outward complemental bleſſing, becauſe thou didſt bleſs him outwardly. As the Apoſtle directs ſervants, *Eph.* 6.6. *Not with eye ſervice, as men pleaſers.* Satan makes *Job* an eye-ſervant to God, or as if, like thoſe of whom Chriſt complaineth, *Matth.* 15. in the words of the Prophet, *He had drawn nigh to God with his lips, while his heart was far from him.* The heart of *Job* hath been far enough from thee, he only bleſſed thee with his lips, and to thy face. Indeed this interpretation hath a fair face, but touch it by a ſerious examination, and it will be found without a heart. The conſtruction of Grammar is quite againſt it, and for us to change the Text, and make it to ſpeak in the Preterperfect tenſe, of a thing paſt, whereas the words are in the Future tenſe, of an act to be done for the time to come, is too much boldneſs with Scripture. Therefore though that opinion hath a plauſible ſence in it, yet I ſhall lay it by, and take the ordinary tranſlation, that he indeed intended this, that *Job* would break forth into blaſphemous revilings of God, if God did but try him with an affliction.

And when he ſaith that *Job* would do it *to his face*, the meaning of it is, that he would do it openly: he will Curſe thee openly, he will Curſe thee boldly, he will not go behind the door to tell tales of thee, but he will ſpeak of it before all the world, that thou art a cruel God, an unjuſt God, and a hard maſter, he will tell ſuch tales of thee, even to thy very face. We have a like ſpeech, *Gal.* 2.11. *When* Peter *was come to* Antioch, *I withſtood him to the face*, (ſaith *Paul*) that is, openly; I did not go behind his back to tell *Peter* his own, but I told him it to his face, plainly, openly before them all, (as it is explained, *verſ.* 14.) *I ſaid to* Peter *before them all*, that were then preſent. *Jerome* (becauſe he would not have *Peter* receive ſuch an open reproof, judging it would be a diſparagement to *Peter*, to be rebuked by *Paul*) gives a quite contrary ſence of thoſe words of *Paul*; *I withſtood him to his face*, that is, ſaith he, I did ſpeak ſomewhat roughly to him before them, but there was no ſuch thing in my heart, I did it but to his face, very ſlightly, leſt I ſhould offend the *Jews*, whoſe Apoſtle *Peter* was; and *I did it to his face*, a little, that I might ſatisfie the *Gentiles* who were ſcandalized by *Peters* walking: otherwiſe in my heart I had no quarrel with *Peter*: he and I agreed well enough. As if *Paul* had made but a ſhadow fight (*ad faciendum populum*) to delude the people. But we muſt not be thus wiſe: *I withſtood him to his face*, is not oppoſed to withſtanding him cordially, but to a withſtanding of him ſecretly, or behind his back. So here *he will Curſe thee to thy face*; that is, he will Curſe thee (as the Greek Scholiaſt hath it) openly, and impudently; himſelf indeed was afraid leaſt his ſons had curſed God in their

φανερῶς, ἀναισχύντως.

hearts, but for all this his niceneſs, and ſeeming fear of his childrens ſinning in ſecret, he will Curſe thee with impudence, he will not only Curſe thee in his heart, but the Curſe will break out at his lips: *Out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth will ſpeak blaſphemy againſt God. He will Curſe thee to thy face.*

We may give ſome exemplifications, what it is to curſe God, to blaſpheme God thus to his face. You may read what it is, *Mal.* 3. 14. *Your words have been ſtout againſt me, ſaith the Lord,* you have ſpoken to my very face: why, what had they ſpoken to the Lord? *What have we ſpoken, ſay they, ſo much againſt thee? Ye have ſaid, It is vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hoſts?* &c. This is to curſe God to his face: when the wayes of God are blaſphemed, and the worſhip of God reported as unprofitable, when men ſay it is in vain to ſerve God, when they caſt aſperſions and bring up an evil name upon an holy duty, this is to blaſpheme God. They did only ſpeak againſt the ſervice of God, and they thought they had not blaſphemed God in it, *Wherein have we ſpoken againſt thee?* Yes, ſaith God, you have ſpoken againſt me, in that you have ſpoken againſt and diſcredited my wayes. So, if *Job* had ſaid the wayes of God are unprofitable, and I ſee now it is in vain to ſerve God and to fear him, this had been blaſphemy and curſing of God to his face. *David* was near upon the very brink of this blaſphemy, *Pſal.* 73. 13. when he ſaid, *I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency, becauſe* (ſaith he) *I am plagued every morning*; the judgments and afflictions that were upon him, began to make him break out thus. But he preſently befools himſelf for ſuch ſpeeches, and by that repairs God in his honour.

Secondly, To quarrel and be angry with the Providence of God, as if he were not wiſe, or juſt, or good in his diſpenſations either to particular perſons, or to the Church, this I ſay likewiſe is a curſing, a reproaching of God.

Thirdly, To curſe the ſervants and people of God, is to curſe God; If he that touches them touches God, then he that curſeth them curſeth God too. And God is curſed in any of theſe ſences two wayes, firſt, by detracting from himſelf, his worſhip, his works, or his ſervants, the good they have; or by faſtning on them, and aſperſing them with the evil which they have not.

He will curſe thee to thy face.

Obſerve two or three points from this,

Firſt, *Satan can only gueſs at the hearts of men.*

He would undertake and enter warranty with God that *Job* would blaſpheme, if God did but touch him, but he was deceived: Satan did but conjecture at moſt, and ſpeak at a venture; If he did not lye knowingly, I am ſure he did but gueſs ignorantly. Satan knows not what is in the heart, that's God's peculiar, that's God's Cabinet. God knew there lay ſincerity in the heart of *Job* all the while, although Satan would ſtand to it, that nothing was there but hypocriſie.

Secondly, We may note, ſeeing Satan, accuſing him of hypocriſie, would have him afflicted,

That, *Affliction is the tryal and touchſtone of ſincerity.*

When God doth afflict you, then he doth bring you to the touchſtone to ſee whether you are good mettal or no, he doth bring you then to the furnace, to try whether you be droſs or gold, or what you are. *Affliction is the great diſcoverer,* That unmasks us. Satan was not out in the thing, he hit upon the righteſt way that could be; if any thing would diſcover *Job*, affliction would. Indeed ſome are diſcovered by proſperity and outward abundance. The warm Sun makes ſome caſt off that cloak, which the wind and the cold cauſed them to wrap cloſer about them. Some, when they have gotten enough from God, care not for God; and when the fiſh is caught, they lay by the net: for they do but go a fiſhing with Holineſs, and the profeſſion of Religion, and when they have their ends, there's an end of their profeſſion. Affliction and the croſs try others: Some will hold on with God as long as the Sun ſhineth, as long as it is fair weather; but if the ſtorm ariſe, if troubles come, whether perſonal or publick, then they pull in their heads, then they deny and forſake God, then they draw back from, and betray his truth; what they, ſuch and ſuch men; No, not they. Trouble makes the great tryal; bring Profeſſors to the fire, and then they ſhew their metal. This courſe Satan took with *Job*. He knew *Job* had been abundantly tryed by fulneſs and abundance, and theſe did not draw his heart from God, he muſt therefore now try another way. It is an excellent paſſage in the Church-hiſtory, concerning *Conſtantius* the father of *Conſtantine*, that to the end he might try the hearts of his Courtiers, he proclaimed, that all they who would not forſake the worſhip of the true God, ſhould be baniſhed the Court, and ſhould have heavy penalties and fines laid upon them: preſently upon this (ſaith the ſtory) all that were baſe, and came to ſerve him only for ends, went away, forſook the true God, and worſhipped Idols. By this means he found out who were the true ſervants of God, and whom he meant to make his own; ſuch as he found faithful to God, he thought would prove faithful to him. What this exploratory decree of *Conſtantius* effected in his Court, the ſame did that which the Apoſtate *Julian* ſet forth in good earneſt againſt the Chriſtians. He no ſooner cauſed it to be proclaimed, that whoſoever would not renounce the Faith, ſhould be diſcarded his ſervice, and forfeit both life and eſtate to his high diſpleaſure; But preſently upon the publication of that decree, they who were indeed Chriſtians, and they who had only the title of Chriſtians, preſented themſelves, as it were, on a common ſtage to the view of all men. Such as theſe are Willows, not Oaks. And as it was with *Naomi* and her two daughters in law, *Orphah* and *Ruth*: All the while that ſhe was *Naomi, beautiful*, and had enough, they both ſtay with her: but when once *Naomi* became *Marah*, bitter, and empty, then *Orphah* took her leave of her, but *Ruth* abides with her. Here was the tryal whether *Orphah* or *Ruth* had the ſincerer affection to *Naomi*; *Ruth* loved her mothers perſon, *Orphah* her eſtate and outward preferments. While Religion and Proſperity go together, it is hard to ſay which a man follows; but when once they are forced to a ſeparation, where the heart was, will ſoon be maniſeſt. The upright in heart are like *Ruth*, whatſoever becometh of the *Goſpel*, they will be ſharers with it in the ſame condition; be it affliction, or be it proſperity; be it comfort, or be it ſorrow; be it fair weather, or be it foul; be it light, or be it darkneſs, they will take their lot with it. This is a clear truth, that, whatſoever was the cauſe of our doing a thing, that being removed we ceaſe to do it; if outward comfort and accommodations in the world, be the cauſe why we follow Chriſt in the profeſſion of his Goſpel, then as ſoon as ever they fail, our profeſſion will fail too. When zeal is kindled only with the beams of wordly hopes, when worldly hopes fail, our zeal is extinct, and our indeavour is cut off with our expectation.

Αὐτίκα ὡς ἐν χωνευτηρίῳ ὄντες Χριστιανοὶ καὶ οἱ νομιζόμενοι φανεροὶ πᾶσιν ἐγίνοντο. Socrat. *lib.* 3. *cap.* 13.

We are next to conſider the Lords grant of Satans motion.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.

We have in this verſe. Firſt, Gods Commiſſion, or his permiſſion unto Satan, *behold all that he hath is in thy hand.* And ſecondly, His limitation of the Commiſſion, *Only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand.* Thirdly, Satans ſpeedy execution of his Commiſſion, *So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.*

The Lord ſaid unto Satan, all that he hath is in thy hand,] *thy power,* ſo we tranſlate it: the word in the Original is, *all is in thy hand.* Satan moved that God would put forth his hand againſt *Job*; and God puts *Job* into Satans hand. Leſt Satan ſhould cavil that God had toucht him but lightly, he puts him into Satans power, and lets him do it himſelf, *who would do it throughly.* The hand (as we before noted) is put for power; and when any thing is put into the hand, it is put into the power or diſpoſition of another, *Exod.* 4. 21. *Thou ſhalt do all the wonders before* Pharaoh *which I have put into thy hand.* And *John* 3. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* This phraſe of giving or putting into the hand, is taken either for good or for evil. Sometime the putting of a thing into ones hand, is only for the managing and diſpoſing of it for good. As *Gen.* 39. 7, 8. Joſeph *ſaid that his maſter had committed all that he had into his hand,* that is, to take care of it, and to order it for his maſters benefit, profit, and honour: But often, to put or to give into the hand, is for evil, to do what you will with perſons or things, to puniſh or to afflict them, *Judg.* 6. 1. God delivered the *Iſraelites* into the hand of *Midian*, that is, he left them to the power of the *Midianites*, to tyrannize over and vex them: And *verſ.* 7. God delivered *Midian* into the hand of *Iſrael*, that is, he gave *Iſrael* power over them to deſtroy or afflict them. So here, he gave all into the hand of Satan, that is, he gave Satan leave to diſpoſe of *Job*'s eſtate as he pleaſed. As if God had ſaid to Satan; Thou haſt leave to do what thou wilt with *Job*'s outward eſtate, ſpoil it, plunder it, deſtroy it, conſume it, fire it; thou haſt free leave, *All that he hath is in thy hand.*

Dan. 1. 2.

We ſhall note a point or two from that. You ſee, as ſoon as ever Satan had made his motion, God preſently anſwereth, *All that he hath is in thy hand.*

It is not alwayes an argument of Gods good-will and love, to have our motions granted.

Many are heard and anſwered out of anger, not out of love. The children of *Iſrael* required *meat for their luſts*, and God gave it them, he did not withhold from them their deſire, they were not ſhortned of their luſts, they had it preſently: many times his own ſervants call and call again, move and move again, and obtain no grant: *For this thing I beſought the Lord thrice*, ſaith *Paul*, yet *Paul* could not have what he ſought. Satan did but move once, and preſently all that *Job* had was in his hand.

Multi irato Deo exaudiuntur, multis propitius Deus non tribuit quod volunt, ut quod utile eſt tribuat, Auguſt.
2 Cor. 12. 8.

But further, that which is chiefly here to be obſerved is,

That until God gives commiſſion, Satan hath no power over the eſtates or perſons of Gods people, or over any thing that belongs unto them.

Neither our perſons nor our eſtates are ſubject to the will either of men or Devils. Chriſt muſt ſay, *All that he hath is in thy hand*, before Satan can touch a ſhoe-latchet: As Chriſt ſaid, *Joh.* 19. 11. unto *Pilate*, when he ſpake ſo ſtoutly, *Knoweſt thou not that I have power to crucifie thee, and power to releaſe thee?* He thought that he had all power in his hand: but Chriſt tells him, *Thou couldſt have no power at all againſt me, unleſs it were given thee from above.* If the Devils could not go into the ſwine, much leſs can they meddle with a man, made after Gods Image, till God gives them leave. Every ſoul that hath an intereſt in Chriſt may ſuck comfort and conſolation in the ſaddeſt, in the ſorrowfulleſt day, from the breaſt of this truth. If Satan and wicked men cannot move till Chriſt ſaith, go; nor wound, till Chriſt ſaith, ſtrike; nor ſpoil, nor kill, till Chriſt ſaith, their eſtates, their lives are in your power: ſurely Chriſt will not ſpeak a word to their hurt, whom he loves, nor will he ever ſuffer his enemies to do a real dammage to his friends. Beſides it may fill the ſoul with unſpeakable joy, to remember, that while a man is ſuffering, the will of Chriſt is a doing.

Thirdly, Satan doth very wickedly (according to his nature,) in moving, that *Job* may be afflicted. He moveth in malice and in ſpight: God knew what his heart and intent was, and yet grants it. We may note from hence,

That which Satan and evil men deſire ſinfully, the Lord grants holily.

The will of God, and the will of Satan, joyned both in the ſame thing; yet they were as different as light and darkneſs, their ends were as different as their natures. Though it were the ſame thing they both willed, yet there was an infinite diſtance between them in willing it. The will of Satan was ſinful, but the power given Satan was juſt: Why? Becauſe his will was from himſelf, but his power was from the will of God. Satan had no power to do miſchief but what God gave him; but his will to do miſchief was from himſelf. Therefore we find that the ſame ſpirit is ſaid to be an evil ſpirit, and to be a ſpirit from the Lord, and yet the Lord doth not partake at all in the evil of the ſpirit, as 1 *Sam.* 16. 14. *The Spirit of the Lord departed from* Saul, *and an evil ſpirit from the Lord troubled him.* An evil ſpirit from the Lord; how was it an evil ſpirit, if it were from the Lord? can the Lord ſend forth an evil from himſelf who is only good? In that he was evil, that was from his own will; but that he had power to trouble *Saul*, that was from the Lord: So here, Satans will and intent were moſt wicked, theſe were from himſelf; his power to afflict *Job* was from God, and that was good. Satan willeth *Job* ſhould be afflicted for his deſtruction; God willeth it only for his tryal and probation. Satan deſireth it, that God may be blaſphemed; but God willeth it, that himſelf might be glorified. Satan willeth it, that ſo others in his example might be ſcandalized and diſheartned from entring into the ſervice of God, ſeeing how ill he ſped; but God willeth it, that others might be ſtrengthened and incouraged to enter into his ſervice, beholding a man under ſuch heavy preſſures, and yet not ſpeaking ill of God or of his wayes. Satan willeth it, hoping thereby *Job* would diſcover his hypocriſie; but God willeth it, knowing that he would therein diſcover his integrity. So then, though the ſame thing was willed, yet there was a vaſt diſproportion in their ends and intentions; and though the power by which Satan did afflict *Job* was from God, yet the evil intent with which he afflicted him was from himſelf. Thus we ſee how God without any ſtain or touch of evil grants this, which Satan did moſt wickedly deſire. It followeth,

Unus idemque ſpiritus & Domini appellatur & malus: Domini per licentiam poteſtatis juſtæ! malus per deſiderium voluntatis injuſtæ, Greg.

Satanæ voluntas ſemper iniqua eſt, ſed nunquam poteſtas injuſta, Greg.
Deus adeo bonus eſt ut nullo modo mala permitterit niſi inde majora bona eliciturus eſſet.

Only upon himſelf thou ſhalt not put forth thy hand.

God gives a Commiſſion, but it is with a limitation, there is a reſtriction in it; *Only upon himſelf*, &c. that is, not upon his perſon, not his body, thou ſhalt not afflict that with diſeaſes; not his ſoul, thou ſhalt not afflict that with temptations. Hence note,

That God himſelf ſets bounds to the afflictions of his people.

He limits out how far every affliction ſhall go, and how far every inſtrument ſhall prevail: as he doth with the Sea, *Hitherto* (ſaith he) *thou ſhalt come, and no further, here thou ſhalt ſtop thy proud waves*; ſo he ſaith to all the afflictions of ſingle perſons, or whole Nations, hither you ſhall come, and no further. *Only upon himſelf thou ſhalt not put forth thine hand.* This limitation reſpects; Firſt, The degree or meaſure, thus far you ſhall afflict, that is, in ſuch a degree, to ſuch a height, and no higher. Secondly, It reſpects the time, thus far, that is, thus long, ſo many years, or ſo many dayes you ſhall have power, and no longer. God leaves not either the meaſure, or the time, the degree or the continuance of any affliction in the hand of Satan or his adherents: We read (*Rev.* 6. 10.) *That the ſouls under the Altar cry, How long Lord? how long?* They cry to God *how long?* they knew that he only had the time in his hand, he only could tell how long, and it ſhould be as long as he pleaſed, *How long Lord?* They cryed not to cruel tyrants, how long will ye perſecute? but Lord, how long will it be before thou come to revenge? And ſo *David*, Pſal. 31. 15. *My time it is in thy hand*, ſpeaking of his afflictions. There is no affliction but it is in the hand of God, for the continuance of it, as well as for the manner of it; and as no enemy, man or devil, can make thy croſs greater, or longer, or heavier, ſo no friend, man or Angel, can make thy croſs lighter, or leſſer, or ſhorter then God himſelf hath appointed; *Only upon himſelf ſhalt thou not put forth thine hand*, thou ſhalt not move an inch further, not a hairs breadth further. As our afflictions for the matter of them are by the will of God, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *While you ſuffer* (ſaith he) *according to the will of God:* thoſe words, *according to the will of God*, note not only the righteouſneſs of ſuffering, that it muſt be in a good cauſe, but alſo the ſpring from whence thoſe ſufferings come, they are *Ex voluntate Dei*, ſo Mr. *Beza* tranſlates it, they are out of the will of God. Now, I ſay, as they are out of the will of God, or from the will of God, ſpringing from his will, and flowing from his diſpenſation of things in the matter of them) ſo alſo in every circumſtance; God himſelf gives thy croſs length, and breadth, and thickneſs; he fills thy cup of ſorrow, he directeth how many drops to a drop, ſhall be put into it, thou ſhalt not have a drop more then God preſcribes, and (which is more comfortable) knows will be for thy good.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That Satan is boundleſs in his malice toward the people of God.*

If God did not ſet him bounds, he would ſet himſelf no bounds, therefore ſaith God unto him, *Only upon himſelf*, &c. He had a mind to have gone further, he would have been upon *Job* himſelf, as well as upon his eſtate, if God had not ſtop'd and curb'd him. Therefore the Apoſtle gives that aſſurance for the comfort of the people of God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *God* (ſaith he) *is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able*: As if he ſhould ſay, Satan would with all his heart lay more upon you, then you are able to bear; Satan would break your backs if he were let alone, but God will not ſuffer it. Satan hath a boundleſs malice againſt the people of God. Some obſerve this from his name *Leviathan*, Iſa. 27. 1. *In that day the Lord with his great and ſtrong Sword ſhall puniſh Leviathan the piercing Serpent. Leviathan* is put there for Satan, and for all the inſtruments of Satan. Now *Leviathan* ſignifieth in the Hebrew an *augmentation*, an *addition*, or an *increaſe*: And Satan is ſo called, becauſe (ſay they) he ever deſires to lay more burdens upon, to increaſe the afflictions, troubles and temptations of Gods people, he never thinks he hath done enough againſt them. His thirſt to work miſchief is never quenched, but ſtill he deſires to do more, he would fain have his Commiſſion inlarged to do more miſchief in the world. Therefore God is ſaid not to ſtrike after their ſtroak, in the ſeventh verſe of that 27. of *Iſa. Hath he ſmitten him as he ſmit thoſe that ſmote him?* In the Hebrew it is, *He hath not ſmitten him according to the ſtroak of thoſe that ſmote him: according to their ſtroak*, noting that the ſtroak of *Leviathan*, and the ſtroak of his inſtruments, is an unmeaſurable ſtroak, a boundleſs ſtroak, they would never give over ſtriking: They think the wound is never deep enough, nor blood ſhed enough; but ſaith the Prophet, verſ. 8. *God doth it in meaſure*, ſo that he oppoſeth their ſtriking to Gods afflicting by the meaſure of it. God keepeth his afflictions in ſuch a bound and compaſs, he afflicts in meaſure; but Satans ſtroak, and the ſtroaks of wicked men, are without all meaſure, that is, without all moderation: unleſs God ſtop them, they would never make an end.

Dicitur Leviathan, *i.e. Additamentum ſive augmentum, nam nullo noſtro malo contentus eſt, nullam poteſtatem ſibi ſatis eſſe putat, plus ſibi poteſtatis addi nobis malorum plus inferri ſemper poſtulat.* Pineda.

Laſtly, Obſerve how Satan is by this proved a deceiver, he intended more then he ſpake; you may ſee it plainly in this, becauſe God put a reſtraint upon him. *Touch all that he hath*, ſaith Satan; that referred to his poſſeſſions and outward eſtate, as if that had been the mind of Satan in the motion, do but afflict him in his outward eſtate, I deſire no more to make this trial: now when the Lord ſaith, *All that he hath is in thy hand*, there he grants him the motion in the letter of it: but the Lord God ſaw that Satan had a further reach, when he ſaid, *Touch all that he hath*, which words ſeem to extend no further then his eſtate; but had not God limited and reſtrained him, he by an indefinite grant to his motion, had likewiſe fallen upon his perſon, that was the great morſel he gaped after all this while, he would have been doing with *Job* himſelf, elſe there was no need of this limitation, *Only upon himſelf put not forth thy hand*; Satans fingers itcht to be medling with *Job*, though his words called for what he had, not for himſelf.

And Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.

As ſoon as he hath leave, and his Commiſſion, he is gone preſently, *He went out from the preſence of the Lord.* The word is, he went out from the face of the Lord: Now the face of the Lord in Scripture it is taken ſometimes for the eſſential glory of God, that inacceſſible Majeſty of God, *Exod.* 33. ult. *Thou canſt not behold my face.* Sometimes the face of God is put for the favour and love of God, *Cauſe thy face to ſhine upon thy Sanctuary which is deſolate*, Dan. 9. 17. *and cauſe thy face to ſhine upon thy ſervant*: So in many other places the face of God is put for the favour of God, becauſe as the favour and love of a man is ſeen and diſcovered in his face, ſo there is ſomewhat in thoſe dealings of God which diſcover God; he is ſaid to make his face to ſhine upon his people, when he doth diſcover by any act of his, that he loves and favours them; that is the ſhining of his face upon them. The face interprets the heart, and ſhews the meaning of the ſpirit: ſo in thoſe things which interpret ſomewhat of the love of God to us, God is ſaid to make his face ſhine upon us. On the other ſide, the face of God is put ſometimes for the anger and wrath of God, becauſe anger is ſeen in the face too; ſo in thoſe things by which God diſcovereth his anger, he is ſaid to ſet his face againſt men: there is an expreſs place for it in this ſenſe, *Lam.* 4. 16. *The anger of the Lord* (the Hebrew is, *the face of the Lord*) *hath divided them*; that is, the Lord hath done ſuch things as have the character of anger upon them, that do repreſent and hold forth nothing but the anger of the Lord unto a people, and that anger of the Lord is called the face of the Lord unto a people. Thirdly, by the face of the Lord in Scripture, we may underſtand the ordinances and the worſhip of God, becauſe in them and by them, God is revealed, manifeſted and known to his people, as a man is known by his face: So in the Old Teſtament, coming to God in thoſe inſtitutions, was called *appearing before God*, becauſe in them God had promiſed to manifeſt himſelf unto his people. Laſtly, the face of God is put for the common and general preſence of God in the world, by which he filleth heaven and earth, *Pſal.* 139. 7. *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?*

Index animi vultus.

Now when it is ſaid that *Satan went forth from the face of God*, or *from the preſence of God*, it cannot be underſtood in the firſt or in the ſecond ſenſe, for he cannot ſo come into the preſence of God, or before the face of God: before his face of glory, or before his face of favour, Satan never came, nor ever ſhall. And as the preſence of God is taken for his worſhip; ſo Satan cares not to come into his preſence. Laſtly, as the face of God ſignifies his common and general preſence in the world, ſo Satan cannot poſſibly go out from his face, *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?* nor men, nor devils are able to go out of the preſence of the Lord, in that ſenſe, for he filleth heaven and earth.

Pſal. 139.

Then theſe words, *He went out from the preſence of the Lord*, are ſpoken after the manner of men. When a ſervant cometh to his Maſter to receive Commiſſion to do ſome buſineſs, and hath his errand given him, then he goeth out from the preſence of his Maſter about his buſineſs. So Satan comes here upon a buſineſs unto God, he makes a motion, and deſireth to have ſuch power put into his hand, to do ſuch and ſuch things: the Lord grants it, and ſo ſoon as ever he had his diſpatch, he goeth out of the preſence of the Lord. So that the meaning is only this, that Satan left off ſpeaking with God, left off moving God any further at that time, and went out to execute that which he got commiſſion to do, as ſervants go out from the preſence of their Maſters, when they have received warrant or direction what to do. While a ſervant is in expectation of his meſſage or errand, ſo long his eyes are upon his Maſter, *Our eyes wait upon thee, O God, as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hands of their Maſters*, Pſal. 123. 3. The eyes of ſervants wait upon the face of their Maſter till they have received their meſſage, and then they go out from their preſence.

Hominum more loquitur, à quibus ſervi exeunt, ut mandata exequantur quæ ab illis acceperant.

It notes the ſpeed that Satan makes when he receives power from God to afflict, or to chaſten and try any of his children, he makes no ſtay, preſently he goeth out from the preſence of the Lord. Satan is ſpeedy and active in executing any power that is committed unto him againſt the people of God, againſt any particular member, or againſt the Church in general: As ſoon as ever he hath but his Commiſſion to afflict, he is gone about it inſtantly: As the good Angels in Heaven are deſcribed to have wings, becauſe as ſoon as ever they have received a command from God, they are upon the wing, they fly, as it were, to fulfil the will of God; and in that ſenſe go out of his preſence: So Satan and the wicked Angels are upon the wing too in that ſenſe, as ſoon as ever they have received power, they preſently put it in execution.

And we may in this make Satan himſelf our pattern. As we pray that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven, in heaven by the good Angels: So in this ſenſe (I ſay) we may deſire that we may do the will of God with as much ſpeed as the evil Angels. It is not unwarrantable to learn from Satan ſpeedily to be doing about the will of God.

VERS. 13, 14, 15.

And there was a day when his ſons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldeſt brothers houſe.
And there came a meſſenger unto Job, and ſaid, The Oxen were plowing, and the aſſes feeding beſides them.
And the Sabeans fell upon them, &c.

IN the former context we ſhewed you the affliction of *Job*, moved by Satan, and permitted by God, *Touch all* that he hath, is Satans motion: *All that he hath is in thine hand* is Gods permiſſion. From this 13. verſe to the end of the 19. the afflictions of *Job* are particularly deſcribed; and we may obſerve ſix particulars in the Context concerning his afflictions.

Firſt, The time or ſeaſon of his afflictions, *And there was a day when his ſons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldeſt brothers houſe*, verſ. 13.

Secondly, The inſtruments or the means of his afflictions. Satan who undertook the afflicting of *Job*, ſtands as it were behind the door, he doth not appear in it, but ſets on others. His inſtruments were firſt cruel and bloody minded men, the *Sabeans*, verſ. 15. The *Chaldeans*, verſ. 17. Secondly, thoſe active creatures, devouring fire and ſtormy winds; the *fire*, verſ. 16. the *wind*, verſ. 19.

Thirdly, The matter of his affliction, or in what he was afflicted, it was in his outward eſtate.

Fourthly, The variety of his afflictions: he was not ſmitten in ſome one thing, in ſome one part of his outward eſtate, but he was afflicted in all; his Oxen, his Aſſes, and his Camels were violently taken away, his ſheep burnt up by the fire, his ſons and his daughters over-whelmed and cruſhed by the fall of an houſe, all his ſervants attending upon theſe, ſlain, conſumed, deſtroyed, excepting only one from every ſtroke, to be the ſad relator or meſſenger of theſe calamities.

Fifthly, The ſuddenneſs of his afflictions, they came all upon him in one day.

Sixthly, The unceſſantneſs of the report of theſe afflictions, the ſound of them all was in his ears at once: as they were all brought upon him in one day, ſo they are all told him in one hour, yea by the ſtory it doth appear, there were but very few moments between the firſt and the laſt. For the Text ſaith, that no ſooner had one meſſenger ended his doleful news, but another begins, nay, they did not ſtay ſo long as to let one another make an end; but the Text ſaith, *While the former was yet ſpeaking, there came another and ſaid*; and ſo while the next was yet ſpeaking, there came another and ſaid; *and while he was yet ſpeaking, another*, &c. So that Satan did not give *Job* ſo much as the leaſt minute of intermiſſion to breath a while, or recollect himſelf. His troubles both in the acting and in the reporting, were cloſe linked together, like a chain, one with another, and he within them all *faſt bound, and yet free*.

Theſe are obſervable, thorough the whole Context concerning this great affliction of *Job*. Now we will conſider the afflictions themſelves, their ſeveral parts, and open the words in which they are preſented to us.

Verſ. 13. **And there was a day when his ſons and daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldeſt brothers houſe.**

Eccleſ. 3.1.

And there was a day.] *To every thing there is a ſeaſon* (ſaith *Solomon*) *and a time for every purpoſe under the Sun*. God hath a time for his purpoſes, God hath his day: Man hath a time for his purpoſes; and ſo hath Satan: any day will not ſerve his turn, he picks and chooſeth. *There was a day*, it intimates a day extraordinary, and there is an expreſs addition in the Original which puts an *emphaſis* upon it, and makes it more then a day, there was *that day*, or that *ſpecial day*: So it is uſed 2 *Kin*. 4.8. *And it fell on a day that* Eliſha *paſſed to Shunem*, or upon that day, a notable day wherein ſo many great things were done.

היום

But what day was this? It is explained in the words, in the latter part of the verſe. It was a notable day, for it was a day, or that day, *When his ſons and his daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldeſt brothers houſe*.

There are three things in thoſe words, which prove that this was an extraordinary day.

Firſt, It was a feaſting day, and feaſting dayes are extraordinary dayes.

Secondly, It was an extraordinary, not an ordinary feaſting day; For it is ſaid, *they were eating, and drinking wine*. In the beginning of the Chapter (where the feaſts of *Jobs* children are deſcribed) it is ſaid only, *That his ſons went every one their day, to eat, and to drink*: But here it is ſaid, that they did *eat, and drink wine*; which notes an extraordinary feaſt. For ſtill in Scripture, when we read of a banquet of wine, or a feaſt of wine, an extraordinary feaſt is meant. Queen *Eſther* invited the King and *Haman to a banquet of wine*; not that there was nothing but wine at the banquet, but that addition doth imply, that it was a plentiful banquet, a ſolemn banquet. It is more to make a *banquet of wine*, then to make a *banquet*, though ſcarce any banquet is made without wine. So when there wanted wine, the ſolemnity and glory of the feaſt was thought to be blemiſhed, *They have no wine*, ſaith the mother of Chriſt unto him at the marriage feaſt in *Cana*. And when the Spouſe would ſet forth the wonderfulneſs of ſpiritual delights, which ſhe had from Chriſt, ſhe expreſſeth it thus, *He brought me into the banqueting houſe*, the Hebrew word is, *he brought me into the houſe of wine*; the houſe of wine notes extraordinary ſpiritual refreſhing. What a banquet had the Spouſe for her ſoul there? Chriſt called her to eat and drink abundantly, to be filled with his love. See the like *Iſa*. 25. 6. So *Jobs* children were eating, and drinking wine, *&c.* they were at a plentiful and and ſolemn feaſt that day.

Eſther 5.6.

John 2.4.

Cant. 2.4.

Thirdly, It was a day of feaſting in their *eldeſt brothers houſe*, that is another thing which proves it was an extraordinary feaſt day. It was a feaſt, and a feaſt of wine, and a feaſt of wine in their eldeſt brothers houſe, who had a larger eſtate, a fuller portion, and to anſwer the dignity of his primogeniture, ought to make a more ſolemn feaſt then the reſt did: This was the day that Satan picks out and chooſes to bring all theſe ſad afflictions upon *Job*, an ordinary day would not ſerve his turn; without doubt this was not the immediate day or time, after which he got that Commiſſion from God, *All that he hath is in thine hand*; Satan went away, he would have been at it as ſoon as he could, but yet he waiteth for a ſpecial time wherein he might do it with greateſt advantage: and that is the point I ſhall obſerve from this.

That Satan obſerveth and watcheth his time to faſten his temptations moſt ſtrongly upon the ſoul.

He watcheth a day, *there was a day*, and there was not a day in the whole year, upon which he could have done it with greater advantage then upon that day. As the mercies of God are exceedingly endeared to us by the ſeaſon in which they come to us: When they come to us in our ſpecial need, how ſweet is a mercy then! And as our obedience is exceedingly commended to the acceptation of God, when it is upon a fit day, when it is on the day, wherein he calls for and expects it: And as our ſins are exceedingly aggravated, by the ſeaſon and time wherein they are committed: What, ſin upon this day? A day of trouble, a day of humiliation? As *Eliſha* rebuked *Gehazi*, *Is this a time to receive money, and to receive garments?* &c. Is this a time for thy heart to run out ſinfully after the world? So likewiſe the temptations of Satan and the afflictions which he brings upon the ſervants of God, are exceedingly imbittered by the ſeaſon; and he knows well enough, what ſeaſons will make them moſt bitter. And what can more imbitter a cup of ſorrow, then to have it brought us upon a day of rejoycing. *Solomon* tells us, that *as he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, ſo is he that ſings a ſong to an heavy heart*. If joy be troubleſome in our ſorrows, how troubleſome is ſorrow in the midſt of our joyes, *Prov*. 25. 20. Then, Satan could never have found out ſuch a time as this: Muſt he needs be afflicting the Father, when the children were a feaſting? Could he find out no other time but this? Muſt his tears be mingled with their wine? Muſt the childrens rejoycing day be the Fathers mourning day? Muſt Satan needs ſhew his malice againſt the Father, when the children were ſhewing their love one to another? It was a love-feaſt. Thus he did with Chriſt; it is obſerved that when Chriſt had faſted forty dayes and forty nights, and afterwards was an hungry, then the Tempter came, he layes hold of this advantage, he would not come till he was hungry, to perſwade him to turn ſtones into bread. What a ſtrength had this temptation from the ſeaſon? Who would not make bread for himſelf if he can, when he is hungry? Had Chriſt been full, there had not been ſuch an edge upon, ſuch a weight in the temptation. How many doth Satan provoke to turn ſtones into bread, when he comes to them in their hunger? Thou art in a ſtrait, like to ſtarve and periſh, turn ſtones into bread, that is, procure thy ſelf meat and proviſion by unlawful and ſinful wayes; This is indeed to turn ſtones into bread.

2 Kin. 5.26.

So here at this time when *Job* was rejoycing (as doubtleſs he did) to ſee the love and unity of his children; now at this time Satan attempts to turn their bread into a ſtone, to bruiſe and break the heart of their tender Father. *Afflictions preſs moſt when they are leaſt expected.*

Let us obſerve then this mixture of malice and cunning in Satan, in chooſing his time. To carry a man from one extremity to another, puts him upon the greateſt extremity: To make the day of a mans greateſt rejoycing to be the day of his deepeſt ſorrows, this is cutting, if not killing ſorrow. To be brought from extream ſorrow to extream joy ſuddenly, doth rather amaze then comfort the ſpirit of a man: It is ſaid that *when the Lord turned again the captivity of* Zion, *the people were like them that dream*; the change was ſo great, ſo ſudden, that they were rather aſtoniſhed and amazed then comforted with it, for a while. So, much more to be hurried from extream joy to extream ſorrow, from the borders of comfort to the brink of death on a ſudden, is not ſo much to afflict a man, as to confound and diſtract him. This courſe Satan takes with *Job.*

Pſal.126.1.

It were well if we could be wiſe in this reſpect to imitate Satan, to chooſe out our day to do good when there is greateſt probability of ſucceſs, as he choſe out his day to do miſchief: It is the Apoſtles rule, *as you have opportunity, do good*; if we could be wiſe to lay hold upon opportunities, it would be a wonderful advantage to us. *As a word fitly ſpoken is a word upon the wheel*; ſo a work fitly done, is a work upon the wheel, it goeth on, takes upon the heart both of God and man. Let us conſider whether now we have not a ſeaſon, whether this be not a day that holds forth to us a glorious opportunity. Surely we may preſent this day unto you, as a day to be doing in. Let us therefore be as quick in this our day to do good, as Satan was in that day to do hurt. This is a day wherein great things are a doing, and grievous things are a ſuffering by many of our brethren, therefore you ſhould be working this day, make a day on't. This is a day in which ſons of *Belial*, men that will not bear Chriſts yoke, are combining to break it, and to caſt his cords from them. Then joyn this day, to help Chriſt; elſe, as *Mordecai* ſaid to *Eſther*, *If thou altogether holdeſt thy peace at this time* (this was a day for *Eſther* to work in) *then ſhall their enlargement and deliverance ariſe to the* Jews *from another place, but thou and thy fathers houſe ſhall be deſtroyed:* So I may ſay to you in reference to the preſent opportunity, if you altogether hold your peace, hold your purſes, and hold your hands at this time, at ſuch a day as this, enlargement will come to the Church ſome other way; but you may be deſtroyed, who think to hold & keep your peace either by ſaying or doing nothing: If ever you will appear, this is a day to appear in to do good. Let us be wiſe to manage and improve our day; that it may never be ſaid of us, as our Lord Chriſt did of *Jeruſalem: If ye had known, even ye, in this your day, the things which belong unto your peace,* Luke 19.42. It is a ſadder thing to have had a ſeaſon and not to know it, (*ſc.* not to uſe it,) then not to have had it. *Solomon* tells us, *Eccleſ.*8.6. That, *Becauſe to every purpoſe there is a time and judgment, therefore the miſery of man is great upon him.* Miſery cannot be great to a man, becauſe there is a time for every purpoſe; but becauſe men are either ſo blind that they cannot ſee, or ſo ſluggiſh that they will not make uſe of the proper time for every purpoſe. Thus the Preacher himſelf expounds it, *Chap.* 9.12. *For man alſo knoweth not his time: as the fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds are taken in a ſnare, ſo are the ſons of men ſnared in an evil time, when it falleth ſuddenly upon them.* Conſider what *Solomons* experience taught him: Let not your inadvertencie of theſe times, make you a new experiment of that ancient truth, and leave men that ſhould be wiſe, eſpecially that pretend to wiſdom, to be numbred among, and compared with a ſilly bird, a ſilent fiſh.

Gal.6.10.

Eſth. 4.14.

Then again, Foraſmuch as it was the day of their great feaſt, of their feaſt with wine, upon which this great affliction aſſaulted *Job*; Obſerve,

> That, *The faireſt and cleareſt day of our outward comfort may be clouded and overcaſt before the evening.*

It was a fair day as ever began in *Job*'s family, a feaſt, and a feaſt with wine, and that, in the eldeſt Brothers houſe, and yet all was darkneſs before night.

This is true in reference to ungodly men, great and terrible judgments fall ſuddenly upon them; their light is turned into darkneſs in a moment, as Chriſt compares it to the dayes of *Noah*, and the dayes of *Lot*: *As it was* (ſaith he) *in the dayes of Noah, they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entred into the Ark, and the Flood came and deſtroyed them all. And as it was in the dayes of Lot*, &c. Both which, are in two words ſet out by the Apoſtle: *When they ſhall ſay peace and ſafety; then ſudden deſtruction cometh.* Thus it is with ungodly men, their Sun often ſets at noon; when they ſay, yea, when they conclude all's well, then judgment mixt with wrath, is at the door. This is a truth alſo in reference unto godly men, and the Churches of God, all their outward comforts may be clouded in a day, while they are eating and drinking, not ſinfully, but in a holy manner; ſuppoſe, as the Apoſtle adviſeth, *to the glory of God:* yet even at that time, all may preſently be taken away. And therefore, as the Apoſtle adviſeth, *Rejoyce as if you rejoyced not* in the Creature, and eat as if you did not eat, and buy as if you poſſeſſed not; Why? *For the faſhion of this world*, and the Scheme of this world *paſſeth away*; you ſee it did with *Job*: in what a goodly faſhion was his worldly eſtate in the morning? how was it dreſt and adorned in perfect beauty, in all its excellencies (as we heard it before deſcribed) yet, before night all the faſhion of it paſt away, and the beauty of it was quite blaſted: therefore, you that have great Eſtates, and good Eſtates, Eſtates well gotten, and well governed, be not high-minded, truſt not in uncertain riches; if riches encreaſe, and if they increaſe in a right way, *yet ſet not your hearts upon them*; for the faſhion of worldly things quickly paſſeth away. Riches make themſelves wings to flie away, when thou art making doors and locks, bolts and bars, to keep them in. That for the Time, in *Verſe* 13.

1 Theſ.5.3.

1 Cor. 10. 31.

1 Cor.7.30.

1 Tim. 6. 17.

Pſal.62.10.

But what did Satan upon this day? That is ſet down in *ver.* 14, and ſo on.

And there came a Meſſenger unto Job, and ſaid, the Oxen were plowing, and the Aſſes feeding beſide them.

There came a meſſenger.] The Jewiſh Rabbins, and ſome of the Fathers tell us, that theſe Meſſengers were Devils, evil Spirits, in the likeneſs of men: But ſurely the Opinion hath little likeneſs with truth; therefore with *Beza*, I lay it by, and reject it amongſt the Tales of the Rabbins: Theſe Meſſengers were really the eſcaped ſervants of *Job*, as we ſhall ſee afterward.

Now the Meſſenger beſpeaks *Job* thus, *The Oxen were plowing*, they were hard at their work; *and the Aſſes were feeding beſides them*: The word in the Hebrew is this, *the Aſſes were feeding at their hand,* or at hand. To be at hand, doth note nearneſs: In our Language we ſay, ſuch a thing is at hand, or ſuch a man is at hand, the day of our fear is at hand, when we mean, they are near: *The Lord is at hand*, *Phil.* 4. 5. *ſc.* nigh unto us for our help. So, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 2. It is applied alſo to nearneſs of place, as well as of time, *Neh.* 3. 2. where the building of the wall of *Jeruſalem* is deſcribed, it is ſaid, *Next unto him built the men of Jericho,* the Hebrew is, *at the hand of him built the men of* Jericho; that is, *next to him in place.*

Now the Meſſenger deſcribeth all in ſuch a poſture, *The Oxen were plowing, and the Aſſes feeding*; by this to aſſure *Job* of the care and diligence of his ſervants about his buſineſs, for the ſecuring of his Cattel, and improving of his ground. As if he ſhould have ſaid, This ſad affliction which is come upon thee, did not come through our negligence or improvidence, we were about our buſineſs, according to our ſeveral places; *the Oxen were plowing, and the Aſſes were feeding by them*; they were not careleſly left to danger, but our eye was upon them; yet notwithſtanding they were all ſurprized and taken away.

From this relation of the poſture of *Job*'s Servants and Cattel at the time when this affliction fell upon them, we may obſerve thus much,

> That, *All our care and diligence cannot ſecure outward things unto us.*

Afflictions may take us in the midſt of our beſt and moſt honeſt endeavours. A man may be looking to, and ordering his eſtate, and yet at the very time, while his eye is upon it, he may ſee it take its flight like an Eagle towards heaven; while he is ordering of it, he may ſee diſorder and confuſion coming upon it; while he is ſetling of it by honeſt care, he may quickly ſee it unſetled, removed, and all broken in pieces, as it was here with *Job*; he was in a very good way, his ſervants were honeſtly employed, but ſuddenly all is gone; the Oxen were taken away, and the Aſſes that fed by them. But who made this attempt? The Meſſenger informs that in the next words:

And the Sabeans fell upon them.

ותפל From נפל

The Sabeans.] The Hebrew is, *Saba fell upon them*; the countrey put for the people, *Saba* for the *Sabeans*: As we uſe to ſay, *Spain* made war, and *France* made war; that is, the *Spaniards* made war, or the *French* made war; ſo it is ſuch an expreſſion, *Saba* fell upon them, that is, the people inhabiting *Saba*.

Fell upon them.] The word noteth a mighty violence; they came upon them as from above, they come powring down upon them like a ſtorm. There is ſuch a phraſe in war, when they go violently upon a place, they are ſaid to ſtorm the place, to ſtorm the gates of a Caſtle, or of a City; ſo here, they fell upon them, that is, they came violently upon them like a ſtorm. In *Prov.* 1. 27. Deſtruction is deſcribed to come upon wicked men *like a whirlwind.*

Sabæos *autem* Arabas *intellige, qui latrociniis dediti erant; unde poſterior ætas eos Saracenos appellavit, non a* Sara, *ut quidam ſomniant; ſed a* Saras, *verbo Arabico, quod furari & latrocinari ſignificat. Unde* Saric, *Fur*, *Latro*. Druſ. in loc.

The *Sabeans* were a people (as is concluded by moſt Interpreters) inhabiting *Arabia Fœlix*, near the Countrey where *Job* dwelt: And for the manners of this people, it is obſerved by Hiſtorians, that they were a people famous only for robberies, a people that lived by pillage and plundering of their neighbours; ſuch a people they were: Theſe *Sabeans* fell upon them, *they took away thy Cattel, and have ſlain thy ſervants with the edge of the Sword.*

Here it may be queſtioned, how or why theſe *Sabeans* at ſuch a time ſhould fall upon the eſtate of *Job?* What hurt had *Job* done them? *Job* lived in a fair way with all his neighbours, and kept good quarter and correſpondence with them, he was not a man of war or contention; how cometh it to paſs that theſe fell upon *Job*'s eſtate, and took it away, and upon that day too, in this nick of time?

2 Sam. 14. 19.

As when the Widow of *Tekoah* had told a fair tale to *David*, about the bringing back of *Abſolom*, the King asked her, *Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?* So when you ſee ſuch men, *Sabeans* and *Caldeans* falling upon the eſtate of *Job*, you may demand, *Is not the hand of Satan in all this?* Yes no doubt. Theſe *Sabeans* fall upon *Job*'s eſtate, but Satan firſt fell upon the *Sabeans*, and by ſtrong temptations provoked them to do this ſervice.

But how could he prevail upon the *Sabeans*, that they ſhould come and do his buſineſs now at this time?

2 Tim. 2. 26.

The Apoſtle telleth us, *that wicked men are led captive by Satan at his will.* Satan doth lead men captive at his will, while they are, as they conceive, conquerors, riding in triumph, doing their own will. Theſe *Sabeans* came to execute their own deſigns, but Satan had a deſign upon them, he brought them thus to ſpoil the eſtate of *Job*.

But what could Satan do? How could Satan prevail with theſe? Can he force men to be his Inſtruments, to execute his deſigns upon the people of God? Or hath he *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, Nations and People at his beck, or under his command?

Eph. 2.

No, Satan cannot force or compel them againſt their wills; but as that Scripture ſaith, *he leads them captive at his will*; and as another Scripture, *he is a Prince of the power of the ayr*, and he *works in the children of diſobedience*; yea, *he works like a Prince, mightily and powerfully in the children of diſobedience.* Though he cannot conſtrain them, yet he can work mightily in them to effect what he hath to do.

But how doth he bring them about thus readily and ſuddenly to act what he projects?

Thus; Firſt, He finds out the temper and diſpoſition of the perſons: That Satan can do; he is a great *Naturaliſt*, and hath a great deal of help to his skill, *long experience*; by both, he can go very far in diſcovering the diſpoſitions of men, which way their ſpirits tend; and he found out, that theſe *Sabeans* were a people given to robbery and ſpoil, and ſo fit miniſters for him to work by in his deſign of ſpoiling the eſtate of *Job*. Secondly, When he hath found out the natural temper or ſtate of a mans heart, he can lay a bait of temptation ſutable to that inclination and deſire: finding out a people given to ſpoil, he preſently ſets before them rich ſpoils; theſe are a taking object: See, yonder is a brave prize for you, yonder is a rich man, his eſtate will be good plunder, yonder are Oxen and Aſſes ſtore, there's good booty to be had. Thus finding out their diſpoſition, he preſents or holds up an object to them, which hits it fully. Thirdly, Satan deals with man to draw him to his purpoſe a degree further, *ſc.* by injecting and caſting into the mind the motion to do this: He not only preſents ſuch and ſuch a thing, ſuch and ſuch an opportunity, but he caſts in and injects the motion. As it is ſaid of *Judas*, that the Devil *put it into his heart to betray Chriſt.* The Devil, being a Spirit, hath acceſs to our ſpirits, and can convey himſelf into them, and inſtill his ſuggeſtions. As the Lord Chriſt did breath upon his Diſciples, and ſo they received the holy Ghoſt, and were filled with the Spirit; ſo Satan breaths filthy ſuggeſtions into the ſpirits of men, and fills them with all manner of wickedneſs, malice, unrighteouſneſs; he fills them with the ſpirit of Hell: *Why hath Satan filled thy heart?* ſaith *Peter* to *Ananias*. Satan had filled his heart *to lie to the Holy Ghoſt*. Thus he inſtilled theſe thoughts of gain by robbery and murder, into the *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, and filled their hearts brim full: Then they reſolve to act it with the hand, and ſo they become his inſtruments. Laſtly, Satan can do ſomewhat more then inject and ſuggeſt ſuch thoughts, he can mightily irritate and provoke, and ſtir up the heart to be willing to give entertainment to ſuch a motion. He not only barely preſents his temptation, but vehemently backs it, and will give no reſt to a man, till he yields it: As it is ſaid of his tempting *David, that Satan ſtood up and provoked David to number the people*; he did not only inject ſuch a thought into *David*, but he *provoked him*; he never let him alone, but followed him, ſolicited him to it. This Satan can do; and yet he cannot *preſs men* to take up Arms for his deſigns; all thoſe that fight under Satans Colours, are *Voluntiers*; he never conſtrains any, neither can he; the will is never forced by him, neither can it be. Satan uſes no compulſion beyond a moral perſwaſion well ſet on; he can but vex us (as the *Midianites* did *Iſrael*) with his wiles; He is an *Achitophel*, not an *Alexander*; a *Machiavil*, not a *Cæſar*.

Joh. 13. 2.

Acts 5. 3.

2 Chr. 21. 1

This is the manner of Satans working in the children of diſobedience. All theſe things he can do; yet I believe he is not alwayes put to do all theſe upon every one over whom he prevailes; ſome come to this work on eaſier terms then others: He needs not provoke and ſolicit them, a ſuggeſtion wins them, the very ſight of an object overcomes them: yea, ſome ſtand ready offering their ſervice unto Satan, and ſelling themſelves to work any wickedneſs he will employ them in. I have ſhewed you the moſt that Satan can do; I conceive he had not much to do with theſe *Sabeans*, to invite them to this war: *That which is in motion, is eaſily moved*: And as we ſay, *He muſt needs run whom the Devil drives*; ſo the Devil needs not drive them, who are running of themſelves.

It being opened, what theſe *Sabeans* were, and how they came into the ſervice of Satan, what made them take up Arms, as it were, in his cauſe; we may obſerve from hence,

> Firſt, *That wicked and ungodly men, while they ſatisfie their own luſts, are but doing the work of Satan, and executing his deſigns.*

Theſe *Sabeans*, though they did not think it, yet they came upon Satans errand: So God, when he doth juſtly uſe wicked men to puniſh or correct his people, they do their own will, and they have their own way; but God hath his way too, he over-rules them to effect his buſineſs at that time: As it is ſaid of the King of *Aſſyria, O Aſſyrian, the rod of mine Anger, I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical Nation, and againſt the people of my wrath will I give him charge; howbeit, he meaneth not ſo, neither doth his heart think ſo*, Iſa. 10. He hath purpoſes of his own. So they that are agitated by Satan, and provoked by him, *they think not ſo*; they think not they are doing the will and work, the dirty drudgery of Satan; but the truth is, they do nothing elſe all the while. *You are of your Father* *the Devil, and his luſts will you do*; ſaith Chriſt to the *Jews*: while they do their own, they fulfil the luſts and deſigns of Satan. As it is ſaid in the *Revelation*, *The Devil* Rev. 2. 10. *ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*; it was not the Devil in perſon, it was the Devil in his ſeconds or ſervants; and theſe men little thought that they did the Devils ſervice at that time: If one ſhould have come and told them, you are now doing the Devils work, and undertaking a piece of ſervice for him, you are ſo many inſtruments and agents for Hell; they would not have believed it: but the truth is, it was the Devils work, and they did it ſo deviliſhly, that, from both, it is ſaid the Devil did it; he caſt ſome of them into priſon. It is a fearful thing to perſecute or oppreſs the people of God; ſuch, in ſerving their own luſts, are indeed the *right hand of Satan, the Devils hirelings.*

Secondly, Foraſmuch as Satan will have *Sabeans* and *Caldeans* to afflict *Job's* eſtate (he could have deſtroyed all himſelf if he pleaſed. Good Angels have mighty power, and ſo have wicked Angels too, if God will let them alone to put out their power; therefore they are called *Principalities and Powers.* Eph. 6. Satan had leave, he might have taken what courſe he would with the eſtate of *Job*; he doth not call in the *Sabeans* and the *Caldeans* to this work, becauſe he could not do it himſelf; no, it is becauſe he would work by others, he would have inſtruments.) Note hence,

That, *Satan loveth to draw others to be partakers with him in his deſigns.*

Though he can do his work alone, yet he will have man joyn with him in it, if he can: And in this he imitates God himſelf, who hath an almighty power, is able to do all things alone, if he pleaſe; yet uſually he calleth in inſtruments. He is able to convert alone by the motion of his Spirit; but he will have Preachers to convert by the Miniſtry of the Word. He is able to protect his people from their enemies, by his own ſtrength; yet he will have Armies muſtered, to do it by. And why doth God chooſe to work thus? There is a double good in it. He doth it, that he may do good two wayes at once. Firſt, His creature is ſaved and relieved; that is one good. Secondly, Men who are employed as inſtruments, are honoured and reſpected; they having given help to God in ſuch a cauſe, (ſo he interprets it, a *coming forth to help the Lord againſt the mighty*) God gives them honour in the eyes of all his ſervants; there is another good. So Satan, while he ſetteth men awork, *Sabeans*, *Caldeans*, and others, to do miſchief, he doth a double miſchief at once; he doth miſchief to *Job*, or others whom he afflicts; and he doth miſchief to his inſtruments; he makes theſe ſin, he makes others ſuffer: If he carry on the work alone, they ſuffer, but others do not partake in the guilt of the ſin; but now when he uſeth inſtruments to effect his wicked deſigns, he makes one miſerable, and the other wicked. This is one of Satans methods, he will work by means, and do his buſineſs by the hands of men, that he may at once do a double miſchief.

Thirdly, In that theſe *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, are obſerved in Hiſtories to be a people given much to robberies and ſpoil, and theſe are the men whom Satan picks out for this buſineſs; Obſerve,

That, *Satan ſuiteth his temptations to mans natural temper and inclination.*

Whenſoever he tempteth, he takes this advantage, if he can diſcover or obtain it. He is wiſer then to ſet ſail againſt wind and tide, to row againſt the ſtream; therefore he labours all he can, to find which way the ſtream of every mans affections runs; and to what ſins his Relations, his Calling, or his Opportunities lay him moſt open and obnoxious; accordingly he layes his Snares, and ſpreads his Net. When he meets with a proud man, him he tempteth with high thoughts: When he meeteth with a covetous man, him he tempteth to the love of the world; he layes a golden bait of profit before his eyes: The adulterous, he leads to the Harlots houſe. For howſoever it be true, that every man hath in him a principle ſuting to every ſin, yet it is a truth too, that every man is not equally active for, or diſpoſed unto every ſin; and every man hath not every particular ſin predominant in him: now Satan, when he ſeeth what is predominant in any man, then he faſhioneth and frameth a temptation ſutable: He perceived theſe *Sabeans* were given to rob and ſpoil, and he ſheweth them a deſirable booty.

And have ſlain thy ſervants with the edge of the ſword.

This a further aggravation of the affliction; they did not only fall upon *Job's* Cattel, and took them away; but they ſlew his Servants. A mans ſervants are nearer to him then his Cattel, then his Oxen and his Aſſes; ſervants are next unto our Children. So that this was a heightning of *Job's* ſorrow, not only are your Cattel gone, but your Servants are ſlain; and they are *ſlain* (ſaith he) *with the edge of the ſword*: the word in the Hebrew is, *they are ſlain with the mouth of the ſword.*

We read in Scripture ſometimes of the *face of the ſword*, and ſometimes of the *mouth of the ſword*; as, *Iſa.* 31. 8. where we tranſlate, *they ſhall flee from the ſword*, the Hebrew is, *they ſhall flee from the face of the ſword.* The like Text you have, *Jer.* 25. 27. Now when the Scripture ſpeaks of the *face of the ſword*, it is meant of war coming, or war preparing and approaching. But the *mouth of the ſword* is war inflicted, war acted. This phraſe, *the mouth of the ſword*, is uſed to ſhew, that the ſword is a great devourer, *Deut.* 32. 42. *I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my ſword ſhall devour fleſh.* War hath a terrible face, it hath a wide mouth, and ſharp teeth; *They have ſlain thy ſervants with the edge of the ſword*; the mouth of the ſword hath devoured them.

At this day we have great cauſe to have our hearts deeply affected with this thing. There hath been (as it were) the face of the ſword a great while looking towards us, but now there is the very mouth of the ſword gaping at us; yea, tearing, gnawing, and devouring the fleſh and bones of thouſands amongſt us. Where the ſword comes, it will devour: war is a great judgment, one of Gods ſore judgments, the ſoreſt of all Gods outward judgments. *David* chooſeth the Peſtilence rather then the ſword; the Peſtilence is a devourer, but the ſword is a greater devourer. And though the Prophet *Jeremiah*, in his *Lamentations*, makes Famine a ſorer judgment then the Sword (*Chap.* 4. 9.) *They that be ſlain with the ſword are better then they that be ſlain with hunger.* Yet the ſword is in this worſe then famine, becauſe uſually it is the cauſe of famine. The ſword cuts off food, the ſupport of mans life, as well as the life of man. While the ſword is making it ſelf fat, it hath famine in the belly of it.

We need not go to *Jeremiah* or *Joſephus* for the proof of this in *Jeruſalems Babylonian* or *Roman* deſolations; ſad *Germany*, bleeding *Ireland*, are near woful witneſſes and ſpectacles of it at this day. The Sword hath opened a way for Famine to enter both; and which of the two hath eaten moſt fleſh, is hard to determine. Let us cry earneſtly to God, that the mouth of the Sword may be ſtopped, or continued open, only to devour thoſe, who would devour the man who is more righteous then they: Let us pray that blood may be ſpared, or none but corrupt blood ſpilt. *Spare thy people, O Lord:* It is (I confeſs) one of the ſaddeſt prognoſticks, in my obſervation, againſt this Nation, that God hitherto hath made little difference. Our Sword hath not yet been taught from Heaven to diſtinguiſh of men. Precious blood hath been drawn, and men, whoſe very hairs were all numbred (that is, highly prized) by God, have been numbred among the ſlain. It muſt ſatiſfie us, that the will of God is ſo. The anſwer which *David* gave *Joab's* Meſſenger, is good ſetling counſel now (2 *Sam.* 11. 25.) *Let not this thing diſpleaſe thee*; (He ſpeaks this after the fall of noble *Uriah*) *for the ſword* (not by accident, but decree; not caſually, but providentially) *devoureth ſo and ſuch* (as the Hebrew elegance hath it) *one as well as another*; ſo we tranſlate. It is mercy, we are not all conſumed by this eater; as in the Text ye may read all the ſervants of *Job* were, excepting one, only one got out of the mouth of the ſword; it eat up all ſaving one, and he was ſaved, that by the report of the deſtructive ſword, he might deſtroy *Job* himſelf.

And I only am eſcaped to tell thee.

רק אני לבדי

The word in the Original, is double; *tantum ego, ſolus ego*, only I; *I alone am eſcaped*: as if the man ſhould have ſaid, between horror and amazement, much ado I had to get away without loſing ſomewhat of my ſelf; I only ſingle,

gle, ſingle I got away and eſcaped. The ſword was very hungry, when but one man of all *Job's* ſervants eſcaped the teeth of it.

But how cometh it to paſs that this one man eſcaped?

Certainly, as I ſaid before, the hand of Satan was in this alſo: For howſoever the Lord ordered and diſpoſed all theſe things, yet he let Satan work in his circle, in his compaſs, to contrive things as he pleaſed himſelf, the moſt aptly he could imagine, to afflict and trouble *Job*; therefore there is ſomewhat in it, no good-will (I believe) to *Job*, that this one man had the favour of quarter or mercy of an eſcape.

It was not out of any compaſſionate reſpect to *Job*, that one of his ſervants comes home alive. It was rather to increaſe the affliction of *Job*, and for the perfecting of his ſorrows; this man was not ſlain, that *Job* may be more deeply wounded. There are two Reaſons, which may be aſſigned, why one man eſcaped out of every one of theſe calamities.

Firſt, That the report of this affliction might come ſuddenly to him. A man that eſcapes out of ſuch a danger, needs no driving; his fear will add wings to his feet, he will run home amain.

Secondly, For the certainty of it. Reports fly abroad, they may be falſe; *Fama mendax*, Fame is a liar. *Job* might have had ſuch reports from his neighbours in the Countrey, all your Cattel are ſeized upon, and all your ſervants are ſlain; and *Job* might ſlight it, and ſay, This might be but a rumour, I give no credit to it; therefore Satan lets one of his own ſervants come frighted home with the news, one that was there, one that was an eye-witneſs, one that *Job* knew, one that had no reaſon, much leſs the boldneſs to bring falſe tales to him; that ſo the report coming ſpeedily and certainly, his heart might be ſmitten preſently. *It is ſome abatement of an evil, to have but a colour to doubt of it.* If we can but lay hold of any circumſtance which renders an evil report improbable, and may for a while ſtrengthen our unbelief of it, we may in that interim get more ſtrength of Faith to bear it, when we ſee it is certain and unqueſtionable. There was no mercy in ſuch a ſparing.

And we may obſerve out of it, that which *Solomon* ſpeaks of the mercies of the wicked is moſt true of Satans, *The very tender mercies of Satan are cruel*, the beſt of his mercies, his ſparings are woundings; he never ſpareth but with an intent to do further hurt. *Jobs* afflictions had not gone ſo deep, if this man had not been left to bring the meſſage.

It followeth,

Verſ. 16. **While he was yet ſpeaking there came alſo another and ſaid, the fire of God is fallen from Heaven, and hath burnt up the ſheep, and the ſervants, and conſumed them, and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee.**

In this verſe we have the ſecond charge which this great enemy gives *Job*, *While he was yet ſpeaking there came alſo another. Afflictions ſeldom go alone*; And therefore when one affliction is ended, look another ſhould begin, and labour to prepare for it. *Job* having received this meſſage of the loſs of his cattel and death of his ſervants, while the meſſenger was yet ſpeaking, a ſecond comes with a ſadder ſtory then that. Satan would not give him the leaſt breathing or intermiſſion; *while he was yet ſpeaking*; one evil treads upon the heel of another; as wave overtakes wave in the ſea; ſo it was here, here was wave after wave, to over-whelm his ſpirit. And as it is ſaid in the *Revelation*, concerning him that ſate on the white-horſe, that he rid out *conquering and to conquer*, there was no intermiſſion of his victories; ſo Satan goeth forth afflicting and to afflict, vexing and to vex, tempting and to tempt, he will never give over. *While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, the fire of God is fallen upon thy ſheep.*

The fire of God.

Why is it here called the *fire of God*? Some conceive it is called the *fire of God*, becauſe ſent from God: that is aſcribed to God, which comes from God, as that *Gen.* 19. 24. where it is ſaid, *that the Lord did rain fire and brimſtone upon* Sodom *out of Heaven from the Lord*: or *Jehovah* did rain from *Jehovah* fire upon *Sodom* to conſume it: And *Levit.* 10. 2. it is ſaid, *That a fire went out from the Lord and conſumed* Nadab *and* Abihu. *Elijah* procures fire from Heaven to conſume the *Captains* that came from the *King* to take him, 2 *King.* 1. 10, 12. The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaking of the plagues of *Egypt* (Pſal. 105. 32.) ſaith *that the Lord ſent flames of fire in the land*; So ſome expound that place, Pſal. 104. 3. *He maketh his Angels ſpirits, and his Miniſters a flame of fire*, that is, he uſeth flames of fire for his Miniſters, for his meſſengers. God ſometime ſends a fire on his errands, though we know that place is applyed to the Angels by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 1. 7.

But here rather it is called the *fire of God* in another regard; for howſoever this fire was ſent of God, as all afflictions are; yet becauſe the immediate kindler of it was Satan, he had the power put into his hand; therefore this was not a fire (in that ſenſe as thoſe other fires are ſaid to be) ſent from God: But it may be called (as uſually in Scripture) *the fire of God*, becauſe of the ſtrangeneſs of the fire, it was a wonderful, an extraordinary fire; and ſo it is very ordinary in the Hebrew to uſe the name of God, *El*, *Elohim* or *Jehovah*, as an Epithite, as an additional word to heighten the excellence or rareneſs of things. We find that phraſe often, *A man of God*. The Hebrews ſay, to call one a man of God, is as much as to ſay, he is an *extraordinary man, a man of an excellent ſpirit, a Prophet, a holy man*: In that Pſalm where the Church is ſhadowed under the ſimilitude of a *Vine*, it is ſaid, *She did ſend forth her branches like the goodly Cedars*: So we tranſlate it; the Original word is, *She ſent forth her branches as the Cedars of God*, that is, *excellent Cedars, tall* and *extraordinary Cedars*. In Pſal. 36. 6. comparing the love of God to great Mountains, *Thy loving kindneſs is as the great mountains*, the word is, *like the mountains of God*. Pſal. 65. 9. *Thou refreſheſt it with the river of God*, that is, *with an excellent River*. Cant. 8. 6. ſpeaking of love and jealouſie, *Love is ſtrong as death, jealouſie is cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a moſt vehement flame*; the word in the Original is a *flame of God, the coals thereof are coals of fire, the flame of God*, that is, as we tranſlate it, *a vehement flame*. So here the *fire of God*, that is, *a ſtrange fire, an unheard of, an unuſual fire, a vehement fire*, ſuch a fire as had not been ſeen nor obſerved before. Therefore the Hebrews call extraordinary things the things of God; becauſe indeed all the wonders and excellencies, all the glory and goodneſs that is in creatures, is but a footſtep, a print or drop of that excellency and glory and power that is in God; therefore every thing that is moſt excellent, is aſcribed unto God. It is moſt equal that his name ſhould be ſtampt upon all excellent things in the creature, who is the cauſe of all creature-excellence. This fire being a ſtrange and extraordinary fire, is ſaid to be the fire of God.

Pſ. 180. 10.

This fire of God is conceived to have been ſome terrible flaſh of Lightning, which in a moment deſtroyed and conſumed the ſheep and ſhepherds. And this is more probable, becauſe it is ſaid to fall down from Heaven, that is, out of the Air; for ſo often in Scripture, Heaven is put for the Air, the middle region of the Air, where Satan hath great power; therefore he is called the *Prince of the Air*; and he can do mighty things, command much in the Magazine of Heaven, where that dreadful Artillery, which makes men tremble, thoſe fiery Meteors, Thunder and Lightning, are lodged and ſtored up. *Satan let looſe by God, can do wonders in the Air*: He can raiſe ſtorms, he can diſcharge the great Ordnance of Heaven, Thunder and Lightning, and by his Art, he can make them more terrible and dreadful then they are in nature. If the ſkill and art of man can heighten natural things, then much more the ſkill of Satan. I doubt not, but many fearful impreſſions are made in the Air by Devils, carrying Nature (by Gods permiſſion) far above its own courſe; and theſe are properly *Marvels* or *Wonders* (ſuch as the Magicians wrought in *Egypt*, by the help of Satan) for Miracles are quite out of the Devils Sphear: But he can do wonders; and ſuch was this fire falling from Heaven, *&c.* *A Marvel, a Wonder, is Nature mightily improved: a Miracle is Nature totally croſſed, if not contradicted.* Obſerve this for the nature of that fire; the effect of it follows in the next words.

Fulgur maximum. Jun.

It hath burnt up the ſheep and the ſervants, and conſumed them.

The word in the Original is, *It did burn them and eat* *them up.* Fire is a devouring Element. Devouring Fire, as before a devouring Sword, theſe were devouring judgements upon *Job.* Yet it doth not neceſſarily infer that the ſheep were all burnt to aſhes; but that the ſheep were all killed by that flame of lightening that came from Heaven; for it is ſaid of *Nadab* and *Abihu* (of which we ſpake before) that a fire went out from God, and did conſume them; it is the ſame Original word that is here in the Text, *A fire went out from God, and did eat them up,* yet we know their bodies were not conſumed, for they were carried out to their burial, and their garments were upon them. So that this conſuming doth not note the burning of things to aſhes, but a ſtriking of them to death; it is a devouring fire, becauſe it is a deſtroying fire, it takes away life: and thus lightenings kill rather by peircing and penetrating, then by conſuming and devouring.

But now here it will be queſtioned for the further opening of this, why Satan chooſes thus to conſume the Sheep with fire? why doth he not rather uſe ſpoylers to take them away? He could doubtleſs have got the *Sabeans* to have fetched away the flocks of Sheep, as well as the droves of greater Cattle; he could have procured them eaſily; why then doth he cauſe fire from Heaven to come down, the fire of God to conſume them?

I anſwer, his reaſon for this was to put the greater ſting into the affliction. He would not have the Sheep taken away after the ſame manner that the Oxen and Camels were, that he might aggravate *Jobs* trouble, and provoke him if he could to be paſſionate againſt God, yea and (for that was his great deſign) to blaſpheme God; therefore he procures fire from Heaven to fall upon the Sheep, thereby to beget an opinion in *Job* that God was now become his enemy as well as man. When we ſuffer from man, then the afflicted ſoul flies to God, makes his complaint and moan to him, as doubtleſs *Job* did when he heard of thoſe cruel *Sabeans,* and what they had done; but leſt *Job* ſhould reſort in his thoughts to Heaven, and comfort himſelf in God again, the next meſſenger telleth him that God is his enemy too, that the *fire of God* is fallen upon the Sheep; an extraordinary fire; as if he ſhould ſay, God fighteth againſt thee as well as the *Sabeans*; Alas now to whom ſhould *Job* make 1Sam. 2.25 his moan! That ſpeech of *Eli,* concerning ſin may well be applied to ſuffering, *If one man ſin againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge him: but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* So if a man ſuffer from men, he may go unto God; But if God himſelf do appear to be an enemy and to fight againſt us, to whom ſhall we go? Indeed *Job* knew how to go to God, though he did appear as an enemy; but that is the greateſt ſtraight, and to do thus notes the greateſt ſpiritual both skill and ſtrength. Hence obſerve,

That Satans great deſign againſt the people of God or any ſervant of God, is to provoke them to ill thoughts of God;

To perſwade them that God is their enemy, to bring the love and good will of God into ſuſpition. Therefore he cauſeth this great fire, and (it is like) formed the ſervants language in that cutting phraſe, *The fire of God is fallen upon the Sheep.* Thou canſt not put this off, as thou mighteſt do the other, and ſay, this is but the malice or the covetouſneſs of the *Sabeans,* that rob'd me of my goods, and ſlew my ſervants; No, thou ſhalt ſee now that God himſelf is angry, Heaven frowns upon thee, the fire of God from Heaven conſumes thee. Turn over the Records of all Antiquity, and ſee whether God ever dealt thus with any, but thoſe curſed *Sodomites* upon *whom God rained fire from Heaven*: Thou who comeſt ſo near them in the puniſhment, haſt reaſon to judge thy ſelf not far behind them in ſin.

Secondly obſerve, *Thoſe afflictions are moſt grievous wherein God appears to be againſt us.*

The malice of Devils and the rage of men may be endured; but who can ſtand before God, when he is angry? If God doth but withdraw his comforts, the ſoul ſinkes under ſmalleſt tryals; how then can it ſtand if God ſhould reveal his wrath againſt us, when we are in great trials?

It may here be queſtioned, why the Sheep were conſumed with fire, rather then any other of his Cattel, rather then any other of his ſubſtance.

There are two things in that. Firſt, The Sheep were uſed in Sacrifice. *When the dayes of their feaſting were ended,* Job *offered Sacrifice,* and the Sheep chiefly were offered in Sacrifice. Now Satan by conſuming the Sheep hoped to faſten this upon *Job,* if poſſibly he could, that God was angry with his very Sacrifices, God was angry with his ſervices. As if he ſhould ſay, *Doeſt thou think that the offering up of thy Sheep in Sacrifice hath been pleaſing to God? Certainly if the fire of thoſe Sacrifices had delighted God, if he had ſmelt a ſavour of reſt in them* (as he is ſaid to have done, when *Noah* offered Sacrifice after the Flood, *Gen.* 8. 21.) *he would never have ſent a fire from Heaven to conſume them.* That is conceived by Expoſitors to be an eſpecial reaſon why the Sheep were conſumed, namely to caſt *Job* upon this apprehenſion, that his very Sacrifices were rejected of God; that he might conclude of himſelf (as *Solomon* ſaith of the wicked) *that his Sacrifices were an* Prov. 15.8. *abomination unto the Lord*; and to ſhew that God would now have no more of his Sacrifices, God himſelf made one Sacrifice of them all. But *Origen* brings in *Job* excellently retorting this ſuggeſtion upon Satan: I ſacrificed now one, and then another of my Sheep to God; but now bleſſed be God, who hath accepted all my flock as one burnt-offering.

Againe, the Sheep were conſumed by fire, as to make *Job* conceive that his former ſervices were rejected, ſo to take him off and diſcourage him from offering any more ſuch ſervices; to make him deſpair of ever thriving in the way of thoſe duties: and conclude ſurely God is ſo angry now, that all my ſervices, all my ſacrifices will never appeaſe him, nor profit me: therefore I were as good lay by theſe duties as perform them, when I get no good. This is a dangerous temptation; if Satan by ſuch prejudices againſt holy duties, can cauſe us to lay them by, the day is won: for then the ſoul is left naked and unarm'd. We have not then ſo much as a bulruſh in our hands to ſmite him, or a paper breſt-plate to ſecure our ſelves. If we give over praying and ſeeking, we have no ground to expect Chriſt either aſſiſting or protecting us. That for the ſecond affliction.

Verſ. 17. **While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, the** Caldeans **made out three Bands, and fell upon the Camels, and have carried them away, yea, and ſlain the ſervants with the edge of the Sword, and I only am eſcaped alone, to tell thee.**

This is the third affliction, the taking away of the Camels, the deſtroying of the ſervants that waited upon them. There is not much to ſtay upon in this, having before opened moſt of the paſſages of it in the 15. *verſe.*

While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, the Caldeans **made out three Bands.**] *Caldeans* ſometime note a condition or a rank of men, ſuch as were Diviners, Southſayers and Aſtrologers, theſe are in Scripture called *Caldeans.* As the *Indians* called ſuch skilful perſons *Gymnoſophiſts,* and the *Perſians* called them their *Magi,* and the *Romans* called them *Augures,* ſo the *Aſſyrians* called them *Caldeans.* When *Nebuchadnezzar* dreamed a dream, it is ſaid, that he ſent for the *Diviners and the Aſtrologers, and the* Caldeans; Dan. 2. 3. and afterward the *Caldeans* take up all, he ſaid to the *Caldeans,* and the *Caldeans* ſaid to the King: the *Caldeans,* were put for all thoſe that undertook the Art of divining and interpreting dreames. But here by the *Caldeans,* are to be underſtood, not a condition of men, but a Nation of men, or the people inhabiting *Chaldea*: frequently ſpoken of by the Prophets, and deſcribed to the life by the Prophet *Habakkuk,* Chap. 1. Hab. 1. 6,7. where the Lord threatned to ſend the *Caldeans* againſt his people, and then deſcribes them, *That haſty and bitter Nation, their Horſes are ſwifter then the Leopard, and more ravening then the evening Wolves*: Such a kind of people they were who were ſtirred up by Satan to take away the Camels of *Job.*

Theſe are ſaid to make out three Bands to ſpoyl. They were a people like the *Sabeans,* delighting in war and robbery; ſo much the Etymologie of their Name *Chaſdim* (which is the word in the Original) implieth, being derived from *Sadad,* which ſignifieth to rob and ſpoyle. Theſe were a wicked generation, yet theſe prevail over the eſtate of *Job.* Victory doth not always attend a juſt cauſe. The way of the wicked often proſpers, and the way of theſe wicked *Caldeans* proſpered ſo often, that the Prophet *Habakkuk* complains to God as one ſcandaliz'd at it: *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on* *on iniquity; wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he?* If ever we ſhould be brought upon a like caſe, to argue it thus with God, or (as *Jeremy* did, *chap.* 12. 1.) to plead with God about his judgments, let us remember to eſtabliſh our hearts (before we open our mouthes) with the Prophet *Jeremies* concluſion in that place, *Righteous art thou O Lord*, though the wicked devour the man that is more righteous then he. It is very rare that God makes one good man his rod to ſcourge another: he uſually makes the worſt of men his rod, his ſtaffe, his ſword, to inflict either trials or judgments upon his people. The durty Scullion ſcowres the Silver veſſel, and makes it both clean and bright for his maſters uſe.

VERS. 18, 19.

While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another and ſaid, thy Sons and thy Daughters were eating and drinking Wine in their eldeſt Brothers houſe.

And behold there came a great wind from the Wilderneſs, and ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thée.

THis was, as the fourth and laſt, ſo the greateſt of all Satans aſſaults, the moſt fierce and terrible charge that *Job* had all the day, and Satan reſerves this untill the evening, till *Job* was ſpent and ſpiritleſs, as he hoped. I ſhall note this in general from it.

That Satan uſually keeps his greateſt ſtrength and moſt violent temptations unto the laſt.

When he thinks we are at the weakeſt, then he cometh with the ſtrongeſt aſſaults. If Satan had ſent *Job* word of the death of his Children firſt, all the reſt would have been as nothing to him: he would not have regarded the loſs of his Cattel, when he heard that all his Children were cruſhed to death by the fall of the Houſe. As ſome one great evil falling upon us, takes the heart off from having any ſenſe or joy in a leſſer good; ſo one great evil ſwallows up the ſenſe and feeling of a leſſer evil: that great evil which fell upon the Wife of *Phineas*, when ſhe heard that *the Ark of God was taken*, afflicted her ſo extreamly, that ſhe could not at all rejoyce in the birth of her ſon, ſhe had no ſenſe of that. Here was therefore the cunning of Satan, leſt *Job* ſhould have loſt the ſmart of the leſſer afflictions, leaſt they ſhould have been all ſwallowed up in the greater, he brings them out in order, the leaſt firſt, the greateſt is reſerved for the laſt. We obſerve in War, that when once the great Ordnance are diſcharged, the Souldiers are not afraid of the Musket: ſo when a great battery is made by ſome thundring terrible judgment upon the Soul, or upon the Body, or Eſtate of any man; the noyſe and fears of leſſer evils are drown'd and abated. Therefore Satan keeps his greateſt ſhot to the laſt, that the ſmall might be heard and felt, and that the laſt coming in greater ſtrength might find the leaſt ſtrength to reſiſt it.

And that this was a greater affliction then any of, or then all the former, is ſo clear that I ſhall not need to ſtay long in the confirming of it; only to quicken the point a little, take notice of the greatneſs of it in five reſpects.

Firſt, It appeareth without controverſie to be the greateſt of all, becauſe it was upon his Children: a mans Children are more then all that he hath in the world: a mans Children are himſelf, every child is the Father multiplied; a Son is the Fathers bowels: and therefore when *Paul* wrote to *Philemon* concerning *Oneſimus*, *whom* (ſaith he) *I have begotten in my bonds*; (*ſc.* to the faith of Chriſt) *Receive him who is mine own bowels*: A ſpiritual Son is the very bowels of a Miniſter; he doth but allude to a natural Son, a Son is the very bowels of the Father. This affliction reached unto the very bowels of *Job* himſelf; Satan had no leave to afflict the body of *Job*, and yet you ſee he afflicts him in his very bowels.

Phil. v. 12.

Secondly, The greatneſs of it is ſeen in this, his Children were all taken away. To looſe all our children, is as grievous as to looſe an only Child: Now that is made a cauſe of the higheſt ſorrows, *Zach.* 12. 10. *They ſhall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for an only Son*: that is, they ſhall mourn moſt bitterly. Now as the meaſure of mercies may be taken by the comforts which they produce; ſo we may take the meaſure of an affliction by the ſorrow which it produceth, and that is the greateſt affliction which cauſeth the greateſt ſorrow.

Thirdly, It was a further greatning of the affliction, that they were all taken away ſuddenly. Had death ſent them a ſummons, by its uſual meſſenger ſickneſs, but a day before to prepare themſelves, it had much ſweetned the bitterneſs of this cup; but to hear they were dead before he knew they were ſick, yea when he thought they were merry and rejoycing, how ſad was this?

Fourthly, That they died a violent death, by a mighty wind caſting the houſe down upon them. Had they died in their beds (though ſuddenly) it had been ſome eaſe to the Fathers heart: violent death had an impreſſion of wrath upon it. And men can hardly judge well of thoſe, who fall by ſuch judgments. Suſpition will ariſe, if cenſure paſs not, from better men then *Barbarians*, if they ſee a Viper on the hand of a *Paul*, *Act.* 28. It is more then probable from our Saviours queſtion, that thoſe eighteen upon whom the Tower of *Shiloe* fell, and ſlew them, were commonly ſuppoſed greater ſinners, or ſinners, above all men that dwelt in *Hieruſalem*, *Luk.* 13. 4.

Fifthly, They were all taken away when they were feaſting; and this did exceedingly aggravate the affliction upon *Job*, that his Children were all deſtroyed feaſting; for you know what the thoughts of *Job* were concerning his Children at their feaſting; after they had done, he offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all, for he ſaid, *It may be my Sons have ſinned and curſed God in their hearts*. Now at this time, when Satan knew that *Job* was moſt ſolicitous leſt his Children ſhould ſin, at that time doth he deſtroy them; that ſo their Father might be afflicted with the thought, that his Children died unreconciled to God, that they died with ſin upon them unrepented of: That they died a double death, death at once ſiezing upon both ſoul and body. This then was a further degree of Satans malice, to wound, vex and grieve the ſpirit of *Job* unto the utmoſt. How ſadly and paſſionately did *David* lament *Abſaloms* death? Some conceive that this was the head of the Arrow that pierced him, becauſe he feared his Son died in a ſinful condition, he was ſuddenly taken away in his rebellion, unreconciled either to God or man. Such a thought might fall upon *Job's* heart; my Children are ſuddenly dead, and dead feaſting, it may be they forgot God, it is poſſible they ſinned in feaſting, and curſed God in their hearts: Alas my Children died before they could ſo much as think of death: I fear they are gone rejoycing to Hell, where they ſhall weep for evermore. Doubtleſs Satan did or might faſten ſuch a temptation upon his heart who was ſo tender of his Childrens ſouls, and ſo fearful of their ſinning in feaſting. So then it is clear from all theſe particular conſiderations, that this was the greateſt affliction.

Be prepared then, not only to receive another affliction, but to receive a greater affliction, and have thoughts of receiving the greateſt affliction at the laſt. Satan will come with his ſtrongeſt aſſaults when thou art weakeſt. At the time of death when he ſeeth he can do no more, but that he muſt then do it, or never do it, then thou ſhalt be ſure to have the ſtrongeſt temptations.

It ſhould therefore ſtir up the people of God, ſtill to look for more and more ſtrength to bear afflictions and tentations, and to beg from Chriſt the greateſt ſtrength at laſt, becauſe they may juſtly fear the greateſt temptations at laſt. If as Satan doth greaten his temptations, Chriſt doth greaten his aſſiſtance, we ſhall be able to bear them, and be more then conquerers over them.

So much of this fourth charge in the general; I ſhall now open the words more particularly (for thoſe in the 18. *verſe* I ſhall not need to ſay any thing of them, they have been handled before at the 13. *verſe*, which runs thus; *And there was a day when his Sons and his Daughters were eating and drinking wine in their Eldeſt Brothers houſe*:) The 19. *verſe* deſcribes the manner of this trial; **And behold there came a great wind from the Wilderneſs**, &c.

And behold.] *Ecce*, or behold, in Scripture notes more then ordinary matter following. Firſt, Great things call for attention. Secondly, That which is ſudden and unexpected, calls us to behold it. Thirdly, Rare things, things

Ecce adverbium demonſtrandi uſurpatur in rebus notabilibus.

ſeldom ſeen, invite all to ſee and wonder at them. Here is matter of admiration: what God threatens in the Law, he ſeems to fulfil upon *Job*, *I will make their Plagues wonderful.* There is no *Ecce* prefixed to any of the former three afflictions; but this as being the moſt ſtrange and terrible, comes in with *Ecce*, *And behold* ———

Deut. 28. 59

There came a great Wind.] It was a Wind, and a great Wind that came. The Wind is elegantly ſaid to come (as the Sun) out of his chamber, and rejoycing as a ſtrong man to run a race, *Pſal.* 19. 5. Hence the word which the Latines uſe for the Wind, is derived from a word that ſignifies *to come*; becauſe the Wind comes with force and violence. The Wind (in the nature of it) is an exhalation ariſing from the Earth, drawn upwards by the power of the Sun and other Heavenly bodies: but meeting and conflicting a while with the cold of the middle region of the Air, is beaten back again; and being ſo light that naturally it cannot deſcend, and ſo reſiſted that it cannot peaceably aſcend, it takes a courſe between both, ſlanting with mighty violence through the Air. Thus Philoſophers teach. This Wind is ſaid to have been a *great Wind*: great in quantity, much Wind, a large Wind; great alſo in quality, a vehement, boiſtrous, angry Wind.

Ventus à violentia & vehementia nomen habet, quod veniat abundè, & magna vi irruat in unum aliquem locum. Magir. Phyſ.

Further, this Wind is deſcribed by the Coaſt or Quarter from which it breathed.

From the Wilderneſs.] Or as the Hebrew is, from beyond the Wilderneſs, from the other ſide of the Wilderneſs this Wind came.

מעבר המדבר *A regione deſerti, vel à trans deſertum.*

Winds are differenced by the quarters or points of the Heavens out of which they blow. This Wind is deſcribed by the place from whence it came, from the Coaſt out of which it was raiſed, it was from beyond the Wilderneſs.

There were many Wilderneſſes. Here Wilderneſs is ſet down indefinitely. There was the Wilderneſs of *Maon*, and the Wilderneſs of *Ziph*, and many other Wilderneſſes ſpoken of in Scripture. What Wilderneſs was this?

It is conceived, that this was either the Wilderneſs of *Idumea*, or *Edom*, ſpoken of 2 *Kings* 3. 8. or elſe it was *Arabia* the Deſart, which is by way of eminency called *The Wilderneſs.* It came from the Wilderneſs, that is, it came over that part which is called *Arabia deſerta*, or *Arabia* the wild.

When it is ſaid, this Wind came from the Wilderneſs, the Coaſt is cleared, but the cauſe and ſtirrer up of this Wind is concealed. A Wind came from the Wilderneſs; but how this Wind was raiſed, and this ſtorm was blown up, there is no mention. We muſt charge it on him who was the contriver and directer of all this miſchief; Satan, Prince of the Air, raiſed up this mighty Wind.

Winds are ſaid ſometimes to come from God; As *Exod.* 10. 13. *The Lord brought an Eaſt-wind upon the Land of* Egypt *that it was covered with Locuſts*, (one of the Plagues of *Egypt.*) And verſe 19. *The Lord turned a mighty VVeſt-wind which took away the Locuſts.* And *Numb.* 11. 31. *There went forth a VVind from the Lord, and brought Quails from the Sea.* Jonah 1. 4. *The Lord ſent out a great VVind into the Sea.* The Heathens (who divided the World among ſundry Gods) gave the Winds to *Æolus*, whom they ſuppoſed to have them all ſhut up and lockt cloſe in his lodge, till he gave them command to fly abroad. It is an argument of a divine power to rule the Winds. Who is this, ſay thoſe Sea-men, *Math.* 8. 27. that even *the Winds and the Sea obey him!* As God only cauſeth the Sun to ſhine, and the Rain to fall, ſo the Winds to blow. The Wind is Originally in the hand of God, *He gathers the Wind in his fiſts* (ſaith *Agar* of God,) *and ſendeth it which way he pleaſeth.* But the Winds were put for that preſent into the hand of Satan, and he had leave to raiſe a ſtorm for this ſpecial purpoſe. So then, *there came a great Wind from beyond the Wilderneſs*, that is, Satan ſtirred up a mighty Wind in thoſe parts and quarters, *which came*——

Prov. 30. 4.

And ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon the Young men, and they are dead.] Here we ſee what was the work of this Wind. As it is deſcribed by the Region from whence the Wind came, ſo by the effects which it wrought being come; *It ſmote the four corners of the houſe*: The Hebrew word is the ſame uſed verſe 11. *Touch all that he hath.* According to Satans ſence, this Wind *touched the four corners of the houſe.* The corners of the houſe are the ſtrength of the houſe, and the four corners are all the ſtrength. *Chriſt* is called the *corner ſtone*, becauſe he is the ſtrength and binding of the Church, he holds all together. This wind ſmote the four corners at once. It may ſeem very ſtrange, that one Wind, a Wind deſcribed to come out of one quarter, a Southern wind, as this is conceived to have been, coming from the Wilderneſs, that this one Wind ſhould ſtrike all the four parts of the houſe together: muſt it not be a Wind from the four quarters of Heaven which ſtrikes the four corners of a houſe? I anſwer, this was an extraordinay Wind, there was a wonder carried on the wings of this Wind; therefore you have an *Ecce* of admiration, *a Behold* ſet in the beginning of this relation; This Wind did not work according to the ordinary rate of Winds. Or we may ſay, It was a Whirle-wind, that tempeſtuous Whirle-wind, which Philoſophers call *Typhon*; ſuch a Wind as whirles about in a circle, and ſo it might fetch in or aſſault all the parts and corners of the houſe with one blaſt. Further, We muſt take notice, that Satan was in this Wind: He acted and wrought mightily with it for the ſure and ſuddain effecting of this dreadful overthrow, the Devil ſpirited this Wind. The Wind (though, for the quickneſs and power of it, called a ſpirit) is a dull and weak thing compared to a ſpirit.

There came a great wind from the Wilderneſs, and ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon the Young men, and they are dead.

But what became of his three Daughters? did they eſcape? They are not named, but they alſo were involved. It is uſual in Scripture, under one Sex, the ſuperiour Sex, to compriſe both. All *Job's* Children periſhed under the ruines of that falling houſe. Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *That Satan being left at his own diſpoſe, can raiſe and enrage ſtormes and tempeſts.*

It is ſaid, *Pſal.* 148. 8. *That ſtormy winds and tempeſts fulfil the will of God.* The winds go often on Gods errand; but as often as the Lord gives leave, theſe ſtormy winds and tempeſts fulfil Satans will; not his alone, much leſs againſt the will of God. Satan cannot raiſe ſo much wind by his own power as will wave a feather; but when God ſaith go, *do ſuch and ſuch things, then the winds likewiſe fulfil his will:* And then he can raiſe wind enough to move Mountains, and raze the foundations of the proudeſt and ſtrongeſt buildings. It is reported that ſome wicked wretches trade with Witches for winds, they buy winds of the Devil: A moſt abominable merchandize; and the Lord doth anſwer them juſtly, to let them have what they pay for, winds of the Devil; as he ſpeaks in the Prophet, *I alſo will chuſe their deluſions.* When men will be deluded, and go down to Hell for help, God will chuſe their deluſions, ſaying in his wrath, you that think the Devil can give you a wind, the Devil ſhall give you a wind; a wind by which you ſhall ſayl at once to the port of your hope, and to the pit of deſperation; a wind which (unleſs you repent) will carry you into that lake wherein there is no water, a lake burning for ever, *And the breath of the Lord like a ſtream of brimſtone kindling it.*

Iſa. 66. 4.

Secondly, Obſerve here, from the effect of this wind;

That a violent and ſudden death, it is no argument of Gods anger or diſfavour.

Here all *Job's* Children were deſtroyed ſuddenly and violently, yet it was not in wrath towards the Children, but for a trial unto the Father. When they told Chriſt of ſome whoſe blood *Pilate* had mingled with their Sacrifices; *Think not* (ſaith he) *that either theſe or thoſe upon whom the Tower of* Shiloe *fell and ſlew them, were ſinners above all men that dwelt in* Jeruſalem; *I tell you, except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* As there is no judging of the ſins of men, by ſuch kind of exigents and events, ſo neither of the wrath of God; yet how many by ſuch appearances judge unrighteous judgment, being as barbarous as thoſe *Barbarians* of *Malta*, who ſeeing a Viper coming out of the heat, and faſtening on *Paul's* hand, they (concluding he muſt die preſently) cenſured him to be a murtherer, whom though he had eſcaped the Sea, yet vengeance followed on ſhore, and would not ſuffer to live. *We muſt not ground our judgments upon the works of God, but upon his Word.* In externals there is the ſame event to all, *Eccleſ.* 9. Men cannot

Luk. 13. 1.

Acts 28. 3.

not be diſtinguiſh'd for eternity by what they ſuffer, but by what they do; not by the manner of their death, but by the tenor of their lives. This is a certain truth, *That man can never die an evil death, who hath led a good life.* There is nothing makes death evil, but the evil which followeth death, or the evil that goes before death.

Thirdly, Here was death, a ſtrange and ſudden death ſurpriz'd the Children of *Job*, and this when they were feaſting, when they were *eating and drinking wine in their eldeſt Brothers houſe.* We may obſerve from that alſo by way of admonition,

Chriſtians had need to take heed, and be holy in feaſting.

While we are eating and drinking, we may be dying: therefore eating and drinking, we had need be holy. *Take* Luk. 21.34 *heed to your ſelves* (ſaith Chriſt) *leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs; take heed leſt at any time, becauſe at any time the day may come upon you unawares. That day*, whether it be a day of general calamity, or perſonal, may come upon you unawares. It becomes us to be holy in all manner of converſation, though we had an Aſſurance of our lives: But ſeeing in what manner of converſing ſo ever we be, death may ſurpriſe us, and we have no aſſurance of our lives in our greateſt joyes, how holy ſhould we be? *Whether you eat or drink* (ſaith the 1 Cor. 10.31 Apoſtle) *or whatſoever you do, do all to the glory of God.* Have God in your eye, let him be your aim. It is pro- Zach. 14.21 phesied concerning the latter times, *That every pot in* Jeruſalem *and* Judah *ſhall be holineſs unto the Lord.* The very pots in *Jeruſalem* ſhall be holy, that is, men at their pots ſhall be holy, to note that they ſhould be holy in their eatings, in their drinkings: not holy only when they were praying, and holy when they were hearing, but holy in thoſe ordinary natural actions of eating and drinking, holy at their Tables, and at all their refreſhings with the Creature. Then indeed there is holineſs in the heart, when there is holineſs in the pot; *and 'tis but need, there ſhould be holineſs in the pot, when there may be death in the pot.*

We may obſerve ſomewhat more generally from all theſe four ſore afflictions conſidered together. As firſt, *We ſee how quickly the beauty of all worldly bleſſings may be blaſted. Job* in the morning had an eſtate, as great and as good as his heart could deſire in worldly things; there was luſtre and ſtrength in and upon all he had, but before night he had nothing but ſorrow to ſup upon; he had no retinue of ſervants left, but four, reſerved only to report his loſſes. In one day all's gone. It is added as an aggravation of *Babylons* down-fall, that *her judgments ſhall come upon her in one day*, Revel. 18.8. *Therefore ſhall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with fire, for ſtrong is the Lord God who judgeth her.* In one day all the beauty of *Babylon* ſhall be blaſted. We need not now trouble our ſelves to think *Babylon* is in a great deal of ſtrength, and beauty, and glory; ſurely there muſt be a long time ſpent in contriving and acting the deſtruction of *Babylon*; no, the Lord can blaſt her beauty and deſtroy her power in a day; and the Text ſaith, he will do ſo, *In one day all her plagues ſhall come upon her.* That which *Babylon* hath been gathering many years, ſhall be ſcattered in a moment. She thinks that by her wiſdom and policy ſhe hath laid ſuch a foundation of her own greatneſs as ſhall never be ſhaken; And therefore concludes, *I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* Yet all her ſtrength ſhall not hold out one day, when God in his diſpleaſure ſhall lay ſiege againſt her walls. So when ye look upon other great and mighty, proſperous and flouriſhing enemies, ſuch as *flouriſh like green bay trees*, remember the Lord in one day can wither their branches and kill their roots, yea root them up. Certainly the ſtrength of the Lord is as mighty for the deſtroying of his enemies, as it is for the afflicting of his own people: if he ſometimes gives Commiſſion to take away all their comforts in a day, when their eſtates are higheſt and ſtrongeſt built; Surely he will at laſt give Commiſſions for as ſpeedy a diſpatch againſt the eſtates of his greateſt enemies.

And this may be unto us all, matter of Admonition, to prepare for changes, to eſteem creatures as they are, *periſhing ſubſtance.* Who ever had an eſtate better gotten, better bottom'd, or better managed then *Job?* yet all was overthrown and ſwept away in a moment. *We can never expect too much from God, nor too little from the creature.*

Laſtly, We may learn from the fore-going ſtory of theſe afflictions, conſidering that Satan was the contriver and engineer, who ſet all a work,

That Satan is mighty both in power and policy for the effecting of his deſigns, if God give him liberty and leave.

You ſee he doth not fail nor miſs in the leaſt, he brings every affliction upon *Job* in the perfection of it: and he doth not bungle at it, or do his work by halves, but he is quick and ſpeedy, both in laying the plot and executing it. There is nothing in this inferiour world able to ſtand before him, no creature, no man, if God let him alone. The good Angels can match, yea and maſter devils, there is no doubt of that: but if God ſtop his Angels, and withdraw his hand, the Devil would quickly over-run all the world. *We wreſtle* Eph. 6: *not with fleſh and blood, but with principalities and powers.* Evil ſpirits are called powers in the abſtract, they have not only a power, they are not only powerful, (hence called *principalities*, ſuch as have great authority and ſoveraignty (as it were) over others) but they are called *Powers.* It is not an empty title or a naked name that is given them, but they are filled and cloathed with ſtrength proportionable. Satan is a mighty Prince commanding in the ſpirits of wicked men (there's his throne) he can kindle their luſts and inflame their ſpirits, ſet them on fire from Hell, and then cauſe them to go on with *a rage* (in doing miſchief) *as high as heaven.* He can lead men *captive at his will*, 1 Tim. 2. 26. though not againſt their own will. Yet to ſhew the efficacy of his actings, he is ſaid to lead them *captive at his will*, to do his will and execute his *devilſhips deſigns.* It is admirable what Satan can do upon wicked men, who are his willing vaſſals and bond-ſlaves; if he ſpeak the word, they go; if he ſuggeſt, they ſubmit; if he move, they obey. And likewiſe we ſee what a mighty Prince he is in the air, all the Elements and the Meteors ſtoop to his direction. He cannot only command men who have reaſon, but he can command the fire, the water, the winds, the thunders, therefore he is called *the Prince of the powers of the air*; thoſe powers Eph. 2. 2. that are in the air he can command. For though it be true that Satan of himſelf cannot make one ſparkle of fire, or ſo much as one breath of wind, yet if he be let looſe and unchain'd, he can go to Gods Magazin of thunder, ſtorms and tempeſts, he can fetch out ſuch ſtore of all theſe, and ſo enrage them, that no man is able to withſtand their violence.

The Apoſtle taxes all natural men, *that they live without* Eph. 2.12. *God in the world*, that is, they live without a ſenſible apprehenſion of the Majeſty, of the Power, and Holineſs of God, they are not affected with God in the world. I may ſay in a ſence unto many godly men (and it may be a reproof unto them) *that they live without the devil in the world*, that is, they have not ſuch apprehenſions of the power, and policy, and ſleights of Satan, as they ought to have. We do not know, or apprehend as we ought, and as we might, who the Devil is, or what his power is. I do not ſpeak this, as if I would have any meditate and pore upon the power of Satan, ſo as to be afraid of him, that's no part of my intent: but it is for this end, that our hearts might be raiſed up to bleſs God, who doth bind up ſuch an enemy, and bound ſuch a power, who if he were let alone, would do us miſchief an hundred times in a day. Nay he would unquiet and unſettle the whole world. This is the reaſon why we ſhould conſider the power and policy of Satan, to bleſs God, who ſtops the mouth of this Lyon, ſo that he cannot ſtir to do that miſchief, unto the which his nature doth at once incline and inable him.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

Then Job aroſe, and rent his mantle, and ſhaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worſhipped,
And ſaid, Naked came I out of my Mothers womb; and naked ſhall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.
In all this Job ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.

THeſe three verſes contain the third Diviſion of the Chapter, as we ſhewed in the Analyſis of it. We have ſeen in the firſt, the character of *Job* in his proſperous eſtate, and the deſcription of his proſperity. We have ſeen his afflictions in the cauſes, in the time, in the inſtruments, in the matter, and in the manner of inflicting them. In this third part we have the carriage of *Job*, how *Job* took it, how he behaved himſelf in this ſad condition. And likewiſe how God took it that *Job* did ſo behave himſelf. So then,

We may note two things in the general out of theſe three verſes.

1. We have the carriage of *Job*, his behaviour.
2. We have the teſtimony of God concerning his carriage and behaviour.

The carriage and behaviour of *Job* is laid down, *verſe* 20, 21. And concerning his carriage, the Text gives us to conſider,

1. What *Job* did.
2. What *Job* ſaid.

Firſt, What he did, and that is in the 20. verſe, and there we find mentioned five diſtinct actions of *Job* upon the receiving of the relation of his affliction.

1. *He aroſe.*
2. *He rent his mantle.*
3. *He ſhaved his head.*
4. *He fell down upon the ground.*
5. *He worſhipped.*

Secondly, What he ſaid, and that is in the 21. verſe, *And he ſaid, Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked,* &c.

His ſayings contain two ſtrong and undeniable argumental Propoſitions, and one clear Concluſion, flowing naturally from them both, or from either of them; by which he doth acquit the Lord in his afflicting of him, and alſo ſupport and ſtrengthen his own ſoul under thoſe afflictions.

The teſtimony of God concerning *Job*'s carriage is in the 22. *verſ.* The Lord comes in, as it were, like an *Umpire* to determine who got the day, which is reſolved when he ſaith, *In all this* Job *ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.* Theſe words expreſly ſet the Laurel of Victory upon the head of *Job*. Satan undertook that *Job* (if touched) would curſe God; now ſaith God, look upon him touch'd, ſee what he hath done, examine all his actions that are paſt, obſerve what he hath ſpoken, weigh every word that hath come out of his mouth in the ballance of truth and reaſon, and when thou haſt done both, tell me whether he hath yet curſed me. I pronounce, that in all he hath done, in all he hath ſaid, *Job hath not charged God fooliſhly.* That in the general for the ſum of the Context, and for the parts of it.

To begin firſt with what *Job* did, his actions.

Then Job aroſe and rent his mantle, &c.

Then.] *Job* ſtood out the three former aſſaults unmoveably, but when he had received the fourth, then his bowels were moved, *And then,* &c.

Job **aroſe.**] This was his firſt action. To ariſe is properly an act of one that ſitteth; he is ſaid to ariſe, that before did ſit or lie. But yet in Scripture to ariſe, is not alwayes taken ſo ſtrictly, neither is it in this place. To ariſe, in the Scripture language notes two things. Firſt, the ſpeedineſs of doing a thing: when a man doth a thing inſtantly or preſently, he is ſaid to ariſe to do it, to ariſe and do it, though he were ſtanding or walking before. This is an Hebraiſm, *He aroſe and rent his mantle*, that is, *He preſently rent his mantle* upon the hearing of theſe *meſſages*, eſpecially the laſt. And ſo you have the word in divers places, as *Judg.* 20. 18. *The Children of* Iſrael *aroſe, and went to the Houſe of the Lord*; that is, they went preſently up to the Houſe of the Lord, 2 *Sam.* 14. 31. *Then* Joab *aroſe and went to Abſolom*; the meaning is only this, that upon the receiving of that Meſſage, he went with ſpeed, he made no delayes: And *Nehem.* 2. 18. when *Nehemiah* exhorted them to the great work of building the Houſe of the Lord, the people ſhewing their willingneſs and readineſs, expreſt it thus, *Let us riſe up and build,* that is, let us build (as we ſay) out of hand, ſpeedily.

Secondly, *To ariſe*, implies the courage, conſtancy and ſtrength of thoſe who undertake or go about a buſineſs, they ariſe and do it, that is, they do it with ſpirit: So here it may import as much concerning *Job* in his ſufferings, *He aroſe and rent his mantle*, that is, though he heard all theſe ſad relations, yet his ſpirit was not overwhelmed, he was not drowned in thoſe ſorrows, he did not ſink down under them, but *he aroſe and rent his mantle*, &c. as if he had raiſed himſelf up to wreſtle with the temptation and the tempter, to wreſtle with Satan himſelf. In this ſenſe the Lord is ſaid to riſe, *Iſa.* 33. 8, 9. where there is that ſad deſcription of the Land, *The Earth mourneth and languiſheth,* Lebanon *is aſhamed*, &c. *now will I riſe, ſaith the Lord, now will I be exalted*; that is, *now will I come and ſhew my ſelf with a mighty power for the deliverance of my people.* I will be exalted, and they ſhall rejoyce. That Prayer of the old Church, *Ariſe, O Lord, and let thine enemies be ſcattered*, hath the ſame intendment, deſiring the Lord to go forth armed with ſtrength for the help of his people and the ſubduing their enemies. Thus *Job* aroſe, bound with a fourfold cord of affliction: he raiſed himſelf up like *Sampſon*, though in humility, yet with ſtrength and courage. And ſo it is oppoſed to the ſinking of the ſpirit under troubles, as you know the ſpirit of *Eli* did, 1 *Sam.* 4. 18. There was ſad tidings brought to *Eli* concerning the death of his Sons, and the taking of the Ark; the Text ſaith, *As ſoon as he heard theſe things, he fell down backward,* he had no ſpirit, no ſtrength left in him, he did not ariſe and rend his garment, but he ſunk down and brake his neck. When *Nabal* heard of the danger that his churliſh and inhoſpitable anſwer had almoſt drawn upon him, 1 *Sam.* 25. 37. *His heart died within him, and he became as a ſtone.* When all that *Job* had, was dead and gone, his heart lived, yea he was (*erecto animo*) of a raiſed ſpirit, not only when he aroſe, but when he fell upon the ground: for then he worſhipped, and worſhip is the lifting up of the ſoul to God: *In the worſhip of God while the body is upon the knee, the mind is or ought to be upon the wing.*

And rent his mantle.] That is the ſecond act. Renting of garments is very often ſpoken of in Scripture, and we find it eſpecially in theſe two caſes. In caſe of extream ſorrow, and in caſe of extream indignation.

In caſe of extream ſorrow, and that of two kinds; either in the ſorrows of afflictions, or in the ſorrows of repentance; in both theſe we find renting of the garments.

For the ſorrows of outward affliction; ſo we read frequently of renting garments: When *Jacob* heard of the death of *Joſeph*, when his Sons brought him home the *bloody Coat*, ſaying (but falſely) *that ſurely their brother was torn with wild beaſts*; he preſently *rent his garment.* And when the relation of the death of *Saul* was brought to *David*'s ear, to expreſs his ſorrow, *He took hold on his clothes and rent them, and likewiſe all the men that were with him:* And ſo again afterward at the funeral of *Abner*, David *rent his clothes*, and gave order to all the people that were with him to do the like. In great funerals or fatal mournings, it was uſual among the Hebrews *to rent their garments.* This alſo was a frequent cuſtom among the Heathen, as the Poet deſcribes a Mourner in his mixt lamentations for private and publick loſſes; he went with his garments torn, being aſtoniſhed at the death of his Wife and the ruine of the City. Many ſuch Inſtances there are amongſt their ancient Hiſtorians.

Gen. 37. 34

2 Sam. 1. 11.

2 Sam. 3. 31.

—*It ſciſſa veſte* Latinus, *Conjugis attonitus fatis urbiſque ruina.* Vir. Æn. 12

Herodotus l. 1. records the like geſtures among the *Lacedemonians.* And *Livy* among the *Sabines. l.* 1.

Secondly, It was uſed in token of Repentance, when ſorrows for ſin brake forth and multiplied, *Joſh.* 7. 6. When *Joſhua* humbled himſelf upon the defeat, flight and ſlaughter of the *Iſraelites* before *Ai*, it is ſaid, *He rent his clothes, and fell to the earth:* This renting of their garments was in reſpect of the outward affliction, but withall in token of repentance; for *Joſhua* and the people humbled themſelves with faſting. So when the Book of the Law was read to *Joſiah*, and he ſaw how far they had departed from the rule and word of God, it is ſaid, *He rent his clothes, and he was afraid, he humbled himſelf, and his heart was tender before God.*

2 Chron. 34. 20.

But it may be objected, that in *Joel* 2. *v.* 13. when we are exhorted to rent the heart, we are ſtopp'd from renting the garment, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments,* in the caſe of Repentance.

For anſwer to that I ſay, the *Not* there is not an abſolute prohibition of renting the garment, it is not ſo much a negation, as a direction, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments,* that is, *Rent your hearts rather then your garments,* or, *Rent your hearts more then your garments,* or, *be ſure that you rent your hearts whatſoever you do with your garments.* Negations do not alwayes quite deny a thing; In the 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. take an Inſtance for it, where the Apoſtle treating of the preheminence of the Goſpel in the new diſpenſation, ſaith, *Who hath made us able Miniſters, not of the letter, but of the Spirit.* *Not*, there doth not deny, as if the Miniſters of Chriſt did not ſpeak and publiſh the letter of the word: for the letter of the word is the veſſel wherein the Spirit is contained, and unleſs we ſpeak the letter to the ear, the Spirit cannot in an ordinary way come into the heart; therefore underſtand the Apoſtles meaning thus, *He hath made us able Miniſters, not of the letter, but of the Spirit*; that is, he hath made us Miniſters rather of the Spirit then of the letter, or more of the Spirit then of the letter, becauſe of the promiſe of the plentiful effuſion of the Spirit, after the aſcenſion of Chriſt.

A further Inſtance we have in that ſpeech of God, *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice*; that is, rather mercy then ſacrifice. Sacrifice is not rejected, but mercy is preferr'd. So *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*, that is, rather rent your hearts then your garments: For otherwiſe you find that not only it was lawful (as in the former places) in times of repentance and ſorrow to rend the garments, but they are taxed becauſe they did not repent and rend their garments. The not renting the garment is charged as a conviction of an unrent heart. When the roll of curſes that *Baruch* wrote from the mouth of *Jeremiah* was read before *Jehojakim* and his Courtiers, the King cut the roll with a pen-knife and caſt it into the fire, their impenitence is thus deſcribed, *Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the King, nor any of his ſervants, that heard all thoſe words.* As if it had been ſaid, this was a time that called them aloud to rend their garments, to humble themſelves and repent before the Lord, when they heard ſuch words as theſe (cloathed with their own ſin and Gods wrath) read unto them; but they did it not; *Yet they were not afraid, neither did they rend their garments.* So then, renting of the garment was uſed as a ceremony of repentance, as a ſhadow of godly ſorrow; It had nothing in it ſelf to move God, only it teſtified the greatneſs of their grief, that their hearts did rend as their garments were rent.

Jer. 36. 24.

Further, Renting of the garment was uſed in caſe of extream indignation. Indignation is anger and ſorrow boyl'd up to the height; it is as it were the extract and ſpirit of them both: And it is ſtirr'd eſpecially when the ear of a man is filled with a voyce of blaſphemy, or his eye with a ſpectacle of bold tranſcendent wickedneſs againſt the Lord. Word being brought to *Hezekiah* of the blaſphemy that *Rabſhakeh* had belched out againſt God, when he heard how he had reproached the *living God*, in ſaying, *who is the God of* Jeruſalem *that he ſhould deliver it out of my hand?* the Text ſaith, that *Hezekiah* rent his clothes with indignation; that report fill'd him with a mixture of grief and anger; he was grieved that the holy Name of God was blaſphemed, he was angry with the blaſphemer: theſe cauſed holy indignation, and this the renting of his garments. Thus alſo when *Paul* and *Barnabas* had reſtored the Criple at *Lyſtra*, the ſuperſtitious *Lyſtrians* would have done ſacrifice to them as Gods; which when the Apoſtles *Paul* and *Barnabas* heard of, and ſaw the preparations (Oxen and Garlands brought to the Gates) for that abominable Idolatry, *They rent their clothes, and run in among the people, ſaying, Sirs, why do you theſe things? we alſo are men of like paſſions with you.* They rent their clothes with indignation, being grieved and vext to ſee men ſo beſotted, and God ſo diſhonoured,

1 King. 19. 1.
Iſa. 37. 1.

Acts 14. 13.

This act of *Job* in the Text, renting his garments, may refer to either of theſe, it may refer to all theſe. If it be demanded why did *Job* rend his garments? I anſwer, firſt, He rent his garments for the greatneſs of that ſorrow that was upon him in regard of his outward affliction. Secondly, He rent his garments, to teſtifie his deep humiliation under the hand of God, with repentance for all his ſins. Thirdly, He rent his garments, being filled with indignation at thoſe blaſphemies which Satan ſuggeſted to him: This latter I clear thus; you know it was the main deſign, the very plot of Satan to provoke *Job* to blaſpheme God, do this ſaith he, *Touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* He did promiſe this to himſelf, and did undertake with God to bring *Job* to that height of impatience. If ſo, then there is no queſtion, but as theſe meſſengers of ſorrow came to him, ſo Satan came with them, and pointed every meſſage with this or the like poyſonous ſuggeſtions. Now ſee what a Maſter you ſerve, now blaſpheme God; why ſhouldeſt thou make ſcruple of thinking, or of ſpeaking evil of him, who hath poured out all theſe evils upon thee? Never ſtand ſo much upon his honour, who ſtands ſo little upon thy comfort. It is no queſtion but Satan provok'd *Job* in ſome ſuch manner. He was not wiſe to promote his own ends, unleſs he did ply him with temptations to blaſphemy. Now *Job* being moſt ſenſible of theſe temptations, it being to him (as afterwards to holy *David*, *Pſal.* 42. 10.) as a Sword in his bowels, while the Enemy ſaid unto him, *Where is now thy God*, he ariſes with indignation and ſoul-abhorrence of theſe injections, *rending his garments*, &c. That for the ſecond act. The third follows.

And ſhaved his head.] Shaving of the head was uſed ſometimes to expreſs ſorrow, ſometimes to expreſs bondage, and I find it uſed in Scripture in oppoſition to both theſe, *ſc.* in times of joy and liberty.

Firſt, Shaving of the head was uſed as a note of ſorrow, *Iſa.* 15. 2. The Lord ſpeaking by his Prophet of the great affliction that ſhould come upon the *Jews*, ſaith, *On all their heads ſhall be baldneſs, and every beard cut off*; that is, they ſhall mourn, that's the meaning of it. And *Iſa.* 22. 12. *In that day did the Lord God of Hoſts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldneſs*; that is, to ſhaving of themſelves or cutting off their hair; the meaning of it in joyning baldneſs and mourning was only this, to ſhew that there ſhould be extream ſorrow and mourning in the Land; *The Lord called to mourning and baldneſs*, that is, to an exceeding great mourning, ſuch as thoſe mournings uſed to be when they ſhaved their heads. And the Prophet puts in this as an aggravation of their ſin, that when the Lord called for ſuch *a mourning as was joyned with baldneſs and ſhaving the head*, that then there ſhould be *joy and gladneſs, ſlaying Oxen, and killing Sheep, eating fleſh, and drinking wine.* See this more clear, *Jer.* 7. 29. when the Prophet fore-ſhews the great affliction of *Jeruſalem*, he thus beſpeaks them, *Cut off thine hair, O* Jeruſalem, *and caſt it away, and take up a lamentation.* To add one inſtance more, *Mic.* 1. 16. In caſe of their ſore affliction, the Prophet ſaith, *Make thee bald and pole thee for thy delicate Children, enlarge thy baldneſs as the Eagle:* The meaning of all is, mourn bitterly, or mourn greatly for thy delicate Children; thy delicate and ſweet Children they are deſtroyed, mourn greatly for them, *enlarge thy baldneſs as the Eagle*; As the *Eagle*, becauſe the *Eagle* (as Naturaliſts obſerve) caſteth her feathers, and her head is many times quite bald, therefore it is ſaid here, *enlarge thy baldneſs as the Eagle*, that is, be exceeding bald, cut off all thy hair in that great mourning. We may illuſtrate this by a contrary rule given by this Prophet *Jeremy*, and likewiſe by *Ezekiel*, when mourning was forbidden, *Jer.* 16. 6. where he ſpeaks of ſome that ſhould die and have none to mourn for them, he ſaith, *They ſhall not lament for them, nor make themſelves bald for them*, Ezek. 24. 17. *Make no mourning for the dead*; what followeth? *Bind the tire of thine head upon thee*; when they ſhould keep on their hair, their tire, that was an argument that there was no mourning.

Further we find, that the cutting off the hair, the ſhaving of the head, was a ſign of bondage and reproach. When *David* ſent Meſſengers to *Hanun*, *Samuel* records, that *Hanun* took the Meſſengers *and ſhaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle*, and the men were exceedingly aſhamed; now the ſhame was not only becauſe their beards were half cut off; for if that had been all, they might quickly have cut off the other half, and have delivered themſelves from the ſhame; for they were at liberty: but it is therefore ſaid that the men were greatly aſhamed, becauſe amongſt them it was a mark of ſhame and ſlavery to be ſhaven. Hereupon *David* giveth order *that they ſhould tarry at* Jericho, *till their beards were grown*; it was a diſhonour to be ſhaved: And it is noted in *Plutarch* concerning *Demoſthenes*, that when he had a mind to ſit cloſe at his ſtudy, and would not go abroad, or be interrupted by viſits of friends at home, that he would ſhave himſelf, that ſo he might be aſhamed to go forth or ſee any body, but be conſtrained to keep to his Book for two or three months together, till his hair were grown again: The bondage and reproach that *Nebuchadnezzar* brought upon *Tyrus* is thus deſcribed, *Every head was made bald.* And *Ariſtotle* obſerves, that the hair

2 Sam. 10. 4.

Ezek. 29. 18.
Crinis eſt libertatis argumentum. Ariſt. 1. Rhetor.

was a token of liberty. Thus the ſhaving of the head in *Job* might be a ſign both of his ſorrow and great reproach that was come upon him, being one now that was ready to be mocked and made the ſcorn and by-word of the world, as we ſee afterward he was, during this affliction.

Yet it is conſiderable from Scripture example, that the cutting off the hair, and ſhaving of the head, had not alwayes either of theſe ſignifications hitherto diſcuſs'd, but did vary according to the diverſity of places and of times. In the Book of *Geneſis*, we read that cutting and ſhaving of the hair, was a token of joy and liberty both together. When *Joſeph* was delivered out of priſon, it is ſaid, *That he ſhaved himſelf, and came to* Pharaoh. And it is noted concerning *Mephiboſheth*, as a matter of his ſorrow for *David's* abſence, that he let his hair grow. *He trimmed not his beard*, being much troubled at the Kings abſence. I confeſs neither of theſe Inſtances come home enough to the point: both of theſe neglecting the care and culture of their bodies in their troubles, now being delivered, prepare themſelves by ſhaving and trimming the hair for the preſence of thoſe Kings. But in ſome Nations, ſhaving hath been a mark of Honour; All the *Roman* Emperors were ſhaved, till *Nero*. And it was an ancient Proverb, *Thou art a ſlave, for thou weareſt locks or long hair*.

Gen. 41. 14.

2 Sam. 19. 24.

*Aul.Gel.l.*3 *c.* 4. *Servus es & comam habes.*

There is an Objection that may be made concerning this act of *Job*, (becauſe afterward it is ſaid, *That in all this* Job *ſinned not*) whether or not *Job* might ſhave his head without ſin? for you have an expreſs rule to the contrary, *Lev.* 19. 27. *chap.* 21. 5. *You ſhall not round the corners of your heads, neither ſhalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.* And ſo you have it again in *Deut.* 14. 1. that they ſhould not *cut their hair, or make any baldneſs upon their heads for the dead*, namely, by ſhaving or cutting off the hair. How is it therefore here that *Job* ſhaved himſelf for the death of his children, and in regard of thoſe great troubles that were upon him?

I anſwer briefly for that, firſt, *Job* lived (as we have cleared when we ſpake of the book in general) before that Law was given, which did prohibit the cutting of the hair in that manner.

Secondly, It appears in thoſe places, where thoſe Laws are ſet down, that the Lord did forbid only conformity to the Heathen; they muſt not ſhave or cut themſelves, as the Heathen did, who cut their heads round like a globe (as it is obſerved concerning them) and were wont to dedicate their locks to their Idol-gods. That vain faſhion and groſs ſuperſtition were the things forbidden in that Law of *Moſes*.

Vovebant cincinnos in honorem dæmonum. Heſych.

Thirdly, Though the *Jews* were forbidden to ſhave their heads, as mourning for the death of their friends; yet (in the judgment of learned *Junius*) the ſhaving of their heads was not only permitted, but commanded in caſe of mourning for ſin, or in times of ſolemn repentance and humiliation. He inſtanceth in two places before mentioned. Firſt, The Prophet *Iſaiah* reproving the unſeaſonable mirth and deſperate ſecurity of the *Jews* in a time of publick trouble and treading down, tells them, *In that day did the Lord God of Hoſts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloath*, Iſa. 22. 12. Secondly, There is counſel given anſwerable to that reproof by the Prophet *Micah*, chap. 1. 16. *Make thee bald, and pole thee for thy delicate children, enlarge thy baldneſs as the Eagle, for they are gone into captivity from thee.*

Etſi calvitium induci pro mortuo interdictum eſt in lege, tamen certum eſt in ſancta reſipiſcentia calvitium probari atque imperari. Jun. *in* Iſa. 22. 12.

We will obſerve ſomething from theſe two actions, the renting of his garments, and the ſhaving of his head. Theſe refer to the expreſſion of his ſorrow for thoſe loſſes in eſtate and the death of his Children: As the other two actions, his falling upon the ground and worſhipping refer to the expreſſion of that homage and honour that he tendred up to God in the midſt of theſe ſorrows. From thoſe two acts of ſorrow learn we,

Firſt, *That when the hand of God is upon us, it becometh us to be ſenſible of it, and to be humbled under it.*

Job hearing theſe ſad relations, doth not ſtand out ſtoutly, as if nothing had touch'd him: but to ſhew that ſorrow did even rend his heart, he rent his garments; to ſhew that his affliction touch'd his ſpirit, he ſhav'd his head. There are two extreams that we are carefully to avoid in times of affliction; and the Apoſtle doth caution all the Sons of God againſt them both in one verſe, *Heb.* 12. 5. *My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* Thoſe are the two extreams, *deſpiſing and fainting* when God doth correct. He would not have us deſpiſe his chaſtening, to ſay, I do not regard this, let God take all if he will: If my eſtate muſt go, let it go; if my children die, let them die; this is a *deſpiſing of the chaſtening of the Lord*, and God cannot bear it, that we ſhould bear it thus lightly. There is another extream, that is, *fainting*: If when goods are taken away, the heart be taken away; and when children die, then the ſpirit of the Parent dies too; *this is fainting*. Take heed of theſe two extreams. *Job* walks in the middle, in the golden mean between them both. He doth not careleſly deſpiſe, neither doth he unbelievingly faint: he riſeth up, and he rents his garments. He would have it known that he fainted not under the ſtroke, and he would have it known that he felt the ſtroke; he was not like a ſtock or a ſtone, he would not carry it with a Stoical apathy, but with Chriſtian fortitude and magnanimity. Senſleſs ones are taxed, *Jer.* 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, and they have not grieved.* Such are compared by *Solomon* to *him that lies down in the midſt of the Sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a maſt*; ſecure and careleſs in the greateſt dangers. *They have ſtricken me, ſhalt thou ſay, and I was not ſick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*, Prov. 23. 34, 35. The Prophet *Hoſea* reproves the like; *Strangers* (ſaith he) *have devoured his ſtrength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth it not*, ch. 7. 9. That is, he is in an afflicted, in a declining condition, and yet he layeth it not to heart. A man may out of the greatneſs of his ſpirit (but not out of the careleſneſs of his ſpirit) ſay as *Luther* once did, when things went very ill, *If the World will go thus, let it go thus.* Otherwiſe it is a moſt unbecoming temper to be ſtricken of God, and not to tremble, at leaſt to take it to heart. When God afflicteth us, then we ſhould afflict our ſelves, and be humbled: when Gods hand is upon us, our hands (in this ſence) ſhould be upon our ſelves: We muſt bear our croſs upon our backs, we muſt not make a fire of it to warm our hands. Indeed the Apoſtle exhorts to *rejoyce in tribulation*, and it is an excellent thing to rejoyce in tribulation; but we muſt not ſlight, much leſs make a ſport of tribulation. Rejoycing ariſeth from a holy ſatisfaction that the ſoul hath in the dealings of God with us: But ſleighting ariſeth from an unholy contempt, or at the beſt from a ſtupid inſenſibleneſs of Gods dealings with us. The former hath in it the height of wickedneſs, and the latter hath not the leaſt degree of goodneſs. *It is no vertue to bear what we do not feel.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That in times of affliction we may expreſs our ſorrows by outward geſtures, by ſorrowful geſtures.*

Job was not only ſorrowful, but he acts ſorrow, he puts himſelf into mourning poſtures, he rents his garments, he ſhaves his head, down he falleth upon the ground. It is no hypocriſie to appear what we are: it is hypocriſie to appear what we are not. We uſe to ſay, he mourneth truly that mourneth without a garment; but if a man mourn in truth, a mourning garment is comely. To mourn in our clothes, and laugh in our ſleeves, is both ſinful and baſe. Now *Job* mourned indeed; the ſhaving his head, and renting his garment, was but to keep an outward correſpondence with what he was within. Therefore take heed of cenſuring thoſe, who in great ſorrows uſe ſorrowful geſtures, ſtriking upon their breaſts, tearing their hair, or the like. Only let all take heed of exceſſive and immoderate mourning; mourn not like *Rachel*, who would receive no comfort; mourn not like the Heathen, who had no hope. To be above paſſions will be our happineſs in Heaven, to rectifie paſſions is much of our happineſs on earth: To be without natural affections, is to fall below a man; to ſteer and mannage them, is one of the heights of a Chriſtian.

Thirdly, We ſhewed, that this renting of his garments might have reference to his repentance: whence note,

That when God afflicteth us with ſufferings, we ought to afflict our ſelves, to humble our ſouls for ſin.

Smarting times are good repenting times, and worldly ſorrow ſhould get the company of godly ſorrow. It is not ſafe to be alone with worldly ſorrow, that works death; but if we mingle a few tears for ſin, and our unkindneſs to Chriſt with thoſe tears, then they will refreſh us. We get by loſſes in our outward eſtate, when they lead us to look to the loſſes, and repair the breaches of our ſpiritual eſtate. No queſtion but *Job* at this time fell a ſearching of his heart, and a trying of his wayes, renewing his repentance, and aſſuring of his peace with God. When afflictions cauſe us to return thus into our own breaſts, they have then a ſweet influence, a bleſſed operation upon us.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *That thoughts of blaſphemy againſt God ſhould be caſt off, and rejected with the higheſt indignation.*

Job rent his garments, when Satan ſollicits *Job* to rent the name of God with reproach and curſings. Thoughts diſhonouring God muſt needs be vexing to every good heart. Nothing touches a godly man, like that which touches God. When the glory of God is engaged and concern'd, he cannot contain. So much for thoſe two acts, *He rent his garments, and he ſhaved his head.*

The two other acts are,

1. **He falleth upon the ground.** 2. **He worſhippeth.**] The *Original words* do both ſignifie a *bowing to the ground*; *He fell upon the ground, and bowed*; ſo ſome tranſlate it; you ſhall ſee the reaſon by and by: *He fell upon the ground and worſhipped*, that is, *He fell upon the ground to worſhip.* To fall upon the ground is a geſture of worſhip; and not only is it a poſture of worſhip, when the worſhipper mourns; but it is likewiſe a poſture of worſhip, when the worſhipper rejoyceth. Great joy as well as great ſorrow tranſports a man in his next actions. It is ſaid, *Matth.*2. 10, 11. that the *wiſe men*, when they found Chriſt, *rejoyced with exceeding great joy*, and preſently, *they fell down, and worſhipped him.* Neither is this poſture peculiar to worſhip in times or upon occaſions of extraordinary joy and ſorrow, (unleſs in the degree of it) for the ordinary invitation was, *O come let us worſhip and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*, Pſal.95. 6. I ſaid, in the degree, for to fall down is more then to bow down. Falling down in worſhip proceeds not only from ſorrow, but from joy; when the heart is filled with joy, then we fall down and worſhip. And it is probably * obſerved, that the ancient Prophets and holy men, the Servants of God, were called *Nephalim* (from *Nephal*, which is the Original word of the Text) *Cadentes* or *Proſtrantes*, that is, *proſtrates* or *fallers*, becauſe in their worſhip they uſually fell upon the Earth to humble themſelves before God. And becauſe adoration was ſo commonly made by *falling to the ground*, by *bowing the head*, by *bowing the knee*, by *bowing the whole body*, therefore the ſame Original word which the Hebrews uſe for *worſhipping*, doth properly ſignifie *to bow down the body*. And that phraſe *to bow the body*, as it is often joyned with worſhipping; ſo ſometime to bow the body, put alone, doth ſignifie to *worſhip*, 2 Kings 5. 18. *When I bow my ſelf in the houſe of* Rimmon, *ſcil. when I worſhip*, &c. So likewiſe the Greek word to *worſhip* hath the ſame ſence in it, for that word ſignifies (as a learned Writer obſerves upon it) *to bow after the manner of dogs, that crouch at the feet of their Maſters for favour, or for fear.* So in *worſhip*, the people of God *crouch down and abaſe themſelves at Gods feet*, as not worthy in themſelves to eat the *crumbs* under his *Table*.

* *Bolduc in loc.*

וישתחו *à radice* שחה

προσκυνέω *Quod eſt more catellorum ad pedes alicujus, tanquam Domini totum ſeſe proſternere ſubjectionis gratia.* Zanch.

Yet we are not to look upon this, as if it were the only true and acceptable worſhip-geſture; for we ſhall find in Scripture, that there were worſhip-geſtures with which God was well pleaſed. Some have worſhipped God ſtanding, ſome ſitting, ſome walking; all theſe are worſhip-poſtures. For ſtanding, we find it, 1 *Kings* 8. 22. at the Dedication of the Temple; *Solomon ſtood before the Altar of the Lord, and made that Prayer.* For ſitting, we have, 2 *Sam.* 2. 18. When *Nathan* brought that Meſſage unto *David*, concerning the building of the Houſe of God, that it ſhould be deferred till his Sons time, the Text ſaith, That *David went in, and ſate before the Lord, and ſaid, Who am I, O Lord?* And in the end, he ſaith, *Therefore have I found in my heart to pray this prayer unto thee.* We alſo find walking in Prayer, *Gen.* 24. 63. *Iſaac went into the field to pray.* He walked and prayed; we tranſlate it, to *meditate*; but in the margin of your books, you find it, to *pray*, as being nearer the Hebrew. So that walking, and ſitting, and ſtanding, are likewiſe praying-geſtures, or poſtures of holy worſhip: But chiefly that poſture of bowing down the body, or bending the knee, is the worſhip-poſture; ſo it follows in the Text.

שוח

He fell upon the ground, and worſhipped.

And worſhipped.] To worſhip, is to give to any one *the honour due unto him*: So the rendring unto God that *Love*, that *Fear*, that *Service*, that *Honour* which is due unto him, is the *worſhipping of God*; that is the Scripture-definition, *Pſal.* 29. 2. *Give unto the Lord the honour due unto his Name*: Then follows, by way of expoſition, *Worſhip the Lord in the beauty of holineſs*; that is, *in his holy Temple, in his beautiful Sanctuary*, or, *in the comely honour of his Sanctuary.* So that *worſhip* is the tendring of honour to the Lord, in a way honourable to him; namely, according to his own will and laws of worſhip: which is intimated by coming to *worſhip him in his beautiful Sanctuary*, where all things about the Service of God were exactly preſcribed by God. And then there was *beauty* or *comely honour* in the *Sanctuary*, when all things were ordered there by the rule of his preſcription; varying and departing from which, would have filled that holy place with darkneſs and deformity, notwithſtanding all the outward luſtre and beauty had been preſerved.

The worſhip of God is twofold; there is *internal worſhip*, and there is *external worſhip*. *Internal worſhip*, is to *love God*, to *fear God*, and to *truſt upon him*; theſe are acts of *inward worſhip*, theſe are the ſum of our duty, and Gods honour, contained in the firſt Commandment: And ſo you may underſtand worſhip in the Text: *Job fell down and worſhipped*; that is, preſently upon thoſe reports, he put forth an act of love and holy fear, acts of dependance and holy truſt upon God, in his Spirit, ſaying to this effect within himſelf, *Lord, though all this be come upon me, yet I will not depart from thee, or deal falſly in thy Covenant. I know thou art ſtill the ſame* Jehovah, *true, holy, gracious, faithful, all-ſufficient; and therefore behold me proſtrate before thee, and reſolving ſtill to love thee, ſtill to fear thee, ſtill to truſt thee; thou art my God ſtill, and my portion for ever. Though I had nothing left in the world, that I could call mine, yet thou, Lord, alone art enough, yet thou alone art all.* Such doubtleſs was the language of *Job*'s heart, and theſe were mighty actings of *inward worſhip*.

Then likewiſe there is *external worſhip*, which is the ſum of the ſecond Commandment, and it is nothing elſe but the ſerving of the Lord according to his own Ordinances and inſtitution, in thoſe ſeveral wayes wherein God will be honoured and ſerved; this is outward worſhip; and as we apply our ſelves unto them, ſo we are reckon'd to worſhip God. *Job* worſhipped God outwardly by *falling to the ground*, by *pouring out ſupplications*, and by *ſpeaking good words of God* (as we read afterward) words tending to his own abaſement, and the honour of God, clearly and fully acquitting and juſtifying the Lord in all thoſe workes of his Providence and diſpenſations towards him.

This is worſhip both internal and external. Internal worſhip is the chief; but God requireth both: and there is a neceſſity of joyning both together, that God may have honour in the world. Internal worſhip is compleat in it ſelf; and pleaſing unto God without the external: The external may be compleat in it ſelf, but is never pleaſing to God, without the internal. Internal worſhip pleaſes God moſt, but external honours God moſt; for by this God is known, and his Glory held forth in the world. External worſhip is Gods Name. Hence the Temple was called *the place where God put his Name*, ſc. *his worſhip*; by which God is *known*, as a *man*, by his *name*: *They that worſhip God, muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth*: *In ſpirit*; that is, with inward love and fear, reverence and ſincerity. *In truth*; that is, according to the true rule preſcribed in his word. Spirit reſpects the inward power, Truth the outward form. The former ſtrikes at hypocriſie, the latter ſtrikes at Idolatry: The one oppoſes the inventions of our heads, the other, the looſeneſs of our hearts in worſhip.

Obſerve further, that it is only ſaid, *Job fell down and worſhipped*; nothing is ſaid of the Object to whom he did direct his worſhip, or whom he did worſhip. The Object is not expreſt, but underſtood, or preſuppoſed: And indeed worſhip is a thing ſo proper and peculiar to God, that when we name worſhip, we muſt needs underſtand God; for nothing but God, or that which we make a god, is, or can be worſhipped. Either he is God whom we worſhip, or (as much as in us lies) we make him one. What Creature ſoever ſhares in this honour, this honour (*ipſo facto*) ſets it up above, and makes it more then a Creature.

The very Heathens thought every thing below a God, below worſhip: therefore there needed not an expreſſion of the Object. When the Text ſaith, *Job worſhipped*, that implies his worſhip was directed unto God; yet there is a kind of worſhip which is due to Creatures.

There is a Civil worſhip mentioned in Scripture, as well as Divine worſhip. Civil worſhip may be given to men. And there is a twofold Civil worſhip (ſpoken of in Scripture.) There is a *Civil worſhip of duty*, and there is a *Civil worſhip of courteſie*: That of duty, is from Inferiors to their Superiors, from Children to their Parents, from Servants to their Maſters, from Subjects to Kings and Magiſtrates. Theſe gods muſt have Civil worſhip; as, *Gen.* 48. 11. When *Joſeph* came into the preſence of *Jacob* his Father, *he bowed down to the ground*; this was a Civil worſhip, and a worſhip of duty, from an Inferiour to a Superiour. And it is ſaid of the Brethren of *Judah*, *Gen.* 49. 8. When *Jacob* on his Death-bed bleſſed the twelve Tribes, *Thy Brethren ſhall worſhip thee*, or, *bow down to thee*. It is the ſame word uſed here in this Text. *Judah*'s honour was to wield the Scepter; the *government was laid upon his ſhoulders*: now he being the chief Magiſtrate, all the reſt of the Tribes, all his Brethren muſt worſhip him, or give Civil honour unto him.

Secondly, There is likewiſe a *worſhip of Courteſie*; which is from Equals: when one Equal will bow to another, or when a Superiour (as ſometimes in courteſie he will) bows down or worſhips his Inferiour: As it is noted concerning *Abraham*, that when he came before the men of the Countrey of *Heth*, he bowed himſelf; now *Abraham* was the Superiour, he was a *Prince* and a *Great man*; yet coming before the men of the Countrey, *he bowed himſelf*: and it is the ſame word. Gen.23.12.

So then this Civil worſhip may lawfully be given unto men: But as for Divine worſhip, that is proper and peculiar unto God; that Glory he will not give to graven Images, Man or Angel, and therefore we muſt not. Hence we find, that when *Cornelius* and *John* did act their Civil worſhip a little too far, they were preſently taken off, for fear they ſhould intrench upon the Divine worſhip. Civil worſhip, when it is exceſſive, and goeth too far, is ſinful; as in *Acts* 10. 25. *Luke* relates, that as ſoon as *Peter* came in, *Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet, and worſhipped him*: the worſhip was to *Peter*; for we are not to think that *Cornelius* was ſo groſly ignorant, as to take *Peter* for a god, and to give him Divine worſhip; but the meaning of it is, that he fell down at his feet, and gave him an honour and reſpect beyond what he ought to have done, he was exceſſive in it; therefore *Peter* takes him off: *Stand up* (ſaith he) *I my ſelf alſo am a man*; I am a man as thou art, though an Apoſtle, give me ſuch reſpect as becometh a Miniſter of Chriſt; take heed that you give me no more then belongeth to a man. So the Angel, *Rev.* 22. 8. When *John falleth down at his feet and worſhippeth*, he takes him up; *See thou do it not*, ſaith he, *for I am thy fellow-ſervant*: This is too much for man, *worſhip God*, as it is in the end of the Verſe; ſuch worſhip belongeth properly and peculiarly unto God.

So much for the opening of theſe two latter actions of *Job* in reference unto God. We ſhall now give you ſome Obſervations. *He fell down upon the ground, and worſhipped.* You ſee how *Job* divides himſelf and his Affections in this time of his affliction; part he beſtowed upon his Children and Servants, and Loſſes, they ſhall have his ſorrow and tears; *He rent his mantle, and ſhaved his head*; but they ſhall not have all: God ſhall have the better part, his love, his fear, his truth, his body to bow to him, and his ſoul to worſhip him. Learn from hence,

Impendit liberis & ſervis luctum, Deo proſtrationem & adorationem Pined. in loc.

That, *A godly man will not let Nature work alone, he mixes or tempers acts of Grace with acts of Nature.*

We muſt not *ſorrow as thoſe that are without hope* (ſaith the Apoſtle) qualifie ſorrow with hope; theſe mixt, do well. A man muſt not ſorrow for outward things, as though we had nothing elſe to do, but to ſorrow; he muſt remember he hath a God to worſhip and honour. *Job* beſtows ſomewhat upon his Children, but more upon his God; while his body fell to the Earth, his heart was raiſed up to Heaven: *He fell down and worſhipped.*

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *Afflictions ſend the people of God home unto God*; *Afflictions draw a godly man nearer unto God*: Then *Job fell down and worſhipped.*

Afflictions are a great advantage to the ſervants of God; for when the world frowns moſt, then they beg moſt for the ſmiles of God; when the world is ſtrange to them, and will not look on them, then they get more familiarity, and cloſer communion with God, they ſeek his face. Wicked men in their afflictions, in their ſorrows, are either quite drowned in, and overwhelmed with them, ſo that there is nothing but ſorrow, as we ſay, *a la mort*; or elſe they go out to help themſelves with worldly refreſhments; trouble drives them to ſin, it may be as low as Hell, to ſeek relief. The more poor they are, the more wicked they are; ſuch are not *poor as* Job, *though they are as poor as* Job. *Job*'s poverty ſent him to God, rich in mercy. *He fell down and worſhipped.*

Thirdly, Learn, That, *That the people of God turn all their afflictions into Prayers, or into Praiſes.*

When God is ſtriking, then *Job* is praying; when God is afflicting, then *Job* falls to worſhipping. *Grace makes every condition work Glory to God, as God makes every condition work good to them who have Grace.*

Job *falleth down and worſhippeth*: Whence obſerve,

Fourthly, That, *It becometh us to worſhip God in an humble manner.*

Though God (as we ſhewed before) may be worſhipped in another poſture, yet we ſhould rather chooſe that poſture which is moſt humble, and may lay our bodies as low as our ſouls, if it may be. There were ſome lately amongſt us, who cried aloud, as great Patrons for humble poſtures in worſhip; and all were cenſured for a ſtiffe neck and an Elephants knee, who refuſed to bow with them, or to bow their way. I may well add, their way; for Gods way of bowing, was neither queſtioned, nor refuſed; all their humility in bowing, went but one way; they muſt bow towards the *Eaſt*, and towards the *Altar* at leaſt, if not to it. Some of their ſtomacks, I believe, would have digeſted that before this time, eſpecially, being a little helped with a diſtinction.

Laſtly, We may here obſerve, That, *Divine worſhip it is Gods peculiar.*

Papiſts have worſhip for Creatures, and they have a diſtinction for it, but no Scripture for it. They tell us of *Latria*, which is, they ſay, worſhip proper only to God; and their *Dulia*, which is for Saints; and then their *Huperdulia*, which is for the Virgin *Mary*, and for the Sign of the Croſs. Thus they make vain diſtinctions, which God and the Scripture make not. Vain Diſtinctions are good enough to maintain vain Superſtitions. They that invent a worſhip, muſt invent a Doctrine to maintain it by. Some perhaps may ſtumble at that Text, *Rev.* 3. 9. where this promiſe is made to the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, which ſay they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worſhip before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

Object. May not worſhip then be given to a Creature?

Anſw. This worſhip may be taken for Civil worſhip; namely, for that ſubmiſſion which the Enemies of the Church ſhall be forced by the power of Chriſt to make unto her; as was promiſed by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 60. 14. *The ſons alſo of them that afflicted thee, ſhall come bending unto thee; and all they that deſpiſed thee, ſhall bow themſelves down at the ſoles of thy feet.*

Anſw. 2. If this be Divine worſhip, then worſhipping at the feet of the Church, notes worſhipping in the Church, not worſhipping of the Church. The worſhip is not terminated in the Church, but in Chriſt; who dwells and rules in the Church, who is both Head and Husband of the

Church. Theſe enemies being convinced of the preſence of Chriſt in his Church, ſhall worſhip him. This *David* propheſies of Chriſt, ſpeaking in his own perſon, *Pſ.* 18. 43, 44. *Thou haſt made me the head of the Heathen, a people whom I have not known ſhall ſerve me; as ſoon as they hear of me, they ſhall obey me; the ſtrangers ſhall ſubmit themſelves unto me.* That of the Apoſtle, will more illuſtrate this ſence; who, ſpeaking of the great benefit of propheſying in a known tongue, concludes his Diſcourſe thus; *If all propheſie, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt; and ſo falling down on his face, he will WORSHIP God, and report that God is in you of a truth.* The worſhip then is not given to the Church, but to God, who in ſuch Ordinances, or other acts of his power and goodneſs, is evidently revealed, as preſent in the Church.

So much for the actions or geſtures of *Job*, what he did: *He rent his mantle, and ſhaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worſhipped.*

Now we come to his words, to that which *Job* ſpake, in the two laſt Verſes.

Verſe 21. **Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither.**

Verſe 22. **The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.**

Words are, or ought to be the Interpreters of the heart, and the comment of our actions. This ſpeech of *Job*, doth indeed interpret his heart, and expound the meaning of his former actions. This ſpeech (I ſay) of *Job* is the true comment of his own actions; for ſome ſeeing *Job renting his garments*, and *ſhaving his head*, and *caſting himſelf down upon the ground*, they might not know the meaning of all this; they could not read his heart in theſe ſtrange behaviours; they might not underſtand what his intentions were; probably they might judge that he was enraged and mad, that he was diſtracted or drunk with ſorrow; that he was either deſperate or impatient at the report of thoſe loſſes. Therefore now to confute all ſuch ſurmizes, he ſpeaks forth *the words of truth and ſoberneſs*. And by that which he ſaith, ſets ſo fair and true a gloſs upon his actions, as might then render them, not only rational and ingenuous, but holy and gracious in the eyes of all men, as they were before in the eyes of God, who knew his heart. Satan was now like the ſervants of *Benhadad* before *Ahab*, watching for words; he had done his buſineſs, and now he was trying how it would work, what the event and iſſue would be; he hearkned when ſome irreverent ſpeech ſhould come from the mouth of *Job*; he looked preſently that he ſhould blaſpheme God: he could not but ſmile ſurely, when he ſaw him renting his garments, and ſhaving his head, and falling down on the ground: O now it works! I ſhall hear him blaſpheme and curſe God preſently. He that is thus diſtempered in the carriage of the other members of his body, will not ſurely be able long to rule (that unruly piece) his tongue. One undutiful or diſhonourable word caſt upon God, would have been muſick to Satans ear, and joy to his heart; he would have catched it up as nimbly, as the men before ſpoken of, did *Brother Benhadad*, from the mouth of *Ahab*. But how blank look'd Satan? how was he cloathed with ſhame, at the fall of thoſe words from *Job? Naked came I out of my mothers womb*, &c.

What *David* ſpake concerning the words of his Enemies, (*Pſal.* 55. 25. *Their words were ſmoother then butter, but war was in their heart; they were ſweeter then honey, and ſofter then oyl, yet were they drawn ſwords*) we may ſpeak of theſe words of *Job*, conſidered in reference unto Satan, and in reference unto God. Theſe words of *Job* in reference unto God were as ſweet as honey, as ſmooth as butter. For this breath had nothing in it, but meekneſs and patience, humility and holineſs, in all which God delights: but in reference to Satan they were as drawn Swords, as poyſon'd Arrows; Satan was hardly ever ſo ſmitten before, as he was by theſe words of *Job*. There is no word in this ſentence, but gave Satan the lye, and refuted all his ſlander. And in the cloſe *Job* gives him the deepeſt ſtab of all, it was a Dagger at the very heart of the Devil, when he heard him ſay, *Bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* No words could be utter'd upon the longeſt ſtudy, more croſs to Satans expectation, or more anſwerable to the former teſtimony of God; and therefore the Lord Crowns all, both his actions and his ſpeeches with a new teſtimony; *In all this* Job *ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.*

So much of *Job's* words in general, I ſhall now examine them diſtinctly in the parts.

Some conceive that *Job* at that time ſpake out his mind more largely; but that the Holy Ghoſt, in the penning of this ſtory, did gather and ſum up the ſtrength of all his ſpeech into theſe two concluſions.

Beza. *in loc.*

Naked came I out of my Mothers womb; and naked ſhall I return thither.

The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.

We will conſider the words a little, firſt, in the Grammatical ſence of them, and then we will conſider the reaſon of them: For here they are uſed Logically, as a ſtrong and mighty argument, both for the ſupporting of his own ſpirit under thoſe afflictions, and for the juſtifying and acquitting God in ſo afflicting him.

Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, &c.

Naked.] There is a twofold Nakedneſs, there is an internal Nakedneſs, and there is an external Nakedneſs; there is a Nakedneſs of the Soul as well as of the body. The Nakedneſs of the Soul is, when it is deveſted of all it's gracious ornaments and endowments. When *Job* ſaith, *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither*; it referreth eſpecially to the nakedneſs of the Body: for though it be a truth that *Job* came naked into the world in regard of his Soul, yet he knew he ſhould not go naked out of the world in regard of his Soul. Seeing then he referreth nakedneſs to his going out of the world as well as to his coming in; therefore it cannot be here meant of an inward nakedneſs: his Soul came naked in, but he knew his Soul ſhould go out cloathed. Neither can it be meant of a then preſent ſpiritual nakedneſs; for *Job* was never ſo richly and gorgeouſly attired in his Soul, never appeared in ſuch glorious ornaments of grace, as when he was ſtript of all worldly comforts. Therefore the nakedneſs here is bodily nakedneſs, that which *Moſes* ſpeaks of *Gen.* 2. 25. deſcribing our firſt Parents, *They were both naked*, ſaith he, *the man and his Wife, and they were not aſhamed.* Yet that nakedneſs and this which *Job* ſpeaks of (though they were both bodily and external) were very different and unlike: for that nakedneſs of Creation needed no covering, nakedneſs was then an ornament. Man was richly attired when he had no garments. The nakedneſs of Creation was the abſence of cloathing, or a not uſing of cloathes, it was not the want of cloathing. But the nakedneſs *Job* ſpeaks of, is the nakedneſs after the Fall properly; where nakedneſs importeth not only a not having of cloaths, but want of cloathing; and ſo nakedneſs is a part of that curſe and puniſhment which followed ſin. *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb*, that is, *I came into the world in a ſad and miſerable condition, weak and poor*: And ſo nakedneſs is put not ſtrictly as oppoſed only to cloathing, but we may take it more largely for the want of all outward comforts whatſoever, *I came a poor deſtitute creature into the world, I had not only no cloathing upon my back, but I had no comfort for my body; I brought neither Sheep nor Oxen, nor Children nor Servants into the world with me, I had none of theſe things, nothing to help me of my own, when I firſt ſet footing into the world.*

Some Naturaliſts conſidering this kind of nakedneſs, have fallen out into great complaints againſt Nature, or indeed rather againſt the God of Nature; as *Pliny* in the Preface to his ſeventh Book of his natural Hiſtory, doth as it were chide with Nature for turning man into the world in ſuch a helpleſs forlorn condition; as if man were dealt with more hardly then any other creature, then any beaſts of the Field or fowls of the Air. Other creatures, ſaith he, come into the world with Hair, or Fleeces, or Briſtles, or Scales, or Feathers, or Wings, or Shels, &c. to defend and cover them; but nature caſts man naked upon the naked ground. This he ſpake, not conſidering that nakedneſs was once no trouble;

Natura noverca unum hominem animantium cunctorum, alienis velat opibus. Cæteris variè tegumenta tribuit, teſtas, cortices, coria, ſpinas, villos, ſetas, pilos, plumam, pennas, ſquammas, vellera; truncos etiam arboris cortice interdum gemino à frigoribus & calore tutata eſt, hominem tantum nudum, & in nuda humo natali die abjecit. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 7. in the Preface.

trouble, but rather an honour and an ornament; and this he ſpake, not knowing whence or how that kind of troubleſom nakedneſs came into the world: And this he ſpake, not obſerving as he might, how many wayes God had provided for the help and ſupply of that nakedneſs; giving man underſtanding and reaſon, inſtead of weapons and cloathes, which alſo are a means for the procuring of all things neceſſary for the ſupporting of that naked and weak periſhing condition.

שמה

Naked ſhall I return thither.] The difficulty that is in this lyeth only in that word *Thither*; the doubt is, what place he means, or whither? What into my Mothers womb? There is no ſuch return, as *Nichodemus* ſaid, *Shall a man that is old go into his Mothers womb, and be born again*? Some anſwer it thus, The Adverbe [*thither*] doth not neceſſarily refer to the literal antecedent: but in Scripture ſometimes Relatives refer to ſomewhat in the mind or in the thought of the ſpeaker, and not to that which was before ſpoken by him; as that of *Mary* ſheweth, *Joh.* 20. 15. when ſhe cometh into the Garden, and finds that Chriſt was riſen; *ſhe meeteth Chriſt, and ſuppoſing him to be the Gardiner*, ſaith unto him, *Sir, if you have born him hence*; *Him, what him?* There was no antecedent mentioned to which *Him* ſhould relate, only *Maries* mind was ſo full of Chriſt, that ſhe thought every one would underſtand, *what him, or whom* ſhe ſpake of: as if none could ſpeak of or think any thing but of Chriſt only. Therefore ſhe made the relation to that which was in her own ſpirit, and not to what was formerly expreſt. So ſome Interpreters make the [*thither*] to be God or the grave, *I ſhall return unto God, or I ſhall return to the grave, to the houſe of the grave,* as the Chaldee paraphraſe hath it. For they ſuppoſe *Job* had his mind full of thoſe thoughts, therefore he may make a relation to that.

Joh. 3.

Quod dicitur nudus revertar illuc, intelligitur in illum ſtatum quem habuit in utero matris. Aquin. *in loc.*

Another conſideration for the clearing of it is this, that ſuch Adverbs of place as this is, do not only ſignifie place, but a ſtate or a condition, wherein any one is, or to which any thing or perſon is brought; as it is ordinary in our ſpeech to ſay, *hither have I brought the matter*, that is, *to this ſtate or to this condition*: So when *Job* ſaith, *Naked ſhall I return thither*, that is, *I ſhall return to ſuch a condition or to ſuch an eſtate, as I was naked before, ſo I ſhall return to ſuch a ſtate of nakedneſs again.*

Neq; novum eſt ut nomen proprium cum figurato eodem filo atq; eadem oratione conjugatur. Sanct.

Magna parens terra eſt. Ovid.

But thirdly, that which may more clearly carry it, the *thither* which *Job* here ſpeaks of may be underſtood of the earth or the grave; *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither*; to the womb of the earth, which is the grave: and ſo there may be in the latter a reference unto the former, taking the one properly, and the other improperly; taking the earth for his Mothers womb, in an improper ſence, *ſc.* the earth which is the common Parent from whence we all came, and to which we all return; the earth ſhall receive and take in all mankind again; when man dyes, the earth opens her bowels and receiveth him in; and which makes her once more a Mother, the earth at laſt being, as it were, with Child, or rather big with Children, ſhall travel in pain, and groaning to be delivered, ſhall by the mighty power of God, bring forth mankind again. There ſhall be a mighty birth from the womb of the earth at the laſt day. In Scripture the reſurrection is called a birth, in the day of the reſurrection mankind is anew begotten by God and mankind is anew, born: that clears it, *Pſal.* 2. 7. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; which words are applied by *Paul*, *Act.* 13. 12. to the reſurrection of Chriſt. God hath fulfilled the promiſe made unto the Fathers, unto us their Children, in that he hath raiſed up Jeſus again; as it is alſo written in *Pſalm* 2. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And as Chriſt, ſo all men, but eſpecially all Chriſtians ſhall be again begotten by the power of God, and born from the womb of the earth in the day of their reſurrection.

So much for the underſtanding of thoſe words, *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither.*

I ſhall collect ſome Obſervations from them two wayes. Firſt, As they contain a general truth. Secondly, As they are an argument or a reaſon for the ſupport of a man in ſuch a ſad condition as *Job* was then reduced unto. In the former way obſerve,

Firſt, *That every man is born a poor, helpleſs, naked creature.*

The ſoul is naked of all that is good, there is not a rag of grace upon it, when we come into the world. Our bodies are naked too, ſo that we are born with nothing upon us, but only an ugly dreſs of ſin, ſuch as may juſtly make God loath us, and us a terror to our ſelves. *Naked came I into the world*: this one thought well taken in and fully digeſted, will lay pride in the duſt; this thought that we were born thus naked, will ſtrip us of all high and proud thoughts of our ſelves.

Secondly, *Naked ſhall I return.* Note,

When death cometh, it ſhakes us out of all our worldly comforts and poſſeſſions.

Death is called an uncloathing, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be uncloathed*, that is, *not that we would dye.* Death is called an *uncloathing*, becauſe it pulleth all outward things off from a man; it pulleth off all his rayment, his riches, his lands, his honours; yea death uncloathes the very bones, our fleſh wears off quickly in the grave. We have a uſual phraſe among us, and it is a very proper one: when a rich man dies (we ſay) *he left a great eſtate*, he leaves it indeed, for he cannot carry it with him, he muſt go out naked, how well cloathed ſo ever he was while he was here. The Apoſtle doth more then intimate, that ſome rich men do ſcarce believe this for ſound doctrine; he ſpeaks as if he would beat them off from ſome thought of carrying the world with them out of the world; while they live they are buried in their riches, and when they die they hope their riches will be buried with them, yea and riſe with them again. Such a conceit (I ſay) the Apoſtle ſeems to meet with, for in 1 *Tim.* 6. 7. having ſaid, *We brought nothing with us into this world*, he addeth in the next words, *and it is certain we can carry nothing out*; he doth not ſay, *we brought nothing into the world, and we can carry nothing out*, as *Job* here ſpeaks; but as if *Jobs* aſſertion had come into queſtion in *Pauls* time, he ſaith, *we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain*, never doubt of the truth of it, *we can carry nothing out*; we ſhall go out as we came in. *Many*, as the Prophet *Habakkuk* ſpeaks, Chap. 2. 6. *lade themſelves with thick clay*: *But*, as the queſtion there follows, *how long?* This *lading* muſt be laid down again. If riches end not before thee as thine, they muſt end with thee. Yet if any would carry riches and cloathing out of the world, it will be their wiſdom to labour for ſpiritual riches, for ſpiritual cloathing; when ſuch die, as they ſhall not be found naked, ſo they ſhall not go out naked: All your other cloathing and riches muſt be left on this ſide the grave, but get ſpiritual cloathing and riches, and you ſhall go out of the world adorn'd and enrich'd for ever; the cloathing of grace, the robe of righteouſneſs, a veſture of ſpiritual ornaments will endure to all eternity.

Thirdly, Note here further, how the *Holy Ghoſt* deſcribes the life of man, *Naked came I into the world, and naked ſhall I return.*

The life of man is nothing elſe but a coming and a returning.

Here is nothing ſaid of ſtaying or abiding; *We have here no continuing City*; while we are here, we can hardly be ſaid to continue here, and after a few dayes we ſhall not be here at all. It is but a coming and a going, it is but a flood and an ebb, and then we are carried into the *Ocean of eternity.*

We may yet conſider the words as they are an argument (and ſo I ſhall note two things from them). So *Job* uſes them as an argument both to ſupport himſelf, and to acquit God. Then Obſerve,

Firſt, *That a godly man in his ſtraits ſtudieth arguments to acquit and juſtiſie God in all his dealings with him.*

Job could not have found out upon longeſt ſtudy a better argument for the acquitting of God then this is: I have as much as I brought, then what wrong is done me in all this? As wicked men when they fall into ſtraits or troubles, eſpecially when they fall into ſin, ſtudy arguments how to ſhift themſelves out, and lay all the blame upon God; as *Adam* and *Eve*, our firſt Parents in Paradiſe, (there it began) when they had ſinned and were naked, they began to deviſe ſhifts how to put it from themſelves, and to faſten the fault upon God. *David* on the other ſide labours to clear God, if ever he ſhould be ſtript naked, *Pſal.* 51. 4. *I will confeſs my ſin, that thou mayſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and clear when thou judgeſt.* Weigh the reaſon why *David* confeſſeth his ſin in that *Pſalm*, I do it, ſaith he, that I may by this means acquit God, whatſoever God ſhall do with me hereafter, whatſoever affliction God ſhall bring upon me; men it may be will begin to judge God for it, and to ſay that he hath dealt hardly with me, notice having been taken, what an eminent ſervant of God I have been. *Behold*, ſaith he, *I confeſs my ſin before thee, that thou maiſt be clear when thou judgeſt*; or as the Apoſtle *Paul* quotes the place, according to the Septuagint, *Rom.* 3. 4. *That thou mighteſt overcome when thou art judged. David* knew men would be apt to judge God, if they ſaw him afflicted; and therefore to ſtop their mouths, or to give God the day againſt them, he confeſſes his ſin; thereby ſhewing cauſe why God might chaſtiſe him, either for correction of ſin paſt, or prevention of ſin to come.

Secondly, As the argument referreth unto *Job* himſelf, we may Obſerve this,

> *That the conſideration of what we once were, and of what at laſt we muſt be, may relieve our ſpirits in the greateſt outward afflictions of this life.*

Art thou for the preſent in a naked condition? Conſider thou waſt naked once, and ere long ſhalt be naked again: Conſider the two extreams, the beginning and the ending, and that will bear thee up in the middle condition. There is many a man that complains, and ſaith, I have nothing but the cloaths upon my back left me, and they are but rags, but mean ones neither: Why! With nothing but the cloaths upon thy back? Know O man thou waſt born with nothing but thy skin upon thy back. Conſider this, and leave complaining; this was one thought which helped *Job* to bear this burden, the want of all. And the Apoſtle *Paul* uſeth this argument to the very ſame purpoſe, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6. having ſaid, *That godlineſs with contentment is great gain*; he ſubjoyns preſently this argument of *Job*, for ſaith he, *we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we ſhall carry nothing out.* To conſider what (not long ago) we were, and what very ſhortly we muſt be, will mightily work the ſoul to contentation in what eſtate ſoever we are. It follows,

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.

This is the ſecond argument which *Job* uſeth to both the former purpoſes; and it is a more ſpiritual and ſublime argument then the former. A man who hath nothing in him but nature, may ſay as much as *Job* did before, though he could never ſay it with *Job's* ſpirit; for though godly perſons uſe natural arguments and common reaſons, yet being concocted in their ſpirits, they become heavenly and ſpiritual. Natural men (I ſay) or Heathens have taken up ſuch an argument as that; as when word was brought to a Heathen Philoſopher, that his Son was dead, *I know* (ſaith he) *that I begot a Son mortal, and ſubject to death*; he did but look back to the common condition of man, and ſupported himſelf. But now I ſay this ſecond argument is higher, it is not an argument bottomed upon the frailty of nature, but upon the ſovereignty of God: this argument is grounded upon the equity of divine providence and diſpenſations. *The Lord* (ſaith he) *hath given, and the Lord hath taken away.*

Scio me mortalem genuiſſe.

The Lord hath given.] *Every good and every perfect gift is from above, James* 1. 17. What gifts doth *Job* here mean? He means good and perfect gifts in their kind; but not the beſt and moſt perfect kind of gifts. The Lord once gave me thoſe Oxen, thoſe Sheep, all theſe outward things that now I am ſtripped of, *The Lord hath given.* A gift is any good freely beſtowed; when we receive a thing which another was not ingaged to beſtow, that is a gift. Now God doth not only give us thoſe tranſcendents, grace and glory, faith in Chriſt here, and the fruition of Chriſt hereafter: not only are theſe gifts, I ſay, ſent in from God, and undeſerved by us; but outward things, riches and honour, children and ſervants, houſes and lands, theſe are the gifts of God likewiſe; we have not the leaſt creature comfort of our own, we have nothing of our own but ſin. *What haſt thou, that thou haſt not received?* is a truth concerning every thing we have, even to a hoof or a ſhoe-latchet. We are indebted unto God for our ſpirituals, for our temporals, for all. We muſt ſay of all, little or much, great or ſmall, *The Lord hath given.*

How did the Lord give *Job* all his riches and eſtate?

The Lord doth give either immediately or mediately. When *Job* ſaith, *The Lord hath given*, we are not to underſtand it, as if the Lord had brought ſuch a preſent to him, and ſaid, here take this eſtate, take theſe cattle, theſe ſervants; but God gave them mediately by bleſſing the labours of *Job*. So when the Lord proſpereth us in our honeſt endeavours, and labours, and callings, then the Lord giveth us outward things.

The Lord hath given. Job doth not ſay, by my ſtrength and diligence, my policy and prudence, I have got this eſtate; as the *Aſſyrian* ſaid, *Iſa.* 10. 13. *By the ſtrength of my hand have I done this, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent. Job* takes no notice of himſelf; he was not idle, yet he ſpeaks as if he had done nothing, *The Lord hath given.*

This ſhould teach us in the firſt place to acknowledge the Lord as the fountain and donor of all our outward comforts. When you get wealth, do not ſay, this I have gotten (ſuch language is barbarous in divinity) but ſay, this, *The Lord hath given.* We find an expreſs caution to this purpoſe given by *Moſes* from God, not only againſt the former language of the tongue, but of the heart; when the Jews ſhould come to *Canaan*, and ſhould grow rich and great there. *When thou haſt eaten and art full, then thou ſhalt bleſs the Lord. Beware thou forget not the Lord thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee, and ſay in thy heart, my power, and the might of my hand, hath gotten me this wealth; but thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth: It is he that giveth thee power.* Many who are perſwaded that God gives them grace, that God gives Heaven and Salvation; are hardly perſwaded, or at leaſt do not ſo well conſider it, that God gives riches, *&c.* their hearts are yet ready to ſay, that they have gotten this wealth, they have gotten this honour. It is a ſweet thing when a man looks upward for theſe lower things, and can ſay on good grounds, that his earth hath dropt down to him from Heaven, *The Lord hath given.*

Deut. 8. 10, 11, 17, 18.

Further, when *Job* ſaith, *The Lord hath given*, it is an argument of his own juſtice and equity in getting: *Job* did not enrich himſelf by wrong, *by grinding the face of the poor.* If he had done ſo, he could not have ſaid, *The Lord hath given. So much as we get honeſtly, we may look upon as a fruit of Gods bounty.* Look into your eſtates, and whatſoever you have got by wrong dealing, take heed of ſaying, this is of *Gods giving*, for ſo you make God himſelf a partner in your ſins. God ſometime gives when we uſe no means, but he never gives when we uſe unlawful means. What God ſaid concerning the ſetting up of thoſe Kings, *Hoſ.* 8. 4. *They have ſet up Kings, but not by me*; he ſaith of all, who enrich themſelves by wrong, *they have gotten riches, but not by me.* When men leave the rule of juſtice, God leaves them: And though unlawful acts are under the eye of Gods providence, yet they are not under the influence of his bleſſing. Wicked men thrive often, but they are never bleſſed; *their proſperity is their curſe.*

Thirdly, It is obſervable, that when *Job* would ſupport himſelf in the loſs of his eſtate, he calls to mind how he came by his eſtate; and finding it all given in by the bleſſing of God upon his honeſt labours and endeavours, he is ſatisfied. Note,

> That, *what we get honeſtly, that we can part with contentedly.*

He that hath got his eſtate by injuſtice, can never leave it with patience. Honeſty in getting cauſeth quietneſs of ſpirit in looſing outward things. Keep a good conſcience in getting the world, and you ſhall have peace when you cannot keep the world. Whereas a wrong-doer and a wrong-dealer, is in ſuch a day under a double affliction; he is afflicted with his preſent loſs, and he ought to be afflicted for his former gain.

Fourthly, Theſe words, *the Lord hath given*, being rightly handled, will be as a ſword to cut off four monſters or monſtrous luſts, which annoy all the world; or as a medicine to cure four diſeaſes about worldly things. Two of theſe luſts are ſtrongeſt in the rich; and the other pair aſſault the poor. The poor pine either with diſcontent, becauſe they have ſo little; or with envy, becauſe others have ſo much. The rich ſwell with pride, becauſe they have abundance, or they are fill'd with contempt of thoſe that are in want. Let the rich ſeriouſly weigh this ſpeech, it will cure them of pride, *Charge them that are rich* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) *that they be not high-minded.* You ſee how ſubject rich men are to this inflammation of pride. But with what doth he prick this Bladder? It is with this thought, that God gives all riches; *Let them truſt in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy.* That argument of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *If thou haſt received it, why doſt thou boaſt?* is as ſtrong and as true in regard of temporals, as of ſpirituals. Conſider ſeriouſly that your eſtates are the gift of God, and down falls pride. If you come honeſtly by them, they are the gift of God; if you come diſhoneſtly by them, they are the gifts of Satan; and you ought to be aſhamed of them, and reſtore them, not to boaſt, or be proud of them.

Then ſecondly, It will cure the rich of all contempt of others. What the Apoſtle *James* obſerved and cenſured in the rich of thoſe times, is found by too much experience among the rich at this day; *Ye have deſpiſed the poor*, chap. 2. 6. Conſider it is the Lord who gave, and he gave as a Lord, freely; he might have given thine eſtate to that poor man, and have left thee in that condition thou ſo much deſpiſeſt in thy brother: God gave him as much as his wiſdom thought fit; and it ſeems he hath given thee more then thou art fit for: In deſpiſing him, thou doſt aſperſe the diſpenſation of God, and whilſt thou woundeſt him in his poverty, thou woundeſt God in his providence. Conſider it is the Lord that gives, and then be unconvinced, if you can, that while you contemn man in his wants, you queſtion God in his wiſdom; buſie thy ſelf hereafter in praiſing him who gives All, and leave deſpiſing him who hath received leſs.

Then likewiſe let the poor look upon this Text, and it will cure them of two diſeaſes, into which they often fall, and by which they are much endangered, even in the vitals of Grace; Diſcontent, and Envy. *It is the Lord that giveth*, that ſhapes and cuts out your condition, why then ſhould you not be contented with his allowance, and be thankful in your lot? If your eſtates be proportioned from above, you ought to be content with your portion. Ignorance or Inadvertency from whom we receive, cauſeth murmuring at what we have. Do not think thou haſt leſs love from God, becauſe thou haſt leſs allowance from God. The power of God is as much acted in making a Fly, as in making an Elephant; and his love may be as much, and is often more acted in giving a penny, then in giving a talent. Know this thou who art a child of God, if thy portion be but a penny, it hath upon it the Image and Superſcription, a Fathers love, which is better then life.

This alſo will cure the poor of envy: many times the poor have an evil eye of envy at the rich; they cannot bear it, that others have ſo much, and they ſo little: Conſider, it is the *Lord that giveth.* This argument Chriſt uſeth, *Mat.* 15. 20. to him that was angry that they who came at the latter end of the day, had as much as he; *May not I do with mine own what I will? Is thine eye evil, becauſe mine is good?* The envious eye is an evil eye; envy is the diſeaſe of the eyes. This Text is one of the beſt Medicines that ever was preſcribed. Wilt thou be ſick, becauſe another is in health; and make thy Brothers happineſs the ground of thy miſery? Do not think that all is loſt, which is not caſt into thy lap; or that thy eſtate is leſs or worſe, becauſe thou ſeeſt one having a greater, or a better. Muſt God ask thee leave, or ask thy counſel, how, and in what meaſure to diſtribute his favours? Were all but well Catechized in this one Principle, that *God gives all*, it would ſoon diſpel this malignant vapour, and all would reſt ſatisfied, not becauſe they or others have received thus or thus, but becauſe God hath thus *diſpoſed to all.*

Obſerve one thing more;

If the Lord give us all, then we ſhould be willing to give back ſomewhat unto the Lord again.

And this conſideration that God gives us, will make us willing to give unto God. What is the reaſon that many are ſo unwilling to give ſomewhat unto God? It is becauſe they will not underſtand that they are beholding to God for all. If they were perſwaded of their receipts from him, a little Oratory might perſwade a gift from them, in the cauſe of God; eſpecially when God intreats them, who may of right command them; when he is content to take it as a courteſie, who may ſend for it by authority, and expect it as a duty. God himſelf, who fills and enjoyes all things, hath ſometimes (in a ſenſe) need of your eſtates. Chriſt, who is Lord of Heaven and Earth, is ſometimes in want of a penny. Chriſt tells you of his wants and poverty, *Mat.* 25. and ſhews how and when he is relieved. And as Chriſt wants in a Member, ſome particular Believer; ſo he often wants in his whole Body; which is the Church, or whole company of Believers. If you have any ſpiritual wiſdom, to diſcern times and ſeaſons, you may know, that now Chriſt *wants money* (as I have explained) now God (in his cauſe) hath need. He goes about (in thoſe who ſolicit his cauſe) and asks a relief at every one of your doors. Now then do but conſider, when any thing is asked for the Lords ſake, that *the Lord gave all*; this will be a key to unlock your cheſts; this will at once untie your hearts and your purſes. Will you let Chriſt want, ſhall the cauſe of God want, while you have it, whereas what you have, *God gave?* It is expreſs concerning *Nabal*, that this was the reaſon why he would not part with a loaf of bread to relieve *David* and his Army, 1 *Sam.* 25. 11. *Shall I take my bread and my water, and my fleſh that I have killed for my ſhearers, and ſend them to a fellow, I know not who?* You ſee the man was all in his poſſeſſives, *my bread*, and *my water*, and *my fleſh*; he never thought that God had any ſhare or intereſt in his eſtate, that God gave it; therefore he would not give to a ſervant of God. You ſhall ſee on the other hand, how *David*'s munificence, and that of the Nobles with him, 2 *Chron.* 29. ſprung from this root, the acknowledgment that nothing was their own, it came in all from God; when they had offered ſo willingly and bountifully towards the building of the Temple, *David* ſhews the Mine which yielded ſo much treaſure; even this we have digged in all this while: *All things come of thee, and of thine own we have given thee*, verſ. 15. They confeſſed that all came of God, they were but Stewards, he was the Owner; and his own they could not with-hold from him. God giveth us the uſe of the creature, but he keepeth the right to them in his own hand; when we have the poſſeſſion of them, he hath the property. Wherefore let the conſideration, that God giveth all, make us ready and open-handed to give unto God, when he calleth and requireth it at our hands.

And the Lord hath taken away.] When God gives, it is an act of bounty; and when he takes, it is an act of juſtice; for he is Lord, ſovereign Lord in both. But why doth *Job* here charge this upon God? *The Lord hath taken.* Was it not told him by the meſſengers, that the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans* came and took away his cattel, plundered and pillaged his eſtate? They told him, that *the fire conſumed his Sheep*, and the *wind blew down the houſe upon his Children*: Why doth *Job* ſay, *The Lord hath taken?* What! will *Job* charge all thoſe robberies upon God himſelf? Doth not this look like the blaſphemy that the Devil hoped would have come out of *Job*'s mouth?

I anſwer, when *Job* ſaith, *The Lord hath taken*, it doth but ſet forth the ſupream power and ſovereignty of God, in ordering all things; and (as we opened before) that God gave the commiſſion to Satan, or leave to ſpoil him, or elſe Satan could not have touched one of the dogs of his Flock. *Job* knew that God had all men and Devils, fire and wind, all creatures in his hand. He ſaith, *the Lord hath taken*; becauſe none could take, but by the will of God; and he was ſatisfied, that God willed that in righteouſneſs and in judgment, which they acted with ſo much cruelty and injuſtice. *Is there any evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos 3. 6. Every evil of affliction or of trouble, is ſaid to be the Lords doing, becauſe it cannot be done without the Lord. Wicked men, in all their plots, and in all their ſucceſſes, are either the rod of God, to chaſten his people for their ſins; or elſe they are as Gods furnace, to try his peoples Graces, and purge them from their ſins. Thus the hand of the Lord is in all our ſorrows, *The Lord*, ſaith *Job*, *hath taken away.*

We ſhould from hence learn, *In all our afflictions to look beyond the Creature.*

In all the evils we either feel or fear, let our hearts be carried up unto God. As then we rightly enjoy outward bleſſings, when thoſe bleſſings carry us up unto God, when, upon creatures, our hearts are raiſed up to heaven: So then we make a right uſe of afflictions, of croſſes and troubles, when we are led by croſſes (in our meditations) unto God. *Job* doth not ſay, *The Lord hath given, and the* Caldeans *have taken away; the Lord hath enriched me, and Satan hath robbed me*; but, as if he had never made any mention of Satan or *Caldeans*, of fire or wind, he ſaith, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken.* He doth not fall out with man, or complain of the Devil, he is not angry with chance or fortune, with ſtars or conſtellations; many, in the troubleſom evils which they ſuffer, are apt to flie out upon all creatures, and upon all cauſes, rather then to caſt an eye upon God; whereas indeed, we ſhould not take either good or evil out of the hand of any creature. There were ſome of old, *Marcion*, and his followers, who could not reliſh this Doctrine, nor endure that we ſhould carry our evils, and lay them before Gods door, and ſay, *The Lord hath done this:* therefore they found out two beginnings; that is, two Gods, rather then they would make the ſame God the author of ſuch extreams (as they thought) of good and evil: They ſaid, *there was one God that was a good God, and another an evil God; the one, a giving God, the other, a taking God; the one a loving God, a merciful God; the other, an angry God, a ſevere God.* Many of the Heathen taught better Divinity then thoſe Hereticks: for they feigned, that their *Jupiter* had two great veſſels placed at the entrance of his *Palace*, whereof the one was filled with *Good*, and the other with *Evil*: Theſe he diſpenſed according to the dictate of his own will, among the ſons of men. And they painted *Fortune* in two *forms*, with two *faces* of *contrary colours*, the foremoſt *white*, the hindermoſt *black*; to ſignifie, that *good* and *evil*, which they ſhadowed under *white* and *black*, come both from *Goddeſs Fortune:* which comes near that language in the Prophet, *Iſa.* 45.7. *I form the light, and create darkneſs; I make peace, and create evil.* And we are taught to look upon the ſame God, as the ſpring and fountain of all good, and of all this ſort of evil. Though it be a truth (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) that the *ſame fountain cannot ſend forth bitter water and ſweet*, take it in a natural or moral ſence; yet the ſame fountain may ſend forth bitter and ſweet, take it in a civil ſence; that is, the ſame may be the author of outward *corrections*, and outward *favours*. God is not the fountain of *good* and *evil* in a moral ſence, ſo nothing but good floweth from him; but take it in a civil ſence, and ſo both good and evil, bitter and ſweet come from the ſame fountain.

Conſider the words, as they are an argument, and then ſee their ſtrength to the purpoſes, for which *Job* doth eſpecially here apply them: 1. The acquitting or juſtifying of God. 2. The ſupporting and comforting of himſelf: and ſo we may note from them,

First, That, *The abſolute ſoveraignty of the Lord over us, is enough to acquit him from doing us any wrong, whatſoever he doth with us.*

Job ſaith only this, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken*: he is the ſovereign Lord, therefore I have no reaſon to complain; he doth it, upon whom I have laid no engagement, upon whom I have no tie at all, to do this or that for me; he doth it who may reſolve the reaſon of all his actions into his own will; *he is the Lord.* God cannot injure his creature; therefore the Apoſtle hath recourſe to that only, in *Rom.* 9. for the anſwer of all cavils and objections againſt Gods dealing with man; *Hath not the Potter power over the Clay?* The ſoveraignty and ſupremacy of the Lord is enough to bear him out whatſoever he doth, with or to his creatures. *O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God?*

Then again, it is as ſtrong for the ſecond end; for the ſupport of the ſoul in bearing evil: conſider that it is *the Lord that giveth, and the Lord that takes.* The thought of Gods ſoveraignty over us, and over ours, may quiet our ſpirits in all that he doth unto us or ours. As it doth juſtifie God, ſo it doth quiet us: Hear *David*, Pſal. 39.9. *I was dumb*, ſaith he, *and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it:* He doth not ſay, I was contented becauſe thou dealteſt thus and thus with me; but, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*; that it was the act of God, the ſovereign Lord, ſatisfied him; he had not a word to ſay, becauſe God did it. *So Job* here, *The Lord hath taken away*, is, as if he had ſaid, I could not have born this at the hands of any creature, but at the hands of my ſoveraign Lord, that may diſpoſe of me and mine, and do what he pleaſeth; at his hands I not only bear it, but take it well.

Joſeph had not a word of diſcontent to vent againſt his Brethren, being thus reſolved; *It was not you that ſent me hither, but God*, Gen. 45. And *David* layes aſide all revenge againſt railing *Shimei*, on this ground, *So let him curſe; becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, curſe David*, 2 Sam. 16.10. A godly man cannot be angry at the doing or ſpeaking of that which pleaſeth God, that it ſhould be done or ſpoken. And it takes away all complaining, *That the Lord hath taken away.*

Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.

The Septuagint, and ſo the Vulgar, from them, inſert here another Sentence between theſe two; *The Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord:* reading it thus, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away* *: *as it pleaſeth the Lord, ſo cometh things to paſs, bleſſed be the name of the Lord*; but we have no more in the Hebrew, then our own Tranſlation gives us.

* ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ ἔδοξεν οὕτως ἐγένετο. Sept.

Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.] This is the triumphant concluſion which floweth from the former Propoſitions; this is the iſſue and reſult of them both: a concluſion as oppoſite to Satans deſign, (as the two *Poles* of the heavens are one againſt the other. Satan waited to hear *Job* conclude with *blaſpheming the name of the Lord*; and now he heareth *Job* conclude with *bleſſing the name of the Lord.* How did this vex and ſting Satan? This one word of *Job* did wound Satan more then all the afflictions which Satan procured, wounded *Job*. Though *I return naked*, though *all be taken from me, yet bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.] The Name of God in Scripture, is taken, Firſt, For God himſelf. The name of a thing, it is put for the thing named, *Pſal.* 44.5. *Through thee we will puſh down our enemies, through thy name we will tread them down that riſe up againſt us.* Through *thy name*, that is, *through thee: Through thee and through thy name*, are the ſame. So, *Pſal.* 48. 10. *According to thy name, ſo is thy praiſe*, that is, *thou art praiſed like thy ſelf; as thou art in thy ſelf, ſo thou art or oughteſt to be praiſed by thy people*; the name is put for the perſon. You have it clearly, *Acts* 1. 15. *The number of names together, were about an hundred and twenty*; that is, the number of perſons, ſo many perſons, becauſe numbred by their names.

Secondly, The Name of God is often in Scripture put for the Attributes of God.

Thirdly, The Name of God is put for his Ordinances or worſhip: *Go ye now to my place which was in Shiloh, where I ſet my Name at the firſt*, Jer. 7.12. that is, where I firſt ſet up my publick worſhip; becauſe as a man is known by his proper name, ſo is God by his proper worſhip. And therefore falſe worſhip is the ſetting up of a *ſtrange god.* When we miſtake the name, we miſtake the perſon.

Fourthly, The Name of God is that reverence, eſteem and honour, which Angels and men give unto God. As we know amongſt us, the report and reputation that a man hath among men, is a mans name; what men ſpeak of him, that is his name: ſuch an one hath a good name, we ſay; ſuch an one hath an ill name; that is, men ſpeak or think well or ill of ſuch perſons. So, *Gen.* 6.4. When *Moſes* deſcribes the Giants, he ſaith, *they were men of renown*; the Hebrew is, *they were men of name*, becauſe the name of a man is the opinion he hath amongſt men; as a man is eſteemed, ſo his name is carried, and himſelf is accepted in the world. So the name of God is that high eſteem, thoſe honourable apprehenſions, which Angels and Men have of God; ſuch as the thoughts and ſpeeches of men are for the celebration of Gods glory and praiſe, ſuch is his name in the world. *Bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

אנשי
השם

By bleſſing God, we are to underſtand, either, firſt, what we expreſs in word concerning God. God is bleſſed by his creatures, when his goodneſs, and greatneſs, and mercy, and bounty, and faithfulneſs, and juſtice, are publiſhed with thankſgiving and praiſe. Or God is bleſſed likewiſe, when we have high, and great, and glorious thoughts of God; when we inwardly fear, and reverence, and love, and honour God, then we bleſs God. The one is to bleſs with the tongue, the other to bleſs with the heart. The tongue bleſſing without the heart, is but a *tinckling Cymbal*: the heart bleſſing without the tongue, makes *ſweet*, but *ſtill muſick*; both in conſort, make that harmony which fills and delights Heaven and Earth. When *Job* ſaith here, *bleſſed be the name of the Lord*, we are to underſtand it both wayes; that *Job* ſpeaks out the bleſſing of God with his mouth, and likewiſe he had high and reverent thoughts of God. His heart and tongue met at this work and word. **Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.**

We may note from hence, That, *God is worthy of all praiſe and honour, not only when he doth enrich and ſtrengthen us, when he fills and protects us; but alſo when he doth impoveriſh and weaken us, when he empties and ſmites us, when he gives us up to the will of our enemies, to the will of Devils and wicked men, even then God is to be bleſſed.*

It is a good thing, and it is our duty to bleſs God, when we are rich, and when we are full; as, *Deut.* 8. 10. *When thou haſt eaten, and art full, then thou ſhalt bleſs the Lord*: But it is a far better thing (yet but our duty) to bleſs the Lord when we are poor and weak, when we are empty, and have nothing to eat; then to bleſs the Lord, is the breathing of an excellent ſpirit indeed, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 18. *In every thing give thanks*: Let God do what he will with his children, they have cauſe to thank him, *as he is God in himſelf, bleſſed for evermore.* When God thunders in judgments ſo loud, that he breaketh the *Cedars*, and ſhakes the *Wilderneſs*, then *to give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, and in his Temple to ſpeak of his glory*, argues a ſpirit highly ennobled, and glorious in Grace, *Pſal.* 29. Therefore his children ſhould not reſt in this, that they bear afflictions, but they ſhould labour to bring their hearts to bleſs and glorifie God in, and for the afflictions that they bear. And a ſoul that thus honoureth God, ſhall aſſuredly receive honour from God. That which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Saints ſuffering perſecution, is true of them in any kind of holy ſuffering, *the ſpirit of Glory and of God doth reſt upon them*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. The Spirit of God is ſpoken of, as if it were unſetled or unquiet, and knew not where to fix it ſelf, till it had found ſuch a ſoul; like *Noah*'s Dove, that went *hovering* about, and knew not where to *reſt* the *ſole* of her *foot*, till it came to the *Ark*; ſo the Spirit of God is expreſt, as *hovering* about from perſon to perſon, from place to place, as if it could not reſt any where, till he found a ſoul triumphing and bleſſing God in affliction; at leaſt lying quietly under affliction, till God takes it off, and there the Spirit reſts and ſettles it ſelf.

Obſerve further, that *Job* here bleſſeth God in his afflictions, and that makes the difference; his afflictions now are good unto him.

If we bleſs God in our afflictions, then our afflictions are bleſſings unto us.

We have ſo much bleſſing in our affliction, as we can bleſs God for our affliction. There is a mighty power in this ſpeech, *I bleſs God*; it changeth evil into good: here is an heavenly *Alchimy* (as we may ſpeak) whatſoever affliction you touch with bleſſing God, you turn that affliction to a bleſſing; if you have an Iron yoke of affliction upon you, do but touch it with bleſſing God, it turneth it into Gold. When you have a heavy croſs upon you, ready to weigh you down, do but touch the croſs with this word from the heart, , and it makes it as a Crown of Glory upon your heads. Thus, (I ſay) you may turn every evil into good, every affliction into a comfort and a bleſſing, if you can but touch it with *bleſſing the Name of God*.

We will come to the Concluſion.

In all this Job **ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.**

This teſtimony the Lord giveth concerning *Job*, both in reference to what he did, and what he ſpake. *In all this, in renting his mantle, in ſhaving his head, in falling to the ground, in worſhipping*, in ſaying, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither; The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the Name of the Lord. In all this* Job *ſinned not, neither charged God fooliſhly*, God himſelf puts all the actions, and all the ſpeeches of *Job* into the ballance, and finds not any lightneſs in them; he bringeth all that he hath done, and all that he hath ſaid, to the touchſtone, and finds them pure metal. The holy Ghoſt, the great and infallible moderator of this cauſe and queſtion between *Job* and *Satan*, determines, *That in all this* Job *ſinned not, neither did he charge God fooliſhly.*

But it will be objected, Is there any man that ſinneth not? or, is there any man that ſinneth not in every thing? How then are we to underſtand what the holy Ghoſt pronounceth, *In all this* Job *ſinned not?* Is any man ſo holy, or can his heart be kept in ſo holy a frame, as to do and ſpeak ſo much, without any touch of ſin, without any ſpot of defilement? *Job*'s queſtion, *chap.* 9. affirms, that no man can do any one act *purely pure*; *Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean?* Now *Job* himſelf in his nature, was unclean, he had uncleanneſs in him; how then was a clean thing brought out of *Job?* Whence had he ſuch a priviledge above his brethren, as not to ſin in doing and ſuffering ſo many things?

There are ſome Popiſh Commentators, who would build the Tower of perfection upon this and other the like Scriptures; *ſcil. That a man may in this life be freed from all ſin.* For the refuting this ſence, and clearing of the Text, I will give you the reſolution in a diſtinction or two.

Firſt, If we conſider ſinful actions, they are of two ſorts. There are actions ſinful in the matter, when the very thing done is a ſin; as, to ſteal, to lie, to be drunk, to commit adultery, and the like; the very thing done is a ſin materially. There are other actions that are ſinful in the formality or manner of doing; ſo a good work in the matter, may be ſinful in the manner of doing. We do not aſſert that all the works of regenerate perſons are ſins, as if they were ſinful actions, or that all that they do is ſinful in the matter; for that were a reproach to the Spirit of Chriſt, that were a reproach to the Grace of Chriſt, by which they being regenerated, act and do theſe things. But we poſitively affirm, that to the works of regenerate perſons, to their beſt works ſome defilement cleaves; ſo that though the action be not ſinful, yet there is ſome ſin in the action. There is a great deal of difference between a ſinful action, and ſin in an action: We have rhat difference expreſly, *Exod.* 28. 38. Where the High Prieſt is ſaid *to bear the iniquity of the holy things*: holy things, yet iniquity in them; holy things in the matter of them, yet iniquity in the manner of performing them.

Now when it is ſaid here, *In all this* Job *ſinned not*, we are to underſtand it firſt thus; Here were no ſinful acts in the matter of them, ſuch as Satan did promiſe to himſelf, and did undertake with God, that *Job* would ſpeak and break out into: Satan was confident that *Job* would *blaſpheme and curſe God to his face*; this was an act of an high nature, ſinful in the very matter of it, an act abominable. *In all this* Job *ſinned not* ſuch a ſin; he was not tranſported by paſſion or impatiency to reproach and curſe the living God.

Secondly, In Scripture-language we are ſaid not to ſin, when we do not commit ſuch & ſuch ſins; as is clear in that inſtance about *David*, of whom this tranſcendent teſtimony is given, 1 *Kings* 15. 5. *That he turned not aſide from any thing the Lord commanded him all the dayes of his life, ſave only in the matter of* Uriah *the* Hittite: a high expreſſion of his holineſs. What then? ſhall we think that *David* never ſinned at all, but in that matter? No, the meaning of it is, that *David* never fell groſly or foully, but that time; in compariſon of that act, all the reſt of the life of *David* went for ſo holy, as if he had lived without any ſin at all. In this ſenſe the Apoſtle *John* giveth the command not to ſin, 1 *John* 2. 1. *I write unto you little Children, that you ſin not* (it is a poſſible precept in an evangelical ſence) that is, that you ſin not as wicked men do, who can do nothing elſe but ſin. In this ſence, *Job ſinned not*; he carried himſelf like an holy perſon, like an obedient child of God, like *one born of God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) whoſe Character and priviledge it is, that he cannot ſin. Such have the bleſſing of impotency in the unregenerate part, ſo that they cannot ſin ſtrongly; though as yet they have not that ability, in their regenerate part, not to ſin at all.

1 Joh. 3. 9.

The *Septuagint* adds to this clauſe, *He ſinned not before the Lord*, or *againſt the Lord.* The *Vulgar* adds thoſe words, *with his lips.* Neither of them mend the ſence of the Hebrew Text; and the latter makes it worſe. For it is a higher and clearer teſtimony to ſay, *In all this* Job *ſinned not*, then to ſay, *In all this* Job *ſinned not with his lips*; for he might ſin in *thought*,&c. though it be moſt true which the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, *chap.* 3. 7. *If any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man.*

Or charged God fooliſhly.] The Tranſlations are ſomewhat different; the *Septuagint* thus, *He did not caſt any folly upon God*; others, *He did not offer any thing unſavoury of God*; another, *He did not accuſe* or *complain of God*: The word in the Original is, *He did not give*; we tranſlate, *He did not charge.*

ὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀφροσύνην τῷ Θεῷ. Sept.
Non dedit inſulſum Deo. Ar. Mont.
ὐκ ἐμέμψατο τῷ Θεῷ. Olym.
תפלה *Proprie inſulſitas.*

The word which we tranſlate adverbially [*fooliſhly*] is a Noun in the Original; yet it is fully enough to the ſence, *He charged not God fooliſhly*, or, *he charged not God with folly*, ſo it is rather in the Original. That word which is here tranſlated *folly*, ſignifieth in the general, any thing that is *indebite diſpoſitum*, any thing that is unduly diſpoſed, any thing in diſorder: And we find it in Scripture referred divers wayes.

Firſt, It is put for unſavoury meat, without ſalt or ſauce; as, *Job* 6. 6. *Can that which is unſavoury, be eaten without ſalt?* The word [*unſavoury*] there, is the ſame with this, here rendred *folly* or *fooliſhly.*

Secondly, It is uſed for *mortar* that hath not a due temper or mixture in it; as, *Ezek.* 13. 14. *I will break down the wall that ye have dawbed with untempered mortar*; mortar that is not well tempered, is unfit for uſe.

Thirdly, It is put for any rude, undigeſted or indiſcreet ſpeech; as, *Lam.* 2. 14. *Thy Prophets have ſeen vain and fooliſh things for thee*; they have ſeen fooliſh and unſavoury things for thee. Hence the word is uſed to expreſs madneſs; becauſe madneſs is the height of folly, being without any ſeaſoning, without any temper, a thing that hath no taſte of wiſdom or goodneſs in it, *Jer.* 23. 13. *I have ſeen folly in the Prophets of Samaria*; that is, they are unſavoury, their ſpeeches are untempered mortar, they are fooliſh and vain. So then, he did not charge *God with folly*, or *charge God fooliſhly*, hath this ſenſe, Job *did not ſpeak any thing raſhly, or unbecoming the Majeſty of God, or charge him in the leaſt, to have dealt unwiſely or unjuſtly with him.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Satan, thou didſt expect that* Job *ſhould now at this time have charged me home, and have laid load upon me with complainings, for dealing thus with him*; thou expectedſt that he ſhould have broken out into the dialect of hell it ſelf; ſuch words as theſe, *Why, what have I done againſt God, that he ſhould deal thus with me? Is this the wages that I ſhall receive for the work and ſervice I have done him? Will he diſcourage and diſhearten others from coming on to his ſervice, by my ſad example? Is it juſtice in God, that I, who have lived ſo innocently, ſhould be thus extreamly afflicted? Could the Lord find out no ſwearers, no drunkards, no adulterers in the world, to let Satan looſe upon, but he muſt needs turn him looſe upon me? Had he no other Butt in the world to ſhoot the arrows of his indignation at, but at an innocent breaſt? Is this a juſt God, who uſes his ſervants thus? Or, if he be omniſcient and omnipotent, why then did he not protect me from Satans rage? Why did he not defend me from the violence of thoſe evil men?* Such kind of ſpeeches, or to this effect, Satan expected *Job* would have uttered raſhly againſt the Lord: but he is deceived; *Job* hath no ſuch thought, much leſs did he ſpeak ſuch words, either againſt the juſtice, or wiſdom, or power of God; he charges no folly upon God, the only wiſe God, but gives him glory; ſaying, *Bleſſed be his Name, whatſoever he doth with me or mine.*

Learn from hence, firſt, what blaſphemy is, or what it is to curſe God:

> *To curſe God, is to charge God with folly, or with doing things fooliſhly and raſhly.*

For theſe expreſſions expound one another. Satan ſaid *Job* would curſe God; the holy Ghoſt ſaith, Job *hath not charged God fooliſhly*; therefore that is a definition of Gods own making, plainly declaring what it is to curſe God: Yet every ſpeech or act unbecoming the Majeſty, Wiſdom and Power of God, doth not preſently denominate a man a blaſphemer: There may be blaſphemy in what is ſpoken, and yet the perſon ſpeaking, not a blaſphemer. *Job* himſelf ſpake many things afterward unadviſedly in the heat of diſpute; but he blaſphemed not. Blaſphemy or curſing of God, properly taken, is ever joyned with an intent to caſt reproach upon God. As every one is not a liar, that telleth what is not true; but he that telleth an untruth, knowing it to be an untruth, with an intent to deceive and wrong others. So he that thinks or ſpeaks a thing unbecoming God, with an intent to reproach or ſlander God, and his wayes, this is blaſpheming indeed.

> Secondly, Obſerve, *Impatience under, and murmuring at the croſs which God layes upon us, is a charging of God with folly.*

Murmuring againſt God, queſtions the wiſdom of God. Complaints have a charge in them. We tax what is done, while we ſubmit not to what is done. When we lie under Gods hand quietly and ſilently, then we ſpeak the praiſe of God, then our carriage aſcribes all wiſdom, honour and glory unto him.

Thirdly, In that it is ſaid by way of excellency concerning *Job*, that *in all this* Job *ſinned not*, referring it to his behaviour under theſe afflictions; as if the holy Ghoſt had ſaid, it is matter of admiration that in this, in all this *Job* ſhould not ſin. Note from hence,

> That, *It is an high act, one of the higheſt acts of Grace, to be compoſed in thought and word under great afflictions.*

In all this Job *ſinned not*; as if he had ſaid, it had not been much for *Job*, not to ſin in other things; but in this affliction, in this diſtreſs, being ſo put to it, being thus tried, in all this not to ſin, is *Grace, almoſt to a miracle.*

> Laſtly, Note this, *What is well done by us, ſhall be ſure to receive a fair teſtimony from God.*

When *Job* had carried himſelf diſcreetly, and ſpoken diſcreetly, the Lord hides not this in darkneſs, he ſhuts it not up in ſilence; but proclaims the innocency and uprightneſs of his carriage in this preſent paſſage of his life, as he had done before, concerning the whole courſe of his life and converſation, *that he was perfect and upright.* The Apoſtle publiſheth, *Glory, and honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good*, Rom. 2. 10. They that carry themſelves well either in ſuffering, or in working for God, ſhall have glory, and honour, and peace from God. No man needs blow a trumpet in his own praiſe, when he hath done well; as the *Phariſees* did, *Mat.* 6. What we do well, the Lord himſelf will report to all the world: *In all this* Job *ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.*

And ſo we have done with this third part of the Chapter, and with this whole Chapter; which contains (as you have heard) thoſe three generals, the deſcription of *Job*'s properous eſtate, the deſcription of his trials and afflictions, and the deſcription of his carriage under thoſe afflictions. Now when he is come off from this aſſault without wound, without any touch of ſin, Satan perceiving himſelf defeated and fruſtrated in this attempt, will not yet give it over, he is reſtleſs, he will attempt him once more. We ſhall find him in the next Chapter, at the Aſſembly again, renewing his motion for a ſecond aſſault; that he may have leave to lay his ſiege nearer and cloſer to *Job*; preſuming, that though he had not prevailed at firſt, yet he ſhall at the ſecond charge; let me charge him but once more, and then ſee his fall, *he will curſe thee to thy face.*

CHAP. II. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Again there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord, and Satan came alſo among them to preſent himſelf before the Lord.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, from whence comeſt thou? and Satan anſwered the Lord and ſaid, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, *that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil? and ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe.*

And Satan anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, Behold he is in thine hand, but ſave his life.

AS the Prophet *Ezekiel*, when in viſion he had been ſhewed one abomination, was led forward to a ſecond, and a third, and a fourth, with, *Come ſee a greater abomination then this, or thoſe.* Or as the Angel proclaimeth in the *Revelation, One woe is paſt, and another woe is at hand.* The ſame may we ſay concerning this Hiſtory of *Job's* ſorrows. Having ſhewed you his firſt affliction in the former Chapter, I muſt now lead on your attentions, with, *Come behold a ſecond, a greater then that*; and having ſhewed you one woful day, I muſt now ſhew you a ſecond; **Again there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves.**

Ezek. 8.

This whole Chapter preſents us in the general with *Job's* ſecond tryal: About which we may obſerve theſe particulars.

1. The occaſion of it.
2. The cauſes of it.
3. The manner of it.
4. The conſequents of it.

1. The occaſion of it was Satans appearing at that heavenly Seſſion; and being there queſtioned about that former affliction of *Job*, he anſwers with ſlander, and deſireth that *Job* may be brought about to a ſecond trial.

2. The cauſes of this affliction (as of the firſt) are two.
   1. God. And
   2. Satan.

1. God permitting and limiting it.
2. Satan provoking and then inflicting it. Both are laid down in the words of the context now read, to the end of the ſixth verſe.

3. The manner of this affliction, was the ſtriking and ſmiting of *Job's* body with a ſore and noyſom diſeaſe, which you have contained in *ver.* 7, 8.

4. The Conſequents of this affliction, or what followed upon it, and thoſe are three.
   1. His Wives ſinful counſel, *ver.* 9. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw him thus ſmitten, *What* (ſaith ſhe) *doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? Curſe God and dye.* There's her counſel.
   2. His wiſe and holy reply, *ver.* 10.
   3. His Friends loving viſit, *ver.* 11, 12, 13. They hearing of the affliction of *Job*, came from a far Countrey, *to ſee him, and to comfort him.*

Theſe are the diſtinct parts of the whole Chapter.

Theſe ſix verſes decipher the occaſion and the cauſes of *Job's* affliction; Satan inciting and provoking the Lord; and the Lord permitting and limiting Satan.

The three firſt contain the ſame matter which we have opened and explained in the former Chapter, and they are almoſt word for word the ſame; therefore I ſhall not need to ſtay long upon them: Only I ſhall enquire a little further about two things.

Firſt, About the day of this great appearance. And ſecondly, About the perſons appearing, who are ſaid to be *the Sons of God*.

To the former of theſe, the Jewiſh Doctors contend much, That this was the firſt day in the recourſe or return of the year: intimating, if not contending, that the firſt day of every year was as Gods day of general *Audit*, in which he conveen'd or called together his Angels, to give him an account of all the paſſages and diſpatches of the year paſt, and to give them inſtructions what to do the year coming; which opinion I leave under the cenſure of a learned interpreter, as groſs and groundleſs.

Nimis craſſum eſt. Merc.

Others fix it upon the laſt day of the week, affirming that this was the Sabbath day. And that this was a Convention or Aſſembly of the Church on Earth for the ſolemn worſhip of God upon that day, which is here called, *A preſenting themſelves before the Lord*; in concurrence with which opinion, *the Sons of God* muſt needs be interpreted holy men. I find ſome affirming, that men are not called the Sons of God in all the old Teſtament, but the Angels only: And ſo they take that Text, *Gen.* 6. 2. *The Sons of God ſaw the daughters of men*, &c. for the Angels, either good or bad, who being taken with the beauty of thoſe daughters, aſſuming bodies, came into them, of whom came the Giants. A conceit as monſtrous as thoſe Giants, and fitter for a Fabuliſt then a Divine. On the other extream, * *Chryſoſtom* denies that the Angels are at all called the *Sons of God*.

Conveniens videtur ſuiſſe feſtum Sabbathi: quod tunc & commune erat omnium fidelium idemque celeberrimum. Bolduc.

* In his Homily on Gen.6.2.

We may walk ſafely in a middle way between theſe two. For both Angels and men are called the *Sons of God*: Why Angels are called the Sons of God hath been ſhewed, *Chap.* 1. *v.* 6. Men are called the Sons of God for two reaſons; either for their *power*, or *greatneſs*; ſo they, *Gen.*6.2. might be called the Sons of God, becauſe great and powerful on the earth. Or rather ſecondly, for their piety and holineſs, by which they reſemble God, and in which they ſerve God as a Son doth the Father. Indeed the Apoſtle affirms, that the priviledge of ſonſhip was brought in by the Incarnation of Chriſt, who is ſaid, *In the fulneſs of time to be made of a woman*, &c. *That we might receive the adoption of Sons*, Gal. 4. 5. But in Scripture a thing is ſpoken of as newly done, when it is more fully done, *Joh.* 7. 39. The Holy Ghoſt is ſaid not to be given at that time, becauſe he had not been ſo plentifully given. And the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks, as if the way into Heaven had been but then opened, becauſe it was then more clearly opened, *Heb.* 9. 8. So we are ſaid to receive the adoption of Sons, when Chriſt came in the fleſh, becauſe then our Son-ſhip was more apparent, though before it was as real.

So then according to this Interpretation the ſence of the words is, That upon the Sabbath day, when the Servants of God, the faithful of that age and place were met together to celebrate the publick worſhip of God, Satan, (the evil ſpirit) who is ever ready to oppoſe and reſiſt us, to interrupt and hinder us, when we appear before the Lord in holy duties) came alſo among them to preſent himſelf before the Lord.

I propoſe this as an opinion to which my own inclination is not ſtrong. Theſe words with the context (as was noted in the former Chapter) ſeeming to me, rather a repreſentation of Gods providence towards man, then a deſcription of mans worſhip tendered unto God.

Again there was a day.

It may be yet further enquired how much time paſſed between the firſt and this ſecond day of appearance. Some affirm, it was the immediate day after: others, the immediate Sabbath after. A third opinion defers it to the year after; Satan cunningly delaying the buſineſs all that while, to the intent he might more fully ſee how the former affliction wrought, what effects it had or would have upon *Job*, before he attempts a ſecond.

The Text reſolveth us in neither of theſe, but leaveth it indifferent and undetermined, ſaying only, *Again there was a day*. It is moſt probable that there was ſuch a diſtance of time between theſe two afflictions, as was competent to a full diſcovery of *Job*'s ſpirit, under the firſt. As when Chriſt was tempted, and had foyled Satan in that tempta on, it is said, *The devil departed from him for a ſeaſon*; he left him probably, to ſee what effects might follow upon the former temptation: So Satan having tempted *Job*, and tempted him by a temptation, though one in the general, yet with a four-fold aſſault, four ſeveral Meſſengers, making (as it were) four charges upon him, he leaveth him for a ſeaſon, and *again when there was a day*, he returns to renew the aſſault and battery. Luke 4.13.

I ſhall paſs over the two verſes following, in all that they contain, opened in the former Chapter. But in the latter end of the third verſe, there is ſomewhat added very material, where the Lord beſpeaks Satan concerning *Job*, *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil?* (This was the Character which God gave of him before in the former Chapter, but now he goeth on) *And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe.* This is ſuper-added to his teſtimony, his commendation is enlarged. *Job* (you ſee) hath gained in this conflict: he was deſcribed before as an holy man, now he is deſcribed as a tryed man, as an approved Souldier. *Job* hath obtained this honour in the former combat with Satan, a glorious addition to his character: As the patience and other graces of *Job* did increaſe, ſo did the teſtimony of God increaſe concerning him. Note from this addition only in the general thus much,

That ſuch as honour God, God will honour.

If we do any new or further ſervice for God, God will add ſome further honour and reſpect unto us. If we do, or ſay, or ſuffer any thing extraordinary for God, God will ſay, or do ſomewhat more then ordinary concerning us. The old character did not ſerve, when *Job* had done this new ſervice. *God will never conceal any of our graces, no nor the improvement of any of our graces.* If we ſpeak but a word for God, we ſhall hear of it again; God takes it and pens it down, as it is ſaid, *Mal.* 3.16. *They that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written*; God ſets it down preſently: So he recorded what *Job* had ſpoken, and gives it him in at the next meeting with Satan. *We can never looſe either by doing or ſuffering for God.* All ſhall be recompenced to the utmoſt farthing. As it is uſual with *Kings* and great men of the world, for great ſervices done them (eſpecially in wars and battels) to make additions to the titles of honour, to give ſome new motto's, or put ſome new devices in the Coat-armour of thoſe who ſerve them. Thus doth God here. *Job* having play'd the *man* (as we ſay) or rather the *Saint* in that former combat, he hath a new title of honour put into his ſtile: Now it is not only *Job*, *a man that feareth God and eſcheweth evil*; *but* Job *a man that holdeth faſt his integrity.*

Conſider the words themſelves,

And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity.

The words (**And ſtill**] or to this preſent time, may have a double reference. Firſt, barely to the time paſt: *Job* was not only a perfect and a ſound man in former times, but he is ſo ſtill, ſo at preſent. Or rather ſecondly, it refers to the affliction and loſſes he had ſuffered; as he was in former times, ſo he is at this time; as he was in proſperous times, ſo he is in troubleſome times: When the day was light and clear to him, *Job* was a perfect man; and now the day hath nothing but darkneſs and gloomineſs in it, *Job* is a perfect man ſtill; though wounded in his eſtate, and broken in his outward comforts, yet he is as ſound and whole in his ſpirit, as ever he was. Though Cattel, Servants, Children be dead and gone, beſpoil'd and loſt; yet grace is ſafe, and faith triumphs, *He ſtill holdeth faſt his integrity.*

Holdeth faſt.] This which we tranſlate by two words, is but one word in the Hebrew. Our language is not comprehenſive enough to expreſs the fulneſs of that word, in a word. *Job* doth not only hold his integrity, but he holdeth it faſt: the word implyes a ſtrength in holding, to hold a thing firmly. And more, the word hath a further Emphaſis in it; it ſignifieth not only to hold a thing by that degree of ſtrength, wherewith formerly we did hold it; but it doth import thus much, to wax ſtronger in the holding of it, to prevail or increaſe in ſtrength. As when *David* ſent *Joab* to number the people, *Joab* was unwilling, and ſaid to the King, *Now the Lord thy God add unto the people an hundred-fold; but why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing?* Then it follows, *Notwithſtanding the Kings word prevailed againſt* Joab. That which is there tranſlated, *And his word prevailed*, is the ſame with this we tranſlate here, *Holdeth faſt*; the Kings word did take a prevailing hold upon *Joab*, or held him faſt to the doing of the Kings command, though he would have got off from the buſineſs: So we may underſtand it here, *Still he prevaileth or waxeth ſtronger in his integrity.* מחזיק 2 Sam. 24. 4.

The ſame word is uſed by the Prophet *Malachi*, chap. 3. 13, 14. Where God convinceth thoſe proud ſpirits that puffed at his ſervice, *Your words* (ſaith he) *have been ſtout againſt me.* That which we tranſlate, *have been ſtout*, is the ſame with this in the Text of *Job*; *Your words have been ſtout*, that is, *they have grown ſtronger and ſtronger againſt me and my wayes*; you are confirm'd in wickedneſs; whereas your hearts ſhould have been brought down and humbled, you are increaſt and hardned in your obſtinacy and rebellion. Such is the *ſtrength* and meaning of the word in this place. *Job* by this oppoſition grows more ſtrong and ſtout in his integrity, he is ſo far from being daunted, that he is encourag'd; he is as he was, nay more then he was, he is increaſed, *Still he holdeth faſt his integrity.*

His integrity.] It is a word of the ſame root with that uſed, *Chap.* 1. *ver.* 1. *There was a man in the Land of* Uz, *and this man was perfect*; and theſe words illuſtrate and expound one another; to be a *perfect man*, is to be a *man of integrity*: there, he was a perfect man; now, he is a man *holding faſt* that perfection, namely, his integrity.

From this firſt branch obſerve,

Firſt, *That Satan in all his temptations plants his chiefeſt battery againſt ſincerity.*

Hence it is here expreſt, that *Job ſtill held faſt his integrity*, as if the Holy Ghoſt would intimate this unto us, that Satan pulled more at that, then at his eſtate. Satan did not care at all to pull *Job*'s Oxen from him, or his Sheep from him, or his Children from him, but to pull his grace from him; therefore it is ſaid, *Job* held that faſt: Without queſtion Satan aſſaulted that moſt, which *Job* held moſt; the thing that Satan aimed at, was not to make *Job* a poor man, but to make him a ſinful man; and he would never have troubled himſelf to rob him of his riches, but only in ſubordination to the robbing him of his graces: That was the booty Satan look'd for. Satan look'd at his cattel, only as pay for his Army of *Sabeans*, and *Chaldeans*: but he look'd upon his grace (if he could have got it from him) as pay for principalities and powers. As grace gotten or improv'd is the joy of Angels: So if grace could be ſtoln away or deſtroy'd, it would be the joy of Devils. This was Satans hope.

Secondly, Note this,

That whatſoever a godly man looſeth, he will be ſure to lay hold of his graces, he will hold ſpirituals, whatever becomes of temporals.

He will be ſure to take faſt hold of theſe, when all is going; when riches are going, when children are going, when friends are going, when liberty is going, yea when life is going too, then he layes faſt hold upon his integrity; and ſaith (as *Jacob* to the Angel) *I will not let thee go*; and he ſaith it without exception: for he knows he cannot be bleſſed if that go. *Integrity* is his *Benjamin*, all the Children he hath ſhall go, but this ſon of his right hand muſt not; For indeed his life is bound up in the life of grace: And if he part with that, he muſt *lye down with ſorrow in his grave*. Wherefore he is reſolved not to part with that, whatſoever he parts with. As it is with a man at Sea in a Shipwrack, when all is caſt over-board, the corn that feeds him, and the clothes that cover him, yet he ſwims to the ſhore, if he can, with his life in his hand. Or as it is with a valiant *Standard-bearer*, that carries the Banner in war, if he ſees all loſt, he will wrap the Banner about his body, and chuſe rather to dye in that as his winding ſheet, then let any man take it from him, or ſpoil him of it, he will *hold that faſt*, though he loſe his life for it. So doth *Job* here, ſo doth every one that is of *Job*'s heavenly temper and ſpiritual reſolution: in the greateſt ſtorm, in the hotteſt aſſault, he will wrap himſelf round about with his *integrity*, wind that about him, and will not let it go: Kill him if you will, deſtroy him if you will, he will never part with his integrity, though he part with life. Indeed there is nothing elſe can ſtand a man inſtead to any purpoſe; if that be loſt, all's loſt. A man that is in danger of drowning will lay hold upon any thing, upon a ſtraw, upon a ruſh, though it have no ſtrength to ſupport him: Men in danger will lay hold upon ſomewhat; they that are wiſe will lay hold upon the Rock, upon that which will do them good in an evil day; They will lay hold upon Chriſt, they will lay hold upon promiſes (in laying hold upon our integrity, all that is done) then they are ſure to live: for *Wiſdom* (that is Chriſt) *is a Tree of life to all that lay hold upon her*, Prov. 3. 18.

Thirdly, It is conſiderable, that this word is uſed for the laying hold upon our weapons, either to defend our ſelves or to offend and aſſault our Enemies, *Pſal.* 35. 2. *David* prays, *that God would take hold of Shield and Buckler, and ſtand up for his help.* We may note from hence,

That integrity is our arms.

Integrity is a Chriſtians weapon. *Job* layes hold upon his integrity as a Sword to wound his Enemy, and as a Shield and Buckler to ſave and defend himſelf.

Fourthly, From that expoſition of the word, that it ſignifieth not only *to be ſtrong*, but *to prevail*, it ſignifieth an *overcoming power*; *he doth hold faſt*, that is, *he prevaileth with his integrity*. We may Note,

That grace doth not only oppoſe, but conquer Satan and all his temptations.

He doth prevail in his integrity (ſo the Hebrew may be rendred in the letter.) Sometimes (you know) there is a war and oppoſition, when there is no conqueſt; a war may be carried on divers years in a Nation, or between Nations, when there is no abſolute victory on either ſide: as we ſee by woful and lamentable experience in *Germany*, where there hath been oppoſition, one ſide againſt another above theſe twenty years, and yet no ſide hath prevailed. But as grace makes war, ſo grace gets the better, grace gets the day, and will ſhortly make a final conqueſt; yea, there is not only a *conqueſt* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8.) *but through Chriſt we are more then Conquerors.*

In the fifth place, I told you that the word ſignifies, *to increaſe in ſtrength*; *he holdeth faſt his integrity, or he increaſeth in ſtrength in his integrity.* Note hence,

That, *True grace gains by oppoſition.*

True grace is increaſed the more it is aſſaulted. Satan comes a purpoſe to deſtroy *Job*'s graces, *Job* waxeth ſtronger in his graces. True grace will do ſo in whomſoever it is. Hypocrites (who have but a ſhew of grace, painted grace) fall off in times of trial, in times of temptation; that which only ſeemeth to be ſomewhat, cometh to nothing, but that which is ſomewhat, cometh to more.

Laſtly, Conſider the Emphaſis of the words. God ſpeaks of this in a kind of admiration; he putteth a greater Emphaſis upon this then upon the other part of *Job*'s character.

Verſe 3. **Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil? and ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity.**

God ſpeaks of it, as a matter of wonder, a rare thing. From this obſerve,

That to hold our integrity in evil times, is not only good, but admirable.

It is that which doth even (as we may ſo ſpeak) provoke God himſelf to an admiration. It is a truth, whether it be in regard of perſonal troubles, or national troubles; to hold faſt and keep cloſe to God in ſuch diſtreſſes is admirable. To continue good, while we ſuffer evil, is the height and crown of goodneſs: As it is that which putteth one of the greateſt aggravations upon the ſinfulneſs of men, that they will hold faſt their ſins in the middeſt of judgments. The Prophet *Amos*, with much elegancy of ſpeech and vehemency of ſpirit, urgeth this againſt the Jews, *Chap.* 4. *I have given you cleanneſs of teeth, yet have ye not returned unto me: I have with-holden the rain, yet have ye not returned unto me: I have ſmitten you with blaſting, yet have ye not returned unto me: I have ſent among you the peſtilence and the ſword, yet have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord.*

The Prophet *Jeremy* takes up the ſame argument, having before ſpoken of judgments ſent upon them, *Yet* (ſaith he) *they hold faſt deceit, and refuſe to return*, (Chap. 8. 5.) they held faſt deceit, though they were afflicted, that aggravated their ſinfulneſs. Now (I ſay) as it makes *ſin out of meaſure ſinful*, to hold it faſt when God afflicteth; ſo it makes *grace out of meaſure gracious*, putteth a wonderful ſplendor and glory upon it, if we hold faſt our grace, when troubles and afflictions meet us in the holding of it forth; and God will put an Emphaſis upon ſuch a one for grace, as he did upon *Ahaz* for his ſin, 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. *In the time of his diſtreſs did he treſpaſs yet more againſt the Lord; This is that King Ahaz*; that brand is put upon him. So there is an honour ſtamp'd on *Job* in this teſtimony, *That in the time of his diſtreſs, he did yet more good; This is that* Job: To ſerve, believe, and love God more in diſtreſs, this is integrity to a wonder, this draws the heart of God toward ſuch, & makes them truly glorious in the eyes of godly men.

That which follows in the text, doth yet more advance the honour of *Job* in this victory, *Still he holdeth faſt*, &c.

Though thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe.

ותסיתני

Though thou movedſt me.] The word here uſed *to move*, ſignifieth more then a bare motion, it carries in it a perſwaſion, and more then a bare perſwaſion, it carries in it a vehement inſtigation: As when a man doth perſwade a thing by arguments and ſtrong reaſons; that is the force of the word; as in that place, 1 *Kings* 21. 25. *There was none like* Ahab *which did ſell himſelf to work wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord, whom* Jezabel *his wife ſtirred up: ſtirred up* is the word in the Text, *thou movedſt me*; *Jezabel* moved *Ahab*, incited him, never gave him over, by arguments and reaſons, by this conſideration and that conſideration, to do wickedly in *Iſrael*: So here, Satan did, as it were, ply God with arguments and reaſons to inſtigate him againſt *Job*, *Thou didſt move me againſt him.* Satan is a cunning Orator, and knows how to handle a matter, that it may take with greateſt advantage.

Some may queſtion, how can this be? Will God be moved by Satan? Is not the Lord unchangeable? Have Satans words and arguments ſuch power with God, to move him to do a thing?

I anſwer it two wayes: We may clear it firſt thus; As the Saints and people of God in Prayer are ſaid to move God, and to prevail with God, they are ſaid to carry a buſineſs with God. Now you know what they do in Prayer, they do not only ſpread a Petition barely before God, but they ſtrengthen it with all the arguments they can, argument upon argument, pleading upon pleading; yet the Lord himſelf is not ſtirred, he is not changed at all by the Prayer of his people; it is not to be thought that the Lord upon the Prayers of his people, takes up any new thoughts, or puts on any new reſolutions to do this or that; for a mercy that is but a day old in regard of our Prayer obtaining it, is an eternity old in regard of God purpoſing it; therefore God is not changed at all; but he is ſaid to be moved to give or do, as or when we pray, becauſe he giveth and doth what he himſelf had purpoſed to give, when we ſhould pray: for as God from all eternity did purpoſe to give

Quanquam Deus à nullo poteſt moveri, ad aliquid volendum de novo, cum ſit immutabilis: tamen ſicut voluntate æterna producit aliquid in tempore, ita ab æterno voluit modum producendi.

give to his people ſuch and ſuch mercies, ſo he did purpoſe and decree, to give them when they prayed. Now then as it is in regard of his peoples prayer and ſeeking for mercy, they move God; but it is only the bringing forth of that which he had in his heart from all eternity to do for them: So here in this caſe, God had a purpoſe from all eternity to try *Job*, and likewiſe he did purpoſe the way and the means of it, that it ſhould be done upon the motion and inſtigation of Satan. For although God cannot be moved by any to do a thing, which before he intended not, he is unchangeable: yet as by his eternal will and counſel, he doth produce things in time; ſo likewiſe from eternity he did order and will the manner of their producing, he purpoſed to do good for his Church upon the ſupplications of his Servants, and ſometimes to afflict his Church or Servants at the inſtigation of Satan.

Secondly, This place [*thou movedſt me againſt him*] is to be underſtood by a figure, very frequent in the Scripture; God ſpeaking of himſelf after the manner of men; becauſe as men uſually when they do a thing, or are moved by others to do it, and by perſwaſions are ſometime prevailed with, to do that which they intended not an hour before. So God is ſaid to do a thing upon motion, though he intended it from eternity, often deſcending to expreſs himſelf by that which is common to men, though his manner of doing it be tranſcendent, infinitely beyond men,

From the force of this word ſo explained, *Thou movedſt me againſt him:* Obſerve,

That Satan is an earneſt and importunate ſolicitor againſt the People and Church of God.

He without ceaſing provokes God againſt them, he bends his wit, and ſtrains his language to the height, in pleading againſt them, to get them delivered up into his hands, or into the hands of his inſtruments.

And if Satan be thus zealous, ſo importunate a ſollicitor againſt the Saints; It may teach us to be as earneſt and zealous for the Saints. Satan doth not only move, but he moveth by arguments, he incites: It is not enough to pray by propoſing our deſires, but we muſt pray enforcing and preſſing our deſires; ſuch a holy unquietneſs of ſpirit, is expreſſed by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 62. 1. *For* Zions *ſake will I not hold my peace, and for* Jeruſalems *ſake will I not reſt*, &c. Such was that required of the *Watch-men ſet upon the walls of* Jeruſalem, *which ſhould never hold their peace day nor night: Ye that make mention of the Lord, or ye that are the Lords remembrancers, keep not ſilence, and give him no reſt till he eſtabliſh, and till he make* Jeruſalem *a praiſe in the earth, Iſa.* 62. *ver.* 6, 7. This duty is now doubled on us by the great afflictions and greater fears of *Sion*. When Chriſt was in his Agony, he prayed more earneſtly, *Luke* 22. 44. And when his Church is in an Agony, we ought to pray more earneſtly. At ſuch a time we muſt mingle more fire with our Prayers, we muſt pray more fervently. At ſuch a time we muſt mingle more water with our Prayers, we muſt pray more repentingly: We muſt with *Jacob*, (Hoſ. 12.) *weep and make ſupplication.* At ſuch a time we muſt mingle more faith with our Prayers, we muſt pray more believingly. In a word, at ſuch a time every Prayer muſt be a pleading, yea a wreſtling with God, a wreſtling with reſolution not to let him go until we have got a bleſſing, till we prevail with God to deſtroy his Churches Enemies, as Satan in the Text moved God to deſtroy *Job*, his *ſervant* and his *friend*. So it follows, *Thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him.*

לבלעו

To deſtroy him.] The word *Deſtroy* ſignifieth to *ſwallow up*, or to *devour:* You have it *Gen.* 41. 4. where it is ſaid, *That the ſeven lean ears, and ſeven lean kine, did devour or eat up the ſeven full ears, and the ſeven fat kine.* And *Exod.* 7. 12. the Text ſaith, *That* Moſes *his rod did ſwallow up the rods of the Magicians.* Pſal. 124 3. *Unleſs the Lord had been on our ſide, they had ſwallowed us up quick.* In all theſe places it is the ſame word we have here, *Thou movedſt me to deſtroy him.*

In the former Chapter, where Satan deſired God to touch *Job*, I ſhewed what kind of touches Satan deſired to lay upon the people of God; you ſee it now cleared by God himſelf, *Thou movedſt me to deſtroy him, to ſwallow him up.* Thy words were moderate and diminitive, do but touch him, but thy intentions were bloody and deſtructive, *Thou movedſt me to deſtroy him*, to make an end of him, that was thy meaning.

Without cauſe.] But will the Lord, the wiſe God, do any thing without cauſe? A wiſe, a prudent man will not do any thing without cauſe; though Satan may be ſo brutiſh and unreaſonable to move God to do a thing for which there is no cauſe, would the Lord be ſo perſwaded, by his motion, to do it without cauſe? The Text ſeemeth here to ſpeak ſo, *Thou movedſt me to deſtroy him without cauſe*; and God hearkened to his motion before, and gave him up all his eſtate, to do with it what he pleaſed.

חנם

Briefly to clear this. *Without cauſe.* It is the ſame original word uſed in the former Chapter, *Doth* Job *ſerve God for nought, or without cauſe* (as was then opened): ſo here, *Thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe, or thou movedſt me againſt him for nothing, or for nought.*

We may conſider this phraſe of ſpeech [*without cauſe*] three wayes. Firſt, in reference unto Satan. Secondly, in reference unto God. Thirdly, in reference unto *Job* himſelf: From each of theſe conſiderations light will ſhine into this point.

First, In reference unto Satan. God tells Satan, *Thou moveſt me againſt him without cauſe*; that is, *Job* never gave thee any cauſe why thou ſhouldeſt make ſuch a motion againſt him; *Job* had never wronged thee, or done thee any hurt, as *David* ſaith of his Enemies, *They are mine Enemies without cauſe, I was never injurious or unjuſt unto them.* So Satan was *Job*'s Enemy without cauſe; *Job* never gave him occaſion: Indeed the holineſs and goodneſs of *Job* was Satans grief, and Satans trouble; but for any other trouble or wrong *Job* never did him; therefore without cauſe, it was in reference unto Satan.

Secondly, In reference unto Satan, *without cauſe*; that is, *Thou didſt not alledge any ſufficient cauſe, or charge him with any particular crime; thou didſt only bring in a general ſuſpition againſt him; there was not ſo much as a common fame* (as you know it was a courſe to accuſe men upon common fame.) So ſaith God here, *It was nothing but a ſuſpition raiſed out of thine own brain* (as indeed thoſe common fames, that we heard of not long ſince, upon which many were accuſed, yea condemn'd, were only ſuſpitions born in the brains of thoſe men.) So here *Job* was charged meerly upon the ſuſpition of Satan; there was no crime directly alledged, nor any evil report in the world againſt him; cauſe was not ſhew'd legally; therefore *without cauſe thou movedſt me againſt him.*

Thirdly, In reference unto Satan, *without cauſe*; that is, *It now appeareth upon the tryal, that thou didſt move me againſt him without cauſe; that which thou didſt pretend to be the cauſe, was not found in* Job: *thou pretendeſt he was an hypocrite, and ſerved me for himſelf; now thou ſeeſt thy ſelf confuted; it appeareth he did ſerve me for nought, ſincerely, and not for his own ends: He is no painted ſepulcher, no rotten ſelf-ſeeker.*

If we conſider the words in the ſecond place with reference unto God, *Thou didſt move me againſt him without cauſe*, then we muſt take heed of thinking that God doth any thing without cauſe: No, the wiſe God doth every thing in number, weight and meaſure; he doth every thing upon great reaſon, upon the higheſt reaſon. God will not do the loweſt thing, but upon the height of reaſon; he doth the leaſt thing upon greater reaſon then the greateſt Politicians in the world do the greateſt. Therefore God had reaſon, important reaſon, to give *Job* up to be afflicted. He did it for the tryal of *Job*, he did it for the magnifying of his free grace, and the graces of his free Spirit, in his weak Creature; he did it that *Job* might be ſet up as an example of patience, he did it to diſcover the ſlander of the Devil; therefore he did it for ſtrong reaſons; it was not without cauſe, in reference unto God himſelf.

Laſtly, If we conſider it in reference unto *Job*, it was not abſolutely without cauſe neither; for though there was not that cauſe in him, which Satan pretended, namely, groſs hypocriſie: yet if the Lord ſhould ſearch and ſift him narrowly (as if he ſhould ſearch and ſift the holieſt of his Servants, his pure eyes, and holy nature, would find ſin enough in them, which might juſtifie him, or ſhew to his Juſtice ſufficient cauſe (take the ſin in it ſelf) not only to afflict them temporally, but to lay his hand upon them for ever.) Should God (I ſay) have tryed him throughly, and looked upon ſin in it ſelf, he might find cauſe to afflict him in regard of his ſin. So then abſolutely in reference unto *Job*, it was not without cauſe, God might have found cauſe in regard of his ſin.

But there were other cauſes in reference unto *Job*, it was to try *Job*, to exerciſe *Job*; it was that *Job* might have further honour after the tryal: There might have been a reaſon in ſin (if the Lord had marked iniquity.) And there were were many reaſons in reference to his good, why the Lord did leave him thus in the hands of Satan to be afflicted.

To wind it up: If we look upon Satan, then it was without that cauſe he pretended; it was without any direct charge, it was a meer ſuſpition, *Job* had never wronged him. But if we reſpect God, it is not without cauſe; God doth all things for weighty reaſons. And if we reſpect *Job*, God (poſſibly, yea eaſily) might have found a ſin in him (any ſin in it ſelf conſidered would do it) as the cauſe of his affliction: And he had other actual reaſons, in reference both to the being and improvement of his graces, why he left him thus in the hands of Satan.

Hence we may learn, Firſt (in that God ſaith, *Thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without cauſe*)

> *That pure, or rather impure malice, ſtirreth Satan againſt the people of God.*

Though he alwayes pretends ſomewhat in them, yet the cauſe is in himſelf. God now diſcovers he doth nothing but out of very malice, pure malice againſt his Servants. Satan hath two names in Scripture, noting his two ſpecial works, *Temptation and accuſation.* He ſollicits good men to do evil againſt God: Hence he hath his name, *the Tempter.* He ſollicits God to conceive evil of good men; and hence he hath his name, *the Slanderer*, or *Accuſer.*

ὁ πειράζων, διάβολος.

> Secondly, note, *That God doth afflict his people ſometimes without reſpect unto their ſins. Thou didſt move me againſt him without cauſe.*

It was not in regard of his hypocriſie, or of any thing thou didſt charge him with, why I did afflict him and lay my hand upon him. Though all men have alwayes ſin enough to be the meritorious cauſe, yet oftentimes ſin is not the moving cauſe of their afflictions. When the Diſciples put that queſtion to Chriſt concerning the blind man, *John* 9. 2. *Maſter, who did ſin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jeſus anſwered, neither hath this man ſinned nor his parents* (not as if either of them were without ſin, but to ſhew that they had not ſinned as to this purpoſe, *ſc.* their ſin was not the cauſe of this blindneſs, and therefore in the next words, he aſſigns the cauſe) But (*ſc.* he was born blind) *that the works of God ſhould be made manifeſt.* Afflictions are alwayes from ſin, but not alwayes for ſin. Neither are they at all for ſin (upon believers) by way of the leaſt ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God (that chaſtiſement Chriſt hath ſo fully born, (*Iſa.* 53.) that no Believers finger ſhall ever ake in that ſence. But they are often afflicted for ſin by way of purgation, or prevention.

> Thirdly, note, *That God will at the laſt give teſtimony for the clearing of the innocency of his Servants againſt all Satans malicious accuſations.*

God himſelf gives teſtimony here a ſecond time concerning *Job*, *Thou didſt move me againſt him without cauſe*; thou didſt move me to it, but it is clear, and I give my ſentence, there was no ſuch cauſe as thou didſt ſuggeſt againſt him, why I ſhould deſtroy him.

When the Lord had thus called Satan to account concerning *Job*, whether he had conſidered him both in his radical graces, and in this additional grace, the *holding faſt of his integrity*; Then Satan comes forth to anſwer this alſo. *Haſt thou* (ſaith God) *conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil? And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without cauſe?* Yes ſaith Satan in *ver.* 4. *And Satan anſwered the Lord and ſaid, Skin for ſkin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.*

Here is Satans anſwer, with his motion upon it.

By his anſwer he labours to blot and obſcure the glory which *Job* had gained in the former battel; and by his motion he labours to bring him about unto a ſecond tryal. As by his anſwer in the former Chapter (a little to compare him with himſelf) Satan ſlandered *Job's* actions, ſo by his anſwer here he ſlanders *Job's* ſufferings. There it was for ſomething that *Job* ſerved God, and here that which *Job* had ſuffered is nothing.

It is Satans trade (and he hath many children of the ſame occupation) to ſlander and to ſlight whatſoever the Servants of God, either do or ſuffer. Before he ſlandered *Job's* active obedience, now he ſlanders his paſſive obedience. What is this? (ſaith he) tuſh, *Skin for ſkin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life:* It is a ſlight trial that he hath paſt yet; what great matter is it if he *hold faſt his integrity*; who would not, who could not *hold faſt*, for any thing that hath been done to him yet? Let us try him again.

For the clearing of this we will examine the words.

Skin for ſkin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life.

We ſee here that malice is ſteeped in wit, Satan anſwereth by a Proverb, *Skin for ſkin*, &c. A proverbial, quick, ſharp ſpeech, the general ſence of which and Satans intendments are very clear.

The general ſence of this proverbial ſpeech is this;

> *That life is the moſt precious treaſure; that a man will part with any thing upon theſe terms, The ſaving of his life. That all a man ſuffers comes not very near him, while that is out of danger.*

Such is the general ſence; and Satans intendment in ſpeaking this, is as clear; namely, that as *Job* before had ſerved God for his wealth, ſo now he doth ſerve him for his breath; that as before *Job* kept cloſe to God, that he might enrich him; ſo now *Job* keeps cloſe to God, leſt he ſhould deſtroy him. He ſeemeth to hold faſt his *integrity* (ſo you tell me) but it is only that he may hold faſt his life; He ſerved you before for wealth, and now he ſerves you for breath. His fear of looſing that makes him humble himſelf, and give many thanks: ſearch him to the bottom, and you will find him ſtill a mercenary ſervant, holding his integrity that he may hold in with thee, and live. This is the general drift of Satan.

But to give the ſpecial meaning of his words doth ſomewhat trouble Interpreters, *Skin for ſkin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.*

Firſt [**Skin for ſkin**] Some interpret it thus, A man will venture the ſkin of one member to ſave the ſkin of another, which being cut off, or wounded, his life is more in danger. As for inſtance, if a blow come at a mans head, he will hold up his hand, or his naked arm, he will venture the ſkin of his hand to ſave his head: And the reaſon is, becauſe his life is more in danger, if he be wounded in his head, then in his hand. Here is *ſkin for ſkin*; he gives the ſkin of a member which is further off from the ſeat of life, to ſave the ſkin of that member which is ſo near the ſeat of life.

Secondly, By *ſkin* in the former place, ſome underſtand all the outward eſtate that *Job* had. It was uſual in thoſe times to expreſs all riches by the word *ſkin*, and the reaſon of it was this, becauſe (as was obſerved before) their ſubſtance was Cattel, and ſo from the ſkin of their Cattel, they did denominate their eſtates. Or as others, becauſe their money was made of ſkins, and ſo they did expreſs their wealth and riches under the word *ſkin*. Anſwerable to which cuſtom, the Latin word for houſhold-ſtuffe, or houſhold goods, is derived from that word which properly ſignifies a *ſkin*, becauſe either they were wont to wrap up their goods in ſkins, or becauſe they did put a great value upon ſkins, and ſo their whole outward perſonal eſtate was comprehended under that notion. Hence that common Proverb amongſt the Ancients, *Thou ſpendeſt out of another mans ſkin. To be liberal out of another mans eſtate, was called a being laviſh upon another mans ſkin.* And then ſkin in the ſecond place doth ſignifie the man himſelf, or the perſon of a man: the thing containing, or that which covereth, being put for the whole, by a Synechdoche; the ſkin for the whole man. And it is uſual in good Authors to put the ſkin for the whole man; as to look to the ſkin, is to look to the whole body. Take it thus, that ſkin in the firſt place is all outward

Æs alienum habere dicitur, & qui aureos debet, & qui corium forma publica percuſſum, quale apud Lacedæmonios fuit. Sen. *de* Ben. *l.* 5. *c.* 14.

Supellex à pelle.

Ludis de alieno corio (i.e.) ex alieno liberalē te præſtas.

Pelliculam curare jubes. Hor. *l.* 2. *Sat.* 5.

In cute curanda plus æquo operata juventus. Hor. *Ep.* 2. *l.* 1.

ward things; and skin in the ſecond, is taken for the skin that covereth the body; and ſo the ſence runs thus, *skin for skin*, &c. that is, *a man will give all his outward eſtate, to ſave the fleſh upon his back*; that is, *to ſave his life.* As if Satan had ſaid, this act of *Job*, which is ſo cried up, and made a matter ſo conſiderable, being examined, will be found as ordinary as the high-way. It being common, to a Proverb, for a man to part with all, that he may preſerve himſelf.

Zanchius.

There is a third Expoſition much laboured by a learned Interpreter; who, by skin, in the firſt place, underſtands not generally all his eſtate; but more eſpecially his apparel, his cloathing, which at the firſt were made of skins, and were uſed long after for cloathings, by Princes and great men, in divers Countries; from which the ſence of the Proverb is thus given, *skin for skin*, &c. A man will part with his cloaths, caſt them off willingly, eaſily, that he may ſave the skin of his body, ſave his life: And ſo he expounds it by that act of *Job* in the former Chapter, *ver.* 20. where it is ſaid, that Job *rent his mantle*, and caſt it off; as if Satan had alluded unto that; and ſaid, no marvel if *Job* humbled himſelf to the duſt, and renting his garment, caſt that away, when he heard all was taken from him: *Job* parted with the skin, his garment, that he might move thee to compaſſion, and ſo ſave his other skin, the garment which cloaths his fleſh; which he fear'd thou wouldſt rent by wounding, and ſo let out his trembling ſoul, his beloved life.

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בעד עור

A fourth gives this interpretation of the words, *skin for skin*, &c. The Original Prepoſition, which we tranſlate (*for*) is often in Scripture likewiſe tranſlated (*upon*) as, in 2 *Kings* 4. 5. The Widow went from *Eliſha*, *and ſhut the door upon her and upon her Son.* So in other places. Then the ſence is made out thus; *skin upon skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*; that is, if a man had never ſo many skins, if it could be ſuppoſed he had an hundred skins one upon another, he would let all be taken off to ſave his life. That place is expounded as a parallel, *John* 1. 16. where it is ſaid, that, *of Chriſts fulneſs we receive grace for grace*; that is, *grace upon grace*, or *abundance of grace, all the grace we have*; this grace and that grace, faith, and love, and patience, and humility; every grace, all grace you receive from Chriſt. Thus ſome illuſtrate theſe two places one by another. So Satan ſaith of *Job* here, *skin for skin*, that is, skin upon skin; a man will give all his skins, ſuppoſe he had many, he would part with all: or take skin for never ſo much of his outward eſtate, he will let all go to ſave his life.

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There is yet another interpretation given of this, *skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life*; take the words comparatively, we tranſlate it, *yea all he hath.* That copulative particle, in the Hebrew, is rendered ſometime *and*, ſometime *yea*, ſometime *ſo*; according to which laſt acception, the ſence ſtandeth thus: as a man will give skin for skin, ſo a man will part with all he hath for his life. We find ſome Scriptures wherein this particle is taken in the very ſame ſence: To give you inſtance, *Prov.* 25. 3. there the Hebrew reads it thus, *The heavens for height, the earth for depth, and the heart of Kings is unſearchable*: Now this is clear, that the ſenſe is comparative, and it is thus to be given, *as the heaven is unſearchable for height, and the earth for depth, ſo the heart of the King is unſearchable:* ſo *verſ.* 25. of the ſame Chapter, it is thus read out of the Original, word for word, *Cold water to a thirſty ſoul, and good news from a far Countrey*; now we tranſlate it according to the ſenſe, and make it a compariſon thus, *As cold water to a thirſty ſoul, ſo is good news from a far Countrey.* Thus alſo we interpret this place, and it carries a good ſence, *skin for skin, and all*, &c. As a man would give skin for skin, one outward thing for another (for they take skin in both places for outward things, for the goods of this life) as a man would give or barter away one commodity for another; ſo a man will give all outward things for his life: Life is more valuable to all outward things, then any one particular thing is to another. It is ordinary to a Proverb, among men in danger, to ſay, *ſpare my life, and take my goods.* How willingly doth the Mariner in a ſtorm, unlade his Ship, and caſt all his rich wares over-board, that he may preſerve that precious Jewel, his Life? As a godly man will give life upon life, a thouſand lives (if he had them) rather then loſe his ſoul; ſo a natural man will give skin upon skin, gold upon gold, treaſure upon treaſure, that he may ſave his life. Let life lie at the ſtake, and a man will give all things he hath in the world for it, and think he hath a good bargain.

Here are five Expoſitions you ſee offered; the two latter to me ſeem the moſt clear, howſoever every one of them hath a fair ſence in it; and ſo we are agreed upon the general; which is only to ſet forth the excellency and preciousneſs of life: there cannot be any miſcarriage in pitching upon either of theſe interpretations. I ſhall give you ſome Notes from hence.

Firſt, Obſerve what a bleſſing life is. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.*

Life is the moſt precious treaſure, the moſt excellent thing in Nature.

And let me tell you, life is the treaſure that is now ſo much digged for; there are many abroad that are digging for your precious lives. Conſider what lies at ſtake, and what will you give for the ſecuring or reducing of it? Have we not cauſe to ſay of ſome of our bloody brethren, as *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 32. 12. when his brother *Eſau* was marching towards him? *I fear him* (ſaith he) *leſt he will come and ſlay me, and the mother with the Children*: loſs of life was the thing *Jacob* feared. And *Heſters* ſpeech in her Petition to the King, imports that all other loſſes might have been born, but loſs of life, *chap.* 7. 3, 4. *Let my life* (ſaith ſhe) *be given at my petition, and my people at my requeſt; for we are ſold, I and my people to be deſtroyed, to be ſlain, and to periſh; but if we had been ſold for bond-men and for bond-women, I had held my tongue.* See how ſhe wrought for life, for her own life, and the life of her people, and thought liberty not worth the asking for, compared with life. *Moſes* made many demurs and excuſes; *I am not eloquent*, &c. when God gave him commiſſion to go into *Egypt*; but we hear of no delayes at all, when once God had ſaid, *Return into* Egypt, *for all the men are dead which ſought thy life*, Exod. 4. 19. God had not ſpoken thus, if he had not known there was ſuch a ſcruple in his mind, which would have galled him worſe in his travels to *Egypt*, then any pebble in his ſhoe.

Secondly, If life be the moſt precious thing, the richeſt Jewel in the world; then in the next place, learn to value your lives. You ſee how Satan values life here, out of an ill intent, only to extenuate and undervalue all the ſufferings of *Job*; he ſets his life at a very high rate, that he might make all his loſſes of no rate, not worth the ſpeaking of. Let our intent be good, and then it is good for us to value our lives high, and to ſell them at as dear a rate as we can, if we muſt ſell them. You know what *Solomon* ſaith in the perſon of a natural man, *A living Dog is better then a dead Lion*; Eccleſ. 9. 4. We read what is ſaid of the woman in the Goſpel, that had *ſpent all ſhe had on Phyſitians*: What was it for? Only to reſtore her health; which is a degree below life. Certainly if ſhe ſpent all that ſhe had, to obtain health, which is only the comfort of life, ſhall not we ſpend a part of that we have, to ſave our lives? As ſhips in danger to be wreck'd in a ſtorm, are often preſerved by caſting ſome of their rich lading into the Sea; ſo it is poſſible, yea probable, that the caſting away of ſome of your eſtates in this great ſtorm, may be a means to ſave both your ſhip and your lives; your eſtates kept, may ſink the Veſſel, and then you muſt ſink with it, and certainly die or ſwim for it; and hardly live. When *Eſau* (Gen. 25. 32.) was hungry, and could not obtain a meſs of pottage from his brother, but upon very hard terms, the ſale of his Birth-right; *Sell me thy Birth-right*, ſaith *Jacob*; a precious Jewel indeed, which *Eſau* ſhould have valued more then his life; he comes to his price on this ground, *Behold I am at the point to die, and what profit ſhall this Birth-right do to me?* He was *prophane Eſau* for ſaying ſo; that's the Apoſtles ſtile, *Heb.* 12. 16. It was prophaneneſs to prefer one morſel of meat before his Birth-right; becauſe the Birth-right was a ſpiritual priviledge as well as natural: but there is no meer natural bleſſing, but we may both in wiſdom and conſcience part with, to keep our lives, when we are ready to die; ye may ſay, what will this eſtate, theſe riches do us good? If that, your eſtates may be the price of your lives, ye have reaſon, and it is your duty to part with them willingly; give ſome, give all; for what will theſe riches do you good, when you are ready to die, or already dead?

Further, be ready to give more then your eſtates for your lives. Give ſome of your blood for your lives; that's more: *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* And which is yet more, give a limb for your lives. The whole is better then a part: And which is higheſt of all, venture your lives to ſave your lives. That which I intend, is only this; do not barter away your lives upon mean rates, upon low terms. If it comes to it (as we have great cauſe to fear it will, we ſee many have been put to it already) ſell your lives as dear as you can. Indeed there are none in ſo great danger to loſe their lives, as they that will not venture their lives. That of Chriſt, is true in this ſence alſo, he that will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it; ſuch ſaving tends to undoing; yea, it tends to death. And whoſoever will (venture to) loſe his life, ſhall (moſt probably) find it, *Matth.* 16.25. Let it not be ſaid that you died to ſave charges; let it not be ſaid, that you died to ſave your skins, or to ſave your blood; yea, let it not be ſaid, that you died to ſave your lives: I mean, that you feared to hazard your lives for the ſecuring of your lives. Give all that you have for your lives, venture life and all; your ſafety depends upon this hazard; by ſuch a noble liberality, you are in the faireſt way, not only to ſave all you have, but to gain more then you have.

Thirdly, If your lives be ſo much worth, what are your ſouls worth? What is this life, which is valued thus above all that a man hath? The Apoſtle *James* makes the queſtion, and gives the anſwer, *It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away*, Jam. 4. 14. A mans breath it is but in his noſtrils, it is gone preſently; yet you ſee, in a true value, all the world is below that. If you are to eſteem your lives ſo, at what price will you ſet your ſouls? To ſave your lives, and ſave your ſouls, are two things. A man may ſave his life, and yet loſe his ſoul; yea, many labour to ſave their lives in doing that, which will be the loſs of their ſouls, poor creatures. Therefore look to that, ſet a high rate indeed upon your immortal ſouls; when eſtates, and liberties, and lives are called for, count them all as traſh, that you may ſave your ſouls; hazard not your ſouls: If life be more worth then all the world, the ſoul is more worth then a thouſand lives; *What will it advantage a man to gain the world, and loſe his ſoul? Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* Mat.19.26. The truth is, a man ſhall not gain much to get the whole world, and loſe his life; that loſs is a loſs irreparable, irrecompenſible from the creature. *Nature teacheth us to prize our lives above the world, and Grace teacheth us to value our ſouls above our lives.* Therefore how unnatural are they that prefer a little profit before their lives? but O how ungracious are they, who prefer a little profit before their ſouls! Some will ſin (as we ſay) for ſix pence; ſelling their own ſouls (as thoſe falſe Prophets did the ſouls of their people) *for handfuls of Barlie, and for pieces of bread*, Ezek. 13. 19. And whereas a man ſhould give all for his life, they will give their ſouls for a thing of nought. Know therefore the worth of your ſouls. Jeſus Chriſt thought ſouls worth his life, and therefore died to ſave ſouls. How much then do our ſouls tranſcend our own lives? And if Chriſt laid down his life to ranſom ſouls, do you rather lay down a thouſand lives (if you had them) then endanger your ſouls, either by acting ſin, or by ſubmitting unto errour. In that caſe, let eſtate go, let liberty go, let life, let all go; for life hath not ſo much preheminence over all, as the ſoul hath over life.

Fourthly, If your lives are worth ſo much, then what is the Goſpel worth? If a man would give all for his life, what ſhould he give for his Religion, to maintain and uphold that in the purity and power of it? Life is a precious thing, a thing of great value; but when the Goſpel comes in competition, then life is a poor commodity; and our breath but a periſhing vapour. Such was the judgment of that great Apoſtle, *Acts* 20. 24. when the Holy Ghoſt *had witneſſed in every City, that bonds and afflictions did abide him*, in preaching the Goſpel; he thus reſolves, *But none of theſe things move me; neither count I my life dear unto my ſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I have received, to teſtifie the Goſpel of the grace of God.* His life came to a low rate in his eſteem; how cheap was life, when the Goſpel was ſpoken of? *I count not my life dear*, ſaith *Paul*: as all other outward things are mean and low, compared with life; ſo life it ſelf is mean, a low thing, in compariſon of the Goſpel. This life is but the life of the body, but the Goſpel is the life of the ſoul. Many men live, but no ſoul lives on this ſide, or without the Goſpel. Now if you will offer much to ſave your lives, will you not offer much more to ſave the Goſpel? In and about this, we may make the beſt improvement of Satans argument, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, ſhould he give for the Goſpel*, for Goſpel-Ordinances, for Goſpel-priviledges, for Goſpel-light. Where, or for what will you venture and bid high, if not for the precious Goſpel?

Laſtly, If life be worth all, then hereby we may take meaſure of the love and bounty of Chriſt to poor ſinners, who not only ſpent himſelf in all to his life, but ſpent life and all, that they might not periſh; the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was exceeding great towards us; *That though he was rich, yet for our ſakes he became poor*, 2 Cor. 8, 9. *That though he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he made himſelf of no reputation*, Phil. 2. 6, 7. But how ſuperabundant was his Grace towards us, that though he was the *Prince of life*, Acts 3. 15. *Yet became obedient unto death, even the death of the Croſs*, Phil. 2. 8. *that we might live.* If a man loves his life, ſo that he will give *skin for skin, and all that he hath*, to redeem it; then, O how did Chriſt love his Church, who gave not only his riches, and his reputation, but his life alſo for its redemption.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thée to thy face.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, behold, he is in thine hand, but ſave his life.

So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord, and ſmote Job with ſore boyles, from the ſole of his foot unto his crown.

And he took him a pot-sheard to ſcrape himſelf withal, and he ſate down among the aſhes.

IN this fifth Verſe, Satan goeth on, and makes a motion unto God (as we obſerved his method in the former Chapter) *But put forth thine hand, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* This is Satans motion. In the ſixth Verſe, we have a grant of this motion, bound up yet with a limitation, as it was in the former Chapter.

For the motion; **But put forth thine hand now, and touch,** &c. What it importeth, *to put forth the hand*, that was opened in the former Chapter, *ver.* 11. where we have the ſame expreſſion; therefore we ſhall not ſtay upon it here. Conſider now only that which is differing, a new object, upon which the hand muſt be put forth, and which Satan deſireth might now be touched. It is the laying of his hand, not upon his Cattel, or upon his Eſtate, or upon his Children, but upon his fleſh and his bone; **Touch his bone and his fleſh**; that is, afflict his body: The *Bone* and the *Fleſh* are the two chief parts, the material parts of the body; of them the whole Fabrick doth conſiſt: the bone, it is as the timber in this houſe; and the fleſh, it is as the lime and mortar filling it up. Touch this, ſaith Satan: And in that he ſaith, *touch his bone and his fleſh*, he intends and requires a deep and a ſore affliction upon his body; for if he had ſaid only thus, *touch his fleſh*, that had been an affliction upon his body: For we know often in Scripture, the *fleſh* is put for the whole body, and ſometimes for the whole man: therefore Satan is not ſatisfied with an expreſſion general, but he putteth it in direct and expreſs terms, *Touch his fleſh and his bone*; that is, touch him ſo, as the pain and diſtemper may ſink into his very bones, into his very marrow, touch him thus, and then you ſhall ſee what he will do.

The *Bone* it ſelf is a part without feeling; yet to touch the *bone*, imports the greateſt pain that can be felt. *Touch his bone and his fleſh*, and then, ſaith he,

He will curſe thée to thy face.

What it is to *curſe to the face*, hath been opened already, in the former Chapter, at *ver.* 11. and I muſt refer you thither for the ſence of this phraſe; only in a word, take it thus, *He will curſe thee to thy face*, is, as if Satan had ſaid thus; Though *Job* did bleſs thee when he had a full eſtate, and though he did bleſs thee when thou didſt empty him of his eſtate, and tookeſt all his goods from him; yet if thou do but touch his body, and afflict his bones, he will break forth into curſed language, both concerning thy perſon, and concerning thy ſervice.

I will only mind you further of that which is here ſecretly couched in this expreſſion, *Touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face:* here is a ſecret imprecation involved; he tacitly ſubjects himſelf to the curſe of God, if *Job* curſe not God. As if Satan ſhould have ſaid, If he do not *curſe thee to thy face,* then do ſo and ſo to me; and think thus and thus of me: If you would have the meaning of Satan from the language of his Children, you may take the plain *Engliſh* of it thus, *Touch but his bone and his fleſh,* and damn me, if he do not curſe thee; ſend me to Hell preſently. Satan indeed kept this curſed imprecation cloſe wrapt up in that form of ſpeaking; but now his Children ſpeak it out: If you would have Satans heart from the mouths of the ſons of *Belial,* a curſed and curſing generation amongſt us, the plain *Engliſh* of it is this, God damn me, ſend me to Hell preſently, if he curſe thee not. Satan we ſee, was more modeſt then theſe ſons of impudence and perdition; who openly imprecate upon, and devote themſelves unto the wrath of God almoſt every word; theſe do not only imitate, but exceed the Copy which Satan ſets them here, by bold blaſphemy and horrid execrations.

And he will curſe thee to thy face. We may from hence obſerve,

Firſt, Satan had tried in vain to make *Job* curſe God: Now he attempts a ſecond time. Note,

> That, *When Satan cannot prevail againſt us by one means, he doth not deſpair of prevailing by another.*

He gives not his cauſe over for loſt, becauſe he cannot carry it at firſt, he will try and try again. As it was with *Balak,* Numb. 23. when he ſent for *Balaam* to curſe the people, and ſaw the buſineſs did not proſper or ſucceed according to his malice, *Balaam could not curſe them*; he brought him to another place; *Come* (ſaith he) *I pray thee, I will bring thee to another place, peradventure it will pleaſe God, that thou maiſt curſe me them from thence*; though you could not do it in one place, you may in another. So Satan, if he cannot work his will one way, he will try a ſecond or a third. Num. 23. 27.

Satans unweariedneſs in a bad cauſe, when it ſucceeded not, reproves thoſe who are ſo ſoon weary of a good one, if it ſucceed not: Many are ready to give up, if one means will not do it; they caſt off hope, and ſay the cauſe is deſperate. If one, or two, or three, or many means we uſe, fail, we ought to try ſtill; never deſpair of the end, while the work is good, and the means are fair. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed* (ſaith the Preacher) *and in the evening with-hold not thy hand; for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, this or that.* I may add, with-hold not thy hand in the evening, though thou ſeeſt the morning-ſeed doth not proſper; this may have a bleſſing, though that had not. Eccl. 11.6.

> Secondly, Obſerve, *Satan trieth another way, and he trieth a way more probable and efficacious for his ends then the former.*

When a weaker will not do it, he provides ſtronger means. As God in puniſhing or chaſtening ſinners, when a leſſer judgment will not humble them, he ſends a greater; God cometh not only with another, but with ſorer judgments; *If he will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will puniſh you ſeven times more for your ſins.* So Satan, when by one temptation he cannot overcome, prepares not only another, but a ſtronger; he aſſaults them more and more: he not only muſters new forces, but more compleat, to foil the ſoul. This ſhould teach us, when we cannot ſubdue a corruption in our own hearts by one means, then to ſeek a better: And when by one prayer we cannot obtain a bleſſing, then to pray again, and to pray better; to pray with more life, with more faith, with more humility; then mix more fire with prayer, more zeal and fervency of ſpirit; mix more water with prayer, as *Jacob,* Hoſ. 12. wept and made ſupplication; above all, mix more of Chriſt in prayer, go out in his name and ſtrength. When *Balaks* firſt meſſengers could not obtain *Balaam* to come with them, *Balak* was not diſcouraged or put off; but (ſaith the Text) *Balak ſent yet again Princes, more, and more honourable, Numb.* 22. 15. Let not us be diſcouraged if our firſt prayers (which are our Meſſengers to God) are not anſwered; but let us ſend more and more honourable, more ſtrong cries, more ſpiritual deſires, which may take upon the heart of God. Why ſhould Satan do more againſt us, then we will do for our ſelves? Lev. 26.

Thirdly, Note this for our own caution,

> That, *We muſt not only expect continued or renewed afflictions and aſſaults from Satan, but we muſt expect greater and greater afflictions and aſſaults from Satan.*

He hath ſome aſſaults that are but as Footmen, he will bring out his Horſemen at the next bout; *And if having run with Footmen, they have wearied thee, how wilt thou contend with Horſes?* Jer. 12. 5. Be ready then, not only to run with the Foot, but to contend with Horſes; prepare your ſelves for other, for more violent charges then you ever felt. Satan will, if he can, lay a cloſer ſiege to thy ſoul, then ever he hath done: As that one evil Spirit returned into the perſon out of whom he was gone, *Luke* 11. 24. *with ſeven Devils worſe then himſelf,* ſo he often returns with ſeven temptations, worſer, and ſtronger then before.

Fourthly, Obſerve what Satan picks out to be the matter of this ſecond and ſtronger temptation; it is, to pinch *Job* in his fleſh, to pinch his body. Note from hence,

> That, *The pain of the body is very powerful to diſquiet and trouble the mind.*

Satan is very confident to trouble and vex the mind of *Job,* by caſting darts and diſeaſes into his body. Phyſitians have a Rule, *That the manners of the mind follow the temper of the body*; and it is a more certain Rule, *That the mind is much carried according to the diſtemper of the body*; when the body is diſtempered, the mind is ſeldom at reſt; the body and ſoul are ſuch near neighbours, that they cannot but ſympathize in each others ſufferings. Some interpret that place of the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 4. 13, 14. concerning the weakneſs and ſickneſs of his body; *You know* (ſaith he) *how through infirmity of the fleſh I preached the Goſpel.* We may ſafely joyn it with thoſe other troubles, afflictions and reproaches which he endured, and were ſo great a diſadvantage to his acceptance in the world. So the meaning is, that though his body was infirm, though he had many weakneſſes upon him, yet he preached the Goſpel. And then it follows in the next verſe, *My temptation which was in the fleſh you deſpiſed not*: obſerve, he calleth his bodily infirmity a temptation; the afflictions of the body, are great temptations to the ſoul. It is very conſiderable to this purpoſe, what the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, when he ſpeaks of the ſeveral conditions of the Saints, and their duties in them, *chap.* 5. 13, 14. *Is any man afflicted? let him pray;* (he ſpeaks that in general) *Is any man merry? let him ſing Pſalms. Is any man ſick?* Is he pained by ſickneſs in his body? What ſhall he do then? He doth not ſay, *Is any man ſick? let him pray*; but, *Is any man ſick? let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him:* As if he ſhould ſay, a ſick man is very unfit to pray himſelf, though for himſelf; he hath need to call others to pray with him, and for him; he hath enough to do, to wreſtle with his pain, and conflict with that affliction: In other afflictions, let him pray; but if he be ſick, let him ſend for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him. A diſeaſed body unfits the mind for holy duties. The prayer of ſick *Hezekiah* is called *chattering*: *Like a Crane or Swallow, ſo did I chatter,* Iſa. 33. It was rather chattering then praying; ſuch a diſquietneſs and uncompoſedneſs was upon his ſpirit, through, or by the infirmity of his fleſh. Pain is a piercing ſhaft in Satans quiver of temptations: Though *the ſpirit of a man will ſuſtain his infirmity,* yet oftentimes, a wound in the body, wounds the ſoul; and the diſeaſes of the fleſh, make the ſoul ſick: *A wounded ſpirit no man can bear*; and a wound in the body, is a burden too heavy for many men. Pro. 18. 14.

And if it be ſo, then the pain and the weakneſs of the body is no advantage to repentance and returning unto God. How pitifully are they miſtaken, who put off repentance till their bodies be in pain, till they are ſick and weak; they do it upon this ground, becauſe when they are in pain, they think they ſhall repent with more eaſe. Obſerve, if Satan thinks to have ſuch an advantage upon a holy man, as to make him blaſpheme when he is in pain, doſt thou think pain will be an advantage to thy repentance? It is ſaid, that at the *pouring out of the fourth Vial,* Rev. 16.9. when God did ſmite the inhabitants of the earth, and ſcorched them with great heat, that *they blaſphemed the Name of God* (they did that which Satan preſumed *Job* would do) *and they repented not to give him glory.* It is a woful thing to put off repentance to a pained body: pain in its own nature fits us rather to blaſpheme and turn from God, then to return to him. Never think to have help for the cure of your ſouls, by the diſeaſes of your bodies: uſually we find, that either ſick perſons repent not, or theirs is but a ſickly repentance. At the moſt, pain can but reſtrain your luſts, it can never heal them. The actings of ſome ſins are quickened by diſeaſes: At the moſt, a diſeaſe can but abate the acts of ſin, it can never deſtroy the life of it. Death it ſelf cannot kill ſin: The ſins of wicked men live when they are dead: the grave cannot conſume them, no nor the fire of Hell waſt their ſtrength: the ſins of unbelievers ſhall remain, not only in their guilt, but in their power to all eternity. So much of Satans motion. *But put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.*

Verſe 6. **And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, Behold, he is in thy hand, but ſave his life.**

Here we have the Lords grant unto that motion of Satan, **He is in thy hand, but ſave his life:** Thou mayeſt do with his bone and his fleſh what thou wilt, *He is in thine hand.* We have opened what it is to have a thing put into the hand, in the former Chapter, where the ſame expreſſion is uſed, therefore I ſhall paſs thoſe words here. Note only this, that the Lord ſaith here, *He is in thy hand,* to prevent Satans cavil: as if he had ſaid, Thou moveſt me to touch his bone and his fleſh; well, leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſay, that I have dealt too gently with him, and have ſmitten him with favour, I will put the rod or ſtaffe into thine hand, do thou with his bone and his fleſh what thou canſt, ſpare him not. We know the Lord is able to ſtrike ſtronger ſtrokes, and give deeper wounds infinitely then Satan can, if he pleaſeth; yet, the love of God to his children, ſtops his hand and breaks the blow: He corrects in judgment, and debates in meaſure, *Iſa.* 27.8. when he ſtrikes his Children, he ſtrikes them as Children, gently: Thus (2 *Sam.* 7.14.) ſpeaking of *David's* family, *If he commit iniquity* (ſaith God) *I will chaſten him with the rod of men;* the word there uſed is *Enoſh*, which ſignifies a weak man; I will chaſten him with the rod of a weak man, of one that hath but a weak arm or hand, the hand of a ſickly frail man: A weak, a ſickly man cannot ſtrike very hard. Thus ſaith God, *I will chaſten thy children,* if they commit iniquity: they ſhall rather ſee my care, then feel my power in their corrections. Now (I ſay) leſt Satan ſhould pretend partiality, God puts *Job* into Satans hand, and gives him liberty to lay on as hard as his hand, acted with utmoſt malice, could ſmite him; thou haſt liberty to ſmite him *into the very valley of the ſhadow of death*; to bring him ſo near death, that he may look into the graves mouth, but no further.

Save his life.] Here is Satans Chain, the limitation or reſtraint of his power. When God puts any of his Servants into Satans hand, he keeps Satan in his own hand. And as all the Elect are in Gods hand, to keep them from taking hurt, ſo the Devil is in Gods hand, to keep him from doing hurt to his Elect. *Save his life.*

נפש

The word *Nepheſh* here uſed, ſignifieth properly the ſoul; and the ſoul is in Scripture often put for the life; becauſe the ſoul is the ſpring, the fountain of life; life is derived or diffuſed into the body from or by the ſoul: and as ſoon as the ſoul is parted from the body, life departs. Hence both this Hebrew word, and the Greek word ψύχη, have their names from breathing or reſpiring: For life goes out when breath goes out; when we ceaſe breathing, we ceaſe living. Our life is but a blaſt, a breath; *The Lord formed man out of the duſt of the earth, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and he became a living ſoul,* Gen. 2.7. This is that vital ſpirit by which all quick things move; therefore Beaſts, Birds, Fiſh, and creeping Things, are called living ſouls, *Gen.* 1.20,24. And this life is called the blood, becauſe it is contained or carried in the blood, *Gen.* 9.4. Further, it is very obſervable, that the Hebrews call the body ſeparated from the ſoul, or a dead corps, *Nepheſh, Num.* 5.2. c.9.10. c.19.11. *Hag.* 2.14. Though the life be quite gone out, departed from the carkaſs or body of a dead man, yet that dead body is called life or ſoul; to note that it ſhall live again, and that the ſoul ſhall return unto it: The myſtery of the Reſurrection from death was implyed in the name of the dead. We find alſo that the Heathens called a dead body, a ſoul; poſſibly from ſome glimpſe of the Reſurrection. We lay up a ſoul in the grave ſaith the Poet. *Animampue ſepulchro condimus.*

Virg. Æn. 3

But how is this work put into Satans hand, *The ſaving of his life?* What is Satan become a Saviour? what ſalvation can we expect from him, whoſe name is *Apollyon*, and *Abaddon*, Rev. 9.11. both which ſignifie a *Deſtroyer.* Shall we ſend to the Wolf to ſave the Sheep? or to the Vulture to ſave the Dove? Deſtruction is the delight of Satan, and it is his way; as he hath no hope to be ſaved himſelf eternally, ſo no will to ſave others temporally.

Obſerve, *That here to ſave life, notes only a ſparing from death; not a delivering from deſtruction, but a forbearing to deſtroy.* Satan ſaved his life negatively, that is, he did not take it away: he cannot ſave poſitively, or reſtore that which was ready to periſh; he doth not ſave as a deliverer, but as a murtherer, who would kill his brother, but cannot. He ſaves, not for want of will, but for want of power: when he is forced to ſpare, his nature is to devour. This devouring Lyon hunts for the pretious life, even when God ſaith, *Save his life.*

Servat animam quia eam non perdit. Druſ.

It may be queſtioned here, Why Satan (for that is implyed) deſired ſo to deſtroy the life of *Job?* God would never have limited and chained him up, but that Satan had a mind to ſuck his blood, or afflict him unto death.

Theſe two Reaſons may be given, why Satan would have his life.

The one might be this; Becauſe it was a thing doubtful with him (though he bragged much of it) whether he ſhould attain his end or no, to make *Job* curſe God; when therefore he ſaw he could not overcome his ſpiritual life, it would have been ſome revenge to him to deſtroy his natural life. As ſome wicked ones, his Agents, when by all their treats or flatteries they cannot make a man ſin, which is to deſtroy his ſpiritual life, their revenge breaks forth againſt his natural life, to deſtroy that: This is the method of perſecution, firſt to attempt the death of the ſoul, by drawing or terrifying unto ſin; and if they fail of that, then death is inflicted on the body.

Or again in the ſecond place, he being doubtful in himſelf (though he made no doubt in words) whether his plot would be ſucceſsful, to make *Job* curſe God; he (I ſay) doubting this deſign might not draw him to ſin, reſolved to take away his life, that ſo *Job* might never have told tales of his victory, or have reported his conqueſt to the world. At leaſt by his death he might obſcure the buſineſs, and bury it with ſome ſlander: ſaying that *Job* dyed with diſcontent and grief; that he blaſphemed God when he dyed, that he wiſhed for death, and could not hold out any longer. Much like that device of ſome Jeſuits, who have blown it abroad, that our moſt zealous oppoſers of Romiſh errors, whom they could never move, either by writing or diſputing, while they lived, have yet recanted all when they dyed. Wherefore leſt Satan ſhould have drawn a curtain over the glory of *Job's* victory, by aſperſing him after his death, the Lord ſaith, *Save his life, Job* ſhall ſurvive his troubles, that matters may come to light, and a true report be made and left upon record both of thy implacable malice and enmity, and of his invincible patience and ſincerity.

And this may lead us yet further to conſider, why God was ſo careful of that precious part, his life.

For ſome may ſay,

Had it not been glory to God, and honour to *Job*, (like that of Martyrdom) if he had dyed under the hand of Satan, holding faſt his own integrity, bleſſing God even unto death?

I grant this, but yet God knew that the ſaving of his life would be more advantagious both to himſelf and his *Job*, for thoſe ends: wherefore he ſaith, *Save his life*, deſtroy him not.

Firſt thus, God intended to make *Job* a *Monument of mercy*, as well as a *Monument of ſuffering*; he intended to ſet him up to all the world, as one, in whom they might behold the goodneſs of God in raiſing up, mixt with his wiſdom in caſting down; that men might learn hope from *Job*, as well as patience from *Job*. Therefore ſaith God, *Save his life*, I have ſomewhat elſe to do with him; I will raiſe him up again, and in him an everlaſting Monument both of his patience in ſuffering, and of my own power in reſtoring. Indeed if he had dyed in the conflict, and left his bones in the field, he had been a wonderful example of conſtancy: but he had not been ſuch an example of mercy, if his life had not been ſaved.

There may be this in it too, *Save his life*, ſaith God, I will have him preſerved in this combat, his courage and carriage in it is my delight. God loveth to ſee his people holding out, tugging and continuing in ſuch aſſaults and temptations. If any thing in the world gives delight to God, this is the thing that delighteth him. The Heathen thought this the ſport of their Gods: *Seneca*, in his Book of Providence, ſpeaking of *Cato*, and other gallant *Roman ſpirits*, ſaith, the gods delighted to look upon them in their conflicts with Fortune. To ſee them wraſtle with ſome great calamity, with ſome great danger, was ſuch a ſpectacle, as would draw off *Jupiter* from his greateſt buſineſs. It is a moſt certain truth, that the moſt true God doth love and delight to ſee his Children wraſtling with ſome great calamity: to ſee a poor man, who is but fleſh and blood, wraſtling with principalities and powers, with the Devil and powers of darkneſs; this is a ſight God himſelf (as we may ſo ſpeak) rejoyceth in. When *Abraham* had finiſhed that great combat about ſacrificing his Son, he calleth the place *Jehovah-jireh*, the Lord will ſee, or the Lord doth ſee, the Lord doth behold; as if that had been a ſight which God himſelf came down to look upon. As when ſome great man or ſtrange ſhew paſſeth by, we go out to ſee it; ſo God cometh down upon Mount *Moriah* to ſee a ſight: And what was it? To ſee *Abraham* in that great temptation aſſaulted and overcoming. Here was a ſpectacle for the great *Jehovah*, and therefore he calls the place *Jehovah-jireh*, the Lord hath ſeen. I doubt not but this place alſo of *Job's* tryal, might have born the ſame name. As the Lord will be ſeen in the mount of our afflictions to provide for us, ſo he will ſee us in the mount of our afflictions, to pleaſe himſelf. The Pſalmiſt deſcribeth *God looking down from Heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand, that did ſeek God*, Pſal. 53. 2. Surely then if any do ſeek God, much more if they ſuffer from him, or for him, in a holy manner, he will look down from Heaven to ſee them.

Spectant dii magnos viros cum calamitate aliqua colluctantes. Ecce ſpectaculum, ad quod reſpiciat operi ſuo intentus Deus. Sen. *de* Cat. *c.*2. *de* Prov.

Gen. 22. 14.

Thirdly, I will note that as another ground why God would have his life ſpared, becauſe he had much uſe of him, when he was in that condition, full of ſores and ſcabs.

> *A godly man is never in ſuch an eſtate, but God hath ſome uſe of his life.*

Therefore ſaith God, *Save his life*, though he be full of ſores, or rather from the crown of the head to the ſole of the foot one continued ſore: though he be a moſt lamentable creature, and cannot wag hand or foot in any ſervice of man, yet ſpare his life, for he may thus ſtand me in very great ſtead, and do me more ſervice then many thouſands, who (as we ſpeak) are ſound wind and limb, and have not one blemiſh upon the whole body. *A godly perſon is ever uſeful to God*; though he cannot ſtir a limb, yet his life may be uſeful to God: whereas a wicked man, though ſtrong and healthy, though furniſh'd with outward comforts and accommodations, is altogether unſerviceable; he will not do God a ſtroke of work, though he have received great pay and wages aforehand. A godly man will ſerve God in and by his poverty, in and by his ſickneſs, when diſeaſed, when diſtreſſed, when nothing is to be ſeen upon him but ſcabs and boils. Grace will work through all the defects and decayes of nature. And when the life of nature can ſcarce move one member of the outward man upon the earth, the life of grace moves all the members of the inward man toward Heaven. *Though the outward man periſh, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. 4. 16.

Laſtly, God ſaved his life, as a puniſhment and vexation upon Satan. The *Talmudiſts* are vouched to affirm, that it was not ſo grievous to *Job* to be afflicted in his body, as it was to Satan when God reſtrained him from deſtroying his life. As if a man ſhould be permitted to crack the glaſs, but he muſt not ſpill the wine. That his life muſt be kept whole in him, was Satans wound. It is a torture to malice not to do the utmoſt miſchief. So much for the clearing of theſe words, *Behold he is in thine hand, but ſave his life.*

From the Lords grant, obſerve,

> Firſt, *That God doth oftentimes give up the bodies of his faithful Servants, to be abuſed and tormented by Satan and his inſtruments.*

He is in thine hand, thou mayeſt do with him what thou wilt, on this ſide death. Touch his fleſh and his bone, or touch his fleſh to the bone; ſtrike as hard, wound as deep as thou canſt. It is ſaid, *Revel.* 2. 10. *That Satan ſhould caſt ſome of them*, that is, of the Servants of God, *into priſon*. God gave up their bodies to Irons and Fetters, to the Stocks and Shackles: He permits thoſe bodies, which are Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, to be thruſt into dungeons and the chambers of death.

Therefore do not think it ſtrange to ſee the bodies of the Children of God put into cruel and bloody hands; though they are veſſels of honour, and Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, yet God may give up thoſe bodies to be defiled and polluted with the outrages of the moſt abominable wretches. Conſider what the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Jewiſh Martyrs, *Heb.* 11. How were their bodies abuſed and mangled? *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were ſlain with the ſword: they wandered about in ſheep ſkins and goat ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented: of whom the world was not worthy.* Their bodies had not a houſe to dwell in, nor garments to put on, in whoſe ſouls God himſelf dwelt, and had put upon them the garment of Salvation. Who is able to expreſs, yea, to conceive what ſtrange inventions of cruelties have been brought into the world to vex and torment the bodies of the Saints? The ſtories of the Primitive times are full: but the Fathers of the Romiſh Inquiſition have exceeded them all. Satan here invents a ſtrange diſeaſe as an engine to torture *Job's* body, in that he mixt the rack and the wheel, the ſword and the ſaw, the fiery gridiron and the boyling oyl: The pain of a thouſand deaths was heighten'd in that malignant deſtemper.

Secondly, *He is in thine hand, but ſave his life*, ſaith God. The matter wherein Satan is limited is life; thence note,

> *That life and death are in the hand of God.*

It is truth, that all we have is in the hand of God; but God keeps our life in his hand laſt of all, and he hath that in his hand in a ſpecial manner. So *David* expreſſes it, *Thou holdeſt my ſoul in life*; though the ſoul continue, life may not continue; there is the ſoul, when there is not life; life is that which is the union of ſoul and body; *Thou holdeſt my ſoul in life*; that is, thou holdeſt ſoul and body together. So *Daniel* deſcribes God to *Belſhazzar*, Dan. 5. 23. *The God in whoſe hand thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy wayes, haſt thou not glorified.* The breath of Princes is in the hand of God; and the ſame hand holds the breath of the meaneſt Subject: This may be matter of comfort to us in ſuch times as theſe are, times of danger, and times of death; when the hand of man is lifted up to take thy life, remember thy life is held in the hand of God. And as God ſaid here to Satan, Afflict the body of *Job*, but ſave his life; ſo God ſaith ſtill to bloody wretches, who are as the limbs of Satan, The bodies of ſuch and ſuch are in your hands, the eſtates of ſuch and ſuch are in your hands, but ſave their lives. The life of a man is never at the mercy of a creature; though it be a common ſpeech of men, when they have a man under them, *Now I have you at my mercy.* Though ſome brag as *Laban* did to *Jacob*, *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt*; yet God often checks them (as he did *Laban*) from ſo much as ſpeaking hurt, *Gen.* 31. 29. *but the God of your Father ſpake unto me yeſter-night, ſaying, Take thou heed, that thou ſpeak not to* Jacob *either good or bad.* Creatures, though full of love, cannot ſpeak good; and though full of malice, they cannot ſpeak bad. If God forbid: then much leſs can they do us hurt, and leaſt of all hurt

Pſal. 66. 9.

hurt our lives, if God with-hold. *David* triumphs in his intereſt in ſuch a God, *Pſal.* 68. 20. *Our God is the God of ſalvation* (that is, of deliverance, of outward deliverance (for that is eſpecially there meant) *and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death*, or the goings out from death, that is, God hath all wayes that lead out from death in his own keeping, he keepeth the key of the door, that lets us out from death; when a man is in the valley of the ſhadow of death, where ſhall he iſſue out? where ſhall he have a paſſage? No where, ſaith man, he ſhall not eſcape; but God keepeth all the paſſages; when men think they have ſhut us up in the jaws of death, he can open them, and deliver us, *To him belong the iſſues from death*: It is an alluſion to one that keepeth a paſſage or a door: And God is a faithful keeper, and a friendly keeper, who will open the door for the eſcape of his people, when they cry unto him. It is expreſt ſo in *Pſal.* 141. 7. *Our bones are ſcattered at the graves mouth: as when one cutteth or cleaveth wood upon the earth*, that is, we are even ready to die, to be put into the grave. What then? *But mine eyes are upon thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my truſt, leave not my ſoul deſtitute. Keep me from the ſnare which they have laid for me. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilſt I withall eſcape*; that is, make me a way to eſcape: As if he ſhould ſay, *Thou haſt the key of the gate*, by which we may iſſue out from death: Lord, I look that thou ſhouldeſt now open it for me.

Let it comfort us that God hath our lives, and the iſſues from death in his own hand. When Satan thought he had *Job* faſt enough lockt up in the valley of the ſhadow of death, God kept him ſafe, he opened a door and let him out.

Thirdly note, *That as God hath life in his hand in a ſpecial manner, ſo he takes ſpecial care of the lives of his people.*

Save his life (ſaith God) I will look to that: *Pſal.* 116. 15. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* Precious is their death; not that death it ſelf is precious; a privation hath no preciouſneſs in it: but their life is precious, therefore he will have a great price for their death; God puts off the life of a Saint at a dear rate. Woe unto thoſe who violently and unjuſtly take away that which is ſo precious in the eſteem of God; at one time or other he will make them pay dear for ſuch Jewels.

Fourthly, obſerve, *It is mercy to have our lives, though we loſe all things elſe.*

You ſee here God ſaith concerning *Job*, *Save his life*; I have given thee his eſtate, thou haſt ſpoiled that; now I will leave his body in thine hand, wound that, afflict that, but ſave his life. Here was mercy. Therefore it was a ſpecial promiſe and priviledge made and granted to ſome in times of great publick ſufferings and common calamities, as to *Ebed-melech* the Ethiopian, *Jer.* 39. 8. and to *Baruch* the Scribe, *Jer.* 45. 5. *That their lives ſhould be given to them for a prey*; as if God had ſaid, It is no ordinary favour, in times of common danger, to have your lives for a prey; you complain for this loſs and that loſs, and you have cauſe too, but think withall that you have your lives. And why is it ſaid, that they ſhould have their lives for a prey? A prey you know properly is that which we take out of the hand of an enemy, that which was in his poſſeſſion; the lives of theſe perſons were ſaid to be given to them for a prey in thoſe perillous times, becauſe God by his care and providence did (as it were) fetcht back their lives from the hand of the enemy: their lives in natural reaſon were in their enemies hands, but God undertakes to fetch them back, and recover them out of their hands, and ſo they were promiſed to have their lives for a prey. Thus God giveth to many of his people their lives for a prey, and they are to bleſs God in this behalf, whatſoever afflictions and troubles are upon them, that yet they have their lives.

Laſtly, We may hence raiſe our meditations to conſider the wonderful love of God to us in Chriſt: when God ſent Chriſt into the world to ſave ſinners, he put him into the hands of Satan and his inſtruments; yet he doth not ſay (as here) to Satan, *Save his life*: Afflict him as thou wilt, perſecute him in his cradle; deſpiſe him, ſlander him, revile him, accuſe him, crown his head with thorns, ſcourge him, buffet him, ſpit in his face, *&c.* but *ſave his life*: No, this bound is not ſet to the malice of Satan, or the rage of men, God gives them leave to take life and all. Concerning his Servant *Job*, God ſaith to Satan, Spare his life; but when he ſendeth his Son, he gives no order to have him ſpared, but gives his cruel enemies full ſcope. How wonderful is the love of God, who for our ſakes was ſo expenſive of his Sons life, whenas he thus ſpared the life of a Servant? If Satan had been chained up from taking the life of Chriſt, he had been at liberty to triumph over our lives, to all eternity. We had all died, if God had ſaid to Satan concerning Chriſt, Save his life.

Thus we ſee the Commiſſion of Satan againſt *Job*, and the limitation of it. Satan was not tied up ſo ſhort as he was in the former Chapter, and yet ſtill he is tied. There he might meddle with *Job*'s eſtate, but not with his body; here he may meddle with his body, but not with his life: Though God lengthen Satans chain, yet he never lets Satan looſe; though he be at more liberty then before, yet he is in cuſtody; there is a *But* of reſtriction upon him ſtill. It is our comfort, that though Satan (as Philoſophers ſpeak of liquids, water, and the like) cannot keep himſelf in his own bounds, yet he is eaſily kept in bounds by the word and power of God.

Verſe 7. **So went Satan forth from the preſence of the Lord, and ſmote Job with ſore boils, from the ſole of the foot unto his crown.**

Verſe 8. **And he took him a potſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall, and he ſate down among the aſhes.**

So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.] He is preſently upon execution, as ſoon as he had his Commiſſion. We have explained theſe words in the former Chapter.

See then what he doth: *He ſmote* Job *with ſore boils from the ſole of his foot unto his crown.*

He ſmote *Job*, ſaith the Text. In the former afflictions Satan had inſtruments to work by: He ſtirred up the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*: he moved the fire and the wind into a conſpiracy againſt *Job*: Here he (that he might be ſure it ſhould be done fully) doth it himſelf.

He ſmote Job.] When the Devil ſmiteth, he ſmiteth throughly, he ſmiteth home. When Angels ſtrike, they ſtrike to purpoſe. It is ſaid *Acts* 12. that an *Angel of the Lord ſmote* Herod, *and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghoſt.* Spirits have mighty power.

He ſmote Job; why, he did not demand to ſmite *Job*, he did but deſire to have him *Toucht*: you heard before ſomewhat of that. Satan moves that his fleſh and his bone might be only touched; now, his motion being granted, it is ſaid *he ſmote him.* There are two things in this ſmiting:

Firſt, It notes ſuddenneſs: He did not afflict him by a diſeaſe that grew upon him by degrees; as you know boils and ſores ordinarily are long a gathering, breeding in, and breaking out of the fleſh; but he was all over full of theſe boils in an inſtant.

Secondly, Smiting intimates the vehemency of it, a killing ſtroke, a deaths wound; the Hebrew word ſignifieth to ſtrike to death. So here was a ſudden ſtroke, and a vehement ſtroke. It muſt needs at once wound both his mind and his body, on a ſudden, in a moment, to be filled with ſores, and covered with a ſcab; he ſaw no cauſe, he had no prognoſticks which might induce a ſuſpition that his body was in ſuch a diſtemper; and ſo it looked the more like an immediate ſtroke from an offended God. Every word hath its weight and emphaſis to add weight and anguiſh to this affliction.

נכה *De homine occidit, perdidit.*

It may here be queſtioned, how Satan can be ſaid to ſmite? And the ſame doubt ariſeth about this action of good Angels; one of which, as executioner of Gods wrath, ſmote of the *Aſſyrians* in one night an hundred and fourſcore and five thouſand, *Iſa.* 37. 36. and another ſmote *Herod*, *Acts* 12.

I anſwer, how Angels ſmite is a ſecret that we cannot expreſs, nor fully comprehend. For this and the like expreſſions of ſmiting, are ſuted to the nature of the Patient, not of the Agent; man being a material ſubſtance, is ſuſceptive or capable of ſmiting, or of a ſtroke: But an Angel being an immaterial ſubſtance, cannot ſmite properly, and he is therefore only ſaid to ſmite a man, becauſe we cannot ſignifie an effect or impreſſion upon a body, but by ſuch a word. We know that in the plague or other diſeaſes, when they are immediately inflicted by Angels, man receives a ſtroak, and therefore is ſaid to be ſmitten. But how the Angel gives that ſtroak, or ſmites, is not known. Man may feel himſelf ſmitten by an Angel, but how the Angel ſmites he cannot underſtand. This word is fitted to the recipient, not to the efficient cauſe of the diſeaſe, or plague, or death.

שחן *Ulcus ortū ex calore, ſive igne, inflammans corpus.* Schind. *Vox Hebræa ſignificat ſcabiem fœdiſſimam, qualis eſt Elephantiaſis.* Vatab. *in loc.*

He ſmote him with boyles.] The Hebrew word ſignifieth an ulcer, a burning or an inflaming ulcer, an ulcer that cometh from extream heat, or is extream hot. Satan did (as it were kindle a fire in the bowels of *Job*, inflamed his blood, and heated the humors of his body, from whence theſe boiles, theſe ulcers, theſe ſores did ariſe. The Grammarians expreſs it ſometime more generally, a filthy ſcab; ſometime more particularly, an ulcer, a boile, ſometime a leproſie; it is indeed any foul diſeaſe breaking out upon the body.

The ſame word is uſed, *Exod.* 9. 10. where it is ſaid, that God ſmote the Egyptians and the Magicians with boyles. It was one of the plagues of Egypt that was inflicted upon *Job*; we need ſay no more of it then that, to ſhew that it was a grievous plague, a moſt painful ſore: for it is added in that place of *Exodus*, that *the Magicians could not ſtand before* Moſes *becauſe of the boiles.*

כשחין רע *Ulcere peſſimo.*

Again, it is not only a ſmiting, and ſmiting with a boile; but there is an Epithite added, he ſmote him with *ſore* boiles, with an evil boile: among evils ſome are worſe, theſe were the worſt kind of boiles. There are many ſorts of boiles, ſome are not ſo bad as others, though all are bad enough. Now leſt any ſhould think *Job*'s boyles were not the moſt painful and malignant, a word is joyned to expreſs it to the height: in the kind they were boyles, and (*intenſive*, or) in the degree, they were the worſt and moſt tormenting boyles.

Further in the fourth place, we know it is painful for a man to have one boyle, eſpecially an angry burning one, a boile of the worſt ſort; but it is ſubjoyned, *he was ſmitten with boyles, from the ſole of his foot to his crown.* To be all over boyles, and to be all over-run with the moſt painful kind of boyles, what a vehement pain muſt this be? *From the ſole of his foot unto his crown,* there is the extent of this ſtroak. *Intenſive*, it was the worſt kind of boyle, and *Extenſive*, it was all over his body, no part free.

From the ſole of his foot unto his crown.] It is uſual in Scripture thus to ſignifie the whole body: as *Deut.* 28. 35. *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee in the knees and in the legs, with a ſore botch that cannot be healed, from the ſole of the foot to the top of the head, or to the crown.* And *Iſa.* 1. 6. when the Prophet would expreſs what a general blow the body politick had received from the hand of God by his judgements, (ſo it is there to be underſtood) he ſaith there were *wounds and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores, from the ſole of the foot even unto the head.* That is, the whole body politick, the whole State had at one time or other, or all at one time received wounds and blows, and ſtroaks from the hand of God. The extreams comprehend all the parts: That which extends from one extream or outmoſt part to another, is extended through all; from Eaſt to Weſt, is all the world over; and from head to foot, is all the body over. So then *Satan ſmote him from the ſole of his foot unto his crown*, is, He ſmote his whole body.

All pains and diſtempers were gathered into this one malady, and all parts of his body were ſmitten, as if they had been but one member: only his tongue was untoucht, as is commonly obſerved, That it might be free to blaſpheme God, who had thus polluted the beauty and comlineſs of his body, who had thus imbittered the comforts of his ſoul.

2 Chron. 16. 12.

Job being thus ſmitten, would ſurely look out for help. Though it be exceeding ſinful (with *Aſa* diſeaſed in his feet) to ſeek to *The Phyſitians, and not the Lord*; yet it is our duty to ſeek to the Lord and the Phyſitian: To truſt in means is to neglect God; to neglect means is to tempt God. Doubtleſs holy and wiſe *Job* walkt in a path between theſe two; he neither truſted nor neglected means, but uſed them; yet alaſs it was with *Job*, as it is ſaid in the Prophet concerning *Ephraim* and *Judah*, *That when* Ephraim *ſaw his ſickneſs, and* Judah *ſaw his wound; then went* Ephraim *to the* Aſſyrian, *and ſent to King* Jareb: *yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.* Though *Job* (as they in their civil ſickneſs) ſeeing his ſickneſs and his wound, had ſent to this and that Phyſitian; their anſwer would have been, *We cannot heal you nor cure you of your wound.* His diſeaſe was of the nature of thoſe which are called, *The Phyſitians reproach*: They could not diſcover any natural cauſe of it, and therefore they could not preſcribe any artificial cure of it. Phyſitians of greateſt value, in *Job*'s caſe, were Phyſitians of no value. And therefore to ſhew that either all had in vain attempted to cure him, or that none durſt undertake the cure, the Text ſaith, *That he took a potſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall, and he ſate down among the aſhes.*

Hoſ. 5. 13.

Opprobrium medicorum.

Theſe words are a further aggravation of *Job*'s affliction. When he is in this manner ſmitten, ſmitten with boyles, ſmitten with the worſt of boyles, *ſmitten with boyles* all over, *from the ſole of his feet unto his crown:* ſurely a man in this pickle had need to have ſome good tendance and looking to; ſuppoſe the Phyſitians and Chyrurgions could not cure him, yet they might eaſe him; if they had plyed him with Fomentations and ſuppling oyles, if they had bound up his ſores with fine linnen, to mitigate and mollifie them: if ſuch applications and attendance had not been a refreſhing to him, yet they would have been a reſpect to him; if they had not been an allay to his pain, yet they would have been an honour to his perſon. But (as this 8. *verſe* ſhews us) when the man was thus nothing but ſores, he had then nothing to help him: He might ſay (as *David* afterwards in a ſad condition, *Pſal.* 142. 4.) *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed, or periſhed from me, no man cared for my ſoul.* When thus, Lover and Friend, Phyſitian and Chyrurgion, Wife and Servant were far from him, at leaſt in duty and affection; then he is forced to be both Patient and Phyſitian, Sick and Nurſe; *he took him a pot-ſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall.* Poor man! He who was lately in health, and the greateſt man in the Eaſt, being now ſick, hath nothing left him but a piece of a broken pitcher.

There are four aggravations of his affliction in this.

The firſt is this, That he could get none to dreſs him; he was fain to do it himſelf, ſaith the Text. Neither Wife, nor Servants, nor Friends would meddle with him. A hard caſe!

Then ſecondly, Conſider what a tool he had to do it with. He was left to be his own Chyrurgion, and his dreſſing inſtrument was *a potſheard.* The word ſignifies, ſometimes a whole earthen pot, ſometimes a broken piece of it, a ſheard as we call it. Here is no mention of fine linnen and ſalves to heal, or of oyle to ſupple theſe ſoares; only a hard pot-ſheard is the tool, and ſcraping is all the Chyrurgery. A hard caſe!

Thirdly, This intimates either that his body was ſo loathſom by reaſon of the diſeaſe, that he was loath to touch himſelf with his hands: As we ſay proverbially in our Language concerning a deformed or filthy creature; *a man would ſcarce touch ſuch an one with a pair of Tongs.* So, as if *Job* had ſo abhorred himſelf, that he was loth to touch himſelf with his bare hands, he muſt take ſomewhat, and for want of a better, a *pot-ſheard* to ſcrape himſelf; he had not the heart (as it were) to touch himſelf, his diſeaſe was ſo foul, that (as we ſay) it turn'd his ſtomack. This ſome give as a reaſon why he took a pot-ſheard, his body was ſo filthy that he was loth to touch it with his hands.

Or as others give the reaſon, his boiles and ſores did ſo over-ſpread and envenome his hands to the very nailes, that it was a pain for him to touch himſelf: his fingers were ſo ſore, that he had ſcarce any uſe of them; this conſtrained him to make a poor ſhift, even to take *a pot-ſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall.* What a lamentable caſe was this!

Fourthly, There follows yet a further aggravation of his affliction. If a man be ſick and full of ſores, yet if he can get an eaſie bed or ſome ſoft place to lie upon, it is a great comfort. You know how men will remove from bed to bed, from place to place, when they are diſtempered and in pain. But ſee where *Job* lies, he hath no down-bed nor ſoft pillows, neither couch nor chair to ſit in, but

He ſate down among the aſhes.

There are two expoſitions concerning this; for his ſitting in the *Aſhes*, may be taken as a voluntary act, or as a neceſſary act. Some take it as a voluntary act of *Job*, and that he did it *Elective*; when he was in that condition, he went out and choſe to ſit among the Aſhes; and ſo his ſitting among the Aſhes was a note of his humiliation and abaſement: As often in Scripture, to ſit down in aſhes, is as much as to repent and humble our ſelves deeply before God, to lie in the very duſt; as it is expreſt of *Job*, (Chap. 42. 6.) when he had ſeen God, *I abhor my ſelf*, ſaith he, *and I repent in duſt and aſhes*; alluding to that cuſtom of ſitting in aſhes when they did repent. So you find in that ſolemn humiliation of the *Ninivites*, Jon. 3. 6. that *when word came to the King of* Ninive (namely that *Jonah* had propheſied the ruine of the City within forty dayes) *he aroſe from his throne, and he layed his robe from him, and covered himſelf with ſack-cloth, and ſate in aſhes*. Chriſt upbraiding *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, tells them, *that if the mighty works which were done in them had been done in* Tyre *and* Sidon, *they had repented long ago in ſack-cloath and aſhes*, Matth. 11. 22. In great mournings, the Heathen uſed to ſit in or ſprinkle themſelves with aſhes. As *Homer* reports of *Ulyſſes* after a Ship-wrack, and of others, whom *Druſius* hath obſerved on this Text. *Iſa.* 61. 3. the promiſe is, *that God will give beauty for aſhes*; that is, they that humble themſelves and lie in aſhes, ſhall have a happy and comfortable reſtauration. So that this act of *Job* might be voluntary, and a geſture of repentance; ſitting down among the aſhes, to humble and abaſe himſelf before God.

ἕζητο ἐπ' ἐσχάρῃ ἐν κονιςοῖ.

The Papiſts are ſuperſtitiouſly ceremonious in this point at this day: annually obſerving a day which they affect to call *Aſhwedneſday*, on which they ſprinkle themſelves with aſhes, as a preparatory to their formal Lenton Repentance. *But we have not ſo learned Chriſt.*

Secondly, We may take it for a neceſſitated act, that he was forced to this, to go and ſit among the aſhes, (or as moſt from the Septuagint tranſlate it, to ſit down upon a dung-hill) and that in two reſpects.

Firſt, In regard of his poverty and want, as if he were ſo bereft and deſtitute of all outward things, that he had not a houſe to put his head in, nor any other conveniencies to make uſe of; but was conſtrained to go out, and ſit upon the dung-hill or amongſt the aſhes.

Secondly, Others rather conceive, that the neceſſity did ariſe from the contagion and loathſomneſs of his diſeaſe, ſo that he was forced to go out of doors, he filled the houſe with ſuch a noiſom ſmell.

Or he was forced to go out as a Leper; concerning whom the Law was afterwards, you know, that they ſhould be put out of the Camp or City; and it was a Law grounded upon reaſon, and the common light of nature, though it had a ſpiritual ſignification, as given to the *Jews*. The Septuagint ſay expreſly, he ſate upon the dung-hill without the City, as Lepers were wont to be, according to the Law of *Moſes*; and as we ſee executed in that caſe of *Uzziah* the King, being a Leper, *he dwelt in a houſe by himſelf alone, and was cut off from the houſe of the Lord*, 2 Chron. 26. 21.

Levit. 13. 14, 45.

ἐπὶ τῆς κοπρίας ἔξω τῆς πόλεως. Sept.

But that *Job* ſate either without the City, or upon a dung-hill, is only a conjecture, and beſides the Text. Which way ſoever we take it, it is a great aggravation of *Job*'s ſorrows. Take it for a neceſſitated ſitting in the aſhes abroad, it inferſ, that either he was ſo poor as that he had not an houſe to be in; or that his diſeaſe was ſo contagious that he could not be endured in the houſe. Or take it for a voluntary act, that he did chooſe to ſit in aſhes, it was an aggravation of his affliction; for then it notes that he was in the loweſt, in the ſaddeſt condition that can be imagined: ſitting in aſhes, being an emblem of extream ſorrow, and never uſed but in times of greateſt calamity, publick or perſonal.

So that here every circumſtance is an aggravation of *Job*'s affliction. He was ſmitten by Satan, and he ſmote hard enough: he ſmote him, and *he ſmote him with boyles*, he ſmote him with the moſt malignant kind of boyles; he ſmote him with ſuch boyles all over, *from the ſole of his feet to his crown*; and when he was in this conditino, he had no Nurſe, no Chyrurgion, no Phyſitian to help him, he was forced to take a pot-ſheard to ſcrape himſelf: he had no ſoft bed prepared to lye on, nor (as many have thought) houſe to be in; but out of the City, or out of his houſe he muſt, and among the aſhes, upon the dung-hill. Lo, there he ſits. What one ſaid of an exact Hiſtory of a great Prince, That ſurely it was written rather in theory as a pattern or picture of a Prince, then according to the truth of a Hiſtory: So we may ſay of this deſcription of *Job*'s troubles; that ſurely it was written rather as a ſtudied pattern of man's ſufferings, then as an accompliſht Hiſtory of the ſufferings of any man: yea who almoſt can go ſo far in imagination, as *Job* went in real paſſion? But we will paſs from the deſcription of his ſorrows, to ſome Obſervations upon them.

Zenoph. Cyr. *Ad Principis effigiem quam Hiſtoriæ fidem.*

Firſt, Here we ſee, *That Satan if he be permitted, hath a power ſuddenly to afflict the body with diſeaſes; and that is a power far tranſcending all the power that is in man.*

Man is able to wound the body of his brother with a material inſtrument, but all the Tyrants in the world cannot ſmite the body with a diſeaſe, or command a man into ſickneſs; though God ſhould ſay to them, as here to Satan, I give you leave, yet they muſt leave that to Satan: whoſe help is ſometime begg'd by envious wretches, who would kill their brethren without a Sword, and vex them unſeen. Man muſt have a weapon to ſmite, but Satan can ſmite and kill without a weapon, if God ſay the word. Man can ſpill the blood, but Satan can poiſon the blood: he can infect the humors, and taint the ſpirits more ſubtilly, more ſpeedily then the moſt ſkilful poiſoner in *Rome*. We ſhewed before how ſuddenly Satan can raiſe commotions in the Air, ſtormes and tempeſts there; he can do the like in our bodies: for ſuch are diſeaſes in the body as ſtorms and tempeſts in the Air. Storms make (as it were) a confuſion among the Elements, and are the diſtemper of Nature: diſeaſes make a confuſion among the humors, and diſtemper the conſtitution and ſpirits of the body. It is ſaid of the woman in *Luke* 13. 16. that Satan had bound her 28. yeares; Obſerve in that, the power Satan hath over the body, if God give him liberty to exerciſe it: as cruel men can bind in chains, and caſt the body into priſon for many years; ſo Satan can bind the body with a ſpirit of infirmity as with a chain.

Secondly, Obſerve this, *That health and ſtrength of body are a very great bleſſing.*

You ſee Satan deſires to try *Job* by taking away this bleſſing laſt, and he thought this would make *Job* curſe God: you may ſee the value of it by his deſire to deſtroy it. *Health is the Prince of earthly bleſſings.* We ſay, he lives miſerably that lives by Medicines, who to uphold Nature is in the continual uſe of Art. How miſerably then doth he live, whom Art and Medicines cannot reſtore to health, who is diſeaſed beyond the help of Phyſick?

I might mind you likewiſe from this, to remember what frail bodies we live in, even ſuch, as have in them the ſeeds of all diſeaſes. Sin indeed is the ſeed of ſickneſs and of death: And hence it is, that if the humors of the body be a little ſtirr'd, they quickly turn to a diſeaſe; and this houſe of clay is ready to diſſolve and fall. What is the ſtrength of the body, that we ſhould truſt it? or the beauty of the body that we ſhould be proud of it? We ſee in *Job*, how quickly the ſtrength of it is turned into weakneſs, and the beauty of it into blackneſs. *All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field*; *The graſs withereth, and the flower fadeth*, Iſa. 40. 6.

And here likewiſe note this, you that enjoy health of body, whoſe ſtrength yet continues, and your ſelves are free from the bonds of any bodily infirmity: while you hear of one ſmitten with a diſeaſe from the crown of the head to the ſole of the feet, conſider what a mercy you have, who have no pain from the crown of the head to the ſole of the feet; who have not an aking joynt, nor pain ſo much as in a finger. It is like that many of you can ſay you have this bleſſing, you do not know what pain in any one member means; look upon a man, that knew nothing but pain, upon a man that had not one member free, and prize your bleſſing.

Such likewiſe who have pain and infirmities, in one or two, or more parts of the body, may ſee in this ſpectacle cauſe to bleſs God, that they have any part free. To have but one or but a few ſores, is mercy, ſparing mercy, when we behold another nothing but a ſore. Indeed when one member ſuffers, (whether in the body natural or myſtical) all the members ſuffer with it. But compaſſion is not ſo heavy a burden, as paſſion is. And as the ſound members ſympathize in ſorrow with thoſe that are ſmitten, ſo they that are ſmitten, ſympathize in joy with thoſe that are ſound. The eaſe of one part mitigates the diſeaſe of another, and it is an abatement of our troubles to ſee thoſe whom we love in peace. Two are better then one (ſaith *Solomon*,) for if one fall, the other may help him up; but if both fall, who ſhall help? And if every member ſuffer, there is paſſion in all, but compaſſion in none, much leſs ſupport or help.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Job in this condition was left of all.*

Do not think it ſtrange if you be brought into ſuch ſtraights, as to be left alone, when you have moſt need of aſſiſtance. *Job* was as a man friendleſs, Phyſitianleſs, wifeleſs, ſervantleſs, all forſook him. It is the comfort of the people of God, that they know how to be alone, and yet can never be alone: though they be left of all viſible friends, yet they have an inviſible friend who will viſit them, ſtay with them by day, and watch with them by night; for he hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* In the Greek there are two negatives to affirm this, that God will not leave his, *Heb.* 13. 5. *And he that hath him alone, hath infinitely more then all the world in one.* When Friends and Phyſitians will not come near, when Wife and Children take their leave or ſtand afar off, when Servants hold their noſes, being not able to bear the ſtinch and ill ſavour that cometh from the body; yea, when a man comes to be an abhorring to himſelf; yet at that time God delights in him, Chriſt at that time imbraceth him, and takes him in his arms, and kiſſeth him with the kiſſes of his lips, which are better then wine, yea better then life. *Job* was never ſo near God, ſo in the boſom of God, as when no creature in the world would ſo much as touch him; *Job* was never ſo beautiful in the eye of God, as when he had nothing but boiles upon him.

Fourthly, I may preſent you with *Job* as he was upon his Aſh-hill in want of all things; from thence be admoniſhed,

That the Children of God, his deareſt Servants may come to uttermoſt outward extremities.

When a man is among the aſhes, then he is at the loweſt: what can a man be leſs then that? The Apoſtles were made as the filth of the world, as the off-ſcouring of all things, as ſweepings and offal which are caſt out upon the dunghil; ſo was *Job* in the ſence of many interpreters. They who are of moſt worth may be uſed as if they were worth nothing. *Job* was a pearl though upon a dunghil. *They who were brought up in ſcarlet embrace dunghils,* ſaith *Jeremy* in his *Lamentation* for *Jeruſalem*, Chap. 4. 5. We may ſay, They who are brought up and clothed in better then ſcarlet, even in the robes of Righteouſneſs, and in the Garments of Salvation, may yet be brought to embrace a dunghil. There is no judging by Appearance; *No man knows love or hatred by all that is before him or (upon him)* Eccleſ. 9.

Laſtly, Look upon *Job*'s ſitting in the aſhes, as a voluntary act, and then obſerve, (which is of much concernment and uſe for us now, in regard of the preſent condition we are in.)

That as the afflicting hand of God doth increaſe upon a people, or upon a perſon, ſo ought the humiliation and repentance of that perſon or people to increaſe.

When the hand of God was upon *Job* before, *he rent his mantle, he ſhaved his head*, theſe were acts of great humiliation; but now *Job* having a nearer and deeper affliction upon him, humbleth himſelf yet more: Then he fell upon the ground, but now he ſitteth among the aſhes. Greater afflictions call to greater humiliation. We ought not only to be humbled when God afflicteth, but to be humbled in a proportion to the affliction: As it is in regard of ſin committed, great ſins call for great ſorrow; and as it is in regard of mercies received, great mercies call for great praiſes: ſo great troubles call us to great humiliations; and ſtill the greater troubles are, the greater our humiliation ought to be. This is one way of accepting the puniſhment of our iniquities, and of improving preſent evils for our everlaſting good. Conſider whether this be not the work of this day.

We have had the hand of God upon the Nation in leſſer judgments heretofore, we have had warning-pieces ſhot off amongſt us; but now we hear the report of murthering-pieces every day. Divers years God made war upon us with the ſword of the Angel; by which thouſands have fallen in our Streets, but now God hath put a ſword into the hands of men. The former ſword was a Favour compared with this; thoſe wounds, a kiſs, compared with this. Both *David* and experience reſolve it thus. Many of our dear brethren are ſlain and fallen by the ſword, their blood hath been ſpilt like water, and their bones have been ſcattered as when one cleaveth or cutteth wood upon the earth. The ſpoyled cry to us for bread, the ſick and wounded for help and healing. Many Towns have been plundered, many Matrons and Virgins have been raviſhed, many Families have been ſcattered, many Wives and Children deprived of their Husbands and Parents, many Pariſhes bereſt of faithful Paſtours, ſome of our Dwellings turned to aſhes; and is it not time for us, not only to rent our garments, but to ſit in aſhes? do not theſe things call us to eat aſhes like bread, and mingle our drink with weeping. Is it not time for us not only to write, but to act a Lamentation, and to ſay, *For theſe things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water?* There is one thing yet, which may and ought to be a Lamentation to us, beyond all our own ſufferings, namely this, God is diſhonoured, his Name is blaſphemed, his people are reproached. The enemies ſtrike this ſword in their bones, a ſcornful enquiry, *Where is now your God?* *Pſal.* 42. 10. Should not tears be our meat day and night (as they were *Davids*) while they ſay continually, *Where is now your God? Pſal.* 42. 3. Our not ſitting in the aſhes for ſuch things as theſe will bring us unto aſhes; and if we will not ſit upon the dunghill of our ſins in humiliation, our ſins will bring us and our Land unto a dunghill of deſolation. In this day, as of old by his faithful Prophet (*Iſa.* 22. 12.) doth *the Lord God of hoſts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloth:* And not only to theſe, but to *Job*'s poſture of ſorrow, *ſitting in aſhes*; the voyce of the rod calleth to this: the voyce of the trumpet heard daily in our Streets, calls to this. We have cauſe to cry out as the Prophet *Jeremy*, Chap. 4. v. 19. *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart maketh a noiſe in me, I cannot hold my peace, becauſe thou haſt heard, O my ſoul, the ſound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war.* And becauſe the ſound of the trumpet among us, like that on mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* 19. 19. doth not only ſound long, but alſo lowder and lowder; it becomes us, not only to continue our mourning, and our crying unto God, but to cry lowder and lowder. If we increaſe not our humiliations, God will yet increaſe our judgments: if we will not ſit in aſhes, he will bring us to aſhes, and puniſh us yet ſeven times more for our ſins.

2 Sam. 24.

Wherefore receive the counſel of the Apoſtle *James*, in theſe your afflictions, *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heavineſs. Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up.* God lifts them up who caſt themſelves down: and if (in this ſence) we be afflicted, we ſhall not be afflicted. *Chriſt* hath purchaſed, *Free Grace* beſtows deliverance; and we receive it, when we return, repent and believe.

James 4. 9, 10.

VERS. 9, 10.

Then ſaid his wife unto him, Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? Curſe God, and die.

But he ſaid unto her, Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh: what? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job ſin with his lips.

WE have already conſidered out of the former parts of the Chapter *Job*'s ſecond affliction: Firſt, in the occaſion of it: Secondly, in the cauſes of it: And thirdly, in the manner of it, together with thoſe aggravating circumſtances which made his ſorrows out of meaſure ſorrowful. And now we muſt look upon that Jewel among the aſhes, and conſider what befel him there: Theſe things make the fourth part of the Chapter, namely the conſequents of his affliction.

Theſe conſequents, are three:

Firſt, His Wives unſeemly and ſinful counſel, *verſ.* 9.

Secondly, His wiſe and holy reply, *verſ.* 10.

Thirdly, His friends viſit to comfort him, *verſ.* 11, 12, 13.

Firſt, We will diſcuſs his Wives unſeemly and ſinful counſel, **Then ſaid his Wife unto him, &c.**

There are two Queſtions raiſed concerning *Job*'s Wife.

Firſt, Who ſhe was?

Secondly, How it came to paſs that ſhe was ſpared, when all his outward comforts were removed?

For the firſt, in a word, It is the opinion of many among the ancient Jewes, that *Job* lived in the time of *Jacob* the Patriark: And that he took to Wife *Dinah*, *Jacob*'s Daughter; but I leave the Rabbins to prove that, if they can. Why ſhe was ſpared in the time of ſo general a calamity, may bear ſome further inquiry. For ſeeing a Wife is the chiefeſt of creature comforts, and the very reaſon why God at the firſt did inſtitute that relation, was that man might have *a help meet for him*: it may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange why Satan, going about to bring upon *Job* trouble in its perfection, ſhould leave him that, which is the perfection of all outward comforts, *a Wife*. What were *Job*'s Oxen, and Aſſes, and Sheep, and Camels to a Wife? And what were his Children to a Wife? When *Adam* had not only ſuch a number of Cattel, but all the Cattel and Riches in the world in his poſſeſſion, and under his dominion, God ſaw him defective till he provided him a Wife, a Wife was the complement of all. How then cometh it to paſs, that when Satan would afflict *Job* to the uttermoſt, he leaves him his Wife?

Gen. 2. 20.

To clear this, before we come to examine the words that ſhe ſpake, The Jews, which are the Authors of that aforenamed opinion, that his Wife was *Dinah*, tell us (to lengthen out the dream) that ſhe was ſpared for *Jacob*, her Fathers ſake. It is a truth, That Children do often fare the better for holy Fore-fathers. It is no mean priviledge to be born of thoſe that are in Covenant. As God *viſits the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, ſo he ſhews mercy to thouſands of thoſe that love him, &c.* Exod. 20. 5, 6. but in this place we have no ſtock to graft this truth upon, but a meer imagination. I paſs on.

Secondly, Some conceive that his Wife was out of Satans Commiſſion, that he had nothing to do to meddle with her, ſhe being comprehended under that clauſe of exception in *Chap.* 1. *verſ.* 12. *All that he hath is in thy power, only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand*; his Wife (they ſay) was a part of himſelf, according to that *Gen.* 2. 24. *And they* (*viz.* the Husband and the Wife) *ſhall be one fleſh.* So that Satan could not ſmite her, but he muſt ſmite *Job* too; therefore ſhe was exempted, ſay they, and ſet beyond the reach of Satans ſtroak.

Though this may have ſome ſhew of wit in it, and ſomewhat of reaſon too, referring unto the firſt part of *Job*'s affliction; yet there is no ſhew of either in reference unto the ſecond, where Satan had a Commiſſion to afflict his body, his fleſh and his bone; for then ſhe alſo (take it in the ſence before) was comprehended under the Commiſſion of Satan, being (though not as *Eve* from *Adam*, bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh, yet) according to the Law of marriage given to all *One fleſh* with him, *Gen.* 2. 24.

Therefore in the third place, that which I conceive and agree with others in for the true reaſon why ſhe was ſpared, is this; That ſhe might be a further inſtrument of her Husbands affliction. Satan meant to make uſe of her for his own purpoſe, to drive on the main deſign; and whereas ſhe ſhould have been a help to her Husband, Satan imployes her againſt her Husband; this was his aim, and therefore ſhe was ſpared. Hence one of the Ancients calls her *the ſtrongeſt* and fitteſt *weapon*, with which Satan did aſſault, the choiſeſt Arrow in his Quiver, by which he wounded the ſoul and ſpirit of *Job*. She that ſhould have had her hands buſied in the waſhing, ſuppling, curing, and healing of his wounds, ſmites him with her tongue, a peircing and a poyſon'd inſtrument. *The rib was not ſmitten, that it might ſmite the head.* Another compares her to a Ladder, by which Satan hoped to ſcale this impregnable Tower, that death might creep in at the window of his ears, by hearing and conſenting to her ſinful perſwaſions.

Chryſoſtom.

Greg. Moral.

Seeing then Satan ſpared *Job*'s Wife, that ſhe might be the inſtrument of this additional affliction, which moſt conclude to be as the ſting of all his afflictions;

Firſt, Note this, *That Satans mercies have alwayes ſomewhat of cruelty in them.*

He ſpareth his Wife, but it was that ſhe might further vex the Husband. His mercies are like the mercies of wicked men, *Their tender mercies are cruel*; that is, they are no mercies at all, *Prov.* 12. 10. There is a puniſhing mercy, and there is a ſparing cruelty among men. Such are Satans ſparings ever lin'd with cruel and bloody intendments.

Planè nullæ. Jun. *in loc.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That the greateſt outward bleſſings may prove the greateſt outward afflictions.*

A Wife is made a croſs, a ſnare. Our greateſt danger may be from our helper; and that which was given for our good, may be to us an occaſion of falling.

Satan can make uſe of our friends to do us hurt by. He tempteth not only by himſelf, but by creatures: and not only by creatures that are at a diſtance from us, but by thoſe who are neareſt in relation, and by thoſe, moſt. He can make a Servant, a Child, a Wife, inſtrumental for our ruine. In this ſence, we may apply that caveat of the Prophet (*Jer.* 9. 4.) *Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and truſt ye not in any brother.* That alſo of *Micah*, *Truſt ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lyeth in thy boſom.* Yea, take heed of thy own boſom, Satan draws a party from our ſelves, againſt our ſelves.

Quiſque etiam ſibi caveat, ne fiat organum diaboli.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Satan is very ſubtile to make choice of ſuch inſtruments as may do his work moſt effectually.*

Of all thoſe that were about *Job* he could not have picked out any to have carried on his plot ſo powerfully and with ſuch probability of ſucceſs.

Firſt, In regard of her nearneſs, ſhe had opportunity to come unto him, and freedom to improve that opportunity. *Saul* knew what he did when he married his Daughter to *David*. *I will give him her* (ſaid *Saul*) *that ſhe may be a ſnare to him*, 1 *Sam.* 18. 21. Politick marriages are uſually made for temptation, not for comfort: *ſnares are tied faſteſt with a falſe lovers knot.*

Secondly, The motion or perſwaſion of a Wife, whether to good or evil, are very taking upon a Husbands heart: We ſee it in the firſt Wife that ever was, ſhe by perſwaſions overcame *Adam* unto ſin, ſhe was the Devils agent for the undoing of her Husband, and the world. *Ahab* was very wicked, but he had a tempter in his boſom. *But there was none like unto* Ahab, *who did ſell himſelf to work wickedneſs, whom* Jezebel *his Wife ſtirred up.* Unparalell'd wickedneſs is aſcribed to the provocations of a Wife. When a Prince hath given up his affections, and his conſcience, into the hands of a malicious, wanton woman, he will quickly ſell himſelf to ſuch wickedneſs as will be his own trouble, and entitle him (like King *Ahab*) *the troubler of the Kingdom.*

1 King. 21. 25.

Thirdly, Satan knew that a wound is deeper, by how much the hand is nearer that ſtrikes it. Afflictions preſs us moſt when they are from our friends. What thou my Son? ſaid *Cæſar* in the Senate. What thou my Wife? Is thy hand upon me in my own houſe, might *Job* ſay? The Prophet brings in one queſtioning, *What are thoſe wounds?* And Chriſt anſwering, *Thoſe with which I was wounded in the houſe of my friends*, Zech. 13. 6. The height of enmity is thus expreſt, *A man's enemies* ſhall be *the men of his own houſe*, Micah 7. 6. This cauſed *David* to complain ſo bitterly, *Pſal.* 55. 12. *It was not an enemy that had done this, but it was thou my friend, and my equal, and my companion:* The friend wounded more then the Sword. So might *Job* complain, It was not an enemy, it was not a *Sabean*, or a cruel *Chaldean* that ſpake this; but it was thou my equal, my friend, my companion; and which is more then all theſe, my Wife, my ſecond ſelf.

I grant that in one ſence the wounds of a friend are precious: *Precious are the wounds of a friend, but the kiſſes of an enemy are deceitful.* Precious are the wounds of a friend, when a friend doth wound with holy reproof; but when a friend wounds by ſinful counſel, or ſollicitations unto ſin, thoſe are pernicious wounds. If that which is light in us be-

be turned into darkneſs (as Chriſt ſpeaks) *how great is that darkneſs?* So, if that which ſhould be our comfort, be turned into our ſorrow, how great is our ſorrow? Therefore we ſee why Satan ſpared the Wife, that ſhe might be an inſtrument, and a moſt effectual inſtrument, either to prevail upon him, or to vex him in caſe he did not prevail. Doubtleſs *Job* did not feel ſo much ſmart, when Satan ſmote both fleſh and bone, as now, when his fleſh and bone ſmote him. Thus we ſee the cruelty of Satans mercy: he ſpared *Job*'s Tongue, and he ſpared *Job*'s Wife; he ſpared his Tongue, that *Job* might have a member free for an inſtrument of ſin, in curſing God; and he ſpared *Job*'s Wife, that himſelf might have an inſtrument to bid him ſin, *Curſe God, and die.* This was her counſel. Matth. 6.

And his Wife ſaid unto him, Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? Curſe God, and die.

Her words conſiſt of two parts:

Firſt, A ſharp and a ſcornful exprobration.

Secondly, A wicked and ſinful direction.

Her ſcornful exprobration, in theſe words: *Doeſt thou ſtill retain thy integrity?*

Her ſinful direction, in thoſe words: *Curſe God, and die.*

Doſt thou ſtill retain thy integrity?

Tantum narrat ſcriptura, quæ mulieris virus & viri antidotum continent.

Words quick and ſhort. It is probable we have here only the *compendium*, or brief of that diſcourſe which paſſed between *Job* and his Wife. We have only the poyſon, and the Antidote, as a learned Expoſitor hints it upon this place.

The *Septuagint* have taken the boldneſs (if they be not falſified) to ſet down his Wifes ſpeech at large, and joyn it in with the body of the Text, thus: *A long time being ſpent, his Wife ſaid unto him, How long wilt thou hold out, ſaying, Behold, I wait yet a little while expecting the hope of my Salvation? For conſider, thy remembrance is blotted out from the earth, even thy Sons and thy Daughters, the pains and travel of my womb, whom I have brought forth in vain. Thou thy ſelf ſitteſt here in the rottenneſs of worms, abiding all night in the open air. I poor hand-maid wander from place to place, from houſe to houſe, looking when the Sun will ſet that I may take a little repoſe from the pains and ſorrows which now oppreſs me; but utter thou ſome word againſt the Lord, and die.* The Greek Authors comment upon theſe words, as upon the Text it ſelf. But I ſhall wave them wholly. Neither ſhall I ſtay here in the Explication of the words, according to our reading out of the Hebrew, becauſe we have handled them at the third verſe of this Chapter, in the teſtimony which God giveth concerning *Job*, where he ſpeaks thus to Satan, *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job, *how that he is a perfect man,* &c. *and that he ſtill holdeth faſt his integrity?* God ſpake it to the praiſe of *Job, ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity*; his Wife ſpeaks it to his reproach, and upbraideth him with it, *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity?* The words ſpoken by both are the ſame, but the ſence and intent of the ſpeakers is quite different. God ſpeaks them in honour to *Job*: his Wife ſpeaks them in contempt of *Job*, and therefore ſhe forms them into a Queſtion, a cutting kind of ſpeech, *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity?* As if ſhe ſhould ſay, What? art thou ſo ſenſeleſs and ſottiſh, ſo ſtupid, ſo mad and ſottiſh, to go on in this courſe ſtill? what haſt thou got by it; where are thy earnings? what is the advantage of holineſs, or what is the profit of integrity, that thou holdeſt and huggeſt it ſo faſt? *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity?* This I conceive is the ſum of the queſtion, it is an upbraiding, a reproaching queſtion; and from that we may Obſerve,

First, *That thoſe things which commend us moſt to God, uſually render us moſt contemptible before the world.*

Luk. 16. 15.

Doſt thou ſtill retain thy integrity?] She ſleighteth him and ſcorneth him for this, whereas God highly commends him, ſpeaks it to his praiſe. *That which is highly eſteemed amongſt men is abomination in the ſight of the Lord.* And that which the Lord eſteems highly, man abominates.

Secondly this, *It is the endeavour of Satan and his inſtruments to perſwade, that the profeſſion of holineſs is vain and unprofitable.*

Satan hath taught wicked ones, and they (like forward Schollars ſay it without book) ſay it openly, *It is a vain thing to ſerve the Lord*: Satan would fain infuſe this curſed principle into the hearts of Gods own people, and make them believe their faith is alſo vain. *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity?* Come take a little counſel at the laſt, work like a wiſe man, wilt thou hold a thing thou canſt get nothing by? Take it on my word, thou canſt not thrive this way, thou canſt make nothing of it, what doſt thou mean to go on madding in ſuch a courſe as this? Thou ſhalt never get bread by it to put in thy head, no nor water to waſh thy hands; all thou getteſt by it, will be a knock, a rod upon thy back, a diſhonour upon thy name. And wilt thou ſtill be ſo ſtrait-lac'd, and hold faſt thy integrity?

Thirdly, Obſerve further from Satans intendment in putting ſuch words as theſe into the mouth of *Job*'s Wife;

That his great deſign is to take advantage from outward troubles and ill ſucceſſes, to diſcourage the hearts, and weaken the hands of Gods people in holy duties.

That was his project, quite to diſcourage *Job*, and from the ill ſucceſs he had in the ſervice of God, to get him put off his Livery, and give over his ſervice: It is the courſe that the world, inſtructed by Satan (as here *Job*'s Wife was) ſtill holdeth with the people of God. Their language is, why are you ſo preciſe, why ſo hot? &c. Do you not obſerve, you get nothing by your prayers? nothing by your faſting? nothing by your holineſs? All that you have got you may put in your eyes, and ſee never the worſe. Shew us ſome of your gains; what have you got? where are your deliverances? where are your victories? where is your ſalvation? you have prayed till you are almoſt undone, you have faſted till all is almoſt loſt, things are worſe then they were; will you ſtill go on in theſe duties of faſting and praying? of humbling and ſeeking? of waiting and believing? This is the language of Satan, this the Divinity of Hell: And I ſhall anſwer it in one word, *It is far better to dye praying, then to conquer blaſpheming.* Such doctrine may ſtop up a hypocrites mouth, and weaken his heart from duty: But it will more open the mouths, and enlarge the hearts of thoſe who are ſincere. Will the hypocrite always call upon God, will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? ſaith *Job.* No, he delights in God no longer, then God gives him worldly delights; nor calls upon God any longer, then ſenſible bleſſings are ſent in unto him: If God ſtayes his hand, he ſtops in duty; he quickly takes up Satans leſſon, and will no longer hold his integrity. But grace ſhews us wages in the work: A godly man hath his fruit in holineſs, and therefore though he receives no outward fruit, he ſtill holds faſt his integrity. But what would *Job*'s Wife advice him to do, in caſe he ſhould let go the holineſs of his life? That follows in the next words; having endeavoured to take him off from one courſe, ſhe directs him to another.

Curſe God, and die.

Here is the ſecond part of her counſel, curſed counſel indeed. *Curſe God, and die.* It is the ſame Original word which we have opened before, and met with two or three times already. In the proper ſignification it noteth *bleſſing*, and ſo the word is by many Expoſitors rendred in this place, *Bleſs God, and die*; Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it ſo in one entire ſentence, *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity, bleſſing God, and dying?* We muſt therefore examine both ſides, that we may find out more fully the ſence of theſe words.

Some take the words in a good ſence, and ſome take them in an ill ſence. Some take the words in a good ſence, *Bleſs God, and die*; and others who tranſlate, *Bleſs God, and die*, do yet expound it to an ill ſence.

Firſt, Some make a good conſtruction out of theſe words of *Job*'s Wife, affirming that ſhe gave her Husband wholſom advice, and ſo they render the words, *Bleſs God, and die*, to this ſence. What? doſt thou ſtill ſtand upon terms with God? wilt thou not humble thy ſelf? ſhouldſt thou not rather *Bleſs God*? that is, pray unto God, humble thy ſelf, and ſeek his face; ſo to bleſs, ſignifies to pray, to make ſupplication. Thou ſeeſt in what a doleful condition thou art, therefore *Bleſs God*, make thy humble prayer before God, *and die*; that is, deſire him to take thee out of this world, to releaſe thee of thy pain; beg that he would cut the thred of thy life, which (to appearance) is the only remedy of all thy troubles; death will be thy beſt friend: Thou mayeſt die with more eaſe, then live as thou doeſt. Thy life is a continual death; it were better for thee to die once, then to die daily.

Mr. *Beza* is very ſtrong in this opinion, excuſing, yea acquitting *Job*'s Wife, in making this motion to her Husband. He grants indeed that ſhe being deceived and overwrought by Satan, did work ſtrongly for him; yet denies, that either the counſel in it ſelf, or in her intendments was evil. He layes the whole matter thus: That ſhe obſerving her Husbands ſilence under the hand of God, in theſe great afflictions, ſuſpected that he ſtood too much upon his own integrity; that he was too well opinionated and conceited of his own worth; or that this proceeded from ſearedneſs of conſcience, and inſenſibleneſs of Gods dealing, and his own condition; and therefore ſhe adviſeth him to conſider, that ſurely God was very angry with him; to conſider that God had brought all this evil upon him, to humble him; and ſhould he now defend his own innocency? ſhould he either be ſilent and not acknowledge his ſin, or ſtand upon terms with God in defence and juſtification of himſelf? Doſt thou perſevere in thoſe high thoughts of thy ſelf? will not all this bring thy ſtomack down? what? will not thy uncircumciſed heart be humbled? *Doſt thou ſtill retain thy integrity?* doſt thou ſtill lean upon that broken reed, thy own integrity? *Bleſs God*; that is confeſs thy ſins, and acknowledge thy tranſgreſſions. (Indeed confeſſing of ſin is the bleſſing of God, it is a giving glory to God, our giving glory to God is our bleſſing of God: *Joſh.* 7.19. *Give glory to the Lord God of* Iſrael, *and make confeſſion unto him.*) Thus bleſs God, that is, confeſs thy ſin, and ſo prepare thy ſelf to die in a holy manner; ſeeing thou art paſt hope of life, addreſs thy ſelf piouſly for death. Thus he; and all upon theſe grounds: Firſt, Becauſe he could not be perſwaded that a Wife, the Governeſs of ſuch a holy family as *Job*'s was, a Wife, the companion of ſuch a holy man as *Job* was, ſhould be ſo full of the Devil, ſo wicked to ſpeak the Devils words, with the Devils heart. And ſecondly, Becauſe Satan himſelf could not be ſo ſenceleſs as to believe or hope, that ſuch deſperate counſel could ever take upon *Job*'s heart: and therefore he conceives that ſhe adviſed him only, as any one would a dying friend, or a malefactor condemned and ready to be carried to execution, yet perſiſting in his ſin, or unlamenting the wickedneſs which procur'd that ſentence. Her error, ſaith he, was only this, that ſhe judged him wicked, becauſe he was thus ſmitten; and that he truſted upon his integrity, becauſe he held it faſt: whereas indeed *Job* looked for no good, but out of the hand of *Free-grace*, and accounted his very *Integrity but dung, to the righteouſneſs and redemption of the promiſed Meſſiah.*

Teipſum ad mortem ſanctè obeundam comparato, **Beza.**

But (with humble reſpect to ſo reverend an Author) there are two reaſons ſtrong againſt this Expoſition, in my apprehenſion, which I ſhall propoſe, and ſubmit to the readers judgment.

The firſt is this, It had been quite againſt Satans deſign, that *Job*'s Wife ſhould give her Husband good counſel: For it had been ſo far from being an addition to *Job*'s affliction, that it had been a great abatement of it to hear his Wife ſpeak ſo holily, and adminiſtring ſuch wholſom counſel in the ſubſtance of it, though miſtaken in the application of it to him. And ſurely a heart ſo compoſed as *Job*'s was under all theſe preſſures, would have ſhaped out ſuch an anſwer as this: My dear Wife, I thank thee for thy care and counſel, thou haſt a holy jealouſie over me, that I am not in ſuch a poſture of ſpirit as becomes a dying man. Though there be an error in thy adviſe as applied to me, yet I take it as an error of love, and thy reproof though miſplaced, is very acceptable and precious unto me.

But (which makes my ſecond reaſon;) He reproves her for it, and tells her plainly, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh*; Whereas if that had been the meaning of her words, *ſhe ſpake as one of the wiſe women*; like a wiſe woman indeed. It is an act of wiſdom and of love, both to ſuſpect ill of another, when that ſuſpition leads us only to adviſe him for his good. It is an excellent thing when jealouſies are improved into faithful counſels. Surely then *Job* had never numbred her with the fooliſh women, if that ſpeech of hers had imported only an humble preparation for his approaching death.

In the ſecond place, Some who tranſlate the words, *Bleſs God and die*, do yet expound them as very ſinful counſel; though the words ſound fair, yet the ſence is made very foul. Theſe underſtand them as an Irony, as if his wife ſcoffing and jeering her husband, had ſaid: *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? bleſs God, and die*; thou ſhalt have enough of thine integrity, take thy fill of bleſſing of God; thou art all for bleſſing God, and holding faſt thy integrity; go on if thou wilt, and bleſs God ſtill, and ſee what thou ſhalt get by it; thou ſhalt have no other reward but a wound, thou ſhalt receive no wages of this Maſter but death, *bleſs God, and die.* Repeat that ſpeech now, which you uſed under the firſt affliction; Repeat again that beloved maxime, with which you ſeem to be ſo much delighted, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord*; you ſhall ſee, it will not fright death away, or be any ſecurity from the grave: you thought when you ſpoke thoſe words firſt, that they would have prevented a ſecond trouble, and that God who ſaw you take the former ſtroak ſo kindly at his hand, would not ſtrike you again: But you ſee, good words are no defence againſt blows: And if thou ſhouldſt be ſo fooliſh, to fly for refuge to the ſame ſubmiſſive language, experience would quickly teach thee, that as before it could not protect thee from this ſore diſeaſe, ſo now it would be no protection from the arreſt of death. *Bleſs God, and die.*

Some ſtrengthen this ſenſe, from the form of ſpeaking here uſed, which is imperative, *Bleſs God, and die:* She bids him do it, I, do it and ſpare not. Such expreſſions import a mixture of ſcorn, as Lam. 4. 21. *Rejoyce and be glad O daughter of Edom:* Here is a grant, if not a command; a ſeeming direction, if not an injunction, to rejoyce and be glad; what is given as the occaſion of this joy? *The Cup alſo ſhall paſs thorough unto thee*; What cup? A cup of blood, a cup of trembling: And is this to be rejoyced in? Surely in ſuch joy the heart muſt be heavy, and the acting of ſuch mirth is ſorrow: yet he bids her rejoyce; as if he had ſaid, be as merry as you can, yet the the cup ſhall paſs thorough unto thee, thou ſhalt not eſcape. So *Eccleſ.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee, and walk in the wayes of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes,* (do ſo) *but know, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgement.* Thus here, *Bleſs God, and die,* Go on I pray, take thy fill of bleſſing God, bleſs him as much and as long as thou wilt, yet I ſee the Image of death in thy face, die thou ſhalt. Mr. *Broughton* ſeems to incline to ſuch a meaning in his Tranſlation, *Doeſt thou ſtill hold thine integrity, bleſſing God, and dying?* As if ſhe had ſaid, wilt thou be ſuch a fool, to go on bleſſing God and dying, bleſſing God, while he is killing thee; which was indeed *Jobs* wiſdom, and his reſolution a little after, *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Eia quæſo! nunc cum vix reſpirare poſſis, repete tuum, Sit nomen Domini benedictum, & poſtea morere.

So far of thoſe who tranſlate the Text, *bleſs God, and die,* with that two-fold expoſition upon it; I ſhall now conſider what ſence we are to make out of theſe words as we tranſlate them, and as they are indeed moſt generally tranſlated. *Curſe God, and die*: This reading of the Text, ſeems moſt anſwerable to Satans deſign, which being to provoke *Job* to curſe God; it was moſt proper to ſute his Wives ſpirit with ſuch thoughts, and to put his own words into her mouth, *Curſe God, and die*: This thred is of the ſame ſpinning with the former, and carries Satans plot home upon his own principles; She ſpeaks this adverſaries mind as fully as he could himſelf, when ſhe bids her Husband *Curſe God, and die.*

But could *Job* die when he liſted, that ſhe biddeth him *Curſe God, and die*? What means this Language?

Some interpret her meaning to be this, *die by thy own hand*, deſtroy thy ſelf; as ſons of *Belial* uſe to ſay, go hang thy ſelf, murther thy ſelf, make an end of thy ſelf: As God by theſe Plagues is thy Judge, ſo be thou (to end the matter) thy own executioner. Or as others; *curſe God*, that ſo he may be provoked to take thee out of the world quickly. Or *Curſe God, and die*, eaſe thy heart ſomewhat, and give it vent by breaking out againſt God in blaſphemies, take this revenge upon him, and then let him do his worſt, *Curſe God*, though thou die for it.

Ne prius animum exhales, quam multis probris in Deum congeſtis dolori tuo ſatisfeceris. Pined.

Laſtly, *Curſe God*, that ſo the Magiſtrate taking notice of it, thou mayeſt be cut off by the Sword of Juſtice. We know blaſphemers were ſentenc'd to death without mercy, by the Law of *Moſes*; and it is not improbable that the light of Nature might carry thoſe Nations, to as high and ſevere a revenge, againſt that higheſt ſin. We know *Socrates* was adjudged to death by the *Athenians* (as their natural divinity taught them) for an injurious or diſhonorable ſpeech concerning their gods. I conceive her counſel, *Curſe God, and die*, had ſome of theſe intendments in it; the beſt of them is bad enough, and ſo bad, that it renders this Objection againſt them all.

It is Objected, That ſurely, any of theſe carry too high a ſtrain of wickedneſs for *Job*'s Wife; ſurely ſhe could not imagine, much leſs have the boldneſs to offer ſuch advice to her Husband.

I anſwer firſt in general, A good man may have a very bad Wife. A Husband cannot infuſe holineſs, or make his Wife good: Marriage doth not change the heart; Marriage with Chriſt doth, but not Marriage with a Chriſtian, or the holieſt man that ever lived. Therefore that reaſon is not cogent.

Secondly, This ſpeech, and a holy perſon, are not altogether inconſiſtent: poſſibly *Job*'s Wife was a good woman, though actually ſhe ſpake thus wickedly. Divers of the Jewiſh Doctors have an opinion, that it was not *Job's* Wife that ſpake, but the Devil in her likeneſs, I ſhall leave that among their other dreams. It is conjectured by others (though it were not the Devil that ſpake, perſonating his Wife, yet) that it was the Devil ſpeaking in or by the perſon of his Wife, as he ſpake in or by the Serpent, *Geneſ.* 3. Or as perſons really poſſeſt of the Devil, who ſpeak Satans words, and do Satans works, not their own. Some (I ſay) carry it thus, that ſhe was for that time not only acted, but actually poſſeſt by the Devil, and ſo ſpeaks the Devils language: One of the Ancients is expreſs to this purpoſe, *Theſe are the Devils words, not the womans words:* which another illuſtrates by that in *Geneſ.* 3. where it is ſaid, *The Serpent ſaid unto the Woman*, but it was the Devil that ſpake unto the Woman by the Serpent; ſo here it is ſaid, *His wife ſpake unto him*, but the truth is, it was the Devil ſpake unto him, in and by his Wife. And if ſo, put the Language into the worſt expoſition given, or give a worſe (if truth will bear it) and it will be no wrong to ſuch an Orator. I believe we cannot expound the words to a higher ſence or ſtrain of wickedneſs, then Satan could ſpeak.

Chryſoſt. *Dixit ad eum uxor ejus; uxorem dixit dixiſſe, ſed verè diabolus dixit, Sic namque & olim ait. Dixit ſerpens ad mulierem; ſerpentem dixit dixiſſe, ſed non ſerpens dixit, ſed diabolus qui per ſerpentē locutus eſt,* Origen.

But we need not make Satan himſelf the ſpeaker, and yet clear the matter too; though we neither ſay as the Jewiſh Doctors, that it was the Devil perſonally, taking the ſhape of *Job*'s Wife; or as thoſe Chriſtian Fathers, that the Devil did actually poſſeſs her; yet we may ſay (and ſo ſalve the difficulty) that ſhe was mightily over-powred, and acted by the temptation of Satan, to be an inſtrument of temptation, in this groſs manner againſt her Husband: Though ſhe were not acted as the Serpent was, in whom Satan ſpake to *Eve*; yet we may well ſay, ſhe was acted as *Eve* by whom Satan ſpake to *Adam*: *Eve* ſpake the Devils mind, being prevailed upon by his temptation, to perſwade her Husband to eat againſt the command of God; and *Job*'s Wife overcome by a like temptation attempts the perſwaſion of her Husband to curſe God.

For as it is poſſible for one that is good, to fall into the groſſeſt and moſt blaſphemous temptation himſelf; ſo it is poſſible for one that is good, to be made an inſtrument of ſuch temptations unto others. We may ſee an inſtance near, if not fully reaching this aſſertion, in the Apoſtle *Peter*, who hearing Chriſt fore-telling his ſufferings, takes him aſide, and *began to rebuke him, ſaying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this ſhall not be unto thee*, Matth. 16. 22, 23. *Peter* acted Satans part, in this, againſt his Maſter, though unwittingly, yet ſo wittily, ſo to the life, that he got his name by it; *Chriſt ſaid to* Peter, *get thee behind me Satan:* It was *Peter*'s tongue, but Satan tun'd it. *Iſaac* ſaid of his Son *Jacob* in *Eſau*'s dreſs, *The hands are the hands of* Eſau, *but the voyce is the voyce of* Jacob. Chriſt perceived here Satans counſel in *Peter*'s words, he ſaw the wicked ſpirit through the cloathing of *Peter*'s fleſh; and therefore rebukes the Organ, under the title of the chief Agent, *Get thee behind me Satan.* Now as *Peter*, though a holy man and full of good intentions to his Maſter, yet ſpake the Devils mind and language ſo fully, that the Devil himſelf (as to that purpoſe) could ſcarce have mended it; ſo likewiſe *Job*'s Wife might be a godly woman in the main, though abuſed and miſled by Satan, ſhe thus excited her Husband, in the groſſeſt conſtruction thoſe words can bear, to *Curſe God, and die.*

There is ſomewhat in the Text, which may give us a hint of this: that though ſhe ſpake this, yet *Job* eſteemed her a good woman; for, obſerve *Job*'s anſwer to this advice. What doth he ſay? He doth not ſay, *Thou wicked Woman, thou abominable wretch*, why doeſt thou give me ſuch councel; all that he ſaith is this, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh Women ſpeaketh.* Obſerve it, he doth not call her fooliſh or wicked Woman, but, *thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh Women*; as if he ſhould ſay, How now Wife? what words are theſe that I hear from thee? thou doſt not ſpeak now like thy ſelf, I uſe to hear other Language from thee; thou and I have had other kind of conference, and I have received other kind of counſel from thee then this: Whence is it that thou art ſo unlike thy ſelf? where are thy words ſeaſon'd with Salt, which have ſo often miniſtred grace unto the hearers? thou art degenerated in manners and corrupted in thy ſpeech, *thou ſpeakeſt now as one of the fooliſh Women*: Intimating, that ſhe uſed to ſpeak wiſely and diſcreetly, or as *Solomon* deſcribes the vertuous Woman (*Prov.* 31.26.) that heretofore *ſhe opened her mouth with wiſdom*; and and now ſhe ſpake only as a fooliſh or wicked Woman; He doth not ſay ſhe was one: one act is enough to aſſimilate, but it is not enough to denominate. Thus much may ſerve to evince, that though we take the words in that worſt ſence, yet it doth not neceſſarily infer, that *Job*'s Wife was a wicked and ungodly Woman, which is the objection againſt that Expoſition.

Non eam ſtultam vocat, ſed in eo ſermone ſtultarum mulierum mores imitatam, quaſi à ſeipſa defecerit, & quaſi in alienos mores & ingenium abierit. Sanctius *in loc.*

From the words tranſlated, *Curſe God, and die*, and thus expounded, we may Obſerve;

Firſt, *That Satan is reſtleſs and unwearied in this deſign, to bring the people of God to think ill and ſpeak ill of God.*

It is that he laboured for, in the carrying on of this whole buſineſs, concerning *Job*; and every ſtone is turned, every way tryed to accompliſh this propoſed end.

Secondly, In that he perſwadeth *Job* by his Wife, when he was in this woful condition to *Curſe God, and die,*

Obſerve, *That Satan would perſwade us to eaſe our ſelves of troubleſom evils, by falling into ſinful evils.*

Job was grievouſly diſeaſed; you ſee the medicine and the cure that Satan preſcribeth, Go ſin, ſaith he, *Curſe God, and die*; whereas one of the leaſt evils of ſin is worſe then all the evils of ſuffering that can befall us. All ſorrows are more elegible then one ſin. It hath been rightly taught us from Antiquity, that the loweſt degree of a lye (becauſe ſin) is not to be made or admitted (if that *medium* could be aſſured ſo noble an end) for the ſaving of a World. What a Father and teacher of lyes then is Satan, who directs many a poor ſoul to ſave it ſelf from, or help it ſelf out of a ſmall affliction, by adventuring upon ſome great tranſgreſſion? *Curſe* GOD, *and die.*

Thirdly, *It is ſinful to wiſh our own deaths, though we are under pains more painful then Death.*

It is ſinful to deſire death abſolutely; we may deſire it with ſubmiſſion to the Will of God: To live is an act of Nature; but to be willing to live becauſe God wills it, is an act of Grace: And as it is our holineſs to do the Will of God while we live, ſo it is our holineſs to be content to live, while we ſuffer according to his Will. On the other hand, to die is an act of Nature; but to die becauſe Gods wills it, is an act of Grace: Chriſt is ſaid to be obedient unto death, becauſe he died in contemplation of Gods Decree, and in conformity to his good pleaſure. To die thus, is the duty of a Chriſtian, and the crown of all his obedience. Satan would have us live as we will, and die when we will; he tempts us as much to die when we liſt, as to live how we liſt. Satan puts *Job* upon it peremptorily, *Curſe God, and die*, deſire or procure thy own death. To wiſh death that we may enjoy Chriſt, it is a holy wiſh; but yet we muſt not wiſh that neither, abſolutely. The Apoſtle *Paul*, *Phil.* 1.23. *Deſired to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt*; yet you ſee how he qualifies and debates it. To wiſh for death, that we may be freed from ſin, is a holy wiſh; but yet we muſt not wiſh that abſolutely neither, we muſt refer our ſelves to the pleaſure of God, how long he will let us conflict with our corruptions and with our luſts, with this body of death and ſin which we bear about us. But to wiſh for death, becauſe our lives are full of trouble, is an unholy wiſh; God may, yea and hath as much uſe of our lives in our troubles as in our comforts: *We may do much buſineſs for God on a ſick-bed*: We may do God as much work when we are bound hand and foot, in a priſon, as when we are at liberty; paſſive obedience brings as much glory to God as active doth: therefore we muſt not wiſh for death, eſpecially not with an abſolute wiſh, becauſe we are under troubleſom evils. And if it be ſinful to wiſh for death, how wicked is it to procure or haſten death, to pull down our houſe of clay, with our own hands, becauſe we are under troubleſom evils?

Fourthly, Obſerve further, *Satan would perſwade that death is an end, at leaſt an eaſe, of outward troubles.*

Wouldſt thou have an end of thy troubles and of thy ſorrows? *Curſe God, and die*, here is the remedy. We ſay indeed of ſome remedies, that they are worſe then the diſeaſe, but I am ſure, this is. Death to ungodly ones, it is ſo far from being an end or an eaſe of their troubles, that it is to them (as Chriſt ſpeaks in another caſe) the beginning of ſorrows, the entrance to eternal death, and the very Suburbs of Hell. Yet, how many doth Satan perſwade (when they are in *Job's* caſe, in great extremities) that death will be the cure of all their troubles?

Fifthly, Obſerve, *That Satan would make men willing to die, when they are moſt unfit to die.*

You ſee what preparation Satan directs *Job* unto, he biddeth him *Curſe God, and die*. Would not *Job*, think you, have been in a fit poſture, in a fit frame for death, when he had been curſing God? Repent and die, pray and die, humble thy ſelf and die, believe and die; *take faſt hold of Chriſt who is our life, our way to life, and die*, are the counſels and voice of the holy Ghoſt; but Satans language is *Curſe God, and die*, ſin and die, be impenitent and die, blaſpheme and die. And it is an experienced truth, that oftentimes they ſeem moſt willing to die, who are moſt unfit, moſt unready for death; you ſhall ſee ſome men venturing, yea caſting away their lives without fear or wit; the whole viſible buſineſs of whoſe lives, hath been nothing elſe but a working out of their own damnation, without fear or trembling: They as it were give diligence all their dayes, to make Hell and reprobation ſure, and yet go out of the World as if they were ſure of Heaven. This is Satans preparation, *Curſe God, and dye.*

Laſtly, Note this, *That the holieſt perſon is lyable to the moſt blaſphemous temptation.*

One would have wondred that Satan ſhould ever have ventured to ſuggeſt ſuch a groſs thing as this, to ſo holy a man as *Job*. But Satan where he hath been often foyled, growes impudent, and will then ſuggeſt ſuch things, not becauſe he hopes to prevail, but becauſe he reſolves to vex ſuch as he cannot overcom. He troubles as much and as many as he can.

So much of the counſel which *Job's* Wife gave him, reproving him as fooliſh and over-credulous in holding faſt (that unprofitable thing) his integrity; and adviſing him to be worſe then mad or outragious, in curſing God and dying.

Let us now conſider *Job's* holy and wiſe reply in the tenth Verſe.

But he ſaid unto her, Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh; what? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?

Theſe words contain *Job's* reply, wherein two things are conſidered. Firſt, A reproof. Secondly, A refutation.

אשת הנבלות

Firſt, He rejects her counſel with a ſharp and wholeſom reprehenſion, and then he refuteth her counſel by ſtrong and ſolid reaſon. The reprehenſion in theſe words, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh.* The reaſon of his reprehenſion in thoſe which follow, *What? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?*

To begin with the reprehenſion, **Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women.**] In the Hebrew, *woman* is not expreſt, it is only a Feminine, *as one of the fooliſh ones*: we tranſlate it, *fooliſh women*; that word cometh from *Nabal*, which ſignifieth properly a thing fallen off like a dried leaf, or blaſted withered fruit, without life, without ſtrength, without ſap and moyſture, exhauſted and killed, thorough exceſs either of cold or heat: and ſo by a Metaphor, it noteth any one without the ſap or juyce of wiſdom, goodneſs, and honeſty; ſuch a perſon, we call, a ſapleſs perſon. Or it ſignifieth one that is vile, and baſe, and low; one that hath a baſe, withered, low, fallen ſpirit, a ſpirit fallen below all noble or holy reſolutions. *Nabal*, is ſuch a fool, as hath his underſtanding faded, and corrupted in regard of any holy principles, though he may be wiſe in regard of natural principles. Such the Prophet deſcribes, *They are wiſe to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge*, Jer. 9. 22. Hence the Latine word (*Nebulo*) which ſignifies a Knave, is by good Etymologiſts derived from the Hebrew *Nabal*; becauſe ſuch are dull-heads in goodneſs, and witty only in wickedneſs. Such was he, 1 *Sam.* 25. 25. *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*; that proper name is the ſame with the Appellative here; that's the Maſculine, this the Feminine, *Thou ſpeakeſt like a Nabaleſs*: We find the word often uſed elſewhere to ſignifie wicked, worthleſs and vile perſons, *Pſal.* 14. 1. *The fool hath ſaid*, &c. *Deut.* 32. 6, 21. at *verſ.* 6. *O fooliſh people and unwiſe, do ye thus requite the Lord?* And *verſ.* 21. *They have provoked me to anger by thoſe that are no gods, and I will provoke them to jealouſie by them which are not a people, and move them to anger with a fooliſh Nation*; by them which are not a people, by a fooliſh Nation: A fooliſh people that deſerve not the name of a people. Look upon this word in the abſtract, folly is wickedneſs; and to work folly is in the Language of the Scripture, as much, as to work wickedneſs, to work the greateſt wickedneſs. Hence it is ſometime tranſlated villany, *Jer.* 29. 22, 23. *The Lord make thee like* Zedekiah *and like* Ahab, *whom the Kings of* Babylon *roſted in the fire, becauſe they have committed villany in* Iſrael. And throughout the Book of *Proverbs*, the fool and an ungodly man, a wiſe man and a godly man, are (*Synonomaes*) words ſignifying the ſame thing. Thus *Job* reproves his Wife, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women*, like one of thoſe who have no wiſdom, no goodneſs, not any ſenſe or ſap of goodneſs in them. But who were theſe fooliſh Women, at whom he aims in this compariſon? that is not clear; ſome conceive he intends the Women of *Idumea*, thou ſpeakeſt as one of theſe heathen Women, theſe *Idumeans*; I have heard indeed ſuch Language from them when things have gone amiſs with them; I have heard them curſing their Idols, curſing their gods; I have heard them rail at fate, fall out, and wrangle with Fortune; *Thou ſpeakeſt like one of them.* Thou takeſt thy pattern in this, from the cuſtom of the Heathen, who uſe their gods courſely, when they think they have but courſe uſage from their gods. If their gods be angry, they will be angry with and revile their gods. *Thou ſpeakeſt after the rate of theſe fooliſh women*; thou didſt never hear ſuch doctrine in my family, or among thoſe who fear and love the true and ever-living God.

Job you ſee, is now ſomewhat warm in his ſpeech. *Job* had indured much, and all his ſufferings hitherto hath not ſtirred any paſſion in him but that of ſorrow, as we ſaw in the latter end of the former Chapter: Not any angry poſture, not an angry expreſſion all along; but now, that God and the wayes of God are concerned, *Job* can hold no longer: this ſpeech of his Wife caſt diſhonour upon both, and now paſſion begins to ſtir, he cannot forbear her though his Wife, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh woman ſpeaketh.*

Obſerve, That, *Paſſion becometh us in the cauſe of God.*

Our Lord Chriſt teaching his Diſciples the true meaning of the Law, tells them, *Matth.* 5. 22. *He that is angry with his brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the judgment*; but he that is not angry when there is cauſe, eſpecially when there is ſuch a cauſe as this, he likewiſe is in danger of the judgment.

Secondly, *Job* is not only angry with her, but he reproves her, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women.*

It is lawful ſometimes to expreſs holy anger and paſſion by ſharp reproofs.

Juſta ira mater eſt diſciplinæ.

Chriſt who was meekneſs and humility it ſelf, yet when he hath to deal with *Phariſees*, he can call them *a generation of Vipers, painted Sepulchres, blind guides, an adulterous* *generation, children of the Devil:* Anger can hardly be ſilent, and that anger is admirable which ſpeaks and ſins not. He that knows not how to be angry, knows not how to love: And he that knows not how to reprove with love, knows not how to be angry.

You may diſcern love in *Job*, mingling with and moderating his reproof. *Job* rebukes his Wife, but it is with the ſpirit of meekneſs. Firſt, He doth not ſpeak poſitively or down right, *Thou art a fool*, but comparatively, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women uſe to ſpeak*; that ſeems one mitigation or allay of this reproof; yet I confeſs ſuch ſpeaking by way of ſimilitude, hath often in it the force and intent of a direct aſſertion.

Another thing obſervable for the meekneſs of *Job*, is this; he doth not fall out with the whole Sex, and ſay, ye women are fooliſh, and ignorant, and impatient; but *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women.* He doth not charge the whole Sex, he knew there were wiſe women, as well as fooliſh; ſuch *Solomon* deſcribes, *Prov.* 31. 26. *She openeth her mouth with wiſdom.* And we know *Abigail* the Wife was wiſe, and her Husband was *Nabal*, a fool. *Job* doth not lay it upon women in general, he falleth not out with all, becauſe he knew there were ſome *fooliſh ones*, and becauſe he ſaw his Wife in that act, imitating *thoſe fooliſh ones.*

There is a third thing mitigating the ſharpneſs of the reproof; *Job* doth not fall out with, or diſguſt the ordinance of God, becauſe his Wife ſpake thus; he ſaith not, who would marry to be yoakt with ſuch a one as you? It is enough to make one forſwear marriage, to have or hear of ſuch a VVife; better be in any condition then in a married condition. How often do Husbands diſcover this folly? if their VVives diſpleaſe them, preſently the ordinance of God diſpleaſeth them, who would be married? It is very ſad, when mans miſcarriage makes us queſtion or diſrelliſh the inſtitution of God.

In the fourth place, *Job* is not only not angry with the ordinance of God in general, but he is not angry with the ſpecial act of Gods providence, in his own particular choice. There are many will ſay, if their wives trouble them, I wiſh we had never ſeen the faces one of another, we may curſe the hour we ever met together. *Jobs* ſpirit was far from this; he was indeed angry with his wife, but he was not angry becauſe this woman was his wife: He doth not reject her becauſe ſhe was bad, but labours to make her better. *To convince another of folly, is the readyeſt way to make him wiſe.* Thus we ſee, though there were ſharpneſs in the reproof to ſearch the wound, yet there was none to exaſperate the perſon: This reproof was an exact compound of love, and anger, of zeal and knowledge.

From the ground of her counſel, and this reproof compared together, we may Obſerve; *That it is an argument of a low and of a fooliſh ſpirit, to judge of any mans condition by Gods outward dealings with him:* For, this was it, that ſhe grounded her counſel upon; ſeeing his outward condition, ſhe thought him as a miſerable man, and therefore adviſeth him to *curſe God, and die. Thou ſpeakeſt* (ſaith he) *as one of the fooliſh women.* It is an argument of folly and madneſs, to judge a man miſerable becauſe poor, or unhappy, or unhealthy.

Again obſerve, *That unworthy and low thoughts of God, argue a low and a fooliſh ſpirit. Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the Nabaleſſes?* Thou haſt ſuch low thoughts of God, and ſpeakeſt ſo poorly of God, that at preſent I cannot but number thee among the fools; for as there is nothing ought to be ſo high in our thoughts, as God and his wayes; ſo we ought to have high and reverent thoughts of God and his wayes, whatſoever he doth with us: though we change, yet he and they change not; God is the ſame, and his ſervice the ſame for ever.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *That to do or ſpeak wickedly, is to do or ſpeak fooliſhly.* Sin is the greateſt folly in the world, ſin is a declining from the rule of right reaſon, both from ſpiritual reaſon and from natural; *Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wiſdom is in them?* Jer. 8. 9. True wiſdom, is to walk by a right rule, to a right end. While we ſin, luſt (in ſome degree or other) is the rule, and ſelf is the end; In both which we joyn hands with folly, and are the companions of fools; *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women,* &c.

From the reproof it ſelf, we come to conſider the reaſons of the reproof. *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh*; **what? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?** Here is the reaſon upon which he grounds his reproof, *Shall we receive good at the hands of God,* &c. The Hebrew runs thus in the letter, *Shall we receive good from God?* &c. The emphaſis of the words carry it thus, *ſhall we receive good* with hand or heart *at the hand of God, and ſhall we not* in the ſame manner *receive evil?* The word *Cabal,* whence this is derived, ſignifieth the receiving of a thing with the hand and with the heart; that is, to receive gladly and thankfully, as it were to kiſs the hand and receive a thing: Or to receive a thing with much reverence and veneration. Hence the *Jewes* call the Doctrine which is received and tranſmitted from hand to hand, namely their traditional Doctrine, *Caballa:* That which the word *Tradition* imports among the Papiſts, the word *Caballa* imports among the *Jewes*; Then the meaning of *Job* is, *That good and evil are to be alike received and entertained as from God*; that is, they are to be received with the ſame reverence and chearfulneſs. We receive good things chearfully, thankfully, reverently, we kiſs the hand and take them. *And ſhall we not receive evil?* The words do not refer to the act of receiving, but to the manner of receiving; We ſhall receive evil whether we will or no, but ſhall we not receive it? namely ſo, and ſo, as we receive good, chearfully, thankfully, reverently, reſpecting God and his wayes of providence towards us. And then the queſtion may be reſolved into this affirmative concluſion; *That look in what manner we receive good from the hand of God, in the ſame we ought to receive evil.* Or thus, *Where we have our good, thence we muſt have our evil.* One and the ſame hand moderates and diſpenceth both. *Wherefore, ſhall we receive good, and not evil?*

נקבל *A radice* קבל *Accepit manibus vel animo.*

Caballa doctrina per manus accepta & ore tenus ab aliis ad alios tranſfuſa. Merc.

Shall we receive good?] Some interpret the *good* here to be meant of the good of the next life; ſhall we be in expectation of everlaſting good? ſhall we be in expectation of enjoying Chriſt, and ſeeing the face of God for ever in Heaven? ſhall we be at leaſt in hope of a crown of glory, layed up in ſtore for us? and ſhall we not be willing to receive evils, and digeſt troubles, to bear the croſs a few dayes while we are here? *I* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, Rom. 8. 18.) *reckon that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared to the glory which ſhall be revealed.* Shall we have glory in the eye of our faith, and ſhall we not indure a little trouble in the eye of our ſenſe?

But rather, by *good* here, we are to underſtand the good things of this life; *ſhall we receive good?* ſc. outward comforts and proſperity, **and ſhall we not receive evil?** from whom? *Evil* from the hand of God.

What **Evil**? Sooner ſhall the Sun ſend forth a cloud, then God ſend forth any *evil* properly taken; therefore *evil* here, is only afflictions, as contradiſtinct to the *good* before-named: So the ſenſe is, *ſhall we receive comforts at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive afflictions?* Afflictions are evil, not moral evil, not natural evil: but they are called evil, either firſt, becauſe they are uſually eſteemed ſo; or ſecondly, becauſe they are ſo to ſenſe; or thirdly, becauſe they are many times abuſed, and ſo in the event they prove evil unto us: laſtly, they are often evil negatively, that is, they do us no good; but they are never evil poſitively in themſelves, or relatively, as they are received from God.

Afflictiones malæ per ſe non ſunt, ſed malæ tantum vocantur quia tales vulgò æſtimantur.

We may take notice (for the further clearing of this paſſage) of the form of the argument. It is propoſed by way of queſtion or expoſtulation, as we render it. *What? ſhall we receive good?* &c. There is a great deal of force in the manner of propoſing; queſtions are full of quickneſs and ſpirit. *Job* doth not only give his wife a Logical reaſon, but a Rhetorical reaſon, words with life, to convince her by; *What?* ſaith he, *ſhall we receive good?* &c. As if he had ſaid, this were an abſurd thing, once to imagine; a blind man may ſee this, it is ſo plain, and a fool may underſtand it, the reaſon lies all in ſight; That if we receive *good* from the hand of God, we muſt at leaſt with patience receive *evil.*

From this reaſon in general, Obſerve, *That reproofs come then moſt ſtrongly upon the heart, when they are backed with reaſon.* Some reprove with rage, and not with reaſon; with paſſion, and not with wiſdom; they reprove with their wit rather then with their ſpirit. *Job* mixes reaſon with his paſſion, and gives her an argument, as well as a rebuke.

More particularly, from the matter of this reaſon, Obſerve firſt, *That good and evil are both from the hand of God. Give me neither poverty nor riches*, ſaith *Agur*, Prov. 30. 8. both are the gift of God. Poverty is Gods gift as well as riches. If God do not give us poverty, all the world will not make us poor. *I form the light, and create darkneſs: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all theſe things*; Iſaiah 45. 7. The ſame Prophet teacheth us that theſe two are equally the prerogative of God, and ſuch a prerogative, as equally diſtinguiſheth him from all Idols and falſe gods; *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good or do evil, that we may be diſmayed, and behold it together.* No creature hath ever anſwered this challenge, or ever ſhall, *Iſa.*41.23. Creatures do good and evil, as miniſters of Gods will, not as matters of their own. Good of every kind, and all kinds of pœnal evil come forth from God. Indeed, God uſually conveyes theſe to us by the hand of man; but it becomes us to receive them as from the hand of God. Much, both good and evil, comes to us at the ſecond hand, but we ought to take it as from the firſt. This truth well wrought upon our hearts, will make every good we enjoy better, and every evil we feel, not ſo bad. This latter branch ſhall be caſt into a ſecond Obſervation,

Which may be this, *To look on evil as coming from the hand of God, will quiet the heart in bearing evil. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?* And this in two reſpects: Firſt, becauſe of the ſoveraignty of God, he being ſupream Lord, may do what he will: and his will being the ſupream rule of Juſtice he can do no wrong. This notion of God aſſures us, that whatſoever we receive from the hand of God, is juſt and right; hence the inference is natural, If God ſend evil, I muſt receive it quietly, for he ſends it juſtly. Secondly, becauſe of the aſſured faithfulneſs, and love and goodneſs of God to his, even when he ſends them (which are all he ſends) this ſort of evils. As if *Job* had ſaid, any thing is well-come that cometh from one that loves me, and hath done me good, as God I know doth, and hath done often, and will do for ever. Will not a man take a nominal evil kindly at his hand, from whom he hath received much real good. While we look only upon creatures and what they do, the burthen of trouble is intolerable; but as it cometh from God, from a God that loveth us, we cannot but receive it in love. Afflictions coming from the creature, are as the rod of *Moſes* upon the ground, a biting, a ſtinging ſerpent: but conſidered in the hand of God, they are as the ſerpent in the hand of *Moſes*, a rod to correct, and a ſtaff to comfort us. *David* we know fled from *Saul* in fear of his life; envious, bloody *Saul* had threatned to kill him. In his flight, *David* meets with his beloved *Jonathan*, and ſaith unto him (1 Sam. 20. 8.) Jonathan, *if there be any iniquity in me, ſlay me thy ſelf, for why ſhouldeſt thou bring me to thy Father?* He would die rather by the hand of *Jonathan*, then by the hand of *Saul*; death from the hand of *Jonathan* who loved him, was ſweet; whereas from *Saul*, it had been a bitter cup indeed. Take another inſtance. *Elijah* flyeth from *Jezabel*, 1 King. 19. 4. and why doth he flie from her? *She ſeeks my life*, ſaith he, *to take it away.* Thoughts of this preſſed him ſo hard, that when he came into the Wilderneſs (the Text ſaith) *he ſate down under a Juniper-tree, and requeſted for himſelf that he might die, and ſaid, It is enough now O Lord, take away my life.* But *Elijah*, if thou be ſo willing to die, why doeſt thou fly from *Jezebel?* ſhe would have given thee thy wiſh preſently, and ſatiſfied at once her own malice, and thy longing: I but death from the hand of a *Jezabel* was his fear, not his deſire: He could welcome it from the hand of God, but not from the hand of a ſpiteful woman. But you will ſay, death is from the hand of God, though it come by the hand of the creature. True; but as every good we receive, is ſo much the more ſweet, by how much the more we ſee of the hand of God in it, and leſs of the creature; ſo every evil is ſo much the more bitter, by how much we ſee leſs of God, and more of man in it. If God will take away my life, I am pleaſed, but I beg deliverance from the hand of *Jezabel:* He fled for his life for fear of *Jezabel*, but he called upon God to die. We may exemplifie this in Chriſt, *Joh.*18.11. *The cup which my Father hath given me*, ſaith he, *ſhall I not drink it?* It is *poculum charitatis*, a grace-cup to poor ſinners, a cup though bitter in it ſelf, though mixt with the wrath of God as a judge, due to ſinners, yet temper'd and ſweetned with a Fathers love everlaſtingly aſſured unto me; I cannot but drink it, it cometh from my Father.

But it may be objected, that I lately aſſign'd it as one reaſon, why Satan ſpared *Jobs* wife; namely, That ſhe who was his neereſt friend, being made an inſtrument of his affliction, the affliction might be more afflictive and vexatious; And *David* complains moſt of a friend, that ſmote him, *Pſal.* 55.

I anſwer, when love turns to hatred, and friendſhip to unfaithfulneſs, when former kiſſes (like that preſent one of *Judas*) are changed into treachery; this is very wounding and grievous indeed. But when God ſtrikes his friends, he is their friend ſtill; when he afflicts, it is in faithfulneſs, (*Pſal.* 119. 75.) He is good to us, when he ſends us evil; and he ſends us evil, for our good. To be ſmitten by a friend whoſe very ſmiting is friendſhip, and who heals us by wounding, cannot be offenſive. Hence *Davids* choice, *Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and not into the hand of man*, 1 Sam. 24. 14.

Hence a third obſervation from the ſtrength of the argument and reaſon, may be thus framed; *To conſider that all the good we have, deſcends from God, makes it both reaſonable and equitable, that we ſhould bear evil quietly when he is pleaſed to ſend it. Shall we receive good, and not evil?* ſaith he. It is *Solomons* advice, (Eccleſ. 7. 14.) *In the day of proſperity be joyful, but in the day of adverſity conſider.* What ſhall we conſider! Conſider this, and mark it well, that as the day of proſperity was from God, ſo the day of adverſity is from God likewiſe; for it follows, *God alſo hath ſet the one over againſt the other.* Therefore ſeeing God hath ſet one over againſt the other, thou muſt take the one well, as well as the other; at leaſt thou muſt bear the latter as patiently, as thou didſt receive the former joyfully. They who have ſhared with others in gains, think it but equal to ſhare with them in loſſes; they ſet the one over againſt the other. And ſo muſt we in reſpect of Gods diſpenſations towards us. If we ſet our preſent wants, over againſt our former fulneſs; our preſent ſorrows, over againſt our former comforts; our preſent ſickneſs over againſt our former health; our preſent war, over againſt our former peace; If we thus ſet the one over againſt the other, our accounts will be ballanc'd, yea our former receits of good will be far greater, and out-ballance our preſent ſufferings of evil. Eſpecially if we remember, that we never deſerved the leaſt part of the good we have received, but we have deſerved more then all the evil that we ſuffer. We may ſay as *Ezra* did, (Chap. 9. 13.) *Thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities*; and we may ſay as *Jacob* (Gen. 32. 10.) *Lord, we are not worthy the leaſt of all thy mercies.*

This argument may be of great uſe to us of this Nation, in theſe times of darkneſs and fear. What? ſhall not we receive evil from the hand of God, who have received ſo much good? we have received many years of peace from God, fourſcore years of peace; ſhall we receive ſo many years of peace, from the hands of God, and ſhall we take it ill, if we receive ſome years of war? We have received many years of plenty, ſhall we take it ill if we ſhould have ſome years of ſcarcity? We have had the Goſpel many years, every one ſitting under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree; what, if now, we hold the Goſpel ſtanding upon our guard, or marching in the Field? what if we hold it a while ſitting in Tents, and ſtanding under our diſplaied banners?

Fourthly, Foraſmuch as the ſame word is applied here to expreſs the act of the mind in reference both to good and evil, Obſerve, *That outward evils are to be received in the ſame manner, and with the ſame mind that good things are received with.* Yet a caution is to be given in with this. There are two ſorts of outward evils or ſufferings: Sin is the cauſe of ſome ſufferings, and grace is the cauſe of other ſufferings, either grace acted, or grace to be tried. Now we are not to receive the evil of ſuffering, whereof ſin is the cauſe, with the ſame mind as we do good; joy and cheerfulneſs doth not become ſuch evils. But when our ſufferings are cauſed by grace, either of thoſe wayes, then it becomes us to rejoyce. The Apoſtle ſaith more, *Rom.* 5. 3. *We glory* *in tribulation.* And again, (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) *as ſorrowful, yet alway rejoycing.* The ſorrow of godly men is like the joy of the wicked, only in appearance: *Paul* had only a ſhadow of ſorrow, as ſorrowful; but his joy was ſubſtantial and continual, *alwayes rejoycing*, though his outward eſtate caſt up, amounted but to this, *poor, and having nothing.* The reaſon is, becauſe God is the ſame in all variety of eſtates: God loves as well when we are poor, as when we are rich, yea as well when himſelf ſmites, as when he heals. He is as good to us when we receive evil, as when we receive good: therefore if God be the ſame, ſurely we ought to be the ſame too, and take it as kindly at his hands, when we are impoveriſht, as when we are inricht; when we are ſick, as when we are in health; when we are in priſon, as when we are free. Shall preſent evils make us either inſenſible of, or unthankful for paſt mercies? Shall preſent troubles be as a grave wherein to bury the memory of all our former comforts? ſhall (as it was in *Pharaohs* dream) *the lean kine, and the blaſted ears of corn, eat up and devour the fat kine, and the full ears?* The Heathen Philoſopher cenſures him for a fool, who thinks there is no benefit in benefits, nor bleſſing in bleſſings, except they be preſent: And he brands him as unthankful, who accounts the end of a mercy an injury; or thinks he is wrong'd, when free gifts are not continued. If a Heathen ſaw ſo much obligation, in the paſt benefits of a man; Chriſtians ſhould ſee it much more in the paſt mercies and bleſſings of their God. Wherefore, to conclude this point, with the counſel of the Ancient, Remember the heaps of good things received, weigh the good and the evil together: Thou ſhalt never find any mans life, at all times alike; It is the priviledge of God alone to be without changes; but if thou grieveſt at what is preſent, take comfort in what is paſt. Now thou mourneſt, but heretofore thou didſt rejoyce; now thou art in want, but thou haſt had abundance. We have a ſaying, *It is a miſerable thing to have been happy:* But a godly man is happy in the mid'ſt of all his miſery; he may ſay with undaunted *Luther, Let him be miſerable that can be miſerable, I cannot.* He that hath not a God to looſe, nor a ſoul to looſe, cannot be miſerable, whatſoever he looſes; while Chriſt is ſafe, a believer hath no reaſon to be unſatisfied. Thus we have diſcuſs'd *Job*'s anſwer, and have found it full of wiſdom and of holineſs; like thoſe words of the Wiſe, which the Preacher ſaith (*Eccleſ.* 12. 11.) *are as goads, and as nails faſtened by the Maſters of Aſſemblies. Job*'s words were as goads by the ſharpneſs of reproof, to awake and quicken lazy drones; they were as nailes by the piercing efficacy and ſtrength of reaſon, to confirm and faſten wavering minds.

Ingratus eſt, qui injuriâ vocat finem voluptatis; ſtultus qui nullum fructum eſſe putat bonorum, niſi præſentium, qui non in præteritis acquieſcit,&c. Sen. *ad* Polyb. *c.* 29. Baſil. *Orat.* 11. *de patientia.*

We have the word and warrant of God for this, in that high Elogium, or commendation given him at the concluſion of all.

In all this did not Job ſin with his lips.

Job reproves his Wife for ſpeaking ſo, and he refutes what ſhe had ſpoken; in both he hits the right: Now *In all this did not* Job *ſin with his lips.*

This is the ſame teſtimony for the matter, and almoſt the ſame in words, with that, given of *Job*'s victory, in the cloſe of the firſt dayes battel; and having explicated them in that place, I ſhall but briefly touch them here. *In all this did not* Job *ſin with his lips.*

We ſee in general, the holy Ghoſt gives the victory to *Job.* Satan is foiled, his plot fails, the weapons of his warfare are all broken and ſucceſleſs; all his fiery darts are either quench'd or beaten back upon himſelf: *Job* ſtands like a mighty rock, or like a houſe built upon the rock, unſhaken, unmoved: He that is held up by everlaſting armes, ſhall ſtand faſt for ever. *In all this* Job *ſinned not.*

The words refer to what was paſt; for *Job* afterward did fail, and ſinned with his lips through vehemency of pain, and heat of diſputation; he ſpake ſome things raſhly, though nothing blaſphemouſly: So he confeſſes, *Chap.* 42. 13. *I have uttered things that I underſtood not. But in all this*, ſo far as *Job* had gone, *he had not ſinned with his lips.* As *Samuel* after many victories and deliverances, ſets up a ſtone or pillar with this inſcription, *Eben Ezer*, The ſtone of help, ſaying, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us* (1 *Sam.* 7. 12.) So here the holy Ghoſt (as it were) erects a pillar, raiſeth a monument of *Jobs* compleat and glorious victories over Satan, thus engraven, *Hitherto, in all this* Job *hath not ſinned.* Yet you may remember, that ſuch ſpeeches concerning the Saints, are to be underſtood in a qualified ſence, not in an abſolute ſence. For, *who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean*? Perfection out of imperfection? Not to ſin, is here our duty, and ſhould be our endeavour, it ſhall be our reward in Heaven. On earth we are ſaid not to ſin, when we deſire not to ſin; as hath been more at larged ſhewed upon thoſe words of the laſt *verſe* of the former Chapter, *In all this* Job *ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.* There read the point handled more diſtinctly. For the opening of theſe words, note only this; that when it is ſaid, *In all this* Job *ſinned not*, there is more to be underſtood, then is expreſt; for *Job* did not only not ſin, but he overcame, and triumphed gloriouſly over Satan: he did excellently, and he ſpake excellently in all this. So then, theſe words carry the ſence not only of a bare acquittal, but of a high approbation: *In all this* Job *ſinned not with his lips.*

With his lips.] Some of the *Jewes* infer from hence, that he ſinned in his heart; becauſe it is ſaid, he did not ſin in words, they conceit there was ſome irregularity in his thoughts. Surely if his heart had been diſorder'd, his tongue would have been diſorder'd too; *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, therefore it is rather an argument that his heart was free from ſin, becauſe his tongue was.

In all this Job *ſinned not with his lips.* That is, he did not murmure, or repine, or blaſpheme; theſe are the ſins of the lips.

Obſerve firſt, *Not to ſin, is the higheſt and trueſt, the moſt honourable and laſting victory of all.*

This victory God himſelf applauds: the holy Ghoſt will cry you up for ſtrength and valour, when you come off from a temptation untouch'd; you ſhall be recorded for it among Chriſts worthies, *In all this* Job *ſinned not.*

And ſecondly, *To govern the tongue under great and ſore afflictions, is a high act of grace.*

It is ſpoken as matter of wonder; *In all this* Job *ſinned not with his lips. Moſes*, you know, was a meek man, yet he was ſo put to it, *that he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips*; He opened his lips ſo unadviſedly, that God ſhut him out of the temporal *Canaan* for it: *raſh words coſt him dear. David* was a very holy man, and very careful over his tongue, *Pſal.* 39. 1. *I ſaid I will take heed to my wayes, that I ſin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a Bridle:* And knowing (though as the Apoſtle *James* teacheth us, *We put bits into the Horſes mouthes that they may obey us, we can turn about their whole body*, Jam. 3. 3.) that no bridle of his putting could keep his mouth; he puts this work into the hand of God, praying with all earneſtneſs; *Set a watch (O Lord) before my mouth, keep the door of my lips.* Notwithſtanding all this, we find him ſinning with his lips more then once, *Pſal.* 73. 13. *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency.* And again, *Pſal.* 116. 11. *I ſaid in my haſte, all men are liars. Job* had the preheminence in this, *he ſinned not with his lips*, no not when he was afflicted and ſmitten with bitter words: *He that offendeth not in words* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*) *is a perfect man*, he is a perfect man indeed, who can rule his tongue, and ſo keep the door of his lips, as that he offends not either by ſilence or by ſpeech. The lips do offend both wayes, negatively as well as poſitively, by ſpeaking, and by not ſpeaking: Sometimes *ſilence is a loud ſin*; not ſpeaking is to ſome, on ſome occaſions, a crying ſin; *Job* ſinned not with his lips, either by being ſilent when he ſhould ſpeak, or by ſpeaking wherein and when he ſhould be ſilent. And ſo much concerning this ſecond conſequent of *Job*'s affliction: His Wives ſinful counſel, with his prudent and gracious anſwer; ſharply, yet moderately rebuking; ſtrongly, yet lovingly convincing her folly: In and by both, faithfully indeavouring at once to diſcover and cure her error.

The third conſequent of his affliction now follows, namely the viſit of his friends, deſcribed in the three laſt verſes of this Chapter, which leads us into the body of the Book, with all the debates, diſputes and arguments held and maintained with much acuteneſs of wit, and ſtrength of reaſoning between him and theſe three, his friends and viſitants,

VERS.

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; for they had made an appointment together, to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.

And when they lift up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads towards Heaven.

So they ſate down with him upon the ground ſeven dayes, and ſeven nights, and none ſpake a word unto him: for they ſaw that his grief was very great.

THeſe three *verſes*, contain the third general conſequent of *Job*'s ſecond affliction. In the diviſion of the Chapter, we called it his friends viſit. In which viſit we may here obſerve;

Firſt, the number of the viſitants. They were three. *Now when* Job's *three friends.*

Secondly, We have here the names of theſe viſitants. Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *and* Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and* Zophar *the* Naamathite.

Thirdly, We have the occaſion of their viſit: and that was the report of all the evil that was come upon *Job*. *Now when* Job's *three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, then they came.*

Fourthly, We have the ground of this viſit: it was a mutual agreement, or a compact made between them; ſo ſaith the Text, *For they had made an appointment together to come.*

Fifthly, We have the end or the intendment of their coming, what they aimed at, in viſiting *Job*. And the end is expreſt in the Text to be two-fold.

First, To communicate with him in his ſorrows.

Secondly, To communicate unto him their comforts.

Firſt, *To mourn with him.* And ſecondly, *To comfort him.*

The former of theſe two ends, *viz.* their mourning with him, we have largely ſet down in the two latter *verſes*; they put that end into act preſently, as ſoon as they came, they fell a mourning with him. And we may obſerve five diſtinct acts of *Job*'s friends ſolemnly condoling or mourning with him.

The firſt act is this, *They wept.* And to ſhew that it was no ordinary weeping, the Text ſaith, *They lift up their voice and wept.*

The ſecond act of their mourning was, their renting of their Mantles, *And they rent every one his Mantle.*

The third act was, the *ſprinkling of duſt upon their heads*, and *the ſprinkling of duſt toward Heaven*, which was another aggravating circumſtance of their ſorrow.

The fourth act was, their *ſitting down with him upon the ground ſeven dayes, and ſeven nights.*

The fifth act of their mourning with him, was their ſilence, *And none ſpake a word unto him.*

The Cauſe or the reaſon of this ſolemnity in their mourning, the reaſon of theſe five Acts, but eſpecially of the laſt, of their ſilence, is given us in the latter words of the verſe, *For they ſaw that his grief was very great*, therefore it muſt have great ſorrow, and great ſilence, to wait the fitteſt ſeaſon for the adminiſtring of counſel and conſolation. Thus for the parts and reſolution of the words, contained in theſe three *verſes*. I ſhall come to the opening of the particulars.

And when Job's three friends.

רעי *A radice* רעה *Pavis, tam ſe quam alios.*

The word which we tranſlate (*friends*) ſprings from a root which ſignifieth to feed a mans ſelf, or others, or to eat together as Sheep eat together; and ſo from the ſame word, a *Paſtor* or a feeder of Sheep is derived, *Pſal.* 23.1. *The Lord is my Shepheard and feeder.* And by a Metaphor it is tranſlated for a *friend*; becauſe friends do uſually feed together, eat and converſe together: So *David* deſcribes a *friend*, Pſal. 41.9. *My familiar friend that did eat of my bread.* *Job*'s viſitants are thus expreſt, his *friends* or *familiars*; The word ſometimes notes only a *friend* at large, or any neighbour; ſo in the Law, *Exod.* 20. 16. *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour*, or (it is the ſame word) againſt thy *friend*: there it is taken in a large ſence, for a neighbour, that is, for any beſides thy ſelf, to whom offices of love are due, as Chriſt expounds it, *Luke* 10. 30. But uſually, it is put ſtrictly, for a ſpecial *friend*, as in *Deut.* 13. 6. when he ſpeaks of inticers to Idolatry, *If thy friend* (ſaith he) *who is as thine own ſoul*; there is the ſame word, and he ſhews by a circumlocution, whom he means by ſuch a friend, namely ſuch a one who is as *thine own ſoul*; one that lyeth in thy boſom, and is as near and dear to thee as thy ſelf. I ſuppoſe here in this place, *Job*'s three friends were not friends at large, but intimate and ſpecial friends, or (as we uſe to ſay) boſom friends. And therefore when it is ſaid, Job's *three friends*, we are not to underſtand it, as if *Job* had but three, as if theſe were all the friends *Job* had; but amongſt all his friends, theſe carried away the name, theſe were the chief and choice; *Job*'s three friends. As it is ſaid concerning *David*'s Worthies, 2 *Sam.* 23. *David* had many Worthies, but there was *a firſt three*, a chief three among them all. So here, *Job* doubtleſs had many friends, a large Catalogue of friends, but in theſe you have the top of his friends, the chief three, the firſt three: Theſe three ſpecial friends came to viſit *Job*, *to mourn with him*, *and to comfort him.*

The occaſion of this viſit, preſents it ſelf next, *When theſe three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon* Job. [When they heard of it.] The troubles of *Job* were noyſed all the Country over, yea into ſtrange Countries. Two things are ſwiftly carried about upon the wings of fame, and poaſted about by reports: Firſt, The ſins. Secondly, The afflictions of Godly men. If they fall into any ſin, it will be heard of all a Country, it may be all a Kingdom over: *It ſhall be told in* Gath, *and publiſh'd in the ſtreets of* Askelon. Again, if they fall into any great affliction, every one deſcants upon it, and many will paſs deep cenſures. It becomes matter of wonder, that men eminent in godlineſs, great profeſſors, ſuch as have held forth the name, and upheld the truth of Chriſt, that they (I ſay) ſhould fall into great afflictions, is reported, diſcours'd, admir'd all a Country over.

There is nothing that is more talked of, then the trouble that befalleth godly men; *When the three friends of* Job *heard of all this evil that was come upon him.*

Nihil ens magis prædicabile quam boni hominis ruino.

When this report about *Job* came to them, they came to *Job*, They came (ſaith the Text) every one from his own place. The word *Place*, is often uſed in Scripture, to ſignifie a *Country*, a *City*, or a *Region*. Now here it is conceived, that the place from whence they came, was not only the place where they dwelt, but the place where they governed. It is frequently aſſerted by the *Jewiſh* Doctors, with whom the Septuagint agree, and moſt of the Jeſuits are in it too; that theſe *three friends* of *Job*'s were Kings, either *Reges* or *Reguli*, ſuch as had the government of thoſe Countries where they lived. *Beza* rejects this as a Fable, and telleth us that this opinion hath no footing or foundation in Scripture, but is grounded only upon that uſual boldneſs of the *Jewiſh* Doctors. But whether they were Kings or Subjects, whether they came from their private dwellings, or from the places of their dominion, needs not trouble us. This is clear, that they were great men, eminent perſons in their Country: and the diſputes which follow, teſtifie that they were men of very great wiſdom and underſtanding, according to all the learning of thoſe times.

Quod autem dicunt Hebrei totidē fuiſſe reges eſt ex audacia illis familiari, Beza.

Theſe three friends of *Job*'s are here ſet forth by name, by a double name. By the name, firſt, of their perſons. Secondly, By the name of their Country, or of their Family. For that's a queſtion, whether the additional name be derived from the Country where they dwelt, or from the Family out of which they were extracted.

Eliphaz the *Temanite*, he is the firſt. We read *Gen.* 36. 11. That *Eſau* begat *Eliphaz*; that *Eliphaz* was the eldeſt Son of *Eſau*, and *Eliphaz* begat *Teman*. This *Teman*, deſcending from *Eſau*, is ſuppoſed to be the Father or the Anceſtor of this *Eliphaz*, from whom he is called *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*; and ſo *Temanite*, is a note of the Family from whence *Eliphaz* deſcended. It is uſual likewiſe in Scripture, to give ſuch additional names from the Countries or places,

Jer. 49.20.
Amos 1.12
Obad. 9.
Hab. 3.4.

Teman *regio Principium* Edom *in terra* Gabalitica *a* Theman *filio* Eliphaz *filii* Eſau *ſortita vocabulum*, &c. *Sciendum etiam quod omnis Auſtralis regio Ebræis* Theman *dicitur* (*paulo poſt.*) Theman *juxta* Ezekielem *civitas Idumææ.* Euſebius *de locis.*

places, and ſo *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, may be from *Teman*, of which we read often in Scripture: *Teman* ſignifies the South; it was a Southern Countrey.

Further, *Teman* was a place, wherein it is obſerved, that the Schools of Learning were ſeated, *Jer.* 49. 7. *Concerning* Edom, *thus ſaith the Lord, Is wiſdom no more in* Teman? Two things may be gathered from that Text. Firſt, That *Teman* was in *Edom*, or *Idumea.* Secondly, That it was a place wherein there was much profeſſion of wiſdom and learning. So then, we may take the word *Temanite*, either as referring unto the Stock from which *Eliphaz* ſprung; or unto the place where *Eliphaz* lived. The *Hebrews* refer it unto his Stock or pedigree: And the *Caldee Paraphraſe* is for the place or Countrey.

Job's ſecond friend was *Bildad* the *Shuhite.* All that I find for his pedigree, is, that he came from one of the Sons of *Abraham* by his ſecond Wife *Keturah*; of whom it is ſaid, *Gen.* 25.1. *That ſhe bare him* Zimram, *and* Jockſham, *with others, and* Shuah: From which *Shuah* was the family of the *Shuhites*: And it is conceived, that *Bildad* was of that line, and therefore here called *Bildad* the *Shuhite.*

And for the laſt, *Zophar* the *Naamathite*, there is leſs certainty concerning him: Some will have him to be *Zepho*, mentioned *Gen.* 36. 11. who was Grand-child to *Eſau* by *Eliphaz* his Eldeſt Son. And for his additional name *Naamathite*, the beſt conjecture which I find, takes it from *Naamah*, the name of a City, ſpoken of *Joſh.* 15. 41. in the diviſion of the promiſed Land to the Children of *Iſrael.*

ועד
מועד
Tempus aut locus certus ac conſtitutus, conventus, indictus, tempus quod unus alteri conſtituit.

Now it is ſaid, that theſe three, upon the report of all the evil that was come upon *Job*, came to viſit him; *For they had made an appointment together to come*; or they all agreed together; they came not by accident, but by appointment. The word ſignifieth, to meet by ſolemn agreement. Hence the place where the children of *Iſrael* uſed to meet to ſolemnize the worſhip of God, before the building of the Temple, was called the *Tabernacle of the Congregation*; becauſe they were to congregate or meet there at ſet times to celebrate the Name of God, according to his own inſtitution. And in the thirtieth Chapter of this Book, the grave is called *Beth-mogned* (*ver.* 23.) the houſe of the gathering together of all men, according to that Statute of Heaven, *It is appointed unto men once to dye*, Heb. 9.27. It is the fancy of *Origen* upon this place, that theſe three friends came at adventure, that they came all of them ſeveral wayes, unknown to, or without the privity of one another, from their ſeveral Countreys, and met, as it were by miracle, at *Job*'s houſe, the ſame day and hour. But the Text is clear, that there was a profeſt covenant and agreement made, by which they came together.

They came (ſaith the Text) **to mourn with him, and to comfort him.** In theſe words we have the end or intendment of their coming.

נוד

Firſt, [**They came to mourn with him.**] The word which we tranſlate, *to mourn*, ſignifieth to move the body, or to paſs from place to place. *Cain* (after that ſin of his in murthering his Brother, *Gen.* 4.) hath this judgment paſs'd by God upon him, *That he ſhould be a fugitive and a vagabond*; he ſhould be *Nod*, a mover from place to place: And afterwards it is ſaid, *He dwelt in the Land of Nod*; which ſome interpret for a ſpecial place, for a Country called *Nod*: but it is taken by others thus, *He dwelt in the Land of* Nod; that is, where ever he dwelt, he found the Land, as it were, moving; it was a moving, a ſhaking, a trembling Land to him, *He dwelt in the Land of* Nod: His conſcience quaking continually, by reaſon of the guilt that was upon him, for murdering his Brother; the earth alſo ſeemed to quake under him, whereſoever he went, or dwelt. *That only by the way.* The ſame word here uſed in the Text, by a Metaphor, ſignifies to mourn, or compaſſionate the afflictions and miſeries of another. So *Nah.* 3. 6. Nineveh *is laid waſte, who will bemoan her?* And *Iſa.* 51.19. *Theſe two things are come unto thee, who ſhall be ſorry for thee?* And the reaſon why this word, which ſignifieth properly to move, is tranſlated to ſignifie mourning in compaſſion with others, may be, either firſt this; becauſe ſuch perſons will run, go, or move from place to place, to give and adminiſter comfort to their friends, whoſe afflictions affect and grieve them, as we ſee here in theſe friends of *Job*; they took a long journey, they moved indeed when they came to mourn. Or rather ſecondly, (as I conceive) for this reaſon, becauſe ſuch compaſſionate ſorrows and mournings when our friends are under deep and ſore afflictions, are uſually expreſt by moving the body, or at leaſt moving ſome member of the body; as many times the hand is lifted up, and we ſtroke our breaſts, or we ſhake the head: It is ordinary in compaſſionate ſorrows, thus to move the hand or the head; and ſo the word is uſed to ſignifie mourning, from that act which accompanies or teſtifies mourning. And the ſame word is ſometimes uſed to ſignifie that trepidation, or trembling of the heart, thoſe convulſions of the ſpirit, upon the approaches of our own troubles. So *Iſa.* 7. 2. That fearful motion and diſquietneſs both of Prince and people, when they heard of the invaſion of their Countrey by *Rezin* King of *Syria*, &c. is thus expreſt, *The heart of the King, and the heart of his people were moved, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.*

Qui condolent aut compatiuntur, ſolent ſubinde movere caput ad teſtandū dolorem. Merc.

נחם

Secondly, It is ſaid they came *to comfort him.* The word which is there uſed to *comfort*, ſignifies likewiſe to *mourn*: and eſpecially the mournings of repentance, or to repent for ſin with ſorrow: The reaſon is given, becauſe true comfort doth ſpring from repentance: Joy often ariſeth out of ſorrow, and ſo the ſame word is applied to both. Worldly joy and ſorrow are contraries, but godly joy and ſorrow are con-cauſes, mutually effecting and helping one another.

We have here an excellent pattern held forth unto us of our duty, in reference unto diſtreſſed perſons or Nations.

> Firſt thus, *It is both an act and an argument of true friendſhip, to mourn with and comfort thoſe that are in affliction.*

A man doth then ſet his ſeal to it, that he is a friend, when he will partake and ſhare in his friends afflictions; when he will divide with him in all eſtates whatſoever it is; whether ſweet or ſowre, joy or ſorrow, he will have his part. Many friends will come and rejoyce with you, they will come to a feaſt with you, they will meet at a houſe of mirth with you; but they fall off and go back, when they muſt weep with you, when if they come, they muſt come to a houſe of mourning. *Solomon* (*Prov.* 17. 11.) gives us the true character of a friend; *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity.* It is the note and tryal of our love to God, when we love him at all times, whatever he doth with us: And it is the argument of true love unto our brethren, when we love and own them at all times, whatſoever they endure from the hand of God, or man: This Chriſt approves and commends in his Diſciples, *Luke* 22. 28. *Ye are they* (ſaith he) *who have continued with me in my temptation.* It is an eaſie piece of friendſhip, or diſcipleſhip, to continue with Chriſt at a Feaſt, or at a full Table; but in a temptation to continue with him, ſpeaks a Diſciple indeed. Some friends are like the Swallow, they come in the Summer and ſing with you; but when it is Winter, cold and froſt, then farewell, they muſt ſeek a warmer Climate. Theſe are ſummer friends; while the ſummer of comfort, the ſummer of riches, the ſummer of outward contentment laſteth, you cannot be rid of them: but if the winter come, the winter of trouble, and ſorrow, and poverty, and ſickneſs, they are gone; they will not once look on you, they paſs on the other ſide of the way, as the Levite did, when he ſaw the man lye wounded and weltring in his blood, *Luke* 10. 32. *Theſe are ſummer friends, not winter friends*, not they.

Secondly, Obſerve this; As it is an act and argument of friendſhip to do thus, ſo it is likewiſe a duty to do thus:

> *It is a duty to mourn with thoſe that mourn, and to viſit thoſe that are in affliction.*

Many look upon it only as a complement, to viſit their ſad friends; we muſt look upon it as a duty. Chriſt puts it (*Matth.* 25. 36.) as one of thoſe viſible acts of duty, upon which he will pronounce the bleſſing of that day; *Come ye bleſſed*; why? *I was ſick and ye viſited me.* Chriſt is not ſick in his perſon; he is in Heaven, where is no ſin, and therefore no ſickneſs ſhall ever enter: and indeed he never was ſick in his perſon, when he was here upon the earth; Chriſt did not bear our perſonal infirmities, he bore only our natural infirmities: I know it is ſaid, *He bore our ſickneſſes* (by compaſſion and by compenſation) but he was not ſick: Whereas then Chriſt ſaith, *I was ſick*, he means, ſick in his members: And when he ſaith, *Ye viſited me*, he means, his ſick diſtreſſed ſervants: He takes it ſo kindly, when done to his, that he reckons it as done to himſelf: It is an act you ſee, and an office of love, upon which Chriſt hath a ſpecial eye. The Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 27.) doth, as it were, put all Religion in this: It is ſuch a fruit of Religion as doth evidence the truth of Religion, and therefore hath obtained not only the name of Religion, but is made the definition of Religion. *Pure Religion* (ſaith he) *and undefiled before God the Father, is this.* What is it? *To viſit the fatherleſs and the widow in their affliction.* This is a definition from the effect: It is not put in general, that *to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow*; but to viſit them *in their affliction, is pure Religion*; that is, this is a fruit, that which groweth up from the root of pure Religion: if pure Religion live in the heart, this will be a fruit in the life. Wherefore look not upon the viſitation of a diſconſolate friend, as a matter of indifferency, but of duty; and do it not only for love, but for conſcience.

Thirdly, The Text ſaith, *As ſoon as they heard,* or *when they heard of all the evil that was come upon* Job, *they came to mourn with him.* Then obſerve,

> *The very report of anothers ſuffering, ſhould move us to mourn and ſuffer with him.*

Report ſhould bring us, when we do but hear of ſuch a thing: It is very unwarrantable to judge or cenſure a friend upon report and hear-ſay; but a report is warrant enough to pity and pray for him, to viſit and comfort him. *Remember them that are in bonds* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Heb.* 13. 3. *as bound with them*: Remember them. Remembrance is of things and perſons which are abſent; remember them, though you ſee them not, though abſent from you, yet make their caſe as preſent; *be as bound with them, be as afflicted with them,* yea haſten into their preſence. *Bear one anothers burthens,* Gal. 6. 2. *Rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and weep with them that weep,* Rom. 12. 5. *Be ye all of one mind, having compaſſion one of another,* 1 Pet. 3. 8. are Apoſtolical rules for, and tryals of Goſpel-love. It was a ſad condition that *David* was in; and it was a very ſinful condition that others about him were in, when he ſaith, *Pſal.* 69. 20. *I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.* But if it be ſinful not to eaſe (when it is in our power) the ſorrows of others, how ſinful is it to add to their ſorrow? Such *David* found (typing Chriſt in his ſufferings) *Who gave him gall for meat, and in his thirſt they gave him vinegar to drink.* Thus the Lord complains of thoſe Heathen by the Prophet *Zachary* (Zach. 1. 15.) *I was but a little diſpleaſed with my people, and they helped forward the affliction.*

Again, If it be a duty to mourn over the afflictions of others; how exceeding ſinful is it to rejoyce at the afflictions of others? This was *Edom's* wickedneſs, reproved by the Prophet *Obadiah,* ver. 12. *Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy brother, in the day that he became a ſtranger: neither ſhouldeſt thou have rejoyced over the children of* Judah, *in the day of their affliction: neither ſhouldeſt thou have ſpoken proudly in the day of diſtreſs.*

We may further preſs this point, in reference unto the preſent condition of our Brethren in many places of this Nation; in reference to the whole Nation of *Ireland,* yea of the whole Church of God: Are they not all mourners? And if we are to mourn with private friends, much more then with publick, with whole Kingdoms and Churches. We may beſpeak all paſſengers in the language of the Prophet *Jeremy,* lamenting over the deſolations of *Jeruſalem, Is it nothing to you, all you that paſs by* England, Ireland? Is it nothing to you that travel, (though but in meditation) into the Churches of Chriſt in *Germany?* &c. We read of *Nehemiah, Chap.* 1. 4. when he heard the report of *Jeruſalems* deſolation, though himſelf was far off at *Babylon,* though himſelf was rich and full, and preferr'd in the Court of that *Perſian* Monarch, yet *he mourned many dayes.* And *Daniel,* (Chap. 10. 2.) *mourned three full weeks,* that is, one and twenty dayes together, over the diſtreſſed eſtate and condition of his people; *Jeremy* wiſheth, *Oh that my head were a fountain of tears, that I might weep night and day for the ſlain of the daughter of my people!* Chap. 9. 1. We have had many ſlain, choice ones ſlain; this ſhould be matter of mourning to us. Take heed of ſuch a ſpirit, as is reproved in thoſe, *Amos* 6. *Who ſate upon beds of Ivory, and ſtretched themſelves upon their couches, who eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midſt of the ſtall: Who chaunted to the ſound of the viol, and invented to themſelves inſtruments of Muſick like* David, *who drank wine in bowls, and anointed themſelves with the chief ointments, but they were not grieved for the affliction of* Joſeph. If ever that of *Solomon* were appliable, it is to ſuch a time as this, (*Eccleſ.* 2. 2.) *I ſaid of laughter, thou art mad*; of all worldly laughter and outward mirth, what do'ſt thou? if ever it were mad, now it is mad: Now ſorrow is ſobriety, and tears are in ſeaſon. No ſong ſo muſical as that which is ſet to the higheſt ſtrain of lamentation. I remember the Prophet *Eliſha's* paſſion, when he fore-ſaw evils that ſhould be acted; he looked upon *Hazael,* ſaith the Text, (2 *Kings* 8. 11.) and wept; and *Hazael* ſaid, *Why weepeth my Lord?* He replyed, *Becauſe I know of all the evil that thou wilt do unto the Children of* Iſrael: *their ſtrong holds wilt thou ſet on fire, and their young men wilt thou ſlay with the ſword, and wilt daſh their children, and rip up their women with child.* This made him weep; he wept, becauſe he ſaw blood and fire, murders and burnings in the face of *Hazael*; what would he have done then, if he had ſeen all fulfilled with his hand? Chriſt himſelf wept over *Jeruſalem,* when he propheſied how the *enemy ſhould come, and caſt a trench about it, and compaſs the City round, and keep them in on every ſide,* &c. *Luke* 19. 43. If Chriſt wept for the evils that were to come on others, how ſhould we for the evils that are already come upon us? *Mine eye affecteth my heart,* ſaith lamenting *Jeremy* (*Lam.* 3. 51.) An eye of propheſie hath affected ſome hearts, and ſhall not an eye of ſenſe affect ours? Our ears were ſmitten long ago, with ſad meſſages out of *Germany,* out of the *Palatinate* and *Bohemia*: We were ſmitten nearer home by the reports of thoſe inhumane butcheries, exerciſed upon our brethren in *Ireland*: We are now ſmitten at home, both ear and eye, the ſword hath paſs'd the Seas, and hath ſpilt Rivers, is like to ſpill a ſea of blood out of our own bowels; for our brethren that have been ſlain, for our brethren that are in captivity, for our brethren that have been ſpoiled, let us mourn and lament with a brotherly lamentation. It is true, *they ought* (as thoſe ancient Worthies) *to ſuffer joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods,* Heb. 10. 34. but we ought to grieve when they ſuffer the ſpoiling of their goods. It is an excellent ſpirit in them, to ſuffer it with joy; but it is a ſinful ſpirit in us, which rejoyceth, when they ſuffer. Some Trees keep their greenneſs and their leaves, Winter and Summer, let the time be what it will, hot or cold, they are alike freſh and green: Some ſpirits are like thoſe hard-grain trees: But the ſpirit of a Chriſtian ſhould be like ordinary trees, which when Winter cometh, caſt their leaves, put off their beauty and bravery. The ſtory ſaith of *Nero,* that when he had ſet the City of *Rome* on fire, he got him up to an high place, to behold the fire, and feed upon the flame, for there and then he ſung ſongs of the deſtruction of *Troy*: To ſing ſongs, to rejoyce in the midſt of *Sions* afflictions, argues not a Chriſtian, but a *Neronian* ſpirit. To ſhut up this point, let us prefer *Jeruſalem* above our chiefeſt worldly joy; let us even reſolve to enjoy nothing of the world, till we ſee *Jeruſalem* a quiet habitation, and the joy of the whole earth. The Wife of *Phineas,* 1 *Sam.* 4. would not enjoy her Son, (and that is the chiefeſt joy) *becauſe the Ark of God was taken*: She enquires, *Where is the glory?* As if ſhe had ſaid, you ſhew me a Son, but can you ſhew me the glory? No, *The glory is departed from* Iſrael, *for the Ark of God is taken.* There is nothing in the world to be rejoyced in, when God departs from us; and there is but little, if any thing, to be rejoyced in, when Ordinances (which are the ſigns of Gods preſence, and the means of communion with God) are taken or departing from us.

Thirdly, Theſe friends of *Job* came to mourn with him; they were not ſent for, they were not invited by letters or meſſengers, but they came of their own accord. Obſerve,

> *It becomes us well for the comforting of our friends, to prevent the invitation of our friends.*

Some out of a kind of modeſty (that is the beſt we can ſay of it) will not come to a troubled friend, unleſs they be ſent for. I do aſſure you this, *It is good manners to be an unbidden gueſt at a houſe of mourning.*

Another thing I would offer to you from hence, is this, It is ſaid, that before they came, *They made an appointment to come, to mourn with him, and to comfort him*; you ſee they agreed upon their end, before they ſet a foot in the way. Note this then,

It is an excellent point of holy prudence, to be ſetled about our tnd, before we undertake or enter upon any action.

Some go about buſineſs, and they know not why; they viſit their friends, and they know not for what. That was juſtly called a confuſed Aſſembly (*Acts* 19. 32.) when the moſt part knew not wherefore they were come together. Though no man can know the end of his action, reſpecting the event, yet every wiſe man doth and ought to know the end of all his actions, in reſpect of his own intendment: His end is firſt intended, though it be laſt, yea though it be not all attained. Obſerve further,

Wiſdom doth not only propoſe an end, but a ſutable end.

Job's three friends propoſed two of the moſt ſutable ends that could be for ſuch a buſineſs, *To mourn with him, and to comfort him.* If a man were to viſit or converſe with a wicked man, it were good to ſay, I will go to counſel him, to convince him of his ſin, to convert him from his ſin. If I go to one who is full of doubts, it were beſt to ſay, I will go ſee, if I can ſettle and reſolve him: A ſutable end is the beauty and grace of all our undertakings.

Again, Conſider the order and method of theſe two ends, it is ſaid, *They came to mourn with him, and to comfort him.* Comfort is the higher and the nobler end, the laſt and ultimate end in regard of man; it is the end into which all actions are reſolved, and all ends emptied at the laſt; all the acts of holineſs have a tendency unto joy; all godly ſorrow leads unto comfort: Therefore the Apoſtle writes to his *Corinthians*, that he was not glad, becauſe he had made them ſorrowful by an Epiſtle, but that they ſorrowed ſo, as they might rejoyce. How was that? They ſorrowed to repentance; their ſorrow wrought *repentance unto ſalvation, not to be repented of.* But is there no more in true repentance, but only this, that it is not to be repented of? Surely yes. For if there be *joy in Heaven* (Luke 15.) *over a repenting ſinner*, then doubtleſs, there is abundant ground of joy on earth. If Angels rejoyce when a ſinner repents, much more may the repenting ſinner rejoyce. So then, repentance, not to be repented of, is repentance greatly to be rejoyced in. Repentance that brings not forth joy, is to be repented of: We muſt mourn for all ſorrows which end in ſorrow; for ſorrow is not good for its own ſake, but for comforts ſake: *Job*'s friends came not to mourn with him, that he might mourn; but they came to mourn with him, that he might be comforted: To add ſorrow unto ſorrow, is to be ſwallowed up with ſorrow; he ſorrows rightly, that would be ſwallowed up with joy: You ſee the ends which theſe men propoſed in coming to *Job*, *To mourn with him, and to comfort him.* Excellent ends both, and without all queſtion, they did propoſe and purpoſe them ſincerely. They came to mourn with him, and they mourned; they came with hearts reſolved to comfort him, but they did not comfort him, they did not attain that end, they could not attain it. Then obſerve,

That as the way of a man is not in himſelf, ſo much leſs is the end of a man in himſelf.

The way of a man is not in himſelf, ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*, Chap. 10. 23. that is, a mans actions are not in his own power, he is not maſter of his own will, or of his own way. If a mans way be not in himſelf, much leſs is his end in himſelf, that is, in his own power, to have what end he pleaſeth and propoſeth: *Man propoſeth, but God diſpoſeth.* Theſe friends came to comfort *Job*, but they did nothing leſs then comfort him: inſtead of comforting, they afflicted him; which forced him to complain, *Miſerable comforters are ye all:* And yet their errand was to comfort him.

Some indeed are of opinion, that they were falſe friends, that they came upon him with prejudic'd and imbitter'd ſpirits: but the preparatory circumſtances, and manner of their coming, clears the uprightneſs of their intentions, and confutes that ſlander. Doubtleſs they came really to comfort him, and eaſe his ſorrows; and yet behold they doubled his ſorrows, and proved a greater affliction to him then all the reſt. *Job* had nothing left him, but the integrity of his wayes, and the uprightneſs of his heart: His eſtate was gone, his children were gone, his health was gone, his body was broken, he was undone quite, yet he had a heart-full of integrity. And when Satan, the enemy, could not ſtrip him of this, he ſends his Wife: Firſt, to jeer him out of it; but he ſhakes her off quickly as a fooliſh Woman: Secondly, he ſends theſe friends, gravely and learnedly to diſpute and beat him out of it, by dint of argument. O how long did theſe hang upon him, with many ſerious and weighty, with many pious and divine (much miſapplied) diſcourſe: he could not get rid of theſe, whoſe words were as drawn ſwords, often making his wounded ſoul bleed and breath out ſad complaints; and yet they came to comfort him. *A mans heart* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 16. 9.) *deviſeth his way, but the Lord directeth his ſteps.* Man deviſeth, but God directeth: He orders the actions, and over-rules the ends of every creature. We can neither cut out our way, nor make up our concluſions, by our own ſtrength or wiſdom. And ſo much for the tenth *verſe*, His friends viſit, *They came unto him.*

I told you before, that the two following *verſes*, do but ſet forth the particulars of the firſt end, *their mourning. They came to mourn with him:* Their mourning is expreſſed by many of thoſe particular circumſtances, obſerved in *Job*'s ſorrow, *chap.* 1. *v.* 20. therefore I ſhall not inſiſt much upon them.

And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, they knew him not.

This is the preface to the ſeveral acts of their mourning.

And when they lifted up their eyes.] To lift up the eyes, is a frequent Scripture phraſe for ſeeing, *Gen.* 26. 63, 64. There is a reaſon in nature for it, man having a ſpecial nerve in the fabrick of the eye, by the motion of which the eye turns upward. I only offer that, becauſe the ſame word is uſed for lifting up the voice.

Afar off.] Some hence infer, that *Job* lay abroad; and they take this for a further argument, that he was put out of the City, or Houſe, where he dwelt, as a Leper. But this *afar off*, might be within the compaſs of his own houſe, or in his Chamber; as if it had been ſaid, as ſoon as they ſtept into the place where he lay, and eſpied him in ſuch a forlorn condition, they knew him not; though it be not improbable that he was ſometime abroad for the benefit of the air, by reaſon of the filthineſs of his diſeaſe; and ſo his friends might find him abroad. But that he was turned out of his houſe, is refuted, *chap.* 7. 13. where he ſpeaks of his bed, and of his couch. *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint*, &c. That is, when I thought to find eaſe by lying down upon my bed, or leaning on my couch. Therefore he had a houſe furniſhed with bed and couch.

When they lift up their eyes afar off, [**they knew him not.**] We need not take it abſolutely, as if his diſeaſe had ſo diſfigured him, that he could not be known to be the ſame man: For often in Scripture, that which is put as an abſolute negative, is intended for a weak affirmative. It is ſaid, (*John* 1. 11.) *When Chriſt came, he came to his own, and his own received him not*; there is an abſolute negation, (yet it followeth,) *But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God.* His own received him not, yet ſome did receive him: Some of his own Kindred and Countrey did receive him: So that, *His own received him not*, is, as if it had been ſaid, few of his own received him, or he had but cold entertainment among his own. So *Hoſ.* 9. 6. Ephraim *is ſmitten, their root is dried up, they ſhall bear no fruit.* There is the ſound of an abſolute denial, yet the ſenſe will bear a weak affirmation; for it followeth, *Yea though they bring forth, yet I will ſlay the beloved fruit of their womb.* They may bring forth a few or ſome fruit perhaps, but I will deſtroy it. So here, *They knew him not*; that is, they could ſcarce diſcern him, or diſtinguiſh who he was, his diſeaſe and ſores had ſo diſcolour'd or blotted out the lines and feature of his face, that they could not ſuddenly aſſure themſelves, this was he. They ſtood as men amazed; What? Is this *Job*? What a ſpectacle is here? How ſtrangely is his viſage changed, and his whole body disfigured? Such kind of doubting language, doubtleſs paſt amongſt them. *When they ſaw him afar off, they knew him not.* The Prophet *Jeremy* obſerves the like, after the hard ſiege of *Jeruſalem*, which cauſed him thus to lament (*chap.* 4. 7, 8.) *Her Nazarites were purer then ſnow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then Rubies, their poliſhing was of Saphire*: But ſee the change; *their viſage is blacker then a coal, they are not known in the ſtreets.* Famine had eaten up, not only their fleſh, but their form; miſery had altered their very complexion and viſage; they who ſhined before like Rubies and Saphires, for colour and comlineſs, were now dark as a coal, or dusky like aſhes; they were not known to be the ſame men and women. It is ſaid of Chriſt in his affliction, *Iſa.* 52. 14. That *his viſage was ſo marred more then any man, and his form more then the ſons of men.* Great afflictions change the very form, and utterly blaſt the beauty of the body. Sin doth ſo change the ſoul, and disfigure the mind; it ſo deforms the ſpirit, and defaces the image at firſt ſtamp'd upon it, that God ſaith, *I know you not*, you are not like the men that I made. But this is the comfort of a *Job*, of a godly man, that when his face is moſt deformed, his ſoul is moſt beautified; and though a diſeaſe may disfigure him, ſo that his neareſt friends know him not, yet God knows him ſtill; No ſickneſs can wear out the markes by which Chriſt knows thee. When thy face is blacker then a coale, he ſees the face of thy ſoul, ſhining like the face of an Angel. A perſon or a people are then in a woful condition indeed, when God ſhall ſay to them, as he did to thoſe hypocritical profeſſors, *Mat.* 7. 23. *Depart from me, I know ye not.* We may be in ſuch a woful condition, that our friends and acquaintance coming to viſit us, cannot know us; yet for the main, well enough, bleſſed enough at that time, beautiful in the eye, welcome into the preſence of a glorious God.

They knew him not. What then? **Then they lifted up their voyce, and wept.**

This is the firſt act of their mourning. And we may obſerve five acts of mourning here ſpecified; whereof, one is a natural act, and the other four are ceremonial. The natural act was this of weeping: *They lifted up their voice, and wept.* The ceremonial acts were theſe; Firſt, *They rent every one his mantle.* Secondly. *They ſprinkled duſt upon their heads towards heaven.* Thirdly, *They ſate down with him on the ground, ſeven dayes and ſeven nights.* The fourth ceremonial act was, their ſilence; *And none ſpake a word unto him, for they ſaw that his grief was great.*

Firſt, **They lifted up their voyce, and wept.** The word is *Baca*, and from that, the place, *Judges* 2. 5. is called *Bochin*, where the people are ſaid to lift up their voice, and weep, when the Angel reproved them. In *Pſal.* 84. 6. we read of the *valley of* Baca, which ſome tranſlate, the valley of weeping, or the valley of tears. Others, from *Baca*, a Mulberry-tree, the valley of Mulberry-trees, which being a dry place, the travellers to *Jeruſalem*, at the ſolemn feaſts, did ſo dig for water, that they made all as one well.

Further, It is ſaid, they did not only *weep*, but *they lifted up their voice, and wept.* We may note two things in that phraſe. Firſt, The vehemency of their ſorrow; as when a man doth lift up his voice, and ſpeaks, he ſpeaks vehemently, *Iſa.* 58. 3. *Lift up thy voyce like a Trumpet*, that is, ſpeak with a loud and ſtrong voice; ſo here, *They lifted up their voyce, and wept*, that is, they wept vehemently, they wept exceedingly. Secondly, To lift up the voyce, and weep, notes the eaſing of the mind in ſorrow; for it is an eaſe to the mind burdened and oppreſſed with ſorrow, to lift up the voyce, and weep; to cry out in ſorrow, lets the ſtrength of the ſorrow out. We ſay, that ſorrow which is included, ſtrangles and ſtifles the ſpirit; ſorrow kept in, is like fire kept in, more augmented; as *David* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 39. concerning himſelf. *While I kept ſilence, even from good, my ſorrow was ſtirred; my heart was hot within me; while I was muſing, the fire burned.* His ſorrow was encreaſed, when he had not vent for it; ſilent mournings are the soreſt mournings: lifting up the voyce, vents the ſorrow. The holy Ghoſt expreſſes great ſorrow, by that of a woman in travel, crying out. To cry out, notes (I grant) great pain; and yet crying out, is a leſſening or mitigation of pain. It is obſerved that the midwife, ſeeing a travailing woman hold in and conceal her pains, will bid her cry out. Some lift up their voyce, and weep, when they are not in pain, when they mourn not at all: there are Crocodiles tears, tears and voyces too of diſſimulation. *Iſhmael* had tears in his eyes, and revenge in his heart, *Jer.* 41. Others are in pain, and mourn, when they lift not up their voyce, nor weep; like one that hath a deadly wound, they bleed inwardly; but when there is the higheſt flood of ſorrow in the heart, weeping will make an ebb, and you may let much of thoſe waters (which are ready to drown the ſpirit) out at thoſe ſluces of the eyes. This is the firſt act, the natural act; *They lifted up their eyes*, and ſaw ſuch a ſpectacle, as made them *lift up their voyce, and weep.*

Strangulat inclusus dolor.

There are four ceremonial acts.

Firſt, **They rent every man his mantle.**] We have ſpoken of that, when we opened the twentieth verſe of the former Chapter, together with the grounds of rending cloaths, ſorrow, and indignation, *&c.* I ſhall refer you thither for further information in this point.

The ſecond ceremonial act of their ſorrow was, **The ſprinkling duſt upon their heads toward heaven.**] In *ver.* 20. of the former Chapter, *Job ſhaved his head*: Here is another ceremony, *They ſprinkled duſt upon their heads*; and which is yet more conſiderable, *They ſprinkled duſt toward heaven.* There were two wayes of ſprinkling duſt: there was firſt a taking the duſt, and ſprinkling it upon the head barely; and then there was another way of taking the duſt, and throwing it up in the air, and ſo letting it fall upon the head: this act was ſignificative, it typed, that all things were full of ſorrowful confuſion, the earth and the air were mingled, the heavens alſo were cloudy and darkned; therefore they caſt duſt toward heaven: For as by a ſtormy wind and tempeſt, the duſt is raiſed, which thickens the air, and obſcures the heavens; ſo by that act of caſting or ſprinkling duſt in the air, ſtormie, tempeſtuous and troubleſom times were ſignified. In *Acts* 22. 23. thoſe wretched *Jews* to whom *Paul* preached, being vexed and enraged, *cried out, and caſting off their cloaths, threw duſt into the air*: Their action had this voyce in it; this man hath, or will, if let alone, fill all the world with trouble, and diſturb the peace of Nations: This they expreſs (together with their own rage) by throwing duſt into the air. It was a judgment, which God threatned his people with, that he would make the rain of their Land duſt, *Deut.* 28. 24. And when men make it rain duſt, by ſprinkling it towards heaven, it ſheweth great trouble or judgment upon themſelves, or upon their Land. Further, the ſprinkling of duſt upon the head, was a *memento* of mortality; they put duſt to duſt, that man might remember himſelf to be but duſt.

And they ſate with him upon the ground ſeven dayes and ſeven nights.] Here is the third ceremonial act of their ſorrow. In verſe 20. of the former Chapter, it is ſaid, *Job fell upon the ground*, theſe ſate upon the ground; as falling, ſo ſitting upon the ground, is the poſture of a mourner, of a mourner greatly humbling himſelf under the hand of God, and the ſence of his own or others afflictions. When God layes us low, he can lay us lower; and therefore it is beſt for us, to lay our ſelves as low as we can: ſo doth he, who ſits upon the ground, if his heart ſit down with him too. It is poſſible for the body to lie groveling upon the earth, when the ſpirit is neſtling among the ſtars; not in faith, as the Saints do, but in pride, as *Lucifer* did, *Iſa.* 14. 13. However, he either is, or appears to be humbled to the loweſt, and emptied to the full of worldly comforts, who, with *Job*'s friends, ſits down upon the ground; eſpecially, if he ſit long there, as *Job*'s friends did, *ſeven dayes and ſeven nights.* The time ſeems almoſt incredible. How could they hold out to ſit ſo long? or how could *Job*, a ſick and diſeaſed man? For it is ſaid, *They ſate down with him ſeven dayes*, &c. I anſwer, We need not interpret it for ſeven continued dayes and nights, without any intermiſſion; it is frequent in Scripture, to put a part, eſpecially a greater part, for the whole; that which is often done, is ſaid to be alwayes done; as, *Luke* 24. 53. *The Diſciples were continually in the Temple, praiſing and bleſſing God.* And, *Luke* 2. 37. It is ſaid, *That* Anna *the Propheteſs departed not from the Temple, but ſerved God night and day*: Not that ſhe was there without any intermiſſion, but the greateſt part of night and day, or, at the uſual times both of night and day. *Paul* teſtifies before the Church of *Epheſus*, that by the ſpace of three years, *he ceaſed not to warn every one night and day with his tears*, Acts 2. 31. Did he therefore actually preach three years, night and day, without intermiſſion?

miſſion? That had been a long Sermon indeed. Then his meaning is but this, that in thoſe three years, he watched, and made uſe of all poſſible opportunities, both by night and by day, to preach the Goſpel: So we may underſtand it here, *they ſate down, ſeven dayes and ſeven nights*; that is, a great part of ſeven dayes and ſeven nights, or all the time of thoſe ſeven dayes and ſeven nights, which were fitting for ſuch a viſit.

Origen will have it, ſeven nights and ſeven dayes without intermiſſion; in maintenance of which aſſertion, he ſaith, they were preſerved by miracle, without ſleep, and without meat, all that time. But here is plain truth without a miracle.

Secondly, Whereas it is ſaid, ſeven dayes and ſeven nights; we may note further, that the number ſeven (as other numbers) may be underſtood indefinitely; a certain time being put for an uncertain: as, *Jer.* 15. 9. The Prophet ſaith, *She that hath born ſeven* (that is, many Children) *languiſheth.* And, *Eccleſ.* 2. 7. *Give a portion to ſeven*, that is, to many. Thus we may interpret it here, *they ſate down ſeven dayes and ſeven nights*, that is, many dayes and many nights; as it is expreſt of *Nehemiah*, c. 1. 4. that when he heard of the calamity of *Jeruſalem, he mourned many dayes.*

Thirdly, We may take it ſtrictly, for ſeven preciſe dayes and nights; and then it refers to the Ceremony of mourning for the dead: it was a cuſtom to mourn ſeven dayes for the dead; *Job's* friends looked upon him as a dead man, and ſo they mourned for him, according to the manner of mourning for the dead. *Joſeph* made a mourning for his Father *Jacob*, ſeven dayes, *Gen.* 50. 10. We have the like time of mourning mentioned, 1 *Sam.* 31. 13. The time of mourning varied both in times and places. The *Egyptians* mourned for *Jacob* threeſcore and ten dayes, *Gen.* 50. 3. The *Iſraelites* mourned for *Moſes* thirty dayes, *Deut.* 34. 8. Which cuſtom of mourning thirty dayes for the dead, continued long after among the *Jews*; for *Joſephus* reports, that when the *Jews* thought he had been killed, they mourned thirty dayes for him. So that we may take it here preciſely for ſeven dayes and ſeven nights, and refer it to the cuſtom of mourning for the dead, or in caſes of extream ſorrow among that people. It followeth,

Joſephus, *l.* 1. *de bello Jud.* c. 3.

And none ſpake a word unto him.] This is the fourth Ceremony of their mourning, their ſilence. In great mournings, ſilence makes up their ſolemnity. So, *Lam.* 2. 10. Theſe are joyned together; *The Elders of the daughters of Zion ſit upon the ground*, there is the former ceremony; *and kept ſilence.* Now whereas it is ſaid, they kept ſilence, we need not underſtand it ſo ſtrictly, as if for ſeven dayes and ſeven nights they never ſpake a word. It is uſual likewiſe in all languages, and very frequent in Scripture, that what is but ſeldom done, or done but a little, is ſaid not to be done at all; as in *Acts* 27. 33. *Paul* ſaith of thoſe that were in the Ship, that *for fourteen dayes they had faſted, having taken nothing*; a thing beyond the ſtrength of man, take it ſtrictly, to faſt fourteen dayes, taking nothing. But it is uſual to ſay, that is not done at all, which is but a little done; *They took nothing to eat*, that is, they took very ſparingly: they did eat only ſo much as would, according to our language, keep life and ſoul together. In *Iſa.* 20. 3. it is ſaid, that *Iſaiah walked naked and barefoot for three years*: Now it cannot be conceived, that the Prophet walked, as we ſay, ſtark naked, for three years together; he is ſaid to walk naked, becauſe he had not ſuch or ſo much cloathing, as formerly and uſually he had worn. So here, they ſpake not a word to him; that is, they did not ſpeak much, they ſpake very little to him. Or ſecondly, thus; reſtrictively to the matter; they ſpake not a word, by way of diſpute or argument (which was the buſineſs they fell upon afterward) either to convince him or reprove him.

The reaſon of this fourth Ceremonial act of mourning, their ſilence, is added in the laſt words of the Chapter; *for they ſaw that his grief was very great.*

כאב

The word here uſed for *grief*, though it had been alone, without any epithete to heighten the ſence, notes a very intenſive, a deep and great ſorrow. And it is put ſometimes for grief and ſorrow ariſing from the pain of the body; and ſometimes, for grief and ſorrow of mind. Now here I conceive, it may carry both ſenſes; they ſaw that the grief and pain of his body was very great, his body was in a woful plight; and they ſaw that his ſpirit was much perplext too, his mind was troubled. But if this word alone ſignifies, as it were all degrees, and all kinds of ſorrow, then conſider both the variety of kind, and intention of degrees collected in *Job's* ſorrows, which a word ſo comprehenſive is not ſufficient to expreſs; the aid of two other words is called in to help out our conception of his ſorrows. *They ſaw his grief*; they ſaw *his grief was great*: yet you have not all; *They ſaw his grief was very great*, exceeding great; this aggravates his grief, and winds up his ſorrow to the higheſt; as if now the affliction were grown to a full ſtature. God threatens *Babylon*, *Iſa.* 47. 9. *Theſe two things ſhall come upon thee, in a moment, in one day; the loſs of children, and widowhood; theſe things ſhall come upon thee in their perfection.* Sometimes imperfect judgments are upon a people or a perſon; they are, as it were, infant-judgments, judgments beginning; anon they grow to a greater height, and anon they come to a perfect ſtature, to be mighty ones, giantly judgments: At that time God had even brought *Job's* affliction to its perfection, and his grief was proportionable, very great; for this reaſon his friends kept ſilence; this reaſon hath an influence on all the acts of their ſorrow, but eſpecially upon this, their keeping ſilence; *for they ſaw his grief was very great.*

גדל מאד

From theſe ceremonial acts of ſorrow, I have obſerved divers things heretofore. Now take one thing in general; That, *great ſufferings call us to, and warrant us in ſolemn mournings.* *Job's* friends do not only mourn, but they mourn, as it were, in ſtate; there is a kind of magnificence in mourning, a pomp in mourning; I approve not a proud pomp, but an humble pomp; they mourn, you ſee, with all the formalities of *mourning*: ſo it becometh us ſometimes. As great mercies call for great rejoycings, ſo great afflictions call for great lamentings. There is a decency in it, when our affections keep pace with the diſpenſations of God, whether they be mercies or judgments, comforts or afflictions.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as *Job's* friends ſeeing his ſorrow to be thus *very great*, kept ſilence; obſerve,

> That, *In great, in overwhelming ſorrows, the mind is unfit to receive and take in comfort.*

When grief is very great, words give little eaſe; precious words are waſted and thrown away, comfort it ſelf is a trouble, in the greatneſs and height of trouble. I am ſure, a mind full charged with ſorrow, hath no room for comfort, is not at leiſure for counſel. It is a profitable rule in viſiting friends that are ſick, or in diſtreſs, when you ſee them in extremity of pain of body, or in extremity of anguiſh and trouble of ſpirit, keep ſilence, wait a while: Let the waters aſſwage a little, and the winds fall before you meddle: Let them come to themſelves before you move them. As ſudden anger, ſo ſudden ſorrow is a kind of phrenſie: *No wiſe Phyſitian will give a medicine in a fit*; the body muſt ſettle before it is fit for phyſick; and ſo muſt the mind too: ſilence is as good as phyſick in ſome diſtempers both of mind and body. A talkative comforter is another diſeaſe to a ſick man; unſeaſonable counſel is a wound inſtead of a plaiſter, and inſtead of healing, tortures the patient. It is as high a point of prudence to know when, as to know what to adviſe a diſtreſſed friend. *Solomon* tells us in general, (*Eccleſ.* 3. 7.) *There is a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak*: Let me adviſe this for one particular time or ſeaſon, to keep ſilence; namely, the extremity and height of trouble. The Prophet *Amos*, *chap.* 5. 13. ſpeaks of a time, wherein the prudent ſhall be ſilent; and he ſhews us why: *In that time the prudent ſhall keep ſilence, for it is an evil time.* Some interpret this, as an addition to the common calamity of thoſe times; they ſhould be ſo evil, that wiſe men would hold their peace. The Apoſtle propheſies of ſuch times, wherein men *will not endure ſound doctrine* (2 Tim. 4. 3.) *in Religion.* And ſuch times may be, wherein men will not endure ſound doctrine, in policie. Then the prudent hold their peace, and none ſpeak but fools or flatterers; ſuch times make the quickeſt market for their ſophiſticated wares, no other will go off: ſuch are very evil times, and this is a ſore judgment upon thoſe times. There is hope of good when wiſe men ſpeak; a word from their mouths, may cure and deliver a Nation. Yet I conceive that this Text of *Amos* may be underſtood as a deſcription of a wiſe mans duty; at leaſt, of his property, in ſome high

Etiam taciturnitas ipſa medicina eſt. Ambr. *in* Pſal. 37. *Conſolator loquax novus morbus ægroto eſt. Velox in ſermonibus magis vulnerat.*

high and great diſtempers upon a people. He ſees them uncapable of counſel; to give them good advice, is (at preſent) but the caſting of pearls before ſwine; all is loſt and undervalued, if not trampled on: yea, he ſees, that the more he labours to reform, the more he enrages them; therefore till this fit be over, prudence teacheth him to keep ſilence.

Thus alſo it is with private perſons in regard of the evils they endure; they cannot endure faithful counſel in ſuch an evil day, upon any private perſon; let the prudent keep ſilence, and wait for an opportunity, which may open a paſſage to let in their reproofs, or directions, or conſolations, with a taking advantage into the hearts of their afflicted friends and brethren. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſeeing the troubles approaching *Jeruſalem*, reſolves to take his fill of mourning; *Therefore, ſaid I, look away from me, I will weep bitterly; labour not to comfort me*, chap. 22. 4. He either thought that the beholders would faint to ſee him, and therefore ſaith, *look away from me*; or, that ſeeing him, they would ſay, he fainted, and ſo would be giving him comfort; that therefore his ſorrow might have full ſcope, he ſaith, *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me.* When a man is reſolved to mourn, let him mourn; your advice may anger him, but it will not help him: Let ſorrow have its way a while, and that will make way for comfort.

We have thus far carried on the ſad ſtory of *Job's* viſitation; his grief is now come to the height, *It is very great.* We have have alſo ſeen his friends viſit, with a double intendment, *both to mourn with him, and to comfort him.* We have ſeen them mourning, they fully reacht that end. We leave them now ſilent, waiting for a time to attempt and accompliſh the other end; they miſerably failed in that; it was to comfort him; *but they proved miſerable comforters:* which in the progreſs and proceſs of this Book, will receive a large and full diſcovery.

CHAP. III. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

After this, Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.*

And Job *ſpake, and ſaid,*

Let the day periſh wherein I was born; and the night, wherein it was ſaid, There is a man-child conceived.

The former Chapter concluded with the aſtoniſhment and ſilence of *Job's* three friends: This Chapter begins with an aſtoniſhing ſpeech of *Job*. We may be as much amazed at what *Job* ſpake, as we were at their ſilence; and there appears the ſame reaſon of both, *viz. the greatneſs of his grief.* They ſaw his grief ſo great, that they forbare to ſpeak; *Job* feeleth his grief ſo great, that he cannot longer forbear to ſpeak; it muſt have a vent. *After this,* (ſaith the Text) *Job opened his mouth.* Why, *Job* had opened his mouth before, he had ſpoken twice ſince he was encompaſſed with thoſe ſorrows. True; but *Job* never opened his mouth as now; he opened his mouth before, to juſtifie and to bleſs his God; now he openeth his mouth, to accuſe and *curſe his day*; and therefore the Chapter may well begin with, *After this,* Job *opened his mouth*; he never ſpake in this manner before: for he no ſooner opened his mouth, but he *curſed his day.*

The Argument and ſubject of the whole Chapter is contained in this firſt verſe, *the curſing of his day*; and concerning this, the Chapter holdeth forth three things moſt conſiderable. There are three particulars belonging unto this Chapter.

Firſt, The matter and the manner of this curſe; what it is, and how expreſt: *Job* pronounceth a curſe upon his day, and unfolds the curſe; he unfolds it with much Rhetorick, and ſtrains of eloquence: Troubles will make a man Rhetorical. *Job* (as it were) calls up all his ſpirits, whets his wit, and heightens his invention, to prepare a proper curſe for his day. This he doth from this firſt verſe, to the end of the nineteenth.

Secondly, In this Chapter *Job* holds forth to us, the ground or reaſon of his curſe; he is full of paſſion, but his *paſſion is rational*; he curſeth, but he ſhews you why. The reaſon (with ſome occaſional intermixtures) is demonſtrated from the ninth, to the end of the nineteenth verſe. If I am asked a reaſon of my anger, why I am ſo bitter againſt my day, this is the account I give; *Becauſe it ſhut not up my mothers womb,* &c.

Thirdly, We have an enforcement of this curſe upon his day, by a vehement expoſtulation, againſt the lengthning and continuance of his dayes. He complained in the beginning of the Chapter, that ever he had a day; and now he complains as much, that he hath any more dayes. He wonders why his life began, and he is troubled becauſe it doth not end. *Wherefore is light given unto him that is in miſery?* &c. This expoſtulation concludes the Chapter.

The nine former verſes contain the firſt diviſion of the Chapter, *Job's* curſe upon his day; both the matter and the manner of the curſe.

We have this curſe, firſt pronounced upon his day in general: *Then* Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.*

Secondly, He fixes a curſe upon his day, in the ſeveral parts of it. Take a natural day, for the ſpace of four and twenty hours, and then it conſiſteth of two parts, of day and night, light and darkneſs. According to which diviſion, the curſe runs, *v.* 3. *Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night wherein it was ſaid, a man-child is conceived.*

Thirdly, He pronounceth a ſpecial proper curſe upon each part of his day. Take the day for the light, for that ſpace between Sun-riſing and Sun-ſet; he curſes that, *verſ.* 4, & 5. *Let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light ſhine upon it,* &c.

Then follows a curſe upon the night, in *verſ.* 6, 7, 8. *As for that night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not be joyned unto the dayes of the year,* &c.

So then, *Job* pronounceth this curſe, firſt, in general, againſt his day.

Secondly, He divides the curſe upon the ſeveral parts of the day.

Thirdly, He faſtens a ſpecial curſe upon each part.

You ſee how accurate, how exact *Job's* ſorrows have made him.

We will begin with that which is firſt here; the curſing of his day in general, contained in the firſt verſe.

Then Job **opened his mouth; or, after this,** Job **opened his mouth, and curſed his day.**

Then, or, **After this,** hath a double reference.

Firſt, After the ſeven dayes ſilence, after his friends had ſate by him ſo long upon the ground, neither moving queſtion, nor adminiſtring a word of conſolation; *then* Job *opened his mouth.* Or, ſecondly,

After this; that is, After his ſorrows were (as it were) boyled up to the height, and began a little to remit, ſo as he could breath, recollect himſelf and conſider, in what condition he was.

After this; After there was ſome allay, ſome ebb and fall of his overflowing ſorrows, then he breaks forth in theſe words. Sorrow doth ſometimes not only oppreſs the ſpirit, but ſtop the mouth; *I am ſo troubled, that I cannot ſpeak,* ſaith David, Pſal. 77. 4. That he could not ſpeak for trouble, ſpeaks the greatneſs of his trouble. Plenty of ſorrow, makes a ſcarcity of words: Hence ſometimes the

Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes ſtupent. Vehementiam doloris exprimit, quod dicit ſe non eſſe locutum. Muſc. *in* Pſal. 74. 4.

Saints in great afflictions and grief of mind, pray and cry much to God, when they ſpeak little. Hanna *continued praying before the Lord*, (2 Sam. 1. 12.) Eli *the High-Prieſt marked her mouth* (ſaith the Text.) *Now* Hanna, *ſhe ſpake in her heart*; *only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard.* Would you know why, in ſo much praying, there was no ſpeaking; why her heart ſpake, and not her tongue. Her ſelf gives the reaſon at verſe 15. *I am a woman of a ſorrowful ſpirit.* And verſe 16. *Out of the abundance of my complaint and grief, have I ſpoken hitherto, ſc.* not with my lips, but with my heart. All which is given us at verſe 10. *She was in bitterneſs of ſoul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept ſore.* Thus it was with *Job*, ſorrow ſilenced him, ſorrow in the height cauſed that high ſilence, but as ſoon as that aſſwaged, *Then he opened his mouth and ſpake.*

Altum ſilentium.

A man cannot ſpeak till he open his mouth; yet to open the mouth and ſpeak, is more then to ſpeak.

Firſt, To open the mouth and ſpeak, is to ſpeak with a loud or clear voice; as he that ſpeaks ſoftly, is ſaid to ſpeak in his throat. Or as they who have familiar ſpirits, or Wizards, are ſaid to peep, and to mutter, *Iſa.* 8. 9. A Witch, or Wizard, is called there, and in other places of Scripture, (*Levit.* 20. 27. *Deut.* 18. 11.) *Ob*, which ſignifieth a bottle, or bladder, becauſe ſuch being poſſeſs'd or acted by an evil ſpirit, ſpake with a hollow voice, as out of a bottle, and (as ſome affirm) with ſwollen bellies: From which manner of utterance, the Greeks call them *Belly-ſpeakers.* And *Junius*, upon that of *Iſa.* 8. 19. apprehends this as a deſcription of thoſe Hell-prophets, in oppoſition to the true Prophets, who uſed to ſpeak with a clear, loud, diſtinct voice: Or as *Job* here, to open their mouths and ſpeak.

ἐγγαστριμύθοι.

Secondly, *To open the mouth and ſpeak*, is as much as to ſay, he ſpake with his mouth: And there is an elegancy in that; as in thoſe like expreſſions, *I heard it with mine ears*; that is, I did certainly hear it, or I did fully hear it. *I ſaw it with mine eyes*; that is, I am ſure I ſaw it. So the Scripture ſaith, *We are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. A thing cannot be bought, but with a price; there muſt be ſome price or other, either money, or money-worth, ſomewhat anſwering the intrinſick value of every thing that is bought; but to ſhew that we are bought with a full price, that Chriſt did not compound our debt with his Father, but paid the uttermoſt farthing, it is ſaid, *We are bought with a price.* So the Prophet *Malachy* tells the ſacrilegious *Jews*, *Ye are curſed with a curſe*, chap. 3. 9. A man cannot be curſed but with a curſe; but to ſhew the greatneſs of the curſe, he ſaith, *Ye are curſed with a curſe.* So here, *Job* opened his mouth and ſpake, or opened his mouth and curſed; that is, he curſed his day greatly, even with a bitter and grievous curſe. *He curſed it* (as he ſaid) *to purpoſe.* Thus to ſhew the excellency of Chriſt's Doctrine, that his was *A Sermon of Sermons*, and he the Meſſenger, the Interpreter, *the One of a thouſand*, yea, *the One of All the Thouſands that ever ſhewed to man his uprightneſs*: The Goſpel ſaith, *Matth.* 5. 1. *When he ſaw a great multitude, he opened his mouth and ſpake.* Hence,

Cum enim aliquis loquitur ex impetu paſſionis, non ipſe aperuit os ſuum, ſed paſſione agitur ad loquendũ, non enim per paſſionem noſtri actus domini ſumus, ſed per ſolam rationem; conſuetum enim eſt apud ſapientes ut ex ratione loquantur paſſionum motus, quos ſentiunt. Aquin. *in loc.*

In the third place, *To open the mouth and ſpeak*, is to ſpeak upon mature deliberation, to ſpeak conſiderately, prudently, punctually, to ſpeak elegantly, to ſpeak orderly, *to ſpeak the words of truth and ſoberneſs.* A fool is ſaid to ſpeak with an open mouth; but a wiſe man openeth his mouth and ſpeaks. A wiſe godly man hath his tongue at his command; but a fools tongue commands him: His tongue runs faſter then his wit, as we ſay. *A fools mouth* (as *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* 15. 2.) *poureth out fooliſhneſs*: Their mouths are alwayes open; and therefore they cannot be ſaid to open their mouths: A fool hath not a door to his mouth (therefore alſo he cannot be ſaid to open his mouth) much leſs hath he a lock and a key, a bolt or a bar to his mouth: but a wiſe man hath a door to his mouth; yea his mouth is lockt with Wiſdoms key, and that unlocks it. *I will open my mouth* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt. *Pſal.* 78. 2.) *in a Parable.* Parables are the ſpeeches of wiſe men; yea, they are the extracts and ſpirits of Wiſdom. The Hebrew word ſignifies, to rule, or have authority: becauſe ſuch ſpeeches come upon us with authority, and ſubdue our reaſon by the weight of theirs. Now when he is about to ſpeak Parables, he ſaith, *I will open my mouth.* When Wiſdom calls for audience and obedience, *Prov.* 8. 6. ſhe ſaith, *Hear, for I will ſpeak of excellent things, and the opening of my lips ſhall be right things. David* invokes God to open his mouth, when he would ſhew forth that excellent thing, the *praiſe of God*, Pſal. 51. 15. God opens not the mouth of a fool, neither doth a fool open his mouth and ſpeak, but his ſpeech opens his mouth.

Figuratè enim & ſcite dicta Parabolæ vocantur, quia authoritatem habent & in ſermone dominantur.

But did *Job* open his mouth in this ſence wiſely and diſcreetly? did he well to be ſo angry with his day? ſpake he wiſely in curſing his day? I anſwer, Though there was much paſſion in this ſpeech, yet *Job* ſpake out of much deliberation; he conſidered what to ſpeak before he ſpake. A man may ſpeak with much paſſion, and yet ſpeak out of much deliberation; and ſo did *Job* here; in that long ſilence he was learning what to ſpeak. And as there was much heat of paſſion, ſo there was much light of wiſdom in what he ſpake.

Fourthly, *To open the mouth and ſpeak*, is to ſpeak boldly and confidently, to ſpeak with freedom and liberty of ſpeech; (as the Greek word ſignifies) to ſpeak all a mans mind, without fear or favour of any man, *Prov.* 31. 8, 9. *Open thy mouth for the dumb*; *open thy mouth, judge righteouſly,* &c. that is, be bold for thoſe that are poor, and dare not appear themſelves; ſpeak thou aloud for the dumb, and freely for thoſe that cannot plead their own cauſe, or make out their own innocence. The Apoſtle begs of the *Epheſians*, Chap. 6. 19. that they would pray, that *utterance might be given him, that he might open his mouth boldly, to make known the myſtery of the Goſpel*: and neither fear the faces of men, nor conceal the truth of God.

παῤῥησίᾳ λαλεῖν. Job 7. 26. *ἐκ πᾶν omne & ῥῆσις dictio, quum quis omne id dicit quod ad rem pertinet, nihil veritus offenſionem eorum quibuſcum loquitur.*

You ſee then by the opening of this expreſſion, there was more then bare ſpeaking meant, *when* Job *opened his mouth and ſpake*: When a wiſe and a holy man opens his mouth, you may look for more then words, even the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge.

Let us now examine what treaſure we can make of thoſe words which *Job* ſpake, when he opened his mouth.

He opened his mouth, and curſed his day.

But is there any treaſure in a curſe? except that which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, as the fruit of Gods abuſed patience, *Rom.* 2. 5. *A treaſure of wrath.* Or did *Job* deliberate for a curſe? was he moulding and faſhioning ſo deform'd an iſſue as this in his thoughts ſo long? Yes, ſaith the Text, *He opened his mouth, and curſed his day.*

The word here uſed, *to Curſe*, is not the word which we have met with ſo often in the two former Chapters; where Satan undertook that *Job* would curſe his God. That word, in its native ſence, ſignifies to bleſs. But here, when *Job* curſeth his day, a word is uſed, which hath neither name nor ſhadow of a bleſſing: And it is derived from a root, which ſignifieth a thing that is light, moveable, or unſetled. And ſo by a Metaphor, it ſignifies any thing, or perſon, which we deſpiſe, contemn and ſlight, or the act of deſpiſing and curſing; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe thoſe things which we deſpiſe, contemn, or curſe, we look upon as light things, trivial, or vain, or hurtful: On the contrary, the word in the Hebrew for honour and glory, comes from a root which ſignifieth heavy, or ponderous, becauſe that which we honour and reſpect, we look upon it as a thing that hath weight and ſubſtance in it: And the Apoſtle calls that moſt glorious eſtate of the Saints in Heaven, *A weight of glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. The oppoſite word which we have in the Text, is frequently tranſlated, to deſpiſe, or contemn, and likewiſe to curſe and blaſpheme; and doth properly ſignifie ſuch a curſing, as ariſes from the contempt, or light eſteem, which we have of a thing, or perſon. So we have the word clearly uſed, *Levit.* 20. 9. *Every one that curſeth his father, or his mother*: Now obſerve, curſing of the father, or mother, it is directly oppoſed to the fifth Commandment, which ſaith, *Thou ſhalt honour thy father and thy mother*; thou ſhalt look upon thy father and thy mother as upon perſons of weight and honour, whom thou art bound to reverence and eſteem; ſo that to curſe the father, or mother, is to account them vile and contemptible. The ſame word expreſſes, that villanous act of *Shimei*, 2 Sam. 16. 15. *who came forth, and curſed* David *ſtill as he came.* That act was alike oppoſite both to the rule and word of the fifth Commandment, which ſaith, *Honour thy father*, &c. taking in the civil father as well as the natural: *Shimei*'s curſing *David*, lightly eſteemed *David*; he did not look up-

קלל *Levis aut nullius ponderis fuit; per metaphoram; levis, vilis, contemptus fuit in Piel.*

קלל *male dixit; blaſphemavit.*

כבר *In Kal ſignificat grave eſſe ſive ingraveſcere; & in Piel honorare, quia quos honoramus non habemus leves aut viles, ſed eorum authoritatis pondus ſuſcipimus.* Rivetus.

on him, in or according to the weightineſs and honour of his Kingly Perſon, or of his Kingly Office; *A King is a weighty perſon, a Crown is a weighty thing*; *Shimei* deſpiſed and ſo curſed both. Sometimes the word is tranſlated directly to deſpiſe: I will give you two Texts for that. *Gen.* 16. 4. *When* Hagar *ſaw ſhe had conceived, her Miſtreſs was deſpiſed in her eyes*; (it is the ſame word with that uſed here for curſing,) the meaning is, ſhe did lightly eſteem her Miſtreſs: Thus ſhe thought: now ſhall I have the honour of raiſing *Abraham*'s family; now I am at leaſt as good a woman as my Miſtreſs; thus ſhe deſpiſed *Sarah*. Again, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. where the Lord ſaith concerning *Ely*'s ſons, *Them that honour me, I will honour*; *and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* I will make little account of them that make little account of me, and woe be to thoſe (though all the world honour them) whom God deſpiſeth: That man looſes more then honour, whom God doth not honour: And they who deny God his honour, deny him all good, and offer him all evil; ſuch a deſpiſing of God, is a curſing of God.

Further, to curſe (if we conſider it in the nature of the thing, and not ſtrictly in the literal ſence of the word) is to wiſh evil to a thing, or perſon: This alſo is the meaning of the curſe in this place; for when *Job* explains this curſe in the parts of it, he doth (as it were) with wonderful art and skill, gather together whatſoever may be thought the evil of a day, or the evil of a night, and calls it up, to ſeize upon them. A curſe, or to curſe, vertually contains in it all evil: As a bleſſing, or to bleſs, contains in it vertually all good. Every mercy we enjoy, is a bleſſing ſpecificated: And ſo any evil that falls upon man, (as Sword, Famine, Peſtilence, *&c.*) is a curſe ſpecificated; howſoever poſſibly thoſe things which are in their nature evil, and in their matter a curſe, may be qualified (in reference unto ſome perſon) into a bleſſing. But take a curſe properly, and it containeth all evil, and only evil in it. Therefore as when God had given the Word an *eſſe*, a being, that he might give it, a *bene eſſe*, a well-being, he adds to the work of Creation, the word of benediction, *And God bleſſed them, and ſaid unto them, be fruitful,* &c. *Gen.* 1. 22, 28. So afterward, when man had ſinned, and the Lord intended to leave the world groaning under part of thoſe evils which ſin had brought upon it, he wrapt up all in the word of a curſe, *Curſed be the ground for thy ſake,* &c. *Gen.* 3. 17. So then when *Job* curſeth his day, he wiſheth all the evil to it, that a day is capable of. *And* Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.*

But, what was this day that *Job* was ſo angry with it? and that his paſſion doth ſo burn againſt it?

The Text ſpeaks indefinitely, Job *curſed his day.*

Some underſtand it of the day of his preſent ſuffering, he curſed the day on which ſuch troubles befel him: And we find ſometimes in Scripture, that a day put thus alone, is an evil or a troubleſome day: As in the twelfth verſe of the Propheſie of *Obadiah* the Lord rebukes the children of *Edom* thus, *Thou ſhouldſt not have looked on the day of thy brother*; that is, the day of thy brother *Jacob*'s ſufferings, the day wherein I had him under my rod, and afflicted him. So the day of the Lord, is the day of the Lords anger, when he pours wrath and trouble upon the earth; *Iſa.* 2. 12. *The day of the Lord of hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low.* The day of the Lord, or the day of a man undetermin'd, often ſignifies an evil day.

But here we may rather underſtand it for that day which was as the occaſion, or for the occaſional day of all *Job*'s troubles, and that was his birth-day: If his birth-day had been prevented, all his troubleſome dayes had been prevented; therefore he falls out with that, as himſelf explains it, *ver.* 3. *Let the day periſh* (ſaith he here) *wherein I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid, there is a man-child conceived.* It is uſual to call a mans birth-day *his day*, ſo the Scripture is conceiv'd to ſpeak, *Hoſ.* 7. 5. *In the day of our King, the Princes have made him ſick with bottels of wine:* That is, on his birth-day, which among Princes is commonly ſolemniz'd with feaſting: As we read of *Pharaoh*, and of *Herod.* So then, the day is his birth-day, the day of his nativity: which ſome take preciſely, for the day upon which he was born; and others more largely, for the annual return of that day; as if he had laid in a curſe for a day, whenſoever or how often ſoever it ſhould return in the years of his life.

A little further to clear the ſence of this curſe, let us conſider the whole matter, as we have conſidered the words. There are two or three Queſtions, which being debated and reſolved, will give light to this context.

Job, you ſee, takes upon him to curſe: Firſt, it may be queſtioned, whether a curſe be in the power of man, or no? Can a man curſe perſons, or things?

Surely bleſſings and curſings are both in the hand of God; whether we reſpect perſons, or things. There is a miniſterial curſe, and a miniſterial bleſſing in the power of man: but it is not in the power of any man, magiſterially to make any thing, or perſon, bleſſed, or to make any thing, or perſon, accurſed. It was a great brag which *Balack* made of *Balaam*, (Numb. 22. 6.) *I wot* (ſaith he) *that he whom thou bleſſeſt is bleſſed, and he whom thou curſeſt is curſed.* He thought he had the curſe in his command, he could curſe whom he pleaſed, and what he pleaſed, and when he pleaſed; but he was deceived; he reckon'd beyond his ſtrength, and beyond the ſtrength of a creature. What the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe concerning the miniſtery of the Word, Paul *may plant, and* Apollos *may water, but it is God that giveth the increaſe*, is as true in this; one man may plant a curſe, and another man may water it with a hearty wiſh that it may grow, but it is God only that giveth the increaſe of evil, and the decreaſe of good. Curſes are not in the power of any creature; if they were, we ſhould have a miſerable world quickly. How many ſhould we ſee daily blaſted with the breath of malicious execrations? *Some mens mouths are full of curſing*, Pſal. 10. 7. *They love curſing, they cloath themſelves with curſing as with a garment*, Pſal. 109. 17, 18. Curſing (as one of the Ancients complained in his time) is now made the common weapon of anger; and wrath wiſhes that evil, which (becauſe of weakneſs) it cannot work. If curſing could have done it, we had not been a people at this day. How often hath *Balack* (out of fear, or envy at our proſperity) ſent to *Balaam* (I mean the falſe Prophet that dwells on the ſeven hills) come curſe *Iſrael*, come defie *England*? how often hath that *Balaam* curs'd our *Iſrael*? We have heard of his Anniverſary *Anathemaes*, wherein this Church and State have been ſtruck with the thunder and lightning of his Papal curſe. But the curſe cauſeleſs (ſaith *Solomon*) ſhall not come. And we may ſay to *England*, as *Moſes* did to *Iſrael*, concerning *Balaam*'s curſe, *Deut.* 23. 5. *Neverthleſs the Lord thy God would not hearken unto* Balaam: *But the Lord thy God turned the curſe into a bleſſing unto thee, becauſe the Lord thy God loved thee.* And what *David* pray'd about *Shimei*'s curſe, we have ſeen come to paſs: *The Lord hath requited us good for his curſing*, 2 Sam. 16. 12. We have far greater cauſe to fear the bleſſing of *Rome*, then the curſe of *Rome*. But to return. The reſult of all is this; *When God pronounceth a curſe, he makes it to be a curſe*; *man at the worſt, can but wiſh a curſe and pronounce it.* Man is but the Miniſter, God is the Maſter of the curſe; God can inflict it, man can but think or wiſh it.

Prima ſemper irarum tela ſunt maledicta, & quæ non poſſumus imbecilles, optamus irati. Votis malis pro armis utimur. Salvian *l.* 3. *de gubern.*

Another thing here queſtionable is, Whether it be lawful to curſe the creature? *Job* curſeth his day: The rule of the Apoſtle is, *Rom.* 12. 4. *Bleſs, and curſe not.*

In ſome caſes, to curſe is Gods Command and our duty, and then we are Gods Miniſters for wrath againſt the wicked. Many times man (though forbidden) curſes, then it is his ſin, and he is Satans miniſter for evil againſt his brother.

There are ſome caſes wherein we may curſe. When the the Patriarch *Jacob* was upon his death-bed, and bed of bleſſing, yet he pronounced a curſe upon the rage and anger of his two ſons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. 49. 7. *Curſed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in* Jacob, *and ſcatter them in* Iſrael. We may curſe the plots and counſels of wicked men, enemies of Chriſt and of his people: we may curſe the perſons of wicked men, as inplacable enemies of Chriſt, and of his people: So *David* more then once in the Book of *Pſalms*; yet it is to be conſidered, that ſome of thoſe *Pſalms* are Propheſies of a curſe, not pronunciations of a curſe. And in in all lawful curſings we muſt obſerve theſe two rules. Firſt, To aim the curſe at the deſtruction of the ſin, not of the ſinner. Secondly, Where the ſinner appears incorrigible,

ble, yet to deſire the clearing up of Gods Juſtice in puniſhing, not the puniſhment it ſelf. To curſe any thing, or perſon, paſſionately, is infirmity: To curſe any thing, or perſon, maliciouſly, is groſs impiety.

There is a third doubt, the reſolving of which will further clear the Scripture to us; that is, Whether a day, be an object capable of a curſe, or no? It is a Queſtion moved by the School-men, Whether a bleſſing and a curſe do belong to any but a reaſonable creature? or whether any thing elſe be a ſubject capable of a bleſſing or a curſe? And they reſolve it, That nothing is properly the ſubject of bleſſing and curſing, but a reaſonable creature. Therefore a day which is a part of time, is in it ſelf uncapable of a curſe: Thoſe things only are capable of penal evils which are capable of moral evils: A day is not, cannot be morally evil, though there be many moral evils acted in the day. The Apoſtle adviſeth us, *To redeem the time, becauſe the dayes are evil*, Epheſ. 5. 15. Times are called evil, in regard both of troubleſome evils and ſinful evils: From evil men, and evil manners, dayes are denominated evil; yet dayes in themſelves are not evil morally, and ſo not lyable to a curſe, which is a penal evil.

Aquin. 2a. 2æ. 76. *Art.* 2. *q.* *Benedictio vel maledictio propriè ad illam rem pertinet, cui poteſt aliquis benè vel malè contingere, ſc. rationali creaturæ. Creaturis autem irrationalibus, bonum vel malum dicitur contingere, in ordine ad creaturam rationalem, propter quā ſunt.* Aquinas *ubi ſupra.*

Further, Thoſe creatures which have life in them, and have no reaſon in them, are on the ſame ground incapable of a curſe. Whereas it is ſaid, that God curſed the ground, and curſed the Serpent, *Gen.* 3. 14, 17. neither the ground nor the Serpent were curſed in themſelves, or for their own ſakes. The Serpent, an unreaſonable creature, had not the knowledge of God; and the earth, a ſenſleſs creature, could not feel the power of God; therefore the curſe upon thoſe creatures, was only in order to, and as a puniſhment of the ſin of man. The Text is expreſs, *Gen.* 3. 17. *Curſed be the earth for thy ſake:* The earth there comprehends all the creatures living on the face of the earth, beſides man: Theſe are curſed for mans ſake. As thoſe creatures at the firſt received not a being, or a bleſſing, for themſelves, but for mans good, ſo they receive not any evil or curſe, but for mans puniſhment: So we are to underſtand thoſe places in *Deut.* 28. *Curſed be thy basket and thy ſtore*, &c. God threatens a curſe on theſe creatures, the fruits of the earth, *&c.* in order to mans diſobedience: *But it ſhall come to paſs, if thou wilt not hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to obſerve to do all his Commandments*, &c. *that all theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee, and overtake thee*, ver. 15. Obſerve, *That the curſe is threatned to come on them, to overtake them:* When the basket was curs'd, when the increaſe of the kine and the flocks of the ſheep were curſed, man was curſed: For we may ſay in the letter, as *David* did in a figure, when the Angel of the Lord ſmote his people with the Peſtilence, (2 *Sam.* 24.) *Alas, what have theſe ſheep done*? that they ſhould be ſmitten with a curſe. As in pulling down the houſe of a Traitor, the revenge is not taken againſt the materials of the houſe, but againſt the Maſter of the houſe. So then, for the reſolution of this point, take it thus, *No creature below man, is, or can be, accurſed by God, or man, properly, terminately, or ultimately:* That is, in it ſelf, for it ſelf, or from it ſelf, but only improperly and relatively, namely, with reſpect to what man ſhould do, hath done, or ſuffered. Firſt, in reference to what man ſhould do; ſo Chriſt curſed the Fig-tree, to teach man either the duty of fruitfulneſs to the glory of God, or of faith in the power of God. Secondly, in reference to what man hath done, the ſin of man, thus God curſed the Serpent and the ground: The Serpent was curſed, both for admonition to man, and for a puniſhment on man: God to admoniſh man, how much he hated ſin, puniſhes an irrational inſtrument of ſin, and by that enmity planted in the Serpent as a curſe, puniſhes mans too much familiarity with the Serpent. And as the enmity of the Serpent was mans ſcourge, ſo alſo was the barrenneſs of the earth: That barrenneſs in bringing forth good fruit, that fertility in bringing forth bryars and thorns, were both as rods for the back of man. Thirdly, the irrational or ſenſleſs creatures are curſed in reference to that which man ſuffers. Thus *David* curſed the Mountains of *Gilboa*, 2 *Sam.* 1. 21. becauſe there *Saul* and his beloved *Jonathan* were ſlain by the ſword of the Philiſtines, *Becauſe there the ſhield of the mighty was vilely caſt away, the ſword of* Saul, *as if he had not been anointed with oyl.* In this ſence, (as *David* curſed a place) ſo *Job* curſes a time, *his day*; the day which either gave occaſion to his ſufferings, or the day in which he actually ſuffered ſuch a world of evils. Thus alſo *Jeremy* curſes his day with a vehement curſe, *Jer.* 20. 14. *Curſed be the day wherein I was born; let not the day wherein my mother bare me be bleſſed:* And not only ſo, but he curſes the man who firſt reported his birth, *ver.* 15, 16. *Curſed be the man who brought tidings to my father, ſaying, a man-child is born unto thee, making him very glad. And let that man be as the Cities which the Lord overthrew and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the ſhooting at noon-tide*, &c. And why ſo bitter a curſe? was it againſt the day for it ſelf, or againſt the man himſelf? *Jeremy* ſhews it was not, *ver.* 18. *Wherefore came I out of the womb to ſee labour and ſorrow, that my dayes ſhould be conſumed with ſhame?* To curſe any thing under the notion of a creature, or as it is the work of God, is to blaſpheme God; to curſe any unreaſonable or inſenſible creature in themſelves, or to take revenge on them, is to be, if not ſenſleſs, yet (I am ſure in that act) unreaſonable. So far of this curſing his day in general. It follows,

Maledicere rebus irrationalibus in quantum ſunt creaturæ, eſt peccatum blaſphemiæ, maledicere eis in ſe conſideratis eſt otioſum & vanum. Aquinas *ubi ſupra.*

Verſe 2. And Job ſpake and ſaid.

This verſe is only a tranſition into the matter of the next, it is as if the holy Ghoſt had ſaid, Job *curſed his day:* and would you know how he curſed it? He did it after this manner, or in this form of words, Job *ſpake and ſaid*, thus, *&c.* Only note, that the word which we tranſlate *ſpeak*, is in the Original *anſwered*; and ſo often in Scripture, he is ſaid to anſwer who begins to ſpeak; *Job* anſwered and ſaid.

Reſpondere ſæpe dicitur qui orditur ſermonem, etiamſi nulla interrogatio præceſſerit. Druſ.

We ſhewed you before, that this day in general was the object of this curſe; now he curſes it in the parts of it, the day and the night. *Let the day periſh*, &c. At which words the ſtile alters; that which you read forward to the ſixth verſe of the forty-ſecond Chapter, is ſacred Poetry; *Job* breaths out his paſſion in verſe, and in verſe receives his anſwer. It is queſtioned, whether *Job* at that time opened his mouth, and vented his ſorrows in verſe? or whether it were after contrived ſo by the Penman of this Book. As I ſee no profit in moving this queſtion, ſo I think there is no poſſibility of reſolving it: And therefore I leave it as I found it, a quere ſtill. Only ~~this is~~ obſervable; that writing in verſe is moſt ſutable, where the matter written is deeply ſteep't in, and chiefly wrought out of our affections. Hence we find, That thoſe parts of Scripture, which ſet forth ſtrongeſt affections, are compoſed in verſe: As thoſe holy flames of ſpiritual love between Chriſt and his Spouſe in the *Canticles* of *Solomon*: The triumphant joy of *Deborah*, after deliverance from *Siſera*'s Army: Of *Moſes* and *Miriam*, after the deſtruction of *Pharaoh:* The afflicting ſorrows of *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs: And the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy*, for the captivity of the *Jews:* The Book of *Pſalms*, is, as it were, a throng of all affections, Love, joy, ſorrow, fear, hope, anger, zeal, every paſſion acting a part, and wound up in higheſt ſtrains by the Spirit of God, breathing Poetical eloquence into that heavenly Prophet. So this book of *Job*, whoſe ſubject is ſorrow, hath a compoſure anſwerable to the matter. Paſſion hath moſt ſcope in verſe, and is freeſt when tyed up in numbers. The words follow;

Let the day periſh.

What this day was, we ſhewed you before: It was the day of his nativity; *The day* (ſaith he) *wherein I was born.* How ſhould this day periſh?

To *periſh*, ſignifies firſt, not to be. A thing is ſaid to periſh, when it is annihilated, when it returns to nothing: As the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Man being in honour and underſtandeth not, is compared to the beaſts that periſh.* The periſhing of a beaſt, is the non-entity of a beaſt; when a beaſt dieth, it periſheth, it is not: A beaſt is no more, but vaniſheth quite, and is gone for ever. Then, ſuch mens likeneſs to a beaſt, is not in periſhing, but in the want of true underſtanding: He doth not ſay, man periſheth like a beaſt, but he is like a beaſt that periſheth. A wicked man, how honourable ſoever, is *a brutiſh man*, ver. 10. For he knows nothing ſpiritually; and *what he knows naturally, in that, like a brute beaſt, he corrupts himſelf*, as the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks, *ver.* 10. of his Epiſtle. But between the periſhing of a fooliſh man and a beaſt, there is a vaſt difference: A beaſts periſhing is a not-being; a fooliſh mans periſhing is a miſerable being.

For ſecondly, To *periſh*, ſignifies often a miſerable being, as in *John* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth, ſhould not periſh*, &c. *Not periſh*; the meaning of it is, not that all unbelievers ſhall looſe their very beings, become a nothing, and with their exiſtence part from their eſſence. Some wicked beaſtly men would be glad of this, that they might live here wickedly, and afterward die like beaſts, in that ſence, eternally: If this were the periſhing, that is threatned unbelivers, many of them would be ready to ſay out of love and liking to their luſts, as *Eſther* did out of love and zeal to the Cauſe of God, *If we periſh, we periſh*: If this be to periſh, let us periſh. But that periſhing is of another nature; *They that believe not ſhall periſh*; that is, they ſhall live and periſh; they ſhall be, and be miſerable for ever; the wrath of a diſpleaſed God, and the ſting of a polluted conſcience, ſhall torment them to all eternity.

Thirdly, To *periſh*, is to be impaired, or looſe former dignity and reſpect. So *let the day periſh*, may be taken in this ſence, let not that day be ſolemnized, let it not be remembred with wonted joy and gladneſs. A day which hath uſually been ſolemnized, may be ſaid to periſh, when that ſolemnity is laid down, and utterly diſus'd. In ancient times (and the cuſtom in ſome places remains to this day) Great men and Princes kept the memory of their birth-dayes with feaſting and triumph. Thus we read, *Gen.* 40.20. *And it came to paſs the third day, which was* Pharaoh's *birth-day, that he made a feaſt unto all his ſervants*. And *Matth.* 14. 6. we read, *That when* Herod's *birth-day was kept, the daughter of* Herodias *danced before them*. It is generally conceived, that *Job* did ſolemnize his birth-day; and ſo many Interpreters take thoſe feaſts, ſpoken of in the firſt Chapter, to have been, the birth-day feaſts of *Job*'s Children. *Origen* in his fragments upon *Matthew*, affirms, that the Scripture gives no teſtimony of any one good man celebrating his birth-day: The truth is, while we reflect upon our birth-ſin, we have little cauſe to rejoyce in our birth-day: The new-born Infant ſeems to forbid this ſolemnity, and by his tears weeps and ſpeaks down this joy. The birth-day of nature ſhould be mourned over every day, much more upon the day of our birth. The birth-day of Grace is our joy and our glory, and is worthy to be rejoyced in, not only in this day of Grace, but in that of glory, and ſo it ſhall. *Eternity, which is the day of glory, is one continued triumph for our birth-day in grace.* Notwithſtanding this, I ſee no cogent reaſon, why a godly man may not celebrate and rejoyce in his naturall birth-day; ſo he rejoyce in God, who took him out of his mothers womb, and hath preſerved him ever ſince he was born. So then, we taking *Job*'s day for his birth-day, he ſaying, *Let that day periſh*, means, let it be no more ſolemnized, let there be no more joy, no feaſts upon that day.

Or fourthly, *Let that day periſh*, may be thus underſtood, let not that be reckoned upon, let it be loſt, let it not be counted in the Calender of the year. A day whereof no uſe is made, is called in Scripture, a loſt day, a fallen or periſhed day. In the ſixt of *Numbers*, the number of dayes is preſcribed for the ſeparation of the Nazarites, thus and thus it ſhall be, and ſo many dayes: Now, if the Nazarite had continued many dayes, according to the Law of his ſeparation; yet if he were polluted with a dead body before the full number was accompliſht, then he muſt begin again, for (ſaith *Moſes*) *The dayes that were before ſhall be loſt, becauſe his ſeparation was defiled*, ver. 12. In the Hebrew it is, *All the other dayes ſhall fall*; he muſt not reckon upon thoſe: So here *Job* ſaith, *Let the day periſh*; that is, let it not be numbred or reckon'd, let it be as a day loſt or fallen. So then the ſum of all is this; let the joy and ſolemnity of my birth-day be laid aſide, let it never be celebrated more in the return of the year. I could wiſh that day had never been, but ſeeing that is impoſſible, it having been already, yet let it be as if it had never been, let it be put out of all accounts, let it be taken off from all records; and not only not remembred with mirth and feaſting, but not be remembred at all.

And the night wherein it was ſaid, a man-child is conceived.

So we tranſlate: The elegancy of the Hebrew ſpeaks thus, *The night which ſaid, a man-child is conceived*; as if the night had been the meſſenger, and had brought word of his conception. Some render the Hebrew word [*Hara*,] (which we tranſlate conceived) *Born*, applying both parts of the verſe to his birth, *Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid a man-child is brought forth*: And the Original word will bear it, being uſed (as learned *Mercer* obſerves) for production as well as conception. So 1 *Chron.* 4. 17. *And ſhe bare* Miriam *and* Shammai, *&c. She bare*, is the word in this Text of *Job*: We may take it either way; the ſence is clear according to our tranſlation, that *Job* ſends this curſe beyond his birth-day, even to the night wherein he was conceived. Or if we refer it no further back then to his birth: It is as if he had ſaid, whether I were born by night or by day, let the time of my birth be accurſed; if it were upon the day time, *Let that day periſh wherein I was born*: Was I born in the night? *Let that night periſh wherein it was ſaid a man-child is brought forth*: This diſtribution notes a reſolvedneſs to curſe it; and leaſt he ſhould miſs the time of the day, he curſes both the diviſions of time, in every day. As *Benhadad* in his charge for the taking of thoſe young-men, that came out of *Samaria*, to ſhew how fully he was reſolved to have them taken, ſaith, *Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive*, 1 Kings 20. 18. as if he had ſaid, I'le have them taken whatſoever comes on't, or for whatſoever they come, they ſhall not eſcape. Or as *Herod*, who, that he might be ſure to ſlay Chriſt in his infancy, commands all Infants to be ſlain: So *Job*, that the curſe might not miſs the time of his birth-day, curſes all the time of that day, the day, and the night. For though a man be born in the night, yet that is not called his birth-night, but his birth-day: And to be born, is to come into the light, though the birth-time be the darkeſt of the night. Hence the Heathen called their *Juno*, whoſe help they invoked in time of womens travail (*Deam lucinam*) *the Goddeſs bringing into light.*

הרה

So much for the opening of this curſe, both in the general and in the parts of it, reſpecting the object day and night. In the next words he cuts out, or proportions a ſpecial curſe, as the portion of each part: The day hath a ſhare, and the night hath a ſhare; each by it ſelf. Before I open this box of curſes any further, I ſhall obſerve ſomewhat from the diſcovery thus far made.

And firſt I muſt anſwer a doubt ariſing upon the whole matter; for it may be queſtioned upon this you have already heard, though we carry on his complaint no further, How *Job* can be ſet up with ſo much admiration for a mirror of patience, who makes ſuch bitter complainings, and breaks out into ſuch diſtemper'd paſſion, curſing *his day*? May he not rather be an example of impatience? an unimitable pattern of an unquiet and uncompoſed ſpirit? Are theſe the words of patience and ſobriety? Is this the language of ſubmiſſion and humility, *Curſed be my day?* He ſeemeth to be ſo far from patience, that he wants prudence; ſo far from grace, that he wants reaſon it ſelf and good nature; his ſpeeches report him mad or diſtracted, breaking the bounds of modeſty and moderation, ſtriking that which had not hurt him, and ſtriking that which he could not hurt, his birth-day. In this *Job* appears much like that proud Emperor *Zerxes*, of whom the Hiſtorian reports, that when the raging *Helleſpont* broke down the bridge that he had made over it, he in a rage cauſed ſome hundreds of ſtripes to be inflicted as a puniſhment on thoſe waters, and cauſed a pair of ſhackles to be caſt upon thoſe waves, to teach them ſubjection: was not this madneſs? what cared the waters for ſtripes? or why ſhould *Zerxes* take revenge upon the waters? And was not *Job* as mad? what cared his day for the curſe? or why ſhould *Job* take revenge upon his day? But as the Prophet ſaith, *Hab.* 3. 8. *Was the Lord diſpleaſed againſt the rivers? was his wrath againſt the ſea?* Should the Lord ſet his anger againſt irrational creatures? Doubtleſs he doth not. Therefore enquire further into the matter: So did *Job* fall out with his day? was he angry with his day? This is yet further to be enquired into and anſwered.

Herodotus.

There are ſome who on the one hand proſecute the impatience of *Job* with much impatience, and are over-paſſionate againſt *Job*'s paſſion. Moſt of the *Jewiſh* Writers tax him at the leaſt as bordering upon blaſphemy, if not blaſpheming. Nay, they cenſure him as one taking heed to, and

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much depending upon Aſtrological obſervations, as if mens fate or fortune were guided by the conſtellations of heaven, by the ſight and aſpect of the Planets in the day of his Nativity; as if *Job* had obſerved ſome malignant conjunction of the Stars upon that day: As if like the ſuperſtitious Heathen, he divided dayes into lucky and unlucky, good and bad dayes; as if he had denied the providence of God, at leaſt the particular providence of God, in guiding individual perſons or paſſages of our lives here below.

There are others, who carry the matter as far on the other hand, altogether excuſing, and which is more, commending, yea, applauding *Job*, in this act of curſing his day: they make this curſe an argument of his holineſs, and theſe expoſtulations as a part of his patience; contending firſt, that they did only expreſs (which he ought) the ſuffering of his ſenſitive part, as a man; and ſo were oppoſite to Stoical Apathy, not to Chriſtian patience; to a ſtone, not to a man.

Secondly, That he ſpake all this, not only according to the law of ſenſe; but with exact judgment, and according to the law of ſoundeſt reaſon: And which is far more, that he ſpake all this, not out of impotent anger againſt his day, but out of perfect love unto his God; that he ſpake this curſe, not in his own, but in the behalf of God; pleading for the providence of God, againſt the ſurmiſes of men; for (ſay ſome) he feared leſt his friends, ſeeing him (whom they ever took for a godly man) thus afflicted, ſhould accuſe the providence of God. As if he had ſaid, I would I had never been born, or it had been better for me not to have been born, rather then I ſhould be an occaſion for any to take up hard thoughts againſt God, or that his name, through my ſufferings, ſhould ſuffer. So that the love of God, not wearineſs under, or unwillingneſs to be under the croſs, conſtrained him thus to ſpeak: And *if he was beſides himſelf* (as the Apoſtles word is) it was to God, 2 *Cor.* 5. 13.

I do not ſay, but that *Job* loved God, and loved him exceedingly all this while; but whether we ſhould ſo far acquit *Job*, I much doubt; eſpecially ſeeing *Job* himſelf ſaith, *chap.* 42. *I have ſpoken, I will ſpeak no more*: If *Job* had ſpoken ſo much, from the love of God, and to the honour of God in this curſe, having ſpoken once, he ought to have ſpoken again and again: And had it been ſo, ſurely *Job* might have ſpared his repentance, as to this point, and needed not have ſaid, *Now I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes*: If *Job* had ſpoken all this according to exact reaſon, and the exactneſs of holineſs, he had no reaſon to repent; eſpecially to repent in duſt and aſhes, for what he had thus ſpoken: No man needs abhor himſelf for that, wherein he both intentionally and actually honours God.

We muſt therefore ſtate it in the middle way; that *Job* is neither rigidly to be taxed of blaſphemy or prophaneneſs, nor totally to be excuſed; eſpecially not flatteringly commended for this high complaint. I conceive, it muſt be granted, that *Job* diſcovered much frailty and infirmity, ſome paſſion and diſtemper in this complaint and curſe; yet notwithſtanding we muſt aſſert him for a patient man, yea, for a mirrour of patience; and there are five things conſiderable for the clearing and proof of this aſſertion.

As firſt, Conſider the greatneſs of his ſuffering, his wound was very deep and deadly, his burden was very heavy, only not intollerable. The ſufferings of Chriſt, being exceeding great, cauſed him to complain, that his *ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death*, Mat. 27. 38. yet in this complaint, there was not the leaſt imaginable touch of impatience. When he hung upon the Croſs, he cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* verſ. 46. yet in this cry, no impatience. To cry out for every light touch, argues indeed a vain and an impatient ſpirit; but he that ſometimes fetches a groan under a weight of ſorrow, is yet untoucht in his wiſdom, or in his patience. In ſuch a caſe, to cry out, is a diſcovery of humane frailty, but not of ſinful frailty; Grace doth not take away ſenſe; it heightens nature, but it doth not aboliſh it. Conſider how much *Job* endured, and then you will find little impatience, though he complained much.

Secondly, Conſider the multiplicity of his troubles; they were great and many: many little afflictions meeting together, make a great one; how great then is that which is compoſed of many great ones? Many pebble ſtones will make a heavy burden; how then is he burdened, who hath (if ſuch a thing may be ſuppoſed) many mill-ſtones upon his back? *Job's* afflictions came upon him as an Army, and encompaſt him round about. He had many particular afflictions, any one of which might make a very patient man complain; then *Job* who bare them all, was not impatient though he complained.

Thirdly, Conſider the long continuance of theſe great and many troubles; they continued long upon him, ſome ſay they continued divers years upon him. We uſe to ſay, *a light burden is heavy, if the journey be long*; a man may bear any thing for a brunt, or for a ſpurt; but to have a ſad load continued upon the ſhoulders all the day, pinches ſore. *Job's* load lay upon him day and night, day after day; yea, moneth after moneth, *chap.* 7. 3. *I am made* (ſaith he) *to poſſeſs moneths of vanity*: yea, as ſome have calculated them, his troubles continued year after year, for ſeven years. Though a man make ſome, yea, great complainings, under many, great, long laſting afflictions, an eaſie Apologie may acquit him of impatience.

Fourthly, Conſider this, that his complainings and acts of impatience were but a few; but his ſubmiſſions and acts of meekneſs under the hand of God, were very many. Now we know, that one, or a few acts, though evil, do not denominate a perſon, eſpecially when they are ballanced by many acts of good in the ſame perſon, and about the ſame thing. How often doth *Job*, in this Book, breath forth patience, humility, faith, love, and ſtedfaſt truſt in God, whatſoever he ſhould do with him; theſe ballance his complainings, yea indeed, they over-ballance them ſo much, for the ſetling of our judgments, about *Job's* patience, that they leave not ſo much as an opinion of the contrary.

Fifthly, Take this into conſideration, that though he did complain, and complain bitterly, yet he recovered out of theſe complainings; he was not overcome by impatience, though ſome impatient ſpeeches came from him; he recalls what he had ſpoken, and repents for what he had done. See how he ſubmitteth himſelf (*chap.* 42.) how low he lies before God, *even in the duſt*; and ſaith, *I will ſpeak no more*. If I have been impatient, I will uſe no more impatient ſpeeches; if I have been impatient, I repent of it; *I repent of it in duſt and aſhes*: To repent of impatience, takes away the imputation of impatience; and to ſay, I will do evil no more, gains (through the mercy of God in Chriſt) an acceptance of us, as if we had done no evil: A man is a conqueror, though in the battel he ſuffers many foils, and receiveth many wounds, and loſeth much blood; though for a great while in the day a man be worſted,; yea, though a whole Army be worſted; yet if in the evening, in the cloſe of the day, he and they keep the field, and foil the enemy, the day is won, and victory goes on this ſide. *Job* was in a great battel, in a ſore fight of afflictions; though it be granted, that he received ſome wounds, and had ſome foils, and ſometimes looks as if he had been beaten, and ſpeaks as if he had been overcome; yet in the cloſe, in the evening, in the making up of all, he went away a conqueror; the concluſion was victory and glory; *Job* had the victory, and God the glory: Therefore, as the Apoſtle *James*, chap. 5. 11. when he ſpeaks of enduring with joy, refers us to the end of *Job's* day of trouble, to the end which the Lord made; *ye have heard* (ſaith he) *of the patience of* Job, *and have ſeen the end of the Lord*. So look to the end of *Job*, to the end which (through the ſtrength of the Lord) *Job* made, and there you ſhall ſee patience having a perfect work; or, *the perfect work of patience*. Look not alone upon all the actings of *Job*, when he was in the height and heat of the battel; look to the on-ſet, he was ſo very patient in the beginning, though vehemently ſtirred, that Satan had not a word to ſay; look to the end, and you cannot ſay, but *Job* was a patient man, full of patience, a mirror of patience, if not a miracle of patience; a man whoſe face ſhined with the glory of that grace, above all the children of men.

So much for that queſtion; I ſhall now add two or three points of obſervation.

The firſt thing then that we may obſerve from hence, is this; If we compare *Job* in the two former Chapters, with *Job* in the third, we ſhall find that the caſe is altered with him; he ſcarce ſpeaks like the ſame man. Hence obſerve in the general,

That, *The holieſt perſon in this life, doth not alwayes keep in the ſame frame of holineſs.*

There is a great deal of difference between what he ſpake in the former Chapters, when he heard of, and felt theſe things firſt; and what he ſpeaks now. *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?* This was the language we lately heard; but now curſing: certainly his ſpirit had been in a more holy frame, more ſedate and quiet, then now it was. At the beſt, in this life, we are but imperfect; yet at ſome time we are more imperfect then we are at another: Faith is never very ſtrong; yet at ſome time Faith is weaker then at another: Our love to Chriſt is never very hot; but yet at ſome time it is colder then at another; we cannot keep it in the ſame degrees of heat. A man at one time can both do and ſuffer, and a while after, he can neither do nor ſuffer as he could at that time; he is out of frame, and bungles in both. Take the life of a Chriſtian all together, it is a progreſs, it is a continual growing; yet take his life apart, conſider him in every circumſtance and ſtage of his life, then there are many ſtops and ſtands in his life, yea, many declinings: As it is with a Child; take a child, and his life, from his birth to his full age, is in a growing condition; yet conſider him at ſome particular time, and the child may abate; the child may not only be ſtronger, but much weaker then he was a year or a moneth before: So it is with us from the firſt hour of our ſpiritual life, till we attain full ſtature of it in Chriſt; only this is our comfort, that in heaven our ſouls ſhall be ſet up in ſuch a frame of holineſs, as ſhall never be moved nor abated in the leaſt degree: look in what frame the hand of God ſets us up in that day, we ſhall continue ſo to all eternity; and that will be the higheſt and moſt exquiſite frame both of holineſs and of delight. But now we are up and down, one day patient, and another day impatient; now believing, and another day diſtruſting; now the heart melts and is very tender, anon it is very hard and relentleſs. How meek a man was *Moſes*, not ſuch a man for meekneſs upon the face of the whole earth; and yet at one time paſſionate, and at another ſo angry, that he ſpake *unadviſedly with his lips.* How full of faith was *Peter* at one time, how reſolved to ſtick cloſe to Chriſt; yet ſhortly after, how full of fear, and for fear, denying Chriſt. We who receive good gifts and perfect gifts, are ſubject to turns and variations; only he from whom *every good and perfect gift comes*, is without *variableneſs or ſhadow of turning.*

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *Great ſufferings may fill the mouths of holieſt perſons with great complainings.*

Job was not only afflicted, but afflicted greatly: *Job* did not only complain, but he complained greatly: You ſee what complainings *David* made in his great troubles, *Pſal.* 77. 2. *In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord, my ſore ran in the night and ceaſed not, my ſoul refuſed to be comforted.* So *Heman*, Pſal. 88. 3. *My ſoul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave:* And, *ver.* 15. *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted.* *Hezekiah*, under the greatneſs of his affliction (*Iſa.* 38. 14.) ſaith, *Like a Crane or Swallow, ſo did I chatter; I did mourn as a Dove*, &c. *Jeremy*, a holy Prophet, ſpeaks, if not out-ſpeaks *Job* in his complaint, *chap.* 20. 14. *Curſed be the day wherein I was born; let not the day wherein my mother bare me be bleſſed: Curſed be the man who brought tidings to my father, ſaying, a man-child is born unto thee.* He doth not only curſe his birth-day, but the meſſenger of his birth; and he curſes both with a word of deeper deteſtation then *Job* employed to eaſe or empty his troubled ſpirit by. *Job*'s word ſignified but his diſeſteem, and himſelf regardleſs of his day; but *Jeremy* employes that very word, through which God poured out his wrath and everlaſting diſpleaſure upon the Serpent and the Devil, *Gen.* 3. 14. in each of theſe *Jeremy* went a ſtrain of impatience beyond *Job*, and yet holy *Jeremy* ſtill. *The Lord* (ſaith the ſame Prophet, *chap.* 8. 14.) *hath put us to ſilence, and given us waters of Gall to drink, becauſe we have ſinned againſt the Lord.* When we remember our own ſins, we have reaſon to be ſilent, though the Lord feed us with waters of Gall, bitter waters. And if we be ſilent, and open not our mouths, becauſe we have ſinned; he bears with our cry, as we are pained: he knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but duſt. A little thing troubles our fleſh, therefore it is no wonder, if fleſh and blood cry out in great troubles, though they be ſubdued by grace unto the Spirit. And if God (in this caſe) bears with us, we ought alſo to bear with one another, and not to be ſcandalized or take offence, when we ſee good men mourning and lamenting under the evils which they endure. He that underſtands man, will compaſſionate the ſorrows, not queſtion the ſincerity of a complaining, groaning brother.

ארר

Thirdly, *Job* complaineth bitterly, and he curſeth; but what doth he curſe? He curſeth *his day*. From hence obſerve,

That, *Satan with his utmoſt power and policy, with his ſtrongeſt temptations and aſſaults, can never fully attain his ends upon the children of God.*

What was it that the Devil undertook for? was it not to make *Job* curſe his God? and yet when he had done his worſt, and ſpent his malice upon him, he could but make *Job curſe his day*; this was far ſhort of what Satan hoped. Doubtleſs, when the Devil heard the word *curſed* come out of *Job*'s mouth, he then began to prick up his ears, and triumph; ſurely now the day is mine, now he will curſe his God; but at the fall of that word, *curſed be the day*, Satans hope falls, and down goes he. That word, *day*, was darkneſs to the Devil, and as the ſhadow of death; he fails of his end, and is confounded, he goes away aſhamed, and hath not a word more to ſay; but leaves his friends to ſay the reſt. The *gates of hell* ſhall never prevail againſt thoſe who are founded on free grace, and the Rock Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, Obſerve, That, *God doth graciouſly forget and paſs by the diſtempered ſpeeches and bitter complainings of his ſervants, under great afflictions.*

Job ſpake this curſe; but when God comes to queſtion with *Job*, we do not hear a word or tittle of this curſe charged upon him: God takes notice that *he had ſpoken of him the thing that is right*, chap. 42. 7. God commends him for what he had ſpoken well; but *Job* doth not hear a word of what he had ſpoken ill: When the iniquity of his ſpeeches *was ſought for, there was none; and his failings, they could not be found; for God had pardoned them*; as the Prophet ſpeaks of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, chap. 42. 20. Our Lord Chriſt ſaith, *that of every idle word you ſhall give an account at the day of judgment; and by your words you ſhall be juſtified, and by your words you ſhall be condemned*, Mat. 12. 36, 37. We had need look to our words: God writeth what we ſpeak, and keepeth a book of all we ſay. You will ſay, how then were *Job*s diſtempered complainings forgotten, and all taken for well ſpoken, that he had ſpoken? I anſwer, Firſt, None of *Job*'s were idle words, though there was an error in his words. Secondly, His right words were more then his erring words. Thirdly, His heart was upright when his tongue ſlipt. Fourthly, He repented of thoſe ſlips and errors. And laſtly, God forgiving, blotted them out of his book for ever. Further (in a ſence) we may ſay, that God makes allowance to his people for ſuch failings; not allowance of connivance and diſpenſation; God doth not diſpenſe with any to do the leaſt evil, or expreſs the leaſt impatience in their ſpeeches; but he makes an allowance of favour and compaſſion, conſidering their weakneſs and the ſtrength of temptation, he abates proportionably, when in ſuch a condition they ſpeak impatiently; though their actions and ſpeeches want ſome grains of that weight which they ought to have, yet weighing them in the ſcale of favour, with his gracious allowance, they go for currant, and paſs in account with God, as good and full pay of that duty he expects from us, and we owe unto his Majeſty.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7,

Let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above; neither let the light ſhine upon it.

Let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it, let a cloud dwell upon it, let the blackneſs of the day terrifie it.

As for that night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not be joyned unto the dayes of the year, let it not come into the number of the moneths.

Lo, let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful voice come therein.

WE have already given the Analyſis and parts of this Chapter: The ſubject of it is *Jobs* curſe upon his day. The firſt ſection of it in the nine firſt verſes, contains the matter and the method of that curſe.

And he curſeth his day, Firſt, In general (verſ. 1.) *After this,* Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.* Secondly, He curſeth it in both the parts of it, (verſ. 3.) *Let the day periſh in which I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid, there is a man child conceived.*

In theſe ſix verſes which remain, appertaining to the firſt Section, he affixes a particular curſe to each part of his day; taking a day, for a natural day, and then dividing it into day and night, he gives a ſpecial curſe to each of theſe parts; A curſe upon the day, and a curſe upon the night.

The curſe powred out upon the day, lies in the fourth and fifth verſes of this Chapter, *Let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light ſhine upon it; let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it, let a cloud dwell upon it, let the blackneſs of the day terrifie it.*

Here are ſix diſtinct branches of this curſe.

Firſt, *Let the day be darkneſs.*

Let the day.] Here we are to take *day*, not for a natural day, but for the day as it is the continent of light, the whole ſpace of time from the riſing to the ſetting of the Sun. Now ſaith he, *Let the day be darkneſs.*

Be darkneſs.] There is a great aggravation of miſery in that, as Chriſt ſpeaks, Mat. 6. 23. *If the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs?* While *Job* wiſheth that his very day, which is light, ſhould be darkneſs, how great a darkneſs doth he wiſh unto it; And if the day be darkneſs, how dark muſt the night of that day be?

Then again, *Let the day be darkneſs*, he doth not ſay, let the day be miſty, or cloudy, or duſky, or dark, he doth not wiſh it like that day deſcribed, *Zech.* 14. 6. *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the light ſhall not be clear nor dark*; but he ſaith, *Let it be darkneſs.* Both in Scripture and common language, Abſtracts are emphatically ſignificant, and carry more then an ordinary ſenſe in them. When *David* ſaith, Pſal. 27. 1. *The Lord is my light*, there is more in it then if he had only ſaid, the Lord doth enlighten me: So to ſet forth the woful condition of thoſe who are unregenerate or in the ſtate of nature, the Apoſtle tells them, Epheſ. 5. 8. *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs; not only in the dark, but darkneſs:* So here, to expreſs how great a curſe he wiſhes upon his day, *Job* ſaith, *Let the day be darkneſs it ſelf.*

Now darkneſs may be taken two wayes: Either
Properly, or
Improperly.

Proper darkneſs is nothing elſe but a privation of light, it is no poſitive creature, it hath no cauſe in nature, but is the conſequent of the Suns abſence. When *Job* wiſhes, *let that day be darkneſs*, we may underſtand it of this darkneſs: as if he had ſaid, whenſoever that day cometh about, in the recourſe and revolution of the year, let it be darkneſs, or a very dark and gloomy day. This had been a great evil upon his day. This kind of darkneſs was one of the ten plagues with which God ſmote Egypt. And yet there is darkneſs, which is a greater evil then this, I mean darkneſs improperly taken: and ſo frequently in Scripture any ſorrowful, troubleſome, ſad condition, is expreſs'd by darkneſs. A condition of darkneſs is a ſad condition, a dark day is as much, as a ſad day; So then, *Let that day be darkneſs*, that is, let it for ever be accounted a ſad and ſorrowful day. Thus the Prophet *Joel*, Chap. 2. 2. calls a day of great trouble, *a day of darkneſs and gloomineſs, a day of clouds and of thick darkneſs.* When *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 12. 2. would ſhew by way of Antitheſis, the ſad and evil condition of old age comparatively to youth, he unfolds it by darkneſs; *remember now thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth*, make haſte, ſerve God betime; But what needs ſuch haſt? I tell thee why, as times change, ſo thy eſtate will change: Evil dayes will come, I therefore counſel thee to do it, *while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them: while the Sun, or the light, or the Moon, or the Stars be not darkened.* A day without pleaſure, is a day without the Sun: take away the joy of a day, and you take away the light of a day. Youngmen have the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, all kind of light and comfortable influences upon them; but theſe will be darkened and eclipſed when old-age cometh, that will put out or at leaſt obſcure your light, your day will be gone, and your night will have neither Moon nor Star in it; therefore work while you have light, that is, while you have health and ſtrength of body, while you have freedom and activity of ſpirits, fit for that great ſervice, *remember*, that is, know and ſerve your Creatour.

So in the Text, we may take darkneſs improperly, as darkneſs notes an uncomfortable eſtate, and it is uſed in Scripture to note a two-fold uncomfortable eſtate. Firſt, An eſtate of ſin; Secondly, An eſtate of miſery. This latter darkneſs is the daughter of the former. The Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. 9. 2. ſpeaks of *the people that ſate in darkneſs*: which is repeated, *Mat.* 4. 16. that is, in the darkneſs of ignorance, of ſin and guilt. They had natural light enough, and they had civil light enough, abundance of outward comforts: they had health, and ſtrength, and riches, and peace, and plenty, *but they had not a Chriſt* to take away their ſins, and cleanſe their conſciences, and therefore they were a people that ſate in darkneſs. *Jobs* curſe intends not this darkneſs of ſin, but that other improper darkneſs, the darkneſs of ſorrow, the darkneſs of penal evil; As if he had ſaid, let ſorrow and ſadneſs over-ſhadow, let mourning and tears overwhelm, let calamity and trouble for ever poſſeſs the day upon which I was born.

Let not God regard it from above.] Here is a ſecond part of the curſe, and a more grievous curſe then the former.

Let not God.] We may obſerve here the Name whereby God is expreſſed, it is *Eloah*.

The learned Hebricians obſerve ten ſeveral Names of God in Scripture, three of which note his *Being*: *Jehovah, Jah, Ehejeh*. Three his *Power*: *El, Eloah, Elohim*. Three his *Government*: *Adonai, Shaddai, Jehovah Tſebaoth*. One his *Excellency*, or *Super-excellency*: *Gnelion*. The Name *Eloah* here uſed, is derived from *El*, which ſignifieth *Mighty*, and ſo by that addition to the word, there is an addition made to the ſenſe, *Eloah* is *Moſt Mighty*, or *Almighty*. This word in the ſingular number is very rare; the Name *Elohim*, which is the plural, is very frequent in holy Scripture: Chriſt upon the croſs cryes out to God by his Name in the ſingular number, *Eloi, Eloi, my God, my God*, as calling for the Almighty power of God, to ſupport and carry him through his ſufferings. *David* uſeth it in the eighteenth *Pſalm*, verſ. 31. *Who is God ſave the Lord?* Who is *Eloah* ſave *Jehovah*? that is, who is a mighty ſtrong God, ſave the Lord *Jehovah*, ſo the next words explain it, *Who is a rock ſave our God?* So *Job* being about to implead and accuſe his day, calls to the mighty God (as it were) to judge this day to his everlaſting neglect, *Let not God regard it from above.*

Regard it from above.] The word ſignifies ſometimes to inquire and ſearch after, or to take an account of a thing exactly and judiciouſly; as they that are called to reckoning or to judgement, are enquired after: and ſo it hath relation to that Name of God, *Eloah*, a powerful or mighty Judge. *Let not God regard it*, let not God take any account of it, or enquire after it, let it paſs as not worth the looking after.

ידרש *Summo judicio inquirere.*

Secondly, The word ſignifies to have a care of a thing, to have a thing or perſon in account, as well as to call unto account: to take care and be watchful over another for good, is our regarding of it. In this ſenſe the word is uſed, *Deut.* 11. 12. where *Moſes* ſpeaking concerning the Land of *Canaan*, ſaith, *It is a Land which the Lord thy God careth for.* [*Careth for*] is the ſame word with this; and this Text may well be expounded by that which follows as the meaning of it, *The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year.* So that to have regard to a thing, to a day, or to a perſon, is to make account of theſe, to take care for theſe for their good, as a part of ones charge or duty, or as an act of grace and bounty. When *Job* ſaith, *Let not God regard it*, this may be the ſenſe, let not God take any care for it, or make any account of it; let not his eyes be upon it to do it any good, or to do any extraordinary good upon it: let it not be honoured by God with any ſpecial work of providence, which might make it recorded and remembred with honour among men.

φρονεῖν ἡμέραν.

The Apoſtle, *Rom.* 14. 6. ſpeaks of mans regarding of a day, *He that regardeth a day, regardeth it unto the Lord.* The Apoſtle treats in that Chapter about the obſervation of dayes: finding that many believers could not be taken off from ſolemnizing thoſe feaſts, which were of Gods own founding and inſtituting among the *Jewes*, he adviſes that they ſhould not be judged or hardly cenſured, for going according to their conſcience; for he that out of conſcience and according to his light *regards*, that is, doth ſolemnize or obſerve a day, *he regards it to the Lord*, that is, to the honour of God, and with a ſincere deſire to pleaſe him. But the thing I aim at in alledging this Text, is to give light to the point in hand, what it is to *regard a day*. The Apoſtle is plain, that *Mans regarding of a day*, is to have a day in ſpecial account, as thoſe dayes were, which God inſtituted among the *Jewes* for ſpecial ends, commanding them to obſerve them, and promiſing a bleſſing in their obſervation. Proportionably Gods regarding of a day, is the ſpecial eſteem he hath, or care he takes of it, & the eſpecial bleſſing he poureth down upon it. Some practical truths are hence obſervable.

Firſt, Conſider theſe two parts of the curſe, as they are placed in ſucceſſion one after another, or in conjunction one with another, *Let the day be darkneſs, and let not God regard it from above.* This may teach us, *That there is no day ſo dark, or condition ſo troubleſom, but if God regard and take notice of it, man may take comfort and rejoyce in it.* Though the day be darkneſs, Gods eye will make it light; his regarding is a bleſſing: we never looſe all, till God leaves us. If in the *hour and power of darkneſs*, (as Chriſt calls the time of his paſſion) *God do but lift up the light of his countenance upon us, we ſhall be ſaved.* *Jobs* wiſh of darkneſs, had done his day no great hurt, unleſs he had taken the eye of God off from it alſo. All the light that is in the world, the light of Sun, Moon and Stars, is but darkneſs to us, if God hide his face; but let Sun, Moon and Stars hide their faces, let all creatures withdraw their comfort, if God regard us we are well: Therefore *Job* puts the ſting of the curſe in Gods not regarding and withdrawing from his day.

Secondly, When he wiſhes that God would not regard his day, he deſires God to lay aſide or ſuſpend his continual work.

Obſerve then, *That God doth obſerve and take particular notice of every day.* As all perſons ſhall be accountable to him for their actions, ſo alſo for their time: God will inquire after every inch of time, after every moment of our lives. Many men regard not a day, they value not their precious time, they know not how to ſpend or be rid of it, how to wear it out and paſs it away: But God obſerves and regards every moment. The Apoſtle calls to *redeeming of time*, Epheſ. 5. 16. And he ſubjoyns a motive, *Becauſe the dayes are evil.* We may give in this of *Job* for a motive: God regards time, therefore let us redeem time. If a day be within Gods regarding, ſurely it may command ours.

Thirdly, *Let not God regard it.* We may obſerve,

That the bleſſing and comfort of every day, depends upon the care and reſpect of God to it. The eyes of all things look up unto God. Why do all things look up to God? It is that God may look down upon them: If God look down upon the creature, then the creature revives and is refreſhed; there are influences from the eye and ſight of God, which are able to quicken the deadeſt times, and make glad the ſaddeſt hearts. As we pray for and humbly expect every day our *daily bread* from God, ſo every day doth (as it were) expect a daily bleſſing from God, which is his regarding of our dayes.

It is the greateſt evil that can befal the creature, when God regards it not; all the bleſſings of the creature are bound up (like *Jacobs* life in the life of *Benjamin*) in that reſpect which God beareth to them, and in the care which he hath of them. The Apoſtle *Paul*, diſputing with the *Philoſophers of Athens*, ſhewes the ſtate of that time, which they accounted ſuch a golden-age, (*Acts* 17.30.) *The time of that ignorance God winked at*, ſo we tranſlate it; the word properly ſignifieth, *God did over-look that time:* And there are ſome tranſlations which expreſs it in the very term of the Text, *The time of that ignorance God regarded not.* For we are not to think, there ever were any times, which God winked at in the matter of his Juſtice, ſo as not to call them to an account: I grant that times of ignorance are comparatively winked at in reſpect of Juſtice, God will not proceed ſo ſeverely with them as with knowing times: but God never winketh at any perſon, or at any times, how ignorant ſoever, ſo as to let them go unpuniſhed, and never call them to an account. Such connivence God hates, as being inconſiſtent both with his providence and his Juſtice. The Apoſtle is direct: *They who ſin without law* (that is, without the knowledge of the law written) *ſhall periſh without law*, namely, the written law, onely according to the ſentence of that law, which the finger of nature hath written in their hearts, *Rom.* 2. 12. Ignorance ſhall not be ſo winked at, as to be altogether excuſed. How then did God wink? There is a two-fold winking. Firſt, Of diſreſpect. Secondly, Of diſpenſation. Gods winking is his diſreſpecting. He winked at thoſe times, that is, he lightly paſſed them by, his eye was not upon them for good, he regarded them not in ſuch a manner as to provide for them and ſend amongſt them that great bleſſing, which now (ſaith *Paul*) he ſends you by my hands, the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

ὑπεριδὼν θεός.

When the bleſſed Virgin heard by that meſſage of the Angel, that ſhe ſhould be mother to the Saviour of the world, ſhe bleſſeth God in this phraſe, *Thou haſt regarded the low eſtate of thine handmaid.* When God in a way of favour doth but look towards us, our loweſt eſtate is raiſed up, *Thou haſt regarded the low eſtate of thine handmaid.* It is but a look of gracious regard from God, and all is well with man. On the other ſide, if God take off his eye, wink and diſregard, all is blaſted, yea accurſed, our high eſtate falls, our comforts are ſowred and turned into a lump of ſorrow. We may ſay of all outward excellencies as *Haman* did, *Eſther* 5. 13. of all his honour, and greatneſs and favour at Court, All this I have, *but all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee* Mordecai *the* Jew *ſitting at the Kings gate.* All his comforts were clouded, all the light of his high eſtate was eclipſed, becauſe there was a new Star, *Mordecai*, ſhining ſtill at the Kings gate. Much more may we ſit down, and caſting up all that we have and are, make the foot of our account *nothing*, without the favour of God; what do riches, what doth credit, what doth beauty or parts avail us, if God regard not? *all is nothing at all without God.* What are times, what are dayes, what is your condition if God withdraw himſelf? this aggravates the curſe, this is mournful, when God regardeth not. *Job* goes on to a third branch of the curſe. *Let not God regard it,*

Neither let the light ſhine upon it.

That which before he ſpake againſt his day, by wiſhing it darkneſs, he ſpeaks over again and more in other words, by wiſhing light might be denied and with-held from it. To have no light, is not a bare repetition or an explication of what it is to be in darkneſs, but it is an addition to, or an aggravation of it: So the Prophet, *Iſa.* 50. 10. by him that *walks in darkneſs, and hath no light*, ſets out the ſaddeſt condition of an afflicted ſoul. No light, is not only darkneſs, but pure darkneſs; as when the Apoſtle *John* would advance the glory of God, he ſaith, *God is light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all*, (1 Ep. c. 1.) God is pure light; ſo darkneſs without light, is pure darkneſs.

Let not the light.] As darkneſs, ſo light may be taken either properly for natural light, that which God firſt created; light was the firſt perfect viſible creature, light was the firſt dayes work, and by the work of the fourth was gathered into thoſe heavenly veſſels, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and there put, that it might be diſpenſed and carried about the world, eſpecially by that Chariot of the Sun. Let this light, this natural light be with-held, let it not ſhine (ſaith *Job*) upon that day. The withdrawing of natural light is a great affliction to the world: Light is the moſt incorporeal of all corporal things; the ſpiritualneſs of it, ſhews the goodneſs of it: light is the beauty, and diſcovers all the beauty of the world. As a goodly adorn'd furniſh't room without a window, or a candle, ſuch is the world without light. Light is not onely the light, but the life of the world, it quickens and comforts the motions of nature; it is the inſtrument by which all the influences of Heaven are communicated to the Earth, which being ſtopt, the courſe of nature ſtops: this cauſed a great Philoſopher to cry out (when at the paſſion of Chriſt the light of the Sun was totally eclipſed) *Either the God of nature ſuffers, or the whole frame of nature diſſolves.* Was it not then a dreadful curſe, when *Job* wiſhes the light (taking it for natural light) might not ſhine upon his day?

But further, take it improperly, then, *let not the light ſhine upon it,* hath this voice in it, *Let there be no comfort, no joy, no good thing in the compaſs of that day.* Light in Scripture expreſſes all good; as darkneſs all evil. That great bleſſing which was promiſed unto the Church in the great reſtauration of it, is ſhadowed by light, and by an increaſing light, in *Iſa.* 30. 26. *Moreover, the light of the Moon ſhall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun ſhall be ſevenfold, as the light of ſeven dayes, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the ſtroke of their wound.* We are not to conceive, that there ſhall be ſuch an increaſe of the natural light of the Moon or of the Sun, but there ſhall be an increaſe of the comfort of the people of God, which ſhall be as if the Moon and the Sun had in one day the light of ſeven dayes, as if the Moon had got the light of the Sun, and the Sun had got a ſevenfold light more then it had before. And he who is the chief, the choiceſt and moſt tranſcendent bleſſing of all, the joy of all our hearts, *Jeſus Chriſt,* is called *light,* he came as *light into the world, he is the light of the world, the Sun of righteouſneſs.* The creator of all good things, found nothing ſo good to ſhew his own goodneſs by, as light. *Chriſt is light, God is light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all.* If then we take *Jobs* ſpeech metaphorically or improperly, *Let not the light ſhine upon that day,* it amounts to a higher loſs then the former, *Truly* (ſaith *Solomon*) *light is ſweet, and it is a pleaſant thing to behold the Sun;* and we may ſay truly, all ſweetneſs is light, and every pleaſant thing is as the Sun: Though the Sun ſhine upon us, yet if comfort be removed from us, we are in darkneſs. Such a condition the Prophet ſpeaks of, (*Iſa.* 50. 10.) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light.* No light, is no comfort, none for the outward man, none for the inner man, both being benighted, both deſerted. Hence obſerve,

That it is a greater judgement to have good things removed from us, then to have evil inflicted on us. He ſpeaks more againſt the day, when he ſaith, *Let not the light ſhine upon it,* then when he ſaith, *Let it be darkneſs.* The puniſhment of loſs is greater then the puniſhment of ſenſe. He that is deprived of all good, is by that act inveſted with all evils. The moſt woful condition of ungodly men in this life, is expreſt by the puniſhment of loſs, *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked,* Iſa. 57. 21. That they have trouble is not ſo bad, as that they have no peace. And the worſt part of that everlaſting wo which ungodly men ſhall ſuffer, is a puniſhment of loſs: *The heat of the fire ſhall not trouble them ſo much, as the want of light:* God hath fully reſolv'd that their day ſhall be darkneſs, that himſelf will never regard it from above, nor let the leaſt beam of the light of his countenance ſhine upon it. Hence the condition of the damned is called *outer darkneſs,* (Mat. 22. 13.) By outer darkneſs, Chriſt means darkneſs without any ray of light: *Outer darkneſs is their portion who are without,* Rev. 22. 15. As the greateſt bleſſing we receive by Chriſt is poſitive, *Joh.* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him, ſhould not periſh,* (here is the removing of evil) *but have everlaſting life,* here is the bringing in of good: And this is the better part of the bleſſing. So on the other ſide, to have all good, light and life removed, is the moſt bitter part of the curſe.

Let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it.

Darkneſs and the ſhadow of death.] Theſe words are the fourth branch of the curſe upon his day; he repeats the former curſe, but with new additions; He had ſaid before, *Let this day be darkneſs,* now he ſaith, *Let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it.*

צלמות

The ſhadow of death.] The word conſidered in the compoſition of it, may be tranſlated *image of death.* And becauſe the ſhadow of a body gives us the image of a body, (as in the ſhadow of a man, you have the image and proportion of a man; in the ſhadow of a Tree, you have the image and repreſentation of a Tree) becauſe (I ſay) the ſhadow gives the image of a body, therefore the Hebrewes by a Metonymie, call an image a ſhadow: So that the *ſhadow of death,* is ſuch darkneſs as is like death, the very image of death: He was not contented in general to ſay, *Let darkneſs ſtain it,* but if any would know what kind or degree of darkneſs he intends, theſe words expound his meaning to be, the worſt darkneſs that can be: Any darkneſs is evil, but *darkneſs and the ſhadow of death* is the utmoſt of evils. *David* put the worſt of his caſe, and the beſt of his faith, when he ſaid, *Pſal.* 23. 4. *Though I walk in the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil;* that is, in the greateſt evil, I will fear no evil. The eſtate of thoſe men who lived beyond the line of the Goſpel, (and that is a very doleful place to live in, though a paradiſe for outward pleaſure) is thus deſcribed by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 9. 2. *The people that walked in darkneſs have ſeen a great light,* (*Jeſus Chriſt,*) *they that dwell in the land of the ſhadow of death, upon them hath the light ſhined.* Again, The ſhadow of a thing in Scripture, notes the power of a thing; and to be under the ſhadow of a thing, is to be under the power of a thing. *The bramble* (Judg. 9. 15.) *ſaid unto the trees, if in truth ye annoint me King over you, then come and put your truſt in my ſhadow:* that is, truſt to that help which I am able to afford you. So likewiſe, *to be under the ſhadow of the Almighty, under the ſhadow of his wings,* is, to be under the power of the Almighty, for ſafety and protection: Thus we may conceive it here, to be under the ſhadow of death, is to be ſo under the power or reach of death, that death may take a man and ſeize upon him when it pleaſeth. *Though I walk in the valley of the ſhadow of death,* that is, though I be ſo near death, that it ſeemes to others death may catch me every moment; though I be under ſo many appearances and probabilities of extream danger, that there appears an impoſſibility (in ſenſe) to eſcape death, *yet I will not fear.*

Thirdly, To be under the ſhadow of death, is to be under the influences of death; the influences of death are thoſe fears and doubtings, diviſions and vexations of ſpirit, thoſe diſtractions and diſtempers of mind which fall upon man, in times of imminent and unavoydable danger. *Let the ſhadow of death ſtain it,* that is, let it be filled with thoſe fears, and cries, and confuſions, which uſually accompany or prepare the way for death.

Fourthly, *Let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it,* that is, ſuch darkneſs as dwells with death, ſuch darkneſs as fills the houſe of death, the grave: The grave is a dark houſe. We uſe to ſay of that which we would have forgotten, let it be buried in darkneſs. There is no work in the grave, and therefore there needs no light in the grave, neither indeed can there be.

Laſtly, thus; *Darkneſs and the ſhadow of death,* that is, deadly darkneſs, thick ſtifling darkneſs, ſuch as is in deep pits and mines under the earth, where vapours and noiſome damps do many times ſtrike men with death. We may here take notice, how *Job* heaps up words, words very like in ſound, and all alike in ſenſe, or concurring to make up one ſenſe: Such amplifications in Scripture, are vehement aſſeverations: As *John* 1. 20. It is ſaid of the *Baptiſt, He confeſſed and denied not, but confeſſed, I am not the Chriſt:* And thoſe phraſes, *Thou ſhalt die, and not live: I ſhall not die, but live; Thou ſhalt be low, and not above.* So *Job* of his day, *Let it be darkneſs, let not the light ſhine upon it, let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it.*

גאל

The word which we render (**ſtain,**) ſignifies properly to redeem a thing, either by price or by power, to redeem a thing by paying for it, or to redeem a thing by reſcuing of it. Hence among the Jews, he that was to redeem his deceaſed brothers land, and marry the widow, was called *Goel,* from this word, as we may read in the fourth of *Ruth.* So the avenger of bloud was called *Goel, Numb.* 35. 12. becauſe he likewiſe did redeem the bloud of his brother, fetch it back again as it were by a price in the execution of juſtice. The learned *Junius,* with ſome others, tranſlates according to that ſenſe of the Original word, *O that dark-*

neſs and the ſhadow of death had redeemed that day, or fetched back that day; (he refers it to the day paſt upon which he was born) and ſo takes it for an alluſion to the firſt ſtate of things. We know at the firſt, darkneſs had dominion over all, over all that Chaos or rude matter which God made at firſt; *Darkneſs* (ſaith *Moſes*) *was upon the face of the deep*, Gen. 1. 2. Then God gave a command to light, ſaying, *Let there be light*, ver. 3. preſently light went forth and reſcued the creature from under the power of darkneſs. Now, ſaith *Job* here, *O that darkneſs and the ſhadow of death had redeemed that day*, or fetched again that day out of the hands of light! Oh that darkneſs had recovered that which in the beginning was under its power! that ſo my day being wrapt up in darkneſs, might be *without form and void.*

But the word is frequently tranſlated, (and well here,) to pollute or to ſtain a thing; as *Mal.* 1. 7. *Ye offer polluted bread upon mine Altar, and ye ſay, wherein have we polluted thee?* And that of lamenting *Jeremy*, *They have polluted themſelves with blood, ſo that men could not touch their garments*, Lam. 4. 14. So darkneſs is ſaid to ſtain or pollute the day, as filthineſs or blood ſtains and pollutes, diſcolours and defiles the beauty of a garment: Darkneſs obſcures and blinds the beauty of the moſt glorious creatures, natural darkneſs doth it. Suppoſe you ſhould come into a room furniſhed with the moſt exquiſite and coſtly ornaments, hung with the moſt curious and lively pictures, if there be no light there, the beauty of all is loſt to us, darkneſs ſtains it; you may have as good a ſight in a dungeon as there. Again, take it for Metaphorical, or improper darkneſs, that alſo ſtains the beauty of the creature; if you have never ſo great a ſtock and eſtate of riches, or honour, *&c.* let but ſorrow and trouble, war and diviſions ariſe, the beauty of all is ſtained. What is honour then, but higher unhappineſs? And what are riches then, but golden thorns? What is liberty then, but freer miſery? And what is ſtrength then, but ſtronger pain, and an ability to bear a heavier burden of affliction? The glory and beauty of the creature is gone in dark times; when ſuch a day comes as *Joel* ſpeaks of, *A day of blackneſs and gloomineſs*, where's your bravery? what becomes of your fineneſs? But that which ſtains the creature moſt, is myſtical darkneſs, the darkneſs, of ignorance, and of ſin; the darkneſs of guilt, and of Gods diſpleaſure: O how is the beauty of the ſoul (which is far more glorious then all viſible creatures) how is the beauty of that ſtained, when it lyes under any of theſe darkneſſes! Hence therefore, we ſee what a bleſſing light is, and how we are bound to bleſs God for light, for natural light, for the outward light of a comfortable condition, but eſpecially for the light of his countenance, which is better then life; for the light of knowledge, for the light of grace, how ſhould we for ever bleſs the Father of lights?

In nocte funeſtatur mūdi honor; omnis ſubſtantia denigratur, ſordent, ſilent, ſtupent cuncta. Tertul. *de reſurrect. carnis.*

Let a cloud dwell upon it.] This is the fifth branch of the curſe. A cloud (as Naturaliſts teach) is a thick vapour raiſed up by the heat of the Sun to the middle region of the Air, and there by the cold condenſed becomes ſo thick, that it ſtops and intercepteth the light: Clouds and darkneſs go together, as in *Pſalm* 97. *verſ.* 2. If there be Clouds, there is darkneſs; *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him.* So that to ſay, *Let a cloud dwell upon it*, is but a further emplifying of the ſame thing; before it was, *Let darkneſs be upon it*; now, *Let a cloud dwell upon it.*

Dwelling, notes the continuance and conſiſtency of darkneſs; he doth not ſay, let a Cloud paſs over it (for Clouds properly are unfixed, Clouds move continually, and are carried on the wings of the wind;) But *Job* would have his cloud a fixed cloud, a cloud ſo black and ſo ſtrong, as might not be diſſolved, but cauſe a continual eclipſe upon the day.

A Cloud, and the dwelling of a Cloud, imports ſometime the care and protection of God over his people, *Exod.* 40. 38. We read of a Cloud that was continually over the Tabernacle, *A cloud was over it by day, and a pillar of fire by night.* In the fire there was direction, in the Cloud protection, and mercy in both. So *Iſa.* 4. 5. God promiſeth *to create upon every dwelling place of Mount* Zion, *and upon her aſſemblies, a cloud.* Which is expounded in the cloſe of the verſe: *For upon all his glory* (his Church and Saints) *there ſhall be a defence.* But here the Cloud, and the dwelling of it, notes continued darkneſs: As if *Job* ſhould have ſaid, If the light do ſhine upon that day, I wiſh that a curtain might be drawn perpetually between the World and the Sun, let a Cloud dwell before the face of the Sun, which may muffle it, and intercept thoſe beams which would enlighten and refreſh the earth.

Clouds are refreſhings; yet Clouds you ſee may prove afflictions: As a Cloud is a protection at one time, ſo it may be an affliction at another: As a Cloud ſhadows us from the heat, it is a bleſſing; but as a Cloud eclipſes the light, ſo it is a curſe: The ſame creature may be employed both for a curſe, and for a bleſſing. Yet further, *Job* would not only have it a dwelling Cloud, but a condenſed Cloud. Some Clouds are ſo thin, that the Sun appears, and light ſhines through them: *Job* deſires this may be thick enough, not only to cauſe darkneſs, but to cauſe blackneſs: Which is the laſt branch of his curſe upon his day.

Let the blackneſs of the day terrifie it.

Job's heart was ſo full of paſſion, that his ſorrows could not come out at once, he takes time and breath. Now ſaith he, *Let the blackneſs of the day terrifie it.*

Blackneſs is more then darkneſs; therefore we find blackneſs an addition to darkneſs, in the Epiſtle of *Jude*, ver. 13. where giving divers elegant characters of wicked men, whom he calls *ſpots in their feaſts of charity, clouds without water, trees without fruit, raging waves of the ſea, foaming out their own ſhame, wandring ſtars*: And what is the portion of men thus qualified, but hell, wrath, and vengeance? So he tells us in the next words, *To whom is reſerved the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever.* Darkneſs, and the blackneſs of darkneſs, is the portion of thoſe that ſhall for ever lye under the wrath of God; blackneſs of darkneſs is the beauty of Hell; that fire will beſoot the damned to all eternity: Then *the blackneſs of darkneſs*, is the darkeſt darkneſs that can be imagined. Blackneſs of darkneſs was *Egypts* plague; that was darkneſs, and thick darkneſs, darkneſs to be felt, *Exod.* 10. 21. ſo dark, that no man *could ſee another, neither aroſe any from his place for three dayes*, *ver.* 23. this was blackneſs of darkneſs; the picture of Hell, that chamber of darkneſs. The word in the Hebrew, ſignifieth heat and blackneſs: The reaſon is given, becauſe heat makes things black and ſwarthy; from the ſame word thoſe Idolatrous Prieſts ſpoken of, 2 *Kings* 23. 5. were called *Chemarims*, or the *black Prieſts*; and they were called ſo, either from the black veſts or garments which they commonly wore; or from the heat and fire of their furious zeal, either in the defence, or exerciſe, of their ſuperſtitious worſhip; or from the ſmoaky Incenſe which they offered, fit enough to black themſelves, but no way pleaſing unto God.

במר בכדירי *Geminata poſtrema calores intenſiores & vehementiores quales eſſe ſolent in diebus canicularibus ſignificat.* Druſ.

Let the blackneſs of the day terrifie it.] Terrifie what? *Terrifie the day.* The day is not capable of fears, or of affrightments; but the meaning is this, let the blackneſs of the day make it a terrible day; or let it be a terrible day, by reaſon of the blackneſs of it: As we uſe to ſay, ſuch a day was a terrible day, it was a black day.

Changes in the courſe of nature are full of terror. That which is proper and natural to the day is light; therefore to ſee the day covered with blackneſs, muſt needs affright us: when we *look for light*, as they in the Prophet, *and behold darkneſs*, that troubles; but when we *look for light*, and behold *blackneſs*, that terrifies. The vulgar Latine tranſlation reads it thus; *Let* (*as it were*) *the bitterneſs of the day terrifie it*: The bitterneſs of the day, are thoſe ſad accidents and troubles which fall out upon that day. To which ſence the *Chaldee Paraphraſe* thus expounds it; let ſuch bitterneſſes of the day afflict it, as the Prophet *Jeremy* was afflicted with, for the deſtruction of the Temple; or as *Jonas* when he was caſt into the Sea. *Hard bondage made the lives of the* Iſraelites *bitter*, Exod. 1. 14. And when the Lord threatens *to turn their feaſts into mourning, and their ſongs into lamentation*, he concludes thus, *And I will make it as the mourning of an only ſon, and the end thereof as a bitter day*, Amos 8. 10. Hence afflictions are called, *gall and wormwood*, bitter things. And the *Chaldeans*, whom God made ſo great a ſcourge to his own people, are called a *bitter Nation*, Hab. 1. 6.

Vox compoſita à מדרים *Amaritudines & particula* בדי *ſic, ſicut.*

We have opened theſe words, which concern the curſe upon *Job*'s day. Now follows his curſe upon the night.

Verſe 6. **As for the night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not be joyned to the dayes of the year, let it not come into the number of the months.**

Verſe 7. **Lo, let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful voice come therein.**

He goeth on in his former paſſionate Rhetorick, to load the night with as many evils (if not more) as he had done the day; **As for that night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it.**

We have heard of darkneſs before, darkneſs upon the day. What doth *Job* mean here to call for darkneſs upon the night? The night is it ſelf full of darkneſs; yea darkneſs is proper to the night. Is it any curſe to ſay, let Wormwood be bitter, or to ſay, let Lead be heavy? the natural property of a thing cannot be the puniſhment of a thing. How is it then that *Job* ſaith, *Let that night be darkneſs*; or, *Let darkneſs ſeize upon it.*

Though it be true, that darkneſs is proper to the night; yet there are degrees of darkneſs, and every darkneſs is not proper to the night. The word here uſed for darkneſs, is obſerved by Grammarians, to ſignifie an extraordinary thick darkneſs, yea darkneſs joyned with tempeſt: Let thick tempeſtuous darkneſs ſeize upon, or take hold of that night; for the word ſignifies, to graſp or take a thing in ones hand, let darkneſs graſp it. Though the night be dark, yet it may be darker; we call ſome nights light nights, in compariſon of others.

אפל
Tenebroſius turbo. Vulg.

Note, *That there is no eſtate ſo ill, but it is poſſible it may be worſe.*

The night is dark, yet you may ſuper-add darkneſs to it: and though the condition of any perſon, or people, be as the night, dark, yet the darkneſs may increaſe more and more to a perfect night. You know what God ſaith concerning the people of the *Jews*, when he threatned them with troubles, *I will puniſh you yet ſeven times more for your ſins.* God can make ſuch a night, as that the former night ſhall ſeem a day to it: God can add darkneſs to the darkneſs of the night: God can add bitterneſs to the bitterneſs of Wormwood, and make Lead more heavy then Lead: There is no man on earth in ſo ſad a condition, but he may be in a worſe. Art thou poor? God can ſend thee ſuch poverty, as that thy former poverty was riches compared with this. Art thou weak and ſick? God can add more ſickneſs, and make thee ſo weak, that thy former ſickneſs may be accounted health, and thy weakneſs ſtrength, compared with this. In this ſence darkneſs ſeizeth upon the night. He wiſhes a ſecond evil upon that night.

Let it not be joyned with the dayes of the year.

Hieron.
Septuag.

Some read it thus, *Let it not be computed in the dayes of the year.* Others, *Let it not be in the dayes of the year.* This is another evil he calls down upon the night. The glory of the night conſiſteth in its conjunction to the day; hence light and darkneſs put together, come both under the denomination and notion of *day*. Night is called day, as being a part of the natural day: Now that which is the chief priviledge of the night, this curſe ſtrikes at: *Job* would have it rent and diſ-joynted from the day. *Let it not be joyned to the dayes of the year.*

Diſunion and diviſion is a great curſe, when the night is not joyned to the day, it is the curſe of the night. The *Rabbins* have a conceit, why after the work of the ſecond day was finiſhed, God (beholding what he had done) did not add any approbation to it: when he made the light, which was the firſt dayes work, he approves it, *God ſaw the light, and ſaid it was good*; but to the work of the ſecond day, God ſubjoyned no approbation, by ſaying it was good; The reaſon (I ſay) which many of the *Rabbins* give of it, was this, becauſe then was the firſt diſunion, that made the firſt ſecond, that ever was, *All before was one, (ſub uniſſimo Deo) under the one-moſt God*; I ſhall leave this fancy to the *Rabbins*. But there is ſomewhat in the notion it ſelf, namely, that diviſion and diſunion are the evils of the creature. The night hath glory by union with the day; the weakeſt things, and the obſcureſt things, have an honour by being joyned with the ſtronger and more excellent.

And as theſe natural diſunions are the affliction of natural things; ſo civil diſunions, and civil diviſions, are much more the affliction of People and Nations. *Chriſt* aſſures us, *That the ſtrongeſt Kingdoms divided cannot ſtand, Mark* 3. 24. Weak things are ſtrong by union; and that not only by union with the ſtrong, but by union among themſelves. Weak things united are ſtrengthened; joyn weak with weak, and they are ſtrong. And things obſcure, united, are honourable, eſpecially if united with that which is honourable: The glory of the Wife is in the band of union with her Husband; *She ſhines with the rayes of her Husbands honour:* Whatſoever natural, or civil excellency is in him, reflects upon her: *The woman is the glory of the man*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 11. 7.) in regard of ſubjection: It is mans glory, that God hath given him ſuperiority over ſo excellent a creature. But in another ſence, the man is the glory of the woman; ſhe communicates with him in all his dignity, how great ſoever. Thus alſo the day is the glory of the night: The night ſhines by her marriage with the day. *Job* ſues out a divorce between them, *Let it not be joyned to the dayes of the year.*

And let it not come into the number of the months.

The Original may be tranſlated, *In the number of the Moons:* The ſame word, among the *Hebrews*, ſignifieth the Moon, and a Month: as likewiſe among the *Grecians*: and the reaſon is, becauſe their Months were counted by their Moons; and the Moon is renewed every Month. Every *Lunation* made a Month; and thirteen *Lunations* made a year; their Month conſiſting of twenty eight dayes, which is a *Lunary* Month: So that when *Job* ſaith, *Let it not come into the number of the Months*, he would take away one ſpecial benefit of the night: And it is as if he had ſaid let that night be uſeleſs, and ſtand for nothing in the Calender of the year. *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and a time to every purpoſe under the Heaven*, ſaith the Preacher, (*Eccleſ.* 3. 1.) So every ſeaſon hath ſomething to do, and there is a purpoſe for every time under Heaven. A purpoſe for Summer, and a purpoſe for the Winter; a purpoſe for the day, and a purpoſe for the night. And for any of theſe to be diſappointed of their purpoſe, is (ſo far as they are capable of affliction) their affliction. We may obſerve hence;

ירח
Antiquiſſima fuit in menſibus Lunarius noctiũ & Lunationũ obſervatio, quod & ipſum menſis nomẽ teſtatur, quod apud Græcos à Luna dicitur, nam (μὴν) *mẽſis eſt, & vero* (μήνη) *Luna*, Pined. *in loc.*
Summa hæc vult, deleatur è Calendario. Druſ.

That it is a great curſe upon any creature, to be made an uſeleſs creature, to ſtand for nothing.

This is to looſe the end of its being; and therefore it muſt needs looſe the happineſs of its being. Every thing was (by the Law of its creation) ordained for ſome uſe, and therefore cannot but be unhappy when it is made uſeleſs. And if it be the glory of inanimate creatures when God will uſe them, or when men make uſe of them for God; how unglorious then is the condition of thoſe men, who are, as (God ſpeaks of that King, *Jer.* 22. 28.) *Like a deſpiſed broken Idol*, which hath no honour, and is of no uſe; *Who are as veſſels wherein there is no pleaſure*, veſſels laid by the walls, (as we ſpeak) laid aſide, as unfit or unworthy to be lookt after, and employed in any publick ſervice.

Lo, let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful ſound come therein.

This ſolitarineſs of the night may have reſpect to the former words: He would not have it *joyned to the dayes of the year*; he would not have it *come in the number of Months*. What then? Then it muſt needs be like a ſolitary widow, all alone; *Let that night be ſolitary.* Or ſecondly, his meaning may be this, Let there be no meetings that night. The night is not ſolitary in it ſelf, but then the night is called ſolitary, when the ſociety of friends is ſtopt and interrupted. It was the cuſtom of thoſe times, and it is a cuſtom continued in many places to theſe times, for friends to meet in the night: and ſuch meetings make night as day; good ſociety is comfortable: A ſolitary condition is a ſorrowful condition. So then, *Job* compleats his curſe in this verſe, and makes up a full ſum of miſery upon his night. What can be ſaid more againſt it, then now he ſaith. He had before wiſht it dark in it ſelf, divided from the day, of no number in the months: And now he would not have friends meet to refreſh themſelves by mutual communion and loving converſe that night. Much of the comfort of our lives is brought in by the ſociety of friends. Man is

Egyptii *feſtum celiberrimũ habuerunt nocturnũ, tum etiam noctu celebrebantur nuptiæ.* Herod. *l.* 2.

defined a ſociable creature, as well as a reaſonable creature; ſolitarineſs is oppoſite both to the nature and happineſs of man. *Wo be to him that is alone* (ſaith *Solomon*) *two are better then one*, and eſpecially in times of trouble. As our comforts are multiplied upon them that are near us, ſo our ſorrows are allayed and eaſed by them. There is a ſolitarineſs which is the ſweeteſt part of our lives, when we retire a while from the world, from the throng of men and buſineſs, that we may be more intimate with Chriſt, and take our fill in communion with him. To go alone, that we may meet with God, is Heaven upon earth; but to be ſo left alone and ſcattered, that we cannot meet with men, is (if not a hell, yet) one of the greateſt afflictions upon the earth. Such ſolitary times are ſad times.

Let no joyful voice come therein.] As if he ſhould ſay, If men will meet that night, and converſe together, let them meet only to mourn together, and let their converſation be made up with mutual ſorrows; let them only tell each other the ſad ſtories of their afflictions. Thus let them meet to lament together; but let none meet to rejoyce together; let there be no meeting with any joyful voice that night. He alludes again to the cuſtom of thoſe times, which were wont to have, as meetings in the night, ſo to rejoyce in thoſe meetings: They feaſted with ſongs and muſick, a joyful voice was in their meetings. Muſick is ſweeteſt in the night: The ſtilneſs of the night gives advantage to the voice. The *Roman* Hiſtory tells us, that their greateſt feaſts, their moſt luxurious banquetings, and curious muſick, was in the night. The Apoſtle alludes to that cuſtom when he ſaith, *They that are drunken, are drunken in the night*, (1 Theſ. 5. 6.) Works of darkneſs ſeek times of darkneſs. *He that doth evil hateth the light*, John 3. 21. principally the light of knowledge, and withall the light of ſenſe. There are two Opinions about this joyful voice, which I ſhall but name, and paſs on. Firſt, The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* will have this joyful voice to be the voice of the Cock, *Let not the Cock crow that night*; the crowing of the Cock is a comfortable voice in the night: The Cock is a natural Cock, and by his crowing tells us the hours of the night: As if *Job* had ſaid, inſtead of the chearful voice of the Cock, let that night be filled with the doleful voice of the Owl, or of the Skreech-owl. A ſecond Opinion ſaith, this joyful voice which *Job* puts from, and denyes his day, was the voice of the Stars, ſpoken of, as they would have us to conceive, *Chap.* 38. 7. *When the morning Stars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy.* But to leave theſe as fancies, rather then expoſitions: The interpretation given is clear and ſutable to the method of the curſe: *Job* would have no meeting on that night; or if any were, he forbids their joy, *Let no joyful voice be heard therein.*

Monſtra volant, diræ ſtrident in nocte volucres, Nocturneq; gemunt ſtriges, & ſeriala bubo Damna canens. Statius, *l.* 3.

It is a great evil upon any time, when the voice of joy is taken away from it: It is a great evil upon times, when joyful meetings can no more be obſerved; when if any do meet, they meet and ſigh together; they meet and lament together; they meet and bemoan each others loſſes and calamities. The Prophet *Amos* ſpeaks of a time, when *the ſongs of the Temple ſhall be howlings*, (Chap. 8. ver. 3.) And *ver.* 10. *I will turn your feaſts into mourning, and your ſongs into lamentation.* It is very ſad, when the ſongs of our private houſes are changed into howlings: but much more when the ſongs of the Temple. Both theſe are pronounced againſt *Babylon*, as a part of that dreadful curſe which God will pour out upon it, when his wrath comes to the utmoſt, *Rev.* 18. 22. *The voice of harpers and muſitians, and of pipers and trumpeters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee; and the ſound of the mill-ſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride ſhall be heard no more at all in thee:* That is, O Babylon, there ſhall be no joyful voice any more at all in thee: Not the voice of muſick; no, not the voice of a mill-ſtone. We have great cauſe to fear, that the joyful voice may ſuddenly be taken away, not only from our nights, but alſo from our dayes; not only from our houſes, but alſo from our Temples: For the voice of ſin hath been heard from both. Darkneſs hath begun to ſeize upon our light; the ſeed of diviſion is not only ſown, but ſprung up among us; our troubles increaſe; yea, our joyful voice is already changed into the ſound of the Trumpet, and the Alarm of War, into the neighings of Horſes, and the *confuſed noiſe* of bloody **Battels**, *Iſa.* 9. 5. And which may afflict our hearts more, we hear the mournful voice of the Widow crying out, *My Husband, my Husband*. We hear the mournful voice of the Orphan crying out, *My Father, my Father*. It is time for us to ſit ſolitary and alone; to mourn *every family apart, and our wives apart*, (Zach. 12. 12.) to lift up our voice in prayer night and day, leaſt the joyful voice be utterly taken away, and for ever ſilenced amongſt us: Leſt it be ſaid of us as of *Jeruſalem*, (Lam. 1. 1.) *How doth the City ſit ſolitary, that was full of people? How is ſhe become as a widow? She that was great among the Nations, and Princes, among the Provinces, how is ſhe become tributary?* As that Heathen ſaid of the time paſt, *I had periſhed, if I had not periſhed:* So we may ſay of the time to come; We ſhall mourn, if we do not mourn; we ſhall be ſolitary, if we ſit not alone. Our nights of ſinful joy in chambering and wantonneſs, have bereft us, and will bereave us more of refreſhing joyes. And inſtead of the voice of friend and brother, you may hear only the voice of the enemy, and avenger: and that is no joyful voice. When *Jacob* was informed of the approach of *Eſau* his bloody brother, he puts all things in order, and preſently the Text ſaith, *Jacob was left alone*, *Gen.* 32. 24. What, deſerted? did his company run from him? No, it was an elected ſolitarineſs, not a neceſſitated ſolitarineſs, he deſired to be alone; and he ſtaid alone, that he might not be alone: He ſtaid alone, that he might get God nearer in communion with him and his; that his family might not be ſcattered from him, and his houſe left deſolate. So, if we would be voluntarily alone, from the world, to be with God, wraſtling out nights in prayer as *Jacob* did, we might (as he did) prevent ſolitary nights, and prevail with God by the voice of prayer, in the mediation of Jeſus Chriſt, and the powerful cry of his blood, to continue unto us the voice of joy.

VERS. 8, 9.

Let them curſe it that curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up their mourning.

Let the Stars of the twilight thereof be dark, let it look for light, but have none; neither let it ſee the dawning of the day.

In the former verſes, *Job* himſelf curſeth the night; in this he inviteth others, to curſe it; that his ſorrow might appear not only ſerious, but ſolemn, he calleth for thoſe who made mourning their profeſſion, and to weep for and with others, their trade: ſuch as uſed to riſe early, and awaken their companions to come away, and joyn in prepared and ſtudied lamentation. This I take to be the ſum and ſence of theſe words, which yet in the letter are very full of difficulty, and have divided Interpreters exceedingly. I ſhall briefly touch the moſt of thoſe ſences given, and then more fully preſent you with what I apprehend as ſutable to this Text, and conſonant unto Truth.

Firſt, Take a brief of the divers readings of this verſe, **Let them curſe it that curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up their mourning**: So we in our Bibles.

The vulgar and the Septuagint read it thus: *Let them curſe it that curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up Leviathan.*

Another renders the latter clauſe, *Who are ready to raiſe up the Dragon.* Theodot.

Mr. *Broughton*'s tranſlation runs thus; *May they curſe it who do curſe the day, who will hunt Leviathan.*

Junius and *Tremelius*, have a tranſlation different from all theſe, *I would they had curſed thee that inlighten the day, who are ready to ſtir up Leviathan, or the Whale.* That which all other Interpreters I have met with, call *curſing of the day*, they call *inlightning the day*.

You ſee there is much variety about the rendring of theſe words out of the Hebrew. And there is as much diverſity of opinion grounded thereupon.

Firſt, Some apprehend, that *Job* in this verſe alludes to the cuſtom of a certain people in *Ethiopia*, called the *Atlantes*

Hi ſolem tranſcendentem execrantur, eique præteria omnia convitia ingerunt quod torridus ipſos & regionem perdat, Herod *l.* 4. *ad finem.* Atlantes *diris ſolis ortum excipiunt*, Solin. *c.* 4. *Polyhiſt.* Atlantes *& ſolem Orientem & Occidentem dira imprecatione contuentur*, Plin. l. 5. *c.* 8. Pined *in loc.*

lantes, frequently mentioned in divers Hiſtories, who living under the torrid Zone, in an extream hot Climate, uſed to curſe the Sun when it aroſe, becauſe it ſcorched them with vehement heat: This made them in love with the night, and hate the day. And ſo the ſence is made out thus, Let them curſe this night, who uſe to curſe the Sun-riſing every day, whoſe pain heightning and imbittering their ſpirits, cauſed them to pour out the moſt bitter and revengeful execrations.

But I will lay this by, though ſome ſet much ſtore by it, as a ſpecial treaſure of invention: For I much queſtion, not only whether this cuſtom of curſing the day amongſt that people, was known unto *Job*, but whether he ever heard of ſuch a people, being ſo remote and diſtant from him.

Secondly, I ſhall a little open the meaning of that Tranſlation given by *Junius*, *Let them curſe it who inlighten the day; who are ready to raiſe up Leviathan, or the Whale.*

By thoſe who *inlighten the day*, he ſaith, the Stars are underſtood; *Let thoſe curſe thee who inlighten the day*; that is, let the Stars curſe thee: *And who are ready to raiſe the Leviathan*; that is, let the Winds be againſt thee; let the Winds curſe thee, or be a curſe unto thee. The reaſon he gives, is, becauſe Stars are (*Illuſtratores Diei*) the inlighteners of the day: And to ſalve it, we muſt not (ſaith he) take the day ſtrictly for a day artificial, for then the Stars are of no uſe; but for that part of the day natural which is dark, namely, the night; the Stars are inlighteners of the day, namely, of the dark part of the day, the night: And ſo *Job* calls here to the very Stars, that they ſhould oppoſe and trouble that night.

We read in that notable Hiſtory, *Judg.* 5. 20. *That the Stars in their courſes fought againſt* Siſera; ſuch expreſſions there are, making, as it were, the Heavens angry, the Stars to oppoſe the deſigns of men. The Hoſt of Heaven is under the command of the Lord of Hoſts, when he calls them forth to the help of his people. Thus he conceives *Job* inviting the Stars to take part with him in this quarrel againſt his night: Let the Stars curſe the day, thoſe inlighteners of the day.

Then he underſtands by them that ſtir up *Leviathan*, the Winds; thoſe words (*Who ſtir up Leviathan*) are (ſaith he) a Periphraſis, or deſcription of the winds. The reaſon which he gives is, becauſe when great Winds ariſe, and blow ſtrongly, that mighty Fiſh, the *Whale*, or *Leviathan*, lying at the bottom of the Sea, by the motion of the waters is rouſed and ſtirred up, and ſo mounts to the ſuperficies or top of the water, or appears above it. Thus the Winds raiſe up *Leviathan*. His ſence from both is, that *Job* ſets the Stars and the Winds againſt this night, and bids them combine to make it troubleſome and tempeſtuous. This Opinion, for the reverence of the Authors name, deſerveth to be looked upon with reſpect; but I ſhould not (neither do I) apprehend that to be the meaning of *Job* in this place.

Thirdly, The difficulty is reſolved by making theſe words an alluſion to Fiſher-men, as if *Job* here did but deſcribe the condition of thoſe, or ſhew what by accident doth befall thoſe, whoſe trade and art is to catch *Leviathan*, or the Whale. Theſe take the word *Leviathan* in the proper ſence, for that mighty Fiſh deſcribed in the 41. of this Book of *Job*, *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou letteſt down?* &c.

Leviathan is derived from *Lavah*, which ſignifieth joyned or coupled together; whence (to note it by the way) the word *Levi*, or the name of the third Son which *Jacob* had by *Leah*. She called his name *Levi*, *For now*, ſaith ſhe, *will my Husband be joyned unto me, becauſe I have born him three ſons*, Gen. 29. 34. The ſame reaſon is given, why that dreadful Fiſh is called *Leviathan*. His deſcription clears this, *Job* 41. 15. *His ſcales are his pride, ſhut up together as with a cloſe ſeal; one is ſo near to another, that no air can come between them, they are joyned one to another, they ſtick together that they cannot be ſundered.* He hath his name *Leviathan*, from the cloſe-joyning or compactedneſs of the ſcales, that cover or harneſs him like an impenitrable armour of proof. Now taking the word thus properly for the Fiſh *Leviathan*, *Job* is conceived to allude to the cuſtom of thoſe who hunt for the Whale: who obſerving the night to be moſt advantagious for that work, are troubled at the approach of light; and therefore the Fiſhermen, as ſoon as ever they ſaw day begin to break, curſed the day, as an enemy to their ſucceſs in purſuing and killing the Whale. That fiſhing is a buſineſs of the night, is evident from the ſpeech of *Peter* to our Saviour *Chriſt*, (*Luke* 5. 5.) *Maſter we have fiſhed all night, and have taken nothing.* According to which alluſion, the meaning of *Job* muſt be; As if he had ſaid, I will not ſtrive any longer for words to expreſs my paſſion againſt this night; let it be blaſted with the curſe of thoſe who are moſt ſkilful in the dialect or language of execrations; even with ſuch a curſe as thoſe ſea-hunters, the fiſhermen, uſe to pour forth upon the day, when it breaks too ſoon for their profit, ſo that they are hindred in catching of *Leviathan*, or the Whale.

לוה *Adjunctus, ſociatus unde Leviathā triſſyllabum cum affixo. Qui hujuſmodi magnos piſces piſcantur, de nocte eos invadunt in tenebris, & ideo quando dies incipit apparere maledicunt diei, quia per hoc eorū opus & intentio impeditur.* Aquinas *in loc.*

There is a Proverb amongſt us, *If you ſwear, or curſe, you will catch no fiſh*: And it ſeems theſe were wont to ſwear and curſe when they could not catch. And hence it was a Proverb in other Countries, when they would ſet out an enormious ſwearer, or one given to prophane curſing, they ſaid, *He ſweareth*, or *he curſeth like a fiſher-man*: A generation of men whom that age had branded on the tongue, whoſe mouths were full of curſings, and their ordinary diſcourſe, as much oaths as words.

Piſcatore aut nauta maledicentior.

But againſt this expoſition experience is objected; that the uſual time of fiſhing for the Whale, is in the day, not in the night. If it be ſo, then the ground of this opinion is quite overthrown. That ſome kind of fiſhing is a night work, the words and practice of *Peter* before mentioned, are proof enough: Whether Whale-fiſhing were exerciſed in the night, I ſhall not much contend to prove, ſeeing I approve but little of that interpretation which is bottomed and built upon it.

Beſides, I find others, who ſticking to this tranſlation, (*the ſtirring of Leviathan*) do yet wave and paſs by this conceit of night-fiſhing: And they ſay that the curſe here, is not to be referred to their rage againſt the light, becauſe it brings the day; but to the day, becauſe it brought them no ſucceſs. So that, day is not oppoſed to night; but a good or ſucceſsful day, to a bad or ſucceſleſs day of fiſhing. And then the ſence is to this effect, that *Job* calls for ſuch a curſe upon this day, as prophane fiſher-men, who attempt to catch the Whale, uſually ſpend upon that unhappy day wherein they looſe their labour, and after all their hazard and coſt come home empty.

Piſcatores diei maledicunt in quo iis non accidit bonus piſcatus

And when it is objected againſt this Opinion; Why doth *Job* mention *Leviathan*, or the Whale, if that be his meaning, to allude unto the ſinful paſſion of diſappointed fiſher-men; for vain men, in that employment, are as apt to curſe and be paſſionate, when they miſs of their intendments in labouring to catch any kind of fiſh?

To this anſwer may be given in two things. Firſt, this buſineſs of fiſhing for the Whale, is a buſineſs of great charge, and greater danger: and becauſe greateſt loſſes raiſe greateſt paſſions, and the higher our diſappointments are, the higher is our language; therefore *Job*, who intended here the higheſt and greateſt curſe, wiſhes it parallel with that, which the greateſt curſers belch forth, when (as they pretend) they have greateſt occaſions, yea (as they call reaſon) reaſon to curſe: And who ſhould theſe be but ignorant, or idolatrous fiſher-men, and they at ſuch a pinch, when they have loſt the hope of their greateſt gain. As if *Job* had ſaid, let as big a curſe fall upon that night, as ever fell from the mouths of thoſe prophane fiſhers, not only when they have been ſucceſleſs in fiſhing for a Herring, or a Sprat, but when, after all their pains and coſt, they cannot take *Leviathan*. *Micah*'s Mother curſed, when the eleven hundred ſhekels of ſilver were ſtollen from her, *Judg.* 17. 1, 2. To looſe what we hope for, vexes corrupt nature as much as the loſs of what we have. *They who have no treaſure in Heaven, and to whom godlineſs is not more then earthly gain, cannot but be enraged, when the hope of their gain is gone upon the earth.*

Secondly, We may ſay, he nameth the *Leviathan* by a Synechdoche, one principal for all, or for any: The chiefeſt of a kind is put for all the kind: And then it is appliable to thoſe ſea-hunters, whatſoever game they purſue. I ſhall touch one way more of illuſtrating the Opinion of thoſe, who take *Leviathan* in this Text for the Whale. We may conceive it thus, that *Job* doth not here allude to fiſhing for the Whale, and ſo to that ſucceſleſs fiſhing which provokes to curſing. But take it in the general: The Whale (we know) is a very formidable monſter to Sea-men, and Marriners, the whole ſhip with the lading of it, and all their lives being endangered if a Whale ſtrike it. So we may underſtand that of *Job*, ſpeaking of *Leviathan*, Chap. 41.25. *When he raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are affraid.* Now the Whale being ſo formidable and dangerous to Seamen; they perceiving the Whale near them, or themſelves at unawares ready to ſtir up or raiſe the Whale, are exceedingly afraid; And as great fear in ſome ſets them a praying, and cauſeth ſtrong prayers, ſo fear in others ſets them a curſing, and cauſeth ſtrong curſes. Prophane marriners, ſeeing themſelves in ſuch imminent danger by the approach of the Whale, preſently curſe the day that ever they looſed anchor or ſet ſail from the Harbour; the day that ever they fell within the reach of this ſea-monſter, now ready to ſink their veſſel, and overwhelm them all. Such a curſe *Job* wiſhes upon that night, the night of his conception, as men of this rank conceive and bring forth in the day of their moſt preſſing fears, when anguiſh and ſorrow take hold of them, *as travail upon a woman with child, and they cannot eſcape.*

Thus I have given you the ſum of thoſe apprehenſions which are offered for the making up of this Expoſition; namely, That the word is here to be taken for that mighty fiſh Leviathan; And that either in reſpect of thoſe who make it their buſineſs and go out purpoſely to catch Leviathan, or of thoſe who unawares are ready to be catcht by Leviathan: The former diſappointed of their hopes, and the latter ſurprized with fears, making a curſe their refuge, and eaſing themſelves by execrations.

There is a fourth opinion which giveth the ſenſe of theſe words quite another way, though it retains the ſame tranſlation. For paſſing by the alluſion to fiſhing or cuſtomes of fiſhermen, they make theſe words as a character or deſcription of the extreameſt and vileſt of wicked men; as if *Job* ſaying, *Let them curſe thee that curſe the day, who are ready to ſtir up Leviathan*, had ſaid, let the worſt or moſt wicked among the children of men curſe this night; And we know, that the worſt of men are moſt for curſing, they curſe deepeſt; as the beſt of men are moſt for prayer, and they pray higheſt and holieſt. So then, *Jobs* mind being to lay the foreſt curſe upon this night, thinks or finds his own ſpirit too ſtraight, his own heart not large enough to do it; therefore he doth (as it were) call in aid from thoſe Maſters of curſing, Let the moſt expert, the moſt skill'd in curſing, ſuch as are verſt in oathes and blaſphemies, the very dregs and ſcum of men, let them poure out the dregs, the worſt, the bittereſt of their curſes upon that night.

But how ſhall we make out this notion, that the vileſt of men are here deſcribed? That we muſt conſider and open further, to ſhew the ſubſtance and dependance of this opinion.

The worſt and wickedeſt of men are conceived to be here meant in two expreſſions.

Firſt, by them who are ſaid to curſe the day, *Let them curſe it who curſe the day.*

Secondly, in theſe words, *Who are ready to raiſe up Leviathan.* Both theſe are ſuppoſed as deſcriptive circumlocutions of the moſt wicked and vileſt men.

How ſo?

Firſt, *They that curſe the day.* That which a man hates, he is forward enough to curſe: Wicked men love darkneſs, and they hate the light, therefore they curſe the light. Light is of two ſorts, either natural, that of the Sun; or metaphorical, that of knowledge. Take light either way; take light properly, for the natural light: or take light improperly, for the light or the day of knowledge, wicked men, and eſpecially the worſt of wicked men, will be found curſers of the day. Firſt, They are ſo expreſt in this book of *Job*, reſpecting the natural day, *chap.* 24. where having deſcribed many acts of violence committed by cruel oppreſſors, who know not God, *verſ.* 1. he concludes, *verſ.* 13. *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the pathes thereof.* And verſ. 16. *In the dark they dig through houſes which they had marked out for themſelves in the day time, they know not the light, for the morning is to them even as the ſhadow of death: If one know them, they are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.* Men, to whom the morning is a terrour, and light as the ſhadow of death, cannot but curſe the day, whoſe approach hinders them in their night-works, in their black deſigns and purpoſes. Secondly, Other Scriptures diſcover more deadly hatred in wicked men againſt the light of knowledge; they rebel more againſt the day of grace then againſt the day of nature, or the natural day: The former hinders only the outward practiſe of ſin, but this oppoſes the inward principles of ſin. We ſee what cold entertainment, yea what war this light found in the world, and why, (*John* 3.19, 20.) *Light is come into the world,* (that is, Chriſt and the knowledge of his wayes) *and men* (not men in general, but ungodly men) *loved darkneſs rather then light*; Why? *Becauſe their deeds were evil,* (evil deeds, and evil doers ſeek covert in this darkneſs) *for every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, leaſt his deeds ſhould be reproved.* They are ignorant willingly, that they may ſin more freely: For though they are reſolved to ſin in and againſt the light of knowledge, yet they had rather ſin in, and with the darkneſs of ignorance; no man can ſin with ſo much eaſe and delight in this light, as he can in darkneſs. A man that hath light in his underſtanding, can hardly ſin without ſmart upon his conſcience: Hence they who love ſin hate knowledge. On this ground it is as clear as the day, that wicked men are (*Lucifugæ*) ſuch as avoid, ſhun and hate the day, no marvel then if they curſe the day; And to be angry with, or curſe, the day, is an evidence (as clear as the day) of a wicked man. He that deſires not to know the truth, hath no deſire to practiſe it; and he who hates the knowledge of the truth, hates the practiſe of it; yea he therefore hates knowledge, becauſe he hates practice: The is wickedneſs at the height. To commit a ſin againſt light, is not ſo great an argument of an evil heart, as to be troubled at the light which rebukes or would prevent the committing of that ſin. Thus we ſee in what ſenſe, by thoſe *who curſe the day*, we may underſtand the worſt of wicked men.

But for the ſecond part, [*Who are ready to raiſe up Leviathan.*] How is this a deſcription of wicked men?

To make out this, we muſt expound *Leviathan*, not properly for the Whale, but improperly and myſtically for the Devil, that great Leviathan: Under which name, he with all ſpiritual wickedneſſes, the oppoſers of Chriſt and of his Church are comprehended by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 27.1.) *In that day the Lord with his ſore great and ſtrong ſword ſhall puniſh Leviathan, the piercing ſerpent, even Leviathan the crooked ſerpent, and he ſhall ſlay the Dragon in the ſea.* Now they that raiſe up this myſtical Leviathan the Devil, are ſurely the vileſt men.

But who do thus? or how can this be done?

They are ſaid *to raiſe up Leviathan*, who ſeek occaſions of ſinning, ſuch as do not ſtay till Satan tempts them, but they (as it were) tempt Satan. They are ſo haſty, ſo forward to do evil, that they think the Devil comes not faſt enough, and therefore they do even go out to meet, provoke and raiſe up the Devil, they invite temptation: There is a truth in this, All ſins are not from the temptations of Satan; our own hearts are not only the ſoil, and have in them the ſeed of all ſin; but they are ſun and rain, to warm and water thoſe ſeeds that they may grow. And as a godly man (from the new principle at firſt planted in him by the holy Ghoſt) doth often ſtir up the holy Ghoſt to come and help him, he doth not alwayes ſtay till the holy Ghoſt ſenſibly comes, but finding his own weakneſs and wants, and deadneſs to and in duty, he goeth and ſtirreth up the ſpirit of God, and prayeth that the holy Ghoſt would breath upon him, quicken and enliven him in prayer and other holy duties. So many ungodly wretches do not ſtay for Satan, or wait till he comes to tempt them, but they (ſuch is their deſperate wickedneſs and delight in ſin) wiſh that he would tempt them oftner. They do not only keep *open houſe*, and *open heart* for him, ready to entertain and welcome him when he comes, but they go forth to ſolicit his company and his coming. This is to ſtir up Leviathan.

Illi parati ſunt ſuſcitare Leviathan, qui ſtudent ad ſuggeſtiones diaboli implendas, Aquin. *in loc. Qui ſibi ipſis occaſiones quærunt peccandi elegantèr dicuntur ſuſcitare diabolum.*

So that the whole ſenſe according to this expoſition may be given to you thus, as if *Job* had ſaid, Let this night be curſed with a grievous curſe, even with as black and foul a curſe as can be moulded and faſhioned in the heart, or ſpit out of the mouthes of the vileſt miſcreants, even of ſuch as are ſo ſet upon ſin, that they hate the light and curſe the day which either the Sun makes in the air, or which knowledge makes in their hearts, leſt that ſhould ſtop and hinder them in the acting of ſin; yea let ſuch a curſe be upon it, as they uſe to vomit out, who are ſo ſet upon miſchief, and engaged to their luſts, that they pray in aid from the Devil, to aſſiſt and quicken them in their wickedneſs; that ſo their natural corruptions being oyled and ſmoothed with his temptations, their motions to ſin (and indeed to Hell) may be ſwifter and more violent. Theſe are they that give diligence to make their damnation ſure: Theſe are they from whom the kingdom of Hell ſuffers violence, and theſe violent ones (rather then not have it) will take it by force. Surely their damnation ſleeps not, who (leaſt they ſhould not ſin enough) awaken the Devil to ſhew them ſinning opportunities. To ſuch as theſe (according to the interpretation now ſuggeſted) *Job* commits his night to curſing, *Let them curſe it who curſe the day*, &c.

Now though there be a truth in the things which are aſſerted in this opinion, taken abſtractedly; though it be a truth that wicked men are ſuch as curſe the day of air-light, and the day of knowledge-light; though they are often ſo mad to be ſinning, that they provoke and tempt the Devil, yet I will not give this for the ſenſe and meaning of the words: rather you may take it and make uſe of it as an Allegory upon, then an Expoſition of, the Text.

The laſt opinion, with which I ſhall conclude the opening of the words, is this: That *Job* in this verſe, doth allude to the cuſtom of his own countrey, and of other Eaſtern Countries, who had certain perſons amongſt them, both men and women, whom, upon ſolemn occaſions either of joy or ſorrow, they were wont to hire or call in for reward, to come and help them out either in rejoycing or in mourning. We find mention of ſuch in Scripture divers times, who were thus called and invited or hired to mourn and lament, in times of ſad and ſorrowful accidents, whether perſonal or publick. Theſe had (*Lacrimas venales*) tears to ſell, or ſale-tears, making both a profeſſion and a profit of mourning. Such the Prophet ſpeaks of, *Jer.* 9. 17, 18. *Thus ſaith the Lord, Conſider ye, and call for the mourning women*, (he ſpeaks of them as of a ſociety or ſiſter-hood well known, and as well cuſtom'd) *and cunning women, that they may come*, (that is, women cunning in mourning.) *And let them make haſte, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eye-lids guſh forth with waters: for a voyce of wailing is heard out of* Zion, *How are we ſpoiled?* And verſ. 20. *Teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour Lamentation*; (you ſee it was an art taught amongſt them,) *for death is come up into our windows*, &c. In 2 *Chron.* 35. 25. We have a record to the ſame effect, concerning the lamentation for *Joſiah*. *And* Jeremiah *lamented for* Joſiah, *and all the ſinging-men and ſinging-women ſpake of* Joſiah *in their lamentations to this day*. So that there were both men and women prepared and uſually called forth to lament ſuch occaſions of ſorrow. Again, *Amos* 5. 16. *Therefore the Lord, the God of Hoſts, the Lord ſaith thus, wailing ſhall be in all ſtreets, and they ſhall ſay in all the high-ways, Alas, Alas! And they ſhall call the husbandman to mourning, and ſuch as are skilful of lamentation to wailing*. Obſerve here different mourners, *they ſhall call the husbandman to mourning, and ſuch as are skilful of lamentation to wailing*. You ſee he ſpeaks of two ſorts of perſons, they ſhall call the *husbandman* to mourning; Husbandmen are ſuch as mourn when they mourn, when they mourn, they mourn indeed, they mourn down-right; but beſides theſe who mourned (*Ex animo*) really, there was another ſort who did but perſonate ſorrow, and act a part in grief; ſo ſaith the Prophet, *Call in ſome who are skilful of lamentation*, men or women who have ſtudied the point, and know how to move a paſſion, and to heighten an affection beyond that which the plain husbandman can do; Let the husbandman mourn, but beſides that, let there be art and ſolemnity in the mourning, call in thoſe that *are skilful of Lamentation*. There was a kind of profeſſion, trade or art of mourning; which is further evidenced, (2 *Sam.* 14. 2.) Joab *ſent to* Tekoah *to fetch thence a wiſe woman*, (which is interpreted in the words following, to be a woman *skilful in lamentation*,) *and ſaid unto her, I pray thee fain thy ſelf to be a mourner*: Thou art a cunning woman, thou knoweſt how to act the part and poſtures of a mourner to the life, *Go to* David, *and fain thy ſelf to be a mourner, and as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead*. And it is obſerved to this day in many places, (and as I have been informed frequently in *Ireland*) that not only friends and neighbours are called to lament at the funeral of their friends and neighbours, but many others no way related, ſcarce ever known to the perſon deceaſed, who come profeſſedly to ſtrain for tears, and make lamentable out-cryes over the dead. To ſuch a cuſtome or profeſſion *Job* here alluding, ſaith, *Let them curſe it who curſe the day*.

• *Solent in luctu voce flebili, & lacertis manibus verberantis ad lachrymas populū provocare. Hic enim mos permanet in* Judea, *ut mulieres ſparſis crinibus nudatiſq; pectoribus voce modulata omnes ad fletum concitent.* Hieron. *in c.* 9. Jerem.

If it be objected, that this Text ſpeaks of ſuch as curſe the day, and not of ſuch as mourn upon or bemoan the day. That is eaſily removed, becauſe upon thoſe days of mourning, they were wont to mix execrations with their lamentations, and curſes with their tears: crying out, oh the day! alas for the day! oh that ever ſuch a day came! In the thirtieth of *Ezekiel*, verſ. 2. The Lord ſaith, *Son of man, propheſie and ſay, thus ſaith the Lord God, howl ye, wo worth the day*. Theſe did curſe the day: and ſuch were hired in that ſenſe to curſe the day. As *Balaam* (who loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs) was hired to curſe the people of God, *Numb.* 22. So then the curſing here meant, was a doleful wiſh, that the day had not been, or that ſuch things had not happened upon that day: And ſo theſe words, *Let them curſe it who curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up their mourning*, are only a circumlocution, deſcribing thoſe mercenary curſers or mourners: As if *Job* had in more words ſaid thus, Let this night be curſed in as high a ſtrain, and mourned over with as enlarged ſorrows, as the art and invention of thoſe, whoſe trade is curſing, and who have tears at command, ever did or can put forth, when hired on purpoſe to mourn over the ſaddeſt ſpectacles and moſt calamitous events.

Now this being taken for a ground-work, that in thoſe times and Countries, men and women were hired to mourn, and that an art of mourning was then profeſt; the difficulties that are in the Text oppoſing this, are further to be examined: For here ſtill it ſeemeth doubtful, how this word *Leviathan* can fall in with ſuch an interpretation, or be applied to thoſe hired and profeſſed mourners. Towards the clearing of which, I ſhall a little open three words.

The firſt is (*Gnatidim*) **who are ready**: which ſignifies a prepared and meditated active readineſs; as we find in two Texts of the Book of *Heſter*, *The copie of the writing for a commandment to be given in every Province, was publiſhed unto all people, that they ſhould be ready againſt that day*, chap. 3. 14. and again, *chap.* 8. 13. So that in *Job*, to be ready to raiſe up their mourning, notes more then an immediate going about a thing; As we ſay, I am ready to do a thing, that is, I will or muſt do it preſently: For it notes alſo a ſtudied readineſs or preparedneſs to do a thing.

The ſecond word is (*Gnour*) **to raiſe up**, which is properly to raiſe from ſleep, as in that place, *Pſal.* 44. 23. *Awake, why ſleepeſt thou, O Lord? Ariſe, caſt us not off for ever*.

The third word is (*Leviathan*) which hath two other ſignifications, both appliable to this interpretation.

First, Divers of the *Rabbins* tranſlate it by the Hebrew word (*Ebel*,) which ſignifies mourning or ſorrow; and with the pronoun affixed, their ſorrow or their mourning. And this is aſſerted by the learned *Mercer*, for the plaineſt meaning of the word, and ſo found in the writings of the Hebrew Doctors, which alſo directly anſwers our tranſlation, **who are ready to raiſe up their mourning**.

Secondly, The word (*Leviathan*) is derived (according to the opinion of others) from *Lavah*, i. e. joyned or aſſociated. Hence *Leviath*, i. e. ſociety or fellowſhip: to which the ſame pronoune being affixed, the word *Leviathan* is made up, and according to that extraction and compoſition, is rendred (*ſocietatem ſuam*) their ſociety or their company. And the word in this derivation and conſtruction of it, falls in with the ſenſe of the former interpretation, who are ready to raiſe and ſtir up their company, namely to go forth and mourn, or their company of mourners. And the reaſon is two-fold, why they are, or may be, ſaid *to raiſe up their company of mourners*.

עֹרֵר: *Expoſui cū Hebrais Leviathan ſimpliciter, pro* אבלם *luctum ſuū, ut ſit Nun pro Mem, ſicut alias hæc confundi videas. Quo ſignificatu in ſcriptis doctorum Hebræorum occurrit, & ex lingua Syriaca Sumptū eſt vicinum nomini,* אליא *ſic & Chaldæus vertit. Simpliciſſimum eſt Leviathan pro luctu exponere cum Hebrais,* Merc.

Firſt, Becauſe thoſe ſolemn mourners were uſually a great many, they were a company, a *Chorus* or a Quire, making a doleful lamentation; and ſo when they were to mourn, they called together, or raiſed up their company of mourners. And the word [*raiſed*] is proper for a ſecond reaſon; becauſe in ſuch mournings, it was accuſtomed to riſe up very early, or early to raiſe up one another. As *David*, ſpeaking of muſical rejoycing, *Pſal.* 108. 2. ſaith, *Awake pſaltery, and harp, I my ſelf will awake early*; the Hebrew is very emphatical in that place, word for word thus, *I my ſelf will awaken the morning*; as if he ſhould ſay, the morning ſhall not awaken me, but I will awaken the morning; the morning ſhall not find me ſleeping, but I will be up firſt, and call up the morning. So thoſe mourners uſed to awake early in the morning, or rather to awaken the morning; and they had one woman, whom they called (*Præfica*) the leader, the firſt or the chief of the quire and company of mourners (*plangendi Magiſtra*) whoſe office it was to call up and bring on the reſt. It appears in the Goſpel of *Matthew*, that the *Jews* (in thoſe times) uſed to call in muſick to their mournings; for when Chriſt came to the Rulers houſe, whoſe daughter was dead, the Text ſaith, *He ſaw the minſtrels and the people making a noiſe* (Mat. 9. 23.) And *Joſephus* relating the ſtory of his own ſuppoſed death, ſhews how all the City of *Jeruſalem* continued a mourning for him thirty dayes. And he adds, directly to this point, that many Muſitians were hired, for reward, to lead thoſe ſongs, to direct the ſolemnity of thoſe lamentations.

עִיר

Præficæ dicebantur apud veteres, quæ adhiberi ſolerunt funeri, mercede conductæ, ut & flerent, & fortia facta laudarent. Non. Marcel. *Quæ præficeretur ancillis quemadmodum lamentarentur præfica eſt dicta.* Varro. *l.* 6. Πλείϛȣς ᵹ μιϑῶσαι, τȣ̀ς αὐλητὰς οἱ ϑρήνων ἐξῆρχον αὐτοῖς. Joſeph. l. 3. *de Pol. Jud.* c. 15.

This expoſition (upon the ſuppoſition of alluding to that cuſtom in mourning, and the allowance of thoſe ſignifications of the word *Leviathan*) hath a clear and a fair ſence, reſpecting the *ſeries* of the Text: *Job* having ſo far poured out a curſe upon, and lamented his night, he (as it were) calls for thoſe to finiſh and conclude it, who traded in ſuch kind of curſes, and who were skilled in lamentations.

There is an objection againſt this, taken from the grammatical regimen or conſtruction of the Original. The Hebrew word [*who are ready*] is of the Maſculine gender, and the Pronoun relating to it (*Leviathan*) their mourning, is of the Feminine gender; ſo that here ſeems to be a fault in Grammar, if we expound it thus, *their mourning*, or, *their company of mourners*.

הָעֲתִידִים

Mos eſt ſcripturæ ut ſæpe cum agitur de actionibus cantandi, lugendi, & etiam ardenter amandi rem aliquam nominibus maſculis verba fœminini generis jungantur, vel affixis fœmineis maſculina nomina afficiantur, ut excellentia illius actionis indicetur, quia mulieres in hujuſmodi actionibus excellunt. Bolduc. *in loc.*

To this we may give a double anſwer.

Firſt, That ſuch changes of one Gender for another, are frequently obſerved in Scripture, by the learned in the Originals.

Secondly, The relative word is conjectured to be put in the Feminine gender, becauſe women were moſt uſually called forth to that work of mourning. And it is further obſervable, that where the Scripture ſpeaks of thoſe actions of mourning, or rejoycing, or loving, which are works of affection, it uſeth to aſcribe them to women rather then to men, becauſe they are quicker in affection, and fuller of affection then men, and ſo more ready to act or expreſs ſuch joys or ſorrows, then men are.

For the cloſe of this point, I ſhall add the apprehenſion of a learned Expoſitor; who taking the words in this laſt ſence, as referring to thoſe ſolemn mournings, yet conceives that the word *Leviathan* muſt ſtand here in the letter; not as if *Job* had any intendment here to ſpeak of the fiſh *Leviathan*, or to allude to fiſhing for *Leviathan*; but either becauſe Heathens in thoſe execrations, did invoke or provoke *Leviathan*, that is the Devil; or becauſe in thoſe ſolemn ſongs of lamentation, *Leviathan* was a word much uſed, or *Leviathan* was the firſt word of ſome of thoſe lamenting ſongs; for in execrations, ſtrange, uncouth, dreadful words were purpoſely uſed, the more to affect and aſtoniſh the hearers: Now there is no word more dreadful then *Leviathan*; whether we take it for that ſea-monſter the Whale, or for that Hell-monſter the Devil. And ſo the meaning is this; *Let them curſe it, who curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up Leviathan*; that is, Let thoſe mourners, who ſing that moſt paſſionate ſong of mourning, which begins with, or is entituled *Leviathan*. It is ordinary among us, to call for a ſong, or to call a ſong by the general ſubject-matter of it, or by the firſt word of it. And ſo, many books of Scripture have their names in the Hebrew from the firſt word; as the book of *Geneſis* is called *Bereſith*, or, *In the beginning*; and *Exodus*, *Veele ſemoth* (that is) *And theſe are the names*: becauſe both begin with thoſe words in the Hebrew. So the ſong which was the form of thoſe *Lamentations*, might be called *Leviathan*; becauſe (ſaith this Author) it began with that word; and he alledgeth a proverbial tradition for it out of *Mariana*, which he had received from a *Jew*, that it was forbidden upon the feaſt-day to raiſe up *Leviathan*; that is, they might not take up that execratory ſong which beginneth with *Leviathan*. I only preſent this opinion, becauſe it ſuits with, and illuſtrates the former notion of ſolemn mourning.

In execrationibus illa communiter adhibentur, quæ horribilia ſunt, quæq; hominibus metum ac terrorem incutiunt: In aquatilibus nihil audimus horribilius Leviathan. Sanct. *in loc. Carmen illud dicebatur Leviathan, quemadmodum multa carmina ab iis ſumpſerunt nomen de quibus inſtituta ſunt.* Idem.

Thus I have with as much ſpeed and clearneſs as I could, given you the meaning of theſe words. That which favours their ſence moſt, who keep to the word *Leviathan*, is, that this Book ſpeaks afterward of *Leviathan*, to ſhew the power of the Creator, and that powerful creature. And I find the very ſame phraſe of raiſing or ſtirring up *Leviathan*, uſed in that place, *chap.* 41. *ver.* 10. *None is ſo fierce that dare ſtir (or raiſe) him up.* The Hebrew word which there we tranſlate, *ſtir*, in this third chapter is tranſlated *raiſe Leviathan.* Yet I rather incline to the lattet expoſition, reſpecting mourning; both becauſe it hath the authority of our Engliſh Bible to countenance it, our Tranſlators putting *mourning* in the Text, and *Leviathan* in the margin; as alſo, becauſe it carries a clearer correſpondence and agreement, both with antecedents and conſequents, both with the matter and with the frame of *Job*'s complaint and curſe in this Chapter.

Taking the words in this ſence, that *Job* calls to have his night curſed in ſuch a ſolemn manner, as thoſe hired mourners uſed to lament and bewail the dayes of humane calamities, we may obſerve,

First, That, *hope of profit will turn ſome ſpirits into any poſture.*

Lamenting and mourning is an unpleaſant work, but profit and reward ſweetens and makes it pleaſant. Some men will be in any action, ſo they may get by it; they will mourn for hire, and curſe for hire; ſo did *Balaam. Balaam* was ſent for to curſe the people of God, Numb. 22. He made many delayes, and ſeemingly conſcientious ſcruples; yet at laſt he goes about the work, as black and bad as it was. But what overcame him, and anſwered all his doubts about the undertaking of ſuch a work? The Text in *Peter* reſolves us, *he loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs.* He that loves wages, will quickly love any work which brings in wages. Upon the ſtage you might have any paſſion for your money; joy and ſorrow, love and hatred, all acted and perſonated (beyond the perſonal temper or occaſions of the men) meerly for reward. And (which is the higheſt argument of a mercenary ſpirit) ſome act holineſs for hire, and are godly for outward gain.

Secondly, In that *Job* calls others to mourn over and condole that night; obſerve,

That, *Some troubles exceed our own ſorrows; and we may want the eyes and tongues of others to expreſs them by.*

My heart (ſaith *Job*) is not large enough, and I have not art enough to act, much leſs to aggravate my own afflictions; let them do it whoſe profeſſion and practice it is, *to curſe the day.* Sometimes the mercies which we receive, and the joy that the ſoul conceives, is more then we can expreſs or be thankful enough for; and then we ſend to others, both private Chriſtians and whole Congregations, deſiring them to help us, to lend us their hearts and their tongues, their affections, and their voyces, in that Angelical work, the praiſes of our God; *Let them bleſs God who bleſs the day* (who are vers'd in dayes and duties of thankſgiving) *who are ready to raiſe up their rejoycings. David* ſaith, *Come and hear, all ye that fear God,* *and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul*, Pſal.66.16. He had not told them what God had done for his ſoul, but to gain the help of their ſouls in praiſing God, for what he had done.

Sometime alſo a Chriſtian is ſo engaged in prayer for the obtaining of a mercy, and finds his heart ſo much below his ſuit, that he calls out to all thoſe, who have any holy ſkill in praying, pray for me, pray with me, the buſineſs is too big for me alone. How earneſtly doth *Paul* beg prayers? *Now I beſeech you brethren, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſts ſake, and for the love of the ſpirit, that ye ſtrive together with me, in prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered*, &c. *Rom.* 15. 30.

As it is thus in praying and rejoycing, ſo it may be in mourning and in ſorrowing; and troubles are very deep, when they exceed our own ſorrows, as mercies are very great, when they are beyond our own praiſes. We in this Nation, have cauſe to fear ſuch troubles, even ſuch, as may cauſe us to invite the hearts and ſpirits, the bowels and compaſſions of all the Chriſtians in the world to come and and lament over us; we may be forced to ſend not only for the *Husbandman*, thoſe plain-hearted mourners; but for thoſe alſo, who are *ſkilful in Lamentations*; ſuch as *Jeremy*, to ſet a ſong in the higheſt ſtrains of lamentation, for the bewailing of our troubles; and ſay, let ſuch lament our day, as lamented *Jeruſalem*; let ſuch lament it, as have lately lamented *Germany*; ſuch as now lament the ruines and deſolations of *Ireland*.

Verſe 9. **Let the ſtars of the twilight thereof be dark, let it look for light, but have none, neither let it ſee the dawning of the day.**

This is the laſt part of the curſe which *Job* paſſeth upon his night; *Let the ſtars of the twilight thereof be dark*. Some comforts of the night are natural, others are accidental. *Job*, in the former verſes, wiſhes away the accidental comforts; the meeting of friends, and the voice of muſick: In this verſe, he removes the natural comforts of the night; which are two. Firſt, The preſent light of the ſtars. Secondly, The expected light of the ſun.

The firſt comfort of the night is, that though it be dark, by the abſence of the Sun, yet there is ſome light, by the preſence and ſhining of the ſtars; and it is a greater comfort in the night, to remember, that though now I have no light, but from a glimmering ſtar, yet ſhortly the light of the glorious Sun will ſhine upon me. But in how dark a condition is the night, when the Sun is gone, and the ſtars too? when the Stars are clouded from ſhining, and the Sun ſtaid from riſing? This *Job* wiſhes as the ſtate of that night; *let the Stars thereof be dark*; yea, let it have no hope to ſee the Sun, that is, let it be an everlaſting night.

נשף *Crepuſculū eſt tam veſpertinum quam matutinum.*

Let the ſtars of the twilight thereof be dark.] By *twilight*, we are to underſtand the beginning of the night, or the evening, when the Stars firſt appear; the word ſignifies both twilights, the twilight of the evening, and the twilight of the morning. The ſtars of the twilight, are thoſe reſplendent ſtars (ſo much obſerved by Aſtronomers, and obſervable by the vulgar) which ſhine in the evening and the morning.

When *Job* would have theſe *Stars of the twilight to be dark*, he at once takes away a threefold benefit from the night. Firſt, Theſe Stars are a great ornament to the night: What a glorious ſpectacle is it, to ſee the canopie of heaven beſpangled with the Stars, as a garment ſet with ſtuds or O's of go'd? Secondly, The Stars are a great delight and comfort in the night. Thirdly, The Stars are for direction, and as guides in the night: Hence ſea-men and travellers mourn when they cannot ſee the Stars. The ſtars are the Mariners guide in the night; while his hand is upon the helm, his eye is toward heaven; and in the heavens his eye is upon the light and motion of the ſtars. The woful condition of thoſe ſea-men in the ſtorm, is thus expreſt, *Acts* 27. 20. *Now when for many dayes neither Sun nor Star had appeared.* When Sea-men feel a ſtorm in the night, and cannot ſee a Star in the night, their caſe is almoſt deſperate: Though the light of a Star be little, yet the benefit is very great.

Let it look for light, but have none.] The Hebrew is, *Let it look for light, and none*; which is an uſual *Illeipſis*: we ſupply the word (*have*) *Let it look for light, and have none.*

Let it look for light.] He putteth that in to aggravate the ſorrow of that night. I would have this night expect the light, let it wait, and look for it earneſtly; but let it have none: let it be full of hopes, but empty of enjoyments. Let that night know no ſucceſſion of a day: whereas uſually the Sun goes and returns, it ſets and riſes; now let it go, and not return; let it ſet, and never riſe again.

Eum vellem ne ſubſequatur dies, ne aurora quidem.

Neither let it ſee the dawning of the day.] He doth not only wiſh away full, clear and perfect light, but the dawning of the day, which is imperfect light; let not ſo much as the beginning or firſt moment of a morning ſucceed that night. The words in the original are, *Let it not ſee the eyelids of the morning*: It is a very elegant expreſſion, noting the firſt breakings of light, when the Sun peeps above the Horizon, which Poets call the rayes of light, ſtreams of light, or the wings of the morning: As our *Lord Chriſt, the Sun of righteouſneſs, is ſaid to riſe with healing in his wings* (Mal. 4. 2.) So *the eye-lids of the morning*, alluding to the Sun, which is *the eye of heaven*, and when the day dawneth, the eye-lids of heaven open, the Sun awakens, and looks out; even as when a man awakes firſt, his eyelids open: Theſe rayes of the Sun are compared to eyelids, becauſe, like the eye-lids, they twinkle or move continually, darting themſelves forth into the air, and upon the earth.

בעפעפי שחר *Primus albicantis auroræ ſplendor, quem cælii poetæ radios capillos, pennas auroræ dicant.*

Sunt palpebræ auroræ radii qui ſub auroram emicare ſolent. Mercer

In that *Job* forbids the Star-light, and would take away the hope of Sun-light from that night, obſerve,

First, That, *In ſad times ſmall comforts may paſs for great mercies.*

In the day-time, no man looks after the ſtars; ſtar-light is not valued, while ſun-light is enjoyed; but in the night, a ſtar is a welcom ſight. *He that is full* (ſaith *Solomon*) *deſpiſeth the honey-comb; but to the hungry ſoul, every bitter thing is ſweet.* When a man is hungry and wants, a little is pleaſant to him; as our proverb hath it. *Half a loaf is better then none.* A great Emperor once drank puddle-water with more delight (he profeſſed) then ever he had drunk the moſt delicious wines. Sad times and hardſhip make that pleaſant and very acceptable; which in plenty we ſlight and paſs by. Hence it follows, That *the removing of ſmall comforts in ſad times, are great afflictions.* If Stars (which have but little light) be taken from the night, a great affliction is added to the night. Some can loſe more then another mans all, and yet feel it not, yet think they have loſt nothing. We are not troubled at the loſs of ſmall things, when we enjoy greater; *but when all we have, are ſmall, then any thing we loſe, is great.* As in *Nathan's* Parable, (2 *Sam.*12.) when the poor man, having loſt but one Lamb had loſt all, he complains greatly.

Artaxerxes *penè ſiti pereunte, cum aquam ebibiſſet ſordidam, quæſivit ab eo Eunuchus ecquid non plurimum moleſtiæ hoc potu ſenſiſſet? Reſpondit rex, nunquam ita ſuaviter ſe vel vinum bibiſſe vel aquam puriſſimam.* Pezal. Mel. hiſtor. *l.* 1.

Secondly, *Job* ſaith, *Let it look for light, but have none*; there is much in that: he doth not ſay, *Let this night have no light*; but, *Let it look for light, but have none.* From this we may obſerve,

That, *The want of that, afflicteth us moſt, which we expect moſt.*

If the night (that is, man in the night) did not expect and look for light, it would not be much troubled with the abſence of light. To loſe our expectation, is more then the loſs of the thing expected. It is ſaid of *Siſera*'s mother (*Judg.* 5. 28.) when her Son was upon that expedition againſt the people of God, that *ſhe looked out at a window, and cried through the latteſs, why is his chariot ſo long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariot?* She looked for a victorious ſucceſs, and rich ſpoiles; for *her wiſe Ladies anſwered her, yea, ſhe returned anſwer to her ſelf; have they not ſped? have they not divided the prey? to every man a damoſel or two, to* Siſera *a prey of divers colours?* &c. This cut her to the heart, that ſhe looked for great booty, and reckoned upon a victory, when *Siſera* was faſt nailed through the Temples, never to return.

That man is greatly burdened, from whom others expect much; but he who expects much, is in danger to be more *burdened.* Therefore *David* prayes, *Pſal.* 119. 116. *Let me not be aſhamed of my hope.* As ſhame ariſes from doing a thing againſt known light and common principles, ſo alſo from loſing or ſuffering a thing againſt known hope and common expectation. It is noted as an aggravation of that peoples affliction in the Prophet, *We looked for peace, and behold, no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble*, Jer. 8. 15. For a people to be in expectation of ſome great mercy, doubles the ſorrow of their miſcarriage: Now in theſe times, we being in our night of trouble, and (as it were) looking when day will break, when our peace will return, when truth will prevail and be ſetled, when error and the abettors of it ſhall be overthrown: How would it augment our ſorrows, if we, looking for theſe mercies, ſhould not have them? As it is a greater affliction to be miſerable to be miſerable, when we have been happy; ſo when we have long hoped to be happy. God expreſſes himſelf, as much troubled, when he loſes his expectation from us: It provokes the Spirit of God to anger againſt us, when he looks for the fruits of his care and love in our obedience, and findeth none (*Iſa.* 5.) *God looked that his vineyard ſhould have brought forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. He looked for judgment, and behold oppreſſion; for righteouſneſs, & behold a cry*: This diſappointment provoked the Lord to lay his vineyard waſte. So in the Goſpel, when Chriſt cometh to the fig-tree three years, ſeeking or looking for fruit, and findeth none: What then? *Cut it down*, ſaith Chriſt; he is very angry, thus miſſing his expectation. Now, as it provokes the anger of God to come looking upon man, his creature, for duty, and finds none; ſo it doth likewiſe exceedingly grieve the ſpirit of man, when he looks to God for mercy, and finds none. And how juſt is it, that God ſhould croſs our expectation, when we ſo often croſs his. No marvel if we look for light, and behold darkneſs; for peace, and behold trouble; for ſucceſs, and behold diſappointments: whenas God looks upon us for repentance, and behold preſumption; for faith, and behold unbelief; for patience, and behold complaining; for reformation, and behold backſliding; for fruit, and behold barrenneſs, or but leaves.

Fourthly, He ſaith, *Let it not ſee the dawning of the day*, that is, let it be quite out of hope ever to receive any light; therefore let it not ſee ſo much as a glimpſe of light. It is the ſtrongeſt denial of the whole, to deny the leaſt of the firſt part: As when the Apoſtle would have us abſtain from all evil, he exhorts us to abſtain from the *appearance of evil* (1 Theſ. 5.) So here, when *Job* would put his night quite out of hope to ſee the day, he ſaith, *Let it not ſee* (ſo much as) *the dawning* (that is, the leaſt appearance) *of the day*. And this, as it is the laſt, ſo the heavieſt ſentence upon his night. Hence obſerve,

That, *A hopeleſs condition is the worſt condition of all other.*

Let a night be never ſo dark, never ſo tempeſtuous, yet the hope of a morning is a mercy and a light. A man will bear any heavineſs, when he can ſay as *David*, *Heavineſs may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*. *Solomon* tells us, that the *hope deferred makes the heart ſick*, Prov. 13. 12. How ſick then are they who are hopeleſs, or, who have quite loſt their hope? Everlaſtingneſs is the head of the arrow, the ſting and poiſon of all miſeries, it is indeed the ſting of Hell; that hell is ſuch a night as never ſhall ſee the dawning of the day, hath more torment and pain in it, then all the pains in hell. As the puniſhment of loſs in hell, pinches more then the puniſhment of ſenſe, ſo in the loſs, this pinches moſt that the loſs is irrecoverable: They are deprived of the glory of God, and ſhall never ſee the leaſt ray of it for ever; they are in darkneſs, and they have no hope of light at all for ever.

As that which makes heaven ſo full of joy, is, that heaven is above all fear; ſo that which makes hell ſo full of terror, is, that hell is below all hope; heaven is a day which ſhall never ſee any approaches of night, and hell is a night that ſhall never ſee any dawnings of the day. So, proportionably in any affliction of this life, to be hopeleſs of deliverance, to ſay it ſhall never have end, I am in ſuch a night as ſhall have no day, no, not the dawning of a day, this is the utmoſt evil, the extremity of affliction.

So much concerning the curſe it ſelf, which *Job* powred out with ſo much paſſion, both againſt the day of his birth, and the night of his conception. We ſhall now here ſee the reaſon of this paſſion, in the words which follow.

VERS. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of my mothers womb, nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes.

Why died not I from the womb? why did I not give up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly?

Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breſts, that I ſhould ſuck?

For now ſhould I have lien ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept; then had I been at reſt.

We are now come to the ſecond general part of this Chapter. You may remember, the whole was divided into three Sections. The firſt ſhewed us the curſe which *Job* powred out upon his day. The ſecond, The cauſe or ground of that curſe. And the third, A vehement expoſtulation about the continuance of his life, and the lengthning of his dayes.

We have heard the curſe opened already in the nine former verſes, now followeth the cauſe of the curſe. *Job* gives an account or reaſon of his paſſion: If any ſhould check him with, *Why doſt thou thus breath out complaints againſt the day of thy birth? why doſt thou write ſuch bitter things againſt the night of thy conception?* he anſwered as *David* did his brethren, in another caſe, 1 *Sam.* 17. Why, *what have I done or ſpoken? is there not a cauſe?* Or, as *Jonah*, when God reproves him about his paſſion for the withered gourd; *Doſt thou well to be angry? Jonah* replies, yes, *I do well to be angry, even unto death*, chap. 4. 9. So ſaith *Job* here to any that ſhould rebuke him with, do you well to be thus angry with your day? yes, I do well to be angry with my day, and I ſhew you why; **becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of my mothers womb**, &c.

The reaſon of the argument ſtands thus; There is cauſe I ſhould curſe that day and that night, which not hindring my conception or my birth, brought me forth upon the ſtage of the world, to act a part in all theſe ſorrows; but the day and the night did not hinder my conception or my birth, therefore I have cauſe, I have reaſon enough to break out in ſuch complaints, and curſe them: I do it, becauſe theſe *ſhut not up the doors of my mothers womb*. This is the argument or reaſon by which he defers his paſſion; and this argument will be found to have more paſſion in it, then reaſon, if we examine it to the bottom. For he complains of that as the cauſe, which was not the cauſe of his troubles: what did the night or the day, that he thus chargeth them? they had no efficiency in bringing thoſe evils upon him; circumſtances are not cauſes: Effects are produced in time, but time doth not produce effects; only this we may ſay to help it, he doth not curſe the day, as if he could have ſhut the doors of his mothers womb, but becauſe on that day thoſe doors were not ſhut.

But leaving the reaſon of his ſpeech, we will conſider the ſence of it.

The Hebrew word for word is thus rendred, *Becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of my belly*. And that the Chaldee *Paraphraſt* renders thus by way of explanation, *becauſe it did not ſhut up the doors of my lips*; the mouth (ſaith he) being (as it were) the door or the in-let to the belly or ſtomach, every thing goeth in by that door; and ſo he carries the ſence thus, let that night be curſed, becauſe it did not ſtop my breath, and ſo make an end of me. The *Septuagint* hath it thus, *Becauſe it ſhut not up* [*the doors of my mothers belly*) which anſwers our Tranſlation, *the doors of my mothers womb*. Mr. *Broughton* to the ſame ſence; *Becauſe it ſhut not up the door of the belly that did bear me*, that is, my mothers belly.

Quia non-cluſit portas maxillarum mearum, quæ ſunt oſtia ventris.

πύλας γαστρὸς μητρὸς μου. Sept.

I ſhall in ſilence paſs over that ſecret or myſtery in nature, which may be the ground of this expreſſion. There are two ſecrets in Divinity, which are the g[illegible]nds of it; and of them I ſhall ſpeak.

The firſt is this, When God layes that affliction of barrenneſs upon the woman, he, according to the phraſe of Scripture, is ſaid to *ſhut up the womb*; and when he ſendeth the bleſſing of fruitfulneſs, he is ſaid to *open the womb*. We have both, *Gen.* 20. 18. When *Abimelech* had taken *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s wife, *the Lord faſt cloſed up all the wombs of the houſe of* Abimelech. The meaning of it is this, he made all the women barren; or with-held the bleſſing of conception;

tion; the *Jewiſh* Expoſitors render the meaning of the very words of this Text, that the Lord had ſhut up all the doors of the wombs of the houſe of *Abimelech.* And ſo likewiſe for fruitfulneſs God is ſaid to open the womb, as *Gen.* 29. 31. *And when the Lord ſaw that* Leah *was hated, he opened her womb; but* Rachel *was barren.* Then, to ſhut the doors of the womb, notes the power of God in denying; and to open thoſe doors, the bleſſing of God in giving conception and making fruitful.

Secondly, It may refer to the birth: for, there muſt be an opening of thoſe doors, and that by an Almighty power, for production as well as for conception, and therefore *David* (*Pſal.* 22. 9.) aſcribes it to the Lord; *Lord thou art he who tookeſt me out of my mothers womb.* It was not the Midwife did it; it was not the womens help that ſtood about his mother, *But Lord thou didſt it*: The hand of God only is able to open that door and let man into the world: Unleſs he (as we may ſo ſpeak) turn the key, the poor Infant muſt for ever lye in priſon, and make his mothers womb his grave.

In either or both theſe reſpects *Job* here ſpeaks againſt the night, *becauſe it ſhut not up the door of his mothers womb*, to ſtop his conception, or ſtay him in the birth: For then, either he had not been, or he had not been brought forth as the ſubject of all thoſe calamities.

Hence obſerve, firſt, *That fruitfulneſs or conception is the ſpecial work and bleſſing of God.*

God carries the key of the womb in his own hand. From him we receive *life and breath*, (Acts 17. 25.) *yea in his book are all our members written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them: We are fearfully and wonderfully made: Our ſubſtance is not hid from God, when we are made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth.* As the holy Ghoſt admirably and moſt elegantly deſcribes the conception and formation of man in the womb, *Pſal.* 139. 14, 15, 16.

There are four keyes in nature, all kept in the hand of God.

Firſt, The key of the Rain. The Clouds cannot open themſelves, the Flood gates of Heaven cannot be unlocked, nor thoſe ſluces opened to let down a drop of Rain, until God turn the key, *Deut.* 28. 12. *The Lord ſhall open unto thee his good treaſure, the Heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his ſeaſon.*

Secondly, The key of Nutrition, or of Food, *Pſal.* 145. 16. *Thou openeſt thy hand and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* The ſtrength of the creature is ſhut up in the hand of God, and until he unlock his hand; the creatures cannot ſtrengthen or nouriſh us, though we have our houſes and our hands full of them.

Thirdly, The key of the Grave, *Ezek.* 37. 13. *I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come out of your graves.* We are ſo faſt lockt up in death, that all the power in the world is not able to releaſe us, till God ſpeak the word, and turn the key of the Graves door. That place in *Ezekiel* is meant (I know) of a civil death: But it is as true of natural death: And the argument is ſtronger for it: If when a Nation (as the Nation of the *Jews* then did) lyes in the grave of bondage and captivity, no man can unlock that door without the key of Gods ſpecial providence; much leſs can any hand or power, but his, open the door, and bring us out of the grave of our corporal diſſolution.

There is this fourth key, belonging to the door ſpoken of in the Text, *The door of the womb*: Which was ſhadowed in that Ceremonial Law among the *Jews*, of giving their *firſt-born* unto *God*, as a thankful acknowledgment, that the beginning of all propagation and increaſe was from him.

Further obſerve, *That our birth and production is the ſpecial work of God.*

Thou art he that tookeſt me out of my mothers womb, (ſaith *David.*) And he apprehended the power of God, ſo great in his natural birth, that he from thence takes an argument to ſtrengthen his faith, that God could do any other thing for him, how hard ſoever. He knew he could never be in ſuch ſtraights, but the power of God could deliver him, when he once remembred that it was God who took him out of his mothers womb: For in the words immediately fore-going, he bringeth in his enemics laughing at, yea reproaching him, and ſaying, *He truſted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him*: They jeer him with his God, *Let him deliver him. David* anſwers, What do you think God cannot deliver me? *Lord* (ſaith he) *thou art he that tookeſt me out of my Mothers womb.* Can I ever be in ſuch ſtraights as I was then? Can I be ever in a more helpleſs condition? Can I ever be in more need of an Almighty help, then when I was ſtrugling to get into the world? There is more of the power of God put forth in bringing a poor Infant into the world, then in bringing him out of any trouble or ſtraight he can fall into, in his travels through the world: And hence the great deliverances of a people from danger, and their reformations from error, are called a birth, as King *Hezekiah* ſpeaks in his meſſage to *Iſaiah*, 2 Kings 19. 4. *The children are come to the birth, and there is no ſtrength to bring forth.* As if he had ſaid, Great things are now attempted, but nothing can be perfected: Great troubles are diſcovered, but we cannot be delivered by any humane power or policy: Therefore *lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left.* Every new deliverance and reformation of a Church is a new birth of that Church. *Who hath heard ſuch a thing? who hath ſeen ſuch things? ſhall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or ſhall a nation be born at once? for as ſoon as* Zion *travelled, ſhe brought forth her children.* That is, *Sions* mercies were ſpeedily and ſuddenly obtained. She uſes to have long travail and many throes, but now the mighty power of God opened the door of the womb, a door of hope, and *Sion* was eaſily delivered of a man-child. A glorious mercy, *Iſa.* 66. 8. You ſee how the holy Ghoſt parallels the working of great things for the Church, to the travail of a woman, whoſe Infant ſticks in the birth, if God ſuſpend his help; but if he open the door by a hand of gracious providence, ſhe brings forth, Even *before ſhe travails*, (as the ſame Prophet ſpeaks,) *and before ſhe is in pain ſhe is delivered.* I have adventured to lengthen out this notion ſomewhat further then that hint in the Text doth well bear, only becauſe we being a people now in ſtrong travail, and wanting ſtrength to bring forth, may be directed to conſider whoſe hand holds the key, which opens the womb of Nations as well as perſons, and at the turning of whoſe hand, we ſhall quickly be delivered; and being delivered, we ſhall quickly forget all our pains and pangs, for joy that a man-child, ſuch a maſculine bleſſing, is born into the world. But the Text goes on ſtill in tears. As follows.

Nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes.

The word which we tranſlate **ſorrow**, ſignifies more properly labour, and wearineſs, or the wearineſs that doth ariſe from labour, and ſo from thence it is tranſlated to ſignifie any kind of ſorrow or trouble.

עמל

Becauſe it hid not ſorrow from mine eyes.] By the hiding of ſorrow from his eyes, he noteth only thus much, that he ſhould have been delivered from the ſenſe and experience of ſorrow. He had miſt thoſe evils which he met with, ſince his coming into the world, if thoſe doors being ſhut, had ſhut him out of the world. When ſorrow is hid from our eyes, then all evil is removed; as in that ſpeech, (*Iſa.* 65. 16.) *Becauſe the former troubles are forgotten, becauſe they are hidden from mine eyes*; that is, as if he had ſaid, we fear no trouble, no danger, no evil hangs over our heads; now *the former evils are forgotten, they are hidden from mine eyes*: As we uſe to ſay of great dangers, that they are *imminent dangers*; they hang over our heads, or hang before our eyes; becauſe they lye ſo near, and are in ſuch readineſs to oppreſs and fall upon us.

Now when *Job* ſubjoyneth ſorrow to his birth; as if as ſoon as ever the doors were open for him to ſtep into the world, the firſt object he met with was trouble, and he was ſaluted by ſorrow as ſoon as ever he ſaw the light.

Obſerve, *That man is born to ſorrow:*

He ſees ſorrow the firſt thing he ſees. Sorrow is the firſt acquaintance. The connexion is very cloſe, *Becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of the womb, nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes. Eliphaz* tells us (*chap.* 5. 7.) *That man is born unto trouble, as the ſparks fly upward.* He is born to it; the expreſſion implyes, that trouble and ſorrow take hold of us, and we enter upon, and take hold of trouble, as ſoon as ever we enter upon the world, we are born to them; trouble and ſorrow are a mans inheritance; as an Heir is born to his land or eſtate. Man hath a right to thoſe troubles; they are his birth-right, and all his birth-right by nature; and as ſoon as ever he is born, he takes poſſeſſion of ſorrow, or ſorrow poſſeſſes him. Many a man is born to riches, and a great eſtate, but he ſtayeth a great while for the poſſeſſion of them; man is born to trouble, and he enters upon that as ſoon as ever he enters the world; ſorrow is not his inheritance in reverſion, but in poſſeſſion; *Even as the ſparks fly upward*; that explains it to be ſo, *as the ſons of the Coal*, (ſo the Hebrew) that is, ſparks, as ſoon as ever they are born out of the coal, fly upward, and are preſently aſcending; ſo is man tending unto trouble. *Few and evil have the dayes of the years of my life been*, ſaith *Jacob*, (*Gen.* 47.9.) How few ſoever they have been, they have been evil: if his life had been but one day, that had been an evil day. If his life had not been lengthened to the leaſt number of dayes, yet his evils had multiplied to a number: in few hours we have many ſorrows.

Some make the Infants tears a preſage of theſe ſorrows, as if he wept to think upon what a ſhore of troubles he is landed: Or rather, into what a Sea of ſtorms he is lanching, when he comes into the world; ſuch ſtorms as he ſhall never be fully quit of, till he is harboured in his grave. Wherefore as the Angel ſaid unto the woman, *Luke* 24. 5. *Why ſeek ye the living among the dead?* So I may ſay to you, why ſeek ye peace in a land of trouble, and joy in a land of ſorrow? Theſe are reſerved for us in our Countrey which is above, expect them not here, *for this is not your reſt*.

Secondly, we may note from this expreſſion, *Nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes*,

That the ſight of the eye wounds the heart.

He doth not ſay, and hid trouble from my ſoul, or trouble from my ſpirit, but *hid ſorrow from mine eyes*. It is a proverbial ſpeech among us, *What the eye ſees not, the heart grieves not.* And when the Lord would ſhew how he was moved with the ſufferings, and knew the ſorrows of his people in *Egypt*, he doubles it upon this ſence, *I have ſeen, I have ſeen, or I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people*, *Exod.* 3.7. Your ſorrows are not hid from mine eyes. *Mine eye affects my heart*, ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Lam.* 3. 51. That is, mine eye afflicts mine heart. While *Jeremy* went about the City, and ſaw many woful ſpectacles in the ruine and captivity of his people, that ſight ſmote him to the heart. It is ſaid, that when Chriſt came to *Jeruſalem*, *and beheld the City*, *he wept over it*, Luke 19. 41. And for the ſorrow of repentance, the ſight of the eye hath a great influence upon the heart, *They ſhall look on me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn*, &c. *Zach.* 12. 10. As the eye doth affect, or rather infect the heart with ſin, from ſin-occaſioning objects; a ſin that is in the eye will be preſently at the heart, which cauſed *Job* to ſay, (*Chap.* 31. 1.) *I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a maid?* He meaneth, ſinfully to luſt after her: As if he had ſaid, there is a quick, a ſpeedy paſſage from the eye to the heart, though in the fabrick of the body there ſeems a great diſtance between them: Therefore I have made a covenant with my eyes to avoid occaſions of ſin, leſt mine eyes ſhould pollute my heart with motions unto ſin. And as it is in pleaſure-provoking objects, that which is a pleaſure to the eye, will preſently be a pleaſure to the heart, a refreſhing to our ſpirits: And that pleaſure which ſhall laſt for evermore in Heaven, is from a viſion that ſhall laſt for ever. Joy ſhall for ever be before the eye, and therefore joy ſhall for ever fill the heart. The joy of Heaven conſiſts in viſion, in ſeeing God *as he is*, (1 John 3. 2.) or in ſeeing *face to face*, (1 Cor. 13. 12.) which is the viſion beatifical. So likewiſe there is an afflicting viſion. The eye affects the heart with ſorrow-occaſioning objects; if ſorrow be in the eye, it will not ſtay long from the heart. Hence when *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s Wife, was dead, *Abraham* thus beſpeaks the people among whom he dwelt, *If it be your mind, that I ſhould bury my dead out of my ſight*, &c. (*Gen.* 23. 8.) It did afflict the heart of *Abraham* with ſorrow, to ſee the body of his deceaſed Wife, or the Coffin wherein ſhe lay, whom he had ſo intirely loved, therefore *bury her out of my ſight*. It is very obſervable, that when *Joſeph* would do ſomewhat purpoſely to afflict and touch the heart of his brethren with more remorſe for their former unkindneſs unto him, the hiſtory ſaith (*Gen.* 42. 24.) *That he took from them* Simeon, *and bound him before their eyes*: He heard them in their private conference whiſper one to another, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us.* When *Joſeph* perceived their conſciences began thus to work, he reſolves to give them a *pill at their eyes*, (even a doleful ſpectacle, yet the lively picture of their dealing with him) to make their conſciences work faſter, with godly ſorrow: *He took from them* Simeon, *and bound him before their eyes.* And *Judah*, when he pleadeth afterward, *Chap.* 44. for the carrying back of *Benjamin*, you know what a pathetical Oration he makes; O, ſaith he, do not detain *Benjamin*, for *when I come to thy ſervant my father, and the lad be not with us (ſeeing that his life is bound up in the lads life) it ſhall come to paſs, that when he ſeeth that the lad is not with us, he will dye*, ver. 30, 31. That very ſight will kill my father: and for me to ſee my father dye, will be death to me alſo: For ſo he concludes, *ver.* 34. *How ſhall I go to my father, and the lad be not with me, leſt peradventure I ſee the evil that ſhall come upon my father.* Oh (ſaith he) let me carry him back; my father will dye if he ſee not the lad, and ſo ſhall I, if I *ſee the evil that ſhall come upon my father*: He knew that ſight would be as a ſword to his heart, and as a dagger in his bowels. The Lord threatens his people thus in caſe of diſobedience, *Deut.* 28. 31. *Thine Ox ſhall be ſlain before thine eyes, thine Aſs ſhall be violently taken away from before thy face. Thy ſons and thy daughters ſhall be given to another people*, &c. *So that thou ſhalt be mad for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee*, ver. 34. and ver. 67. He ſhews what convulſions and diviſions of ſpirit, the viſions of the eye would bring upon them. *In the morning thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were even; and at even thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou ſhalt fear, and for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee.* The fear of the heart, and the ſight of the eye, are nearly joyned. The ſight of the eye cauſed the fear of the heart, and both were as concauſes of thoſe diſtracting thoughts, and wiſhes, of haſtning the morning to the evening, and again ſuddenly reducing back the evening to the morning. Unleſs ſorrow be hid from the eyes, it can hardly be kept from the heart. It is an uſual cuſtom, if a man be but let blood, to bid him turn away his head, if he be faint-hearted, for the ſight of his bloud will make his heart faint: And ſo from more ghaſtly ſpectacles, men commonly turn away their faces, *&c.* Which is to hide ſorrow from their eyes. It follows,

Why died I not from the womb? why did not I give up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly? why did the knees prevent me, &c.

Theſe two verſes contain a further aggravation of the former reaſon by three other ſteps. Before he ſpoke againſt his conception and his birth, now, **Why dyed I not from the womb?** As if he had ſaid, though I were conceived, and ſecondly, though I were born, yet why did not I make my cradle, my grave, or my firſt ſwadling clothes my winding ſheet; though I were born, yet why did not I dye ſo ſoon as ever I was born? *Why dyed I not from the womb? why gave I not up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly?* Having received the diſcourteſie of a birth, death would have been a favour: It had been beſt for me, not to have been born, and next beſt to have died quickly, or as ſoon as I was born; that's the meaning in general of the eleventh and twelfth verſes. But I ſhall a little examine and enlighten the particular expreſſions.

Why did I not give up the ghoſt?] The Hebrew is but one word, which coſts us five in Engliſh, *I give up the ghoſt*; the word ſignifieth, that laſt act of thoſe who are in the agony of death: In the Greek and Latine that act is expreſt by one word, *Luke* 23. 46. Where it is ſaid, *that Chriſt gave up the ghoſt*. The word is conceived to note a willing chearful reſignation of our ſelves in death; a dying without much reluctance or reſiſtance, a being active in death rather then paſſive, we call it well a giving up the ghoſt. Some apply it only to the death of the godly, (as *Gen.* 25. 8.) of *Abraham*, &c. whoſe lives are not violently ſnatcht from them, but willingly ſurrendred. When a godly man dyes a violent death, he doth not dye violently: Whereas a wicked

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ἐξέπνευσεν *Expiravit. Leniter mortuus eſt, ſine morbo & dolore diuturniore: quando quis facile moritur ita ut non diu decumbat.*

wicked man dyes violently, when he dyes naturally: and though ſometimes (being weary of his life, or deſpairing of relief) he drives out his ghoſt, yet in a ſtrict ſence he never gives up the ghoſt. It is ſaid to the wicked rich man in the Goſpel, (*Luke* 12. 20.) *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee*; demanded indeed; but O how unwillingly doth the rich man pay his natural debt, who is ſo able to pay all civil debts. Yet it muſt be confeſt, that we find the word often uſed promiſcuouſly, applyed as well to the death of the wicked as of the godly: To *Iſhmael* (*Gen.* 25. 8.) as well as *Abraham*, to *Ananias* and *Saphira*, Acts 5. 10. Yea it is applied to the death of any or all living things, *Gen.* 7. 21. *And all fleſh dyed that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattel, and of beaſts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.*

Then again, If I had not ſo much favour to dye as ſoon as ever I came from the womb, or to dye in the very birth; yet, Why did the knees prevent me? or the breaſts that I ſhould ſuck?

Here are two ſteps aggravating the cauſe of his curſe againſt his day. If I had not been born dead, ſaith *Job*, or dyed naturally as ſoon as I was born, yet why was I not left to periſh? I ſhould have dyed quickly, if they had let me alone, though I were born alive into the world; that is the meaning of thoſe words, *Why did the knees prevent me?* why was there any care taken of me? why did the Midwiſe and the aſſiſtant women take me upon their knees? why did they waſh me, ſwathe me, and bind me up? If they had not been ſo kind, it had been a kindneſs unto me; if they had ſpared their labour, they had done me a favour; If they had omitted their care, how many cares had I eſcaped?

Why did the knees prevent me?] *or* (which is a further ſtep, and the fifth ſtep by which this ſpeech aſcends) *why the breaſts that I ſhould ſuck?* As if he had ſaid, If they would needs be ſo favourable as to take me up upon the knee, to waſh me, to bind me up and cloath me, yet why was the breaſt preſented to me? why was I layed to the breaſt? If they had kept me from ſucking the breaſt, I ſhould have ſuckt but little breath, I had dyed quickly.

So that in theſe words there are five gradations, by which *Job* aggravateth the cauſe of this curſe againſt his day. Firſt, Becauſe he was conceived. Secondly, Becauſe the door was opened for him to be born. Thirdly, Becauſe being born, he did not preſently give up the ghoſt, or dye as ſoon as he came into the world. Fourthly, Becauſe there was ſo much care taken for him, as to take him upon the knee, and bind him up. Fifthly, Becauſe there was a breaſt provided, and paps for him to ſuck: If any of theſe latter acts had been neglected, *Job* had dyed, and ſo eſcaped all theſe enſuing troubles of his life, *Sorrow had been hidden from his eyes.*

And it is obſerved (eſpecially in theſe latter acts of this gradation) that *Job* alludes to the cuſtom of thoſe times, wherein unnatural women left their children upon the cold earth, naked and helpleſs, as ſoon as they were born: or caſting them out, expoſe them to miſery, or the caſual nurſery of nature lent them by beaſts, more merciful then thoſe beaſtly mothers, who would not afford them knees to prevent, nor breaſts to give them ſuck. As in that place, *Ezek.* 16. 4, 5. the woful condition of ſuch an Infant is expreſt, to ſhadow out the ſinfully polluted and wofully helpleſs eſtate of that people, and of all people by nature, till the Lord prevents them by *the knees of free grace*, and *ſuckles them with the breaſts of his conſolation. Thy father was an* Amorite, *and thy mother an* Hittite (of a barbarous people; and what then?) *In the day thou waſt born, thy navel was not cut, neither waſt thou waſhed in water, thou waſt not ſalted at all, nor ſwadled at all, none eye pittied thee to do any of theſe unto thee, but thou waſt caſt out in the open field, to the loathing of thy perſon, in the day that thou waſt born.* Now this is a certain rule, that ſuch parabolical and allegorical Scriptures are grounded upon known cuſtoms and things in uſe: It is certain there were ſome ſo unnatural to their Infants, that they would beſtow no care upon them when they were born, neither waſh, nor cleanſe, nor bind them up, but caſt them out, (as the Prophet ſpeaks) *to the loathing of their perſons.* The Heathen *Romans* had a ſpecial Goddeſs, or Deity, whoſe name imported her care and office, that Children, when they were born, ſhould be taken up from the earth, and ſet upon the knee. And for the preventing of this unnatural cruelty, (very frequent, as it ſeems, amongſt them) the *Thebanes* made an expreſs law, that Infants ſhould not be neglected or caſt out when they were born, though the parents thought they would be a burden to them by reaſon of the charge, or no delight to them by reaſon of their deformity.

Parabolæ non ſumuntur niſi ab his quæ crebro & de more fiunt.

Levana dea pro levandis è terra infantibus, Aug. *de Civ. Dei.* l. 4. c. 11

Thebanorum lex de non exponendis infantibus, *Apud* Ælian. *de Var.* Hiſt. l. 11.

Now ſaith *Job*, I could wiſh, I had ſuch a father, or ſuch a mother, or ſuch friends, who forgetting natural affection, would have caſt me out when I came firſt into the world; *Why did the knees prevent me?* From hence alſo we may obſerve,

> Firſt, *That an Infant, as ſoon as he liveth, hath in him the ſeeds of death.*

So *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf, *Why dyed I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghoſt when I came out of my mothers belly?* Or why was I not ſtifled in the womb? why was ever that door opened to let me into the world? I could have dyed as ſoon as I lived. Not only is man acting ſin, but his nature infected with ſin, the ſubject of, and ſubjected to the power of death: ſo the Apoſtle teacheth us, (*Rom.* 5. 14.) *Death reigned from* Adam *to* Moſes, *even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of* Adam's *tranſgreſſion:* And who were thoſe? Even little Infants; they had life, yet death reigned over them, they were under the dominion of death, and ſubject to that King of terror. Sin is the ſeed of death, and the principle of corruption. God doth Infants no wrong when they dye; their death is of themſelves, for they have the ſeed of death in them: We may affirm in one ſence, that when Infants dye, they have no loſs; and we are ſure (in every ſence) when they dye, they have no wrong: *All death* (except death to ſin) *is the wages of ſin, and therefore can be no injury to the ſinner.*

Secondly, We may obſerve concerning man in his birth, what a helpleſs creature man is. If I (ſaith *Job*) had been left a little, I had been gone quickly, there had been an end of me, I could not have helped my ſelf: if the knees had not prevented me, if the breaſts had not given me ſuck, if I had been deſtitute of theſe ſuccours, then preſently *I ſhould have been free among the dead, I ſhould have been quiet and gone into ſilence.*

> Thirdly, Obſerve, *That every ſtep of life ſtands in need of a ſtep of mercy.*

When the Infant is conceived, there muſt be an act of mercy to quicken it, an act of mercy to nouriſh it in the womb; an act of mercy for the birth, and an act of mercy, being born, to take it upon the knee, an act of mercy to bind it up, an act of mercy to give it ſuck. The beginning of our lives, and the progreſs of our lives, our generation, and our preſervation, call for acts of mercy, or elſe (poor creatures as we are) we quickly periſh and return unto our duſt. We owe our lives to God at firſt, and we owe them every moment; if he did not renew mercy every moment, we could not continue life one moment: As it is with our ſpiritual life, ſo it is with our natural; *Our lives are hid with Chriſt in God,* Col. 3. 3. Of and from our ſelves we cannot ſubſiſt, either in grace or nature. It follows,

> *For now ſhould I have lyen ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept; then had I been at reſt.*

Theſe words are an inlargement of the former reaſon taken from a deſcription of the ſtate and condition of the dead; *For now* (ſaith *Job*) *I ſhould have lyen ſtill.* If you ſhould ask me a reaſon of my former reaſon, Why was I ſo angry with that day, or night, wherein I was conceived and born, wherein I had that (to me unacceptable) mercy to be preſerved and kept alive? This I ſubjoyn for the reaſon of it, If none of thoſe unwelcome favours or natural rights had been done me, then, *I had lyen ſtill, I had been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept, I had been at reſt:* Either I ſhould have been as one that never was, or I ſhould have been at reſt and quiet. The argument lyes thus; Reſt and quiet are deſirable things, but death, in the omiſſion of thoſe ſuccours, would have given me reſt; therefore I deſire thoſe ſuccours had been omitted. This concluſion is in the eleventh and twelfth verſes, which we heard before. The aſſumption is in this thirteenth verſe, which he further confirms in the ſix verſes following, by an argument which we may thus form. I will prove, ſaith he, that in death I ſhould have reſt, and been quiet, and lyen ſtill, for all conditions and ſorts of men are quiet and lye ſtill in death. There (or in that eſtate) where all degrees and ſorts of perſons are at reſt, there ſure I ſhould have found reſt; but in death all ſorts and degrees of perſons have found reſt, therefore I ſhould have found reſt too.

Now that all ſorts of people lye ſtill, and are at reſt in death, he proves by an elegant enumeration of the ſeveral ſorts and conditions of men. He makes an argument by way of induction of all or moſt of the ranks of men. Firſt, He ſhews it in *Kings and Counſellors of the earth*; theſe men that make ſuch a buſſle in the world, when once they are dead, they are quiet enough. And then he ſhews it in *Rich men and Princes, who load themſelves with thick clay*, who toil and moil all their dayes to heap up and amaſs much wealth; when theſe come to the grave, there's an end of all their labours, then they muſt give over all their purſuit of riches. Fourthly, He ſhews it in children, either abortives, born before natures time, or born in full perfection of nature, *ver.* 16. Laſtly, He ſhews it in *oppreſſors and the oppreſſed*; *in priſoners and thoſe that impriſon them*; *in the ſmall and in the great*; *in the ſervants and in their Maſters*: Thus making an enumeration of all theſe, from thence he infers; That if all theſe are quiet, when they are in the grave, then ſurely his condition had been ſo too; *I ſhould have been quiet, and lyen ſtill, then I ſhould have ſlept and been at reſt.*

We muſt here take notice, that *Job* ſpeaking of the ſtate of death, ſpeaks only in reference to an outward condition, and our reſting from outward calamities and troubles; he doth not handle the point at all concerning mans eternal eſtate: For, death is not reſt to all ſorts of men in that ſence: Kings, and Counſellors, and rich men, &c. may reſt from the troubles of this world, and go to a world of everlaſting troubles. Such a total reſt is the ſole priviledge of the Saints. Thus only *bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works follow them*, *Rev.* 14. 13. When the Saints dye, they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them (through free grace) in glorious rewards. When the wicked dye, they reſt from their labours, but their works follow them (through divine Juſtice) in everlaſting puniſhments. And *Job* reſting aſſured of his own eternal reſt, wiſhes only a reſt from thoſe temporal commotions.

Apertè his verbis oſtendit, ſe adeo de futura vita ſecurũ eſſe, ut tantũ ſuerit ſolicitus de quiete à præſentibus calamitatibus.

Further, We may obſerve four words uſed by *Job* to expreſs the ſame thing. Firſt, **I ſhould have lyen ſtill.** **And been quiet**, there is a ſecond. **I ſhould have ſlept**, there is a third: And fourthly, **Then I had been at reſt.**

שכב

I ſhould have lyen ſtill.] The word ſignifies to lye down in any kind, and it ſignifies to ſleep, *Gen.* 19. 4. *Before they lay down*; that is, before they went to bed: It is applyed likewiſe to the ſleep of death, 2 *Sam.* 7. 12. *Iſa.* 43. 17. *They ſhall lye down, they ſhall not riſe*, (they ſhall dye, ſo the next words expound it) *They are extinct, they are quenched as tow.*

שקט

Securus fuit, in pace degit, etiam ſiluit.

And been quiet.] The word ſignifieth alſo to be ſilent; we may put both together, *Then had I lyen ſtill and been ſilent*; and you know, death and the grave are called ſilence; *I had been like thoſe that go down into ſilence* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 115. 17.) that is, like thoſe that go down into *the grave.* And *Hezekiah* in his mourning deſcribes that ſilence, *Iſa.* 38. 18. *The grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee.*

I ſhould have ſlept.] Sleep is the image of death; and death is more then the image of ſleep: Sleep is a ſhort death, and death is a long ſleep. *Many of them that ſleep in the duſt of the earth ſhall awake, ſome to everlaſting life, and ſome to everlaſting contempt*, Dan. 12. 2. *Our friend* Lazarus *ſleepeth*, (ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples, *John* 11. 11.) *but I go that I may awake him out of ſleep.* In the fourteenth verſe, *Jeſus ſaid unto them plainly*, Lazarus *is dead.*

Then had I been at reſt.] We uſually ſay when a man goes to ſleep, he goes to reſt: Yet reſt is more then ſleep, for ſometimes a man ſleeps when he doth not reſt, his very ſleep being troubled, and he troubled in his ſleep: But when reſt is joyned with ſleep, it is perfect ſleep. The word here uſed, ſignifies a very quiet, ſetled and peaceable condition.

נוח

Hence *Noah* had his name, *And he called his name* Noah, *ſaying, this ſon ſhall comfort us, concerning our work and toil of our hands, becauſe of the ground which the Lord hath curſed*, (Gen. 5. 29.) He was reſt and comfort to the old world, by preaching righteouſneſs, even the righteouſneſs which is by faith, which alone gives reſt unto the ſoul, and is able to refreſh us in the midſt of all thoſe toils and labours which that firſt curſe brought upon the world, both new and old. Such reſt and ſweet repoſe had I found (ſaith *Job*) from all my toil in the houſe of death, and bed of the grave.

Having thus, four words concurring in the ſame ſence, we may here not unprofitably take notice of that elegant multiplication of words in the holy Scriptures. There, ſtore is no ſore, and variety is no ſuperfluity, yea, there tautology is no ſuperfluity: It is the uſual rhetorick of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to ſpeak the ſame thing in divers words, yea ſometime in the ſame words: We find ſuch a congeries or heaping up of words, uſed for the moſt part in ſome heat of paſſion, or vehemency of ſpirit: As firſt, when God would expreſs a great deal of anger and wrath againſt a people, he ſpeaks thus, (*Iſa.* 14. 22, 23.) *I will riſe up againſt them, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and cut off from* Babylon *the name and remnant, and ſon and nephew, I will alſo make it a poſſeſſion for the Bittern and pools of water, and I will ſweep it with the beſom of deſtruction.* Here are a multitude of words, and all tending to the ſame purpoſe, ſetting forth the fierceneſs of Gods anger, and the reſolvedneſs of his judgment for the ruining of *Babylon.* The towring confuſed pride of the King of *Babylon*, is preſented to us in ſuch a heap of words, (*Iſa.* 14. 13, 14.) hear the pure language of pride from that Kings heart; *Thou haſt ſaid in thine heart, I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God, I will ſit alſo upon the mount of the Congregation, I will aſcend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the moſt High.* The manifold apoſtacies and backſlidings of *Judah*, are deſcribed in many words by the Prophet *Zephany*, chap. 1. 6. *And them that are turned back from the Lord, and thoſe that have not ſought the Lord, nor enquired for him*: (Chap. 3. 2.) *She obeyed not the voice, ſhe received not correction, ſhe truſted not in the Lord, ſhe drew not near to her God.* When our Lord Chriſt would ſhew the extream ignorance and darkneſs of his Diſciples, in thoſe great Articles of his ſufferings, death and reſurrection, having taken the twelve unto him, and diſcourſed of thoſe points, he concludes, *Luke* 18. 31, 34. *And they underſtood none of theſe things, and this ſaying was hid from them, neither knew they the things that were ſpoken.* As if Chriſt had ſaid, their ignorance in theſe myſteries was ſo great, that they had not the leaſt glimpſe or glimmerings of light about them. So here, *I ſhould have lyen ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept, and been at reſt*, and all to note the uninterrupted quiet and tranquillity of the grave. As if he had ſaid, Had I dyed then, not only had not theſe ſtorms been upon me, nor theſe waves gone over me, but the leaſt breath of wind had never blown upon me. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, *That in regard of all outward troubles, death is the reſt of man.*

Bleſſed are the dead that dye in the Lord, for they reſt from their labours. And they who dye out of the Lord, reſt from all that labour they have had in this world. *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave, whither thou goeſt*, *Eccleſ.* 9. 10. This life is a day of working, and death is a night of reſting. *The Sun ariſeth, man goeth forth to his labour until the evening*, Pſal. 104. 23. When the Sun of our life ariſeth, we go forth to our labour, until the evening of death. This life is a continued motion; death is a continued reſt. This life is but noiſe and tumult; death is ſilence. Our life is a ſtormy paſſage, a tempeſtuous ſea-voyage; death bringeth us to the harbour.

There is a four-fold reſt which we obtain in death. Firſt, A reſt from labour and travel; no working there. Secondly, There is a reſt from trouble and oppreſſion; no wars, no bloody battels there. Thirdly, There is a reſt from paſſion; no ſorrow, no grief ſhall afflict us there. In the grave there is a fourth reſt better then all theſe; a reſt from ſin, a reſt from the drudgery of Satan, a reſt from the winnowings and buffettings of Satan; a reſt from the law of our members, warring againſt the law of our minds. When

Saul went to the Witch of *Endor* for advice with *Samuel*, that *Samuel*, or the Devil in the appearance of *Samuel*, ſpeaks as one diſturb'd being raiſed from the grave; *Why* (ſaith he) *haſt thou diſquieted me to bring me up?* 1 Sam. 28. 15. I was at reſt, why didſt thou call me up to a land of trouble? It is the obſervation of an ancient Father, and the reſolution of an ancient Council, concerning Chriſts weeping over *Lazarus*, *John* 11. That not his death, but his riſing drew thoſe tears. When Chriſt came to the grave where *Lazarus* lay, the Text ſaith, that *Jeſus wept.* Why did Chriſt weep, ſaith *Jerome*, in comforting a mother that had loſt her daughter? It is clear, that Chriſt wept over *Lazarus* that was dead; but he did not weep thy tears: Chriſt did not weep becauſe *Lazarus* was dead; but he wept rather, becauſe *Lazarus* was to be raiſed up again; he wept to think that his friend *Lazarus* ſhould be brought back into ſo troubleſome a world. And it was the reſolution of the third *Toletane* Council, That Chriſt did not weep over *Lazarus* becauſe he was dead, but becauſe he was to be raiſed up again to feel the burdens and afflictions of this life: that was their apprehenſion of it. And it is a truth, that whoſoever lives the common life of nature, lives in trouble: But ſuch is not the life of him who is raiſed from the dead: The lives of ſuch, though here upon the earth, muſt needs lye out of the common courſe: And what their condition is, is ſuch a ſecret as we cannot underſtand but by injoying it.

Planè Lazarum *mortuum flevit Chriſtus, ſed non tuas lachrimas ſudit. Dolavit* Lazarum *non dormientem ſed potius reſurgentem.* Hieron. *Ep. ad* Tryaſiã *ſuper mortẽ filiæ. Chriſtus non ploravit* Lazarum *mortuum, ſed ad hujus vitæ ærumnas ploravit reſuſcitandum, Concil.* Tolet. tert.

Again, from that particular expreſſion, in that he ſaith, *I ſhould have ſlept*, we may obſerve,

That as death is the reſt of the whole man, ſo death is the ſleep of the body.

So you find it often in the Scripture; *Our friend* Lazarus *ſleepeth*, ſaith Chriſt, when he was dead, *John* 11. And the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 13. *I would not have you ignorant concerning thoſe which ſleep*; that is, concerning thoſe who are dead. *Lighten mine eyes* (ſaith *David*) *leſt I ſleep the ſleep of death*; or as the Hebrew, *Leſt I ſleep death*, Pſal. 13. 3. And hence the grave is called a bed, *Iſa.* 57. 2. *The righteous are taken away*, &c. *they ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds*. When a righteous man dyes, or is taken away, he is but gone to bed. Therefore we call thoſe places where the dead are laid up and buried, *Dormitories*, or *ſleeping places*. Both the Greek and Latine words meet in the ſame ſignification.

κοιμητήριον *Dormitoriũ.*

Some of the Ancients were of opinion, that this ſleep took hold of, and ſeiz'd upon, all man, namely, upon his ſoul as well as upon his body; aſſerting, that the ſoul is in a ſleep, or ſlumber; that is, that the ſoul, from the time of its diſunion from the body until the reſurrection, lyes ſtill without any motion or operation. I grant that many operations of the ſoul do ceaſe when it parteth from the body. There are ſome acts of the ſoul which are organical; and there are other acts that are inorganical, or immaterial: The organical acts, that is, whatſoever the ſoul acts by the members of the body, thoſe acts, I ſay, muſt needs ceaſe; but the ſoul can act of it ſelf without the aſſiſtance of the body; as we may collect by many experiments while our bodies and ſouls are joyned together. How often do we find our ſouls at work, when our bodies lye ſtill and do nothing; when ſleep binds up all our ſenſes, and ſhuts up the windows of the body ſo cloſe, that we can neither hear nor ſee: yet then the ſoul frames to it ſelf, and beholds a thouſand various ſhapes, and hears all ſorts of ſounds and voices; then the ſoul ſees, and the ſoul hears, the ſoul deviſeth, and the ſoul diſcourſeth, the ſoul grieves, and the ſoul rejoyceth, the ſoul hopes, and the ſoul fears, the ſoul electeth, and the ſoul refuſeth: All this the ſoul doth in dreams and viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falls upon man. So alſo in extaſies and raviſhments, the body is, as it were, laid by, as uſeleſs and uninſtrumental to the ſoul. *I knew a man in Chriſt about fourteen years ago*, (ſo the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith) *whether in the body, I cannot tell, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth*, 2 Cor. 12. 2. As if he had ſaid, I was loſt as to my body, I could not tell what I was, I did not feel my ſelf; yet he had mighty operations in his ſoul, his ſpirit wrought ſtrangely, and then took in ſuch revelations of God and from God, as his bodily organs could never faſhion into words, or repreſent by ſpeech: He heard *unſpeakable words, which is not *lawful (or poſſible) for man to utter. The ſoul hath an ear to hear ſuch words as the body cannot find a tongue to expreſs. So the Apoſtle *John* in his divine raviſhments, *I was in the Spirit upon the Lords day.* As for his body, that was, as to that buſineſs, laid by and ſuſpended, as uſeleſs in that day; and his ſpirit called up to that angelical work, the receiving of viſions and revelations from on high. And among other things which *John* ſaw, *He ſaw under the Altar the ſouls of them that had been ſlain, for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held:* Theſe ſouls were not aſleep, though their bodies were, for *they cryed with a loud voice, ſaying, How long, O Lord holy and true, doſt thou not judge and avenge our blood*, &c. *Rev.* 6. 9, 10. From all theſe Texts and experiences we may conclude, that the ſoul wakes while the body ſleeps that ſleep of death. And the death of the body is called a ſleep,

* *Quæ fando explicari a quoquã homine non poſſunt.* Beza.

* *Quæ nulla vine Sanctorum quidem poſſit explicari, nempe quia divinum eſt numen. Sic explicat* Clemens Alex. *Strom.* 5. Beza.

Firſt, Becauſe as ſleep, ſo death brings the body to reſt, as was obſerved in the former point.

Secondly, Natural ſleep is not perpetual, we ſleep and wake again; ſo though the body lye in the grave, yet death is but a ſleep, the man ſhall awake and riſe again.

Thirdly, As a body aſleep can eaſily be awaked and called up by the power of man; ſo the body, being dead, can with infinitely more eaſe be raiſed by the power of God: It is but a call from Heaven, and we awaken out of the duſt; God can beyond all compariſon more eaſily awaken us from that dead ſleep of death, then we can awaken one another from the lighteſt ſlumber.

There are two Queſtions which I ſhall propound and endeavour to reſolve upon the whole matter of this context.

Firſt, We find *Job* complaining, becauſe things were not otherwiſe ordered about him; he is troubled, becauſe he was born, or becauſe he was not caſt away in the birth; for then it had been better with him, he had been aſleep and quiet; he was troubled things were with him as they were. Hence it may be queſtioned, *Whether it be lawful for us to wiſh, or to deſire, that had not come to paſs, which wee ſee come to paſs?* And are we not bound to reſt ſatisfied with the preſent and fore-paſt diſpenſations of God, and ſo be content with the things that are, or with things as they are?

For this, I ſay in general, ſuch wiſhes or deſires are not ſinful. It is not abſolutely ſinful, to wiſh that not to be, which is: Nay, ſome things which are, ought to be wiſhed they had not been; and it is a ſin not to wiſh, they had not been. As thoſe things that are diſpleaſing to God, provocations to the eyes of his glory, things that are diſhonourable to God, we ought to wiſh that ſuch things had never been. God himſelf wiſheth in that manner, *Pſal.* 81. 13. *O that my people had hearkened unto me, and* Iſrael *had walked in my wayes!* They did not walk in his wayes; he wiſheth they had; he deſireth they had been better, more holy and more obedient then they were. To wiſh that a thing had not been, out of a tenderneſs that God ſhould be offended by ſin, is not only lawful, but very commendable. But to wiſh things otherwiſe then they are, as murmuring againſt, and miſliking Gods adminiſtration, or out of a tenderneſs, becauſe we ſuffer, is not only ſinful, but abominable: When our wills riſe up againſt the will of God, when we cannot be contented to be what God will have us to be, and to ſuffer what God would have us ſuffer; when we, who ſhould learn to be content in every eſtate, are angry with our eſtates, and on that ground wiſh, O that this had never been, O that I had never ſeen this day, becauſe it hath ſo much trouble in it; this wiſh hath I know not how much evil in it. So likewiſe when man ſhall (as it were) take upon him to direct the Almighty and only wiſe God in governing the world, ſecretly ſurmizing, or openly complaining, that things might be diſpenced and manag'd with more wiſdom, juſtice and moderation; ſuch boldneſs is plain blaſphemy. Some are ready to ſay in their hearts, about the Lord Chriſts governing the world, as *Abſalom* did concerning his Father *David*'s government of *Iſrael*: Things are carried, *as if there were none deputed to hear* or redreſs the wrongs of men. *O that I were made Judge of the world, that every man which hath any ſuit or cauſe might come to me, and I would do him juſtice:* Things ſhould not go thus if I had the ordering of them; ſuch boldneſs is higheſt blaſphemy. And yet with caution of due reverence to the Name of God, he gives us leave to debate the

2 Sam. 15. 3, 4.

the matter with him, both concerning the ſtate of things in publick, and our own perſonal eſtates.

Firſt thus, If we, while we are debating, adore his ſacred Juſtice and unſearchable Wiſdom, in that which we neither ſee, nor are able to underſtand. Thus while the Prophet *Jeremy* took liberty to plead with God about the miniſtrations of the world, he humbly premiſes, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* We may aſk God the queſtion, and plead with him about his judgments, but we muſt not have the leaſt jealouſie or ſuſpition of his righteouſneſs, or of his judgments.

Illud ſemper retinere debemus, ἄμεμπτον ϗ ἄμωμον, eſſe Deum.

Secondly, We may ſit down and bewail the ſtate of things, or our private eſtates; In that ſence we may wiſh things not to be that are, ſo as to bewail that ſuch things are; and this is it which *Job* eſpecially doth in this Chapter, he ſits down bewailing his condition: And ſo may we while we keep within our bounds, and duly regulate our lamentings. The bounds and rules may be ſuch as theſe. Firſt, Deal not too much with the creature, either in complaining of the creature, or in complaining to the creature. Let ſecond cauſes paſs, or look upon them but in the ſecond place: pour your complaints into the boſom of God. Secondly, Conſider from whence your bewailings move; take heed they ſpring not from delicacy of ſpirit, or an unwillingneſs to lye under the croſs, becauſe it ſpoils your *fair ſhew in the fleſh*: While we bewail our own croſs, or publick croſſes, we ſhould be working our hearts to a willing and chearful ſufferance of the croſs. Though a man doth not love that which he bears, yet let him love to bear: It is an high ſtrain of ſpiritualneſs in bearing, when a Chriſtian can ſay, I love not that which I ſuffer, yet I love to ſuffer: I love not that which I bear, yet I love to bear. To bear, is the patience of neceſſity; to love to bear, is the patience of vertue: To love to bear, hath in it the higheſt affection, and the loweſt ſubjection unto Chriſt. The Apoſtles ſpirit was raiſed to this heroick pitch, and ſomewhat above it, when he ſaid, *I rejoyce in my ſufferings*, Col. 1. 24. (Joy is a degree beyond love) when he ſaid, *I take pleaſure in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake*, 2 Cor. 12. 10. (Pleaſure is a degree beyond joy.) But eſpecially when he ſaid, *I glory in tribulations*, Rom. 5. 3.) *And God forbid that I ſhould glory* (in any thing elſe) *ſave in the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, *Gal.* 6. 14. To glory in a thing is more then to take pleaſure in it. Again, take heed your complaints and bewailings do not ariſe out of diſtruſt and unbelief; ſuch complainings are provocations. It was called *the provocation*, when the people of *Iſrael* made ſuch diſtruſting complaints, *Pſal.* 95. 8. *Harden not your hearts as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderneſs.* And that the provocation lay in their unbelief, the Apoſtle is expreſs, *Heb.* 3. where quoting this text of the *Pſalm*, he concludes his whole diſcourſe thus, *ver.* 19. *So we ſee they could not enter in becauſe of unbelief.* If we mix faith with our tears, and while we bemoan our condition, yet believe, that God is good, and good to us; that God is all-ſufficient, and all-ſufficient to deliver us; we may wiſh that the things that are, were not; and that God, who changes not, would make a change in our eſtate.

Gal. 6.12.

Tolerare eſt patientia neceſſitatis, amare tolerare eſt patientia virtutis.

For the cloſe of this point, I ſhall lay down theſe three Concluſions.

Firſt, A man may deſire that, which God wills not, and not ſin in that deſire: As the deliverance of a people whom God will deſtroy.

Secondly, A man may ſin in deſiring that, which God wills: When it is the will of God that the father ſhall dye, the child ſins in deſiring it.

Thirdly, A man may, without ſin, deſire that not to be, which God wills; or which is the ſame, that not to be, which is: ſuch deſires being qualified according to the cautions before given.

There is a ſecond queſtion ariſing upon a part of this complaint: For *Job* complains not only of his troubles, but of his life: And ſeems to have been angry with his very being; while he wiſhes he had never been conceived, or that his Mother had been denyed the bleſſing of conception. The queſtion then is, *Whether an evil or a troubleſome being be worſe then no being? Or whether it be better not to be, then to be miſerable?*

I anſwer, There is a twofold miſerable being, one Temporal, the other Eternal. An eternal miſerable being is eternally worſe then a not being. But a temporal miſerable being, at the worſt, is better then a not being: And the reaſon is, becauſe our being is far more excellent then the outward comforts of our being, theſe being only accidental to our being; and therefore it neceſſarily follows, that it is better to be without outward comforts, then to be without a being. Again, life is better then all outward things, (Satan ſpake truly in the former Chapter, *All that a man hath will he give for his life.*) That which a man parts with rather then his life, is below his life. If then life be better then riches, or health, or pleaſures, then much more is our being better then all theſe. As a man may hold his life when all his eſtate and comforts are gone, ſo he doth hold his being when his life is gone: Life is brittle ware at the beſt, but mans being is of an *everlaſting make*. I know there are ſome who diſpute and conclude, that a being, even an eternally miſerable being, is better then no being: And I grant it is ſo in a metaphyſical, or a philoſophical notion; but in a theological notion it is not. A Philoſopher (keeping within the ſphere of Nature) can ſee no miſery ſo miſerable, or evil ſo bad, as not to be. But a Divine can, he ſees two things worſe. Firſt, An everlaſting ſtain and guilt of ſin lying upon the ſoul. Secondly, The everlaſting wrath and diſpleaſure of God poured out upon the whole man. Hence Chriſt ſaith of *Judas*, who betrayed him, *Mat.* 26. 24. *It had been good for that man, if he had not been born*; becauſe that accurſed act, joyned with his impenitence and unbelief, ſubjected him to everlaſting miſery, to wrath for evermore; *It had been good he had never been born*, rather then to fall into ſuch a ſin, and from that to fall into Hell. Not to be born, is in this place, as much as not to be. And it had been good for him not to have been born, is as much as to ſay, it had been better for him not to have been born. It had been better for him not to have been, then to have committed ſuch a ſin, to lye under ſuch wrath, and to looſe ſuch happineſs for ever. Though a ſtate of damnation (conſidered abſtractedly) be better then no ſtate all, that is, then a not being; yet, in the concrete, it is not better to be damned then not to be: In it ſelf, eternal miſery is better then a non-entity; but a man eternally miſerable is worſe then a non-ens. And without doubt it will be the eternal deſire of the damned (and that deſire is both a part and an increaſe of their miſery) that they never had been, or now might ceaſe to be, rather then continue to be miſerable.

Si natus non fuiſſet ille homo, i.e. *ſi nunquam proceſſiſſet à non eſſe ad eſſe. Melius quippe fuiſſet nunquam fuiſſe quam tanta flagitia perpetrare, gratiâ quoque & gloria in æternum privari: ſed & appetibilius eſt homini abſolutè non eſſe, quam eſſe damnatum, propter æternam pœnatiſſimamq; miſeriam,* Dioniſ. Carthuſ. *in* Mat. 26. *v.* 24.

Now to ſhut up and reſolve the queſtion, as to the ground of it, *Job's* complaint in this Text. I ſay, *Job* was only in the preſent feeling of temporal troubles, and he was beyond the fear of eternal: Therefore number this among his failings, that he wiſht he had never been conceived, becauſe he was thus afflicted.

VERS. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

With kings and Counſellors of the earth, which build deſolate places for themſelves.

Or with Princes that had gold, who filled their houſes with ſilver.

Or as an hidden untimely birth, I had not been, as Infants which never ſaw light.

There the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary be at reſt.

There the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the oppreſſor, &c.

From the tenth verſe of this Chapter to the end of the nineteenth, we have ſhewed you, that *Job* layeth down the cauſe of his former bitterneſs and complainings againſt his day. At the tenth verſe he is angry, becauſe it hindred not his conception and his birth: And at the thirteenth he giveth a further cauſe of that cauſe; *For then* (ſaith he) *I ſhould have been at reſt.* Now being about to prove, that in death he ſhould have found reſt, he doth it by an induction of particulars. As if he had thus ſaid: Where all ſorts of perſons, even they who have been hardeſt wrought, and moſt troubled in the world, find reſt; there ſurely I ſhould have found reſt alſo: But in death, perſons that have been hardeſt wrought, and moſt troubled in the world, find reſt; therefore there I ſhould have found reſt too. Now for the proving of this aſſumption, that in death all ſorts of perſons find reſt, even thoſe who have been moſt travail'd, tired, and worn out in the world: To prove this (I ſay) he gives inſtance in divers, almoſt all ranks, degrees and conditions of men.

Firſt, In thoſe who are great, rich and wiſe, *in Kings and Counſellours of the earth, which build deſolate places for themſelves. And in Princes who had gold, who filled their houſes with treaſure*, &c.

With Kings and Counſellors of the earth.

מלר
Regnavit Conſilio & Legibus.

With Kings.] The word here uſed, properly noteth ſuch as rule by Law, ſuch as are oppoſed to Tyrants, who rule according to the dictates of their own will. With ſuch Kings Counſellours are uſually joyned; *With Kings and Counſellours of the earth.* Great Princes have their Councils; and it is a happy conjunction when good Kings and good Counſellours meet together. Yea many times bad men are good Kings, when they are attended with good Counſellours: Whereas evil Counſellours often make a good man a bad King, and by their poiſonous whiſpers and inſtillations at the ear, corrupt the hearts, and taint the ſpirits of the beſt Princes. *In the multitude of Counſellours* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 15.21.) *there is ſafety.* The ſafety of Kings, and the ſafety of Kingdoms, doth conſiſt in *following this multitude.* Where there are good Counſellours, and a multitude of them, we may expect good, and much good, a multitude of bleſſings upon a Nation.

Now when *Job* had named theſe eminent perſons, *Kings and Counſellours*, he addeth ſomewhat further by way of their deſcription, he giveth as it were a character of them from their ſtudies and imployments, *With Kings and Counſellours of the earth, which build deſolate places for themſelves.*

חרבות
Proprie deſtructiones.

It may ſeem very doubtful what is here meant by theſe *deſolate places, and the building of them.* The word in the Hebrew is, *deſolations*, or *deſtructions*; It comes from *Charab*, which ſignifies to *dry up*, becauſe dry places are deſolate places, as a deſolate wilderneſs for the drineſs of it, being unfit to ſuſtain man or beaſt. Hence the name of the Mount *Horeb*, Exod. 3.1. called ſo from drineſs, becauſe there was no water, *Deut.* 8.15. The ſame word alſo ſignifies *a ſword*; becauſe the ſword (as we ſee by woful experience) makes places deſolate. But what *Job* ſhould mean by this, *That Kings and Counſellours of the earth, build ſolitary places for themſelves*, is queſtionable.

Firſt, Some take it for an expreſſion of vaſt and mighty buildings, Pallaces and houſes of ſuch largeneſs, and content, that when great Princes and Kings have their full retinue and families in them, they can ſcarce be ſeen: But I ſee no reaſon at all for that ſenſe, and therefore I paſs it; a little touch will make that opinion deſolate.

Others by theſe *deſolate places*, conceive that *Job* meaneth Forreſts and Parks, places of pleaſure, which Kings and great men uſe to build and make up for delight and recreation.

Or thirdly, That by *deſolate places*, are meant houſes built in deſolate or ſolitary places, in Woods and Forreſts. Princes and great men will have their houſes far remote from Towns and places of reſort, that they may be free from ſuitors, and retire when they pleaſe from the throng of the multitude. It is ſaid concerning *Solomon*, 1 King. 7.2. that after he had built the Temple, and his own houſe, for his Kingly reſidence, he built a houſe in the *Forreſt of Lebanon*; But this may be called a building in, rather then a building of, *deſolate places.*

Innuit loca vaſta & deſtructa deſolataq; quæ ipſi extruebant ad nomen ſibi cõparandum. Druſ.

Fourthly, Rather, I conceive that Kings and Counſellours of the earth may be ſaid to build deſolate places, when finding places deſolate and ruined, they, with vaſt expences raiſe up and build ſtately Fabricks upon them, to get themſelves a name. As want and poverty, war and troubles turn a Pallace into a deſolate place; ſo riches and plenty, power and peace meeting together in Kings and great men, turn deſolate places into Pallaces. Kings and Counſellours are of ſuch wealth and power, that they can alter the moſt deſolate and ruinous places, into delicate edifices and ſtately dwellings.

Or laſtly, Which doth beſt ſuit with the ſubject of *Jobs* diſcourſe or curſe in this Chapter. He ſpeaking ſo much of death, by the *deſolate places*, we may underſtand, *Tombs and Sepulchers*, places of burial, which Kings and Counſellours build to, or for, themſelves: And ſo taken, the ſence may be given thus, as if *Job* had ſaid, if I had died, I ſhould have lien in the grave with as much eaſe and quiet, as thoſe great Princes and Kings of the earth, who build themſelves ſtately monuments to lie in; It would have been as well with me as with any of them, though interr'd under ſtately tombs. We know it was an ordinary thing for Kings and great men (eſpecially in ancient times) to prepare for themſelves coſtly monuments, while they lived, as houſes for their bodies being dead: Which grew to ſuch exceſſive charge among the *Romanes*, that they were forced to make a Law to reſtrain it. The *Egyptians* beſtowed more care and coſt in building their tombs then their houſes. Even *Abraham* (Gen. 23.16.) bought him a burying place before he built himſelf a houſe; though while he lived, he dwelt in a moveable tent, yet he would be as ſure as he could of a certain grave. And good *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* had made himſelf a ſepulcher in a rock, *Mat.* 27.60. And it is ſaid of *Abſolom*, 2 Sam. 18.18. *That in his life time he had taken and reared up a pillar*, (that is, he had artificially raiſed a great pile of goodly ſtones) *in the Kings dale, For he ſaid, I have no ſon to keep my name in remembrance; And he called the pillar after his own name.* Now as this pillar was to keep his name, ſo he intended it likewiſe to keep his body when he ſhould die; For it being related in the verſe before, how as ſoon as he was ſlain, they made no more ado with him, but *caſt him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of ſtones upon him.* The holy Ghoſt, to ſhew us the vanity of man in preparing for a dead body, while he neglects an immortal ſoul, and how God diſappoints the vain conceits of men in ſuppoſing to perpetuate their own name and greatneſs; The holy Ghoſt (I ſay) to ſhew this, preſently ſubjoyns in the ſacred ſtory, *Now* Abſolom *in his life time*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Do ye obſerve how this ambitious Prince was buried, even tumbled into a pit with a rude heap of ſtones caſt upon him. This man had prepared himſelf another kind of monument, even a ſumptuous pillar, *&c.* So that under, or by, that pillar, he had archt a curious vault for himſelf to be buried in, *called Abſaloms place*, namely, his burying place.

Noſtræ quidẽ legis interpretes, quo capite jubent ſumptus & luxus removere á Deorum manium Jure, Intelligunt imprimis ſepulchrorum munificentiam eſſe miruendam. Cicero. *Major apud* Egyptios *ſepulchrorũ quã domorum cura.*

Inane monumentũ quod vocatur κηνοτάφιον Jun. *in loc.*

And the word which we have here *for deſolate places*, is in Scripture clearly applied to the grave, or a place of burial. We have it in *Ezek.* 26.20. where the Prophet foreſhewing the deſtruction of *Tyre*, ſpeaks from the Lord, thus; *When I ſhall bring thee down with them that deſcend into the pit, and ſhall ſet thee in the low parts of the earth, in places deſolate of old.* There are three words in that verſe, and they are all *Synonima's*, words of the ſame ſignification; Firſt, *The pit.* Secondly, *The low parts of the earth.* Thirdly, *The deſolate places*; and all theſe are but ſeveral expreſſions for the grave, or for a place to bury in: It is no more but this, *When I ſhall bring thee down, even with thoſe that lie buried in the grave.* So that the word which we tranſlate *deſolate places*, being alſo in other places uſed for the grave or a place of burial, we may very well expound it ſo here, that *deſolate places* are the graves or ſepulchers of *Kings, and Princes, and Counſellours of the earth*; which we may do eſpecially, becauſe *Job* treats in this place about death, and the ſtate of the dead.

Now *Tombs and Monuments* may be called *deſolate places* in two reſpects.

Firſt, Becauſe when the body is layed in there, all company and all friends leave it; you ſhall have a mighty train following their friend to the grave, but there they leave him. *Kings and Counſellours* have ſtately Funerals, but when their ſubjects or friends, favourites or flatterers, have brought them to the tomb and opened the door of the grave, they go no further, they will not go in with them, and dwell with their bodies in the duſt of death, as much as they honour'd or ador'd them when they lived: ſo that, they are in *deſolate places.*

Secondly, Graves may be called *deſolate places*, becauſe Tombs and Sepulchres were in deſolate places, they were made in ſome high Mountain or caved Valley, in ſome place remote from the company and habitations of the living; for in former times they did not bury in Cities or in Towns, but in places where few came, till they were carried

Eutrop. *lib.* 8. *In Urbe ne ſepelito neve urito.*

ried, and therefore properly called *deſolate places.* It is obſerved, that among the *Romans*, the firſt Emperour that was buried in *Rome* was *Trajan.* And the law of the the *twelve Tables* did prohibit both the burial and the burning of the dead within the City. So then it is clear, that anciently Tombs and Monuments were erected in deſolate places, and that great coſt was beſtowed in building and beautifying of them; both which favour and illuſtrate the expoſition given. It follows in the Text;

Or with Princes that had gold, who fill their houſes with treaſure.

שׂר

The word *Sar*, a Prince, in the Hebrew, as in moſt other languages, ſignifies *the chief, the head, the firſt.* Some Criticks conceive that our *Engliſh* word [*Sir*] comes from it; it is very near in ſound, and ſo is the *French* word [*Mounſier*] to this Original for a Prince or Chief.

Job deſcribeth Princes thus, **they are ſuch as had gold.** noting both what the ſtudy and indeavours of Princes are, namely, to lay up gold; and likewiſe what is requiſite for them. Gold is of great uſe in a high eſtate; Treaſures are neceſſary for Princes. *Princes that had gold.* Therefore *Solomon* that wiſe Prince ſaith of himſelf, *Eccleſ.* 2. 8. And he putteth it among his Princely works, *I gathered me alſo ſilver and gold, and the peculiar treaſure of Kings.* When the *Wiſe-men* came to *Chriſt*, the firſt thing they offered him was *gold*, and they did *wiſely*, for he was a *Prince:* gold being the chief, and as it were the prince of Mettals, is a very proper offering for Princes. And howſoever wiſdom and goodneſs, juſtice and clemency are far more neceſſary requiſites in Princes then gold, yet there is ſuch a neceſſary conjunction of theſe two, that we find him in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 3. 7.) refuſing the government becauſe he was poor. *Be thou our Ruler* (ſay they v. 6.) *and let this ruine be under thine hand*, that is, be thou our Prince, and take charge of us; Not I ſaith he, *I will not be an healer, for in mine houſe is neither bread nor cloathing, make me not a Ruler of the people*; As if he had ſaid, I am but a poor man, a man of a weak eſtate, Princes muſt have treaſure and great eſtates to bear up the dignity of their places. As covetouſneſs, ſo poverty is very unbecoming in a Prince. The *Roman* ſtory tells us, that when two great Councels ſtood in competition for a great employment in the affairs of that Common-wealth, One of the Senators being askt upon which of the two he would beſtow his vote, anſwered, upon neither: And gives this reaſon, *One hath nothing, and the other can never have enough*; One was ſo poor that he had nothing to ſupport him, and the other was ſo covetous that nothing would ſatisfie him. Therefore, as before *Job* joyned Counſellors with Kings, ſo here he joyneth gold with Princes; *The next expedient for Princes to counſel and wiſdom, are gold and treaſures.* We find indeed, that God gives it in charge to the Kings of *Iſrael*, concerning their gathering of treaſures, that they ſhould not be exceſſive, (*Deut.* 17. 17.) *Neither ſhall he greatly multiply to himſelf ſilver and gold.* He doth not ſay, your Prince or your King ſhall not multiply ſilver or gold, but *he ſhall not greatly multiply ſilver or gold*, that is, he ſhall not ſet his heart upon them, or think he never hath enough, he ſhall not greatly do it, but let him be careful to do it proportionably to his occaſions either of peace or war.

Valerius Maximus. *l.* 6. *c.* 4.

כסף *Argentum quod ab omnibus appetitur.*

Further, It is added, **Who fill their houſes with treaſure.** The word which we here tranſlate *treaſure*, is ordinarily tranſlated *ſilver.* The root from which it ſprings, ſignifieth *to deſire*, and the reaſon is, becauſe treaſure, ſilver or gold, are ſuch deſireable things, or things upon which the deſires of moſt men are ſet: therefore the *Hebrews* give ſilver a name proper to its own nature, or rather to the nature of men, whoſe deſires are enflamed after it. With this deſireable thing, *Princes fill their houſes.*

What are theſe houſes?

A houſe is a place wherein man liveth, or inhabiteth while he liveth: this is the ordinary acception of the word; and ſo it may be taken here, for the ordinary dwelling houſes or Pallaces of Princes; and then it is an heightning of the ſenſe, *They had gold*, yea, they had ſo much, as they *filled their houſes with it.*

Then again, (That we may keep in this clauſe to the expoſition given in the laſt, of the *deſolate places*,) we may underſtand by the houſes that theſe Princes filled with treaſure, the *graves*, the *Tombs* wherein they were buried; And it is the language of Scripture, to call the grave a houſe, mans houſe. Two Texts I will give you for it, one out of this book, *Job* 30. 23. where *Job* ſpeaking of the grave, calleth it *the houſe appointed for all living*; And *Eccleſ.* 12. 5. where *Solomon* calls it our *long home. Man dieth, and goeth to his long home*; the word in the Original is, he goeth to the houſe of his age, or to the houſe of age. God is called the *rock of ages*, becauſe he is an *everlaſting ſtrength*, Iſa. 26. 4. The grave is called an houſe of age, becauſe it is a very laſting houſe, an abiding houſe, a houſe where man muſt abide till God ſound him up by the voice of a *Trumpet* to the reſurrection. So then the grave is likewiſe called an houſe, the *houſe of all living*, becauſe thither every one that is living is travailing, man travails to the grave as to his houſe; And *a long home*, in oppoſition to our *ſhort home*, our uncertain abode in thoſe houſes wherein we dwell upon the earth.

בית עלם׳ *Ad domum ſeculi.*

Princes (ſaith *Job*) *that had gold*; and this is one uſe they make of it, *they fill their houſes*, that is, their graves or their tombs with this treaſure. In thoſe times (it ſeems) they did not only beſtow great coſt upon their Tombs and places of burial, but they put great ſtore of treaſure into the Tombs with them. According to this interpretation, the meaning of *Job* may be thus repreſented, *If I had died before*, and had been buried poorly and obſcurely, *yet I ſhould have done as well as Kings and Counſellours, who with vaſt expence of treaſure build ſtately Tombs for themſelves, yea as well as Princes that put their treaſure into their Tombs with them.*

Joſeph. *lib.* 13. *Antiq. c.* 15. *& lib.* 16. *cap.* 11.

That it was a cuſtom to put in much treaſure into Tombs, is obſerved by *Joſephus* in his 13th book of Antiquities and 15th chapter, ſhewing how *Hircanus* opened *Davids* Sepulcher, and took out three thouſand Talents. And in his 16th book, chap. 11. he notes, that afterward *Herod* opened the Sepulcher of *David*, and thought to have found a great deal of treaſure there, but found only ſome precious garments, *&c.* And the ſtory is famous out of *Herodotus* concerning *Semiramis*, That ſhe having built a ſtately Tomb, makes this inſcription upon it, *Whatſoever King ſhall ſucceed here and wants money, let him open this Tomb, and he ſhall have enough to ſerve his turn*; Which *Darius* in after-ages being in ſtraights for want of treaſure attempting to do, in ſtead of money found only this reproof written and laid up there, *Unleſs thou hadſt been extreamly covetous and greedy of filthy lucre, thou wouldeſt not have opened the graves of the dead to ſeek for money.* The Lord threatens by the Prophet *Jeremy*, that the *Chaldeans ſhall bring out the bones of the King of* Judah, *and the bones of his Princes, and the bones of the Prieſts, and the bones of the Prophets*, &c. *out of their graves*, chap. 8. 1. It is conceived that the reaſon why the *Chaldeans* digged up and raked in the graves of the *Jewes*, was not ſo much from cruelty as from covetouſneſs: They having heard that the *Jewes* uſed to put rich ornaments upon the dead, or riches into their graves with them. Or this might be as a juſt puniſhment of that greedineſs after gain, ſo eminent in the *Jewes*, that the Prophet in the very Chapter where this is threatned, chargeth them thus, verſ. 10. *Every one from the leaſt to the greateſt, is given to covetouſneſs.* Thus it is clear, that there was a cuſtom to put riches and treaſure into the grave with the dead, to which *Job* might allude in this place.

Herodotus, *lib.* 1.

So much for the opening of the words. From the ſenſe given,

> Obſerve, firſt, *That neither power, nor wiſdom, nor riches, are any priviledge at all againſt the ſtroake of death.*

Here are Kings, men that have great power; Counſellours, men full of wiſdom; *Princes that have riches*, ſo much gold that they can ſtuff their graves with it: yet theſe cannot defend themſelves againſt death. Death will not obey the authority of Kings, nor doth it fear their frowns; the ſubtilty or policy of Counſellors is not able to defeat it; there is no eloquence, no Rhetorick can perſwade death to depart; all the gold and riches in the world cannot bribe death or ſtay its hand; I (ſaith *Job*) ſhould have found Kings and Counſellors, and rich men, even all theſe in the grave, and we ſhould have reſted together. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath*, (Prov. 11. 4.) *but righteouſneſs delivereth from death. Righteouſneſs delivereth*

eth from death? why, ſhall not righteous men die? Surely *Job* might have ſaid, *with righteous men*, with holy men ſhould I have reſted; with *Abraham*, with *Iſaac*, and with *Jacob*, theſe are in the grave, death ſeized on them as well as other Princes, and Kings and Counſellors: How then doth *Solomon* ſay, that *righteouſneſs delivereth from death?* Death is there either to be underſtood of ſome dangerous judgment; for, ſaith he, *riches avail not in a day of wrath*, that is, in a day of publick calamity; *but righteouſneſs delivereth from death*; that is, from thoſe troubles and dangers: God hath reſpect to a righteous perſon, and hideth him from that death. Or, *righteouſneſs doth deliver from death*, that is, from the evil of death, from the ſting of death, from the bitterneſs of death; the bitterneſs and evil of death is paſt to a righteous man: but riches they avail not at all; they cannot at all, as not deliver from death, ſo not mitigate the pain, or pull out the ſting, or ſweeten the bitterneſs of death; yea rather, riches increaſe all theſe: That is a truth, *O death! how bitter is thy remembrance to a man that is at eaſe in his poſſeſſion?* Men may put their riches with them into the grave, but riches cannot keep them a moment out of the grave. This thought, *How bitter!*

Secondly, When *Job* ſpeaks of *Kings, and Counſellors, and Princes*, theſe great men of the world, he ſheweth us, what their ſtudy and buſineſs for the moſt part is in the world; it is about worldly things: *They build deſolate places, they have gold, they fill their houſes with treaſure*; theſe are their employments, the current of their cares and endeavours runs out this way. Hence obſerve,

> That, *The thoughts of the greateſt and wiſeſt of the world are uſually but for, and about the world.*

The poor receive the Goſpel, and the rich receive the world. As the godly man is deſcribed by his faith, *Abraham believed God*; by fear, by uprightneſs, by juſtice, as *Job* in the firſt Chapter of this Book; by *meekneſs*, as *Moſes*, &c. by the heavenlineſs of their ſpirits and converſations; *Our converſation is in heaven*, Phil. 3. 20. ſo worldly men are deſcribed by their proper ſtudies. *Kings, Counſellors, and Princes* build palaces, gather riches, heap up gold; *they buy, they ſell, they build, they plant, they eat, they drink*, as the worldly world is pictured, *Luke* 17. 27, 28. In *Pſalm.* 17. great men are called, *the men of the world*, as if they were for nothing but the world, or all for the world; as if all their proviſions were laid in for this world; ſo it follows, *who have their portion in this life*, ver. 14. It is a ſad thing to have received our portion. It is ſaid of the rich man, *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things*, thou haſt had thy portion. In *Pſal.* 49. 11. it is ſaid concerning ſuch men, that *their inward thought is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; and they call their Lands after their own names. Their inward thoughts are upon theſe things*. It is ſomewhat a ſtrange kind of ſpeaking, to ſay, *their inward thoughts*; for there are no thoughts but inward: thoughts are all wrought in the ſecret ſhop of the heart. But there is an elegancy in it, the Hebrew is, *their inwards, their internals*; *their inwards* are, how they may get themſelves a name and riches; not only are their thoughts about theſe things, but the very inmoſt of their thoughts; the moſt retired thoughts and receſſes of the ſoul are about theſe things; theſe lie neareſt to their hearts: as the ſtory ſaith of Queen *Mary*, when ſhe died, *ſhe bade them open her, and they ſhould find* Calice *at her heart*; it was a pitiful caſe, that a rotten Town ſhould lie (where Chriſt ought) at the heart of ſuch a Princeſs: The heart is the place where Chriſt and the thoughts of heaven ſhould lodge: all below heaven, ſhould be below our hearts. But as a godly mans inward thoughts are for heaven, and the things of heaven, for grace & for holineſs; ſo he hath thoughts upon the world, but (if I may ſo ſpeak) they are his *outward thoughts*, not his *inward thoughts*; that which lies neareſt his heart; his inward thoughts are for heaven; ſo the inward thoughts of worldly men are for the world: The Apoſtle might well ſay, *Not many wiſe, nor many rich, nor many noble are called*. The thoughts of wiſe Counſellors, of potent Kings, and rich Princes, are legible in their actions.

Internum vel interiora.

Thirdly, Having expounded theſe *deſolate places* to be Tombs, and theſe *houſes* Graves; obſerve,

> That, *Some take in their life-time, more care for their Sepulchers, then they do for their Souls.*

Here are great men, what do they? *They build deſolate places*; they will be ſure to have ſtately monuments: *And they had gold*; they will be ſure to fill their graves with treaſure, they will be buried richly, or they will have their riches buried with them; but what care did theſe take for their poor ſouls in the mean time, where they ſhould lie? Had they taken order what ſhould become of their ſouls? When all things are diſpoſed of, this choice piece, for the moſt part, is left undiſpoſed of, unprovided for: Some will carefully provide for their children, they will provide for their families, they will provide for their dead bodies, for their carkaſes; but for their immortal ſouls there is no proviſion made: While their bodies are aſſured of a reſting-place, they may ſay of, and to their departing ſouls (as that trembling Emperor beſpake his) *O our poor fleeting, wandring ſouls! whither are you going, where is the place of your reſt?* As it is ſaid of *Abſolom* in the place before cited, *He in his life-time had reared up a pillar* (a monument, or a Tomb) *for himſelf, in the Kings dale.* What a careful Prince was this for his body? But how careleſs was this Prince for his ſoul? He will have a pillar to preſerve his name, and yet runs out in rebellion againſt his own father, to the deſtruction of his ſoul. The great buſineſs of the Saints on earth, is, to get aſſurance of a place for their ſouls to lodge in when they die; it troubles them not much, what lodging their bodies have, if they can put their ſpirits into the hand of Chriſt: What though their bodies be caſt upon a dunghil, or trodden upon, like mire in the ſtreets, by cruel men? A heathen ſaid, *The loſs of a Funeral, or a Sepulcher, may eaſily be born*: I am ſure a Chriſtian may. That loſs will never undo any man, eſpecially not thoſe that believe: For in the perſon of ſuch, the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *We know that if our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* All that rich worldlings, and ungodly great ones can ſay when they die, is, *We know when the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved*, we have a building of man, a ſtately tomb made with hands, and with all the skill of the cunning artificer; we have ſeen it done already, or we have taken order in our wills to have it done. The believer erects his pillar in heaven, and his whole life is a preparation for his houſe which is above; and often he ſettles the buſineſs ſo, that he can ſay, *I know, that when this houſe of my body is taken down, I have a building*, &c. And he can ſay, *I know*, with far greater aſſurance then any worldly man, who hath ſealed it in his will, that thus and thus his body ſhall be intombed. It is a ſad thing to take care for a rotting carkaſs, and forget an immortal ſoul.

Facilis jactura ſepulchri.

Job, having thus parallell'd or compared himſelf in death, with Kings, Counſellors, and Princes, notwithſtanding all their pompous Funerals and curious Tombs, paſſeth, as it were, in the next verſe, to the other extream.

Verſe 16. **Or as an hidden untimely birth, I had not been, as infants which never ſaw light.**

As if he had ſaid, if any think that I have ſtrained too high, in making my ſelf equal in death with Kings, *&c.* yet ſurely I ſhould have been as thoſe, that never knew themſelves to be in this world; or as thoſe that the world never knew to be, that is, *as an hidden untimely birth*; or, *as infants which never ſaw light*.

An hidden untimely birth.] The word [*Nephel*] in the Hebrew, for *an untimely birth*, comes from [*Naphel*] which ſignifieth to fall down, or to fall off, as *untimely fruit* falls off from a tree; which falling off before it is ripe, is unprofitable and uſeleſs. When the mother miſcarries, her fruit is like the fruit of a tree, ſhaken off and falling down before it be ripe, or in the blooming. And the ſame word is uſed in the Hebrew, to ſignifie a *Giant: There were* (Nephilim) *Giants in the earth in thoſe dayes*, Gen. 6. 4. And the reaſon why they are ſo called, is, as ſome apprehend, becauſe they were *Apoſtates*, ſuch as fell off from God, from true worſhip and Religion: Or, becauſe they did *fall upon men*, as that phraſe is applied to cruel men, *they did fall upon the poor*: So the word is uſed, *chap.* 1. *ver.* 15. of this Book. *The* Sabeans *fell upon* Job's *Oxen*, &c. *They who*

Quaſi deciduus aut immaturus fructus qui ante maturitatis tempus ex arbore decidit inutilis. Bold. *in loc.*

fall from God by impiety, will quickly fall upon men by cruelty. Or, becauſe the dread and terrour of them made men to fall down for fear before them. It is very obſervable, that the ſame word ſhould ſignifie an *infant* of leſs then a ſpan long, and a Giant (it may be) of more then *ſix cubits and a ſpan* (1 *Sam.* 17. 4.) and both upon equal reaſon, and with equal ſignificancy,

Further, We may take notice, that the Hebrews expreſs any dead body or carkaſs by the ſame word; the dead body of the oldeſt man is called *Mappeleth*, from the ſame root and reaſon too in part, from which they denominate an untimely birth, that never lived a day. When the old man dies, he falls as well as the newly conceived embryon; the one falls off as a bloſſom from the tree, and the other as the fruit fully ripe, which (if you pull it not off) muſt fall off. The Greek word for a dead body, and the Latine, have the ſame reaſon of their derivation; namely from falling; ſo ſaith *Job*, I had been as one of theſe untimely births, that fall to the earth before their time. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith concerning himſelf (1 *Cor.* 15. 3.) *I was as one born out of due time*; I was an untimely birth. Some of the Naturaliſts ſay, that word ſignifies ſuch abortions as are after the ſeventh, and before, or at the fortieth day of conception. Others, that it ſignifies thoſe who are born the eighth moneth; which, uſually as they are untimely, ſo they die. Now *Paul* calleth himſelf an untimely birth, to ſuit the humble thoughts which he had of himſelf, with an humble expreſſion of himſelf; which reaſon he ſeems to give in the next words, *ver.* 9. *For I am the leaſt of the Apoſtles, that am not meet to be called an Apoſtle*, &c. Even as an untimely birth is not fit to be called a birth; or, becauſe children that are ſo born, are very imperfect, they are leſſer and weaker then thoſe of full growth: So ſaith he, I am as a poor abortive, as a child born out of due time; *I am the leaſt of the Apoſtles, and am leſs then the leaſt of all Saints*, Eph. 3. 8. I am not come to that ſtature and growth of a timely birth. Secondly, He calleth himſelf an untimely birth, or one born out of due time, probably for this reaſon, becauſe of the ſuddenneſs or violence of his converſion; for you know, every abortion or untimely birth comes from ſome ſudden danger into which the mother falleth; ſome ſtrain or violence cauſeth abortion: *Paul* in this ſence was an untimely birth, his converſion was a wonderful violent converſion; Chriſt came upon him of a ſudden, whereas the other Apoſtles were a great while a forming, a ſhaping, a fitting to an Apoſtleſhip; but *Paul* was, as it were, in a moment conceived and born, brought forth and perfected an Apoſtle; and ſo from the ſuddenneſs and violence of his new-birth, he may call himſelf an *untimely birth*.

πτῶμα à πίπτειν, *Cadaver, à cadendo.*

ἔκτρωμα, *apud* Ariſtotelem *ſignificat fœtum poſt ſeptimum & intra quadrageſimum diem conceptum; Apud* Hippocratem, *octavo menſe natos.* Ariſtot. l. 7. *de Hiſt. Animal. c.* 7.

Juſtum temporis ordinē ſervavit dominus in creandis fovendis & formandis Apoſtolis. Paulus *vero vix dum bene concepto ſpiritu vitali ex utero projectus fuerat, momento ſimul genitus & natus, & vir plenæ ætatis fuit.* Pined.

But to paſs on from that, to the words of *Job*, *As an hidden untimely birth, I had not been.* Here are two things diſtinct about this birth. Firſt, It is called *an untimely birth.* Secondly, *A hidden birth.*

An *untimely birth* is called a *hidden birth*, becauſe it is hid from the eyes of others; abortives are unpleaſing and undeſirable ſpectacles, therefore they are covered and laid by; there is no remembrance of their form or likeneſs; therefore *Solomon* ſpeaking of an untimely birth, *Eccleſ.* 6. 4. thus deſcribes it, *He cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkneſs, and his name ſhall be covered with darkneſs.*

As a hidden untimely birth, [**I had not been.**]

An untimely birth is ſaid *not to have been.* A not being is taken two wayes. Firſt, Strictly, for that which never had any life at all; and ſo ſome interpret this; for there are abortions or untimely births before quickning, or before *there is any life.* Secondly, Not to be, is, not to ſubſiſt, or not to live: When that which hath lived, dies, it is ſaid not to be. The Prophet brings in *Rachel*, *weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, becauſe they were not*, *Jer.* 31. 15. that is, becauſe they were dead. *Joſeph*'s Brethren, pleading before unknown *Joſeph*, tell him, *Thy ſervants are twelve brethren, and behold, the youngeſt is this day with his father, and one is not*, Gen. 42. 13. that is, one is dead. So *Jacob* ſpeaks at *ver.* 30. of the ſame Chapter; *Joſeph is not*, &c. Hence that anſwer of the wiſe man to *Alexander*, who demanding of him, whether the living or the dead were more in number? ſaid, *the living; for the dead are not.*

Eſſe dicitur qui vivit; & non eſſe, qui mortuus eſt.

As infants that never ſaw the light.] This clauſe may be an expoſition of the former clauſe, ſhewing what *Job* means by an untimely birth; even *an infant that never ſaw the light*. Yet all infants that never ſee the light, are not untimely births. Infants are often ſtill-born, when their mothers have gone out their time to the laſt hour, before the pains of travail come upon them. And therefore I rather underſtand this as diſtinct from the former. In the one *Job* intending ſuch as are born before time, which births are commonly called *abortions* or *miſcarriages*. And in the other, thoſe who die in the birth, who are commonly called *ſtill-born*. The word which is here uſed for an infant, ſignifies properly a weaned infant; but it is likewiſe transferred to ſignifie an infant dying in the birth; which is therefore ſaid never to ſee the light; ſo *Solomon* expreſſeth it too, in that place, *Eccleſ.* 6. 5. *Moreover, he hath not ſeen the Sun*: And in alluſion to this, *David*, when he curſeth the plots of wicked men, that though they have conceived miſchief, and though they have gone with it a long time, and are ready to bring it forth; yet, in *Pſal.* 58. 8. ſaith he, *Let them be* (that is, let their counſels and deſignes be) *like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not ſee the ſun*; that is, let them be daſhed and blaſted, let them never bring forth their poyſonous brood, to the hurt and trouble of the world. To theſe, ſaith *Job*, I am ſure, I ſhould have been like, if not to Kings and Counſellors, and it had been as well, and all one to me. In death, untimely births, and thoſe that go down to the grave, as a ſheaf of corn that cometh in ripe, are all one; there is no difference in the grave, between the Infant that never ſaw the ſun, and him that hath lived to ſee an hundred recourſes of the ſun.

עולל *Significat parvulum ablactatum, per* Catachreſin *uſurpatur de infantibus in utero matris extinctis.*

The ſpeech of *Job* proceeds to a third ſort; he ſtrengthens his argument of reſt in death. I ſhould certainly have had reſt in death; for in death, even they who have been moſt vexed, who have had leaſt reſt, who have been even reſtleſs in the world, they have found reſt in death; this he clears by a further induction, in *verſ.* 17, 18, 19.

There the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary be at reſt.

There the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voyce of the oppreſſor.

The ſmall and great are there, and the ſervant is free from his maſter.

When he had ſpoken of the reſt of death, concerning thoſe great and mighty ones; and the reſt of death, concerning untimely births and infants; then he ſpeaks of the reſt which poor oppreſſed ones, or which wicked oppreſſors have in death; all theſe have a reſt in regard of outward bodily troubles, agitations and labours, in the grave, therefore certainly there I ſhould have been at reſt.

There (that is, in the grave) **the wicked ceaſe from troubling.**] True reſt and wickedneſs never meet; reſt and the wicked meet but ſeldom. And it is but half a reſt, and it is reſt but to half a wicked man, to his bones in the grave; and it is reſt to that half but for a little time, only till the reſurrection.

The word which is here uſed for **wicked**, is conſiderable: Though every wicked man be a ſinner, yet every ſinner is not a wicked man: It is one thing to ſin, and another thing to be wicked; there are divers words in the hebrew tongue, which ſignifie, as it were, the divers ſtatures of ſinners, and the degrees of ſin; and the hebrew, which uſually expreſſeth many things by one word, doth here uſe many words to ſignifie one thing, only differing in degree.

רשעים

Firſt, A ſinner is called ſometime [*Cata*] that's the loweſt expreſſion; noting one that doth miſs a mark, or his way; he aimes at the mark, yet miſſes it; he would go in the right way, yet miſtakes it, or is miſled: So every man, the holieſt men are ſinners; they often miſs the mark, the white which God ſets up, though they take their aim, and carefully level at it.

חטא *Erravit à ſcopo vel via, ea potiſſimum peccata ſignificat, quæ vel errore, vel per ignorantiam vel infirmitate carnis committuntur,* Moller. *in* pſal. 106. v. 6.

Secondly, A ſinner is called [*Peſhang*] which ſignifieth a willingneſs to ſin, and an unwillingneſs to obey; it ſignifieth pride in ſinning, or a ſinning from pride, which is plain rebellion.

Thirdly, The word here uſed, and in divers other places, ſignifieth wickedneſs in the height, and men moſt active in wickedneſs. So that when *Job* ſaith, *There the wicked are at reſt*, he means, thoſe who had been reſtleſs in ſin, who

פשע *Peccatum ex ſuperbia, tranſgreſſio non ſimplex & qualiſcunq;, ſed malitioſa ac temeraria, unde & ali-*

could

quãdo rebellio vocatur. Muſ. *in* Pſ. 5. v. 10.

could not ſleep, till they had done miſchief, nor ſcarce ſleep for doing miſchief; he means thoſe, who had out-run others in the ſinful activity, or rather turbulency and unquietneſs of their ſpirits; ſuch as are without peace themſelves, and ſeek to moleſt and diſturb the peace of others: The Prophet deſcribes them to be like the troubled ſea, which cannot reſt, (*Iſa.*57. 20) The proper ſignification of the word (*wicked*) in the hebrew, is the word unquiet, vexatious, or without reſt, 1 *Sam.* 14. 47. *Whereſoever* Saul *turned himſelf, he vexed the enemy.* So, *Job* 34. 29. And the reaſon of it is given, becauſe men of this height and ſtature in ſin, are men of troubled, unquiet and reſtleſs ſpirits. As it notes a height in holineſs and grace, to have a kind of unquietneſs upon the ſpirit, till we can do good, and compaſs holy deſigns and purpoſes; when we are not only pious, but zealous; as *David* reſolves, *Pſal.*132.3,4. *Surely I will not come into the Tabernacle of my houſe, nor go up into my bed; I will not give ſleep to mine eyes, nor ſlumber to mine eye-lids, until I find out a place for the Lord,* &c. So unquietneſs upon the ſpirit, till it can put ſin into act, and compaſs an evil project, notes a compleatneſs in the ſinner. Sin wakes and works in them to purpoſe, who cannot ſleep till they have wrought out their ſin; of theſe, it is properly, that *Job* ſpeaks here; theſe troublers of themſelves, and troublers of *Iſrael*; theſe, *whom the Lord ſhall trouble this day*, or one day: There *ſo*, in the grave, *theſe wicked ones ceaſe from troubling*; there they have a kind of reſt, being dead, who could not reſt while they lived; there, at leaſt, they ceaſe from raging. This word (*Ragaz*) notes any vehement motion, either of mind or body, ariſing from fear, or grief, or anger, or the concurrence of them all: As when *David* heard of the death of *Abſolom*, the text ſaith, 2 *Sam.* 18. 33. *The King was much moved,* &c. He was, as it were, for a time, enraged and diſtracted, much troubled, I am ſure, with paſſions, or the working of many paſſions together. The word, you ſee, in the hebrew, hath a near affinity in ſound and ſence, with our *Engliſh* word *raging*; and we tranſlate it ſo, *Pſal.* 2. *Why do the heathen rage?* It is the ſame word; ſo here, *the wicked ceaſe from raging*, or, from troubling; that is, from that madneſs of rage in troubling the poor, eſpecially ſuch as fear God: Wicked men are not only ſinful, but they are mad in their ſin; as *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf before his converſion; *I puniſhed them oft in every Synagogue, and compelled them to blaſpheme; and being exceedingly mad againſt them, I perſecuted them even unto ſtrange Cities,* Acts 26. 11. In *Paul* unconverted, ſee the picture of a wicked mans ſpirit; he could not ceaſe from troubling, but in death he ſhall.

And there the weary are at reſt.

Sicut prior pars de tyrannis & oppreſſoribus intelligitur, ita hæc ſecunda poteſt de afflictis & oppreſſis. Sed congruentiùs ſi tota hæc periodus referetur ad viros famoſos, qui dicuntur feſſi robore, mille ſeſe objiciẽtes vitæ diſcriminibus. Pined.

The weary.] Some, by the *weary*, underſtand thoſe whom the wicked have wearied, by troubling them; and that is a truth, that in the grave, the wearied, thoſe that wicked men have turmoiled and vexed, are at reſt. But rather, by the *wearied*, we are to underſtand only the wicked themſelves; *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary be at reſt,* that is, there thoſe wicked men, who weary and tire out themſelves with vexing and troubling of others, are at reſt; they then ceaſe from thoſe vexatious undertakings, which have conſumed their ſpirits, and worn out their bodies; and the reaſon why I rather expound the weary to be the wicked (though the other be a good ſence) is, becauſe *Job* afterward ſpeaks of the reſt of thoſe that are wearied, who are paſſive under the cruelties and plottings of thoſe wicked ones, *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary be at reſt.* Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *Wicked men are troublers both of themſelves and others.*

There the wicked ceaſe from troubling; as if the wicked did nothing in the world, but trouble the world. As before *Job* had given the ſpecial character of great ones and Princes, *They get Gold, build Palaces and Sepulchers, and fill them with treaſure*: So, when he ſpeaks of wicked ones, he ſaith, *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling*; as intimating, that while they live in the world, they are a perpetual trouble to the world. The Prophet *Iſaiah* is expreſs, (*chap.* 57. 20.) *The wicked are as the troubled ſea, that cannot reſt*; they can do any thing better, then be quiet; they have not ſtrength enough to ſit ſtill, *they cannot reſt.* King *Ahab* had this apprehenſion of *Elijah* (1 *Kings* 18. 17.) when the Kingdom of *Iſrael* was full of trouble (for God did vex them with great adverſity.) *Art not thou he* (ſaith *Ahab*) *that troubleth Iſrael?* No, ſaith *Elijah* (who could make up a better judgment then *Ahab*, in that point) *I am not he that troubleth Iſrael, but it is thou and thy fathers houſe.* *Ahab* had ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs, and ſo had ſtock enough to purchaſe trouble for *Iſrael*: *Wicked ones are the troublers of all*; they are troublers of their own families, troublers of the places and cities where they live, the troublers of a whole Kingdom, troublers of the Churches of Chriſt, and the troublers of their own ſouls; they are born to trouble both *active* and *paſſive*, they love to trouble, and they have what they love: It is the character, and the argument of an extream wicked man, to be a troubler; even as it is a great argument of great grace, when you ſee one a comforter of others, or buſie to help others, to do good to others: *The tree is known by its fruits.*

Secondly, Taking the latter words of this verſe (*There the weary be at reſt*) for thoſe wicked men who are wearied by troubling others, we may obſerve,

> That, *Wicked men, by troubling others, do as much weary and tire out themſelves.*

And though they find, that in troubling others, they weary themſelves, yet they will not give it over, they will trouble ſtill. *Job* ſaith thus of a wicked man in *chap.* 15. of this Book, *v.* 20. *The wicked man travaileth with pain all his dayes*; not only doth he put others to pain, but himſelf is in pain: and they are frequently expreſſed in Scripture, as wearying themſelves; ſometimes, as *weary of themſelves*; ſo *Jer.* 9. 5. *They weary themſelves to commit iniquity.* And, *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counſels,* Iſa. 47. 13. *Thou art wearied in the greatneſs of thy way,* Iſa. 57. 10. and that was but a way of troubling the Church: *She wearieth her ſelf with lies,* Ezek. 24. 12. The ſins which wicked men commit only in and againſt themſelves, weary them; but they are moſt wearied, when they are perſecutors of others. It is obſerved of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, that *famous troubler of the Church* (by him that hath written the *Itinerary of the Saints*) that he did undertake more troubleſom journyes, and went upon more hazardous deſignes, meerly to trouble, and vex, and oppoſe the Church of the *Jews*, then ever any of his predeceſſors did about any other conqueſt or noble enterprize; that he travelled more miles to do miſchief, then (as the Author doth compare their journies) any of the Saints did to do good; and therefore he concludes the ſtory of him, with this general truth concerning perſecutors, *All ſuch wicked men go with more trouble to eternal death, then the Saints do to eternal life*; they toil themſelves more, and ſuffer more, *to work out their own damnation*, then the godly do, *in working out their ſalvation*: To be wicked in the height, is the height of trouble. *Solomon* ſaith, *that a good man is merciful to his beaſt, but a wicked man is unmerciful to himſelf; he will tire himſelf more then a good man will tire his beaſt.* This is a certain truth, *he that will follow ſin, and ſerve his own luſts* (eſpecially the luſts of pride and oppreſſion, whoſoever ſerveth thoſe luſts) ſerveth a hard maſter, a maſter that will make him toil and ſweat, and weary himſelf while he lives, and at laſt pay him with death. The work of ſin is bad enough, but (as to the ſinner) the wages of ſin is worſe.

The laſt thing I ſhall note from it is this; *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling. There*, where is that? At the grave, when they come to die, they make an end of their troubling, not before. Hence obſerve,

> *Wicked men will never ceaſe troubling, until they ceaſe to live.*

In the grave they ceaſe troubling, there they are at reſt; *If they ſhould live an eternity in this world, they would trouble the world to eternity.* As a godly man never gives over doing good, he will do good as long as he lives, though he fetches many a weary ſtep; ſo wicked men never give over doing evil, until they ſtep into the grave: And the reaſon of it is, becauſe it is their nature to do evil; and that which men do naturally, they do alwayes, they never give it over. Nothing but death can ſuſpend and ſtop nature.

There are indeed two caſes wherein wicked men ceaſe troubling, while they live; one is, when they are deſperate in their deſigns, and ſee they cannot by troubling themſelves, trouble others ſufficiently; when they cannot have their will, nor compaſs their ends fully; they being in deſpair of doing the miſchief they would, will do no more: So the Hiſtorian notes concerning *Diocleſian*, the moſt bloody perſecutor that ever the Church had; at laſt he gave over the empire, and declined the government (not becauſe he was weary of perſecuting, but he was weary of being diſappointed) *becauſe he ſaw he could not hatch that which he had long brooded, or bring forth thoſe deſignes he had contrived for the utter extirpation of the Chriſtians*: Being thus out of hope to do all the miſchief he intended, he puts himſelf out of power to do that miſchief, *reſignes the Empire.* A ſecond caſe, wherein wicked men ceaſe troubling, is, when they have fully attained their ends in this life; ſometimes they bring their work to ſuch a perfection, to ſuch a period, that they think they have attained all, all their plots have taken, all's theirs; and when they have fully done the Devils work, then he gives them a play day, they have ſome ceſſation: But otherwiſe, except in theſe two caſes, they never ceaſe from troubling; therefore the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Gal.* 5. 12. prayeth, *that they which trouble them, might even be cut off*: As if he had ſaid, they are ſuch a kind of men, there is no curing of them; they will never have done doing miſchief, until they be cut off by death. As God threatens death, to deter men from ſin; ſo ſometimes, he is (as it were) conſtrained to ſend death to keep men off from ſin: A godly man ſaith, *If God kill me, yet will I truſt in him*; and ſome wicked men ſay (in effect, if not in the letter) *till God kills us, we will ſin againſt him.* The Pſalmiſt asks the queſtion, *Pſal.* 94. 4, 5. *How long ſhall the wicked, how long ſhall the wicked triumph? How long ſhall they utter and ſpeak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boaſt themſelves? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord.* What anſwer ſhall we give, what date ſhall we put to this, *How long?* The anſwer is given, *ver.* 23. *The Lord ſhall bring upon them their own iniquity, and cut them off in their own wickedneſs: yea, the Lord our God ſhall cut them off.* As if he had ſaid, except the Lord cut them off in their wickedneſs, they will never leave off doing wickedly. *The wicked* (ſaith *Hannah*, in her ſong, 1 *Sam.* 2. 9.) *ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs.* The wicked will ſin while they have any light to ſin by; therefore God puts out their candle, and ſends them down into darkneſs, and there they will be quiet; *The wicked ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs.* They will ſin againſt the light of the word, as long as they enjoy the light of the world; and do the works of ſpiritual darkneſs, till they are ſhut up in pœnal darkneſs. It follows,

Exiſtimant aliqui Diocletianum *etiam dolore motum fuiſſe, ut imperium deponeret cum perficere ſe non poſſe videret ea quæ contra Chriſtianos molitus fuerat.* Chr. Pez. Mellif. *hiſt.* *Par.* 2.

Quam mortem comminatus eſt Deus homini, ut à peccando illum deterreat; eandem ipſum infert ut à peccando ceſſet.

There the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voyce of the oppreſſor.

Here is another ſort [**The priſoners.**] The word is, thoſe that are bound: And theſe priſoners may be of two ſorts. Firſt, Slaves and captives, who are under *hard task-maſters*, ſuch as ſet them to hard labour; or, men that are in debt, and put into priſon, by *cruel Creditors*: Priſoners, in either of theſe reſpects, are at reſt, or they reſt together in the grave: *When they have paid that debt to nature, all their other debts are diſcharged*; death is their debt to nature, and when they have paid that debt, they (ſaith *Job*) receive an acquittance (a *quietus eſt*) *they reſt together*; when they have done that work, the work of dying, poor captives and priſoners have done all, and paid all.

נגש

It is added [**They hear not the voyce of the oppreſſor.**] The word which we tranſlate an oppreſſor, ſignifieth, by violence to compel one to work or to pay a debt: So the Task-maſters, *Exod.* 5. are ſaid to compel the people with violence, to go on about the work. The ſame word ſignifieth both an *Exacter* and an *Oppreſſor*; an exacter of debt, an exacter of tribute, an exacter of labour; in all theſe wayes the word is uſed: and becauſe thoſe three (tribute, debt and labour) are demanded many times againſt right and equity, often with much violence and cruelty, therefore the word ſignifies alſo an oppreſſor: Exaction is alwayes within a ſtep of oppreſſion, and is often put for the ſame; and becauſe oppreſſors uſe bitter words, and hard ſpeeches, wounding with their tongues, as much as with their hands; therefore poor priſoners dying, are ſaid to be *free from the voice of the oppreſſor.* Poor priſoners *hear not the voice of the oppreſſor* in the grave; there they are beyond the ſound, and out of the hearing of thoſe vexing, railing task-maſters, or exacting creditors. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, That, *An eſtate of bondage is a miſerable reſtleſs eſtate.*

There the priſoners reſt together. Captives and bond-men have little reſt, until they reſt in the grave: The language of priſoners is a ſorrowful language; their ſpeech is ſighs, *Pſal.* 79 11. *Let the ſighing of the priſoners* come before thee. And, *Pſal.* 12. 5. *Becauſe of the oppreſſion of the poor, and for the ſighing of the needy.* It is a reſtleſs condition, which yields nothing but ſighs and groans: Indeed we read in the *Acts* (chap. 16. 25.) of priſoners that ſpake another language, even the language of joy; we read there of the ſinging of the priſoners; *Paul* and *Silas* did not ſigh, but ſing in the night, while they were bound in priſon; but this was extraordinary: They, receiving enlargement of heart, and wonderful conſolation from the holy Ghoſt, pray in priſon, and ſing praiſe to God; *Chriſt ſent the Comforter* that night to them, who made them a feaſt in the priſon, and they ſung to it, they made muſick, heavenly muſick; *they ſung praiſe to God.* It was not from the good chear, or any comfortable meſſage which they had from the Jaylor, or from their oppreſſors; but Chriſt came and viſited them: any place, or any eſtate is comfortable, when Chriſt is preſent to the ſoul; but in it ſelf, impriſonment is a ſad condition. Therefore the Apoſtle biddeth us, *remember thoſe that are in bonds, even as bound with them*, Heb. 13. 3. And Chriſt takes a priſon-viſit as a ſpecial point of ſervice and kindneſs done unto him; *I was in priſon, and ye viſited me*; *Mat.* 25. 36. I, in my afflicted members was in priſon, and your viſit was an eaſe to my affliction, and (as it were) a looſening of my chains. Now therefore remember the bondage and captivity, the hard uſage and impriſonment that many ſuffer from their Oppreſſors. *Let the ſighing of the priſoners come up before you*, even the ſighing of thoſe *Joſephs*, whoſe feet are hurt in the ſtocks, and the iron enters into their ſouls; as ſome tranſlate that *Pſal.* 105. 18. When you are at your tables, and have plenty, then remember the bread of adverſity, and water of affliction which many poor priſoners, are ſerved with, and muſt be contented with every day, or ſtarve in priſon. When you are in your pleaſant warm chambers, and ſoft beds, think of the cold, loathſom dungeons and hard boards, in which, and on which many of them lie. And when you hear the voice of love, and ſuch ſpeaking to you, who have *the law of kindneſs in their tongues*, Prov. 31. 26. then remember thoſe who *hear the voyce of the oppreſſor.* From which, take this ſecond Obſervation,

That, *The words of oppreſſors are wounding words.*

The voice of an oppreſſor is a terrible voice; and therefore *Job* puts this in, as a ſpecial priviledge, that the poor priſoners ſhall have in the grave, *They ſhall not hear the voice of the oppreſſor*: Who can reſt where they ſpeak, or hear their words, and not be troubled? Therefore, *not to hear the voice of the oppreſſor*, is a circumlocution, noting full liberty. The wild Aſs is ſo deſcribed, *Job* 39. 7. He regardeth not the crying, or the voice of the driver; the original word is that in the text, *he regardeth not the voice of the oppreſſor*, or of the exacter. This is the liberty of the wild aſs, which was never in hand or under burdens; whereas other aſſes that are in hand, and are employed to bear and travel, they muſt be at the voice of the driver, they hear the voice of their oppreſſors; and ſome men are very unmerciful to their beaſts; it is grievous to the poor cattel to hear the voice of ſuch drivers; and the groans of thoſe beaſts will riſe up in judgment againſt their drivers: And if ſo, how then will the groans of the Saints riſe up againſt their drivers? We have heard of *oppreſſors* turned *drivers*, they have driven their poor brethren as beaſts or cattel, before them; and more cruel then any ſuch driver; they have not ſuffered them to drink of the pudled water through which they paſſed: And yet more, the words of theſe drivers, as goads and ſtaves, beat their ears, and prick'd them to the very hearts in their paſſage. The voice of theſe oppreſſors is the voice of ſcorn, the voice of ſlander and reproach; and *David* ſhews us from his own experience, how reproaches work (*Pſal.* 42. 10.) *as with*

Non audire vocem exactoris, circumlocutio eſt maximæ libertatis.

with a ſword in my bones mine enemies reproach me: And the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 11. 36.) ſpeaks of the believing, perſecuted *Jews*, that they had this tryal of *cruel mockings*; their oppreſſors ſharpened their tongues, as well as their ſwords, againſt them. The tongue wounds deeper then the ſword; the tongue wounds the ſpirit, but the ſword cannot reach beyond the fleſh: And God will take as deep, if not a deeper revenge upon oppreſſors for their tongue-woundings, then for their ſword-woundings: hard words as well as hard blows muſt be accounted for. And the Apoſtle *Jude* aſſures us, *ver.* 15. *That the Lord cometh to execute vengeance upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongſt them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* If any ſhall ſay, when did we ſpeak againſt the Lord? Chriſt will anſwer as in the Goſpel, (*Matth.* 25.) *In as much as you have ſpoken againſt any one* (and you have ſpoken againſt many) *of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have ſpoken againſt me.* To how many of my brethren, have you ſaid, many times, *Where is now your God?* To how many have you ſaid, as they (*Pſal.* 22. 9.) in that propheſie of Chriſt, *You truſted on the Lord, that he would deliver you, let him deliver you?* To how many have you ſaid, *Where are your prayers and faſtings? where are your hopes?* Theſe are hard ſpeeches. This voice of the oppreſſor cuts the heart of the poor priſoner; he can with more eaſe dye, then hear ſuch blaſphemies and reproaches. The wicked (*Mal.* 3. 13.) bluſter and ſpeak big againſt God himſelf; *Your words have been ſtout againſt me, ſaith the Lord:* if wicked men will ſpeak ſtoutly againſt God, the high God, how ſtoutly will they ſpeak againſt a poor oppreſſed captive, that lyes under their feet?

Seeing then it is ſuch a wound, and a terror, to be under the power of inſulting oppreſſors, who will not only ſtrike with the ſword, but ſtrike with every word: Let us pity and pray for thoſe that are under the hands, yea, feet, and which is worſe, under the tongues of ſuch drivers; pity them, in regard of the wants which they feel, and of the reproachful words that they hear. And let us betimes hearken to another voice, that we may not at laſt come to hear this voice, *O that my people had hearkened unto me* (ſaith God, *Pſal.* 81.) If we would hearken to the voice of God, we ſhould not hear the voice of ſuch men. It is the puniſhment which God lays upon a people, (and it is a ſutable puniſhment) for not hearing his voice, that he gives them up to hear this voice: when a Nation will not hear the *voice of the Prophets*, then they muſt hear the *voice of oppreſſors:* Let us haſten to hear the voice, the ſweet voice, the pleaſant voice of our God in his Miniſters of the Goſpel, leſt we be given up to hear the dreadful, grating, cutting voice of ſuch, who are the Miniſters of Gods juſt diſpleaſure againſt a diſobedient people. If we, like *the deaf adder, ſtop our ears at the voice of the charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely,* (*Pſal.* 58. 5.) doubtleſs the Lord will (yea he hath done it in part already) *ſend Serpents and Cockatrices among us, which will not be charmed, and they ſhall bite us,* (with bitter and ſharp words,) *Jer.* 8. 17. Let us therefore ſo hear the voice of the word, that we may be delivered from this rod of the voice (which ſmarts worſe then the voice of the rod,) and from the ſcourge of tongues. And let us pray, that God would haſten the performance, either of that gracious promiſe, (*Iſa.* 14. 2.) *They ſhall take them captives, whoſe captives they were, and they ſhall rule over their oppreſſors:* or of that (*Iſa.* 60. 17.) that he would make thoſe great and notable changes in the Church, and give us *for braſs gold, and for iron ſilver, and for wood braſs, and for ſtone iron:* That he would alſo *make our Officers peace, and our Exactors righteouſneſs:* This will be *a time of refreſhing indeed.* And as *the time of the reſtitution of all things, which God hath ſpoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets, ſince the world began,* Acts 3. 21. namely, when *our Officers ſhall be peace, and our very Oppreſſors righteouſneſs:* When the very troublers of a people become their peace, how great is that peace? when they who were the oppreſſors of a people, are turned to be, *very righteouſneſs*, how great is that righteouſneſs? And where there is great righteouſneſs, and great peace, how great is the joy of that people? Yet however the wiſe God ſhall order theſe outward diſpenſations, yet *His priſoners* have freedom in, though not from their captivity; and they ſhall hear the voice of his Spirit ſpeaking more comfort to their hearts, then the voice of their oppreſſors can ſpeak terror to their ears: and their ears ſhall not long be ſmitten with the *hard ſpeeches* of ungodly men; death, a bleſſed death, will ſhortly lead them into the houſe and chambers of ſilence, where, as *Job* here ſpeaks, they ſhall never hear the voice of the oppreſſor any more.

Verſ. 19. **The ſmall and the great are there, and the ſervant is free from his maſter.**

The laſt inſtance which *Job* gives of reſt in death, is contained in this nineteenth verſe. In the words before he ſaid, *There the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the oppreſſor:* here he adds, *The ſmall and the great are there, and the ſervant is free from his maſter.*

The ſmall and the great are there.

Small and great.] There is *two-fold quantity*, in which men may be conſidered. There is a *natural quantity*, and there is a *civil quantity*; and in both quantities, *ſmall and great are there.*

Firſt, There is a natural quantity, by which men are diſtinguiſhed into ſmall and great; children, and men of full growth: In the grave ſuch ſmall and great are mixed: little children, *children of a ſpan long*, mingle their duſt with men of higheſt ſtature.

Again, There is a civil quantity, and ſo *the ſmall* are the poor, the low, and the mean; they are ſmall ones in a civil account: And civil greatneſs, is power, riches and honour; the honourable, they are the great men, and the rich are great men, in a civil quantity; ſo the word is uſed, *Chap.* 1. *ver.* 3. Job *was the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt*; he was the greateſt in civil quantity, in regard of his power, honour and riches. The Prophet *Jeremy* oppoſes the poor and the great, (*Chap.* 5. *ver.* 4, 5.) *Therefore I ſaid, ſurely theſe are poor*, &c. *I will get me unto the great men, ſcil.* the rich and honourable, the Princes and the Magiſtrates.

The ſmall and the great are there. In Scripture, when we find the two extreams, (ſmall and great are extreams in quantity) we are to underſtand all the middle acts, or things, or perſons, that is, all that lyes between thoſe extreams. We read ſuch Scripture language concerning the actions of men, *Pſal.* 139. 2. *Thou knoweſt my down-ſitting and my up-riſing*: Here are two extreams, the two terms of a mans actions and of his life, *his down-ſitting, and his up-riſing*; now when it is ſaid, God knows theſe two, we are to underſtand, that God knows whatſoever a man doth, all his actions between his *down-ſitting and his up-riſing.* So in that promiſe of a continual bleſſing from God: *Pſal.* 121. 8. *The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out and thy coming in.* Here are two extreams; between theſe, we are to include and ſuppoſe all that a man doth while he is abroad. *God ſhall preſerve thy going out and thy coming in*; that is, every thing thou takeſt in hand (according to his will) from the time thou goeſt forth, or beginneſt thy work in the morning, till thy coming home from work, or the end of thy work in the evening; thus it is clear about things, or actions: It is likewiſe clear about perſons, *Pſal.* 49. 2. when *David calls high and low, rich and poor, to hear, he calls all to hear*; *Give ear all ye inhabitants of the world,* ver. 1. So when it is ſaid in this Text, *The ſmall and the great are there,* it is not, as if thoſe were only there; or that thoſe of a middle quantity, either in regard of natural, or civil proportion, were not there; for death ſeizeth upon middle men, as well as ſmall and great: There are graves of all imaginable ſizes, and dimenſions, between ſmall and great: According to that of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 9. 27. *It is appointed to men once to dye*; to men indefinitely, of what ſort, or degree, or ſize, or quantity, or quality ſoever: *It is appointed to men*; therefore ſmall and great are there; and many of all ſorts are there.

There is a further elegancy yet in the original; we read it, *Small and great are there*, but the Hebrew, ſtrictly read in the letter, runs thus, *The ſmall and the great are there the ſame*: Or as Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *Little and great are there all one.* The words taken thus, yield theſe two points to our meditation.

Ex æquo illic ſunt tam parvi quam magni, ſecundum illud, Mors Sceptra ligonibus æquat. Druſ.

הוא

Firſt, this; *Death ſeizeth equally upon all ſorts and degrees of men.*

The ſmall and the great are there; The ſmall cannot eſcape the hands, or ſlip through the fingers of death, becauſe they are little; the greateſt cannot reſcue themſelves from the power, or break out of the hands of death, becauſe they are big.

That the ſmall are there, ſhould be an admonition to young ones, *Take heed of putting off repentance until you are great, for the ſmall are in the grave:* That the great are there, ſhould be an admonition to the greateſt and ſtrongeſt, to prepare for death; for all your ſtrength and greatneſs, your honours, your ſwelling titles, your vaſt riches, cannot oppoſe, much leſs prevent, or overcome death. *The ſmall and the great are there.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That death makes all men equal*; or, *That all are equal in death.*

As death equally takes hold of all men, ſo death makes all men equal; not only are the ſmall and the great there, but there *the ſmall and the great are the ſame:* Death takes away all diſtinctions, and the grave knows no difference among the ſons of men. While men live, they are at a great diſtance one from another. There is, and there ought to be, diſtinctions among men; and men ought to know their terms of diſtance, and to acknowledge men in their greatneſs, power, and places. As there is *one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another Star in glory*, 1 Cor. 15. 41. So there is one terreſtial glory of Kings, and another glory of Nobles, and another glory of the Common-people, and theſe have not the ſame glory in common; even among them, one man differs from another man in this worldly glory; but when death comes, there is an end of all degrees, of all diſtinctions, *There the ſmall and the great are the ſame.* As the Apoſtle ſpeaks of our being in Chriſt, in regard of the priviledges of the Goſpel, *Col.* 3. 11. *In Chriſt there is neither Jew, nor Gentile; there is neither male, nor female; there is neither bond, nor free*; that is, all have a like and an equal ſhare in Chriſt, and in the priviledges of the Goſpel: the Goſpel makes no diſtinction between poor and rich, in regard of ſpiritual priviledges and benefits; ſo death takes away all diſtinctions in regard of civil priviledges: *In death there is neither ſmall, nor great, neither male, nor female; neither bond, nor free; the greateſt ſhall lye as low as the ſmalleſt; and the higheſt, as low as the meaneſt*; every one there ſhall be but as his neighbour, and as his brother in the fleſh. There is but one diſtinction that will out-live death; and death cannot take it away; the diſtinction of *holy and unholy, clean and unclean, believer and an Infidel*; theſe diſtinctions remain after death, and ſhall remain for ever; but *rich and poor, honourable and baſe, high and low, King and ſubject*, theſe diſtinctions ſhall be done away, and forgotten, as if they had never been: no difference, no diſtinction, (but that which God makes, and that which Grace makes) can ſtand out againſt the power and ſtroke of death; *There, the ſmall and the great are the ſame.*

And the ſervant is free from his Maſter.

The ſervant.] There are two ſorts of ſervants. There are ſome who are voluntary ſervants, and others who are ſervants by conſtraint. There are ſome who might be free, but they will not; and there are others, who would be free, but they cannot. Of the former ſort we read a Law, *Exod.* 21. 5. where the ſervant that loved his Maſter, and refuſed his freedom, ſaying, *I will not go out free*, muſt be brought before the Judges, and have his *ears bored through with an awl*, in token of his willingneſs to *ſerve that Maſter for ever.* Others are ſervants by conſtraint, as the people of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*; who were made *to ſerve with rigour*, Exod. 1. 14. to ſerve whether they would or no, which is ſervitude rather then ſervice.

We may underſtand the Text of both, *The ſervant*; that is, either he that doth voluntarily ſerve, and willingly puts himſelf under the command of another; or he, which is under the command of another whether he will or no: to both theſe death giveth freedom, whether their Maſters will or no; *The ſervant is free from his Maſter.*

The word which we tranſlate [*is free*] noteth that formal manumiſſion, or ſetting at liberty, which is uſed in places, or Corporations, where freedoms are either purchaſed by money, or deſerved by appointed ſervice.

And the word here tranſlated [**Maſter**] is plural, *Maſters:* It is one of the Names of God, *Adonai*, which Name the Lord hath from government: That very name is given to Maſters of Families, becauſe they ought to govern and order the affairs and buſineſs of the family, with wiſdom and juſtice; *Every Maſter of a family, is a governour of the family*; he is (as it were) a King in his own family. *The ſervant is free from his Maſter.*

Tria ſunt quorum terminatio pluralis & ſenſus ſingularis, videlicet Adonim *Dominus*, Elohim *Deus*, Bagnalim, *Herus.*

Hence note, Firſt, *Sin brought in ſervility, and the ſubjection of man to man.*

I ground it thus, becauſe *Job* ſpeaks of ſervice, as of an eſtate of affliction, as of an eſtate of trouble, under which many groan, and ſets them free.

In the ſtate of innocency, there was a dominion granted to man over the beaſts, but there was no dominion granted to man over man: In the ſtate of integrity relations ſhould have continued, but ſubjection ſhould not have been found: only that natural ſubjection of Children to Parents; but as for civil ſubjection, there had been no ſuch thing in the world. Before man forſook the ſervice of God, he needed none to ſerve him; ſervice comes in by ſin, and the increaſe of it, by the increaſe of ſin: As we ſee, when *Canaan* was ſo vile as to forget the duty of a ſon, he is ſet below, or in the worſt condition of a ſervant, *Gen.* 9. 5. *Curſed be* Canaan, *a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren*; that is, the loweſt and moſt abject ſervant: As God of Gods, is the greateſt God; and Lord of Lords, is the higheſt Lord; ſo ſervant of ſervants, is the loweſt, the baſeſt ſervant: So then, as civil ſubjection came at firſt from ſin, ſo the increaſe of ſubjection, which is to be a ſervant of ſervants, came from the increaſe and progreſs of ſin.

Gen. 1. 26.

Peccatum ubi intravit, libertatem perdidit & corrupit poteſtatem naturæ datam. Chryſoſt. *Hom.* 29. *in Gen.*

Subſtantivũ ſeipſum genitivo caſu regens, ſuperlativam locutionem cum ſingulari energia denotat. Buxtorf.

Obſerve ſecondly, *A ſervant is not in his own diſpoſe.*

Though he be a voluntary ſervant, yet he muſt ſerve the lawful will of his Maſter. He may, yea he ought, in every ingenuous ſervice, to ſerve willingly; but he is not at his own will, to ſerve when, or where, or how he will.

Servus abjectiſſimus.

Some have thought they have freedom from ſervice, by the liberty of the Goſpel, or Goſpel-priviledge: and that is the reaſon why the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. gives that rule, *Let as many ſervants as are under the yoak, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour*, &c. He ſpeaks of believing ſervants. Some preſumed they had ſuch freedom by Chriſt, that they might caſt off ſubjection to men: No, ſaith the Apoſtle, *As many as are under the yoak*; that is, while they continue ſervants, they muſt ſubmit to their condition; yea, though their Maſters be unbelievers, as the next verſe ſhews, *And they that have believing Maſters, let them not deſpiſe them*, &c. nothing takes away ſubjection, but death; *For as he that is called in the Lord, being a ſervant, is the Lords free-man*, 1 Cor. 7. 22. So he that is the Lords free-man, being called to it, is and ought to be mans ſervant: The Centurion in the Goſpel ſhews the ſervants duty; *I ſay unto one, go, and to another, come, and he cometh, and to my ſervant do this, and he doeth it.* The ſervant is at his Maſters beck, not at his own diſpoſe, and nothing can free him but death, ſo long as he continues under the yoak, in that relation.

Hence obſerve, Thirdly, *That death concludes the ſubjection of man to man.*

In the grave, or *There, the ſervant is free from his Maſter*; there is no more ſervice due to man, when once Death, that King of terrors, hath carried us into his dominions.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life unto the bitter in ſoul?

Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more then for hid treaſures:

Which rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave, &c.

AT this twentieth verſe, the third and laſt Section of the Chapter begins, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life to the bitter in ſoul?*

In the former part of the Chapter, *Job* wiſhed that death had ſurprized him as ſoon as ever he ſet foot into the world, yea before he came into the world, that he might have dyed in the very womb: Here *Job* begins to expoſtulate, why he having made ſo long a journey, and in his latter time ſo troubleſome a journey in the world, why (I ſay) he is not (at his requeſt) cut off and taken away, by the ſtroke of death; *Why is life given to him that is in miſery, and life to the bitter in ſoul?* We may frame his argument thus, out of his words, as they are here couched; *There is no reaſon, or if there be, ſhew me a reaſon why his life ſhould be prolonged, who liveth miſerably, and would dye willingly: But I am the man who live miſerably, and I would dye willingly: wherefore then? where is the reaſon, or ſhew me a reaſon why my life is prolonged?* That is the force of his argument. The main Propoſition of the argument is contained in *verſ.* 20, 21, 22, 23. namely, that there is no reaſon why a man that liveth miſerably, ſhould be denied to dye. *Wherefore is light given to a man that is in miſery?* He endeavours to prove the Aſſumption at *verſ.* 24. where he ſhews that he lived in great miſery, which he doth ampliſie in the two laſt verſes of the Chapter. This may ſerve for the ſum, and ſcope, or intendment of this laſt Section.

To the words themſelves. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery?*

Wherefore. There is a *wherefore* in Scripture, firſt of doubting; and ſecondly, there is a *wherefore* of mourning; and thirdly, a *wherefore* of complaining. In this *wherefore*, in this queſtion, we may include all three. *Job* doubteth; and *Job* mourneth; and *Job* complaineth; *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery?*

Wherefore is light.

Light.] Some take *light* here for knowledge; *Wherefore hath a miſerable man ſo much knowledge to ſee himſelf, and to know himſelf miſerable?* It is ſome abatement to the ſenſe of miſery, not to know that we are miſerable; *Wherefore is light given?* If I did not underſtand the ſadneſs of my condition, it would be leſs to me. There is a truth in that; and it is the thing that will ſo much torment and vex the damned to all eternity, that while they are in the darkneſs of helliſh miſery, they ſhall have ſo much light in Hell, (I mean the light of knowledge concerning their own condition, whereby they ſhall fully and clearly diſcern their own unhappineſs;) if they were ignorant and did not know how miſerable they were, their eſtate were far leſs miſerable. On earth, the light of the knowledge of Gods will increaſes the ſin of men; in Hell, the light of the knowledge of their own woe, will be an increaſe of their puniſhment. As Chriſt ſaith to the *Jews*, John 9. 41. *If ye were blind, ye ſhould have no ſin; but now ye ſay we ſee, therefore your ſin remaineth.* So we may ſay of thoſe who are ſeparated from Chriſt for ever; if ye were blind, ye ſhould have no ſorrow; but now becauſe in that eſtate of *utter darkneß*, ye ſhall have both eyes and light to ſee your miſery, therefore your ſorrow ſhall remain. When a wicked man *goes to the generation of his fathers, where he ſhall never ſee light*, ſcil. of comfort, *Pſal.* 49. 19. even then he ſhall have light enough, (and more then he would have) to ſee his ſorrow. And in Hell he ſhall be as much pained with, and hate the light of his own condition, as upon earth he hated and was pained with the light of divine revelation, *John* 3. 20, &c. So that the damned ſhall for ever cry out, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery?*

Ad quid prodeſt homini in miſerii conſtituto, quod lucem cognitionis habeat, cum per eam conſideret mala quibus affligitur. Aquin. *in loc.*

Yet I take not this to be the ſence here, *Wherefore is light?* by *light* here underſtand natural light, and then it is no more but this, *Why do mine eyes behold the Sun? Wherefore doth the light ſhine upon me, when as I am under the clouds and in the darkneſs of this condition?* Or by light, we may underſtand life; and ſo the ſence is, *Wherefore is life continued*, (which is expreſſed in the next clauſe,) *to him that is in miſery?*

To be in miſery, is more then to be miſerable. As to be *in the fleſh*, notes, a meer carnal man, and to be *in the ſpirit*, notes a very ſpiritual man; ſo to be in miſery, notes a very miſerable man. The Hebrew word properly ſignifies, *labour*: At the tenth verſe it was tranſlated, *ſorrow*: And it notes any toilſome moleſtation, which either we our ſelves endure, (*Pſal.* 25. 18.) or cauſe others, by guile or miſchief done them, to endure. Hence it is tranſlated *guile*, *Pſal.* 55. 11. and *miſchief*, (*Pſal.* 94. 20.) becauſe by theſe, one man troubles and vexes another, to the making of him miſerable.

עמל *Sumitur activè pro labore cum ſumma defatigatione & tædio, paſſivè pro dolore ipſo & miſeria, & ſæpe utroq; modo ſumitur conjunctim, ut in* Eccleſiaſte, *ubi vitæ humanæ calamitas & miſeria iſto vocabulo explicatur.*

And life to the bitter in ſoul.

Life.] Is the union of ſoul and body: when life departeth, ſoul and body take leave and part. The Philoſopher defines life to be the bond or colligation of ſoul and body together: Now (ſaith *Job*) why is this life? why is this bond continued to a man *whoſe ſoul is in bitterneſs?* While my life was pleaſant, it was pleaſant to live; while my ſoul was ſweet, it was ſweet to have it knit to my body; but now my ſoul is in bitterneſs, or I am bitter in ſoul, and what ſweetneſs or pleaſure can I find in my body?

To the bitter in ſoul.] Notes deep, intrinſical, or inward ſorrow; the greateſt ſorrow, makes the ſoul bitter: As in Scripture, when we find *Soul* added, reſpecting the evil of an eſtate, or the good of an eſtate, evil and good are meant in the higheſt degree: As when Chriſt ſaith, *Mat.* 26. 38. *My ſoul is exceeding heavy, or exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death*; that is, I am in the loweſt deeps of ſorrow: Sorrow unto death, is ſorrow within one ſtep or degree of death. *My ſoul is ſorrowful.* There can be no ſorrow but in the ſoul; the body (take it as diſtinct from the ſoul) is not capable of ſorrow; ſorrow is a paſſion, or an affection of the ſoul, an affection of the mind, and therefore all ſorrow is ſeated in the mind; yet when our Lord Chriſt ſaith, *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful*, it is far more then to have ſaid, there is ſorrow, or exceeding much ſorrow in my ſoul. So here, this phraſe, *To him that is bitter in ſoul*; or whoſe ſoul is bitter; notes the moſt bitter and grievous ſorrow. When the Pſalmiſt would ſet forth the great ſorrow of *Joſeph* in priſon, *Pſal.* 105. 18. One Tranſlation ſaith, *That the iron entred into his ſoul*; and the Hebrew, word for word, is this, *His ſoul came into iron.* We know the ſoul is ſo pure, and ſpiritual, that iron cannot enter it; We know that only the body can be bound with chains. The ſoul could quickly ſlip from the moſt watchful Keeper, and break out from the ſtrongeſt irons, were it not to keep company with the body. Whereas then it is ſaid, *His ſoul came into irons*; it is only to ſhew, that *Joſeph* was under very ſore affliction, even the ſoreſt affliction of the body. As on the other ſide, when *Mary* ſaid, *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord, my ſpirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour.* We know, nothing properly can magnifie the Lord, or rejoyce, but the ſpirit or the ſoul; yet when ſhe ſaith, *My ſpirit doth rejoyce*; this notes a deep, pure, internal, ſpiritual joy, with which ſhe was raviſh'd at that time: And as they, who rejoyce in ſoul, would even willingly be rid of their bodies, they are above the body: So they, who are bitter in ſoul, are deſirous to be rid of their bodies; the body is a burden when the ſoul is bitter. This bitterneſs of ſoul cauſed thoſe bitter complaints before, and now this vehement expoſtulation.

למרי נפש *Qui præ calamitate animo ſunt acerbo & in perpetua mæſtitia*, Merc.

Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery?

Wherefore? We are apt to think there is no reaſon for that, for which we can ſee no reaſon. *Job* was in a dark condition, and could not ſee the reaſon, and therefore almoſt concludes there was none. When we are poſed, we think all the world is poſed too. If we cannot interpret and expound the dealings of God, we think none can; nay, in ſuch caſes, ſome are ready to think (at leaſt to ſpeak, as if they thought) that God himſelf can ſcarce give a good account of them: This *wherefore* goes through the *earth*, and reaches *Heaven.* Tell me, O my friends, ſhew me, O my God, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery?*

Why *Job*, there may be many reaſons, many anſwers given to this, *wherefore* a man ſhould be in light, though he be in miſery; and why his life ſhould be continued, though his ſoul be in bitterneſs. What if God ſhould appear and tell thee, It ſhall be thus; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe I will have it ſo: Is not that *therefore* anſwer enough, to any mans *wherefore?* The *will of God* is reaſon enough for man, and ought to be the moſt ſatisfying reaſon: If God ſay, I will have life remain in a man, *that is bitter in ſoul*, that man ſhould ſay, Lord, it is reaſon I ſhould, becauſe it is thy pleaſure, though it be to my own trouble. Yet it is but ſeldome that God makes his will his reaſon, and anſwers by his bare Prerogative: He hath often given weighty reaſons to this quæry. Firſt, The life of nature is continued, that the life of grace may be increaſed. Again, Such live in ſufferings, *That they may learn obedience by the things which they ſuffer.* God teacheth us by his Works, as well as by his Word, *his dealings ſpeak* to us: And, *It is as great an act of holineſs to ſubmit our ſelves to the will of God in his works, as it is to the will of God in his word.* Another reaſon of this *wherefore*, may be this, *God ſets up ſome as patterns to poſterity*; He therefore gives the light of life to ſome that are in miſery, to ſhew that it is no new, nor ſtrange thing for his Saints to be in darkneſs: And what if God doth it to magnifie the ſtrength of his own power in ſupporting, and the ſweetneſs of his mercy when he delivers ſuch bitter ſouls?

Further obſerve, Firſt, That *the beſt things in this world may come to be burthens to us.*

See here a man, *weary of light and life*. Light, one of the moſt excellent creatures that God made, the moſt excellent next to life; yea life, the beſt, the moſt excellent thing in nature; both theſe become burthenſome. How gladly would *Job* have been rid of light? how gladly rid of his life? Conſider then, how burthenſome other things (which at the beſt are burdens) may be unto you: If you hear a ſoul complaining of *light and life*; *and why are theſe given me, when I am in miſery?* Then what comfort, think you, will honour give you? or what comfort will riches give you? or what comfort will beauty give you, in ſuch a condition, as makes you weary of light and life? What comfort will ſin give you? what eaſe will your luſts give you, in ſuch a condition, as makes you weary of light and life? I never heard of any of the Saints, that were troubled at any time with their grace, or weary of the favour of God; I never heard any of them ſay, why is grace given to one that is in miſery? or the light of Gods countenance to the bitter in ſoul? I never heard any ſay, wherefore is faith given to a man that is in miſery, or hope and patience to the bitter in ſoul? Grace was never a burden to any man, under greateſt burdens, or unſavoury to the bittereſt ſoul; when you are weary of all other things in the world, theſe will be your ſupports. Therefore labour after thoſe things which you ſhall never be weary of, even after thoſe things which will be more pleaſant to us, then ever light was, when light ſhall be to others more troubleſome, then ever darkneſs was to any; let us labour after thoſe things which will be more ſweet to us, then ever life was, when life ſhall be to others, more bitter, then ever death was to any.

Secondly obſerve, *It is a trouble to poſſeſs good things when we cannot enjoy them.*

Would you know, how *Job* ſpake here as one weary of light and life? It was not under the notion of *light* and *life*, as if he had been weary of theſe in themſelves, but it was becauſe he could not enjoy theſe. *Solomon* aſſures us, (*Prov.*25.20.) that, *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vineger upon Nitre, ſo is he that ſingeth ſongs to an heavy heart.* Muſick to one that is in ſorrow, doubles his ſorrow, why? becauſe he cannot enjoy the muſick; a heavy heart can worſe intend muſick, then a heavy ear; only thoſe things which we can enjoy in the uſe of them pleaſe in the poſſeſſing of them: Of all temporals, the poſſeſſion and enjoyment may be ſeparated; but for ſpirituals, the very poſſeſſion of them is joy, therefore enjoyment; their preſence is a pleaſure; and therefore their preſence ſhall ever pleaſe. We may diſtinguiſh between their uſe and their comfort, but we can never ſeparate them.

One thing further, When *Job* ſaith, *Wherefore is light given, and life given?* The meaning of it is, *wherefore is light continued, and wherefore is life continued?* for he ſpeaks of himſelf and others that had light and were alive, and yet he ſaith, *wherefore is light given?* &c. From this we may learn, That

Every act of continuance of good things to us, is a new act or deed of gift to us. Mercy is given, every moment it is enjoyed: not only is a new mercy, and a renewed mercy, a new gift, but continued mercy is a gift and a new gift; life is a new gift every hour of time we live on the earth; and glory will be a new gift, every minute of eternity we ſhall live in Heaven.

Which long for death, and it cometh not, and dig for it more then for hid treaſures.

This 21. *verſe* doth further explicate who are the bitter in ſoul, even ſuch as *long for death*; when a ſoul (from natural principles) finds a ſweetneſs in death, that ſoul is in bitterneſs; *Our affliction and our miſery is indeed wormwood and gall*, (*as the Church complains*, Lament. 2. 19.) when death is as honey, and long'd for as the honey-comb. There is bitterneſs in the death of the body; and yet ſome are ſo bitter in ſoul, that they account the very bitterneſs of death, ſweetneſs; They ſay not as *Agag*, (1 Sam. 15. 32.) *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*, but O that the ſweetneſs of death would come. To be rid of ſin makes us long for death ſpiritually; to be rid of pain makes us deſire death naturally; therefore he ſaith, *the bitter in ſoul long for death.*

The word which we tranſlate [by longing] ſignifieth a very vehement deſire, as you know in our tongue, *to long for a thing is the higheſt and hotteſt acting of deſire, after a thing.* It ſignifieth properly to gape or to breath: Hence (by a Trope) it ſignifieth ſtrong deſire; becauſe they who deſire a thing much, are ſaid to gape or breath after it; juſt as an hungry man gapes after meat, whereſoever he ſees it, and his mind runs upon it, when he cannot ſee it. That is the force of the word. Hence alſo the wotd is uſed in Scripture, to note the ſtrong actings of faith, and vehement expectations of hope in God; when the ſoul is raiſed up mightily to believe the word of promiſe, then it longs after and opens its mouth wide (as it were) to receive the thing promiſed. As in *Iſa.*8.17. *I will wait upon the Lord, who hides his face from the houſe of* Jacob, *and I will look for him.* The Prophet *Hoſea* applies the word to robbers and thieves, who ſtand watching and longing for the traveller, and looking at every turning, chap.6.9. *As troopes of robbers wait for a man.* Yet further to clear this, we may take notice, that in the Hebrew there are two words which come from this root, whereof the one ſignifieth the *Palate* of the mouth; becauſe the palate is the part affected with the taſte of ſuch meats, as we long for; Hence we ſay, the mouth waters after ſuch or ſuch a pleaſing diſh. The other word ſignifies a *Fiſh-hook*, and the reaſon is double, either becauſe thoſe hooks are pleaſantly baited, which when the fiſh ſees, he longeth after it, and greedily ſwallows it down: Or becauſe when the angler hath caſt in the hook, he is in great expectation, waiting and looking earneſtly when the fiſh will be enticed, and bite. By all theſe uſes of the Original word, we may collect the exceeding intenſiveneſs of that deſire which is here expreſt by longing for death: They long for death, even as a hungry man longeth for any meat, or as a woman with child longeth for ſome ſpecial meat, as a fiſh longs for the bait, or as an angler longeth till the fiſh bites, or as a believer (which as it is the ſpiritual, ſo the moſt ardent deſire of all) deſires to have any promiſe fulfilled, upon which he hath pitched his faith, and anchors at by hope.

המחכים from חכה *Hiavit, inhiavit, ore aperto intuitus fuit, concupivit, expectavit. Notat etiã vera fide, patientiq; expectatione anhelare ad rem promiſſam.*

חך *Palatum, quod cibo inhiet.*

חכה *Hamus, quòd in eũ piſces inhient, vel potius quod piſces expectet.*

Which long for death, and it cometh not, that is, it cometh not ſo ſoon as they would have it; for death will come at one time or other, but death doth not come at their time, or their pace. *It cometh not*, in the Hebrew it is only thus, *which long for death, and it is not*; we ſupply, *it cometh not.*

And dig for it more then for hid treaſures.

To illuſtrate the greatneſs of this deſire after death, he addes a ſimilitude of thoſe who ſeek for treaſures; if there be any natural deſire more ſtrong, then that of a woman with child, or a longing woman, it is the deſire of a covetous man, the deſire of gain or treaſure; covetouſneſs is the ſtrongeſt appetite.

Obſerve but what a gradation there is in this expreſſion, to ſet forth the greatneſs of their deſire after death: they do not only long for it, but they dig for it. Digging you know is no ordinary labour, it is an extraordinary work, a hard labour. As longing is a ſtrong deſire, ſo digging is ſtrong labour, hard labour. And then, it is no ordinary digging neither, but digging for a treaſure; men will dig hard for treaſure; you ſee men will dig hard for a ſtone, for iron, for coals, how then will they dig for a mine of gold or ſilver? A man will dig the earth for a little money; but when a man diggeth, hoping to find money in the earth, that will make him work indeed; now they dig after ſuch a manner: and beyond that, he ſaith, they dig for it as for hidden treaſure; that is a further degree of their endeavour after it.

מטמונים from טמן *Abſcondit.*

That which we tranſlate, **hidden treaſure**, is but one word in the Hebrew. It ſignifies any hidden thing, eſpecially treaſures; becauſe treaſures uſe to be hid, or cloſe laid up. And there is a twofold hiding of treaſures; there is a natural hiding, and there is an induſtrious and artificial hiding. There is a natural hiding, ſo treaſures are hid, that lie in the bowels of the earth, they are naturally hid. Then treaſures are hid by induſtry and by art, when we are afraid we ſhall be ſpoiled of our treaſures, or that they ſhall be taken away; then there is a hiding of them, and often a digging to hide them in the earth: As in any times of ſpoil and violence, if a rich man hear that the ſpoilers are nigh, he preſently hides his treaſure. Now either as robbers dig and ſearch for treaſures induſtriouſly hid, or as miners dig and ſearch for treaſures naturally hid, ſo (ſaith *Job*) with ſuch earneſtneſs do theſe dig for death.

There is one thing to be reſolved here by way of queſtion before we come to the Obſervations; namely, whether it be lawful to wiſh for, or to deſire death? *Job* here propoſeth ſuch as long for death: Is it lawful to deſire death? doth he ſpeak here only (*de facto*) of a thing which ſome do, or of that which may be done.

I anſwer, Firſt, That death in it ſelf is no way deſirable, and it is not an object of deſire. We cannot deſire that (for it ſelf) which is an enemy, or deſtructive unto us. If any ſhould deſire death as death, or under the notion of death, they ſhould deſire that which is deſtructive, that which is their enemy; ſo the Apoſtle calls death, 1 *Cor.* 15. *The laſt enemy which ſhall be deſtroyed, is death.* Death is an enemy, therefore (as death) no man can deſire it. Indeed, many have deſired death, but ſtill we find ſomewhat elſe at the bottom of that deſire. But what bottom or ground makes the deſire of death lawful? I anſwer,

Firſt, It is a holy deſire of death, if we deſire death to be free from ſin; when the ſoul ſaith thus, becauſe I ſee, only the end of living will be the end of ſinning, therefore I long for death, that I may ſin no longer.

Secondly, It is lawful to deſire death, that we may have more full communion with *Chriſt the Lord of life. I deſire to be diſſolved*, ſaith *Paul*; but why? not that he deſired diſſolution, but that he might be with *Chriſt*, Phil. 1. 23. Chriſt is life, and Chriſt is our life. It is better to enjoy *life*, then to live; how much better then is it to enjoy Chriſt, who is life, then to live?

To both theſe, we may refer that of the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 5. *We that are in this Tabernacle, groan, being burdened*; they were burdened with ſorrows, and burdened with ſins, while they were in the tabernacle of the body; yet (ſaith he) it is *not that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon*; he did not groan for the grave, but for glory; not that he might be uncloathed, but cloathed with immortality; not barely that he might die, but *that mortality might be ſwallowed up of life.*

Under theſe notions we may deſire death; yet with this caution, that for the time of it, we refer our ſelves to the good pleaſure of God. For what the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks of the inordinate deſires, and abſolute reſolves of worldly men, about gaining in that or t'other City, is by alluſion, appliable to theſe ſpiritual greedy merchants, after heavenly glory, *chap.* 4. 13. *Go to now, ye that ſay, to day or to morrow we will go into ſuch a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get gain*, &c. *For that ye ought to ſay, if the Lord will.* So I may ſay, go to now, ye that ſay, to day or to morrow I would die (*for to die, to us is gain, Phil.* 1. 21.) and go to that *heavenly City*, that *City having foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God*, and continue there for ever, taking in, and enriching our ſelves with that glory which Chriſt hath bought; for that *ye ought to ſay, when the Lord will, or now if the Lord will.* On ſuch conditions as theſe, and with this caution, we may deſire death, yea, long for death.

But to long for death, only to be rid of the troubles of this life, to deſire to lie down to ſleep in the bed of the grave, only to eaſe our fleſh, and reſt our outward man, is ſinful. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Acts* 20. 24.) *I count not my life dear, ſo I may finiſh my courſe with joy*; but we ſhall account our lives too cheap, if we fear to finiſh our courſe with ſorrow, if we think, that it is not worth the while to live, unleſs we live in outward comforts; we exceedingly undervalue our lives, when a croſs in our lives makes us weary of our lives. This was *Jonah*'s infirmity, when he had taken pet about the gourd (*chap.* 4.) he would needs die; and he concludeth the matter, *it is better for me to die then to live*; and all was, becauſe he could not have his will, becauſe he was troubled. This alſo was *Elijah*'s infirmity, when he was perſecuted by, and fled for his life from *Jezebel*, 1 Kings 19. 4. *He requeſted for himſelf, that he might die, and ſaid, it is enough now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better then my fathers.* This is an infirmity at the beſt. We ought rather to ſeek to God, that he would remove the evil from us, then remove us from the evil; for God hath a thouſand doors to let us out of trouble, though he doth not open the door of the grave, to let us in there, and out of the world. He can end our troubles, and not end our lives.

Periniquum eſt non aliā relinquere Deo levandæ ærumnæ rationem quam ſi vitam adimat, &c. petendū ergo potius, ut ne vultus ſui luce illuſtret, quam ut tenebris mortis obruat.

Yet ſuch a wiſh is much allayed, yea (in ſome caſes) lawful, if we keep the former caution, and ſay, *if the Lord will.* If we refer our ſelves to the will and good pleaſure of God, we may deſire to be laid to reſt by death, that we may be rid of thoſe pains and evils which we ſuffer in this life. And yet I deſire rather to raiſe the ſpirits of all above theſe troubles while they live, then ſatisfie them how they may deſire freedom from them by death. *When* Solomon *returned, and conſidered all the oppreſſions that are done under the Sun, and beheld the tears of ſuch as were oppreſſed, and they had no comforter; and on the ſide of their oppreſſors there was power, but they had no comforter: then he praiſed the dead, which are already dead, more then the living, which are yet alive* (Eccl. 4. 1, 2.) that is, he pronounced the dead to be in a better condition then the living. Yet know, that *Solomon* in this place, ſpeaks the words of meer natural reaſon, not of divine reaſon: For he ſpeaks (though with a divine ſpirit) yet in the perſon of a natural man. Natural reaſon ſaith, it is better to die, then live under oppreſſions; but divine reaſon ſaith, there is more honour to be gained by living under oppreſſions, then there is eaſe to be attained by dying from under them. To bear a burden well, is more deſirable then to be delivered from a burden; eſpecially, if while we are bearing, we can be doing, doing good (I mean) and I mean it eſpecially, if we can do publick good. A Chriſtian ſhould be content, yea, he ſhould rejoyce, in ſuffering much evil upon himſelf, while he can be doing any, eſpecially if he can do much good to others. A graciouſly publick ſpirit will triumph over perſonal troubles and labours, ſo long as he ſees himſelf a bleſſing or a help to the publick; and though he longs to die for himſelf, *and to be with Chriſt, which is better*; yet he is loth to die, ſo long as he can ſay with bleſſed *Paul, Nevertheleſs to abide in the fleſh, is more needful for you* (or others) *Phil.* 1. 24. When an heathen Emperor, *Cæſar*, ſaid, he had lived long enough, whether he reſpected *Nature* or *Honour*; *Tully*, the *Orator* anſwered him well; *But you have not lived long enough for the common-wealth.* Much more may we ſay, when we ſee able and godly men longing for death, becauſe they have lived long enough, whether they reſpect common nature, or their own honour; *But you have not yet lived long enough for the Church of God, and for the common good of his people.* We ſhould be willing to live ſo long as God, or his people, have a ſtroke of work to be done, which our abilities and opportunities fit us to do. In this ſence, *a living dog is better then a dead lion*, Eccleſ. 9. 4. That is, it is better to live (though we are the meaneſt) working for God, then die, or be dead, though we have been the chiefeſt.

I enlarge this the rather, becauſe of the preſent troubles, and the infirmity of our fleſh, which ſometimes is ready to envy thoſe who die, becauſe we live in ſorrow; and is not ſatisfied with this, that *our ſouls are here ſheltered from death, and under the covert of Chriſt, unleſs our bodies alſo may be ſheltered in death, and lie under the covert of the grave.* So much to that queſtion.

Let us note ſomething from the words themſelves; *Which long for death, and it cometh not; and dig for it more then for hid treaſures.* Obſerve, Firſt, That, *Many afflictions, to our ſenſe, are worſe then death.*

They long for death, becauſe they are in miſery. It is ſaid, and it is a truth, *O death! how bitter art thou to a man that is at eaſe in his poſſeſſions?* And there is a truth alſo in this, O death! how ſweet art thou to a man that is bitter in his ſoul? It often falls out, that to die, is but a ſhort affliction; but affliction many times is a long and continued death, a frequent death; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of his afflictions, *in deaths often* (2 Cor. 11. 23.) That there is a bitterneſs in death, the ſpeech of *Agag* implies (1 *Sam.* 15.) *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*; yet while a man (as lamenting *Jeremy* complains, *Lam.* 3. 19.) *remembers his afflictions, and his miſery, the wormwood and the gall*, that is, his afflictions and miſery, more bitter then gall and wormwood, his ſenſe overcomes his judgment, to conclude, that there is a pleaſantneſs in that bitter thing which we call death.

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *As death finds many before they look for it, ſo ſome look for death, and cannot find it.*

How many are there, whom death ſurprizes before they are aware, and ſeizeth upon them, when they think not of it? when as others are expecting, and longing, and gaping, and gaſping after death, and they cannot meet with it, it cometh not. Indeed, it is a great deal better for a man to expect death when it cometh not, then to have death come upon him, when he expects it not. Some are calling for death, crying out for death, before they know how to die, before they know how to live, yea before they know why they lived. It were well for ſuch, if they might loſe their longing, and long for death long enough before it cometh; for upon the matter (poor ſouls) they long for hell, while they long for death; and while they are haſtning from that life and miſery, which will quickly have an end, they are plunging into that death and miſery which will never end.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *As death is a puniſhment to moſt; ſo, not to die, is a puniſhment to ſome.*

Mors expectata non veniens, miſerrimam efficit vitam.

Job ſpeaks of it as an affliction upon ſuch; *they long for death, and it cometh not.* Death is an affliction to all; it is a puniſhment to all unbelievers, *a puniſhment with a ſting*: And as all wicked men are puniſhed with death, ſo ſome of them are puniſhed with this, that they (for the preſent) cannot die (*Rev.* 9. 6.) *In thoſe dayes men ſhall ſeek death, and ſhall not find it; and ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them.* It is laid as their puniſhment, that they ſhould live, and as an affliction beyond all their afflictions, that then they could not die. They are in a ſad condition, who can have no remedy or cure of their troubles but death; but how ſad is their condition, who cannot obtain that remedy? It is like the puniſhment of the damned in hell, they ſhall long for death, but it will not come; and they ſhall ever ſeek for death, but ſhall never find it. No wicked man did ever part ſo unwillingly with his ſoul when he died, as he will unwillingly meet with it, when he riſeth again. And as the firſt death doth part ſoul and body unwillingly, ſo the ſecond death keepeth ſoul and body together unwillingly. They have a taſt of this miſery in this life, whoſe ſouls are truly ſaid to be impriſoned in their bodies: And O how deſirous are they to dig down theſe mud-wals, and make an eſcape, but cannot?

Mors prima animan nolentem pellit à corpore; mors ſecũda animam nolentem tenet in corpore. Aug.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *It is an affliction to Nature, to be debarred of any thing it deſireth, how deſtructive ſoever it be unto it.*

It is (in one ſence) a natural deſire, to long for death; and yet death is the deſtruction of nature: A man under diſtempers of body, a diſeaſe, a Fever, *&c.* is often troubled and grieved, becauſe he cannot have thoſe things which will hurt him; he longs for ſuch meats and drinks, as given him, would kill him, and yet a denial angers him. *The hope of death deferred, will make the heart ſick*; and when the deſire (death deſired) *comes, it is as a tree of life.* Grief ariſeth from the unſatisfaction of our deſires; and therefore though the thing had, which we deſire, will undo us, yet the not having it, doth afflict us.

Which long for death, and it cometh not; and they dig for it more then for hidden treaſures. Take ſomewhat from this latter branch, *and they dig for it more then for hid treaſure.* As ſoon as ever *Job* had expreſt their longing deſire after death, you ſee preſently, he tells us that they dig for death. Hence obſerve,

That, *Where deſires are true, they preſently produce endeavors.*

He that longs for a thing, will labour for it, they are digging preſently (*Prov.* 18. 1.) *Through deſire, a man having ſeparated himſelf, intermedleth with all wiſdom*: If it be death a man deſireth, he will be endeavouring after it. There are ſome *velleities, liſtleſs wiſhings and wouldings*, which produce no endeavours; but true deſires are ever active; natural deſires are ſeconded with natural endeavours, and ſo ſpiritual deſires with ſpiritual endeavours. If a man deſire death, he will dig for it; ſurely then, he that deſires Chriſt, and longs for eternal life, will be digging for the enjoyment of them. Obſerve further,

That, *Proportionably to the ſtrength of our deſires, is the ſtrength and earneſtneſs of our endeavours.*

As real deſire cauſeth real endeavour, ſo ſtrong deſires cauſe ſtrong endeavours: It was not a bare deſire, but an earneſt longing (as was cleared in opening the words). And it is not a bare labour, but hard labour; digging is ſtrong labour. A meer natural man, whoſe deſires after ſin, are ſtrong and vehement, acts ſin with equal vehemency. The Holy Ghoſt ſaith, he doth *evil as he can*, that is, to his utmoſt *cunning* or ability; *he draws iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were, with cart-ropes. He doth evil* (ſaith another Scripture, *Mic.* 7. 3.) *with both hands greedily.* To do a thing *with both hands*, notes the greateſt endeavour. As when the *Phariſees* are ſaid not to touch the burdens which they laid on others *with their little finger*, it notes their refuſal of the leaſt endeavour, *Mat.* 23. 4. So a ſpiritual heart, having his deſires turned heaven-ward, he digs for heavenly treaſure every day, and *gives diligence to make his calling and election ſure.* They who have ſtrong deſires after Chriſt, labour ſtrongly after Chriſt. So they are expreſt (*Prov.* 2. 4.) where *Solomon* ſpeaks of *Wiſdom*, which is Chriſt, and all that is Chriſts; *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures*; ſuch is the ſearch and endeavour that ought to be after Chriſt, and ſuch it will be, if there be true and great deſires after Chriſt.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *They dig for it, as for hid treaſure*, we may obſerve,

That, *The beſt things are hardeſt to come by.*

If you will have treaſures, you muſt dig for them; you may have pebble-ſtones, flints, above ground; but treaſures lie deep: And in proportion, the better every thing is, the more digging it requireth; and the beſt things ought to be moſt digged for. They that will have the great bleſſing, muſt wreſtle for it; or the Crown, they muſt ſtrive for it. We muſt dig for heavenly hidden treaſure, before we have it; and yet both the treaſure, and the ſtrength to dig for it, are freely given.

Fourthly, obſerve, That, *Thoſe things which we eſteem moſt, we labour to ſecure moſt.*

It is ſaid, that they digged for treaſures, and that the treaſures were hid. I told you, in opening the words, there is a natural hiding of treaſure, and an induſtrious hiding. Take it in the laſt ſence; men that have treaſures, will labour to preſerve them: why? becauſe treaſures are much eſteemed, and the things we eſteem moſt, we preſerve moſt. In the Hebrew, the word that ſignifies *treaſure*, ſignifies the *hiding of treaſure*, or *hidden treaſure.* Among all treaſures, ſpiritual treaſures are moſt hidden; they are ſo hidden, that they are called myſteries, or ſecrets. The knowledge of Chriſt was a hidden treaſure, for ſome thouſands of years. The Apoſtle, in his time, calls it, *the myſtery which was kept ſecret ſince the world began*, Rom. 16. 25. Again, he calls it *The wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom which God ordained before the world, unto our glory; which none of the Princes of this world knew*, 1 Cor. 2. 8, 9. And as ſpiritual knowledge, ſo our ſpiritual life, is called a hidden life; *your life is hidden with God in Chriſt*, *Col.* 3. 3. And as our life, ſo our ſpiritual comforts are hidden; therefore called *Hidden Manna*, Revel. 2. 17. All our ſpiritual eſtate is treaſure, and it is all hidden treaſure, ſo hidden, that the Saints dig deep to find it, and when they have found it, they hide it, as Chriſt ſhews us, (*Mat.* 13. 44.) ſpeaking of the *Kingdom of God*, which he compares to a *treaſure hid in the field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth:* He hideth it, not to obſcure it from the light, but to ſecure it from danger. *Mary* hid thoſe precious ſayings of Chriſt, her Son, and her Saviour, in her heart, *Luke* 2. 51. And *David* having found the Commandments of God, which he prized above any treaſure, *above thouſands of gold and ſilver*, he hid them in his heart. *Thy word* (ſaith he) *have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee*, Pſal. 119. 11.

Verſe 22. **Which rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave.**

Having ſaid, That *they long for death, and dig for it as for hidden treaſure.* Now ſuppoſing, that they find death, he ſhews how it affects them; *They rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave.* There is little or no obſcurity in theſe words, only conſider the emphaſis of this expreſſion; the word which we tranſlate *rejoyce*, or *rejoyce exceedingly*, noteth ſuch a rejoycing as breaks forth in ſome outward geſture, as when a man doth leap for ioy: And Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it thus, *Which joy till they skip again*; noting an extraordinary joy, and gladneſs, when they can find the grave; that is, when they dye. Yet ſome joyn the ſence of this verſe with the former, to carry on, or lengthen out the ſimilitude thus; *Which long for death, and dig for it as for hid treaſures:* And finding death, they are affected as they who (ſeeking for treaſures) find a grave: For if in digging, they did but hit upon a grave, then they thought themſelves ſure of treaſure and great riches; becauſe treaſure and riches was uſed to be put into graves, as was ſhewed in opening the fifteenth verſe of this Chapter. The ſence is fair, and comes up to the ſame point, from either of theſe expoſitions.

גיל ישישו *Summo gaudio & incredibili lætitia etiam ſignis exterioribus prodita geſtiunt, vel præ lætitia exultant, vel lætantur ad exultationem.* Druſ.

Obſerve hence, firſt, That, *What at one time we fear moſt, in that, at another time, we may exceedingly rejoyce.*

Death is dreadful, and the grave is a place of darkneſs, yet here is joy and rejoycing, yea exceeding joy, and rejoycing, when they find the grave.

Secondly, They rejoyce in it, but why? It was that which they had longed for, that which they had long ſought for: if at another time they had been ſhewed the grave, or commanded into the grave, they would have taken little pleaſure in it. The ſame thing inflicted or threatned by another is dreadful to us, which deſired by our ſelves is pleaſant and delightful: It pleaſeth us to have our deſire ſatisfied, though the thing deſired be never ſo unpleaſant: And to be eaſed of preſent evil, makes a future evil appear in the likeneſs of a preſent good. For Joy is an affection of the mind, ariſing from the apprehenſion of ſome preſent good, even as hope ſprings from the apprehenſion of ſome good that is to come.

Further, We may conſider the iſſue of all theſe acts. After they had longed for death, and digged for death, and found death; preſently upon the finding of it, they rejoyce, and rejoyce exceedingly.

Hence obſerve, *That which any one truly deſireth and endeavoureth to find, cauſeth him to rejoyce, when he hath found it.*

If you deſire death, and ſeek for the grave, the finding of theſe will be to you as life, and as a houſe of mirth: How much more then ſhall we rejoyce, having found good things, the beſt things, after earneſt longing and digging for them. When the wiſe Merchant had found the treaſure hid in the field, the next words inform us of his joy, *Mat.* 13. 44. When the man, after long ſeeking on the mountains, had found his *loſt Sheep*; and the woman, after lighting her candle, and ſweeping her houſe, and diligent ſearch, had found the *loſt groat*; they both rejoyced, and called in their neighbours and friends to rejoyce with them, (*Luke* 15.) It troubles a man to be found of that, or him, whom he hates, or fears; *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* ſaith *Ahab* to *Eliah*, 1 *Kings* 21. 20. And it cannot but delight us, to find that, or him, whom we love and long for: *Have I found thee, O my friend?* will ſuch an one ſay. And if a miſerable man rejoyces exceedingly, when deſiring he finds death, and a grave; how will the ſoul leap for joy, when we ſhall find him, who is the *longing and deſire of all Nations, Jeſus Chriſt!* How exceeding exceedingly will the ſoul rejoyce, when we ſhall find what we have ſo much longed for; not death, but life; and life not only in Chriſt, but with Chriſt; when we ſhall find, not the houſe of the grave, but a houſe of glory, and glory in the height, an exceeding, excelling, ſuperexcellent weight of glory.

And by this effect, we may make proof of grace here. If thou haſt found Chriſt, in Ordinances, in Duties, in Meditation, in Prayer, in the Promiſes; for here, in theſe things, the longing ſoul digs after Chriſt: Joy will at one time or other fill thy heart, yea thy heart will leap for joy; thou wilt *rejoyce in Spirit, as Chriſt did, in his Father*, Luke 10. 21. For this joy is a fruit of the Spirit, (*Gal.* 5. 22.) and one of the firſt fruits. And God ſeldome miſſes to give the ſoul a taſt of this joy at the firſt, or preſently after converſion, though afterwards clouds may come over us, or at leaſt our light of joy be not ſo clear.

Further, If a man long after any truth, and digs it, how exceeding joyful will he be, when he can find that truth? When a Philoſopher had found out the reſolution of a Queſtion in the Mathematicks, he was ſo raviſhed with it, that he ran about crying, *I have found it, I have found it:* Surely the finding of one Divine truth (which is the mind of Chriſt) ſhould affect us more then the compleat knowledge of all that is knowable, or can be known in the whole courſe of Nature. Every truth is beautiful, but the Truths of God are beauty. Thus we may try our deſires in all their purſuits, by this iſſue of them, joy in finding the things which we purſue.

Archimides.

Laſtly obſerve, That as he doth rejoyce, ſo this joy anſwers to the deſire in the degree of it: Proportionable to our deſires and endeavours in ſeeking, are our joyes and comforts when we have found. There is not only a joy, but a proportionable joy; the deſire was very great, and the endeavour was very great, and now the joy comes up to both, that is very great too; not only do they rejoyce, but they rejoyce exceedingly; they rejoyce, ſo as they skip for joy: That is (I am ſure it ought to be) more apparent, in our regular deſires after things good for us, then in our irregular deſires, after things which are hurtful to us. If that exceeding deſire after death, will produce exceeding joy in death; then exceeding deſire after life, and ſpiritual good things, will work exceeding joy when we have found them; deſire is that which widens the veſſel to take in abundance of joy; large deſires after any thing open the heart, and inlarge the faculties to take in abundance of joy, when we have found the thing which we deſire.

VERS. 23, 24, 25, 26.

Why is light given to a man, whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?

For my ſighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.

For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me.

I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

At the twentieth verſe of this Chapter, *Job* begins to expoſtulate concerning the continuance of his life; and he caſts his complaint into an argument, which was formed to his purpoſe, thus. There is no reaſon; or if there be, ſhew me a reaſon why his life is continued, that liveth miſerably, and would dye willingly: But I am the man who live miſerably, and would dye willingly: Therefore why is light, or life, continued unto me? The former part of this argument is contained in *verſ.* 20, 21, 22, 23. In which *Job* demonſtrates, that there is no reaſon; or, at leaſt, if there be a reaſon, it is ſuch, as he could not make out, why that man ſhould have his life continued, who lives in miſery, and is willing to dye. Three of thoſe verſes we have already finiſhed; and there remaineth *ver.* 23. (which is a part of the ſame reaſon) to be yet opened.

In this *ver.* 23. he (as it were) repeats his argument: He had ſaid before, *Why is light given to him that is in miſery?* &c. and ſo he doth illuſtrate it in the two verſes following: In this *ver.* 23. he re-inforceth what he had ſaid in other words, *Why is light given to a man, whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* He doubleth his call for a reaſon, or proof of this thing.

Why is light given?] Thoſe words are not here expreſly in the Hebrew, but they are ſupplied by our Tranſlators, and by Tranſlators in other Languages, from *ver.* 20. to make up the ſence. The Original runs thus, *To a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in:* But the Queſtion is implied as in the former, and here to be prefixed, *Why is light given to a man, whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* Mr. *Broughton* readeth it without the Queſtion, *(Why is light given?)* thus: *The Wight, or man, whoſe way is hid, over whom the puiſſant caſteth a covering.*

To a man, whoſe way is hid.] *Job* ſpeaks not here of a way in a proper ſence, the way wherein men travel, and paſs in their journeys, from place to place: but *the way,* is a *way,* in a *Metaphor*: And ſo in Scripture, the way of a man is taken: Firſt, for the purpoſe or intention of a man: Secondly, for the courſe and converſation of a man: and that either for the courſe, wherein we walk toward others, or for the courſe wherein others walk towards us. When it is ſaid here, *Why is light given to a man, whoſe way is hid?* the *way,* is either the courſe wherein *Job* walked, reſpecting God; or the courſe which God took, reſpecting *Job*; *Why is light given to a man, whoſe way is hid?*

The way of man, in his walking before God, is twofold.

First, *Internal.*
Secondly, *External.*

There is an internal, and inward way, which the ſoul treads in converſe with God; a ſecret path, a path which no eye hath ſeen. And then there is the outward way of walking. That ſpeech of God to *Abraham* takes in both, *Walk before me, and be perfect*; that is, converſe and carry thy ſelf uprightly before me, in thy affections, and in thy actions. Now when *Job* ſaith, *His way was hid,* he means neither of theſe: for though the internal way, whether it be the way of ſin, or the way of obedience, be a path ſo ſecret, as that it is alwayes hid from the eyes of men, yet *Job* knew well enough that God ſaw even that way, and therefore he could not complain, that his moſt ſecret way was hid from God. Yea, in another place, he comforts himſelf with this, that God knew the ſecret wayes of his heart: For when his friends accuſe him, and charge him with hypocriſie, he ſupports himſelf with this, *My witneſs is above, and my record is in Heaven*; there is one there that knoweth the way, the ſecret way of my ſpirit with him, to be ſincerity, though you charge the way of my ſpirit with hypocriſie. The ſoul hath many wayes of communion with God, which are altogether hidden from the eye of man: man cannot ſee, or diſcern, the private paſſages between God and the ſpirit; either when the ſoul approves it ſelf to God, or rejoyceth and exults in God. And as concerning this way, this inward way, as *Job* knew that it was not hid from God; ſo (I conceive) it did not trouble him, that this way was hid from man: As there are in God certain (*Arcana Conſilii*) ſecret myſteries, and hidden wayes of counſel, which he will not communicate to holy men; ſo there are in holy men (*Arcana Pietatis*) ſome ſecrets, ſome myſteries of godlineſs, which they do not communicate to the world; and therefore the complaint doth not lye in either of theſe reſpects.

The Church complained, but ſhe was check'd for complaining, that her way was hid from God, *Iſa.* 40. 27. *Why ſayeſt thou,* O Jacob, *and ſpeakeſt,* O Iſrael, *My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is paſſed over from my God?*

Yet that place is not to be underſtood of a hiding from the eye of Gods inſpection, as if the Church had any ſuſpition that the Lord did not know, or did not ſee how matters went with them, or in what condition they were; but it is to be underſtood of the eye of Gods compaſſion: There is a ſeeing eye, or contemplating eye, and a compaſſionating or ſuccouring eye. So the meaning of that complaint is only this, *Why ſayeſt thou my way is hid from the Lord?* that is, why doeſt thou ſpeak, as if God did not regard thee in thy troubles; as if God had no pity nor compaſſion on thee, no bowels toward thee; *Why ſayeſt thou my way is hid from the Lord?* In the third of *Exodus,* when God comes to help the people of *Iſrael,* he telleth *Moſes, I have ſeen, I have ſeen,* or *I have ſurely ſeen*; namely, with an eye compaſſionating their condition, as the next words ſhew, *For I know their ſorrows.* Now when the Church complained, that *Her way was hid from God*; her meaning was, that God did not take notice, ſo, as to pity and deliver her. Excepting in that ſence, ſhe could not conceive that her way was hidden from God: neither is the way of the Church, ſo hidden from God, but as to our ſenſe; for the Lord pities his people when he corrects them; and therefore *Jacob* is chidden for ſaying ſo; *Why ſayeſt thou,* O Jacob, *my way is hidden from the Lord*? Therefore this Text is not to be underſtood of *Job*'s way, in reſpect of God, but of the hiding of Gods way, or the hidden dealings of God toward *Job.* *My way is hid,* ſaith *Job,* that, I cannot underſtand, nor interpret, nor expound the meaning of Gods dealing with me; I am not able to give an interpretation of it, I know not what this thing meaneth: *My way is hid.*

The way of Gods dealing with him, was a hidden way, in two reſpects.

Firſt, In regard of the cauſe of his affliction: It was hidden from him, why God had laid ſo ſore and ſo heavy a burthen upon him; and that is it which *Elihu* in *Chap.* 34. of this Book, *ver.* 31, 32. hints at, where he telleth *Job, Surely* (ſaith he) *it is meet to be ſaid unto God, that which I ſee not, teach thou me.* He anſwers ſuch a complaint as this. I (ſaith *Job*) cannot ſee the reaſon why God doth afflict me: *Elihu* tells him, *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, that which I ſee not, teach thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do ſo no more:* Lord, if thou wilt ſhew me that my ſin is the cauſe, and what ſin is the cauſe, I do here promiſe, I will lay down my ſin, and (through thy help) do ſo no more.

Sunt qui viam enarrãt viam elabendi. Druſ.

Or again, It was hidden in regard of the iſſue, or event. *My way is hid*; that is, I can ſee no paſſage out of this way; I cannot tell when theſe troubles will end; I ſee no help; I have no glimpſe of light breaking out to me in this way; it is a dark, a hidden way unto me: This darkneſs troubles him, as much as all his troubles. And it is, as if he had ſaid, I am ſo encompaſt with clouds, that I walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light: My life is ſo intangled, and wrapt up in troubles, that I ſee no way of deliverance, or eſcape.

And this expoſition ſeems moſt proper, if we take in the latter part of the verſe, where he ſaith, *And whom God hath hedged in:* This explains the hiding of his way, to be the hedging of his way; ſuch an encompaſſing of him about with ſorrows, that he could not make his way out.

In the firſt Chapter, you may remember, that Satan was much troubled, that God had made *a hedge about* Job: And now *Job* himſelf is much troubled, that God had made a hedge about him: I am the man, ſaith he, [**Whom God hath hedged in.**] That which before was the object of Satans envy, is now become the object of *Job*'s complaint, a hedge: Sure then it was not the ſame *hedge.* No; that which Satan complained of, and envied at, was a hedge of mercy, and a hedge of bleſſings, a hedge of favour, and of protection: But this which *Job* complaineth of, is a hedge of thorny troubles, and of pricking ſorrows: The former was (as we may ſpeak) *a hedge of Roſes*; and this was *a hedge of Bryars.* That was a hedge ſo high, and ſtrong, that no evil could come in, or break through, to annoy him: And this was a hedge ſo high, and ſtrong, that no good could come, or be brought unto him.

So then, take the ſence thus, *Why is light given to a man, whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* That is, why doth God continue my life, when I am in ſuch a condition, as that I can neither diſcover the reaſon why I came into it, nor am I able to diſcover any paſſage out of it.

And this is it which the Church complains of, (*Lam.* 3. 7.) *He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out*; and *ver.* 9. *He hath encloſed my wayes with hewen ſtones.* God had built up a wall (as it were) by Art, *with hewen ſtones*; he had ſet them ſo cloſe together, that there was no paſſing by, no getting through.

Obſerve hence, Firſt, *That affliction is uſually accompanied with much darkneſs.*

Affliction is often called darkneſs in Scripture. And as it is darkneſs without, ſo it often cauſeth darkneſs within. An afflicted perſon hath ſuch darkneſs upon his perſon, that he cannot diſcern, many times, either why God doth afflict him, or when God will make an end of his afflictions. That in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 50. 10.) is true of outward afflictions, as well as inward, *Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſs?* There's many an afflicted perſon walks in a way, hidden in a three-fold darkneſs. Firſt, The way is hid in the darkneſs of the cauſe for which he came into it. Secondly, The way is hid in the darkneſs of the event, how to get out of it. Thirdly, The way is hid in the darkneſs of his preſent duty, what to do in it. The way of affliction is often wrapt up, and hidden, in this three-fold darkneſs.

Further, Seeing *Job* ſpeaks of this as an addition to all his ſorrows, and as the complement of them all, that he was thus ſhut up and hedged in, and that his way was thus dark, in regard of the cauſe of it,

> Obſerve, That, *It increaſeth an affliction greatly, not to know the reaſon of an affliction; or to have the way of Gods dealings hidden from our eyes.*

It is a trouble, not to ſee the reaſon of things: The mind is exceedingly eaſed, when the underſtanding hath light: This made *Jeremy* inquire, *Why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* As if he had ſaid, If I could ſee the reaſon of it, it would ſatisfie me; but while thou keepeſt me in the dark, and I can give no account to my own ſoul, or thoſe that ask me, of this thy diſpenſation to wicked men, *This is the burthen of my ſoul.* It is uſually ſaid, *They are happy, who know the cauſes of things.* And in regard of the diſeaſes of the body, we ſay, *That a diſeaſe is half cured, when the cauſe of it is diſcovered:* But when a Phyſitian is in the dark, and cannot find out the cauſe of a diſeaſe, he muſt needs be in the dark for the remedy of it. So it is alſo with a man, in regard of any affliction, when he cannot find out the cauſe, he knoweth not what to pitch upon as a remedy. When *Rebeckah* (*Gen.* 25. 22.) had Twins in her womb, and they ſtrugled together within her, ſhe was much troubled, and nothing would ſatisfie her, until ſhe went to God to know the reaſon of the thing; *Lord* (ſaith ſhe) *why am I thus?* And when God had told her, that *Two Nations were in her womb; and that two manner of people ſhould be ſeparated from her bowels;* ſhe made no more complaints. So when there are ſuch ſtrivings, ſuch ſtruglings, and contrary motions of trouble in us, or about us, the ſoul goes to God, and inquires why it is thus? Lord, I am more troubled with the ignorance of my troubles, then with the weight, or ſmart of them.

Fœlix qui potuit rerũ cognoſcere cauſas.

Thirdly, Take the words as reſpecting the iſſue, or deliverance from trouble, and they afford us this Obſervation:

> That, *It is a great addition to an affliction, not to ſee, or diſcern, a way to eſcape, or get out of affliction.*

To be in an affliction, out of which there appears no paſſage, (unleſs the ſoul be mightily ſupported by the hand and power of Chriſt) brings within a ſtep of deſpair. The Apoſtle ſpeaks as much when he ſaith, (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) *There is no temptation hath taken hold of you, but that which is common to man;* (and then it follows,) *but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will, with the temptation, alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* As if he ſhould ſay, If God did not indeed diſcover, or make out to you ſome way of eſcaping, I muſt needs ſay, you were never able to bear it; but (ſaith he) God will make *a way for you to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it:* Meaning, that the opening of this way, would revive their ſpirits, and then they would be able (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) to bear it.

If ſo, then how ſhall the ſoul bear an affliction, when God inſtead of making a way to eſcape, doth as it were make a hedge to ſtop all eſcape? Therefore when the Lord would ſupport his people in their troubles, he promiſed that they ſhould have a door of hope opened to them, *I will give her the valley of* Achor *for a door of hope,* Hoſ. 2. 15. He would give her ſome appearance, ſome glimpſes and openings of deliverance, in and from their preſent dangers. It is threatned, (*Deut.* 28. 25.) *thou ſhalt come out one way againſt thine enemies, and flie ſeven wayes before them:* they ſhould flie many wayes, but they ſhould eſcape no way. *Thou ſhalt come out one way, and flie ſeven wayes,* that is, thou ſhalt trie this, and that, and every way to eſcape, but thou ſhalt find a hedge at every wayes end, to ſtop and hinder thy eſcape. We uſe to ſay of a man in a diſtreſſed condition, *He is in a wood, or in a wilderneſs.* And when God entangles men in their own deviſes, it is ſaid, *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and cauſeth them to wander in the wilderneſs, where there is no way,* Pſal. 107. 40. So *Pharaoh* ſaid of the children of *Iſrael, They are entangled in the land, the wilderneſs hath ſhut them in, Exod.* 14. 3. And when a people are as the children of *Iſrael* were, having a Sea before them, an Army behind them, and Mountains on either hand, then they may ſay (as *Job* did) *Their way is hid, and God hath hedged them in.*

Tentabis ſemper & diverſis viis effugere, ſed fruſtra, nuſquam tibi patebit effugium.

For my ſighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like water.

Here *Job* takes up the former Propoſition, and applyes it particularly to his own perſon. Before, he ſaid only in the general, *Why is light given to him that is in miſery? and why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* Now he ſaith in effect, it is thus with me, I am a man in miſery, and I am a man, whoſe way God hath hid and hedged in, wherefore then is my life continued? And he proves that he was in ſuch a condition, by the effects of it, *ſighs and roarings.* So that this verſe holds forth two things about *Job*'s ſorrow. Firſt, The continuance of it, in thoſe words, *My ſighing comes before I eat.* Secondly, The extremity of it, in thoſe, *My roarings are poured out, &c.* The Argument may be thus framed: That man is in extream and continual miſery, who doth not ſo much breath, as ſigh, who, when he would ſpeak, is forced to roar: But thus it is with me, *My ſighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like water,* therefore my miſery is extream and continual.

My ſighing cometh before I eat.] In the Hebrew it is word for word thus, *Before the face of my bread my ſighings come.* Which Hebraiſm, (*Before the face of my bread*) hath a great emphaſis in it: It notes the continuance of his ſorrows without any intermiſſion. When a thing is ſaid *to be before the face of another,* it notes an equal continuance with that, before the face of which it is ſaid to be. As in the negative, (*Exod.* 20. 3.) *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me,* ſo we tranſlate it: The Hebrew is, *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before my face;* that is, ſo long as I continue to be thy God, thou ſhalt have no other god; but I ſhall be thy God to all eternity, therefore thou ſhalt have no other gods but me, for ever. So in the affirmative, *Pſal.* 72. 5. where, under the type of *Solomon*'s Kingdom, the continuance of the Kingdom of Chriſt is propheſied, the *Holy Ghoſt* ſaith, *It ſhall continue ſo long, as the Sun and Moon endureth:* the Hebrew is, it ſhall continue *before the face of the Sun and of the Moon;* that is, there ſhall be an equal duration of the Kingdom of Chriſt, and of thoſe lights of Heaven, the Sun and the Moon: The Kingdom of Chriſt ſhall laſt as long as the world ſhall laſt.

לפני
לחמי
ἐις πρόσωπον ἄρτȣ μȣ̃ Aquila.

So then (according to this ſence) *Before the face of my bread my ſighings come,* is, as if he had ſaid, look how long I have my bread before me, look how much time I ſpend in eating, ſo much time I ſpend in ſighing, my ſorrowings are of the ſame continuance with my refreſhings. The phraſe imports the un-intermittedneſs (as we may ſo ſpeak) of his ſorrows; that he had no ſtop, no breathing time, which was not a ſighing time, no not for a meal time; while he was eating, with every bit of meat, he had a morſel of ſorrows: He might ſay as the Pſalmiſt, (*Pſal.* 102. 9.) *I have eaten aſhes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping;* when I drink, my tears flow into my cup; When I take in a few drops of comfort, I weep out ſtreams of ſorrow: Or my ſighings come and return ſo faſt upon me, that I have no time to eat my bread: I am ſo plyed and followed with theſe afflictions, that I have no leiſure to be comforted.

A Deo perpetua eſt hæc calamitas, ut ne cibi quidem aut ullius neceſſitas cauſa dolores poſſim fallere & uno momento à gemitibus aberrare. Vel tam frequentes mihi ſunt gemitus ut vix mihi tẽpus ſuperſit ad capiendũ cibum.

If at any time a man gets reſpite from his grief, it is when he eats; how reſpiteleſs then was *Job*'s grief, before whom ſorrow and ſighings ſate (as gueſts) continually at his table.

My roarings are powred out like water.

As the former words ſhewed the continuance, ſo this the extremity of *Job*'s ſorrows. It is a great affliction that makes a man of ſpirit ſpeak, or complain: . It is a great affliction that makes a man of ſpirit weep or mourn. How great an affliction then is it, which makes a man of ſpirit cry out and roar? When a man of courage roars, he is pained to purpoſe. *Job*, a man of ſpirit and courage, doth not only ſigh, but roar; ſighings are more ſecret ſorrows, but roarings muſt be heard; eſpecially, his roarings, which were *powred out like water.*

Metaphora à leonibus famelicis.
Iſa. 11.4.
Pſal. 46.3.

Roaring is the Lions voice, and here is an alluſion to the hungry Lion, roaring *on his prey*: Or to the troubled waves of the ſea, which alſo are ſaid to *roar*. Exceſſive ſorrow is often ſet forth by roaring. *Pſal.* 22. 1. *Why art thou ſo far from the voyce of my roaring?* ſaith *David*, typing the ſorrows of Chriſt: I do not only cry, but I roar out unto thee. Lord, why doſt thou not hear my ſtrong cries, cries like the roaring of the Lion, or the noiſe of troubled waters? So, *Pſal.* 32. 3. *David*, to ſhew his extremity of pain and trouble, while he kept in, and did not confeſs his ſin, ſpeaks thus, *while I kept ſilence* (while I ſmothered my ſin in ſecret) *I roared for the very diſquietneſs of my ſoul.* Silence in not confeſſing ſin, cauſes roaring under the guilt of ſin. Thoſe are great burdens of ſin, and great burdens of ſorrow, that cauſe roaring. *My roarings are powred out like water.*

This notes further yet, the abundance and the ſtrength of his ſorrows. *I am powred out like water* (I am, as it were, all melted into ſorrows) is ſaid of Chriſt, in that Pſalm of his paſſion (*Pſal.* 22. 14.) *I am powred out like water, my heart in the midſt of my bowels is like melted wax.* When the Prophet *Ezekiel* would ſhew how that people ſhould be affected with the tidings of their afflictions, he ſaith, *Every heart ſhall melt, and all hands ſhall be feeble, and every ſpirit ſhall faint, and all knees ſhall be weak as water,* (*chap.* 21. 7.) The hebrew is, *all knees ſhall go into water.* The ſorrows of repentance are expreſt by *the powring out of water,* to note, both the abundance of them, and the intenſiveneſs of them, in that known place, 1 *Sam.* 7. 9. *They gathered together to* Mizpeh, *and drew water, and powred it out before the Lord*, that is, they mourned abundantly, and they mourned with all their ſtrength.

Madet metu. Plaut.

How ſtrong and abundant the ſorrows of *Job* were, hath been often ſhewed before, and Obſervations drawn down from them; and therefore I ſhall need do no more then clear the words, and give the ſence. It followeth,

For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me.

כי
Particula (quia) *interdum non reddit cauſam, ſed vel ornatus vel aſſeverationis cauſa adhibetur.*

For the thing which I greatly feared.] The cauſal particle in the beginning, doth not alwayes infer a cauſe. This verſe is not a reaſon of what he ſpake before; but this particle is often uſed, in Scripture, for affirmation or illuſtration, and not as cauſal, or by way of demonſtration; as, *John* 4. 17. Chriſt tells the woman of *Samaria, Thou ſpeakeſt well, I have no husband*; the Greek is, *for I have no husband.* We tranſlate it only by way of aſſertion. So, *Mat.* 7. 23. *Then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you*; the Greek is, *Then I will profeſs unto them, for I never knew you*; we render it only as an aſſeveration: So very frequent in the Hebrew, the particle [*Chi*] which is here uſed, hath in it only the force of an affirmation; *For the thing I greatly feared, is come upon me*, that is, certainly, or aſſuredly, *the thing which I greatly feared, is come upon me*; as if *Job* ſhould make this as the concluſion and the ſum of all his complainings; this is it which now I muſt conclude, that *the thing which I greatly feared, is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me.*

פחד פחדתי
Metuere metum ita dicitur ut gaudere gaudium, pugnare pugnam, ἑορτάζειν ἑορτὴν. Druſ.

The thing which I greatly feared.] The Hebrew word is, *I feared a fear, and it is come upon me.* And ſo fear is in the Scripture, frequently put for the *thing feared*, by a Metonymie of the effect for the cauſe, the abſtract being put for the concrete; as, *Prov.* 1. 26. *I will mock when your fear cometh*; that is, when the trouble which you feared, ſhall come upon you: As if *Job* ſhould have ſaid, this evil is that which I have fore-ſeen and fore-thought; I had ſuch miſgrievings in my ſpirit long before this, that ſuch a black day might come upon me, and I might be thus hedged in: now I ſee my thoughts are come to paſs, and my conjectures prove true; the thing which I feared, and greatly feared, is come upon me. We tranſlate well, *I greatly feared*; the Hebrew is, *I feared a fear*: Such expreſſions raiſe the ſence; as when we are ſaid *to be bought with a price*, it notes, that there was a *great price* paid for our redemption: To rejoyce with joy, ſhews the greatneſs of joy. So here, to *fear a fear*, ſhews that he was in a great fear; as we tranſlate, *I feared a fear, I greatly feared.*

Here it may be queſtioned, whether theſe fears of *Job* were lawful? doth it become us to have ſuch miſgrievings of heart, in reſpect of our outward condition? The Apoſtle biddeth us, *be careful in nothing* (Phil. 4. 6.) and was it a virtue or a grace, was it commendable, or ſo much as approveable in *Job* to be fearful in all things? Chriſt rebukes his Diſciples, becauſe they were afraid in a ſtorm; and was it well in *Job*, that he was fearful in a Sun-ſhine, when he had the faireſt weather, and proſpered in all things? Doth it become a godly man, to be alwayes ſolicitous about his eſtate, and doubting that troubles will come? One would think there is trouble enough in troubles, when they come; a man ſhould not trouble himſelf with them before they come. Beſides, it is ſaid, *Prov.* 10. 24. reſpecting wicked men, *that God will bring that which they fear upon them*; ſo it ſeemeth, God is angry with thoſe, who are alwayes fearing, or ſtand poring upon ſuch and ſuch evils as they fear may come upon them: To theſe, God ſaith (*Iſa.* 66. 3.) *I alſo will chooſe their deluſions, and will bring their fear upon them*; becauſe you feared theſe things, you ſhall have your fear. As God gives ſome their prayers in anger, ſo he gives many their fears in anger; and it is as great a ſin, inordinately to fear, that God will take away the meat of our neceſſity or convenience, as it is to pray that God would give us meat to ſatisfie our luſts or wantonneſs.

To clear this, we muſt diſtinguiſh of fear, as to the purpoſe we have in hand. There are divers ſorts of fear.

Firſt, There is a fear of *wiſdom and caution,* and there is a fear of *torment and vexation.* That which the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks (1 *John* 4. 18.) *Fear hath torment*, is not meant of all fear: there is a fear that is a tormenting paſſion, a fear which diſtracts and divides the thoughts about troubles which may come; and there is a fear, which only directs us to avoid or prevent the coming of trouble.

Secondly, There is a fear, which is oppoſed to comfort. It was *David*'s ſin, that he wanted the fear oppoſed to ſecurity; when he ſaid, *In my proſperity I ſhall never be moved: Lord, by thy favour, thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong*, Pſal. 30. 6, 7. The fear of *Job*, in his proſperity, was oppoſed to this ſecurity; he did not ſay, *I ſhall never be moved*; he thought he might be moved: The favour of God had made his mountain ſtrong, yet he knew it had but the ſtrength of clay, and therefore might be caſt down. This was his fear; he looked upon creatures, as they are, mutable and moveable. Chriſt ſpeaks of a faith of miracles, which will remove mountains; and that fear is not contrary to ſaving faith, which cauſeth us to think, that our mountains may be removed. *Job*'s fear was grounded on the uncertainty of creature-comforts; he knew wealth was *brittle ware*, and might quickly receive a crack. This fear we ought to carry about us, in regard of our ſpiritual eſtates; *though grace be everlaſting ware*, though we are high-built, and full-grown in grace; though through the favour of God, our mountain of holineſs and comforts be very ſtrong, yet we muſt not be ſecure; though we are *high-built*, we muſt not be *high-minded.* Hence the Apoſtle *Paul* warns the believing Gentiles, that they ſhould fear: I grant, ye are in a good eſtate, in compariſon of the Jews; they are caſt off, ye are graffed in; yet let me give you this caution, *Be not high-minded, but fear.* That fear which is oppoſed to preſumption and ſecurity, is a good and neceſſary fear, in the beſt of our eſtate, whether in grace or nature, whether in worldly or heavenly riches. And ſuch was the fear of *Job*.

Rom. 11. 20.

Thirdly, There is a fear which makes us provide for an evil day, and there is a fear which hindreth us from enjoying the comforts of a good day. The former was in *Job*; doubtleſs

leſs his fear in good dayes, made him diligent to provide for the evil day. As it is ſaid of *Noah* (*Heb.* 11. 7.) *That* Noah *being warned of God, of things not ſeen as yet, through faith, moved with fear, prepared an Ark, for the ſaving of his houſe.* *Noah* knew the flood would come, this holy fear ſet him awork to provide an Ark. It is an argument both of wiſdom and of grace, in a calm, to provide for a ſtorm; in peace, to conſider what to do in a time of war; in health, to lay up thoughts about our ſickneſs; & in a day when the light of Gods countenance ſhines into our hearts, and we walk in the comforts of the holy Ghoſt, then to think, a night of deſertion may come; and what ſhall I do, if I ſhould walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light? Such as this, was the fear which *Job* feared.

Fourthly, There is a fear which makes us diſtruſt God, that he will afflict us; and there is a fear, which keepeth us from doing that, which may provoke God to afflict us: This was *Job*'s fear, as was ſhewed (*chap.* 1. 1.) *He feared God, and eſchewed evil.* He was loth to grieve and offend God, or give him any occaſion to be angry.

Laſtly, There is a fear, which is oppoſed to *hardneſs of heart*; and a fear, that is oppoſed to *courage of heart*. *Job*'s fear was oppoſed to hardneſs of heart; of this, *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 28. 14.) *Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwayes.* And to clear what fear he means, he adds in the next words; *But he that hardneth his heart, ſhall fall into miſchief.* Where we ſee, Firſt, That there is a fear oppoſed to hardneſs of heart. And, Secondly, That to fear that fear alwayes, even in our greateſt proſperity, is not only our duty, but our happineſs; that fear will not interrupt our comforts, but comfort us. Yea, this fear doth not only conſiſt with comfort, but with courage; and though we may fall into the troubles which we thus fear, yet we ſhall not fall under them: Such as this was *Job*'s fear.

So then, to take up all; *Job*'s fear was a *fear* of wiſdom and caution, not of torment and vexation; a *fear* oppoſed to ſecurity and preſumption, not to joy and conſolation; a *fear* that made him diligent to prepare againſt an evil day, not a fear that did eat out all the comforts of a good day; a *fear* which kept him from doing that, which might move God to afflict him; not a *fear* which made him diſtruſt, that God would afflict him; a *fear* oppoſed to hardneſs of heart, not a *fear* oppoſed to courage and ſtrength of heart. Such a fear as this, is a holy fear; ſuch a fear as this, is a good companion in our beſt eſtate: this fear, and our comforts may well joyn together; this fear will not trouble, but regulate our lives; not break, but ſweeten our ſleep. Hence obſerve,

That, *Holy wiſdom, ſanctified prudence, biddeth us fear, and prepare for evil, in our good dayes.*

Sapienti meliora ſunt in votis, deteriora verò in expectatione. Plut. *in Tranquil.*

I was afraid of theſe things, ſaith *Job*: We muſt not ſuſpect, but we ought often to think of evils, before they come. A wiſe moral man, much more, a wiſe Chriſtian, while he is earneſtly praying for good, is alſo carefully providing for evil. Leſt the Diſciples ſhould forget trouble in times of peace, Chriſt ſaith to them, *Behold* (Mat. 24. 25.) *I have told you before*; now you are at pretty good eaſe, it may be, you think, it will be thus with you alwayes; but take heed of ſuch thoughts, I have told you what will be hereafter; *Behold, I have told you before.* And again (*John* 16. 33.) *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye ſhall have tribulation.* In the peace we have with Chriſt, we ſhould expect tribulation from the world. The Spirit of God often hints ſuch things aforehand, to the ſpirits of his people, that they may not be ſurprized. *Paul* teſtifies (*Acts* 20.23.) *that the holy Ghoſt every where witneſſed that bonds and afflictions did abide him*; he lookt for trouble in all places, this made him both patient under, and victorious over all his troubles. Ungodly men feel trouble, before they ſee it; and are often paſt all hope, before they have had any fear; when they have a good day, they think their day will be an eternity, and laſt for ever. Thoſe in *Amos* (chap. 6. 3.) were merry, they were ſinging and feaſting, eating the fat, and drinking the ſweet; and what do they in theſe their good, their only good dayes? The Prophet ſhews us in the next words; *They put the evil day far from them*: they would have no thought that their eſtate might change, when they had a mind their eſtate ſhould continue. Hence the Prophet *Iſaiah* (chap. 28. 15. deſcribes them, making a covenant with death, and coming to an agreement with hell; and then they ſuppoſed themſelves ſafe and under covert, come what would. The Prophets indeed have been talking of judgments and ſcourges; but what of that? we have got a protection, we have covenants in our pockets, will be our ſecurity; ſo they were promiſed, and ſo they believed, as their words witneſs; *If the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſs through, it ſhall not come near us.* Theſe are the thoughts of fooliſh and ungodly men, they make bargains and agreements, as it were, with all troubles, that they ſhall not be touched; others may ſmart, but they have taken order for their own indemnity: *They have made lies their refuge, and under falſhood have they hid themſelves.* And ſo they call chearfully for their wine; come fetch wine, and *we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drink*; and then conclude confidently (as if all the world, and time were at their command) *To morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant*, Iſa. 56. 12. When a wiſe man falleth into trouble, *he falleth forward*, that is, he falleth into thoſe troubles which he did foreſee; but when an ungodly man, a wicked man falleth into trouble, *he falleth backward*; he falleth into thoſe evils, which he never thought of, much leſs, feared. Many of the people of God, at this day, do, and may ſay of the evils which are now upon us, the things which we feared are come; theſe ſtorms were ſeen long ago in the clouds; yea, in the Sun-ſhine, in fair dayes; theſe foul rainie dayes were foreſeen: and they who have foreſeen them, and foreſeen them with ſuch an eye of faith and holy fear, as we have deſcribed, are in beſt caſe to grapple with them, and will be gainers by them. It is well for us, when we can ſay, the things we feared, are come upon us. They are in a ſad condition, upon whom thoſe evils fall, which they never feared; when troubles come, they go neareſt their hearts, who have put them fartheſt off, before they came. Hence obſerve,

Secondly, That, *The more preparing fears we have before troubles come, the leſs we are preſt with fears, when trouble comes.*

If we conſider *Job*, how unmoveable he ſtood the charge and aſſault of theſe afflictions, how he wreſtled with all the diſtreſſes, which at once took hold of him, we are to look (next to the ſupport he had immediately from Chriſt) to this wiſe caution of his, that he feared ſuch a ſtorm might overtake him, before he got to his journeyes end: He thought theſe things might come, and therefore laid in proviſion for them, againſt they came. Thoſe blows wound deepeſt, which we expect not. Dangers unknown, do eaſily ſurprize us and oppreſs us; whereas thoſe which we fear and think of, may either be prevented in their coming, or we may be provided againſt they come. That which the *Naturaliſts* ſay of the *Cockatrice*, that if the *Cockatrice* ſee a man firſt, the man dieth; but if the man ſeeth the *Cockatrice* firſt, the *Cockatrice* dies; is an experienced truth, reſpecting the point we have in hand; that if troubles ſee us firſt, we die; but if we ſee them firſt, they die; that is, their ſting and ſtrength (as to us) is much abated. Dangers are moſt felt, where they are not foreſeen; and ſometime, being foreſeen, they are not felt at all; for a prepared expectation doth either weaken them, or ſtrengthen us, make us more able to ſuſtain them, or them leſs able to hurt us; whereas indeed every croſs, which findeth us ſecure, hath an advantage to leave us deſperate. When *Nabal* heard of danger paſt, which he never dreamt might come, *his heart died in him like a ſtone* (1 Sam. 25.) How then had he been aſtoniſhed into a ſtone, if he had ſeen the evil falling upon him? Such can ill bear trouble, who look for nothing but comfort. It was an addition to the affliction of that afflicted people (*Jer.* 8. 15.) *When they looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble*; If they who are in trouble, are more troubled, when they cannot have the peace they looked for, then ſurely they muſt be more perplexed with trouble (when it comes) who enjoying peace, never had a thought, that trouble would come. When a people are ſo far from looking for evil, that they look for nothing but good, and build upon it, that they ſhall never ſee ſorrow; then to ſee ſorrow, is a killing ſight, The ſorrows of *Babylon* ſhall be

Gravius eſt vulnus quod non expectatur, & illa ægrius tolerantur, quibus homo ſe non prius aſſuefacit.

mightily increas'd and augmented, doubled and trebled upon her, becauſe when they are coming upon her, ſhe ſhall be ſaying, *I ſit as a Queen, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow*; ſhe was fearleſs, and ſhe ſhall be comfortleſs: Trouble will lie heavy enough upon us, when we look and prepare for it; but it will be intolerable to thoſe, who never look'd for, nor laid in one thought of preparation againſt it's coming. The fool in the Goſpel, ſaid to his ſoul, *take thine eaſe, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*: But it is beſt for us, when we have abundance of outward goods, to ſay to our ſouls, *theſe may be loſt in a few hours*: Therefore ſay to thy ſelf, in the time of thy fulneſs,, what if a day of emptying ſhould come? ſay, when you are rich, it may be, before I die, I may be poor; what ſhall I do then? Now I have a houſe, it may be, before I die, or within a few dayes, I ſhall be turned out of doors; in what poſture do I find my ſelf for ſuch a condition? Now I am at liberty, and enjoy my friends; it may be, ſhortly I may be caſt into a priſon, and come into the hand of enemies; now I have my wife and children about me, *my vine and my olive-plants, at, and round about my table*; I may ſhortly be deprived of them; and, O my ſoul, how canſt thou bear theſe changes? It is good to put theſe caſes to our ſelves now; ſurely *Job* often tutor'd his ſpirit with ſuch queſtions as theſe, and catechized his heart in them from day to day; hence he ſaith, *The things I feared, are come upon me.* To proceed;

I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, nor was I quiet; yet trouble came.

This is both an addition to, and an expoſition of the former verſe. Theſe words explain what he meant by ſaying, *I feared a fear*; even this, *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt*, &c.

I was not in ſafety.] No? was not *Job* in ſafety in the dayes of his proſperity? Is it not ſaid, *that he had a hedge about him, and ſuch a hedge as the Devil could not break through, to hurt him?* and was not *Job* in ſafety then?

לא שלותי

Significat in quiete vel pace agere, vel tranquil'è & in otio vivere. Nec multum abludit à voce Hebræa *Latinum ſalus.* Moller *in* Pſal.122. 6. Shiloh *non tantum habet ſignificationem paſſivam, quaſi dicas, tranquillum, fœlicem, cui omnia proſpere cedunt; ſed activam etiam, ut* Shiloh *ſit ſoſpitator, ſeu promiſſæ fœlicitatis author.*

The hebrew word, from the root [*Shalah*] doth alſo ſignifie, I was not ſecure, I was not in ſecurity; or, I did not ſit ſafe in my own thoughts, in my own opinion; I did not live ſecurely or without fear in my moſt flouriſhing dayes. And from this root, *Chriſt* is called *Shiloh*, Gen 49. 10. *The Scepter ſhall not depart from* Judah *till* Shiloh *come. Chriſt* is *Shiloh*, that is, he, in whom all perſons may ſecurely truſt; you may ſit down in ſafety in Chriſt, and reſt your ſouls for ever; he is *Shilah*, our preſerver; and the *Hebrews* uſe that word to ſignifie the fleſhy mantle in which the infant is wrapped in the mothers belly, becauſe the infant lieth there quietly and ſecurely; it is out of fear, and hath no thought of any danger, but lieth ſecurely, *out of harms way*. So that when *Job* ſaith, *I was not in ſafety*, he means, I did not think my ſelf ſafe, or beyond the reach of danger, I was not taken up in outward contentments; I did not look upon my poſſeſſions as perpetulties, or upon my houſe, as that which ſhould endure for ever, or *my dwelling-place to all generations. Job* was not like the great Monarch of *Babylon*, (Dan. 4. 4.) who ſaid, *I* Nebuchadnezzar *was at reſt in my houſe* (it is the ſame word which is uſed in the Text) I, ſaith *Nebuchadnezzar*, counted my ſelf the greateſt man in the world, and I thought none could touch or moleſt me; *I was at reſt and ſafe:* We have ſuch a deſcription made by the Prophet, of a whole Nation, as this King makes of his own perſon, *Jer.* 49. 31. *Ariſe, get ye up unto the wealthy Nation that dwelleth at eaſe*; or (it is the ſame word) to a Nation without either fear or care, a ſecure Nation; as it is explained by the words following, *which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone.* If you come to a mans houſe that hath neither lock nor key, nor door, nor bar, you may well reſolve, that he dwelleth ſecurely, and is in ſafety. And if you come to a City that hath neither gates nor bars, you will ſay, either this City hath no enemies, or elſe it fears none. A City without gates and bars, is the embleme of ſecurity. *Job*'s temper was directly oppoſed to this; *I was not in ſafety.*

Neither had I reſt, nor was I quiet.

Theſe two latter expreſſions are of the ſame importance with the former: Both theſe words have been opened at the thirteenth verſe of this Chapter, both being there applied to reſt and quietneſs in the grave. There he ſaid, if he had died, he had been at reſt and quiet; but all his life-time, he had no reſt, neither was he quiet. But is this agreeable to the duty or character of a godly man, to ſay he hath no reſt, he is not quiet? Surely a godly man ought to be quiet, when all the world is hudled together in confuſion; when the mountains skip like lambs, and the little hills like young ſheep, then, even then, he ought to ſtand like mount *Sion*, that cannot be moved: And did it become *Job*, or is it any part of his commendation, that in the times of his peace, he had no reſt? When the Prophet ſhews the temper of wicked men, he compares them to *the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt*, Iſa. 57. 20. It ſhould ſeem that *Job* was like a troubled ſea; for himſelf ſaith, he could not reſt. I anſwer, by diſtinguiſhing, firſt, of a twofold reſt; there is a reſt of contentation, and a reſt of confidence. *Job* had not a reſt of confidence, he truſted not in his outward peace; but he had the reſt of contentation, even in his outward troubles. A wicked mans conſcience is like a troubled ſea, when he enjoyes outward peace; but *Job* enjoyed peace of conſcience while his outward eſtate was like a troubled ſea: He was fully ſetled in his mind, when he had no reſt; and was ſatisfied in ſpirit, when he had not this quietneſs: ſo that when he ſaith, *I had no reſt, neither was I quiet*; his meaning is only this, I never placed my happineſs in theſe things, I never built my hopes upon creatures, I never truſted upon them, nor expected much from them. Or, if you will more clearly apprehend the ſence of this laſt verſe, you may read it in that contrary practice of the rich man, *Luke* 12. 19. His houſe was full, but his heart was fuller of the creature; and he made the creature both his rock to build upon, and his pillow to ſleep upon; when his ground brought forth plentifully, and he had built new barns to lay up his fruits, then he layes himſelf down to ſleep; and that he might ſleep quickly and quietly, he ſings a *requiem* to his ſoul; *Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry*; no face can be more unanſwerable to a face; heaven and hell, light and darkneſs, are not more unlike, then theſe words of the rich man are unanſwerable in likeneſs, to thoſe words of *Job*. That rich mans words are the affirmatives of all *Job*'s negatives; and may be thus rendred in full ſence: I was (and I reſolved I ſhould ſo continue) *in ſafety, at reſt and quiet. Job*'s eſtate was as full as his, but his heart was emptied of all creature-confidence and complacence; I (ſaid he) never thought my ſelf the ſafer for theſe, and therefore I ſaid to my ſoul, ſoul, take not thy reſt, quiet not thy ſelf in theſe: this is his intent in ſaying, *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, nor was I quiet.* It follows,

Yet (though it was thus with me) **trouble came**; though my heart was looſe from the creature, yet I loſt all I had in the creature: though I made not the world my comfort, yet I found ſorrow in the world; I never expected much peace in it, none at all from it; yet trouble came: ſuch trouble came, as might move and ſhake me to pieces. *Job*, you ſee, when he had abundance of all outward things, yet ſaith, he was not in *ſafety, and at quiet*; *he did not reſt in or upon them.* Hence obſerve,

A godly man never ſetteth up his reſt in Creatures.

Though he have never ſo much riches in poſſeſſion, yet he doth not make riches his portion. He lives by that caution (*Pſal.* 62. 10) *If riches flow in or encreaſe, yet ſet not thine heart upon them.* In the higheſt flood and ſpring-tide of worldly proſperity, we ſhould keep our hearts within the channel: When riches are increaſed into a mountain, and (to the eye of nature) into a mountain of rocks, yet then do not ſet thy heart upon them, as upon a foundation, (ſo the Hebrew word imports) to ſettle thy contentments. All the creatures in heaven and earth, are not ſtrong enough to bear the weight of a mans heart (God only can do that) who is *the rock of ages*, or *an everlaſting ſtrength*, Iſa. 26. 3. All, beſides him, is a foundation of ſand, and ſo a godly man takes them. What nature looks at as a foundation of *rocks*, that grace ſees to be a foundation of *ſand*, and therefore will not reſt upon it; neither indeed can it. A godly man, in his afflictions, is, *as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things* (2 Cor. 6. 10.) and in his abundance, *he hath all things, but poſſeſſeth nothing*; for he ſo poſſeſſes things, as if he did not poſſeſs them; as the Apoſtles counſel is (1 *Cor.* 7. 31.) *He marries as if he married not*; *he*

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weeps, as if he wept not; he rejoyces, as if he rejoyced not; he buyes, as if he poſſeſſed not; becauſe the faſhion of this world paſſeth away. It was an excellent ſpeech of *Luther*, concerning worldly things, *I have proteſted, that I will never be ſatisfied with the creature* (*this is to be a Proteſtant in deed, as well as in truth.*) A godly man is an *Epicure in Chriſt*, he would never play the *Epicure, but in Chriſt, and in God*: In them, and towards them, he gives his affections their full ſwing, and as a wicked man is ſaid *to enlarge his deſires* (after the Earth) *as Hell* (Hab. 2. 5.) So he enlarges *his deſires* (after Heaven) *as Heaven*, and complains his deſires are no larger. In the thoughts of Chriſt he ſits down, and would take his fill; he ſaith, *I am ſafe in him, I am quiet and at reſt; He ſaith to his ſoul, ſoul, doſt thou ſee* that Chriſt, *and doſt thou take notice of thoſe promiſes? Thou haſt goods laid up in him, in them for many years, yea, for eternity; ſoul, take thine eaſe, take it fully, thou haſt riches, thou haſt an eſtate that can never be ſpent; ſoul, eat, drink and be merry; his blood is drink indeed, and his fleſh is meat indeed; joy in Chriſt is joy indeed, unſpeakable joy here, and fulneſs of joy hereafter: In his preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at his right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.* Until the ſoul pitches thus on Chriſt, it is not in *ſafety*, much leſs in *reſt* or *quiet*. As the *Needle* in the *Compaſs* is in continual motion till it points towards the *North*, where (as it is conceived) there are Rocks of Loadſtone, with which it ſympathizeth, ſo the ſoul is in continual motion, until it points to Chriſt, who (we are ſure) is that living Rock, with whom all Believers ſympathize; and the true Loadſtone which attracts all Believers to him. A Believer, like *Noah*'s Dove, finds no reſt (all the world over) for the *feet of his ſoul*, until he returns to *this Ark* of ſafety and ſalvation: And therefore after all his flights and flutterings among the Creatures, he ſaith (with the Pſalmiſt) *Return unto thy reſt* (thy Chriſt) *O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee*, Pſal. 116. 7. Thou haſt been abroad in the world, and that (like a narrow hearted Maſter) deals niggardly with thee: If thou ſhouldeſt ſtay long, either in the ſervice of, or dependance upon the world, the world would ſtarve thee: Therefore return unto thy reſt in the Lord; for the Lord hath dealt (and will yet deal more) bountifully with thee, O my ſoul.

Laſtly, In that *Job* ſaith, *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt*, &c. *yet trouble came*; we may obſerve,

> That, *The more our hearts are looſened from the creatures, the more aſſurance we may have of enjoying the Creatures.*

It is as if *Job* had ſaid, I was not faſtened to the world, my heart was not engaged to any thing on this ſide Chriſt; and this was the faireſt, the moſt probable way for the continuance of my outward comforts; *yet trouble came.* The Redditive Particle, *yet*, ſuppoſes ſomewhat in reaſon or probability at leaſt, that might have carried it another way. As when the Prophet *Amos*, reckoning up the judgments of God upon his people, ſpeaks to them thus in his name (chap. 4. 6, 8, 9.) *I have ſent you cleanneſs of teeth, yet you have not returned unto me; I have ſent you the peſtilence, the ſword, yet have you not returned unto me.* The *yet*, ſhews there was great reaſon God ſhould expect their return, or that he had done that, which, in all probability, might have cauſed them to return, when he ſent thoſe judgments. So here, when *Job* ſaith, *I was not in ſafety*, &c. *yet trouble came*; the *yet*, implies that there was ſomewhat even in that unquietneſs, which gave him hopes of ſettlement in his outward comforts: It ſeems to carry ſuch a ſence in it, as if he had in more words explained himſelf thus; *Had I dwelt ſecurely, and given my ſelf up to the contentments of my fleſh, or truſted in an arm of fleſh for ſafety, I ſhould not have wondred at my calamity, or thought ſtrange of my trouble; but this is a riddle which I cannot yet expound, that when my heart was no way ſet upon my eſtate, my eſtate ſhould fall: That when I reſted not in the creature, I ſhould meet with ſuch troubles in the creature.* This is not the manner of God, it is not uſual for God to do thus in his diſpenſations toward his people and ſervants. *It is very rare that he takes their outward comforts from them, when they are not taken with their comforts.* Hence it is (as I apprehend) that *Job* putteth it in with a *yet trouble came. This way of God with me, is out of the ordinary courſe of Providence.* I confeſs, *Mercer*, a very learned Commentator, doth not favour this expoſition of laying ſuch a weight upon the particle *yet*, and therefore renders the Original (*Vau*) as a bare Copulative. *I was not in ſafety*, &c. *And trouble came.* Yet having the authority of our Tranſlation, and the frequent uſe of the word to that ſence in other places, we may venture upon it; yea, I think it no venture, but a certain advantage both to the Text and to our ſelves. And I am certain the poſition is true, though the expoſition ſhould not prove ſo: For the truth is, troubles are never ſo near, as when we put them furtheſt off; nor is the world ever ſo unſure to us, as when we make ſureſt of it. God often pulls their comforts from them, whoſe hearts are glued to their comforts; As it is ſaid of thoſe in 1 *Theſ.* 5. 3. *When they ſhall ſay, peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction ſhall come upon them, as pain upon a woman in travail, and they ſhall not eſcape*; Mark, when they ſhall ſay, that is, conclude all's their own, when out of the abundance of their hearts, their mouths ſpeak of nothing *but of peace and ſafety, all is well, and all will be well, then ſudden deſtruction cometh*: When a man ſaith, I have riches, I have a full eſtate, I have honour, I am a happy man, I may take my reſt; then poverty, want, diſgrace, miſery, vexations and troubles, fall upon him as an armed man, Thus for the moſt part, God wreſts the creatures ſooneſt out of their hands, who hold them faſteſt. In *Luke* 17. Chriſt inſtanceth in the *dayes of* Noah, and *in the dayes of* Lot, when they were ſecure, buying and ſelling, building and planting, marrying and giving in marriage, as if the world had been their own; and as if they meant to take the heart of it out, and leave a poor world for the next age, then the flood came, and then fire came, and they, with theirs, were ſwept away and conſumed, as in a moment. The Maſter of the ſervant in the Goſpel, *ſhall come in a day.* In what day? Firſt, In a day when he looked not for him. Secondly, In a day when his heart was let out upon the creature; *When he ſhall be eating and drinking with the drunken, when he ſhall be ſmiting his fellow-ſervants*; when he ſhall think all ſure, and the day his own; *in that day ſhall his Maſter come, even in the day that he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not aware*, Luke 12. 45, 46. To have the ſpirit ſteept and drencht in worldly pleaſures or profits, endangers us to ſome ſudden ſweeping judgment: And when we value the enjoyment of the creature more then we ought, we ſhall not long enjoy it ſo much as we might. Earthly things fail us ſooneſt, when we truſt in them, or think our ſelves ſafe by them.

Non placet quod quidã putant Jobum *velle hoc loco, quòd non intumuerit, neq; inſolentior fuit rebus affluentibus, & tamen in hæc mala inciderit*, Mercer.

From this obſerve (in paſſage) a vaſt difference between God and the world, between earthly things and ſpiritual; the way to hold ſpiritual things faſt, is to take faſt hold of them, to cleave to them with a full purpoſe of heart never to let them go. If you carry looſe affections towards Chriſt, you may quickly loſe the comforts of his preſence: The more we reſt upon Chriſt, the more we truſt on God, and make him our ſafety, the more ſafe we are. *Him doth God eſtabliſh in peace, in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed upon him, even becauſe he truſts upon him*, Iſa. 26. 3. We have moſt peace from God, when we expect moſt; and may look for more reſt and quiet, when we reſt quietly in him, and ſay, *In God I have enough*; yea, as *Jacob* (Gen. 33. 11.) *I have all.* But if you would have reſt in the world, ſay as the Prophet *Micah* directs (*chap.* 2. 10.) *This is not our reſt.* Keep your hearts at a due diſtance from the world, and you ſhall (moſt probably) keep the world. What Chriſt ſpeaks of this life, is true of the things of this life; he that will loſe (that is, he who is ready) to loſe the things of this life, ſhall ſave them; and he that will ſave, that is, he who is reſolved to ſave the things of this life, ſhall loſe them; put them out of your hearts, and you may hold them in your hands: you ſtand firmeſt upon the earth, when you do but touch it, and touch it (as a round body doth a plain) only in a point. You are freeſt from danger, when you ſay, we are not *in ſafety*; freeſt from motion, when you ſay, *we are not in reſt*: And when in *Job's* ſenſe) you are *not quiet*, then (according to the ordinary dealings of God, with his people) you are *furtheſt from trouble.*

So much concerning this Chapter, containing *Job*'s bitter curſe upon the day of his birth, and his vehement expoſtulation about the continuance of his life.

His *Three Friends* ſtood ſilent all this while, much divided between compaſſion and indignation; they pitied his ſad afflictions, but they were angry (and they thought they had reaſon to be angry, in the behalf of God) with his impatience and complaint. Their zeal kindled, and their hearts waxed hot within them; while they were thus mute and muſing, the fire burned and brake forth; at laſt they ſpake (every man in his order) with their tongues: A hot diſpute enſues; *Eliphaz* begins, the reſt follow: After a long ventilation and debate, God himſelf (appearing as Moderator) ſtates the queſtion between them, determines and concludes for *Job* againſt thoſe three; *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath*, chap. 42. 7. *To this God the moſt wiſe, the only wiſe God, the infallible moderator of all perſons, actions, things and queſtions, both in Heaven and upon the Earth, be glory and praiſe for ever*, Amen.

TO

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH

AND SEVENTH CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER:

To thoſe chiefly of this *CITY*, who have been the MOVERS, and are the PROMOTERS of this WORK.

SIRS,

Your continued Care and labour of Love, engages a like degree of both, for the growth of this Infant-work. *And therefore (though in the midſt of manifold diverſions) theſe pieces are ventured out. We live in an Age (O that we could live it) wherein the* hand of Providence *works* glorioufly, yea, terribly: *Having then got three or four ſteps further into this* Book of Providence, *it will not be unſeaſonable to ſhew you* the Prints *of them: Eſpecially ſeeing this Hiſtory of* Job*'s Affliction, looks ſo like a Propheſie of ours; and (almoſt in every Line) gives us ſome Lineament of our preſent troubles and diſtempers, of our hopes and fears.*

In the three former Chapters we had a Narrative *of the Caſe, and of thoſe occurrences out of which the Queſtion here debated receives its ſtate; as alſo the bringing together of the* Interlocutors *or perſons maintaining this Diſcourſe; as we may alwayes obſerve in the writings of the* Ancients, *whether Natural, Moral or Divine, which are compoſed into Dialogues or Diſputes.*

This great Divinity-act (*one of the greateſt ſurely and moſt ſolemn, I think the firſt that ever was held out in ſuch a formality, in the world*) *is principally ſpent upon that* Noble probleme, How the Juſtice and Goodneſs of God can be ſalved, while his Providence diſtributes good to the evil, and evil to the good? *A Queſtion ſtarted and toucht in many Books of the Holy Scriptures; but is here* (ex profeſſo) *purpoſely handled; Firſt, In a very long Diſputation between* Job *the* Reſpondent, and his three Friends Opponents; *Then in a full Determination, Firſt, By* Elihu, *an acute and wiſe; then by* God himſelf, the moſt wiſe, and infallible Moderator.

The Method here obſerved is after the manner of the Schools (pro *and* contra) *every one of the four Diſputants having his ſeveral Opinion, and each one his arguments in favour of his own. Which, yet, are not preſented in that affected plainneſs of the* Schoolmen, *with their down-right* (videtur quod ſic, probatur quod non) This I affirm, this I approve; this I deny, this diſprove. The Pen-men *of the* Holy Ghoſt *never diſcuſs Queſtions ſo; no, nor any of the* old Philoſophers. *This covert carriage of their Opinions, and cloſe contexture of their Arguments, Anſwers and Replies about them, render the Book ſomewhat dark and obſcure to the Readers meditation. And therefore it will be a Deſign not unprofitable (if that end offered at, may be attained) briefly to draw them forth, and ſet them before you in a more open light. And doubtleſs, what they hold, and by what* Mediums *they mannage their proofs, may (by the bleſſing of God, upon ſerious thoughts, and frequent reviews) be made out to a very great plainneſs.*

Towards which, it is obſervable, that there are many threds of the ſame colour and ſubſtance, mixt and inter-woven by the Diſputants throughout this whole Diſcourſe. And that, though the three Opponents, with one conſent, ſet up Job, *as their common* Mark *to ſhoot at; yet they take up very different ſtandings, if not different levels, varying each from other in ſome things, as well as all (upon the main) from him.*

The reaſon of the former is this, becauſe there are ſome common Principles, *wherein they all agree; which, if we abſtract, with what is ſpoken in the illuſtration of them, taking in alſo thoſe* Concluſions *which ſpring from them, as their* firſt-born: *Then the remainder will ſhew us that proper and diſtinctive Opinion which each of them holds about this* grand Queſtion of Providence; *the events and diſtribution whereof, ſeem ſo croſs-handed in giving trouble and ſorrow to godly men, joy and proſperity to the wicked.*

There are three Principles *wherein* Job *concurs with his three friends ; and a fourth, wherein they three concur againſt him.*

The three, wherein all four agree, are theſe ;

Firſt, That all the afflictions and calamities which befal man, fall within the eye and certain knowledge of God.

Secondly, That, God is the author and efficient Cauſe, the orderer and diſpoſer of all thoſe afflictions and calamities.

Thirdly, That, In regard of his moſt holy Majeſty, and unqueſtionable Soveraignty, he neither doth, nor can do any wrong or injury to any of his creatures, whatſoever affliction he layes, or how long ſoever he is pleaſed to continue it upon them.

Theſe three Principles *and ſuch Concluſions as are immediately deducible from them, are copiouſly handled and inſiſted upon by them all. In purſuance whereof, they all ſpeak very glorious things of the* Power, Wiſdom, Juſtice, Holineſs and Soveraignty of the Lord. *In proclaiming every of which Attributes, the tongue of* Job, *like a ſilver Trumpet, lifts up the name of God ſo high, that he ſeems to drown the ſound of the other three, and makes their praiſe almoſt ſilent.*

But Job's *three Friends proceed to a* fourth Principle; *which he utterly denies ; about which, ſo much of his anſwer, as is contradictory to their objections and rejoynders, wholly conſiſts. That, their fourth Principle ſeems to be bottom'd upon two grounds.*

Firſt, That, whoſoever is good, and doth good, ſhall receive a preſent good reward, according to the meaſure of the good he hath done ; and, That whoſoever is wicked, and doth wickedly, ſhall be paid with preſent puniſhments, according to the meaſure of his Demerits.

Secondly, That if (at any time) a wicked man flouriſh in outward proſperity, yet his flouriſhing is very momentany, and ſuddenly (in this life) turns to, or ends in viſible judgments: And, that (if at any time) a godly man be withered with adverſity, yet his withering is very ſhort, and ſuddenly (in this life) turns to, or ends in viſible Bleſſings.

Upon theſe two Grounds or Suppoſitions, *they raiſe and build their* fourth Principle, *from which, they* three *make continual Batteries upon the Innocency of* Job. *We may conceive the Poſition in this frame ;*

That, Whoſoever is greatly afflicted, and is held long under the preſſure of his affliction, that man is to be numbered with the wicked, though no other evidence or witneſs appear or ſpeak a word againſt him. Hence,

The peculiar Opinion of Eliphaz *riſes thus ;* That, All the outward evils which overtake man in the courſe of this life, are the proceeds of his own ſin, and ſo from the proceſs of Gods Juſtice. *He gives us this ſence, for his, in expreſs terms,* chap. 4. 8. They that plow iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame: *Which he applies perſonally to* Job (*chap.* 22. 5, 6.) Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquities infinite? Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their cloathing, *&c. The whole ſcope of his ſpeech bends the ſame way, and is, as if he had ſaid to* Job, Though thy carriage hath been ſo plauſible among us, that we are not able to accuſe thee of ſin ; yet theſe judgments accuſe thee, and are ſufficient witneſſes againſt thee: Theſe cry out with a loud voyce, That thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, *&c.* Though we have not ſeen thee act theſe ſins, yet, in theſe effects we ſee thou haſt acted them: The ſnares which are round about thee, tell us, thou haſt laid ſnares for others ; and he that runs may read how terrible, how troubleſome thou haſt been to the poor, in the terrors which have ſeiz'd thy ſpirit, and in the troubles which have ſpoiled thee of thy riches.

Bildad *the* Shuhite *ſpeaks ſecond ; His Opinion is not ſo rigid as that of* Eliphaz: *He grants that afflictions may fall upon a righteous perſon ; yet ſo, that if God ſend not deliverance ſpeedily, if he reſtore him not quickly to his former eſtate and honour, then (upon the ſecond ground of the* Fourth Principle) *ſuch a man may be cenſured, caſt and condemned as unrighteous. That ſuch was* Bildad's *judgment in this caſe, is clear,* chap. 8. 5, 6. If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous; though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhall greatly encreaſe. *And,* verſ. 20. 21. Behold God will not caſt away a perfect man, *&c.*

&c. till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing. *As if he had ſaid* I cannot aſſent to my Brother *Eliphaz*, affirming, That every man afflicted, is afflicted for his wickedneſs; I (for my part) believe, and am perſwaded, that a godly man may be afflicted for the trial and exerciſe of his Graces, *&c.* But, then I am aſſured, that God never lets him lie in his afflictions; for as ſoon as he cries and calls, the Lord awakes preſently, makes his habitation proſperous again, and encreaſes him more then ever. I grant, the Lord may caſt down a perfect man, but he will not (in this life) caſt him away; no, he will ſpeedily fill his mouth with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.

Zophar, *The third Deponent, differs from the two former, in this great controverſie, affirming,* That the reaſon of all thoſe afflictions which preſs the children of men, is to be reſolved into the abſolute will and pleaſure of God; that we are not further to enquire about his Wiſdom, Juſtice or Mercy in diſpenſing them, his counſels being unſearchable, and his wayes paſt finding out. *Thus he delivers his mind (chap.* 11. 7, 8.) Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? canſt thou by ſearching find him out to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? Deeper then hell, what canſt thou know? *Verſe* 12. Vain man would be wiſe, though man be born like a wild Aſſes colt. *In the reſt of his ſpeech he comes neareſt the opinion of* Bildad, *verſ.* 14, 15, 16. *And gives out as hard thoughts of* Job *as either of his brethren, numbring him among the wicked, and aſſigning him the reward of an hypocrite* (chap. 20. 29.) This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.

Theſe (I conceive) are the Characteriſtical opinions *of* Job's *three friends about his Caſe. All conſiſtent with thoſe four Principles which they hold in common, all equally cloſing in the cenſure and condemnation of* Job, *though in ſome things diſſenting and falling off from one another.*

But what thinks *Job? or how doth he acquit or extricate himſelf from theſe difficulties? Very well; His ſentence is plainly this:*

That the Providence of God diſpences outward proſperity and affliction ſo indifferently to good and bad, to the righteous and the wicked, that no un-erring judgment can poſſibly be made up of any mans ſpiritual eſtate by the face, and upon the view of his temporal. *He declares this as his opinion, in clear, reſolute and Categorical terms* (chap. 9. 22, 23.) This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it. He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked; if the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent. *Which opinion hath no quarrel at all with any of thoſe three Principles held by* Job *joyntly, and in conſort with his three Friends, but only with their fourth: which he throughout refutes as heterodox and unſound in it ſelf, as uncomfortable to the ſpirits, and inconſiſtent with experiences of the* Saints.

In the Strong-hold *and* Fort-Royal *of this holy Truth,* Job *ſecures himſelf againſt all the Aſſaults, and ſcatters all the Objections of his Opponents; reſolving to maintain it to the very death; he will lay his bones by this Poſition, ſay his unkind friends what they can againſt him, and let the moſt wiſe God do what he pleaſes with him.*

That he was a ſinner, he readily grants; that he was an hypocrite, he flatly denies.

That the Lord was righteous in all his dealings with him, he readily grants. That himſelf was unrighteous, becauſe the Lord had dealt ſo with him, he flatly denies.

How perfect ſoever he was, he confeſſes, that he needed the Free Grace *and Mercies of the Lord to juſtifie him; but withal, aſſerts, that he was perfect enough to juſtifie himſelf againſt all the challenges of man.*

In theſe acknowledgments of his ſinfulneſs and denials of inſincerity; in theſe humblings of himſelf before God, and acquittings of himſelf before men; in theſe implorings of mercy from the Lord, and complainings of the unkindneſs of his brethren, the ſtrength of Job's *Anſwer conſiſts, and the ſpecialties of it may be ſummed up.*

'Tis true, that through the extremity of his pain, the anguiſh of his ſpirit, and the provocation of his Friends, ſome unwary ſpeeches ſlipt from him; for which Elihu *reproved him gravely and ſharply; of which himſelf repented ſorrowfully and heartily, all which the moſt gracious God paſſed by and pardoned freely, not imputing ſin unto him.*

Thus (Chriſtian Reader) *I have endeavoured (as heretofore of the whole Book, ſo now) to give a brief account concerning the Argumentative part of it; and to repreſent how far in this great* Controverſie, *the* Anſwerer *and his* Objectors *agree in judgment, and where they part.*

If this Diſcovery adminiſter any help, as a Thred *to lead your meditations through the many ſecret turnings and intricacies of this Diſpute, the labour in drawing it out, is abundantly ſatisfied. And if any further light ſubſervient to this end, ſhall be given in from the* Father of Lights, *that alſo in its ſeaſon may be held forth, and ſet upon a* Candleſtick.

What is now received, together with the Textual Expoſitions upon this firſt undertaking *between* Eliphaz *and* Job, *I leave in your hands; praying for a bleſſing from on high, to convey Truth home to every heart; deſiring earneſt prayers for the* Spirit of Grace and Illumination to be powred out, according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt, upon

April 28. 1645.

Your very Affectionate Friend and

Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH AND SEVENTH
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

CHAP. 4. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Then Eliphaz *the* Temanite *anſwered, and ſaid,*

If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? But who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?

Behold, thou haſt inſtructed many, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands.

Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the feeble knees.

But now it is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, the uprightneſs of thy wayes, and thy hope?

JOB's complaint ended in the former Chapter; in this, a hot diſpute begins. *Job* having curſed his day, is now chid himſelf; and he had ſuch a chiding, as was indeed a wounding, ſuch, as almoſt at every word, drew blood; and was not only a rod upon his back, but a ſword at his heart. *Job* was wounded firſt by Satan, he was wounded a ſecond time by his Wife, a third time he was wounded (not as it is ſpoken in the Prophet, *in the houſe of his friends*, but) in his own houſe, by his friends; theſe laſt wounds are judged (by good Phyſitians in ſoul-afflictions) his deepeſt and soreſt wounds.

Then Eliphaz the Temanite anſwered, and ſaid,

Eliphaz being (as is ſuppoſed) the elder and chief of the three, firſt enters the liſt of this debate with *Job*; concerning whoſe name, perſon and pedigree, we have ſpoken before at the eleventh verſe of the ſecond Chapter; and therefore referring the Reader thither, for thoſe circumſtantials of the ſpeaker, I ſhall immediately deſcend unto the matter here ſpoken.

If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? &c.

The whole diſcourſe of *Eliphaz* may be divided into three general parts.

1. The Preface
2. The Body } of his Speech.
3. The Concluſion

The Preface of his ſpeech is contained in the ſecond verſe, *If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* &c.

The body of his Speech is extended through this fourth, and to the laſt verſe of the fifth Chapter: It conſiſteth eſpecially of two members, or two ſorts of matter, in which *Eliphaz* deals with *Job*.

The firſt is reprehenſory, by way of conviction and reproof.

The ſecond is exhortatory, by way of counſel and advice.

Firſt, *Eliphaz* reprehends *Job*. This work of reprehenſion begins at the third verſe of this Chapter, and is continued to the end of the fourth verſe of the fifth Chapter. And to ſhew that he did not reprehend him upon paſſion, he grounds his reprehenſion upon reaſon, and ſtrengthens his reproof with arguments. And there are four Reaſons or ſpecial Arguments, which *Eliphaz* takes up to make this reprehenſion convincing; the naming of them will give light to the whole, before we come to the particulars.

The firſt Argument is contained in the words I have read, to the end of the ſixth verſe: And it is taken from the unſuitableneſs of his preſent practice, to his former precepts.

Or from the unequality of the courſe he now took under affliction, to the counſel he had given others under affliction.

His ſecond Argument beginning at the ſeventh verſe, and carried on to the twelfth, is grounded upon a ſuppoſed inequality of Gods preſent dealing with him, in reference to his former dealings with godly men.

Eliphaz thought thus, ſurely *Job* is an hypocrite, otherwiſe God would have dealt with him, as with an innocent; *Remember* (ſaith he) *I pray thee, who ever periſhed being innocent?* I will convince thee by all examples, by whatſoever is upon record in the hiſtory of all ages, that thou art a hypocrite, a wicked perſon; for ſee, if thou canſt find an inſtance in any Story, of an innocent perſon periſhing. That is his ſecond Argument.

His third Argument is continued from the twelfth verſe, to the end of this fourth Chapter; and that he might make the deeper impreſſion upon *Job*'s ſpirit, he brings it in with a dreadful preamble: A viſion from God at once terrifying and inſtructing him, thus to reaſon down the pride of man. The Argument it ſelf is coucht in the ſeventeenth verſe. It is drawn from an evidence of preſumption in all ſuch as ſhall dare to implead Gods juſtice, or plead their own: as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, ſurely thou art a proud and a wicked perſon; for there was never any godly man upon the face of the earth, no nor any Angel in heaven, that durſt be ſo bold with God as thou haſt been: *Shall mortal man* (ſaith he) *be more juſt then God? ſhall a man be more pure then his maker? Behold, he put no truſt in his ſervants, and his Angels be charged with folly.*

His fourth Argument begins at the fifth Chapter, and ends with the fourth verſe; and it is taken from the unlikeneſs of *Job*'s carriage under his afflictions, to that which any of the Saints in any age of the world, did ever ſhew forth under their afflictions. He carries himſelf ſo as none of the Saints ever carried themſelves, gives an evidence againſt his Saintſhip. *Call now to the Saints*, either thoſe now living upon the earth, or ſearch the records concerning all the Saints that ever lived; conſider, and ſee whether thou canſt obſerve or read any parallel of thy complaints and unreaſonable expoſtulations. So much for the ſum of his convictions.

Then *Eliphaz* turns himſelf to admonition and exhortation in the following part of that fifth Chapter; and there are two heads of his admonitory exhortation.

Firſt, He admoniſhes him to ſeek unto God, and to call upon him, *ver.* 8. *I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe.* I give thee no other counſel then I would take my ſelf. If I were in thy caſe, I would not ſtand thus complaining and curſing my day, but this I would do, *I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe.* This admonition is enforced by divers Arguments, to *ver.* 17.

The ſecond head of his exhortation beginneth at *ver.* 17. and it is to prevail with him, patiently to bear, and quietly to accept his affliction or the puniſhment of his iniquity; in purſuance of this, he ſhews him many benefits and bleſſings, attending thoſe who graciouſly comply with the correcting hand of God upon them. *Behold* (ſaith he, *ver.* 17.) *happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty*; he concludeth all from his certain knowledge, and infallible experience of what he had ſaid (*ver.* 27.) *Lo this, we have ſearched it, ſo it is*; back'd with a warranty, that if he obey, his own experience ſhall quickly teach him this truth; *Hear it, and know thou it for thy good.*

So much concerning the Diviſion or Parts of this firſt Speech or Diſpute made by *Eliphaz*, in anſwer to the former complaint, poured out by *Job* againſt the day of his birth, and the night of his conception, in *chap.* 3.

The ſix verſes (lately read) contain (as I ſaid before) the firſt Argument, we have the Preface in the ſecond verſe, and the Argument it ſelf in the four following. The point which *Eliphaz* deſires to prove and clear is this; that *Job* was guilty of hypocriſie, of cloſe hypocriſie at the leaſt, if not of groſs hypocriſie. The *Medium* or reaſon by which he would prove it, is the unſuitableneſs of his preſent practice, to his former Doctrine. His actions under ſufferings contradict what himſelf had taught other ſufferers: And this ſpeaks him guilty. The Argument may be thus formed.

> *That mans Religion is but vain, and his profeſſion hypocritical, who having comforted others in, and taught them patience under affliction, is himſelf (being afflicted) comfortleſs and impatient.*
>
> *But* Job, *thus it is with thee; thou haſt been a man very forward to comfort others, and teach them patience, yet now thou art comfortleſs and impatient:*
>
> *Therefore thy Religion is vain, and thy Profeſſion hypocritical.*

Is not this thy fear? Here is a goodly Religion indeed, a proper piece of profeſſion; and ſuch is thine, this is all thou art able to make out. Thus you have the Logical ſtrength of the Argument contained in the words. We ſhall now examine them in the Grammatical ſence of every part, as they lie here in order. And firſt, for the Preface.

If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?

The words import, as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid thus unto *Job*; we thy friends have all this while ſtood ſilent, we have given thee full liberty and ſcope to ſpeak out all that was in thy heart; let it not grieve thee, if we now take liberty to ſpeak our ſelves: and indeed a neceſſity lies upon us to ſpeak. Two things *Eliphaz* puts into this Preface, whereby he labours to prepare the mind of *Job*, readily to hear and receive what he had to ſay unto him.

Firſt, He tells him that he ſpeaks out of good-will, and as a friend to him. *If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* Pray do not take it ill, we mean you no harm, we would but give you faithful counſel, we ſpeak from our hearts, not from our ſpleen, we ſpeak from love to thee, let it not be thy grief.

Secondly, He ſhews that he was neceſſitated to ſpeak; as love provokes, ſo neceſſity conſtrains; *Who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?* Either of theſe conſiderations is enough to unlock both ear and heart to take in wholeſom counſel. What ear, what heart will not the golden key of love, or the iron key of neceſſity open to inſtruction? When a friend ſpeakes, and he ſpeaks as bound, when kindneſs and duty mix in conference, how powerful!

If we aſſay,] or try. The word ſignifies properly to tempt, either for good or evil; and becauſe in temptation, an aſſay or experiment is made of man, how bad or how good he is; therefore the word is applied to any aſſaying or experimenting of things or perſons. *This very word is*

נסה *Tentavit in bonum vel in malum, periculum fecit, expertus eſt.*

winning

דביר *Adytum quaſi Oraculum vel loquutorium dictum, quod Deus inde reſponſa daret.*

winning and gaining upon Job. We will but try a little if we can do thee any good, or bring lenitives to thy ſorrows, we will not be burthenſom or tedious; we will but *aſſay to commune with thee.* The word notes ſerious ſpeaking. The place where God communed with his people, in giving anſwers from Heaven, is expreſſed by this word, 1 *King.* 6. 19. *The Oracle he prepared in the houſe within*, &c. or the communing-place where God ſpake.

להה *Feſſus corpore vel animo, inſanivit, furiit.*

Wilt thou be grieved?] The word ſignifies to be extreamly wearied even unto rage or fainting. Here *Eliphaz* ſeems to hint at *Job*'s former diſtempered ſpeeches. If we ſpeak, wilt thou promiſe us not to fall into ſuch a fit of paſſion as even now thou waſt in. And yet whatſoever comes of it, or howſoever thou takeſt it, I muſt diſcharge my duty and my conſcience: Therefore he adds,

Who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?] That is, no man can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking in ſuch a caſe as this: To hear thee ſpeak thus, would even make a dumb man ſpeak. Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel, *If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would cry*; there is ſuch a ſence in theſe words: If we thy friends ſhould hold our peace, when thou ſpeakeſt thus, the very ſtones would cry out againſt thee for ſpeaking, and againſt us for holding our peace. The Hebrew word tranſlated *withhold*, ſignifies to ſhut up a thing ſo as that it cannot come out: It is applyed to the locking up of the Clouds that they rain not; to the holding in of fire that it cannot break forth, *Jer.* 20. 9. where the Prophet very elegantly fits it to the reſtraining of ſpeech, which is the very point in hand. *His word was in my heart as a burning fire was ſhut up in my bones, I was weary with forbearing.* So it implies, that the friends of *Job* had as it were a fire in their boſoms, which they could no longer reſtrain, they were as clouds full of water, full of dew and rain; they were not able to ſuſpend themſelves from diſſolving and ſhowring upon *Job*, both reproof and counſel, adviſes and exhortations. We may Obſerve from this Preamble,

עצר *Clauſit, coercuit.* 1 King. 8. 35

That, *it is wiſdom to ſweeten reproof with friendly inſinuation.*

Gal. 6. 1.

Reproof is a bitter Pill; it is a wholſom yet a bitter Pill, and there is need to wrap it up in Gold and Suger, that pleaſing both eye and palat it may be taken down the better. It is the Apoſtles counſel to his *Galathians, Brethren, if a man be overtaken with a fault, ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs.* The word *reſtore*, is an alluſion to the Art of Chyrurgery, in ſetting a bone out of joynt; ſoft words and a ſoft hand fit the Patients mind to endure that painful operation. By falls into ſin, the ſoul breaks or disjoynts a bone; he that will ſet ſuch a mind muſt handle it gently. We may obſerve the holy skill of ſome of the Saints in prayer, preparing God for receiving of Petitions, by Prefaces and humble Inſinuations (as it were) getting within him. Thus did *Abraham, Gen.* 18. when he prayed for *Sodom, Let not my Lord be angry, if I, who am but duſt and aſhes, ſpeak unto thee.* There is ſuch a ſpiritual art in winding a reproof into the boſom and ſpirit of a man, *Let it not trouble thee that I thus ſpeak, take my words in good part, If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?*

Secondly Obſerve, That, *it is no eaſie thing to bear reproof.*

To take a reproof well, is as high a point of ſpiritual wiſdom, as to give it well. When we reprove the ſin, we ſhould love the man; but there are few men who can love their reprovers. You know what is ſaid in the Prophet, *They hate him that reproveth in the gate.* Reproofs are uſually entertained with hatred, and ill taken by evil perſons; reproof is not alwayes taken in good part, by thoſe who are good. It is but need to have ſome way made for its due entertainment, by the beſt tempered ſpirits. *Wilt thou be grieved?* it may be weariſom and troubleſom unto thee, but I pray let it not.

Thirdly Obſerve from the Preface, That, *in ſome caſes it is our duty to ſpeak and reprove, whether men are troubled or no.*

How ſhould I be pleaſed, if thou wouldeſt receive my ſpeech in good part? but I cannot withhold my ſelf from ſpeaking, though thou art diſpleaſed; take it how you will, I muſt ſpeak, theſe reproofs muſt out. When we ſee plainly, that God is diſhonoured, and that the ſoul of our brother is greatly endangered, we muſt then ſpeak (as God chargeth the Prophet) *whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.* In ſuch caſes we muſt adventure to *ſave men by fear, plucking them out of the fire.*

Jude 23.

Laſtly Obſerve, That, *when the heart is full, it is a very hard thing, not to give it vent at the lips by ſpeaking.*

When the heart is full of matter, the tongue will be full of words; the tongue muſt bring forth the treaſures that are laid up in the heart: *Who* (ſaith *Eliphaz*) *can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?* The Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. 20. 9. thought to ſtifle the meſſage of God in his heart, *I ſaid I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his name*: he began to take up a reſolution to withhold himſelf from ſpeaking; *but* (ſaith he) *his word was in mine heart as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay,* I could not hold it any longer. So the Apoſtles, *Act.* 4. 19. *We cannot but ſpeak that which we have heard and ſeen,* it is impoſſible for us, *the Lord hath ſpoken, who can but propheſie?* that is, who can withhold himſelf from propheſying when once the Lord bids him ſpeak. Words are the conceptions of our minds; and when our thoughts are form'd and organized, as it were, and grown to perfection, when thoſe children come to the birth, a little ſtrength will bring them forth: Or rather, great ſtrength cannot keep them from being brought forth. It is as poſſible for her that is with child to withhold the birth, as it is for thoſe that have pregnant conceptions, or an errand from God, to withhold themſelves from ſpeaking. When *David* kept ſilence (it is a ſtrange connexion) he roared, *Pſal.* 32. 3. When he held his peace from good, his ſorrow was ſtirred, *Pſal.* 39. 2. Pangs took hold on him as upon a woman in travel, which made him roar. His heart waxt hot, and the fire burned, till he ſpake with his tongue. He was then delivered. Our Engliſh phraſe of *Delivering a mans mind*, may hit this ſenſe well. *Their hearts are barren, whoſe mouths are always ſhut. Who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?*

Amos 3. 8.

But what is it that he could not forbear? He could not forbear to tell him, that (as he ſuppoſed) he acted againſt his own principles.

Behold thou haſt inſtructed many, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands, &c.

Ecce doctorē egregiū! Ecce medicū aliorum qui ſeipsō curare neſciat.

Behold,] This word is ſometime uſed in a way of deriſion, as *Gen.* 3. 22. where God ſaith concerning *Adam, Behold the man is become as one of us*, do you not ſee what a God he is? how like a God he looks? ſo, *Behold thou haſt inſtructed many,* (ſome make that the ſenſe) ſee now your great Teacher, your learned Doctor; he that hath been ſo forward and buſie in teaching others, ſee in what diſorder, how uncompoſed he is himſelf: he would needs Phyſick his neighbours, but knows not how to cure his own diſtempers.

But rather take it by way of aſſeveration, *Behold*, as if he ſhould ſay, This is a thing clear and certain, all that are about thee, can witneſs it; that thou haſt inſtructed many, and that thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands. But how art thou changed? thou art not like the man thou waſt.

Here are four ſpecial acts of ſpiritual Charity, ſo we may call and diſtinguiſh them. Firſt, inſtructing of the ignorant; ſecondly, encouraging of the weak and ſlothful; thirdly, ſupporting of thoſe that are ready to fall; and fourthly, comforting thoſe that are ready to faint. In theſe four duties *Job* had been very converſant. 1. Inſtruction of the ignorant, *Behold thou haſt inſtructed many.* 2. Encouragement of the weak and ſloathful, *Thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands.* 3. Supportation of the weak, *Thy words have upholden him that was falling.* 4. Conſolation of thoſe who were ready to faint, *Thou haſt ſtrengthened the feeble knees.*

1 *Indoctos docere.*
2 *Torpentes excitare.*
3 *Labentes erigere.*
4 *Mœſtos conſolari.*
2 Tim. 3. 15

Here you ſee the four uſes which *Job* made in his counſels; Firſt, of Inſtruction; Secondly, of Exhortation; Thirdly, of Admonition; Fourthly, of Conſolation: *Job* was a perfect Preacher, he applies the word to all the ſervices and ends of it, reſpecting the ſeveral conditions, tempers or diſtempers of thoſe with whom he had to do.

Further, ſome take the three latter to be but as explications or branches of the firſt; *Behold thou haſt inſtructed many*, namely, concerning the nature of afflictions, and their duty in the bearing affliction; yea, thou haſt inſtructed them ſo far, that thou *haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands, upholden thoſe that were falling, and ſtrengthned the feeble knees.*

I come now to the opening of the ſeveral expreſſions.

יסר *Erudivit, caſtigavit ut patres & præceptores ſolent pueros. Reſpondet Græcorum παιδεύειν docere verbis & verberibus.*

Thou haſt inſtructed many.] The word which we tranſlate *inſtructed*, ſignifieth both to correct and to teach; and the Hebrews give the reaſon of it, becauſe uſually with inſtruction correction is joyned; and ſo the ſame Greek word ſignifies both to teach and to chaſten: As there is a voyce of the Rod, inſtruction in correction; ſo a Rod ſometimes goes with the voyce, correction is helpful to inſtruction: In either or both the ſences we may underſtand it here, *thou haſt inſtructed many*, thou haſt taught and directed, thou haſt (where need was) chaſtned and corrected many.

Many.] We have heard in the firſt Chapter, that *Job* prayed for his children, for his Sons and Daughters; but now we ſee *Job*'s piety extended further then his own children. Yea, the word may well be carried out beyond his own Family. He prayed for his children, and not only did he pray for them, but alſo teach and inſtruct them; and not only them but others, he inlarges his School, he inſtructs *many*, it is an indefinite word, a word of number without a number. *Job*'s School of holy diſcipline was a large one, he ſet up his School where ever he came; he was an univerſal Teacher, an Apoſtle of the holy World; *thou haſt inſtructed many.*

And thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands.

רפה *Debilis, laxus, hinc* Rephaim *ſignificat mortuos, ex eo quod in illis omne robur & vires naturales elanguerunt. Manus laſſæ & dejecta brachia pertinent ad habitum aut molliter aut ſegniter ambulantis, aut currere non valentis. E contra vero adducere brachia, manus comprimere, fortiter jactare cubitos ſtrenuè currentis eſt.*

The word ſignifies, *Remiſs hands, or the hands that hang down*, looſe and lax. Hence by a Metaphor it notes one, that is negligent or idle; a man with his hands hanging down and his arms looſe, is the emblem of idleneſs or of ſadneſs. *Thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands*, that is, thoſe that were idle or grieved, negligent or dejected. Hence the word (*Rephaim*) is uſed, to ſignifie thoſe that are dead; and the reaſon is, becauſe all ſtrength, natural vigour and activity depart when life departeth: Giants alſo are expreſſed in the Hebrew by this word, becauſe they are ſuch dreadful perſons, that their very aſpect or ſight terrifies the ſpirit, makes the hands hang down, and the knees of beholders feeble; they called thoſe mighty men, *weak*, from that effect wrought upon others, becauſe they made others weak and terrible at their approaches. Hence, when *Goliah* the Giant challenged and defied the Hoſt of *Iſrael*, it is ſaid, that all the men of *Iſrael*, when they ſaw the man, fled from him, or fled from his face, (he overcame them with his looks) and were ſore afraid, 1 *Sam.* 17. 24.

This weakneſs of hands (as we find inſtanc'd in Scripture) ariſes four wayes. Firſt, from ſloath and idleneſs (as we noted before) ſome have ſtrong heads, but they have weak hands; they are ſufficiently inſtructed, but they cannot act, or they are unactive, and an unactive man is a weak-handed man.

Secondly, Weakneſs of the hands cometh from fear; and ſo that phraſe, *to ſtrengthen the hands*, notes incouraging of a perſon, as *Zech.* 8. 9, 13. *Fear not, let thy hand be ſtrong*, that is, let not fear weaken thy hands: and *Jer.* 38. 4. the Princes came to the King and beg'd of him that *Jeremiah* might be put to death; and they give the reaſon from this, *For* (ſay they) *he weakens the hands of the men of war that remaine in the City, and the hands of all the people*; that is, he diſcourages them, makes them believe they ſhall never be able to ſtand out againſt the King of *Babylon*, but that he ſhall certainly take the City; this is called weakning of the hands: So *Iſa.* 35. 3. *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; ſay to them that are of a fearful heart, be ſtrong, fear not.* So ye ſee weakneſs of the hands is cauſed by fear; when the bands of the heart are diſſolved (as it were) and looſened by fear, the hand muſt needs be diſſolved and looſened from labour; the hand is not able to work at all when fear works much upon the heart.

Thirdly, Weakneſs of the hands ariſeth from irreſolution, when a man is not reſolved what to do, not ſetled upon a buſineſs, then his hands are weak. Hence it was the counſel of *Achitophel* to *Abſolom*, that he ſhould go up upon the houſe top, in the ſight of all *Iſrael*, and abuſe his Fathers Concubines; and he gives the reaſon of it, *then* (ſaith he) *ſhall the hands of all that are with thee be ſtrong*; his meaning is, then they will be ſo reſolved to ſtick to thee, that they will do their utmoſt; he grounds his counſel upon the preſent irreſolution of the people, he doubted whether *Abſaloms* party would adhere cordially to him or no, therefore (ſaith he) do an act which may render thy ſelf and all that are with thee irreconcileable to the King; this will unite them to thee, and their hands will be ſtrong. If once they be out of hope to be receiv'd into the Kings favour, thou mayſt be out of fear that they will return to the Kings obedience. In any lawful and good deſign it is beſt to raiſe up reſolution, and ingage it to the higheſt. *Where the heart is ſtrongly reſolved, the hands will act ſtrongly.* The reaſon why men are ſlow and dull in great undertakings, is, becauſe they are off and on, full of neutrality and indifferency, in what they undertake. Unſettled ſpirits can never ſettle actions. *A double minded man is unſtable* (and weak-handed) *in all his wayes.*

2 Sam. 16. 21.

James 1. 8.

Laſtly, There is a weakneſs of the hands (which is I conceive moſt proper to this place) ariſing from ſorrow and grief; from the weight and burthen of affliction, or from a ſudden ſurpriſe of trouble. As it is ſaid of *Balteſhazzar* (*Dan.* 5. 6.) who ſeeing the hand-writing upon the plaiſter of the wall, preſently *changed countenance, and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the joynts of his loyns were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another.*

Thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands.] That is, thoſe, whoſe hands are weak by reaſon of manifold tryals and tribulations: thou haſt ſpoken words to them, which have been as ſinews to their hands, and ſtrength unto their joynts. In this ſence the Apoſtle uſes both the expreſſions of the Text, *Heb.* 12. 6. where having treated about the nature of afflictions, together with the fruit and benefit of them, he concludes thus, *wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees*; as if he ſhould ſay, it is probable that affliction hath made your hands hang down, that ſorrow and grief have looſened your ſpirits and your loyns too, therefore now be of good cheer, *lift up your hands that hang down, and the feeble knees.* This Symptom or effect of ſorrow is elegantly deſcribed, *Ezek.* 7. 17. where the Prophet having ſhewed that many ſhould mourn, *as Doves of the Valleys*, adds, *all hands ſhall be feeble, and all knees ſhall be weak as water.*

Columbis pro cantu gemitus eſt & in amœnum murmur. Sanct. in Ezek. *cap.* 7.

Thy words have upheld him that was falling.] Some afflictions lie ſo hard and heavy upon us, that they do not only weaken, but caſt down: *Job* ſtood ready to uphold ſuch as was ready to fall. Timely advice may catch a man before he is quite down, and prevent his fall.

from כושל כשל *Impingere, & quod ſæpe conſequitur, ruere cadere.*

The word which we tranſlate *falling*, ſignifies in its firſt ſence, to ſtumble or ſtrike the foot againſt a thing, and ſo it is put for that which is the conſequent of ſtumbling, *falling*: he that ſtrikes his foot, or ſtumbles at a thing, is in danger of a fall. So *Iſa.* 40. 30. *The young men ſhall utterly fall*, it is this word, but doubled, *falling they ſhall fall*, that is, they ſhall utterly fall. There is a threefold falling mentioned in Scripture.

ἐν τινι παραπτώματι *Præcipuè ſignificat peccata actualia, à* παρὰ *&* πίπτω, *ad verbum præter cadere, cum ſcil. ultra rectam juſtitiæ lineam cadimus, ac erratis etiam levioribus uſurpatur,* παρὰ *in compoſitione minuit ſenſum.*

1. There is a falling into ſin, *Gal.* 6. 1. *If a man be overtaken in a fault*: that word (like this Hebrew in the Text) ſignifies, a fall taken by ſtumbling or by tripping upon any thing that lies in the way. In this ſence we underſtand the *fall of Adam*, the *fall of Angels*, and the *falls of the Saints.*

2. There is a falling into affliction, a falling into trouble: So *Prov.* 24. 16. *The juſt man falleth ſeven times a day*, that is, he meets affliction at every turn, he falls into trouble almoſt at every ſtep. Seven times a day is very often in the day, or often every day.

3. There is a falling under trouble. And of perſons falling ſo, we are chiefly to underſtand this Text. Many fall into trouble, who yet (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) ſtand firmly under trouble. Others no ſooner fall in, but they fall under it. The ſhoulders of ſome are not able to bear a light affliction, and the afflictions of others are ſo heavy that no ſhoulders are able to bear them; the back breaks, the ſpirit ſinks under the load.

To ſuch as theſe *Job* lent his hand, his ſhoulders: his counſel was as a ſtaff in their hands, as ligaments to their loyns and knees. *Job* was well ſkil'd in ſetting props and buttreſſes of holy advice to ſuch tottering ſouls. *Thou haſt upheld him that was falling.* We may take the words in all or either of theſe three interpretations, yet moſt properly of the latter.

ברך *Genu quod flecti ſolet in Benedictionibus & ſalutationibus.*

Thou haſt ſtrengthned the feeble knees.] The Hebrew word for a knee, ſignifieth (in the root) to bleſs or to pray, becauſe in bleſſing and praying for one, or in ſaluting, we uſe to bow the knee. And here, what we tranſlate *the feeble knees,* is word for word, *the bowing knees*; becauſe when knees bow and buckle, or double under us, it proceeds from weakneſs and feebleneſs: hence the bowing knee is called the feeble knee, *Dan.* 6. 5. it is ſaid of *Belſhazzar, his knees ſmote one againſt another*; he fainted, his ſpirits ſank within him, when his knees (as a Symptom of his fear) beat one againſt another. The hanging down of hands, notes a kind of deſpair in regard of preſent evils: and feeble quaking knees, ſeem to refer to ſome expected evil. Taking the words with that difference, *Job*'s work of love appears more full; he not only upheld in preſent troubles, but labour'd to ſtrengthen againſt ſuch as were to come. *Thou haſt inſtructed many,* and inſtructed them many, even all theſe wayes. We may Note,

First, That, *to teach, inſtruct and comfort others, is not only a mans duty, but his praiſe.*

For here *Eliphaz* ſpeaks it in a way of commendation, though with an intent to ground a reproof upon it. *Job* himſelf ſpeaks of what he had done in that kind, as a defence of his own innocence, Chap. 29. Verſ. 21, &c. *Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept ſilence at my counſel: after my words they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech dropped upon them, and they waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide, as for the latter rain.* This was his practiſe, and this was the praiſe of *Job.* That which the Apoſtle ſpeaks as a ſpecial qualification or gift of a Biſhop, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. is an excellent, a noble qualification in any perſon, of what rank or degree ſoever, *to be apt to teach.*

διδάκτικος.

Secondly, Conſider who *Job* was; he was a holy man, one that had much acquaintance and communion with God. Now though his friends miſtook what was in his heart, yet they hit right upon his practiſe; and we knowing both what his heart was, by the teſtimony of God: and what his practiſe was, from the teſtimony of men, may ground a ſecond point upon it.

That, *ſuch as know God in truth and holineſs, are very ready to communicate the knowledge of God unto others.*

They who know God themſelves, are deſirous that others ſhould know God too. *David* (*Pſal.* 51. 13.) promiſeth and profeſſeth, that he would communicate his experiences of Gods love, in pardoning his ſin, when he had taſted the ſweetneſs of a pardon. *Then will I teach tranſgreſſors thy ways, and ſinners ſhall be converted unto thee:* when my heart hath learned more of God, others ſhall learn more of God from my mouth. This is ſpiritual charity, and it is the moſt excellent and nobleſt charity of all. Charity to the ſoul is the ſoul of charity; charity to the better part, is the beſt charity. In this ſence alſo, *Job was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame,* by guiding them to ſee, and by directing their feet to walk, in the wayes of God. To give knowledge is better then to give gold. Inſtruction is the higheſt alms.

Quæ autem eſt certior eleemoſyna, quod majus opus miſericordiæ, quã docere rudes ſegnes ad bene agendũ extimulare, labentem erigere, mæſtos conſolori.
Job 29. 15.

Thirdly, If we conſider *Job* (of whom all this is affirmed) as he was a great rich man, we may Note thus much.

That, *honourable and great men, loſe nothing of their honour and greatneſs by deſcending to the inſtruction of others, though their inferiors.*

Some think it belongs only unto Miniſters to inſtruct: What wee inſtruct? They reſent it as a diſparagement: they truſt out that work wholly into the hands of others. Where ſhall we find an *Abraham* (a great Prince in his time) of whom God gave this Teſtimony, *I know him that he will command his children,* &c. *and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord*: and becauſe he was willing to teach others, God condeſcends to teach him: *Shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do.* They receive moſt knowledge, who are moſt ready to impart it. And we find before this, *Abraham* ſo ſucceſsful in teaching, that he had an Army of Scholars in his houſe. The Text ſaith, when he prepar'd for that expedition to reſcue his Nephew *Lot,* that he armed three hundred and eighteen of his trained, catechized, or inſtructed ſervants. The word ſignifies to train in the principles of Religion, as well as in the poſtures of war: being the ſame word uſed in the Book of *Proverbs,* for teaching a child the firſt elements of holy knowledge. And that place of *Geneſis* may very well comprehend both.

Gen. 18. 17, 18, 19.

חניכיו: Gen. 14. 14. Prov. 22. 6

Fourthly Obſerve, That, *charity, eſpecially ſpiritual charity, is very liberal and open-hearted.*

Job inſtructed not only his own, but he inſtructed others, he inſtructed many; he did not confine his doctrine and his advice to his own walls, but the ſound thereof went whereſoever he went: he inſtructed many. And if *Job* who had no ſpecial, no direct calling to it, were a teacher of many: what ſhall we think of thoſe, whoſe calling and buſineſs it is to teach, and yet teach not any at all? their trade, their profeſſion is to teach, yet they are ſo far from teaching that they teach none, and which is worſe, they hinder teaching: they ſtop the mouth of the teacher, and (if they can) the ear of the learner, *they take away the key of knowledge.* They neither open the door themſelves, nor ſuffer thoſe that wonld. This is the very ſpirit of wickedneſs.

Further, Taking thoſe other parts of his inſtruction, as they reſpect perſons afflicted, who are here deſcribed *by weak hands and feeble knees, ready to fall, unable to ſtand.*

Obſerve firſt, That, *ſore afflictions do exceedingly indiſpoſe for duty.*

Sore afflictions make weak hands and feeble knees: the weak hand and the feeble knee, are (as I ſaid before) emblems of one unfit for any buſineſs; unfit to work, unfit to walk: when the hand is weak and the knee is feeble, what is a man fit for? Great ſufferings unfit us for action. Hence it is that the Lord moderates the afflictions of his people, ſweetens the bitterneſs, and takes off the oppreſſing weight of them. God promiſeth to *come with reviving, and that he will not contend for ever with his people.* Why? A principal reaſon is, *Leſt their ſpirits ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made.* Leſt the ſpirit ſhould fail; that is, leſt they ſhould fail in their duties: the ſpirit cannot fail in the eſſence of it, the ſpirit is of an eternal conſtitution; but it faileth in the duty often. And if afflictions lie too hard and too long upon a people, their ſpirits fail, their faith fails, their courage fails, their labors cannot be laborious, to carry on and carry out their work. Therefore when *Job* ſaw any under afflictions, he endeavour'd to put courage into their hearts, and ſo ſtrength into their hands.

Iſa. 57. 16.

Secondly, In the general we may Note further,

That, *the words of the wiſe have a mighty power, ſtrength, and prevalency in them.*

You ſee how efficacious the words of *Job* were. *Job*'s inſtructions were ſtrengthnings: thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands and feeble knees; his words were as ſtays to hold them up that were ready to fall: *Eliphaz* doth not only ſay, thou didſt inſtruct many, and in inſtructing thou didſt intend, it was thy deſign and aim to ſtrengthen the weak hands, but he ſpeaks of what *Job* had effected and wrought; thy words put ſinews into the hands and knees of men that were weak and ready to fall, thy words were as props to hold and bear up the ſpirits of thoſe that were ſinking. Words wiſely diſpenſed and followed, with the bleſſing of God, what can they not do? God doth the greateſt things in the world by a word ſpeaking. As at the firſt he made the World it ſelf by a word ſpeaking: ſo he hath done the greateſt things, and wrought the greateſt changes in the world, by a word ſpeaking. When a word goes forth clothed with the authority and power of God, it works wonders. How hath it raiſed up ſinking ſpirits? How hath it made the fearful, undaunted; and the weak-hearted, couragious? God by his Word in the mouth of a weak man overthrows the ſtrong holds of ſin, and by a word brings every thought of man into ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt. By a word he ſtops the mouth of blaſphemy and evil ſpeaking; by a word ſpeaking, he makes a man deny himſelf; by a word he opens the eyes of the blind, and makes the lame to run and leap like a Hart, in the way of holineſs.

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

And I could wiſh that the word which I now ſpeak, might (through the bleſſing of God) have ſuch an effect upon your ſpirits. O that it might ſtrengthen all weak hands and feeble knees! O that it might uphold all who are ready to fall! we are caſt upon knee-feebling, hand-weakning, yea, heart-weakning times: The ſight of thoſe things which our eyes do ſee, and the hearing of thoſe things which our ears do hear, cauſe many to fear, and the ſpirits of ſome to fall. Now a word inveſted with commiſſion from God, to go and comfort, will maſter all our ſorrows, and diſpel all theſe fears. If the Lord breath upon a word, that word will breath lively activity into a very carkaſs. Look to thoſe many and gracious promiſes made to thoſe that mourn, and comfort will flow in. Promiſes are the treaſures of comfort; promiſes hold the Churches ſtock, they are the patrimony of believers; it is their priviledge and their honour, to be called *heirs of the promiſe.* While Chriſt and the promiſe lives, how can faith die or languiſh, eying a promiſe?

Heb. 6. 17.

So much of the firſt branch of the minor propoſition, in the third and fourth verſes.

The ſecond branch lies in the fifth verſe.

Now it is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

Thou haſt inſtructed many, thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands, &c. **But now it is come upon thee**, &c. That is, trouble and affliction are come upon thee.

להה

Laſſus fuit corpore vel animo, præ laſſitudine neſcivit quod ageret.

And thou fainteſt.] The word ſignifies an extraordinary fainting; when a man is ſo wearied and ſpent, that he knows not what he doth, when his reaſon ſeems tired, as much as his ſtrength. So that the words, *Now it is come upon thee, thou fainteſt*, may import thus much; thou art in ſuch a caſe, that thou ſeemeſt to be beſides thy ſelf, thou knoweſt not what thou doſt, thou ſpeakeſt thou knoweſt not what. The word is tranſlated in the firſt verſe, by *grieved*; in other Scriptures, by *mad and furious* (Prov. 26. 18.) *As a mad man who caſteth firebrands*, &c. And whereas we ſay (*Gen.* 47. 13.) *The Land of Egypt fainted by reaſon of the famine*, many render it, *The Land of Egypt was enraged or mad, becauſe of the famine.* Want of bread turns to want of reaſon; famine diſtracts. The *Egyptians* were ſo extreamly pinched with hunger, that it did even take away their wits from them; and ſcarcity of food for their bodies, made a dearth in their underſtandings. So there is this force in the word, Thou who haſt given ſuch grave and wiſe inſtruction unto others, from thoſe higher principles of grace, now it is come upon thee, thou art even as a mad man, as a man diſtracted, not able to act by the common principles of reaſon.

Inſanivit terra Ægypti, nam propter famem nimiam inſanit homo. Furebat terra, i.e. tumultuabantur anno quinto famis mentem illis adimente fame. Jun. *in loc.*

It toucheth thee.] It is the ſame word which we opened before; the Devil deſired that he might but touch *Job*; now his friend telleth him he is *touched.*

בהל

And thou art troubled.] That word alſo hath a great emphaſis in it. It ſignifies a vehement amazed trouble; as in that place (1 *Sam.* 28. 21.) where, when the woman, the witch of *Endor*, had raiſed up *Samuel* (in appearance) as *Saul* deſired, the Text ſaith, that when all was ended, ſhe came unto *Saul, and ſhe ſaw he was ſore troubled*: think what trouble might fall upon a man in ſuch a condition as *Saul* was in, after this acquaintance with the viſions of hell; think what a deep aſtoniſhment of ſpirit ſeized upon him, ſuch diſorder of mind this word layes upon *Job*: *Now it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.* Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *To commend a man with a* But, *is a wound inſtead of a commendation.*

Thou haſt inſtructed many, *But*, &c How many are there who ſalute their friends very fair to their faces, or ſpeak them very fair behind their backs, yet ſuddenly (as *Joab* to *Amaſa*) draw out this ſecret dagger, and ſtab their honour and honeſty to the heart. As it is ſaid of *Naaman*, 2 Kings 5. 1. He was an honourable man, and a mighty man of valour, *but he was a Leper*, &c. So, &c.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Great afflictions may diſturb the very ſeat of reaſon, and leave a Saint, in ſome acts, below a man.*

Some acts of holineſs repreſent the Saints as mad-men to carnal men. So *Paul* appeared to *Feſtus*, and ſo to many of his *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 5. 13. *For whether we be beſides our ſelves, it is to God.* Workings of Grace are ſometimes ſo far above reaſon, that they ſeem to be without reaſon. So ſome acts of infirmity repreſent the Saints, to carnal men, as mad-men. A gracious man works ſo much below reaſon ſometimes, that he ſeems to be without reaſon.

Thirdly, Note, That, *When we ſee any doing ill, it is good to mind him of the good which he hath done.*

Eliphaz ſaw *Job* fainting, enraged as a mad-man, or as a man aſtoniſhed; he tells him of the wiſe and grave counſel and inſtruction he had given before: conſider what thou haſt done. As in the *Revelation*, Chriſt ſpeaks to the Church of *Epheſus*, (Rev. 2. 5.) *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy firſt works*; when the Church did ill, then he tells her what ſhe had formerly *done well.* So the Apoſtle, *Ye did run well*; *having begun in the ſpirit, will ye end in the fleſh?* When he ſaw them run upon fleſhly Ceremonies and Ordinances, ye began in the ſpirit (ſaith he) conſider that, and end as ye began. As in diſpute and reaſoning, a falſe concluſion cannot be derived from true premiſes, ſo neither can it in practice, or in living. Holy premiſes conclude in holineſs. He never began well, that ends ill.

Fourthly, Obſerve, That, *The good we have done, is a kind of reproach to us, when we do the contrary evil.*

When a mans latter actions contradict his former, or when his actions contradict his profeſſions, the former good is a ſtain or blemiſh to him. *It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, then after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment given unto them.*

2 Pet. 2. 2

Further, take this likewiſe, *It is an eaſier matter to inſtruct others in trouble, then to be inſtructed, or take inſtruction our ſelves in our own troubles.*

Even *Job*, *holy Job* could give thoſe counſels of patience, and meekneſs, and quietneſs under the hand of God, which he could not follow to the full, when it fell upon himſelf. For though he did not fail to that height, which *Eliphaz* implieth in this reproof, yet fail he did. He had ſet others a Copie, which he could not write by, or imitate, when his own turn came. A good man may quickly give counſel, above his own ſtrength to practiſe.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *It is a ſhame for us to teach others the right way, and to go in the wrong our ſelves.*

Eliphaz ſeeks to ſhame and convince *Job* upon this very ground; thou haſt done thus and thus, thou haſt taught others patience, and thou art mad thy ſelf: art thou not aſhamed to complain and cry out of thy afflictions, when thou haſt bid others be quiet and chearful under them? It is an excellent thing, when our words are made viſible by our actions; as he ſaid in the Church ſtory, *The faith which is ſeen, is a great deal better then the faith which is heard*; ſo we may ſay in another kind, the wiſdom which is ſeen in bearing of affliction, is far better then the wiſdom which is heard. *Phyſitian, heal thy ſelf. He ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave*, ſay the Jews to Chriſt. Man may juſtly be reproved with, thou teacheſt others, thy ſelf thou canſt not teach. When the ſame fault which we reprehend in others, may be reprehended in our ſelves, our fault is doubled, and the act is not only ſinful, but ſhameful. The Apoſtle convinces the Jews mightily by this argument, *Rom.* 2. 19. *Thou art confident that thou thy ſelf art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkneſs, an inſtructer of the fooliſh*, &c. Thou takeſt upon thee all this; *thou therefore* (ſaith he) *that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou thy ſelf? Thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal?* He goes on preſſing it upon them, as matter of ſhame and bluſhing, that their actions ran ſo croſs and contradictory to their own profeſſions.

Turpe eſt doctorum cũ culpa redarguit ipſum.

Thus we have opened the minor propoſition or aſſumption

tion of the firſt argument, couched in theſe two verſes; thou haſt comforted, inſtructed, and taught many, yet when trouble cometh upon thee, thou knoweſt not how to order thy ſelf. *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, the uprightneſs of thy wayes, and thy hope?* Thus he gathers the concluſion, and from hence infers *Job* a hypocrite in Religion, or irreligious.

Is not this thy fear? &c.] As if he had ſaid, thy fear, thy confidence, thy uprightneſs, thy hope, thy religion, call it what thou wilt, is but thus much, or is but this.

Is not this thy fear?] In the firſt verſe of the firſt chapter, it was ſhewed what the fear of God is; part of *Job's* character being thus given, *A man fearing God.* Now *Eliphaz*, by this firſt point of his Interrogatories, taxes *Job*, in the firſt Part of his character or commendation; thou art reported to be a man fearing God; Is not this thy fear?

Fear is taken either for the whole compaſs of Gods worſhip, or for that awfulneſs of affection with which we worſhip God; which we ought to mingle and mix in all our actions and duties. Therefore (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12.) *Let us have grace to ſerve him with reverence and godly fear.* And, *Pſal.* 2. *Serve the Lord with fear.* God is to be ſerved in love, and yet God loves no ſervice which hath not this ingredient, holy fear.

Fear is the moſt proper affection, which, we creatures, duſt and aſhes, who are at ſuch an infinite diſtance from God, can put forth in his worſhip. God condeſcends ſo far as to be loved by us; yea, he calleth for our love as a friend, or as a father, as a familiar, as one in near relation; but conſidered in his Majeſty, Glory and greatneſs, fear is the moſt ſutable affection in our approaches unto God. The name of God, in ſome languages, is derived from fear; and God is expreſly called *Fear* by *Jacob*, Gen. 31. in that diſpute with *Laban*; where he telleth him, *Except the fear of his father Iſaac had been with him*, &c. ver. 42. *And Jacob ſware by the fear of his father Iſaac*, ver. 53. that is, by that God whom his father *Iſaac* feared: *Jacob* was a man ſo holy, that he would take nothing into his mouth to ſwear by, but only the holy Name of God. Religious ſwearing is one of the higheſt acts of worſhipping, as vain ſwearing is one of the higheſt acts of prophaning the name of God.

כסל *Inconſtantia levitas, per Antiphraſin conſtantia, confidentia.*

Thy confidence.] The word which we tranſlate *confidence*, ſignifies alſo, and that moſt properly, folly, inconſtancy, levity; when the Prophet *Jeremy* reproveth the idolatry of thoſe times, and ſpeaks to worſhippers of Idols, he expreſſes it by this word; *they are altogether brutiſh and fooliſh*, Jer. 10. 8. And holy *David*, (Pſal. 49. 13.) ſpeaking of wicked men, who make riches their portion, and who lay out all their endeavours in the raiſing of an outward eſtate, gives this account of their practice in *ver.* 13. *This their way is their folly*: this is the courſe that worldly men take, and they think it is a very wiſe courſe; but indeed their way is their folly. Some Tranſlators read that Text, *This their way is their confidence*; as here in *Job*: and ſo ſo they make the ſence out thus; this way of worldly men, in gathering riches, in heaping up abundance of theſe outward things, is their confidence, that is, they have nothing elſe to truſt unto; they have nothing beyond the world to truſt unto, *this their way is their confidence.* So again, *Prov.* 15. 26. *A fooliſh man*, or, *a man of folly, deſpiſeth his mother.* And once more, *Pſal.* 85. 8. Where the Pſalmiſt goeth up, like *Habakkuk*, to his Watch-tower, to hearken for an anſwer of his Prayer; *I will hearken what the Lord will ſay, for he will ſpeak peace unto his people; but let them not return again to folly.* So ſome read it in this Text of *Job*; *Is not this thy fear, thy folly?* that is, was it not meer folly for thee to brag and boaſt of thy fear? *ſc.* that thou didſt fear God, *&c.*

כסל אדם

But the word is often taken in a contrary ſence, as we tranſlate, for conſtancy or confidence, and ſometimes for hope; and thus *Job* 31. 24. *If I have ſaid to gold, thou art my hope, or my confidence*; and, *chap.* 8. 14. ſpeaking of the hypocrite, *whoſe hope ſhall be cut off*; the ſame word is uſed: and, *Prov.* 3. 26. *The Lord ſhall be thy confidence, and he ſhall keep thy foot from being taken*; and (not to heap many places) *Pſal.* 78. 7. *That they may ſet their hope in God.* In this ſence it is generally underſtood here, *Is not this thy fear and thy confidence?* ſc. *all the truſt thou haſt placed in thy God?*

Fear and confidence are acts of natural worſhip. Confidence or truſt is the reſting of the ſoul upon another; here the reſting of the ſoul upon the word or promiſes of God, upon the power, faithfulneſs and truth of God, an act thus put forth by the ſoul, is confidence. Now, ſaith *Eliphaz*, *Is not this thy confidence?* Thou haſt ſpoken much of reſting and truſting upon God and his word, upon his power and faithfulneſs; is not this that which thou haſt all this while talked of? See what a godly confidence it is! Doth it look like a proper piece of grace?

Confidence is an act beyond faith; a ſoul confiding walks in a higher region of grace and comfort, then a ſoul only believing; there may be believing, where there is not this confiding. As patience is hope lengthned, ſo confidence is hope ſtrengthned. Aſſurance is the higheſt degree of faith, and confidence is the higheſt degree of aſſurance. It carries with it, firſt, Chearfulneſs, oppoſite to ſorrow: ſecondly, Courage, oppoſite to fear and deſpondency of ſpirit: thirdly, Boldneſs and adventurouſneſs, oppoſite to cowardice. Confidence, having a good cauſe, and a good call, will take a Bear by the tooth, or a Lion by the beard: fourthly, It notes boaſting, or a kind of ſpiritual wiſe bragging, oppoſite to ſinful modeſty and concealment of what God hath done for us. Or take it thus; Confidence is the nobleſt exerciſe of Faith, which looking ſteadily upon God in himſelf, and in Chriſt, through the promiſes, raiſes the ſoul above all fears and diſcouragements, above all doubts and diſquietments, either about the removing of evil, or the obtaining of good.

Hence confidence is well called the reſt of the ſoul; therefore ſuch as attain to confidence, are ſaid to be in peace, *in perfect peace. Him wilt thou eſtabliſh in perfect peace, whoſe heart doth truſt upon thee.* And this act of confidence or truſt, is proper and peculiar to God, no creature muſt ſhare in it. This is worſhip commanded in the firſt Precept; *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me.* Whatſoever we confide in, unleſs it be in ſubordination unto God, we make it our god. And it is one of the higheſt acts of the ſoul, not only as we reſpect the taking in, our own comforts, but alſo, the giving out, glory unto God. This confidence is well coupled with holy fear; the more we fear God ſo, the more we truſt him; ſuch fear is the mother and nurſe of confidence: But confidence is directly contrary, yea, and contradictory to carnal fear; he that truſts God indeed, leaves both ſoul and body, temporal and eternal eſtate with him, without ever ſending a fearful thought, or a jealous look after either. It follows,

Iſa. 26. 3.

And the uprightneſs of thy heart.] It is the word uſed in the deſcription of *Job*, chap. 1. 1. There it is in the concrete, *perfect*; here in the abſtract, *uprightneſs*; We may read it, *Is not this the perfection of thy wayes?* Uprightneſs is the Saints perfection in this life. Uprightneſs may have a double notion; Firſt, as it reſpects the ſincerity of our hearts towards God. Secondly, as it reſpects the juſtice and equity of our actions towards man. In both ſences we may extend it here; Thou haſt been reported for a perfect man, now if thou art perfect in thy being, thou wouldeſt be perfect in thy working; if thou wert upright in thy nature, thou wouldſt be upright in thy actions. Now conſider thy uprightneſs or perfection, is not this the uprightneſs of thy wayes? Is not this all, even lately diſcovered in thy impatient complainings?

And thy hope.] That word is derived two wayes. Firſt, From a root that ſignifieth a line, rule or meaſure; ſo in *Gen.* 1. 9. *Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place*; the word ſignifies a gathering together by rule, as if God by that act had meaſured out the water (that unruly, turbulent, wandring element) and had brought it into compaſs, by a rule or line, which it could not exceed or go beyond, without permiſſion or commiſſion from himſelf; thereby giving us a mighty proof of his almighty power and infinite wiſdom. So ſome tranſlate the word here, taking it to be derived from that root, *Is not this thy rule?* Is not this the rule that thou haſt heretofore walked by, whatſoever thou haſt pretended? Is not this the righteouſneſs of thy wayes, the courſe or meaſure, by which thou haſt directed, ſquared thy actions?

תקוה

קוי *Linea, regula, ſic veteres Hebræi deducunt. Videtur* Moſes *non ſine magna emphaſi hoc verbum obſervaſſe, nimirum ad exprimendū infinitam verbi Dei potentiam, qui fluxum illud & vagum elementum, totam ſuperficiem terræ occupans, tanquam ad amuſſim & perpendiculum in unum locum cogit.* Paulus Fagius *In prim. cap.* Gen.

But

קוה *Expectavit. Significat magna intentione & corporis erectione expectare, atque id eſt quod Paulus Græco verbo dicit,* ἀποκαραδοκεῖν. ἀποκαραδοκία.

But ſecondly, rather the word is derived from (*Kavah*) which ſignifieth to expect, hope or wait: and it notes a very vehement intention both of body and of mind, in waiting, expecting, or hoping; when a man waits (as it were) ſtretching forth his ſpirit or his mind, putting himſelf out exceedingly to hope or wait for a thing. *Pſalm* 37. 9. & *Iſa.* 8. 17. the ſame word is uſed with the ſame emphaſis. And that Greek word which the Apoſtle *Paul* hath (*Rom.* 8. 19.) comes up fully to it, *The earneſt expectation of the creature*, &c. So the meaning here may be thus conceived, Is not this thy hope, or thy earneſt expectation? Is it not come to this now? Thou haſt boaſted much of thy hope, what treaſures thou hadſt laid up in that, beyond all thy preſent poſſeſſions; is not all ſhrunk up to this, yea, changed into deſpair? Thy deſperate ſpeeches give me ground to think ſo. Is not this thy hope? So much for the words.

הלא

There are four interpretations given of this verſe. Firſt, Some make out the ſence, by a different conſtruction of the firſt particle in the Hebrew, which, they tranſlate, not (as we) *Is not*? but *where is?* So the vulgar and divers others, reading it thus, *where is thy fear and thy confidence, thy patience, and the perfection of thy wayes?* As if he had ſaid, What's become of all thoſe graces, of which thou haſt ſpoken, and with which thou haſt been reported to be moſt richly endowed? where are they at this time? in this day of thy trouble, in this day of thy trial? Taking the words in that ſence, they yield us theſe Obſervations.

> Firſt, That, *times of trouble are ſpecial times for the uſe of our graces.*

It is as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, Thou thy ſelf, and all that knew thee, have ſpoken much of thy grace, but now is the time to uſe it, where is it? Shew it me now, *where is thy fear, and thy confidence?* If a man have been reported very skilful at his weapon, when he comes into danger, then is the time to ſhew his skill: and we may ſay to him, Where is thy skill now? Where is thy art now? So here, Now, that thou haſt moſt need of thy graces, Where are they? Bring them forth, are they to ſeek now? Is thy righteouſneſs as the morning dew, and as a cloud vaniſhed away? Times of trouble will put every grace to a ſtreſs; and we had need look to it, that we have not our graces to ſeek, when we have moſt need to uſe them; that when it ſhall be ſaid unto us, Where is your faith? Where is your hope? we may be able to hold them forth, and anſwer the queſtion in our actions, here they are, here is my fear, here is my confidence, here is my hope, here is my uprightneſs; I can make proof of them, and render them viſible in my life: I can (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) act them, and walk according to the rule of every one of theſe graces.

Secondly, From the ground of this argument, which is, that true grace holds out and perſeveres unto the end: For hereby (ſaith *Eliphaz*) I will convince thee for an Hypocrite, and that thy grace is but a ſhadow of grace, becauſe it is decayed and gone. This being the ground of conviction by theſe words, *Where is thy fear?* Obſerve,

> That, *falſe grace, or a ſhew of grace, fails us when we have moſt need of it.*

A Hypocrite ſeems to ſtand in grace, till he falls into trouble. When good is in ſight, he ſuppoſes he hath a great ſtock of faith; he is joyful in believing any thing, when nothing pinches him: And when he enjoyeth what he deſired, he hopes as much as is promiſed: But when outward comforts are withdrawn and eclipſed, when he muſt live upon a word, and relieve himſelf upon inviſibles, when he hath nothing in the creature to ſupport him, and muſt truſt what he cannot ſee: then this phancy of faith, this vain hope, and pretended confidence diſappear, and where are they? how much charity will ſome make profeſſion of, until a real object of charity preſent it ſelf? Then excuſes are made, they have but little for themſelves, times are hard, they may be ſuddenly caſt into ſtreights, they know not what a day may bring forth. Falſe charity, and falſe hope vaniſh when they ſhould act their parts, and make good what they have profeſſed. As Chriſt ſpeaks of the two houſes, *Matth.* 7. One built upon the rock, the other upon the ſand: theſe two houſes were alike skilfully and ſtrongly built in all appearance; while the Sun ſhone, and the weather was fair, none could diſcern but that the houſe upon the ſand, was built as well, and might have ſtood as long, as the other upon the rock; but when the rain fell, and the floods came, when the winds blew and beat upon the houſe, then it fell, the foundation failed, and all the fair ſuperſtructions came down into the duſt. Where is the Hypocrite with all his faith and fear in a wet windy day? Is he not like a houſe founded on the ſand? Or is not he and his goodly outſide of holy fear and hope like the Apples of *Sodom* (reported in Hiſtory) which are fair to the eye, but touch them, and they crumble to aſhes in your hand; ſo is the faith and the fear, the hope and confidence of hypocrites: Where are theſe? they are no where, for they never were.

Take the words in a ſecond conſtruction, and ſo they are thus rendred, *Is not thy fear thy confidence? and the uprightneſs of thy ways thy hope?* So Mr. *Broughton*, *Is not thy Religion thy hope? and thy right wayes thy confidence?* and then the ſence is, as if *Eliphaz* had thus ſpoken unto *Job*, Doth it not now plainly appear, that Satan charged thee rightly, that thou ſerveſt God for ends of profit and outward comforts, ſeeing thou art thus impatient and unquiet, when the hand of God takes away thy profit and outward comforts? Is it not a clear argument, that thou heretofore didſt obey God, only to gain by him, or becauſe thou waſt confident he would protect and ſave thee harmleſs, he would bleſs and proſper thee with encreaſe? Was not the uprightneſs of thy wayes thy hope? that is, didſt thou not look to thrive by upright dealing with men, and fair carriage in all thy actions? thou hadſt no love to Religion, none to Juſtice, thy love was to thy purſe, thy profit; and thou didſt believe, at leaſt hope, that profit would come in at the door of the Sanctuary, or elſe thou hadſt never gone ſo often thither. This is the ſecond ſence, predicating the firſt term of the ſecond, *Is not thy fear thy confidence? and is not thy uprightneſs thy hope?* ſurely 'tis. This is a fair expoſition of the words, and from it we may Obſerve,

> That, *A Hypocrites profeſſion of Religion is grounded on his confidence to gain by it.*

Is not thy fear thy confidence? thy Religion was nothing elſe but a hope to be rich. It was Satans objection, and now *Eliphaz* (reſuming and managing Satans argument) makes it his conviction. And it is a truth in the general theſis, that the Religion or the fear of Hypocrites, is nothing but their confidence; they conſider the word of promiſe, which God hath given to thoſe that ſerve him; they in their thoughts ſurveigh the land of promiſe, and taſte the milk and honey of it: they read that God *will give both grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*; therefore that they may be under the influence of theſe promiſes, or upon a confidence that they ſhall receive golden ſhowers out of theſe precious promiſes, and dig aboundant treaſure out of theſe heavenly *mines*, they *fear and worſhip God*, they are upright in their wayes, and honeſt in their dealings among men: Chriſt found it was love to the loaves, not to his doctrine, which brought ſo many after him, *Joh.* 6. They liked a miracle to feed them, more then a Sermon to inſtruct them: And were affected with the meat which endures to everlaſting life, onely in ſubordination to the meat which periſheth. How many ſay, at leaſt in their hearts, at this day, if I caſt my ſelf into ſuch and ſuch courſes of holineſs, ſhall I not have credit and cuſtom, good acquaintance and profitable correſpondence? In many men their wickedneſs is their confidence, that is, the very reaſon why they are ſo wicked, is, becauſe they are confident they ſhall get by their wickedneſs; ſo thoſe entiſers ſaid to the young man (*Prov.* 1. 11.) *Come let us lay wait for blood*, there was their wickedneſs; now at the twelfth verſe, you ſhall find, that the riſe of their wickedneſs was this confidence; *we ſhall find all precious treaſure, we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil.* Some (I confeſs) have ſuch a ſpirit of wickedneſs, that they are wicked for wickedneſs ſake: and they love the very ſin it ſelf, more then the ends of profit or pleaſure, which may

Ego furtum facere volui nulla compulſus egeſtate ſed faſtidio juſtitiæ; nec ea refrui volebam quam furto appetebam, ſed ipſo furto & peccato; Aug. *l.* 3. *Confeſſ. c.* 4. *& paulo poſt. Eram gratis malus, amavi defectum meum, non illud ad quod deficiebam.*

poſſibly follow the ſin; but others act the ſin, out of confidence they ſhall advance themſelves by it: And ſo there are many, ſo refined in their aims, and heightned in the wayes of holineſs, that they are holy for holineſs ſake, and religious for religions ſake; yet there is a generation, whoſe Religion is nothing but this confidence; I will caſt in my lot with the godly, I will take their way, ſhall I not fill my houſe with treaſure, and raiſe an eſtate by it? The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch (1 *Tim.* 6. 5.) *Men ſuppoſing that gain is godlineſs*, and they are godly only that they may gain by it. Whereas they whoſe hearts are perfect with God, love godlineſs for Gods ſake; and they are holy, not out of confidence of gaining by it, but out of a delight in acting of it; there is a beauty, an excellency in holineſs which takes their hearts: And they are above, not only this poor confidence, to be enriched by it; but alſo above that rich, that heavenly confidence, to be ſaved by it, to get Heaven by it. The fear of ſome, who are above the former, is yet but equal to this confidence; they ſee there is no other way to be ſaved, to go to Heaven, but this. Now I ſay, holineſs in the height and purity of it, keeps under the reſpect of Heaven it ſelf; it is ſo much above theſe things below, that it is above thoſe things above: That is a ſecond ſenſe.

Thirdly, The words are underſtood by divers of the Hebrew writers, for a direct and ſimple aſſertion, and they give it thus. *Will not, or would not thy fear be thy confidence? and the uprightneſs of thy wayes thy hope?* As if *Eliphaz* had thus ſaid unto him; *Job* thou haſt pretended much holineſs and Religion, fear and uprightneſs: why art thou ſo diſquieted, now, that the hand of God is upon thee? why art thou ſo amazed under theſe ſufferings? would not that fear be thy confidence? and would not that uprightneſs of thy wayes be thy hope? ſurely it would, if thou hadſt any ſuch fear as thou pretendeſt: this fear would be thy confidence, and this uprightneſs thy hope; thou wouldeſt be very bold, and by hope caſt Anchor upon the goodneſs and faithfulneſs of God, in the midſt of all this ſtorm: thy heart would be poiſed, ſettled and eſtabliſhed, notwithſtanding all theſe ſhakings. Would not thy fear be thy confidence? It would. Hence Obſerve;

Firſt, That, *they who fear moſt in times of peace, have moſt reaſon to be confident in times of trouble.*

Timidum eſſe ad mala patranda genus eſt fortitudinis & fiduciæ.

They who fear moſt (in one ſence) fear leaſt; they who fear God moſt, fear creatures leaſt, and creature-troubles leaſt. We have this point in ſo many words, *Prov.* 14. 26. *In the fear of the Lord is ſtrong confidence.* The fear of the Lord is the cure of all other fears. They who are moſt fearful of the evil of ſin, are moſt courageous among the evils of ſuffering. To be fearful thus, raiſeth the higheſt acts of confidence, *Pſal.* 112. 7, 8. We read of one *that will not be afraid for any evil tidings, his heart is fixed*; Who is this confident man? this fearleſs man? It is this *divine coward* (as we may call him,) you ſhall find him ſo expreſs'd, *ver.* 1. *Bleſſed is the man that feareth God, he ſhall not be afraid for any evil tidings*, *Exod.* 20. 20. When the people of *Iſrael* were much amazed and aſtoniſhed at the giving of the Law, *Moſes* comes to cure them of that fear; but what is the medicine? *Fear not, for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye ſin not.* As if he had ſaid, when God hath put his fear into your hearts, ſuch fears as theſe will be removed and vaniſh: when your hearts are filled with this fear of God, you will have confidence to hear, and ſee the thunder and lightening of Mount *Sinai*; you ſhall not fear, no not this terrible tempeſt, in which the Law it ſelf is given. So when the people were in a fear, another time, *Samuel* thus beſpeaks them in that ſhaking fit, 1 *Sam.* 12. 20. *Fear not, only fear the Lord.* If you will be confident in ſuch a time as this (for by prayer he procured thunder and rain in that time of wheat-harveſt) *fear the Lord.* The fear of the Lord will be our confidence in the wetteſt day, in the moſt tempeſtuous and ſtormy night that ever fell upon the ſecure, ſinful world. *A man fearing God is the only dreadnought.*

Secondly, We may obſerve from the other branch, (for the ſence is the ſame) *And would not thy uprightneſs be thy hope?*

The uprightneſs of a mans wayes in good times, doth mightily ſtrengthen his hope in evil times.

When a man can look back, and approve his heart to God, that he hath been upright in peace and plenty, how full of hope will he be in trouble and in wants? It was that which *Hezekiah* pleaded before God, in the day of his trouble and trial, 2 *King.* 20. 3. *I beſeech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth and with an upright and perfect heart.* This was it, when he lay upon his ſick-bed, and as he thought upon his death-bed, that put life into him, and bare up his ſpirit.

A fourth interpretation is taken from our reading: *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, the uprightneſs of thy wayes, and thy hope?* So the words contain four diſtinct affirming queſtions, *Is not this thy fear? Is not this thy confidence? Is not this the uprightneſs of thy wayes? and is not this thy hope?* This is thy fear, &c. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Job*, without doubt thou haſt ſhewed all thy goodneſs at once; or, Is not this all that thou art able to make out and ſhew; Is not this all that thou canſt ſay for, all the teſtimony thou canſt give of, thy religion and holineſs? Haſt thou not ſhewed all? Surely thy great boaſt of Religion is nothing but this. *Eliphaz* ſeems to call *Job* to make a further or clearer proof of his grace; *Is not this thy fear?* or if this be not, ſhew me ſomewhat elſe: Thou art a man very famous in the world, much talked of, and highly commended, for fear and for confidence, for uprightneſs and for hope; what haſt thou more to anſwer that report, and ſave thy own credit, with the credit of thy friends, who have been ſo large in their commendations of, and teſtimonies concerning thee? Note hence;

Firſt, *Afflictions diſcover that unto us, which before we knew not.*

Is not this thy fear? thou didſt not know of what *make* or conſtitution thy fear was, untill now: That's *Eliphaz* his ſuppoſition; and it is a truth, That ſome hypocrites know not, that their graces are falſe, till they are brought to ſuch tryals. They carry falſe, counterfeit coin about them, and ſuppoſe it currant money, till they come to the ballance, or a touch-ſtone. Some are active hypocrites, who go about intentionally to deceive and put a fair mask over a filthy face. Others are paſſive hypocrites, who are miſerably deceived by the colluſions of Satan, and the baſe treachery of their own ſpirits. Many a man is brought to ſee (which before he could not, by reaſon of thoſe miſts of hypocriſie) what his fear is, what his faith, by thoſe changes which affliction works in him.

Secondly thus, *We ought to make our graces viſible in our actions.*

Is not this thy fear? Shew me what thy fear is; if this be not, make proof of it. The Apoſtle bids *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 5. *Make full proof of his miniſtry.* It may be ſaid to ſome Miniſters, is not this your miniſtery; if it be not, make full proof of it: or as the Apoſtle *James*, in a caſe near this, *James* 2. 14, 18. *Shew me thy faith by thy works*; ſo we may ſay, *Shew me thy fear by thy works*: Is not this it? if it be not, make it appear what it is: *The tree is known by the fruits*; *do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?* or, do men gather crabs from vines, or ſloes from fig-trees? As an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, ſo neither doth a good tree bring forth evil fruit. If thou ſayeſt thou art a vine, make proof of it, by the fruit thou beareſt, or elſe I muſt conclude, thou art but a thorn or a thiſtle. We may queſtion many for this grace, and for the other grace they pretend unto: For their actions have not the leaſt print or impreſſion of ſuch graces upon them. If any one ſhould hold forth much faith and confidence in God, and this man ſhould run or take unlawful courſes to help himſelf, might we not ſay, *Is this thy confidence?* Or if one ſpeaking much of confidence in God, for the accompliſhing of a buſineſs, ſhould ſit ſtill, and do nothing himſelf, might we not ſay, *Is this thy confidence?* This is to tempt God, not to truſt in him. Once more, If a man ſhould profeſs much confidence in God, and yet be taken up altogether about the creature, ſwallowed up with creature thoughts, or ſwallowing in creature delights, ſeeking to, and engaging this creature, and that creature, with neglect of God, may we

not

Heb. 6. 19. not ſay, *Is thy confidence?* Hope is an anchor of the ſoul; but thou art driven with every blaſt; is this thy hope? Hope makes not aſhamed; but thou, either art, or oughteſt to be aſhamed, *Is this thy hope?* The fear of the Lord is clean, but thou art defiled, *Is this thy fear?* Rom. 5. 5.

Then again conſider this, When *Job* carries himſelf thus in his trouble, *Eliphaz* telleth him, what *is not this thy fear?* Thou art ſurely but an hypocrite, for if thy fear were true, it would have preſerved thee from theſe impatient complainings and diſtempers. Hence Obſerve;

That, *true fear, holy fear, preſerve the ſoul, and keeps it holy.*

Holy fear is as a golden bridle to the ſoul, when it would run out to any evil: It is like the banks to the Sea, which keeps in the raging waves of corruption, when they would overflow all. If thou hadſt fear indeed, thou wouldſt never thus break the bounds of patience. *The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil,* that's the definition of it; therefore if thou hadſt any fear of God indeed, thou wouldeſt never have done this evil, *curſe thy day,* Prov. 14.27. *The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the ſnares of death;* that is, either from ſin, which is ſpiritual death, or from damnation, which is perpetual death; the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from both theſe ſnares of death; where this fear is not, we are ready to joyn with every evil, and ſo to fall into the jaws of every death. *Abraham* (*Gen.* 20.11.) argues ſo, *The fear of the Lord is not in this place, therefore they will kill me;* when we perceive a bent of ſpirit, to deviſe evil, and a readineſs of the hand to practiſe it, (we may conclude) the fear of the Lord is not lodged in that heart.

Fourthly Obſerve, That, *truſt, or confidence in God, ſettles the heart in all conditions.*

Is not this thy confidence? Thy confidence certainly is but a ſhadow, for if it had been real, thou hadſt been eſtabliſhed and upheld, notwithſtanding all that weight of affliction that lies upon thee. When there was an unquietneſs upon the ſoul of *David*, he firſt queſtions his ſoul about it, *Why art thou diſquieted O my ſoul?* and then directs, *truſt in God*, Pſal. 42.11. So the Prophet promiſeth, (*Iſa.* 26.3.) *Him wilt thou eſtabliſh in perfect peace, whoſe heart doth truſt upon thee. They that truſt in the Lord ſhall be as mount Zion*, Pſal. 125.1. He that is carried and toſſed thus about, with every wind of trouble and guſt of ſorrow, ſhews he hath not caſt out this anchor of hope, upon the Rock Jeſus Chriſt.

But here a queſtion muſt be anſwered, for the clearing of all, and likewiſe for diſcovering the ſtrength or weakneſs of this argument brought by *Eliphaz*, in this particular caſe of *Job*. *Eliphaz* taxed *Job* with hypocriſie, becauſe his graces did not act, or they did not act like themſelves, like graces; he gave not proof of them at that time. Hence the doubt is, *Do a mans failings or declinings from what he was before, or what he did before, argue him inſincere?* Is their ſufficient ſtrength in this Argument for *Eliphaz* to ſay, *Job* thou haſt been a comforter of others, thou haſt profeſt much holineſs heretofore, and now thou art come to the trial, thou canſt not make it out thy ſelf; therefore thou haſt no grace, therefore all thy religion is vain.

For the reſolving of that, I anſwer firſt, that the propoſition is not ſimply true, that every one who faileth or declineth or falleth off from what formerly he was, or held forth, is therefore an Hypocrite, or that his graces are falſe, and but pretences; there may be many declinings and failings, many breaches and backſlidings, and yet the ſpirit upright. Indeed falling away and quite falling off, are an argument of inſincerity and hypocriſie; for *true grace is everlaſting grace, true holineſs endures for ever.* Therefore we are here to conſider, whence theſe failings were occaſioned in *Job*, and how a failing may be expreſt, and continue, ſo, as to conclude inſincerity or hypocriſie.

Firſt, It was from a ſudden perturbation, not from a ſetled reſolution. *Job* was not reſolvedly thus impatient and unruly: an unexpected ſtorm hurried his ſpirit ſo violently, that he was not maſter of his own actions; *Job* had not his affections at command, they got the bridle (as it were) on their necks, and away they carried him with ſuch force, that he was not able to ſtop or ſtay them.

Secondly, It came from the ſmart and ſence of pain in his fleſh, not from the perverſeneſs of his ſpirit. If the taint had been in his ſpirit, then *Eliphaz* had a ground, a certain ground to have argued thus againſt him.

Thirdly, *Job's* graces were hid and obſcured, they were not loſt or dead; the acts were ſuſpended, the habits were not removed; when the grace which hath been ſhewed, is quite loſt, that grace was nothing but a ſhew of grace, painted fear, and painted confidence: but in *Job's* caſe there was only a hiding of his graces, or a vail caſt over them.

Laſtly, We muſt not ſay, he falls from grace who falleth into ſin; nor muſt it be concluded that he hath no grace who falls into a great ſin: It follows not, that grace is falſe, or none, becauſe it doth not work like it ſelf, or becauſe it doth not ſometimes work at all. True grace works not alwayes uniformly; though it be alwayes the ſame in it ſelf, yet it is not alwayes the ſame in its effects; true grace is alwayes alive, yet it doth not alwayes act; it retains life, when motion is undiſcern'd. Wherefore they who do not work like themſelves, or do not work at all (for a time) in gracious wayes, are not to be concluded as having no grace, or nothing but a ſhew of grace.

And ſo much be ſpoken concerning this firſt Argument contained in theſe ſix Verſes, the conviction of *Job*, from his failing in the actings of his grace, the putting forth of that fruit which formerly he had born and ſhewed to the world.

VERS. 7, 8.

Remember I pray thee, who ever periſhed being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

Even as I have ſeen, they that plough iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame.

IN theſe two Verſes and the three following, *Eliphaz* coucheth and confirmeth his ſecond Argument, wherein he further beſpatters the innocency of *Job*, and hopes to convince him of hypocriſie. The Argument is taken from the conſtant experience of Gods dealings in the world, *Remember, I pray thee, who ever periſhed being innocent?* We may give it in this form.

Innocent perſons periſh not, righteous men are not cut off.

But *Job*, thou periſheſt, and thou art cut off. Therefore thou art no innocent nor righteous perſon.

The major propoſition is plain in the ſeventh Verſe; for that queſtion, *Who ever periſhed being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?* is to be reſolved into this Negation, *No innocent perſon ever periſhed, nor were the righteous ever cut off.* And *Eliphaz* conceiveth this to be ſo clear a truth, that he challengeth *Job* to give one inſtance to the contrary, out of his own experience; he appeals to experience (which is a ſtrong way of arguing) *Remember, I pray thee, who ever periſhed being innocent?* ſhew me the man; and withal he profeſſeth, that he could give many inſtances or examples out of his own experience, that wicked men have periſhed and were cut off, this he doth in the eighth Verſe, *Even as I have ſeen, they that plough iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame;* which he enlarges in the three following Verſes, *by the blaſt of God they periſh, and by the breath of his noſtrils are they conſumed,* &c. This in general for the ſum and ſubſtance of the Argument.

We will now conſider the words, and examine the ſtrength of it in particulars.

Remember I pray thee.] He handleth *Job* tenderly in words, he ſpeaks gently and winningly to him, *Remember I pray thee. To remember*, noteth often in Scripture a ſerious conſideration of things preſent, and before us, *Eccleſ.* 12.1. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth;* that is, ſeriouſly bethink thy ſelf at the preſent, of God and his wayes, and how thou oughteſt to walk holily before him. But properly, to remember, is the calling to mind of things which are paſt: And ſo *Eliphaz*, in this place, directs *Job* to ſearch the Records; go and inquire into all the Monuments of Antiquity, look the Regiſters and Hiſtories of the Ages paſt, and ſee if thou canſt find any ſuch thing as this, *A righteous man periſhing.*

Memory is the Souls ſtore-houſe; there we lay up obſervations, and from thence fetch them out, as occaſion invites. Hence Chriſt, *Mat.* 12. 57. compareth every Scribe which is inſtructed for the Kingdom of Heaven, *to a houſholder, which bringeth forth out of his treaſury things both new and old.* This treaſury is the memory; there holy truths and profitable examples are ſtored and reſerved; *Remember, I pray thee.*

In that *Eliphaz* ſendeth *Job* back to former experiences, we may note,

> That, *It is our duty to lay up and record the dealings of God, whether publick or perſonal, whether with the godly or with the wicked.*

It is our duty to obſerve what God doth, *Pſal.* 111. 4. *He hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*; as if the Pſalmiſt had ſaid, God hath not wrought ſuch great things in the world, whether reſpecting perſons or nations, that we ſhould write them upon the water, or in the ſand, which the next puff of wind defaces and blows out; *but he hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*; he will have them written in braſs with *a pen of Iron*, and with the *point of a Diamond*, that all ages may hear the loving kindneſſes of the Lord; *he hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*, or he hath made them ſo, as that they are moſt worthy to be remembred. *David* was a great obſerver of experiences (*Pſal.* 37. 25.) he telleth us, that he had (as it were) collected notes concerning Gods dealings all his dayes; and it is to the very point in hand, *I have been young, and now am old, yet never ſaw I the righteous forſaken*; himſelf carefully obſerved the dealings of God, in this Pſalm; and in the next (*Pſal.* 37. 35, 36.) he gives the like direction to others; thus I have done, do you take the ſame courſe too, *I have ſeen the wicked in great power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green Bay-tree*; then he goes on, *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright.* I have conſidered the ſtate of wicked men; let all obſerve the ſtate of the godly; *mark the perfect man, & behold the upright.* The works of God expound his word; in his works his word is often made viſible. That's an excellent expreſſion, *Pſal.* 111. 7. *The works of his hands are verity and judgment: The acts of God are verity*, that is, God acts his own truths. As the works of our hands ought to be the verity and judgments of God (*every action of a Chriſtian ſhould be one of Chriſts truths*) ſo it is exactly with God himſelf; the works of his hands are his own verity and judgments. When we cannot find the meaning of God in his word, we may find it out in his works; his works are a comment, an infallible comment upon his word.

Yet we muſt take this Caution. The dealings of God in the ſurface and outward part of them, appear ſometimes contrary to his word, contrary unto his promiſe; but they only appear ſo, they are never ſo. When a man reads a promiſe, and finds much good ſtored up in it for the righteous, and then looks upon the ſtate of the righteous, and ſeeth it full of evil; here is a ſeeming contrariety between the word and the works of God; but it is only a ſeeming contrariety, as we ſhall ſee ſomewhat further anon. Therefore in that *Pſal.* 111. 2. where he ſaith, *The works of God are verity and judgment*, he adds, *The works of God are ſought out.* If you will have the verity or judgment that is in the works of God, you muſt not only look upon the outſide of them, but you muſt ſeek them out, ſtudy them, ſtudy them as you ſtudy the Scriptures; and then you will find out the meaning of them, and ſee how exactly they ſquare with every part of the word. Why doth *Eliphaz* ſend *Job* to experience? The ground is this, the works of God are like the word of God; therefore if thou canſt not make it out by experience from his works, thou canſt hardly make it out, as a poſition, from his word, *that righteous perſons are cut off.*

Remember now, I pray thee, who ever periſhed being innocent? Or where were the righteous cut off?

Here are four terms to be opened, *periſhed, cut off, innocent, righteous.* We will conſider, Firſt, What we are to underſtand by *periſhing, and by cutting off.* Secondly, Whom we are to underſtand by *innocent and righteous perſons*: And then apply the whole ſentence, by ſhewing wherein the truth of this propoſition ſtands, that a *righteous man, or an innocent perſon, cannot periſh or be cut off.*

The word which we tranſlate *periſhed*, hath divers ſignifications.

ו אבד

Firſt, A returning to nothing, an utter conſumption, which is to periſh as a beaſt, *Pſal.* 49. 20. The holy Ghoſt deſcribing a man who is not acquainted with God in his great eſtate, compares him thus; *Man being in honour* and not underſtanding (*ſc.* the things of God) *becometh like the beaſts that periſh*; not that he periſheth as a beaſt doth, but he is like a periſhing beaſt; the ſimilitude is not in periſhing, but in his qualities who periſheth; he hath but ſuch qualities, he is (upon the matter) even of as groſs a temper as a periſhing beaſt.

Secondly, To periſh, ſignifies to die. The diſſolution of man, or the diſ-union of ſoul and body, *Iſa.* 57. 1. is thus expreſt; *the righteous periſh*, that is, they die; as it is explained afterward, *they are taken away from the evil to come, they reſt in their beds*, ſc. *in their graves*: So, *Mat.* 8. 25. *Maſter, ſave us, we periſh*, ſay the Diſciples, when they thought they ſhould all be drowned. Lord, help us, or elſe we all die preſently: and ſo we tranſlate *Job* 34. 15. where *Elihu* ſpeaking of the power of God, thus deſcribes it, *If he ſhould but ſhew himſelf, all fleſh* (ſaith he) *ſhall periſh together*, that is, *all fleſh ſhall die*; they are not able to ſtand before Gods power and greatneſs: the word which he uſeth there, ſtrictly taken, ſignifies to expire or give up the ghoſt; yet we tranſlate it, *all fleſh ſhall periſh together*; that is, they ſhall all give up the ghoſt and die, if God ſhould appear in his power and greatneſs.

גוע

Thirdly, By periſhing, we may underſtand outward afflictions and troubles falling upon, either godly or wicked men; theſe are called a periſhing (*Joſh.* 23. 13.) *Joſhua* tells the people, *If you will not obey and walk according to the Commandments of God, ye ſhall quickly periſh from off this good land*, that is, ye ſhall be removed by outward afflictions from your land, you ſhall go into captivity. And ſo, *If I periſh, I periſh*, ſaith *Eſther*, chap. 4. 17. that is, if I bring trouble and affliction upon my ſelf, let it be ſo, I will venture it; *A Syrian ready to periſh was my Father*, *Deut.* 26. It is meant of *Jacob*, a man much verſt in trouble, as he himſelf acknowledgeth; *Few and evil are the dayes of my pilgrimage.*

Fourthly, To *periſh*, notes eternal miſery; as it is put for the miſeries of this life, ſo for the life of miſery; for that life which is an everlaſting death, *John* 3. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Periſhing is oppoſed to everlaſting life, and therefore implies everlaſting death.

Omnimodam rei perditionem ſignificat, opponitur enim generationi.

Fifthly, To *periſh*, notes utter deſolation and total ruine. A cutting off, or a deſtroying the very name and remembrance of a perſon or of a people. *He that ſpeaks lies, ſhall periſh*, Pſal. 19, 9. that is, *he ſhall be utterly deſtroyed.* In this ſence the word is uſed for the Devil, becauſe he is a deſtroyer to the utmoſt, as Chriſt is a Saviour to the utmoſt: He is called *Abaddon*, from *Abad* (the word here uſed) *Rev.* 9. 12. and *Apollyon*; his buſineſs is to deſtroy totally and eternally. Thus alſo Antichriſt, *The firſt-born of the Devil* (2 Theſ. 2. 3.) is called *the ſon of perdition*: take it actively, he is a deſtroying ſon, one that deſtroyeth bodies and ſouls; as in Scripture, a bloody man is called *Iſh dammim*, a man of blood; and paſſively, he is a *ſon of perdition*, that is, a man to be deſtroyed both body and ſoul.

Theſe two latter ſences, namely, eternal deſtruction in Hell, and utter deſtruction in this life, are joyned together, *Prov.* 15. 11. *Hell and deſtruction* (or hell and periſhing) *are before the Lord*; and *chap.* 27. 20. we have the ſame words again, *hell and perdition, or hell and deſtruction are never full.* So that to *periſh* (in a ſtrict ſence) notes, even in this life, an utter extirpation; ſo ſome render it here *who ever ſaw the righteous plucked up by the roots*, ſo as there ſhould be no remembrance, no remainder of them? The other word which is joyned in the Text, *cut off*, carries the ſame ſence; though it ſignifies properly, to hide a thing, yet it is ſo to hide it, as it appeareth no more; or ſo to hide it, that it can neither be heard of, nor ſeen no more. Hence by a *Metonymie*, it ſignifies, to take away, or to cut off, becauſe things that are taken away and cut off, are as things hidden and ſeen no more. Here then is the height of the ſence, either to take it for periſhing in hell, or for ſuch a

כחד *Abſcondit, ut amplius audiatur, vel videatur, per metonymiā ſublatus, deletus, ſucciſus; ſublata enim è medio non apparent amplius, ſed abſconduntur.*

periſhing in this life, as is joyned with total deſolation and deſertion.

נקה Then for the terms, *innocent and righteous.* The word we tranſlate *innocent*, ſignifieth empty: And it is therefore applied to an innocent perſon, becauſe innocent perſons are emptied of malice and wickedneſs, their hearts are ſwept and cleanſed, purged and waſhed; there is in ſome ſenſe a *vacuum*, a holy *vacuum* in the hearts of holy perſons; they are freed from that fulneſs of evil which lies in their hearts by nature, that filth is caſt out. Every mans heart, by nature, is brim-full, top-full of wickedneſs, as the Apoſtle deſcribes the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1. 29. *Being filled with all unrighteouſneſs*; and it is a truth of every mans heart, it is a *Cage full of unclean birds, a Stable full of filthy dung*, he hath in him a throng of filthy thoughts, a multitude of prophane gueſts lodging in him. Now a perſon converted, is emptied of theſe; theſe gueſts are turned out of their lodgings, the rooms are ſwept and emptied, therefore an holy perſon is called an empty perſon; emptied, not abſolutely emptied of all ſin, but comparatively; there is abundance caſt out; ſo that conſidering how full of ſin he was, he may be ſaid to be emptied of ſin, and that his malice is caſt out. נקיון שנים In *Amos* 4. the Prophet threatens *cleanneſs of teeth* (it is a ſuitable judgment, that unclean hearts and lives ſhould be puniſhed with clean teeth) or innocency of teeth; for it is the word of the Text: Famine is elegantly ſo called. Want of bread makes empty or clean teeth,

And where were the righteous (that's the other text) **cut off?** One may put the queſtion, where were the righteous? Surely *Job* had very good eyes, if he could find any righteous man upon the earth, he might ſeem to have clearer eyes then the Lord himſelf, if he could find any righteous; *God looked down from heaven, and he ſaw none righteous, no, not one*, Pſal. 53. 3, 4. Yet here *Eliphaz* bids *Job* enquire about the righteous, where they were cut off. To clear that;

By righteous here, we are to underſtand, not righteous perſons in a ſtrict and legal ſence, but in a Goſpel-mollified ſence; righteous with an allay, righteous by way of interpretation, and not in the ſtrictneſs of the letter. And ſo men are called righteous, firſt, in reference to the work of regeneration. There are none righteous in the root or original, in their firſt ſetting and plantation in the ſoil of the world; but there are righteous perſons as regenerate, and tranſplanted into the body of Chriſt, as wrought and faſhioned by the Spirit of Chriſt.

Secondly, There are none righteous, that is, none exactly, perfectly, compleatly righteous, but inchoately and intentionally; ſo many men are righteous, and are called righteous in the language of the Scripture.

Thirdly, There are none righteous, that is, none righteous by way of merit or deſert; none are ſo righteous, as that they can challenge any thing at Gods hand, of right; the moſt righteous perſon is an unprofitable ſervant; he hath nothing to plead before God but free grace, nothing to ſhew unto God, but Chriſts fulneſs, and his own emptineſs, the riches of Chriſt, and his own poverty. Yet there are righteous in Gods acceptance, he accounteth and accepteth them for righteous, and honours them to be called righteous.

Laſtly, We may anſwer it thus, there are none righteous in themſelves, or from themſelves, none have any righteouſneſs of their own making; but the Scripture ſhews us thoſe who have righteouſneſs, and are righteous in another, and from another; we have the righteouſneſs of juſtification in Chriſt, and the righteouſneſs of ſanctification from Chriſt: Righteouſneſs is both imputed to, and floweth into the ſoul by virtue of the union which is promiſed in the Covenant of Grace, with Chriſt the righteous, with the *Lord our righteouſneſs*. In theſe reſpects there are righteous perſons, and of ſuch we may underſtand this enquiry, *where were ever the righteous cut off?* The righteous by regeneration, the righteous by inchoation, the righteous by acceptation, or the righteous by imputation; where were any ſuch righteous in all the world, of whom thou canſt ſay, they have ever periſhed, or have been cut off?

Having opened the ſence of the ſingle terms, we will look to the ſence of the propoſition, and conſider wherein we may clear the truth of it, *That innocent perſons do not periſh*, or, *that the righteous are not cut off.*

Take periſhing or cutting off in the firſt ſenſe, namely, for annihilation and returning to nothing, and ſo neither righteous nor unrighteous, guilty nor innocent can periſh; no man ſhall periſh ſo, man is of an everlaſting make.

Then take periſhing in the ſecond ſence, as it is put for dying and going out of the land of the living; thus all righteous and innocent perſons periſh and are cut off, namely, by the ſword and ſythe of death: we may ſay all. God indeed hath made ſome few exceptions out of the general rule; but the ſtatute is plain, *It is appointed unto all men once to die*: *Enoch* was tranſlated, and ſo was *Elijah*, and many ſhall be found alive when Chriſt cometh to judgment, who ſhall not die; they ſhall be but changed, and have a metaphorical, not a proper death; this makes ſome ſmall abatement from, but doth not croſs the general rule, that all muſt die.

Take periſhing in the third ſence, for ſome temporal outward ſuffering in the world, either from the hand of God immediately, or mediately from the hand of man. Thus righteous and innocent perſons may periſh too, that is, they may fall under ſore and great afflictions; thus *righteous Abel* periſhed, and thus *Jacob was a Syrian ready to periſh*; and thus the godly party among the Jews, in the time of their captivity, periſhed (*they periſhed from off the Land*, as it was threatned, *Joſh.* 23.) with the reſt of the wicked; of which the two baskets of figs, one bad, and the other good, were a famous type, *Jer.* 24. 3.

And in regard of this outward, preſent, temporal periſhing, we find it often, that the righteous periſh, while the unrighteous flouriſh. *Pſal.* 73.12. *Behold* (ſaith *David*) *theſe are the ungodly that proſper in the world*; and at the fourth verſe, *All the day long have I been plagued, and chaſtened every morning.* As ſure, or as ſoon as I riſe, I have a whipping, and my breakfaſt is bread of ſorrow, and the water of adverſity; theſe proſper, and I periſh. And the Prophet (*Jer.* 12. 1, 2.) expoſtulates with holy ſubmiſſion, about this flouriſhing eſtate of the wicked, and periſhing eſtate of the godly: *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked proſper?* &c. And in the next verſe, *Thou haſt planted them, yea, they have taken root, they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit.* What a gradation is here of the flouriſhing proſperity of wicked men, while the righteous ſeem to wither? *Thou haſt planted them.* Every tree that is planted, doth not take root; but theſe take root. Every tree that taketh root, doth not grow up to any ſtrength; but theſe take root, and they grow. There are trees that grow, yet they bring not forth fruit; but theſe bring forth fruit alſo; *yea* (ſaith he) *they bring forth fruit*; theſe were flouriſhing trees indeed, yet in the mean time, thouſands of righteous perſons periſhed in, and by, outward troubles.

Sometime (we find on the other hand) that the wicked periſh in outward troubles, while the righteous are delivered, and have Arks provided to ſave them in a common deluge. God makes that difference ſometime, even in this life; he pulled *Lot* out of *Sodom*, while *Sodom* periſhed by fire; and righteous *Noah* was ſaved in the Ark, while the world of the ungodly periſhed by water.

And laſtly, Both the righteous and the wicked may be wrapped up in the very ſame outward periſhing condition, yet alwayes with a difference; though both alike periſh, yet their periſhing is not alike. As it is with the righteous and wicked in regard of ſin, ſo of ſufferings: They may both commit the ſame ſin for the matter, as it is a tranſgreſſion of the Law; but a righteous man can never ſin as the wicked: he ſins not, with ſuch formalities of ſinning, he hath not ſuch a heart, ſuch a temper and bent of ſpirit, as a wicked man hath in ſinning; to ſin ſo, is utterly inconſiſtent with the new nature. Thus alſo it is with the periſhings, afflictions and troubles which they fall into; God ſometimes ſends the very ſame affliction for the matter, as ſuppoſe poverty, want, impriſonment, captivity and the like, upon the one, as upon the other: But are the righteous ſmitten, as God ſmites thoſe that ſmite them? Surely no; in meaſure he debateth with them, *Iſa.* 27. 7, 8. They ſin not againſt God with the ſame heart, or at the ſame rate as wicked men do: and God never ſtrikes them with the ſame heart, and at the ſame rate, as he doth the wicked; he cannot do it, the ſtrength of his love to them, makes this impoſſible for him: Therefore, though, as the Preacher reſolves the caſe, *Eccleſ.* 9. 1. *No man knoweth either love or hatred*,

hatred, by all that is before him. In the matter of events, love or hatred are not viſible; yet in the manner of events, there is much love and hatred viſible; and the ſpirits of ſuch as are under thoſe events, may diſcern love or hatred, when no eye can: One ſeeth hatred, and another ſeeth love, abundance of love mixed in his cup of ſorrow. God never gives his own a cup of pure wrath to drink; there are alwayes ſome ingredients of comfort and ſweetneſs put into it. This is the third ſence, how righteous ones may, or may not periſh.

Take *periſhing* in the fourth ſence, as periſhing is an eternal deſtruction; and ſo the propoſition of *Eliphaz* is true throughout, ſtrictly true; that no righteous ever periſhed, or were cut off: an innocent perſon is, in that ſence, paſt periſhing; a righteous man is paſt cutting off, *John* 10. 28. *I do give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh.* Rejoyce in this, ye righteous, ye are beyond periſhing, ye are paſt periſhing, while ye live in a periſhing world.

Laſtly, Take it in the fifth ſence, and you may have a further truth, which I conceive, is that which *Eliphaz* purpoſely aims at; take periſhing, for outward deſtruction, joyned with a total deſertion, and in that ſence, the propoſition of *Eliphaz* is true alſo; No righteous man, no innocent man ever periſhed, or was ſo cut off with any temporal judgment: The Apoſtle is direct for it (2 *Cor*. 4. 8, 9.) *We are in trouble on every ſide* (we ſee trouble which way ſoever we turn) *but we are not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed* (we are in the briars as well as ungodly men) *but not in deſpair* (we are in hope ſtill, and if there be hope for us, God is for us:) *we are perſecuted, but not forſaken* (God is near us, though all the world ſtand aloof) *we are caſt down, but not deſtroyed*; we ſhall up again. So that, while he admits of periſhing, in the former ſence, reſpecting outward affliction; yet he denies it conſtantly in this latter ſence, ſo as to be cut off quite from the comforts and ſupports of God. That obſervation of *David*, may be thus underſtood (*Pſal.* 37. 25.) *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken* (he doth not ſay, in my experience I never ſaw the righteous afflicted; but, I never ſaw him left or forſaken in his afflictions) *and I never ſaw his ſeed begging their bread*: he puts in that, becauſe begging of bread, eſpecially in the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, and in the ſtate of the *Jews*, was a note of utter dereliction; for though God had told them, that they ſhould have the poor alwayes with them, yet he had given an expreſs law, that there ſhould be no beggar among them; therefore, ſaith he, I have not ſeen the righteous ſo forſaken, that they ſhould be forced to live by begging.

Caſus tranſitorii non reddunt mẽdicum.

If any ſay, that *David* himſelf begged, he asked bread of *Abimelech* and *Nabal*. I anſwer, It is a good rule, and it reſolves the caſe; tranſitory caſes, and ſudden accidents, make no beggars: we muſt not ſay, *David* was a beggar, or begged his bread, becauſe once he was in a ſtraight, and asked bread of *Abimelech*; and in a ſecond ſtraight, ſent to *Nabal*: In ſuch ſudden caſes, the richeſt man in the world, may be put to ask a piece of bread. A good man may fall into ſuch wants; but good men are rarely, if ever, or at all, left in them.

Now to apply it particularly to the intent of *Eliphaz* in this place. We have given three interpretations, in which we have ſhewed, how righteous men may periſh; and two, wherein the righteous cannot poſſibly periſh; in both which, the words here ſpoken by *Eliphaz*, are a truth. And concerning the fifth and laſt, I conceive, *Eliphaz* is particularly to be underſtood; for he ſpeaks not here of the eternal eſtate of *Job* (though that be involved) when he concludeth him a wicked man; but he ſpeaks of the dealings of God in temporals: he look'd upon *Job* as a loſt man, a man utterly forſaken of his God; as a man of a forlorn hope, cut down, and pluckt up root and branch; when he ſaw his ſtock conſumed, his children ſlain, his body diſeaſed, and his ſpirit ſo diſtempered. And ſo the Minor, or the Aſſumption only is falſe, the Propoſition true: Righteous men do not periſh thus, innocent perſons are not thus cut off; but thou *Job* periſheſt, and art cut off: hold there, that's falſe; *Job*, in the ſence *Eliphaz* intended, periſhed not, was not cut off; for in the ſequel, God gave him both comfort and deliverance; Love was mingled with the affliction, ſtre gth was miniſtred to bear the affliction; and at laſt a gracious way was made out of the affliction. The bleſſing of God cauſed him to ſpring out again; though his goodly branches were broken, and his fruit pluckt off, yet his roots were not pluckt up.

Pſal. 7. 3.
Jer. 12. 1.

It will not be unneceſſary, for the clearing of this Scripture, to ſubjoyn a reaſon, why in the Old Teſtament, or under the old Covenant, there was ſo much ſtumbling at the afflictions and troubles of the righteous; for it put even a *David*, a *Jeremiah*, and a *Habakkuk* hard to it, for an anſwer, when they ſaw ſuch under ſufferings; the reaſon was this, becauſe God, in thoſe times, made more ſpecial temporal promiſes to his people, in caſe of obedience, then he hath done in the times of the Goſpel. Read *Deut*. 28. *Lev*. 27. and other places; where you ſhall find, how all the promiſes run upon things that concern the outward man; they ſhall be bleſſed in their basket and in their ſtore, they ſhall have this and that, and all outward things abundantly; and the curſe threatned, was the loſs and deprivation of theſe outward bleſſings, in caſe of diſobedience: For God did win and carry them on in that non-age of the Church, by outward and temporal promiſes; hence they were much troubled and offended, when they ſaw righteous men under heavy preſſures and breaking afflictions. Now ſince the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, and the powring out of thoſe ſpecial ſpiritual bleſſings upon his people, by the holy Ghoſt, he doth not feed us ſo much with theſe outward hopes or enjoyments. Therefore in the Goſpel, we read what hard meat he giveth his people; foretelling them plainly, *If any will follow me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs*; there is ſcarce ſuch a word in all the Old Teſtament as that, he which will follow me, ſhall find a Croſs, and be ſure of perſecution; they were but children, ſuch words and ſights might terrifie them; therefore they were (as it were) dandled on the knee, and allured by ſenſible comforts, a land flowing with milk and honey, if they did obey; and they heard of rods and ſtripes in caſe of ſtubbornneſs and diſobedience: *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with them, for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings; wo the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him*, &c. *Iſa.* 3. 10, 11. *David* ſaith (indeed) *many are the troubles of the righteous*, but (it is not put among the terms of their ſtate or ſervice) it is not ſaid, if ye will be righteous, ye ſhall have trouble. *Moſes* never told them, *If any will be my Diſciple, let him take up his Croſs*, &c. So then, Gods dealings and diſpenſations being moſt in outward things at that time, they were very apt to ſtumble at the Croſs. And there is greater reaſon why they ſhould ſtumble at a molehill, then we at a mountain of trouble; God having told us, that ſeeing he had given us ſuch excellent things in Chriſt, ſuch glorious mercies, and tranſcendent priviledges in the Goſpel, we may well take afflictions and troubles into the bargain, and never ſhrink or ſtrain at them, but rather take them well. So much for that verſe; *The righteous are not cut off, neither do innocent perſons periſh.*

Ver. 8.

Eliphaz having given *Job* his turn to ſearch his experiences, brings forth his own, in the next words: *Even as I have ſeen, they that plow iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame*: As if he ſhould ſay, *Job*, I know you are not able to give me one inſtance of a righteous mans periſhing, but I could give you many and many inſtances, I could write whole books concerning wicked men periſhing, and of the ungodly cut off. This he carries under a Metaphor, and by continued Metaphors, makes up an *elegant Allegory*, in thoſe terms of *plowing*, *ſowing*, *reaping*.

ראה *Significat non ſimpliciter videre, ſed curioſè inſpicere.*

Even as I have ſeen.] That word notes a curious obſervation, not a light, tranſitory glance of the eye, but a critical conſideration of any thing. As it is ſaid, *Gen.* 1. 4. *God ſaw the light that he had made, God ſaw it diſcerningly*; for he found it was very good: and ſo it is ſaid, *Gen.* 34. 1, 2. that *Dinah* went forth *to ſee the Daughters of the land*, that is, curiouſly (though vainly) to obſerve the manners and faſhions of the people; and in the ſame verſe, *Hamor* the ſon of *Sechem ſaw her*; he ſaw her ſo exactly, as to be taken with her beauty, his eye entangling his heart, and both entangling his life. So here, *Even as I have ſeen*, that is, by a diligent inſpection, and judicious conſideration of what I ſaw. And what was that? *Myſtical Hubandry.*

They that plow iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame.

חרש
Fodit ſundum, aravit per metaphoram fodit cogitatione, vel intentus fuit rei alicui conficiendæ, ſicut arator præparat terrã ante ſeminatorem.

They that plow iniquity.] The word which we tranſlate, to plow, ſignifies the uſe of any kind of art or manufacture; as the work of a Smith, or of a Carpenter, in Iron, Wood, or Timber; and as the Art, ſo the Artiſt or handicraftsman (*Iſa.* 44. 12.) is expreſt by this word: *The Smith with his tongs, worketh in the coals.* And, *Zech.* 1. 20. it is put for a Carpenter; *The Lord ſhewed me four Carpenters*: Now here it is applied to the Plowman, and to his plowing. So, *Hoſ.* 10. 13. *Ye have plowed wickedneſs, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lies.*

And this plowing of iniquity, or plowing of wickedneſs, takes in both the outward act of ſin (to plow iniquity, is to commit and practiſe iniquity) and the inward act of ſin; to plow iniquity, is as much as to deviſe and meditate iniquity, *Prov.* 3. 29. *Deviſe not* (Heb. *Plow not*) *evil againſt thy neighbour.* So, *Prov.* 6. 18. *A heart that deviſeth*, or ploweth, *wicked imaginations.* And, *Prov.* 21. 4. *The plowing of the wicked is ſin*; that is, whatſoever they deviſe, or whatſoever they do, inſide and outſide, the cloth and linings of their garments are all ſin.

Likewiſe this word denotes, not only ſpeculative evils, but alſo ſecreſie of practice, or a plot carried and acted ſecretly. Thus (2 *Sam.* 23. 9.) it is ſaid, *David knew that Saul ſecretly practiſed evil againſt him*; the hebrew is, he knew that *Saul* plowed evil againſt him. So that it may be taken, either for the meditating of evil, or for a politick cloſe way of effecting any evil or wicked deſign.

And the Scripture elegantly calls the muſing or meditating of ſin, *plowing*, becauſe a man in meditation (when he would accompliſh any wickedneſs) turns up (as it were) all the corruptions that are in his heart, and all the conveniences that are in the world, to attain his end. As a man that meditates upon any holy thing, *upon Chriſt*, or *Free-grace*, &c. turns up all the graces and abilities that are in his ſpirit, he plows up his heart, that he may fetch up the ſtrength, and enjoy the ſweetneſs of them.

So then this plowing noteth two things chiefly; firſt, the pains and labour which wicked men take in ſinful courſes; every one that ſins, doth not plow ſin, or is not a worker (which is an equivalent phraſe) of iniquity. Secondly, It implies the black art and helliſh skill of wicked men in ſinning. To plow, is a skill, and ſo is ſome kind of ſinning (though to ſin in general, be as natural, as to ſee, and needs as little teaching as the ear to hear) ſome men (as we may ſay) are bunglers in ſinning, others are their craftsmaſters at this plough, and can lay a furrow of iniquity ſo ſtrait, do an act of filthineſs ſo cleanly, that you can hardly ſee any thing amiſs in it: Thoſe words in the New Teſtament, *to commit ſin, to work iniquity, an abomination, or a lie*, Rev. 21. 27, &c. are anſwerable to this in the old Teſtament, *a plougher of iniquity.*

Qui operantur iniquitatem.

And ſome tranſlate this Text ſo: the vulgar reads it thus, *They who work iniquity*: All which expreſſions ſet forth, and elegantly deſcribe ſuch, who ſin reſolvedly, induſtriouſly, cunningly, curiouſly, ſuch as have the art (and will ſpare no pains) to do wickedly. Theſe have ſerved an apprentiſhip to their luſts, and are now as Free-men of hell, yet ſtill Satans drudges, and active engineers to plot and execute what God abhors.

Note this further, that plowing in Scripture, refers both to good actions and to bad; there is a plowing for good, the Metaphor is ſo applied, *Prov.* 4. 27. *Do not they err that deviſe evil?* (that plow evil) *but mercy and truth ſhall be to them that deviſe good* (to them that plow good;) the ſame word is uſed in both; and it intimates (as before) both the pains and the skill which a godly man beſtows and ſhews about holy things. The great work of repentance is often Allegorized by plowing; *break up the fallow ground.* And our obedience to the Goſpel, whether in the profeſſion or preaching of it, is called plowing, *Luke* 9. 62. *He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looks back*, is not fit for the Kingdom of God. Grace is as active and as accurate as luſt can be.

It follows, **And ſow iniquity, reap the ſame.** *Eliphaz* goes on with the Metaphor; after plowing, comes ſowing, and after ſeed-time, reaping-time or harveſt. Sowing in Scripture is divers wayes applied unto the actions of men.

Firſt, There is a ſowing, which is the work of charity, when we diſpenſe and diſtribute to the help of the poor, eſpecially to the Saints; ſo, 2 *Cor.* 9, 6. *He that ſoweth ſparingly*, that is, he that giveth to the poor ſparingly.

Secondly, Sowing is applied to the preaching of the Goſpel, to the ſcattering of the word in at the ears, and into the hearts of men; *Luke* 8. 5. *A ſower went out to ſow.*

Thirdly, Sowing is applied unto the burial of the dead, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42. *That which is ſown in weakneſs*; the bodies of men are as ſeed in the earth, they ſhall ſpring up again.

Fourthly, Sowing is applied to repenting tears, *Pſal.* 126. 5. *They that ſow in tears*, that is, they that go on repenting and mourning, *ſhall reap in joy*, they ſhall have ſheaves of comfort.

And Fifthly, It is applied generally unto any action good or bad, *Gal.* 6. 8. *He that ſoweth to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; and he that ſoweth to the ſpirit*, &c. Sowing (as plowing) is uſed in regard of doing good and evil: *Sow to your ſelves in righteouſneſs*, ſaith the Prophet; and here on the other ſide, *They that plough iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs.* Here is the progreſs of ſin; ſin goeth on gradually, there is not only a plowing, but a ſowing; ſin is the ſeed, and there is a ſeminal virtue in every ſin; it will ſpring up again, and bring forth an hundred fold more in miſery to the whole man, fleſh and ſpirit, then ever it gave in delights unto the fleſh.

עמל
Seminant dolores. Vulg.

The word which we tranſlate [*wickedneſs*] ſignifies *wearineſs, labour, perverſeneſs*; becauſe wicked perſons weary and toil themſelves in ſerving and ſatisfying their luſts, *Numb.* 23. 21. *I have ſeen no perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* God did not find them laboriouſly and induſtriouſly wicked at that time. To do wickedly, is a weariſom employment, a hard labour. The vulgar Latine renders it by ſorrow; *and ſow ſorrows.*

Reap the ſame.] The Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 37. telleth us, *That the Husbandman ſoweth not the ſame body that ſhall be*; how then is it ſaid, *they ſow wickedneſs, and reap the ſame?* When they come to the harveſt, what ſhall they have? The ſame, ſaith *Eliphaz.* It is true; A man that ſoweth, doth not *reap the ſame* individually or numerically, that is, the very ſame particular ſeed; but he reaps the ſame ſpecifically, the ſame in kind: that's the meaning here; their crop or harveſt ſhall be like their ſeed-time, *Gal.* 6. 7. *Whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap*, the ſame in kind, not the ſame in number, *Prov.* 22. 8. *He that ſoweth iniquity, ſhall reap vanity.* It is not the ſin it ſelf which is reaped, but the fruit, the product of that ſin, that they ſhall reap; the puniſhment of ſin is the fruit of ſin, and it is called *the ſame*: *Puniſhment is a viſible ſin. Thy way and thy doings have procured theſe things unto thee, this is thy wickedneſs*, Jer. 4. 18. The bitter things procured by wickedneſs, are called wickedneſs; as the ſweet fruits of our good works, are called our works, *Rev.* 14. 13. *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them*: their works follow them, how? Not their works in kind; the very ſame individual works which they have done here, follow them not (for they are tranſient acts, and have no ſubſiſtency) but the fruits of thoſe works, and the bleſſings which lie in the promiſe for ſuch as do thoſe works; theſe fruits, theſe bleſſings follow them: the bleſſings annexed to faith, obedience and holineſs, theſe follow them. So now, when it is ſaid of a wicked man, what a man ploweth and ſoweth, he reapeth the ſame, it is to be underſtood of the ſame thing in the iſſue and conſequents of it, thoſe curſes, thoſe treaſures, that harveſt of wrath, which lie in the threatnings againſt him, theſe are rained down upon him, and are made the portion of his cup.

Again [*the ſame*] that is, *the ſame in degree*; if he have ſown much, he ſhall reap much; if he have ſown but little, he ſhall reap but little, he ſhall have his due proportion. The juſtice of God doth neither commute nor compound penalties with wicked men; as it will not wrong or over-charge, ſo neither will it favour or ſpare them in their ſins. God ſpared not his Son, when he was in the place of ſinners, *Rom.* 8. 32. much leſs will he ſpare any ſinner, who is not in his Son. So much for the opening of theſe words. We ſhall now obſerve ſome things from them.

Even as I have ſeen, they that plough iniquity.

Hence we learn, Firſt, *That to be a wicked man is no eaſie task; he muſt go to plough for it.*

It is plowing, and you know plowing is laborious, yea it is hard labour. Wicked men in Scripture are called *Sons of Belial*, that is, ſuch as will not endure the yoke; they will not endure Gods yoke, or the yoke of Chriſt, though it be an eaſie yoke: but they are content ſlaviſhly to yield their (otherwiſe) proud and delicate necks to Satans yoke, to tug and ſweat at his plough all their days. There is a promiſe, in the Prophet, of a time, when *ſwords ſhall be turned into plough-ſhares, and ſpears into pruning-hooks*; that is, men ſhall leave fighting and go to working, they ſhall have peace: and there are many in the World, who would break their ſwords into theſe myſtical plough-ſhares, and their ſpears into ſinning hooks; they would have peace, why? that they might leave fighting and go to ſinning, that they might work wickedneſs more quickly, and keep cloſe to their Trade, the ploughing of iniquity without diſturbance.

Belial, deduci poteſt à בלי *q. e. Non &* עול *q. e. Jugum, ut ſignificetur impatientia Jugi.* Hieron.

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *there is an art in wickedneſs.*

It is ploughing, or, as the word imports, an artificial working. Some are curious and exact in ſhaping, polliſhing and ſetting off their ſin: ſo the Holy Ghoſt intimates, *Rev.* 21. 27. *Whoſoever worketh abomination, and maketh a lye:* There is but one Verb in the Greek, and ſo we may read it full enough in our language, *whoſoever worketh an abomination and a lye*; to work an abomination or a lye, is more then to do an abomination, or tell a lye. As when we ſay, ſuch a man is a Clockmaker, it notes Art, as well as action. So to ſay, ſuch a man is an Abomination-worker, or a Lye-maker, notes him not only induſtrious, but crafty, or (as the Prophet ſpeaks) *wiſe to do evil.*

ποιῶν βδέλυγμα καὶ ψεῦδος.

Thirdly, Note from theſe Metaphors, of ploughing and ſowing,

That, *wicked men expect benefit in wayes of ſin, and look to be gainers being by evil doers.*

They make iniquity their plough; and a mans plough is ſo much his profit, that it is grown into a Proverb, to call that (whatſoever it is) by which a man makes his living or his profit, *His plough.* And when we ſay, *there are many candles burning, and never a plough going*: It is to tax unthriftineſs or careleſs ſpending, without honeſt care of getting. Every man tills in expectation of a crop; who would put his plough into the ground to receive nothing? The Apoſtle argues from this, as a dictate of nature, (1 *Cor.* 9. 10.) *He that ploweth, ploweth in hope.* And *James* 5. 7. *The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth*; having beſtowed his labour, he doth not count it labour loſt. It is even ſo with wicked men, when they are ſinning, they think themſelves thriving, or laying up that in the earth a while, which will grow and increaſe to a plentiful harveſt. What ſtrange fancies have many to be rich, to be great, by wayes of wickedneſs? Thus they plow in hope, but they ſhall never be partakers of their hope: yea, they ſhall be aſhamed of their hope, their ſin will deceive them. And that which will make their poverty moſt burthenſom, is their hope of riches; the expectation they had to gain, will make their loſs, their breaking, and their undoing, intollerable.

Fourthly, Obſerve from theſe Metaphors,

That, *every ſinful act perſiſted in, ſhall have a certain ſorrowful reward.*

It ſhall aſſuredly be anſwered with judgment, tribulation, and anguiſh: Aſſuredly it ſhall. Are not plowing and ſeed-time an aſſurance of the harveſt? They that go forth vainly rejoycing, bearing that poyſonous ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again, and bring their ſheaves of ſorrow with them. That which God promiſed (*Gen.* 8. 22.) in regard of natural husbandry, he hath threatned in regard of this myſtical husbandry: after the Flood he promiſed, that *while the Earth remained, Summer and Winter, Seed time and Harveſt ſhould not ceaſe.* So it is here, only with this difference, the Lord uſeth all means to diſſwade and prevent the ſeed-time of ſin. But when notwithſtanding all thoſe threatnings, men will be ſowing iniquity, he hath made an everlaſting Decree (as firm in its kind, as that about the waters of *Noah*) that Harveſt ſhall follow, and every ſuch ſoul ſhall both reap and eat, the fruit of his ſinful plowing and ſowings.

Fifthly Obſerve, That, *the puniſhment of ſin may come long after the committing of ſin.*

The one is the ſeed-time, and the other a reaping-time; there is a great diſtance of time between ſowing and reaping. The ſeeds of ſin may lie many years under the furrowes. A man may commit a ſin in his youth, and not find the harveſt of it till his old age. How many (as *Job* complains, but in a worſe ſence then he) in their old age, are made to poſſeſs the ſins of their youth, and feel that which they have forgot? *The Husbandman* (in that place before mentioned, *James* 5. 7.) *waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it*: and through the long patience of God, ſome wicked men (though they thought their ſins not ſowed, but buried for ever, and never deſire to ſee or hear of them; yet (in a ſence) ſome wicked men, I ſay) wait long for the noxious fruit of their own hearts.

Sometimes indeed the ſeed-time and harveſt of ſin, are found in the ſame hour: and while a man hath ſcarce ended his ſin, his puniſhment begins. The Prophet deſcribing the plenty and proſperity of the Church in the latter dayes, tells us, *that the plough-man ſhall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes, him that ſoweth the ſeed.* The returns of ſin are to ſome as quick and plentiful, judgment rides poſt after them, the reaper overtakes the ſower, or the man reaps as ſoon as he hath ſowed: wrath arreſts him in the very act of ſinning. And we may ſay, as *Eliſha* in another caſe, *Is not the ſound of his maſters feet behind him?* The ſound of puniſhment is at the very heels of ſin. That black Oxe comes as ſwift as a Leopard, treading upon his heels: And though ſometimes it comes ſlowly as an Oxe, yet alwayes it treads hardeſt, when it comes ſloweſt. *A wicked man may commit evil an hundred times, and his dayes* (*of peace*) *be prolonged*, for his harveſt of wrath (like *Habbakkuks* viſion of mercy) is for an appointed time, but in the end it will not lye, (though he would tarry for it) it will not tarry. The natural harveſt belies (*ſc.* failes) ſome mens hopes; but this myſtical harveſt ſhall not bely his fears (if he have any) it ſhall bely his preſumption, how much ſoever he hath.

Amos 9. 13

2 King. 6. 32.

Eccleſ. 8.

Spem mentita ſeges.

Sixthly Obſerve, That, *the puniſhment of ſin ſhall be proportionable to the degrees of ſin.*

He ſhall reap, *the ſame*, ſaith the Text, the ſame in degree. So the Scripture ſpeaks, and ſo experience teacheth concerning natural ſowing; a mans harveſt is gradually ſuch, as is his ſeed-time, if he have ſowen much (as an ordinary courſe) he ſhall reap much: The Apoſtle alludes to this, where he ſpeaks of the ſeed of charity, *If ye ſow ſparingly, ye ſhall reap ſparingly*; on the other ſide, if ye ſow plentifully, ye ſhall reap plentifully. Sometimes through the judgment of God, (which can eaſily break thorow the principles of nature) it cometh to paſs, as it is *Hag.* 1. 6. *Ye ſow much, and reap little*: God makes the Harveſt thin and lean, when the ſeed-time was thick and plentiful; but in regard of ſinning (I ſpeak of ſuch as go on impenitently in their ſins, and have not Chriſt to take off their ſin from them) ſuch perſons as ſow much, ſhall be ſure to reap much: They ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes, who impenitently multiply their tranſgreſſions.

2 Cor. 9. 6.

Seventhly Obſerve, *Puniſhment ſhall not exceed the deſert of ſin.*

They reap the ſame; The ſame, equal in degree or quantity, not beyond the degree of ſinning. In nature, the corn reap't is more then the corn ſown; ſometimes an hundred fold, ſometimes ſixty, ſometimes thirty; as Chriſt ſpeaks, in the Parable of the Sower, *Matth.* 13. But the puniſhment of ſin reaped, is not a grain more then the ſin committed. All the puniſhments of this life, are leſs then ſin, as *Ezra* confeſſeth, *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquity,* &c. Chap. 9. 13.

9. 13. And in the life to come, the damned ſhall not be puniſhed more then ſin deſerveth; yea, I may ſay (with reverence to his Almighty power) God cannot puniſh a ſin, beyond that proportion which it deſerveth; and the reaſon is this, *Infinite power, cannot inflict a puniſhment, beyond that which infinite juſtice doth require:* Infinite juſtice is offended, and muſt be ſatisfied (if not ſatisfied by Chriſt) then by the perſon himſelf offending; therefore, infinite power cannot lay upon a man, more then his ſin doth deſerve, though it may eaſily lay more upon him then his nature can endure. So then, all that wicked men bear in this life, is leſs, and all they ſhall bear in Hell, will not be more then the deſerts of ſin, or the demands of Juſtice.

An objection may ſeem to lye againſt this, from that Rev. 18. 6. award of judgment againſt *Babylon: Double to her double, according to her works*; It may ſeem that her harveſt of puniſhment muſt exceed in double proportion, her ſeed Pſal. 79. 12. time of ſinning: The Pſalmiſt ſpeaks yet higher, *Render unto your neighbours ſevenfold into their boſom, their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee O Lord.* Render ſevenfold, that is, manifold: That number in Scripture, multiplies the ſence into any number; To render ſevenfold, may be rendred the greateſt number.

I anſwer, *Babylons* puniſhment ſhall be double, reſpecting what *Babylon* ſhall have acted; but not double, reſpecting what *Babylon* ſhall have deſerved: *Give to her double*; if it be poſſible, let her have as much blood more to drink as ſhe hath ſpilt, for ſhe deſerveth to drink an hundred times more. The blood of Saints is precious blood; one drop of the blood of *Sion*, is more worth then a whole ocean of the blood of *Babylon*, therefore *give her double*; though it be more in quantity, it is not ſo much in value. And ſo reward our neighbours that have reproached thee, ſevenfold, it is not ſevenfold beyond their deſerts; for one ſcorn that a wicked man poureth upon a Child of God (and ſo upon God, for that's the meaning of the Pſalm) cannot be recompenſed with ten thouſand reproaches poured upon wicked men. Reproach is the due of ungodly men here, and everlaſting reproach ſhall be their portion hereafter. But the leaſt reproach caſt upon God is an infinite wrong; and the reproach of his people is ſo much his, that he reckons it as his own: And will therefore take away all reproach from his people, and render to their unkind neighbours, their reproach ſevenfold (and that's but equal) into their boſoms.

Laſtly, When it is ſaid, *They ſhall reap the ſame:* We are taught,

That, *the puniſhment of ſin, ſhall be like the ſin in kind.*

It ſhall be the ſame, not only in degree, but alſo in likeneſs. Puniſhment often bears the image and ſuperſcription of ſin upon it. You may ſee the fathers face and feature in the child. *Whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 6. 7. If a man ſow wheat, he ſhall reap wheat; the harveſt tells you what kind of grain was ſowed in every field: If a man ſows wheat, he ſhall not reap tares; and if a man ſow tares, he ſhall not reap wheat. Thus God often returns the ſin of man upon him: ſin comes to him in his own likeneſs, and he may read the name of it ſtampt upon the affliction; or by the judgment inflicted, interpret the wickedneſs committed: This was openly confeſſed by *Adonibezek*, (Judg. 1. 7.) *As I have done, ſo God hath requited me,* juſt ſo; and what was that? He ſpeaks out in the former words: *Threeſcore and ten Kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table:* There was his ſowing, his reaping was the ſame; *they caught him* (ſaith the Text) *and cut off his thumbs, and his great toes.* The very firſt Law that was formally made and publiſhed after the fall, was a Law of Retaliation, or of Counterpaſſion, *Gen.* 6. 9. *Whoſoever ſheddeth mans blood,* (*what ſhall he reap?*) *By man ſhall his blood be ſhed, he muſt reap the ſame:* The Judicials of *Moſes* are plain for this, *Exod.* 21. 24. *Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,* &c. Deut 32. 21 *They have moved me to jealouſie,* ſaith the Lord, *by that which is not God; and I will move them to jealouſie, by thoſe who are not a people. Like as ye have forſaken me, and ſerved ſtrange Gods in your Land, ſo ſhall ye ſerve ſtrangers in a Land which is not yours,* Jerem. 5. 19. God payeth them in their own coin. *Who ſo ſtoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he alſo ſhall cry himſelf, but ſhall not be heard,* Prov. 21. 13. And ſo concerning the preaching of the word, contemned, (*Zach.* 7. 13.) *Therefore it is come to paſs, that as he cryed, and they would not hear; ſo they cryed, and I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of hoſts:* They reap as they ſowed: they would not hear, that was their ſin; they ſhall not be heard, that's the puniſhment; they ſhall ſee how good it is to be wilfully deaf, when God commands, by his being judicially deaf, when they complain. The *Sodomites* had a fire, of unnatural luſt among them, and God ſent a ſhower of fire unnaturally from Heaven (fire deſcending croſſeth the courſe of nature) to deſtroy them. The *Egyptians* killed the *Iſraelitiſh* Children, that was the ſeed they ſowed, they reap the ſame; God ſlew their Children, even all their firſt-born in one night. *Nadab* and *Abihu* offered ſtrange fire, there was their wickedneſs; they reaped the ſame; God by fire from Heaven, in a ſtrange manner, ſlew them in a moment.

Yea, we find the Lord ſometimes dealing thus with his own dear ſervants, he will cauſe them to reap that which they have ſown in kind; *David* had defiled his neighbours wife, *Therefore,* ſaith the Lord, *I will take thy wives from before thine eyes, and give them to thy neighbour, and he ſhall lye with thy wives, in the ſight of this Sun.* 2 Sam. 12. 11. Again, the Lord tells him, *Thou haſt ſlain* Uriah *with the ſword of the Children of* Ammon, *therefore the ſword ſhall never depart from thine houſe.* You ſee, here was ſword for ſword, and defilement for defilement, even holy *David* reaped the ſame which he had ſowed. It is very remarkable, which is reported in the Hiſtory of the Church, by *Socrates,* concerning *Valens* the Emperor, *Socrat. Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 4. *c.* 3. who was a great perſecuter of the orthodox Chriſtians, and a maintainer of Arrianiſm: The ſtory tells us, that in his wars againſt the *Gothes,* he was overthrown, and hiding himſelf in a little cottage, the enemy came by, burnt it, and him together: Now ſee, how God in this, gave him to reap what he had ſown: for when fourſcore of the orthodox ſayled from *Conſtantinople* to *Nicomedia,* to treat with him, about the points of Arrianiſm, and to ſettle the matter by way of diſpute: The Emperor hearing of their approach, while they were in the haven, and before they could come on ſhore, cauſed the Ships to be fired wherein they were, and ſo conſumed them all. Here was burning for burning. And it is obſerved (in the French Hiſtory) that *Charles* the ninth of *France,* who *Anno* 1572. was the contriver of that great Maſſacre in *Paris,* wherein ſo many thouſand Proteſtants were forced through a Red Sea, a Sea of blood, to their reſt in *Canaan*: This bloody King, at laſt dyed himſelf, by a ſtrange eruption of blood from all the paſſages of his body; thus he had alſo reaped what he had ſown; he had poured out blood, and his blood was poured out. It were eaſie to give you plenty of inſtances, bearing witneſs of this accurate juſtice of God. Examples were frequent in *Job*'s time, you ſee *Eliphaz* had ſtore of theſe in his note-book, *Even as I have ſeen, they that plow iniquity, and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame.*

VERS. 9, 10, 11.

By the blaſt of God they periſh, and by the breath of his noſtrils are they conſumed.
The roaring of the Lion, and the voice of the fierce Lion, and the teeth of the young Lions are broken.
The old Lion periſheth for lack of pray, and the ſtout Lions whelps are ſcattered abroad.

ELiphaz having given an account of his obſervation, in general, that he had often ſeen wicked men periſh, *verſ.* 8. In theſe three verſes, he illuſtrates his obſervation, by an elegant deſcription of the manner how, or the power by which wicked men periſh and are cut off; namely, by the blaſt of God, *ver.* 9. *By the blaſt of God they periſh, and by the breath of his noſtrils are they conſumed:* and leſt any ſhould think, that this blaſt of God carries away only ſtraws and feathers, light and weak perſons into perdition, he adds the weightieſt and the ſtrongeſt: *The roaring of the Lion, and the teeth of the young Lions are broken.* God by his blaſt can take away, or break, the ſtrongeſt, the mightieſt, Lion-like men, men fierce like Lions, and ſtout like the Lions whelp. Under the ſhadow of which alluſions, he cloſely ſtrikes at *Job*, who was once a great man, the greateſt of all the men in the Eaſt; a fierce ſpoiling Lion (in the apprehenſion of his friends) and yet God brought him down. This in brief, is the illuſtration of the argument, in theſe three verſes, *By the blaſt of God they periſh*, &c.

Eliphaz (having in the former verſe, by the metaphor of plowing, ſowing and reaping, ſet forth the actings and expectations, the iſſues and ſucceſſes of wicked men) here (as ſome conceive) continues the metaphor or the Allegory, by this expreſſion of blaſting, which (we know) is often uſed in reference to the ſeed ſown: As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, when theſe men have plowed and ſowed, when they are in expectation of a fruitful and plentiful harveſt, then God blaſteth the ſeed, and the ſeeds-man too; he ſendeth forth his rough wind, which dryeth up and withereth ſtalk and ear, the Counſel and the Counſellors: And though blaſting ſpoil or prevent reaping in an ordinary ſence, yet blaſting may be reaping (as here) in a figurative ſence: They who ſow iniquity, are often puniſhed by reaping diſappointments, which is the blaſting of their hopes, and the conſumption of their confidences.

Blaſting of corn and fruits, is often ſpoken of in the Old Teſtament (as 1 *Kings* 8. 37.) *If there be in the Land blaſting and mildew.* Amos 4.9. *I have ſmitten you with blaſting and mildew:* And a people ſpoiled by the ſword, and conſumed by war, are compared *to corn blaſted before it be grown up*, Iſa. 37. 27. But the word in the Original, for blaſting corn, is different from this in the Text: The root of that, ſignifies to dry up, or cauſe to wither; this to breath, as a man breaths with his noſtrils; *By the breath of his noſtrils*, or (as we tranſlate) *by the blaſt of his noſtrils:* So in the deſcription of mans Creation, *Gen.* 2. 7. *Moſes* ſaith, *God breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life*, or *the blaſt of life.*

שרכה *Herba percuſſa uredine eſt percuſſio ſementis vento orientali ingrediente ſpicas; adeo ut non perficiant maturitatem ſuam*, Rab. David. *in lib. rad.*

This blaſting, or blaſt of God, is ſometime put for a ſtorm or mighty tempeſt ſuddenly raiſed up by the Power of God. Thus (*Exod.* 15. 8.) *Moſes* relating the ſudden deſtruction of the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea, ſaith, *with the blaſt of thy noſtrils, the waters were gathered together, the floods ſtood upright as an heap*, &c. that is, with the wind which God ſent out, as his inſtrument, he gathered the waters to ſwallow up the *Egyptians*, and ſave his own people. And we find the word (*Iſa.* 25. 4.) uſed to denote the furious blaſting violence of wicked men, in the day of their rage and madneſs againſt the Church. *When the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a ſtorm againſt the wall, thou ſhalt bring down the noiſe of ſtrangers, as the heat in a dry place*, &c.

נשמה from נשם *Anhelavit.*

By the blaſt of God.] God in this act of vengeance againſt the plowers of wickedneſs, is preſented to us in his Name, *Eloah*, which ſignifies, the mighty or puiſſant God: So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it, *By the breath of the puiſſant they periſh.* The ſtrong God, or God in his ſtrength, comes armed againſt ſtrong tranſgreſſors. The effect ſhews the ſtrength of this blaſt; For,

By his blaſt **they periſh**, ſaith the Text; it is the word uſed before: they are not only a little withered or ſcorched, but they are utterly conſumed, they are deſtroyed, root and branch, head and tail, as in one day.

The next words in the Text, **by the breath of his noſtrils they are conſumed**, are but the repeating of the ſame thing; yet there is a conſiderable difference in the expreſſions. **By the breath of his noſtrils.**] The word (*Ruach*) which we there tranſlate breath, ſignifies generally, ſpirit, ghoſt, breath or wind; ſometime the Holy Ghoſt, who is breathed from the Father and Son: The breath of God put alone, notes the wrath of God, *Iſa*, 30. 33. *Tophet is prepared of old*, &c. *the breath of the Lord*, (*ſc.* the wrath of the Lord) *like a ſtream of brimſtone, doth kindle it.* This phraſe alſo, *The breath of Gods noſtrils*, ſignifies the anger and wrath of God. And the anger of God, is called *the breath of his noſtrils*, after the manner of men and other creatures; becauſe anger breaths out at their noſtrils: The Naturaliſts obſerve, that anger inflaming the ſpirit, and heating the heart, frequent breathing follows (as it were) to cool the fire, and to eaſe that inflammation; an angry man breaths quick and ſhort: When *Saul* was enraged and mad with malice againſt the Saints, he is ſaid, *To breath out threatnings and ſlaughter*, Acts 9. 1. therefore alſo, anger is called, *the breath of Gods noſtrils.*

מרוחאבו

Animalia commota, ſpirant vehementius, & narium flatu iram indicant.

Further it is conſiderable, that the word *noſtril*, is put alone for the wrath of God: *Pſal.* 95. 11. *He ſware in his noſtril*, that is (as we tranſlate it) *he ſware in his wrath, that they ſhould not enter into his reſt.* Likewiſe *Pſal.* 2. 12. *If his wrath be kindled but a little:* The Hebrew is, if his noſe or noſtril be kindled but a little; the noſtril, being an Organ of the body, in which wrath ſhews it ſelf, is put for wrath it ſelf. Paleneſs and ſnuffing of the noſe, are ſymptomes of anger. In our proverbials, to take a thing in ſnuff, is to take it in anger. Again, in Scripture we find that ſlowneſs to anger, and haſtineſs to be angry, are expreſt by the different frame of the noſtrils; as namely, when the Lord is ſaid to be ſlow in anger; the Hebrew is, *long of noſtrils:* (Pſal. 103. 8.) *The Lord is ſlow to anger*, or, (*Exod.* 34. 6.) *long-ſuffering.* In both places, the Original is, *long of noſtrils*, that is, of anger, or long ere he be angry. On the other ſide, a paſſionate, cholerick man, a man ready to conceive anger, is ſaid to have a ſtrait or ſhort noſtril; *He that is ſoon angry dealeth fooliſhly*, Prov. 14. 17. the Hebrew is, he that hath a ſhort or a narrow noſtril, dealeth fooliſhly; becauſe ſuch men are moſt apt to conceive anger: So then, while *Eliphaz* ſaith, *By the breath of his noſtrils they are conſumed*, it is, as if he had ſaid, by the wrath and diſpleaſure of God they are conſumed; and the Septuagint tranſlate it, directly by anger; *They are conſumed by the breath, or ſpirit of his anger*; So others in the Latine, *They are conſumed by the ſpirit of his fury.* And both theſe words, *breath* and *blaſt*, are found together in one place, 2 *Sam.* 22. 16. *At the blaſt of the breath of his noſtrils*; the whole verſe runneth thus, *The channels of the Sea appeared, the foundations of the earth were diſcovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blaſt of the breath of his noſtrils*, that is, at the great diſpleaſure of the Lord.

In naſo enim ira apparet, ex vehementiore ſpiratione, & potiſſimum ex remiſſione aut dilatatione nariū ira conſpicitur.

ארך אפ

קצר אפים *Brevis narium*, i. e. *præceps ad iram.*

ἀπὸ πνεύματ۬ος ὀργῆς. Sept. *Spiritu furoris ejus deficiunt.*

So, we ſee, what we are here to underſtand, by the breath and by the blaſt of the Lord. And in this paſſage, *Eliphaz* ſeems to hint at the manner of the death of *Job's* children, who were deſtroyed by the ſtrength of a mighty wind, ſmiting the four corners of the houſe ſo, that it fell upon them: that wind may well be called the breath and the blaſt of God, both in regard of the wonder and ſtrangeneſs of it, as alſo becauſe (though Satan was the inſtrument) he had the ordering and diſpoſing of it. Satans breath, all the wind he can raiſe, cannot blow away a feather, unleſs the Lord give and continue leave and ſtrength to do it.

Obſerve Firſt, *God can eaſily deſtroy wicked men.*

He doth it by a blaſt, or by a breath. Though, to themſelves and others, they appear as great Mountains, yet before God they are but as duſt, or chaff of the Mountains; by a blaſt or by a breath, he ſcatters and conſums them: So *David* compares them (*Pſal.* 1. 4.) *The ungodly are not ſo*, (not ſo? how? they are not as a tree planted by the waters ſide, that is the portion of the righteous; how are the ungodly then?) *they are as the chaff, that the wind ſcattereth or driveth away*; the beſt of them, the moſt ſolid of them are no better. And (*Iſa.* 17. 13.) *The Nations ſhall be chaſed, as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and as a rolling thing before the whirl-wind.* Though Nations, mighty, ſtrong, powerful Nations come out againſt God, and his people, *fear them not.* For if God ſet himſelf againſt them, they are no more before him, then a little chaff, he ſcatters them by the breath of his diſpleaſure.

You know it is no trouble, for a man to breathe, or to make a blaſt with his mouth; and this phraſe is uſed, to ſhew with what eaſe and facility God deſtroyes all the plots and counſels of wicked men; it putteth him to no pain, no ſweating, no travel or labor, to do it; men are put to much expence of pains, and run many hazzards, to oppoſe the wickedneſs of men: but God doth it with a breath. (2 *King.* 19. 7.) When God ſent to *Hezekiah*, to aſſure him that he would deliver him from *Sennacherib*, he not only promiſeth to do it, but ſhews him how he will do it, even as in this Text, *Behold, I will ſend a blaſt upon him:* that's all I will do, I will not trouble my ſelf much about the buſineſs; you muſt gather armies and make great preparations againſt the enemy, but I will do it with a blaſt.

And which is yet more ſpeedy; Some underſtand this blaſt to note only the will and pleaſure, the intent or purἀπὸ προςτάγματος κυρίου.

poſe of God, *by the blaſt of God they periſh*, that is, if he do but will it, it is done; it is no more for him to act it, then intend it. The *Septuagint* tranſlate near this ſence, *by the command of God they periſh*; as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, it is as eaſie for God to do it, as to ſay it ſhall, or to command it to be done. Men can command great things, and talk much what they will do; and all proves but talking and commanding: One man may command more in an hour, then a million can do in a year; but with God, it is all one, to command and accompliſh. It is noted for a high ſpeech, that of *Cæſar* to *Metellus*, who oppoſing him, when he came into the *Roman* Treaſury, to take the money there heaped together; *Cæſar* (whoſe great ſpirit could not bear oppoſition) ſaith to him, *Let me alone, or I will lay thee dead upon the ground*; and preſently, at once to qualifie that threat, and magnifie his own power, adds, *Young man, it is harder for me to ſpeak this, then to do it.* It is moſt certainly ſo with God, he can as eaſily do any thing, as ſpeak it. Yet further, we find the eaſineſs of Gods deſtroying his enemies ſet forth, a degree higher, *he doth it by a look*; as by a blaſt of his noſtrils, ſo by a caſt of his eye; that's a ſmall trouble, and that's all that it needs coſt God to deſtroy the ſtrongeſt, the vileſt and violenteſt foe in the world: Thus he conſumed the hoſt of *Pharoah*, even with a look, (Exod. 14. 24.) *It came to paſs that in the morning-watch, the Lord looked upon the hoſt of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the hoſt of the Egyptians.* If God hide his face from his people, they are troubled; and if he look upon his enemies, they are troubled. He darts out both beams of life, and beams of death from his eyes. When a godly man is afflicted, if he can but get the Lord to look upon his trouble, he is delivered. And when wicked men proſper, if God do but look upon their glory, they are withered. With ſuch eaſe doth the Scripture expreſs the deſtruction of wicked ones, it is by a breath, by a word, by a command, by a look: *An intimation from the eye of God is execution.*

Secondly note, *God can ſuddenly deſtroy the counſels, and the plottings, the ploughings, and the ſowings of wicked men.*

In proverbial ſpeaking, to do a thing ſuddenly, and to do a thing with a breath, are the ſame: God can as ſoon deſtroy his enemies, as a man can breath, *Pſal.* 73. 10. *How are they brought into deſolation in a moment!* A blaſt, you know, is gone in a moment, *Iſa.* 42. 9. *Theſe two things ſhall come upon thee in a moment, loſs of Children, and widowhood.* God can with one breath, blow away both the husband and the children. So (*Jer.* 4. 20.) The Church of the *Jews* ſpeaks thus, *Deſtruction upon deſtruction is cried, for the whole Land is ſpoiled, ſuddenly are my tents ſpoiled, and my curtains in a moment*: God doth but blow upon the tents, and preſently the cords break, and the ſtakes thereof are looſned. If man be angry, he muſt ſit down and conſult, he muſt lay his plot and contrive a way of revenge: But no ſooner is God angry, but he can revenge. *That wrath cannot want an inſtrument, which can make one. Infinite wiſdom ſees all means at once, and infinite power can uſe them at once.* As *the grace of God knows not long delayes*, it comes ſwiftly, as a ſweet blaſt or holy breath; Grace is ſpeedy, and upon the wing; ſo likewiſe the wrath of God knows no tedious long delayes: They who do wickedly, and ſtand out impenitently, ſhall periſh ſuddenly. And though the Lord be ſlow to anger before he ſtrikes, yet when he ſtrikes, he can do it at once; it is but a blaſt of his wrath, and a breath of his diſpleaſure, and the ſtouteſt of the ſons of men are dried like a leaf.

Neſcit tarda molimina Spiritus ſancti gratia.

Thirdly note, That, *God deſtroyeth wicked men ſecretly and inviſibly.*

To deſtroy by a breath, is a cloſe way of deſtroying. So, (*Hag.* 1. 9.) his anger is expreſt againſt his own people, for neglecting his Ordinances and Temple; *Ye looked for much, but lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it*, that is, I ſent an inviſible and ſecret curſe upon it.

Laſtly, We may obſerve from the manner of this deſtruction,

That, *The deſtruction of wicked men, the plowers of iniquity, is unavoidable.*

It is done by a breath; now *the wind bloweth where it liſteth, no man can countermand or ſtop the wind.* The wind is ſwift, as well as ſtrong; no man can out-run the ſtorm of Gods diſpleaſure. *He that fleeth of them, ſhall not flee away* (for it is a wind that followeth them) *and he that eſcapeth of them, ſhall not be delivered*; it is a blaſt that is gone out after them: they cannot deliver themſelves by art or cunning, by wit or policy; they cannot deceive or cozen the wind; they cannot deliver themſelves by power or ſtrength; they cannot conquer or overcome this wind: it comes ſuddenly, inviſibly, irreſiſtably; who can ſtand before God when he is angry? yea, who knoweth the power of his wrath or blaſt?

Am. 9. 1, 2.

This *Eliphaz* goes on to ſhew, in *verſ.* 10, 11. and therefore takes his inſtance from thoſe creatures which are mightieſt, which are ſtrongeſt. *The roaring of the Lion, and the voice of the fierce Lion, and the teeth of the young Lion are broken; the old Lion periſheth for lack of prey, and the ſtout Lions whelps are ſcattered abroad.*

The expreſſions are very various. Here are five words in theſe two verſes, ſignifying the Lion, yet with a difference and ſpecial reference to the ſeveral ages and conditions of the Lion. 1. *The Lion.* 2. *The fierce Lion.* 3. *The young Lion.* 4. *The old Lion.* 5. *And the ſtout Lion.* We have theſe five ſeveral words in our tranſlation, and we give epithites to four of them; whereas in the hebrew they are all ſingle terms, as we ſhall ſee in a brief touch upon them.

Leonum nomina plura ſunt, & ſecundum ætatis gradus diſtinguuntur. Buxtor. *lex.* 1. *Arieh.* 2. *Shacal.* 3. *Cephir.* 4. *Laiſh.* 5. *Laby.*

אריה from ארה *carpſit, decerpſit; alii deducunt ab* ארי *Leo &* ראה *vidit, quaſi leo videns, quia ſemper eſt oculis intentus ad prædam.*

First, The Lion (*Arieh*) which name is given the Lion, to note his power in renting and tearing; and Mr. *Broughton* renders it ſo, *the roaring of the renting Lion*, putting the etymologie or notation of the word into the tranſlation. Others derive it from *Arie*, a Lion, and *Raah*, which ſignifieth to ſee, and then it is as much as the *Lion-ſeer*; and the reaſon of this derivation is given from the Lions watchfulneſs, he is ever intent upon his prey; and, as ſome Naturaliſts obſerve, ſleeps with his eyes open. So that this word entitles him, either from his watchfulneſs, the *Lion-ſeer*; or from his ſtrength, the *Lion-renter*.

שחל *Leo ferox vel immanis, mediæ ætatis.*

The ſecond is a primitive, ſignifying, ſometimes a Leopard, and ſometimes a Lioneſs, or ſhe-Lion. We render it a fierce Lion, which may well refer to the former, becauſe a ſhe-Lion, eſpecially when ſhe hath young ones, is exceeding fierce.

The third word it is (*Cephir*) a young Lion, and it is ſometimes uſed as an epithete (*Cephir Arieh*) a young Lion roared on *Samſon*, Judg. 14. 5.

The fourth word is (*Laiſh*) ſignifying a Lion, that is grown in years, which periſhes for hunger, not being able to hunt and get prey. So the Text, *The old Lion periſhes for lack of prey.*

Quaſi leonẽ cordatum & animoſũ dicas. Buxt.

And the fifth word is (*Laby*) which ſignifies a Lion in greateſt ſtrength and fierceneſs. And the Criticks tell us, it is derived from (*Leb*) which ſignifieth the *heart*, as noting a ſtrong-hearted and a couragious Lion; and ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, for *ſtout Lion, the heart-ſtrong Laby. Judah* being compared to this Lion, by dying *Jacob*, is ſet forth by his majeſtick ſtoutneſs: *Judah is a Lions whelp*, &c. *And as an old Lion, who ſhall rouze him up?* Gen. 49. 9.

Theſe ſeveral ſorts of Lions ſhadow out unto us, mighty, ſtrong and powerful wicked men, or plowers of wickedneſs, with all related to them, they and their families, they and their wives, they and their children; all theirs are uſually full of Lion-like qualities, and all theſe ſhall be deſtroyed and periſh, by the blaſt, by the breath of God.

For, as the Apoſtle puts the queſtion in another caſe, about Oxen, *Doth God take care for Oxen?* So if any ſhould queſtion here, is God angry with Lions? Doth he oppoſe himſelf againſt Lions, that he ſaith here, The Lion ſhall periſh, the young and the old Lions ſhall be deſtroyed?

No, There is a further meaning in it, ſomewhat elſe is ſhadowed under the name or notion of Lions. Firſt, In Scripture, the Lion ſignifies any one in authority, eſpecially in Kingly authority (*Gen.* 49. 10.) The *Tribe of Judah* (which was to have the Scepter and the Rule, the Magiſtracy or Government being ſetled in that Tribe) is compared to a Lion; *Judah is a Lions whelp, from the prey my ſon, thou art gone up: he ſtooped down, he couched as a Lion, and as an old Lion, who ſhall rouze him up?* As Lions are chief, the moſt eminent among the beaſts of the field, ſo

Kings and Magiſtrates are chief, the moſt eminent among the ſons of men. Chriſt is called the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*, from the prerogative of his power, and the excellency of his Kingly condition above all others, his name being *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* Secondly, The Devil is compared to a Lion, he is called a *roaring Lion*, becauſe of his cruelty and devouring nature; *He goeth about like a roaring Lion ſeeking whom he may devour.* And the Lions here in the text (how old ſoever they be) are whelps of this old Lion, the Devil: not great men in general, but wicked great men, men mighty in power, and mighty in ſin, mighty ſinners. It is frequent in Scripture, to ſhadow out powerful, wicked, tyrannical men by the name of Lions; and the reaſon is, becauſe they imitate the qualities and conditions of the Lion. *A man acts by reaſon, and a beaſt acts by ſenſe and paſſion:* Reaſon is the difference between a man and a beaſt; therefore when a man acts againſt reaſon, or without reaſon, the name of a beaſt is juſtly put upon him; and the name of that beaſt moſt fitly, whoſe qualities and paſſions he moſt reſembles. Man in regard of his headſtrong unrulineſs, is compared to a horſe and to a mule, *Pſal.* 32. 9. *Be not as the Horſe or as the Mule which have no underſtanding, whoſe mouth muſt be held in with bit and bridle:* Be not unruly. For ſubtilty, man is called a Fox; for flattery or filthineſs, a Dog or a Swine; and here, for rapine and cruelty, a Lion. Thus the Prophet *Nahum* elegantly, *chap.* 2. 11, 12. *Where is the dwelling place of the Lions, and the feeding place of the young Lions?* that is, where is the dwelling place of oppreſſors and cruel tyrants? And, *Ezek.* 19. 1, 2. *Take up a lamentation for the Princes of Iſrael, and ſay, what is thy Mother? a Lioneſs, ſhe lay down among Lions, ſhe nouriſhed her whelps among young Lions*: the tyrannical Princes in *Iſrael*, were thus deſcribed: And ſo is tyrannical *Pharaoh*, (Ezek. 32. 2.) *Take up a lamentation for Pharaoh King of Egypt, and ſay unto him, Thou art like a young Lion of the Nations.* In general, *Solomon* (*Prov.* 28. 15.) telleth us, *That as a roaring Lion, and a ranging Bear, ſo is a wicked Ruler over the poor people.* And the Apoſtle *Paul*, ſpeaking of his eſcape from the jaws of that perſecuting Emperor, ſaith, (2 *Tim.* 4. 17.) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion*, that is, out of the mouth of *Nero*, who was ready with open mouth to devour and deſtroy me; or as ſome, (taking it for a proverbial ſpeech, noting any eminent danger) I was delivered from the extreameſt hazard of death; even as a man reſcued out of a Lions mouth, and pulled from between his teeth.

And it will not be amiſs, for the clearing of this a little further, to give you ſome ſpecial things, wherein the reſemblance may be taken between the Tyrant, the oppreſſing Ruler, or any oppreſſing great one, and the Lion: we may draw the picture of a Tyrant by a Lions face, in theſe reſpects.

Firſt, In regard of his pride, ſtatelineſs, and diſtance which he affects to hold towards others. The Lion is a proud and ſtately creature.

Secondly, Tyrants reſemble Lions in regard of courage and animoſity. Couragiouſneſs in any noble or good way, (in which ſence, *Prov.*28.1.(*the righteous are bold as a Lion*) is the courage of Saints: But to be valiant and couragious in doing miſchief, in wronging and oppreſſing the weak or innocent, is the courage of a beaſt. Courage out of the way of truth and juſtice, is Lion-like cruelty.

Thirdly, They are Lions in regard of their ſtrength. Lions are the ſtrongeſt of creatures: *What is ſtronger then a Lion?* ſay they, in reſolving *Samſons* Riddle. And *Prov.* 30. 30. *A Lion which is ſtrongeſt among beaſts.* Tyranny muſt have ſtrength to back it. Hence they who mean to oppreſs, fortifie themſelves with titles and priviledges, with honours and relations. *Solomon* conſidering the oppreſſions that were under the Sun, obſerves tears on the one ſide, and ſtrength on the other; *On the one ſide of the oppreſſors there was power*, Eccleſ. 4. 1.

Fourthly, They are Lions in regard of their ſubtilty: The Lion is a ſubtil creature, as well as a ſtrong creature; he hath a great ſtock of policy, as well as power: though we uſually oppoſe the Lions skin and the Foxes skin, yet many times they both meet in one: Some are double-skinn'd, as well as double-cloath'd: Hence we have that phraſe, *Pſal.* 10. 9. (comparing a wicked man to a Lion) *He lieth in wait ſecretly, as a Lion in his den*; which teacheth us, that the Lion waits and watches for his prey; and ſo do theſe wicked men (*Pſal.* 17. 12.) *Like as a Lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young Lion, lurking in ſecret places.*

Fifthly, They are Lions, eſpecially in their cruelty, in their blood-ſucking cruelty. The Lion is a devouring beaſt, therefore when the Devil is called a Lion, it is ſaid he *goeth about to devour.* And God himſelf (when he would be expreſt in his reſolutions of judgment, ſo as he will not have mercy upon a man, or upon a nation) is pleaſed to take upon him this name too, *Hoſ.* 5. 14. *I will be unto Ephraim as a Lion, and as a young Lion to the houſe of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away, and none ſhall reſcue him*; that is, I am reſolved to execute judgment to the uttermoſt upon him: So, *chap.* 6. 1. *The Lord hath torn*, which is (properly) the act of a Lion. And, *Job* (*chap.*10. 16.) complains thus to God, *Thou hunteſt me like a fierce Lion.* Aud (*Iſa.* 38. 13.) *Hezekiah* fearing, that God would not ſhew him that mercy, to raiſe him from ſickneſs, cries out, *as a Lion, ſo will he break all my bones.* So that when the Lord would expreſs himſelf in wayes of judgment, and reſolvedneſs to go on in judgment, he takes upon him the name of a Lion. But ſuch is the very nature of wicked men: Such as the Prophet *Micah* beſpeaks (*chap.* 3. 2.) *Hear this, O ſons of Jacob, and ye Princes of the houſe of Iſrael, is it not for you to know judgment? who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skins from off them, and their fleſh from off their bones*: noting Lion-like cruelty in thoſe, who ſhould have been as ſhepherds, to feed and protect the people.

6. They are compared to Lions, in regard of their terrible roaring; the Lion roareth terribly, ſo terribly, that when the Lion roareth, the beaſts of the forreſt tremble. The Naturaliſts obſerve, that though many creatures are ſwifter of foot then the Lion, yet when he roareth, they fall down, and he overtakes them with his aſtoniſhing voice: ſo tyrannical men, with their roaring words, their loud threatnings, often aſtright and daunt the poor.

7. They reſemble Lions, in the ſowrneſs and ſterneſs of their countenance, and clowdineſs of their brows. *Much of mans heart is ſeen in his face*: Frowns are as blows; hence we call it *brow-beating.* The Love of God is expreſſed by the pleaſantneſs of his face, and the light of his countenance: ſo alſo is the love of man; and we may ſee what the intent of another is, in his very looks. Many are, in this reſpect, Lion-like men; they have (as *Ariſtotle* ſaith of the natural Lion) clouds and ſtorms hanging about their eye-brows. It was a threatning againſt the *Jews*, in caſe of diſobedience, that God would ſend againſt them, a nation of a fierce countenance, which ſhould not regard the perſon of the old, *&c. Deut.* 28. 50.

Animalia fortia vocē edunt gravē ut Leo & Taurus. Ar. *Tanta illi vocis eliciendæ naturæ præſtitit inſtrumenta, ut animalia longè ipſo celeriora ſolo ſæpe rugitu capiantur.* Baſil. Hexam. Hom. 9. *Leo aliquid nubis habet circa ſupercilia, ſc. aſpectum minimè ſereni.* Ariſt.

Laſtly, They are like Lions, in regard of their greedineſs after prey. *They have ſet their eyes bowing down to the earth, like as a Lion that is greedy of his prey*, Pſal. 17. 11, 12.

Thus you ſee, both who are here meant by Lions, and likewiſe, how the reſemblance or picture of a wicked man may be taken from a Lion,

Now when it is ſaid, that, *the teeth of the Lions are broken, that the old Lions periſh, and the young Lions are ſcattered abroad*; by theſe expreſſions of ſcattering, periſhing, and being broken to pieces, the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhews us, the utter, full, and final conſumption of wicked men; they are not only touched, troubled, and rouzed up out of their dens, but theſe Lions, old and young, are ſcattered and conſumed. *They periſh.*

There is an opinion currant among the Jewiſh Writers, that this Verſe is to be underſtood, as a deſcription of the means or inſtruments by which God deſtroyes wicked men, and not (as we) of wicked men themſelves, whom God will deſtroy: *Junius* agrees with this interpretation of the Jews, tranſlating the two verſes, in this ſence; *By the blaſt of God they periſh, and by the breath of his noſtrils they are conſumed; by the roaring of the Lion, and by the voyce of the fierce Lion, and by the teeth of young Lions they are conſumed*: As if, when wicked men (ſo he giveth the gloſs) are not deſtroyed immediately by the breath, and by the blaſt of God, then God ſtirs up the creatures againſt them, and will deſtroy them by Lions. We know it was a ſpecial judgment threatned in the Law againſt the diſobedient, (*Levit.* 26. 22.) that God would ſend evil beaſts among them: The Prophet numbers this, among Gods ſore judgments: *Sword, famine, peſtilence, and evil beaſts, are put together.* In the hiſtory of the Kings, we have a famous Record, how the Lord ſent Lions, who ſlew ſome of thoſe Idolaters, whom the King of *Babylon* had tranſplanted into the Cities of *Samaria.* 2 King. 27. 15.

But I rather conceive the former expoſition of the words, to be the truth, and moſt ſutable to the context; and there is this reaſon to be given, becauſe it agrees beſt with the purpoſe of *Eliphaz*, whoſe work was, ſo to deſcribe the deſtruction of wicked men in general, that he might particularly intimate the deſtruction fallen upon *Job* and his family, with the reaſon of it: *Job* was a great man in his time; he was among men as the Lion among beaſts, *a chief:* His friends thought him a cruel Lion too, and ſo he is told to his face afterward, by one of them, that he (like a greedy Lion) *had taken away the pledge and the garment from the poor:* This *Eliphaz* would hint, at leaſt, to *Job*, and that God had found him out in his Lion-like qualities; that he being a Magiſtrate, and a man in authority, having dealt hardly and cruelly with others, now the Lord had meaſured to him, the ſame meaſure he had given others: He, the Lion; and ſhe, the fierce Lion or Lioneſs his wife; they the young Lions, his children, were all broken, and either periſhed or periſhing. So much for the clearing of the words; I ſhall now add ſome Obſervations from them.

> Firſt, *Wicked men, how powerful, how ſtrong ſoever, ſhall fall before the wrath and indignation of God.*

The day of the Lord ſhall be againſt every one that is high, and that is lifted up. God deſires in a ſpecial manner to be dealing with theſe, for they, in the pride of their ſpirits, think themſelves a match for God: though indeed, their ſtrength be but weakneſs, and their wiſdom fooliſhneſs; yet in their own conceits they are ſtronger, and wiſer then God himſelf. Hence (like *Pharaoh*) they ſend defiance to Heaven, and ſay, *who is the Lord*? Exod. 5. 1. When God ſees the hearts of men ſwoln to this height of inſolent madneſs, he delights to ſhew himſelf, and grapple with them, that the pride of man may be abaſed, and every one that is exalted may be laid low: that he only may be exalted, and his Name ſet up in that day. *David* was much troubled, at that murther of *Abner*, yet he could not take vengeance preſently upon the fierce Lion that had ſuckt his blood. Why? his power did not reach it; *Ye ſons of Zeruiah* (ſaith he) *are too hard for me*, (2 *Sam.* 3. 39.) but there are no ſons of *Zeruiah* too hard for God, no Lions ſo ſtrong, but he can tear them, with infinitely more eaſe, then a Lion can the tender kid.

This ſhould comfort us, when we ſee great and potent enemies riſing up againſt the Church; what are theſe before the great Lion, the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*. If the Lord do but roar, if the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah* come againſt theſe Lions, they will run like a herd of fearful Deer: *The Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty men*, are deſcribed, *trembling at the preſence of Chriſt, when he appeared but as a lamb*, Rev. 6. 15, 19. *They cry to the mountains and the rocks to fall upon them, and to hide them from his face.* If when Chriſt appears like an angry Lamb, the greateſt in the world fall before him, what then will theſe do when Chriſt ſhall appear as a roaring Lion?

Secondly obſerve, how gradually the Holy Ghoſt expreſſes the deſtruction of wicked Tyrants: All is not done at once; Firſt the roaring of the Lions doth periſh, then their voice, then their teeth are pulled out, next their prey is taken away, laſtly their whelps are ſcattered.

> Note hence, That, *uſually God deſtroyes wicked men by degrees.*

Here are five ſteps or degrees of Gods juſtice, againſt theſe Lions. Firſt, He ſtops the roaring of the Lions, they ſhall not be able to make ſuch a dreadful noiſe as heretofore; their roaring may be ſtopt, when their voice is not; though they can ſpeak, yet they ſhall not yell.

In the ſecond place, He breaks the very voice of the Lions; they ſhall not only not roar, but they ſhall not ſo much as ſpeak, either againſt the lambs, or againſt the ſheep, or for themſelves; the *voice of the fierce Lion ſhall be taken away.* God is able to ſilence Lions, and ſtop their mouths, not only from devouring and roaring, but from ſpeaking.

Thirdly, When their voice is taken away and their roaring, yet their teeth may remain: and there will be biting and tearing ſtill, though they have done roaring and yelling, therefore with a third ſtroak God breaks out their teeth; the teeth of the young Lions are broken. So the Pſalmiſt prayes, *Pſal.* 58. 6. *Break their teeth in their mouths, break out the great teeth of the young Lions, O Lord*: that is, take away the inſtruments, by which they oppreſs, the means by which they tear and rend, as Lions with their cruel teeth.

Fourthly, Chriſt deals further with theſe Lions, he not only breaks their teeth, by which they uſed to hurt others; but he takes away their prey and their meat, they ſhall not have wherewith to live themſelves; they were wont to ſuck the blood of the ſlain, and to eat the fleſh of the poor; but now the Lord will pluck away their prey, they themſelves ſhall be ſtarved or pincht with hunger.

Laſtly, Not only ſhall their meat be taken away, but they themſelves ſhall be ſcattered and diſperſed; that is the laſt ſtep of their calamity. Their dens ſhall be broken up, and their lurking places ſhall be opened; they ſhall run from place to place, from Nation to Nation. This is the Judgment of the Lord upon Lions, and the portion of cruel enemies from our God.

Further, It is here ſaid in the Text, *That the old Lion ſhall periſh for want of prey:* It is a ſtrange expreſſion, Lions have the greateſt power to get proviſion, to ſatisfie their hunger, yea their appetites and humour, yet theſe ſhall want; theſe Lions, who have all their life time, preyed upon the eſtates of other men, even theſe ſhall want.

> Note hence the juſtice of God, *Such as have made others want, ſhall at laſt come to want themſelves, they ſhall periſh for want of prey.*

They ſhall have nothing to eat: *when thou ceaſeſt to ſpoil, thou ſhalt be ſpoiled*, ſaith the Prophet; *and when thou ſhalt make an end to deal treacherouſly, they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee.* We muſt not underſtand it, as if wicked men do ever give over ſinning; ſin and their deſire of ſinning is in a kind infinite; they never ſay, now we have done, and will ſin no more; but the meaning is, when thou canſt ſin no more, nor deal treacherouſly any more; when thou haſt done thy utmoſt, and ſpent thy ſtrength in ſpoiling others, or taken all their ſpoil; ſo that thou haſt done ſpoiling, becauſe there is no more to ſpoil: then others ſhall ſpoil thee; and thou Lion who haſt preyed upon others a long time, ſhalt not have a bit thy ſelf, but ſhalt periſh for want of prey.

It is the promiſe of God unto his own people (*Pſal.* 34. 10.) *That the Lions ſhall lack and ſuffer hunger, but they that fear the Lord, ſhall not want any good thing:* He expreſſes it by Lions, to note, that certainly they that fear him ſhall not want; for if any creatures in the world can preſerve themſelves from hunger, Lions can; if they do but roar, the very beaſts will fall down as a prey before them: but yet (ſaith God) theſe, even theſe ſhall rather periſh for hunger, then any one that feareth me ſhall want. God provides for his lambs, for innocent perſons, for thoſe who fear him, though they have no ſtrength to provide for themſelves; but the wicked who have greateſt power, and have been moſt active to provide for themſelves, ſhall pine with want; they who have cauſed ſo many to be bitten with hunger, ſhall at laſt be hunger-bitten, and for want of meat gnaw their tongues.

Laſtly, Where it is ſaid, that the Lions whelps are ſcattered abroad.

> Obſerve, *God will not only deſtroy the perſons of wicked men, but their families and poſterities.*

They and their whelps ſhall all be ſcattered; *he will not leave them ſo much as a name or remembrance*, (Pſal. 36. 6.) *I ſought his place* (ſaith the Prophet) *and he could not be found*; there was no print of him, no man could remember, that there was ſuch a man in the world, unleſs to curſe his memory.

I ſhall only give one caution reſpecting this, and ſo conclude the point. That which is here affirmed in the general by *Eliphaz*, concerning the deſtruction of wicked men, Lions and fierce Lions, is not to be taken as a truth in the univerſal experience of it; we are not to underſtand it thus, as if all perſons, all Lion-like perſons at all times periſh, and are deſtroyed, and ſcattered abroad: But *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of what is uſually done, or he ſpeaks of what God can eaſily do at any time, and of what God may juſtly do at all times. Lions, fierce Lions, Tyrants, Oppreſſors, he both may and can ſcatter when he pleaſeth. Yet we find, that God hath permitted ſome Lions to live fully, and to die quietly; they ſpend all their dayes in roaring and rending, in tearing and devouring, and yet themſelves are not devoured: God often ſuſpends this juſtice, but it is for weighty reaſons; for, in a word,

Firſt, If God ſhould deſtroy all Lion-like men, the joynts of the world would be unlooſed, and the bands of humane ſociety broken aſunder. God forbad the children of *Iſrael* to deſtroy all the *Canaanites*, leaſt the beaſts of the field ſhould multiply, *&c.*

Secondly, If God ſhould hunt all theſe Lions out of the world, his own people would live by ſenſe, rather then by faith; and ſeem to be terrified by the viſible actings of wrath, rather then allured by the promiſes of mercy, or tenders of free-grace.

Thirdly, He defers them untill they have ſucked blood enough, rent enough, and done evil enough, even fill'd up the meaſure of their ſin, and fulfill'd his righteous purpoſe, by their unrighteouſneſs. As theſe Lions fill their own bellies, ſo they fulfil Gods counſells; therefore he lets them alone, that they may do his work, though they little think of it, and leſs intend it.

Laſtly, *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of what God did frequently, in thoſe times of the world, wherein he lived; for then God dealt more by outward judgments, then in theſe Goſpel-times. *As his mercies are now more ſpiritual, ſo uſually are his judgments.*

VERS. 12, 13.

Now a thing was ſecretly brought unto me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

In thoughts from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth on men.

THis part of the Chapter, from the twelfth Verſe unto the end, containeth the third Argument, by which *Eliphaz* labours to convince and reprove *Job* of his impatient complainings. In the whole context we may obſerve two general parts.

1. The Argument it ſelf by which he reproves him.
2. The confirmation or the proof of that Argument.

The matter of the Argument is contained in the ſeventeenth Verſe. *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? ſhall a man be more pure then his Maker?* The Argument may be formed thus.

That man carrieth himſelf raſhly and ſinfully, who would ſeem more juſt and pure then God his Maker.

But thou Job *carrieſt thy ſelf as if thou wert more juſt then God thy Maker.*

Therefore thou carrieſt thy ſelf very ſinfully and raſhly.

He confirms this Argument two wayes.

Firſt, By an Argument taken from divine authority.

Secondly, By an Argument taken from reaſon.

His Argument taken from Divine authority lies in the former five Verſes of this context, (*ſc.* 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16.) I may give it thus.

That is to be received as a truth, which God from heaven immediately declareth to his ſervant in a viſion.

But God hath declared and revealed this to me in a viſion, that he who contends with God carries himſelf very ſinfully.

Therefore it is to be received as a truth.

The firſt part of the Argument is unqueſtionable; that it is a truth which God revealeth from Heaven in a Viſion. And that God had revealed this unto *Eliphaz* from Heaven in a Viſion, he himſelf at large declareth in thoſe five Verſes, deſcribing both the manner how, and the time when this truth was revealed to him.

His ſecond Argument from reaſon is grounded upon the common logical rule, of arguing from the greater to the leſs, (Verſ. 18, 19, 20, 21.) The ſum of it may be thus conceived.

That which would be folly and ſinful boldneſs in Angels, if they ſhould aſpire and take upon them to do, is much more ſinful in a mortal man.

But if Angels ſhould go about to juſtifie themſelves, or ſtand upon termes with God, it would be ſin and folly in them.

Therefore it is much more ſin and folly in mortal man, to juſtifie himſelf before God, &c.

The Major, or the firſt propoſition, is undeniable. The ſecond propoſition is proved and illuſtrated to the end of the Chapter. Wherein is ſhewed in what condition man now ſtandeth: how weak and how poor a thing a man is, compared unto an Angel; therefore if it would be ſin and folly in Angels to compare with God, it muſt much more be ſin and folly in man. So we ſee how *Eliphaz* confirms the major propoſition of the firſt Syllogiſm.

The ſecond propoſition or aſſumption which he infers upon *Job*, *But thou* Job *carrieſt thy ſelf ſo as if thou wert more juſt then God:* he proves by that ſad expoſtulation Chap. 3. And takes that for granted. We may form it thus,

He that complaineth of God, as if he had done him wrong, makes himſelf more juſt then God.

But thou Job, *haſt made ſuch a complaint,* Chap. 3. *as if God had done thee wrong in afflicting thee, or in giving and in continuing thy life under ſuch afflictions.*

Therefore, thou ſeemeſt to make thy ſelf more juſt then God, or to ſay that God hath dealt unjuſtly or injuriouſly with thee.

This I take to be the Logick of the remaining part of this Chapter.

And having cleared his manner of reaſoning in general, I ſhall deſcend to open particulars.

Now a thing was ſecretly brought unto me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

I muſt yet reſolve a queſtion before I explain the tearms; the queſtion is this. Whether this were a true viſion ſent from God, or whether it were only feigned by *Eliphaz*, thereby to gain authority to what he ſpake?

There are many Expoſitors of great name, who are very confident that this viſion was a fiction or holy fraud; a viſion of *Eliphaz* his own brain, not a viſion from Heaven. Some have gone further, maintaining that it was a viſion ſent from Hell, an illuſion of the Devil, thereby to ſtrengthen the hands of *Eliphaz*, in vexing and troubling *Job*.

It cannot be denied, but that many have pretended viſions from God, when they have received none; they have belyed the Almighty with their Dreams and Revelations, when they have ſeen nothing. Thus (1 *Kings* 22. 11.) *Zedekiah* the falſe Prophet takes upon him to have had a viſion from God, by which he would confirm *Ahab* in his counſel to go up to *Ramoth Gilead*. *And* Zedekiah *the ſon of* Chenaanah *made him horns of iron, and he ſaid, thus ſaith the Lord, with theſe ſhalt thou puſh the* Syrians *till thou haſt conſumed them.* And in the Propheſie of *Jeremiah* you have *Hananiah* the falſe Prophet, not only ſpeaking the language, but dreſſing himſelf in all the formalities of a viſion; he comes forth with a yoke upon his neck, and breaks it before the people, and telleth them, thus will God break the yoke of your captivity, and at ſuch a time.

The true Prophets complain often of the falſe, for crying up their deceivings under the warrant of viſions and dreams, when all was but a dream indeed, a meer phancy or ſtudied impoſture to miſlead the people, and gain credit to their lies. While a man hath nothing but ordinary humane authority for things extraordinary, he is eaſily rejected.

Man is ſubject to error, he may deceive, and be deceived; therefore when they would put *a new nothing* upon the world, as an infallible truth, and have it ſwallowed without chewing, received without diſputing, then uſually they pretended that it was (*quid Divinum*) a doctrine or meſſage received immediately from God. And it is well obſerved, that this courſe of pretending to Divine revelation, was very frequent amongſt the Heathen; when their Wiſemen had a mind to faſten ſome unwonted opinion upon the vulgar. Among the *Romans*, *Numa* (to the intent they might be received with greater authority) ſtampt his laws with a kind of divinity, and told the people that he had received them from the goddeſs *Ægeria*. As if he had ſaid, theſe laws are not ſuch as I have coyned and faſhioned by my own policy, drawn up or enacted by my own power, I had them from the goddeſs. So *Plato* informs us of another law-maker (*Minos* the *Cretian*) that he uſed to enter into Caves and ſolitary places, where (he told the people) he received laws and immediate dictates from *Jupiter* their god, to govern them by. This drew a great eſtimation and reverence upon him. *Valerius Maximus*, and *Herodotus* tell us of thoſe other law-makers, *Licurgus* and *Zaleucus*, uſing the like State-ſtratagems to over-rule the people. *Licurgus* ſaid, he received his laws from *Apollo*: *Zaleucus* and *Piſiſtratus* avouch *Minerva* for the Directreſs or Doctreſs of *Theirs*. So that both among the people of God, and among Heathens, it hath been very frequent to pretend Divine authority; that they might with the more eſtimation put off either ſuch points of doctrine or ſuch rules of policy, as themſelves had invented.

Valer. lib. 1.
Herod. lib. 1.

Rem in dubio relinquimus; videtur tamen potius vera fuiſſe viſio, etſi ea abutatur. Merc.

For this of *Eliphaz*, howſoever ſome charge him directly, and others leave the matter in doubt, only turning the ſcale with a probability [it ſeemeth rather that it was a true viſion.] Yet I ſhall adventure to reſolve directly, that his was a true viſion, as well as a viſion of truth ſent from God. And the reaſons which ſway with me, are theſe three.

Firſt, If we conſider the manner of this viſion. The deſcription here made, holds exact proportion with thoſe, of which there is no queſtion but they were the Oracles of Heaven. *When a thing is done as God doth it, it is ſome argument that God hath done it*. I grant, this reaſon is not demonſtrative or infallible, becauſe Satan and our own hearts are very apt to make imitations of holy things, for ſinful ends. Satan can transform himſelf into an Angel of light, and the heart can diſguiſe or ſhape its own dark conceptions, by the light of divine revelations.

Take then a ſecond reaſon, *Eliphaz* was a godly man. Tis granted on all hands, that *Eliphaz* and his friends were right in their affections, though they failed in this action. God was angry with them indeed, and told them in the cloſe of this diſpute (Chap. 42. 7.) *That they had not ſpoken of him the thing that was right, as* Job *his ſervant had*; yet *he bids* Job *pray and offer ſacrifice for them*; which he would not have done, unleſs they had been upon good terms with him in general, and in a preſent capacity for mercy and acceptance. Now it being ſuppoſed that *Eliphaz* was a godly man, it is a ſin not to be ſuppoſed of him, that he would make boaſt of a falſe revelation, and with ſuch deliberate gravity put a lye upon God.

Thirdly, The matter which he profeſſes to have received in this viſion, is a great and a holy truth of God. Man never belyes God to confirm the truth of God. When any boaſt vainly of revelations, it is to confirm their own phancies and deluſions. 'Tis rare when men are ſo zealous for truth, as to improve all that God hath ſpoken, in the maintenance of it: I have not read of any that have fained a word from God, to maintain that which is really the Word of God. We find all along in Scripture, that when viſions from God were falſly pretended, they ever tended to ſecure the heart in falſe opinions, or unwarrantable practiſes.

The Apoſtle *Paul* found many who falſified the ſtamp of the Spirit, and forged his hand and ſeal to eſtabliſh error, (2 *Theſ*. 2. 2.) *I beſeech you brethren that you be not ſoon ſhaken in mind, or be troubled either by ſpirit, or by word, or by letter, as from us, as that the day of Chriſt is at hand*. That groſs error was ſcattered in the Church of *Theſſalonica*, that the day of Chriſt was at hand, that in thoſe beginnings of the Goſpel, there ſhould be an end of all things. To confirm this, falſe teachers boaſted the ſpirit, an immediate revelation from God: or a word immediately from the mouth, or a letter under the hand of *Paul*. How active is error to find patronage? It cares not whom it belyes, ſo it ſelf may paſs for truth. Thouſands love errors, but none will own them by that name: and therefore (becauſe children bear their fathers name) they would father them upon the God of truth. *Montanus* the Heretick, ſaid he had the Holy Ghoſt his *Paraclete*, dictating thoſe erroneous doctrines to him, beſide his Propheteſſes, *Priſca* and *Maximilla*. *Mahomet*, that *Grand helliſh Impoſtor*, often pretended viſions from Heaven. And the ſtory aſſures us that he cunningly made uſe of the diſeaſe of his body, to perſwade his diſciples of the ſoundneſs of his doctrine. For being afflicted with *the falling ſickneſs*, when at any time a fit was upon him, he made the people believe that he was in an extaſie or raviſhment of ſpirit, at the appearance of the Angel *Gabriel*, who revealed many myſteries to him. And having by long uſe and familiarity taught a Pigeon to feed at his ear, he by art prevailed with the people, to feed at his poyſonous mouth: as if his words had been the inſpirations of the Holy Ghoſt, who (as he affirmed) came then to him, in the form of a Dove, and taught him thoſe ſecrets.

Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. *c.* 14. 16.

So then, this of *Eliphaz* was a true viſion, becauſe it was the confirmation of a truth. Invented viſions are in uſe only to gain credit to the inventions of man, or the viſions of the Devil. Now for the matter and words themſelves.

Now a thing was ſecretly brought unto me.

דָּבָר
Τὸ ῥῆμα τῦτο τὸ γεγονὸς.
Factum eſſe verbũ alicui nihil aliud ſignificat quam factã eſſe revelationem in aliquo, & Deum cognitione futurorum, inſtar luminis, mentem illuſtraſſe, Cyril. in 1 c. Hoſ. v. 1.
גנב

We tranſlate [thing,] the Hebrew is [*word*,] *A word was ſecretly brought unto me*; but it is uſual both in Hebrew and Greek to call *A thing, A word*. *Luke* 2. 15. The Shepherds ſaid, *Let us go to* Bethlem *to ſee this thing*, the Greek is, *To ſee this word which is done*. Though here, it is proper enough, to ſay, *A word was brought unto me*.

Now a thing, or a word, was brought unto me, it was brought unto me ſecretly. The language of the Prophets was, *The word of the Lord came unto me*. There are two words in our tranſlation, (*ſecretly brought*) but the Hebrew is one; and that word ſignifies to ſteal, or to do a thing by ſtealth; ſo it may be tranſlated, *A thing was brought unto me by ſtealth, or was ſtole into me*: Mr. *Broughton* near this, *A ſpeech came by ſtealth upon me*: We tranſlate fully to the ſence, *A thing was ſecretly brought to me*, as if it were whiſpered into the ear, and ſent in cloſely to the ſpirit. And it is thus expreſſed, by way of oppoſition to another way, in which God reveals his mind unto his people. He ſometimes comes openly and ſpeaks aloud, that all may take notice, or becauſe all ought, *Iſa.* 58. 1. *Cry aloud, lift up thy voice like a trumpet*. Things are brought openly to the people, ſecretly to the Prophets: what the Lord ſpeaks in the ear, or to the heart of a Prophet, that he by the Prophet ſpeaks on the houſe top to all his people. *A thing was ſecretly brought, or a thing was whiſpered unto Eliphaz*. But he ſpeaks it aloud to *Job*. This word, or this thing, is ſaid to be ſtoln into him, or to be brought unto him by ſtealth, for three reaſons, which I ſhall but name and proceed.

First, A thing done by ſtealth, is done ſuddenly. The theif haſtens to do miſchief, he makes no delayes. Then ſecondly, a thing done by ſtealth, is done ſecretly; a thief comes cloſely in the dark; ſtealth is committed with greateſt privacie; and to ſay, a thing is brought by ſtealth, is as much as to ſay, a thing is brought privately. Thirdly, A thing done by ſtealth, is done unexpectedly. A man ſeldom looks for the thief, he is upon him in the way, upon him in his houſe, before he is aware. A thief is uſually as unexpected, as he is an unwelcome gueſt. So this word came, or was brought in by ſtealth, becauſe it came ſuddenly, it came ſilently, and it came unexpectedly to *Eliphaz*. And in theſe three reſpects, Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to come as a thief; *Behold, I come as thief in the night*. As the word of Chriſt comes to many of his people now, ſo the perſon of Chriſt will come at laſt unto all, *he will come by ſtealth, or as a thief*, ſuddenly, ſecretly, unexpectedly, when the world ſhall little dream of him, and his Church ſcarce be awake for him. Hence note,

Rev. 16. 15.

Firſt, That, *Divine Truths are infuſed into us, not born in us, or born with us.*

Every thing which is of heaven, cometh unto us from heaven; it is either ſtoln in ſecretly, or thundred in loudly. Sometimes the Prophets and Miniſters of Chriſt, ſpeaking aloud, carry truth into the ſoul; ſometimes God whiſpers it into the Soul; one way or other, truth muſt be brought in, for it grows not in us. Our hearts by nature are not only like white paper, having no inſcription, not a letter of Gods will written in them, but they are like paper blotted and blurred, written all over with the corrupt principles and poſitions of our own wills. God by his

Spirit firſt croſſes or wipes out thoſe, and then writes down his own golden rules of holy truth and heavenly wiſdom. This he doth, firſt, in converſion from ſin to grace and holineſs, and afterward in all the increaſes of grace, and growths of holineſs. *There is not a ſyllable of the Law of God in any mans heart, till the finger of God writes it there; I will put my law in their mind, and write it in their hearts,* which is an alluſion unto the two Tables of the Law. They were firſt written by the finger of God, and then put into the Ark: So God firſt writes the Law in our hearts, and then puts it into our minds; he layes it up in the Ark of our underſtanding and memory.

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *God ſteals truths into the hearts of his people unawares.*

As they often expect and wait long for knowledge, ſo they ſometime know before they expect. A truth either in whole or part, in the matter or clearer light of it, comes like a thief into the heart, ſuddenly, ſecretly, unlooked for; in which caſe it is ever true, that *truth unexpected, is doubly welcomed.* The way of the Spirit of God is alwayes undiſcernable to fleſh and blood. The ſoul receives a thing, and the man knows not how; he can ſcarce (poſſibly not at all) tell where, by whom, or which way it came to him; it was brought, ſecretly brought; and with a moſt bleſſed, gracious ſlight of hand, conveyed into his heart. Yet ſometime truth enters in *State,* and may be ſaid to make its paſſage viſibly into the heart of a man. The Word comes, not as a company of thieves, but as a band of Souldiers, with weapons drawn, and terrible ſhouts, tearing open the ſoul, and breaking open the iron gate of the heart, locked and barred with unbelief, to ſecure that curſed crew of luſts garriſon'd within it. *The weapons of our warfare* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *are mighty through God,* 2 Cor. 10.4. The word is mighty, wonderful in ſtrength, it comes upon the ſoul as an armed man, to ſpoil it of all ſinful pleaſures, yea, of the very life of ſin. Sometimes the Lord proclaims war, as by a Herald of Arms, againſt a man, and openly prepares for his ſiege and battery. He ſurprizes another, and ſteals him into a happy captivity to himſelf. *A thing was ſecretly brought unto me.*

And mine ear received a little thereof.

שמץ *Particula, pars, modicum.*

Mine ear caught ſomewhat of it; ſo Mr. *Broughton.* The word ſignifies a part or a portion. *Mine ear received a little;* yet we are not to underſtand this, as if *Eliphaz* had taken in only ſome fragments or imperfect notes of what God delivered, or had heard to the halves. For doubtleſs *Eliphaz* received all that was brought, he turned nothing back; he ſaid not, a little is enough, I need not the reſt: that he received but a little, was not from neglect of the reſt, but from inability to receive more, or to receive it more perfectly. And though he had not all of every part, yet he had a part of all; it was not a little of this, and none of that: little reſpects ſomewhat of every truth, not ſome one truth. He received, though not all, yet a perfect model of all that was brought.

Further, This ſpeech may have reference unto our preſent condition; concerning which the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Cor.* 13.) *We know but in part;* Now when he ſaith, *we know but in part.* it is not as if we had but a part of Gods will made known unto us. The word of God and the works of God are perfect. And the Apoſtle aſſures the Church of *Epheſus,* that *he had not ſhunned to declare unto them the whole counſel of God,* Acts 20. 27. The whole (which concerns man) is declared, but we know that whole but in part. Such is our weakneſs and infirmity, that we cannot take in All of All; no, nor any part of all, in the full latitude and extent of it: Thus *we know but in part.* So ſaith *Eliphaz,* when this was brought to me, mine ear received but little of it; my narrow ear could drink in but ſome drops of that Ocean, which was poured out upon me. All that man apprehends, is but little, in reſpect of what God offers now, or of what hereafter he ſhall apprehend. *Eliphaz* ſpeaks modeſtly and humbly of himſelf; God brought a thing unto me, and I am ſuch a poor ſtreightned veſſel, that I could receive but a little of it; yet ſomewhat I caught hold of, which I am about to make known unto thee. We may note from this,

Modeſtè loquitur, quaſi non plenè acceperit, quod ſciendum eſſet de hac re. Quod optimum eſt & eximium comprehendere vir teſt mortalis homo. Merc.

First, *Holy truths are very pleaſant to the ear of a holy perſon.*

A thing was brought unto me, and mine ear caught a little of it. As when meats pleaſant to the taſte, are brought to a man, he puts forth his hand, and takes them; or when pleaſant muſick ſounds, the ear catches it, or we drink it in greedily at the ear; ſo when holy truths are revealed, a holy heart catches them: The ear is not more affected with pleaſant muſick, or the palat with pleaſant meats, then the underſtanding ſpiritualized, is affected with ſpiritual truths. The ear of a holy man takes in holy things with pleaſure, and therefore he is ſaid to catch them, or drink them in, as with much deſire and raviſhing delight: *David* found more ſweetneſs in the truths of God, *then in the honey or honeycomb.* The ſpirit of a regenerate man doth ſo much catch *heavenly doctrine,* that in the hebrew, the word which ſignifies ſuch *doctrine,* ſignifies alſo *catching* or *receiving;* and a word from the ſame root, ſignifies the *palat of the mouth;* which may hint us thus much, That *heavenly doctrine pleaſes the palat or taſte of a heavenly mind:* And the reaſon of it, is, becauſe there is a ſuitableneſs in the heart of every godly man, with every truth of God. All delight ariſes from proportion and ſuitableneſs between the object and the organ, in ſenſitives; between the object and the underſtanding, will, affections, in ſpirituals: That which makes delight to the eye, is the ſuitableneſs of *viſibles* to the eye; and that which makes delight to the taſte, is the ſuitableneſs of *edibles* to the palat; and ſo that which makes delight to the ſoul, is the ſuitableneſs of *intelligibles* to the underſtanding. Hence the reaſon is clear, why wicked men will not receive the things of God, but inſtead of catching them, catch at them, ſnarl and murmure at them, ſpeak, yea, rail and fight againſt them; their hearts are unſuitable to thoſe truths, therefore they diſtaſte them, therefore they reliſh them no more then the white of an egg, or a dry ſtick: nay, not only have they no pleaſant taſte, but they have a bitter taſte in their mouths; they are as gall and wormwood to them, they are a vexation and torment to them. The truth which the two Witneſſes publiſh, torments them that dwell on the earth; and then no marvel, if inſtead of catching thoſe truths to embrace them, they catch the witneſſes and kill them.

Vide Buxt. Lex. *in verbo* לקח

Rev. 11.

Secondly, obſerve, That, *The ear and heart of man in this ſtate of corruption, are veſſels too narrow, to take in, or hold all the truths of God.*

I have many things to ſay (ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples) *but ye cannot bear them now,* John 16. 12. Nor could they ever fully bear ſo much as Chriſt had to ſay. *We have line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little,* Iſa. 28. 10. becauſe it is but here and there a little, ſome few lines or precepts which we are able to learn and digeſt into our ſpirits. Whole ſhowers of divine truths are often rained upon us (*Heb.* 6.) yet we drink in but a drop or two; we ſwim, as it were, in a whole ocean, a ſea of holy revelations, but we are narrow-neck'd bottles, and how little is it which bubbleth in! *Mine ear received a little thereof.* The truth of God is like God himſelf, infinite: *Truth is nothing elſe but the mind of God,* and that is infinite; therefore we, who are not only finite, but ſtreightned, cannot poſſibly comprehend it.

Thirdly, *Mine ear received a little thereof:* It was but a little he received, yet he received a little; all did not fall beſide his ear, all did not ſlip away, he caught ſomewhat: Hence note,

That, *The ear and heart of a godly man ever receive ſomewhat, when the truths of God are revealed.*

I cannot get in all, my heart will not receive all, my memory will not retain all; but a little it will hold, ſomewhat it takes in at every Sermon, and from every viſion of God. (Sermons are the viſions of God, and ſomewhat of Gods mind is brought to you in every holy Sermon.) Natural men are like ſieves, like veſſels without a bottom, or full of holes, into which theſe truths being put, run out every drop: the beſt in this life, are leaking veſſels, much drops out: *Eliphaz received a little;* how many hear much, and receive nothing! they come empty to the Ordinances, and they return empty; their ears have been filled with a ſound, but their hearts have not caught a ſyllable, not a word of truth is written in their hearts, not a letter laid up in their minds, and that's the reaſon, why not a word is to be ſeen in their lives: How can they hold out the word in a pure converſation, who have not received it into a pure conſcience?

In thoughts from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth on men.

The former verſe ſhewed us the manner how that thing was brought to *Eliphaz*; *a thing was ſecretly brought to me*: this ſhews the time when it was brought; it was (ſaith he) *in thoughts from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth on men.*

In thoughts from the viſions of the night.] Some read it, *in the thoughts which I had, after the viſions of the night*; ſo, *Hoſ.* 6. 2. *From two nights. Heb.* After two dayes; or, *in thoughts which I had in the viſions of the night*; or, *in thoughts of the viſions of the night*: the Original bears any of theſe readings.

Vel poſt viſiones noctis, ſicut dicimus à cœna, à prandio; ſic Hoſ. 6.2. *vel in cogitationibus viſionum noctis, ut* Mem *Genitivum indicet.*

In thoughts.] The Hebrew word ſignifies properly *the boughs of a tree*; and ſo ſome tranſlate, *In the boughs, ſprigs or branches of the viſions of the night*; but we render it well, *in the thought*: And thoughts are called *boughs or branches*; Firſt, Becauſe thoughts grow from the mind, ſprout and ſhoot up from the mind, as branches from the ſtock of a tree: From the root and ſtock of a mans underſtanding, a branch of thoughts grows up, ſometimes like a tall Cedar of *Libanus*, as high as heaven. Secondly, The boughs and branches of a tree are many, thick, interwoven, and croſſing one another; ſuch are the thoughts of a man; he hath many, even multitudes of them: *In the multitude of my thoughts*, ſaith *David*. The mind puts forth many branches and twigs, they ſprout and ſhoot forth every way; thouſands of various thoughts are moving, upon various objects, and to various ends; ſome are earthly, ſome heavenly. The branches of ſome minds are but briars and thorns, others bear the *Lilie and the Roſe*, their root is in heaven, and they grow heaven-ward. Thirdly, Thoughts are called branches, becauſe the branch or the bough brings forth and bears the fruit; the ſtock or the body of a tree brings forth fruit at the branches; ſo all the fruit of our ſouls is born upon, or from our thoughts: our actions are the fruits of our thinkings. Thoughts are poſſible actions; look what a man thinketh, that he doth, or would do: And ſuch as our thoughts are, ſuch our actions are, or would be. Thoughts are the firſt-born, the bloſſoms and blooms of the ſoul, the beginnings of our ſtrength, whether for good or evil; therefore the Hebrew word is elegantly tranſlated from a bough or a branch, to a thought.

מחזיונות
לילה
שעפים

The Hebrew word for ſpeech, prayer and meditation, ſprings from a root of the ſame ſignification; becauſe ſpeech, prayer and meditation ſpring up from the ſpirit, as a ſtalk or branches from the ſtock of a tree.

There is one thing further to be obſerved from this word, (for it is a very elegant word, and therefore I ſpend a little the more time upon it) *In thoughts from the viſions of the night*: The word ſignifies, not only a bough, but the higheſt bough, the top bough of a tree. A tree hath ſome under-boughs, and ſome top-boughs, as the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Iſa.* 17. 6.) *Two or three berries in the top of the uppermoſt bough*: it is the ſame word, which here in the text, we tranſlate *thoughts*; as if *Eliphaz* ſhould ſay, *In my very uppermoſt or higheſt thoughts, in thoſe very top-branches of my higheſt fancy, which I had from the viſions of the night.* The higheſt, the top branches which grow from the ſoul of a godly man, are for, or about the higheſt mercies, top-mercies, for heaven and heavenly things. A wicked mans higheſt and uppermoſt thoughts are for the earth; his thoughts for the earth out-grow all his other thoughts: but a godly mans thoughts for heaven and ſpirituals, out-grow all his other thoughts; his thoughts for heaven, are the higheſt and uppermoſt branches of his ſoul. We have this word uſed in 1 *Kings* 18. 21. *How long* (ſaith *Elijah*) *will you halt between two opinions?* That word which we there tranſlate *opinions*, is here tranſlated *thoughts*; hence ſome render that in the *Kings* thus, *How long do ye halt between two top-thoughts, or high thoughts?* As if this were the thing which *Elijah* reproved in that people, that they had high thoughts both of *God and of Baal*, top-thoughts of both; and they (as it were) ſet *Baal*, a dumb Idol, as high in their thoughts, eſtimations and opinions, as the living God. Why do ye halt between two uppermoſt opinions, higheſt thoughts, or thoughts of equal height concerning *God* and *Baal?* Your thoughts of your Idol are as high as of God himſelf. What! will you make an Idol equal with God? An Idol is a baſe thing, a low thing, a thing below upon the dunghil (therefore called a dunghil-god.) The true God is on high, he is in the higheſt heavens, he is higher then the heaven of heavens; and do you debaſe him thus by halting between two thoughts of equal height, concerning him and *Baal?* *They who ſet up an Idol, make it equal unto God. All falſe worſhip is a ſetting of our poſts by Gods poſts, and of our threſhold by his threſhold*; a making both of equal height and worth.

שיח *Stirps, frutex, quia ſermo è corde, ut arbor è terra naſcitur.* Shin. *Elegans metaphora ſumpta à ſupereminentibus arborum ramuſculis; & eſt primigenia hujus vocis ſignificatio) ad phantaſmatum extremitates, ac velut teneras cogitationum ſummitates notionem ſuam extendit.* Bold.

Quouſque claudicatis inter duas prominentias. Merc. *Quaſi* Elias *objurgaret populum, quod duas eminentias ſibi conſtituerent; Deū &* Baalem *quaſi æquales, inter quas nulla eſt comparatio.* 2 Cor. 6. 15. Bol.

And to clear it yet further (*Pſal.* 119. 113.) the ſame word is uſed by *David*, when he profeſſes, *I hate vain thoughts*; or as ſome read it, *I hate vain things.* He calls Idolatrous thoughts vain thoughts, becauſe they are wavering, inconſtant or unſetled thoughts, in further alluſion to the boughs of a tree: As the topmoſt and higheſt boughs of a tree are ſhaken with every puff of wind, and waver to and fro with every blaſt, ſo are the thoughts of Idolaters: or becauſe (as before) Idolatry ſets up *too high thoughts*, adoring an Idol as much, or in competition and rivality with the ever-living God. The higher our thoughts are of God, the more excellent they are; and to have as high thoughts of an Idol, as of the living and true God, are the vaineſt thoughts of all; thoſe high thoughts are low thoughts, the loweſt thoughts, thoughts moſt hateful. *I hate vain thoughts.*

Quaſi dicat Idololatriā odio habui, quæ plura eminentia ſupremo cultu reveretur, cum ſit unum.

From the viſions of the night.] As I have opened that word about the thoughts ſomewhat largely, ſo this of the viſions, requires more enlargement; yet I ſhall do it as briefly as I may.

Viſions were a ſpecial way of Divine Revelation: *Heb.* 1. 1. *God, who at ſundry times, and in divers manners ſpake to our Fathers by the Prophets*, ſaith the Apoſtle. God ſpake at ſundry times, and he ſpake in divers manners. Now amongſt thoſe divers manners of ſpeaking, ſpeaking by or in viſions was one. The Jewiſh Doctors obſerve four degrees of divine revelation. The firſt they called *Prophecy*, which included viſion, and any apparition whereby the will of God was made known. They had a ſecond way of divine revelation, which they called, *The inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt*, whereby the party was inabled without viſion or apparition to propheſie: either as prophecying is taken for the foretelling of things to come, or for the reſolving of things in doubt: The Rabbins give us the difference between theſe two, *prophecy and inſpiration*: In *prophecy* (though it was from the Holy Ghoſt) a man was caſt into a trance, or brought into an extaſie, his ſenſes being taken away; but ſpeaking by inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, was without any ſuch change in, or impreſſions upon the body: So *David*, and other Pen-men of the Scriptures, wrote by the immediate inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, yet without viſible apparitions to them, or viſible change upon them. Thirdly, God revealed himſelf by *Urim and Thummim*, which was an anſwer given by the *Ephod*, or by the ſtones that were on the breſt-plate of the *High Prieſt*. Theſe three wayes of *divine revelation* (as they obſerve) ceaſed in the *ſecond Temple*. The Jewiſh Writers having this tradition, that after the latter Prophets, *Haggai*, *Zechariah* and *Malachy*, *the Holy Ghoſt departed from* Iſrael; meaning, the Holy Ghoſt (not in the ordinary work of ſanctification, but) in thoſe extraordinary wayes of Propheſie, Inſpiration, and of *Urim* and *Thummim*, went up and departed from them. There was yet a fourth way of divine revelation, which they call *Bathcol*, the daughter of a voice, or eccho, declaring the will of God immediately from heaven; ſuch ſome conceive to be, the voice heard from heaven, *Mat.* 3. 17. proclaiming the teſtimony of God concerning Chriſt; *A voice was heard from heaven, ſaying, this is my beloved ſon in whom I am well pleaſed.*

πολυμέρως ϗ πολυτρόπως.

Paulus Fagius, in Ex. 28.
Goodw. Heb. Antiq.

But to paſs from theſe traditions of the *Jews*, we ſhall give you the doctrine of divine revelation more diſtinctly from the Scriptures. We find (*Numb.* 12. 6, 7, 8.) three diſtinct wayes, in which the Lord revealed himſelf of old unto his people: *If there be a Prophet among you, I the*

Lord will make my ſelf known unto him in a viſion, and will ſpeak unto him in a dream; my ſervant Moſes *is not ſo, who is faithful in all mine houſe, with him will I ſpeak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark ſpeeches, and the ſimilitude of the Lord ſhall he behold.* This is an illuſtrious Text, deſcribing three diſtinct wayes or degrees of holy revelation. Firſt, By Viſion, which we have here in *Job.* Secondly, By a *Dream*, which was, when God preſented ſomewhat to them ſleeping: This kind of revelation God vouchſafed, not only to his own people and Prophets, but to Heathens alſo, and ſtrangers from his Covenant. *Pharaoh* had a revelation by a dream (*Gen.* 41.) concerning the ſeven years of famine; and *Nebuchadnezzar* had a wonderful revelation by a dream (*Dan.* 2.) concerning the ſtate of the four Monarchies. The wiſe men of the Eaſt were warned in a dream, to return into their Countrey another way, *Mat.* 2. But with the Saints, theſe revelations by dreams, were very frequent; *Jacob* (Gen. 28.) in a dream, as he ſlept upon a ſtone, *ſaw a ladder*, &c. *Joſeph, Jacob*'s ſon, had ſo many dreams, that his brethren jeered him with it, and called him the *Captain-dreamer, the dreamer, a maſter of dreams*, Gen. 37. 19. *Joſeph* the husband of *Mary*, was twice warned in a dream; firſt, that he ſhould not forſake his wife, *Mat.* 1. and then, that he ſhould go into *Egypt*, Mat. 3. Many other the like revelations by dreams, might be inſtanced in; but I forbear. There is a third way ſpoken of in this Text, and that is, *ſpeaking mouth to mouth; my ſervant* Moſes *is not ſo, with him will I ſpeak mouth to mouth, even apparently.* This is a more eminent way of heavenly manifeſtations then the former: *Moſes* had a priviledge above the ordinary Prophets. For, to *ſpeak mouth to mouth*, is expounded by (*apparently*) *I will ſpeak plainly*, or *apparently*, not in a viſion or in a dream. When a man ſpeaks mouth to mouth to his friend, or (as the Scripture phraſes our communion with God in heaven) *face to face*; this is oppoſed to a more remote or obſcure communion. As our ſeeing God face to face in heaven, ſo his ſpeaking to us mouth to mouth on earth, notes the cleareſt and fulleſt revelation; it is to give us his mind nakedly, without any figure or ſhadow; or (as Chriſt is ſaid once in the Goſpel) to *ſpeak plainly, and not in parables.* And theſe ſpeakings *mouth to mouth*, were of two ſorts; either immediate, as himſelf did unto *Moſes*, or as to others, by the miniſtry of Angels: God often employed Angels in this ſervice, to declare his mind, and bring meſſages to his people: This was a kind of ſpeaking *mouth to mouth*; but *Moſes* had an honour beyond this, *with him will I ſpeak mouth to mouth*, I by my ſelf, not I by a created Angel.

בעל הח
למות

Viſions (to keep the term in hand) were (you ſee) a principal means, by which God broke his mind, and unlock'd the ſecrets of his counſels. *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my ſelf known unto him in a viſion.* And to clear this point about viſions, yet more fully; we may diſtinguiſh of divers ſorts of viſions. Firſt, A viſion is ſometime put for an ordinary diſpenſation of the will of God to his Prophets or Miniſters, who as from God, diſpenſe it to his people; (*Prov.* 29. 18.) *Where viſion faileth, the people periſh*, that is, where there are none to publiſh and declare the mind of God (no, not in an ordinary way) to a people, that people are in a ready way to perdition. *Without the viſions of Grace there is no ordinary way to the viſions of Glory.* Secondly, By a viſion, we underſtand *an extraordinary work of God, manifeſting his mind to his Prophets, either to aſſure future ſucceſſes, or to reſolve future Queries.* And theſe were called *viſions*, becauſe by them, things were made ſo manifeſt, as if they had been ſeen before their eyes; and in ſome of theſe revelations, a viſible repreſentation was made to the eye: viſions were often attended with apparitions. In reference to both theſe ſorts of viſions, that is appliable, 1 *Sam.* 9. 9. *Before-time in Iſrael, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he ſpake; Come let us go to the Seer: for he that is now called a Prophet, was beforetime called a Seer.* Prophets were called Seers, becauſe in viſions, they had either an ocular, or an intellectual ſight of the mind of God.

Viſio eſt omnis doctrina diviniths revelata; quia Deus quibuſcunq; viſum eſt revelare, res ipſas quodammodo videndas & ſpectandas oculis ſervorum ſuorum exhibet ad obſignandum earum certitudinem. Jun. *in Iſa.* cap. 1.

Secondly, Viſions may undergo this diviſion: There was an open viſion, and there was a private viſion. In 1 *Sam.* 3. 1. we have the ground of the diſtinction; *In thoſe dayes there was no open viſion*: Open is oppoſed to private or ſecret; the word imports a viſion appearing in publick; and the meaning of the text is this; there were no Prophets ſent openly, and (as it were) *in State*, inveſted with commiſſion, and furniſhed with meſſages from heaven unto the people; *there was no open viſion*: yet at that time there were private viſions, as to *Manoah*, Judg. 13. God revealed himſelf in thoſe dark times to ſome of his ſpecial ſervants; and ſo he hath and will at all times. While he hath a Church upon the earth, he never ſhuts himſelf quite in heaven. Open viſion may fail, but all viſions ſhall not fail. So open profeſſion may fail in the reign of Antichriſt, in his hour, and in the power of darkneſs; as it did in the time of *Elijah*; yet all profeſſion of the truth ſhall never fail: *The Lord hath alwayes his thouſands in ſecret, who never bowed their knee to Baal.* In many places, ſince Chriſt came in the fleſh, there hath been no open viſion, no holding forth of the truth of Chriſt, and yet even in thoſe places there have been private viſions; and a remnant reſerved, to whom God hath made known the myſteries of the Kingdom of Chriſt. *When darkneſs covers all in appearance, there may be light which appears not; and candles under a buſhel, when there are none in the candleſticks.* A *Goſhen* hath light, while *Egypt* is plagued with darkneſs; and when the Prophets are benighted, it may be day with many of the people.

Fuerūt quidem ſingulares & privatæ viſiones cum piis communicatæ, ut cum Manoah, *Jud.* 13. *Sed publicè Prophetarum omne munus jacebat.* Jun. *in loc.*

Thirdly, Some viſions were without any trance or raviſhment (*Gen.* 15. 1.) *The word of God came in a viſion to Abraham*, ſpeaking to his ear, and bidding him look up to heaven with his eyes, *ver.* 5. But often we find, that viſions were accompanied with trances: 'Twas ſo with *Balaam* the falſe Prophet (*Numb.* 24. 16.) *He hath ſaid, which ſaw the viſion of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:* And it was ſo with ſome of the true Prophets; *Daniel* ſaw a viſion, and when he heard the voice, *Then* (ſaith he) *was I in a deep ſleep upon my face*, (Dan. 10. 9.) *Peter* was in a trance, when he had the viſion of a ſheet let down from heaven, *Acts* 10. And the Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 12. 1.) *I will come to viſions and revelations of the Lord, whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth.* His ſoul had ſo much acquaintance with God, that he became a ſtranger to his own body; his ſoul was ſo buſied in receiving knowledge from God, that he was fain to put off the knowledge and care of his body wholly to God: What the ſtate of my body was, I know not, *God knoweth.*

Fourthly, Some viſions were preſented only in bare naked words, others were cloathed in types and figures, in the ſhapes of beaſts of the earth, and fowls of the ayr, of trees and ſtones, *&c.* As to *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* in their Propheſies, and to *John*, in the book of *Revelations.* Theſe figures were as an Alphabet of ſacred Letters, which put together and ſpell'd, made the mind of God legible to his ſervants.

Laſtly, The Scripture in hand hints us a fifth difference about viſions. *In thoughts from the viſions of the night*; that's conſiderable. There were viſions of the day, and viſions of the night; thus it is ſaid (*Dan.* 2. 19.) when *Daniel* expounded *Nebuchadnezzar*'s dream, that God made it known to him *in viſions of the night*, oppoſing it to *viſions of the day.* Uſually the night was the time for viſions; hence (*Numb.* 22. 18, 19.) *Balaam* the falſe Prophet (when the meſſengers of *Balak* came to him) ſaith, *tarry this night, and I will ſhew you in the morning*; he thought to have a viſion in the night: So it is obſervable, that when *Saul* and his ſervant came to *Samuel* (1 Sam. 9. 19.) to enquire about the ſtray'd Aſſes, he tells him, *Ye ſhall eat bread with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart*: he deſired a night, intimating, that God uſed to reveal ſecrets unto him in the night.

So much concerning viſions, with the kinds and differences of them.

From this Doctrine of viſions, we may take notice of our priviledge under the Goſpel. The Apoſtle ſaith, *at ſundry times, and in divers manners, God ſpake unto our Fathers by the Prophets*; but he hath ſpoken unto us one way, which exceeds them all, *even by his Son, who is the brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. 1. 2, 3. We have a viſion which out-ſhines all the viſions which ever the Prophets or Patriarchs had from the beginning of the world. Their light was darkneſs, at moſt, but a ſhadow; their viſions were obſcurities, and their revelations, concealments, compared with ours. Our viſion is *Chriſt*, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*: *Mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*, ſaith old *Simeon*; he had a viſion of Chriſt in perſon. The Land of *Judah* was called the *valley of viſion*, becauſe God revealed himſelf to that people more frequently and clearly then all the world beſide. Where-ever the Goſpel is preached, that Land is a *valley of viſion*, a valley of viſion far more lightſom and glorious then the Land of *Judah* was; the very darkneſs of the Goſpel is clearer then the lightneſs of the Law. *That which was more glorious, had no glory, by reaſon of that glory which excelleth*, 1 Cor. 3. 10. Only remember, that as our priviledge is greater then theirs, ſo is our duty; *A clearer light ſhould be anſwered with a holier life*: And we who have more evidence of what God would have done, ſhould make more conſcience to do it. Now we are not taught by dreams and viſions of the night; *we ought to walk as children of the day*. Not only is darkneſs gone, but the ſhadows are fled away. The true light now ſhines, even he who enlightens every one that comes into the world. We need not dreams or viſions now. Why ſhould we call for Candles when the Sun is up? We need not Star-light, when we have Day-light, or when the promiſed *Day-ſtar is riſen in our hearts*, 2 Pet. 1. 19.

Sopor eſt ſomnus profundior, ſomnus eſt plus quam dormitatio, & ſopor plus quã ſomnus.

Here is one circumſtance more in the Text about this viſion, very remarkable; it was not only in the night, but in *the night when deep ſleep falleth on men*; or, *on ſorrowful man*, man wearied with labour and travel. This is a more diſtinct deſcription of the time then the former. It was in the night, and in that part of the night, *when deep ſleep falleth upon men*; that is, in the former part or beginning of the night; for *the firſt ſleep is the deep ſleep*: and we uſe to ſay, that a man, eſpecially a weary hard-wrought man, is in a *dead ſleep*, when he is in his *firſt ſleep*. The word ſignifies an extraordinary ſleep. It is uſed (*Gen.* 2. 21.) where it is ſaid, that *God cauſed a deep ſleep to fall upon Adam*, when he took out his rib, and formed the woman. The Seventy tranſlate it, *Extaſie*. Some compare it to a *Lethargy*; a man in a *Lethargie* can hardly be awakened. Such a ſleep as *Saul* was in, 1 *Sam.* 26. 12. when *David* came into the Trench, and took away the Spear, and the Cruſe of water from his bolſter. Such a one as *Jonas* was in, while the Ship was almoſt ſunk with the tempeſt, *Jonah* 1. 5. In both places we have this original word. At the time when ſuch ſleep falls on wearied man, *Eliphaz* had this viſion. And he ſpeaks very elegantly, *that this deep ſleep falleth on men*; becauſe ſuch ſleep ſeems to oppreſs the ſpirits, as a heavy weight the body; it falls as heavy as Lead upon all a mans ſenſes, and overcomes them: we ſay ordinarily, *a man falls aſleep*; and it is true of ſleep, that it falls upon man, and falls with ſuch a weight, that a man is not able to ſtand under it. We ſay alſo, a man is heavy to ſleep; for ſleep, like a heavy thing, comes down upon him, and then down comes he. Heathen Poets tell us, that at this time they had viſions, or deluſions rather. *Satan imitates God in what he can, that he may deceive with better ſucceſs.*

תרדמה *Significat gravem ſomnum, imo plus quam ſomnum profundum, ſomnum & quaſi lethargum.* ἔκστασιν. *Tempus erat quo prima quies mortalibus ægris incipit, & dono Divum gratiſſima ſerpit. In ſomno ecce ante oculos mœſtiſſimus* Hector *viſus adeſſe mihi.* Virg. 2 *Æneid.*

We may obſerve from hence, *Seeing* Eliphaz *had this viſion when deep ſleep falleth upon men*;

First, That, *The power of Gods Spirit works through all natural impediments.*

When tired Nature is willing to fall, or cannot ſtay it ſelf from falling into a deep ſleep, then God can awaken us with his viſions, and make us ſee, when we cannot hold open our eyes. When God will reveal his mind to the ſoul, he overcomes the imperfections of the body. Sleepineſs is an imperfection; if a man be ſleepy, he is unfit to hear: While the eye is thus ſhut, the ear cannot be open. That ſleeper in the *Acts*, fell down dead while *Paul* was preaching. Yet when God comes by his mighty power and Spirit, though a mans ear be ſhut, he can break through and get into his heart. *The Word hath taken ſome napping and nodding.* Yea, God breaks in by his almighty power in revelations of his will, not only when men are in a dead natural ſleep, but when they are in a ſleep of ſpiritual death. The Word breaks open the bars of the grave, and looſens the bands of death.

Joh. 5. 25.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as *Eliphaz* had this viſion *when deep ſleep falleth on men*, himſelf being kept awake, or waking. Obſerve,

That, *When we are moſt retired from the world, then we are moſt fit to have, and uſually have moſt communion with God.*

If a man would abridge himſelf of ſleep, and wake with holy thoughts, when deep ſleep falleth upon ſorrowful labouring men, he might be entertained with viſions from God, though not ſuch viſions as *Eliphaz* and other Saints have had, yet viſions he might have. Every time God communicates himſelf to the ſoul, there is a viſion of love, or mercy, or power, ſomewhat of God in his nature, or in his will, is ſhewed unto us. *David* ſhews us divine work when we go to reſt. The bed is not all for ſleep; *Commune with your own heart upon your own bed, and be ſtill*, Pſal. 4. Be ſtill or quiet, and then commune with your hearts; and if you will commune with your hearts, God will come and commune with your hearts too; his Spirit will give you a loving viſit, and viſions of his love. When *Jacob* fearing the rage of his brother, had put himſelf into the beſt poſture of defence he could, and had ſent his wives and children, his ſervants and his flocks over the River, the text ſaith, (*Gen.* 32. 24.) *that Jacob was left alone*; which is not to be underſtood, as if his company had left or deſerted him: *Jacob's ſolitarineſs was not paſſive, but elective.* He having diſpoſed of all his family, withdrew himſelf, and ſtayed alone; and what then? then he had a viſion indeed, *then there wreſtled a man with him until the breaking of the day*; he ſpent not the night in carking and caring what ſhould become of him the morrow; no, he retires to pray for a bleſſing upon his former cares, and a bleſſing he obtains. It is obſervable alſo concerning *Iſaac* (Gen. 24. 36.) that he went out into the fields *to meditate* (or as others read it) *to pray*. Some fooliſhly gloſs upon it, that *Iſaac* being delighted in Aſtronomy, went out to contemplate on the ſtars. But I believe the walk of *Iſaac*'s ſpirit was above the ſtars. It is a ſweet expreſſion of *Bernard*, If thou wouldſt meet Chriſt in ſpecial communion, do thou oftentimes retire thy ſelf; *O chaſt and lovely ſoul, doſt thou not know thou haſt a modeſt ſpouſe, that will not come to thee in the throng of worldly company and employment. Come my beloved* (ſaith the Spouſe, *Cant.* 7. 11.) *let us go forth into the fields, and lodge in the villages*; let us get from the tumult of the creature. He loves to find his Spouſe alone, retired into a Chamber, or into a Cloſet, or in the Fields and Groves, in the Gardens and ſhadie Walks, or in thoughts upon thy Bed, having the Curtains drawn, and all the world ſhut out. Some have viſions in the night when deep ſleep falleth upon men; but what are their viſions? ſurely they are viſions of darkneſs, not of light, viſions of hell, rather then viſions of heaven. The Prophet complains of ſuch, *who deviſe evil upon their beds*; they plot and contrive evil upon their beds, or they have viſions of uncleanneſs, viſions of covetouſneſs, viſions of oppreſſion, black infernal viſions. How much better is it to be blind, then to have ſuch viſions? to be aſleep, then have ſuch waking thoughts? But to be awake in our beds with thoughts of Chriſt, is far more ſweet then the ſweeteſt ſleep. And in the day, could we make more vacations from the world, we ſhould have more buſineſs in heaven. Moſt men are mudding in the earth all day, and if they wake in the night, earthly care keeps them awake. There are many thouſands whom love unto the world keeps awake; but how few are there, whom love to Chriſt keeps awake?

O ſancta anima ſola eſto, ut ſoli omnium ſerves teipſam, quem ex omnibus tibi elegiſti. An neſcis te verecundum habere ſponſum? &c. Bern.

It was an harſh, and (in one ſence) an ignorant ſpeech of a wiſe man amongſt the Heathen, who ſaid, *There is no man who may not more holily be in company, then with himſelf alone*; and yet there is a truth in it: for if a man be by himſelf alone, and deal only with his own heart, probably, he might be as profitably with any company, as with himſelf; one mans heart in it ſelf, is as bad as anothers, and uſually it is worſt, when it is by it ſelf: *Some, like* Nebuchadnezzar, *being ſecluded from men, converſe only with beaſts, theſe moſt beaſtly beaſts, luſts in their own boſoms.* But to be alone from men, to converſe with God; to be alone from men, to converſe with Chriſt, is infinitely better then the ſociety of men. The reaſon why many receive but little of Chriſt, little of heaven, is, becauſe they are ſo much in the crowd of the world, ſo long upon the wrack of earthly care, they ſeldom let their hearts ſettle. The ballances muſt ſtand at an even poize, before you can weigh aright. If you deſire to know which bears moſt weight in your

Nemo eſt cui non ſanctius ſit cum quolibet eſſe quam ſecum. Sen.

Dan. 4. 3.

Pietas periclitatur in negotiis.

your hearts, Earth or Heaven, Chriſt or the Creature, let your hearts ſtand ſtill. That in the *Pſalm* 4. v. 4. reaches this ſence fully; *Commune with your own hearts upon your bed, and be ſtill.* Our hearts will not be ſpoken with, unleſs we be quiet. And as the Picture-drawer cannot take the features of the face, to the life; ſo neither can we of our hearts, or lives, unleſs we have the patience to ſit for it.

VERS. 14, 15, 16.

Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to ſhake.

Then a Spirit paſſed before my face, the hair of my fleſh ſtood up.

It ſtood ſtill, but I could not diſcern the form thereof; an Image was before mine eyes, there was ſilence, and I heard a voice, ſaying.

WE have already given the Logical dependance of this whole Context, from Verſe 12. unto the end of the Chapter, and therein ſhewed how *Eliphaz* confirms the principal Propoſition (lying in Verſe 17.) *by Divine Authority, A viſion received from Heaven. A thing* (ſaith he) *was ſecretly brought to me, and my ear received a little thereof, in thoughts from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth on men.* Thus, the manner of the viſion is deſcribed in general. The effects of the viſion upon *Eliphaz*, and the particular manner how the viſion appeared, are now further deſcribed and ſet forth. This Verſe 14. contains one eminent effect of the viſion, with the conſequents of it; as ſoon (ſaith he) as I was in that heavenly rapture and extaſie, *Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to ſhake.*

It was very uſual, for Prophets and holy men, to be ſurprized with fear, at the appearance of *Jehovah* in his meſſages by Angels, or other Viſions. It is natural unto man to fear at the ſight of an Angel: and it is a received opinion among the Jews, that whether God or an Angel did appear, it was preſent death; which they collect from divers Scriptures (*Exod.* 33.20.) When *Moſes* deſired to ſee the face of God, the Lord anſwered, *there is no man can ſee my face and live.* Thoſe words of *Gideon* import as much (*Judges* 6.22.) *When* Gideon *perceived that he was an Angel of the Lord,* he ſaid, *Alas, O Lord God, for becauſe I have ſeen an Angel of the Lord, face to face*; as if he had ſaid, alas, wo is me, I ſhall certainly dye: and *Judges* 13. 21. *Manoah* concludes it, *we ſhall ſurely dye, becauſe we have ſeen God*, when an Angel appeared to them. Hence alſo *Jacob* (*Gen.* 32. 30.) after his wraſtling with the Angel (which was Chriſt) called the name of the place *Penuel*, which is, *The face of God*, for ſaith he, *I have ſeen God face to face, and my life is preſerved*; as noting, that it was a wonderful priviledge not to dye at ſuch a ſight; the very appearance of God, is death to the creature. And that which *Hagar* ſpake (*Gen.* 16. 13.) may well be interpreted to this ſence; when flying from her Miſtris, God came to her in the wilderneſs, ſhe called the name of the Lord that ſpake unto her, *Thou God ſeeſt me*; the reaſon is added, by way of admiration, for ſhe ſaid, *have I alſo here looked after him that ſeeth me?* Which words may be well tranſlated thus, *Do I live after him* (ſc. God) *that ſeeth me?* for here one act of life is put for the whole, looking or ſeeing, for living; *Have I ſeen, or have I beheld the light, after God hath ſeen me?* that is, *am I alive after God hath ſeen me?* How wonderful!

Ex Hebræo ita reddi poteſt. Etiamne jã video ſeu lucem hanc aſpicio & vivo, poſt videntẽ me. Pareus.

The effect of this viſion upon *Eliphaz*, was not death, but fear, yet no ordinary fear, but fear which looked almoſt as pale as death; it was fear joyned with trembling, and no ordinary trembling, but ſuch a fit of trembling as ſhook his very bones. We have often ſpoken of fear, both in this and in the former Chapters; but ſuch a fear as met *Eliphaz*, we have not met with before.

That before was the grace of fear, ſpiritual fear, but this is the paſſion of fear, natural fear. And it is natural to man (as ſome of the Ancients have obſerved) to fear thus at the appearance of God by Angels. *Fear is cauſed by the apprehenſion of ſome evil imminent or at hand*; that's the definition of natural fear. Now when God manifeſts himſelf, though the greateſt good be at hand, yet the ſoul hath ſome miſgivings and apprehenſions of evil; and hence comes fear: the foundation of this fear is laid in guilt, ſin is in the ſoul, and guilt may be upon the ſoul; thence natural fear works, when God, who is all holy, manifeſts himſelf. And in ſpecial, there is much unbelief remaining in the heart, this fear is ſtrengthened by unbelief, *Wherefore do ye fear*, ſaith Chriſt, *O ye of little faith?* Where there is little faith, there is much fear; and as unbelief prevails, ſo fear prevails too. Thirdly, this fear ariſes from the ſuddenneſs and unexpectedneſs of the thing. God (as you may obſerve in all thoſe revelations of himſelf) comes ſuddenly: that which comes before we ſee it, cauſeth fear when we ſee it: ſudden motions without us, work ſtrange commotions within. And fourthly, the over-powering Majeſty and ſuper-excelling Excellency of God, in any ſuch revelation, cauſeth aſtoniſhment of ſpirit: a little appearance of God, makes the creature diſappear. One drop of the Divine Ocean, ſwallows up all man; and one ray of the Eternal Light, dazles him. From any or all theſe conſiderations, it may be, that fear and trembling took hold upon *Eliphaz* like an armed man, as ſoon as the viſion appeared, *fear met him* (ſaith the Original) or (as the *Septuagint*) *fear came out* and (as it were) ſtood in the way to ſurprize and apprehend him.

Eſt homini naturale conſpecto angelo etiam bono timere. Bold. ex Beda, Origin, & Chryſoſtõ.

קראני μοῖ συνήντησε Sept. *Occurrit, obviam factus eſt mihi.*

Neither was this bare fear, but fear heightened, fear accompanyed with trembling. Trembling of the body is a ſymptom or ſign of great fear; when fear works outwardly, manifeſting it ſelf by ſad effects upon the body, then fear is in its reign and greatneſs. There are four ſpecial effects which fear works upon the body, and we have three of them here in this Text. The firſt is, The quaking or the ſhaking of the members of the body; the ſecond is, The ſhaking of the bones; the third is, The ſtanding up of the hair; and the fourth is, the paleneſs and wanneſs of the countenance. All except the laſt appeared upon *Eliphaz*, at the appearance of this viſion.

Firſt, He trembled in this Verſe 14. **Fear came upon me and trembling**: theſe two go often together in Scripture; you ſhall find trembling coupled with godly fear, as well as with natural fear, *Pſal.* 2. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear* (with reverential, filial fear) *and rejoyce before him with trembling*; that is, let your fear be an exceeding great fear, even ſuch, as fills you with an awful trembling at the preſence of the Lord. The Apoſtle *Paul* (*Phil.* 2. 12.) puts them together again; *work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling.*

The ſecond effect is ſhaking of the bones, **It made all my bones to ſhake**; as if he had ſaid, this fear ſtayed not in my fleſh, but deſcended, and entred into my bones, I was deeply affected with it. We tranſlate, *Which made all my bones to ſhake*; the word in the Hebrew is, it made *the multitude of my bones*, or, *my bones, how many ſoever they are, to ſhake.* The Hebrews have this rule, that the major part is uſually taken for the whole, therefore the multitude of his bones, or many of his bones, is well tranſlated, *all his bones.* And the Verb which we render *ſhake*, is of the ſame root with fear, *fear came upon me*; ſo that according to the letter we may read it thus, *Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to fear.* A bone is in it ſelf ſenſeleſs, and therefore fearleſs; but to ſhew how extream and deep this fear was, he ſaith, it made fear enter into that which is without fear, and hath of it ſelf no feeling; it made my very bones to fear, as well as my heart to fear, or my fleſh to tremble. *Habakkuk* in the third of his Propheſie, being before God in his prayer-viſions, deſcribes the rapture of his ſpirit, by this and other ſymptoms upon his body, *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entred into my bones*, v. 16.

Quaſi dicat tremor non fuit ſuperficialis, ſed vehemens & intimus, qui etiam oſſa concuterit. Aquin. *Geliduſq; per ima cucurrit Oſſa tremor.* Virg. 2. *Æneid.*

The third effect follows; **Then a ſpirit paſs'd before my face, and the hair of my head ſtood up.** *A Spirit ruſh'd upon me*, ſo the *Seventy*. Some tranſlate it, *a wind paſs'd before me*; a gale or breath of wind, as (1 *Kings* 19. 11.) when God appeared to *Elijah*, it is ſaid, firſt there came *a mighty wind, which rent the mountains, and brake the rocks*; and ſome conceive that a wind paſſed before *Eliphaz*; but the context will not bear it; thoſe words which follow, are not compatible with a wind; *v.* 16. *it ſtood before me, it ſtood ſtill*; this cannot be underſtood of the wind, for wind is alwayes in motion: and then it is ſaid, *I had an Image before my face*; now there is no form or image of the wind; the wind hath no ſhape or likeneſs, therefore it was a Spirit or Angel, not an Aerial wind. And if you ſay, how hath a Spirit a form or an image, or how can that be ſeen? I anſwer, it was not a Spirit abſtracted and naked in it ſelf, but a Spirit joyned with a form and ſhape, as is generally agreed: ſo Angels or Spirits did uſually appear to the Ancients, taking a body or ſome form upon them: and thoſe apparitions, when a body was aſſumed, were called Spirits (*Luke* 24. 37.) it is ſaid, that the Diſciples were afraid at the appearing of Chriſt, *thinking they had ſeen a ſpirit*: the Apoſtles were not ſo abſurd, as to believe, that a Spirit in it ſelf, a Spirit abſtracted, could be ſeen; but they call'd it a Spirit, becauſe they thought it only the repreſentation of Chriſts body, and not the true body: and therefore though an outward ſhape appeared, they call'd it a Spirit. So here, *a ſpirit paſs'd before me*, which yet might have ſome outward ſhape, in which it was clothed to the eye.

חלפ *Non ſignificat proprie metum progreſſivum, qualis eſt animalium, ſed motum levem & fluxum, qualis eſt cœlorum vel venti vel creſcentis arboris. Numina venientia ad nos in homines &c. ſe transformant; Ex oculus autem notari poſſunt, cum continuo obnutu intueantur & palpebras nunquam concludant. Et magis ex inceſſu, qui non ex dimotione pedum neq; tranſpoſitione exiſtit. Sed quodam impetu aerio & vi expedita, ſindentium magis auras quam tranſeuntium. Quamobrem ſtatuas quoque Deorum Egyptii ponunt, conjungentes illis pedes & quaſi unientes.* Heliodor. *in Æthiopicis*, l. 3. *Pedes veſtis defluxit ad imos. Et vera inceſſu palluit Dea.* Virg. l. 1. *Æneiad. de Venere.*

A ſpirit paſs'd before me] forward, backward, up and down, which is oppoſed to the words in the 16 Verſe, *it ſtood ſtill*: here it was tranſient or in motion. The word uſed for *paſſing*, ſignifies rather ſuch a motion as is of the Heavens, or of the winds, then that which is properly progreſſive, or the motion of the living creatures. And thence ſome obſerve, that the motion of Spirits clothed with bodies in their apparitions, is not like the motion of men, who move, lifting up their feet one after another; but it is a paſſing as a ſhip moveth with a gale of wind, rather a gliding, then a going: Among the Heathen, this was made the chief difference, to diſtinguiſh a *Numen*, or Spirit coming in any ſhape, from a natural body: The ſteadineſs of their eyes was one, the not tranſpoſing their feet was another, and a clearer evidence.

This Spirit paſſing thus before him, produces the third effect;

The hair of my head ſtood up.] Shaking of the bones went before, and now ſtanding up of the hair. *A ſpirit paſs'd before me, and the hair of my head ſtood up.* The Original is, *the hair of my fleſh*, or the hair of my body; fleſh is put for the body, as in *Gen.* 2. 24. *They two ſhall be one fleſh*, that is (as it were) one body, ſpeaking of man and wife. And *Pſal.* 119. 120. *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee*, ſaith *David*, it is the ſame word. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, I am ſo much affected with thoughts of God, that the very hair of my fleſh (as in extraordinary fear it uſeth to do) ſtood up. The natural reaſon, why the hair ſtands up in time of fear, is this; when ſudden fear falleth upon us, the blood goes, or haſtens rather to the heart, and ſo the outward members wax cold: and the skin, in which the hair is rooted, is preſt more together, which cauſeth the hair to ſtand up, though of it ſelf it be a weak and unſtable excrement.

So we ſee the general effect of the viſion, which was fear, and thoſe three concomitants or ſymptoms of fear, The trembling of his fleſh, The ſhaking of his bones, And the ſtanding up of the hair of his fleſh. From all, take theſe Obſervations.

Firſt, Foraſmuch as *Eliphaz* falleth into ſuch a fit of fear and amazement, at this manifeſtation of God to him; we learn,

> That, *man is not able to bear the preſence of God.*

Weak and frail man falls before the greatneſs, power and majeſty of God: Duſt and aſhes crumbleth away, if the glory of the great God do but ſhine forth, even in thoſe leſſer manifeſtations of himſelf. Hence it was, that *Job* ſeems to capitulate with God, that he would ſpeak with him, upon two Articles or conditions granted, *Chap.* 13. 21, 22. Firſt, *Withdraw thy hand far from me*: Secondly, *Let not thy dread make me afraid: Then call thou, and I will anſwer; or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.* As if he had ſaid, ſo dreadful is thy preſence, that unleſs thou be pleaſed to ſweeten it to me, fear will preſently ſeize upon me, and diſable me to ſpeak. *Moſes* who was *a favorite of Heaven*, and one who ſhortly after had communion with God, above all that ever lived: yet when *Jehovah* appeared in that *flaming Buſh*, the Text ſaith, *Exod.* 3. 6. *That* Moſes *hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God*; holy *Moſes* could not bear that glory. *Daniel* a man *greatly beloved* of God, and honoured with glorious viſions, was yet greatly aſtoniſhed at thoſe viſions, *Chap.* 10. 8. *There remained no ſtrength in me, for my comelineſs was turned into corruption, and I retained no ſtrength*: and verſ. 16. *O my Lord, by the viſion my ſorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no ſtrength*: Verſ. 17. *Neither is there any breath left in me*, I am ready to dye, I am not able to bear thy majeſty, in theſe myſteries of thy will, made known to me. How doth *Habakkuk* cry out in the place afore-quoted, of his trembling belly, quivering lips, and of rottenneſs entring into his bones: We find in the New Teſtament, the Saints ſwallowed up with the like amazements. *Zechariah*, of whom the Holy Ghoſt had given ſuch an excellent teſtimony a little before, for a man that had *walked blameleſs in all the ordinances of God*; yet as ſoon as the Angel appeared, the Text ſaith, *he was troubled, and fear fell upon him*, Luke 1. 12. Yea the bleſſed Virgin (*ver.* 29. of that Chap.) *when ſhe ſaw him* (that is the Angel) *ſhe was troubled in her mind.* Laſtly, *John* the beloved Diſciple, ſeeing Chriſt walking in the midſt of the ſeven golden Candleſticks, *&c. Fell at his feet as dead*, Rev. 1. 17.

How ſhould this humble and abaſe us in our ſelves! we that are not able to ſtand before the gracious manifeſtations of God, when he comes to reveal himſelf to us in mercy; how ſhall we be able to ſtand before the wrathful manifeſtations of God? The Apoſtle tells us, (1 *Cor.* 15. 50.) *Fleſh and blood cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; by *fleſh and blood*, we are not to underſtand, the ſinful nature of man (as fleſh and blood often ſignifie in Scripture, being oppoſed to ſpirit) but the conſtitution of nature, or that eſtate wherein we ſtand, as men; this fleſh and blood is not able to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, it cannot bear the majeſty, glory and excellency of Heaven, where God clearly manifeſts himſelf unto his Saints; and where we ſhall *ſee God face to face*; and therefore the Apoſtle argueth all along, as by divers other arguments, ſo by this; to prove the neceſſity of a reſurrection, a raiſing and a new-moulding of the body into a ſpiritual condition: Why? becauſe our natural bodies are not able to ſtand under ſuch a weight of glory, as is prepared for the Saints in that Kingdom: *Corruption* (nature ſubject to corruption) cannot inherit incorruption; hence it was, that when but a little of God broke forth, the holieſt and beſt of men in the world, fell a ſhaking and trembling, as not being able to bear that tranſcendent Majeſty ſhining out in thoſe weaker refracted beams of glory.

Secondly, Seeing God coming at this time to inſtruct *Eliphaz*, and reveal a great truth to him, was pleaſed to deal thus with him, to make him ſhake and tremble; we may Note,

> That, *God uſually humbles a man, and layes him very low, before he exalts him in the manifeſtations of his truth or power. Humiliations prepare and poſture the heart for revelation.*

The reaſon is, becauſe God delights to have a man humbled, before he be inſtructed. *Paul* (though as humble a ſoul as lived (was in danger to be *exalted above meaſure, through the aboundance of revelation*, (2 *Cor.* 12.) even divine knowledge (through our corruption) is apt to puff up, and therefore we had need to have the bladder prickt, and our ſpirits laid flat, for the receiving of knowledge: *Only humble ones are fit to be Gods Schollars*; he will teach none elſe, he reſiſteth a proud man, then ſurely he will never teach a proud man; *The meek he will teach his way*; He breaks our will, before he truſts us with the ſecrets of his will: When the ſpirits of men lie in the duſt, when they tremble and ſhake, when all their bones are afraid, and rottenneſs enters into them, then they are prepared veſſels, to receive and take in the dew and influences of divine revelation. When God made that moſt memorable manifeſtation of himſelf, to the ancient Church, in giving the Law, we read how he terrified them, how he humbled and abaſed them: How dreadful was the preparation to the giving of the Law? The Apoſtle deſcribes it, (*Heb.* 12. 18, 20, 21.) by *blackneſs, and darkneſs, and tempeſt, ſo that they could not endure that which was commanded; and ſo terrible was the ſight, that* Moſes *ſaid, I exceeedingly fear and quake.* I confeſs the Law in it ſelf, was a terrible, a *killing letter*, and that which might well make the world ſhake, and men to tremble: *If* (*as* Luther ſaith) *but one precept or ſentence of*

Pſal. 25. 9.

of the Law ſhould be left in its full power and ſtrength (mans ſin) it would deſtroy mankind, and make all the world (becauſe guilty) tremble and fall before it: yet it was not barely the matter of the Law revealed, which cauſed this trembling; that was written in the heart of man before, and was publiſhed to the *Jews*, with gracious, with Goſpel-intentions; but it was the manner and circumſtances wherein the Law was revealed, which were ſo terrible. And this terror had this great uſe, even the humbling of their ſouls to a willing ſubjection and obedience to the will of God. When God revealed the Goſpel to *Paul* (as well as when he revealed the Law to *Moſes*) he made *Paul* tremble (*Acts* 9.) *Paul* was ſmitten down to the ground; God laid him along, unhors'd him, when he came to manifeſt his Chriſt to, or (as himſelf ſpeaks, *Gal.* 1. 16.) *to reveal his Son in him.* And this was to abaſe him, *to break his heart*, that he might be made up *a choſen veſſel, to carry the Name of God unto the Gentiles.* And howſoever ſuch humiliations are not of abſolute neceſſity, yet they have been very uſual, and are very uſeful. When the Lord hath laid the will and wiſdom of man in the duſt, when he hath made the ſtrongeſt and ſtouteſt to become as a child or a babe, to quake before him; then he takes him into his School of Inſtruction, and ſhews him ſuch things, *as none of the wiſe men, or Princes of this world ever knew*; *even ſuch things as eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither have they entred into the heart of man.* This made our Lord Jeſus break out into that mixt rapture of gratulation and admiration, *Mat.*11.25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them to babes.* Be as babes before God, and he will give you the wiſdom of men; yea, of Angels. They who are high-built, and pinacl'd in their own conceits, ſeldom have the foundation or firſt principles of ſaving knowledge laid in them ſavingly.

Acts 9. 15.

Thirdly, From this effect of the viſion, obſerve,

That, *Fear is a ſtrong and powerful paſſion.*

Fear comes upon a man like a Giant: *Fear* (ſaith *Eliphaz*) *came upon me*, it came upon me violently. A man were as good meet a Bear robb'd of her whelps, as this Fear: The ſtrongeſt man in the world cannot ſhake your bones as fear alone will, if that take hold of you. Some of the *Greeks* had ſuch amazing thoughts of fear, it was ſo terrible to them, that to appeaſe it, they worſhipped it for a god; as ſome worſhipped *Sorrow* among the *Romans* for a Goddeſs, under the name of *Dea Angerona. The true God is called Fear* in Scripture. And Fear was made an Idol-god among the *Heathens*: And if we conſider theſe effects in the Text, *trembling of the fleſh, ſhaking of the bones, ſtanding up of the hair*, all which this ſudden ſurprize of fear wrought upon *Eliphaz*, we muſt needs acknowledge and conclude it to be a very potent paſſion. In *Prov.* 1. the Lord threatens thoſe who would not fear him, thus; *I will laugh when your fear cometh*: Then he ſhews how ſuch fear cometh, *when your fear cometh as deſolation*, Prov. 1. 27. We cannot well take fear in this place, for the object of fear, for that is deſolation it ſelf, and therefore cannot be ſaid to *come as deſolation.* Then, taking it properly, for the paſſion of fear, we ſee, that the fear of trouble is like the trouble we fear. Fear is even as bad as deſolation: Fear pulls all down within, and makes a man like a deſolate place, before his place is made deſolate. And therefore in times of trouble, we had need take care that we add not ſtrength to our fear. We ſhould pray much that the power of natural fear may be ſubdued; eſpecially, that our natural fear may be turned into godly fear: godly fear is the proper cure of natural fear. *Sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts, and make him your fear*, or elſe the fear of man will quickly Lord it over your hearts. Such a fear is more dangerous then all our dangers. Trembling joynts, and ſhaking bones, will make ſmall reſiſtance; and while natural fear is ſtrong, natural ſtrength is but weak or uſeleſs. *When from the onſet or aſſault of this fear, a mans hair ſtands, himſelf will run.*

Aug. *de Civ. Dei.* l.4. c.8.

Fourthly, Conſider this by way of conſequence, That if a time when God cometh to reveal his will to man, be ſo dreadful, what will that time be (and that time is coming) when God cometh to reckon with man for the diſobeying of that will? Here a truth was but ſhewed *Eliphaz* in an extraordinary manner, and behold him ſhaking, fearing and trembling: Now when God ſhall come to require an account of man, for reſiſting or impriſoning the truth; when he ſhall come (2 *Theſ.* 1. 8.) *to take vengeance on all thoſe that have not obeyed the Goſpel of truth*, what terror, fear and trembling will fall upon the ſtouteſt of ſinful men! There muſt be an appearing of all, but there can be no ſtanding for ſuch before the dreadful Throne of Chriſt. *The ungodly* (of what ſort or ſize ſoever) *ſhall not ſtand in judgment*, Pſal. 1. 5. Impenitent unbelievers ſhall not be able to hold up their heads in that day. Captains and mighty men, who have often convers'd with dangers, and knew not what it was to be afraid; men who (like the horſe, deſcribed, *Job* 39. 72.) *uſed to mock at fear, and would not turn back for drawn ſwords, or the glittering of ſhield or ſpear*, ſhall at that day ſhake with fear, and hide themſelves like little children. So much for the effects of the viſion. Now follows a further deſcription of the viſion.

Verſe 16. **It ſtood ſtill, but I could not diſcern the form thereof, an Image was before mine eyes, there was ſilence, and I heard a voyce, ſaying.**

This verſe containeth a ſecond geſture of this Spirits appearing in the Viſion to *Eliphaz.* The Spirit was *paſſing* before, here *ſtanding*, as if he would preſent himſelf more fully to his view and obſervation. *It ſtood ſtill, an Image was before mine eyes*; but though the Spirit gave *Eliphaz* this fair advantage, yet he made little uſe of it; for he ſaith, *I could not diſcern the form of it*, that is, I could make nothing of it diſtinctly; but when his eye gave him no help, his ear did; though he could not diſcern or diſtinguiſh the form of the Spirit appearing, yet he could diſtinguiſh the voyce of the Spirit ſpeaking; *there was ſilence, and I heard a voyce, ſaying.*

It ſtood ſtill.] To ſtand, in Scripture, imports, not alwayes a ſetled poſture of the body; but it is taken ſometime in a larger ſence, to note our preſence in any place, whether it be ſitting, ſtanding, or walking; as, *Mat.* 16. 26. Chriſt ſaith, *There be ſome ſtanding here which ſhall not taſte of death, till they ſee the Son of man coming in his Kingdom.* Yet here the poſture is conceived to be, an erect, ſetled, fixed poſture; to the intent *Eliphaz* might have his eye more ſetled and fixed upon it, and likewiſe that his heart might be better prepared and fitted for the receiving of that meſſage, which ſhould be delivered unto him by it. When a man ſpeaks, he uſually makes a ſtand: *An ambulatory ſpeech*, a ſpeech in motion, is not ſo audible, nor ſo comly. In apparitions, this poſture is frequently mentioned. When our Lord appeared to the Diſciples after the Reſurrection, *Luke* ſaith, *he ſtood amongſt them*, chap. 24. 36. *Zachary ſaw the Angel ſtanding on the right ſide of the Altar*, Luke 1. 11. And while the Apoſtles were looking up ſtedfaſtly to heaven, at the Aſcenſion of Chriſt, *Behold two men ſtood by them in white apparel, which alſo ſaid*, &c. *Acts* 1. 10. Therefore alſo this Spirit being to ſpeak, ſtood ſtill.

I could not diſcern the form of it.] *The face of it*, ſo ſome read; *the countenance or aſpect of it*, ſo others. They who riſe from the dead, are not eaſily known by them that knew them living. When Chriſt aroſe (*John* 20.) it is ſaid, that *Mary*, who was very well acquainted with him in his life, (though he ſtood by her) *knew not that it was Jeſus, but thought it had been the Gardner.* When Chriſt walked with the Diſciples to *Emmaus*, they knew him not; and there is a reaſon given, *their eyes were held that they ſhould not know him*; a ſpecial act of Gods providence ſuſpended their eye-ſight, and took away (though not the power of ſeeing, yet) the power of diſcerning. God hath every ſenſe ſo exactly in his own hand, that he can let it out, or call it back in any degree, as himſelf pleaſeth; he can give a man ſo much power, as to ſee another, and not ſo much power as to diſcern him; which, by the way, is an argument of the wonderful exactneſs of Gods providence over us; he holds our ſenſes in his hand, as well as our reaſon or our wills; and ſaith, thus far you ſhall ſee or hear, and no further; therefore it is ſaid, *ver.* 31. *that their eyes were opened*; they were opened before to ſee him, but now they were opened to know him. And at other times when Chriſt appeared after his reſurrection, his Diſciples were at a ſtand whether it was he or no: *Thomas*, though he ſaw

מַרְאֵהוּ τὴν ὄψιν vel τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ.

Chriſt before him, yet he would not believe it was he, until he had put his finger into the hole which the Spear made in his ſide; until he had aſſurance from another ſenſe, he would not believe his eyes. If then a body ariſing from the grave, though it be ſeen, yet can hardly be diſtinguiſhed by mortal eyes; how much leſs is the eye of man able to diſcern Angels and Spirits, clothed in humane forms? The impreſſions of glory and immortality, which appear upon bodies aſſumed by Spirits, eſpecially in ſudden apparitions, do exceedingly maſter, if not aſtoniſh ſenſe. The Heathens thought it abſurd to ſay, that their gods could be known by face: for though they were ſo groſs, as to ſatisfie themſelves with bodily gods, yet they believed thoſe bodies were ſo refined, had ſuch a kind of Majeſtick Divinity ſtampt upon them, that a meer mortal could not comprehend them. Their doctrine ſhines a little into this text. A Spirit paſſed before *Eliphaz*, he had a ſight of it, for it ſtood ſtill, yet he could not make out what it was, or who it was; *he could not diſcern the form thereof.*

Ethnicis ſemper abſurdũ fuit, ut faciem deorum agnoſcerent homines quam Deorum ἀορασίαν; poſteriores poetæ ab Homero, Homerus *ab Ægyptiis, vel potius ex ſacris ſancti* Moyſis *libris ſumpſit.* Bold.

An Image was before mine eyes.] The word *Themounah*, which we tranſlate *Image*, is taken either for a viſible or intellectual Image. Sometime it is taken for the form of a thing, which is apprehended viſibly by the eye; ſo in *Deut.* 4. 15, 16. *Take ye therefore good heed to your ſelves (for ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude, in the day that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the midſt of the fire) leſt ye corrupt your ſelves, and make the ſimilitude of any figure,* that is, leſt you make a viſible image of the inviſible God.

תמונה *Significat ſpeciem vel ſenſibilem, vel mentalē.*

Secondly, The ſame word ſignifies an image in the mind. Thus God himſelf, who ſaid in *Deuteronomie, that they ſaw no ſimilitude,* and thereupon bade them take heed of making any ſimilitude, ſaith of *Moſes, that the ſimilitude of the Lord he ſhall* behold, *Numb.* 21. 8. The word ſimilitude in *Numbers*, is the ſame for Image in the text, an *intellectual Image*, a repreſentation to the underſtanding. *Moſes* had this priviledge, the ſimilitude of God revealed to *his underſtanding*; but when he ſaith in *Deut. ye had no ſimilitude*, the meaning is, no corporal, no viſible ſimilitude, no object of ſenſe. This Image in the text, was not intellectual, for it was before his eyes: Nor was it the image of a Spirit groſs'd into a body; but it was a Spirit in or with the imaginary form of a body.

Spectrum & viſum vocant Latini quicquid corporea apparet forma licet corpus non ſit.

There was ſilence, and I heard a voice, ſaying,] That is the laſt thing which the Text holds forth about this Viſion.

There was ſilence.] The Hebrew thus, *Silence, and I heard a voyce*; we ſupply, *there was.* The readings are various, yet the ſence one. *I heard the voyce, as it were, of a gentle gale; I heard a gale, and a voyce, I heard a ſilent murmur.* Our Tranſlators put in the margin, *I heard a ſtill voyce*; which comes near to that, *I heard a ſilent voyce* (by a uſual figure) *ſilence and a voyce,* for *a voyce of ſilence.* If any ſhould ſay, theſe two are ſo oppoſite, that they cannot be predicated or affirmed one of another. Silence is the direct contrary to a voyce, therefore to ſay there was a ſilent voyce, ſeemeth to be a contradiction in the adjunct: I anſwer, it is frequent to affirm contraries one of another, in an inferiour and remiſs degree. Though we cannot ſay *light is dark*, yet we may ſay, *this is a dark light*; that is, a glimmering, imperfect, obſcure light (*Zech.* 14. 6.) *The day ſhall be neither clear nor dark*; it ſhall be, as it were, *a dark light.* So a low voyce may well be called a ſilent voyce; *I heard a ſilent voyce*, that is, I heard a low or a ſtill voyce ſpeaking to me. Thus it ſuits well with what he ſaid at *ver.* 12. *Now a thing was ſecretly brought unto me.* And we may further clear it by that, 1 *Kings* 19. 12. where the expreſſion is of the ſame importance; here we have *ſilence and a voyce*; there, after the noiſe of a great wind, and an earthquake, it is ſaid, that *Elijah* heard (as ſome render it) *the voyce of a ſubtil, fine, ſlender, attenuated ſilence*; or as we tranſlate, *a ſtill ſmall voyce*, a ſweet raviſhing whiſper, a voyce without a ſound. Hence we have a kind of muſick, which in our common language we call *ſtill muſick.*

דממה וקול *Silentium & vocem per hyppalagen, vocem ſilentii, i. e. vocem tacitam & ſubmiſſam audiebam.* Merc. *Et vocem quaſi auræ levis audivi.* Vulg. Αὔραν ϗ φωνὴν ἤκουον. Sept. *Silens murmur.* Ar. Mont.

קול דממה דקה *Vox ſubtilis ſilentii, dulce ſuſurrum, vox ſine ſono.*

A twofold reaſon may be given why the Lord ſpake (as it were) in ſilence. Firſt, That the ſecret manner of ſpeaking might be an argument, that the matter ſpoken was a ſecret, a myſtery, not common or ordinary. Secondly, To diſpoſe the hearer to receive it with more care, reverence, and attention. *A man muſt ſet himſelf to hear with diligence, while another ſpeaks with ſilence.* A loud voyce finds us out, comes to us; but we muſt come to a low voyce, and find that out. When the Speaker takes leaſt pains with his tongue, the Hearer muſt take moſt pains with his ear.

And this manner of ſpeaking was uſed by the ancient heathen in their *myſterious Oracles and Revelations.* As when God revealed a ſecret, he ſpake ſecretly, and as it were, whiſpered thoſe truths in the ear (whiſpering is ſpeaking within one degree of ſilence;) ſo the Devil (who imitates God in what he can, that he may draw credit unto his own deceivings) is deſcribed in his inſtruments, to ſpeak thus, *Iſa.* 8. 19. *When they ſhall ſay unto you, ſeek unto them that have familiar ſpirits, and unto Wizards that peep, and that mutter*: They ſpeak, as it were ſilently, they only whiſper their diabolical incantations, and lying impoſtures. And, *Iſa.* 29. *Thou ſhalt be brought down, and ſhalt ſpeak out of the ground, and thy ſpeech ſhall be low out of the duſt, and thy voyce ſhall be as of one that hath a familiar ſpirit, out of the ground, and thy ſpeech ſhall whiſper out of the duſt.* The Prophet in this alludes to the manner of Witches and Enchanters, who had familiar ſpirits; which he here applies in a threat unto the people: The time ſhall come, that you ſhall be brought down by your enemies, that you ſhall ſpeak out of the ground, you ſhall lie at their feet like poor captives, that cry ſubmiſſively and pitifully for quarter, *Oh mercy mercy, ſpare my life*: That is the the thing aimed at by the Prophet, that God would abaſe them ſo before their enemies, that they ſhould whiſper out of the ground to their enemies for pity, as a Witch whiſpers from the ground to her miſerable Clients who come for counſel. *Tertullian* in his *Apologetick*, deſcribes the heathen *Magicians* thus, they ſpeak *belching and gaſping, humming and hawing*, rather then ſpeaking. The old Poet calls this *Poppyſm*; by which word he ſhews how their Idol-Prophets anſwered the deluded people, their miſerable Clients, when they came for counſel. To which the Hebrew word *Tſiphtſaph*, uſed by *Iſaiah*, chap. 8. before-cited, is very like, both in ſound and ſence.

—Sortes ducent, frõtemque, manumque. Præbebit vati crebrũ poppyſma petenti. Juvenal.

• *Auruſpices de circo ex oris preſſi ſono, quod Poppyſma dicitur, futura colligebant.* צפצף

There is yet another interpretation of theſe words, more proper and anſwerable to our tranſlation. *There was ſilence,* **and I heard a voyce, ſaying,**] This refers the ſilence to *Eliphaz*, as a preparation to his hearing the voyce; *there was ſilence*, that is, I ſtood ſtill, and ſpake never a word, but waited to hear what ſhould be ſpoken; I was ſilent, and all things about me were huſht and ſilent too: Then I heard a voyce; & ſo *Junius* gloſſes, becauſe (ſaith he) compos'd and ſtrengthened a little, after my former fear, I attended ſilently to the Spirit, that I might hear what ſhould be ſpoken unto me.

Me continebam tacitus expectans revelationē.

We read, *Rev.* 8. 1. that *there was ſilence in heaven for half an hour*; and *ver.* 5. we read of *voyces and thundrings*; before thoſe great voyces, there was great ſilence: Uſually before great ſpeaking, there is great ſilence; *I was ſilent*, and all were huſht; *then I heard a voyce*: ſilence prepares for audience. In Congregations, before the Preacher begins, all hold their peace: In Courts of Juſtice, when the Judge is to ſpeak, the Crier calls for ſilence. It was an uſual word amongſt the Rites of the Heathen, *Favour your tongues*, or *Spare your ſpeech*, when the myſteries of their ſuperſtitions were revealed: We may take the preſent Text in this ſence; that *Eliphaz* ſet himſelf in a ſilent poſture, to attend the meſſage which was to be revealed unto him: *There was ſilence, and I heard a voyce, ſaying.*

Favete linguis.

If we take the former interpretation, then, foraſmuch as *Eliphaz* after thoſe terrors and tremblings, the ſhaking of his bones, and ſtanding up of his hair, the confuſed form of a Spirit, and an amazing image before his eyes; foraſmuch (I ſay) as after all theſe, he hears *a ſtill ſilent voyce*, we may obſerve,

That, *God, after terrors, uſually ſends in comforts and refreſhings.*

God, having terrified *Elijah*, by a mighty ruſhing wind, (in the viſion before-noted) by an earthquake which brake the Rocks, and by a fire; then comes (as here in the text) *a ſtill ſmall voyce*, a voyce of ſilence, *and God was in that voyce.* It is put as a principal diſtinction amongſt the Ancients, clients, to know, whether a revelation were from a good Angel, or from a bad Angel. When a revelation was made by a good Angel, though he fill'd the heart with fear, at the beginning of his ſpeech, yet he gave comfort in the end, and cloſed with conſolation. We may obſerve in thoſe revelations, ſuch heartning, cheering language as this, *Be not afraid, be of good cheer*; ſo to *Daniel*, ſo to *John*, ſo to *Zachariah*, ſo to *Mary*, ſo to *Gideon*. But when a revelation was made by an evil Angel, or by a Witch, as it filled the hearers with fear, ſo it left them full of fear; it wounded them with terrors, and it applied no cure, no plaiſter, nothing medicinable to heal thoſe terrors. We find indeed (1 *Sam.* 28.) that when *Saul* conſulted the Witch of *Endor*, as ſoon as the Spirit appeared, it is ſaid, that the Witch her ſelf was afraid, and there is no mention made of *Saul*'s being afraid at the firſt; ſo that *Saul* falls a comforting the Witch, and ſaid to her, *Be not afraid*: She was afraid, not of the Spirit that appeared, but of *Saul*, becauſe he had made a Law againſt Witches; and hence *Saul* comforts her, in aſſurance of impunity, notwithſtanding that ſin, both againſt the Law of God, and his own. But you ſhall find in how ſad a condition *Saul* himſelf was, before the Devil had done with him; for, as ſoon as *Saul* heard the tidings delivered by that *perſonated Samuel*, he fell into a ſhaking fit, and was as one aſtoniſhed and dead; hanging upon the rack of theſe torments, the Devil left him; there was no word of comfort, no ſweet ſtill muſical voyce to revive and fetch him again, but away packs the wicked Spirit, and leaves him overwhelmed with ſorrow. And then (in ſtead of a better, ſurely he could not have a worſe) the poor Witch comes to comfort and counſel him. *They who refuſe counſel from the Prophets of God, may at laſt be forced to receive all their comfort from a Witch, a Prophet or Propheteſs of the Devil.* But to the point in hand; we ſee, when the Devil and wicked Angels ſpeak terror, they leave terror; whereas, if God, by good Angels, ſpeaks terror, or affrights his people with the tokens of his preſence, he with a ſweet and ſtill voice refreſhes and comforts them before he departs.

And we may in that general apply it to our ſelves: That when God aſtoniſhes and terrifies us, when he makes our bones to ſhake, and rottenneſs to enter into them, we may expect comfort and refreſhing are at hand; and we may build upon it, that the more we tremble, the more we ſhall be refreſhed: *Habakkuk* in the place before-cited, is expreſs in this faith, *I trembled, that I might have reſt in the day of trouble*: to which he adds, *when he cometh up to the people (he will invade or cut them in pieces) with his troops.* As intimating, that they who will not tremble, ſhall be made to tremble; but when we actively labour to make our hearts tremble, or when God makes us tremble in ſuch a way as this, we may build upon it, that we ſhall reſt in the day of trouble, at leaſt we ſhall reſt in the end of that day: God never leaves his people under a cloud; he takes off trouble, and brings in a ſucceſſion of comfort, or conquers the trouble by mingling a prevailing portion of comfort with it.

If we take the Text in the latter ſence, we may note,

That, *Silence becomes man, when God ſpeaks.*

Speak Lord (ſaith *Samuel*) *for thy ſervant heareth.* Hear, O ſervant, for thy Lord ſpeaketh.

Silence prepares the heart to learn: *Pythagoras* commanded his Scholars to keep ſilence five years. And the Papiſts impoſe ſilence, as a part of Diſcipline, upon their Novices. Let Superſtition be avoided, and then *ſilence is fitteſt for learners, unleſs their voyce be an enquiry after learning.* That which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, reſpecting women in the Church, is true of all in the ſence I now ſpeak of, 1 *Tim.* 2. 12. *Let the woman learn in ſilence*; ſo let the man learn in ſilence. *Silence is good as a preparative to learning, but wo to that which is an hinderance to inſtructing.*

VERS. 17.

Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? ſhall a man be more pure then his maker?

IN this Verſe we have the Argument it ſelf, of the matter revealed in the former Viſion: *There was ſilence, and I heard a voyce, ſaying*: What that voice ſaid, we have in theſe words, *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God?* This is the Theme or Subject, upon which *Eliphaz* argued; and it is the main *Propoſition* of the whole Context. The proof of this Propoſition was given from divine authority, in the foregoing words; and we have a proof from reaſon, in the following part of this Chapter.

Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? Or, *Shall man be juſtified in compariſon of God?* Or, *Shall man be juſt before God?* The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe is yet more quick; the Spirit cried out, and ſaid, *Can it poſſibly be, that man ſhould be more pure then God?*

Numquid homo Dei comparatione juſtificabitur? Vulg.

μὴ καθαρὸς ἔσται βροτὸς ἐναντίον κυρίου? Sept. *Clamabat & dicebat, fierin poteſt ut homo quam Deus purior ſit?* Chald.

The words are propounded by way of queſtion; we may reſolve them into this negative propoſition, *Mortal man is not more juſt then God, man is not more pure then his Maker.*

We tranſlate Mortal man, the Hebrew is but one word; yet in the propriety of that Language, it contains both, noting man with an addition (ſuch as it is) of weakneſs & frailty, the meaneſt & loweſt eſtate of man; *Enoſh*, a poor, ſick, weak, dying creature, a creature of ſo little hope, that ſome derive this name, in the Hebrew, from deſperation; a creature ſo unworthy to be remembred by God, or ſo ready to forget God, that others derive it from a word which ſignifies forgetfulneſs, or to forget.

אנוש *Miſer ærumnis & peccatis obnoxius.*

אנוש *quaſi* נאוש *in quo ſenſus deſperandi* Euſebius à נשה *deducit, quod oblivisci ſignificat, &* ἐπιλησμὸν *interpretatur, quaſi animal obliviosum dicas.* Druſ.

Shall man, this mortal man, this weak creature, be *more juſt*, or, *be juſtified rather then God?* Such a ſence the words carry. When man and God are compared together, ſhall God be eſteemed leſs juſt, or leſs pure then man? (*Luke* 68. 18.) it is ſaid of the *Publican*, that *he went down juſtified rather then the other*; put the *Phariſee* and the *Publican* in the ballance together, and the *Publican* was the weightier in righteouſneſs, or the more juſt of the two. That in *Luke*, is an *Hebraiſm*, and it is the ſame with this. Put weak man and the mighty God (the word *Eloah*) which is here uſed for God, noteth the ſtrong God, or the mighty God) put him in the ballance of conſideration with weak man, will he not be infinitely more weighty in juſtice, more ſhining in purity, more glorious in holineſs.

Min eſt comparandi particula; comparatio exprimitur per præpoſitionem ultimi caſus, juſtificatus ab illo, i. e. præ illo. Luk. 18.14.

גבר *Vir, quaſi validus, ut & Latinè à viribus dictus.*

Yea, not only if you take man in his obſcureſt notion, or in this term of extenuation, *Enoſh*, for a weak man, a poor cripled creeping creature; but take him in his beſt eſtate, as he is (*Geber*) a ſtrong man, a powerful man, a holy man; yet as it follows in the Text, *Shall man be more pure then his Maker?* that is, ſhall ſuch a mighty man, a wiſe man, a learned man, a gracious man, a man accompliſhed in all natural, in all acquired endowments, the chiefeſt and choiceſt, the cream and flower of all the men upon the face of the earth, a Worthy of the firſt three, the firſt of all the Worthies, a man of the firſt magnitude, of the higheſt elevation, both in parts, gifts and graces, *ſhall he be more pure then his Maker?* Chriſt (as incarnate or made man) is called the *Mighty God* (Iſa 9. 6.) *God made a mighty man, or man becoming the mighty God.* The *Chaldee* calls all Giants, *Gibbaraja*; and *Nimrod*, the firſt of the Giants, was called by this name, *a mighty hunter before the Lord*, Gen. 10. 8. So then, let man be never ſo excellent, his excellency is baſeneſs; let him be never ſo ſtrong, ſo wiſe, ſo holy, he is but weak, fooliſh, filthy, compared with him who made him. Leave your *Enoſh*, your weakling, your poor ſick creatures; bring forth your *Gebers*, your beſt, they are as nothing, yea, leſs then nothing before the Lord. *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? Shall man (the beſt of men) be more pure then his Maker?*

We are to mark the double oppoſition of the Text. Here is, firſt, mortal, weak, ſick man, ſet in oppoſition to the ſtrong, the mighty, the all-powerful God. And then in the ſecond place, the oppoſition is between the ſtrongeſt, the beſt, the holieſt, the wiſeſt of men, and the maker of all men. *Shall mortal man, or ſhall the beſt of men be more juſt, more pure then God their Maker?* There is a threefold ſence, which we may give of the words joyntly.

Firſt, They are a denial of all compariſon between God and man. No man may compare himſelf with God. *Shall* *mortal man?* that is, mortal man ought not to be ſo bold and daring as to venture upon ſuch a thing as this, to ſtand upon terms of equality with the mighty, the great, the glorious God, the Maker of all, as the Apoſtle reſolves in his own caſe, (1 *Cor.* 4.4.) *Though I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified at all*; much leſs, though a man know nothing by himſelf, will this juſtifie him in this compariſon, *that he is juſt, as God is juſt.*

But ſecondly, *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God?* It is as if he had ſaid, God who is infinite in juſtice, would never do that which a juſt man will not do; God who is infinite in power, would never do that which a weak man would not do, *ſhall weak man be more juſt then God?* And ſo we may form the Argument, thus:

No man, no Judge is more juſt or incorrupt then God, who is the ſupream and Lord chief Juſtice of all men. But there is no juſt Judge amongſt men who will puniſh an innocent man; therefore God doth not puniſh any one that is innocent. The conſequence or inference is plain and clear, for God himſelf ſhould either be unjuſt, or he ſhould be leſs juſt then man is, if he ſhould do that which a juſt man upon true grounds would refuſe to do. Therefore in *Gen.* 18. *Abraham* pleads with God under that title of a juſt Judge, *Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?* As if he ſhould ſay, faithful Judges upon the earth will do right, therefore ſurely he that is the Judge of all the earth will do right. So *Eliphaz* here to *Job*, never complain as if God had done thee wrong, for certainly the juſt God will not do that which a juſt man would not do: The word, whereby God is expreſt (*Eloah*) doth well comply with, and anſwer this ſence, it being properly attributed to God as a judge, the great Arbitrator and Determiner of all the cauſes and caſes of all men in the world. *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God?*

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Eloah *denotat judicem, & æquiſſimum rerum arbitrum.*

Thirdly, The ſence may be taken thus, If any man ſhould come to implead God, or to plead with God, if any ſhould dare to tax the Juſtice of God, or be ſo hardy to put in a bill of complaint againſt him; ſhall this man, this weak man be found more juſt in his complaining, then God hath been in ſentencing? Shall his bill of complaint be better grounded then the Lords award of Judgment? It is an alluſion to thoſe, who ſuppoſing they have wrong, complain againſt the Judge, and ſay, that he hath erred in, or perverted judgment; That word (*Juſtified*) here uſed, *ſhall man be juſtified before God?* Is a *Judiciary word*, a *Court* or *Law term*; The ſame word, which the *Holy Ghoſt* uſes, in that great work of Free Grace, the *juſtification* of a ſinner before God; and that imports the declaring and ſetting forth of a man to be righteous, and his cauſe good in Jeſus Chriſt, whereupon he is cleared and acquitted. When Satan accuſes or pleads againſt us, laying ſuch and ſuch ſins to our charge; thus and thus this man hath offended: then God is ſaid to juſtifie a man, that is, to declare him to be juſt, his ſins being covered, and himſelf accepted in Jeſus Chriſt. Hence that divine challenge to all accuſers, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect, it is God that juſtifieth*, Rom. 8.33.

צרק *Verbū forenſe ſpectans ad innocentis abſolutionem.*

So now, if man ſhould accuſe and complain againſt God, he hath done thus and thus in the world, *afflicted a* Job, troubled a righteous perſon; *ſhall mortal man be more juſt then God?* Shall this man in his complaint be juſtified? Shall not God rather be juſtified, againſt whom he complains? Certainly he ſhall. God ſhall be declared juſt, yea, he ſhall be declared juſt by man. A man un-ingaged and rightly principled, *Such a man ſhall ſay, verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.* In the judgment of man, that judgment ſhall ſpeak a God; and all ſhall be forced to *Daniels* mourning acknowledgment, *O Lord, righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of face*, Dan. 9.7, 9. We may enlighten it further by that of *David*, (*Pſal.* 51. 4.) where he profeſſes thus, *I will confeſs my ſins*, &c. *that thou mayeſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when thou judgeſt:* As if he ſhould ſay, if hereafter thou ſhalt afflict me, and lay thy rod upon me, I know many will be ready to complain, and ſay, why doth God thus, why doth he afflict *David*, *David* a holy man; a man after his own heart; a man of whom he hath given ſuch a large teſtimony, of whom he hath ſaid, I have found *a man after my own heart?* Now to the intent all theſe may be caſt in their ſuits, and anſwered in their complainings, I here acknowledge before all the world, that I have ſinned greatly; and therefore, though thou haſt pardoned my ſin, and ſo wilt never charge it upon me to condemnation, nor puniſh me for it in a way of ſatisfaction; yet hereafter thou mayſt in thy fatherly wiſdom, ſee it needful to chaſtiſe me, to prevent and purge out ſin, or to help me againſt the weakneſs of my nature, and the ſtrength of temptation for the time to come. So here in the Text, *Shall man be juſtified before God?* If *Job*, or any of his friends for him, ſhould complain againſt God, why he being one commended and approved from the mouth of God, for a man *perfect and upright*, ſhould be thus afflicted; what? *Shall weak* Job *be juſtified before God?* Yea, though *Job* be conſidered in his greateſt flouriſhings of grace, and higheſt pitch of his proſperity, as he was *Geber* indeed, *the greateſt, the mightieſt man in the Eaſtern world, yet ſhall he be more pure then his Maker?* No, ceaſe your complainings, God is juſt, and his honour muſt be vindicated, in what he doth, or in what he ſhall do againſt the weakeſt, or againſt the mightieſt, againſt the meaneſt or againſt the beſt of men. *God will be found juſt, and man a lyar.*

Either of theſe three ſences are fair from the conſtruction of the Text, and may be profitable for us; I ſhall therefore draw them down into five or ſix concluſions, which will be at leaſt a portion of that marrow and fatneſs, which this Scripture yields us to feed upon.

First, We may Obſerve, That, *man naturally preferreth himſelf not only above other men, but even before God himſelf.*

A *principle* of pride dwels in our hearts by nature, which at ſome times, and in ſome caſes, breeds better thoughts in us of our ſelves, then of God himſelf. And it is this height of ſpirit, which the heavenly viſion here would level to the ground. We know it was the firſt ſin of man, that man deſired to be like God, *Gen.* 3. The firſt temptation was baited with a parity to Divine powers, *Ye ſhall be as Gods knowing good and evil.* This alſo was the language of *Lucifers* heart; *Thou haſt ſaid in thy heart, I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God, I will aſcend above the heights of the Clouds, I will be like the moſt high*, Iſa. 14. 13, 14. And the practiſe of *the man of ſin*, is thus propheſied, *That he ſhall exalt himſelf above all that is called God*, 2 Theſ. 2.4. But the heart of man is yet more mad, and hath out-grown thoſe ſinful principles. For in troubles and temptations, when things go not according to his mind, he ſometimes hath thoughts, not only that he is like God, but that he is more juſt then God; and if he had the ordering of things, he would order them better then God: he ſometime thinks himſelf juſter then God, and if he had the puniſhing of offenders, juſtice ſhould proceed more freely and impartially then it doth: which is upon the matter, not only to exalt himſelf (as the Man of Sin doth) above *Nuncupative Gods*, or all *that is called God*, but to exalt himſelf above him *who is God by nature, above the only one-moſt God:* Even to ſpeak in this Dialect of higheſt blaſphemy, that he is *more juſt then God, more pure then his Maker.*

Secondly, Take this Concluſion, That, *it is a moſt high preſumption, not only for low weak man, but for the beſt, the higheſt of men, to compare themſelves with God, or to have any thoughts concerning his wayes, as if they could mend them.*

When God calls us to amend our wayes, for us to preſume we could amend Gods wayes, is the very top branch, the higheſt tower, yea, the moſt towring Pinnacle of preſumption. We ſay amongſt men, that *compariſons are odious*; but this is the moſt odious compariſon of all, for a man to compare himſelf with God, *his thoughts with Gods thoughts*, what he hath done or would do, with what God doth.

If you conſider the terms of oppoſition that are in the Text, this concluſion will be more clear unto you. Conſider how *Enoſh*, weak mortal man is oppoſite to *Eloah*, the mighty, the ſtrong God: it is preſumption for a weak man to compare with a ſtrong man; what preſumption is it then, for a weak man to compare with the mighty God? For a Reed to compare in ſtrength with a Rock? For darkneſs to compare with light? For a Cloud to compare with the Sun ? For death to compare with life ? For folly to compare with wiſdom ? For uncleanneſs to compare with holineſs ? For nothing to compare with all, how preſumptuous ? *Will ye provoke the Lord ?* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 10.) *are ye ſtronger then he ?* It implies, that ſome ſuch thoughts lodge in man, as if he could make his party good with God, or might be ſtronger then he. And it is equal folly in us, and provocation againſt the Lord, to think our ſelves juſter, as to think our ſelves ſtronger then he,

And then mark the other terms of oppoſition ; **Man and his Maker** : *Shall the great man, compare with*, or be *more pure then his Maker ?* As if he ſhould ſay, How great and excellent ſoever this man is, he was made, and made by God, with whom he thus compares, then whom he thinks himſelf more pure. And ſhall the thing formed ſtand upon terms with him that formed it ? Shall the potſheard or the pot contend with the Potter ? What though it be an excellent veſſel, a veſſel determined for the moſt excellent ends and uſes ? Yet whatſoever it is, it was made to be, and made to be by God, both in its conſtitution and uſes : Shall it then boaſt it ſelf againſt its maker ? The Lord made *Geber* as well as *Enoſh*, the ſtrong man, as well as the weak the wiſe and learned man as well as the fooliſh and ignorant, the Noble as well as the baſe, the holy and righteous, as well as the wicked and prophane : In a word, the *veſſels of honour are as much, yea more of his making* then the veſſels of diſhonour ; ſhall they then *be more pure then their maker ?* Hath the Lord given more to others then he hath in himſelf ? Hath he made a creature his Superiour, or his Peer ? Hath his bounty impaired his own ſtock, or hath he made man more then God ? That God hath made the beſt out of the duſt, is enough to lay all our pride and boaſting as low as the duſt. That, what we are, we are from another, ſhould ever keep us humble in our ſelves.

Thirdly, Take this Concluſion, That, *God in himſelf is moſt juſt and pure.*

Shall mortal man be more juſt then God ? The queſtion hath this poſition in it, that God is infinitely juſt, infinitely pure, therefore he is perfectly pure, perfectly juſt. God is eſſential Juſtice, eſſential purity ; Juſtice and purity are not qualities in God, but they are his very nature : A man may be a man, and yet be unjuſt ; but God cannot be God and be unjuſt : A man may be a man, and yet impure ; but God cannot be God, and be impure ; ſo that Juſtice and purity are not qualities or accidents in God, but his very eſſence and *being* ; deſtroy or deny the purity and juſtice of God, and you put God out of the world, as much as in you lies : for he cannot be God, unleſs he be both juſt to others, and pure in himſelf.

Fourthly, Take this Concluſion, *The beſt men compared with God are evil, and the holieſt are impure.*

Not only is it preſumption, but a lie, for men to compare with God ; *ſhall mortal man be more juſt then God ?* It is as if he ſhould ſay, man hath no juſtice at all compared with God, *ſhall man be more pure then his Maker ?* Man compared with his Maker, hath no purity at all, not ſo much as a name or a ſhadow of juſtice and purity, compared with God : though it be ſomewhat in it ſelf, yet it is nothing before him : *In thy ſight, or before thee, ſhall no fleſh living be juſtified, or be juſt.* All that righteouſneſs and purity which God hath put into the creature, is but as the light of a candle, to the light of the Sun : *the candle hath no light in it, compared to the Sun* ; the candle enlightens the night, but a thouſand candles cannot a day, or make the day lighter then it is ; Sun-light overcomes and ſwallows up candle-light : The Stars help us to ſee in the dark, but in the bright day time the Stars themſelves cannot be ſeen : ſo all creature purity diſappears and vaniſheth, when once we look upon the purity of God, who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all. The Apoſtle *Paul* hath a parallel expreſſion (2 *Cor.* 3. 10.) ſpeaking of the adminiſtration of the Jewiſh, ceremonial, earthly ſhadows, and the adminiſtration of light in Goſpel heavenly ordinances ; *Even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this reſpect, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth :* I do not deny (ſaith he) but there was great glory in the Jewiſh Church ; *Gods inſtitution ſtampt excellency upon the worſhip of the Jewes ; their Ceremonies were made glorious* ; but if you will compare Jewiſh worſhip to Chriſtian worſhip, it hath no glory in it all ; *that which was made glorious, had no glory, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth*, this is Goſpel glory. So we may ſay, man who was made glorious, man who was made gracious and juſt, hath no grace, no juſtice, no glory in him, in compariſon of that glory which doth excel ; namely that juſtice and purity which is in God. *God is ſo true, that all men are liars*, Rom. 3. 4. *So righteous, that all mens righteouſneſs are a filthy rag*, Iſa. 64. 6. Man, who is juſt by participation from God, is not juſt in compariſon of God.

Humana juſtitia divinæ comparata injuſtitia eſt ; quia & lucerna in tenebris fulgere cernitur, ſed in ſolis radio poſita tenebratur. Greg.

Cujus participatione juſti ſunt, ejus comparatione nec juſti ſunt. Aug. lib. ad Oroſium. c. 10.

The fifth Concluſion is this, and it is the principal point, which we are to receive and attend from this Text.

God is ſo juſt, ſo pure in himſelf, that he neither doth nor can do wrong to any creature.

In this truth, *Eliphaz* aimes to inſtruct *Job* chiefly ; for he ſuppoſed, that *Job* had complained of God, as if he had done him wrong, wherefore he ſpeaks reprovingly and chidingly, *ſhall mortal man be more juſt then God ?* as if he ſhould ſay, art thou ſo groſs as to charge God with doing thee an injury ? It is impoſſible that God ſhould do any man wrong ; (*de Facto*) he doth no man wrong, and (*de Poſſe*) he cannot wrong any man. *The power of God is ſeen moſt in this, that he cannot do any evil ; This impotency* (if we may ſo call it) *is the ſtrength of God ; yea the omnipotency of God conſiſts in this, that he can do no wrong.* We have a *Maxime* of State amongſt us, (and it is the glory of the Kings of this Nation) we ſay, *The King can do no wrong* ; but it is not to be underſtood as this, *God can do no wrong* ; we know Kings are men, and that's enough to prove they may do wrong : As to ſay, the Lord is God, is enough to prove, that he cannot. Princes have a *natural power* to do evil ; but which is his glory, God hath not. The meaning then is, the King hath not any *civil power* to do wrong ; the Law hath ſo bounded, ordered, and directed him ; the conſtitution of the Kingdom hath given him the advice of Parliaments and Counſellours, the aſſiſtance of Judges and Officers, he acts all by others : ſo that *the failings of his Miniſters do the Subject wrong, the regal power doth it not.* But when we ſpeak thus of God, we mean it of his natural power, which being eſſentially and infinitely juſt and good, as well as ſoveraign and ſupreme ; there is not the leaſt imaginable ſeed in him, which would be procreative of the leaſt injuſtice : Therefore the Scripture deſcribes the Lord, juſt and holy, not only in his nature, but in all his works and wayes, *Pſal.* 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his workes.* And this implies, not only that all the wayes wherein the Lord walks, are righteous, and the works he doth, *holy :* but that he can go in no way but a righteous way, nor do any work in the creature, but a work of holineſs. *Not only is that juſt and holy, which the Lord doth, but let the Lord do what he will, that will be juſt and holy.*

And here give me leave, ſomewhat to enlarge this, and plead for God againſt ſome objections, which are made by the men of the world, and ſome temptations which Satan will urge ſtrongly upon the hearts of thoſe, who fear God ; by which (poſſibly) they may be ſo entangled and gravel'd, that they know not how to extricate themſelves, or make out the Juſtice of God in his adminiſtrations towards men.

For firſt it will be objected, Is God ſo juſt, that he neither doth nor can do injuſtice to the creature ? How comes it to paſs, that both the righteous and the wicked fall under the ſame judgment : if the judgment be right upon a wicked man, ſurely it cannot be right upon the righteous man : Is God righteous and juſt, when they who differ as much as Heaven and Hell, as light and darkneſs, do yet meet (as it were) under the ſame act of God, and are wrapt together in the ſame ſentence ? If it be Juſtice upon the wicked, if it be their portion, how can it be the portion of the righteous, or an award of Juſtice upon them ? As *Abraham* pleaded with God (*Gen.* 18. 25.) *Shall the righteous be ſlain or periſh, with the wicked ? that be far from thee to do in this manner ; ſhall not the Judge of all the earth do right ?* as if he ſhould ſay, if thou doeſt involve a juſt man and a wicked man in one and the ſame judgment, this is not to do as a righteous Judge, far be it from thee to do ſuch a thing. Yet we ſee in frequent experiences, that the ſame judgment falleth upon the righteous and the wicked; By Sword, Famine, Peſtilence, by Storms at Sea, and Enemies at Land, both are overtaken and fall together. Is this unerring Juſtice?

Juſtitia eſt ſuum cuique tribuere.

Juſtice is to give every one his portion, his due: And God hath given this exact diſtribution in charge to the Prophet, he muſt ſay ſo, and will not the Lord do ſo? (*Iſa.* 3. 10, 11.) *Say ye to the righteous, it ſhall be well with them, for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings; woe unto the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him:* But how do the diſpenſations of God anſwer this direction to man, when his providence ſeems to huddle up all together, to make the ſame portion ſerve, both to the righteous and the wicked?

I Anſwer it firſt in the general, and then in ſome particulars. In the general, the troubles of the righteous are good for them, and therefore they have that which is promiſed; God ſaith, *ſay to the righteous it ſhall be well with him:* when a righteous man is troubled, it is well with him; therefore he hath that which God promiſed him: and when a wicked man proſpereth, it is ill with him; therefore he hath that which God threatneth againſt him. Outward mercy is judgment to wicked men, and their proſperity is their undoing: therefore, do not think that God varies a tittle from the tenour of his word, when he ſaith, it ſhall be ill with wicked men, and yet you ſee them proſper; for it is never worſe with them, then when they proſper, then when they think it is beſt, and when the world thinks ſo too; *the proſperity of fools ſhall deſtroy them*; and what proſperity is there in deſtruction? *The meat in their mouthes is as a ſword in their bowels.* If you ſaw the Lord formally ſending a Sword to devour wicked men, you would think it juſtice: the proſperity of wicked men is as ſharp as a Sword; that can but deſtroy, and ſo doth this; *It is their judgment that they are without judgments, and not to be ſmitten, is their ſcourge.*

Prov. 1.

Now more particularly to anſwer this objection about the juſtice of God; and it will be but needful, conſidering the times we live in, threaten us with a common deluge, or an overflowing ſcourge, which may ſweep away both good and bad together.

Firſt, In reference to the godly. Are they in a ſad eſtate outwardly? are they in great afflictions? I anſwer, though they are afflicted, yet they proſper. When they are impoveriſhed, they are enriched; when they are as *having nothing, they poſſeſs all things.* What is there? what can there be, even in their ſaddeſt eſtate, which doth not conduce to their good, which will not be a benefit unto them?

For firſt, Their troubles are but trials; now is there any hurt in a trial, or perturbation in a probation? Troubles try their graces, and their corruptions too. Trouble tries grace that it may be honour'd, and corruption that it may be mortified; there is no hurt in all this, rather it is a moſt happy condition, which makes grace conſpicuous, whereby a mans beſt ſide, his inſide (wherein his glory lies, *The Kings Daughter is all glorious within*) is turned outward. That Scripture (*Dan.* 11. 33, 34, 35.) is very pregnant to the point in hand; where the Prophet foretelling troubleſome times, ſaith, *They that underſtand amongſt the people, ſhall inſtruct many; yet they ſhall fall by the ſword, and by flame, and captivity, and by ſpoil many dayes:* They that underſtand, that is, godly men, ſhall fall by theſe judgments, ſome of them by the ſword, they ſhall utterly be cut off; ſome by flame, they ſhall be burnt to aſhes: others by captivity and by ſpoil, their eſtates ſhall be plundred, their perſons impriſoned. How doth this anſwer the Juſtice of God (will carnal reaſon object) that it ſhall be *thus ill with the righteous, to whom the Lord promiſeth it ſhall be well*? Yes, well enough. For it followeth, *Now when they ſhall fall, they ſhall be holpen with a little help, and ſome of them of underſtanding ſhall fall* (that is by captivity, and by ſpoil) *to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white.* Here are two remarkable ends, why they of underſtanding fall into theſe evils. Firſt for probation, *to try them.* Secondly, for cleanſing and purgation, *to purge them and make them white.* Gold is never wrong'd by being tryed. A ſpotted garment, a diſtemper'd body are not damnified by waſhing or by purging. To be freed from filth without, and bad humours within the body, is more then a common favour. How high an act of favour then is it, to have ill humours and filthy ſpots waſhed, purged out of the ſoul? Such baſe humours a good man may have, as call for theſe ſtrong working pils, Spoiling and Captivity, to caſt them out. Now thoſe *men of underſtanding* have no more hurt intended them by God, when they fall into ſpoilers hands, then when a diſeaſed body falls into a Phyſitians hand, or when a defiled garment fals into a Fullers hand; *ſc. to purge and make them white. Affliction is a cleanſer.* Chriſt is the only Lavatory, and his blood the only Fountain to waſh away the guilt of ſin; yet God hath other Fountains and Lavatories, to waſh away the pollution of ſin: That blood cleanſes in this ſence alſo, principally; and all the waters or fires of affliction have no efficacy at all, to refine or cleanſe, but in vertue of that blood. *A Croſs without a Chriſt, never made any man better: But with Chriſt, all are made better by the Croſs.* We may then ſay at leaſt, that *it is well with the righteous in affliction, foraſmuch as* (through the bleſſing of God) *they are bettered by affliction.* When you ſee a godly man caſt out into the open air, and having the waters of ſorrow powred continually upon him, know that he is only laid out a *whitening*, and will appear ſhortly more reſplendent then ever.

Secondly, Afflictions are ſent to humble. *Pride is ſuch a weed, as often grows in the beſt ſoyle:* Now that which humbleth us, cannot hurt us; we loſe nothing by the abatements of our Pride: no, the more pride loſes, the more we gain. And we ſeldom or never loſe any thing, but by pride. Now ſaith God, *Deut.* 8. 1. If you would have an account, why I brought my people about in the wilderneſs, through ſo many difficulties, know, this was my deſign, *it was to humble them.* God reſiſts pride whereſoever he finds it; (they in whom pride totally prevails, are Gods enemies, and he reſiſts them) they in whom pride hath ſome, yea great prevalency, may be Gods friends, and God will reſiſt pride in them: the difference is obſervable between reſiſting of pride, and reſiſting the proud; the reſiſting of the perſon, and the reſiſting of the ſin. The great reſiſtance which God makes againſt the pride of mans heart, is by the rods of affliction; he whips them into humility, and by taking away carnal comforts, takes them off from carnal confidence. *And O bleſſed affliction which makes us leſs to our ſelves, and all creatures leſs to us.* We are never ſo much in Gods eye, as when we are leaſt in our own: nor have we ever ſo much of God, as when we expect little, or leaſt from man; ſay therefore it is *well with the righteous*, when they are in the deeps of affliction; for it is but to bring them off their Mountains of pride, that they may be exalted in the ſtrength and love of God, even upon the Mountain of his Holineſs, and their glory for ever.

Thirdly, Afflictions bring the Saints nearer to God. *Troubles abroad cauſe the ſoul to look inwards and homewards.* Is there any hurt in being brought nearer to God? *It is good for me to draw near unto God*, ſays *David*; and it is good for us to be drawn near unto God, if we will not come of our ſelves: It is a deſirable violence, which compels us heaven-ward. *Heaven is but our neareſt being unto God*; and by how much we are nearer God on earth, ſo much the more we have of Heaven, upon earth. Afflictions (as in the prodigals example) put us upon thoughts of returning to God; and the more we return, the nearer we are unto him; returning thoughts will not reſt, but under our fathers roof: yea, returning thoughts will not reſt, till we are got into our fathers armes, or under the ſhadow of his wing, and this is a happy condition indeed; as it was with *Noahs Dove* (*Gen.* 8. 9.) when ſhe was ſent forth of the Ark, ſhe could find no place for the ſoal of her foot to reſt on; ſhe knew not whither to go, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth; therefore ſhe returneth back, and comes hovering about the Ark, as deſiring to be taken in: but after the waters were aſſwaged, he ſent out a Dove, which returned to him no more. So when it is fair weather in the world, calm and ſerene, *even Doves* keep off from God; and though they go not quite away from him, yet they are not ſo deſirous of coming to him; but when we find a deluge in the world, ſuch ſtorms and tempeſts of trouble, that we know not where to fix our ſouls for a day, then we come as the Dove fluttering about the Ark, and cry to our *Eternal Noah*, that we may be near him, yea, within, with him. Wicked men (like the Raven, which *Noah* ſent out firſt, *ver.* 7. *and returned not again*) care not for the Ark of Gods preſence in the greateſt troubles; to be near God, is more troubleſom to them, then all their troubles. But Believers, like the Dove, will look home (at leaſt) in foul weather: God is their chief friend at all times, and their only friend in ſad times. Is there any harm in this? Chriſt ſends a ſtorm, but to draw his back to the Ark, *that, at the laſt, where he is, there they may be alſo.*

Laſtly, We may ſay it is well with the righteous in their worſt condition of outward trouble, becauſe *God is with them: It can never be ill with that man, with whom God is,* It is infinitely more to ſay, *I will be with thee,* then to ſay, peace is with thee, health is with thee, credit is with thee, honour is with thee. To ſay, *God is with thee,* is all theſe, and infinitely more: for in theſe you have but a particular good, in God you have all good. When God ſayes I wlll be with you, you may make what you will out of it; ſit down and imagine with your ſelves whatſoever good you can deſire, and it is all comprehended in this one word, *I will be with thee.* Now God who is with the righteous at all times, is moſt with them in worſt times; then he faith in a ſpecial ſeuce, *I will be with thee. When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee; when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt,* &c. *Iſa.* 43. 2. When *a mighty wind* paſſed before *Eliah,* it is ſaid, that *God was not in the wind*; and when the *Earthquake* ſhook the hills, and a conſuming fire appeared, it is ſaid, God was not in the earthquake, nor in the fire. God joynes not with outward troubles for the terror of his people, but he joynes with outward troubles for the comfort of his people. So he is in the fire, and in the wind and in the Earthquake, and his preſence makes the fire but as a warm Sun; the ſtormy wind, a refreſhing gale, and the earthquake, but a pleaſant dance.

So much for the removing of this objection, and clearing up the juſtice of God, reſpecting the afflictions of the righteous.

If any ſhall look on the other hand, upon wicked men, as if God came not home in his juſtice, while he ſuffers them to proſper.

Firſt, I anſwer, Their proſperity ſerves the providence of God, and therefore it doth not croſs his juſtice. That was *Nebuchadnezzar*'s caſe (*Iſa.* 10. 6.) *I will ſend him* (ſaith God) *againſt an hypocritical nation*: ſo then he muſt proſper, while he goes upon Gods errand; but mark what follows (*ver.* 12.) *It ſhall come to paſs, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion,* ſc. by *Nebuchadnezzar*'s power, (who was but doing the juſt work of God, while he thought ambitiouſly of doing his own) now it is no injuſtice for God, to give an inſtrument power to do his work (and when his bloody luſt hath performed the holy work of God, you ſhall ſee the Lord will take an order with him ſpeedily; for) then, ſaith the Lord, *I will puniſh the fruit of the ſtout heart of the King of Aſſyria, and the glory of his high looks.* God let him alone to do the work he had ſet him about; and it was a righteous work of God upon his people, though *Nebuchadnezzar* went about it with a proud and malicious ſpirit againſt his people.

Secondly, The proſperity of wicked men ſerveth them, to ſhew how wicked and vile they are, to act and publiſh the ſeven abominations of their own hearts. Now as it is one of the greateſt mercies under heaven, for a man to have his luſts quite mortified, ſo it is a very great mercy, for a man to have his luſts but reſtrained. It is a mercy, for a man to have that fewel taken away from his corruptions, upon which they feed; therefore it muſt needs be wrath and judgment upon wicked men, when God, in ſtead of reſtraining their luſts, giveth them opportunity to enlarge their luſts, and layes the reins on their neck, to run whither and which way they pleaſe, without ſtop or control. This is wrath, and high wrath, a ſore judgment, the soreſt judgment that can fall upon them: Wherefore when we think they are in a moſt proſperous condition, they are in the moſt dreadful condition; they are but filling themſelves with ſin, and fitting themſelves for deſtruction. Many Many a mans luſts are altogether unmortified, which yet are chill'd and over-awed by judgments. And there is more judgment in having liberty to commit one ſin, then in being ſhut up under the iron bars and adamantine neceſſities of a thouſand judgments. *He that is Satans treaſury for ſin, ſhall be Gods treaſury for wrath.*

Thirdly, Their proſperity is the judiciary hardning of their hearts: and *a hard heart is the greateſt judgment on this ſide hell*: As there is a naturally inbred, and ſinfully acquired hard heart, ſo there is a judicially hardened, or a divinely inflicted hard heart. When to a natural hard heart, and an acquired hard heart, which men get by many repeated acts of ſin, the Lord adds a judicially hardened, or inflicted hard heart, then *wrath is heated to the hotteſt, and judgment is within one ſtep of hell.* Eſpecially if we conſider, that every hour of ſuch proſperous impenitence, and hardneſs of heart increaſes puniſhment, and adds to the treaſury of that wrath, which is ſtored up againſt the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Who thinks that man happy, who is let alone only to gather a mighty pile of wood, and other fewel of flames, to burn himſelf? While ungodly men ſeem to the world to be gathering riches, honour and pleaſure, they are but gathering a heap of wrath, and a pile of fire; which, at the laſt, will flame ſo bright, that it will make a revelation, of the (formerly ſecret, but) ever righteous judgment of God.

Laſtly, To ſhew that God is juſt in all his dealings, both the righteous and the wicked learn from the end of both. That we may fully diſcover the juſtice of God, we muſt look upon all his works together; while we look only upon ſome particular piece of Gods dealings with a godly man, he may ſeem to deal very hardly with him: or if we look but upon ſome particular piece of his dealings with wicked man, God may ſeem very gentle and kind towerd him; but take all together, and the *reſult is exact juſtice.* It was a good ſpeeck of a modern Writer, *We muſt not iudge of the works of God before the fifth Act,* that is, the laſt Act or Concluſion of all. This, and that part may ſeem diſſonant and confuſed; but lay them all together, and they are moſt harmonious and methodical: Hence *David* (Pſal. 37.) after he had a great diſpute with himſelf, about the troubles of the righteous, and the proſperity of the wicked, and was put hard to it, how to make out the juſtice of God, reſolves all in the cloſe with this advice (*ver.* 37.) *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* Though a righteous man die in war, yet, his end is peace, whereas though a wicked man die in peace, yet his end is war. It is ſaid (*Deut.* 8. 16.) that all which God did to his people in the wilderneſs, was, *that he might do them good at the latter end.* Come to the end therefore, and there you ſhall find *juſtice viſible.* We often loſe the ſight of juſtice; in our travels and paſſage through the world, mountains and hils interpoſe, which we cannot ſee over or through; but when we come home, and arrive at the end of our travels, Juſtice will appear in all her *ſtate* and *glory, rendring to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory, honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath.*

Joſhua concludes the ſtory of the people of *Iſrael,* in their paſſage to *Canaan,* with the higheſt teſtimonies of Gods juſtice and faithfulneſs; though God dealt with them ſo variouſly in the wilderneſs, that they often murmured in their tents, as if he had done them wrong; yet in the cloſe, you ſhall find, how exact and punctual the Lord was with them (*Joſh.* 21. 45.) *There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had ſpoken to the houſe of Iſrael, all came to paſs*: And in that other Text, *Joſh.* 23. 14. *Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth, & you know in all your hearts & in all your ſouls, that not one thing hath faild of all the good things which the Lord your God ſpake concerning you, all are come to paſs unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* How admirably juſt was God in his word? If a man promiſe many things, we take it well, if he perform ſome of the chief, and them in the chief, though ſomewhat may fail. God promiſed many things, and performed all; and which is more, all of every one of thoſe many things promiſed. The texts compared, make this out; the one ſaying, That *not one thing failed of all the good things which God ſpake concerning them,* and the other, That *not ought of any good thing failed.* So then, they had every good thing in kind, with each particular part and degree of every good thing: And for the truth of all this, *Joſhua* makes his appeal to themſelves, and to that in themſelves, which was beſt able to

determine

termine it, *all their hearts, and all their ſouls*; which words do not only refer to every perſon, as if the meaning were, *the hearts and ſouls of you all*; but rather to all that is in every perſon, *all their hearts and all their ſouls*, that is, underſtandings, memories, conſciences, affections; yea, ſenſes, their eyes and ears, their hands and mouths, could bring in witneſs from their ſeveral operations, to this great truth. And ſurely God in the end, will deal as well with every *Iſraelite*, as he did with all *Iſrael*: A time will come, it will come ſhortly, when every *Saint ſhall ſay, in all their hearts and in all their ſouls*, that not one thing, nor ought of any good thing, which the Lord hath ſaid concerning them, hath failed. I ſhut up this in the words of Chriſt to his Diſciples, when they were amuſed about that act of his, the waſhing of their feet (*John* 13. 7.) *What I do, ye know not now, but ye ſhall know hereafter.* Stay but a while, and all thoſe *myſteries and riddles of providence* ſhall be unfolded. *Though clouds and darkneſs are round about him, yet judgment and juſtice are the habitation of his Throne*, Pſal. 97. *Mortal man never had, and at laſt ſhall ſee he had no reaſon to complain of God; mortal man ſhall not be more juſt then God, nor ſhall man be more pure then his Maker.* And ſo much for the fifth Concluſion, That God neither doth, nor can do any injuſtice to the creature, he is juſt in nature, juſt and holy in all his wayes.

Juſtior ſit oportet qui immerito affligitur, quã qui immerito affligit.

Quiſquis de perſecutione murmurat, quid aliud quam judicium ferientis accuſat, puriorem ergo ſe vir factore ſuo exiſtimat, ſi contra flagellum querelam parat, cumque ſibi proculdubio poſtponit, cujus judiciũ de ſua afflictione redarguit. Greg.

The ſixth or laſt Concluſion is this, That *to complain of Gods dealing with us, is to make our ſelves more juſt and pure then God*; or, when any perſon or people complain of Gods diſpenſations toward them, they (though not formally, yet by way of interpretation) make themſelves more juſt and pure then God. This was the point wherein *Eliphaz* labours much, to convince *Job*, ſuppoſing that he had thus exalted himſelf againſt God, by theſe grievous complainings of his preſent ſtate, in the foregoing Chapter: There is a truth in the Propoſition, though not in the Application, as hath often been hinted. *Job*'s complaints were bitter, from the ſence of his pains, not from any prejudice in his underſtanding: *He ever preſerved high and holy thoughts of God.* The leaſt ſuſpition of whoſe righteous dealings, is to make our ſelves, by ſo much more righteous then he. The reaſon is clear; for, he that complains thus, thinks ſome wrong is done him; *Now he that complains of wrong, would be thought more juſt, then he of whoſe wronging him he complains.* Whoſoever murmurs or repines at what God doth, ſecretly ſaith (this voyce is in it) that he could do better, or that God ought: He that ſpeaks againſt the rod, ſpeaks againſt him that ſmites with the rod; *He that ſwears by heaven, ſwears by the Throne of God, and by him that ſitteth thereon*, ſaith Chriſt; and ſo he that accuſes the rod of God, accuſes the work God, and God that wrought it: He thinks himſelf more pure then his Maker, who is diſpleaſed with God as a corrector. To diſapprove any thing which God doth, is to approve our ſelves before God. It is ſeaſonable for us to look to our hearts in ſuch a time as this; it is a time of temptation, let us not by our murmurings, make it a time of provocation. Poſſibly we may often ſee cauſe to complain of men, but we can never have cauſe to complain of God. There is but little good got by complaining of creatures; but how much guilt and miſery gets he, who complains of his Creator? For a man to complain to man, is in ſome caſes neceſſary; but it is beſt in all caſes, to complain to God, and the worſt of any caſe, to complain (though ſilently) of God. So then, complain of man to God, rather then of man, to men; complain often to God, but never of God; complain before God, and tell him, that ſuch have dealt negligently. ſuch falſly, ſuch unjuſtly, ſuch cruelly: But alwayes ſay, *Lord, thou haſt done juſtly, even by thoſe who are unjuſt; Lord, thou haſt done graciouſly, even by thoſe who are wicked; Lord, thou haſt done holily, even by the hand of thoſe who are unholy; and thou haſt dealt faithfully, though theſe have been treacherous.* Thus let us complain to God, but not of God. Every complaint of God will be interpreted, a ſecret juſtification of our ſelves, and a condemnation of the righteous God. Man is then worſe then a Devil, when he would make himſelf better then God: *Nothing pollutes man ſo much as his thought, that there is unrighteouſneſs in God: Nothing debaſes the creature, ſo much as that thought, deſire or act, wherein he prefers and exalts himſelf above the Creator.*

Thus we have opened the general Propoſition: The probation of it, from the vaſt difference between men and Angels, is proſecuted at large in the latter part of the Chapter.

VERS. 18.

Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants, and his Angels he charged with folly.

ELiphaz having laid the dignity of man (comparing with God) in the duſt, by thoſe humbling queſtions, in the former verſe; *What is man that he ſhould be juſt? and ſhall man be more pure then his Maker?* He now ſtrengthens it further, that there is no compariſon between *God and mortal man*, by a direct aſſertion, that there is no compariſon between *God and immortal Angels. Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants, and his Angels he charged with folly.* As if he had ſaid, If Angels are not able to ſtand before God, and juſtifie themſelves upon his enquirie; then certainly man, the beſt of men, who dwell but in houſes of clay, cannot: But Angels cannot juſtifie themſelves before God, therefore much leſs can the beſt of men. That Angels are not able to juſtifie themſelves before God, he proves in theſe words; *Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants, and his Angels he charged with folly*: They that cannot be truſted by God, cannot be juſtified by God; and they that are chargeable with folly, are not able to ſtand in judgment before the moſt wiſe, the only wiſe and holy God. Angels are excellent creatures, yet becauſe creatures, they are in and of themſelves, frail and weak: they have no ſtrength to ſtand longer then upheld; no ſtedfaſtneſs to obey, longer then confirmed; no faithfulneſs to be loyal, longer then over-ruled; no wiſdom to diſcern, further then they are enlightned; what then will become of man, if he ſtand alone, or ſtand in competition with *God his Maker?* This is the ſum and general ſence of the words, as they are an argument. We will now conſider them as they lie here in order.

Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants.

The Particle [**Behold**] in the Original, as it often notes wonder in other texts, ſo it may much more in this; *Behold* a wonder! *Angels are fooliſh, Angels are not to be truſted* Yet in this place, *Behold*, is put by way of affirmation, rather then of admiration. *Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants*, is as much as *verily and indeed, certainly and without controverſie, he put no truſt in his ſervants*: So (*Deut.* 13. 14.) *Thou ſhalt enquire and ſearch, and ask diligently, and behold if it be true*; in the Hebrew thus, and *behold true*, or *behold truth*; that is, if upon enquiry it appear, that ſuch and ſuch things are certainly ſo, then they muſt proceed according to the Law provided in that caſe. Again, (*Deut.* 19. 8.) *The Judges ſhall make diligent inquiſition, and behold, if the witneſs be a falſe witneſs*, ſo we tranſlate; but the Letter is, *Behold the witneſs, a falſe witneſs*, that is, if it be affirmed, and do appear that it is a falſe witneſs or teſtimony which is brought, then the Judges ſhall proceed ſo and ſo, *&c.* Thus here, *Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants*, is a vehement affirmation, that God ſearching into thoſe his ſervants, finds them ſuch as are not to be truſted.

But who are theſe untruſty *ſervants?* Firſt, The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* underſtands by *ſervants*, the *holy Prophets.* Prophets (I grant) ſometimes have, and ofter would have proved unfaithful; ſome of them diſcovered much, and others would have diſcovered more unfaithfulneſs, if God had not mightily ſupported them. Secondly, One of the *Rabbins* underſtands it in general of any, or of all the faithful; *Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants*, that is, not in any of the holieſt and faithfulleſt of the children of men.

But the connexion of the Text carries it clearly, that by ſervants, we are to underſtand the *Angels*, who are called *miniſtring ſpirits*, Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all miniſtring ſpirits* (or ſervants) *ſent out for the good of thoſe that are the heirs of ſalvation?* And ſo the words in the cloſe of this verſe, are *exegetical*, expounding who are intended by thoſe ſervants; *Behold he put no truſt in his ſervants, and his Angels he charged with folly*; that is, he truſted not thoſe ſervants, the Angels, but charged them with folly. But there is a further reaſon, more fully evidencing, that it muſt be underſtood of Angels, in *ver.* 19. where the perſons ſtanding in equal oppoſition to theſe ſervants and Angels, are men; *How much leſs* (ſaith he) *on them that dwell in houſes of clay?* Now a dwelling in a houſe of clay, is a *Periphraſis*, or deſcription of mankind in general, good or bad, one or other, high or low; all mankind dwells in a houſe of clay. Seeing then the term of oppoſition is mankind in general, we muſt take ſomewhat, which being a rational creature, is not man, for the other term, which cannot be any except Angels; we cannot ſet any ſort of men in oppoſition to others upon this ground, becauſe they dwell in houſes of clay; for the Saints on earth, dwell in houſes of clay, as well as men of the earth: therefore to make the oppoſition clear, it neceſſarily follows, that by *Servants*, in the firſt clauſe of the verſe, *Angels* are implied, as well as in the latter, where Angels are expreſt.

אמן

Nutrivit, in Hiphil, *credidit, fiſus eſt, à fide quæ in nutriendo requiritur.*

אמן

nutritius dictus eſt cujus fidei puer eſt cõmiſſus, quaſi fidum aut fidelem dicas, ſæpe etiam accommodatur ad œconomum & diſpenſatorem propter fidelitatem eorum.

But if theſe ſervants be Angels, how is it, that *he put no truſt in*, or that (as we may render it word for word out of the Hebrew) *he did not believe in theſe his ſervants?* I ſhall anſwer that, when I have a little opened the word here tranſlated *to put truſt*. We find it uſed two wayes in Scripture; ſometime *paſſively*, and ſometime *actively*. It is taken *paſſively* to be *faithful*, *truſty* and *true*, in word or promiſe. From this Root the Hebrew takes the name of a *Guardian*, or *Foſter-father*, or *Steward*, becauſe ſuch, to whoſe care children or families are committed, ought to be moſt faithful in the diſcharge of ſo great a truſt.

The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2.) ſpeaking of that heavenly Stewardſhip, the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, expreſſeth it thus, *Let a man ſo account of us as of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the myſteries of God*; *moreover* (ſaith he) *it is required in a Steward, that a man may be found faithful.* And (*Num.* 12. 7.) where *Moſes* is ſpoken of as a ſervant, he is thus deſcribed, *My ſervant Moſes is not ſo, who is faithful in all my houſe*; he is a man whom I may truſt or give credit to; for he is truſty and faithful, (*Heb.* 3. 2, 5.) The Apoſtle comparing Chriſt and *Moſes*, ſaith of Chriſt, That *he was faithful to him that appointed him, as Moſes was faithful in all his houſe.* So that here is an elegant *Antitheſis*; his ſervants, who according to their duty and office, ought to be conſtant, faithful, truſty; he found unconſtant, unfaithful, not to be truſted.

לא יאמין בעבדיו

A verbi proprietate non recedamus, qua ſignificat cum ב *credere & fidere alicui* Merc.

Verbum de verbo, in ſervos ſuos credidit.

Yet the word being in *Hyphil*, is of an active ſignification, and when it is conſtruction with *Beth* (as *Grammarians* obſerve) it imports to give credit unto, or confide in a perſon; and ſo here, *he put no truſt*, that is, he did not credit or confide in thoſe ſervants, or he did not believe on them. He ſaw ſomewhat in them, which might betray them to diſloyalty, if himſelf, withdrawing his aſſiſtance, ſhould make an experiment, or try what was in their hearts. And this ſence is moſt ſuitable to the ſtate and office of a ſervant: truſting, or not truſting, faithfulneſs, or unfaithfulneſs, are acts proper to that relation, *Lord and Servant.* So then, the Lord *put no truſt*, that is, he could not confide in his ſervants, they being ſuch, as he found not perfectly ſure and loyal unto him. We ſay commonly of a man whom we cannot truſt, *We will not give our word for him, and we will not take his.* Our Lord Chriſt is therefore called *a faithful High Prieſt*, becauſe his *Father* truſted him with the whole buſineſs of our ſalvation, without the leaſt miſgiving thought of his faithfulneſs, or the miſcarriage of the work. Thus *Solomon* deſcribes a faithful wife, and a confiding husband, *Prov.* 31. 10, 11. A rare couple indeed, and as rarely found: Therefore he makes proclamation for ſuch a woman; *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above Rubies, the heart of her Husband doth ſafely truſt in her, ſo that he ſhall have no need of ſpoil*; there's confidence to the height; *the heart of her husband doth ſafely truſt in her.* A husband that hath ſuch a Jewel to his wife, knows, ſhe will order the family with diſcretion at home, when he is abroad; he knows ſhe is faithful to him body and goods: Her chaſtity or her frugality never came in queſtion before his thoughts; therefore (ſaith he) *I ſhall have no need of ſpoil*; which ſome interpret thus; her care and wiſdom in providing for the family, will make it like an Army which hath overcome the enemy in the field, or won a wealthy City, where the Soldiers have ſpoil and pillage enough, they need no ſpoil. Or as others, *He ſhall have no need of ſpoil*, that is, he ſhall have no need to ſpoil or oppreſs others, to help his family. All things ſhall be ſo ordered by his wives prudence, that he ſhall not need to take any unjuſt way, to provide for, or ſupply his houſhold. Thus *the heart of her husband doth ſafely truſt in her.* Such truſt the heart of God could not put in thoſe ſervants, his Angels, he knew they might come ſhort in their accounts. Such truſt Chriſt could not give ſome, who ſeemed to truſt or believe on him (*John* 2. 23.) Many, ſeeing Chriſts miracles, believed on him, yet *Chriſt would not believe on them*; we tranſlate, *he would dot commit himſelf to them*: the Grek is, he did not believe or truſt himſelf unto them; Chriſt believes in, or may truſt them all the world over, who truly believe in him; but theſe believed ſo falſly upon him, that he could not believe fully upon them; and the Text gives the reaſon, *for he himſelf knew all men*; he knew, they were not metal of a due temper, and therefore not to be truſted. So God knew all Angels, the uttermoſt perfection, power and virtue that was in Angels, therefore he would not commit all to them, he would not believe upon them. We find the word belief thus uſed (*Exod.* 14. 31.) When the Children of *Iſrael* ſaw the great work that the Lord had done in deſtroying the *Egyptians*, it is ſaid, *The people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his ſervant Moſes*; he puts God and *Moſes* as the joynt object of their faith, as they had formerly been of their unbelief. *Except the ſervants of the Lord be believed, the Lord himſelf is not: And when they are believed, the Lord is. Believe in the Lord your God, believe his Prophets*, ſaith good *Jehoſhaphat* to his people, 2 *Chron.* 20. 20. *Moſes* had told them enough of the power of God before he had undertaken they ſhould be delivered; but they would not truſt *Moſes* upon his word, nor would they truſt the word of God; yet now when they ſaw this great deliverance, preſent ſight wrought faith for the time to come: they perceived by this miracle, that the Lord and *Moſes* were to be credited, and they doubted not to credit them another time. *Though that faith which comes in at the eyes only, ſeldom goes down ſo low as the heart, or ſees further and longer then the eye.* Thus we may underſtand the firſt part of the Verſe, *He put no truſt*, no belief in his ſervants; he gave no credit to them, as knowing perfectly what their nature and power was, what both could do; that if left by God, they would quickly leave God, and prove unfaithful.

Tam circumfluit bonis omnibus familia ejus quam milites ſpoliis expugnata urbe aut hoſte ſuperato.

ὐκ ἐπίστευεν ἑαυτὸν αὐτοῖς.

I ſhall obſerve one Point, before I come to the latter part of the Verſe (for there the ſuſpition of diſloyalty upon the Angels, comes more fully to be conſidered) from the title here given to the Angels, his ſervants; *he put no truſt in his ſervants.*

Angels are the ſervants of God.

They are his ſervants, as being altogether at his command; and they are his ſervants, as being fully conformable to his commands. Theſe great and glorious Spirits come under the ſame denomination with men, who dwell in houſes of clay, *ſervants of God.* To ſerve God, is not only the duty, but it is the honour of the higheſt creatures. *It is more honour to ſerve God, then to rule the world.* The ſtile of the good Angels, is, *Miniſtring Spirits*, Heb. 1. But the ſtile and title of the evil Angel, is, *Prince of the power of the air, God of this world*; you would think theſe were weighty titles, *Prince of the air, God of the world*; but the additions diminiſh their weight; yea, make them lighter then vanity, or rather, heavy only with miſery: *There is more glory in being a ſervant to God, then in being a god of the world, or a Prince of the power of the air.*

I might here enlarge my enquiry into the ſervices of Angels, in what they are ſervants, and what their offices and duties are; but I ſhall only touch. Their ſervice may be conſidered, either in reſpect of the Church, or the enemies of the Church. Reſpecting the Church and people of God, they have ſuch ſervices as theſe:

1. They are as meſſengers to carry and reveal the mind of God; they are as Tutors and Inſtructors of the Churches, *Dan.* 8. 9. God ſent his Angel to teach *Daniel* the myſtery of thoſe viſions. And, *Rev.* 1. 11. an Angel was ſent to inſtruct *John*, chap. 22. 16. *I Jeſus have ſent mine Angel to teſtifie theſe things in the Churches.*

Secondly, They are ſent as Guardians and Protectors of the people of God, to take their part, and to be on their ſide, *Pſal.* 34. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.* Pſal. 91. 11. *He giveth his An-*

gels a charge over them, leſt at any time they ſhould daſh their feet againſt a ſtone. Gen. 32.2. When *Jacob* journeyed, it is ſaid, *the Angels of God met him*; an army of Angels was his convoy, Gods Hoſt coming out for his protection and ſafeguard, and therefore he called the name of that place *Mahanaim*, that is, *two Hoſts or Camps*; either becauſe the Angels appeared in two bands, and ſo made, as it were, a guard for *Jacob* to paſs between them; or becauſe the great Angelical Royal Army quartered and marched with *Jacob*'s little army; and ſo two confederate Armies appeared in the field together. Angels are called Chariots, *Pſal.* 68.17. *The Chariots of God are twenty thouſand, even thouſands of Angels*: that is, God uſeth Angels for defence of his people, as Chariots in war. The ancient Prophets were called the Chariots of *Iſrael* (2 *Kings* 3.13.) And the Angels are the Chariots of God. *Our ſtrongeſt Militia is of Spirits, or of men ſpiritualized.*

Thirdly, Angels ſuggeſt good things, holy thoughts to us. If the Devil, who is an evil Angel, a wicked Spirit, can ſuggeſt evil, ſinful, filthy thoughts, and help on the heart in wickedneſs; then doubtleſs a good Angel can help on the heart in holineſs, in heavenly thoughts and meditations. Chriſt ſpeaks of *Judas*, that *Satan had put it into his heart to betray him*, John 13. and *Peter* to *Ananias* (Acts 5.) *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghoſt?* The nature of a good Angel is as fit, his power given as great, to deal with our ſpirits, as either the nature or the power of an evil Angel. That of the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 11. 14.) gives a hint, if not a proof of it, where he tells the *Corinthians, That deceitful workers transform themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt; and no marvel, for Satan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of light*; and when is Satan in this change, from an *Angel of darkneſs* to *an Angel of light?* Even when he ſuggeſts *good, for evil ends, or evil, for good ends.* And if he is called *an Angel of light* for this reaſon, then *Angels of light, good Angels*, ſuggeſt good, for good ends; otherwiſe, Satan could not be ſaid to imitate them, in ſuggeſting good for ill ends, and under ſpecious pretences of bringing glory to God, tempting to tranſgreſs the will of God.

Fourthly, Good Angels comfort, ſtrengthen and ſupport in times of diſtreſs, anguiſh and trouble. An Angel comforted *Hagar Gen.* 21. And (*Mat.* 4.10.) after Chriſt had finiſhed his terrible combat with that wicked Angel, the good *Angels came and miniſtred unto him.* Again, when he was in that moſt bitter *Agony in the garden* (Luke 22. 43.) *an Angel appeared to him from heaven, ſtrengthening him.* That which they do to Chriſt the Head, they do to his members in their proportion.

Their fifth ſervice is to convey and carry the ſouls of departed Saints to heaven; they are *Heavenly Porters* (Luk. 16.22.) *Lazarus died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's boſom.*

Laſtly, They ſhall convocate and gather all the elect together at the laſt day, *Mat.* 24.21. Their ſervices againſt the wicked, and all enemies of the Church, have been many and great. *Angels aſſiſt Saints*, and oppoſe the oppoſers of *Sion*. Two Angels were ſent upon a meſſage of deſtruction to *Sodom*; an Angel defeated the hoſt of *Senacherib*; an Angel ſmote bloody perſecuting *Herod*; Angels (by name, if not by nature) poure out the ſeven vials of Gods wrath in the *Revelation.* And at the laſt day Angels ſhall hurry the wicked to Chriſts Tribunal; they are *heavenly Purſivants*, and they ſhall bundle the Tares up together, as fewel to be thrown into everlaſting burnings, *Mat.* 13.41,42.

And it may be a great comfort to us, that God hath ſuch ſervants. When viſible dangers are round about us, we ſhould remember, God hath inviſible ſervants round about us. *There are more with us, then againſt us,* as *Eliſha* told his fearful ſervant, 2 *Kings* 6. And in that low eſtate of the Church, *Zech.* 1.8. the Prophet is ſhewed Chriſt in a viſion, *ſtanding among the Myrtle trees in the bottom* (the Myrtle trees in the bottom, noted the Church in a low eſtate) *and behind him, there were red horſes, ſpeckled and white*, that is, horſemen ſpeckled and white. Theſe diverſe-coloured horſes were Angels appointed for ſeveral offices, as the learned *Junius* (with others) interprets it: the *red horſes* being appointed for judgment, the *white* for mercy, and the *ſpeckled* (as he conjectures) for mixt actions, being ſent out, at once, to protect and help the people of God, and to execute wrath and judgment upon the Adverſary. Thus we ſee the ſervices of the Angels; they are ſervants, yet ſuch as *the moſt wiſe God put no truſt in*; therefore we have *an Angel better then* Angels, even the *Angel of the Covenant*, the Lord Jeſus, into whoſe hands our ſafety is committed, to whoſe care the Church is left, in whom God puts the whole truſt, knowing that this *great Angel* is, and for ever will be faithful in and over his houſe, to his higheſt delight, and the Churches compleateſt welfare.

And his Angels he charged with folly.

There are very different readings of this part of the Verſe. Some (as Mr. *Beza*) read it thus, *He truſted not his ſervants, though he had put light into thoſe his meſſengers.* Others read it with a negation in both parts, *He put no truſt in his ſervants, neither hath he put light in his Angels.* Another thus, *Neither hath he put perfect light in his Angels.* Mr. *Broughton* differs from all theſe; *Behold, he holdeth not perfection to be in his own ſervants, and in his Angels he judged no clear light to be.* Another ſort read it to theſe ſences, *He charged or put madneſs in or upon his Angels, he put or charged vain boaſting in or upon his Angels, he found vanity in or amongſt his Angels, he obſerved ſome evil amongſt his Angels.*

Nec in Angelis ſuis ponet lumen. Pagn.
Nec in Angels ſuis poſuit lucem exactiſſimã. Vatabl.
Angelis ſuis poſuit veſaniam. Tyg.
In Angelis ſuis ponet gloriationẽ. Bibl. Reg.
In Angelis ſuis reperit vanitatem. Sym.
κατὰ τῶν Ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ σκολιόν τι ἐπενόησεν. Sept.

Now that which hath given occaſion to this variety of tranſlations, is, the different ſences which the Original yields us. The Hebrew word is very fruitful of ſignifications, and hath (as the Oracle told *Rebekah* concerning two contrary Nations) two contrary meanings in the womb of it, and that makes the ſtrugling amongſt interpreters. The word in its proper ſence, ſignifies to *ſhine forth with a reſplendent brightneſs*: ſo, *chap.* 29.3. *Job* wiſheth, *O that I were as in moneths paſt, when the Candle of God ſhined upon my head*: It is a Verb, of which the word *Folly* in this text of *Job* is a derivative. And (*Iſa.* 14.12.) *Hielel* ſignifies the *Morning-ſtar*, whoſe ſhining brightneſs hath obtained the name *Lucifer, Light-bringer*, or *Light-bearer. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, ſon of the morning? How art thou fallen from Heaven*, Hielel, *thou ſhining day-ſtar?* Thus the word properly ſignifies ſhining or brightneſs, or to ſhine and be bright; and hence by a *Metaphor*, to be *famous* or renowned, or to make one renowned or famous, or to paint out a man with praiſes; becauſe a man is (as it were) decked with light, and hath rayes of brightneſs caſt upon him, when he is honoured and adorned with praiſes. Due commendations are to a man as a robe or veſture of light, which makes him ſhine to all about him. And hence the word *Halelujah* is derived, *praiſe ye Jah*, or the Lord; uſed frequently both in the beginning and end of the Pſalms: in the beginning of the Pſalms, by way of exhortation; and in the end, by way of acclamation, crying up the honour and glory of God. And (to note that in paſſage) it is well obſerved, that this word *Halelujah* is firſt uſed in the Old Teſtament, *Pſal.* 104.35. where the utter conſumption of ſinners is mentioned; and in the New Teſtament it is firſt uſed, *Rev.* 19.3,6. where the utter conſumption of *Antichriſt* is propheſied. *Judgment on the wicked, is matter of high praiſe to God.* Thirdly, The word ſignifies (by the figure *Antiphraſis*, or *contrary ſpeaking*) to boaſt and brag vainly, fooliſhly, or vain fooliſh boaſting. *To commend or extol our ſelves, is pride running mad, and arrogance diſtracted.* It is the higheſt dotage to be in love with our own wiſdom, and folly to publiſh our own works. There may be wiſdom (though oftentimes there is a great deal of folly) in commending others; but in commending our ſelves, there can be nothing but folly; therefore the very ſame word which ſignifies to boaſt and commend our ſelves, ſignifies both the concrete, to be mad, vain, or fooliſh; and the abſtract, madneſs and folly: thus, in *Eccleſ.* 2.2,12. the word is uſed, *I ſaid of laughter, thou art mad. I turned my ſelf to behold wiſdom, and folly, and madneſs.* And. *Pſal.* 75.4. *I ſaid unto the fools, deal not fooliſhly*, or to the mad-men, do not play the mad-men, that is, do not exalt your ſelves; for ſo he clears his meaning in the fifth verſe, *Lift not up your horns on high, ſpeak not with a ſtiff neck*, that is, a neck ſtiffened with pride, and a horn lifted up with vain-glory or ſelf-confidence.

תהלה *à radice* הלל *Splenduit, luxit, claruit, Metaphoricè in* Piel, *ſplendidum, illuſtrẽ, clarum reddidit, laudavit, prædicavit.* Per Antiphraſin, *inglorius, inſanus, furore actus fuit, inſanivit.*

From this variety of ſignifications, the variety of tranſlations before-toucht, ariſeth. First, They who read it, *He put light into thoſe his meſſengers*; Take the words in a proper ſtrict ſence, making out the meaning thus; That God, having put the light of excellent knowledge into the Angels, could not yet truſt them: all their ſpeculative knowledge, and high-raiſed illuminations, were not enough to make them ſteadily and ſtedfaſtly holy: That is the intent of Maſter *Beza*'s interpretation, *He truſted not to his ſervants, though he had put light into thoſe his meſſengers.* For thoſe who retained the word, *Light*, tranſlate negatively, *neither hath he put light in his Angels*, or, *neither hath he put perfect light into his Angels*; Or as Maſter *Broughton, In his Angels he judgeth no clear light to be*, putting a negative particle in both branches of the Verſe, whereas in the Hebrew there is no expreſs negation in the latter. Theſe, I ſay, are led by this reaſon or rule. It is frequent in Scripture, when there is a negative in the former clauſe of a Verſe, then to underſtand a negative alſo in the latter clauſe, though none be expreſt. For inſtance (*Pſalm* 9. 18.) *The needy ſhall not alway be forgotten, the expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh for ever*; ſo we read: but in the Hebrew the latter clauſe is, *the expectation of the poor ſhall periſh for ever:* There is no Negative in the *Original*; but our *Tranſlators*, and not only they, but all that I have ſeen upon the place, render it ſo, ſupplying the negative particle of the former in the latter clauſe of that ſentence. And without that negative, the ſentence is not only imperfect, but untrue. Thus, *The needy ſhall not alwayes be forgotten, the expectation of the poor ſhall periſh for ever*, this were a contradiction: but reading it, the expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh for ever, makes the whole a truth, and congruous in it ſelf. Again (*Prov.* 17. 26.) *To puniſh the juſt is not good, to ſtrike Princes for equity*, ſo the letter of the Hebrew; but we read it thus, *To puniſh the juſt is not good, nor to ſtrike Princes for equity.* I might give you other examples, but a taſte may ſuffice. Thus in the Text before us, when it is ſaid in the firſt clauſe, *he put no truſt in his ſervants*, we take up the negative, and ſay in the ſecond, *Neither hath he put light into his Angels*, or *he did not put light in his Angels*, or *he put no perfect light in his Angels*, or *he judged not clear light to be in his Angels.*

Secondly, They, who (according to our Tranſlation) render it *madneſs or folly, vain boaſting or vanity*, theſe take the Original in that figurative ſence before given. When a man from a reflection upon his own worth, boaſts out his own praiſes, which, becauſe it is a point of extream vanity and folly, therefore the word is elegantly applied to ſignifie *folly*, &c. *He charged his Angels with folly, He put or laid folly upon, or to his Angels*; He put, for ſo the Hebrew word bears. Not, that the vanity which is in Angels is of Gods putting; but the folly that is in them, he *puts to them, or chargeth it upon them, or layeth it to their charge.* As we ſay, *Such a one put it home upon him*; that is, he charged him ſoundly, or fully, with ſuch a crime or offence. To charge, is a judicial or Law-term, implying, that the Lord ſitting in judgment to examine the eſtate of Angels, charged them by way of accuſation, and upon trial found them (in a ſence) guilty of that, which, though they had not formed into any one ſin, yet might be formed and ſhap'd into any ſin, *Folly, or vain-glory.*

ישים מתהלה

Having given ſome account of thoſe terms, *Charging* and *Folly*, *He charged his Angels with folly*, it grows to a great doubt what Angels we are here to underſtand: what Angels did God thus charge with folly? The quere or doubt lies, whether we ſhall lay this charge at the door of the good Angels, or of the bad, or of both?

Many of the ancients reſtrain it to the evil Angels, to the *Apoſtate Angels*; God put no truſt in them, he ſaw folly in them; taking it for confeſſed, that the Angels which ſtood, the good Angels, are truſty ſervants, diſcreet and wiſe, far from either unfaithfulneſs or folly; ſuch as God hath put truſt in, and they never deceiv'd his truſt; ſuch whoſe obedience is made the pattern of ours, by Chriſt himſelf in his pattern of prayer, *Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.* And would the Lord regulate us by them who are themſelves irregular? or make them our copy in doing his will, whoſe folly renders them unfit to be truſted with the doing of his will? Therefore (ſay theſe) ſuch a charge ſuits not the ſtate and condition of the good Angels.

Others caſt it upon the good Angels, that God put no truſt, no, not in them. I conceive; from either, there may be a good ſence, though I incline to the latter. For in the Apoſtate Angels (take it in the broadeſt ſence) God ſaw no light, no goodneſs, no faithfulneſs at all; they have plainly diſcovered themſelves, and ſhewed, not only weakneſs and unfaithfulneſs, but wickedneſs and utmoſt folly. But to confine it to the evil Angels, or to underſtand it chiefly of them, is too narrow for the Text; eſpecially, ſeeing this is but a light, a too eaſie charge for *thoſe Apoſtate Spirits*, to ſay only thus, that God found unfaithfulneſs in them, and charged them with folly: for in them rebellion was found, and they ſtand charged to this day with High Treaſon againſt the Crown and dignity of the King of Heaven: and are therefore committed to priſon, and reſerved in chains of darkneſs to the judgment of the great day. As for the good Angels, God may be ſaid to charge them with folly without any wrong, either to the holineſs of their nature, or the ſtedfaſtneſs of their obedience. For upon examination (or intimation rather) he finds they have no wiſdom or ſtability, but by divine bounty and eſtabliſhment. As the Apoſtate Angels were poſitively full of folly and unfaithfulneſs; ſo the good Angels might be charged with folly, negatively, namely, that they had no faithfulneſs, but as aſſiſted and propt up.

Angeli boni ex ſe nihil; habent niſi inſaniam negativè, i. e. nullā ex ſe ſapientiam, nullam veritatem, bonitatem nullam.

But we may take the Angels in a third or middle conſideration, neither for the fallen or Apoſtate Angels, nor for the good and confirmed Angels as diſtinct, or ſince this diſtinction: But by Angels we may underſtand the *Angelical nature.* The whole complex nature of Angels in their creation and conſtitution was ſuch, as God could not truſt fully unto, ſuch as he ſaw folly in. We may demonſtrate this plainly, becauſe a great part of the Angels (and it is queſtioned whether or no the greater part, but it is clear, that a great part of the Angels) a whole Regiment at leaſt, proved diſloyal, and fell together: therefore the Angelical nature (in that abſtracted notion) is ſubject to folly and unfaithfulneſs, as well as man, although they are of a more excellent make and conſtitution then man. God looking upon Angels in general, ſaw they were not to be truſted; the event alſo ſhewing many of them (who were as good by nature as they who ſtand) falling from him, diſcovering their folly and nakedneſs to all the world.

But it may be queſtioned yet, how there could be folly in the Angelical nature; for as much as God viewing and reviewing all the works which he had made, *ſaw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good?*

I anſwer, firſt, God charged them with folly *comparatively*, reſpecting himſelf. As (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) the Apoſtle ſaith of God, *that he only hath immortality*; that ſpeech is excluſive, ſhutting out all other creatures from a participation of Gods immortality. Yet we know Angels are immortal, Angels dye not, therefore alſo they are oppoſed to men (in the next Verſe to the Text) *Who live in houſes of clay, whoſe foundations are in the duſt, and are cruſhed before the moth.* Angels are not cruſhed, they dye not, yet God only is immortal; becauſe the immortality of Angels compared with the immortality of God, is but mortality. And the Reaſon is this, becauſe Angels are not immortal in themſelves, or of themſelves, they have not original or abſolute immortality, their immortality is dependant and derivative; God only is independently and originally immortal, and hence *he only* is ſaid *to have immortality.* As it is in the point of life, ſo alſo of righteouſneſs, wiſdom and faithfulneſs. God only is faithful, *he only is wiſe*, that's the Apoſtles phraſe, *To God only wiſe:* Men, yea Angels are unfaithful, unwiſe, fooliſh, compared with God. He is wiſe of himſelf, and in himſelf, in his own compaſs: creatures have only what they borrow or receive from him. To this ſence one of the Ancients ſpeaks fully, *In compariſon of the Juſtice of God, if the holy Angels in Heaven be called unjuſt, I ſee no hurt in the aſſertion, not becauſe they have faln from juſtice, but becauſe they are creatures, and not God.* All is reſolved into this, *they are creatures*, that's enough to prove their folly and unfaithfulneſs. And if a man that hath not only ſome ſmattering of learning and knowledge, but is a profeſſed Scholar, be looked upon as ignorant, compared with the *Beu-clerks* and great Scholars of the world; is it any wonder that Angels ſhould be called fools, in reference to the infinite wiſdom of God? *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then men, and the weakneſs of God* is

In comparatione juſtitiæ Dei, ſi nec ſancti in cœlis Angeli juſti eſſe dicantur, non mihi videtur importuna ſententia, non quia ut hoc eſſent à juſtitia lapſi ſunt, ſed quia facti ſunt & Deus non ſunt. Auguſt. *cont. Priſc.*

is ſtronger then men. And it is as true of Angels, the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then Angels, and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger then Angels. Angels are called *Principalities and Powers*, but yet it is only becauſe they act in the Power of God, and go forth in his ſtrength; that's the firſt Anſwer. The whole nature of Angels is unfaithful and fooliſh, weighed with God.

Secondly, I anſwer, although in the Angels there is no actual unfaithfulneſs or folly, yet there is poſſible folly and unfaithfulneſs in Angels; and this potentiality is the thing here meant or aimed at. The Holy Angels that now ſtand are wiſe and faithful altogether, yet conſidered in themſelves (not as confirmed by Chriſt) they may fall; their condition is altered, but their conſtitution is the ſame. It is otherwiſe with man, (which makes a wide difference between Angels and men.) Man not only hath a potentiality to be fooliſh and unfaithful, but man is actually fooliſh and unfaithful; yea man in himſelf is nothing elſe but a bundle of folly and unfaithfulneſs. Whereas Angels in themſelves, or conſidered in their natural conſtitution, have no folly actually in them at all. *The nature of man is nothing but ſin, and Angels have no ſin at all in their nature*; they only have a potentiality, a poſſibility in their nature to ſin. So then we muſt underſtand this charge of folly with two cautions concerning Angels. Firſt, There was not any folly concreated with them, their nature is *purely pure*. Secondly, They have not contracted any folly into their nature. The folly of the good Angels is but like the folly of man in the ſtate of innocency, when he had only a power to ſin: which poſſibility of Angels to ſin is by the mediation of Chriſt (wherein theſe Angels have a ſhare, though not to redeem or raiſe them from their Fall (as man) yet to confirm and keep them from falling) I ſay, by the mediation of Chriſt that poſſibility is removed. Chriſt hath changed their poſſiblity to ſin, into an impoſſibility of ſinning. This is a glorious priviledge indeed, and that which all the Saints ſhall have in glory. Redemption hath not only bettered the condition of man, but the condition of Angels. Now *they all excel in ſtrength, doing the Commandments of God, and hearkning to the voice of his word for ever*, Pſalm 103.20.

Cuicunq; creaturæ hoc convenit, ut peccare non poſſit, hoc habet ex dono gratiæ, non ex conditione naturæ. Aqui. *p.* 1. *quæſt.* 63. *art.* 1.

We may hence learn, Firſt, *What the ſin of Angels was.*

God charged his Angels with folly; The poſſible ſin, which God ſaw and ſtill ſees in the nature of Angels, was the actual ſin of Angels. Pride and ſelf confidence were the ſins of Angels, and theſe are the moſt proper ſins of Angels; Angels cannot fall into every ſin. The Schoolman queſtions, *Whether the firſt ſin of Angels was pride?* He argues and concludes, that howſoever in regard of guilt, the Devils, or fallen Angels, have all ſins upon them, becauſe they tempt man to every ſin, (*For he that tempts another to a ſin which himſelf commits not, or is incapable to commit, is as guilty as if he had committed it,*) yet in regard of the act it ſelf, evil Angels can only commit thoſe ſins which are ſutable to a ſpiritual nature.

Aquin. par. 1. *q.*93.*art.* 2.

Now a ſpiritual nature is not affected with thoſe ſins which belong to a corporal or ſenſitive nature: Devils are not adulterers, they are not drunkards; theirs are ſpiritual ſins, and their chief ſpiritual ſin was pride: Their firſt ſin conſiſted in not ſubmitting themſelves to that condition wherein God placed them, and whereunto they were appointed. All agree it was pride, though there be different opinions about what this pride ſhewed it ſelf; whether in affecting a higher degree then God created them in, refuſing the work and office God ſet them about, (which ſome conceive, was the miniſtration to, or the guardianſhip of man, which truſt they deſerted or ſcorned) or whether it were in affecting a further condition upon their own ſtrength, not looking to the ſtrength and grace of God; whatſoever the particular was, the general is plain, *They abode not in the truth, they kept not their ſtation: Pride and ambition ſwel'd them, till they brake and fell.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *Angels* (*as creatures*) *are mutable creatures.*

Though they are the beſt of creatures, yet they are changeable creatures; though they are the moſt perfect creatures, yet there is ſomewhat in them of imperfection. Look upon Angels in their creation, they were created bleſſed; Bleſſed (as the Schools determine) with a natural bleſſedneſs, not with a ſupernatural, which conſiſts in the viſion of God; for, if they had been created in a ſupernatural bleſſedneſs, then they had never fallen; they were created only in a natural bleſſedneſs, and from that they might fall, and did. Now, indeed, the good Angels have obtained by Chriſt a ſupernatural bleſſedneſs, from which they cannot fall; and ſo by grace are become immutable, which by creation they were not. Though Chriſt be not a Redeemer (as was toucht before) yet he is a confirmer, a ſupporter of the holy Angels. In reference whereunto, Chriſt is called the *Head of all things* (Epheſ. 1.22.) *And of him the whole family in Heaven and in earth is named*, Epheſ. 3.15. And *by him* (Col. 1.20.) *God hath reconciled all things unto himſelf; by him, I ſay, whether they be things in earth, or things in Heaven.* Some underſtand that place in the *Coloſſians* of men only, becauſe of the word *reconciling*; yet we may well take in Angels alſo, becauſe that place takes in all things, both in Heaven and earth. And howſoever Angels needed not ſuch a reconciliation as ſuppoſes a breach of peace, or a falling out before: Yet they needed ſuch a reconciliation as conſiſts in the continuance and ſtrengthning of that peace which was before.

Angeli fuerunt à Deo creati beati, beatitudine naturali, non autem beatitudine ſupernaturali, quæ in viſione divinæ eſſentiæ conſiſtit. Aquin. *par.* 1. *q.*62. *ant* 1.

Further, We learn by way of Corollary, from the former point,

That, *there is no ſtability in any eſtate out of Chriſt.*

The Angels themſelves could not be truſted out of Chriſt; folly is in them not conſidered in Chriſt, how much more in man? When *Adam* fell, if God ſhould have repair'd him again, and ſet him up (*in ſtatu quo*) in the ſame condition wherein he was, yea, in a better (if a better could be had) without a Mediator; and ſo have tried his obedience once more; or ſhould every particular man have ſtood for himſelf, and not one for all; certainly, as we fell at firſt in a lump all together, ſo we ſhould have all fallen ſingle (as it were) by retail, one after another: *There is no aſſurance in any eſtate on this ſide Chriſt:* Nor man, nor Angel can hold out without a Surety: Chriſt is called *the Surety of the Covenant*, Heb. 7.22. becauſe he undertakes for us that we ſhall do our parts, that we ſhall be faithful and believing, that we ſhall be holy and humble, that we ſhall do what God expects from thoſe whom free grace ſhall ſave. Chriſt undertakes for all the grace, and holineſs, and faithfulneſs, which is required in believers; He gives no command but what himſelf helps us to fulfil, nor calls he for any duty but what himſelf works in us, and for us.

Fourthly Obſerve, That, *God ſees imperfection in creatures, whoſe natures are moſt perfect.*

Man looking upon the Angelical nature, or upon mans nature in innocency, could ſee no fault or folly in either; but God ſaw both poſſibly faulty, though not actually faulty. And, as it is with the nature of men and Angels, ſo with their works: when we can ſee nothing amiſs in a work, God can: As the Apoſtle acknowledges (*1 Cor.* 4.4.) *I know nothing by my ſelf:* I profeſs, when I look into the courſe of my miniſtery (for he ſpeaks to that particular) when I look how I have diſcharged my Apoſtleſhip, my conſcience bears me witneſs, I know of no unfaithfulneſs or neglect, but yet, *though I know nothing by my ſelf, I am not hereby juſtified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord:* as if he ſhould ſay, when God comes to look over my work, he may find faults, many faults in it; there is no ſtanding for creatures before God in any creature-purity: Angelical perfection is imperfect in his ſight. Angels have not the leaſt ſpot or tincture of ſin in their nature, ye the nature of Angels is potentially ſinful. The beſt creature (in regard of pure naturals) may be wrought to evil, only God cannot. And the reaſon is, becauſe every one may err, who hath not the rule of righteouſneſs within him: and therefore it is impoſſible God ſhould err, becauſe his own will is the rule of his own actions: He is every way a law unto himſelf. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the Gentiles (*Rom.* 2.14.) ſaith, *Theſe having not the Law, are a law to themſelves.* Not, that their nature is a law,

(which is the tranſcendent priviledge of God) but that they have the law of Nature, or the law printed in their nature, though not publiſhed to their ear; *They have the Law written in their hearts: but the heart of God is his Law, both written and unwritten.* Creatures how perfect ſoever in their nature, have the will of God for their rule and law: which though it be within them, yet it is not *Them*, and ſo they may act beſide it. The hand of the Artificer often fails in cutting or faſhioning the work he is about, becauſe his hand is not the rule by which he works: his hand works by a rule or line, his hand is not that rule or line: Therefore he ſometimes ſtrikes right, and ſometimes he ſtrikes wrong; but if the hand of a man were the rule by which he works, then it were impoſſible that ever he ſhould work amiſs. Thus it is with God, the very will of God which acts, is the rule by which he acts, hence it is impoſſible for God to fail; Angels and men act by a rule preſcribed, their will is one thing, and the rule is another; the power by which they work is one thing, and the direction by which they work is another; and therefore (to ſhut up this point) the moſt perfect creature may poſſibly ſwerve and err in acting; *Only he cannot err in any thing he doth, whoſe will is the perfect rule of all he doth.*

Solum illum actu à rectitudine declinare non contingit, cujus regula eſt ipſa virtus agentis. Aquin. *par.* 1.q.63. *art.* 1.

Fifthly, Foraſmuch as God beholding Angels, ſees folly in them; Learn,

That, *God hath no need of any creature, no not of Angels*.

The Reaſon is clearly this, becauſe Angels themſelves in themſelves are unfaithful, Angels themſelves in themſelves are fooliſh, therefore what need hath God of ſuch as theſe? As King *Achiſh* ſaid (1 *Sam.* 21. 15.) when *David* changed his behaviour before him, (ſtudiouſly acting the fool and madman) ſcrabling on the doors of the gate, and letting his ſpittle fall down upon his beard: What, ſaith *Achiſh* unto his ſervants, *Have I need of mad-men, that you have brought this fellow to play the mad-man in my preſence?* So God may ſay when he looks upon the beſt of creatures, Angels or men, have I any need of mad-men, any need of fools or of their folly? Foraſmuch then as there is nothing in any creature, barely as a creature, but what may be reduced to folly and unfaithfulneſs, and would certainly end there, therefore God hath no need at all of any creature. Men will ſay, we need not the help of diſloyal or untruſty men, we need not the help of fools to counſel us, or of unfaithful ones to act for us.

Beſides, Creatures are no help to God: For the truth is, God and the creature are no more then God alone; I ſay, God and the utmoſt perfection of all creatures put together are no more then God alone: The Reaſon of it is, becauſe, if there be any perfection in creatures, it is but what God himſelf hath put into them. What a man gives to another is no addition to himſelf; much leſs is that which God gives man or Angel, any addition to God. God is infinite, and no addition can be made to infinite: When the creature doth moſt for us, the creature (of it ſelf) doth nothing for us, *God doth all in all and by all.* The creature doth you no more good at one time then at another; all the good that is done at any time, God doth it: So then, every way God hath no need of creatures. And it is our comfort, I am ſure it ought to be, that he hath not. He ſaith to *wiſe men*, I have no need of your *counſels*; to *rich men*, I have no need of your *purſes*; and to *great men*, I have no need of your *power*; he ſees all is vanity.

Laſtly, If God truſt not Angels, let not us truſt in man; If he charges his Angels with folly, let not us adore the wiſdom of man. This diſcovery of imperfection in Angels ſhould lay all creatures low before us, and take us off from confidence or boaſting in any arm of fleſh. To this ſence *Eliphaz* proſecutes the Argument in the following words to the end of the Chapter. If Angels, the chiefeſt and choiceſt of creatures, be thus weak, what then is man, *who dwels in a houſe of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt, and who is cruſhed before the moth?*

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

How much leſs on them that dwell in houſes of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt, which are cruſhed before the moth?

They are deſtroyed from morning to evening, they periſh for ever without any regarding it.

Doth not their excellency, which is in them, go away? they dye, even without wiſdom.

THeſe three verſes contain a deſcription of man in oppoſition to the Angels. The form of the Argument was given before to this effect; That if Angels, thoſe excellent creatures, cannot ſtand before God, or be juſtified in his ſight; then much leſs man, a weak creature; *Man who dwels in a houſe of clay, and whoſe foundation is in the duſt.*

Two things this Context holds forth to us, concerning the weakneſs of man, in oppoſition to Angels.

Firſt, It ſhews that man is a *material ſubſtance*, ſo are not Angels, *Angels are ſpirits, ſpiritual ſubſtances.*

Secondly, It ſhews that man is a *mortal ſubſtance*, ſo are not Angels, *ſpirits dye not.*

That man is a material ſubſtance, is proved in the beginning of the 19. verſe, from thoſe words, *He dwels in a houſe of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt.*

That man is a mortal ſubſtance, is implied in the former; That which is made of clay and duſt muſt needs be brittle ware. But beſide that his mortality is implied in thoſe words, it is proved expreſly, and in terms, in the words following to the end of the Chapter. And this mortality of man is ſet forth by divers adjuncts or circumſtances.

Firſt, By a ſimilitude, ſhadowing the quickneſs or the ſuddenneſs of mans death, *They are cruſhed before the moth.*

Secondly, By the ſhortneſs of life; *They are deſtroyed from morning to evening.*

Thirdly, By the everlaſting power which death hath upon us (reſpecting this world;) *They periſh for ever.*

Fourthly, By the common and general inſenſibleneſs and inconſideration of this frail life, of this long-laſting death; *Man* (ſaith he) *is deſtroyed from morning to evening, he dyeth quickly, periſheth for ever*; he lies, as long as the world laſts, in his grave: yet ſuch is the ſtupidity of man that none regardeth all this, *he dyes without any regarding.*

Fifthly, And leaſt any ſhould ſay, ſurely, man is not ſuch a pitiful creature, as this ſad deſcription repreſents him; man was the moſt excellent part of the inferiour Creation; God planted many noble endowments upon man: and is there no more to be ſaid of him but this? *He is cruſh'd like a moth, and dyes, no man regarding?* That objection is taken away in the laſt verſe; as if the Holy Ghoſt had ſaid, I grant that man, beſides *duſt and clay* (which are his materials) hath many heavenly, yea *divine endowments*, he hath the impreſſions of *Gods Image* in reaſon and underſtanding ſtamped upon him; but, though he be thus qualified, yet *all his excellency* (all which may be accounted the choiceſt and the beſt in him) will not *keep him ſweet*, or protect him from death and rottenneſs: *Doth not* (ſaith he) *their excellency which is in them go away?* As if he had ſaid, If you alledge, that man is more then *duſt and clay*, then weakneſs and corruption; 'tis granted: But what then? *Doth not their excellency that is in them go away?* Doth it not vaniſh, and where is it? and where is he? All natural perfections (whatſoever man hath under the notion of a reaſonable creature) be they never ſo high and raiſed, quickly paſs, wither and decay: They have no abiding excellency in them, *Doth not their excellency that is in them go away? They have wiſdom, but they dye without wiſdom*, even as bruit beaſts; either their wiſdom decayes while they live, or it is not able to keep them alive: wiſdom, parts and learning ſtand them in no ſtead to prevent death. Now if their excellency go away, they muſt go too; if wiſdom cannot keep them alive, dye they muſt; as we ſhall ſee further in opening the ſeveral parts, having thus given the ſence in general.

Theſe things conſidered, we may ſee the ſtrength of the Argument in Verſe 19. *How much leſs on them who dwell in houſes of clay,* &c. As if he ſhould ſay, Foraſmuch as Angels cannot ſtand in competition with God, or approve themſelves in his ſight, certainly much leſs can man, how great thoughts ſoever he hath of himſelf; much leſs can man be juſtified in his ſight, who comes ſo many degrees ſhort of Angelical perfections; for his ſoul which is within him, though it be a noble and a ſpiritual ſubſtance, and that wherein he is moſt like to Angels, yet this ſoul of his ſojourns, dwells and acts in a body compoſed of corruptible clay, and hath no better a foundation (in a natural capacity, then the very duſt: And ſo ſubject is this man to mortality, thus compoſed of duſt and clay, as, what through the inward diſtempers of his body, what through outward accidents and caſualties, he is as tranſitory, and as ſubject to death, as the meaneſt worm, as the pooreſt creature in the world; *he is cruſhed before the moth.*

How much leſs on them that dwell in houſes of clay?

The Hebrew bears a double rendring; either, *how much leſs* (as we) or, *how much more*: If it be rendred *how much leſs*; then it refers to the firſt clauſe of the former verſe; thus, *if he puts no truſt in his Angels, then much leſs doth he put truſt in men, who dwell in houſes of clay.* If it be rendred, *how much more*, then it refers to the latter clauſe of that verſe; thus, *If he charged his Angels with folly, then how much more may he charge them with folly who dwell in houſes of clay?* Which words are a deſcription of man, either in his civil condition, or in his natural conſtitution. Some take theſe words in the very letter, *the houſe*, for that which we ordinarily call a houſe, the houſe wherein man ordinarily inhabits; as if *Eliphaz* had thus ſaid, Angels dwell in heaven, they have everlaſting *manſions*; but man dwells in a houſe of clay: the beſt and goodlieſt houſes are but clay and duſt, a little refined and ſublimated by art or nature; brick and ſtone, all theſe materials are but dirt concocted by the heat of fire and Sun: So that, if the alluſion were to the very houſes in which mankind dwells, in oppoſition to the habitation of Angels, theſe ſet them far inferiour to, and below the Angels. As theſe take it for the houſe wherein man lives, ſo ſome underſtand it, of the houſe where man lies, being dead, namely, the *Grave.* The *Chaldee* is expreſs, paraphraſing thus, *How much more the wicked, who dwell in a Sepulcher of clay?* That the grave is called a houſe, the Prophet helps us, *Iſa.* 14. 18, 19. *All the Kings of the Nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own houſe*, that is, in the grave, as the next words prove; *But thou art caſt out of thy grave*, &c. But I rather take it (as was before intimated) to be an expreſſion of mans natural conſtitution; *He dwells in a houſe of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt*: And ſo the Apoſtle is expreſs (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *If our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved*; the earthly houſe is the body; and (2 *Cor.* 4. 7.) the body is called *an earthen veſſel, we have this treaſure* (namely the precious promiſes and truths of God in the diſpenſation of the Goſpel) *in earthen veſſels.* We, dying men, preach eternal life; we have death in our faces, while the word of life is in our mouths. The word here uſed, ſignifies clay, either wrought or unwrought, either natural ſlimie dirt, or dirt made up for uſe by art: So, *Gen.* 11. 3. When they attempted the building of that Tower, it is ſaid, *they had ſlime for morter*; it is the word of the Text, which is uſed for both ſlime and morter; *they had ſlime* (which is natural) *for morter*, that is (by art & induſtry) they made *morter* of *ſlime*: The body of man is a houſe of clay, but not of rude natural clay; the power, and (if I may ſo ſpeak) the art of God hath wrought it beyond it ſelf, and refined it for this goodly building, the body of man.

Particula אפכ *pro quo eſt ſimpliciter* אף *hoc loco utrumq; deſignat, ſc. vel quanto minus vel quanto magis.* Druſ.

חמר *Turbidus, lutulentus, mixtus, ut cum aqua turbantur, & in eis lutum ita commovetur, ut confundantur & invicem miſceantur, ut in cementum degenerent.*

The body of man is called a houſe, or a building, in two reſpects. Firſt, Becauſe of the comely fabrick; it is ſet up by line or by rule; there is admirable architecture, admirable skill in building and raiſing up the body of man, ſtory after ſtory, room after room, and contrivance after contrivance, in all ſo compact and ſet together, that the moſt curious piles in the world are but rude heaps compared to it; ſo then in reſpect of the frame and ſtructure, it is fitly called a houſe.

Secondly, The frame of the body is called a houſe, in reſpect of the ſoul; the ſoul dwells in or inhabits the body, as the whole man inhabits or dwells in a houſe; the ſoul guides and orders the body, as the inhabitant orders the affairs of the houſe; or, as the Mariner and Pilot ſteer and direct the motions of the Ship: Not that the ſoul is in the body accidently (we muſt not ſtrain the ſimilitude ſo far) as a man is in a houſe, or a Mariner is in the Ship: there is a formal union between the body and the ſoul; only the ſoul is ſaid to dwell in the body, and the body or the matter is after called a foundation, becauſe there is the beginning. Man was begun at his body, as the houſe is at the foundation. Firſt, *God formed man* (that is, the body) *out of the duſt of the earth, and then he breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul.*

Hoc corpus luteum domus animæ dicitur, quia anima humana quantum ad aliquid eſt in corpore, ſicut homo in domo, vel ſicut nauta in navi, In quantum ſcilicet eſt motor corporis; anima autem non unitur corpori accidentaliter ſed formaliter, ut forma materiæ, dicitur enim materia fundamentum formæ, eo quod eſt prima pars in generatione, ſicut fundamentum in conſtitutione domus. Aquin.

Thus the body is a houſe, and it is a houſe of clay, or a houſe of earth, ſo called, chiefly in two reſpects.

Firſt, Becauſe of the matter of it; it is made of earth. Though all Elements (as Naturaliſts teach) meet in mixt bodies, yet earth is predominant in groſs or heavy bodies.

Secondly, Becauſe of the continuance of it, or the means by which it is ſupported; for as it was at the firſt framed out of the earth, ſo it is ſtill ſupported and maintained by earth; earthly creatures, meat and drink, with ſuch like accommodations, continue and repair this houſe from day to day, until at laſt, it be laid down in the duſt, and return to earth again. So then, it is called an earthly houſe, not only from the matter of which it is made, but alſo from the means by which it is kept in repair, earth and earthy all.

Corpus humanum lutũ dicitur, quod ex terra & aqua gravioribus elementis abundantius conſtat. Aq.

Whoſe foundation is in the duſt.

Theſe words aggravate the weakneſs of mans condition. Suppoſe man were formed out the duſt, and were but clay, yet, had he a ſtrong foundation, that would ſupport and ſtrengthen him. The ſtrength of a building is in the foundation, and that building whoſe walls are but weak, may ſtand long, being firmly founded. The Church of Chriſt is weak of it ſelf; but becauſe the Church hath ſuch a mighty foundation, *Chriſt the Rock, a living and unmoveable Rock;* (that confeſſion of *Peter, Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God*, is the Churches foundation-rock) therefore *the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* But when the building is weak, and the foundation weak too, in how tottering a condition is ſuch a building? Mans foundation is but ſand or duſt; and the word ſignifies flying, light, unſtable, moveable duſt, ſuch as lies on the ſurface of the earth, and is plaid about with every puff of wind, though ſome (I confeſs) take the word not ſtrictly, for this flying duſt, but for ſlimie duſt, or duſt moiſtened, which is ſlime. This was the matter out of which God created man (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *duſt out of the earth, or out of the duſt of the earth.* That duſt which can hardly be collected or kept together, to make a ſubſiſtence, that is laid together as the foundation of man; *His foundation is in the duſt.*

עפר *Pulvis propriè rarior & tenuior, qualis in ſuperficie terræ.* Merc. *in* Gen. *Significat non ſimpliciter pulverem, ſed pulverem cœnoſum & limoſum.* Fag. *in* Gen. 2. 7. *Pulvis leviſſimus, ex quo nihil firmum aut diuturnum compingi poteſt.*

Hence we may obſerve firſt, what the pedigree and original of man is; what treaſure ſoever he carries about him, yet he is an *earthen veſſel*; or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the firſt man, 1 *Cor.* 15. 47. He is of the *earth earthy.* Earth is the original of man, and man himſelf is no better, *earthy*; yea the earth is called *his earth*; as if he had propriety in nothing but earth, *Pſal.* 146. 4. ſpeaking of the greateſt Princes, *Truſt ye not in Princes, nor in the Son of man, his breath goeth forth, and he returneth to his earth.* Our bodies can challenge no alliance with, or propriety in any thing but earth; it is *our earth.* The Wiſe man (*Eccleſ.* 12. 7. calls the body only an Allie to the duſt, or a-kin to duſt, but plain *duſt*; *Then* (ſpeaking of Death) *ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was*; it came from the earth, and in death it returns to the ſame point from whence it ſet out.

A ſecond thing we may take notice of from mans Original, which exceedingly advances the infinite wiſdom, and the almighty power of God;

That, *Duſt and Earth are the matter out of which we are formed.*

But doth the countenance of man repreſent duſt and earth? Could any one ſay, who had nothing to judge by, but the eye, that man was made of ſuch mean materials? what characters of Beauty and Majeſty ſit in his viſage? how unlike is he to his own parent the Earth? Man hath received from God, not only an excellent fabrick or compoſure

ſure of body; but if you conſider it, the very matter of which the body is compoſed, is far more excellent then earth or duſt. Take a piece of earth, or a handful of duſt, and compare them with the fleſh of man, that fleſh is earth indeed, but that fleſh is far better then meer earth. This ſhews the power of the Creator, infinitely exceeding the power of a creature. A *Goldſmith* can make you a goodly Jewel, but then you muſt give him Gold and precious Stones, of which to make it; he can put the matter into a better form, but he cannot make the matter better. The *Engraver* can make a curious Statue, exactly limb'd and proportion'd to the life, out of a rough piece, but the matter muſt be the ſame you put into his hands; if you give him Marble, it will be a *Marble Statue*; but he cannot mend the matter. Mans work often exceeds his matter, but mans work cannot make the matter exceed it ſelf. Now God took up a rude lump of earth, or ſubtil duſt, and he did not only put that into an excellent form, but he mended the matter alſo. Man is earth, but he is earth ſublimated and refined: *Not only doth the form exceed the matter, but the matter formed exceeds the matter unformed.*

Materiam ſuperabat opus.

Thirdly, *As this lifts up the wiſdom and power of God, ſo it ſhould humble and lay man low.*

Eliphaz improves this principle as an argument to take down the ſpirit of *Job* from his ſuppoſed heights and ſelf-conceits. Surely thou art great in thy own thoughts, when thou preſumeſt to enter a conteſt with God: but, *look to thy Original*; ſuch towring, lofty, and aſcending thoughts would quickly be abated, if thou wouldſt remember that thou art but a *clod of earth*, a little *refined clay*, *moving ſlime*, *enlivened duſt*, *breathing aſhes*; did we ſpiritually look upon the matter of our bodies, it would take down the ſwelling of our ſpirits; when our ſpirits are like *Jordan*, in the time of harveſt, overflowing all the banks of humility and moderation, this thought ſpiritualized, will bring us into our channels again, and recall us to our own bounds and banks. Some *Naturaliſts* obſerve of the *Bees*, that when they are up and angry, do but throw a little duſt upon them, they are quiet, and hive again. Certainly, when our imaginations are *buzzing and humming* in the air, when they are flying and mounting up to heaven, not in holy aſpirings to God (which we ever ought) but in bold aſpirings againſt God, which we ſhould never dare, in ſuch a diſtemper of our ſpirits, if we could but caſt this duſt upon them, it would quiet and bring them in again.

Hath not man cauſe to lie as low in his thoughts, as that from whence he was extracted? ſhould not he be humbled to the duſt, who is the duſt? Eſpecially this earth ſhould be abaſed in all addreſſes to heaven, in all our approaches unto God; as *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 27. *I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, who am but duſt and aſhes.* We ſhould never be ſo low in our own thoughts, as when we make uſe of our higheſt priviledges. And the nearer we are admitted to come to heaven, the more ſhould we (for the magnifying of free Grace, which makes this admiſſion) remember that we are but earth.

Fourthly, If the Body be but clay, and hath but a foundation of duſt; then,

Do not beſtow too much care and coſt upon your clay, upon your duſt.

How many are there who beſtow much pains to trim up a vile body, and neglect a precious ſoul? Moſt uſually they who beſtow moſt pains upon this *mortal houſe* of clay, beſtow leaſt about that *immortal inhabitant*. *In an over-cared-for body, there ever dwells a neglected ſoul.* You ſhall have a body cleanly waſhed, and a ſoul all filth; a body neatly cloathed and dreſt, with a ſoul all naked and unready; a body fed, and a ſoul ſtarved; a body full of the creature, and a ſoul empty of Chriſt; *theſe are poor ſouls indeed.* That complaint of the *Moraliſt* againſt *Heathens*, may be renewed againſt ſome *Chriſtians*; they are buſied moſt *betweem the Comb and the Glaſs, and troubled more at a diſorder in their hair, then at a diſorder in the Commonwealth*, (he ſaid, I ſay) *then at a diſorder in the Church, or in their own hearts.* It is a ſad thing that any who bear the name of a Chriſtian, ſhould ſpend much time between *the Comb and the Glaſs*, and but little between *Ordinance and Ordinance, between the Bible and the Pulpit, between reading and hearing, between both, and holy meditation*; the body is but a houſe of clay, it is but duſt, therefore be not ſo induſtrious for it. We uſually laugh at children, when they are making houſes of clay, and Pies of dirt. They whoſe care is thus over-active for the body, , are but *children of a greater ſtature*, and ſhew, they have ſo much more folly in their hearts, then they, by how much they have more years over their heads; and are fooliſh about more ſerious matters then they. *There is no Child to the old Child.*

Fifthly, Seeing this houſe of clay is founded alſo in the duſt, obſerve,

That, *Man is a very frail, an unſteady, and an unſtable creature; every puff muſt needs ſubject him to ruine.*

Look upon his foundation, it is nothing but duſt. When Chriſt (*Mat.* 7. *ult.*) had finiſhed his Sermon upon the Mount, he compares his hearers to ſuch as build either upon the Rock, or upon the Sand; *They that hear and do not, are like a houſe built upon the ſand*: and what becomes of that houſe? when the rain deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, *that houſe fell, and the fall thereof was great.* A foundation of duſt or ſand cannot ſtand out one ſtorm. The houſe of a mans body is walled and roofed with clay, and bottomed upon no better then duſt; the ſtrength of the Church (as was touch'd before) is deſcribed by the matter of its foundation, a Rock, *Mat.* 19. And the new *Jeruſalem* (which, as it is conceived, to be the moſt pure ſtate of the Church here on earth, ſo it muſt be the ſtrongeſt) is ſet forth having twelve fonndations, and they all of ſtone, and all thoſe ſtones moſt precious, and therefore moſt durable, *Rev.* 21. 19. The ſtrength and ſtability of that eſtate which the Saints ſhall inherit, when theſe houſes of earth are by death levelled to the earth (the ſtability (I ſay) of that eſtate) is deſcribed under the notion of a *City which hath foundations* (Heb. 11. 10.) He, namely, *Abraham) looked for a City which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God.* When the holy Ghoſt ſaith *foundations*, who can tell how many they may be? we can eaſily tell the feweſt they can be; *two* is the loweſt number; ſo that at leaſt this City hath a foundation upon a foundation. The foundation of Chriſts perfect righteouſneſs is laid upon the foundation of Gods eternal free love; here is foundation upon foundation. The City above hath theſe foundations, and therefore we receive *a City that cannot be ſhaken.* I note theſe things, to ſhew by conſent of Scripture, that the ſtability of any condition, in alluſion to a building, is expreſt by the ſtrength of its foundation. Now all our outward glory and excellency, our life, and all the pomp of it, hath ſcarce ſo much as deſerves to be called a foundation: a foundation of duſt hath only the name of a foundation. That *Image* in *Daniel*, which typed out all the deſcents of worldly greatneſs, had *a head of Gold, the breaſt and arms of Silver, the thighs of Braſs, and the legs of Iron, but the feet were part of Iron and part of Clay.* The feet are the foundation, and the feet of this Image ſpeak thus much to all the world, that all worldly pomp and greatneſs, all worldly power and Majeſty muſt fall; for the Image ſtands upon clay; and though it have a mixture of iron in the feet, which is ſtrong, yet it ſhall not ſtand by the iron which is ſtrong, but fall and be broken by the clay, which is weak. As it was in thoſe great Monarchies, into which the outward power of Nations and Kingdoms was contracted; ſo if you look upon any particular man, though you may conceive him to have a head of gold, arms and breaſt of ſilver, thighs of braſs, and legs of iron, yet when you come to the feet, the foundation of the whole body, it is but duſt, which a ſmall ſtorm will diſſipate and blow away. The body of man hath ſo weak a foundation, that it is ſome time compared to that which hath no foundation, *a Tabernacle* (1 Cor. 5.) *If the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved*, ſaith the Apoſtle) Now a Tabernacle hath a roof or a covering, but no foundation: The Tabernacle of the body hath a covering, but hardly any foundation, only a foundation in the duſt.

Tectum habet, fundamentum non habet.

Laſtly, Conſider the form of ſpeaking in this Scripture; *How much leſs on them that dwell in houſes of clay?* He ſpeaks of the whole man, as dwelling in a houſe of clay: Now we know that a body cannot properly be ſaid to dwell in a body, the houſe doth not dwell in a houſe; yet he ſpeaks, as of a compleat perſon dwelling in a houſe of clay, which yet is to be underſtood of one part of the perſon, *The ſoul; that dwels in a houſe of clay*, that is, it acts and officiates in a body compoſed of clay. Hence obſerve, ſeeing the whole man cometh under the notion of the ſoul,

That, *the ſoul of man is the man.*

The ſoul goes away with the name of the whole perſon: The ſoul is not the man in a natural conſideration, (as ſome have Philoſophiz'd, aſſerting that man is nothing but a ſoul cloathed with a body) for, man is man by the union of ſoul and body; and the perfection of man as man, conſiſts in that union; but the ſoul is the man in a moral conſideration, becauſe it is the more noble and excellent part of man: and it is uſual to denominate the whole from that part which is more excellent. The body is but as the Cabinet, the ſoul is the Jewel; the body is but as the ſheath or the ſcabbard, the ſoul is as the knife or the ſword: You know when a man buyeth a ſword, he buyeth a ſcabbard too; or when he buyeth a knife, he buyeth the ſheath too; yet he ſaith, this knife coſt me ſo much, or I gave ſo much for this ſword; he makes no mention of the ſcabbard or of the ſheath: now the body is the ſheath or ſcabbard of the ſoul, (*Dan.* 7. 15.) you have it expreſt ſo, *I was grieved* (ſaith the Prophet) *in my ſpirit in the midſt of my body*, ſo we tranſlate it, but the Chaldee is (and ſo we have in ſome Margents) *in the midſt of my ſheath*; *The ſoul is the blade, a blade of admirable metal and temper; the body how beautiful ſoever by nature, or gay by art, is but a velvet, or an emboſſed ſheath and ſcabbard*: Therefore at firſt, when God formed man out of the duſt of the earth, and had breathed into him the breath of life, the reſult of all is, *and man became a living ſoul*; it is not ſaid man became a living body, though life was breathed into the body, and the body ſtood up and lived; yet the beſt part is named for all, the duſt and the clay are (as it were) quite forgotten in the ſtory, *man became a living ſoul.* And that may be a reaſon, why the fear of God and keeping his Commandments (*Eccleſ.* 12. *ult.*) is called *all man*, becauſe the things chiefly concern that part of man, which (upon the matter) is all man. The fear of God and keeping his Commandments, are *ſoul work*, and tend to the eternal welfare of the ſoul; and though the body ſhares in all the bleſſings, and aſſiſts in moſt labours of the ſoul; yet the ſoul labours moſt for, and is the chiefeſt ſeat of bleſſedneſs. How ſtrangely have ſome departed from this point of truth, which the Scripture every where writes as with a *Sun-beam*? who inſtead of making the ſoul to be the chief part of man, deny that man hath any ſuch part. And whereas ſome (toucht at before) err'd on the right hand, ſaying that *man was nothing but a ſoul*; theſe go aſtray more, and more dangerouſly on the left hand, ſaying, that *man hath no ſoul at all*: An opinion, howſoever lately dreſt in ſome fineneſs of wit and ſubtilties of Philoſophy; yet in it ſelf, ſo groſs, ſo diſhonourable to man, ſo contrary to this Text and the whole tenor of the word of God, that I hope *it is very mortal, and will ſhortly find a grave in every heart, but theirs, who have more reaſon to wiſh it, then to maintain it.* I intend no diſpute about it, beyond the Argument before me; which if it be not demonſtrative (as many others from Scripture are) yet it carries (at leaſt) a fair probability aud an ingenuous ground: For how can man be ſaid to dwell in a houſe of clay, if he himſelf be nothing elſe but a houſe of clay? or how can the inhabitant and the houſe be in all, but one, and the ſame?

Non quod anima ſit homo, ut quidam poſuerant, dicentes hominem nihil aliud eſſe quam animam indutam corpore; ſed quia anima eſt principalior pars hominis, unumquodq; autẽ conſuevit appellari id quod eſt in eo principalius. Aquin. *in loc.*

כל־ האדם

But I ſhall dwell too long upon theſe houſes of clay, in which man cannot dwell long, for it followes;

Which are cruſhed before the moth.

What ſtrength is there in houſes *which are cruſhed before the moth*? or as others read it, *which ſhall be conſumed after the manner of a moth*? Mr. *Broughton* thus, *Beaten to powder as a moth be they*; that is, they are cruſhed as ſoon, or as ſpeedily as a moth. Another, *They are conſumed as it were with a moth.* A fifth tranſlates differently from all theſe, *which are cruſhed and conſumed before Arcturus. Arcturus* is a conſtellation in Heaven about the *North Pole*; we read in the 9. Chapter of *Job*, ver. 9. *Which makes Arcturus, Orion and the Pleiades*, &c. The ſame word here, ſignifies a moth, and ſometimes a conſtellation, a knot or company of Stars: The ſence of this reading is made out thus; *they are cruſhed before the face of Arcturus*, that is, they are cruſhed as long, or whileſt *Arcturus* doth continue; in plain Engliſh, as long as there is a Star in Heaven, man will be a mortal man; or man will never change this condition of mortality, while the world ſtands. We may thus expound it, by that (*Pſal.* 72. 17.) where the Prophet deſcribing the Kingdom of Chriſt in the extent both of place and time, ſaith, *His name ſhall be continued as long as the Sun*; the Hebrew is *His name ſhall continue before the face of the Sun*; to continue before the face of the Sun, is to run in a line of equal continuance with the Sun; ſo here, they are cruſhed before the face of thoſe Stars, that is, they ſhall be in ſuch a cruſhing, periſhing condition, as long as thoſe Stars continue, which is, as long as the courſe of this world continues. Our own tranſlation, which comes clear to the letter of the Original, is further to be looked into. *They are cruſhed before the moth.* It may have a three-fold interpretation. Firſt, Before the moth, that is, before in time, or ſooner then the moth. How quickly is a moth cruſhed? man may be cruſhed before it, ſooner then it is cruſht. Secondly, *Before the moth*, may be as much as, in preſence of the moth; as if he ſhould ſay, man thinks he is able to ſtand it out againſt a potent Adverſary, yea, againſt God himſelf; but, alas poor creature, he is not able to ſtand before a moth, or contend with a fly, if God arm any of them againſt him. Thirdly, *They are cruſhed before the moth*, that is, man is cruſht and torn, vext and worn out by a thouſand miſeries and troubles which attend his life, before ever the moth hath to do with him, before ever he lyes down in the bed of death, before the moth, that is, for the moth to fret on, or as a companion for the worms.

לפני עש

Ad facies tineæ, σητὸς τρόπον, *in modũ tineæ*, Sept.

Velut à tinea, Vulg. Pagnin.

לפני שמש

Ad facies ſolis.

All theſe rendrings, though they differ in words, come near and meet in the ſame general ſence, namely, *An illuſtration of mans frailty.* Take them firſt by way of ſimilitude, *Man is cruſhed, as it were, with a moth*; it notes thus much to us, *That death conſumes us without noiſe*, ſecretly and ſilently: To do a thing as a moth, is to do it ſilently and without noiſe, *Hoſea* 5. 12. God himſelf ſaith, *That he will be as a moth unto* Ephraim, *and as a Lion*, verſ. 14. When he ſaith, he will be as a Lion, it implieth open judgments, which come violently and viſibly, which come in like thunder, roaring as a Lion upon them: But when he ſaith, *I will be as a moth to* Ephraim, the meaning is, I will ſend ſilent and ſecret judgments upon you, which ſhall eat out your ſtrength, corrode your power, and blemiſh the beauty of your garments, and you ſhall not perceive it: Ye ſhall be undone, conſumed, and (as we ſpeak Proverbially) *ye ſhall never know who hurt you.* The open enemies of the Church are threatned with ſecret judgments, under this notion of a moth, *Iſa.* 50. 9. *Lo they ſhall wax old as doth a garment, the moth ſhall conſume them.* Again, Chap. 51. 6, 7. *Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their reviling. For the moth ſhall eat them up like a garment, and the worm ſhall eat them like wool*: that is, whereas your enemies have made a great noiſe and clamour with their revilings againſt you; I will come againſt them without noiſe, they ſhall periſh with as little clamour as a garment doth, that is eaten with moths. And thus the life of man is ordinarily conſumed (as it were) by a moth; ſickneſſes and diſeaſes enter ſecretly, into his houſe of clay, they lye in the frame, and between the rafters of this houſe, ſucking up the ſpirits, and waſting the ſtrength, ſpending the heat, and drinking up the natural moiſture of the body; we know not how we conſume, but we conſume; we know not how we decline, but we decline; we dye, we know not how, but we dye: Is it not then as with *a moth*, creeping upon us, yea, feeding upon us without noiſe?

Again, Take it by way of ſimilitude, not as before, *actively, or inſtrumentally*, they are *cruſhed as by a moth*, or as a moth cruſhes; but *paſſively or ſubjectively*, *They are cruſhed as a moth*, that is, they are cruſhed as a moth is cruſhed, alluding to the eaſineſs of cruſhing a moth: A moth is duſt as ſoon as you cruſh it, the leaſt touch kills it: Man in his houſe of clay is ſo weak, that if God do but touch him, he dies and falls to duſt; the Lord needs not bring his great

Artillery, and make batteries againſt the body of man; the body of man is no ſuch *ſtrong Fort or Bulwark* to ſtand out a long ſiege, or endure much aſſaulting and oppoſition; he is cruſhed as *a moth between your fingers*: Hence *David* moſt humbly deprecates the ſtroak of God, which he ſaw coming, or felt as come, becauſe he was not able to bear it, *Pſal.* 39. 10. *Remove thy ſtroak away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand,* (Lord if thou ſtrike me thus, I ſhall quickly conſume.) And leſt you ſhould think that *Davids* fleſh (he being a King) was tender and delicate, and ſo leſs able to bear any hardſhip, therefore in the following words, he puts the caſe in general concerning *man* or *man-kind.* Take the man *whoſe ſtrength is as the ſtrength of ſtones, and his fleſh as braſs*; yet this man breaks and vaniſhes under the hand of God, ſo he affirms, *ver.* 11. under this paſſive conſideration of *a Moth, When thou with rebuke doth correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a Moth*; (And then cloſes with that common axiome of mans mortality) *ſurely every man is vanity,* Selah.

Further, Man may well be ſaid to be cruſhed, or dye even as a moth, for as the garment breeds the moth, and then the moth eats the garment; ſo (beſides that power of God, or the out-ward ſtroak of his hand, of which *David* ſpake) mans own diſtempered body breeds ill humours, they diſeaſes, and theſe breed death: As it was with *Jonas* gourd, ſo it is with us, we give life and ſuck to a worm in our own roots, which ſucks out our life, cauſing our leaves to fall, and our goodly branches ſuddenly to wither.

Thirdly, From that ſence, he is *cruſhed before Arcturus*, or as long as the Stars continue, Obſerve;

> That, *as mans ſtate is frail and weak, ſo it will be, the for ever of this world.*

Do not look that ever there ſhall riſe up a generation of men, that ſhall have better houſes then houſes of clay, or houſes ſtronger built then our preſent buildings. As we are riſen up in our fathers ſtead, a generation of *ſinful men*; ſo we are riſen up in our fathers ſtead, a generation of *weak mortal men*: and our children will ariſe in the ſtead of us their fathers, a generation of men, as mortal as we their fathers. Till the whole compages and courſe of nature be changed, man ſhall not exchange the infirmity of his nature, *He ſhall never be without cruſhing ſickneſſes, till he is above them.*

The ſad ſtory of man holds on ſtill, and grows yet more ſad; before it was *cruſhing*, now it is *deſtroying.*

Verſe 20. **They are deſtroyed from morning to evening' they periſh for ever without any regarding it.**

We may underſtand the former verſe of natural death, and this of caſual and violent death. Deſtruction and periſhing, import violence; though I conceive natural death be here alſo intended. *They are deſtroyed from morning to evening, they periſh for ever without any regarding it*; or as Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *between a merning and evening, they are waſted without any regarding,* or without any thinking upon it.

They are deſtroyed.] That is, they are ſubject or liable to deſtruction: That phraſe *from morning to evening*, notes the whole day: it is as much as to ſay, they are deſtroyed continually, or all the day long, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks out of the *Pſalm,* Rom. 8. 36. *For thy ſake are we killed all the day long*: the morning and the evening are the parts of a natural day, *Gen.* 1. 5. or the two terms of a civil day, and theſe include and take in the full compaſs of the day.

A mane ad veſperam, i. e. *per totum diem, quippe mane & veſpera ſunt partes diei.* Druſ.

> This ſence teacheth us, That, *man is deſtroyable every moment.*

He waſtes in one ſence, while he grows; and dyes, from the morning of his birth, and coming into the world, to the evening of his return, and going out of the world: And not only ſo, but he is obnoxious to the violent aſſaults of death every day, and all hours of every day: From the morning when he riſes, to the evening when he goes to bed, he walks among armies of dangers, and within the Gun-ſhot of deſtruction. The Apoſtles Catalogue of perils is true to this day, 2 *Cor.* 11. 26. *In perils of Waters, in perils of Robbers, in perils of mine own Country-men, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderneſs, in perils in the Sea, in perils among falſe Brethren*: Every place is a peril, and every perſon a peril. Where can we go, with whom can we meet, and not go among or meet with perils? And do not all theſe perils ſpeak deſtruction *from morning to evening? Pauls* experiences, both in regard of a natural, but eſpecially of violent death, brought forth theſe concluſions, which come full up to the point, *I dye dayly,* (1 Cor. 15. 31.) *in deaths often* (2 Cor. 11. 23.) *we are killed all the day long* (Rom. 8. 36.)

Secondly, Take the words as a *proverbial ſpeech*, by which the ſhorteſt time is ſignified. As (*Iſa.* 38. 12.) *Hezekiah* complaining, ſets forth his mortal ſickneſs, threatning preſent death and cutting off, thus, *Mine age is departed and removed from me as a ſhepherds Tent; I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining ſickneſs, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me*; that is, either continually or ſuddenly: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me, I am waſting perpetually: or *before night*, within the compaſs of this day thou wilt deſtroy and make an end of me: theſe were the thoughts of my heart, when I was in the hands of that *acute* diſpatching diſeaſe. The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 90. 5, 6.) deſcribes man as graſs, *In the morning it flouriſheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth*; that is, man continueth but a very ſhort time: His life is but a ſpan long, or but as a day long. *Jonahs* Gourd came up in a night, and periſhed in a night; and man cometh up in the morning, and periſheth in the evening. The Naturaliſts ſpeak of a Fly, they call *Ephemeron*, a creature of one day, which comes forth in the morning, is very active about noon, but when the Sun declineth, it declines too, and ſets with the ſetting of the Sun. Man is an *Ephemeron*, a creature of one day; for howſoever his life conſiſteth of many days, and is often lengthened out to many years; yet between morning and evening, or from morning to evening, he is deſtroyed. The firſt ſtep he ſets upon the ſtage of the world, is a going out of the world; his aſcending to the height of his natural perfection, hath in it a deſcent. One part of his life compared with another, is an increaſe; but the whole, in reference to his end, is a decreaſe: his life is but a breathing death, life ſhortning as faſt as it lengthens; his life is death haſtning upon him continually. A hand breadth is quickly meaſured; *Behold* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 39. 5.) *thou haſt made my dayes a hand breadth*; nothing needs no time to paſs it in: mans age, in it ſelf, is but little, and comparatively it is *nothing*; it falls under no calculation before the face of Eternity. *Mine age is nothing before thee.*

But though the life of man be thus ſhort, and himſelf be deſtroyed between a morning and an evening; yet death laſts long, *they periſh for ever without any regarding.*

They periſh for ever.] Death it ſeems is everlaſting. *They periſh*; the word is often uſed in this book for the diſſolution of ſoul and body, not for the annihilation of either, as periſhing properly imports: to periſh, is here but to dye, for thus even the *righteous periſh, and no man lays it to heart,* Iſa. 57. 1.

But doth man *periſh* thus, dyes he for ever? Shall there not be a return, a reſurrection, ſhall not ſoul and body be re-united? How is it ſaid then, they periſh or dye for ever?

εἰς χρόνον πολύν.

For ever,] is ſometime put for an infinite time, and ſometime for an indefinite time, 1 *Chron.* 23. 25. *The Lord God of* Iſrael *hath given reſt unto his people, that they may dwell in* Jeruſalem *for ever.* And yet the Jews are now ſo far from dwelling in *Jeruſalem,* that they have ſcarce reſt or dwelling among any people. The like ſence of *for ever,* read 1 *Kings* 2. 33. *Pſal.* 132. 12, 14. Yet further, *for ever* is put for the finite time of one mans life, 1 *Sam.* 27. 12. *He ſhall be my ſervant for ever,* that is, *as long as he lives*; Pſal. 23. 6. *I will dwell in the houſe of the Lord for ever*; that is, as long as I live. In the Text before us, *for ever,* is as long as this world laſts; it notes the utmoſt term of time, not (which is without term) eternity. *They periſh for ever,* that is, they ſhall not live in this world any more; as (*Job* 14. 14.) *If a man dye, ſhall he live again?* As if he had ſaid, man can dye but once; he cannot live again, that is, in this world; ſhall he any more

to

return to his houſe, to his wife and children, to his riches or honours, and ſhall he here again enjoy ſuch an eſtate as he had before? That (*Pſal.* 103. 16.) explains it ſo, *As for man, his days are as graſs, as a flower of the field ſo he flouriſheth; for the wind paſſeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof ſhall know it no more*; that is, he ſhall never return to that local place, or civil place in which he lived; he ſhall not return to that place of Magiſtracy or Miniſtry, to that place of merchandizing or trading, of husbandry or handicraft, where he converſ'd before. Thus his place will know him no more. Man dyes but once, and therefore when he dyes, he is ſaid to dye for ever. There is a *ſecond death*, but it is only a *ſecond condition of life*. Some ſhall ſo live for ever, that they ſhall be dying for ever. The miſery of all men here, is, that they are dying while they live; the miſery of the damned hereafter, will be, that they are living while they dye. We ſee then, that as life is a continual going out of the world; ſo from death there is no returning to the world, *they periſh for ever*; when once you dye, you are dead for *good and all* (as we ſay;) there's an end, in reſpect of any work proper to this world, whether Natural, Civil, or Spiritual. A dying man periſhes for ever from eating and drinking, from any outward content or pleaſure. When *Barzillai* was (as it were but) upon the borders of death, and confines of the grave, (2 *Sam.*19.25.) he beſpeaks *David* thus, who had invited him to Court, *Can I taſte what I eat and drink?* (and it follows) *Can I any more hear the voice of Singing-men and Singing-women? Can I any more?* As if he had ſaid, I am now nigh unto death, theſe delights are gone, they are periſhed for ever, I can hardly taſte any thing I eat or drink; the pleaſant Voice or muſical Inſtrument, can I any more hear? Much more then in death it ſelf are all theſe outward comforts periſhed, and will periſh for ever.

Again, In reſpect of civil works, he that dyes periſheth for ever; no more buying, or ſelling, or trading, or dealing, all theſe things are paſt, and paſt for ever. Yea, death puts an end to all ſpiritual works, ſuch as were the Saints exerciſe and duty upon the earth; at the grave, there's an end of them alſo; a dying man periſhes for ever, in reſpect of repenting or believing, in reſpect of praying or hearing the word. Theſe are heavenly works, but the time for theſe is, while you are upon the earth, none of theſe labours are in Heaven or Hell, no, nor in the grave whither thou goeſt, as the Preacher concludes (*Eccleſ.* 9. 10.) Therefore (*Iſa.* 38. 18.) *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs, makes it one part of his ſuit to God, that he might be ſpared, *For* (ſaith he) *the grave cannot praiſe thee, they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth; the living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this day.* To praiſe God ſhall be the work of Saints for ever; and yet the Saints dying are truly ſaid to periſh for ever, from praiſing God. All that praiſe ſhall ceaſe in death, which belongs to the ways of grace; and then ſuch praiſe begins as ſuits with glory, which is our end. That *Hezekiah* means it of ſuch praiſe, and not of all praiſe, is clear from his own words, Verſe 20. *We will ſing my ſongs to the ſtringed Inſtruments, all the days of our life, in the houſe of the Lord*; that is, in the ordinances of thy publick worſhip. They that are in the houſe of the grave, cannot praiſe the Lord in his houſe. And though the praiſes of the Lord in Heaven are tranſcendent, and more perfect then thoſe in his houſe on Earth; yet it is a higher act of grace to deſire to live to praiſe God, then to be willing to dye that we may praiſe him, becauſe in this we deny our ſelves moſt: *Praiſing God on earth is a work as well as a reward; but praiſing God in Heaven is a reward rather then a work.* And we put forth the moſt ſpiritual acts of grace, when we cheerfully go on with a work which we know ſtands between us and the beſt part of our reward. But I return to the Text.

They periſh for ever without any regarding,] or without any laying it to heart. The word *heart* is not in the *mouth*, but it is in the *heart* of this Scripture. For the ſence is parallel with that, *Iſa.* 57. *The righteous periſh, and no man lays it to heart.* The *Chaldee* gives a ſtrange gloſs, *They periſh or dye becauſe no man giveth them medicine*; as if he had ſaid, there is no Phyſitian can give an *Antidote* againſt death, or by any medicines prolong mans life. It is a truth, that the decayes and ruines of Nature, will at laſt exceed the repairs of Art: but this gloſs hath little regard to the Text, which we tranſlate well, *They periſh without any regarding it*, that is, *none or very few regarding it.* The *negative* is not abſolutely univerſal, excluding all, as if there were none in the world who take notice of the ſhortneſs and frailty of mans life, or of his for ever periſhing condition. So in that place of *Iſaiah, The righteous periſh, and no man layes it to heart*; that is, there are very few, ſcarce any to be found who lay to heart (in compariſon of the number which neglect) the death of righteous men.

מִבְּלִי מֵשִׂים *Abſq; apponente. Pereunt eo quod nemo apponat eis medicinam.*

Obſerve hence, *Few of the living regard how ſuddenly others do, or themſelves may dye.*

Till we ſee a friend gaſping and dying, till we ſee him bedewed with cold ſweats, and rackt with Convulſions, till our *eye thus affects our hearts*, our hearts are ſeldom affected with the ſenſe of our mortality. It is one Reaſon why *Solomon* adviſes to go to the houſe of mourning, *Eccleſ.* 7. *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, then to the houſe of mirth; for* (ſaith he) *that is the way of all men* (all muſt dye) *and the living will lay it to heart*, or the living will regard it. As if he had ſaid, the living ſeldom lay death to heart, till they come to the houſe of death: he ſeems to promiſe for the living, that then they will: yet his undertaking is not ſo ſtrict, as if every man that goes to the houſe of mourning, did certainly lay it to heart: but he ſpeaks probably, that if living man will at any time lay death to heart, then ſurely he will when he goes to the houſe of mourning. When will a man think of death, if not when he ſees death? And looks into that dark chamber of the grave? There are many who lay it to heart only then: for a fit at a Funeral, they have a paſſion of the heart about mortality. And very many have gone ſo often to the houſe of mourning, that they are grown familiar with Death, and the frequency of thoſe meetings take off all impreſſions of mortality from their hearts. As we ſay of thoſe Birds that *build and rooſt in ſteeples*, being uſed to the continual ringing of the bells, the ſound diſquiets them not: or as thoſe that dwell near the fall of the River *Nylus*, the noiſe of the water deafens them ſo, that they mind it not. Many have been ſo often at the grave, that now the grave is worn out of their hearts; they look upon it as a matter of cuſtom and formality, for men to dye and be buried; and when the ſolemnity of death is over, the thoughts of death are over: as ſoon as the grave is out of their ſight, preparations for the grave are out of mind. It is ſtoried, (2 *Sam.* 20. 12.) that when *Amaſa* was ſlain by *Joab, and lay wallowing in his blood*, in the midſt of the high way, every one that came by him *ſtood ſtill*; but anon *Amaſa* is removed out of the high way into the field, and a cloth caſt upon him, and then (the Text ſaith) *all the people went on after* Joab. It is ſo ſtill, we make a ſtop at one that lies gaſping and groaning, at one that lies bleeding and dying; but let a cloth be thrown over him, and he drawn aſide, put into the grave, and covered with earth; then we go to our buſineſs, to trading and dealing, yea to coveting and ſinning, as if the laſt man (that ever ſhould be) were buried. Thus men periſh for ever, without any regarding. If this kind of periſhing were more regarded, or regarded by more, fewer would periſh. *Thoughts of death ſpiritualiz'd have life in them: thoughts of death laid to the heart, are a good medicine for an evil heart.* It follows,

Verſe 21. **Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? They dye, even without wiſdom.**

This Verſe (as I noted in the beginning) prevents an objection which might be made, as if man had wrong done him: and that it were too great a diminution to his honour, whom God made the chief creature in the inferior world, and but little inferior to Angels themſelves, that he ſhould be looked upon only as a *heap of duſt, or a lump of clay*, as a mortal momentany periſhing creature, therefore he grants that man hath an excellency; but all the excellency that he hath, whether natural or artificial, bred in him, or acquired by him, as a man, when he goes, goes too; **Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?** Or *journieth not their excellency with them?* As Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, alluding to our paſſing out of the world, as in a journey; when a man dyes he takes a journey out of the world, he goes out for ever; and (ſaith he) doth not his excellency journey along with him? Yes, the queſtion affirms it; when man goes, his excellency goes too. The word (*Jether*) which we tranſlate excellency, ſignifies primarily, a *reſidue*, or a *remain*, and that two wayes. Firſt, a reſidue of perſons, *Judges* 7. 6. *But all the reſt of the people bowed down on their knees to drink water.* So the Vulgar underſtands it here. *They who are left after them, ſhall be taken away from them*; namely, their heirs or poſterity.

Secondly, It ſignifies a reſidue of things, *Pſal.* 17. 14. Where deſcribing worldly men, who have their portion in this life, he ſaith, *Their bellies are filled with hid treaſure, they are alſo full of children, and leave the reſt of their ſubſtance to their babes.* Thus others take it here, Doth not the wealth and riches which men leave when they die, die alſo, and go away? as their perſons are mortal, ſo are their eſtates; there is a Moth will eat them both. And as the word ſignifies a *quantitative remainder*, or overplus, both of perſons and things; ſo alſo a *qualitative* exceſs or remainder, or that which exceeds in quality; any exceſs in the goodneſs of a quality, is called excellency. Thus *Jacob* calls *Reuben*, in regard of his primogeniture, *the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power*; yet blots him in the next verſe, becauſe of his ſin; *thou ſhalt not excel*, Gen. 49. 3, 4. This ſenſe of the word ſuits well with the ſcope of the Text in hand. *His excellency*, that is, whatſoever doth excel, or is beſt in him. But what is that? Some by his *Excellency* underſtand the *Soul*; as if he had ſaid, that beſt part of man, the Soul, which may be oppoſed to clay and duſt before ſpoken of, *that noble gueſt, that royal inhabitant* of this houſe of clay, goeth out when Death enters. Death diſſolves the union between ſoul and body.

Jather, *quod eſt ſupereſſe, non ſolum exceſſum quantitatis ſignificat, ſed etiā qualitatis dignitatis, ſicut verbum Latinum* ſupero, *non ſolum ſupereſſe, ſed etiā vincere, & excellere.* Pined.

חבם בם

Or rather, we may take excellency for any ſpecial endowment; firſt of the body, as beauty or ſtrength. Secondly, of the mind, as wit and knowledge, learning or skill. Thirdly, We may take it for thoſe worldly excellencies of riches, honour or authority; when a man goeth out, all theſe excellencies which are in him, or which are about him, go out too. This excellency is the ſame which is called the *goodlineſs of man*, by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 40. 6.) *The voyce ſaid cry; what ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field*; not only is the fleſh, but the goodlineſs thereof fading alſo. So here, not only the houſe of clay, and the foundation of duſt, but the excellency of it, all the adorning and poliſhing, the guilding and painting, the rich hanging and precious furniture of this houſe go away.

Taking excellency here for the ſoul, then we ſee wherein our excellency conſiſts.

> *As man was the principal part of the Creation, ſo the Soul is the principal part of man.*

> *The conſtitution of the Soul is mans natural excellency, and the converſion of the Soul is mans ſpiritual excellency.*

> Secondly, Obſerve, *Death is the going away, or the departure of the ſoul from the body.*

Death is called ſometime *a departure* of body and ſoul out of the world. *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace* (ſaith old *Simeon*, Luke 2.) *Man goes to his long home*, Eccleſ. 12. 5. *I go the way of all fleſh*, ſaith *Moſes*; and, *I go away*, ſaith our *Lord Chriſt* of his death. Death is alſo called a departure of the ſoul from the body. The death of *Rachel* is thus deſcribed, *Gen.* 35. 18. *And it came to paſs, that as her ſoul was in departing (for ſhe died.*

From the other interpretation, which I rather inſiſt upon; obſerve,

> That, *In death all a mans natural and outward excellency whatſoever, leaves him, and departs from him.*

Pſal. 49. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his houſe increaſes*; why, *For when he dieth, he ſhall carry nothing away with him; his glory ſhall not deſcend after him.* Though a man have an excellent outſide, a great ſtock of riches, beauty and honour, though he hath excellent *linings* of wiſdom and knowledge, yet all ends, as to him, when he ends; and therefore *David* concludes (*Pſal.* 39.) *Man at his beſt ſtate*, or, *in his beſt eſtate, is altogether vanity.* The excellencies that are in him go away, *in that day all his thoughts periſh*; his counſels and his projects periſh with him. One of the Ancients ſtanding by *Caſar's Tomb* (who was one of the moſt accompliſh'd men in the world, for natural, civil and moral excellencies, learned, valiant, noble, rich and powerful) he (I ſay) ſtanding by *Caſar's Tomb*, wept, and cried out, *Where is now the flouriſhing beauty of* Cæſar? *what is become of his magnificence? where are the Armies now? where the honour of* Cæſar? *where are now the victories, the Triumphs and Trophies of* Cæſar? All's gone, all's departed, the goodlineſs of them is as the flower of the field; his excellency which was in him, is gone away. And thus it will be ſaid of all thoſe, (who without grace) are moſt excellent in any thing below. Though your clay be curiouſly wrought, and ſtampt with ſuch beauty, as renders you almoſt Angelical to the eye of others; though your bodies are ſtrongly joynted, and bleſſed with ſuch health as renders your lives moſt active and comfortable to your ſelves; though your minds are ſtored with variety of learning, and you know as much as is *knowable* in the whole circle of nature, or of times; yet when Death comes, all theſe excellencies go away. Nothing will ſtay by us then; and go (not from us, but) with us, *but the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, for whom* (*Paul* did, and) *we ought to ſuffer the loſs of all things, and count them but dung, that we may win Chriſt* (Phil. 3. 8.) For notwithſtanding all other knowledge and wiſdom, we ſhall die, and conclude (as this Chapter concludes of man) without wiſdom. *They die even without wiſdom*, or word for word *They die not, and in wiſdom.* We may underſtand it two wayes. Firſt, (as if he had ſaid) though men are excellent in wiſdom, yet they die, their wiſdom is to them in death, as if they had no wiſdom; they have no more priviledge or defence againſt the ſtroke of death, by all their wiſdom, learning and knowledg, then fools or brute beaſts, who have no wiſdom, no knowledge at all. *They die even without wiſdom*, or, *even as if they had no wiſdom. Died Abner as a fool dieth?* ſaid mourning *David*, 2 Sam. 3. 33. yea, *Abner died as a fool dieth.* And ſo, in one ſence, do the wiſeſt of men. He was the wiſeſt of all the children of men, and he ſpake it by the wiſdom of God, who asking this queſtion, *How dieth the wiſe man?* anſwers, *as the fool*, Eccleſ. 2. 16. Let not any man pride himſelf in the excellency of his wiſdom; for that he dwells in a houſe of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt: his frailty is not curable by his excellency, nor his mortality conquerable by his wiſdom; he ſhall die as if he had no wiſdom. And ſome who have moſt worldly wiſdom, die with leaſt; yea, they die with the greateſt folly. *Not in wiſdom*, may be an extenuation, or a more gentle, eaſie expreſſion, for, *in abundance of folly.* I remember, it is obſerved concerning *Paracelſus* (a great Phyſitian, a man exceedingly vers'd in *Chymical experiments*) that he bragg'd and boaſted, he had attained to ſuch wiſdom, in diſcerning the conſtitutions of men, and ſtudying remedies, that whoſoever did follow his rules, and keep to his directions, ſhould never die by any diſeaſe; caſually he might, and of age he muſt; but he would undertake to ſecure his health againſt diſeaſes: a bold undertaking! But he who by his art promiſed to protect others to extream old age, from the arreſt of death, could not, by all his art or power, make himſelf a protection in the prime of his youth, but died even as one without wiſdom, before, or when he had ſeen but *thirty.* Secondly, *They die without wiſdom*, that is, they cannot carry their wiſdom away with them; as not their worldly riches and pomp, ſo nor their worldly wiſdom and knowledge, *chap.* 36. 12.

Ubi nunc pulchritudo Cæſaris? *quo abiit magnificentia tua?*

ולא בחכמה

Nulla eſt ſapientia qua mortem effugiant. Mer.

Non in ſapientia, extenuatio eſt, i. e. *in magna ſtultitia.* Pined.

Thirdly, They die even without wiſdom, that is, they prepare not wiſely for death. This is the condition of moſt men, their excellency goes away with them, and they die without wiſdom; they have had wiſdom, but they die as if they had none, that is, they apply not their wiſdom while they live, to fit themſelves for death; they die before they underſtand what it is to live, or why they live. This wiſdom is wanting in moſt men; and of all ſuch the Pſalmiſt concludes to this ſence of the place, *Man being in honour, and underſtandeth not, is like the beaſts that periſh*, *Pſal.* 49. 20. That is, he periſhes fooliſhly, and without wiſdom, like a beaſt, though in his life a man of honour and excellency. He that dies unpreparedly, dies fooliſhly. It is the wiſdom of man to live in the world, in the

Moriuntur inſipientes vel inſipienter. Druſ.

medi-

Prius moriuntur quam quicquam intellexerint de divina ſapientia. Merc.

meditation of, and preparation for his departure out of this world. And it is ſuch a wiſdom as is above man; therefore *David* prayes, *Pſal.* 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the meaſure of my dayes, what it is; that I may know how frail I am*: As if he had ſaid, Lord, I have been conſidering this and that thing (haply *David*'s thoughts were in the duſt, and he had been handling the clay out of which he was made) yet ſaith he, by all thoſe conſiderations of my natural conſtitution, I cannot bring my heart to be ſo ſenſible of my frailty, as I ought to be; therefore he turns himſelf to God, *Lord make me to know this thing*. Here is our wiſdom, when we ſeek to God to ſpiritualize natural conſiderations, and make them effectual for the attaining of this wiſdom, the knowing of our end, and the meaſure of our dayes.

But is it not ſome ignorance of our duty to petition for the knowledge of our end? May we deſire to know what God hath no where promiſed to reveal? To petition for the literal knowledg of our end, that is, what year or day our lives ſhall end, is a ſinful curioſity, and a preſumptuous intruſion into the ſecret will of God: but to petition for a ſpiritual knowledge of our end, that is, how we may end well any day of the year, or any hour of the day, in an holy duty, and an humble ſubmiſſion of our ſelves to the revealed will of God; thus to know our end, how *ſoon ceaſing* (as one tranſlates) ſhort-liv'd and brittle ware we be; thus to know, how defective we are (as the Greek renders it) or what we lack, namely, to the end of our dayes, is above the inſtruction of any creature. We may preach, and you hear of death, as long as you and we live, and yet not know the frailty of our lives, till God makes us know it; therefore (ſaith he) *Lord, make me to know how frail I am*; none could teach him this Leſſon, but God himſelf. The ſame holy deſires are breathed out, *Pſal.* 90. 12. *So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom*; as if *Moſes* had ſaid, Lord, I have been numbring my dayes my ſelf, and telling over my life; I can tell no further then three or four ſcore, and yet, though I can tell no further, I cannot apply my heart unto wiſdom; we need but little *Arithmetick to number our dayes, but we need a great deal of Grace to number them.* And a child may be wiſe enough to number the dayes of an old man; and yet that old man a child, in numbring his own dayes, that is, not able to number his own dayes ſo, as to apply his heart to wiſdom. To number them ſo, is a very ſpecial point of wiſdom; the true *Chriſtian Philoſophy; perfectly to meditate on death, is the perfection of life.* And it is therefore our wiſdom to die well, becauſe we can die but once: *A man had need do to that wiſely, which he can do no more.* An error in death, is like an errour in war, you cannot commit it twice. We have moſt reaſon to look to it, not to err at all, where it is not poſſible to err again. *Actually to err twice, is more ſinful; but not to have a poſſibility of erring twice, is moſt dangerous.* We tranſgreſs the Laws of living, over and over a thouſand thouſand times; but as for *the Laws of dying, no man ever tranſgreſſed them a ſecond time. That we ſo often tranſgreſs the law of living, is an aggravation of ſin upon all men. And that we can tranſgreſs the law of dying but once, is the ſeal of miſery upon moſt men. Let us then cry unto God, to be taught this great wiſdom, how to die, and not without wiſdom.*

Meditatio mortis vita eſt perfecta. Greg. *Mor.* 13.

Summa Philoſophia.

CHAP. V. Verſ. 1, 2.

Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?

For wrath killeth the fooliſh, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.

THe five firſt verſes of this Chapter, contain the fourth Argument, by which *Eliphaz* goes on to convince *Job* of ſinful hypocriſie. And the conviction is made two wayes, from a twofold compariſon. Firſt, He compares *Job* to the Saints, and finds him unlike to them. Secondly, He compares *Job* to the wicked, and finds him like to them; if ſo, then *Job* muſt needs be a hypocrite, who had carried it fair all the while in the world, for a *great Profeſſor*, and yet, when he comes to the trial, was unlike all the Saints, and moſt like the wicked of the world. The firſt Argument may be thus framed;

> *He is not a juſt or a holy man, who in his affliction is altogether unlike holy and juſt men.*
>
> *But* Job, *thou in thy affliction, art altogether unlike holy and juſt men*:
>
> *Therefore thou art not a holy or a juſt man.*

The Propoſition is implied: the *Minor* or the Aſſumption is in the firſt verſe; *Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* As if he ſhould ſay, Enquire as much as thou wilt, thou ſhalt find none among the Saints like thy ſelf; they who have been ſomewhat like thee (of whom thou ſhalt find but few) in the troubles which thou haſt born, even thoſe thou wilt find altogether unlike thee, in bearing thoſe troubles. Scarce any of the godly ever ſuffered ſuch things as thou haſt done, but none of the godly ever did ſuch things in their ſufferings.

As he argues him, in the firſt verſe, of hypocriſie, by his unlikeneſs to the Saints; ſo in the next words, he argues him of hypocriſie, by his likeneſs to the wicked: His firſt Argument for this, lies in the ſecond verſe; and in the three following verſes, there lies a ſecond Argument to confirm the ſame point: He attempts to prove *Job* like a fool or a wicked man, two wayes.

First, In his manner of ſuffering.

Secondly, In the matter of his ſufferings.

Firſt, (ſaith he) Thou art like a fool, or like a fooliſh man, like the worſt of men, in the manner of thy carriage under ſufferings: The Argument may be framed thus;

> *He that behaveth himſelf like a fool, or like a wicked man while he is in trouble, is a man either openly wicked, or groſly hypocritical.*
>
> *But* Job, *thou behaveſt thy ſelf like a fooliſh or wicked man in thy troubles*:
>
> *Therefore thou art wicked,* &c.

The Aſſumption or *Minor* Propoſition is in the ſecond verſe; *Wrath killeth the fooliſh, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.* As if he ſhould ſay, Thou pineſt, rageſt, and vexeſt thy ſelf under thy ſufferings, after the rate of fooliſh and ſilly ones, that is, ſinful and wicked ones.

Secondly, He would prove *Job* to be a hypocrite, becauſe his ſufferings, for the matter of them, were like the judgments which God uſes to pour forth upon wicked and ungodly men; and that Argument may be thus framed:

> *Wicked men flouriſh a while, and then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them; they and their children, and their whole eſtates are ſwallowed up in a moment.*
>
> *But* Job, *thou having flouriſhed a little while, waſt ſuddenly ſurprized and ſwallowed up by judgments; thou, thy eſtate, thy children, all devoured and conſumed:*
>
> *Therefore thou art a wicked man, a very hypocrite;* God hath dealt with thee as he uſes to deal with his enemies, and therefore thou art not his friend.

This is the Logick of the Context, or the Reaſons couched in them, whereby *Eliphaz* would convince *Job* of ſin: By this a general light is let into the whole Context.

Now we will conſider the words, and open their ſence diſtinctly.

Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?

Interpreters varie much about the meaning of theſe words.

Firſt, Some of the Jewiſh Writers look upon theſe words as proceeding from height and pride of ſpirit in *Eliphaz*; as if he diſdained to talk with *Job* any longer about the buſineſs; as if he looked upon *Job* as no match for him, in point of argument; bids him look out an *Angel* or a *Saint* to grapple with him in theſe diſputes, and ſee if he could find any one of thoſe, who would undertake for him as an *Advocate*, or be his *Second*, foraſmuch as himſelf was ſo unable to defend his cauſe, or juſtifie what he had done; *Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee*, that is, *anſwer for thee*; or, to which of the Saints wilt thou turn for help, to patronize or plead thy cauſe? but I ſhall paſs that.

Nemo tibi pravè corruptéque de his rebus judicanti patronus aderet? nemo qui tibi reſpondeat, tibi accinat, tuam ſententiam tueatur.

Secondly, Others of the *Jewiſh Writers* make the ſence out thus, as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid with *Paul*, in the point of the Lords Supper (1 *Cor.* 11.24.) *That which I have delivered unto you, I have received of the Lord*; ſo, that which I have delivered unto thee, in my former argument, I received from the Lord in a viſion; it was revealed unto me from heaven: Now, do thou try whether thou canſt learn any thing from heaven, or from the Saints upon the earth, (who are inſtructed to and for the *Kingdom of heaven*) which may anſwer my arguments, or confute the reaſons which I have brought againſt thee. I had a viſion from heaven, now call thou to heaven, and ſee if thou canſt have any anſwer from thence; turn alſo to the Saints, to any Saint upon the earth, and ſee what they will anſwer thee; I believe thou wilt not find one amongſt them all, differing in judgment from *me*, or from that *Oracle* with which I have now acquainted thee. They will all agree with me in theſe great Principles, about the providence, power and juſtice of God, about the ſufferings, ſinfulneſs and weakneſs of man. That's a ſecond ſence.

Thirdly, Others take the words as an *Ironie*, as a deriſion or ſcorn put upon *Job* by *Eliphaz*; as if *Eliphaz* had mocked him thus; Thou haſt handled the matter well, thou haſt carried thy ſelf ſo, in the dayes of thy peace and proſperity, that now, when thou art in trouble, thou maiſt call long enough, and cry till thy throat akes, and thy ſpirits be ſpent, and yet have none to anſwer thee, none to ſpeak a word to thee, or to do thee any good; though thou cry to all the Saints, and ſend to all thy friends round about thee, yet in this day, none will hear or regard thee: Thou wilt find thy ſelf forſaken of all, no man will give thee any aſſiſtance, or take any care of thy condition. Juſt as *Elijah* brake forth in holy ſcorn againſt the Prophets of *Baal* (1 Kin. 18.27.) when they were crying out to their *Idol* for help, and a ſign by fire; *Cry aloud* (ſaith he) *cry aloud*; he bad them cry aloud, yet he knew the Idol was deaf and dumb, and could neither hear their cry, nor give them Anſwer: So *Eliphaz* ſeems to ſpeak to *Job*; *Cry aloud* now, to this, to that Saint, with whom thou art acquainted here on earth, or cry to Heaven, cry to God himſelf; call this way, call that, if any will anſwer thee, either *God* above, or *Saint* below; thou ſhalt not find here or there any to aſſiſt, any to relieve thee. And ſo he ſeems to allude to that juſt retaliation of God, who uſually turns his ear from their cry in a day of trouble, who have turned their ears from his counſels, in the dayes of comfort; as (*Prov.* 1.) Wiſdom threatens, *They ſhall call, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall cry, but I will not hear.* Why? *Becauſe they have refuſed inſtruction, and have not choſen the fear of the Lord.*

Vox in tribulatione eum non invenit quem mens in trãquilitate contempſit. Gre. *in loc.*

In the fourth place, Moſt of the Popiſh Writers buſie themſelves much, to ground invocation of Saints, and the interceſſion of Saints for us, upon this Text: As if *Eliphaz* had directed *Job* to cry to the Saints departed; *Call now, if there be any that will anſwer? and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* What Saint wilt thou chuſe for thy Patron or helper in this ſad condition? So they teach and practiſe, having appointed a particular Saint in the *Kalendar* of the year, to the help of every particular affliction in their lives, and to theſe they turn themſelves in every diſtreſs: They have a Saint for the Sea, and a Saint for the Land, a Saint for the fire, and a Saint for the water, a Saint for each diſeaſe of the body, and for each diſaſter in the family: To ſome of theſe they ſuppoſe *Job* was adviſed to have recourſe for ſuccour and comfort in his troubles. And yet they are divided in opinion, and give a double ſence about it, Firſt, As if *Eliphaz* had thus beſpoken him; *If thou doſt not give credit unto me, nor believe what I have ſpoken, was revealed from God, then call thou thy ſelf upon God, and try whether he will not give thee ſome anſwer, and reſolve thy doubt: Or if by reaſon of thine own unworthineſs, thou canſt not obtain an immediate anſwer at the hand of God, then turn thee to ſome of the Saints, that by their mediation thou maiſt receive light from God, to aſſure thee about my viſion, whether it were ſent from heaven or no.* Secondly, Others interpret it more largely, as if *Eliphaz* perceiving *Job* to be brought to ſome ſight and acknowledgment of his ſins, and now to thirſt after the pardon of them; he, in theſe words, exhorts him to call upon, and cry unto God for pardon, if perhaps he himſelf would vouchſafe to anſwer; but in caſe ſhame did ſo cover his face, aud guilt ſo ſtop his mouth, that he could not ſpeak unto God immediately, then he adviſeth him to pray in aid from ſome of the Saints departed, who might manage this ſuit, and intercede for him at the throne of Grace. The groſneſs of this interpretation, is ſuch, as carries a ſelf-reputation with it, and therefore I ſhall not need to ſtay long about the refuting of it, Neither will I ſtay to argue againſt that groundleſs, uſeleſs doctrine in general, *The invocation of Saints departed*; which finds no letter of command or direction, no letter of promiſe or acceptation, no letter of example or practice for our imitation, in the whole Book of God: but it is a reproach to the Saints, and a diſhonour to God, whoſe Name and incommunicable Title is, *The God hearing prayers, and therefore to him ſhall the deſires of all fleſh come*; and if all to him, then who to Saints or Angels? Only *He* can be the object of our prayer, who is the object of our prayer, *Rom.* 10. *How ſhall they call on him on whom then have not believed?* To whom we pray, upon him we muſt believe. Saints departed are not to be believed upon, how then ſhall they be called on?

Aqu. *in loc.*

But to leave the queſtion, I ſhall only touch two things, to ſhew how wide they are in this expoſition.

Firſt, The confeſſed Doctrine of *Popery* tells us, that before Chriſt coming in the fleſh, and his reſurrection from grave, all the Saints departed were in *Limbus*, a place, which they have framed and built up in their own fancies, as the common receptacle of all thoſe who died in the Faith of Chriſt, before Chriſt died; therefore they tell us (to eek out the ſtory) that as Chriſt went down into *Hell*, the place of the damned, to ſtrike terror into the Devils, ſo he went into this *Limbus*, thence to deliver the Fathers from that priſon, and carry them up, with himſelf into glory. Now this being their Tenet, how ſenceleſs is it for them to ground their opinion of invocation of Saints, upon any Scripture of the Old Teſtament? And therefore it is ſo, to ground it upon this.

Secondly, If we conſider theſe words, we may as well ſeek for fire in the bottom of the Sea, as for the invocation of Saints in this Text, for here is no ſuch thing ſpoken of; and if any thing ſounds that way, it is rather to condemn praying to Saints, then any confirmation of it; for *call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee*; carries this ſence rather; call now, for there is none to anſwer thee, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn? that is, none among all the Saints (if thou turneſt to them) can give thee any help: As *Mercer*, a moderate Papiſt, gives the meaning of this Scripture, againſt the current of their interpreters.

Voca ſi quis eſt qui tibi reſpondeat, q. d. nemo tibi reſpondebit. Merc. *Quod quidam noſtrorum hunc locum ad ſanctorum mortuorum invocationem, quam veteres ne agnoverunt quidem, referunt, merum delirium eſt,* Idem *paulo poſt. Nihil hic de ſanctorum mortuorum invocatione.* Tho. Aquin. & Lyranus *eo quidem referunt, ſed æquè ineptè, ne dicam impiè.* Idem *in loc.*

And this will appear more fully in opening the Grammatical ſence of a word or two, which alſo will give the clear meaning of the whole paſſage. *Eliphaz* (as was hinted in drawing out his Arguments) calls upon *Job* to call to remembrance former times, to ſearch the records of Antiquity, and ſee whether he could find an example of any one among all the Saints, who either had ſuch troubles as his, or in his troubles ſpake and behaved himſelf as he had done; he bids him name one, if he could.

Call now.] or, *Call I pray thee.* What we tranſlate,

for his departure out of this
om as is above man; there-
. *Lord, make me to know mine*
eyes, what it is; that I may
had ſaid, Lord, I have been
g (haply *David*'s thoughts
en handling the clay out of
he, by all thoſe conſiderati-
I cannot bring my heart to
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, as long as you and we live,
our lives, till God makes us

know it; therefore (ſaith he) *Lord, make me to know how frail I am*; none could teach him this Leſſon, but God himſelf. The ſame holy deſires are breathed out, *Pſal.* 90. 12. *So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom*; as if *Moſes* had ſaid, Lord, I have been numbring my dayes my ſelf, and telling over my life; I can tell no further then three or four ſcore, and yet, though I can tell no further, I cannot apply my heart unto wiſdom; we need but little *Arithmetick to number our dayes, but we need a great deal of Grace to number them.* And a child may be wiſe enough to number the dayes of an old man; and yet that old man a child, in numbring his own dayes, that is, not able to number his own dayes ſo, as to apply his heart to wiſdom. To number them ſo, is a very ſpecial point of wiſdom; the true *Chriſtian Philoſophy*; *perfectly to meditate on death, is the perfection of life.* And it is therefore our wiſdom to die well, becauſe we can die but once: *A man had need do to that wiſely, which he can do no more.* An error in death, is like an errour in war, you cannot commit it twice. We have moſt reaſon to look to it, not to err at all, where it is not poſſible to err again. *Actually to err twice, is more ſinful; but not to have a poſſibility of erring twice, is moſt dangerous.* We tranſgreſs the Laws of living, over and over a thouſand thouſand times; but as for *the Laws of dying, no man ever tranſgreſſed them a ſecond time. That we ſo often tranſgreſs the law of living, is an aggravation of ſin upon all men. And that we can tranſgreſs the law of dying but once, is the ſeal of miſery upon moſt men. Let us then cry unto God, to be taught this great wiſdom, how to die, and not without wiſdom.*

Meditatio mortis vita eſt perfecta. Greg. *Mor.* 13. *Summa Philoſophia.*

CHAP. V. Verſ. 1, 2.

be any that will anſwer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?
he fooliſh, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.

verſes of this Chapter con-
urth Argument, by which *Eli-*
on to convince *Job* of ſinful
. And the conviction is made
s, from a twofold compari-
t, He compares *Job* to the
nd finds him unlike to them.
to the wicked, and finds him
b muſt needs be a hypocrite,
while in the world, for a *great*
comes to the trial, was unlike
the wicked of the world. The
amed;
u, who in his affliction is altoge-
men.
tion, art altogether unlike holy

ly or a juſt man.
: the *Minor* or the Aſſumpti-
ow, if there be any that will an-
e Saints wilt thou turn? As if
much as thou wilt, thou ſhalt
like thy ſelf; they who have
f whom thou ſhalt find but few)
haſt born, even thoſe thou wilt
e, in bearing thoſe troubles.
er ſuffered ſuch things as thou
godly ever did ſuch things in

firſt verſe, of hypocriſie by his
in the next words, he argues
ikeneſs to the wicked: His firſt
e ſecond verſe; and in the three
a ſecond Argument to confirm
ts to prove *Job* like a fool or a

Firſt, In his manner of ſuffering.

Secondly, In the matter of his ſufferings.

Firſt, (ſaith he) Thou art like a fool, or like a fooliſh man, like the worſt of men, in the manner of thy carriage under ſufferings: The Argument may be framed thus;

> *He that behaveth himſelf like a fool, or like a wicked man while he is in trouble, is a man either openly wicked, or groſly hypocritical.*
>
> *But* Job, *thou behaveſt thy ſelf like a fooliſh or wicked man in thy troubles:*
>
> *Therefore thou art wicked,* &c.

The Aſſumption or *Minor* Propoſition is in the ſecond verſe; *Wrath killeth the fooliſh, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.* As if he ſhould ſay, Thou pineſt, rageſt, and vexeſt thy ſelf under thy ſufferings, after the rate of fooliſh and ſilly ones, that is, ſinful and wicked ones.

Secondly, He would prove *Job* to be a hypocrite, becauſe his ſufferings, for the matter of them, were like the judgments which God uſes to pour forth upon wicked and ungodly men; and that Argument may be thus framed:

> *Wicked men flouriſh a while, and then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them; they and their children, and their whole eſtates are ſwallowed up in a moment.*
>
> *But* Job, *thou having flouriſhed a little while, waſt ſuddenly ſurprized and ſwallowed up by judgments; thou, thy eſtate, thy children, all devoured and conſumed:*
>
> *Therefore thou art a wicked man, a very hypocrite;* God hath dealt with thee as he uſes to deal with his enemies, and therefore thou art not his friend.

This is the Logick of the Context, or the Reaſons couched in them, whereby *Eliphaz* would convince *Job* of ſin: By this a general light is let into the whole Context.

Now we will conſider the words, and open their ſence diſtinctly.

Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?

Interpreters varie much about the meaning of theſe words.

Firſt, Some of the Jewiſh Writers look upon theſe words as proceeding from height and pride of ſpirit in *Eliphaz*; as if he diſdained to talk with *Job* any longer about the buſineſs; as if he looked upon *Job* as no match for him, in point of argument; bids him look out an *Angel* or a *Saint* to grapple with him in theſe diſputes, and ſee if he could find any one of thoſe, who would undertake for him as an *Advocate*, or be his *Second*, foraſmuch as himſelf was ſo unable to defend his cauſe, or juſtifie what he had done; *Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee*, that is, *anſwer for thee*; or, to which of the Saints wilt thou turn for help, to patronize or plead thy cauſe? but I ſhall paſs that.

Secondly, Others of the *Jewiſh Writers* make the ſence out thus, as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid with *Paul*, in the point of the Lords Supper (1 *Cor.* 11. 24.) *That which I have delivered unto you, I have received of the Lord*; ſo, that which I have delivered unto thee, in my former argument, I received from the Lord in a viſion; it was revealed unto me from heaven: Now, do thou try whether thou canſt learn any thing from heaven, or from the Saints upon the earth, (who are inſtructed to and for the *Kingdom of heaven*) which may anſwer my arguments, or confute the reaſons which I have brought againſt thee. I had a viſion from heaven, now call thou to heaven, and ſee if thou canſt have any anſwer from thence; turn alſo to the Saints, to any Saint upon the earth, and ſee what they will anſwer thee; I believe thou wilt not find one amongſt them all, differing in judgment from *me*, or from that *Oracle* with which I have now acquainted thee. They will all agree with me in theſe great Principles, about the providence, power and juſtice of God, about the ſufferings, ſinfulneſs and weakneſs of man. That's a ſecond ſence.

Thirdly, Others take the words as an *Ironie*, as a deriſion or ſcorn put upon *Job* by *Eliphaz*; as if *Eliphaz* had mocked him thus; Thou haſt handled the matter well, thou haſt carried thy ſelf ſo, in the dayes of thy peace and proſperity, that now, when thou art in trouble, thou maiſt call long enough, and cry till thy throat akes, and thy ſpirits be ſpent, and yet have none to anſwer thee, none to ſpeak a word to thee, or to do thee any good; though thou cry to all the Saints, and ſend to all thy friends round about thee, yet in this day, none will hear or regard thee: Thou wilt find thy ſelf forſaken of all, no man will give thee any aſſiſtance, or take any care of thy condition. Juſt as *Elijah* brake forth in holy ſcorn againſt the Prophets of *Baal* (1 Kin. 18. 27.) when they were crying out to their *Idol* for help, and a ſign by fire; *Cry aloud* (ſaith he) *cry aloud*; he bad them cry aloud, yet he knew the Idol was deaf and dumb, and could neither hear their cry, nor give them Anſwer: So *Eliphaz* ſeems to ſpeak to *Job*; *Cry aloud* now, to this, to that Saint, with whom thou art acquainted here on earth, or cry to Heaven, cry to God himſelf; call this way, call that, if any will anſwer thee, either *God* above, or *Saint* below; thou ſhalt not find here or there any to aſſiſt, any to relieve thee. And ſo he ſeems to allude to that juſt retaliation of God, who uſually turns his ear from their cry in a day of trouble, who have turned their ears from his counſels, in the dayes of comfort; as (*Prov.* 1.) Wiſdom threatens, *They ſhall call, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall cry, but I will not hear.* Why? *Becauſe they have refuſed inſtruction, and have not choſen the fear of the Lord.*

In the fourth place, Moſt of the Popiſh Writers buſie themſelves much, to ground invocation of Saints, and the interceſſion of Saints for us, upon this Text: As if *Eliphaz* had directed *Job* to cry to the Saints departed; *Call now, if there be any that will anſwer? and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* What Saint wilt thou chuſe for thy Patron or helper in this ſad condition? So they teach and practiſe, having appointed a particular Saint in the *Kalendar* of the year, to the help of every particular affliction in their lives, and to theſe they turn themſelves in every diſtreſs: They have a Saint for the Sea, and a Saint for the Land, a Saint for the fire, and a Saint for the water, a Saint for each diſeaſe of the body, and for each diſaſter in the family: To ſome of theſe they ſuppoſe *Job* was adviſed to have recourſe for ſuccour and comfort in his troubles. And yet they are divided in opinion, and give a double ſence about it, Firſt, As if *Eliphaz* had thus beſpoken him; *If thou doſt not give credit unto me, nor believe what I have ſpoken, was revealed from God, then call thou thy ſelf upon God, and try whether he will not give thee ſome anſwer, and reſolve thy doubt: Or if by reaſon of thine own unworthineſs, thou canſt not obtain an immediate anſwer at the hand of God, then turn thee to ſome of the Saints, that by their mediation thou maiſt receive light from God, to aſſure thee about my viſion, whether it were ſent from heaven or no.* Secondly, Others interpret it more largely, as if *Eliphaz* perceiving *Job* to be brought to ſome ſight and acknowledgment of his ſins, and now to thirſt after the pardon of them; he, in theſe words, exhorts him to call upon, and cry unto God for pardon, if perhaps he himſelf would vouchſafe to anſwer; but in caſe ſhame did ſo cover his face, and guilt ſo ſtop his mouth, that he could not ſpeak unto God immediately, then he adviſeth him to pray in aid from ſome of the Saints departed, who might manage this ſuit, and intercede for him at the throne of Grace. The groſneſs of this interpretation, is ſuch, as carries a ſelf-reputation with it, and therefore I ſhall not need to ſtay long about the refuting of it, Neither will I ſtay to argue againſt that groundleſs, uſeleſs doctrine in general, *The invocation of Saints departed*; which finds no letter of command or direction, no letter of promiſe or acceptation, no letter of example or practice for our imitation, in the whole Book of God: but it is a reproach to the Saints, and a diſhonour to God, whoſe Name and incommunicable Title is, *The God hearing prayers, and therefore to him ſhall the deſires of all fleſh come*; and if all to him, then who to Saints or Angels? Only *He* can be the object of our prayer, who is the object of our prayer, *Rom.* 10. *How ſhall they call on him on whom then have not believed?* To whom we pray, upon him we muſt believe. Saints departed are not to be believed upon, how then ſhall they be called on?

Aqu. in loc.

But to leave the queſtion, I ſhall only touch two things, to ſhew how wide they are in this expoſition.

Firſt, The confeſſed Doctrine of *Popery* tells us, that before Chriſt coming in the fleſh, and his reſurrection from grave, all the Saints departed were in *Limbus*, a place, which they have framed and built up in their own fancies, as the common receptacle of all thoſe who died in the Faith of Chriſt, before Chriſt died; therefore they tell us (to eek out the ſtory) that as Chriſt went down into *Hell*, the place of the damned, to ſtrike terror into the Devils, ſo he went into this *Limbus*, thence to deliver the Fathers from that priſon, and carry them up, with himſelf into glory. Now this being their Tenet, how ſenceleſs is it for them to ground their opinion of invocation of Saints, upon any Scripture of the Old Teſtament? And therefore it is ſo, to ground it upon this.

Secondly, If we conſider theſe words, we may as well ſeek for fire in the bottom of the Sea, as for the invocation of Saints in this Text, for here is no ſuch thing ſpoken of; and if any thing ſounds that way, it is rather to condemn praying to Saints, then any confirmation of it; for *call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee*; carries this ſence rather; call now, for there is none to anſwer thee, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn? that is, none among all the Saints (if thou turneſt to them) can give thee any help: As *Mercer*, a moderate Papiſt, gives the meaning of this Scripture, againſt the current of their interpreters.

Voca ſi quis eſt qui tibi reſpondeat, q. d. nemo tibi reſpondebit. Merc. *Quod quidam noſtrorum hunc locum ad ſanctorum mortuorum invocationem, quam veteres ne agnoverunt quidem, referunt, merum delirium eſt,* Idem *paulo poſt. Nihil hic de ſanctorum mortuorum invocatione.* Tho. Aquin. & Lyranus *eo quidem referunt, ſed æquè ineptè, ne dicam impiè.* Idem *in loc.*

And this will appear more fully in opening the Grammatical ſence of a word or two, which alſo will give the clear meaning of the whole paſſage. *Eliphaz* (as was hinted in drawing out his Arguments) calls upon *Job* to call to remembrance former times, to ſearch the records of Antiquity, and ſee whether he could find an example of any one among all the Saints, who either had ſuch troubles as his, or in his troubles ſpake and behaved himſelf as he had done; he bids him name one, if he could.

Call now.] or, *Call I pray thee.* What we tranſlate, *now*, is ſometime a particle of inſulting, but moſt uſually of perſwading or intreating. We render it as an Adverb of time, but it rather imports a requeſt. So, *Gen.* 12. 13. *Abraham* intreats *Sarah*; *Say I pray thee, thou art my Siſter.*

The word (*Kara*) which we tranſlate *call*, ſignifies firſt to cry aloud by way of preaching or proclamation, *Iſa.* 58. 1, *Cry aloud, lift up thy voyce like a Trumpet*: Secondly, By way of prayer or invocation, as, *Pſal.* 50. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble*; but it rather ſignifies, and that more properly, to call by appellation, or by way of nomination, as, *Ruth* 1. 20. *Call me not Naomi, but call me Marah.* So here, *Call now*, that is, look over the names, or call over the names of all the Saints, as we uſe to ſay, when many ſhould meet together, and we would know whether they are all met; or as Stewards, when they pay many hired ſervants their wages, take the Bill, and call over their names, and ſo pay them one by one, *Mat.* 20. 8. In the evening, the Lord of the Vineyard ſaith unto his Steward, *call the Labourers*, that is, call them by their ſeveral names, and give them their hire. Thus we may underſtand the phraſe in this place, read the Catalogue of the Saints; call every one by his name, and put the queſtion to them, ask them whether ever they had ſuch afflictions as thou haſt? or ask them whether they behaved themſelves under their afflictions as thou haſt done? I believe thou wilt find none to anſwer thee. To this ſence Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Call now if there be any that will defend thee*, that is, be thy Patron or Advocate, in word, or in example of their lives.

קרא נא *Na, licet inſultantis aliquando ſit, ut plurimū tamen ſuadentis & exhortantis eſt, ut* ſodes amabo *Latinis.*

If there be any that will anſwer thee.] For, the word which we render *anſwer*, ſignifies not only, anſwering unto a queſtion, but an anſwering to a condition, or a correſpondency in practice. There is an anſwering by likeneſs of works, as well as by fitneſs of words. A *real* anſwer, and a *verbal* anſwer. Take it ſo, and then, *Call now to the Saints*, call them all by their names, intends only thus much, ſee if there be any that are like thee, or ſute either thy ſpirit or thy condition, if there be any to whom thou mayeſt parallel thy ſelf, either in the matter or manner of thy ſufferings. Thou art more like a *Heathen*, who knows not God, then any of the *Saints*, in theſe complainings. And ſeeing, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaks, theſe words ſpeak thy heart abounding in ſin, but empty of grace. *Face anſwers face in the water*; but neither thy face nor heart, will anſwer either heart or face of any of the Saints, in theſe waters of affliction. We find this word ſignifying ſimilitude or compariſon, or the equivalence of one thing to another, in that inſtance, *Eccleſ.* 10. 19. *Money anſwers all things*; the meaning of it is, that money in a proportion or value, ſuits, parallels and fits all things: There is nothing in the world, but you may ſuit it with a proportion of money, money will anſwer it; money anſwers, or is like all things, by an equivalency, though not in the formality.

Verbum reſpondere, in hoc loco ſignificat potius ſimilitudinem vel comparationem quam reſponſionem. Bold.

And to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?

ἢ εἴ τινα ἀγγέλων ἁγίων ὄψῃ.

The *Septuagint* read it, *To which of the Angels wilt thou look?* And the learned *Mercer* adheres to that tranſlation, as thinking, that by Saints, are meant Angels; though he be ſo far from laying any bottom in the words for the Popiſh opinion of the mediation of Angels, that he expreſly condemns it: but he gives the ſence thus, as if *Eliphaz* had reproved *Job* of pride, for conteſting with God, whenas, if he did turn himſelf to Angels, he ſhould find himſelf far below, and much over-matcht by them: What! *Thou duſt and aſhes, more righteous and juſt then God?* Though he charged his Angels with folly, yet, even they are too wiſe and holy for thee to deal with. If thou wert put into the ballance with Angels, how light wouldſt thou be? then, how much lighter then vanity art thou, being weighed with God? But the Hebrew is better tranſlated, *Saints*. The word ſignifies a thing or perſon, ſeparated and ſet apart from common, and dedicated to a ſpecial, eſpecially, a holy uſe. Holineſs (in the general nature of it) is nothing elſe but a ſeparation from common, and dedication to a divine ſervice, ſuch are the Saints, perſons ſeparated from the world, and ſet apart unto God: The Church in general (which is a company of Saints) is taken out of, and ſevered from the world: The Church is a fountain ſealed, and a garden incloſed; ſo alſo, every particular Saint is a perſon ſevered and encloſed from the common throng and multitude of the world: *Come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord; and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you*, 2 Cor. 6. 17.

Turn thee.] It is both a witty and judicious conceit that *Eliphaz*, in theſe words, alludes to Painters and Picture-drawers, who when they are drawing the picture of a man, or of any other thing, frequently turn their eyes upon the *Proto-type*, upon that which they are to draw by. When a man ſits (as they ſpeak) to have his picture taken, the Artiſt turns his eye often upon him; ſo here, to which of the Saints wilt thou turn thee to ſee thy picture, or to ſee any one like thee? where wilt thou look now, and by looking, obſerve a Saint of thy complexion, a holy man like thy ſelf? *If the Pictures of all the Saints were loſt, none of them could be found in, or copied out from thee.* The word which we tranſlate *turn*, doth not ſignifie ſimply to look about or turn the eye, but to turn the eye about with much intention, or curioſity of obſervation, to make a diſcovery, and find out ſomewhat. Sometime it ſignifies to look in compaſſion, *Pſal.* 25. 16. *Turn thee unto me* (ſaith *David*) *and have mercy upon me, for I am very low.* To look in compaſſion, notes a ſtrictneſs of obſervation, to find out what charity or mercy ſhould ſupply: ſuch a look or view of his eſtate, *David* deſired, that God would turn his eye upon him; to what end? that he might conſider and find out all his neceſſities, and in mercy ſuccour him.

Alludere videtur ad pictores, qui frequenter ad prototypum & exemplar, quod imitari conantur, oculos dirigunt & ad illud convertuntur.

Verbum פנה *non ſimpliciter reſpicere ſignificat, aut aliquid intueri, ſed cum quadam animi intētione & ad aliquem finem.*

So then, *To which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* ſounds thus much; upon what Saint wilt thou fix thine eye, to find thine own likeneſs, a repreſentation of the ſufferings thou beareſt, or of thy bearing theſe ſufferings? Take the ſum and ſenſe of the whole verſe thus, *Call over the Roll or Catalogue of all the Saints, which either ever were, or at this day are upon the face of the earth. See if there be any whoſe condition or actions will anſwer in proportion unto thine; turn thine eye upon all the holy ones, ſee if thou canſt obſerve any like thy ſelf, in the matter or manner of thy afflictions, in the dealings of God with thee, or in thy complainings againſt God.* Job, *thou ſtandeſt alone for all the Saints; go to the fools of the earth, and to the prophaner Infidels; among them thou maiſt haply meet thy pattern, and among their records read the ſtory of thine own impatience and miſcarriage: For* (as it follows) *wrath killeth the fooliſh, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one. How like a fool and ſilly one art thou, who haſt thus almoſt vext thy ſelf to death at thy own troubles, and pineſt with envy at the proſperity of others?* Such ſeems to be the connexion and dependence of the ſecond verſe, with, and upon the firſt, which I ſhall preſently deſcend to open, when I have added an Obſervation or two from the former already opened.

It was good advice which *Eliphaz* gave *Job* in that condition, namely, to take view of the Saints, and to compare himſelf with them. Thence obſerve,

> *It is profitable for us to look to the example of the Saints, either thoſe departed, or thoſe alive, and by them to examine, both what we do, and how we ſuffer.*

God hath given us, not only his Word for a rule, but he hath given us examples as a rule, to walk by. He hath given us his own example, that we, looking unto him, ſhould *be holy, as he is holy, in all manner of converſation*; *Be ye holy as I am holy*: *God, who is the holy one, is the higheſt pattern of holineſs.* And he hath given us his Son, *who is the expreſs image of his perſon, and the brightneſs of his glory*, to be our example. The life of Chriſt is a fair copy indeed, a copy without any blot, or uneven letter in it: for he alſo is *the holy one.* Chriſt is not only the *Principle of holineſs*, but alſo *the Pattern of holineſs* to his people, *they that ſay they abide in him, muſt walk even as he walked.* His works (excepting thoſe that were miraculous, and works of mediation between God and us) are our rule, as well as his word, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him*, &c. words of near importance with thoſe in the Text, *To which of the Saints wilt thou turn thee?* Look to Jeſus; when you are in ſufferings, and have a race of patience to run, let your eye alwayes be upon Chriſt, and draw the lines of your carriage, both in your ſpirits and outward actions, according to what you ſee in him. *Look to him*: And, *ver.* 3. *Conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction*

diction of ſinners. Which the Apoſtle *Peter* (1 *Pet.*2.21.) give us in plain termes, *For even hereunto were ye called, becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving an example that we ſhould follow his ſteps:* We muſt follow his ſteps both in the matter and in the manner of our ſufferings: Therefore Chriſt ſaith, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me*, Matth. 11.29. Chriſt calls it his yoke (it is a yoke of affliction, as well as a yoke of inſtruction.) And he calls it *his yoke*, not only becauſe, he, as a Lord layes it upon the necks of others, but becauſe, he, as a ſervant bore that yoke himſelf; therefore he ſaith, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me*; that is, not only take my yoke upon you for the matter, but learn of me for the manner, how to bear that yoke. Beſides theſe grand leading, unerring examples of God and Chriſt, the examples of the Saints are alſo commended to our imitation, both in doing and in ſuffering. *Whatſoever things were written* (and examples were written) *aforetime, were written for our inſtruction.* Why hath the Holy Ghoſt ſet ſo many pens a work, to write the lives of the Saints? Why hath he kept a record of them in his own book, but for direction to his people in after-times? The Lord hath not regiſtred any one act of the Saints, but is uſeful for us. The acts of *Noah, Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob, Samuel, David, are full of practical Divinity.* The ſufferings and troubles of theſe, and many others, are full (if I may ſo ſpeak) of *pathetical Divinity.* As the Apoſtle *James* his counſel doth more then intimate (*James* 5. 10.) *Take, my brethren, the Prophets, who have ſpoken in the Name of the Lord, for an example of ſuffering affliction and of patience:* Hence thoſe ancient Saints and believers (*Heb.* 12. 1.) are called *a cloud of witneſſes*; A cloud, becauſe there is a directive or a leading vertue in them. As there was a cloud that went before the children of *Iſrael* in the day to lead them, ſo this cloud of witneſſes, leads us up and down the wilderneſs of our ſorrows, and in the dark night of our ſufferings. Turn you to the Saints, to that cloud of witneſſes, eye them, and ſee what becomes you in ſad times. They have ſuffered joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods; ſuffer you likewiſe, if you come into the hands of ſpoilers. They lived by faith in the midſt of a thouſand deaths; live you likewiſe by faith in death, when ever you come into the hand of that King of terrors. And when at any time your own hearts, or the wayes of others are out of courſe, check and chide them for and from thoſe diſorders, by ſending them to the practiſe of the Saints. *Look to the Saints:* from which of the Saints have you learned to be proud and high minded? From which of the Saints have you learned to be earthly and covetous? From which of the Saints have you learned to ſeek and ſet up your ſelves, or to be impatient under the hand of God? *That man hath reaſon to ſuſpect he hath done ill, who doth that, which a good man never did, or ever repented the doing of it.*

Obſerve further, *When God forſakes a man, all the Saints on earth forſake him too.*

Eliphaz looks upon *Job*, as a man forſaken of God, and then he bids him get help, if he could, among the Saints. He that oppoſes God, ſhall be oppoſed by all who are God's. There is the ſame mind in the ſervants of Chriſt, which is in Chriſt their Maſter. They love where and whom he loves, they hate whom he hates, they are aſhamed of thoſe of whom Chriſt is aſhamed; If God reject a man, the Saints will not undertake or anſwer for him. So much of the firſt Argument, ranking *Job* with the wicked, becauſe (as *Eliphaz* thought) he could not find any in the rank of Saints like himſelf.

The ſecond Argument riſes to a like conviction, becauſe (in the ſame mans opinion) he might eaſily ſee himſelf ſo like the wicked.

For wrath killeth the fooliſh man, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.

Here are two ſinful paſſions, *wrath* and *envy*; and here are two ſorts of ſinful perſons, *The fooliſh man*, and *The ſilly one*, producing two ſad effects, (which yet in effect are but one) the one kills, and the other ſlayes, both are deadly and deſtructive; *Wrath killeth the fooliſh man, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.* There are ſeveral ſins and luſts which accompany, as the ſeveral ages and degrees, ſo the ſeveral tempers of men. Raſhneſs and intemperance hurry and inflame young men, ambition blows up riper years, and covetouſneſs often tyrannizeth over old age: Wrath takes hold of fools, and envy ſeizeth the ſilly one. Theſe worms ſtrike the root of ſuch men, and make them wither. As there is a ſpecial worm killing ſpecial trees, and conſuming their fruits; ſo there are ſpecial luſts, which like worms eat out, and deſtroy the life of man; *wrath killeth the fooliſh man.*

Omne pomū, omne granū, omne frumentum, omne lignū habet vermē ſuum, & alius [illegible] *vermis mali, alius pyri, alius Tritici.* Auguſt.

The fooliſh men.] He is *A fool*, who hath not wiſdom to direct himſelf; but *The fool*, is he, who will not follow the counſel and direction of the wiſe, The word ſignifies, not ſo much a fool, who hath no knowledge; as a fool, who makes no uſe of the knowledge which he hath: ſuch a one is a fooliſh man indeed. Or it notes a man haſty, bold, inconſiderate, ruſhing on, hand over head, without fear or wit: A man, who either is maſter but of little knowledge, or that which he hath (be it little or much) maſters him. It agrees fully in ſence, and is the ſame to a letter in ſound, with our Engliſh word *Evil*; Such the Prophet (*Zech.* 11. 15.) deſcribes: *Take* (ſaith he) *the inſtruments of a fooliſh ſhepherd*, he doth not mean, the inſtruments of a rude and merely ignorant ſhepherd, a man that hath no knowledge or learning; but of a raſh and imprudent ſhepherd, or of a lazy and idle ſhepherd, who, though he hath knowledge, yet knows not how (or hath no heart) to improve his knowledge for the good of his flock. The Prophet *Ezekiel* gives us the character of ſuch, *Chap.* 34. 4. *The diſeaſed have ye not ſtrengthened, nor have ye healed that which was ſick, nor bound up that which was broken*, &c. *But* (will ye know what work they made?) *with fury and with cruelty have ye ruled them:* ye have been moved with fury, not with pitty, and acted by paſſion, not by reaſon, much leſs by grace: So in this place, the fooliſh man, whom envy ſlayes, is not a mere ignorant, one that hath no brains, but one hare-brain'd and uncompos'd. *Eliphaz* hints at *Job* ſecretly in this word, whom he knew reported for a man of great knowledge and learning, according to the learning of thoſe times, yet he numbers him with fools; becauſe he conceived him wrathful, raſh, intemperate, not having any true government of himſelf. *Anger reſteth in the boſom of fools*, Eccleſ. 7. 9. A fool is not able to judge of the nature of things, or times, or occaſions, and therefore he is angry with every thing that hits not his nature or his humour. He will be angry with the Sun, if it ſhine hotter then he would have it; and with the winds, if they blow harder then he would have them; and with the clouds, if they rain longer then ſerves his turn. They that are emptieſt of underſtanding, are fulleſt of will, and uſually ſo full of will, that we call them *wil-ful*. Hence, unleſs every thing be ready to ſerve their wills, they are ready to dye by the hand or judgment of their paſſions.

אויל *Temerarius, audax, imprudens, percitus iræ*

Non his ſolū, ſed calamo iraſcimur in ſcribendo, eumque collidimus & frangimus, & pictores penecillo & alcatores teſſeris, & cuicunque inſtrumento quilibet, ex quo difficultatem ſe pati arbitratur. Auguſt. *Ira ſtultitiæ comes.*

Wrath kills the fooliſh man.] *Wrath* may be taken here two wayes, either for the wrath of God, or for the wrath of man. In the former ſence, the meaning is, That the *wrath of God kills fooliſh men*; which is an undoubted truth: but I rather adhere to the latter, which gives the meaning thus, That the *wrath of a fooliſh man, kills himſelf*; his own wrath is as a knife at his throat, and as a ſword in his own bowels. The word which we tranſlate *wrath*, ſignifies indignation, anger, teaſtineſs, or touchineſs: Properly *wrath* is anger inveterate; anger is a ſhort fury, and wrath is a long anger; when man is ſet upon it, when his ſpirit is ſteeped and ſoaked in anger, then it is wrath. *Eſau* raked up the burning coals of his anger in the aſhes, till his Fathers Funeral; *The time of mourning for my Father will ſhortly come, then will I ſlay my brother.* But our word rather notes, a fervent heat and diſtemper of ſpirit preſently breaking forth, or an extream vexation fretting and diſquieting us within: As *Pſal.* 112. 10. *The wicked ſhall ſee it, and be grieved*; (that is, he ſhall have ſecret indignation in himſelf to ſee matters go ſo.) *He ſhall gnaſh with his teeth, and melt away.* Gnaſhing of the teeth is cauſen by vexing of the heart: and therefore it follows, *he melts away*; which notes (melting is from heat) an extream heat within. This ſence is very ſutable to this of *Eliphaz*, *wrath ſlayeth the fooliſh*, or wrath makes him melt away; it melts his greaſe with chaſing, as we ſay of a man furiouſly vext: Hence that deplorable condition of

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the damned, who are caſt out of the preſence of God for ever, is deſcribed by *weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth*; which imports not only pain, but extream vexing at, or in themſelves. Thoſe fools ſhall be ſlain for ever with their own wrath, as well as with the wrath of God.

Wrath killeth, &c.] But how doth wrath kill a fooliſh man? His wrath ſometimes draws his ſword and kills others: but is his wrath as a ſword to kill himſelf? Many like *Simeon* and *Levi*, in their anger have ſlain a man; but that the anger of a man ſhould ſlay himſelf, may ſeem ſtrange. The paſſion of wrath is ſuch an engine, as recoyles upon him that uſes or diſcharges it. As *the deſire of the ſloathful killeth him*, Prov. 21. 25. So, the wrath of a fooliſh man kills him: that place enlightens this; how comes deſire to ſlay the ſlothful? Thus; A man ſlothful in action is full of deſires, and quick in his affections after many good things; he would fain have them, he longs for them: but the man is ſo extream lazy, that he will not ſtir hand or foot to get the things which he deſires; and ſo he pines away with *wiſhing and woulding*, and dies with grief, becauſe deſire is not ſatisfied. So, in like manner, wrath is ſaid to ſlay a man; firſt, becauſe it thruſts him head-long upon ſuch things as are his death; he runs wilfully upon his own death, ſometimes by the dangerouſneſs of the action, whence caſual ſudden death ſurpriſes him; ſometime by the unlawfulneſs of the action, which brings him to a legal or judiciary death. Secondly, his wrath is ſaid to kill him, becauſe his wrath is ſo vexatious to him, that it makes his life a continual death to him, and at laſt ſo wearieth him out and waſtes his ſpirits, that he dyes for very grief: and ſo at once commits a threefold murder; Firſt, He murders *him*, *intentionally*, againſt whom he is wroth: Secondly, He, *really*, murders his own body: And thirdly, He, *meritoriouſly*, murders his ſoul for ever, except the Lord be more merciful then he hath been wrathful, and the death of Chriſt heal thoſe wounds, by which he would have procured the death of others, and hath (as much as in him lies) procured his own.

And envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.] Theſe two expreſſions meet near upon a ſence. *Envy is the trouble which a man conceives in himſelf, at the good which another receives.* This diſeaſe gets in at the eyes and ears, or is occaſioned by ſeeing or hearing of our neighbours bleſſings. In the 1 *John* 2. All the luſts in the world are reduced to three heads, *The luſt of the eyes, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life*; Envy is the chiefeſt luſt of the eyes, and it is properly called the luſt of the eye; becauſe a man ſeldom envieth another, untill he ſees ſome good he hath above himſelf. This paſſion is a murderer alſo, it begins at the eyes, but it roots down into the bones.

פתה *Suaſus, perſuaſus, deceptus, ſeductus fuit, hinc* πείθω *ſuadeo, apud Græcos.*

Envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.] There is not much difference between the nature of theſe two, the fooliſh man, and the ſilly one; But the Original words by which they are expreſſed, are very different. The root ſignifies to perſwade, to intice or allure: And it is taken ſometime in a good ſence (as in *Gen.* 9. 27.) where the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks with admirable elegancy, *God will perſwade the perſwaſible*, we tranſlate it, *God will perſwade* Japhet. *Japhet* had his name from being perſwaded or perſwadable; God ſhall intice or perſwade *Japhet*: which was a propheſie of the calling of the Gentiles, who are deſcendants from *Japhet*, as the Jews are from *Shem*. So, that word is applied to Gods drawing, or alluring men by the ſweet promiſes and winning enticements of the Goſpel. God doth (let it be taken in holy reverence) tole men on by promiſes, and deceive them graciouſly into the Goſpel (*Hoſea* 2. 14.) *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderneſs.* And becauſe by perſwaſions men are often deceived and ſeduced to evil, therefore the word ſignifies alſo to deceive and beguile, as well as to perſwade; and in the paſſive, to be beguiled and deceived; Hence the word in the Text is derived, which we tranſlate *a ſimple one*, or a man that will eaſily be perſwaded and led by another, a ſequacious or eaſie man, whom you may carry with a mouth full of good words, and fair promiſes, whither you will. Yet, we find this word (*Pſal.* 116. 6.) uſed in a good ſence, for a man without ſinful guile and craft, a ſimple, honeſt, plain-hearted man, *The Lord preſerveth the ſimple.* But here, and often elſe where, it is taken in an ill ſence, for a man without ſence and reaſon, without heart and ſpirit; a man that cannot in any competency judge of things, or make out his way, but is merely led, and lives upon the opinion and judgment of another: To ſuch *wiſdom cryeth without, and uttereth her voice in the ſtreets; how long ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity?* Prov. 1. 20, 22. *This ſilly one envy ſlayeth*, He is out of his wits already, and a little matter will put him out of his life: *Envy ſlayeth him*, that is a ſimple man looking upon the proſperity and bleſſing of God upon his neighbour, will needs afflict himſelf: he looks upon himſelf, as having loſt all, if that man gain: he falls, if his brother ſtands; and *can with more eaſe die miſerably, then ſee another live happily.* In this ſence it is, *That envy kills the ſilly one.*

יפת ליפת *Japheh le Japheth.*

Exiguo animo & abjecto ſpiritu.

Now the reaſon why *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of theſe two, the fooliſh and the ſimple one, and characters them, as dying by the hand of theſe two luſts, *Wrath and Envy*; is becauſe he conceived all *Jobs* troubled and (as he thought) muddy complaints in the third Chapter, aroſe from theſe two impure and filthy ſprings, *Wrath and Envy*; from proud Wrath, and impotent Envy: he looked upon him, as angry and diſpleaſed, yea, as enraged, becauſe God had dealt ſo ill with him; and he ſuppoſed he ſaw him pale and wan, eaten up and pined with envy, becauſe others were ſo well, becauſe his friends enjoyed health, and lived in proſperity round about him. As if he had ſaid, *Thou art wroth at thy own poverty, ſickneſs and ſores; and thou art envious at our plenty, health and eaſe.* And may not *folly and ſimplicity*, challenge that man for *Theirs*, whoſe ſpirit thus reſents, either his own evils, or his neighbours good?

> Obſerve hence, Firſt, *Every wicked man is a fooliſh, a ſilly man. Sin is pure folly.*

In the *Proverbs* all along, wickedneſs is the Interpretation of fooliſhneſs. It is folly to take braſs Counters for gold, and to be pleaſed with Bugles more then with Diamonds. When an *heir* is impleaded for an *Ideot*, the Judge commands an apple, or a counter, with a piece of gold, to be ſet before him, to try which he will take; if he takes the apple or the counter, and leaves the gold, he is then caſt for a fool, and unable to mannage his eſtate, for he knows not the value of things, or how to make a true election. Wicked men are thus fooliſh, and more, for when Bugles and Diamonds, Counters and Gold are before them, they leave the Diamonds and the Gold, and pleaſe themſelves with thoſe toyes and bables; when (which is infinitely more ſottiſh) Heaven and Hell, life and death are ſet before them, they chuſe Hell rather then Heaven, and death rather then life; they take the mean, tranſitory, trifling things of the world, before the favour of God, the pardon of ſin, a part in Jeſus Chriſt, and an inheritance among the Saints in light. All the wiſdom of wicked men, is wiſdom in their own conceits. And *Solomon* aſſures us, that *there is more hope of a fool then of ſuch*; that is, of thoſe who are ſenſible of their own failings, and are willing (as the Apoſtle directs) *to become fools that they may be wiſe*, 1 Cor. 3. 18. Opinion in it ſelf is weak, but ſelf-opinion is very ſtrong; even the ſtrongeſt of thoſe ſtrong-holds, and the higheſt of thoſe high Towers, which the ſpiritual war, by thoſe weapons which are mighty through God, is to oppoſe and caſt down: which, till they are caſt down, theſe fools are impregnable, and will not be led captive unto Chriſt.

> Secondly, Obſerve, That, *to vex and to be angry at the troubles that fall upon us, or at the hand which ſends them, is a high point of folly and of ignorance.*

Wrath and diſcontent ſlay the fooliſh; ſuch are at once twice ſlain, ſlain with the wrath of God, and with their own.

To die thus, is to die like a fool indeed. For firſt, this wrath of man ſprings from his ignorance of God: Man would not be angry at what the Lord doth, if he knew he were the Lord, and may do what himſelf pleaſes, *The ground of anger is a ſuppoſition of wrong.*

Secondly, This wrath of man ſprings from ignorance of himſelf. He cannot be angry with any croſs, who rightly knows himſelf.

Firſt, to be a creature.

This notion of our ſelves teacheth us that leſſon of humility, to be ſubject to the will of our Creator. The law of our creation calls us to all paſſive obedience, as well as unto active, as much and as quietly to ſuffer, as to do the will of God; but eſpecially, if a man did fully know himſelf to be a ſinful creature, he would not be angry; yea, he would lay a charge upon his mouth, not to utter a word, and a charge upon his heart, not to utter a thought againſt what the Lord doth with him. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him*, ſaith the Church, *Micah* 7. 9. As if ſhe had ſaid, the remembrance of my ſin takes away all pleading, much more all quarrelling, in how angry a poſture ſoever the Lord ſets himſelf to afflict me: And therefore my ſpirit is reſolved, that becauſe my fleſh hath ſinned, my fleſh ſhall bear the indignation of the Lord. *He that knows what it is to ſin, knows that all ſufferings leſs then hell, are leſs then ſin.* If a man were convinced of this, that, what he bears is leſs then his ſin deſerves, he would bear it, with thanks, not with complaints. Yea he would ſay, that, as he hath deſerved all theſe and more then all theſe ſtrokes, ſo he hath need of them. The bundle of folly in his heart, calls for a bundle of rods upon his back, and he ſees want of correction might have been his undoing. Therefore to be angry with affliction, argues a man ignorant of himſelf as a creature, much more as a ſinful creature. Once more, the fooliſhneſs of ſuch wrath appears to the eye of nature and common reaſon, becauſe this wrath brings no eaſe or remedy at all to thoſe wounds, but rather makes them more painful, if not remedileſs. It is an argument of folly to do a thing, whereby we cannot help our ſelves; but it is folly and madneſs to do that which hurts, which makes our wound feſter and our diſeaſe grow deſperate. Did any man ever eaſe himſelf by fretting or raging under the croſs? How many have made their croſs more heavy upon them, by raging at it? A mans own wrath is heavier to him then his croſs. *A ſtone is heavy, and ſand weighty, but a fools wrath is heavier then them both*, Prov. 27. 3. A fools wrath is very heavy to others, but it is heavieſt to himſelf. The Text is expreſs for it, which may be a third Obſervation.

Iraſcitur, quia omnia ſibi deberi putat.

To be angry and diſcontent at Gods judgments, is more deſtructive then the judgments themſelves.

The wrath and judgments of God afflict only, but your own wrath deſtroyes; wrath ſlayes the fooliſh. Probably God came only to correct you, but wrath kills you. The wrath of man is a paſſion, but it is very active upon man, and eats up the ſpirit which nurſes and brings it forth: Frowardneſs and anger are at once our ſin and our torment. He that is angry when God ſtrikes, ſtrikes himſelf, whereas humble ſubmiſſion to the blow turns it into a kiſs or an embraces and they that ſit down quietly and believingly under any evil, bear it at preſent with more eaſe, and in the end, find it in the inventory of their goods. *David, It is good for me that I have been afflicted.*

Fourthly, Note, That, *to envy another mans good or proſperity, is an argument of the worſt ſimplicity.*

Envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.] Envy is a common theam, I will not ſtay upon it; but ſhall only give you two reaſons to demonſtrate the ſilly ſimplicity of an envious perſon.

Firſt, The good of another is not thy hurt; thou haſt not the leſs, becauſe another hath more. *Leah's* fruitfulneſs was no cauſe of *Rachels* barrenneſs. Thy portion is not impaired by thy brothers increaſe; thou haſt thy ſhare, and he hath but his; how ſilly a thing then is it to envy him that hath much, when as, his having much is not the cauſe why thou haſt little? Again, this troubling thy ſelf that others have more, will not get thee any more; Envy never brought in earnings or increaſe.

Secondly, A man of wiſdom will make all the good of another his good. Take away envy, and that which is mine, is thine; and if I take away envy, that which is thine is mine. To have a heart to bleſs God for his bleſſings upon another, is it ſelf a great bleſſing, and gives thee likewiſe a part in thoſe bleſſings. Thus we may enjoy all the joys and comforts, the favours and deliverauces, the health and peace, the riches and plenty, the gifts, yea, and the very graces of all thoſe, in whoſe graces and gifts, plenty and riches, peace and health, *&c.* we can really and cordially rejoyce. Whereas an envious man ever ſtandeth in his own light, and cannot rejoyce in his own mercies, for grieving at his Brothers.

Tolle invidiã, & quod meũ eſt, tuũ eſt; & ſi ego tollam invidiam, quod tuũ eſt meũ eſt.

So far of the ſecond part of the argument, whereby *Eliphaz* would convince *Job* of wickedneſs, his likeneſs to the wicked in bearing of, or rather fretting againſt his troubles.

VERS. 3, 4, 5.

I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, but ſuddenly I curſed his habitation.
His children are far from ſafety, and they are cruſhed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.
Whoſe harveſt the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thornes, and the robber ſwalloweth up their ſubſtance.

TWO parts of the fourth argument were cleared in the two former Verſes. In theſe three *Eliphaz* argues further, to the ſame effect. His argument is grounded upon his own experience, which had ſhewed many examples of fooliſh men, like *Job* (as he ſuppoſed) both in his riſing and in his falling, in his good dayes and in his evil. *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, and ſuddenly I curſed his habitation*, &c. The Argument may be thus framed,

Fooliſh men flouriſh a while, and then come to certain and ſudden deſtruction; they, and their children, and their eſtates, are all cruſhed and ſwallowed up.

But thou didſt flouriſh a while, and grow up like ſome goodly tree, yet ſudden deſtruction came upon thy children and upon thy eſtate, the robbers have conſumed and ſwallowed all up.

Therefore thou alſo art fooliſh, &c. *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, but ſuddenly I curſed his habitation:* I have ſeen thee taking root, and I obſerve thy habitation curſed; Thy outward condition is ſo parallel with theirs, that I know not how to diſtinguiſh thee, from them, in thy inward and ſpiritual condition.

I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root.

Eliphaz urgeth experience. He urged experience in *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 8. *Even as I have ſeen, they that plough iniquity and ſow wickedneſs, reap the ſame*, &c. He urgeth experience here again, and this ſuperadded experience ſeems to anſwer an objection which might be made againſt that former experience: For ſome might ſay, many wicked men plow iniquity enough, and ſow wickedneſs abundantly, yet they reap comforts and the contentments of this world; they have what their hearts deſire, a full harveſt of riches, pleaſures and honours.

It is true (ſaith *Eliphaz*) I grant it, I have obſerved the like alſo, *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root*; yea, but I can anſwer quickly and remove this objection: it doth not at all weaken my former aſſertion, grounded upon that experience; for as *I have ſeen him take root, ſo, ſuddenly I curſed his habitation, his children are far from ſafety*, &c. He flouriſheth, but he withers quickly; he takes root, but he is ſoon pull'd up by the roots.

I have ſeen.] *Experience is the miſtreſs of truth.* Truth is called the *daughter of time*, becauſe experience bringeth forth many truths; and the word of God is made viſible in the works of God. *I have ſeen*, (ſaith he) *This truth hath run into my eye.* In experiences the promiſes of God ſtand forth, and in experiences the threatnings of God ſtand forth, and ſhew themſelves: all the experiences that we have in the world, are only ſo many exemplifications of the truths contained in the promiſes or threatnings of the word.

The fooliſh.] I ſhall not ſtay to open that term; for we met with it in the former verſe, *wrath ſlayeth the fooliſh one.* Only in a word, this fooliſh man is one, who acts without counſel, and whoſe will is too hard for his underſtanding. He hath no reaſon for what he doth, but becauſe he hath a mind to do it. A fooliſh man is a wicked man; and here the fooliſh man is a wicked man at eaſe, a wicked man in his fulneſs and abundance of outward comforts: *A fool is*

אויל *Levẽ hominem notat, qui ſine conſilio agit, vult & facit, nullamq; facti rationem habet, niſi quia ita venit in mẽtem.* Cocc.

ever worſt, when he is at eaſe. And as he more abounds in comforts, ſo, he abounds more in ſin. All mercies are to him but fuel to his folly, and meat and drink for his madneſs. That rich man who pleaſed himſelf ſo in his worldly ſucceſſes is call'd a *fool, Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be taken from thee, and then whoſe ſhall all theſe things be which thou poſſeſſeſt* ? (Luke 12. 10.) All wicked men are fooliſh, and wicked rich men have ever the greateſt ſtock of folly. And they are therefore more fooliſh then others, becauſe they think themſelves wiſer then all. If a man can get riches, if his root be well ſettled in the earth, and his branches ſpread fairly out, he accounteth himſelf very wiſe, and ſo do many others account him too. *A thriving ſinner is a fooliſh and an unproſperous man ; but he that plots how to thrive by ſin, is the moſt fooliſh man in the world,* and therefore in all his proſperity moſt unproſperous. As *the fooliſh take root,* ſo, that by which they take root is oftentimes their folly.

Taking root.] Wicked men under the outward curſe are compared to trees not taking root, *Iſa.* 40. 24. *He bringeth the Princes to nothing, yea they ſhall not be planted, yea they ſhall not be ſown, yea their ſtock ſhall not take root in the earth.* And *Pſalm* 129. 6. *Let them be as graſs upon the houſe* (having no earth to take root in) *which withereth afore it groweth up, whereof the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth up the ſheaves his boſom.* Wicked men proſpering, are compared to a tree well rooted. *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root* ; that is, confirmed and ſetled in their outward proſperity. A root is to the tree as a foundation is to the houſe, the eſtabliſhment of it ; when a tree is well rooted, it takes in the moiſture of the earth freely, then the body or trunk grows big, the branches ſpread forth, the leaves are green, and it abounds with fruit. So that with the well-rooting, we muſt take in all that concerns the flouriſhing of a tree. Hence, other Scriptures expreſs the men of the world by trees, not only ſecretly taking root in the earth, but putting themſelves forth and appearing in their viſible beauty and vertue. (*Pſal.* 37. 35.) *David* produceth his experience, *I have ſeen the wicked in great power* (how ? *taking root,* yea) *ſpreading himſelf like a green bay-tree.* They are deſcribed by their boughs, branches and leaves. And in *Iſa.* 2. 11. *The day of the Lord ſhall be upon the Cedars of* Lebanon, *that are high and lifted up* ; not only upon the Cedars of *Lebanon* that are deeply rooted, but upon the *Cedars of* Lebanon *that are high and lifted up, and upon all the Oakes of* Baſon. In *Hoſea* 14. *v.* 5. The proſperous eſtate of the Church (under the dew and influence of heavenly bleſſings) is held forth to us under the notion of a tree taking root. *I will be as the dew to* Iſrael, *he ſhall grow as the Lilly, and caſt his roots as* Lebanon (*that is, as the trees in* Lebanon) *his branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the Olive-tree, and his ſmell as* Lebanon.

In the fourth of *Daniel,* the ſtate, glory, and magnificence of the Kingdoms of this world are ſhadowed by a tree. *Nebuchadnezzar* in a viſion hath a tree preſented before him, he knew not what to make of it, and thereore calls for the wiſe men to expound the viſion, which he thus relates, *ver.* 4. *I ſaw, and behold a tree in the midſt of the earth, the heighth thereof was great ; and the tree grew, and was ſtrong, and the heigth thereof reached unto heaven, and the ſight thereof to the ends of the earth, and the leaves thereof were fair.* When *Daniel* comes to interpret it, (*ver.* 22.) he ſayes to the King, *Thou art this tree,* &c. *Nebuchadnezzar* in all his worldly pomp, is ſet forth by a goodly tree. In the 53. of *Iſa. v.* 2. Where the birth of Chriſt is propheſied, it is ſaid, *That he ſhall grow up before him, as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.* As a very flouriſhing eſtate, whether in ſpirituals or temporals, is expreſt by a tree *planted by the water ſide* ; So a mean, low eſtate, is ſignified by a tree in a dry ground. Our *Lord Jeſus,* in regard of any outward glory, was like a tree in a dry ground, as the words following expound it, *He hath no form nor comelineſs ; and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire him.* His Kingdom was not like the Kingdom of thoſe great Monarchs, ſtrong, and high, and beautiful with any created luſtre.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That wicked men may flouriſh in great outward proſperity.*

I have ſeen the wicked taking root. The Prophet *Jeremiah,* in the twelfth of his Propheſie (a Scripture touched before, *chap.* 4. 7. to this purpoſe) being ſomewhat ſcandalized at the proſperity of treacherous dealers, deſcribes them thus, *ver.* 2. *Thou haſt planted them, yea, they have taken root ; they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit.* Here are four degrees : Firſt, They are planted ; there is many a tree planted that takes not root : but (ſaith he) *thou haſt planted them, yea, they have taken root.* There are ſome trees, which are both planted and have taken root, yet they do not grow ; eſpecially not to any height or greatneſs : though they live, yet they do not thrive. Theſe are planted, and they take root, and they grow ; but there are many trees planted, rooted and growing, which yet are fruitleſs ; theſe have all, they are planted, they take root, they grow, and they bring forth fruit : And who are theſe ? Surely, the worſt of men, as the very next words evidence ; *God is near in their mouths, but far from their reins.* God is near in the mouth of ſuch, that is, they may ſpeak of him ſometimes, but he is far from their reins ; there is nothing of God in their hearts : and ſurely, they that have nothing of God in their hearts, have nothing of goodneſs in their hearts, or in their lives.

This preſent glory and proſperity of wicked men lifts up the glory of Gods patience. How is the glory of the patience of God exalted, in letting them have eaſe, who are a burden unto himſelf? in letting them proſper, who are (as God can be pained) a pain unto himſelf ; in ſuffering them to flouriſh, who vex his people ? in ſuffering them to laugh, who make his people mourn ?

Further, He gives them leave to take root and flouriſh, (whom he could blaſt and root up every moment) that all may ſee what is in their hearts. If God did not permit them to take root, yea, and ſometime to grow up and flouriſh, we ſhould never ſee what fruit they would bring forth ; we ſhould never ſee thoſe grapes of gall, thoſe bitter cluſters, if theſe vines of *Sodom,* and fields of *Gomorrah,* were not water'd with the dew, and warm'd with the Sun of ſome outward proſperity.

Laſtly, The proſperity of wicked men, is a great trial of good men ; *The flouriſhing of the ungodly is as ſtrong an exerciſe of their Graces, as their own witherings.*

Secondly Obſerve, That, *Wicked men may not only flouriſh and grow, but they may flouriſh and grow a great while.*

משריש

I ground it upon this ; the Text ſaith that they take root, *I have ſeen the fooliſh take root* ; and the word notes a deep rooting. In the Parable of the Sower (*Mat.* 13. 21.) it is ſaid, that the ſeed which fell into ſtonie ground, withered, *becauſe it had no root* ; noting, that the cauſe of a ſudden decay, or withering in any plant, is the want of rooting ; whereas a Tree well rooted, will endure many a blaſt, and ſtand out a ſtorm. Some wicked men ſtand out many ſtorms, like old Oaks, like trees deeply rooted, they ſtand many a blaſt, yea, many a blow. Spectators are ready to ſay, ſuch and ſuch ſtorms will certainly overthrow them, and yet ſtill they ſtand ; but though they ſtand ſo long, that all wonder, yet they ſhall fall, that many may rejoyce, *and take up this proverb againſt them* (as of old againſt the King of *Babylon) How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed? The Lord hath broken the ſtaff of the wicked, and the ſcepter of the Rulers : He who ſmote the people in wrath, with a continued ſtroke, he that ruled in the Nation with anger, is perſecuted, and none hindreth. Therefore many ſhall break forth into ſinging, yea, the fir-trees ſhall rejoyce at him, and the Cedars of Lebanon, ſaying , ſince thou art laid down, no feller is come up amongſt us,* Iſa. 14.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Outward good things are not good in themſelves.*

The fooliſh take root. The worſt of men may enjoy the beſt of outward comforts. *Outward things are unto us, as we are.* If the man be good, then they are good. And though the Preacher tells us, *Eccleſ.* 9. *That all things come alike unto all,* yet all things are not alike unto all. There is a great difference between the flouriſhing of a wiſe man, and the flouriſhing of a fool ; all his flouriſhing and faſtning in the earth, is no good to him, becauſe himſelf is not good. Spiritual good things are ſo good, that though they find us not good, yet they will make us good; we cannot have them indeed, and be unlike them: But worldly good things find ſome really good, and make them worſe; others who had but a ſhew of goodneſs, they are occaſions of making ſtark naught: *Rooting in the earth never helpt any to grow heaven-wards. Many deeply rooted in the earth, have grown down, and gone down to the depths of Hell.*

Fourthly, obſerve, as a conſequence from the former;

> That, *The enjoyment of outward good things, is no evidence, can be made no argument that a man is good.*

I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root. And yet how many ſtick upon this evidence, bleſſing themſelves, becauſe they are outwardly bleſſed? Yea, though they meet with a diſcovery of their ſins, and ſinful boſomes, in the word, though they find thoſe ſins threatned, yea curſed with a grievous curſe in the word, yet they bleſs themſelves, and ſay, we are rich and flouriſh, we have a good eſtate and credit, we take root and ſtand; but they forget that all this may be the portion of a fool. *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root.*

And ſuddenly I curſed his habitation.

ואקוב *deducitur vel à* נקב *vel à* קבב *ſedit, perfodit, terebravit, & per metaphoram, maledixit, execratus eſt, eſt metaphora tranſlata ab his qui gladio aut pugione aliquem transverberant, tanquam ſi aliquis Dei aut hominis maledictione trajiceretur,* Cartw. *in* Prov. 11. 26.

The word here uſed, *to curſe*, ſprings indifferently from two roots, which yet meet, and are one in ſignification; namely, to ſtrike through or pierce, as a man that is ſtruck through with a ſtaff, or ſword, or ſtabb'd with a dagger; thus, *Hab.* 3. 14. *Thou didſt ſtrike through with his ſtaves the head of the villages.* And, *Iſa.* 36. 6. The piercing of a reed into the hand of him that leans upon it, is expreſt by this word. So then it carries a metaphorical alluſion to the effect of a curſe; the curſe of God alwayes, and the curſe of man upon due grounds, is as a ſword or a dagger, piercing a man through and through; through both ſoul and body. *I have curſed his habitation*, that is, I have ſmitten his habitation quite through with a curſe.

I curſed his habitation.] Some read, I abhorred, or I abominated his habitation. I was ſo far from envying this flouriſhing, ſpreading tree, or from being in love with his goodly ſeat and brave habitation, that I loathed, and could not abide it. The cottage of an honeſt man was more delightful to me, then the tents or palaces of wickedneſs.

Pium non decent dira.

But the word bears rather *to curſe*; which is firſt to wiſh evil unto another: And ſecondly, to foretel, to pronounce, or denounce evil againſt another. Often in the *Pſalms*, *David*'s curſes upon his enemies, are predictions from the ſpirit of God, not maledictions or ill wiſhes from his own ſpirit; good men know not how to wiſh evill; their curſings are propheſies, not prayers; they foretel or foreſee evils, but they deſire them not. *I have not deſired the woful day, Lord, thou knoweſt*, ſaid that Prophet, who had denounced many woful dayes, *Jer.* 17. 16.

Id fieri ab aliquo dicitur in Scriptura quod faciendum denunciatur.

In Scripture, many are ſaid to do that which they declare to be, or foretel that it ſhall be; as (to give an inſtance or two) *Lev.* 13. in the caſe of the Leper, the Text ſaith, that when the Prieſt makes up his judgment concerning the Leper (having found the tokens of Leproſie upon him) *he ſhall defile him* (v. 3, & 8.) *or make him unclean*; ſo the Original gives it; which we tranſlate, *The Prieſt ſhall pronounce him unclean.* In that ſenſe, the Miniſters of the Goſpel (whoſe buſineſs it is to cleanſe) defile many; yea, one way to cleanſe men, is thus to defile, and pronounce them Lepers. So *Iſa.* 6. 8. The Lord ſends the Prophet againſt the people, and ſaith to him, *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes*: Now, the Prophet did not act this himſelf, he did not deafen their ears, or blind their eyes; but only fore-told or denounced that this judgment ſhould fall upon them: becauſe they had ſo long ſtopped their ears, at laſt their ears ſhould be ſtopt and made heavy enough: and becauſe they had ſo long winked and ſhut their eyes, at laſt they ſhould be blind, and their eyes ſhut faſt enough: *How faſt are thoſe eyes and ears lockt up, which are thus double lockt?* Once more, *Jer.* 1. 10. The Lord gives the Prophet a ſtrange commiſſion, *See* (ſaith he) *I have this day ſet thee over the Nations and over Kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to deſtroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant.* One would think this commiſſion, more fitting for a *Cæſar* or an *Alexander*, for great Commanders attended with numerous Armies, then for an unarmed Prophet; what could he do? could he root out Kingdoms, and deſtroy Nations? Yes, by denouncing the deſtroying judgments, and conſuming wrath of God, due unto them for their rebellions and provocations: Thus a poor weak Prophet can overturn a whole Kingdom, and root up the ſtrongeſt Nations. And the truth is, that, *never was any Nation or Kingdom rooted up by the ſword, but it was firſt rooted up by the word*; firſt, God hewed them to pieces, and ſlew them by his Prophets, and then let in Armies of cruel enemies to do it.

Prædic excæcandos oculos, & aures aggravandas.

Non per invidiam & iram dira imprecarer, ſed animus præſagiret, male ipſi fore. Cocc.

So here in the Text, *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, but ſuddenly I curſed his habitation*; The clear meaning is, I foretold a curſe, I knew what would ſhortly become of his habitation. It was not anger againſt his perſon, or envy at his eſtate, that moved me to curſe him; but it was an eye of faith which ſhewed me him markt with a curſe in the juſt threatnings of God: I ſaw a curſe hanging over his family and dwelling, over his riches and honours: And though he then flouriſhed, that, yet he ſhould quickly wither and be deſtroyed root and branch. *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked*, Prov. 3. 33. Man doth but ſee it there, the Lord ſent it there.

נוה

The word is conſiderable which we tranſlate **Habitation**; It ſignifies *a quiet, a ſetled, a peaceable, a beautiful habitation:* And ſo carries an aggravation of the judgment upon the fooliſh man; his judgment is worſe upon him, becauſe he thought himſelf ſo well, ſo well ſeated, ſo well ſetled, ſo ſecured and accommodated, that he ſhould never be removed: They are moſt troubled with removings, who thought themſelves ſetled; *troubles afflict them deepeſt, who ſuppoſed themſelves beyond trouble.* When *David* thought God had made his mountain ſo ſtrong that it could not be moved, how was he troubled, as ſoon as God hid his face? *Pſal.* 30. 6, 7. And if they are ſo troubled with ſhakings, who look upon their eſtates as ſettled by the favour of God, how will they be troubled to meet with totterings and ſhakings, much more with ruinings and deſtructions, whoſe eſtates at beſt, are bottomed only upon their pollicies, often, upon their ſins?

> Obſerve hence, Firſt, *the eſtate of ſome wicked men, is out of the prayers of Gods people.*

When they go by their dwellings, they cannot ſay, *The bleſſing of the Lord be upon you, we bleſs you in the name of the Lord*, Pſal. 126. 8. It is a great mercy to ſtand under the influences of prayer, and for a man to have his eſtate, land, dwellings, watered with ſhowers of bleſſings and hearty good wiſhes from the mouthes of Saints. Their bleſſings or their curſings, are next to the bleſſings and curſins of Chriſt, nay, they are his: It is an argument that Chriſt hath bleſſed or curſed a man, when the ſpirits of his people generally are carried to either. It is one of the ſaddeſt preſages in the world, for a man to be caſt out of the prayers of the Saints, or to be caſt by their prayers; that is, when their prayers are againſt him, and he preſented naked to the diſpleaſure of Chriſt: It ſhewes that the ſin of a man is a ſin unto death, when the faithful ceaſe praying for him, 1 *Joh.* 5. 16. What can it prognoſticate then, but approaching ruine and deſtruction, when they bend the ſtrength of prayer againſt him? There was never any habitation of wickedneſs, ſo firmly founded or ſtrongly fortified, but that *Great and Holy Ordinance* hath or may ſhake, and batter it to the duſt. The fair Towers and Walls of *Babylon*, the ſeat and ſtate of Antichriſt, have long been under this curſe: All the Saints, whoſe eyes God hath unſcaled and brought out from *Egyptian* darkneſs, have ſeen *That fooliſh man* taking root, *and have curſed his habitation.*

> Obſerve, Secondly, *A wicked man in proſperity is under the curſe of God.*

He is often under the curſe of man, but ever under the curſe of God. *Eſau have I hated* (ſaith God, *Rom.* 9. 13.) yet even at that time *the fatneſs of the earth was his dwelling, and of the dew of Heaven from above*, Gen. 27. 39. *While the meat was in the mouths of the murmuring* Iſraelites, *the wrath of God was upon them.* They did at once eat their luſt and their death, wrath was mingled with their meat; and *while he gave them their requeſt, he ſent leanneſs into their ſouls*, (Pſalm 106. 15.)

15.) This is the moſt dreadful curſe of all, *To have a fat eſtate, a well fed body, with a lean ſtarven ſoul.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *A vaſt difference between godly and wicked men, between the fooliſh and the wiſe.*

When a godly man withers in his outward eſtate, and is pluckt up by the roots, yet God loves him; when a godly man is poor, God loves him; when he is ſick, God loves him; when he is in priſon, God loves him; when he is in diſgrace, God loves him; and when the world hates him moſt, then God uſually ſhews, that he loves him moſt: *The world cannot caſt a godly man into any condition, but he meets with the love of God in it:* his eſtate may vary and vary, change and change a thouſand times, but the love of God towards him is unchangeable. On the other ſide, we ſee in the Text, when a wicked man takes root, and the branches of his outward eſtate bear fruit abundantly, God curſeth him; when he is at eaſe, God is angry with him. That place is very obſervable (*Zech.* 1. 15.) *I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the Heathen, that are at eaſe*; the Heathen were at eaſe, yet God was extremely diſpleaſed with them. When a wicked man is in health, God curſeth him; when he is rich, God curſeth him; when all men honour, admire and flatter him, God abhorreth, hates and deteſts him; he can be in no condition, but he is ſure to meet with the curſe of God. As a fooliſh man, a wicked man, gives God many things, but he never gives God his love, or his affection: A wicked man may give God prayers, but he doth not give him his love; he may give him praiſes, but he never gives him any love; he may give God his purſe, but he gives not his love or his heart; whether ſuch a fool praiſeth God, or prayeth to God, or giveth unto God, he hateth God. So likewiſe, whatſoever God gives to a wicked man, he hates him; whatſoever he beſtows on him, he curſeth him: This ſhould awake men rooted in the earth, to conſider whether they are under the influences of Gods eternal love, as well as under the influence of temporal bleſſings. This is the ground of *Davids* concluſion, *Pſalm* 37. 16. *A little that the righteous hath, is better then the riches of many wicked:* the reaſon is this, becauſe many ungodly ones, ſwimming in a full Sea of riches, have not ſo much as one drop of the love of God, nor one beam or ray of the light of his countenance ſhining upon them; but a godly man, if he have but a ſmall eſtate, he hath much love mixed with it; if he have but a little purſe, he hath a large portion of the favour of God in it, and this makes it ſo out-worth and out-value a wicked mans eſtate, this puts the price and ſtamps an excellency upon his little. The love of God doth ſo far exceed the fatneſs of the earth, in the eſteem of Saints, that they in rating their eſtates, reckon not upon earthly things at all, they ſee nothing to value themſelves by, but their intereſts in the love of God. As when God gives his people their portion, he looks upon outward things, as mere additionals, or as an overplus given in by way of vantage. *All other things ſhall be added* (*Matth.* 6. 33.) When a man caſts in a handful of wheat after the buſhel is full, or gives a fingers breadth after the due meaſure of the cloth; ſo it is in the caſe of all temporals beſtowed upon the Saints.

Then fourthly Note, *Outward good things, are no argument of the favour of God.*

As we ſhewed before, that, they are no evidences of the goodneſs of a perſon, ſo neither are they any evidences of the grace and favour of God unto a perſon. *A man cannot find an evidence of Gods love in his purſe, in his land, in his honour, in his credit:* Yea, a man may flouriſh in better things then theſe I ſpeak of, and yet have no evidences of Gods love to him; a man may flouriſh in knowledge, be deeply rooted in learning, may have extraordinary branches of parts, and wonderful fruits of gifts; yet notwithſtanding all this while, his habitation and his perſon too under a curſe. And therefore, be ſure that you look for your evidences of the love of God in the right box, do not look for evidences of the love of God in your cheſts, or in your purſes; but look into your hearts, and ſee what Chriſt hath done there; look into your lives, and ſee what light ſhines there from the Spirit of Chriſt: Look whether grace flows from the Spirit of Chriſt, and is rooted in your ſpirits. If grace be rooted in thee there, if it ſpring up and bring forth fruit in thy life, this is an evidence indeed. They that are thus rooted, God never curſeth: Grace and holineſs were never under any curſe.

Obſerve one thing further, As theſe words hold forth the judgment or opinion of a godly man, concerning the wicked in proſperity. *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, and preſently I curſed his habitation.*

A godly man ſees the wicked of the world to be miſerable in their beſt and moſt flouriſhing condition.

When thouſands ſtand about the great ones of the earth, admiring, applauding, making *little gods* of them, envying their happineſs, and thinking none happy but they, or ſuch as they are; then a godly man pitties them, mourns over them, ſees them, and all ſuch as they are, miſerable: He looks through all their outward glory and beauty, riches and honours, and ſees them curſt through all, hated of God through all: He ſees nakedneſs through their cloathing, emptineſs and want through all their plenty and abundance: neither is this unhappineſs confined to their own perſons, but derived to all, to whom they derive life, or ſtand related. So it follows,

His Children are far from ſafety, and they are cruſhed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them, &c.

Theſe words contain a further effect of this curſe. *I curſed his habitation?* and what then? was it an ineffectual curſe? was it but wind and words, returning and doing nothing? or did it ſpend all its ſtrength upon this fooliſh man, in his own perſon? No, *His children are far from ſafety, they are cruſhed in the gate*, &c. One of the Rabbins conceives that theſe words and the verſe following, are the form wherein the curſe was pronounced upon the habitation of the fooliſh man; as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *I curſed his habitation*, thus, *Let his Children be far from ſafety, and let them be cruſhed in the gate, neither let there be any to deliver; as for his harveſt, let the hungry eat it up, and let the robbers ſwallow up their ſubſtance.* And we find ſuch a form, *Pſa.* 109. *David* pronounces the curſe upon thoſe wicked enemies, in language very ſutable to this (*verſ.* 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.) *Set thou a wicked man over him, and let Satan* (an adverſary) *ſtand at his right hand. When he ſhall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become ſin. Let his Children be fatherleſs, and his Wife a widow; let his Children be continually vagabonds and beg, let them ſeek their bread alſo out of deſolate places, let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the ſtranger ſpoyle his labour.*

Secundum genus calamitatis quod Deus improbis immittit, poſteritatis exitium deploratum, & quidem acclamante publico conſenſu.

Rabbi Solomon, formam maledictionis eſſe vult.

But we may rather take it, as the matter, then as the form of a curſe. *I curſed his habitation*, and the curſe brake forth upon his Children, and upon his eſtate, upon the branches, and the fruit of that goodly tree: much like that in the viſion, *Dan.* 4. 13, 14. *I ſaw in the viſions of my head upon my bed, and behold a watcher, and a holy One came down from Heaven. He cried aloud and ſaid thus; Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, ſhake off his leaves, and ſcatter his fruit*, &c. This Allegory may be rendred in the plain words of *Eliphaz*, *I curſed his habitation, his Children are far from ſafety.* The Maſter of the Family is the tree, his Children are either fruit or branches, his leaves are riches and honour, the beauty and pleaſantneſs of his habitation.

Some things in the letter of the Text are to be opened, but I ſhall firſt obſerve one thing in the general, from the connection of this fourth verſe with the third, *I ſuddenly curſed his habitation* (verſe 3.) Then follows, *his children are far from ſafety.*

Obſerve from it, That, *Creatures cannot ſtand before the curſe of God.*

How ſtrongly ſoever they are rooted, the blaſt of the breath of Gods diſpleaſure, will either blow them down, or wither them ſtanding. The curſe comes powerfully, ſuddenly and ſecretly, it is often an inviſible ſtroak. When we ſee neither ax nor ſpade at the root, nor ſtorm at the top, yet down it comes, or ſtands without leaf or fruit. When Chriſt in the Goſpel curſt the fruitleſs fig-tree, his Diſciples paſſing by that way, wondred ſaying, *how quickly is this fig-tree withered!* it was but onely a word from Chriſt, *Never bear fruit more*, and the fig-tree which had no fruit, loſt its life. Some are ſuch tall Cedars, ſuch mighty Oaks, that men conclude there is no ſtirring of them, no Ax can fell them, or blaſt looſen them; yet a word from the Lord will turn them upſide down: or if he do but ſay to them, _never*fruit grow_ upon your actions, or out of your counſels, preſently they wither. *The curſe cauſeleſs ſhall not come*; but when there is a cauſe, and God ſpeaks the word, the curſe will come: Neither power nor policies, neither threatnings nor entreaties can hinder or block it up. It is ſaid of the *water of jealouſie* in the book of *Numbers*, that when the woman drank that water, if there were cauſe of her husbands ſuſpition, preſently *her belly ſwell'd, and her thighs did rot*, the effect was inevitable. So, if God bid judgment take hold of a man, family or Nation, it will obey. A word made the world, and a word is able to deſtroy it. *There is no armour of proof againſt the ſhot or ſtroak of a curſe.*

Suddenly I curſed his habitation, and the next news is, *His Children are far from ſafety.* If God ſpeak the word, it is done as ſoon as ſpoken; as that myſterious Letter ſaid of the Gunpowder plot, *As ſoon as the paper is burnt, the thing is done.* Surely God can cauſe his judgments to paſs upon his implacable enemies, ſuch horrid conſpirators againſt Churches and Common-wealths, truth and peace, with as much ſpeed, as a paper burns; with a blaze and a blaſt they are conſumed. That, in the general from the connexion of theſe two verſes: As ſoon as he was curſed, his Children and his eſtate, all that he had went to Wrack, and ruine. I ſhall now open the words diſtinctly.

His Children are far from ſafety.] Some read, *Were far from ſafety*, (and ſo the whole paſſage in the time paſt) becauſe he ſpeaks of a particular example, which he himſelf had obſerved in thoſe dayes, as is clear, *v.* 2.

Having ſhewed the curſe upon the root, he now ſhewes the withering of the branches.

Some of the *Rabbins* underſtand, by **Children**, the Followers or Imitators of wicked men, ſuch as aſſiſted them, or ſuch as were like them; theſe are moral children. But take it rather in the letter, for natural children, ſuch as were born to them, or adopted by them, theſe come under their Fathers unhappineſs: *They are far from ſafety.*

The Hebrew word is commonly rendred, *ſalvation. His Children are far from ſalvation.* But then we muſt underſtand it for temporal ſalvation, which our tranſlation expreſſes clearly by ſafety. *His children are far from ſafety.* It is poſſible that the children of a wicked man, may be near unto eternal ſalvation; Though godly Parents have a promiſe for their ſeed, yet grace doth not run in a blood, neither is the love of God tied or entail'd upon any lineage of men. Election ſometimes croſſes the line, and ſteps into the family of a reprobate Father. Therefore, it is not ſaid, *His Children are far from ſalvation*, in a ſtrict, but in a large ſence. We find the word *ſalvation*, frequently uſed for ſafety (2 *Kings* 13. 17.) when *Eliſha* bad *Joaſh* the King of *Iſrael* ſhoot the arrow, he called it *the arrow of the Lords Salvation*, which we render, *the arrow of the Lords deliverance.* So *Moſes* beſpeaks the trembling *Iſraelites* at the Red Sea, *Stand ſtill, and behold the ſalvation of the Lord*; that is, behold what ſafety the Lord will give you from all theſe dangers, what deliverance from the hand of *Pharaoh.* The Prophet repreſents the Jews thus bemoaning their outward judgments*; *We roar all like Bears, and mourn ſore like Doves; we look for judgment, but there is none, for ſalvation, but it is far off*, Iſa. 59. 11.

They are far from ſafety.] To be far from ſafety, is a phraſe importing extream danger; As when a man is ſaid to be far from light, he is in extream darkneſs; and when a man is ſaid to be far from health, he is in extream ſickneſs; and when a man is ſaid to be far from riches, he is in extream poverty: So here, *His Children are far from ſafety*; that is, they are in extream danger and peril, they walk (as it were) in the regions of trouble, in the valley of the ſhadow of death continually. That phraſe is uſed alſo, reſpecting the ſpiritual eſtate of unbelievers, *They are far off from God, far off from the Covenant*, Iſa 57. 19. *Epheſ.* 12. 13. that is, they have no benefit by the covenant, no intereſt in, no favour at all or mercy from the Lord. To be far off from mercy is to be near wrath, and to be *far from ſafety* is to dwell upon the borders of danger.

And they are cruſhed in the gate.] In Chap. 4. *Eliphaz* deſcribes man, as *cruſhed before the Moth*, to ſhew how ſuddenly, how eaſily man is deſtroyed. This mans Children are cruſhed in the gate, as a man would cruſh a flie or a moth between his fingers.

They are cruſhed in the gate.] That notes two things.

Firſt, The publickneſs of their deſtruction, they ſhall be deſtroyed in the ſight of all men; for the gate was a publick place (*Prov.* 31. 31.) *Her works praiſe her in the gates*; that is, ſhe is publickly known by her good works. To do a thing in the gate is oppoſed to the doing of a thing ſecretly. To ſuffer in the gate is to ſuffer publickly.

Secondly, *To be cruſhed in the gate*, is to be cruſhed or caſt in judgment; for *The gate* was the place of old, where juſtice was adminiſtred and judgment given; and for a man to be cruſhed in the gate, is as much as for a man to be overthrown in his ſute, when he hath any controverſie or tryal before a Judge, whether for his eſtate or for his life. So this phraſe, *They are cruſhed in the gate*, implies that all buſineſs ſhall go againſt them; if they have any controverſie in law, or if they be charged with any crime, they ſhall certainly be condemned.

In portis judicia exercebantur; Merc.

I need not ſtay to prove that judgment was given in the gate; only take a few Texts. Firſt, In this book (*Chap.* 29. 7.) *Job* deſcribes his own proſperity thus, *When I went out to the gate*, that is, to ſit in judgment; And *Chap.* 31. *v.* 21. the word is uſed in the like ſenſe; So *Gen.* 23. 17. *Chap.* 34. 20. *Ruth* 4. 1. *Iſa.* 29. 11. Thoſe words of the curſe, *Pſalm* 109. 7. *When he is judged, let him be condemned*, are the full Expoſition of this, *They are cruſhed in the gate.*

And the reaſon given by one of the Ancients, why juſtice was uſually adminiſtred in the gate, is the accommodation and convenience both of ſtrangers and Citizens: For ſtrangers, who lived far off in the Countrey, that they might have juſtice, before they entred into the City, whoſe pomp and throngs of people might poſſibly occaſion either ſome terror or diverſion in the minds of poor Countrey men. And then likewiſe, that the Inhabitants of the City, might not be either charged or tired with long journies into the Countrey; to which we may add, that judgment was therefore adminiſtred in the gate, becauſe gates are places through which all paſs in and out, and therefore the declaring of judgment there, was the making of it more publick, that all might take notice of what paſſed, in ſuch and ſuch caſes, as the ſentence and reſolution of the Judges.

Ne agricola litis cauſa veniens, civitatis frequentia & nova terreretur conſpectu; nec urbis habitator, longè ab urbe properaret & ſubvectionē quæreret jumentorum. Jeron. *in* Amos *c.* 5. *v.* 10.

Neither is there any to deliver them.

This is the third degree of evil falling upon the fooliſh mans Children. Though a man be brought to and caſt in judgment, yet he may have a friend to help and deliver him; but theſe ſhall have no help, none to ſpeak a good word for them, none to mediate either for reprieve or pardon. Some give the ſence thus, *His Children ſhall neither find a judge to give a favourable ſentence, nor an Advocate to plead for them, and make the beſt of their cauſe.* This alſo anſwers another part of another curſe, *Pſal.* 109. 12. *Let there be none to extend mercy to him, neither let there be any to favour his fatherleſs Children*; None ſhall be found either able or willing to reſcue or pluck them out of the hand of danger.

In ſummis malis neminem habebūt aſſertorem. Ut injuſti confundebuntur & contundebuntur in judicio publicè coram tribunalibus

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, That, *a wicked man and his Children are often wrapt up in the ſame deſtruction.*

I curſed his habitation, and his Children are far from ſafety, they are cruſhed in the gate. A godly man is a defence for his Children; it is a great bleſſing to be born of holy parents, and it is a curſe to be born of oppreſſing wicked parents. As the bleſſing of God deſcends from the Father, upon the Children; ſo, the curſe of God many times deſcends from the Father, upon the Children, and they inherit their judgments, as well as their Lands. Though the juſtice and goodneſs of God, will make that Proverb ceaſe in all the families of the world for ever, which was once taken up by the Jewes, Ezek. 18. 2. *The Fathers have eaten ſowre grapes, and the Childrens teeth are ſet on edge.* The Naturaliſts obſerve, and experience teacheth, that when a man eats very ſowre grapes (and ſo makes a ſowre face) another ſtanding by is affected with a ſympathy,

Liberi parentum pœnis ſæpe implicantur.

and

Ὀδυναλγία dicitur à Philoſophis. Ariſtot. §. 5.*prop.queſt.* 7.

and his teeth are ſet on edge or pained with the very ſight or grating of anothers teeth, though himſelf taſte not the grape. The preſent *Jews* thought themſelves but bare lookers on upon their Fathers ſin, and yet they ſuffered. But the Lord found the ſowre grapes in their mouths alſo, or them riſen up in their Fathers ſtead, an encreaſe of ſinful men to fill up the fierce wrath of the Lord againſt them. Now (I ſay) though the Lord will make that proverb ceaſe, in their ſence: For no child is puniſhed merely in contemplation of his Fathers ſin. Yet when a ſon is wicked, the wickedneſs of a father, whether immediate or further off, may come in remembrance againſt him, and at once aggravate his ſin, and encreaſe his ſorrow.

Secondly, Note, *Whom God will deſtroy, no creature ſhall be found able to deliver out of his hands.*

God can take away the help, and ſtop up the pitty of all creatures, *None ſhall deliver them.* And though themſelves ſhould endeavour to eſcape, they ſhall not eſcape, (*Amos* 9. 1.) *They that fly ſhall not fly away, and they that eſcape ſhall not be delivered*; that is, by endeavouring to eſcape, they ſhall not be delivered, they ſhall attempt it in vain. If God will not deliver, none can. If a *Lot* be taken priſoner, *He* bids *Abraham arm and reſcue him. If a* Paul *be in the mouth of a Lion, the Lord will deliver him.* It needs not trouble us, who is our enemy, if God will be our deliverer: nor can it avail what friends ſo ever we have, if God ſaith, ye ſhall not be delivered. *A wicked man* (when the Lord appears againſt him) *either hath none to deliver him, or none ſhall.* Salvation is far from the wicked, for they keep not thy ſtatutes, *Pſal.* 119. 155.

From the Children, judgment proceeds to the eſtate of this wicked man.

Verſe 5. **Whoſe harveſt the hungry eateth up, and fetcheth it even out of the thornes, and the robber ſpoileth all his ſubſtance.**

Meſſis nomine parata bona omnia intelliguntur condenda & reponenda in annos plurimos.

Whoſe harveſt the hungry eateth up.] By his **Harveſt**, we are to underſtand not only the return of that which he hath ſown, as corn and other fruits of the earth; but all the goods or proviſions, which he hath gathered or laid up for his ſupport and accommodation. A mans harveſt is the improvement of his whole eſtate. And this mans harveſt is all he hath gotten, by right or wrong; by induſtry or by injury; by ſweat or by deceit; by ſecret practiſes or open violences. To eat up a harveſt, is as much as to *devour a houſe*, with which Chriſt charges the hungry Scribes and Phariſees (*Matth.* 23. 14.) who made Beggars as faſt as they made prayers; *Ye devour widdows houſes and under pretence make long prayers.*

The greatneſs of his affliction is ſet forth by the loſs of thoſe things, which coſt much pains to get. A harveſt is not had with idleneſs: The earth muſt be broken, plowed and ſowed, before we reap. The Law of Nations (I am ſure of this Nation) is very tender in this point, providing, that they who till and ſow the Land, ſhall alſo enjoy the crop. But this wicked man ſhall not reap what he ſowed: The labour ſhall be his, and the benefit another mans. *The hungry ſhall come and eat up his harveſt.*

Whence Obſerve in general, *It is a great evil when we cannot enjoy the thing we labour for.*

Impius hæc tam culta novalia miles habebit? Barbarus has ſegetes? en queis conſevimus agros? Virg. *Egl.* 1.

What greater diſappointment to the husband-man, then to deprive him of his harveſt? Poets have ſung this in mournful verſe. And we find this threatned in the law, as the very ſting of thoſe evils, which ſhould come upon a diſobedient people, *Deut.* 28. 33. *The fruit of thy land and all thy labours, ſhall a Nation which thou knoweſt not, eat up: All thy labours*, that is, The fruits for which thou haſt laboured, ſhall be eaten up by ſtrangers. And (*Levit.* 26. 16.) *Ye ſhall ſow your ſeed in vain, for your Enemies ſhall eat it. The ſloathful man roaſteth not that which he took in hunting*, ſo we tranſlate, *Prov.* 12. 26. But it ſeems not ſo proper to the ſence of this proverb: A ſloathful man is not uſually a hunter, That ſport requires an active ſpirit. And uſually men that are ſlow at work, are quick at meat, and will not loſe their Veniſon for the roaſting. Therefore more properly (I conceive with others) to the original, and fully to the point in hand, it may be tranſlated thus, *Deceit or the deceitful man ſhall not roaſt his hunting*, or that which he hath taken in hunting: That is, he ſhall not take pleaſure in that, which he hath got by extream pains (as all hunters do) or by craft and ſtealth, as ſome hunters do. Somewhat comes between his mouth and his morſel, his cup and lip; either he cannot get his meat to the table, or he riſes hungry from it. Therefore *Solomon* puts a great bleſſing in this, when a man enjoyeth his labour, *Eccleſ.* 2. 10. *My heart rejoyced in all my labour, and this was my portion of all my labour*; namely, the fruit and benefit which God gave me by my labour; I enjoyed it, and this was my portion. Again, (*Eccleſ.* 3. 13.) *And alſo that every man ſhould eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God:* He puts the Emphaſis upon this, when a man hath taken pains to lay in proviſions for a comfortable ſubſiſtence, that then he may ſit down quietly and enjoy it, *It is the gift of God.* Therefore on the other hand, not to eat and drink, and enjoy the good of our labours, but to have all violently ſnatcht from our mouths, *It is the judgment of God.* This judgement the Prophet alſo threatens (*Iſa.* 1. 6.) *Your land ſtrangers ſhall devour it, in your preſence*; when you are looking on, ſtrangers ſhall devour it. *Thou prepareſt a Table before me in the preſence of my enemies*, ſaid *David*, Pſal. 23. 5. As it is one of the greateſt outward mercies, to eat at a Table, prepared in the preſence of an enemy; ſo, it is one of the greateſt afflictions, to have an enemy eat up what is prepared for our Table, in our preſence, (Mic. 6. 15.) *Thou ſhalt ſow, but thou ſhalt not reap; thou ſhalt tread the Olives, but thou ſhalt not annoint thee with oyl; and ſweet wine, but ſhalt not drink wine.* Obſerve how he puts in their labour to aggravate their ſorrow. If they had not ſown, it had not been ſo troubleſom not to reap; if they had not trod the Olives, it had not been ſo grievous to have had no oyle; but this was their calamity, they ſowed, but reaped not; they trod the Olives, but had no oyle to annoint themſelves. The miſery of that rich man (*Luke* 12.) is thus deſcribed, when he had made larger barns, and got in his harveſt; when he had made proviſion for many years, then the queſtion is, *Whoſe ſhall all theſe things be that thou haſt provided?* The rich man was not unprovided of an anſwer to the Query long before: *Whoſe ſhall they be?* My own I warrant you: I am not ſuch a fool to take pains for others. Little did he think his grave was a making while he was making his barns: Or, that all his providence and care ſhould redound to ſtrangers. How will it cut the heart to ſee all thoſe things taken away, in and about which, a man hath laid out his whole ſtrength, and laid up his whole heart? This *Job* imprecates as the extremity of all outward evils, in caſe he were an hypocrite, and dealt falſly with God (*Chap.* 31. 8.) *If any blot hath cleaved to my hands*; that is, if this blot of inſincerity (*Job* did not think himſelf to be without all blot of ſin, but, if ſuch a blot as I am charged with) cleave to my hands, *then let me ſow, and let another eat.* This judgment which *Eliphaz* hints at in another perſon, as already fallen on *Job* for his hypocriſie; *Job*, in his own perſon calls for, if he were an hypocrite. *Let me ſow, and let another eat, yea let my off-ſpring be rooted out.*

Non aduret fraudulentia (ſive vir doloſus) venationem ſuam. Aries Mont. Pag.

The hungry.] There is ſome difference in opinion, who are to be underſtood by the *hungry*. Some take this *hungry one* for the *Devil*; he is a *hungry one* indeed: but his hunger is not after our riches, but after our ſouls; 'tis them *he goes about like* (a hungry) *roaring Lion, ſeeking to devour* (2 Pet. 5. 8.) It is a truth alſo, that Satan goes about as a *hungry* one, to devour our Eſtates, ſo he did *Jobs*, *His harveſt that hungry one did eat up*; but, it was not becauſe he deſired *Jobs harveſt*, but becauſe he gaped for *Job himſelf*. He thought if God would but give him leave to rob *Job* of his riches, *Job* would quickly let his ſoul lapſe into his hands. A ſoul is the dainty morſel, which *That hungry ſpirit* waits for. *The moſt delicate things in the world are meat too groſs for a ſpirit, though an unclean one.*

Others, by the *hungry one*, underſtand the *Heir* of this rich worldling; his heir whom he had kept low, and bare, and ſhort, as long as he lived, now, when he is dead and gone, comes hungry to the eſtate, and quickly conſumes it; he eats it out, drinks it up, and laviſheth it away. It is often ſeen that the heirs of great, rich men, come very hungry

gry to their inheritances, and as quickly ſwallow them down. They have been kept ſo ſhort, that like empty and ſharp ſet ſtomacks they waſte all, when they come where they may have their fill. *That eſtate which is got by the oppreſſion, and kept by the baſe covetouſneſs of parents, is uſually ſpent out in riot and luxury. A hungry heir devours the harveſt.*

Thirdly; *The hungry* may be taken for thoſe poor oppreſſed ones, whoſe eſtates thoſe *Nimrods* of the world had unjuſtly and cruelly raviſht from them. They, whom wicked men make hungry and lean by their exactions and cruel dealings, come at laſt (though unbidden and unwelcome gueſts) to eat the bread from their tables. And theſe poor *hungry ones* are conceived by ſome, to be *Wiſdoms children*, the people of God, whom thoſe *wicked fools* had ſtript of their eſtates, and would have eaten them too like bread, *Pſal.* 14. So the *Septuagint* renders it; *The juſt or the godly ſhall eat up or devour the harveſt of this rich worldling.* Put both theſe together, and this may be the ſence, *The hungry eateth up his harveſt*, that is, the godly poor, whom this man had unjuſtly oppreſt, and even put to ſtarving, God, by his juſt judgment ſhall ſend in, to take free Quarter, to eat their fill of his harveſt, and never reckon with their Hoſt. From that ſence take this Note.

Δίκαιοι ἔ-δονται. Sep.

That, *God doth ſometimes give the riches of wicked men to poor godly men whom they have oppreſt.*

Job himſelf, *chap.* 27. *v.* 16. gives us this truth in expreſs terms; where ſpeaking of a wicked man, he ſaith, *Though he heap up ſilver as the duſt, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it* (let him prepare it, let him ſcrape it together as faſt as he can) *but the juſt ſhall put it on, and the innocent ſhall divide the ſilver*, that is, thoſe juſt and innocent perſons whom he had wronged, ſhall by a divine retaliation enter upon his eſtate. The wicked grind the faces of the poors to make themſelves bread, but at laſt the poor ſhall make bread of their corn and griſt.

Fourthly, We may take the hungry yet more largely, for any that are low and poor, whom God ſtirs up and ſends in judgment, *as his teeth*, to conſume and eat up, to devour and deſtroy the portion of ſuch fat ones. Every ſpoiler is *a hungry one*; ſpoilers devour as if they had never eaten in their lives, they ſweep all away: The word which we tranſlate *to eat up*, ſignifies the moſt fierce kind of eating; when a man eats as if he could never have enough, And therefore it is applied to the eating of fire, which we know is the moſt hungry thing in the world; nothing will ſatisfie the appetite of that hungry Element; the more it eats, the more hungry and devouring it is. Hence that adjunct of fire (*Iſa.* 29. 6.) *A flame of a devouring fire*, or, *the flame* (it is the word of the Text) *of an eating fire*; a fire whoſe ſtomack is able to digeſt all the material creatures in the world. So (*Job* 1.) it is ſaid, that *the fire of God, or a great fire did eat up the ſheep*, the fire came hungry and conſumed them; ſuch is the force of the word here uſed: and ſecondly, it is applied in Scripture, to the eating of the ſword; which (*alas!*) we know is very hungry too, *My ſword ſhall devour fleſh*, Deut. 32. 42. Thirdly, it is applied to ſavage beaſts (*Gen.* 37. 33.) when *Jacob* bewaileth the loſs of his ſon *Joſeph*, he ſaith, *an evil beaſt hath devoured him.* Fourthly, The cruelty of perſecutors (in whom wild beaſts, and ſword and fire are all met, if not ſwallowed up) the cruelty, I ſay, of perſecutors is expreſſed by this word, *They eat up my people like bread*, Pſal. 14. 4. *Wild beaſts, and ſword, and fire, and above all, the perſecuting ſpirits of men, are the moſt hungry and ſpeedy devourers, ſuch a devouring ſhall conſume the harveſt of thoſe fooliſh men; the hungry ſhall eat it up.* Hence we may obſerve,

In communi quicunque raptor & deprædator famelicus appellatur. Pined.

אכל *Eſt acrius quam noſtrũ comedere, ſignificat enim comedẽdo conſumere; ingẽtem aviditatem comedentis præ ſe fert, adeo ut de igne quæ omnia avidè depaſcit utatur.*

That, *They who conſume others, ſhall at laſt be conſumed themſelves.*

Such as have raiſed themſelves upon the ruines of others, ſhall raiſe others by their own ruine: God will ſend devourers to eat up the eſtate of thoſe, who have devoured the eſtates of their brethren; eſpecially, if they have devoured the eſtates of his own people. The Apoſtle, *Gal.* 6. 7. gives this general law, *whatſover a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap*; he that ſows oppreſſion, or makes his ſeed-time to be the reaping of his neighbours harveſt, may find reapers which he hired not, in his field at harveſt. The Prophet *Iſaiah* denounceth a wo againſt thoſe that joyn houſe to houſe by oppreſſion; and what is the wo? *their houſes ſhall be made deſolate*: So, *Zeph.* 3. 19. *I will undo all that afflict thee.* And, *Jer.* 30. 16. *They that devour thee, ſhall be devoured; and they that ſpoil thee, ſhall be a ſpoil; and all that prey upon thee, will I give for a prey: It is juſt with God* (2 Theſ. 1. 6.) *to recompenſe tribulation to them that trouble you.* The rich man who hoards up that for himſelf and for his children, which he hath pulled out of the bellies of others, ſhall have his meat devoured from his table, and pull'd from between his teeth.

The hungry eat up his harveſt. But where doth he find it? **[He takes it even out of the thorns.]**

There is ſome difficulty in that expreſſion. Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *The hungry ſhall eat up his harveſt which he had gotten thorough the thorns.* And others thus; *He ſhall fetch it out from among the arms or weapons.* The Hebrew word which we tranſlate *Thorns*, gives occaſion of theſe various readings, which ſome derive from *Tſinnah*, which ſignifies a Shield, and ſo by a Trope, it notes any kind of arms or weapons.

צנינים *Spinæ, alii qui deducunt à* צנן *unde* צנה *ſcutum, clypeus.*

If we take the word in the firſt ſence, for thorns, a threefold interpretation may be given of this clauſe.

Firſt, As Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *which he had gotten thorough the thorns.* This refers to the manner how a worldling obtains his eſtate; he hath a great harveſt, and how came he by it? *he got it through the thorns*; that is, he got it through vexing pricking cares: for ſo (*Mat.* 13.) in the Parable of the Sower, when Chriſt expounds the meaning of the *thornie ground*, he ſhews, that the *thorns* are *cares*, the cares wherewith men are vexed in getting riches, or compaſſing the things of the world. Hence a man is ſaid to get riches through the thorns, when he gets them through overmuch care and vexation of ſpirit.

Secondly, As the word ſignifies *thorns*; ſome conceive, that *Eliphaz* cloſely deſcribes the perſons who ſhould take away his eſtate, as he did in the former branch; there he ſaid, *the hungry eat up his harveſt*: now he deſcribeth another ſort of men, that ſhall eat it up, namely, *men of thorns*, or, *men coming out of the thorns*; this rendring is not eaſily made out of the Original, though it hath learned abettors, and therefore I am not confident of it; yet it may yield ſome advantage to our meditation upon the words. The meaning is this; Mean or contemptible men ſhall take it away: As in our language, when we would expreſs a vulgar perſon, a man of low birth, we ſay, *he was born under a buſh, or under a hedge*, that is, he is a man of a low pedigree, none of the *Gentry*; and ſo it is, as if he ſhould ſay, this great, rich, mighty man, who hath ſo much honour and riches about him, and thinks himſelf ſafe, ſhall ſee a man coming out of the thorns, ſome obſcure perſon, and take all that he hath from him. This expoſition may yield us a profitable Obſervation.

Homo ex ſpinis exiens, ſc. abjectus & contemptus eum rapiet. Homo ignobilis qui de ſpinis naſcitur. Merc.

That, *When God reckons with the greateſt of wicked men, he can humble and pull them down by the meaneſt and pooreſt of men.*

A very ſhrub, a man that comes out of the thorns, may pull down the talleſt Cedar: It encreaſes affliction, to be overcome by a weak, deſpiſed, inconſiderable Enemy. It troubled *Abimelech* more to be ſlain by a woman, then to be ſlain; and therefore (upon the matter) he would have the pain to be twice killed, rather then the diſgrace to be kill'd by a woman; for having received his deaths wound by her hand, yet, *he calls haſtily to the young man his Armour-bearer, and ſaid unto him, draw out thy ſword now, and ſlay me, that men ſay not of me, a woman ſlew him*, Judg. 9. 54. The Lord threatens it, both as a juſt retaliation for the ſin, and an aggravation of the puniſhment of his people, *I will move them to jealouſie with thoſe that are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a fooliſh Nation*, Deut. 32. 21. The Gentiles (as *Paul* expounds this place, *Rom.* 10. 19. & *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 10.) whom the *Jews* ſlighted as a fooliſh people, as no people, came in, and eat up the harveſt of the Goſpel, and were inveſted with greater priviledges then they. This made the *Jews* mad with anger, as you may read in that famous record of it, *Acts* 22. 21, 22. They could not bear it, that, Thoſe *men of the thorns, ſhould partake of the fatneſs of the Olive*; as *Jotham* ſpake in his Parable (*Judges* 9. 15.) when the queſtion was, which of the trees ſhould be

King, the Olive or the Vine? *&c.* at laſt it fell to *the Brambles lot*, or *to the Thorn.* That Parable gives ſome light to this expoſition; for thoſe ſeveral ſorts of trees ſhadowed out the ſeveral ſorts of men, and the Bramble ſhadowed out the meaneſt ſort of men, a man of thorns, or a man coming out of the Thorns. And he adds (which further anſwers this ſence) *Let fire come out of the Bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon*; which in plain Engliſh is, let there come power from a powerleſs man, who is but as a bryer, or as a thorn, and conſume the greateſt and the mightieſt.

And it may ſupport us (while we ſee ſo many great Cedars and ſtrong Oaks, with whom we have to do) that God can ſend a man out of the thorns to ſubdue their pride; and can cauſe a Bramble to conſume Cedars, when himſelf pleaſeth. The Prophet *Amos* puts the queſtion, *By whom ſhall Jacob riſe? for he is ſmall*; the only anſwer is, *Jacob* hath a great God, a God that can do great things. If we ſhould queſtion, *By whom ſhall the wicked fall, for they are very great?* I anſwer, haply, *they ſhall fall by him that is very ſmall.* A man out of the buſhes, a man of thorns, ſome poor ſhrub, armed with the power of God, ſhall ſhake and overthrow them in the height of all their wickedneſs and worldly glory.

Thirdly, Take it according to our reading; *He ſhall fetch it out of the thorns.* Which ſome interpret, to be thorns growing naturally in or among the corn; according to that general curſe upon the earth, *Gen.* 3. 18. *Thorns and thiſtles ſhall it bring forth to thee.* But rather (if not alone) theſe are thorns platted together induſtriouſly, and wrought into a hedge, to ſave corn-fields, or corn-ſtacks from ſpoil. So the meaning is, that when the hungry man comes with a commiſſion from God, to eat the harveſt of the fooliſh, he will have his eſtate, whatever it coſt him, or what danger ſoever he incurs for it. For, as a man is ſaid to fetch a thing out of the fire, or out of the Lions mouth, when he gets it with much peril and hazard; ſo, what a man gets with much difficulty and labour, he is ſaid to get it out of the thorns: And the reaſon is this, becauſe men were wont, when they had gathered in their harveſt, (take it eſpecially about that, and in proportion about any thing elſe) they were wont (I ſay) to ſecure it with a thorn-hedge, or to lay buſhes about their ſtacks, to keep off cattel or any other annoyances. We read among the Laws given by *Moſes*, ſomewhat anſwerable to this practice, *Ex.* 22. 6. *If fire break out, and catch in thorns, ſo that the ſtacks of corn, or ſtanding corn, or the field be conſumed therewith, he that kindled the fire, ſhall make reſtitution.* This Law intimates it for an ancient cuſtom, to make fences of thorn about corn brought home or ſtackt up; and that fields while the corn was ſtanding, were hedged about with thorns. To either of which, the alluſion may be made by *Eliphaz*; ſo that, to fetch his harveſt out of the thorns, is to fetch it through the fences made to ſecure his harveſt, to fetch it, though it coſt (as we ſpeak proverbially) *a ſcratch'd face, or ſcratch'd fingers.* We ſay, *hunger breaks through ſtone-walls*; certainly then thoſe hungry ones will break through a thorn-hedge.

E ſpinis, hoc eſt, è magno periculo, ſicut nos dicimus ex ore leonum. Druſ. *Quamvis inter ſpinas abdita ſit, & forſan ut tutior ſit.* Merc.

When the Lord would keep his Church from wandring in ſinful paths, he reſolves thus, *Hoſ.* 2. 6. *I will hedge up her way with thorns*; there are pleaſures that ſhe would go fetch; but as men fence their ground and paſtures with thorns, ſo will I do with her; I will hedge up her way with thorns, *ſhe ſhall pay dear, ſhe ſhall ſmart for pleaſures, ere ſhe come at them.* And therefore, as it ſhews the extream intenſiveneſs and reſolvedneſs of a man to ſin, when a man will ſin, though God hath hedged up his way with thorns; that is, when a man will break through many dangers, and run hazards to ſatisfie his luſts; ſo here in this place, the hungry mans taking it out of the thorns, notes a reſolvedneſs and eagerneſs of ſpirit, to have the eſtate of this rich man, let him ſecure it by all the power and policies he can.

From this Expoſition, we may obſerve firſt, the practice of worldly wiſe men.

> *When they have gotten riches, they do not leave them looſe and open to ſurprizal, they keep them among the thorns.*

They will ſecure their eſtates as much as they can. As they get riches with thorns, ſo they will keep riches with thorns, that is, they will beſtow care to keep, as well as to get. A godly man takes great care to get more of Chriſt, more riches of Grace; he improves all means, and makes this his buſineſs night and day; theſe ſpiritual cares are his *thorns*, and when he finds his ſtock of holy things increaſing, his next care is to preſerve his ſtock, to maintain communion with Chriſt, and to keep up his graces to their height: *The care of a godly man, is as much to preſerve grace and comforts from the power of that hungry one the Devil, as it was to fetch them in.* And Satan is ſo hungry after our ſpiritual harveſt, that he would fetch it out of the thorns and fences of all our prayers and holy cares, were it not that Chriſt himſelf keeps it for us; his care over his peoples ſpiritual welfare is ſuch a *thorn-hedge*, as the Devil can never break through: We are kept by the power of God as with a Garriſon, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5.

Such alſo is the wiſdom of that generation, about worldly things, they fence in and fortifie their riches, ſo that if any man will have them, he muſt have them through the thorns, or come upon the Pikes.

Secondly, Though he lay up his eſtate within the thorns, yet the hungry man will fetch it out. Hence note,

> That, *All the care of worldly men, all the thorn-hedges they make about their eſtates, ſhall never ſecure them from ſpoil and ruine.*

The hungry will preſs and venture through the thorns to take them.

Further, As the word ſignifies a *Buckler* (or any kind of arms, whether offenſive or defenſive) as the text is by ſome tranſlated, *He ſhall fetch it out of their Arms, or from among their weapons.* And then the ſence may be thus conceived (which agrees fully with the former Obſervation.)

De armis tollet eam, ſc. meſſem.

Though this wicked man in his high eſtate, ſhould get many armed men together to defend it, yea, though he ſhould get an Army of men, with ſword and buckler, with pike and ſhot to defend it, yet none of them ſhall be able. The wrath of God, by the man out of the thorns, the meaneſt inſtrument of his wrath, ſhall break through all. And in alluſion to this, the *Vulgar* (more truly then as a Tranſlation) reads it,

The armed man ſhall take him away, that is, he ſhall carry him away priſoner, and ſpoil him of his harveſt: Which, though it doth not comply with the letter of the Original, yet it implies the fence of it; for when armed men come to take any thing away, it intimates, that the thing was, or was ſuppoſed to be protected with arms. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe ſaith the ſame; *Souldiers with weapons and warlike inſtruments ſhall carry them away.* This word is in other places rendred *an Army*, in the *Chaldee.* So, *Joſh.* 23. 15. That which we tranſlate, *They ſhall be thorns in your eyes*, the *Chaldee* gloſſeth thus; *They ſhall be an army beſieging or compaſſing you round about.* And ſo much for the ſecond Branch of this Verſe, *He taketh it even out of the thorns.*

Et ipſum rapiet armatus Vulg.

Quod juxta textum Hebraicum extaret, de armis rapiet, *vertit Vulgaris Biblia*, rapiet armatus; *non enim niſi armatus poſſit de medio armorum eam rapere.* Bold. *Milites armis ſive inſtrumentis bellicis abducent eos.* Chald. *Erunt exercitus vos cingentes.* Chald.

There is a third branch; **And the robber ſwalloweth up their ſubſtance.**

It is the ſame in ſubſtance with the former; and we may ſay here, as *Joſeph* about the dreams of *Pharaoh*, *The dreams are the ſame, and they are doubled, only to note the certainty of the thing*: The matter here is the ſame, only the words are doubled (as the Holy Ghoſt often doth) to note the certainty of this thing, that the fooliſh mans eſtate ſhall be conſumed.

Yet there is ſomewhat very conſiderable in the phraſe here uſed; and therefore I ſhall open it a little: *The robber ſwalloweth up his ſubſtance.*

The robber.] Some tranſlate, *The thirſty ſhall drink or ſwallow up their ſubſtance*; Mr. Broughton, *The thirſty ſhall ſwill up their wealth*; and it ſuits fairly with the former words, there, *the hungry ſhall eat up his harveſt*; and here, *the thirſty ſhall ſwill up their wealth*; ſo you have both the hungry and the thirſty to make riddance of all; neither his corn, nor his wine, his bread, nor his drink, neither wet, nor dry, ſhall ſcape, where both hungry and thirſty come to conſume.

Bibent ſitientes divitias ejus, Vulg.

We render it, *The robber ſwalloweth up their ſubſtance*; The reaſon of this difference is from the original word, which

צמים *vel à* צמא *ſitire, vel à* צמם *quod eſt capillus aut cæſaries. Prædo ſic dictus, quod more ferino capillos nutriit, ut mos eſt in terra* Iſmael. Rab. Dav. Kimchi, *in lib. Rad.* *Tſammim, prædo, quem ſic appellatum exiſtimant, à coma, quam alit, vel quod ſanguinem humanum ſitiat.* Druſ. *Abſorbeat pilosus divitias eorum,* Rab. Mordoch. *Horridus, Hiſpidus.*

which may have a double derivation; firſt, from a root, ſignifying to thirſt, or to be thirſty: Secondly, from a root which ſignifies the hair of the head, or the locks, or extraordinary Ruffian-like long hair and locks. And the reaſon why we tranſlate *Robber*, is given from both; from the firſt, becauſe robbers and ſpoilers are commonly toſs-pots and drunkards, men that love their liquor, a thirſty generation in that ſence: and they alwayes thirſt for a prey, they thirſt for the eſtates or lives of others: From the latter, becauſe robbers, plunderers and ſpoilers, uſually wore very long hair, either to diſguiſe or make themſelves the more terrible; ſo that a robber may be denominated, both from his unnaturally natural thirſt after the pot, and from his uncivil civil thirſt after a purſe, or from his long, ſhaggie, buſhie hair: To this latter ſence one of the *Rabbins* tranſlates, *The hairy man, or the man with long hair, ſhall ſwallow up their eſtates.* Hence ſome expreſs him by a Latine word, which ſignifies a man all over-grown with hair; this Ruffian or Robber *ſhall ſwallow up his ſubſtance.*

Swallow up.] The word notes an utter exhauſtion, he ſhall exhauſt his ſubſtance: As we ſay, when a ſpender or an unthrift is deſcribed, he hath exhauſted his eſtate, he hath, as it were, ſuckt it up, guzl'd or ſwallow'd it down his throat; the radical word may import, drawing or ſucking up with a pipe; properly it ſignifies to fetch wind, or draw breath; and by a Metaphor, to ſwallow down, to ſup or ſuck up; as alſo, with fervency and pleaſure to deſire; becauſe vehement deſires are often expreſt by quick breathings; yea, to breath after a thing, is to deſire it: or it notes a mind to ſwallow it up, either from the delight we have in it, or hatred of it. In which latter ſence *David* applies it to his enemies (*Pſal.* 56. 2.) *Mine enemies would daily ſwallow me up.* They breath after me to devour me. So then the meaning is, this robber, this hairy ſpoiler or thirſty one, will be ſo *dry*, that he will ſwallow all up, he will ſoop and drink up the fooliſh mans eſtate to the very bottom; he will draw it down to the very dregs or lees, and not leave a drop behind him.

שאף *Propriè attraxit per nares aut os: per Metaphoram, inhiavit, ardenter cupiit; qui enim ardenter aliquid cupiunt, præ deſiderii magnitudine, ad os aërem frequentius trahunt ſeu reſpirant.*

The robber ſwalloweth up **their ſubſtance.**] In the firſt Chapter we read *Job* deſcribed, A man of a very *great ſubſtance*; *Job*'s *ſubſtance* in cattel was thus and thus: Here alſo it is ſaid, *The robber ſhall ſwallow up his ſubſtance*; but the word in the Hebrew, is very different from that in the firſt Chapter; there the word ſignifieth properly *ſubſtance in cattel*; but here it ſignifies ſubſtance in any kind of wealth and riches whatſoever: And it notes three things.

חיל *Non magis ad corporis quam ad ingenii vires pertinet: & tres fere virtutes continet, fortitudinē, juſtitiam, prudentiam.*

אנשי חיל

Firſt, and moſt properly, Strength; either ſtrength of body or of mind, namely, valour, activity and courage; alſo wiſdom and induſtry to get or defend our ſubſtance; ſo *Gen.* 47. 6. *Pharaoh* tells *Joſeph*, that if among his brethren, *there were any men of activity, he ſhould make them Rulers over his cattel.*

Secondly, It notes riches and wealth, or any worldly ſubſtance; becauſe much activity, wiſdom and ſtrength, is uſually employed in obtaining them; or becauſe wiſdom and ſtrength are requiſite for the keeping and retaining of them (*Prov.* 11. 16.) *Strong men retain riches*; as if he ſhould ſay, though a man have abundance of riches, yet if he have not ſtrength, he ſhall hardly hold them, they will be wreſted out of his hands. Once more, Riches are thus expreſt, becauſe men uſually account their riches to be their ſtrength; a man naturally puts confidence in his riches, *Prov.* 13. 15. *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong City*: Riches are called ſtrength, from that corrupt opinion which the world hath of them, making them Idols, and truſting to them, as they ſhould unto God alone. Though yet, there is a truth in it, that riches have much ſtrength in them; a rich man, and a powerful man, are mutually put for each other.

Ariſtoteles *divitias appellat vires rerum, quia per ipſas omnia poſſumus.* l. 1. Pol. c. 8.

Thirdly, The word ſignifies an Army of men, *Pſal.* 33. 16. *There is no King ſaved by the multitude of an hoſt.* We may take it either way; this hungry man, this robber, ſhall come and ſwallow up his ſubſtance, his riches, his ſtrength; or, he ſhall come and ſwallow up his very Army, by which he thought to defend his ſubſtance: All ſhall be loſt, neither the eſtate, nor the means uſed to protect the eſtate, ſhall ſtand before this hungry, thirſty, hairy robber. In this deſcription of a total deſolation brought upon the eſtate and family of the fooliſh man, together with the character of the perſons, who ſhall make him deſolate, queſtionleſs *Eliphaz* would repreſent to *Job*, the deſolation brought upon his eſtate and children, by thoſe troops of hungry, hairy, thirſty robbers, the *Caldeans* and the *Sabeans*, who ſwallowed all his ſubſtance at one morſel, ſoopt up his eſtate at one draught. Whence obſerve,

> *It is a great point of wiſdom, to ſhew a man his condition in anothers, and to ſeem only relating the Hiſtory of our foreign obſervation, when we mean the perſon to whom we ſpeak.*

What is propoſed as ſeen in others, works the heart to ſee it ſelf; and doth at once mitigate the ſharpneſs of the reproof, and open the ſpirit to let it in. As we ſee in the inſtance of *Nathan*'s Parable to *David*, 2 Sam. 12. *Eliphaz* ſaid only, *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root*, &c. He doth not lay it boiſterouſly and directly upon *Job*, *I ſaw thee taking root*, &c.

Thus we have opened the context of theſe five verſes, wherein *Eliphaz* argues *Job* guilty of wickedneſs and inſincerity, becauſe God had dealt with him as he uſually doth with the wicked and inſincere, whoſe habitations are curſed, their children cruſhed, their ſubſtance ſwallowed up by thirſty, and eaten up by hungry robbers, who take it out from the very thorns of their own cares, in getting, or means in ſecuring what they have gotten.

VERS. 6, 7, 8.

Although affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground.

Yet man is born unto trouble as the ſparks flie upward.

I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe.

THus far *Eliphaz* had ſpent his diſcourſe in reproof and conviction; and you have had it out of the fourth Chapter, and the precedent part of this, four heads of reaſon, or arguments, by which *Eliphaz* labours to reprove *Job* for, and convince him of cloſe ſin, or of groſs hypocriſie. Now *Eliphaz* turns himſelf to another ſtile, and falls to counſel and exhortation, directing and adviſing *Job* what becomes him, what he ought to do in his condition. His exhortation conſiſts of two diſtinct branches.

The former whereof begins at the ſixth, and is continued to the ſeventeenth verſe of the Chapter. The ſum of this exhortation is, That, *foraſmuch as he had found him ſo diſtempered in his ſpeech and carriage, he now earneſtly beſeeches and intreats him, that he would ſeek unto God, beg favour, and believingly commit himſelf and his cauſe unto God.*

The ſecond branch of exhortation begins at *v.* 17. and is continued to the end of the Chapter: The ſcope whereof is, *That* Job *would humbly and patiently ſubmit himſelf unto, and under the correcting hand of God, quietly waiting the time of his deliverance.*

The matter of the former exhortation lies in the words of the eighth verſe, *I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe.*

He ſtrengtheneth his exhortation by two arguments; whereof,

The firſt is taken from the cauſe of his afflictions, and that either the efficient, or the meritorious cauſe of his afflictions; both which we find in the ſixth and ſeventh verſes.

The ſecond argument by which he ſtrengtheneth his firſt exhortation, is continued in the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth verſes following; and it is grounded upon the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God: As if he ſhould ſay, *Who would not ſeek unto a God who is of infinite power, able to deliver? Who would not ſeek unto a God, and commit his cauſe unto him, who is gracious, and pitiful, merciful, and ready to deliver? Who would not ſeek unto a God, and commit his cauſe unto him, who is of infinite wiſdom to find out wayes and means for the contriving of deliverance, though mans condition (to the eye of ſenſe or humane reaſon) ſeem altogether deſperate and remedileſs?*

Theſe three verſes contain the firſt exhortation, together with the firſt Argument: And we may form it thus, both reſpecting the efficient, and the meritorious cauſe of his afflictions.

Firſt, Reſpecting the efficient cauſe, the Argument ſeems to lie thus;

He is to be ſought unto in our afflictions, who is the principal efficient cauſe or ſender of our afflictions.
But, God is the principal efficient cauſe and ſender of our afflictions:
Therefore, he is to be ſought unto, and, to him our cauſe is to be committed.

The *Major* or *firſt Propoſition* is not expreſly in this text, but it is plainly ſuppoſed, and logically to be underſtood. The *Minor*, or the *Aſſumption* lies in the ſixth and ſeventh verſes, where he proves that God is the efficient cauſe or the ſender of afflictions; and his proof is grounded upon a denial, or a removal of all other efficient cauſes. As if he ſhould ſay, there muſt be ſome efficient cauſe of affliction, but no efficient cauſe can be aſſigned or named, except God: therefore God is the efficient cauſe, the ſender and orderer of afflictions. That no other efficient cauſe can be aſſigned, he proveth plainly in the ſixth verſe, thus; *Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground; yet man is born to trouble,* &c. As if he ſhould ſay, our eyes teach us, we ſee plainly man is full of trouble; man is no ſooner born, but he is afflicted; theſe afflictions muſt have ſome efficient cauſe; ſome hand or other doth frame, form and faſhion them, they come not alone; and if they come not alone, then we muſt find out this cauſe either in earth or in heaven: we muſt find it, either in the Creator, or among the creatures; but from the earth or from creatures, they come not: *Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*, that is, it riſes not by or from the creatures in themſelves, and alone conſidered; and if ſo, it muſt needs come from heaven, from the hand of God, who dwelleth above, and diſpoſeth all things according to the pleaſure of his own will. It is ſuch a kind of ſpeech, as often falls from us, when a thing is loſt; we ſay, ſome body muſt have it; *ſure it is not gone into the ground, you* or *you* muſt have it, for there were none elſe in the place. So *Eliphaz* ſeems here to argue about the afflictions which he ſaw upon *Job*: here are heavy afflictions upon thee, theſe afflictions muſt come ſome way upon thee; *They come not forth of the duſt, neither do they ſpring out of the ground, they come not up alone*: Either then they muſt come from God or man; and from man they come not, they ſpring not out of the earth; therefore he leaves it, as a clear inference, that God is the efficient cauſe or ſender of affliction.

Again, if we conſider this Argument, as it ſtrengtheneth the exhortation from the *meritorious cauſe* of his afflictions; it may be formed thus.

If the ſin of man be from himſelf, and the ſufferings of man be for his ſin, then in his ſufferings for ſin, he ought to ſeek unto God, and commit his cauſe unto him.
But the ſin of man is from himſelf, and the ſufferings of man are for his ſin:
Therefore, he ought in ſuch a condition to ſeek unto God, and commit his cauſe unto him; for remedy is no where elſe to be had.

This ſecond Argument is grounded rather upon the expoſition, then the letter of the text, as ſhall be further cleared in purſuance of the words.

Concluſio enunciata in perſona Eliphazi, *quod modeſtum cohortationis genus magnam vim habet, & eſt uſitatiſſimum.* Merc.

Thus you ſee how the *Minor* or ſecond Propoſition is confirmed, both, as it reſpects the efficient cauſe, and the meritorious cauſe of mans affliction. The Concluſion lies in the eighth verſe, which *Eliphaz* pronounces in his own perſon; *I would ſeek unto God*: therefore ſeek thou unto God: he ſpeaks in his own perſon, thereby more freely to inſinuate his counſel, and make way for his exhortation. As if he had ſaid, *Were I in thy caſe, I would do ſo*; therefore do thou ſo likewiſe; *Seek unto God, aud commit thy cauſe unto him.*

So much of this context in the Logick of it, as it contains an exhortation, with an argument to ſtrengthen and back that exhortation. Now for the clearing of the words.

Although afflictions come not forth of the duſt.

כי

The Hebrew particle, which we tranſlate *Although*, may be taken three wayes, and ſo I find it rendred upon this place.

Firſt, (which is its moſt proper ſence) it is taken cauſally, and then the text is read, *For, affliction cometh not forth of the duſt.* So Mr. *Broughton*, *for ſorrow iſſueth not from the duſt.*

Secondly, It may be taken *adverſatively*, as we read it, *Although affliction or ſorrow comes not forth of the duſt.*

Thirdly, It may be taken *affirmatively*; according to which acception, the text is thus carried, *Certainly, affliction cometh not out of the duſt*, or, *Surely, affliction cometh not out of the duſt.*

Either of theſe wayes the ſence is good; yet to me our tranſlation by the *Adverſative Although*, doth a little obſcure the ſence: And to ſay, *Surely, or certainly, affliction comes not forth of the duſt*, ſeems to carry it more clearly.

Surely affliction cometh not out of the duſt.] It is conſiderable, that the word by which affliction is here expreſt, bears a double ſignification in Scripture, and I conceive it may alſo in this text; properly it ſignifies, ſin, iniquity, iniquity of all ſorts, but eſpecially, *That ſin of Idolatry*; as (*Hoſ.* 4. 14.) when the *houſe of God* (*Bethel*) was polluted with Idolatry, the name is changed, and it is called *Bethaven, the houſe of an Idol*, or, the *houſe of iniquity*; or of that ſpecial iniquity, namely, of Idolatry; *Sin alters the nature of man; no marvel then, if it alter the names of things*, *Hoſ.* 10. 15. and often in the old Teſtament we find this word added, to ſet out the worſt of men, *the workers of iniquity*, Pſal. 5. 5, *&c. Iniquity comes not out of the duſt*: the ſoil where it grows, or the ſhop where it is wrought and formed, is mans heart; *Eliphaz* would carry us to the well-head, our ſinful natures, or our birth-ſin.

און
Iniquitas, vanitas, moleſtia, labor, quia iniquitas laborem afflictionemq; parturit. Sept. *vertunt per τὸν κόπον & κόπον.* Schind.

פעלי און
Aſcendit Eliphaz *ad communem & naturalem ſortem hominis quod omnes in peccato & ad miſeriam naſcimur, damnati in A*damo. *Cor.*

Secondly, The word ſignifies affliction or ſorrow, calamity or miſery, becauſe ſin is the cauſe of affliction, the mother of ſorrow: and therefore by a *Metonymie* of the effect for the cauſe (which is frequent in Scripture) the ſame word notes both ſin and ſorrow; the mother and the daughter are called by the ſame name. We tranſlate by the effect, *Surely, affliction cometh not out of the duſt*; many by the cauſe, *Surely, iniquity cometh not out of the duſt.* And for the full underſtanding of the Text, we muſt take in both; where the effect only is mentioned, the cauſe is ſuppoſed, *Affliction ſprings not out of the duſt, becauſe ſin ſprings not out of the duſt.*

Now this form of ſpeaking (*Iniquity or affliction ſprings or cometh not forth of the duſt*) is proverbial; and no doubt was well known, and often uſed in thoſe times. When they would *remove chance or fortune* (as we ſay) or deny any event to be without a certain directive power, they ſpake in this language, *This came not from the ground*; thereupon the Vulgar tranſlates it ſo in terms, (a) *There is nothing in the world without cauſe*, alluding (it is probable) to the Proverb. Hence, a man obſcurely born, whoſe Parents and Original are unknown, is called (b) *A Son of the earth*: Which imports, that no man can tell whence he is, or how deſcended. *They whoſe original cannot be aſſigned, are uſually aſſigned to the common Original, or* (c) *parent of us all, the earth.* And as in regard of perſons, ſo of things, when no man can tell how or which way they come, they are ſaid to come out of the ground. We ſpeak alſo (in the other extream) affirmatively, *Such a thing comes out of the clouds*, that is (we know not, but) *God knows how it comes.* So then, here is a denial of chance or fortune; as if *Eliphaz* ſhould ſay, reaſon may be found and aſſigned for theſe things, they come not out of the duſt.

Proverbialis quædam ſententia eſt, qua tollat caſum, aſſeratq; divinam erga res humanas & impoſitum ſupplicium providentiam. Pined. Sanct.

(a) *Nihil in terra ſine cauſa ſit.* Vulg.

Quaſi diceret non caſu mala nobis accidunt. neq; ex terra germinant ut ſolent herbæ nullo jacto ſemine.

(b) *Terræ filius.*

(c) *Magna parens terra eſt.*

Further, For the clearing of this, *The duſt and the ground* ſtand in a twofold oppoſition. Firſt, Unto God; and ſecondly, unto our ſelves. Firſt, In oppoſition to God, thus, *Affliction ſpringeth not from the ground*, that is, it comes from the wiſdom, power, and diſpoſition of God, as the efficient cauſe. Secondly, In oppoſition to our ſelves, and then the ſence may be thus conceived, that, the material and meritorious cauſe of our affliction, is not without us, it is not in the ground, or in other creatures, but in our ſelves: Every man in himſelf hath the ground which bears, the ſource, or fountain, which bubbles out his ſorrows and his ſufferings. Man hath no reaſon to accuſe or charge heaven or earth, as the Authors of his ſorrow, he carries the reaſon about with him, *The ſinfulneſs or ſink of his own polluted nature.* And therefore (to allude to that of the Apoſtle in the point of Juſtification, *Rom.* 10. 6, 7. *Say not in thy heart, who ſhall aſcend into heaven? that is, to bring thy*

Non exit è pulvere iniquitas. q. d. ab hominibus eſt, non è terra vel pulvere, nam terra non profert iniquitatem, ſed homines, ea eſt natura eorum corrupta proin & proclives ad eam feruntur. Druſ.

troubles down from above? or, who ſhall deſcend into the deep? that is, to bring up thy troubles from below; for the cauſe is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the corruption of nature, which we preach.

The latter branch of this verſe, **Neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground**, is of the very ſame importance with the former, therefore I ſhall not need to ſtay upon it. The word which we tranſlate *Trouble* ſignifies properly, toylſom labour, or any laborious toyl accidental to man in this life, as a fruit of ſin. This doth not ſpring out of the ground. It is an alluſion to plants or herbs, which grow in the open field, without the work or care of man, and ſo are oppoſed to plants or herbs in a garden: As if he ſhould ſay, thy troubles are not like thoſe herbs, that grow wild, in the fields, without the labour and pains, the care or art of man. There is ſome hand or other, that both plants and waters them.

עפר *Terrâ nata dicuntur illa, quibus nulla ab agricolis impenſa eſt opera, ut ſunt herbæ quas ultro terra fundit in pratis & locis incultis.* Sanct.

We may ground ſome obſervations as the Text is read, *Iniquity comes not forth of the duſt.* And then as it is read, *Affliction comes not forth of the duſt.* And it is neceſſary to give it this latitude; the word equally bearing both ſences. As it is read, *Iniquity comes not*, &c.

We learn, Firſt, *The material cauſe of ſin is in our ſelves.*

We bring forth the fruit at our tongues or fingers ends, and the root is in our hearts. Our ſins ſpring not out of the duſt, but out of the dirt and filth of our own corruptions, *Gen.* 6. 5. *Every thought of the imagination of mans heart it is evil, and only evil, and that continually*; the Hebrew is every *figment or every creature* in the heart of man, whatſoever a man moulds and faſhions within himſelf, naturally, is evil, and nothing but evil, and it is alwayes ſo. The natural births of mans heart have all one common face and feature; they are all of one common conſtitution, *Evil all.*

Secondly, We may Obſerve, That, *the meritorious cauſe of mans ſuffering is from his ſin.*

Iniquity ſpringeth not from the ground, neither doth trouble come out of the duſt. As iniquity ſprings from our ſelves, ſo we may reſolve it, that miſery ſprings from our ſin. It is a truth (as hath been touched upon the ſecond Chapter) that, God, in many afflictions laid upon his dear children and ſervants, reſpects not their ſin, as the cauſe procuring and drawing on theſe afflictions. And very many are afflicted by the world, not for ſins ſake, but for righteouſneſs ſake. As Chriſt, ſo ſome Chriſtians may ſay in their ſphear, *We have done many good works, for which of them do you ſtone me.* Yet this is as clear a truth, that the ſin of any man is in it ſelf a ſufficient meritorious cauſe of any, yea, of all afflictions. A creature cannot bear a greater puniſhment, then the leaſt of his ſins deſerves. Man weaves a ſpiders web of ſin out of his own bowels, and then he is intangled in the ſame web; the troubles which inſnare, and wrap about him, are twiſted with his own fingers.

Thirdly Obſerve, *Naturally every man ſeeks the reaſon of his ſorrows and afflictions out of himſelf.*

When man is afflicted, he is not willing to own himſelf, as the cauſe of his afflictions, or acknowledge that they ſpring from his ſin; and, that may be the reaſon, why *Eliphaz* ſpeaks thus to *Job*, as if he had ſaid, thy thoughts are wandring abroad, thou little thinkſt that thy afflictions were bred in thy own boſom: Thou art faſtning the cauſe of them upon this, and t'other thing; thou art complaining of the day wherein thou waſt born; but thou ſhouldeſt rather complain of the ſin, wherein thou waſt born; Thy birth-day hath not hurt thee, but thy birth-ſin. Thy birth-ſin hath given conception, to all the ſorrows of thy life.

The *Jews* in the Prophet *Iſaiah*'s time were in great diſtreſs, and could get no deliverance: The ports and paſſages of mercy were all obſtructed. Now, whither went their thoughts? And what did they look upon, as the reaſon of thoſe abiding lingring evils? we may read their thoughts in the refutation of them; we may ſee what the diſeaſe of their hearts was, by the medicine which the Prophet applies unto them: he labours to purge them from that conceit, as if either want of power, or want of love in the Lord, were the ſtop of their deliverance. *The Lords hand is not ſhortned that he cannot ſave, neither his ear heavy, that he cannot hear*, Iſa. 59. 1, 2. As if he had ſaid, I know what your apprehenſions are in theſe afflictions, you think the reaſon is in God, that either he cannot, or he will not ſave you: You think the hand of Gods power is ſhrunk up, or the ear of his mercy ſhut up; but, you reflect not upon your ſelves, nor conſider, that *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God*: Your ſin does hurt you, and you touch not that with a little finger, but lay the weight of your charge upon God himſelf. So (*Hoſ.* 13. 9.) *Thy deſtruction is from thy ſelf, in me is thy help*; God is forced to tell them ſo, that their deſtruction was from themſelves, they would not believe it: they ſuppoſed it was from the cruelty or malice of the creature, from the wrath and rage of enemies, from ſome overſight or neglect of their friends; therefore the Lord ſpeaks out, in expreſs terms, *Thy deſtruction is from thy ſelf.* It ſprings not forth of the duſt, neither is thy deſtruction from me; *In me is thy help*: in both the heart of man fails equally: we are ready to ſay, that the good we have comes from our ſelves, that our help and comforts are from our own power and wiſdom, and ſo offer ſacrifice to our own nets, *as if by them our portion were fat:* but for evil and deſtruction we aſſign it wholly over, ſometime to men, and ſo are angry; ſometime to God, and ſo blaſpheme. *We naturally decline what reflects ſhame upon our ſelves, or ſpeaks us guilty.*

From our tranſlation, *Although affliction*, &c.

Obſerve, Firſt, *Every affliction hath a cauſe.*

The Proverb carries that ſence, in every common underſtanding. Our afflictions have a cauſe, a certain cauſe, they come not by hap hazzard, or by accident. Many things are caſual, but nothing is without a cauſe. Many things are not fore-ſeen by man, but all things are fore-ordained by God. The Prophet *Amos* (*Chap.* 3. 6.) ſets forth this by an elegant ſimilitude, *Can a bird fall in a ſnare upon the earth, where no gin is for him?* As if he ſhould ſay, is a bird taken in a ſnare by chance, where none have prepared, ſet, or induſtriouſly laid a ſnare or gin to take him? The bird ſaw not the ſnare, but the ſnare was ſet for the bird. Snares fall not on the ground at adventure, they grow not out of the earth of themſelves: but the Fowler, by his art and induſtry, invents and frames them on purpoſe to catch the bird: Thus the calamity and troubles in which men are caught and lime-twig'd, inſnared, and ſhackled in the world, come not out of the ground; *They are not acts of chance, but of providence:* The wiſe and holy God ſets ſuch ſnares, to take and hold fooliſh, unruly men, like ſilly birds, gaping after the baits of worldly pleaſures. Which meaning is clear from the ſcope and tendency of the whole Chapter; but the next queſtion reſolves it in the letter, *Is there any evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Thoſe words are both the concluſion and explication of the former ſimilitude.

Secondly Obſerve, *Affliction is not from the power of any creature.*

As it comes not by chance or without a cauſe, ſo not by the power of creatures, they are not the cauſe; *duſt and the ground*, are oppoſed to Heaven or to a divine power: Creatures in this ſence, can neither do good, nor do evil. *The world would be as full of trouble, as it is of ſin, if ſinful men could make trouble:* It is not in the compaſs of a creature, no not of all the creatures in Heaven or earth, to form or to make out one affliction, without the concurrence and allowance of God himſelf. *Men alone, can neither make ſtaves of comfort, nor rods of affliction.*

Whence thirdly, A conſectary from both may be, That,

Afflictions are from the Lord as from the efficient cauſe, the directer and orderer of them.

Theſe evils are from a creating, not from a created ſtrength. *I* (ſaith the Lord) *form the light, and create darkneſs*, Iſa. 45. 7. Natural darkneſs hath only a deficient cauſe, but pœnal darkneſs hath an efficient cauſe. *Darkneſs is created.* As in the firſt creation God ſaid, *let there be light*, ſo in providence (which is a continued creation) he ſaith, *let there be darkneſs.* If afflictions come not forth of the earth, then they come from Heaven. That wicked King preacht very good doctrine, when he ſaid of an extream devouring famine, *This evil is from the Lord*; though he failed utterly in the uſe or application, while he murmured out, *Why ſhould we wait on the Lord any longer*, *2 Kings* 6. 33. For the reaſon holds ſtrong to the contrary, This evil is from the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord for ever.

Verſe 7. **Yet man is born unto trouble, as the ſparks fly upward.**

Yet man, or **but man is born to trouble.**] Some read, *Man is born to ſin*, that is, he is born with a nature ready and prone to ſin, becauſe *he is born in ſin*, *Pſal.* 51. 5. And ſo by conſequent he is born to trouble, which is cauſed by, and is the fruit of ſin. Theſe two, ſin and trouble, are ſo near in blood and kindred, that ſtill one word includes them both; the former word which ſignifies ſin properly, is tranſlated affliction; and this word which ſignifies affliction properly, may be tranſlated ſin. When it is ſaid, That *Man is born to trouble or ſin*; it notes two things.

Firſt, A right to them, a right to ſin, and a right to ſorrow. That which a man is born to, is duly his, it is his inheritance, or his birth-right; that is the common underſtanding of the phraſe: As ſome men are born to a great eſtate, to lands and honours, *&c.* ſo all men are born to trouble and ſin; they are ours by a lineal right, derived from our next, yea firſt parents, ſo they deſcend to us as land deſcends.

Secondly, It implies a readineſs, or a fitneſs to commit ſin, or to fall into trouble: When a man is ſaid to be born to a thing, it notes him exceeding apt and forward to take it: He needs little teaching and inſtructing, little cultivating or manuring. As when a man makes verſes readily, we ſay he was born to Poetry; or when a man gets wealth eaſily, we ſay, he was born to be rich. So in the preſent caſe; a mans underſtanding, will, and affections, need no manuring or dreſſing to bring forth ſin, or the fruit of it, ſorrow. He is born to ſin.

The latter clauſe of the verſe clears the ſence fully, *Man is born unto trouble, or unto ſin, as the ſparks fly upward*; the meaning is, as the ſparks have a principle in themſelves, by which they aſcend, they need no directing; when a ſpark comes out from the fire, no man bids it fly upward, or ſhews it the way, it will fly upward alone, it knows no other way, but upward; ſo, it is a natural courſe for man, as ſoon as he is born, to ſin and work his own ſorrow. This he can do, the firſt thing he doth, and before he can do any thing, well, he can do this, but, too well; *He needs no Tutor for theſe, ſinning and ſorrowing, are not his art but his nature:* Though he ſhould have neither rule nor example in the world, he would find out the myſteries of iniquity, and do enough quickly to make himſelf miſerable.

Vau.

The particle, *As*, is a copulative in the hebrew: So divers render it in this Text, *Man is born unto trouble, And the ſparks fly upward*; that is, mans trouble and ſparks flying upward, are alike natural. We, as in divers other places, tranſlate it by way of ſimilitude; *Man is born unto trouble, as the ſparks fly upward*: So *Job* 34. 3. *The ear tryeth words, and the mouth taſteth meat*; we tranſlate the copulative by a comparative; *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*. Again, *Mark* 9. 49. *Every one ſhall be ſalted with fire, and every ſacrifice ſhall be ſalted with ſalt:* The ſence lies in the ſimilitude, *Every one ſhall be ſalted with fire, as every ſacrifice is ſalted with ſalt*; It is an alluſion to the old ſacrifices, wherein ſalt was continually uſed. So here, *Man is born unto trouble, and the ſparks*, that is, *as the ſparks fly upward*.

בנו רשף
Filii prunæ hoc eſt ſcintillæ, Metaphoricè ferris ſagittæ incaleſcens motu, & quicquid volat in aëre, ſive ſcintillæ, ſive ſagittæ, ſive aves.

As the ſparks.] The Hebrew is, *The ſons of the coal*; the ſons or children of the coal, are ſparks; blow a coal, and preſently a ſpark is begotten and born; therefore the Hebrew elegancy calls ſparkes, *The ſons of the children of the coal*. And it is obſervable, that by a metaphor this word ſignifies in the Hebrew, the Head of an arrow heated with motion, as alſo, a bird flying in the air; and the reaſon is, becauſe birds fly up in the air, they aſcend naturally, they fly about and flutter, like ſparkes of fire in the air. Hence the vulgar and ſome others tranſlate the words, *Man is born unto trouble, as the birds fly upward*; The Septuagint, *as the young Vultures fly upward*; others, *as the young ones of the Eagle fly upwards: Aben Ezra* a learned Rabbin, makes uſe of that ſence alſo, and gives the gloſs thus, *As it is natural and innate for birds to fly, ſo it is natural for man to ſuffer trouble.*

Νεοσσοὶ δὲ γυπὸς τὰ ὑψηλὰ πέτονται. Sept.
Νεοσσοὶ δὲ ἀετῶν. Complut.
Non ſecus ad ærumnas & miſerias hic perferendas natus eſt homo, quã innatũ eſt & naturale ſcintillis & volatilibus omnibus ut in ſublime attollantur. Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Sorrow and ſin are the portion and all the portion that man hath by nature.*

He is born to theſe.

They who are aſcended to the greateſt heigths, and have got the greateſt ſtock, either of ſpiritual or outward comforts, were born to nothing, but a cup of ſorrow, to the bread of affliction, and to the waters of adverſity: And theſe we are inſtated in, yea poſſeſſed of, as ſoon as we are born; we need not wait the death of our parents for this inheritance, they divide it all to every child, and yet keep it all to themſelves: All our real comforts are from our ſecond birth, and have their pedigree from the bleſſing and love of God. Therefore the Apoſtle puts that general queſtion, *What haſt thou, that thou haſt not received?* that is, what good haſt thou? Thou haſt all thy evil from thy ſelf, but whatſoever good thou haſt, was received from above; all our good is founded in free Grace.

Secondly Obſerve, That, *All ſins and ſorrows are contained virtually in the nature of man.*

Though a man doth not formally commit or bring forth every ſin, though a man doth not formally bear evey affliction, or taſte every cup of ſorrow; yet virtually and radically a man hath every ſin in him, or it is poſſible for any ſin to be formed and ſhaped out of the nature of man: Radically alſo every man hath every affliction, all ſorrows in him; and the juſtice of God, may form the moſt dreadfully ſhap'd afflictions out of his ſins: And as the ſparks lie cloſely in the fire, or in the flint, till you ſmite or blow them up; ſo ſin lies ſecretly in our hearts, till ſome temptation or occaſion ſmites and brings it out.

Again we may Obſerve, That, *Man can ſin without a teacher.*

You need not inſtruct him, or teach him to do evil; he doth that by a natural inſtinct, ſince his nature was corrupted. He ſins as the ſparks fly upwards, or as a bird flyes in the air, whom no man directs how to uſe her wings, *Nature is her rule.* There needs much teaching againſt ſin, and it is the buſineſs of all the Ordinances, to bridle us from acting our corruptions: But man walks in the wayes of wickedneſs, without guide or precept.

It was the ancient error of the *Pelagians*, that the ſin of man came onely by imitation: they denied that man had a ſtock of corruption in his nature, or that his nature was corrupted; but, ſeeing others ſin, he ſinned; an opinion which carries its condemnation in its own face, as well as in our hearts. And though ſimilitudes are no proofs, yet, the reaſon of a ſimilitude is: mans ſinning is therefore compared to a ſparks flying, to ſhew how naturally he ſins. A ſpark flies upward without any to lead it the way; and a bird would fly, though ſhe ſhould never ſee another bird fly: And if a man could live ſo, as never to ſee any one example of ſin all his dayes; yet that man, out of his own heart, might bring forth every ſin, every day. Example quickens and encourages the principles of ſin within us, but we can ſin without any extrinſick motion or provocation, without pattern or preſident from without.

Laſtly Obſerve, *To ſin, is no burden, or labour, to a natural man*; *For it is his nature.*

It is no pains to the ſpark, to fly upwards: what we do naturally, we do eaſily. Holy duties are no burdens to a godly man, becauſe, through grace, he doth them naturally; he hath an inward principle, which dictates the law of holineſs to him, though he ſhould want outward teaching: *He hath an unction from the Holy Ghoſt, and knoweth all things*, 1 Joh. 2. 20. Not that a godly man becomes like God, Omniſcient, or knowing all, for at moſt we know, here, but in part: but he knows all things neceſſary, and ſo far as neceſſary, his new birth teacheth him: He lives not meerly upon the outward teaching, he hath both light and liberty in himſelf; and ſo hath a tendency to theſe things in his own ſpirit, as there is a tendency in fire to aſcend.

We ſhould wonder and rejoyce, to ſee how grace conquers the courſe of ſinful nature. The new man is born to mercy and holineſs, to grace and glory, as the *ſparks fly upward.* Hence it is ſaid, *He that is born of God cannot commit ſin, for the ſeed of God remaineth in him*: As, the ſpark cannot fly downward, becauſe the heat of fire remains in it. The Apoſtle affirms it, of himſelf and his Fellow-labourers in the Goſpel, *We can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth*, 2 Cor. 13. 8. The poſſibilities and impoſſibilities of a regenerate man, are directly oppoſite to thoſe of a natural man: The one cannot ſin, the other cannot but ſin; the one can do nothing againſt the truth, the other can do nothing for the truth: gracious acts become as natural, as ſinful, when nature is changed from ſin to grace. What a bleſſed change is this, that man ſhould do good as readily, as once he did evil; that, he who was born free to iniquity, ſhould be re-born free to righteouſneſs, as the ſparks fly upward. *A godly man is an heavenly ſpark:* He hath a fire in his nature, which carries him upward for ever.

Thus having opened theſe two verſes, being the grounds of the following exhortation; let us now examine the matter of the exhortation it ſelf, contained in the eighth Verſe.

Verſe 8. **I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe.**

אולם

Our Tranſlation omits one word in the beginning of this ſentence, which though it may be underſtood in our reading, yet the expreſſion of it betters the ſence. *Surely*, or *truly I would ſeek*, &c.

There are two opinions about the meaning of theſe words; ſome conceive, that *Eliphaz* ſpeaks in high contempt of *Job*: and I may give you their ſence, by that proud Schooling, which the Phariſee gave the poor Publican, *Luke* 18. As that Phariſee inſulted over the Publican, thus, *I thank God, I am not ſuch a one as thou art*, &c. *but I faſt, and I pray*, &c. So, they repreſent *Eliphaz* here inſulting over *Job*, *I thank God, I am not ſuch an impatient perſon as thou art; no ſuch rude curſer of my day, or complainer of my trouble; I am not (I thank God) ſo diſtracted, and ſo diſtempered as thou art; and if I had been in thy caſe, I ſhould have ſhewed more wit, and grace too, then, to do, as thou haſt done; I ſhould never have been ſo vain and fooliſh, ſo forgetful of my own duty, or the Lords Soveraignty, as, to cry out againſt and accuſe his providence and dealings with me, to lay about me like a mad man, as thou haſt done; no, I would have ſought unto God, and committed my cauſe unto him, this ſhould have been my courſe, ſuch and ſuch the frame and temper of my ſpirit.*

But I rather take theſe words in a good ſence, implying much ſweetneſs and meekneſs of ſpirit in *Eliphaz*. And ſo this verſe is as an application of the Doctrine, contained in the former two: As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Seeing matters ſtand thus in themſelves, and theſe are undoubted truths, that afflictions come from our ſelves, and that our ſins are our own: and ſeeing thy caſe ſtands thus, that now thou art under great afflictions and troubles; I do aſſure thee my loving friend* Job, *were I in thy condition (I will give thee faithful counſel, and tell thee my heart, what I would do) I would no longer ſtay complaining againſt my day, curſing creatures, diſtempering my head, and diſquieting my heart with theſe paſſions; but, I would even go and addreſs my ſelf unto God, I would apply my ſelf to Heaven, I would ſeek for remedy there, earth affords it not.* I have ever found this the way to eaſe my heart, when burdened; to aſſwage my ſorrows, when encreaſed; to compoſe my ſpirit, when diſtracted; to ſtrengthen my reſolutions, when unſetled: I can give thee this rule with (*a probatum eſt*) an aſſurance from mine own experience, in the uſe of it, and with clearneſs of conſcience, that it is my purpoſe in ſuch caſes to uſe it ever.

דרש *Significat quærere diligenter & cum cura, ſed interrogatione & verbis ut plurimum.*

I would ſeek unto God.] The word ſignifies a very diligent ſearch; I would ſeek exactly and enquire laboriouſly unto God. It ſignifies to ſeek by asking queſtions or by interrogating: And it imports ſeeking with much wiſdom and skill; a curious or a critical enquiry; So *Eccleſ.* 1. 13. *I gave my heart* (ſaith *Solomon*) *to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſdom.* And this ſeeking implies four things.

First, A ſuppoſition and a ſenſe of our wants; no man ſeeks that which he hath already, or, but thinks he hath it. He that is full loaths a hony comb.

Secondly, A ſtrong deſire to find that which we want; it notes not a bare deſire only, or woulding, but a kind of unquietneſs or reſtleſneſs, till we find: ſuch a deſire took hold of *David*, Pſal. 132. 4. *I will not give reſt to mine eyes, nor ſlumber to mine eye lids, untill I find out a place for the Lord, or, untill I find the Lord.*

Thirdly, A care to be directed about the means which may facilitate the finding or recovery of what we want, and thus earneſtly deſire. A ſeeking ſpirit, is a careful ſpirit, after light and counſel.

Fourthly, A diligent and faithful endeavour, in or about the uſe of thoſe means, to which counſel directs us. *Through deſire a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdom*, Prov. [illegible]. 1. That is, he is very induſtrious in purſuing thoſe advices, which wiſdom ſhews him, or, which are ſhewed him, as the wayes of wiſdom. *A lazy ſpirit is unfit to ſeek.*

I would ſeek unto God, **and unto God would I commit my cauſe.**] In the former clauſe, the word for *God*, is *El*, and in the latter, *Elohim*; both names note the power of God. *El*, notes power or ſtrength to act and execute; *Elohim*, power or authority to judge and determine. *I would ſeek unto* El, *The ſtrong God*: I would commit my cauſe to *Elohim, the mighty God*: As if he had ſaid, Thou art in a weak and low condition, now therefore ſeek unto God, *the ſtrong God, the mighty God*, who is able to deliver thee: Thou wanteſt the help of ſuch a friend as he.

אשים דברתי

The Hebrew, word for word, is thus rendred, *Unto God would I put my words, or turn my ſpeech*; We reach the meaning fully, rendring, *Unto God I would commit my cauſe, or put my caſe.*

דבר *Significat verbum vel negotium, res meas ei committere.* Κύριον τῶν πάντων δεσπότην ἐπικαλέσομαι. Sept.

The term which we tranſlate, *cauſe*, ſignifies any buſineſs or cauſe, but moſt properly a *word*; *Explicite prayer in the turning of our thoughts into words, or the putting of our caſe to God.* It is a ſpeaking to, or a pleading with the Lord. The Septuagint is clear in this ſence, *I would deprecate the Lord, I would call upon the Lord, the governour of all things.*

Both theſe ſignifications of the word, are profitable for us, and congruous with the ſcope of the Text, *I would turn my ſpeech and prayer, or I would commit my cauſe unto God.*

The committing of our cauſe to God, notes a reſignation of our ſelves, and of our condition into the hands of God: It is as much as to ſay, Let God do what he will, or determine what he pleaſeth concerning me, I will not ſtrive or contend about, queſtion or diſpute his deciſion or judgment of my cauſe: I will lay my ſelf down at his feet, and tell him how the caſe ſtands with me; then, let him do with me, what ſeems good in his eyes: This is the committing of our cauſe and condition unto God. And the Original word here uſed for God, doth very well ſuit and correſpond with this ſence; *I will commit my cauſe unto God, unto Elohim*, the great and impartial Judge of Heaven and Earth; the God who loves Judgment, and the habitation of whoſe Throne is righteouſneſs: The God who knows how to diſcern exactly between cauſe and cauſe, perſon and perſon, and will undoubtedly give a righteous ſentence concerning every cauſe and perſon, that comes before him. Unto this *Elohim* would I commit my cauſe, and refer my ſelf to his arbitration.

Obſerve, firſt, in the general; *Eliphaz* having reproved *Job*, turns himſelf to counſel and exhortation: From which we may learn,

> That, *As it is our duty to reprove a fault in our brother, ſo it is our duty to adviſe and counſel him how to amend, or come out of that fault, for which we reprove him.*

It is not enough to eſpy an error, but we muſt labour to rectifie it; or, to tell another that he is out of the way, but we muſt endeavour to reduce him. Many can eſpy faults and failings in others, who either know not how, or care not to reform and help them out.

> Secondly Obſerve, That, *It is a duty to exhort and excite our brethren to thoſe duties wherein we find them ſlack or negligent.*

Eliphaz conceived, that *Job* was much behind in the duty of prayer and ſelf-reſignation unto God, and therefore he quickens him up to it. The Apoſtle calls us to this Chriſtian inſpection (*Heb.* 3. 13.) *Exhort one another daily, leſt any of you be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of ſin*; ſin growing and getting ſtrength, hardens the heart; it is beſt to oppoſe it betimes, and therefore he bids them do it at all times, *Exhort one another daily.* Though the Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Pet.* 1. 12.) was perſwaded of the Saints eſtabliſhment *in the preſent truth, yet* (ſaith he) *I will not ceaſe to put you alwayes in remembrance of theſe things.* It is a dangerous error (which ſome hold) that the Saints in this life may out-grow counſel and exhortation; as if there were no need to bid a godly man pray, and ſeek unto God; no need to bid a godly man to repent, or humble himſelf, or believe: he cannot but do theſe things (ſay they) theſe are connatural to him: they are indeed to the new man, within him: but let them withal remember, that the neglect of all theſe duties, is as connatural to the old man, within him. While there are two men within us, we had need every man to look, not only to one, but to one another. It may go ill with the better part, *the new man*, if while he hath an enemy within to oppoſe him, he hath not a friend without to help him. On this ground (beſides the command of Chriſt) the holieſt man on earth, may be exhorted to look to his holineſs: none are in more danger then they, who think they are paſt danger. And, as it is a certain argument, that a man was never good, if he deſires not to be better; ſo, it is a great argument, that a man was never good, who fears not that he may be worſe. They who are truly aſſured they cannot fall from grace, are aſſured alſo that they may fall in grace, and fall into ſin: The foundation of God ſtands ſure, but the footing of man doth not; and therefore, *Let him that ſtands, take heed leſt he fall:* And let them who ſee their brethren heedleſly falling, lend them the right hand of exhortation to raiſe them up again: and when they are careleſs of, or wandring from the Lord, lead them by the hand of counſel, into wayes where he may be found. *I would ſeek unto God.*

Obſerve in the third place, That, *We ought to manage our exhortations with meekneſs and tenderneſs.*

This of *Eliphaz* is a mild and tender expreſſion; and to make it more eaſie, he puts the exhortation (as was noted before) in the firſt, not in the ſecond perſon; he doth not ſay, ſeeing afflictions come not from the ground, and that man is born unto trouble, therefore do thou ſeek unto God, and do thou commit thy cauſe unto God; but ſeeing thy caſe is thus, truly brother, I adviſe thee as I would adviſe mine own ſoul, *Seek unto God.* It moves ſtrongly and gains upon the affection of another, to tell him, we would do the thing our ſelves which we deſire he ſhould, and we wiſh him as we do our own ſouls.

Fourthly Obſerve, That, *It is both our wiſdom and our duty in all our afflictions to ſeek unto God.*

I would (ſaith *Eliphaz*) if I were in thy caſe, ſeek unto God. Unto whom ſhould we go, but unto God? He is our beſt friend, when it is beſt with us; and he is our only friend, when it is ill with us: all other friends will be Phyſitians of no value, as *Job* himſelf found them, therefore *ſeek unto God.* As the Diſciples ſaid unto Chriſt, when Chriſt asked them, *Will ye alſo go away? Whither ſhall we go* (ſay they) *for thou haſt the words of eternal life?* So ſaith the ſoul in afflictions, To whom ſhall I go? Unto this creature or that creature, unto this friend or that friend? No, I will ſeek unto God, That is the wiſeſt and ſhorteſt courſe: all other courſes are about, if not in vain. Other wayes may be uſed as helps, but this muſt; *pitch mainly upon God.*

When we are directed to ſeek unto God in afflictions, it ſpeaks four things.

Firſt, To ſeek unto God about the cauſe of our afflictions, deſire that God would inform us, what his mind is in ſending ſuch an affliction, or what it is he aims at, in ſending it. *Afflictions are the Lords meſſengers, and we ſhould never be quiet, till we know their errand.* This is it which *Job* complained of in *Chap.* 3. *That his way was hid*, which was expounded, that he knew not the cauſe of his afflictions, the cauſe was hidden; and ſo was the iſſue, he could neither tell how he came in, nor how he ſhould come out; If our way in afflictions be hid, we muſt ſeek unto God for the opening of it.

Secondly, *To ſeek unto God* for ſtrength and patience, to bear the affliction. As the affliction comes from God, ſo doth the ſtrength by which we ſtand under it, or, get victory over it.

Thirdly, *To ſeek unto God* for the ſanctifying of affliction to our profit, that we may be partakers of his holineſs. Afflictions are the good creatures of God, and they (as all other creatures) are ſanctified to us, by the word and prayer. We have as much reaſon to ſeek unto God for a bleſſing upon our *daily Rod*, as upon our *daily Bread.*

Fourthly, *Seek unto God* for cure and eaſe, for the removing or mitigating of them. *In their affliction they will ſeek me early*, ſaith the Lord, *Hoſ.* 5. 15. But, for what will they ſeek? even, for medicine and healing. *Come and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up*, Hoſ. 6. 1.

Obſerve from the other branch, *And unto God would I commit my cauſe,*

That, *It is a very great eaſe unto the ſoul in affliction, to commit our cauſe unto God, and to put our affairs into his hand.*

Man is not able to ſtand alone, under the weight of his afflictions. Both ſin and ſorrow are burdens too heavy for us to bear: if you would have eaſe, lay both upon Chriſt; it is no unbecoming boldneſs to do ſo, for, he calls us to it, and bids us do it; *Pſal.* 55. 22. *Caſt thy burden upon the Lord, and he ſhall ſuſtain thee.* Chriſt is willing to bear a part, and put his ſhoulder under theſe burdens; yea, it is his ſtrength that bears the whole. The committing of our cauſe to God, is at once our duty, our ſafety, and our eaſe. Thus *David* did, *Pſal.* 142. 2. *I powred my complaint before him, I ſhewed before him my trouble. David* brought out his evils, and ſet them (as it were) one by one, in the ſight of God, and told him, thus it is with me. We may ſee *David* acting this rule, to the life, when *Abſalom* had fomented a moſt unnatural rebellion againſt *Him*: He haſtens out of *Jeruſalem*, *All the Country wept with a loud voice*, and the Prieſts with the Ark of the Covenant of God came with him alſo, In what poſture was *Davids* ſpirit, in the midſt of theſe commotions? His words to *Zadok* ſhew (no doubt) the true picture of it. *And the King ſaid to* Zadok, *carry back the Ark of God into the City; if I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and ſhew me both it and his habitation:* but if he ſay thus, *I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him* (2 Sam. 15. 25, 26.) As if he had ſaid, I am uncertain what God will do with me: but I am reſolved to let the Lord do with me what he will, I am willing to be what God will have me; I lay my cauſe and leave my buſineſs at his foot-ſtool, if he will have me dethron'd and unking'd, I am content my honour ſhould lie in the duſt. If he ſay, I ſhall never come again to *Jeruſalem*, or ſee the Ark of his ſtrength and preſence, I am content for ever to be baniſht *Jeruſalem*, never to ſee the Ark (which to me is the moſt beautiful and deſirable ſight in the world) any more. Here was ſelf-reſignation, and cauſe-committing to the height. And when *David* had brought his heart to this, his heart was unburden'd, he (doubtleſs) found the weight and ſtreſs of the whole buſineſs lying upon God himſelf. His cauſe was with God, and his cares were with God; and therefore, *though his throne ſhak'd, yet his heart was fixed.* Nor do I find, that ever his heart was more fixed, then in this ſtreſs, while his Throne and Crown were tottering. *Hezekiah* did the like with like ſucceſs. In the day of that great and publick calamity, he went and ſpread the letter of *Rabſhaketh* before God; he, as it were, deſired God to read it, to obſerve the blaſphemous contents, and ſee in what condition he was. *He that commits his cauſe to God, breaths a compoſed ſpirit, when the greateſt ſtorms and diſtractions are upon his body or eſtate, upon Church or State.*

Only take this caution, be ſure the cauſe you commit to God, be a good cauſe. The committing of a ſinful cauſe to God, is a diſhonour to, and a high ſtrain of preſumption againſt God. We may commit a doubtful cauſe to

God, deſiring, that he wou'd try, and examine, whether it be good or bad. But we muſt not commit a doubtful cauſe to God, deſiring him to protect it, or us in it, whether it be good or bad. And if (in this ſenſe) we may not commit a doubtful cauſe to God; what ſhall we think of thoſe, who ſhall dare to commit an openly unjuſt and wicked cauſe to God? A wicked mans prayer is alwayes ſinful; but, how abominable is it, when he prayes to be proſpered or directed in acting his ſin, or to be ſtrengthned in ſuffering (impenitently) for his ſin? There is no gracious act, but a wicked man, at one time or other, will imitate it. He will pray, and repent, and forgive, and commit his cauſe to God; and when he dyes, commit his ſoul to God. There is no truſting to a mouth full of good words; while the heart will not empty it ſelf of wickedneſs. It is good alwayes to commit our cauſe and our ſouls to God: but a cauſe or a ſoul are not therefore good, becauſe committed unto God. The language of *Iſrael* is often ſpoken by the men of *Aſhdod*; and many who never had the leaſt part of holineſs in them, can yet ſet themſelves (when there is no remedy) to act a part in it. The Apoſtle *Peter* gives us this rule, (1 Epiſt. 4. 19.) *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him, in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* Except we ſuffer according to the will (or from the hand) of God, and, alſo, do well in our ſufferings, Chriſt will not admit this Feoffment; though we commit our ſelves to him, he will not accept the truſt. But he that ſuffers according to (or by) the will of God, and doth well in ſuffering; that is, hath a good cauſe, and a good conſcience: He (I ſay) may commit all to God, and (in the mercy of the moſt High) he ſhall not miſcarry.

Laſtly, Whereas *Eliphaz* ſaith, I would *ſeek unto God*, were I in thy caſe,

> Obſerve, That, *It is a wiſe courſe in adviſing others, to ſhew our ſelves ready to follow the ſame adviſe.*

It wins exceedingly upon others, to take our counſel, when it appears we are ready to follow the ſame counſel our ſelves. *We ought to do nothing unto others, but what we would have done unto our ſelves; and we ſhould adviſe nothing to others, but what we our ſelves would do: It puts ſtrength into a rule, when he that gives it, is ready to enliven it by his own practice.* As a Phyſitian, for the encouragement of his Patient to take a nauſeous medicine, will ſay to him, Sir, you ſeem unwilling to drink it, but if I were ſick and diſtempered, as you are, I would drink it readily; and that you may ſee there is no hurt in it, I will taſte a little my ſelf; his taſting ſweetens it, and the Patient likes it well. Thus when either Miniſter or private friend offers adviſe or counſel, and ſhall ſay, thus I would do, this I would follow; this takes upon the heart: whereas it diſparages prayer or any duty, to ſay to another, *Seek unto God*, put your caſe unto him, faſt and pray, when he that gives the counſel neglects all theſe duties, and is careleſs of communion with God.

Chriſt ſaith of the Phariſees, that they bound heavy burthens upon the ſhoulders of others. Theſe burdens were counſels and directions, rules, and canons; they would have men do thus and thus, in the manner of Gods worſhip, or daily converſe with men. But, *They themſelves would not touch them with one of their fingers*; (Matth. 23. 4.) That is, they would not practiſe them in the leaſt degree. As to do evil with *both hands*, (Mic. 7. 3.) notes the higheſt degree both of deſire and endeavour, in doing evil: So not to touch that which is good with a finger, notes a total neglect of doing good. A finger is the leaſt member, and a Touch is the leaſt act; then theſe Phariſees not touching with a finger, imports they did not act at all. It is good to act a rule privately by way of experiment, before we put it upon others: but it is moſt neceſſary to act it by way of example, when we have publiſhed it to, and preſt it upon others. It was a ſpeech of one of the Ancients, *I never taught my people any thing, but what I had firſt practiſed and experimented my ſelf.* Doctrine is ſooner followed by the eye, then by the ear; he that (like the Scribes and Phariſees *Matth. 23. 3. ſaith and doth not, ſhall find but few to do what he ſaith.* No man ought to teach any thing which he is not willing (as he is call'd) to do and obſerve himſelf. It is very ſinful to give counſel, which we will not take. *Our works ought to be the practiſe of our words, and as practicable as our words.* Wo unto thoſe of whom it may be ſaid, as Chriſt of the *Phariſees*, Matth. 23. 3. *Whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do, but do not ye after their works.*

VERS. 9.

Which doth great things and unſearchable; marvellous things without number.

THis context unto *verſe* 17. contains the ſecond Argument, by which *Eliphaz* ſtrengthneth his former exhortation, *To ſeek unto God, and to commit his cauſe unto him.* The Argument may be thus formed.

> *He is to be ſought unto, both in duty, and in wiſdom; and unto him our cauſe is to be committed, who is of abſolute, infinite power, wiſdom and goodneſs.*
>
> *But God is of abſolute, infinite power, wiſdom and goodneſs.*
>
> *Therefore it is our duty and our wiſdom to ſeek unto God, and unto God to commit our cauſe.*

That, God is infinite in power, wiſdom and goodneſs, *Eliphaz* proves by an enumeration or induction of divers effects and works, which call for infinite power, wiſdom and goodneſs to produce and actuate them.

Theſe effects are laid down, firſt in general, *verſe* 9. *Who doth great things and unſearchable; marvellous things without number.*

Then, theſe works or effects are given in particulars; and the firſt particular inſtance of Gods mighty power, is in natural things, or his preſervation of the world, at *verſe* 10. *Who giveth rain upon the earth, and ſendeth waters upon the fields.*

The ſecond inſtance is given in civil things, or his adminiſtrations in the world, at *verſ.* 12, 13, 14. And that we may conſider two wayes.

Firſt, In deſtroying the counſels and plots of the wicked, in *verſ.* 12, 13, and 14. *He that diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſo that their hands cannot perform their enterpriſe*, &c.

Secondly, In delivering thoſe who are in trouble, *verſ.* 15. *He ſaveth the poor from the Sword*, &c. Theſe are works of Power.

Further the goodneſs of God ſhines forth in two things.

Firſt, By the preſent intendment, or end aimed at, in theſe mighty works, *verſ.* 11. *To ſet up on high thoſe that be low, that thoſe which mourn may be exalted to ſafety.*

Secondly, By the future benefit of theſe works, and that in two reſpects, *verſ.* 16.

Firſt, The raiſing up of their ſpirits who are oppreſſed; *So the poor hath hope.*

Secondly, The confounding and ſhaming of their oppreſſors, expreſt in their ſilence, at the latter end of *verſ.* 16. *And iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth.*

Thus you have a brief account of the ſeveral points contained in this argument, and the diſpoſition of the whole context. For the better underſtanding thereof, we will firſt conſider what might be the aim or ſcope of *Eliphaz*, in making ſo accurate and large a deſcription of God, in his great and marvellous works, and then ſurvay theſe works in order as they are digeſted.

To the former, we may take notice of a four-fold aim, which *Eliphaz* might have in deſcribing theſe works of God.

Firſt, Plainly to aſſert the providence of God, in ordering or diſpoſing all actions and events here below: and ſo it is in proſecution of what he had ſaid in *verſ.* 6. *Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground.*

Or ſecondly, His intent might be, to humble *Job*, to bridle and take down his ſpirit, which he conceived overbold with, and too much heightned towards the Almighty; a diſcovery whereof himſelf made in his extravagant ſpeeches before noted, in *Chap.* 3. *The remembrance of God in his greatneſs, is one of the readieſt means to humble man*: And God himſelf took this way to humble *Job*, in the latter end of this Book, even, by a large diſcourſe of his own power, exemplified in many great acts and pieces of the creation.

Or thirdly, The intent of *Eliphaz* might be, to ſupport and comfort *Job* in his afflictions, by ſhewing him a God that had done ſuch wonders, and therefore able to work another wonder in delivering and raiſing him up again: A God, who could provide medicines for all his diſeaſes, heal all his breaches, repair all his loſſes, ſupply all his wants, and reſolve all his doubts. *To conſider God in himſelf, and in his works, who he is, and what he doth, is a mighty encouragement to ſeek unto God in our greateſt extremities, in the ſaddeſt and cloudieſt day of our afflictions.* Neither can we do any thing more prevalent, for the ſupport and relief of our own ſpirits, in a time when we are loweſt, then to ſpread before the eye of our own thoughts, the power, greatneſs and goodneſs of the high God, in his works and wonders.

A fourth intent in probability was to ſtop *Jobs* curioſity, in enquiring ſo much into the reaſon of Gods dealing with him; which *Eliphaz* it ſeems obſerved in the complaints of *Chap.* 3. where *Job* expoſtulates, *Why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* *Job* was troubled, becauſe he could not ſee the bottom of Gods dealings with him; he could not ſee through them, either what the cauſe was, why he came into thoſe troubles, or by what iſſues and out-lets, he ſhould eſcape thoſe troubles. Now, to ſtop *Jobs* curioſity in prying too far, or too boldly, into the ſecret workings of God; *Eliphaz* tells him, *That God doth great things, and unſearchable:* no marvel therefore, if his wayes were hid; *That he doth marvellous things without number,* no marvail then, if he could not meaſure his dealings, by the line of humane underſtanding, or ſum up their account by the beſt of his Arithmetick.

This in general, for the common tendency of his diſcourſe, about thoſe noble acts of divine Providence in earthly things. I come now to open the words in particular.

Which doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.

Which doth.] He ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe, he ſayes not, *which hath done great things*, or, *which will do great things*; but *which doth great things*. And that notes not only a preſent act, but a continued act, or an everlaſting act; or, as if the workings of God were but an act, paſt, and to come, all included in the preſent, *He doth*. As in his *Nature and Eſſence*, though God was from all eternity, and ſhall be unto all eternity, yet his Name is, *I am*. So in his works, though he hath done great things, and ſhall no great things for ever, yet all are comprehended in this, *I do, or He doth great things*. Chriſt (*John* 5.17.) ſpeaks this language, *My Father worketh hitherto*: *worketh*; All that which God had done, and all that he ſhould do, is to be looked upon as his preſent act, *My Father worketh hitherto.*

עשה *Aptè, concinnè, & exquiſitè, facit.* *Eſau vocatus, quia cũ naſceretur fuit actus & perfectus pilis. Eſau ſonat perfectũ & ornatũ, nam perfectior pueris,* i. e. *inſtructus pilis in lucem venerit.* Jun. *in loc.*

Again, there is ſomewhat to be conſidered in the natural emphaſis of the word it ſelf, as well as in that circumſtantial of the time. The word which we tranſlate, *Doth*, ſignifies more then an ordinary *Doing*; *which doth great things*. The Criticks obſerve, that in ſtrictneſs and propriety of the Hebrew, it ſignifies to do a thing compleatly, perfectly and exactly, or (as we ſay) *the ſetting of our laſt hand to a work.* Hence *Eſau* (*Gen.* 25.25.) had his name. When *Jacob* and *Eſau* were born, *Eſau* came forth firſt, and the Text ſaith, *they called his name* Eſau; and why? becauſe he was born, *made up, in greater perfection,* then an ordinary child. *Eſau* ſignifies, *adorned and perfected*, becauſe he came into the world hairy, or with hair upon him, which is both a natural ornament, and an argument of natural ſtrength, activity and *heat* of ſpirit, *&c.* Hence they call'd him, *Eſau:* So then, the word [*doth*] imports doing, not by way of eſſay or inchoation, but doing compleatly, or to carry a thing on, or up to an extraordinary degree of perfection. I ſhall give one Scripture to illuſtrate that ſignificancy of the word, *Iſa.* 43.7. where the Lord by the Prophet, ſhewing the abundant increaſe of the Church, ſpeaks thus, *Bring my ſons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea I have made him.* Obſerve, here is a pair gradation in thoſe three words, *Created, formed, made*; *I have created*, ſignifies the bringing of a thing from a not-being, to a being. But, ſaith God, I have not only given him a being, but, *I have formed him*; which notes the limming, proportioning and poliſhing a thing: And not only have I done ſo; but, in the third place, (which is the word of the Text) *I have made him.* There is more in this word, then in the former two, and therefore we tranſlate it with an emphaſis; *yea, I have made him*; that is, I have not only given him a being and a ſhape, but I have put upon him all the perfections of nature; yea, and the perfections of grace, the impreſſions of my ſpecial love and favour; I have lifted him up to the top of all, and ſo ſome render the word, *I have magnified or made him great*; I have exalted and ſet him upon the higheſt pinnacles of perfections, and mountains of holineſs.

ברא *Produxit ad eſſe* יצר *Conſtituit rem in forma ſua.* עשה *Perfecit, diſpoſuit.*

Hence Obſerve, *When God begins a work, he compleats it and carries it thorough.*

He doth not only *Create*, and give a being; *Form*, and give proportion: but *He doth*, or *He makes*, giving beauty and exactneſs to his works. Whether we conſider the works of God as Natural, Civil, or Spiritual; in this ſence God *doth them*, Deut. 32. 4. *Moſes* ſpeaks in generall concerning all the works of God; *He is a Rock, and his work is perfect:* The works of Creation are admirable to the eye; the works of providence, how often do they fill the heart with admiration! That which he ſpake to *Samuel* concerning the houſe of *Ely*, is appliable both to his works of Mercy and of Judgment; *When I begin, I will alſo make an end*, 1 Sam. 3. 12. that is, I will do it fully, there is nothing ſhall take me off, or ſtay me in the mid way; I will not work to halves, I will alſo make an end. And ſo it is in ſpirituals, when once God hath begun, he carries on his work of grace; when once he hath laid the *foundation ſtone* of mercy, he never leaves, until he hath ſet up the *top ſtone, the higheſt ſtone of Glory.* Hence the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12.) entitles Chriſt, *The author and finiſher of our Faith*; that is, the beginner and ender, *Alpha* and *Omega*, firſt and laſt about our faith. It ſhall never be ſaid of any work of God (as *Luke* 14.) *That he began to build, but could not finiſh it.*

And as he finiſhes, ſo he beautifies: all his works are full of order and comelineſs: He doth his work exquiſitely (or as we ſay) artificially; yea, thoſe works that we look upon as full of confuſion, are full of order; and thoſe works in which we ſee no form, or nothing but deformity, even theſe will one day appear (now they are) admirable in beauty and comelineſs. That which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in his exhortation to *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 15. bidding him *do the work of an Evangeliſt*, bidding him *ſhew himſelf a Workman that needeth not to be aſhamed*; is moſt true concerning the great God of Heaven and Earth: He ſhews himſelf a workman, or a worker that needeth not to be aſhamed: When he works, *he doth the work of a God*; *He works like himſelf*: Man cannot ſo much as be ſuſpected to have done ſuch things: The Name, that is, the wiſdom, power and goodneſs of God, is written upon them in ſo fair and clear a letter, that it muſt be ſaid, by way of aſſertion, *This hath God wrought:* And by way of admiration, *what hath God wrought!* Numb. 22. 23. *A man* (*ſc.* a meer natural man beholding theſe things) ſhall ſay, *verily he is a God that judgeth the earth,* Pſal. 58.11. Man cannot judge, or do like this. The Lord needs not engrave or ſubſcribe his Name to his works; His works, like ſo many Capital letters, ſpell, and like ſo many Heraulds, proclaim his Name.

Which doth great things.] To paſs from the act or manner of doing, we will conſider the object; *He doth great things.* Some men with a great deal of pains do nothing; and others with a great deal of Art do a thing of nothing, a trifle, a toy, a meer fancy; at moſt, ſome mean or inferior work takes up their time, ſkill and ſtudy: But when God goes to work, we may expect a noble work, *He doth great things.* *The works of God, anſwer the ſtile or Attributes of God.* He is a great God, and His are great works. The works of God ſpeak a God. And here are four things ſpoken in this one verſe, of the works of God, which ſpeak aloud, *This is the finger of God.* I will firſt bundle them together, and then, both take and weigh them aſunder.

He doth { Firſt, **Great things.**
Secondly, **Unſearchable.**
Thirdly, **Wonderful.**
Fourthly, **Innumerable; or, without number.**

No works of man or Angel, are capable of ſuch a fourfold *ſtamp* as this; no, nor any one work of all the creatures put together, could ever be ſtamped with any one of theſe characters, in any compariſon, with the works of God. Some, in a ſence, have done *great things*, but none have done things *unſearchable*: Man may fathome the works of man, his cloſeſt wayes are not paſt finding out. As there was never any thing made ſo ſtrongly by the ſtrength of man, but there was ſome other ſtrength in man, that could match, yea overthrow it; ſo there was never any thing ſo wiſely, ſo artificially or myſteriouſly contrived, by the skill, knowledge and deepeſt underſtanding of a man; but that the skill, knowledge and underſtanding of another man, hath, or might have ridled and ſearcht it out. The works of moſt men are wrought above ground, and their intentions flote and ſwim upon the face of their actions: And although ſome, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.*29.) *work deep to hide their counſels* (as they hope, not only from men but) *from God*; yet God gives other men a light, to diſcover the very loweſt Hell of thoſe counſels; even all the *depths of Satan, The Maſter-Engineer* of thoſe mines and ſubterranean contrivances. Further, Though ſome men do that, which makes other men (eſpecially fools, or men weak in knowledge) wonder, yet no (*Thaumaturgus*, or) wonder-worker ever did that, which makes all men wonder. Or, if it ſhould be granted, that any have done things great, unſearchable, wonderful, yet I am ſure, none have done theſe things *without number*; one great, unſearchable, wonderful work, is task enough for one mans life: And a little skill in numbers will ſerve the turn, to caſt up, and give us the total ſum and number, of all the works of all men, which deſervedly bear (as mans may) the title and ſuperſcription of great, unſearchable, wonderful.

More directly. Firſt, *He doth great things*. There is a greatneſs upon every thing God doth: The great God leaves (as it were) the print of his own greatneſs, even upon thoſe things which we account little; little works of Nature, have a greatneſs in them, conſidered as done by God; and little works of Providence, have a greatneſs in them, conſidered as done by God: If the thing which God doth, be not great in it ſelf, yet it is great, becauſe he doth it. As there is no ſin of man little in it ſelf (though comparatively it be) becauſe committed againſt a great God: So there is no work of God little (though comparatively it be) becauſe acted by the great God. Further, if God doth a thing, which in it ſelf conſidered, or conſidered according to the line and rule of the creature, is unjuſt; yet becauſe God doth it, or commands it to be done, his very doing or commanding ſtamps juſtice upon it; as is clear in the caſe of *Abrahams* call to ſacrifice his ſon, and the *Iſraelites* carrying away the jewels of the *Egyptians*. If then the Act of God (whoſe will is the ſupreme law) makes that lawful, which according to the common rule, is unlawful; how much more doth the act of God make that great, which in ordinary proportion is accounted ſmall.

Again, When it is ſaid, *God doth great things*, we muſt not underſtand it, as if God dealt not about little things, or as if he let the ſmall matters of the world paſs, and did not meddle with them: *Great* in this place, is not excluſive of *Little*, for, he doth not only great, but ſmall, even the ſmalleſt things. The Heathens ſaid, their *Jupiter* had no leiſure to be preſent at the doing of ſmall things, or it did not become him to attend them. God attendeth the doing of ſmall things, and it is his honour to do ſo: the falling of a Sparrow to the ground, is one of the ſmalleſt things that is, yet that is not without the providence of God; the hairs of our head are ſmall things, yet as not too many, ſo not too ſmall for the great God to take notice of; Chriſt aſſures us this, *The very hairs of your head are all numbred*, Matth. 10. 29, 30. We ought highly to adore and reverence the power and inſpection of God about the loweſt, the meaneſt things and actions. Is it not with the *great God*, as with *great men*, or, as it was with that *great man Moſes*, who had ſuch a burthen of buſineſs in the government of that people upon his ſhoulders, that he could not bear it; therefore his father in law adviſeth him, to call in the aid of others, and divide the work: But how? The great matters, the weighty and knotty controverſies muſt be brought to *Moſes*; but the petty differences and leſſer cauſes, are tranſmitted and handed over to inferior judges; *And it ſhall be, that every great matter, they ſhall bring unto thee, but every ſmall matter they ſhall judge*; *Exod.* 18. 22. But God, the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, hath not only the great and weighty, but ſmall matters brought unto him; the leaſt motions of the creature, are heard and reſolved, diſpoſed and guided by his wiſdom and power.

Non vacat exiguis rebus adeſſe Jovi.

You will ſay, What is this greatneſs, and what are theſe great things? I ſhall hint an anſwer to both, for the clearing of the words.

There is a two-fold greatneſs upon the works of God. There is (ſo we may diſtinguiſh) Firſt, the greatneſs of quantity. Secondly, the greatneſs of quality or vertue. That work of God which is greateſt in the bulk or quantity of it, is the work of Creation: How ſpacious, huge and mighty a fabrick is Heaven and Earth, with all things compacted and comprehended in their circumference! And in this work, ſo vaſt for quantity, what admirable qualities are every where intermixt! Matter and form, power and order, quantity and quality, are ſo equally ballanced, that no eye can diſcern, or judgment of man determin, which weighs moſt in this mighty work.

Yet among theſe works of God, ſome are called *Great*, in regard of quality, rather then quantity. As it is ſaid (*Gen.*1.16.) That *God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the leſſer to rule the night*. (Sun and Moon) theſe are great lights, not that there are no lights great but theſe, or that both theſe are greater then all other heavenly lights; for many Stars are greater then the Moon, as the doctrine and obſervation of Aſtronomers aſſures us; but the leſſer of theſe is great, in regard of light and influence, excellency and uſefulneſs to the world.

And as theſe works of creation, ſo the works of providence are great works: When God deſtroyes great enemies, the greatneſs of his work is proclaimed. When *great Babilon*, or *Babylon the great*, ſhall be deſtroyed, the Saints ſong of triumph ſhall be, *great and marvailous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are thy wayes, thou King of Saints*, (Rev. 15. 3.) Great and marvellous works, why? Becauſe thou haſt deſtroyed great *Babylon*, and haſt executed great judgment, and powred out great wrath. So, great works of mercy and deliverance to his people, are cried up with admiration, *And hath given us ſuch a deliverance as this*, ſaith *Ezra, Chap.* 9. 13. When the Jews returned from their captivity out of *Babylon*; that mercy was a kind of miracle, that deliverance a wonder, and therefore he mentions it in terms of admiration, *Such deliverance as this!* How great? So great, that he had neither words to expreſs, nor example to parallel it; but lets it ſtand nakedly by it ſelf, in its native glory: *Such deliverance as this.*

The ſpiritual works of God, are yet far greater; the work of redemption, is called *a great Salvation*; the converſion and juſtification of a ſinner, the pardon of our ſins, and the purifying of our nature, are works as high above creation and providence, as the Heavens are in compariſon of the earth. Take two or three Corolaries or Deductions from hence;

> As firſt, *It is the property of God to do great things: And becauſe it is his property, he can as eaſily do great things as ſmall things.*

Among men, *Great ſpirits count nothing great*: A great ſpirit ſwallows and overcomes all difficulties: Much more is it ſo with the great God, who is a Spirit, all Spirit, and the Father of ſpirits; *To the great God there is nothing great*: He can as eaſily do the greateſt as the leaſt: 1 *Sam.* 14. 6. 2 *Chron.* 14. *There is no reſtraint to the Lord, to ſave with few or by many*; or, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: It is

Animo magno nihil magnum.

is not ſo much, as the duſt of the ballance with God, to turn the ſcale of victory in battel, whether there be more or leſs: *Seeing all Nations before him, are but as the duſt of the ballance, as nothing, yea leſs then nothing.* So that whether you put him upon any great work or ſmall work, you put the Lord to no more ſtreſs, to no more pains in the one, then in the other, *for he doth great things*; and to do them, is his property, not his ſtudy; his nature, not his labour. He needs not make proviſions or preparations, for what he would have done; the ſame act by which he wills the doing of a thing, doth it, if he wills. What great things hath the Lord done in our dayes? We may ſay as the Virgin (*Luke* 1.49.) *He that is Mighty, hath done to us great things, and Holy is his Name*; and as they, *Act.* 2. 11. *We have both heard and ſeen the great things of God done amongſt us*; and I believe greater things are yet to be done. It was a great work at the beginning of time, *to make Heaven and Earth:* and will it not be a great work, *to ſhake Heaven and Earth?* That God hath ſaid, he will do, before the end of time. *Yet once it is a little while, and I will ſhake the Heavens and the Earth, and the Sea, and the dry Land*, Hag. 2.6. The words following, ſeem to interpret this *Earth-quake, and Heaven-quake*; *I will ſhake all Nations.* Again, It was a great work to make the old Heaven and Earth: and will it not be a great work to make a new Heaven and a new Earth? That is the buſineſs which God is about in theſe latter dayes, as he promiſed, *Iſa.* 65.17. *Behold I create a new Heaven and a new Earth*; what is that? *Jeruſalem a praiſe, and her people a joy.* When God reformeth the face of his Church, and ſettles the affairs of Kingdoms and Common-wealths, he makes new Heavens and a new Earth.

Τὰ μεγαλεια τȣ̃ Θεȣ̃. *Magnalia Dei.*

And if it be the property of God to do great things, then it is a duty in us, to expect great things. We ought to look for ſuch things, as come up to, and anſwer the power and greatneſs of God; we diſhonour, and as it were, humble God, when we look only for low and mean things; *Great expectations from God, honour the greatneſs of God.* As the Lord expects to receive the greateſt ſervices from us, becauſe he is a great King, *Mal.* 1.14. So we ought to expect, that we ſhall receive the greateſt mercies from the Lord, becauſe he is a great King; *It diſhonours God as much and more, when we believe little, as when we do little.* A great King thinks himſelf diſhonoured, if you ask him a petty ſuit; he looks more what becomes him to give, or do in bounty, then the petitioner to ask in neceſſity. The Great *Alexander* could tell his ſuiter (whom he had more aſtoniſh'd then reliev'd with his favour) that though the thing might be too great for him to receive, yet it was not too great for *Alexander* to give. *If duſt and aſhes can ſpeak and think at this rate*; *O how large is the heart of God!* Then, it is not only our priviledge, but our duty to ask and believe great things; we ought to have a great faith, becauſe God doth great things; Is it not unbecoming to have a *great God*, and a *little Faith?* to have a God that doth great things, and we to be a people (his people) that cannot believe great things? nay, to have a God who can eaſily do great things, and we a people, that can hardly believe ſmall things? How unbecoming! If ſome ſmall thing be to be done, then uſually faith is upon the wing; but if it be a great thing, then faith is clogg'd, her wings are clipt, and we at a ſtand; why ſhould it be ſaid unto us, as, Chriſt ſaid unto his Diſciples. *O ye of little faith? It may be as dangerous to us, if not as ſinful, not to believe the day of great things, as to deſpiſe the day of ſmall things.* Why ſhould not our faith in a holy ſcorn, baffle the greateſt difficulties, in that language of the Prophet (*Zech.* 4.7.) *Who art thou O great Mountain? before* Zerubbabel *thou ſhalt become a plain.*

There is another uſeful conſequence from this truth.

He that doth great works, ought to have great praiſes.

As we ought to have great faith, that he will do great things; ſo he ought to have great acknowledgments, when he hath done great things. Shall God do great things for us, and ſhall we give him ſome poor, lean, ſtarven ſacrifices of praiſe? It is very obſervable, that, as ſoon as the Prophet had deſcribed the Lord in his greatneſs (*Iſa.* 40. 15.) he adds in the very next verſe, *And* Lebanon *is not ſufficient to burn, nor the beaſts thereof ſufficient for a burnt Offering.* That is, no ſervices are great enough, for this great God. *Lebanon* abounded in ſpices for Incenſe and perfume; it abounded with cattel for Sacrifice and Burnt-offerings; to ſay that *Lebanon* had not ſpice enough to burn for Incenſe, nor beaſts enough to burn for Sacrifice, ſhews the Lord far exalted in greatneſs, above all the praiſes and holy ſervices of his people.

Laſtly, *Seeing God doth great works for us, let us ſhew great zeal for, great love unto the Lord.*

We ſhould aim at the doing of great things for God, ſeeing God indeed doth great things for us. So much of the firſt Attribute of the works of God. *Who doth great things,*

ואינחקר

And unſearchable.] The Hebrew is, *and no ſearch.* The word imports the ſearch of thoſe things which are moſt abſtruſe and ſecret. As the heart, which the Lord only can ſearch, *Jer.* 17.15. The heart lies too low, not only for the eye, but for the underſtanding of man. Hence it is uſed, *Pſal.* 95.4. to note the *Foundations,* or deep places of the earth, becauſe they cannot be known, but by deep ſearchings, or rather, becauſe they are beyond the deepeſt ſearch of man. And the ſame phraſe we find, *Pſal.* 145.3. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praiſed, and his greatneſs is unſearchable*; or according to the letter, *of his greatneſs no ſearch.* As when the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of the greatneſs of God, in his nature and eſſence, preſently he adds, *and of his greatneſs there is no ſearch*; ſo here, when *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of the greatneſs of God, in his works, the next word is, *they are unſearchable.* As God in himſelf is great, and of his greatneſs there is no ſearch; ſo many of the works of God are ſo great, that of their greatneſs there is no ſearch; that is, you cannot find out their greatneſs by any ſearch. God is in working (and ſo are men, the hand cannot act beyond the head) as he is in underſtanding. *There is no ſearching of his underſtanding* (Iſa. 40.28.) Therefore there is none of his working.

Penetralia terræ, ut Aben Ezra *explicat, quæ ſcire nequeunt, niſi exquiſita perſcrutatione, vel potiùs quod homini minimè ſunt perſcrutabilia, Deo antè in propatulo.* Buxtorf.

This unſearchableneſs of the works of God, may be conſidered two wayes.

Firſt, As that, which cannot be found by enquiry.

Secondly, As that, which ought not to be found or enquired.

There are ſome works of God, which are not to be ſearched into; they are to be adored by believing, not to be pryed into by ſearching; and in that ſence they are called unſearchable (*Rom.* 11.33.) *O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his judgments!* Many of his judgments, that is, his works of judgment, are ſo unſearchable, that it is not induſtry or duty, but preſumption, to ſearch into them. As thoſe *unſpeakable words*, which *Paul* heard in the third heavens, were ſuch as (2 *Cor.* 12.4.) *it is not lawful for man to utter*; ſo unſearchable judgements may be interpreted ſuch, as it is not lawful for a man to ſearch. Great Princes will not have all their actions ſcann'd, at leaſt, not by all, *They keep ſtate in their works.* If all a mans actions be level to the loweſt, his perſon will be ſo too. The reaſon why the works of *Antichriſt* were to be ſo myſterious and miraculous, is, becauſe he was to be adored and *Godded, to be exalted above all* (in man) *that is called God, or that is worſhipped*, 2 Theſ. 2.4. They who aſpire to divine honour, have, or at leaſt pretend to have many ſecrets. Becauſe *ſecret things belong unto God, things revealed unto man,* (Deut. 29.29.) And as the Angel at once anſwers and reproves *Manoah* (Judges 13.18.) *Why askeſt thou after my name, ſeeing it is ſecret, or, wonderful?* As if he had ſaid, thou muſt not enquire after my name, for it is a ſecret. Such prying into the works of God, is as dangerous, as *prying into the Ark of God* (1 Sam. 6.19.) *It were more profitable for us, and more honourable to God, if we did ſearch our own ſecret wayes more, and Gods leſs.*

Arcana imperii.

There are other works of God, which cannot be ſearched, yet we may and ought to ſearch them; it is our duty to ſtudy them, though we cannot find them. We may ſearch and find many of the works of God, with our ſenſes; there are others which we cannot find, though we ſearch for them, with our reaſon and underſtanding. As ſome parts of the word of God (2 *Pet.* 3.16.) So ſome parts of his works are ſo *hard to be underſtood, that unſtable men wreſt them to their own deſtruction.* The mind of God is very legible in many of his works, and we may read them without a Comment or Interpreter. Other of his works are myſterious and enigmatical, very riddles, in ſo much, that if an ordinary man looking on them, ſhould be queſtioned, *Underſtandeſt thou what thou ſeeſt?* he muſt anſwer, as the *Eunuch* did *Philip*, *How can I, except ſome man teach me?* And theſe works are unſearchable, two wayes.

Firſt, In regard of the manner of doing: we cannot find out the wayes and contrivances of Gods work. *His wayes are in the deep, and his footſteps are not known*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*; that is, the wayes which God goes to the accompliſhing of his ends, are oftentimes like ſteps upon the water, which leave no impreſſion or track behind him.

Secondly, His works are unſearchable in their cauſes or ends; what it is which God aims at or intends, what moves or provokes him to ſuch a courſe, is uſually a ſecret. He doth ſuch things as no man can give an account of, or render a reaſon why. *Peter* knew not how to conſtrue or expound that work of Chriſt, *John* 13. when he took a towel with a baſon of water, to waſh his feet: therefore Chriſt tells him, *What I do thou knoweſt not* (that is, thou knoweſt not what moves me to do this; for his eye taught him what Chriſt did) *but thou ſhalt know hereafter*. In due time this ſhall be interpreted to thee, and thou ſhalt know the reaſon why I did this.

But it is ſaid (and that may be an objection againſt both Text and Expoſition) *Pſal.* 111. 2. *The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all thoſe that have pleaſure therein.* To ſeek out, notes a full diſcovery. And in *Pſal.* 106. 7. *Failing* in this, is charged upon the Fathers, and confeſſed by the Children, as a fault; *Our Fathers underſtood not thy wonders*, that is, the great things which God did for them in *Egypt*. How then is it ſaid here, *The works of the Lord are great and unſearchable?*

To clear this, Firſt, I ſay there are ſome great works of God, which are eaſie and plain; and it is our duty to be acquainted with, and learned in theſe works of God, as well as in the word of God.

Secondly, Thoſe works whoſe Text is hard, we muſt ſearch and labour to expound them, ſo, as to further duty, but not to feed our curioſity; we may ſearch them with ſubmiſſion to the mind of God, not for ſatisfaction only to our own minds. We may ſearch with deſire to honour God, but not to humour our ſelves. We may ſearch them to make us more holy, though not barely to make us more knowing. Take two Corollaries from this.

Firſt, If the works of God are unſearchable, then how unſearchable are the counſels of God, the deep and ſecret counſels of God? *The works of God are the counſels of God made viſible.* Every work of God is the bringing of ſome counſel of God to light. Now if we are not able to find out his counſels, when they are made viſible in his works; how ſhall we find out his counſels, when they lie hidden in his breaſt?

Secondly, If the works of God are unſearchable, then, we are to ſubmit unto the diſpenſations of God, whatſoever they are; though we are not able, according to reaſon, to give an account of them; though we cannot ſearch out either the manner how, or the cauſe for which they were done, yet we muſt reverence them: and what we cannot believe by knowing, we muſt know by believing. It is our duty, not only to *wink and believe, ſhut our eyes and believe*, or believe when we cannot ſee; but we muſt often believe where knowledge is ſhut out, *believe when we cannot underſtand*. *Abraham* by faith followed the call of God, *not knowing whither he went*, Heb. 11. 8. It is dangerous to follow men blindfold (how ſeeing ſoever thoſe men are) but it is ſafe, and our duty to follow God blindfold, how ſeeing ſoever we think our ſelves to be. We muſt not be diſpleaſed (as *Joſeph* was at *Jacob* his father, *Gen.* 48. 17.) when we ſee God laying his right hand upon *Ephraim*, and his left upon *Manaſſes*, doing things croſs to our thoughts; much leſs may we take upon us to direct the hand of God, as *Joſeph* would *Jacob's*, where we pleaſe. The Lord knows (as *Jacob* anſwered *Joſeph*) what he doth, and it becomes us to acquieſce in what he doth, though we know it not. Some *Romiſh Paraſites* have ſaid of the *Pope*, *That if he ſhould carry thouſands to hell along with him, there is no man muſt ſay to him, Sir, why do you ſo?* They adore him ſo in the unſearchableneſs of his wayes and doings, that it is enough for them, if he doth them.

This abominable flattery of that *Man of ſin*, is a ſober truth concerning the *holy God*; *Though God caſt thouſands of ſouls into hell, no man may ſay to him, what doſt thou?* And though God turn Kingdoms upſide down, though he ſend great afflictions upon his own people, and make them a reproach unto the heathen, though he give them up unto the power of the adverſary, and make all their enemies to rejoyce, yet no man may ſay unto God, why do you thus? His works are unſearchable. It is beyond the line of a creature, to put any queſtion, *a why, or a wherefore*, about the work of the *Creator*. *Shall the thing formed ſay to him that forms it, why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over his clay?*

Some think they could do things better then God hath done, or at leaſt, that God might have done better; if they had the power in their hands, things ſhould not go thus and thus: What an inſufferable indignity is this to the wiſdom and power of God, that He, whoſe works are unſearchable, ſhould be made accountable for his works? That of *Auguſtine*, when he was in a deep meditation about the Nature of God, may well be applied to the works of God, who walking by the ſea-ſide in deep thoughts of God, either heard this voyce, or was filled with this thought, *That he might as ſoon empty the Sea with, or comprehend the Ocean in one of thoſe little Cockle-ſhells which lay on the ſhore, as with the narrow veſſel of his Spirit, comprehend the infinite greatneſs of the God of Spirits.*

Marvellous things.] Unſearchable things and marvellous, differ thus: Thoſe things are unſearchable, which lie hid, and cannot be found: that is a marvel, whoſe cauſe cannot be found, though it ſelf be not hid. This is the third adjunct or attribute of the works of God. The word is derived from a root, which ſignifies, *ſeparated, disjoyned or divided*. And marvellous things are expreſt by that word, becauſe *marvels* or *wonders* are ſeparated or removed from us three degrees at leaſt.

Inſcrutabile & mirabile differunt; Inſcrutabile eſt quod latet & perquiri non poteſt: Mirabile eſt, quod ipſum quidem apparet, ſed cauſa ejus perquiri non poteſt. Aquin. *in loc.* נפלאות from פלא *Separatus, disjunctus. Hinc ſignificat mirabilia, quia talia ſunt à nobis ſeparata, & captum ſuperant, ita ut ratione quis aſſequi, aut re præſtare nequeat.*

They are ſeparated,

Firſt, From our knowledge or reaſon.

Secondly, From our ſenſe; not that marvels are inviſible, marvels and miracles are wrought to be ſeen, and the uſe of them lies in this, from the ſenſe to confirm faith, or to convince of unbelief. Which (by the way) quite overthrows the Popiſh refuge of a miracle, in their ſuppoſed tranſubſtantiation of Bread at the *Euchariſt*, who tell us of a miracle, but can ſhew us none. But though in all miracles and marvels the thing wrought is plain to the ſenſes, yet both the power and manner of doing it, are removed from the ſenſes: *The marvel wrought is ſeen, but the working of the marvel is not ſeen.*

Thirdly, *Marvels* are ſeparated or removed from our imitation; we cannot do ſuch things. The Lord ſtands alone working wonders. They are a ſeparated part and portion for God himſelf. The *Egyptian Sorcerers* ſeemed to do by their deviliſh enchantments, what *Moſes* did by the command and power of God; but at the beſt, they did but ſeem to do like *Moſes*, and preſently they could not ſo much as ſeem, *Exod.* 8. 18. *And the Magicians did ſo:* (that is, they attempted to do ſo) *but they could not. They that work by the Devils art or power, cannot work long*, they will quickly be at *A could not*. Both their Religions and their *miraculous works* are at beſt but in appearance; at laſt they will not ſo much as appear. In theſe three reſpects *Marvels* are rightly called, *ſeparate*.

Further, The word alſo ſignifies ſometimes, *a hard or a difficult thing*; becauſe thoſe things that are very difficult, have ſomewhat of wonder in them, and cauſe us to wonder at them, *Deut.* 17. 8. *If a matter come which is too hard*, the word is, *which is too marvellous and wonderful for thee*, &c. And, *Gen.* 18. 14. *Is any thing too hard for me?* (ſaith God) the word is, *Is any thing wonderful to me? Nothing is wonderful to us, but that which is too hard for us. There is nothing wonderful to God, who doth all wonders, and is himſelf all Wonder.* It hath been ſaid concerning thoſe lovers of, and ſearchers after ſecret wiſdom, called *Philoſophers*, that it *doth not become a Philoſopher to wonder*; for admiration is uſually the Daughter of Ignorance: We marvel at moſt things, becauſe we know the cauſes of few things. It was therefore a ſhame for a Philoſopher to wonder, becauſe it betrayed his ignorance, who would be thought ſtudied in, yea, a maſter of all cauſes; and able to give a reaſon of all things in Nature. But it is moſt certain, the great God never marvelleth at any thing; For, *is any thing too hard for me?* ſaith the Lord. Wonders are things too hard for us, and the ſame word ſignifies a *Wonder*, and a *thing too hard*.

אות
מופת
נפלא

There are three words of near alliance in the Hebrew, *Signs*, *Miracles*, and *Marvels*: And they may be diſtinguiſh'd thus; a *Sign* is the repreſentation of a thing preſent, or before us: A *Miracle* or *Portentum* (as contra-diſtinct from the former) ſhews forth ſomewhat future, or, that is to come. A *Marvel*, as differing from both, is any act of providence, ſecret or ſeparate from us, in the manner of doing or producing it; a thing to us *unſearchable*: ſo (*Exod.* 33. 16.) *Wherein ſhall it be known, that I and thy people have found grace in thy ſight* (ſaith *Moſes*) *Is it not in that thou goeſt with us? So ſhall we be ſeparated, I and thy people*; ſo we tranſlate it, or *made wonderful*; that is, if thou goeſt along with us, thou wilt do ſuch marvels for us, a will make a difference between us and all the people in the world; we ſhall be a people marvell'd at all the world over, or, a *ſpectacle to the world, Angels and Men*. The preſence of God with a people, is their difference, or will make them differ from all people with whom God is not (under the *Notion* of *Favour and Protection*) preſent.

Again, *Marvels* are taken ſometimes for *Miracles*, which are meerly and purely ſupernatural. For in ordinary acceptation of the word, a *Marvel* is only the heightning and ſublimating of Nature, or acting in the higheſt ſphear of Nature; but a *Miracle* is a croſſing or a contradicting of Nature; a work altogether above, yea, againſt Nature. Now we are not to take *marvels* here in that ſtrict ſence for *miracles*; for the great works of God are called *marvels* or *wonders*, which yet are but either the ordinary conſtitutions of Nature, or the extraordinary motions of Nature; as, *Pſal.* 136. 4. *O give thanks to the Lord, to him, who alone doth great wonders*: What are theſe? In *verſ.* 5 6,7. inſtances are given in natural things, as making the heavens, and ſtretching out the earth above the waters; the making of thoſe great Lights, the Sun and Moon (*a*). One of the Ancients diſcourſing upon that Miracle in the Goſpel, *The multiplying the Loaves*, obſerveth, that in natural things, there are very great wonders, though we lightly paſs them by; they were aſtoniſhed to ſee the loaves multiplied while they were eating: To ſee bread grow upon the Table, or between their teeth, made all wonder: but there is as great a miracle wrought every year, and no man takes notice of it; that is, when Corn caſt into the ground, multiplies thirty, ſixty, a hundred fold; It is (ſaith he) a greater miracle for corn to multiply in the earth, then for loaves to multiply on the table. And he makes a like concluſion in his *Book of the City of God*, *Whatſoever is wonderful in the world, is not ſo great a wonder as the world*; yet men rarely wonder at the making of the world, the *Earth, the Heavens, the Sea, the Air*, every creature in them, exceed in wonders, the things we wonder at. Ordinary works of Nature are marvellous; Firſt, Becauſe they proceed from a divine power. Secondly, Becauſe man is poſed to give a reaſon of moſt of them; *Canſt thou tell how the bones grow in her that is with child?* ſaith the Preacher. The bringing of an Infant alive from the womb, is a wonder, as well as the raiſing of a man from the dead: and the budding of a *Tree*, as well as the budding of *Aaron's Rod* (*b*). The uſualneſs of the one, and the rareneſs of the other, is, though not the only, yet the greateſt difference *And as the ordinary works of Creation, in making, ſo of Providence, in governing the world, are full of wonders*, though they paſs unobſerved. Such *Eliphaz* takes notice of in the words following; *The diſappointing of crafty oppreſſors, and the deliverance of the poor.* When God ſhall deſtroy *Babylon*, the Song prepared is, *Great and wonderful are thy works*: And (*Exod.* 15. 11.) from whence that is taken, *Who is like unto thee, O God! who is like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders!* The wonder was, a deliverance, the wonderful deliverance of his people from *Egypt*, and through the *Red Sea*. Works of judgment are often called works of wonder (*Deut.* 28. 59.) *I will make thy plagues wonderful*; and, *Iſa.* 28. 21. *The Lord ſhall riſe up as in Mount* Perazim, *he ſhall be wroth as in the valley of* Gibeon, *that he may do his work, his ſtrange work, and bring to paſs his act, his ſtrange act*: What act was this? an act of judgment upon his, and his peoples enemies; as is clear, 2 *Sam.* 5. 20. & *Joſh.* 10. 12. Where we may read, what God did in Mount *Perazim*, and in the Valley of *Gibeon*; ſtrange works indeed! And theſe works of God are called marvellous, not only, when God is in them alone, and acts without the intervention of the creature, but when he acts with the creature, above the ſtrength of a creature, ſo that little of the creature appears in the act, this alſo is a marvel. *What God doth more by a man, then man can do, whether in ſtrength or wiſdom, ordinarily aſſiſted, ſo much of a wonder ſhews it ſelf, in what man doth.* And therefore no man is ordinarily to attempt any thing beyond his ſtrength, for that is to tempt God, and to call him to work a miracle, at leaſt a wonder for us. *Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 131. 1.) *mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exerciſe my ſelf in great matters, or in things too high for me*: The word is, *in things too wonderful for me*, that is, I do not ordinarily put my ſelf upon things which are extraordinary, or beyond my ſtrength and parts. I meaſure my undertakings, and my abilities together, and would keep them even. I do not put God upon doing wonders every day; therefore I ſet my ſelf to thoſe things which are according to the line of man. If God call us to it, we may expect a miracle, but we muſt not call God to work miracles for us, or with us. *I do not exerciſe my ſelf in matters too high for me. Miracles or marvels are not every dayes exerciſe.* We ought rather to be above our work, or any of our deſignes, then below them; but we muſt be ſure they are not above us. *It is the ſafeſt and the holieſt way for man, in all his actions, to be upon a level. We cannot but diſpleaſe God, and hurt our ſelves, by clambering.* It is but ſometimes, that the Lord will work wonders to relieve our neceſſities, and help our faith; but he will never (unleſs in wrath) work wonders, to pleaſe our humors, or comply with our ambition. Hence obſerve,

(*a*) *Mirabilior eſt grani in terra multiplicatio, quã illi quinque panum.* Aug. *tract.* 24. *in* Johan. *Quicquid mirabile fit in mundo, profectò minus eſt quam totus hic mundus. Quamvis itaq; miracula viſibiliũ naturarum videndi aſſiduitate vileſcunt, tamen cum ea ſapienter intuemur, inuſitatiſſimis rariſſimiſq; majora ſunt.* Aug. l. 5. *De Civ. Dei.* c. 12.

(*b*) *Permulta ſunt quæ admirari non ſolemus, propterea quod vulgò quotidiéque fiant. Re nova & inſolita commovetur animus.*

Non me extuli ad ea quæ meas vires aut ingenium ſuperarent. Eleganter Theodoretus, *Meipſum metiabar, & quæ me excedũt, non aggreſſus ſum.*

First, *When we ſee marvels done, we muſt acknowledge the hand of God.*

Marvels are proper unto God, *Pſal.* 75. 1. *In that thy Name is near, thy wondrous works declare.* Wondrous works are an Argument that God is near. When wonders are among us, we may know God is among us. We may well apply that of the Pſalmiſt, to our ſelves, *Marvellous things hath the Lord done in our ſight*, *Pſal.* 78. 12.

Secondly, If God work marvels, and we believe him not, hath he not reaſon to marvel at our unbelief? Chriſt having wrought miracles to gain the belief of his Countrey-men, *marvelled at their unbelief*, Mark 6. 2, 6.

Unbelief is a great ſin at all times, but in a time when marvels are wrought for the cure and healing of it, unbelief is a marvellous ſin.

Will not Chriſt, think you, marvel at our unbelief, if we believe not after all theſe marvels? *Ye will not believe*, (ſaith Chriſt, and he rebukes the *Jews* for it, *John* 4.) *except you ſee ſigns and wonders*: Surely, if they were ſo charged, becauſe they would not believe, except they ſaw ſignes and wonders, how ſhall they be charged, who will not believe, when they ſee ſignes and wonders? eſpecially when God ſeems to work a wonder on purpoſe, that they might believe? *God loves and prizes the faith of man ſo highly, that ſometimes he bids a miracle for it, rather then go without it.* And ſurely now, as God hath done marvels, to abate the marvellous pride of the Adverſary, ſo, to overcome the marvellous unbelief of his own people: As hath been obſerved concerning the Lords ſwearing, *As I live, I deſire not the death of a ſinner*, &c. O happy man, for whoſe ſake the Lord ſwears! but O moſt unhappy, who doth not believe the Lord, when he ſwears! So we may ſay of the Lords wonder-workings; O happy people, for whom the Lord works wonders! but O moſt unhappy people, who believe not the Lord, when he works wonders!

Thirdly, *When God works extraordinary things for us, let not us ſtay in ordinary duties.*

Let our works have ſomewhat of a marvel in them too; let our repentance, and the change of our lives be marvellous; let our zeal and courage for Chriſt be marvellous; like that of the Apoſtles, who carried themſelves with ſuch heroical magnanimity, in the work of the Goſpel, that when the High-Prieſt and Council (who had convented and threatned them) *ſaw their boldneſs, they marvelled*, ſaith the Text, *Acts* 4. 13. Let our love and thankfulneſs be marvellous, let us pray marvellouſly, and believe marvellouſly; Marvels done by God, ſhould ever work faith in man; and faith in man, doth ſometime work marvelling in God. Chriſt ſpeaks with a kind of admiration to the woman of *Canaan*, *O woman, great is thy faith*, Mat. 15. 28. O that his people in this Nation, would ſet *Him* thus a wondring once more! *O* England, *great is thy faith in me!* *O* England, *great is thy love to me!* *O* England, *great is thy zeal for me!* *O* England, *great is thy repentance, exceeding glorious thy Reformation!*

I will cloſe this Point with this one word. God hath begun to do ſo many marvels amongſt us, that I verily believe, the work he is about, will end in a marvel too; and we in the cloſe, ſhall be made either a *wonder of mercy, or a wonder of judgment to all the Nations round about.*

The fourth Attribute of the works of God, raiſes the glory of them all. They are innumerable.

He doth marvellous things **without number.**] The Hebrew, word for word, is, *Until there be no number*: *Without number*, may be taken three wayes.

Firſt, Strictly and abſolutely, for that which is without number; and thus there is no number innumerable. Things abſolutely without number, would be infinite; but there cannot be two infinites: *As God is ſo one, and without number, that he is infinite; ſo, whatſoever could be ſo many, that it were without number, would be infinite too.*

Secondly, *Without number*, is that which man cannot reckon or caſt up the ſum of it (*Rev.* 7. 9.) *John* ſpeaks of *a great multitude which no man could number*; as a ſmall number is ſaid to be ſuch *as a Child may write*, Iſa. 10. 19. So ſuch a multitude as a man cannot write, notes the greateſt number. And, *Heb.* 12. 22. There is mention made of *an innumerable company of Angels*. So God calleth *Abraham* out, and ſaith, *Look now towards heaven, and tell the ſtars, if thou be able to number them*, Gen. 12. The Stars are innumerable, that is, beyond mans Arithmetick.

Thirdly, Things are ſaid to be without number, or innumerable (in a more common ſence) when they are a very great number; and ſo we find it frequent in Scripture; as that which is very high, is ſaid to be as high as heaven: Thus the diſcouraging Spies deſcribe the Cities of the *Canaanites*, to be *Cities walled up to heaven*, Deut. 1. 28. And when Seamen or Mariners are toſſed upon the waves and billows of the Sea, they are ſaid, *to mount up to the heaven, and go down again to the depths*, Pſal. 107. 26. So here, a very great number is ſaid to be innumerable or without number: In this third, and in that ſecond ſence, the great works of God are innumerable: God hath done ſo many marvellous things, as are impoſſible for man to reckon. His mighty works are not only beyond the writing of a child, but of the wiſeſt men: The man who numbers moſt dayes, cannot number the wonders of God.

I ſhall note but one or two Inſtructions from this, That the works of God are innumerable.

First then, *What God hath done, he can do it again a ſecond time, yea, a third, a fourth time, ten times, yea, ten thouſand times over, if our neceſſity and his good pleaſure meet together; for his works are innumerable.*

Eliphaz ſpeaks not only of what God had done, but of what he can do; yea of what he is doing; *he doth innumerable marvels*. Some men can do great things, many have done great things, but they cannot do them without number; even a child may write all that any man can do, and at moſt, it needs but a man to reckon all the great things which all men have done. The hand of God ſhortens not in an eternity; but the hand of man ſhortens every day, ſometimes in a day; and therefore he cannot do things innumerable: Man cannot do that to day which he could yeſterday, whether we reſpect his civil abilities, or his natural. As old *Barzillai* ſaid unto *David*, 2 Sam. 19. When the King invited him home with him, and offered him all the pleaſures of the Court, *Can I any more hear the voyce of ſinging-men and ſinging-women? or can I any more taſte what I eat and what I drink?* As if he ſhould ſay, It is true, Sir, I have known the time when I could have made uſe of this Royal Favour, and have taken in the pleaſures of your Court; I once delighted in Muſick, and my ear could taſte a ſweet voice; I once delighted in rich fare, and my palat could taſte meat and drink; but can I any more do thus? My natural ſtrength is gone, my ſenſes cannot renew innumerable acts of pleaſure: *If Grace doth not wean us from the abuſe, yet Nature will tire in the uſe of worldly comforts.* But the civil abilities of man wither ſooner then his natural; you may ſee a man that hath done great things in a State or Commonwealth, come to him a while after, and he may ſay, *Can I any more do thoſe things?* I am not what I was, my power is gone: But come to God, after he hath done this or that, and a thouſand great things, he will not ſay, *Can I help you any more?* can I deliver you any more? can I deſtroy your enemies, can I diſcover their plots and counſels any more? Yes Lord, as thy works are unſearchable, ſo they are innumerable, and thou canſt do them for evermore. The Lord ſaith ſometime to a people, as he did to *Iſrael* (Judg. 10. 13.) in anger, *I will deliver you no more*; but he never ſaith to any of people out of weakneſs, *I can deliver you no more*, Pſal. 78. The people provoked God, by making a queſtion of this (*ver.* 20.) *Behold* (ſay they) *he ſmote the rock, that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed* (we acknowledge that God hath done a marvel) *but can he give bread alſo? can he provide fleſh for his people?* ſurely, he cannot do this marvel alſo: what ſaith the Text? *The Lord heard this, and was wroth, ſo a fire was kindled againſt* Jacob, *and anger alſo came up againſt* Iſrael: What do you think, that I can do but one great thing? that I have but one bleſſing, but one deliverance, but one wonder? Know, that I who ſmote the rock, can provide you fleſh; I, who gave you water, can give you bread; I, who have diſcovered one wicked plot of the enemy, can diſcover all; I, who have given you one victory, can give you a thouſand; I, who have given you one deliverance, can give you innumerable deliverances; therefore take heed of ſetting bounds to God, *of limiting the Holy one of* Iſrael: *Men love not to be limited, but God ought not.* We at once provoke and diſhonour the Lord, by thinking, that our wants can renew faſter then his ſupplies; or that our innumerable evils ſhall not find innumerable good things to balance, or remove them, from the hand of God. We weary men, when we come often to them, to do great things for us; yea, to come often for ſmall matters, wlll weary men: But we never weary the Lord by coming often; we weary God only, when we will not come often. How doth the Prophet, not only complain, but expoſtulate, becauſe that unbelieving King *wearied God* (take it with reverence) *by not ſetting him awork*, and that about the hardeſt and moſt knotty piece of work that can be, the working of a miracle, and that, as hard a one as himſelf would ask, either *in the depth beneath, or in the height above. Is it a ſmall thing with you to weary men, but will you weary my God alſo?* Iſa. 7. 13. It is no wearineſs to God to do innumerable miracles for us; but he is weary when we will not believe he can do them. *To be diſtruſted the doing of one, is more laborious to God, then to do a million of miracles.*

To conclude this, take heed above all, that you limit not God in works of ſpiritual mercy; as, to fear to ask pardon of ſin, becauſe ye have asked it often. His great works of forgiveneſs are as much without number, as any of his works. *He multiplies to pardon*, ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 55. 7. And when the people of *Iſrael* had committed a new ſin, it is admirable to read, by what argument *Moſes* moves the Lord for pardon: It is not this (as uſually with men) Lord, this is the firſt fault, Lord, thou haſt not been often troubled to ſign their pardon: But, *pardon, I beſeech thee, the iniquity of this people, as thou haſt forgiven this people from Egypt until now*, Numb. 14. 19. As if he had ſaid, Lord, becauſe thou haſt pardoned them ſo often, therefore I beſeech thee pardon them now. It is a moſt wicked argument to move our hearts to ſin, becauſe God will pardon often; but when we have ſinned, it is a holy argument to move God to pardon again, becauſe he hath pardoned often before; for he pardons without number.

Amicitia non eſt reducenda ad calculos. Obedientia non eſt reducenda ad calculos.

Secondly, Seeing God doth innumerable great things for us, let u not be ſatisfied in doing a few things at the command, and for the glory of God; let us continue in acts of holineſs, charity, humility, zeal and thankfulneſs, without number; let us never ſtand reckoning our duties, when we hear the mercies of God are beyond reckoning. It is a noble rule in our friendſhip with men, *That Curteſies muſt not be counted*: I am ſure it is a holy rule in our obedience to God, *That duties muſt not be counted: God hath no need of any one of our good works; but he will not bear it, if we think we have done enow, or can do too many.* Let our hearts be like the heart of God, as he doth great things for us, let us do (in what we are able) great things for God, and good things for one another, without number.

So much in general of the proof of Gods power, by the *Greatneſs*, &c, of his works.

VERS. 10, 11, 12.

Who giveth rain upon the earth, and ſendeth waters upon the fields.

To ſet up on high thoſe that be low, that thoſe which mourn, may be exalted to ſafety.

He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſo that their hands cannot perform their enterprize.

THis Context, from *v.* 9. to *v.* 17. contains the ſecond Argument, by which *Eliphaz* ſtrengthens his exhortation upon *Job* to ſeek unto God. The Argument ſpeaks to this effect; *He is to be ſought; and unto him our cauſe is to be committed, who is of abſolute power, infinite in wiſdom and goodneſs; But ſuch is God: Therefore ſeek to him, and commit thy cauſe unto him.* That God is of infinite power, wiſdom, *&c.* was proved in general at *v.* 9. by thoſe four adjuncts of his works, *great, unſearchable, marvellous, and without number.* And now, at *v.* 10. he begins his proof, by an enumeration of the particular effects of Gods power, wiſdom and goodneſs. The firſt inſtance is in natural things; *God doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.* And would you know what thoſe things are? You need not go far to enquire; there are things very near unto us, and very common among us, which yet, if they be well looked unto, will advance the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God; *every ſhower of rain drops down this truth, that God doth great things; He giveth rain upon the earth, and ſendeth waters upon the fields.*

מטר *Generale nomen eſt ad quamcunq; pluviam. Non deſunt qui putant cognationē habere cum* סוה *quod eſt humectari, quod pluvia liquefaciat, humectet & & diſſolvat dura.* Merc.

There is not any difficulty about the meaning of theſe words, which calls for ſtay in opening of them. Therefore in brief; The Hebrew word for *Rain*, in our Letters (*Matar*) is ſo near in ſound to our Engliſh, *Water*, that ſome think it a derivative from it.

By the Rain, we are to underſtand, not the ſhowers only which fall from heaven, but all thoſe bleſſings and benefits for the ſupport of our natural life, which are the fruits of rain: *He ſendeth rain* (as it were) on his errand, to bring or carry the bleſſings of plenty, and to drop fatneſs on the earth. He giveth rain to the earth, and then the earth giveth her encreaſe. The *Rabbins* have a ſaying, that *Rain is the Husband of the Earth,* becauſe thoſe ſhowers fœcundate the Earth, and make that *great Mother* of plenty, fruitful, in bringing forth all things uſeful and comfortable for the life of man.

He giveth Rain upon the face of the Earth (ſo the Letter of the Original) that is, upon the Earth; as the *face of Heaven*, and *the face of the Sea*, ſo the face of the Earth, is an Hebraiſm, for the Earth it ſelf.

It is ſaid in the latter clauſe of the verſe, that *he ſendeth waters upon the fields*: we muſt diſtinguiſh theſe waters from the rain, taking them for rivers and ſtreams of water, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *He cauſeth the Rivers to run among the hills*; and the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *Thou cleaveſt the earth with the Rivers.*

מים *Forma duali ſignificā-*

The word is of the *Dual Number* in the Hebrew, and therefore by ſome applied to thoſe two ſorts of waters; or to the waters above, and to the waters that are beneath; ſo the waters are diſtinguiſh, *Pſal.* 104. 3. We read of the upper waters; *Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot*; and of the inferior or lower waters, *Gen.* 1. 9. *The Lord ſaith, let the waters under the earth be gathered into one place*: and both are put together, *v.* 7. *God made the firmament, and divided the waters that were under the firmament, from the waters that were above the firmament.* So that the waters above, and the waters below, may both be here underſtood.

tur aquæ duplices, ſuperiores in cœlo, ut nubes, & inferiores in terra, ut mare, fontes & flumina.

חוץ *Nomen propriè eſt, ſed ſumitur ſæpe adverbialiter, pro foris & in univerſum pro loco exteriori.* Merc. *Deſerta, horrida loca & mortalibus inacceſſa.*

Irrigat aquis univerſa. Vulg.

It is added further, *He ſendeth waters upon the fields.* The word we tranſlate [*fields*] ſignifies any place without doors, as ſtreets and high-wayes; and becauſe *fields* are are without (*ſub dio*) covered only with the Canopie of the heavens, therefore we tranſlate, *He ſendeth waters upon the fields.* And it taketh in all ſorts of fields, whether till'd or untill'd; though ſome conceive, that here *Eliphaz* means, thoſe fields eſpecially which are untill'd, unſown, or unmanur'd; fields where men come not; namely, deſarts and wilderneſſes; as if he ſhould ſay, there is no place but God ſends waters to it: Hence the Vulgar read, in ſtead of *fields, all places*: *He moiſtens all places with waters.*

Here firſt, Foraſmuch as an inſtance of Gods greatneſs, power and unſearchable wiſdom is given in the rain, a natural thing we may note,

> That, *The common bleſſings of God are not diſpenſed without a ſpecial providence: Nature works not without the God of nature.*

He doth great things: And what? *He ſendeth rain.* The whole courſe of Nature moves, as it is turned by the hand of God, and directed by his counſel. It is not in the frame of Nature, as in many artificial frames, which being once ſet up, will ſtand, or go alone. When the Artificer hath made a Clock, and put it in frame, and hung on the weights, let him go whither he will, the Clock will go, and if there were room for the weights to deſcend, the Clock (continuing in frame) would go perpetually, though no hand helped or toucht it: But it is not ſo, in the frame and workings of natural things; God hath ſet all creatures in a frame, and curiouſly ordered them one within another, but there is no motion of the leaſt wheel, much leſs of the whole fabrick, without the ſpecial hand of God: When *Rain* comes, God ſaith, *go*; Rain is his gift, not the Clouds; the Cloud receives a Commiſſion from God to diſtill and diſſolve upon man: The moſt full, ſpongie Clouds diſtill no more then the Rock did in the wilderneſs, till the Lord ſpeaks to them. As, *When he uttereth his voyce, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he cauſeth the vapors to aſcend from the ends of the earth,* Jer. 10. 13, So, till he uttereth his voyce, not one ſingle drop of all that multitude of waters, falls from heaven, nor will thoſe vapours deſcend and return again to the earth, except he bid them.

Cum plenæ ſunt nubes, effundunt pluviam, non tamen abſque Dei juſſu. Druſ.

He giveth rain upon the earth.

Rain is the ſpecial gift of God. Special, not in that ſence as Grace is a ſpecial gift; for rain is a common gift; but ſpecial, becauſe it is that, of which, and about which, God takes ſpecial notice; as we read, *Amos* 4. 8. *I cauſed it to rain* (ſaith God) *upon one place, or upon one City, and not upon another.* There is a ſpecial diſcriminating work about the rain; it rains by appointment, not accident, upon one place, rather then another. And, *Iſa.* 5. 6. When God expreſſes diſpleaſure againſt his Vineyard (he ſaith) *I will command the Clouds, that they ſhall not rain upon it*: The Clouds are as vaſt Bottles full of rain, but they cannot unſtop themſelves, or let out one drop, until God himſelf commands them: *He melteth the clouds* (as it is ſaid in *Job*) *and then the rain falleth down. Thou, O God, didſt ſend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt confirm thine inheritance when it was weary,* Pſal. 68. 9. *How weary or dry ſoever the Earth is, unleſs God by a word broach thoſe veſſels of rain, the very inheritance of God cannot have a draught, no, nor a drop, to quench its thirſt.*

Therefore though rain be a common bleſſing in reſpect of all places and perſons; yet we ought to acknowledge a ſpecial hand in giving it. And this checks that natural Atheiſm, which reigns in their hearts, who think that they are beholding only to the motions of the winds, or change of the Moon for rain: And hence in times of drought, they look moſt when the wind will turn, or when the Moon will change. To confute this, the Prophet tells us by way of queſtion, That as Idols cannot, ſo neither can the Heavens give rain, *Jer.* 14.22. *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cauſe rain? Or can the Heathens give ſhowers?* They cannot. Indeed the holy Prophet *Elias* ſpeaks ſuch language, as if he had carried the keyes of the Clouds at his girdle, or had been maſter of the rain, 1 *King.* 17.1. *As the Lord liveth, there ſhall not be dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word.* But the Apoſtle *James* ſhews us what word this was, namely a word of prayer, not of command, *Chap.* 5.17. Elias *prayed, and it rained not; again he prayed, and it rained.* All the power of man cannot prevail with the Heavens to rain, but the prayer of faith can prevail with the God of Heaven. *To ſend rain was the work of God, though it were at the word of a man.* They, who deny God in one work, will quickly deny him in another. And if we deny him in leſſer, yea, the leaſt of his works, in a drop of rain, we are in danger to deny him in the greater. *And they who deny God in his working, have but an eaſie ſtep to the denyal of his being.*

This ſhould teach us to walk in dependance upon God for all natural comforts, *He giveth rain.* All creatures drink from Heaven, that they may have their eyes and their hearts in Heaven. And if we muſt walk in dependance upon God for natural comforts, how much more for ſpiritual; if for the rain of the Clouds, how much more for the dews of his Spirit, and the rain of grace upon our hearts?

Further Obſerve, *It is a great, wonderful, and unſearchable work of God to ſend rain.*

For we muſt put the ſtamp of thoſe four characters upon all theſe works; and ſo the rain is a great, a wonderful, and an unſearchable work of God: ſo great and wonderful, that (as hath been proved) no creature can communicate with God, or ſhare in the honour of this work. The *Rabbins* have a ſaying, that upon every (apex or) *Tittle of the Law* there hangs a mountain of ſence and holy Doctrine. We may ſay, that in *in every drop of rain there is an ocean of wiſdom, of power, of goodneſs, and of bounty.* If we ſtudy the ordinary works of God, we ſhall learn ſomewhat extraordinary in them; common things are full of wonder: And among all common things, none fuller of wonders than the rain: To illuſtrate this a little, in ſome particular conſiderations.

In ea mira Dei in ſuas creaturas ſpectatur benignitas, clementia ſimul & potentia, undè paſſim Prophetæ, et præſertim in hoc libro, quādo ſocii Job, *aut* Job *ipſe, admiranda Dei opera proponunt, pluviam inter ea primo loco ponunt.* Merc.

Firſt, There is marvellous power ſeen, in cauſing and giving rain. Is it not marvellous power, which raiſes the vapours and holds (as we may ſo ſpeak) *a Sea of water above the earth?* That ſuch mighty Seas and floods of water hang in the Air, and thence are diſtill'd and ſprinkled down (as *Job* ſpeaks) in ſmall drops, are acts and arguments of the wonderful power of God.

Secondly, Behold in the rain the wonderful goodneſs of God: who by this means cools and refreſhes, nouriſhes, and ſuckles all earthly living creatures. When the ground is chapt and gapes, as it were with open mouth, the Lord opens theſe bottels, and gives it drink. And a miracle of goodneſs is ſeen in this, foraſmuch as when his very enemies hunger, he thus feeds them; when they are naked he thus cloaths them; when they thirſt, he thus gives them drink: *Matth.* 5.45. *He ſendeth rain upon the juſt, and upon the unjuſt:* They are maintained in life by the goodneſs of God, whoſe lives maintain a continual war againſt his Juſtice.

And as there is a wonder of goodneſs in giving rain for the uſe of evil men: So there is a wonder of bounty in ſending rain upon thoſe places, which are not of uſe to any man; *He ſendeth waters upon the fields*, that is, all over the world. Hence when *Elihu* would ſet forth he marvellous power and bounty of God, he exemplifies it in this (*Job* 38.25.) *Who hath divided a water-courſe for the overflowing of waters, to cauſe it to rain on the earth where no man is, and on the wilderneſs, where there is no man?* Such an open and bountiful houſe doth the Lord of Heaven and Earth keep, that rather then any ſhall want, he will (in a ſence) let the water run waſte. God will not have ſo much as an herb or a plant to want: though there be no man to come there, yet the graſs and ſhrubs ſhall have drink, and taſte of his bounty.

And ſo legible is that goodneſs of God, which is written with drops of rain, ſo wonderful his power and bounty in giving rain, that the Prophet wonders at the ſtupidity of thoſe men, who are not convinced of, and taught obedience by it. *They have not ſaid, let us fear the Lord that giveth the firſt and the latter rain in his ſeaſon* (Jer. 5.24.) As if he ſhould ſay, what a ſtrange thing is it that ſweet ſhowers of rain have not ſoftened the hearts of men, into the fear of God, and made them bloſſom with, and bring forth abundantly the fruits of holineſs? Hereupon it is very remarkable, how *Moſes* makes this a motive to perſwade the children of *Iſrael* to obedience in *Canaan*; becauſe that Country ſtood in much need of rain, which *Egypt*, from whence they came, did not, *Deut.* 11. Therefore ſhall ye keep all the Commandments, which I command you this day, *verſ.* 8. *For the land whither thou goeſt in to poſſeſs it, is not like the land of* Egypt, *from whence ye came out, where thou ſowedſt thy ſeed, and wateredſt it with thy foot, like a garden of herbs.* That is, *Egypt* being a flat plain Country all upon a level, when the land wanted moiſture, thou didſt not ſtay for, or depend upon the rain, to moiſten it; but with thy foot, thou diggedſt drains and madeſt ſluces or water-courſes, from the River ſide (meaning *Nilus* that famous River, which ran quite through *Egypt*) and that refreſhed thy lands, and made them fruitful. *But* (*Canaan* is another kind of Country, *verſ.* 11.12.) *the Land whither thou goeſt in to poſſeſs it, is a Land of hills and valleyes, and drinketh water of the rain of Heaven. A Land which the Lord thy God careth for, his eyes are upon it,* &c. As if he had ſaid, *Canaan* is not a Country capable of being watered by the foot, it is ſo mountainous and uneven. All the labour of hand or foot, cannot bring the ſtreams upwards, to give thy thirſty land drink; it muſt drink from Heaven, or be burnt up and parcht with thirſt: and if ſo, then, that muſt be the Lords care; his eye muſt obſerve, when thou wanteſt rain, his hand muſt make water-courſes in the Heavens, and open the ſluces and cataracts of the clouds for thee. *And wilt thou not ſerve this God in duty, who in bounty thus ſerveth thee,* and gives thee ſuch a ſenſible evidence of his care over thee? The Apoſtle *Paul* preaches thus to the *Gentiles*, as *Natural Theology*, to leave them inexcuſable, *Though he ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own wayes* (in that he gave them not either the light or reſtraint of grace, yet he did give them light and reſtraint too in nature) *nevertheleſs he left not himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us rain from Heaven.* As if he had ſaid, though ye have not had the rain of the word, yet the rain of the cloud, is ſuch a Preacher of Gods power and goodneſs, as will leave you for ever without excuſe. The Lord himſelf ſeems to glory in this, as one of the chiefeſt of his works: (*Job* 38.37.) *Who can number the clouds in wiſdom? Or who can ſtay the bottles of Heaven?* I challenge all creatures to a competition with me in this. And again in his book (*Chap.* 36.26.) *Elihu* lifts up the greatneſs of God in this act of his providence, *Behold God is great, and we know him not;* (wherein doth he inſtance his greatneſs?) it follows, *verſ.* 27. *For he maketh ſmall the drops of water, they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof.* Read parallel Texts, *Jer.* 10.13. *Pſal.* 65.10, 11. *Pſal.* 147.8. So much of this firſt work of God, the *rain*; and of his power, wiſdom, goodneſs, bounty, viſible and apparent in it.

Act. 14.17.

The ſecond inſtance of Gods power and wiſdom, *&c.* is in civil things, both in ſetting up and pulling down: Firſt, in raiſing and ſetting up.

Verſ. 11. **To ſet up on high thoſe that be low, that thoſe which mourn, may be exalted to ſafety.**

As if he ſhould ſay, will you ſee another way, wherein God ſhews himſelf in his power, wiſdom and goodneſs? It is in looking thorough the world, for ſuch as are low, that he may lift them up: in eſpying out mourners and weeping eyes, that he may wipe them; and more, *exalt them to ſafety.*

Some of the Jewiſh Writers connect this verſe with the former; making this as an effect of Gods bounty and wonderful work in ſending rain. He ſendeth rain and ſhowers upon the earth with ſuch plenty of bleſſings; that by this means, many who were poor, low, mean and ſad-hearted, may be ſet in high eſtate, and exalted unto ſafety. And there is a truth in it, Gods bleſſing upon the earth hath exalted many, that were low, to an high eſtate, to riches and proſperity.

But rather, we ſhall take it in a more general ſence: And ſo *Eliphaz* in theſe words ſeems to comfort *Job* by giving him a hint, that though his eſtate was now very low, yet if he would apply himſelf unto God, as he had adviſed, *verſ.* 8. *By ſeeking unto and committing his cauſe to him,* as low as he was, he might be *ſet high again*; and though he was now a mourner, ſitting in duſt and aſhes, *He might be exalted to joy and ſafety*; for in this, the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God are uſually put forth and exalted.

The words carry an alluſion to that cuſtom of Princes and Magiſtrates, who ſit in high places, upon erected thrones. As (1 *King.* 16. 19.) it is ſaid of *Solomon,* that he built a magnificent Throne, or chair of State, which had an aſcent of ſix ſteps to it, *he ſate on high.* And the Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 6. verſ. 1.) deſcribed the Lord in the ſame manner, ſitting in ſtate; *I ſaw the Lord* (ſaith he) *ſitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up.* The pride and arrogancy of the *Aſſyrian* is thus expreſt (*Iſa.* 14. 13.) *He hath ſaid in his heart, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars, I will ſit alſo upon the Mount of the Congregation.* So that to *ſit on high,* is as much as to be preferred or advanced, whether we reſpect honour or riches, dignity or authority.

To ſet on high thoſe that be low.] The word may note either thoſe that are low in their own eyes, or thoſe that are made low by others, active or paſſive lowneſs. Grace in our own hearts, cauſes the former lowneſs; and ſinful oppreſſion from the hand of others, cauſes the latter. The former are humble, the latter are humbled; the Lord ſets both theſe on high. And,

קדרים a
קדר
Obſcurus, obſcuratus, luce privatus fuit, nigruit, per Metaphoram contriſtatus fuit; in triſtitia enim fugit ſplendor facici. Sic latinè, Atrati dicuntur lugentes.
σκυθρωπάζοντες, *mœſti vultus.*

Thoſe which mourn.] The Hebrew word ſignifies to be *black, dark* or *obſcured.* And the reaſon why that word is borrowed to note *mourning* or *ſorrow,* is, becauſe ſorrow cauſeth blackneſs, or darkneſs of habit and countenance; *mourning* and *blackneſs* uſually go together (*Jer.* 4. 28.) *For this cauſe ſhall the earth mourn, and the heavens above ſhall be black.* And uſually *Mourners* go in black, it is the die and dreſs of *Mourners*; as white is the colour of joy. *Let thy garments be alwayes white,* ſaith the Preacher to him, that is to eat his bread with joy, *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. Yea the very beauty of the face is obſcured, the light of the countenance ſhadowed or clouded with tears and ſorrow. Hence the *Seventy* render it, *They whoſe faces are ſad or ſowre.* It is the word uſed, *Matth.* 6. 16. *When ye faſt, be not as the hypocrites, of a ſad countenance*; It implies an affected, ſtudied ſadneſs, ſeverity, auſterity, grimneſs, gaſtlineſs, unpleaſantneſs of countenance, proceeding from art, rather then from nature, much leſs from grace, as the words following imply: for they disfigure, vitiate or diſcolour their faces, corrupt or aboliſh their native complexion, ſo as it appears not what it is, that they may appear what they are not. *Hypocriſie can paint the face with black, as well or rather worſe then pride with red and white*; and ſo doth real ſorrow ſometimes, whether for ſin or outward affliction. *True paſſion in the heart, will dim the brightneſs and ſtain the beauty of the face.*

שגב
In loco ſublimi ſtetit exaltatus, adeò ut ab hoſtibus pertingi nequeat. Per Metaphoram, tutus, inexpugnabiles. Hinc
משגב
turris. Olim munitiones extruebantur in locis editioribus in montibus præruptis et inacceſſis, ut latinè arx ab hoſte arcendo dicta eſt.

Theſe Mourners ſhall be exalted to ſafety.] The word which we tranſlate *Exalted,* ſignifies to ſet in a high place, and in a place ſo high, that a man ſo placed, is beyond the reach of danger or the power of an adverſary; it is to be ſet upon a place impregnable: Hence the word is uſed for a *Fort, Tower,* or *Caſtle,* becauſe Forts and Towers, being places of defence, were for the moſt part built upon ſome high place, upon ſome rock or *præcipice* (Prov. 18. 10.) *The name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower*; That is, we are as ſafe under his protection, as in a ſtrong Tower founded on the ſteepeſt rock. And the Prophet deſcribing the ſafety of him who walks uprightly, gives it in this word; *His place of defence ſhall be the munition of Rocks,* Iſa. 33. 16. So *Jer.* 48. 1. *Miſgab is confounded and diſmayed*; that is, the high place or Caſtle of defence is diſmaied: That word which is common to all places of ſafety, being ſuppoſed by our tranſlators, as the proper name of ſome one place of more eminent ſafety.

Further, although this word (*Exalted*) implies ſafety, yet in the Original, we have two words, *They are exalted to ſafety.* He that is exalted (according to the ſence of that word) is ſafe: But to ſhew the compleatneſs of their ſafety, ſafety or ſalvation is expreſſed. *He is exalted to ſafety with ſalvation,* or *he is ſafely exalted in ſafety.* It is a full and a perfect ſafety, to which God exalts his mourners and oppreſſed ſervants: They are as ſafe as ſalvation it ſelf can make them. That's the force of the Hebraiſm.

Ἓν διὰ δυοῖν. *Endyadis.*

From the former clauſe of the verſe, we may Obſerve,

First, That, *advancement is the gift of God.*

He ſetteth on high thoſe that are low, *Pſalm* 75. 6, 7. *Promotion cometh neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South* (neither this way nor that way, nor any way of man) *but God putteth down one, and ſetteth up another.* When a man is advanced by the favour of a Prince, it is God that ſetteth him up. If a man be advanced by the vote of the people, yet it is God that ſetteth him up. Though a man be advanced by that, which may ſeem to have moſt contingency in it, *by a lot,* yet it is God that ſetteth him up, *Prov.* 16. 33. *The lot is caſt into the lap, but the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord. The Lord gives ſpecial direction to mans peradventure, and certainly determines, what we call contingent.*

Secondly Obſerve, *They that are low and mourning, are neareſt to exaltation and ſafety.*

To be very low, it is to be (as it were) in a due poſture and readineſs to be exalted very high; *He ſetteth the low on high* (Luke 1. 51.) *he hath put down the mighty from their ſeat, and hath exalted the humble and meek*; or, hath exalted the lowly and the meek. We are not to underſtand it only of thoſe, who are low, that is, lowly in mind (that frame of heart which is wrought above in the higheſt Heavens (is in this ſence) loweſt upon the earth) but we may underſtand it likewiſe of thoſe, who are low in their eſtates; (many that are low in mind, may be high in place; a man may have abundance of humility in the height of outward eminency) therefore (I ſay) we muſt take in both; *Before honour goes humility, as a high mind before a fall,* Prov. 15. 33. And (*Pſal.* 113. 6, 7.) *he raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil, that he may ſet him with Princes,* &c.

And as it is in reference to particular perſons, ſo to the Church and people of God in general; when they are low, then look for their raiſing up. The Scripture is frequent in this, *Deut.* 32. 36. *Pſal.* 126. *Pſal.* 102. 13. And in that notable place, *Iſa.* 33. 9, 10. *The Ambaſſadors of peace weep bitterly, the earth mourneth, and* Lebanon *languiſheth, and* Carmel *ſhakes off her fruit,* &c. All places, every creature is brought in, mourning with that mourning people. When it was thus with them, *Now will I ariſe,* (ſaith the Lord) *now will I be exalted, now will I lift up my ſelf.* There are three *Nows* for it, to note That the ſpecial *Now* of their exaltation. But the Text ſaith, God would then be exalted. Was he brought low? God is alwayes alike exalted in himſelf, but he is not alwayes alike exalted in his people; therefore when he ſaith, *Now will I be exalted*; the meaning is, I will exalt this people who are low, that my name may be exalted and lifted up in the ſight of all people.

Therefore our low eſtate ſhould be ſo far from ſinking, that it ſhould lift up our faith in believing deliverance and exaltation. A low eſtate, is a great advantage for faith; faith hath ſureſt footing when we lie proſtrate upon the ground: There faith ſtands firmeſt, becauſe there faith meets with moſt promiſes: Promiſes are the foundation of faith. *The people of God have never ſo much of the word about them, as when they have leaſt of the world about them.* The covenant ſits cloſeſt to us, when we are diveſted of the creature. When the river is at the loweſt ebb, we are ſure the tide is coming in: the night is darkeſt a little before day breaks: when the dayes are ſhorteſt, and the winter ſharpeſt, then the ſpring of mercy is at hand. As the higheſt flouriſh of ungodly ones, is the immediate forerunner of their downfal (*Pſal.* 92. 7.) *When the wicked ſpring as the graſs,* what then? would you know the meaning of it? The next words are a comment upon the former: *It is,* *that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever :* So, the loweſt downfal of the godly, is uſually the immediate forerunner of their advancement. *When the godly wither as the graſs*, the interpretation of it is, *That they ſhall flouriſh for ever.*

Obſerve in the third place, from that word, *exalted to ſafety.*

That, *God can ſet his people on high, beyond the reach of all their Enemies.*

Beyond the reach of their heads or counſels, and beyond the reach of their hands and ſwords ; *Iſa.* 33.16. *The munition of rocks ſhall be their place of defence* : He ſetteth them ſo high, that no ladders can be found long enough to ſcale theſe rocks, nor any Artillery or engine ſtrong enough to batter them down; and leaſt any ſhould ſay, but we will hold the ſiege, till we ſtarve them out ; it follows in the Text, *Bread ſhall be given him, his waters ſhall be ſure.* I remember a ſtory in *Alexanders* wars, that when he came to beſiege the *Sogdians*, a people who dwelt upon a rock, or had the literal munition of rocks for their defence, they jeered him, and asked him whether his Souldiers had wings or no? Unleſs your Souldiers can fly in the Air, we fear you not. It is a moſt certain truth, when God exalts a people, he can ſet them upon a rock, ſo high, that unleſs their adverſaries have wings, and thoſe more then Eagles wings, to ſoar higher then God himſelf, they are beyond annoyance. He carries his own upon Eagles wings ; what wings then muſt they have, who get above his people?

There are theſe two things, about which the thoughts of men are moſt converſant : The one is, to be ſet on high ; the other is, to be ſet in ſafety. They both meet in the mercy here promiſed : *He ſetteth on high thoſe that are low*, that's their honour : *He exalts them to ſafety,* that's their comfort. The firſt thoughts of men are ſpent to get a great eſtate, but their next thoughts are to keep and protect it. Experience hath often ſhewed us the men of the world, rolling riches and Titles together into a mountain ; but it hath been a mountain of ſnow, one hot day hath melted all down. The mountain of outward bleſſings, upon which God raiſeth his people, ſhall be, if he pleaſeth, like a mountain of Adamant, which cannot be melted, or like mount *Sion*, which cannot be removed. A high place is ſeldom a ſafe place : *All high things are tottering, and the more high, the more tottering.* Then how unſearchable is the wiſdom, how great the power of God, who can ſet his people very high, and yet very ſafe? who can make a man ſtand as firm and ſteady upon the higheſt pinacle of honour, as upon a level ground, or in a valley of the loweſt eſtate and condition. *He exalts to ſafety.*

Nutare ſolent excelſa omnia.

And hence we may draw down a difference between Gods exaltation of his own people, and the exaltation of his enemies and wicked ones. Wicked men are oft-times exalted, and God exalts them, though they know it not : but how? He exalts them to a high place, but doth he exalt them to a ſafe place? No, the Pſalmiſt, after a long temptation, concludes, *Thou haſt ſet them in ſlippery places, thou caſteſt them down into deſtruction ; how are they brought into deſolation, as in a moment!* Pſal. 73. 18, 19. *Haman* was exalted high, but not in ſafety : Many are exalted, as *Jezabel* exalted *Naboth*, high among the people ; but it was to ſtone him rather then to honour him. It is ſaid of *Pharaoh*, he lifted up the head of his chief *Baker*, he lifted up his head out of priſon indeed, but he lifted up his head to the gallows alſo ; he lifted him out of priſon, but it was unto his death. Such is the lifting up of wicked men, they may be ſet on high, but they are never ſet in ſafety. How many have we ſeen ſuddenly advanced, and as ſuddenly depreſs'd? *We are never ſafe, but where God ſets us, or while God holds us in his hand.*

Fourthly Obſerve, *It is a wonder, a wonderful work of God, to exalt thoſe that are low, and ſet mourners in ſafety.*

The 107 *Pſalm*, is a Pſalm recounting the wonderful works of God ; *O that men would praiſe the Lord for his wonderful works!* is the burthen of that holy ſong. And all thoſe wonders conclude in this, *verſ.* 39, 40. *Again, they are miniſhed and brought low, through oppreſſion, affliction and ſorrow :* what then? *He powreth contempt upon Princes,* &c. *yet ſetteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.* How wonderful is this, that the Lord will give Kings for the ranſom of his people, and to raiſe his poor, will pour contempt upon Princes? the higheſt muſt down, rather then his low ones ſhall not be ſet on high. There are four things which encreaſe this wonder, and make it exceeding wonderful. Firſt, Theſe poor have no ſtrength (*Deut.* 32. 36.) *He ſees that their ſtrength is gone.* Secondly, Many times they have no hope, no faith ; *When the Son of man comes, ſhall he find* (among low ones) *faith* (this faith to be exalted) *upon the earth? Luke* 18. 8. Thirdly, They have many enemies, ſubtil enemies, powerful enemies, confident enemies, enemies (above hope) arrived at aſſurance, that they ſhall keep poor ones at an under for ever. *Lord* (ſaith *David*) *how many are they that trouble me?* So many they were, that he could not tell how many. Fourthly, They are ſuppoſed to have no friends, none to appear for them. *Let us perſecute and take him* (ſay they) *for there is none to deliver him.* Not a man, no nor God, as they conclude ; *They ſay of my ſoul, there is no help for him in his God.* I need not ſay, it is a wonder to exalt a people, upon all theſe diſadvantages; the fact ſpeaks : ſhould you ſee a man trod upon the ground, and many there holding him down, one by the arm, another by the leg, a third laying a great weight upon his breaſt ; were it not a wonder to ſee this man to riſe up, and reſcue himſelf from them all? Thus it is with the Church and ſervants of God, when they are low, all the world is upon their backs ; the world of wicked ones hang about them, one with his power, another with his policy, all with their utmoſt endeavours to hold them down ; yet the Lord ſets them on high, who were thus low, and exalts them to ſafety, who were thus in danger. *Oh that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and declare his wonderful works to the children of men.*

Pſal. 71. 11.

And this is further cleared in the twelfth verſe.

He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſo that their hand cannot perform their enterpriſe.

As if *Eliphaz* ſhould ſay, Would you know, how God exalteth his people, and ſetteth them in ſafety? 'Tis true, they have many enemies, many that plot and deviſe evil againſt them, but the Lord breaks their plots, he out-plots them ; **He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty,** &c. And as this is a proof of the former, ſo it is a further inſtance of Gods wonderful works. The firſt was in natural things, *ſending rain* ; the ſecond and third were in civil things ; firſt, *exalting his own people* ; and ſecondly, in defeating the policies and power of their adverſaries : ſo then, this twelfth verſe, may be taken either as it hath reference to the former, or as a further inſtance of Gods wiſdom and power.

He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty.] Or, *he defeateth the purpoſes of the ſubtil* (ſo Mr. *Broughton* readeth it) *that their hands can bring nothing ſoundly to paſs.* The Apoſtle in 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. ſets the holy ſtamp of divine authority upon this whole book, by quoting this or the next verſe, as a proof of his doctrine : *For it is written* (ſaith he) *He takes the crafty in their own counſel* ; *He diſappoints the devices of the crafty*, (ſaith *Eliphaz*) and, *He takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs.*

He diſappointeth.] The word ſignifies to break, to break a thing to pieces : and by a metaphor, to diſappoint or to defeat ; becauſe if an engine or inſtrument, with which a man intends to work, be broken, he is diſappointed of his purpoſe, and cannot go on with his work : So here, *He breaks the devices of the crafty* ; the crafty frame very curious engines and inſtruments, they lay fine plots and projects ; but the Lord breaks them, and then they are defeated or diſappointed. The word is often uſed for breaking or making void the law, as *Pſalm* 119. 126. *Ezra* 9. 13. becauſe wicked men, as much as in them lies, would defeat and diſappoint the holy purpoſe and deſign of God, in giving thoſe laws. They would repeal and abrogate the laws of God, that they might enact their own luſts. They would do that by the will of God, which the Lord doth with their wills, *Null and diſappoint it.*

מפר *à radice* פור *fractus, contritus.* הפר *Confregit, diſſipavit. Metaphoricè irritum fecit. Latinè poteſt reddi abrogari.*

מחשבות *à radice* חשב *cogitavit, excogitavit, denotat opus ingenioſum, inventum artificium, quia artificium fit per cogitationem.*
* *Ainſw.* on the *Cant.*

The devices.] The word which we tranſlate, *devices*, ſignifies, not barely *cogitation*, or *thinking*, but *excogitation*, or, *ſtudied thinking*; not only a natural thought, but an artificial thought, or thoughts made up and formed after long debate of a buſineſs in our own breaſts: This is properly expreſt by *deviſing*. Thoſe Pools of water in *Cant*. 7. 4. are called from this word, *The pools in Heſhbon*. Some take *Heſhbon* for a City (*Numb*. 21. 26.) and ſo it notes the place where thoſe pools were. Others tranſlate it thus *, *Pools artificially made*: And we may obſerve much skill and curioſity uſed in making pools and water-works. So (*Exod*. 28. 8.) the holy Girdle which was made for the High-Prieſt, is called a *curious girdle*; it is from the ſame Root; becauſe that girdle was made of cunning work, and exquiſite embroideries. So that this word notes, the very *ſpirits and quinteſſence* of ſinful wit, drawn out for the deviſing of evil. In *Pſal*. 119. 59. *David* uſeth this word, to ſhew the accurateneſs and holy curioſity which he uſed, in ſurveying his own life, *I thought on my wayes*, that is, I ſtudied my ſelf and my works with greateſt exactneſs, to find out every error or failing, or to frame my wayes to a hairs breadth (if it were poſſible) according to rule; which anſwers the Apoſtles phraſe, *Eph*. 5. *of walking circumſpectly or exactly. Grace will vie it with ſinful craft, for exactneſs; that will make as curious works or devices in holineſs, as the other can in wickedneſs.*

Of the crafty.] Here the workmen are deſcribed as well as their work; their works are *devices*, and the workmen are *crafty*. *As the man is, ſo is his employment; we are in working as we are in being; Devices are the proper trade of crafty ones.* The Original word ſometimes imports holy wiſdom, and ſometimes corrupt and ſinful wiſdom. We read it in a good ſence (*Prov*. 1. 4.) & (*Prov*. 22. 3.) *The prudent man* (a man that hath holy craft and skill in him) *foreſees the plague, and hideth himſelf.* Again, *Prov*. 8. 12. *I Wiſdom dwell with Prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.* But uſually the word is taken in an ill ſence, for ſubtil and ſinful craft, for craftineſs and ſubtilty to do miſchief; therefore the Vulgar tranſlates it, *He diſappointeth the devices of the Malignants*; noting, that it is not any honeſt craft, but a malignant craft, by which the counſels and devices of theſe men are contrived or acted (*Pſal*. 83. 3.) that word is uſed, *They have taken crafty counſel againſt thy people, and conſulted againſt thy hidden ones*: And, *Gen*. 3. 1. *Now the Serpent was more ſubtil then any beaſt of the field*; The word properly ſignifies to be *naked*; and by a Metaphor, to be ſubtil, crafty, nimble; becauſe men, who (as tumblers, racers, rope-dancers) are to do a thing nimbly and ſpeedily, ſubtilly and ſlily, often ſtrip themſelves of all, but will never cumber themſelves with many cloaths. We know that craft always puts a cloak or veil upon actions, and walks in a diſguiſe; yet becauſe the crafty man is ſo nimble to turn and wind, and varie himſelf a thouſand wayes, both for the plotting and acting of his deſignes, therefore he is elegantly named from *nakedneſs*. Hence alſo in the Greek Language, the word which ſignifies any nimble acting or exerciſing the mind or body, as alſo places and Schools where thoſe exerciſes were performed and taught, is derived from nakedneſs, or being naked. And it is obſervable, that our firſt parents *Adam* and *Eve*, before they ſinned, are called (*Gen*. 2. 25.) *naked*. And the Serpent in the very next verſe (being the firſt of the third Chapter) is called *ſubtil*, by one and the ſame word. Our firſt Parents were naked outwardly (*Innocency needed none, and Glory ſhall need no cloathing*) they were alſo (in oppoſition to evil) naked inwardly; they were ſimple, plain-hearted, without any cloak of malice or wickedneſs. But the ſerpents nakedneſs, notes only a fitneſs, ſlyneſs, readineſs or activeneſs to do evil; for he was double-cloath'd with craft, cloak'd and hooded with ſubtilties, to act miſchiefs unſeen. The naked crafty ones of the Text, are the ſeed of the Serpent, his children, and therefore they bear their Fathers name. The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* tells us, that the crafty ones here meant by *Eliphaz*, were eſpecially the *Egyptians*, who when they would oppreſs the people of God, ſaid, *Come on, let us deal wiſely with them, leſt they multiply*, Exod. 1. 10. *A crafty man is one, who hath not alwayes more underſtanding then his neighbour, but ever leſs conſcience: Yea, how great ſoever his wit is, his conſcience is ſo little, that it never ſtands in his light, whatſoever he is doing. He takes meaſure of his actions, not by what he ought to do, but by what he would have done*; and yet he can ſeldom do what he would, for the Lord diſappoints the devices of the crafty ſo, that as it follows in the Text,

ערום *Nudus, ſignificat etiã involutum vafrum, cujus in animo plures ſunt flexiones & diverticula.* Γυμνάζω, *Exerceo, unde* γυμνάσιον. *Locus ubi nudi ſe exercebantur: nunc ſumitur pro ludu literario, ubi ingenia literis diſcendis exercentur. Nudi ſunt agiliores & minus præpediti.*

Intelligit cogitationes Ægyptiorum, *quia ſapientes fuerunt ad malefaciendum* Iſraeli. Targ.

Their hands cannot perform their enterprize.

To every buſineſs, two things are required, Invention and Action; or, the electing of means, and the purſuing of the end: The former is *Head-work*, and the latter is *Hand-work*. The hands are the inſtruments of action, as the head is the inſtrument of invention and conſultation. Theſe crafty heads were at work before, now their hands go to it; What they deviſe craftily, they would act induſtriouſly; but they cannot, *Their hands cannot perform their enterprize.*

The word which we tranſlate *Enterprize*, ſignifies *Being*, as alſo reaſon, wiſdom and virtue; becauſe wiſdom, virtue, and reaſon, are, as it were, the being, ſtability and permanency of things; and therefore, as in the Hebrew, this word ſignifying wiſdom and virtue, is derived from a root which notes *Being*. So the word ſignifying wickedneſs and folly, is derived from a root (as ſome Criticks obſerve) which notes only a negative, or a not *being* of any thing; becauſe wickedneſs is nothing, or it is good for nothing: *Thoſe things which want wiſdom and reaſon, are as if they were not, and ſhortly will not be at all.* Hence ſome render the words thus, *Their hands cannot perform their wiſdom*, that is, they cannot bring to paſs that enterprize, which they had determined and laid (as themſelves conceived) with ſo much wiſdom and ſtrength of reaſon. Mr. *Broughton* to the ſame ſenſe; *Their hands bring nothing ſoundly to paſs.* And the *Chaldee* exemplifies it in the *Egyptians* before-mentioned, who as the holy ſtory informs us, could not effect that which they had conſulted with thoſe depths of policy, and principles of ſinful wiſdom, the deſtruction of the children of *Iſrael*. Here then we may obſerve,

תושיה *à radice* איש *ut* און *ab* אין *denotat eſſentiam, rationem, ſapientiam, virtutem ſemper permanentem aliis rebus in mũdo tranſeũtibus. Hinc ſignificat, omne quod cum intellectu & ratione fit; & hic ſpecialiter pro eo, quod quis ſibi ſtatuit ut faciat quo finem optatum aſſequatur, etiam in malum.* Mer.

First, That, *The wiſdom of natural men is nothing but craft or wit to do wickedly.*

The Prophet *Jeremy* gives us this character of them, *They are wiſe to do evil* (Jer. 4. 22.) And to be wiſe to do evil, is very ill wiſdom, the worſt wiſdom, indeed meer folly; *better to be a fool, then to be but ſo wiſe*: And theſe have it from their father, it dwells and is derived in their blood, *They are the ſeed of the ſerpent* (as was toucht before) and his ſubtilty was made the inſtrument of the greateſt evil, the tainting of that firſt created innocency, and the overthrow of man. Now, they are called the ſerpents ſeed, becauſe they are like the Serpent; the Serpent was the ſubtilleſt of all the beaſts of the field, and *theſe* (as Chriſt ſpeaks of the men of the world) *are wiſer in their generation then the children of light*; yet it is but in their generation, and their wiſdom laſteth but for their generation, if it laſt ſo long: *Elymas* (Acts 13. 10.) being charged to be *full of all ſubtilty and miſchief*, is called at the next word, *child of the Devil*. Subtil to do miſchief, is the *Genius* or diſpoſition of the Devils children; and they ſhall have the Serpents, the Devils portion: For as the Serpent, who was once the ſubtilleſt of all the beaſts of the field (applying his ſubtilty to miſchief) became the moſt curſed of all the beaſts of the field; ſo they, who are thus the ſubtilleſt among the children of men, ſhall be the moſt curſed of all the children of men, *Jer*. 18. 18. We find crafty men in conſultation, and under a curſe; *Come* (ſay they) *let us deviſe a device againſt* Jeremiah, *and let us ſmite him with the tongue. Let us deviſe devices*; it is the ſame word in the text, but doubled for greater *emphaſis*: Theſe were their crafts-maſters. To *deviſe devices*, notes more then ordinary skill in that *black art*; as to *work a work* (John 6. 28.) notes great induſtry and intention of the mind in working. Some play their works rather then work their works: *I muſt work the works of him that ſent me*, ſaith our Lord Chriſt, *John* 9. 4. None ever laboured as Chriſt laboured, therefore his was *working a work*. As (I ſay) *to work a work*, notes great induſtry in working; ſo *to deviſe a device*, implies much cunning and skill laid out in deviſing. Now as theſe men would be witty above others, in deviſing evil, ſo they are curſed above others in bearing evil. The Prophet gives them their load, *v*. 21, 22. *Therefore deliver up their children to the famine,* *and pour out their blood by the force of the ſword, and let their wives be bereaved*, &c. And it is moſt juſt, that they ſhould be deepeſt in the curſe, who are deepeſt in ſuch craft: for the truth is, that, *Every ſinful act, the more skill there is in it, the more ſin there is in it, it is beſt to be a dull-head, a very bungler in doing miſchief: Wit commends and ſets off other things, but it makes ſin the more ſinful and deformed.*

Secondly Obſerve, That, *Satan makes uſe of ſubtle, crafty men, and abuſeth their parts for his own purpoſes.*

He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty. God never diſappointeth thoſe whom he ſets a work: If God diſappoint the devices of men, theſe devices were not of God: Satan ſets thoſe a work, whoſe work God ſpoils. The Lord loves to break Satans engines, tools and inſtruments. Chriſt came to deſtroy the works of the Devil, both his works within us, and his works againſt us. All Satans works and workmen ſhall rue it, when Chriſt pleaſes. And here we ſee whom Satan ſets a work, even men of the fineſt wits, of the moſt reaching brains, of the deepeſt judgments and richeſt endowments; theſe he draweth into his pay, and makes ſerviceable for his ends; that's Satans deſign; ſuch as are amongſt men, as the Serpent amongſt the beaſts, the moſt ſubtil of all, theſe Satan makes uſe of: The deep policy of an *Achitophel*, the *Great Oracle* of his times for counſel, he deſires to improve againſt a *David*; the high parts and learning of a *Julian*, he deſires to improve and boyle up againſt the Chriſtians; ſuch a one will not only *Fire and ſword, but ſet hard to jear and wit them out of the profeſſion of the Goſpel.*

Philoſophi hæreticorũ Patriarchæ. Tert.

And it is obſervable, that the ſeeds of the greateſt hereſies and errors, that ever poyſon'd the ſpirit of man, or vext the Church of God, have been ſown in that rank ſoyl, the wits of Philoſophers. Which gave *Tertullian* occaſion to call Philoſophers, *The Patriarks of Hereticks*, or *The Patrons of Hereſies*: They were men of high conceits and apprehenſions; and in thoſe fertile and rich grounds, Satan with great ſucceſs caſt the tares of error. When Chriſt came into the world, he had moſt oppoſition among the crafty *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and *Herod* the Fox (as Chriſt himſelf calls him for his ſubtilty) was a notorious inſtrument of Satan, to hinder the receiving of Chriſt. Our Lord Chriſt ſometimes chooſeth the ſimpleſt, the meaneſt, the plaineſt men, fiſher-men, to do his work. But Satan chooſeth the ſubtileſt he can find in *learned throngs*, to ſend of his errand. The reaſon of this difference between Chriſts choice and Satans, is, *Satan cannot make a* Mercury *out of every block*; he is not able to give a man underſtanding, wiſdom or abilities for his work: neither can he increaſe or improve any mans parts and gifts; he muſt have inſtruments ready to his hand, he can but put them forward and tempt them on. He will give ſuch as are ſtrong and crafty, many motives to ſerve him, but he cannot furniſh them with ſtrength or craft to ſerve him. But Chriſt can give gifts to men, which they have not, and raiſe the parts which they have. *He can make himſelf a Mercury, a meſſenger out of any block. Chriſt can ſend a fool of his errand, and cauſe him to do it wiſely*; he can cauſe the ſtammering tongue to ſpeak plain, and the plaineſt man to ſpeak the higheſt Rhetorick. When a *Moſes* complains of a *ſlow tongue*, he can ſay, *I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay*, Exod. 4. 12. If he finds us not fit to do his buſineſs, he can make us fit. If Chriſt pleaſe, he can make a man Maſter of his trade, before, or as ſoon as ever he is a ſervant to it. Thus, without the wiſdom of the world, Chriſt overcomes the wiſdom of the world: And *by the fooliſhneſs of preaching* (as men count fooliſhneſs) *ſaveth thoſe that believe* (1 Cor. 1. 21.) *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then man*; that is, thoſe inſtruments which Chriſt imployes, how fooliſh ſoever men account them, ſhall foil all the wiſdom of man.

Therefore let no man boaſt of his natural *parts*, unleſs they be ſpiritualiz'd, and reſign'd up (for ſuch Chriſt commonly uſes, though he can make uſe of others) to the ſervice of Chriſt. Conſider to whom you are inſtrumental, with your parts and knowledge. All wit out of Chriſts work, degenerates into craft, and wiſdom into wickedneſs. It is Satans work to ſolicite the learning of men (even as an Adulterer ſollicites the beauty of women) that he may commit folly with it, and beget ſome monſtrous birth of miſchief and villany.

For, when ſuch appear on Satans ſide, they are a great credit to his cauſe, and by the reputation of their learning and parts draw others to it. Do ye not ſee (will he ſuggeſt to inferior ones) ſuch and ſuch wiſe, learned men, go this way; ſuch learned Divines, ſuch learned Lawyers, ſuch deep Politicians, and do you ſcruple? and how many have been caught in this ſnare, and led aſide by the noiſe of their abilities, whom Satan abuſeth to his own ſide? what, ſuch wiſe men, ſuch learned men, think thus, and do you ſimple ones ſtand off? Hath he not reaſon then to ſay of wiſe men, (as it was once ſaid of one) *Seeing ye are ſuch, I wiſh you would come over to me*: and to brag of them, as much as ever that *Perſian* Monarch did of *Themiſtocles*, whoſe revolting to him from the *Græcians*, tranſported him ſo, that he broke ſuddenly out of his ſleep with theſe words, *I have* Themiſtocles *the* Athenian. I remember what *Auguſtine* obſerves (it is a very remarkable paſſage) in an Epiſtle to a young Noble man of great learning, who it ſeems had been ſometime his Schollar. *Auguſtine* having received from him a Poem or copy of accurate verſes (but perceiving that he abuſed his wit to wantonneſs or uſeleſs curioſity) returns him anſwer to this effect, *I have read this Poem, and I know not with what verſes, or with what lamentation to mourn over it; becauſe I ſee an excellent wit ſparkling in every line, but ſuch an one, as I cannot dedicate unto God.* A little after he thus exhorts him, *Give thy ſelf unto my Lord, who hath given thee this excellent wit: if thou hadſt found a golden Cup, what wouldſt thou have done with it? Wouldſt thou not have given it to ſome good publick uſe? God hath given thee a golden wit, thy underſtanding is a golden Cup, and wilt thou let thy luſts drink out of it, or wilt thou drink thy ſelf to the Devil in it? I tell thee thus much, the Devil would fain make thy wit his ornament, and thy parts, the credit of his Court and Cauſe.* Satan ſerves himſelf of the beſt wits, and his is the worſt ſervice of wit: Such ſhall be paid at laſt with crying, *We fools. Of all fools, the knowing wiſe fools will be in the ſaddeſt condition.*

Cũ talis ſis, utinã noſter eſſes. Habeo Themiſtoclem Athenienſẽ.

Auguſt. Ep. 39. *ad Licentiũ Juvenẽ nobi'ẽ & doctum. Da Domino meo te, qui tibi illud donavit ingeniũ, &c. Accepiſti à Deo ingeniũ ſpiritualiter aureũ, & miniſtras inde libidinibus & in illo Satanæ propinas teipſum? Ornari abs te diabolus quærit.*

Obſerve Thirdly, *The crafty are full of hopes, that their deviſes will ſucceed; and full of trouble, becauſe they ſucceed not.*

Otherwiſe it could not be ſaid, that *God diſappointeth the deviſes of the crafty*; *Diſappointment implies expectation*: And it is no afflicting affliction to miſs of that which we never looked for. Theſe thought all ſure. Theſe doubted not to over-wit and over-power all, at laſt. This brought them ſomewhat beyond hope, even to the borders of aſſurance; at leaſt it ſo endeared them to their hopes, that they would rather hazzard their ſouls, then loſe their plots; they were burthened to be delivered. Having *conceived miſchief, they were in travel with iniquity*, Pſal. 7. 14. As the Lord ſuffers his own people to fear much, that when deliverance comes, their joy may be full: ſo, he ſuffers wicked men to hope much, that their ſorrows may be full, when they cannot be delivered. A woman forgets the pains of her travel, for joy that a man child is born into the world; and theſe men ſhall remember the pains of their travel, for ſorrow that a monſter (ſuch are their deſigns) is not born into the world: *That their miſchief comes not (in their ſenſe) to light, leaves them in deſperate darkneſs.*

Fourthly Obſerve, *What ſuch plot and deviſe, they labour to act and effect.*

Their hands cannot perform their enterpriſe; which intimates, that they put their hands to the work, as well as their heads; as ſoon as they have laid their plot, they fall to acting. We ſhould in this imitate our enemies, not to ſtand deviſing and conſulting, this is a good way, and t'others a good way, and then do neither, or then ſit ſtill and moulder away in expectation; love to, and zeal for Chriſt, and his truth, ſhould render us as full of action, as of invention; of execution, as of deſign.

Fifthly, Though they did attempt it with their hands, yet they could not effect it with their hands, *their hands did not perform their enterpriſe.*

Hence note, That, *Crafty men may deviſe ſtrongly, but they have not ſtrength ſufficient to accompliſh their devices.*

The *Phariſees* after all their confederacies againſt Chriſt were forc't (without any rack, but that of their own conſciences) to make this confeſſion, *Joh.* 12. 19. *Perceive ye how we prevail nothing.* At this day they have many fine devices and *Idæas* ready framed in their heads, but the hand ſhakes, *They cannot perform their enterpriſe.* They want not counſel, nor craft, nor skill, nor will, nor deſires, nor endeavours, only they want God with them. Hence it is, that though they gather very proper materials, and lay very ſtrong foundations, yet they cannot rear up their building. And in the iſſue; (*Luke* 14. 29.) *All that behold it ſhall mock, ſaying, Theſe men began to build, and were not able to finiſh*; it is the main work of God to ſtop evil men in their works: what they would do, he ſaith they ſhall not; and what they would not do, he ſaith they ſhall: *Pharaoh* deviſed a deviſe againſt the children of *Iſrael,* but his hands could not perform his enterpriſe. *Haman* deviſed a deviſe againſt the Jews, but his hands could not perform his enterpriſe. *Achitophel* gave crafty counſel againſt *David*, but his hands could not perform his enterpriſe. *Herod* the Fox plotted againſt Chriſt, to hinder the courſe of his *Miniſtery* and *Mediatorſhip,* but he could not perform his enterpriſe: 'Tis ſo all along, therefore (*Pſal.* 2. 1.) it is ſaid, *Why do the Heathen imagine a vain thing*; a vain thing, becauſe a thing ſucceſleſs, their hands could not perform it; it was vain, not only becauſe there was no true ground of reaſon, why they ſhould imagine or do ſuch a thing; but vain alſo, becauſe they laboured in vain, they could not do it. And therefore it follows, *verſ.*4. *He that ſitteth in the heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord hath them in deriſion.* The Lord ſees what fools they are, and men (yea themſelves) ſhall ſee it. The Prophet gives us an elegant deſcription to this purpoſe (*Iſa.* 59. 6.) *They weave the ſpiders web, but their webs ſhall not become garments, neither ſhall they cover themſelves with their works.* As if he had ſaid, they have been deviſing and ſetting things in a goodly frame to catch flies; they have been ſpinning a fine thread, out of their brains, as the Spider doth out of her bowels, ſuch is their web: but when they have this web, they cannot cut it out, or make it up into a garment. They ſhall go naked and cold, notwithſtanding all their ſpinning and weaving, all their plotting and deviſing. *The next broom that comes will ſweep away all their webs, and the Spiders too, except they creep apace. God loves and delights to croſs worldly proverbs, and worldly craft.*

How many viſible demonſtrations hath there been of this in all ages! How many cunning, but ruining devices have been unacted! They went thorough the *Head-work*, but they could not get through *their Hand-work.* We may ſay, as in the Pſalm (76.5.) *None of the men of might have found their hands:* The men of craft found their heads, but the men of might (bleſſed be God) have not yet found their hands, to execute up to the height of the deviſers, either, wit or malice.

In this we ſee the glorious prerogative of God. How many thouſand, thouſand, thouſand thoughts do men looſe! The thoughts of many years are loſt in a moment: *God never loſt, nor never ſhall looſe one thought.* And therefore *David* put theſe two together in a breath. Having ſaid (*Pſalm* 33. 10.) *The Lord bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought, he maketh the devices of the people of none effect:* In the next verſe, he ſubjoyns, *The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* And as the counſel of the Lord ſtands, ſo he causeth the counſel of thoſe to ſtand, who conſult for him: *He confirmeth the word of his Servants, and performeth the counſel of his Meſſengers,* Iſa.44.26. So that their hands ſhall perform their enterpriſe, as the Lord encouraged his ancient people; (*Zach.* 4. 9.) *The hands of* Zerubbabel *have laid the foundation of this houſe, his hands ſhall alſo finiſh it:* And again, *Chap.* 8. 13. *Fear not, let your hands be ſtrong.* As if he had ſaid, *Fear not, go on with your work; for your hands ſhall perform their enterpriſe*; you ſhall not be beaten from your work, neither ſhall ye work in vain. *The Lord himſelf hath no barren counſels, and he makes all the counſels which are for him, bring forth in their due time, deſired fruit, the longed for and beloved iſſue.*

Laſtly, Obſerve, That, *It is a great and wonderful work of God, to diſappoint the devices, and ſtop the enterpriſes of crafty men.*

Eliphaz put this among the wonders of God. This is reported in a way of admiration concerning God (*Iſa.* 44. 25.) *He fruſtrates the tokens of the lyers, and maketh diviners mad; he turneth wiſe men backwards, and maketh their knowledge fooliſh.* The wiſdom of God is moſt ſeen, in defeating the wiſe; as the power of God is moſt ſeen, in overthrowing the ſtrong. While we conſider that *Theirs*, are ſecret devices, and that they are ſubtil devices; that they have many devices, and that they have many wayes to bring theſe devices to paſs; it cannot fall below a wonder in our thoughts, that their thoughts, or devices are not accompliſhed. Therefore the Pſalmiſt concludes (*Pſalm* 124.) *Unleſs it had been the Lord, who was on our ſide,* &c. *we had been ſwallowed up quick, and taken in their ſnare.* As if he had ſaid, if we ſhould have had any leſs then God, to help us, we had been gone; all the world could not ſave us. To paſs through a place full of gins, and ſnares, and pits, ſet and made on purpoſe to take a man, and that man not taken, is marvelous in our eyes. Thus it is with the people of God, they walk among ſnares and traps; *The trade of moſt wicked men, is to be Trap-makers, Snare-makers, if not Sword-makers againſt the Saints of the moſt High.* They meet with devices upon devices, and plots upon plots; now that God ſhould diſappoint all theſe, and exalt his people to ſafety, in the very face of death and dangers, how admirable!

But ſome may object, Yet we ſee that, at leaſt ſome of theſe plots are not diſappointed, at leaſt ſome of theſe devices take, and we have ſeen bloody hands performing their enterpriſe.

I anſwer, in a word, Firſt, this Text and the obſervation bottom'd upon it, are to be underſtood of what is often done, not ſtrictly of what is alwayes done. The Lord very frequently *diſappoints the devices of the crafty.*

But ſecondly, Their very ſucceſs is a diſappointment, and their proſperity is their curſe. For their cauſe is under a curſe, and ſo are their perſons, when both ſeem moſt ſucceſsful. If outward judgments ſlay not wicked men, *Their proſperity ſhall,* Prov. 1. 32.

Thirdly, All the ſucceſs, which the devices of wicked crafty ones have, tends to the fulfilling of Gods counſels, more then their own: So that, though it be to the eye, or in the letter, ſucceſs to them; yet in truth, and upon the matter, it is ſucceſs to the cauſe of God: Craft prevails no further, and no longer on earth, then ſerves to accompliſh the counſels of Heaven, and fulfil what infinite wiſdom hath deviſed. Therefore when you ſee any devices of the crafty thrive, know, that God is ſerving himſelf upon them, and that they are but acting, *What his hand and counſel hath determined before to be done*, Act. 4. 28. As Chriſt himſelf overcame by dying, ſo do they who are Chriſts, they have ſucceſs in all their diſappointments; and theſe are diſappointed in all their ſucceſſes, and die while they overcome. No ſinful deviſe of man ever did, or ever ſhall prevail, beyond a contribution to the juſt and holy purpoſe of God. All their prevailings are diſappointments, who intentionally oppoſe, though they really accompliſh the good pleaſure and purpoſe of God.

VERS. 13, 14, 15, 16.

He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs; and the counſel of the froward is carried headlong.
They meet with darkneſs in the day time; and grope in the noon-day as in the night.
But he ſaveth the poor from the Sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.
So the poor hath hope; and iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth.

IN theſe four verſes *Eliphaz* proceeds in, and finiſhes the former Argument, by a further and fuller clearing of the power and wiſdom of God, in catching and over-matching crafty ones, in their wayes and counſels. Having ſhewed before (in *verſ.* 12.) that their devices are diſappointed; he ſheweth now, that they are intangled in their devices. There, we ſaw they could not perform their enterpriſes,

priſes, and here we ſhall ſee them ruined in their enterpriſes. *It is a ſore trouble to ungodly men, when they cannot do the miſchief, which they intend to others; but it is a far ſorer trouble, when their counſels recoyle, and when their own projects promote their own ruin: when their own actions effect that, which they had rather die, then ſee done; when that miſchief falleth upon their own heads, which they intended others:* That's their calamity in this Text.

He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs.

Theſe wiſe men, are no better then the crafty, before mentioned, for we ſee their wiſdom is but craftineſs. We had the *Crafty* in the former verſe; and here we have their *craft* or *craftineſs*. The Apoſtle in 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. quotes this Text of *Eliphaz*; *The Wiſdom of the world is fooliſhneſs with God*; for it is written, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs.* The Greek word there uſed hath ſomewhat more in it, then the Hebrew word, opened at *verſe* 12. For it notes a fitneſs for all purpoſes, a dexterity to ſerve any turn, be it never ſo ſiniſter or evil. Such a man can be on any ſide, and is for any purpoſe you will turn him to. A godly man hath but one work, and he can do but one work, that is, one work in kind; every work he doth (as a godly man) hath a ſtamp of goodneſs, or godlineſs, of holineſs, or juſtice upon it. But theſe crafty ones are for any work; for various works, you may turn them looſe to any ſervice; they are ready to do good for a need, to ſerve their own ends, and they will not ſtick at any evil, for their own ends; their bias is not within them, but upon them, and they can clap it to which ſide they pleaſe, or may be moſt pleaſing to, or taking with others; yet this *Turn-coat Craftineſs* ſhall not ſerve their turn; for ſaith the Text, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs.*

πανȣργία à πανȣ̃ργος, *quaſi dicas, ad quodlibet opus promptus, qui dexteritate ingenii valet ad quodlibet agendū.*

The word which we tranſlate [He taketh] is very ſignificant. It imports a taking by force or ſtrength, and it imports a taking by skill or ſtratagem. God will have them both wayes: If theſe cunning men work by their wits, *He can take them:* The Lord hath more ſtratagems to take them, then they have had to take others: Or if they work by power and by plain ſtrength, *he can take them.* The Lord hath more ſtrength to take them, then they have had to take others.

לכד *cepit, apprehendit de loco aut urbe, expugnavit inopinata & violenta expugnatione.*

The word is applied to the taking in of Cities or Forts, places ſtrengthned both by Art and Nature, and to the taking of them (which includes both ſences) either by ſiege or ſudden ſurpriſal. Read *Numb.* 21. 32. *Joſh.* 6. 2. *Deut.* 2. 34. And ſo the ſence may be, that, although theſe men think, they have ſo intrenched and fortified themſelves by their wits, policies and counſels (as it were in a ſtrong City or Caſtle) that they ſeem impregnable, and laugh at all oppoſite power: Yet, then God beſieges, batters and takes them preſently; he takes in, and ſlights their works with eaſe; he levels to the ground their great thoughts, even the high Tower of their imaginations: That may be the force of the word [*He taketh* them.] For as every natural man labours to ſecure himſelf and his luſts, againſt the power of the word of God, by carnal reaſonings and pleadings for them: All which the Apoſtle calls *ſtrong holds* (2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.) *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty through God to the caſting down of ſtrong holds.* Now (I ſay) as natural men ſecure themſelves (as it were in ſtrong-holds) by their carnal reaſonings; ſo wicked Politicians think to ſecure themſelves, and fortifie their deſigns by plots and platforms of crafty counſel. But as God in the miniſtry of his word, caſteth down all the arguments, which a man frames in his heart, to protect his luſts: ſo the Lord in the adminiſtration of his providence, throws down all the fortifications, which crafty men frame in their hearts, to protect their lawleſs practiſes, *and takes them in.*

Secondly, The word may imply the taking and binding of a man in bonds or in fetters. *He takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs*, that is, he takes and binds them as with a chain, or he fetters them in their own craftineſs. So the word is uſed (*Prov.* 5. 22.) *His own iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelf, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſins.*

Thirdly, The metaphor may be carried in alluſion to Hunters of wild beaſts, or to bird-takers; who ſet nets and gins, traps or toyls to take them: Theſe wiſe, crafty men, are cunning hunters; their trade and buſineſs is, to ſet nets to catch, and toyls to intangle; they dig pits, and lay ſnares, for others to fall into: So the Prophet deſcribes them (*Jer.* 5. 26.) *They lay wait as he that ſetteth ſnares, they ſet a trap, they catch men:* But at laſt, *God takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs*; that is, the pits they have digged, and the ſnares they have laid, and the nets they have ſet, ſhall catch themſelves.

Fourthly, The word is applied in Scripture, to a taking or a diſcovery by lot: So (*Joſh.* 7. 15.) the rule was thus given, *He that ſhall be taken with the accurſed thing, ſhall be burnt*; and verſ. 18. *Achan was taken*, that is, taken by a lot, the lot diſcovered and catcht him. *Achan* had hid the Babyloniſh garment, and the wedge of gold ſafe enough, as he thought: and one would have thought, that in ſuch a multitude, in ſuch an huge hoſt and throng of people, he might have been hidden too; but God ſends a lot, and takes out *Achan* from the midſt of all the multitude; he calls him out by name, this is the man. There may be a like meaning and uſe of the word in this place, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs*; that is, men who think to ſhelter themſelves amongſt the multitude, or to walk in the clouds of craft: men who hide and ſhadow themſelves from the eye of the world, as if none ſhould ſee who they are, or what they do, even theſe God will take; he will direct a *divine lot*, one time or other, to apprehend and lay hold on them; he will diſcover *Achans, the troublers of his* Iſrael, in their wicked counſels; and bring to light their *ſtoln wedges of Gold, and their Babyloniſh garments.*

There is one thing further conſiderable, from the ſence of that Greek word, which the Apoſtle uſes (1 *Cor.* 3. 19.) *He taketh the wiſe,* &c. The Apoſtles word ſignifies properly to take, or a taking with the hand, a laying hold upon one that is flying: as in a battel, when the enemy flies and runs, the purſuer takes hold of him, and will not let him eſcape. And ſo the ſence is, that though theſe crafty ones think to make an eſcape, when they have done miſchief, to out-run the juſtice of men, yea, to get out of the reach of God; *yet he taketh them*, as flying enemies or malefactors, that would make an eſcape; he catcheth them by the back, takes them by the ſhoulder, layes faſt hold on them, ſo that they ſhall not be able to get away. *He takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs.*

δρασσόμενος à δράσσομαι, *Manu capio & firmiter teneo; fugientē in curſu deprehendere manuq; injecta capere. Ita tenere quicquam ut nō elabatur; unde* δρὰξ *manipulus pugillus.* Eraſ.

Laſtly, It is obſervable, that the Prepoſition [in] he takes them [*in*] their craftineſs, may be underſtood inſtrumentally: and ſo it is as much as the Propoſition [*by*:] He takes them in, that is, he takes them by their devices; that Prepoſition is often put inſtrumentally (*Gen.* 32. 10.) *Jacob* ſaith, *In my ſtaff I paſſed over this* Jordan; we tranſlate, *with my ſtaff, or, by my ſtaff I paſſed over this* Jordan. And ſo *Heb.* 1. 1. *God who at ſundry times, ſpake in time paſt to the Fathers* [*in*] *the Prophets,* ſo the Greek; we tranſlate, *by the Prophets*, becauſe they were the means or the inſtruments, which God employed to ſpeak by. Thus here, *He takes the wicked* [*in*] *their craftineſs*; or [*by*] their craftineſs; their craftineſs is the very means and inſtrument by which God apprehends and takes them. So much for the opening of this firſt clauſe.

Pleroſq; aſtus illorum facit Deus inſtrumentū ad arcendū ab iis quod cogitans. Rab. Levi.

We may Note hence, Firſt, That, *No wiſdom or craftineſs of man, can ſtand before the wiſdom and power of God.*

He not only takes them in their fooliſhneſs, but in their craftineſs; he ſtayes not till they begin to dote and do weakly, before he takes them; but when they are in their height of wit, and in the depths of worldly wiſdom and policy; when they put forth the quinteſſence of craft, and give counſel like *the Oracle of God* (2 Sam. 16. 23.) then God takes them; *He takes them in their craftineſs.* (Prov. 21. 30.) *There is no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the Lord.* No counſel againſt the Lord. How is it then ſaid in *Pſalm* 2. *The Kings of the Earth ſet themſelves, and the rulers take counſel together, againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed?* There are many counſels oppoſed againſt the Lord, but there are none prevailing againſt the Lord. The meaning of that holy Proverb, is, That no wiſdom, not the moſt ſublime and refined wiſdom; no counſel, not the moſt *Machivilian* or *Achitophelian* counſel can prevail againſt the Lord. Men, uſually catch others, when they are at a fault, or take them upon ſome ad-

advantage and error in their counſels. *Moſt ſucceſſes of men, are made out of the ſlips and defects of their adverſaries:* They take, upon miſtakes, either in adviſing or acting; but after the moſt deliberate and grave debates, the choiceſt and beſt grounded reſolves, the Lord takes them. For (1 *Cor.* 1. 25.) *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then man:* And if the wiſdom of man cannot match the fooliſhneſs of God, how ſhall it contend with the wiſdom of God? as the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaks in another caſe, *If I have run with footmen, and they have wearied me, how can I contend with horſes?* So, if theſe men are not able to deal with the fooliſhneſs of God, how ſhall they deal with his wiſdom? Not, that there is any, the leaſt imaginable fooliſhneſs in God; for as *God is light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all; ſo God is wiſdom, and in him there is no fooliſhneſs at all:* but the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks thus, to put God as low as the fooliſheſt thoughts of man can put him, which is to think there is fooliſhneſs in God; yet in that, or then, he is wiſer then they.

Secondly Obſerve, That, *God turneth the counſels of wicked men againſt themſelves.*

He taketh the wiſe, not only in, but by their craftineſs; He beats their own weapons againſt their heads; He wreſts their weapons out of their hands, and with them wounds their hearts. Thoſe counſels and contrivements, by which they thought to ſecure themſelves, are their deſtruction. He deſtroyes them in their counſels, and by their counſels.

This wonderfully magnifies and commends the wiſdom of God: He doth not trouble himſelf to deviſe ſome new way or ſtratagem to take theſe men, but he makes uſe only of that which they have deviſed. It is the nobleſt way of conquering, to conquer our enemy with his own weapons; ſuch was that victory of *David* over *Goliah*; and that was a type of Chriſts victory over the Devil and all ſpiritual wickedneſſes. And ſuch will his victory be over all the wickedneſſes of this world. *The Lord is (and ſhall ever be) known by the judgments which he executeth; the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands,* Higgaion Selah *. Mark and meditate, *Pſal.* 9. 16.

Qui ſcripſerunt de arte militari; dicunt ſummū genus dimicandi, quoties calcato umbone adverſarii, ſe in hoſtilem clypeū erigit miles & ita contraſtantis vulnerat terga. Serv. *in Virg. Æn.* 11.

* *Rem meditandā ſummè.* Jun. *in loc.*

It was the plot of Satan, to tempt man, who was made in the image of God (for the doing of good and a voiding evil) to deſire to be as God, knowing good and evil; he tempts man to affect *a Deity, or a Godſhip*; and this plot was, to ruine man below the beaſts, by aſpiring to an equality with God; or to make man leſs then he was made, by ſeeking to be as much as his maker. Now the Lord takes (as it were) this weapon out of Satans hands, and deſtroyes him by it. Satan would have man aſpire to be a God, that he might be ruined; and God becomes man, to ruine Satan: *This was the greateſt counterplot that ever was.* God took the Devil in, and by his own craftineſs. As if God had ſaid, *Satan, Thou ſhalt ſee what a fine device thou haſt deviſed, I will meet thee in thy own way, and turn it upon thee. Thou wouldſt have man become God, ſo to ruine him; now God ſhall become man, and by that I will at once ruine thy counſels, and repair the broken condition of man.*

Joſeph's brethren, had a device to hinder his Prophecies, and make his dreams but phancies; *Joſeph* dreamed that his brethren ſhould worſhip him; they ſell him for a captive into *Egypt*: what more oppoſite to honour among his brethren, then captivity among ſtrangers? yet this device effected what they oppoſed; *Joſeph* was exalted in *Egypt*, and his brethren preſs'd with want, worſhipt or bowed unto him for bread.

The *Jews* took counſel to kill Chriſt, and what was the motive? A wiſe man among them ſuggeſts this fear; *If we let him thus alone, the* Romans *will come and take away both our place and Nation* (Joh. 11. 48.) But the Lord took the wiſe in this craftineſs; for that cruel act in killing Chriſt, brought the *Romans* upon them: *The time cometh* (ſaith Chriſt, he foreſaw what would come) *that thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide; and they ſhall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they ſhall not leave in thee one ſtone upon another, becauſe thou knoweſt not the time of thy viſitation,* Luke 19. 43, 44. And thus as the Pſalmiſt (*Pſalm* 64. 8.) propheſied of his enemies; *They made their own tongues to fall upon themſelves.* A ſtrange thing, that the fall of a mans tongue ſhould oppreſs his body, and whole eſtate; yet ſo it is, the weight of a mans tongue falling upon him, cruſhes him to powder. The ſeventh *Pſalm* is the paraphraſe of this point (*verſ.* 14.) *He travelleth with miſchief, and hath brought forth a lie;* (that anſwers *verſ.* 12. *He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty:*) *He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made; his miſchief ſhall return upon his own head, and his violent dealings ſhall come down upon his own pate:* Here is *verſ.* 13. made good, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs.*

How doth this aggravate the ſorrows of crafty men? It is ſad enough with the crafty, when they are taken by the craftineſs of other men; *That any man out-wits them, is enough to put them out of their wits:* How then will they live, being taken and enſnared by their own wit; when they ſee themſelves acceſſary to their own undoing; when they ſee they have pull'd down their eſtates with their own hands, and have put fire to their own houſes? As it greatens the ſin, ſo it greatens the puniſhment, when a man falls by his own hand; ſelf-murder is the moſt ſinful and moſt bloody murder. Neither is their ſin or puniſhment leſs, who die by the craftineſs of their own heads, then theirs, who die by the violence of their own hands.

This is a viſible truth among us, and he that runs, may read it in the book of Gods latter providences: I believe our age will be able to make as fair a record of this point for poſterity, as any that hath paſſed, if not as all that have paſſed for many generations. *He takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs: And,* as it follows in the Text.

The counſel of the froward is carried headlong.

The counſel.] There is ſomewhat further in that: not only are their devices diſappointed, but their counſels; Counſels are the reſults of ſerious and ſad debates: *Craft is of one, counſel of many heads laid together. Counſel is the extract of reaſon, both about what we are to do, or leave undone:* Theſe counſels God carries head-long: there is nothing more oppoſite to counſel then precipitation. Long deliberation ſhould go before determination, but their counſels ſhall be carried head-long: They ſhall either be overhaſty in counſel, or their counſels being ſolemnly enough ſetled, ſhall be over-haſtily acted: *Raſh, headlong execution may be as dangerous as raſh, headlong reſolutions.* But whoſe are theſe counſels? The ſame mens ſtill, though under another notion. *The counſel of the froward.* Before we had, *the devices of the crafty*; and again, *the craftineſs of the wiſe*; now here, *the counſel of the froward.* The Spirit of God varies words, but the men are the ſame. *There is ſcarce variety enough of words in all languages, to expreſs the variety of wickedneſſes, which one heart ſpeaks.* The Hebrew word in the root, ſignifieth to wreſt or to writhe a thing, or to wreſt and turn a thing as wraſtlers their bodies. Hence by a Trope, it is tranſlated often to wraſtle; becauſe a cunning man in wraſtling, turneth and windeth his body, and works himſelf in and out every way, to get an advantage of his adverſary any way; therefore your cunning-headed men, your crafty men, are fitly preſented under this word; they are like wraſtlers, who turn and wind themſelves in and out, and lie for all advantages; or, as we ſpeak, *they lie at catch.* A man knows not where to have them, or what they mean, when they ſpeak plaineſt, or ſwear ſolemneſt: when we think we ſee their faces, we ſee but their vizards; all their promiſes and performances too, are under a diſguiſe. Such cunning gameſters or wreſtlers are here intended. One of the Patriarchs had this name (*Gen.* 30. 8.) *Naphtali*, and the reaſon is there given, for (ſaith his mother) *with great wraſtlings have I wraſtled with my ſiſter, and I have prevailed; and ſhe called his name* Naphthali: The Hebrew is, with wraſtlings of God, that is, divine and vehement wraſtlings; as if ſhe had ſaid, I have uſed great and earneſt endeavours, both with God in prayer, and all other means, as a wraſtler, by might and ſlight, to obtain theſe bleſſing (given before to my ſiſter) and now I have prevailed. And it is obſervable, that the Hebrews call an extraordinary *cunning wraſtler, Pethalthol,* which is this word doubled in the lat-

Conſiliū eſt aliquid faciendi non faciendivè excogitata ratio, Cicer. *l.* 2. *de Invent.*

נפתלים *è radice* פתל *Et in niphal Niphtol, tortus, diſtortus per Metonymiam, luctatus fuit; qui enim luctatur cum aliquo, eū variè torquet donec eum vincat & proſternat. Notatur hic vel talis verſutia, qua quis facilè alium aliumq; habitum induet, ut nec facile caveri, nec facile teneri poſſit in actionibus ſuis: vel ad luctatores alluditur.* Cocc.

פתלתל *Nomine literiſque geminatis, ut inſignis vaſricies, & quaſi duplicata caliditas ſignificetur. Contortuplicatus.*

ter ſyllable; becauſe he is a man of double or extraordinary skill in wreſtling, the word is doubled; and ſo it expreſſes one that is *double witted, or that hath craft enough for two or three, though not honeſty enough for one.* And this word is applied to the Lord himſelf (*Pſal.* 18. 26.) *With the froward thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward*; that is, if men will be winding and turning, and thinking to catch others, or over-reach the Lord himſelf, with tricks and turnings of wit, the Lord will meet and anſwer them in their own kind, he can turn as faſt as they, he can put himſelf into ſuch intricate Labyrinths of infinite wiſdom and ſacred craft, as ſhall entangle and enſnare the moſt cunning wreſtler or tumbler of them all. He will *Cretize the* Cretians, *ſupplant the ſupplanters of his people.*

Utitur hoc verbo, ut indicetur maxima quædam & invicta Dei quaſi diſtortio, implicatio, & ſacra calliditas adverſus pravos, callidos, diſtortos, q. d. *adverſus* Cretenſes *cretizat Deus, cum vafro luctatore, vafrè luctatur Deus, ſupplantatores ſupplantat.*

Olympiodorus *vertit* πολυπλόκους, *homines varios, nodoſos, implicatos, intricatos.*

Some of the Greeks interpret this elegantly by a word in that Language, noting a thing that hath many knots, folds or twiſts, wreaths or plaits in it, as plaited hair, or a folded garment, thereby ſhadowing out men like a Serpent, of knotted, twiſted, enfolded ſpirits, men who wreath and plait their actions ſo cloſely and artificially, that few can underſtand or tell what to make of them, or where to find them: The counſels of theſe cunning, intricate, froward men,

Are carried headlong.] It is very obſervable (*Iſa.* 44. 25.) how the Prophet threatneth, that the *counſels of the wiſe ſhall be turned backward*; and here, their *counſels ſhall be carried headlong*, that is, forward. God hath wayes of all ſorts to croſs ungodly policies; he turns them ſometimes backward, and ſometimes forward; by both, or either they are diſappointed: Counſels are turned backward, when the event is quite croſs to the deſign; or the motion of things, to the reſolutions of the mind: As if a man purpoſing to go Eaſtward, ſhould be turned about (he knows not how) with his face into the Weſt: Counſels are carried headlong, when they go too faſt forward, and make ſo much haſt on in their way, that they tire and are out of breath, or ſtumble, and break themſelves, before they can attain their journeyes end.

Omne conſilium captum in feſtinatione eſt ſtultitia. Rab. Sol.

נמהרה *à radice* מהר *accelerare, feſtinare, atque inde præcipitem eſſe, imprudentem, ſtultum; nam prudentia tranquilitate & deliberatione gaudet. Bruta impetu ruunt in ſuam peſtem.* Coc.

The Original word ſignifies to haſten, and thence to be precipitate, raſh or fooliſh in counſel; *Prudence uſes to go ſoftly, wiſdom keeps a kind of ſtate in her pace, and loves to go ſtep by ſtep, not headlong.* A prudent man ſets his head before his feet; his head goes before his feet in conſultation, but he loves to go upon his feet, not upon his head, in action. It is the curſe of the froward, their counſels are carried headlong; when they ſhould go ſteadily upon their feet, they run upon their heads, or run their heads againſt the next wall. The meaning (in a word) is, *They ſhall make more haſte then good ſpeed*; or, they ſhall go ſo faſt to their ends, that their end ſhall be their undoing. As the Lord (in mercy) makes the *raſh underſtand*, ſo (in judgment) he makes the *underſtanding raſh.* As this is here threatned, ſo the former is graciouſly promiſed (*Iſa.* 32. 4.) *The heart of the raſh ſhall underſtand knowledge, and the tongue of the ſtammerer ſhall ſpeak plainly.* When the Prophet would ſhew, how great a bleſſing God poures out upon his people by Chriſt, he thus expreſſes it; *Chriſt, who is the wiſdom of the Father, cauſeth the heart of the raſh to underſtand knowledge*; it is the word of the Text, the heart of thoſe who naturally *run headlong* upon buſineſſes, who have no ſteadineſs nor ſtableneſs in their underſtandings, ſhall be ſtayed and balanced with wiſdom and gravity from above. Chriſt will take them off their hurrying pace, and teach them to go and do, to adviſe and act with ſobriety and deliberation. The latter clauſe of the promiſe joints fitly with this; *And the tongue of the ſtammerer ſhall ſpeak plainly*; ſuch as ſtammering is to ſpeech, the ſame is raſhneſs to counſel: A man that ſtammers, huddles his words; he that hath an impediment in ſpeech, ſpeaks faſteſt; and and becauſe he cannot ſpeak one word well, he ſpeaks many words at once: This haſte is his hinderance; in making ſo much haſte to ſpeak, he cannot ſpeak at all; therefore we uſually adviſe ſtammerers, to take heed of ſpeaking haſtily, that they may ſpeak plainly. The Prophet joines theſe ſweetly, to note the compleat abilities of a Chriſtian, *The raſh ſhall underſtand, and the ſtammerer ſhall ſpeak plainly*; that is, he ſhall adviſe judiciouſly, and ſpeak elegantly; depth of wiſdom, and ſweetneſs of elocution ſhall meet in him, though before, rude and ruſtick. But the counſels of the froward, though men of great parts, and filed ſpeech, *ſhall be carried headlong.* Hence obſerve,

Ut blæſitudo linguæ accelerationem habet cum hæſitantia, ut nihil expeditè pronunciare poſſit, & quo magis properat eo minus proficit, citata illa lingua volubilitate Ita qui intelligentia feſtinus eſt, nullum profert utile & integrum conſilium ſed manca omnia & inutilia. Bold.

Haſty counſels are ſucceſſeleſs counſels.

Haſte in counſelling, alwayes makes waſte; and ſo doth haſtineſs in acting. Haſte in either, may hurt, as much as ſloth; though uſually we may divide the miſcarriages that are in the world, between haſtineſs in counſel, and ſlowneſs in action. I know not which is the greater prejudice to any honeſt deſign, to be quick in concluding, or to be dull in executing. *They who will not take time to conſult about what they do, may have time enough to repent of what they have done. And they who will not take the time for doing what they conſult, loſe all the time they took for conſultation.*

Secondly note, That, *God diſappoints evil counſels, as by ſtopping them, ſo by putting them forward.*

The Princes of Zoan *are become fools* (ſaith the Prophet) Why? *The Lord hath mingled a perverſe Spirit* (or a headlong, vertiginous ſpirit) *in the midſt thereof, and they have cauſed* Egypt *to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man ſtaggereth in his vomit,* Iſa. 19. 13, 14.

Verſe 14. **They meet with darkneſs in the day-time, and grope at noon-day, as in the night.**

Here is a further aggravation of the miſery upon crafty, froward Counſellors, *They meet with darkneſs in the day-time.* Some underſtand this for the darkneſs of trouble, falling upon theſe men ſuddenly in the day of their proſperity; as if the Holy Ghoſt had ſaid, *In the day-time of their greateſt glory, when they think their Sun at the height, then they are clouded and overcaſt, they meet with the darkneſs of ſorrow,* and are benighted in a moment, *Amos* 8. 9. *I will cauſe the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day*; (it is meant of great afflictions, as the next words interpret) *And I will turn your feaſts into mourning.*

But rather by *darkneſs in the day-time,* we are to underſtand the *ignorance of thoſe things which are very plain and clear. They meet with darkneſs in the day-time,* that is, they are puzled to find out and diſcover thoſe things which are as clear as the light. God often ſends ſuch a ſpirit of giddineſs and blindneſs upon the counſels of his enemies, that eaſie things are hard, plain things, obſcure; and common queſtions, very riddles to them.

Diurnæ tenebræ ignorationem denotant rerum clariſſimarum.

They meet with darkneſs in the light.

There is a double light neceſſary to the ſeeing or diſcovery of a thing. Firſt, An external light. And ſecondly, An internal light. External light is of the *Medium* or place in which we ſee; the air muſt be enlightned: Internal light is of the Organ or inſtrument by which we ſee; the eye muſt be enlightned. Though there be much light in the air, a blind eye ſees nothing. So the meaning of theſe words may be explained [*They meet with darkneſs in the day-time*] though theſe men have outward light, though the buſineſs they are about, be plain, a *clear caſe* (as we ſpeak) yet they are ſo darkned in their underſtandings, that they cannot apprehend or make it out. The Idol-Shepherd is threatned with this wo, *Zech.* 11. 17. *The ſword ſhall be upon his arm* (his power ſhall be broken) *and upon his right eye* (his underſtanding ſhall be darkned). *The Idol-Shepherd ſhall be like an Idol, having eyes, but ſeeing not*; he was before a *blind Seer,* ſinfully, and now he ſhall be a *blind Seer* judicially. As that *wicked Prieſt,* ſo theſe *wicked Politicians* in the Text, ſhall have a ſword upon their right eye, a wound in the beſt of their underſtandings, which ſhall make them alſo *blind Seers,* and make the light to be darkneſs round about them. The latter clauſe clears it farther.

They grope at noon-day, as in the night.

To grope at noon-day.] is the deſcription of a blind man. For what the eye is to a man that ſees, the ſame is the hand to a man that cannot ſee. A man that ſees, looks his way, but a blind man feels it; his hand is inſtead of an eye, to direct his way. They, as it is ſaid in the Text, *grope at noon-day, as in the night.* When the *Sodomites* were ſmitten

Palpare in meridie, eſt cæci periphraſis. Cæcus tentat & palpat manibus antequam pedem efferat.

Prabent manus cæcis oculorum uſus & miniſteria. San. in Iſa. 59.

ten with blindneſs, *they wearied themſelves to find the door of* Lot's *houſe*, Gen. 19. 11. And when the *Philiſtines* had put out *Samſon's* eyes, and he was brought to make them muſick at their Feaſt, he ſaid to the Lad that held him by the hand, *Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the houſe ſtandeth, &c.* He could not ſee them, but he could grope ot feel them out. *Groping* infers either want of light, or want of ſight. Theſe in the Text had light enough, therefore the failing was in their eyes; *They grope at noon-day.* This fearful judgment the Lord threatens againſt his own people, *Deut.* 28. 29. *Thou ſhalt grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkneſs.* And it was brought upon them, as themſelves lamentably complain, *Iſa.* 59. 10. *We grope for the Wall like blind men, and we grope, as if we had no eyes, we ſtumble at noon-day, as in the night.*

In that it is here added as a further aggravation of the judgment of God upon theſe, who thought themſelves Eagle-eyed, all eye, and all the world blind, *That they ſhall meet with darkneß in the day time*; we may obſerve,

First, *It is a ſore judgment not to ſee when there is light.*

It is like ſtarving at a full Table, or periſhing with thirſt, in the midſt of a Fountain. It is a great judgment not to have light to ſee by; but it is a greater judgment not to ſee by the light. It is a great judgment to a people, when they have not the light of the Goſpel; *when Chriſt, who is the light,* is not ſhiningly preached among them; but if light ſhine, if Chriſt be preached, and a people ſee it not, this is a far greater judgment. The poor Gentiles, before the light of the Goſpel came to them, *ſate in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death*; and in that eſtate, they could only (like blind men) grope after God; as the Apoſtle elegantly expreſſes it, *Acts* 17. 27. *He hath made of one blood all Nations of men,* &c *that they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him.* The Gentiles were inexcuſable, if they did not find the Lord by feeling after him in the dark: what then are they, who find him not by ſeeing in the light? The Apoſtle ſhews us them as *as loſt men, and blinded by Satan, to whom the light of the glorious Goſpel doth not ſhine, when it ſhines* (2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.) To grope in Goſpel-light, to be in darkneſs, when truth is at her high-noon, is as the ſhadow of death. It is the worſt of ſins to ſin againſt the light; and it is the worſt of judgments, not to ſee the light, by which we may avoid ſin, The heat of divine wrath breaks out in this, when abuſed light is puniſhed with want of ſight, or when light is ſent, and eyes taken away (*Iſa.* 6. 9, 10.) When the Prophet brought killing light to the *Jews*, he ſaith, *See ye indeed, but perceive not,* that is, becauſe ye have had light, and would not ſee believingly; now ye ſhall have light which ye ſhall not ſee, perceivingly, or diſtinctly; as the man in the Goſpel ſaw, but he did not perceive; when he ſaw men walking as trees, he had not a diſtinguiſhing eye, or a *diſcerning ſence,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 5. 14. But why ſhall they not perceive, when they ſee? The Prophet tells us, becauſe the Lord had ſaid, *Shut their eyes, leſt they ſee.* The work of a Prophet is to open eyes; but when men wilfully ſhut their eyes, then God ſhuts them judicially, and blinds them with light. The Apoſtle quoting this text, *Acts* 28. 27. expounds it ſo, *Their eyes have they cloſed, leſt they ſhould ſee*; for this, God cloſed them, that they could not ſee. *Paul* was preaching, and he preached *Chriſt* the true *light, the Son of righteouſneſs*: Behold the miſery ſpoken of in this Text, *They met with darkneſs in the day-time. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs rather then light.* Why love they darkneſs? becauſe they ſee not the light; And becauſe they ſee not the light, therefore they cannot love it. It is impoſſible to ſee the light, the beautiful face of the Truth, as it is revealed in Chriſt, and not to love it. A Heathen ſaid, if virtue (much more if Goſpel-truth) were ſeen, every eye would be taken, and every heart led captive by it. A great part of the world hath not this light to ſee, and the greateſt part of thoſe, who have this light, ſee it not. They muſt needs meet with darkneſs, who are darkneſs, in the day-time; and they muſt grope at noon-day, as in the night, who are in the night. If men hear the Law and the Teſtimony, and neither ſpeak nor do according to that wotd, it is (as the Prophet gives the reaſon) becauſe there is *no light in them*; or as the Hebrew, *No Morning in them, Iſa.* 8. 20. Till the *day-ſtar ariſes in our hearts*, the day before our eyes, is night.

Secondly obſerve, *Plain things are often obſcure to the wiſeſt and moſt knowing men.*

They grope at noon-day, as in the night.] That which a man may ſee with *half an eye* (as we ſay) theſe men, who think themſelves *all eye*, cannot ſee. Men of acute and ſagacious underſtandings, men quick-ſighted like Eagles, prove as dull as Beetles. Owles and Bats ſee in the dark, better then in the light; and (in a ſence) it is true of theſe, they can ſee about the works of darkneſs, but the light of holineſs and juſtice, they cannot ſee. The reaſon is given in that of Chriſt, *The light that in them is darkneſs*; no wonder then, if the light without them be darkneſs, if the inward light, the light that is in them, be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs? ſo great, that it quite darkens the outward light. *Inward darkneſs is to outward light, as a great outward light is to a ſmall one* (in regard of our uſe and benefit) *it extinguiſhes and overcomes it.* Hence theſe men cannot ſee the plaineſt object in the cleareſt light. *Light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehendeth it not, John* 1. 5.

Chriſt breaketh forth into a vehement gratulation to his Father (*Mat.* 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes.* The wiſe and prudent could not ſee ſo much as children. They were ſo wiſe in their own conceits, that the could not conceive the things of God. As it is in ſpirituals, ſo likewiſe, in regard of civil counſels. God hides wiſdom from the wiſe, and underſtanding from the prudent. They ſhall not be able to do or ſee, what a child might have done or ſeen; they ſhall do ſuch things, and ſo abſurdly, that a child would not do them. Myſteries are plain, when the Lord opens, and plaineſt things are myſterious, when he ſhuts the eyes of our underſtanding.

Thus far *Eliphaz* hath ſet forth the power and juſtice of God againſt ſubtil, crafty counſellors. Now he ſhews the oppoſite effect of his power and goodneſs.

Verſe 15. **But he ſaveth the poor from the ſword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.**

But he ſaveth the poor.] It is very obſervable in Scripture, that uſually, if not alwayes, after the mention of judgment and wrath upon the wicked, the mercy, goodneſs and love of God unto his own people, are repreſented; leſt any ſhould think, that judgment is a work wherein God delighteth, he quickly paſſeth from it, and concludes in what *he delighteth*; *Mercy. As he retains not his anger for ever towards his own people,* ſo he ſtayes not long upon the deſcription of his anger againſt his enemies, *becauſe he delighteth in mercy,* Mich. 7. 18. *A ſubject of mercy is moſt pleaſant both to the hand and pen of the Lord. He wiſhes rather to write in honey then in gall, and to draw golden lines of love, then bloody lines of wrath.* Satan is a Deſtroyer, and he doth nothing but deſtroy and pull down. The Lord deſtroyeth, and he pulleth down; he defeats and diſappointeth, but he hath another work beſides; he ſaves and delivers, he builds up and revives the hopes of his people.

He ſaveth the poor.] Theſe *poor are Gods poor.* Some may be called the *Devils poor,* for they have done his work, and he hath given them poverty for their wages. Satan will give all his hirelings full pay, when they die; *the wages of ſin is death*; while they live, many of them receive only the *Earneſt* of it, poverty and trouble; all that are poor, and not under the rich influences of this promiſe, *He ſaveth the poor.* Wicked poor are no more under Gods protection, then wicked oppreſſors or wicked rich men are. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard,* Pſal. 34. 6. Not every or any poor man. Some *poor men* may cry, and the Lord hear them no more then he did the cry of *Dives, the rich man in hell,* Luke 16. *Fonget not the Congregation of thy poor,* Pſal. 74. 19. *Thy poor*, by way of diſcrimination; There may be a greater diſtance between poor and poor, then there is between poor and rich. There are many *ragged Regiments, Congregations of poor, whom the Lord will forget for ever*: *But his poor ſhall be ſaved.* And theſe poor are of two ſorts; either poor in regard of wealth and outward ſubſtance, or poor in regard of friends or outward aſſiſtance. A rich man, eſpecially a godly rich man, may be in a poor caſe, deſtitute and forſaken, wanting patronage and protection; God ſaveth his poor in both notions, both thoſe that have no friends, and thoſe that have no eſtates.

אביון *à radice* אבה *quod eſt deſiderare, quaſi pauper omnia deſideret, cum nihil habeat; inde* Æbion *hæreticus, quaſi mentis & intelligentiæ inops.* Schind. *Quia omnibus indiget, omnia cupit, & grata habet* Rab. Dav.

The Hebrew word for *Poor*, ſprings from a root ſignifying deſire; and the reaſon is, becauſe poor men are commonly rich in deſires. They that are full of ſenſible wants, are full of earneſt wiſhings: *They that are emptieſt of enjoyments, are fulleſt of hopes and longings.* And the reaſon why *poverty of ſpirit*, in our ſpiritual eſtate, is pronounced a bleſſing, is, becauſe the poor in ſpirit are full of deſires after ſpiritual riches. They are ever craving and ſeeking to be filled with that fulneſs which is in Chriſt, with *grace for grace*; they would have the image of every grace in Chriſt, engraven upon their ſouls. Or (in a holy covetouſneſs) they would be as rich in grace as Chriſt is, *grace for Grace*; as a covetous man would have penny for penny, pound for pound with his richeſt neighbour; or as an ambitious man would have honour for honour, title for title, with his greateſt Neighbour. That Chriſtian who ſees his eſtate loweſt, uſually ſets his deſires higheſt; his affections are ever upon the wing for ſupplies from Chriſt. Both the civil poor man, and the ſpiritual poor ſoul, would fain be enriched.

He ſaveth the poor from the ſword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

Some read this by appoſition, *he ſaveth the poor from the ſword, their mouth*, making the latter to be but an expoſition of the former, *from the ſword their mouth*, that is, their mouth is the ſword, from which God ſaveth his poor. So taken, it is a truth; for the mouth is a ſharp ſword, as killing as any inſtrument or engine of war. Hence others, who keep this ſence, read it thus, *He ſaveth the poor from the ſword of their mouth*; or, *from the killing ſtroak of their mouth*: making the particle *Mem*, in the Original, to govern the Genitive Caſe, *The Sword of their mouth*, or, *the Sword coming out of the mouth*. There are two Swords of the mouth, two coming out of the mouth, or one doubleedged. 1. Slander. 2. Falſe-witneſs: by which, often the reputation, and ſometime the perſon of a man is murdered.

A gladio oris eorum. Vulg. *Ab occiſione oris eorum.* Chal. *Ut Mem indicet Genitivum.* מחרב מפיהם *Gladius oris eſt ipſe lingua mala* i. e. *calumnia falſa, qua homo tanquam gladio necatur. Sed melius à gladio qui ex ore ipſorum,* i. e. *à falſis teſtimoniis.* Dru.

But I conceive that the cleareſt meaning of the Original (though both are good) is, to read theſe as diſtinct evils, from which *He ſaveth the poor*; namely, 1. *From the ſword.* And, 2. *From their mouth.* 3. *From the hand of the mighty.* That is, From *Nimrods*, *mighty hunters*, oppreſſors of the poor, or from the violent man. *I returned* (ſaith the Preacher, *Eccleſ.* 4. 1.) *and conſidered all the oppreſſions that are done under the Sun, and behold the tears of ſuch as were oppreſſed, and they had no comforter; and on the ſide of the oppreſſors there was power, but they had no comforter.* Oppreſſors are alwayes cloathed with power, and the oppreſſed ſeldom find ſo much pity from men, as to be their comforters. *Therefore for the oppreſſion of the poor, and the cry of the needy, the Lord ariſes, and he ſaves his poor.*

From the { Slaying Sword.
Slandering Tongue.
Oppreſſing Hand.

Theſe three wayes, crafty, powerful men ſeek to deſtroy the poor. Firſt, By the Sword, to cut off their lives. Secondly, By Slander, to blemiſh and blot out their good Names. Thirdly, By ſtrong Hand, to captivate their perſons, or oppreſs their eſtates and liberties. *To be ſaved from all theſe deſtructions, is compleat ſalvation.* Let the wicked attempt as many wayes as they will or can, to deſtroy, the Lord both will and can find out as many wayes to ſave. *The malice of man ſhall never out-act or overmatch the mercy of God. He ſaveth the poor from the ſword*, &c.

I ſhould here more diſtinctly open theſe great evils, *the Sword, the Mouth, and the hand of the mighty, with the goodneſs of God in ſaving his poor from them*: But theſe particulars occur again, *v.* 20, 21. Where you may find a more diſtinct explication of them. From theſe words thus far opened, Obſerve,

Firſt, *To what all the Devices and crafty Counſels of ungodly Politicians tend.*

Here we have the iſſue or Engliſh of their counſels, the meaning of their State-myſteries is interpreted, *Oppreſſion.* Their craft concludes in cruelty, and their witty devices, in drawn Swords, ſlandering Tongues, or the Hands of violence. We may ſay of them as *Jacob* of his Sons *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. 49. 5, 6. *Inſtruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my Soul, come not thou in their ſecret, for in their anger they will ſlay men, and in their ſelf-will dig down a wall.*

Secondly, Obſerve their method. Firſt, here is the bloody Sword.

They will cut them off, and rid their hands of them, if they can.

They could wiſh (as that bloody *Roman* Emperor) that the heads of their ſuppoſed enemies (poſſibly their beſt friends) were ſet upon one ſhoulder, and that they might cut them all off at one blow. But if God ſave his poor from the mouth of the Sword, then the next weapon is the ſword of their mouths; ſlanders and defamations, lies and falſe accuſations ſhall reach them, whom Iron and ſteel, pike and ſhot cannot. *The tongue is a little member, but it is a world of iniquity, and boaſteth* (often acteth) *great things*, *Jam.* 3. 5, 6.

But if God ſaves his poor from both mouth and ſword, ſo that their enemies cannot prevail at *ſharps*; then they try at *blunts*, by a heavy hand, to over-load, oppreſs and keep them down, in their Eſtates, Liberties and Privilidges.

Thirdly Obſerve, That, *Salvation is of the Lord.*

The Faith of *David* graſped this, as his richeſt treaſure, *Pſal.* 68. 20. *He that is our God, he is the God of ſalvation.* The Lord is called the God of ſalvation, as the God of comfort, both affirmatively and negatively. Salvation is to be had in him, and there is no ſalvation to be had without him. *Truly in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains* (from Armies, from counſels, from the power and policies of men) *in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of Iſrael*, Jer. 3. 23.

Fourthly, It is obſervable *Againſt whom theſe crafty cruel men muſter up and levie the united forces of Sword, Tongue and Hand.*

They are the poor. He ſaveth the poor. Why, will not God ſave the rich? will he not ſave the mighty, the Princes of the earth? Yes, God will ſave all that fear him, both high and low, rich and poor. Why then is it ſaid, *He ſaveth the poor?* As it were, determining ſalvation upon them. The reaſon is, becauſe, as the poor are moſt eaſily oppreſt, ſo uſually they are moſt oppreſt: *Where the hedge is loweſt, men go over faſteſt.* And becauſe, for the moſt part, Gods people are poor, comparatively to others; they are the vallies, the lower part of the Earth, and wickedneſs is commonly advanced upon the mountains of wealth, honour and greatneſs; therefore the denomination is taken from them: *He ſaveth the poor: They whom God loves moſt, the World loves leaſt, they have leaſt of the World.* The World gives moſt to its own; and God hath given his own ſo much beyond the world, that, the loſs of a world is not diſcerned in their Eſtate, and worldly gains are not often diſcernable in their Eſtates; therefore, though in Chriſt, they are *heirs of all things, and all is theirs*, yet their rank and titles are among the poor.

Fifthly obſerve, they are poor ones; yet what deviſing and plotting is here againſt them? Crafty counſels, drawn ſwords, envenom'd tongues, ſtrong hands lifted up, Againſt whom are all theſe? *Againſt the poor.* Hence note,

That, *Wicked men plot againſt the people of God, how poor and low ſoever they be.*

As *David* ſaid unto *Saul* (1 Sam. 24. 14.) *After whom is the King of Iſrael come out? after a dead dog, after a flea?* As if he had ſaid, whom doſt thou purſue? thou doſt that which is unworthy, and much below ſo great a King;

Facis quod eſt tanto rege indignum, dum me tenuiſſimum tanto comitatu perſequeris. Jun. *in loc.*

wilt thou ſet thy ſtrength againſt my weakneſs? *Why doſt thou arm againſt him, by whoſe conqueſt thou canſt get no honour?* Alas, I am but a poor man, a mean ſubject, no match for thee; I wonder you trouble your ſelf ſo much in following or oppoſing me: I am (in compariſon) but as *a dead dog, or as a flea. A dead dog cannot bite*; or if I bite, it is but a *flea-bite*: *A dead dog can do no hurt, and a living flea can do but little. The people of God (as ſuch) never have any will to do wrong, and it is ſeldom that they have any power to do wrong*; and yet the world is all up in purſuit againſt them: What's the reaſon of it? what's the matter? The truth is, how poor and low ſoever they are, yet there is an eye of jealouſie awake upon them. The world looks upon them as a *ſuſpected party*: the world hath ſecret miſgivings, that one time or other, they muſt riſe upon their ruines; and therefore they will keep them down (yes, that they will) as long as they can. What a diſtance was there between *Haman* and *Mordecai?* the one ſate in the gate, and the other ſtood at the Kings elbow, and had his ear, yea, and his ſignet (upon the matter) at his command: yet this *Haman* muſt needs oppreſs *Mordecai*, becauſe he would not bow: *Haman* had a jealous eye upon him, he was a ſuſpected perſon; though he cou'd not reach *Haman*, yet *Haman* fear'd he might undermine him.

Again, There is a continual *Antipathy between the two ſeeds*; and *Antipathy* is incurable: *To oppoſe the godly, is not ſo much the diſeaſe, as the nature of wicked men*: And we know, *Antipathies* are againſt the whole kind; revenge againſt this, or that *Individual*, is no *eaſe* to it; *Antipathy* is not ſpent, but in the conſumption of the whole kind. It is not this or that ſheep which the Wolf hates, but every ſheep, fat or lean, ſhorn or unſhorn, that's all one to the Wolf; he will ſuck the blood of a ſheep that hath not a *lock of Wool* on his back, as greedily as if that ſheep had a *Golden Fleece*. Let a godly man be poor or rich, low or high, their ſword ſhall be unſheath'd, and their mouth opened againſt him: the old hatred and quarrel is againſt all. *Haman thought ſcorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, wherefore Haman thought to deſtroy all the Jews*, Eſth. 3. 6. He hated thoſe whom he never ſaw, thoſe who had never wrong'd him, haply had bowed to him; yet, becauſe *Jews*, die they muſt.

Sixthly obſerve (*But he ſaveth the poor.*)

God delights to help the poor: He loves to take part with the beſt, though the weakeſt ſide.

Contrary to the courſe of moſt, who when a controverſie ariſes, uſe to ſtand in a kind of *indifferency* or *neutrality*, till they ſee which part is ſtrongeſt, not which is juſteſt. Now if there be any conſideration (beſides the cauſe) that draws or engages God; it is the weakneſs of the ſide. He joynes with many, becauſe they are weak; not with any, becauſe they are ſtrong; therefore he is called, *the helper of the friendleſs, and with him the fatherleſs* (the Orphans) *find mercy*: By fatherleſs, we are not to underſtand ſuch only whoſe parents are dead, but any one that is in diſtreſs; as Chriſt promiſeth his Diſciples, *John* 14. 18. *I will not leave you Orphans*, that is helpleſs, and (as we tranſlate) *comfortleſs*; though ye are as children without a Father, yet I will be a Father to you. Men are often like thoſe clouds, which diſſolve into the Sea, they ſend preſents to the rich, and aſſiſt the ſtrong; but God ſends his rain upon the dry Land, and lends his ſtrength to thoſe that are weak. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and ſaved him out of all his troubles. Forget not the Congregation of thy poor for ever.* The truth is, *he never forgets them: They are graven upon the palms of his hands; ſuch poor are his treaſure, his Jewels, as the Signet upon his right hand*; therefore alwayes in his eye, yea, alwayes in his heart, though they lie in the dirt, or be trodden under foot, like mire in the ſtreets. The Prophet makes this report to God of himſelf (*Iſa.* 25. 4,) *Thou haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm*, &c.

Pſ. 10. 14, 18.
Hoſ. 14. 3.
Pſ. 34. 6.
Pſ. 74. 19.

Thus far *Eliphaz* hath given inſtance of the great, marvellous and unſearchable works of God, in a double reference: Firſt, to wicked crafty oppreſſors. Secondly, to poor helpleſs innocents. He ſhuts up this Narration with a double effect of theſe works upon thoſe two ſorts of men. Firſt, ſhewing what effect they produce in the poor; namely, *Hope*. Secondly, what in the wicked; namely, *ſhame and confuſion of face*.

Verſe 16. **So the poor hath hope, and iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth.**

Here is the concluſion or reſult of all, the *Epiphonema* or exulting clauſe, in which *Eliphaz* perfects the ſtory of thoſe admirable acts of judgment and of mercy; *So the poor hath hope.*

This original word for [**poor**] varies from the former, though the perſons and their eſtate be the ſame: That word noted them full of deſire, and this (which is the cauſe of it) empty of comforts: Properly it ſignifies one that is *exhauſted or drawn dry.* Poor perſons are exhauſted perſons; exhauſted of their ſtrength, exhauſted of their eſtates, exhauſted of friends and credit in the world. It is a Metaphor taken from Rivers, Ponds or Pools, that are drawn dry, when we would take the fiſh, or take away the defence which they give to Forts or Cities, *Iſa.* 19. 6. *And they ſhall turn the Rivers far away, and the Brooks of Defence ſhall be emptied and dried up*: Which alſo enlightens that Text, *Iſa.* 33. 21. *There the righteous Lord will be unto us a place of broad Rivers.* A River which ſhall not be drawn dry or ſluced out (as *Euphrates* was by *Cyrus*, when he took *Babylon*) but ſhall fill its banks and ſhores perpetually; that is, the Lord will be there a perpetual defence; a River that ſhall never be impoveriſhed, but ſhall keep a full ſtock and treaſure of ſtreams and waters.

à radice דלל דל *Exhauſtus, de humore propriè, per metaphoram de viribus corporis & opibus, attenuatus, tenuis fortunæ homo.*

Delilah had her name from this root, and it carries an elegant alluſion to the qualities of all *Delilahs*, or inſinuating laſcivious women; they drain the ſtrength, exhauſt the purſes, dry up the credit, waſte the *All* of the mightieſt *Samſons*, whoſe hearts are entangled by their flatteries, or enſnared by their beauties.

The poor have hope.] The word hath been opened at the ſixth verſe of this Chapter, to note ſtrong and earneſt expectation: The poor man obſerving the wonders which God doth in the world, cannot be out of hope, though he be out of poſſeſſion; and though his own ſtrength be gone, yet he lives upon the ſtrength of Chriſt; he hopes ſtrongly (that's the force of the word) when he feels no ſtrength. *When I am weak* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 10.) *then am I ſtrong*; that is, I am ſtrongeſt (through hope) in Chriſt, when I am weakeſt, through ſenſe, in my ſelf.

More diſtinctly, this hope may be taken two wayes.

1. For the Object, or thing hoped for.
2. For the Act or Grace of hope.

In the former notion of hope, the ſence runs thus; God having taken the wiſe in their own craftineſs, and diſappointed the devices of the crafty, having delivered the poor from the ſword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty, now the poor hath the thing he looked for, the thing he prayed for, the thing for which he hath been ſeeking and waiting upon God: *So the poor hath hope*, that is, he hath the mercy he expected, *ſalvation from the ſword*, &c. he is made *partaker of his hope*, by thoſe glorious adminiſtrations of the juſtice and mercy of God. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *Gods poor hope for good in the worſt times.*

When deliverance comes, theſe poor have but that which they looked for; they looked for light when they were in the darkeſt condition. When they were exhauſted, they knew God was not exhauſted; and when they were drawn dry, they knew the Lord was not; though *their treaſure was ſpent, yet they were aſſured the treaſury of Heaven was full*: When ſtrength is gone, and Money is gone, and Friends are gone, yet God is not gone; and therefore they know the good may come which they hope for. *Turn ye to the ſtrong holds, ye priſoners of hope*, ſaith the Prophet, *Zech.* 9. 12. The people of God (though priſoners) are yet priſoners of hope, that is, they have hope of deliverance and enlargement, in their greateſt ſtreights: The power of God is never impriſoned, and while his people can make this out, their ſpirits are not.

Secondly obſerve, *It is no vain thing to hope in God.*

The poor hath his hope. The Prophet brings in the *Jews* thus triumphing in God (*Iſa.* 25.9.) *And it ſhall be ſaid in that day:* What day was that? The former verſe points it out, *A day wherein death ſhall be ſwallowed up in victory, wherein tears ſhall be wiped away from off all faces,* &c. And in that day, the people of God ſhall thus boaſt of God, and (as it were ſhewing him to the World) ſhall ſay, *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will ſave us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his ſalvation*; vain hopes fill our faces with ſhame; but hopes fulfilled, fill our hearts with rejoycing. *The poor hath his hope*; he can ſhew his hope, 'tis viſible: As *Hannah,* when ſhe came to preſent her ſon unto *Eli, For this child I prayed,* as if ſhe ſhould ſay, *Sir, here is my prayer*; you could not *hear my prayer,* when I was in the Temple, you thought I was drunken; but now you may *ſee my prayer,* here it is, *for this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him,* 1 Sam. 1.27. So the ſoul ſaith, In ſuch a time of trouble, Perſonal or National, I was praying and ſeeking God, I was believing and hoping; men knew not, underſtood not the workings of my ſoul toward Chriſt, yet now they may ſee them; here is the thing I prayed for, here is that I hoped for; *So* (firſt) *the poor hath hope.*

Secondly, *The poor hath hope,* that is, the grace of hope or the gracious actings of hope; and taking it ſo, the ſence riſes thus: *So* (that is) *God having done ſuch great things, in diſappointing the devices of the crafty, and in ſaving his poor,* by this means, *the poor come to have hope*; the grace of hope ſtrengthned and confirmed in them.

> Hence Obſerve, That, *the experience we have of Gods power and mercy, in ſaving us out of former troubles, breeds and nouriſhes hope, againſt future times of trouble.*

So the poor hath hope. Though the poor man was in a hopeleſs condition before; yet now ſeeing the works of God, he hath hope laid up for ever, *Pſalm* 64.9,10. *All men ſhall fear and declare the Works of God, for they ſhall wiſely conſider of this thing:* And what follows? *The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord, and truſt in him*; that is, if they have fail'd in their truſt heretofore, and not given God honour by confiding in him; yet theſe wonderful works of God(of which he ſpeaks in that *Pſalm*)work this hope; *Rom.* 5.4. *Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. Graces have a generation one from another, though all have but one Generation from Chriſt at once. We have here the genealogy of hope in three deſcents.* Experience is the next, or immediate parent of hope. *So the poor hath hope.* Thus it is begotten, 2 *Cor.* 1.10. *God who hath delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver; in him we truſt, that he will yet deliver us.* An Armed daring *Goliah,* ſhould be looked upon, as vanquiſht already, when we can but remember a vanquiſht Lion and a Bear.

Again, *The poor hath hope:* He doth not ſay, God having thus deſtroyed the ungodly, and ſaved his own people from the ſword, *&c.* Now they have liberty, now they have peace, now they have abundance of riches and proſperity; but he makes this the iſſue, *now they have hope.*

> Whence Note, That, *hope is a greater and better poſſeſſion unto the people of God here, then all the great and good things which they poſſeſs.*

Put as much into their hands as you can, there is more then that put in their hearts by hope. *The poor hath hope:* he looks over all his poſſeſſions, and pitcheth upon expectation as his Portion. The eſtate which a believer hath in the promiſes, is more then the eſtate he hath in poſſeſſion: Riches in the promiſe, is better then riches in the cheſt. And ſo the deliverances and protections which are laid up for the Saints in promiſes, are more then all the deliverances and protections received and enjoyed: There is no enjoyment but that in Heaven (where we ſhall enjoy all that ever was promiſed) ſo good as hope, for what is promiſed. *Alexander* an Heathen, had ſuch a notion about an *earthly hope,* which had no ground neither, but the great things his own ambition promiſed him: for when one ſeeing him give away all his preſent inheritances, ſaid, *What Sir, will you make your ſelf a beggar?* *No* (ſaith he) *I will reſerve hope for my ſelf,*

And iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth.

Here is the oppoſite effect, iniquity; the abſtract is put for the concrete, *iniquity, for men of iniquity*; *wicked men, theſe ſtop their mouthes.* And it is obſervable, that as before God made them active in their own deſtruction, ſo here he makes them active in their own ſilence; he ſaith not, *God ſtoppeth their mouthes, but they ſtop their own mouths*; that is, the wicked ſeeing thoſe wonderful works of God, have not a word to ſay, nor a counſel to give more againſt the godly; *they are as mute as fiſhes, as dumb as dogs,* they know not how to ſlander, or of whom to complain, and therefore they ſuſpend, and enjoyn ſilence upon themſelves. As that word of Chriſt, *Friend how cameſt thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment* (Matth. 22.12.) ſo theſe works of Chriſt ſhall make his enemies *ſpeechleſs. Iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth.*

Perſpectâ hac Dei providentiâ erga pauperes & humiles, maligni & nocendi ſtudioſi retrahent ſeſe, neq; inter ſe ãplius ineant prava & iniqua adverſus pios conſilia. Aquin.

This *ſtopping their mouths,* is cauſed two wayes; Firſt, from ſhame; A man is ſometime ſilent, becauſe he is aſhamed to ſpeak; diſappointments (eſpecially ſuch as theirs before noted) produce ſhame naturally, and ſhame makes ſilent. *A man that bluſhes much, ſpeaks little*; and he that dares not lift up his head, will not be forward to lift up his voice, *Mich.* 7.16. *I will ſhew marvellous things* (ſaith the Lord, and what then?) *The Nations ſhall ſee and be confounded; they ſhall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears ſhall be deaf: They ſhall ſee it, and be confounded,* that is, they ſhall be greatly aſhamed; confuſion of face is but ſhame heightned, and the Holy Ghoſt puts ſhame and confuſion of face together in divers places. Now this great ſhame layes their hands upon their mouths, and puts their fingers in their ears; they are reſolvedly both dumb and deaf, at the ſight of thoſe marvellous things.

Secondly, *Admiration and amaizment ſilence them:* The works of God being marvellous, they ſhall ſtand admiring and wondring at them, till they cannot ſpeak. Read the like, *Iſa.* 52.15. & *Pſal.* 107.42. where, when the Prophet had reckoned up many wonderful works of God, he concludes as in the Text, *verſ.* 42. *He ſetteth the poor on high,* &c. *the righteous ſhall ſee it and rejoyce, and all iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth*; while the Lord ſeems to do nothing, or to do but little, *iniquity will do nothing, but talk,* or it talks very much, it is very talkative; but if once God begin working, iniquity has done ſpeaking, you ſhall hear no more of them, till the next ſucceſs on their ſide.

> Then Obſerve, Firſt, *Wicked men will never ceaſe ſlandering and cenſuring, bragging and boaſting, till ſome eminent judgment ſtops their mouths.*

So iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth, they will never ſtop their mouths before: *Iſa.* 26.11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee; but they ſhall ſee and be aſhamed for their envy at thy people:* I will make the judgment bigger and and greater; write my wrath in fairer, or rather bloodier Characters, that they may ſee them: As ſmall judgments will not open the eyes of wicked men, ſo ſmall judgments will not ſtop their mouthes; but when God begins to work wonders, they are dumb, they have done.

> Secondly Obſerve, That, *God will do ſuch things for his people, as ſhall put the crafty to ſilence.*

The Saints ought to live ſo holily, *That by well doing they may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men,* 1 Pet. 2.15. The Lord will do ſo juſtly and gloriouſly, as ſhall put to ſilence the malice of the wiſeſt men: *Theſe two, the holineſs of the Saints, and the Juſtice of God, are ſtopples in the mouths, or the ſtop-mouths of ungodly men.* As they by unrighteous acts have ſtopped other mens mouths, and ſilenced them, ſo God *by terrible things in righteouſneſs,* will ſtop their mouths, and ſilence them for ever: They ſhall have nothing to ſay at laſt, either againſt the juſtice of God, or againſt the innocency of his People; *againſt both theſe their mouths chiefly open.* They impute and faſten unrighteouſneſs on God: you talk of God, and boaſt of his promiſes; where is he? where are they? The Prophet brings them in, belching out ſuch blaſphemies (*Iſa.* 5.19.) *They ſay, let him make ſpeed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it; and let the counſel of the holy One of* Iſrael, *draw nigh* *and come that we may know it.* Words filled with as high a ſence of ſpiritual wickedneſs, as wit and malice can infuſe. They jeer the patience of God as ſlackneſs, and as if Juſtice it ſelf were tired, or too ſlow-pac'd, they ſpur it on, to ruine themſelves. You have often told us of the *Holy One of* Iſrael, *and what he would do, but threatned men live long we ſee.* You are nimbler of your tongues, then your Holy One of *Iſrael* is of his hands. Therefore *let him make ſpeed* (if he can) *and haſten his work, that we may ſee it.*

Will not the jealouſie of the Lord awake, at the noiſe of this helliſh blaſphemy? will he not ſtop the mouth of this iniquity? ſurely he will: And the Prophet aſſures us he will at *verſ.*24. *Therefore as the fire devoureth the ſtubble, and as the flame conſumeth the chaff; ſo their Root ſhall be rottenneſs, and their bloſſoms ſhall go up as duſt.* But how doth the fire devour the ſtubble? how doth the flame conſume the chaff? even in a moment; fire needs no blowing, to make it take hold of dry ſtubble: *Stubble is at once flame and aſhes.* So ſpeedy ſhall the conſumption of theſe men be, who called the Lord to make ſpeed; then (I believe(they'l no more bid him make haſte. The mouth of this iniquity will be ſtopt for ever. *Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence. A fire ſhall devour before him,* Pſalm 50. 3. *And then the wicked ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs,* 1 Sam. 2. 9. The fire of wrath is all heat, no light.

Laſtly, All the ſlanders againſt the innocency of the Saints ſhall be ſo confuted, that the adverſary ſhall have nothing to ſay againſt them. *Their innocency ſhall be made as clear as the light, and their juſtice as the noon-day:* Yea God will ſo order it, that theſe crafty oppreſſors ſhall carry a juſtification of God, and of his people in their own hearts. Their conviction ſhall be ſo ſtrong, and their light ſo clear, that iniquity it ſelf ſhall not be able to gain-ſay, but muſt ſtop it's mouth for ever.

VERS. 17, 18.

Behold happy is the man, whom God correcteth; therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty.

For he maketh ſore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

WE have finiſhed the firſt branch of Exhortation, begun *verſ.* 8. wherein *Eliphaz* moves *Job*, *to ſeek to God, and unto God to commit his cauſe*; with the ſeveral arguments and reaſons, ſtrengthning that Exhortation. At this *verſ.* 17. *Eliphaz* begins a ſecond branch of Exhortation, and it is continued to the end of the Chapter. We have the Exhortation (or Dehortation rather, for it is expreſt in the negative) in the latter clauſe of *verſ.* 17. *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty.*

The firſt Argument by which he quickens *Job* to receive this counſel, lies in the former part of the ſame verſe; *Behold happy is the man, whom God correcteth:* The Argument may be framed thus, *That condition is not to be deſpiſed, wherein a man is truly happy; But under the correcting hand of God a man is truly happy: Therefore that condition is not to be deſpiſed. Behold* (ſaith he) *happy is the man, whom God correcteth; therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Almighty.*

Behold, happy is the man.

To **behold**, calls here both for attention and admiration: For here is a ſtrange ſight, *An afflicted man, a bleſſed man.* Natural ſence and reaſon cannot agree about this conjunction. They know not how happineſs and correction ſhould meet, and kiſs the ſame perſon: Therefore raiſe up thy attention (ſaith *Eliphaz*) to conſider this wonder. *When the Angel of the Lord appeared unto* Moſes *in a flame of fire out of the midſt of a buſh; he looked and behold the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh was not conſumed. And* Moſes *ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt,* Exod. 3. 2, 3. Such a great ſight, this Text ſhews us: *A buſh burning,* and not *conſuming*; yea a *buſh burning,* and yet *flouriſhing*; a buſh on fire, and yet a fruit-bearing buſh; a buſh blooming and bloſſoming with the pleaſanteſt and ſweeteſt fruit on Earth, or rather with the fruit of Heaven; fruit upon which we ſhall feed for ever in Heaven; fruit, the taſte of which, makes a Heaven here on Earth, *Happineſs.* Well then, is this ſtrange ſight preſented to us, with *A Behold.*

Happy is the man whom God correcteth.

Happineſs is the enjoyment of good commenſurate to all our deſires. That's perfect happineſs. Happineſs is the ſum of all our deſires, and the aim of all our endeavours: and when we have attained perfect happineſs, we ſhall be at a full point, both of our deſire and endeavours.

But though all men have happineſs in their Eye (to be happy is their end, and this happineſs is but one) Yet the wayes, which men have chalked out, as leading to happineſs, have been, not only various, but almoſt infinite. Some of the learned have reckoned up two or three Centuries, or hundreds of opinions, concerning this one point. And it is well obſerved, that men varied thus in opinion about happineſs, becauſe they thought the enjoyment of that, wherein any of them was defective, would make them happy. He that was poor, ſaid, I ſhould be happy, if I had riches, and thence grew his opinion, that happineſs conſiſted in riches: The ſick man ſaid, I ſhould be happy, if I had my health, and thence grew his opinion, that happineſs conſiſted in health: Another was obſcure, mean and low, *O* (ſaid he) *how happy were I, if I were honourable*; and thence grew a third opinion, that happineſs conſiſted in honour: Thus they varied according to their particular neceſſities and intereſts. But amongſt all thoſe *Opinioniſts,* we meet not with any one, who pitcht upon this in the Text. This is a *Paradox* to them all; a natural man cannot place happineſs in correction: No Philoſopher or pure Moraliſt ever ſaid, Happy is the man, that is ſore; happy is the man, that is ſick; happy is the man, that is diſgraced; or happy is the man, that is in priſon: Theſe are riddles, ſuch as nature is not able to expound or make out; the Philoſopher would as ſoon place light in darkneſs, the Sun in a cloud, heat in coldneſs, the Element of fire in the water, as bleſſedneſs in ſufferings. Therefore no marvel if *Eliphaz* uſher it in, with *a Behold*; *Behold happy is the man, whom God correcteth.*

The word, **Happy**, is of the *Plural* number, or rather of the *Dual* in the Hebrew. Some tranſlate it in the *Abſtract, Behold the bleſſedneſs of that man, whom God corrects:* But it is fully rendred by the *Adjective,* as we; *Behold happy is the man,* &c.

אשרי *Beatitudines, conſtat indeclinabile eſſe, & formam habere non tā pluralis quā dualis.*

There is much contention amongſt the *Grammarians* about the word, whether it be *abſtract or concrete*; a *Noun, or an Adverb*: But I will not ſtay on thoſe, only conſider a little what accounts is given, why the word is uſed *plurally* or *dually.*

Firſt, It is to increaſe the ſignification, and heighten the ſence; as noting the confluence of many good things in happineſs. *Happineſs is not a ſingle good*; happineſs conſiſts in the concurrence or meeting together of many good things: God, who is infinitely happy, infinitely bleſſed in himſelf, and an infinite bleſſing, all bleſſing to his people, is not a ſingle good, or a particular good, but he is all good, both to himſelf, and to his people. A godly man is happy in the largeſt ſence, in all ſences; becauſe his, is not this or that particular good, but all good. And he is not happy only at this or that particular time, but at all times. He is as happy, when he is ſuffering under the hand of God, as when he is ſerving God; as happy in his paſſive, as in his active obedience. And therefore the ſame word expreſſes his condition, both in the one, aud in the other.

Beati beatitudo in multis bonitatibus conſiſtit. Rab. D.

Secondly, Becauſe there is a two-fold happineſs: Firſt, the happineſs of this life: And ſecondly, the happineſs of the next; Temporal happineſs, and Eternal happineſs; Corporal hpapineſs, and Spiritual happineſs, To note a complication of all theſe, the word may be given in the *Dual* or *Plural* number; he that is thus corrected, loſes not temporal happineſs, but he gains in ſpiritual, and toward eternal happineſs. The preſent and future happineſs of the Saints, the happineſs of grace and of glory, differ but in degrees: *It is the ſame ſtate in a higher ſtature: The ſame book in a more correct edition and fairer letter.* Theſe differ as a child from a man, or as the morning light from the light at high-noon; ſo then, this word includes all kinds and degrees of happineſs: yet, here it is properly to be underſtood of the happineſs of this life, which only is conſiſtent with correction: *There are no rods in Heaven,*

and

aud we ſhall be paſt children, before we come thither.

Simplex & genuina reſponſio eſt, quod nomen ipſum quo Hebræi beatitudinem notant, eſt plurale tantũ, ut Latinis opes, Divitiæ. Ames *in* Pſal. 1.

Thirdly, We may anſwer plainly, that the word in the Hebrew is only *Plural* or *Dual*, being never read in the ſingular number: As in the Latine we have many the like words.

It is further obſervable concerning this word, that it is alwayes applied unto man, whereas the word (*Barac*) bleſſed, is applied both to God and man. This happineſs is a ſpecial and peculiar happineſs of man: *The Lord being infinitely above, both obeying and ſuffering.*

Happy is the Man.] *Enoſh*, the Hebrew word for *Man* (of whom happineſs under correction is predicated) is very ſutable to this buſineſs of correction. *Enoch* ſignifies a ſickly, weak, miſerable man: We might render the full ſence of the word thus, *Happy is that miſerable man, whom God corrects.* That is, look upon a man according to the ordinary account of the World, and calculation of reaſon, he is a miſerable man, a weak, ſickly man; yet happy is this weak, ſickly, miſerable man in the account of God, and by the calculation of faith. *Grace makes that good ſence, which is a contradiction, both in nature and in reaſon: A miſerable man, and a happy man, one and the ſame.*

In *Pſalm* 1. the word *Iſh* is uſed, *Bleſſed is the man*, that is, *Bleſſed is that excellent man, that holy man, that ſtrong man, walking and delighting in the law of the Lord. Yea bleſſed with the ſame bleſſedneſs is that miſerable man* (ſmarting under the rod of the Lord) *whom God correcteth.*

And yet Bleſſedneſs is joyned with all the words, by which man is expreſſed. It is joyned with *Adam*, Pſalm 32. 1. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquity is forgiven. Adam* is the general word for Man, and is therefore moſt fitly joyned with Bleſſedneſs in pardon of ſin, becauſe all men are ſinners, and no man can be bleſſed, except he be pardoned. Bleſſedneſs is joyned alſo with *Geber*, a ſtrong, powerful and mighty man, *Pſal.*94.12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy Law*; Bleſſed is (*Geber*) the great man, the honourable man, the higheſt by birth or place, whom thou chaſteneſt.

Beatus Abrahã *vir pius quem corripuit Deus.* Chal. Parap.

The *Chaldee Paraphraſe* reſtrains the word [**Man**] to an *individual*, to *Abraham*, as if *Eliphaz* had put the inſtance in *Abraham*, and ſaid, *Behold, happy was that holy man* Abraham *whom God corrected; therefore diſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Almighty*: I can give thee a famous example of a godly man corrected; *Abraham* (thy Anceſtor) met with afflictions, as well as thou, and yet he was a moſt happy man: therefore *deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Lord.* But the word is general, and ſo we are to underſtand it; though this be a truth, in any or every inſtance among the ſervants of God.

I muſt yet put in a caution for the right underſtanding of this propoſition, *Bleſſed is the man, whom God corrects.* The meaning is not, as if happineſs were the portion of every miſerable man, or of every man that is afflicted; do not think ſo; many are at once, corrected and curſed, troubled and miſerable in trouble. To many, their preſent ſorrows, are but the fore-taſts of eternal ſorrows. As Chriſt ſpake in a common caſe, *Theſe things are but the beginning of ſorrows:* So we may ſay to the particular caſes of many groaning under ſickneſs, poverty, diſgrace, &c. Alas, poor ſouls, ye are ſo far from being happy in theſe, that theſe are but the beginnings of your unhappineſs; God doth but begin to call for ſome arrears, due to his juſtice, which ye muſt be a paying and ſatiſfying to all eternity.

There is no happineſs in affliction naturally conſidered; it is accidental to afflictions, that happineſs is aſſociated with them. Affliction in it ſelf is grievous, and it would be only ſo to us, did not the over-ruling, admirable diſpenſations of God, temper, order, diſpoſe, and work it to an end above its own nature; it is the art and wiſdom of the Phyſitian, which corrects poyſonous ſimples and ingredients, ſo, as to make them medicinable. And did not the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, *correct our corrections*, they would not be medicine to us, but poyſon; it is not correction, but the hand of God with it, and in it, which makes us happy.

Happy is the man, whom God correcteth.

The word, which we tranſlate **correct**, ſignifies to reprove or to convince, by arguments or diſpute; to argue a man down from his error, by the ſtrength and clearneſs of reaſon or divine authority. So *Levit.* 19. 19. *Thou ſhalt not ſuffer ſin upon thy brother, thou ſhalt ſurely rebuke him. Thou ſhalt rebuke him*, it is the word here uſed, that is, thou ſhalt bring ſuch arguments, as may convince him of his ſin, and lay his wickedneſs open before him. This word is applied to corrections and afflictions in Scripture, becauſe with convictions, we feel corrections frequently joyned; the Lord argues the matter, and (as it were) diſputes with ſome very long, who yet will not let in divine truth, nor be perſwaded, though they are perſwaded; What doth he then? Then he ſends correction with his redargution, he cloaths his words with blows, diſputes with a rod in his hand, and brings an argument from feeling, when reaſoning prevails not. In this book of *Job*, *Elihu* ſhews it, *Chap.* 33. 16, 19. *Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction: he is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his bed.*

יכח *Arguit, redarguit, corripuit,* 3 *præparavit verba contra aliquẽ, diſputando & oſtendendo jus. Quod etſi verbis plerũq; fiat, pertinet tamen ea vox ad ſeveriorẽ diſciplinam & verbera, quæ cujuſpiã peccati reprehenſionem comitari ſolent.* Pined.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, That, *afflictions to the children of God at ſoreſt, are but corrections.*

Bleſſed (*or happy*) *is the man whom God corrects.* You will ſay, but what is a correction? And how (in a ſtrict ſence) differenced from judgments and puniſhments, and wherein do they agree?

They agree, firſt, in the efficient cauſe. God layes his hand on man in both.

Secondly, They agree in the matter; the ſame evil, the ſame trouble to one man is a correction, to another a judgment.

Thirdly, They may agree alſo in the degree; a trouble or an affliction may fall and lie as heavy, and be as painful to ſenſe upon a child of God, as upon the vileſt wretch in the world; he may be as poor, as friendleſs, as ſick, as ſorrowful in his outward man, as any wicked man; he may lie in the ſame dungeon, and be bound with the ſame chain, he may be ſlain with the ſame ſword, burnt at the ſame ſtake, eaten up with the ſame famine. So that both in the materiality, and likewiſe in the graduality of it, it may be the ſame on both, yet, upon one it is a correction, upon the other a judgment.

What then is this correction? And where will the correction and the judgment part?

I conceive, that the infirmities of the Saints, and the ſins of the wicked differ, as judgments and corrections differ. Now look upon thoſe ſins, which we call the infirmities of the Saints; they may be the ſame in the matter, the ſame in kind, yea (poſſibly) the ſame in the degree (I mean reſpecting the outward rule given by God, and the outward act committed by man) with the ſins of thoſe who know not God, or who, in ſinning, go againſt their knowledge.

Then, where do they part?

Surely, where corrections and judgments part: And where is that? Eſpecially in two things.

1. In the manner how; 2. In the end why, they are inflicted.

Firſt, The Lord never corrects his children with ſuch a heart, as he carries in laying trouble upon the loyns of wicked men. The heart of God is turned toward his children, when he corrects them; but his heart is turned from a wicked man, when he puniſhes him. The Lord is even pained (that I may ſpeak as the Scripture often doth in this point, after the manner of men) I ſay the Lord expreſſes himſelf as pained, as grieved, as if every ſtroak went to his own heart, when he ſtrikes his children. When he is about to ſtrike, he is (as it were) unreſolved whether he ſhall ſtrike or no; and as ſoon as he hath ſtricken, he (as it were) repents that he did ſtrike them. All which motions of his heart the Lord ſhews us in the higheſt ſtrains of paſſionate Rhetorick, *Hoſ.* 11. 8, 9. But when he takes the wicked in hand to puniſh them, we read of no paſſion aſcribed to him, but theſe, delight or joy, and the effect of them, laughter: hatred or indignation, and the effect of theſe, mocking at them, *Prov.*1.26. *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.* And when he reſolves upon the deſtruction of his enemies, he ſpeaks, as if then he had unburden'd himſelf, and his heart were lighter then before, *Iſa.* 1. 24. *Ah I will eaſe me of my adverſaries, and avenge me of my enemies.*

Secondly, The difference is as broad about the end. When God layes the rod of correction upon his child, he aimes at the purging out of his ſin, at the preventing of his ſin, at the revealing of a fatherly diſpleaſure againſt him for his ſin: The Lord would only have him take notice, that he doth not approve of him in ſuch courſes. When theſe ends are propoſed, every affliction is a correction. But the afflictions of the ungodly are ſent for other ends. Firſt, To take vengeance on them. Secondly, to ſatisfie offended juſtice; juſtice cries aloud againſt them, and they have nothing to interpoſe, but their bare backs or naked ſouls. The Lord comes as a ſevere Creditor, and bids them pay that which they owe, or ſuffer, and to priſon, becauſe they cannot pay.

Secondly obſerve, *A Child of God is in a happy condition under all corrections.*

As man (in a natural or civil capacity) *at his beſt eſtate, is altogether vanity*, Pſal. 39. 5. So, in a ſpiritual capacity, he is altogether happineſs, in his worſt outward eſtate: *Happy is the man whom God corrects*; he is a gainer by correction: If he loſeth any thing, it is but the droſs of his corruptions; *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin.* Corrections are not ſent to take away his comforts, but to take away his corruptions. That fire which God kindles upon his children, ſhall burn only (as it did the material bonds of the three Children in *Daniel*) the ſpiritual bonds of their iniquity that they may be more free to righteouſneſs. Again, Corrections are not manifeſtations of wrath, but an evidence of his love, and of their Son-ſhip. *Whom I love, I chaſtize*, Rev. 3. 21. *And if ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons*, Heb. 12. 7. The love of God is better then life; and to be a ſon of God, is the higheſt priviledge of his love. Where ſhall we be happy, if not in that which aſſures us of ſuch love, and of love in ſuch a relation? Hence the Apoſtle concludes (2 *Cor.* 4. 12.) *So then, death worketh in us*; *death*, that is, our daily ſufferings and endurings. He ſpeaks (indeed) eſpecially of ſufferings for the truth, from the cruel hand of man; but it is true likewiſe of all ſufferings under the correcting hand of God: Thoſe ſtroaks which are deadly to our bodies, may yet work for us. And what work they? The ſeventeenth verſe anſwers the queſtion; *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding & eternal weight of glory.* The ſufferings of the Saints are active, and their paſſions operative; But how do they work? Not by way of merit or earning (*Our blood cannot oblige God*) but by way of preparation. The Lord ſends afflictions, to faſhion and cleanſe our hearts, as fit veſſels to hold an exceeding weight of glory: our bearing the heavieſt afflictions, doth not weigh ſo much as the leaſt grain of glory, yet they fit our hearts for an *exceedingly excellent weight of glory.* We cannot ſay properly, that they work any glory; but by an *Hyperbole in ſpeech*, we ſay, they work towards an *Hyperbole in glory.*

Iſa. 27. 9.

καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν

And if any doubt, can a man be happy when his outward comfort is gone? Doubtleſs he may: *For a man is never unhappy, but when he hath loſt that wherein happineſs doth conſiſt.* The happineſs of a godly man doth not conſiſt in his outward comforts, in riches, in health, in honour, in civil liberty, or humane relations; therefore in the loſs of theſe he cannot be unhappy. His happineſs conſiſts in his relation to, and acceptance with God, in his title to, and union with *Jeſus Chriſt*. While he keeps theſe priviledges (and theſe he ſhall keep for ever) what hath he loſt, if he loſe all beſides theſe? He hath not loſt any thing diſcernable, out of his eſtate. Suppoſe a man were worth a million of money, and he ſhould loſe a penny, would you think this man an undone man? No: his eſtate feels not this loſs, and therefore he hath not loſt his eſtate. If a man ſhould buy a thouſand meaſures of Corn or Cloth, and ſhould loſe the given handfuls of the one, or inches of the other, would ye ſay, that this man hath loſt either his corn or his cloth? All the things of the world (and they only are looſable) which a godly man hath, are not ſo much to his eſtate as a penny to a million; they are indeed no proper part of his eſtate, they are but an additional overplus to his eſtate; as the handful of grain, or inch of cloth, are no part of the meaſure agreed or bargained for; only ſo much that ſpeech of Chriſt imports, *Mat.* 6. 33. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs thereof, and all other things ſhall be added or miniſtred to you*; your kingdom is whole and ſafe to you, though you have not theſe: Theſe things are extrinſecal and foreign to all that, which I reckon upon as your eſtate; *God having given us Chriſt, caſts us in the creatures*, as not coming upon any account in that vaſt act of his free love and bounty: And ſhall we account him unhappy, who hath loſt theſe things, which were never brought to account as any part of his happineſs? Then happy ſtill, though corrected. And which is yet more, correction takes nothing from the ſtock, but it addeth ſomewhat; correction brings in a revenue of profit with it. *They* (ſaith the Apoſtle, meaning our earth-parents) *chaſtened us after their own pleaſure, but he for our profit.* What profit? Do Houſes and Land, Gold and Silver, bloſſom from the correcting rod? Surely they may: But he means better profit then theſe, and a far more noble merchandize: Gold and Silver are poor and baſe, to the profit which comes in by chaſtenings; Grace and holineſs come in this way: *He for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holineſs*, Heb. 12. 10. *We want nothing of the happineſs in heaven, but ſo much holineſs as we ſhall have in heaven.* Surely then whatſoever affliction takes away, it cannot take away our happineſs, foraſmuch as it makes us greater ſharers in, and partakers of holineſs.

And the corrected children of God are unhappy only in the opinion of other men, not in their own: When did you ever hear any of them ſay, they were unhappy, becauſe they were corrected? I do not remember, that I ever read or heard any of them ſay, *O unhappy we, who are thus afflicted!* Salvian anſwered this Objection well, when he ſaw many ſcandalized at the afflictions of the godly, thinking theirs a very ſad and pitiful condition: *Do you hear them complaining* (ſaith he) *or did they ever complain to you? No man is to be accounted miſerable in another mans ſenſe, but in his own. You make the complaint, not they.* The truth is, a holy heart can bear trouble with more eaſe, then a carnal heart can ſee it. *Paul* (whoſe whole life, after converſion, was but one continued affliction) was ſo far from complaining and ſaying, *O unhappy man that I am!* that *he rejoyced in tribulation, and was but as ſorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing.* I confeſs, it becomes us to be more ſenſible of corrections, then of perſecutions; the former being uſually, ſufferings upon our defects in Grace, and the latter upon our higheſt actions and puttings forth of Grace. It becomes the Saints to be humbled under corrections; but who hath heard them (when they were themſelves) complaining of corrections? I have often heard them bleſſing God for corrections; I have often heard them ſay, it was, and it is good for us, that we have been corrected; And while the Saints write their afflictions upon the Inventory of their goods, we have no reaſon to put them to account, or caſt them up among their evils.

Quamvis ſancti videantur ignorantibus eſſe miſeri, non poſſunt tamẽ eſſe aliud quam beati. Nemo aliorum ſenſu miſer eſt, ſed ſuo. Nulli enim beatiores ſunt quã qui ex ſententia ſua & voto agunt. Humiles ſunt religioſi, hoc volunt: Pauperes ſunt, paupertie delectãtur. Lugent, lugere geſtiunt, &c. Salv. *De gub. Dei* l. 1.

Laſtly, A godly man cannot be unhappy while he enjoyes God: And he uſually enjoyes God moſt, when he is moſt afflicted. A wicked man is never unhappy in his own thoughts, till he hath loſt his god, ſuch a one as he is, his riches, his pleaſure, his credit; theſe he makes his god, inſtead of a better; indeed, inſtead of him who is *beſt of all*: Theſe are loſeable gods, and ſo his happineſs may ſoon be loſt; but he that once enjoyes the true God, can never loſe him, and therefore can never loſe his happineſs.

That of *Saul*, is one of the ſaddeſt ſpeeches in all the Book of God, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. *I am ſore diſtreſſed, for the Philiſtines make war againſt me, and God is departed from me.* When trouble comes, and God departs, when ſickneſs and poverty make war upon a man, and God be departed from a man, O how unhappy! What words can expreſs the unhappineſs of ſuch a man? But they who can take liberty, and eſtate, and life from us, cannot take God from us; and if God ſhould take all theſe from us, he will not, he cannot (becauſe he hath promiſed he will not) take himſelf from us: *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will never leave thee nor forſake thee*, Heb. 13. 5. And if God forſake us not, happineſs cannot; for he is our happineſs.

A Heathen could ſay, it was unbecoming a *Roman* ſpirit, to cry out (in his loſſes) I am undone, while *Cæſar was ſafe.* It is infinitely below a Chriſtian ſpirit to ſay, I am undone, while *Chriſt is ſafe*: ſuch language is groſſeſt Barbariſm in all the Churches. They who cannot loſe either their ſouls or their Saviour in the worſt condition, cannot be unhappy in any condition, much leſs then under the fatherly correcting hand of God.

Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects, is a truth which no ſtorms of trouble ſhall ever ſhake or weaken.

Therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty. That's the inference.

The word which we tranſlate [**deſpiſe**] hath various ſignifications, and they will all be profitable for the clearing of this point; therefore I ſhall open them diſtinctly: and give ſome brief Notes upon every one in order.

מאם *Significat ſpernere, faſtidire, reprobare vel rejicere aliquid cum faſtidio, tanquam vile & contemptum.* Sept. *reddunt aliquando per* ἐξουθενέω, *& hic per* ἀπαναίνου, *ne renuas aut averſeris.*

* *Ut ſicut faſtidio illis fuiſſet Deus optimus, ita etiam faſtidio illis ſint creaturæ, & ſuæ ipſorum voluptates.*

Firſt, It ſignifies to reject a thing, or caſt it off with loathing; when a mans ſtomack turns againſt ſome meats, or they go againſt his ſtomach, loathing ariſes from it. So the word is uſed, *Numb.* 11. 20. When the people murmured becauſe they wanted fleſh, God threatneth them with ſatisfying their deſires: Fleſh would you have? *You ſhall have fleſh:* It is a threat; But how ſhall they have it? *You ſhall not have it one day, nor two dayes, nor five dayes, neither ten dayes, nor twenty dayes; but you ſhall have fleſh even a whole moneth, until it come out of your noſtrils, and it be * loathſom unto you, or till you your ſelves deſpiſe it. It is moſt juſt with God, that they who loath his will, ſhould at laſt loath their own deſires*; and that the creatures ſhould not long pleaſe them, who take no heed to pleaſe the Creator. The leaſt mixture of Gods diſpleaſure ſowres our ſweeteſt contents, and makes our very pleaſures loathſom.

Where alſo (by the way) we may obſerve the great difference between earthly and ſpiritual things: The beſt of earthly things, uſed too much or too often, grow loathſom. Angels food (Manna or Quails) will not go down long with us. But Chriſt, the ſpiritual Manna, and all heavenly things, the more we have of them, and the longer we are dieted with them, the more we ſhall delight in them: Theſe will not loath us, after two, or five, or ten, or twenty dayes, or after a whole moneths feeding on them: No, we ſhall feed on them dayes without number, or the whole day of eternity, without any loathings; uſe and delight ſhall never ceaſe or abate; appetite ſhall renew every moment, though our enjoyment be but one and the ſame. Yea, the Saints ſhall be ſo far from loathing the pleaſant cup of glory, that they ought not to loath, and (Chriſt ſtrengthning them) they ſhall not loath the bitter cup of ſorrow: their ſtomachs ſhall not turn, though dieted more then two, or five, or ten, or twenty dayes with the bread of adverſity, and the water of affliction. That is the firſt ſence of the word, in alluſion to nauſeating at the ſight or long uſe of meat: *Loath not the chaſtening of the Lord.*

Or the word may ſeem to carry a reference to phyſick or medicines, as well as meat, which you know is many times given in a bitter pill, or in a diſtaſtful potion: the ſick man is apt to loath the potion brought him, and turn his head away from it; what, he take it, no not he. He had rather die, then drink ſuch a draught; he is ready to throw it againſt the wall, and ſpill it on the ground rather then drink it: But then his Friends or the Phyſitian perſwades with him; be not angry, though it be loathſom to your ſtomach, yet it is wholeſom for your body: it is an enemy only to your diſeaſe, therefore loath it not. So here *Eliphaz* (as it were) brings in God ſtanding like a Phyſitian or a Father, or a tender Mother at the beds ſide, where a ſick Child or a friend lies, uſing many intreaties or perſwaſive reaſons to take a bitter potion; my child, or my friend, do not loath, do not deſpiſe, no nor diſtaſte this medicine, do not caſt it away; though it be bitter in your mouth, yet take it down, and the effects of it will be ſweet to your whole body. We find in Scripture, afflictions compared to a cup: Our Lord Jeſus calls all his ſufferings for our ſalvation, a *Cup*, and it was a cup tempered with the venom and poiſon, with the gall and wormwood of all our ſins; it was a loathſom potion indeed, and ſuch as would have turned the ſtomachs of all Men and Angels to *have drunk it.* So much of the firſt ſence of the word, as it ſignifies loathing, whether in reſpect of meats or medicines.

Now foraſmuch as here is a charge given under this notion, not to loath chaſtenings; We may obſerve,

There is, or poſſibly may be an averſneſs in the beſt of Gods children for a time, from the due entertainment of chaſtenings.

He ſpeaks as if moſt were loth to take them down, and therefore he exhorts, not to loath them: Even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt (ſo far as he was partaker of our nature) ſeemed to loath the bitter cup of ſufferings. Hence he prayed hard, once, and again, yea a third time, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me,* (Matth. 26. 39.) Yet at another time, he ſpeaks as if he had been athirſt for that Cup, and angry with *Peter* who would have hindred his draught, *The Cup which my Father giveth me, ſhall I not drink it?* Joh. 18. 11. and ſhortly after, he indeed drank it up to the bottom. Affliction is alſo a bitter Cup to the Saints, and they (as Chriſt) pray again and again, yea thrice againſt it; becauſe to ſenſe, *no chaſtening ſeemeth joyous but grievous,* Heb. 12. 11. though grace perſwades them to drink it, and faith gives them a taſte of much ſweetneſs, when they have drank it: As a ſick man is backward to take a diſtaſtful medicine, till his reaſon hath overcome his ſenſe; ſo a godly man is unwilling to bear afflictions, till his faith hath overcome his reaſon: nor can he quietly endure the troubleſom ſmart of the rod, till he is aſſured of the *peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs*, which grow from it, to thoſe who are *exerciſed by it*. When the Apoſtle is carried upon thoſe Eagles wings of aſſurance, to ſee a houſe not made with hands eternal in the Heavens, then he groans earneſtly under the burden of his earthly tabernacle, and deſires to die; yet looking upon death, he ſaw no form or comelineſs in that, why he ſhould deſire it; and therefore he ſeems to correct himſelf, at leaſt to draw his mind plainer with the next drop of his pen; *Not for that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon, that mortality may be ſwallowed up of life.* He ſpeaks ſomewhat like a man, who in a time of heat, haſtily ſtrips himſelf to go into the water, but putting a foot in, and finding it cold, calls for his cloaths again. The Apoſtle in a true holy heat of ſpirit had in his deſires almoſt ſtript himſelf of his body, but putting a foot into the grave, he found that ſo cold, that he had no great mind to it, and therefore had rather keep on the cloathing of his body, and have a ſuite of glory over it, then lay it down. The Saints deſire to live with Chriſt; but in it ſelf, they deſire not to die: They had rather their mortality ſhould be ſwallowed up of eternal life, then their temporal life ſhould be ſwallowed up of mortality. *They that have grace, like not the diſ-unions of nature.* Now as it is in the caſe of death (which is to the Saints the laſt and greateſt affliction) ſo likewiſe in the caſe of all afflictions, which are as renewed and leſſer deaths: Though they embrace and kiſs them (both in a holy ſubmiſſion to the will of God, and in an aſſured expectation of their own good) yet they have nothing pleaſing in them; much, which creates ſo much loathing, that the beſt do but need counſel and encouragement to take and digeſt them.

And then if there be ſome averſneſs even in the beſt from theſe potions of affliction, tempered with the mercy and goodneſs of God; no wonder if there be an abhorrence in wicked men, from thoſe deadly potions, mixt only with his wrath and juſtice. The Pſalmiſt preſents the Lord to us, with a cup in his hand (*Pſal.* 75. 8.) *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, the wine thereof is red* (which notes fierce wrath) *and it is full of mixture:* (This mixture, is of judgments, plagues, and puniſhments, this is the portion of their cup, *Pſal.* 11. *ult.*) But what will the Lord do with this mixed cup? who ſhall ſip at the top of the cup, he tells us not; but he is expreſs, whoſe the bottom is, *He poureth out the ſame* (ſome drops are ſpilt here and there) but the dregs thereof, *all the ungodly of the Earth ſhall wring them out and drink them.* Alas they loath it, their ſtomachs turn at it: They have not been brought up to drink dregs, they have had their wine well refined, and ſparkling with ſpirits in chriſtal glaſſes; and how can they get this down? They who have drunk ſo willingly and freely of the cup of ſin, ſhall be forced whether they will or no to drink the cup of judgment. And it is not a ſip or two ſhall ſerve their turns, they muſt drink all, dregs and all; they ſhall drink it to the bottom, and yet they ſhall never come to the bottom; they have loved long draughts, and now they ſhall have one long enough, there is eternity to the bottom: If a cup of affliction, which (in the effect) is a cup of ſalvation, be ſometime or for a time, nauſeous to the godly, how deadly ſick will the ungodly be, who muſt for ever drink a cup of wrath and death?

Secondly, The word which we tranſlate *deſpiſe,* notes the rejecting of a thing as unprofitable or unuſeful: That which a man deſpiſeth, he thinks he ſhall have no good by it: *Things which are unprofitable are deſpioable:* So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 118.22.) *The ſtone which the builders refuſed or deſpiſed, is become the head ſtone of the corner.* There were maſter builders in the Church, who (when they ſurveyed all ſorts of materials or ſtones for their fabrick of faith) looking upon the perſon of Chriſt, thought him fit only to caſt out among the rubbiſh, as altogether unuſeful; they layed him by, as a refuſe-ſtone, who is the *head corner ſtone,* both the ſtrength and beauty of the whole building. Thus the word is very appliable to the preſent Text: refuſe not corrections, as unprofitable and uſeleſs: Say not (as the Jews of Chriſt, *Can any good come out of Nazareth?* ſo) can any good come out of chaſtenings? *Deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Almighty.*

And from this notion of the word, we may obſerve a ſecond prejudice againſt the rod: Even the Saints are ready to conceive afflictions to be unuſeful, and that they could well enough ſpare, and be without their troubles. A natural eye never ſees nor finds any thing but dammage by affliction; and a ſpiritual Eye doth not alwayes ſee the advantage that comes by them. Yea, he may ſometime ſay of an affliction, it will be my undoing, and the ruine of my houſe, and yet afterwards find it *as a corner ſtone,* the choiceſt outward means, which (through the bleſſing of God) hath united the walls both of his ſpiritual and civil building, the frame both of grace within, and comforts without. The Apoſtle *Peter*, hath a ſtrange Parentheſis (1 *Pet.* 1.6.) For having told them of their rejoycing in the ſafety of their ſpiritual eſtate, being kept (or ſecured as with a Garriſon from Heaven) *by the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation. Though now for a ſeaſon (if need be) ye are in heavineſs through manifold Temptations,* or afflictions. Obſerve how he puts an *If need be,* or a ſuppoſition of neceſſity upon the afflictions of believers. As if he had ſaid, ye who are the *Candidates of eternity,* and heirs of ſalvation, may judge your ſelves paſt the *rod* or the *ferula,* and think, now ye have need of nothing but comfort or rejoycing in the hope of that ſalvation, ready to be revealed; but I tell you, you may have need of heavineſs yet, before you come to Heaven: and of manifold temptations, for the removing or ſubduing the corruptions of your hearts, before you enter upon your *incorruptible inheritance.* We are apt to conceive chaſtnings to be of no uſe, when they are as neceſſary as our daily bread; therefore *deſpiſe not chaſtnings,* as uſeleſs or unprofitable.

Thirdly, The word is applied often to the rejecting of a thing or perſon, as low, diſhonourable and diſgraceful: In this ſence alſo it is appliable here. *Deſpiſe not chaſtning:* That is, do not think thy ſelf diſgrac'd when thou art chaſtiſed: The heart of man is naturally full of pride, *Man is a proud piece of fleſh.* Nor doth he reſent any thing more, then his diſhonour; many can bear the pain of the croſs, better then the ſhame of the croſs. It is very obſervable to this purpoſe, how the Apoſtle deſcribes the Lord Chriſt in his ſufferings, *Heb.* 12.2. *He endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame:* as noting, that his being above the ſhame of the croſs, bore up his ſpirit under the croſs. *To deſpiſe ſhame,* is to look upon that, which the world accounts ſhameful, not only as deſpicable in it ſelf, but as not hurtful to us: When a man deſpiſes an enemy, as *Goliah* diſdained *David* (1 *Sam.* 17.42.) he preſumes himſelf above his enemies power to hurt him: So to deſpiſe ſhame is to make nothing of it, or to think our ſelves no whit the worſe for it; yea rather to think our ſelves honoured by it. And until in this ſence we can *deſpiſe ſhame,* we ſhall deſpiſe correction and the croſs. Who is it almoſt, that finds not this the hardeſt Text in all the Chapter of afflictions? *Zedekiah* was more afraid to be mocked by the fugitive Jews, then to be a priſoner to the King of *Babylon*, *Jer.* 38.19. If a man be poor, preſently he thinks he is diſgraced: if he be weak, he doubts he ſhall be contemned: if he looſe his eſtate, he fears he ſhall looſe his credit in the world: he was a man of place, ſome-body among his neighbours, but now he ſhall be ſlighted. *Suffering for well doing, is our crown; ſuffering for evil doing, is our ſhame; but it is no ſhame to ſuffer.*

Fourthly, *To deſpiſe* a thing, notes the ſlighting of it, as if we did not think it worth while, to take any notice of it; and ſo this will be the ſence, *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtnings of the Lord*; that is, do not ſlight the chaſtnings, do not lightly paſs them by, do not look upon them as inconſiderable, as not caring what God doth with thee or thine. *When God layes his hand upon us, he would have us lay it to our hearts.* As it is our duty to be affected with mercies, ſo likewiſe with chaſtnings. If a malefactor ſhould ſay to the Judge, do what you will with me, I care not; or a child to the Parent, correct me as long as you will, I care not; how unnatural were this? This is properly to deſpiſe afflictions. Some are like *Leviathan* in this ſence (*Job* 41.27.) *They eſteem Iron as Straw, and Braſs as rotten Wood*: They make nothing of the acts or inſtruments of Gods diſpleaſure. This is groſs deſpiſing. But beſides every undervaluing, or inadvertency of the correcting hand of God, hath a degree of this deſpiſing it. That exhortation ought never to be forgotten, which ſpeaketh to us, as unto children, *Heb.* 12.5. *My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* The Greek word imports, the *Littling, or thinking of them little.* Do not think the chaſtnings of God little, do not little, or ſlight them in thy thoughts. *Neither faint when thou art rebuked,* that is, do not think thy afflictions ſo great, that thou muſt needs ſink and faint under them. Theſe are the two extreams, into which our hearts uſually run when chaſtnings are upon us. Some err by neglecting the hand of God, as light; and others by fainting under it, as too heavy. As a good heart takes notice of, or will not deſpiſe a little, the leaſt comfort; ſo it will take notice of, and not deſpiſe a little, the leaſt croſs. When a man hath a ſmall loſs in his eſtate, if he ſay, this will not undo me, I can bear this, I will fare as well, and go as fine as ever for all this, ſuch ſpeeches or thoughts are a deſpiſing of the chaſtening of the Lord. We are to obſerve the hand of God taking away, as well as giving a penny. So when a man hath a little fit of ſickneſs, if he ſay, I ſhall rub out this well enough, this is to deſpiſe the chaſtning of the Lord: We are to bleſs God for every hours health, and to be ſenſible of his hand in every hours ſickneſs, or aking joynt.

μὴ ὀλιγώρει παιδείας κυρίȣ.

Every affliction is a meſſenger from God, it hath ſomewhat to ſay to us from Heaven; and God will not bear it, if his meſſengers be deſpiſed, how mean ſoever: If you ſend a child with a meſſage to a friend, and he ſlight and deſpiſe him, you will take it ill. I remember what the ſtory relates of *Galienus* the Emperor, who, when the report came to him, that *Egypt* was loſt, what then (ſaid he) cannot I live without the flax of *Egypt*? And when the report was brought that a great part of his Dominion in *Aſia* was waſted: Cannot I live (ſaid he) without the delicacies of *Aſia*? To ſpeak thus from a principle of mortification toward the creature, is the character of an excellent ſpirit; but to ſpeak thus from a contempt of the providence of God, is the character of a proud, or of a ſtupid ſpirit. When we hear of the loſs of a child, of a friend, or of a loſs in our eſtate; to ſay, what then? I can bear that well enough, I have more children, other friends, eſtate enough beſides that, this (I ſay) is a high deſpiſing of affliction.

There is one thing further, in the fifth place, obſervable in this word, *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtnings of the Lord.* The word is an extenuation or a leſſening of the ſence. The Holy Ghoſt intends more then is expreſſed; for the truth is, when he ſaith, *Deſpiſe not,* &c. His meaning is this, ſhew reverence, highly prize and eſteem the chaſtning of the Lord. As (for inſtance) when the Apoſtle ſaith, in 1 *Theſ.* 5.20. *Diſpiſe not prophecying.* Do you think this is all that is due unto an Ordinance of God, that a man ſhould not deſpiſe it? Surely no, he means then, prize prophecying highly, have it in great eſteem: So in 1 *Tim.* 4.12. and *Tit.* 2.15. when he ſaith, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth,* is that all the Holy Ghoſt means? That *Timothy* a godly Paſtour ſhould only not be deſpiſed by his people? No, his meaning is, that they ſhould honour, reſpect and reverence him, as one that watched over them in

Extenuatio eſt, nã plus ſignificatur quã dicitur, ſc. maximi facito diſciplininã Domini, nihil tibi antiquius aut potius ſit, quã ut illius correctionẽ æquo animo accipias.

in the Lord. I might give you divers other Scriptures, where, when the Holy Ghoſt only forbiddeth the ſin, he intendeth the duty or grace in ſtricteſt oppoſition to that ſin. So here, *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty*, layes this charge and duty upon us, highly to eſteem the chaſtening of the Lord; we muſt put afflictions amongſt our comforts, and rank them with our bleſſings. Not to deſpiſe, is but the firſt ſtep beyond ſin, but that includes the laſt and furtheſt ſtep of duty, which becomes us under chaſtenings.

מוסר *à radice* יסר *Vincivit, ligavit, & per Metaphorã, caſtigavit, erudivit verbis aut verberibus, ad diſciplinã vel pœnã transfertur. Sicut vox Lamad, quæ doctrinã ſignificat etiam aliquando ſtimulũ ſonat.*

So much of the act forbidden, *deſpiſing*. Now, for the object, **chaſtening**. The original verb ſignifies to inſtruct, or to teach; ſo it is tranſlated, *Chap. 4. verſ. 3. Thou haſt inſtructed many*. Inſtruction is both by words and blows. The wiſdom of God mixes a rod with his word, and chaſtening with teaching: Therefore it is promiſcuouſly uſed in Scripture, ſometime for teaching, and ſometime for chaſtening. Chaſtening belongs properly to children, who are wanton and ungovern'd, who have a bundle of folly in their hearts, which the rod of correction driveth out. *To be chaſtened*, hath a double aſpect upon us; Firſt, upon our priviledge: Secondly, upon our weakneſs. To be chaſtened, notes our priviledge and relation, as children, unto God our Father. He hath revenges for his enemies, but chaſtenings are a part of his childrens portion; yet in that we are chaſtened, it taxes us of weakneſs; we are but children, fooliſh, unruly, wanton, and therefore we go almoſt all our dayes, with a rod at our backs. Though the Saints on Earth, compared among themſelves, are ſome children, and others men; yet all the Saints on Earth, compared with thoſe in Heaven, or with what themſelves ſhall be in Heaven, are children, and therefore they have what fits their ſtate, *chaſtening and correction*. This *chaſtening* is ſometime put for revenge, or the exacteſt and ſevereſt retribution of juſtice; thus it is ſaid, *Prov. 7.22.* That the fooliſh young man caught by the ſubtil harlot, *went after her as a fool to the correction of the ſtocks*; that is, as a wicked man goes to puniſhment. And when the Prophet deſcribes the ſufferings of Chriſt, which were vindictive in the higheſt degree; he expreſſes it in this word, *The chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him* (Iſa. 53. 5.) Though Chriſt were the infinitely and moſt entirely beloved Son of his Father, yet he did not chaſtiſe him as a ſon, but as an enemy or malefactor; for he chaſtened him in our ſtead, and under the ſame notion, that we muſt have been chaſtened, who were enemies and malefactors. So then, the word ſignifies ſometimes judiciary chaſtening, but here fatherly chaſtening; which will yet appear more clearly, in opening the laſt term of this verſe, which ſhews us the efficient cauſe of this chaſtening. *The Almighty*.

Deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Almighty.] The chaſtening rod is in the hand of *Shaddai*, the Almighty. This is one of the glorious names of God.

שדי *Variè derivatur; Primò à radice* שדד, *Vaſtavit, ſpoliavit, populatus eſt, perdidit, quaſi vaſtatorẽ dicas, i.e. invictũ & potentem cui nemo reſiſtere poſſit. Et volunt nonnulli Deum hoc nomen traxiſſe à vaſtatione mundi facta in diluvio. Græci reddunt παντοκράτωρ, & Latini, Omnipotens.*

And he is ſo called, Firſt, from his power, to go thorough with what he takes in hand: His work never ſticks in the mid-way for want of ſtrength to bring it to the end. Deſpiſe not the correction of an Almighty hand. Further, the word notes not only power enough to correct, but power to deſtroy, ſpoil and lay all waſte before him. God hath gained this Title or Attribute, from deſtroying or waſting his enemies. Some of the Rabbins deſign the Original of it, to that ſpecial act of his deſtroying power, *The drowning of the old world*; he ſhews his Almighty power in deſtroying and pulling down, as well as in making or ſetting up this goodly frame. To this the holy Prophets are well conceived to allude, when they ſay that, *Shod, ſcil.* Deſtruction, commeth from *Shaddai, The Almighty*. We have it in two expreſs Texts, *Iſa. 13. 6. Howle ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand, it ſhall come as a Deſtruction from the Almighty*; it ſhall come as *Shod* from *Shaddai*. So (*Joel* 1. 15.) *Alas for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a deſtruction from the Almighty ſhall it come*. It will be profitable for us to conſider, under what name God is expreſſed, when he is chaſtening his own children.

Secondly, Others derive this name from the conjunction of two Hebrew words, whereof the one (*Dai*) ſignifies, it *Sufficeth*, or is ſufficient: and the other, though it be but a letter (*Shin*) yet it ſupplieth the part or place of the Relative (*Aſcher*) *which*, and ſo the word put together ſounds thus much, *Who is ſufficient, or who is all-ſufficient*; *Deſpiſe not the chaſtening of him that is all-ſufficient*. Thou art under his correction, who doth not take from thee, becauſe he wants himſelf; who doth not let thee want, becauſe his own ſtore is ſpent, out of which he uſed to ſupply thee. He alone hath ſufficiency in himſelf, and he is at all times *all-ſufficient* for all others, and gives ſufficiency to as many, as he pleaſeth. That of the Apoſtle fills this ſignification of the word, *Act. 17. 25. Neither is he worſhipped with mens hands, as if he needed any thing; for he giveth to all, life and breath, and all things*.

Nonnulli putant שדי *eſſe ex verbo* די *ſufficit, & litera* ש, *quæ ſupplet locum & ſenſum relativi* Aſcher, *& ita denotat* Deum *ſibi ſufficientem, & qui omnibus largitur ſufficientiam, reſpondens Græco* αὐτάρκης Druſ.

Thirdly, The word is conceived to come from *Shad*, which in the Hebrew ſignifies a *breaſt*, the mothers *breaſt or pap*, by which ſhe ſuckles her child. And anſwerable to this notion, in moſt of thoſe places, wherein God is expreſſed in that act of his providence, making fruitful, and giving increaſe, he hath this name, *Shaddai*: as noting, that he hath the *Great Milky Breaſt*, which nouriſhes and ſuckles, which feeds and ſtrengthens all creatures: that is, the word, his bleſſing, not only makes fruitful and multiplies, but preſerves and keeps alive. Thus, *Gen. 49. 25.* the Patriarch, old dying *Jacob*, bleſſes his ſon *Joſeph* in this form, *And by the Almighty* (Shaddai) *who ſhall bleſs thee with bleſſings of Heaven above, bleſſings of the deep that lies under, bleſſings of the breaſts, and of the womb*. His Father *Iſaac* had ſent him to *Padan-Aram* under the influences of the ſame bleſſing, almoſt in the ſame words, (*Gen.* 28 3.) *God all-mighty bleſs thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee*. And the Lord himſelf ſpeaks thus to *Jacob*, when he appeared the ſecond time to him, after his coming from *Padan-Aram*. *I am* (El-Shaddai) *God Almighty, be thou fruitful and multiply*, Gen. 35. 11. that is, I can make thee fruitful, and multiply thy poſterity, and I can feed them, as faſt as they multiply, and give thee fruit for thy family, as well as make thy family fruitful. *Thou ſhalt not over-charge me with the greatneſs or numerouſneſs of thy houſe. Trouble not thy ſelf, let thy children be my care, at my finding, how many ſoever they are, let my purſe pay for all: I am* El-Shaddai, *God Almighty*. So then, as the juſtice and exact wiſdom of God are ſet forth in the former branch under the title *Elohim, Happy is the man whom God,* (Elohim) *corrects*; ſo (leaſt we ſhould think of God under that notion only) his power and all-ſufficiency, his goodneſs and tenderneſs are ſet forth in the next branch, *Deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Almighty*. You are under the rod of *Shaddai*, an *All-powerful*, an *All-ſufficient*, an *All-nouriſhing God*. The verſe following ſeems to joynt in with, and ſuit this fully, *He makes ſore, and he bindeth up; he woundeth and he healeth*; one part ſhewing us God, as a Judge, *wounding and making ſore*; the other, as an all-ſufficient Friend, and Father or Phyſitian, *healing and binding up*. Take two or three Notes, from the conſideration of the name, under which God is here expreſſed.

Alii deducunt שד à שדי *Quod Mammam ſignificat, quaſi mãmoſũ dicas, quod omnia alat.* Druſ.

Firſt, *The lighteſt chaſtenings come from a hand that is able to deſtroy.*

When the ſtroak is little, yet a great God ſtrikes. Although God give thee but a touch, a ſtripe which ſcarce razes the ſkin: yet he is able to wound thee to the heart. Know, it is not becauſe he wants power to ſtrike harder, but becauſe he will not, becauſe he is pleaſed to moderate his power; thou haſt but ſuch a chaſtening, as a child of a year old may well bear; but at that time, know, thou art chaſtened with a hand able to pull down the whole world; the hand of *Shaddai, The Almighty* gives that little blow. Men ſeldom ſtrike their brethren, leſs then their power; they would often ſtrike them more, their will is ſtronger then their Arm. But the Lords arm is ſtronger (in this ſence) then his will. He doth but chaſten, who could deſtroy. And this carries a mighty perſwaſion with it, not to *deſpiſe the chaſtening of the Lord*, how little ſoever; for he can ſtrike harder, if thou ſlighteſt this. He can break thy bones, who hath not yet broken thy fleſh. *Fear him* (as our Lord Chriſt argues, who, though at the preſent he hath made thy head only to ake a little, yet) *can kill thy body, and after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell.*

Pondus eſt in voce שדי *noli ſpernere clementiam ejus in quo vivis, qui te uno momẽto poteſt comminuere.* Cocc.

Secondly, In that afflictions, come from *Shaddai*, a God all-ſufficient, God would have us conceive in all our troubles;

> That, *when he takes away any or all created comforts from us, yet he is himſelf all-ſufficient for us.*

When we are chaſtened by the loſs of any good things, *Shaddai* doth it, who hath the power of all good things in his hand. When he takes away riches, or health, or relations, if he doth not take away himſelf from us, we cannot be comfortleſs, for all-ſufficiency ſtands by us.

Laſtly, He dealeth with us, but as a tender nurſe, or mother in all his chaſtenings. The mother ſtrikes the child a little blow with one hand, and gives it the breaſt with the other; ſhe gives it a little tap with one hand, and a ſpoon with the other. Conſider your chaſtenings, they are the chaſtenings of *Shaddai*, who, as a tender mother, hath a breaſt ready to nouriſh, and a ſpoon to feed, while he chides or chaſtens. And if by greater afflictions, he wounds or makes you very ſore, you ſhall not want careful dreſſing and aſſured healing.

Verſ. 18. **For he maketh ſore, and he bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.**

This verſe contains an exemplification of the former ground, why we ſhould not deſpiſe the *chaſtening of the Almighty*: For if it ſhould be objected againſt the former aſſertion (*Happy is the man whom God correcteth.*) Where is this happineſs? Is there happineſs in ſores and wounds, in ſickneſs and weakneſs, in poverty and in wants? Who cannot eaſily want this happineſs, and not complain? *Eliphaz* ſeems to anſwer for God in this Text. If your faith cannot come up to believe this, ſtay but a while, and your ſenſe ſhall teach it you. Who would not be glad of a wound when he knows he ſhall have *Shaddai* for his Chirurgion. If you will not allow a man is happy, when he is ſore; will you not allow him happy, when his ſore is bound up by ſuch a hand? If you will not grant a man is happy, when wounded; you cannot deny him happy, when he is thus healed. The Almighty will not leave them in their ſores, in their wounds: As he hath a rod, ſo he hath a ſwath; as he hath a ſword, ſo a ſalve. His plaiſter is ready for your wound, and his medicines for your diſeaſes. It is true of God above all others, *One and the ſame hand ſmites and cures*. Thus of the general meaning and connexion of this verſe.

Unde eadēque manus vulnus opēque tulit.

He maketh ſore.] The word is uſed in the ſecond Chapter of this book, *verſ.* 13. of *Job*'s friends, that they ſtood ſilent, for they ſaw his grief was great, or his ſoreneſs was very great. It notes the grief and ſoreneſs, either of mind or body; ſome tranſlate, *He woundeth*: But the next clauſe bears that diſtinctly, or we may joyn both, the one, as the cauſe, the other, as the effect, *He maketh ſore by wounding.*

כאב *Doluit animo vel corpore.*

And bindeth up.] The word is appliable to any kind of binding. First, To the binding of captives in priſon with chains. Secondly, To the binding of ornaments upon the head, *Ezek.* 29. 9. Thirdly, It is uſed metaphorically for binding to obedience or puniſhemt, *Job* 34. 17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* The Hebrew is, *ſhall he bind*; becauſe Governors bind their ſubjects or ſervants, either to do what they command, or to ſuffer what they inflict. Fourthly, It is alſo applied by a metaphor to the binding up of thoſe civil breaches or ruines, which are upon a people, *Iſa.* 3. 6, 7. *A man ſhall take hold of his brother*, &c. *ſaying, be thou a ruler, and let this ruine be under thy hand. In that day ſhall he ſwear, ſaying, I will not be a Healer, or a Binder up.* Fifthly, It is uſed for the applying of ligatures, with which the medicine or plaiſter is bound upon the wound or ſore; and this word doth therefore alſo ſignifie the healing of a wound, becauſe the due binding of the wound is one half of the patients cure, and a very great part of a Chirurgions skill, as the learned Phyſitians obſerve in their Diſcourſes about wounds and Chirurgery; Ligature contributes ſo much to healing, that the ſame word ſerves for both, or either. Now (*Shaddai*) the Almighty is admirable at this, when he hath made a ſore, he can make an exact *Ligature*. We often find theſe two together, *Pſal.* 147. 3. *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.* The Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 34. 4.) complains of the falſe Prophets, *Becauſe they did not heal, that which was ſick, and bound not up, that which was broken.* They had neither skill nor conſcience, either ſpiritually to break hearts, or when they found them broken to bind them up. They knew not how to faſten Goſpel promiſes and holy counſels upon the heart, that the wounds of it might be cloſed, and were therefore Phyſitians of no value.

חבש *Ligavit, colligavit.*

Partim quidem ipſu deligatio ſanat, &c. Maxima deligationis vis eſt. Hip. *in Officina Chirurg.*

There are two interpretations given of theſe words, *He maketh ſore, and he bindeth up.*

Firſt, Some expound them by an *Enallage* of the Participle for the Verb, thus, *He maketh ſore, and he bindeth up*; that is, *He making ſore, bindeth up*; as if the very act, by which God ſmites, had an influence upon the healing and a tendency to the reſtoring of his afflicted ones, *He making ſore, bindeth up.* We find ſuch conſtructions frequent in Scripture, *Iſa.* 65. 22. *They ſhall not build, and another inhabit; they ſhall not plant, and another eat:* That is, *They building, another ſhall not inhabit, and they planting, another ſhall not eat.* The negative is not fixed upon their building, *&c.* but upon other inhabiting. And ſo, *Deut.* 22. 4. *Thou ſhalt not ſee thy brothers Aſs, or his Ox fall down by the way, and hide thy ſelf from them:* That is, *Thou ſeeing thy brothers Aſs or Ox fall down, ſhalt not hide thy ſelf from them:* A man ſometimes could not but ſee his brothers Aſs or Ox fall down: but he ſeeing, muſt not at any time, hide himſelf from them, that is, not ſuccour them; ſo (by the way) that phraſe of hiding may be interpreted, by that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 58. 7.) *Thou ſhalt not hide thy ſelf from thy own fleſh.* But to the point, here we ſee, *He maketh ſore, and bindeth up*; may congruouſly to other Scripture ſpeakings, be rendred, *He making ſore, doth bind up*; as if the wound were a part of the cure, and the ſore a plaiſter. We know that a wound in nature is ſometime a part of the cure: it is a common and a neceſſary practiſe in Chirurgery (and to that the Holy Ghoſt may allude in this place) when they perceive a wound or a ſore, to which medicines cannot well be applied (and ſo unfit for healing) either to make a new wound in the whole fleſh, or to make the firſt bigger. The murderer wounds to kill, and the Phyſitian wounds to cure. He comes, as it were, arm'd with inſtruments of cruelty. The patient whoſe fleſh is to be launced cries out, but yet he launces him. The patient whoſe fleſh is to be ſeared, cryes out, but yet he ſears him. He is cruel to the wound, while he is moſt kind to the wounded.

Vulnerat & medetur, i. e. *vulnerans medetur, vulnerando ſanat.*

An ignorant man would wonder to ſee a Chirurgion, when he comes for healing, make the wound wider, yet ſo he muſt do, and he doth it upon urgent reaſons. As when the orifice is not wide enough to let in the medicine, or to let out the corruption, or cannot admit his ſearching inſtruments to the bottom; in ſuch caſes, he ſaith, *Unleſs I increaſe your wound, I cannot cure it.* Thus often times the Lord is compelled to wound, that he may heal; or fit our wounds for healing. Our wound is not wide enough, to let out the ſinful corruption of our hearts, to let in the ſearching inſtruments and corraſives of the Law, or the balm and comfortable applications of the Goſpel.

Illa eſt vox Domini, percutiam & ego ſanabo; hoc faciunt medici. Ferrum geſtant & curare veniūt. Clamat ſecandus & ſecatur; ſævitur in vulnus ut homo ſanetur. Aug. *in Pſa.* 50. *Chirurgus ſæpe vulnus infligit, & ferro ſibi ſpacium ad commodam curationem aperit.*

We may Obſerve from this ſence of the words,

> That, *The woundings and ſmitings of God, are preparatories for our cure and healing.*

It is ſaid (*Iſa.* 53. 5.) of Chriſt, *that with his ſtripes we are healed:* and it is in this ſence a truth, that we are healed with our own ſtripes: We are healed with the ſtripes of Chriſt *meritoriouſly*, and we are healed by our own ſtripes *preparatorily*; the ſtripes of Chriſt heal us naturally, our own ſtripes heal us occaſionally: or his in the act, ours in the event. (*Prov.* 27. 6.) *Faithful are the wounds of a friend*, his wounds are faithful, becauſe he wounds in faithfulneſs: The healings of many are unfaithful. *They heal the hurt of the daughter of my people deceitfully*, is the Lords complaint by the Prophet, they skin over the wound, but they do not cure it. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs; and let him reprove me, it ſhall be an excellent oyl which ſhall not break my head*, Pſalm 141. 5. Much more may we ſay, *Let the righteous Lord ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſs to me; let the righteous Lord reprove and correct me, it ſhall be as an excellent oyl, which ſhall not break mine head*; it ſhall heal my heart: How healing then are his ſalves, whoſe very ſores are a ſalve?

Secondly, Take the words in the plain rendring of them, noting only thus much, that God makes ſore, and bindeth up; ſo we have two diſtinct acts, often aſcribed to God in a figure, to ſet forth judgment and mercy, the afflictions and deliverance of his people (*Hoſ.* 6.2.) *Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up.* (1 Sam. 2.6.) *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive.* (Deut. 32.39.) *See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive, I wound, and I heal.* Hence obſerve,

It is the property of God to take care of all the ſickneſſes, ſores or evils of his people.

As God is the great corrector and inſtructer of his people, ſo he is the great Phyſitian of his people: If he make a wound, he will take care for the healing of it; he doth not make ſores, and leave others to bind up. Mighty men wound, but they take no care for healing; they can impoveriſh and ſpoil, but they care not to repair; they can pull down and root up, let who ſo will build and plant. *Shaddai, the Almighty God* doth both; if he break thy head, come to him, humble thy ſelf before him, and he will ſurely give thee a plaiſter, which will coſt thee nothing but the asking. And whereas *he doth not willingly afflict or grieve*, he doth moſt willingly comfort and heal the children of men, *Lam.* 33.3. He ſpeaks of it as a pain to himſelf to make us ſore; but to make us ſound, is his delight and pleaſure. Satan is the *Abaddon*, the deſtroyer, and he only deſtroyes; he makes wounds, but he heals none; he kills, but he makes none alive.

The ſecond Branch of the Verſe [**He woundeth, and his hands make whole**] is but a repetition of the ſame thing, yet with ſome addition, or heightning of the ſence. To *make ſore*, and *bind up*, are not ſo deep either in judgment or in mercy, as to *wound* and *make whole*.

מחץ *Transfodit, transfixit, vel cruentavit.*

The word uſed for wounding, imports a dangerous and deadly wound, or to make a man all *gore blood*. It ſignifies to ſtrike quite through; and it is divers times applied, to note that ſtroak which God gives his worſt enemies, *Pſal.* 68.21. *But God ſhall wound the head of his enemies,* or, *he ſhall ſtrike them quite through the head.* ver. 23. *He ſhall dip his foot,* or *make it red in the blood of the ungodly.* And, *Pſal.* 110.5. *The Lord ſhall ſtrike through Kings in the day of his wrath.* Hence obſerve,

That, *God ſometimes makes very deep and great wounds in his own ſervants.*

Such wounds, as by the ſight of the eye, you cannot diſtinguiſh them from the wounds of his mortal enemies. He ſtrikes through both heads and hearts of his own people: Or as *Simeon* ſaid to the bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, Luke 2.35. *A ſword pierceth through their ſoul alſo.* But then laſtly note,

God never makes a wound too great for his own cure.

The power of God to ſave, is as great as his power to deſtroy; his healing power and his wounding power, are of the ſame extent; his juſtice cannot out-act his mercy; both are infinite.

And not only doth he heal the wounds which himſelf makes, but he can heal the wounds which men make; even all the wounds which the utmoſt power and malice of man can make. He is able to do more good, to ſhew more mercy, then all creatures are able to do hurt or miſchief. We find the ſtate and condition of a people ſometimes ſo wounded and ſick, that men have deſpaired of recovery; being conſulted, they may anſwer, your ſore cannot be bound up, and your wound cannot be healed, your eſtate is gangreen'd and paſt cure: *Lo*, he ſaid, as was toucht before, (*Iſa.* 3.8.) *In that day ſhall a man ſwear, ſaying, I will not be an healer, for in my houſe is neither bread nor cloathing.* Alas, I heal you! I cannot heal you; your troubles are paſt my ſkill to remedy or redreſs. Thus man is ſometimes at a ſtand, he cannot heal what men have wounded; but God is never at a ſtand; your old feſtered ſores, and rankled wounds which have taken wind, diſcourage not his Chyrurgery. When a people are in ſuch a pickle or pitiful plight, as the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes the Kingdom of *Judah*, in chap. 1.56. *The whole head is ſick, and the whole heart is faint: from the ſole of the foot, unto the head, there is no ſoundneſs in it, but wounds, and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores; they have not been cloſed, neither bound up, neither mollified with oyntment.* When (I ſay) the caſe of a people is thus, and they can get no healer: yea, though a people (like the woman, *Mark* 5.25.) *have had an iſſue of blood* (in bloody battels, which is now almoſt *Englands* caſe) *many years, and have ſuffered many things of many Phyſitians, and have ſpent all that they have, and are nothing bettered, but rather grow worſe; yet if Chriſt do but touch ſuch a ſick, diſeaſed, bleeding people in mercy, and they touch him in faith, they ſhall be healed, and their fountain of blood will immediately dry up.* Or if their condition requires ſome longer operation, he can effectually take ſuch a courſe for their cure; he is abundantly furniſhed with all inſtruments and abilities for the making of a perfect cure.

It is well obſerved, that three things are neceſſary for a Chyrurgion.

Firſt, He muſt have an *Eagles eye*; one that is good at healing, had need be good at ſeeing.

Secondly, He muſt have a *Ladies hand*, ſoft and tender, to handle the ſore gently.

Thirdly, A *Lions heart*, a ſtout ſtrong heart; for if he faint, how ſhall his Patient keep up his courage?

Theſe three are exceeding neceſſary in Chyrurgery about natural bodies; but much more in Chyrurgery about Civil and Eccleſiaſtical bodies, the healing of Churches and Kingdoms. And where ſhall we find, whither ſhall we ſend for Phyſitians, qualified with this *Eagles eye*, to look into all our ſores and ſickneſſes? with this *Ladies hand*, to deal gently and tenderly with our wounds? with this *Lions heart*, ſtoutly and couragiouſly, without fears and faintings, to go through with the work? Well, if men ſhould not be found thus furniſhed, the Lord is: He hath an *Eagles eye*, an all-ſeeing eye, ſeven eyes of providence and wiſdom, to look through our ſores, and into all our diſtempers: He hath (as in alluſion we may ſpeak) a *Ladies hand*, ſoft and tender, to deal gently and graciouſly with a people; he can dreſs our wounds, and pain us little, ſcarce be felt while he doth it. And he hath the *Lions heart*, infinite courage and ſtrength of ſpirit, to undertake the moſt gaſtly wounds, or ſwoln putrified ſores. Let us therefore reſt our ſelves aſſured, that whatſoever our perſonal or our National ſores, our perſonal or our National wounds be, be they what they will, or what we can call them, deſperate, incurable, ſuch as have diſcouraged many from medling with their cure, or ſham'd thoſe that have; yet our *Shaddai*, the almighty God, can bind them up and heal them, fetch the core from the bottom, and cloſe the skin upon the top, ſo tenderly dreſs, and ſo perfectly cure them, that a ſcar ſhall not remain, unleſs it be to mind us of his infinite skill and goodneſs, or of our own duty and thankfulneſs.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

He ſhall deliver thée in ſix troubles, yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thée.

In famine he ſhall redéem thée from death, and in war from the power of the ſword.

Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the tongue; neither ſhalt thou be afraid of deſtruction when it cometh.

E*Liphaz* ſtill proſecuteth his former Argument, to take *Job* off from deſpiſing the *chaſtenings of the Almighty* ſpoken of at the ſeventeenth verſe. And having ſhewed, firſt in general, that they are happy whom the Lord corrects: And ſecondly, That the Lord heels as well as wounds, is as ready to bind up, as to make the ſore; he illuſtrates this by giving,

Firſt, An aſſurance of deliverance from evil, and that,

1. In the general, at the nineteenth verſe.
2. By an enumeration of particular caſes of greateſt dangers and outward evils.

And ſecondly, To ſhew the happineſs of thoſe whom God corrects, he gives an aſſurance of poſitive bleſſings, which ſhall in due time be heaped upon their heads, whom God had before wounded with ſorrows, and loaded with afflictions.

The nineteenth verſe is a promiſe of deliverance from evil.

נצל
Spoliavit, rapuit, eripuit tanquā ab hoſte aut malo. Eripere prædā.

צר
Anguſtia, interdum ſignificat hoſtem, quaſi anguſtiatorem dicas.

evil. **He ſhall deliver thee from ſix troubles; yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee.**

To **deliver**, notes here, the ſnatching or pulling of a man out of the hand of an enemy, out of the mouth of danger.

The Hebrew word for [**Trouble**] comes from a Root, which ſignifies to ſtraighten or to narrow a thing up in a little compaſs; and ſo by a Metaphor, to vex and trouble; becauſe they who are ſtraightned in any kind, are pained and troubled. And when we hear of any trouble, we uſually ſay, ſuch are in ſtraights. And this word is often tranſlated *a ſtraight* (2 Sam. 24. 14.) *I am in a great ſtraight*, ſaith *David*, when he was put upon that hard election, between Sword, Peſtilence and Famine. So, *Judg.* 11. 7. & 1 *Sam.* 13. 6.

The holy Language expreſſes an Enemy or Adverſary by this word, becauſe an Enemy puts upon ſtraights, and ſo, to much trouble.

And to raiſe the force of this word to the higheſt, it is uſed to ſignifie the pangs and throws of women in childbearing, in which the mother labours in grievous ſtraights, while the infant labours for enlargement. Troubles ever meet us in, or bring us into ſtraights; they may well change names, which are ſo near in nature; I find the word ſo tranſlated here, in ſome Books, *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix ſtraights, and in ſeven*; when thou art ſo encompaſt about, ſhut in and encircled by evils on every ſide, that thou knoweſt not which way to move or turn, much leſs to go out; then the Lord will give enlargement, and either find a way out for thee, or make one, as he did for *Iſrael* at the red Sea, through thoſe mighty waters.

In ſix, yea, in ſeven.] This phraſe of ſpeech is very conſiderable: Some numbers in Scripture, have a kind of eminency or excellency in them: I intend not any large diſcourſe about numbers; only in brief. Thoſe three numbers, *Three, Six* and *Seven*, are applied to a ſpecial ſignification by the Holy Ghoſt. A great number, a perfect number is expreſſed by any one of theſe three numbers; *A threefold cord* (that is, a cord of many or ſufficient folds) *is not eaſily broken*, Eccleſ. 4. 12. *Three times thou ſhalt keep a feaſt to me in the year*, Exod. 23. 14. *Three times in the year all thy males ſhall appear before the Lord*, ver. 17. The Candleſtick had three Branches, *Exod.* 25. 32. And *three cubits was the height of the Altar*, Exod. 27. 1. *Three Cities of refuge* were appointed for the man-ſlayer, *Deut.* 19. 7. And the addition made is of another *three*, v. 9. *Three witneſſes* gave the compleateſt evidence requirable; as *Two*, the leaſt admittable in the Law, *Deut.* 17. 6. That (beſides a rule) there was a myſtery in moſt of theſe, I think no man doubts; though what the myſtery was, may be preſumption in any man to determine. Of this we are ſure, that the higheſt myſtery and perfection of all *numbers* and *things*, is found in *One Three, That Three in One, The ſacred Trinity*: And in the common ſpeech of moſt, if not of all Languages, *Thrice happy, Thrice great, Thrice honourable*, note a man advanced to the very pinacle of *Happineſs, Greatneſs* and *Honour. The Number Three, or the Numeral Thrice, imply a compleatneſs in all Numbers.*

That the number ſix notes perfection, may be ſeen in the work of Creation: The Lord could as eaſily have made the world in ſix, or in one moment, as in ſix dayes; but the Lord ſaw it good, to take a compleat number of dayes, for ſo compleat a work. God threatens *Gog*, his perfect and compleat enemy, with a compleat puniſhment, or with judgment in perfection, (*The Juſtice of God can be as compleat in puniſhing, as the malice of man can be in ſinning*) Ezek. 39. 2. *I am againſt thee, O Gog, the chief Prince of Meſhech and Tubal, I will turn thee back, and leave but the ſixth part of thee*; ſo we tranſlate: yet in the Margin of our Books, we find the Hebrew thus, *I will ſtrike thee with ſix plagues*, or, *I will draw thee back with a hook of ſix teeth.*

Seven is a famous number, implying, Firſt, Multitude. Secondly, Perfection: *The barren hath born ſeven* (ſaith *Hannah* in her Song, 1 *Sam.* 2. 5.) that is, many, ſhe is a compleat mother, ſhe hath a flouriſhing family, many children. And in oppoſition to this (*Jer.* 15. 9.) *She that hath born ſeven, languiſheth*, that is, ſhe that hath had many children, now hath none. Seven Devils were caſt out of the woman (*Luke* 8. 2.) that is, a multitude of Devils: So the *ſeven Spirits, the ſeven Churches, the ſeven Trumpets, the ſeven Seals, the ſeven Vials*, &c. in the *Revelation*, ſpeak the compleatneſs and perfection of each in their kind, whether good or evil: And that is appliable to the particular ſence of the Text (*Prov* 24. 16.) *The juſt falleth ſeven times a day*; that is, he falleth often, almoſt continually into trouble, and yet *he riſes again, God delivers him.* The Hebrew word *Shebange*, is near in ſound to our Engliſh *ſeven*; and to note that ſeven is a compleat full number, the ſame Hebrew word ſignifies *ſeven* and *full*, *ſeven* and *ſatisfied* or *compleat*. And the word to *ſwear*, is of the ſame extraction in that Language, with the word *ſeven*; the reaſon is added, becauſe in or about an Oath, many and important cauſes and grounds are required.

שבע *Septē*
שבע *Saturatus, impletus, abundavit.*

נשבע
Juravit, inde juramentum, à Septenario numero, ut quidam putant, quod juramenta fieri debeant multis adhibitis & idoneis multumque confirmatis teſtibus & cauſis.

But to paſs from ſingle numbers, I ſhall conſider them in conſtruction or conjunction, as here ſix and ſeven. *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee.* Some underſtand this ſtrictly and preciſely of thoſe two numbers ſix and ſeven; and expound the Text by the enumeration of thoſe ſix or ſeven particular evils made by *Eliphaz* in the following verſes: For having ſaid in general, that God will deliver his in ſix troubles and in ſeven, he reckoneth up ſeveral troubles, and gives us (as it were) a Catalogue, or a particular of thoſe evils by name, amounting to ſix or ſeven; as, 1. Famine. 2. War. 3. Scourge of the Tongue. 4. Deſtruction. 5. Evil Beaſts. 6. Hurtful Stones. Here are ſix; and if a ſeventh evil come upon thee, *in ſeven no evil ſhall touch thee.*

But I rather take this expreſſion, *ſix, yea ſeven*, to be a fixed number put for an unfixed, a certain number for an uncertain; and that uncertain number to be a great number, the greateſt number, any number imaginable. We find this kind of ſpeaking frequently in Scripture: In the thirty third of this Book of *Job*, v. 29. *Lo theſe things God works twice and thrice*; which we tranſlate, *theſe things God works oftentimes. When numbers are doubled with an encreaſe in the latter, it notes a mighty growth of the whole number. Twice and twice* (we know) is but four times; but *twice and thrice*, may be more then five times; *twice and thrice is oftentimes, no man knows how often.*

We find the number next above this in the ſame ſignification; *three and four*, are put for many, very many (*Amos* 1. 3.) *For three tranſgreſſions of Damaſcus, and for four*: Some underſtand it of three or four ſpecial ſins, of which *Damaſcus* was chiefly guilty; namely, 1. Idolatry. 2. Inceſt. 3. Luxury. 4. Oppreſſion. Or, Three may be taken for a *Cardinal* number, and Four for an *Ordinal*, for the *Fourth*, as if ſome fourth ſin were ſo ſinful, and had ſuch a malignity in it as the Lord would not pardon. Thus *Four* is put for the fourth, *Prov.* 30. 15, 18, 21, 29. *Three things are never ſatiſfied, yea, four things ſay not it is enough.* That is, a *fourth thing* (ſc. *fire* being the moſt unſatiable of all the reſt) ſaith not it is enough. The copulative particle (*and*) is often in Scripture taken comparatively, for *much more*, Pſal. 125. *The Mountains are round about Jeruſalem, and the Lord is about his people*; ſo the Hebrew: we tranſlate by *a comparative of ſimilitude*; *As, So*: but more emphatically to the ſcope of the place, by *a comparative of exceſs*. Thus, as the Mountains are about *Jeruſalem*, ſc. to fortifie and defend it; ſo *much more* is the Lord about his people to fortifie and defend them. In this ſence we may take the copulative *And*, in *Amos*. *For three tranſgreſſions*, the Lord would not turn, *&c.* but much more *for a fourth*, would he not turn away the puniſhment thereof. The former *three*, were enough to provoke the Lord to deſtroy you; but for this *fourth*, he is reſolved to be irreconcileable, and will deſtroy you. Others add *Three* to *Four*, which make ſeven, as if the Holy Ghoſt had ſaid, for ſeven (that is, manifold) tranſgreſſions of *Damaſcus*, I will not turn away, *&c.* But rather take the numbers diſtinct for *Three* and *Four*, that is, for the many, for the multitude of tranſgreſſions committed in *Damaſcus*, *I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof.* Not that the mercies of God are exceeded by any number; or that, becauſe they had gone on to ſin three and four times, that is, very often times; therefore the mercy of God was at a ſtand, and could go on no further; but theſe numbers three and four, note the boundleſs impenitency of thoſe *Syrians*, or their malicious perſecutions of the people of God, dayes and times without number. They turn not from their tranſgreſſions, theirs are *three and four*, they will never have done; therefore I will begin to puniſh, or I will never have done puniſhing; *I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof.* Such forms of ſpeech are frequent in heathen Authors, when they would enlarge or multiply the ſence.

O terq; quaterq; beati. Virg. *lib.* 1. Æn. *Terq; quaterq; manu pectus percuſſa Deorum.* Id. *l.* 4. *Ubi ſeptenario numero octenarius additur, ingentem exprimit & prope infinitam multitudinem.*

Again, The Numbers Seven and Eight, have a greater *Emphaſis* in Scripture (*Eccleſ.* 11. 8.) *Give a portion to ſeven and alſo unto eight.* That is, Give much, and give to many; give (yet diſcreetly) to all comers: We muſt not ſtint nor bound our charity; *Give a portion to ſeven*, give to many; and if there come more, give to more, *give alſo unto eight. Charity prefers ſome, but ſhe refuſes none, who are meet objects of charity*, And when the Lord would ſhew what choice and ſtore of able men, both for counſel and action, his people ſhould have in times of dangers and invaſions, he propheſies by *Micah*, that the people ſhall ſpeak thus (*Chap.* 5. 5.) *When he* (ſc. the *Aſſyrian*) *ſhall tread in our palaces, then ſhall we raiſe againſt him ſeven ſhepherds, and eight principal men*, that is, we ſhall muſter multitudes of wiſe, valiant, faithful men, every one of which may be fit to command or direct in chief; *Seven ſhepherds, and eight principal men.*

So then, *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, yea, in ſeven*, &c. is as if the *Holy Ghoſt* had ſaid by *Eliphaz*, O Job, *The Almighty Shaddai, of whom I have ſpoken to thee, is of ſuch power, and hath ſuch an unwearied arm, that he is able to deliver thee, not only in one, or two, or three, or many troubles, but he can deliver thee in ſix, yea in ſeven, in all thy troubles; let the number of thy afflictions be as great as thou canſt imagine. The power and malice of men cannot multiply thy troubles faſter, then the power and goodneſs of God can multiply thy deliverances; yea, if he pleaſes, he could perfect ſeven deliverances for thee, before they can lay the plot of one trouble againſt thee.* Obſerve hence in brief,

First, *Deliverance it is of the Lord.*

He ſhall deliver thee.] Whatſoever the inſtruments are, by which deliverance is brought to you, or in whoſe hand ſoever deliverance is put; know, that the work and procurement of it, is from above. It is the priviledge of God, and of God alone to be a *Deliverer*; and he hath deliverance at his command, *Pſal.* 44. 4. *Command deliverance for Jacob.* Man muſt humbly petition for, and beg deliverance: But God ſtands not intreating the creature, or debating the matter with Kings and Princes, with the ſtrongeſt and moſt hard-hearted *Pharaohs*, to deliver his people; but he ſends forth a *Writ of Deliverance*, and authoritatively commands deliverance, when it is his pleaſure a perſon or a people ſhall be delivered.

Secondly obſerve, *The Lord can deliver as often as we need deliverance: In ſix troubles, yea, in ſeven.*

This ſhould bear up our hearts in the returns, the multiplied returns of trouble. Though (as *rheumatick old age* is deſcribed, *Eccleſ.* 12. 2.) *The clouds return after rain.* That is, though one evil follows upon, or treads on the heels of another, though as ſoon as one black cloud is diſſolved, and we begin to ſay (as in nature) this was a rainy day, but ſure the next will be fair, yet the next proves more overcaſt and lowring then that; even in ſuch a caſe, know, God hath a *wind in his fiſt*, which he can let out to ſcatter thoſe clouds, before they diſſolve; or if they diſſolve, he hath a Sun at command, to dry up the fallen rain. *The Lord hath a ſucceſſion of mercies for our ſucceſſion of ſorrows.* Say not then, we have got off this trouble, but what if another come? *If another come, you have the ſame God, and he can give you another deliverance.* Have we not been delivered *in ſix troubles, yea in ſeven?* Our ſtraights have not been ſingle; we may ſay (as ſhe in *Geneſis*, at the birth of her ſon) *Behold a Troop.* Not once only, but *many a time, may our* Iſrael *now ſay, If it had not been the Lord, who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us, they had ſwallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled againſt us.*

The Lord ſpake once to his people, as if he were weary of delivering, or would not deliver (*Judges* 10. 10.) There we read the people of *Iſrael* in a great ſtraight, crying to the Lord for deliverance, but he anſwers, *ver.* 11. *Did not I deliver you from the* Egyptians, *and from the* Amorites, *and from the children of* Ammon, *and from the* Philiſtines? *The* Zidonians *alſo, and the* Amalekites, *and the* Moabites *did oppreſs you, and ye cried unto me, and I delivered you out of their hand.* Here are ſeven troubles in which they found deliverance. But, as if *ſix* or *ſeven* deliverances (which we have expounded for boundleſs deliverances) were now the utmoſt bound of deliverance, he reſolves, *ver.* 13. *I will deliver you no more.* And at *v.* 14. he turns them off to their Idols for help: *Go* (ſaith he) *and cry unto the gods, which you have choſen, and let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation*: But what was the reaſon of this refuſal? The reaſon was this, not becauſe God was weary of delivering that people, but becauſe that people were weary of their God. *Ye have forſaken me, and choſen other gods*, ver. 13. *If we chuſe our ſelves another god, then we chuſe our ſelves another deliverer*; ſo long as we look upon God, as our God, ſo long we may look upon God as our deliverer. God would never have turned them off for deliverance to any thing below (what was in their conceit) a God.

How ſad will it be, now that we are in great troubles, and crying daily, *Lord deliver us out of theſe ſtraights*, for thou art he, whoſe name is, *The Deliverer in ſix troubles, yea in ſeven.* How ſad (I ſay) will it be, if we have put God to read the Chronicle, and repeat the Hiſtory of his deliverances given us, as he did to *Iſrael*, and ſay, I delivered you in 88. from the *Spaniard*; I delivered you in 1605. from the *Gunpowder-Treaſon*, &c. I will deliver you no more. Will not ſuch ſpeakings from Providence, be a plain conviction, that we have *forſaken the Lord, and choſen other Gods? God hath ſometime (what a miracle of mercy!) choſen thoſe who forſook him, but he never (ſo ſtedfaſt is he in faithfulneſs) forſook any, who choſe him to be their God.* If he keep not ſuch, from, yet he will certainly preſerve all in ſuch trouble, as it follows.

Yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee.

He ſaith not, *He ſhall deliver thee from ſix troubles, and from ſeven*; as if troubles ſhould only threaten, but never come upon us; or as if all our deliverances ſhould be preventions; but, he *ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, yea, in ſeven, there ſhall no evil touch thee.*

Non dicit à ſex, ſed in ſex; non quod ab illis nō poſſit, ſed quod cū acciderint, ab illis liberet, ut in illis non ſuccumbat.

[**Evil**] ſignifies ſometimes the evil of ſin, and ſometimes the evil of puniſhment. We may here take it either way. The Lord will ſo keep up thy ſpirit, and direct thy way in trouble, that thou ſhalt not defile thy ſelf with the evil of ſin; thy troubles ſhall purge, not pollute thee. And he will ſo keep thee, that thou ſhalt not be annoyed by any evil of puniſhment. If fatherly diſpleaſure ſhould appear againſt thee, wrath ſhall not. Love ſhall be mixed with thy correction; with thy wormwood and gall (as the Church ſpeaks in the *Lamentations*) thou ſhalt have a temperament of honey and of ſweetneſs; though troubles preſs thee, yet evil ſhall not touch thee.

Not touch thee.] This notes exact deliverance; we think our ſelves well many times, if we can come off from dangers with a *ſcratcht face*, with a wound, or with the *loſs of a limb*; but to come off without the *loſs of a hair*, or which is leſs, without a touch, ſpeaks a compleat deliverance. It aſtoniſht *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 3. 27. to ſee the three Children come out of the fiery furnace, without *a hair of their heads ſinged, without any change of their coats, or the ſmell of the fire.* So much this imports, thou ſhalt paſs the pikes, through *ſix*, *yea ſeven*, a whole army of troubles, and *no evil ſhall touch thee.* When the woman told the tempting Serpent, *God hath ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of the fruit of the Tree in the midſt of the Garden, nor touch it*, Gen. 3. 3. She implied a charge of total abſtinence. And when the Lord ſaith, *No evil ſhall touch thee*, it implies a promiſe of total deliverance. In the firſt and ſecond Chapters of his Book (and it is the ſame Original word) Satan begs leave of God, that he might *touch Job*, and *touch all that he had.* Now here *Eliphaz* ſeems to touch that ſtring, *No evil ſhall touch thee*; as if he had ſaid, God will not let his ſervants be overwhelmed (as thou art) with evils; no evil ſhall ſo much as touch them. And the truth is, though Satan obtain leave of God, to afflict the body of *Job* with pains, and he made it all over as one wound, yet *no evil touched him*, in the ſence here intended: Though *Job* was all over evil ſores, yet there was not ſo much as the leaſt ſcar of an evil upon him: *Troubles toucht him, but evils did not. And troubles may touch the ſervants of God, but evil ſhall not.*

Ita eripit, ut nullum malum attingat, etiā ſi tentari & conflictari ſinat ad tēpus, nocumētum tamen non capiet. Coc. *in loc*

Hence obſerve, *God ſaves and delivers his people from all evil, even while they are in the midſt of trouble.*

He delivers as well in trouble, as from trouble; while trouble is continued, good may be enjoyed. While *his* are in the water, and in the fire, God is with them, and his *preſence is more then deliverance* (Iſa. 43. 2.) If God be with us, though all evils are upon us, yet *no evil touches us.* *The preſence of the chief good, is baniſhment to every evil.* As a wicked man may be loaded with good things, and yet none of them *touch him*; that is, do him any good: So a godly man may be loaded with evils, and yet none of them touch him, that is, do him any hurt. And thus we may underſtand that of the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 10. 14.) *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation alſo, make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Temptation you ſhall have; but with the temptation, even while the temptation is upon you, or while you are in the temptation, *the Lord will make a way for you to eſcape* the evil of that temptation. Thus with or in trouble, we have deliverance. *To be kept from the evil of trouble, is a deliverance from trouble, while we are in trouble.*

Thus far of the general Promiſe.

Doloſus verſatur in univerſalibus.

Now *Eliphaz* goes on to particulars, in *ver.* 20, *&c.* As if he had ſaid, leſt thou ſhouldſt think, I deal only in general Notions, that I may more eaſily elude and deceive thee; therefore I will now give inſtance in the point, and name what troubles I mean: I will deſcend with thee to particulars, and reckon up the greateſt outward evils, the moſt pinching ſtraights that befal the ſons of men, or the children of God; and out of all theſe, I affirm *the Lord will deliver thee.*

Verſe 20. **In famine he ſhall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the ſword.**

Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the Tongue, &c. *Famine* leads the *Van of this great Army of evils* here muſtered up.

Redimere eſt lucrari ex alterius poteſtate interpoſito pretio vel potentia, contra vim detinentiũ, ad faciendũ liberum aut ſuum.

פדה *liberavit ex anguſtia, ſervitute,* &c.

He ſhall redeem.] But what is it *to redeem from Famine?* To redeem, properly is, *to take a man out of the power of another, by price, or by greater power.* Redemption is an act of ſpecial favour, and it notes a ſpecial diſtinction by favour. When God threatned *Pharaoh* and his people with ſwarms of Flies, and promiſed, that his own people ſhould be free; *I will ſever in that day the Land of* Goſhen, *in which my people dwell, that no ſwarms of flies ſhall be there, ver.* 22. This act of divine diſcrimination is called redemption, in the next verſe. *And I will put a diviſion* (*Heb.* a redemption) *between my people and thy people*; that is, thoſe Armies of Flies, which invade thy people, ſhall not meddle with my people. To ſee one periſh with, and our ſelves ſaved from the ſword, is redemption in war. To ſee others hunger-ſtarved, and our ſelves ſtill fed, is redemption from famine, though our ſelves were never in the hands, or between the teeth of famine. *A people divided from the troubles of others, are redeemed from thoſe troubles.* Such a redemption our Saviour ſpeaks of, *Mat.* 24. 40, 41. *Two ſhall be in the field, the one ſhall be taken, and the other left; two women ſhall be grinding in the Mill, the one taken, the other left.*

In Famine.] Famine is the want of Bread, and Bread is the ſtay and ſtaffe of life (*Lev.* 26. 26. *Iſa.* 3. 1. *Pſalm* 105. 16.) when this ſtay is gone, our lives fall quickly, or ſlip away. When this ſtaff is broken, the thred of life breaks too. *Man goes by the Bread in his belly, more then by the ſtaff in his hand*; except Bread hold us by the arm, and ſtay us up, down we fall. Famine is ſo like, or ſo near, or ſo certain a harbinger of death, that the Text puts them together. *In Famine he ſhall redeem thee from death.* Famine is numbred among the ſore judgments of God, if it be not the ſoreſt judgment, *Ezek,* 6. 11. *Jer.* 24. 10. And therefore redemption from it, is one of his choiceſt outward mercies. We may collect how ſore a judgment Famine is, by the effects of it.

Firſt, It cauſeth faintneſs and madneſs, *Gen.* 47. 13.

Secondly, *Hunger burneth,* Deut. 32. 24. That word is not uſed in the Hebrew except here. Famine kindles a fire in the bowels: *When the natural heat hath no fewel put to it, to feed upon, it feeds upon Nature.* Suitable to this, is the deſcription of lamenting *Jeremy* in the famine of *Jeruſalem, Their faces are blacker then a coal,* Lam. 4. 8. *&* chap. 5. 10. *Our skin was black like an Oven, becauſe of the terrible famine.* Both the Coal and the Oven contract their blackneſs from burning heat.

Thirdly, It cauſeth pining and languiſhment, *Lam.* 4. 9.

Fourthly, Shame and howling, *Joel* 1. 11.

Fifthly. Rage and curſing, *Iſa.* 8. 21.

Laſtly, It breaks all the bonds of Nature, and eats up all Relations: Read that dreadful threatning, *Deut.* 28. 53, 54. and that dreadful example, *Lam.* 4. 10. Tender Mothers eating their Children. Famine eats up our bowels of compaſſion, and then it eats our bowels by relation: And, which comes yet nearer, Famine is ſuch a devourer, that it cauſeth man to devour himſelf. The Prophet deſcribes man in a fit of Famine, ſnatching on the right hand, and yet hungry; eating on the left, and yet unſatisfied; when he cannot fill his belly abroad, he comes home to himſelf, and makes bold with his own fleſh for food; *Every man eating the fleſh of his own arm,* Iſa. 9. 20.

We read of many great Famines in Scripture, and withall of Gods care to redeem his people from them. *Abraham, Gen.* 12. who (at the call of God) denied himſelf, and came out of his own, into a ſtrange Land, was preſently entertained with Famine. One would have thought, God ſhould have made him good cheer, and have ſpred a plentifal Table for him, cauſing his cup to overflow, while he was in a ſtrange Land, and a meer ſtranger there; yet he met with a Famine, but the Lord redeemed him from that Famine, by directing him into *Egypt*, that famous ſtorehouſe for his people. *Jacob* and his Sons were redeemed from Famine in the ſame *Egypt*, afterward their *houſe of bondage.*

It is a precious comfort to have bread in ſuch a promiſe as this, when there is none upon the Board. God takes care for the bodies of his people, as well as for their ſouls; he is the Father of both, and the provider for both. And while we remember what ſore afflictions have been upon many Nations and People by Famine; while we remember *Samaria's Famine,* 2 Kings 6. *Jeruſalem's Famine,* Lam. 4. And that ſtoried by *Joſephus*, in the *Roman* ſiege of that City; while we remember the late Famines in *Germany*, and the preſent one in many parts of *Ireland*; while we conſider that the Sword threatens *this Nation* with Famine; ſurely we ſhould labour to get under ſuch a promiſe as this is, that we may plead with God in the midſt of all ſcarcity and wants; Lord, thou haſt promiſed to redeem *Thine in Famine from death: There is no dearth in Heaven: And whatſoever dearth is on Earth, the plenty that is in Heaven, can ſupply it.* How ſad would it be, if your poor children ſhould come about you, crying for Bread, and you have none to give them? How much ſadder would it be, if your poor children ſhould be made your bread, and ground to pieces between your teeth, as in the Famine of *Jeruſalem?* In ſuch a time, to look up to God in the ſtrength of this promiſe, will be a *feaſt to us,* though we ſhould periſh in the Famine.

But how doth God redeem from famine?

Firſt, The Lord can make the barrel of meal, and the oyl that is in the cruze, though but little, yet to hold out and laſt, while the time of famine laſts; ſuch a miracle redeemed the poor widow from death, in that great famine, 1 *King.* 17.

Secondly, He can redeem by lengthning one meal, to many dayes. *Elijah* went forty dayes in the ſtrength of one dinner. *Man liveth not by Bread without God, but man may live by God without Bread.*

Thirdly, Not only are the ſtores of the creatures his, and the fruitfulneſs of the Earth at his command, but if he pleaſe he can open the windows of Heaven; he can bring Bread out of the clouds; he can make the winds his Caterers to bring in Quails and abundance of proviſion for his people. Thus alſo he can redeem his from death, in the time of famine.

Or fourthly, He can do it in a way of ordinary providence, by making the Land yield it's natural increaſe, and by giving ſtrength to the Earth, to bring forth plentifully, for the uſe of man.

Fifthly, While the common judgement laſts, he can make ſome ſpecial proviſion for his, and make a redemption of diviſion, as he did in another caſe for his people, *Exod.* 8. 22.

And laſtly, We may improve this promiſe, not only for redemption from death in famine, but for plenty of conſolation, though we ſhould die in famine. When the bread is quite taken away from your Table, your hearts may feed upon ſuch a word as this, as upon marrow and fatneſs. Chriſt can feaſt your ſouls, when your bodies are ready to ſtarve, he can fill your ſpirits with joy and ſweetneſs, when there is nothing but leanneſs in your cheeks: Thus the Prophet *Habakkuk* triumphs in God (*Habak.* 3. 17.) *Though the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat; the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls: Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* He was feaſting upon God, while he imagines the World ſtarving; he ſees all things in God, though the World ſhould afford him nothing. That ſoul is well fed and taught, which can be rejoycing, while it's own body is ſtarving.

And in war from the power of the ſword.

מלחמה bellum, à radice לחם *veſci, edere, per Metaphorâ pagnare; quia gladius in bello devorat hominū corpora. In bello ſe mutuò homines devorant & obſumunt.*

War is the ſecond evil. Famine and war go often together, yea they two ſeldom go without a third; the Peſtilence, 2 *Sam.* 24. *Jer.* 18. 22. And though in the order of the words, famine be ſet before war, yet uſually war is the fore-runner of famine. The ſword cuts off proviſion, and when it ſelf hath *devoured much fleſh*, it leaves no bread for thoſe who ſurvive. It is obſervable, that the original word for war here uſed, comes from a root ſignifying to eat or to devour, and ſo by a *Metaphor* it ſignifies to fight, or to ſtrike with the ſword. And the reaſon, why the ſame word, which ſignifies war, ſignifies to eat, is, becauſe the *Sword* is ſuch an *Eater* or rather a *Devourer*, and it eats two wayes.

Firſt, The ſword eats up the bodies of men, drinks up their blood, diſpeoples a Land. And then,

Secondly, It eats up and conſumes the fruits of the Earth; and hence War is the mother of Famine. Therefore we find, that when the great peace, and ſo the plenty of the Church of Chriſt is propheſied of, and deſcribed, *Iſa.* 2. 4. and in *Micah*, it is thus expreſſed, *They ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning-hooks.* As if he ſhould ſay, while the ſword is abroad in the field, the plow-ſhares will do little there; for the moſt part Juſtice is ſilent in the time of War (*the ſound of the trumpet and drum, is too lowd for the Law*) and when the Law ſtands ſtill, the plough ſtands ſtill; therefore when the ſword is in motion, both are at a ſtand. Hence the promiſe, that *ſwords ſhall be beaten into plow-ſhares, and ſpears into pruning-hooks*; that is, with peace, you ſhall have Bread and Wine, which note the abundance of all other things. The ancients emblem'd peace by *Ears of Corn*, and *Concord* by (a *Cornu-copia*) *a horn of plenty*; riches are the fruit of peace: And ſafety is the priviledge of the Saints in times of War; *In War they ſhall be delivered from the power of the Sword.*

Inter arma ſilent leges.

The Hebrew is, *They ſhall be delivered from, or out of the hand of the Sword:* Sometimes in Scripture we read of the *face of the Sword*, which notes the Sword coming and approaching to a people: And ſometimes we read of the *mouth of the Sword*, which notes the Sword come, devouring and eating up a people: And here we have the *hand of the Sword*; they ſhall *be delivered out of the hand of the Sword*; which notes (as we tranſlate) *the power of the Sword:* Or, that form of ſpeaking may be underſtood by an *Hypallage, From the hand of the Sword*, that is, *from the Sword in the hand*, which phraſe imports preſent danger; when the Sword is unſheathed and drawn out, when it is in the hand ready to ſtrike, then the enemy is ready to *charge*, and then the Lord delivers: He ſhall deliver from the Sword in the hand, or out of the hand of the Sword. So *Pſalm* 127. 4. *Children of the youth, are as Arrows in the hand of the mighty*, that is, as Arrows ready to be ſhot. And *Pſal.* 149. 6. *Let the high praiſes of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged Sword in their hands*; noting actual revenges taken on the enemies of God, and actual praiſes given to the name of God, at the ſame time.

Gladius manu apprehenſus & elevatus, ſymbolum eſt extremi diſcriminis & præſentis hoſtis: Quaſi diceret etiā in ipſa pugna vel inter tot manus gladios agitantes & contra te vibrantes ſalvaberis.

So then, the meaning of theſe words, *He ſhall deliver thee from the power of the Sword, or out of the hand of the Sword*, is this; ſuppoſe thou art in ſuch a condition that the Swords are drawn about thy ears, and thou art in the midſt of a thouſand deaths and dangers, in the very heat of a battel, yet, then the Lord God can and will deliver thee.

And this likewiſe is a comfortable promiſe, for us to lay hold on, in theſe times. It is a time of War to us all, and there are many of our friends and brethren (as it were) in the very hand of the ſword: Deſires are often ſent to the Congregation, by one for a husband, by another for a brother, by a third for a ſervant, by many for their friends, gone forth to meet the power of the Sword. Here is a promiſe, to comfort and to ſupport ſuch; the Lord in time of War, can deliver out of the very hand of the Sword, or, when Swords are in hand; when thouſands of Swords are drawn together, preparing for, or ſmiting in the day of battel, know, then God is a deliverer. *In the moſt preſent dangers, God ſhews the moſt preſent help.* (Pſal. 23. 5.) *Thou ſhalt ſpread my Table, and cauſe my cup to overflow, before the face of my enemy*; even then when my enemy is neareſt and looketh on. As when the Sword is in the hand of the Angel, ſo when it is in the hand of man; *A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee* (*Pſalm* 91. 7.) Not nigh thee? what? when they die on this ſide and on that ſide, on every hand of a man, doth it not come nigh him? Yes, nigh him, but not ſo nigh, as to hurt him: *The power of God can bring us near to danger, and yet keep us far from harm:* As good may be locally near us, and yet virtually far from us, ſo may evil; the multitude throng'd Chriſt in the Goſpel, and yet but one toucht him, ſo, as to receive good; ſo Chriſt can keep us in a throng of dangers, that, not one ſhall touch us, to our hurt.

Yet, we are not to take this or the like holy *writs of protection*, as if God would deliver all his people, from famine and from the Sword; we know many precious ſervants of his have fallen by theſe common calamities; the Lord knows how to diſtinguiſh his, when Sword and famine do not. Neither doth this word fall, though they do: If the ſervants of Chriſt are not delivered from theſe troubles, they are delivered by them; and *while they are overcome by one trouble, they conquer all.*

Verſ. 21. **Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the tongue, neither ſhalt thou be afraid of deſtruction when it cometh.**

This verſe contains a ſecond pair of evils: Firſt, *The ſcourge of the tongue.* Secondly, *Deſtruction.*

Two things are here to be enquired into, about the former.

Firſt, What is meant by *the ſcourge of the Tongue*?

Secondly, What it is *to be hid from it*?

Quo tempore lingua flagellabit homines. Druſ.

בשוט לשון

לושן

In Piel eſt detrahere vel nocere lingua.

The ſcourge of the Tongue.] Mr. *Broughton* reads it thus, *Thou ſhalt be delivered (or thou ſhalt be hid) when the Tongue whippeth.* And another to the ſame ſence, *At what time the Tongue ſhall be ſcourging of men, thou ſhalt be ſecured from it.* And that word (*Leſhon*) the Tongue, *in Piel*, ſignifies to *detract, to traduce or ſlander*; the ſame word is uſed both for the inſtrument, the Tongue, and one of the worſt acts of the Tongue, calumniation; or we may render it according to the exact letter of the Hebrew elegancy, to *Betongue a Man:* We uſe ſuch a kind of ſpeaking in our Language, as, to ſtrike a man with a cudgel or a Cane-ſtaff, is to *cudgel or cane* a man; and if a man be ſhot with a *Piſtol*, we ſay he was *Piſtol'd*; ſo a man ſmitten with anothers Tongue, is ſaid in the Hebrew, to be *Betongu'd*, or ſuch an one hath *betongu'd* him.

ב *Sæpe redditur per Min*

בכל לבו

ἐξ ὅλης καρδίας.

We leave the *Verb*, and tranſlate by the *Noun*; *From the ſcourge of the Tongue.* In conſtruction (*Beth*) *In*, is often rendred by (*Min*) *From*, as Grammarians know. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God in all thy heart*, or from thy whole heart, or from the *heart-root:* So here, *Thou ſhalt be hid in the ſcourge*; that is, *Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge*; when the Tongue is laſhing and whipping, thou ſhalt be hid from the laſh and ſcourge of *Tongues*.

But what may we underſtand by this ſcourge of the Tongue?

Firſt, Some take it for publick accuſations before a Judge or Magiſtrate. Many ſcourge their brethren at the *Tribunal of Princes*, Revel. 12. That accuſer of the brethren, that traducer, the Devil, is conceived to make thoſe accuſations by his agents, in thoſe times, before the *Heathen Emperors*, againſt the Chriſtians; the Chriſtians in that age, were extreamly ſcourged by malignant and malevolent Tongues, *Tongues ſet on fire of Hell*, as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 3. 6. And ſo the ſcourge of the Tongue may be that puniſhment, which they by falſe accuſations obtained againſt the innocent; their Tongues got judgment againſt them ſometimes to be ſcourged or whipt; therefore alſo, that very work of the Tongue, is well called *ſcourging*. Our *Lord Jeſus* was crucified upon the *Tongues of the Jews*, before he was crucified upon the *croſs by the* Romans. The Jews cried out firſt, *crucifie him, crucifie him*, here was the croſs of the Tongue. The conſpirators againſt *Jeremiah*, adviſe thus (*Chap.* 18. 18.) *Let us ſmite him with the Tongue*; that is, let us accuſe him to the King, that he may be ſmitten by a publick ſentence. In this ſence a man is impriſoned by the Tongue, baniſhed by the Tongue, hang'd and burn'd by the Tongue, that is, the Tongue doth all theſe *vertually* (or *vitiouſly* rather) by falſe accuſations, cauſing theſe things to be done *actually* and *formally*.

Accuſemus eum apud regem & omni induſtria & ratione efficiamus, ut publica ſententia vapulet. Flagellum linguæ eſt pœna in judicio conſtituta, & poſtulata fieri à calumniatoribus.

Secondly, Others interpret the ſcourge of the Tongue, to be thoſe terrible and dreadful reports which amaze, laſh and afflict the ſpirit about the approach of dangers. As, when a report is rung in the ear, that an invading enemy, ſpoilers and plunderers, arm'd with power and malice, are at hand to take away Eſtates, Liberties and Lives: How many have been beaten about the Ears, and ſcourg'd with ſuch *Alarums*? (Jer. 50. 43.) it is ſaid, *The King of* Babylon *hath heard the report of them*: what report was it? and of whom? A ſpy rides in, and kills the King with his Tongue, ſtrikes him through with his Tongue, before he was toucht with the ſword of the *Medes and Perſians*: How? He brought him a ſad report, that the Enemy was upon his march, then it follows, *The King of* Babylon *hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble, anguiſh took hold of him, and pangs as of a Woman in travel.* We find the like expreſſion, *Iſa.* 28. 18, 19. They who had ſlighted the judgments of God, and ſaid, *when the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſs through, it ſhould not come near them*; even theſe (ſaith God) ſhall be vext, when they do but hear of a ſcourge coming near: *I will ſend a report, and it ſhall paſs over morning by morning, aud it ſhall travel by day and by night*; and what ſhall be the effect of it? *It ſhall be a vexation* (ſaith the Lord) *only to underſtand the report.* You ſhall not only be vexed when the enemy is come, and thruſts a ſword into your bowels, and fire into your houſes, but you ſhall be vext at the noiſe of his coming; *it ſhall be a vexation to you, to hear the report.* It is a a great mercy to be delivered and hid from this ſcourge of the Tongue, and this is promiſed him who fears God, (*Pſal.* 112. 7.) *No evil tydings ſhall make him afraid. A heart which hath trembled at the voice of God inſtructing him, ſhall not tremble at the voice of men reporting evil to him.* Many a man is more afraid then hurt, and more perplexed with the *hearing* of evil tydings, then others are with ſeeing or feeling the evil. The Lord threatens *Ely*, to do ſuch a thing in *Iſrael*, and againſt his houſe, *that, both the ears of him that hears ſhall tingle*, 1 Sam. 3. 11. But,

Thirdly, Some tranſlate thus, *He ſhall be hid when the Tongue wandreth or walketh about*; for the ſame word which ſignifies a *ſcourge*, by the alteration of a point in the Hebrew, ſignifies to *run to and fro*. It is the word uſed in the firſt Chapter, where Satan reports himſelf, *A goer to and fro about the Earth.* There is an expreſſion (*Pſalm* 73. 9.) ſutable to this ſence, though the Original word be not the ſame; *They ſet their mouth againſt the Heavens, and their tongue walketh thorow the Earth. The tongues of many take long journies, while themſelves ſit ſtill: Kings are ſaid to have long hands, but many of their ſubjects have long tongues*, and ſtrike their brethren with them many hundreds of miles off; the tongue travels from Town to Town, from City to City, and ſcourgeth one here, and there another. And, while theſe men ſend their tongues about a wandring, to wound here and there, this and that mans credit, *He is a happy man that can be hid from them.*

Quidam, cũ vagabitur lingua, ut ſit שוט *pro* שוט Druſ. Merc.

Fourthly, Some of the Hebrew Doctors, retaining the fore-going ſence of the Verb, ſay, that by *tongue*, is meant *Nations and people: When the tongue*, that is *when a Nation ſhall go about*, or march from place to place to deſtroy and over-run a Land; then, at ſuch a time, thou ſhalt be hid: It is frequent in Scripture to put *tongues* for *Nations*, or Tongues and Nations for the ſame, *Rev.* 7. 9. *Chap.* 17. 15. And there is a comfortable truth in the matter of this interpretation; that when all Tongues or Nations ſhall be gathered to deſtroy us, yet *we ſhall be hid*: As if it ſhould be ſaid (like that, *Pſal.* 83. 6.) Though the *Tabernacles of* Edom *and the* Iſhmaelites, Moab *and the* Hagarens, Gebal, *and* Ammon, *and* Amalek, *the* Philiſtines, *with the inhabitants of* Tyre, be confederate againſt thee: or, to take modern names and Nations, though *Iriſh and Spaniſh, French and Danes*, &c. ſhould at any time, wander from their own Lands to invade thee; yet thou ſhalt be hid when theſe *tongues rove and wander ſpoil and pillage.* The matter, I ſay, of this interpretation is a truth, and a very comfortable one, but I would not charge it upon this Text.

Sunt qui per linguam hic intelligunt nationes q. d. quũ graſſabuntur longè latèq; gentes & populi omniſque depopulabuntur, &c. Druſ.

Fifthly, And moſt generally, and I conceive moſt truly, by the ſcourge of the tongue, is meant all, and all manner of calumnies and ſlanders, curſings or evil ſpeakings, falſe witneſſes and accuſations; and from theſe (the promiſe is) *thou ſhalt be hid.* It is ſaid, *Prov.* 14. 3. That, *In the mouth of the fooliſh is the rod of pride*; not, that a fooliſh man will ſcourge pride, he loves it too well; but, becauſe the pride of a fool ſets his tongue a ſcourging the wiſeſt and the beſt: (*a*) Evil words are the ſame to the credit of a man, that a ſcourge is to his back. When ſlanderers ſpeak openly, then their tongue is compared to a ſword, or an arrow by day; when ſecretly, then to a trap, or an arrow by night, to a Serpent which comes behind, *Gen.* 49. and as here, to (*b*) a ſcourge which is prepared for the back, and is called in our Language *back-biting*, or we may call it back-beating. The ſcourge of the tongue, is all that ill which the tongue can ſpeak: And the (*c*) Latin word for a word, agrees well to this ſence; being derived (as Criticks obſerve) from a word which ſignifies a ſtripe; or the word which ſignifies a ſtripe from that which ſignifies a word: And we find, that they who defame or over-ſeverely reprove others, are called (barely) (*d*) *ſtrikers*. And this (as ſome of the Ancients note) according to Scripture Language, in thoſe two Apoſtolical directions (1 *Tim.* 3. 3. and *Tit.* 1. 7.) where the Apoſtle gives the rule concerning *a Biſhop*, that he muſt be *no ſtriker*; this may be underſtood of ſtriking, not with the hand (the Apoſtle could hardly think that quarrelſom ſpirits and ſons of violence ſhould be ſo much as admitted to a probation about that office) but *ſtriking* with the tongue, by an undue, an over-haſty, or an angry reproof and cenſure. The great inſtrument of a Biſhop or a Miniſter, is his tongue: but he muſt uſe his tongue, rather to heal then to wound; or if at any time, he uſeth it to wound, it ſhould be in tendency unto, or in a preparation for healing: Therefore, *Let not a Biſhop be a ſtriker, a ſtriker with his tongue in paſſion, much leſs in ſpleen or for ſelf-ends.*

(a) *Maledicentia eſt famæ hominis, quod flagellũ corpori; nam lædit eã & interdũ occidit, hinc Græcè* μαϛιξ. Druſ.

(b) *Flagellum dicitur quod in ſcapulas impingitur, & à tergo lædit, ut non videas — Metuentes patruæ verbera linguæ,* Hor. 3. *Car. Od.* 11. *Nam patrui multo quam patres incorruptiores eſſe ſolẽt in judicandis & objurgandis fratris filiorũ peccatis.*

(c) *Verbera à verbis, aut verba à verberibus dicta ſunt: quod aures vox verberet.* Nonius.

(d) *Qui detractoriis verbis, famam alterius verberant, percuſſores appellantur etiam ſuppreſſo nomine linguæ.* Pined. 1. *Sermone inutili conſcientiam percutit infirmorum, nec contumelioſus & garrulus, perdat eum quem potuit modeſtia & lenitate corrigere,* Hier. *in* Titus 1. 7.

Thus we ſee what we are to underſtand by the ſtroke or ſcourge of the tongue. But what is it to be hid from that ſcourge? A word of that, **Thou ſhalt be hid.**

Not as (*a*) *One*, Thy actions ſhall be hid, which might be as matter for ſlander to work upon; nor as (*b*) Another, though ſuch actions appear, yet ſlanderers ſhall want proof, or ſufficient witneſs ſhall not appear againſt thee. But,

First, We may take it thus; *Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the tongue*, that is, the tenor of thy actions ſhall be ſo fair, and thy life ſo blameleſs, that malice it ſelf ſhall not find, where to faſten an accuſation.

Or ſecondly, When other men are ſlandered and reproached, thou ſhalt be free.

Or thirdly, *Thou ſhalt be hid*, that is, though occaſion ſhould be given to malice (and that our nobleſt andholieſt actions uſe moſt to give) yet malicious men ſhall not be able to come at thee, thy perſon ſhall be ſecured in a chamber of ſecrecy, and covered with a mantle of providential darkneſs, while the light of thy good works dazles and troubles the eye of the World.

(a) *Latebũt detractorem tua facta, de quibus poſſit detrahendi materiam ſumere.* Aquin.

(b) *Deficient detractorẽ firma probationes & ſufficientia indicia.* Cajet.

But rather fourthly, *Thou ſhalt be hid*, that is, Thou ſhalt be patroniz'd and defended, thou ſhalt be ſet right, and vindicated from all calumnies and falſe aſperſions. The Lord will ſo take care of thy credit and reputation, that though many go about to blemiſh it with lies and ſlanders, yet thy honour ſhall be ſaved, or the wounds of it healed; *by cauſing thy righteouſneſs to break forth as the light, and thy juſt dealing as the noon day.* Some charitable medicinable tongue ſhall lick thee whole, after all the ſtripes of thoſe ſcourges or envenom'd ſcorpion-tongues: Thus, thou ſhalt be healed if ſmitten, or elſe thou ſhalt not be ſmitten, (*Pſal.* 31. 20.) *Thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in thy pavilion, from the ſtrife of tongues.* The words of the Pſalmiſt are an alluſion to Kings, who being reſolved to *protect their Favourites*, againſt all the clamours and accuſations of men, take them, as it were, into their own *Pavillion*, into their Bed-chamber and boſom, where none may touch them. *God alſo hath a pavillion, a ſecret hiding place for his Favourites,* where he preſerves their credit and reputation untoucht, againſt all the blots and cauſeleſs blemiſhes of malignant ſpirits. Thus they are *hid from the ſtrife of tongues.* Hence his Saints and people are called, *His ſtored, or his hidden ones*, Pſal. 83. 3.

Ad ſimilitudinem regiæ defenſionis loquitur, qua ſc. illi qui regibus chari ſunt corã, in ipſis aulæ penetralibus & in ipſo regum conſpectu verſãtes, defenduntur & ſecuri vivunt. Muſc. *in Pſal.*

Obſerve, Firſt, *The Tongue is a ſcourge.*

The Tongue is a *terrible Engine:* The Scripture gives us variety of compariſons to ſet forth the evil of an ill tongue. It is here called a ſcourge of many laſhes or knotted cords, or rather ſtinging Scorpions; ſcoffing is one, ſlander a ſecond, falſe accuſations a third. The former ſtrictly taken, is a lie told any neighbour, and the latter is a lie told the Magiſtrate. The tongue (*Pſal.* 52. 2.) is called *a ſharp raſor.* Pſal. 57. 4. it is compared to *Spears, and Arrows, and a ſharp Sword*; and if at any time with much uſing, this ſword be blunted in the edge or point, the Scripture ſpeaks of *whetting the tongue*, Pſal. 64. 3. It is as the *ſharp Arrows of the mighty man, and coals of Juniper*, Pſal. 120. 4. *They bend their tongues like a bow*, Jer. 9. 3. *Their tongue is as an Arrow ſhot out*, verſ. 8. In a word, *It is a fire and a world of miſchief*, James 3. 6. (*Jer.* 18. 18.) we read of ſmiting with the tongue, and *of devouring words*, Pſalm 52. 4. As there are *devouring opinions*, opinions which not only hurt the judgments of men, but devour their conſciences, and eat up truth (as it were) at a bit; ſo there are *devouring words*, words that eat up a mans reputation, and devour his good name as *Bread. Slanderous monthes love the whiteſt Bread, the fineſt of the Wheat; a mans credit which hath not a bran in it, how ſweet a morſel is it to ſuch mouthes?* Though, the truth is, every name, by how much more pure and ſpotleſs it is, by ſo much more deadly will it be in the ſtomacks of theſe devourers. *A good name ſwallowed by an ill man, will* (as *Jonas* did the Whale) *make him* (one time or other) *ſtomach-ſick, if not conſcience-ſick, and he ſhall be forced to vomit it out ſafe again.*

It is a ſad thing when (thus) the people of God are wounded and ſcourged by the tongues of wicked men; but I will tell you of a ſadder ſcourging, that is, when the people and ſervants of God ſcourge one another with their tongues: I beſeech you leave this work to wicked men, take not the ſcourge of the tongue out of their hands; let us, not only not ſlander, but, not ſpeak hardly one of another. The *ancient Chriſtians* in the Primitive times, were deeply wounded by the ſcourge of the tongue, what ſtrange things did ungodly men feign and then faſten on them? They reported them as black as Hell, as if their holy meetings were not to worſhip God, but to defile themſelves with inceſt and uncleanneſs; but among Chriſtians themſelves, we read not of this ſcourge, at that time. No, Chriſtians loved one another to the amazement of Heathens: They were ſo far from this ſcourging or wounding of one another, that they were ready to be ſcourged, to be wounded, to be burned, to die one for another. This cauſed their Pagan perſecutors to cry out, *Behold how the Chriſtians love one another!* We are ſcourged by wicked ones, as *They*, O that we could love one another as *They*. Sons of *Belial* have revived the ancient reproaches and accuſations againſt the brethren; O, that we could revive the ancient imbraces and moſt endeared affections of the brethren.

Obſerve, Secondly, *It is a great mercy to be delivered from the Scourge of the Tongue.*

The Apoſtle ſpeaks of it, as a wonderful mercy, that he was delivered out of the *Mouth of the Lyon* (2 Tim. 4. 17.) Surely it is no ordinary mercy (though lying be very ordinary) to be delivered out of the *Mouth of a Lyar.* This is joyned in one promiſe, with deliverance from the moſt deadly inſtruments of War, *Iſa.* 54. 17. *No weapon formed againſt thee ſhall proſper*, that is, no weapon of War, neither Sword nor Spear ſhall hurt thee. Then follows, *And every tongue that ſhall riſe up againſt thee in judgment, thou ſhalt condemn. This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord.* The tongue of a *Ziba* or of a *Tertullus* will devour and deſtroy, as bad as the Sword of a *Cæſar* or a *Pompey.* The holy ſtory tells us, what woful work the tongue had made upon *Joſeph* and *Mephiboſheth*, if the good providence of God had not ſpoken a good word for them.

Laſtly, Let me add one ſeaſonable word of admonition, to theſe tongue ſcourgers; as the word is, They that ſmite with the ſword, ſhall periſh with the ſword; ſo, they that ſmite with the tongue, ſhall periſh with the tongue. The tongues of the Saints are in ſome ſence, ſharper and ſorer ſcourges, then the tongues of wicked men. The word of God in their mouths, is a *Two-edged Sword*, yea *ſharper then any Two-edged Sword.* A Prophet or a Miniſter of Chriſt, can ſtrike as hard with his tongue, as (and infinitely harder, then) any prophane wretch, or railing *Rabſhakeh* in the World. *Truth will ſet home, will wound deeper, then ſlander can. I* (ſaith the Lord, *Hoſ.* 6. 5.) *have hewed them by my Prophets, and ſlain them by the words of my mouth.* In *Revel.* 11. it is propheſied, *That fire ſhall go out of the mouthes of the two Witneſſes, and devour their enemies*, v. 5. That is, the word of their mouths, ſhall be as a fire to ſcorch and conſume the gain-ſaying World; and with this inſtrument their tongue (for that only is ſutable for the work of Witneſſes) they are ſaid to have *tormented thoſe that dwell upon the Earth*, verſ. 10. Some indeed are *Sermon-proof* and *Word-proof*; they at preſent do even laugh at all our ſpiritual Artillery; let whole volleyes of threats be diſcharg'd upon them, let them be hackt and hewed all day long with the Sword of the Word, they feel it not, it may be they jeer at it, at leaſt they regard it not. As they, *Jerem.* 18. 18. conſpiring againſt the Prophet, *Come let us deviſe devices*, &c. *let us ſmite him with the Tongue.* And leaſt any ſhould ſay, if we ſmite him with the Tongue, he will ſmite us again, *For theſe Prophets are notable at their weapons*; to ſecure themſelves they reſolve thus, *Let us not give heed to any of his words.* As if they had ſaid, we know he will ſpeak big words, and threaten us terribly, with Sword, and Peſtilence, and Famine, and Hell, *&c.* But let's arm our ſelves againſt him, and make no more of all, then of a *Squib or a pot-Gun*, then of a ſtab with a *wooden Dagger*, or a charge with a *Bull-ruſh*; *Let us not give heed to any of his words.* But let theſe know, though now they are hardned againſt the ſpiritual ſcourge and ſword, in the mouth of Chriſts Miniſters; yet at the laſt, *Chriſt himſelf will ſmite them with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhall he ſlay the wicked*, Iſa. 11. 4. He once made a *ſcourge of cords*, and whipt the buyers and ſellers out of the Temple; he will at laſt make a *Scourge of words*, which ſhall whip all impenitents and unbelievers out of his preſence into Hell, where they ſhall gnaſh their teeth, and gnaw *Thoſe tongues*, which have ſcourg'd his faithful ſervants with many ſtripes, only for doing or ſpeaking his, their Maſters will.

Neither ſhalt thou be afraid of deſtruction, when it cometh.

The word **Deſtruction** ſignifies a confluence or meeting together of all kinds of evil; when evils break in together, as thieves and robbers into a houſe to ſpoil and take away all, *Iſa.* 60. 18. *Jer.* 48. 3.

שוד *à radice* שדד *more prædonũ & impetu Hoſtili vaſtari & depopulari.*

When ſuch deſtruction comes, thou ſhalt have this priviledge, *Not to be afraid of it. Not afraid*, the word ſignifies any kind of fear, holy fearing as well as natural; here it is uſed for exceſſive diſtracting fear: It is not meant, that a man ſhall be ſecure or ſenſleſs, when deſtruction cometh, *So to be fearleſs, is worſe then to be reaſonleſs.* But this is the meaning, *Thou ſhalt not be afraid*; that is, thou ſhalt not be diſmayed with fear, thou ſhalt not be amazed or aſtoniſhed with fear, thou ſhalt not be at thy *wits end,* much leſs at thy *Faiths end*, when deſtruction cometh. Fear is good in its kind, yea it is an excellent grace; ſome fear in time of deſtruction is the daughter of faith, (*Heb.* 11.7.) *By Faith*, Noah *being warned of God*, *of things not ſeen as yet*, *moved with fear*, *prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe*; *He fears deſtruction ſavingly, whoſe fear moves him to prepare due means of ſafety.* Such preparatory fears are holy fears, and well become the Saints, when deſtruction cometh. (*Exod.* 9.20.) He that heard of the deſtruction coming, and *feared the Word of the Lord*, *made his Servants and Cattle flee into the houſes.* God would not have his people, when they hear deſtruction is coming, ſtand at the door in a daring manner to meet it, and lay themſelves open to it; no, he would have them flee into the houſe, and *enter into the Chamber*, *and ſhut the door about them*, *hiding themſelves*, *as it were for a little moment*, *until the indignation be over-paſt*, Iſa. 26. 20.

The fear which God promiſeth his people protection from, is unbelieving fear, or fear which is the daughter of deſpair: Such as that, *Iſa.* 7. 2. where, when a report came of deſtruction coming, it is ſaid, *That the heart of the King*, *and the heart of his people*, *was moved as the Trees of the Wood are moved with the wind.* They were ſo afraid, ſo unſetled and diſorder'd within, that they knew not how to ſettle and order their affairs without. Such a fear the Prophet *Jeremy* threatens upon *Paſhur*, Jerem, 20. 3. *The Lord hath not called thy name* Paſhur, *but* Magor-miſſabib; *for thus ſaith the Lord*, *Behold I will make thee a terror to thy ſelf*, *and to all thy friends:* Fear round about, and fear within; this fear God promiſeth to deliver his people from, in times of danger.

> Obſerve hence, *The power and preſence of God is able to uphold his people in the face of dangers*, *and in the preſence of deſtruction.*

They ſhall not be afraid of deſtruction, when it cometh: Suppoſe God doth not keep the deſtruction off from them, yet he will keep ſinking fears off from them. How terribly ſoever men look upon them, they ſhall not be a terror to themſelves, neither will God be a terror to them. *Many a Man is his own Bug-bear.* *And there is nothing can be ſo terrible to us*, (*except an angry God*) *as we may be to our ſelves.* But he, to whom God is not a terror, and to whom himſelf is not a terror, will not be afraid of the *King of terrors.* So long as we are at peace with God and our ſelves, deſtruction cannot come ſo faſt, as conſolation will. And deſtruction cannot carry that away, wherein conſolation lies. The beſt part of the Saints eſtate, is out of the reach of deſtroyers. They can deſtroy houſes and goods, they can carry away gold and ſilver, but they cannot deſtroy faith and hope, they cannot carry away grace or holineſs; they may burn your writings, and the evidences of your Lands and Tenements, but they cannot burn your evidences for Heaven, or weaken your tenure and intereſts in Jeſus Chriſt. Upon the wings of this aſſurance the Saints are carried beyond the borders of fear when deſtruction comes into their borders, or death is breaking open their doors, and climbing up unto their windows. Yea this aſſurance, (which carries them beyond the confines of fear) ſets them down in a very comfortable place, in the Land of joy, or upon the mountains of light. It is too little to ſay, *They ſhall not be afraid*, *when deſtruction comes*, *for at deſtruction they ſhall laugh:* as *Eliphaz* undertakes with his next breath.

VERS. 22, 23.

At deſtruction and famine, thou ſhalt laugh; neither ſhalt thou be afraid of the beaſts of the earth.

For thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones of the field; and the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee.

IN the former words, we had a promiſe of redemption from famine, and from fear at the coming of deſtruction. Here both the mercy and the promiſe are heightned, or the promiſe is made yet more merciful; *At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh.* It is a high priviledge to be redeem'd from famine, and not to be afraid of deſtruction, but to laugh at theſe is the higheſt priviledge. But is it not a ſin to laugh at theſe? And if ſo, how will it be any priviledge at all? *I* (ſaith the wiſe man, *Eccleſ.* 2. 2.) *ſaid of laughter*, *it is mad*; *and of mirth*, *what doth it?* And is not this mad laughter, to laugh at deſtruction, and to be merry in famine. The Prophet vehemently reproves joy in ſad times, (*Iſa.* 22. 12, 13.) and brands it for an iniquity, that ſhall not be purged from them, till they die. And can it then be commendable to rejoyce in famine, *&c.* Is it comely for man to be merry, when God is angry? And to be rejoycing, when the Lord is deſtroying? To clear this I ſhall open the ſence of the Text, and ſhew, that this *Laughter is neither ſin nor madneſs, but the holineſs and ſobriety of the Saints.*

At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh.] The word is ordinarily uſed for *laughing*; whence *Iſaac* hath his name. The ſon of the promiſe was called *Iſaac*, becauſe *Abraham* laughed, or becauſe he rejoyced at the promiſe or birth of his ſon; eſpecially at the promiſe of *His birth*, *who was to be the joy and deſire of Nations*, *the Lord* Jeſus Chriſt; who, referring to this act of *Abraham*, tells the Jews, *John* 8. 56. *Your Father* Abraham *rejoyced to ſee my day*, *he ſaw it and was glad.* *To laugh* in Scripture is taken two wayes.

שחק *Idem quod* צחק *Sumitur in bonâ vel in malâ partē, pro loci ratione: riſus gaudii, riſus contemptus.*

Sometimes in a good ſence; and
Sometimes in an ill ſence.

In a good ſence, and ſo, *To laugh is an outward expreſſion of ſound inward joy and true comfort*; *To laugh* is an act proper to man. There cannot be true and ſollid joy (and ſo, not this effect of it, laughing) where there is not true ſollid reaſon. Even paſſion (ſtrictly taken) is founded in reaſon. In *Chap.* 29. *v.* 24. *Job* deſcribing the great proſperity of his former dayes, ſaith, *If I laughed at them*, *they believed it not.* *Job* was a man of that eſteem and veneration, that though he expreſſed in his geſture or countenance, a kind of familiarity, and how well he was pleaſed; yet the people did ſo much reverence him, and his piety and unſpotted juſtice did ſo over-awe them, that they ſuſpected ſtill he might obſerve ſomewhat amiſs in them.

Secondly, *To laugh*, is uſed for ſcorning and deriding. In *Job* 39. *v.* 7. Laughter is aſcribed unto the wild Aſs, *improperly*; *He* (ſc. *the wild Aſs*) *ſcorns* (*or laughs at*) *the multitude of the City.* And (*Pſal.* 2. 4.) when the Princes and the people gather themſelves together, to take counſel againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt; *He that ſitteth in Heaven ſhall laugh*, *and the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.* That is, the Lord (in a moſt holy manner) ſcorns or derides the counſels and practiſes of wicked men. *Man is never in ſo ſad a condition as when God laughs at him.*

Again, Laughter proper to man, is either ſinful and reproveable, or holy and commendable. Sinful laughter is that which ariſes,

Firſt, From unbelief or weakneſs of faith: Such was the laughter of *Sarah* (Gen. 18.12.) when the Angel brought his meſſage that *Sarah* ſhould have a ſon, *Sarah* heard it, as ſhe was in the Tent-dore, and the Text ſaith *Sarah laughed:* The ground of her laughter was unbelief, ſhe thought it an impoſſible thing, for her to have a ſon (as a man will laugh at a thing you tell him, when he thinks it impoſſible to be done.) That her laughter was from unbelief, is plain, from the Angels reproving queſtion in the next words; *Wherefore did* Sarah *laugh*, *ſaying*, *ſhall I of a ſurety bear a child*, *which am old?* *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* As if he had ſaid, ſurely *Sarah* thinks the Lord hath out-promis'd his own power to perform.

Secondly, Sinful laughter ariſeth from contempt, or ſlighting of counſel, and carnal ſecurity in times of danger, (2 *Chron.* 30. 10.) when *Hezekiah* ſent meſſengers to *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh* to warn them to come up to the houſe of the Lord to keep the Paſſover, it is ſaid, That *they laughed the meſſengers to ſcorn*, *and mocked them*; they laughed, ſlighting and contemning this admonition, thinking themſelves ſafe and well enough, though they came not up to that ſolemn Paſſover.

Thirdly, Sinful laughter ariſes from pride and ſelf-confidence (*Hab.* 1. 10.) The Prophet deſcribes the proud *Chaldeans*, invading *Judah*, thus, *They ſhall ſcoff at the*

Kings, and Princes ſhall be a ſcorn unto them, and they ſhall deride every ſtrong-hold. They ſhall come up with ſuch an Army, with ſuch an arm of fleſh, as all fleſh muſt fall down and yield unto.

Laſtly, There is a ſinful laughter, ſpringing from ſenſuality, and exceſs of creature contentments. Such laughter Chriſt threatens, *Luke* 6. 25. *Wo to you that are full, wo to you that laugh now :* That is, wo to you that laugh, becauſe of your creature fulneſs.

Laughter, which is good and commendable, hath ſuch roots, as theſe.

Firſt, It ſprings up from faith, ſuch was the laughter of *Abraham* (Gen. 17. 17.) When he heard the promiſe, that he ſhould have a ſon, the Text ſaith, *Abraham fell upon his face and laughed:* That the laughter of *Abraham* was from faith, is clear from the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 4. 19. affirming, that, *He not being weak in faith, conſidered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadneſs of* Sarahs *womb*; *he ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God, through unbelief,* &c. *Abraham* laughed out his faith, not (as *Sarah*) his unbelief. Therefore alſo Chriſt ſaith (as was toucht before) *Abraham rejoyced to ſee my day, he ſaw it and was glad:* In the promiſe of his ſon, he ſaw the *Promiſed ſeed*, in whom all the Nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed. This ſight of the day of Chriſt, in that *proſpective of the promiſe*, drew it in near to the old-mans heart (though it were far off) and made him glad.

Secondly, Commendable laughter comes from holy courage, and well grounded confidence; well temper'd magnanimity and Chriſtian heroicalneſs of ſpirit, lifts us ſo far above dangers and fears, that we laugh at them.

And then, there is a laughter in dangers grounded upon aſſurance of deliverance from, or ſupport in dangers. A man that ſees a great ſtorm coming, laughs at it, knowing where to go to ſhelter preſently, where to get a warm houſe over his head. The Pilot knowing he hath a ſtrong Ship, and good tackling, laughs at the winds. In that ſence [*not to fear*] is uſed (*Prov.* 31. 21.) where it is ſaid of the wiſe woman, *She is not afraid of the ſnow for her houſhold*; If the ſnow and cold weather come, ſhe doth not fear it, ſhe can laugh at the ſnow; Why? *For all her houſhold are cloathed with ſcarlet, or double cloth*; ſhe hath made ſuch proviſion againſt cold weather, that ſhe fears neither froſt nor ſnow.

Ridebis vẽtos hoc munere tectus & imbres. Mart.

Now, the Text (when it is ſaid, *At famine thou ſhalt laugh*) is not meant of laughter, ſpringing either from unbelief, or pride, or ſelf-confidence, or ſenſuality, or ſenſleſneſs; as if he ſhould not care what God did in the world, let God do what he would, he would laugh. As that proud Emperor ſaid (not only as one before him, when I am dead, but) while *I live, let Heaven and Earth be mingled together, I care not*; ſcorning and contemning what could come. But this laughter comes from ſtrength of faith, from holy courage, and well-grounded confidence; from an aſſurance of ſhelter, ſafeguard and protection from, or ſupport in the greateſt dangers, even in famine and deſtruction: He fixes on ſuch a promiſe as this, *Pſal.* 37. 19. *They ſhall not be aſhamed in the evil time, and in the dayes of famine, they ſhall be ſatisfied.* The ſoul of a believer ſees ſalvation in deſtruction, food in famine; he hath *wine well refined to drink, marrow and fatneſs to feed upon*, when the world knows not how to give him (or will not give him) a dry cruſt, or a cup of cold water. He ſees a hiding place, when all others lie open to the danger; he ſees a place of refuge, a covert from the rain and from the ſtorm, when others ſtand naked under them. The ſum of all is, A godly man ſees himſelf ſo protected in dangers, ſo provided for againſt all wants; he ſees in the promiſes ſuch a Magazin of arms, ſuch ſtore of bread, that he fears no weapon form'd againſt him, and feeds, when no Table is ſpred for him; Danger ſecures, deſtruction ſaves, and famine fattens him, that is, in danger, deſtruction and famine, he knows whither to go for food, ſavation and ſafety; even unto God, who is all this to him, and will be more, if he need it. Upon theſe grounds it is, that the Text ſaith, *At Famine and deſtruction he ſhall laugh.* Hence obſerve,

ἐμοῦ ζῶντος γαῖα μιχθήτω πυρί.

In vaſtitate ita eris munitus, ac de tua ſalute ſecurus, ut ridere poſſis, etiãſi fameſcas, nõ te enecabit fames, verũ Deus ſuo te conſolationis papulo ita reficiet, ut ridere poſſis. Ipſa te fames reddet ſaturum; & contabis, nõ ſecus ac ſi tibi plenus eſſet venter. Pined.

A godly man, a true Believer, is not only not afraid of outward evils, when they come, but through Faith, he is above, and triumphs over them.

Not to be *afraid of famine and deſtruction when they come*, is too low for his ſpirit, *He ſhall laugh when they come.* Hence the Apoſtles exulting language, *We glory in tribulation, we are exceeding joyous in all our tribulations.* And to this ſence we may interpret that of *Peter*, ſpeaking of the ſufferings of the Saints, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. *The Spirit of glory reſteth upon them*; that is, a ſpirit of glorying and holy rejoycing, whereby the ſoul is carried up (as it were) upon Eagle-wings, above and beyond reproaches. *All evils lie below a Believer, when he is lifted up with this Spirit of glory.* Tis ſpirit of glory reſting upon us through him that loved us, makes us *more then Conquerors over tribulation, diſtreſs, perſecution, famine, nakedneſs, peril or ſword,* Rom. 8. 35, 36. *More then Conquerors!* Who can expreſs how much that is? No tongue can tell what it is to be more then a conqueror. When Chriſt would advance the exceeding greatneſs of that reward which *Givers* ſhall receive, *Luke* 6. 38. He ſaith not barely, *Give, and it ſhall be given you in good meaſure*; but you ſhall have it *preſſed down*; and yet more, *ſhaken together:* that is not all neither; but you ſhall have it *running over.* Now a meaſure will run over, as long as you will pour; there is no ſtint, no bounds to that gift, which ſhall be given running over: A Veſſel will run over continually, pour as long as you will: So here, you ſhall not only have a conqueſt, but more then a conqueſt; and what that is, is as much and more, then all our thoughts are able to comprehend. Hence alſo the Apoſtle ſpeaking of that great enemy, the laſt enemy, *Death* (1 *Cor.* 15. 55.) brings in the believing ſoul in a kind of holy triumph, laughing at, and even jeering Death, in the ſence of the Text, *O Death, where is thy ſting?* As if a man having diſarmed his enemy, ſhould ſay, now Sir, where's your ſword? where's your piſtol? *Chriſt hath diſarmed Death*, taken away its ſting; now the Believer may laugh in the face of Death, *O Death, thou thoughteſt to make us all ſmart, where is thy ſting? thou thoughteſt thy ſelf a conquerour, able to devour and ſubdue us all, but where is thy victory?* Such is the Laughter here meant. And in the ſame ſence, *Leviathan* the mightieſt of living creatures, that Sea-monſter (*to whom upon the Earth there is not the like, he is made without fear*, Chap. 41. 33.) is ſaid to *laugh at the ſhaking of the ſpear* (Job 41. 29.) He is ſo armed with impenitrable ſcales, that, ſhake a ſpear at him, he laughs at you; it is an alluſion to thoſe, that are armed with *proof*, they fear neither ſword nor ſhot: The truth is, a believer is ſhot-free, ſhake the ſpear at him, ſhake famine, ſhake deſtruction at him, threaten him with this or with that, he laughs at all, becauſe he hath *armor of proof*, wherein he may ſafely truſt; he hath a ſhield, a ſhield of faith, which will quench even the fiery darts of Satan, much more then the fiery dangers of the world.

The Hiſtories of the Primitive Church, are full of this holy laughter, and heroical magnanimity of the Saints, grapling with the greateſt evils. How did thoſe renowned Martyrs, even *baffle death*, and deride their torments (from this principle of faith in Chriſt) conquering them, not ſlighting them (from a principle of ſelf-neglect.) When *Polycarpe* was threatned to be torn in pieces with the teeth of wild beaſts, *Let them come,* ſaith he, *and grind me, I ſhall make very good bread*; ſo that the very tormentors were more tormented with the holy ſcorn and laughter of ſuffering Chriſtians, then the Chriſtians were with the torments which they ſuffered. In 2 *Sam.* 2. 14. When *Abner* and *Joab* the two *great Generals* met, *Abner* ſaith unto *Joab, Let the young men ariſe and play before us*; the ſport was to fight, and fighting unto death, and yet theſe ſtout Souldiers being above fear, call it playing one with another: It is the word here in the Text (*let them come and laugh together before us*) As if theſe young men were of ſuch courage, that they could laugh at death, and go to killing one another, as if they were to go to play with one another. Surely there is little reaſon for ſuch courage; *killing of men is no laughing matter, no matter of ſport*; for as *Abner* ſaid unto *Joab*, not long after (*verſ.* 26.) *ſhall the ſword devour for ever, knoweſt thou not, that it will be bitterneſs in the end? There is little cauſe to account the beginning of that a ſport,* *which will be bitterneſs in the end:* But when the Saints are to joyn in the deadlieſt battel, or to meet with the *deadlieſt death for Chriſt*, or from the chaſtening hand of Chriſt, they have reaſon enough to account it a ſport, and to laugh at deſtruction (in this ſence cleared) becauſe they know it will be ſweetneſs and comfort in the end: *Valour ſometimes laughs at danger, much more may faith.* (Pſalm 68. 12, 13.) *Though we have lyen among the pots, yet ſhall we be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold:* This is the confidence of the Saints, when they lie among the pots, or among the pot-ranges (as ſome interpret it) where the ſcullions lie, and are beſooted and black'd over, at the fire of afflictions, till they look like very ſcullions, that yet they ſhall be gilded over ſoon after. Or it may be underſtood of the bounds and limits of the enemies Country: and ſo it is a deſcription of great danger; for they who lie upon the borders of an enemies Country, are in a continual fear of an aſſault; this the Greeks ſeems to favour, rendring it thus; Though we have *lain between the inheritances, or the lots, ſc.* our own and the enemies; either way the ſence reaches this point fully; though believers lie among the pots, or neareſt dangers, yet they are aſſured that they ſhall have wings, as the wings of a Dove, which are covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold. There is gold and ſilver in the eye of faith, while there is nothing but blackneſs and death in the eye of ſenſe; yea, faith aſſures them, that they ſhall be *white as ſnow in* Salmon (as it follows in that Pſalm) that is, they ſhall have whiteneſs after blackneſs, or light in the midſt of darkneſs. *Salmon* ſignifies dark, duskiſh or obſcure; for, it was a hill full of pits, holes and gins, very dark and dangerous for paſſengers; but when the ſnow was upon it, it was white and gliſtering; now ſaith he, they ſhall be like *Salmon* in the ſnow, though black in themſelves, yet white, lightſom and glorious, either through pardon of ſin, or victory over their enemies, to both which, *whiteneſs* hath reference in Scripture.

ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν κλήρων Sept. Ainſworth.

Again, In that it is ſaid, *At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh*; as from that word, *laughing*, we ſee what ſpirits the Saints have in troubleſom times; ſo, in-as-much as he gathers together and rally's all the ſcattered troops of afflictions, to charge at once upon a believer; and yet concludes, *At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh*,

Non ſolū ſingulas ærumnas ſuperabit, ſed omniū illorum in unū coeuntiū agmen. Integrum ex omnibus exercitū fugabit

> Obſerve, That, *A godly man laughs at, or is above all evils, though brought againſt him at once.*

It hath been ſaid, That *Hercules* could not match two: here are two, *Deſtruction and Famine*, overmatcht by one; bring whole legions and armies of troubles to encounter a Saint, he overcomes them all: *He famiſhes famine, and deſtroyes deſtruction it ſelf.* The Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8.35. muſters up (as it were) all evils together into a body, and dares any or all to battel, with a believer; *Who ſhall ſeperate us from the love of God? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?* which of theſe ſhall undertake the challenge, or will you bring any more? then, come *life, or death, Angels, or principalities, or powers, things preſent, or things to come, height or depth, or any other creature: none of theſe ſingle, nor all of theſe joyned, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Every heightned Saint is a ſpiritual *Goliah*, who in the name of the living God, bids defiance to this huge hoſt, and they all run and tremble before him. *Rejoyce* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Jam.* 1. 2.) *when you fall into divers temptations:* A believer hath joy, not only when he grapleth with a ſingle temptation; but let there come many, divers temptations, variety of temptations, variety for kind, and multitude for number, yet he rejoyceth in the midſt of all.

Neither ſhalt thou be afraid of the beaſts of the earth.

Having thus lifted a godly man above the afflicting reach of thoſe two great evils, famine and deſtruction, want of good things, and ſpoiling of his goods; he proceeds to inſtance another great evil, wherein a godly man is exempt from, and ſet above fear; *Neither ſhalt thou be afraid of the beaſts of the Earth.*

Beaſts of the Earth.] The root of that word ſignifies life, and ſo any living creature, eſpecially a wild beaſt; becauſe they are ſo active and full of life, therefore they are named from life.

חית *à radice* חיה *vita, vivēs, beſtia fera.*

And theſe are called, *The beaſts of the Earth*;

Firſt, Becauſe beaſts are produced from the earth, and the earth received a charge to produce them, *Gen.* 1. 24, 25. *And God ſaid, let the earth bring forth the living creature, after his kind, and God made the beaſt of the earth after his kind.*

Or ſecondly, Becauſe beaſts have nothing but earth to live upon; as men whoſe portion is only in creatures, are called *men of the world*, or men of the earth.

The word for *(earth)* ſignifies the whole earth, habitable or inhabitable: And though the earth ſtand ſtill, yet this word is derived (ſay ſome) from running, either becauſe the Heavens run round about the earth, with a continual rotation or motion; or becauſe all creatures, men and beaſts, move or run upon the face of the earth. Though others deduce it from a word which ſignifies to* *deſire, wiſh, or will a thing*; becauſe the earth is perpetually deſirous of bringing forth fruit, for the uſe and help of man. But it is not agreed on what we are to underſtand, by *the beaſts of the Earth.*

ארץ *Complectitur totū terrarum orbē, tum habitabilē, tū qui non eſt habitabilis, deductū volunt à verbo* רוץ *currere, vel quia cœlum perpetuo rotatu circa terram currit, vel quòd omnia animalia currant ſuper faciem terræ.* * *Alii à verbo* רצה i.e. *voluit, concupivit, deductum volunt eo quod terra jugiter appetat afferre fructum.*

Firſt, Some take the words improperly, and ſo *the beaſts of the earth*, are interpreted men; a company or ſociety of men, and theſe in a double ſence. For the word notes ſometimes a company of men in a good ſence, and ſometimes a company of men in an ill ſence. I ſhall give you an inſtance of both, for the clearing of this Text.

It ſignifies men, or a company of men in a good ſence, *Pſal.* 68. 10. where ſpeaking of *that rain of liberalities*, (that is, bleſſings of all ſorts) which God ſent upon his inheritance, to confirm and refreſh it, he ſaith, *Thy Congregation hath dwelt therein.* Thy Camp or League, thy Hoſt or Troop dwelt there; (ſo 2 *Sam.* 23. 13.) which the vulgar tranſlates, *Thy beaſts*; and the Greek, *Thy living creatures dwelt therein:* The ſame word is uſed (and ſome apprehend in alluſion to this Pſalm) *Rev.* 4. 6. *Chap.* 5. 8, 9. in thoſe myſtical deſcriptions of Chriſt and his Church: in this ſence it ſuits not at all with the promiſe of the Text. *Theſe beaſts are not to be feared, but honoured and loved; mans greateſt ſpiritual comforts on earth, are found in the ſociety of theſe beaſts.*

Animalia tua habitabunt in iis, Vul. Sept. *ζῶα.*

But commonly this word, referred unto men, ſignifies an aſſociation of wicked men; *men of the earth*, worſe (many of them) then the *beaſts of the earth:* Theſe are ſpoken of in the ſame *Pſalm* ver. 30. *Rebuke the company of ſpear men, (or Archers) The rout or crue of the Cane*, that is, men that bear reeds, or canes, whereof ſpears and arrows were wont to be made; therefore the company of Spear-men or Archers, are called a company with reeds: the word by us rendred company, is, *the beaſts of the reeds*; thoſe men that are like beaſts, ſavage, cruel and bloody, theſe are as bruits and beaſts of the earth; ſo they are decipher'd in the next verſe, *The multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people.* And we find the word ſignifying, a company of wicked ones, and a company of Saints in the ſame verſe, *Pſal.* 74. 19. *O deliver not the ſoul of thy turtle Dove unto the multitude of the wicked*; the Hebrew is, unto the company of the beaſts; *Forget not the Congregation* (or the beaſts *) of thy poor for ever*; there the ſame word is taken (as in *Pſal.* 68. 10.) for a company of Saints, or the poor people of God. In the Scripture of the New Teſtament, it is frequent to ſhadow wicked men under the names of beaſts, beaſts of the earth: ſo that of *Paul* hath been taken (1 *Cor.* 15. 32.) *If I have fought with beaſts at Epheſus after the manner of men*, with beaſtly men, cruel men, men like unto beaſts in their qualities and diſpoſitions: though others underſtand it of his being caſt unto the beaſts, to fight with them, which was a cruelty thoſe perſecuting times exerciſed againſt the Chriſtians. So (1 *Tim.* 4. 16.) *Paul* ſaith, *he was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion: Nero* that cruel Tyrant, is ſuppoſed to be the Lion, the beaſt of the earth he aimeth at. And the Apoſtle, *Titus* 1. 1. gives this

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this *character of the Cretians*, they are *evil beaſts.* If we take it here in this ſence, it is a truth, and a very comfortable truth, that godly men ſhall be delivered from the fear of beaſtly and cruel men, or as the Apoſtle calls them, *unreaſonable or abſurd men, who have not faith.*

But rather underſtand here *beaſts of the earth* properly, for thoſe fierce and cruel creatures hurtful to man. Once, man had power and dominion over all the creatures; the wildeſt beaſts were tame to him in his ſtate of innocency; till he roſe up and rebelled againſt God, the creatures were ſubject unto him; but man rebelling againſt God, the creatures rebelled againſt man: hence it is, that man naturally is ſurpriſed with fear, at the approach and ſight of ſtrong and cruel beaſts, and therefore it is here ſpoken as a ſpecial mercy and priviledge of the godly, that they *ſhall not be afraid of the beaſts of the earth.*

The beaſts of the earth are hurtful to us three wayes.

Firſt, Naturally, many beaſts by nature are very dreadful to man, as the Lion, the Bear, the Wolf, and ſuch other fierce, ſtrong and bloody beaſts.

Secondly, Tame beaſts, ſuch as we daily uſe and ſubdue to our ſervice, are often by accident hurtful to us; the Horſe and the Ox, have many times been deſtructive to their owners.

Thirdly, (Which I conceive is the thing chiefly aimed at here) beaſts hurt judicially, in a way of wrath from God: There are divers places in the Book of God, wherein God threatens to arm creatures, againſt thoſe, who ſin againſt him, and that when people ſhould forget their duties, the beaſts ſhould forget their ſubjection. *Deut.*32.24. *I will ſend the teeth of beaſts upon them.* And *Jer.* 15. 3. *I will appoint over them four kinds, ſaith the Lord, the Sword to ſlay, and the Dogs to tear, and the Fowls of the Heaven, and the beaſts of the Earth, to devour and deſtroy.* You ſee God can have an army any where if he pleaſeth, an army of Dogs to deſtroy, an army of Fowls of the Air, an army of the beaſts of the Earth, to ſubdue a rebellious people. And *Ezek.* 14. 21. This is one of the four ſore judgments that God denounceth againſt *Jeruſalem, The Sword, and the Famine, and the noyſom Beaſts, and the Peſtilence.* Thus in a judicial manner they were very terrible and dreadful, and ſo were numbered among the ſoreſt evils or judgments which God ſent upon a Nation for their wickedneſs. To all or any of theſe wayes, this promiſe may be enlarged. Thou ſhalt not be afraid of the natural cruelty, the caſual hurtfulneſs, or the judiciary rage of beaſts, when ſent by God with commiſſion to puniſh the beaſtlineſs of men.

How this cometh to paſs, that beaſts of the Earth hurt not godly men, is laid down in the next verſe, which I ſhall a while open, and then give you ſome notes and obſervations from both together.

Verſ. 23. **For thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones of the field, and the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee.**

This verſe contains the reaſon, why he ſhould not be afraid of the beaſts of the field; and here is ſomewhat more got into the reaſon, then was before in the promiſe; the ground of the promiſe is higher, and carried farther then the promiſe it ſelf. The promiſe was, to be delivered from the fear of beaſts; and that thou mayeſt be certain of it, know God will not ſuffer ſo much as a ſtone to do thee hurt: *Thou ſhalt be at league* not only with the beaſts of the Earth, but with the ſtones of the field.

Thou ſhalt be in league.] The word is frequently uſed in the Old Teſtament, to ſignifie that ſolemn gracious covenant of reconciliation between God and man, eſtabliſhed in the blood of Chriſt.

ברית *à radice* ברה *Elegit, quia eliguntur perſonæ inter quas, & res & conditienes propter quas fœdus initur.* Buxt.

A league or covenant is a very ſolemn act, an act of reaſon, and of the higheſt reaſon, an act of judgment and deepeſt deliberation: therefore it may be doubted how a league can be entred with ſtones, which have no life, or with beaſts which have no reaſon. We read (*Gen.* 39. 49.) of a league or covenant made at or upon an heap of ſtones, between *Jacob* and *Laban*; but this is very ſtrange and unheard of, to make a league with a heap of ſtones.

For the clearing of this, we muſt enquire into two things;

Firſt, What theſe ſtones are.

Secondly, What this league doth import.

Firſt, *For the ſtones:* There are divers opinions about them, and many interpreters have exceedingly ſtumbled at theſe ſtones: Some change theſe ſtones into men, ſtrong men, or the ſtrongeſt of men. That of *Job* in the next Chapter, hath ſome alluſion to it, *verſ.* 12. *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones?* A ſtrong man is ſtrong, as a ſtone.

The *Chaldee Paraphraſt underſtands by ſtones, the Law, which was written in ſtones. Thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones,* that is, the Law written in *tables of ſtone* ſhall never hurt thee. But that (as to the Text) is a meer conceit, though (in it ſelf) a great truth, and our greateſt comfort, that believers are at league with thoſe *Law ſtones,* which left in power and hoſtility, would have broken all man-kind to pieces, and ground them to powder. Chriſt hath made peace for us with the Law; the Law had a quarrel at us, and the Law would have been upon us with an everlaſting war, if Chriſt had not ſetled our peace by ſatisfying the Law; *Stoning to death, had been the death of us all, if Chriſt had not made a league for us with theſe ſtones.*

Thirdly, Others interpret theſe ſtones by a Metonymy of the thing contained, *Thou ſhalt be at league with the ſtones of the field,* with the rocks or rocky places, that is, thou ſhalt be at league with thoſe creatures, or with thoſe beaſts, which lie among the ſtones, and have their dens about hollow rocks: and ſo they make the latter branch [*and the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee*] to be exegetical, giving us the expoſition of the former, or ſhewing, what is meant by being at league with the ſtones of the field; *Thou ſhalt be at league with the ſtones of the field,* that is, with the beaſts who make their dens, and their holes, and their hiding places, among the ſtones of the field. This is a good ſence of the words.

But leaving the former, with ſome other apprehenſions about theſe ſtones, I ſhall take theſe ſtones properly, and ſo they will fall under four conſiderations, all which give light to the clearing of this Text, and the manner of our league with ſtones.

Firſt, As naturally ſcattered upon the face of the earth, ſo hindring Travellers, or endangering a man in haſte upon his way. One part of *Arabia,* was called *Arabia Petræa,* or the ſtony, becauſe it was full of ſtones, and ſo uneaſie, either for tillage or travel.

Stones are ſo dangerous to the foot, that the Latine word is derived from *hurting the foot*; hence thoſe Scripture expreſſions. *A ſtumbling ſtone and a rock of offence,* becauſe men are ſo apt to ſtumble at ſtones. And both theſe are applied to *Chriſt* in a figure, he is called *a ſtumbling ſtone, and a rock of offence. Chriſt in himſelf is the moſt precious and elect foundation-ſtone to build on, but he is the moſt ſore and dangerous ſtone to ſtumble on: To be in league and covenant with that living ſtone, is the higheſt mercy.*

Lapis à lædendo pede nomẽ habet.

Secondly, Theſe ſtones as they lie naturally hidden in the bowels of the earth, or under the earth, are a trouble to the Husband-man in tilling the ground, in plowing and ſowing, and they often endanger the breaking of his plough, and hinder the rooting and growth of the ſeed ſown.

Thirdly, Conſider theſe ſtones as artificially laid together for the making of a wall or mownd to fence and part field from field, or both from the common fields and highwayes.

Fourthly, Conſider theſe ſtones as artificially and induſtriouſly placed for *marks and boundaries,* to diſtinguiſh private mens lands, or the precincts of ſuch and ſuch Countries, which are commonly called (*a*) *Mark-ſtones,* or *boundary-ſtones*; as alſo ſtones ſet in the roads or high-wayes, for the direction of Travellers pointing which way to go, to eminent Towns or Cities. Of ſuch a ſtone we read (1 *Sam.* 20. 19.) when *Jonathan* bad *David* ſtay at the ſtone *Ezel,* that is, as we put in the *Margin* of our Bibles, the *ſtone that ſheweth the way,* or *the* (*b*) *way ſtone.* Theſe *boundary ſtones,* or *way-ſtones* to direct Travellers, were famous in Antiquity: inſomuch that among the (*c*) Heathen, *They* were worſhipped as a *god,* or *Numen,* as divers of the Chriſtian Fathers have obſerved in their learned reports of Heatheniſh idolatry. Which alſo their own (*d*) Poets have ele-

gantly

(a) *Lapides terminales.*

(b) *Lapides viatorii. Lapis itiõis*

(c) *Romani Deum habebant quem Terminum vocabant. Is Deus ſaxum erat.* Aug. *l. de Civ. Dei, cap.* 23. Lact. *l.* 1. *c.* 20.

(d) *Termine, ſive lapis, ſive es defoſſus in agro, Stipes, ab antiquis, tu quoque numen habes.* Ov. *primo* Faſt.

—— *Omnis erit ſine te litigioſus ager* ——

gantly deſcribed, both in their conſtitutions and uſes; giving thoſe ſtones a charge faithfully to teſtifie, (e) *This is your land, and this is yours.* And they break out into the commendation of the *integrity* of theſe witneſſes, whom no threats could terrifie, or bribes corrupt to ſpeak a lie, or conceal the truth.

(e) *Et ſeu vomeribus, ſeu tu pulſabere raſtris, Clamato tuus eſt hic ager, ille tuus.*

Now conſider the other term, what it is to be in league with ſtones, in any of, or in all theſe acceptations.

In general we know, that, to be *league with ſtones*, is an improper or alluſive ſpeech: *Stones* are not capable of the formalities of a *league*; when we are in *league* or *covenant* with God or man, ſo with ſtones; theſe two things are made out to us.

Firſt, That God or man will do us no hurt; a covenant or league takes off the actings of hoſtility. Whatſoever a man is in covenant with, he fears no dammage from. *Preſumptuous ſinners having made a covenant with Hell, and an agreement with death, build their confidence of indemnity upon the ſtrength of it. When the over-flowing ſcourge ſhall paß through, it ſhall not come near us,* Iſa. 28. 15. A man that is in league with the Devil, believes the Devil will do him no wrong.

Secondly, A **League** imports, that we may expect to receive good, protection, benefits and bleſſings either from God or man, according to the Articles of covenant agreed to, and ſealed reſpectively. Theſe two aſſurances we have by a *league*. And when it is ſaid here, that a godly man is in *league with the ſtones of the field*, both theſe are to be underſtood; It is as much, as to ſay, *The ſtones of the field ſhall not annoy him*; yea, *the ſtones of the field ſhall be a benefit or a friend to him.* Man is ſaid to be in *league with ſtones*, when he receives the effect of a *league from ſtones.* Taking it in this general ſence, we may apply it unto thoſe four particular ſences of ſenſeleſs ſtones before mentioned.

Firſt, As ſtones are naturally ſcattered upon the face of the earth, the promiſe imports thus much: that, ſuch ſtones ſhall not hurt or annoy him in his walks or travels. This promiſe we have expreſly (*Pſal.* 91. 11.) *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes; they ſhall bear thee up in their hands, leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone.* This is the *league with ſtones.* Stones ſhall not annoy thee in thy way, thou ſhalt not ſtumble or fall to break thy bones, or bruiſe thy body upon theſe ſtones. The Devil in his combate with Chriſt, miſapplieth this promiſe of a *league with the ſtones* (Matth. 4. 6.) Tempting him to caſt himſelf down from a pinacle of the Temple; for it is written, *He ſhall give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they ſhall bear thee up, leſt at any time thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone:* As if he had ſaid, a godly man hath this aſſurance from his league with the ſtones, that he ſhall receive no harm from them; therefore truſt God, and in confidence of this promiſe, *Caſt thy ſelf down.* So, here is the firſt ſence, *Thou ſhalt be at league with the ſtones of the field:* that is, thou ſhalt not be hurt by thoſe *ſtones*, as thou travelleſt or walkeſt.

Secondly, Take the ſtones as they lie hidden in the Earth, then to be at league with them, hath this ſence; Firſt, That in tilling the Earth, ſtones ſhould not trouble or hinder that work. God ſhall ſo order it, that, though thou ploweſt among ſtones, yet thou ſhalt till thy ground ſucceſsfully. The ſtony ground ſhall be fruitful ground. In that parable of a Vineyard (*Iſa.* 5. 1.) God is pleaſed to manifeſt his care of making it fruitful, by this act among others, *I gathered out the ſtones thereof*, verſ. 2. noting that ſtones are naturally great impediments to fruitfulneſs. We read (*Matth.* 13. 5.) how the ſeed, which fell upon the *ſtony-ground*, ſprung up quickly and withered as quickly; ſtony ground naturally cannot feed or bring forth fruit to maturity. It is then a great priviledge, thus to be in *league with the ſtones of the field*; that, though we ſow among ſtones, yet we ſhall have a plentiful *Harveſt.* When *Job* deſcribed the dayes of his proſperity (*Chap.* 29. 6.) he ſaith, *The Rock poured him out Rivers of Oyl:* To have Oyl out of Rocks, is like having Corn out of the Stones; both noting things ſucceeding beyond their natural principles, and our common expectation. When the *Baptiſt* would ſhew how God can work beyond all the poſſibilities of nature or reaſon, he ſaith to the Jews, *Even of theſe ſtones God can raiſe up children unto* Abraham (*Matth.* 3.) There is ſomewhat of a miracle in it, to raiſe up bread to a man out of ſtones: that is, to make a rocky Land a fertil ſoil. God threatned his people, that he would make the earth to be iron under them; that is, the earth which was ordinarily fruitful, ſhall yield you no more fruit, then iron. And on the other ſide he promiſes, *That they ſhall ſuck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock*, Deut. 32. 13. *Honey out of the Rock*; that is, Honey of Bees, hiving themſelves in Rocks; or (as others) Honey-fruits, as Dates, *&c.* which grow on Palm-trees (as Oyl on Olive-trees) in rocky places. Hereby the Lord aſſured his people of abundant plenty; for whereas Rocks and Stones are uſually barren, he would make thoſe places fruitful to *Iſrael.* They ſhould have Oyl out of the Rock in *Canaan*, as well as water out of the Rock in the wilderneſs. We are ſurely in league with thoſe Rocks and Stones of the fields, which ſend us ſuch *Preſents* as theſe, Bread and Water, Honey and Oyl.

Juſto molleſcunt ſaxa, impiis verò terræ pulvis molliſſimus lapideſcet.

Ainſw. on *Deut.*

Thirdly, Take theſe *Stones* as artificially laid together, and ſo, *Thou ſhalt be in league with them*, is thus to be underſtood; thoſe walls and mounds of ſtone, ſhall be as the keepers and watch-men of thy field, they ſhall preſerve thy corn and thy cattel from annoyance. To this ſence ſome joyn the former words with theſe, *Thou ſhalt not be afraid of the beaſts of the Earth*, for the *ſtones of the field*, which lie in the walls and fences, ſhall be-friend thee, and keep them out. When God would ſhew his intendments to deſtroy and lay waſte his vineyard, he expreſſes it by pulling down the wall, as before he had expreſs'd his care to protect it, by building of a wall, *Iſa.* 5. 2. *I fenced it, and gathered out the ſtones thereof*; which we may underſtand thus, *I gathered out the ſtones* (and as it is uſual) *made a fence of them*; and had the Vineyard brought forth fruit, it had alſo been in league with theſe ſtones, that is, the ſtones of the wall had kept out the wild beaſts, or any annoyance from them; but being fruitleſs, the league with ſtones was broken: *I* (ſaith the Lord, *verſ.* 5.) *will break down the wall thereof, and it ſhall be troden down.* So that, in this ſence, to be *at league with the ſtones of the field*, is, as much as to ſay, that *ſtone-wall*, or the *ſtone-fence* which is made about thy field, ſhall ſtand to protect and maintain thy Land, thy fruits and cattel, ſtand the incurſions of wild beaſts from ſpoyling and treading down by any.

Nunquam diſſolvetur materia, nō diſſiliet lapis ex ſepe, nemo furabitur, nemo inſiliet in agros tuos.

Fourthly, Take theſe *Stones* for *Land-marks* or for *Way-marks*, for *boundary-ſtones*, or for *directory-ſtones*; and the ſence may be thus conceived, *Thou ſhalt be at league with the ſtones of the field*, that is, no man ſhall come within thy bounds, none ſhall remove thy *Land-marks*, or invade thy *Eſtate*; thoſe Stones ſhall firmly diſtinguiſh thine inheritance: thou ſhalt have no controverſie ariſing, which is thine, or what is thy poſſeſſion. As if an argument had formally been made with theſe *ſtones*, to keep off all intruders upon their Maſters inheritance, and accordingly the ſtones in purſuance of that agreement (like ſo many hired ſervants) ſhould faithfully witneſs for their Maſter, and chide away all who would do him wrong (1 *Sam.* 7. 12.) *Samuel* ſet up a *ſtone* as a boundary of the conqueſt and victories which the Lord had given the children of *Iſrael* againſt the *Philiſtims*, *He ſet up a ſtone, and called it Eben-Ezer*, or *ſtone of help.* Adding the reaſon, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us*; As if he had ſaid, here is a *Stone of remembrance*, how God hath helped us; and that Stone ſeemed to ſpeak thus much to *Iſrael*, *Keep and hold what ye have gotten, let not the* Philiſtims *ſet a foot (unrevenged) over or beyond this ſtone.* So then, in this ſence, to *be in league with the ſtones of the field*, is a promiſe of keeping our inheritances free from invaſion and confuſion, that we ſhall know what is ours, and that no enemy ſhall take it from us.

Facere pactum cum lapidibus agri, eſt pacificè vivere cum proximo, item ſecurus eſſe, quod nullus terminos agri ſui tranſiliturus ſit, acſi cum lapidibus terminalibus pepigiſſet: ipſique lapides pactum initum ſervarent, nec aliter acſi ratione valentes incurſores, aut tranſgreſſores etiam verbo fugarent. Pined. *Termini agrorum tuorum à nemine violentur; nemo tranſgreditur.*

It was a great ſin to remove the *Land-marks* and *Boundaries*, and a great puniſhment was threatned againſt any, who ſhould alter or remove them, *Prov.* 23. 11. *Deut.* 19. 14. *Deut.* 27. 17. And when the Prophet *Hoſea* would ſhew, how extreamly wicked the Princes of *Judah* were, he ſaith (*chap.* 5. 10.) *The Princes of Judah were like them that remove the bounds*; as if he had ſaid, we account thoſe the worſt of men, who remove Land-marks; how vile then are theſe Princes, who are as bad as they? Juſt as the wickedneſs of the people is aggravated, *chap.* 4. 4. *This people are as they that ſtrive with the Prieſt*, To ſtrive with the Prieſt, is to ſtrive with God; that's a ſad ſtrife. Strivers with the Prieſt, are the worſt of people; how vile then are this people, who are as bad as they? But to the preſent point, if it be ſo great a ſin to remove the *Land-ſtones,* it muſt needs be a great mercy to have thoſe ſtones preſerved. So then, to *be in league with the ſtones of the field*, may have this good ſence alſo; the *boundary-ſtones* ſhall be preſerved, none ſhall remove them, and they ſhall preſerve thy eſtate, that none ſhall invade or waſte it. Hence obſerve,

> *God can do us good by any thing, if he pleaſeth; and nothing can do us good without God.*

Though we have carefully ſet up bounds, though we have made ſtrong fences, yet theſe will not keep out evil or annoyance, unleſs there be a league, a league of Gods making for us; and God can produce our comforts out of improbables, yea, impoſſibles to Nature: He can fetch us bread and a bleſſing from ſtones, It was a temptation upon Chriſt when he was hungry, *to make bread of ſtones. If thou be the Son of God, command that theſe ſtones be made bread*, Mat. 4. 2. But it is our comfort, that God can turn ſtones into bread, that he can make thoſe things which are moſt improbable to do us good, very good unto us. It is a ſin for us to turn ſtones into bread, or to expect ſtones to be turned into bread, that is, to put God upon miracles for us, when means or endeavors may help us; but God out of the ſuperabundance of his power and goodneſs, alwayes can, and ſometimes will work miracles: turning ſtones into bread for us. Then we turn ſtones into bread, when we live upon ſin; whoſoever eateth a bit of bread out of the hand of ſin, turneth ſtones into bread. Then God turneth ſtones into bread for us, when out of his infinite power and goodneſs, he gives us ſupplies by unuſual means, and comforts us by that, from which we can expect no more comfort, then we do bread and water out of ſtones.

Further, When ſtones ſeem to be moſt angry with a godly man, then he is in league with them. Stones (in a proper ſence) flew about the ears of *Steven*, and killed him; yet *Steven* was in league with the ſtones, even while they took away his life: God turned theſe ſtones into bread for him, and every ſtone was as a glorious Diamond in his Crown of Martyrdom.

There are two Interpretations of this *league with ſtones*, (which ſome make great ſtore and treaſure of) different from all theſe; the former is grounded upon a cuſtom in *Arabia*, where, or near which it is ſuppoſed *Job* s friends dwelt. It was (ſaith the learned Author) a very capital offence in that Countrey, if any man did caſt or carry heaps of ſtones into his neighbours ground; for that action had this ſignification or meaning in it, the man, who afterwards ventured to plow or till that ground, ſhould ſurely dy by the hands of thoſe who caſt in thoſe Stones. So that, the ſight of ſuch ſtones was terrible and ominous to the owner of the Land, as ſpeaking death and ruine to him, if he medled with it. Hence 'twas often left unus'd and untill'd. Againſt this barbarous cuſtom (it being an occaſion of murders and bloodſhed) a very ſevere Law was made; *That whoſoever ſhould be diſcovered to have caſt ſuch ſtones into his neighbours ground, ſhould have judgment of death by the Magiſtrate.* In alluſion to this Law or cuſtom, the interpretation of this promiſe (*Thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones of the field*) is made out thus. The ordinary ſtones of the field ſhall be ſo far from hurting, that, even thoſe ſtones, which ſpeak anger and malice ſhall not hurt thee. God will reconcile or ſubdue the rage of thine enemies, and though they have caſt theſe ſtones of defiance into thy Land, yet they ſhall deſire a league of peace with thee, or fall before thee.

Pined. *Crimen hoc appellabant σκοπελισμὸν, cujus rei admiſſum, tale eſt; pleriq; inimicorum ſolent prædiū inimici σκοπελίζειν, id eſt, lapides ponere indicio futuros, quod ſi quis eum agrum coluiſſet, malo letho periturus eſſet inſidiis eorum qui ſcopulos poſuiſſent. Quæ res tā tum timorē habet, ut nemo agrum accedere audeat; crudelitatem timent eorū qui ſcopeliſmon fecerūt.* Id. *ex* Ulpiano.

The ſecond is grounded upon a cuſtom in war, of which we read (2 Kings 3. 25,) that when the *Moabites* fled before *Iſrael, the purſuing* Iſraelites *beat down their Cities, and on every good piece of Land, caſt every man his ſtone, and filled it*, &c. *Eliphaz* might have an eye to this; as if he had ſaid, thy Land ſhall not be buried under the heaps of ſtones, thrown there by a conquering hand; that is, thou ſhalt have a league of amity with, or victory over all that are round about thee.

And the Beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee.

That is, they ſhall (through the power of God) be made peaceable to thee. *To be at peace with the beaſts*, is the ſame in proportion, with *being in league with ſtones.* It was mans priviledge by creation, to have power over the beaſts of the field, and it is the priviledge of redemption, *to be at peace with them.* This is the ordinary priviledge of every Believer: But there is a more tranſcendent priviledge of the Church, in the moſt flouriſhing eſtate of it here on earth, repreſented under this notion, *Iſa.* 11. 6, 7, 8, 9. *The Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the fatling together, and a little child ſhall lead them,* &c. *And the ſucking child ſhall play on the hole of the Aſp, and the weaned child ſhall put his hand on the Cockatrice den; they ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain.* This *peace with beaſts*, is within a degree of glory with God, whether we underſtand it in the letter, of beaſts in kind, or in the Allegory, of men ſymbolizing in rage and fierceneſs, in power and poyſons, in ſtings and teeth, with beaſts and ſerpents.

The Text before us, goes lower then this promiſe; *And to be at peace with the beaſts of the field*, is only a gracious aſſurance that they ſhall not hurt us, or that they ſhall be uſeful to us. In the firmnſs of this promiſe of *peace with the beaſts*, the fearleſneſs of a godly man is founded; *He ſhall not be afraid of the beaſts of the earth, for the beaſts of the earth ſhall be at peace with him.* Hence obſerve,

> *The courage and fearleſneſs of a godly man is grounded on divine reaſon, not on humane preſumption.*

When we ſee a man ſtout in the midſt of danger, fearleſs amongſt wild beaſts, we may wonder where the ſpring of his courage lies: This promiſe ſheweth you the ſpring-head, *He is at peace with them.* It is not conceit and fancy, or deſperateneſs of ſpirit, that cauſed him to deride and ſlight danger; but he hath a ſolid ground; there is a peace and a league ratified in heaven, for him; even with the Stones and Beaſts of the earth. As a godly man can give a reaſon of the hope that is in him, ſo he can give a reaſon of the courage that is in him; he knows why he is ſo ſtout and venturous.

Secondly, Obſerve from both, in that man is here ſaid to be in league with the ſtones, and at peace with the beaſts;

> That, *Every creature, by ſin, is made dangerous and hurtful unto man.*

For, in that there is a league and peace made with theſe, it notes, they were in a ſtate of hoſtility, ready to riſe up againſt us, and annoy us. As the creature, by reaſon of mans ſin is ſubject unto vanity, ſo man is ſubject unto fear, by reaſon of the creature. *Sin hath made the creature vanity in it ſelf, and ſin hath made the creature vexation unto us.* When the beaſts rebel againſt us, we ſhould remember how we have rebelled againſt God; and, that until God renews a league, and makes peace for us, with the creatures, there is not a creature upon the earth, but may quickly be deſtructive to us, If God ſpeaks the word, and gives a call or a commiſſion to a Flie, againſt the ſtrongeſt, the ſwifteſt man; flight ſhall periſh from the ſwift, and power from the ſtrong, neither of them ſhall eſcape.

Thirdly, *Thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones, and with the beaſts*; he reckons up all thoſe wayes by which evils may come in upon us; and aſſures a man, to whom God is reconciled; that theſe evils ſhall not come. Hence obſerve,

> That, *When God is once a friend to us, he can quickly make all other things friendly to us alſo.*

Every godly man (of ſuch *Eliphaz* here ſpeaks) is at peace and league with God, therefore God makes all creatures at peace and league with him. Though uſually, they who are in neareſt league and covenant with God, are moſt warred with, and oppoſed by the world; yet this ſtands ſure, that when God is our friend, he can make our enemies our friends, or their enmity ſhall befriend us; Stones and ſavage Beaſts ſhall be helpful to us. *When God is at peace with us, he makes all things at peace with us. Daniel* was at peace with God, and he was at peace among the Lions. The Apoſtle (*Rom.*8.) gives it in general, *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* No creature hath power in it ſelf to maintain war and enmity againſt thoſe, on whoſe ſide God appears.

Qui dominū habent adjutorem, habebit & omnes creaturas adjutrices; ille ſi favet, favent omnes, ait, aiunt; negat, negāt, Qui Dominum habet, cuſtodem habebit, & lapides cāpi cuſtodes. Brent *in loc.*

Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia.

appears. If God love us, *All things work together for good to us.* He that hath help from God, ſhall not want help from any creature; for all creatures are at the call and command of God; if he ſaith, *go, they muſt go; if he ſaith, come, they muſt come; if he ſaith to a Stone, do ſuch a man good, the Stone muſt do it; if he ſaith to a Raven, go carry* Elijah *his dinner, the Raven will haſten; if he ſaith to a wild beaſt, ſave ſuch a man, deliver ſuch a mnn, ſpare ſuch a man, he muſt go of Gods errand.* In our friendſhip and league with God, we have a virtual league of friendſhip with the moſt unfriendly creatures.

And if God pleaſe, he can make men, who have as little ſence as Stones, and leſs reaſon then Beaſts, to be helpful and uſeful, and peaceable to his people. There is a generation amongſt us, a ſtony generation, a hard-hearted generation of men, you may as well move a Stone, as move them with what you ſay; a beaſtly generation of men, when you deal with them, you deal with beaſts; yet the great God (if he pleaſe) can make a league for us with theſe Stones, he can make theſe beaſts of the earth, brutiſh and unreaſonable men, *to be at peace with us.* Further obſerve,

> *It is from ſpecial providence, that the Stones, and the Beaſts of the earth do not hurt or deſtroy us, but ſpecially that they help and do us good.*

There is providence towards all, but a ſpecial providence to the people of God, that the creatures hurt them not. If God did not bridle the rage and reſtrain the power of Beaſts, man could not comfortably ſubſiſt with them. The reaſon is given (*Deut.* 7. 22.) why God deſtroyed the *Canaanites* by little and little, before his people; namely, *Leſt the beaſts of the earth ſhould encreaſe upon them.* Here was a ſpecial providence, as all leagues and peace-makings are, all the leagues and peace which believers have, are branches of that *great League*, of that *grand Covenant*, which God hath made with Chriſt on our behalf. And therefore (*Hoſ.* 2. 18.) his promiſe is made in ſpecial to the Church. *And in that day I will make a Covenant for them, with the beaſts of the field.*

Fifthly note, *A godly man enjoyes common comforts for ſpecial favour.*

Wicked men are ſeldom hurt by the beaſts of the field, but they are never at peace with them.

Laſtly obſerve, *Peace is a great mercy.*

By how much God makes more peace upon earth, by ſo much, man hath more of heaven upon earth. Man ſhould deſire peace with beaſts, much more with men, moſt of all with God.

VERS. 24, 25, 26, 27.

And thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace, and thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not ſin.
Thou ſhalt know alſo that thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thine off-ſpring as the graſs of the earth.
Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in his ſeaſon.
Lo this, we have ſearched it, ſo it is, hear it, and know thou it for thy good.

AT the Nineteenth verſe of this Chapter, we had a promiſe of deliverance from evil, *in ſix troubles, and in ſeven,* In the Verſes following, we had a ſpecification of ſix or ſeven troubles, from which deliverance is promiſed. In theſe words, we have the reſult of all, a well-grounded ſecurity, in aſſurance of a fourfold bleſſing. Firſt, Of a quiet and happy life. Secondly, Of many proſperous children, *v.* 25. Thirdly, Of a long life. Fourthly, Of a ſweet and comfortable death, *v.* 26. Every one confirmed and ratified as a truth in it ſelf; and by way of application brought home to *Job* in *v.* 27. or the laſt verſe of the Chapter.

Verſe 24. **And thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.**

Thou ſhalt know it.] Knowledge is ſometime put for preſent ſence; *He that keeps the Commandments, ſhall feel* (*Heb.* ſhall know) *no evil*: and ſo *Job* is promiſed to know, his Tabernacle ſhall be in peace, that is, he ſhall ſee and feel it to be in peace. And,

Non ego vanus augur, experieris & cognoſces reipſa. Coc.

Secondly, Knowledge is put for experience; as we ſay of a rich man, *he never knew poverty*: And in that ſence, *Chriſt is ſaid not to have known ſin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Thus, alſo, the godly man knows his Tabernacle ſhall have peace, even by the peace which he hath had: From the former dealings of God, he gathers concluſions what God will do with him for the time to come; Thou ſhalt not find me a falſe Prophet, or that I have fed thee with wind: *Thou ſhalt know from experience*, that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.

And there is a third way by which this might be known, *ſc.* by debate and reaſoning; *Thou ſhalt know it*: if thou doſt but conſider, what the eſtate of a godly man is, and what God hath ſpoken about that eſtate, thou maiſt make out ſuch a concluſion, that certainly thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.

There is a fourth way of knowing, and that is, upon the teſtimony or word of another; this is properly called *Faith*; *Thou ſhalt know it*, that is, by looking into the word of God, or conſidering the promiſes made to godly men, thou ſhalt aſſent to and believe this thing, that *thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.*

Fifthly, To know, is as much as to be aſſured or certain of a thing; and to know ſo, is oppoſed not only to ignorance and opinion, but it is oppoſed to the lower degrees of Faith: *I know that my Redeemer lives*, &c. (ſaith *Job*, *chap.* 19. 25.) that is, I am ſure he lives. And the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 14. *Knowing that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus.* Knowledge is often put for aſſurance, and it may riſe to that pitch here; *Thou ſhalt be aſſured that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.*

Thy Tabernacle.] Tabernacles were of two ſorts. There were Tabernacles for civil uſes, and the Tabernacle for Church-uſes; they dwelt in Tabernacles, and God was worſhipped in a Tabernacle; and therefore (*Ezek.* 23. 4.) *Iſrael* and *Judah* are called *Aholah* and *Aholibah*. *Iſrael*, the ten Tribes, is called *Aholah*, that is, a *Tent*, or or a *Tabernacle*; noting, that they had been the Tent and the Tabernacle of God, wherein he was worſhipped; but *Judah* is called *Aholibah*, that is, *My Tent is in the midſt of her*; becauſe God at that time continued the outward Ordinances of his worſhip to *Judah*, though the ten Tribes had been long in captivity. That only by the way: Here by Tabernacles, we are to underſtand civil Tabernacles; for in thoſe Eaſtern Countries, their ordinary habitations and dwellings were in moveable Tents or Tabernacles, becauſe of their frequent removes. And hence afterward amongſt the *Latines*, the word for a Tent or Tabernacle, ſignified a houſe, or any place wherein men dwell and frequent. Further, By a Trope, a Tabernacle ſignifies all a mans eſtate, or all his goods; ſo that, when it is ſaid, *Thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace*, the meaning is, thy whole eſtate and family, whatever thou haſt, *ſhall be in peace.*

Solent frequentiſſimè abſtracta ob Emphaſin, pro concretis prædicare.

Shall be in peace.] That is, it ſhall be peaceable or in ſafety: Peace may be conſidered two wayes, either ſtrictly or largely; ſtrictly, and ſo peace is oppoſed to war; either firſt, Foreign; or ſecondly, Civil; or thirdly, Domeſtical war (as we may call it) namely, ſtrife and contention in Families. Thus, *Thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace*, may take in all theſe; thou ſhalt neither be invaded by Foreigners, neither ſhalt thou have any inſurrection and ſedition in thy own borders; neither ſhalt thou have unkind contentions in thy particular family, or within thy private walls.

Secondly, Take the word more largely (as it is very frequently in Scripture) and then peace ſignifies all manner of bleſſings and good things, the confluence and gathering together as it were of all comforts; and peace in this large ſence, is oppoſed to any kind of trouble or adverſity; and to ſay ſuch an one hath peace, is as much as to ſay, he proſpers. Peace and proſperity are terms of the ſame ſignification. And then the meaning is this, *Thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace*, that is, that thy whole eſtate ſhall proſper, and that thou ſhalt have good ſucceſs. Note hence, Firſt, *Peace is a choice and a ſpecial bleſſing.*

Outward peace is the choiceſt of outward bleſſings, and inward peace is the choiceſt of ſpiritual bleſſings. Peace gives ſweetneſs and beauty to all our bleſſings; without peace, riches are but guilded thorns; honour is but higher miſery, health but ſtronger affliction.

So, without inward peace, Grace gives no preſent comfort; and therefore in the wiſhes of perfect ſpiritual mercy to the Saints, we find theſe two in conjunction, *Grace and Peace.* The higheſt promiſes made to the Church, are promiſes of ſetled peace in the Church, *Iſa.* 32. 18. *My people ſhall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in ſure dwellings, and in quiet reſting-places;* There's the top of their outward felicity: Again, in *Iſa.* 33. 20. *Look upon Zion the City of our ſolemnities* (that is, where the worſhip of God was ſolemniz'd) *thine eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation, a Tabernacle that ſhall not be taken down, not one of the ſtakes thereof ſhall ever be removed, neither ſhall any of the cords thereof be broken:* Pure Ordinances, and a peaceable Habitation, are *Jeruſalems* perfection on earth; yea, ſome look upon it as a perfection too perfect for earth, and therefore interpret the Propheſie of the heavenly *Jeruſalem.*

Secondly, He ſaith not only, thou ſhalt have peace in thy Tabernacle; but *thou ſhalt know it.* Hence obſerve,

To be aſſured of a mercy, is better then the enjoyment of a mercy.

Doubts of loſing a mercy, eat out the heart of a mercy; and a man in that caſe, is as much troubled with the fear of wanting, as he can be comforted with the ſenſe of enjoying.

There are three ſteps of bleſſedneſs. To be delivered from evil, is but a part of bleſſedneſs, negative bleſſedneſs: to receive good, is the better part of bleſſedneſs, poſitive bleſſedneſs: But to be aſſured that we ſhall hold and retain all this, is the perfection of bleſſedneſs. The firſt part of that great bleſſing we receive by Chriſt, conſiſts in our deliverance from evil; or in a freedom from periſhing. The ſecond conſiſts in the conveyance of good to us, as pardon of ſin, grace and glory. But the third (which is the height of all) conſiſts in our everlaſting aſſurance to enjoy all this. *Adam* had a good eſtate, but he was not aſſured of it: The bleſſings we have by Chriſt, are built upon a foundation, which can never be ſhaken. In this method, temporal mercies are promiſed in this Scripture: Firſt, Deliverance from Sword and Famine. Secondly, Peace with the Creatures. Thirdly, An aſſurance that this peace ſhall be continued.

Laſtly obſerve, *All outward bleſſings are in themſelves fading and periſhing.*

Though a man be aſſured that he ſhall enjoy outward bleſſings, yet he can enjoy them but in the nature and condition of outward bleſſings. Though he be ſure to uſe and enjoy them, yet he looks upon them as periſhing in the uſing. All outward things are here (as frequently in other Scriptures) implied under the notion of a Tabernacle; a Tabernacle is a moveable habitation. It is a piece of a miracle if a Tabernacle ſtand long: that promiſe (*Iſa.* 33. 20.) imports ſomewhat extraordinary: A Tabernacle that ſhould not be taken down, not one of the ſtakes thereof removed, nor any of the cords thereof be broken: It is as if the Holy Ghoſt ſhould ſay, Thou ſhalt be a Tabernacle, priviledg'd above all Tabernacles; they are moveable, unfixed, eaſie to be taken down; but it ſhall not be ſo with thee. The Apoſtles concluſion takes in all creature-comforts; *The faſhion of this world paſſeth away,* 1 Cor. 7. 31. The Scheme, the beauty of the beſt earthly things paſs, while we enjoy them, and moulder away between our hands, while we are uſing them.

And thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not ſin.

This clauſe of the Verſe compleats mercy yet higher: It is better not to ſin in our habitation, then to be aſſured of a habitation. *To have quietneſs in our habitation, is very good; but to have holineſs in it, is beſt of all. Thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not ſin.*

The word which we tranſlate *habitation,* ſignifies not only a *houſe,* but a *wife,* or a *houſewife:* Hence ſome render, *Thou ſhalt viſit thy beauty, or thy fair and beautiful wife, and ſhalt not ſin:* The reaſon is, either, becauſe a good wife is the beauty and ornament of the houſe; or becauſe the knowledge, wiſdom and diligence of the wife is a means to furniſh and adorn the houſe; or laſtly, the buſineſs of a wife is ſo much in the houſe, that ſhe ſhares names with the houſe; ſhe is, or ought to be like a Snail, living with her houſe upon her back. The Apoſtles rule alſo being, *I will that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the houſe.* 1 Tim. 5. 14. And *exhort them to be diſcreet, chaſte, keepers at home,* Tit. 2. 5. Hence alſo probably, the ſame word in the Hebrew, ſignifies a beautiful wife, and a beautiful houſe. We read it in that ſence (*Pſal.* 68. 12.) *Kings of Armies did fly apace, and ſhe that tarried at home, divided the ſpoyl. She that tarried at home,* or the beauty of the houſe (*ſc.* the wife) divided the ſpoil. The meaning is, ſuch victory ſhall be obtained over the enemies of the Church, that the wives and weak women ſhall be filled with thoſe ſpoils, which their triumphant husbands ſhall bring home to them.

נוה
Habitatio, & in fœminino genere ſignificat Habitatricem mulierem, ſc. habitantem in domo, & exornantem eam. Moller. *in* Pſal. 68. 13.

נות בית

But here we may rather take the word in the ordinary ſence, only with this emphaſis, ſignifying (not bare walls, or a numerous Family) but a beautiful, a well furniſhed, a well ordered houſe. And ſo we have the word at the third verſe of this Chapter, where *Eliphaz* ſaith, *I ſaw the wicked taking root, and preſently I curſed his habitation,* or, his goodly, beautiful, flouriſhing houſe: So here, *Thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation,* that is, thy houſe in all the beauty, order, riches and furniture of it.

Thou ſhalt viſit.] The word ſignifies more then to ſee and look upon the buildings and furniture: To viſit, notes in Scripture theſe three or four things.

פקד
Viſitavit.

Firſt, To overlook or take care of the houſe; to viſit the houſe, is to provide for the houſe, *Pſal.* 8. 4. *Lord, what is man that thou viſiteſt him!* that is, that thou takeſt ſo much care of him, and haſt ſuch waking thoughts about him.

Secondly, To viſit the houſe, notes an enquiry of what is done in the houſe, how things go in the family.

Thirdly, It imports a calling of all to an account and reckoning, about what is done in their diſcharge of family-duties.

Fourthly, To viſit, is to order and direct, to command and give precepts for what ſhall be done. Hence frequently in the Old Teſtament, the Commandments of God are expreſſed by this word, *his Precepts.* So then, *Thou ſhalt viſit thy houſe,* or, **thy habitation,** may take in all theſe; thou ſhalt, as a Maſter, view, and overſee, direct and call to account thy houſe and family. In this ſence, the word is commonly uſed amongſt us: That act of the Biſhops calling their *Dioceſſes* to an account, and over-looking them, was called *their Viſitation.* And over Colledges, Hoſpitals, and ſuch publick Foundations, *Viſitors* are appointed, to ſee and take an account, how the Rules and Statutes of thoſe places are obſerved. *Thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not ſin.*

But how is it ſaid, he ſhall do this, **and not ſin**? Doth not ſin mingle with all we do?

The word here uſed, ſignifies, 1. Tropically, to err, fail or miſcarry in the general. 2. Properly, to miſs a ſpecial mark or way, to ſhoot awry, or wander in ſtead of walking; as (*Judg.* 20. 16.) it is ſaid of thoſe ſeven thouſand *Benjamites,* that they could ſhoot at an *hairs breadth, and not ſin;* ſo the word is, or not miſcarry, not miſs the mark. And becauſe every tranſgreſſion is a wandering out of the way of Gods Commandments, or a ſhooting beſide the mark of his word, therefore that word in Scripture, is commonly uſed for ſinning.

חטא
Erravit via vel ſcopo.

Here the word admits a twofold interpretation.

Firſt, For the fruit or effect of ſin; thus, thou ſhalt order and overlook thy family, with ſuch wiſdom and diſcretion, that thou ſhalt not err, or do things beſide the rule of prudence, and ſo bring miſcarriage and troubles upon thy affairs by ſin. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates to this ſence, *Thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not miſproſper.* And ſo *Eliphaz* may hint at *Job's* former loſſes, at the overthrow of his Eſtate and Family; as if he had ſaid, heretofore thou didſt viſit thy habitation, and didſt not proſper; but if **thou ſhalt now** humble thy ſelf, thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation,

Non afficieris pœna pro peccato. Targ. *Non læderis, non accipies damnum aut detrimentum,* Targ. *Curabit res tuas, & domum tuam,* tion, and all ſhall proſper; things ſhall go well with thee, thou ſhalt not labour in vain, or loſe thy end in the care thou takeſt about thy family.

at eas procurans non fruſtraberis ſpe tua, cedentibus tibi rebus omnibus pro voto, & ex animi ſententia. Mer. *Non aberrabis,* ſc. *à ſcopo & fine deſiderii tui.* Coc.

Secondly, The ſence may be this, thou ſhalt order and viſit thy family with ſo much juſtice, equity and holineſs, that thou ſhalt not ſin. Not that *Eliphaz* undertakes his abſolute freedom from ſin, but he ſhould not ſin as (he ſuppoſed he had) before, thou ſhalt not run into ſuch errors, or ſplit thy ſelf upon ſuch rocks as have wrack'd thy former greatneſs. And thus he ſecretly reproves *Job*'s former carriage in his family, as irregular and ſinful.

There is a further expoſition, joyning both theſe together; *Thou ſhalt viſit thy houſe, and ſhalt not ſin*; namely, by conniving or winking at the ſins and diſorders of thy family, and yet thou ſhalt have peace; thy ſtrict and faithful carriage in overſeeing thy family, ſhall not provoke either ſervants or children to contention and complainings, to anger and paſſion; thy holy ſeverity ſhall not fill thy houſe with quarrels and troubles; but God ſhall ſo over-aw the ſpirits of thoſe under thee, that they ſhall willingly and chearfully ſubmit to thy purer diſcipline. Hence obſerve,

Domeſtici correpti non ſuccenſebũt. Vatabl.

Firſt, *It is a great and a ſpecial point of godly wiſdom, well to order and viſit a Family.*

Families are the principles or ſeeds of a Commonwealth. As every man is a little world, ſo every houſe is a Kingdom. *A Family is a Commonwealth in a little Volume.* And the Rules of it are an *Epitome* of all Laws, by which whole Nations are governed. The Apoſtle makes it a ſpecial Character of *his Biſhop*, That he muſt be *one who rules his own houſe well*; and ſubjoynes the reaſon, *for if a man know not how to rule his own houſe, how ſhall he take care of the Church of God?* 1 Tim. 3. 4, 5. And therein wraps up this truth, that he who knows how to rule his own houſe well, is in a good poſture of ſpirit for publick rule. The ſame wiſdom, and juſtice, and holineſs for kind, only more enlarged and extenſive, acts in either ſphear, and will regularly move both.

Secondly, *A Family well viſited and ordered, is uſually a proſperous Family.*

Sin ſpoiles the comforts, and cankers the bleſſings of a Family.

Sin brought into a houſe, rots the timber, aud pulls down the houſe; or it undermines the foundation, and blows up the houſe. *The ſin of Families, is the ruine and conſumption of Families.* Hence obſerve,

Thirdly, *To be kept from ſin, is a better and a greater bleſſing, then all outward bleſſings.*

When *Eliphaz* had reckoned up all the comforts which repenting *Job* is promiſed; Thou ſhalt be delivered in ſix troubles and in ſeven; Sword and Famine ſhall not hurt thee, peace and plenty ſhall dwell within thy walls, and lodge in every chamber: Yet (ſaith he) I will tell thee of a bleſſing beyond all theſe, *thou ſhalt not ſin*: It is more mercy to be delivered from one ſin, then from ſword and famine; grace is better then peace, and holineſs then abundance; riches, and honour, and health, are all obſcured in this one bleſſing, a holy, a gracious, an humble heart.

There is more evil in one ſin, then in any or all troubles; therefore there muſt needs be a greater bleſſing in being kept from ſin, than in protection from any or all troubles. Sin is the greateſt evil; therefore to be kept from ſin, is one of the greateſt goods. Chriſt took upon him all ſorts of outward evils, *he became poor for our ſakes*; he had not ſo much as an houſe to lie in; he came in the form of a ſervant for our ſakes, and he was a man of ſorrows; he was acquainted with grief all his life, at laſt, with death and a grave: yet, he would not admit of the leaſt ſin: he was content to bear all our ſins, but he abhorred the thought of acting one. *Not to ſin, is the next priviledge to God, and the utmoſt priviledge of man.* When, in a full ſence, man ſhall not ſin, man will be arrived at fulneſs of joy; and as we daily empty of ſin, ſo we proportionably, fill with joy.

Verſe 25. **Thou ſhalt know alſo that thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thy off-ſpring as the graſs of the earth.**

From preſent bleſſings upon the family, he deſcends to thoſe which concern poſterity; as if he had ſaid, thy comforts ſhall not be confined to thy ſelf, neither ſhall they be ſhut up within the limits of one generation: Mercies ſhall be tranſmitted to thy children, thy heirs ſhall inherit bleſſings.

רב גדל

Thy ſeed ſhall be great.] The word *Great*, ſignifies both multitude and magnitude: Thou ſhalt have a *great ſeed*, that is, a numerous ſeed, a multitude of children: and thou ſhalt have a *great ſeed*, that is, honourable and wealthy children; *Job* himſelf was called, *chap.* 1. 3. (though by another word, yet in the ſame ſence) *the greateſt man in the Eaſt*: This greatneſs is promiſed his children, and they ſhall receive additional further bleſſings: For the word [*Rab*] ſignifies *greatneſs*, in a continual motion to more eminent greatneſs; and therefore it is ſometime tranſlated by *encreaſing*; So (*Iſa.* 9. 6.) Where the Prophet ſets out the flouriſhing greatneſs of the Kingdom of Chriſt: *Of the encreaſe of his Kingdom and Peace, there ſhall be no end*; or, *Of the greatneſs and greatning of his Kingdom, there ſhal be no end.* So that, to ſay, *thy ſeed ſhall be great*, notes, not only ſome ſtanding greatneſs, but growing greatneſs: they ſhall ever be upon an encreaſe, till they come to their full in glory.

And thy off-ſpring as the graſs of the earth.

Both clauſes of the Verſe mean the ſame thing. The word which we tranſlate [**off-ſpring,**] ſignifies properly *that which goeth forth* or iſſues, becauſe children ſpring or go forth from their parents, and are therefore called *their iſſue*. And the word is uſed for the bud of the Olive or of the Vine; hence the Pſalmiſt puts them both into a ſimilitude. *Thy children ſhall be like Olive-plants round about thy Table.* They are as the Olive-bud in their birth, and as the Olive-branch in their growth.

צאצאים *Germina ſicut ex vite palmites.*

Thy off-ſpring ſhall be [**as the graſs of the earth.**] To be as the graſs of the earth, is a *proverbial ſpeech*; and it ariſes to the ſence of thoſe proverbials ſpoken to *Abraham* concerning his ſeed; *Thy ſeed ſhall be as the ſtars of heaven*: And, *thy ſeed ſhall be as the ſand upon the Sea-ſhore.* The graſs of the field is as innumerable as the ſtars, or the ſands. *Thy off-ſpring ſhall be as the graſs of the field.* Thou ſhalt not only have a numerous, but thou ſhalt have (as it were) an innumerable off-ſpring.

Proverbiale multitudinis, talia ſunt ſicut arena maris, ut ſtella cœli. Druſ.

Mankind in general, is compared unto graſs, *Iſa.* 40. 6. *All fleſh is graſs.* Graſs, in regard of its ſudden withering, he is ſuddenly cut down; *the goodlineſs of man is as the flower of the field.* Wicked men are compared to Graſs, not only becauſe they wither, but becauſe they wither ſuddenly, or are cut off by ſome hand of Juſtice. The off-ſpring of a godly man are compared to Graſs, but in another reference. To Graſs, firſt, becauſe of their mutitude; and ſecondly, becauſe of their beauty; they ſhall flouriſh and be green as the graſs, which is very pleaſant to the beholders eye.

And in this alſo *Eliphaz* aimes at the death of *Job's* Children; Thou haſt loſt thy children, they periſhed miſerably; but if thou return, that bleſſing ſhall return, *Thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thy off-ſpring ſhall be as the graſs of the earth.*

Hoc dicit quia Job *filios amiſerat.* Merc.

The bleſſing of Children hath been ſhewed in the firſt Chapter; therefore I ſhall but name a Point or two now.

Firſt, That, *The poſterity of godly parents ſtand nearer then others, under the influence of heavenly bleſſings.*

As Grace doth not run in a blood, ſo neither do bleſſings infallibly run in a blood; yet the children of thoſe who are bleſſed, are neareſt a bleſſing, and their poſſibilities for mercy, are faireſt. Many promiſes are made to them, *they are heirs apparent of the Promiſes in their parents right*; others to appearance, are ſtrangers to the promiſes; though we know free Grace chuſeth often out of the natural line: The mercies of God are his own, and it is his prerogative, *to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardneth.*

Secondly, When he ſums up the bleſſings of a godly man, the bleſſings of his Children are caſt into the account. Hence note,

That, *The bleſſings of the Children are the bleſſings of the Parents.*

As the Parent is afflicted in the afflictions of his Children, ſo he is bleſſed in their bleſſings. *Relations ſhare mutually both in Comforts and Croſſes.* Children are their Parents multiplied; and every good of the Child is an addition to the Parents good. *A flouriſhing, and a numerous Poſterity is a great outward bleſſing.* Some have the choiceſt of ſpiritual bleſſings, who want this (*Iſa.* 56. 3.) God comforts thoſe that have no Children. *Do not ſay that thou art made a dry Tree; for I will give thee in mine houſe, a place and a name better then of Sons and Daughters:* As if he had ſaid, the name of Sons and Daughters, is a very great Comfort, but it is not the greateſt Comfort, the beſt bleſſing: thou ſhalt have a name and a place, better then of Sons and Daughters.

Verſ. 26. **Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in his ſeaſon.**

From perſonal preſent bleſſings of this life, and the bleſſings of poſterity, *Eliphaz* deſcends to ſhew the bleſſing of a godly man in death: A happy death is the cloſe of temporal happineſs, and the beginning of eternal. A happy death ſtands between grace and glory, like the *Baptiſt* between the Law and the Goſpel, and is the connexion or knitting of both: And as it was ſaid of *John*, *That among them who are born of women, there aroſe not a greater then he; nevertheleſs, he that is leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, is greater then* John: So we may ſay, that among all the bleſſings of this life, there is none greater then a bleſſed death; nevertheleſs that which is leaſt in eternal life, is a greater bleſſing, then a bleſſed death. It was an obſervation among the Heathen, *That no man is to be accounted bleſſed, until he die.* But when life is ſhut up with a bleſſing, then man is fully bleſſed; as in reaſoning, ſo in living, the concluſion lies in the premiſes. *A happy death is the reſult of a holy life.*

Thou ſhalt come to thy grave.] That phraſe notes two things.

Firſt, A willingneſs and a chearfulneſs to die. *Thou ſhalt come,* thou ſhalt not be dragged or hurried to thy grave, as it is ſaid of the fooliſh rich man, *Luke* 12. *This night ſhall thy ſoul be taken from thee.* But *thou ſhalt come to thy grave,* thou ſhalt die quietly and ſmilingly, as it were; *thou ſhalt go to thy grave,* as it were upon thine own feet, and rather walk, then be carried to thy Sepulcher.

Secondly, It notes the honour and ſolemnity of burying. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave with honour,* as it is ſaid of *Abijah* the ſon of *Jeroboam*, 1 King. 14. 12, 13. When Meſſengers were ſent to the Prophet to inquire whether he ſhould recover, the Prophet tells them, *The child ſhall die, and all* Iſrael *ſhall mourn for him, and bury him: For, he only of* Jeroboam *ſhall come to the grave, becauſe in him there is found ſome good thing toward the Lord God of* Iſrael, *in the houſe of* Jeroboam. He onely ſhall *come to the grave,* the reſt ſhall be thruſt into the grave, or lie unburied; but he ſhall come, that is, he ſhall be buried with honour; others ſhall have reproach caſt upon them, when the earth is caſt upon them. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave*

In a full age.] So we tranſlate. The word is expounded two wayes.

כלח *Senium, ſenectutis tempus.*

In a full age, that is, in an age, when thou ſhalt be full: full of eſtate, full of wealth and honour, thou ſhalt have abundance when thou dieſt. And ſo it points at *Job*'s preſent poverty; though thou haſt nothing now, ſcarce a rag to thy back, or a ſheet to wind thee in, if thou ſhouldſt die, yet ſeek unto God, and thou ſhalt die in a full age, in a *golden Age,* thy wants ſhall be ſupplied, and thy loſſes repaired to the full.

But rather a *full age,* notes here a fulneſs of dayes, though the other (fulneſs of eſtate) be not excluded. The Prophet puts the ſame difference, between aged men, and men full of dayes, as is between children, and young men (*Jer.* 6. 11.) *I am full of the fury of the Lord, I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the aſſembly of young men together: The aged, with him that is full of days.* That is, all ages ſhall feel the fury of the Lord. A full age, is an age full of dayes or compleat to the utmoſt time of life. Some of the Jewiſh Writers obſerve, that the *numeral letters* of this word (*Chelad*) make up threeſcore, which they conceive is the age here meant; but threeſcore is not a full old-age, it is rather the beginning of old-age. Therefore *fulneſs of age,* is by others interpreted, to be ſtrength of age; thou ſhalt die in an old-age, yet thou ſhalt have ſtrength and comfort in thy old-age; thine old-age ſhall not be a troubleſom age, thou ſhalt not be weak and crazy, diſtempered and ſick, a burden to thy ſelf or friends; thou ſhalt dye (as ſome tranſlate) *in a good old-age;* or as Mr. *Broughton, thou ſhalt die in luſty old-age;* time ſhall not wither thee, nor drink up thy blood and ſpirits, *Thou ſhalt have a ſpring in thy Autumn, and a Summer in the winter of thy life.* As it was with *Moſes*, *Deut.* 34. 7. who dyed when he was an hundred and twenty years old, yet ſaith the Text, *His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated:* This is to die in a full old-age, full of dayes, yet full of ſtrength and health. It is a great bleſſing, when a man is (in this ſence) youthful in old-age: when others ſee with four eyes, and go with three legs, he uſes neither ſtaff nor ſpectacles, but renews his ſtrength like the Eagle.

בכלח *In numeris notat 60 ea prima ſenectus eſt, non matura. Quidam Hebræorum viridem ſenectam nomine* כלח *putant ſignificari, ut Caph ſit ſimilitudinis* לח *autem virtutem & humidum ſonat.* Ευγηεία *Senectutem itaq; pollicetur, non quidem moleſtã & morboſã, ſed vegetam & fælicem.*

Or we may take the ſence more generally; for any one that liveth long, and liveth comfortably; as it was ſaid of *Abraham*, Gen. 25. 8. *That he dyed in a good old-age, an old man, and full of years.* He dyed in a good old-age; the young-man is councel'd, *To remember his Creator in the dayes of his youth; before the evil dayes come,* Eccleſ. 12. 1. What are thoſe? Thoſe evil dayes are the dayes of old-age: The words following being an Allegorical, elegant deſcription of old-age: Old-age in it ſelf is the evil day: The lives of many old-men are a continual death. They live as it were upon the rack of extream pains or ſtrong infirmities; therefore it is a ſpecial bleſſing for a man to be old, and yet to have a good old-age, that is, a florid comfortable old-age; *To have many years and few infirmities* is a rare thing. In ſome *old-age flouriſhes,* and in others *old-age periſhes. Job* gives us this difference in the uſe of this word, *Chap.* 30. 2. *Yea whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me, in whom* (Chelad) *old-age was periſhed.* As if he had ſaid, ſome old-men are active and ſtrong; but theſe, who were faded and flatted in all their abilities, in what ſtead could they ſtand me? They were a trouble to themſelves, and therefore could be no comfort unto others.

This *full old-age* is explained further, by way of ſimilitude, *He ſhall die in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in his ſeaſon.* When a young man dies, he is as green corn. The *Pſalmiſt* imprecates that ſome might be like the *graſs* or *corn on the houſe top, that withereth before it is cut down; whereof the Mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth up the ſheaves, his boſom.* The life of a man ſometimes is like corn growing upon the houſe-top, that withereth: Or (as it is in the Parable of the ſower, *Matth.* 13.) like the corn that fell on the high-way ſide, or among ſtones and thorns, which came not in, in its ſeaſon; it never ſtaid the ripening or reaping, but was eaten up, or dryed, or choaked before the harveſt. Now here, man is compared unto corn ſowed in good ground, well rooted and continuing out its ſeaſon, and is brought in ripe at harveſt. *Old-age is the harveſt of nature.* Some divide mans life into ſeven parts, comparing it to the ſeven Planets: Some into five, comparing it to the five acts of an interlude; but commonly the life of man is divided into four parts, and ſo it is compared to the four ſeaſons of the year. And in that diviſion old-age is the winter quarter, cold and cloudy, full of Rheums and Catarrhs of diſeaſes and diſtillations. But here, old-age is the harveſt; though thou art a very old-man, thou ſhalt not die as in winter, but thou ſhalt die, as it were in harveſt, when thou art full ripe and ready, as a *ſhock of corn* that is laid up in the barn: The general judgment of the world is compared to a harveſt, and death (which is a particular day of judgment) is a harveſt too.

Pſal. 129. 6, 7.

Thoſe words, *He ſhall come to his grave as a ſhock of corn,* are further conſiderable; the Hebrew is, *He ſhall aſcend at a ſhock of corn;* and that, referring to death, is ſometimes tranſlated by *cutting off, or taking away,* Pſal. 102. 25. *Cut me not off in the midſt of my days:* The letter is, *Let me not aſcend in the midſt of my dayes:* Whether it have any alluſion to that hope or faith of the Saints in their death, that, they do but aſcend, when they die, or to their diſ-

עלה *Aſcendere ſignificat evaneſcere, velut in auras tolli vel medio tolli.*

appearing to the eye of ſenſe, when they die; becauſe things which aſcend, vaniſh out of ſight, and are not ſeen: In either ſence, when the Saints are cut down by death, they aſcend. And they are elegantly ſaid, *To aſcend as a ſhock of corn*; becauſe that is taken from the earth, and reared or ſtack't up; and ſo by a *Metaphor* it ſignifies a Tomb or a Monument erected or high-built over a dead Corps, much after the manner of a ſhock of corn: So the word is uſed, *He ſhall remain in the Tomb or Heap,* Job 22. 32.

גדיש *Propriè ſignificat acervũ frugum, qui in area erigitur. Metaphoricè tumulum ceu cumulum terræ vel monumentũ ſepulchro impoſitum.*

So then, the ſum of this verſe, is a promiſe of comfort and honour in death: He ſhall die in a full age, when he is ready and ripe for death. Yet this is not to be taken ſtrictly, that, every godly man dies in ſuch a full old-age; in an age full of dayes, or full of comforts. Many of Gods beſt ſervants have had evil dayes in their old-age; their old-age hath had many dayes of trouble and ſickneſs, of pain and perplexity. But thus it is with many in old-age, this is ſpecially to be look'd upon as an *Old-Teſtament promiſe*, when the Lord dealt more with his people, in viſible external mercies. Yet in one ſence it is an univerſal truth, and ever fulfilled to his people; for whenſoever they die, they die in a good age; yea though they die in the ſpring and flower of youth, they die in a good old-age; that is, they are ripe for death, when ever they die; when ever a godly man dies, it is harveſt time with him: though in a natural capacity he be cut down, while he is green, and cropt in the bud or bloſſom; yet in his ſpiritual capacity, he never dies before he is ripe. God ripens his ſpeedily, when he intends to take them out of the world ſpeedily. He can let out ſuch warm rayes and beams of his Spirit upon them, as ſhall ſoon maturate the ſeeds of grace, into a preparedneſs for glory: whereas a wicked man living an hundred years, hath no full old-age, much leſs a good old-age; *he is ripe indeed for deſtruction, but he is never ripe for death*; he is as unready and unripe for death, when he is an hundred years old, as when he was but a day old. He hath not begun to live, when he dies; or he is at the end of his natural race, before he hath ſet one ſtep in his ſpiritual. Gray hairs are the ſhame, and ſhould be the ſorrow of old-age, when they are not found in the way of righteouſneſs. From the former branch of this Verſe,

Obſerve, Firſt, *To have a comely burial, to come to the grave with honour, is a great bleſſing.*

It was threatned upon *Jehoiakim*, the ſon of *Joſiah*, as a curſe, *That he ſhould have the burial of an Aſs, and be drag'd and caſt out, beyond the gates of the City,* Jer. 22. 19. That man ſurely had lived like a beaſt, whom God threatned by name, that when he died, he ſhould be uſed as a beaſt. Though we know the bodies of many of the ſervants of God, have been ſcattered and may be ſcattered, upon the face of the earth, like dung; *The dead bodies* (as the complaint is, *Pſal.* 79. 2.) *of thy ſervants have they given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven, the fleſh of thy Saints to the beaſts of the earth*: Yet to them (even then) there is this bleſſing reſerved, beyond the bleſſing of a burial, they are ever laid up in the heart of God, he takes care of them, he imbalms them for immortality, when the remains of their mortality, are trodden under foot, or rot upon a dunghill.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A godly man is a volunteer in his death; he cometh to the grave.*

A wicked man never dies willingly; *Though he ſometime die by his own hand, yet he never dies with his own will.* Miſerable man is ſometimes ſo over-preſt with terrors, and horrors of conſcience; ſo worn out with the trouble of living, that he haſtens his own death. Yet he *Comes not to his grave willingly*, but is drag'd by neceſſity. He thruſts his life out of doors with a violent hand, but it never goes out with a cheerful mind. He is often unwilling to live, but he is never willing to die. *Death is welcome to him, becauſe life is a burden to him.* Only they come to the grave, who by faith have ſeen Chriſt lying in the grave, and perfuming that houſe of corruption, with his own moſt precious body, which ſaw no corruption.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *To live long, aud to die in a full age, is a great bleſſing.*

Old *Eli* had this curſe pronounced upon his family, 1 *Sam.* 2. 31. *There ſhall not be an old man in thy houſe.*

Gray hairs are a crown of honour, when they are found in the way of righteouſneſs. It is indeed infinitely better to be full of grace, then to be full of dayes; but to be full of dayes and full of grace too, what a venerable ſpectacle is that? To be full of years, and full of faith, full of good works, full of the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Chriſt; how comely and beautiful, beyond all the beauty and comlineſs of youth, is that? Such are truly ſaid to have filled their dayes. Thoſe dayes are filled indeed, which are full of goodneſs. When a wicked man dies, he ever dies empty and hungry; he dies empty of goodneſs, and he dies hungry after dayes. That place before mentioned of *Abraham* (*Gen.* 25. 8.) is moſt worthy our ſecond thoughts, *He died in a good old-age, an old man, and full*, ſo the Hebrew, we read, *full of years.* As a man, that hath eaten and drunk plentifully, is full, and deſires no more: So, *he died an old man, and full*, that is, he had lived as much as he deſired to live, *He had his fill of living, when he died.* And therefore alſo, it may be called a full age, becauſe a godly man hath his fill of living; but a wicked man (let him live never ſo long) is never full of dayes, never full of living; he is as hungry and as thirſty (as a man may ſpeak) after more time and dayes, when he is old, as he was when he was a child, fain he would live ſtill; *He muſt needs think it is good being here, who knows of no better being, or hath no hopes of a better.* It is a certain truth, *He that hath not a taſte of eternity, can never be ſatisfied with time.* He that hath not ſome hold of everlaſting life, is never pleaſed to let go this life; therefore he is never full of this life. It is a moſt ſad thing, to ſee an old man, who hath no ſtrength of body to live. yet have a ſtrong mind to live. *Abraham* was old and full, he deſired not a day or an hour longer. *His ſoul had never an empty corner for time, when he dyed.* He had enough, of all, but (of which he could never have enough, and yet had enough, and all, as ſoon as he had any of it) eternity. In that great reſtitution promiſed, *Iſa.* 65. 20. this is one priviledge, *There ſhall be no more there an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not fill'd his dayes.* There is much controverſie about the meaning of theſe words; the digreſſion would be too long to inſiſt upon them. Only to the preſent point thus much, that there is ſuch a thing, as an Infant of dayes, and *an old man that hath not fill'd his dayes.*

Impii quãvis diu vivant, tamen non impleat dies ſuos, quia ſpem in rebus temporariis collocantes perpetua vita in hoc mundo perfrui vellent.

An infant of dayes, may be taken for an *old child*, that is, an *old man childiſh*, or a man of many years, but few abilities: A man whoſe hoary head and wrinkled face ſpeak *fourſcore*, yet his fooliſh actions and ſimple carriage ſpeak under *fourteen*. *An old man that hath not fill'd his dayes*, is conceived to be the ſame man, in a different character. An old man fills not his dayes, Firſt, When he fulfils not the duty, nor reaches the end for which he lived to old-age. That man who hath lived long, and done little, hath left empty dayes upon the record of his life; and when you have writ down the dayes, the months, and years of his life, his ſtory's done, the reſt of the book is but a *continued blank*, nothing to be remembred that he hath done, or nothing worth the remembrance.

Now as an old man fills not his dayes, when he ſatisfies not the expectation of others: ſo in the ſecond place, his dayes are not fill'd, when his own expectations are not ſatisfied; that is, when he having lived to be old, hath yet young freſh deſires to live; when he finds his mind empty, though his body be ſo full of dayes, that it can hold no longer, nor no more. He that is in this ſence, an *infant of dayes*, and *an old man not having fill'd his dayes*, though he be an hundred years old, when he dies, yet he dies (as the Prophet concludes in that place) accurſed; he comes not to his grave under the bleſſing of this promiſe in the Text, *in a full age.*

Laſtly Obſerve, *Every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon.*

He ſhall come to his grave like a ſhock of corn that is brought in, in his ſeaſon. Even pale death hath beauty in it, when it comes in ſeaſon. *Eccleſ.* 7. 17. *Be not wicked over much, why ſhould'ſt thou die before thy time?* No man can die before Gods time, but a man may die before his time; that is, before he is prepared by grace, and before he is ripened in the courſe of nature. Theſe two wayes a man dies before his time: Firſt, When he dies without any ſtrength of grace: Secondly, When he dies in the ſtrength of nature. In this ſence the Prophet deſcribes the hand of God upon him, *Pſal.* 102. 23. *He weakened my ſtrength in the way; he ſhortned my dayes:* and therefore prayes in *verſ.* 24. *I ſaid, O my God, take me not away in the midſt of my dayes:* That is, in the ſtrength or beſt of my time, according to the line and meaſure of nature. A godly man prayes that he may not die out of ſeaſon; but a wicked man never dies in ſeaſon: That threatning is ever fulfilled upon him, in one ſence, if not in both (*Pſal.* 55. 23.) *The blood-thirſty and deceitful man ſhall not live out half his dayes.* A wicked man never lives out half his dayes, for, either he is cut off before he hath lived half the courſe of nature, or he is cut off before he hath lived a quarter of the courſe of his deſires; either he lives not half ſo long as he might, or not a tenth, not a hundreth part ſo long as he would; and therefore let him die when he will, his death is full of terror, trouble and confuſion, becauſe he dies out of ſeaſon. He never kept time or ſeaſon with God, and ſurely God will not keep or regard his time or ſeaſon.

Verſ. 27. **Lo this, we have ſearched it, ſo it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good.**

As *Eliphaz* began his diſpute with an elegant preface, ſo he ends it with a Rhetorical concluſion; as if he had ſaid, *Job* I have ſpoken many things unto thee, hear now the ſum and upſhot of all, *Lo this, we have ſearched it, ſo it is; hear it, and know it for thy good.*

Two things he concludes with; Firſt, With an aſſertion of the truth of what he had ſpoken, *So it is.* Secondly, With a motion for his aſſent to what was ſpoken, *Hear it.*

Or the words may fall under a three-fold conſideration.

As the { 1. Concluſion
2. Confirmation
3. Application } of his ſpeech.

And this application is ſtrengthened by a three-fold Motive.

By a Motive, firſt, from experience, *Lo this, we have ſearched it,* we have found the thing to be true.

Secondly, By a Motive from the truth of the thing in it ſelf, *ſo it is:* we have ſearched it, we have experience of it, *ſo it is,* the thing is certain. And then,

Thirdly, From the fruit and benefit of it, if he ſubmit unto and obey the truth delivered, *know it for thy good,* thou ſhalt reap the profit of it. Theſe are three Motives, by which he ſtrengthens his exhortation, in applying the truth he had beaten out, in his former diſcourſe.

חקר *Scrutatus, perſcrutatus eſt, remota aut abſtruſa.*

We have ſearched it.] As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, we have not taken theſe things upon truſt, or by an implicite faith; we have not received them by tradition from our Fathers, but we have ſearched, and tryed, and found out, that thus the matter ſtands in Gods diſpenſations, both to a wicked man, and to a godly man, in all the particulars run thorough in this Chapter. Or *we have ſearched,* that is, we have learned theſe truths by experience; that, God puniſheth not the innocent; that, man cannot compare in juſtice with God; that, hypocrites ſhall not proſper long; and that, mans afflictions are the fruit of his tranſgreſſions. The word ſignifies a very diligent and exact ſcrutiny (*Deut.* 13. 14.) *Thou ſhalt enquire, and make ſearch, and ask diligently.* It is to ſearch as Judges ſearch and enquire about any crime, or queſtion in Law determinable by their ſentence; and as we ſearch to find the meaning of a riddle. (*Judg.* 14. 14.) The word is alſo applied to the ſearchings and enquiries of a Spie (*Judg.* 18. 2.) ſent to bring intelligence; a Spie is an exact inquiſitor, into all affairs, given him in charge for diſcovery. So here, *we have ſearched out,* we have ſpied out and tryed this thing to the utmoſt, we have as it were, read over all the records of divine Truths, we have examined all experiences and examples, and this is the reſult, the ſum of all, *Lo thus it is.*

Diligenti inquiſitione & veritatis ſcrutatione nec non reconditorum divinæ providentiæ judiciorum conſideratione rem ita ſe habere comperimus.

A queſtion ariſes here, how *Eliphaz* can ſay, we have ſearched it, when as *Chap.* 4. he ſaith, *A thing was ſecretly brought to me?* It ſeems theſe were matters attained and beaten out by ſtudy, not ſent in by divine revelation; and ſo are rather the opinions of men, then the oracles of God. Men inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, ſpeak another language; as, *Thus ſaith the Lord, or this we have received, not this we have ſearched.* Scripture is given by inſpiration from God, not by the diſquiſitions of men.

Some have hence concluded this ſpeech of *Eliphaz* Apocryphal, as being rather matter of humane invention, then divine inſpiration: Or the work of mans wit, rather then of Gods Spirit.

Ex quo intelligimus hanc Eliphæ *diſſertionem non oraculi fuiſſe, ſed ſtudii, nec ad Dei revelantis reſponſa, ſed ad humani ingenii inventa pertinere.* Janſon *in loc.*

But I anſwer, Firſt, The Apoſtle *Paul* hath ſufficiently atteſted the Divine Authority of this Diſcourſe, by alledging a proof out of it, 1 *Cor.* 3. 19.

Secondly, That which was ſecretly brought to *Eliphaz,* was that one ſpecial Oracle, *Chap.* 4. 17. *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? ſhall a man be more pure then his Maker?* The other part of his diſcourſe, to which theſe words (*Lo this we have ſearched*) refer, were grounded upon the experiences which himſelf and his friends had obſerved in, and about the providence of God, in all his dealings both with the godly and the wicked, all agreeable, to that *grand principle* received by *immediate revelation.* And therefore as he told *Job* before, that the general poſition was brought him in a viſion; ſo all ages, and the records kept of them (in all which he had made a diligent enquiry) came up fully to the proof of it; as if he had ſaid, The Lord told me ſo, and all he hath done in the World proclaims that it is ſo. His Word is enough to aſſert his own juſtice, but his Works witneſs with it, *Lo, This we have ſearched, ſo it is.*

We have ſearched. He ſpeaks in the plural number; he begun his ſpeech in *Chap.* 4. and he concludes it here in the plural number. Yet, we are not to think, that this was a diſcourſe pen'd by them all together, or debated firſt in private conference, and agreed on, that thus *Eliphaz* ſhould ſpeak, becauſe he ſaith, we *have ſearched it.* But the meaning is only this, I ſuppoſe I have ſpoken the ſence of my two friends, who ſtand by, and I believe they are ready to ſubſcribe to, or vote every word I have uttered, therefore *behold we have ſearched, and thus it is.*

Hear thou it.] To adviſe thee, was our part; to hear and hearken is thy part; therefore *hear it.*

But had he not heard them all this while? why doth *Eliphaz* now bid him hear it?

It is true, he had heard; but, there is more required then the hearing of the ear, when ſuch a Sermon as this is preached; To hear, is more then the work of the ear. It is,

Firſt, To believe and give credit to what is heard. (*Joh.* 9. 27.) *I told you before, and you would not hear* (ſaith the blind man) *wherefore would you hear it again?* That is, I have told you already, but you would not believe, nor give credit to what I ſpake.

Secondly, To hear, is to hearken, that is, to yield and conſent to what is ſpoken. (*Gen.* 3. 17.) *Foraſmuch, as thou haſt hearkned to the counſel of thy wife:* Barely to hear a temptation to ſin, is no act of ſin; as barely to hear an exhortation to good, is no act of grace. *Therefore becauſe thou haſt hearkned,* is, becauſe thou haſt yielded and conſented to that which ſhe hath ſpoken.

Thirdly, To hear, is to obey. *Iſa.* 55. 3. *Hear and you ſoul ſhall live.* It is not every hearing of the ear, that bringeth life to the ſoul; obedient hearing is enlivening hearing.

So here, *we have ſearched it, ſo it is, hear it,* that is, believe what we have ſpoken, ſubmit unto, and conſent to what we have ſpoken, obey and practiſe what we have ſpoken.

To hear, is both an act of ſenſe, and an act of reaſon; an act of nature, and an act of grace. To hear one requeſting and praying is to grant: and to hear one counſelling and commanding, is to obey. When God hears man, he grants; and when man hears God, or hears men ſpeaking in the name of God, he yields and obeyes.

דע לך

It follows, **And know thou it for thy good.** The Hebrew is, *know it for thy ſelf.* Now, becauſe that which a man knows for himſelf, is for his profit; therefore we tranſlate *know it for thy good;* that is, know it as that, whereby thy ſelf mayſt receive good. The meaning of, *know it for thy ſelf;* is not this, know and keep it to thy ſelf, let none partake with thee of it; it is againſt the uſe of knowledge, that a man ſhould ſo know for himſelf, though a mans ſelf hath or may have good by all he knows. So, we muſt underſtand that of *Solomon,* Prov. 9. 12. *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf;* that is, thou ſhalt be advantag'd by thy wiſdom: Wiſdom brings in a fair revenew: though many know much and ſeem very wiſe, who know nothing for themſelves, and are not wiſe at all for their own good.

There are three ſorts of *knowing men.*

Firſt, Some know only to know. They know, but they propoſe no end to themſelves, beyond knowledge: They know not for the good of others, no nor for their own good. As it is with riches and honour, ſo with knowledge: covetous men gather riches that they may be rich, they propoſe not any other end of having riches, but only to be rich. An ambitious man, deſires honour that he may be honourable; he propoſeth to himſelf no other end of his deſiring honour, but to be honourable, So, many are covetous and ambitious of knowledge; they read from Book to Book, and from Point to Point, from Science to Science, and what do they with all this knowledge? onely this, that they may know; to know thus, is not to know for good; *To know, only to know, is no better then not to know.*

Secondly, Others know, that they may be known to know: this is their end, that other men may know that they are knowing men, that they are great Schollars, great read-men, men of great abilities and boundleſs ſtudies. Even as ſome deſire riches, that they may be accounted rich; and honour, that they may be fam'd for honourable. *To know only that we may be known, is worſe then not to know.*

But thirdly, That which is the right way of knowing, is to know that others may know; or, to know that our ſelves may practiſe. Theſe are the true ends of knowing, to communicate knowledge, and to obey knowledge. The great end of knowing, ſhould be our own profiting in holineſs and obedience. And ſo here, *Know it for thy good*, is, know it ſo, as to make an advantage of thy knowledge. *To know for our good, is the only good knowledge.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Truth deſerves our moſt diligent ſearch.*

We have ſearched it (ſaith *Eliphaz*) The promiſe of finding truth, is only to ſuch as ſearch for truth (*Prov.* 2. 4.) *Thou ſhalt find wiſdom,* &c. *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures.* There are two places, two veins eſpecially, where truth is to be found; *There is the book of Gods word, and the book of Gods works; the book of Scripture, and the book of Providence:* In theſe two books, we are to ſearch, in them, to ſtudy out truth, for our own practice, and for advice to others.

Obſerve Secondly, *That which we offer to others for truth, we ought diligently to make tryal of our ſelves;* or, *we ſhould make truth our own, before we diſtribute it to others.*

We have ſearched the thing out (ſaith *Eliphaz*) we know the truth to be thus, we are maſters of what we teach. They who hear aright, ſearch (as the *Bereans*) thoſe things which are taught them; and they who inſtruct aright, ought to ſearch the things which they teach: If there muſt be after-ſearchings of thoſe things we hear, certainly there muſt be fore-ſearchings of the things we teach. *Truth (ordinarily) is not worth the having, unleſs it be come in by our own ſearching.* They who receive that for truth which they never ſearcht, will not hold any truth when themſelves are ſearcht. Truths meerly borrowed and taken upon truſt, are no ſtock, no abiding treaſure of knowledge; and yet moſt can only ſay of all the truth they have, as he of his *ax-head*, (2 *King.* 6. 5.) *Alas maſter, for it was borrowed*; they ſnatch up one truth from this hand, and another from that; they take it upon the credit of this, and that learned man; very few are able to ſay (as *Eliphaz* here) *Lo this, we have ſearched it:* The more pains we take to find truth, the more pleaſure we take in it: That is ſweeteſt to us, which we ſweat moſt for, in Praying and Studying: Morſels of Truth dipt in that ſawce, fatten and ſtrengthen the ſoul moſt.

Obſerve Thirdly, *What a man knoweth by ſearch and diſquiſition, he is confident of.*

We have ſearched it; and what follows? **ſo it is**; he ſpeaks with authority, not timerouſly, as if he doubted, whether it were ſo or no; but *ſo it is*, we will bide by it, we have it upon enquiry and diligent ſearch.

Obſerve Fourthly, *The truths we know our ſelves, we ſhould communicate unto others.*

Here it is, we have ſearched it, but we will not put the light we have found, under a buſhel; we ſhall not hide the talent we have, in a napkin: Here it is, make what uſe of it thou canſt, *know it for thy good.*

Obſerve Fifthly, *Truth may challenge credit, and command the ear.*

Hear thou it.] Truth needs not ſtand begging audience, or creep upon the ground with flattering inſinuations, or humble ſubmiſſions to gain acceptance. Truth is a great Prince, and may ſpeak in the language of Princes; *We will, We require:* It commands rather then entreats, or all its entreaties command, every word a law or a charge; *Hear thou it.*

Obſerve Sixthly, That, *it is needful to make ſpecial application of general doctrinal truths.*

Eliphaz had delivered a doctrinal truth, and here he makes application; and though he failed much, in the application of it to *Job*, yet, there were general truths very appliable, in the things he delivered. Therefore he ſtayes not in generals, nor leaves his doctrine hovering in the Air, but brings it home to the heart, and layes it cloſe to the conſcience; *hear it, and know it thou for thy good.* And not only are National and ſpeculative truths to be brought home and applied, but even common experimental truths; ſuch were theſe diſcuſſed, and handled by *Eliphaz.*

Obſerve Seventhly, *A man may know much, and yet get no good by it.*

Know this for thy good.] The Devil is a great Schollar, he knows much, but he knows nothing for his benefit, but all for his hurt. Many a man knows almoſt all that is knowable; but he knows nothing which is (to him) profitable: *Nothing gains by his knowledge but only his pride*; he is puffed up with Knowledge, not built up; and *that knowledge which puffs up, will at laſt puff down, or caſt us down.*

Obſerve Eighthly, *A godly man may make a profitable uſe of any truth.*

You ſee what truths *Eliphaz* ſpake; many of them were ordinary common Doctrines, and many of them ſore threatnings and judgments upon wicked men; yet *know thou this for thy good.* There is no vein of Doctrine in the book of God, but a man may make uſe, yea treaſure of it. All truth is ſo ſymbolical to the regenerate part, that it cannot but more ſublimate and ſpiritualize a ſpiritual heart, though it ſelf be a truth about things earthly and temporal.

Obſerve Laſtly, *All truths, eſpecially truths contained in the promiſes, are the portion of a godly man.*

Know thou it for thy good, ſaith he; as if he ſhould ſay, If thou art a godly man, then all the good things I have here ſpoken of, belonging to godly men, belong to thee, they are thy portion alſo. While a believer reads the book of God, he ſees great riches, many precious things in the promiſes; and whatſoever good he finds there, there is nothing of it too good for him; he may know it all for his own good; thoſe ſweet delicious promiſes of the pardon of ſin, of the love of God, of the freeneſs of grace, of the glory to come, the promiſes of Chriſt, and of all that is Chriſts, all theſe things are his; when he reads them, he may ſet his mark upon them, and know them for his good, know them as his own proper goods. Unbelievers are ſtrangers to the promiſes, and the promiſes are as ſtrange to them; they know not the promiſes, and the promiſes will not know them; they know not a letter of Scripture for their good. The very promiſes are threatnings to them, and the very bleſſings of the book of God, are their curſe. As the clouds paſs over this and that piece of ground, and then diſſolve upon a third, by the directing and all-diſpoſing providence of God: So the promiſes (which are full of bleſſings, full of comforts, as the clouds are of ſhowers) paſs over a wicked mans head, and let not down one drop of mercy or comfort upon him, but leave him like the *dry hearth, or barren wilderneſs, which ſeeth not when good cometh*, Jerem. 17.6. But then the cloud moves a little farther, and meets with the family or perſon of a godly man, there it diſſolves and poureth out a *plentiful rain* (both of temporal and ſpiritual bleſſings) *to refreſh and confirm that inheritance of the Lord*, Pſalm 68. 9.

And ſo much for this fifth Chapter, wherein, with the fourth, we have handled the firſt part of the diſpute, undertaken againſt *Job*, by *Eliphaz*, the firſt of his three friends; the whole diſcourſe conſiſting of divers Arguments, to convince and humble him under the hand of God: of divers counſels and motives to perſwade and direct him to ſeek unto God, and ſubmit to his correcting hand: All he was to ſpeak, being let in, by a loving Preface; and all he ſpake, being ratified, with an aſſuring concluſion, that, all he had ſpoken was for his good, if he would hear, believe and obey. In the next Chapters, we ſhall hear *Job* making his defence, ſcattering the charge thus brought againſt him, ſtiffly maintaining, and importunately renewing his firſt complaint.

CHAP. VI. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

But Job *anſwered, and ſaid,*

O that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the ballances together!

For now it would be heavier then the ſand of the Sea: therefore my words are ſwallowed up.

This ſixth Chapter begins *Job*'s replication, which is continued to the end of the ſeventh. He replies exactly to the ſeveral parts of the charge, given by *Eliphaz*; who, in the two fore-going Chapters, undertook both to reprove the impatience of *Job*, and to adviſe him a more holy and better temper'd carriage, towards God, under his afflictions. In this reply, *Job* ſhapes and forms up anſwers unto both. I ſhall endeavour to give you a brief of the whole, and then to particulars.

Firſt, *Job* enters with a refutation of thoſe reproofs of impatience, which *Eliphaz* had heap't upon him; and with that ſubjoyns a refuſal of the counſels (in his ſence) which he had given him. In this work, ſeven verſes of the Chapter are ſpent.

Secondly, We have a renovation or a re-inforcement of his grief and deſire to die, from the eighth, to the end of the thirteenth verſe, *O that I might have my requeſt, that God would cut me off*, &c. As if he had ſaid, I am ſo far, from being ſatisfied, with what thou haſt ſpoken againſt me, or from recanting and recalling, what I have ſpoken, in thoſe my breathings after death, that I will be bold to make the ſame ſuit to God again; *O that I might have my requeſt, and that God would cut me off*, &c.

Thirdly, He proceeds to a charge of raſh cenſure, of uncharitable, yea of deceitful dealing upon his friends, from the thirteenth, unto the twenty fourth verſe. *To him that is afflicted* (ſaith he) *pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend; my brethren have dealt deceitfully, as a brook*, &c.

Fourthly, He yet ſubmits himſelf to their judgment and direction, if they would ſpeak reaſon to him at laſt, and come home to his caſe indeed: or, if they could fully and candidly diſcover to him any error, he was willing to be rectified; this he profeſſes (and it is a moſt ingenuous profeſſion) in *verſ.* 24, & 25. *Teach me* (ſaith he) *and I will hold my tongue, and cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred*, &c. As if he had ſaid, all that you have ſpoken hitherto, doth not reach my condition, ye have quite miſtook my caſe; yet, you ſhall ſee, I do not ſtand out againſt you, becauſe I will ſtand out; it is not my will that oppoſes what you have ſpoken, but my underſtanding; therefore, if you can ſhew me better reaſon, I lay down the bucklers, and yield my ſelf a Priſoner to your ſelves, and unto truth. I delight not to lengthen out contentions, nor am I reſolved to have the laſt word, *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue.*

Fifthly, He adds an expoſtulation, mixed with an aggravation. An expoſtulation about, and an aggravation of their high jealouſie, and low opinion of him, in *verſ.* 26, 27. *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate, which are as wind?* As if he had ſaid, Do you think, that you have had to deal with a man, that only makes a noiſe, or ſpeaks a great many words, which have more ſound then ſence? Do ye think I am out of my wits, and in ſtead of arguing with you, do only rave like a mad man at you? Ye have had not vain, windy words from me, but words full of weight and matter, words of truth and ſoberneſs, wherefore then do you ſpeak thus? *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate?* Do ye think I ſpeak like one, who knows not what he ſpeaks? Or that, I have at once loſt my hope, and my underſtanding.

Sixthly, He gives them advice and admonition to take better heed to what they ſhould after ſay, if they intended to ſay any more, or to continue their counſel and diſcourſe with him; in the three laſt verſes of this ſixth Chapter. *Now therefore be content, look upon me, for it is evident to you, if I lie: return I pray you*, &c.

In the ſeventh (which concludes his ſpeech) he offers three things, eſpecially to be obſerved.

Firſt, A renewing of many Arguments and conſiderations, by which he confirms the equity of his requeſt, to have his life cut off; upon which ſad ſubject he inſiſts, from the beginning of the Chapter, to the end of verſe 17. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth? Are not his dayes, like the dayes of an Hireling?* &c.

Secondly, After all his high ſtrains of conteſt with man, we have an abaſement of himſelf, as unworthy, that God ſhould take notice of him, either by mercies or judgments, in *verſ.* 18, 19. *What is man that thou ſhouldſt magnifie him, and that thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning?* &c. A godly man will ſtand (when he ſees cauſe) upon his terms with men, but he ever falls low before, and hath not a word to reply againſt God. He is ſometime angry, when men villifie him; but he ever admires, why God ſhould magnifie him. *What is man?* &c.

Thirdly, He concludes his ſpeech with an humble acknowledgment of his own ſinfulneſs, and with an earneſt requeſt for the pardon of his ſin. *Lord* (ſaith he) *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men?* verſ. 20, *&c.* After all this heat and paſſion, after all theſe complainings, *Job*'s heart lay level before the Lord; yea he abaſes himſelf to exalt and give glory to God, with humble confeſſion, and an earneſt ſupplication for the pardon of his ſin. Thus we have the general parts and ſubſtance of his anſwer to that charge of *Eliphaz*, in the two former Chapters.

But Job anſwered, and ſaid.

In theſe words, and the three following verſes, *Job* gives us the refutation or rejection of that reproof, given him by *Eliphaz*; and he refutes it by ſhewing the reaſon why *Eliphaz* (as he ſuppoſed) was ſo ſharp and bitter in reprooving him: And further, he ſhews cauſe why he rejects his Councel or Conſolation. The reaſon upon which he puts off thoſe reproofs, is this, becauſe *Eliphaz* had not duly conſidered his ſorrows, or was not ſo ſenſible of them, as a man ſhould be, that undertakes a friend in his condition. The ſum of this Argument, againſt what *Eliphaz* had ſpoken, may be thus formed.

Amicos taxat, quod antequã ipſũ reprehenderent, non expendiſſent ſuã miſeriã. Cocc.

He cannot duly reprove or convince another of impatience in complaining, who hath not fully weighed thoſe calamities, which are the cauſe and ground of thoſe complaints.

But Eliphaz, *thou haſt not fully weighed and conſidered my caſe and condition, my troubles and calamities, which are the ground and cauſe of my complaints.*

Therefore thou canſt not duly reprove or convince me of impatience.

The Aſſumption or ſecond Propoſition of this Argument is couched in *verſ.* 2. *O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and that my calamity were laid in the ballances together!* As if he had ſaid, I had never received ſuch harſh cenſures, ſuch a judgment or reproof, if thou hadſt duly weighed my ſorrows: if thou hadſt faithfully ſtudied my caſe, thou thou hadſt never rebuked me thus.

The weight of his calamity, himſelf expreſſeth two wayes.

Firſt, *Comparatively*, at *verſ.* 3. by putting it into the ballance with the ſand of the Sea; *For now* (ſaith he) *it would be heavier then the ſand of the Sea.*

Secondly, He ſets forth the greatneſs of his calamity, *Demonſtratively*, by declaring in what manner he had been afflicted: My affliction is not an ordinary affliction, *I am wounded with the arrows of the Almighty, and thoſe poyſoned arrows, and thoſe arrows drinking up my ſpirits.* I have not only ſome ſingle great affliction, or many ſmall ones upon me; but, *I have terror, and terrors; yea, I have an army of terrors, yea an army of terrors alwayes incamping about me, and charging me continually:* why Eliphaz, *thou didſt never clearly conſider theſe things; much leſs haſt thou had a ſympathy or fellow-feeling of them. Thou haſt not been afflicted in my afflictions: Thou haſt not ſorrowed my ſorrows, nor wept my tears;* Therefore it is that thou haſt ſo ſharply reproved me, and put ſo much gall and worm-wood into thy diſcourſe.

So then, the ſum of this firſt part may be thus given, taking it out of thoſe high and hyperbolical ſtrains, in which his paſſion was carried; as if *Job* had thus anſwered *Eliphaz*, *It is an eaſie matter to ſlight that which a man doth not know, and to think others complain too much, when we our ſelves feel nothing; but is it any wonder to hear a man groan, that hath a burden upon his back, as heavy as the ſand of the Sea? Is it any wonder to hear a man cry out, whoſe fleſh is filled with poyſoned arrows, ſhot from a bow, bent and drawn by the arm of omnipotency? Is it any wonder, if that man fear, who is incompaſt about with terrors? Is it any wonder, if that man be troubled, who hath the terrors of the Almighty incamping about him? Why* Eliphaz, *thou wouldſt not think, that an Ox or an Aſs were reprovable, if the one ſhould low, when he hath no graſs, and the other bray when he hath no fodder; if it be ſo, that the very irrational creatures do according to reaſon, when they complain upon their wants, doeſt thou think me deſperate or irrational in complaining of mine? Alas all my fodder and my graſs, all my comforts and refreſhings are taken from me. Doeſt thou not ſee, how upon a due conſideration of my eſtate, all thy reproofs may be wiped off from me, or retorted upon thy ſelf? what great matter is it, if thou doſt not complain, who ſitteſt at eaſe, and knoweſt no ſorrow? Thou art in green paſtures or full barns, thou haſt graſs and fodder in abundance, and therefore haſt no cauſe of complaint.* Thus in the general.

But Job anſwered, and ſaid.] *To anſwer*, is here taken properly; he anſwers to a charge, reproof, or argument. At *Chap.* 3. *verſ.* 1. when *Job* began to ſpeak, it is ſaid, *Job anſwered, and ſaid.* In Scripture language anſwering is often put for ſpeaking, though none have ſpoken a word or made any propoſal before. But here anſwering is taken in a ſtrict ſence, as it notes a reply to ſomewhat before ſpoken; *Job anſwered, and ſaid.*

Note this from it, *It is the duty of a man to anſwer when he is queſtioned or charged.*

It is the Apoſtles rule (1 *Pet.* 3. 15.) *Be ready alwayes to give an anſwer to every man, that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you.* As a man in duty ought to give a reaſon of the hope that is in him; ſo in duty he ought to give a reaſon of the ſorrows, that are in him, and of the complaints that proceed from him: *We muſt anſwer for our paſſions, as well as for our ſpeeches; we muſt anſwer for our ſorrows, and for our joyes, and for our fears, as well as for our hope, or for our faith.* Theſe muſt all be anſwered for; and when any ſhall charge us about any of theſe, we muſt be ready to give a reaſon of them (as the Apoſtle adviſes there, in the caſe of our hope) *with meekneſs and fear.*

It is our duty to anſwer thus, both in reference to our ſelves and others.

Firſt, It is our duty in reference to our ſelves, that we may vindicate that which ſhould be more precious to us then the *Gold of* Ophir, our own credit or ſincerity; *No man ought to deſpiſe his own integrity or reputation, ſo, as not to ſtand up for it.* Therefore *Job* grows reſolute in that point, profeſſing *that he would hold his integrity, till he died*; he would never let that go, but anſwer ſtiffly for it: It is juſtice to diſ-asperſe our ſelves, and give witneſs to our own wronged innocency. A man is more bound in duty to ſtand up for himſelf, then for any other, by how much he is nearer to himſelf, then to others.

Secondly, It is our duty to anſwer in reſpect of others; (and that *Job* might have an eye unto) namely to ſatisfie thoſe, who are ſcandalized, by what we have either done or ſpoken: Suppoſe it be not a ſcandal given, ſuppoſe it be only a ſcandal taken, as this of *Job* was: *Job* did nothing purpoſely to ſcandalize them, nor any thing, which upon a due conſideration, was a ſcandal; but his friends had taken ſcandal at what he ſpake, his impatient complainings: therefore he was bound in duty to ſatisfie them, and to ſhew further grounds wherefore he ſo complained. *Silence when we are charged, either makes a full conviction, or ſtrengthens ſuſpition:* And in this caſe, if *Job* had held his peace, he had either yielded the cauſe, and confeſſed himſelf guilty, or at leaſt his friends ſhould have had cauſe to grow higher in their jealouſies of his ſincerity. *To right our ſelves is not a point of indifferency, but of duty. Self-love is the rule of our love to others. He who neglects his own wronged honour, will not be very careful (which yet he ought) of his neighbours.*

Si accuſatus non reſpondeat, aut criminis convictus aut certè ſuſpectas videatur. Pined.

O that my grief were throughly weighed.

Grief may be conſidered two wayes, either *Paſſively* or *Actively*. Grief taken *Paſſively* is the thing which we ſuffer, or which is grievous to us; affliction it ſelf is called Grief. Take Grief *Actively*, and then it is the ſorrow we expreſs, under the preſſures of grievous afflictions. The word in the Hebrew is tranſlated ſometimes anger, ſometimes indignation, ſometimes wrath. It is the ſame which *Eliphaz* uſeth, *Chap.* 5. *v.* 5. where he ſaith, *Wrath killeth the fooliſh man. Eliphaz* began his ſpeech with that word, hinting at *Job*, as if his wrath and impatience towards God had diſcovered him for a fool, or a wicked one: Now *Job* returning anſwer, begins with the firſt word of *Eliphaz* his ſpeech; as if he had ſaid, *You told me that wrath kills the fooliſh man; but O that my anger, or the wrath which you conceive to be in me, that grief which I have expreſſed, were fully weighed, you would quickly ſee, that it is not the anger or wrath of a fool, you would find reaſon for my paſſion; and that, not the want of wiſdom, but the plenty or weight of my grief hath wrought out theſe complaints.* Therefore my deſire is, *O that my Grief,* O that my ſorrows poured forth in my former lamentation were throughly weighed; you have but gueſſed at them yet, you have not weighed them (which you ought) as you would weigh gold to a grain, or to the turning of a ſcale; or if ſo, your beam is not a true one, nor your ballance the ballance of the Sanctuary; you have weighed me, but by a common beam, or (I fear) by *falſe ballances, and a bag of deceitful weights.*

כעש. *Ira, indignatio, hoc loco, ira eſt querimonia valdè iracunda vel moleſtia, quam ex morbi & ulceris gravitate concipiebat.* Merc. *Notat dolorem quem quis capit, ex re adverſa & diſplicenti.* Cocc.

O that my Grief.] The Vulgar Latin tranſlates, *O that my ſins*, namely for which I am thus afflicted, were throughly weighed; as if the meaning of *Job* were to lighten his ſin, and to aggravate his ſufferings: But doubtleſs, that was none of *Job*'s mind or meaning; neither will the original

Utinã peccata mea. Vulg.

nal bear ſuch a tranſlation. When our ſins are put into the ballance with our ſufferings, all our ſufferings, the heavieſt we can feel or go under in this life, are but as a feather to a talent of lead. As all the afflictions of this life are light, in compariſon of that *exceeding weight* of glory, prepared for us in the next life: So all the ſufferings of this life are light, in compariſon of the exceeding weight of one ſin committed by us. Therefore *Job* makes ſuch compariſon here, as if he had been afflicted more then he deſerved. That of *Ezra* concerning the Church of the Jews, (*Chap.* 9. 13.) *Thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve*, is true of every puniſhment; put any puniſhment of this world, Spiritual or Temporal, in one ſcale, and the leaſt ſin, in another, that lighteſt ſin outweighs our heavieſt puniſhments. Only in Hell ſins and ſufferings ſhall be of equal poyſe. God will then pour and meaſure our puniſhments, which ſhall come up to the proportion and dimenſion of our ſins; and what the creature cannot bear at once in weight, ſhall be weighed to him in eternity. But to paſs that rendring, as unſafe.

שקל *Libravit, ponderavit, olim moneta libravatur et expondere habebatur ſumma pecunia, ut mini ex numero nummorum.* Ulpian.

O that my grief [**were throughly Weighed.**] Our Engliſh word, *Scale*, which is the inſtrument, by which we Weigh, is well conceived to come from the Hebrew word here uſed (*Shakal*) ſignifying to Weigh any thing; but eſpecially to Weigh Coyn or Money, to Weigh Gold and Silver; as *Gen.* 23. 16. *Abraham* upon the purchaſe of that field, which he bought of the Children of *Heth*, for a burying place, *Weighed to* Ephron *the Silver which he had named.* It was the cuſtom of thoſe times, in ſtead of telling, to Weigh their Money, and that was the moſt exact and ready way of payment: And from that word (*Shakal*) ſignifying to Weigh Money, comes the Hebrew word for one ſpecial ſort of Money, the *Shekel*; becauſe they Weighed by the ſhekel, that being as their Standard or a ſpecial Coyn, of ſuch a known Weight and value, that all other Coyn was Weighed and valued by it. So in the Latine, and likewiſe in our Engliſh, we call one ſpecial ſum of Money *A pound*, which is a Weight, and by which Money is commonly accounted and paid. And hence by a Metaphor, this word ſignifies to judge or to conſider of a thing exactly and fully; becauſe of all matters that men Weigh, they will Weigh Gold and Silver moſt exactly; if a man Weigh Gold, he Weigheth it to a grain; if Gold want but the turning of the ſcale more then due Weight or allowance, it will not paſs, *Iſa.* 33. 18. *Where is the Scribe, where is the Receiver*; the Hebrew is, *Where is the Weigher*; that is, either the *Spiritual Weigher*, he that uſes to be exact in Weighing every tittle of the Law: Or, the *Civil Weigher*, becauſe they uſed to Weigh all the Money they received. So then, *O that my grief were throughly Weighed*; is as if he had ſaid, O that my grief were Weighed, as Gold and Silver is Weighed, Weighed exactly, to the leaſt, to the utmoſt, that you might fully know what it is.

Siclus moneta certi ponderis & omnium ponderū regula.

Ubi legū verba ponderans. Sanc. *Queſtor præfectus ærario militari.* Jun.

The word ſingle by it ſelf, notes an exact examination by Weighing; but when (as here) the word is doubled, or (by an Hebraiſm) repeated, *O that my grief in weighing were Weighed*, it heightens and increaſes the ſence exceedingly: Hence we tranſlate, *O that my grief were throughly Weighed*; Weighed ſo as that there might be a clear diſcovery, how much my ſorrows Weigh. The doubling of a word, to this ſence, is very frequent in Scripture, I ſhall not need to inſtance: Take only that (*Gen.* 2. 17.) *Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, in dying thou ſhalt die*, (that is) *thou ſhalt ſurely die*; So here, O that in weighing it were Weighed, that is, *O that it were throughly and exactly Weighed.*

Lay all together and it imports thus much; as if *Job* had ſaid, I would not have my ſorrows Weighed at a vulgar beam, or in ordinary ballances, I would not have the ſound or letter only of what I have ſpoken conſidered; but I deſire that you would take my complaints together, the words and the matter, and that you would Weigh all impartially, that you may come to a full underſtanding, what my condition is; and then ſurely you would give up a better judgement, and make a fairer interpretation of my words, then as yet you have put forth: Thus he ſpeaks alſo *Chap.* 31. 6. *Let me be Weighed in an even ballance, that God may know my integrity.* Uneven ballances will not make a perfect diſcovery: That which is falſe, cannot give a true report: Things and perſons act as they are; therefore *Job* deſireth to be Weighed in an *even ballance*, ſuch a beam will ſpeak the truth of my eſtate, both to God and man: God needs no means to make him know, he knows all immediately, and he Weighs by his eye, not one thing by another, but all things in themſelves: *Job* ſpeaks of God after the manner of men.

And my Calamity laid in the Ballances together.

הוה *à radice* הוה *fuit eventus malus, in fortunium* מאזנים *Trutina, ſtateræ quod duas ſc. habeat lances, velut aures.* Pagn

My grief and my Calamity. Grief cauſed by my Calamity, and Calamity the cauſe of that grief.

My Calamity.] The word ſignifies any troubleſom evil, ſad event or accident, vulgarly called *a miſ-fortune*; *O that this ſad eſtate and condition wherein I am, were put into the Ballance.*

The original for **Ballances**, is very obſervable: As there is much elegancy in the word by which the action, ſo, in this, by which the inſtrument of Weighing is expreſſed. It is found only in the *Plural* or *Dual* number, as many of that nature are: The ſame word in Hebrew, ſignifies alſo the Ears, which are the organ of hearing: and the reaſon of it is thus given, becauſe as the *Tongue* of the Ballance ſtands like a judge between the two ſcales, inclining to neither, till the weight be laid in: ſo ſhall the Ear of a Judge by Office, or of any man by Deputation, called to hear and determine of things in difference, ſtand indifferent to both parties, till he hear the matter debated, and the reaſons brought forth on either ſide. The Moraliſts embleme this, by the place of that *Sign* in the *Zodiack*, which they call the *Virgin*, ſtanding (according to the doctrine of Aſtronomers) between the *Lion and the Ballances*: The Lion bids *Virgin Juſtice*, be ſtout and fearleſs; the Ballances adviſe her to weigh the matter on both ſides, with moderation, and be cautious, neither inclining one way nor other, but as the merit of the cauſe, fully heard, ſhall ſway her judgment.

ישאו *à radice* נשא *Levavit, ſuſtulit, nā qui appendit aliquid tollit lances in altum.* Druſ.

Job deſires, that his Calamity might be laid thus in the Ballances before his ſentence: *Laid*, the word is, *O that my Calamity might aſcend in the Ballances*; and that manner of ſpeaking is uſed, either becauſe in weighing, the lighter ſcale of the Ballances doth aſcend, or becauſe when things are weighed, the Ballances aſcend or are lifted up. A man takes up the Ballances in his hand to weigh; ſo it is, as if he had ſaid, *O that theſe*, might be poiſed together and *lifted up*, to ſee which way the Scales will turn.

יחד *Pariter vel potius ſimiliter. Nulla ejus parte prætermiſſa.*

Together.] There is ſome difference in opinion about the word *Together*, whether he meaneth thus; *O that my grief and Calamity were Weighed*; you conſider things to halves, and leave out thoſe points which are moſt weighty and material; you ſhould take in all together: Or whether his deſire be, that his grief and Calamity, both together, might be put into one Ballance, and the Sand of the Sea into another; and ſo an experiment be made, whether his grief and Calamity, or the Sand of the Sea were heavier. Or thirdly, Whether thus, that his grief ſhould be put into one Ballance, and his Calamity into another, and then trial be made which of theſe two were heavier, his grief and ſorrow, or his calamity and trouble. A learned Interpreter conceives, that *Job* wiſhes his Grief and Calamity might both together be put into one Ballance, and all the Sand of the Sea (if it were poſſible) in the other, ſuppoſing that his Grief and Calamity would out-weigh that vaſte ponderous aggrevated body. His opinion is chiefly ſtrengthned by ſome difficulties in the Grammatical conſtruction, unleſs this be admitted; and yet if it be, a greater difficulty is ſhewed by a ſecond, and therefore I rather take it thus; *O that my Grief and Calamity were laid in the Ballances together*; that is, O that my Grief were put, one into one Ballance, and my Calamity into another; or, O that my Grief might be weighed with my Calamity, and it would appear (notwithſtanding your judgment of me) that yet, there is nothing ſo much weight in my Grief, as there is in my Calamity; that is, I have not yet grieved or complained up to the height or weight of thoſe Calamities which are upon me: ſo that if my ſorrow were laid in one Ballance, and my affliction in another, my affliction would out-weigh my ſorrow, and it would appear, that I have complained, not only, not without a cauſe, but not ſo much as I had cauſe.

Mercerus.

Bolduc.

And to prove that his calamity was heavier then his grief, he adds in the next words; *It* (namely his calamity thus weighed) *would be heavier then the ſand of the ſea*: as if he had ſaid, it is poſſible that in trying all heavy things, ſomewhat might be found heavier then my grief or my complaint hath been; but I am ſure nothing can be found of equal weight with my calamity; for my *calamity* (which is the immediate antecedent) *would be heavier then the ſand of the Sea*, then which nothing can be found more heavy.

That of *David*, Pſal. 62. 9. is parallel to this expreſſion in *Job*; *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balances, they are altogether lighter then vanity.* The meaning is, that if men of all degrees, high and low, were put in one Scale, and *vanity* in another, vanity it ſelf would be weightier then the graveſt and moſt weighty men. Hence ſome read, *They together are lighter then vanity.* Others to this ſence, *men and vanity being weighed together*, vanity will not be ſo light, as vain men. As *David*, to ſhew mans lightneſs, makes him lighter then the lighteſt thing, *vanity*. So *Job*, to ſhew the heavineſs of his calamity, makes it heavier then the heavieſt thing. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, That, *It is a duty to weigh the ſaddeſt eſtate, and afflicted condition of our Brethren thoroughly.*

But (you will ſay) what is it to weigh them throughly?

I anſwer, It is not only to weigh the matter of an affliction, to ſee what it is which a man ſuffers; but to weigh an affliction in every circumſtance and aggravation of it; *The circumſtance of an affliction is often more conſiderable then the matter of the affliction.* If a man would confeſs his ſins, and confeſs them throughly, he is to confeſs, not only the matter of them; as ſins are the tranſgreſſions of the *Law*, and and errors againſt the *Rule*; but he muſt eye the manner, in which ſin hath been committed, the circumſtances with which it is cloathed, theſe render his *ſin out of meaſure, and out of weight ſinful.* Likewiſe, would a man conſider the mercies and favours received from God, would he know them throughly, and ſee how much they weigh; let him look, not only what, but how, and when, and where, and by whom he hath received them. *There may be (and often is) a great wickedneſs in a little evil committed, and a great mercy in a little good received.* As relations, ſo circumſtances have the leaſt entity, but they have the greateſt efficacy. Now, as there is often more in the circumſtances, then in the matter of a ſin, or of a mercy; ſo, there is often more in the circumſtance, then there is in the matter of an affliction; therefore he that would throughly weigh the afflictions of another, muſt conſider all thoſe accidents, as well as the ſubſtance of it: As namely, the time when ſent, the time how long endured, whether a ſingle affliction, or in conjuncture with other afflictions, the ſtrength of the Patient, and the dependencies that are upon him.

Secondly, He that would weigh an affliction throughly, muſt put himſelf in the caſe of the afflicted, and (as it were) make anothers grief his own: He muſt act the paſſions of his brother, and a while perſonate the poor, the ſick, the afflicted man: He muſt get a taſte of the wormwood and of the gall upon which his Brother feedeth: In a word, he muſt lay ſuch a condition to heart. The Prophet *Malachy* threatens a curſe upon thoſe, who laid not the word and works of God to heart (*chap.* 2. 2.) *I will curſe your bleſſings* (ſaith the Lord) *becauſe you do not lay it to heart*; that is, ye do not conſider, what I ſay or do, throughly: God curſed them throughly, becauſe they would not throughly conſider his Laws and Judgments: So then, to weigh the affliction of another throughly, is to put our ſouls, as it were, in their ſouls ſtead. Hence, that we may be aſſured, Chriſt hath throughly weighed all our afflictions, he is ſaid to *be afflicted in all our afflictions.* He doth not only intuitively conſider or contemplate them, but he is (though above enduring) as actually enduring them, He is afflicted in all our afflictions, that is, he conſiders our afflictions as his own, and is affected with them, as if himſelf were pained with all our pains; and therefore it is ſaid, that *himſelf took our infirmities, and bear our ſickneſſes*, Mat. 8. 17. The meaning, is, he weighed the grief of his people fully. In theſe two points, this holy art of weighing grief, conſiſts; conſideration of circumſtances, and ſympathy of the ſmart. Meer ſpeculation moves little. We have no feeling of anothers ſuffering, till we have a fellow-feeling. The bare Theory of affliction affects no more, then the bare Theory of fire heats.

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, *O that my grief were throughly weighed*; we may obſerve,

That, *It is an addition to a mans affliction, when others are not ſenſible of his affliction.*

For it is, as if *Job* had ſaid, This makes me cry out ſo much of the weight of my ſorrows, becauſe my friends weigh them ſo little. The Church (*Lam.* 1. 12.) complains thus, *Is it nothing to you all ye that paſs by? behold and ſee if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow.* Is it nothing to you? as if the Church had ſaid, My affliction is ſomething to me, and this afflicts me above all my affliction, that paſſengers and beholders ſlight my calamities, and think my affliction no affliction, that is, not ſo great, as indeed it is: Or, it is nothing to them (they are not toucht with it) how great ſoever they ſee it is to me: That which wounds and breaks my heart, doth not prick their little fingers. And becauſe man is ſo ready to afflict his brother with this negative affliction, a not being ſenſible of his afflictions, therefore the Apoſtle aſſures us (*Heb.* 4. 15.) That *we have not an High Prieſt that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are.* This is ſpoken to comfort the Saints in their extreameſt ſufferings: What though men will not take notice and be ſenſible of your condition? what though men will not weigh your grief? *Yet Chriſt will*: Our high Prieſt is none of your ſenſleſs Prieſts, who care not what weather the people endure, ſo they be warm and at eaſe.

Thirdly obſerve, *We can never rightly judge, till we throughly weigh the condition of an afflicted brother.*

For *Job* conceived that *Eliphaz* proceeded to judgment, before he had been in conſideration. This is the reaſon why thou haſt judged me uncharitably, becauſe thou haſt not weighed me ſeriouſly. To ſhew, that conſideration muſt go before judgment, God himſelf is expreſt to us in Scripture, conſidering the ſtate of things, before himſelf judges. So, *Gen.* 11. in the caſe of the builders of *Babel*, and *Gen.* 18. in the caſe of the men of *Sodom*, it is ſaid, that *the Lord came down to ſee whether they had done altogether according to that cry which was come up unto him*; Not, as if the Lord moves from one place to another, from heaven to earth; for he filleth all places: not that the Lord needs come down to receive information, or to examine his own intelligences, to ſee whether things are, as they are reported; but it is only an alluſion to the manner of men; or to ſhew, that he doth not cenſure or judge any man, or men, or Nations, till he hath taken a full cognizance of their condition. Now, if God who is infinite in knowledge and wiſdom, repreſents himſelf coming down, and by degrees deliberating about, and weighing the eſtates of men, before he cenſures them; what need then have blindfold men, ignoant men, men, who at beſt, have much darkneſs mixed with their light; what need (I ſay) have they to examine, weigh and try every mans eſtate, before they ſentence or determine it?

Fourthly obſerve, *A man, who hath not been, or is not afflicted himſelf, can hardly apprehend what another endures, who is under affliction.*

As there are comforts, eſpecially ſpiritual comforts, which no man knows or can know, but by the enjoying of them: The *white ſtone* (promiſed *Rev.* 2. 17.) *hath a new name written in it, which no man knows, ſaving he that receiveth it.* A man that is a ſtranger to Chriſt and his wayes, is not able to make any judgment what the comforts and refreſhings of a Chriſtian are. He admires to hear men ſpeak of ſpiritual comforts and conſolations, he knows not the meaning of thoſe things. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. It is ſo (proportionably) in all ſorrows and afflictions, eſpecially in ſpiritual ſorrows and afflictions, which lie off from ſenſe; yea, which lie quite beyond the reach and borders of reaſon: ſpiritual ſorrows, the hidings of Gods face, the withdrawing of aſſiſtance, few pity in others, becauſe few have had experience of theſe things, in themſelves. They think men are mad, when they complain of ſuch afflictions; when they cry out of their ſins, of the want of the favour of God, and the ſhining of his love, of deadneſs and coldneſs in duty, of unbelief and hardneſs of heart, *&c.* And therefore our Lord Jeſus, to aſſure our hearts, that he hath a full ſenſe of all our ſorrows, taſted himſelf of our ſorrows. There is not any ſorrow that can be upon any ſoul, or any affliction that can be upon the body, but our Lord Jeſus hath had (ſome way or other) an experience of it: This makes him (to our apprehenſions) moſt fit to judge and compaſſionate the diſtreſſes of his people. As all the ſins of his people were laid upon him, ſo all their ſorrows were laid upon him too; therefore the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribeth him thus, *Chap.* 53. 3. *A man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief*; grief and he were no ſtrangers; while he was here upon the earth, grief was his Acquaintance and Familiar (as it were) that went up and down with him, all the while he travelled here below. Therefore ſeeing it is ſo, the whole Church and every particular Believer, have ſtrong conſolation in their ſorrows, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth throughly weigh their condition, and knoweth fully what it is; *We have not* (as was toucht before) *an High Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*; Why, what aſſurance have we of this? It follows, *He was tempted in all things like unto us, yet without ſin*, Chriſt had temptations unto ſin, yet without ſin; therefore he knows how to ſuccour us, when we are tempted unto ſin: Chriſt was tempted by manifold ſorrows, therefore he knows how to ſuccour us, when we are under manifold temptations: If we had a Mediator in Heaven that had not been tempted on earth, we might doubt whether he would be toucht with the feeling of our infirmities. whether ſinning infirmities, or ſorrowing infirmities. And were it not, that ſome of the Saints have been tempted and tried, they, who are under trials and temptations, would find none on earth to ſuccour them. *As God doth comfort ſome in all their tribulations, that they may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, with the ſame comforts wherewith they themſelves are comforted of God*, 2 *Cor*, 1. 4. So he afflicts them, that they might pity and help others, as being under the ſame troubles, with which themſelves have been afflicted. A man that hath only travelled in Geographical Books and Maps, is not able to give you ſuch lively deſcriptions of, or directions about foreign Countreyes, as he hath travelled to, and been upon the places; ſo, they who have read and ſtudied much about afflictions, can never give ſuch enlivening, ſtrengthening, heartning counſel, as they who have been afflicted, and have dwelt ſometime upon the Land of ſorrows. To paſs on,

For now it would be heavier then the ſand of the Sea.

That is, it would be moſt heavy. Who can tell how heavy that is, which is heavier then the heavieſt?

If my calamity (ſaith *Job*) were weighed, it would have been found heavier then the ſand of the ſea, that account would be given of it; though you (my friend *Eliphaz*) ſeem to account it as light as a feather.

The ſand of the Sea is applied three wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, To ſet forth an exceeding great number (*Gen.* 22. 17.) *I will multiply thy ſeed as the Stars of the Heaven, and as the ſand which is upon the Sea-ſhore*: That is, I will exceedingly multiply thy ſeed, thy Children ſhall be not only numerous, but numberleſs; though a Book of *Numbers* be written concerning *Abraham*'s poſterity, yet their total number is not written. So (*Pſal.* 78. 27.) *He rained fleſh upon them as duſt, and feathered fowls like as the Sand of the Sea*, that is, he rained abundance of feathered Fowls.

Secondly, The Sand of the Sea is uſed to expreſs the largeneſs, the mighty extent or capacity of a thing; the ſand of the Sea is of a vaſter extent then the Sea it ſelf, as being the outward line or bound of it; therefore (*Jer.* 33. 22.) it is ſpoken of, as a thing impoſſible, for the ſand of the Sea to be meaſured; *As the hoſt of heaven* (*ſc.* the Stars) *cannot be numbred, neither the ſand of the Sea meaſured, ſo will I multiply the ſeed of my ſervant* David. Meaſure is taken both of the content and extent of things: The ſand of the Sea is immeaſurable both wayes; it cannot (as we ſpeak of humane impoſſibles) be meaſured by the Pole, or by the Veſſel. And in 1 *Kings* 4. 29. it is ſaid, *God gave* Solomon *wiſdom and underſtanding exceeding much, and largeneſs of heart as the ſand of the Sea*, that is, as the ſand encompaſſes and takes the Sea in its arms; ſo *Solomon* had a heart comprehending all the depths and oceans of knowledge; he had the compaſs of all learning in his underſtanding. Hence, when a man attempts a thing impoſſible, we ſay to him proverbially, *Thou meaſureſt the ſand.*

Arenam metiris.

Thirdly, The ſand of the Sea is applied in Scripture, to note the exceeding weight and heavineſs of a thing: That inſtance is pregnant for it (*Prov.* 23. 7.) *A ſtone is heavy, and the ſand is weighty, but a fools wrath is heavier then both*; when *Solomon* would ſhew us how intolerably burdenſom the manners of a wicked man are, he compares them to a ſtone, and to the ſand: The wrath of a wicked man is very weighty, but (by the way) the wrath of God is incomparably more weighty. *Wrath proceeding from extream folly, is weighty; but wrath proceeding from infinite wiſdom, is infinitely weighty.* The wrath of a fool upon his brother, is heavier then a ſtone, or then the ſand; how heavy then will the wrath of the moſt wiſe God be upon that fool?

Stulti mores intolerabiles.

It is further conſiderable, that, he ſaith not barely, *heavier then the ſand* (any ſand is very heavy, but) *heavier then the ſand of the ſea.* Rivers have ſand, and dry pits have ſand, but ſea-ſand is the vaſteſt and the heavieſt ſand.

Triplex eſt arenæ genus foſſitia, fluvialis & marina. Plin. *l.* 3. Nat. Hiſt. *c.* 23.

Again, He ſpeaks not in the ſingular number, *Heavier then the ſand of the ſea*; but (the Hebrew is plural) *heavier then the ſand of the Seas*: as if *Job* had ſaid, if thou ſhouldeſt ſhovel up all the ſand that is upon the ſhores of all the Seas, together on a heap, it would not be ſo heavy as my calamity: In ſuch *Hyperbolies* or high ſtrains of eloquence, *Job* rhetoricates about his ſad condition, as if he reſolved to put more weight into his expreſſions, as he found more weight put into his afflictions.

Hence obſerve, *Afflictions are heavy burdens.*

The judgments of God upon wicked men, are frequently in Scripture called burdens; and they are heavy burdens, *Iſa.* 15. 1. We read of the *burden of Moab*; that is, the judgment and calamity that ſhould fall upon *Moab.* &, *Iſ.* 17. 1. *The burden of Damaſcus.* &, *Iſa.* 19. 1. *The burden of* Egypt. & *Iſa.* 21. 1. *The burden of the Deſart of the Sea.* And afterwards, *The burden of the valley of Viſion*, that is, of *Jeruſalem.* &, (2 *Kings* 9. 25.) When *Jehu* had killed *Jehoram*, he ſaid to *Bidkar* his Captain, *Take him up, and caſt him in the portion of the field of* Naboth *the* Jezreelite; *for remember, how that when I and thou rode together after* Ahab *his Father, the Lord laid this burden upon him*, that is, that he ſhould be ſlain, and thrown out in this manner. As afflictions upon wicked men are burdens, ſo, afflictions upon the godly, are burdens too; they are alſo heavy burdens (Their ſins are burdens upon them; *My ſins* (ſaith *David*) *are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavy for me to bear*, Pſal. 28. 4. Their ſins are burdens, and their ſorrows are burdens. Sin doth not only burden man, but it burdens God: *I am preſſed under your ſins, as a cart is preſſed that is full of ſheaves*, ſaith God; *Amos* 2. 13. As man, by ſin burdens God, ſo God, by affliction burdens man. But of all afflictions, inward afflictions are the greateſt burdens: As the ſpirit of a man is ſtronger than his fleſh, ſo the afflictions which are upon his ſpirit, are weightier then thoſe that are upon his fleſh: The Spirit hath wonderful ſtrength; all ſpirits are ſtrong; Angels are mighty in ſtrength: *One good Angel is an over-match for all men.* And the Devils (who are Spirits) are called not only *Principalities*, but *Powers*; becauſe of their ſtrength. Proportionably, the ſpirit of a man hath a mighty ſtrength in it; and ſo the afflictions, which are upon the ſpirit, may have a greater weight in them. The affliction which *Job* complains of, as heavier then the ſand, was not ſo much the calamity that preſſed his fleſh, or the pain that tormented his body (as is plain in the next verſe) but it was the calamity of his ſpirit, the affliction lying there; *A man can ſuſtain his infirmity, but a wounded ſpirit* (that is, when a man hath got a blow, a wound, an affliction upon his ſpirit) *who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. As if *Solomon* had ſaid, I challenge all the world to find me out a man, that can bear a burdened, wounded ſpirit; unleſs Chriſt put under his hand, no ſtrength of mans ſpirit can bear the burden of a wounded ſpirit: A ſpirit hath no weight at all, only fleſhly and material ſubſtances are ponderous; but a wounded ſpirit is heavier then wounded fleſh. The ſpirit is ſtrong enough to bear the burdened fleſh, but nothing in fleſh can bear a burdened ſpirit.

In the cloſe of the verſe, we have the effect of this heavy weight of affliction, both ſpiritual and corporal.

Therefore (ſaith he) *my words are ſwallowed up.* That is, I want words to expreſs my grief. (*a*) All Language is too narrow for the vaſtneſs of my ſorrows.

Some read it (*b*) *Therefore my words are bitter*; or, therefore my words are ſteeped in bitterneſs; as if he had ſaid, I my ſelf feed upon bitter things, I feed upon Gall and Wormwood, therefore no wonder if my words taſte of them.

The Vulgar goes farther from the Letter of the Text, rendring (*c*) *Therefore my words are full of ſorrow*; as if he had ſaid, the ſorrows which are in my mind, flow out upon my Tongue.

The *Septuagint* yet further off (*d*) *Therefore it ſeems my words are evil, or ill taken.* My grief renders my words more liable to exception or miſ-interpretation.

(*a*) *Verba deficiunt quibus magnitudinem dolorum exprimam. Nulla poſſum ratione conſequi, quanto infeſter dolore.* Merc. *Vix ſatis eſſe queant tanto jam verba dolori.*

(*b*) *Propterea verba mea amara.* Symmach. (*c*) *Propterea verba mea ſunt dolore plena.* Vulg. (*d*) Ἀλλὰ ὡς ἔοικε τὰ ῥήματα μȣ ἐστὶ φαῦλα. *Sept.*

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Therefore my words come ſhort*; there is a weight upon me heavier then the ſand of the ſea; *Therefore my words come ſhort*, or my expreſſions come not up to my intention. We tranſlate near that ſence, and anſwerably to the Original, *My words are ſwallowed up.*

The Hebrew word ſignifies *to lick up*, or *to ſwallow down*, and by a Metaphor to deſtroy or conſume; in the Propheſie of *Obadiah*, v. 16. the word is uſed to that purpoſe, *They ſhall drink, and they ſhall ſwallow down*: And, *Prov.* 20. 25. *It is a ſnare to the man, who devoureth that which is holy*, or who ſwalloweth down that which is holy; ſo here, *Therefore my words are ſwallowed up*; that is, when I would ſpeak, my words are, as it were, half-eaten before ſpoken; or my words are ſnatcht down in the ſpeaking, by the ſharp teeth and devouring ſtomach of my grief and ſorrows.

לען *à radice* לוע *Lambit, abſorbuit, per Metaphoram, perdidit, corrupit. Verba ſemeſa.* Jun. *Verba mea corrupta ſunt, aut perdita*, R. Levi; *deleta*, R. Moyſes; *intercisa*, Theod. Laſſa. Chal. *Verbum pertinet ad pronunciationem corruptam & ad balbutiem. Vix loqui poſſum, vox faucibus hæret.* Vat.

Others from the Letter read, *Therefore my words are corrupted, wearied, loſt, blotted, blubbered*, ſo cut off, that I cannot ſpeak diſtinctly, alluding unto thoſe that ſtammer. A ſtammerer is in ſuch haſte to ſpeak, that he *eats his words*, and (as we uſe to ſay proverbially in our Language) *he clips the Kings Engliſh*, he ſwalloweth up half his mind, when he would bring it out in words; ſuch is the meaning of *Job, My words are ſwallowed up*, I cannot ſpeak all; my grief takes me off, and cuts me ſhort. And ſo he ſeems to excuſe himſelf.

Firſt, In caſe he had ſpoken abruptly and brokenly, my pain hath been ſo great, that I can hardly ſpeak, therefore take no advantage of the abrupt language and broken ſentences, which have fallen from me; for the truth is, my grief hath ſwallowed up my words. I have rather ſighed, then declared my mind; real ſorrow, as well as poetical paſſionate imitation of ſorrow, makes many an (*Apoſiopeſis*, or) ſudden ſtop and breach, when the tongue is upon its ſwifteſt ſpeed, and quickeſt motion.

And ſecondly, He ſeems to excuſe himſelf for the matter of his ſpeech; I have not yet ſpoken all my mind, I have not yet given you my full ſence, about my condition; for through grief, I was forced to ſwallow up my words, and to ſuppreſs what I had further to ſay. Therefore ſuppoſe my ſpeech hath been imperfect, yet be not ſcandalized at it; for if you will have patience to ſtay, I ſhall anon bring up the words again which my ſorrows have ſnatcht from me, and ſwallowed down. Stay a while, and you ſhall hear more, you ſhall hear all; I will ſpeak more largely and more diſtinctly then I have done. One of the *Rabbins* takes the word actively, and refers the act of ſwallowing to *Job*'s Friends: as if he had ſaid, *Ye, my friends, have ſwallowed down my words*; ye have not leiſurely fed upon and digeſted them, but ſwallowed them in ſuch haſte, that ye have not taſted them. As a man that ſwallows down a morſel greedily, without chewing, never taſtes either the ſweetneſs or the bitterneſs of it. It is a uſual Metaphor to expreſs hearing by eating; and we have it (as many interpret) at the ſixth verſe of this Chapter, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?* It is a truth, that when words are thus ſwallowed or gobled down, we take not out the ſtrength or intent of them. But I ſtay not upon this expoſition, becauſe it ſtrains too hard upon the Grammatical conſtruction, and other circumſtances of the Text.

R. Kimchi.

Obſerve out of the former meaning,

First, *Great grief interrupteth ſpeech; and makes broken Language.*

Therefore my ſpeech or my words are ſwallowed up. As ſometimes our words devour, ſo ſometimes our words are devoured; ſome men ſpeak ſwallowing words, and others ſwallow their words (*Pſal.* 57. 4.) *Thou loveſt all devouring words; or thou loveſt all ſwallowing words, O thou deceitful tongue!* There are ſwallowing words, as well as ſwallowed words. Malice makes a man ſwallow the integrity of another with his words; and grief will make a man ſwallow down his own words, ſo that he cannot ſpeak to maintain his own integrity.

Secondly obſerve, That, *Some afflictions exceed all complaints, and are too big for expreſſion.*

That Note reaches Mr. *Broughton*'s ſence, *my words come ſhort* of what my condition is; there is no language large enough, no Oratory eloquent enough to deſcribe or make known my ſorrows.

Laſtly obſerve, *Not to be able to expreſs our grief, is an encreaſe of our grief.*

Therefore my words are ſwallowed up. This is an addition to my ſorrows, that I cannot make known my ſorrows. It is a great part of my trouble, that I can tell you but a part of my trouble. Let a man be hindered from expreſſing his grief, either through want of power, or through the reſtraint of power; both wayes grief encreaſes. Some, who have been dying upon cruel Racks, or under bloody tortures, have yet eſteemed this beyond all their tortures, that they might not freely ſpeak out their minds and ſorrows: to have their mouths ſtopt, was worſe to them, then to have their breath ſtopt. *It is a pain to be kept from ſpeaking.* To command a man to ſwallow or eat down his words, is next to the command of eating and ſwallowing down his own fleſh. *The cruelty of a diſeaſe may gagg a man, as well as the cruelty of a Tyrant; ſuch is my grief, that my words are ſwallowed up.*

Apud Sophoclem Electra *fœlicem vocat* Niobem, *cui lugere filiorum interitum permiſſum eſt, cum id ſibi matris crudelitas negaverit.*

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit; the terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.

Doth the wild Aſs bray when he hath graſs? or loweth the Ox over his fodder?

Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt? or is there any taſte in the white of an egg?

The things that my ſoul refuſed to touch, are as my ſorrowful meat?

JOB continueth his Reply and his Complaint. He had expreſt the greatneſs of his calamity, by comparing it with the ſand of the ſea for weightineſs; now he proceeds in the ſame ſad aggravation, by comparing it to an arrow for ſharpneſs, and to an army for terribleneſs: *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me; the terrors of the Lord ſet themſelves in array againſt me.*

We are in this verſe to open a quiver full of poyſoned arrows, and to marſhal an Army full of divine terrors; *The arrows of the Almighty*, &c.

An arrow is a deadly engine, ſo called in the Hebrew, from its effect, cutting or wounding. Being taken properly, it is an inſtrument ſhot out of a Bow, of wood or iron, either for ſport or fight: But here figuratively. And arrows in Scripture, are taken in a figure divers wayes.

חץ *Sagitta, à* חצץ *dimidiavit, diſcidit, quòd ſcindit rem perenſſam.*

Firſt, For the Word of God, *Pſal.* 45. 5. *Thine arrows are ſharp in the heart of the Kings enemies, whereby the people fall under thee*: That is, thy words are ſharp and piercing, whereby thou convinceſt and beateſt down ſin and ſinners, either converting or deſtroying them. The Rider on the white Horſe, going out conquering, and to conquer, (who is conceived to be Truth, or the Word of God triumphing) is deſcribed, with a Bow in his hand, *Rev.* 2. 6.

Secondly, Arrows are put for the bitter and reproachful words of men, *Pſal.* 64. 3, 4. & *Pſal.* 120. 4. *They bend their bows to ſhoot their arrows, even bitter words.*

Thirdly, For any evil or miſchievous purpoſes, which a man intends or aims to the hurt of his brother, *Pſal.* 58. 7. *When he bendeth his bow to ſhoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.* Bending of the bow, notes the preparing and ſetting of miſchief: The arrow ſhot out of this bent bow, is the miſchief acted and finiſhed (*Pſal.* 2.) *The wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the ſtring*; that is, they prepare miſchiefs againſt their neighbour.

Fourthly, For any kind of affliction, judgment or puniſhment, *Zeach.* 9. 14. And *the Lord ſhall be ſeen over them, and his arrow ſhall go forth as the lightning.* Particularly,

1. For Famine, *Ezek.* 5. 16. *When I ſhall ſend upon them the evil arrows of famine.*

2. For Peſtilence, *Pſal.* 91. 5. *Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.* What the terror and the arrow are, is explained in the next verſe; which is not an addition of other evils, from which ſafety is promiſed, but an explication of the ſame. *The peſtilence that walks in darkneſs, and the deſtruction* (being the ſame peſtilence) *waſting at noon-day.* The meaning of all is, Thou ſhalt be kept or antidoted againſt the Plague both night and day.

3. Thoſe Thunder-bolts and hailſtones, which God ſends out of the Magazine of heaven, and diſcharges in his wrath againſt wicked men, are called the arrows of his indignation, 2 *Sam.* 22. 15. *Pſal.* 144. 6. & *Hab.* 3. 11. compared with *Joſh.* 10 11.

Further, The arrows of God ſignifie inward afflictions, troubles of the mind and ſpirit; God often ſhoots an arrow, which pierces into the very ſoul. It was ſaid of *Joſeph, The Iron entred into his ſoul.* And it is (in this ſence) very uſual for the arrows of God to enter into the ſouls of his people (*Pſal.* 38. 1, 2.) *O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath,* &c. *For thine arrows ſtick faſt in me*: Where ſtuck they? He means it not of his body haply; the skin of that was not razed. There is an arrow, which touches not the ſides, but ſticks faſt in the ſoul of a Child of God.

Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.

Underſtand it here of the arrows of affliction; and thoſe either external, outward calamities, faſtning in the fleſh of *Job*; or internal, galling him to the ſoul and ſpirit. Therefore he ſaith, *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit.*

Theſe Arrows are deſcribed in the Text two wayes.

1. } From the { Efficient cauſe. } *The Arrows of the Almighty.*
2. } From the { Effect, } *They drink up my ſpirit.*

They are the arrows of the Almighty, Shaddai. Of which word we have ſpoken in the former Chapter, *ver.* 17. at large, it being one of the names of God, noting out his power and omnipotency; there he calls them the chaſtnings of (*Shaddai*) the Almighty; and here, *The Arrows of* (*Shaddai*) *the Almighty.*

First, Becauſe they are ſent out from him. His arm bends and draws the Bow. And,

Secondly, Becauſe of the mighty force and ſtrength, in which they are ſent home to the mark. The ſtrength in which theſe arrows come, and the depth of the wound which they make, ſpeak an Almighty arm to draw the Bow. None but an almighty arm can ſhoot an arrow thus deep, up to the feathers in the ſoul and ſpirit. It is not in the power of all the tyrants in the world to ſtrike or ſhoot thus deep. The ſoul of a Saint hath ſuch armour upon it, as no bodily weapon can enter. And therefore the Martyrs, when all was wound in their fleſh, ſpoke and triumphed, becauſe their ſpirits were whole and untoucht. Only a Spirit can ſhoot Arrowes in our ſpirits.

Poetæ deos arcu, jaculis, ſagittiſque armant, intelligentes quas inferunt mortalibus clades, quæ feriunt eminus quod proprium Dei videtur Bold.

We find it frequent among Heathen Poets and others, to deſcribe their gods armed with bows and arrows. And in that they ſhadowed their power to wound the minds of men, and to wound them ſuddenly and ſecretly. The Scripture deſcribes the true God thus, furniſhed with his quiver of arrows, and his bow (*Pſal.* 7, 13.) *He ordaineth his arrows againſt the perſecutors.* God hath an arrow for the wounding of his enemies, and an arrow for the wounding of his friends. He hath arrows for both, and both are wounded, with poyſoned fiery arows; yet, with a vaſt difference: theſe are wounded and poyſoned that they may be healed, and they are wounded and poyſoned that they may be deſtroyed.

Arrows are { 1. Swift } Inſtruments.
{ 2. Secret }
{ 3. Sharp }
{ 4. Killing }

I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (Deut. 32. 42.) They are inſtruments drawing blood, and drinking blood, even unto drunkenneſs; afflictions are like arrows in all theſe properties:

First, Afflictions often come very ſpeedily, with a glance, as an arrow, quick as a thought.

Secondly, Afflictions come ſuddenly, unexpectedly; an arrow is upon a man afore he is aware, ſo are afflictions. Though *Job* ſaith, the thing he feared came upon him, he looked for this arrow before it came; yet uſually afflictions are unlooked for gueſts, they thruſt in upon us, when we dream not of them.

Thirdly, They come with little noiſe; an arrow is felt, before, or as ſoon as, it is heard; an arrow flies ſilently and ſecretly, ſtealing upon, and wounding a man, unobſerved, and unſeen.

Laſtly, All afflictions are ſharp, and in their own nature killing and deadly. That any have good from them, is from the grace of God, not from their nature.

The poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit.

Quarum indignatio. Vulg. *Furor.* Sept. *Fervor,* Tygur, *plurimi venenum.*

רשף

Sagitta ignita, incaleſcens motu.

There's the effect of his afflictions. Some read it, *The fury or anger whereof drinketh up my ſpirit.* It may be called the fury and anger of an arrow, becauſe the arrow is often ſent in fury and in anger. We read alſo of the fire of an arrow, or of a fierie arrow (*Pſal.* 76. 4.) *There break'ſt thou the arrows of the bow.* Arrows even firing themſelves by the ſwiftneſs of their motion.

חמת

a radice

יחם

Caluit, incaluit ira, ſic dicta quod irati incaleſcunt.

The word of the Text is derived from a root, ſignifying to *wax very hot*, and in the Nown, *heat.* Hence by a Metaphor it ſignifies anger, becauſe angry men wax hot; *Anger is breathed fire* (Iſa. 42. 12.) *Therefore he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the ſtrength of battel, and it hath ſet him on fire round about.* Fire and fury are near in name and in nature. When fury burns within, fire quickly burns without; and ſo by a Metonymie the ſame word ſignifies poiſon; the reaſon is, becauſe poiſons heat and enflame; poiſons enflame the fleſh, and (as it were) ſet the body on fire, or; becauſe an angry man (like an angry Serpent) ſeems to breath out fire, or ſpit poiſon. *Paul,* before his converſion, *breathed threatnings,* fire and ſword, againſt the Church, *Acts* 9. 1. And therefore, either way, the word is well rendred, *The anger whereof,* or, *the poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit.* And in the Greek, the ſame word ſignifies anger and poiſon; becauſe of that inflammation which is about the heart of a man throughly angry.

Pſal. 58. 4. Θυμὸς pro ἰὸς. Sept.

Venenatis gravida ſagittis pharetra. Hor. *Qui mortis ſævo geminent ut vulnera cauſas. Omnia vipereo ſpicula felli linunt.* Ovid. *l.* 1. *de Ponto.*

Mos erat Perſarum, *ut ponerent venenum ſerpentis in ſagittis ſuis.* R. Solom.

רוחי

In theſe words, *Job* ſeems to allude to the cuſtom of cruel ſavage men, who, when they purſued their enemies with deadly hatred, and would wound them to death, uſed to dip the head of their arrows, the top of their ſpears, or the point of their ſwords, or whatſoever weapon they fought with, in poiſon, that ſo every wound might be a death; the poiſon of ſuch an arrow, ſpear or ſword, drinks up the ſpirit, and corrupts the blood preſently. Some poiſon ſtrikes the heart, almoſt as ſoon as the weapon ſtrikes the arm. *Job* compares the arrows which God ſhot into him, not to ordinary arrows, which kill only by piercing, but, to poiſoned arrows, which kill by infecting; as if God had ſet himſelf to the utmoſt, to pour out the fierceneſs of his indignation upon him; not only ſhooting an arrow, but an arrow dipt in poiſon, ſuch an arrow, as the moſt barbarous and cruel men ſhoot at their moſt profeſſed and mortal enemies.

Drinketh up my ſpirit.] Poiſon gets quickly to the ſpirit, and there drinks; poiſon is ſubtle and ſpiritful, and therefore (if I may ſo ſpeak) incorporates with that which is moſt ſubtle in man, his ſpirit. Flat, pal'd, groſs, or dreggiſh liquor will not quench the fiery thirſt of poiſon; it drinks nothing but pure ſpirits; yet ſome read, *It drinketh up my blood*; but this amounts to the ſame ſence, for the ſpirit of a living creature is in the blood: the ſpirits ſwim in the blood,

There are different opinions about this ſpirit, or what we are to underſtand by it.

Tot confeſſus vulneribus vix reſpirare valeo. Aquin.

Firſt, Some take ſpirit here, for the breath, or for the act of breathing; as if he had ſaid, I have received ſo many wounds by theſe poiſoned arrows, that I begin to faint, and cannot draw my breath; theſe arrows ſup up my ſpirit, and by wounding, ſtop my breath.

Dolores mei me penitus enervant, atque exhauſto robore dejiciunt. Pined.

Secondly, Others underſtand it more generally, taking ſpirit for his ſtrength and vigor; ſpirits are ſo ſtrong, that they are put for ſtrength. *The Egyptians are men, and not God, and their horſes fleſh, and not ſpirit* (Iſa. 31. 3.) that is, they are not ſtrength, but weakneſs. So here, *It drinketh up my ſpirit*, that is, the ſtrength that is in me, all the powers and abilities of body and ſoul, are waſted and conſumed; theſe calamities ſpend upon my ſpirit, where the ſtock of my ſtrength is laid up, or which is the lock wherein my ſtrength lies.

A third apprehends, that by ſpirit, he means his judgment, reaſon and underſtanding; as if he had ſaid, ſhower, and arrows and troubles come ſo thick upon me, that, they even darken my mind, and drink up the ſtrength of my underſtanding; hence I may ſeem to ſpeak diſtractedly, unadviſedly, weakly: I have not that ſpirit to quicken, that ſtrength of reaſon to judge, which formerly I had; the pains of my body diſable and diſtemper my mind; and therefore if I have ſpoken any thing below what I ought, it is, becauſe I am caſt below what I was.

The terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.

בעותיאל
וה

Arrows and terrors are the ſame thing, in a different cloathing of words; or the arrow is the affliction it ſelf, and the terrour is the effect or conſequent of it. The word here uſed for *Terrour*, notes the moſt terrible terrour or affrightment. *Terrour is the extream of fear, or fear confuſed into amazement and aſtoniſhment:* Death is therefore called the King of terrors, becauſe there are ſo many powerful terrors in death, *Pſal.* 55. 4. That vexation which *Saul* felt, when God ſent out an evil ſpirit with commiſſion to vex him, is expreſt by this word, 1 *Sam.* 16. 14. *An evil ſpirit from the Lord, troubled, or terrified him*: Such terrors, for the matter, ſuch for the manner and preſent workings of them, ſeized upon upright-hearted *Job*, and falſe-hearted *Saul*. A believer, a child of God, an heir of heaven, may feel himſelf haunted and pierced with helliſh terrors.

Theſe are called the *Terrors of God*, either, firſt, By a common *Hebraiſm*; becauſe great and ſtrange terrors. In that Language, *God* is often put as an *Epithete*, to ſhew exceeding greatneſs, himſelf being the *greateſt*. So *chap.* 1. 16. *Fire of God*, &c, Secondly, *Terrors of God*, becauſe he ſent and commanded that army of terrors. When *Jacob* journeyed with his little Army, *Gen.* 35. 5. It is ſaid, *The terror of God was upon the Cities round about, and they purſued them not*; that is, the Lord ſent an army of terrors to oppoſe the Cities, leſt they ſhould arm againſt *Jacob*. The terror of man is very terrible, and therefore the Apoſtle arms the Saints againſt it, 1 *Pet.* 3. 14. *Be not afraid of their terror.* The terror of God is infinitely greater; and thereupon the Apoſtle argues, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men.*

Nomen terroris frequenter in Scripturis ſumitur pro flagellis, maliſq; graviſſimis à Deo miſſis.

Thoſe terrors of God may be taken two wayes; either *actively* or *paſſively*; actively, for that work of God, in terrifying and troubling. *Thy terrors*, that is the terrors which thou didſt afflict me with; or paſſively, for thoſe afflictions which oppreſs the mind; when God leads that army againſt us, ſets it in array to charge, and commands it to encamp about us; in either ſence we may take this of *Job*, as alſo that of *Heman*, Pſal. 88. 15. *While I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted.*

Further, There is a twofold terror; Firſt, cauſed by outward imminent danger. Secondly, cauſed by inward guilt. Or, Terror comming from the wrath of man, and terror coming from the wrath of God. Thus it was threatned, *Lev.* 26. 16. *I alſo will do even this unto you, I will appoint over you terrors*, Deut. 32. 25. *The ſword without, and terror within, ſhall deſtroy both the young man and the virgin*, that is, fear ſhall kill thoſe who eſcape the ſword. A people cannot ſtand before an Army of men, who are once ſurprized with an army of terrors. Hence, *Joſh.* 2. 9. *Your terror is fallen upon us*, ſaith *Rahab*, to aſſure the ſpies, that the *Canaanites* could not ſtand before the people of *Iſrael*.

Again, The terrors of God afflict the ſoul, Firſt, When ſin is ſet openly (to the eye of Conſcience) in array againſt us. *An Army of ſins are an Army of terrors.* The Church is called, *Terrible as an army with Banners*, Cant. 6. 10. when ſhe is ſtrengthened and armed for the exerciſe of all that power which Chriſt hath given her; and when our ſins ſtand before us, are in all that ſtrength which the Law hath given them, they alſo are *terrible as an army with banners*.

Secondly, When God hides his face from us, an army of terrors quickly faces us; though an army of ſins come out in array againſt us, yet if God appear to us, in the fulneſs and freeneſs of his Grace; if Chriſt our Captain will but lead us on againſt this army, we ſhall quickly overcome them, or they will flie before us: But an army of ſins is exceeding terrible, when Chriſt appears not in the field for us, or when God hides his face from us, and leaves us in the dark. It is uſual in Scripture, to ſet forth terrors, as the effect of that darkneſs, and the hidings of the face of God. Naturally, terror accompanies darkneſs; children are afraid in the dark, and not only children, but men. Hiſtories tell us of great Emperors, who durſt not be in the dark for fear. And as natural terrors meet us in natural darkneſs, ſo ſpiritual terrors, in ſpiritual darkneſs: *When the light of Gods countenance is clouded, and* (as it were) *benights the ſoul*, then terror takes hold upon us. Under either of theſe notions we may underſtand the terrors of this Text; *The terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* It was true in reſpect of outward troubles, they were very terrible; but eſpecially in regard of inward troubles; when God ſets his ſins in array before him, or hid his face, and obſtructed the courſe of his wonted communion.

Set themſelves in array againſt me.

ערך

Ordinavit, ratione & proportione diſpoſuit, inſtruxit.

The Original imports, a very exact, curious, artificial ordination and diſpoſal of things; as if the Lord had even ſtudied to be exact and exquiſite in afflicting *Job*, he puts his ſorrows into a method, and his troubles into order. The Providence of God obſerves a rule, and is harmonious in thoſe things which appear to us a chaos, a heap of confuſion.

The word is applied, Firſt, To the ordering of ſpeech or diſputations: There is a kind of embattelling in diſputation, when it is regular and artificial (*Job* 32. 14.) *Now he hath not directed his ſpeech againſt me* (ſaith *Elihu*) concerning *Job*; As if he ſaid, *Job* hath not marſhalled his Arguments againſt me, but all the charge hath been upon you.

Secondly, I find the word uſed in reference unto prayer: Prayer ought to be full of holy order and composedneſs (*Pſal.* 5. 3.) *In the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and look up.* In the morning will I put my prayer in array, I will poſture my prayer in a gracious order, my heart in order, and my words in order; every petition ſhall (as it were) keep rank and file, when I am ſeeking unto God: *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God*, is the counſel of the holy Ghoſt by *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 5. 2.

But properly, the word is applied to the marſhalling and embattelling of an Army (*Jer.* 50. 9.) *Lo, I will raiſe, and cauſe to come up againſt* Babylon, *an aſſembly of great Nations from the North-Countrey, and they ſhall ſet themſelves in array againſt her*, &c.

So then, whereas *Job* ſaith, *The terrors of God are ſet in array againſt me*, he would intimate, that God afflicted him, both orderly and reſolvedly. It was not ſome confuſed terror, or ſudden ſurprizal; but the Lord God, like ſome great Commander or General, muſtered and marſhalled his Army, and led it up exactly form'd to a pitcht battel againſt him.

Obſerve from hence, Firſt, *Afflictions come ſometimes by multitudes.*

You

Bellum atq; virum.

You ſhall have a whole Army of them together: Sometime we ſee a duel or ſingle combate, one man match with one trouble; here a man and an affliction, there a man and an affliction; but another time we may ſee, a man and an Army (as he ſpake in the ſtory, when one made good a *paſs* againſt a whole hoſt of the enemy) in the ſpiritual War, one ſoul grapples with a multitude of troubles and conflicts with a thouſand temptations: As there are legions of evil ſpirits, ſo legions of ſpiritual evils aſſaulting at once.

Obſerve Secondly, *God ſometimes appears as an enemy to his own ſervants.*

The terrors of God, and the arrows of God (ſaith *Job*) God ſhoots the arrows, and ſets the terrors in array; *Job* expected favour and ſuccor from God, but he finds terrors and arrows: Thoſe wounds make our hearts bleed moſt, which we apprehend given us from his anger, whom we have choſen as our only friend. The Church had that apprehenſion of God (*Lam.* 3.3.) *Surely againſt me is he turned, he turneth his hand againſt me all the day.* The Church ſpeaks as if God were quite changed, as if he having been her friend, were now turned enemy. So *Job*, I that was wont to have ſhowers of ſweet mercies, ſhot and darted into my ſoul, now feel deadly arrows there, ſhot from the ſame hand; my ſpirit was wont to drink in the pleaſant influences of Heaven; but now poyſon drinks up my ſpirits. I was wont to walk ſafe, under the guard of divine favours, but now divine terrors aſſault me on every ſide.

Obſerve Thirdly, *When God appeareth an enemy, man is not able to hold out any longer.*

See, how *Job* (poor ſoul) cries out as ſoon as he found, that theſe were Gods arrows, and Gods terrors. *Job was a man at arms*, a man of valour, and of an undaunted courage; a man that had been in many skirmiſhes with Satan, and had often, through the power of God, foiled him, and come off with victory, *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, were (indeed) too hard for his ſervants, and conquer'd his cattel, yet the ſpirit of *Job* beat thoſe bands of robbers, and triumphed over them; but he was never in battel with God before, and perceiving now God himſelf to appear as an enemy in the field, he cries out, *O the terrors of God, O the arrows of the Almighty. When God is angry, no man can abide it*; (2 Cor. 5.11.) *Knowing the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men*: We (ſaith the Apoſtle) who have felt by experience, or by faith have underſtood the terror of the Lord: we knowing it experimentally, or knowing it believingly; we being fully perſwaded, that the terror of the Lord is moſt terrible, perſwade men; O take heed you put not your ſelves under the terror of the Lord, or provoke the terror of the Lord againſt your ſelves. Thoſe terrors of the Lord which come from pure wrath, are altogether intollerable: And thoſe which come from love, and are ſet in array by the infinite wiſdom, and gracious providence of God, ordering all things for good (to his) in the iſſue, even thoſe are very dreadful; no man, not the holieſt of men (and they are the ſtrongeſt in this war) are able to ſtand before them; *Pſal.* 38.2. *Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore, there is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh by reaſon of thine anger*: that is, I am as a man, who hath not a whole piece of skin all his body over, all is a wound; or I am as one, whoſe fleſh is all rotten by reaſon of his wounds. As *Ely* ſpeaks to his ſons, 1 *Sam.* 2.25. *If one man ſin againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge him*; *but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* So, we may ſay on the other ſide, if man contend with man, ſome one may help him, he may have a *Second* to relieve him; but if once a man be contending with God, who will be his *Second?* who will undertake for him? who can come in, to the reſcue, when God is fighting and contending with us? *We wraſtle not againſt fleſh and blood* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* 6.12. when he would ſhew, what a terrible thing it is to wraſtle with the Devil) *but againſt principalities and powers, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places.* Fleſh and blood is no match for a Spirit, though a created Spirit, though an unclean Spirit, a Devil; how then ſhall fleſh and blood be able to wraſtle with the creating Spirit; with him, who is a moſt holy Spirit; with God, who is *The Principality, The Power, The High, The Strong, The Almighty, Shaddai.* In other battels it is man with man, or at worſt, man with Devils; but here it is man with God, weakneſs and frailty, contending with Omnipotency: and therefore when once God appears againſt the ſoul, the ſoul can hold out no longer; *His anger, who is the Spirit, quickly drinks up our ſpirits.*

Obſerve Fourthly, *Inward wounds and terrors are moſt terrible.*

Tanto pœna intolerabilior, quanto ſpiritus corpore ſubtilior.

Do not think that the ſoars upon *Job*'s body, fetcht all theſe complaints from him. He ſhews you now, what it was that made him complain indeed; *The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the terrors of God ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* As the joyes and exultations of the ſpirit do infinitely exceed all the pleaſures which come in from the ſenſes, all bodily pleaſures: ſo the troubles and afflictions, which are upon the ſpirit, infinitely exceed all the troubles and afflictions which fall upon the body. As God hath ſuch comforts, ſuch joyes to beſtow upon his people, as the world can neither give nor take away; ſo likewiſe, he hath terrors and troubles, which all the world is not able to remove or mitigate: *There are no medicines in the whole circuit of nature, that can heal a wounded ſpirit*; All your friends, all your relations, all your riches, yea all your natural wiſdom, will be but as the white of an egg to your taſte, in the day when God ſmites the heart with theſe terrors.

Theſe arrows and terrors, are often preparatory to converſion; when ſome men are over-come to receive Chriſt, an Army of terrors is ſent out, to take them captive, and bring them in. There are many (I grant) whom God wounds with love, he ſhoots an arrow of favour into their hearts, and overcomes them with Troops of mercies. Again, an Army of terrors is ſent out to try the holy courage of thoſe, who are converted, as well as to conquer the unholy enmity of perſons unconverted. That was *Job*'s caſe here, and theſe ſecond Armies may be as terrible to the ſoul as the firſt, and often are more terrible. And (we have ſuch caſes) a man that was converted without an Army of terrors, may have an an Army of terrors ſent againſt him after converſion. *The diſpenſations and methods of God are various, though both his rule and end be ever the ſame*: But whether this Army of terror comes before converſion, or after converſion; whenſoever it comes, it muſt needs diſtreſs the ſoul exceedingly. *A broken ſpirit is very comfortable, but a wounded ſpirit is very dreadful*; Of a wounded ſpirit we may ſay, as I remember the Moraliſt ſpeaks, concerning thoſe barbarous naked fights, among the *Romans*, when men fought naked with men, or naked with beaſts; ſurely (ſaith he) all the former fights and battels, were ſports and mercy to theſe: So all other troubles, all other terrors, are pleaſures and recreations to theſe: When you come to this bout, when God ſends theſe arrows, and arrayeth ſuch an Army of terrors againſt you, Fire and Sword, Stone and Gout, are, yea Hell it ſelf, (to preſent apprehenſion) is a pleaſure: Many under thoſe aſſaults, have thought they ſhould gain by the exchange, and have wiſhed to be in Hell, ſo they might be out of thoſe terrors.

Quicquid ante pugnatum eſt, miſericordia fuit. Sen.

Few believe this, but they who have had experience of it. *As the joyes of the ſpirit, ſo the terrors of the ſpirit, are ſecrets unto moſt*: As the Prophet ſpeaks concerning thoſe carnal ones in his time. *If one propheſie unto them of wine and ſtrong drink, he ſhall even be the Prophet of this people. To propheſie, or to ſpeak unto ſome of riches, and of honour, and of pleaſure, they find ſome taſte in theſe things, this is wine and ſtrong drink unto them.* There is ſome reliſh in theſe things, they underſtand what you mean; but if you ſpeak unto them of joy in the Holy Ghoſt, of peace of Conſcience, of the refreſhings which are had in communion with Chriſt; they underſtand not the language, they know not what is meant. So, on the other ſide, if you would be a Prophet, or ſpeak, or preach to ſome of Fire and Sword, of ſpoiling and plundering their Eſtates, preach to them of Plague and Peſtilence, preach to them of the Gout, and of the Stone, of burning Fevers, and languiſhing Conſumptions, they underſtand theſe and are afraid, they even tremble to hear you ſpeak of theſe things: but preach to them of the arrows of the Almighty, ſhot into the ſpirit, and of the terrors of God ſet in array againſt them; preach to them of trouble of Conſcience, and the hiding of Gods face; they ſmile at theſe things, they wonder what you would have, they know no ſuch matters. *Spiritual good or evil, is ſeldom known till felt, yea neither of them is known* (to purpoſe) *till it is felt:* Spiritual troubles are as little known, till felt, as ſpiritual joyes are: The natural man perceives none of the things of God, he cannot know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned: And there is as much ſpiritualneſs evidenced in diſcerning ſpiritual ſorrows and afflictions (our own or others) as there is in diſcerning our own or others ſpiritual joyes and conſolations.

I ſhall add a word here to thoſe, who live ſecurely, in, or dally with their ſins: Surely, if *Job* here in the Text; if *David* often in the *Pſalmes*, and *Heman* (Pſal. 88. 15.) cryeth out, *While I ſuffer thy terrors I am diſtracted*; If theſe cryed out thus of the terrors and arrows of God, then (I ſay) *Sinners and ſecure ones*, what will you do, when God bends his bow, opens his quiver, and ſhoots his arrows at your naked breaſts? What will you do, when God ſhall bring up Armies of terrors to charge upon you, when you hear a *Job* thus crying out of terrors? How ſad will it be with you, who ſhall be a terror to your ſelves, as *Paſhur* was threatned, *Jer.* 20. 4. and God a terror to you likewiſe? What will you do, when there is fear round about, and fear within? *The ſinners in* Zion *are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurpriſed the hypocrites; who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? Who amongſt us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* Iſa. 33. 14. If they who have a ſhield of faith to keep off theſe arrows, and a rock of ſalvation, Jeſus Chriſt, to hide themſelves in, when theſe Armies come to battel againſt them, are thus afraid; what will become of you, that are unarmed? of you, naked ones? of you, who have no ſhield, no ſhelter, no faith, no Chriſt?

Magor Miſſabi.

One thing more. Foraſmuch, as there are ſuch arrows and terrors ſent by God, even againſt his own, for their trial; take heed of making arrows againſt your ſelves; take heed you be not found to raiſe and prepare an Army of terrors, againſt your own ſouls. All the while men ſin, knowingly and preſumptuouſly, they ſhoot arrows againſt God, and God may take thoſe arrows and ſhoot them back into their breaſts; he can make their ſins recoyl upon themſelves, and pierce their own hearts with the works of their own hands. Men muſter (as it were) whole Armies of terrors, and levy a bloody war againſt themſelves by wilful ſinnings. That Text, *Pſal.* 50. 21. telleth us, that God will bring the ſins of wicked men, as an Army againſt them; *I will reprove thee, and ſet thy ſins in order before thine eyes*; It is the ſame Hebrew word, we have in the Text, *I will ſet thy ſins in array before thine eyes*; as if he ſhould ſay, thou thoughteſt all thy ſins were ſcattered and diſperſt, that, there was not a ſin to be found, that they ſhould never be rallied, and brought together; but I aſſure thee, I will make an Army of thoſe ſins, a compleat Army of them, I will ſet them in rank and file before thine eyes, and ſee how thou canſt behold, much leſs contend with ſuch an hoſt as they. Take heed therefore you do not levy war againſt your own ſouls; that's the worſt of all civil or inteſtine wars. If an Army of divine terrors be ſo fearful, what will an Army of black helliſh ſins be? When God ſhall bring whole Regiments of ſins againſt you, here a Regiment of oaths, there a Regiment of lies, there a third of falſe dealings, here a Troop of filthy actions, and there a Legion of unclean, or prophane thoughts, all at once fighting againſt thy life, and everlaſting peace?

Significat quaſi diſtinctio ordine bellico apparatu catalogum omnium ſcelerum proponere.

Laſtly, You that have never felt theſe arrows, nor ſeen any of theſe Armies, and yet God hath been pleaſed to diſcover to you his love in his Chriſt, ſee what cauſe you have to bleſs God: Or if you have at any time felt them, and are now again at peace; and if thoſe terrors are removed, and the poyſon of thoſe arrows ſucked out, and the heads of the arrows drawn out; bleſs God. Do you not hear how *Job* complains of arrows and of terrors? *The arrows of the Almighty are within me, poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit; the terrors of God, do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.*

Verſ. 5. **Doth the wild Aſs bray when he hath graſs? Or loweth the Ox over his fodder?** &c.

The three verſes following contain ſimilitudes, taken from nature, by which *Job* tells on the ſtory of his ſorrows, and juſtifies his complaint. The ſence in general is this, as if he had ſaid, I do not cry out without cauſe; I ſhould be more unreaſonable then bruit beaſts in ſo doing, *The wild Aß doth not bray, when he hath graſs*, &c. Or thus, *We blame not beaſts, if they complain, when they have cauſe: take away graſs from the Aſs, and fodder from the Ox; Pinch them with hunger, and they will tell you of it in their language, they will low and bray, till you underſtand they want meat:* Therefore ſurely you have no reaſon thus to find fault with me, or to charge me ſo heavily, becauſe I have complained, when my graſs and fodder, my comforts and my neceſſaries are taken from me: Nor is it any wonder, if you complain not, who have contentments to the full, and know not (by experience) what ſorrow meaneth.

Doth the wild Aſs bray, when he hath graſs?

The Hebrew word for a **wild Aſs**, comes from a root, ſignifying, *To bring forth:* and the reaſon is given, becauſe wild beaſts uſually are more fruitful, and bring forth more plentifully then the tame. The word alſo notes *wild* in general; and is applied to wild and ſavage men, who delight in wild beaſts, or wild places, Foreſts and Wilderneſſes. So (*Gen.* 16. 12.) God ſpeaks of *Iſhmael*, whom *Hagar* bear unto *Abraham*, that he, ſhould be *A wild man*, that is, *wild among men*; or as a wild Aſs among men, ſtrong and active, delighting in Fields and Foreſts.

פרא *Fera, Onager, à* פרה *Fructificavit, fructum fecit, quod feræ Domeſticis animantibus ſint fœcundiores.* Shin.

Doth the wild Aſs (ſaith *Job*) *bray, when he hath graſs?* When the Aſs hath meat, he is quiet; you hear not of him: but if he wants graſs, he brayes, and makes a diſmal noiſe, (*Jer.* 14. 6.) *The wild Aſſes did ſtand in the high places, they ſnuffed up the wind like Dragons, their eyes did fail, becauſe there was no graſs*; ſpeaking of a time of drought and famine; the wild Aſs is very impatient, both of hunger and of thirſt. And therefore the Rivers are (by name) aſſigned to them for drink, *Pſal.* 104. 10, 11. *He ſendeth the ſprings into the valleyes, which run among the hills: they give drink to every beaſt of the field; the wild Aſſes quench their thirſt.* Hence wild Aſſes are obſerved by natural Hiſtorians to delight in, and frequent Rivers and Springs.

פרא אדם *Onager inter homines, ſubaudito* כ *erit inter homines ſicut Onager, robere prævalens.*

To which that prophane fiction of the *Roman* Hiſtorian (in abuſe of the Jews) hath relation; who ſpeaking of the travels of the *Iſraelites*, through the wilderneſs, tells us (to obſcure the miracle, which God wrought for them) that they being ready to die with thirſt, at laſt eſpied a company of wild Aſſes upon a rock: which advantage *Moſes* took, and preſently followed them, knowing that they would lead him to the waters, if any were to be had in thoſe parts. In purſuance of which Lie, *Plutarch* affirms, that the Jews worſhiped an Aſs, as a Deity, which they had in ſpecial honour and veneration, for that famous deliverance. Upon this ſtock of Lies, the *Heathen* grafted that uſual ſcorn againſt the Chriſtians, *That they worſhipped the head of an Aſs*; as that great *Aſſertor* of the Chriſtians honour againſt *Heatheniſh* cavils and helliſh imputations, hath obſerved.

Cornelius Tacitus, *l.* 21.

Plutarch, *l.* 14. *Convivaliū Queſtionū. queſt.* 5.

Tertul. *adverſ. Gentes, cap.* 16.

But, that is a harmleſs and a witty obſervation (how ſolid I leave the Reader to judge) which hath been hinted from this natural thirſtineſs of the wild Aſs: namely, that the Lord gave *Samſon* water out of the *jaw-bone of an Aſs*, *Judg.* 15. 19. thereby advancing the miracle, that a dead bone of that thirſty creature ſhould be made a ſpring of water to revive him, who was ready to dye with thirſt.

The intendment of this digreſſion, is only to clear up the Text, by ſhewing that the wild Aſs is moſt fitly inſtanced in, to ſhew the great cauſe which *Job* had to cry out as he did, of his afflictions; foraſmuch as the wild Aſs (who is ſo greedy of graſs and thirſty after the waters) will not bray for either, till he is afflicted with the want.

Or loweth the Ox over his fodder?

This carries the ſame meaning with the former inſtance; that being in wild creatures, and this in tame: as if *Job* had ſaid, look amongſt all ſort of cattel, wild or tame, you ſhall find they are content, when they have food convenient for them. And hereupon grounds his argument, that if brutes led only by ſenſe and appetite, complain not without reaſon, then ſurely he at leaſt a reaſonable creature, had reaſon to complain, or elſe he had not complained.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Brute beaſts complain not without cauſe.*

They complain not till want provokes them. Surely, men are more then brutiſh, who complain when they have no want: But moſt of all, *They*, who are not content with abundance. Some are diſcontent, not only, though they have *daily bread*, and (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *Food and raiment* (wherewith all ſhould be content) but though they have ſtore of bread and cloathing *laid up for many years.* Shall not the Ox or Aſs condemn theſe, who bray and low not when they have graſs and fodder plenty, when they ſtand continually at rack and manger? By whom ſhall theſe men be accuſed think you? We ſhall not need to ſend for the Angels out of Heaven, to witneſs againſt them; no, we may call the wild beaſts and bid them be witneſs: we may empannel *a Jury of Aſſes and Oxen to paſs a verdict upon ſuch men.* As God upbraids his people in caſe of their ingratitude for mercies, *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib*; and (*Jer.* 8.7.) in caſe of their neglect of judgments, *The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Crane, and the Turtle, and the Swallow, obſerve the time of their coming, but my people doth not know the judgment of the Lord.* As if the Lord had ſaid, whither ſhall I go to fetch witneſs againſt this people? ſhall I go up to Heaven for Angels? or call in men out of other Nations? No, I need go but to the Air for birds, for *the Turtle the Crane, and the Swallow; any thing in nature will ſerve to condemn them, who act againſt, or below the dictates of Nature. Men are worſe then beaſts, when they do worſe.* Their preheminence of conſtitution is loſt in the baſeneſs of their actions; and they put themſelves by ſo much inferior to beaſts, by how much they were placed above them. The Pſalmiſt charges it ſadly upon himſelf, that he walked in the ſphear of a beaſt, *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee* (Pſal. 73.22.) How ſadly then ſhall they be charged, who walk in a ſphear below beaſts, who are more fooliſh and ignorant, then a beaſt? Take heed of complayning without cauſe; if beaſts are ſatisfied with what is agreeable to nature, man ſhould be ſo, much more; *When Nature hath not enough, Grace hath all.* Grace will not bray or low, when there is no graſs, no fodder: ſurely then they have a ſcarcity of grace in their hearts, who bray and low over their graſs and fodder. Spiritual accommodations will make a good heart forget temporal incommodities; and it is reaſon they ſhould. God promiſeth (*Iſa.* 30.20.) *Though I give you the bread of adverſity and the water of affliction, yet thy Teachers ſhall no more be removed into a corner, but thine eyes ſhall ſee thy Teachers.* As if had ſaid, though your bodies are courſely fed, yet your ſouls ſhall be feaſted; Good chear ſhall daily be ſerved into them, both at your eyes and ears, *Thine eyes ſhall ſee thy Teachers and thou ſhalt hear a voice behind thee.* Thy ſight and thy hearing ſhall be refreſhed with heavenly Meſſengers, and good news from Heaven. Now beſides this promiſe expreſt, there is a duty implyed in the Text, namely, that becauſe their ſpirits were ſo well fed, therefore they muſt not complain, though their fleſh come ſhort in feeding; *The bread of affliction ſhould be pleaſant to us, while we eat Goſpel-dainties.* In theſe times God gives more plenty of ſpiritual food then formerly, yet many complain, becauſe their natural bread is ſhortned; remember beaſts complain not, when they have what is ſutable to nature; then let not Chriſtians complain, when they have what is ſutable to grace, though nature have but ſpare diet, and ſhort commons.

Verſ. 6. **Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt.**

He proceeds to another ſimilitude. It is, as if *Job* had ſaid, Nature will complain, when it wants meat; yea oftentimes Nature will complain, when it wants pleaſant meat. Nature is not pleaſed, if it want a grain of ſalt; if it have not ſauce, it is not ſatisfied. Therefore, ſurely I am to be born with, and not to be charged thus deeply, who complain, when you offer me that which is unſavoury, when you give me meat without ſalt, without ſauce, without any thing to render it either pleaſing to my palat, or eaſie to my diſgeſtion: Unleſs I were ſenceleſs like a ſtock or a ſtone, how ſhould I not diſ-reliſh and diſguſt ſapleſs, ſaltleſs, how much more, bitter things?

Can that which is unſavoury.] The word, which we render *unſavoury*, is the ſame uſed, *Chap.* 1. *verſ.* 22. which we there opened at large; Job *did not charge God with folly or fooliſhly*, or he ſpake not unſavourily of God.

תפל *Eſt quod debito condimento & temperamento caret, ſive in defectu, ſive in exceſſu.*

There is a Three-fold application of that word in Scripture.

First, To unpleaſant meats.

Secondly, To untempered morter.

Thirdly, To indiſcreet ſpeeches, which want the ſeaſoning either of wit, wiſdom, or of truth, *Lam.* 2.14. *Thy Prophets have ſeen vain and fooliſh things for thee*; Lying viſions without truth, vain words without wiſdom. So here, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?*

Seaſoning makes unſavoury things ſweet; *As ſalt gives a reliſh to meat, ſo wiſdom and wit to words.* And therefore the Latines expreſs wiſe, witty ſpeeches, pleaſant diſcourſe, a good grace in ſpeaking, and *ſalt*, by the ſame word.

Sales, pro facetiis, quod ſint quaſi condimentum ſermonis, Literæ Sparſæ ſale humanitatis. Cicer, ad Artic.

There is another Interpretation of that word, which we render *without*: for ſome underſtand it, not as a Prepoſition, governing the word *Salt*, but as a compound word, noting the oldneſs or ſtaleneſs of meat, wherein the very Salt it ſelf is putrified; and ſo, whereas we ſay, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?* They tranſlate thus, *Can that which is unſavoury through the corruption of ſalt be eaten?* Or, can that meat be eaten, which having been ſalted, is now putrified? *Salt which keeps meat from corruption, may in time be overcome with the corruption of the meat.* And a learned Interpreter gives the reaſon why he rather chuſeth this Interpretation of the word, becauſe (ſaith he) it carries a ſtronger *Emphaſis* with it; *Job* ſpeaks as of a thing, (in a manner) unpoſſible to be done; now, it is very poſſible to eat unſavoury meat without ſalt? A good appetite will down with unpleaſant food, and hunger will diſpence much with Cookery. But when ſeaſon'd or ſalted meat corrupts and putrifies, whoſe ſtomack doth not loath and abhor it? Therefore it is a fuller and a more flat denial to ſay, *Can that which is unſavoury through the corruption of ſalt be eaten?* then to ſay, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?*

מבלי. *Eſt præpoſitio abſq; ſive. Sed quidam accipiunt pro nomine expoſito ex Min, quod eſt, ex & Beli, à Balab, quod eſt vetuſtas. Hinc locum reddunt Infatuatum ex vetuſtate ſalis, potius quam inſipidum abſq; ſale.* Bold. Job *rem præ horrore prorſus impoſſibilem vult ſignificare; Numquid comedetur,* &c. *At impoſſibile omnino non eſt comedere inſipidum ſine ſale, carnes autem corruptæ ex vetuſtate ſalis manducari nullatenus poſſunt.* Bold.

Or is there any taſte in the white of an Egg?

Theſe words are much obſcured, by moſt Tranſlators, and have found almoſt as many expoſitions, as Expoſitors. Some tranſlate thus, *Is there any taſte in that, which being taken, brings death?* So the Vulgar; doubtleſs a man hath but little pleaſure to taſte that, which taſted, will be his death: So the words are an aggravation of the unſavourineſs of thoſe things, which were offered him by his friends; to touch or take them, was to take poiſon, or to drink in a deadly cup.

בריר חלמות *An poteſt aliquis guſtare quod guſtatum affert mortem?* Vulg.

To clear up this Expoſition, they make the Hebrew word (*Challamuth*) which we tranſlate, *Egg*, a compound from *Muth*, ſignifying to die, whence *Maveth*, death, and *Chala*, ſignifying froth or foam, or from *Chali*, ſignifying infirmity; as if the word having theſe parts put together, had this ſence, *The froth and foam of death*; Or, *The infirmity of death:* That is *deadly froth* or deadly infirmity, as if he had ſaid, is there any pleaſing taſte, in the ſpittle of dying men, who, we know often foam and froath at their mouths, when they *lie drawing on.*

Others thus, *Is there any taſte in the ſpittle of a healthy man.* The word (*Rir*) which we tranſlate *white*, ſignifies ſpittle or froth. As when *David* acted the mad-man before the King of *Gath*, it is ſaid, that he *let his ſpittle fall down upon his beard*, 1 Sam. 21.13. And the word which we tranſlate, *Egg*, ſignifies *Health*, and the Verb, *to be healthy*, Chap. 39.4. of this book, *Their young ones are in good liking.* So *Iſa.* 38. *verſ.* 16. But I leave this, as a very diſeaſed and ſickly interpretation.

ו חלם *Sanus, confortatus, convaluit.*

I ſhall therefore paſs from theſe, to our own rendering,

In albumine vitelli.

Is there any taſte in the white of an Egg? The word ſignifies ſtrictly, but *the yolk of the Egg*, ſo Mr. *Broughton*, *Is there any taſte in the white of the yolk?* And in the root, to wax fat or ſtrong; and it is therefore taken for the yolk of the Egg, becauſe that is the fatter, groſſer, and more condenſe part of the Egg. As the white being the thinner, and much like ſpettle, is therefore expreſt by a word, which alſo ſignifies ſpettle.

The white of an Egg, is an emblem of things without taſte or ſavour. And ſo the ſum of all is, that *Job* in this place by a *Proverbial ſpeech* (for ſo I take this to be) intends only thus much, that he had very inſipid taſteleſs things preſented to him; ſuch as he found no reliſh at all in, ſuch as no way raiſed his appetite or quicken'd his ſtomach to receive them; all were unſeaſoned and flat. In the next word he goes yet higher, even to the higheſt Antipathy againſt them.

Verſ. 7. **The things which my ſoul refuſed to touch, are as my ſorrowful meat.**

Here is the Application and Explication of both the former ſimilitudes, *The things which my ſoul refuſed*; that is, the things which I exceedingly refuſed or abominated: (The ſoul is here taken for the Appetite) as to deſire with the ſoul, notes a ſtrong intention of deſire (*Iſa.* 26. 9.) *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea with my ſpirit within me will I ſeek thee early.* That is, I have moſt vehemently deſired, and in my moſt retired thoughts ſought the Lord; *When the ſoul is expreſſed to do that, which nothing can do but the ſoul, it imports the higheſt actings of the ſoul in doing it.* To deſire with the ſoul, implies the ſweeteſt delight; and ſo to refuſe with the ſoul, implies the bittereſt averſation, a refuſal to the uttermoſt. The word, *refuſe*, is proper to the nauſeating of the ſtomach, at the ſight of any filthy thing (*Iſa.* 30. 22.) *Thou ſhalt defile the covering of the graven images*, &c. *Thou ſhalt caſt them away as a menſtruous cloth, thou ſhalt ſay unto them, get ye hence.* So here, the things which my ſoul *refuſeth*, as a man refuſes a filthy clout, or, as he ſhould refuſe that which is more loathſom then any filthy clout, an *Image*, or an *Idol*.

Anima, τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν, partem, ſcilicet animæ, qua concupiſcimus, notat hoc loco.

Theſe things (ſaith he) *are now my ſorrowful meat*, or, *the meat of my ſorrow*. The terms of this latter clauſe are at fartheſt diſtance from, and oppoſition with that which went before. Not to touch a thing, notes the greateſt averſation from it; and to have a thing given us as meat, notes our greateſt communion with it. That which a man will not touch with his finger, how far is he from chewing it between his teeth, or letting it down into his ſtomach, and digeſting it into himſelf? So that *Job*'s meaning ſeems to be this, that, what he deſired to be the greateſt ſtranger from, was now offered to his neareſt familiarity and acquaintance: He was now (as it were) to eat, what before he would not touch. This we call *ſorrowful meat*. Pſal. 127. 2. We read of the *bread of ſorrow*, that is, bread gotten with ſorrow, bread eaten with ſorrow, or, courſe bread; as *bread of pleaſure* (Dan. 10. 3.) is *fine bread*: here ſorrowful meat is either unpleaſant meat, or any meat eaten in that time of his ſorrow.

That relative (**the Things**) is not in the Hebrew, and ſo we may render word for word thus, *My ſoul refuſeth to touch them as my ſorrowful meat:* Or as another, *My mind refuſes to touch them; theſe are plainly the very ſickneſs of my meat.* As if he had ſaid, I am ſo far from being refreſhed with theſe things, that (the truth is) they make my very meat, and ſo my whole life unpleaſant to me.

Mr. *Broughton* varies the latter clauſe, *Thoſe things which I have loathed to touch, are now the very ſickneſs of my fleſh.* The word (*Lechem*) which we tranſlate *meat*, or *prepared fleſh*, ſignifies alſo *living fleſh*, in the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Languages, as the learned Grammarians obſerve: Beſides, we render the word (*Lechem*) *fleſh*, Zeph. 1. 17. *Their blood ſhall be poured out as duſt, and their fleſh as dung.* Hence he tranſlates, *Theſe things are to me as the ſickneſs of my fleſh*; that is, the things which my ſoul refuſed to touch, are now brought very near, and laid cloſe upon me, as ſickneſs or ſoars cleave unto, and are in the fleſh, or they trouble me as much as the ſickneſs of my fleſh.

The right application of theſe words, is as difficult as the tranſlation of them; there are divers wayes to make out the ſence; I ſhall reduce them unto two: Either, Firſt, That all theſe unſavoury, taſteleſs, ſorrowful meats which *Job* ſpeaks of, are but the ſhadows of his afflictions and troubles, received from the hand of God. Or, Secondly, That they are ſhadows of the councels and reproofs, which he had received from the mouth of his friends.

Firſt, Some refer and apply all to the troubles which were upon *Job*: and ſo theſe words are a fuller juſtification of himſelf, that he had great cauſe to complain, becauſe his graſs and fodder, that is, comforts ſutable to mans nature (as they to a beaſts) were taken from him, and he was now fed and dieted with unſavoury meat, meat without ſalt, the white of an egg, diſtaſtful, grievous afflictions, very gall and wormwood; *The things which heretofore my ſoul refuſed to touch, are as my meat*; I am put (as it were) to feed upon that, which I would not willingly come near: poverty and ſoars, ſorrows and worms are my companions, and my cates.

Nauſeabam ego quondã ad cujuſmodi ærumnas movebant mihi ſtomachũ ſqualor paupertas, vilior cibus ulcera, ſanies, vermes nunc ve[illegible] his ipſis [illegible] unde paſcor. Pined.

From that ſence Note, *What at one time we loath, at another time may be our diet.*

We have a ſaying, *What is one mans meat, is another mans poyſon*; but it may fall out to the ſame man, that what he diſguſted and avoided as poiſon, he ſhall be conſtrained to receive for his meat and portion, *Lam.* 4. 5. *They that did feed delicately, are deſolate in the ſtreets; they that were brought up in ſcarlet, embrace dunghils?* When thoſe gallants were in ſcarlet, how did their ſouls loath to touch a dunghil? they loathed to touch it with their feet, but now they muſt hug it in their armes, and lay it in their boſoms; *they embrace dunghils*. How many have been brought from faring deliciouſly, from wearing purple and fine linnen every day, to ſcraps and rags, to hunger and nakedneſs every day. The Lord threatens the nice delicate dames of *Jeruſalem* with ſuch things, as their proud ſpirits and haughty ſouls refuſed to touch, *Iſa.* 3. 24. *It ſhall come to paſs, that inſtead of ſweet ſmell, there ſhall be a ſtink; and inſtead of a girdle, a rent; and inſtead of well ſet hair, baldneſs; and inſtead of a ſtomacher, a girding with ſackcloath; and burning inſtead of beauty.* Take heed of coyneſs and curioſity: many a dainty tooth hath been taught by hunger, to knaw bones, and wait for a cruſt of bread.

Secondly Obſerve, *That which makes afflictions moſt grievous to us, is the unſutableneſs of our ſpirits to afflictions: Delight and content, conſiſt in ſutableneſs of the object to our affections and deſires.*

God offers ſpiritual food to the natural man, but his ſoul refuſes to touch it: he loaths Angels food, and is weary of the Manna of the Word; the precious Goſpel, the bread of life, is an affliction to him, becauſe his heart is unſutable to it; how will ſuch be afflicted at the laſt, when they find, *That*, as their ſorrowful meat for ever, which their ſouls will for ever refuſe to touch. They, who loath Chriſt and his wayes, ſhall find nothing in the end to feed upon, but what is moſt contrary to their appetite, even fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt; theſe ſhall be the portion of their cups, and the meat in their diſh for ever. How ſorrowful will that meal be?

But we may rather apply all to the words of *Eliphaz*, in the two former Chapters: and *Job*'s ready ſubmiſſion in the firſt and ſecond Chapters, to the afflicting hand of God, argues for him, that afflictions, how grievous ſoever, were not the things which his ſoul refuſed to touch. And the apprehenſion of a learned Interpreter ſatisfies me in it; *This ſence* (ſaith he) *is too low for a man afflicted with troubles far above theſe, which concern'd his outward man.* The Septuagint are expreſly for this opinion, who tranſlate thoſe words, *Is there any taſte in the white of an Egg?* thus, *Is there any taſte in vain words?* they are ſo far off the judgment that theſe unſavoury things, the things which *Job*'s ſoul refuſed to touch, and the white of the Egg, in the Text, are all meant of vain words, that they put it into the very Text. It is a uſual boldneſs with them, and a very unwarrantable one, to vary ſo from the words of the Original, and make their gloſs the Text; but it ſhews us, how ſtrongly they were engaged to that ſence: Moſt of the Greek Writers concur with them in it, *viz.* that *Job* aims at the counſels and ſpeeches of *Eliphaz*, which wanted

Senſus humilior eſt, quã hominẽ deceat gravioribus malis exagitatum. Pined. εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστι γεῦμα ἐν ῥήματι κενοῖς.

the ſeaſoning of wiſdom and prudence, yea of truth and ſoundneſs, as applyed to the ſpirit of ſo ſick a man, as *Job* was.

And beſides, many Modern writers are clear in the ſame apprehenſion, giving the ſum of all plainly, to this effect, as the mind of *Job* in thoſe fore-going paſſages; *I would not have complained of the things which ye have ſpoken, if they had been meat for me, but I aſſure you, your counſels are not nouriſhing: I can find no food, much leſs any ſweetneſs or fatneſs in them; your counſels want the due ſeaſoning of wiſdom, and the right temperament of holy zeal: They are either unſavoury, or taſteleſs, ſapleſs ſtuff; ſuch, as I am ſo far from being refreſhed with, that indeed they are a burden to me; and the remedy you preſcribe me, is worſe then my diſeaſe. How can you expect, that I ſhould ſubmit or ſubſcribe to what you have ſpoken, or that I ſhould reſt and acquieſs in your reproofs or advice, ſeeing I aſſure you, they are not for me, they hit my ſtate or ſpirit no more, then unſavoury meat doth my pallate; or that which I abhor to touch, can pleaſe my taſte. And therefore, with my ſoul, I refuſe and reject what you have ſpoken; and you have not only not ſatisfied me all this while, but you have vext or tyred me, and in ſtead of mitigating my ſorrows, have added to them.*

Tantū abeſt ut ſermonibus veſtris recreor, aut eorum condimento reficiatur vita mea, ut è contra cibū ipſum mihi amariorem vitamq; injucundiorem reddunt. Jun.

But an objection ariſes againſt this; and one of the Ancients is very angry with thoſe, who make this application to the counſels of *Eliphaz*, as if *Job* had rejected them as unfit food, and unſavoury meat. *Let no man* (ſaith he) *think that this holy man deſpiſed the counſel of his friend, who himſelf was humble, as a ſervant.*

Abſit ut vir ſanctus, aliquando amicorum ſuorū dicta deſpexerit, qui & humilis ſervus fuerit. Greg.

To which I anſwer, That the counſels of *Eliphaz*, are to be conſidered, either in the doctrine, or in the uſe. His counſels, in the doctrine of them, were good and ſavoury, he ſpake wholſom food; but as to *Job's* caſe, he was quite miſtaken in their uſe, and ſo in ſtead of eaſing, troubled him. A Phyſician may give his ſick Patient, that which is good in it ſelf, very cordial and ſoveraign, and yet it may kill him in ſtead of curing him, if it be not proper for his body, and his diſeaſe. Thus it is alſo in giving counſel: what we ſpeak, muſt be fitted to the perſon, and to the ſeaſon; there are many good counſels, of which we may ſay, as *Huſhai* did of *Achitophels* ill ones, 2 *Sam.* 17. 7. *They are not good at this time.* That which is good counſel to a man at one time, may be, or might have been, ill, to the ſame man at another. *I have many things to ſay*, ſaith Chriſt, *but ye cannot bear them now*, Joh. 16. 12. And that which one man can bear, another cannot at the ſame time. And therefore the Apoſtle *was made all things to all men*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 2. And accounted himſelf debtor, both to the wiſe, and to the fooliſh, to the learned and unlearned, to the weak, and to the ſtrong; that is, he looked upon it as his duty, to ſpeak truths, ſuiting the ſtate of every degree and ſort of men; which is the meaning of his rule to all the diſpenſers of holy myſteries, that they *divide the word aright*: The rightneſs reſpects, not only, or not ſo much the ſubject or word divided, as the object, or perſons to whom the diviſion is to be made, in giving every one his portion, or food convenient for him. One man may ſurfet with that which another digeſts kindly; what fattens a ſecond, may ſicken or ſtarve a third. This plainly is the meaning of *Job*; what *Eliphaz* had ſaid was not ſavoury food for him, nor dreſt for one in his condition: His ſoul did even refuſe to touch, what he ſpake, becauſe his ſoul was not of that temper, for which *Eliphaz* had fitted his ſpeech; he was a Phyſician of no value to him, becauſe he brought a wrong potion, and miſtook his caſe; his was good ſearching Phyſick for the foul ſtomach, and groſs ſpirit of a hypocrite: but it is enough to kill the heart of *an upright-heart*, when God ſeems angry with him, and appears againſt him, when he is ſmitten without, and ſmitten within, by ſore afflictions of mind and body; then for his comforters to ſmite him with their tongues, to lay at him with hard words, and wound him with their unreaſonable jealouſies, then for his councellours and helpers to be angry with, and oppoſite againſt him too.

2 Tim. 2. 15

Obſerve hence, That, *not only words untrue, but words miſapplied, are unſavoury, and may be dangerous.*

They are no food, and they may be poyſon: *Prudence in applying, is the ſalt and ſeaſoning of what is ſpoken.* As a word ſpoken in the right ſeaſon is precious, and upon the wheele, ſo is a word right placed: When that faithful Prophet (*Ezek.* 13.) reproves the falſe prophets, he ſaith, *They daubed with untempered morter*, ver. 10. It is the word of the Text: and why was theirs untempered morter? even, becauſe they applied the word of God wrong. *They made ſad the hearts of thoſe, whom God would have refreſhed; and they cheared the ſpirits of thoſe, whom God would have ſadned; they ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not die, and ſave the ſouls alive that ſhould not live.* This was untempered morter: The Apoſtle adviſes all, *Col.* 4. 6. *Let your ſpeech be alwayes with grace, ſeaſoned with ſalt.* And ſpeech muſt be ſeaſoned, not only with the ſalt of truth, but with the ſalt of wiſdom and diſcretion: and therefore the Apoſtle adds, *that ye may know how to anſwer every one*; that is, that you may give every man an anſwer, fitting his caſe, and the preſent conſtitution of his ſpirit. *Of ſome have compaſſion* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Jude ver.* 22.) *making a difference, and others ſave with fear.* This ſhews the holy skill of managing the word of God, when we make a difference of our patients, by different medicines, and not ſerve all out of the ſame box. Hence our Lord calleth thoſe great Teachers of the Goſpel, and Diſpenſers of his Oracles, *Light and Salt*; *Ye are the Light of the world, and ye are the Salt of the earth*; becauſe they were to ſpeak ſavoury things to every perſon, to every palate, as well as to enlighten them with knowledge, and prevent or cure the corruption of their manners, and keep their lives ſweet. As there is an unſavourineſs in perſons, when they are miſimployed; ſo there is an unſavourineſs in ſpeeches, when they are miſ-applied. The Hiſtory of the Church, ſpeaks of one *Eccebolius*, who changed religion ſo oft, and was ſo unſetled, that at laſt he caſt himſelf down at the Congregation door, and ſaid, *Trample upon me, for I am unſavoury ſalt.* And that word (though in it ſelf a truth) which is unſeaſonably delivered, or unduly plac'd, may be caſt at the doors of the Congregation, to be *trampled on, for* (in this ſence) *it is unſavoury ſalt*: Such corrupt the word, and theirs is but corrupt communication, ſuch as cannot miniſter grace unto the hearers, and often grieves the Holy Spirit of God. Theſe work-men, for their ill diviſion of the word of God, have reaſon enough to be aſhamed; and the Lord may juſtly reprove them, as he did *Job's* friends, *Chap.* 42. 7. *Ye have not ſpoken of me* (nor of my wayes) *the thing that is right.*

Conculcate me ſalem inſpidum. Niceph.

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

O that I might have my requeſt! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!

Even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let looſe his hand and cut me off.

Then ſhould I yet have comfort, yea, I would harden my ſelf in ſorrow; let him not ſpare, for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.

IN the former part of this Chapter, we have had *Job* defending his former complaint of life, and his deſire of death. In this Context, from the 8. *verſ.* unto the end of the 12. he reneweth and re-inforceth that deſire. He not only maintains and juſtifies what he had done, but doth it again; begging for death as heartily and importunately, as he did in *Chap.* 3. *O that I might have my requeſt! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for.*

The requeſt it ſelf, is laid down in *verſ.* 8, 9. and the reaſons ſtrengthning it, in *verſ.* 10, 11, & 12. So theſe 5. verſes are reduceable to theſe two heads.

Firſt, The renewing of his deſire to die.

Secondly, An inlargement of reaſons confirming that deſire.

O that I might have my requeſt!

It is ſuch a vehement deſire, and ſo expreſt, as *David's* was, 2 *Sam.* 23. 15. *And* David *longed, and ſaid, O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of* Bethlem, *which is by the gate.* *David* did not more long to taſte a cup of that water, then *Job* did to taſte the cup of death.

The ſum and ſcope of *Job's* thoughts in this paſſage, may be conceived thus. He would aſſure his friends, that his faith was firm, and his comforts flowing from it, very ſweet; that it was not impatience under the troubles of this life, but aſſurance of the comforts of the next; which cauſed him ſo often to call for death. That, theſe comforts cauſed his heart to triumph and glory in the very approaches of the moſt painful death, and made him deſpiſe, and lightly to eſteem all the hopes of life. That, he was gone further then the motives which *Eliphaz* uſed, from the hopes of a reſtitution to temporal happineſs: he now was pitcht upon, and lodg'd in the thoughts of eternal happineſs. That, he call'd for death, not, as that, with which he had made any Covenant, or was come to any agreement with; but only, as that, which would bring him to *his deſired home, The one Thing he deſired.* That his comforts had not their foundation in a grave: where *all things are forgotten,* but in the Covenant of God, *who remembers mercy for ever*; and therefore it ſhould not trouble him, to die, before he was reſtored to health, riches and honour (which his friends propoſed to him) as a great argument of comfort and of patience. For in death he ſhould have riches and glory; and hence it was, that he had rather endure the extreameſt pains of death, then ſtay to receive any outward comforts in this life. His deſires to be diſſolved, were not ſo much, from the ſence of his preſent pain (for he would harden himſelf to endure, yet more) as from the apprehenſion of future joy; this, was not a phanſie or a dream, but he had good proof, and real evidence of it in the whole courſe of his life, which had been as a continued acting of the word of God, and ſo a fitting him for neareſt communion with God. This in general.

The letter of the Hebrew runneth thus, *Who would give me, that my requeſt, or that my petition might come?* He had ſent up a requeſt, a prayer, a prayer for death, and he thought his prayer too long gone, upon that meſſage; Prayer was not quick enough in its return from Heaven, every hour was a year till he heard of it; therefore (ſaith he) *O that ſome body would give me, that my requeſt might come back again unto me:* The word whereby he expreſſes his requeſt, notes a very ſtrong deſire, a ſtrong cry, a ſtrong prayer; implying, that *Job* had ſent up mighty requeſts, or ſtrong cries about it. As it is ſaid of our *Lord Chriſt*, Heb. 5. *That in the dayes of his fleſh, he ſent up ſtrong cries unto God, who was able to deliver him*; Chriſt ſent up ſtrong cries to be delivered from death, and *Job* ſent up ſtrong cries for death. A word of the ſame root, ſignifies the grave; the grave is a craving, a begging thing; the grave is never ſatisfied, as it is in the *Proverbs*; *The grave ſaith not, it is enough:* And the grave is therefore expreſt by a word that ſignifies to deſire, or requeſt, or to ask a thing importunately; becauſe the grave, hath a mouth, as it were, continually open to ask, and beg, and cry out for more morſels, it conſumeth all, and is never full; ſuch a deſire *Job* put forth for death.

שאל

And that God would grant me the thing that I long for.

It is a repetition of the ſame deſire, in other words. What it is to *long*, hath been opened in *Chap.* 3. *verſ.* 21. *Who long for death:* Here *Job* reneweth the ſame ſuit again, *O that I might have the thing that I long for*, or the thing which I expect with great expectation and vehemency of affection! I ſhall not ſtay upon it: But only give you the general ſence a little varied.

In this paſſage, *Job* ſhews himſelf aſſured, that his comforts ſhould not end, though his life ended, before he was reſtored to earthly comforts. And he thus ſeems to anſwer *Eliphaz*, who had made large promiſes of outward felicity. *I am not ſtayed at all in my deſire to die, becauſe I may poſſibly live in greater worldly honour and fulneſs, then ever I enjoyed: All that is in the creature, is below my longing, I have not a ſweet tooth after worldly dainties: I ſhall not envy any, who out-live me to enjoy them; let them divide my portion, whatſoever it may be, among them alſo: The thing which I long for, is death (not for it ſelf) but as that, which will bring me to the laſt of my ill dayes, and the firſt of my beſt.* *Job*'s thoughts were in a higher form then his friends: They thought a golden offer of riches, would have made him agogg to live. But *Job*'s heart lived above theſe, even upon the riches of eternal life: To enjoy which, he even longs for temporal deſtruction, and cutting off.

Job expectationem proximam facit mortē tanquam eā, quæ patiendi ultimam & quietis ac fœlicitatis primam repræſentet lineam.

I have ſpoken at large in *Chap.* 3. concerning the lawfulneſs of ſuch a requeſt, and how far *Job* might be approved in it; therefore I need not diſcuſs it here.

Only Obſerve in general, That, *A praying ſoul, is an expecting ſoul.*

Job had prayed, and prayed earneſtly, and though it was but a prayer to die, yet he lived in the expectation of an anſwer. When prayer is ſent up unto God, then the ſoul looks for its return. Prayer is as ſeed ſown: After this ſpiritual husbandry, the ſoul waits for the precious fruits of Heaven, *Pſal.* 62. 1. *My ſoul waiteth upon God*; and (*Pſal.* 85. 8.) *I will hearken what the Lord God will ſay*; *Job* had ſent up his requeſt, and now he was hearkning for an anſwer, *O that I might have the thing I look for! Habbakkuk* in the ſecond of that Prophecy, *verſ.* 1. having prayed about the great concernments of thoſe times, reſolves, *I will ſtand upon my watch, and ſet me upon the Tower, and will watch to ſee, what he will ſay unto me.* They who ſend Embaſſadors to forraign Princes, wait for a return. Thus it is with the ſoul, having put up its requeſt and ſent an Embaſſie to God.

Obſerve Secondly, *Anſwer of our prayer is the grant of God.*

Nothing ſtands between us and our deſires, but his will. If he ſign our Petition, no creature can hinder us of our expectation.

Obſerve Thirdly, *God often keeps the Petitions of his ſervants, by him unanſwered.*

Obſerve Fourthly, *The return of prayer is the ſouls ſolace and ſatisfaction.*

As cold water to a thirſty ſoul, ſo is good news from that far countrey, Prov. 25. 25. *O that my requeſt might come, and O that I might have the thing that I long for!*

Would you know what his requeſt was? He explains that in *verſ.* 9. And a man would wonder, that one ſhould be ſo very earneſt to have ſuch a requeſt. Many have prayed to God to ſave and deliver them, but how unnatural doth this prayer ſeem, to be cut off and deſtroyed? Yet the thing which *Job* doth more then pray for, long for, is this, *That it would pleaſe God to deſtroy him, and that he would let looſe his hand and cut him off.*

That it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me.

Some read, *that he who hath begun, would make an end in deſtroying of me*; For the word ſignifies both to be willing to do a thing, and likewiſe to begin to do a thing; therefore they make out the ſence thus, *That he who hath begun thus to deſtroy me, to tear and conſume me, would finiſh his work, and make an end of me*; As if *Job* had ſaid, I am already near unto deſtruction, a borderer upon the grave. God hath begun to deſtroy me, I would have him to go on and perfect that work. As in works of mercy, *Deut.* 32. 4. *He is the Rock, and his work is perfect.* When he begins to deliver, he will make an end. So likewiſe when he begins to deſtroy, he can make an end too; *Job* deſires, that his afflictions might be perfected, to the deſtruction of his dying body, and that mercy might begin in the triumph of his ſoul.

יאל *Significat liberè velle, inchoare, acquieſcere in re quapiā eamq; tota voluntate amplecti.*

But rather, take it in the other ſence, as we render it, *To be willing to do a thing*; *Even that it would pleaſe God, or, even that God would be willing to deſtroy me:* As if he had ſaid, *I find as it were a kind of unwillingneſs in God, to make an end of me, his bowels ſeem to yern over me, he ſeems yet to be upon the diſpute, whether to cut me quite off, or no: now I even deſire that God would lay aſide that his tenderneſs and compaſſion, that he would determine and reſolve to deſtroy me, that he would acquieſce, and fully reſt ſatisfied in that reſolution.*

דכא *Contulit, contrivit, comminuit.*

The word here uſed, *to deſtroy*, notes to beat a thing to powder, or to beat a thing to pieces, *Pſal.* 143. 3. *He hath ſmitten my life down to the ground*, that is, he hath beaten me as it were to dirt. So *Job* here, I would have the Lord even beat me to duſt or dirt. The word is uſed for contrition of ſpirit, *Iſa.* 57. 15. *I dwell with him that is of an humble heart, and of a contrite ſpirit*; that is, with him, that hath a ſpirit beaten to powder, or all to pieces, as any hard thing is with a hammer or peſtle; *A hard heart is a heart all in a lump, condenſate, and cloſed together*; but an humble, a repenting heart, is a heart beaten ſmall and ground to powder; Thus *Job* deſires here, *O that it would pleaſe God to beat my life down to duſt, and break me all to ſhatters!*

ſhatters! that he would *cruſh me* (as *Eliphaz* ſpake in *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 19.) *as a Moth.*

Obſerve then in how ſad a contrition, *Job* was, who not only makes, but renews, ſuch a requeſt, as this. Some upon a ſudden pang, wiſh to die, and haſtily call for death; yet are willing it ſhould take it's own time, and come leiſurely: and as ſoon as death appears, they are crying as hard for life. *It is rare for any mans ſecond thoughts, to keep up, to ſuch deſires. Job* ſpake once, and he ſpeaks it over again; O that I might die! yea, he wooes deſtruction, and is an importunate ſuiter for the grave. *How ſad is a mans outward condition, when he hath only this complaint left, that he cannot die? when a man hath no help, but in deſtruction, or healing, but in a deeper wound? Job* in this appears like a man (that is to be preſſed to death) lying under a heavy weight, yet the weight not heavy enough to cruſh him to death, he cryes out, *more weight, more weight.* It will be a kindneſs to cruſh out my breath and bowels; the greateſt favour I expect in this world, is, but to have more weight laid upon them, that I may die. Some of the Martyrs, when the fire was ſcant, have cried out, *more fire.* The cruelleſt flame was their friend, and the more the fire raged, the more merciful it was to them. The Book of our Martyrs reports of *reverend Latimer*, that when he was giving witneſs to the truth, and glorifying the Name of Chriſt in the fire; he cried out, *Oh, I cannot burn!* the fire came not faſt enough upon him. Such, this expreſſion of *Job* ſeems to be, *Oh, I cannot die, I cannot die, I cannot be deſtroyed, I cannot periſh yet; O that the hand of God would lay more weight upon me, that I might die!* He ſeems to ask ſuch a curteſie, as that *Amalekite* ſaid, King *Saul* craved of him, 2 *Sam.* 1. 9. *Stand I pray thee upon me, and ſlay me: for anguiſh is come upon me, becauſe my life is yet whole in me.* This is the favour, the only favour, that remains for me. I am capable of no worldly comfort, but a quicker diſpatch out of the world.

And that he would let looſe his hand, and cut me off.

נתר
Loco movit, evulſit, excuſſit.

Here is the ſame Petition, though other language, *That he would let looſe his hand.* That's an elegant expreſſion; the word ſignifies to looſe the bond, that a man may have uſe of his hands or feet: As priſoners are looſed, *Pſal.* 146. 7. *The Lord looſeth the priſoners:* So that, it is, as if *Job* had ſaid, *Lord, thou haſt been ſmiting and wounding me, but I ſee thou haſt not given thy hand the full ſcope, thy hand is as it were bound or tied behind thee:* As you know, a man that hath great advantage of another, or is much his overmatch, will ſay to him, I will fight with thee with my hand tied behind me. The truth is, God is able to contend with all the creatures, with his hand bound behind him, with his hands faſt bound, that is without putting forth the leaſt part (to ſpeak on) of his power; he can overcome with ſpeaking: *Job* obſerving here that God contended with him (as it were) with his hands bound or tied up, deſires now, that, God would give himſelf full ſcope, and put out his ſtrength, and not ſtrike, as if his hand were a priſoner. And he may have a reſpect in ſpeaking thus to the reſtraint or binding up of Satans power; *In this work Satan was Gods hand*; God put power into the hand of Satan, *All that he hath, is in thy power, or in thy hand, Chap.* 1. 12. Firſt, God looſned Satans hand, to take away his eſtate. Next, he let looſe his hand a little further, to the afflicting of his body; but ſaith God, ſpare his life; there he bound up his hand again. Now *Job* alluding (probably) to that reſtraint; Lord (ſaith he) looſen thy hand a third time, do not only looſen it, to take away my eſtate, to take away my health and ſtrength; but O that thou wouldſt looſen it, to take my life too! enlarge I pray thee, Satans Commiſſion, who is thy hand, let it quite looſe, that he may make an end of me, and cut me off.

Tranſlatio ab his qui manū vinctam habent.

Non ſe gerat erga me, inſtat hominis colligatam habentis manum.

בצע
Inexplebilē cupiditatem atq; immanem aviditatem vulnerandi, & humani ſanguinis perfundendi ſignificat.

The word here uſed to *cut-off*, comes up to heighten *Job*'s ſence ſtill, ſignifying to cut off, with an unſatiable appetite of revenge; as if he ſhould ſay, *cut me off, ſpare me not*, ſpare not my blood; do it, as they who are moſt greedy of blood, and thirſt moſt vehemently for revenge. Let Satan that blood-ſucker, come with as great revenge (thy hand being looſened from reſtraining his) as ever the greateſt Tyrant haſtned with, to ſuck the blood of innocents; *Let him greedily cut me off*, even as it were to have ſome great gain, or get ſome rich booty by my blood; *What profit is there in my blood?* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 30. 9.) Let him make what profit he can of my blood, ſaith *Job.* The word ſignifies to covet or deſire gain; and it notes the worſt kind of covetouſneſs, covetouſneſs of filthy lucre, or covetouſneſs of bloody lucre. Hence *Job* ſaith, *Let God cut me off*, as if he were to have profit, or raiſe himſelf a revenew out of my blood; or let Satan come upon me, and take his peny-worths out of my blood; let him murder me, as if he were to find all manner of treaſure in my bowels, and could thence fill and adorn all his chambers of darkneſs with ſpoyl. We may Note from hence,

Avidè me abſumat, quaſi ex mea morte ingens lucrū reportaturus.
Pined.

Firſt, That, *God diſpenceth and acteth his power as he pleaſeth.*

He looſeth his hand gradually, as to him ſeemeth good. Firſt, To the eſtate, then to the body, and when he will, he can reach the life.

Secondly Obſerve, *If God put out his power, no creature can ſtand before it.*

If God do but let looſe his hand, man is cut off preſently; it is but as a little twig, or as graſs before the ſithe, or before a ſword, there is no more in it. As when *God openeth the hand of his mercy, he ſatisfieth the deſire of every living thing*, Pſal. 145. 2. *So when God looſeth the hand of his judgments, he takes away the life and comforts of every living thing.* God hath a hand full of bleſſings and mercies; if he pleaſe but to open that hand, all things are filled with comfort: God hath another hand full of judgments and afflictions; if he open or looſen that, all creatures fall before him, like a withered leaf. The reaſon why the enemies of God live and are mighty, is, becauſe God doth not fully looſen his hand againſt them: if he would but unpriſon his power, and let out his hand, he can with eaſe deſtroy, and cut them off in a moment. Therefore the Prophet prayes but for this one thing, *Pſal.* 74. 11. *That God would pluck his hand out of his boſom; Why with-draweſt thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy boſom:* Lord (ſaith he) this is the reaſon, why enemies yet prevail, thy hand is tied up; that is, thine own act hath tied up thy hand, thy will ſtayes thy power, or thy power is hid in thy will. *Gods power kept in by his will, is his hand in his boſom.* Among men, a hand in the boſom, is the emblem of ſloth, *Prov.* 19. 24. Man hides his hand in his boſom, becauſe he will not be at the pains to work: God is ſaid to hide his hand in his boſom, when it is not his will and pleaſure to work; therefore he ſaith, Lord, if thou wouldſt but let looſe, and put out thy hand, all mine enemies ſhall be conſumed. And that's the reaſon, why there are ſuch various diſpenſations of providence in theſe times; when the enemy prevails, God with-draweth his hand, he keepeth his hand in his boſom. And when at any time, his ſervants have victory, it is, becauſe his hand hath liberty. If God holds his hand, men ſtretch forth theirs in vain.

Thirdly Obſerve, *Aſſurance of a better life will carry the ſoul with joy through the ſorrows and bittereſt pains of death.*

It was not any Stoical apathy, or ignorant regardleſneſs of life, which raiſed the heart of *Job* to theſe deſires. He did not invite his end, like a *Roman*, or a Philoſopher, or by the height and gallantry of natural courage, ſet the world at nought, and bid defiance to deſtruction: But he had laid up a good foundation againſt this day; upon this he builds his confidence. He knew, as *Paul*, that he had Chriſt, while he lived, and ſhould have gain, when he dyed. The joy which was ſet before him, made him over-look the croſs, which was before him. So much of his requeſt, now he tells us the conſequence, or effect, it would have upon him, in caſe it were granted.

Verſ. 10. **Then ſhould I yet have comfort, yea, I would harden my ſelf in ſorrow; Let him not ſpare, for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.**

Then ſhould I yet have comfort.] If I had but this ſuit granted, I were refreſhed, notwithſtanding all my ſorrows, the very hope of death would revive me. Nothing doth ſo much refreſh the ſoul, as the hearing of a prayer, and the grant of a deſire; *When deſire cometh, it is as a tree of life,* (ſaith *Solomon*) therefore *Job* might well ſay, when my longing comes, I ſhall have comfort; and leſt any ſhould think, that as *David* would not drink the water, he ſo longed for, when it was brought unto him; ſo, when the cup of death ſhould be brought to *Job*, he might put it off ſomewhat upon thoſe terms, which *David* did, and ſay, I will not drink it, for it is my blood, my death; therefore he adds,

Yea, I would harden my ſelf in ſorrow.

As if he had ſaid, though ſome call haſtily for death, and repent with as much haſte, when death comes, yet not I, *I would harden my ſelf*, &c.

סלדי *Significat, 1. Solidare & corroborare. 2. Calefacere, urere. 3. Orare, ſuppliciter præcari.*

The Hebrew (*to harden*) hath a threefold ſignification among the *Jewiſh* Writers, though it be uſed but this once only in all the Scripture. And hence there is a threefold interpretation of theſe words, I would harden my ſelf in ſorrow. It ſignifies,

1. To pray or to beſeech.
2. To heat or to warm; yea, to ſcorch and to burn.
3. To harden or to ſtrengthen; ſtrengthning is hardning in a Metaphor.

According to the firſt ſenſe, the Text is rendred thus, *Then ſhould I yet have comfort; yea, I would pray in my ſorrow*, that is, I would pray yet more for an encreaſe of my ſorrow, that I might be cut off: If I had any hope, that my requeſt ſhould be granted, this hope would quicken my deſire, and I would pray yet more, that I might obtain it.

Hac ſpe certiſſima moriendi incaleſcerem, reſocillarer.

Secondly, As the word ſignifies to warm or to heat, the ſence is given thus, *Then ſhould I have comfort, yea, I would warm my ſelf in my ſorrow.* And ſo it refers to thoſe refreſhings, which his languiſhing ſoul, his ſoul chilled, as it were, with ſickneſs and ſorrows ſhould receive, upon the news of approaching death. This news (ſaith he) would be as warm cloaths to me, it would fetch me again, out of my fainting, to hear of dying. But, beſides a warming or a refreſhing heat, the word alſo notes ſcorching, burning heat. Mr. *Broughton* takes that ſignification of the word; I ſhall touch that, and his ſence upon it, by and by.

We tranſlate according to the third uſage of the word. *I would harden my ſelf*; and ſo the conſtruction is very fair, *I ſhould yet have comfort; yea, I ſhould harden my ſelf in ſorrow,* that is, I would now ſet my ſelf to endure the greateſt ſorrows and afflictions which would come upon me, for the deſtroying and cutting off the thred of my life. And ſo, he ſeems in theſe words, to prevent an objection before hinted; Why *Job*, doſt thou deſire to be cut off, and to be deſtroyed? thou haſt more pain upon thee already then thou art able to bear; thou crieſt out of what thou haſt; thou muſt think, when death comes, thy wound will be deeper, and thy pain ſharper: *Job* ſeems to anſwer, I have conſidered that before, I know there will be a hard brunt at parting; I prepare for it, and I am thus reſolved, *I would harden my ſelf in ſorrow*; that is, I would ſet my ſelf to bear the pangs and agonies of death, if I had but this hope, that my miſery were near expiring. The Apoſtle uſeth that phraſe (2 *Tim.* 2. 3.) in his advices to young *Timothy, Thou as a good Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt, endure hardneſs, or bear evil.* As if he had ſaid, thou doſt not know, what hardſhip thou ſhalt be put unto in thy Miniſtry; I, who am a Veterane, an old beaten (though never conquered) ſouldier, in this warfare of Chriſt, have been put to much hardſhip in my time; and from my own experience I adviſe thee, to enure thy ſelf to hardſhip, to lie hard, to fare hard, to work hard, to hear hard words, and receive hard uſage. A tender ſpirit, and a delicate body, which muſt have *warm*, and *ſoft*, and *fine*, and *ſweet* continually, is unfit for the warfare of the Goſpel. Such a ſence is here, I know I muſt endure more then now I do, but I would harden my ſelf againſt that time, and reſolve to endure it; let come what could come, I am reſolved, and have forethought the worſt.

Further, For the clearing of theſe words, it is conſiderable, that ſome learned Interpreters put the two middle expreſſions into a *Parentheſis*, and read the whole thus; *I ſhould have comfort (though I ſhould ſcorch with pain, and though God ſhould not ſpare me) for I have not concealed the words of the holy One.* One thus; *This yet is my comfort, even while I ſcorch with pain, and God doth not ſpare me, that I have not concealed the words of the holy one.* Mr. *Broughton* (as I touched before) comes near this ſence and tranſlation. So *I ſhould yet find comfort, though I parch in pain, when he would not ſpare; for I kept not cloſe the words of the moſt Holy.* That is, when the long expected hour of my death ſhall come, though God, to take away my life, ſhould heat the furnace of my affliction ſeven times hotter then hitherto, ſo that I muſt parch in pain, yet, I ſhould have comfort. Or, take it in Mr. *Broughton's* own gloſs, *In all theſe pangs, if God would make an end of me, it ſhould be my comfort, and I would take courage in my ſickneſs, to bear it, by my joy, that I ſhould die, becauſe I profeſſed the Religion of God.* So that the ſtrength of *Job*, to bear the hand of God, was from the conſcience of his former integrity, in doing the will, and maintaining the truth of God.

Junius.

Let him not ſpare.

Job having taken up this hope, that he ſhould have comfort; and this reſolution, that he would harden himſelf in ſorrow, ſpeaks now as if he were at a point; let God do what he pleaſeth, let him not ſpare; as if he had ſaid, what courſe ſoever the Lord ſhall ſee good to take for the cutting me off, I am content he ſhould go on with it, *Let him not ſpare.* The word ſignifies, to indulge or ſhew mercy to him, whom, by all right, a man might juſtly deſtroy, (Ezek. 5. 11.) *Becauſe thou haſt done thus and thus,* ſaith God, *therefore will I alſo diminiſh thee, neither ſhall mine eye ſpare, neither will I have any pity*: *Job* ſeems to invite, what God threatens others; *Let him not ſpare, let him not have any pity, let him take his full ſwinge in deſtroying of me.*

חמל *Pepercit, clementia uſus fuit.*

In this ſence it is ſaid, Rom. 8. 32. *That God ſpared not his own ſon*; that is, he abated not any thing which Juſtice could inflict; Chriſt therefore ſaves to the uttermoſt, becauſe he ſuffered to the uttermoſt. He was not ſpared one blow, one drop, one ſigh, one ſorrow, one ſhame, one circumſtance of all, or any one of theſe, which Juſtice could demand, as a ſatisfaction for mans ſin. Yea, though (in a ſence) he cried to his Father, that he might be ſpared, yet he was not.

There is a threefold mercy in God. There is a preventing mercy, mercy that ſteps between us and trouble; and there is a delivering mercy, mercy that takes us out of the hand of trouble: There is a third kind of mercy, coming in the middle of theſe two, and that is called ſparing mercy; and that is twofold: Firſt, Sparing for the time, when God delayes and ſtayes long ere he ſtrike. Secondly, Sparing for the degree; when the Lord moderates and mitigates, abates and qualifies our ſufferings, not letting them fall ſo heavy upon us as they might: This ſparing mercy ſtands (I ſay) in the middle of the two former; it is not ſo much as preventing mercy, ſtopping trouble that it come not; neither is it ſo much as delivering mercy, removing it, when it is come. Now, *Job* did not only, not ask delivering mercy, that he asked not ſparing mercy; let him not ſpare me in the time, let him not delay or loſe time, let him come as ſoon as he will; and let him not ſpare me in the degree and meaſure; let him ſtrike me as hard, and lay his hand as heavily upon me as he will. *David* (Pſal. 39. 13.) makes this his requeſt; *O ſpare me, that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no more*; That is, abate and mitigate my ſufferings, that I die not; but *Job* deſireth not to be ſpared at all. He rather ſaith, take away all my ſtrength, that I may go hence, and be ſeen no more. Hence obſerve,

> That, *The hope troubles will end, comforteth, yea, hardneth in bearing preſent troubles.*

Then will I comfort my ſelf, then will I harden my ſelf, let him not ſpare, if I may have my requeſt, and die. The ſharpeſt ſting of trouble is, that it is endleſs: and that it is next to that, when we cannot look to the end of it, nor ſee any iſſue or way out of it. That which diſcourages the damned in bearing their ſorrows, and ſoftens both their fleſh and ſpirit, to receive home to the head every arrow of wrath, and dart of vengeance, is, they ſee no end, and are aſſured there will be none. They know, they cannot be cut off, and therefore they cannot harden themſelves to ſorrow; no, that very conſideration, makes their hearts, which have been hardnend to commit ſin, tender to receive puniſhment, and exactly ſenſible of their pains; could they ſee, that at laſt they ſhould be cut off, even they, would be hardened to bear the torments of hell; in the mean time, though that time ſhould be very long, yea, as long as time can be, only not endleſs. The pain it ſelf doth not afflict ſo much, as the thought that they ſhall be afflicted for ever. As the aſſurance that the glory of heaven ſhall never end, infinitely ſweetens it; ſo the aſſurance that the pains of Hell ſhall never end, infinitely ſharpens them: And not to ſee the ending of worldly troubles near, puts us further off from comfort, then the bearing of thoſe troubles; therefore, ſaith *Job*, if I might be aſſured, that God would cut me off, I would harden my ſelf in ſorrow, and let not God ſpare; I would not deſire him to hold his hand, to mitigate or abate my pains *. Yea, I would account every blow an embrace, and every wound a reward.

* *Et hæc mihi merces eſſet ejus ſeu pro eo, quod non occultavi unquam, ſed diligentiſſimè obſervavi & quam commendatiſſima habui verba Domini, Opin. nonnullorum Hebræorum apud* Merc.

For not concealing the words of the holy One.

In theſe words, *Job* gives the reaſon, or an account of his renewed prayer and requeſt to die. As the deſire of *Job* was ſtrong and paſſionate, ſo likewiſe it was well-grounded. He had a very high reaſon, an excellent ground, upon which he bottom'd this requeſt to die: His reaſon was ſpiritual, and therefore ſtrong. He begs to be delivered from the troubles of his life, though by a painful death, becauſe he was clear in himſelf, that he had led a blameleſs life. That which ſet him above the pains of bodily death, was the tranquility of his ſpirit in this teſtimony of his conſcience. *I have not concealed the words of the holy One.* As if he had ſaid, *You may wonder why I ſhould be ſo forward and ready to die, why I ſeem ſo greedy after the grave, why I am ſuch an importunate ſuiter for my diſſolution; the account I give you, is this, I have the teſtimony of a good conſcience within me, notwithſtanding all the troubles which are upon me, notwithſtanding all your harſh, unfriendly accuſations, jealouſies and ſuſpitions of me, yet my own breaſt is my friend, my heart ſpeaks me fair, and gives me good words, even theſe; it tells me that I have not concealed the words of the holy One, that I have not ſmothered any light he hath ſent me; that I have not refuſed any counſel he hath given me; that I have not wilfully departed from any rule he hath preſcribed me; that I have been faithful to God, to his Cauſe, and to his Truth; that I have declared his will, and ſpoken his mind to others; that I have not hidden any thing that he hath given me in charge to declare, or committed to my truſt; the word of God hath appeared in my life, and therefore I am not afraid; yea, I have boldneſs to die, and to appear before God.*

Mirum eſt ut mihi non parcat, quũ illius verba non celarim, neq; diſſimulaverim. Aben Ez.

I have not concealed.] The word ſignifieth to hide a thing, ſo as it be neither heard or ſeen.

כחד׃ *Significat abſcondere, ne videatur vel audiatur ne amplius appareat.*

But may we not conceal the words of the moſt High? It is ſaid of *Mary*, that *ſhe hid the words of Chriſt in her heart*; and of *David*, that *he hid the Commandments of God in his heart*, Pſal. 119. 11. Did not the *wiſe Merchant hide the treaſure*, namely, Goſpel-truth (*Mat.* 13. 44.) *as ſoon as he had found it?* It ſhould ſeem all theſe concealed the word of God; how then is it that *Job* improves this, as a ſpecial point of comfort, that he had not *concealed the words of the holy One?*

There is a double hiding or concealment of the truth. There is firſt, a hiding from danger. Secondly, a hiding from uſe. There is a hiding to keep a thing ſafe, that others ſhall not take it from us; and there is a hiding to keep a thing cloſe, that others may not take the benefit of it, with us. When it is ſaid that *Mary* and *David*, and the wiſe Merchant hid the word of God, it was, leſt they themſelves ſhould loſe it, leſt any ſhould deprive them of it, they hid it from danger; they laid it up as a treaſure in their hearts; but they did not hide it from the knowledge, or uſe of others: and that is it which *Job* affirms of himſelf; *I have not concealed the words of the holy One.*

And there are four wayes by which the word of God is ſinfully hid or concealed, from all which *Job* ſeems to acquit himſelf.

The firſt is, When we conceal the word of God by our own ſilence; when we know the word and truth of God, and yet we draw a vail over them, by not revealing them: The Apoſtle *Paul* (*Acts* 20. 27.) acquits himſelf in this, to the Church of *Epheſus*, *I have not ſhunned to declare unto you the whole counſel of God*; and, *v.* 20. *You know how I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you. Silence to what is ſpoken, is conſent; and ſilence when we ſhould ſpeak, is concealment.*

There is a ſecond way of concealing the word of God, and that is by ſilencing others. Some conceal the words of the holy One themſelves, and they cannot endure that others ſhould publiſh them. The chief Prieſts and Rulers, (*Acts* 4. 18.) *charged* Peter *and* John, *that they ſhould not ſpeak at all, nor teach any more in the name of Jeſus.* They would ſtop the Apoſtles mouths from ſpeaking the words of the holy One. Theſe keep the truth lock'd up (as Chriſt chargeth the Lawyers, (*Luke* 11. 52.) *by taking away the key of knowledge,*

Thirdly, There is a concealing of the word of God, under falſe gloſſes and miſinterpretations, or a hiding of it under errors and miſconſtructions. This is a very dangerous way of concealing the words of the holy One. The Phariſees made the Law of God of none effect by their expoſitions, as well as by their traditions; by the ſence they made of it, as well as by the additions they made unto it.

Fourthly, The word of the holy One may be concealed in our practice and converſations. The Apoſtle exhorts (*Phil.* 2. 16.) *To hold forth the word of life in a pure converſation.* The lives of Chriſtians ſhould publiſh the word of life. The beſt way of preaching the word, is by the practice of the word. *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs,* that is, who by their unrighteous practices, and ungodly converſations, impriſon, fetter, reſtrain and keep in the word. *Mans holy life is the loudeſt proclamation of the word of God; and a ſinful life is the concealment of it.*

Job here acquits himſelf from all theſe concealments; *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*, either by my own ſilence, or by impoſing ſilence upon others; I have not concealed the word of the holy One, by my own corrupt gloſſes or interpretations, nor by a corrupt practice or converſation; I have deſired and endeavoured, that the whole word of God might be viſible in my actions, and audible in my ſpeeches, that I might walk cloathed, as it were, with the holy counſels and commandments of my God.

There is a reading of the words, different from this. Whereas we ſay, *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*, that gives it thus, *I would not conceal the words of the holy One*; and ſo the word of the holy One, is taken, not for the truths of God in general, but for that ſpecial word of decree or ſentence which God ſhould paſs out againſt him; As if he had ſaid, *Let not God ſpare me, let him write as bitter a ſentence againſt me, as he pleaſeth, for my part, I would not conceal the word of the moſt high, but I would publiſh his judgment and ſentence againſt me; yea, I would praiſe him and extol him for it.* The Vulgar Latine to this ſence, *I would not contradict the word of the holy One*; Let him not ſpare me, for as for my part, whatſoever God ſhall determine and reſolve, whatſoever word God ſhall ſpeak concerning me, I will never withſtand or open my mouth againſt it. This is a truth, and carries in it a high frame of holineſs; when we can bring our hearts to this, that let God write as bitter things againſt us as he pleaſeth, we will never contradict his word or decree, but our minds and ſpirits ſhall ſubmit wholly and fully to his diſpoſitions of us, and diſpenſations towards us. *It is as clear an evidence of Grace to be paſſive under, as to be active in the word of God; not to contradict his writ, for our ſufferings, as not to conceal what he ſpeaks for our practice.* But I rather ſtick to the former interpretation, *Job* giving this as a reaſon of his great confidence in purſuing his petition for death, becauſe he had been ſo ſincere, holding forth the word of God both in doctrine and in life. And ſo we may obſerve from it,

Malo potentialiter exponi omnia; utinam inquit, non parceret: Neque enim occultarem dicta ſancti ſed ejus in me ſententiã prædicarem & laudare. Merc.

First, That, *The teſtimony of a good conſcience is the beſt ground of our willingneſs to die.*

That man ſpeaks enough for his willingneſs to die, who hath lived ſpeaking and doing the will of God; and he is in a very miſerable caſe, who hath no other reaſon why he deſireth death, but only becauſe he is in miſery. This was one, but not the only reaſon, why *Job* deſired death; he had a reaſon tranſcending this, *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*, and I know if I have not concealed the word of God, God will not conceal his mercy and loving kindneſs from me. *David* bottoms his hopes of comfort in ſad times upon this, *Pſal.* 40. 9, 10. *I have preached righteouſneß in the great Congregation, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord thou knoweſt* (he was not actively or politickly ſilent) *I have not hid thy righteouſnes within my heart*, (it lay there, but it was not impoiſoned or ſtifled there) *I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation*; *I have not concealed thy loving kindneſs and thy truth from the great Congregation.* Upon this, he falls a praying with a mighty ſpirit of believing, *ver.* 11 *With-hold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord; let thy loving kindneß and thy truth continually preſerve me: for innumerable evils have compaſſed me about.*

The remembrance of our active faithfulneſs to the truth of God, will bear up our hearts for hoping in the mercy of God. He that in *David*'s and in *Job*'s ſence can ſay, *I have not concealed the words of the moſt High*, may triumph over innumerable evils, and ſhall be *more then a conqueror over the laſt and worſt of temporal evils, Death*: *God cannot long conceal his love from them, who have not concealed his Truth.*

Secondly obſerve poſitively, That, *The counſels of God, his truths, muſt be revealed.*

God hath ſecrets which belong not to us, but then he puts them not forth in a word, nor writes them in his book; he keeps his ſecrets cloſe in the cabinet of his decrees and counſels; but, what he reveals either in his word, or by his works, man ought to reveal too. It is as dangerous, if not more, to conceal what God hath made known, as to be inquiſitive to know, what God hath concealed. Yea, it is as dangerous to hide the word of God, as it is to hide our own ſins. And we equally give glory to God, by the profeſſion of the one, as by the confeſſion of the other. *Paul* with much earneſtneſs profeſſes his integrity about this, as was even now toucht, *Acts* 20.

Fourthly obſerve, That, *The ſtudy of a godly man is to make the word of God viſible.*

I have not concealed, that is, I have made plain, I have revealed, or I have publiſhed the words of the holy One; Much of *Job*'s mind is concealed under that word, *I have not concealed.* For in this negative there is an affirmative; as if he had ſaid, this hath been my labour and my buſineſs, my work in the world, to make known ſo much of the will of God as I know. This was the work of Chriſt here below; *Father, I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do*, John 17, 4. What this work was, he ſhews, *ver.* 6. *I have manifeſted thy name unto the men which thou gaveſt me out of the world.*

Laſtly obſerve, That, *It is a dangerous thing for any man to conceal the word of God, either in his opinion, or in his practice.*

For it is, as if *Job* had ſaid, if I had ever concealed the words of God, I had been but in an ill caſe, at this time: God might now juſtly reveal his wrath againſt me, if I had concealed his word from others; or, God might juſtly hide his mercies from me, if I had hid his word from men. *Smothered truths will one time or other ſet the Conſcience in a flame*; and that which *Jeremiah* ſpake once, concerning his reſolution to conceal the word of God, and the effect of it, will be a truth upon every one, who ſhall ſet himſelf under a reſolution to do, what he under a temptation did, Jer. 20. 9. *Then I ſaid, I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his name:* What follows? *Then his word was in my breaſt, as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing.* If a gracious heart hath taken up ſuch a ſudden reſolution to conceal the word of God, he quickly repents of it, or ſmarts under it: He finds that word as a burning fire in his bones, he is not able to bear it; *I was weary with forbearing* (ſaith the Prophet) *Nothing in the world will burden the conſcience, ſo much as concealed truth.* And they who have taken a meditated reſolution that they will not reveal the word of God, may be ſure, that word will one time or other, reveal it ſelf to them, in the light and heat of a burning fire, feeding upon their conſciences.

I have not concealed the words. Whoſe words? *The words of the holy One.* Who is that? *The holy One* is a *Periphraſis for God.* When you hear that Title, *The holy One*, you may know who is meant. This is a title too big for any but a God: All holineſs is in God, and God is ſo holy, that properly he only is holy; hence the Scripture ſets God forth under this, as a peculiar attribute, *The holy One*: The Prophets often uſe this addition or ſtile, *The holy one of Iſrael.*

קדש *Separatus.*

The holy One, is *One ſeparate or ſet apart from all filthineſs and uncleanneſs.* No evil dwells with God, none comes near him; therefore he is *The holy One.* He is ſo ſeparated from evil, *that he cannot behold evil, or look on iniquity*, (*Hab.* 1. 13.) except with a vindictive eye. *Sin never got a good look from God, or ever ſhall.*

Deus vocatur Sanctus Iſrael, *vel Sanctus ſimpliciter, vel quod ſanctè à nobis colendus eſt, vel quod ipſe ſolus verè ſanctus eſt.*

Further, God is called *The holy One*, in three reſpects. Firſt, Becauſe he is all holy in himſelf. Secondly, Becauſe we receive all holineſs from him. Thirdly, Becauſe we are to *ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs all our dayes. A holy God muſt have a holy ſervice.* God is *the holy One.*

Firſt, In his Nature; his eſſence is purity. Or, he is eſſential purity.

Secondly, He is holy in his Word: Thoſe are frequent adjuncts of the Word of God, *holy, pure and clean.*

Thirdly, He is holy in his Works: there is not the leaſt imaginable ſtain or defilement upon any thing he hath done.

Theſe three put together, lift up the glory of God in this Title, *The holy One.* He that is holy throughout in his Nature, holy in his Word, holy in his Works, *is the holy One*; yea, he is, as *Moſes* ſtileth him in his triumphant Song, *Exod.* 15. *Glorious in holineſs, a glorious holy One.*

Or again, We may conſider God, *The holy One*;

Firſt, Radically and fundamentally, becauſe the Divine Nature is the root and original, the ſpring of all holineſs and purity. All holineſs is in God, and there is no holineſs to be had, but in God alone.

Secondly, God is *The holy One*, by way of *example* and pattern, or in regard of the rule and meaſure of holineſs, (1 *Pet.* 1. 16.) *Be ye holy, as I am holy*; the holineſs of God, it is the exemplar and pattern of all the holineſs that is in the creature.

Thirdly, God is *The holy One*, by way of *motive*: He is, as the rule of holineſs, ſo, likewiſe the reaſon of our holineſs; therefore another Scripture ſaith, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*; I am *The holy One*, and that is the reaſon, why you muſt be holy too.

Fourthly, God is *The holy One* effectively, becauſe he works, conveyes and propagates all holineſs to, and in the creature. *Nothing can frame a heart to holineſs, but the finger of God.* Man can no more make himſelf, or another holy, then he can redeem another or himſelf.

Fifthly, He is called *The holy One* by way of eminency or ſuper-excellency; becauſe his holineſs is infinitely beyond all the holineſs of men and Angels. *Angels are holy*, and God is pleaſed to ſay of *men*, that they are *holy*; but nor man nor Angel can be called *The holy One.* His ſupereminency in holineſs ſhines forth in ſuch beams and rayes as theſe.

Firſt, Holineſs in God is not a quality, but his eſſence. Holineſs in Angels is a quality; the eſſence of many Angels continues, though their holineſs be loſt and vaniſhed; the lapſed Angels, who are now Devils, keep their nature, but their holineſs is gone; therefore holineſs was but a quality, or accidental to them: So, in the Saints, holineſs is an infuſion, a quality, a grace; moſt men never had any holineſs, and the man would remain though his holineſs ſhould be loſt. But in God, his eſſence and his holineſs are the ſame, *The holineſs of God is the holy God*, as the wiſdom of God is the wiſe God; and the power of God, is the powerful God. *The Attributes of God, for our learning, are diſtinguiſhed from his Nature, but in him they are the ſame.*

Secondly, God is *The holy One* eminently, above men and Angels, becauſe he is *abſolutely perfect* in holineſs. Abſolutely perfect; Firſt, Becauſe he is holy, extenſively (if we may ſo ſpeak of God) in all parts, he is holy *throughout*, and then he is holy *intenſively*; as he is holy in all parts, ſo he is altogether holy in every part. Holy men have holineſs in every part, yet they are holy but in part; and though Angels be holy in every part extenſively, and have alſo a perfection of holineſs; yet they have not an abſolute perfection of holineſs; therefore Angels themſelves are *chargeable with folly*, compared with God, *chap.* 4. 18. God is ſo *light*, that in him there is no darkneſs at all; he is ſo holy, that in him there is no unholineſs at all. But men, the beſt of men, all the Saints upon earth, have darkneſs with their light, and unholineſs mixed with their holineſs.

Therefore in the third place, the eminency of God in holineſs, appeareth in this, that, God is ever equally holy, ever in the ſame degree and frame of holineſs; Angels are ſo too, becauſe they are confirmed; and though at the preſent, the Saints are not, yet, when Chriſt ſhall ſet them up in that glorious eſtate, they ſhall keep the ſame frame for ever. But the Saints upon earth are unequally holy, ; for firſt, they are growing, their eſtate here is an encreaſing eſtate; they are more holy one year then another; as they grow more in knowledge, ſo in every grace: And then, in regard of the exerciſe, they are more holy at one time then at another. Which of the Saints hath not found, or doth not find much variety in his ſpirit? Now a heart enlarged in prayer, and anon ſtraightned, now a heart believing, and anon doubting; now humble, anon lifted up with pride, *&c.*

But as *the holy One* is perfectly and abſolutely holy, ſo, he is ever equally in the ſame degree and tenor of holineſs, not the leaſt variety or ſhadow of turning in him. Put all theſe together, and the title is clear, how God by an excellency, is called, *The holy One.* As he is ſo ſtrong, that all the power of the creature, compared with his, is weakneſs; and ſo wiſe, that all the wiſdom of the creature, compared with his, is folly; ſo he is ſo holy, that, compared with him, all holineſs is unholy, and he alone, *The holy One.* Hence obſerve,

First, That, *The holineſs of man conſiſts in his conformity unto God.*

Sanctitas dicitur per quam mens ſeipſam & ſuos actus applicat Deo.

Holineſs is our likeneſs to God, or the application of our minds and actions to God, as the Schools define it. God, *the holy One*, is (if we may ſo ſpeak) the ſtandard, the pattern, and the object of all holineſs. There is a twofold conformity to God in holineſs.

Firſt, A conformity to the Nature of God.

Secondly, A conformity to the will of God, or to that which God wills. Theſe make up the total holineſs of the Creature.

Firſt, Holineſs is our conformity to the Nature of God. And therefore Believers are ſaid to be *partakers of the divine Nature* (2 Pet. 1. 4.) This participation is our analogical reſemblance unto the Divine Nature; Firſt, In his Attributes. Secondly, In his Affections. In his Attributes, when we are patient, merciful, juſt, faithful, true, loving, as God is. Theſe are the Image of God in us, and by theſe God becomes (as it were) viſible in man. As thoſe inviſible things of God, even his eternal power and God-head are ſeen in the things which are created; ſo, thoſe other inviſible things of God, even his eternal holineſs and purity, are ſeen in thoſe who are ſanctified. And in the ſame ſence that God ſpeaks of Magiſtrates, in regard of his power depoſited in their hands, *I have ſaid ye are gods*; we alſo may ſay of all the faithful, in regard of his holineſs infuſed into their hearts, *ye are gods*; and as to live or do ſinfully, is (as the Apoſtle phraſeth it) to walk (*κατ' ἄνθρωπον*) as men; ſo to live and do holily, is, in our ſphear to walk (*κατὰ Θεόν*) as God. And as this holineſs ariſes from a reſemblance of God in his Attributes, ſo in Affections; when we love what God loves, when we hate what God hates; when what pleaſes God, pleaſeth us alſo; when what provokes his Spirit, provokes ours. This is holineſs.

Secondly, Holineſs is our conformity to the will of God. That is, to whatſoever God wills us either to do, or not to do. *The will of God is the rule of holineſs, as his nature is the patern of it.* His internal will, called by the School-men, *The will of his good pleaſure*, is the firſtly-firſt rule (as they ſpeak) his external will, or his will expreſſed and ſignified by his word, is the ſecondly-firſt rule of holineſs. Every action of man is holy or unholy, according to his conformity with, or variation from this will. There is no more holineſs in any work, then there is of the will of God in any work. To do holily, and to do the will of God, are the ſame. *David*, a holy man, is deſcribed by both theſe, *Acts* 13. 22. *I have found* David *the ſon of* Jeſſe, *a man after mine own heart*; there's conformity to the nature of God; which ſhall fulfil all my will; there's conformity to the will of God; the reſult of both is holineſs.

Voluntas bene placiti. Voluntas ſigni.

Unholineſs and impurity ariſe from our conformity or adheſion to thoſe things, which are unclean and unholy: In externals and corporals, if a mans hand or his garment touch an unclean thing, he hath the mark or impreſſion of of that uncleanneſs upon his hand or upon his garment; and this likeneſs to an unclean thing, makes his hand or garment unclean: So for inward uncleanneſs or defilement, when the ſoul inordinately cleaves, and the mind drenches it ſelf in filthy things, or drinks in filthy objects: when our thoughts are ſteeped in puddle-waters, this defiles the mind, and makes our thoughts unclean; *Our thoughts are ſuch, as the things they are familiar with*: If they converſe with filthy and unclean things, with worldly and baſe things, the image and impreſſion of ſuch things is ſealed upon our thoughts, and the ſpring of them, our ſpirits. On the other ſide, by our converſing and reverend familiarity with Chriſt in holy Ordinances, we receive ſtamps and impreſſions of holineſs from him. When our hearts and affections are raiſed up and pitcht upon God, this makes them holy.

Sicut impuritas naſcitur ex contactu inferiorum, ut cum facies aut veſtis luto aſpergitur, vel cum anima, per affectus inferioribus inordinatè inhæret; ita puritas oritur ex contactu ſuperiorum, cum affectus ad ſublimiora & nobiliora aſſurgit, & iis adhæret. Leſſ. *De Perf. Div.* l. 8. *c.* 1.

God is the *Objective cauſe* of holineſs; looking upon him, we become holy (2 *Cor.* 3. 18.) *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord* (that is, we looking upon that glory, holineſs and excellency which is in the Lord) *are changed into the ſame image*; that is, we are made conformable unto him: we receive (as it were) the engravings of holineſs upon our ſouls, by beholding the *Holy One.* The eye of faith (as well, yea more, then the eye of ſence) affects the heart. *Laban*'s ſheep conceived according to the colour of the rods which lay before them in the water-troughs. *Viſion aſſimilates both in Nature and in Grace, yea, and in Glory too.* In heaven we ſhall be perfectly holy, becauſe we ſhall perfectly (in Chriſt, who is the expreſs image of his perſon) ſee God, and ſo be like him; that's the Apoſtles argument, 1 *John* 3. 1. *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* And proportionably here, ſuch as our viſions of God are, ſuch is our likeneſs unto God.

Summa puritas conſiſtit in adhæſione cum Deo; nam Deus eſt ratio objectiva & menſura ſanctitatis. Leſſ. *ubi ante.*

Secondly obſerve, *They who want holineſs, muſt go to God for it; for he is the holy One.*

Are any of your hearts unholy? whither will you go? To *what Coaſt will you trade for holineſs?* Or, where ſhall you find the merchadize of it? Go whither you will, go to what holy Ordinance, to what holy Duty, to what holy Miniſter you will, your veſſels will return unfraight and empty of holineſs, if you trade not to the holy God. We muſt deal with Ordinances, and by Ordinances; but, if we only have to do with them, neglecting to meet with God, we ſhall make nothing of them; we ſhall not traffique in them, to any ſpiritual enriching or advantage. Ordinances have a relative holineſs, or a holineſs paſſing through them; but they have no inherent holineſs, or holineſs paſſed by them; *They are Conduit-pipes, not Springs, or the Well-head.* Therefore, as when you would have mercy you go to the *merciful God*; as, when you would have pardon of ſin, you go to the *ſin-pardoning God*; as, when you would have wiſdom and light to direct your way, you go to *the wiſe God, and the Father of lights*: So, when you would have holineſs, and be made pure, whither will ye go, but to the pure and holy God? Be diligent in holy duties and holy ordinances, but ſtay not in them, paſs through them, and never reſt till you come to God in Chriſt, who is the *Holy One*; and he only can, and he hath ſaid he will make you holy,

Thirdly obſerve, *All ſin and unholineſs are contrary to the very Name and Nature of God.*

Contrary to the name of God, *He is called holy*; and contrary to the nature of God, *He is the holy One.* And in this, we ſee the reaſon, why God hates ſin with a *perfect hatred*; man hates that, which is contrary to his nature, and contrary to his name. And in this alſo we ſee the reaſon, why God is ſuch a ſevere avenger of ſin, *He is the holy One:* Can he (think you) take part with, or ſpare that which is contrary to himſelf? Sin, as much as in it lieth, puts God out of the world, therefore ſin is called *God-murther*, as being that, which would murther God: *Sin would not allow him a being in the world, who gave the world its being.* Sin (in the nature of it) is, *The unholy thing*, and God is, *The holy One*; theſe two muſt contend for ever: ſo far as things or perſons are unholy, they directly ſtrike at the being of God; *Sin would put down all rule and all dominion but its own.* Obſerve,

Deicidium.

Fourthly, *They who deſpiſe holineſs, deſpiſe God himſelf.*

They who deſpiſe holineſs, deſpiſe the very glory of God; *God is glorious in holyneſs*, and this is his glorious Name, *THE HOLY ONE.* Some of the prophane, wretched *Jews*, derided and blaſphemed God, under this title; the Prophet had long threatned judgment, and had told them, that *the holy God* would be avenged on them for their filthineſs and profaneneſs, for their hypocriſie and idolatry. But when theſe wretches ſaw God delaying to come out, and bring forth the treaſures of his wrath againſt them, they fall a jearing, and they jear at God, under this title (*Iſa.* 5.19.) *Let him make ſpeed, and haſten his work, that we may ſee it*; as if he had ſaid, God is too ſlow, let him make more haſt, *and let the counſel of the holy One of* Iſrael *draw nigh, and come that we may know it*; him, that you have ſo often told us of, *The holy One*, let him make haſt and bring on his work. Without queſtion God came ſpeedily upon thoſe, and he will come ſpeedily upon all thoſe unclean ſpirits and tongues who blaſpheme that holy Name, *The holy One.* Hence we learn,

Laſtly, *Why none can ſee God, why none have any fitneſs for communion with God, but* holy Ones, *holy perſons.*

The reaſon is, becauſe *God is the holy One.* That great Law is gone out from the mouth of God, *Levit.* 10. 3. *I will be ſanctified in thoſe that come near me*; why ſanctified? Becauſe *God is the holy One*; unleſs we ſanctifie God, we cannot draw nigh to God. As holineſs is a ſeparation from evil, ſo it is an approximation to the chiefeſt good. But ſome may demand, how can man ſanctifie God? God ſanctifies us, but can we ſanctifie him? We cannot ſanctifie God, as he ſanctifies us. We do not ſanctifie God by adding or communicating any holineſs unto him; but we ſanctifie God by acknowledging his holineſs, or by acknowledging that he is, *The holy One*; *drawing nigh unto God with a holy heart, with holy affections, is the ſanctifying of God.* For this is the language of ſuch preparation, I have a holy God to go unto, therefore I muſt have a holy heart to come unto him with; this is ſanctifying God: And that's the reaſon why none can ſee God, but they that are holy, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Without holineſs, no man ſhall ſee the Lord*; becauſe God himſelf is holy, therefore they cannot ſee God, who are unholy. There muſt be an inward holineſs, holineſs in the Organ, to take in the holineſs of the object; God firſt works holineſs in us, and then we behold him, *the holy God:* And that was the reaſon, why the Prophet (*Iſaiah* Chap. 6. When the voice proclaimed that thrice holy Name of God, *Holy, Holy, Holy*) cried out, *I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips*; I have an unclean heart, and how ſhall I ſtand before this *holy, holy, holy God*; this made his ſpirit recoyl, though he was a holy Prophet: *If the remainders of unholineſs in him, made his ſpirit faint, when there was an appearance of the holy God: How will they that are nothing but corruption, or a lump of uncleanneſs, lying ſtill in the dregs of nature, be able to ſtand before God, The holy One, that holy, holy, holy One?*

This is the ſum of the firſt reaſon, upon which *Job* grounds his requeſt to die, it was not the miſery he ſuffered, but the integrity in which he had lived. He had not concealed the words of *the holy One*, therefore as his affliction made his life troubleſom to him, ſo the goodneſs of his cauſe and conſcience, made death welcome to him.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14.

What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope? and what is mine end, that I ſhould prolong my life?
Is my ſtrength of ſtones? Or is my fleſh of braſs?
Is not my help in me? And is wiſdom driven quite from me?
To him that is afflicted, pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend; but he forſaketh the fear of the Almighty.

JOB (as hath been ſhewed) in this context from *verſ.* 8. renews his former requeſt and deſire of death, confirming it by divers arguments: Some of which were opened in *verſ.* 10. eſpecially, that, from the clearneſs and integrity of his own conſcience, in that, *he had not concealed the word of the holy One:* He hath dealt faithfully in the cauſe of God, and therefore he was not afraid to appear before God. And his deſire did not hang about his lips, as if it would return and deny it ſelf: Therefore in *verſ.* 11. he puts forth two reaſons further, why he moves or re-enforces his motion to die. The firſt is grounded upon the ſmall hope he had to live long, if he ſhould deſire it, *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope?* The ſecond is grounded upon the ſtrong hope, yea, aſſurance which he had, that it ſhould be well with him in death, or that death could be no dammage to him. *And what is my end, that I ſhould prolong my life?* Put theſe two together: And then conſider, is it any wonder, that a man in much miſery deſires to dye ſpeedily, when he hath no hope, no ground of hope, that he can live long, and when he hath no fear, no ground, no nor ſhadow of fear, that it ſhall be ill with him when he dies? This I conceive is the ſum and ſtrength of his reaſoning, contained in *verſ.* 11.

I ſhall now open the words diſtinctly.

What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope?

Some render it, *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould bear?* I ſhould be able to ſuſtain this weighty burthen, this mighty load of affliction, preſſing my wounded ſoul, and wearied body? Thus it refers to his preſent ſufferings, to the enduring and ſtanding under, which he found his own ſtrength altogether inſufficient. And ſo the [**My**] in the Text, *What is* [*my*] *ſtrength*, ſeems to be oppoſed to ſome other ſtrength? As if *Job* had ſaid, *Eliphaz* you adviſed me (in the former Chapter, *verſ.* 8.) *to ſeek unto GOD, and to commit my cauſe unto him, to ſeek help at his hands. Why, do you think I have not done that all this while? Do you believe that I have ſtood out theſe aſſaults in My own ſtrength? What is My ſtrength, that I ſhould bear? That I ſhould bear this burthen ſo long, as I have born it? Surely I have been held up by the power of God and prayer all this while; GOD hath put his everlaſting arms under me, otherwiſe I had fallen before this day, had I not prayed in aid from Heaven, I had not lived thus long upon the earth; for what is my ſtrength compared to theſe burthens which are upon me.*

His ſuſtinendis imparſu; hac mea vita miſeriis obnoxia ſuſtentatur non meis viribus, ſed divina gratia, fide, dilectione in filium Dei. Pined.

This is a good ſence; for, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Gal.* 2. 10.) *The life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* So *Job* ſeems to ſay, the life which I have lived, ever ſince the afflictions have encompaſs'd me, I have lived by the power of God, and the ſtrength of faith in him, *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould bear*; *We have this treaſure* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 4.7.) *in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of the power, may be from God, and not from us*; as he ſpeaks there, reſpecting the burthen of the Miniſtry: So we may, in reſpect of any burthen of trouble, or weight of affliction, *We have theſe afflictions laid upon our earthen veſſels* (and one would wonder, that an earthen veſſel ſhould not crack and ſhatter to pieces under them) *but it is, that the excellency of the power might be from God, and not from us; when we are weak, then are we ſtrong, ſtrong in God, and in the power of his might. God loves to ſhew the world, what his ſtrength can do in a weak creature, as well, as what his grace and mercy can do for a ſinful creature.*

This (I ſay) is a good ſence, but the word rather ſignifies to hope; and yet theſe two are not at any great odds: for

יחל *Moratus, præſtolatus,*

vel ſignificat anxia ſpe potiendi volo rē aliquā expectare, & agrè ferre protractionem rei expectatæ. Chemn. *Spes, eſt, cum præparatio ad boni futuri & promiſſi ſuſceptionem, tum patientia moræ ex intuitu illius boni.*

for hope is the ſtrength, the bearing ſtrength of the ſoul: *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope?* That I ſhould wait and tarry, that I ſhould expect and ſtay for ſuch and ſuch changes, as thou haſt promiſed? *Pſal.* 130. 5. we have theſe words put together, *I wait for the Lord, my ſoul doth wait; and in his word do I hope. The ſoul which is in a hoping condition, is alſo in a waiting condition;* waiting and hoping ever attend the ſame thing. No man will wait at all for that of which he hath no hope, and he who hath hope, will wait alwayes. He gives not over waiting, till he gives over hoping. The object of hope is ſome future good, but the act of hoping is a preſent good, and that is preſent pay to bear our charges in waiting. So then, the word implies both a patient waiting, and a hopeful truſting. So Chriſt expounds it, *Matth.* 12. 21. rendring that of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 42. 4. *The Iſles ſhall wait for his Law,* thus, *In his Name ſhall the Gentiles truſt. Noah* (after the ſtrength of the deluge was ſpent) opened the window of the Ark, and ſent forth the Dove, and ſhe returned; then ſaith the Text, *He waited ſeven dayes, and again he waited, yet other ſeven dayes,* hoping at laſt the floud would be dryed up, and the waters return into their ancient channels. Now (ſaith *Job*) what is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope or expect deliverance, and therefore, why ſhould I wait for it. The waters of my afflictions are ſo deep, and ſwoln ſo high, that I have no hope to ſee dry ground again.

Gen. 8. 10, 12.

And in this paſſage he ſeems to anſwer, what *Eliphaz* ſpake in *Chap.* 5. *verſ.* 16, & 25. (for doubtleſs *Job* applies himſelf exactly to what *Eliphaz* had ſpoken, and the trueſt interpretation of his anſwer will be in finding out, and ſuiting the references to what the other propounded) *Eliphaz* in *Chap.* 5. *verſ.* 16. (where he makes a report of the wonderful works of God) had ſaid, *So the poor hath hope, and iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth;* and at *verſ.* 25. he tells *Job* that a godly man (notwithſtanding all his afflictions) *may know that his tabernacle ſhall be in peace, and that his ſeed ſhall be very great. Job* in anſwer to thoſe words, replies; *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope.* As if he had ſaid, *Eliphaz you ſpeak of great hopes, that the poor may have; and you ſpeak of a peaceable Tabernacle, of a flouriſhing off-ſpring: Alas, my condition is ſuch, I am ſo worn out with pain, with ſickneſſes, with diſeaſes. with diſtempers, with griefs, that I have no hope left, in regard of my ſtrength in me, ever to enjoy ſuch promiſes. What is my ſtrength that I ſhould hope? What is my ſtrength that I ſhould expect to live to ſee ſuch good dayes, as you ſpeak of; that my Tabernacle ſhould be in peace, that I ſhould have plenty, that I ſhould have a numerous Iſſue? Alas, my ſtrength is gone; what is my ſtrength that I ſhould look after theſe things.* Not that *Job* meaſured all his hope by his own ſtrength; but here he expreſſes the grief and pain, which was in his ſenſitive part, or upon his outward man, thereby to anſwer the ſowre reproofs and ſweet promiſes of *Eliphaz*: For we find *Job* himſelf in *Chap.* 13. *verſ.* 13. reſolving thus; *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt* (or hope) *in him;* he would truſt or hope in God, though he died; therefore he did hope while he lived. And it is the property of that grace (and where it is in ſtrength, it ſhews as much) *to hope againſt hope:* Rom. 4. 18. *Who againſt hope believed in hope;* when there was no ſtrength in *Abraham*, no poſſibility in nature, yet againſt hope, he believed in hope: So at this time there was ſuch a grace in *Job*, he had a hope, by which he could hope againſt hope; but when he looked into his own ſtock of ſtrength, *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope?* I know the ſtrength of God, is a rock ſure enough for my hope to anchor in: *Abraham* ſaid in effect, *what is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope to have a child?* for he looked upon himſelf as a dead man, but, ſaith he, there is power in God; he knew his own weakneſs, but *he conſidered it not, waxing ſtrong in faith, and giving glory to God.* So here, while *Job* ſaith, *What is my ſtrength that I ſhould hope?* my ſtrength is dryed up and withered, and ſo is my hope in my own ſtrength: The ſtrength of God is vigorous and green, and in him my hope is alſo green and vigorous: Though all the earth about us be like a dry heath, and barren wilderneſs; yet our hope buds and bloſſoms like a plant, while it is rooted by the ſprings of heavenly promiſes.

Quæ fortitudo mea, ut ſperem liberos. Vatab. *Quid in longiorem ſpem me adducitis quū ſperando non ſim, jam propè mortuus videar. Hoc à* Jobo *dicitur, ut conſilii importunitatem, expreſſo ſenſitivæ partis affectu, retunderet, non quod de divina potentia diffideret.*

And what is mine end, that I ſhould prolong my life?

אאריך נפשי

The letter of the Hebrew is, *That I ſhould prolong, or lengthen out my ſoul,* that my ſoul ſhould inhabit longer in the tabernacle of my body: The word *prolong*, is indifferently joyned to life, or dayes, *Deut.* 5. 16. *Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, that, thy dayes may be prolonged,* &c. Ezek. 12. 22. *Son of man, what is that proverb that you have in the Land of* Iſrael, *ſaying, The dayes are prolonged, and every viſion faileth?* To prolong dayes, and prolong life, are the ſame. Yet here the word (*Nepheſh*) ſoul, which we tranſlate, life, may be taken for *deſire*, which is a vehement act of the ſoul. The ſoul expreſſes it ſelf ſo much in deſires, that the ſame word may expreſs both. And ſo we may render *Job*'s ſence, thus, *What is my end, that I ſhould lengthen out, or extend, my deſires any further after the things of this world: or that I ſhould defer, and put off my deſires after the things of the world to come: Is there any thing in this life worth my ſtudying for it, or any thing ſo worthleſs in the next, that I ſhould not wiſh preſently to enjoy it?* In this ſence the word (*Nepheſh*) is often uſed, as *Gen.* 23. 8. *Abraham* ſpeaks to the children of *Heth*; *If it be your ſoul or your deſire,* we tranſlate, *if it be your mind, that I ſhould bury my dead.* So *Prov.* 23. 2. *If thou be a man given to thy appetite,* or whoſe deſires are thy Lord and Maſter, as the elegancy of that place bears. And again, *Pſal.* 27. 12. *Pſal.* 41. 2. *Eccl.* 6. 9. The word is applied, to ſignifie the will or deſire. So here,

What is mine end, that I ſhould prolong my life, or my deſire of life?

His [**End**] may be conſidered two wayes.

Firſt, His End, may be taken for the latter part of his life, which *Eliphaz* promiſed would be very comfortable. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a good old age, as a ſtock of corn cometh into the ſtore:* As if *Job* ſhould ſay, you are promiſing me good dayes, and a happy old age; but, what is mine end? what's the latter part of a mans life, that he ſhould deſire to prolong his dayes, to take it out? Why ſhould I deſire to prolong my life, I am now well ſtricken in years, and as for the end, the latter part of a mans life, it is nothing (for the moſt part) but trouble and ſorrow? As old *Barzillai* (2 *Sam.* 19. 35.) when *David* offered him the pleaſures of the Court, anſwers, I am thus old, and can I taſte my meat, and taſte my drink, and hear muſick? What is the Fag-end of mans life, that one ſhould hunger after it? The ſweeteſt comforts of this life are in the fore-part of life, in the ſpring of youth, in the ſtrength and flower of age; as for the the winter of life, what is that but wet and cold, but clouds and darkneſs? *What is my end,* (of old age) that I ſhould deſire my life to be prolonged or eeked out to that.

But rather, we may take this *End*, Firſt, for the end of his troubles; as if he had ſaid, *What end ſo gainful or comfortable can I have of theſe evils, that ſhould recompence my pains in bearing them, till I receive it?* No worldly comforts can anſwer my ſorrows; and therefore why ſhould I deſire to prolong my life for them.

Secondly, Take *End*, for the very laſt term of life, not that latter part or condition of a mans life, *troubleſom old age*, as before; or a renewed eſtate as here. But take *End*, for the *ending*, the termination, the period of life; *What is my End, that I ſhould ſo prolong my life?* and ſo *End* is as much as death, *What is my death, that I ſhould ſo deſire to live?* I know no evil in death, that ſhould make me afraid of the end of my life; I know no ſuch trouble in dying, that I ſhould be deſirous to ſpin out this troubleſom life longer; ſurely the trouble and pain of death is not ſo much as the preſent trouble and pain of my life; and as for any other trouble, I fear none: then what is my end, that I ſhould prolong my life, that I ſhould not deſire death, or that you ſhould be ſo angry with me for deſiring it? Hence Obſerve,

> Firſt, *There is no ſtrength in man, that may give him aſſured hope of long life.*

What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope? No, though man be in the flouriſh of his age, the greenneſs of his years: yet what is youth, or ſtrength, or beauty? what all thoſe fair leaves and fruits which hang upon, and adorn this goodly tree, that he ſhould hope to ſtand long? *Man* *in his beſt eſtate, is altogether vanity*, *Pſal.* 39. 5. He that hopes to live upon any of theſe things, hopes in a vain thing, and truſts, but in a ſhadow. Our hopes to live this natural life as well as the ſpiritual, and eternal, muſt be in the living God. The Image of death ſits upon the beſt of our ſtrength and beauty; while we grow, we decline, and we flouriſh, we wither. The lengthning of our dayes, is the ſhortning of them, and all the time we live, is but a paſſage unto (and ſhould be but a preparation for) death. We are moſt miſerable, if in this life only we have hope; and we are moſt fooliſh, if our hopes of this life, be in our own ſtrength.

And becauſe there is no ſtrength in nature, which may give us hope to live long; it is our greateſt wiſdom, to conſider what proviſion we have in grace, to maintain our hopes, that we ſhall live for ever. They are in an ill caſe, who when they cannot hope to live long, care not to ſettle their hopes of living eternally. It is a moſt ſad ſpectacle, to ſee a languiſhing body, and a languiſhing hope meet in one man. Some have a *Kalender in their bones*, ſhewing them, they have but few dayes here, and many diſtempers upon the whole body, crying in their ears with a loud voice, *What is your ſtrength, that you ſhould hope to live?* who yet prepare not at all to dye. They are both unready and unwilling to be diſſolved, when they ſee no hope to keep up their Tabernacle from diſſolution.

Secondly, (Taking the word in the laſt ſence, which I conceive rather to be the mind of the Holy Ghoſt in this place) Obſerve,

> That, *there is no evil in the death of a godly man, which ſhould make him unwilling to dye, or which ſhould make him linger after this life.*

What is the end of a godly man, that he ſhould prolong his life? All the bitterneſs of death is removed, or ſweetned by Chriſt. Death the King of terrors, is made a ſervant, to let us in, to our comforts, by the power of *Chriſt, that Prince of life*, who hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Goſpel. *A believer buries all his fears of death in the grave of Chriſt.* He looks upon death as the funeral of his ſorrows, and the reſurrection of his joyes. When the Pſalmiſt had deſcribed the troubles and ſtormy conflicts of a godly man, together with the flouriſhing outward pomp of the wicked, he concludes with this advice, *Marke the righteous man* (obſerve him well, take ſpecial notice of him) *the latter end of that man is peace*; if his end be peace, there is nothing in his end, which can make him affraid of it, or put it off. All deſire peace, they eſpecially, who are wearied out with war. The life of the holieſt man is a warfare, and his end is peace. Then what is his end, that he ſhould prolong his life?

Pacem te poſcimus omnes.

When a worldly man looks upon his end, he ſaith, O what is my end, that I ſhould deſire to dye? His end is ſuch, as makes him juſtly affraid to die. There is nothing in the end of a wicked man, but matter to feed the fear of death, and the deſire of prolonging life, as long as he can. This is the reaſon, why, when God calls him to die, he is deaf at the call; yea, that call is death to him, before he dies. *Lot* had a mind to prolong his time in *Sodom*, it was a goodly City, and he was not well aſſured, whether to go, or how he ſhould be lodged next night. This cauſed him to linger ſo long, till the Angels came and thruſt him out: Natural men have all their portion and eſtates in the *Sodom* of this world. And if they hear a meſſage of departing or going out, they linger and make excuſes, they run behind the door, or hang about the poſts, till God thruſts them out of the world, and pulls them from their pleaſures by head and ſhoulders, as we ſay. They would never leave the world, if they might enjoy it, becauſe they have nothing to enjoy beyond it.

A worldling groans, becauſe he muſt be uncloathed of his houſe of earth; and the Saints *groan earneſtly, that they may be cloathed upon with their houſe from Heaven:* Who would not be willing to exchange a ſuit of fleſh, a ſuit of ſack-cloath and ſorrow, for a ſuit of glory, for a cloathing of immortality, and garments of everlaſting praiſe.

Verſ. 12. Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones? or is my fleſh of braſs?

Theſe words may refer to the former part of *verſ.* 11. *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope?* What is it? Let us ſeriouſly examine and conſider what my ſtrength is, *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones, or is my fleſh of braſs?* Am I made of ſuch hard mettle, think you, that I am able to endure any thing? Only a body of braſs, and ſinews of iron, are ſtrong enough to endure this trial. Stones and braſs are hard bodies, and heavy bodies, they can bear blows and knocks without breaking; they yield not eaſily to the hammer; it is hard to make an impreſſion upon them, with many, and thoſe violent ſtroaks. To ſay a man is ſtrong, as ſtones, or that he hath a body of braſs, is to give him ſtrength, which is not mans, and to ſet him two degrees below himſelf. Beaſts are ſtronger, and can endure more hardſhip then man. Trees are ſtronger, and can endure more than beaſts. Stones are yet ſtronger, and can endure more then trees. Therefore, while he asks, whether his ſtrength be not only, like that of beaſts, who have no reaſon; or like that of trees, which have no ſence; but like that of ſtones and braſs, which have no vegetation or growth, he puts it to the utmoſt: As if he had ſaid, *If a man had as much ſtrength as a beaſt, or a tree, he muſt needs fall at theſe ſtroaks and troubles; but it ſeems, ye put me lower then beaſts, or ſenſleſs trees, and that I can ſtand it out againſt all ſtorms and batteries, like a ſtony rock, or a brazen wall.* I confeſs, though the Ox loweth, when he wants fodder; and the wild Aſs brayeth, when he hath no graſs; yet the ſtone complains not, when ye give it no food; nor doth braſs cry out when ye melt it in a furnace: unleſs you can find, that I am in nature like ſtones or braſs, you have no reaſon to find fault with me. Allow me to be either man or beaſt, and you muſt allow me to be ſenſible of my ſorrows, and deſtroyable by them. Only ſtones can be thus trampled on, and braſs thus hammer'd without pain and dying.

Deficio, Saxeus aut Calybeus non ſum. Lapides corpora ſunt non ſolum gravia, ſed robuſta & dura, quæ non facilè cedunt aliis corporibus, unde robur lapidum pro duritia.

As when man (in his ſpiritual capacity) is ſaid in Scripture to have a *heart of ſtone, an iron ſinew, a brow of braſs.* It notes him reſolved, againſt all threats, and ſtrong, againſt all oppoſitions of the word, to commit the evil of ſin. So in this natural capacity, to ſay his ſtrength is the ſtrength of ſtones, notes him a man able to bear all the evils of trouble, and to ſtand againſt all the ſtorms of tribulation.

Such kind of ſpeaking is frequent among the ancient Writers, who, when they would expreſs a man of undaunted courage, a man whoſe ſtrength would not eaſily be broken, or his ſpirit be taken down: a man inſuperable, whom no difficulties could overcome. Of ſuch an one they ſay, he hath, *an heart of braſs*, and *a back of ſteel, he is a man made up of ſtones, born of a rock*; he is a man of Adamant, he hath *treble braſs about his breſt*; as he was deſcribed, who firſt ventured in his ſhip to Sea. The common uſe of the word hath made it proverbial in all languages: for a man of more ſtrength then is commonly found in man, or for a Maſter of dangers and extremities.

Homines Adamantini, ferrei, ſaxei, nati è ſcopulis. Illi robur & æs triplex circa pectus. Hor. *Græci vocant, χαλκεντέρους & σιδηρόφρονες.*

Job's queſtion denies, *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones? Or is my fleſh of braſs?* No, it is not: As if he had ſaid, I am made of fleſh and blood as well as others, I muſt ſhortly yield to theſe ſtroaks, I am not able to hold out and contend everlaſtingly with afflictions, I cannot ſtand againſt theſe aſſaults and batteries for ever; I am made of the ſame mould whereof your ſelves are, I am ſenſible how it is with me, I feel what I endure, and I cannot long endure what I feel, my ſtrength is not the ſtrength of ſtones. Note hence,

> Firſt, *Mans natural conſtitution makes him ſenſible of affliction, and ſubduable by it.*

Mans body is no impregnable caſtle. We are not made of ſtones and braſs, but of *fleſh and blood*; *I will not contend for ever* (ſaith God, *Iſa.* 57. 16.) *neither will I be alwayes wrath. For the ſpirit ſhould fail before me*, &c. The Spirit of a man (that is his courage and reſolution) is far ſtronger then his fleſh, (namely his natural temper and conſtitution) and yet that cannot hold out for ever. The Spirit will come down whether we will or no, if God contend long with us: how then muſt the fleſh wither like a leaf before him? And therefore, the bodies, the fleſh and blood of the damned, who are to bear the wrath and contendings of God for ever; their fleſh and blood (I ſay) are (in a ſence) made ſpiritual, that is, they have more ſtrength given them, then fleſh and blood yield naturally, otherwiſe it were impoſſible for them to hold out for ever under the wrath of God, and the torment of their accurſed condition. Their ſtrength is made the ſtrength of ſtones, and their fleſh as braſs, they are made immalliable: their ſenſe of pain ſhall be admirably quickned, and yet they ſhall continue, as if they had no ſence at all: they ſhall be for ever wounded, and never die of their wounds. As it is in reference to that everlaſting miſery, ſo in proportion to thoſe temporal miſeries, there is no ſtrength of man, no fleſh and blood, able to endure and hold out, if God lets out his hand to afflict, and put not under his hand to ſupport.

Verſ. 13. **Is not my help in me? And is wiſdom driven quite from me?**

This and the verſe following, are of a very difficult conſtruction and underſtanding, which cauſed a learned Interpreter to ſay, *If there be any hard Text in the whole book, this is one*; and after all his thoughts about it, he concludes with this ingenious acknowledgment, *I do not yet underſtand the meaning of it.*

iſſi- quis hoc & to on .

Firſt, As we read it, the Text ſeems to carry an harſh connexion with the words fore-going. There *Job* queries, *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones?* And yet immediately to ſay, *Is not my help in me?* ſounds incongruous. For if he had help in him, he had ſtrength in him, and ſuch as might well be called, the ſtrength of ſtones, extraordinary ſtrength. So then, *Job* having ſaid with his laſt breath, *that he had no ſuch ſtrength*; how is it, that here he ſhould ſay, and more ſtrongly affirm, that he had ſuch ſtrength, ſo much this queſtion implies; *Is not my help in me?* As if he had ſaid, do not I know which way to help my ſelf? How to extricate my ſelf out of this condition?

Beſides, how is this a truth? For there is no man that hath his help in himſelf, not help enough in himſelf for any natural work, much leſs for any ſpiritual work, and moſt of all leſs for the holy carriage of their heart under affliction, or to deliver himſelf from it. Man hath no help in himſelf. The voice of the Church is, *Our help ſtandeth in the Name of the Lord*; and the voice of *David* was, *The Lord is my helper*; how then doth *Job* ſay, *Is not my help in me?* Mans ruine is of himſelf, but how unlike is this to the voice of truth, to ſay, *My help is in my ſelf?* We can undo our ſelves faſt enough, but we cannot repair and make our ſelves up again.

Nor can any creature be our help, no Man, no Angel can be our help. God reproveth the Jews, *Iſa.* 31. *For going down to* Egypt *for help*, though they were a ſtrong people: *Certainly it is as bad, for a man, to make himſelf his help, as to make another man his help.* How then ſhall we give a wholſom underſtanding of theſe words, *Is not my help in me? And is wiſdom driven quite from me?*

For the clearing of it. Conſider the divers readings. Some thus, *Was not my help in me?* And ſo they make the meaning to be this; Did not I help my ſelf, as much as I could? Was I faint-hearted and cowardly? Did I ſink as a man of a poor ſpirit under the burden? Did not I put my ſelf forth to the uttermoſt that I could, to ſtand under theſe troubles and afflictions? There is much in that, for ſome men do not help themſelves as they might, but their own ſpirits ſink, and their hearts fail; yea, their hearts fail before their ſtrength fails. *Job* diſclaims this, I did not ſo, I helpt my ſelf while I was able, I put out the utmoſt of my power, to bear and ſet a good face on't, as long as ever I could, *Was not my help in me?*

The *Septuagint*, with the *Greeks* in general, refer theſe words to God, making *Job* ſpeak thus, *Did not I truſt in him? But my help is departed from me, and the mercy of the Moſt High hath with-drawn it ſelf from me.* As if he had ſaid, *I never put my truſt in my ſelf, nor did I promiſe my ſelf great matters, as from my ſelf; for, alas! What is my ſtrength? I am acquainted well enough with mine own frailty, but that which I only truſted to, hath left me; I truſted unto God, and unto his help, now he ſeems to forſake and withdraw his aſſiſtance from me:* But I leave this with the Authors, it hath little authority with me, or ſutableneſs to the courſe and tenour of *Job*'s ſpirit under theſe afflictions.

The *Vulgar* tranſlates the whole verſe negatively, and ſo it makes a plain and good ſence. Whereas we read it interrogatively, *Is not my help in me?* &c. He reads it thus, *Behold, my help is not in me, and my friends who ſhould help me, are departed from me*; That which we tranſlate wiſdom, *Is wiſdom departed from me?* He tranſlates friends, *my friends, who ſhould be my helpers, are departed from me.* And ſo the meaning of all is, as if *Job* had ſaid, *I cannot help my ſelf, and they who ſhould, have deſerted me:* And ſo connects or joyns it with that, which went before; *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope? my ſtrength is not the ſtrength of ſtones; there is no help in me, and they who ſhould help me, are departed from me*; I was once an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame (*Chap.* 29 15.) *When a man hath no help in himſelf, he may have it in another*; If a man want an eye, he may have an eye of his neighbour; and if he want a hand, his friend may be a hand to him; but (ſaith *Job*) they that ſhould be *eyes and hands*, helpers unto me, are gone and departed from me.

Ecce non eſt auxilium mihi in me & neceſſarii quoque mei receſſerunt à me. Vulg.

There is yet another rendring, which makes a very clear ſence; *What though I have not help in me, is wiſdom driven quite from me?* Though I have no ſtrength, and ſo no help in my ſelf, wiſdom is not therefore driven quite from me. As if he had ſaid, *Will you conclude that I am a wicked man, an hypocrite and a fool, becauſe I am not able to help and deliver my ſelf out of theſe troubles?*

Fifthly, Conſider the words as we tranſlate them, with which moſt of the Rabbins and Jewiſh Writers concur, only they uſually expreſs the Text affirmatively, we interrogatively, yet both equivalent, and meet in the ſame meaning. Our Queſtion, *Is not my help in me?* is to be reſolved into this affirmation, *My help is in me*; and the latter branch, *Is wiſdom departed from me?* into this negation, *Wiſdom is not departed from me: Job*'s ſence may be taken thus; *Have not I that in me, which is, and will be a help unto me, notwithſtanding all the objections and aſſaults which you make againſt me? Have not I that in me, which may furniſh me with wiſdom to anſwer all the exceptions which you have taken at my complaints?* Mr. *Broughtons* tranſlation favours this ſence very much, *Have not I my defence? and is judgment driven away from me?* Though I thus complain, and deſire death, yea renew my deſire; *Have not I my defence? Have I nothing to ſay, why I made this requeſt? Have I no Argument to help my ſelf, and bear up my ſpirit under the weight of theſe calamities? Is wiſdom quite departed from me? Do you take me for a man deſerted of God, deſerted of his ſpirit, and deſerted of my own wiſdom and underſtanding too; becauſe I am deſerted of the world, and deſtitute of outward comforts?* And ſo the help which *Job* knew he had in ſtore, was the innocency and integrity of his heart, *Is not my help in me?* I have no help, no ſtrength, no comfort in my fleſh? what is my fleſh? *My fleſh is not of braſs*, but have I no help in me neither? my outward man is deſtroyed, my houſe of clay is almoſt battered down, tottering, falling it is; but have I nothing within to help at a dead lift? have I no grace, no hope, no teſtimony of a good conſcience, no witneſs in my ſelf? Do you think me clean diſrobed and ſtript, and emptied of all wiſdom and comfort? *Hath the Devil, think you, robbed me of my grace? Have the Sabeans plunder'd and ſpoyled me of my underſtanding? Is not my help within me*, notwithſtanding all the troubles that are upon me? Thus the interpretation is fair and clear, that when all his outward comforts were gone, when the ſtrength of his fleſh could hold no longer; yet then he had help within him; and his ſpirit could bear, though his fleſh could not. Grace can hold out beyond Nature; and when bodily ſtrength can do no more, wiſdom comes in with her *Auxiliaries.*

An non auxilium meũ in me quo me tueri poſſum ac defendere, innuit innocentiam ſuã ac vitæ integritatẽ, quã nunquã deſtitutus fuit, aut rectam rationem & ſapientiam quã poſtea Tuſiab Appellat. Druſ. *An judicio & ratione deſtituor ut dignoſcere nequeã recta ab inſulſis qualia ſunt verba veſtra, non ſũ mentis inops.*

Is not my help in me? and is wiſdom departed from me?

The word [**Wiſdom**] in the Hebrew, is of various ſignifications, as was touched, *Chap.* 5. 12. Here one renders it, *The Law is not departed from me.* As if his meaning were, I never forſook the Law of God. Another thus, *Was my duty driven from me?* As if his meaning were, I ever kept cloſe to the rule of my place and calling. A third, *Is my ſubſtance driven from me?* So a fourth, *Is my ability of ſubſiſting gone from me?* As if he had ſaid, Cannot I live, becauſe I have not the world to live upon? To

תושיה *Significat legem, ſapientiã ſubſiſtentiam. Et lex repulſa eſt à me?* Pagn. *Numquid officium impulſum fuit à me?* Vatab. *Num ſubſiſtentia impulſa eſt à me?* Regia. *Quid facultas ſubſiſtendi me deſtituit?* Tygur.

which ſence thoſe words of Chriſt are appliable, *Luke* 12. 15. *The life of man conſiſts not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth*: All which Interpretations meet to make up a compleat Apology of *Job*'s piety, conſtancy, patience, and flouriſhing reſolutions in his dying, withering condition. The *Sabeans* drove away his cattel, but they could not drive away his underſtanding; they offer'd violence to his ſubſtance, but his reaſon and his graces were untoucht. Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *Then when all outward helps depart from a godly man, he hath ſomewhat abiding in him, to help and ſtay up his heart.*

As when the outward glory and ſtrength of the Church is utterly decayed, *Yet* (the Prophet tells, *Iſa.* 6. 13.) *in it ſhall be a Tenth, as a Teyle-tree, and as an Oak whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves, ſo the Holy Ghoſt ſhall be the ſtrength thereof.* Thus alſo, when the outward glory and ſtrength of any true member of the Church, is utterly decayed; even then, he ſhall be as an Oak, his ſubſtance ſhall be in him, the ſeed of holineſs ſhall be his ſubſtance. *Is not my help in me?* I know my eſtate is gone, my beauty is gone, my ſtrength is gone, the ſtrength (I mean) of my fleſh, yet I have inviſible ſupports, ſomewhat unſeen to truſt unto. It is the comfort of believers, that they have an eſtate, riches and poſſeſſions, lying as far beyond the reach of mens power, as their eye; and as far beyond the reach of Satans malice, as either. When they feel nothing but pain in the fleſh, when nothing but weakneſs inhabits the *houſe of clay*, the outward man; then the *inward man* is renewed with ſweet refreſhings, and ſtrong conſolations *day by day*. *The ſpirit of a man* (of a godly man) *will bear his infirmities, when his body cannot.* The ſtrength of nature is not *the ſtrength of ſtones, nor is it the fleſh of braſs*; but the ſtrength of grace is ſtronger then the ſtrength of ſtones, and the ſpirit is more durable then braſs: Grace wears not out by uſing, nor doth it ſpend by imploying: *Afflictions are but the higher ſervices and employments of Grace.* A ſtock of grace is an inexhauſtible treaſure, and a good heart aſſures us better then the bars of a Caſtle. Faith and a good conſcience, are (under Chriſt) our beſt helps in trouble; they are friends that will never forſake us: They are to us as their Author, who hath promiſed that he will not. Grace is our participation with the *Divine Nature*, and grace participates with the Divine Nature in this, it is an unchangeable good, an everlaſting comfort.

And yet we muſt take this warily, grace and holineſs, faith and a good conſciencc, are not to be truſted upon, no more then riches or any outward means. *We may make an idol of our faith, and a vain thing of a good conſcience.* The meaning then is, faith and a good conſcience are our beſt helps and friends, becauſe faith carries us unto Chriſt who is our beſt help. Faith pitches upon Chriſt, and a good conſcience feaſts us in the favour of God. Faith alone is no help, but faith is our help, becauſe it is not alone: Grace left alone, would be our ſtrength, but little more then nature is; and our ſpirit little more then the fleſh: And therefore our comforts are not to be reſolved in this; That we have grace in our hearts: but into this, That we and our graces are in the hands of Chriſt. Faith can live no where but upon Chriſt; that which faith reſpects as our help, is Chriſt, in whom we believe, not the act of believing. We are helped by the grace within us, but the grace within us, is not our help. Obſerve,

Secondly, *A godly man in the darkeſt affliction or night of ſorrow, finds a light of holy wiſdom to anſwer all the objections of his enemies, and the ſuſpitions of his friends.*

Is wiſdom departed quite from me? Do you think I have nothing to ſay? nothing to reply by way of apology for what I have done or ſpoken?

Though *Job* had many afflictions upon him, and friends againſt him, yet ſee how he recollects himſelf, *Is not my help in me?* He makes out the goodneſs of his cauſe in the midſt of a thouſand evils, and can plead his own integrity in the throng of many jealouſies and contradictions. *Is not my help in me?* Do you think you have ſo daunted me, that I am not able to make out my own eſtate? or that I know not what I am? The truth is, ſometimes God leaves his ſervants in ſo much darkneſs, for their trial and exerciſe, that they cannot ſee their own eſtates, but cry out, they are loſt and undone; many a good ſoul cannot reflect upon his graces, or get his heart into any communion with Chriſt in promiſes. *This is walking in darkneſs, and ſeeing no light. As our ſins are ſometimes ſecret to us, ſo alſo our graces may.* But let a man be encompaſſed with never ſo many afflictions, yet if his ſpirit be free, he is able to judge of his own intereſts, through all the black clouds which hang over him, through all the diſtractions and confuſions that are about him. *The eye of faith is uſually quick in a dark night. And while trouble is near at hand, beholds Chriſt near at hand. He can never be without help, who carries his help about him, or within him.* Nor can he utterly want counſel to direct him, whoſe heart is a Counſel Table, where Chriſt (the wiſdom of God) is ever Preſident in the Chair. My worldly comforts are quite driven from me, but wiſdom is not: I am afflicted, and therefore ſhould not be thus ſuſpected, but pitied.

Verſ. 14. **To him that is afflicted, pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend; but he hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty.**

This verſe begins the third Section of the Chapter, wherein *Job* draws up a ſtrong charge againſt his friends, for their uncharitableneſs. See the progreſs and links of this Diſcourſe.

Firſt, He refuted and anſwered their objections againſt him, from the firſt to the eighth verſe.

Secondly, He renewed his complaint, which was the ground of all their objections, from the eighth verſe unto the end of the thirteenth.

Here at the fourteenth verſe he begins a charge againſt his friends of unkindneſs, indiſcretion, yea of cruelty in managing this diſpute againſt him. He giveth it firſt in general, or by way of preface; *To him that is afflicted, pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend. But he hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty*: As if he had ſaid, *You ſhould have dealt otherwiſe with me then you have, in this caſe; though (bleſſed be God) I find help within me, God hath given me the light of his Spirit, and wiſdom to diſcern my own condition, yet it is no thank to you: I have found no help in my friends, you have dealt unfriendly with me: you ſhould have pitied me, but you have oppoſed me, and ſo forſaken that duty which the fear of the Almighty teaches.* He proceeds to illuſtrate this more particularly, by way of ſimilitude, comparing his friends to a brook, whoſe waters fail when we are a thirſt, or when there is moſt need of water.

To him that is afflicted.] The word ſignifies, *Him that is melted*: And the reaſon is, becauſe affliction diſſolves the ſpirit of a man, and (as it were) melts his heart, therefore it is called *the fire of affliction*: To be diſſolved or melted, and to be afflicted, are the ſame. And that effect is aſcribed to fear, and trouble of ſpirit, ariſing from affliction, *Pſal.* 22. 15. *My heart* (ſaith *David*, a type of Chriſt) *in the midſt of my belly, is like melting wax*: By reaſon of the heat and greatneſs of his trouble, and the anguiſh of his ſpirit, he was as mettle melted in a furnace. At the defeat of the *Iſraelites* before *Ai*, it is ſaid, *the hearts of the people melted, and became as water*, Joſh. 7. 5. And in *Pſal.* 6. *verſ.* 6. *David* cryes up the exuberance of his ſorrows, by this word, *I melted or watered my couch with tears.* Thus the Prophet threatning a day of great fear againſt *Jeruſalem*, tells them, *They ſhall be, as when a ſtandard-bearer fainteth*, Iſa. 10. 18. When the battel waxes hot, and a vanquiſht army is running and crying for quarter, the *ſtandard-bearer* is in greateſt danger, all make up to him, and then he *fainteth*, or *melteth* away with fear.

מסס *Solvit, diſſolvit, liquidum & fluidū reddit. Sic mea perpetuis liqueſcant pectora curis.* Ovid. Pont. מס

* Tributes and taxes are expreſt in the Hebrew by a word coming from this root, becauſe if heavily impoſed, they melt away the eſtates of a people. † It is a witty obſervation, that whereas ſome of the Papiſts conceive their word [*Maſs*] was derived from this Hebrew word [*Maſſas*] which ſignifieth to melt; one of ours anſwers, let it be ſo: It ſuites this ſence of the word exactly, and the effect of that abominable Idolatry; for the *Maſs hath diſſolved and melted away truth and piety out of the Popiſh territories.*

* *Tributum ſic dictum, quia paulatim liqueſcere facit facultates, maxime ſi nimium imponatur.* Buxtorf.

† *Quidam pontificii volunt ſuam Miſſam hac voce Hebraica fuiſſe appellatam; Rectè quidem per eam ſcilicet pietas omnis liquefacta eſt & diſſoluta.* Rivet.

To him that is afflicted [**pity ſhould be ſhewed.**] That word *Pity* in the Hebrew, ſignifies a ſacred ſweet affection of mercy, benignity, goodneſs and piety: And by *contraries* (in which ſence words are often uſed in that language) it notes, Firſt, Reproach; *Prov.* 14. 34. *Sin is* (*Cheſed*) a reproach to any people: Secondly, Impiety and cruelty, harſhneſs and ſeverity: Thirdly, It ſignifies any abominable wickedneſs (*Levit.* 20. 17.) where *Moſes* ſpeaking of inceſt, inceſt between brother and ſiſter, calls that abomination by this word (*Cheſed*) *A wicked thing. That may have a good name, the nature whereof is ſo ill, that it is not to be named.*

חסד *Pietas, bonitas, benignitas, & per Antiphraſin impietas, crudelitas ex Chaldaica lingua uſu.*

Further, the word, as we tranſlate, imports more then a bare act of pity or commiſeration; as ſuppoſe a man ſee his brother in miſery, compaſſionates him, but relieves him not, this is no pity. Such the Apoſtle *James* deſcribes, in *Chap.* 2. *verſ.* 15. *If a brother or a ſiſter be naked, and deſtitute of daily food, and you ſay unto them, Be filled, be warmed, be clothed*: Poor creatures, ye are hungry, ye are naked, I pity you, I am ſory to ſee you thus; be filled, be cloathed, I wiſh it were otherwiſe with you; and yet in the mean time, he gives them nothing wherewith either to cloath or feed them. Is this fulfilling the law of love? Is this charity? Nothing leſs. The pity here ſpoken of, is not a verbal pity; our ſaying to a brother in trouble, be comforted, or, I would courſe were taken for you, I wiſh you well with all my heart, ; and ſo we beſtow a mouthful of good words, but not ſo much as a morſel of bread, or a cup of cold water. Good words alone are cheap charity to a mans expence, and they are ſo cheap in Gods eſteem, that they will not be found of any value at all in the day of reckoning: good words, not realized, if they be found any where, will be found in the treaſury of wrath. This is not the pity *which* (*Job* teacheth us) *ſhould be ſhewed to him that is afflicted.* The Apoſtles queſtion ſhakes ſuch out of all claim to this Grace, 1 *John* 3. 17. *Whoſoever* (ſaith he) *hath this worlds goods, and ſeeth his brother in need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how doth the love of God dwell in him?* Though a mans mouth be open with good words, yet if he ſhut his bowels from good deeds, there's no love to God or man hous'd in that mans heart. *It is no pity (to ſpeak of) only to ſpeak pity*; and therefore the Apoſtle adds, *ver.* 18. *My little children, let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth*; that's the true meaning of this word, *To him that is afflicted pity ſhould be ſhewed*; but you (my friends) have not given me ſo much as the ſound of pity; you have not bemoaned me, much leſs have you relieved me, which is the ſubſtance of pity, real pity: you have not loved me in tongue, giving me good words, much leſs in deed and in truth. Deed-pity is both the duty and the diſpoſition of a godly man; therefore this word (*Cheſed*) in the concrete, is often uſed in Scripture, to ſignifie a godly man; he is one that hath obtained much grace and pity from the Lord, and he is kind, gracious and pitiful unto men. The holy Proverb aſſures us, *That a good man is merciful, pitiful to his beaſt*, but much more to a man; and moſt of all to a godly man, who is his brother in the neareſt bond. And it is conſiderable how this word was uſed by way of diſtinction among the *Jews*, who caſt their whole people or nation into three ranks, (and it is grounded upon *Rom.* 5. 6, 7. Where the Apoſtle alludes to thoſe three ſorts.) Firſt, There were (*Reſhagnim*) ungodly men, the prophane rabble. Secondly, There were (*Tſadikim*) *righteous men.* And thirdly, There were (*Chaſidim*) *good men*, or pitiful men. *Scarcely* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *will one die for a righteous man*, for a man fair and juſt in his dealings? peradventure (for one of the *Chaſidim*) for *a good man ſome one may chance to die*: He that had been pitiful, might (haply) find pity; and having done ſo much good in his life, all would deſire he ſhould live ſtill. But *herein God commended his love to us, that while we were yet ſinners* (*Reſhagnim*) in the worſt rank of men, *Chriſt died for us.* No man had either love or pity enough to die for them who had ſo much impiety. The fartheſt, that the natural line of mans pity can reach, is to do good to thoſe who do him good, or are good.

Pity, notes out ſuch a ſort of men, and ſuch a ſort of actions as are fulleſt of love, of bowels of brotherly kindneſs and compaſſion; hence the *Stork*, which by divers of the Ancients was put for the *Embleme of love and benignity*, is expreſt in the Hebrew by this word, *Lev.* 11. 19. The Stork is very tender toward her young ones, and her young ones are as tender of her when ſhe is old, as Naturaliſts have obſerved. So then, this word imports the height of all offices and affections of love from man to man, eſpecially from Chriſtian to Chriſtian, in times of trouble, and caſes of extremity. *This pity you ſhould have ſhewed me,* ſaith *Job.*

Antiqui vocant Ciconiam pietatis cultricem. Ciconiis pietas eximia eſt. Sol.

But he forſaketh the fear of the Almighty.] That is, he forſakes all godlineſs, goodneſs and religion; fear takes in all that's good; and ſo it is conceived, that *Job* retorts the words of *Eliphaz* in the fourth Chapter, *Is this thy fear?* or, *where is thy fear, thy religion?* Now *Job* ſaith, *Is this your fear? You have forſaken the fear of the Almighty. Is this your Religion, to deal ſo harſhly with a diſtreſſed friend, or to give him ſuch cold comfort? Surely you have forſaken that fear of the Almighty, which you have charged me with.* Have not I reaſon to ask, *Is this thy fear?* or to conclude, *You have forſaken the fear of the Almighty.*

Theſe words are diverſly rendred. Some thus, *He that takes away pity from his friend, hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty.* And that's a truth, and a good ſence; though not ſo clear to the letter of the Text.

Qui tollit ab amico ſuo miſericordiam, timorem Domini dereliquit. Vulg.

Mr. *Broughton* joynes this with the former verſe, *By him whoſe mercy is molten toward his friend, and who leaveth the fear of the Almighty.* So referring this (*melting*) to mercy, and not to the man, joyning it to the former thus, *Have not I my defence, and is judgment driven away from me, by him whoſe mercy is molten away toward his neighbour, and who leaveth the fear of the Almighty?* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Eliphaz, doſt thou think thou haſt driven away all wiſdom from me by thy diſpute? doſt thou think that I have loſt my reaſon, as thou haſt loſt thy pity? Thou thinkeſt wiſdom and underſtanding have forſaken me; but it appears by thy dealings, that thou haſt forſaken the fear of God, which is the beginning of wiſdom.*

Thirdly, It is rendred in the contrary ſence. The word (*Cheſed*) being taken for reproach and harſh dealing, and ſo the meaning is made out with a kind of admiration, thus; *Should reproaches be caſt upon a man that is afflicted, from his friend? ſhould he be told that he hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty, and that wiſdom is driven from him? Do you think I am not able to diſcover your dealings? ſhould you go about to reproach me in this condition? ſhould you tell me thus harſhly, that I am departed from the fear of God? Is this think you, a fair carriage towards me, when you ſaw me melted and afflicted, you ſhould have given me ſweet and comfortable words, not reproachful words.*

An diſſoluto à ſodali ſuo convitium, & quod timorem omnipotentis deſeruerit? An hoc amicitiæ jus? &c. *ut nunc ego à vobis audio.* Merc.

Job (according to this ſence) found his friends dealing with him as the *Jews* with Chriſt, to whom being athirſt, they gave vinegar to drink; or, as *David* in the type ſpeaks, *They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink*: here ſeems to be a like meaning; you have given me reproaches in ſtead of comforts, ſlandered me in ſtead of refreſhing me; and is this the courſe you ſhould take? As *Abſolom* ſaid to *Huſhai*, 2 Sam. 16. 17. *Is this thy kindneſs to thy friend?* when he ſeemed to fall away from *David* unto him. So *Job* might ſpeak to *Eliphaz*, *Is this thy kindneſs to thy friend, to load him with reproaches, when you ſee him overladen with afflictions?*

A fourth thus, *Shall he that conſumes by reproaches of his friend, forſake the fear of the Almighty?* The meaning whereof is this, Do you think that all men, whoſe riches and comforts are loſt, have loſt their reaſon and judgment? And do you think that they who are reproach'd by men, do not fear God? The world commonly judges none wiſe but thoſe that are rich; and that they fear God moſt, who rejoyce moſt. But my practice and example (I doubt not) ſhall confute that opinion, and give all the world to know, that a man conſumed and ſpent by the reproaches of men, and the ſtroaks of God, may yet fear God, and keep up his ſtock to the full in holineſs and wiſdom.

Qui tabeſcit ab amico ſuo probro, etiā timorem omnipotentis relinquet? Fœlices ſoli videntur ſapere, miſeri deſipere.

Fifthly, This melting is referred, not to the pity of his friends, but to *Job* melting or conſuming, by that which they called pity; thus,

Contabeſcens charitas, non tam dicitur erga quem ſocii charitas contabeſcit, quam qui per ſocii charitatem præpoſteram (ſcilicet) & ſine ſcientia exercitam contabeſcit. Cocc.

Shall he be charged to have forſaken the fear of the Almighty, who conſumes by the charity of his friends? that is, who is more afflicted by the counſels which his friends (in love) give him, then by all his other afflictions. As *the mercies of the wicked are alwayes cruel* (Prov. 12. 10.) ſo ſometimes the mercies of the godly are; eſpecially when they give prepoſterous and indiſcreet counſel; and this interpretation ſuits well with the title which *Job* gave his friends, *Miſerable comforters are ye all*, Chap. 16. 2. That is, you have done your good will to comfort me, but God hath not ſhewed you the way, nor given you the tongue of the learned, that ye might know how to miniſter a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary; and ſo notwithſtanding all your good intentions, ye have added to my miſeries.

Hunc diſſolutū (præ doloribus) ab amico ejus (exhibenda) miſericordia (derelinquit) & (eundem diſſolutum) timor Saddai derelinquit.

A ſixth thus, That pity which friends ſhould ſhew this man melted with afflictions, hath forſaken him; but hath the fear of the Almighty forſaken him alſo?

Horum duorum verſiculorum terminos ita digerimus, ut in poſteri, vox diſſolutus *ſit maſculini generis, & accuſativi caſus, regaturque à verbo derelinquit: cujus duo nominativi ſint, miſericordia & timor Saddai, illi vero diſſolutus ſit* Job *loquens de ſeipſo in tertia perſona, Apparet ex hac explicatione* ל *cum nominativo, ut in* ולשרים Iſa. 31. 1. & Ezra 1. 5. Coc.

The meaning whereof may be made out to this effect, as if *Job* had ſaid thus, You plainly ſee, that there is no help in me, for my pains and unceſſant troubles have quite bereaved me of all that ſtrength, upon which I ſhould naturally ſubſiſt; and as for you (my friends) that pity and compaſſion which you ſhould afford a man thus melted with ſorrows, is quite fled and gone from your hearts and lips. But what then? Is the fear of God departed alſo from this ſorrowful ſoul? It is confeſs'd, ſtrength is gone from my body, and I ſee pity towards me is gone from your ſouls. O how miſerable then were I, if I ſhould go from my God, and forſake his fear! You ſhall ſee, that though the pity of men hath forſaken me, a melted man, yet (as you object) the fear of God hath not.

Diſſoluto à ſocio ejus benignitas eſt, ſc. impendenda, alioqui timorem Omnipotentis deſerit. Druſ.

Vau apud Hebræos variè ſumitur, & interdum pro alioqui.

A ſeventh reading, varying from ours only in a word, gives the ſence very fair and eaſie. *To him that is afflicted, or melted, pity ſhould be ſhewed by his friend, otherwiſe he forſakes the fear of the Almighty.* Whereas we ſay, [*but he forſaketh*] this tranſlation ſaith, [*Otherwiſe he forſaketh*] *the fear of the Almighty*; that is, if a man do not ſhew pity to his friend in affliction, that man ſheweth that he hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty. Thus, as I hinted at the entrance of this paſſage, Interpreters are much divided about the Grammatical conſtruction of theſe words; there is a truth in every ſence given, and their variety may teach us to adore the fulneſs of the holy language, which leads our thoughts ſo many wayes, as alſo to be humbled for our own blindneſs of mind, and narrowneſs of heart, to ſee or comprehend the mind of God fairly written to us.

But I take the laſt to be the cleareſt meaning of *Job* in this paſſage, and that, to which moſt of the former are reducible, and therefore ſtaying upon this ſence, I ſhall give two or three Obſervations from it.

First, *It is the common duty of friends, and the ſpecial duty of godly friends, to pity and help one another in affliction.*

I ſay, to pity and help (for that's the compaſs of the word) we have not done our duty in pitying the diſtreſſed, unleſs we come to real aſſiſting them. We ſatisfie not our obligation to the bond and law of love by giving comfortable words. As that faith, which is alone without works, doth not juſtifie us; ſo that pity which is alone without works, doth not juſtifie our faith; ſuch empty pity will go for little better then cruelty, and not to help, will be interpreted oppreſſion. *Word-pity is but the leaf of love, Deed-pity is the fruit of it.* As we ſhould *labour to be filled with all the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Chriſt*; ſo with all the fruits of love, of compaſſion, and of tenderneſs, for theſe alſo are by *Jeſus Chriſt, unto the glory and praiſe of God*, Phil. 1. 11. Obſerve,

Secondly, That, *the fear of God is ever joyned with love to our brethren.*

True religion (that we mean by fear) hath a double bond in it, a bond of obedience to God, and a bond of love to men. The Apoſtle puts ſo much of religion in the latter, that in one place he makes it all religion, the very definition of religion, *Jam.* 1. 17. *Pure religion and undefiled before God* (what is it?) *It is this, to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow in their affliction.* This is religion and pure religion, that is, this is a great branch of religion, and a ſpecial fruit, which ſprings from that goodly tree, Religion. To viſit the fatherleſs, is more then to look upon them, and to aſk them how they do: To viſit them is to help them: It is like that viſit (in its proportion) which Chriſt made into the diſtreſſed world. He viſited and redeemed his people, or he viſited his people to redeem them. And the fatherleſs, to whoſe viſit religion leads us, are not only poor children, or Orphans, whoſe parents are lately dead, and they not able to ſhift for themſelves; but the fatherleſs are all the afflicted, who want our help, or patronage. Every helpleſs and comfortleſs ſoul is as an Orphan without parents, as a widow without an husband, *To relieve ſuch is pure religion.* In the 1 *Joh.* 4. 20. the Apoſtle makes that an everlaſting conviction againſt any man, that he loves not God, if he loves not his brother; *If a man ſay he loveth God, and hateth his brother*, (there is no *medium* in this point, between hating and not loving, or between hating and not helping, if it be in our power) *he is a lyar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?* *Job* puts it ſo here, you ſhould ſhew pity to your friend in affliction, but you forſake the fear of the Almighty; and where the fear of God is not, the love of God is not. *Love to God is viſible in love to man.* And in affliction the love of man to man is made moſt viſible. *A true friend can hardly be diſcovered in proſperity, and a falſe friend can hardly be hid in adverſity.* Obſerve,

Laſtly, *It is not enough, not to be cruel to, or to grieve the afflicted.*

We muſt ſhew them favour, and do them good. The light of nature condemns the oppreſſor, and the light of Religion condemns them who ſhew no pity.

VERS. 15, — 22.

My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the ſtream of brooks that paſs away;

Which are blackiſh by reaſon of the Ice, and wherein the Snow is hid.

What time they wax warm, they vaniſh: when it is hot, they are conſumed out of their place.

The paths of their way are turned aſide; they go to nothing, and periſh.

The Troops of Tema **looked, the Companies of** Sheba **waited for them.**

They were confounded, becauſe they had hoped; they came thither and were aſhamed.

For now ye are nothing; ye ſee my caſting down, and are afraid.

JOB having in the former verſe begun to charge his friends with unkindneſs, proceeds in this context to illuſtrate his charge by a ſimilitude, to make their unkindneſs yet more notorious and viſible, he ſets it out by things which are viſible: that ſo their own eyes or experiences might convince them, as well as his diſcourſe. The whole ſimilitude is extended from *verſ.* 15, to 21. The ſum of all is this, That *Job* had found his friends like thoſe brooks which hold leaſt water when there is moſt need, and greateſt enquiry for water; they gave him no comfort when he was nothing (to the eye) but ſorrow. He was parcht and ſcorcht in thoſe hot regions and fiery climates of affliction; and they gave him not to his (taſte) ſo much as a drop of water to cool his tongue, to eaſe his complaints. That in general.

For the better underſtanding of this elegant ſimilitude, we may obſerve the parts of it.

We have here { 1. The *Protaſis* or propoſal
2. The *Exegeſis* or explication
3. The *Apodoſis* or application } of this ſimilitude.

Or more plainly, we have four things conſiderable in it.

1. } The ſimilitude is { Propoſed.
2. Explained.
3. Confirmed.
4. Applied.

It is, Firſt, Propoſed, *verſ.* 15. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook*, &c.

Secondly, Explained, *verſ.*16,17,18. *Which are blackiſh by reaſon of Ice, and wherein the Snow is hid; what time they wax warm, they vaniſh*, &c.

Thirdly, Confirmed, *verſ.* 19,20. *The Troops of* Tema *looked, the Companies of* Sheba *waited for them, they were confounded, becauſe they had hope*, &c.

Fourthly, Applied to them, *verſ.* 21. *For now ye are nothing, ye ſee my caſting down, and are afraid.*

So much for the parts, now to the opening of the words.

Verſ. 15. **My brethren have dealt deceitfully, as a brook**, &c.

אח *Frater, propinquus, vel qui eadem profeſſione, gente, moribus vel amicitia frater eſt. Etiam tribuitur inanimatis, quæ ſimilitudinem quandā invicē habent.* Chem. *in Harm. Evang. Vera amicitia eſt quædam fraternitas & animorum æqualitas.*

My brethren.] The words ſignifie, firſt, a brother of the ſame bowels (ſo brother is taken in the ſtricteſt ſence) a natural brother.

Secondly, A brother of the ſame blood, any kinſman.

Thirdly, It ſignifies any one that is knit to us in affection, or like us in manners and diſpoſition.

Fourthly, It notes all thoſe, who are bounded with us in the ſame Nation, or aſſociated in the ſame profeſſion, though ſcattered all the world over. As in Scripture that relative word *Father* is taken, not only for a natural father, but for any leader, guide, or director of others in Spiritual or Civil reſpects; ſo they who are near one to another in Civil or Spiritual reſpects, are called brethren, though they be never ſo far diſtant in blood or place.

And it is obſervable, that this word likewiſe is attributed to things inanimate, or without life, when they have a ſimilitude or likeneſs one to another. So *Exod.*25.20. *The Faces of the Cherubims ſhall look one to another.* The Hebrew is, *Each man to his brother.* And *Exod.* 26. 3, 5. The Curtains of the Tabernacle, the loops, and (*verſ.* 17.) the Tenons, are all called *woman and ſiſter*, becauſe they were all to be of the ſame materials and dimenſions.

אח *Frater cognationem habet cum* אחד *unus, vel* יחד *pariter, quoniā ſimiles ſunt, vel in uno conveniunt; fratres dicuntur.* אחי שנם יחד.

Some Criticks obſerve, that the Hebrew word for a *Brother*, is of near brother-hood or alliance, with two other words, whereof the firſt ſignifies *One*, and the other *Alike*, or *Together*, to ſhew that brethren ought to be as *One*, and *Alike*, or *Together*: which latter is by an elegant *Paranomaſia*, joyned with it, *Pſal.* 133. 1. *Behold how good and pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*, or as we put in the margin, *To dwell even together.*

So then, the very word, whereby brethren are expreſſed, notes, that there ought to be a *Nearneſs*, a *Similitude*, a *Oneneſs* (if I may ſo ſpeak) between them in their affections and actions. Yet (ſaith *Job*) theſe men, whoſe relation thus obliges them, have laid themſelves out to my greateſt diſadvantage.

בגד *Perfidus fuit, perfidè egit, violavit fidem, vel fœdus.*

My brethren [**have dealt deceitfully with me.**] The word imports, dealing perfidiouſly, or treacherouſly in any kind, *Iſa.* 21.3. *The Treacherous dealer dealeth treacherouſly.* And it is applied to that treachery or perfidiouſneſs, which is the higheſt in civil relations, the treachery of the wife to the husband, *Jer.* 3. 20. *Surely as a wife treacherouſly departeth from her husband, ſo you have departed from me*; Idolatry is the violation of our faith to Chriſt, and therefore often called adultery.

Fortè quod veſtimentū ſit primæ hominis contra Deū perfidiæ tegumentū & teſtimonium, cum antea homo nudus fuerit. Buxt.

This word (to note that by the way) as it ſignifies to deal perfidiouſly, in the *Verb*, and perfidiouſneſs and treachery, in the *Nown*; ſo alſo a *garment*, or *veſture*, made up of any kind of matter or ſtuff. And the reaſon is thus given by a learned Hebrician, *Becauſe a garment is both the cover and the witneſs of mans firſt perfidiouſneſs and treachery againſt God.* Our firſt parents in innocency had no garment, but innocency: they were without cloathing, and wanted no cloathing; they were naked, and did not perceive their nakedneſs; but as ſoon as they departed from God treacherouſly, their ſin told them, that is, made them feel, that they were naked; therefore they put themſelves on aprons of leaves, but God clothed them with skins, and that clothing he veſted in a word of that Language, which ſhould ever mind man of the reaſon, why cloaths were firſt put upon him, namely, his perfidious and treacherous dealing with God. *That* (take it in paſſage) *which now ſo many make a matter of their pride, is a witneſs of their ſhame, their ſhameful rebellion, and falling away from God.*

Put theſe together, *My brethren have dealt deceitfully with me. Job* meaneth it of his three viſiting friends, theſe (if not brethren of his blood, yet) were of great familiarity and correſpondence with him; therefore he at once titles and reproves them thus, *My brethren have dealt deceitfully with me.* Hence Obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *there is no obligation ſo near, but an evil heart will break thorough it.*

My brethren have dealt deceitfully. Though I ſuppoſe *Job* here charged his brethren too deeply, if ſo deep as their hearts: who, notwithſtanding they failed in the buſineſs they came about, yet I believe, had no intention to wrong or to deceive him: yet many have been intentionally deceived by brethren; and it is a truth in poſition, *That brethren will deceive.*

Secondly, Whereas he puts ſuch an Emphaſis upon it, *My brethren have dealt deceitfully with me.* As if he had ſaid, you are not enemies, you are not ſtrangers that ſpeak theſe things, but my brethren. Note from it,

> That, *as it is ill for any to deal deceitfully, ſo worſt of all for brethren.*

It is a trouble to be deceived by any, and a ſin for any to deceive, but it is worſe to be deceived by thoſe we truſt. And when a brother deceives, the ſin of the deceit is doubled, whether he be a brother in the fleſh, or a brother in friendſhip, or a brother in the profeſſion of the faith. Deceit from a brother is exceeding bad in all, but worſt of all in the laſt. *Deceit from a brother in the faith, is more then double unfaithfulneſs. David* complains (*Pſalm* 55. 12.) of the wrong he had received from ſuch a brother, *It was not an enemy that reproached me, for then I could have born it* (the reproach had not been half ſo heavy or grievous unto me, if an enemy had reproached me; the wound had not been half ſo wounding, if an enemy had ſmitten me) *But it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintance, we took ſweet counſel together, and we walked to the Houſe of God in company*; to be reproached and wronged by thee, this is the thing that lies heavy upon my ſpirit. God himſelf complains moſt, when they deal perfidiouſly with him, who are near him, his own people; he cannot expect any other of Heathens and Strangers; but when his children deal deceitfully with him, he complains of this, as much with admiration as with anger. *I have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me,* Iſa. 1. 2. He calls *Heaven and earth* to bear witneſs of this unfaithfulneſs. *Men are wicked beyond all reaſon* (not that there is reaſon in any wickedneſs, but ſo we ſpeak of all exceſſes) *men* (I ſay) *are wicked beyond all reaſon, when God appeals againſt them, to things without all ſence. David* ſatisfied himſelf in the evil meaſure he received from a ſtranger, becauſe he had received evil from a ſon. As greater benefits and favours ſwallow up the thought of leſſer; ſo do greater afflictions, and unkindneſſes. A man hath no leaſure to think of his diſcurteſie, who gives him ill language, when another aſſaults him to cut his throat. When *Shimei* railed on *David*, (2 *Sam.* 16. 10, 11.) *Abiſhai* heats his ſpirit to revenge; *What*, ſaith *David*, *my ſon which came forth of my bowels, ſeeketh my life, how much more now may this Benjamite do it?* This ſtranger, one of another Tribe and Family: As if he had ſaid, I have no reaſon to be much troubled, to hear a ſtranger ſpeak hard words againſt me, when my ſon is up in arms againſt me: to hear the one curſe me, when the other would kill me. *Moſes* uſes this argument to umpire between the two Hebrews, *Sirs, ye are brethren, why do you wrong one to another?* Acts 7. 26. It will be a mighty aggravation of ſin, when God ſhall ſay, *My children have dealt deceitfully with me:* Or man, my bowels, my brethren have dealt deceitfully with me.

My brethren have dealt deceitfully, [**as a brook.**] Here is the ſhadow of their deceit, *Job* explains himſelf by a ſimilitude, *They have dealt deceitfully.* But how? I will tell you how, *They have dealt deceifully, as a brook, and as the ſtream of a brook they paſs away.* I can go to the ſtreams, and to the brooks, and ſhew my friends the face of their hearts to me (I am ſure of their dealings with me) in thoſe waters.

They

נחל
Significat hæreditatē, deinde fluvium, & quoniam torrens plerumque in valle labitur, accipitur aliquando pro valle. Merc.

They are as a brook.] The word ſignifies both a *Brook* and a *Valley*; becauſe brooks uſually run in valleys, therefore one word expreſſeth both. The ſame word ſignifies alſo to *inherit*, and an *inheritance*: Hence ſome joyn all the three ſences together in this one word, *A brook, a valley*, and *an inheritance*; becauſe valleyes inherit the brooks which deſcend to them from the mountains; valleyes are the heirs or inheritreſſes of the ſtreams which iſſue from the hills, *Pſal.* 104.. 10. The Holy Ghoſt deſcribes a ſpring or a brook, thus, *He ſendeth ſprings into the valleyes, which run among the hills*; hills are the original of rivers, and they *run among the hills*; hills ſend them down as a portion to the valleyes.

But the *Brook* here ſpoken of, is not ſuch a brook as hath a ſpring in a hill, mountain or rock, but a brook or torrent cauſed by rain, or melted ſnow; the Text clears that meaning: *My friends have dealt deceitfully, as a brook*; a brook ſpringing from a hill will not deceive, ſuch a brook being fed with continual ſupplies of water, will give us drink continually; but a brook falling from a hill, fails quickly: ſuch a brook the next words expreſs more clearly, *And as the ſtream of brooks they paſs away.*

אפק
Aqua impetuoſa & violenta quæ fluit cū vi & impetu.

As a ſtream of brooks.] That is, as thoſe torrents and overflowings of brooks; a brook hath a conſtant channel, and it hath an accidental channel: We ſee many ſtreams running into a brook in a time of rain, and that brook ſwoln above its banks, ſending out many ſtreams: So that to ſay they are like the ſtream of *brooks*, is to ſay they are like brooks when they ſtream forth, or to thoſe ſtreams of brooks which, by waters from the clouds, are ſuddenly increaſt: Theſe ſtreams of brooks uſually called *Land-floods*, have their ſpring or fountain in the clouds; which ſometimes diſtil in ſoft, ſoaking, deawy ſhowers, and often pour out in ſtrong, violent ſtormy rains, whence theſe ſtreams (which in the Hebrew are denominated from their impetuous violent ſtrength) run violently, and ſpend their ſtrength as quickly. *That which is violent cannot be permanent, much leſs perpetual.* We have the word, *Pſalm* 126. 4. where the Church prays, *Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the ſtreams in the South*; which ſome render, *As the mighty waters in the South.* Why would they have their captivity turned like thoſe mighty floods in the South? The reaſon is this, becauſe the South is a dry country, where there are few ſprings, ſcarce a Fountain to be found in a whole deſart. What then are the waters they have in the South, in thoſe parched Countries? They are theſe mighty ſtrong torrents, which are cauſed by the ſhowers of Heaven: So the meaning of that prayer in the Pſalm, is, that God would ſuddenly turn their captivity. Rivers come ſuddenly in the South: where no ſpring appears, nor any ſign of a river, yet in an hour the water is up, and the ſtreams overflow. As when *Eliah* ſent his ſervant toward the Sea (in the time of *Ahab*) he went and looked, and ſaid, *There is nothing*; that is, no ſhew of rain, not the leaſt cloud to be ſeen, yet preſently the heavens grew black, and there was a great rain, 1 *King*. 18.44. Thus let your captivity be turned, thus ſpeedily and ſuddenly, though there be no appearance of ſalvation, no more then there is of a fountain in the ſandy deſart, or of rain in the cleareſt heavens, yet bring ſalvation for us. We uſe to ſay of things beyond our ſupply, Have we a ſpring of them Or can we fetch them out of the clouds? So though no ground appears whence ſuch rivers ſhould flow, yet let our ſalvation be as rivers in the South, as rivers fetched out of the clouds, and dropt in an inſtant immediately from the heavens. *Job* compares his brethren and friends to thoſe ſtreams of *brooks*, they came ſuddenly, but they are quickly down again. The compariſon in the *Pſalm* is made only with reſpect to the ſudden appearance of thoſe rivers, but *Job* applieth it to the ſudden paſſing away of thoſe rivers; *as the ſtream of brooks they paſs away.* Their coming ſo ſuddenly is a great refreſhing, but their ſudden departure is as great a diſappointment.

Nullum violentum perpetuum. Tanquam aquas validiſſimas. Jun.

בער
Eſt præterire et penitus evaneſcere, quia quæ prætererunt non amplius exiſtunt.

The word notes two things; Firſt, motion: and ſecondly conſumption. In both ſences violent torrents *paſs away*. Firſt, they paſs away with a ſtrong motion; and then they paſs away with a ſudden conſumption, they run ſo faſt, that they run themſelves off their legs, they come to nothing; their motion ſpends them, whereas the motion of a river doth not. So the word is uſed, *Pſal.* 37. 36. *He paſſed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I ſought him, but he could not be found.* Thoſe things that paſs away, are many times ſaid to loſe their being and their uſe; *He paſſed away, and lo, he was not.* So *Job* meaneth here, theſe ſtreams paſs away, and lo, they are not.

Having thus propoſed this ſimilitude, that his friends dealt deceitfully as a brook, and ſhewed what kind of brook he meant, thoſe violent torrents which *paſs away*; now he gives a further deſcription of thoſe brooks.

Verſ. 16. **Which are blackiſh by reaſon of the Ice, and wherein the Snow is hid.**

The vulgar Latine puts a ſtrange ſence upon this paſſage, rendring it thus, *He who fears the froſt, ſhall be overwhelmed by ſnow.* Which ſeems to be a proverbial ſpeech, to ſet forth thoſe, who ſhifting from one danger or extream, run into another more dangerous, like that of the Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 5. 19. As if a man did flie from a Lion, and a Bear met him, or went into his houſe, and leaned his hand on a wall, and a Serpent bit him. But as their tranſlation is a corruption of the Text, ſo their ordinary gloſs corrupts their tranſlation. * *I feared ſmalleſt ſins, but now I am puniſhed after the rate of great ſins,* Whereas indeed *Job* was ready to acknowledge that the leaſt ſin he ever committed, deſerved a greater puniſhment then the greateſt pain he felt; and yet never lookt upon any of his pains, as the puniſhment of his ſins. But to paſs that:

Qui timet pruinam irruet ſuper eum nix. Vulg.

Elegans dictum in ſocios Jobi, ſed minus concordat cum hebraica veritate. Druſ.

* *Timebam peccata minima, nunc punior quaſi pro magnis ſceleribus.* Gloſſ.

Take the mind of *Job*, as purſuing his ſimilitude in more words to this effect; Theſe mighty ſtreams are but for a while, *they paſs away*: or if at any time they continue, it is not from any quality or fitneſs they have in themſelves to continue; but as their coming is extrinſecal (not out of the ground, but from the air) ſo is their continuance; I grant, theſe great land-floods ſometimes ſtay with us a while, not becauſe they have any ordinary natural ſupply or ſtay, *they are only blackiſh by reaſon of the Ice:* after a great rain in Winter, a great froſt comes, and then your water courſes, or brooks, ſwelling above their channels, are ſurprized by cold, and cannot get away; the cold condenſeth the waters, and freezeth them up, and the ſnow is kept cloſe from melting: then theſe torrents, or ſtreams, ſeem to be laſting fountains, and treaſures of water.

Or take it thus, He compares thoſe friends, who adminiſter no comfort in trouble, to brooks, which in time of rain, when we have no need, overflow with water; but in cold Winter-weather, are lockt up with froſts, or in hot Summer-weather, are exhaled and dried up by the Sun. As it follows:

Verſ. 17. **What time they wax warm, they vaniſh; when it is hot, they are conſumed out of their place.**

Theſe ſtreams you might think living, laſting ſtreams, or ſtanding, fixed waters, when you ſaw them frozen into great mountains of Ice and Snow compact together: but ſtay a while, and you ſhall ſee what becomes of them; at the next thaw they are conſumed out of their place: *Such friends have I*, and ſuch is the friendſhip of man-kind, unleſs God renew the heart, or reſtrain it from its natural baſeneſs.

The word which we tranſlate, **to wax warm**, is uſed but this once in Scripture: it ſignifies alſo, *ſcattered*, or *diſſipated.* And the reaſon is, becauſe heat or warmth, diſſipates and ſeparates thoſe things which were united or congealed. The Sun warms the ſtreams, and then the waters, which ſtood on a heap, ſcatter and diſperſe. The ſum of all is: Theſe ſtreams in winter have nothing to ſtay their conſuming, but their hardening; and as ſoon as heat comes, they diſſolve, and are gone, in Summer theſe brooks are dry. This is yet further illuſtrated.

זרב
Diffluere, diffundi. Buxt.
Diſſipari. Vulg.

Verſ. 18. **The paths of their way are turned aſide, they go to nothing and periſh.**

What he had ſaid before in thoſe words, *They vaniſh and are conſumed out of their place*, he ſaith again in theſe, *The paths of their way are turned aſide, they go to nothing and periſh.* That is, theſe ſtreams are as if they had never been, you cannot find them in their former channels; theſe waters are quite ſpent, the Sun at a few draughts empties theſe veſſels, and draws them dry; ſo that there is not a drop left, either for man or beaſt.

The word which we render, **Turned aſide**, ſignifies *to gather up or contract into a narrow compaſs*, as when a man

Inclinavit, percelluit.

of courage gathers or ſhrinks up himſelf; or, as we ſay, *buckles to a buſineſs*, that he may put out the uttermoſt of his ſtrength; ſo *Judg.* 16. 29. When *Samſon* came to the pillars on which the houſe ſtood, the text ſaith, *He turned himſelf with all his might.* It is the word of the Text) as if *Samſon* would collect all the power he had into one place, to pull the pillars out of theirs. He that would do a great ſervice, will have all his outward ſtrength about him, or near at hand. And at ſuch a time a man will have all his inward ſtrength cloſe together, and therefore puts his body into leſs room, if he can, that all his members may act as one. We ſhrink up our bodies alſo in ſudden fear. The word is ſo uſed, *Ruth* 3. 8. When *Boaz*, that good man, awakening, found *Ruth* at his feet, and perceived there was a woman on the floor, he gathered or ſhrunk up himſelf, as a man that is afraid in his bed, will gather up his limbs nearer together, and lies in leſs room. In ſuch a manner the heat gathers or ſhrinks up the waters.

Thus the paths of theſe waters (ſaith *Job*) are ſhrunk up or gathered together, as it were, into one channel, or they creep under the banks, to ſhelter themſelves from that *great drinker, and river-drinker the Sun*; but all their ſubterfuges are in vain; the Sun dries up all, nothing remains; ſo it follows in the next words.

תהו *Vacuitas.*

They go to nothing and periſh.] It is the word uſed, *Gen.* 1. 2. *The earth was without form and void.* There was a *nothingneſs* upon that confuſed heap before a ſecond creation ſtampt a form upon it: that which is uſeleſs, is but as good as nothing. The *Jews* expreſs an *Idol* by this word, 1 *Sam.* 12. 21. Which ſuits excellently with that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 8. *An Idol is nothing in the world.* So theſe ſtreams, theſe rivers which ſeemed ſuch goodly pleaſant ſtreams, ſuch as might have relieved the thirſty traveller at all ſeaſons, come to them in ſummer, they are gone to nothing, they are like that rude maſs when the world lay undigeſted into parts, void and without form.

Before I come to the general Obſervations from the whole ſimilitude, obſerve, from this deſcription of paſſing ſtreams,

That, *Things or perſons cannot hold long, which are not ſupplied from an inward principle.*

Metaphora in ſignis & Hieroglyphicum clariſſimè exprimens, vanitatem magnæ ſpeciei, pietatis & charitatis quæ non ex vera fide provenit. Coc.

Job deſcribes ſtreams, having no ſpring to maintain them, the rain filled them, the cold froze them, and the warmth of the Sun emptied them. As it is in things, ſo in *perſons*, no man can hold out either in gracious and ſpiritual, or juſt and honourable civil acts, unleſs he have a principle within, anſwerable to what he undertakes (*Job* 27. 10.) *Will the hypocrite alwayes call upon God?* Not alwayes; why? becauſe he hath not a ſpirit (or ſpring) of prayer: Therefore hypocrites are well compared to ſuch brooks, as *Job* here deſcribes. *A failing brook is a clear embleme of* a *falſe heart, both to God and man.*

And that is the reaſon why regeneration is ſet forth by the gift of a new principle, of a new heart, or of a new nature. It is to no purpoſe to work a man by ſome extrinſecal motive, by hopes, or by fears, by threats, or by promiſes, by rewards or puniſhments, to do, or forbear good or evil: unleſs he have a new heart, all vaniſhes and comes to nothing. A regenerate perſon hath a *new heart*, *a new ſpirit*, *is a new creature*, *a new man*; all which notes *a laſting principle*, an everlaſting frame of holineſs in the main; though it may ſometime decline and need repairs. *It is far better to be a rivulet, a little ſpring, then to be a great torrent; it is better to have a little ſpring of grace, then a great loud ſtream of profeſſion.* It is reported by *Geographers*, in their deſcriptions of *America*, that in *Peru*, there is a River called the *Diurnal River*, or the day-river, becauſe it falls with a mighty current in the day, but in the night is dry. This may ſeem to be a fabulous report, but the reaſon given (which is direct to the point in hand) makes it not only probable, but very plain; for they tell us, that this River is not fed by a fountain or ſpring, but is cauſed meerly by the melting of the ſnow, which lies on the mountains thereabouts; in the day-time, when the Sun is up and warm, the Snow melts; but when night comes and the Sun goes down, the Snow freezes, and ſo the channel dries. Thus it is with thoſe who have not an inward principle of holineſs, they may have a great flood of profeſſion, when the Snow melts down into their boſoms, by the ſhine of outward proſperity; but when night and and cold, when troubles and dangers come, their waters freeze up, or paſs away, and go to nothing. So much of the cauſes, why theſe ſtreams, theſe water-brooks vaniſh, they have no ſpring to maintain and feed them: Rain and froſt, and ſnow (uncertain all) are all they have to truſt to.

Job having thus explained his ſimilitude, and ſhewed what he means by brooks, and what kind of brooks he means; he now confirms all by an experiment. You ſhall ſee it thus, theſe brooks will yield nothing at a time of need, many have dried them; who are they? *The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.*

ארח *Semita, ſemita thema, cœtus hominum ſive turma viatorum.*

Hos torrentes deſignaverunt, ſive pro ſtatione ad refocillationem. Coc.

Itinera, ſc. *homines iter facientes.*

The troops of Tema.] That is, the travellers who came in great companies from *Tema*, and paſſed through thoſe deſart Countries, where they had obſerved in the winter, ſtreams and floods of water frozen, and full of ſnow; now in their ſummer travels, being parcht with heat, and diſtreſſed for want of water, they expected relief from thoſe brooks which they had markt out for themſelves, and of which they had ſaid, Theſe will be watering places for us, and refreſhings in extreameſt heat. We read often in the Old Teſtament of ſuch travellers, *Gen.* 37. 25. *Behold a company of* Iſhmaelites, *came from* Gilead, *with their Camels, bearing ſpicery and balm, and myrrhe, going down into* Egypt. Such are now called a *Caravan.* The letter of the Hebrew is, *The paths of* Tema; the path or road in which they travelled, is put for the travellers. So, *Iſa.* 21. 13. *O ye travelling companies of* Dedanim! the Hebrew is, *O ye paths of* Dedanim! that is, O ye who travel in the paths of *Dedanim!* Thus here; *The wayes of* Tema, *or the troops of* Tema; *and the companies of* Sheba, waited and looked in theſe places for water, and (as it followeth) *they found none.*

The troops of Tema [**looked.**] Why did they look? why did they wait for thoſe ſtreams? They had ſeen plenty of water there, and therefore being thirſty, they looked and waited for water. Hence note,

Firſt, That, *The ſenſe of want carries us out to look for a remedie.*

The troops of *Tema* looked; After what? after the ſtreams of brooks; why? becauſe they were parched with thirſt. They that are thirſty, will be looking for a ſtream, for a river; they that are hungry, will be enquiring after bread. As it is in natural, ſo in ſpiritual things; when once the ſoul is parched and thirſty, Oh how it longs for the rivers of mercy, for the ſtreams of conſolation! it looks and waits for them too. *As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God! my ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God*, Pſal. 42. 1, 2. That's the reaſon why *Job* inſtances in *Tema* and *Sheba*, becauſe they were often diſtreſſed in their travel for want of water.

Secondly obſerve, That, *Probability of ſpeeding, is ground enough of ſeeking and endeavouring.*

Theſe troops of *Tema* looked, and as they looked, they ſearched for waters; they waited, becauſe it was probable that they ſhould find water where they had obſerved water. As (*Mat.* 21. 19.) *Chriſt himſelf when he was an hungry, ſaw a fig-tree afar off* (ſaith the Text) *having leaves upon it*: A fig-tree having leaves, in probability hath fruit alſo; becauſe the fig-tree (as Naturaliſts obſerve) puts forth her fruit as ſoon as her leaf; therefore when Chriſt ſaw leaves upon the fig-tree, it was an argument that there was fruit too. And whereas *Mark* ſaith, *For the time of figs was not yet*; he means the time of in-gathering figs; ſo that, the tree having leaves, ſhewed it might have fruit growing, and the time of gathering figs not being paſt, both theſe were ground enough for the Lord Chriſt to go and ſeek fruit upon it; for in this he acted according to the rule of humane reaſon, not of Divine omniſcience. Many object againſt ſeeking God, and humbling themſelves before him: It is a thing doubtful, whether ever they ſhall ſpeed, whether ever they ſhall find or no; they know not whether God will be merciful unto them or no; he will be merciful to ſome (they know) but whether they be the men, is very doubtful. I may anſwer ſuch from the point, *A probability of ſpeeding, is ground enough for ſeeking.* If Chriſt ſought for fruit when he ſaw leaves, becauſe it was a thing probable to find it; and if theſe of *Tema* and *Sheba* would ſeek for water, becauſe they had obſerved water in thoſe places; ſurely then, there is ground enough of ſeeking unto God for mercy, though we ſuppoſe there is but a probability of having mercy. The Prophet perſwades that afflicted people to faſt and humble themſelves, upon this ground; *who knoweth if he will return and repent?* (Joel 2.) that is, it is very probable he will return and repent. Heathen *Nineveh* is carried by the ſame argument, *Jonah.* 3. 9. *Who can tell if God will return?* &c. No man is ſure he will not, end though we are not ſure he will, yet let us venture. *A peradventure from God, is better then a promiſe, or an aſſurance from the creature: And if probability be ground enough, what ground is there in aſſurance and certainty?* and that is the ground we have of ſeeking God; if we ſeek to him, and wait upon him in faith, we ſhall be ſure to find, Pſal. 9. 18. *The expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh.* The companies of *Tema* found no water, but God is a living fountain, whoſe waters fail not; his banks are alike filled, ſummer and winter; Chriſt is not a water-brook, but a ſpring of waters: We ſhall never miſs water of life, if we ſeek to, and wait upon him for it; and if we believe on him, *out of our bellies ſhall flow rivers of living waters*, John 7. 38.

We have ſeen the endeavour of theſe troops of *Tema*: Now ſee how they ſpeed.

Verſe 20. **They were confounded, becauſe they had hoped; they came thither and were aſhamed.**

The ſum is, they hoped to have found water there, and it grieved and repented them, that ever they had hope to find water there, becauſe there was none to be found.

בוש *Puduit rei vel facti.*

They were confounded.] The word ſignifies indifferently to be aſhamed or to be confounded, and to be confounded in regard of events or actions. The word is very near in ſound to our Engliſh *Abaſhed*: It notes alſo a waxing pale and wan, when the colour failes and withers, *comes and goes.* If a man be failed much in what he much hoped, his countenance failes too, his viſage changes, as his thoughts change, and he waxeth pale, Therefore we tranſlate it well, *confounded.* And it is expreſſed by confounding, for two reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe the complexion is confounded at ſuch a time, ſhame and bluſhing make a kind of confuſion upon nature.

Ainſw. on *Exod.*

Secondly, The ſpirits are confounded, the heart is troubled; *Diſappointment of our hope perplex a man both within and without. He is diſordered quite through.* And becauſe long delayes cauſe ſhame, therefore by a Metonymie of the cauſe for the effect, this word ſignifies to delay time (*Exod.* 32. 1.) *And when the people ſaw that Moſes delayed to come down*, &c. that is, when the people ſaw, that *Moſes* made them *aſhamed* by his long delay, *they gathered themſelves together*, &c. They waited for *Moſes* forty dayes, and now *Moſes* had ſtayed ſo long, that they were aſhamed of his ſtay; that is, they expected, but he came not as they expected; this troubled them. We read the word in the ſame ſence (*Judg.* 5. 28.) *The mother of Siſera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, why is his chariot ſo long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?* Why is his chariot aſhamed? that is, why doth his chariot ſtay ſo long, as to make us aſhamed of our ſtay? We have long looked what Trophies *Siſera* would bring home, why doth his chariot by delayes make us aſhamed? Thus in the Text, theſe travellers are ſaid to be confounded, becauſe they had great hope to find water, but were diſappointed; *They were confounded becauſe they had hoped*; the latter clauſe carries the ſame ſence, *They came thither and were aſhamed.*

חפר *Fodit, effodit, per Metaphoram traductam à fodientibus, erubuit; nam qui rubore perfuſi ſunt à peccato, caput in terram dimittunt, inſtar eorum qui terram defodiunt.* Cartw.

Yet there is a ſpecial elegancy in the word, *aſhamed*; which ſignifies to dig, to dig that we may hide a thing; as it is ſaid of the evil ſervant, who received but one talent that *he went and digged, and hid his Lords money*, Mat. 25. 18. And ſo by a Metaphor this word is tranſlated to ſignifie being aſhamed, becauſe a man that is aſhamed, would hide his head in a hole (as we ſay) if he could, he would run his head into the ground, and rather be at the pains in digging of a hole in the earth, to hide himſelf, then to endure the ſhame of ſhewing himſelf. No man loves that ſhould appear, or to appear in that, which is his ſhame.

Theſe two things, to be aſhamed and confounded are often owned by the Saints in their repentance. It is beſt not to do any thing whereof to be aſhamed; but when we have done evil it is good to be aſhamed; *To hide our ſins for ſhame, and not to be aſhamed of them when they are not hid, are equal aggravations of ſin.* Hence when the holy Ghoſt would ſet forth men impudent or ſhameleſs in ſinning, who ſinned and cared not who ſaw them, he ſaith (*Jer.* 2. 34.) *Alſo upon thy skirts is found the blood of innocents, I have not found it by ſecret ſearch*; ſo we tranſlate it, the Hebrew is, *I have not found it by digging*; as if he had ſaid, ſome men are ſo aſhamed of their ſins, that when God comes to find them out, he muſt dig for them, becauſe they have digged into the earth, as it were, to hide their ſins; but others are ſo impudent in ſinning, that God needs not dig to find out their ſins; they are ſo ſhameleſs, that they let their ſins lie above ground; or as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *They declare their ſins like Sodom*, that is, openly. *Truth and holineſs never ſeek corners, and ſometimes ſin and wickedneſs do not.* And as the doing of evil forbidden, cauſeth or ſhould cauſe ſhame; ſo doth the not receiving of good expected; hence when the Lord would aſſure his people that they ſhould undoubtedly receive all the good he had promiſed, and which they on that ground could expect, he concludes with them thus, *And my people ſhall never be aſhamed.* Why? The reaſon is plain in the Text; *Ye ſhall eat in plenty, and be ſatisfied*, Joel 2. 26. Which is directly oppoſite to this in *Job.* The *Temanites* were aſhamed, becauſe being thirſty, they were not ſatisfied. And becauſe Jeſus Chriſt ſhall ſo abundantly ſatisfie all the hunger and thirſt, and ſupply all the wants and weakneſſes of every believing ſoul, therefore it is expreſt under this word and notion, *Whoſoever believeth on him, ſhall not be aſhamed*, Rom. 9. 33.

Foderunt puteos, ſc. ad aquam inveniendam.

Such a meaning the word bears in this text [**They were aſhamed.**] That is, when they ſaw there was no water to be had, they would have hid themſelves in the earth, or digged holes to hide themſelves in for grief and ſhame.

And ſome render this word here (though to another ſence) *They digged*; that is, when they ſaw that there was no water in the ſtreams, then they fell a digging, to ſee if they could find any ſprings. That's a good ſence. But rather take digging as before; to ſhew what ſhame would have us do, when we have done amiſs, or when we miſs what we would find, then we ſeek covert and hide our ſelves. Hence theſe two are often joyned in Scripture, *Shame and hiding, with the diſappointment of hope.* Read a Text of near compliance with this in the letter (*Jer.* 14 3.) *Their Nobles have ſent their little ones to the waters, they came to the pits, and found no water* (it was in a time of drought) *they returned with their veſſels empty:* What followeth? *They were aſhamed and confounded, and covered their heads.* Again, *v.* 4. *Becauſe the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth; the plough-men were aſhamed, they covered their heads.* And, *Joel* 10. 11. *The corn is waſted, the new wine is dried up:* What followeth? *Be aſhamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye Vine-dreſſers, becauſe the harveſt of the field is periſhed.* So that in the common language and current of rhe Scripture, ſhame is an effect of diſappointment, and hiding the face, or covering the head an effect of both. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *Deceived hopes trouble us as much if not more then preſent wants.*

A preſent want is a preſent ſmart; but deceived hopes are a perpetual ſmart; and that's the reaſon why the burden of ſorrow is ſo heavy, and the drought of the damned (who as *Dives* in the Parable, ſhall never have a drop of water) ſo intollerable. They (to allude to the Text) hoped to come to the overflowing ſtreams of their former earthly delights: But alas, the *paths of the way of thoſe brooks are turned aſide for ever, they are gone to nothing and periſhed.* All the while they travel (and that will be an eternity) through that howling Wilderneſs and fierie Deſart ſhall not meet with one Rivolet, nor taſte one drop of comfort to cool their parched tongues, or refreſh their enflamed bowels. *Hopes delayed, trouble; but hopes deceived, confound.*

Secondly, Obſerve from this paſſage, That, *Deceived hopes fill with ſhame. Deceived hopes make a man hide his head.*

Shame ariſes two wayes, either from doing a thing againſt common principles; or from loſing a thing againſt common expectation. The Lord threatens the Idolatrous *Iſraelites*, That *they ſhall be aſhamed of the Oaks which they have deſired, and confounded for the Gardens which they had choſen*, Iſa. 1. 29. Why aſhamed of Oaks and Gardens? becauſe in gardens and under ſhady oaks they ſet up and worſhipped Idols, in which they truſted for deliverance and protection; therefore when deſtruction ſhould overtake them, they muſt needs be aſhamed of oaks and gardens, becauſe their hopes were ſo foully deceived by them. In the ſame ſence the Lord foretels them by the ſame Prophet, that they *ſhall be aſhamed of* Ethiopia *their expectation, and of* Egypt, *their glory*, chap. 20. 5. becauſe they had hoped for ſo much help from confederacies with theſe Nations, who in the iſſue would delude their hopes, and give them no help at all. Thus alſo he ſpeaks hiſtorically, *chap. 30. 5. They were all aſhamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be a help.* All they who hope in any thing, ſave the Lord, ſhall as (theſe troops of *Tema*) be aſhamed, becauſe they have hoped, for they ſhall be deceived of their hopes.

And this is the reaſon, why hypocrites, at the laſt day, when Chriſt comes to judge them, ſhall be filled with ſhame. The reaſon (I ſay) is, becauſe they have been ſo full of deluding hopes. It appears they had great hopes, becauſe they ſpeak great words, and make great boaſts. They preſume if any are to be ſaved, they are the men; they ſhew fair for heaven, *Mat. 7. 22. Many ſhall ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name, and in thy name caſt out Devils?* &c. They ſhall ſay, Lord, we have done thus and thus; what doth this repetition of their great works intimate, but the greatneſs of their hopes? Now when Chriſt ſhall ſay, *I know you not*, how will ſhame cover their faces for ever? and how will they cover their faces for ſhame, wiſhing they might never be either ſeen or known. When *Jacob* had ſerved a full apprentiſhip in order to his marriage with beautiful *Rachel*, and at laſt, through the guile of *Laban*, was put off with blear-eyed *Leah*; the holy Ghoſt expreſſeth him in a kind of paſſionate amazement, *And it came to paſs, that in the morning, behold it was* Leah; *and he ſaid unto* Laban, *what is this thou haſt done unto me?* As if *Jacob* had been in ſuch a diſtraction, that he could not tell how to expreſs himſelf: and therefore ſaith, *What is this thou haſt done unto me?* I know not by what name to call ſuch a uſage or diſappointment as this. Oh, in what a caſe will they be at the laſt day, who have ſerved out (as it were) an apprentiſhip in hopes of *Rachel*, the beauty of heaven and ſalvation; and yet when they awake at the reſurrection, *Behold it will be (infinitely worſe than* Leah) Hell and Damnation; how will ſhame and confuſion of face take hold of ſuch for ever?

So much for the letter of this ſimilitude; the failing of thoſe ſtreams, exemplified in the ſad experiences of the troops of *Tema*, and the companies of *Sheba*, as often deceived and aſhamed as they came to them for water.

Now follows the application of the ſimilitude, as if *Job* had ſaid, *I have ſpoken in the clouds, and told you ſtories of foreign concernment. I tell you, my friends, I muſt even apply all this to you, and leave it at your doors.* As *Nathan*, when he had told *David* the parable of the poor man, and his little Ewe-lamb, which his rich neighbour took away to dreſs for the way-faring man that was come unto him; he (I ſay) brings it home to *David* in the cloſe, ſaying, *Thou art the man.* So after *Job* had told a ſtory in the general, or in a third perſon, about deceitful brooks, and travellers deceived by them, now he applies it to his friends, Ye, my friends, are the men I mean by theſe brooks; ye are they, I have all this while delineated and ſet forth by theſe unfaithful and unconſtant ſtreams of water.

Verſe 21. **For now ye are nothing, ye ſee my caſting down, and are afraid.**

הייתם לא *Fuiſtis non. Eſtis mihi nihili & vaniſſimi, & ut torrentes deſcripti.* Merc.

For now ye are nothing.] What! nothing? Ye are nothing at all unto me. Ye are no more to me in any way of refreſhing, then thoſe ſtreams of the brook, which I even now deſcribed, were to the troops of *Tema*, for now ye are nothing. *As out of nothing comes nothing, ſo that is as nothing unto us, out of which nothing comes.*

Ex nihilo nihil fit. Ex quo nihil fit nihil eſt.

If we render it word for word according to the Hebrew, it is, *Ye were not*; you are unto me as if you had never been, or ye have deceived me in what I took you to be; I hoped for floods of comfort, for rivers of joy, and ſtreams of conſolation from you, but now I cannot find a drop, *Ye are not unto me. That man is indeed, who doth that, for which he is, or that which is expected.*

The *Chaldee* tranſlates *Ye have been as if ye were not.* And there is a difference in the Hebrew word; for ſome read it with the Pronoun *Them*, moſt with the Adverb *Not*; but though the tranſlation differ, yet it comes to the ſame ſence, *Ye are them*, that is, *like to them*, like to thoſe ſtreams, or, *Ye are not*; that is, ye are nothing to me; as thoſe ſtreams were nothing, or were not to the Travellers. The phraſe, *Ye are not*, imports the deceivableneſs of thoſe men; *Job* thought they would be ſomething to him; yea, they thought they would be very much to him, even as much ar water-brooks to a thirſty man; but they proved nothing at all to him: For as the word [**Yea**] in Scripture notes aſſurance, conſtancy, fidelity and faithfulneſs; ſo the word [*Not* or *Nay*] both in the *Hebrew* and in *Greek* ſignifies unconſtancy and unſetledneſs, eſpecially when theſe two are joyned together: And ſo it hath a clear ſence with that (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) where the Apoſtle ſpeaking of Chriſt and of his faithfulneſs, ſaith, *The Son of God was not yea and nay, but in him was yea*, that is, he was not various, inconſtant and uncertain, but he was the very ſame; look what you have found Chriſt at one time, you ſhall find him a ſecond and third time, yea, the ſame for ever: He will not ſtart from you an inch; ſo *ver.* 17. of the ſame Chapter, *When I was minded to come, did I uſe lightneſs? or the things that I purpoſe, do I purpoſe after the fleſh, that with me there ſhould be yea, yea, and nay, nay?* that is, that with me there ſhould be *I* and *No*, ſomething and nothing. It is of a near importance with the words of *Job*, *Ye are no to me*; ye promiſed to be *I* to me, to be *yea, yea*, but now it comes to the trial, ye are *No*, *No* to me, that is, ye are nothing to me; ye are no ſuch thing as I expected you would be.

Vos fuiſtis, quaſi non eſſetis, Chal.

לא *pro* ללא *& eſt idem quod* לאין

In textu Hebræo ſcribitur לא, *ſed in margine notatur legendum eſſe* לו *ti.q.d. fuiſtis ei ſimiles*, ſc. *torrenti.* Druſ.

Qui reſpondet expectationi etiam *dicatur* etiam, & non *qui varius & inconſtans.*

For ye ſee my caſting down, and are afraid.

חתת *Dejectus, metaphoricè territus fuit mente jacuit.*

Ye ſee my caſting down.] That is, *my affliction*; To be caſt down, and to be afflicted, are the ſame. The word ſignifies dejection & conſternation of ſpirit, to be *heart-falter'd* the falling of a mans mind, as well as of his eſtate, *Deut.* 1. 21. *Fear not, neither be diſcouraged*, let not your ſpirit or courage fall, *Job*'s caſting down was in his body and goods, his ſpirit and courage ſtood upright upon their feet: Ye (ſaith *Job*) ſee my outward caſting down, the caſting down of my eſtate abroad, ye ſee how all is broken and loſt; and now what is the help ye give me? Do ye ſtand to me, or lift me up now I am thus caſt down? Do ye ſupply me with comfort, and prop me up with counſel? No, *ye are afraid your ſelves*: ye are ſo far from removing my trouble, that you your ſelves are troubled.

Ye are afraid.] Their fear may be referred to his perſon, or to his condition; ye are afraid to come nigh me, ye are afraid I will infect you; or ye are afraid ſome ſuch evil will fall upon your ſelves; I had thought ye had come as friends, to deliver me from my fears, and now ye are fallen into fears your ſelves: Thus, *Ye are not*, ye are no ſuch thing as ye promiſed me; ye promiſed to comfort, at leaſt to pity me, but ye do not: So the *Septuagint*, *Ye viſit me. but ye are not moved with any compaſſion towards me.* I had been as well without your company; or, if no ſuch men had been in the world.

Vos me viſiſtis nulla miſericordiâ moti. Sept.

Obſerve firſt from theſe words, **For now ye are nothing.**

He that is not what he ought to be, or what he promiſed to be, is nothing.

To be uſeleſs is (in a ſence) *to be eſſenceleſs.* To be uſeleſs in the world, is to be as out of the world: A man who lives only to eat, and drink, and ſleep, may be ſaid not to live at all. What we ſay in our Engliſh Proverb, is true, both in perſons and of actions, *As good never a whit as never the be; as good not to be, as do no good.* The Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaking of unprofitable perſons (*ver.* 12.) calls them *trees without fruit*; and what then? *Twice dead, plucked up by the roots*; as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, I look upon fruitleſs perſons, as dead perſons, yea, as doubly dead, that is, *dead ſure enough.* As a man can be born but once, in one kind (*Nicodemus* argued from a truth, though not to a truth, becauſe he could not diſtinguiſh natural from *ſpiritual, John* 3. 4.) ſo a man can die but once in one kind. Theſe men of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks, were alive naturally, though dead ſpiritually; how then is it ſaid, that they were twice dead? They were judged *twice dead*, either, becauſe a ſpiritual death is ſo great a death, that it may well go for two; yea, one ſpiritual death is worſe then a thouſand natural deaths;

Or ſecondly, they are ſaid to be *twice dead*, becauſe they were dead both in regard of the truth of grace, and in regard of any outward actings of grace; for ſome hypocrites who are indeed dead in ſin, yet act grace in many outward fruits, as if they were alive: but of theſe perſons it is ſaid, *their fruit withereth*, and they are *without fruit*; they were not ſo much as externally active, they had no life of union with Chriſt, and they did no good with the life of their profeſſion in Chriſt, and therefore are juſtly ſaid to be twice dead. They who have leaves, and look freſh and lively, as if they had more then one life in them, yet, if *uſeleſs, are called liveleſs, and they who do nothing in the world, are to be reckoned no-bodies in the world.* In the Parable of the Prodigal, the concluſion is, *This my ſon was dead, and is alive*; why dead? becauſe he was unanſwerable to thoſe purpoſes, to thoſe ends for which he received life. He was a prodigal, and had deſerted his fathers ſervice, therefore his father looked upon him, as if (all that while) he had not been at all. That's the deſcription of the dead, as *Jacob* ſaid of *Joſeph* (when he concluded him torn by a wild beaſt) *Joſeph is not*; and *Rachel would not be comforted for her children, becauſe they were not*; ſo ſaith the father of the prodigal, *This my ſon was dead*, or, *he was not*; he was no help nor comfort to me. We no longer deſerve the name or reputation of *any thing*, than we do thoſe things for which we are. If we leave our duty (upon the matter) we loſe our nature, and are as if we had no being, while we reach not (at leaſt, while we reach not after) the end of our being. A heathen concludes of ſuch a man, *He hath only been, he hath not lived.* But we may from the warrant of *Job*'s Rhetorick, go a degree further, and deny that he hath been; *for he is as if he had never been, a meer nothing.*

Fuit, non vixit.

From thoſe words, *Ye ſee my caſting down, and are afraid*; Note,

That, *Some man is able to bear more then another is able to behold.*

The ſight of fearful things cauſeth fear. Further obſerve,

A fearful man will never be a helpful man.

Courage in a day of trouble, either of our own or others, is a great cure of trouble, yea a victory over it. There is one fear very good when we ſee the caſting down of our friends, *To be afraid of provoking God to caſt us down* (Deut. 17. 13. *they ſhall hear and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly.* What ſhall they hear? They ſhall hear how God hath caſt men down, or caſt down a Nation by his judgments, they ſhall hear of this and fear. How ſhall they fear? They ſhall fear to do preſumptuouſly, fear to provoke that God, who can thus caſt down men and kingdoms. *It is good to be thus afraid.* But there is a ſinful fear, when fear diſorders or unfits us to put our hands to the help of thoſe who are caſt down, and to adminiſter comfort to thoſe who are in ſorrow; ſuch was the caſting down and the fear here meant: They were ſo afraid, that they could not lend *Job* a hand, or give him adviſed counſel to ſupport his ſpirit.

I ſhall add one Obſervation from the general ſcope of the ſimilitude.

That, *An unfaithful friend fails us moſt, when we have moſt need of him.*

That's the ſum of all. In Winter, when there is water in every ditch, thoſe brooks abound with water; but in Summer, eſpecially in a dry Summer, when the *rain of the Land is duſt* (as *Moſes* ſpeaks) theſe brooks are duſt too, they vaniſh and are conſumed out of their place, they afford no refreſhing at all. When the man that went down from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho*, and fell among Thieves, (*Luke* 10. 30.) lay in the way ſtript and wounded, even half dead, *A certain Prieſt came that way* (ſaith the Text) *and when he ſaw him, he paſſed by on the other ſide; and likewiſe a Levite, when he was at that place, came and looked on him, and paſſed by on the other ſide; but the Samaritan went to him* (not from him) *and had compaſſion on him. Job* ſpeaks very near this language, but fully this ſence, of his friends. They, like the uncharitable Prieſt and Levite, *paſſed by him*, as the ſtreams of *brooks they paſs away*; whereas they ſhould have been like the good *Samaritan*, a fountain, a river of ſetled, ſpringing comfort to him.

This is the great difference between the love of God, and that of moſt men; *God* is the beſt friend to us at all times, (he is beſt to us in the beſt times; if we had not him to our friend, it would be very ill with us when we have moſt friends.) But God is beſt of all to us in the worſt times, a beſt friend to us, when we have no friends; he is our ſpring when the rain falls; but he is our ſureſt, ſweeteſt ſpring, when there is neither rain nor dew upon the face of the earth. Therefore he is compared (as *Jer.* 2.) ſo in other places, unto a living fountain, where you may be ſure to find water in the hotteſt ſeaſon. This infinitely commends the love of God beyond that of men, who at the beſt, are but broken ciſterns, which leak out the comforts they are truſted with, and for the moſt part, are but like *Job*'s brooks, that turn aſide, and paſs away when we have moſt need of them.

It is obſerved of the *Samaritans* in *Joſephus*, that whenever the *Jews* affairs proſpered, they would be their friends, and profeſs much kindneſs; but if the *Jews* were in trouble, and wanted their aſſiſtance, then they got them far enough off, they would not have to do with them, or own them. *The rich hath many friends* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 14. 20.) *but the poor is hated even of his own neighbour. Worldly friendſhip ends with riches, and he that wants money, ſeldom abounds with friends.*

Ubi deficit pecunia; labaſcit & amicitia.

But conſider how far this is from the very nature of a brother, and from the Law of friendſhip. *Solomon* (Prov. 17. 17.) deſcribes a true friend, to be one who *loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity.* As if he had ſaid, This is the reaſon God hath raiſed up relations, and made men near one to another, becauſe himſelf orders there ſhall be times of adverſity, when they ſhall have need of one another. Some render the place, *A brother is born in adverſity*; as if the meaning were, that, when a man is in trouble, God raiſes up a brother to help him; or, as the *Septuagint* hath it, *A brother is born for this end and purpoſe, to help in adverſity.* Therefore a brother loſes the very end and purpoſe why he was born, if he refuſe to help thoſe who are in adverſity. *Ruth* was a true pattern of a faithful friend and brother, though a daughter; *I went out full* (ſaith the Mother-in-law) *but the Lord hath brought me home empty*; but though ſhe was emptied of the world, yet *Ruths* heart was full of love to her; *I will not leave thee, God do ſo to me, and more alſo, if ought but death part thee and me.* So ſaith faithfulneſs in friends, eſpecially in Chriſtian friends. It is one of the greateſt duties and commendations of Chriſtian profeſſion, to ſtick to, and ſtand by one another, be it foul weather, or be it fair, blow the winds high or low, let it be ſtormy or calm, ever to be the ſame. The Heathens wondred in the primitive times at the great love of the Chriſtians one to another. Let us take heed we do not put heathens, natural, carnal men to wonder, *Oh how little do Chriſtians love one another!* Let us not give them occaſion to ſay, *Oh how the Chriſtians hate one another!* How like are they at beſt, to ſtreams of brooks, who fail when their friends and brethren need the benefit of their aſſiſtance?

Let me only give you this caution, God ſuffereth men to be thus unfaithful unto men, yea ſometimes a Chriſtian brother to fail a Chriſtian brother (which is their ſin, and ought to be their ſorrow;) I ſay, God leaves them to this evil of their own hearts, that we may have a greater good out of it, then the higheſt actings of their love and faithfulneſs could eſtate us in: Namely, that we may learn to truſt upon God alone, and may better know what creatures are. *Truſt not in a brother* (Jer. 9. 4,) ſo as to let out your hearts upon him, think not you are ſafe in the love of a brother, no, not of a godly brother: The Apoſtle (1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) to draw off rich men from truſting in their riches,

Talia patitur Deus ſuis accidere, ne hominibus nimis fidant, ſed omne ſolatium, ſpem & fiduciam in ipſo ſolo vivo & vero Deo ponant. Lavat.

riches, uſeth this argument, *Charge them that are rich, that they truſt not in uncertain riches, but in the living God:* Why ſhould they not truſt in riches? He giveth the reaſon in the *Epithite, uncertain*; they are *uncertain riches*, therefore truſt them not. So we may ſay of men, Truſt not in men, no, not abſolutely in godly men; for the beſt of men are uncertain, poſſibly they may be as theſe ſtreams of brooks, whoſe waters failed, *Pſal.* 146. 3. *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the ſon of man, in whom there is no help.* Why not? *For his breath goeth forth* (that's one reaſon, he muſt die, he muſt return to the earth,) therefore truſt him not. But beſides that, we may ſay, Truſt not in Princes, *&c.* while their breath tarrieth in them, for it is poſſible their help and faithfulneſs may go forth, though their breath doth not. Therefore truſt only in the living God, he will never leave us, though men do; *God only is unchangeable*, he only hath preſerved this honour without touch or ſtain, *Never to forſake thoſe who truſted in him, how forlorn and forſaken ſoever their condition was.*

VERS. 22, 23, 24, 25.

Did I ſay, Bring unto me? Or give a reward for me of your ſubſtance?

Or deliver me from the enemies hand, or redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred.

How forcible are right words? But what doth your arguing reprove?

JOB having ſhadowed out his friends unfaithfulneſs by an elegant ſimilitude in the context fore-going; now aggravates their unfaithfulneſs to him in his wants, by his own modeſty, in ſeeking to them for ſupplies. *Did I ſay, Bring unto me? or give a reward for me of your ſubſtance?* As if he had ſaid, I have not been burthenſom or troubleſom to you, I have uot called for your contributions and benevolences, or ſought to have my eſtate made up out of your purſes? Why do ye charge me with impatience at my loſs, as if that were it which pinches and preſſes me? did I ever charge you for my reparation or redemption? That (indeed) might have been, either burdenſom or dangerous to you. All that I expected from you, was your comfort, and your counſel; theſe would not have put you to much expence; or if you could not have reacht ſo far as to comfort me, yet you might have forborn to contribute ſo largely to my ſorrows, by overtaxing me with impatience, aud charging me with hypocriſie.

Did I ſay.] I was not clamorous or importunate, no, I did not ſo much as open my mouth to move you in that point; I have been ſo far from begging, that ye have not heard me, ſaying, *Bring to me.*

Bring unto me?] The word is, *Give unto me*, Hoſ. 4, 18. *Their Princes love, Give ye*, or *Bring ye*, ſo ſaith *Job*, I did not ſay, Bring ye, or give ye, my ſpirit was not ſet upon money, or the repair of my loſſes out of your eſtates; I did not either write or ſend for your charity; you were not invited to viſit me, that you might contribute to my neceſſity.

שחד *Propriè munus quod datur ad corrumpendū Judicē, à* חד *unus, quod unum facit dantem ſcilicet & accipientem.*

The word here uſed for a **reward**, properly taken, ſignifies that which is given to a Judge, to corrupt or turn him aſide in judgment. One of the Rabbins gives this reaſon, why it notes a *Bribing reward*, becauſe it is compounded of a word ſignifying *One*; and a bribe makes the giver and the receiver, the Judge and party One, or of one mind; a Judge ſhould ever ſtand indifferent between both parties, till the cauſe be heard, but a bribe makes him One of them.

Yet ordinarily, this word is put for any gift, or help, ſubſidy or ſupply of anothers wants.

כח *Humor nativus in quo vigor corporis conſiſtit, & opes, nam in opibus conſiſtit potentia hominum.*

Of your ſubſtance.] The word implies, the native, natural ſtrength, which ſupplies the wants, or ſupports the weakneſſes of the body; as alſo the ſtrength of the earth, by which it puts forth fruit, *Levit.* 26. 20. And becauſe riches are a mans civil ſtrength, therefore the ſame word expreſſes both.

Verſ. 23. **Or did I ſay, Deliver me from the enemies hand?**

The enemies.] Or the hand of thoſe that have brought me into ſtraights; for the original imports, the ſhutting of man up in a narrow compaſs, ſo that he knows not how to get out; he that is in the hand of an enemy, is in a ſtraight hand. *Ahab* commands, (1 *King.* 22. 29.) *Go carry* Micaiah *back, and feed him with the bread of affliction*, or with the bread of ſtraights, ſuch bread as an enemy provides. The Greek word uſed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. reaches this fully, *We are troubled but not diſtreſſed*, or ſtraightned. Now ſaith *Job*, did I ſay, deliver me out of the hand or power of mine enemies, who have brought me into theſe ſtraights? alluding, as is conceived, to thoſe *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, who had ſpoiled his eſtate, and ſlain his ſervants.

ςενοχωρȣμενοι.

Or redeem me out of the hand of the mighty.

Redeem me.] That is my goods which they have carried away captive. To redeem, ſignifies the fetching back of a thing by price or force. Chriſt is a Redeemer in both ſences, he redeemed or fetcht back captivated man, by compact and by price, in reſpect of God his Father. *We are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. that is, bought with a full price. Chriſt did not compound with the juſtice of his Father, but ſatisfied it, to redeem us; And he redeemed us by force, out of the hands of Satan, *Spoyling Principalities and Powers, and making a ſhew of them openly*, Col. 2. 15. As in Triumphs, the *Romans* uſed to do with their ſpoiled, captivated enemies. *Job* had not begg'd redemption of his friends, from the power of his enemies either way: Did I deſire you, by compact, and by price, to ranſom me? Or did I deſire you to levy an Army, with power and force, to recover my eſtate out of the hands of thoſe mighty oppreſſors.

עריץ *Terribilis, ſua potentia formidabilis*

The word [**Mighty.**] ſignifies alſo *terrible*; the hand of the *terrible one:* It is often applied to God, when he ſhews himſelf in terror to wicked men, *Pſal.* 89. 7. *God is greatly to be feared*, Iſa. 2. 19. *He ſhakes terribly the earth.* But moſt commonly, to cruel, powerful men, who make no other uſe of their ſtrength, but to be a terror to innocents. The Apoſtle, *Phil.* 1. 28. explains this word, while he ſaith, *and in nothing be ye terrified by your adverſaries*; that word in the Greek, anſwers this in the Hebrew, your adverſaries are *terrible men*, men who think to beat down all with their great looks, but be not ye terrified by theſe terrible ones. So here, *Did I call unto you, to redeem me out of the hand of the mighty*, the terrible? out of the hand of thoſe cruel plunderers, the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans.*

De manu Tribulationis. Vatab. *Puto eum Allegoricè tam graves & vehementes calamitates intelligere.* Merc.

Further, Some underſtand by the *hand of the mighty*, not the perſons afflicting him, but the affliction it ſelf, which was upon him: Trouble is ſometime compared to a mighty enemy, *Prov.* 6. 11. *So ſhall thy poverty come, as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.* Want ſtrips us: but is it ſelf, not only cloathed, but arm'd; *Evils have ſo much life and ſtrength in them, that they are compared to the ſtrongeſt, who live, armed men.* Hence Obſerve,

> Firſt, *It is an aggravation of unkindneſs, to thoſe, who are in want, not to be kind to them, when they are modeſt in asking a ſupply of their wants.*

Love ought to prevent asking, and ſhould be moved to give moſt to them (who being in need) complain leaſt.

Again, He ſpeaks this to wipe off that aſperſion, as if the loſs of his eſtate were the thing which grieved and pinched him ſo ſore. *Did I ſay unto you, bring me a reward*, &c.

> *It is an argument that a man over-loves that which he hath loſt, when he is over-importunate to have his loſſes repaired.*

If you had ſeen me call out unto you for an eſtate, then you had reaſon to think that the loſs of my eſtate, was the loſs of my patience.

Thirdly, Obſerve the temper of a gracious heart under loſſes and afflictions.

> *A gracious heart under loſſes: is not forward to complain to creatures, or to ask help of men.*

Did I ſay, bring unto me, or give me a reward of your ſubſtance? He complains to God, and ſheweth him his trouble, he opens his wants to God, and asketh ſupplies of him;

but he is very modeſt and ſlow in complaining to, or in ſuing for help at the hand of creatures.

It is not unlawful for thoſe, that are in want, to make their loſſes and wants known to men; it is a duty, rather ſo to do: only it muſt be done with caution, leaſt, when we ask of creatures too importunately, we give an argumen againſt our ſelves, that we are too much in love with creatures.

As it is reproved in thoſe Rulers before ſpoken of, *Hoſ.* 4. 18. that *they did love, give ye*; it is a crime in the rich, to love, *give ye*; and certainly it is a ſin, at leaſt an infirmity in thoſe that are poor and in want, to love, *give ye*, or to ſay as *Job* here had not, *bring to me*. *Solomon* ſpeaks of the daughters of the *horſe-leach*, that they are alwayes crying *give, give*, noting their inſatiable thirſt after blood. Some poor are alwayes crying *give, give*, which notes a very inordinate deſire after riches. *Job* is very careful to take off the ſuſpition of ſuch a blemiſh from himſelf, *I did not ſay, bring ye, or give ye me of your ſubſtance.*

It is the duty of thoſe that are full, to give to their empty brethren, it is their ſin if they give not; and it is their ſhame, if they are not moſt free in giving to thoſe, who are moſt modeſt in asking; but when God hath emptied us, we ſhould not be eager in filling our ſelves. When God takes creatures from us, we ſhould take heed of purſuing them: we ſhould not do any thing, which may argue our hearts glued to them, when the Lord hath looſen'd them out of our hands. It is an honour to a poor Chriſtian, when in his greateſt ſtraights he can approve himſelf to God and men, and can ſay as the Apoſtle (*Acts* 20. 33.) *I have coveted no mans ſilver, or gold, or apparel. It is as ſinful to covet in our wants, as it is in our abundance.* And it is as bad (if not worſe) to be greedy of the creature, when we are empty, as when we are full. *A poor man oppreſſing the poor*, Prov. 28. 3. *and coveting from the rich, are ſights of equal abomination.*

Verſ. 24. **Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred,** &c.

This and the next verſe, contain the fourth branch of *Job's* reply; and the general ſence of them, is a ſubmiſſion of himſelf to his friends, if yet they ſhould ſpeak reaſon, or diſcover his error. *Teach me and I will hold my peace*; as if he had ſaid, *Though I have to the beſt of my underſtanding, thus far acquitted my ſelf, and cleared mine own innocency; though I have, as I think, with truth and juſtice, laid this charge of uncharitableneſs and unfriendly dealing with me upon you; yet you ſhall ſee I am ready to hear you, I am teachable: if you can yet teach me, I will keep ſilence, and if you cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred, I ſhall do ſo no more.*

ירה *Jecit, projecit, per metaphoram* הורה *rigavit quando transfertur ad pluviam qua lapidū & ſagittarū inſtar ex cœlo decidit in terram eamq; ſerit, rigat, & fœcundat. Hinc per metaphorā, ſignificat etiā docere. Quod doctrina veluti inſtilletur animis diſcentium & minutatim indatur, eoſque imbuat.*

Teach me.] The Original word notes in ſtrict ſence, to caſt a thing forth, to throw a thing as a dart or ſtone is thrown, either downward or upward, or in a direct motion forward. Hence by a Metaphor, it ſignifies *rain*, becauſe rain is (as it were) darted forth from the clouds, and caſt down upon the earth: And from hence (yet one remove further) the Metaphor is carried to ſignifie *teaching*; hence the holy Prophet is commanded to drop his word, *Ezek.* 20. 46. & 21. 2. *Son of man, ſet thy face toward the South, and drop thy word towards the South. Son of man, ſet thy face toward* Jeruſalem, *and drop thy word toward the holy places*: And the reaſon is this, becauſe Doctrines, Truths, and wholſom inſtructions, are inſtilled and caſt down among the people, or dropt into their ſpirits, as rain is caſt or dropp'd from Heaven upon the Earth: And ſo we may read the words out of the Metaphor thus, *rain down upon me*; do ye, O my friends, like clouds full of water, diſſolve and ſhowre down inſtructions upon me, and ſee if I do not receive and drink them in. And from this word, all doctrine and inſtruction in the Hebrew is called *Torah*, *Prov.* 13. 1. and *Pſal.* 1. 1. And the *Jews* by way of eminency, call the five books of *Moſes* (as alſo all the books of the Old Teſtament) the *Torah*, that is, the Law or rule of holy Doctrine, which God rained down from Heaven, and diſtilled graciouſly upon his people, for their growth in knowledge and in holineſs: And ſo a *Teacher*, from the ſame root, is called *Moreh*, Job 36. 22. *Who teacheth like Him?* who raineth like him? *there is no man can diſtil truths, as God doth. Moſes* (Deut. 32. 2.) elegantly ſets forth his preaching, by an allegory of rain and dew. *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain; my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and as the ſhowres upon the graſs.* And the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Heb.* 6. 7, 8. compares a taught people to ground that is well watered with rain; *For the earth which drinketh in the rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth fruit, is bleſſed; but that which beareth thornes and bryers, is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned.* A people well inſtructed, are like that ground which is under continual ſhowres and dews.

And doctrine is fitly compared to rain, and teaching to raining; Firſt, becauſe all true and holy doctrine comes from God, as the rain doth. The rain is Gods proper gift, (*Jer.* 14. 22.) *Can any of the vanities of the Gentiles give rain?* All the men in the world, are not able to make one drop of rain; ſo we may ſay of this figurative rain of truth and holy doctrine, *Can any of the vanities of the Gentiles?* yea, can any of the moſt learned among the ſons of men give this rain? Can any man make any one truth, which hath not firſt been made above? Truth like rain comes from Heaven, it drops from beyond the clouds. *Art not thou He? O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon Thee,* ſay they of the natural rain, *Jer.* 14. 22. and ſo we muſt in regard of the ſpiritual. Hence the word which *Moſes* uſes (*Deut.* 32. 2.) for doctrine, dropping as the rain, ſignifies *a received learning*: Holy truths are ſo called in that language, becauſe the doctrine of Religion is received from God, not deviſed by men. So the Apoſtle phraſes it (1 *Cor.* 11. 23.) *I received of the Lord, that which I delivered unto you.* And Chriſt himſelf, *As my Father hath taught me, ſo I ſpeak theſe things,* John 8. 28. That which *Nicodemus* ſaid of Chriſt, is true of every one that teacheth truth, *Joh.* 3. 2. *Thou art a Teacher come from God.* As truth it ſelf, ſo the teachers of it are from God: as a lie, and the tellers of it are from the Devil, *Joh.* 8. 44.

Accipere eſt diſcipuli, ſicut dare præceptoris לקחי:

Secondly, Like rain (as in regard of the original whence it comes, ſo) in regard of the effect: rain refreſheth the earth, when the earth is weary and faint, when the earth gaſpes and is parched, how doth a ſhowre of rain revive it? When the Pſalmiſt had ſpoken of the rain coming down upon the earth, he preſently adds this effect, *The little hills rejoyce on every ſide, they ſhout for joy, they alſo ſing.* Thus alſo a people wearied, and languiſhing, and fainting in ignorance, when they receive truths and holy inſtructions, how do their hearts rejoyce, how do they *laugh and ſing?* In the parable, *Math.* 13. Some are ſaid to *receive the word with joy*; even they who are but formaliſts and hypocrites (for it is ſpoken of them) rejoyce and are refreſhed for a ſeaſon with the word. Truth is ſuch a gracious ſhowre, that they ſometimes receive it with joy, who have no grace. And if truth refreſh men, who are but nature, or move in ſpiritual works, but upon natural principles, how will it refreſh thoſe who have grace, and ſpiritual principles ſutable to it. *Thou, O God* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 68. 9, 10.) *didſt ſend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt refreſh thine inheritance when it was weary.* That's a truth in the letter, and ſome underſtand it of natural rain; but others interpret that plentiful rain in a figure, for the rain of doctrine which God ſent down upon his people, when he gave the Law and dropt thoſe heavenly Oracles from Mount *Sinai* upon his people *Iſrael*, that ſhowre of the Law came indeed in a ſtorm, Thunder and Lightning, and a terrible tempeſt accompanied it; But though the thunder terrified, yet the ſhowre refreſhed; and the Saints have ever delighted in the matter of thoſe inſtructions and holy counſels given there, though *Moſes a chief among the Saints*, feared and quak'd exceedingly, at the manner of giving them.

Thirdly, As rain, ſo teaching makes fruitful. The Prophet *Iſaiah* makes out this part of the ſimilitude expreſly, *Chap.* 55. 10, 11. *As the rain cometh down, and the ſnow from Heaven, and returns not thither, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater: So ſhall my word be that goeth out of my mouth,* &c. Hence alſo the people of God are compared (*Deut.* 32. 2.) to graſs and tender herbs which grow and flouriſh, which are fed and bring forth fruit, when watered with the rain. It cannot be denyed, though it be much to be lamented, that many ſouls upon whom much of this rain falls, are altogether barren and unfruitful. But, Oh! How barren are thoſe ſouls, upon whom not a drop of this rain ever fell! They that are deprived of theſe ſhowres are under a grievous curſe, even ſuch a curſe as *David* imprecates upon the Mountains of *Gilboa*, 2 Sam. 1. 21. *Ye Mountains of* Gilboa, *let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you*, &c. When God ſaith unto a people, let there be no dew, no rain upon you, no *Moſes* to drop doctrine upon you, no *Paul* to plant, no *Apollo's* to water you with the Word, this is the ſaddeſt ſhowre of curſes that can fall upon a People; as without rain, ſo without the Word, ordinarily, there can be no fruitfulneſs. You ſee at this time how upon a little with-holding of the natural rain, we preſently fear barrenneſs and famine; the want of ſpiritual rain brings in a worſe barrenneſs, though there are not many who fear it, or are ſencible of it.

This was preach'd in a time of drought

Fourthly, The Word taught is like rain in regard of the diſpenſing of it. The rain comes not down alike, at all times; ſhowres are very various; ſometimes it rains ſoftly, then we call it a ſtill, ſoaking rain; ſometimes we have a ſtrong mighty rain; at another time rain is accompanied with Thunder and Lightning, while the ſhowres deſcend, the great Ordnance of Heaven diſcharge from the clouds, and fill the Air with terror. Thus alſo it is, or ſhould be in teaching: Many ſouls require a ſtill, ſoft, quiet rain: Others muſt have ſtronger ſhowres, mighty rains you muſt *pour down* upon them. A third ſort muſt have thunder joyned with rain, they need a *Boanerges*, a ſon of thunder, a mixture of terror with inſtruction to bore their ears, and break their hearts. Thoſe teachers miſtake their work, who in ſtead of raining are alwayes Thundering and Lightning. As if their Pulpet were ſet upon Mount *Sinai*. And I believe, it is as great a miſtake to think Teachers need never thunder. The word of God in all parts of it, and in all manner of diſpenſations of it, is exceeding uſeful. A Miniſter without teaching, is (as *Jude* ſpeaks) *a cloud without water*; and he ſhall do but little good upon ſome, if he have nothing but *water in his cloud*. Fire ſometime muſt mingle with the rain, and a Tempeſt come after or before the dewing, diſtilling, ſtill voice. The word of God is compared to fire, as well as unto water. Only it muſt be the wiſdom, and it is the duty of every Teacher, to know how to give every one his portion, or as the Apoſtle *Jude* counſels, *verſ.* 22, 23. *Of ſome to have compaſſion, making a difference, and others to ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire*: A difference muſt be made, ſome are to be dealt with compaſſionately, and gently rained upon; others muſt be ſaved with fear, that is, they muſt be made affraid with Thunder and Lightning, with ſtormy and tempeſtuous doctrine. *Some ſpirits will not be kept out of the fire, but by caſting them into the fire*; ſo much that Text in *Jude* imports. *Others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire*; as if he had ſaid, your terrifying them with the fire, will be as pulling them out of the fire. A ſhowr of ſpiritual brimſtone (ſuch as God rain'd on *Sodome* in the letter) is beſt for them, if you ſpare them, you deſtroy them.

חרש *Fodit terrã, per Metaphoram, fodit cogitatione, ſiluit.*

Teach me, [and I will be ſilent.] Or, *I will hold my tongue*. The word properly taken, ſignifies to dig or to plough: And ſometime improperly to meditate or think, and it implies much thoughtfulneſs; becauſe a muſing, meditating, thoughtful man is ever digging into matters, he reſts not in the outſide and face of things, but puts in his plough deep, turning them up to the very bottom. From whence, by one ſtep further into the Metaphor, it is tranſlated to ſignifie ſilence, or to hold our peace: becauſe they who have many thoughts, have feweſt words; *Muſing men are no great talkers*; when the mind is much at work, and very buſie, the tongue uſually doth little. *Job* promiſes ſilence, as if he meant to ſit down and conſider fully, what they ſhould further ſay unto him.

This promiſed ſilence or holding of his tongue, may have a threefold reference.

Firſt, in general to the duty of a learner, *Teach ye me, and I will keep ſilence*, I will learn.

Or ſecondly, To his former complaints, *Teach me, and I will be ſilent*: That is, I will give over complaining, I confeſs I have made a bitter complaint in the third Chapter: but if you will teach me better, I will complain no more.

Thirdly, It may have reference to that which they ſhould ſpeak to him in their next advices. Teach me aright, and I will hold my tongue, that is, I will reply no more, I will not gain-ſay your counſels, but rather (if I have offended) acknowledge my error, and ſit down in ſilence, I will not wrangle, when I cannot anſwer, *I can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth*. From hence we may Obſerve,

First, That, *a gracious ſpirit is a teachable ſpirit*.

A gracious heart calls for teaching. Teach me, and I will hold my tongue. As a gracious heart calls for ſtrengthning from Chriſt, ſo it calls for teaching from Chriſt, and from any who can teach the truth, *as it is in Chriſt*. A weak ſoul ſaith, *Lord draw me, and I will run after thee*; an ignorant ſoul ſaith, *Lord inſtruct me, that I may underſtand thee*. Give me the wiſdom of the prudent, that I may underſtand my way, and I ſhall walk therein. A godly man loves not to be at his own diſpoſing, nor at his own *Tutoring*; *He that will learn of none, but himſelf, hath (ſure enough) a fool to his Maſter*; *And there is more hope of a fool then of him, that is (thus) wiſe in his own conceit*, Prov. 26. 12. Obſerve,

Secondly, *A teachable ſpirit is an excellent ſpirit*.

A man that is willing to be taught, is in a better condition then many who are able to teach. It argues a holier temper of the heart, to be willing to be taught, then to be able to teach. And it is far worſe to be unwilling to learn, then not to be knowing; *Unteachableneſs is more dangerous then ignorance*. It is ſad to conſider how unteachable many are, they will not be taught, or they think they have learned all, they have devoured all knowledge, they are full and need no more: Some deceived ſouls (and they moſt) carry it, as if they had a ſpirit of infallibility: what? teach them? they are above teaching. It is a ſweet frame of ſpirit, when a man ſees he may be out of frame. He is in a fair way to truth, who acknowledge that he may be in an error. And he who will not acknowledge that he may be in an error, is certainly out of the way of truth. The Apoſtle reſolves it, 1 *Cor.* 8. 2. *If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*. Not as if the Apoſtles meaning were, that all knowledge muſt be ſpecial or uncertain, all in queries and nothing in concluſions, that we ſhould halt between two opinions, and hang like meteors in the Air. Nor doth he commend to us that proud modeſty, which will not let us acknowledge we know what we know; but his mind is to meet with thoſe who think they know any thing ſo well, that they need not or cannot know it better, and abound ſo in their own ſence, that they have no room to admit the ſence of others. As he who thinks himſelf ſo good, that he cannot be better, was never ſo good as he ſhould; ſo he that thinks he knows ſo much, that he can learn no more, knows nothing as he ought. It is beſt to be fixed in judgement, but it is very ill to be fixed in opinion. *It is to be feared that man is much divorced from right reaſon, who is ſo married to his own, that he reſolves nothing but death ſhall part him and his opinion*. What if this man have eſpouſed a fancy of his own, not any truth of God? To be ſo fixed, that a man may be fixed in evil, is as dangerous, as to be ſo unfixed, that he may be unfix'd in good. It was a high breathing of holineſs, when *David* ſaid, *Pſalm* 57. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed*: While we are upon a known duty, or have a known truth on our ſide, our hearts cannot be too much fixed and ſet upon them. To be of an unfixed, moveable, wavering ſpirit in goodneſs, is within one degree of falling into evil; but to ſay, *I am fixed, I am fixed, I am reſolved, reſolved*, when yet things are doubtful, and under difficult diſpute, is actually to be in an error, though poſſibly the thing we fix on be a truth. The Apoſtle cautions his *Epheſians*, and us in them, *Chap.* 5. 14. *That they, and we, be not henceforth children, toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*; and yet they are under a rebuke, who will not be moved by any wind of doctrine; that is, let never ſo powerful and forcible a wind of Truth, breathe and blow upon them, they will not be carried or moved in judgment by it. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *Silence becometh learners*.

Yet not all ſilence. There is a ſpeaking helpful to learning. To move doubts is the way to be reſolved, and to ask the queſtion, the readieſt means for inſtruction. But he that will have all the talk, ſhall have but little profit. The ear is the Organ of diſcipline: Hearing is the ſenſe of Learning, and the ſeaſonable ſtopping of our own mouths, a ready means to open our underſtandings. To be *ſwift to hear, and ſlow to ſpeak* (Jam. 1. 19.) is the ſpeedieſt way to attain wiſdom. Obſerve,

Fourthly, *He that is ſhewed his error, ſhould ſpeak no more, but ſit down convinc'd.*

Teach me (ſaith *Job*) *and I will hold my tongue*; that is, I will reply no more upon you, I will never ſtand up in maintaining an error; I will be no patron of evil, though my ſelf am in the fault. Error ſhall not be excuſed, or a miſtake apologiz'd for by me. Some wits are able to make a fair cover for, and put a gloſs upon the moſt deformed and groſſeſt errors. There was never any opinion in the world, but ſome have ſeconded it, and undertaken it's protection. *When Conſcience hath never a word to ſay, wit will be very talkative*; and when they have ended reaſoning, ſome can wrangle everlaſtingly. When wit and learning undertake a cauſe, and leave conſcience out of the *Commiſſion*, there muſt either be a very ill end of it, or no end. A ſubtil Sophiſter will diſpute any thing, and bring probable Arguments (where Reaſon alone ſits Judge) againſt the moſt undoubted truths. It is an ill office to be an Orator for our own or others errors, for our own or others ſinful practices, *Prov.* 30. 32. *If thou haſt done evil in lifting up thy ſelf, or if thou haſt thought evil* (or maintained evil) *lay thine hand upon thy mouth*; ſpeak no more, never be an Advocate in a bad cauſe, though it be thine own; when our faults are ſhewed us, we ſhould not open our mouthes, unleſs it be to renounce and diſclaim them. A ſad account will be given of that time, and of thoſe parts, which have been laid out in the patronage of our failings and miſtakes. It is as ſinful to ſew fig-leaves, or make fair pretexts to cover the nakedneſs of our opinions, as of our practices.

And cauſe me to underſtand, wherein I have erred.

As if *Job* had ſaid, When once you bring me to ſee clearly, that I am in an error, and caſt light into my conſcience, you ſhall find me readily ſubmitting to you.

Conceſſio eſt quâ Quintilianus dicit eſſe cum aliquid iniquum videmur cauſæ fiducia pati. Apud eum dicitur conſeſſio nihil nocitura. Quint. l. 9. c. 2. *Non ſubmittit ſe erraſſe, ſed humiliter ſe ſubmittit amicorum cenſuræ.* Bold.

A queſtion ariſes here in the general, whether *Job* doubted his cauſe, or whether or no there were an heſitancy in his ſpirit, about what he had done or ſpoken?

I anſwer, this ſpeech implies not, that he had any doubt of himſelf, or an admiſſion that he had erred, *Job* ſpeaks like Orators or Diſputants, who when they are ſure of a point, will yet grant a little doubtfulneſs, or raiſe doubts about what they are able to maintain and confident to carry. It is ordinary to put things by way of ſuppoſition, of which we make no queſtion. When *Job* ſaith, *Cauſe me to underſtand, wherein I have erred*; it is not an acknowledgment that he had erred; but a ſubmiſſion in caſe he had, or a conceſſion that he might; *Job* was not lifted up with an opinion of his own infallibility; he knew to err was common to man, and therefore he ſpeaks of himſelf under the common notion of all men: not from any conſciouſneſs of his own error.

הבין *In Hiphel, inteligentē fecit, erudiit.*

Cauſe me to underſtand.] It is but one word in the Original, and it ſignifies to convince by Reaſon or Argument. *Cauſe me to underſtand*, that is, do not think to force my opinion, or to offer violence to my judgment; do not think to club me down with great words and clamorous threats, but do it by ſolid Arguments, by evident demonſtration of Reaſon: Do it by ſavoury advices and counſels, not by bitter reproaches and invectives. Deal with my underſtanding, not barely with my affections, *Cauſe me to underſtand*

My error.] It ſignifies *local, corporal wandrings and errors*, and *bodily erring* or *wandring*; and ſometimes it ſignifies the *wandrings* of the mind, judgment and affections, *Prov.* 5. 19, 20. *Solomon* bids the Husband, *Rejoyce in the Wife of his youth, let her be as the loving Hind and pleaſant Roe, let her breaſts ſatisfie thee at all times, and be thou raviſhed alwayes with her love.* The *Hebrew* (as our Tranſlators put in the Margin) is, *err thou alwayes in her love*; that is, *Let all thy wandring, erring thoughts and affections be reduced and brought whom to the Wife whom God hath given thee.* The next words ſeem to interpret ſo, *for why (my Son) wilt thou be raviſhed with a ſtrange woman, and embrace the boſom of a ſtranger?* That's dangerous *erring* in love: Therefore (ſaith he) let all thine *errings* and *wandrings*, all thy *delights* and *raviſhments* be (chaſte and conjugal) *towards the Wife of thy youth.*

Further, It ſignifies *erring* or *wandring* out of mere ignorance. This word is often uſed in *Leviticus* for the ſin of *Ignorance*, Chap. 4. 2. & 5. 18. & 22. 14. *If any man hath ſinned through ignorance, or committed an error, then he ſhall offer theſe and theſe Sacrifices and Oblations.* So *Pſalm* 19. 12. *Who can underſtand his errors?* That is, thoſe ſins which he commits out of ignorance and inadvertency. Hence he concludes with this prayer, *Cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults.* He doth not mean faults which he committed privately, and ſo were *ſecrets* to others; but faults which he had committed ignorantly, and ſo were *ſecrets* to himſelf: that is, they were ſins of ignorance. And I conceive he means not only ſuch ſins as he had committed ignorantly, but then knew they were ſins, but even ſuch ſins as he was ignorant whether ever he had committed them or no; that is, he prays for the pardon of all thoſe ſins which poſſibly he might have committed, though to him as yet altogether unknown and undiſcovered.

The Title of *Pſalm* 7. is, *Shiggaion of David*; it is the ſame Original word we have in the Text, and ſome tranſlate it, *A wandring Song*: and the reaſon for it, is either becauſe of the variable and wandring Poetry, or becauſe of the variable or wandring tune in which that *Pſalm* was ſung, and to which it was ſet for greater delight; others make the Title (ſuitable to the tranſlation of the word here) *The Pſalm of David's Errors*; becauſe it ſets forth his fears and dangers, which made him wander in body, and ſometime alſo to go a little aſtray in mind. This *Pſalm* was ſung to the Lord, concerning the words or the buſineſs of *Cuſh* the *Benjamite*, that is, of *Saul* who was of *Kiſh* and of *Jemini* (1 *Sam.* 9. 1.) called here *Cuſh*, that is, *Ethiopian* or *Black-moor* (figuratively) from his black and ill conditions, his heart not being changed, as the Black-moor changeth not his skin. *Saul* was a bitter enemy to *David*, and made him flie and wander, and ſometime go a ſtray in his ſpeeches and actions, upon a ſudden guſt of temptation. And ſo a *Pſalm* of that ſubject may well bear this ſtile, either from his corporal or ſpiritual errors. There is a third apprehenſion upon *Shiggaion*, taking it for delight or raviſhments of mind, and ſo the *Pſalm* is ſuperſcribed, *David's delight or ſolace*; that is, the *Pſalm* which he compoſed and ſung to the Lord, to comfort himſelf in all his troubles with *Saul*; his ſoul wandred Heaven-ward in holy raviſhments and delights in God, while his body wandred about the Earth in aſtoniſhment and ſorrows, cauſed by a bloody-minded man.

Cantio erratica.

The very ſame Title is given to the prayer of *Habakkuk*, Chap. 3. 1, *A prayer of* Habakkuk *upon Sigionoth*, which ſome interpret to be ſo called becauſe of the ſtrange variety or variableneſs of the Song and tune, the Prophet being in a holy rapture, raviſhed in ſpirit, and ſwallowed up in the contemplation of Gods Power and Majeſty, ſoars up and wanders (like *Paul* in another caſe) he knows not whither, or how.

But the Vulgar renders it, *A prayer for ignorance*, or a prayer for error; which tranſlation is ſurely an error, if not of ignorance, as to the ſcope of that prayer; though the letter of the original word (as in the former inſtances, and in the Text before us) bears that ſence.

Oratio pro ignorantia.

When *Job* ſaith, *Cauſe me to underſtand my error*, his meaning is, that his errors (whatſoever they were) in that buſineſs, were ſecret to him, he had not gone againſt the light of his own conſcience, nor as yet had they brought any light to convince his conſcience; he had been charged with errors, extravagancies and wandrings; but he underſtood not what they were, and therefore deſires them to cauſe him underſtand his error. Obſerve hence,

First, *Man is ſubject to error.*

To *error* in ſpeech, to *error* in practice, to *error* in judgment. Man by nature can do nothing elſe but *err*, *All* *his goings, are goings aſtray*, and all his knowledge is bottom'd upon an heap of falſe principles. *All his works (by nature) are errata's, and the whole edition of his life, a concontinued miſtake.* Obſerve,

Secondly, *That man is in a fair way to truth, who acknowledgeth he may err.*

Cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred, ſaith *Job*; he thought he had not *erred*: but he grants it was poſſible for him to *err*. That which hath faſtned ſo many *errors* to the *Popes Chair*, and from thence ſcattered them all over the world, is an opinion, that he in his Chair *cannot err*; his ſuppoſed ſpirit of Infallibilty, hath made him *the great Deceiver*, and deceived him. He that thinks *he cannot err, errs in thinking ſo*, and ſeldom thinks or ſpeaks, or doth any thing, but it is *an error*. He is moſt ſecured from *error*, who ſuſpects he hath erred, and humbly acknowledges that he may.

We may here Obſerve what an *Error is*.

Thirdly, *An Error ſtrictly and properly taken, is that which we hold or do, out of bare ignorance of the Truth.*

It is an *Error* in practice, when we are ignorant of what is better to be done. An *Error* in opinion is, when we are ignorant of what is better for us to believe or hold. Hereſie is an *Error* and more, for Hereſie hath theſe three things in it.

Firſt, In regard of the matter, it muſt be in ſome great and fundamental truths. The word *Hereſie* is by ſome derived from *chooſing*; by others from *taking away*, becauſe it takes us off from Chriſt, or from the foundations of ſaving knowledge.

Secondly, *Hereſie* is accompanied with pertinacy and obſtinacy, after clear light offered: It is poſſible one may have an *Error* about things which are Fundamental, and yet be no *Heretick*: *An Heretick is condemned of himſelf*, *Tit*. 3. 10. But he will not be convinced by another. Not that he doth formally and in terms, give ſentence againſt or condemn himſelf; but equivalently he doth, as the Apoſtle (*Acts* 13. 46.) ſpeaks to the unbelieving Jews, *Seeing ye put the word from you, and judge your ſelves unworthy of everlaſting life*, &c. Theſe men did not judge themſelves ſuch formally, they came not to the Apoſtle and ſaid, we willingly ſubmit our ſelves to Hell and wrath. No, they thought very well of themſelves, and judged themſelves worthy of eternal life. But their practice judged them, and gave a real ſentence againſt them, while they acquitted themſelves. Thus alſo an Heretick (who ever hath a very high opinion of himſelf and his opinions) is condemned of himſelf.

Thirdly, In Hereſie there is taking of pleaſure and delight: therefore Hereſie is numbred among the *luſts of the fleſh, adultery and fornication*, &c. *Gal*. 5. 20. Hereticks deſire to diſperſe and vend their opinions. A man alone in an error, will weep over his opinions, and it grieves him that he diſſents and goes contrary unto others: But he that ſtifly maintains an error, inſults over others, and delights to maintain his oppoſition: he triumphs and boaſts of his war, though he can never obtain victory (Truth only is victorious.) And ſome learned Criticks obſerve as much from the form of the Greek word, *Tit*. 3. 11. So then, Hereſie is not only an error in judgment, but a pertinacy in the will, and it takes in delight at the affection.

Hæreticus eſt cui voluptas eſt falſas tueri opiniones, ea enim eſt nominum Græcorum in ικὸς *deſinentiū proprietas, ut ad qualitatem deſignandam non adhibeantur modo, ſed etiam ad innuendā delectationem, quam in ea capit, cui illa qualitas ineſt.* Camer. Myroth. Evang. in cap. 2. Epiſt. ad Titum.

Obſerve from theſe words, *Cauſe me to underſtand, wherein I have erred,*

Fourthly, That, *an erring brother, or friend, muſt not be importuned barely to leave his error, but he muſt be made to underſtand his error.*

Error ſhould not be left, nor truth received blindfold; a man may ſin in leaving an error: they do (without queſtion) who lay it down thinking it to be a truth; and there is little queſtion but they do, who leave it before they underſtand it to be an error. *It is much alike to reject an opinion as an error, which we do not underſtand, and to practice an opinion for a truth; which we do not underſtand.* If a man practice or believe a truth, not convinced that it is, or not conceiving it to be a truth, that truth is but an error to him; becauſe he doth not believe or practice it under the notion of a truth; and ſo, if he leave an error, which he is not convinced to be an error, his leaving it is not much better (and in ſome caſes it may be worſe) then his holding it; becauſe he leaves it not under the notion of an error. We muſt not dance after other mens pipes, or ſee with other mens eyes: Except we know it is good we do, and evil which we leave undone, our not doing evil, is not good to us, and our doing good is (to us) no better then evil.

Verſ. 25. **How forcible are good words! But what doth your arguing reprove?**

Job ſpeaks by way of admiration, **How forcible**! I cannot tell how forcible. It is an elegant way of expreſſing the highneſs of our thoughts, as *Pſal*. 84. 1. *How amiable are thy dwelling places, O Lord of Hoſts!* He admires in ſtead of ſpeaking: they are ſo amiable, as I cannot tell how amiable they are. Put your thoughts to their utmoſt conceptions of beauty, and that beauty is in the dwellings of the Lord: ſo ſaith *Job* here, *How forcible are right words!* they are ſo forcible, as I know not how forcible they are, I muſt admire and be ſilent.

In Hebræo Admirativum eſt elegans & patheticum. Bold.

How forcible are right words! The Chaldee Paraphraſe reads it, *How ſweet are right words!* interpreting it by that, *Pſal*. 119. 103. *O how ſweet are thy commandments unto me! they are ſweeter then the honey and the honey comb.* But the originals differ, though that be a good ſence.

We read, **How forcible**! The word ſignifies any thing that is ſtrong, potent, or mighty; it notes alſo acrimony, ſharpneſs or ſmartneſs, and ſo it is often applied to words either good or bad, 1 *King*. 2. 8. when *David* lay upon his death-bed, giving his laſt advice to *Solomon*, *Thou* (ſaith he) *haſt Shimei with thee, who curſed me with a grievous curſe.* In the Hebrew it is this word, who curſed with a ſharp, ſtrong, forceale curſe, he curſed me with all his heart, with all his might he laid load upon me. *Evil words are ſtrong, right words are ſtrongeſt.* *Job* had before at *verſ*. 6. of this Chapter, called the diſcourſes of *Eliphaz* unſavoury, in this he taxes them for flat or weak: right words have a pleaſing acrimony upon the palate of the ſoul, and a power upon the judgment, to ſway and carry it; but yours are dull and feeble.

מרצ *Acrimoniæ notionem habet.*

Some render it after the letter of the Hebrew, *words of right, or truth:* Others in the concrete, *How forcible are the words of a right, or upright man!* But take it as we tranſlate, *How forcible are right words!* Words are right three wayes;

אמרי ישר *Eloquia rectitudinis* Mont. ἀληθινῦ ῥήματα. Sept. λόγοι ἰσο-[illegible]. Aquil.

Firſt, In the matter, when they are true.

Secondly, In the manner, when they are plain, direct, and perſpicuous.

Thirdly, In their uſe, when they are duly and properly applied; when the arrow is carried home to the white, then they are right words, or words of righteouſneſs. When this three-fold rightneſs meets in words, how forcible, how ſtrong are ſuch words?

But what doth your arguing reprove? I confeſs there is great ſtrength in right words, and in the words of the upright; but you have been long diſputing the matter with me, and what have you got? where are your gains? The word ſignifies, to rebuke with conviction and argument, to ſhew what is right, and to refute that which is contrary; *Job* 13. 3. the word is ſo uſed, *Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God,* to reaſon it out as it were by force of argument with God. The word is anſwerable in ſence to that in the Greek, uſed by the Apoſtle *Heb*. 11. 1. *Faith is a conviction, or the evidence of things not ſeen*, that is, an evident conviction: Faith gives a ſtronger evidence then any reaſon, yea then ſence: therefore though faith be of things that fall not under ſence, and are above reaſon; yet faith is an evidence or a conviction, fuller then any Logical conviction or demonſtration. The Argument from ſuch authority as faith grounds upon, is ſtronger and more convincing then any, or then all the reaſon in the world.

יכח *Arguit, redarguit, præparavit, verba contra aliquem diſputando & oſtendendo jus.*

What doth your arguing reprove? Word for word, *What doth your diſputation diſpute*? Or, what do your Arguments argue? as if he had ſaid, Your arguing is no arguing, your reaſons are no reaſons; that which you have been arguing all this while with me, doth not ſo much as deſerve the name of an argument (in my caſe) it hath no power or

Quid diſceptando conficiet diſceptatio veſtra, q. d. quod vos redarguitis, redarguendi verbo non eſt donandum.

ſtrength in it: *Job* layes a charge upon his friends by this oppoſition; *Right words are forcible, but your arguments are not right*, or, *you are not right who argue; therefore what force, what power is there in what you have ſpoken? I can blow it all off as eaſily as a man can blow off a feather.* Mr. *Broughton* varies ſomewhat from this ſence. *And what can your blame ſoundly blame?* That is, you ſhall find nothing blame-worthy, or reprovable in me. Obſerve hence,

First, *Words rightly ſpoken are very forcible.*

Take it in the general. What mighty things have words, words duly ſpoken, done? *Abigail*, a weak woman, by a few right words overcame the ſtrength and wtath of mighty *David*, and turned his whole army back: *David* with all his men, were in the heat of reſolution, and upon a hot march to deſtroy *Nabal*, yet ſhe ſtops them; and that woman ſpeaking to *Joab* (when *Sheba* fled to the City) with a few right words prevailed to ſave the City, and ſtay the fury of war.

Take the Point more ſtrictly; the words of truth, are full of power, full of ſtrength.

Naked truth is too hard for armed error.

Truth hath the ſtrength of God in it, therefore that muſt needs prevail. The Apoſtle profeſſes, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *We can do nothing againſt the truth*; he means it in regard of the bent of his ſpirit, his heart could not move againſt truth; but we may uſe it in another ſence, *We can do nothing againſt the truth*, that is, let us put out the uttermoſt of our power, we can never prevail againſt the truth. Look upon truth in the promiſes, that will conquer all; look upon truth in the threatnings, that's forcible to overcome all, *Jer.* 1. 10. God gives the Prophet a commiſſion, *I have ſet thee over the Nations, and over the Kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to deſtroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant*: Here's a ſtrange commiſſion for a Prophet; how could *Jeremiah* plant or root up, build or pull down Nations? He never drew Sword, yet he performed this commiſſion fully by his Word: he pulled them down, and rooted them up by the Word of threatning, and he planted them and built them with the Word of promiſe, *Zech.* 1. 10. *Your fathers are dead, they are gone, but my words* (ſaith the Lord) *which I ſpake by my ſervants the Prophets, did not they take hold of your fathers?* Your fathers are dead, and the Prophets are dead, but my words live ſtill, and did not they take hold of your fathers? you eſteemed my words as wind, but they were a ſtrong wind, they blew down the power of your fathers. The Apoſtle gives this honour to all the Word of God (which is all right) that it is *mighty, or forcible, through God, to bring down ſtrong holds, and to bring every thought into ſubjection unto Chriſt.* And *Heb.* 4. 12. *The word of God is mighty in operation:* The energy of it is ſuch that nothing can ſtand before it, no luſt can ſtand before it, no error can ſtand before it, it bears down all with fine force.

Therefore take heed of ſtanding in the way of right words. Truth comes with ſuch a force, that no man is able to bear up againſt it. *It is better to have all the men of the world againſt us, then to have one Word of God againſt us.* One word of Truth will do more againſt us, then all the Armies in the world; no force can ſtand againſt this force, the force of the Word will deſtroy the force of the Sword. *Truth will be the great Conqueror at laſt.*

Take it in the Concrete, in reference to the ſpeaker, *How forcible is the word of an upright man!* Then Obſerve,

Thirdly, *The words of one that is upright-hearted, carry great ſtrength and power with them.*

Truth looſes by the patronage and defence which ſome give it. Truth gets little by the tongues of thoſe men who have no grace in their hearts. Truth in the mouth of a wicked man is weakned by the falſneſs of his heart and filthineſs of his life. Sometimes precious truths are ſpoken by vileſt men, but what force have they? they are not received or owned. Chriſt could not abide to hear the Devil ſpeak truth. A godly man ſpeaks *with authority*, as it is ſaid of Chriſt, *He ſpake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*; the Scribes taught that which was truth ſometimes, and the Scribes had alwayes authority to teach; the *chair of* Moſes *was theirs*, they were not intruders upon an office they had no call to. When Chriſt ſaith, *The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in* Moſes *chair* (Mat. 23. 2.) He ſpeaks not only (*de facto*) of what they did, but (*de jure*) of what they had right to do; they were not uſurpers, or actors beyond their line. But though the Scribes had the right of authority to teach, yet their teaching had no force of authority, it was but talk. And it appears plainly, that the words of that hypocritical generation, the Scribes and Phariſees bare no weight with the people; becauſe Chriſt gives them a charge, *to obſerve and do what the Scribes and Phariſees bid them:* As intimating that the doctrine of thoſe Scribes (though true) was low-priz'd, and lay much unpractis'd, *Matth.* 23. 3. We muſt not ſhorten the hand of God, as if he might not uſe thoſe who have no truth to publiſh a truth; he may imploy what inſtruments he pleaſes, and he can make thoſe that are evil, inſtruments of good. But look upon it ordinarily, thus it is, the word of truth hath moſt power, ſtrength and force, from the lips of thoſe who are upright in heart and holy in life. *How forcible are their words?* The words of the wiſe are like goads, or like nails, faſtned by the Maſters of the Aſſembly, *Eccleſ.* 11. But the words of wicked Maſters in the Aſſembly, are like nails without points, they will not drive, or take hold, there's no faſtning of them; or the words of wicked men are like weak nails, which break in the driving: What do you arguing, reproving, teaching, you that carry your ſelves thus, what force have your words? Truth looſes both ſtrength and credit in your mouths: *Thou that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf? thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal? thou that ſayeſt a man ſhould not commit adultery, doſt thou commit adultery?* &c. are the Apoſtles chiding expoſtulations with the Jewiſh Doctors, *Rom.* 2. And upon this he charges them with diſhonouring God, and cauſing his Name to be blaſphemed among the Gentiles, *verſ.* 23, 24. But what was the blaſphemy? Surely this, The Gentiles grew to have a low eſteem of the word of God, his Law was of no force with them, becauſe thoſe Teachers were ſo falſe to it, and unſpoke with their lives whatſoever their Tongues had ſpoken. That which hath no force upon the ſpeakers heart, hath ſeldom any upon the hearers. What do your teaching teach, or your comfortings comfort? what do your arguings argue, or your reprovings reprove? *Shall vice reprove ſin?* as we ſpeak proverbially: or if it doth, ſin is not much hurt with thoſe reproofs. Words ſpoken from the heart, go to the heart; and words read in the life, are moſt forcible to reform the life: *Then the word goes firſt cloathed with life and power, when the Preacher can read his Sermon in his own heart, and the people in his life. He that ſpeaks only out of books, does much after his rate, who (as we ſay) ſpeaks without-book: And he that lives not what he ſpeaks (what in him lies) kills what he ſpeaks. And how ſhall ſuch a dead letter ('tis almoſt a miracle if it doth) conveigh a quickning ſpirit?* Such arguings ſeldom reprove any but the arguer, and him they alwayes reprove.

VERS. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate, which are as wind?

Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherleſs, and you dig a pit for your friend.

Now therefore be content, look upon me, for it is evident unto you, if I lye.

Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity, yea return again: my righteouſneſs is in it.

Is there iniquity in my tongue? Cannot my taſte diſcern perverſe things?

IN the two former verſes, *Job* made an humble ſubmiſſion of himſelf unto the better counſel and inſtruction of his friends, if they could yet ſhew him wherein he had errred. In theſe five verſes, he doth two things further.

First, He expoſtulates with his friends about their former ſpeech and carriage toward him.

Secondly, He admoniſhes them to be better adviſed, more moderate and conſiderate, in what they had yet to ſay unto him.

The former of theſe is contained in *verſ.* 26, 27. And there are two branches of it.

Firſt, He taxes them for making ſo light of what he had ſaid, *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate, which are as wind?* verſ. 26.

Secondly, He taxeth them for laying ſuch heavy load upon him, in what they had ſaid, *Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherleſs, and you dig a pit for your friend,* v. 27. As if he had ſpoken plainly thus, *You have carried the matter hitherto with me, as if I had ſpoken nothing but bare empty words, words without any weight; yea, as if I were raging mad, diſtracted, deſperate, not knowing, nor caring what I did, or what I ſpake; as if my whole diſcourſe were no better, then meer vapouring, a puff of wind, a nothing; and ye your ſelves rage againſt me with ſuch violence, as a cruel hard-hearted Tyrant is enraged with, againſt a poor, helpleſs, innocent and forſaken, friendleſs Orphan; or at beſt, ye deal with me, as cunning ſophiſters and ſubtil diſputants, ſeeking to catch me in your intricate diſcourſes and doubtful debates, you make a pit for your friend.*

This for the general ſence of thoſe two verſes, containing an expoſtulation about his friends unfriendly dealing with him. Now to the particulars.

Do ye imagine to reprove words?

חשב *Ad crepandum tantum verbis concinnatis.* Vulg.

The word we tranſlate [**Imagine**] notes a very curious, exquiſite and elaborate invention of any thing. The Vulgar refers *imagining* to the words with which they did reprove, not to the act of reproving. *Ye make a neat frame of words to reprove me;* and ſo the ſence riſes thus, you artificially imagine, mint and coyn eloquent ſpeeches and ſubtil arguments, to reprove and convince me with; as if you came hither to ſhew your ſelves Logicians and Orators, rather then loving friends. This is your dealing, *You imagine words to reprove with.* Others thus, *Do you think that words reprove?* That great words ſhall overcome me, without weight of reaſon? This ſence refers alſo to the ſpeech of *Job*'s friends; as if he had ſaid, *Do you ſtand deviſing words againſt me, or wording it with me? Do you think that your fine phraſes and elaborate poliſht language will carry the matter with me, will words reprove me?* And ſo we may connect it with the ſence immediately foregoing, *How forcible are right words? But what doth your arguing reprove?* Your arguings that are ſlight arguings? Your words are meer words, a ſound and a noiſe; * words ſet alone, are often taken for words only, for naked words, words without any due cloathing of comlineſs and moderation, and without any ballaſt or weight of reaſon and diſcretion. And do you (my friends) imagine to gain me, by ſuch a parcel of words as theſe?

Num verba nuda putatis arguere, q. d. *putatiſne verba ſatis eſſe ad arguendum & diſceptandum ſine ratione. Planior fuerit ſenſus, ſi* ב *ante* מלים *ſubaudias, an cogitatis arguere* במלים *meris verbis.* Merc.

* *Verba nuda & ſola. Ut mulier, mulier bona, Lana, lana alba, & ſi quæ alia Gramaticis obſervata.* Druſ.

But according to the ſence touch'd before, *Job* rather refers to the opinion, which his friends had of his words; *Do ye imagine to reprove words?* That is, do you think that you have nothing to anſwer, or reprove, but a company of empty ſillables; have I not ſpoken reaſon or ſence all this while? Do you think you diſpute with ſome idle-headed fellow, who cares not what he ſaith, or ſaith he knows not what? Do you think, that your words are ſtrong and full of reaſon: that yours are irrefragable arguments, and mine, but idle talk or a frothy diſcourſe? That's a ſecond Interpretation, and that which I conceive more clear to this place. It followeth,

And the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate, which are as wind?

We muſt underſtand or repeat the firſt branch, *And do ye imagine to reprove the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate, which are as wind?*

נואש *à radice* יאש *Diffidit, deſperavit, ſpe omnem rei alicujus efficiendæ aut conſequendæ abjecit ſeu amiſit.*

The ſpeeches of one that is deſperate.] The word ſignifies a perſon that is quite without hope, who thinks his eſtate paſt remedy or redreſs, his wound incurable, his loſs irreparable, and his breaches ſuch as can never be made up or heal'd. So *Jer.* 2. 25. where the Prophet counſels the Church to return and repent: but, *Thou ſaidſt there is no hope;* or as we read it in the margin, *thy caſe is deſperate;* what do you talk of repentance, and of returning now, all's loſt, all's gone, I am undone, my eſtate can never be recovered, *Do ye imagine to reprove the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate?*

Some refer this alſo, to the friends of *Job*, thus: Do ye think that bare words are anſwer enough for me, and that the ſpeeches of a deſperate mad man, which are nothing but wind and ſound, are ſufficient to refute me. And therefore you riſe up againſt me in this ſtorm and fury, ſpeaking any thing, without ſtudy or premeditation.

But we may rather underſtand it of *Job* himſelf, and that as before, he gave their ſence of his words, that they were but wind; ſo here he gives us their apprehenſion of his perſon, that ſure he was mad or deſperate.

Do ye imagine that I am deſperate or diſtracted, becauſe I have little or no hope to be reſtored? Becauſe I have loſt my eſtate, my ſtrength, my children, do ye alſo think I have loſt my wits, my reaſon and underſtanding. I confeſs I am even worn to pieces, and brought to nothing, I am ſpent and conſumed with ſorrows, that's my condition, but am I therefore deſperate, and regard not what I ſpeak? It is an eaſie and a compendious way of refuting all a man can ſay, to ſay he is mad. His words muſt needs be but wind, without weight, who is himſelf without reaſon. *Do ye think to reprove the words of one that is deſperate,* **that are as wind**? Or, as Mr. *Broughton* reads, *Do ye hold the terms of the forlorn, a wind?* That is, do ye think, becauſe I am in ſuch a ſad condition, and in appearance in a deſperate condition. that therefore my words are light and vain, ſuch as are no more to be regarded or heeded, then a puff of wind? And ſo it is, as if he had ſaid, ye ought not to ſlight what I ſpeak, becauſe I am in ſuch a low forlorn condition. That of *Solomon* comes to this ſence, *Eccleſ.* 9. 16. *The poor mans wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard.*

Haud ſane ita convenit, ut pro futilibus, verba mea habeatis, eo quod afflictionibus attritus ſum & tabefactus. Merc.

It is common in Scripture to put light, vain, and unprofitable words under this expreſſion, *they are but wind.* In *Job* 15. *v.* 3. *Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk, or with ſpeeches wherewith he can do no good? Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the Eaſt-wind?* That is, ſhould a man talk nothing but that which is vain and unprofitable? And ſo, *Jer.* 5. 13. *The Prophets ſhall become wind;* that is, their propheſies ſhall become wind; whatſoever they ſpeak (ſaid that unbelieving people) ſhall be but as a vain thing, it ſhall be as nothing, it ſhall paſs away, and the place of it ſhall be known no more; thus they undervalued the Prophets in thoſe times, when they ſpake the truths of God, and brought them immediate meſſages from Heaven. Hence Obſerve,

> Firſt, *That words without reaſon, meer vain words, are no words, they are but wind.*

Hence thoſe prophane ones in *Jeremiah*, who ſaid the true Prophets had belied the Lord, *and were but wind,* add preſently, *And the word is not in them:* That is, the words of theſe Prophets are no words. Indeed the Lord anſwers for his Prophets, at *verſ.* 14. telling the people, becauſe they had thus diſhonoured his meſſengers, that they ſhould find thoſe words, which they accounted wind, to be a fire, *Thus ſaith the Lord, becauſe ye ſpeak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it ſhall devour them.* Whoſoever eſteems the Word of God to be wind, ſhall find it to be a fire: and they who will not be taught by it, ſhall be conſumed by it. But to the point in hand, we ſee in that Scripture, vain words are windy words, and windy words are as no words: *The Prophets* (as they ſuppoſed) *were wind,* and thence they infer, *the word is not in them:* That is, their words have no ſubſtance, ſtrength, or power at all in them. So, *Hoſ.* 12. 1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the Eaſt-wind;* what was the wind that *Ephraim* fed upon? Some vain words, ſome promiſes he had from the creature to be delivered, ſome hopes raiſed by the word of man, who is a wind; therefore his feeding upon thoſe hopes, was but a feeding upon wind, there was no ground or ſtrength to make thoſe words good: So the next words interpret, *He daily encreaſeth lies.*

Such words are (by the Learned) called *bubbles;* and why bubbles? Becauſe a bubble upon the water is only fill'd with wind, touch it and 'tis nothing. Theſe words have nothing in them, but the breach of the ſpeaker.

Bullatas nugas. Perſ. *Sat.* 5. *utpote ſimilia bullis vento plenis.*

Unleſs the ſpirit of reaſon fills our mouths, we ſpeak nothing but our breath, or as we phraſe it in our Language, *we do but vapour.* The Apoſtle *Peter* deſcribes ſuch (2 Epiſt. 2. 8.) *They ſpeak great ſwelling words of vanity;* and the Apoſtle *Jude* uſes the ſame expreſſion in *verſ.* 16. of his Epiſtle:

ὑπέρογκα ματαιότητος φθεγγόμενοι.

Epiſtle. Their *mouth ſpeaketh great ſwelling words*; that is, words greatly ſwel'd with vanity. Or ſwel'd, as the fleſh ſwells, by the gathering of corruption, and ill humors. The greatneſs of theſe words was their diſeaſe, and not their nature. *Wiſe men ſpeak great things, and fools ſpeak great words.* Obſerve,

Secondly, *That windy, empty words, will never either convince, or convert.*

Such words do no work: they are wind, and they paſs away like wind without any impreſſion upon the hearers. They trouble the ear, but touch not the heart. When the noiſe of them is paſt, all is paſt. They are a ſound, and beſides that, a nothing. Windy meats are not nouriſhing for the body, neither are windy words for the ſoul. Some knowledge doth not build up, but puff up, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. and that's all the knowledge which ſuch words can breed, when they breed any. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *We are apt to judge the words of thoſe that are greatly afflicted, to be but vain windy words.*

And we are ready to conclude, they complain more then they need. When the *Iſraelites* groaning under the preſſures of that bondage, ſent to *Pharoah* for ſome abatements of their burdens: we will not diminiſh the tale of the bricks, only let ſtraw be given us: no ſaith *Pharoah*, Exod. 5. 17. *They are idle, let more work be laid upon the people, that they may labour therein, and let them not regard vain words.* He reſolved to deal wiſely with them, and therefore muſt count them mad; their perſons were near *Job's* condition, and their words were fully under the ſame cenſure. Hence note,

Fourthly, *That it is very ſinful to eſteem the words of the afflicted to be but wind.*

It was great uncharitableneſs in *Job's* friends, thus to expound and gloſs the Text of his complaints. We ſhould hear a man in affliction, as if every word were drenched and ſteeped in the ſorrows of his heart; and take every ſentence, as coming bloody from his wounded ſpirit.

Obſerve how *Job* deſcribes his own eſtate, he was as a man deſperate (not utterly deſparate, for in another place he profeſſes in higheſt confidence, that though God kill him, yet he will truſt in him) yet deſperate he was in regard of outward help, or temporal ſuccor.

Laſtly, *A godly man in affliction may ſometime think his caſe deſperate and remedileſs.*

Wicked men reſolve in the Pſalm, *There is no help for him in his God*; and a good man under a cloud of temptation may ſay, *Surely there is no help for me in my God*; that is, I ſee not which way I ſhall be helped, I have no aſſurance, no evidence that God will help me: Not that he doubts the power of God to help him: But the providence of God ſeems to ſpeak that he will not, *I ſhall one day periſh by the hand of* Saul, ſaith holy *David*. *Heman* looked upon himſelf, as a *man that had no ſtrength, free among the dead*, Pſal. 88. 5. As if he had got a diſcharge from the ſervice of this world, and was enfranchiz'd a Citizen of the grave, where all are free. As (to note that only in paſſage) it is ſaid of *Azariah*, being ſmitten with Leproſie, and ſo put from the exerciſe of the Government, which was a civil death; that he dwelt in a ſeveral houſe, or in a houſe of freedom, 2 *King*. 15. 5.

Verſ. 27. **Yea, you overwhelm the fatherleſs, and you dig a pit for your friend.**

After he had convinced them of their uncharitableneſs in accounting his words light and windy, he ſhews them how they dealt with him, what kind of words theirs were towards him: their words were as ſwords, their words were blows, every expreſſion of theirs to his ear, was an oppreſſion upon his ſpirit; *Ye overwhelm the fatherleſs*; he ſets forth their (as he conceived) cruelty againſt him, by two things, very odious both;

Firſt, The undoing of a fatherleſs child.

Secondly, The digging of a pit (not for an enemy, but) for a friend.

Ye overwhelm the fatherleſs.] The Original is full of Emphaſis, word for word, it may be tranſlated thus, *You throw your ſelves upon the fatherleſs*; and ſo it is an alluſion to hunters, either to men when they hunt wild beaſts, or to wild beaſts, when they hunt their prey; as ſoon as the hunter can reach the game, he overwhelms it, he caſts himſelf down, or layes all his ſtrength upon it. A dog having caught the hare, falls upon it, and keeps it under. Some conceive that expreſſion, *Gen.* 49. 9. concerning *Judah*, compared to a Lion, reaches this ſence, *Judah is a Lions whelp, from the prey my ſon thou art gone up, he ſtooped down, he couched as a Lion, and as an old Lion, who ſhall rouze him up?* As if that crouching and lying down were when he hath taken his prey; who dares to ſtir up a Lion, when he hath his prey under him? if any dare, the Lion will make them a prey too. We ſee in daily experience, how angry a dog will be, if you ſtir him up, when he hath but a bone under him. Such a violence is noted in this expreſſion, you throw your ſelves down upon a poor fatherleſs one, a man in a low condition, as if you would tear him to pieces, and eat him up at a morſel. Our tranſlation comes near the ſignification of the word, *Ye overwhelm the fatherleſs.*

נפל
Ruit, irruit.

The word ſignifies to run upon one with violence, and hence Giants are called *Nephilim* in the Hebrew, which is as much as to ſay *Oppreſſors*, becauſe they overwhelm the weaker with force and violence.

Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates the word to another ſence, as noting, not an open violent way of oppreſſing, but a ſecret ſubtil way of circumventing, *To lay a ſnare for the Orphan*: The word may bear that ſence, namely, *to ſet a trap, or to lay a ſnare*: And he parallels it with that word uſed often in the New Teſtament, *To ſcandalize* or offend a brother, which properly ſignifies to lay a trap or a ſnare, to ſet ſomewhat whereby to entangle or catch a man, that he may be ſtopt and hindred in his way. Thus *Job*, of his friends, you ſet a trap to enſnare, and make a pit for me to fall into, or you lay a block to cauſe me to ſtumble in, or turn out of the wayes of holineſs, while you would perſwade me, that he who walks uprightly in that way, ſhall never meet with any rub of outward trouble. What is this but to diſcourage me in the way I walk, becauſe therein I have met ſo many troubles. Thus you lay a ſnare for

σκανδαλίζω *Scandalum eſt impedimentum in via, ut quis vel collabatur & ruat, vel ab inſtituto curſu impediatur.*

The fatherleſs.] The word ſtrictly taken, notes a child whoſe parents are dead. Some of the Ancients ſay, the word *Pupill*, which is from the Latine, ſignifies one without ſight, or wanting the apple or Pupill of his eyes; becauſe being deprived of his Parents, he wants the light of counſel and direction, to carry him on in his courſe through the world. What *Moſes* ſpake to *Hobab* his Father in law, is a truth of all good Parents to their Children, *They are to them in ſtead of eyes*, Numb. 10. 31. But here by fatherleſs, we may rather underſtand any one that is deſtitute of help, though himſelf be a Father. He that hath many Children may (in this ſence) be an Orphan, that is, friendleſs and comfortleſs. So *Pſal.* 10. 14. *Thou art the helper of the fatherleſs*; that is, Thou art the helper of all thoſe who want help. That's the meaning of Chriſt's promiſe to his Diſciples, *I will not leave you comfortleſs*; the Greek is, *I will not leave you Orphans or fatherleſs*; Orphans and fatherleſs are uſually full of ſorrows, therefore to be left fatherleſs, and to be left comfortleſs are the ſame. In this larger ſence take *Job's* mind, *You overwhelm the fatherleſs*; that is, you overwhelm me, who am a poor, deſtitute, helpleſs man, who have no friend, ſuccor or ſupport.

Pupillus juxta Auguſtinum & Iſidorum ita dicitur, quaſi ſine oculis, quæ pupillæ dicuntur, i. e. *parentibus orbus.*

And you dig a pit for your friend.

Word for word thus, *You dig for your friend.* And this is on all ſides agreed on, to intimate the ſecret circumvention or ſubtle practice (as *Job* apprehended) of his friends. For in Scripture, *to dig a pit*, is a proverbial ſpeech, and imports the laying of ſecret plot to circumvent another either in word or deed. So, *Pſal.* 7. 15. *He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into it himſelf*; that is, he deviſed ſome miſchievous device to entrap his brother, and the miſchief is fallen upon his own head, *Pſal.* 64. 5. *They commune of laying ſnares privily*; & *Iſa.* 29. 21. The Prophet deſcribes evil workers thus, *They dig deep to hide their counſel from the Lord*: Wicked Politicians are diggers and underminers; ſometime this is true literally (as in our Powder-plotters) but myſtically and myſteriouſly every one that layes a plot (though he never breaks ground) is ſaid to

Velut laqueũ & decipulã ſtruitis ad eum capiendum, i. e. *captionibus & cavillis eum nitimini circumvenire.* Merc.

to dig a pit for his neighbour. In the old Law (*Exod.* 21. 33.) a proviſion was made, that whoſoever digged a pit, ſhould cover it, becauſe pits were dangerous, both for men and cattel. To dig a pit for a friend, is to endanger a friend.

In this ſence, the latter part of the verſe agrees with Mr. *Broughton*'s tranſlation of the firſt, *Ye lay a ſnare for the Orphan, and ye dig a pit for your friend.* Falſe and fallacious arguments are traps and pits, in which the innocent are entangled. And *Job* ſuppoſes his friends intended to caſt him down into the pit of deſpair, by charging him with hypocriſie and rottenneſs of heart in his profeſſion.

כרה *Significat fodere, & convivium inſtruere, Epulamini ſuper ſocium veſtrum.*

There is a further apprehenſion concerning this word, *You have digged a pit*; Some of the Hebrew Doctors tranſlate thus, *You make a feaſt upon your friend.* The word ſignifies not only to dig a pit, but to feaſt and banquet; and it notes a ſumptuous exquiſite banquet, 2 *Kings* 6. 23. *And he prepared great proviſion for them.* In this Book, *chap.* 41. 6. The word is uſed in that ſence, where *Leviathan* is deſcribed too big for a banquet, *Shall thy companions make a banquet of him?* that is, are the fiſhermen able to catch and eat *Leviathan?* As if *Leviathan* ſcorned the fiſhermens engines, their nets and hooks.

Taking the word ſo, the meaning of the clauſe may be thus conceived, *You overwhelm the fatherleſs, yea, you are not contented with that, but you feaſt upon your poor friend*, that is, you rejoyce in his miſery, and make your ſelves merry with his ſorrows, as the *Philiſtines* dealt with *Samſon* when they had put out his eyes; *Come, let us bring him out, and make ſport with him*: So, ſaith *Job*, you deal with me, you oppreſs me, and then you make your ſelves merry with my ſorrows. The tears of an oppreſſed poor man are as wine to the oppreſſor, he drinks them down; the groans of a poor man are as muſick to a wicked oppreſſor, and his fleſh is as meat to him.

> Hence obſerve, Firſt, *To be fatherleſs, is to be in a ſad condition.*

They who are fatherleſs, are friendleſs, and ſo moſt ſubject to oppreſſion. They who have leaſt help in themſelves, have uſually leaſt help from others, and often receive moſt hurt from others. Hence we find (*Pſal.* 10. 18.) the oppreſſed and the fatherleſs put together; as if the fatherleſs were to expect oppreſſion for their portion, and they who needed moſt protection, ſhould be ſure to find moſt vexation. We uſe to ſay, where the hedge is loweſt, there men go over; it is ſo in every dayes experience. The mighty *Nimrods* ride over the backs of the poor; and where the hedge is low, they make lower gaps to paſs over more eaſily to their own deſigns. This ſpirit of oppreſſion is deſcribed raging againſt thoſe who are under heavieſt preſſures, Pſal. 69. 26. *They perſecute him whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they talk to the grief of thoſe whom thou haſt wounded.* When wicked men ſee a man afflicted by the hand of God, they afflict him more; when they ſee God hath wounded him, they will kill him. The trouble he is in, makes their victory more eaſie: As when the *Philiſtines* fell before *Jonathan*, (1 *Sam.* 14.) his Armour-bearer ſlew after him; ſo do theſe, they ſlay thoſe who are fallen before the afflicting hand of God.

> Obſerve ſecondly, That, *It is a great aggravation of the ſinfulneſs of oppreſſion and wrong doing, to oppreſs or do wrong to the fatherleſs.*

Commonly the poor are moſt oppreſſed, but alwayes there is more ſin in oppreſſing the poor, though to oppreſs or wrong the rich be a ſin, and a very great one. What a ſtock of wickednes do they gather who take from thoſe to whom they are bound to give; who make them naked and hungry, whom they ſhould cloath and feed; who are ſtraightned in juſtice towards them, to whom they ought to be enlarged in charity? It is a ſin to deny them juſtice, who need not your charity; but to be unjuſt where we ſhould be charitable, how ſinful is that! It is a great ſin to take away from him who hath abundance, but to take away from him who is in want, is an abounding ſin. Therefore we find that given, not only as a rule, but as a charge, Prov. 22. 22. *Rob not the poor becauſe he is poor*; make not poverty your advantage for robbery. There is much baſeneſs in it (beſides the ſinfulneſs) to trample upon thoſe who cannot reſiſt, and perhaps dare not complain. God is moſt reſiſted in wronging thoſe who cannot reſiſt others, or right themſelves. When we help a poor man (eſpecially a godly poor man) God himſelf gains, and (in a ſence) is enriched by it; becauſe God receives glory, and is paid (which is his greateſt revenue from man) in honour and in praiſe, for all the help we give ſuch poor. In our almes, we perform Gods promiſes for him, and they who receive promiſes, cannot but return praiſe. On the other ſide, when we wrong the poor (eſpecially the godly poor) God himſelf loſes, and (in a ſence) is impoveriſhed; becauſe not only his praiſe (as much as we can do) is with-held, but his truth and faithfulneſs are queſtioned. Mans uncharitableneſs would make void the promiſes of God; and when promiſes lie unfulfill'd, praiſe lies unreturn'd. Hence that threatning prohibition, *Prov.* 23. 10, 11. *Enter not into the fields of the fatherleſs*, that is, make not a forcible or violent entry. Why is it more dangerous to enter into his field, then into anothers? Or, is there any licence here to enter into the field of a rich man, or to treſpaſs upon him? No, there is no licence to treſpaſs upon a rich man, or to enter upon his field; but take heed you enter not into the fields of the fatherleſs; why? *For their Redeemer is mighty, he ſhall plead their cauſe with thee*: Though poor Orphans and Fatherleſs have no might, no help, they cannot plead themſelves, and they have no friend to help or plead for them, they cannot get an Advocate or Counſeller ſpeak in their cauſe, *yet their Redeemer is ſtrong, he will plead with thee*; he will plead with thee for the wrong done the fatherleſs, as for a wrong done himſelf; becauſe thou haſt oppreſt one whom he undertook to protect, and ſo (as much as thou canſt) haſt brought up an ill report upon the Lord, as if he were either forgetful of his word, or unable to accompliſh it. *We vex and tear the promiſes of God every time we vex and tear the poor of God.* How ſinful then is this ſin, by which at once we break the command which God gives us, to relieve the poor, and weaken the promiſe which God hath given the poor, that they ſhall be relieved.

Obſerve further, from that expreſſion of their cunning dealing with him, *you dig a pit for your friend.*

> *Deceitful words are as pits and ſnares to cath men in. The tongue is a great enſnarer.*

The tongue teacheth to lay a ſnare. *Balaam taught Balak to lay a ſtumbling-block before the children of Iſrael, Rev.* 2. 14. He taught him how to dig a pit, and ſet ſuch a ſnare as catcht the people into adultery and idolatry: The tongue is a great Engineer, a trap-ſetter to catch and entangle both the eſtates and ſouls of men,

And we may note another Point, from the relation of the perſon for whom this pit was digged; *You dig a pit for your friend.*

> *It is a great aggravation of unkindneſs to endeavour their hurt, to whom we are bound by many names and obligations to do good, or to whom we have made profeſſion of our readineſs to do them good.*

The more duty or reſpect we owe any man, the more is our ſin when we neglect him.

The three remaining verſes of this Chapter contain *Job*'s admonition to his friends, wherein he adviſes them to deal better or more moderately with him, and ſo he makes a *tranſition* to the latter part of his ſpeech, in the ſeventh Chapter, wherein he returns to the old matter, the juſtification of that complaint made againſt his life, and the equity of his deſire to die,

Verſe 28. **Now therefore be content, look upon me, for it is evident unto you, if I lie.**

Now therefore be content, &c.] Some read it, *Now therefore begin to look upon me, or to look more favourably upon me*; as if he had ſaid, all this while ye have hardned your faces, and clouded your brows againſt me, therefore now begin to be more benign in your aſpects towards me. The word ſignifies, to begin, or take a thing in hand willingly; as alſo, to be well pleaſed, content or ſatisfied, the ſence of all comes to one point. We tranſlate in the latter, *Now therefore be content*, do this thing freely, be ſatisfied, and acquieſce in it; as we uſe to cool and calm an

יאל *Acquieſcere in re quapiam, eamq; tota voluntate amplecti. Significat etiam inchoare.* Deut. 1. 5. Gen. 18. 17.

angry friend, who diſputing or ſpeaking to a buſineſs, grows hot and paſſionate, *I pray, ſir, be ſatisfied,* let us go on meekly and moderately.

Look upon me.] Which notes either his deſire of their friendly compliance with, and reſpect to him, as Mr. *Broughton* reads; *Now therefore be content, regard me*: or it notes the ſtrength and firmneſs of *Job*'s reſolution, in this conteſt with his friends, *I am not afraid to look you in the face, or to ſpeak face to face*; look upon me, you ſhall not read either fear or falſeneſs written in my forehead; the lines and characters of my countenance ſhall ſhew you nothing but ſoundneſs and integrity of my Conſcience. *For it is evident unto you, if I lie*; you will anon read the lie in my face, if there be a lie in my heart; therefore break not off with me, turn not away in diſcontent, let us diſcourſe a little more about this buſineſs, and the truth will appear.

על פניכם

It is evident unto you, if I lie.] The Hebrew is, *It is before your face if I lie,* that is (as we tranſlate it) it will quickly be evident, and appear unto you by a little ſober debate of this buſineſs, whether I am right or no.

Et in faciē meam mentior; ſc. deſpeream vel moriar, vel non ſit mihi propitius Deus, vel tale quippiam. Merc.

Some think, there is a kind of ſecret imprecation in this Speech, *It will be evident to you, if I lie*: As if he had ſaid, *Let not the Lord be merciful or gracious unto me, let not the Lord pity or ſpare me, if I am falſe-hearted and lie unto you.* It is frequent and familiar in the Hebrew to give ſuch expreſſions of an oath; as in that oath of God, *Pſal.* 95. 11. quoted *Heb.* 3. 11. *Unto whom I ſware in my wrath, if they ſhall enter into my reſt*; which we tranſlate by a plain negative in both places; *They ſhall not enter into my reſt*. And, *Pſal.* 89. 39. *Once have I ſworn by my holineſs, that I will not lie unto* David; or, *if I lie unto* David, then let not my word be taken any more: So *Job* here; *It will be evident to you, if I lie*; and if I do, let me not have help, or ſtrength, or ſupport from God any more.

Mentiri eſt contra mentem ire.

To lie, may be taken two wayes; either ſtrictly, as to lie, is to ſpeak that which is falſe, with an intent to deceive. To ſpeak againſt clear knowledge, is the proper, ſtrict ſence of a lie: or to lie, ſignifies to fail, or to come ſhort in that which is expected from us by others: to fruſtrate any of their hopes, is to lie to them; and ſo it is applied oftentimes to the fruits of the earth (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the labour of the Olive ſhall fail*; the word is, *though the labour of the Olive ſhould lie,* that is, though you coming to find fruit of the Olive, ſhould find none there. The Olive whoſe fair leaves promiſe and ſpeak you fair, as if you ſhould have fruit, if when you come, it yields none, this Olive lies to you. So (*Hoſ.* 9. 2.) *The new wine ſhall lie,* we tranſlate it, *the new wine ſhall fail,* that is, the Vines which ſpeak thus much, that you ſhall have new wine ſhortly, if when you come, there is none, *the Vines lie.* In either of theſe ſences we may underſtand it; *If I lie,* that is, if I ſpeak any thing againſt my mind, wittingly or willingly; or if I fail in this buſineſs, if I am like the Vine, or like the Olive, when they give no fruit according to expectation, it will be evident unto you, you ſhall ſee if we diſcuſs this controverſie a little further, the truth will out, whether I ſhall fail or belie your expectation, or no. That place (*chap.* 24. 25.) will expound it ſo; *Who will make me a liar* (ſaith *Job*) *and make my ſpeech nothing worth?* as if he had ſaid, my words ſhall be made good, and I will not fail in that which I have undertaken, or taken upon me.

Spem mentita ſeges. Hor.

Totus hic verſus eleganter inſinuat rem forenſem, nempe judicis ſtrictiſſimum examen, quo ſontes & teſtes interrogat, non ſolum verbis, ſed etiam nutibus oculorum & intuitu. Bol.

There is a further apprehenſion about theſe words, *Look upon me, it is evident unto you, if I lie,* as if they were an alluſion to the carriage of Judges and Magiſtrates towards offenders, in publick judiciary trials: when an offender, or one accuſed for an offence is brought before a Judge, and ſtands at the Bar to be arraigned, the Judge looks upon him, eyes him, ſets his eye upon him, and he bids the Offender look up in his face; look upon me (ſaith the Judge) and ſpeak up; guiltineſs uſually clouds the forehead, and cloaths the brow; the weight of guilt holds down the head; *The evil doer hath an ill look*, or dares not look up; how glad is he, if the Judge look off him. We have ſuch an expreſſion, *Pſal.* 11. 4. ſpeaking of the Lord, the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, *His eye-lids try the children of men*, as the Judge tries a guilty perſon with his eye, and reads the characters of his wickedneſs printed in his face: hence we have a common ſpeech in our language, ſuch an one *looks ſuſpitiouſly*, or, *he hath a guilty look.* At that great Goal-delivery deſcribed (*Rev.* 6. 16.) all the priſoners cry out to be *hid from the face of him that ſate upon the throne.* They could not look upon Chriſt, and they could not endure Chriſt ſhould look on them; the eye-lids of Chriſt try the children of men. That of *Solomon* may help this ſence, *Prov.* 20. 8. *A King that ſitteth in the Throne of Judgment, ſcattereth away all evil with his eyes.* Wickedneſs cannot endure to be under the obſervation of any eye, much leſs of the eye of Juſtice. Hence the Actors of it ſay, *Who ſeeth us?* It is very hard not to ſhew the guilt of the heart in the face, and it is as hard to have it ſeen there. *Job* ſeems to offer himſelf to the view of the ſevereſt Judge, *Be content, look upon me,* if I am guilty it will quickly appear unto you: my hypocriſie will break out in my face, and you may read my conſcience in my countenance. It is noted of *Paul,* Acts 13. 59. That when he had to deal with *Elymas* the Sorcerer, *he ſeth is eyes upon him, and ſaid, O full of all ſubtilty!* The Apoſtle beat him down, as it were, with a caſt of his eye; *Job* bids his friends look upon him as long and as critically as they pleaſed, he was not afraid of their looks.

Heu quam difficile eſt crimen non prodere vultu. Ovid. *ſecund. Met.*

Laſtly, thus, look to me, that is, attend well what I ſay, for I will explain my mind ſo fully and clearly to you, that it will quickly be evident to you whether I am right or wrong.

We may obſerve from this paſſage, Firſt, That, *Uprightneſs hath much boldneſs.*

He that hath a good cauſe and a good conſcience, is not afraid to be ſearched to the bottom; he cares not who looks upon him, or who looks into him. *David* in regard of the uprightneſs of his heart, calls unto God himſelf, *Search me and try me, if there be any way of wickedneſs in me,* Pſal. 139. 23. *David* was ſo aſſured of his own integrity, than he was not afraid to put himſelf upon the higheſt trial in that point. A holy heart is willing that God and men ſhould ſearch it, even ſearch it with candles, as God threatens he would the corrupt and falſe-hearted *Jews.*

Secondly, note this from it, *Where a lie is, it will not long be hid.*

A lie will break forth one time or other; ye may cover and hide a lie, you may keep it cloſe, and ſit upon it, as *Rachel* upon her fathers Images, but at laſt it will be evident, a lie will out. We ſay, *Truth is the Daughter of Time,* and ſo is a Lie too; a little time will bring that work of darkneſs to light.

Take the word in the other ſence, for failing, and it yields us this inſtruction,

That, *He who hath uprightneſs of heart, is ſtedfaſt for ever.*

Truth is uniform; which way ſoever the wind and the world turn, his poſture is the ſame; Chriſt will not fail him, and therefore he cannot. Such a man is as Mount *Zion,* that never ſhall be removed; where the heart is ſound, the actions are ſteady, and he that moves upon a right principle, moves regularly, and in all charges of events, changes not his way; try him, and try him again, it will be evident unto you he will not lie. Grace is ever the ſame, and renders them who have it like him (in their degree) from whom they have it, *without variableneſs or ſhadow of turning.* He that is not (for the ſubſtance) what he was, was never what he ought to be, ſincere. He that is upon a good ground, and knows his ground, will ſtand to it; truſt him (as a creature may be truſted) and he will not fail.

Verſe 29. **Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity, yea return again; my righteouſneſs is in it.**

He goes on to beſpeak his friends to hear him better.

Return.] The word ſignifies,

First, A local return, or returning from a place.

שוב

Redire ſignificat, ſed ſæpe transſertur ad animum; eſtq; à propoſito abſiſtere, inſtitutum vitæ mutare, & pœnitentiam agere.

Secondly, It is uſed Metaphorically, to return from anger, or to turn anger away, *Iſa.* 5. 25. *His anger is not turned away, the Lord did not turn from his fierce wrath.* Some underſtand it ſo here, *Return I pray you,* that is, I beſeech you be not ſo angry, be not ſo haſty and cholerick with me.

Thirdly, To turn or return, notes deſiſting from our purpoſe, or the change of our reſolutions. And thus it is the ſame with repentance; the Scripture abounds with the word in this ſence, I ſhall not need to quote Texts. Thus moſt underſtand it here, *return*, that is, *Reform, repent of your former hard dealing with me*, perſiſt not in it, perſevere not in your uncharitableneſs.

Ubi redieritis, & rurſū redieritis, id eſt, ubi iterum atque iterū omnia diligenter diſcuſſeritis, eodem ſubinde redeuntes, & eadem accuratius reputātes, meam cognoſcetis juſtitiam.

Or laſtly, *Return*, that is, weigh the matter better, return, look it over again, let it have your ſecond and more ſetled thoughts; conſider whether I ſpeak not as one conſtrained to this ſeeming impatience, from real ſorrow, rather then from a profeſſed hypocriſie. So he beſpeaks his friends again, *chap.* 17. 10. *But as for you all, do you return and come now* (that is, be better adviſed, as the next words expound his meaning) *for I cannot find one wiſe man among you.* As if he had ſaid, you have not ſhewed any great treaſures of wiſdom in all your diſputations againſt me hitherto; and therefore he tells them (*chap.* 19. 28.) what counſels became them to take. *Ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him?* let us give over ſuch hard cenſures and wounding language. Say to your ſelves, *Let us return*, as here he ſaith to them, *return, I pray you*.

Let it not be iniquity.] Some underſtand it thus, let not the thing which is objected againſt me, be iniquity, object not unrighteouſly againſt me. Or thus,

Secondly, in this diſputation, as it ſhall be carried on again, deal not ſo unequally, ſo unjuſtly and hardly with me as before, deal fairly, uprightly, candidly and friendly with me; *Return I pray thee, let it not be iniquity*; let there not be ſuch wrangling and hard ſpeeches between us as hitherto there have been. Mr. *Broughton* agrees to either ſence, *Change your mind now; let not unrighteouſneſs be objected.*

Particula אל *non ſemper prohibet, ſed aliquando ſimpliceter negat. Non erat iniquitas in verbis meis ſcilicet.* Merc.

Yet the Hebrew particle (*Al*) doth not alwayes forbid, but often notes ſimply to deny; and ſome tranſlate it here, for a plain denial, rather then a forbidding. Not as we, *Let it not be iniquity*; but, there ſhall not be iniquity, that is, in my words, or in that which I ſhall ſpeak: and we may connect it with the latter part of the verſe, *my righteouſneſs is in it*.

Yea, return again.] He adviſed them to return before, now he doubles his advice, *yea, return again*. Such repeated doubled ſpeeches in Scripture, note,

Firſt, A vehemency of ſpirit in the ſpeaker.

Secondly, A neceſſity of obedience to the thing which is ſpoken, by the hearer. It is ſurely a weighty and neceſſary point, which is ſpoken and ſpoken again. *That's a double duty, and calls for double diligence, which we are doubly called unto. Return, I pray you*, do not think that this is a ſmall matter, a matter of indifferency, *return again*. (As *Cant.* 6. 13.) *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return.* There was great neceſſity for the *Shulamite* to return, when he was ſo often cried after to return. So, *Rejoyce, and again I ſay, rejoyce*, ſaith the Apoſtle, to note the vehemency of his ſpirit, and the neceſſity of the Goſpel-duty, or how exceeding becoming it is for Chriſtians to walk chearfully and rejoyce: Here then, *Return, yea, return again*, is, as if he had ſaid, there is great cauſe you ſhould return, and be better adviſed, that you ſhould conſider otherwiſe of my caſe, then hitherto you have done.

My righteouſneſs is in it.] That is, I am righteous in this matter, in this buſineſs; or upon ſuch a further conſideration and returning to the queſtion, *My righteouſneſs* (by a true ſtating of theſe differences) will appear unto you. *Job* was no Juſticiary, no boaſter in, or of his own righteouſneſs; but he ſpeaks of the righteouſneſs of his cauſe, and of the uprightneſs of his Conſcience; according to that of (Pſal. 73. 6.) *Thy righteouſneſs ſhall appear as the light*, that is, the righteouſneſs of thy cauſe: ſo ſaith *Job*, *My righteouſneſs is in it*; when you return, and return again, to conſider diligently and ſeriouſly of this buſineſs you will find the reſult of all will be, that my righteouſneſs is in it, that is, that I am in the right, or free from blame in this buſineſs, that I have not broken the rules of iuſtice, or departed from a good conſcience.

Forte indignabundi diſceſſum parabant, aut jam ſurrexerant diſceſſuri, quare illos invitat ad promovendā diſputationem. Pined.

Further, Others conceive *Job* beſpeaks his friends in this quick language, *Return, yea, return again*, to recal his friends, who were ready to go away in a pet, or in a fume, as we uſe to ſay; they were riſing to be gone, and *Job* haſtily calls them back, *Return, I pray return*; as a man in diſcourſe growing ſo hot, that the houſe cannot hold him, but he will break away, is uſually re-invited, *Pray ſtay, Sir, return again*; ſo *Job*, return again, *my righteouſneſs is in it, you ſhall ſee I will make the matter good.*

Hence obſerve (taking the return in a Metaphorical ſence)

Firſt, That, *A paſſionate or inconſiderate man goes from himſelf, and from the matter.*

Paſſion carries as from the buſineſs before us. An angry mans diſcourſe runs wild, he had need to be reduced. Conſideration is the returning of a man unto himſelf, or his coming home. As the paſſions of the concupiſcible appetite, and intemperancies of youth, carry a man beyond his bounds (and therefore the prodigal repenting, is ſaid to come to himſelf (*Luk.* 15. 17.) ſo likewiſe do the paſſions of the iraſcible appetite. Anger diſorders and diſcompoſes the ſpirit, as much as Luxury.

Secondly obſerve, *To perſiſt in evil, is worſe then the committing of evil.*

The one is common to man, rhe other peculiar to the Devil and his peculiars, who know no repentance. It is bad enough to do ill, but not to return from evil, is inexcuſable; therefore the Lord often by his Prophets layes this as the heavieſt charge of all, upon his people. He taxes them with their departures from him: but eſpecially with their refuſals to return unto him; *yet have ye not returned unto me*: this is more ſinful then all the ſins you have committed, you have not returned, you go on and perſevere in evil. The ſword of God proclaims a like voice in our ears at this day, *Return, return again.* We have departed and gone away from God, let us not draw that ancient charge upon our ſelves, *I have ſmitten you, yet have ye not returned unto me.* It is not ſinning, but not returning, which brings final condemnation. *Impenitency ſeals the ſtone of deſtruction upon perſons and nations.*

Thirdly, Whereas theſe words, *Return, let it not be iniquity*, are referred to *Job*'s friends, as if he had ſaid, *Let not this your paſſion make your ſin fouler and greater*: you have ſinned already, but if you return not, your ſin will be iniquity ſhortly.

Note, *He ſtops his ſin from being an iniquity, who haſtens his returning from ſin.*

Every ſin, the leaſt ſin is ſin, as the leaſt drop of water is water; but every ſin in a (ſtrict ſence) is not iniquity. The nature is the ſame, but the degree varies. As many a child never comes to be a man, ſo many a ſin comes not to be an iniquity. *Happy is he that taketh thoſe little ones, and daſheth them againſt the ſtones*, That returns before their ſin be an iniquity.

Fourthly obſerve further, how *Job* calls upon his friends, when he ſees them tranſported (as he thought) with paſſion; he leaves complaining of his own ſorrows, and gives them good counſel; he, for that preſent forgets his own ruines, that he might amend them.

It is our duty to reclaim and to appeaſe thoſe by gentle entreaties, who we ſuppoſe have wronged us, or gone aſtray from the truth.

Job doth not rail upon or revile his friends, but beſeeches them to be better adviſed, and conſider what they did.

Fifthly, In that he ſaith, *Return, yea, return again*, taking this for a call to a more ſerious conſideration of the buſineſs, we may note,

That, *A mans cauſe and condition muſt be conſidered, and conſidered again, twice, that is, fully conſidered, before he be condemned.*

We muſt give account of every idle word, much more then of every unjuſt ſentence or cenſure: It is but wiſdom to conſider that ſtrictly, about which we muſt give ſo ſtrict an account.

Sixthly, In that he ſaith, *My righteouſneſs is in it*, obſerve,

That, *A good cauſe, the more it is ſearched into, the better it will appear.*

The deeper you dig into it, the more truth and holineſs you will find in it. Search a godly man, and the lower you go, the better he proves, the nearer you come to his heart, the richer treaſures of grace and uprightneſs will be diſcovered. Whereas take an hypocrite, and you may have a little good metal at his tongue, or his lips may be gilded over with good words, but ſearch him to the bottom, and there is all rottenneſs, even ſeven abominations in his heart.

A godly man is not gilded, but gold. Search a *Job* quite thorow, try him to the center, righteouſneſs is in all his wayes, the further you ſearch, the better he is, and he will be beſt of all at laſt.

Verſe 30. **Is there iniquity in my tongue? Cannot my taſte diſcern perverſe things?**

Formula eſt ſeipſum compellantis, & animum ſuū ſcrutantis, facta examinantis. Coc.

Verba per ſtultitiam & temeritatem prolata latentis pravitatis indices.

Thus he concludes his directory to his friends, and his preparatory for what himſelf intended to purſue in the next Chapter; **Is there iniquity in my tongue?** Doth my tongue ſpeak unequal or evil things? Hath any thing been ſpoken by me againſt common right, or againſt the divine rule? Hath my tongue uttered any iniquity from my heart? Hath the ſinfulneſs of my heart broken forth at my lips? or hath it appeared that I have done wickedly by what I have ſaid? When my words are duly weighed, I ſhall not appear the man you make me.

The word ſignifies calamity or miſery, as well as iniquity, and ſo we may take it here, *Is there calamity in my tongue?* that is, do my words beſpeak or invite my afflictions? We find the word uſed in that ſenſe, *Pſal.* 52. 2. *Thy tongue deviſeth miſchief*, or calamity; *Iniquity deviſed or framed by the tongue is often a ſcourge upon the back*, Micah 7.3. *The great man uttereth his miſchievous deſire*; the miſchievous evil words of his ſoul. Is there (ſaith *Job*) any ſuch miſchievous device in my tongue? Have I ſpoken poyſon to infect you, or blaſphemy to diſhonour God?

Dober Havoth Nappſhi.

Cannot my taſte diſcern perverſe things?

חך

Palatum, eleganti Metaphora, à ſenſibus externis, ad interiores tranſlata, appellat illam animæ facultatem, qua juſta ab injuſtis, vera à falſis, & æqua ac recta ab iniquis & perverſis dignoſcuntur, non ſecus ac palato cibi dulces ab amaris, &c. Merc. *Habet & anima unum palatum*

Cannot my taſte?] The Hebrew is, *Cannot my palat?* And becauſe the palat is exquiſite in taſting, therefore by a trope the organ is expreſſed for the act? Cannot my taſte diſcern? cannot my palat? Or as others, *Cannot my mouth diſcern perverſe things?* That faculty of the ſoul, whereby we diſcern or diſtinguiſh juſt from unjuſt, truth from falſehood, as ſweet is diſtinguiſhed from bitter by the palat, is elegantly called the palat of the ſoul.

בין

Scriptura ſæpe linguæ faucibus, manibus tribuit quod mentis, & intellectus proprium eſt, ſc. meditari & intelligere.

Cannot my taſte [**diſcern?**] The Hebrew is, *Cannot my taſte underſtand perverſe things?* It is uſual in Scripture to aſcribe underſtanding, not only to the ſenſes, but alſo to the tongue, and ſometimes to the hand. Underſtanding is aſcribed to the tongue in the place before named, *Pſal.* 52. Where the tongue is ſaid to *deviſe miſchief*: The tongue properly cannot deviſe, the tongue doth but utter miſchief, it is the mind or heart that deviſeth. The ſhop is within, where miſchief is forged and framed; yet the contrivance of it, is in that text, given to the tongue. There is a twofold reaſon of it, why the holy Ghoſt attributes the work of the underſtanding to the tongue, hand or ſenſes.

Magna eſt rationis & orationis cognatio.

Firſt, There is a great affinity between reaſon and ſpeech, and therefore the tongue, which is the inſtrument of ſpeech is honoured with the work of the underſtanding: And ſo great is the affinity between reaſon and ſpeech, that no creature void of reaſon can ſpeak. Speech is a peculiar property of the rational creature. *Speech is or ought to be the immediate iſſue or birth of Reaſon.* Words are conceived in the mind, and born at the tongue. And words are the image of the mind. We may ſee what work is wrought in the mind, by that which is ſpoken by the tongue. The ſhape of mans heart (when he ſpeaks himſelf) comes out at his mouth. And therefore before he ſpeaks, he meditates. Meditation is the conception of words, as ſpeaking is the production of them. Thus the Lord charges *Joſhua* (chap. 1. 8.) *The Book of the Law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night.* One would think it ſhou'd rather have been ſaid, *The Book of the Law ſhall not depart out of thine heart, but thou ſhalt meditate therein, or if, not out of thy mouth, then thou ſhalt ſpeak of it.* Meditation is too high a work for the mouth; yet, becauſe there ought to be much meditation about the Law of God, before a word of it comes out of the mouth, therefore the Lord ſaith, *The Book of the Law ſhall not depart eut of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night*; that is, as oft as thou ſhalt ſpeak, thou ſhalt meditate, thou ſhalt not ſpeak raſhly, it ſhall not be the work of thy tongue alone, but of thy mind and tongue together.

Ita meditaberis ut ex ipſa cogitatione mentis efferveſcente redundent, & ebulliat, in ore verba.

There is a ſecond reaſon why acts of the underſtanding are aſcribed to the tongue, or to the ſenſes; becauſe when a thing is well ſpoken or duly acted by any ſenſe, Reaſon is the guide, and the bodily Organ is under the dictates of the mind or underſtanding. So, *Gen.* 48. 14. When old *Jacob* in giving the bleſſing unto *Joſeph*'s children, *Manaſſeh* and *Ephraim*, laid his right hand upon the younger, and his left upon the elder, the text ſaith, he made *his hands to underſtand*; we tranſlate, *He guided his hands wittingly*; there was ſo much reaſon, ſuch divine reaſon in that act of *Jacob*'s hands, in laying his right hand upon the younger, that the Hebrew gives it wirh this elegancie, he made his hands to underſtand; which one of the Jewiſh Writers learnedly expounds thus, *He ordered his hands wiſely, as if they had been made acquainted with that great myſtery of Gods counſels, that the greater bleſſing was the portion of the younger ſon.* And ſo the Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 78. 72.) ſpeaking of *David*'s reign and government, ſaith, *He governed them by the skilfulneſs of his hands.* The Hebrew is, *by the underſtanding of his hands*; and more, *the underſtandings of his hands*: Or, as one renders it, *The diſcretions of his hands, or the prudency of his palms*, aſcribing all kind of political knowledge and underſtanding unto *David. David*, in the outward adminiſtrations of the Kingdom, acted with ſo much reaſon and juſtice, that his very hands are ſaid to underſtand. *His hands underſtood more then the heads of other Princes.* As *David*'s hands, ſo *Job*'s palat or taſt, had an underſtanding; *Cannot my palat underſtand*

Prudenter egit manibus ſuis, acſi ipſæ manus myſteriorum conſciæ erat Onkel.

בתבונות כפיו

In intelligentiis manuum, vel velarum.

Yet further, it is frequent in Scripture, Metaphorically to tranſlate things which are only acted or apprehended by the inward ſenſes, to the outward. Taſte, properly is of meat or drink; the humour or moiſture, which is in meats, ſuitable to the ſalival humour in the mouth, cauſeth pleaſantneſs of taſte. Here *Job* ſpeaks of doctrines or of actions; *Cannot my taſte diſcern perverſe things?* If a thing be perverſly or properly, truly or falſly ſpoken, cannot I taſte it quickly? And hence the Word of God is compared to thoſe things which are the object of taſte, as to *milk and to ſtrong meat*, 1 Cor. 3. 2. *I* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *have fed you with milk and not with meat*, that is, with eaſie and common truths, not with the more myſterious parts of Goſpel-knowledge, becauſe ye were not able to bear it. The taſte of ſuch myſteries was too ſtrong for your palats. The ſame Metaphor is enlarged by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 5. 12, 13, 14. And in this Book we find it more then once, *Doth not the ear try words, and the mouth taſte his meat* (Job 12. 11, & 34. 3.) That is, doth not the ear try words, as the mouth taſtes meat? *Cannot my taſte diſcern?*

הוות

Perverſe things. [That is, words ill ſpoken, or wrong placed. The word ſignifies alſo any calamity or ſad accident. And ſo Mr. *Broughton* renders it. *Cannot my palat declare any kind of heavy ſorrow?* Do ye think I have loſt my judgment of things, and that I cannut tell when I am pincht or pain'd?

Firſt, In that he ſaith here *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* obſerve,

The tongue oftentimes diſcovers the iniquity of the heart.

If there be iniquity in the heart, it will one time or other break forth at, and bliſter upon the tongue. He that is rotten at his heart, is commonly rotten in his talk, *Mat.* 12. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaks.* And when there is abundance of iniquity in the heart, there is ſeldom a dearth or ſcarcity of it in the mouth; eſpecially in times of trouble, that iniquity and corruption, that diſeaſe and plague of the heart, will break forth at the lips. As *evil words corrupt good manners*, ſo evil words diſcover, that our manners are corrupt. There are few men, but, as the Damoſel ſpake to *Peter*, *Their ſpeech bewrayeth them*, and you may ſmell the filth of their hearts by their breath.

Secondly, Obſerve from theſe words, *Is there iniquity in my tongue?*

He whoſe heart is upright, may know that he is upright.

When *Job* queſtions, *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* He reſolves *There is no iniquity in my tongue*; none of that iniquity that you charge me with. I grant a believer hath not alwayes a ſight of his own integrity and uprightneſs; many a ſoul bears falſe witneſs againſt himſelf, and oppreſſes his own innocency; yet for the moſt part, ſincerity hath a witneſs in it ſelf, and holineſs carries a light, by which it is ſeen to him that hath it. An upright heart may know his own uprightneſs.

Thirdly, In that *Job* is thus ſtiff in maintaining his own uprightneſs, and in denying any iniquity to be in his tongue, Obſerve,

It is a duty to maintain our own integrity and uprightneß.

Job was upon it before, and is now upon it again, and he will be upon it afterward; he never gives over juſtifying of himſelf againſt man, though he had not a word to plead for himſelf againſt God.

Fourthly, From the latter clauſe, *Cannot my taſte diſcern perverſe things?* Obſerve,

Reaſon diſtinguiſhes truth from falſhood, as the pallate diſtinguiſhes bitter from ſweet.

Reaſon it is the ſouls-taſter. Princes have their taſters before they eat, leaſt there ſhould be poiſon in the diſh. God hath given unto man a taſter for his ſpiritual meat. The Pope will not ſuffer the meat he provides and cooks to be taſted, but will have it ſwallowed whole, or elſe he will thruſt it whole down their throats. *It is a like ſpiritual tyranny, to ſtarve ſouls, and to cram them.* It is our duty, when meat is ſet before us, and we are at a full table of Knowledge, where variety of Doctrines and Opinions are ſerved in, then to call for our taſter; We may be ſurfetted elſe, if not poyſon'd. There may be a wild gourd among good herbs in the pot, and ſo death in the pot too; therefore firſt taſte, then eat, and digeſt. A Chriſtian hath a taſte to diſcern error from truth, why then ſhould he be denied the uſe of it? A wo is pronounced againſt thoſe who offer unwholſom Doctrine, *Iſa.* 5. 20. *Wo to thoſe that call evil good, and good evil; that put light for darkneß, and darkneß for light; that put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.* A like wo is due to them, who will not give others leave to diſcern for themſelves, what is good or evil, light or darkneſs, bitter or ſweet; as good let another live for us, as another taſte for us. And their miſery will be little leſs, then the woes of theſe men, who cannot, or will not take pains to diſtinguiſh; when evil is called good, and good evil; when light is put for darkneſs, and darkneſs for light; when bitter is put for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter; or (as *Job* ſpeaks here) *whoſe taſte cannot diſcern perverſe things.* There are ſome whoſe taſte is ſo far from diſcerning perverſe things, that it is eaſie to diſcern their taſte is perverſe; for bring them wholſom, true and ſavoury doctrine, they ſay it is bitter, or falſe doctrine; bring them falſe doctrine, a lie, a dream, a fancy, a meer humane invention, diſh out ſuch proviſion before them, that's excellent chear. This was the heavieſt curſe which God ſent upon the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1. 28. God gave them over to *a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient:* That is, to a mind void of judgment, a mind that could not taſte or diſtinguiſh things; therefore the iſſue or effect was, *They did things which were not convenient;* as if a man not being able to judge of meats, eats poiſon, or meats moſt contrary to his health and conſtitution. It is a fearful judgment to be given up to an unapproving mind, to a mind that cannot diſcern truth from falſe-hood, the Oracles of God, from the forgeries of men; ſuperſtition, from holy worſhip. *It is a ſad thing to looſe our ſpiritual ſenſes.* Such as play the wantons with the Word of God, and walk below the truths they know, are at laſt given up to a reprobate mind, to a mind not able to know the Word of Truth; and then they ſwallow down error for Truth, and ſuck in deadly poyſon, like ſweet pleaſant wine. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the difference of doctrines, under the metaphor of meats, ſaith, *Milk is for babes, but ſtrong meat is for them of full age, even for thoſe that by reaſon of uſe, have their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern good and evil:* That is, their ſpiritual ſenſes exerciſed to taſte this from that doctrine, and not to ſwallow every doctrine alike. It is a great bleſſing, when a people have *ſenſes exerciſed*; and it is a bleſſing we have much cauſe to pray for in theſe times. That many pallats are out of taſte is too apparent by the multitude of heterodox opinions, which go down without diſreliſh. Some which would even make a man tremble to name them, are entertained with delight. Some which diſſolve our comforts, and break us off from comfortable communion with Chriſt: Some which ſhake, if not overthrow the very foundations of faith, are ſwallowed as pleaſant morſels. Doth not this convince, that there's a want of *Job's* taſte among us *to diſcern perverſe things.* Therefore get your ſenſes exerciſed, be eſtabliſhed in the preſent truth, that, ye, as this holy man in the midſt of all bodily diſtempers, and outward troubles) which uſually put the natural pallate out of taſte) may yet even then, as he, have your inward ſenſes exquiſite, and your ſpiritual pallate exact to diſcern right from perverſe things. Note,

Laſtly, *Falſe doctrine, or true doctrine falſly applied, is a perverſe thing.*

Falſe doctrine perverts, Firſt, Reaſon; Secondly, Scripture; Thirdly, The Souls of men. The Apoſtle (*Act.* 20. *verſ.* 30.) prophecies to the Church of *Epheſus,* and with them to all Churches; *That out of themſelves men ſhould ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things to draw away diſciples after them.* Holy doctrine draws men to God, and falſe doctrine draws men to man. *As itching ears heap teachers to themſelves* (2 Tim. 4. 3.) So falſe tongues heap diſciples to *themſelves.* That which is perverſe in it's nature, is perverting in it's effect.

CHAP. VII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his dayes alſo like the dayes of an hireling?

As a ſervant earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:

So am I made to poſſeß months of vanity; and weariſom nights are appointed to me.

When I lie down, I ſay, When ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone? I am full of toſſings too and fro, unto the dawning of the day.

WHere the knot of connection, between this and the former Chapter lieth, is not ſo diſcernable; which hath given occaſion for much diverſity of conjecture about it.

Firſt, It may be conceived, that *Job* in this diſcourſe, refutes that tenet of *Eliphaz,* that he was puniſhed and ſcourged for his wickedneſs: by ſhewing that to be afflicted is the common condition of man, and therefore no ſuch judgment of any mans wickedneſs or ſinfulneſs could be made from his afflictions. Or,

Secondly, That *Job* here confutes that promiſe, which *Eliphaz* made about *Chap.* 6. 20. concerning outward proſperity, *He ſhall know that his tabernacle ſhall be in peace, and he ſhall be delivered,* &c. by proving it inconſiſtent with the preſent eſtate of mortals to look for ſuch uninterrupted happineſs, or fair dayes without any clouds and ſtorms, as *Eliphaz* ſeemed to undertake he ſhould, *Is there* *not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his dayes alſo like the dayes of an hireling*, &c.

Or thirdly, the connection may be made with thoſe words, which himſelf had ſpoken at *verſ.* 24. of the former Chapter, *Teach me* (ſaith *Job*) *and I will hold my tongue, and cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred*: In which words we ſhewed, *Job* makes an humble ſubmiſſion of himſelf: and in caſe his friends could inſtruct him better, he was willing to learn, he was not wedded to his own opinion, or reſolved never to be removed from it.

In purſuance of which promiſed teachableneſs, he in this Chapter grants what was grantable in the former diſcourſe of *Eliphaz*. *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Chap.* 5. *verſ.* 7, 8. *That man was born to labour as the ſparks fly upward*, and thereupon preſently infers, *I would ſeek unto God*, &c. both theſe, *the Doctrine and the Vſe*, *Job* ſeems to proſecute in this ſeventh Chapter; as if he ſhould ſay, what thou haſt rightly ſpoken, I will grant thee; thou haſt ſaid, *Man is born to trouble*, I ſay ſo too, *Is there not an appointed time unto man* (of trouble?) *and are not his dayes as the dayes of an hyreling?* And thou adviſeſt me to ſeek unto God, and apply my ſelf to him; it is good counſel, and therefore I will follow it: As we read he doth, at *verſ.* 17, & 20. of this Chapter, *O remember that my life is wind, what is man that thou ſhouldſt magnifie him*; *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men? Why doeſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity?* Language full of humility, and ſounding out the brokenneſs of his heart.

But laſtly, rather thus, *Job* having in the former Chapter refuted thoſe arguments by which *Eliphaz* would convince him, and having renewed his requeſt to die, expoſtulated with his friends about their unkindneſs toward him, and admoniſhed them to a more equal dealing with, and hearing of him: he now proceeds to the confirmation of his firſt requeſt to die, which he doth from divers grounds.

Firſt, From the general condition of mans life, *verſ.* 1. *Is there not an appointed time to man*, &c.

Secondly, From the condition of ſome particular men, *A ſervant earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow, and a hireling looketh for the reward of his work*; may not I therefore deſire death, which only will be a ſhadow to me, till when I ſhall not have my reward? And

Thirdly, From his own ſpecial condition at the third verſe, and ſo forward to the ſeventh, therein expreſſing how ſad, how reſtleſs, how troubleſom his life was to him, which (as he apprehended) nothing could give remedy to but only death: *My diſeaſe appears curably only by a grave, and my only medicine, is a mouth full of earth*: Therefore the matter ſtanding ſo with me, have I not rightly and reaſonably deſired, either that I had not lived at all, or that I may quickly die, and that God would cut off my life.

Having by theſe arguments confirmed that former deſire, in the next place, he again renews his former complaints from *verſ.* 11. of this Chapter, unto *v.* 17. Thirdly, he abaſes himſelf before God, as unworthy that God ſhould take any notice of him, or beſtow a thought, a viſit, a ſmile or a chaſtiſement upon him. *What is man, that thou doeſt magnifie him? that thou doeſt viſit him*, &c. Laſtly, he concludes with confeſſion of his ſin, and earneſt deſire of pardon, at *verſ.* 20, 21.

Thus in general, both for the dependance of the latter part of his ſpeech upon the former, and the principal parts contained in this.

Verſ. 1. **Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? And are not his dayes alſo like the dayes of an hyreling.**

The queſtion affirms, there is an appointed time to man upon earth, and his dayes are like the dayes of an hireling. From whence, we may from his argument thus infer: He that hath a certain term of life appointed him to ſerve in, doth not ſin in deſiring an end of his ſervice: But there is an appointed time, &c. Therefore it is not ſinful to deſire it.

Is there not an appointed time?] The Hebrew thus; *Is there not a warfare to man upon earth?* So you find it in the margine of your Bibles: Our Tranſlators put *warfare* there, and *appointed time* in the Text. The word ſignifies both, becauſe wars of all other actions have their ſeaſons, and their appointed times; and the life of man is well deſcribed under both, or either of thoſe notions.

צבא *Militia, per Metaphorā, tempus ordinatum, determinatum, conſtitutum: ipſum militiæ tempus.*

Conſider it firſt under the moſt proper ſignification, and ſo many read it, *Is there not a warfare to man upon the earth?* Iſa. 40. 1, 2. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith the Lord, ſpeak comfortably to* Jeruſalem; Why? *Tell her, her warfare is ended.* In that place our Tranſlators put *appointed time* in the margine, and *warfare* in the Text; as here they put *appointed time* in the Text, and *warfare* in the margine: The ſence in both is the ſame. *Tell her that her warfare is ended*, that is, *the time appointed or conſtituted for her trouble is ended*: So here, *Is there not an appointed time?* That is, is there not a ſet, determined time of the troubles, or troubleſom warfaring life of man?

The Greek Tranſlators interpret it, *Temptation*, *Is there not an appointed temptation to man upon the earth?* And that gives us the ſame meaning; for temptation is a warfare; temptation is our ſpiritual war, the exerciſe and probation of a Chriſtian. There are three things in which the greateſt exerciſe of a Chriſtian life conſiſt, *Prayer*, *Meditation* and *Temptation*. Firſt, Prayer, wherein man is ſeeking unto, and working his heart towards God: Secondly, Meditation, wherein he is preparing himſelf, by holy thoughts and divine conſiderations, for his nearer addreſſes unto God in prayer, and how to walk in every duty towards man: Thirdly, Temptation, wherein he wraſtles and ſtrives with thoſe enemies oppoſing prayer, meditation and the whole courſe of holy obedience. The life of man is a continued temptation, and that's a ſpiritual warfare, a continual bickering with a world of enemies; and though they without ſtand ſtill, yet a ſoul can ſcarce paſs one hour, but he ſhall have many fights and bouts with his own heart. In this ſence, *Is there not an appointed time of warfare, or temptation to man upon earth?*

Græci πειρατήριον, quaſi tentationis officinam, ubi homo varia experiatur, variiſq; eventis & periculis ſit expoſitus, ut miles in bello.

Our life is a warfare in divers reſpects.

Firſt, It is a warfare, becauſe Chriſtians do or ought, to live under the greateſt command of any in the world; they ought to ſtand armed at a call. A Souldier is under abſolute command, he muſt not diſpute the Orders of his General, but obey them; the Centurion in the Goſpel ſaith, *I have Souldiers under me, and I ſay to one go and he goeth, to another come and he cometh, and to a third do this and he doth it*: which he ſpeaks not as commending the ſpecial vertue and good diſpoſition of his own Souldiers, but as deſcribing the duty of all Souldiers: therefore ſouldiary is well defined, *To be the obedience of a ſtout and valiant mind, out of his own diſpoſe*; A Souldier moves upon direction, ſo muſt a Chriſtian, he is in a warfaring condition, he muſt have a charge or a word from his Commander for every ſtep he treads, or action he undertakes.

Militia eſt obedientia quædam fortis & invicti animi, arbitrio carentis ſuo.

Secondly, It is a warfare, in regard of perpetual motions and travels: A Souldiers life is an unſetled life; while he is in actual ſervice, he hath no reſt, he is either marching, or charging; and when he comes to his Quarters, his ſtay is but little, he cannot build him a houſe, he can but pitch him down a Tent for a night or two, he muſt away again. Mans life hath no ſtop, we have here no abiding City, we dwell in Tents and Tabernacles, waifaring and warfaring out our dayes.

Thirdly, A warfare, becauſe of continual watching. It is the *watch-word* which Chriſt gave his followers, *I ſay unto you, watch*; that's the Souldiers word and work too; warring and watching go together: The Souldier ſtands Centinel, fearing the enemies ſurpriſe: A Chriſtian ſhould ſtand upon his guard and his watch at all hours, is not that a warfare?

Fourthly, A warfare, becauſe Chriſtians ought to keep their rank and file, that is, the places and relations wherein God hath ſet them. A Souldier commanded to ſtand ſuch a ground, muſt not ſtir though he die for it, and if he ſtirs (by Martial Law) he ſhall die. There is ſo much keeping of order in War and Battels, that whatſoever keeps order, is ſaid to fight or war. The Stars are ſaid to have fought againſt *Siſera* in their courſes, *Judg.* 5. 20. The Stars are embattaild or encampt in their ſphears, out of which they move not, and are therefore often called the *Militia*, or hoſt of Heaven.

Fifthly, A warfare, becauſe ſo full of hazzards, troubles and labours, or becauſe ſo much hardſhip is to be endured. A Souldier converſes with dangers, and dwels in the territories of death continually: This cauſed *Deborah* to begin her *Triumphant Song*, with praiſe to the Lord, *becauſe the people offered themſelves willingly.* Many are forc'd and preſs'd to the wars; and moſt who are not preſs'd by the Authority of others, are preſs'd by their own hopes of gain, or deſire of vain glory and renown. *A true Voluntier in war, is a rare man*: There is ſo much danger in it, that there is ſeldom much of the will in it.

The whole life of man, is full either of viſible or inviſible dangers; he paſſes the pikes every day. The Apoſtle reckons eight diſtinct perils in one verſe, which met him which way ſoever he turned, 2 *Cor.* 11. 26. *He was in deaths often.* And though there are but few ſuch *Heroes* as he, yet 'tis ſeldom but any of us are in deaths: Eſpecially while we remember the mighty ſpiritual enemies and oppoſitions which encompaſs and beſet us every day. *We wraſtle not with fleſh and blood, but with principalities and powers*, &c. And are therefore adviſed to take to us the whole armor of God; never to ſtir without our Sword.

2 Tim. 2. 26

Sixthly, A warfare, in regard of the iſſue; victory and triumph, or ſlavery and death, is the iſſue of our lives. Either we overcome, and are *more then conquerors* (that's the Apoſtles language, *Rom.* 8.) or elſe we are conquered, and more then captives; that's the Apoſtles ſence too, (both in alluſion) *They are taken captive by the Devil at his will:* To be led captive by the Devil, is the loweſt captivity: lower then any captivity unto men. In reference to the ſpiritual part of our warfare, there's no coming off upon equal terms: we muſt be victors or ſlaves, conquer or die. Only this is the Saints aſſurance, that as the *Captain of their ſalvation was made perfect by ſufferings*, and conquer'd by dying, ſo (at the worſt) ſhall they; ſpiritual death (as ſinners) hath no power over them at all: and when they die (as men) naturally, or by men violently, they ſhall receive fuller power: Thus our life is a warfare upon earth.

But take the word as we tranſlate, *for an appointed time*; *Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth?* And the reaſon why it bears that ſence, is grounded upon theſe two things:

Non ſignificat tempus ſimpliciter; ſed tempus certum ac conſtitutum, eâ analogiâ, quod determinato anni tempore exerceri ſolet militia. Militia ideo tempus determinatum dicitur, quia non quævis ætas bello apta eſt, ſed determinata & certa.

Firſt, Becauſe there is a ſpecial ſeaſon of the year, moſt fit and ſutable for war, 2 *Sam.* 11. 1. *And it came to paſs at the return of the year, when Kings go forth to battel.* The time for war, is ſuch a known appointed ſeaſon, that the ſame word ſignifies warfare, and any appointed ſeaſon.

Secondly, Becauſe men go out to war, at a ſpecial time of their age: There is an appointed ſetled time of mans life, wherein he is fit to bear arms. Every age is not fit for arms: Old men and children are not fit for the field: Hence we find, *Numbers* the firſt throughout, that the muſter of the children of *Iſrael* is thus made, *verſ.* 3, 20, 22, &c. *From twenty years old and upward; all that are able to go forth to war.* The *Roman* and *Greek* Hiſtories are diſtinct in this; in ſome Common-wealths, from Fifteen to Fifty; in others from Twenty to Sixty; and in ours the appointed time is between Sixteen and Sixty, ſo men are preſs'd and liſted for war: And becauſe there is ſuch an appointed, or a ſet time of life in all States to go out to war, therefore that word is elegantly applied, to ſignifie a ſet or an appointed time for any buſineſs. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?*

Upon earth.] In Heaven our time knows no bounds, there are no terms or diſtinctions in eternity; ſeaſons and variety of of times vaniſh and ſhall not be heard of in Heaven. Eternity is time fixt. *But there is an appointed time.*

Singulis diebus ſua certamina præſto ſunt, adeo non niſi cum ipſa vita terminantur labores vitæ, ac proinde ſecundū naturam finem vitæ expeto. Jun.

To man upon earth.] The word is *Enoſh*, miſerable, weak, frail man; is there not an appointed time to this man upon earth? That is, while he walks in this lower region of the world, and lives on mould. The ſum of all may be thus conceived, as if *Job* had ſaid, *Every day hath evil annexed, ſome affliction or other waits upon every hour, ſo that there is no period of mans ſorrow, but the period of his life; and therefore I walk by the rule of ſound reaſon, when that I might ſee an end of my trouble, I call for the end of my dayes.* Obſerve hence,

Firſt, *The life of man, is meaſured out by the will of God.*

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? There is. As God hath ſet out bounds and limits to the Sea (*Hitherto thou ſhalt come and no further*) by a perpetual decree, ſo he hath alſo ſet out bounds and limits to the life of man, his life is an appointed time: Thus far the line of thy life ſhall reach, and no further. We live not at adventures, neither can our care lengthen out our own dayes. As all our care cannot add one cubit to our ſtature, ſo not one minute to our glaſs or hour. And as we cannot lengthen, ſo we cannot ſhorten our own dayes in reſpect of this appointed time: They who die in a time when God forbids, yet die when God appoints: *And they live out all Gods time, who wickedly ſhorten their own:* They cut their thread of life, but they cannot cut the thread of Gods decree; we live not at our own will, but at the will of God; we are Tenants at his will, in theſe houſes of clay. He is the maker of time, and the meaſurer of our dayes; he gives us the leaſe of our lives for what years he pleaſes; and it is moſt fit that he who created time, ſhould diſpoſe of time. *God is the Lord of time, and farms it out, as, and to whom he thinks good.* Chriſt might do what he pleaſed upon the Sabbath, *for* (ſaith he) *the Son of man is Lord alſo of the Sabbath*; God is the Lord of time, and therefore hath power to appoint, to one more, to another leſs: *My times* (ſaith *David*) *are in thy hand*, Pſal. 31. v. 15: Thou mayeſt lengthen or ſhorten, continue or break them off, as thy pleaſure is.

Some live as if they were maſters of time, and could appoint out their own term: as if they lived at their own diſcretion, and could make a covenant with the grave, and agree with death, when to come for them. They article with it, for this year and the next; they ſay to the grave, thou ſhalt not take me yet, thou ſhalt ſpare me yet, I have ſuch ends to drive, ſuch pleaſures to take before I would die. They (*Iſa.* 56. 12.) ſpeak, as if their tongues and their time were their own, and they knew no Lord of either; *To morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant*; they ſpeak of the next day, as if they could command it, and bid it come to ſerve their luſts. That wretched rich man, *Luke* 12. could ſay, *Soul take thine eaſe, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*; ſee how liberal he is to his ſoul, out of anothers right; and becauſe he had got a great ſtock of riches, he gives himſelf a rich ſtock of time, *many years.* He reſolved to make his life larger, as he had done his barns; and becauſe they were full of corn, he alſo will be full of dayes; whereas the word came, *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be taken from thee*: And he could not live till next morning, who reſolved upon many years to live. Obſerve,

Secondly, *That the decrees of God concerning our lives, muſt not leſſen our care to preſerve our lives.*

Non in abſurdum trahenda eſt hæc Jobi ſententia, ut temere ſe quiſpiam periculis objiciat, quia ſpatiū vitæ definitū eſt.

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Yes, that there is; man lives at Gods appointment: but he muſt not live upon that appointment; that is, withdraw himſelf from means of his preſervation, and ſay, God hath appointed how long I ſhall live, therefore what need I take care how to live? Or what need I take care for the preſerving of my life? As it is in ſpirituals, ſo alſo in temporals. God hath determined and appointed the portion of every man, all comes under a decree, under an everlaſting and unmoveable decree; yet the decree which is paſt concerning us, muſt not take us off from our care about our ſelves. *Though only the elect are ſaved, yet none are ſaved by their election*; Infants who attain not the uſe of reaſon, much leſs the actings of grace, yet are not ſaved barely by election; what they cannot do, is done for them, they are ſaved as elect in Chriſt, not preciſely as elect; how they are united to Chriſt, we know not, but we know they muſt be united, or elſe they could not be ſaved. But they who grow in years, muſt alſo grow in the graces of ſanctification, otherwiſe they are not ſaved by the grace of election: The decree of God appoints us to ſalvation, but the decree of God doth not ſave us; we muſt run through all the ſecond cauſes, and wayes which the word of God hath chalked out to eternal life and glory. Thus alſo our temporal life, paſſeth under a decree, it is by appointment: but wo unto thoſe that ſhall ſay, God hath appointed how long I ſhall live, therefore what need I take care about my life? This is to walk contrary to one part of the decree, while we ſeem to ſubmit unto the other, For God who appoints life, appoints all the means which concern the preſervation of life. It hath no ſhadow of a warrant, for any man to caſt himſelf upon needleſs dangers, or to forbear neceſſary helps for the ſuſtaining of his life, becauſe he hears his time is appointed, and that his dayes on earth are all reckoned and numbred to him from heaven.

Thirdly, Foraſmuch as there is an appointed time, we ſhould learn patience, and wait quietly upon God. It is not in creatures (be they never ſo angry) to prolong the time of our ſorrows. The ſame word which ſhews us, that our life is a warfare, ſhews us alſo that it is an appointed time. Men cannot appoint you one moments trouble, or lengthen this war, when God will ſhorten it. Our hairs are numbred, much more our dayes. Honour God, and have good thoughts of him; for whether your times be fair or foul, calm or ſtormy, they are appointed times. The whole life of man on earth is ordered in heaven.

Fourthly, If our lives are for an appointed time, we ſhould be willing to die when God calls. All the time we would live beyond that, is of our own appointment; and we ſhould be willing to live till God calls, for all thats appointed time. As it is ſinful not to be willing to do (though it be burdenſom) what God appoints; ſo is it likewiſe, not to be willing to live what time God appoints, though it be painful and troubleſom.

And are not his dayes like the dayes of an hireling?

An hireling is he, who works a ſet time, for a ſet reward: And ſo this latter clauſe of the verſe is the ſame in ſence with the former. *Is there not an appointed time to man, and are not his dayes like the dayes of an hireling?* that is, are not his dayes ſet as an hirelings, with whom we agree for ſo many dayes, or for ſuch a day.

שכיר *Mercenarius, à* שכר *Conduxit. Mercenarius eſt qui in certum tempus conducitur, & ſæpe in diem, quem ideo Græci vocant ἀνθημέριον μίσθιον. Sicut in unico die operario, quamdiu lucet Sol, non eſt ulla requies mercenario conſtituta, ita dum luce hujus vitæ fruimur, nulla nobis requies expectanda eſt.*

An hireling.] We may take him either for a hired ſouldier, a mercenary in war; or for an hired ſervant, a mercenary in work. An hireling in either notion, is called to labour, ſorrow and ſweat: Such is the common condition of man, *His dayes are as the dayes of an hireling*, God threatneth *Moab* by the Prophet in this language (*Iſa.* 16. 14.) *Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab ſhall be contemned*; that is, within three years, which ſhall be like the years of an hireling, troubleſom years, laborious years, vexatious years, weariſom years, and then the glory of *Moab* ſhall be contemned, and utterly deſpiſed; as if he had ſaid, *Moab* is now in great glory, but near great deſolation. You ſhall ſee three years trouble will ſtain all the glory of *Moab*, and wither all her beauty: we feel this truth. England *was a Nation of great glory, you ſee how two or three years, like the years of an hireling, troubleſom years, years of affliction, years of hard labour and travel, have almoſt ſpoil'd the glory of it.*

And yet here *Job* makes a general deſcription of the life of man: It is not the lot only of ſome poor afflicted, hard-wrought ſervants, that their dayes are as the dayes of an hireling; he ſpeaks of mankind, of the maſter as well as of the ſervant; *His dayes are like the dayes of an hireling.* We may note from it,

First, That, *Except we labour, we ought not to eat.*

For the dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling; the hireling ſhall not have his meat except he work for it; neither ought he that hires, or ſets him awork. The Maſter is in this ſence an hireling. The Saints are (in this ſence) *Hirelings*. The Apoſtle ſpeaks to Believers, and reproves them (2 *Theſ.* 3. 12.) *There are ſome who walk among you inordinately, working not at all; now them that are ſuch, we command, that they work and eat their own bread*: and *ver.* 10. *If any man work not, let him not eat*; even they whom Chriſt hath made free, are to account themſelves as hired ſervants, that is, they muſt not eat the bread of idleneſs; we ſteal all the bread, which (one way or other) we labour not for; and therefore the Apoſtle bids the *Theſſalonians* work, that they might eat *their own bread.* It is not our own bread which we buy with our money, unleſs we pay (in what we can, and are called to) labour for it alſo. As we eat that bread pleaſantly, ſo we come by it honeſtly, which is dipt in our ſweat.

Secondly, We are hence taught, That, *We ought to take our travels well, we muſt not murmur at our labours, or complain over our work, and ſay, what a wearineſs is it?*

As the Lord cannot bear it, that any ſhould murmur at ſpiritual work, or ſay with them, in the Prophet, *what a wearineſs is it?* ſo it is very diſpleaſing to him, to ſay of our callings and the burdens of them, *What a wearineſs are they?* Why? It is the common condition of man, why then ſhould we quarrel with that law of labour, which is become the portion of our mortality? The corruption of our Nature hath led us into this condition, and made us all as hirelings. Mans innocency had buſineſs, but ſin hath brought him to ſweat, and changed his labour into toil. Man was put into the garden, *as Lord of it*, to dreſs and till it; but now he is put there, *as an hireling*, to ſweat and toil at it. There is a ſtamp of ſervility and drudgery upon all the labours which the children of men take under the Sun. That argument which the Apoſtle uſes, to ſupport us in the bitterneſs of affliction, hath a like ſtrength in it to comfort us in the toilſomneſs of our labours. *As there is no temptation hath taken hold of us, but that which is common to man*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. So there is no labour laid upon any of us in our lawful callings, but that which is common to man. Even the Saints whom Chriſt hath made free, and ſeparated from the world, are not freed from ſervice while they are in the world. And while Chriſt wou'd not have them careful in any thing, he would have them induſtrious in every thing. That Canon of the Apoſtle is clear for it (1 Cor. 7. 20.) *Let every man abide in the ſame calling wherein he was called*; that is, your ſpiritual calling doth not void your civil. When you have learned to drive a trade for heaven, you muſt ſtill drive your trade on earth. *While there is any thing of ſin in us, there muſt be ſomewhat of the hireling in us.* There is not the moſt ingenious, no, nor the moſt ſpiritual labour we go about, but there is ſomewhat of the hireling in it; in the duty of prayer, in the duty of preaching, there is ſomewhat of the hireling, that is, there is bodily pain and wearineſs, a waſte upon our ſtrength, and expence of our ſpirits. Though in theſe things the Saints work not for wages, but their very work is their wages, and their labour their reward, though there be nothing mercenary in their ſpirits, yet they feel the effects of a mercenary work upon their bodies, even wearineſs and waſte of natural ſtrength and ſpirits.

Thirdly, *Seeing the dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling*, Obſerve,

There is a reward or wages, ſomewhat follows the labour and travel of this life.

The hireling labours all day, but at night he hath his reward, *Mat.* 20. Chriſt compares Believers, even in their ſpiritual capacity, unto Labourers in a Vineyard, to hirelings, who wrought for a penny a day, and at night they had every one their pay: It is ſo in reference to the whole courſe of this life, we are hirelings; in the evening we ſhall have our penny; verily, *There is a reward for the righteous, their labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. And as the righteous have a reward, ſo the wicked ſhall have wages. Satans hireling ſhall have full pay, though no content, for all their works: *The wages of ſin is death*; there's pay, ſuch as it is, woful pay, a black penny. The dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling, there is an iſſue and a reward for every work.

Fourthly, Note from the Metaphor, *While an hireling is doing his Maſters work, he doth his own too.*

That is, his own profit comes in by thoſe acts in which he labours for another. It is thus alſo in the general ſtate of man; above all, Chriſts ſervants and hirelings gain by the duties of obedience they perform to Chriſt, their own profit comes in with his honour. A godly man cannot do a ſtroke of work for God, but he works for himſelf too; the ſervants of God muſt not be ſelf-ſeekers and ſelf-workers, they may not make themſelves their end; but as it is with an hireling, let him be never ſo upright-hearted toward the maſter he ſerves, let him lay *ſelf* by in all he doth, yet he hath a ſhare of profit in all his labours. God hath ſo eſpouſed and married his own glory and the good of man together, that whoſoever really promotes the one, promotes both. It is ſo likewiſe with thoſe who work the works of darkneſs, and do the luſts of the devil. While his ſlaves are doing his work, they are gaining toward deſtruction, and their own wages encreaſes daily, they are treaſuring up wrath and judgment againſt the day of wrath. As the meaſure of their ſin fills, ſo doth the meaſure of their puniſhment. Thus alſo *the dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling.*

There are two general Obſervations which I ſhall but name, becauſe they will occur again.

Firſt, *The life of man is ſhort; as the dayes of an hireling.*

The ſervant doth not abide in the houſe for ever, a hireling is but for a time. And it is good for a man that it is ſo. Some complain exceeding much, becauſe their lives are ſo exceeding little. But let them weigh it well, and they ſhall ſee cauſe to rejoyce much, becauſe they live ſo little. In ſome reſpect it is good for wicked men, that their lives are ſo ſhort; if their lives were longer, they would be wickeder, and ſo heaping up more ſin, they would heap up more wrath againſt themſelves. And it is very well for the Saints, that their lives are ſo ſhort. Their corruptions and temptations, their weakneſſes and infirmities, their troubles and afflictions are ſo many, that it is well their dayes are ſo few. If they ſhould have length of life added to heaps of ſorrows, and perpetuity with outward miſery, how miſerable were they! Chriſt promiſes it as a point of favour to his, that the dayes of trouble ſhould be ſhortned; *Except thoſe dayes ſhould be ſhortned, no fleſh ſhould be ſaved* (that is, kept or preſerved alive in thoſe tribulations) *but for the Elects ſake thoſe dayes ſhall be ſhortned,* Mat. 24. 22. It is a favour alſo to the Saints, that their particular dayes are ſhortned, that theirs are but as the dayes of an hireling, foraſmuch as their preſent dayes are dayes of trouble and travel. *The dayes of the beſt are ſo full of evil, that it is good they are not fuller of days.*

Secondly, *It is good they are ſo evil or full of trouble.*

It is well for wicked men that their dayes are full of trouble; the ſweeter their lives are to them, the ſinfuller they are againſt God. Their outward comforts are but fewel and encouragement to their luſts; and while their lives are calm and quiet, they do but ſail more quietly down into that dead Sea of everlaſting miſery. And the Saints have this advantage by the troubleſomeneſs of their lives, to be kept in continual exerciſe, and more dependance upon God; they would love the world too well, and delight in the creature too much, if God did not put bitterneſs into their cup.

Job having thus ſhadowed the ſtate of man, ſeems to make out his intendment or ſcope thus, *There is no reaſon why I ſhould be charged ſo deeply for deſiring death; for what is the life of man? Is it not a life full of travel, and of trouble, full of dangers and temptations, is not the time of his life ſhort and ſet? Is it not a ſpeedy paſſing time, and yet a firmly appointed time? Why then ſhould not I think the period of my life to be at hand? Why ſhould not I think my appointed time is come? Foraſmuch as I have ſo many evidences and ſymptomes of death before me, and have heard ſo many meſſages and ſummons to the grave. Death ſits upon my lips, ready to come in while I am ſpeaking. Death hath taken poſſeſſion of me already, and ſeiz'd my ports. Death is in my face, I am the very picture of death, and images of death ſtand round about me. Therefore* Eliphaz, *why ſhould I not call to have my dayes ſummed up, that I may ſee the end and ſum of theſe troubles; Or, wherefore wouldſt thou ſtay my complaint againſt my life, or ſtop my deſire of death, by giving me hopes of many dayes, and of a flouriſhing eſtate in this world?*

Plurima mortis imago.

That's his firſt argument, from the general condition of mankind. Now he proceeds to conſider ſomewhat more ſpecial in that condition.

Verſe 2. **As a ſervant earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow, and as a hireling looketh for the reward of his work.**

Verſe 3, **So am I made to poſſeſs moneths of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.**

As a ſervant earneſtly deſireth.] *To deſire earneſtly,* is but one word in the Original; it is ſo full of ſence, that we cannot empty it into any one word in our language. The Letter is, *As a ſervant breaths after the ſhadow*: And becauſe a man that hath an earneſt longing deſire for a thing, pants, breathes and gaſpes after it, therefore that word, which ſignifies to gape and draw in the air pantingly, ſignifies alſo to deſire, or to deſire earneſtly, *As a ſervant earneſtly deſireth.*

שאף *Traxit aerē ad os, per Metaphorā, inhiavit, ardenter cupiit, qui enim vehementer aliquid cupiunt, præ deſiderii & expectationis magnitudine ad os aerem trahunt ſeu frequentius reſpirant.*

The ſhadow.] Some underſtand it of the night, when the ſervant comes to reſt himſelf after his labour all the day. *Night is but a great ſhadow.*

Secondly, We may take it for the *ſhadow* of the day: A ſervant that is heated in labour abroad in the open field, earneſtly deſires a ſhadow, to get under a tree or a buſh; a little to refreſh himſelf. Or,

Thirdly, The ſhadow may be taken for the houſe; to come into a mans houſe, or under a mans roof, is called a coming under his ſhadow, *Gen.* 19. 3. *Therefore are they come under my ſhadow,* ſaith Lot to the men of *Sodom,* that is under the covert of my roof.

The ſhadow is uſed often in Scripture to note protection and mercy; *Shadows are ſubſtantial mercies, and the promiſe of a ſhadow is a real favour,* Iſa. 4. 6. The Church hath a promiſe under this notion; *There ſhall be a Tabernacle for a ſhadow in the day-time from the heat.* Iſa. 25. 4. *A refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat.* And, *Iſa.* 32. 2. The Lord promiſes that he will be *as the ſhadow of a great Rock in a weary Land unto his people.* And *David* flies to this ſhadow for ſafety. *Under the ſhadow of thy wings ſhall be my refuge, till theſe calamities be overpaſt,* Pſal. 57. 1. So, *Pſal.* 17. 8. *Pſal.* 91. 1.

Umbra id ſignificat quod protegendo & cuſtodiendo obumbrat.

So that in theſe words, *As a ſervant earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow, Job* means that which is moſt refreſhing and deſirable by a ſervant: And in thoſe Eaſtern hot countries, ſhadows were very refreſhing and much deſired. *Jacob* reporting his labours in keeping *Laban*'s ſheep, ſaith, *In the day-time I was conſumed with heat, or parched with heat.* Therefore a ſervant hath reaſon to deſire the ſhadow.

And as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work.

There are two things which a ſervant or an hireling deſires much, *reſt* and *reward*; *ſhadow* and *pay*. When he is hot, the ſhadow refreſhes him: and when he is hungry, his pay refreſhes him; while his hand is at work in the day, his heart is upon the wages he ſhall receive at night. Hence the Lord in compaſſion to ſervants, made a gracious proviſion for them by a Law, *Deut.* 24. 14, 15. *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant,* &c. *at his day thou ſhalt give him his hire, neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor and ſetteth his heart upon it, leſt he cry againſt thee to the Lord, and it be ſin unto thee.*

Job puts the inſtance in both, *As the hireling looks for the reward of his work,* &c.

He looketh.] The word ſignifieth to expect a thing with an eye toward it; what we earneſtly expect, our eyes move after it. *David,* in his waiting upon God, ſaith, *Mine eyes are towards thee*; I lift mine eyes and my heart to God; the ſame word is here uſed, *The hireling looks.*

For the reward of his work.

So we tranſlate it. The Hebrew is, *He looks for his work*: Why? He had work before, he had his work all day long, his Maſter ſhewed him his work, he needed not look for that; then his work is the reward of his work. In the Scripture, the word *work* ſignifies three things.

Firſt, The very act of labour.

Secondly, The effect of labour, the thing wrought, or that which is the product of labour. When a man hath laboured, what he laboured about is viſible, and that we call his work, as well as the act of his labour.

Thirdly, The reward or the wages which a man receives for his labour, *Lev.* 19. 13. We read a plain Text for it. *The wages of him that is hired ſhall not abide with thee all night, until the morning.* The Hebrew is, *The work of him that is hired ſhall not abide with thee.* So, *Pſal.* 109. 20. *Let this be the reward of mine adverſaries from the Lord*; The Hebrew is, *Let this be the work of mine adverſaries from the Lord.* And, *Jer.* 22. 13. We have the word in the ſame ſence, work for wages. As it is uſual to put prayer for the thing prayed for, a petition for the thing petitioned, or for the thing obtained by petition; *The Lord hath given me my petition* (ſaith *Hannah,* 1 *Sam.* 1. 27.) That is, the child for whom I did petition. It is uſual alſo in Scripture, to put ſin for the puniſhment or reward of ſin,

Opus eſt fructus ſeu merces operis, quæ pro labore datur, per Metonymiam.

Geneſ. 4. 13. *My ſin is greater*, that is, my puniſhment is greater *then I can bear*. And the Maſter is forbid to detain the ſervants wages, *leaſt it be ſin to him*, Deut. 24. 15. That is, leaſt he be puniſhed for detaining it. Thus alſo it is uſual to put the work for the reward of the work, *The hireling expects his work*, that is, he earneſtly looks that he ſhall have wages in the evening for his work. Now (ſaith *Job*) as theſe wait, the ſervant and the hireling, for the ſhadow in the day, and for their wages at night; ſo *I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity*, &c.

I ſhall Note a point or two in paſſage from the words, as they contain a general truth, before I examine them in this application.

Take the words as they are a direct propoſition, *A ſervant deſires the ſhadow, and an hireling looks for the reward of his work.* Hence obſerve,

First, *The condition of a ſervant is a very laborious and weariſom condition.*

He longs for ſome reſt, he earneſtly deſires the ſhadow. Obſerve,

Secondly, *The ſervant muſt have a reward.*

There's all the reaſon in the world he ſhould. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *The hireling hath earneſt thoughts upon his reward.*

His reward is in his eye. It is the reaſon given, why the wages of the hired ſervant ſhould not be with-held, *Deut.* 24. 15. The Lord the righteous judge between Maſters and Servants, gives this account or ground of his Law, *Thou ſhalt not detain his wages, for he ſetteth his heart upon it*; Poor man he hath been working all day, and he hath had his heart upon his wages; the hopes of that gave him ſome relief and eaſe in going through his hard task and ſervice, therefore thou ſhalt not keep it from him, his heart is ſet upon it.

But it may be queſtioned: is not this a ſin in the ſervant, to ſet his heart upon his wages? A charge is given, *Pſal.* 62. *v.* 10. *If riches increaſe, ſet not your hearts upon them*; and is it approveable in a ſervant, to ſet his heart upon his wages or encreaſe?

There is a great difference (and it is worthy our notice) between thoſe two Scriptures. The word in *Deutronomy*, (ſpeaking of the poor ſervant) notes the lifting up of the Soul: *He hath lifted up his ſoul unto it*, ſo we read in the margin of our Bibles; But in the *Pſalm* (where he ſpeaks of the covetous rich man) the word imports, the letting down or ſetling of his heart upon it. A poor man hath but a little, and his wages (it may be) is above him, his wages (poſſibly) is more then he is worth, therefore he lifteth up his mind to it, as a mercy and a bleſſing from God, for the relief of himſelf and family; take heed (ſaith the Lord) that thou detain not his wages; for the poor man lifteth up his ſoul to it, as a thing he reacheth upward for; *It is very dangerous to take that out of the hands of a man, which he is taking (as it were) out of the hand of God.* But a rich man, who hath aboundance, lets his heart down, he croucheth and broodeth upon the creature. A godly poor man, looks up to his reward, and fetches his bread from Heaven; a covetous rich man looks down to his reward, and takes his bread from the Earth; a godly man is above all earthly things, and yet he lifts up his mind to receive them. A meer natural man is below earthly things, and yet he deſcends that he may receive them: The things which both receive, are the ſame, but the conveiance and derivation differ alwayes, as much as Heaven and Earth, ſometimes as much as Heaven and Hell. But to the Text. Obſerve,

Laſtly, That, *it is the property of an hireling* (take it ſtrictly) *to eye his reward.*

This is the deſcription of an hireling, *he is one who looks to his reward, whatſoever he doth to his work.* Chriſt, *Joh.* 10. 13. confirms this character, *The hireling fleeth, becauſe he is an hireling, and careth not for the ſheep*; he cares much for the fleece, and for the fleſh, but he cares little, if at all for the ſheep; that is, how or whether the ſheep be fed and proſper. He that works for Chriſt, finds his reward in his work, and his eye is upon his work, as a reward, as well as upon the reward of his work; he is pleaſed as much, yea far more with his buſineſs, then he is with his wages: Did he not take content, and pay himſelf in this, that he is in a work acceptable to Chriſt; he could take no content, he could not be pleaſed at all, that he is in a work profitable to himſelf.

Now *Job* applies this general, about the nature of a ſervant and an hireling, to his own condition.

So I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity, and weariſom nights are appointed to me.

Similitudo diſſimilis.

So am I made.] It looks like a ſtrange, and a very unlikely ſimilitude; *As a ſervant deſireth the ſhadow, ſo am I made to poſſeſs months of vanity*: Therefore to clear it, we muſt remember, that this is a ſimilitude with a diſſimilitude: The ſimilitude is conceal'd, the diſſimilitude is expreſt; we may make it out thus, *As a ſervant deſireth the ſhadow, and an hireling looketh for the reward of his work; ſo I, who am labouring in the heat of theſe afflictions, do earneſtly deſire a ſhadow; and I who am at work as an hireling, would have a reward; that is, I would ſee the end and iſſue of theſe troubles: But* (here's the diſſimilitude) *I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity, and weariſom nights are appointed to me*; as if *Job* had ſaid, *When the ſervant hath wrought all day, and is weary, he can lie down at night quietly and reſt himſelf; but alas! the night is as troubleſom, and as laborious to me as the day; When the hireling hath laboured and taken pains, he receives his reward at evening; but my wages are months of vanity, and my rewards are nights of trouble; I am paid in ill coyn, months of vanity, wearyſom nights are appointed for the reward of weary dayes.* Thus the ſence is plain.

יחל *Eſt jure hæreditario aliquid acquirere & poſſidere.*

I am made [**to poſſeſs.**] The word ſignifies poſſeſſing by inheritance and deſcent. Two things are implied in that phraſe:

First, That troubles and afflictions belong to us by right, they are poſſeſt as an inheritance, which we receive from our Parents and Progenitors. *I am made to poſſeſs.* And

Secondly, It notes the continuance of troubles upon us: We have not only an ill lodging for a while, or we ſtay not with trouble, as travellers for a night, but we poſſeſs and inherit them as our own. *Job's* troubles, were not to him as an hired houſe, or a lodging, but as an inheritance wherein he was ſetled and eſtated: *I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity*; as if he had ſaid, you ſee what the patrimony and inheritance is which deſcends to me: I have waited for comfort, and have been in expectation of good dayes, but I poſſeſs months of vanity, that's all I have found and felt, as the iſſue of my labours.

ירחי־שוא

Months of vanity.] Some read, *Empty Moons* (the word bears that ſence) as if *Job's* Moon were alwayes in the wane, or ever in the Eclipſe. The word ſignifies any kind of vanity, whether in word or in deed, perſonal vanity, or real vanity, falſhood or deceit, any thing that is trivial or light. Such months have I appointed to me.

But ſome may ſay, *Months of vanity*? Why doth *Job* complain of this? Hath any man in the world any other then months of vanity? Why then doth *Job* take it ſo ill, that he poſſeſſeth months of vanity, when no other fall to the lot or poſſeſſion of any man? *David*, Pſalm 39. 5. affirms, *that man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*; what reaſon then hath *Job* to complain of months of vanity in his worſt eſtate? It was with him as well as with any of his neighbours, we know not who hath any other then months of vanity. The Preacher makes this the preface of his Sermon, *Eccleſ.* 1. 2. *Vanity of vanities* (ſaith the Preacher) *vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

I anſwer, It is true, our whole life is a life of vanity; but yet there is more vanity in ſome mans life, or in ſome part of the ſame mans life then in another. Vanity is gradual. There is a vain, and a vainer vanity, and there is the vaineſt vanity. Months of vanity may be underſtood two wayes.

Inanis & vacua, quia erat vacua hominibus, jumentis & plantis.

First, *Months of vanity*, that is, months empty of comfort, fruitleſs months, months bringing me no refreſhing or content. As *Gen.* 1. 2. it is ſaid, *The earth was without form and void: void*, that is, it had neither man, nor beaſt, nor plant upon it; there was nothing but emptineſs upon the face of the earth, as it lay in that rude maſs; ſo *Job* ſaith here, mine are months of vanity, void months, that is, months not filled up with any comfort, with any refreſhing, with any joy, with any light or content; all theſe which are as the filling up of our months, and the beauty of time, are taken away from me; mine are empty months, my dayes are all Dog-dayes, or at beſt, the dayes in the Kalendar of my life are blanks.

Secondly, *Months of vanity*, becauſe he had not what he expected, or the iſſue which he waited for: *Job* expreſſes himſelf in a poſture of waiting, by the former ſimilitudes; The hireling looks for his wages, and I look for ſomewhat, but it is in vain I cannot enjoy it. So the word is uſed, *Pſal.* 78. 33. where the Pſalmiſt deſcribes the ſinful diſtempers of the people of *Iſrael*, and Gods anger towards them; *They believed not his word*, &c. What then? *Therefore their dayes did he conſume in vanity, and their years in trouble.* The dayes of all men are conſumed in vanity, as we ſaid before; but here was ſomewhat more judicial and penal; it is a ſore judgment to conſume our dayes in vanity, as that people did; As ſoon as they came out of *Egypt*, they were in a fair way to *Canaan*; but God leads them about by the wilderneſs, and there lets them wander out forty years, expecting and waiting for *Canaan*, but no *Canaan* came, or they came not to *Canaan*; this was the *ſpending of their years in vanity*, becauſe they were travelling to their deſired reſt, but enjoyed it not; they went toyling up and down the wilderneſs, as in a maze, finding no way out, but at the door of the grave; their carkaſſes fell in the wilderneſs; thus their dayes were conſumed in vanity. So ſaith *Job*, *I poſſeſs months of vanity*, that is, months wherein I am tyred out in continual troubles, and they are fruitleſs, iſſuleſs troubles; I have no ſenſible benefit by them, I ſee no end of them, my hopes are fruſtrate, and put far off from me. And are not theſe months of vanity? Obſerve hence,

Vacuum tempus eſt, quod nullam nobis affert utilitatem.

Firſt, *Troubles will prevail upon us, whether we will or no.*

I am made to poſſeſs, &c. As if *Job* had ſaid, I would fain have got over theſe months of vanity, or worn them out, but whether I will or no, I am made to poſſeſs them. *The bands of affliction are too ſtrong for the creature to break:* when the Lord ſends trouble, he will make a man poſſeſs it, how diſpleaſing ſoever it is; *It is beſt for us to ſubmit, where we cannot remedy, and to yield quietly to that which we cannot avoid.* Obſerve,

Secondly, *Troubles come to us, as our natural inheritance.*

I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity, they are as mine inheritance, and I would wave my right but I cannot. There are two parts of our natural patrimony, *ſin* and *ſorrow*; both theſe deſcend to us, and we are made to *poſſeſs them*, till we come to our purchaſed inheritance, reſerved in Heaven for us. Obſerve,

Thirdly, That, *though every mans life have vanity in it, yet ſome men have more.*

That is, more troubles and trials, more diſquietments and diſappointments. The common condition of all men, in their beſt eſtate is, *that they are altogether vanity*; but the vanity of ſome men is more vain, their afflictions more afflicting, their troubles more troubleſom, and their ſickneſs more ſick then their brethren. *Job* ſpeaks as if he had ſpoiled all the world of this inheritance, and had engroſs'd all vanity to himſelf; *I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity:* That vanity which is the portion of all men, ſeems ſometimes to be the portion of one man alone. *I am the man that hath ſeen affliction*, ſaith the Prophet *Jeremiah, Lam.* 3. 1. why, is that ſuch a ſtrange ſight, who hath not ſeen affliction? True, but *Jeremiah* had ſeen more then moſt, and therefore he ſpeaks, as if he only had ſeen affliction, *I am the man.*

And weariſom nights are appointed to me.

Weariſom nights.] Or nights of labour and wearineſs; at if *Job* had ſaid, though the ſervant be wearied all day, yet the night is not weariſom to him, he reſts at night, but I am wearied in the day, and wearied in the night: *weariſom nights are appointed to me*; the night which is given unto others for reſt, is meaſured out to me in watchings and in ſorrows. And this is a great aggravation of his ſad condition; It is ſaid before, that he had moneths of vanity, yet it might be ſuppoſed his nights were comfortable intervals of refreſhing: as a man may ſay, I have had ſeven years of hard labour, yet it is ſuppoſed he reſted all the nights of thoſe years; ſo when *Job* ſaith, I had months of vanity, it might be conceived, he had at leaſt ſometimes a good night; therefore he adds *weariſom nights are appointed to me*, I ſpeak not after the rate of ordinary men, whoſe months labor, is a month of dayes, my labouring months include the night alſo.

Noctes plenæ vigiliis & anxietatibus. Noctes laboris, i. e. *laborioſas, Menſes habeo omni ſolatio vacuos, ut nec in noctibus quidem liceat mihi quieſcere. Alluſio ad ſervi & mercenarii nocturnam quietem.* Pined.

A ſtrong healthy *man goeth forth to his labour and to his work, until the evening*, Pſal. 104. 23. But a ſick, weak man, goeth forth to his labour in the evening. The night is moſt laborious to ſick men, then they revolve their troubles, and being free from viſits of friends, they viſit their own afflictions, and ſtudy their own diſtempers freely.

Nox ægris maximè infeſta eſt, toti ſunt in cogitandis malis ſuis.

Are appointed to me.] The Hebrew is, *are numbred, or reckoned to me*; as if he ſhould ſay, God ſets down my nights by tale, or by ſcores; It is an *Arithmitical word*, it notes to number by art and skill: And ſome obſerve, that it notes *Arithmetick* in that operation of it, which we call *Subſtraction or Subduction*; not that which we call *Addition or Multiplication*. Weariſom nights are numbred or appointed to me, in a kind of Subſtraction, that is, God takes or ſubſtracts the nights out of the months, and makes them as weariſom and as troubleſom to me, as the dayes are. And becauſe thoſe things which are thus numbred by way of ſeparation or ſubſtraction, are uſually appointed or appropriated to ſome ſpecial uſe, therefore the word is well tranſlated, to appoint or conſtitute: if you ſee a man ſeparate or ſubſtract one thing from another, it is an argument that he hath a reaſon for what he doth, and intends it to ſome extraordinary purpoſe: The word is ſo taken here, to note a ſpecial end to which theſe nights, being ſubſtracted from the reſt of his time, were appointed, namely, they were to be as *Job's pay and reward*; He was troubled all day, and if he looked for his reward or comfort in the evening, this was given him, *A night as weariſom as his day*, or he had an ill nights reſt given for his hard dayes labour. The Prophet gives us the word in ſuch a ſence, *Iſa.* 56. 11, 12. He tells the *Jews* their ſin in the former words, *Ye furniſh a drink-offering to that number*; Some underſtand his meaning to be a reproof of that wicked and ſuperſtitious cuſtom, wherein the *Jews* (it ſeems) did ſymbolize with the Heathens, who were wont to drink to their *Idols by number*, to ſuch an *Idol* they would drink ſo many cups, and that was called a *drink-offering to that number*; Now ſaith God, becauſe you have done thus, namely, *furniſhed a drink-offering to that number, therefore I will number you to the ſword*, or therefore I will appoint you to the ſword; I will ſubſtract and take you out, and you ſhall be the men ſeparated for the ſword to deal with and deſtroy; I will number you to the ſword, that ſhall drink your blood, becauſe you have been ſo accurate in wickedneſs, to drink by number. The word is applied to Chriſt (*Iſa.* 53. 12.) *He was numbred amongſt the tranſgreſſors*; that is, he was taken aſide, and ſeparated from the innocent, and ranked amongſt tranſgreſſors; which notes him appointed, or ſet apart to that end, that ſo he might be the Saviour of tranſgreſſors, and a deliverer of the wicked from their ſins. In *Daniel* 1. v. 10. when thoſe children of the *Hebrews*, deſired to be ſpared from eating the Kings diet, I dare not do it, ſaith the Steward, *for I fear my Lord the King, who hath appointed your meat and your drink*; as if it ſhould be ſaid, *he hath numbred out to you ſo many diſhes of meat, he hath numbred out to you ſo many flagons of wine*; he hath ſubſtracted ſuch a proportion, and appointed it to you, and I dare not alter it. And in the Propheſie of *Jonah, chap.* 1. *verſ.* 17. it is ſaid, *God prepared a great fiſh to ſwallow up Jonah*, ſo we tranſlate: the Hebrew is, *God numbered a great fiſh to ſwallow up Jonah*; That is, God did ſeparate or ſubſtract a fiſh from all the reſt of the fiſhes of the Sea, for that end and purpoſe to ſwallow up *Jonah*. From all which inſtances it is clear, that the word notes an appointment, by way of deſign, or the draw-

מנה *Numeravit, ſupputavit, unde,* [illegible] *menſis, quod juxta lunæ curſū menſes numeramus. Non quancumq; rationem numerandi denotat, ſed artificialem & Arithmeticam; neq; illam quam vocant Additionē, ſed ſubſtractionem. Quod in hac ratione numerandi quædam ſubducuntur, & quaſi ſeparantur, ideo ſignificat ſeorſim deſtinare ad aliquem ſpeciale uſum.*

drawing of a thing to ſome ſpecial uſe and ſervice. When *a Party* is drawn out of the body of an Army, they are numbred or appointed to ſome deſign; ſuch a meaning is in *Job's* words, theſe nights are ſubſtracted or drawn out, and then appointed to be my reward and wages. The ſum of all is, *Job* comparing his eſtate with that of hirelings, ſervants and ſouldiers, finds his far worſe then theirs, they have reſt in the night, at leaſt ſome nights they reſt, but he had none. Obſerve here the law of nature,

Night is the time of reſt.

Sleep is the parentheſis of our troubles: it puts a ſtop to our ſorrows, and gives intermiſſion to our labours. Obſerve,

Secondly, *That the troubles of every night, and how many troubleſom nights any one ſhall have, are determined by God himſelf.*

I have wearisom nights (ſaith *Job*) but they come not by accident, they are appointed and exactly numbred to me. *It is matter of great comfort, to remember that God is thus accurate about our ſorrows:* He gives his people a cup of ſorrow, and he appointeth how many drops ſhall be in their cup, all the world cannot put in one drop beyond his meaſure: He appointeth out our trouble for the kind, and for the degree, and for the time and continuance of it; how many weariſom nights, how long every night ſhall be, are all calculated and ſet down in the Kalender of his heavenly counſels.

I ſhall add but a word of the next verſe, which is only the deſcription of a weariſom night: *Job* having ſaid, that weariſom nights were appointed or numbred out to him: now reſolves us what he means by a weariſom night, or when he accounts a night weariſom.

Verſ. 4. **When I lie down, I ſay when ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone? And I am full of toſſings too and fro, unto the dawning of the day.**

This is a weariſom night, and it is a moſt exact deſcription of a weariſom night; when a man as ſoon as he goes to bed, deſires to riſe; as ſoon as it is night enquires for day; this man hath a weary time of it.

ערב *Miſcuit, adveſperaſcit, inde* ערב *veſpera tempus illud cū tenebræ miſcentur luci.*

When ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone?] Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates, *the duskie time be gone?* The word ſignifies evening, and the verb, to mingle or mix; becauſe the evening is a time wherein there is a mixture (as it were) of light and darkneſs. Evening, is light and darkneſs mingled, hence we call it *twilight*: And though all the night be (in this ſence) mixed, becauſe in nature there is *no pure darkneſs*, yet in the evening this mixture is more diſcernable; therefore it is rather appliable to the former part of the night, becauſe afterward the light is more fully overcome and conquered.

מדד *Menſuravit hinc* מדה *menſuram quantitatis continuæ denotat, ſicut* משמורה *diſcreta.*

When ſhall the night be gone?] The Hebrew is, *When ſhall the night be meaſured out?* There is an elegancy in that; it ſignifies to meaſure a thing, as we meaſure cloth by a yard, or as ground is meaſured by a rod or pole; it ſignifies likewiſe to meaſure time, to tell, count and obſerve the hours: As if *Job* had ſaid of himſelf (as many times ſick men do) *I lie a bed all the night and tell the clock.* The clock is the meaſure of the night: now, ſaith he, *when ſhall the night be meaſured out?* As if he had (with ſorrow) counted the tedious hours, oh when will this time be meaſured out! What a long night is this! As come to a ſick man in a morning, and you ſhall have him ſay, What a long tedious night was this? As long as two or three nights.

שבע *Saturatus.*

He adds yet another part of the deſcription, *I am full of toſſings too and fro unto the dawning of the day.* He lay meaſuring the night, and was unquiet all the while, *full of toſſings too and fro.* The word ſignifies to be filled with meat and drink; I have my fill of troubles, my fill of torture, I have unquietneſs enough, as much as I can hold of ſorrow.

נדדים *à radice* נדד *motus, remotus, elongatus. Celerem agitationem denotat. Saturatus ſum vagis cogitationibus.* Rab. Lev.

Toſſings too and fro.] The word is underſtood by ſome of inward toſſings. *I am full of toſſings too and fro,* that is, *I have great agitations in my heart, my thoughts are very unſetled.* One of the Rabins to that ſence, *I am full of wandring thoughts*; thoughts will toſs up and down, forward and backward; a mans thoughts will toſs him from one end of the world unto the other, while he is a priſoner in his bed: They toſs him from buſineſs to buſineſs, while he is unfit for any buſineſs. A ſick man is full of inward toſſings, of wandring thoughts, his thoughts run faſteſt, when himſelf is bed-rid, or confin'd to his bed; all the night is ſpent in the travel of his mind, while his body cannot ſtir a foot.

Ægrotantes mutationibus ut remediis utuntur. Sen.

But rather underſtand it of corporal toſſings. A ſick man full of pain removes from one ſide of his bed to another, from one corner to another, ſometimes from the head of the bed to the foot. The Moraliſt expreſſes it excellently, *Sick men uſe changes as if they were medicines,* they hope by changing their place to looſe their pain by the way, *I am full of toſſings too and fro.*

נשף *Crepuſculum veſpertinū, vel matutinum.*

Till the dawning of the day.] Till the day break, that is, the whole night through. Some underſtand this for the evening, the word ſignifies both the evening and the morning. And theſe interpret this latter part of the verſe for his troubles in the day, having complained before that weariſom nights were appointed to him, *When I lie down, I ſay, when will the night be gone?* There is an end of the night; but when the night is gone, have I any eaſe in the day? No, I am full of toſſings too and fro until the evening; and ſo it is an amplification of his troubles in regard of both parts of the natural day, light and darkneſs. But we may more properly keep it to the deſcription of a weariſom night, and that word which may note the evening is here to be appropriated to the dawning of the day, when darkneſs begins to depart, and give way to the prevailing light.

This was a great aggravation of the afflictions of this holy man, he had no reſt, no eaſe, in any part of the night, he could not ſo much as get a nap towards morning.

Malorum Domitrices.

The night is the time of our truce with troubles, though a man be in conflicts with buſineſs all day long, yet there is a ceſſation at night, all is laid by till morning. Hence the night and ſleep are well called *The Conquerors of evil, and Victors over ſorrow*; becauſe in the night a man gets rid of them. Chriſt ſaith, *Math.* 6. *ult. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof:* if there be evil enough in the day, who is able to ſtand before the evils of day and night too? When our very ſleep becomes our fight, what can fleſh and blood do any more? Sleep is a medicine for all diſeaſes, and Phyſitians often give a ſleepy potion for a medicine, that the body may have a little refreſhing, after it hath been worn and tired out with a wakeful ſickneſs.

Obſerve from the Text, as it is the deſcription of a ſick man.

That a man in pain looks upon every time as better to him then the preſent time.

When I lie down, I ſay, when ſhall I ariſe? I hope it will be better with me anon, I hope the day will be better to me then the night: and when the day comes, then he wiſheth for night, hoping the night will be better then the day. An afflicted troubleſom time is ſo deſcribed, *Deut.* 28. 67. *In the morning thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were even; and at even thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were Morning:* They ſhall think any thing, or time to come better to them then the preſent; therefore when they had night, they call'd for day; and when they had day, they ſent a meſſenger for the night; ever thinking the next change of time would be-friend them with a change in their condition. Obſerve,

Secondly, *Change of place giveth no eaſe of pain.*

Cœlum non animam mutat, qui trans mare currit.

I am full of toſſings too and fro to the dawning of the day; he had changed, and changed, and changed, but could not change his pain for eaſe, that continued ſtill. Some travel to other Countries to mend their eſtates. Some go from Kingdom to Kingdom to eaſe their minds, and ſome to better their manners; but as he that runs to another country changes his air, but not his heart, alters place, but not his manners, the ſame is the ſame ſtill: So it brings no health to the ſick, no eaſe to the pained to change place.

As a man ſin-ſick, before he comes to reſt and healing in Chriſt, toſſes from place to place, from this duty to that duty, from this means to that means, to get a little eaſe for his wounded ſpirit and aking conſcience; he hopeth this will do him good, and that will do him good, but all in vain. And as worldly men hope their pleaſures and their riches will do them good, and ſo they toſs from one pleaſure to another, from creature to creature; but all failes, there is no ſettlement, no compoſedneſs, no peace, no redreſs till the ſoul fixes upon Chriſt. So in bodily pains, there is no eaſe, no refreſhing but in God: it is not this or that place of the bed, it is not the bed or the couch, it is not the Countrey or the City, a ſharp or a temperate air can do it, God can alone, and he can command any creature to do it.

You that have moneths of comfort, and to whom refreſhing nights are appointed, bleſs God; it is not your bed that gives you reſt, but his bleſſing.

Remember this deſcription of a ſick man; preſent the conditions of a ſick man to your thoughts, think what a weariſome thing it is to lie all night telling the clock, calling for the day, and toſſing to and fro, praiſe God for quiet nights, and pity thoſe to whom weariſome nights are appointed.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8.

My fleſh is cloathed with worms and clods of duſt, my skin is broken, and become loathſome.

My dayes are ſwifter than a weavers ſhuttle, and are ſpent without hope.

O remember that my life is wind, mine eye ſhall no more ſée good.

The eye of him that hath ſéen me, ſhall ſée me no more; thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

WE have ſeen *Job* in this Chapter confirming his former deſires of death.

First, From the general condition of mankind, *v.* 1.

Secondly, From the condition of ſome particular men, *v.* 2.

And Thirdly, From his own preſent condition, which he draws forth in *verſ.* 3, 4, 5, 6.

The third and fourth verſes have been already opened.

In this fifth, he gives us a farther deſcription of himſelf, and ſuch a one, as might well aſſure us, that his reſtleſs nights were not without reaſon; *My fleſh is cloathed*, &c. As if he had ſaid, if you think I am thus unquiet without cauſe, then behold my body, look upon me, and ſee what a pitiful ſpectacle I am, *My fleſh is cloathed with worms, my skin is broken and become loathſome.*

Theſe words give us *Job*'s *picture*; here is his delineation and pourtraicture as he was under the hand of God. They who would take *Job*'s picture, as in the day of his afflictions, muſt draw him thus, *A man cloathed with worms and clods of duſt; there's his garment; his skin ſcabby and diſcoloured, full of chaps and running ſores, angry biles and enflamed ulcers, his poſture, lying on the ground, ſcraping himſelf with a potſherd.*

My fleſh is cloathed with worms.

בשר *Caro, per Synechdochē corpus, in* Piel *Biſher, ſignificat Evangelium.*

My fleſh.] That is, my Body, by a *Synechdoche*; and the word which we tranſlate *fleſh*, ſprings from a root, or hath near relation to it, which ſignifies to bring and publiſh good tidings or welcome news; and therefore the Goſpel is expreſt by it (*Evangelium*) is the ſame in Latin, or, (εὐαγγέλιον) in Greek with this in the Hebrew; and ſome Criticks give the reaſon why *fleſh* is expreſt by this word, which ſignifies to publiſh or bring good tidings, becauſe there ſhould be a taking of fleſh, or making of fleſh, namely the *Incarnation of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which ſhould be the beſt tidings, and the moſt joyful news that ever the world heard of.

Is cloathed with worms.] In the firſt Chapter of this Book, at *ver.* 21. *Job* deſcribes himſelf thus, *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked ſhall I return*; but now it ſeems *Job* had got cloathing, and being ready to lie down in the grave, he had a veſture put upon him; now (it ſeems) *Job* ſhould not go naked out of the world. for he ſaith, *My fleſh is cloathed*; but what is this cloathing? *My fleſh is cloathed with worms and clods of duſt*, that is a ſuit of cloaths very fit and ſuitable for the grave, bur it is uſually put on in the grave. *Job* is in his grave-cloaths before he dies; or he ſpeaks this to ſhew that he accounted himſelf dead while he lived, or as *Heman* mourns (*Pſal.* 88.) *Free among the dead*; a member of that Corporation, a brother of that Society already. For he was now in that Habit or Livery; *A Gown of worms, ſet or embroider'ed with clods of duſt.*

Quavis re veſtiri dicimur, cujus acceſſione vel dedecoramur, vel ornamur.

My fleſh is cloathed with worms.] It is frequent in Scripture, when the holy Ghoſt would heighten the ſence of what we are and enjoy, or would note the abundance of a thing, or how man is adorned, or defiled with it all over, then to expreſs it under the notion of cloathing; God himſelf is expreſt *cloathed with Majeſty*, becauſe he is Majeſty all over, and there is nothing but glory upon him: God is alſo deſcribed cloathed with judgment and with juſtice; why? Becauſe theſe are his honour and his ornament, he is juſtice and judgment all over; we find *Job* in the twenty ninth of this Book, at *verſe* 14. ſpeaking thus of himſelf in his ſtate of Magiſtracy. *I put on righteouſneſs, and it cloathed me, my judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem*; that is, I was full of righteouſneſs, I was altogether righteous in diſpenſing rewards and puniſhments, in exerciſing my power among the people. To be cloathed with humility, to be cloathed with the Spirit, to be cloathed with Chriſt, are phraſes of the ſame importance. So on the other hand, to be cloathed with pride, with ſhame, with diſhonour; *Let mine enemies* (ſaith *David*) *be cloathed with ſhame*, Pſal. 109. 29. *Let them be cloathed with diſhonour*, Pſal. 35. 26. that is, let them be aſhamed and diſhonoured all over, or, exceedingly aſhamed or diſhonoured, And ſo a great deſolation is called a cloathing with deſolation, *Ezech.* 7. 27. *That which ſtrips a man naked is in this ſence called his cloathing*, cloathed with deſolation.

Thus we are to underſtand *Job*, when he ſaith, *That his fleſh was cloathed with worms*; his meaning is, he had many worms crawling upon his fleſh; or lying within his fleſh, and ſo were as a lining to his upper garment of nature. Theſe worms ſpread themſelves all over him, as a filthy and loathſome garment covering his whole body.

And beſides this figure, *Job* ſpake properly, while he was thus full of ſores and botches and biles, to ſay, he was cloathed with worms; worms are proper to ſores; many ſores breed worms, and worms are a diſeaſe in the fleſh, as well as within the bowels, and ſuch diſeaſes are accounted the fouleſt and filthieſt diſeaſes of all other: Such was *Job*'s, his ſores and biles corrupted and bred worms, which made him an abhorring to himſelf. *Putrefaction is the ſoil out of which worms grow.* Rotten fleſh breeds worms, and a rotten Conſcience breeds a worm, *Iſa.* 66. 24. *Their worm ſhall not die.* Why doth the holy Ghoſt ſay of thoſe men who were never waſhed, nor healed of their ſin-ſores, of their ſoul-ſickneſſes and pollutions, that when they die, they have a worm that dieth not? It is in alluſion to this, becauſe as a corrupt body, or corrupt putrid fleſh, breeds noiſome worms, ſo a corrupt Conſcience, a ſoul full of filthineſs and uncleanneſs, which was never waſhed or healed in the fountain of the blood of Chriſt, this Soul, this Conſcience breeds worms, even that gnawing worm which ſhall live with it, feed upon it, and cloath it for ever. Both the natural and the ſpiritull worm ariſe from rottenneſs, and derive their pedigree from ſores, ſickneſſes and putrefaction.

גוש

And clods of duſt.] *Worms and clods of duſt.* Here are ſtrange materials, courſe ſtuff for *Job*'s cloathing, *clods of duſt.* Some conceive that *Job* ſate in the duſt, and ſo the duſt gathered about him as a garment. Others, that theſe clods of duſt were the ſcrapings of his ſores; for the word ſignifies the filings of any metal, or the ſcrapings of an unclean thing. It is ſaid expreſly in the ſecond Chapter, that *he took a potſherd to ſcrape himſelf*; thoſe clods of filthy duſt, or ſcales ſcaped from his putrifying ſores, theſe with the crawling worms bred in them, covered his whole body like a garment. and therefore he complains, *I am cloathed with worms and clods of duſt.*

You ſee what his garment was (to carry on the alluſion) his skin, upon which this garment was put: **My skin** (ſaith he) **is broken, and become loathſome.** The skin is the immediate garment of the fleſh, his ſickneſs had worn out his skin, he had many holes and rents in that garment, which needed mending, and it was all over ſo filthy, that it needed waſhing: *My fleſh is broken and become loathſome.* Sores break the skin; and defile the skin; *Job*'s skin was ſo broken and chapt, ſo defiled and filthy, that he was loathſom to all beholders, and to himſelf.

This is the picture of *Job*; a few dayes before, you might have pictured or drawn him thus, *Job cloathed with ſilk and ſcarlet, his garments ſet with precious oriental ſtones, his skin ſmooth and beautiful, his face chearful and manly, his eye quick and piercing; but now* Job *is cloathed with clods of duſt, his skin is broken and become loathſom.*

We may hence learn what our own bodies are. The Apoſtle (*Phil.* 3. 21.) calls the body *a vile body*; not that the work of God was vile: The work of God was noble and honourable in all he wrought, eſpecially in that Maſter-piece of it, the fabrick of mans body; but as the body is come out of the hands of ſin, ſo it is a vile body, that is, it is a body ſubject to corruption, and will quickly corrupt, be vile and loathſome, 1 *Cor.* 15. 53. *This corruptible muſt put on incorruption.* The body of man is but one remove from worms and corruption, *chap.* 17. 4. *I have ſaid to corruption, thou art my Father, and to the worm, thou art my Mother.* We ſhall quickly bear the image of our parents, worms and corruption.

Then be not proud of your bodies, nor of your beauties; they who are now the faireſt and goodlieſt to look upon, may quickly have a broken and a loathſome skin; a diſeaſe, one fit of ſickneſs will ſpoil all thy beauty, deface and blemiſh thy excellent feature; and if a diſeaſe doth not, old age will: time will draw furrows in thy face, and make wrinkles in thy brow. Strength and beauty of body are no matches for time. All things were made in *time*, and *time* will mar all things, So long as generation continues, corruption muſt.

Again, Take heed of pride in cloathing. The two externals, of which man is moſt ſubject to be proud, are beauty and apparel. Cloaths are a flag of vanity, and pride ſits upon the skirts. But remember how fine ſoever your cloathing is this day and hour, God can put you on another ſuit before to morrow, We ſee what change of apparel *Job* had, a godly man, an humble man. That which God did to try the grace of one, he can quickly do to puniſh and chaſtiſe the ſin of another; he can quickly put you on ſuch cloathing, as you ſhall have little cauſe to be proud of. *He can make you wear cloaths of worms and clods of duſt.*

And if we conſider it, we have little reaſon to be proud of our cloaths; for if we follow the beſt of them to their original, they will be found to be but a cloathing of worms, and clods of duſt: what are ſilks, ſattins and velvets, but the iſſue of worms? And what is your gold and ſilver, what your pearls and precious ſtones? are they any thing (if you will reſolve them into their principles) but *clods of duſt?* They are indeed better concocted by the heat of the Sun, refined and poliſhed by the art of man, but if you ſearch their pedigree, they alſo are but clods of duſt. In your moſt glorious array, you are but cloathed with duſt and worms, and if you be proud of ſuch cloathing, God can cloath you with *worms and clods, not only of unrefined and unpoliſhed, but of putrified and filthy duſt.*

Thus we ſee the firſt thing, the picture or deſcription of *Job*'s body; his friends at firſt ſight, might be convinced, that a body in ſuch a caſe, could take little reſt day or night. He carries on his complaint a degree further at the ſixth verſe.

Verſe 6. **My dayes are ſwifter then a weavers ſhuttle, and are ſpent without hope.**

Ὁ δὲ βίος μου ἐστιν ἐλαφρότερος λαλιᾶς.

My dayes are ſwifter.] She Seventy render it thus, *My dayes are ſwifter or nimbler then a word or ſpeech.* Nothing moves faſter, or paſſeth away more lightly then a word; a word is gone, and it is gone ſuddenly: Hence the ſimilitude is uſed proverbially, *Pſal.* 90. 9. *We ſpend our dayes as a tale that is told*, or, *as a meditation* (ſo ſome tranſlate) ſuddenly or ſwiftly; a diſcourſe is quickly over, whether it be a diſcourſe from the mouth, or in the mind; and of the two, the latter is far the more ſwift and nimble of foot, a diſcourſe in our thoughts outruns the Sun, as much as the Sun out-runs a ſnail; the thoughts of a man will travel the world over in a moment; he that now ſits in this place, may be at the worlds end in his thoughts, before I can ſpeak another word, So that the tranſlation or gloſs, by ſpeech or meditation, aggravates the ſence, and extends it to the higheſt.

ארג

But the word properly ſignifies (as we tranſlate) *a weavers ſhuttle*, which is an inſtrument of a very ſwift and ſudden motion. And the word which we render [**Swifter**] ſignifies that which is fitted for the ſwifteſt motion, *any light thing*, becauſe thoſe things which are light, move ſwifteſt; and we call a good runner a man *light of foot*, Hab. 1. 8. The horſes of the *Chaldeans* are thus deſcribed, *Their horſes are ſwifter (or lighter of foot) then the Leopards*; ſo, *ſwifter or lighter then the weavers ſhuttle*, which paſſeth the loom or web with ſuch ſpeed, that it is grown to a proverb, for all things which are quick and tranſient. The Latines expreſs it by that word which ſignifies a ray of the Sun, which is darted in a moment from one end of the heavens to another.

Radius textoris, dictum proverbiale, radio velocius.

But a queſtion riſes; *Job* in the third Chapter, and ſo in the fifth, complains that his life was ſo prolonged, and ſlow-paced, that it was very tedious to him; and in this verſe, by a repeated requeſt, he ſpurs and haſtens his life to his journeys end; he thought (it ſeems) his time not winged, but ſlow-footed; how is it then that in this place he complaineth of the ſwiftneſs of his dayes? *My dayes are ſwifter then a weavers ſhuttle.*

I anſwer in a word; By his dayes here, we are to underſtand his good dayes, his dayes of comfort and proſperity; the dayes of my peace and plenty are ſlipped away and gone, even as a *weavers ſhuttle.* But when he complains that his life is ſlow-footed, and requeſts that his dayes might move faſter, he means the dayes of ſorrow and trouble which had overtaken him in his journey; the former were too ſwift, and the latter too ſlow: It is as if he had ſaid, *Alas, all my fair dayes of proſperity are gone, they are ſlipt away as a weavers ſhuttle, they are as a tale that is told, nothing remains of them but the remembrance, which is an addition to my ſorrow; but now I have dayes that ſeem long, very long, they hang upon my hands, I cannot get them off, my ſorrows clog my time, and make every hour ſeem a year. Hezekiah* in his complaint upon his ſick bed, uſeth this alluſion, *Mine age is departed and removed from me as a ſhepherds tent, I have cut off like a weaver my life*, Iſa. 38. 12. As the weaver cuts of the thred when the web is finiſhed, ſo it is with me; *I have cut off as a weaver, my life*; not that *Hezekiah* was active in his own death, we are not to underſtand it ſo, for he prayed that God would ſpare him, and he ſpake this upon the promiſe of God to lengthen out his life, and to tie the thred of his dayes again, according to which the web was woven on for fifteen years more: but this ſpeech of *Hezekiah*, *As a weaver I have cut off my life*, is like that of the Apoſtle, *I have finiſhed my courſe.* He compares the paſſing of his life to a ſhuttle, and the concluſion of it to the cutting off of the thred; nights and dayes paſs this ſhuttle forward and backward, too and again; the night caſts it to the day, and the day to the night; between theſe two time quickly wears off the thred of life. The Heathen Poets had a fiction anſwering this alluſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*; they tell us a ſtory or a fiction rather, of three Siſters, whereof, the one held the wheel or the diſtaffe; the ſecond drew out the thred, and a third cut it off: In this they ſhadow the ſtate of mans life; our ordinary phraſe for living long, is *ſpinning a long thred*; and for dying, the *cutting off the thred of life.*

Tres Parcæ Clotho, Lacheſis, Atropos.

And they are ſpent without hope.] Some tranſlate, *They are ſpent ſo, as that there is no hope left.* The word which here we engliſh *ſpent*, ſignifies both *conſumption* and *conſummation*; or ſometimes in a good ſence, the end or perfecting of a thing; and ſometime in an ill ſence, the end or conſuming of a thing, *Gen.* 2. 1. *So the heavens and the earth were finiſhed*; it is this word, *they were ended*; God ended his work by way of perfection and conſummation, he made his work compleat. But here, and often in Scripture, it notes ending by way of conſumption, or as we tranſlate the ſpending of a thing, *Jer.* 14. 12. *I will conſume* (or, make an end of) *them by the ſword:* And, *Exod.* 33. 3. God commands *Moſes*, to go with the people into the wilderneſs, *for* (ſaith he) *I will not go up in the midſt of them, leſt I conſume them in the way.*

ἀπόλωλε δὲ ἐν κενῷ ἐλπίδι.

כלה

And to ſhew how deep an expence and conſumption of time was upon him, *Job* rells us, it had devoured and eaten up all his hope. It is worſe to have our hope ſpent, then to have our dayes ſpent; now (ſaith he) *my dayes are ſpent*; and that is not all, *my hope is ſpent.* Some tranſlate ſo, *My dayes are ſpent, and I have want and penury of hope*; as I have ſpent my dayes, ſo I have ſpent my hope. And his hopeleſneſs may refer two wayes; *I have no hope*, or,

Cum inopia ſpei, vel defectu ſpei, ſc. longioris vitæ.

my hope is ſpent; firſt, in regard of long life; I ſee I am ſo afflicted with this diſeaſe, that there is no hope I ſhould hold out under it. Secondly, *without hope*, that is, without hope of being in a better condition, that is, of having my eſtate reſtored unto me again, if I ſhould have health reſtored, and a longer life continued. In both theſe ſences, as he ſaw the thred of his dayes cut off, ſo he ſaw the thred of his hope cut off; he was near death, and *his hope was dead. My dayes are ſpent without hope*, or, there is no hope remaining. This alſo is a negative to both parts of *Eliphaz* his promiſe, either of longer life, or of a better.

We may obſerve hence, firſt, a common truth (which I ſhall not inſiſt upon) about that precious commodity, a commodity more precious then the gold of *Ophir*, *Time*.

> *All time is ſhort, and we have a very ſhort eſtate in time. Man is not maſter of one day, and a ſervant but of few dayes.*

The holy Ghoſt gives us very many remembrances of this, which is an argument that we are very apt to forget it. Man is ſlow to take notice of the ſwiftneſs of time, and very dull in apprehending the ſpeed of his dayes. It is a wonder that ſuch a plain common doctrine ſhould be handled ſo often, and that the ho[illegible] Ghoſt ſhould, as it were, labour for ſimilitudes, and fetch in all things that are more then ordinarily tranſitory in nature, to teach us the tranſitorineſs of our condition: We meet with many in this book, all hinting at the ſudden inviſible motion of time: This is a point eaſie to be known, but very hard to be believed; every man aſſents to it, but few believe it. And ſurely the holy Ghoſt would not ſpend ſo many words about it, nor gather up ſo many illuſtrations of it from ſence, if it were not of much importance to our faith. We uſually ſlight the hearing of common principles, and a Sermon preacht upon this ſubject, the ſhortneſs of our lives, and the ſpeed of time, is judged a needleſs ſhortning of time; and the hour ſeems very long which runs out upon the ſpeed of time: we think it an eaſie doctrine, and a theme for Boyes: But the truth is, if the heart did well digeſt how few our dayes are, we ſhould have better dayes; and men would live holier, if they knew indeed their lives were no longer. Therefore though I only touch this ſubject, yet do ye dwell upon it, and ſtay long in your thoughts upon the ſhortneſs of your lives. *Common truth neglected, cauſe a neglect of every truth.* Had we more ſerious thoughts of heaven and hell, that theſe are, and what theſe are; that there is a God, and who he is; that there will be a judgment, and what it will be, we ſhould more profitably improve and trade our time and talents.

> Secondly note, *Time paſſeth irrecoverably.*

When the weavers ſhuttle is once out of his hand, 'tis gone preſently; there is no hope time paſt ſhould be recalled, or time in motion ſtopt: To conſider time under that notion, ſhould make us very good husbands of our time; or (as the Apoſtle adviſes) *to redeem the time*. Redemptions are made by purchaſe; to redeem a thing, is to buy it with a price; the price we redeem time with, is our labour and faithful travel. *It is matter of mourning to conſider that ſo little care is taken in ſpending that, which when it is gone, we have no hope it can be reſtored to us again.*

Thirdly, In that *Job* complained before that his life was ſo long, and now complaineth of the ſhortneſs or ſwiftneſs of his life, we may note,

> That, *Man thinks good dayes end too ſoon, and that evil dayes ſtay too long, and will never have an end.*

We love the company of good dayes, and are therefore ſorry when they depart. When the Diſciples were upon the Mount, and had ſuch a good day of it, how deſirous were they to have continued there, and ſorry they were the day was at an end? *Maſter* (ſaith *Peter*) *it is good for us to be here. The ſudden paſſing of our comforts is our trouble.* Time is alwayes of the ſame pace; no creature keeps his pace more evenly then time doth, it alwayes moves at the ſame rate, neither faſter nor ſlower; but man thinks this time ſhort, and that time long; this time ſpeedy, and that time ſlow, according to the ſeveral objects he meets with, and to the conditious wherein he is.

> Fourthly obſerve, That, *Hope is the laſt refuge of the ſoul.*

My dayes are ſpent without hope, my hope is ſpent too; if I had hope left, I had ſomewhat left, but my hope is gone. It is ſo in natural things, it is ſo in ſpiritual things. The Apoſtle, *Heb.* 6. tells us, that hope *is the anchor of the ſoul, ſure and ſtedfaſt*; while hope holds, comfort holds; and when hope is gone, all is gone.

> Laſtly obſerve, That, *Sometime a godly mans hope may lie proſtrate.*

My dayes (ſaith he) *are cut off without hope*: *Job* thought (as I have noted from ſome paſſages before) that his caſe was deſperate, his hope lay in the duſt, as well as his body or his honour. Every godly man is not an *Abraham*, of whom it is ſaid, *Rom.* 4. 18. *That againſt hope he believed in hope*: Nay *Abraham* is not alwayes *Abraham*; he that hath ſuch a ſtrong hope, hath it not alwayes, even his hope may ſometimes poſſibly be hopeleſs. There are weakneſſes in the ſtrongeſt, and imperfections may come upon thoſe who are moſt perfect, ebbings after the greateſt flowings, and declinings after the greateſt heights of graces and gracious actings. *My dayes are ſpent without hope.*

Job having thus complained of his condition, and aſſerted his own deſires of death, now turns from his friends, with whom he had diſcourſed all this while, and betakes himſelf to God, to ſpeak a while with him: The next words are generally underſtood, *as an Apoſtrophe to God.*

Verſe 7. **O remember that my life is wind, mine eye ſhall no more ſee good.**

O remember that my life is wind.] To remember, is not here taken ſtrictly, for to God all things are preſent. Remembrance is the calling of that to mind which is paſt; when the act of remembrance is applied to God in Scripture, it hath one of theſe three ſences.

Firſt, It notes a reſolution or ſetled purpoſe in God, to act his juſtice, or inflict puniſhment upon his enemies, *Pſal.* 137. 7. *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom*: that is, Lord, bring forth that decree of thine, for the ruine and deſtruction of theſe bloody *Edomites*, who have been cruel againſt thy people.

Secondly, It ſignifies an affection in God, ready to help and relieve his own people, *Pſal.* 74. 2. *Remember thy Congregation which thou didſt purchaſe of old*, that is, do good to thy Congregation, bleſs thy Congregation.

Thirdly, To **remember**, imports an act of preſent conſideration; to remember, is fully to weigh, obſerve and take notice of the eſtate of things or perſons, *Pſal.* 78. 39. *He remembred that they were but fleſh, a wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again*; that is, he conſidered and weighed the eſtate of man: So in that place, *O remember that my life is wind*, that is, conſider and weigh it well; Lord, put my condition into the ballance, obſerve what a weak creature I am, how ſhort my life is; therefore deal with me as with a weak ſhort-liv'd creature: thou needeſt not lay any great ſtreſs upon me, thou needeſt not trouble thy ſelf much to make an end of me, my life is but wind, it is but a puff, which quickly paſſes away.

O remember that my life is wind. This is a proverbial ſpeech like that before of a *weavers ſhuttle*. The word tranſlated *wind*, ſignifies the *Holy Ghoſt*, *the third perſon in the bleſſed Trinity*; as alſo a Spirit in general. And becauſe the wind is of a ſpiritual nature, inviſible, ſwift, powerful, therefore it is applied to that celeſtial or elementary Spirit; and the operation of the holy Ghoſt is ſhadowed by wind or breath, *Chriſt breathed upon his Diſciples, ſaying, receive the holy Ghoſt*, John 20. 22. And the *holy Ghoſt* came *as a mighty ruſhing wind*, Acts 2. 2.

Vita ventus Elegans proverbiale.

Quaſi ventus Targum.

When *Job* ſaith, *remember that my life is wind*, he means, *my life is like the wind*: It is a ſimilitude, not an aſſertion The life of man is like the wind in two things. Firſt, The wind paſſeth away ſpeedily, ſo doth mans life. Secondly, The wind when it is paſt, returns no more; as you cannot ſtop the wind, or change its courſe, ſo all the power in the world is not powerful enough to recall or divert the wind, which way the wind goes, it will go, and when it goes, it is gone, *Pſal.* 78. 34. *He remembred that they were but fleſh, wind that paſſeth away*; in this ſence *Job* calleth his life a wind,it paſſeth away,and ſhall not return by any law or conſtitution of nature, or by any efficacy of natural cauſes.

Yet here obſerve, *Job* ſaith not, *his ſoul was a wind*, but *his life was a wind*. Some have *Philoſophiz'd* the ſoul into a wind, a blaſt or a breath; and tell us, that it goes as the ſoul of a beaſt, that life and ſoul are but the ſame thing; when the life is gone out of the body, the ſoul is gone from its being: They acknowledge a reſtoring of it again with the body at the reſurrectiion, but deny it any exiſtence when ſeparate from the body. How diſhonourable this is to the noble conſtitution of man, and how diſſonant to Scripture, is proved in mentioning it; we acknowledge, that life which is the union of ſoul and body, is a wind, and paſſeth away. In all the learned Languages, *Hebrew*, *Greek*, *Latine*, the word which ſignifies ſpirit or life, hath its original from reſpiring; and when we ſay, my wind was gone, or my wind was almoſt beaten out of my body, our meaning is, my life was almoſt gone, in the Creation (*Gen.* 2.7.) *God breathed into man the breath of life, or of lives*, implying the many faculties and operations of life. And in as much as the body of man was firſt formed, and this life brought in after, to act and move it, this is an abundant proof that the ſoul of man is not any temperament of the body, the body being compleated (as a body) before it, and yet no life reſulting. Whereas beaſts (to whom that beaſtly opinion compares man in his Creation) had living bodies as ſoon as bodies, their total form being but an extract from the matter.

רוח *Flare, πνεῦμα à πνέω Spiritus, à ſpirando; Animum quaſi ἄνεμον quidam dictũ exiſtimant. Græci pro reſpiratione ſeu ſpiritu quem ducimus accipiunt, primò quod vita noſtra reſpiratione indigeat; ſecundò, quod flatu videatur humana vita in prima ſua origine conſtitiſſe.*

Solomon, Eccleſ. 3. 19, 20, 21. brings in the Atheiſt drawing this concluſion from thoſe confuſed oppreſſions which he obſerved in the world; men carried themſelves ſo like beaſts, preying upon and devouring one another, that he (who had nothing but carnal reaſon to judge by) preſently reſolves, *That which befalleth the ſons of men, befalleth beaſts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, ſo dieth the other, yea they have all one breath; ſo that a man hath no preheminence above a beaſt, for all are vanity, all go to one place, all are of the duſt, and all turn to the duſt again.* And whereas the Atheiſt heard ſome ſpeak of the aſcent of mans ſpirit after this life, he puts it off as but talk and gueſſing, *ver.* 21. *Who knoweth the ſpirit of man, that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of a beaſt, that goeth downward to the earth?* That is, who can tell that there is ſuch a difference between the ſpirit of a man and of a beaſt? who ever ſaw the one aſcending, or the other deſcending? or from what Anatomy was this learned? Thus the Atheiſt derides the doctrine of the ſoul,and will therefore laugh and be merry with his body while it laſts, that's his portion; *for who ſhall bring him to ſee what ſhall be after him?* ver. 22. Is it not ſtrange,that any who are called ſober Chriſtians,ſhould plant their opinions in this ſoyl of Atheiſm, and make that a proof of their faith, which *Solomon* brings only as a proof of ſome mens infidelity? The Preacher in this Book perſonated thoſe whom he abhorred, and ſometimes ſpeaks the practices of other men, not his own opinion. There is no more reaſon to ground this Tenet of the ſouls mortality upon thoſe Texts, then there is encouragement to intemperancy in that, *chap.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thine own heart*: Or in that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 32. *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.* If any would learn *Solomon*'s own ſence about this point, let him read it as plain as words can make it (*Eccleſ.* 12.7.) *Then* (namely, when man dies) *ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God, who gave it.*

So then (to the text before us) the ſoul is not a wind, but the life; and all thoſe Scriptures where life is compared to wind and dying, to the paſſing of it withont returning, deny the regreſs or returning of the ſoul to a natural, not to an eternal life: and imply the ſhort ſtay of the ſoul in the body, and certain departure from a not-being, when it parts. Theſe two muſt part, and ſo part, never to return to that eſtate again. Thus *Job* expounds himſelf in the words following.

Hujuſmodi ſententiæ regreſſum animorum in corpora minime negant, ſed neceſſitatem moriendi confirmant & celeritatem.

Mine eye ſhall no more ſee good.] Or as the Hebrew, *I ſhall not return to ſee good*, (anſwerable to the Metaphor of a wind,) it paſſeth away, and returns no more.

Videre bonum pro frui nota locutio eſt.

To ſee,] In this place, as often elſewhere, is to enioy, *I ſhall not enjoy good*, Pſal. 4. 6. *Who will ſhew, or who will cauſe us to ſee any good?* It was not the bare ſight of good, which they deſired, but the enjoyment of it. So, *Jer.* 17. 6. The man whoſe heart departeth from God, is threatned, that *he ſhall not ſee when good cometh*, that is, he ſhall not enjoy good when it comes; *for, though to ſee good, be a mercy, yet to ſee it, and not taſte it, is a curſe.* Therefore at the laſt day, they who thought themſelves high in Gods favour, but were indeed under his wrath, are told, that *they ſhall ſee Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, and themſelves ſhut out*; they ſhall ſee what they cannot enjoy, and that ſight ſhall add to their ſorrow. The Prophet cries out, *Lam.* 3. 1. *I am the man that hath ſeen affliction,* that is, I am the man that hath felt and had experience of afflictions. And, *Pſal.* 16. 10. The great promiſe of Chriſt is, that though he took a corruptible body upon him, *yet he ſhould not ſee corruption*, that is, *partake of corruption*; corruption ſhould have no communion with, much leſs power over him: And we have the ſame uſe of the word in this Book, *chap.* 20. 17. Where *Zophar* tells the hypocrite, that God will deprive and ſtrip him of every good thing: *He ſhall not ſee the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.* It is a Rhetorical expreſſion, comparing the affluence of outward things to floods, and rivers and brooks, which ſend fo[illegible]their ſtreams plentifully; as if he had ſaid, though there be great ſtore of honey and butter (thoſe two are ſpecified for the reſt) though there be rivers, brooks and ſtreams of theſe commodities, yet he ſhall ſee none of them, that is, he ſhall not enjoy or taſte a drop of them. That unbelieving Lord is told by *Eliſha*, that he ſhould ſee plenty in *Samaria* the next day, *but ſhould not eat thereof*, 2 Kings 7. 2. Not to ſee, is not to eat; and he that ſees, but eats not, is not relieved, but troubled at the ſight.

Luk.13.28.

Mine eye ſhall not ſee [**good.**] What good? When a man dies, ſhall he ſee no more good? We ſee but little good while we live, and the greateſt good is to be ſeen when we die; or rather, while we live, what do we ſee but evil? and when the Saints die, what have they to ſee but good? How is it then, that *Job* ſaith, *when I die, mine eye ſhall not ſee good?* What miſerable creatures were we if there were no good to be ſeen beyond the line of this life? our richeſt ſtock of comfort lies in the good we ſhall ſee hereafter, which is therefore called the *bleſſed-making viſion*; and *Job* knew well enough that his eyes ſhould ſee good after death; for he ſaith (*chap.* 19. 27.) *with theſe eyes ſhall I ſee God*; he knew alſo his ſoul had an eye to ſee good (and a better good then ever he ſaw in the world) while his body lay in the grave. Then his meaning of *Mine eye ſhall no more ſee good*, is, no more worldly good, none of theſe good things which I have ſeen; I ſhall be above the ſmart of earthly ſorrows, and above the ſence of earthly joyes. Good is either natural, or civil, or ſpiritual. When God created the world, he looked upon all that he had made, and he ſaw that all was very good: Civil good is the order, peace and proſperity of the world, death ſtops the ſight of all this good. As for eternal or ſpiritual good, death cannot cloſe or dim the eye againſt thoſe objects.

טוב *Sicut Græci* καλὸν, *& Latini bonum, aliquando pro pulchro, commodo & utili uſurpât, Ita ſubinde Hebræi vocabulum,* Tob. Fagius, *in Gen.* 2. 18.

Then here is no plea for Atheiſts againſt the reſurrection, nor any againſt the ſouls *Being, or being alive*, till the reſurrection. *Job* ſpeaks only about the ſphear and courſe of nature; when man dies naturally, and is in the ſtate of the dead, he enjoyes nothing, he acts nothing according to the ſtate of the living *, *Pſal.* 115. 17. *The dead praiſe thee not*, &c. *There is no work, device or buſineſs at all in the grave*, Eccl. 9. 10. The hand works not, the tongue ſpeaks not, *The eye ſhall no more ſee this good.*

Job expreſſes himſelf by an act of the eye, which carries the greateſt ſtrength for refreſhing to the whole man. All the joy and pleaſure we ſhall have in heaven, comes in by ſight, *we ſhall ſee him as he is.* The beholding of God in Chriſt, is the *beatifical viſion*, much of the good of which we have in this world, comes in by the ſence of ſeeing; and all the good of the next is placed in ſeeing; therefore he doth not ſay, I ſhall no more taſte good, or no more feel good, but

no

* *In his & ſimilibus locis, Scriptura intelligẽda eſt de ſtatu mortuorum, in morte quis confitebitur tibi? poſt reſurrectionem pii laudabunt Deum, ſed ante illam, quamdiu erunt in ſepulchro, nemo confitebitur ei, anima & corpore ſimul.* Druſ. *Juxta naturæ curſum hic loquitur, negans crediturum hominem ubi hinc exceſſit. Reſurrectio mortuorum divinum & ſupra naturam opus eſt, quo hic non reſpicit, naturæ tantum conſuetum ordinem afferens, quomodo intelligenda ſunt quæcunque talia in hoc libro, in Pſalmis, & aliis Scripturæ libris, occurrunt.*

Per analogiã ad ſummi boni poſſeſſionẽ, quæ in viſione conſiſtit aliorum bonorum, poſſeſſio rectè dicitur videre bona.

no more ſee good; becauſe the chiefeſt good, eternal good, conſiſts in viſion, therefore proportionably our preſent good doth ſo likewiſe.

Sick *Hezekiah* ſpeaks in the language of ſick *Job*; *I ſaid, I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I ſhall behold man no more, with the inhabitants of the world*, Iſa. 38. v. 11. When *Hezekiah* thought he ſhould die, he deſcribes the ſtate of the dead by a deprivation of all thoſe comforts which are taken in by the ſight of the eye. But you will ſay, how ſaith he, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord?* He doth not ſay abſolutely, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord*; but with a modification, thus, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living.* But did *Hezekiah* ſee the Lord in the land of the living, or while he lived? Yes, as *Moſes ſaw him that was inviſible*, ſo did *Hezekiah*: God makes himſelf viſible to the Saints in this life. Though God cannot be ſeen in his eſſence in Heaven, much leſs on earth; yet he is ſeen in his works, in the acts of his providence, and in his ordinances; we may *ſee the goings of God in the Sanctuary*, and behold the beauty of the Lord, while we enquire in his Temple, *Pſal.* 27. 4. So that when *Hezekia* ſaith, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord in the land of the living*; his meaning is, I ſhall not behold God in his great works and in the ordinances of his holy worſhip, and in the Congregations of his holy people. In all theſe God is viſible, and moſt in the laſt; and therefore he ſaith, *I ſhall behold man no more, with the inhabitants of the world*; God is viſible in all creatures, but moſt in man, and among men; moſt in his Saints, and among his Saints; moſt when they meet in the comely order of his houſe and worſhip; the ignorant and unlearned coming into ſuch a ſacred throng, ſees ſo much of God, that he is convinced and goes away reporting, that God is in them of a truth. *In Chriſt is ſeen the brightneſs of his Fathers glory, and in the Saints much of the beauty of it is ſeen. Chriſt is the expreſs image of his perſon, and in the Saints ſo meeting, much of his image is expreſſed.*

Firſt, In that *Job* betakes himſelf to God, *O remember that my life is wind*, &c. Obſerve,

> That, *In our diſtreſſes it is better to cry to God, then to complain to creatures.*

God is uſually the laſt, but he is alwayes the beſt refuge, when we have told over the ſtory of our ſorrows and ſad condition, and powr'd our wants into the boſoms of our moſt faithful friends; yet this *Apoſtrophe* is ſweeteſt to the ſoul, when we can turn unto God, *O remember me.* It is ſaid of *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs, that he *turned himſelf unto the wall and prayed*; he turned from the people, from thoſe that were about his bed, unto the wall; why what was the wall to him? Or what could the wall do for him? ſurely nothing. As good turn to an Idol for help or eaſe, as to a wall, yea ſuch a turn to the wall, turns the wall into an Idol; Good *Hezekiah* had no thought of the wall, nor had he any meſſage to any Image hanging there. But as 'tis probable, many of his loving Subjects and ſervants were weeping about the bed of their ſick King, and he had been diſcourſing of his diſeaſe, and telling them of his ſickneſs, *but at laſt he turns to the wall*; that is, he leaves ſpeaking to the company, and turns away from them, that he might have communion with God; and his firſt word of prayer, is the ſame with *Job's*, *Remember now O Lord*, &c. *Iſa.* 38. 2. Creatures are but creatures, and when they have done their beſt for us, it may be they can do no good for us; when they have tryed all their skill, and all their ſtrength, and ſtirred the utmoſt of their abilities, to give us counſel and eaſe, we muſt ſay to them all, ſtand by, and come to *Job's Turn, O Lord remember. That man is moſt to be bemoaned, who can make his moan to man only.* He who knows not how to complain to God, or to ſpeak out his ſorrows, and his griefs in the ear of Chriſt, ſhall gain little (though he receive much) by complaining to the creature. But ſo long as we have a God to turn to, and ſpread our caſe before, though men turn from us, yea, though they turn againſt us, and forget us, yet it is enough that we have ſaid, *O Lord remember.*

Secondly, From the matter which *Job* puts God in mind of, namely his natural frailty and fleeting condition, that he was a *paſſing wind.* Obſerve,

> *It is an argument moving the Lord to compaſſion, to mind him of the frailty of our condition.*

There is no argument from our ſelves ſo effectual, to draw out the bowels of Gods compaſſions toward us, either in regard of our ſpiritual or temporal eſtate, as this, to tell him how frail we are; the Pſalmiſt ſhews this the motive of mercy often to that ancient people the Jews, *Pſal.* 78. 38. *He being full of compaſſion forgave their iniquity, and deſtroyed them not, yea many a time turned he his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath*: But what moved the Lord to deal thus with his people? What was it out of himſelf? We know the inward moving cauſe was his own free-grace, but what did he look upon abroad in the creature? *He remembred that they were but fleſh, a wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again.* *Job's* argument to a letter. He conſidered how eaſily and quickly they might be deſtroyed, and therefore he deſtroyed them not, *Pſalm* 103. 4. *Like as a father pittieth his children, ſo doth the Lord*, &c. Why, what ſtirs up this pitty? *For he knoweth our frame, and he remembreth that we are but duſt*; Now, that which God himſelf makes the argument, all the argument in us of his turning to us in mercy, that we ſhould mannage, eſpecially as our argument when we turn to him in prayer. Should we plead before God our perfections, and ſay, Lord remember our holineſs, our zeal, our prayers, our tears, our faſtings and humiliations; could any of this move God, or be any attractive of his compaſſions toward us? If we will plead our perfections, God will deſpiſe our prayer. Our ſtrongeſt argument is to ſay, we are weak, and to tell God we are ſinful, prevails more then to tell him we are righteous: We ſhall gain moſt by ſaying, we are unprofitable ſervants.

But did not *Hezekiah*, entreat the Lord to *remember that he had walked before him in truth, and with a perfect heart, and done that which was good in his ſight?* Iſa. 38. 3. And doth not *Nehemiah* uſe the like plea, *Chap.* 13. 14, 22.

I anſwer, Firſt, that theſe were the beſt, the moſt ſpiritual and powerful pleadings with God is not proved, becauſe uſed by good men. Grace doth not act alwayes at the height, nor bring out it's choiſeſt treaſures at all times.

Secondly, They move the Lord to remember what good they had done, but they do not move the Lord by that remembrance to do them good. *Hezekiah* was ſo far from rejoycing in his own righteouſneſs, that the Text ſaith, *He wept ſore.* And *Nehemiah* with the ſame breath, deſires the Lord to remember what he had done, and to ſpare him, according to the greatneſs or multitude of mercy. He, that when he hath done beſt, begs a multitude of mercies to ſpare him, is far enough from challenging juſtice to reward him.

Men that are but ingenuous, will be moved moſt with a ſight or report of anothers weakneſs. The begger ſpeaks moſt effectually by his rags and ſores. The woman, 2 *Sam.* 24. 14. who was hired to move *David* for the bringing back of *Abſolom*, uſeth this argument, *For we muſt needs die, and are as water ſpilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again*: As if ſhe had ſaid, Sir, will you contend with your ſon, thus, alas, his life is but water, and he will die, for this is the common condition of mankind; therefore be compaſſionate and pittiful to him, fetch home your baniſhed. This motive takes much upon the heart of God, as in regard of particular perſons, ſo of a people in general, *Deut.* 32. 36. *The Lord ſhall repent himſelf for his ſervants.* But when will he repent himſelf? *When he ſeeth that their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left.* When they have no power or ſtrength, and there is none ſhut up, that is, when they have no fort, no ſtrong places to defend themſelves in, but even lie open to the rage and malice of the adverſary, and are ready to ſinck utterly; then the Lord takes this, both as an argument and ſeaſon for him, to repent of the affliction of his people; that is, to change the way of his adminiſtrations towards them. This promiſe was in part made good to *Iſrael* in the dayes of *Jeroboam*, ſon of *Joaſh*, 2 King. 14. 26. *The Lord ſaw the affliction of* Iſrael, *that it was very bitter, for there was not any ſhut up, nor any left, nor any helper in* Iſrael.

Thirdly, Speaking of the world, he ſaith, *Mine eye ſhall no more ſee good.* Obſerve then,

That worldly things are good things.

In their ſphear and proportion, they are good. *Abraham* minds the rich man, *Luke* 16. *Son remember, that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things.* Therefore we are to uſe the world, and all the creatures in it, as the good things of God, and the goodneſs we ſee in creatures ſhould raiſe us up to admire the goodneſs of the Creator; if goodneſs be ſtamped upon preſent and temporary things, how good are things eternal?

Fourthly, *Mine eye ſhall no more ſee good.* Obſerve,

After this life there is no more uſe, or enjoyment of wordly things.

The things of the world are but for the world; *Mine eye ſhall no more ſee,* I ſhall no more enjoy or uſe theſe good things. Conſider what it is you lay up, when you lay up the things of this life, you lay up thoſe things which after a while your eyes ſhall ſee no more; you lay up thoſe things, which after a few dayes, you ſhall have no more uſe of; you ſhall have no uſe at all of your gold, no uſe at all of your ſilver, no uſe at all of your apparel, no uſe at all of your goodly houſes, no uſe at all of your rich furniture, no uſe at all of your lands, you ſhall have no uſe of all theſe good hings Conſider then what it is you lay up: a time is coming, when you ſhall ſay of them all, I ſhall no more ſee, I ſhall no more uſe and enjoy any of theſe good things. Therefore be ſo wiſe as to improve this time, which paſſes like a Weavers ſhuttle and a blaſt of wind, to lay up ſuch good things as your eyes ſhall ſee, when you are laid down in the grave: lay up ſpiritual good things, lay up your portion in Chriſt, make him yours, and then when you die, and lie down in the grave, you may ſay, we have good things yet to ſee; our beſt ſight is to come, even ſuch a ſight as eye hath not ſeen. Such a ſight as to which the glory of all the Princes of the world is a meer Pageantry. And ſo much of *Job's* Apoſtrophe to God.

The next verſe is a further deſcription of the ſtate of the dead.

Verſ. 8. **The eye of him that hath ſeen me, ſhall ſee me no more; thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.**

In the former verſe, *Job* had ſaid his own eyes ſhould ſee no more good, now he ſaith, that the eyes of others ſhall ſee him no more; *The eye of him that hath ſeen me ſhall ſee me no more.* It is a great part of the glory and comfort which men take in the world to be ſeen of men. As we take in our comfort by ſeeing, ſo by being ſeen. No man would put himſelf into goodly cloathing, were it not that he goes abroad in company to be ſeen, and knows others will be looking upon him. Now as *Job* ſets forth the vanity of the creature and of this life, becauſe he ſhould ſee none of it when he died, ſo becauſe when he died, others ſhould ſee him no more: all his beauty, riches and good things muſt be buried with him. There is an elegancy in putting theſe two together, *to ſee and to be ſeen.* Death ſtops both, it takes us from ſeeing, and it takes us from being ſeen. As all the good we have will be hid from our eyes, ſo all our glory and excellency will be obſcured from the eyes of others in the dark chambers of the grave.

Ponit hic duo, ut ſignificet quod non revertetur ad converſationem humanam, quæ maximè conſiſtit in videre & videri. Viſus cum ſit ſubtilior ſenſuũ principatum tenet in vita ſenſibili. Aquin. *Me quærent quem aſpiciant; humanitus dictum.*

Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

Job ſpeaks of a three-fold eye; Firſt, Of his own eye, *Mine eye ſhall ſee no more good,* verſ. 7.

Secondly, Of the eye of Men, *The eye of him that hath ſeen mee ſhall ſee me no more.*

Thirdly, Of the eye of God, *Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.* He doth not ſay, *Thine eyes are upon me, and thou ſhalt not ſee me.* Gods eye looks into the grave, and can ſee there; when we are out of the eyes of men, we are in the eye of God; therefore he ſaith, *Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not;* as if he had ſaid, Lord, if thou ſhalt defer a little to help me, and then ſhouldeſt come to look for thy *Job,* I ſhall be dead, I ſhall be laid in the grave, I ſhall not be capable of remedy, if my remedy be deferr'd: it is too late to give a man a cordial when he is dead: *Thou ſhalt not have a Job to help, if thou doeſt not help him quickly.* Some underſtand it in a ſpiritual ſence, *Thine eyes are upon me;* as if he ſhould ſay, *Lord thine eyes are upon me, to ſearch me, and try out my wayes, and alas I am not, I am not able to ſtand before thy juſtice, before thy pure eyes, which can behold none iniquity.* But rather take it as an appeal to God, whether or no he were not near death. Thou Lord ſeeſt I am as a dead man; as a man not to be numbred among the living. Therefore if thou wilt deliver me, let thy loving kindneſs ſpeedily prevent me, for I am brought very low. As a ſick man in ſome acute diſeaſe, haſtens his Phyſitian, ſir, give me ſomewhat preſently, or I am gone, you cannot but ſee I am a borderer upon death. *Thine eyes are upon me, and*

Tuorum beneficiorum, ſi fortè cupias (humanitus loquitur, cũ occulto queſtu neglectus fui) non ero capax. Coc.

I am not.] That is, I am not alive, I am not among the children of men. *Not to be, doth not import a not being, but a not appearing. I am not as I was, nor can I long be at all. Rachel* wept for her children, becauſe they *were not; Joſeph's* brethren ſaid to their Father, *Joſeph is not;* and *Job* himſelf in this *Chap. v.* 21. explains this to be his ſence, *Thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, and I ſhall not be;* Death is a great devourer, it ſweeps all that appears of man into the grave. The world ſhall no more enjoy him, nor he the world; this is mans *not being* when he dies, as the two following verſes further explain by an elegant ſimilitude.

Verſ. 9. **As the cloud is conſumed and vaniſheth away; ſo he that goeth down to the grave ſhall come up no more,**

10. **He ſhall return no more to his houſe, neither ſhall his place know him any more.**

Job having moved the Lord to take notice of, and compaſſionate his tranſitory condition, his life being but like the haſtening wind, gives us another compariſon to the ſame ſence and purpoſe: there his life was but a wind, and here it is but a cloud, *As the cloud is conſumed and vaniſheth away, ſo he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no more, &c.*

The Cloud] in a natural notion, is a thick and moyſt vapour, drawn up from the earth, by the heat of the Sun to the middle region of the Air, and by the coldneſs of that heavenly Country (where Snow and Hail, *&c.* are made and ſtor'd up) is further condens'd, congeal'd and thickn'd, and ſo hangs or moves partly from natural cauſes, the Sun and Wind, but eſpecially by ſupernatural, the mighty power and appointment of God, like an huge mountain in the Air. To this cloud *Job* compares the vaniſhing eſtate of this life.

As the cloud (ſuch a cloud as you ſee hanging in the Air) **is conſumed**, or ſpent: The ſame word is uſed at *verſ.* 6. *My life is ſpent without hope.* A cloud comes to it's height, and then 'tis quickly diſperſt *and vaniſheth away;* the letter of the Hebrew is, *It goeth or walketh away.* The walk of the clouds is according to the walk of the winds, we call it the *Rock of the clouds.* When the Heavens are (as it were) all masked with clouds, and a black vail or curtain drawn between us and the Sun, the Winds in a little time diſſipate and ſcatter them.

כלה
הלך
Ambulavit, ivit, & per metalepſin de rebus evaneſcentibus, intereuntibus, &c.

It is uſual in Scripture to compare thoſe things which are vaniſhing and ſuddenly conſumed to clouds; In which ſence (*Iſa.* 44. 22.) the ſins of the Saints are compared to a cloud, and the pardoning of their ſins to this conſuming and ſcattering of the cloud, *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy tranſgreſſions, and as a cloud thy ſins.* A cloud is but a kind of a blot in the pure parchment roll of the skies; I am ſure a cloud of ſin is a foul blot in the roll of our lives. Blot a fair writing, and you cannot read it, but blot out the blots, and then 'tis legible again: yet, the blotting out of ſin, intimates it fair written, as an evidence or a record againſt us, till a pardon blots it out. In which ſence Chriſt is ſaid to *have blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was againſt us,* Col. 2. 14. Thy ſins (O *Iſrael,* ſo the Lord ſeems to ſpeak in the Prophet) are as a cloud to hinder the ſhining of the light of my countenance upon thee: like blots they hinder thee, from reading the evidences of my favour, or they ſtand like evidences of guilt againſt thee. But I have blotted out this cloud, that is, I have pardon'd thy ſins, and by the breath of my favour and free-grace, ſcatter'd thy tranſgreſſions, with all the evils and ſequels which they naturally bring forth. So that now the light ſhines fair and warm upon thee; the evidences which were againſt thee cannot be read, and thou mayeſt read the evidences of my love and mercy towards thee. *The ſins of the Saints are but vaniſhing clouds,* whereas ſin in it ſelf, and the ſins of all thoſe who are out of Chriſt, are an abiding cloud; they are a cloud firm and immoveable, like a mountain of braſs or a rock of ſtone. Sins make ſuch a cloud, as no power in Heaven or Earth is able to conſume, but the power of mercy, and a gale of love, breathing through the covenant of Grace.

And as the life of man is compared by *Job* to a cloud, ſo to that which is the matter of the cloud, by the Apoſtle *James*, Chap. 4. verſ. 14. where he puts the queſtion, what's the life of man? *Is it not* (ſaith he) *even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away?* A vapour is exhaled from the Earth by the heat of the Sun, and is the matter out of which the cloud is made. Mans life is not only like a cloud, which is more condenſe and *ſtrong*, but like thoſe thin vapours ſometimes obſerved ariſing from mooriſh grounds, which are the original of clouds, and more vaniſhing then clouds. Even theſe are but vaniſhing enough, to ſhadow the vaniſhing, decaying, quickly diſappearing life of man. As the cloud conſumes and vaniſhes (the next words ſpeak out the mind of the compariſon.)

So he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no more.

The grave is a deſcent; and the word which is here uſed for the grave is *Sheol*, about which many diſputes are raiſed among the learned: The root of it ſignifies to deſire, or to crave with earneſtneſs, and the reaſon given is, becauſe the grave is alwayes craving and asking; though the grave hath devoured the bodies of millions of men, yet it is as hungry as it was the firſt morſel, ſtill it is asking and craving: The grave is numbred among thoſe things which are not ſatisfied, *Prov.* 30. 16. In the Greek of the New Teſtament, it is tranſlated *Hades*, which by change of letters, ſome form out of the Hebrew *Adam*, and *Adamah* the Earth, unto which God condemned faln man to return, *Gen.* 2. 19. We find this word *Sheol*, taken five wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, Strictly and properly for the place of the damned, *Prov.* 15. 11. *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lord, how much more then all the hearts of the children of men.* God looks through the darkneſs of hell, which is outer darkneſs.

שאול

Tã infernus quam ſepulchrũ ᾅδης. Sept.

Status mortuorum vel ſepulchrum, nam ut anima de corpore, ᾅδης *de ſepulchro uſurpatur,* Pſ. 16. Druſ.

Secondly, It is put Metaphorically, for great and extream dangers, or miſeries which ſeem irrecoverable and remedileſs; theſe are figuratively called *Hell*, becauſe Hell properly taken, is a place from whence there is no recovery; there's no releaſe from the chains of darkneſs; all changes are on Earth, Heaven and Hell know none: When *David* praiſes the Lord (*Pſal.* 86. 13.) *for delivering his ſoul from the loweſt Hell*; he meaneth an eſtate on earth, of the loweſt and deepeſt dangers imaginable; Mercy helpt him at the worſt. To be as low as Hell, is to be at the loweſt.

Thirdly, The word ſignifies the lower parts of the earth, without relation to puniſhment. *Pſal.* 139. 8. *If I go down into Hell thou art there.* He had ſaid before, *If I aſcend up into Heaven thou art there*; by Heaven he means the upper region of the world, without any reſpect to the eſtate of bleſſedneſs; and Hell is the moſt oppoſite and remote in diſtance, without reſpect to miſery. As if he had ſaid, let me go whether I will, thy preſence finds me out.

Fourthly, It is taken for the ſtate of the dead, whether thoſe dead are in the grave or no, *Pſal.* 30. 3. *Iſa.* 38. 18, 19. *Gen.* 37. 53. In all which places, to go out of the world, is to go to *Sheol*. *Jacob* in the Text alledged, *Gen.* 37. 35. ſaid, *He would go down into the grave to his ſon, mourning*; yet *Jacob* thought his ſon was devoured by a wild beaſt, he could not go down into the grave to his ſon, for the bowels of a wild beaſt was his ſuppoſed grave; but he meaneth only this, I will even die as he is dead. So *Num.* 16. 33. where that dreadful judgment of God upon *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* is ſtoried, it is ſaid, that *they, their Sheep and their Oxen, and their Tents, and all went down into Sheol*, that is, they were all devoured and ſwallowed up. But,

Fifthly, *Sheol* ſignifies the place where the body is laid after death, namely, the grave, *Prov.* 30. 16. Man hath a dimenſion of Earth, fitted to the dimenſion of his body; this portion or allotment is his *Sheol*. Yet it ſignifies the grave only in general, as it is natural to man-kind, not that grave which is artificial and proper to any particular man, this the Hebrew expreſſes by another word: He that goeth down to the grave, goes to his *long home*, to a houſe out of which he is never able to ſee or make his way, and therefore it follows;

קבר

Ainſw. *in* Gen. 37.

He ſhall come up no more.] No? that's ſad news indeed to go down into the grave and come up no more. Are all the hopes of man ſhut up in the grave? And is there an utter end of him when his life ends? *Shall he come up no more.*

Many of the Greek writers tax *Job*, as not acquainted with the doctrine of the Reſurrection, as if he either knew not that myſtery, or doubted at this time of it: And ſome of the Rabbins ſay plainly, *he denied it*: But he is ſo clear in *Chap.* 19. that we need not think him ſo much as cloudy here: And if we look a little farther, himſelf will give us the comment of this Text: When he ſaith, *he ſhall come up no more*; it is not a denial of a dying mans Reſurrection to life, but of his reſtitution to the ſame life, or to ſuch a life as he parted with at the graves mouth: They who die a natural death, ſhall not live a natural life again; therefore he addeth in the next verſe,

Hic abnegat Job reſuſcitationem mortuorum. Rab. Sol.

Non negatur reſurrectio ad vitam, ſed ad ſimilē vitã. Pined.

Verſe 10. **He ſhall return no more to his houſe.**

He doth not ſay abſolutely, he ſhall return no more, but he ſhall return no more to his houſe; he ſhall have no more to do with this world, with worldly buſineſſes or contentments, with the labours or comforts of the creature, or of his family; *He ſhall return no more to his houſe.*

But ſome may ſay, how doth this anſwer the compariſon, *That as the cloud is conſumed and vaniſheth away, ſo he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no more*; for we find another deſcription of clouds, *Eccleſ.* 12. 2. where the Text ſaith, that, *the clouds return after rain*; So that it ſeems though clouds vaniſh and are conſumed, yet they return and come again. The clouds are like bottles full of rain, or ſpunges full of water; God cruſhes theſe ſpunges, or unſtops theſe bottles, and they are emptied, and in emptying vaniſh away: but yet *Solomon* affirms, *the clouds return after rain*; how then doth *Job* ſay, that as the cloud vaniſheth, ſo man goeth down to the grave and returns no more?

In that place of *Eccleſiaſtes*, *Solomon* is only giving us a deſcription of old age, and the ſad condition of man in it; he calleth it the *evil day*, and wiſheth men would be wiſe to conſider their *latter end*, remembring their Creator, and laying up a good foundation, before thoſe *evil dayes* overtake them, *before the light of the Sun and Moon and Stars be darkned, and the clouds return after the rain*; In old age, the clouds return after the rain, thus: as in ſome very wet time, when we think it hath rained ſo much, as might have ſpent and quite exhauſted the clouds, or drawn thoſe bottles dry, yet you ſhall ſee them return again; it will rain day after day, as faſt as ever; ſo in old age, when Rheums diſtill ſo freely, that you would think an old man had emptied himſelf of all, yet the clouds will return again, and floods of watery humors overflow. Thus the clouds of old age return; and in this ſence the clouds of the air return, after they are conſumed and ſpent into rain: But how doth a cloud return? not the ſame cloud numerically, that cloud which was diſſolved doth not return; the ſame Sun goes down, and vaniſheth out of our ſight in the evening, and returneth again the ſame individual and numerical Sun in the morning; but that numerical cloud which vaniſhed comes not again: Thus man vaniſheth, and returns as the clouds return after the rain, that is, after one generation of men are dead, they return again in their children, another generation ſprings up: other return to life there is none, till all ſhall return at the general judgment of quick and dead. As now we are, who never were, ſo ſhall all return, who were, but are not. It was a witty anſwer of a Learned *Jew*, diſputing with a Heathen Philoſopher, who oppoſed the Reſurrection: *If that* (ſaith he) *which never was in the world, now is; is it ſtrange, that, that which now is ſhould be again, after it is*

Si id quod nunquã fuit, nunc eſt, quomodo quod nunc eſt, poſt interitum denuo fore negatur? Nam ſi hoc mirum, illud magis mirũ videtur.

not in the world? If this be a wonder, the other is much more wonderful.

Neither ſhall his place know him any more.

His place.] May be taken three wayes. Firſt, For the calling and condition of a man in this life, that's the place of a man, a mans calling is his place. Or ſecondly, Locally for his houſe or inheritance where he dwelt; he ſhall come to that place no more. Or thirdly, Place is taken for dignity, Magiſtracy, for the eminency of a mans callings; therefore we ſay of a Magiſtrate or a man in honour, he hath a *great place*, or he is a man of *place and rank*, in all theſe ſences, *his place ſhall know him no more.*

His place ſhall not know him.] That is an elegancy of the holy language. Places are without life and without ſenſe, much more without knowledge; knowing is an act of reaſon, how is it then ſaid, *his place ſhall know him no more? Did it ever know him?* There is a double figure in it: ſome underſtand it by an *Hypallage*, or tranſmutation of the words, *his place ſhall know him no more*, that is, *he ſhall know his place no more.* So that is expounded (*Pſal.* 103.16.) *The place thereof ſhall know it no more*, ſpeaking of man paſſing away like a wind. So *Pſal.* 37.10. *Thou ſhalt diligently conſider his place, and it ſhall not be*; his place ſhall not be; places continue while the world continues: Then his place ſhall not be, is, *he ſhall not be in his place.* Or ſecondly, Underſtand it by a *Proſopopeia* (frequent in Scripture) which is the imitation of life, by things without life: when a place takes upon it the perſon of a man, or when a place acts or imitates the ſpeech of a man: ſence and reaſon are often aſcribed to things without life, and ſo the meaning of *his place ſhall know him no more*, may be conceived thus: When a man lives and comes home to his houſe, his houſe (as it were) welcoms him home, and his place is glad to entertain him; as in the *Pſalm, the little hills* are ſaid to *rejoyce* at the ſhowers, ſo when a man comes home, his houſe and all he hath, have as it were, a Tongue to bid him welcom, and open Arms to receive and embrace him; but when he dies he ſhall return no more, and then *his place ſhall know him* (that is, receive him) *no more.*

Quaſi diceret, ipſæ res inanimæ quæ ſerviunt & parent ad nutum mortalibus, mortuis tamen nulli uſui ſunt. Illos non agnoſcunt dominos. Ea enim eſt vis verbi cognoſcendi & non cognoſcendi.

Obſerve from this briefly (becauſe it is a ſimilitude of the ſame importance with that opened in the former words)

> Firſt, *That death is the concluſion of all worldly comforts and relations.*

As the cloud vaniſheth and returneth not, ſo (in that ſence) there is an utter concluſion of man, he is gone and there is no returning; God by his Almighty power hath fetched back ſome, and the vaniſhing clouds have been brought again: ſo *Lazarus* (and others at the death of Chriſt) was raiſed from the grave; but in a natural way, death ſeizeth all faſt for ever: your places, your relations, your credits, your friends ſhall know you no more, or give you farther entertainment. Obſerve,

> Secondly, *That God hath given us not only the book of Scripture, but the book of the creature, therein to learn and read our own frailty and mortality.*

The creatures preach what man is, and that is a reaſon why the *Holy Ghoſt* ſpends ſo much time, and is ſo frequent in giving us the meaſure of our ſelves by creatures; theſe are every hour in our eye, we meet with, and ſee, and handle, and feel them continually: The wind, the vapors, the clouds, ſet forth what we are, *When I conſider* (ſaid *David*, *Pſal.* 8.3,4.) *the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* To conſider the greatneſs of the works of God ſhould abaſe man; it ſhould amaze us, to remember that God hath made ſuch things for our uſe, who are our ſelves ſo uſeleſs (in compariſon of what we ought) to God. And when man conſiders the Heavens and the Earth, and weighs how many things there are in them, which ſet forth his frailty, he hath reaſon to cry out, *O Lord what is man?* Man is but a wind, a cloud, a vapor, even ſuch a thing as I ſee moſt periſhing and vaniſhing in the whole compaſs of the Creation. *Pſal.* 19.1. *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his handy work:* The Heavens are excellent creatures, and full of glorious wonders, they ſpeak the power and wiſdom of God, they ſhew forth his handy work; they can be the work of none but of God only: The clouds alſo ſhew forth the handy work and power of God, *Pſal.* 147.8. *Who covereth the Heavens with clouds*: The hand of God draws thoſe curtains, and puts that mask upon the face of Heaven.

But as the Heavens declare the glory of God, ſo they publiſh and declare the weakneſs of man, the vapors and the winds ſhew forth how frail he is: *As the inviſible things of God, to wit, his eternal power and Godhead are ſeen in the things which are made*; *God is* (as it were) *viſible in the creatures*: ſo likewiſe the frailty and mutability, the weakneſs and inconſtancy of man is viſible in the things which are created; we may read a lecture of our own tranſitorineſs, in the moſt tranſitory Texts of nature: And that is an admirable contrivance and complication of things, that out of the very ſame Text of the creature, where the infinite wiſdom and power of God may be learned, man alſo may learn his own frailty: *He that ſtudies the creature much, ſhall find much of God and of himſelf.* Some conceive when *Iſaac* (*Gen.* 24.63.) went forth into the field to meditate, that he ſtudied the book of the creatures, probably the holy man did ſo, but we are ſure he might. How will it ſhame thoſe men at laſt, who know not God nor themſelves, when they have or might have had (without coſt or travel) ſo many tutors and inſtructors.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Therefore I will not refrain my mouth, I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.

Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?

When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint.

Then thou ſcareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me through viſions.

So that my ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling, and death rather then life.

I loath it, I would not live alwayes, let me alone, for my dayes are vanity.

IN the context of theſe ſix verſes, we may take notice of four things.

Firſt, *Job's* violent reſolution to complain, *verſ.* 11.

Secondly, His vehement complaint, *verſ.* 12.

Thirdly, An amplification of his ſorrows, *verſ.* 13, 14.

Fourthly, A renovation of his often repeated deſires to die, and the tedioufneſs of his life, *verſ.* 15, 16.

Therefore.] *Job* having in an apoſtrophe to God, ſhewed his weak condition, takes up a freſh reſolution of complaining to God; *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth*, &c. as if he had ſaid, *The conſideration of theſe things, is ſo far from putting me to ſilence, that it doth rather enlarge my heart, and open my mouth to ſpeak and complain once more; ſeeing death is by Gods appointment, the certain end of all outward troubles, and perceiving my ſelf upon the very borders or brink of death, my body paſt cure, my eſtate irrecoverable and remedileſs, therefore I will complain yet again, I will yet farther lay open my miſery before the Lord, and preſs him to haſten me through the confines of this land of ſorrow, that I may accompliſh my dayes, and ſee an end of theſe troubles, for my ſoul is in great bitterneſs.*

I will not refrain my mouth.] The word ſignifies to ſtop, inhibit or prohibit: Thoſe *Writs* which ſtay the proceſs of inferiour *Courts*, are called *Prohibitions*, and then no man may open his mouth more in that buſineſs, until the Prohibition be diſſolved or taken off: I (ſaith *Job*) will not give my ſelf a prohibition, I will not ſilence or ſuppreſs my ſorrows: I will give my heart full liberty to meditate, and my tongue to ſpeak out my ſufferings: Being emptied of all my comforts, I will ſurely take my fill of complainings. It will be ſome eaſe to me, to make known how I am pained. *I will not refrain my mouth.* That word is uſed (*Iſa.* 38.1.) *Cry aloud ſpare not*; when the Prophet is commanded to tell the people of their ſins, the Lord ſets his tongue at liberty, *ſpare not*, thou art not ſilenced or limited, therefore *cry aloud*; theirs were crying ſins, and crying

חשך *Propriè eſt continere, prohibere, & cum ad linguam & orationem refertur affert ſuppreſſionē quandam & cohibitionem eluctantis ſpiritus, & ſermonis, conantis ſe aperto ore effundere.*

ing ſins muſt have crying reproofs, loud ſinners muſt not be whiſpered to, therefore, *Cry aloud, ſpare not.* *I will not ſpare my mouth* (ſaith *Job*) or *refrain*, as we tranſlate.

בצר i.e. *in anguſtiis ſpiritus mei; coarctat me ſpiritus pectore incluſus, patefaciam liberum illi aditum:* אשיחה *à radice* שוח *Propriè meditari, vel ex meditatione interius animo concepta aliquid exterius agere loqui, orare, conqueri. Vocem edam querulam, muſſitando & meditando.* Merc.

But I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit.] Or in *the ſtraightneſs of my ſpirit*; I am in a ſtraight, I am pent in my ſpirit, and unleſs I let my ſpirit out, my heart will break; I muſt give it vent and Air. *I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit.*

I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.] The word render'd *complain*, ſignifies to meditate, and ſo to ſpeak upon meditation, or to ſpeak deliberately. It implies, firſt, a forming and faſhioning of what we would ſay in our thoughts; *Thoughts are the moulds of our words.* *Job* intends not raſh ſpeaking: what he intends to ſpeak, ſhould be moulded, ſhap'd and wrought in his heart, before brought forth by his tongue. Prayer is expreſt by this word, becauſe prayer ought firſt to be formed in the heart: *Prayer is the manifeſtation of our deſires to God*; If the tongue ſpeaks before the heart, before the heart makes up our requeſts, we take Gods name in vain. *Hannah* takes up this word (1 *Sam.* 1. 16.) *Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of* Belial, *for out of the abundance of my complaint* (*or meditation*, ſo the word is rendred) *and grief, have I ſpoken.* *Hannah* was praying, her voice was not heard, only her lips moved, which cauſed *Eli* to ſuſpect and cenſure her for drunk or diſtracted; but ſhe anſwers in words of truth and ſoberneſs, *O my Lord, count not thine handmaid a daughter of* Belial, for though my voice hath not been heard, yet I have been ſpeaking out of the aboundance of my complaint, that is, out of the aboundance of my meditation; my complaints are not the work of my tongue, but of my heart, and my lips moved not, until my heart moved, my complaint is my meditation. Hence likewiſe that phraſe of pouring out prayer, *Pſal.* 142. 2. *I poured out my complaint before him*; He that pours out, muſt have ſomewhat, yea much within, where there is a conſtant ſtream, there alſo is a fountain, *I poured out my complaint*, or my complaining prayer; it is the ſame word here, I have gathered the bitter waters of ſorrow into my own heart, and now I pour them forth in complainings.

Amarū non ſolum dulci opponitur, ſed etiam jucundo. Amariorem me fecit ſenectus, i. e. *aſperiorem.* Plaut.

I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul. What the bitterneſs of the ſoul is, hath been expounded already in *Chap.* 3. therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it: It notes only the height or extremity of affliction. Bitter is oppoſed to unpleaſant, as well as to ſweet: *In the bitterneſs of my ſoul*: The affliction appeared moſt upon his body, but it afflicted him moſt in his ſoul. He ſpeaks little of the pain of his body, in compariſon of the trouble upon his ſpirit, he inſiſts principally upon that, *I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul*; not in the pain of my fleſh, or ſufferings of my body; and yet that form of ſpeaking, excludes not his ſence and ſenſibleneſs of bodily pains, for a man may well ſay, his ſoul is in bitterneſs by reaſon of the pains of his body.

Being in this condition, we ſee what his remedy was, he falls a crying and a complaining before God, telling how it was with him.

Job's complaints have been ſpoken of in former paſſages of the Book, and why he complains hath been ſhewed. *An afflicted ſoul finds ſome eaſe in complaining of affliction*; To complain out of impatience, diſtruſt and hard thoughts of God is very ſinful; in that ſence we muſt be ſilent, as *David*, *Pſal.* 39. 9. when the hand of God was heavy upon him, *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*; in reference to the dealing of God with him, *David* had not a word to ſay; Our Lord Chriſt (the great pattern of ſuffering) *was as a ſheep before the ſhearer, dumb, and opened not his mouth*, no impatient ſpeech came from him. Though the grief of *Job* was very great, and ſo it might ſomewhat (as hath formerly been cleared) excuſe the greatneſs of his complaint, yet in this *Job* ſhewed himſelf *a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are.* Man thinks to get cure by complaining, but uſually he gets a wound: *What poor ſhifts are we poor creatures often put to? How often do we entangle our ſelves, becauſe we are ſtraightned?* Though *Job's* heart kept cloſe to God in the main, though his ſpirit was preſerved untoucht of blaſpheming, yet we find him touching too often, and too loud upon this ſtring of complaining. He cannot be excuſed from ſome motions of impatience, while we hear him ſetling upon theſe reſolutions to take his fill of, or to let looſe the reins of his paſſion to complain; *I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.* *Anguiſh is a very ill guide of the tongue. It muſt needs be troubled matter, which paſſion dictates.* Obſerve further,

Docemur quantæ ſint hominis vires, ſibi à Deo derelicti. Merc.

That when ſorrow continues and hangs long upon us, it grows boyſterous and reſolute.

We have *three wills* in the Text, as if *Job* had turned all his reaſon into will, and his will into paſſion, *I will not refrain, I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul*; He was grown to a kind of reſolvedneſs in his ſorrow. *It is as unſafe for man* (in this ſence) *to will what he doth, as to do what he will; we ought to will the will of God, but we muſt ſubmit our own.* We ſhould not mourn over our afflictions, nor rejoyce over our comforts, but as God wills. Yet in this the will of *Job* was rather ſtrong then pertinacious. He was not a man of that *rough make*, to oppoſe his will againſt the will and good pleaſure of God, though that were a pain to him.

Nec tamen is fuit Job, *qui quod ſibi liceri non putaret protervè ac procaciter vellet aggredi.* Merl.

Having thus reſolved to complain, he complains in this very high languege.

Verſ. 12. **Am I a Sea, or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?**

Theſe are his firſt words, words full of deep complaint like the Sea, which whether he was or no, he would be anſwered. *Am I a Sea? Tell me.* His queſtion is of like like importance with that, at *Chap.* 6. *verſ.* 12. *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones, or is my fleſh braſs?* He expoſtulates with God, why haſt thou laid ſuch trouble upon me? Am I ſtone or braſs that I ſhould be able to bear it? And here (like a Sea ſwoln with bitter waters) in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, he begins to break the bounds again, *Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?*

A Sea, or a Whale.] The Sea and the Whale are often joyned in Scripture, *Pſal.* 104. 25, 26. *O Lord how manifold are thy works*, &c. *the Earth is full of thy riches, ſo is the great and the wide Sea; there go the Ships, there is that Leviathan, whom thou haſt made to play therein.* Again, *Pſalm* 74. 13, 14. *Thou diddeſt divide the Sea by thy ſtrength, thou breakeſt the heads of the Dragons in the waters, thou brakeſt the head of Leviathan in pieces.*

But why doth *Job* ſpeak this language? In brief, the meaning is this, The Sea, you know, is a mighty boiſterous and unruly creature, and the Whale is the ſtrongeſt, mightieſt and moſt dreadful creature in the Sea; the greateſt of the creatures whether upon Sea or Land. The Sea is the moſt boiſterous of all the inanimate creatures, and the Whale is the moſt boiſterous of all living creatures: So that here *Job* gives inſtance in two creatures, which are the moſt head-ſtrong, violent and out-ragious in the whole creation, *The Whale and the Sea.* And he ſets forth his own weakneſs, by the Antitheſis of theſe two creatures, ſurpaſſing all in ſtrength, with which God only is able to grapple and encounter. And in asking, *Am I Sea or a Whale?* he may be conceived to ſpeak thus, *Lord thou ſeemeſt to deal with me in a way beyond all thy dealings with the children of men; thou carrieſt thy ſelf towards me, as if I were more proud, heady, hard to be reclaimed, then any man in the world; thou ſeemeſt to take ſuch a courſe with me, as with the unruly Sea, and with the boiſterous Whale, to keep me in compaſs.* He ſpeaks as if God laid too heavy an affliction upon him, and took too ſtrong a courſe to tame him, or as if he might be more gently dealt with, and that God needed not prepare ſuch bonds and fetters for him, or lay ſuch law upon him, as upon the mighty Sea, and the monſtrous Whale.

But for the words in particular.

Mare barbarum & indomitum elementū eſt.

Am I a Sea? There are three things in the Sea, ſpecially conſiderable, at which *Job* might have an aim here.

Firſt, The turbulency of the Sea; the Sea is ſtormy and turbulent, ſo ſtormy and turbulent, that it threatneth to over-whelm all; to over-whelm the Ships ſailing upon it, to over-whelm the dry Land encompaſſing it, and it would do both, if God did not bound it, if he had not ſaid,

Hitherto

Viſus eſt Deus conjeciſſe mare in carcerem, atq; illi pedes ac manus conſtrinxiſſe propter quā exquiſitam Dei providentiam dicitur, Pſal. 95.4.

Hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no further, and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtaid; did not God put an everlaſting law upon it, it would be lawleſs, *Gen.* 1. 10. the Text ſaith, *That the gathering together of waters, God called Seas*; God gathered them together, thruſt them together into one place, and there ſet a watch upon them, put them in priſon, bound them in chains, for he ſaw what an unruly element it was, and how ſoon it would diſturb all, if left to its own guidance. So, *Job* 38. 10. *He hath ſet bounds to it, bars and doors to keep it in.* He locks and bolts it in by his mighty power. And then *Job's* meaning may be this. Am I an over-whelming Tyrant or Oppreſſor, a ſwallower up of the poor, *&c.* that thou doſt thus impriſon and reſtrain me?

Secondly, There is a wonderful capaciouſneſs in the Sea: the Sea is ſo big and broad, ſo extenſive and vaſt, that it takes in all the waters that come of the Land into its boſom, and yet feels no acceſs. And then his meaning may be thus conceived, *Am I able to drink in all theſe flouds of ſorrow, and rivers of affliction, which are let out and unburthen themſelves upon me?*

Thirdly, The Sea is of mighty ſtrength, though we ſay, *weak as water*; water is a weak element in one ſence, yet in another water is a ſtrong Element, ſo ſtrong that it bears all dowh before it, and bears all the ſtorms that rage upon it. And ſo his meaning is, am I able to bear continual tempeſts perpetual toſſings and agitations. Wilt thou ever let looſe the winds and guſts of trouble to blow thus furiouſly upon me?

תנים Vaſta ſive ſtupenda quævis animantia ſignificat, ſive terreſtria, ſive aquatilia, ſive aëria. Quidam Thinnorum nomen hinc deducunt.

Or (am I) a Whale?] The word ſignifies any great and terrible creature, any monſter whether of Sea or Land, but frequently *the Whale*; ſo *Gen.* 1. 21. *God created great Whales*; and *Lam.* 4. 3. *The Sea monſters draw out their breaſts*; which ſome interpret the *Sea calf*. It is taken alſo for the *Dragon*, which lives partly upon the Earth and partly in the Water (*Deut.* 32. 3.) *Their Wine is the poyſon of Dragons*; and ſo *Jer.* 51. 37. But place it either at Land or Sea, it notes the moſt fierce, devouring and cruel of all living creatures. Our Tranſlators underſtand it of that huge ſtupendious Sea-monſter, the *Whale* or *Leviathan*, *Am I a Sea, or a Whale.*

That thou ſetteſt a watch (*or guard*) over me?

משמר: à radice שמר Cuſtodire, ſervare, ſignificat; cuſtodiam undiq; circumcluſam unde nullum patet effugium.

The word ſignifies to watch a thing ſo narrowly, that it can neither eſcape nor do hurt: for upon theſe two reaſons, watches and guards are ſet; we are afraid ſome will run from us, that others will hurt us, therefore we ſet a guard upon them. In this laſt ſence, *Job* ſpecially meaneth it, *Thou ſetteſt a watch over me, as thou doſt over the Sea and the Whale.* Why doth God ſet a watch over theſe? It is that the Sea ſhould not hurt the Earth, that Whales and Sea-monſters ſhould not hurt man, ſayling upon the Sea, or deſtroy the leſſer fiſhes ſwimming there.

In *Pſalm* 39. 2. the word is uſed for ſetting a watch upon the tongue, *I have ſet a watch* (ſaith *David*) *upon my lips*, &c. A man ſets a watch upon his lips, leſt he ſhould ſpeak amiſs, or leſt he ſhould do hurt or wrong in ſpeaking, ſo (*Pſal.* 141. 3.) the Pſalmiſt deſireth God to *ſet a watch before his mouth, aud keep the door of his lips.* The Tongue is a hurtful inſtrument, as the Apoſtle *James* deſcribes it, a little member which hath a world of iniquity in it: Therefore the Tongue being ſo hurtful, it is a great part of grace to keep a watch over it, and a great part of our duty to beg of God to ſet a watch upon it that it may do no hurt, that it may not as a Sea or a Whale, ſwallow up our neighbours good name. *Nehemiah* (Chap. 4. 23.) *made his prayer* (a ſweet conjunction) *and ſet a guard or a watch*; why was it? To keep off his wicked enemies from hurting him, and hindring the good work he had in hand.

Circum dediſti me carcere. Vul. Sicut carcer latinis à coercendo, ſic Hebræis à cuſtodiendo.

Some tranſlate it thus, *Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou ſhouldeſt incloſe me in priſon?* It comes to the ſame ſence, and the word ſignifies a priſon in divers Texts of Scripture: priſons are places of watch and guard, from whence there is no eſcape or getting looſe. *Job* thought himſelf a man kept in priſon, as offenders are. The Sea is a priſoner ſhut within banks and walls: as a man in priſon cannot go where he will, ſo neither can the Sea. And the Whale of whom it is ſaid, *He takes his paſtime in the Sea*, is yet Gods priſoner there. And the truth is, all creatures are in the *priſon of providence*, the limits whereof they can no more go beyond, then a man that is bound (as *Petet*) with two chains, and all the doors lock't upon him. Eſpecially afflictions are impriſonments, ſickneſs is an impriſonment. A diſeaſe is ſent like a Sergeant to attach a man: that ſhuts a man within his houſe, confines him to his chamber, and then binds him upon his bed, not to ſtir till God give a releaſe: ſorrow is often called a *Cord*, Pſal. 18. 4. *The ſorrows of death* (the cords of death, as the Hebrew is) *compaſſed me about*; and *Pſal.* 116. 3. *The ſorrows of Hell* (or the cords of Hell) *were about me.* And in that ſence *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf, why doſt thou arreſt and caſt me into priſon, binding me with the cords of theſe ſorrows and ſickneſſes. So he complains, *Chap.* 13. 27. *Thou putteſt my feet alſo in the ſtocks, and lookeſt narrowly to all my paths, thou ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet.* It is ſaid of the woman (*Luk.* 13. 16.) *that Satan had bound her eighteen years*; ſhe was bound with the cords of that infirmity, and kept as a poor priſoner thoſe many years. From all we may collect the ſence formerly hinted, that *Job* expoſtulates with God for uſing him after the manner of a Whale or a Sea, as if he were a man ſo unruly, that nothing could tame and quiet him, but ſuch a ſevere courſe as is uſed with beaſts, or as if he were a vexer and a devourer of his brethren, a very enemy to man-kind. Obſerve from hence,

הבלי שאול

First, In that *Job* ſaith, *Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?*

The providence of God watches over all his creatures.

All theit motions are by his permiſſion or commiſſion, they ſtir not but by his leave: The providence of God is his watch, and therefore it is called the *eye of providence*; and providence hath ſuch an eye as never ſleeps nor ſlumbers; and therein lieth our ſecurity, that we have a *providential eye* open for us, when ours are ſhut and we aſleep. Obſerve,

Secondly, *God expreſſes moſt care to keep thoſe creatures from hurting man, which are moſt apt to hurt man.*

We ſee *Job* inſtances in theſe two by name, the *Sea and the Whale*, and tells us, that God puts a guard upon them; he watches the leaſt creatures; but it ſpeaks moſt ſecurity to man, to hear that theſe are under a *watch*. The Lord watches over all wicked men that they ſhould not hurt his people; but ſuch of them as are moſt harmful, who are very *Seas* and *Whales*, men who would ſwallow and drown his people with a deluge of rage and malice, over theſe the Lord watches in a ſpecial manner. His eye of jealouſie (which is alwayes awake) is ſurely wakeful upon theſe. As the Lord hath a ſpecial eye upon the Saints to do them good, ſo he hath a ſpecial eye upon the wicked, that they do no hurt, or no more then ſhall turn to good. Hence the Pſalmiſt admoniſhes all, and it may have a particular application to wicked men, *Pſal.* 32. 9. *Be ye not as the Horſe, or as the Mule which have no underſtanding: whoſe mouth muſt be held in with bit and bridle, leſt they come near unto thee.* If the Lord ſees men ſo brutiſh, that they will not be ruled by reaſon, he will rule them by rigor, *He hath a whip for the Horſe, a bridle for the Aſs, and a rod for the fools back* (Prov. 26. 3.) A rocky ſhore for the Sea, and a priſon for the Whale, rather then they ſhall come near to hurt his beloved people. Note,

Secondly, That, *man in the paſſion, and diſtempered ſinfulneſs of his nature, is like the Sea or the Whale.*

A cruel man is as hurtful, as the moſt hurtful creature. In the place before noted, while man is warned, *Not to be as the Horſe, or as the Mule, which have no underſtanding*, it is intimated that many men are; and it is a truth, that all men left to themſelves would be like unto a Horſe or a Mule, yea like unto a Sea or a Whale in doing miſchief. The Prophet (*Iſ.* 57. 20.) compares wicked men *unto the troubled Sea that cannot reſt.* There is not in the whole compaſs of nature, a clearer ſhadow of mans nature, then the Sea.

First, The Sea is very vaſt, and would (if let alone) be boundleſs. Man is naturally vaſt and boundleſs in his deſires, he is never ſatiſfied.

Secondly, The Sea is unſtable, alwayes fleeting and moving, *Geneſ.* 49. 3. Dying *Jacob* characters *Reuben* thus, *unſtable as water:* The heart of man is a moveable thing, ebbing and flowing forward and backward, tumbling up and down, as the vaſt Ocean.

Thirdly, The Sea is often provoked with ſtorms and tempeſts, it is the great ſtage where the winds act their parts, and ſtrive as it is expreſt in the *Revelation.* There are many winds ſtriving upon the Sea of mans heart continually, and therefore he is ſo boiſterous and ſo ſtormy; he hath winds within him, and winds from without him: The winds in his own bowels make the greateſt commotions. The Apoſtle *James* queſtions (Chap. 4. 1.) *Whence come contention, and wars, and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your luſts, that war in your members?* Luſts are as boiſterous winds in the ſoul, which make it unquiet and unruly: ſtrong luſts and deſires like ſtrong winds, and contrary luſts and deſires, like contrary winds, contend upon this Sea. Moſt men are (*Tit.* 3. 3.) *ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures;* not only many, but divers, or divers not only in number but in nature, one luſt as a contrary wind ſtriving with another, and ſo making a ſtorm in the heart. And this ſtormineſs is cauſed alſo by an outward blaſt; Satan blows upon the heart, and the world blows; ſo that, till the Holy Ghoſt breaths heavenly gales to overcome and blow down thoſe ſtorms raiſed by the blaſt of ſtrong luſts and temptations, the ſoul will be ever like a Sea tumbled up and down, or as the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks (*verſ.* 13.) like a *raging wave of the Sea, foming out it's own ſhame.*

And this is further conſiderable, that as the Sea is moſt turbulent and tempeſtuous, moſt loud and roaring about the banks, where it is reſtrained; ſo man is moſt boyſterous, where he is kept in and ſtopt, if God do but ſet bounds to him by afflictions, he begins to rage at thoſe bounds. It is that which *Job* (in a degree) complain'd of, he thought God would bind and bound him in by afflictions, and he began to be ſomewhat unquiet in his ſhackles. But when God ſets bounds to wicked men by afflictions, and hedges up their way with thorns, they are angry indeed and their corruptions break forth the more, by how much the ſtronger banks are made againſt them. The great bank and bound, which God hath ſet to keep the luſts of men from over-flowing all, *is his Word and Will, his Laws and Ordinances,* by which he ſpeaks to man as to the Sea, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no farther;* Againſt theſe banks, the hearts of men naturally rage moſt. How do their luſts roar and riſe up againſt the holy and righteous will of God, there the fome of their corruptions is moſt wrought and caſt up. As *Paul* himſelf acknowledged of his natural condition, *Rom.* 7. 8. *Sin* (ſaith he) *taking occaſion by the Law, wrought in me all manner of concupiſcence;* my luſts and corruptions were more mad, becauſe they were more reſtrained, I was like the Sea, which makes moſt noiſe at, and moſt aſſaults the banks which ſtay it. So *v.* 13. *Sin that it might appear ſin, wrought death in me by that which is good;* there was a good, a holy, and a righteous Law ſet before me, but the baſeneſs of my heart was ſuch, that I was the worſe, for that which taught me what was good, and ſhould have made me better.

Further, Man is as a Sea in this, he ever caſts up mire and dirt: when he is moved, corruption moves, every ſtirring ſtirs up the puddle of his heart. As he is a Sea for largeneſs, ſo he is a very ſink for filthineſs, *Iſa.* 57. 20. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt.*

Laſtly, Covetous oppreſſors have a near reſemblance to the Sea in three things. They (as the Sea) ſuck in all the rivers and ſtreams of profit, which flow in to them from any part of the world, and yet are not filled.

Secondly, They (as the Sea) wrack [illegible] over-whelm thouſands, and are not at all moved with their out-cryes.

Thirdly, They (as the Sea) have huge treaſures in their houſes, yet all ſatisfies not their deſires, they are as greedy as if they were not worth a groat.

Look upon man, in the other compariſon, He is a Whale, a devourer. In the worſt of bruits, you may ſee the picture of mans nature. They who have power to do what they will, and will do (when their advantage is in it) to the utmoſt of their power: Theſe are your Leviathans upon dry Land. *Senacherib* was a mighty Whale, gaping to ſwallow up the people of God, and therefore the Lord expreſſes his dealing with him in a word very ſutable to this ſence (2 *King.* 19. 28.) *Becauſe thy rage againſt me, and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy noſe, and my bridle in thy lips,* &c. See how God uſes him, *Senacherib* came raging and threatning to ſwallow all up; God uſes him like an unruly beaſt of the Earth, or like a devouring fiſh of the Sea, *He puts a hook in his noſe.* It is ſaid of Leviathan, that he ſcorns the hook and the angle, *Job* 41. *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with an hook?* implying that no hook, no tackle is ſtrong enough to hold this Sea-monſter, but God hath a hook can hold him. Some men are like this Sea-monſter, no takling of mans making will hold them, no power under Heaven can ſtop them; then the Lord prepares his engines and inſtruments, he can make a hook will catch *Senacherib,* the *great Whale,* as if he were but a *ſprat, I will put my hook into his noſe, and turn him about, or pull him up.*

What devouring enemies have alwayes come out againſt the Church, threaning to ſwallow, or as the Moabites ſaid of the Children of *Iſrael* (Numb. 22. 4.) *To lick up all that were round about, as the Ox licketh up the graſs of the field.* Yea, they thought (as it is ſaid of Leviathan) *That they could draw up Jordan into their mouths,* that is, remove the greateſt difficulties, and overcome all oppoſition. But how often hath God put a bridle into the lips of the Horſe, and a hook into the noſe of theſe Whales?

Further, If we conſider the words, as *Job's* queſtion, in application unto himſelf, *Am I a Whale? Am I a Sea?*

Obſerve, *Man is apt to have good thoughts of himſelf.*

Job would not be the Whale, or the Sea. Note,

Secondly, *Man is apt to judge that God layes more upon him then there is need.*

Am I a Whale, or a Sea? As if *Job* had ſaid, Lord thou needeſt not deal thus ſtrictly and ſeverely with me, or beſtow ſo much care to watch me. I would have come in at a call, thou needeſt not have bounded me with theſe afflictions, and put ſuch a hook in my noſe, a nod, or a beck would have fetched me in: Wiſe men ſute their preparations to their occaſion; we carry not out a piece of Ordinance to ſhoot at a flye, which we can kill with a phillup; ſo ſaith *Job,* Lord I need not all this, a little admonition, a little chaſtning, or a check ſhould have reduced me; ſuch are mans thoughts. But the moſt wiſe God, never layes more upon man then he hath need of: when God ſtreightens us with ſuch afflictions, he ſeeth there is ſomewhat of the Sea in us, he muſt bound us; ſomewhat of the Whale in us, he muſt watch and bring us under. If we ſee God beſtow more rods and blows upon us, we muſt conclude we could not be without them; ſome apprehend that ſuch is *Job's* meaning in *verſ.* 16. *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him?* As if he had ſaid, it is too great an honour for man to be afflicted by thy hand. If we ſee a King make great proviſions of war, to go out againſt an enemy, we ſay he magnifies the enemy. *It is an argument they have great ſtrength, againſt whom we prepare great ſtrength.* So *Job,* Lord thou magnifieſt me, thou makeſt me to be look'd at, as ſome powerful creature, a Sea, a Whale, againſt whom thou acteſt ſo much of thy power.

Job having, as he reſolved, begun to complain of his ſorrows, now amplifies them.

Verſ. 13. **When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint,**
14. **Then thou ſkareſt me,** &c.

He amplifies his ſorrows upon this general ground, becauſe they were ſuch as he could not find any eaſe or abatement of, no not at any time, no not by any means; As if he had ſaid, my grief and my pain is ſo remedileſs, that neither artificial nor natural means give me any eaſe; thoſe things which have the greateſt probability of refreſhing, yield me none. He inſtances in thoſe ordinary wayes, which give ſick and diſtempered bodies ſome abatement or intermiſſion of their pains; *Lying down upon their bed or couch; When I ſay, my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint;* As if he had ſaid, while I was wraſtling all day, and conflicting with my ſorrows, I yet had ſome hope to find comfort at night, and that I ſhould meet with reſt in my bed, but my hope fails me ever; or while in the day time my thoughts are overburthened, and my ſpirit overwhelmed within me, I think ſometimes to deceive my pains a little, by taking a nap or a ſlumber upon my couch; but alas, my pains will not be deceived; *when I ſay, my bed ſhall comfort me, and my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint (I find in ſtead of eaſe, further trouble, and in ſtead of comfort, terrors; For then) thou ſcareſt me with dreams.*

When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me.

נחם *Doluit, pœnituit, per antiphraſin dolere deſiit, conſolationẽ invenit.*

The word ſignifies to mourn and repent, as well as to comfort; becauſe comfort uſually follows holy mourning and repenting. Godly ſorrow is the mother of ſpiritual joy.

In the words, we have either that ordinary figure *Proſopopeia*, the fiction of a perſon, when acts of life and reaſon are aſcribed to things without life; and ſo *Job* brings in his bed, as his friend ſpeaking to him, *when I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me*, my bed and I will confer together, I am perſwaded that will afford me a word of comfort: Or, we may rather undeſtand it by a *Metonymie* of the effect, *when I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me:* Comfort is the common and uſual effect or benefit of lying down upon the bed: The bed is ſaid to comfort, becauſe ordinarily we find comfort in reſting upon the bed; that being a means or inſtrumental cauſe of comfort, is called a comforter.

My couch ſhall eaſe my complaint.

The words are indifferently tranſlated in Scripture, either for a bed, or for a couch; but if we take them diſtinctly, then the bed is the place, where we reſt in the night, and the couch by day: When *Job* ſaith,

נשא *Levavit, evexit, ſuſtulit.*

My couch ſhall eaſe [my complaint]; it notes his complaint or ſorrow lay as a heavy burden or weight upon him; for the word ſignifies to *eaſe*, or *to lift up*, or *to eaſe by lifting up*; if a man have a burden upon him, the way to eaſe him, is to lift it off from him; ſo *Job* here, *I lie down upon my couch, with a burden of heavy ſorrows upon me, God knows*, hoping my couch will be a means to take off that burden a while, that I may have a little breathing, but (to my grief) I find it doth not. The uſe of ſleep is to unburden the ſpirit, and take off the load of cares: The word is uſed in that ſence, *Gen.* 4.13. about the ſin of *Cain*, which lay upon him as a heavy burden, *My ſin* (ſaith he) *is greater then can be forgiven* (ſo ſome tranſlations) or *greater then I can bear*; word for word thus, *my ſin is greater then can be taken off*. Forgiveneſs is the taking ſin off from us; it is the word here uſed for *eaſing:* my ſin is greater then I can be eaſed of; as if *Cain* thought his ſin a burden which the arm of mercy could not lift from his ſhoulders: Pardon is the eaſing of the conſcience, ſin the burdening of it; ſin is a burdeu, and ſo is ſorrow. *My couch* (ſaith he) *ſhall eaſe my complaint*, by taking off, or at leaſt, intermitting the troubles which cauſe me to complain; or, my couch ſhall eaſe me in my complaint, when I am meditating, revolving, and rowling my troubles up and down in my thoughts, then my couch and I am diſcourſing together, and reaſoning out the matter, but no eaſe comes. We may obſerve from hence,

Magnum eſt peccatum meum præ tollendo, vel majus quam ut tolli poſſit, Sept. *τοῦ ἀφεθῆναι με, quā ut remittatur mihi, quam ut ſuſtinere poſſim.* Jun. בשיחי *In retractione ſive meditatione miſeriæ apud animū. Loquens mecum.*

First, That, *A man in pain, expects eaſe from every change.*

My bed (ſaith *Job ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint*) every thing he ſees, raiſes his hope; every man that comes to him, he looks upon him as a meſſenger of good news, I ſaid, this ſhall help me, and that ſhall help me; ſurely if I had ſuch a thing (ſaith a ſick man) it would do me good; if I had ſuch meat, I could eat; if I had ſuch drink, my palat would reliſh it; if I were in ſuch an air, it would reſtore my health, and I ſhould get up again. As a Bee goes from flower to flower, to ſuck out ſomewhat, ſo man from inſtrument to inſtrument, from means to means, from bed to couch, ſtill hoping to find relief or mitigation, at leaſt, for his troubled mind, or pained body.

Secondly obſerve, That *The moſt probable or proper means are unable of themſelves to give us any eaſe or comfort.*

What is fitter to give a man reſt then a bed? What is more proper to give one refreſhing then a couch? But *Job* goes to his bed in vain, and goes to his couch in vain, nor this, nor that, nor t'other adminiſtred him any help. Creatures are not able of themſelves to give out the comfort committed to them: Their common nature muſt be aſſiſted with a ſpecial word of bleſſing, or elſe they do us no good. If God will command a bed to comfort us, it ſhall comfort us; if he will ſay to a couch, eaſe ſuch a mans complaint, it ſhall eaſe his complaint; *Job* ſaith it, and his ſaying could not effect it: Nay, if God will ſay to a hard ſtone, give ſuch a man reſt, he ſhall reſt and ſleep ſweetly upon it, when another ſhall not get a wink of ſleep upon a down-pillow; if God ſay to a priſon, give ſuch a man reſt, he ſhall find reſt there; if God ſpeaks to bonds and fetters, give ſuch a man content and pleaſure, he ſhall find not only contentment, but pleaſure in bonds and fetters; if God ſay to flames of fire, refreſh ſuch as are caſt into your arms, the fire will obey him, and refreſh them. The moſt probable means cannot help us of themſelves, and a word from God will make the moſt improbable means helpful to us, yea, that which is deſtructive, ſhall ſave us. For as God can create that good for us which is abſent, ſo he can (as it were) uncreate the evil that is preſent. Providence can take away or ſuſpend that hurting and deſtroying power which creation gave; no creature is able to help or to hurt if God forbid and lay his reſtraint upon it. Bread cannot nouriſh, or cloaths warm us, if he ſay they ſhall not; poyſon ſhall not kill, or fire burn us, if he ſay, they ſhall not. *Mans ſaying is but ſaying, Gods ſaying is doing.* Man may ſay to his bed, comfort me; to his riches and honours, content me; to his wife and children, pleaſe me; to wine and muſick, make me merry; he may lay his command, or ſend his deſires to all creatures, and yet remain comfortleſs, contentleſs, mirthleſs. Pleaſure it ſelf will not pleaſe him, nor having of his will, ſatisfie his mind at his own ſaying or bidding.

Fourthly obſerve, That, *Reſt and ſleep are from the eſpecial bleſſing of God.*

When I ſaid to my bed, do it, the bed could not; ſleep is not from a ſoft bed, or from an eaſie couch, *Pſal.* 127.2. *For ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep*, that is, ſleep with quietneſs, or extraordinary quiet refreſhing ſleep; which ſome have noted in the Grammar of the Text; the Hebrew word *Shena*, for ſleep, being with (*Aleph*) a quiet or reſting letter, otherwiſe then is uſual in that language. He giveth ſleep to his *Jedidiahs*, as the word is there alluding to one of the names of *Solomon*. *The Lord gives ſleep ſometimes as a love-token to his beloved.* The connection is ſomewhat obſcure, the words before run thus, *It is in vain for you to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrow, for ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep*: How is ſleep a conſequent of fruitleſs labour, and eating the bread of ſorrow? Theſe rather hinder ſleep. Some refer it to the words of the firſt verſe, *Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain, for ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep*; the Lord watches and takes a care of a City and family, and thus gives his people reſt and quiet ſleep; they are not awakened with alarms or ſurprizes of the enemy. Others read it thus, for *ſurely he will give his*, &c. that is, notwithſtanding the ungodly are eaten up with cares to provide bread for themſelves and families to eat; yet without fail, the Lord of his meer mercy, will give food convenient to his people by their labours, and quiet ſleep (which includes all inward contentments) with it. So, *Prov.* 3.24. *Thou ſhalt lie down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet.* And, *Pſal.* 41.3. There is a ſpecial promiſe made to the ſick man, or to him, who hath been a comforter of the ſick, *The Lord will make all his bed in his ſickneſs*, that is, God will make his bed eaſie and comfortable in his ſickneſs. When we cannot ſleep, we uſe to complain of our ſervants, and ſay, ſure this bed was not made to night, or it was ill made; no man complains his bed was ill made when he hath ſlept well. That his people in ſuch a caſe, may be ſure of reſt, the Lord condeſcends to that low office, the making of their beds. Therefore we are to receive ſleep as a matter of ſpecial bleſſing, coming from the hand of God; he makes the bed in ſickneſs and in health too: then bleſs God for reſt, and not your beds. Though we know ſleep is the portion of mankind,

kind, and many times the worſt of men have quiet and refreſhing ſleep, yet no wicked man ever ſlept upon the pillow of this promiſe, nor will God make the bed of the greateſt Prince in the world, as ſuch, which yet he is ready to do for his meaneſt ſervant; *common comforts are to ſome ſpecial mercies.* As ſome enjoy riches and honour by common providence, while others enjoy them by virtue of a ſpecial promiſe, ſo it is with ſleep; *He giveth his beloved ſleep.*

But what found *Job* upon his bed? In ſtead of ſleep and reſt, he found ſkaring dreams and terrifying viſions; as it follows.

Verſe 14. **Thou ſkareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me with viſions.**

As if he had ſaid, I find my ſelf altogether diſappointed and deceived, in ſtead of being comforted, I am ſkared; in ſtead of being eaſed, I am terrified, my bed is to me as a very rack, and my couch my torment, or a *little-eaſe.*

Thou ſkareſt me.] The word ſignifies to be caſt down proſtrate to the ground with fear, or to be ground to powder with fear; and it is often rendred by that word *contrite,* which notes breaking of the heart by godly ſorrow; ſuch a breaking is upon me through the dreams which fall upon me in, and break my ſleep: If I have any ſleep, it is terrifying, and not refreſhing ſleep.

Thou ſkareſt me [**with dreams.**] That word ſprings from a root ſignifying thick vapours; becauſe ſleep is cauſed by thick vapours aſcending from the ſtomach to the brain, and cloſing up the ſenſes; dreams uſually come in that ſleep, and the ſtronger and thicker the vapour is procuring ſleep, the more we are ſubject to dream.

And terrifieſt through viſions.] In the fourth Chapter I had occaſion to ſpeak at large concerning viſions, therefore I ſhall not here inſiſt upon that point, but refer the Reader thither; I ſhall only ſay thus much, that theſe were not viſions as thoſe before treated of, for the revelation of any divine ſecrets, to enlighten the mind of man, but only viſions of helliſh horror, to darken and vex the mind of man. The Hebrew word ſignifies to ſee, whence the ancient Prophets were called (*Chozim*) * *Seers.* Our Engliſh word *Gaze,* hath near affinity with it. And we call Star-prophets (who pretend skill in predictions from the viſions of the Heavens) *Star-gazers.*

חתת *Stratus, proſtratus, contritus, per Metaphoram, territus, conſternatus, mente jacuit, & velut animi deliquium importat.*

חלם *Spiſſus, craſſus, per Metalepſin, ſomniavit quia ex vaporibus craſſis provenit ſomnus, quē ſomnia conſequuntur. Viſiones iſtæ quibus percellebatur* Job *erant terriculamenta, lemures, ſpecies, umbræ, ſpectra, manes, ſimulachra, & alia hujuſmodi à dæmone procurata, quamvis ipſe* Job *ſibi à Deo inferri aſſerit.* Caſſia *Col. 7. cap. 32.* * מחזי ונות *à radice* חזה. *Hinc Prophetæ* Chozim videntes *dicti.*

Job had both dreams and viſions; for in every dream there is ſomewhat of a viſion: There are many viſions without a dream, but there cannot be a dream without a viſion. An image or ſimilitude is alwayes repreſented to, or formed in the fancy, or elſe there can be no dream. *Jacob* dreamed (*Gen.* 28. 12.) *and behold a ladder ſet upon the earth, and the top of it reaching to heaven.* The viſion here ſpoken of, was (I conceive) the viſion of his dream, though ſome underſtand it of day or waking viſion.

There is a twofold cauſe of dreams; there is an inward cauſe, and an outward cauſe. And,

The inward cauſe of dreams is twofold.

Firſt, The accidental motions of the fancy, of which a man can give no reaſon from any precedent agitation of mind or body.

Secondly, The ſetled natural temperament and conſtitution of the body.

The external or outward cauſes are uſually according to the objects with which or about which we are converſant in the day-time, the impreſſions of theſe kept in the fancy, are formed into dreams at night; ſuch as the deſires or diſtempers of the mind are, ſuch often are our dreams.

Or take it thus, Dreams have a five-fold cauſe.

Firſt, The natural temper of the body, and ſo from the variety of conſtitutions, variety of dreams are ſhaped; Cholerick, or Melancholy, or Flegmatick, or Sanguine, produce their ſpecial dreams.

Secondly, Dreams are cauſed by the diſtempers of the body, either from intemperate drinking or eating any kind of meat, or from the very eating (though moderately) of ſome meats, or from the diſeaſes and ſickneſſes of the body; from this latter *Job*'s dreams were much encreaſed, and Satan took the advantage to raiſe fumes, and ſtir the pudled humors of his body up into his brain, out of which his fancy formed terrible repreſentations to his mind. As Melancholy is ſaid to be the *Devils Bath,* ſo are other diſeaſed ſickly humors; in them he ſports himſelf, and vexes man.

Thirdly, There is a moral cauſe of dreams, ſuch as the ſtudies and buſineſſes, labours and employments, cares and diſquietments of a man are in the day, ſuch often are his dreamings. As he works in the day, his fancy works in the night,

Quæcunque mentis agitat infeſtus vigor ea per quietem ſacer & arcanus refert veloxq; ſenſus, Sen. in Oct.

Fourthly, Dreams have a divine cauſe, and are immediately from God. The Scripture is full of inſtances, I need not ſtay upon them: *Jacob* had ſuch a dream, *Gen.* 28. 16. And *Joſeph* had many dreams from God; hence his brethren called him in ſcorn, *The Dreamer,* or a *Captain-Dreamer,* Gen. 27. 19. And not only have godly men dreams from God, but heathens alſo, *Pharaoh* and *Nebuchadnezzar,* men of the earth, received from heaven things of high concernment, revealing the counſels of God, concerning their own Kingdoms, and the latter about the ſtate of all Kingdoms and Monarchies, till all the Kingdoms of the earth ſhall become the Kingdom of *that One, Sole, Supream Monarch, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Fifthly, There are diabolical dreams, dreams which are from the Devil: Not that the Devil of himſelf is able to cauſe a dream, he cannot ſtir the fancy in the night, or tempt in the day, but as he hath a power given him; but permitted, he cauſes ſometimes ſinful and filthy dreams; as *Auguſtine* bewailes in the tenth book of his Confeſſion; ſometimes terrible and troubleſome dreams, ſometimes treacherous and deluding dreams. It is by ſome conceived, that the dream of *Pilates* wife, *Mat.* 27. 19. was from the Devil; ſhe came to *Pilate,* and deſires him to have nothing to do with that Juſt man; *for* (ſaith ſhe) *I have ſuffered many things this night in a dream becauſe of him.* The reaſon why ſome conceive that dream was from the Devil, is this, becauſe thereby Satan would have hindred the work of mans redemption, if Chriſt had not died; and ſo by ſaving him, would have deſtroyed us all. I will not aſſert this; but it is clear to the point in hand, that there are dreams from the temptations, motions and ſuggeſtions of the Devil, who hath a power over us, as God lengthens out his chain both day and night.

Aug. Conf. l. 10. *c.* 30.

But when it is ſaid, *Thou ſkareſt me with dreams*; what dreams were theſe, *Divine or Diabolical? Job* ſpeaks unto God, *Thou ſkareſt me with dreams*: doubtleſs divine dreams had an influence upon his ſpirit, and left terrifying impreſſions there. But Satan having power to afflict *Job* which way he pleaſed, was inſtrumental here; and yet *Job* ſaith to God, *Thou ſkareſt me.* As before, when Satan by his inſtruments took away all from him, he ſaid, *The Lord hath taken*; ſo here, when Satan vexed him with viſions, repreſenting horrid and fearful ſpectacles, yet he ſaith, *Thou ſkareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me with viſions*; as pointing ſtill unto the power and providence of God, who hath all ſecond cauſes, Satan and all, at his own diſpoſe. Hence obſerve,

First, That, *Even our dreams are ordered by God.*

Though Satan be the inſtrument, yet we may ſay, *Thou ſkareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me with viſions. Job* was not ignorant that ſecond cauſes had a great power upon the body, to produce dreams and nightly fancies; he was not ignorant, that the ſtrength of a diſeaſe might do very much in this, and that Satan, his former enemy was buſie to improve the diſtempers of his body for the trouble of his mind; yet he overlooks all theſe (as he did before) and ſaith, *Lord, thou ſkareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me with viſions.* Dreams are in the hand of God; as our waking times are in the hand of God, ſo are our ſleeping-times; when we are ſleeping, we are in the arms of an ever-waking Father; Satan hath no power to touch us ſleeping or waking, without leave.

Secondly, *God can make our ſleep an affliction.*

Job's were ſkaring and terrifying dreams: Some dreams are for warning and admonition; *The Lord warned Joſeph in a dream*: Some are for counſel and inſtruction; he revealed great things in dreams: Others are for comfort and conſolation. Many a ſoul hath taſted more of heaven in a night-dream, then in many dayes attendance upon holy Ordinances. As the luſts of wicked men have dreams attending them, ſo alſo have the graces of the Saints. *Job's* dreams were for terror and afflictions.

Secondly obſerve, *Satans deſire of troubling poor ſouls, is reſtleſs.*

It is reſtleſs indeed, for he will not give them leave to reſt, they ſhall not ſleep in quiet, their very dreams ſhall be diſtractions, and their nightly repreſentations a vexation to them. Note further,

That (*If God permit*) *Satan can make dreams very terrible to us.*

He can ſhew himſelf in a dream, and offer ugly ſights, extreamly perplexing to the Spirit. He is able to caſt himſelf into a thouſand ill-favoured ſhapes, into horrid and dreadful ſhapes, he can cloath himſelf with what habit he pleaſes, if God give him a general commiſſion. And hence the Devil terrifies, not only by temptations to the mind, but by apparitions to the eye, and is ſeen, at leaſt, conceived to be ſeen (eſpecially by ſuch as labour under ſtrong diſeaſes) like a Lion, a Bear, a Dog, gaping, grinning, ſtaring; whence we ſay of any terrifying ſight, it looks like a Devil. We depend upon God, as for ſleep, ſo for the comfort of ſleep. Many lie down to ſleep, and their ſleep is their terror. As that evil Spirit (in the Goſpel) *went about ſeeking reſt, but found none*; ſo he hinders ſome, (and would more) from finding reſt when they ſeek it. Therefore bleſs God for any refreſhing you have by ſleep: Bleſs God when your dreams are not your ſcares, nor your beds your rack. See the effect, what deep impreſſions dreadful dreams made in *Job's* ſpirit; he was ſo affrighted with them, that he profeſſes with his next breath,

Verſe 15. **My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling, and death rather then life; I loath it, I would not live alwayes.**

So that my ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling.] He renews his former often repeated motion, but with a greater ardency; he not only preſers death before his troubled condition, but a violent death (and in the opinion of ſome) the worſt of violent deaths, *ſtrangling*; which, though it be not the moſt painful of violent deaths, yet it is looked upon as the moſt ignominious of violent deaths.

Some refer theſe words to the terror which *Job* had in his dreams and viſions, as if they were ſo violeut upon him, that they almoſt diſtracted him, and made him mad, that they even put him upon deſperate thoughts of deſtroying himſelf; *My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling*, that is, I am often tempted, and almoſt prevailed with to make my ſelf away, The learned Phyſitians tell us, that their Patients have often attempted to deſtroy themſelves through the terrors of dreams and viſions.

Ab hujuſmodi ſpectris multos ſe jam ſtrangulaſſe, & proſiliiſſe in puteos aſſerit. Hipp.

Yet we may underſtand the word [**ſtrangling**] only of natural and ordinary death. Every death is a kind of ſtrangling, and ſome diſeaſes ſtop and choak a man, even as ſtrangling doth; ſo that *my ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling*, may be taken in general, *My ſoul chuſeth death rather then life.*

My ſoul chuſeth.] He puts the ſoul (as it is often in Scripture) for the whole man; and the ſence of all is, as if he had ſaid, *If I might be my own chuſer, if I might have my election, I would even take the worſt of deaths rather then the life which now I live. My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling,*

And death rather then life.] If we take ſtrangling for a ſpecial death, then here *death* is put in general; as thus, if ſtrangling be too eaſie a death, let me die any kind of death, *Death rather then life.*

מעצמותי עצם *Os à robore dictum, nihil in ipſo tam forte & firmū, quod vis doloris non debilitarat & confregerat.* Aquin.

The Hebrew in the Letter is, *And death rather then my bones*, which ſome render thus, *And death rather then to be with my bones*; To be with our bones, is to live. Others make this chuſing an act of his bones; *My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling, and my bones death*, that is, every part of me chuſeth death, all vote for the grave; I have not a diſſenting member, no, nor a diſſenting bone; when *David* prayes, *Pſal.* 6. 2. *Heal me, O Lord, for my bones are vexed*; His meaning is, I am vexed quite through. And when he promiſeth (*Pſal.* 35. 10.) *All my bones ſhall ſay, who is like unto the Lord?* &c. His meaning is, that he will praiſe God quite through, ſoul and body. Again (*Lam.* 1. 13.) *From above hath he ſent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth againſt me*; that is, he hath utterly conſumed me. So here, the whole man is expreſſed by parts, ſoul and bones, or body and ſoul, that is, whether I conſider the anguiſh of my ſoul, or the pains of my body, I deſire to die.

Thirdly [*Death rather then my bones*] becauſe he had ſuch ſore, putrified and afflicted bones, painful bones; for when Satan deſired a Commiſſion to afflict him, he words it thus, *Touch his fleſh and his bone, and he will curſe thee to thy face*: Doubtleſs Satan had gone as deep as his commiſſion; he had liberty to touch his fleſh and his bone, and he did it: *He vexed his very bones* (as we ſay) my bones are even rotted and conſumed, the ſores and the putrefaction is ſunk down into my marrow, *I had rather have death then my bones*, that is, then a body thus conſumed and putrified even to the very bones.

Magis optarem mori, quam talia oſſa & mēbra putrida, & ulceribus diffluentia. Merc.

Yet further, ſome of the Hebrews give it thus, [*Death rather then my bones*] becauſe *Job* had nothing left him but bones, he could not ſay, my fleſh, for his fleſh was conſumed; as we ſay, *ſuch a man is nothing but skin and bones, a meer Skeliton*: I am nothing but bones, and I had rather die, then live ſuch an Anatomy.

Oſſium meminit quod dolor ad intima uſque oſſa penetravit. Jobo *vix aliud quam oſſa ſupereſſet.*

Verſe 16. **I loath it, I would not live alway; let me alone, for my dayes are vanity.**

He cloſeth up his complaint, as he had often done before, with the *tedium* that was upon him, and the nauſeouſneſs of his life; *I loath it*, I am nothing but skin and bone, nothing but ſores and biles, my life is a burden to me, *I would not live alway.*

מאס

I loath it.] The word ſignifies the greateſt averſation poſſible. God expreſſeth his greateſt diſplicency of that, wherein the *Jews* were commanded to take their greateſt pleaſure under this notion, *Amos* 5. 21. *I deſpiſe your feaſts*; you think you keep ſolemn feaſts, wherein I delight as much as your ſelves, but *I loath them*, my ſtomach turns at every diſh. The ſtomach cloſes with wholeſom meat, and turns to it; that which is unwholeſom, the ſtomach turns againſt, the ſight of it cauſes loathing. Their feaſts were of Gods own appointment, and he uſed (in a ſence) to feaſt with them, but their hypocriſie ſpoil'd the banquet. *Job* ſpeaks of his own life, what the Lord ſpake of their feaſts, *I loath it*, even as that meat which is moſt burdenſome to the ſtomach. So, *Pſal.* 53. 5. *Thou haſt put them to ſhame, becauſe God loathed them*, or, *becauſe God deſpiſed them. They who are loathſome to God, cannot long be honourable or acceptable among men.*

לאלעלם

I would not live alway.] The word is, *I would not live to eternity*, or, *I would not live for ever*. Why, who can, if he would? Why ſhould *Job* deprecate that which was not attainable? *I would not live alway*; he needed not trouble himſelf about that (for he ſpeaks of a natural life) it being impoſſible that he ſhould. There is no fear of living alwayes in this world, nor is there any hope of avoiding it in the next. Why then doth *Job* ſay, *I would not live alway?* To live alway or for ever, is often uſed in Scripture for a long time. The Ceremonies and Inſtitutions of the *Jews* were ſaid to be for ever, becauſe they were long-liv'd, yet we know they are vaniſhed and gone: *That which continues as long as it ſhould, continues alwayes.* So here, *I would not live alway*, that is, I would not live long, or I would not live out my full time, I had rather be cut off in the midſt of my dayes, or in the midſt of my years, then live to the end of them.

Let me alone, for my dayes are vanity.

חדל *huic* חדל *Mundus, tēpus, hoc nomen non tam humanæ vitæ terminum quam totum vitæ curriculum & tempus humanæ vitæ præfinitum denotat, quod cito deficit & ceſſat.*

Let me alone.] Or ceaſe from me; which is taken two wayes, either, leave off to prolong and protract my dayes, ceaſe from me ſo, do not ſtand by me with thine aſſiſting power to keep my life whole within me; I am ready to die, give me no ſtrong-water or cordial, rather pull away my pillow, let me go: Or, *Ceaſe from me*, that is, ceaſe afflicting me, take off thine afflicting hand from me, do not any longer hold me in this woful and ſad condition; *Ceaſe from me*, The world and time, while they continue, are alwayes ceaſing, and therefore have their denomination from this word, which ſignifies to ceaſe.

For my dayes are vanity,] That's the ground of his prayer, why he requeſts God to ceaſe from him, *My dayes are vanity*; why ſhouldeſt thou ſtay me longer in a vain ſhadow? If we take, *Ceaſe from me*, or, *let me alone*, for the ending of his affliction, it is, as if he had ſaid, my life is vanity, there is trouble enough in it; if thou giveſt me the greateſt eaſe that ordinarily a life can have, yet it is but a vain life, I need not have this ſuper-addition or accumulation of ſorrows upon me: Or, *let me alone, my life is vanity*; why ſhould I converſe further any longer with vanity?

My dayes are vanity.] He ſaith not, *My dayes are vain*, but they are *vanity*. *My dayes are Hebel*, which ſignifieth a vain, light thing, a bubble on the water, or a breath of the mouth; my dayes are but a breath or a puff. The root imports vaniſhing or diſappearing, the ſtill, almoſt unperceivable breath of a little infant, which will ſcarce move a feather. Alas! my dayes are fleeting and vaniſhing, vain, yea, vanity; they have no conſiſtency in them, O then ceaſe from me, and let me do what vanity muſt, vaniſh out of ſight. Hence obſerve,

חבל *A verbo* Habal, *quod eſt evaneſcere. Rem denotat quæ non eſt quidpiam, aut citò deſinit, aut flatus, qui exit ab ore, ſic enim halitum infantium appellant* Pag.

Firſt, *That which a man loatheth, he longs to be rid of.*

I loath it, I would not live alway. When a man loaths his ſin, then he ſaith, *I would not ſin alway*, I would be eaſed of this burden of corruption; *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* When a man delights in ſin, he would ſin alway, he thinks he can never have enough of ſinning; it is ſo in any other inſtance: where once affection is alienated, we would be eſtranged and taken off from converſation: We care not to be with that from which our hearts are departed. Aſſoon as ever *Amnon* had defiled, he loaths his ſiſter; and as ſoon as he loathed her, he turned her out of doors; *And Amnon ſaid unto her, ariſe and be gone*, 2 Sam. 13. 15. He that loaths his life, is glad when a door opens for its departure.

I loath it, I would not live alway.

Secondly obſerve, *Trouble makes a little time ſeem long.*

He had ſaid before, that his *life was ſwifter then a Weavers ſhuttle*; now, *I would not live alway.* O how long is my life, how tedious! He looks upon it, as if it were a kind of eternity, as if his life would never have an end, never be done, *I would not live alway.* Pain makes every hour a day, and every day a moneth, and every moneth a year, yea, an age. *He thinks his life will never end, whoſe affliction doth not*; he thinks he ſhall never die, becauſe his troubles live. Every man is ready to ſay, he lives too long, when he lives not as he would. The ſouls under the Altar, cried out (*Rev.* 6. 10.) *How long, Lord, how long, Lord, wilt thou ceaſe to avenge?* &c. Of our good dayes we complain, *How ſhort, Lord, how ſhort?* And of our evil dayes, we cry out, *How long, Lord, how long?* This is a long day, and this a long night indeed; this is a long fit, this a laſting affliction. *As the eternity which we ſhall have in heaven, is the longeſt, ſo it is the ſhorteſt; Eternity is longeſt in regard of duration, but it is ſhorteſt in regard of apprehenſion.* The eternity of heaven ſhall be no more tedious then a minute or a moment. Eternity is ſo full of pleaſure and ſatisfaction, that it breeds no fulneſs of it ſelf; living at the well-head of comfort, in immediate communion with God by Jeſus Chriſt, our comforts renew as much as they continue; whence freſhneſs of appetite, and fulneſs of ſatisfaction are perpetually interchangeable. The joyes of that eſtate are ſo many, that the years ſeem but few. Eternal joy makes eternity but as a moment, as eternal pain will make every moment an eternity.

Thirdly obſerve, Foraſmnch as *Job* ſaith, *I would not live alwayes*; he intimates, that there is ſuch a deſire in ſome men; for he ſpeaks of a life in this world.

There is a principle in man drawing out his heart in deſires to live alway in the world.

I (ſaith *Job*) *would not live alway*; let others make that their choice if they will, I will not. Moſt are very greedy of that commodity, and would not part with it upon any terms; and no wonder, for (as the Pſalmiſt deſcribes them) *they have their portion in this life*: He that hath his portion in this life, would ever have this life; he that hath nothing beyond this world, would never go beyond the world. *Such muſt needs be all for life, all for the world, becauſe theſe are their all.* You ſhall never come to a worldly man, and find him in a mind to die. Let others take heaven, he is contented with his earth; let others make their beſt of the next life, the preſent ſhall ſerve his turn.

From the reaſon of this requeſt, *My dayes are vanity*; obſerve,

The life of man is a vain life.

Vanity hath two things in it, whereof the one may ſeem quite contrary to the other; it hath emptineſs in it, and it hath fulneſs in it; it hath emptineſs of comfort, and fulneſs of vexation; that's the right vanity, *Vanity with vexation of ſpirit*; *My dayes are vanity*, they are empty of good, and full of evil.

Four wayes the vanity of mans dayes may be demonſtrated.

Firſt, They are vain comparatively; ſo our dayes are more then vain, or leſs then vanity, for they are nothing, *Pſal.* 39. 5. *My age is nothing before thee.* As in compariſon of God (*Iſa.* 40. 15, 17.) *The Nations are as the drop of a bucket*, &c. *they are vanity, yea, they are nothing, yea, they are counted to him leſs then nothing*: So our dayes are vain, they are nothing but vanity, they are leſs then vanity, or nothing; *Nothingneſs is the ſubſtance of vanity, and all troubleſomneſs is the accident of it.* We cannot form up an apprehenſion of our life, ſo little as it is, we cannot reach ſo low in our thoughts as the bottom of mans vanity, in either notion. As we are not able to raiſe our hearts ſo high as the excellency of that eſtate which we have by Chriſt; no mans thoughts are big enough, or can be, to comprehend or take in that: So we cannot little our thoughts enough to conſider the eſtate ſin hath brought us into; therefore it is ſaid to be as nothing, and leſs then nothing, and how little that is, which is leſs then nothing, no man can proportion.

Secondly, Our dayes are vanity, becauſe they are ſo unconſtant and changeable, ſo ſubject to motion and alteration. That's a vain thing which is ever upon its change. That which ſets the glory of God higheſt in oppoſition to the vanity of the creature, is, *That with him there is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning*, Jam. 1. 17. or, *ſhadow by turning*; ſome tranſlate it ſo, no ſhadow by turning, becauſe the Tropick or turning of the Sun makes the ſhadow; while the Sun is in the *Zenith*, that is, directly over our heads in the higheſt point of the heavens, we caſt no ſhadows. Now the Lord never turneth, he is ever fixed at a point, and ſo makes no ſhadow; or thus, as we render it, *no ſhadow of turning*; that is, not only is there no turning in God, but there is not ſo much as a ſhadow of it, not ſo much as the leaſt imagination of a ſhadow. This ſets up the glory of God higheſt; and in oppoſition to this point of higheſt perfection in God, lies the loweſt point of the creatures vanity, that in them there is nothing but turning, in them there is nothing but variableneſs, and the ſubſtance of turning. The faſhion of the world paſſeth away, it is ever paſſing, never ſtanding at a ſtay. It is more then paſſing, it is poſting from ſtage to ſtage, night and day. As the nature of man contains the ſeeds and principles of all things in the world (and is therefore called a *little world.*) So his nature contains the ſeeds and principles of all the changes in the world. Therefore his dayes are vain.

Sicut homo omnes in ſeipſo res velut mundus quidam, ita omnium mutationum ſemina continet.

Thirdly, The vanity of theſe dayes appears in this, becauſe they are unſatisfying dayes. That's a vain thing, which doth not ſatisfie; for vanity is emptineſs, and emptineſs can never fill; our dayes are but as a dream. And what is ſpoken in *Iſaiah* (chap. 29. 8.) concerning the dreamer, is verified of a meer natural life. It is, ſaith the Prophet, *As when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; but he awaketh, and his ſoul is empty: or, as when a thirſty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold he is faint*: neither hunger nor thirſt can be appeaſed by dreams; ſatisfaction comes not in at the door of imagination. Our dayes of themſelves can give us no more ſatisfaction, no better a breakfaſt, then a dream of meat and drink doth to a hungry or a thirſty man. *All creatures are not able to fill us.* Theres a ſatisfaction which comes to us through the creature, but the creature doth not ſatisfie;

God can make any thing ſatisfie, the leaſt of all his creatures ſhall fill the greateſt. He can give us as much as we expect from them, that is, look what ſatisfaction a man would have from a creature, that God can give when he pleaſeth; but the dayes of man are vanity in this, becauſe we cannot take this ſatisfaction our ſelves from the creature, neither is any creature able to give it us. When creatures have done their beſt, we are hungry and reſtleſs ſtill, empty and unſatisfied ſtill. *There is no reſt till we return to God, or till God turn his face to us.*

Fourthly, The vanity of our dayes appears in this, that they are *deceivable dayes*; that's very vain to us, which deceives us. And in this the great vanity of the creature conſiſts; it promiſeth much, and performeth nothing. Great promiſes are made, and hopes are raiſed very high; riches will tell us what they will do for us; and honours will tell us what they will do for us, and how happy they will make us; and the wine will tell us, O that will refreſh us; and the ſweet and fat will tell us how they will fatten us. All theſe make golden promiſes, but leaden performances. They cannot make good what they promiſe, unleſs they can with evil. As Satan ſaid to Chriſt, when he had not ſo much as a *ſhooe-latchet* to diſpoſe of, *All this will I give thee*; ſo the creature joyning with our hearts, makes wonderful promiſes of high content, and then leaves us moſt diſcontented; *This is vanity and vexation of mans ſpirit.* If the creature were not ſo free to enter bond and give us ſecurity for the payment of that great good, it would not be ſo ill with us. If the creature would ſay directly to us, *It is not in me*, as *Job* brings in the creatures diſclaiming wiſdom (*chap.* 28.) *The ſea ſaith, it is not in me; and the earth ſaith, it is not in me*: So if creatures would ſpeak plainly, comfort is not in us, help is not in us, ſatisfaction is not in us, and ſo tell us how vain they are, their vanity were leſs to us, though the ſame in it ſelf. *It is worſe to be deceived of good, then to want it.*

Quaſi nihil habeat humana vita verum & ſolidum, ſed apparens umbratile, imaginarium.

Surely (ſaith *David* of this life) *every man walketh in a vain ſhew*, Pſal. 39. 6. There is a ſhew of this, and that, and the other thing, a promiſe of it, but it is a vain ſhew; it is but like a Pageant, which feeds the eye, and delights the fancy, or pleaſes the ear, but paſſeth away, and leaveth you as empty as before. In the fifth verſe of that Pſalm, the inventory of mans temporal eſtate is ſummed up, and the total amounts but to this, *Every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*; and leſt any ſhould think he had miſcounted, an affirmation is prefixt; *ſurely every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*: Every man is vanity, and every man is vanity at his beſt eſtate; not only in his afflictions and in his loſſes, in his troubles and in his ſorrows, ſuch as *Job* now was in; but take a man in the height and perfection, and accompliſhment of all creature-comforts and accrewments; take the cream, the pith, the marrow, the ſweetneſs of all, extract a quinteſſence of all that can be had in creatures, all is vanity. *Man at his beſt eſtate is vanity, yea, altogether vanity.*

Abel *vivétium omniū typus & repreſentatio.* Pined.

When *Cain* was born, there was much ado about his birth; *I have got a man-child from God*, ſaith his Mother; ſhe looked upon him as a great poſſeſſion, and therefore called his name *Cain*, which ſignifies *a poſſeſſion*; but the ſecond man that was born into the world, bare the title of the world, *vanity*; his name was *Abel*, which is the word here uſed: *They called his name Abel*, that is, *vanity*; a premonition was given in the name of the ſecond man, what would or ſhould be the condition of all men, *Pſal.* 144. 4. There is an alluſion unto thoſe two names; we tranſlate it, *Man is like to vanity*; the Hebrew is, *Adam is as Abel*; *Adam* (you know) was the name of the firſt man, the name of *Abel*'s father; but as *Adam* was the proper name of the firſt, ſo it is an appellative, or common to all men; now *Adam*, that is, man, or all men, are *Abel*, vain, and walking in a vain ſhadow.

Χρόνος τοῦ αἰῶνος εἴδωλον. Pined.

And this word is by ſome tranſlated *nothing*; *his dayes are nothing*; Idols are nothing; time is but the Idol of eternity, and things temporal but the Idol of things eternal. This word ſignifies in the Hebrew, an Idol, and a vain thing, *Deut.* 32. 31. *Jer.* 2. 5. The word *Abel* is tranſlated *Idol*; and the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 8. 4.) tells us, that *an Idol is nothing in the world*, that is, an Idol is the vaineſt thing in the world, or the greateſt vanity; ſo that upon the matter, our eſtate and our dayes here, are but an Idol, that is, the repreſentation of a thing which is not; ſo much vanity and folly, ſo much trouble and ſorrow, ſo much affliction is mixed with the dayes and life we now lead, as *a nothing is all* it can juſtly be called, or an Idol, a ſhew of what is not.

התעיף עינך

And therefore we may well make it an argument (as *Job* here) to take us off from the world, and to chide worldlings with, as *David* did (*Pſal.* 4.) *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye love vanity!* or as *Solomon*, about that adored Idol of the world, riches (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes* (or as the original) *wilt thou cauſe thine eyes to flie upon that which is not.* An Eagle will not catch flies (that's no game for her) much leſs will ſhe make a flight at nothing, when there is no game ſprung at all. And wilt thou make a flight with thy heart (for the eye, which *Solomon* chiefly intends, is the eye of the ſoul) when nothing ſprings before thee, but *that which is not?*

To cloſe this point, if the creature be ſo vain, and the dayes of man be vanity, let us ſet our eyes and hearts upon that which is ſomethiug, upon that which is all, upon that which is laſting, upon that which is everlaſting, upon that which is true, upon that which is truth, upon that which will not deceive, upon that which cannot deceive, upon that which will be more in fruition then ever it was in expectation.

The excellency of that eſtate we have in ſpirituals, conſiſts in this, that as it promiſeth much, ſo it performeth much, and rather more then it promiſeth; a believer finds himſelf ſatiſfied in Chriſt beyond expectation; the ſoul did not expect ſo much as it finds: As the Queen of *Sheba* coming to *Solomon*, had ſatisfaction beyond report and promiſe, ſo ſhall all who come to Chriſt; he makes us large promiſes and if we believe, we ſhall find larger performances: We ſhall at laſt ſay, *that the half of thoſe good things which we now enjoy, were not told us in the promiſes.* God hath laid up all good in his word, but our thoughts are not able to take out the extent of thoſe good things: Hence it is ſaid, that when Chriſt appears, *He ſhall come to be admired in his Saints*; things ſhall be ſo far beyond their apprehenſion, that they ſhall be all in admiration.

VERS. 17, 18, 19.

What is man, that thou ſhouldſt magnifie him? and that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon him?

And that thou ſhouldeſt viſit him every morning, and try him every moment?

How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone, till I may ſwallow down my ſpittle?

These three verſes contain a farther argument, whereby *Job* ſtrengthens his complaint. The ſum of the argument is taken from a compariſon of the Power, Majeſty, and greatneſs of God, with the meanneſs and miſery, with the lowneſs and poverty of man; *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine heart upon him?* Why ſhould the great, the wiſe, the powerful, the glorious God contend or have to do with weak, miſerable, vain man? How unequal is this match?

Paria paribus congaudent.

מה אנוש

What is man?] The word is, *What is miſerable man? Enoſh*, man encompaſt about with ſorrows? What is this ſorrowful, miſerable man? *Job* concluded in the former *verſe, man is vanity.* And yet here he queſtions, *What is man?*

The queſtion reliſheth of contempt, rather then of ignorance; and carries with it a low eſtimation of man, let him be what he will; not a want of information what man is: *What is man?* As we uſe to ſay to, or of thoſe we ſlight, *Who are you?* or, *What is he?* It imports the vanity and deficiency of the creature. Or the words are a diminutive admiration; he admires the ſmalneſs, the littleneſs, the meanneſs, the nothingneſs of man. Queſtions in Scripture often abate the ſence, *Zech.* 4. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain?* thou lookeſt very big and very great, *but who art thou?* tell me who thou art, or I will tell thee, thou art now but a mole-hil, thou ſhalt be a nothing ſhortly, *Before Zerubbabel thou ſhalt become a plain*; it is a contemptuous undervaluing queſtion againſt the proud oppoſers of the Church. *Who am I, O Lord, and what is my houſe* (ſaith *David*, 2 Sam. 7. 18.) His queſtion extenuates. On the other ſide, queſtions often encreaſe the ſence, and raiſe it to the higheſt, *Ex.* 15. 11. *Who is a God like unto thee?* where is there ſuch a God as thou art? So, *Mic.* 7. 18, *Who is a God like unto thee,* *pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin*? The queſtion puts the brighteſt glory upon God, in pardoning ſin. Hence man is abaſed in a queſtion, *what is man?* How low, how poor a creature is he?

Or take the queſtion, barely for a deſire of reſolution; as if this were a piece of a Catechiſm about mans frailty, *what is man?* He had told us in the words immediately foregoing the Text; that *man is vanity*, why then doth he enquire in theſe words, *what is man?* It is not to learn what man is, but to teach us the wonder, that man being ſuch ſhould be thus regarded: As if he had ſaid, *Foraſmuch as man is vanity, what is vanity that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie it?* Will any one eſteem vanity, and prize a thing of nought? *Man is vanity*; that's the anſwer to the queſtion.

The Scripture gives many anſwers to this queſtion: Ask the Prophet *Iſaiah*, what is man? And he anſwers (*Chap.* 40.6.) Man is graſs, *All fleſh is graß, and the goodlineß thereof as the flower of the field.* Ask *David, what is man?* He anſwers (*Pſal.* 62.9.) *Man is a lie*, not a lyar only, or a deceiver, but a lye and a deceit. All the anſwers the Holy Ghoſt gives concerning man, are to humble man: man is ready to flatter himſelf, and one man to flatter another; but God tells us plainly what we are.

תגדלנו
גדול
Magnus quantitate vel qualitate, annis, honore, exiſtimatione, authoritate. Shind.

That thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him?] Or make him great? There is a three-fold ſence of that word [**magnifie**] uſed in Scripture.

Firſt, It implies only a manifeſtation or declaration of anothers greatneſs, or an opening of his intrinſical worth and dignity; in which ſence, man is often ſaid to magnifie God, he declares and publiſhes the infinite, internal worth and dignity of God, *Luke* 1.46. the Virgin beginneth her Song thus, *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord.* It is impoſſible we ſhould give the leaſt addition to the greatneſs of God: Then magnifying of God, is only a declaring that God is great: So *Pſalm* 34.3. *O magnifie the Lord with me*, that is, let us joyn our hearts and our tongues in this great work, to lift up the honour and Name of our God.

Secondly, To magnifie, is to eſteem or prize greatly: So the Apoſtle ſpeaking of his office, ſhews how highly he priz'd it, by breaking forth into this holy boaſt, *Rom.* 11.13. *I magnifie mine office.* I eſteem this as my greateſt priviledge and honour, that God hath called me to be an Apoſtle: And *Act.* 5.19. when the Phariſees were ſo angry with the Apoſtles, and many were afraid to joyn with them, the Text ſaith, *the people magnified them*, that is, the people had high thoughts of them, and eſteemed them greatly.

But thirdly, (which is chiefly intended in this place) to magnifie, is to make great, or to give ſome real addition of worth and reſpect. Thus the Lord magnifies man, he magnifies him, by adding ſomewhat to him, by giving glory aud luſtre to man, who in himſelf is vile, and mean, and contemptible. And thus God magnifies man four wayes.

Firſt, He magnifies man in the work of creation; of that we read, *Pſal.* 8.4. where this queſtion is put, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt be mindful of him, or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him*; The third verſe ſhewes us, what it was which raiſed the Pſalmiſt to this admiration of the goodneſs of God to man; *When I behold the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt made? Lord what is man?* God in the work of creation, made all theſe things ſerviceable and inſtrumental for the good of man. What is man, that he ſhould have a Sun, a Moon and Stars planted in the Firmament for him; What creature is this? When great preparations are made in any place, much proviſions layed in, and the houſe adorned with richeſt furnitures; We ſay, *What is this man that comes to ſuch a houſe?* When ſuch a goodly fabrick was raiſed up, the goodly houſe of the world adorned and furniſhed, we have reaſon, admiring to ſay; what is this man that muſt be the tenant or inhabitant of this houſe? There is yet a higher exaltation of man in the creation, man was magnified with the ſtamp of Gods Image; one part whereof the Pſalmiſt deſcribes at *verſ.* 5. *Thou haſt given him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou haſt put all things under his feet, all Sheep and Oxen, yea, and the beaſts of the field, the fowl of the Air, and the fiſh of the Sea*, &c. Thus man was magnified in creation. What was man that he ſhould have the rule of the world given him? That he ſhould bc Lord over the fiſh of the Sea, and over the beaſts of the Field, and over the fowls of the Air. Again, man was magnified in creation, in that God ſet him in the next degree to the Angels; *Thou haſt made him a lit le lower then the Angels*; there is the firſt part of the anſwer to this queſtion, man was magnified in being made ſo excellent a creature, and in having ſo many excellent creatures made for him. All which may be underſtood of man, as created in Gods Image, and Lord of the world; but ſince the tranſgreſſion, it is peculiar to Chriſt, as the Apoſtle applies it (*Heb.* 2.6.) and to thoſe who have their blood and dignity reſtored by the work of redemption, which is the next part of mans exaltation.

Secondly, Man is magnified or made great by the work of redemption. That exalts man indeed. Man was laid low, and his honour in the duſt, notwithſtanding all that greatneſs which he received in creation: Though Sun, and Moon, and Stars, the Fiſh of the Sea, and the Fowles of the Air, *&c.* were made his ſervants, and himſelf a companion of Angels; yet by ſin he fell below all theſe priviledges, and was made a companion for Devi's, a Citizen of Hell: Therefore the ſecond magnifying of man, was by the work of redemption. And, *what was man that thou ſhouldeſt redeem him*, when he was a captive? raiſe him when he was down, build and repair him when he was ruined, when he was loſt ſeek him, and when he was bankrupt and undone, give him a better ſtock and ſet him up again? What was man that thou ſhouldeſt do all this for him? How did the mercy of God magnifie his ſervants, when he gave his Son to pay their debt to his own juſtice? If man was magnified when the Sun, and Moon, and Heavens were made for him; how was he magnified, when God was made man for him? How was he exalted, when the Son of God was humbled for him?

Thirdly, Man is magnified or made great in the work of regeneration, wherein God re-ſtamps his Image upon him, in thoſe ſhining characters of holineſs and knowledge; The firſt creation being ſpoiled, occaſioned redemption, and redemption purchaſed a ſecond creation. *Every one that is in Chriſt is a new creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Our dignity is far greater in being new creatures then in being creatures.

Laſtly, Man is magnified by thoſe ſeveral acts of favour and grace, which God caſts upon him every day: ſmiling upon him, embracing him in his arms, admitting him to near communion with himſelf, watching over him, tending him, guarding him with Angels, directing him, counſelling him, comforting him, upholding him by his Spirit, till he bring him unto glory, which is the higheſt ſtep of preferment that mans nature is capable of. What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him in all theſe things? Obſerve hence,

First, That, *All the worth and dignity of man is out of himſelf.*

What is man? As if he had ſaid, man hath nothing of his own, to commend him to or to ingratiate himſelf with God: God hath put ſomething upon him, he hath magnified man, and given him a real worth, becauſe he would. Free-grace exalts man. Hence (*Pſal.* 90.20.) the Pſalmiſt prayes, *Let the Heathen know themſelves to be but men*: As if he had ſaid; man who is high in his own eſteem, conceits himſelf to be ſomewhat above man, he judges of himſelf beyond his own ſphear and border: Therefore Lord bring their thoughts within the compaſs of their own condition, *Let them know that they are but men*; A man that is acquainted with himſelf, will be humble enough; *A mear man is but mear earth*: The Prophet tells him ſo thrice over with one breath (*Jer.* 22.29.) *O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the word of the Lord.* Man is Earth, in the conſtitution of his body, that was framed out of the Earth: he is earthly in the corruption of his mind, that muds in the Earth: The Apoſtles ſtile is, *earthly minded men*: And he will be Earth in his diſſolution; when he dies he returns *to his Earth.* A natural man is earth all over; Earth in his making, earthly in his mind, his ſpirit is earthly, Earth gets into his Heaven, his upper regions: and the body, his lower region, ſhall moulder to Earth again: Then, *what is man?* Hence (I ſay) it is, that when man at any time would exalt and lift himſelf up, he thinks himſelf above man, he hath ſome notion or apprehenſion of an excellency, beyond the line of a creature: He conceits he hath or is a piece of a deity. The firſt ground of hope upon which man raiſed himſelf againſt God, was, that he might be a god; hs was not ſatisfied in being made like unto God, he would be (*which was the higheſt robbery*) Gods equal, and ſtand by himſelf: this thought was his fall. There is ſuch a principle of pride in the hearts of all men by nature. They are not contented in the ſphear of a creature, they would be ſomewhat beyond that. The truth is, all the true worth and dignity of man, is in what he hath beyond himſelf, his excellency is in Chriſt, and his glory, in being made a partaker of the divine nature. It abaſed man, when he aſpired to take a divine nature to himſelf, but it exalts man, when God inſpires him with a participation of the divine nature. *What is man that thou doeſt thus magnifie him?* Chriſt makes us very great and glorious, by the dignity which he puts upon us: as he tells the Church (*Ezek.* 16.14.) *Thy beauty was perfect, through my comlineſs which I had put upon thee*; thou hadſt no comlineſs, no beauty of thine own, but thorough my comlineſs thou art very beautiful. The worth of man is out of himſelf; the Church ſhines by thoſe rayes, by that luſtre, which Chriſt caſts upon her.

Secondly, Obſerve from this queſtion, *What is man?* &c.

Man hath laid himſelf ſo low, that he is not worthy of one thought from God.

What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, and ſet thy heart upon him? It is a wonder that God ſhould vouchſafe a gracious look upon ſuch a creature as man; it is wonderful conſidering the diſtance between God and man, as man is a creature, and God the Creator; *What is man,* that God ſhould take notice of him? is he not a clod of Earth, a piece of clay? But conſider him as a ſinful and an unclean creature, and we may wonder to amazement; what is an unclean creature, that God ſhould magnifie him? Will the Lord indeed put value upon filthineſs, and fix his approving eye upon an impure thing? One ſtep further, what is rebellious man, man an enemy to God, that God ſhould magnifie him! What admiration can anſwer this queſtion? Will God prefer his enemies, and magnifie thoſe who would caſt him down? Will a Prince exalt a Traytor, or give him honour, who attempts to take away his life? The ſinful nature of man, is an enemy to the nature of God, and would pull God out of Heaven; yet God even at that time, is raiſing man to Heaven; *Sin would leſſen the great God, and yet God greatens ſinful man.* Obſerve,

Thirdly, *Though man be low in himſelf, yet God beſtows many thoughts and cares upon him.*

Though there be no reaſon at all in man, why God ſhould magnifie him, yet God doth and will. Free-grace overlooks all the diſtance that is between God and us, as we are creatures, and it overlooks that greater and vaſter diſtance which is between God and us, as we are ſinful creatures. Many a man is ready to think himſelf ſo good and ſo great, that his brother is not worthy one of his thoughts, or a caſt of his eye; he thinks it too much to look towards a man, that is of the ſame make with himſelf, becauſe he is a little lower ſtatur'd in eſtate or degree. A great rich man thinks he doth a poor man a very great favour, if he turns about and ſpeaks to him: We may well cry out with admiration, O the pride of man to man! and O the love of God to man! one man hath ſcarce humility enough to ſpeak to another, who in nature is equal to him, and yet God (who is infinitely above us) hath love enough to magnifie and ſet his heart upon him.

The language of the Holy Ghoſt is very gradual about this point.

Firſt, *What is man that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son of man that thou viſiteſt him?* Phil. 8. 4. To be mindful of a man is not ſo much as to viſit him, we may be mindful of thoſe whom we go not to ſee, or to whom we ſend no help.

Secondly, *What is man that thou takeſt any knowledge of him? Or the Son of man that thou makeſt an account of him?* Pſal. 144.3. It is much that God will take knowledge of a man, or caſt an eye upon him; but it is a great deal more, that God will make account of him. But the third and higheſt ſtep of favour, is this of the Text, that the Lord will magnifie man, and ſet his heart upon him, as if he could not be without him? Obſerve,

Fourthly, *The true apprehenſion of the greatneſs of Gods mercy and goodneſs to us, makes us little in our own eyes.*

I ground it thus, when *Job* had conſidered how the Lord exalts and greatens man, he then abaſes and diminiſhes man; *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him?* Nothing ſhould draw man ſo low in himſelf, as to think how high God doth, and how much higher, yet God intends to raiſe him. In the 1 *Chron.* 17. 16. When *David* enquired of God by *Nathan,* whether he ſhould build him an houſe, God anſwered no, he ſhould not, but his ſon after him ſhould; But though the Lord would not have *David* build him an houſe, yet the meſſenger, who was to carry this report, muſt tell *David, That the Lord would build him an houſe, and eſtabliſh his ſons upon the Throne after him,* verſ. 10, 11. Aſſoon as *David* had this anſwer brought him of Gods wonderful goodneſs toward him, and of thoſe large promiſes to his family, he breaks out into this diminutive admiration, *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto? And yet this is a ſmall thing in thine eyes, O God: for thou haſt alſo ſpoke of thy ſervants houſe for a great while to come, and haſt regarded me according to the eſtate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.* We hear not of ſuch an humble ſpeech falling from *David's* lips, till God ſent him that meſſage of advancement. And ſo (2 *Sam.* 9. 8.) when *David* out of that abundant love he bare to *Jonathan,* enquired, *Is there any that is left of the houſe of* Saul, *that I may ſhew him kindneſs for* Jonathan's *ſake? Mephiboſheth* was found; and when *David* told him, I will take care for thee, *Thou ſhalt eat bread at my table continually*; This favour aſtoniſheth *Mephiboſheth, what is thy ſervant, that thou ſhouldeſt look upon ſuch a dead dog as I am?* He ſpake of himſelf below man, when he heard *David* ſpeak ſo highly of him. A living Dog is better then a dead Lion; but what is worſe then a dead Dog? The like impreſſion *David's* exceſſive kindneſs made upon the ſpirit of *Abigail* (1 *Sam.* 25.41.) when he ſent meſſengers to her, after the death of her husband *Nabal,* to aſſure her that he would be her husband. This honour (that *David* anointed King over *Iſrael* ſhould deſire her to be his Wife) abaſes *Abigail* in her own eyes, *Let me* (ſaith ſhe) *be a ſervant to waſh the feet of the ſervants of my Lord. David's* wife! (ſaid ſhe) it is too much preferment for me, to be *David's* ſervant; I ſhall be honoured enough to be his ſervants ſervant, and that in the loweſt ſervice, to waſh their feet. As ingenuous ſpirits, when they hear meſſages of great favours tender'd them, fall low in their own thoughts: So much more will gracious ſpirits. Thoſe magnifying offers of Chriſt, and pardon of ſin by him, of a crown of life, and an exceeding weight of glory purchas'd by him; theſe magnifying promiſes (I ſay) bring the ſoul upon the knee, upon the meditation and acknowledgment of it's own meanneſs and vileneſs; *What am I that the Lord ſhould reſpect me, that the Lord ſhould redeem me, that he ſhould regenerate me, that he ſhould ſet his love upon me, prepare Heaven and glory, a Crown and a Kingdom for me? What am I? There is nothing doth more empty us of ſelf-conceit and high thoughts, then duly to conſider what high thoughts God hath of us.*

Note one thing further from theſe words, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him?*

If God magnifie man, one man ſhould not vilifie and debaſe another; one man ſhould not contemn and ſlight another.

Who art thou that contemneſt thy brother? Thou canſt not (really) magnifie thy brother, and wilt thou debaſe him? It is a moſt dangerous attempt to abaſe thoſe whom God magnifies, to deſpiſe thoſe whom God honours. That, on whom God ſets his heart againſt him, man ſhould ſet his heart, or tongue, or pen. God ſeeks occaſion to magnifie us, though we give him advantages every day to caſt diſhonour upon us. Let man take heed how he diſhonours thoſe whom the great God now doth, and intends to honour more. When *Pharoah* magnified *Joſeph*, he cauſed the people to cry *Abrech*, that is, *bow the knee before him*, Geneſ. 41. 43. And when *Ahaſuerus* intended to advance *Mordecai*, he commanded him to be arrayed in Royal apparel, *&c.* and proclamation to be made *Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour*, Eſther 6. 11. Princes expect that all ſhould favour and honour thoſe whom they honour and make their favourites. Surely then the great God will not bear it, that they ſhould be deſpiſed, whom he delights in, and caſts honour upon.

But here a Queſtion ariſes, How this is appliable unto *Job*? Why doth *Job*, who lay upon a dung-hill, and was caſt into ſo low a condition, ſpeak of *magnifying*? Was *Job* magnified? Doth *Job* wonder at his preferment and exaltation, when he was brought down to the duſt? Poor *Job*! Thou waſt almoſt nullified, and made no body, and doſt thou ſpeak, as if thy honour were too big for thee, *What is man that thou ſhouldſt magnifie him?* We may anſwer.

Firſt, By connecting this word [magnifie] with the words that follow; *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, and that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon him?* As if he had ſaid, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, by ſetting thine heart upon him?* And ſo ſetting the heart upon man, is an explication of what is meant by magnifying man. And that is a clear truth; when God ſets his heart upon a man, he magnifies him ſure enough; that act of God is the exaltation of the creature: Man needs no greater honour then this, that God ſets his heart upon him; he that knows that, knows himſelf high enough. Whatſoever man ſet his heart upon, he (as man can) exalts and magnifies it. If a man ſets his heart upon another man, he magnifies that man. Yea if a man ſets his heart upon a beaſt or a ſtone (he in a ſence) deifies that beaſt, that ſtone. If he ſets his heart upon any creature, he makes that creature a god to him: for nothing ſhould have the heart but God alone. And the reaſon is, becauſe ſetting the heart upon any thing is the higheſt exaltation we can give it. Therefore nothing ought to have the heart ſet upon it, but God, for he is Lord over all. And the Lord calls us to ſet our hearts upon him, becauſe that is the higheſt honour creatures can give him. Now as our ſetting our hearts on God magnifies him, ſo the ſetting of his heart on us doth wonderfully magnifie us. And he therefore ſets his heart upon us, that we might at once ſee and admire how much he honours us. If a King ſet his heart upon a man, that man is greatly magnified; he is magnified in the opinion of others, and not only in the bare opinion of others, but there is a real dignity put upon that man, on whom a King puts his heart. How much more if God ſets his heart upon a man, is man really magnified. That God ſets his eye upon a man is a magnifying of him. It was the priviledge of *Solomon's* Temple, that the Lord promiſed his eye would be upon that place: and it was a high honour to the Temple, that God would look upon it continually, 1 *King*. 8. 29. If it be a condeſcenſion in God to eye the creature, *He humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and in the Earth*, Pſal. 113. 6. How great is his condeſcention in ſetting his heart upon the creature. So there is a truth in this ſence, and we may make a comfortable improvement of it, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, by ſetting thine heart upon him?*

Secondly, *Job* may have reſpect to his former greatneſs, when God magnified him, and made him the greateſt man in the Eaſt; and is now bemoaning his own change, in the changeableneſs of mans condition; who when he is lifted up to the higheſt, fairly built and adorned, yet in a moment may be caſt down and ruined. Therefore *Job* comes with his wonder, *Lord, what is man!* What is the ordinary ſtate of man, that thou ſhouldeſt take care to make him great! As if he had ſaid, why didſt thou magnifie me, to make me the greateſt man in the Eaſt? Why didſt thou ſet thine heart upon me to bleſs my family, and provide for me, as if thou hadſt none elſe to provide for? Thou ſeeſt mans beauty is blaſted in the twinckling of an eye, and then all thy work is loſt. *It is not worth the while to do that which may be undone ſo ſoon.* Would any one be at coſt to build a houſe, to beſtow a great deal of charge and pains upon it, and it may be ſpend ſome years about the adorning and furniſhing of it; and when all is done, it is ſuch a houſe, that the next breath of wind may level with the ground. What is ſuch a houſe that a man ſhould build it? When man is raiſed up and built, a puff of wind, a blaſt of affliction blows him down, and brings him to the duſt; what is this man that he ſhould be magnified? This is a good ſence of the words; that *Job* reflecting upon his former greatneſs, and honour, now defaced and overthrown, breaks out into this expoſtulation; what is man? Why ſhould God in his providence lay out ſo much to magnifie and ſet a man up, who may be ſo quickly down, as you ſee I am at this day.

Quorſum in me locupletando tuam operam poſuiſti, tuam providentiã oſtendiſti, quare me ad eum ſtatum evexiſti in qua perſiſtere non poteram.

But thirdly, rather take it thus, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him?* Namely by dealing with him thus in chaſtnings and afflictions by diſciplining and tutoring him with the rods of thy correction.

But you will ſay, Is it a magnifying of a man to afflict a man?

Yes, It is a magnifying of man; man is magnified two wayes by affliction.

Firſt, In that God who is ſo great will deſcend to chaſtiſe and correct, or to order the chaſtiſments and corrections of man. Man is magnified, when God deals or contends with him. That God wraſtles and ſtrives with man, is an honour to man. *David* (1 Sam. 24. 14.) ſeems to look upon it as too great an honour (though it were a burthenſom one) that *Saul*, a King, one ſo much above him, would follow and purſue him; *Againſt whom is the King of* Iſrael *come out? Againſt a dead Dog, or againſt a Flea?* Alas, I am no match for thee, thou putteſt too much weight upon me, in that thou contendeſt with me. To make great preparations, and to ſend out a great Army and skilful Commanders againſt an enemy, magnifies that enemy, that is, it begets an opinion, that ſurely he is ſome great and potent enemy againſt whom ſuch great preparations are made. In this ſence you may underſtand it, that affliction is a magnifying of a man, becauſe the great God comes forth to battel againſt *him, who* is but duſt and aſhes, but as a dead Dog, or a Flea The Heathens had ſuch a notion, they looked upon it as no ſmall priviledge for a man to be ſlain by ſome famous great Commander; Comfort thy ſelf in this miſerable death (ſaid one) *thou falleſt by the hand of great* Æneas, thou art magnified enough in this, that thou haſt ſuch a man as *Æneas* to fight with thee. And another, *To die by the arm of* Hercules, *a mighty favour and alwayes to be remembred.* Some kind of trouble is an honour, as well as a trouble: The magnifying of man, as well as an afflicting of him. Man is ſo far from deſerving any favour from God, that as a creature, he is not worthy a blow, though as a ſinner, he is moſt worthy of death from God.

Indignus ſũ quem vel percutias, contemptior ſum quam ut adverſus me manum extindas.

Hoc tamen infœlix miſeram ſolabere mortē. Ænei. *magni dextrâ cadis*, Virg. l. 10. *Occumbens, Is nunc Herculis armis. Donum ingens ſemperque tuis memorabile factis.* Valer. Flac. l. 3. Argon.

But ſecondly, we may anſwer it, that man is (not only thus notionally, but) really magnified by afflictions, and that two wayes.

Firſt, In this life, the very humbling of the Saints are their exaltations: their afflictions are their glory. There was never any ſo famous for greatneſs, for riches, for honours, as ſome have been for ſufferings. Who is there upon Record throughout the whole book of God? Who is there in any Hiſtory of the world ſo famous for greatneſs and riches and high atchievements, as *Job* a ſufferer? All the victories of *Alexander* or *Caſar*, yea of *Joſhua* and *David*, have not rendred them ſo famous to poſterity, as the conflicts of *Job*. His afflictions have magnified him more, then all his other greatneſs, or then the greatneſs of other men hath magnified them. If *Job* had only been the richeſt man in the Eaſt, I believe we ſhould never have had a word of any of his acts, or ſo much as mention of his name in Scripture. That which gave him the honour to have a whole book written of him alone by the pen of the Holy Ghoſt, beſides the often mention of his precious name in other books, is this, that he endured ſo much. *That man is magnified really, who is thus afflicted, and comes off holily.*

Secondly, Afflictions have an influence upon the life to come. The Apoſtle is expreſs in that, 2 *Cor*. 4. 17. where he exhorts, not to be troubled with our preſent afflictions, for they *work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory.* That which works for us an exceeding weight of glory, magnifies us. It is not ſaid any where in Scripture, that a mans honours, or his riches, or his greatneſs in the world, work for him a far more exceeding weight of glory: There is no ſuch thing aſcribed or attributed to outward comforts and priviledges; but our afflictions work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory. Not (as Papiſts abuſe that Scripture) as if afflictions did merit glory; but as the way and courſe wherein God ſets men, and through which he will exalt and lift them up to greateſt glory. Glory is the purchaſe of Chriſt, and all the heavieſt ſufferings of the creature are not able to purchaſe one grain of glory, not the leaſt imaginable weight of glory, much leſs an exceeding weight of glory; but God brings his people to glory, and makes them (as he did the Lord Chriſt) in their degree perfect through ſufferings. Hence obſerve,

Duntaxat ſignificatur, quo itinere ad gloriam pervenitur.

That, *Afflictions are (if rightly improved) the exaltations and magnifyings of the Saints.*

The rod of Diſcipline in Gods hand, becomes a Scepter of honour in ours. This croſſes the common thoughts of the world. The truth is, there is ſcarce a ſoul in the world under affliction, but he thinks himſelf abaſed by it, and ſaith, that God hath laid him low. Yet the right uſe and improvement of affliction is the beſt preferment. The Apoſtle, *James* 1. is expreſs, *Let the brother of low degree rejoyce in that he is exalted.* The low have an exaltation; yea, their lowneſs is their exaltation; yet, we are ready to have undervaluing thoughts of our ſelves, when the hand of God is upon us; when God takes away that for which men ſet a price upon themſelves, they ſcarce think themſelves worth any thing. But this eſpecially reaches that ſinful contempt of others, a man afflicted is eſteemed by moſt as a man abaſed. They who have prized a man, and had great thoughts of him, when he had a great eſtate, *&c.* let him once fall in temporals, though he continue the ſame in ſpirituals, yea though he encreaſes in them, and his Grace ſhines as much or more then ever, yet he is diſeſteemed and laid low in their thoughts. So much for thoſe words, *what it is to magnifie*, and likewiſe how they may have a ſutableneſs with *Job*'s condition, he being ſo afflicted and emptied when he ſpake them.

And that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon him.

To ſet the heart, notes four things in Scripture.

Firſt, Great care and intention of ſpirit, *Prov.* 27. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the ſtate of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds*; the Hebrew is, *ſet thy heart upon thy herds*: The heart is ſet upon the herds in providing and taking care of them, in looking to the welfare of the herds and of the flocks, *Samuel* uſes that language to *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 9. 20.) when he came ſeeking his fathers Aſſes; *As for the Aſſes* (ſaith he) *ſet not thine heart upon them*, that is, take no care for them, never trouble thy ſelf more about that buſineſs, that care is over, they are found. In this ſence God ſets his heart upon man; *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon him?* that is, that thou ſhouldeſt take ſo much care of him, and watch over him: As the Lord ſpeaks of his Vineyard (*Iſa.* 27. 3.) *I the Lord will keep it, leſt any hurt it; I will keep it night and day:* He ſet his heart upon the vineyard to watch it, leſt any ſhould, touching, hurt it. God in this ſence takes ſo much care for man, that he ſeemeth (as it were) careleſs of all other creatures, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. *Doth God take care for Oxen?* God doth take care for Oxen: The Apoſtle having ſhewed the goodneſs of God to beaſts, providing by a Law, that they ſhould not be muzled, preſently he queſtions, *Doth God take care for Oxen?* As if he had ſaid, ſurely there is ſomewhat more in it; *or ſaith he it altogether for our ſakes?* Not altogether, doubtleſs God had regard to Oxen; *But for our ſakes no doubt it was written*, that is, chiefly for our ſakes, *That he which ploweth, ſhould plow in hope, and he that threſheth in hope, ſhould be partaker of his hope.* So when Chriſt ſpeaketh of the Lilies, *Mat.* 6. *If God ſo cloath the Lilies of the field, how much more will he cloath you?* You ſhall have the ſtrength of his care to provide for you, to feed and cloath you. Thus God ſets his heart upon man, he looks to his people as to his houſhold, to his charge; he will ſee they ſhall have all things needful for them. And ſo not laying to heart (which is the contrary) ſignifies careleſneſs, *Iſa.* 47. 7. It is reported of *Babylon, Thou ſaidſt I ſhall be a Lady for ever, ſo that thou didſt not lay theſe things to thy heart*, that is, thou didſt not regard theſe things, to take care about them. And, *Ezek.* 40. 4. The expreſſion is very full, where God calls the Prophet to attention, and he calleth him all over; *Behold* (ſaith he) *with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and ſet thine heart on all that I ſhall ſhew thee*: He awakens the whole man; ſee, and ſee with thine eyes; hear, and hear with thine ears, and ſet thine heart upon it; the ſum of all is, be thou very intentive and diligent about this buſineſs to the utmoſt.

Secondly, To ſet the heart, notes an act of the affections and deſires. A man ſets his love upon what he ſets his heart; that is the meaning of *Pſal.* 62. 10. *If riches encreaſe, ſet not your heart upon them*, that is, let not your love, your affections, your deſires cloſe with theſe things: when riches abound, let not your deſires abound too. It is an admirable frame of heart to have narrow, ſcant affections in a large plentiful eſtate. *He is the true rich man, who loves his riches poorly. Set your affections on things that are above*, Col. 3. 2.

Thirdly, To ſet the heart, notes high eſteem and account, this is more then bare love and affection, 2 *Sam.* 18. 3. When a Council of war was held by *David*'s Commanders, about going out to battel againſt *Abſalom*, they all vote againſt *David*'s perſonal undertaking, upon this ground, *They will not care for us, they will not ſet their hearts upon us, or value us*, their hearts are ſet upon thee, thou art the prize they look for, and therefore the heat of the battel will be againſt thee. Again, 1 *Sam.* 4. 20. When the wife of *Phineas* was delivered of a ſon (a ſon is the womans joy and glory, yet) the text ſaith, when the women that ſtood by, told her that a ſon was born, *ſhe anſwered not, neither did ſhe regard it*, ſhe did not ſet her heart upon it, becauſe the glory was departed from *Iſrael.*

In either of theſe ſences, the Lord ſets his heart upon man, he greatly loves man; the love of God to man, is the ſpring of mercy to man; yea, love is the ſpring of love, love acted, ſprings from a decree of love; (*Deut.* 7. 7.) *The Lord thy God did not ſet his love upon you*, &c, *becauſe ye were more in number then any other people, but becauſe the Lord loved you.* Love alſo led in that higheſt work of mercy, the giving of Chriſt: *So God loved the world, that he gave hi[illegible]ly begotten Son*, John 3. 16. As love is the ſpring and root of all the real duty which man performs to God, and is therefore called *the fulfilling of the Law*, our love fulfilleth the will of God; ſo the love of God is the root of all that good we receive; his love fulfilleth our will, that is, whatſoever we will or ask according to the will of God, the love of God fulfils it for us. Our love fulfils the law of Gods command, and Gods love fulfils the law of our wants and lawful deſires. His heart is ſet upon us, and then his hand is open to us.

Further, God doth not only love man, but his love is great, and his eſteem of man very high; and he realizes the greateſt love by beſtowing the greateſt mercy: How did God ſet his heart upon us, when he gave his Son, who lay in his boſom, for us? *He ſet his boſom upon us when he gave us his ſon, who came out of his boſom.*

Hence let us ſee our duty. Should not we ſet our hearts upon God, when God ſets his heart upon us? The Soveraignty of God calls for our hearts; he, as Lord, may uſe all that we have or are: And there is more then a law of Soveraignty why we ſhould give God our hearts; God hath given us his heart firſt: he who calleth for our hearts, hath firſt given us his. What are our hearts to his heart? The love of God infinitely exceeds the love and affection of the creature. What were it to God if he had none of our hearts? But wo to us, if we had not the heart of God. This phraſe ſhews us the reaſon why God calls for our hearts; he gives us his own; it is but equal among men, to love where we are loved, to give a heart, where we have received one; how much more ſhould we love God, and give him our hearts, when we hear he loves us and ſets his heart upon us, whoſe love and heart alone is infinitely better then all the loves and hearts of all men and Angels?

There is yet a fourth conſideration about this expreſſion, the ſetting of the heart. Setting the heart is applied to the anger and diſpleaſure of God; ſo the phraſe is uſed (*Job* 34. 14.) *If he ſet his heart upon man, all fleſh ſhall periſh together*; that is, if God be reſoved to chaſtiſe man, to bring

judzjudgments upon him, all fleſh ſhall periſh together; none ſhall be able to oppoſe it. As it is the higheſt favour to have God ſet his heart upon us in mercy and love, ſo it is the higheſt judgment to have God ſet his heart upon a man in anger and in wrath, to ſet his heart to afflict and puniſh. The Lord anſwers his own people, *Jer.* 15. 1, 2, 3. that notwithſtanding all the prayers and motions of his beloved favourites in their behalf, *his heart could not be towards them.* Then his heart was ſtrongly ſet againſt them, or upon them in extream anger; therefore he concludes, *they that are for the ſword, to the ſword, and they that are for deſtruction, to deſtruction,* &c. If God ſet his heart to afflict; he will afflict, and he can do it. And there may be ſuch a ſence of the text here. *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon him?* that thou ſhouldſt come ſo reſolved to conteſt and contend with man who is but duſt and aſhes? The words following (though I adhere rather to the former interpetation) carry ſomewhat toward it.

Verſe 18. **That thou ſhouldeſt viſit him every morning, and try him every moment?**

Here are two acts more about which the queſtion is put. *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt viſit him every morning?* And, *what is man that thou ſhouldſt try him every moment?*

That thou ſhouldeſt viſit him every morning?

פקד *Viſitavit in bonum & in malum.*

To *Viſit,* is taken three wayes, and they may all be applied to this text.

To *viſit,* is firſt, to afflict, to chaſten, yea, to puniſh; the higheſt judgments in Scripture come under the notion of viſitations, *Exod.* 34. 7. *Viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children,* that is, puniſhing them. And in the Prophets, *Jer.* 5. 9. *Shall not I viſit for this? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this? Jer.* 48. 44. When God came againſt *Moab* with thoſe terrible judgments, it is called *the year of their viſitation: I will bring upon it, even upon Moab, the year of their viſitation.* And it is a common ſpeech with us, when a houſe hath the Plague, which is one of the higheſt ſtroaks of temporal affliction, we uſe to ſay, *Such a houſe is viſited.* Hence obſerve,

Afflictions are Viſitations.

They are called ſo, becauſe then God comes to ſearch our hearts and lives; *Afflictions are Gods ſearchers and examiners. Jeruſalem* is threatned to be ſearcht with candles, and that was the time of *Jeruſalems* viſitation. To ſearch with a candle, notes the moſt accurate ſearching; as the woman when ſhe had loſt her groat, *lighted a candle, and ſought diligently till ſhe found it;* ſhe viſited every hole to find it out. When you ſee the Lord afflicting, then he is viſiting; he lights a candle to ſearch every corner of your lives.

And if afflictions be Gods viſitations, it is time for man to viſit himſelf when he is afflicted. We ſhould viſit our ſouls when God viſits our bodies, our eſtates, our families, or the Kingdom where we live. Wo to thoſe who do not viſit themſelves when God viſits them. The Prophet calls to this duty in a time of ſaddeſt viſitation, *Let us ſearch and try our wayes,* Lam. 3.

Yet further, if God in affliction viſit us, let us viſit God; let us anſwer his viſitation of us with our viſitation of him. *Lord, in trouble have they viſited thee, they powred out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them,* Iſa. 26. 16. Would you know what the viſiting of God is? It is praying unto him; *They viſited thee, they powred out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them.* We viſit heaven in our afflictions, when we pray much in our afflictions. When God viſiteth us, let us viſit him, and never give over viſiting him, till he remove his viſitation from us, or ſanctifie it to us. That's the firſt ſenſe.

Secondly, To viſit, in a good ſence, ſignifies to ſhew mercy, and to refreſh, to deliver, and to bleſs, *Ruth.* 1. 6. *Naomi heard how the Lord had viſited his people, and given them bread.* Gen. 21. 2. *The Lord viſited Sarah, and ſhe conceived,* &c. Exod. 3. 16. *The Lord hath ſurely viſited his people,* when they were upon dawnings of deliverance out of *Egypt:* That greateſt mercy and deliverance that ever the children of men had, is thus expreſſed, *Luke* 1. 68. *The Lord hath viſited and redeemed his people.* Mercies are viſitations, when God comes in kindneſs and love to do us good, he viſiteth us. And theſe mercies are called viſitations in two reſpects.

Firſt, Becauſe God comes near to us when he doth us good: Mercy is a drawing near to a ſoul, a drawing near to a place. As when God ſends a judgment, or afflicts, he is ſaid to depart and go away from that place; ſo when he doth us good, he comes near, and as it were applies himſelf in favour to our perſons and habitations.

Secondly, They are called a viſitation becauſe of the freeneſs of them. A viſit is one of the freeſt things in the world. There is no obligation but that of love, to make a viſit; becauſe ſuch a man is my friend, and I love him, therefore I viſit him. Hence, I ſay, that greateſt act of free grace in redeeming the world, is called a *viſitation,* becauſe it was as freely done as ever any friend made a viſit to ſee his friend, and with infinite more freedom; there was no obligation on mans ſide at all, many unkindneſſes and neglects there were. God in love came to redeem man.

Idiotiſmus eſt elegans apud Hebræos pro eo quod eſt diligentiſſimè & exactiſſimè rem inveſtigare. Bold.

Thirdly, To viſit, imports an act of care and inſpection, of tutorage and direction. The Paſtors office over the flock, is expreſſed by this act, *Zech.* 10. 3. *Acts* 15. 36. And the care we ought to have of the fatherleſs and widows, is expreſt by viſiting of them. *Pure Religion* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*) *is this, to viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction* Jam. 1. 27. & Mat. 25. 34. Chriſt pronounceth the bleſſing on them who, when he was in priſon, viſited him; which was not a bare ſeeing, or asking how do you; but it was care of Chriſt in his impriſonment, and helpfulneſs and proviſion for him in his afflicted members. That ſence alſo agrees well with this place, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt viſit him?* that is, that thou ſhouldſt take care, have ſuch an inſpection over him, look ſo narrowly to, and provide for him? *That thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning?*

לבקרים *Singulis manè, quotidie manè, manè autem fieri dicitur quod quotidie fit, ac diligenter ſeduloque.* Druſ. *Latini vocant diluculum, quaſi dici lucula,* i. e. *parva lux.*

Reliquum diei tempus, quaſi ob majorem lucis intenſionem vocant. עצם היום *Ghetſem, Hajom,* i. e. *corpus, robur diei.* Bold.

Every morning.] The Hebrew is, *in the mornings.* And the word here uſed for morning is conſiderable: There is a twofold morning, which the *Jews* diſtinguiſhed exactly by their watch. One morning was that which they accounted from an hour before Sun-riſing, from the very firſt breaking of the day, till the ſun appeared above the Horizon, which is about the ſpace of an hour. And the word which they uſe for it is *Shachar,* which ſignifies to be darkiſh or blackiſh, becauſe that firſt morning is ſomewhat dark; and ſo the Latine word (*diluculum*) which is for the firſt morning, is by the Criticks called *a little of the day;* but their other morning was the ſpace of an hour after Sun-riſing, and the root of that word ſignifies to ſeek or enquire, to enquire diligently. And the reaſon why they expreſs the ſecond morning ſo, is, becauſe when the Sun is up, we may ſeek and ſearch about our buſineſs, or go on in our callings and affairs. The height of the day they call the body or ſtrength, we, the heat of the day; either morning may be here meant, though the word bears the latter properly: *Thou doſt viſit him every morning,* that is, as ſoon as the Sun is up, yea, as ſoon as day breaks, or there is any light, thou art viſiting. Mans viſits are uſually in the afternoon; it is an extraordinary thing to viſit one in the forenoon, more extraordinary to viſit in a morning, and moſt, early in the morning. Gods viſits are extraordinary viſits. they are viſitings in the morning, and viſitings every morning, as often as the morning returns, ſo often doth God come to viſit; not a morning that we miſs him.

To do a thing *every morning,* notes, firſt, the doing of it alwayes; or ſecondly, the certain doing of it; *Thou doſt viſit every morning,* that is, as ſurely and as certain as the Sun riſeth, and the morning cometh, ſo certainly doth God viſit man. Or thirdly, it notes the ſpeed the haſte that God makes to viſit; *he viſits in the morning,* that is, betimes, God delayes not until noon, much leſs ſtayes till it be night; but he cometh in the morning, *Pſal,* 46. 5. *God ſhall hear her, and that right early;* the Hebrew is, God ſhall hear her in the morning, betimes, ſpeedily. The late coming in to work in the vineyard, is expreſt by coming at the eleventh hour, they came ſpeedily, who came in the morning, at the firſt hour. And to ſhew that we ought not to continue in wrath, and keep up our anger, it is ſaid, *let not the ſun go down upon your wrath,* that is, do not continue all day angry, let your anger go down ſpeedily, even before the Sun.

In

Hoc ad conſervationem & generalē providentiā pertinet. Metaphora à paſtoribus ſingulis matutinis oves ſuas recenſentibus. Coc.

In this ſence, *Job* ſaith, that God viſits man every morning, as a ſhepherd his flock, leſt any ſhould be hurt or ſtraid, we may apply it, as before in the ſeveral ſences of viſitation, either to Gods viſiting of us in afflictions, or in mercies, he afflicts (if he pleaſes) continually, ſpeedily, certainly. And as ſure as the Sun riſeth, and the morning cometh, ſo ſure God viſiteth his with mercies; therefore his mercies are ſaid *to be renewed every morning*, Lam. 3. 23. or freſh every morning. Unleſs God bring new mercies every day, the old would not ſerve: we cannot bring the mercies of one day over to another. The mercies of a former day will not ſupport us the next, therefore they muſt come every morning; *ſufficient for the day, is the evil thereof*, Matth. 6. and, but ſufficient for the day, is the good thereof. As we are therefore commanded to pray every day for our dayly bread: the bread you had the laſt day, will not ſerve this day, you muſt pray for the bread of this day, and for a bleſſing upon it, that God would viſit your bread, and your ſtore in mercy. So if need require, God afflicts every day: And the hearts of ſome men want as much the rod every day, as bread every day; they could not be without affliction every day, to keep them in order, and *God will be as careful to correct his children, as to feed them.* If a man be watchful over his own wayes, and the dealings of God with him, there is ſeldom a day, but he may find ſome rod of affliction upon him: But, as through want of care and watchfulneſs, we loſe the ſight of many mercies, ſo we do of many afflictions. Though God doth not every day bring a man to his bed, and break his bones, yet we ſeldom, if at all, paſs a day without ſome rebuke and chaſtning, *Pſal.* 73. 14. *I have been chaſtned every morning*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt: Our lives are full of afflictions; and it is as great a part of a Chriſtians skill to know afflictions, as to know mercies; to know when God ſmites, as to know when he girds us; and it is our ſin to overlook afflictions, as well as to overlook mercies.

Secondly, Take the word as it imports care and inſpection: Then Obſerve,

The care of God is renewed every morning.

The eye of God is alway upon us: *He viſiteth ſo as he telleth all our ſteps, he tells our very wandrings:* he viſiteth us ſo, that we can turn no way but he is with us; his eye of inſpection, as a Tutor, as a guide, is ever upon us; he looks to his people as a ſhepherd to his flock, who knows their wandrings.

And try him every Moment.

בחן *Periculum fecit, expertus eſt, tentavit.* αὐτὸν κρινεῖς. Sept.

It is of the ſame ſence with the former. [**Try him.**] The word ſignifies an exact and thorough trial: Some take it to be an alluſion to the practiſe of thoſe who ſet the watch in Armies or Gariſon Towns; who leſt their Centinels or Watchmen ſhould ſleep, uſe to come ſuddenly upon them (poſſibly) divers times in a night, to try whether they are faithful and wakeful; The Prophet *Iſaiah* hints at ſuch a cuſtom (*Chap.* 21.) The watchman is ſet, *v.* 6. *Go ſet a watchman, let him declare what he ſeeth*: The watchman is tryed, *v.* 11. *He calleth to me out of Seir, watchman what of the night? Watchman what of the night?* And it is obſerved in Forraign parts, that their watchmen in Frontier Towns are tryed every hour of the night, the token being, their giving ſo many tolls with the Bell hanging in their Watch-tower, as the great City-clock ſtrikes. This is a good ſence of the place, the Lord viſits us every morning, and tryes us every moment, that is, very, very often, as often as may be, to ſee whether we keep our watches, and ſtand duly upon our guard.

But ſecondly, It may note a trial, as a Schollar is tried, by examination: We call it *Probation day*, when the proficiency of Schollars is examined; God cometh to examine and make probation of mens proficiency; what have you gotten? How have you improved ſuch times, ſuch opportunities for the gaining of ſpiritual knowledge? What have you learned, what know you more of your ſelves? What more of God and Jeſus Chriſt, whom to know is eternal life?

1. κρίμα.
2. παιδεία.
3. πείρασμος.

Thirdly, It may note tryal by affliction: There are three words which ſignifie the troubles which God brings upon man: They are, Firſt, ſtrictly, Judgments which he ſends in wrath upon enemies: Secondly, Chaſtiſements, and corrections: Thirdly, Temptations or tryals: theſe are proper to his children. Hence Obſerve,

Afflictions are tryals.

The Lord proves what grace there is in the heart, and he tries what corruption there is in the heart by affliction. There are many graces in the heart of man untried, and there are ſome that cannot be tried, till God bring him to an hour of trouble. There are many corruptions in the heart of man which he takes no notice of, nor can till he is afflicted; many a good ſoul would not believe that he had ſuch an unbelieving heart, ſuch a proud heart, till God tried him and then corruption diſcovered it ſelf. The reaſon why God brought his people ſuch away about in the wilderneſs, was (*Deut.* 8. 2.) *to prove them, to try them, to know what was in their heart.* God knows what is in the heart of man intuitively, and he needs not go about; he can go the neereſt way into every mans heart; he proves it only to make it known to others, and to make a man know himſelf. They could not think their hearts were ſo rebellious, ſo full of murmuring and unbelief, if God had not taken them about to prove and try them thoſe forty years.

Proſperity and comforts are trials too: whatſoever God doth with a man, he ſome way or other tries him. Look not only upon your afflictions as trials, your mercies alſo are trials: God gives you them to ſee what you will do with them; he gives riches, and honour, and credit, to ſee how men will uſe and improve them: as by afflictions, ſo by outward comforts he tries both what grace and what corruption is in our hearts. He gives comforts, to ſee how we can live upon God in Chriſt, when we have the creature: and that we may ſhew how much we make of him, without whom we cannot live, when we have all things beſides him. Proſperity tries corruption, then pride and creature-confidence break forth, which before were undiſcerned: We ſay, *Magiſtracy ſhews a man,* nature when it is exalted ſhews it ſelf, as much as when it is vext.

לרגעים *ad momenta.*

He trieth **every moment.**] A moment is the leaſt part and diviſion of time: To *try every moment,* is to try not only frequently, but continually: Hence Obſerve,

The temper and ſtate of mans heart is ſo various, that there needs new experiments of him every moment.

Why doth God try us every moment? Becauſe we are one moment in one temper, and the next moment in another: The acting frame of a mans heart this hour, cannot be collected, from the frame it was in an hour before; therefore there is a continual trial. Some things if they be tried once, they are tried for ever; if we try gold, it will ever be as good as we found it, unleſs we alter it: as we try it to be, ſo it continues to be. But try the heart of man this day, and come again the next and you may find it in a different condition; to day believing, to morrow unbelieving; to day humble, to morrow proud; to day meek, to morrow paſſionate; to day lively and enlarged, to morrow dead and ſtraightned; pure gold to day, and to morrow exceeding droſſy. As it is with the pulſe of a ſick man, it varieth every quarter of an hour, therefore the Phyſitian tries his pulſe every time he comes, becauſe his diſeaſe alters the ſtate of his body: ſo it is with the diſtempered condition of mans ſpirit, God having tried our pulſe, the ſtate of our ſpirit, by croſſes or by mercies this day, next day he tries us too, and the third day he tries us again, and ſo keeps us in continual trials, becauſe we are in continual variations: That ſickneſs, and diſeaſe within us, alters the ſtate and condition of the ſoul every moment. Our comfort is, that God hath a time wherein he will ſet our ſouls up in ſuch a frame, as he ſhall need to try us, but that once. Having ſet us up in a frame of glory, he ſhall not need to try our hearts for us, or to put us to the trial of our ſelves any more, we ſhall ſtand as he ſets us up to all eternity.

I muſt yet come down from the thoughts of this bleſſed eternity, and ſhew you *Job* tired out with his time, and earneſtly calling, but for a minutes reſpite from his pains and ſorrows, in the voice of *verſ.* 19.

Verſ. 19. **How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone, till I may ſwallow down my ſpittle.**

In this verſe *Job* makes application of the two former to himſelf; as if he had ſaid, ſeeing man is a creature ſo weak and unworthy in himſelf, and I am ſuch among the reſt, why doeſt thou viſit me, and try me every moment? *How long ſhall it be ere thou depart from me?* or, *how long wilt thou not look away from me?*

שעה *Quando conſtruitur cum* אל *ſignificat aſpicere, reſpicere cum delectatione,* Gen. 4. 5. *ſed cum* מ *ſignificat avertere, recedere.*

The word under another conſtruction, ſignifies to look upon a man with reſpect and complacency. So *Geneſ.* 4. 5. *The Lord had reſpect unto*, or he looked graciouſly upon, *Abel and his offering.* But here to look away, and ſo *Iſa.* 22. 4. *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly.* And becauſe they who with-draw their eyes from us, are ready alſo to with-draw their preſence from us, therefore it ſignifies to depart. *How long wilt thou not depart from me*, &c.

But is this the voice of *Job?* Is he burthened with the preſence of God? Or doth he think the time long, till God be gone from him? The wicked *ſay unto God depart from us*, (Chap. 21. 14.) And the Lord threatens this as the soreſt judgment againſt his own people, *Jerem.* 6. 8. *Be inſtructed O* Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee*; And by the Prophet *Hoſea* (*Chap.* 9. 12.) *Wo alſo unto them, when I depart from them.* The promiſe of ſtrongeſt conſolation to the Saints, is this, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee,* Heb. 13. 5. And the very offer of a departure, did ſo afflict *Moſes,* that he was ready to throw up all. *Lord, if thy preſence go not along with us, carry us no further* (Exod. 23. 15.) How earneſtly do the ſervants of God deprecate the hiding of his face, how bitterly have they complained upon thoſe hidings: how importunately have they prayed, that he would return, look on them, behold them, cauſe his face to ſhine, and lift up the light of his countenance upon them? And is *Job* ſo weary of Gods company, that he begs of him to depart? Is this the voice of *Job?* Will a man that is in darkneſs, bid the Sun go from him? Or will a man that is thirſty, ſay to a fountain, turn away from me?

I anſwer, the Lords preſence may be conſidered two wayes.

Firſt, As his pleaſed comforting preſence.

Secondly, As his angry afflicting preſence. When *Job* ſaith, **How long, wilt thou not depart from me?** His meaning is, How long, wilt thou not with-draw thine afflicting hand from me? We may expound it by that of *David*, Pſal. 39. 10. *Remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand.* Hence ſome tranſlate, *How long doeſt thou not ſpare me?* And another gloſſes, *Turn thine anger away from me.* Or as himſelf ſpeaks of a third perſon (*Chap.* 14. 6.) *Turn from him, that he may reſt, till he ſhall accompliſh, as a hireling his dayes.* This ſence is given us fully in the next clauſe of the verſe.

Uſquequò non parcis mihi. Vulg. *Iram aliò converte.* Jun.

Nor let me alone, till I may ſwallow down my ſpittle.

Accipienda ſunt hæc de Deo affligente non providente, & curante.

This is not a refuſal of ſupport from God in the way of his providence, by which he upholds every creature: For the truth is, if God ſhould ſo let us alone, we of our ſelves are not able to ſwallow down our ſpittle. We are inſufficient barely of our ſelves, not only for ſpiritual acts, but alſo for natural. We can, not only not pray, and hear, and believe, and repent without the ſtrength of Chriſt, but we cannot go, nor walk, nor eat, nor drink, nor ſpit, nor ſwallow down our ſpittle without an aſſiſtance (ſutable to thoſe acts) from him, for *in him we live, and move, and have our being.* This letting alone, is like the departing before ſpoken, in the firſt clauſe of the verſe. As we uſe to ſay to a man aſſaulting or ſmiting us, *Pray let me alone*; Such is *Job's* meaning, pray give over theſe bitter chaſtenings, leave off to wound or ſmite me any more.

רפה *Dimittere illud quod tenet ligatum, laxare dolores, diſſolvere funiculos cruciatuum.*

The word ſignifies to looſen or unty that which is bound or ſtraightned, and ſo to deal more gently and tenderly then before. The word is uſed ſometimes in a good ſence, to note, that the Lord keeps cloſe and ſtraight to his people, as being knit and bound to them by the tie and knot of his own love and free-grace (*Joſh.* 1. 5.) *I will never leave thee,* or let thee looſe from me. And as it is applied in the negative to the cloſe-keeping of God to us in love; ſo in the affirmative, to our departure from God by unbelief, *Prov.* 24. 10. *If thou fainteſt in the day of adverſity,* or art looſned from God, by fear and want of faith, *thy ſtrength is ſmall.* If thou fainteſt thus in the time of ſtraights and poverty, it argues thou haſt a very ſtraight, narrow, poor ſpirit. That's the elegancy of the original.

Si remiſſus fuiſti in die anguſtiæ, anguſta fortitudo tua. Mont.

When *Job* deſires to be let alone or looſened, his meaning is, looſen the bonds of my affliction, take me off from the rack of theſe tortures and troubles. As we are girded with ſtrength, ſo alſo we are girded with weakneſs. *Job* ſpeaks of God in this word (*Chap.* 12. 21.) *He weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty*; The Hebrew is, he looſeth the girdle of the ſtrong. The ſame God, who looſeth the girdle of our ſtrength, looſeth the bands of our infirmity: and therefore *Job* prays, *O depart from me*, looſen me, let me alone, let me go. Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *The Lord can make his own preſence grievous to his own ſervants.*

In his preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at his right hand there are pleaſures for evermore (Pſal. 16.) Yet he can make his preſence to be the fulneſs of ſorrow, and give us pains with his right hand. As he can be to his people like a Sun to warm and comfort them, ſo like a fire to conſume and burn them; as like a ſhield to defend, ſo like a ſword to wound them. The Lord is a Sun and a ſhield (*Pſal.* 84. 11.) yea, and he is ſometime as a fire, and a ſword, even to thoſe who walk uprightly. *The ſinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites. Who among us ſhall dwell with devouring fire; who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings:* That is, who ſhall be able to bear the diſpleaſed preſence of God, which makes him to ſinners as a devouring fire, *Iſa.* 33. 14. And thus the Saints in *Sion* are ſometimes afraid, and fearfulneſs ſurprizes the upright in heart: Even they cry out, how ſhall we dwell with this devouring fire, with this everlaſting burning? They eſpecially who have ſlighted the preſence of God, may quickly feel the burden of it. Not only do they ſo, who ſay formally and in plain terms, *depart from us*; but they alſo do it in a great meaſure, who do not prize the preſence of God, who do not welcom and entertain him in all his approaches to them. If a friend come to your houſe, and you will not look upon him, or ſpeak to him, you bid him be gone, and your ſilence interprets his non-acceptance with you. Then take heed of neglecting the comfortable and ſanctifying preſence of God, leaſt you fall ſpeedily into his afflicting preſence. The angry preſence of God is never ſo terrible to us, as it is after our undervaluings of his gracious preſence. Note,

Secondly, *If the preſence of God chaſtening, be ſo grievous, what will his preſence be puniſhing and tormenting.*

If afflictions which are but for trial, and are all ſteeped in love, be ſo grievous; what will thoſe terrors be, which are all ſteep'd in pure everlaſting wrath? If his chaſtnings be ſo intollerable to ſome of his deareſt friends, what will his revenges be to all his profeſſed enemies? Wicked men are now burdened with the preſence of God becauſe he is ſo holy; they ſay depart, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy law; but hereafter they ſhall find the preſence of God burdenſom to them, becauſe he is ſo juſt; O how will they cry out, *How long, ſhall not thy wrath depart from us! How long wilt thou be angry for ever, and ſhall thy jealouſie burn like fire for evermore?* Yes, that it ſhall, They who have ſo often ſaid in their hearts to God, *depart from us,* ſhall hear his voice ſaying unto them, *Depart from me ye curſed, &c.* Ye who have not loved my preſence, ſhall be baniſhed from it for ever. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *Troubleſom times are very tedious times to us.*

How long? The Pſalmiſt under ſome hidings and ecclipſes of divine favour, thought himſelf in an everlaſting night, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious,* &c. *Will the Lord caſt off for ever?* Pſal. 77, 8. Obſerve from the latter branch,

Fourthly, *That afflictions are bonds.*

Firſt, They ſhould bind and hold us faſt from ſin, and to our good behaviour. It is better to be bound faſt with the cords of affliction, then to be looſe and at liberty in the wayes of ſin.

Secondly, They will bind us from taking in our worldly comforts; and ſometimes they do (which they ought not) bind us from taking in ſpiritual comforts. Obſerve,

Fifthly, *That man cannot reſcue himſelf out of the bands of affliction, till God pleaſe to looſen him.*

If he bind none can unty; if he impriſon, none can ſet free; we cannot break his bands, nor caſt away the cords of his afflictions from us. *He opens and no man ſhuts, he ſhuts and no man opens,* Revel. 3. 7. *Be ye not mockers,* ſaith the Prophet, *leſt your bands be made ſtrong* (Iſa. 28. 22.) that is, ſtronger then they were. So I may ſay, be ye not ſtrivers or ſtruglers with God, for your bands are made ſtrong. It is ſaid, *Exod.* 4. 25, 26. That the Lord met *Moſes* in the *Inn, and ſought to kill him.* The Lord is never *to ſeek* to do what he pleaſes; but thus he ſpeaks after the manner of men, who offer or aſſay at any buſineſs, *They ſeek to do it.* But Zipporah having circumciſed her ſon, *He let* Moſes *go.* It is this word, *He ſlacked or looſened,* having before as it were arreſted and attached him, or clapt him in priſon for making that great default, the neglect of circumciſion.

Sometimes we find the Lord himſelf ſpeaking, as if he were at the mercy or under the power of man, and therefore calling (in this word) to be looſened or let alone, *Deut.* 9. 14. *Let me alone that I may deſtroy them.* The prayer of faith is as a band upon Gods hand, holding him ſo faſt, that he ſeems as one that cannot ſtrike or deſtroy, till a *Moſes* will give him leave by ceaſing to pray unto him. To be ſure we are at Gods mercy, and under his power ſo, that nothing but the prayer of faith can looſen us. And therefore *Job* doth not attempt to break the cords, or cut them aſunder, nor ſeeks he to unty their knots, but deſires God himſelf to do it, let me alone, looſen me: I will be a priſoner, till thou openeſt the door for my deliverance.

As *Jephtah's* daughter ſaid to him (*Judg.* 11. 37.) when he had bound himſelf and her in the bands of a raſh vow, *Let me alone for two months,* or looſen me from the engagement of my vow for two moneths, as if ſhe had ſaid, I will not looſen my ſelf by a wilful refuſal, but do thou give me a willing diſpenſation. So a godly man beſpeaks the Lord in his ſtreights, *Looſen me Lord.* Unleſs God be pleaſed to looſen him, he will be contented, and (when in a good frame of heart, and freeneſs of ſpirit) well-pleaſed with his bands. In ſome ſence he ſpeaks, as *Paul* and *Silas,* when they were in priſon (*Act.* 16. 37.) *Let the Lord himſelf come and fetch us out.* That is, let us ſee ſuch means of our enlargement and freedom from trouble, as may aſſure us that the Lord hath looſened and enlarged us. *A godly man had a thouſand times rather be put into a priſon by God, then put himſelf into a paradiſe.* He had rather be bound by Gods hand, then looſened by his own. That place touch'd before, may reach this ſence (*Prov.* 24. 10.) *if thou fainteſt* (ſo we) or looſneſt thy ſelf in the day of adverſity, *Thy ſtrength is ſmall*; that is, the ſtrength of thy faith and patience is ſmall. There is nothing diſcovers our weakneſs more then ſtriving to break the cords of our afflictions. The ſtronger we are in faith, in love, in humility, the more quietly we lie bound. Faith ſeeks eaſe and releaſe only in God: to ſay Lord looſen me is a duty, to looſen our ſelves is both our ſin and our puniſhment.

Till I may ſwallow down my ſpittle.

Some conceive, that from this Hebrew word (*Rak*) which we tranſlate ſpittle, *Raca* is derived (*Matth.* 5. 22.) as if to call a man *Raca,* were as much as to ſay, he is worthy to be ſpit upon, or that one ſhould ſpit in his face: though others ſpring that word from *Rik,* which ſignifies empty, as if it were as much to call a man an empty fellow, without wit or brains, or within one degree of a *fool,* which is the next word in *Matthew.*

רק *Saliva, undè quidã deducunt* Raca, Mat. 5. 22. *quod* κατάπτυσον *interpretantur,* i. e. *conſpuendũ vel dignum qui conſpuatur. Alii à* ריק *vacuus quaſi cerebro vacuus & judicio carens.* Druſ.

But what is *Job's* intendment, in deſiring God to let him alone, *Till he might ſwallow down his ſpittle.*

Firſt, Some refer it to a bodily diſtemper, as if *Job* were troubled with a * ſquinſie or ſore throat, which hindered the ſwallowing of his ſpittle.

Another takes it in a Philoſophical notion; as if *Job* had ſaid, Lord let me have ſome eaſe, that I may at leaſt taſte once more, what it is to live or how ſweet life is. For that ſence of taſte works by the ſalival humor or ſpittle in the mouth, which mixing with the juyce or ſap that is in meats, affects and delights the pallate.

Dimittet me, ut guſtum aliquem hujus vitæ capiam. Alber.

Thirdly, Theſe words are taken as the deſcription of a man ready to die, who is diſabl'd either to ſwallow his ſpittle or to void it. As if he had ſaid, I am now even at the point of death, let me alone a little; *David's* Prayer comes near this ſence, *Pſal.* 39. 13. *O ſpare me that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence and be no more.*

Fourthly, It may be taken proverbially, and that two wayes.

Firſt, To note the ſhorteſt time, even ſo much as may ſerve a man to ſpit. As if he had ſaid, O let me have a little intermiſſion, a little reſpite; ſuch is the ſence of that phraſe, *Chap.* 9. 18. *He will not ſuffer me to take my breath.* And the like are thoſe uſed in ſome Countries, *I have not leiſure or time to ſcratch my ear, or to pare my nails,* My ſorrows know no interim: my feaver is one continued fit, I have no well dayes, no nor a good hour; therefore let me at leaſt have ſo much time of eaſe, as I may ſwallow my ſpittle, let me have the ſhorteſt time, that I may once more know (though but for a moment) what it is to be without pain. To which interpretation that alſo ſubſcribes, which makes theſe words to be *a circumlocution for ſilence.* For while a man is ſwallowing his ſpittle, his ſpeech ſtops: he cannot bring up his words, and let down his ſpittle at the ſame time; ſo his meaning is, I am forced to complain continually, I would be ſilent and forbear ſpeaking, but my grief will not ſuffer me.

Sermo proverbialis talis eſt, neq; ad ſculpendas aures mihi otium eſt.

Ne tantillũ quidem temporis eſt quo non tenter à te. Con.

The ſecond Proverbial underſtanding of the words, is that they import a very ſtrict watch held upon another in all his motions: ſo that he cannot ſtir a finger, or move his tongue (ſilently) in his mouth un-obſerved. If I do but ſtir my tongue, to ſwallow my ſpittle (which is one of the moſt unperceivable acts of man) thou takeſt notice. O do not hold ſo ſtrict a hand, and ſo curious an eye upon me. Let me have a little liberty, do not examine every failing, do not queſtion me upon the leaſt infirmity.

Elegans proverbialis loquutio ad denotandum diligentem in alium intuitum quo minimas in alio diſcernet actiones. Saliva fere imperceptibiliter abſorbetur.

From the former Proverbial expoſition. Obſerve,

Firſt, *Afflictions are continued upon ſome without any intermiſſion.*

Job had not ſo much whole skin, as one might ſet a pin on, nor ſo much whole time, as a man might ſpit in. Every hour brought a wound with it, and the renewing of every moment, renewed his affliction. Obſerve,

Secondly, *A ſhort refreſhing may be a great mercy.*

Dives in Hell deſires not a large draught, but a drop of water, which alas! could not have eaſed him ſo long, as a man is ſwallowing down his ſpittle. The eternity of pain in Hell ſhall not find ſo much abatement, as that either in time or in degree. Every affliction in this life, by how much it is with leſs intermiſſion, by ſo much the more like it is to Hell; and every comfort by how much the more it is unbroken, and without ſtops, by ſo much it is the more like to Heaven. Conſider then your mercies, who have un-interrupted mercies, dayes and years of eaſe, and not pained ſo long as a man is ſwallowing down his ſpittle: your mercies are like the glory and the joy of Heaven.

From the latter Proverbial expoſition. Note,

That God obſerves the leaſt, the moſt ſecret motions of man.

He tels our ſteps our wandrings; and thoſe not only corporal, but moral and ſpiritual. He knows how many ſteps our hearts fetch every day, and how far they travel, *Thou haſt ſearched and known me* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 139. 1, 2.) and this ſearch is not made in the out-rooms only, but in the inner parlor and cloſeſt cloſets, *Thou underſtandeſt my thoughts,* and thoſe (not only preſent, or produced, but to come and unborn) thou knoweſt them *a far off.* What can ſcape that eye, which a thought cannot? And he that ſees man ſwallowing down his ſpittle, how ſhall not he both hear and ſee him, coughing up and ſpitting out the rottenneſs and corruption, the filth and flegme of his ſinful heart?

VERS.

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* *Inter cætera mala Synanchen habuiſſe ſe perhibet.* Hieron.

VERS. 20, 21.

I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men! why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf?

And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity? for now ſhall I ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, but I ſhall not be.

JOB, having in the former part of this Chapter conteſted with his friends, and expoſtulated the matter with God; now turns himſelf into another poſture, even to humble his ſoul, and make confeſſion of his ſin, He had juſtified himſelf againſt the accuſations of men, but now he accuſes and judges himſelf in the preſence of God; He will a while forget his ſorrows, and bethink himſelf of his ſins, *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men!*

The words may be taken two wayes.

1. As a Confeſſion or a Prayer.
2. As a Conceſſion or a Grant.

I ſhall firſt open them under the notion of a repenting prayer and confeſſion of ſin.

I have ſinned.] As if he had ſaid, Lord, if thou holdeſt me thus long upon the rack of this affliction, to gain a confeſſion of me, to make me confeſs, here I am ready to do it, I do it; *I have ſinned.*

The word ſignifies to miſs the mark we aim at, or the way wherein we would walk. And ſo it is put ſtrictly for ſins of infirmity, when the purpoſe of a mans heart is (like the Archers, when he draws his Bow) to hit the white, or (like the honeſt travellers in his journey) to keep the right way, and yet he miſcarries, and is drawn aſide.

חטא *Significat errare, aberrare, declinare, deflectere à via vel ſcopo.*

I have ſinned.] But is this a ſufficient confeſſion? What! to ſay only in general, *I have ſinned.* Did not hard-hearted *Pharaoh* (Exod. 9. 25.) falſe-hearted *Saul* (1 Sam. 15. 24.) and traitor-*Judas* (Mat. 27. 4.) make as good a confeſſion as this. Every one of theſe ſaid *I have ſinned*; and what doth *Job* ſay more? It is ſurely no great coſt nor pain to ſinful natnre, to bring up ſuch a confeſſion as this.

I anſwer, Firſt, A general confeſſion may be a ſound confeſſion: It is one thing not to expreſs particular ſins with the circumſtances of thoſe ſins, and another thing purpoſely to conceal them. I grant, *Implicit confeſſion may be as dangerous as implicit faith.* And to dig in the earth, and hide our ſins in the Napkin of our excuſes, is worſe then to hide our talents in the Napkin of our idleneſs: And as it is moſt dangerous knowingly to conceal ſin from God, ſo it is very dangerous to do it through ignorance and inadvertency; ſome confeſs ſin in general terms only, becauſe they know not what their ſins are, or have quite forgot them; as *Nebuchadnezzar* called the Aſtrologers, and Sorcerers, and *Chaldeans*, and told them he had dreamed a dream, but he could not tell what it was; *for the thing was gone from him*, Dan. 2. 5. Some ſuch there are, who can or will only ſay, *they have ſinned, they have ſinned*; but what, they cannot tell, or they do not remember, *Thoſe things are gone from them.* That which is written of the learned *Bellarmine*, a great Cardinal, and a champion for *auricular, particular confeſſion of ſin to man*, ſeems very ſtrange, that when he lay upon his death-bed, and the Prieſt, after the Popiſh manner, came to abſolve him, he had nothing to confeſs; at laſt he thought of ſome ſlight extravagancies of his youth, which was all he had to ſay of his own miſcarriages: We ſee a man may be a Scholar in all the knowledge of the world, of nature, and of Scripture, and yet not know his own heart, nor be ſtudied or read himſelf. He that is ſo in a ſpiritual notion, can never want particular matter in his moſt innocent dayes to confeſs before the Lord, and to ſhame himſelf for. What though he hath eſcaped the pollutions of the world, and is cleanſed from the filthineſs of the fleſh? yet he knows that ſtill in his fleſh there dwells no good thing, and that in his ſpirit, there are, at the leaſt, touches of many ſpiritual filthineſſes, as pride, unbelief, *&c.* beſides his great deficiencies in every duty, and in his love to Jeſus Chriſt, which is the ground of all. So then, in any of theſe ſences, to confeſs ſin only in general, is a ſinful confeſſion. And yet *Job* made a holy confeſſion here, and ſo did the Publican (*Luke* 18.) when he ſmote his breaſt, and ſaid only thus, *God be merciful to me a ſinner.*

For ſecondly, Though to ſpeak a general confeſſion, be an eaſie matter, and every mans work, yet to make a general confeſſion is a hard matter, a work beyond man. As no man (in a ſpiritual ſence) can ſay, *Jeſus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt* (1 Cor. 12. 3) ſo no man can ſay (in a holy manner) *I have ſinned, but by the holy Ghoſt*; good and bad, believers and unbelievers, ſpeak often the ſame good words, but they cannot ſpeak the ſame things, nor from the ſame principles; Nature ſpeaks in the one, in the other Grace. The one may ſay, very paſſionately, he hath ſinned, and ſometimes almoſt drown his words in tears; but the other ſaith repentingly, *I have ſinned*, and floods his heart with godly ſorrows.

Thirdly, To clear it yet more, the general confeſſions of the Saints have theſe four things in them.

Firſt, Beſides the fact, they acknowledge the blot, that there is much defilement and blackneſs in every ſin; that it is the only pollution and abaſement of the creature.

Secondly, They confeſs the fault, that they have done very ill in what they have done, and very fooliſhly, even like a beaſt that hath no underſtanding.

Thirdly, They confeſs a guilt contracted by what they have done, that their perſons might be laid liable to the ſentence of the Law for every ſuch act, if Chriſt had not taken away the curſe and condemning power of it. Confeſſion of ſin (in the ſtrict nature of it) puts us into the hand of juſtice; though through the grace of the new covenant, it puts us into the hand of mercy.

Fourthly, Hence the Saints confeſs all the puniſhments threatned in the Book of God to be due to ſin; and are ready to acquit God, whatſoever he hath awarded againſt ſinners: *O Lord; righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of face, as at this day, to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem*, Dan. 9. 7.

And as in this confeſſion, for the matter, they acknowledge the blot, the fault, the guilt, the puniſhment of ſin; ſo for the manner (which ſets the difference yet wider between the general confeſſion of wicked and godly men) they confeſs,

Firſt, freely; Acknowledgments of ſin are not extorted by the pain and trouble which ſeizeth on them, as in *Pharaoh, Saul* and *Judas*. But when God gives them beſt dayes, they are ready to ſpeak worſt of themſelves; and when they receive moſt mercies from God, then God receives moſt and deepeſt acknowledgments of ſin from them. They are never ſo humbled in the ſight of ſin, as when they are moſt exalted in ſeeing the ſalvations of the Lord. The goodneſs of God leads them to this repentance, they are not driven to it by wrath and thunder.

Secondly, They confeſs feelingly; when they ſay they have ſinned, they know what they ſay. They taſte the bitterneſs of ſin, and groan under the burdenſomeneſs of it, as it paſſes out in confeſſion. A natural mans confeſſions run through him as water through a pipe, which leaves no impreſſion or ſcent there; nor do they (upon the matter) any more taſte what ſin is, then the pipe doth of what reliſh water is. Or if a natural man feels any thing in confeſſion, it is the evil of puniſhment feared, not the evil of his ſin committed.

Thirdly, They confeſs ſincerely; they mean what they ſay, and are in earneſt both with God and their own ſouls, *Bleſſed is the man in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile*, Pſal. 32. 2. The natural man caſts out his ſin by condition, as Seamen caſt their goods over-board in a ſtorm, which in the calm they wiſh for again. They ſo caſt out the evil ſpirit, that they are content to receive him again when he returns, though it be with ſeven worſe then himſelf. Even while they confeſs ſin with their lips, they keep it, like a ſweet bit, under their tongues, and wiſh it well enough, while they ſpeak it very ill.

Fourthly, They confeſs believingly; while they have an eye of ſorrow upon ſin, they have an eye of faith upon Chriſt: *Judas* ſaid he had ſinned in betraying innocent blood (*Mat.* 27. 4.) but in ſtead of waſhing in that blood, he defiles himſelf with his own, he goes away and hangs himſelf. No wicked man in the world (continuing in that ſtate) did ever mix faith with his ſorrows, or believing

ing with confeſſing he had ſinned. So much for the clearing of the words, and the ſence of this general confeſſion.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *While a godly man maintains his innocency, and juſtifies himſelf before man, he willingly acknowledges his infirmity, and judges himſelf before God.*

Job had ſpent much time in wiping off the aſperſions caſt upon him by his friends, but he charges himſelf with his failings in the ſight of God.

Secondly obſerve, *God ſpeaks better of his ſervants then they do of themſelves.*

When God ſpeaks of *Job*, we find not one blot in all his character, all is commendation, nothing of reproof. He ſaith (*c.* 1.21.) *In all this Job ſinned not*; but for all that, *Job* ſaith, *I have ſinned*: A hypocrite hath good thoughts of himſelf, and ſpeaks himſelf fair; *He flatters himſelf in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful*, Pſal. 36. 2. A godly man thinks and ſpeaks low of himſelf, he accuſes himſelf in his own eyes, though his integrity be found very acceptable with the Lord.

Thirdly obſerve, *The holieſt man on earth hath cauſe to confeſs that he hath ſinned.*

Confeſſion is the duty of the beſt Chriſtians. Firſt, The higheſt form of believers in this life, is not above the actings of ſin; though the loweſt of believers is not under the power of it. And if the line of ſinning be as long as the line of living, then the line of confeſſing muſt be of the ſame length with both. While the ſhip leaks, the pump muſt not ſtand ſtill. And ſo long as we gather ill humors, there will be need of vomits and purgings.

Secondly, Confeſſion is a ſoul-humbling duty, and the beſt have need of that, for they are in moſt danger of being lifted up above meaſure. To preſerve us from thoſe ſelf-exaltations, the Lord ſometimes ſends the meſſenger of Satan to buffet us by temptations, and commands us to buffet our ſelves often by confeſſion.

Thirdly, Confeſſion affects the heart with ſin, and engages the heart againſt it. Every confeſſion of the evil we do, is a new obligation not to do it any more. The beſt in their worſt part, have ſo much freedom to ſin, that they have need enough to be bound from it in variety of bonds.

Fourthly, Confeſſion of ſin ſhews us more clearly our need of mercy, and endears it more to us. How good and ſweet is mercy to a ſoul that hath taſted how evil and how bitter a thing it is to ſin againſt the Lord? How welcome, how beautiful is a pardon, when we have been viewing the uglineſs of our own guilt?

Fifthly, Confeſſion of ſin advances Chriſt in our hearts. How doth it declare the riches of Chriſt, when we are not afraid to tell him what infinite ſums of debt we are in, which he only, and he eaſily can diſcharge? How doth it commend the healing virtue of his blood, when we open to him ſuch mortal wounds and ſickneſſes, which he only, and he eaſily can cure? Wo be to thoſe who commit ſin abundantly that grace may abound; but it is our duty to confeſs ſin abundantly, that grace may abound.

Laſtly, Though we need not confeſs ſin at all to inform God: he knows our ſins, though we will not make them known; and hath an eye to ſee, though we ſhould not have a tongue to confeſs. Though (I ſay) we confeſs not to inform God what we are, or what we have done, yet we muſt confeſs to glorifie God. While we ſhame our ſelves, we honour him. *My ſon* (ſaith *Joſhua* to *Achan*, *c.* 7. *v.* 19.) *give I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Iſrael, and make confeſſion unto him.* Every attribute of God receives this gift of glory by mans confeſſion. Juſtice is glorified, and mercy is glorified, patience is glorified, and holineſs is glorified. Holineſs is glorified in oppoſing ſin, and patience in ſparing the ſinner; mercy is glorified in pardoning ſin, and juſtice in receiving ſatisfaction at the hand of Chriſt for the pardon of it.

Fourthly obſerve, *Holy confeſſion of ſin, leads the way to gracious pardoning of ſin.*

Job begins the next verſe with a vehement prayer for pardon. *And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity?* Sin concealed and kept cloſe, grows upon us: And it grows three wayes. Firſt, In the ſtrength of it. Secondly, In the guilt of it. Thirdly, In the terror and vexation of it, *Pſal.* 32. 3, 4. *When I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long.* Confeſſion is a means to obtain the abatement of ſin in all three. The ſtrength of it is weakned, the guilt removed, and the terrour overcome. Then hear the counſel of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 43.26.) *declare that thou maiſt be juſtified.*

Thus far of the words as they are a confeſſion of ſin. I ſhall now handle them as they are a conceſſion or a grant that he had ſinned; and ſo the ſence may be given thus; *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee?* As if he had ſaid, *Let it be granted, or ſuppoſe that I have ſinned, and ſinned as deeply as my friends have charged me; ſuppoſe I have been as wicked as they imagine, what then? if this were my caſe, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men?*

The latter words plainly import a queſtion, *What ſhall I do unto thee?* But the ſence of the queſtion is not ſo plain: The queſtion may be taken two wayes; either affirmatively, or negatively. Take it affirmatively, and ſo the ſence is, *What ſhall I do?* that is, Lord direct me, counſel me, order me, teach me what becomes me to do in ſuch a caſe, in ſuch a ſinful condition as I either confeſs my ſelf to be in, or am ſuppoſed to be in. That's the affirmative ſence.

What ſhall I do?] The word which we tranſlate [**do**] ſignifies working or doing, under a twofold qualification.

אפעל *A radice* Pagnal, *reſpondet Græco,* ἐργάζομαι, *eſt agere cum energia & effectu.* Piſc.

Firſt, Working with great willingneſs and readineſs of mind; and hence it is applied to the workings of ſin in natural men, who work with the greateſt freedom that can be. Man ſins naturally, and therefore freely; he is carried on with a full ſwing, with tide and wind; he ſins, nothing in himſelf contradicting or giving a contrary vote; he is a true worker of iniquity, *Pſal.* 5. 5.

Secondly, Working with energie and ſucceſs, and the doing of a thing not only effectually, but willingly, *Num.* 23.23. *What hath God wrought?* When God works, he works throughly, he doth not his buſineſs to halves. So, *Iſa.* 26. 12. *Thou haſt wrought all our works in us,* that is, thou haſt brought them to paſs, they have ſucceeded through thy help, and the influences of thy bleſſing.

The word being taken in this height of ſence, and the queſtion for an affirmation, *what ſhall I do?* that is, ſhew me, direct me what to do; we may obſerve from it,

Firſt, That, *What to do in caſe of ſin, is a point of the higheſt conſideration.*

I have ſinned, what ſhall I do? If ever we have need to go and ask counſel, to ſit down and debate the matter with our ſelves or others, it is, when we have ſinned. Such is the nature of ſin, and ſuch the conſequences, that it calls us to higheſt conſideration what to do about it. Matters of great conſequence are matters of great conſultation: Sin hath an influence upon an eternity. If any thing be more worthy your thoughts then that, let it have them.

Secondly, Look upon the queſtion as following *Job's* confeſſion: Whence obſerve,

That, *Sincere confeſſion of ſin, makes the ſoul very active and inquiſitive about the remedies of ſin.*

I have ſinned; The very next word is, *What ſhall I do?* Many make confeſſion of ſin, who are never troubled about the cure and redreſs of ſin; *Lord, what ſhall* I *do?* is not the next queſtion to *Lord, I have ſinned.* Nay, it may be, the next action is to ſin over the ſame ſin they have confeſt. As ſoon as thoſe *Jews* heard of the foulneſs of their ſin in crucifying Chriſt, and of the ſadneſs of their condition their queſtion is like this of *Job*, *What ſhall we do? What ſhall we do that we may be ſaved?* As Chriſt ſpeaks to the woman of *Samaria* (*John* 4. 10.) when he offered her the water of life, *If thou didſt know the gift of God, and who it is that ſpeaks unto thee, thou wouldeſt have asked*, &c. That is, if thou wert ſenſible of the excellency and virtue of this water, and thy need of it, thou wouldeſt be very inquiſitive how to get it, how to have a taſte of it. As in regard of Chriſt, and the benefits we have by him, ſo of ſin and the evils which come by it: When a man hath confeſt and acknowledged his ſin, we may ſay to him, if thou didſt but know what thou haſt confeſt, if thou didſt but know what thou haſt acknowledged, thou wouldeſt preſently be asking, how ſhall I get free? how ſhall I get clear of theſe ſins which are ſo deadly, poyſonous, deſtroying and condemning? He that is but ſenſible what the wound of ſin is, will never be at reſt, never give over enquiring, till he hath found a plaiſter or a medicine for it. He that knows what he ſaith, when he ſaith *I have ſinned*, will reſolve as *David* in another caſe, that his eyes ſhall not have a wink of ſleep till he ſees where to have help againſt it.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *what ſhall I do?* obſerve,

> That, *A ſoul truly ſenſible of ſin, is ready to ſubmit to any terms which God ſhall put upon him.*

What ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men? Put what terms thou wilt upon me, I am ready to accept them. That was the ſence of their queſtion (*Acts* 2. 32.) *What ſhall we do?* ſhew us the way, let it be what it will, we will not ſtand making of conditions, we will not pick and chuſe, this we will do, and that we will not do; this we will ſubmit unto, and that we will refuſe; no, let the Lord write what Articles he pleaſes, we intend not to debate, but yield and ſubſcribe unto them. When the Jaylor found himſelf in the bonds of his iniquity, he was ready to enter into any bonds of duty, *Acts* 16. 30. *Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?*

Laſtly, From the queſtion in the affirmative, obſerve,

> That, *God is to be conſulted and enquired after in all doubtful caſes, eſpecially in our ſin-caſes.*

I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men? He calls upon God to know what he ſhould do, and to learn what courſe he ſhould take. Though, when we have opportunity to ſpeak to men, that's good and a duty; yet we muſt not reſt in the counſels of men, what to do in ſin-caſes: God muſt be conſulted. After the people had committed Idolatry in making the Calf, *you have ſinned* (ſaith *Moſes*) *and now I will go up unto the Lord, that I may make an atonement for you*: I will go up to the Lord, that I may underſtand from him what courſe to take for the removing of this ſin. Though we have not ſuch a Mount to go up unto as *Moſes* then had, to ſpeak to God; yet there are wayes for the ſoul in all ſin-caſes, to make addreſſes unto God: A ſinner may ſay, I will go to the Lord, and make my atonement; whatſoever advice and direction we receive from men, we muſt enquire whether it be an advice and counſel eſtabliſhed in heaven. And the reaſon is clear, God is the perſon offended in every ſin, and therefore he muſt be conſulted about the remedy of ſin. Again, God only can reſolve us what will pleaſe him; we may pitch upon a wrong courſe, and take a wrong way; we, in ſtead of pacifying God, may provoke him; in ſtead of ſatisfying, further diſpleaſe him: therefore we muſt ſay, when we have ſinned, Lord, what wilt thou have us to do? His advice will lead us to Chriſt for eaſe and peace.

So far for the queſtion taken in the affirmative ſence, *What ſhall I do unto thee?* ſhew me what I ſhall do, and I will readily ſubmit unto it.

Secondly, Take the queſtion negatively, *What ſhall I do unto thee?* And ſo I find two ſences of it.

Quid tibi nocui, aut quid te læſi? Olymp.

Firſt, Some render it thus, *What have I done againſt thee?* And then the meaning is this, I have done nothing againſt thee, or I have not hurt thee by ſinning: *What have I done againſt thee?* Wherein have I injured thee, that thou layeſt thy hand thus ſeverely upon me in theſe grievous afflictions, both upon my ſoul and body? I am hurt, what have I hurt thee? There is a truth in this, though I take it not for the truth of this place. A man when he ſaith he hath ſinned, what hurt have I done unto God? and yet all the hurt and wrong which God receives, he receives by ſin. Our ſins are no hurt unto God, by abating any thing of his happineſs or fulneſs, or intrinſecal eſſential honour; take it thus, and our ſins cannot hurt God: All the darts of our ſins fall infinitely ſhort of God, they cannot reach him, ſo as to annoy him. And we have that language expreſly in *Job* 35. 6. *If thou doſt ſin, what doſt thou againſt him?* (that is, thou doſt nothing againſt God, as a real dammage to him) *or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?* Sin as many ſins as you can, you cannot impair the happineſs of God, or diminiſh his greatneſs; he is out of the reach of the creature in that ſence. As on the other ſide, if a man be never ſo holy and good, or do never ſo many acts of righteouſneſs, yet God hath no good or gain by it; we cannot advantage God by our holineſs, and that is the language of this Scripture too, *Job* 35. 7. *If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him, or what receiveth he of thine hand?* We make no addition to the happineſs of God by all our holineſs, *Job* 22. 3. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or any gain unto him that thou makeſt thy wayes perfect?* That which is infinite cannot encreaſe, neither can it be encreaſed. God is above all gain and loſs, above all acceſſes of pleaſure and pain. When the Scripture ſaith, he is delighted in the ſervices of his Saints, and takes pleaſure in his people, we muſt underſtand them in the ſame ſence as thoſe Scriptures, which deſcribe him diſpleaſed with the ſins of men, angry and grieved, becauſe of their provocations. All the motions of Gods delight or grief, pleaſedneſs or diſpleaſure, are only expreſſions towards the creature, not any impreſſions upon himſelf. But I ſhall let that ſence paſs.

Peccata noſtra beatam illam naturam labefactare non poſſunt.

'Ει ἐγω ἥμαρτον τὶ δυνήσομαι πράξαι. Sept.

Secondly, In the negative, take the queſtion thus, *what ſhall I do unto thee?* Or, as the Septuagint reads it, *what can I do unto thee?* That is, I can do nothing to thee. Lord, I have ſinned, and if thou ſeekeſt for ſatisfaction at my hands, I am able to make none. And ſo he ſpeaks like a poor, undone, broken man to his rich Creditor arreſting him for a debt which he is unable to pay. The poor man falls down at his feet, and ſaith, Sir I confeſs I owe you a great Sum, you have my Bonds, I confeſs my Hand and Seal, but what ſhall I do unto you? I cannot pay you a penny, I have nothing, I have loſt all, I am not worth a groat, what will you have of me? This ſounds ſuch a kind of melting pitiful language, *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men?* Lord, when I look into my ſtock, into my treaſure and revenues, I ſee I have nothing to ſatisfie this debt of ſin I have run in and ſtand engaged to thy Majeſty for; what can I pay thee? and ſo the word [*do*] ſignifies a retribution or recompence; ſo it is uſed in the ſecond verſe of this Chapter, where he ſpeaks of the hireling, waiting for his work, that is, for the reward or recompence of his work, the payment of his wages. What ſhall I do? is as much as, what ſhall I pay, or, what ſhall I render? This is a due debt, but I have nothing to pay, no way of making ſatisfaction for all the dammage I have put thy holy Majeſty to by my ſins.

Or thus, there may be a threefold negation in the Queſtion, *What ſhall I do unto thee?*

Firſt, I can do nothing to eſcape thy power. I cannot get away from thee, I cannot reſcue my ſelf from under thy hand.

Secondly, I can do nothing to ſatisfie thy Juſtice.

Thirdly, I can do nothing to pacifie thine anger. I cannot only not pay the debt, but I cannot appeaſe thee, or turn away thy diſpleaſure in the leaſt degree.

From the Queſtion taken in this ſence, we may obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *The holieſt man on the earth by all his ſufferings and doings, cannot ſatisfie the juſtice of God for one ſin. I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee?*

When the Angels had ſinned, what could they do unto God in this reſpect? Theſe three negations lay upon them, and do lie to this day, and ſhall to all eternity. They ſinned but once, yet could they not eſcape out of the hand of God. Though Spirits and Powers, yet they could not maintain their ſtate againſt the power of God, and are therefore caſt into priſon, and *reſerved in chains of darkneſs to the judgment of the great day.* They could not pacifie the wrath of God towards them, God is as highly diſpleaſed, and his wrath burns as hot againſt them as ever. Now if ſinning Angels could do nothing to God, what can ſinful man do? The Queſtion is put, *Micah* 6. 6. *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord? and bow my ſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſand rivers of oyl? Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?* Theſe Queſtions are denials; come not before God with any of theſe. Then what is it that God doth require? *He hath ſhewed thee what is good, to do judgment and righteouſneſs, to walk humbly with thy God.* But why theſe things? What though I cannot make a price for my ſin with calves and rams, and rivers of oil, though my children will not be accepted as a ranſom for my tranſgreſſions, yet can I make a price for them out of juſtice and righteouſneſs and humble walking? No, not out of theſe neither. The The Lord doth not require theſe for the payments of our debt, as we are ſinners, but for the payment of duty, as we are creatures. There is a double debt to God; a debt to the juſtice of God for ſins committed, and a debt to the Law of God for duties enjoyned. The former no man is able to pay but with eternal ſufferings. The latter, the Saints (through grace) do pay by their daily holy actings.

There is a threefold deficiency in all that man can do, to ſatisfie the juſtice of God.

Firſt, All is imperfect and defiled, our ſervices ſmell of the veſſel through which they paſs, and taſte of the cask into which they are put. There is a ſtamp of our ſinfulneſs even upon our holy things. And can that which is ſinful ſatisfie for ſin?

Secondly, Whatſoever we do is a debt before we do it. All our duties are owing before we perform them. And can we pay the debt of ſin by thoſe duties which were due though ſin had never been committed.

Thirdly, The greateſt deficiency is this, our works want the ſtamp of Gods appointment for that purpoſe. *God hath no where ſet up mans righteouſneſs, as ſatisfaction for mans unrighteouſneſs.* Hence, if it ſhould be ſuppoſed, we had performed perfect righteouſneſs according to the whole will of God commanded, yet we could not ſatisfie the juſtice of God offended, unleſs God had ſaid, that he would accept that way of ſatisfaction; it is the appointment and inſtitution of God which renders what we do acceptable unto himſelf. Surely all that Jeſus Chriſt did or ſuffered for us in the fleſh, had not ſatisfied the juſtice of God, if God had not appointed that Chriſt ſhould do and ſuffer thoſe things for the ſatisfying of his iuſtice. It was the compact between Chriſt and his Father, which made him a Sacrifice, *Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire.* Sacrifices were refuſed by God, it being impoſſible that they ſhould purge ſin (*Heb.* 10.4.) *Then the ear of Chriſt was opened or bored*, as a ſervant, according to the Law in that caſe, *Exod.* 21.6. to receive and do the will of his Father, Or, as the *Seventy* interpret, which the Apoſtle follows, *God prepared him a body.* Then Chriſt undertakes the work; *And ſaid, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. Why? In the Volume of the Book it is written of me.* That is, thou haſt decreed and ordained from everlaſting; the record is clear for it, that I am he whom thou haſt ordained to do thy will. Hence the Apoſtle concludes at *ver.* 10. *That we are ſanctified* (that is, ſaved) *by that will through the offering of the body of Jeſus once for all*; as inferring, that the very offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt could not ſave us, but by the will and ordination of God. His hanging and dying on the Croſs had not delivered us from death, unleſs it had been written in *the volume of the Book.* There is nothing ſatisfactory but what the Law, or the will of the Lawgiver makes or agrees to accept as ſatisfactory. In the volume of the Book there is nothing written which appoints man ſuch a work, and therefore he cannot do it.

There is ſomewhat to be done by way of thankfulneſs, but nothing can be done by way of payment. That queſtion (*Pſal.* 116.12.) affirms as much, *What ſhall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?* We muſt render unto the Lord for his benefits; but we cannot render to the Lord for our ſins. We ought to take up the cup of thankſgiving; but Chriſt hath, and he alone was able, and he alone was ordained to take and drink the cup of ſatisfying.

Secondly, Obſerve (which depends upon the former.)

That, *Pardon and forgiveneſs of ſin come in at the door of free-grace.*

Free grace doth all. *What can I do?* I can do nothing, *O thou preſerver of men*; I can only (nor that without thy help) acknowledge my ſin: it muſt be thine infinite goodneſs to pardon it. When a man hath travelled through all duties and doings, he muſt at laſt ſit down in Gods love, and reſt in this, that God is merciful to poor ſinners, *Iſa.* 55.1. *Come unto me, O all ye that are thirſty, come without money or without price.* There is nothing in the creature that God requires as a price of his favour; his milk and his honey, his bread and his water, are all gifts and bounties unto his people. He calls us to buy theſe, becauſe we ſhall have them as willingly from God, as any things from man for our money; and he calls it a buying without money, becauſe no value can be ſet upon it high enough, nor any heart receive it freely enough. *To offer money*, that is, to think to obtain any of that favour by what we do, is the moſt dangerous offer in the world. We read how dreadful the iſſue was to *Simon Magus*, when he offered money *for the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, and yet thoſe gifts were ſuch, as a man man may have, and go to hell with them; for they were but gifts of miracles and of healing, and the like: But this gift of the favour and love of God in the pardon of ſin, is ſuch a gift, as whoſoever hath it, is ſure and ſafe for ever; and therefore (the gift being much more precious then that of *Simon Magus*) take heed of offering this kind of money for it, your works and doings. *To do ſo, is the worſt Simonie in the world.* Better offer literal money for thoſe gifts of the holy Ghoſt, then this figurative money for the favour of God in the pardon of ſin. What *Peter* threatned *Simon Magus*, may be affirmed of them, *Their money muſt periſh with them*, that is, their prayers and tears, their ſorrows and their humblings, their almes and good deeds, foraſmuch as they have thought that this gift of pardon may be obtained by ſuch money, they have neither part nor lot in that mercy, for their hearts are not right in the ſight of God. *A good work truſted to, is as mortal as a ſin unrepented of.*

Again, There is ſomewhat to be done when we have ſinned, but nothing to be paid. That's Goſpel-language, when a man hath ſinned, to ſay, *What ſhall I do?* Thoſe Converts in the *Acts*, who enquired, *What ſhall we do?* were told by the Apoſtles of ſomewhat to be done; *Repent and be baptized, believe and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* Theſe are wayes wherein ſalvation is tendered, not works for which it is beſtowed. It is as dangerous an errour ſo to lift up the grace of God, as to deny the induſtry of man through Grace: and becauſe he can do nothing by way of ſatisfaction, that therefore he muſt do nothing. The Apoſtles gave Goſpel-counſel, yet when men asked them, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* They ſaid not, ye muſt do nothing, God will ſave you by his free Grace; no, they called them to repent and believe, *&c.* Take heed, when ye have ſinned, to ſay we need not mourn for ſin, we need not be humbled, we need not repent; for, Lord, what can we do unto thee, O thou Saviour of men? Theſe are the inferences of our own ſpirits, not of the Spirit of Chriſt. They who lift up the grace of Chriſt, to leſſen the neceſſity of gracious actings in themſelves, ſhew they know not the meaning of his Grace, and have not indeed taſted how gracious the Lord is. To deny our own righteouſneſs, and to be very active in the wayes of righteouſneſs, is the due *Goſpel-temper.* The Apoſtle. *Phil.* 3.8. *counts all things but loſs and dung*; all duties and humblings, all legal righteouſneſs and obedience; not that he refuſed righteouſneſs, or neglected duties, but he would not mingle them with Chriſt, or bring them in as contributions to the purchaſe of bleſſedneſs. Our righteouſneſs and holy duties are dung and droſs in juſtification, but they are Gold and precious things in ſanctification; without theſe we cannot walk worthy of our holy calling, or as it becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt.

So much for theſe words, *What ſhall I do unto thee?*

O thou preſerver of men!

Here is the compellation, or the title under which *Job* beſpeaks the Lord (and it is a *royal one*) *The Preſerver of men.* The word ſignifies both to preſerve and to obſerve; and hence it is applied to our keeping the Law of God, *Pſal.* 119.22. *I have kept thy teſtimonies*, I have kept them by obſervation, that is, I have obeyed thy Commandments. The word is often applied to God, in reference to mans protection and preſervation, *Deut.* 32.10. *Moſes* deſcribes the care of God over his people *Iſrael*, *He found them in the wilderneſs* (as a people wandring and going aſtray) *and he kept them as the apple of his eye*, that is, he looked to them, and had a continual tender care over them. So, *Pſal.* 17.8. *Keep me as the apple of thine eye.*

נצר האדם Natſar *conſervavit, obſervavit, cuſtodivit, defendit, de qualibet cuſtodia dicitur, & ſignificat etiam ſeris vectibuſque claudere, licet proprie cuſtos.* שומר *dicitur, ſed confundit ſcias.* Druſ.

ὁ ἐπιςάμενος τὸν νοῦν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, qui perſpectam habes mentē hominum. Sept.

The Septuagint render it, *O thou obſerver of men; What ſhall I do unto thee, O thou who art the obſerver and looker into the very hearts of men?* Lord, ſaith he, what wilt thou have me to do? Thou lookeſt quite through me, and ſeeſt all that is in me, I need not declare my ſelf unto thee, thou knoweſt me altogether, *Thou who art the ſearcher of the heart, and the trier of the reins*; Thou who art a moſt vigilant watcher over all my wayes, what have I done or ſpoken, but thou knoweſt and canſt eaſily obſerve. Thus *Job* ſpeaks at *Chap.* 14. *verſ.* 16. *Thou numbereſt my ſteps:* A man obſerves another curiouſly, when he tells how many ſteps he treads, it is an expreſſion, noting the exacteſt obſervation. *Salomon* joyns the Act of keeping with obſerving, *Prov.* 24. 12. *If thou ſayeſt, Behold, he knoweth it not* (this is the refutation of an Athieſt) *Doth not he that pondereth the heart, conſider it, and he that keepeth thy Soul, doth not he know?* He that preſerveth us in our wayes, muſt needs ſee us in all our wayes.

Again, Preſerving or keeping may be underſtood two wayes.

Firſt, There is a preſerving or keeping of Man, that he ſhall not eſcape. And,

Cuſtos hominum, ſc. qui hominem talibus malis quaſi quadā cuſtodia includis, ut non ſit effugium.

Secondly, A preſerving or keeping of Man, that he ſhall not take hurt. Some underſtand it in the firſt ſence, *O thou preſerver of men!* that is, *O thou, who art ſo ſtrict a keeper and watcher over men, that they cannot eſcape thine hand.* A man is ſaid to be in *ſafe cuſtody*, when he is a priſoner, and ſo the ſence is thus given, *Lord, thou haſt me faſt enough, I cannot break away from thee, I am lockt up within iron-gates and bars, what wouldſt thou have me to do unto thee? Thou mayeſt put what conditions thou pleaſeſt upon me, I muſt ſubmit.* Such language we have (*Lam.* 3. 5, 7.) which may illuſtrate this. *He hath builded againſt me, and compaſſed me with gall and travel, he hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out, he hath made my chain heavy.* You ſee he ſpeaks of God (as we may ſpeak with reverence) as of the Maſter of a Priſon, who ſaith to his under Officers, there is ſuch a one, look to him well, make his chain heavy, that he may not get away, put him in a place where there is a ſtrong wall, leaſt he break priſon. This ſence of the word makes *Job* ſpeaking like *Jeremy*, *He hath builded againſt me, he hath compaſſed me about, he hath made my chain heavy upon me.*

But the ſecond ſence, according to the letter of our Tranſlation, is moſt clear and apt, *O thou preſerver of men!* Thou who keepeſt man, leaſt he take hurt or fall into danger; As if *Job* had beſpoke God thus, Thou art the Saviour and Protector of men, thou haſt not only given man a being, but thou provideſt for his well being: thou art a preſerver of our outward eſtates, and a preſerver of our ſpiritual eſtates. A God in whom we live, move, and have our being, as well as we receive being, life and motion from thee; and therefore ſeeing ſuch is thy nature, and this thy office, to be a preſerver of men, what wouldſt thou have me to do unto thee? Why doſt thou thus deſtroy me, and break me to pieces? Why doſt thou follow me with affliction upon affliction, till I am utterly ruin'd and undone? Thus *Jacob* (Gen. 28. 15.) *If thou wilt keep me in the way that I ſhall go*; he makes a vow to God, and indents or articles with God to be kept and preſerved by him. The word there is *Shomer*, but that and this are uſed promiſcuouſly, as *Pſalm* 121. 4. *The keeper of Iſrael.* In the word of the Text, and *Pſalm* 31. 23. *The Lord preſerveth the faithful*; he preſerveth them from the reach of dangers and troubles, incompaſſing them on every ſide.

So then in this title, we have the work and office of God held forth, the ſecond act of his power. The firſt is the act of Creation, the ſecond is this act of Preſervation or providence. Preſervation or providence is a continued Creation. Obſerve from this title,

First, *Man wants a preſerver.*

If God having made man, and ſet him in the world, had left him to his own keeping, what would become of him? When God truſted man to go a little alone, and did not hold a ſpecial hand of preſervation over him, to keep him from, or in temptation, how quickly did he fall and loſe himſelf? Man like a little child (which if the mother or the nurſe leaveth alone unwatched or uneyed) runs into dangers and deaths every moment. Man is a weak creature, therefore he needs a preſerver. Again, man (as fallen eſpecially) is a fooliſh creature, he hath no underſtanding to guide himſelf, he is as ignorant as a child (if God leave him) how to diſpoſe of his own wayes, and order his goings; *The way of man is not in himſelf, neither is it in him that goeth to direct his own ſteps.*

Laſtly, Man walks in the midſt of enemies. He is beſet with dangers, therefore he needs a Protector; what would become of a man, living in a throng of adverſaries, were it not that he hath a God, whoſe Name is, *the Preſerver of men?*

It is good for us to know God by this Name in every letter of it, in the full extent of it.

Mirus ſane Dei amor in populū ſuū, mira providentia Sanct. in Zech. 2.

Firſt, Immediately, his own hand and out-ſtretched arm is our ſafety, *Zech.* 2. 5. *I will be unto* Jeruſalem *a wall of fire round about*; If you want a wall, I will be your wall, my immediate providence ſhall be your defence, rather then you ſhall not be defended. *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones, or is my fleſh braſs?* Was *Job's* queſtion, *Chap.* 6. 12. We may reſolve it, the ſtrength of God is more then the ſtrength of ſtones, and he, *The Spirit* is more firm then braſs. The *Romans* in their Wars uſed to call out the *Tutelar gods* of thoſe Cities they beſieged, *&c.* as believing them a ſtronger defence to thoſe places, then walls or forts. And yet our God is more then a wall of ſtone and braſs, he promiſed to be a wall of fire. Now who can batter down a fire, that is it's own fewel, or who can ſet up ladders to ſcale the flames?

And as the Lord is a wall of fire, ſo a wall of water for the ſafety of his people, *Iſa.* 33. 21. *There will I be a place of broad rivers, and of ſtreams*; that is, I will be their preſervation; the broad rivers preſerves a place from the invaſion of enemies: Waters are ſtronger then Bulwarks of ſtone. And leaſt any ſhould object, though broad rivers keep off Foot or Horſe, yet they give advantage to Ships: therefore it is added, I will be ſuch a river to thee, *as wherein ſhall go no Galley with Oars, neither ſhall gallant Ship paſs thereby.* But if any ſhall venture their Navies upon theſe ſtreams to thy annoiance, then know (as *verſ.* 23. intimates) *Their tacklings ſhall be looſed, they ſhall not well ſtrengthen their maſts, they ſhall not ſpread their ſails*; They ſhall be ſo ruffled and entangled, *that the lame ſhall take the prey,* that is, the weakeſt reſiſtance ſhall ſubdue them and make prize of their whole Fleet, even of their Invincible Armado's. *I love the Lord my ſtrength, my rock, my tower, my fortreſs, my buckler, the horn of my ſalvation*; *Pſal.* 18. 1, 2. all theſe titles meet in this one, *The preſerver of men.*

Secondly, God is a preſerver of men mediately by inſtruments: he preſerves man by man, and man ſometimes by the beaſts of the Earth, and fowls of the Air, but chiefly he preſerveth men by Angels; *Are they not miniſtring ſpirits, ſent out for the good of thoſe that ſhall be heirs of ſalvation?* (Pſal. 91.) *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes; they ſhall bear thee up in thy wayes, leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone.* A promiſe ſo full of ſweetneſs for faith to feed on, that the Devil hath no way to elude it, but by tempting us (as he did Chriſt) to over act it, and ſurfet faith into a preſumption, by a wilful needleſs throwing our ſelves into danger.

And there is a neceſſity that God himſelf ſhould thus take upon him the preſervation of men: This neceſſity is three-fold.

Firſt, None are ſtrong enough to preſerve us without him, our enemies would break through all ſtrength below God: ſo that, if he were not our preſerver, none could: *In vain is ſalvation hoped for from hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of* Iſrael, *Jer.* 2.

Secondly, None are wiſe enough to preſerve us, except the Lord. As evil ſpirits are *powers*, for ſtrength; ſo likewiſe *Serpents*, for policy and craft; this craft of Hell cannot be diſcovered, much leſs diſappointed, without wiſdom from Heaven.

Thirdly, None but God are patient enough to be the preſervers of men, I believe if the Angels left to their natural temper, were ſet to be keepers of men, they had all given over this charge long before this time; as it is ſuppoſed, they who fell refuſed to undertake, or take it up at firſt: Angels have not the patience to keep ſuch a froward piece as man. It is a wonder God doth not give over that care, and in ſtead of preſerving, daſh him in pieces. When the Lord told *Moſes, he would ſend an Angel before him, and drive out the Canaanite* (Exod. 34. 2.) *For I will not go up in the midſt of thee, for thou art a ſtiff necked people leſt I conſume thee in the way.* The Text ſaith, *when the people heard this evil tidings, they mourned, and no man did put upon him his Ornaments.* Why what was it that troubled them? Was it that the Angel is ſent now to conduct them to *Canaan?* That was told them (*Chap.*23.20.) and they well ſatisfied with it, *Behold, I ſend an Angel before to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.* I anſwer, the Angel in *Chap.* 23. is by all (that I meet with) agreed to be the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the great Angel of the Covenant; but the Angel, *Chap.* 33. appears to be a created Angel, and rather threatned them then promiſed them. And though the Lord is pleaſed to ſignifie a reaſon of ſending this Angel in favour to them, namely, leſt *He himſelf conſume them in the way for their ſtubbornneſs.* Yet the people are not ſatisfied with this tidings; ſurely they thought if the Lord was not able to bear their provocations, much leſs could an Angel; and therefore if he ſhould ſend an Angel, and withdraw his own preſence from them, they muſt periſh; A mere Angel could not have bore their manners as the Lord did; receiving provocations from them, and continuing preſervations over them this fourty years.

It is yet further obſervable, that the Hebrew is not only ſingular, but a particular: *The preſerver of Adam*, or of *that man*, which hath ſome ſpeciality in it: We tranſlate in general, *the preſerver of men*, but the *preſerver of man*, or of *that man*, is more emphatical. God preſerveth all, but he hath a ſpecial eye of preſervation upon ſome, *Thou preſerveſt Man and Beaſt*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt; the beaſts of the earth are preſerved,but man is preſerved more: And among men, ſome are more preſerved. It is a truth, the great God preſerveth his greateſt enemies: a wicked man were not able to liſt up a hand or a tongue againſt him, if God did not uphold him: but God is the ſpecial preſerver of *that man*, that is, the preſerver of *a godly Man*, or of godly Men. As Chriſt is *the Saviour of all Men, but eſpecially of thoſe that believe*; *ſo the Preſerver of all Men, but eſpecially of thoſe that believe*; he hath a care of them, beyond the care he hath of the world. The care which God hath of the reſt of the world, compared with that towards his own, is but careleſneſs, and he as it were neglects the whole world to look to his own People. As it was ſaid of *Conſtantine*, that for the love he bare to *Conſtantinople*, he undreſſed and unadorned all the other Cities of the Empire, to beautifie and adorn that: God ſeems to take off from all men in the world to lay it on upon his people; the very gleanings of thoſe mercies which his people have, are better then the whole vintage of the world: And the Lord is therefore a ſpecial Saviour to his people, becauſe,

Firſt, They are more precious then the reſt of the world: and that calls for moſt care, which hath moſt worth. A man takes more care of his jewels, then of the lumber in his houſe; *Theſe are my Jewels*, ſaith God (*Mal.* 3.) A man carries his jewels about him, or keeps them in a ſafe cabinet.

Secondly, Nearneſs of relation calls for that care; will not a man preſerve his Wife, his Spouſe? The Church is the Spouſe of Chriſt. Will not a man preſerve his Children? If his houſe be on fire, bring my Children out ſaith he: The heart of God is towards his Children, he muſt provide them a portion. Yea they are his portion, he makes a revenew of them (*Deut.*32.9.) A man will preſerve his revenew, that wherein his eſtate lies: All that God hath on earth (though he hath ſuch a fulneſs in himſelf, that he needs nothing from his Church,yet,all that he hath) he is pleaſed to ſay, he hath it from his Church: and therefore God is ſaid to be *great in Zion*; he is the ſame great God all the world over,but it appears not ſo,what he is to the men of the world, as to the Saints in *Zion* it doth: yea he is little in the eye of the world, in compariſon of what he is in *Zion*, therefore he takes great care to preſerve his *Zion.* Obſerve,

> Laſtly, *The preſerving care of God over man, eſpecially over that man, over his own people, is a perpetual care.*

Preſervation is a continued act, if God ſhould leave us one moment, and ſtop providence, Creation would be diſſolved: This continuance of his care, is eminent towards his Church; *Iſa.* 27. 3. *Leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* Night and day divide all time between them: to do a thing night and day, is to do it continually, *Pſal.*121. 4. *He that keepeth* Iſrael, *neither ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth*: A ſlumber is leſs then ſleep; but God will not ſo much as ſlumber in his thoughts towards as, all his are waking thoughts. Further, his love is without intermiſſion, that knows no ſtops nor breaches, therefore his care is ſo too. His peoples dangers are without intermiſſion, therefore his preſevation is ſo too. Enemies oppoſe his people without intermiſſion, therefore he protects them ſo too. *The Devil goeth about like a roaring lion*,he is ever in motion,*he goeth about* as an *Abaddon* or *Appollyon*, the deſtroyer and devourer of men: The care of Chriſt prompts him to a like vigilancy, *He goeth about preſerving*; his act of preſervation runs parallel with that of the enemies oppoſition: God watches that his people may have ſome quiet reſt and ſleep. As the ſtory reports of *Alexander the Great*, that he told his Souldiers, *I watch more then any of you all, that you may ſometimes have quiet ſleep:* his care diſpenſed with ſome of their careleſneſs. It is moſt true of God, he wakes for ever, and he watches for ever, to preſerve us that we may ſleep in quietneſs and confidence. *Solomon* reproves ſome ſecure ones, who are as they, *who ſleep on the top of the maſt* (Prov.23.) But the Saints may ſleep (in regard of fear, though not of indeavour) on the top of the maſt, while they remember that both the helm and the winds are in Gods hands. As our ſpiritual eſtates, ſo our temporal are kept (as with a garriſon in their degree) by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation. So much for the Title, *O thou preſerver of men.*

Certo ſcio me plus vigilare quam vos, ut ipſi ſomnos quietos capere poſſitis. Arian. l.8.

Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf?

Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?] The word ſignifies to meet one, to come the oppoſite way; Hence ſome tranſlate this, *why haſt thou ſet me contrary to thy ſelf?* Becauſe he that meets another, comes the contrary way, the way oppoſite to him: *why haſt thou put me as an object againſt thee?* or, *as an enemy to thee?* the object ſtands directly before us, and we deſire to have an enemy right before us. And the word may be taken ſimply for an enemy, or adverſary, who ſtands oppoſite to us, both in his actions and deſigns, and againſt whom we direct both ours. We render, *wherefore haſt thou ſet me as a mark?* And that ſuits the ſence of the word fully, becauſe a mark at which a man aims, is ſet in direct oppoſition to him; we level our arrows or bullets at the mark right before us: *Job* thought himſelf thus placed, *why haſt thou ſet me as a mark* to meet with, or intercept thy ſhot, thy arrows, thy bullets, thy blows upon my breaſt? Wilt thou make the boſom of thy ſervants, like the breaſt of an enemy, a *Butt* to receive all thy arrows? A mark is as a ſtanding enemy; and an enemy is a moving mark to ſhoot at: a mark is a liveleſs enemy, and an enemy is a living mark: his meaning then is, Thou haſt ſet me againſt thee, as if I were an enemy, as if I were one againſt whom thou reſolveſt to direct all thine arrows, and aim every ſtroak: ſo the word is uſed, *Judg.* 8. 21, where *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, two Kings taken captive by *Gideon*, ſaid to him, *riſe thou and fall upon us*; it is this word, ſet us before thee as a mark for thy victorious ſword: So the Prophet (*Amos* 5. 19.) tells us that a man in hopes to eſcape the hand of God, *ſhall be as if a man did flee from a Lion, and a Bear met him*, ſuch a man is but a mark for a Bear, who thinks to out-run this Lion. That expreſſion (1 *King.* 5. 4.) is very clear to this ſence, where the peace-fulneſs of *Solomons* reign is deſcribed, thus, *there was neither adverſary nor evil occurrent*; the word we tranſlate, *evil occurrent*, it is that in the Text, no evil met or befell them. So then the ſum of all is, That *Job* expoſtulates or complains before God, that he was as it were the man choſen out amongſt all the men in the world, to be as the mark and butt againſt which God ſhot his afflictions, and level'd all his arrows: As if he had ſaid, There are many more about me, and thou doeſt not ſo much as touch one of the hairs of their head, there are men that receive not ſo much as one ſhot from thee, but I

מפגע פגע *Occurrit, obviam factus fuit.* *Quare poſuiſti me contrariũ tibi.* Vulg. *In occurſum tibi.* Pagn. *Objectum tibi.* Tyg. *Offendiculũ in quem ſemper impingas* Vatab.

am made thy ſtanding mark, why is it thus Lord? So he expreſſeth himſelf in other words, but to this very ſence, *Chap.*19 11. &. 13.24. *Wherefore holdeſt thou me for thine enemy?* Or (according to the Letter of the Hebrew) among thoſe who ſtraighten thee, as an enemy ſtraightens a City, in the time of a ſiege; and this he doth to move God to pity and compaſſion; Lord, ſaith he, I am ſet as a mark againſt thee. You would be much moved (a tender heart would) to ſee a man bound faſt to a poſt, and another ſtanding off with his bow bent, and his arrow on the ſtring, with his gun or piſtol cock'd, aiming at his breaſt: *Job* preſents himſelf in ſuch a poſture, as if the Lord had bound him faſt to a poſt or to a tree, and were pouring vollies of ſhot, and ſending ſhowers of arrows upon him continually.

Obſerve, Firſt, The manner of the language, which is by way of a vehement queſtion, or expoſtulation, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?*

Man is very inquiſitive to know the reaſons of Gods dealings with him.

That's one thing. And ſecondly, which is near the ſame'

It is ſome ſatisfaction and eaſe to the mind ſmitten by the hand of God, to know the reaſon why he wounds, why he ſmites.

Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark? As if he had ſaid, if I could but learn this, and ſee the reaſon of it, ſurely I ſhould receive thy wounds as kiſſes, and take thy ſtroaks as embraces. When *Gideon* ſaw ſo many evils and troubles upon *Iſrael*; *Judg.*6. and the Angel told him, *the Lord was with him,* Then *why is it thus* (ſaith he) Can you give me a reaſon, why God being with us, it is thus with us? *To know the reaſon of our pain, is a great eaſe, and almoſt the cure of it.* If the people of God did but know what infinite reaſon he hath (reaſon of the higheſt temperament of wiſdom and goodneſs) why he layes affliction upon them, and makes them as his marks, they would be abundantly ſatisfied with it. What is the reaſon why the Saints coming out of great affliction, are willing to confeſs, *It is good for us that we were afflicted, and bleſſed be God that we were chaſtned.* It is, becauſe then they ſee more clearly the reaſon why God afflicted them, and they then begin to taſte the fruit of thoſe afflictions. If while the affliction is upon us, we knew what good God meaneth us, what honour he intendeth us, we ſhould bear it not only with courage and with patience, but with joy. If *Job* had been fully acquainted with this, that God therefore ſet him up as a mark to ſhoot at, that he might be to all the world a mirror of patience: that God intended him this honour, that his name ſhould be upon record in his Book ſo long as there was a Church; ſurely he would have born all with more patience and eaſe then he did: But he was groping in the dark, and therefore enquires, *Wherefore haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?* The words are not only, or not ſo much, an expoſtulation, becauſe he was ſet as a mark, as an Inquiſition, why he was ſet as a mark. Note,

Thirdly, *God ſometimes ſeems an enemy to his faithful ſervants.*

For one to be before God as a Butt continually ſhot at, what other interpretation can ſence make of it but this, that God looks upon him as an enemy? *Jacob* ſaith of *Joſeph* (Gen. 49.23.) *the Archers have ſorely grieved him, and ſhot at him.* *Joſeph* was as the common mark of his brethrens envy. But in this caſe, as it is ſaid of *Joſeph* (Gen. 42.) when his brethren came to him, *He made himſelf ſtrange to them.* (*Joſeph* ſtrained himſelf, and uſed his Art, to overcome his nature, *He made himſelf ſtrange: Joſeph* was of a meek and loving diſpoſition, and therefore like a Player upon a ſtage, he only acted the part of a rigid maſter or governor.) Thus many times the Lord takes upon him the poſture of an enemy, and forces a frown upon a poor creature, whom he loves and delights in with all his heart; he makes him as his mark to ſhoot at, whom he layes next his own heart. Thus the Church ſpeaks, *Lam.* 3.12. *He hath bent his bow, and ſet me as a mark for his arrows*; And (*Job* 16.13.) that you may ſee how his language agrees with our Scriptures: *His archers compaſs me round about, he cleaveth my reins aſunder, and doth not ſpare. He poureth out my gall upon the ground.* How exactly he ſpeaks! A man ſhoots at a hairs breadth that ſhoots thus: when God ſends his archers, their bows ſhoot ſo true, that they cleave the reins aſunder: the reins are in the midſt of a man, and to cleave the reins is to ſhoot level: as pouring out the gall, or unbowelling, imports to ſhoot dead.

Fourthly, Obſerve this, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark?*

God takes the moſt eminent and choiceſt of his ſervants, for the choiceſt and moſt eminent afflictions.

He makes a *Job the white.* Why haſt thou choſen me? There was great reaſon, God ſhould chooſe him, he was the moſt eminent in holineſs and grace of all about him: he was the moſt remarkable man for grace and goodneſs, therefore he muſt be the mark. They who have received moſt grace from God, are able to bear moſt affliction from God. God doth this in infinite wiſdom: as the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 14. 11. gives an excellent advice in reference to weak brethren, *ſuch as are weak receive, but not to doubtful diſputations*, take heed how you ingage your weak Brethren in doubtful diſputes, you may looſe them ſo; take thoſe that are ſtrong and able, ſuch as are well ballaſted for a ſtorm, take theſe men if you will to doubtful diſputations, but do not take weak brethren. If God will not have us take a weak Chriſtian to a doubtful diſputation; ſurely then he calls ſuch to ſufferings, of whoſe ſtrength he is well aſſured: A man under great affliction, is brought to a very doubtful diſputation; therefore the Lord will not bring a weak one, one low in grace to it, but he takes out the ſtrong: As the General of an Army chuſes out the valianteſt and moſt experienced veterane Souldiers, to put them upon hard adventures, it is not wiſdom to venture a freſh-water Souldier upon difficult ſervices. God will not put new Wine into old bottles: as it is in acting duties, ſo in ſufferings. And as Chriſt orders the word in ſuch wiſdom, that he will not have counſel given to any ſoul, who is unprepared to receive it, or unable to bear it. *John* 16.12. *I have many things yet to ſay unto you, but you cannot bear them now*; therefore I will defer until you have got more ſtrength: So God ſaith of a young Chriſtian, one that is newly come in; thou haſt great afflictions to undergo before thou dieſt, but thou art not fit to bear them yet, I will defer thy trial till thou art grown more hardy, through more communion with me, to fit thee for that encounter. As our Lord Chriſt told *Peter* (Joh. 21. 18.) *When thou waſt young, thou girdeſt thy ſelf, and walkedſt whether thou wouldeſt; but when thou ſhalt be old, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thy hands, and another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whether thou wouldſt not.* That is, when thou waſt young and unexperienced, thou enjoyedſt thy liberty; but when thou ſhalt be grown older in years, and ſtronger in grace, thou ſhalt willingly ſtretch forth thy hands, and quietly ſuffer thy ſelf to be bound to the Croſs (*Peter* was not nailed as Chriſt, but tied to the Croſs) and there die in witneſs of my truth; *For this Chriſt ſpake, ſignifying by what death he ſhould die, and glorifie God*, ver. 19.

Fifthly, In that he ſaith, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee? Why doſt thou run thus againſt me?* Obſerve,

Man in ſinning, runneth contrary to God; and God in afflicting, ſeemeth to run contrary to Man.

Every act of ſin is a direct oppoſition unto God: we ſet God as a mark, and ſhoot arrows of diſobedience againſt him; ſin is a miſſing the mark of duty, but it aims to hit the Lord as a mark, who charges us with that duty. In affliction God runneth upon us, and makes the tranſgreſſor his mark. *Moſes* (Levit.26.41.) ſpeaks both wayes; *If your uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, and ye acknowledge that ye have walked contrary unto me, and that I have walked contrary unto you*; that I have made you a mark, and ſhot at you by my judgments, and that you have made me a mark, ſhooting at me by your ſins; then *I will remember, &c.* So that our ſinning is a walking contrary unto God, and Gods corrections are his walking contrary to us: There is an excellent expreſſion, noting how ſin ſtrikes, and (as it were) ſhoots at God (*Job* 15.25,26.) *He ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God* (ſpeaking of a wicked man) *and ſtrengthneth himſelf againſt the Almighty*: (here this word is uſed) *he runneth upon him, even on his neck,* *upon the thick boſs of his bucklers.* See how he deſcribes a wicked man in his natural courſe; what doth he? He runs upon God, he runneth upon him, even upon his neck as a man that encounters an enemy, runs upon him, and ſets his feet upon his neck; he runneth upon the thick boſſes of his bucklers: a warrior hath boſſes upon his arms, both for beauty and defence. The enemy runs upon the very boſſes, and fears nothing; ſuch is a wicked man. He runs againſt God; and will not God run upon him? He will certainly be upon the boſſes of their bucklers, and upon their necks too one time or other, till they ſhall be forced to cry out, that as they have been burdens unto God, ſo now they are burdens to themſelves. Thus *Job* concludes in his own caſe.

So that I am a burden to my ſelf.

נשׂא à משׂא *Tulit onus à tollendo ac ferendo dictum. Sum ſuper te onus.* φόρτιον. *alii vertunt* φορτικὸς. *oneroſus, moleſtus, quo alluditur ad importunos peccatores, qui auribus ludicrum perſtrepunt.* עליך *tibi quod Scribæ mutarunt in* עלי *mihi, quod indignum divina majeſtate arbitrarentur, ut homuncio ei oneri eſſet.* Ab. Ez, Druſ.

The former words are the cauſe, and theſe are the effect: *Thou haſt ſet me as a mark*: what follows? *O I am a burden to my ſelf!* The Septuagint read thus, *ſo that I am a burden unto thee*; or, *ſo that I am burdenſome to thee.* And then his meaning may be conceived thus; *Lord, thou ſetteſt me as a mark, ſo that I become burdenſome unto thee; I have ſuch a weight of afflictions upon me, that I am forced to complainings and expoſtulations, wherein I am afraid I am burdenſome to thee*; as poor ſuiters, when they cry long in the ears of a Judge or Magiſtrate, he ſaith, forbear, you are very troubleſom, very burdenſom to me.

The *Rabbins* obſerve, that this was the ancient reading of the Text, *I am a burden unto thee*, and that the Scribes, who wrote out the Bibles in Hebrew, made this alteration, *a burden to my ſelf*; becauſe they conceived it was unbecoming the Majeſty of God, that *Job* ſhould ſay, he was a burden to him. There is a general truth in that Tranſlation, *a burden unto thee:* The ſins of man are burdenſome to God, the frowardneſs and impatience of men are burdenſome unto God; But I conceive our tranſlation carries the ſence fairer, in a reflection upon his own tired ſpirits, *So that I am made a burden to my ſelf*, that is, thou doſt even throw me upon my ſelf, whereas heretofore thou waſt wont to bear me, and take my burden upon thy ſelf. Alas, I faint, I cannot ſtand under my ſelf, I am weary of my life, becauſe I am left alone to bear it, I know not what to do with my ſelf, I am ſo burdenſome to my ſelf. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, *Outward afflictions, poverty, ſickneſs, want, &c. are burdens, and they make a man burdenſome to himſelf.*

It is a great burden to have our comforts taken away from us. The removing of comforts lies like a heavy weight upon the ſpirit; the removing of health from the body is a weight upon the ſoul; fear is a burden, care is a burden, and ſo is pain. Therefore God calls us to caſt all thoſe burdens upon him, *Pſal.* 55. 22.

> Secondly obſerve, *Man left to himſelf, is not able to bear himſelf.*

Man is much born down by weight of natural corruption. Hence the Apoſtle calls it a *weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us* (*Heb.* 12. 1.) or dangle about our heels to burden us, as long garments do a man that runneth. Our ordinary callings and affairs, left upon our own backs, preſs us to the earth, much more do our extraordinary troubles and afflictions. And therefore he adviſeth, *Caſt thy burden upon the Lord* (he aſſures in the next words) *and he ſhall ſuſtain thee.* As implying, that man cannot ſuſtain or bear his own weight. And though it ſhould ſeem we have ſtrength to ſpare for others, and are therefore commanded to bear one anothers burdens (*Gal.* 6.) yet no man of himſelf, no not the holieſt *Atlas*, nor the ſpiritualleſt Porter on earth, is able to bear his own ſelf, unleſs Chriſt be his ſupporter, who is alſo therefore ſaid to *uphold all things by the word of his power*, Heb. 1. 3. Becauſe no creature in a natural, or man in a ſpiritual capacity, can bear his own weight.

Thirdly, From the connexion between theſe two phraſes, *Thou haſt ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf*, what is it that makes my life to be ſo burdenſome to me? It is this, becauſe I am ſet as a mark before thee, that is, becauſe thou ſeemeſt to be an enemy to me: And ſo the Note from the connection is this,

> *That which preſſes and burdens the ſoul above all, is the apprehenſion that God is againſt us.*

Job in many things looked unto God under theſe temptations with ſad thoughts, as if he were his enemy; ſo he expreſt himſelf in the ſixth Chapter, *The poyſon of his arrows drinks up my ſpirits, he ſetteth himſelf in battel array againſt me.* In theſe temptations and deſertions, this was the burden of his ſpirit, that God appeared as an adverſary; *Why doſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?* Let the *Sabeans* and the *Chaldeans* ſhoot at me as much as they will, let fire and winds contend with me, and make me the mark of their utmoſt fury, I can bear all theſe. *Job* was light-hearted enough when he thought he contended only with creatures, and that creatures only contended with him, but in the progreſs of the trial, he finds God againſt him, withdrawing comforts from, and ſhooting terrors at him; now he is a burden to himſelf, he can bear this no longer. As *Cæſar* ſaid in the Senate, when he had many wounds given him, yet this wounded him moſt, that he was wounded by the hand of his ſon; *What thou my ſon?* So when a Believer looks this way and that way, and ſees many enemies, Satan and the creatures all in arms againſt him, he can bear all their charges and aſſaults; but if he apprehend God oppoſing and wounding him, he weeps out this mournful complaint, *What thou my Father? what thou my God?* Thou who haſt ſo often ſhined upon me, doſt thou darken thy face towards me, and appear mine enemy? Theſe apprehenſions of God, will make the ſtrongeſt Saint on earth a burden too heavy for himſelf to bear. That which cauſeth the moſt burdenſome thought in the Saints, is the inevidence of their pardon. Sin unpardoned is in it ſelf a burden, and our not knowing ſin to be pardoned, is a greater burden; but our jealouſies and fears that it is not pardoned, is the greateſt burden of all, and that which adds weight, yea an intolerableneſs to all other burdens. Hence *Job* in the next verſe, and with the laſt breath of his anſwer, points directly at that which pincht him.

Verſe 11, **And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity? for now ſhall I ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, but I ſhall not be.**

In the former verſe, we found *Job* humbly confeſſing his ſin, and earneſtly enquiring of the Lord a reaſon of his ſorrows, why he had ſhot him ſo full of arrows, that now he was not ſo much wounded as loaded, *and become a burden to himſelf.*

In this verſe he ſues for the pardon of thoſe ſins, and ſo for the removal of thoſe ſorrows; that the bow might ſpeedily be unbended, and not a ſhot more made at his bleeding breaſt. In the anſwer of which ſuit, he deſires ſpeed and expedition, leſt help being retarded, come too late; for he profeſſeth that he cannot hold out this ſiege long, he muſt needs make his bed in the grave, and then being ſought for, he ſhall not be found.

And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſions?

We may conſider the words two wayes.

In the { 1. Form / 2. Matter } of them.

In the form they are a vehement expoſtulation; *Job's* ſpirit hath been heated all along with the fire of his ſufferings, and here he ſpeaks in the heat of his ſpirit, and with fiery deſires after mercy: He keeps up his heart to the ſame height and tenour ſtill. There it was, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?* Here's another *why*, *and why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion?* As before he was grieved to be ſet up as a *mark* for afflictions to aim at; ſo now he deſires to be made a *mark* for mercy to aim at.

I ſhall note one thing from hence, before I come to open the words; *They who are ſenſible of the evil of ſin, will pray heartily for the pardon of ſin*, Expoſtulation is earneſt prayer; expoſtulation is a vehement poſtulation, a vehement enquiring after, or deſiring of a thing; *Why doſt thou not pardon my ſin?* may be reſolved into this, *O that thou wouldſt pardon my ſin!* Or, *wilt thou not pardon my ſin?*

The matter of this Prayer requires ſuch a form, ſuch a vehemency of ſpirit in him that prayes. If there be any petition in the world, about which the ſpirit ſhould be fired, it is in this, when we pray for pardon of ſin.

Will not a man whoſe body is defiled by falling into the mire, call haſtily for ſome to cleanſe and waſh him? will he not ſay, if it come not ſpeedily, why do you not bring away the water there? ſin is the defiling and bemiring of the ſoul, and pardon is the cleanſing of it.

If a man be deeply and deadly wounded, will he have only ſome few feeble deſires, or make cold requeſts for a Chirurgeon? will he not call and call aloud? call and call again for help and healing? Sins are the wounds of the ſoul, and pardon is the only cure of it.

If a man hath broken his bones, will he not be very very earneſt to have them ſet again? Sin is the breaking of the bones, and pardon is their ſetting. How doth *David* cry to the Lord (*Pſal.* 51. 8.) *That the bones which he had broken might rejoyce*: Sin had broken his bones firſt, and the hiding of Gods favour from him, was a ſecond breaking.

If a mans peace, or the peace of a Nation be diſturbed, is there not earneſt crying (as at this day) to have it repaired and re-eſtabliſted? Sin troubles our peace, the peace of the ſoul, and the peace of Kingdoms; *Sin is the great make-bate*, and pardon is the returning of our peace, and quieteth all again, and therefore no marvel if we cry out, *Why doſt thou not pardon our ſins?*

He that is greatly in debt, and fears every hour to be arreſted and caſt in priſon, is trying all friends to get ſecurity and protection. Sinning is a running in debt with God, and it brings us under the danger of his arreſt every moment; forgiveneſs cancels the bond: when the ſin is pardoned, the debt is paid, and the ſoul diſcharged; and therefore no wonder if in this caſe, we hear or make ſtrong cries, *Why doſt thou not pardon our ſins? My ſon* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 6. 4. ſpeaking about ſuretiſhip) *if thou be ſurety for thy friend* (if thou haſt engaged thy ſelf for another) *give not ſleep to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eye-lids, deliver thy ſelf as a Roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.* Not to give reſt to the eye, nor ſlumber to the eye-lids, notes the hotteſt purſuit and greateſt intention of ſpirit about a buſineſs: Thus buſie *Solomon* adviſes a man to be who becometh ſurety for another. Then what ſhould we do, who have contracted huge debts our ſelves? How ſhould we in this ſence, give our eyes no reſt, and our eye-lids no ſlumber, till our ſouls be delivered, as a Roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler, that is, from all the power and challenge which the Law without us, Conſcience within us, Satan purſuiug us, and the Juſtice of God threatning us, can any way make or have againſt the peace of our ſouls. That's the firſt thing, from the manner of form in which *Job* ſues for the pardon of ſin, his ſpirit doth not fall, he grows not flat upon this point, but is as high and earneſt here for the pardon of ſin, as in any of his requeſts for the eaſe of his pained body, or the diſſolution of it.

Why doſt thou not pardon my ſin, and take away mine iniquity? I ſhall firſt ſhew what is meant by *pardoning* and *taking away*; and then, what by *tranſgreſſion and iniquity*, and ſo put the ſence of all together.

Why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion?

The Septuagint reads it, *Why doſt thou not forget my tranſgreſſion?* or bury it in the grave of oblivion, and the word may ſignifie to *forget*, as well as to *take away*. But generally it imports the *lifting up*, or *taking away* of that which lies heavy upon us, either in a moral, or in a natural notion, *Hoſ.* 11. 4. *I was to them as they that take off the yoke*; and becauſe pardon is the taking away, or lifting off of ſin, therefore it is often put for the act of pardoning.

Διὰ τί οὐκ ἐποιήσω λήθην τῆς ἀνομίας μου, accipiunt נשא *tanquam à* נשה *oblitus fuit.* נשא *Tollere, levare, per Metaphorā donare eò quod munera & donaria in altum elevari ſolerent, ſicut ſacrificia cū Deo offerebantur.*

Hence alſo it is applied to that geſture of the Prieſts, when they received gifts and ſacrifices, becauſe they were wont to elevate and lift them up. Hence Chriſt, the ſubſtance of all the Sacrifices, is ſaid to be lifted up; himſelf ſaith, *As Moſes lifted up the Serpent in the wilderneſs, ſo muſt the Son of man be lifted up* (John 3. 14.) We may ſay, as *Aaron* lifted up the Sacrifices at the Altar, ſo the Son of man was lifted up. This lifting up noted alſo the acceptance of thoſe Sacrifices, and the favour of God to thoſe who brought them. When *Pharaoh* beſtowed a great favour upon the chief Butler, *Gen.* 40. 30. according to his dream, he lifted up his head: *Joſeph* expounded it ſo, *After three dayes, Pharaoh ſhall lift up thine head*, that is, *he ſhall freely pardon thy offence*, and beſtow ſome great honour, gift or reward upon thee. And in this ſence it is proper to the Text, when ſin is pardoned, a mans head is lifted up, himſelf is advanced indeed.

The Lord proclaims his name in this tenour (*Exod.* 34. 7.) *The Lord, the Lord, forgiving* (or lifting up) *iniquity.* And, *Pſal.* 32. 1. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe tranſgreſſions are forgiven*, or lifted up.

Further, this word ſignifies, not only to take or lift off a burden from another, and lay it down; but ſo to lift it off from another, as for a man to take it upon himſelf, and bear it in his ſtead, from whoſe ſhoulders it was taken. And in this ſtrict ſence we are eſpecially to underſtand it in the point of pardon; for pardon is not the taking away of ſin from a man, and laying it none knows where; but ſin being taken off from a man, ſome other ſhoulders are prepared to bear it, even the ſhoulders of our Lord Chriſt, on him our ſin is laid; *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*, Iſa. 53. 6. When the burden of debt was taken off from us, it was charged on Chriſt. He did not take or lift the burden of ſin from us, and throw it by, but he bare it himſelf; nothing but this could compleat the work of pardon; therefore it was alſo propheſied, *Iſa.* 53. 4. *Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows.* And (1 *Pet.* 2. 22.) *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree*, that is, in his humanity or humane nature, while he dwelt with us in the body. Body is not here oppoſed to ſoul, but includes it; as ſometime the whole work is laid upon the ſoul of Chriſt, not excluding his body, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *When thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin.* By the whole man this offering was made, and the whole man bare our ſins on the tree. That paſſage, *Mat.* 8. 17. (where the firſt Propheſie of *Iſaiah* is quoted, is very emphatical) when Chriſt had healed many of their outward diſtempers, this reaſon is added, *That it might be fulfilled which is written* (ſc. *Iſa.* 53. 9.) *himſelf took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes.* Now Chriſt took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes, when he took and bare our ſins; when he took ſin, he took that which was the neceſſary fruit of ſin, our ſickneſſes and our ſorrows; for as in Scripture Chriſt is ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, that is, with the ſin he bare thoſe afflictions and ſorrows which are the conſequents of ſin; ſo here, when it is ſaid, *he bare our ſorrows and our ſickneſſes*, it takes in the bearing of thoſe ſins, which procured and produced thoſe ſorrows.

The Greek words uſed by the Evangeliſt, are full with this ſence, *He took them to him*, he received them upon himſelf; he (as it were) tranſlated them from poor ſinful man, to his own body.

Τὰς ἀσθενείας ἔλαβε καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν. Aſſumpſit ſecum, atque recepit quaſi ad ſe tranſtulit.

The word alſo imports his taking our ſins and ſickneſſes upon him, as a veſture or garment, and ſo wrapping himſelf in them. We know our ſins by nature cloath us as a garment, ours is not only a burden, but a cloathing of ſin and filthineſs, *Take away his filthy garments* (ſaith the Lord concerning *Joſhua* the High-Prieſt) then follows, *And unto him I ſaid, I have cauſed thine iniquity to paſs from thee, and I will cloath thee with change of raiment. Man ſaw not his own nakedneſs till he was cloathed with ſin*, Gen. 2. Chriſt to anſwer that, cloaths and wraps himſelf with our ſins, as we our ſelves were wrapped about and cloathed with them; he cloaths himſelf with our ſorrows, as we our ſelves were cloathed with ſorrow. In which ſence (among others) Chriſt may be called a *man of ſorrows*; as we may call a man cloathed with rags, *a man of rags*; and a man cloathed with ſilk, *a man of ſilks*.

ἐβάστασε.

The ſecond word of the Evangeliſt, *Mat.* 18. 17. ſignifies to bear as a *Porter bears* a great burden; Chriſt took up that burden under which all the Angels in heaven would have ſunk; he took it up like a mighty *Samſon*, and carried it out for us. The *Scape-Goat* was a type of this, *Levit.* 6. 22. *And the Goat ſhall bear upon him all their iniquities into a Land not inhabited*; or a Land cut off and ſeparated from other Lands and people, figuring hereby the total aboliſhing of our ſins, which being carried into a Land, where no man dwels, ſhall be as loſt and gone for ever, not to be found when they ſhall be ſought for;

who can find that, which is where no man ever was? Pardon'd ſin is carried and (as it were) hid out of the ſight both of God and man, for it is not; and that which is not, is not (according to man) to be ſeen. In alluſion to all which, Chriſt (*Joh.* 1. 29.) is pointed at by the Baptiſt, with, *Behold the lamb of God that takes away the ſins of the world*; he takes ſin off from the world, upon himſelf, and carries it away no man knows whither. That for the firſt word, *pardon,* Why doſt thou not pardon my ſin?

ὁ αἴρων.

עבר

Eſt, 1. *Simpliciter præterire.* 2. *Interire, perire, evaneſcere, mori.*

The ſecond word is rendred by our Tranſlators, *Take away,* **Why doeſt thou not take away mine iniquity**? Others thus, *Why doeſt thou not cauſe mine iniquity to paſs away?* Or, *Why doeſt thou not put away mine iniquity?* So we tranſlate, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. where aſſoon as *David* confeſt his ſin, ſaying, *I have ſinned, Nathan* anſwers, *and the Lord hath put away thy ſin*; he hath made it to paſs away.

The word ſignifies, firſt ſimply, to paſs away or to paſs by.

Secondly, To die, periſh or vaniſh away, that which paſſes by us is vaniſhed, as to us: So the word is taken, *Pſal.* 37. 36. where *David* ſpeaking of the flouriſhing eſtate of wicked men, ſaith, *I have ſeen the wicked in great proſperity, flouriſhing as a green bay tree, yet he paſt away, and loe he was not:* A man unpardoned, ſees, or ſhould ſee, his ſins growing up as a mighty tree: ſin unpardoned, flouriſhes like a green bay-tree, it roots in the ſoul, and guilt nouriſhes it; but when pardon comes, ſin paſſes away, and it is not, becauſe that which gave it ſap is not.

Quando dicitur de mandato, pacto, juramento ſignificat tranſgredi, violare, peccare.

Further, this word (which is very conſiderable) is applied to the committing of ſin, as well as to the pardoning of ſin: For when it is joyned with thoſe words, *The Commandments of God, the Statutes of God, the Word of God,* or the like; it ſignifies to violate, to break the bounds, to tranſgreſs: for in ſinning a man paſſes by the word and commandment of God, the precepts which God hath given, and the charge God hath laid upon him, he goeth away from all; when man ſins, he paſſeth by the Commandment of God, and when God pardons, he paſſeth by the ſin of man, or he cauſeth his ſins to paſs away.

Tranſire facis, i.e. *impunitum relinquis, condonas.*

So that this word, *Take away, put away,* or *cauſe to paſs,* notes the removing of ſin, both in the guilt and puniſhment; When ſin is paſt by, all the puniſhments due to ſin are paſſed by, the ſinner ſhall never be toucht, or feel the weight of Gods little finger in judgement; when God comes with his revenges, he paſſeth ſuch by, as in that Plague of *Egypt*, of the ſlaying of the firſt born, which was therefore called the Lords *paſſover*, in memorial whereof that great Ordinance was appointed the *Jews*, of keeping the *paſſover*, and eating the *Paſcal Lamb*, Exod. 12. 13, 14. In this ſence the word is uſed, *Amos* 7. 8. when God was reſolved to puniſh and charge the ſins of that people upon them, he ſaith, ***Behold,*** *I will ſet a plumb-line in the midſt of my people* Iſrael, and what follows? *I will not again paſs by them any more.* God came before, once and again, armed to deſtroy them, but when he came, he paſt by them, he put up his ſword, he unbent his bow, he ſtopped up the vials of his wrath; when a cloud of blood and judgements hung over their heads, he ſent a breath of mercy, and cauſed it to paſs over them; but now (ſaith he) *I will not again paſs by them any more*; that is, I will ſurely puniſh them, ſo the next words interpret, *the high places of* Iſaac *ſhall be deſolate, and the ſanctuaries of* Iſrael *ſhall be laid waſt.*

Verbum Ebraicum העביר *quoties in ſcripturis ſanctis ex perſona Dei ponitur, pro pœna accipiendum eſt, ut nequaquam apud eos maneat ſed pertranſeat,* Hierō. *in* Amos.

Some tranſlate that in *Amos, I will not any more diſſemble your wickedneſs or your ſin*; and that carries a fair ſence, for when a man pardons or will not puniſh an offence, he ſeems to take no notice of it, for that (properly) is to diſſemble a thing (as ſimulation is to pretend that which is not, ſo diſſimulation is to take no notice, or not to hold forth that which is;) God paſſeth by and diſſembles the ſins of men in a gracious way, when he will not obſerve or look upon them to queſtion or puniſh them.

παρελθέτω. *Non ultra diſſimulabo ei ſcelera ſua* Pagan. Mer.

The Greek word (*Matth.* 26. 39.) anſwereth this Hebrew, where our Lord Chriſt prayeth earneſtly about the removal of the cup, *Father* (ſaith he) *if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs away from me*; In the ſame ſence that ſin is ſaid to paſs away, the cup of Gods diſpleaſure and wrath paſſes alſo away, when ſin is pardoned: therefore Chriſt prayed thrice, that *the cup might paſs away from him*, that he might not be dealt with as a ſinner, but that there might be a courſe found out to ſpare him, and ſave the glory of his Fathers juſtice: *Yet* (he ſubmits) *not my will, but thy will be done, if it muſt not paſs away, I am contented it ſhould not paſs.* Thus far we have ſeen, what is meant by *pardoning* and *taking away.*

A word upon thoſe two terms, *Tranſgreſſion and Iniquity* (which are the objects on which pardoning mercy works) *Why doeſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and put away mine iniquity? Tranſgreſſion and Iniquity*, are words of great ſignificancy: for in them all manner of ſins, eſpecially ſins of a greater ſtature are comprehended.

פשע

Propriè rebellio, peccatum ex ſuperbia. Non ſimplex & qualiſcunq; ſed malitioſa & temeraria tranſgreſſio.

The former, **Tranſgreſſion**, notes a violation of the commands of God with a high hand, or a rebellion of the mind, when pride of ſpirit ſhews it ſelf very much. There is a ſpice of pride in every ſin: *Becauſe of pride* (ſaith *Solomon*) *cometh contention*; all the contentions we maintain againſt the word and will of God, riſe from the pride of our own hearts, becauſe we cannot ſubmit to the will of God; but in ſome ſins, pride holds up her head more proudly. Such ſins, this word notes, it is not (ſimply) any ſin, but ſin very proudly and rebellioùſly committed.

עון

Incurvationem declinationem à recta via, & ad animum tranſlata ſignificat perverſitatē & malitiā. Curvi mores.

Peccata denotat quæ fiunt ex προαιρέσεως *& deſtinata malitia ſeu propoſito, cū ſc. mens videt quod æquum eſt, & tamen indulgens cupiditatibus ſequitur deteriora.* Moller. *in* Pſal. 106. 6.

The latter word **Iniquity**, imports the crookedneſs and inequality of a thing; when it turns this way or that way, and extends not in a ſtrait and right line. Hence it is applied to the vitioſity and perverſneſs, to the crookedneſs and inequality of mans nature. *Our nature is a crooked piece*, and that makes all the crookedneſs in our lives. The Latines ſpeak ſo, in a moral ſence they call ill manners, and ill manner'd men, *crooked men, and crooked manners. David, Pſal.* 51. 5. bewailed his birth ſin under this notion, *I was born in iniquity:* And he that was firſt born in the world, applied this word to himſelf, ſaying, *my iniquity* (the perverſneſs, the crookedneſs of my wayes) *is greater then can be forgiven*, or made ſtraight, *Gen.* 4. 13. So that this word alſo (take it ſtrictly) implies more then a bare act of ſin, ariſing from infirmity, weakneſs or inanimadvertency; it rather notes thoſe ſins which are committed from a crooked purpoſe, from an ill or falſe bent of the heart: when the mind ſees that which is right and good, juſt and ſtraight, and yet turns to crooked paths, and follows that which is perverſe and worſe.

Take one thing further, This word in Scripture, ſignifies not only the act of ſuch ſins; but ſecondly, the puniſhment of them, *Pſal.* 31. 10. *Gen.* 19. 15. And thirdly, it is put for the means of expiation or pardon, *Hoſ.* 4 8. *They eat up the ſin of my people, and they ſet their hearts on their iniquity.* But how did the Prieſts eat up the ſin, and ſet their hearts on the iniquity of the people? Sin can make us but a hungry banquet. The Text bears variety of interpretations. But to the point in hand, ſin is here put for the ſacrifices offered up for ſin, out of divers of which the Prieſts had a portion for themſelves to eat; ſo that the Prophet here deſcribes the horrible prophaneneſs of thoſe degenerate Prieſts, who ſet their hearts upon the ſacrifices, becauſe themſelves were fed by them; not becauſe the people came to ſeek the favour of God, and make their peace by them when they had ſinned. As Phyſitians may be ſaid to eat the diſeaſes of the people, and ſet their hearts upon their ſickneſſes, when they (becauſe their own gain is in it) are pleaſed to hear of ſpreading ſickneſſes, *&c.* Or as Lawyers, eat the contentions and quarrels of the people, when they are glad to hear of Suits, *&c.* becauſe they grow rich by it. So thoſe baſe-ſpirited Prieſts were ſaid to eat the ſins of the people, and ſet their hearts on their iniquities, becauſe they were glad to hear of a multitude of ſacrifices, their proviſions being enlarged by them. So that then iniquity is the ſacrifice for iniquity, in which ſence alſo Chriſt is ſaid *to be made ſin for us,* namely a ſacrifice for ſin, 1 *Cor.* 5. 21.

From the words thus opened, we may Obſerve,

Firſt, To whom *Job* addreſſeth himſelf for pardon, is it not unto God? *And why doeſt not thou pardon my tranſgreſſion?*

God only can pardon ſin.

Pardon is his act, his proper and peculiar act, he can do it, and none can but he. We read it among his Royal titles (*Exod.* 34. 7.) the Name of God is proclaimed in this ſtile. *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and in truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin.* Pardoning ſin, is put the laſt of thoſe ſeven Attributes in which the Lord manifeſted himſelf to *Moſes*, as being that wherein all the former are ſumm'd up, and into which they conveigh their ſeveral bleſſings, to make man compleatly bleſſed; or to ſhew that none can be a pardoner of ſin, but he who is veſted with all thoſe fore-going glorious titles, and therefore none but God alone. Hence the Prophet *Micah* (Chap. 7. 18.) puts the queſtion, and challenges all the world; *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?* Shew me one if you can, there is no ſin-pardoning God beſides thee. *Who is a God like unto thee? Pardoning;* As if the Prophet had ſaid, ſome will be or have been offering at this work, but they all have been or will be found mear bunglers at this work. None can pardon as thou doeſt. None can pardon, 1. So freely. 2. None ſo fully. 3. None ſo continually. 4. None ſo eternally. 5. None ſo indifferently, whether in reſpect of ſinners or ſins as thou doeſt. It is all one to thee what the ſins are, and all one to thee whoſe the ſins are, ſo they come to ask thy pardon. And that which is a diſadvantage to ask pardon of man, is an encouragement to ask it of God, the greatneſs of our ſins. The Pſalmiſt did, and any man may make that his plea, *Lord pardon my ſin, for it is great.* Dare any be a competitor with God in this work? The Phariſees put the queſtion right, if they had not miſtook the perſon to whom they put it, *Mark* 2. 7. *Who is this that forgiveth ſins? none can forgive ſin but God alone.* Again, ſin (in one ſence) is committed only againſt God, and for that reaſon alſo God only is the pardoner of it, *Pſal.* 51. *Againſt thee only have I ſinned.* Only the creditor can remit the debt, and he the offence to whom we have done the wrong. God is wrong'd in all ſins chiefly, and the wrong is ſo much his, that it may well be called only his, therefore without him no pardon.

But man is charged to forgive his brother, *Luke* 17. 4. *Forgive thy brother ſeven times*; and Chriſt hath taught us to pray *for the forgiveneſs of our treſpaſſes, as we forgive thoſe that treſpaſs againſt us*, Matth. 6. 12.

I anſwer, there are two things in all Second-table ſins; Firſt, Diſobedience againſt God; Secondly, Injury to man; That which man can, or is required to forgive and be a pardoner of, is only the injury done unto himſelf, ſo as not to revenge it; he cannot take off the ſin againſt God, or ſtay him from taking vengeance.

But other Scriptures ſpeak of a power committed to man, to remit and forgive ſin, *Joh.* 20. 23. *Whoſe ſins ye remit are remitted, and whoſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.*

I anſwer, This power is not authoritative and magiſterial, but miniſterial and declarative: God hath ſet up ſuch an inſtitution, that man ſhould pardon man, becauſe many men, yea moſt men are not competent judges of their own eſtates, whether they be fit for pardon or no: Many wicked men would remit and looſen themſelves when as their ſins are to be retained; they ſee not their ſins, as another man may and doth ſee them: The Apoſtle *Peter* could ſay to *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. 23. *I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity*; *Simon Magus* did not perceive it, he did not know his own condition, he flatter'd himſelf, and thought all well, becauſe lately ſprinckled with the water of Baptiſm; therefore ſome muſt declare theſe men bound, and hold them ſtill under ſin.

Again, there are others whoſe hearts are upright and ſincere, ſuch as are indeed reconciled to God, and all whoſe ſins are pardoned; but they are not able to make it out, and they cannot clear up this thing from the word to their own hearts: therefore they need a helper, to declare them pardoned, for they cannot ſpeak or declare it to their own ſouls: in ſuch caſes both for the conviction of preſuming ſinners, and the help of upright hearted, yet weak and doubting Chriſtians, God hath left this power with his Miniſters; *Whoſe ſins ye remit they are remitted, and whoſe ſins ye retain they are retained.* As in the caſe of Leproſie, *Lev.* 15. The Leper was brought to the Prieſt, and ſet before him as a Judge in that point; many were not competent Judges of their own diſeaſes, they could not reſolve it whether they had the Leproſie or no; ſome perceiving a ſcab or a ſore riſing upon them, thought (preſently) it was the Leproſie, when indeed it was not, and ſo wronged themſelves; Others who were indeed infected, would not be perſwaded that they were, therefore the Prieſts office was to determine theſe caſes, to bind and reſtrain, to looſen and let them go as he ſaw cauſe: In which ceremonial practice, we have the ſhadow of this Goſpel practice, in the power of remitting or retaining, of binding or of looſing ſin, according to the various conditions of men. Yet all this while God keepeth the great work in his own hand, he is *the pardoner*, and therefore *Job* (as the whole tenor of the Scripture rules it) made his addreſs to him, *Why doeſt not thou pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity?*

Secondly, From theſe expreſſions about the pardon of ſin, we may learn what the pardon of ſin is; *Pardon of ſin, is the removing or the lifting off, the paſſing away of ſin from the ſinner*; that properly is pardon of ſin. Scripture language is very various and copious about this thing, and yet all runs into this general; I ſhall inſtance ſome of them.

First, Pardon is often expreſſed by a metaphor from paying of a debt, 1 *Joh.* 2. 12. *I write unto you little children, becauſe your ſins are forgiven you*; the word notes your ſins are paid, your debts are ſatisfied; the ſame word the Apoſtle uſeth, *Rom.* 8. 32. in reference to the ſufferings of Chriſt, *God ſpared not his Son*; He did not ſpare him the debt, that is, he neither forgave the whole, nor compounded with him to take half, or a part, and remit the reſt; no, he made him pay all fully down. So to be pardoned, notes the ſparing of the debt, letting the debt paſs, without calling us to account about it.

ἀφέωνται.

Secondly, Pardon of ſin is the removing it out of ſight, (*Iſa.* 38. 17.) *Thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back*, ſaith *Hezekiah*, that is, thou haſt put them out of thy ſight. As when man is ſaid, *to caſt the word of God behind him*; Pſal. 50. 17. *or behind his back*, Nehem. 9. 26. The meaning is, he regards it not at all to obey it; ſo when God caſts the ſin of man behind his back, the meaning is, he will not regard or ſee it at all to puniſh it. That phraſe uſed by the Prophet *Micah*, is of the ſame importance, though of a deeper ſence, *Chap.* 7. 19. *Thou wilt caſt all their ſins into the depths of the Sea.* Who can dive thither to fetch them up? But may they not riſe up or ſwim out of themſelves? Surely no; our ſins are not cork or wood, but they are iron or lead, they are like ſtone, or like a mil-ſtone. To ſhew how irrecoverably the *Egyptians* were deſtroyed in the Red-ſea, it is ſaid, they *ſank like lead in thoſe mighty waters* (Exod. 15. 10.) and to ſhew how irrecoverably *Babylon* ſhall be deſtroyed, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, that *Babylon ſhall be like a great Mil-ſtone caſt into the Sea by a mighty Angel* (Rev. 18. 21.) The caſting of a ſtone, iron or lead into the Sea, was anciently the Emblem of everlaſting forgetfulneſs, or of a reſolution never to recal that which was reſolved. * A learned Hebrician obſerves, that it was a cuſtom among the *Jews*, to take thoſe things which they abominated as filthy and unclean, and caſt them into the Sea; which act noted either the purging of them, or the overwhelming them out of ſight for ever: And a like uſage, is noted by † a reporter of the manner of the *Americans*, that thoſe barbarous people either deſciphering ſome wicked thing upon a ſtone, or making a ſymbole or ſign of it, uſed to throw it into a River which ſhould carry it down into the Sea, never to be remembred.

Phocenſes ferreā maſſam in mare demerſerunt, & jurarunt non prius ſe in Phocæam reverſuros, quam hæc maſſa è fundo maris emergerit, atq; in ſumma aqua extaret. Herod. l. 1.

* Mont. ex bb. Miſna: cap. de phaſe.

† Joſeph. Acoſta. l. 5: de Hiſtor. Natur. & Moral. Novi orbis.

Thirdly, Pardon of ſin is noted by waſhing and purging, to ſhew that the filthineſs of it, is removed from us, *Pſal.* 51. 2.

Fourthly, By covering, *Pſal.* 32. 1. and by not imputing, *ver.* 2.

Fifthly, By blotting out, *Iſa.* 43. 25. and bloting out as a thick cloud, *Iſa.* 44. 22. All theſe notions of pardon concur in this one, that ſin paſſes away, is lifted up and taken off from the conſcience of the ſinner when it is pardoned: The ſum of all which is read in that one Text, *Jer.* 50. 20. *In thoſe dayes, and in that time, ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none*, &c. (why?) *For I will pardon them, whom I reſerve.* So that pardoned ſin in Gods account is no ſin, and the pardoned ſinner, is as if he had never ſinned: Forgiveneſs deſtroyes ſin, as forgiving a debt deſtroyes the debt, and cancelling a Bond, deſtroyes the Bond. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *When ſin is pardoned, the puniſhment of ſin is alſo pardoned.*

Both words ſignifie both the puniſhment and the ſin; and *Job* having complain'd that he was ſet up as a mark, and wounded by ſharp afflictions, now ſeeks eaſe in the ſureſt and ſpeedieſt way, the pardon of ſin, *Why doeſt not thou pardon my tranſgreſſion*, &c.

There are three things in ſin; The inward matter, the foul evil, the ſtock, the root of ſin, which is natural corruption dwelling in us, and flowing out by actions. Secondly, The defilement and pollution of ſin: Thirdly, The guilt; when we ſay ſin is pardoned or taken away, it is not in the former (though in pardoned perſons corruption is mortified, and the actings of it abated) but in the latter, the guilt is taken away which is the obligation to puniſhment, and ſo the puniſhment is taken away too: nothing vindictive or ſatisfactory to the juſtice of God, ſhall ever be laid upon that ſoul whoſe ſin is pardoned: Hence *Iſa.* 33. 24. the Prophet fore-ſhewing, how happy a pardoned people ſhall be, aſſures them, *The Inhabitant ſhall not ſay, I am ſick, the people that dwell therein, ſhall be forgiven their iniquity*; When iniquity is forgiven, our infirmity is cured: When the ſoul is healed, the body ſhall be recovered, both the body natural, and the body politick. Plague, and ſword, and famine, and death, all theſe evils go away, when ſin goes; Judgments are nothing elſe but unpardoned ſins; ſin unpardoned is the root which giveth ſap and life to all the troubles which are upon man or Nation: And as ſin committed, is every judgment radically, that is, there is a fitneſs in ſin to produce and bring forth any evil upon man; ſo pardon of ſin is every mercy radically; when you have pardon, from thence every other particular mercy ſprings; you may cut out any bleſſing, any comfort out of the pardon of ſin, particular mercies are but pardon of ſin ſpecificated or individuated, brought into this or that particular mercy; of all bleſſings you may ſay, *This is pardon of ſin, that's pardon of ſin, and t'other is pardon of ſin.* Forgiveneſs deſtroyeth that wherein the ſtrength of ſin lies, it deſtroyeth our guilt, and to us aboliſheth the condemning power of the Law: in theſe the ſtrength of ſin lies. Hence when the people of *Iſrael* had committed that great ſin in making the golden Calf, the firſt thing *Moſes* did, was to pray for the pardon of ſin, and he did it with a ſtrange kind of *Rhetorick*, Exod. 32. 32. *Oh, this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold. And now if thou wilt forgive their ſin*; what then *Moſes*? There's no more ſaid; *Moſes* is ſilent in the reſt, it is an imperfect ſpeech: a pauſe made by holy paſſion, not the fulneſs of the ſentence. Such are often uſed in Scripture, as *Luk.* 13. 9. *And if it bear fruit*, what then? Our own thoughts are left to ſupply the event: our Tranſlators add, *well.* The Greek Tranſlators ſupply that in *Exodus*, thus, *If thou wilt forgive them the ſin, forgive them:* We may ſupply it with the word in *Luke*, *If thou wilt forgive them, well.* As if *Moſes* had ſaid, Lord forgive them, and then though they have done *very ill*, yet, I know it will be *very well* with them; God cannot withhold any mercy, where he hath granted pardon, for that with the antecedents and requiſites of it, is every mercy. *Moſes* knew what would follow well enough if they were pardoned, and what if they were not: therefore he adds, *And if not, blot me I pray thee out of thy book which thou haſt written*; If their ſins muſt ſtand upon record, *Moſes* would not; he knew if they were an unpardoned people, they were an undone people, all miſeries would quickly break in upon, yea overwhelm them, and he deſired not to out-live the proſperity of that people. If *Iſrael* muſt bear their ſins, they muſt alſo bear the wrath of God, and if their ſins be but taken off, then his love is ſetled on them: *God gives Quailes ſometime, but he never gives pardons in anger.* Obſerve,

Fourthly, *The greateſt ſins fall within the compaſs of Gods pardoning mercy.*

The words in the Text are of the higheſt ſignification; *Job* ſpeaks not in a diminutive language, he is willing to lay load upon himſelf; they whoſe hearts are upright will not ſtand mincing the matter, and ſay they have ſins, but theirs are ſmall ones, ſins not grown to the ſtature of other mens. As the ſins of a godly man may be very great ſins, ſo (when they are) he acknowledges that they are. I know not where to ſet the bounds in regard of the nature or quantity of ſin; what ſin is there which a wicked man commits, but a godly man (poſſibly) may commit it, excepting that againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*? Theſe *Job* did, and the Saints may put to God in confeſſion: and as he did not, ſo they need not be diſcouraged to ask pardon for them, becauſe they are great. *The grace of the Goſpel is as large as any evil of ſin the Law can charge us with.* The grace of the Goſpel is as large as the curſe of the Law; whatſoever the Law can call or ſhew to be a ſin, the Goſpel can ſhew a pardon for it; what ever the Law can bind us with, the Goſpel can unlooſe. *The Mercy-ſeat covered the whole Ark*; The Mercy-ſeat noted the forgiveneſs of ſin; and if you read the deſcription of it (*Exod.* 25.) you ſhall find that it was exactly, to a hairs breadth, of the ſame dimenſions with the Ark, wherein the Law was put; intimating that there was mercy and pardon for ſin, let it come out of any part of the Law, laid up in that Ark. *As the leaſt ſins muſt of neceſſity have a pardon, ſo the greateſt ſins are in a poſſibility of pardon:* And the truth is, there is no ſin, as it is an *Anomy*, a tranſgreſſion of the Law, without the compaſs of pardon. It is not the malignity of the ſin, but the malignity of the ſinner, that makes it incurable; the ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* is not unpardonable, becauſe there wants mercy large enough to pardon it, but becauſe it refuſeth the mercy which ſhould pardon it, and the medicine that ſhould heal it.

Fifthly, Obſerve who it is that here preſſeth thus for pardon; it is *Job*, and was *Job* never pardoned till now? Or was this (think you) the firſt time that ever *Job* prayed for pardon? Had not *Job* thought of this buſineſs before? Without queſtion he had; he was one of whom God gave this teſtimony, that he was *a juſt and an upright man, one that feared God and eſchewed evil*; He that did all this, and was all this, muſt firſt be in favour with God, and yet *Job* crieth out, *Why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion?* Whence Obſerve,

They whoſe ſins are pardoned, muſt yet pray for the pardon of ſin.

Yea, they who upon good grounds, have aſſurance, that their ſins are pardoned, muſt yet pray for the pardon of their ſins, 2 Sam. 12. 13. When *Nathan* told *David*, *God hath put away thy ſin*; he aſſured him that he was pardoned, and doubtleſs the heart of *David* opened by faith to let in that gracious meſſage; he was not faithleſs, but believing. Yet *David* in his penitential *Pſalm* penned afterward, prayes (O how earneſtly!) for pardon, again and again? That which a man is aſſured he hath, he may pray to have and injoy; make it ſo high, which ſome make the grand objection againſt this point. Why ſhould we pray (ſay they) for that which we have already? I ſay, a man may pray for that which he hath already, and is aſſured he hath. Chriſt himſelf was aſſured of the love of his Father, and that his Father would ſtick to him for ever, and he knew God was near unto him, yet he cries (*Matth.* 27. 46.) *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Which Queſtion may be reſolved into this petition, *My God, my God, do not forſake me.* When *David* had received a meſſage by the Prophet concerning a great temporal mercy, the eſtabliſhing of his houſe, that God would ſettle him and his poſterity in the Throne for ever, the Text ſaith (2 *Sam.* 7. 15.) he preſently went in, and ſate before the Lord, and there makes a moſt earneſt prayer; and what is it about? He prayeth that God would ſettle and eſtabliſh his Kingdom, *verſ.* 25, 26. *And now O Lord God, the thing which thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy ſervant, and concerning his houſe, eſtabliſh it for ever, and do as thou haſt ſaid*, &c. *And let the houſe of thy ſervant* David *be eſtabliſhed before thee.*

Might not the Lord anſwer (according to this Objection) why doeſt thou trouble me about this? Did not I ſend thee a meſſage even now, that I would eſtabliſh thy Kingdom? Doſt thou think I have forgotten my promiſe, or will be unfaithful to it? We find not *David* thus chidden for praying thus. Nay at *verſ.* 27. you ſhall ſee how *David*

vid makes this the very ground of his prayer, *Lord* (ſaith he) *thou haſt revealed to thy ſervant, ſaying, I will build thee an houſe, therefore hath thy ſervant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee*, &c. Even becauſe thou haſt revealed this unto me, that thou wilt build me an houſe, therefore upon this very ground I make this prayer, that thou wouldeſt build it. And to ſhew that he was full of faith the thing ſhould be done, before he prayed it might be done, he adds, *ver.* 28. *Thou art that God, and thy words be true; and thou haſt promiſed this goodneſs unto thy ſervant. Now therefore let it pleaſe thee to bleſs the houſe of thy ſervant.* No man could be fuller of aſſurance, or fuller of prayer then *David* was. Likewiſe Chriſt knew and was aſſured, that his ſheep, his elect people ſhould continue for ever, and that none ſhould be able to take them out of his hand, yet how abundantly doth he poure forth his ſpirit in prayer about theſe things? *John* 17. Again, Chriſt was aſſured he ſhould be delivered and upheld in death, yet *in the dayes of his fleſh he offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong cries and tears to him that was able to ſave him from death, and he was heard in what he feared*, Heb. 5. 7. He was not afraid of the event, whether he ſhould hold out and prevail or no, whether he ſhould conquer and obtain the victory or no, he doubted not the ſucceſs of this war, though it were with *principalities and powers*; his fear was only a natural paſſion, which he took upon him, when he took our nature upon him. He was certain of the iſſue, and knew he ſhould carry the work through againſt all the armies of hell, he would never have undertaken it elſe; yet he prayeth with ſtrong cries that he might be ſtrengthened. So then it is no argument, becauſe a Believer knoweth his ſin is pardoned, that therefore he ſhould not pray for pardon; for many things of which there was clear and certain evidence that they were or ſhould be, have been prayed about; it is our duty, for it hath been the practice both of Chriſt and of his people to pray in ſuch a ſtate.

Further we may anſwer, matters of faith are of two ſorts. Firſt, Such as as are fully accompliſhed, acted and compleated in all the parts and circumſtances of them; for, and about ſuch things we are not to pray. No man is to pray for the redemption of the world; for that is a thing paſt, and yet it is a matter of faith; but the pardon of ſin though it be compleat in it ſelf, and a matter of faith too, yet it is compleating and perfecting every day more & more. Pardon given us, yet we feel not all which pardon gives: It is a ſetled act on Gods part, yet it is in motion on ours, that is, in a perfective motion; therefore, though we are aſſured that our ſins are pardoned, and ſhall ſtand pardoned for ever, yet we may pray about the pardon of them.

Thirdly, Suppoſe a man know his ſins are pardoned, yet he may pray to know it more, and that his evidences may be known yet clearer to him; for though ſin cannot be more pardoned in reſpect of God at one time then another; yet in regard of man, it may. He apprehends the pardon of his ſin more now then before, and may hereafter apprehend it more then now: And it is worth the while to beſtow pains in prayer for pardon, to have the pardon a little more enlightned: The degrees of any grace or favour, as well as the matter and ſubſtance of them, are worthy all our ſeekings and moſt ſerious enquiries at the Throne of Grace.

Fourthly, He that hath aſſurance of the pardon of ſin, is to pray for the pardon of ſin, becauſe he continueth ſtill to ſin: And though it be a truth that ſin uncommitted is pardoned in the decree and purpoſe of God, yet we muſt not walk by the decrees of God, but by his commandments and rules. His decree pardons ſin from all eternity; but his rule is, that we ſhould pray for pardon every day, as we pray for the bread we eat every day, *Mat.* 6. 11, 12. We muſt not ſay, God hath pardoned all ſin at once, therefore no matter to ask it again; or I have once had the ſight of pardon. and therefore the ſight of ſin ſhall never trouble me; ſeeing we are directed to ſearch our hearts for ſin, and to ſeek to God for pardon continually. So long as we ſin, it becomes us to be ſuitors for the pardon of ſin. He that hath ceaſed to ſin, may ceaſe to ask the forgiveneſs of ſin, till then, I know neither rule nor promiſe that gives a diſpenſation for this duty.

To cloſe this point, there are two caſes wherein Believers are eſpecially to renew their ſuits about the pardon of ſin.

Firſt (which though it be lamentable, yet it is poſſible) in the caſe of falling into ſcandalous and groſs ſins: Theſe not only weaken aſſurance, and benight the ſoul, but exceedingly diſhonour God, and grieve the holy Ghoſt. This cauſed *David* to pray and cry for the pardon and purging of his ſin as freſhly and as ſtrongly, as if he had never received a pardon, or any evidence of Gods love (of which yet he had great ſtore) before that day, *Pſal.* 51.

Secondly, In times of great troubles and trials, whether perſonal or national, the Saints re-inforce prayer about pardon. This was *Job*'s caſe, his perſonal afflictions occaſioned to beg the remiſſion of ſins; and not only remiſſion for ſins then committed, but for all the ſins he had committed either before or after converſion. Even our formerly pardoned ſins need pardon; when we loſe the ſight of pardon, and when the ſoul hath no viſions, but viſions of terrour, it muſt ſeek viſions of peace in the free grace of God, renewing and ſealing pardon in the blood of Jeſus Chriſt.

Job having thus breathed his ſpirit in arguings, complaints and prayers, moves the Lord for a ſpeedy end and gracious anſwer; otherwiſe he ſees no way but he muſt breath back his ſpirit into the hands of the Lord who gave it, and lay his body in the duſt from whence it was taken.

For now ſhall I ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, but I ſhall not be.

Now ſhall I ſleep in the duſt.] What he means by this ſleep hath been handled (*chap.* 3. 13.) where it was ſhewed that death is called a ſleep, why and in what manner death is a ſleep. The word here tranſlated *to ſleep*, ſignifies properly to lie down; but the ſence is the ſame, becauſe men lie down when they compoſe and fit themſelves to ſleep. And the dead are called *down-liers* as well as *ſleepers* in the Hebrew. The Septuagint reads it, *Now ſhall I go to the earth*. *David* ſpeaks near this language, *Pſal.* 22. 15, *Thou haſt brought me to the duſt of death.*

לעפר אשכב *Propriè eſt cubare, hinc mortui* שכבים *vocantur, ut etiam* ישנים Νυνὶ δὲ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσομαι.

Obſerve hence whither we are travelling, and where we muſt take up a lodging for our bodies ere long. They whoſe heads are higheſt, they who lie in beds of Ivory, muſt lie down in a bed of earth, and reſt their heads upon *a pillow of duſt*. Moſt ſleep in the duſt while they live, but all muſt ſleep in the duſt when they die: Earthly men have earthly minds, and they cannot reſt but in earth, for it is their center. Only he who hath laid up his heart in heaven, can comfortably think of laying down his head in the duſt.

Further it is remarkable in how pleaſing a notion *Job* ſpeaks of death when his life was moſt unpleaſant to him. He complained of reſtleſs nights in *verſ.* 3, 4, 13, 14. of this Chapter; yet he could think of a time when he ſhould lie quietly in his bed, and not have ſo much as a waking moment, or a diſtracting dream. And when he was once gone to *this bed*, the curtains of darkneſs being cloſe drawn about him, he ſhould open his eyes no more till the eyelids of that eternity-morning opened; therefore he concludes,

Thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning (*ſc.* of time) **but I ſhall not be.**

In the Hebrew, **Thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning** is but one word; and ſome cut out a Latine word fit to ſerve it. We may Engliſh it ſtrictly to the Letter, *If thou morning me*, that is, if thou comeſt to ſeek me (as the force of this word hath been formerly given) with never ſo much diligence and care, I ſhall not be found, thou wilt not have *Job* alive upon the earth to beſtow thy mercies upon:

שחרתני *Si diluculaveris me, ficto verbo.*

For, **I ſhall not be.**] The Hebrew is, *And not I*, that is, I ſhall not be alive, I ſhall not be to be had, he means a *non-exiſtence*, not, *a non-eſſence*; a being he ſhould have, but he ſhould not appear. It is as if he had ſaid, *Lord, I ſhall not be a ſubject capable of outward deliverances, and bodily comforts unleſs they come ſpeedily; Lord, if thou wilt give me any help, give it, for death haſtens upon me, as if it hoped to be too nimble for, or to out-run thy ſuccours.*

ואינני *Non ego, ſubaudi ſum, vel ero.*

Mr. *Broughton*'s tranſlation ſeems to intend another ſence, which other of the learned Hebricians favour too. He renders the latter part of the verſe thus, *Whereas I lie now in the duſt* (referring it to his preſent condition; I am now lying in the duſt, *to be pitied of the keeper of men*, ſo he himſelf expounds, Lord, I lie in the duſt, a pitiful object, then) *why doſt thou not quickly ſeek me out, that I ſhould no more be?* which he

Cum jam in iſto pulvere decumbam? aut quid non *tempeſtivè requiſiviſti me, ut non eſſē?* Jun.

he interprets, *I would by a quick death be rid from theſe pains,* As if in theſe words *Job* had again renewed his former deſire of death; concerning which, many things have been ſpoken from preceding paſſages of his reply, I will not double upon them here.

But I take the former reading and meaning of the words, as moſt proper to the coherence and concluſion of *Job*'s diſcourſe; and ſo they are but a repetition or re-inforcement of what he ſpake at verſ. 7, 8. There he ſaid, *O remember that my life is wind, mine eye ſhall no more ſee good, the eye of him that hath ſeen me, ſhall ſee me no more. Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.* Here he ſpeaks the ſame thing in ſome variety of words, *Thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, and I ſhall not be.* The ſeverity of my ſickneſs threatens to prevent thy earlieſt preparations for my relief.

Thus (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) ſome diſcoveries have been made about this firſt congreſs or charge between *Eliphaz* and *Job*. But *Job* hath not yet done; behold a ſecond and a third Combatant ready to enter the Liſt againſt him: And when theſe three have once tried their skill and ſtrength upon him, they all three charge him afreſh a ſecond time, and two of them a third. *Was ever poor ſoul held ſo hard to it as he?* How much doth the life of Grace make him exceed man, when he (as a man) could ſcare be reckoned among the living? Truth and Grace will triumph and prevail, notwithſtanding all the diſadvantages of fleſh and nature. Is it not ſtrange, that a man ſhould not be weary with arguing, while he often profeſſes he was wearied with living? That while he could ſcarce fetch his breath for pain, he ſhould do ſo much work (in a manner) without a breathing. For as the meſſengers of his troubles gave him no reſt; *But while one was yet ſpeaking, there came another alſo and ſaid,* &c. *And while a ſecond was yet ſpeaking, a third came and ſaid,* &c. So neither did theſe Diſputants about his troubles. While *Eliphaz* and *Job were* yet ſpeaking, *Bildad anſwered and ſaid,* &c. While *Bildad* and *Job* were yet ſpeaking, *Zophar anſwered and ſaid.* What *Eliphaz* ſaid, and *Job* anſwered in his firſt undertaking, you have heard: The opening of what *Bildad* had to ſay, and *Job* to anſwer, waits (till the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to vouchſafe it) a further oppertunity. What is now (as himſelf hath pleaſed to inable his unworthy inſtrument) offered, waits upon him for his bleſſing. To him all bleſſing is for ever due; on him let praiſes ever wait for all his bleſſings, *Amen.*

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

EIGHTH, NINTH AND TENTH

CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER:

To thoſe chiefly of this *CITY*, who have been the MOVERS, and continue the PROMOTERS of this WORK.

I *Am your Debtor; and becauſe my Stock cannot paſs out great Sums at once, therefore I am conſtrained to diſcharge my Credit by the ſmaller Payments. I need not call upon you for Acquittances or cancell'd Bonds: I know your Ingenuity will confeſs more received then I have paid. I have paid you in the Book now Preſented, as much as I intended for this time: But Time will not ſuffer me to pay you what I intended and had projected for an Epiſtle. And I believe your ſelves will eaſier excuſe a ſhort Epiſtle, then a longer ſtay for the whole Book. Accept both with your wonted Candor, and let theſe Labours on your behalf, be the return of your own Prayers to the Father of Lights, by the help of the Spirit of* Grace *in Jeſus Chriſt, for*

Jan. 12. 1646.

Your very Affectionate Friend and
Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
EIGHTH, NINTH, AND TENTH
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

CHAP. VIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then anſwered Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and ſaid,*
How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like a ſtrong wind?
Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?

THE anſwer of *Eliphaz* to *Job's* firſt complaint, hath been opened in *Chap.* 4, 5. together with *Job's* reply, in the 6, & 7. In which he labours to diſ-aſperſe and vindicate himſelf from what *Eliphaz* had raſhly taxed him with, *Hypocriſie*, *The name of an Hypocrite* (*like that of a Heretick*) *is ſuch*, *as no man ought to be patient under.*

But while *Job* endeavours to clear himſelf in the opinion, or from the imputations of one of his friends, he runs into a further arrere of prejudices with a ſecond: Some of thoſe Arguments which he had framed to pay his debt to *Eliphaz*, and ſave his own integrity, being again charged upon his account by his friend *Bildad* the *Shuhite*; who preſents himſelf (a duty very commendable) as an *Advocate for God*; and he conceived there was but need he ſhould. *Job* in his reply having (in his ſenſe) wronged the juſtice of God, he takes himſelf obliged to ſtand up and clear it, to ſhew *Job* his ſuppoſed ſin, and provoke him to repentance, both by threatnings of further wrath, and promiſes of ſpeedy mercy. Thus in general.

More diſtinctly, there are four parts of *Bildads* ſpeech.

Firſt, A confutation of *Job's* reply to *Eliphaz*; and he gives it us ſhadowed by an elegant ſimilitude in *verſ.* 2. *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like the ſtrong wind?* There's a cenſure upon all that he had ſpoken.

Secondly, He gives us an aſſertive Queſtion, concerning the juſtice of God; to clear it from, and ſet it above, whatſoever might ſeem to ſtain it in the eyes of men. This we have at *verſ.* 3. *Doth God pervert judgement? Or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?* Not he.

Thirdly, In the body of the Chapter he urges divers Arguments to confirm this concluſion, that, *God is juſt*; and there are three heads of Argument, by which he confirms it;

Firſt, From the example of *Job's* Children, and from his own preſent, with the poſſibility of his future condition, in caſe he repent, from *verſ.* 3, to 8.

The ſecond Argument is drawn from the teſtimony of antiquity, and that's laid down in *verſ.* 8, 9, & 10.

The third Argument appears in the ſimilitudes;

First, Of a *ruſh* or *flag*, in *verſ.* 11, 12, & 13.
Secondly, Of a *ſpiders web*, in *verſ.* 14, 15.
Thirdly, Of a *Tree floriſhing* for a time; but anon plucked up, in *verſ.* 16, 17, 18, and 19. Theſe are the Arguments and Illuſtrations of his grand aſſertion.

Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice? No he doth not. *And thou mayeſt learn this leſſon from thy own experience, from the example of thy Children, from the teſtimony of antiquity, yea the withering ruſh, the ſpiders-web, the luxurious roots and branches of a tree may all be thy Maſters and inſtructors to teach thee this truth, That God is juſt.*

The fourth and laſt part of the Chapter, ſets forth the favour of God, to thoſe who are faithful and ſincere: for having maintained the juſtice of God, and ſhewed how terrible he will be to hypocrites who deal falſly with him; he now mitigates and mollifies his diſcourſe, by proclaiming the goodneſs of God to ſinners repenting, yea (who are the worſt of ſinners) to hypocrites if they repent, pluck off their masks or diſguiſes, and truly humble themſelves before him. This is the ſubject of the three laſt verſes of the Chapter, *Behold God will not caſt away a perfect man*, &c. As if he had ſaid, *Though God be juſt to deal with hypocrites, as he hath dealt with thee and thy Children, yet he will not caſt away the perfect and upright; ſhew thy ſelf ſuch, and he will receive thee.* This he quickens by ſubjoyning the further ſeverity of God, to thoſe that ſhall perſiſt in their hypocriſie, *verſ.* 20. and in the cloſe of the 22. *Neither will he help the evil doers, and the dwelling place of the wicked ſhall come to nought.*

Thus you have both the general ſcope, and likewiſe the ſpecial parts of *Bildad's* diſcourſe, which will give us ſome help towards a more clear diſcovery of particulars.

Verſ. 1. **Then anſwered** Bildad **the** Shuhite, **and ſaid.**

The ſpeaker is *Bildad*; I ſhall not ſtay upon the perſon; who this *Bildad* was, of what line and pedigree, was touched in opening *Chap.* 2. *verſ.* 11. and therefore I ſhall paſs to the matter about which he ſpeaks.

Verſ. 2. **How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?**

He begins very chidingly, **How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?**] The words import either, firſt, admiration, *How long*! As if he had ſaid, *Could any man have believed that thou wouldſt have ſpoken ſuch things as theſe, and theſe ſo long! How ſtrangely haſt thou forgot thy ſelf, to twiſt ſuch a thred, and ſpin out a diſcourſe ſo ſinfully, ſo frowardly, ſo long?*

Secondly, The words may carry a ſence of indignation in the ſpeaker, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* As if he had ſaid, *I am not able to bear thee any longer, I cannot endure ſuch language, it grates harſhly upon mine ear, and is a burden to my ſpirit; for ſhame give over, hold thy peace, enjoyn thy ſelf ſilence, lock up thy lips, How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?*

Thirdly, The charge of an accuſation may lie under theſe words, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* That is, *How long wilt thou ſpeak vain and fooliſh words, indiſcreet and falſe words, dangerous and blaſphemous words, imputing injuſtice unto God? Art thou obſtinate and pertinacious? Wilt thou not yet hearken to the admonitions and wholſom counſel of thy friends? How long!* Thus he taxes and cenſures him. *How long wilt thou ſpeak?* We have the like ſence in that Queſtion, *Pſal.* 4. 2. where *David* conteſts with his hardned enemies, *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into ſhame? How long will ye love vanity, and ſeek after leaſing?* How long, and how long? It is matter of admiration to think that reaſonable creatures ſhould be ſo unreaſonable to love vanity, and to love it long. His ſpirit riſes and boyls ſo high with holy indignation, to ſee men ſo fooliſh, that his mouth muſt run over in cenſure and accuſation, How long! The Text of Wiſdoms expoſtulation, *Prov.* 1. 22. (*How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity?*) bears the ſame gloſs, one interpretation fits both. *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?*

Interrogatio ex adjuncto tempore aculeos addit reprehenſioni. Sanct.

Theſe things.] The demonſtrative particle may have reference to the words immediately fore-going, and only to them, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* That is, the things which thou haſt ſpoken in *Chap.* 6, 7. The language is undervaluing and contemptuous, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* Such poor ſtuff. How long wilt thou trouble thy Auditors with ſuch matter, ſuch fruitleſs, frothy, crude, and undigeſted matter; matter ſo injurious, ſo diſhonourable to God, ſo unſavory, and unedifying to man.

Taking *Job* (under *Bildad's* apprehenſion) as having failed and erred in his diſcourſe, Obſerve,

First, *Perſeverance in evil is worſe then the doing of evil.*

How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? If thou having ſpoken once amiſs had'ſt recall'd thy ſelf, and ſtopped there it had been more excuſable; *To outlaſh ſometimes in a word, may be a wiſe mans caſe*: but to make ſuch a continued ſtudied oration as this, and be out in all, and all to be an invective againſt Heaven, who is able to bear it? *To ſpeak or do ill, though but once, is too often by once; To act evil often, is to double every act.* The ſhorteſt time is too long to ſerve any luſt in. When the Apoſtle *Peter* (1 Pet. 4. 3.) ſaith, *The time paſt of our life may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*; his meaning is, *the time paſt is too much*: our luſts have got too much of our lives, as the world hath got too much of our loves. One minute is more then we owe to the ſervice of ſin. The ſufficiency here ſpoken of is an exceſs; the time paſt of our lives is too much to work the will of the *Gentiles*. We may not make an equal diviſion of our lives between our luſts and Chriſt, ſo much to Chriſt, ſo much to luſt. Nothing is more unequal then this equality. We can never ſerve Chriſt too long, nor ſin too ſhort a time. We can not beſtow too much of our breath in holy ſpeeches and conferences; nor can we beſtow two little in thoſe which are vain and ſinful. We may juſtly take off thoſe who are moſt conciſe and laconical in uſeleſs diſcourſes, with, *How long will you ſpeak theſe things? Frothy words are the waſte of time as well as of breath.*

Secondly, Note, *Bildad* rebukes *Job* for his laviſh language.

It is our duty to be watchful over our words.

How long wilt thou ſpeak thus; we muſt obſerve our own words, and know what we ſpeak. We ſhould ſtop our own mouths, and put our ſelves to ſilence, when the tongue grows unruly. *It were very happy that ſome had power as well as authority over their own mouths, and knew how to put that bridle* (ſpoken of in the Pſalm) *upon their own lips.* It is better for a man to ſtop his own mouth by prudence, then that another ſhould ſtop it by reproof.

Thirdly, Taking *Bildad's* ſuppoſition ſtill, that *Job* was in the wrong. Note,

It is our duty to give check to fruitleſs and frothy ſpeeches, much more to blaſphemous and wicked ſpeeches.

Bildad thought it high time to ſilence *Job*, ſeeing *Job* would not ſilence himſelf. The Apoſtle repreſents to *Titus* the tongue-folly of the *Cretians*, *There are many unruly and vain talkers among you, eſpecially they of the circumciſion*; and what muſt be done with theſe, who cared ſo little what they ſaid? He is counſell'd how to deal with them in the next words, *Whoſe mouths muſt be ſtopped, who ſubvert whole houſes*, &c. It is a ſin in the hearer to let another ſpeak ſinfully, without a ſignification of his diſtaſte. The word which the Apoſtle uſeth to *Titus*, is a metaphor taken from the *muzling of barking howling dogs*, when they open unſeaſonably and are unquiet; *Rational conviction is a Goſpel-muzle, and an effectual ſtop-mouth for unruly talkers.* And it is obſervable, that the Apoſtle uſeth this ſimilitude of muzling a dog, when he ſpeaks of thoſe of the circumciſion, concerning whom he had given caution in a very ſutable character (*Phil.* 3. 2.) *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the conciſion*; that is, of thoſe who ſtood for circumciſion. Writing to the *Philipians*, he calls them dogs; and his adviſe to *Titus* is, they muſt be muzl'd. The noxious iſſues of the tongue muſt either be cured or ſtopped, *Evil words corrupt* (which is worſe then the corrupting of good air) *good manners.* An infection taken in at the ear, hath often poyſon'd the heart.

ἐπιστομίζειν.

Fourthly, Taking *Bildad* as miſtaken (and ſo he was) in this reproof and cenſure upon *Job*, Obſerve,

Reproofs are often grounded upon miſtakes.

It is eaſie to reprove, what we do not apprehend. *Bildad* perceived not the reach and drift of *Job*, and he falls heavily upon him with reproofs. A due underſtanding of his ſcope, would have given a fair comment upon his words. But *Bildad* clothes the ſpeech of *Job* in a ſence which he abhorred; and having put it in that ugly dreſs, he reproves and cenſures it accordingly. Many diſ-figure the opinions and doctrines of others with conceits of their own, and preſuming they hold or mean thus and thus, they diſpute not againſt the real opinion of the oppoſite party but their own diſguiſe. As the perſons of the *Primitive Chriſtians* were often put into Lions, or Bears-skins, by their barbarous and heatheniſh perſecutors, and then baited with Dogs; ſo are the opinions of many *later Chriſtians* debated.

And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?

רוח כביר *Spiritus ſumitur pro halitu & per Metonymiam pro verbis*, i.e. *pro aere articulato, & per loquelæ inſtrumenta in verba formata.* Bold.

The Hebrew, word for word, runs thus; *And the words of thy mouth a ſtrong wind:* we reſume in this latter clauſe, *How long*, and add, *be like*, to ſupply the ſence. There is no tearm of compariſon expreſſed in the original, yet the ſtrength of one is implied, and therefore to fill up the meaning, we render, *And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it without a note of ſimilitude, *How long wilt thou talk in this ſort, that the words of thy mouth be a vehement wind?*

Words are air or breath formed and articulated, by the inſtruments of ſpeech. Hence breath and words are put for the ſame in divers Scriptures (*Pſal.* 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth. Breath* in the latter clauſe, is no more then *word* in the firſt, for it was a powerful word, which cauſed all the creatures to ſtand out in their ſeveral forms. So *Iſa.* 11.4. *He ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips (or with the wind of his lips) ſhall he ſlay the wicked*; It is not blowing upon wicked men that will ſlay them, but it is ſpeaking to them; there is a power in the word of a Prophet, when ſpoken in the Name of Chriſt, which deſtroyes thoſe who will not obey it, *Hoſ.* 6. 5. *I have hewed them by my Prophets, I have ſlain them by the words of my mouth.*

Græci & Latini Prophetas quoſdam ex Hebræo Cabiros *cognominarunt, ob inſignem eorum ad extra gravitatem & loquacitatem idem dicti Corybantes.* Bold.

Secondly, *Bildad* is conceived to allude to a certain ſort or ſect of men. For from *Cabir* here tranſlated **ſtrong**, the name of certain Poets or old Prophets is derived, whom the *Greeks* and *Latines* called *Cabirs* or *Cabirims.* Theſe men had an affected outward gravity, yet were full of words, and much given to *Battology*, repeating the ſame thing over and over. *Bildad* ranks *Job* (ſay ſome) with thoſe Prophets, *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like thoſe roming Cabirs*, who by a needleſs multiplying of words, grated the ears, and burdened the ſpirits of all the hearers? Why doeſt thou ſpeak, as if thou couldſt carry the matter with empty words, and bare repetitions.

Quos Authores Latini Divos potes, ſeu potentes vocant Græcis κάβειροι dicuntur ab hac voce, quæ potem ſive potentem denotat. Druſ. *Ad magnanimitatem referri poteſt, quod corpore attenuato exhauſtiſq; viribus fortiter tamen perſiſteret in loquendo & reſpondendo.* Cajet. Jobi *oratio non fuit frigida & languida ſed vehemens & concitata.* Pined.

Thirdly, The word **ſtrong wind**, may note the ſtoutneſs of *Job's* ſpirit, or magnanimity he expreſt in his words. *Job's* language was not cold and chill, as if his breath were frozen, but he ſpake with height and heat; *The ſpirit and courage of a man, breathes out at his lips; How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be a ſtrong wind?* When wilt thou yield to God, and lie humbly at his feet? What a heart haſt thou? Thou ſpeakeſt as big, as if thou hadſt never been touched, as if God never laid one ſtroke upon thee; thou haſt a weak body, but a ſtiff ſpirit: Thou ſpeakeſt as if thou wouldſt bear all down before thee, and by thy boldneſs, ſtorm and bluſter thoſe out of countenance, who are here to give thee counſel.

Fourthly, Take in the ſimilitude, *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?* That is, how long wilt thou ſpeak ſo much, and ſpeak ſo fiercely. For the word *Caber* is more then *Gadol*, which ſignifies barely *great.* Grammarians note, that it ſignifies both *continued quantity* and *diſcreet quantity*, multitude and magnitude. How many words wilt thou ſpeak? and how great words wilt thou ſpeak? Shall thy words be as a great, various, unfolded wind? (ſo the Vulgar) Wilt thou blow all the points of the compaſs at once, and like a whirle-wind, invade and circle us on every ſide.

Spiritus multiplex ſermones oris tui. Vulg. πνεῦμα πολυῤῥήμων. *Spiritus multiloquus.* Sept.

Such words are like a ſtrong wind.

Firſt, Becauſe of their bluſtering noiſe. There are ſtormy and tempeſtuous words. *The tempeſt of the tongue is one of the greateſt tempeſts in the world.* Paſſionate language troubles both the air and the ear, makes all unquiet, like an enraged angry wind.

Secondly, In ſuch words, as in ſtormy winds, there is great ſtrength to bear all down before them, or to ſway all to that point they blow for. As all the trees in a Forreſt look that way which the wind ſits: ſo all the ſpirits in any Aſſembly, are apt to turn that way, which words bearing a fair ſhew of reaſon direct. How often are the judgments and opinions of men, carried by words either to good or evil, to truth or error. And unleſs a man have good abilities of judgment and reaſon, to manage what he knows or holds, and to make himſelf maſter of it: It is a hard thing upon a large wind of anothers diſcourſe, not to have his opinion turned. Hence the Apoſtle (*Tit.* 1. 11.(ſpeaking of *vain talkers*, ſaith, Their words *ſubvert whole houſes*; as a ſtrong wind, ſo ſtrong words blow houſes down, *They ſubvert whole houſes*; as that ſubverts the frame and materials of the houſe, ſo this the people or inhabitants of the houſe; when Chriſt breathed graciouſly towards *Zacheus*, he ſaid (*Luk.* 19. 9.) *This day is ſalvation come to this houſe*; when falſe Teachers breath erroniouſly, *ſubverſion comes to many houſes.* The Apoſtle (*Epheſ.* 4. 14.) uſing this ſimilitude about the doctrines of men, adviſeth us to look to our ground, and that we be well rooted; *That we be no more children, toſſed too and fro, and carried with every wind of doctrine*; as if he had ſaid, The wind that blows from the lips of ſeducers (unleſs you be well eſtabliſhed) will carry you to and fro like children, or wave your tops up and down as trees, yea endanger the pulling you up by the roots.

Thirdly, Strong words are as ſtrong winds in a good ſence, for as many ſtrong winds purge and cleanſe the air, making it more pure and healthy; ſo thoſe ſtrong wholſom winds from the mouths of men, purge the mind of error, and cleanſe the ſoul of ſin: This is the ſpecial means which Chriſt hath ſet up to cleanſe his people from infectious and noiſom opinions. Theſe he diſperſes and diſpels by the breath of his Miniſters, in the faithful and authoritative diſpenſation of the Goſpel.

Fourthly, There are ill qualities in ſtrong winds; ſome are infectious winds, they corrupt the air, conveying ill vapors to the places on which they breathe: So there is a ſtrong, unwholſom wind of words, which carries unto ſin or error. How often are the ſpirits and manners of men infected and poiſon'd by ſuch a breath?

Fifthly, They may be compared unto ſtrong winds, in regard of the lightneſs of them; the wind hath little ſolidity ~~in it~~, and that's it which *Bildad* eſpecially reproveth in *Job*; here are a great many words, much of the tongue, but here's little matter, *Words without weight are but wind:* when you gather them up, weigh and conſider them fully, you can make nothing of them, there's no tack in them. Wind will not feed, no more will ſuch words; but wholſom and faithful words are meat and drink, ſtrength and nouriſhment to the ſoul: Sound diſcourſe yields a well-tempered underſtanding, many refreſhing morſels.

Laſtly, They are like ſtrong winds for the ſwiftneſs of them; words paſs ſpeedily, and fill all quickly; *Their line is gone out thorow all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*, Pſal. 19. 4. Another Pſalm ſpeaks as much of wiched men, *Their tongue walketh through the earth*, Pſal. 73. 9. As the wind runs from one part of the world to another; ſo do words, when they are ſent upon an errand, either to do good, or to do hurt; therefore God choſe the Miniſtry of the Word as an Inſtrument to ſave his people. And it is the fitteſt Inſtrument, running ſwiftly into the ears, and ſo conducting truth into the hearts of thouſands at once. Upon the day of Pentecoſt (*Acts* 2. 2, 3.) when the Diſciples met together, the Text ſaith, *Suddenly there came a ſound from Heaven as of a ruſhing mighty wind, and it filled all the houſe where they were ſitting:* firſt comes a ruſhing wind; what followeth? *There appeared unto them cloven tongues with fire.* Theſe repreſented the manner how the Goſpel ſhould be conveyed through the world: The Holy Ghoſt is ſent in tongues, to ſhew, that by tongues tipt and inſpired, acted and moved by the Holy Ghoſt, the word ſhould be ſubdued to the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt. The tongue is the chief Organ of ſpeech. And obſerve, with the tongues there comes a wind, a ruſhing wind, implying that words ſpoken by thoſe tongues ſhould be as a mighty ruſhing wind, and like that wind, which filled all the houſe where they ſat, ſhould fill the world, even all Nations with the ſound of the Goſpel; that, like a ſtrong wind they ſhould bear down the errors, ſins and luſts of men before them, and like a wholſom wind, purge and winnow out all the filthineſs and uncleanneſs, the chaff and duſt of mens ſpirits. By cloven tongues, and a ruſhing wind, wonders have been wrought in the world. *As thoſe unruly talkers* (Tit. 1. 11.) *ſubverted, ſo thoſe who talk by rule have converted whole houſes*; The wind of words blows both good and evil to the world; and we may as much encourage holy tongues, *Let your words be long and long, a ſtrong wind:* as check a vain talker in the language of *Bildad, How long ſhall thy words be a ſtrong wind.*

From this general reproof, *Bildad* deſcends to a ſpecial charge againſt *Job*.

Verſ. 3. **Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?**

ἀδικήσει κρίνων. Injuſte aget judicans. Sept. *Theſis eſt dicendorum.*

As if he had ſaid, *Job, thou haſt ſpoken words which like a ſtrong wind pervert all things, and turn them up-ſide-down.* But, *Doth God pervert? Doth he turn things up-ſide-down? This blaſphemy is the interpretation of many of thy complaints. Thou ſeemeſt to lay this aſperſion upon God but (with indignation I ſpeak it) doth God pervert judgment.*

The Queſtion is reſolvable into a vehement negation, *God doth not pervert judgment, neither doth the Almighty, pervert juſtice.* He gives it with a queſtion for greater emphaſis, *Doth God pervert judgment?* Doſt thou think he will? Far be it from thee to think ſo; Injuſtice lies far from the heart of God, Juſtice lies at his heart, *He loveth judgment*, Pſal. 37. 28.

To clear the Text, I ſhall briefly touch upon the ſingle terms; 1. *God.* 2. *Almighty.* 3. *Judgment.* 4. *Juſtice*: And then ſhew what it is to pervert judgment and juſtice; from all it will appear, how extreamly oppoſite it is to the very nature of God to pervert either.

אל *Fortis potens.* Shaddai *notat robuſtum & ſufficientem ad omnia perpetranda & executioni mandanda quæ facienda judicaverit; aliqui vertunt, invictum.*

Doth God.] The word is, *El*, ſignifying the *ſtrong God*, the *mighty God*, the *powerful God*. In the ſecond clauſe, *Doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?* We have the word, *Shaddai*, which name of God was largely opened at *Chap.* 5. *v.* 17. I ſhall not ſtay upon it here, but only as it reſpects the point in hand, and ſo there are three interpretations of that Title obſervable.

Firſt, It notes God all-ſufficient to do what he pleaſeth, or to effect what he deſigneth: if he gives direction for any judgment to be executed, he is *Shaddai*, It ſhall be done. As he is *El*, a powerful Judge to give ſentence, ſo he is *Shaddai*, an Almighty God to execute the ſentence: There is no reſiſting his power, no getting out of his hands, his name is *Shaddai*.

Alii vertunt uberrimum, abundantem copioſum, cujus virtus, & munificentia, per omnia permeat, & cujus uberibus & bonitate omnia alantur & nutriantur, qui nullius indiget, qui bonorum noſtrorum nulla cupiditate tangitur. Pined. ὁ τὰ πάντα ποιήσας. Sept. *Quod ſic explicant, qui cunctarum rerum naturas ſummo ordine & equitate conſtituit, is in te affligendo, quod juſtum eſt, non ſubvertet.*

Secondly, The word ſignifies, *one who hath all abundance, plenty and fulneſs in himſelf*; As alſo whoſe power, goodneſs, and bounty, flow out to the ſupply of others, himſelf having no need to receive from any other. He is a *fountain of all for all.* Hence *Shaddai* cannot but do juſtice; He that hath abundance in himſelf needs not take bribes to pervert juſtice; *Needy Judges are often covetous Judges; they who have not a fulneſs of their own, are under a great temptation to wrong others, to ſupply their wants.* But he that gives to all, needs not receive from any. This conſideration ſets God infinitely above one of the ſtrongeſt temptations to Injuſtice.

Thirdly, The word *Shaddai*, is rendred, *The maker of all things.* Will the Almighty, the maker of all things, who hath ſet the world in ſuch an exquiſite form and order, who hath given ſo much beauty to the creature; will he put things out of order, or do ſuch a deformed act as this, *pervert juſtice?* He that is the maker of all things, and hath made them in number, weight and meaſure, will he turn the world up ſide-down, or make confuſion in the world? It is not poſſible he ſhould.

So then the name *Shaddai*, in theſe three ſences, is aptly applied to God; in oppoſition to the perverting of juſtice. As *Abraham* debates the matter with him (*Gen.* 18. 25.) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* It is impoſſible for God who judgeth all men, to do an act of injuſtice unto any man. He that judgeth all can do injuſtice to none. God takes no advantage to be unjuſt, becauſe none can call him to account for injuſtice. They ſhould be furtheſt from doing wrong, who need not fear any appeal from them, or complaint againſt them, if they do wrong. The Judge of the whole earth hath none to judge him. He will do right to all, who cannot be judged by any.

Further, Conſider thoſe two words, **judgment and juſtice.**] Judgment and juſtice are often put in Scripture for the ſame, and when put together, the latter is as an epithite to the former, *Pſal.* 119. 121. *I have done judgment and juſtice:* that is, I have done judgment *juſtly*, exactly, to a hair. Sometimes they have a diſtinct ſignification.

Facere legē & præceptū eſt facere judicium. Deus ideo leges ſuas judicia vocat, quod æquiſſima ſunt, quæ præſcribit.

Firſt, Judgment ſignifies, that right which every man ought to do at all times (*Pſal.* 106. 3. *Iſa.* 5. 7.)

Secondly, The Law or rule it ſelf, according to which every man is to do right, *Levit.* 26. 26. *Pſal.* 19. 10. God calls all his Laws *judgments*, becauſe they are all moſt juſt and equal. Judgment hath a three-fold oppoſition, by which we may underſtand the nature of it.

Firſt, Judgment is oppoſed to anger, rigor and ſeverity, *Jerem.* 10. 24. *Correct me, O Lord, but with judgment, not in thine anger:* That is, Correct me mercifully, moderately, and in meaſure: ſuffer not thy whole diſpleaſure to ariſe; do not exact the utmoſt farthing. In which ſence the judgments of God upon wicked men in Hell ſhall be without judgment: And thus to do a thing without judgment, is all one, as to do it without mercy.

Ezek. 44. 14

Secondly, Judgment is oppoſed to folly, or to fooliſhneſs: Judgment is Wiſdom; when we ſay, Such an one is *a man of judgment*, we mean, he is a wiſe man. Thus judgment is an ability to judge.

Thirdly, Judgment is oppoſed to injuſtice and wrong, which is the vulgar and common meaning.

We may take it in any of theſe ſences here. As judgment is oppoſed to anger, ſo it is moderation in juſtice, *Will the Lord pervert judgment?* That is, Will not he be as moderate in executing judgment, as equity can admit? *Hoſ.* 11. 9. *I will not execute the fierceneſs of mine anger. I will not return to deſtroy* Ephraim, *for I am God and not man, the Holy One in the midſt of thee, and I will not enter into the City.* As an enemy having taken a City, to ſhew them ſome favor, ſaith, I will not enter your City with my Army, to ſpoyl and plunder you: ſo God ſpeaks here, *Though men be as wicked as they can, yet God will not be as angry as he can.*

Again, Will he pervert Judgment, as it imports Wiſdom? No, He walks exactly by the rule of Wiſdom, of the higheſt and pureſt Wiſdom. There are no miſts or clouds of ignorance before the eye of his underſtanding. And as he hath no darkneſs, ſo no falſe lights.

Laſtly, Take it as oppoſed to injuſtice; *Will the Lord pervert judgment?* Will he wrong any man? Carries he a matter ſiniſterly or partially? He will not do it.

משפט *Judicium, jus & mos ſeu modus in judicando. Judicium eſt in vero abſq; errore cognoſcendo, juſtitia in tribuendo cuique quod ſuum eſt. Judicium pœnam reſpicit, juſtitia compenſationem bene actorū.* Druſ.

Again, As judgment and juſtice are taken preciſely or diſtinctly.

Firſt, Judgment ſignifies due order in trying and finding out the ſtate of a cauſe: And Juſtice the giving of ſentence upon that tryal.

Secondly, Judgment is a clear knowledge of what ought to be done: And Juſtice is the doing of that which we know. Juſtice is an evenneſs and uprightneſs of Conſcience, in paſſing every thing according to received light.

Thirdly, Some diſtinguiſh them thus: Judgment is in condemning thoſe that are guilty; and Juſtice is in abſolving and acquitting thoſe that are innocent, or rewarding thoſe who have done well.

Fourthly, Thus, Judgment reſpects capital cauſes, which are for life; and Juſtice reſpects civil cauſes, which are for eſtate or liberty.

Take them in any of theſe ſences, or under whatſoever other diſtinction they are conſiderable. The Lord God *El-Shaddai*, is no perverter of either. He never diſturbs or clogs the order of tryal: He is no hinderer of the ſentence from due execution. He exactly underſtands every cauſe, and he awards what is due to every perſon. He wrongs no man in life or limb, in eſtate or liberty.

Thus we ſee what Judgment and Juſtice are: I ſhall now open what it is to pervert Judgment and Juſtice. The ſame word is uſed in both. *

* *Iſtæ repetitiones divina eloquia multum commendant, ſive eadem verba alta ſententia ſive aliis verbis eadem ſententia repetatur, illa enim ejuſdem rei reſumptio, moram quandam in meditando & ponderando requirit, quod in Pſalmis frequens.* Auguſt.

Doth

עות *Pervertit, ſubvertit, detorquet, à recto & æquo, ſupplantat.* Vulg. *Eſt autem in verbo (ſupplanto) perbella Metaphora, proprie eſt objecto, vel ſuppoſito pede aliquē ad caſum impellere.*

Doth God pervert?] Some tranſlate it, ſupplant Juſtice. And ſo it imports, ſecret, cunning wayes of injuſtice; for to ſupplant, properly is to come behind a man, and to ſtrike up his heels, and caſt him down, or to lay ſomewhat in his way, upon which he may trip or ſtumble, and then fall. God doth not ſupplant Juſtice, he layes no plots, he ſets no ſnares, to entangle or overthrow a man in his cauſe.

More largely, The word ſignifieth, *To make crooked*, and ſo it very well anſwers the point in hand. Judgment and Juſtice are both carried by a ſtraight line: They are the rectitude of our actions. To pervert Judgment, is to make crooked lines: So we have the word (*Eccl.* 1. 16.) *That which is crooked cannot be made ſtraight*. He means it of civil, not natural things, whoſe crookedneſs is often cured by art; but who can cure all civil evils? Man is not able by all his diligence to turn the courſe of things which God hath determined, though to him there appear much crookedneſs, and many diſtortions. *Solomon* himſelf makes this interpretation (*Chap.* 7. 13.) where he ſhews, that it is beſt to ſubmit to God, becauſe his will is irreſiſtible, and the effects of it unavoidable; *Conſider the work of God, for who can make that ſtraight which he hath made crooked?* So then, to pervert judgment is to make judgment crooked; or to make judgment (to which all things and perſons ſhould bow) to bow it ſelf down, as the word is alſo uſed, *Eccleſ.* 12. 3. In the deſcription of old-age, *The ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves*; the legs and knees in old-age bow and double under us. *To pervert juſtice is to creeple juſtice, to make it lame and halt*. This word is tranſlated, *to overthrow* (Job 19. 6.) *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compaſt me in with his net*. *Job* ſpeaks in a great paſſion, as if God had come upon him violently in judgment, and caſt him: We ſay a man is overthrown or caſt in his ſute. God overthrows men and Nations; but he never overthrows Juſtice. A man who overthrows his adverſary, may ſettle Juſtice. *Job* looked upon himſelf, as one againſt whom God had entred his action, and overthrown him in the ſute. Lamenting *Jeremy* cries out (*Lam.* 3. 59.) *O Lord thou haſt ſeen my wrong* (it is this word) Thou haſt ſeen how I am vexed, and wreſted by the hard dealings of men, *judge thou my cauſe*; Thou wilt judge me aright, and ſet me ſtraight again.

Judgment is perverted two wayes.

First, By Subtilty.
Secondly, By Power.

Firſt, Some pervert judgment by ſubtilty; They are wiſe to do evil. The Lord hath infinite wiſdom, and ſo is able to go beyond and over-reach all creatures; he is wiſe enough to befool all the world: but he is not wiſe to do evil; His wiſdom is not a trap or a ſnare to others, but an unerring guide and light to himſelf.

Secondly, Some pervert judgment by violence and force: if they cannot untye the knot by craft, they will cut it aſunder by power; and if they have not law for it, they have will for it, and an arm for it, and it ſhall be done. The Lord can do what he will, but he hath no will to do what is evil. He can put forth as much ſtrength as he deſires, but he hath no deſire to pervert juſtice, or to act his power to over-aw and maſter it.

Further, To pervert judgment and juſtice, hath theſe two things in it.

Firſt, *To darken and obſcure the rule of judgment.*
Secondly, *To torture or miſ-interpret the rule of judgment.*

Firſt, Judgment is perverted by darkning and obſcuring the Law or rule of Juſtice. God doth not do ſo: He never caſts a miſt before his Word, or a vail over it, that he may act againſt it.

Secondly, Neither doth he miſ-interpret his Law. A good Law ill expounded is made the warrant of an evil Judgment. A gloſs corrupting the Text of the Law corrupts Juſtice. *Where tongue and conſcience are ſet to ſale, the wit muſt find out ſomewhat to help the market.*

The words opened invite theſe Obſervations,

Firſt, That *God is moſt exact in judgment, God is a juſt God.*

It is a high truth, and we ſhould adore it, that whatſoever God doth, he is juſt in doing it. When Reaſon cannot reach, or make it out, yet Faith muſt; and we muſt honor God in what we cannot underſtand: The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, though his wayes are paſt finding out. For,

Firſt, He hears every cauſe before he judges: He doth not judge one ſide before he knows the other, or judge any man before he hath heard him fully out: We ſee both (*Gen.* 11. & *Gen.* 18.) in thoſe two great acts of Juſtice, when God confounded the builders of *Babel*, and when he deſtroyed *Sodom*, *I will go down and ſee whether it be altogether according to the report that is come up unto me.* God needs no Intelligence to be brought him unto Heaven; neither doth he that fills all places go to any place to inform himſelf: but he ſpeaks thus, to note how exact he is in point of Juſtice; to ſhew that he deals with the Children of men, as a man: who hearing a report of ſuch a thing done, ſaith, I will not judge of it by what I hear, but I will go to ſee whether it be ſo or no. Without evidence of the fact, the ſentence cannot be juſt, though it may be right.

Secondly, He examineth and takes confeſſion, which is another point of Juſtice. So he proceeded with our firſt Parents (*Gen.* 3.) propoſing Interrogatories unto them, and then the Judgment is pronounced according unto what was confeſt; he judgeth them out of their own mouths, *verſ.* 17. *Becauſe thou haſt done this, and harkned unto the voice of thy Wife, therefore*, &c.

Thirdly, God proceeds by the evidence of the Law, as well as by the evidence of the fact; and this alſo ſets forth the exactneſs of his judgment: Theſe two things make judgment perfect; you muſt not only have the evidence of the fact, that ſuch a thing is done, but you muſt have the evidence of the Law condemning ſuch a deed. Though God himſelf be an everlaſting Law, and he may judge all from his own breſt, yet he hath given out a Law, which gives the knowledge of ſin. It is ſaid, *Rom.* 2. *They that have ſinned without the Law, ſhall periſh without the Law*; as if ſome ſhould be judged without Law: but he means without a Law formally publiſhed, not materially enacted: For he ſpeaks of the *Gentiles*, who were not within the hearing of Mount *Sinai*, and had not ſeen that formality of a *Law written in Tables of ſtone*; yet they had *a Law written in their hearts*: They that have not heard the Law publiſhed or ſeen it written in a Book, ſhall be judged by the *Law written in their hearts, their conſcience bearing them witneſs, and their thoughts accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.*

Fourthly, God is impartial in giving judgment: He doth not ſtrike one and ſpare another, who is under the ſame condemnation; nothing can ſway or byas him, nothing can preponderate the ballance of Juſtice in his hand; you cannot put in any conſideration to ſway his beam, beſide the right.

There are three things which uſually cauſe men to pervert juſtice, the Lord is free from them all.

Firſt, *Fear of greatneſs*: Some would do juſtice, but they dare not; the buſineſs concerns a great man, and to do juſtice upon ſuch, is, *To take a Bear by the tooth*, (as we ſay) *or to play with the paw of a Lion.* Now the Lord is not turned away for fear, nor defers he Juſtice for any mans big looks, *The day of the Lord* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 2.) *ſhall be againſt the high Oaks.* He is *El-Shaddai*, the Allmighty, the all-powerful God, and therefore cares not for the might or power of man.

Secondly, *Hope of reward*; that's another thing which cauſeth many to pervert judgment. With ſome their hope is ſtronger then their fear: They care not for the greatneſs of men, but they hope for gain. A bribe taken or promiſed clogs and obſtructs the courſe of Juſtice (*Hoſ* 4. 14.) *Her Rulers with ſhame do love, Give ye*; the Hebrew is, *Her Shields*; Magiſtrates ſhould be as Shields to the people to protect them; but what did they? *They love, Give ye*; that word pleaſed them. They were more pleaſed with receiving rewards, then with doing right. The Lord is above all gifts, he is *Shaddai*, he hath all in himſelf, and needs not that any ſhould give unto him; and he tells them expreſly (*Ezek.* 7. 19.) *That their ſilver and their gold ſhall not be able to deliver them in the day of his wrath*; offer thouſands of ſilver and gold, he will not ſtay judgment a minute for it, *Prov.* 11. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath*; In the day of mans wrath they ſometimes will, but never in the day of Gods.

Thirdly, *Affection and nearneſs of relation pervert judgment.* Many have clean hands, free from bribes, and ſtout hearts free from fears, yet they are overcome with affection and relations; theſe put out the eye of juſtice. The

Lord is above all relations. As he commands us in our cleaving unto Chriſt, not to know Father or Mother, *Yea to hate Father and Mother, Wife*, &c. (and thoſe are neareſt to us) that we may keep cloſe unto Chriſt : So himſelf doth not know the neareſt relation, to pervert judgement or do wrong in favor of it. Hence he ſaith of *Coniah* (*Jer.* 22. 24.) *Though* Coniah *be as the ſignet upon my right hand, yet will I pluck him thence :* Let him plead nearneſs (as men do, ſuch a man is of your blood or alliance , pray ſpare him) God will not ſpare the ſignet on his right hand, that is, he will not ſtop juſtice upon any pretence of nearneſs or uſefulneſs.

Etiamſi fuiſſet Jeconia mihi chariſſimus quem ſemper in oculis ferrẽ. Jun.

Fifthly, God is exact (take them diſtinctly) both in judgment and in juſtice. He is as curious in ſearching out the cauſe, as in ſentencing the perſon. As ready to acquit the innocent, as to condemn the guilty : as careful to relieve the oppreſſed, as to chaſten the oppreſſor : as zealous in rewarding thoſe who deſerve well, as in puniſhing thoſe who do evil. Not to reward is as great injuſtice , as not to puniſh. What God hath promiſed ſhall be performed, and what he threatens ſhall be inflicted. He will neither diſcourage goodneſs by neglecting it, nor encourage ſin by winking at it. He hath bread in one hand, and a ſword in the other.

Pervertit jus, qui non punit improbos; pervertit juſtitiā, qui non remunerat juſtorum bona opera. Druſ.

Thus we ſee the Lord is moſt exact in juſtice (*Pſal.* 48. 10.) *The right hand of the Lord is full of righteouſneſs.* His power and might are his right hand ; and that right hand hath nothing but righteouſneſs in it. Few men come to that of *Laban*, *It is in the power of mine hand to do thee hurt*, but I will not : moſt do as much hurt as is in their power. God hath all power in his hand, but he wrongs no man. As none have now any cauſe to ſay, that they have received wrong from the hand of God : ſo at laſt all ſhall confeſs they have not.

Further , *Bildad* ſpeaking upon ſuppoſition, that God was wronged in juſtice, teacheth us,

> That, *It is a duty to vindicate the juſtice of God, whenſoever we hear it wronged.*

When we hear any wounding God in his faithfulneſs, truth, or juſtice, we ſhould preſently ſtand up to plead for him ; What, will God be unfaithful ? Will God pervert judgement ? Will God be untrue ? *&c.* Thus we ſhould plead for God. When *Jeremy* could not make out the juſtice of God, he is an advocate for his juſtice, *Lord, thou art righteous, yet let me plead with thee.* He would not have the matter once queſtioned, though the manner was enquired. Obſerve,

> Laſtly, That, *the judgments of God may be ſecrets to us, but they are never injuries to us.*

Juſtice is in all the dealings of God, but his juſtice is not alwayes viſible. His judgments are founded upon reaſon, when upon his will, for his will is the higheſt reaſon. God cannot be unjuſt, and he ever puniſhes thoſe who are. He is ſo far from ſubverting judgment, that he ſubverteth Kings and Magiſtrates, yea, Nations and Kingdoms for ſubverting judgment ; *To ſubvert a man in his cauſe, the Lord approveth not*, Lam. 3. 36. The Hebrew is, *The Lord ſeeth not* : That is, He doth not ſee it, to approve it ; but he doth ſee it to puniſh it. He is an avenger of thoſe who will not avenge the oppreſſed. And as he looks for judgment in all places, ſo eſpecially among his own people, upon whom he beſtows moſt mercy (*Iſa.* 5. 2.) When the Lord had done ſo much for his vineyard, *He looked for judgment, and behold oppreſſion : for righteouſneſs, but behold a cry.* God makes privy ſearch thorow a Nation to find this jewel : Judgment between man and man in commerce , which is, *commutative juſtice* ; judgment from Magiſtrates to the people, which is, *diſtributive juſtice* : for theſe God is ſearching at this day ; one of the greateſt ſins among us, is the perverting of judgment : And until judgment return to man, how can we expect mercy ſhould return from God ? (*Jer.* 5. 1.) *Run to and fro thorow the ſtreets of* Jeruſalem, *and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that loves the truth, and I will pardon it.* A Land is ſeldom fill'd with the judgments of God, till it is emptied of judgment among men. What a ſad thing is it that there ſhould be ſo many cries againſt injuſtice on earth, in a time when there is ſo much crying out for mercy from Heaven : That in ſuch a time when the Judgments of God are upon our ſelves, we ſhould not learn righteouſneſs to act it among our ſelves ! I am perſwaded the *Sword of War* had been ruſting in its ſheath to this day, if the *Sword of Juſtice* had been uſed as it ought, both to puniſh offenders, and protect the innocent. And when the Sword of Juſtice ſhall be both wayes imployed, I doubt not but the Sword of War ſhall be ſheathed again, and imployed no more, but be *beaten into plow-ſhares, and our ſpears into pruning hooks. Keep ye judgment* (ſaith the Lord by his Prophet, *Iſa.* 56. 1.) *for my ſalvation is near to come, and my righteouſneſs to be revealed.* God hath done terrible things in righteouſneſs among us, and we hope he will do comfortable things in righteouſneſs among us : ſeeing the righteous deſtructions of God have been upon us, and his righteous ſalvations (we hope) are near us, let not our righteouſneſs be far off.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

If thy Children have ſinned againſt him, and he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion.
If thou wouldſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty.
If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy Righteouſneſs proſperous.
Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly encreaſe.

Theſe four verſes contain the firſt confirmation of the former general Poſition, *That God is juſt :* which is reſolved out of thoſe Queſtions, *Doth God pervert Judgment ? Or doth the Almighty pervert Juſtice ?* He doth not. Then, *God is juſt*, there's the Poſition. And as that Poſition conſiſteth of two parts, ſo alſo doth this proof or confirmation of it.

Firſt, That God doth not pervert judgment (taking judgment under that ſtrict notion for puniſhing of offenders) he proveth by the example of *Job's* Children, whom God puniſhed becauſe of their tranſgreſſion, as he conceived.

Secondly, That God doth not pervert juſtice (taking juſtice under that ſtrict and diſtinct notion of rewarding and relieving the innocent) he proveth by the readineſs of God to do *Job* good in caſe he ſhould humble himſelf and repent, in *verſ.* 5, 6, 7.

His Argument for the former may be thus conceived.

He doth not pervert judgment who puniſheth thoſe who have ſinned againſt him.
But God hath puniſhed thy Children for their ſin.
Therefore he doth not pervert judgment.

His Argument for the latter may be thus formed.

He doth not pervert juſtice, who is ready to pitty as ſoon as an offender humbly ſeeks, ſues and ſubmits unto him.
But God is ready to help thee as ſoon as ever thou humbly ſeekeſt unto him.
Therefore God doth not pervert juſtice.

Thus you have the general ſence of theſe four Verſes, as Arguments brought for proof of the former point, that God doth not pervert judgment or juſtice. I ſhall now open them diſtinctly.

If thy Children have ſinned againſt him.

There may be a two-fold ſence given of theſe words.

Firſt, Thus, *Although thy Children have ſinned againſt him, and he hath caſt them away for their iniquity ; yet, if thou wilt ſeek unto him, he will do thee good.* Which tranſlation makes the ſence more clear then ours , *If thy Children have ſinned againſt him*, &c. The one is a ſuppoſition of what might be ; the other a conceſſion of what was.

Secondly, By way of proportion, thus, *As thy Children have ſinned againſt him, ſo he hath caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion.* And ſo *Bildad* argueth with *Job* upon the ſame principle that *Eliphaz* had done before, *ſcil.* that his ſons and himſelf had exceedingly provoked God, and that therefore God had ſent that judgment, and laid that heavy ſtroke upon them, *If thy Children*, or, *although thy Children have ſinned.*

Againſt

חטאו לו

Againſt him.] That word is to be opened a little. The Hebrew is, *Have ſinned to him.* Which is indifferently Tranſlated, either *before or againſt him*; we take the latter.

Every ſin is committed againſt God; that's the firſt. Sin is moſt oppoſite to God. It is againſt God in his Nature: againſt God in his Will: againſt God in his very Being. Sin would thruſt God out of the world, if it were poſſible; and therefore it is rightly tranſlated, *They have ſinned againſt him.* No marvel if God do ſo much againſt ſinners, when ſin doth ſo much againſt him; but it is not a miracle, that God ſhould do any thing, eſpecially ſuch great things for ſinners, when ſin doth ſo much againſt him? *David* (*Pſal.* 51. 4.) ſaw his ſin was ſo much againſt God, that he overlooks all others ageinſt whom it was; *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight*; which ſome miſ-interpret, as if, becauſe he was a King, he could do no injury to his Subjects, and therefore ſaith, *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned.* But, *They who rule men, may ſin againſt man*; and *David* ſinned in that act againſt man: Firſt, By doing private wrong: Secondly, By giving publike ſcandal. The reaſon then why *David* ſpake thus, was becauſe the ſin he had committed was ſo much againſt God, that though he had grievouſly offended againſt man, in taking away the life of one Subject, the chaſtity of another, and by endangering the whole Army to compaſs a cover for his ſin, yet in this, his ſin exceeded in ſinfulneſs, that he ſinned againſt God; and therefore he ſaith, *Againſt thee, thee only*; or take it comparatively, the ſin is ſo much againſt thee, that what is againſt any other is not worth the naming. *God is not only wronged, but he is chiefly wronged in every ſin.* As, becauſe in the wrong done to the life or eſtate of a Subject, the King is chiefly wronged, therefore all Inditements run in this ſtile, *Againſt the peace of our Soveraign Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity.* Laſtly, That place may be underſtood in the ſecond ſence of, *Againſt thee*, that is, *Before thee*; and ſo it ſeems to be expounded in the latter part, *Againſt thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight*; that is, though others took no notice of this, though it was done in ſecret (2 *Sam.* 12. 12.) yet it was committed clearly and plainly before thine eyes, thine eyes which are ten thouſand times brighter then the Sun, beheld me in the darkneſs of that folly; and therefore againſt thee have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight; as noting, that though it were conceal'd and hidden from men, yet it could not be conceal'd and hidden from God. *If thy Children have ſinned againſt him.*

לך לבדך
Tibi, tibi ſoli.

And he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion.

Bildad's poſition is true in it ſelf, but falſe in the application, *If thy Children have ſinned againſt him.* It is a truth, that godly parents may have wicked Children. Grace doth not alwayes run in a Blood. But it was unevident unto *Bildad*, that *Job's* Children had ſinned againſt God in his ſence. It is not the common ſinner whom *Bildad* meaneth; by ſinning againſt God, he intends not the inevitable actings of ſinful nature, but the voluntary ſtudied improvements, heightnings, and provocations of ſinful nature.

Further, In that he concludes, *They were caſt away for their tranſgreſſion:* He faileth again. It is a truth, that ſin is the meritorious cauſe of puniſhment, *Thy deſtruction is from thy ſelf*, ſaith the Lord, *Hoſ.* 13. 9. *Thy way and thy doings have procured theſe things unto thee*, Jer. 4. 18. Sin will help us to ſorrow enough. Yet this is not a truth, that every man is afflicted for his ſin. As no man knows the love or hatred of God; ſo no man knows the ſin or holineſs of man by all that is before him: we cannot argue every one is caſt away for his tranſgreſſion, becauſe he is caſt away.

ישלחם
ביד
פשעם

He hath caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion.] The Hebrew is very elegant, *He hath ſent them away in the hand of their tranſgreſſion:* or, *He hath put them into the hand of their tranſgreſſion.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it ſo. *As thy Children have ſinned againſt him, ſo he hath ſent them into the hand of their treſpaſſes. Into the hand*, that is, into the power, as (*Chap.* 5. 20.) *the hand of the Sword*, is, the power of the Sword: and (*Pſal.* 63. 10.) *They ſhall fall by the Sword:* the Hebrew is. *They ſhall fall by the hand of the Sword.* Then, *He hath delivered them into the hand of their tranſgreſſion*, is, into the power of their tranſgreſſion.

There are two things conſiderable about this expreſſion of ſending or giving up into the hand of tranſgreſſion.

שלח
Simpliciter mittere aut ejicere ſignificat, quaſi cum recto tramite aberraſſent, aberrandi copiam pro libidine feciſſet.

Firſt, It may Note, That God had delivered up *Job's* Children unto the raign or dominion of their own ſinful hearts, or had laid the reyns in their necks, ſuffering their luſts to hurry them whither they would, to carry them captive unto every ſin, and ruſh them head-long into every evil. The word —— here uſed, ſignifies either ſimply, to ſend, or violently to caſt, or to put a thing away from us: and ſo, it is as much as if *Bildad* had ſaid, *For as much as thy children would ſin againſt God, he ſuffered them to ſin their fill; they being wicked, he gave them up to do all wickedneſſes: They loved to wander from him, and he let them wander.* We have this ſence of the word (*Prov.* 29. 15.) *A Child left unto himſelf brings his Mother to ſhame:* The Hebrew is, *A Child ſent away, ſent to himſelf, or put into his own hands*; A Child ſent away to himſelf, or left alone, bringeth ſhame, that is, will certainly run into vile and enormous courſes, to the ſhame of her that bare him. A Child left, or ſent to himſelf, is one that hath no guide, no governor, no inſtructor, but himſelf. *A man that will learn only of himſelf, hath but a fool to his maſter*; How much more then a weak Child, what a Maſter, what a Tutor hath a Child, if he have none but himſelf? To be *left or ſent out to themſelves*, is, to have none to counſel or adviſe them in a right way, or to give them any ſtop and check in an ill way. The character that *Paul* and *Barnabas* gave of the former times, when they preached to the Heathens at *Lyſtra*, was this (*Act.* 14. 16.) *We exhort you to turn unto the living God that made Heaven and Earth, who in times paſt ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own wayes.* He let them go, and never ſtaid them at all, they had no bridle of reſtraint, not ſo much as a word to bring them back; *He ſuffered all Nations*, as if he had ſaid, *He left them in the hand of their tranſgreſſion*, that their own evil hearts ſhould do what they would with them. In which ſence we may alſo underſtand that place (*Act.* 17. 30.) when *Paul* at *Athens* diſputed with the Philoſophers, he tells them that now God began to look towards them, and had ſent them the knowledge of Chriſt, *The times of that ignorance God winked at; but now he calleth all men every where to repent.* The words undergo a two-fold interpretation: Some thus, to note the indulgence of God, *The time paſt of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, he did not deal ſeverely and ſtrictly with them, when they ſinned, becauſe they had no means, or ſo little means to keep them from ſin. And there is a truth in it, for though ignorance doth not totally excuſe ſin, yet it doth abate the degree and meaſure of ſin. But there is another ſence, which I rather embrace, *The times of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, in thoſe times wherein there was ſo much darkneſs and blindneſs in the world, God let men go on in their ſin: they ſinned, and he never called upon them, he never oppoſed them, or ſent any to teach them better. God did not manifeſt his will to them as unto the Jews, *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his word unto* Jacob, *his ſtatutes and judgments unto* Iſrael; *he hath not dealt ſo with any Nation*, &c. So that this winking is oppoſed to favor, rather then to juſtice. To have the eye upon a place, or upon perſons, is to ſhew them favor, 1 *King.* 8. 29. The later branch clears this meaning, *But now he calleth all men every where to repent:* now he doth not leave men in the hands of their tranſgreſſions: He doth not wink and let them do what they liſt: now Goſpel-light is riſen to the world, and there are many ſent out to call in and reclaim wandering prodigals, many to cry, *Return, return.* He ſpeaks of it as of the mercy and priviledge of that age, beyond what the former ages had enjoyed. That of the ſame Apoſtle hath a paralel ſence (*Rom.* 1. 20, & 26.) where deſcribing the dealings of God with the *Gentiles*, who ſinned againſt the light of nature, he concludes, Therefore God left them in the darkneſs of nature, in the worſt of nature: they came not up ſo high as the principles of nature might have led them in the worſhip of God, therefore he left them below the principles of nature in the things of man, *He gave them up to vile affections*, which is as much as to ſay, *He put them in the hands of their tranſgreſſions.* And ver. 28. *He gave them over to a reprobate mind*, to a mind that could not judge aright, which

Nihil aliud ſibi volunt Pauli verba quam cæcitati addictos fuiſſe homines, donec ſe illis Deus patefaciat. Calv.

which had not a true underſtanding of any thing: Hence they elected the worſt, reprobated the beſt things. The like we have (Pſal. 81. 11.) of Gods own people the Jews, *So I gave them up unto their own hearts luſts, and they walked in their own counſels.* The Hebrew is, *I ſent them into the pertinacy of their hearts*, becauſe I had ſo often called upon them, and they would not hearken, nor return unto me, Therefore I ſaid, foraſmuch as you will not hear, you ſhall not hear; becauſe you will not obey, you ſhall have none to call you to obedience; follow the counſels of your own hearts, as long as you will. This is *the firſt ſence, of putting or ſending them into the hand of their tranſgreſſion*, ſcil. a leaving them to the raign of their luſts.

Expulit eos è mundo propter prævaricationem. Pagn. *Permiſit eis pervenire, quod ſcelus eorum poſtulabat.* Tygur.

Secondly (Which is the ſence our tranſlation holds out) *Thou haſt left them, or ſent them into the hand of their tranſgreſſion*; that is, Thou haſt left them in thoſe evils, which their tranſgreſſions did deſerve and call for. Our reading carries that meaning, *He hath caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion:* Others thus, *He hath thruſt them out of the world for their tranſgreſſion*; *He hath ſuffered that to befall them which their tranſgreſſion called for.* According to theſe, the ſence is, *Thy Children ſinned againſt him, and he hath let thoſe evils which their ſin deſerved fall upon them*; *He hath rewarded them according to their iniquity* (Iſa. 64. 6, 7.) *Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away: Thou haſt hid thy face from us, and haſt conſumed* (or melted) *us, becauſe of our iniquities.* The Hebrew is, *Thou haſt conſumed or melted us in the hand, or in the power of our iniquities.* And ſomewhat parallel to this ſence, is that (*Gen.* 4. 6.) *If thou doeſt ill* (ſaith God to *Cain*) *ſin lies at the door*; As if he had ſaid, Thou ſhalt be given into the hand of ſin preſently, thy ſin ſhall arreſt thee, and bring thoſe evils upon thee which it deſerveth, thou ſhalt not need any other puniſhment then thy own wickedneſs.

Alliſiſti nos in manu iniquitatis noſtræ. Vul.

Hands and power are aſcribed to ſin, becauſe God gives men over to thoſe puniſhments which their ſins challenge at his hands. Some ſins have a louder voice then others; but every ſin unpardoned (the mouth whereof is not ſtopt by the blood of Chriſt) cries to God for vengeance, till God put the ſinner into the hand of ſin, that he may at once receive pay for, and from his own folly. Obſerve from the former interpretation,

> Firſt, That, *the Lord doth often in judgment give man up to the power of his ſinful luſts.*

This is a general truth, though we cannot draw it down to the inſtance of *Job's* Children: The Lord in wrath leaves man to himſelf. Every man by nature ſins freely, and many are left by God to a judiciary freedom in ſinning. He cannot reſtrain himſelf, and ſometimes God will not reſtrain him, but lets him take his fill of ſin, and be as wicked as he will (*Rev.* 22. 11.) *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill.* This permiſſion is the higheſt and soreſt affliction. This liberty is worſe then any bondage. Thus alſo the Church leaves thoſe to their ignorance, who obſtinately refuſe inſtruction (1 *Cor.* 14. 38.) *He that is ignorant let him be ignorant ſtill.* Thoſe ſouls are in a deſperate condition, who are put out of the care either of God or of his Church. Obſerve,

> Secondly, That, *ſin is a puniſhment.*

Tu, Domine, dixiſti, & ita eſt, ut omnis malus animus ſibi ipſi ſit pœna. Auguſt.

Ulciſcentur eum mores ſui. Cicero ad Atticũ.

Sin is the puniſhment of ſin: Thy Children ſinned againſt him, and he gave them into the hand of their ſin; he never goes unpuniſhed for ſin, who ſins and repents not. Thou, Lord (ſaith one of the Ancients) haſt decreed it, and ſo it is, That every evil mind is it's own ſcourge. The Apoſtle tells us (*Heb.* 10. 31.) that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God:* it is indeed; and it is as fearful a thing to fall into the hand of deadly ſins, or dead works. How dreadful a thing is it to be under the power and tyranny of our own hearts. The committing of ſin is worſe then the enduring of trouble? The Lord doth not only puniſh men according to their ſins, but he makes their ſin their puniſhment, yea, their ſins are their puniſhers. He puts them into the hand of ſin, as into the hand of a tormenter. A Heathen could threaten a wicked man, thus, *His manners ſhall be his revenge.* Holineſs carries its reward with it, and though no creature will recompence the good we do, yet doing good is a recompence. In keeping the Commandments of God, there is an exceeding great reward, *Pſalm* 19. 11. The act of keeping them is a reward, as well as the iſſue. *A good work is pay enough to the worker.* So alſo is an evil work, *Prov.* 1. 32. *The turning away of the ſimple ſhall ſlay him.* A ſimple Child, that will not be ruled, counſel'd or ordered (ſuch *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Ye ſimple ones, how long will ye love ſimplicity?* That is, your own fooliſh, vain wayes) *The turning away of ſuch* ſimple ones from the counſel of the wiſe, ſhall ſlay them. The way of ſin is death, as well as the end or wages of it. *As ſaith the Proverb of the Ancients* (they are the words of *David* concerning *Saul*, 1 Sam. 24. 14.) *Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand ſhall not be upon him. David* knew that *Saul* was a man ſo wicked, that he needed no other revenger but his own ſelf, his own ſin would bring miſery enough upon him: therefore, ſaith he, *Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked*, that is, the puniſhment of wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked man himſelf. Obſerve the occaſion of thoſe words, it was, when ſome about *David* adviſed him to ſlay *Saul*; not I, ſaith he, *my hand ſhall not be upon him*; I know he is a man ſo given up to ſin, ſo enſlaved to his own vile affections, that there's enough upon him already, and in a ſhort time more will be upon him; *Wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand ſhall not be upon him*; I will leave him to the hand of his ſin, which is his Plague already, and which in a little time will attach him, and do me right, though he never would. When God took up a reſolution againſt his own people, that he would not hear or be intreated, and proteſted his mind could not be towards them, he ſaith (*Jer.* 15. 2.) *Let them go forth, ſuch as are for the ſword, to the ſword; and ſuch as are for the famine, to the famine; and ſuch as are for the captivity, to the captivity.* This was a dreadful ſentence; but for God to ſay to a people, Let them go forth in the wayes of their ſin; he that is for drunkenneſs, to be drunk; he that is for uncleanneſs, to be unclean; he that is for pride, to be proud; he that is for ſwearing, to oaths; and he that is for envy, to be envious; and he that is for Idolatry, to his Idols. O how unconceivably miſerable are ſuch a people! To be left in the hand of theſe ſins, is a ſpiritual judgement; and theſe ſins will quickly bring in temporal judgements, and not long hence eternal.

From the latter interpretation, Obſerve,

> *Sin ſhall not alwayes go away unpuniſhed by outward, ſenſible evils.*

God will ſink and caſt men away for their tranſgreſſions. If ſin be in the houſe, puniſhment lies at the doors, and will turn the lock and open it, or break it open upon the ſinner. And though he hide himſelf in vaults or ſecret corners, yet his iniquity will find him out. *He that will not caſt away his tranſgreſſion, ſhall be caſt away for his tranſgreſſion*, whether he will or no.

So much for theſe words, wherein *Bildad* ſets before *Job* the ſinfulneſs of his Children, thereby to vindicate the juſtice of God in giving them up to the dominion of their ſin, or to deſtruction for their ſin. In the next words he adviſes *Job* to take heed by their harms, and aſſures him of happy ſucceſs, in caſe he do. As if he had ſaid, Though they periſhed in their tranſgreſſion, yet do not thou deſpair. For,

Verſ. 5. **If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty, &c.**

God hath been juſt in puniſhing thy Children, and he will be merciful in pardoning thee, in accepting thy perſon, in proſpering thy eſtate, if now at laſt thou apply thy ſelf to ſeek him diligently; *Though thy Children have fallen into the hand of their tranſgreſſion, yet there is hope that thou mayeſt eſcape.* Thus he deals with him in a way of counſel, as *Eliphaz* had done before, *Chap.* 5. 8. *I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe*; this is the counſel I give thee, and the courſe I would take my ſelf, *Bildad* ſpeaks the ſame in effect, and almoſt in the letter; *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication unto the Almighty*, &c. *He would awake for thee.*

There are two parts of *Bildad's* counſel.

First,

Tirſt, To humble himſelf in prayer, *verſ.* 5.

Secondly, To purge himſelf by repentance, *verſ.* 6.

Or, we may look upon this counſel as a pattern of repentance, and turning to God in three things.

First, To ſeek unto God.

Secondly, To acknowledge our own unworthineſs to receive any mercy from God.

Thirdly, To be ſincere and upright-hearted with God in both.

If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes.

שחר *Eſt quaſi aurorare aut dilu- culare Deũ Diligenter, ſtdulo, & magno ſtudio quærere. Qui mane ſurgit precandi cauſâ, dicitur manicare Deũ.* Druſ.

We have met with the word more then once before; and in ſtrictneſs of tranſlation it ſounds thus much, *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God in the morning*; or, *If thou wouldeſt morning God,* be with him early in the morning, that is, If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto him diligently: they that come in the morning about buſineſs, are diligent in their buſineſs. The Apoſtles rule is (*Heb.* 3.) *To day harden not your hearts*; but here *Bildad* adviſeth, *Whileſt it is morning*, which is the firſt part or beginning of the day, pour out thy heart to God. So then, it may be taken for ſeeking God either at the firſt of the day, the morning; or, for any earneſt, diligent and fervent ſeeking unto God in any part of the day; To ſeek God diligently, though in the night, is according to this Hebraiſme, a ſeeking him in the morning.

Herodot. l. 10. Plin. *Ep.* 57. *ad* Trajan. Tertul. *Apol. cap.* 2.

It was an ancient cuſtom to ſeek God in the morning (take it in the letter) early in the morning. *David* profeſſes this, *Pſal.* 5. 3. *My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And Heathens by the light of nature, took this courſe in their profane and ſuperſtitious worſhip. *Herodotus* in his tenth book, tells us of the *Perſian Magi*, who addreſſed themſelves early in the morning to ſeek their falſe gods. And the Primitive Chriſtians were wondred at for their early devotions. *Pliny* in an Epiſtle to *Trajan*, and *Tertullian* in his Apologeticks for the Chriſtians, report their Aſſemblies before day-break to pray and call upon God. And there hath been and ſtill is a ſuperſtitions abuſe of this among the Papiſts, who call their morning prayers, their *Mattins*, becauſe they begin early in the morning. Hence Obſerve,

First, *Prayer is our ſeeking unto God.*

That's the general deſcription of prayer. When we pray, our work is to get near to God, to find God; every ſoul that prayes indeed, feels it ſelf at a loſs for ſomewhat that God only can beſtow. In God all that we want is to be found, and therefore he invites us to ſeek him. In this life the Saints are a generation of ſeekers: in the next, they ſhall be a generation of enjoyers; when God is fully found, there's nothing more to be ſought: Having him, we have all. The work of Heaven is to bleſs God for what we have found, not to ſeek him for what we want.

Secondly, *God muſt be ſought unto without delay.*

As it is with vows, ſo with prayers, *Defer not to pay them*; defer not to pray, *Iſa.* 5. 5. *Seek him whileſt he may be found.* Matth. 6. 33. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God*; firſt in time, not only chiefly, but early, put not God behind in the latter end of the day, or in the latter end of your buſineſſes. It is beſt to begin with him who is beſt.

Thirdly, *God muſt be ſought unto with diligence.*

We muſt lay our ſtrength and ſpirits out in ſeeking God. It is not a ſleight enquiry which finds out God. We read that he is found of ſome who ſeek him not at all, but that he is found of any, who ſeek him negligently, we read not. Free-grace prevents thoſe who have no ability to ſeek him, but it meets not thoſe who will not lay out their abilities in ſeeking him. *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes,*

And make thy ſupplication to the Almighty.

Verbum חנן *denotat gratuitam illã commiſerationem, quæ ſine ullo merito impenditur.*

The word which we tranſlate [Make thy ſupplication] is very ſignificant of the manner how we ſhould ſeek unto God, namely, bottoming our ſelves upon free-grace alone. A thought of our own worth is inconſiſtent with a *ſupplication*; *Call upon the Almighty for pity*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*, when we ſupplicate, we deſire that to be done for us, for which there is no reaſon in us why it ſhould be done. *To make ſupplication*: is to ſeek help and relief freely or *gratis*, acknowledging there is nothing in us worthy of love. That *adverb* uſed in the firſt, and repeated in the ſecond Chapter, where the Devil objects, *Doth* Job *ſerve God for nought*, that is, without reſpect of good pay for his pains from God, that *adverb* (I ſay) comes from this *verb*. As we ought to ſerve God (in this ſence) for nought, and not like mercenaries for our hire: So God helps us for nought, without looking to any thing in us, or from us, as an hire of his help, The *Baptiſt* had his name (*John*) from this Word, either becauſe he preached the Free-grace of God in Chriſt, then exhibited; or, becauſe God beſtowed him upon his Parents in their old-age, as a ſpecial grace and favour: *The poor* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 23.) *uſeth intreaties*; ſome render it thus, *The poor maketh, or ſpeaketh ſupplications*; a poor man hath nothing of deſert to plead, why he ſhould receive your charity, but he lies at your feet and begs ſomewhat, becauſe he is in want, becauſe miſery hath arreſted and taken hold upon him: *The poor uſeth entreaties,* he doth not call for any thing of right, and he will not wreſt any thing from you by force; he only ſupplicates your favour. We in our drawing nigh unto God ſhould pray for grace and favour, as a poor man, begging an alms, who makes this his plea, that he is poor. So then, *Bildad's* counſel to *Job* is this, *Stand not upon thy terms with God, plead not thine own integrity and good works*, but caſt thy ſelf at his feet for mercy, *Make thy ſupplication unto him.* The word is uſed by *Moſes*, *Deut.* 3. 23. when he deſcribeth his own unbelief, for which God ſaid he ſhould not go into *Canaan*. *And I beſought the Lord at that time, ſaying,* &c. When *Moſes* perceived God was angry, he did not reckon his former good ſervices to ballance this failing, but he ſought unto God for mercy, as one that had never done him any ſervice at all. And as man expreſſes his deſires of Free-grace by this Word, ſo doth the Lord his higheſt actings of it, *Exod.* 33. 19. *I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious.* To ſhew, that to *make ſupplication*, is, to deſire the Lord to be gracious: and to be gracious is to do that, which is deſired *by a ſupplication*; the ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies both an act of loweſt humility in us, namely the making a ſupplication, and an act of the higheſt grace in God, namely the granting of a ſupplication. Hence Obſerve,

First. *In ſeeking God we muſt look to receive all from his Free-grace and undeſerved favour.*

Seek unto God, and make thy ſupplication to him. Mercy in God is the ſpring of all the mercies received by man. What can a beggar, who comes to a King, ask upon deſert? That's the condition of every one that comes to God: we are a company of beggars, tho riches both of temporal and ſpiritual bleſſings are treaſur'd up in God. *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit*, they who look upon themſelves as mean and low, as not having a rag of goodneſs about them, as emptied of themſelves, are the veſſels which God will fill, *He that is full loatheth a honey-comb*, and he that thinks he is full, is loathed ſo much by God, that his real emptineſs ſhall never be filled. When *Jacob* held God ſo faſt, that he would not let him go without a bleſſing, he had quite let go all hold, yea, or opinion of his worthineſs to receive a bleſſing, *I am leſs then the leaſt of all thy mercies* (Gen. 32. 10.) Then we are fit to receive great things from God, when we are little, and then fitteſt, when we are leaſt in our own eyes. Yea, we muſt ſupplicate God, not only as a beggar, but as a Traitor or a Rebel doth a King: who hath not only nothing in him to commend him to his acceptance, or procure his favour, but much to provoke his wrath, and incur the weight of his diſpleaſure. Every ſin in it ſelf renders us rebels againſt God. And though his own people, coming unto him in Chriſt, are under another notion, they are his ſons, yet, even they ought to have ſuch apprehenſions of themſelves for ſin. *Abraham believed in him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. Even *Abraham* after he was juſtified in the ſight of God through faith, looked upon himſelf as ungodly, in reference to his own works. In all our approaches to God, we ſhould reflect upon our ſelves, not only as having many wants, and no worthineſs, but as having many ſins, and (of our own) no goodneſs. God (in juſtice) viſits iniquity upon them that hate him (*Exod.* 20.6.) *and he ſheweth mercy unto thouſands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments*; They who love God and keep his Commandments, receive all from mercy. Juſtice puniſhes thoſe who break the Commandment, but mercy doth them good who keep the Commandments. *We have at any time ſin enough to merit the wrath of God, but we never have goodneſs enough to merit his favour.* And as no objection from our ſinfulneſs can obſtruct the way of Free-grace from moving towards us: ſo no argument from our holineſs can open the way, for Free-grace to move towards us. In all our duties we are to lie in the duſt, yea, we are to lay our duties in the duſt, and to ſeek all of God in humble ſupplications.

Conſider this verſe in connexion with the former, and then two points are obſervable from it. *Bildad* aſſuring *Job*, that though his ſons had fallen by their ſin, yet, if himſelf would ſeek unto God, and make his ſupplication, it might be well with him, teacheth us,

First, *That the falls of others, whether into ſin, or under judgment for ſin, ſhould be warnings to us.*

Thou ſeeſt what is become of thy ſons: let them be as a looking-glaſs for thee. Children may teach their Parents, Parents are often whipt upon their Childrens backs. The hand of God upon others points towards us, and while they are ſmitten, we are inſtructed. The Apoſtle ſums up the moſt remarkable judgments which fell upon the Jews in their paſſage from *Ægypt* to *Canaan*, and cloſeth all with this application to Chriſtians, *Theſe things happened unto them as enſamples, and they are written for our admonition*, &c. *to the intent that we ſhould not luſt*, 1 Cor. 10. 11. As if he had ſaid, God let them fall into the hand of their ſins, and their falls may help us to keep our feet. Their falls were *types* (ſo the word is) theſe things happened unto them *typically*, in them we may ſee what God will do with us, if we take their courſe, and go their way.

τύπος, propriè ſignificat notam inſculptam pulſatione ſeu percuſſione effectam, Beza. *in* Joh.20.25. *τύπος παρὰ τὸ τύπτειν, percutere. Unde Ars Typographica.*

The Greek is very elegant and expreſſive of this ſence. For a *type* is ſuch a form or repreſentation of a thing, as is made by hard preſſing or ſtriking of it, ſuch as we ſee in ſtamps and ſeals. It is the leaving of a mark with a blow; implying, that the Lord by thoſe ſtroks upon his ancient people, left marks upon their bodies, or printed letters there (the Greek word for a Printer is a Type-writer) which were legible to their poſterity, and are to this day. Hence the ſcar which the nails made in the hands of out bleſſed Saviour upon the Croſs, is called, *The print of the nails*, or, *The type of the nails*, Joh. 20.25. Such a type or print ſufferings leave behind them. How many ſuch *types* have we this day? Where can we go, but we ſee the print of the Sword, and thruſt our hands into wounded ſides, *Let us not be faithleſs, but believing?* The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 Epiſt. 2. 6.) brings the apoſtate Angels, the old world, filthy *Sodome*, as admonitory examples unto thoſe that ſhould live ungodly. They made themſelves evil examples by committing ſin, and God made them good enſamples by puniſhing them for their ſin.

Secondly, From the connexion, Obſerve,

That they who are equal in ſin, may be unequal in puniſhment.

Job was (in the judgment of his friends) as deep in ſin as his Children; but though he had ſinned like them, or more then they, yet he might be unlike them in ſuffering, or ſuffer leſs then they. God (ſaith *Bildad*) hath taken them quite away, he hath but wounded you, and if you ſeek unto God he is ready to heal you. The ſame ſinners for matter, are in Heaven and in Hell, that is, take two who have committed the ſame ſins for matter, and for degree alſo (as ſin is a tranſgreſſion of the Law) and the one of theſe may be found in Heaven, and the other in Hell at the laſt day. Yea, I believe, there are many in Heaven that have committed greater ſins then ſome that are in Hell. It is not the matter of ſin committed, but the obſtinacy, impenitency, or unbelief of the ſinner, which binds on the guilt, and ſeals up the ſinner to judgments temporal, and to condemnation eternal.

Verſ. 6. **If thou wert pure and upright, he would awaken for thee, &c.**

Bildad counſels *Job* to ſeek God, yet he puts in a caution, *If thou wert pure and upright:* As if he had ſaid, I adviſe thee to ſeek unto God, and to make thy ſupplication to him; but take heed of doing this with a purpoſe to continue in thy ſin, *If thou wouldſt ſeek unto God, and make thy ſupplication to him in purity, and uprightneſs of heart, He would awaken for thee.* Holy prayers awake God. Be holy, and thou ſhalt be ſure of audience and acceptance when thou prayeſt.

In the former verſe he gave advice for the duty to be performed, here he gives advice in reference to the perſon who is to perform the duty. Thy duty is to ſeek unto God, and to make ſupplication to the Almighty, but look thine own heart be pure and upright. Take heed of coming to a holy God in thine unholineſs.

זכר ג זך eſt lucere in modū vitri atq; cryſtalli.

Pure and upright.] The word ſignifieth to ſhine or gliſter, as glaſs or cryſtal, noting, that the purity of our lives in holineſs ſhines as light, *Matth.* 5. *Let your light ſo ſhine before men.* The works of the Saints ſhould be clear as cryſtal: The word is uſed (*Lam.* 4. 7.) to ſet forth the exacteſt beauty, *Her Nazarites were purer then ſnow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then Rubies, their poliſhing was of Saphyr.* The oyl (*Lev.* 24. 2.) and the frankincenſe (*Exod.* 30. 4.) appointed for the uſe of the Sanctuary, are both thus expreſſed, *pure oyl, pure frankincenſe*, ſhining oyl, or ſhining frankincenſe, tranſparent oyl, *&c.* ſuch as you may look thorow, not obſcure or dark. The oyl and frankincenſe were a type of their purity, who had communion with God in holy things. The ſame word is uſed by *David*, complaining under a temptation (*Pſal.* 73. 15.) of loſt labour, or labour in vain in waſhing himſelf. Some waſh in vain; becauſe they are ſtill unclean, and get not out their ſpots; others think they waſh in vain, becauſe though clean, they cannot obtain their comforts. Thus *David* thought he waſhed in vain, *I ſaid, Verily I have cleanſed mine heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency, for I am chaſtned*, &c. *David* by cleanſing got the ſin-ſpots out as well as moſt men, but he could not get the affliction-ſpots out, this was his temptation. Sin is a blot, a ſpot, an uncleanneſs, a filthineſs; holineſs is purity, beauty, honour, light; things which have the greateſt excellency and luſtre, are but the ſhadows of holineſs.

Thus lucidiſſimum, pellucidum.

Peccatum vocatur macula, & ſanctitas munditie, quod quæ maculata & infecta erant habebantur profana & divino conſpectu indigna.

There is a two fold purity: First, The purity of our natures, which is received at converſion. Secondly, The purity of our converſations, which is renewed by repentance; we may underſtand both, or either in this place.

And upright.] It is the word uſed in *Chap.* 1. *v.* 1. *Perfect and upright.* Here *pure and upright:* we may thus diſtinguiſh them; purity refers to outward acted holineſs, or holineſs of life; and uprightneſs, to inward ſincerity, or holineſs of the heart; and ſo his meaning is, If thou wert pure in thy wayes, and ſincere in thine ends; If thy outward man, and inward man were waſhed and reformed, *Then he would awake*, &c. Obſerve hence,

Purus ad cor pertinet, rectus ad actiones, ut dicat purus corde, rectus opere. Druſ.

First, *Holy perſons are fit for holy duties, and onely they.*

Sin is our ſeparation from God, and holy duties are acts of communion with him: how then ſhall ſin and duty ſtand together?

Make thy ſupplication, ſeek unto God, but be thou pure and upright. What have unholy perſons to do about holy things? God cannot like the ſervices of thoſe who are unlike him. Prayer purifies, yet purifying muſt be a preparative to prayer. *Pſal.* 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart* (if I lodge filthineſs there) *God will not hear me*; he will not regard my prayer. The blind man ſaw this truth, *John* 9. 31. (it ſeems this was a received maxim among them) *God heareth not ſinners.* We are commanded to pray, *lifting up pure hands*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. An Heathen being at Sea in a great ſtorm, and perceiving many wicked wretches with him in the ſhip, calling upon the gods, *O* (ſaith he) *forbear prayer, hold your tongues, I would not have the gods take notice that you are here, they will ſure drown us all if they do.* If an Heathen by the light of Nature, could ſay this, much more may we by the light of Scripture, *That God heareth not ſinners*, Iſa. 1. *When you ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of blood.* As he ſpeaks out of the fulneſs of the grace of God, (*Come*

Silete (inquit) ne vos hic navigare dii ſentiant. Bias.

let us reaſon together, though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow, &c.) So alſo the neceſſity of gracious purity in man, *Waſh ye, make ye clean*, &c. Obſerve,

Secondly, *The prayers of the pure and upright are prevailing prayers.*

In the next words God awakes, *Jam.* 5.16. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Fervency of prayer effects nothing, unleſs the perſon praying be righteous; God is not melted into compaſſion by the heat of our words, but by the holineſs of our hearts. In the prayer of a righteous man there is ſtrength, prevailing ſtrength, ſuch as God himſelf yields to. *As a Prince thou haſt power with God, and haſt prevailed,* ſaith he to *Jacob* when he wreſtled with him. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *It is no way contrary to the doctrine of Free-grace to ſay we muſt be holy, if we deſire to be heard.*

Bildad's doctrine is an excellent piece of Divinity; though he ſaid before, Thou muſt ſeek unto God, and make ſupplication to him, that out of his Free-grace he would beſtow a bleſſing upon thee, yet he adds, *If thou wert pure and upright*. Though we are not heard, becauſe we are pure and upright, yet none can come with a warrantable confidence to be heard in their impurity and hypocriſie; if they do, God will reject their confidences, and they ſhall not proſper in them. It is impudence, not confidence, to make ſupplication to God with a reſerve, or a reſolve in ſecret, to go on in ſin. The greateſt ſinners in the world may come to God, they that are moſt impure and filthy may find favour; yet every man that cometh unto God, muſt come with this deſire, to have his impurities removed, and his backſlidings healed; *Unto the wicked, ſaith God, What haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or to take my Covenant in thy mouth, ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behind thee*, Pſal. 50. 16. It no way croſſes the doctrine of Grace, when with the ſame breath we ſay, God will do us good freely for his own names ſake, and that we muſt be pure and upright who come to God; *With the pure thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure, and with the upright man thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf upright, and with the froward thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward,* Pſal. 18.25, 26. But doth the Lord take colour from every one he meets, or change his temper as the company changes? That's the weakneſs of ſinful man, he cannot do ſo, with whom there is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of changing. God is pure and upright with the unclean and hypocritical, as well as with the pure and upright, and his actions ſhew him to be ſo. God ſhews himſelf froward with the froward, when he deals with them, as he hath ſaid he will deal with the froward; deny them, and reject them. God ſhews himſelf pure with the pure, when he deals with them as he hath ſaid he will; hear them and accept them. Though there be nothing in purity and ſincerity, which deſerveth mercy, yet we cannot expect mercy without them. Our comforts are not grounded upon our graces, but our comforts are the fruits or conſequents of our graces.

Bildad having ſhewed *Job* his duty, ſhews him a promiſe of mercy, *If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee.* There is a three-fold gradation of mercy in this promiſe.

That God would
1. Awake for him.
2. Proſper or pacifie his habitation.
3. Abundantly encreaſe and multiply him in his latter end.

The firſt ſtep of mercy, is, *That God would awake for him.* Surely now he would awake for thee. And there are three things obſervable about this.

Firſt, The certainty of it, in the word [*Surely*] without all doubt, or, peradventure if thou wouldſt thus ſeek to him, *He would awake.*

Secondly, The ſpeedineſs of it; *Surely now* he would awake [*Now*] without delay or demur; thou ſhouldſt no ſooner ſeek to God, but find an anſwer of mercy from him.

יעיר עליך

Thirdly, The benefit of it to *Job*, *He would awake for thee.* For *Job* might ſay, I may awaken a ſleepy Lion to riſe up againſt me; God may be angry with my prayer, and in ſtead of bleſſing pour out ſome further judgment upon me: No, ſaith *Bildad*, I aſſure thee, if thou thus ſeek to him, *He will awake for thee,* not againſt thee.

God ſometimes awakes againſt us, *Jer.* 31.28. *It ſhall come to paſs, that as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to deſtroy, and to afflict, ſo will I watch over them to build, and to plant, ſaith the Lord.* As the Lord would watch to do them a good turn; ſo he had watcht to do them (as we ſpeak) a ſhrewd turn. He threatens them with ſuch a watchfulneſs, *Chap.* 44. 27. *I will watch over them for evil, and not for good.* When we are dull and ſleepy in doing the Will of God, he will be watchful and active to afflict us. And when men cannot ſleep till they do evil, God will not ſleep till he brings evil. So, *Daniel*, in the ninth of that Prophecy, and *verſ.* 14. having humbled himſelf before God in prayer and faſting, and confeſſed the ſins of the people, concludes, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us.* God not only awakes, but watches to do a people evil, who have long abuſed his goodneſs. As men in maliciouſneſs of ſpirit watch for advantages and ſpy out opportunities to revenge themſelves, *All my familiars watch for my halting*, ſaith *Jeremy*, Chap. 20. 12. So the Lord in abundant holineſs and exactneſs of juſtice, though with a great deal of wrath and ſeverity, watches to revenge himſelf of a wicked people. He takes all opportunities and advantages againſt them, *Thou haſt watched evil, and brought it upon us.* His love to a returning people is as vigilant, as his anger againſt a backſliding people.

Surely now he would awake for thee.

Awake.] The word ſignifies both to awake, and to ariſe. There are two interpretations of this awaking.

Some take the words tranſitively, thus, *He will awake good for thee.* Not, of *Job* awakening God by prayer, but of God awakening proſperity, or ſtirring up bleſſings for *Job*. As if *Bildad* had ſaid, *Job, now bleſſings are (as it were) aſleep, but if thou pray, God will awaken them; He will ſtir up mercies for thee, he will cure thy broken condition, he will reſtore that which is fallen; repair that which is ruined, and fetch thee out of the grave of thy deſolate eſtate.* As a mans ſpirits, gifts, yea graces are ſometime aſleep, and need awakening; ſo alſo are, and do our outward comforts. It is frequent in Scripture to call the repairing of a mans eſtate, or the bringing of good to him, the raiſing of him up, *He raiſeth the poor out of the duſt*; he awakens them out of that low condition. *Job* was in the duſt, and his Children in the grave, God made a reſurrection of both for him. That's a good ſence.

Suſcitabit ſuper te bonum. Tranſitive accipitur; excitabit ſuper te, ſc. bonum quod nunc in te ſopitũ eſt.

But rather underſtand it (as our tranſlation reads) of *God awakening. He will awake for thee.*

He will awake.] The Pſalmiſt aſſures us (*Pſal.* 121.4.) *He that keepeth* Iſrael *doth neither ſlumber nor ſleep.* God never ſleepeth: How is it then ſaid, that God awakes?

For the opening of this Metaphor; Firſt, As, the Church confeſſes and profeſſes (*Cant.* 5.2.) *I ſleep, but my heart waketh*; when the Church is aſleep, yet her heart is awake towards God: So much more, when in regard of outward providences God ſeems to be aſleep, his heart is awake toward his Church, his heart (*ſcil.* his affection, *&c.*) never ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth.

Secondly, God is ſaid to ſleep, when he doth not anſwer our prayers; and when he hears prayer, then he is ſaid to awake. Hence the Septuagint render this Text, not as we, *He will awake*; but, *He will hear thy prayer for deliverance.*

δεήσεως ἐπακούσεταί σου. *Deprecationem exaudiet tuã.* Sept.

Thirdly, God ſleeps, not in regard of the act, but the conſequents of ſleep. Natural ſleep is the binding or locking up of the ſences. The eye and ear of God is never bound. But to mans apprehenſion the affairs of the world paſs, as if God did neither hear nor ſee. When men are aſleep, things are done which they can take no notice of, much leſs ſtop and prevent. The Parable tells us, (*Matth.* 13.) *While men ſlept, the envious man came and ſowed tares:* While the houſholder ſlept, the thief brake the houſe; and the Phariſees direct the watchmen to ſay of Chriſt in the Sepulchre, *While we ſlept his Diſciples came and ſtole him away.* So now, when things are ſo carried in the world, as if the God of Heaven did not regard or take notice of them; when he doth not prevent or hinder evil, when he doth not ſtop or reſtrain the rage and malice

Dormire videtur cum te relinquit in his calamitatibus. Druſ.

malice of men; this retiring of himſelf in the way of his providence, is called his ſleep.

The complaint runs high, *Pſal.* 44.9. &c. *Lord, thou goeſt not forth with our Armies, we are become a reproach unto our enemies; Thou ſelleſt thy people for nought, we are killed like ſheep all the day long.* There's a deſcription of the confuſion of things; then followeth (*Verſ.* 23.) *Awake why ſleepeſt thou, O Lord? Ariſe, caſt us not off for ever; wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and forgetteſt our affliction and our oppreſſion.* Such a time was accounted the ſleeping time of God.

Hence when God, in the workings of his providence, ſearcheth out the wicked, and brings them to deſtruction; when he breaks their deſigns, and turns theis counſels backwards; when he turns their wickedneſs upon their own heads, and catches them in the ſnare which they have laid for others, then he is ſaid to awake, *Pſal.* 78.65. *He gave his people over to the ſword, and the fire conſumed the young men; then the Lord awakened as one out of ſleep, and like a Giant refreſhed with wine; He ſmote his enemies in the hinder parts, and put them to a perpetual ſhame.* Such a time was accounted Gods waking time.

So then, ſleeping and awaking, note only the changes of providence. Hence alſo the providence of God is deſcribed by *an eye* (2 Chron. 16.9.) which is the proper organ of ſleeping, or waking; and the exactneſs of providence, is ſet out by *ſeven eyes*, Zech. 3.9. The Scripture ſpeaks this language in reference to our ſoul-ſleep and awakening. When we ſin and let things go which way they will in our hearts, without taking any care, or keeping our watch againſt temptation, then we are aſleep in ſin: And when we begin to conſider our eſtates, and return to our ſelves, when we take notice how it is with us, and ask our hearts the queſtion, *What have we done?* This in a ſpiritual ſence is our awakening, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*, Epheſ. 5.14. Our ſpiritual ſleeping and waking are the decayes or quicknings of ſoul-endeavors. And Gods providential ſleeping and waking are the ſeeming ſtops and viſible motions of his power, mercy and juſtice in the world. This is the awaking which *Bildad* promiſes; *If thou wouldſt ſeek God*, &c. *Surely he would awake for thee.*

The words opened teach us,

Firſt, *That holy prayer ſhall certainly be heard.*

If thou make thy ſupplication to him, ſurely he will awake. God cannot ſleep when a poor believing ſoul cries in his ears, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer* (Pſal. 66.18.) *But verily God hath heard me, he hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.* What, God turn prayer away? No, he cannot lie ſtill (as I may ſo ſpeak) when prayer knocks at the door, he muſt ariſe and open preſently. Note,

Secondly, *Prayer ſhall be heard preſently.*

What preſently? Yes, preſently heard, though not preſently anſwered; *Surely now he will awaken for thee, even now.* Holy prayers are never deferred the hearing, no not a minute, *Iſa.* 65.24. *Before they call I will hear, and while they are yet ſpeaking I will anſwer.* In the very act of praying the anſwer came forth; yea, the anſwer ſometimes antedates our asking, and the grant cometh before the petition. The giving out of the anſwer may be defer'd, but the anſwer is not defer'd. We may be heard, and heard graciouſly, and yet not preſently receive the thing we ask; but every prayer is heard and laid up, as ſoon as put up; he hangs it upon the file, he hath it ſafe by him. Prayer receives an anſwer in Heaven, as ſoon as ſpoken upon Earth, though the anſwer be not returned to us on Earth. *God ſleeps not at the prayer of thoſe who are awake in prayer.* Obſerve,

Thirdly, *Prayer is the beſt means to awaken God.*

God hath many wayes to awaken man; and he hath directed man a way to awaken himſelf. When we are aſleep, he awakeneth us chiefly two wayes: Firſt, By the voice of his word: Secondly, By the voice of his Rod. He now awakens us by the loud ſounding Trumpet, and the alarms of War: when God awakeneth us by judgments, it is time for us to awaken him by prayer. We find two things in Scripture which awaken God. Firſt, The prayers of his own people. And ſecondly, The rage and blaſphemy of his enemies, *Pſal.* 78.65. The Prophet having deſcribed the cruelty and rage of the enemy, adds, *Then the Lord awaked as one out of ſleep, and like a mighty man that ſhouteth by reaſon of wine: David* makes this an argument in prayer, (*Pſal.* 7.) *Becauſe of the rage of mine enemies awake for me to the judgment which thou haſt commanded.* As if he had ſaid, Lord, ſhall mine enemies rage, and wilt thou ſleep? Wilt thou not awake for me? Ariſe, I pray thee. The noiſe of blaſphemy, and the cry of violence from wicked men, ſtir up God when he ſeems to lie aſleep. The noiſe of prayer, the cries and calls of faith in his own people, will not let him ſleep. A man whoſe heart is drenched in the world, and drowned in rivers of earthly pleaſures, prays himſelf aſleep, and his prayers bring God aſleep too; he ſleeps when he prays, and God ſleeps at his prayers, that is, God regards not his prayer; he is as one that ſleepeth, as if he heard not what was ſaid. A worldy man doth not hear what he ſpeaks, he knows not what his own requeſts are. God ſleepeth when men are thus aſleep; But when we (as the Apoſtle directs) *watch and pray*, then God awakes at our prayers. As in the former verſe *Job* was counſelled to awake to pray to God, ſo now he is promiſed, That the Lord will awake when he prayes.

Fourthly, Seeing the Lord is awakened by prayer: We learn,

That, *Prayer ought to be very ſtrong and fervent.*

As men are gradual in their ſleep, ſo is the Lord in his. A man is ſometimes ſlumberingly aſleep, that the leaſt noiſe will awake him, you cannot ſtir, but he will hear it. At another time a man is ſo dead aſleep, that though you hollow in his ear you cannot awake him, thunder cannot ſtir him. Sometimes God departs ſo little, that the leaſt voice calleth him again, he comes at the firſt word; at another time he is gone ſo far, that (as to a man in a deep ſleep) you muſt cry and cry again, call and call again, cry aloud before he hears. And we may (in a ſafe ſence) apply that to the true God, which *Elijah* did to that falſe god, *Baal*, when his Prieſts were calling to him from morning to night. *Elijah* mocking, bids them *cry aloud, it may be* (ſaith he) *he ſleepeth:* We may ſay (with reverence) thus, when any pray to God, and he doth not hear, pray aloud; not in regard of the voice and outward ſound, but pray with louder deſires of heart, with more fervency and zeal of ſpirit, *Peradventure God ſleepeth*; peradventure he is in a deep ſleep at this time, and he will not ſuddenly be awakened, therefore cry aloud. When God ſeemed to depart far from the Church of the *Jews*, with how much fervency do they cry after him (*Iſa.* 51.9.) *Awake, awake, put on ſtrength, O arm of the Lord, awake, as in the ancient dayes?* &c. They double and treble it upon him, and cry with an outſtretched voice, *Art not thou he that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon?* What a clamor, what a holy ſtir was here to awaken God? God himſelf ſometimes ſeems (as it were) willing to take his reſt; as when he ſaid to *Moſes*, *Let me alone*; he ſpake like a man that is in bed, or very ſleepy; *Do not trouble me, let me alone*; as he in the Goſpel (*Luke* 11.7.) when he was awakened in the night to come and give bread unto his neighbour, *Do not trouble me* (ſaith he) *the doors are ſhut, and I am in bed with my Children, I cannot riſe and give thee, let me alone.* Thus in ſome ſence the Lord expreſſes himſelf to his people, I am now in bed, do not trouble me, *Let me alone.* What muſt we do in this caſe? We muſt knock harder at the door, as he in the Goſpel did, *For whom, though his neighbour would not riſe and give him, becauſe he was his friend, yet becauſe of his importunity he riſes and gives him as many loaves as he needed.* We muſt be the more importunate to awake God, by how much he ſeems more unwilling to hear us; our modeſty (in this caſe) pleaſes him not: we muſt call and call again: He will take it well at our hands if we do ſo. We muſt give our ſelves no reſt, and let him take none; ſo the Prophet reſolves (*Iſa.* 62.1.) *For* Jeruſalem *ſake I will take no reſt*, I will never give over praying; and at *verſ.* 6. *I have ſet watchmen upon thy walls, O* Jeruſalem, *which ſhall never hold their peace day nor night, you that make mention of the Lord, keep not ſilence, and give him no reſt, till he eſtabliſh, and till he make* Jeruſalem *a praiſe in the Earth.* If the Lord ſhould carry it in the preſent anſwers of his providence,

dence, as if he were willing to reſt, and deſired not to be troubled in this buſineſs; be not you ſo put off: but with a holy boldneſs and confidence come to him and awaken him; take no anſwer, till ye have an anſwer. He is beſt pleaſed, and moſt at eaſe, when (in prayer) we give him no reſt.

Laſtly obſerve, *If God do but awake for us, all is preſently well with us.*

If the eye of God be upon us for good, that brings us in all good; therefore (*Zech.* 2. *ult.*) when the Church was in her return from *Babylon*, the Prophet concludes with an exultation of ſpirit, *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord; for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*; it is this word, *He is awaked out of his holy habitation, now be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord*: All fleſh, ye that are the wicked of the world, ye that are enemies, be ye ſilent, leave your boaſting, your reproaching and blaſpheming, for the Lord is awaked, now he begins to ſtir for his people, he will ſtop your mouths ſhortly: *All fleſh*, takes in the Church and People of God too; *O be ye ſilent*, in regard of your fears and doubtings, murmurings and diſtracted complainings, ſilence all theſe, why? *The Lord is awaked, he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*, that is, he that ſeemed before to confine himſelf to thoſe higher regions, and as the Atheiſt ſpeaks in *Job*, to walk in the circle of the heavens, not intermedling with the earth: This God is now awaked, he is raiſed out of his holy habitation, and now ye ſhall know that he orders all things here below; therefore be ſilent, O all fleſh. When Chriſt was aſleep (*Matth*, 8. 25.) *A grievous tempeſt aroſe* (ſaith the Text) *in ſo much that the Ship was covered with waves.* When ſtorms and tempeſts are upon the Church, God is then aſleep, though even then he directs the ſtorms, and gives law to the proud waves, But what did the Diſciples in this ſtorm? *They awoke Chriſt, Maſter, ſave us, we periſh*; and as ſoon as ever Chriſt was awakened, *he rebuked the ſtorm, and there was a great calm.* Thus when we are toſt up and down with contrary winds, and in danger to be ſplit and ſunk, if God once awake, all is calm; *How quietly may they ſleep for whom God wakes?* I do not ſay they ſhould ſleep careleſly, but confidently they may. God doth not wake for us to the intent we ſhould ſleep in ſecurity; but we may ſleep quietly when *He* ſhews himſelf awake for us, *who* (indeed) *never ſlumbreth nor ſleepeth.* And if God awake not for us, all our watchfulneſs is as uſeleſs to us as our ſleepineſs. *The watchman waketh but in vain except the Lord keep the City.* Except he awake, our watching can do no good; and if he awake, good will come though we be aſleep. It is our duty to be careful, and it is our comfort that the care of God is enough for us. *The eye of divine Providence helps us in many humane improvidences.* What their happineſs is for whom God awakes, ſee in the next words.

He will make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.

This is the ſecond degree or ſtep of mercy promiſed; when the Lord awakes, he will awake to purpoſe. We ſay of ſome men, *Early up, and never the near*; they awake, and do little work; but if God awakes, ſee what he doth.

Anima eſt juſtitia & omnium virtutum domicilium. Aben Ezr.

He will make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.] Some of the *Rabbins* underſtand theſe words as a deſcription of the ſoul; **The habitation of thy righteouſneſs**, that is, *thy ſoul ſhall proſper*, becauſe the ſoul is the proper ſeat of righteouſneſs and holineſs. Righteouſneſs belongeth to the inward man. Righteouſneſs being a ſpiritual thing, is houſed and lodged in the ſpirit, that's the habitation of it.

There are others of the *Jews* who take this *habitation of righteouſneſs* for the body, becauſe the body is the habitation of the ſoul, in which righteouſneſs is ſeated, and ſo the *habitation of righteouſneſs* by a ſecond remove, is the outward man. The Lord ſhall bleſs thy body, which now lieth in a woful plight, diſtempered and diſfigured with ſores and ſickneſſes.

But rather take the word *habitation* in thoſe two ordinary Scripture-ſences, either ſtrictly for the place where *Job* dwelt, or more largely, for all that did belong unto him. The habitation of a man is all his eſtate, and all that appertains to his eſtate; *He will make thy habitation*, that is, thy children, thy ſervants, thy fields, thy cattel, thy ſtock, thy all, to be proſperous.

נוה *Significat domum vel ſpeciem, pulchritudinem juſtitiæ tuæ.* Tur.

The Chaldee Paraphraſe readeth, *He will make thy beautiful place to be proſperous.* The word ſignifies *beauty*, as well as an *habitation*, as was ſhewed upon *chap.* 5. 3. Thither I refer the Reader. Then, *habition* is the ſeat of a mans outward eſtate, and his eſtate, the ſhell and the kernel, the outſide and inſide of all he hath.

Quaſi nihil aliud quam æquitatem & juſtitiam redoleant bona juſtè acquiſita. Merc.

The habitation of thy righteouſneſs.] That is, the habitation where righteouſneſs doth flouriſh, or wherein thou liveſt righteouſly.

But what is righteouſneſs?

δικαιοσύνη οὐκ μέρος ἀρετῆς, ἀλλ' ὅλη ἀρετή. Ariſt. Eth. *l.* 5. *c.* 1.

Righteouſneſs is a very comprehenſive word, The Philoſopher tells us, it takes in all other virtues whatſoever; *It is not a part of virtue, but all virtue.*

When righteonſneſs is ſet as diſtinct from holineſs and piety, then it is reſtrained to our dealings with men. *Righteouſneſs relates to men, and holineſs to God*, Luke 1. 75. *Tit.* 2. 12. Goſpel-Grace teaches us to live *ſoberly*, in oppoſition to the intemperance of our bodies; *righteouſly*, in oppoſition to wrong in our actions; *godly*, in oppoſition to all impiety and prophaneneſs of our minds.

But righteouſneſs here takes in our whole duty, whether to God or man; *The habitation of thy righteouſneſs*, that is, the place where thou exerciſeſt all manner of holy and righteous duties toward God and toward man. Righteouſneſs toward man, firſt, in diſtributive juſtice, giving every one his due in judgment, as thou art a Magiſtrate. Secondly, Righteouſneſs towards man in commutative juſtice, giving every one his due in commerce, as thou art a neighbour.

The habitation of thy righteouſneſs.] It is an elegant expreſſion. The Church is ſometimes called ſo, *Jer.* 31. 23. *Thus ſaith the Lord God of hoſts, the God of Iſrael, as yet they ſhall uſe this ſpeech in the Land of Judah, and in the Cities thereof, when I ſhall bring again their captivity, The Lord bleſs thee, O habitation of righteouſneſs, and mountain of holineſs*, This ſpeech they ſhall uſe: It ſeems it had been an ordinary ſalutation thus to beſpeak *Judah*, *O thou habitation of juſtice or righteouſneſs, and mountain of holineſs.* Every particular Member of the Church is named *A tree of righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 61. 3, *They ſhall be called trees of righteouſneſs, the plantation of the Lord.* Each Saint is a tree of righteouſneſs, and all of them together are an habitation, a plantation of righteouſneſs

God himſelf is ſtiled *The habitation of righteouſneſs*, becauſe he (in a way of higheſt excellency, or in the moſt moſt ſuperlative degree) is the ſeat of righteouſneſs; all righteouſneſs is (as it were) houſed, and dwelling in him. The Prophet (*Jer.* 50. 7.) deſcribing the unkind uſage which the true worſhippers ſhould find in the dayes of which he propheſieth, ſpeaks thus, *All that found them have devoured them, and their adverſaries ſaid we offend not, becauſe they have ſinned againſt the Lord.* They thought their brethren had ſinned againſt the Lord, and that therefore they might trouble them without ſin: *They have ſinned againſt the Lord, the habitation of juſtice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.* It is but juſtice (ſay they) for us to puniſh thoſe who ſin againſt the habitation of juſtice. *Men* (take it in paſſage) *do evil ſometimes out of conſcience, and think they do God good ſervice, while they really wrong their brethren.*

שלם *Pacificabit; pacatum reddet*, i. e. *integrum, perfectum, omnibus bonis redundans, qualia affert pax.* ἀποκαταστήσει σοι. Sept.

He ſhall make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.] That is, he ſhall make it peaceable and quiet, ſetled and eſtabliſhed. The word ſignifies peace, plenty and proſperity. He ſhall pacifie or quiet the habitation of thy righteouſneſs. The Septuagint thus, He ſhall reſtore it to, or repair it for thee.

There are three things in that word. It may note,

1. The quietneſs of all within his family. There ſhall be peace and a good agreement in thy habitation.
2. The abundance, the fruitfulneſs, the great encreaſe of all within his family, he will make thee thrive.
3. The peaceable holding or enjoyment of all thoſe good things, free from foreign invaſion or oppreſſions. Do thus, and then neither *Sabeans* nor *Chaldeans* ſhall any more come upon thee and plunder thee. Thus he will make the *habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.*

The ſum of all is, as if *Bildad* had ſaid unto *Job*, *Thy habitation hath heretofore been an habitation of unrighteouſneſs, of impiety, of tyranny, thy houſe hath been filled with ſpoil and oppreſſion, thy Tabernacle hath been a Sanctuary for* *wickedneſs, a lodging or rendezvouz for all manner of riot and intemperance, of rapine and injuſtice; but now* Job, *if thou wilt make thy ſelf pure and upright, thou ſhalt ſee the caſe will alter; whereas before troops and armies of miſeries have invaded thee, and ſpoiled all thou hadſt within and without, if in thy houſe, where wickedneſs formerly dwelt, righteouſneſs ſhall enter and dwell, thou ſhalt ſee that with righteouſneſs peace will enter too; troubles will depart when wickedneſs departs, and evils of puniſhment will diſlodge with the evil of ſin; when thoſe gueſts, righteouſneſs and holineſs come into, and are welcomed at thy houſe, then thy houſe ſhall be better; when thy heart and thy life change, thy eſtate ſhall change; and thoſe comforts which have been ſo long ſtrangers from thee, ſhall return; thy baniſhed mercies ſhall come home again, adorn thy walls, and ſtrengthen thy family.*

Ubi facta fuerit morum & ſtudiorum, fiet etiam magna fortunæ converſio.

This is the ſum of what he promiſeth in theſe words, *He will make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.* Hence obſerve,

First, *Proſperity is in the power of God.*

If he awakes, he can make us proſperous and peaceful. If he do but ſpeak the word, our captivity ſhall return. He ſaith to a dry ſtick, flouriſh, and to a green tree, wither; his word is cloathed with power to do good or evil.

Secondly obſerve, *A righteous habitation ſhall be a proſperous habitation.*

Whether we reſpect perſons, families or Nations, thus it is in the ordinary diſpenſations of God. As in regard of our ſpiritual and eternal eſtate, *The work of righteouſneſs is peace* (Iſa. 32. 17.) ſo, in regard of our temporal and outward. Chriſt, who is the *Prince of righteouſneſs*, is alſo the *Prince of peace*: He brought righteouſneſs into the world, and then peace came into the world. If he had not made an habitation of righteouſneſs in the world, there had never been an habitation of peace in the world; in that work of his the foundation of our proſperity was laid. Jeſus Chriſt, who as a Prieſt, purchaſed our peace, is alſo the *King of righteouſneſs*. Bleſſings crown the head of a righteous people (*Jer.* 31. 23.) *They ſhall ſay, The Lord bleſs thee, O habitation of righteouſneſs.* If thou art a habitation of righteouſneſs, a bleſſing ſhall reſt upon thee: *The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. As the ſpiritual Kingdom of God is righteouſneſs, peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt: So the joy and peace of worldly Kingdoms is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs. When Kingdoms are holy habitations, they will ſoon be quiet habitations. In *Iſa.* 26. 2. *Open ye the gates, that the righteous Nation which keepeth the truth may enter in; thou ſhalt keep him in perfect peace.* God will give and preſerve the peace of the righteous. Righteouſneſs is the pillar of a State, and the parent of peace. *The mountains* (Pſal. 72.3.) *ſhall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteouſneſs.* Plant righteouſneſs upon barren hills and mountains, and peace will flonriſh there.

I might hence infer a Corollary by the rule of contraries, That, *Unrighteouſneſs makes unproſperous and unpeaceful habitations.* An habitation of Idolatry and falſe worſhip, an habitation of cruelty and hard dealing ſhall be an habitation for owls and ſhreech-owls, a dwelling-place for every unclean bird and beaſt; theſe ſhall take up their lodgings within ſuch walls, and make their neſts in ſuch chambers.

Whilſt we are fill'd (as the Apoſtle characterizeth the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1.) *with all unrighteouſneſs*; it is no marvel if we are filled with all trouble. The Prophet *Malachi* brings in *Edom* thus reflecting upon himſelf (*chap.* 1. 4.) Whereas *Edom* ſaith, *I am impoveriſhed,* &c. *Edom* began to be ſenſible all was not well with him. Hereupon he adviſes upon a way to help himſelf, and concludes thus, *We will return and build the deſolate places.* This was their reſolve; but what ſaith God to it? Even this, will ye build? ye ſhall build, I will give you leave to build, *but I will throw it down again.* I will ſpoil your work. Why would the Lord be thus ſevere? The next words give a reaſon; *They ſhall call thee the border of wickedneſs, the people againſt whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.* Wickedneſs is a large word, and takes in all unrighteouſneſs towards man, as well as impiety towards God. *That building cannot ſtand long, where unrighteouſneſs lies between the timber and the ſtones. God will pull down by night what ſuch men build by day.* If then we would have buildings ſtand, and our habitations proſperous, let us labour to build with juſtice, and make ours the habitations of rigtheouſneſs. Look upon it in families, that which withers the comfort of a family, in children, in ſervants, is the unrighteouſneſs found in a family; if there be unrighteouſneſs there, no wonder if there be decayes and diſcontents there too. If there be unrighteouſneſs in Cities; *If* (Pſal. 55. 11.) *deceit and guile go not out of our ſtreets, no marvel if complainings go not out of our ſtreets.* We call for peace and proſperity, O that peace would come! but if our hearts were ſet upon this, if we laboured every one with himſelf, and every one with his brother, and every one with the publick to the uttermoſt of his line, that we may in our perſons, in our families, in our policies, be an habitation of righteouſneſs; how ſoon ſhould we all be a proſperous habitation, an habitation of peace.

Two things make a Nation an habitation of righteouſneſs.

First, When right is done ſpeedily.

Secondly, When right is done impartially.

Tedious delayes make Courts priſons of righteouſneſs, not habitations of righteouſneſs. Partial diſtributions ſhew a place to be a market of righteouſneſs (where he ſhall have it that bids moſt for it) not an habitation of righteouſneſs, where every one ought to have it that comes for it; *Ye ſhall do no unrighteouſneſs in judgment* (ſaith the Law, *Lev.* 19. 15.) How ſhall they avoid it? The next words give direction, *Thou ſhalt not reſpect the perſon of the poor, nor honour the perſon of the mighty.* Righteouſneſs: takes not notice of the perſons of men, but of their cauſes. we muſt not do unrighteouſly in charity to the poor, as well as not in hopes, or for gifts from the rich.

Again, The Hebrew ſignifies a beautiful habitation. Righteouſneſs loves to dwell in a fair houſe. It is ſo, when firſt ſwept from bribes, theſe are filth in the houſe, and the corrupters of righteouſneſs.

Secondly, A beautiful houſe hath ſtore of lights in it. Juſtice and Truth love, not corners and cloſe cells. Juſtice muſt act clearly; men cannot bear it, that what falls upon their ſenſes, ſhould not be in the light of their underſtandings. God hath ſecret judgments, but man muſt not. One potſherd muſt ſhew another why he forms or breaks him thus in judgment.

Laſtly, The beauty of the houſe of Juſtice ariſes from good Laws, and good men to execute them. Righteouſneſs cannot act without a rule; and rules cannot act themſelves. Good Laws without good Magiſtrates, never make any people a habitation of righteouſneſs. It is not good Laws, but good men which make a Kingdom happy. Now, as unrighteouſneſs makes a ſtrong people weak, a rich people poor, an honourable people baſe, a great eſtate to decreaſe and come to nothing; ſo righteouſneſs makes a weak peopeople ſtrong, a poor people rich, a mean people honourable, a little eſtate encreaſe and come to much. Thus *Bildad* aſſures *Job* with this next breath.

Verſe 7. **Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly encreaſe.**

This is the third gradation. God will not only awake for thee, and make thee proſperous, but he will greatly encreaſe thee. Thou ſhalt not only be ſet in as good a condition as thou waſt, but in a far better.

Though thy beginning were ſmall.] Though the head of thy eſtate (ſo the Hebrew) though the firſt of thy eſtate were ſmall.

רשית
A quo quid incipit.

The word *ſmall* notes a ſmalneſs either in quantity or in quality; and it is oppoſed to a double greatneſs (*Gen.* 25. 23.) *Jacob* and *Eſau* are thus diſtinguiſhed, the one ſhall be *great*, the other *ſmall*; which we tranſlate, the *elder ſhall ſerve the younger*; the greater ſhall ſerve the leſs.

Though thy beginning was ſmall. The City that *Lot* deſired (*Gen.* 19.) is called *Zoar*, from this word, *Is is not a little one?* Though thy eſtate were but a *Zoar*, a little one, yet it ſhall be built of a larger compaſs.

The *Septuagint* raiſes the ſence of the latter clauſe, *Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhall be ineffable, ſuch as none ſhall be able to tell over or deſcribe.* Thy eſtate ſhall be beyond account.

Τὰ ἔσχατά σου ἀμύθητα. Sept.

A Queſtion ariſes how we are to make this compariſon between *Job's beginning and later end?* Whether we are to refer it to the eſtate he had before his affliction, compared with what he ſhould have after his affliction; or, whether we are to underſtand it of the augmentation and encreaſe of his eſtate after his affliction, which at the beginning ſhould be but ſmall, but afterwards ſhould receive a mighty augmentation. The ſence is good either way.

Firſt, If we underſtand it of his eſtate before and after his troubles compared together, Though thy beginning or the firſt eſtate which God gave thee were ſmall, yet thy later end, or the eſtate which God will give thee, when theſe ſtorms are over-blown, ſhall wonderfully encreaſe.

Againſt this it may be objected, how can the former eſtate of *Job* be called *ſmall*, when as it is ſaid (Chap. 1.) that *Job* had a very vaſt eſtate? We have heard the inventory of his goods, the total ſum or apprizement of all, being given in by God himſelf, *That* Job *was the greateſt of all the men in the Eaſt*. How then can it be ſaid, that his firſt eſtate was ſmall? *Though thy beginning were ſmall.*

I anſwer, comparatively it may be called ſmall. An exceeding exceſs of greatneſs, leſſens and littles any other greatneſs. The Moon is a great light, but the light of the Sun makes that light darkneſs. That which is glorious hath no glory, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth; he that is rich or great hath no riches or greatneſs, by reaſon of riches and greatneſs which excel. *Job* had a fair eſtate before, and was the greateſt man of all the men of the Eaſt; but his eſtate is promiſed to be ſuch as ſhall obſcure the former, and render it inconſiderable. Accordingly, it is ſaid, in the ſtory of his reſtoring (Chap.42.10.) *That the Lord turned the captivity of* Job; *alſo the Lord gave* Job *twice as much as he had before*. Half is but a little to the whole. And at *verſ.* 12. *The Lord bleſſed the latter end of* Job *more then his beginning*. Which words are a good expoſition upon the Text in hand. When *Joſeph* ſent for his Father and Brethren to come into *Ægypt* (Gen. 45. 20.) he ſaith, but *as for your ſtuff, do not regard that, for the good of all the land of* Ægypt *is before you*. *Joſeph* knew his Father was a rich man. *Jacob* was no beggar: but let all that go for nothing, leave it to thoſe that will take it up, all the good of *Ægypt* is before you, what is all you have to the *riches of* Ægypt? That's the firſt ſence. Obſerve from it,

> That, *the Lord is able to repair all our loſſes with abundant advantages.*

We complain of loſſes; I have loſt a great eſtate, ſaith one; but the Lord is able to give thee ſuch an eſtate, as that the greatneſs of the former ſhall not be remembred.

> Secondly, *They who loſe much, uſually have great repairs.*

Job was great above all others in the Eaſt, but now he ſhall be made greater then himſelf. As in ſpirituals, they that have, to them more ſhall be given, and they ſhall have more abundance; ſo they that loſe much in temporals, to them more is given ſometimes then they have loſt, and they ſhall have abundance.

There is a ſecond ſence, to which the letter of the original doth rather incline, which makes both parts of the verſe look only to his ſecond eſtate, namely, his reſtauration: and ſo the ſence is this, *Though thou doeſt not preſently thrive and grow up to a great eſtate, yet afterward thou ſhalt*; Though after this breaking and undoing thou ſhouldeſt ſet up (as it were) but with a little ſtock, one friend bringing thee a piece of ſilver, another, a piece of gold, a third, a jewel, all making a purſe for thee: and ſo thou beginneſt but upon alms and charity, yet thy later end ſhall greatly increaſe. As if *Bildad* had ſaid, Though God ſhould now begin to comfort, and reſtore thee but with ſmall matters, yet do not think he will ſo conclude with thee, he hath enough in ſtore. The letter of the Original is moſt clear for this, the words being aſſertive, rather then ſuppoſitive, *Thy beginning ſhall be ſmall, and thy later end ſhall greatly encreaſe*: which refers to the time future, not paſt, as we and others tranſlate. Hence obſerve,

> That, *the Lord doth uſually raiſe his people by degrees.*

They do not receive all at once. It is true of perſons, families and Nations. We muſt not look for all in a day. Outward mercies may come too faſt upon us, there may be a glut of them. We may have more then we know how to order and take in, it may do hurt to receive all together: As it is with men that have been long pined with famine and hunger, and are grown out of their ordinary courſe by reaſon of their neceſſitated abſtinence. We do not preſently give them all manner of good chear, or bring them to a full table, and let them eat as much as they will; but we give them a little and a little at a time, and ſo by degrees bring their ſtomachs on, till they be wrought for plenty. So when the Lord brings perſons or Nations very low, he doth not bring in a glut of mercies at firſt, this would be more then they are able to bear, as they may be undone, if they have all at one receipt; but he gives as they are able to take them in, and make a right uſe of them. As *Jacob* ſaid to *Eſau* his brother, when he invited him to march with him; no, ſaith *Jacob*, I cannot march thy pace, I muſt conſider what my train is, I have flocks here that are great with young, *And if I ſhould over-drive them one day, they would all dye: therefore* (ſaith he) *I will lead on ſoftly, according as the cattel that are before me, and the Children be able to endure.* So it is in this caſe, the Lord in infinite wiſdom gives, as men are able to receive. *We may be over-mercy'd, as well as over-afflicted; over-laden with comforts, as well as with ſorrows.* And therefore as the Lord doth correct in judgment and in meaſure: So alſo doth he reſtore. We have not full tyde in a moment, or in a quarter of an hour: it would be terrible, dangerous, and troubleſom: if when it is low water we ſhould have full tide in a moment, but it comes in ſtealing by degrees, and at laſt it ſwells all over the banks. Such a ſtealing flood of mercies the Lord gives his people.

Therefore be caution'd. In the returns of mercy do not deſpiſe ſmall things. Your beginnings may be inconſiderable, this is but a little, and that is but a little, but do not deſpiſe the firſt, or ſecond little. So the Prophet counſels (*Zech.* 4. 10.) *Deſpiſe not the day of ſmall things*: The beginnings of mercy were ſcarce diſcernable, and they looked upon them as nothing, they thought they would never come to any thing. Take heed (ſaith the Prophet) do not deſpiſe ſmall things, there's more a coming. Haſt thou but a little? Doth God make but ſome little repairs of outward comforts? Do not ſlight theſe, look upon them as the beginnings of greater things. When *Elijah* ſent his ſervant to go, and look towards the Sea, whether he ſaw any ſign of rain, he at laſt brought him word that he ſaw a little cloud ariſe out of the Sea as big as a mans hand: would any one think that a prognoſtick of great rain? *Elijah's* ſervant might deſpiſe this, and ſay this is no ſign of rain; but *Elijah* knew better, that little aſſured him there was a mighty ſhowre at hand, he knew how it would work preſently: Go, bid *Ahab* prepare his Chariot, and get him down, that the rain ſtop him not. Thus it is, reſpecting dayly providences; if you ſee a mercy coming but as big as a mans hand, be perſwaded that the Lord ſends it as a fore-runner, as that which ſhall uſher in large and extenſive mercies. If we ſee the glimmering light of day break, we are not angry, becauſe it is not preſently high noon, or, becauſe we have not full light, we know the light will come by degrees; *Thy beginning ſhall be ſmall, but thy latter end ſhall greatly encreaſe.*

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their fathers.
(For we are but of yeſterday, and know nothing; our dayes upon Earth are a ſhadow)
Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

WE have opened the firſt Argument, by which *Bildad* confirms his propoſition laid down at *verſ.* 3. *that God is juſt*; both from the example of Gods dealing with *Job's* Children, *verſ.*4. and from what, God was ready to do for him, in *verſ.* 5, 6, 7.

The context now read contains a ſecond general Argument to prove the former aſſertion, and it is grounded upon

Cum dicat, erit ſatis indicat ſe loqui de iis bonis, quæ habiturus eſt, ſi reſipuerit, non de iis quæ habuit, ante hanc tempeſtatem. Druſ. *Sic ſolet Deus ditare ſuos, non uno tempore ſimul, ſed paulatim; & ut* Itali *dicunt*, poco à poco, *Galli* peu à peu. *Idem.*

the teſtimony or Authority of the Ancients; as if *Bildad* had ſaid thus, *I will not preſs thee with my own bare ſentence, and ſay-ſo, with my own reaſon and authority, but I wiſh thee to ſearch the records of former times, to conſult the wiſeſt and the holieſt men that ever were in the world, and let them judge in this caſe. Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their Fathers.*

It is here obſervable that *Bildad* manages his counſel by the ſame Arguments which *Eliphaz* had uſed before him: *Eliphaz* bid *Job* (*Enquire who ever periſhed being innocent,* (*Chap.*4.) and promiſes him peace upon repentance (*Chap.* 5. 23, 24.) *Bildad* runs the ſame ſtrain, *If thou wert pure,* &c. and here, *Enquire of the former age,* &c.

The ſtrength of his Argnment may be caſt into this form.

That is true which the holieſt and wiſeſt in all antiquity with one mouth and one conſent agree in.
But the holieſt and wiſeſt in all antiquity agree in this, that God is juſt.
Therefore this is a truth.

Hereupon he inferreth, that God had dealt juſtly with *Job* in conſuming his eſtate, in deſtroying his Children, and in afflicting his perſon. That's the Logical meaning or Argument of theſe three verſes.

Enquire I pray thee.] The word notes a very earneſt, and a diligent ſearch or enquiry: To enquire with induſtry, yea, with importunity. The *grave* hath its name in Hebrew from this word, and ſo hath Hell: becauſe the grave (as it were) calls for, or enquires after all fleſh; and Hell with much earneſtneſs gapes for wicked men, *Eccleſ.* 2. 10. *Whatſoever mine eyes deſired.* The eye is a ſtrong asker.

שאל *Significat petere, poſtulare & quidem cum precibus. Etiam ſciſcitari in dubiis.*

It is applied ſometimes to perſons, and then it ſignifies, to enquire or conſult what is to be done. Sometimes it is applied to things, and then it ſignifies, to ask that a thing may be done. Prayer is an enquiry after God, and the things of God, 1 *Sam.* 1. 17, 20, 27. This word is uſed about *Hannahs* prayer to God for a Child, *Hannah conceived and bare a ſon, and called his name* Samuel, ſaying, *Becauſe I have asked him of the Lord.*

De perſonis; ſic conſulere; de rebus ſic petere. Merc.

Further, the word is applied to God when he enquires after or asks ſomewhat of us, as if he made his requeſt and ſute to us (*Deut.* 10. 12.) *And now,* Iſrael, *what doth the Lord thy God require of thee?* Or, what doth he enquire after in thee? It is this, *To fear the Lord thy God,* &c.

Here, *to enquire,* is to uſe all endeavours and means to find out the beſt informations and reſolutions, which the Fathers in thoſe former ages were able to give *Job* in the controverſie then a foot between him and his friends, *Enquire, I pray thee,*

Of the former age.] By the former we are not to underſtand thoſe that were immediately preceding only, or thoſe that were preceding for ſome few generations paſt, but as the Septuagint well renders it, by former generations, we may underſtand *the firſt generation*; begin at the firſt, and ſo come down all along, begin as high as thou canſt. Enquire not only of thoſe who lived ſince the flood, but of all who have been ſince God created man upon the Earth; draw the line of thy ſearch thorow all ages, and thou ſhalt find the pedegree of this truth from age to age, from generation to generation, *Enquire I pray thee, of the former*

γενεὰν πρώτην.

Age.] The word age, is taken three wayes.

Firſt, For the whole ſpace of mans life; which, when it is doubled, ſignifies a very long life, *Pſal.*61.7. *Thou ſhalt prolong the Kings life* (or, according to the letter of the Hebrew, thou ſhalt add dayes to the dayes of the King) *and his years as many generations*; or, as generation and generation, age and age, long and long, that is, very long; Two lives, or two mens ages, being (as it were) laid into one.

דור *à radice* דור *Continue & ſucceſſive vixit, duravit; ſenſu & ſono idē quod vox Latina* duro.

Secondly, For ſome ſpecial part of mans life. Mans life is divided into ſeveral ages. Some divide it into four, alluding to the four parts of the year. Some, into five, infancy, childhood, youth, mans eſtate, and old-age; comparing them to the five acts of an interlude, the Prologue whereof is infancy, and the Epilogue, decrepid old-age. Others into ſeven, in alluſion to the ſeven Planets.

Thirdly, It is taken for an age of men, or the ſtate of the time preſent. So in the Goſpel, Chriſt calleth the Scribes and Phariſees, *A generation of vipers, and an adulterous generation.* As if he had ſaid, You of this time and age of the world, are a viperous and an adulterous brood. So *Pſal.* 14. 5. *God is in the generation of the righteous:* That is, he favours that generation, or ſort of men; God is in all generations, but ſuch he delights in moſt; the wicked have cauſe enough to fear thoſe, in whom God delights.

Ætatem vocant Hebræi genus hominum ſimul viventiū, ſic ætas prava adultera. Apud Græcos γενεὰ, ſignificat intervallum ſeptē annorum, unde medici vetant duas ætates habenti, i.e. *annos quatuor decem nato venam incidi, quod ſanguine egeat.* Suid.

That of the Prophet (which Text hath variety of interpretations) is taken in this ſence (*Iſa.* 53. 8.) *Who ſhall declare his generation?* It is the word of the Text, *Who ſhall declare his age, or the generation of Chriſt?* Some underſtand it of his eternal generation. Others, of his temporal generation, when he was incarnate, the myſtery whereof was beyond words. A third, of that eternity which followed his paſſion. As if it were an Antitheſis to thoſe words, *He was taken from priſon, and he was cut off, but who ſhall declare his generation?* You may quickly write up the dayes that Chriſt lived here upon Earth, they were but few, even *his pilgrimage* was ſhort on Earth, but who can declare his generation? Thoſe infinite and eternal ages and revolutions, thorow which he ſhall paſs, though now you have quickly cut off his life? Others, by his *generation* underſtand the holy ſeed and iſſue, the Children of Chriſt. His Croſs was fruitful, and his ſufferings productive of an infinite generation, *Who can declare it?* Though you cut off the Father, yet this Father by dying will give life to an innumerable poſterity, *Who can declare his generation?* So (verſ. 10.) *He ſhall ſee his ſeed.* But beſides all theſe we may with good probability interpret the word *generation* for the time when Chriſt ſojourned in the fleſh, *Who can declare this generation?* That is, who can deſcribe the time or the age wherein Chriſt lived? As if he had ſaid, you ſee here in this glaſs of prophecy how they will uſe Chriſt, how bloodily and cruelly they will deal with him, he ſhall be impriſoned, he ſhall be cut off and numbred among tranſgreſſors, *Who can declare his generation?* What pen is able with lively colours to paint out the ſeveral wickedneſſes and Tyrannies of that age, acted againſt, and inflicted upon that holy and innocent lamb *Jeſus Chriſt,* who came to dye for the ſins of the world? Surely his generation, or the ſtory of his age will be ſuch, as no pen is able to draw out, or fully to delineate, *Who ſhall declare his age?*

Quis cogitare aut dicere poteſt quam perverſi fuerint homines, qui tempore ejus victuri ſint. Pined.

The age which *Bildad* calls *Job* to enquire into, is not a part of mans life, or the whole life of a man, or one age of men, or ſtate of times, but the whole ſpace of time from the very beginning with all things done or ſuffered, and the perſons who have been active or paſſive, doers or ſufferers in thoſe times. *Thus enquire of the former age.*

The reaſon why he called him to enquire of the former age, was, becauſe in thoſe times the will of God was not reduced to writing. The divinity of the firſt ages was traditional; the Scriptures were not compoſed for more then two thouſand years after the creation, but the mind of God was either immediately revealed, or carried from father to ſon, from generation to generation; being preſerved, not in paper and ink, or other formal records, but in the memories and hearts of the faithful, until the giving of the Law. Hence it was that *Bildad* refers *Job* to thoſe revelations, or to the experiences of the Fathers concerning the dealings of God in former ages.

Beroſus in his eighth book of Antiquities, reports that the Fathers after *Adam* ſet up two great pillars, upon which ſome affirm they inſcribed many Divine Truths: but he tells us that thoſe pillars (of which ſome monuments were ſeen after the flood) were filled rather with Aſtronomical obſervations, Mathematical ſcheams of the Heavens and figures of the Stars; we cannot put much value upon either of theſe opinions. The former cannot warrant us that any thing was regiſtred and written by Gods appointment, till the writing of the Law. And therefore *Bildad,* according to the uſage of thoſe times, ſends *Job* for information to the traditions and reports of the Fathers. For after the Law was written, the Prophets, in caſe of emergent doubts and controverſies, ſent the people, not to the traditions or experiences of former ages, but, *To the Law and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there*

Columnæ duæ inſcriptæ à nepotibus Adami characteres quoſdam & figuras Mathematicas, pro ſiderum obſervatione potius quam ullam hiſtoriam, aut exquiſitā de Deo & ejus providentiæ doctrinam habuiſſe dicuntur. Beroſ. l.8. Ant.

there is no light, or no morning in them, Iſa. 8. 20. The word once written was the rule, and though it cannot ſpeak, yet it muſt teach us how to ſpeak. If we ſpeak not according to this, there is no light in us. But the word not being written, *Bildad* adviſes *Job* well, *Enquire of the former age*,

And prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their Fathers.

כון *Fundare, aptare, parare, ordinare, ſtabilire ſignificat.*

Having counſel'd him to *enquire of the former age*; he addeth, *Prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their Fathers*; as if he had ſaid, though I bid thee enquire, yet I would not have thee ruſh hand over head upon this enquiry, *Prepare thy ſelf*. The word ſignifies to lay a good foundation; *Due preparations are the foundation of action.* Hence it ſignifies alſo to eſtabliſh; becauſe a matter is eſtabliſhed and confirmed by wiſe preparations, and conſiderate addreſſes to it. Thoſe things ſtand faſteſt about which we make not too much haſt. Further, the word ſignifies the fixing of the mind, *Fix thy heart upon this work*: keep thy ſpirits intent (*Pſal.* 108. 1.) *My heart is fixed* (ſaith *David*, which ſome render, *My heart is prepared*) *I will ſing and give praiſe. Prepare thy ſelf*

To the ſearch of their Fathers.] Before he adviſed him to enquire of the former age, here, *To ſearch their Fathers*; as if he had ſaid, Do not confine thy ſelf to the immediately fore-paſſed times, but go as high as thou canſt: The former age (as was touched upon that paſſage) may include all times paſt: but here to avoid all miſtakes, he gives it in expreſly. The Fathers of the former age, are the Fathers of every age. All that have lived before us, come under the relation of our Fathers. The Fathers were dead, but they lived in their monuments and works: theſe he muſt ſearch, ſo far as any mark or remembrance of them could be found. Hence Obſerve,

First, *That as it is a duty in all, ſo it was a cuſtom, in ancient times, carefully to record the dealings of God with them, for the uſe of enſuing generations.*

To what end ſhould *Job* ſearch, if nothing were to be found; The Jews were commanded to remember the works of God for their learning, after the word was written, *Pſal.* 78. 5. He eſtabliſhed a teſtimony in *Jacob*, &c. *That they ſhould make them known to their Children.* God hath alwayes had a book of his acts and monuments, as well as of his Laws and Inſtitutions. Names given to Children and yearly feaſts, to ſtones and pillars, have been the preſervatives and memorials of his wonderful works. The works of God are his holineſs, juſtice, power, mercy, truth made viſible. The adminiſtrations of God in one age, are for the inſtruction of all ages. God ſpake with *Jacob* only in perſon at *Bethel*, yet there the Scripture ſaith, he ſpake with all his poſterity, *Hoſ.* 12. 4. *He found him in* Bethel, *and there he ſpake with us.* It is then a debt to poſterity, to ſhew them what *God* hath done for us. Obſerve,

Secondly, *That it is our duty to enquire into the dealings of God in all ages.*

It was their duty before the word was written, and it is a duty ſtill. The works of *God* are to be ſtudied and read over as well as his word, *Deut.* 4. 20. & 32. *Ask now of the dayes that are paſt, which were before thee, ſince the day that God created man upon Earth; and ask from one ſide of Heaven to another, enquire every way to ſee whether ever God dealt with a people, as he hath dealt with thee, whether God did ever aſſay to take to himſelf a Nation from the midſt of an other Nation by temptations, and by ſigns, and by wonders*, &c. Enquire this of all the former times. So *Deut.* 32. 7. *Remember the dayes of old, conſider the years of many generations, ask thy Father and he will ſhew thee, thy Elders and they will tell thee,* The Pſalmiſt promiſes to rehearſe what theſe were enjoyned to record, *Pſal.* 78. 3, 4. *I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark ſayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our Fathers have told us.* Our ſpeaking of, and enquiring into, what *God* hath done, ſhews the harmony between his word and works. And the former providences of *God* are food for our faith, as well as the promiſes of *God.*

Thirdly, That which I ſhall rather inſiſt upon, is this,

True antiquity ever gives a teſtimony to the truth.

Quod antiquiſſimum veriſſimum.

Hence the Prophets ſend the people back to antiquity, *Jer.* 6. 16. *Enquire for the good old-way.* Every old way is not a good way, but in every good old way we may walk ſafely and ſee the foot-ſteps of truth. It is a received rule, *That is trueſt which is ancienteſt.* It is certainly ſo, for truth is not only ancient, but eternal. Truth is as old as *God* himſelf, for truth is nothing elſe but the mind of *God*, truth was with *God* from everlaſting. Truth is commonly called the daughter of time, yet (in a ſence) it is the mother of time, for it was before time was; and therefore (no queſtion) that which is ancienteſt is trueſt.

Yet there is a great abuſe of this principle. Look back to antiquity and conſult with your Fathers (ſay many) and ſee what they did, how they believed. But what is the antiquity they call us to conſult with? It is not (as *Moſes* ſpake in that place of *Deuteronomy*) antiquity, *ſince God created man upon Earth*, or ſince Jeſus Chriſt was upon the Earth, and gave out his Goſpel laws: but it is the antiquity of ſome later ages and editions, an antiquity far ſhort of what is indeed the ancient time. The Apoſtle (1 *Joh.* 2. 7.) gives us the definition of an old commandment, *This is the old commandment which was from the beginning.* Our ſinful nature is called the *old man*, and yet is a *corrupt man.* It is called the *old man*, not that it is older then the *new man*; the *new man* is not of a younger houſe, or later date then the *old man.* Holineſs was before corruption. And the image of *God* upon man, elder then ſin, the image of the Devil. There are many corruptions in doctrine, in opinion, in worſhip, in practice, which go for very old: And there are many doctrines which we call *new truths*; Is it becauſe thoſe corruptions are older then theſe new truths? No, new truths are elder then the oldeſt corruptions. That which we call the *new world*, was created in the beginning, though diſcovered but yeſterday. So new truths were given from the beginning only they were unknown till of late; and we may well conceive that ſome goodly regions of truth are ſtill (*terra incognita*) undiſcovered; *God* having reſerved them for the honour and induſtry of ſome *divine Columbus*, who may give us an exacter Sea-card, of divine Myſteries, then the world hath yet ſeen, though enough hath been ſeen from the beginning, for the ſafe ſteering of our courſe to Heaven. He that would enquire and make a diligent ſearch for truth, muſt go to the firſt inſtitutions, *That's the old commandment which was from the beginning.* The Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 23. 43.) ſpeaks of ſome who were *grown old in adulteries*; that is, old in adulterating and corrupting the truth, and worſhip of *God*, *That which is old may be old in evil, and fuller of errors then it is of dayes.* We find when the good Kings of *Judah* reformed, they did not ſearch only into what was done in the ages immediately before them, or what their next Fathers had done; but they ſearch'd what was done in the times of their godly Fathers, how many removes ſoever diſtant from them. *Hezekiah* (2 *Chron.* 29. 6.) tells the *Levites* that their Fathers were in an error, that they had treſpaſſed, and done that which was evil in the ſight of the Lord, and had forſaken him; and *Chap.* 30. 5. ſpeaking of the obſervation of the Paſsover, he ſaith, *They had not done it of a long time in ſuch ſort as it was written*; therefore *ver.* 7. he dehorteth them ſaying, *Be not ye like your Fathers which treſpaſſed againſt the Lord God of your Fathers*; he doth not mean that they ſhould not be like their firſt Fathers, who had the truth purely committed to them, and ſo worſhipped God purely; but be not like your immediate fore-fathers, or your corrupt fore-fathers, how many deſcents and generations ſo ever, ye can number from them. And this was a thing ſo ſtrange, that when *Hezekiah* ſent the Poſts from City to City thorow the Countries of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, with this meſſage, that he would have a reformation according to the firſt inſtitution or pattern, and would not have them ſtay in what their fore-fathers had done; It is ſaid, *verſ.* 10. *That they laughed the meſſengers to ſcorn, and they mocked them*; what muſt we now be wiſer then our Fathers? Yes, ſaith he, you have done evil a long time, you and your Fathers, therefore I muſt bring you back to your firſt Fathers, in compariſon of whom, the Fathers you claim by were but Children, and thoſe degenerate Children. It is ſaid of *Joſiah's* reformation, (2 *King.*

23. 22.) That *there was not the like from the dayes of the Judges, nor in all the dayes of the Kings of Iſrael and Judah*; he went to the very beginning of all, there had not been ſuch a thing done before. So that if any ſhould have objected, why may not ſuch a reformation ſerve us as ſerved thoſe Kings and Judges? No, ſaith *Joſiah*, I will ſearch beyond their times into the remoteſt antiquities. The Church makes humble confeſſion (*Pſal.* 106. 6.) *We have erred with our fathers*; let not any turn this into a ſtubborn reſolution, and ſay, *We will err with our fathers*: if that be an errour which our fathers believed and practiſed, we will erre with them. So thoſe rebellious *Jews* pleaded (*Jer.* 44. 17.) *We will do as our fathers.* They who will do as their fathers, may ſuffer with their fathers; they who will needs err by their fathers copy, may go to hell too by their fathers copy. *Jerom* once deſired leave of *Auſtin* to err with ſeven fathers whom he found of his opinion. I ſhould not deſire that leave, nor envy any one the priviledge. The Fathers are but Children when they err, and they who will err with their Fathers, are worſe then Children.

Conſider then to what Antiquity, and to what Fathers you appeal. Many practices are very old, yet very erroneous. Many old ſayings and old doings muſt be unſaid and undone, or we ſhall be undone for ever. How many old ſayings of the *Jews* doth Chriſt gainſay? (*Mat.* 5.) *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid by them of old time*, thus and thus, *But I ſay unto you*, &c. And (*Mat.* 19.) Anſwering the Queſtion about divorce, *Moſes indeed for the hardneſs of your hearts, ſuffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not ſo.* Beſides, ſome (like the *Gibeonites*) feign antiquity, they can put a gray beard upon a green head; and their opinions will be found fennowed and mouldy with errour, not with age. As we muſt take heed of novelties, ſo we muſt be cautious about antiquities. Some antiquities of old men are no better *then old wives fables*, of which the Apoſtle bids us beware; unlearned old wives fables are as authentick as many learned mens antiquities pleaded for. To have an itch after novelties, and to dote upon antiquities, are alike vain and dangerous. Old fables and young fancies are with me at the ſame rate; *No man having drunk old wine* (ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 5. 35.) *ſtraightway calls for new, for he ſaith the old is better.* Old is better then new, if it be as good as new. But any new truth is better then the oldeſt error; and every errour, the elder it is, the worſer it is.

Again, *Bildad* adviſes *Job* to prepare himſelf to the ſearch of his Fathers, Hence obſerve,

We muſt not preſume to find truth with eaſe, or to come ſlightly by it.

Prepare thy ſelf (Prov. 2. 3.) *If thou crieſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voyce for underſtanding; if thou dig for it as ſilver, and ſearch for it as for hid treaſures, then thou ſhalt find,* &c. A man that will find ſilver, muſt prepare and fit himſelf to ſearch for ſilver. That lies not upon the ſurface, but in the boſom and bowels of the earth. There are four things wherein this preparation conſiſts.

Firſt, Humility. God doth not teach, but reſiſt the proud, he gives more grace (humility is much grace) to the humble. A lowly minded man ſhall know the mind of the moſt high God.

Secondly, Holineſs. Submitting to, and practiſing the truth we know, prepares us to receive more of truth. He that doth the will of Chriſt, ſhall know his doctrine, *Jo.* 7. 17.

Thirdly, Prayer. *Doth any man want wiſdom? let him ask of God*, Jam. 1. 5. Truth is the daughter of God, and he will not beſtow her in marriage upon our minds, unleſs we ask him.

Fouthly, Love unto Truth. *Truth is a beauty, and deſerves our love*; to love truth, is not a civility, but a duty; to ſearch for truth, without love to truth, is a diſhonour to truth; and as the not receiving the love of the truth, is the cauſe why many apoſtatize and fall from it, ſo it is a reaſon why many are ſtill ignorant and cannot come at it. As God, the Father of truth, muſt be askt his good will before we can have her; ſo truth, the daughter of God ſhall be loved before we have her.

Bildad having thus adviſed *Job* to ſearch antiquity, giveth him a reaſon of his advice, a modeſt reaſon, reflecting upon himſelf and upon his friends.

Verſe 9. **For we are but of yeſterday, and know nothing, our dayes on earth are a ſhadow.**

As if he had ſaid, the reaſon why we refer thee to the former ages, is, becauſe we are able to ſay little of our ſelves, and from our own experience, *we are but of yeſterday*, that is, the time we have lived is very little, our dayes have been few upon earth. Truth is the daughter of time, and we are ſcarce ſons of time, *we are but of yeſterday.*

Yeſterday.] Taken in our common ſpeech, ſignifies only the day immediately going before. 2. It is put for the time a little before, and is as much as *lately*, 2 Kings 9. 26. *Surely I have ſeen yeſterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his ſons*, That is, It is not long ſince *Naboth* and his ſons were ſlain, and their blood is as freſh in my memory, as if it were in my eye. 3. It is put for all time, how long ſoever paſt (*Heb.* 13. 8.) The Apoſtle Hebraizing, ſaith, *Jeſus Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, to day and for ever*; yeſterday is not put for the day immediately before, or for many dayes before, but for all dayes before, even from the beginning of the world; yea, not only are all dayes paſt included in yeſterday, but the eternity which is paſt.

תמול *Heri dicitur de die præterito, tam de propinquo, quã de longinquo, quaſi diceres antea.* Rab. Dav.

Apoſtolus Hebraizans, ſic utitur vocabulo, χθὲς. Heb. 13. 8.

Yeſterday and the day before, are often tranſlated *before*, or heretofore, *Gen.* 31. 2, 5. *Exod.* 40. 10. *Ruth* 2. 11. 2 *Sam.* 5. 2. Noting time not much paſt the preſent.

Heri & nudius tertius, dum ſimul junguntur, proverbialẽ conficiunt hyperbolem tempus nuper actum ſignificantem. Sic etiam apud Græcos, χθὲς ϗ πρῴην, Bol.

In this place by *yeſterday*, we are not to underſtand all time paſt, nor the time immediately paſt, but ſmall time paſt; *We are but of yeſterday*, that is, we have lived but a while in the world (yet they were old men) the dayes which we have ſeen are as nothing; he expreſſes their lives by the leaſt compleat time paſt, to ſhew that they had lived but a little time paſt.

So, in Scripture, this phraſe, *to morrow* (oppoſite to yeſterday) ſignifies not only the day immediately to come, but any time to come indefinitely (1 *Sam.* 28. 29.) The Devil anſwers *Saul*, *To morrow thou and thy ſons ſhall be with me*; he did not know exactly and preciſely, that it ſhould be the very next day, but he uſeth a word which would ſave his credit, if it ſhould have fallen out many dayes, or ſome few years after. *To morrow* may be any time to come. As then *to morrow* ſignifies the immediate day coming, or all time to come, ſo *yeſterday* ſignifies the immediate day paſt, or all time paſt. Thus one of the Ancients ſpeaks of *Matthew*, *Yeſterday a Publican, to day a Preacher*, that is, he was heretofore a Publican, and now a Preacher.

χθὲς *uſurpatur indefinitè de tẽpore præterito, ut cras de futuro.* Druſ.

ὁ χθὲς τελώνης ϗ σήμερον ἐυαγγελιστής. *Senſus eſt antea nunc.* Naz. de *Mat.*

For we are but as yeſterday.] *Bildad* ſtileth himſelf and his friends *yeſterday*, to ſhew they had been but ſhort-liv'd, though they had lived long. Some have given us the date of their years, or an account how old they were. They reckon *Bildad* an hundred and forty, *Eliphaz* an hundred and fifty, and *Zophar* an hundred and twenty years old. In what Records the years of their nativities were found, I know not; but probable enough it is, that they were ancient men; and (*chap.* 15. 10.) *Eliphaz* ſpeaks as much, *With us are both the gray-headed and very ancient men, much elder then thy father.* Yet *Bildad* calleth himſelf and them but as of yeſterday, either abſolutely, becauſe the life of man is ſhort, or comparatively to the lives of the fathers in the firſt age of the world, who lived much longer. His meaning then is, we will not bound thee to our experiences, who have lived but a while, but inform thy ſelf from them who lived many years ago, and lived many years, ſome of them nine hundred years and more; enquire of *Methuſelah*, and his contemporaries, who are able to give thee a better account then we. Therefore he addeth,

Hiſterni quaſi unius diei homines ſunt novi & recentes.

And know nothing.] The particle [**And**] is here cauſal, *We are but of yeſterday, therefore we know nothing*; in which ſence we read it often. Take an inſtance (*Ezek.* 13. 31.) *Thou haſt walked in the way of thy ſiſter, therefore I will give her cup into thine hand*; The Hebrew is, *And I will give her cup into thy hand, thou ſhalt pledge her in the ſame cup of affliction.* So here, *We are but of yeſterday, and know nothing*, that is, *We are but of yeſterday, therefore we know nothing.*

Know nothing.] The negation is not abſolute, but comparative, *We know nothing*, that is, we Neotericks know but little in compariſon of thoſe who lived long ago, and lived ſo long, even many centuries, gathering knowledge, and making up their obſervations; for (*ch.* 12. 12.) *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of days underſtanding.* Hence obſerve,

The ſhort life of man is not ſufficient to gain much knowledge.

We are but of yeſterday, and we know nothing; we cannot know much who live but little. The great Phyſitian complained long ago, *Life is ſhort, and art is long*; natural life is not long enough for the journey of natural knowledge, how much leſs is it for divine knowledge in the myſtery of Chriſt, which is the art of all arts, and ſcience of ſciences? Thoſe myſteries are very long, and our lives very ſhort; therefore at our beſt, we come ſhort in the knowledge of them. Hence the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 13.) ſpeaking of the moſt perfect knowledge we have in this life, concludes, *we know but in part*; there is a vaſt ocean of truths in the Goſpel, but we are ſtraight-necked veſſels, we take in truths but by drops; we are long a taking it in, and we have not long to take it in; hence the emptineſs of thoſe that are fulleſt. He that hath much to learn, and but a little to live, cannot learn much. And as our time is little, ſo we loſe a great deal of our time. Our loſſes of the time we have, hinder more then our having but little time. Our dayes are few, but if we could number them, we ſhould apply our ſelves to, and gain to our ſelves a ſufficient ſtock of holy wiſdom. *The greateſt reaſon why we profit no more in knowledge, is, becauſe we improve our time no more*, though that be a reaſon alſo, becauſe we have no more time.

Ars longa, vita brevis, Hipp.

Non parum temporis habemus, ſed multum perdimus. Sen.

Secondly obſerve, how modeſtly *Bildad* ſpeaks of himſelf and of his friends, *We are but of yeſterday, and we know nothing.*

It becometh us to have humble thoughts of our own knowledge, how much ſoever we know.

Theſe were neither children nor fools who had to do with *Job*, they were the wiſeſt of that age, *Oracles of wiſdom, yet we know nothing*, ſaith *Bildad*. The beſt of our knowledge here, is to know our imperfections, it is as much knowledge as we can reach, to know wherein our knowledge cometh ſhort; the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.*8.2.) is direct, *He that thinketh he knoweth any thing knoweth nothing as he ought to know*: He would not have us think that we know any thing, though he had ſaid in the former verſe, *We know that we all have knowledge*; the Apoſtle *knew it*, but he would not have them *think it*. His meaning is, I grant there is knowledge abroad in the world, I have ſome, and you have ſome. We know that we all have knowledge; which yet ſome underſtand, as if he ſpake in a ſecret *Ironie*, againſt thoſe who bragg'd ſo much of their knowledge; yea, *we know you have knowledge, but let me tell you thus much, you who ſtand ſo much upon your knowledge; he that thinketh he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* How can that be? Is not a man to think that he knows what he knows? Muſt a man think himſelf ignorant, or otherwiſe he muſt be accounted ignorant? Surely no. There are very many that know much, and they may think that they know ſomething, yea, that they know many things; but obſerve the word there, *He that thinketh*: the word doth not ſignifie a ſimple apprehenſion of a thing, or a bare and naked knowledge, for ſo a man may reflect upon his own knowledge, and *know that he knows, as well as what he knows*; but it imports *thinking* with a kind of inſolency and pride of ſpirit, with affectation, boaſting and vain-glory in that knowledge. *He that thinketh he knows any thing*, that is, he that vaunts and ſtands upon his knowledge, who conceits he hath ſo much knowledge, ſuch a head-piece that he can carry all before him by the ſtrength of his wit and parts, ſuch a knowing man *knows nothing. That mans wiſdom is but conceit who is wiſe in his own conceit.* In this ſence we have the word (*Mat.* 3.9.) Where the Baptiſt beſpeaks the Phariſees, *Think not to ſay within your ſelves, we have Abraham to our father*; *Think not*; it was not a ſin for them to think that *Abraham* was their father, and that they were deſcended from him; but, *think not*, that is, do not think of this, and ſo be proud of it. Be not lifted up upon an outward priviledge which will ſtand you in no ſtead at all if you ſtand upon it. *Except you be changed and born again of the Spirit, it will not avail you, that you are born of Abraham's fleſh; if Abraham's faith be not in your hearts, it ſhall be no advantage to you that* Abraham's *blood runs in your veins.* The word is ſo uſed again (*Phil.* 3.4.) *If any one thinketh he may be confident, I much more.* If any one may have an opinion of himſelf in regard of outward priviledges, ſurely I may, but I will not. So then an opinion, or a conceitedneſs of our knowledge, blaſts all our knowledge; ſuch a man *knoweth nothing as he ought to know*; he knoweth ſomewhat *by rote*, but he doth not know any thing (as a Chriſtian ought) *by heart*. By how much we have the more true knowledge of the higheſt objects, by ſo much we have the lower thoughts of our knowledge. *It is beſt to know as much as we can of the beſt things, and to think as little as we can of our ſelves.*

οὐδέπω οὐδὲν; geminatio negatis particulæ vehementius negat. Bez.

Δοκεῖ, non ſignificat ſimplicem aliquam perſuaſionem, ſed quæ cum ſuperbia & inſolentia conjuncta eſt, alioquin nihil magis repugnat fidei, quam Academica dubitatio. Bez.

Our dayes upon earth are a ſhadow.] But were not the dayes of all the fathers a ſhadow? Yes, the longeſt life is but a long ſhadow; he means comparatively, our lives are ſhorter by much then theirs were, and therefore but a ſhadow.

There are three ſorts of ſhadows. 1. Natural. 2. Civil. 3. Spiritual.

Firſt, A natural ſhadow is a dark light cauſed by the coming of ſome thick body between us and the Sun. This is a ſhadow in a proper and ſtrict acception.

Secondly, Beſides the natural, there is a civil ſhadow, *Protection is a ſhadow*; and to be under a ſhadow, is to be protected: We tranſlate (*Num.*14.9.) *Their defence is departed from them*; the Heb. is, *Their ſhadow*. So, *Iſa.*4.5.& 25.4.

Thirdly, A ſhadow is taken for a dark or imperfect repreſentation of things ſpiritual; ſo all the ceremonies of the old Law are called ſhadows (*Heb.*8.5. & 10.1. & 9.9. *Col.* 2.17.) Ceremonial worſhip is expreſſed by a ſhadow, becauſe it was but an obſcure repreſentation of the truth; the ceremonies were interpoſed between Chriſt the true light, and us, and ſo caſt a ſhadow of him. Or, as a Painter, who is to draw the lively figure or ſhape of a man, at firſt makes an obſcure draught, or ſome imperfect lines of the body, but afterwards gives it beauty and luſtre to the life. The *Moſaical* rites were ſuch a ſhadow of heavenly things. Yet further, a ſhadow (which comes neareſt the meaning of this text) notes the leaſt imaginable ſign or ſemblance of a thing. So (*Ja.*1.17.) When the Apoſtle ſaith, that with God *the father of lights, there is not ſo much as a ſhadow of turning*, he means, there is not the leaſt ſign or token o[illegible]ng with God.

When *Bildad* ſaith, *Our dayes up[illegible]th are but as a ſhadow*, we may underſtand it, either of the time paſt, and ſo our life is but as a ſhadow that is gone. Or, it may be meant of the whole life of man taken together. The life of man (take it from the beginning to the ending, from the *Alpha* to the *Omega*, from the firſt to the laſt of it) is a ſhadow. The compariſon is frequent in Scripture, I ſhall not need to ſtay upon it. See two or three particulars of the reſemblance.

Firſt, The life of man is a ſhadow, becauſe it hath little in it that is ſubſtantial, a ſhadow is oppoſed to a ſubſtance; our life rather ſeems to be then is, it is ſo quickly gone.

Secondly, A ſhadow (though ſometime put for protection and ſafety, yet) implies unſetledneſs and uncertainty; if a man ſtands or reſts under a ſhadow, the ſhadow will leave him, it will be gone from him, and betray him to the ſcorching Sun-beams; a ſhadow never keeps long in one place, but varies with the motion of the Sun, and when it is high-noon the ſhadow goes quite up, and is not. There is ſuch an uncertainty in the life of man, it holds not one tenour, it ſtayes not in any ſtate, there is a deceitfulneſs in it, changes are upon it. The greateſt certainty of our lives is, that they are uncertain.

Umbra eſt quid inane, & nihil habens ſolidæ ſubſtantiæ, Umbra denotat malefidam ſtationem & protectionẽ fugacem, nã qui ſub umbra dormit, proditur ſtatim, atq; traditur radiis ſolis. Pined.

In general, the life of man being compared to a ſhadow, teaches us, that it is ſhort, moveable and unconſtant, there is no hold or tack in it, *Pſal.* 102.11. *My dayes are like a ſhadow that declineth.* The encreaſe of our dayes hath a declenſion in it, 1 *Chron.* 29.15. *We are ſtrangers before thee, and ſojourners, as were all our Fathers; our dayes on the earth are as the ſhadow.* How doth he explain that? *There is no abiding in our dayes, as there is no abiding in a ſhadow.* Many of the Ancients have repreſented the life of man, not only as a ſhadow, but leſs then a ſhadow; *A dream of a ſhadow, a ſhadow of a ſhadow, an Idol of a ſhadow*; which is the loweſt expreſſion that can be, as much as to ſay, a nothing of nothing. *An Idol is nothing in the world.* God made no ſuch thing in the world. And though our dayes be made by God in world, yet they are no ſuch thing as *God* made, or as the world makes them. We have met with points about the ſhortneſs and tranſitorineſs of mans life often in this book, I ſhall therefore only add a word here.

Homo vocatur σκιᾶς ὄναρ. Pin. *καπνοῦ σκιά* Soph. *εἴδωλον σκιᾶς.* Æſc;

It is our wiſdom, foraſmuch as our life on Earth is as a ſhadow, that we improve this ſhadow to gain aſſurance of eternal light: *Life here is but a fleeting ſhadow, that to come* *is an abiding ſubſtance.* Shall we for the pleaſures and comforts of a life, which is no more enduring then a ſhadow, hazard the pleaſures and comforts of a life, which endures for ever. A man hath not a ſhadow of reaſon, not a ſhadow of true wiſdom and underſtanding, who will ſpend out a ſhadowiſh life in thoſe things which are but a ſhadow, neglecting that which is the true light, and will bring us to eternal light?

Attendat igitur homo in diebus umbræ ſuæ, ut faciat aliquid dignum deſideratæ lucis ſuæ. Aug. *in* Pſal. 143.

Bildad having put in his parentheſis, as a reaſon why he ſends *Job* to the Fathers, gives him an encouragement at *verſ.* 10. to make this enquiry, he tells him what he ſhall get for his pains in conſulting with thoſe former ages, and with the Fathers.

Verſ. 10. **Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?**

As if he had ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not loſe thy labour by enquiring into thoſe ancient times, ſhall not they teach thee?* Certainly, they ſhall, thou ſhalt not come away empty, undirected, uncounſell'd.

Shall not they teach thee?] How could they teach? They were dead and gone, they were paſt many ages before. *Bildad* may be conceived to anſwer, *Though the Fathers are dead, yet they will ſpeak to thee and counſel thee, as well as if they lived and ſtood before thee with our ſelves. They ſhall teach thee, and they ſhall inſtruct thee.* And more then that, they will not only teach thee in a complement, and ſpeak words to thee, but they will ſpeak their very hearts to thee: thou ſhalt find that they will give thee cordial counſel, They will utter words to thee out of their heart.

Utter words out of their heart.] The meaning of that is, either: Firſt, In general, they will give thee the real conceptions of their minds about theſe points, they will ſpeak ſincerely, they will not ſpeak to thee from the teeth outward, but from the heart inward. Secondly, They will ſpeak wiſely and ſeriouſly to thee about theſe things; they will utter, not ſo much words as oracles to thee out of their heart.

Eloquia ex corde proferre, eſt ſapienter loqui, ſapiens cordatus dicitur; ſtultus excors. Cor loquitur, quæ animus præmeditatus eſt os loquitur ſine meditatione.

The heart is the ſeat of knowledge and underſtanding, and a wiſe man is (*homo cordatus*) a hearty man, a man with a heart; and the fool in Scripture is ſaid to be a heartleſs man, *a man without a heart*; he cannot utter words from his heart, who wants a heart, he utters them from his mouth, or from his tongue. *A fools heart is in his mouth, and a wiſe mans mouth is in his heart*; he ſpeaks that which lies in the in-moſt receſſes and cloſets of his ſpirit: he ſpeaks from meditation, he brings what he ſpeaks to his heart, and from his heart utters what he ſpeaks. Chriſt aſſures us, *That a good man out of the good treaſures of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treaſure of his heart brings forth evil things.* Every heart is a treaſury. When a good man ſpeaks evil, he ſpeaks not from his heart (though he hath a ſtock of ſinfulneſs in him) but from his lips; and when an evil man ſpeaks good, he ſpeaks it not from his heart, but from his lips: for he hath no ſtock or treaſury of good within. An hypocrite ſpeaks good with a heart and a heart, with a double heart. A fool ſpeaks without a heart, yet of the two, it is better to have no heart then two.

Or we may take the meaning of the words, as a ſecret reproof of *Job*; If thou wilt look after theſe Fathers, and ſearch them, they will not ſpeak as thou haſt done, raſhly, unadviſedly and indiſcreetly, but they will ſpeak from their hearts, they will utter things of weight and ſerious conſideration. From hence obſerve,

First, *That old men are preſumed to have a great ſtock of knowledge.*

Go to the Fathers, they will certainly teach thee. Every man ſhould labour to have a proportion of knowledge to his proportion of years, we ſhould not be Children in underſtanding, when we are men in time. The Apoſtle reproves ſuch as are ſo (*Heb.* 5. 2.) *When* (ſaith he) *for the time you ought to be teachers* (look upon the years that are gone over your heads, and you ought to be teachers; you ſhould have much in your hearts for the inſtruction of others, yet ſo it is) *you have need that one teach you again, which be the firſt principles of the oracles of God, and you are become ſuch as have need of milk, and not of ſtrong meat.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *They who are dead and gone, yet ſpeak to us as if they were living.*

Bildad ſends *Job* to the ancient Fathers, go they will teach thee and utter words out of their heart. Whilſt we conſider what they have ſpoken and done, it is as if they now ſpake, *Heb.* 11. 4. Abel *by faith offered a better ſacrifice then* Cain, *and being dead he yet ſpeaketh.* They who are dead ſpeak by their works, and they ſpeak by the words which they ſpake, while they were alive. The records which they have left, give us counſel to this day. When the rich man (it is the ſcope of the Parable) I ſay when the rich man (*Luke* 16. 7.) deſired that *Lazarus* might go from the dead to ſpeak to his brethren, *Abraham* anſwers him, *They have* Moſes *and the Prophets, let them hear them,* &c. *If they hear not* Moſes *and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded though one roſe from the dead. They have* Moſes *and the Prophets*; but *Moſes* and the Prophets were dead and gone; how have they *Moſes* and the Prophets? they have not the men before them, but they had their writings and records: they who read the Prophets writings, hear their ſpeakings. *Books are ſilent voices.*

If *Moſes* and the Prophets may be heard when dead and gone, then much more may we hear Chriſt, ſince he died and roſe, and his Apoſtles who are dead. And whereas ſome have an opinion that they do not know the mind of Chriſt, or that they cannot reform the Church, or their Churches, till Chriſt himſelf come from Heaven to do it, or till there be Apoſtles ſent perſonally to do it (they wanting an Apoſtle, cannot order the worſhip and ordinances of *God*, and therefore conclude againſt a preſent Church-ſtate) I ſay to ſuch, if that be your ground that you muſt have Chriſt and his Apoſtles to ſettle all for you; you have your deſires. Look into the works and word of Chriſt, into the writings and practices of his Apoſtles, both for your rule and patern. If *Abraham* could ſay, they have *Moſes* and the Prophets, they may hear them: ſurely, we may ſay much more, we have Chriſt and his Apoſtles, whom we may hear and conſult about all the inſtitutions and orders that concern the frame of his Church. We need not ſtay till Chriſt come down in perſon from Heaven, or till new Apoſtles are ſent and furniſhed with inſtruction for this work, for we have Chriſt and his Apoſtles already, we hear what Chriſt ſpake, we read the rules which he gave concerning the wayes of his worſhip and government of his Church (in all the eſſential and conſtitutive parts of either) to the end of the world. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *They that teach others ſhould teach their own hearts to ſpeak.*

It is beſt ſpeaking to others with the heart. The heart will teach better then the tongue, yea better then the underſtanding, *The word which comes from the heart of the teacher, goes ſooneſt to the heart of the hearer.* Obſerve,

Fourthly, *The heart is the true repoſitory or treaſury of holy truths.*

You may ſee where the Fathers, the holy men in ancient time laid up truth: they utter words out of their heart, then, truth was lay'd up there. Truth is (as it were) the heart of God, and therefore we muſt put it into our hearts. *David* hid the Commandments of *God* in his heart: *Mary* laid up the words of Chriſt there. To have the word only ſwimming in our *brains*, is to as little purpoſe, as to have it only in our *Note-books*. To have truth only in our brains, or in our books, will do us as little good as water in our ſhoes. It is a ſad thing to conſider how many thouſand Sermons are written almoſt word for word in books, and ſcarce a letter of them written in the heart. The promiſe of the new Covenant is, that God *will write his law in our hearts:* Let not any reſt ſatisfied in having the word written in their books. Obſerve further,

Holy men of old did highly eſteem the word and truths of God.

You may know the eſteem they had of theſe by the place where they laid theſe; the heart is the beſt place, the faireſt room in man. To put a thing into the heart, notes higheſt eſteem and approbation. When we ſay a thing is in our hearts, we cannot ſay more to expreſs our eſteem of it.

When the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 1.7.) profeſſes to the *Philippians*, *I have you in my heart*; his meaning is, you are moſt dear and precious to me. When we ſee a man preparing a ſpecial place, a ſafe place, a convenient place to lay a thing in, we conclude that the thing he would lay up is of value and account with him: when we are preparing and fitting our hearts to put the word and truths of God in, hereby we give a real teſtimony, that we honour the Word of God. For the moſt part the truths of God (as we ſay of things we neglect) are caſt at mens heels rather then laid up in their hearts. We may know the eſteem a Queen of *England* had of the City of *Calice*, when ſhe ſaid, *It was in her heart, and there they ſhould find it, if they opened her.*

So much concerning theſe three verſes, containing an argument from antiquity, and the teſtimony of tha firſt ages, by which *Bildad* confirms his former poſition, *That God is juſt.*

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Can the ruſh grow up without mire? Can the flag grow up without water?

Whilſt it is yet in his greenneſs and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope ſhall periſh.

Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe truſt ſhall be a ſpiders web.

He ſhall lean upon his houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand: he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure.

THis context from the eleventh to the twentieth verſe, contains an illuſtration (for ſo are ſimilitudes) of the former argument; and it is taken from a three-fold ſimilitude. Firſt, Of a *ruſh*, which is explained, *verſ.* 11, 12. and applied in *verſ.* 13. The ſecond is, Of a *ſpiders web*, explained and applied, *verſ.* 14, 15. The third, Of a *luxuriant flouriſhing tree*, explained, *verſ.* 16, 17, 18. applied, *verſ.* 19. *Behold, this is the joy of his way*, &c.

The ſum of all may be given in this brief;

That it is as equal and ordinary in the courſe of divine juſtice to deſtroy wicked men; as it is in the courſe of nature, for a ruſh to wither when it wants water; or, for a ſpiders web to break when it is leaned upon; or for a tree to be hewen down, when it either under-grows or over-grows its owners houſe, when caſting its roots under the foundation, it looſens the ſtones, and weakens the ground-work; or, when it ſpreads its boughs and grows ſo high that it drops upon the roof, or darkens the windows of it.

Verſ. 11. **Can the ruſh grow without mire?**

It cannot. The original word for a *ruſh* ſpeaks its nature; the root ſignifying to ſuck and drink in, or alwayes to be guzling down. The ruſh lives in liquor, and is alwayes drinking. Theſe abounded near the banks of *Nilus* in *Ægypt*. There *Moſes* was put into an *Ark* or *skiff made of bulruſhes*, Exod. 2. 3. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 18. 1, 2.) tells us of a land, *ſending Ambaſſadors by the Sea, even in veſſels of bulruſhes upon the waters.*

גמא *Juncus à* גמא *bibit, ingurgitavit, quia juncus eſt aqua immerſus, & eam ſemper imbibens. Conſeritur bibula Memphytis cymba papyro.* Luc. *l.* 4. *Perque papyriferi ſeptemflua flumina Nili.*

Can the ruſh grow?] In ſtrength, luſtre, and beauty. The word implies growing with a kind of pride, ſo plants do in a rich or proper ſoil, they lift up their heads, and carry it highly.

גאה *Elatus eminuit, eſt mediæ ſignificationis, ſumitur pro vitioſa elatione, quæ eſt ſuperbia, etiam pro magnificentia & decore.* Riv. *in* Hoſ. 5. 5.

Can the ruſh grow [**Without mire?**] Which is as much as to ſay, can a man live without food? Mire is the ruſhes meat and drink. It loves and delights in a mooriſh ſoil, and by the rivers ſide. A ruſh upon the dry land, is like a fiſh upon the dry land. At moſt the ruſh among vegetables and plants, is like thoſe fowls and beaſts among ſenſitives, which live part upon the water, and part upon the land.

Limoſus juncus, paluſtres junci amphibia.

Can the flag grow without water?] The word ſignifies any fertile place for graſs, a medow, *Gen.* 41. 2. *Pharaoh* ſaw in his dream ſeven welfavoured kine, and fat-fleſhed, *and they fed in a medow.* Some render it ſo here, *Can the medow grow without water?* Both flags and medows are ſuch drinkers, that they quickly wither, if they want water: which *Bildad* gives us plainly in the next verſe.

אחו *Locus graminis ubi aſcuntur pecora, forſan ab* אח *frater quod ex una ſtirpe veluti multi fratres gignantur, quaſi herbarum quædam fraternitas.*

Verſ. 12. **Whilſt it is in his greeneſs, and not cut down. it withereth before any other herb.**

Whilſt it is yet in his greenneſs.] Or, ſhooting up in ſtem. Some derive the Hebrew word from *Ab*, *Father*; and ſo it may be rendered from the letter of. the Hebrew, though the expreſſion be ſomewhat uncouth. While it is yet in its paternity, or fatherhood, that is, while it is flouriſhing and procreative. Others derive it from *Abib*, which ſignifies an ear of Corn, or the ear with the ſtalk. Hence the month *Abib* among the Jews had its name, becauſe in thoſe climates, corn was then eared and began to be ripe; it was the firſt moneth to the *Iſraelites*, becauſe of their coming out of *Ægypt*, and anſwered to part of our *March*, and part of *April*, Exod. 13. 4. Chap. 23. 15. *This day came ye out in the moneth Abib, this moneth ſhall be to you the beginning of moneths.* So then this greenneſs of the ruſh implies the ſtrength and beſt of it, the goodlineſs and beauty of it.

באבו *Abib eſt ſpica matureſcens, vel ſpica cum calamo, inde* Ibbo *virgultum aut lignum virens in eo,* ſc. *tempore quo eſt parens novarum frugum & frondium. Vel ab* אב *pater,* q.d. *in paternitate ſua.*

And not cut down.] That is before it is cropt and pulled up by the hand, or is fully ripe.

It withereth before any other herb.] That is, ſooner or more ſpeedily then any other herb of leſſer ſhew, but better rooting. There are two cauſes why trees wither, both which are here removed from the ruſh, and yet it withers.

Firſt, *Age*, but the ruſh withers, while it is young in its greenneſs.

Secondly, *Violence*, when it is pulled up or cut down by force of hand: but the ruſh withers, while it is not cut down. Both argue enough, the little ſubſiſtency which the ruſh hath in it ſelf; to ſeek any further account about it, were but to ſeek a knot in a ruſh.

Verſ. 13. **So are the paths of all that forget God**, &c.

Bildad having explained his ſimilitude, now applies it. The compariſon may be made out three wayes.

Firſt, That hypocrites are kept in life and luſtre, by outward, earthly ſupplies only, as the ruſh is by mire and water; and therefore when theſe fail, they fail alſo.

Secondly, As the ruſh dies, becauſe it hath no water; ſo an hypocrite declines and waſtes, becauſe he is not watered by the bleſſings of God, and hath no rooting in grace. The *ſeed caſt on the ſtony ground* (Matth. 13. 6.) *withered, becauſe it had no earth.* The lack of earth to the one, is the ſame with the lack of water to the other.

Thirdly, In the general, that as a ruſh flouriſhes a while, but quickly withers; ſo the beſt eſtate of an hypocrite, his greenneſs, is of no long continuance; his ſeeming graces, like his joyes, are but for a moment. Hence obſerve,

Natural things are ſhadows to us of ſpiritual.

We may learn many leſſons from ſpeechleſs creatures. While we turn the leaves, and peruſe the contents of this great volumn, the book of Nature, we may find much of the *God* of nature. *David* took inſtructions from it dayly, (*Pſal.* 8.) *When I conſider thy Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* I ſay likewiſe, when we behold the graſs and flowers of the field, the flag, the ruſh in the water: we may not only put the Queſtion, *What is man?* But we may reſolve the Queſtion, what the man is: when we look upon the meaneſt creatures, we may ſee pieces of our ſelves, they are as we are in many conſiderations, and we as they; what is man? Man is as graſs. What is a wicked man an hypocrite? *He is a ruſh, he is like the chaff which the wind drives away.* What is a godly man? *He is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon.* The Spirit of God from things ſenſible and viſible, raiſeth us up to things ſpiritual and inviſible.

The Ancients were very frequent in this kind of ſtudy, peruſing the book of Nature, and taking helps to better the underſtanding by every object of the eye. It is well obſerved by one of them,* *That God ſent us the book of Nature, before*

* *Præmiſit Deus naturam magiſtram, ſubmiſſurus & prophetiam, quo facilius credas propbetiæ diſcipulus naturæ.* Tert.

before he ſent the book of Scripture. The mind of God was written upon the things which he had made, before he made Tables or Books to write his mind in. The Fathers had many revelations from the beginning, but they had not Scripture from the beginning. Some conceive that *Iſaac* going out into the fields to meditate, meditated upon the Text of the creature, and uſed to raiſe his heart by thoſe ſteps of earth to heavenly contemplations. It is ſaid of *Solomon*, (1 *King.* 4. 32, 33.) *That he ſpake three thouſand Proverbs, and his ſongs were a thouſand and five, and that he ſpake of trees, from the Cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the Hyſop that ſpringeth out of the wall*; which * *Joſephus* expounds thus, *Solomon* applied his three thouſand parables or ſimilitudes unto thoſe trees or plants about which he diſcourſed, drawing ſome divine moral from every plant, whoſe nature as a Philoſopher he had deſcribed.

Familiare eſt Syris & maxime Palæſtinis ad omnem ſermonem ſuum parabolas jungere, ut quod per ſimplex præceptum teneri non poteſt, per ſimilitudines teneatur. Hier. *in* c.19. Mat.

* *Cuilibet ſpeciei plantarum ſuam adhibuit parabolam.* Joſeph. *in loc.*

More diſtinctly for the ſpiritualizing of this ſimilitude, conſider wherein a wicked man or an hypocrite is like unto a ruſh; the ruſh may be of good value to us, being thus improved.

Firſt, The ruſh is very ſpungy, hoven, hollow ſubſtance, it is not ſolid or cloſe-grain'd: An hypocrite hath no ſolidity, we call him a hollow-hearted man.

Secondly, Hypocrites are well compared to a ruſh or a flag, becauſe in windy weather they ſit which way ſoever the wind ſits. They take no harm by a ſtorm, becauſe they yield to every turn: let the wind blow which way it will, the ruſh breaks neither body nor branch. Let things turn which way they will, hypocrites can ſhift, and bend, and yield with them. And therefore when ſtorms ariſe, which pull down and deſtroy many goodly trees of Gods own planting, theſe ruſhes continue. Hypocrites keep their ſtanding, becauſe they never ſtand. A great man being asked how he kept his honour and preferment in ſo many changes of wind and weather, of times and Princes, anſwered, *By being a willow and not an oak.* He that can ſway, ſeldom breaks. Hypocrites in the Church and State, live by the ſame principles.

Thirdly, A bulruſh or a flag in time of a ſtorm hangs down the head, but when the ſtorm is over, it holds up the head, and ſtands upright again. This reſemblance between the hypocrite and a bulruſh is given by the Prophet, (*Iſa.* 58. 5.) *Is this the faſt that I have choſen, a day for a man to afflict his ſoul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulruſh? &c.* The bulruſh in a ſtorm ſeems to be humbled to the very ground, but in fair weather it is as high as ever. Hypocrites in times of publick humiliation, hang down their heads, and ſeem to lay their mouths in the duſt, but when the day is paſt, they quickly forget their ſorrows, *If I* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.*1.18.) *build again the things which I have deſtroyed, I make my ſelf a tranſgreſſor.* Hypocrites are the worſt ſort of tranſgreſſors, for they ſeem to deſtroy their ſins one day, but they indeed build them again the next.

Fourthly, The ruſh and the flag grow only in miry places, where they may have abundance of water and moiſture, which notes a kind of ſenſuality in them, and therefore they have their names from *drinking.* So hypocrites ſeem to be heavenly, but are indeed earthly: they are like the ruſh, they cannot live without ſtore of water, they are ſenſual, they muſt pleaſe their appetites, and delight their palates. The Apoſtle deſcribes them ſo, *They ſerve not the Lord Jeſus, but their own bellies*; they muſt be ſupported with the affluence of outward things, elſe they cannot hold out in profeſſion. Whereas the godly and true believers can live, when the water is drain'd or dry'd away, when outward things fail and are gone. So the Prophet *Habakuk* profeſſes, *Chap.* 3. *ult. Although the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, though the fields ſhall yield no meat, and there be no herds in the ſtall; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, and will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* A godly man will grow, when all the world decaies to him; he will rejoyce in God, when all outward comforts fail him; hypocrites muſt have ſenſual ſupplies, or they are loſt. *A feigned love of ſpiritual things is ever joyned with a true love of worldly things.* Chriſt ſpeaks of ſome who followed him more for the loaves then for the word. And *Judas* followed his Maſters bag, more then his Maſter.

Fifthly, Bulruſhes or flags yield no fruit at all, they only make a fair ſhew; hypocrites how green ſoever they are, what ſhew or profeſſion ſoever they make, yield no fruit of holineſs.

Sixthly, A bulruſh or a flag withers ſooner then any other herb, that is, then other herbs that are not ſeated ſo near the water. And this agrees well with the hypocrite, for when the hypocrite begins once to wither, he withers quickly. He never had any true life, and he will not long appear to have any. When one that hath made a fair profeſſion begins to decay, he decaies ſooner then a meer civil man; a civil man will hold out in honeſty and juſtice a great while, but a hypocrite gives over holineſs and godlineſs preſently. Beſides, God blaſts and withers an hypocrite ſooner then any other man, becauſe he hath abuſed and wronged *God* more then any other man. When judgments come, they fall firſt upon hypocrites, *The hypocrites in Zion tremble, Iſa.* 33. Trembling will take hold upon the prophane and openly wicked, but trembling takes hold ſooneſt upon hypocrites; they have moſt cauſe to tremble, who were confident without a cauſe. Falſe hope is the parent of real fear; and they who believe without repenting, ſhall repent without believing.

Verſ. 13. **So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope ſhall periſh.**

So are the paths.] So, that is, thus it comes to paſs, this is the way, and the end of all thoſe who forget God.

Sic ſane illis accidit & uſu venit, talis eſt eorũ conditio. Druſ.

The path of a man is taken two wayes.

Firſt, For his ſtate and condition, *Pſal.*1. *The way of the wicked ſhall periſh*; that is, the whole ſtate of a wicked man ſhall periſh.

Secondly, For his courſe and converſation, *Job* 33. 11. *He putteth my feet in the ſtocks, he marketh all my paths,* that is, takes notice of the whole courſe of my life; all my converſation, all my tradings and dealings are before God. This path of mans courſe and converſation is two-fold. There is an internal, and there is an external path. The internal is that of the mind; the mind hath its courſe, the heart hath a way, *Iſa.*57. 17. *He went on frowardly in the way of his heart.* The external path is that of outward actions; That which we uſually do, is our path. Thus the actions and works of God are called the paths of God, *Job* 40.19. *Behemoth is the chief of the wayes of God,* Prov.8.22. *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old*; Pſal.77.13. *Thy way, O God, is in the ſanctuary*; that is, thy actings and doings are ſeen there.

Our actions are compared to a path in two reſpects. 1. Becauſe we are frequent in them, that which is a mans courſe he treads every day. 2. They are called our paths, becauſe they lead us to ſome end; every path leads us to ſome place or other. Some actions lead to life, and ſome to death, ſome lead to Heaven, ſome to Hell, ſome to Chriſt, and ſome to Satan; to one of theſe ends, we are travelling and journeying all the dayes of our lives.

Of thoſe that forget God.] To forget God imports theſe four things.

Firſt, Not to think of God, we forget that which we mind not. The firſt act of remembring is thinking. The thief on the croſs prayed, *Lord, remember me when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom*; that is, think of me for good. *God* is not in all the thoughts of a wicked man to obey or honour him, and a wicked man is not in all the thoughts of God (in this ſence) to bleſs or pardon him.

Secondly, To forget God, is to diſobey God, or not to do the will of God, *Deut.*8.11. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God in not keeping his Commandments.* As to remember God, is to do the will of God, *Eccl.*12.1. *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth:* that is, do the will of thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth: ſo to forget God, is to diſobey God, not to do his will. God is ſaid to forget us when he doth not our will, that is, when we in prayer propoſe our deſires to God to do them for us, the not doing of thoſe things for us, is to forget us. *David* expoſtulates, *Pſal.* 77.9 *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* He had prayed much at the beginning of the Pſalm with ſucceſs, *I cried unto God with my mouth, even unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me.* He puts up other requeſts, which finding no preſent anſwer, or ſenſible acceptance, he cries out, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* Now, as when the Lord doth not our will, he is ſaid in Scripture to forget us, ſo when we do not the will of God, we indeed forget him.

Thirdly,

Oblivio aſfert contemptum.

Thirdly, To forget, is lightly to eſteem, to ſlight the Lord. That which a man highly eſteems, he keeps in his memory, and treaſures it up there; and when a man forgets a thing, eſpecially when he wilfully forgets it, he diſreſpects it, he ſlights and contemns it, *Jer.* 30. 14. *All thy Lovers have forgotten thee*, that is, thy Lovers care not for thee, they ſlight and eſteem lightly of thee. When a man comes not at one whom he loves, he is ſaid to forget him, *Jer.* 2. 32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a Bride her attire?* A Maid hath a great eſteem of her ornaments, eſpecially of her wedding-ornaments; aud therefore ſhe is often thinking of them: it may be ſhe can hardly ſleep the night before, for thinking of the rich garments, yea the Bracelets and Bables ſhe is to wear upon the wedding day? *Can the Bride forget her attire?* Will ſhe throw theſe by the walls (as we ſpeak) or caſt them at her heels? Yet, ſaith the Lord, *My people have forgotten me dayes without number.* They have lightly eſteemed me, I am not ſo much to them as new cloathes, who am indeed their life, I am not ſo much remembred as unneceſſary curioſities, from whom they receive all things neceſſary, and whoſe favour is the one thing neceſſary.

Fourthly, To forget God, is to depart from God. We ſtay with God no longer then we remember him; as we cannot have communion with truth, ſo not with the God of truth, without an act of memory (*Heb.* 12. 5.) *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which ſpeaketh unto you as unto children, My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, &c.* A word forgotten is to us of no more uſe then a word never ſpoken. We are without all the good we forget; and to forget God, is (*Epheſ.* 2. 12.) *to be without God in the world*; or to live on earth as if there were no God in heaven, either in regard of mercy to be received, or of duty to be performed. Hypocrites forget God all theſe wayes; though their natural memory may be good, yet ſpiritual memory (and that only holds ſpiritual things) they have none.

Hence obſerve, That, *The Hypocrite is a forgetter of God.*

Every wicked man is forgetful of God. Hence we find theſe put together, *Pſal.* 9. 17. *The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God.* But this is the ſpecial character of an hypocrite, he is a forgetter of God. Conſider this (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ye that forget God*, that is, ye hypocrites conſider this (*Pſal.* 50. 22.) for he ſpeaks of ſuch as had taken the Covenant of *God* in their mouths; *What haſt thou to do* (verſ. 16.) *to take my Covenant in thy mouth?* As if he had ſaid, Thou profeſſeſt to be in Covenant with me, to have an intereſt in me; *Yet when thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſentedſt with him, and haſt been partaker with adulterers, thou giveſt thy mouth to evil*, &c. Hypocrites take the Covenant of God in their mouths, but caſt it out of their lives; *God is near in their mouths, but far from their reins* (*Jer.* 12. 2.) If the hypocrite did not forget that God is about his bed, and about his path, and eſpieth out all his wayes, he could not be ſo falſe with God, ſo polluted in his wayes, ſo rotten in his inward parts. If an hypocrite did not forget that God being a Spirit, delighteth to be worſhipped in ſpirit, he would never be ſatisfied in worſhipping him with his body. If he did not forget that God is jealous, that he will not hold them guiltleſs who take his name in vain, he durſt not (which is his every dayes work) take the name of God in vain.

Secondly obſerve, That, *Forgetfulneſs of God (howſoever it ſeems no great matter, yet) is exceeding ſinful, a wickedneſs of the higheſt ſtature.*

Forgetfulneſs of God is therefore a great wickedneſs, becauſe God hath done ſo many things to be remembred by. What could the Lord have done more to make himſelf remembred then he hath done? *Have I been a wilderneſs to Iſrael, or a land of darkneſs?* (ſaith the Lord, *Jer.* 2. 31.) The words are an aggravation of their forgetfulneſs. As if the Lord had ſaid, I have been a light to you whereſoever you go, and whereſoever I go, my ſteps drop fatnes for you, and am I forgotten? Where can we ſet a ſtep, but we tread upon a remembrance of God? Every creature holds forth God unto us. He hath left his remembrance upon every Ordinance: *Do this in remembrance of me*, ſaith Chriſt in that great Ordinance of the Supper; yea, all the works of his providence are remembrancers of him. He leaves an impreſſion of his wiſdom, holineſs, juſtice, power upon all he doth. Now for us to forget God, who hath (as it were) ſtudied ſo many wayes to faſten himſelf in our remembrance, muſt needs be extreamly ſinful. Further, It is very ſinful to forget God, becauſe God doth ſo abundantly remember us. He hath not only done that which may cauſe man to remember him, but he hath man alwayes in his remembrance, eſpecially his own people. *He hath graven them upon the palms of his hands, and they are continually before him.* They who deſire to preſerve their friends freſh in memory, get their pictures in their houſes, or engrave them upon Rings and Jewels which they wear alwayes about them: But he that cuts the image of his friend in his fleſh, or draws it upon his skin, how zealous is he of his friends remembrance? Pictures and Annulets may be loſt, but our hands cannot fall off. When the Lord would ſhew how mindful he is of his Church, he aſſures her that he carries her picture alwaies about him, not drawn upon a Tablet, or engraven upon the ſignet of his right hand, but upon the palms of his hands: as if he ſhould ſay, I muſt loſe my ſelf before I can loſe the ſight or memory of thee (*Iſa.* 49. 16.) He remembers her ſo, that he cannot forget her. And becauſe the characters and ſtamps of nature are more abiding and indelible then thoſe of art, therefore he ſaith (*ver.* 15. *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.* A woman may break the bonds of nature, but God will never break the bonds of his own free grace. May not all this raiſe us into *David's* rapture of holy admiration, *Pſ.* 8. *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him* with ſuch remembrances? What is a wicked man, that God ſhould give him bread to eat, and cloaths to put on? And what is a godly man, that God ſhould give him Chriſt to eat, and cloath himſelf withal? That God ſhould remember us, is a wonder of mercy, but what a wonder of unthankfulneſs is it, that we ſhould not remember God? What, or *who is God, that man ſhould be ſo mindles of him?* Is not God worthy of all our remembrance? Is it loſs of time to call God into our thoughts? Do we ever, or in any thing remember our ſelves ſo much, as when we remember God moſt? It is a wonderful favour that God ſhould be mindful of us at all; and is it not a wonderful ſin that man ſhould be ſo unmindful of God?

Thirdly obſerve, That, *Forgetfulneſs of God is a mother ſin, or the cauſe of all other ſins.*

It is the cauſe of this ſin of hypocriſie, *Bildad* puts it as a fruit of forgetting God. Forgetfulneſs of God is threefold.

Firſt, A forgetfulneſs that there is a God.

Secondly, A forgetfulneſs who, or what manner of God he is; *Thou thoughteſt that I was ſuch an one as thy ſelf* (*Pſal.* 50.) Thou forgetteſt what manner of God I am; thou preſumeſt that will ſerve my turn which ſerves thine, or that every thing will pleaſe me which pleaſes thee; thou ſaiſt, becauſe it is no great trouble to thee to ſteal and lie, *&c.* therefore it is no great trouble unto me neither.

Thirdly, To forget God, is to forget what God requires; this forgetfulneſs of theſe three ſorts is productive of any, of every ſin.

Laſtly obſerve, *They that forget God, ſhall quickly wither, how great and flouriſhing ſoever they are.*

The reaſon is, becauſe the forgetting of God is a departing from God; and he that departs from God, departs from the fountain of life. If the ruſh go out of the water, it quickly withers, and if men will depart from God, they ſhall quickly decay; neither grace nor comforts can hold out ſeparated from Chriſt. Why is the godly man compared *to a tree planted by the river ſide, which brings forth fruit in his ſeaſon, whoſe leaf ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper?* Why is the man that truſts in the Lord compared to *a tree planted by the waters, that ſpreads out her roots by the river, and ſhall not ſee when heat cometh?* Jer. 17. 7, 8. Is it not becauſe the Saints alwayes keep cloſe to God, by Jeſus Chriſt, who is as an ever-living fountain of water to them, refreſhing and moiſtning them ſo with continual ſupplies of the Spirit, that they *ſhall not ſee when heat cometh?* that is, they ſhall not be afflicted with thoſe evil effects of heat, drought and barrenneſs. They who keep covenant with God, may poſſibly feel ſome decayes, but die they ſhall not, they ſhall revive and ſprout up again; they ſhall again put forth their leaves as a plant, and their fruit as the garden of *Eden*; they ſhall bring forth fruit in old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.

And the hypocrites hope ſhall periſh.

חנף *Simulavit, diſſimulavit occultè peccavit, per Metaphoram pollutus, contaminatus.*

The word which we tranſlate **Hypocrite**, comes from a root that ſignifies cloſe and covered, and by a Metaphor, polluted, defiled, contaminated, becauſe an hypocrite, though he be outwardly covered, and beautifully painted over, yet his paint is a ſpot upon him. All painting is but a ſpot in compariſon of natural beauty. An hypocrite is not ſo much painted as polluted. Hence he is called a *vile perſon* (Iſa. 32. 6.) *The vile perſon will ſpeak villany, and his heart will work iniquity to practiſe hypocriſie, and to utter errour againſt the Lord.* We have the character of hypocrites, *Iſa.* 58. 3. *They dayly call upon my name, as a people that would know the Lord: As a people*; An hypocrite doth but play a part in religion, he doth but perſonate another; like an Actor upon a Stage, who puts forth the ſeveral poſtures and geſtures of a King, when as himſelf is ſome mean fellow. An hypocrite is deſcribed acting a double part; the one is ſimulation, he labours to appear what he is not; he would ſeem to have ſome good which he hath not. And the other is diſſimulation; he labours, not to appear what he is, he would hide and cover the evil that he hath. *An hypocrite is one who ſeems to be what he is not, and would not ſeem what he is.* He is a *Jew outwardly*, and his Religion *Circumciſion outward in the fleſh*, Rom. 1. 18. *He ſeems to be religious* (Jam. 1. 26.) *He is a whited Sepulcher* (Mat. 23. 27.). Stately on the outſide, within nothing but rottenneſs and dead bones. The hypocrite hath a *divided heart*, Hoſ. 10. 3. and a *double mind*, Jam. 1. 8. He is not half enough for God, and too much for himſelf.

Externa facie internā ſanctitatem mentitur.

Hypocrites are of two ſorts, ſome in a large, others in a ſtrict ſence. Moſt wicked men are hypocrites in a large ſence, though ſome are above hypocriſie, they are arrived at impudence. The Prophet ſpeaks of ſuch (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *The ſhew of their countenance doth witneſs againſt them, and they declare their ſin as Sodom, they hide it not.* They declare it not as the mourners in *Zion* declare their ſin, who are aſhamed of it; but they declare it as *Sodom* her ſin, that they may delight in it. But though there are ſome ſuch as theſe, yet the greateſt number of wicked men fall under the notion of hypocriſie in a large ſence, becauſe they keep their ſins cloſe and hide them. Hence the works of ſin are called works of darkneſs. Wicked men uſually hide their wickedneſs, and ſhew that which hath but a ſhew, their goodneſs: But in a ſtrict ſence, he is an hypocrite that ſeems to be very religious, who hath nothing but God, and Chriſt, and Heaven in his mouth, but in his heart and ſecret practices nothing but Earth and Hell. The Hypocrite is like the Onyx-ſtone, of which Naturaliſts write, that it is clear and bright in the Superficies, but the center is dark and earthy. This generation is pure, not only in their own eyes (*Prov.* 30. 12.) but in the eyes of many men, poſſibly in the eyes of all men, *yet they are not cleanſed from their wickedneſs.*

The hypocrites hope ſhall periſh.] That is, the time ſhall come when he ſhall give over the hope which he hath hoped, or the thing ſhall fail him wherein he hoped. Firſt, The object of his hope ſhall fail him, that is, thoſe benefits, bleſſings, accommodations and comforts which he looked for in the profeſſion of Religion, theſe ſhall fail him and prove falſe hopes. Hypocrites (*Mat.* 7.) plead with Chriſt for heaven, *Lord, we have propheſied in thy name, and in thy name caſt out Devils*, &c. But their hopes periſhed; *Depart from me* (ſaith Chriſt) *I know you not.* His hope periſheth when he cannot have the things he hoped for. Secondly, The act of his hope ſhall fail, his hope ſhall be ſo long deferred, that his hope ſhall die; he never had any true ground of hope, and at the laſt he ſhall not have a ſhew of hope. *His hope ſhall periſh.* Obſerve from the name given hypocrites,

First, That, *Hypocrites are filthy and polluted perſons.*

None are ſo ugly in the eye of God as they who paint for ſpiritual beauty. Pretended holineſs is more unlovely then profeſſed unholineſs to them that can diſcern it. As it is ſaid of *Nabal* (1 *Sam.* 20.) *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*: So we may ſay of an hopocrite, *filthineſs is his name, and filth is in him. Nabal* had his name from folly, and hypocrites have theirs from filthineſs.

Secondly obſerve, *Hypocrites may be full of hope for a time.*

They have ſomewhat (though it be unſound) upon which they build, they think what they do and are, will ſerve the turn, and go for currant with God. This raiſes up their ſpirits. Some hypocrites will be full of hope, even while they are deſcending to the pit of deſpair. Some hypocrites are not convinced of their hypocriſie to the very laſt; ſuch die in peace while they are going down to eternal war; they go (as we uſe to ſay) like lambs, when their ſouls are among lions, and they are tumbling into the place of dragons.

Thirdly obſerve, *The hoppe of hypocrites will deceive and fail them.*

God rejects their confidences, they ſhall not proſper in them, Jer. 2. 37.

Laſtly obſerve, That, *To loſe our hope, is the utmoſt of evils.*

Bildad doth not ſay that the hypocrite is damned, and ſhall go to hell, and endure the wrath of God for ever: This one expreſſion, *Their hope ſhall periſh*, amounts to all this and more, if more can be. Do but ſit down and imagine in your thoughts, and contrive the utmoſt of all evils felt by men, yea, the utmoſt (were it poſſible) of all the evils of puniſhment that are in the thoughts of God, and all are wrapped up and comprehended in this one word, *Their hope ſhall periſh.* Hell, and wrath, and fire, and brimſtone, and the worm that never dies, meet in this one word.

Bildad goes on to illuſtrate this by a further inſtance.

Verſe 14. **Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe truſt ſhall be as a ſpiders web.**

Verſe 15. **He ſhall lean upon his houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand: he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure.**

The hypocrite clings about the object of his hope, as a man that is ready to drown, takes hold on any thing, upon a ſtraw or a rotten ſtick; but though he lean upon his houſe, it ſhall not ſtand, *&c.*

Theſe words contain the ſecond ſimilitude, which is both a confirmation and a further illuſtration of the former; for having concluded in *ver.* 13. with theſe words, *The hypocrites hope ſhall periſh*; he (as it were) doubleth and reſumeth it here again, *Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe truſt ſhall be a ſpiders web.*

The Original beareth different interpretations, and from that, ſeveral ſences have been given of theſe words.

כסל

The word here uſed for [**hope**] is not the ſame in the Hebrew, which we had in the laſt clauſe of the former verſe, *His hope ſhall periſh.* This word was opened at large in the fourth Chapter at the ſixth verſe, where we tranſlate it *confidence*; *Is not this thy hope, thy confidence, the uprightneſs of thy wayes?* Now, beſides that the word ſignifies *hope or confidence*, it ſignifies alſo folly, inconſtancy, frowardneſs of ſpirit, vanity and levity of mind. And thus ſome render it here.

This hope ſhall be cut off.] That word alſo beareth different interpretations.

קוט *Debilitatus, languefactus fuit, per Metaphorā, mæſtitia, dolore, tædio affectus fuit, propriè tanquam*

First, To be weakned, to languiſh; and becauſe thoſe things which languiſh and are weak, either are cut off, or are ready to be cut off, therefore it ſignifies likewiſe cutting off.

Secondly, Further the word imports gradually, 1. Diſpleaſing. 2. Loathing and abominating. 3. Chiding or contending.

βδέλυγμα, *i. e. rem putidam, & quæ nauſeam parit, averſari, & eam abhorrere. Non enim placebit ei vecordia ejus.* Vulg.

The words yielding theſe ſences, receive different tranſlations and interpretations. Firſt,

Firſt thus,taking the former for *inconſtancy or folly*, *his folly ſhall diſpleaſe him*, or, *his folly ſhall not pleaſe him.* So the Vulgar. *Hypocrites never pleaſe God, and at laſt they ſhall not pleaſe themſelves.* The wayes and works of hypocrites are ever diſpleaſing to God, and they ſhall at laſt be diſpleaſing to themſelves. That's the ſence of their tranſlation.

And not only ſhall the wayes of an hypocrite be diſpleaſing, but a loathing, an abhorring to him; the Lord loaths him now: *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination*; and he ſhall loath himſelf hereafter. There is a double loathing. There is a loathing of repentance, and there is a loathing of deſpair. The former (though it be unpleaſant, yet) it is a happy loathing of our ſelves. Such loathing of our ſelves is pleaſing to God in the act, and will be pleaſant to us in the fruit (*Ezek.* 6.9.) *They ſhall loath themſelves for the evils they have committed.* And again, *Ezek.* 16.47. & 20.43. The word is taken for this loathing of repentance. But the hypocrite ſhall have another kind of loathing. What? a loathing of deſpair, ſeeing himſelf utterly loſt, and his hopes quite cut off, he ſhall be an abhorring to himſelf.

Hæc diſplicentia cum faſtidio quodam & tabeſcentia conjuncta eſt.

There is yet a third ſtep or degree of ſence in this word. He ſhall not only be diſpleaſed with himſelf, and loath himſelf, but he ſhall fall out with himſelf; his hope ſhall diſpleaſe or vex him into ſelf-anger. Some render the word by contending or chiding; as a man that is diſpleaſed with another, falleth out with him, wrangleth and contendeth with him; ſo an hypocrite, at laſt ſhall chide, contend and wrangle with himſelf, he ſhall contend as much with himſelf at laſt, as ever the Word of God contended with him before. An hypocrite never cometh to a Sermon, but God chides him, the word of God contends with him, and the Spirit of God hath a controverſie with him; this man will not be warned by the chiding of God, nor take that to heart, he ſtill goes on in his hypocriſie. But when no reproofs nor chidings can prevail upon his heart, he is left to the reproofs and chidings of his own heart; which will read him ſuch a Lecture,and give him ſuch a ſchooling as he never had in all his life. Conſcience may be long ſilent, and it may long flatter, but when once it begins to ſpeak, and to ſpeak right, it is the moſt terrible Preacher in the world. There is no *Boanerges* or ſon of thunder hath ſo dreadful a voyce. Mount *Sinai* it ſelf did not thunder ſo loud as Conſcience will. And as conſcience ſpeaks loud, ſo it ſpeaks long. An hypocrite ſhall reprove and chide himſelf for ever, what a fool was I? what a beaſt was I thus to flatter my ſelf, thus to mask mine own filthineſs, and to dawb over the rottenneſs of my heart with the fair covering of a verbal profeſſion? Why did I wilfully deceive my ſelf into irrecoverable perdition?

Secum ipſe litigabit, rixabitur, quæ omnia ad mentis commotionẽ & animi cruciatum pertinent. Pined.

Again, obſerve from, *Whoſe folly ſhall diſpleaſe him.*

That, *The whole courſe of hypocriſie is nothing but fooliſhneſs.*

Of all fools the hypocrite is the greateſt; and the reaſon is, becauſe he takes a great deal of pains in profeſſion, and hath no good at all by profeſſion; he ventureth himſelf many times in the world to perſecution; he runs the hazard of his credit, of his eſtate, of liberty and life. What a fool is this to take ſo much pains, and ſubject himſelf to ſo many dangers in the outward profeſſion of Chriſt, & yet at laſt to loſe the fruit and benefit of all? *This folly muſt needs diſpleaſe him*: he ſhall at laſt ſee what an extream fool he hath been to trouble himſelf about that which bringeth him no real good, but will really double and encreaſe all evil upon him. *No man ſins at ſo dear a rate as the hypocrite.*

A ſecond tranſlation takes the *Noun* (as we) for hope,and not for folly, and retains the former ſence of the *Verb*; and ſo the words are thus, *Whoſe hope ſhall loath him*, that is, the thing which he hoped for ſhall loath him; how loath him? It ſhall loath him, not formally, but equivalently; becauſe it ſhall do that which man doth when he loaths any thing: when we loath a thing, we flee or turn away from it; ſo, *His hope ſhall loath him*, that is,the thing which he hoped for, ſhall flee far away and quite depart, it will not come near him. Good ſhall remove from the hypocrite when he expects and makes after it. An hypocrite at once loaths true grace,and hopes for true comfort; but comfort here, and glory hereafter ſhall loath him,heaven ſhall ſhut againſt him.

Quem faſtidit ſpes ſua. Jun.
Eum quaſi faſtidius fugit id ipſum quod ſperat. Jun.

Or take it for the act of hope (as others) *he ſhall loath his hope*, that is, the very hope which he hath had ſhall be grievous and vexatious unto him;nothing ſhall grieve him more then this, that he hath hoped ſo much. His hope ſhall grieve and afflict him as bad as all his afflictions. *Raiſed expectations diſappointed, prove our greateſt ſorrows.* That man ſinks loweſt in grief, whoſe heart was higheſt in hope. How extreamly ſhall the hypocrite be grieved who falls as low as hell, when his hopes were raiſed up as high as heaven? The hypocrite both in his way and in his end is like the King of *Babylon, He ſaith in his heart, I will aſcend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the ſtars of God, I will aſcend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the moſt high, yet he ſhall be brought down to hell, to the ſides of the pit*, Iſa. 14.13,14.

Spes ei moleſta erit, quod illa excidat, ne id conſequatur quod expectarat. Merc.

Take the words as we tranſlate, ſo they yield a clear ſence, and very agreeable to the original, *Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off.* The word is rendred *cut off*, by a Metaphor, becauſe when a man is exceedingly diſpleaſed and vexed (as the word properly ſignifies) he many times tears his garments, and even cuts his own fleſh, like the idolatrous Prieſts of *Baal*, who were ſo angry becauſe they could not get an anſwer, that *they cut themſelves after their manner, with knives and lancers, till the blood guſhed out upon them*, 1 Kin. 18.28. *Grief cuts the heart alwayes, and ſometimes cauſes cutting of the fleſh.* The Lord complains (*Pſal.* 95. 10.) *Forty years long was I grieved with this generation*; it is this word, *forty years long was I vexed and cut with this generation*, with their murmurings, backſlidings and unbelief. They did (as it were) cut the Lord to the heart; as in another place, *They broke him with their whoriſh hearts*, Ezek. 6.9. God ſpeaks there as a man whoſe patience is almoſt ſpent, or as a husband grieved with the diſloyalties of an adulterous wife.

Sumitur Metaphoricè, quod ii quos tædet ſeſe torquẽt & veſtes, & ſeſe membraq; ſua diſcindant ac lacerant, & velut diſſecent. Merc.

And thus we may joyn it with hope, either as hope imports the act of hope, or the object of hope, *Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off*; the expectation which the hypocrite hath had ſhall come to an end. Or, a time is at hand when an hypocrite ſhall be paſt hoping. Hence obſerve,

Deſpairing is the cutting off of hope.

And ſuch is the condition of an hypocrite. To have hope cut off, is the greateſt cut in the world. *Will the hypocrite pray alwayes?* No,at laſt his prayer ſhall be cut off; *Will the hypocrite hope alwayes?* No, at laſt his hope ſhall be cut off. The Saints in heaven have (in a ſence) their hope cut off, becauſe they are above hope; and at laſt all wicked mens hope ſhall be cut off, becauſe they are below hope. It is better to have all our profeſſions cut off then our hopes. Better have the thread of our lives cut off then the Anchor-cord of our hope cut off, and ſo we left to the rage and tempeſt of deſpair. Again, Joyn it with the object of hope, thus;

All that an hypocrite hopeth for or expects, ſhall be utterly taken away, and cut off from him.

His worldly comfort will be gone,and heavenly comforts will never come. He ſhall find that he hath been in a golden dream, that he hath been as one that is hungry, who dreameth that he is eating, but when he awakes, his ſoul is empty; or as a thirſty man,that dreams he is drinking,but he awakes and behold *he is faint*, Iſa. 29.8. *When dreams ſatisfie hunger and thirſt, the hypocrites hope ſhall be ſatisfied.* Hypocrites ſhall have as good as they bring. They bring God nothing but words and empty profeſſions; and they ſhall have nothing from God but air and empty expectations; their real hopes, or the thing they hoped for,ſhall be cut off. When Hypcrites awake out of their ſleep, their hopes vaniſh as a dream. Not only doth the world, but the Chriſt on whom they hoped, prove a ſhadow, a fancy, an image, an idol of their own making; their hearts were filled with leaves in ſtead of gold, as the Devil cozens his greedy votaries; *Their hope ſhall be cut off.*

And whoſe truſt ſhall be a ſpiders web.

As hope before, ſo here truſt, may be put either for the act or object of truſt; and both (by a Synecdoche) for the whole profeſſion of an Hypocrite.

Hope and truſt are often taken promiſcuouſly. There is a gradual difference between them, not an eſſential. Truſt is the ſtrength of hope, or the acting of a ſtrong faith. The original word ſignifies a very quiet, ſecure, ſetled truſt; when a man truſts upon or about a thing, without caſting ſo much as a jealous thought after it. Thus the Hypocrite truſts, he never ſuſpects himſelf; his heart ſaith all is well,

בטח

Lev. 25. 18. *Ye ſhall dwell in the Land in ſafety*; the word is, *Ye ſhall dwell in the Land in truſt*, becauſe an opinion of ſafety is the companion of truſt; when we truſt our condition is good, then we think our ſelves ſafe.

There are two things noted by this word.

Firſt, Boldneſs and confidence.

Secondly, Security and peaceableneſs. The hypocrite feels no trouble, and he fears none: The languiſhing of his heart is like that of *Babylon* the mother of whoredoms and *hypocriſie, who ſaith in her heart, I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow*, Rev. 18. 17.

This truſt, where it is true, hath a double effect. The want of which diſcovers the falſeneſs of it in the Hypocrite.

Firſt, It confirms and ſtrengthens the heart againſt all oppoſitions. And,

Secondly, It encourages the heart againſt all dangers. He that truſts in God, will walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, and fear no evil. He dares take a bear by the tooth, or a lion by the beard: In both theſe the truſt of the hypocrite faileth. He will work and go on boldly till he meets with oppoſition; he will work in a fair day, till he meets with a ſtorm, and dangers threaten; but there he gives over. *He that is not acquainted with the aſſurance-Office of heaven, will ſeldom, if at all, run hazards here on earth.* True truſt brings God and the ſoul together, but the hypocrite never comes near God, and then no marvel if he be afraid to come near danger.

Note from it before we put the words together, thus much,

> That, *An Hypocrite hath a truſt of his own, a truſt like himſelf.*

Whoſe truſt.] An Hypocrite doth moſt things which the upright and ſincere hearted do, and he ſeems to have every thing which the upright and ſincere hearted have. Do they pray? ſo doth he. Do they hear? ſo doth he. Do they faſt? ſo doth he. Have they faith? he hath a faith too. Have they the fear of God? he alſo hath a kind of fear. Have they zeal? ſo hath he; yea, the zeal of hypocriſie burns hotter for a blaſt, then the zeal of ſincerity. He hath Grace proper to his ſtate; falſe grace for his falſe heart; he hath truſt, ſuch as it is, a truſt which belongeth to all of his rank; ſee the character of it in the next words.

It ſhall be a ſpiders web.] The Hebrew is, *It ſhall be the ſpiders houſe*; the web is the houſe of the ſpider. We have the ſame word, *Iſa.* 59. 5. *They weave the ſpiders web. Iſaiah* ſpeaks of ſuch pretenders, *They truſt in vanity, and ſpeak lies.* Theſe were the ſpiders web which they weaved.

עכביש *Tam animal quam rete ejus, quod ſolet contexere ſignificat.*

But why is the truſt of the hypocrite compared unto the ſpiders web? I ſhall clear that in four or five particulars, which will be as ſo many notes upon this text.

Firſt, Becauſe the profeſſion and all the works of an hypocrite are very weak and unſtable, as the ſpiders web is. There is a kind of curioſity in them, but there is no ſtrength or ſtability in them: The ſpider works very curiouſly, but her houſe will not bear any ſtreſs of weather, much leſs force of battery. The ſpiders web is no match for a broom or a whisk. Thus is the profeſſion, the truſt of hypocrites; you may ſee a neat ſpinning, a fine thread of profeſſion, accurate weavings and contrivances, but when it comes to a puſh, it is not able to ſtand; if you do but touch it, 'tis gone. Some will ſtand out longer then others, yet all fall, as Chriſt aſſures us (*Mat.* 7. *ult.*) it is the hypocrite who buildeth his houſe upon the ſand; to have a houſe built upon the ſand, is no better then to have a houſe built in the cieling; when the ſtorm comes, that houſe falls; and when the broom comes, this muſt down.

Secondly, The truſt of an hypocrite is called a ſpiders web, becauſe he fetches and formes it (as it were) out of his own bowels; that whereunto he truſteth, is wrought out of himſelf. That's the nature of the ſpider, ſhe hath no extrinſecal materials to build her houſe with; ſhe doth not hew her ſtones out of any quarry, or fetch her timber from any foreſt (as we may allude) the materials which ſhe hath, ſhe fetcheth out of her bowels. The Bee makes an houſe, and fetcheth the materials from this and that flower; ſo the Bee makes a comb for a houſe; but the ſpider ſucks no flowers. Thus it is with hypocrites, their truſt and hope is as the ſpiders web, made out of their own ſubſtance; they eviſcerate themſelves, they fetch all out of themſelves. The meaning is, all their truſt is in their own ſtrength, in their own ſtock, in their own gifts, upon theſe they build, theſe are their houſe. We find the Phariſees truſt thus grounded; ſuch was his houſe (*Luke* 18.) *I faſt twice a week, I give alms, I pay all men their due.* He was very exact in righteouſneſs according to the Law, upon this, and out of this he makes his houſe; this is to make an houſe like a ſpider. *Though it be our graces we truſt upon, our truſt will be a ſpiders web.* The Believer is well compared to a Bee; the Bee hath an houſe and honey, but the Bee fetcheth all from abroad, from herbs and flowers: Believers have their houſe to dwell in, and their honey to feed upon; but they ſuck all from the promiſes of Chriſt; yea, they ſuck it from Chriſt himſelf: they reſt not in the letter of the promiſes, but they go to Chriſt, who is the matter promiſed, and the accompliſher of all the promiſes. Here they build their houſe, and hew out the pillars of it.

Thirdly, **Their truſt ſhall be a ſpiders web**, in the iſſue it ſhall periſh like a ſpiders web. How is that? As ſoon as the houſe comes to be cleanſed, down go the ſpiders webs; when the houſe is ſwept, the cob-webs are firſt ſwept away. Thus it is with the truſt of all hypocrites; when God ſweeps his houſe, his Church, he quickly ſweeps out theſe ſpiders webs (*Iſa.* 14. 23.) The Prophet ſpeaks of the *Beſom of God*; the judgments of God are the beſom of God by which he ſweepeth his houſe. God hath a double beſom, or a double uſe of his beſom; he hath a beſom of deſtruction, and a beſom of purgation. It is a beſom of deſtruction to hypocrites, and it is a beſom of purgation to his Saints. When either the beſom of deſtruction, or the beſom of purgation is in hand, the truſt of hypocrites is ſwept away. When the Prophet deſcribes the Lord in his great and terrible judgments (*Iſa.* 33. 14.) The Text ſaith, *The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs ſurprizeth the hypocrite, who ſhall dwell with devouring fire?* God provoked is a devouring fire. How ſhall ſtubble and ſpiders webs ſtand before him? When trouble comes, the truſt of hypocrites goes to wrack; they tremble then, for their truſt is but a ſpiders web, it cannot ſtand one ſtroak, or endure the flaming heat. The hope of a godly man grows ſtrongeſt in times of trouble, he is purified in the fire; and the hope of an hypocrite weakens till it be none at all, in times of trouble, it is caſt out of doors amongſt the rubbiſh, or is conſumed with the fire.

Fourthly, Take this parallel between the ſpiders web, and the profeſſion of hypocrites; the ſpider makes his web to catch and enſnare others, to catch the poor flies. She hath a double uſe of her houſe, to lie in it, and to entrap flies in it. Her houſe is a ſnare. The profeſſion of an hypocrite is a ſpiders web in this notion; he makes it to catch flies with, to enſnare and deceive the ſimple, that he may prey upon them: He would count godlineſs a poor thing, did he not make a gain of godlineſs; that brings him in food and cloathing, he lives upon it. This his deceitful web is ſo fine ſpun, and fairly woven, that you cannot eaſily diſcern any thing but truth and beauty in it: Hypocrites cannot be diſtinguiſhed by the outſide of what they do; their lewdneſs is under a covert. Some tell us that the Hebrew word for an hypocrite, may be derived from another, which ſignifies a cloud; the wickedneſs of ſuch is wrapt up in a cloud; whence the Latine word for a crafty, diſhoneſt man, imports one who caſts a cloud or a miſt before his diſhoneſty; ſo that it is hard to make this diſcovery, till effects and iſſues make it. Only God looks quite through all clouds and coverings, he ſees what is in the heart, though man cannot. God ſees his contrivances are only to ſerve his turn, and attain earthly ends.

Nebulo à nebula, qui mendaciis ſuis nebulã quandam & tenebras objicit.

Fifthly, The hypocrite, like the ſpider, thinks himſelf ſafe and out of harms way, when once lodged in this profeſſion. He is ready to boaſt that the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it. So much for the ſimilitude.

Animalculum illud valde imbecillum & malicioſum atque meditabundum, potius quam prudens, domicilium adificat, in quo ſe tutum exiſtimat. Bold.

Now follows the application of the ſimilitude in the fifteenth verſe.

Verſe 15. **He ſhall lean upon his houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand; he ſhall take hold of it, but it ſhall not endure.**

Bildad goes on to bring down his ſimilitude to this particular.

Thus the ſpider doth, and thus the hypocrite: the ſpider leans upon his houſe, there he dwels; and ſo the hypocrite he leans upon his houſe, there he dwells and reſts himſelf.

שען Nixus, innixus eſt, reclinatus fuit, incubuit totis viribus, per Metaphorā confidet.

The word which we tranſlate *lean*, is often uſed in the Old Teſtament, to note the *vital act of faith*, the act of recumbency; Faith in the vital act of it is a reſting upon another. Now falſe faith imitates true faith, that will be reſting and leaning. Faith whether true or falſe cannot ſtand alone, it muſt have a *lean-to.*

He leaneth upon his houſe.] It noteth leaning upon a ſtaff, or upon any ſtay (1 *Sam.* 1. 6.) *Saul leaned upon his ſpear being weary in the battel.* And *Prov.* 3. 5. *Lean not to thine own underſtanding.* Wiſe men, men of deep reach and judgment, lean to their own underſtandings, their wits are their props (*Iſa.* 10.20.) *The remnant of* Iſrael, *ſhall no more ſtay themſelves upon him that ſmote them, but they ſhall ſtay upon the Lord,* or, *they ſhall lean upon the Lord, the holy One of* Iſrael *in truth* (2 Sam. 22. 19.) *They prevented me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my ſtay.* God prevent his people with mercy, and their enemies prevents them with unkindneſſes, but the love of God outruns the malice of man; his love ſtaies up thoſe whom malice would caſt down. The Lord was my ſtay. And hence, the *Noun* of this *Verb* in the Hebrew ſignifies a *ſtaff*, becauſe we uſe a ſtaff to lean and reſt the body upon (*Iſa.* 3. 1.) *Behold, the Lord of hoſts doth take away from* Jeruſalem *and from* Judah, *the ſtay and the ſtaff, the whole ſtay of bread, and the whole ſtay of water. The ſtay of bread,* or, *the ſtaff of bread*; becauſe bread is that upon which the life of man leans or depends, as we depend or lean upon a ſtaff. Bread is elegantly called a ſtaff, becauſe bread ſupports the life of man, as a ſtaff doth the body. It implies this alſo, that the power, vertue and ſtrength by which bread doth ſuſtain us, comes from without; *The ſtaff of bread*; he doth not call the bread it ſelf a ſtaff, but he ſaith, there is a ſtaff of bread, the bread muſt have a ſtaff (of bleſſing from God) or elſe it cannot be a ſtaff (of ſtrengthning to us) as the bread is the immediate ſtaff of our bodies: ſo the bleſſing of God is the immediate ſtaff of the bread: the bread leaneth upon the bleſſing of God, as we lean upon the bread. As an hungry man leans upon his bread, ſo an hypocrite leans upon his houſe, *He ſhall lean upon his houſe.* That's his ſtay.

Scita eſt Metaphora, cum fulcimentū panū uſurpat pro pane fulciente, ſignificans foris vim illā panū accedere. Ut enim greſſus ſenū reguntur baculo, ita panis dicitur habere baculum. Mol. in Iſa. 3. 1.

But, what is his houſe? *He ſhall lean upon his houſe.*

The houſe of this hypocrite it is two-fold; or he hath two houſes. He hath a worldly houſe, and he hath a ſpiritual houſe. He hath one houſe made out of earthly materials, and another made out of heavenly materials.

He hath an houſe made out of worldly materials, and ſo ſome interpret this place, *he ſhall lean upon his houſe*; that is, upon his riches, upon his relations, upon his greatneſs upon his friends, upon his correſpondencies, upon the eſtimation that he hath abroad in the world, upon his reputation with his neighbours at home.

Domū impii vocat bona & facultates ejus quibus homines ſe fulciant, juxta illud, opes divitis arx ejus valida. Druſ.

Theſe framed and put together are a houſe which the hypocrite builds for himſelf, upon theſe he reſts: and that's a truth, the world is an hypocrites ſupport, the houſe upon which he leans. The money in his cheſt upholds him, not faith in his heart; his goods pleaſe him more then goodneſs. He eaſily believes that he is in the favour of God, becauſe he hath ſo much favour among men. That's one houſe.

Bildad might aim at this, becauſe *Job* was a man of a full and vaſt eſtate, the richeſt and greateſt of all the men in the Eaſt; as if he had ſaid, *Job, thou haſt leaned upon thy outward abundance, upon thy ſheep and oxen, upon thy children and ſervants, and now thou findeſt all but a ſpiders web, ſwept away in a moment.* Yet (I conceive) he means rather a houſe built of heavenly materials. And there are three ſorts of heavenly materials, out of which the hypocrite builds his houſe.

Firſt, Gifts; he hath knowledge and underſtanding in the Word and wayes of God, the gift of prayer, the gift (it may be) of Tongues of Prophecy and Preaching. Theſe are excellent materials, and upon theſe he builds his truſt, that he is in a good eſtate.

The ſecond ſort of materials, are holy Duties, he prayes, he hears, he faſteth, and he gives alms, and the like; Theſe he doth, and out of theſe materials he builds his houſe, very ſtrongly he hopes.

Thirdly, He hath finer ſtuff then all this to build his houſe of, he buildeth upon ſuppoſed graces; he can tell you, he hath faith, he hath love, he hath patience, he hath humility, and he hath ſorrow for ſin; he can count all theſe things, and out of theſe he buildeth himſelf an houſe of ſpecial confidence, ſuch a houſe as he doubts not will ſtand all winds and weathers: he hopes to ſtand ſafe in judgment, under the roof and goodly fabrick of this houſe.

Out of theſe three ſorts of materials, ſpiritual gifts, ſpiritual duties, and ſuppoſed ſpiritual graces; upon all theſe, and out of theſe he buildeth, and thinks he hath made an houſe that ſhall ſtand for ever.

The point I ſhall give you, taking in thoſe three ſorts of materials, is,

That gifts, duties, and ſuppoſed graces are the ſtay and the ſtaff, the houſe, and the ſtrength of hypocrites.

Upon theſe they lean, and in theſe they ſecure themſelves; they reſt upon this bottom for eternity. Hence they even dare to plead with God himſelf about it (*Matth.* 7. 22.) *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name caſt out Devils, and done many great wonders?* They truſted upon, *Have we not propheſied? Have we not prayed? Have we not done wonders?* They thought thoſe ſufficient materials to build them a Tower which ſhould reach Heaven it ſelf; who can doubt, but they who do ſuch things as theſe ſhall do well? The gift of prophecy, the power to caſt out Devils, and work miracles, ſound high, and make a great noiſe. Yet at laſt, this Tower of their confidence proves but a Caſtle in the Air, or a ſpiders web. How confident were they, who could plead thus with God: He hath opened the ſecrets of Heaven to us, and do you think he will ſhut the gates of Heaven upon us? We have preached, we have been inſtruments of ſaving others, and ſhall not we be ſaved our ſelves? We have caſt out Devils, and ſhall we be caſt to the Devil? We have not walked in an ordinary tract of Profeſſion, but we have traded in wonders, and done miracles, we have amazed the world with reports of the great things we have done, is all this nothing? Thus they plead with Chriſt, as if he were bound to ſave them by the law of theſe ſervices: yet Chriſt tells them, *Depart from me, I know you not:* Surely, thought they, God will fetch his fewel for thoſe everlaſting burnings from among the rude Heathens, or debauched drunkards, adulterers, *&c.* not from among us. Were it not a wonder greater then any we have wrought, if we who have wrought great wonders ſhould not be admitted? One of the Ancients repreſents them in ſuch amazements, *What means this ſtrange unexpected anſwer from Chriſt, Depart, &c.* Muſt we depart who lived ſo near thee? Muſt we be damned, whom thou haſt thus honoured?

τί βούλεται, τὸ ξένον καὶ παράδοξον τοῦτο τέλος &c. Chryſ.

The Apoſtle *Paul* (*Rom.* 2. 17.) ſpeaking of hypocritical Jews, diſcovers ſuch a confidence, *Thou reſteſt in the Law,* as a man reſteth in his houſe, there he ſleeps and is quiet, ſo theſe in the Law, there they were quiet; that is, in the priviledges and outward profeſſion of the Law, or in a litteral and outward obedience to the Law. The Jews built their houſe upon, or with legal righteouſneſs, *Thou reſteſt in the Law*; he ſpeaks both by way of narration, and likewiſe by way of redargution. He tells what they did, and how ill they did in doing ſo. *Paul* rejects this as refuſe ſtuff, as hay and ſtraw, as droſs and dung, as *confidence in the fleſh* (Phil. 3. 3. *&c.*) are fleſh. So Prayer is fleſh, ordinances are fleſh, the righteouſneſs of the Law is fleſh; yea, *Grace it ſelf truſted to, is fleſh.* The duties which Chriſt hath appointed are the houſe of the hypocrite; but Chriſt himſelf is the houſe of the upright; He would be *found in him* (Phil. 3. 9.) not in duties or inherent graces. Saints deſire that much grace may be found in them, but they dare not be found in grace; they would ever be acting graces, but never truſting to them. Obſerve,

Tibi applaudis quod legem ſcriptam acceperis, quod frequens es in lectione & auditione legis.

Secondly, *An hypocrites hope is high and ſtrong, that his eſtate is good now, and that he ſhall receive good at the laſt.*

He leaneth upon this houſe. Some are without hope in the world, of whom we may ſpeak as the Apoſtle of an Heretick (*Tit.* 3. 11.) *they are condemned of themſelves.* Some men have the ſentence of condemnation in their own hearts. But there are others, as you ſee here, who have great and ſtrong confidences in themſelves, who live and die with this confidence too; This they do upon the former witneſs. As the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks concerning the witneſs which the Saints have for Heaven, *There are three which bear witneſs*, &c. *and theſe three are one:* So there are three which bear witneſs to the hypocrite, and theſe three are one; they agree in one to deceive, as the other to give aſſurance.

Firſt, The world that giveth many a man a witneſs and letters teſtimonial, that his eſtate is good, his neighbours ſay ſo, they flatter him, and cry peace, peace to him.

Secondly, Satan applauds him, the Devil gives him his good word, and tells him that certainly his eſtate is very good.

Thirdly, His own heart will ſeal to all, he ſhall have *the witneſs in himſelf*, as it is ſpoken of the true believer. So that the hypocrite having ſuch witneſſes, a witneſs within himſelf, a certificate under the hand of Satan, and letters commendatory from the world, all this muſt needs give him ſtrength of hope, that his houſe ſhall ſtand for ever.

But ſee the iſſue, *He leaneth upon his houſe*, what then?

עמד
Stetit, perſiſtit, manſ.

It ſhall not ſtand.] The word ſignifies to ſtand firmly and ſtrongly, or to continue ſtanding. He thought that the materials which he had brought together, and the hopes which he had raiſed upon them, would have been as Mount *Zion*, that cannot be removed, but he leaneth upon it, *and it ſhall not ſtand.* Whence obſerve,

All that an hypocrite truſteth unto ſhall deceive him at the laſt.

It ſhall not ſtand. Their webs ſhall not become garments, *Neither ſhall they cover themſelves with their works*, Iſa. 59. 6. The language is proverbial, importing higheſt diſappointment: Who would weave a web, if he knew he ſhould never have a garment by it? Or work hard, when himſelf muſt go naked? *Jer.* 7. 1, 2. The Lord ſends to the people by his Prophet, *Say to this people, Truſt not to lying words*; that is, words which will deceive and fail you, you truſt and lean to them, but they will fall away from you: What were thoſe words? Even that they had a goodly houſe to lean to, they cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*: but I hope that's a ſtrong houſe, as well as a beautiful, a man may lean upon that, upon the Temple of the Lord, and do well. No, *The Temple of the Lord leaned upon, will be but a ſpiders web*; God gave the Jews a Temple to worſhip him in, and many of them worſhipped the Temple. We adore every duty we depend upon, and give the Ordinances of God the honour of God. We can ſtand no more by ſuch truſt-to Ordinances, then we ſhall by the neglect of them.

Theſe, and all the materials before mentioned, will be found too weak, they ſhall not ſtand. Gifts cannot commend to God. If a man had the tongue of men and Angels, if all the knowledge that ever was ſcattered in the world were brought together into one head; this cannot commend him unto God. The Devil is as full of knowledge as he can hold, and yet he is as full of wickedneſs as he can hold. Duties cannot commend to God.

And there are two ſpecial reaſons why the hypocrites duties cannot.

Firſt, He is not at all changed in duties. He prayes and ſins, hears and ſins, profeſſes and continues wicked cloſely, if not openly.

עמדי
Inducitur à Gnamad, *mulier quã dediſti mihi, ut adſtaret, juvaret, iſſetq; vicarium auxilium, ipſa author hujus mali exſtitit.* Fagi. *in loc.*

Secondly, He leans upon his duties. Could we ſuppoſe true grace leaned on, that could not ſtand. *Nothing is a ſufficient ſtrength for us to ſtay upon, but the free grace of God, and Jeſus Chriſt:* Lean to theſe houſes, for they will ſtand for ever. Of all other houſes you ſhall ſay as *Adam* did of his wife, *Gen.* 3. 12. (and it is the word here uſed in the Text) *The woman which thou gaveſt to be with me*, to ſtay by me, to be a helper and a ſupport to me, this woman hath given me, and I did eat, ſhe hath been the cauſe of my ruine. The ſame will be ſaid of all the gifts, and duties, and graces, which we ſtand upon. God hath given them us, and he hath given them us as meet helpers, but they will deceive and ruine us, if we lean on them. We ſhall fall by them, if we hope to ſtand by them (*Pſal.* 23. 4.) *Thou art with me in trouble* (ſaith *David*) *therefore I ſhall not fall*; it is this word, *Thou ſtandeſt with me.* Chriſt will ſtand by us at all times, *Thou ſtandeſt with me*, or *by me:* When the world faileth, and when gifts fail, yea, when graces fail, in degree and activity, then Jeſus Chriſt and free grace will ſtand by us, *Iſa.* 26. 7. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtaied on thee. Chriſt is the only lean-to.*

עמדי
Quaſi apud me ſtans.

There is one clauſe further,

He ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure.

This clauſe is of the ſame importance with the former, only the ſence is ſomewhat heightned. It notes, that the hypocrite ſhall not only lean upon his houſe, but he ſhall take ſtrong hold upon his houſe, *He ſhall faſten on it*; ſo Mr. *Broughton.* A man may lean to a thing, and have no hold of it; he that takes hold of a thing would make it firm to himſelf, and himſelf firm to it. Thus the hypocrite leans upon his houſe, and takes faſt hold of it; if it would fall from him, if any attempt to pull him away from it, or he ſticks to it, he will not let it go.

יחזיק בו
Eam mordicus tenens, ſe in ea ſtabilem & firmum ſemper fore putans. Merc.

The word ſignifies to hold faſt, ſtrongly and prevailingly. *Job's* wife (*Chap.* 2.) ſpeaks thus, *Doeſt thou ſtill hold faſt thine integrity?* And God himſelf ſpeaks in the ſame language concerning *Job*, *Doeſt thou not ſee, though thou haſt moved me to afflict him without cauſe, how he holdeth faſt his integrity?* The hypocrite (after his manner, *Mordicus tenet*) holds his duties, performances, gifts, toughly, or (as it were) with his very teeth, he will hold them to the very death, and not let them go, the hypocrite will not give over, will not be beaten off from truſting to theſe falſe and weak props, here he ſets up his reſt, he will die by his gifts, his duties, his outward profeſſion, and go no further.

It is our glory to hold integrity faſt, to hold grace faſt, yea, and duties in point of practice and obedience; but it is our ſin and danger, to hold them faſt in reliance and confidence.

It is a ſad uſe which ſome make of this truth, when they hear that hypocrites hold faſt upon duties, *&c.* they let go their duties; they let prayer go, repentance, and ſorrow for ſin go; they ſay, it is no matter for duties, they need not trouble themſelves, Chriſt doth all. This is to turn the grace of God into wantonneſs. We muſt let go both our graces and our duties in point of juſtification, but hold them we muſt as our lives, in converſation, and the tenour of our lives. Prayer, hearing, faſting, repenting, muſt not die, while we live; Do them we muſt, but glory in them we muſt not.

לאיקום
à radice
קום
Surrexit, ad ſtandũ erectus, ſtabilis, ſolidus manſit, perſeveravit.

He holdeth them faſt, but (yet) it ſhall not endure.] That's the laſt thing. We ſee as often as the hypocrite riſes to take hold of his hopes, ſo often his hopes fail him: (before) *It ſhall not ſtand* (*now*) *it ſhall not endure.*

The word ſignifies, it ſhall not be eſtabliſhed to him, he would eſtabliſh this houſe to himſelf, but it ſhall not be eſtabliſhed, his worldly eſtate ſhall not be eſtabliſhed, his duties, his graces, his gifts, ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.

The word notes that eſtabliſhment which is made by a politick Act or Edict. It is the Jews operative word, in which they enact Laws, *Eſth.* 9. The word is uſed three times (*ver.* 29, 31, & 32.) for a political eſtabliſhment of that decree about the deliverance of the Jews from the conſpiracy of *Haman*, they eſtabliſhed or made a Law for it. Laws are for continuance, therefore they are *eſtabliſhed* and *ſetled.* An hypocrite would do ſo too, he would enact and aſtabliſh what he doth, *but it ſhall not endure*, it will be null'd and repeal'd quickly.

The word alſo ſignifies, that which is *ſubſtantial* (*it ſhall not endure*) that is, it ſhall not be as a ſubſtance, it ſhall appear at laſt to be a ſhadow, *Gen.* 7. 23. *Every living ſubſtance was deſtroyed*; it is this word, that is, every thing that ſtood up and ſubſiſted. So, *Deut.* 11. 6. the word ſignifies the ſubſtance and outward eſtate which *Korah, Dathan*, and *Abiram* had, *They and their ſubſtance went down into the pit.* The hypocrite thinks his eſtate is a ſubſtantial eſtate, yet both his worldly houſe, and his ſpiritual houſe, builded as was before deſcribed, ſhall moulder away and rot, they ſhall not endure, 1 *King.* 7. 21. *Solomon* ſet up two pillars in the Temple, and an hypocrite in his building ſets up two pillars, and he calleth them after the name that *Solomon* called his, the Text ſaith, *The one he called* Jachin, *and the other* Boaz; *Jachin*, he will eſtabliſh, and *Boaz*, ſtrength. Which may note that the people of God, who worſhip him in his Temple, have two pillars, two everlaſting pillars, they have *Chriſt, and the free grace of God to truſt upon*; theſe are the two pillars of the Temple, that ſupport our hope, and the one is truly called *Jachin, eſtabliſhed*, and the other *Boaz, ſtrength*. The hypocrite hath a Temple, an houſe, and two pillars, upon which he makes theſe inſcriptions, *Upon his worldly eſtate he writes* Jachin, *Eſtabliſhed*; *Upon his ſpiritual eſtate he writes* Boaz, *Strength*; but he will be deceived in both, *They ſhall not endure. When a wicked man begins to fall, nothing ſhall ſupport him.* As it was ſaid of *Haman* in regard of his outward honour, *If theſe men be of the ſeed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt fall utterly:* So, though when an hypocrite ſees his houſe falling, he takes faſt hold of it, and endeavours to ſupport it, *yet it ſhall not ſtand*, fall it ſhall. *The righteous falls and riſes again, he falls ſeven times in a day, and yet is raiſed up again*, Prov. 24. 16. but when an hypocrite begins to fall, he falleth down, down for ever. It is ſaid of the righteous (*Pſal.* 37. 24.) *Though he fall, he ſhall not utterly be caſt off, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand*; but when the hypocrite falleth, he ſhall be utterly caſt away, for his duties only hold him by the hand, he hath only ſomewhat of himſelf to ſupport himſelf with, therefore though he take hold of it, *It ſhall not endure*.

Ubi ſemel corruerit impius non erigetur. Merc.

VERS. 16, 17, 18, 19.

He is green before the Sun, and his branch ſhooteth forth in his garden.

His roots are wrapped about the heap, and ſeeth the place of ſtones.

If he deſtroy him from his place, then it ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee.

Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth ſhall others grow.

THE Context of theſe four Verſes holds forth to us the third ſimilitude, by which *Bildad* illuſtrates the condition of an hypocrite.

The ſimilitude is explained in *verſ.* 16, 17, 18. and applied in *v.* 19.

The hypocrite was firſt, compared to a *ruſh, or a flag.* Secondly to a *ſpiders web.* But now to a *goodly tree.* This third ſimilitude grants the hypocrite the beſt of his condition, and puts him in the faireſt poſture that can be imagined, and yet all proves nought; his root is but rottenneſs, and his bloſſom ſhall go up as the duſt; or his branches ſhall be cut down, and his root ſtubbed up. It is as if *Bildad* had ſaid, *If you think I have ſpoken too little and too low, or have debaſed the hypocrite more then was meet, by comparing him to a poor ruſh or a flag, and his eſtate to a ſpiders web; then take him in his higheſt notion, let him be looked upon as a green flouriſhing tree before the Sun, faſtning his roots, and ſpreading out his branches, yet you ſhall ſee, at the laſt, deſtruction is his end. Behold, this is the joy of the hypocrite.*

That's the ſum, and the general ſence of the words.

Three things are held forth in this ſimilitude concerning the hypocrite.

Firſt, His outward and flouriſhing eſtate in *verſ.* 16. *He is green before the Sun, and his branch ſhooteth forth in his garden.*

Secondly, His hurtfulneſs, or the annoyance which he doth to his neighbours and brethren, ſhadowed out in *verſ.* 17. *His roots are wrapped about the heap, and he ſeeth the place of ſtones.*

Thirdly, We have his ruine or cutting down, his deſtruction or pulling up, in *verſ.* 18. *If he deſtroy him from his place, then it ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee.*

His flouriſhing eſtate begins in *verſ.* 16.

He is green before the Sun.

רטב *Madere humidum ſucco ſum eſſe.*

The word [**Green**] ſignifies moiſt, juicy, or ſappy, proper to trees: So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *He is juiceful before the Sun.* And others, *He is full of ſap.* In which ſence the word is uſed, *Chap.* 24. 8. of this Book, *They are wet with the ſhowres of the mountains*, or *moiſt*, and *ſappy*, receiving many ſhowres from the mountains.

A tree green, juicy and full of ſap, is in the height of his ſtrength and beauty: Juice and ſap is to the tree, as blood to the veins, and marrow to the bones of a man; and therefore as a young man in the prime and ſtrength of his age is deſcribed by having his veins full of blood, and his bones full of marrow; ſo a tree is deſcribed in it's greateſt verdure, by having his root and branches full of ſap and moiſture. The hypocrite may be ſuch a flouriſhing tree, *He is green before the Sun.*

לפני שמש

Before the Sun.] The Hebrew is, *Before the face of the Sun.* The word *Shemeſh* (*the Sun*) ſignifieth a miniſter or ſervant, becauſe the Sun is the great ſervant of the world, and miniſtreth thoſe benefits of light, heat, and influence. This (by the way) ſhould have kept the Nations from adoring it as a God, which both in name and nature was their ſervant. But what means this, *Before the Sun*?

First, Some take, *before the Sun*, to be only this, openly, conſpicuouſly, and in the ſight of all; for to do a thing *before the Sun*, is to do it without covert or ſecrecy, 2 *Sam.* 12. 12. Thus the Lord threatneth *David*, after that ſin of privacy committed with *Bathſheba*, *Thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this before all* Iſrael, *and before the Sun:* So the hypocrite, *is green before the Sun*; that is, he flouriſheth in the eye, view and ſight of all men. He hath fair leaves and branches of outward profeſſion in the Church, and of outward proſperity in the world.

Ante ſolem, i. e. *palam in oculis omnium.*

Secondly, *Before the Sun*, that is, as a tree in Summer, when the Sun returns to us, or turns upon us. In the beginning of the Spring the Sun returns: having travel'd furtheſt off from us, it comes to the Vertical point and turns about to us again. So that *before the Sun*, or the Sun looking towards us, is a deſcription of the Spring. And ſo it is, as if he had ſaid, *As a tree when the Sun cometh towards it in the Spring, and ſhines hot upon it in the Summer, makes a fair ſhew:* So the hypocrite is very green, joyful, full of contentment, whilſt he hath the Sun of proſperity ſhining upon him, whilſt thoſe warm rayes of outward comforts, heat and nouriſh him, *ſo long he is green and flouriſhing.*

Thirdly, *Before the Sun*, that is, (according to others) before the Sun ſhines too hot upon him, before the Sun ſcorches and withers him; as if he had ſaid, the hypocrite is a green tree, till the heat comes upon him, till the Sun ariſeth in his ſtrength: but aſſoon as the heat of the day, or the year comes, this tree withers. An hypocrite cannot abide the extream heat of the Sun, whereas the godly have ſuch an everlaſting ſupply of moiſture and ſap, that let the Sun ſhine as hot as it will upon them, they are green ſtill. The ordinary heat of the Sun is put for proſperity: the extream heat of the Sun, is put for perſecution. So, the meaning may be this, *He is green before the Sun*, that is, before the Sun of trouble and perſecution ariſeth, or (as ſome render it) before God looks angerly upon him and ſcorcheth his leaves, till then, *He is green and flouriſhing. Before* refers both to *time*, and *preſence.*

Antequã ſol veniat. Bibl. Reg. *Ante exortũ & ardorem ſolis*, i. e. *antequã ſol inardeſcens eum adurat*, q.d. *priuſquã à Domino puniatur & viſitatur. Ardor eſt ira Domini.* Merc.

Fourthly, Others take it as a deſcription of the hypocrites outward flouriſhing, which may be ſuch ſometimes as *holds out before the Sun*, that is, when the Sun is very hot upon him; and then this clauſe ſtands in oppoſition to the ruſh, which *whilſt it is yet in his greenneſs withereth before any other herb.* If the Sun riſe hot upon the ruſh, it withereth preſently, where it wants outward moiſture. But here *Bildad* ſeems to grant, or at leaſt to ſuppoſe, that the hypocrite may poſſibly riſe to ſuch a flouriſhing eſtate, that he holds his greenneſs, even before the Sun, in a great deal of heat and trouble. Thus *Before* notes preſence.

Ante ſolem, i.e. *in ardore ſolis arboris more, quæ pulchre aliquandiu ſuccreſcens æſtum non timet, imò calore ſolis moderato adjuvatur & alitur.* Merc.

Either way the ſence is good, *He is green before the Sun* cometh with his heat, that is, he cannot endure the ſcorching time of trouble: or *he is green before the Sun*; that is, before ſome trouble or ſcorching, before ſome heat of perſecution, this hypocrite may ſtand, *He is green before the Sun:*

And his branch ſhooteth forth in his garden.

יונק Significat lactantem ſeu infantem lac ſugentem per Metaphoram ſumitur pro ſucculo aut tenero ramo qui ſugit arborem. Teneriores ramuſculi lactantibus pueris ſunt ſimiles.

Branch.] The word which we tranſlate *Branch*, is derived from a root which ſignifies a little ſucking child, or an infant; and the reaſon is, becauſe branches which come from a tree, draw moiſture and ſap from the tree, as an infant doth milk from the mothers breaſt; therefore we elegantly in our language, anſwering the Hebrew, call ſuch branches *Suckers*, and we cut them off where we ſee many ſprouting from one fruit-bearing tree, becauſe they draw too much from the tree, and hinder the fruit; that's the meaning of the Hebrew word, *His ſuckers*: So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *His ſuckers ſprout out over his orchard.* By theſe branches we may underſtand either his children, or his honour, his relations, or his reputation, theſe ſhoot forth and ſhew themſelves as branches from a tree, *His branches ſhoot forth in his garden.*

Hortus גן à radice Ganan, *velavit, metaphoricè protexit, quod ſepto protegi ſolet.*

In his garden.] That is, in that place which he hath fenced or taken in for himſelf; a garden is a plat ſeparated and incloſed from thoſe places which lie open and in common. So much the Hebrew word imports, coming from a root which ſignifies to protect or to fence a thing about, becauſe gardens are places fenced, hedged or walled in, *Cant.* 4.12. *A garden encloſed is my beloved*, Eccleſ. 2. 5, 6. *I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all (kind of) fruits, I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*

Per hortum intellige omnes rationes, quibus ſuam tuetur & auget magnitudinem, Merc.

His branches ſhoot forth in his garden.] That is, he appears very beautiful and glorious, very green and flouriſhing in his ſtate or condition, in his dignity and honour. He lives as in a garden or paradiſe: So the word is tranſlated (*Gen.* 2. 8.) *And the Lord God planted a paradiſe, or a garden of delight.* The hypocrites garden is all that by which he preſerves and keeps his worldly comforts, as we do plants and flowers of profit or delight in gardens. Thus the hypocrite grows as a goodly tree, and ſhooteth forth his branches.

This is the firſt dart of the deſcription of his flouriſhing eſtate. Hence note a point or two.

Firſt, In general (which hath heretofore been obſerved, therefore I ſhall but touch it.) *viz.*

> That, *A wicked man, an hypocrite may abound exceedingly in outward proſperity.*

He is a tree green before the Sun, and ſhooting forth his branches in his garden.

> Secondly Note, That, *The thriving of hypocrites, their greenneſs and flouriſhing is only outward.*

The tree is green before the Sun, but he is withered in his ſoul. Hypocrites do all before the Sun, to be ſeen, or in the ſight of men. They are of thoſe who rebel againſt the light, which would keep them from ſin, and they ſay, *No eye ſees us*, while they are ſinning. But they love the light which ſhews any good they do; then they ſay, O that all eyes did ſee us. Phariſees pray in the markets, and blow a trumpet when they give alms, that the ears of all, as well as the bellies of the poor, may be filled with their charity. *Come ſee my zeal*, ſaith *Jehu*. *Moſes* was faithful, but he never ſaid, Come ſee my fidelity. *Joſhua* was valiant in the battels of the Lord, yet he never ſaid, Come ſee my fortitude. The upright heart cares not to be thus before the Sun; he delights in ſecret holineſs. His goodneſs is not leſs prized, or leſs pleaſing to him, becauſe it is hidden. He takes infinitely more content in being and doing good, then in being known to be or do good.

Thirdly, Taking *Before the Sun*, to note the extream heat of the Sun, we may obſerve thus much from it,

> That, *An hypocrite may endure trouble and perſecution for his profeſſion.*

He is not like the ruſh, which preſently withereth, but he is ſometimes like a tree that ſtandeth out before the Sun a great while. We know that many have not only performed outward acts of holineſs, but they have ſometimes ſuffered in a holy cauſe; they can be paſſive in obedience, as well as active, and yet have fallen away at the laſt. Before the Sun of proſperity the hypocrite will continue green very long; and before the Sun of perſecution he may continue green a while. It is conceived by moſt, that *Alexander* the Copperſmith, ſpoken of by *Paul* (2 *Tim.* 4. 14.) as as a man very grievous to him, *Alexander the Copperſmith did me me much evil*, he oppoſed the Apoſtle, yet I ſay, this *Alexander* is conceived to be the man of whom we read (*Acts* 19. 32.) that ſtood to *Paul* when he was in that danger at *Epheſus*; there he had like to have loſt his life for appearing on his ſide; the text ſaith, *They dragged him out of the multitude to the market-place.* It is poſſible for an hypocrite to be green before the Sun of perſecution, at leaſt before ſome ſcorching beams of that Sun, though he is not able to bear it when it comes to the utmoſt trial, to the extream heat of the day.

Thus we ſee the hypocrites greenneſs in his branches, yet that is not all, for in the next verſe we find his roots alſo, he is ſeemingly ſetled below, as well as beautiful above. And when a tree hath flouriſhing branches and firm roots, what can be deſired more? For as when a tree is cut down root and branch, it is then utterly taken away; ſo when a tree flouriſheth root and branch, it is in beſt eſtate and higheſt perfection. Both theſe meet here; not only doth he ſhoot forth his branches in his garment, but *he wrappeth his roots about the heap, and ſeeth the place of ſtones.*

His roots are wrapped about the heap.

Radices ſunt divitiæ, liberi, amicitiæ, dignitates, honores.

The root of this hypocritical tree is that by which he faſtens himſelf: any accomodation or ſtrength which he hath in this world, credit, riches, friends, whatſoever ſtrengthens a man, that's his root; it is as neceſſary to faſten a tree, as to moiſten and feed a tree. Now (ſaith *Bildad*) he ſpreads his roots, he hath not only excellent branches outwardly, but he layes his matter ſo, that he hath rooting alſo in the world; yea, he ſeems to have rooting in the Church too.

גל à radice גלל. *Volvit à ſummo ad imum.*

His roots are wrapped about the heap.] The word in the Hebrew, ſignifies to roll, or bring things together, to put them up in a heap. Hence the Verb is uſed for that act of the ſoul in believing, whereby a Chriſtian gathers himſelf together, and all that he hath, and layes it upon the Lord, *Pſal.* 22. 8. *He truſted in the Lord*; the Hebrew is, *He rolled himſelf upon the Lord.* Hence it is tranſlated to ſignifie, Firſt, A tempeſt wherein the winds roll and are enfolded together. Secondly, A wave of the Sea, which is a rolling water. Thirdly, As here, a heap, becauſe in a heap a great many ſtones are gathered or rolled together. As, *Gen.* 31. 47. After that conteſt and debate of *Laban* with *Jabob*, about his departure, *Jacob* ſaid, *Let us gather ſtones together, or roll ſtones together, and make an heap*; and *Laban* gave it a a name, he called it *Jeger-ſhahadutha*, which is to ſay, *A heap of witneſs*, becauſe theſe ſtones were rolled together for a witneſs.

Laſtly (which ſence is applied by ſome interpreters to this Text.) The word ſignifies a ſpring or a fountain, *Joſh.* 15. 19. becauſe ſprings and fountains are as the gathering together of waters: The ſea is called the gathering together of waters (*Gen.* 1.) There waters are rolled and laid as upon a heap; and ſo proportionably every ſpring, fountain and river, is a place wherein the waters are rolled or wrapped together. Some tranſlate the word thus, *His roots are wrapped about the water, or about the fountain.* And that further ſets forth the ſeemingly ſure and ſtedfaſt eſtate of the hypocrite; as he hath goodly green branches above, ſo his roots are wrapped about the fountain, he looks as if he were planted by the waters ſide, as the flouriſhing tree deſcribed, *Pſal.* 1. A godly man *is as a tree planted by the rivers ſide*; ſo the hypocrite ſeems to have his roots wrapped about the waters, as if he had an ever-living ſupply from an everlaſting fountain, as if his leaves ſhould not wither, or his fruit fall off from him. That's one ſence.

But moſt go with our tranſlation, *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, they are intricated and folded about the heap of ſtones; and ſo the meaning of it may be given three wayes.

Impius aliquando floret inter varia impedimenta.

Firſt, In that it is ſaid, *His roots are wrapped about the heap, the heap of ſtones*, it notes his thriving againſt all oppoſition, here ſhadowed by heaps of ſtones. Heaps of ſtones are hinderances to the growing of a tree, to the rooting of it; therefore we ſet or plant trees in places free from ſtones: but to ſhew that he may even overcome, conquer, and ſubdue thoſe difficulties which hinder his growth, he ſaith, *His roots are wrapped about the ſtones.* The ſeed that was caſt in ſtonie ground, could not take root, the ſtones hindered it from a due depth of earth, *Mat.* 13. 15. So that *Bildad* according to this ſence magnifies the hypocrite, and ſpeaks high of him; *He wrappeth his root about the ſtones*, he grows in places of greateſt diſadvantage. A wicked man may conquer oppoſitions, and prevail againſt the pull-backs which hinder his worldly, yea, his ſeeming ſpiritual eſtate; he may encreaſe when he wants encouragements and means of increaſe; yea, he ſometimes increaſes againſt ſteps and diſcouragements, he thrives among ſtones.

Secondly, *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, notes, that he thrives, or will thrive, if he can, though it be to the hinderance and dammage of others; for by the heap ſome underſtand the foundation of an houſe, where ſtones are artificially heaped or laid together, not a natural or accidental heap. Trees that grow near a houſe ſhoot their roots under or about the foundation of the houſe, and ſo may be dangerous to the whole ſtructure. Thus the hypocrite will grow if he can, though he inwraps himſelf about the foundation of another mans houſe, raiſing or ſecuring his eſtate upon his neighbours wrong or ruine.

Ita latè radices diffundat ut fundamenti ſtruem offendat in ædibus Domini ſui. Jun.

In aliorum damnum propagatio denotatur. Idem.

Hypocrites care not whom they injure, ſo themſelves may thrive, though they undermine the foundation of another mans houſe, and looſen his eſtate, to faſten their own.

Thirdly, *His roots are wrapped about the heaps*, may note the firmneſs, and the ſeeming ſtrength of his ſtanding. He is rooted, not in ſome looſe and ſandy earth, or in tougher clay, but his roots are wrapped about a heap of ſtones. As (*Matth.* 7.) The houſe founded upon the ſand, could not continue when the ſtorms came, but the houſe founded upon the rock did; ſo a tree that is rooted only in looſe, ſlight ground, cannot ſtand againſt a great tempeſt, we ſee ſuch trees blown down; but that which is rooted among the ſtones, and wrapped about their heaps, that which interweaves and incorporates it ſelf (as it were) with a rock, this hath ſtrength againſt all ſtorms. Thus hypocrites pretend to Chriſt, and ſay they have wrapped themſelves about that rock; they will ſpeak great words, and bid defiance to all the world can do, profeſſing they have laid up a good foundation, and that the munition of rocks is their defence.

And ſeeth the place of ſtones.] The words may be tranſlated, *He dwelleth and he ſtayeth in the place of ſtones*; or, *He plants himſelf among the ſtones*; and then it carries the ſame ſence with the former clauſe: So Mr. *Broughton*, *He platteth about the houſe of ſtones.* And the *Chaldee Paraphraſt*, *He ſhall ſee with his eyes the place of ſtones*. We are near that ſence, *And ſeeth the place of ſtones*; that is (for all theſe rendrings of the Hebrew will come to a fair agreement, and the reſult is this) he lives, abides, converſes, or dwells even where there ſeems to be the leaſt probability of his ſtay, he ſtayeth in the place of ſtones.

Domum lapidum cernet, i. e. *inter lapides feliciter provenit.*

Ἐν μέσῳ χάλικων ζήσεται. Sept.

Inter lapides commorabitur. Vulg.

Domum lapidum oculis vidit. Druſ.

בית *Domus vel generaliter ſedes, vel locus quo aliquid capitur vel continetur.*

The Hebrew is, *houſe of ſtones*; and houſe is taken either for that ſpecial place wherein men dwell, or generally for any place; ſo that, *the houſe of ſtones* is either an houſe naturally built; Nature uſeth a kind of art: or an houſe artifically built; Art is but an imitation of Nature. *He ſeeth*, that is, he ſeems to abide or continue in that houſe of ſtones, he is very eminent or glorious in that place. The ſame word is read (*Dan.* 8. 5.) Where *Daniel* ſpeaking of his Viſion, ſaith, *The Goat which he ſaw in the viſion had a notable horn.* The *Chaldee* is, *a horn of ſight*; he had a horn of ſight, that is, a conſpicuous, or a notable horn; or, as others render it, he had a perplexed, enfolded, or enwrapped horn, a wreathed horn. So that the word ſignifies both the conſpicuouſneſs of a thing, and likewiſe the infoldedneſs and complication of it.

קרן חזות *Cornu aſpectus eſt cornu conſpicuū & eminens quod ſupra alia cernatur.*

Alii cornu perplexitatis, i. e. *perplexum & intricatum.* Merc.

A learned interpreteter gives yet another ſence, *He looks into the houſe of ſtone*, that is, he hinders the light, or darkens the houſe by perking up ſo proudly by, or near the windows; as if he had ſaid, he annoyes his Maſters houſe both below and above, at the foundation, and at the windows.

The ſtate of the hypocrite thus ſetled and made firm among ſtones, is yet a tottering one, it will not be able to ſtand; the eighteenth verſe ſhews this.

Verſe 18. **If he deſtroy him from his place, it ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſéen thée.**

There is much difficulty in giving a clear ſence of theſe words.

If he deſtroy him from his place, &c.

If he] Who is that? Who is the Antecedent to this *he?* There is no antecedent expreſt in the Hebrew. Some underſtand it thus, *If he*, that is, if the Lord, if God come to take vengeance of this man who ſeems to be a tree, ſo highly grown, and ſo deeply rooted.

Secondly, We may carry on the ſimilitude thus, *If he deſtroy him*, that is, if the Gardener or the huſbandman, if the maſter or owner of that ground or place, ſeeing a tree thus luxuriant, growing ſo near the foundation of his houſe, and ſo wrapped about the place of ſtones, hindering the windows of his houſe; if he come to deſtroy or cut him down, it ſhall deny him.

Or, Thirdly, *If he deſtroy him*, that is, if the Sun deſtroy him: So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *If the Sun root him up from his place.* But can the Sun root a tree up from his place? Yes, the Sun roots up a tree, when the Sun, before which a tree flouriſhes a while, caſts his beams ſo hot upon it, that it is ſcorched. Extream heat draws out all the moiſture of a tree, and kills it. In that ſence the Sun may be ſaid to root up a tree, the Sun killing the tree, cauſeth it to be rooted up. Thus we ſee divers Antecedents anſwering the *he*, the agent in the Text.

If he deſtroy him from his place.

The word which we tranſlate **deſtroy**, ſignifies properly to ſwallow down as a man ſwallows down meat and drink; and it ſignifies to ſwallow as a man ſwallows when he is very hungry; a man that is very hungry, eats his meat greedily, he throws it down whole into his throat, rather then chews it. Now, becauſe when meat is ſwallowed down, the meat is conſumed and ſpent, and is deſtroyed and comes to nothing, therefore the Hebrews elegantly tranſlate that word, which properly ſignifies to ſwallow up, to deſtroy; to deſtroy is to ſwallow up; and in that ſence (*Iſa.* 28. 7.) wine is ſaid to ſwallow up a man, that is, to deſtroy and conſume him. *Intemperate men ſwallow up wine, and at laſt wine ſwallows up them*: The wine drinks up their eſtates, their wits, their healths, their lives, their all at laſt. It is a Metaphor taken alſo from cruel and ſavage beaſts, who devour men: as *Jacob* ſaith of *Joſeph*, *Surely a wild beaſt hath devoured or ſwallowed him up:* And (*Pſal.* 35. 25.) We have that word applied to wicked men conſpiring againſt the Saints, they ſay, *We have ſwallowed him up, ah! ſo would we have it*; that is, we have utterly deſtroyed him, this pleaſes, this goes well on our ſide.

בלע *Abſorbuit, devoravit, Metaphoricè corrupit, deſtruxit, conſumpſit, quia quod deglutitur, perditur, abſumitur. Pereleganter qui vinū multum deglutiunt, à vino abſorberi dicuntur.* Pined.

Then the meaning is, Though the tree be in this ſtate, yet if the huſbandman come, he can quickly deſtroy it from his place; yea, though it be thus fairly grown, and firmly rooted, the Sun is able to kill this tree, and to draw out all its moiſture, and ſo leave it dry and ſeared, fit only to be ſtubbed for fewel. Or take it for an hypocrite, to whom the ſimilitude referreth. If God come to deſtroy him out of his place, to ſwallow him up, there's an end of him quickly; *It ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen him.*

From this conſideration, that the deſtruction of the tree is ſpoken of ſo immediately after the flouriſhing of it, that word *He is gren*, &c. is no ſooner out, but he adds, *If he deſtroy him*, &c. we may note,

That, *The deſtruction of hypocrites and wicked men cometh often upon them, in the height of their proſperity.*

Even in the time of his greatneſs he ſhall be deſtroyed, and when his roots are wrapped about the heap. Trees ſtand ſo long ſometimes that they wither of themſelves, and then we cut them down for the fire, but this man ſhall be cut down like a tree in his prime, in his flouriſhing, when affliction and withering ſeem fartheſt off, when he thinks leaſt of deſtruction, then it ſhall come upon him; when his eſtate is like *Jonah's* gourd, a very pleaſant plant, and a great rejoycing to him, a worm ſmites the roots and kills it.

That of *Job* (*chap.* 20. 22.) is full to this point; *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraights*, A ſtrange thing that a man ſhould be in ſtraights when he is in his greateſt enlargement, that a man ſhould be emptied when he is full, that a man ſhould be nothing when he hath all ſufficiency about him, yet thus it ſhall be, *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits.* As a godly man hath a ſufficiency in his wants, yea, a fulneſs of ſufficiency in his wants: So on the other ſide, an hypocrite whoſe heart is falſe with God, hath want in his ſufficiency, yea, want in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency. Which may be underſtood two wayes: either that his fulneſs in the greateſt ſufficiency of it, is unſatisfying; or that his fulneſs in the greateſt ſufficiency of it, is upon decaying and abating. (*Pſal.*78.13.) *Whilſt the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God fell upon them*; while meat is in the mouth, rich clothes upon the back, while ſtore of money is in the purſe, while the land brings forth abundance of encreaſe, even in all theſe ſufficiencies a man may be in ſtraits. As it was with *Agag* (1 *Sam.* 15.) *Surely* (ſaith he) *the bitterneſs of death is paſt*; he thought himſelf ſafe, and that the ſtorm was quite blown over, but then, in that nick of time comes *Samuel*, and cutteth him in pieces. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith (2 *Cor.* 1.9.) *I had the ſentence of death in my ſelf*; that is, I concluded, I could not ſurvive thoſe ſufferings, I thought my ſelf a loſt man: yet the Lord delivered him, and fetched him from the grave. But when hypocrites (like *Agag*) have the ſentence, yea, the ſweetneſs of life in themſelves; When they ſay peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction comes, as pain upon a woman in travel, and they ſhall not eſcape: God cuts them off. It follows,

If he deſtroy him from his place; what then?

It ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee.

Here is the further aggravation of his miſery, when he is deſtroyed, *It ſhall deny him*; What ſhall deny him? Some read it thus, *his place ſhall deny him.* Can a place ſpeak, affirm, or deny? No, it cannot; but it is uſual in Scripture, by a *Proſopopœia*, a fiction of a perſon, to aſcribe ſpeech to beaſts, to trees, and places too, things not only without reaſon, but without life. Such an elegancy is here, *It ſhall deny him*; that is, when he is deſtroyed, if any man ſhall ask the queſtion, where is the man? Where is this goodly tree that ſtood here before? The place ſhall anſwer. *He is not here now.*

וכחש *Mentietur ei* ὁ τόπος ψεύσεται αὐτόν. Sept. *Per proſopopœiam tribuit ſermonem & mendacium rei inanimæ; quod inſolens non eſt in his libris. Ita è loco ſuo excidetur & interibit, ut nullus jam agnoſcat eũ ibi unquam fuiſſe.* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *The place ſhall lie*; the place ſhall feign and ſay, we have not ſeen him; we know not what is become of him: So men uſe to anſwer, when they are either afraid or aſhamed to own one that is asked for.

Some underſtand it of a perſon, *Then one may deny him: I ſee them no more,* ſo Mr. *Broughton.* Suppoſe a traveller, who oftentimes paſt by, and ſaw this goodly tree, when he cometh to the place again, ſees it no more, the tree is down: So he, who hath paſt by ſuch a mans houſe, and beheld his goodly ſeat, when he comes another time, there is no ſuch man there, the man is gone, *It*, or, *he ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee.*

I have not ſeen thee.] We have near the ſame words, *Pſal.* 73. 35, 36. where the flouriſhing eſtate of a wicked man is ſhadowed under the notion of a tree, *I have ſeen the wicked flouriſh like a green bay tree,* &c. (yet) *he paſt away, and he was not*; as much as to ſay, if it be asked, what's become of him? A man ſhall anſwer, he hath not ſeen him; yea, *I ſought him, but he could not be found.* Such a ſence hath been ſhewed (*Job* 7.18.) upon thoſe words, *The place thereof ſhall know him no more*; A clear riddance ſhall be made of all men out of the world, eſpecially of wicked men. In that deſcription (*Dan.* 2.35.) of the four Monarchies, under the ſimilitude of a *great Image, whoſe head was of gold, his breſt and arms of ſilver, his belly and thighs of braſs, his legs of iron, and his feet of iron and clay*; The Text ſaith, *Then was the iron, the clay, the braſs, the ſilver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threſhing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them*; or, as the Chaldee, *They were found in no place:* A time will come when all Monarchies and worldly Kingdoms, which have ſtood up in ſo much luſtre, which have dazled the eyes of all the beholders with their ſplendor, and kept all their neighbour Nations under by their power (a time ſhall come) when this clay, and iron, and braſs, and ſilver, and gold ſhall be all beaten to pieces, ſo that if a man ask, where are the *four Monarchies*? What's become of the pomp and ſtate of thoſe great Empires? *The places of them ſhall know them no more*; no man can tell where they are. There is ſuch a meaning here, this green tree, this hypocrite ſhall have his branches ſo pull'd off, his roots ſo ſtubbed up, that it will be hard to give an account what's become of him.

We find the happy and flouriſhing eſtate of the Church and people of God deſcribed, as if no place were large enough for them to dwell in (*Zech.* 10. 10.) *I will bring them again out of the land of Ægypt, and gather them out of* Aſſyria, *&c.* that is, I will gather my Saints, my Church, together from all parts of the world where they have lived, (while they could not live, but ſculking in corners) I will bring them together, ſo conſpicuouſly, *that there ſhall be no place found for them*; that is, no place capacious enough to receive them and their families. We have the ſame promiſe of enlargement (*Iſa.* 49.) *They ſhall ſay, The place is too ſtrait for me, give place to me that I may dwell.* Now, as the Saints ſhall be gathered together ſo eminently and abundantly, that no place ſhall be found big enough to hold them; ſo the hypocrite with all his greenneſs and verdure ſhall be ſo blaſted and rooted up, that the place where he was ſhall not be viſible, as his: he ſhall be ſo far from filling all places, that he ſhall fill none, *The place where he dwelt ſhall ſpue him out, and by any remaining ſymptom it ſhall not be known where that man was.*

So then, the ſum of all may be given thus, taking the compariſon from the tree to this wicked man;

That as a tree highly grown and deeply rooted, may be ſo cut down and ſtubbed up, that it ſhall not be known whether ever it grew upon that place or no; ſo a wicked man, though for a while he flouriſheth and overcometh all impediments that hinder him, in the eye of the world, yet at laſt himſelf and his family ſhall be ſo clean removed and ſwept away, his name and memory ſo blotted out, that there ſhall not be any print or foot-ſtep of his being upon the face of the earth.

Whence note, *That the memory of wicked men ſhall periſh for ever, none ſhall own them.*

If they be asked about them, they ſhall ſay, *We have not ſeen them. Peter* in his temptation denied Chriſt, *Matth.* 27. when they asked him, ſaying, *Art not thou one of his Diſciples?* No, ſaith he, *I know not the man.* As the Saints under temptation, and as hypocrites in their dayly converſation deny Chriſt: ſo the time will come when hypocrites and wicked men ſhall be denyed themſelves, their places ſhall ſay, *We know them no more.* They ſhall be remembred only as *Pilate* is remembred in that, which is called the Apoſtles Creed, who ſtands there upon record for his wickedneſs, cowardize and injuſtice in condemning Chriſt, whom he knew to be innocent. *Wicked men are either forgotten, or elſe remembred with a brand of diſgrace. They who have been adored and flattered, and crept to like little gods, ſhall not be owned by the meaneſt men.* Even their paraſites who have hung about them, will fall off from them, and ſay, Who, we know them? We know no ſuch men. It is propheſied (*Zech.* 8.23.) of the Jews, who are now a deſpiſed and ſcattered people (yet ſtill a people in the heart of Chriſt) that God will bring them forth at laſt, and they ſhall be a people ſo much honoured, that *ten men out of every Nation ſhall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, ſaying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* The deſpiſed Saints, ſuch as the world hath caſt out, and ſaid, We will not ſee or take notice of them, ſhall be honoured or envied of all. Men will be glad to take hold of their skirts, and ſay, *Come, let us go with you*; O that we might have a part and a portion with you, for we know that God is with you! O that we had lived the lives, and might die the deaths of the righteous! O that our beginnings had been, and that our latter ends might be like theirs! Likewiſe a time will come, when hypocrites and wicked men ſhall be deſpiſed by their admirers, and caſt out, as not worth the looking on by their groſſeſt flatterers. It was a great honour which the *Orator* gives *Homer*, a Heathen Poet, who was a man of ſuch reputation, that many great Cities ſtrove for him. One ſaid, he was born here; another ſaid, he was born there; a third, among us was the place of his birth. All deſired to own him, becauſe he was a man highly honoured for his learning in thoſe times: So on the other ſide, every place ſhall be aſhamed of ſome men; this place ſhall ſay, we have nothing to do with him; and that place ſhall ſay, we have nothing to do with him; one ſhall diſclaim him, and another ſhall diſclaim him, all ſhall refuſe him. *It ſhall be the*

Cic. in Orat. pro Arch. poet.

the honour of Saints to be deſired of all; and it ſhall be the ſhame and puniſhment of wicked men, to be caſt out and diſregarded by all. They who deſpiſe God, ſhall at laſt be lightly eſteemed among men.

Bildad having thus enlarged his ſimilitude, in all the parts of it, and at laſt laid the hypocrite as low as forgetfulneſs, ſo low that no man will own him, as he is alwayes ſo low that God will not own him, he concludes triumphantly againſt him.

Verſ. 19. **Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth ſhall others grow.**

Here's his concluſion.

This is the joy.] The word which we tranſlate *joy*, ſignifies the higheſt joy, a kind of leaping for joy. It is an alluſion to dogs or ſpaniels, who (you know) when their Maſters come home, leap about them for joy, and in their language bid them welcom. Such a joy is here meant, a joy lifting up the heart, a leaping, an exulting joy. The word is often applied to the joy of the Saints, they rejoyce, and (as it were) leap about Jeſus Chriſt, they triumph in the favour of God. The leaping, the exulting joy, the beſt joy, all the joy which an hypocrite hath, is but this, which hath been deſcribed; Is it not a deſirable joy? A goodly joy ſure? The words are ironical, *This is the joy of his way.*

Of his way.] Way is taken for the courſe, purpoſe, and inſtitution of a mans life, for the tenour of his converſation, which he holds in the world, *This is the joy of his way: This is it.* The particle is demonſtrative, This is it which I have told you; as if he had ſaid, caſt up all the comfort and happineſs of that flouriſhing tree, of the hypocrite, this is all that it comes to, his end is to be rooted up and not ſo much as to be owned by thoſe that knew him before.

השוש *Dicitur quando gaudio geſtimus, ut canes ſolent quando peregre advenienti Domino adulantur. En hæc eſt exultatio viæ ejus ironicωs dictum. Hæc eſt lætitia qua ſibi placebit in magnitudine ſua. Viam appellat ſtatum in quo erat, q. d. en quo redeat ejus gaudium dũ ita ſeſe efferet.* Merc.

There are three things which I ſhould obſerve from this, *This is the joy of his way.*

First, *That an hypocrite may have much joy in his way.*

He may rejoyce much in his condition, and thinks all's well. *Falſe hopes can produce falſe joyes.* Falſe faith brings forth a comfort like it ſelf, a fading comfort, a ſhadow of comfort, as that is but a ſhadow of faith. The fancy of faith is uſually fuller of joy then true faith. Satan helps forward this joy, and God for a time will not hinder it. Faith (though feigned) gives the ſoul a ſight of ſuch things as are worth the rejoycing in, and a ſuppoſed title to them will move joy, as well as a real title doth. The ſtony ground received the word with joy. The promiſes are delicious to the ſenſitive and rational part, as well as to the ſpiritual and regenerate part. Hence (*Heb.6.*) they that fall away are ſaid to have had taſtes of the *joyes of the world to come.* An hypocrite may think himſelf in Heaven ſometimes, and then like one in Heaven, he cannot but rejoyce. *He may have a glimpſe of Heaven upon Earth, all whoſe Heaven is Earth. This is his joy.*

Secondly, *This*, may be demonſtrative, and anſwers the queſtion; what is his joy? It is this, His worldly comforts, his flouriſhing outward condition is his chiefeſt joy. Then note,

The joy of hypocrites is chiefly bottomed upon outward things.

It is not the joy of the Lord, no, nor joy in the Lord, *Rejoyce in the Lord, and again, I ſay, rejoyce*; is the Goſpel-command. An hypocrite cannot rejoyce thus. When he rejoyces in the Lord, ſomewhat beſides the Lord cauſeth his joy. He rejoyces in his green boughs, in his goodly branches, in his ſuppoſed ſtrong root; but to rejoyce in God, as God, he knows not how. *David's* joy was the oppoſite of this (*Pſal.4.6.*) *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and that will put gladneſs in my heart, more then in the time that their corn and wine encreaſed.* Let me have the Sun-ſhine of thy love, and then though I have nothing but darkneſs and clouds from the world, I ſhall rejoyce. But what ſaith the hypocrite? Let my corn and wine encreaſe, let the Sun of outward proſperity ſhine warm upon me, let me have my greenneſs of creature-contentments, let me have credit and fair repute among men, theſe will put gladneſs in my heart. Theſe glad his heart, when he hath not a dram of grace or goodneſs there.

Thirdly, *The joy of an hypocrite is but for a moment.*

It is a periſhing joy. *This is the joy of his way*; you ſee what it amounts to, how well it laſts. His greenneſs is turned into withering, his root rots, and his fruit falls off. *This is his joy.* He is like thoſe ſpoken of in the Epiſtle of *Jude*, (verſ. 14.) *Trees twice dead, and plucked up by the roots.* That's the concluſion of the hypocrite: he hath a name to live, but he is dead, *twice dead*, naturally dead in ſin, and judicially dead under wrath: he was born ſpiritually dead, and his whole life is a paſſage to eternal death. He hath rejoyced a while, but he muſt mourn for ever. *The portion of hypocrites is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, (*Matth.* 24. 51.) Their joy is but for a morning, or a day, weeping comes at night, and that night hath no morning after it.

And out of the earth ſhall others grow.

Some read, *Out of the earth ſhall ſomewhat elſe, ſome other thing grow*: We, out of the Earth (when theſe are removed) other perſons ſhall grow, who ſhall inherit the place, and poſſeſs the dwelling of theſe proſperous trees. For he follows the ſimilitude of a tree, when, or where one is pulled up, another is planted and grows up in its room. Or, others ſhall poſſeſs what he hath gotten. In which ſence *Job* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 27. 16, 17.) *Though the heap up ſilver as the duſt, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it, but the juſt ſhall put it on, and the innocent ſhall divide the ſilver.* Which words may be a Comment upon theſe, *Out of the Earth ſhall others grow*; that is, others ſhall riſe up. God will bring a new generation to enjoy his ill-gotten ſubſtance, and eat the ſweet of all his labours. *Solomon* (Eccleſ. 2. 18.) was much afflicted, becauſe he knew not who ſhould grow up after him. *I hated* (ſaith he) *all my labour which I have taken under the Sun, becauſe I ſhall leave it to a man, and I know not what he ſhall be, whether a wiſe man or a fool.* It is a part of the vanity which lies upon man-kind, that after all a mans labour and pains, he muſt leave all unto ſome body, he knows not certainly who. But there is a greater and ſorer vanity upon the hypocrite; he ſeldom ſtayes to take his part, *He ſhall not roſt that which he hath taken in hunting* (Prov.12.) that is, he ſhall not have the benefit himſelf of what he hath, but others (unthought of) ſhall come out of the ground and grow in his place, *This is the upſhot or ſum of all his miſery, he hath laboured for others in temporal things, and he hath got nothing for himſelf in ſpiritual things.*

Alii, qui alieni erunt ab eo, & quaſi è terra alia germinabunt, in bona ipſius ſuccedentes juxta illud, repoſitæ ſunt juſto opes peccatoris. Druſ.

Further, the words may carry this ſence. That,

When wicked men are taken away, the righteous ſhall grow in their room.

Pull up the bryars and thorns, and then vines and fig-trees, lillies and roſes will grow the better. When wicked men are removed, good men will proſper.

Again, *Out of the earth ſhall others grow*; they were not worth the ground they went upon, though they were worth a great deal of ground, therefore out of the ground ſhall others grow. God will raiſe up a generation which ſhall be more faithful and ſerviceable unto him.

There is a fourth ſence of this expreſſion, *Out of the earth ſhall others grow*; that is out of the meaneſt and loweſt condition others ſhall grow: and ſo it carries an oppoſition between the condition of an hypocrite, and of a godly man. The hypocrite in his flouriſhing greenneſs ſhall be cut down to the ground, but they whoſe hearts are ſincere and upright, though they are as low as the ground, though they are upon the Earth, and are trodden down as mire in the ſtreets, yet they ſhall grow up, they who were growing high ſhall be cut down, and they who were below ſhall grow up; ſuch as they feared not, nor ſuſpected, ſhall prevail over them. *They who are loweſt, even as low as the earth, ſhall be raiſed, built up, and ſet on high in the world, when God ſpeaks the word.*

There is an Expoſition of this whole context, about which (becauſe many cloſe with it) I ſhall give a brief account. Divers of the learned underſtand this third ſimilitude, not as deſcribing the ſtate of an hypocrite, but as an inſtance in oppoſition to the ſtate of an hypocrite,

crite, ſet forth by the ruſh and by the ſpider in the former Verſes.

Hence it is that the *Italian* verſion begins *verſ.* 6. thus, *But the perfect man is green before the Sun*, &c. And ſo the ſence may be given to this effect. As if *Bildad* had ſaid, *Though hypocrites wither like a ruſh, or like a flag, though they are ſuddenly ſwept down like a ſpiders web, yet a godly man is a green tree before the Sun; he is not like a ruſh without water, but like a tree planted by the rivers ſide, which is able to endure the heat of the Sun, yea the hotteſt Sun of perſecution:* [*His branches ſhoot forth in his garden*] *he is no wild tree, no tree of the foreſt, or of the wilderneſs, he is a tree of the incloſed garden. which if it want the water from the clouds, the Gardener will take care to water it with his hand. Or* [*his roots are wrapped about the heap, about the fountain*] *he is ſtrongly ſet, and he hath water continually to feed and ſupply his branches*; Thus the Church is ſo deſcribed by *Balaam* (Num. 24. 6.) *How goodly are thy tents,* O Jacob, *and thy Tabernacle,* O Iſrael! *as the valleys are they ſpread forth, as gardens by the rivers ſides, as the trees of Lign Aloes, which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar trees beſides the waters. Thus the godly mans roots are wrapped about the fountain, and there he is fruitful; though the Sun ſhine hot upon him, yet it cannot exhale his moyſture faſter then the river can ſupply him with more. And he ſeeth the place of ſtones, he will live upon a flint, having a lively root of faith continually ſucking in refreſhings from Chriſt, under whoſe protection and favour he remains ſtrong and abounding in the work of the Lord* [*But if he deſtroy him from his place, it ſhall deny him*] *that is, if the wicked of the world attempt to root the godly man up: the place, that is, the men of the place ſhall take part with him, own him, and deny to give him up into the hands of thoſe who would deſtroy him. But if the place ſhould not ſecure him, if the power and violence of the enemy deſtroy and pluck him up, yet this is his joy, a godly man may be deſtroyed, but none can deſtroy the joy of a godly man.* [*This is the joy of his way*] *he delights in perſcution; he is as ſorrowful, but alwayes rejoycing, even in death it ſelf.* [*And out of his earth ſhall others grow.*] *He ſhall have a bleſſed poſterity to ſtand up in his ſtead, in whom he ſhall live, when he is dead. Or, if the power of the adverſary root him out of this earth, in which he lived, and drive him from this ground, from houſe and home, he ſhall grow in an other Earth* (The original may bear that ſence.) *If he be removed from this place, he ſhall grow in another place; if you take him from his own Country, he can grow in any Country, and if he be plucked from all Countryes he will grow up too, and in Heaven.*

De terra alii germinabunt. Pagn.

Thus the whole Context may be made out as a ſimilitude of a godly man, in oppoſition to the hypocrite. But I rather acquieſce and ſettle in the interpretation before, that it is a third deſcription of the condition of an hypocrite. The original and our tranſlation fairly carry it ſo.

Bildad having thus far proſecuted the point, vindicated the juſtice of God, and illuſtrated his former proof by a threefold ſimilitude, ſhuts up and ſtates the point for God, that *He is juſt, For he will not hurt the innocent, neither will he help the evil doers*, &c.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

Behold, God will not caſt away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers.

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing and thy lips with rejoycing.

They that hate thee ſhall be cloathed with ſhame, and the dwelling place of the wicked ſhall come to nought.

These three verſes are the Epilogue or cloſe of *Bildad's* diſcourſe with *Job*: having in the former parts of the Chapters aſſerted, and with great clearneſs illuſtrated the juſtice of God in his dealings againſt impenitents and hypocrites; he now concludes in a mollifying language, with the aſſurance of his favour and goodneſs unto thoſe who return and humble themſelves. Yet this he interweaves with threats of the diſpleaſure of God ſeen in the effects of it againſt the wicked, in *verſ.* 20, 22.

It is, as if *Bildad* had thus ſaid, *Behold, God will not caſt away a perfect man.* Job, *thou mayeſt perceive by what hath now been ſpoken, that God is no enemy to the righteous, nor no friend to wicked men: Thou ſeeſt what the portion of a wicked man is from God, and how juſt God is in giving him ſuch a portion; yet know, that mercy ſhall act as glorioufly in the hand of God, as juſtice doth; as God is not unjuſt to favour hypocrites, ſo neither will he be unjuſt to forget the righteous and the perfect man: the hypocrite ſhall periſh, but he will fill the mouth of a godly man with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.*

Or, if we conſider his ſpeech mere diſtinctly, we may ſee two negative acts of juſtice, one toward the perfect, the other toward the hypocrite, with the effects of both.

His juſtice acts towards the perfect man, in that, *He will not caſt him away.* The effect whereof is, *The filling of his mouth with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.*

His juſtice acts againſt the hypocrite, thus, *He will not help the evil doers.* The effect whereof is, That *evil doers ſhall be cloathed with ſhame, and that their tabernacles ſhall not be.*

We may caſt all into a form of Argument. Firſt, To the general; and then to the particular caſe of *Job*.

He that doth not caſt away a perfect and a good man, is juſt and righteous in his dealings and adminiſtrations.

But God doth not, will not, caſt away a perfect and a good man. Therefore he is juſt and righteous in his dealings and adminiſtrations.

Then to the particular caſe of *Job*.

He that doth not caſt away any perfect man, will not caſt thee away, if thou art perfect.

Therefore, *Job*, return, make thy way perfect before God, and *He will not caſt thee away.* Or take this inference. God will not *caſt away a perfect man*: therefore ſurely thou haſt a great deal of imperfection or inſincerity in thee, becauſe God hath thus caſt thee off, and laid thee aſide.

The like Arguments may be framed upon the other part of his juſtice, in his dealings with the wicked.

From the general ſence of the Context thus given, I come to open the particulars, as they here lie in order.

Behold, God will not caſt away a perfect man.

Behold.] Is here a ſtrong affirmation. This is a certain truth.

God will not.] The ſtrong God, or the puiſſant, *will not caſt away a perfect man.* God hath infinite power, but he puteth none of it forth, to this purpoſe: he never layes out himſelf in oppoſing thoſe who are perfect and righteous, *The powerful God doth not caſt away a perfect man.*

אל *Deus fortis non abutitur potentia ſua ad conterendum ſimplicem.* Pined.

Caſt away.] The word which we tranſlate, *caſt away*, was opened at *verſ.* 14. of this Chapter, and in *Chap.* 5. *verſ.* 9. There it was tranſlated by deſpiſing, *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord*, caſt not away, or caſt not off the chaſtening of the Lord. And in *verſ.* 14. of this Chapter, *The hypocrites hope ſhall be cut off*, he ſhall caſt away his hope, or his hope ſhould caſt away and abhor him, for ſo the word bears. The *Seventy* tranſlate it to that ſence, *He will not caſt off*; that is, he will not reprobate, or diſapprove, he will not reject or diſcountenance *a perfect man.* And Mr. *Broughton, Loe, the omnipotent will not loath the perfect.* Either of the ſences are full enough to the Text.

מאס *Faſtidivit, reprobavit.*

Non Reprobabit innocentem, 70.

Only take notice that in the words there is a figure; for when it is ſaid, *That God will not caſt away a perfect man*; this is not all the meaning, as if God made no other reckoning of perfect men then thus, that he would not caſt them away; more is intended then expreſt, namely, that the Lord doth highly eſteem and prize righteous men, he layes them as it were in his boſom and next his heart: thus the Lord deals with the righteous, *His not caſting away, is a near imbracing.*

Meioſis.

There is a two fold caſting away; Firſt, Temporal. Secondly, Eternal; and in neither of theſe ſences doth God caſt away a perfect man. Not only ſhall he not periſh eternally, but not temporally. He doth not reject or caſt him away for a moment; his love is an everlaſting love, and there can be no breaches or gaps made in it, ſo as to cut off his love to the perſon, although he often ſignifies diſpleaſure againſt his ſin.

The perfect man.] The word we had in the firſt Chapter, where it is uſed to expreſs *Job*'s compleatneſs in ſpirituals; a compleatneſs, not in degrees, but in parts; ſincerity filled up his ſoul, and ſo perfected all the limbs and members of his inward man. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *A gracious ſoul ſhall never be rejected of God.*

Whatſoever God doth in the world, he will never do this, *Heb.* 13. 5. *He hath ſaid, he will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* If God doth not leave a perfect man, he will not caſt him away. The Apoſtle puts the queſtion (*Rom.* 11. 1.) *Hath God caſt away his people? God forbid. God hath not caſt away his people whom he foreknew.*

Perfect men are Gods Jewels, not the rubbiſh or offſcowring of the world, though the world count them ſo. A wiſe man will not caſt away Jewels.

Perfect men are Gods ſervants, his faithful ſervants; all the willing ſervice he hath done him in the word (on this ſide Angels) is done by theſe men. A wiſe man will not caſt away ſuch as are truly ſerviceable unto him.

Perfect men are Gods children; they are born of God, and ſons of the moſt high. Natural love will not caſt away a child.

Perfect men are Gods portion, the lot of his inheritance, his revenue comes in, he hath his incomes of glory by them, A man will not deſpiſe his own glory, he will not reject his own inheritance.

Further, They who are perfect come to him in his Son, and he hath pawned his truth for it (*John* 6. 37.) *He that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out*: As if he had ſaid, this thing is furtheſt from my heart of any thing in the world. God calls after many who go away from him, but he caſts away none who come to him. None comes to him till he draws them, therefore he will not drive them away who come.

Again, Perfect men have the Spirit of God, God cannot caſt away or ſtop his ears at the voyce of his own Spirit. They have the earneſt of his Spirit; if God ſhould go about to put them off or lay them aſide, they will ſhew God thoſe tokens and pledges of his love, the earneſt he hath given them to aſſure their hearts.

Laſtly, He hath tied himſelf to them in the bond of a Covenant, they are faſt to him in the everlaſting bonds of his own love; therefore they cannot be caſt off. So he promiſes his people (*Lev.* 26. 44.) though they ſhould provoke him to afflict them, yet he would not reject them utterly; he might put them into the hands of their enemies, but he would never ceaſe to be their friend; *for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not caſt them away.* (Many think when the Saints are caſt into trouble, that *God* had caſt them away; no, there is no ſuch matter; when they are in their enemies hand, God holds them ſtill in his hand. yea, in his heart.) *I will not caſt them away, neither will I abhor them to deſtroy them utterly, and break my Covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God.* The Covenant holdeth God and his people ſo faſt together, that they ſhall never part.

We find the Church complaining grievouſly, as if ſhe were caſt away (*Pſal.* 44. 9.) *Thou haſt caſt us off and put us to ſhame, and goeſt not forth with our Armies*; and, *ver.* 23. The Church prayes, *Ariſe, O Lord, caſt us not off for ever.* So (*Pſal.* 60. 1.) *O God, thou haſt caſt us off*; and, *ver.* 9. *Who will bring me into the ſtrong City? Wilt not thou, O God, who hadſt caſt us off?* God (to ſenſe) caſts off his own people, when he caſteth them into dangers; but even then their faith takes hold of God, and Gods love takes hold of them. *Though all this be come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falſly in thy Covenant* (Pſal. 44. 17.) Neither had God forgotten them, or dealt falſly in the Covenant; they were his people ſtill, and as near unto him, as when they were furtheſt from thoſe troubles.

God caſts away ſome indeed, but they are ſuch as he never had within the bonds of his Covenant. He caſts away wicked men as rubbiſh, as filth and dirt; ſuch the Prophet ſpeaks of (*Hoſ.* 9. 15.) *My God will caſt them away, becauſe they did not hearken unto him.* Theſe were imperfect, not perfect men. God caſt theſe away, not from any intereſt they had in him, but becauſe they never had any. Such as will not hearken unto the word of God, God will caſt away; why? They caſt God away, when they caſt the word of God away. They caſt the Covenant behind their backs (*Pſal.* 50.) no wonder God caſts them behind his back; he throws them out of doors, when they throw his truth out of their hearts. Perfect men love the truth of God for ever, and the God of truth loves them for ever.

Secondly (For, as we ſaid, theſe words expreſs leſs then is meant.) obſerve,

That, *Perfect men are highly eſteemed by God.*

He prizes them greatly, he delighteth in them, *They that honour me, I will honour,* ſaith God; not only will I not caſt them away or abhor them, but I will honour them. God eſteems and prizes them, though the world diſeſteem and reject them. There is many a ſoul which the world tramples under their feet, as the mire in the ſtreets, which at that time God layes in his boſom. Chriſt embraceth ſome in his arms, whom the world, yea, whom their brethren hate, and ſmite with their tongues (*Iſa.* 66. 5.) *Your brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my names ſake, ſaid, let the Lord be glorified.* (Not only the wicked world may do this, but brethren, even thoſe that are brethren indeed in the main, may poſſibly hate a perfect man, and caſt him out) *your brethren that hated you, and caſt you out for my Names ſake*; but the Lord at that time loved them, as it follows, *But he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.*

And if God doth not only not caſt away perfect ones, but eſteem them, then take theſe three cautions.

Firſt, Ye that are perfect, be ſure ye keep cloſe to God, do not caſt him off, do not caſt away the word, any one truth or command of God. Caſt not the wayes of God away, for he will never caſt you away.

Secondly, Ye that are perfect, *caſt not away your confidence,* Heb. 10. 35. The Apoſtle had ſhewed how cloſe God would ſtick to his people; now, ſaith he, if it be ſo, if he will bring his promiſes to paſs, *then caſt not away your confidence.* There is a great ſtrength of engagement in it, when we read that God will not caſt away his people, that they ſhould not caſt away their confidence in God, *which hath great recompence of reward.*

Thirdly, To all, take heed of caſting off, or ſlighting any perfect man; we ſhould act towards men, and think of them as God doth. It is beſt to love where God loves, and to love moſt where God loves moſt. *Negative promiſes aud negative threatnings have greateſt force in them.* God holds them faſteſt, and loves them deareſt, of whom he ſaith, *I will not caſt them away. God will not caſt away a perfect man.* There's a negative promiſe. Now ſee the *portion* of the wicked; that's given out in a negative threatning: God ſaith not what he will do againſt them, bnt what he will not do for them, *Neither will he help the evil doers.*

He will not help them.] Some read it, *He will not put forth his hand to evil doers.* So the Letter of the Hebrew imports. And there may be a threefold ſence given of that reading. *Putting forth the hand,* notes, firſt, our taking men into *ſociety, fellowſhip* and *familiarity* with us; when we would ſhew a man how we love him at our hearts, we put forth a hand, and take him by the hand. Now (ſaith he) *God will not take an evil doer by the hand,* to welcome or entertain him, to countenance and reſpect him, *Exod.* 23. 1. *Put not thy hand with the wicked, to be an unrighteons witneſs*: Be not of the ſame ſide, *communion* and *fellowſhip* with him in giving witneſs.

Non porrigit manum malis. Vulg. *Ad amicitiæ fœdus pertinere videtur.*

Secondly (As the *Septuagint* gives the ſence) *He will not put forth his hand,* that is, *to receive a gift or an offering from wicked men.* When a gift or a preſent is brought, the receiver (if he would teſtifie his liking and acceptance of it) puts forth his hand and receives it. Now (ſaith *Bildad*) *God will not put forth his hand to receive any offering or gift from wicked men*; the oblations of wicked men are an *abomination* unto the Lord: *The good deeds of evil doers are evil in his ſight. He had no reſpect to Cain and his offering,* He did not put forth his hand to receive *Cain*s offering; but he put forth his hand to receive *Abel*'s offering. This is a profitable ſence.

Nec ullum munus impii accipiet. Sept. q. d. *Non porriget manus, accepturus munus, impiorum dona non ſunt Deo grata.* Pined.

Thirdly, It rather refers to Gods not aſſiſting wicked men. So Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *He will not maintain,*

The

יחזיק *Denotat fortiter apprehendere, aut potius apprehendendo confortare & roborare, hoc eſt, præſtare auxilium. Improbis nõ favet, nec eos juvat.* Merc.

the hand of the miſchievous. To put forth or ſtretch out the hand, according to this Hebrew phraſe, implies ſtrong holding; or the taking of ſtrong hold upon any thing, ſo as by taking hold of it to ſtrengthen and confirm it, to give it help and aſſiſtance. A man that would give aſſiſtance to another in any buſineſs or work, puts forth his hand to him. When we want help, we uſually beſpeak a friend, *Pray lend me your hand.* Now here, *the Lord will not put forth his hand to evil doers*; that is, the Lord gives them no aſſiſtance or help in their wickedneſs. If wicked men ſay, Lord, *lend us thy hand*; no, ſaith he, I will not lend you my hand. We find this phraſe frequent in Scripture. That (*Gen.* 19. 16.) illuſtrates it fully; where *Lot* being warned to go out of *Sodom* (verſe 16.) *While he lingred, the men* (that is, the Ange's) *laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth, and ſet him without the City.* They laid hold upon their hands: It is the word of the Text. When the Lord ſees wicked men in any diſtreſs or danger (as *Lot* was in *Sodom*) or when they want help or aſſiſtance in any buſineſs, he will not be merciful to them in taking them by the hand, or in laying his hand ſtrongly upon them, either to pull them out of danger, or to give them help in difficulties. The ſin of *Jeruſalem* is charged upon her in this language by the Prophet, in a parity with that of filthy *Sodom* (Ezek. 16. 49.) *Neither did ſhe ſtrengthen the hand of the poor and needy*, that is, ſhe did not relieve, comfort or help them. The ſin oppoſite to this, is charged upon the falſe Prophets, by *Jeremy* (chap. 23. 14.) *They ſtrengthen the hands of evil doers* either by counſel, or by countenance, by flatteries or connivance. We read (*Nehem.* 6.) how often the enemies ſent falſe alarms to *Nehemiah* and the people that were with him, to terrifie and affright them; *Nehemiah* ſhews the enemies, deſign in it, *ver.* 9. *They all made us afraid, ſaying, their hands ſhall be weakned from the work that it be not done*; therefore in the cloſe, *Nehemiah* prayes, *Lord, ſtrengthen mine hands* (it is this word) as if he had ſaid, *Lord, help me, put thine hands to mine.* So, *Iſa.* 35. 3. *Strengthen the weak hands*, put your hands to their hands, *Pſal.* 73. 23. *David* acknowledging how he had almoſt fallen at the riſing of the wicked, ſhews yet what kept him up; *Nevertheleſs, I am continually with thee, thou haſt holden me by my right hand*; the hand of providence is the power of God upholding our being, as the hand of creation was the power of God giving us our being, *Iſa.* 42. 6. *I the Lord have called thee in righteouſneſs, and I will hold thine hand and help thee.* So, *Iſa.* 41. 13. That is, by holding of thine hand I will help thee. The ſame word in the original is uſed for hardning the heart (*Exod.* 9. 12.) becauſe hardneſs of heart ſtrengthens it to do evil. A hard heart is armed for any ſin.

חזק לב

So then we ſee, when the Lord refuſeth to put forth his hand, or to take ſtrong hold (as the word imports) upon the hand of evil men, the meaning lies in one of theſe three things;

Firſt, That he bears no favour to them, he doth not approve their cauſe or buſineſs.

Secondly, That he gives them no aſſiſtance or encouragement in their buſineſs.

Thirdly, That he will not deliver or reſcue them out of their diſtreſſes; when they are ſinking or falling, he will not put forth his hand to hold them up, or keep them from ſinking. God is not a patron or a protector, an adjutor or aider of evil doers.

מרעים

Evil doers.] We muſt not take theſe *evil doers* for all and every one that doth evil; for *then whom would God help?* We may then ſay (with reverence) *God help us indeed:* What a miſerable condition were we then in if God would not put forth his hand to help any that do evil? The evil doer is a man notoriouſly, profeſſedly, ſtudiouſly wicked, one that acts and deviſes evil againſt God and his wayes. Every one who doth evil, is not to be reckoned an evil doer. A man doth evil in any one act; but one act doth not make him an evil doer. A Magiſtrate muſt count him an evil doer who doth evil; and therefore he muſt take vengeance (in many caſes) *of him that doth evil* (though but once) *Rom.* 13. 4. and though he repent. The Angels were caſt as evil doers for one act, and ſo was man in innocency; but now the evil doer is one who multiplies and continues in evil deeds; to ſuch as theſe the Lord will not put forth his hand, or give them his help. Obſerve then,

> Firſt, That, *God is no friend, no aſſiſtant unto men in ſinful wayes.*

He will not ſtrengthen the hands, or help forward the work of wicked men. God is the puniſher and Judge of evil doers, and therefore not their helper.

Evil doers oppoſe not only *Gods Law*, but his *Nature*, therefore he will not help them. He cannot exerciſe one Attribute againſt another; his *Power* will not *work* againſt his *Holineſs*, or againſt his *Will.*

There is a *twofold* help which *God* giveth.

First, A *common* help.

Secondly, A *ſpecial* help.

We grant that *God* ſtrengthens the hands even of *evil doers* in regerd of *common help*; for no man could put forth his hand to any evil, as a ſinner, if God did not give him a general aſſiſtance as a creature. In this ſence the ſtrength by which men rebel and ſin againſt God, comes from God. But he doth not ſtrengthen their hands, or give them help by any ſpecial aſſiſtance. In the doing of good, we have a *common aſſiſtance* to the act, as there is a natural motion in it, which God gives his people with the reſt of the world; but this will not carry them out to *do good compleatly.* To bring forth any *gracious act*, they muſt have a ſpecial aſſiſtance. Hence Chriſt ſaith, *without me ye can do nothing*; he means it not of that general *ſupport* which Chriſt gives to man, by which *all live, and move, and have their being in him* (in that ſence no man is able to do any thing without Chriſt, for in him all things conſiſt) but when he ſaith, *without me ye can do nothing*, he means, without my ſpecial *aſſiſtance* and *ſtrength* ye cannot perform holy and ſpiritual duties, acceptable unto God. So the *Apoſtle, We have no ſufficiency of our ſelves, ſo much as to think a good thought.* We have no ſufficiency to think any thought without ſome aſſiſtance; but to think a *good thought*, we have not any ſufficiency without a ſpecial aſſiſtance. Wicked men are not able to do evil without a *common aſſiſtance*, but they have no *ſpecial aſſiſtance* from *God to do evil.* He doth neither ſtir up and excite their luſts to the act, nor ſupply their luſts while they are acting. Wicked men have aſſiſtance enough in both from their own hearts, and from Satan. Though man hath no ſufficiency in himſelf to think *one good thought*, yet he hath a ſufficiency in himſelf to think all evil thoughts; as he is a creature, he acts, and as he is a *corrupt creature*, he ſins. Man hath *full power* and *free will* to do evil, *therefore the Lord doth not put forth his hand to help the evil doer.*

But it will be neceſſary for the underſtanding of this and other like Scriptures, to conſider ſomewhat more diſtinctly, what God doth in reference to *evil acts*, or the *acts of evil doers.* He concurs, but not with ſuch concurrence as amounts to the helping of evil doers, or the ſtrengthening of their hands.

The firſt help which God gives evil doers is privative or negative, the calling in, or not giving out of that power, by which they might do good, or avoid evil. Thus he departed from *Saul*, and then *Saul* went on worſe and worſe againſt *David.* God hath ſomewhat to do with evil doers when he withdraws that help from them by which they may be kept from doing evil: Or, when he doth not aſſiſt them againſt the evil of their own hearts, and the pollutions of the world. This deſerting and leaving them unto themſelves, layes them open to ſin; yet the ſin which a man thus deſerted commits, can no more be charged upon God, then the darkneſs of the night can be charged upon the Sun for going down; ſin follows divine deſertion, not as the effect doth the cauſe, but as a conſequent doth the antecedent.

Secondly, He delivers or gives them up, firſt, to Satan; and ſecondly, to their own counſels, to a reprobate mind and vile affections, *Pſal.* 81. 12. *Rom.* 1. 24, 26. This tradition is an act beyond deſertion; there is a greater ſpiritual judgment in it, when God makes a mans own wickedneſs active againſt him, then when he doth not make his Spirit or Grace active in him. It were better to be put into the hands of all the tyrants in the world, yea, better be put into the hands of the Devil, then into the hands of our own luſts and paſſions. *God doth not give a reprobate mind or vile affections, but he gives up to them.*

Thirdly, Evil doers, in their doing evil, are ordered by God. Wicked men (in every ſinful act) run beyond the line of obedience, but they cannot run beyond the line of providence. God limits and circumſcribes the acts of wicked men, for otherwiſe every wicked man would be a *monſter*, a *non-ſuch* in wickedneſs, if he could; every one would be a *Cain*, an *Ahab*, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*, &c. The ſinfulneſs of men would be, not only out of meaſure ſinful *intenſive*, in regard of the quality of it, but out of meaſure ſinful *extenſive*, in regard of the quantity of it, it would break all bounds, carry all down before it, did not the Lord order and direct the diſorders and confuſions of it. There is a Sea of wickedneſs in the heart of a wicked man, which is as boyſterous and unruly as the natural Sea; and if the Lord did not ſet bounds to that Sea of wickedneſs, and ſay, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further*, it would overwhelm all. Thus far alſo God hath to do in the ſinfulneſs of men, to limit and ſtay them, to reſtrain and keep them in compaſs, while they ſin. Every ſin goes without the compaſs of that law which God hath given, but no ſin can get beyond the compaſs of that leave which God gives.

Fourthly, We may ſay, *God aſſiſts the motions of ſin, but not the motions to ſin, or the ſinfulneſs of the motion.* The ſtrength of a wicked mans hand, while he ſins, is from the Lord, but the Lord doth not ſtrengthen his hand to ſin. A ſinner hath natural help from God, but he hath no moral help from God; he hath all that from himſelf, from his own wicked heart, or from Satan. To eat, was a natural act in our firſt parent, this was from God; but to eat againſt the command was a moral act, and that was from man, and the Serpent. As ſuppoſe that a Muſitian ſhould touch or play upon a Lute that is out of tune, his touching the Lute is an artificial act, but the ſounding of it comes from the nature of the inſtrument: the ſounding of the inſtrument is from the hand of him that playes upon it, but, that it ſounds untunably, is, becauſe the inſtrument is out of tune. So the Lord by natural aſſiſtance puts the hearts and hands of wicked men into motion, but that they move irregularly, that they make ſuch harſh muſick, that there is ſo much diſcord in their actions, that's from the diſorder and untuneableneſs of their own ſpirits, not from the hand of God. They have not any moral aſſiſtance from God in ſin, but a natural only.

Or, take it negatively, *God doth not help the evil doers.*

Firſt, He doth not help the evil doers, by inſtilling the leaſt motion of evil into them. He caſts in, or infuſes holy thoughts and motions into the hearts of his own people, to prepare them for holy performances; but he never dropt the leaſt motion of evil into the heart of man, to fit him for wickedneſs.

Secondly, The Lord doth not excite or ſtir up that natural inherent corruption that is in wicked men; he doth not provoke or blow up their luſts. He excites the graces of his own people, when they are to do any good: they have a principle of grace in them, and this God breaths upon, moving and acting it by freſh aſſiſtances. Neither of theſe wayes doth the Lord aſſiſt evil doers.

Further, Taking the words (as they muſt) in a figure, when it is ſaid, *God doth not help the evil doers*; the meaning is, he doth oppoſe and reſiſt them. Hence obſerve,

Wicked men are reſiſted and oppoſed by God in their evil doings.

God is ſo far from giving them any help, that he ſets himſelf againſt them. Underſtand this with a diſtinction.

There is a two-fold reſiſtance or oppoſition that God makes againſt the evil doings of men. There is,

1. A moral
2. A natural } oppoſition.

Or there is,

1. A declarative
2. An operative } reſiſtance.

When it is ſaid, that God doth reſiſt (as this phraſe imports or ſuppoſeth) wicked men in doing evil, we are to underſtand it, that he ever oppoſes them morally; that is, he ever layes a moral impediment in their way, and he ever oppoſes them declaratively, he declares his oppoſition in his Word. He never ſhews the leaſt liking of wicked men in their wayes. For when he ſaith, *He that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill; and he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill* (Rev. 22. 11.) he doth not at all approve, but threatens theſe ſinners. This ſeeming admiſſion is the higheſt rebuke of ſin. But take it for a natural oppoſition, which is the bringing out of ſtrength and power to ſtop men in the wayes of ſin: Thus the Lord doth not alwayes reſiſt evil doers. For if he did, it were impoſſible that any wicked man ſhould move one hairs breadth in doing evil; if God would put forth his power againſt man, he could not ſtir to ſin againſt God: but God doth not ſo, neither is he bound to lay a natural impediment in the wayes of wicked men. It is enough to acquit him in his holineſs, that he ever layes a moral impediment in their way. He declareth his Law againſt, and his diſlike of their ſins: and in this ſence he alwayes reſiſts them. All the ſin of man is againſt the will of God, yet no man ſins whether God will or no. The declarative will of God is often reſiſted, but his operative will cannot be reſiſted. As (which may illuſtrate this) in the civil State, the Laws of this Kingdom lay a moral impediment in the way of thievery and robbery, *&c.* It is perpetually declared by the Law, that no man ought to take another mans eſtate from him violently; but yet the Kingdom doth not ever ſet a natural impediment againſt robbers, *&c.* That is, we do not place a power of men to guard all high wayes or houſes, to ſee that no paſſenger ſhall be robbed, or houſe broken open: So the Lord layes a moral impediment in the way of wicked men alwayes, but he doth not alwayes ſet his power againſt them, whereby he is able (if he pleaſe) to diſable wicked men from doing evil. Thirdly obſerve,

When wicked men are going down, down they ſhall.

Why? God will not put forth his hand to help them; they, whom God will not aſſiſt or help, cannot ſtand long. They in the Pſalm thought they had got the godly man at an advantage, *Come* (ſay they) *let us perſecute and take him, for God hath forſaken him, and there is none to deliver him.* Now we may have our wills of this man, for God ſtands by, and doth not own him. If God be a neuter, his friends cannot ſtand long, how then ſhall his enemies ſtand, when he is their oppoſer? We may conclude againſt wicked men, that they ſhall be deſtroyed, for God hath forſaken them, he will not own them; and as *Hamans* wife told him ſadly, *Eſth.* 6. 13. *If* Mordecai *be of the ſeed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt ſurely fall before him.* When a man is going down, nothing can ſtay him, if God do not: his hand muſt ſupport a ſinking and tottering perſon or Nation, or elſe either falls. When wicked enemies begin to fall, they ſhall fall and periſh, for God will not put forth his hand to help the evil doers.

Now follows the effect of all. The effect firſt of Gods gracious helping of the righteous, *He will not caſt away the righteous man*; and is that all? Shall a righteous man be only not rejected? As mans duty ought not, ſo the mercy of God doth not ſtay in negatives. The Lord hath poſitive bleſſings in ſtore for his people; the latter part of the promiſe affirms this, *He will not caſt away the righteous man*,

Verſ. 12. **Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing.**

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.] And is it but juſt till then? Will the Lord, when he hath ſet his people a laughing, leave them, and help them no more? Will he, when he hath given them cauſe of joy, caſt them off? His people had better never laugh at all, then laugh upon thoſe terms. No man can laugh long, nor at all (upon any due ground) if God leave him.

We are not to underſtand this [**Till**] to be a *terminative*, or a *determinative* particle, as if the Lords care and favour towards his people, ſhould be only till he put them in a good eſtate, and then they muſt ſhift for themſelves: God puts no ſuch limits to his love. *It cannot ſo much comfort the ſoul to know God loves us now, as it would trouble the ſoul, to think a time may come when he will not love us.* The [*till*] here notes a continued act; it is as much as to

Particula donec non ſignificat poſtea projiciendum eſſe à Deo ſimplicem, ſed quod immutabiliter ſervabitur à Deo.

ſay, *He will never caſt them off.* The word [*until*] both in the Hebrew and Greek, often notes everlaſtingneſs. God makes a promiſe to *Jacob* in this form (*Gen.*28.19.) *I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have ſpoken to thee of.* And would he leave him then? No, the meaning is, I will never leave thee (*Pſal.* 110. 1.) *Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-ſtool.* Chriſt ſhall not be put from the right hand of God, when his enemies are ſubdued under his feet, Chriſt ſhall ſit there for ever.

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.

Thy mouth.] Obſerve here the change of the perſon: he ſpake before in the third perſon, *The Lord will not caſt away the perfect man.* Now he brings it home and applies it unto *Job*, *Till he fill thy month with laughing*; as if he had ſaid, that which I ſpake in the third perſon, I meant it as appliable unto thy ſelf, that general truth may be made good to thy perſon, *Till he fill thy mouth.* I do not ſpeak ſpeculations or fleeing notions of things that ſhall never come to paſs; If thou follow my counſel, thy own experience will quickly teach thee, *That God will not caſt thee off, till he fill thy mouth with laughing.*

Hoc quod dixi in tantũ verũ eſt, ut in te ſentieris. Aquin.

Laughter is an act of joy flowing from reaſon. To *fill the mouth with laughing* notes great joy, ſuch an income of joy, ſo much matter of joy, that the heart cannot hold it, but out it muſt at the mouth: joy begins at the heart, there's the ſeat of it: and when the heart is ſo full of it that it cannot hold, then it runs over at the mouth and lips; that is, we expreſs the inward joy of the heart, by ſome outward ſign or token, ſpeech or geſture. So then to ſay, *I will not caſt thee away, till I have filled thy month with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing*; is as much as to ſay, I will not leave thee, till thou haſt more comfort then thine heart can hold, ſo much, that thou muſt give it vent at thy lips, and be ſpeaking of it.

Os impleri dicitur riſu, cum aliquis tanta animi hilaritate perfruitur, ut illa cordis hilaritas per vociferationem, conclamationem, riſum, aut hujuſmodi exteriora ſigna valde appareat. Bold.

The word for *laughter*, ſignifies as well inward as outward joy, heart-laughter as well as face-laughter. Beſides there is a two-fold laughter.

Firſt, A laughing of joy. And

Secondly, A laughing of ſcorn, called *ſubſannation.* With both theſe laughters the Lord will fill the mouths of his people.

Firſt, With laughing for joy: for joy at their own comfortable and good eſtate, for joy that the Lord hath glorified himſelf in their deliverance. Theſe things are great matter of joy to them. And then he will fill their mouths with a laughing of deriſion, they ſhall ſcorn their enemies who have ſcorned at them. God laughs at the proud oppoſers of his truth and people, *Pſal.* 2. *He that ſitteth in the Heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.* When the Lord hath confounded the plots of his enemies, he laugheth at them; his people alſo ſhall laugh, not inſulting in the ſins and miſeries of men, but in the vengeance and diſappointments which God poureth upon them. *The deriſions and ſcorns of the Saints have more holineſs in them, then the devotions and prayers of wicked men.* The word in the next clauſe is conſiderable.

And thy lips with rejoycing.] We tranſlate *rejoycing*, but the word properly ſignifies, *a joyful ſound.* So it is uſed (*Pſal.* 89. 15.) *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound.* And it ſignifies to make a joyful ſound, either with the mouth, which is a natural inſtrument, or with a trumpet, or any other artificial inſtrument. *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound,* that live within the ſound of the ſilver trumpet which congregated the people of God, and gave notice of their ſolemn meetings for publick worſhip. This word is applied ſometimes to that rude ſound or confuſed noiſe, which Souldiers make when they come on to charge in battel; they commonly make a great clamor, to ſtrike the adverſary with terror and amazement, and to encourage and raiſe their own ſpirits. The Greeks and Latines have their ſpecial terms to expreſs it by, noted by the learned in the proprieties of thoſe languages.

תרועה: *à radice* רוע *Perſonavit, vociferatus eſt, vocem magnã edidit.* ἀλαλάζειν *eſt lætũ clamorẽ tollere, ut ſolent homines fiducia præditi & ſpe erecti ut milites ante præliũ. Latini* Barritũ *vocant; clamor quẽ* Barritum *vocant, non prius debet attolli quam acies utraq; ſe junxerit* Veget.

Again, That word is uſed for the confuſed noiſe of worſted or conquer'd enemies, when they flee and run away. So (*Judg.* 7. 21.) when *Gideon* had diſcomfited the hoſt of the *Amalekites*, all the hoſt *ran and cryed,* they made a doleful ſound: ſo the word bears, as well as a joyful ſound.

Thirdly, The word is chiefly uſed to note the ſound or acclamation of Souldiers after victory is obtained; a prevailing army ſhouts when the adverſe forces are routed and overcome. Thus, in that famous inſtance (*Joſh.* 6. 5.) *Joſhua* gives command, that when they make a long blaſt with the rams horns, and when they heard the ſound of the trumpet, all the people ſhould *ſhout with a great ſhout,* which ſhout is expreſſed by the word of the Text: and *verſ.* 10. he charges that they ſhould not ſhout or make a noiſe with their voice till the ſeventh day, becauſe that was deſigned for the day of victory, the day when the wall ſhould fall: *You ſhall not ſhout or make any noiſe with your voice, neither ſhall any word proceed out of your mouths, till the day I bid you ſhout, then ſhall ye ſhout. Baalam* (*Numb.* 23. 21.) confeſſes he could not curſe *Iſrael*, becauſe *the ſhout of a King was amongſt them.* It is this word. That the ſhout of a King may be underſtood three wayes.

Firſt, That it was ſuch a ſhout as Kings uſed to have in their reception and coronation; Such a ſhout, ſaith he, there is among this people, as if a King were to be received and crowned. Thus when *Samuel* brought *Saul* out, whom he had anointed for King, and ſaid, *See ye him whom the Lord hath choſen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people ſhouted, and ſaid, God ſave the King,* 1 Sam. 10. 24.

Or ſecondly, It noteth ſuch a ſhout as is in an Army, where a King in perſon is leader or victor.

Thirdly, The ſhout of a King is amongſt them, becauſe the voice of a King ſhould be as the ſound of a trumpet, or ſome loud inſtrument, to enform and direct his people, as alſo to encourage them.

From all, we ſee this rejoycing is no ordinary joy; It is a high, a triumphant joy, *I will fill thy lips with rejoycing, till thou ſhalt ſing* VICTORIA *over all thine enemies and calamities.*

Further, This alſo is in it, a rejoycing with praiſe: not a bare rejoycing in the bleſſings and deliverances, but a rejoycing in the praiſes of God, who hath given thoſe bleſſings, and wrought thoſe deliverances. The Septuagint tranſlate it by rendring of thanks, or a confeſſion of praiſe, *I will not caſt thee away, till I have filled thy lips with rejoycing*; that is, with my praiſes. Thus *David* prayes (*Pſal.* 71. 8.) *Let my mouth be filled with thy praiſe, and with thine honour all the day long.* Praiſe filling the heart fills the mouth; joy as well as ſorrow pent up, ſtifles the Spirit. Hence we may obſerve,

ἐξομολογήσεως, i.e. *confeſſione laudis & gratiarum actionis pro accepta reſtitutaque fœlicitate.*

> Firſt, *That as joy is the portion of the people of God, ſo in good time they ſhall receive their portion.*

He will not caſt off a perfect man, till he fill his mouth with joy, and his lips with rejoycing. Joy is their due, and joy they ſhall have. Hereafter they ſhall have their *Maſters joy*; *Enter into your Maſters joy,* will Chriſt ſay at laſt. Now they ſhall have ſuch a joy as befits them, whilſt they are in their Maſters ſervice. And as rejoycing is the portion, ſo the proper portion, the peculiar of godly men. Though laughing, as it is a natural act, is common to all men, yet in the ſence we ſpeak of, laughter is appropriated unto godly and perfect men: *They only can laugh indeed, who have mourned indeed.* A wicked man doth but feign a laugh. *He laughs to thee, and to me, but he doth not laugh to himſelf:* He hath no true laughter, while he laughs. His laughter is madneſs, and proceeds from his ignorance, not from his reaſon. Beſides other marks of difference which ſhall be put between the ſervants of God and their enemies, this is one, *My ſervants ſhall rejoyce, and ye ſhall be aſhamed* (*Iſa.* 65. 13.) This joy ariſes two wayes.

Tibi ridet & mihi, non ſibi.

Firſt, From the greatneſs of the bleſſing, which they receive for themſelves. We muſt rejoyce in the leaſt mercy, how greatly then in the greateſt? Our joyes take their meaſure by our mercies. When *Sarah* had a Son, ſhe ſaid, *God hath made me to laugh, ſo that all that hear me ſhall laugh with me,* Gen. 21. 6. Her mercy in receiving a ſon was ſo great, that it would ſerve a whole world to make merry with. The man that had found his loſt ſheep, *laid it on his ſhoulders, rejoycing* (it was a pleaſant burden to him) *and when he came home, he called together his friends and neighbours, ſaying, Rejoyce with me* (Luke 15. 6.) As ſome afflictions are ſo big, that all our own ſorrows are not large enough to weep and mourn over them: ſo ſome bleſſings are ſo big, that they call out more then our own affections to rejoyce over them.

Secondly, This overflowing joy ariſes from the greatneſs of thoſe judgments, which are poured out upon the enemies of the Saints. The overthrow of *Pharaoh* at the red Sea, of *Jabin* and *Siſera* at the brook *Kiſhon*, filled all hearts and mouths with laughter, and ſo ſhall the overthrow of *Babylon*, Rev. 15.

Thus, when God doth great things for his people, and great things againſt his enemies, then it is time to rejoyce greatly (*Pſal.* 126. 1.) *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce*, ſay the captive Jews in the morning or firſt dawnings of their deliverance from *Babylon*; and more then ſo, *Then was our mouth fill'd with laughter, and our tongue with ſinging.* And there is cauſe of great rejoycing in thoſe great things, becauſe then God fulfils his promiſes, and makes his Name glorious in his providences. Then God is greatly honoured, when his people are greatly delivered; then the blaſphemies of wicked men are unanſwerably confuted, and their mouths for ever ſtopped. From all theſe conſiderations the hearts of the Saints are filled with laughter, and their mouths with rejoycing, in a day when God works great things. At ſuch times joy, and this degree of it, is not only our priviledge, but our duty. When we carry a meſſage of thanks to God, we muſt not come with unchearful countenances, or ſowr faces. It is a comely thing, when our affections keep time and proportion with the diſpenſations of God: when we cannot ſing the ſongs of *Sion*, or uſe our harps by the waters of *Babylon*; and when we cannot but ſing either in the reſtoring of *Sion*, or in the ruines of *Babylon*.

Some may object thoſe Texts, *Wo to them that laugh*, &c. (*Luke* 6. 25.) It ſeems laughter is the portion of wicked men, for wo (we are ſure) is their portion. It's true, worldly laughter, a laughter in corn, and wine, and oil, a laughter in riches, and honours, and carnal pleaſures, as ſuch, is laughter with a wo annexed. But to laugh in the ſence of the goodneſs of God giving us outward good things, to expreſs our ſelves joyfully, when God expreſſes himſelf graciouſly, is not only comely, but holy. When Gods heart comes out at his hand, and is ſeen in his actions, our hearts ſhould come out at our mouths, and be heard in our exultations.

Thus we have ſeen the effect of the goodneſs of God upon his own people. See the effect of his juſtice upon wicked men.

Verſ. 22. **They that hate thee ſhall be cloathed with ſhame, and the dwelling place of the wicked ſhall come to nought.**

God reſiſts, or will not put forth his hand to evil doers, then follows, *They ſhall be brought to ſhame.* Shame is oppoſite to laughing: he that rejoyceth, uſually holds up his head, and cares not who ſees him; but he that is aſhamed, holds down his head, and endures not to be ſeen. Some men laugh in their ſleeves (as we ſay) but all men would be aſhamed in their ſleeves.

They that hate thee.] The word hath a double ſignification.

שנא *Odio habuit contempſit. Dicitur etiam aliquando per comparationem alterius, quod magis amatur, non quod propriè odio habeatur.* Rab. Dav. *in l. Rad.*

Firſt, It imports the putting forth of bitter hatred, when a man ſets himſelf maliciouſly againſt his brother.

Secondly, It is taken comparatively for a leſſer and more remiſs putting forth of love. He may be ſaid to hate, who wants a due heat and height of love. In that ſence *Jacob* was taxed for hating *Leah*, Gen. 29. 31. *When the Lord ſaw that* Leah *was hated*, &c. Take hatred in the common notion, and then ſurely *Jacob* was not a man ſo forgetful of a Husbands duty, as to hate his Wife: the meaning then is only this, *The Lord ſaw that* Leah *had a leſs portion of love then* Rachel *had, or leſs then her conjugal relation called for. Jacob* did not love her with that ſtrength of affection with which he loved *Rachel*. Which expoſition is clear, (*verſ.*30.) *and he* (namely *Jacob*) *loved* Rachel *more then* Leah; then *Leah* was loved, yet *Jacob's* loving of *Rachel* more then *Leah*, is called, hating of *Leah*. *Not to love another in that degree we ought, is a degree of hatred.* And in this ſence we may take it here; for though ſuch maliciouſly and profeſſedly ſet themſelves againſt the righteous are chiefly intended and fitted for this veſture of ſhame; yet it is cut out alſo for them, who do not love and eſteem the righteous, who do not prize and rejoyce in them, as the beauty and dignity which Chriſt hath put upon them, invites them to do. Theſe haters *ſhall be cloathed with ſhame*; according to the degree of their hatred ſhall be the degree of their ſhame.

They ſhall be cloathed with ſhame.] To be aſhamed at all is a great puniſhment; what is it then to be cloathed with ſhame? To be cloathed with ſhame is a great puniſhment, and moſt proper for thoſe who are proud of their cloathing.

בשת *à radice* בוש *Puduit aliquem rei vel facti.* Our Engliſh word *abaſht* is as near in ſound as in ſence.

Shame is the fruit of ſin. When there was no ſin in the world, there was no ſhame in the world, *The man and his wife were both naked, and were not aſhamed.* Innocency knew no ſhame, and glory ſhall know none. It is good to be aſhamed when we have done evil, but it is beſt to do no evil whereof to be aſhamed. *Shame is a perturbation or trouble of mind, expreſſed outwardly by holding down the head, or by bluſhing in the face.* And it ariſeth three wayes.

Firſt, From doing ſomewhat againſt common light: though every act of evil hath matter of ſhame in it, yet a man is not naturally aſhamed of it, unleſs it be done againſt the light of Nature. Not to be aſhamed of ſuch ſins, is to put out the light of Nature. Such men are grown down into beaſts. The impudence of *Jeruſalem* is ſet forth in ſinning againſt the light of Scripture without bluſhing, *Iſa.* 3. 9. *Were they at all aſhamed?* Some are ſo modeſt, that they are aſhamed to hear of, much more to be praiſed for the good which they have done; Others are ſo impudent, that they are not aſhamed to hear of, no, nor to be reproved for, the evil which they have done, *Were they at all aſhamed?* As if he had ſaid, what a boldneſs or impudence is this people come to; they are not aſhamed of thoſe things, which are clearly forbidden in the Word. *A good man is aſhamed of any thing he hath done againſt the light of Scripture. Every man is aſhamed of what he doth againſt the light of Nature.*

Secondly, Shame ariſes from long delay, or detainments much beyond expectation. When *Moſes* ſtaid long in the Mount, *the people were aſhamed* (*Exod.* 32. 1.) So *Judg.* 3. 25. when *Eglon* ſtaid long in the inner parlour, the Text ſaith, his ſervants, who waited without, *were aſhamed.*

Thirdly, Shame ariſeth from utter diſappointments. If hope deferred cauſeth ſhame, then much more hope deſtroyed. When a man ſees his hopes quite cut off, ſo that he can no way reach the thing he looked for, ſhame takes hold of him ſtrongly. *David* prayes (*Pſal.* 119. 116.) *Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, and let me not be aſhamed of my hope*; that is, let me not loſe my hope, for then I ſhall be aſhamed; my enemies will rejoyce and hoot at me, where's the word upon which you truſted to be upholden? Read *Iſa.* 12. 9. *Pſal.* 27. 6. *Pſal.* 119. 116. In all which Scriptures we find ſhame following the total fruſtration and diſappointment of hope.

Evil doers ſhall be aſhamed upon theſe three grounds. They have done things againſt common light. They ſhall ſtay waiting and gaping long for what they deſire. They ſhall ſee themſelves totally diſappointed and defeated in their deſires; hence ſhame ſhall fill their faces, and they ſhall be covered with it as with a garment.

Here is more then bare ſhame waiting upon them, the Text ſaith, *They ſhall be cloathed with ſhame.* To be cloathed is applied both to ornament and diſhonour. There are three degrees of expreſſion in Scripture about ſhame.

Firſt, Barely to be *aſhamed*, that's the loweſt.

Secondly, To have the face covered with ſhame; *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hoſts, be aſhamed for my ſake. Becauſe for thy ſake I have born reproach, ſhame hath covered my face*, (Pſal. 69. 6, 7.) The Prophet complains, that his face was covered with ſhame; his enemies endeavoured to blot and aſperſe him, they poured contempt and reproaches upon his face, that is, upon his reputation in the world, (to do ſo, is to cover the face with ſhame) therefore he prayes, *Let not thoſe* *that wait on thee be confounded for my ſake.* Lord, they have covered me with ſhame, but do thou vindicate my reputation and mine honour; let not them that wait on thee be aſhamed for my ſake, becauſe I have had ſhame upon me for thy ſake: that is, let not any be diſcouraged in thy ſervice, through my ſufferings. The Apoſtle feared ſome would faint, becauſe of his tribulations, *Epheſ.* 3. 13.

Indui confuſione eſt Hebraiſmus quo exprimitur omnimoda & undiq; confundens verecundia. Bold. *Veſtimenta dicuntur abominari, quaſi maculam contrahere timentes.*

Thirdly, *To be cloathed with ſhame*, which implies the whole man under a covering of diſgrace. Some are ſo cloathed with ſin, that their very cloathes are aſhamed of them, being unwilling to touch or hide ſuch ſins. *Job* ſpeaks that ſence in *Chap.* 9. (*verſ.* 31.) concerning his own righteouſneſs in juſtification, *If I waſh my ſelf with ſnow water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloathes ſhall abhor me*; that is, if I ſhould ſet my ſelf up in my own righteouſneſs; my own cloaths would be loath to cover ſuch a piece of ſpiritual pride, as that act would witneſs me to be.

To be cloathed with ſhame, notes four things.

Firſt, The extent or abundance of it. To be cloathed with honour, is to have much honour. To be cloathed with humility, is to be very humble (1 *Pet.* 5. 5.) He that is cloathed is covered all over with his cloathing.

Manifeſte confundentur. Aq.

Secondly, The publickneſs of it, that ſhame cannot be hid. A man cannot go abroad but cloathing is ſeen: the filthineſs which lies underneath may be hid, but his cloathing cannot. Their ſhame ſhall cloath them, they ſhall not put their ſhame under their cloaths, their ſhame ſhall be in ſight.

Eſt quaſi præmium peccati, mercedis enim nomine Syndones olim dabantur.

Thirdly, They *ſhall be cloathed with ſhame*, may be underſtood thus, *Shame ſhall be their reward.* They have been doing the buſineſs of Satan, he ſet them a work, now ſee what livery they ſhall have at laſt, into what ſuit the Devil will put them. They ſhall go in a livery of diſhonour. Servants are cloathed by their Maſters; Satan clothes his ſervants, and this is their cloathing, they ſhall be cloathed with ſhame. *Sampſon* was to give thirty change of garments to the *Philiſtines* for a reward, if they could declare his riddle (*Judg.* 14. 12.) Satan gives liveries and garments of ſhame to thoſe who ſtudy out his riddles, and do his drudgery.

Natura pudore tacta ſanguinem ante ſe pro velamento diffundit & obtendit. Macr. *l.* 7. *c.* 11.

Fourthly, If we take the letter of the Hebraiſm, *to be cloathed with ſhame*, implies thus much, that when a man hath done a thing of which he is aſhamed, he (as it were) ſends forth blood into the face, in a bluſh, to cover that foul act, he puts out a red garment, or a ſcarlet vail to hide his filthineſs. Thus he is cloathed with ſhame. Modeſty commands nature, and (where it is but honeſtly natur'd) prevails with it to caſt this covering over all uncomlineſs in ſpeech or practice; and though this bluſh appears only in the face, yet the whole body is dipt and dyed with the ſame colour.

Solent qui erubeſcunt manum faciei, quia opprobrium ac dedecus timent, admovere. Bol.

Hence alſo they who are aſhamed, either hold their hands before their faces to cover them, or hold their heads down that they may not be diſcovered. Obſerve,

> *That which evil men glory in, will be matter of their abaſement.*

The Apoſtle ſaith, *They glory in their ſhame* (Phil. 3. 19.) not formally, but materially. No man can glory in any thing under the notion of ſhame, but many glory in that which is in it ſelf ſhameful, and will be their ſhame. The Hebrew expreſſes an Idol, by a word that ſignifies ſhame, or a ſhameful thing (and it is the root of that in the Text) becauſe Idols, firſt or laſt, make their worſhippers aſhamed, *Jer.* 11. 13. *According to the number of thy Cities were thy gods,* O Judah, *ye have ſet up altars to that ſhameful thing.* Idolaters ſhall ſee at laſt how fooliſh they have been in worſhipping a ſtock or a ſtone, in adoring the invention of their own brains, which can do them no good in an evil day: every Idol is a ſhameful thing, becauſe it deceiveth its worſhippers: ſo every ſinful act will be like an Idol, matter of ſhame, becauſe every ſin is a deceit, Iſa. 26. *They ſhall be aſhamed for their envy at my people:* They ſhall ſee their envy againſt the people of God was unreaſonable, groundleſs and fruitleſs, therefore they ſhall be aſhamed; and if they ſhall be aſhamed of their envy againſt the people of God, how ſhall they be aſhamed of their oppoſition and injuries, of their oppreſſion and injuſtice, *Iſa.* 41. 11. *Behold all they that were incenſed againſt thee ſhall be aſhamed.* The Churches enemies glory in their own ſhame, and the Church ſhall glory in the ſhame of her enemies; therefore ſhe is called to behold it, as a piece of her glory. Obſerve further,

בשת *Idolū cujus pudet cultorem, poſtquā ab eo in periculis deſtitutus, nec adjutus fuerit.*

> *They that hate thee ſhall be clothed with ſhame, then, wicked men are haters of the righteous.*

They are haters of God, therefore they muſt be haters of thoſe who have the Image of God upon them. As he that loves, ſo he that hates him that begets, hates him alſo that is begotten. Natural men are ſuch haters of holineſs, that they hate that which is but the Image, the Idol of holineſs, *hypocriſie*; they cannot endure a man who doth but ſeem religious. It is ſaid of the *Panther*, that he bears ſuch hatred againſt man, that if he ſee but the picture of a man, he will tear it to pieces. Many men have ſuch an hatred againſt true, real goodneſs, that they cannot abide the ſhadow or appearance of it.

And the dwelling place of the wicked ſhall come to nought.

We have met many paſſages to this purpoſe. *Dwelling place*, in the Hebrew, is a Tabernacle, becauſe they were wont to dwell in Tabernacles. And when he ſaith, *His Tabernacle ſhall be brought to nought*, the meaning is, *His whole eſtate ſhall be brought to nought*, not only the walls of his houſe ſhall be overthrown, but all his goods, his riches, his honours, his titles, his children, his relations, whatſoever is dear to him ſhall be *brought to nought*; the Hebrew is, *It ſhall not be*; it ſhall be, as if ſuch a thing had never been in the world. God will at laſt make an utter *conſumption* of wicked men. None who have Tabernacles in the world, ſhall long have a Tabernacle in the world. But the fall of theſe mens Tabernacles ſhall not be according to the condition of mortality only. As *Moſes* ſpeaks of *Corah, Dathan*, &c. Theſe men ſhall not die the common death of all men, a remarkable judgement ſhall overtake them. Some take *Tabernacle*, to note their religious duties, their worſhip and ſervice of God, and ſo their ſpiritual eſtate. Wicked men will ſerve God outwardly, they have their Tabernacles as well as the Saints, they pray, and hear, *&c.* But, be it a civil, or be it a religious Tabernacle, down it muſt, all their riches and all their religion ſhall come to nought.

Olim in tentoriis habitabant, unde factum ut tentorium pro qualibet domo accipiatur. Per domum innuit familiā totam cum omnibus rebus domeſticis. Druſ.

איננו

οὐκ ἔστι ad verbum, non ipſum, ſubintelligitur eſt, vel erit.

. CHAP. IX. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Then Job anſwered, and ſaid,

I know it is ſo of a truth: but how ſhould man be juſt with God?

If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.

He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength: who hath hardned himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?

IN the former Chapter *Bildad* gave a threefold advice to *Job*.

First, To think aright of the juſtice and judgments of God.

Secondly, To humble himſelf, and ſeek unto God.

Thirdly, (which is implied in both the former) To forbear complaining of his own troubled life, or deſiring the end of it by death.

To theſe three heads of *Bildad's* advice or reproof, *Job* ſhapes his anſwer in *Chap.* 9, 10.

Firſt, He opens his thoughts about, and highly magnifies the Juſtice of God, *verſ.* 21.

Secondly, He renounces his own righteouſneſs, and proves that no man is to be judged by the preſent dealings of God with him, from *verſ.* 12. to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He renews and juſtifies his complaint againſt his life, and his wiſhes for death, by many arguments, in *Chap.* 10.

In moſt of theſe points he anſwers exactly, according to the ſtrict laws and rules of diſputation.

Firſt, Repeating his Opponents argument, and then yielding what was true, denying what was falſe, and diſtinguiſhing about what was doubtful. Which he doth with ſo much acuteneſs and vigour, with ſo much ſtrength and clearneſs both of reaſon and judgment, that one of the Ancients cries out upon the whole matter of his anſwer in theſe Chapters, *O how much Phyloſophy (I may ſay, how much Logick) hath* Job *ſhewed in this reply to the argument of* Bildad!

Quantum verba hæc præ ſe ferunt philoſophiã. Chryſ.

Bildad's argument ſpeaks to this effect; *God who hath puniſhed thee is juſt, therefore thou art unjuſt. Job* in anſwer, grants the antecedent, but denies the conſequent. His grant of the antecedent appears in the two firſt verſes of the Chapter, *I know it is ſo of a truth* (I yield this) *but how ſhould man be juſt with God?* He proves and confirms that God is juſt, in *verſ.* 4. by a double *medium.*

Firſt, From his wiſdom, *He is wiſe in heart.* And

Secondly, From his power, *He is mighty in ſtrength.* What force there is in theſe two Attributes to hold up the juſtice of God, we ſhall ſee afterwards.

The fourth verſe is likewiſe a conceſſion unto the ſecond part of *Bildad's* advice, namely, that *Job* ſhould humble himſelf. As if *Job* had ſaid, *You adviſe me to humble my ſelf, and to ſeek unto God, it is moſt becoming I ſhould do ſo, for, he is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength; who hath hardned himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?* There is no ſtanding out againſt God, and therefore I yield. I fall down and abaſe my ſelf before him.

That God is thus powerful and wiſe, he goes on to prove in the following parts of the Chapter to *verſ.* 22. by the enumeration of many particular acts and effects, both of his power and wiſdom.

The other part of his argument, namely, the conſequent, that therefore *Job* was unjuſt and wicked, he denies, and more, refutes it ſtrongly. His negation and refutation begin at *verſ.* 22. *This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it, He deſtroyeth the righteous and the wicked.* As if he had ſaid, *This is no argument that I am a wicked man, becauſe God hath deſtroyed my eſtate, and my children; for God (in this ſence) deſtroyeth both the righteous and the wicked. It cannot be proved that I am wicked, becauſe God hath afflicted me, or, that God hath afflicted me for my wickedneſs: I know another way how to acquit the juſtice of God, and to declare him righteous, though I do not joyn with you in condemning and judging my ſelf (in your notion) unrighteous.*

This is the ſum of his anſwer contained in *Chap.* 9.

In the tenth he renews his complaint, as before in the ſixth, and ſheweth (after he had given God glory under all his ſufferings) what great reaſon he had to be ſenſible under the pain and ſmart of his ſufferings.

Verſ. 1, 2. **Then Job anſwered, and ſaid, I know it is ſo of a truth.**

Thus he grants the antecedent, [**I know it to be ſo of a truth**] or, *truly I know it to be ſo.* The word hath a double force in it. Sometime of a bare, yet ſtrong aſſeveration, and ſometimes of an Oath. *I know it to be ſo of a truth,* I affirm or aver the thing, or truly and indeed, or verily I know the thing to be ſo. As if *Job* had ſaid, this is ſo much a truth, that I dare ſwear it is a truth, *that God is juſt,* I durſt take my oath of it, if I were called to it; I would ſwear for the juſtice of God, above all things in the world. *As we ought to ſwear in truth* (Pſal. 89. 49.) *ſo to affirm a thing to be ſo in truth, is ſwearing.*

אמנם *Aſſeveratio quædam eſt rei ſibi bene exploratæ. Radix* Amen, *fidelem, ſtabilẽ, veracẽ eſſe, unde* Amen.

Further, the word is taken either in way of affirmation, or in way of confirmation. In way of affirmation, it refers to that which is to be ſpoken; ſo frequently in the New Teſtament, *Amen, Amen, verily, verily,* is a vehement affirmation of what was afterwards to be ſpoken, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you.* But here rather it is a note of confirmation of the truth already ſpoken: The *Syriack* of the New Teſtament uſes it commonly for an affirmation; the *Hebrew* in the Old, for a confirmation.

Amen *duplicem habet ſenſum,* 1. *Ut ſit affirmatio eorum quæ dicturi ſumus.* 2. *Ut ſit confirmatio eorũ quæ jam dicta ſunt. Hebraicè innotare ſolet confirmationem. Syriacè in* N. T. *affirmationem.* Bold.

So then, it is here a ſealing to the former truth delivered, both by *Bildad* and *Eliphaz,* about the juſtice of God; *Eliphaz,* in *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 17. and *Bildad,* in *Chap.* 8. *v.* 3. *Doth the Almighty pervert judgment?* No (ſaith *Job*) *I know it of a truth, that he doth not.* And ſo the ſence runs thus.

Bildad, *doeſt thou ſurmiſe, by what I have ſpoken, that I have ill or hard thoughts of the juſtice of God? Did I ever think that juſtice was perverted, becauſe I was afflicted? I acknowledge thou haſt truly ſaid, that God doth not pervert judgment; and I acknowledge thou haſt faithfully counſelled me to ſeek unto God, and make my ſupplication to the Almighty; for alas! who am I that I ſhould contend with God? What am I that I ſhould diſpute it out with him concerning my troubles, and his dealings with me? Or, if I ſhould be ſo raſh, ſo fool-hardy, and adventurous, to attempt ſuch a thing; alas! I could make nothing of it, I could not anſwer him one argument of a thouſand, whereby he might maintain his own juſtice; or to one charge and article of a thouſand, whereby he might impeach mine. I am no match for God. Therefore I yield thee the whole matter, ſo far as concerns the honouring of God in that great attribute of his juſtice, and the duty of weak man in humbling himſelf before that great God. I know it to be ſo of a truth.* Note hence,

> Firſt, *That in all diſputes and controverſies it is a note both of an ingenuous and of an holy heart, to yield as much as without wrong to truth may be yielded unto.*

It is good to agree as far as we can, if we cannot agree in all. We ſhould walk with an adverſary one mile (when it lies in our way) though we cannot walk twain. Aſſoon as *Job* hears a truth, he falleth down before it. He hath not a word to ſpeak againſt the truth of God, though it come

Jobus *veritatis fidiſſimus aſſertor; qui omnia ratione, non afflictionis ſenſu, metiretur; tam ingenuè fatetur & commendat vera quæ ab impugnatoribus promuntur, quam generoſè falſa depellit, quod hoc præſertim capite liquido demonſtrat, dum verum duorum diſputatorum aſſertum, non admittit modo, verum elegantiſſimè & diſertiſſimè integro fere capite amplificat & exornat.* Pined.

from erroneous men. He will be a friend to truth, though brought by them who ſeem'd his enemies. If this law of diſputation were well obſerved, many diſputes would be ſooner ended. As ſome out of love to men, are apt to entertain their very errors; ſo ſome out of hatred to men reject their truths. Errors cannot be really adorned, nor truths ſoiled by thoſe who hold them. Our judgment about both muſt be carried by reaſon, not ſwayed by affection. Willingly to embrace and receive a truth from thoſe, whoſe errors we moſt zealouſly oppoſe, is the due temper of a champion for the truth.

Secondly, *I know it to be ſo of a truth,* ſaith *Job,* Obſerve,

A godly man is a knowing man.

He is eſtabliſhed in truths, eſpecially in great and neceſſary truths, in the vitals and fundamentals of religion, *Job* had been long acquainted with this principle, that God is juſt, and that every man muſt abaſe himſelf before him, how juſt ſoever any man is. Light is the firſt thing which God makes in the new creation of Grace, as it was in the old creation of Nature: He caſts in a beam, a ray into the ſoul, whereby we may diſcern of things that differ. There may be darkneſs in a godly man, but he dwells not in darkneſs: bring a truth to him, and as there is ſomewhat in his heart that anſwers and is a kin to it, ſo that apprehends and makes out his acquaintance with it, often at firſt ſight, alwayes after conſideration, unleſs he be under clouds and temptations. In thoſe caſes we may bring truths to holy men, which they do not *know to be ſo of a truth,* yea, which they may refuſe for errors. But uſually a good man knows truth, having learnt it before, or as having a likeneſs to other truths he knew before.

Thirdly, *I know this to be ſo of a truth* (ſaith *Job*) in the midſt of his pains, in the greateſt troubles of his fleſh, he forgets not to honour God. Hence obſerve,

A gracious heart gives teſtimony to the righteouſneſs of God, though ſeverely chaſtened under the hand of God.

When God deals moſt hardly with the ſoul, or with the body, or with ſoul and body, a holy heart hath not a hard thought of God, *I know it to be ſo of a truth;* He doth not only acknowledge that *God was juſt,* when he puniſhed others, but when he afflicted him. The common argument which the friends of *Job* took up to prove *God* to be juſt, was this: *God* is righteous, for he deals with men according to their deſerts: but *Job* argues thus, *God is righteous,* however he deals with men, and whatſoever thoſe men are, let men be wicked or upright, holy or prophane. When we ſee *God breaking the wicked, and making gall and worm-wood, fire and brimſtone the portion of their cup;* this argues his juſtice, becauſe he hath threatned ſuch with his wrath and vengeance. But the Saints go further, they proceed upon purer and ſublimer principles, maintaining that *God is juſt,* though he afflicts the *juſteſt* and *holieſt* man upon Earth. The righteouſneſs of *God* ſhines forth to them throw the darkeſt ſufferings of righteous men. The righteouſneſs of God is not grounded upon the object about which he dealeth, whether righteous or unrighteous, but upon the act of his own will, yea upon the pleaſure of his own will. His righteouſneſs proceedeth from himſelf, and he is a righteous act, what ever the object be upon which he acts. We need not ſay, *God is juſt,* becauſe he puniſhes the guilty; *for God is juſt, though he afflict the innocent.* We may at once maintain our own innocency, and the *juſtice of God,* while we bleed under his hand, or ſmart under his ſevereſt ſcourges. *I know it to be ſo of a truth;*

But how ſhall man be juſt with God?

Mr. *Broughton* reads, *And how can man be juſt before the Omnipotent?* And ſo the ſence runs more clear, taking the firſt particle for a pure copulative, whereas we read it as a *diſcretive, but how ſhall man be juſt before God?* Namely, in your ſence, as if he had ſaid, you diſcourſe of juſtice under ſuch a notion as renders it impoſſible *for any man to be juſt before God;* in one ſence a man may be righteous before *God,* but in yours no man can. Would you not have a man know himſelf to be juſt, unleſs he know himſelf to be without ſin? If you take juſt, to be the ſame as without in-dwelling ſin, then it is impoſſible for any man to appear juſt before God: but man may be juſt and righteous before God, though he have ſin dwelling in him, and that's my notion of juſtice in this diſpute.

Illud cum Deo vel ante Deum erit aliquid forenſe & judiciale.

Juſtice is either inherent or imputed. By inherent juſtice no man is juſt before God: according to imputed juſtice, man may be juſt, and is before God. So theſe two propoſitions are reconciled, *No man is juſt before God: every believer is juſt before God.* Our tranſlation uſing the diſcretive, *But,* ſeems to carry this intendment, that no man can be juſt before *God* by inherent juſtice, which the next verſe implies, *For if he contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*

The words taken in this ſence are the ſame with *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 17. *Shall mortal men be more juſt then God?* There *Eliphaz* ſpeaks comparatively, in a way of exceſs, *more juſt,* or *juſt rather then God:* He cannot exceed God in any thing. Here *Job* ſpeaks comparatively in a way of equality, *How ſhould man be juſt with God?* He cannot compare with God at all. Yet the ſence is the ſame, and the denial of mans perfect inherent righteouſneſs is the ſubject of both. A juſt man comparing with God deprives himſelf of all his juſtice. He is not ſo much as man may be, by aſpiring to be what God is. But I need not ſtay in any further clearing, how man is not juſt before God, or in any obſervations from it, but ſhall refer the Reader back to *Chap.* 4.

Quiſquis ſe authori bonorū comparat, bono ſe quod acceperat privat, ea ipſa ratione, qua quis ſe componit Deo juſtus eſſe deſinit, quãvis juſtus fuerit. Greg.

Only take this from it, *How ſhall man be juſt with God? With God;* that is looking upon, or comparing himſelf unto God; as if he had ſaid, It will take down all the proud and high thoughts of man, in regard of his own juſtice and righteouſneſs, if he will but caſt his eye upon God, and duly conſider how juſt and righteous God is. Hence obſerve,

The way for us to humble our ſelves for our own ſinfulneſs, is to look up and to conſider the purity and holineſs of God.

If we ſet our ſelves before him, we ſhall ſee how vile and corrupt we are. His fulneſs will convince us abundantly of our emptineſs, his purity will ſhew us our ſpots, and his all-ſufficiency our nothingneſs. If we bring a courſe piece of cloth before a fine, we ſhall ſee what courſe ſtuff it is: if we lay a better in any kind by a worſe, the worſe will appear worſer then before. For the moſt part we who are courſe ſtuff our ſelves, compare our ſelves with thoſe who are as courſe as our ſelves. While ſome men compare themſelves with men, they begin to think they are like God himſelf. A man looking upon his neighbour is juſt before him, or ſees him no better then himſelf, of no purer threed, of no better die in his life then he; I have faults, and ſo have others; I have failings, and ſo have my neighbours; if you charge me with my ſinnings, who is it that is without ſin? As our uſual phraſe is, *If the beſt mans faults were written in his fore-head, it would make him pull his hat over his eyes.* Thus uſually men compare themſelves with men: but if they would look up to God, O how would the thoughts of their hearts fall, and be abaſed before him. The Phariſee could pride himſelf in his compariſons with men (*Luke* 18.) *God be-thanked I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.* But Phariſee, art thou as God? Pure, and holy, and juſt as he? *Look upwards, and pride will down.* The holy Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 10. 12.) ſpeaking of thoſe falſe Apoſtles, ſaith, *They meaſuring themſelves by themſelves, and comparing themſelves amongſt themſelves, are not wiſe.* So we may ſay to men in general, while ye take a ſcantling of your own wayes, by your own rules, and meaſure your ſelves by your ſelves, or while ye meaſure man by man, and compare creature with creature, ye are not *wiſe;* while we go this way to work pride will not down. Man hath ſome reaſon to ſay, I am as good as man, I have ſinned, and ſo hath he, ſuch a man hath as many ſins as I. But if we look up to God, we ſhall quickly find that he hath no ſin at all in him, and that we have no goodneſs at all in us. The beſt of Saints muſt not only confeſs, with *Paul, I know that in me (that is, in my fleſh) dwelleth no good thing,* Rom. 7. 18. but he muſt confeſs alſo, *I know that in me, even in my ſpirit dwells no good thing, in compariſon of the goodneſs of God.* Though man in regeneration is made *a partaker of the divine nature* (2 Pet. 14.) yet his nature cannot bear the perfections of the divine nature. *How ſhall man be juſt before God?*

Verſ. 3. If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.

This is a confirmation of the former grant. I (ſaith he) acknowledge no man can be juſt, by inherent righteouſneſs before God. For, *If he would contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*

חפצ *Voluit, optavit.*

If he would contend.] The word, *If he would,* is, *If he have a mind, or delight to contend,* if any man takes pleaſure in *contending with God,* he ſhall quickly (as we ſpeak) have his hand full, and his belly full of it.

From this word the Church is called *Hephzibah,* that is, my pleaſure is in her (*Iſa.* 64. 2. & *Pſal.* 16. 3.) *David* profeſſes of the Saints (*Hephzibam*) *my pleaſure,* or, *my delight is in them.* So here, if any one hath a pleaſure, or a delight, or would take upon him to contend with God, or (as the word ſignifies) to chide, to argue and plead with God. The word may be taken either for an angry chiding, or a rational chiding, which is diſputing. The place where the *Iſraelites* did contend or chide with *Moſes,* is called *Meribah,* from this word, *Exod.* 17. 7. And after *Gideon* had pull'd down *Baal's* altar, a great controverſie or contention, a pleading or arguing enſued, therefore he was called *Jerubbaal,* a contender or pleader with *Baal,* Judg. 6. 21.

ריב *In foro & extra litigavit, diſceptavit, cauſam egit, ſeu dixit, etiam jurgavit, de verbali tantum contentione ſeu actione dicitur.* Merc. *Contentio hæc, eſt rationibus, objectionibus, reſponſionibus, argumentationibus cum Deo agere.* Pined.

Now (ſaith *Job*) if a man take delight to contend, plead or argue with the Lord, What will be the iſſue of it? He is like to have a cold pull of it, *He cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand,* poor creature! Before I open that, take this obſervation,

Man naturally loves to be contending.

φιλόνεικος *eſt cui victoria potior eſt veritate.* Eſt *in* 1 Cor. 11. εἰ δέ τις δοκεῖ, *non aliud eſt quam* εἰ δέ τις θέλει. *Si quis ſibi ea complaceat, quod contentioſus ſit* Dan. Heinſ. *exerc.*

Some cannot live but in this fire, and in troubled waters, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16. *If any man ſeems to be contentious,* or as the Greek carries it, *lover of victory.* Contentious ſpirits love victory more then truth, *and to overcome more then to teach or be taught.* Beſides the *Verb,* which we (in the Text of the Apoſtle, tranſlate *ſeems,* doth rather ſignifie, *is to be, deſires, or hath a will to be contentious,* yea, boaſts and prides himſelf in it. So the word (δοκεῖ) is uſed, *Matth.* 3. 9. & *Gal.* 6. 3. *If a man think himſelf to be ſomething,* &c. That is, if he boaſt and take upon him as if he were ſome great man. Thus ſome glory to be medling and contending in all Queſtions. Yea, though it be upon as unequal terms, as *Jehoaſh* the King of *Iſrael,* by his parable, ſuppoſed *Amaziah* King of *Judah* would War with him, (2 *King.* 14. 9.) *The thiſtle that was in* Lebanon, *ſent to the Cedar that was in* Lebanon, *&c.* Thiſtles will ſometimes challenge Cedars; whom we may counſel as he doth, *tarry at home, why ſhouldſt thou meddle to thy hurt?* It argues folly enough in any man to love *contention with man,* and pride enough *to love contention with men above him.* Then how mad are they both with folly and pride, *who attempt to contend with God?* Whom, as it follows, *They cannot anſwer,*

אלפ *Pædagogus, dux quod aliis præire ſolet, ſicut* Aleph *prima litera reliquas omnes præcedit hinc* Eleph, *mille numerorum princeps.*

One of a thouſand.] A thouſand is a great number, a full number, and therefore it is put for all great numbers. It is a leading number, therefore the word in Hebrew for a thouſand cometh from a *root* which ſignifies to lead, and the *Noun,* a *Duke or a Captain,* who is a chief and a leader of men, *Gen.* 36. *The Dukes of* Edom, or the leaders of *Edom,* As alſo a maſter or teacher, becauſe he goes afore, and is a chief over thoſe he inſtructs. And hence the number *thouſand* in the *Hebrew* hath it's name, becauſe a *thouſand,* is (as it were) a Prince among numbers, a chief number, a Captain number; and is therefore put for all great numbers, or for the greateſt number that can be imagined: to ſay, *One of a thouſand,* is as much as to ſay, *One amongſt all. One* is not a number, it is but the ſeed, principle or beginning of number; a unity hath a ſeminal vertue in it; all numbers are made out of *ones,* but *one* it ſelf is no number. So that to ſay, *one of a thouſand,* is to put the greateſt and the leaſt *number* in oppoſition, it is as much as to ſay, a man cannot anſwer God in any thing that ever he did in the *whole courſe of his life* (2 Pet. 3, 8.) *One day is with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day.* When he ſaith a thouſand years, he means *all years,* all time put together, is but as one day to the *Lord.* A day was the firſt diſtinction of time; the firſt perfect time that was created, was a day: now put a thouſand *years* together, *it is but as one day to the Lord; All times and one time are all one to him who inhabits eternity.* In *Pſal.* 90. 6. it is, a thouſand years are but as yeſterday, which notes all time paſt, as *Peter* notes, all time to come, is but as one day,

Unitas huic numero oppoſita pro nihilo habetur.

One of a thouſand, referred to a perſon, notes a choice, excellent man, among all men (*Job* 33. 23.) *If there be an interpreter, one among a thouſand,* one choiſe man amongſt many, or amongſt all. He that rightly expounds the Text of a troubled conſcience, and interprets the mind of God to ſuch a ſoul, is a chief, the flower of a thouſand, a man of men. *Chriſt* (Cant. 5. 5.) is called *the chiefeſt of ten thouſand,* the Hebrew is, a Standard bearer, ſuch are choiſe men, elect of the multitude, Chriſt is the elect of all the multitudes in the whole world; bring all Armies of men together, or an Army of man-kind, choſe amongſt them all, and you cannot find ſuch an other as Chriſt is, he is the choice of ten thouſand, that is, the choiſe of *all the thouſands* that are in the world.

He cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.

He cannot anſwer.] Some refer it only to the perſon. *He,* that is, *one man of a thouſand men,* is not able to anſwer God.

Secondly, We may refer it to the matter, to the objections or charges, that ſhall be brought againſt him, he cannot anſwer to one thing of a thouſand. So Mr. *Broughton,* as if he had ſaid, *If God brings many charges,* or layes many articles againſt him, he is not able to ſatisfie God, or give a good account in one.

Vilem hominum conditionem judex contemnet. Polyc. *Tantum non eſt homo, ut Deus eũ ſua reſponſione dignetur.* Vitabl. *Illud non poterit, idem erit quod nolet, vel per tranſpoſitionẽ verborũ, poterit non reſpondere.*

Thirdly, Some refer it to *God* himſelf, *If he* (that is, man) *ſhould contend with him, he would not anſwer him one of a thouſand;* that is, *God* would not anſwer him one of a thouſand: as if he had ſaid, the matters will be ſo trivial and ſo ſleight, the charges that a man can bring againſt *God,* or the objections he can make, will be ſo eaſie, that the Lord will not vouchſafe to anſwer one word of a thouſand. Some men will plead priviledge to ſome charges, and all their anſwer ſhall be, they may chuſe, or it is at their liberty whether they will anſwer or no. Here *He would not* (referred to *God*) is as much as he need not, he is no way obliged to anſwer, he may claim priviledge. Further, when arguments are poor and empty, a man will ſay in diſpute, *Theſe things are not worth the anſwering;* or of a book, there is not one page that is worth a confutation, it carries its own confutation. Such a ſence may be made out here, *God* will not diſhonour himſelf by contending with ſo weak an adverſary as man, or by anſwering ſuch ſimple arguments.

Rogatus homo in judicio divino, hæſitabit, æſtuabit obmuteſcet.

But rather (as before) refer it to man, *He cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand;* that is, if *God* come to queſtion man, to lay ſuch and ſuch matters to his *charge,* or object againſt him, *poor creature,* he muſt ſhut his mouth, put up his books, he hath nothing to ſay, he muſt hide his face, *For he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.* So in *verſ.* 14. of this Chapter. *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my words to plead with him?* Hence obſerve,

First, *That there is in man a ſpirit ready to contend againſt God himſelf.*

If he contend with him, or, if he plead with him, which ſuppoſes that there is ſuch a principle of pride in the heart of man. The heart of man is very full of quarrels and contentions with man, but fuller of quarrels with God himſelf. The great controverſie between God and man, is, whoſe will ſhall ſtand, Gods will or mans. God directs man one way, and man contendeth he will go another way. There is a natural unanſwerableneſs between the heart of man, and every thing that God doth or ſpeaks; hence it is that man calls God ſo often to anſwer. There is a contention, firſt, about that work of God, the foundation-ſtone of all the works of God, his decrees and counſels. While the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 9. 20.) ſtops ſo much mouths, he ſhews how ready they are to open, *O man, Who art thou that replyeſt againſt God? Thou wilt ſay, wherefore doth he complain?* Thus man begins to contend. But, O man, who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt dare to reply upon God?

Wilt thou be venturing to queſtion the righteous God? Muſt he be accountable to thee for what he did before thou hadſt a being?

Secondly, What contentions are there continually about the rules which God gives man to order his life by? Man thinks this is an unreaſonable rule, that's a hard rule, and a third is an unprofitable rule; how many riſe up againſt the Law, to which they ſhould ſubmit, and would ſhift off obedience to the rule, by complaints againſt it? *The carnal mind* (or, *the minding of the fleſh*) *is enmity againſt God, it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be* (Rom. 8. 7.) Words importing higheſt oppoſition, and that, irreconcilable. It is not, it cannot be ſubject; the mind is never ſubject to the Law, till it be changed into the Law. Chriſt ſaith, that one *iota* or tittle of the Law ſhall not paſs, till all be fulfilled; it is as true, that not one *iota* or tittle of the Law can be fulfilled by us, till our carnal minds paſs away. *Paul* found juſt as much ſtubbornneſs and contrariety againſt the will of God remaining in him, as there was of a carnal mind remaining in him (*Rom.* 7.) As man deſires not the knowledge of the will of God (*Job* 21. 14.) and ſecretly wiſhes, that he were ignorant of what he knows, ſo he wiſhes there were no ſuch thing to be known; and that the revealed will of God were leſs by ſo much, as it ſpecially oppoſeth his will.

Thirdly, The conteſt about providence grows as high in the hearts of men, as that about predeſtination to life, or the rule of life. The Saints ſometimes (modeſtly) enter this controverſie, *Let me plead with thee,* ſaith *Jeremy,* Chap. 12. 1. *He* doth it, we ſee, with a great deal of trembling and ſubmiſſion; he ſeems to ask leave before he doth it. Hypocrites contend with God proudly about their own good works (*Iſa.* 58. 3.) *Wherefore have we faſted, and thou ſeeſt not?* As if they had done ſo well, that God himſelf could not mend it. Carnal men plead with God profanely about his works; as if he had done ſo ill, that they could mend it. *Ye ſay, the way of the Lord is not equal: hear now, O houſe of* Iſrael, *is not my way equal? Are not your wayes unequal?* Ezek. 18. 25. They charged God with ill dealing, becauſe he puniſhed them who did evil. *Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have tranſgreſſed againſt me, ſaith the Lord* (Jer. 2. 29.) they began to plead with God about his diſpenſations, as if he had been unrighteous or rigorous; *Wherefore will ye plead with me? I will plead with you, ſaith God,* verſ. 9. God may plead and contend with man, but ſhall man plead and contend with God? Ye have all ſinned and tranſgreſſed againſt me; that's enough to ſtop your mouths; I can anſwer you with one word, *Ye are a company of ſinners,* then plead not with me. *Plead with your mother, plead,* Hoſ. 2. 2. let man plead with man, man with his neighbour. The wit of one man may compare with the wit of another, and their juſtice may hold plea with one another. But neither the juſtice, nor the wit of man, will ſerve him to plead with God. That is a ſecond obſervation,

Man is not able to maintain his cauſe, and hold plea, either againſt the works of God, or for his own.

If he diſpute with God in the Schools, or Fee an advocate to implead him at the bar, he is not able to anſwer him *one of a thouſand* (Iſa. 45. 9.) *Woe be to him that ſtriveth with his maker*; it is this word, *Woe be to him that contendeth with his maker,* for he ſhall not be able to make out one argument, or prove any thing againſt him; ſuch a man is in a ſad condition, wo unto him. *David* prayes, *Pſal.* 143. 2. *Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant, for in thy ſight ſhall no fleſh living be juſtified*; As if he had ſaid, Lord, if the holieſt and pureſt, if the beſt of men ſhould come and ſtand before thee in judgment, or plead with thee, they could not be juſtified: therefore *David* was ſo far from contending with God, that he deprecates Gods contending with him, enter not into judgment with thy ſervant: ſuch a charge is laid upon *Job* (Chap. 33. 13.) *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? for he giveth not an account of any of his matters.* And if he ſhould condeſcend to give an account, can any man gain by it? The Lord argues ſo convincingly, *That every mouth muſt be ſtopped, and all the world become guilty before God,* Rom. 3. 19. Every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, when God opens his. When God ſpeaks, man hath nothing to ſay againſt him, *Every mouth is ſtopped,* with this one word, *Man is a ſinner.* The Apoſtle points at ſome (*Tit.* 1. 11.) *Whoſe mouths muſt be ſtopped,* he means, with reaſon to convince them that they are in an error. By this one argument, *That all men are ſinners,* God ſtops their mouths for ever.

Thirdly, By way of corollary, we may give you that general truth,

That no man can be juſtified by his works.

If we contend with him, we cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand. He that mixeth but one ſin with a thouſand good actions, cannot be juſtified by his works; how then ſhall he be juſtified by works, who hath not one perfectly good action amongſt a thouſand ſins? Man is not able to anſwer for one thing he doth of a thouſand, no not for one thing he doth of all that he hath done. He that would be juſtified by his works, muſt not have one ill action amongſt all his actions. One flie in the box of ointment corrupts all, one defect makes a ſinner, but many good actions cannot make one righteous: *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our heart* (1 Joh. 3. 20.) Should man contend with his own heart, that will condemn him, his own heart would bring a thouſand witneſſes againſt him ſooner then one for him. *Conſcience is a thouſand witneſſes*; man cannot anſwer before that tribunal; how much leſs can he anſwer God, *Who is greater then all our hearts, and knoweth all things!* That's the argument *Job* goes on with, to prove that man cannot be juſtified before God.

Verſ. 14. **He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?**

Which words are a further illuſtration both of the juſtice of God, and of mans duty to be humbled and abaſed before him.

He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength.

Here is a double proof in theſe words.

A proof, firſt of Gods juſtice; why? *He is wiſe in heart,* therefore he knows how to do right: *He is mighty in ſtrength* or power, therefore he needs not pervert judgment, or do wrong for fear of man. *Fear of a higher power uſually biaſſeth thoſe who are in power.* Here are two Attributes which keep the balances of divine judgment in a due poiſe, *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power,* therefore there is no turning of him out of the path of juſtice.

Integerrimus judex cui nec ſapientia ad judicandū, nec potentia ad exequendum deeſt.

Secondly, It is a proof or a confirmation of the other point about which *Bildad* adviſeth *Job,* namely, that he ought to ſeek unto God, and humble himſelf before him, it would be dangerous to contend or conteſt with God. Why? *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power.* As if he had ſaid, Shall ignorant, fooliſh man contend with the wiſe God? Shall weak man contend with the mighty God? Alas! man is no match for God, *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength,* who can enter ſuch a controverſie and proſper in it?

There are two wayes to carry on a controverſie.

Firſt, By wit and policy.

Secondly, By ſtrength and power. If man will take up the former weapon againſt God, if he work by wit, and diſpute againſt God, God will be too hard for him, *For he is wiſe in heart.* If man will ſet his ſhoulders, or take up weapons againſt God, poor creature, what can he do? *The Lord is mighty in ſtrength*; from both we ſee there is no dealing with him.

These two attributes render God at once the moſt dreadful adverſary, and the moſt deſirable friend. It is a hard choice whether to have wit or power in an enemy? And who would not have both wit and power in his friend? *God* is here repreſented under theſe two notions, both meet in him, either of which in an enemy render him dreadful. Will any man enter the liſts, or meddle with an adverſary (who would not rather humble himſelf, and make him his friend?) *Who is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power?*

Dolus an virtus quis in hoſte requiret?

He is wiſe in heart.] It is ſpoken after the manner of men; the heart natural is a principal organ or part of the body, it is the ſeat of life, thither the ſpirits have their recourſe, there they have one ſpecial ſeat of reſidence; the

Humanitus dictum, cor in Hebræo ſumitur pro judicio & intellectuali potentia, ita homo vel Deus ſapiens corde dicitur, qui præſtat ſapientia. Pined.

heart is chief in man. To ſay, *God is wiſe in heart,* is to ſay, *He is moſt wiſe,* becauſe the heart is the ſeat of wiſdom. As when we ſay of a man, he is holy in heart, or he is humble in heart, or upright in heart, or he obeys *God* from his heart, we report ſuch a man for exceeding humble, holy, upright, and obedient. So when *God* is ſaid to be wiſe in heart, it imports that he hath infinite wiſdom; his, is not only wiſdom in the tongue, or ſome flaſhes of wit, but deep, ſolid, rooted wiſdom: He is wiſe, yea, he is wiſdom at heart. A fooliſh man is without an heart. As an hypocrite hath two hearts, a double heart, an heart and an heart; ſo a fooliſh man hath never an heart. Hypocrites will be found at laſt to have no hearts, they are the greateſt fools of all. *Ephraim* (Hoſ.7.11.) is called, *a ſilly Dove without heart.* Sillineſs is heartleſneſs. Therefore in *Chap.* 12. of this Book, *verſ.* 3. the heart is put alone for underſtanding, *I have an heart as well as you* (ſaith *Job*) we tranſlate it, *I have underſtanding as well as you.* Heart alone notes wiſdom, but a wiſe heart notes abundance of wiſdom. Hence obſerve,

God is infinitely wiſe.

He is wiſe in heart, wiſdom it ſelf. The Lord ingroſſes all wiſdom, and therefore ſtiled by the Apoſtle, *God only wiſe* (1 Tim. 1. 17.) he is only wiſe, becauſe all wiſdom is his; the creature hath none but what he gives out; he hath it all locked up in his own treaſury, and as he diſpenſeth it, ſo man receives it.

There is a two-fold act of wiſdom, and both moſt eminent in God. The firſt is, knowledge in the nature of things. The ſecond is, knowledge how to order and diſpoſe of things. The former is properly called *Science*; and the latter *Prudence.* Where there is much of the former, and a want of the latter, man in that caſe is like a ſhip that hath a very large ſail, but wants a rudder to order its courſe, and ballaſt to poiſe it. Both theſe meet in the Lord: he hath (as we may ſay) a vaſt ſail, infinitely extending to the knowledge of all things: and hath a moſt exact rudder, and ballaſt of prudence, to order and to mannage all things. The knowledge of ſome men is too hard for their wiſdom, they are not maſter of their knowledge, though they may be maſters in their art. The Lord knows all, and he rules all his knowledge.

כוח *Differt à* חיל *quod ſtrenuitatem ad geſta præclara ſignificat, idem quod Græce* δύναμις, *quæ ſe foras exerit in opere.* Merc.

And mighty in ſtrength.] It is much for man, to be ſtiled *ſtrong or mighty*; but *mighty in ſtrength,* is the ſtile of God. Theſe in conſtruction note the Almightineſs, the All-powerfulneſs, the All-ſufficiency of the Lord; he is not only ſtrong or mighty, but mighty in ſtrength.

The word which we tranſlate *ſtrength* (referred to man) imports that natural power, and lively vigor which in man is the principle of ſtrength, which nurſes and feeds man with continual ſupplies of activity. The Lord is mighty in this ſtrength, he hath an infinite, an everlaſting ſpring of ſtrength in him, he ſpends no ſtrength at all, how much ſoever he uſes. His lamp conſums not with burning. His ſtrength is ever vigorous, he knows no decayes or faintings, *Haſt thou not known, haſt thou not heard that the everlaſting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary?* (Iſa. 40. 28.) As if he had ſaid, where haſt thou been bred, that thou ſeemeſt to be a ſtranger to this truth? Man cannot do much, and he faints in doing a little. God who can do all things, never faints, how much ſoever he doth.

Δύναμις
ἐξουσία.

Strength may be conſidered two wayes. There is Civil ſtrength, and there is Natural ſtrength. Civil ſtrength is authority and power to command. A man is armed and ſtrengthened by Laws and Commiſſions. Theſe put authority into his hands. The Lord is mighty in his ſtrength, he hath all authority, all command in his hand, not by commiſſion from others, but original from himſelf. Natural ſtrength executes and exerciſes the former; a man may have much Civil ſtrength, but if he want Natural ſtrength, to put it in act, he can do little or nothing. As God by his Soveraignty is above all creatures; ſo by his power he is able to bring all creatures under him, and ſubdue them to his command. Thus God is *mighty in ſtrength.* He hath a right of authority, by which he may, and an arm of power, by which he can make all ſtoop to him.

Hence obſerve, *The power of God is an infinite power.*

There is nothing too hard for the Lord. *If he will work who ſhall let it?* Iſa. 43. 13. No creature can *ſuperſedeat* or ſtay the works of God, God can *ſuperſedeat* all creatures; when creatures are in their full carreer, he can let them; *The power of God is as large as his will*; yea, he can do more then he wills. If the power of men were as large as their wills, what work would they quickly make in the world? If infinite ſtrength were not mannaged by infinite wiſdom, what a woful condition were we in? Both theſe are joyned in God. Therefore we can fear no hurt from his power: he can do what he will, but he will do nothing which is hurtful to his people; he will not wrong any creature, much leſs his ſervants. The Lord (if I may ſo ſpeak) is only weak about thoſe things, which proceed from weakneſs. There are ſome things which he hath no ſtrength to do, becauſe to do them argues a want of ſtrength: he cannot deny himſelf, he cannot lie, he cannot do any evil, he cannot ſin. Theſe things import impotency, therefore the Lord cannot do them. But whatſoever is for the good of his people, for the glory of his Name, for the executing of juſtice, for the fulfilling of his counſels, whatſoever is for the making good of promiſes, for all theſe the Lord is mighty in ſtrength. Never fear either a defect of power in God, or a defect in mannaging that power. Sometimes power overthrows it ſelf by its own bulk and greatneſs; but mighty ſtrength ordered with equal wiſdom, is dreadful to enemies, and comfortable to friends. *A rude rout, an undigeſted Chaos of men, though very great, never did any great thing.* But ſuppoſe a very numerous Army of men, and every man in that Army having as much wiſdom as would fit a General to lead and command them all, what could ſtand before them? Thus it is with God (and how admirable is the union and marriage of theſe two together!) he hath all power and all wiſdom. Every degree of power in God is acted with a ſutable degree of wiſdom; therefore there can be no miſcariage.

Vis conſili expers mole ruit ſua.

Note further, how this Attribute runs through all the Attributes of God, *He is mighty in ſtrength*; he is mighty alſo in truth, mighty in love, mighty in mercy, mighty in faithfulneſs; a mighty ſtrength is in whatſoever God is.

Again, Take this general concerning all the Attributes of God, when it is ſaid, *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength,* &c. Theſe are not qualities in God, they are in men. Wiſdom is to them an accident, and ſo is ſtrength, whether civil ſtrength or natural, it may be ſevered from them, and they ſtill keep their being; but the wiſdom of God is the wiſe God, and the power of God is the powerful God, and the knowledge of God is the knowing God. Theſe Attributes are not accidents, but his eſſence; not qualities, but his nature.

From both theſe Attributes laid together, *Job* draws down his great concluſion, which he puts by way of queſtion,

Who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?

Shew me the man: Having deſcribed the Lord in his wiſdom and power, he chalengeth all the world, and ſends defiance to all creatures in heaven and in earth, to meet with this God. As if he had ſaid, *Friends, Do ye think I have any thought to contend with God? No, I know not one who hath accepted this chalenge, or hardened himſelf againſt God and proſpered. If my own conſcience would not, yet their harms who have attempted it, might warn me from ſuch preſumption.*

קשה *Indurare aut obdureſcere. Metaphorice à tactu ad alios ſenſus transfertur, & denotat crudele, ſævum, difficile, quod dura ſunt difficilia.*

Hardened himſelf.] Hardening, under a natural conſideration, comes by withdrawing the moiſture out of any ſubſtance, whence the parts of it are condenſed, grow ſtiff and unyielding to the touch: So Philoſophers define it. That is hard which doth not eaſily ſubmit to impreſſions from without.

In a moral ſence, to harden, is to ſettle the ſpirit, or immoveably to reſolve upon the doing or not doing of a thing; when a man doth purpoſely reſolve and reſolvedly purpoſe to carry on a deſign, he hardeneth himſelf to do it. The word is uſed both in a good ſence, and

Durum eſt quod in ſe per ſuperficiem non credit. Ariſt. *l.* 4. *Met. c.* 4. *Durities eſt qualitas denſas & bene compactas habens partes, difficulter cedens tactui.* Ariſt. *l.* 2. *de Gener.*

in an ill ſence. In a good ſence, when a man is reſolute to do the will of God, that is, when he grows ſo reſolved, that he will not be removed by hopes, or fears, by promiſes, or by threats; When a man hath not a ſoft, ſequacious ſpirit, to be ſwayed this way and that way, but ſtands fixed and firm like a rock, ſuch a reſolute ſpirit in goodneſs, is a ſpirit hardened to do good.

When the Lord had told *Ezekiel* that he ſhould find the ears of *Iſrael* lock'd againſt his meſſages, and their hearts hardened; he gives him aſſurance of a ſutable ability to deal even with ſuch (*Ezek.* 3.8, 9.) *Behold, I have made thy face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy fore-head ſtrong againſt their fore-heads, as an adamant harder then flint have I made thy fore-head.* The words ſeem to carry an alluſion to Bulls or Rams, who uſe to run head againſt head, when they are enraged againſt one another. And ſo the ſence is, as if the Lord had ſaid, *I know this people will be mad at thee, and run upon thee like furious beaſts; but trouble not thy ſelf, I will (through my grace) make thee as ſtrong in declaring my will, as they (through pride and unbelief) are ſtrong in oppoſing it. Thou needeſt not fear to encounter theſe Bulls and Rams: holineſs ſhall make thy fore-head, that is, thy purpoſe to perform my command, harder, then wickedneſs ſhall make their fore-heads, that is, their purpoſes to diſobey what I command.* As to be hardened in ſin is worſe then ſinning, ſo to be hardened in doing good, is better then doing good. Sin and grace act moſt like themſelves, when they act againſt all oppoſition. *As an adamant have I made thy face.* The adamant is inſuperable, as the notation of the word imports. A heart thus hardened in holineſs overcomes all the fears and terrors which the world can raiſe againſt it. Heroical *Luther* was thus hardened, when he ſaid, he would go to *Worms*, though the tiles upon every houſe in that City were match'd with a like number of Devils, ready to reſiſt him and the truth of Chriſt. But uſually hardening is taken in an ill ſence: and ſo to harden the ſpirit, noteth,

Adamas ejus creditur eſſe naturæ, ut domet omnia neq; ipſe ab ulla vi ſive arte domari poſſit. Unde nomen traxit; ἀδάμας, *ſonat indomitũ.* Sanct. *in Ezek.*3.

First, A reſolving to ſin, whatſoever God ſaith or doth. To ſin againſt the word and works of God, that's hardening of the heart againſt God: when a man will go on in his way, though a threat be ſounding in his ears, and a judgment appear terribly before his eyes; ſuch a man is hardened indeed, he is grown valiant and couragious in wickedneſs.

Obdurare cor eſt Deũ loquentem nolle audire, contemnere, pervicaciter reſiſtere, nec ſe ejus verbo ſubjicere velle. Par. *in Heb.* 3. *v.* 8.

Secondly, A man hardens himſelf againſt God, when he ſpeaks ſtoutly againſt God: the hardneſs of the heart appears in the tongue (*Mal.* 3.13.) *Your words have been ſtout againſt me.* Stout words are a ſign of ſtout ſpirits. Our language is uſually the image of our minds. So the word of the Text is uſed (2 *Sam.*19.43.) *The words of the men of* Judah *were fiercer then the words of the men of* Iſrael: Their words were harder then the words of the men of *Iſrael*; they ſpake more reſolutely and manly. When a man ſets himſelf to ſpeak boldly againſt God, the wayes or the works of God, he hardens himſelf againſt God fearfully.

Thirdly, We harden our ſelves againſt God, when we are diſpleaſed with what God doth; that man makes a bold adventure, who dares paſs but an unpleaſing thought againſt the wayes or works of God.

Fourthly, Not to be ſatisfied with what God doth is a degree of hardening our ſelves againſt God: diſcontents and unquietneſſes upon our ſpirits are oppoſitions.

Fifthly, Not to give *God* glory in what he doth, hath ſomewhat in it of hardening of our ſelves againſt *God*.

And laſtly, He that will not give *God* glory in what he commands, is in a degree hardened againſt *God*. We may ſee what it is to harden our ſelves againſt *God* by the oppoſite of it (*Prov.* 28.14.) *Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwayes, but he that hardeneth himſelf ſhall fall into miſchief.* Hardneſs is contrary to holy fear; holy fear is a diſpoſition of heart, ready to yield to God in every thing: A man thus fearing, quickly takes impreſſions of the word, will, and works of *God*; and therefore whoſoever doth not comply with God in holy ſubmiſſion to his will, hardens himſelf in part againſt *God*.

That which is here chiefly meant is, the groſſer act of hardneſs, when men either ſpeak or go on in their way acting againſt God; let him ſay what he will, his word ſtops them not; or do what he will, his works ſtop them not. They are like the adamant, the hammer of the Word makes no impreſſion upon hard hearts, but recoyls back again upon him that ſtrikes with it. More diſtinctly, this is either a ſenſible hardneſs of heart, of which the Church complains (*Iſa.*63.15.) *Wherefore haſt thou hardened our hearts?* &c. Or an inſenſible hardneſs, which in ſome ariſes from ignorance, in others from malice and obſtinacy.

Further, We read of Gods hardening mans heart, and ſometimes of mans hardening his own heart. There is a three-fold hardneſs of heart.

Firſt, Natural, which is the common ſtock of all men; we receive the ſtone of a hard heart by deſcent; every man comes into the world hardened againſt God.

Secondly, There is an acquired hardneſs of heart. Men harden themſelves, and add to their former hardneſs. *He ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God, and ſtrengtheneth himſelf againſt the Almighty,* Job 15.25. There is a growth in ſin, as well as a growth in grace; many acts make hardneſs more habitual (2 *Chron.*36.13.) *He ſtiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord. I know thy rebellion, and thy ſtiff neck,* Deut. 31.27.

Thirdly, There is a judiciary hardneſs of heart, an hard heart inflicted by God, as a judge, When men will harden their hearts againſt God, he agrees it, their hearts ſhall be hard, he will take away all the means which ſhould ſoften and moiſten them, he will not give them any help to make them pliable to his will, or he will not bleſs it to them. He will ſpeak to his Prophets, and they ſhall make their hearts fat (that is, ſenſleſs) and their ears heavy, that is, heedleſs under all they ſpeak, *Iſa.* 6.10. Thus alſo God hardened the heart of *Pharaoh*, and of the *Ægyptians*, by the miniſtery of *Moſes* and *Aaron*.

So then we having hardneſs of heart by nature, do by cuſtom acquire a farther hardneſs, and the Lord in wrath inflicteth hardneſs, then the ſinner is pertinacious in ſinning. All theſe put together make him irrecoverably ſinful, *His neck is an iron ſinew, and his brow braſs,* Iſa. 48.4. Obſerve,

First, There is an active hardneſs of heart, or man hardens his own heart.

Exod.5. We read of *Pharaoh* hardening his heart, before the Lord hardened it; *Who is the Lord* (ſaith he) *that I ſhould let* Iſrael *go?* Here was *Pharaoh* hardening his heart, and ſteeling his ſpirit againſt the command of God; God ſent him a command to let *Iſrael* go; he replies, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord*; who is this that takes upon him to command me? Am not I King of *Ægypt*? I know no Peer, much leſs Superior Lord. It was true indeed, poor creature! he did not know the Lord; *Pharaoh* ſpake right in that, *I know not the Lord*; if he had, he would never have ſaid, I will not let *Iſrael* go, he would have let all go at his command, had he known who the Lord was that commanded. Thus *Sennacherib* (2 Chron. 32.14.) blaſphemes by his meſſengers, *Who was there among all the gods of thoſe Nations that my fathers utterly deſtroyed, that could deliver his people out of my hand, that your God ſhould be able to deliver you out of mine hand?* Theſe are hard words againſt God, and hardening words to man.

Every act of ſin hardens the heart of man, but the heat of blaſphemy at once ſhews and puts it into the extremity of hardneſs. Man hardens himſelf againſt God, four wayes eſpecially.

Firſt, Upon preſumption of mercy; many do evil, becauſe they hear God is good; they turn his grace into wantonneſs, and are without all fear of the Lord, becauſe there is mercy ſo much with the Lord.

Secondly, The patience of God, or his delayes of judgement, harden others; becauſe God is ſlow to ſtrike, they are ſwift to ſin. If the ſound of judgment be not at the heels of ſin, they conclude, there is no ſuch danger in ſin; *Solomon* obſerved this (*Eccl.*8.11.) *Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil, or, it is full in them to do evil.* They have not ſome velleities and propenſions, ſome motions and inclinations, ſome queries and debates about it, but the matter (upon this ground) is fully ſtated and determined, they are ſo full of it, that they have no room in their hearts for better thoughts or counſels: the ſum of all is, they are hardned and reſolved to do evil.

Thirdly, Groſs ignorance hardens many. Firſt, Ignorance of themſelves. And ſecondly, Ignorance of God; he that knows not what he ought to do, cares not much what he doth. None are ſo venturous as they, who know not their danger. *Pharaoh* ſaid, *I know not the Lord*; he knew not the Lord, nor himſelf, therefore he ran on blind-fold, and deſperately hardened himſelf againſt the Lord.

Fourthly, Hardneſs of heart in ſinning is contracted from the multitude of thoſe who ſin. They think none ſhall ſuffer for that which ſo many do. The Law of *Moſes* ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil* (Exod. 23. 2.) There is a ſpecial reſtraint upon it, becauſe man is ſo eaſily led by many. The heart is ready to flatter it ſelf into an opinion, that God will not be very angry when a practice is grown common; this is the courſe of the world, this is the way of moſt men; therefore ſurely no great danger in it. And examples harden chiefly upon three conſiderations.

Ego homunc io non facerem. Ter.

Firſt, If great ones go that way; the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickedneſſes of the gods, ſaid, what! Do they ſo, *and ſhall I ſtick at it?*

Secondly, If ſome wiſe and learned men go that way, ignorant and unlearned men conclude they may.

Thirdly, If any godly men, ſuch as make more then ordinary profeſſion, do ſuch things, then who may not? The failings of the Saints are a countenance to wicked men in their follies. They are apt to follow the dark ſide of the cloud, and to approve thoſe in what they do ill, whom they ſcorn in what they do well. They imitate their falls and ſins, whoſe repentance they never think of imitating.

How many harden their hearts by their doing what is evil, whoſe hearts have been broken becauſe they did evil; from the ſin which a holy man commits againſt his purpoſe and reſolution, many purpoſe and reſolve to commit it.

Upon theſe, and the like grounds, the heart of man is hardened againſt God. Take a brief of the degrees of this hardneſs; ſee by what ſteps the heart riſes ſo high in ſinning. Man doth not grow hard at once, much leſs hardeſt; but when once he begins to harden himſelf, where he ſhall make an end he knows not.

The firſt ſtep is, the taking time and leave to meditate upon ſin, and roll it up and down in the thoughts. A hard heart lets vain thoughts dwell in it. A holy heart would not let them lodge with it.

A ſecond ſtep is, ſome taſtes of pleaſure and delight in ſin. It proves a ſweet morſel under his tongue. As the heart grows more delighted in ſin, ſo more hardened in ſin. Nothing ſhould be ſo bitter as ſin in the act; for nothing would be ſo bitter as ſin in the iſſue: but when the act is pleaſant, the iſſue is ſeldom ſuſpected.

Improbè Neptunum *accuſat, qui iterum naufragium facit.*

The third ſtep is, cuſtom in ſinning. It argues great boldneſs to venture often. One ſaid of him that had eſcaped danger at ſea, if you go again, you have no reaſon to complain, though you be wrack'd. Mariners are fearful of ſtorms at firſt, but through cuſtom they play with them. When a man comes off once ſafe from ſin, he will venture again, and ſo often, till at laſt he thinks there is ſcarce any venture at all in ſin. He grows bold and hardy.

By the fourth ſtep of hardneſs he comes to defend and maintain his ſin. He hath ſpoken ſo long in his heart againſt the word, which forbiddeth him to ſin, that now he can ſpeak againſt it with his tongue. He hath a plea or an argument to make the evil he doth, good. He appears a Patron, an Advocate for ſin, who was before but a practiſer of it.

Fifthly, The hard heart grows angry and paſſionate with thoſe who give advice againſt ſin; he is reſolved; and a man that is reſolved in his way, is angry if he be deſired to remove out of his way. He that is reſolved to ſleep, loves not to be awakened; A touch or a jog from him that ſits by, provokes him, he prayes to be let alone. We ſhould love the man, while we hate and reprove his ſin. But he that loves his ſin, will hate his reprovers.

Sixthly, Hard hearts grow too hard for the Word, they are *Sermon-proof*; they can ſit under the Preacher, and hear from day to day, but nothing touches them. A man in armour feels not the ſtroak of a ſword, much leſs the ſmart of a rod. This hardneſs of heart is a ſteel armour to the heart; it makes the man paſt feeling, till he be paſt healing. *Some being often reproved, harden their hearts* (Prov. 29. 1.) till their hearts are too hard for all reproofs.

And then ſeventhly, The heart is ſo hard, that the ſword of affliction doth not pierce it; the man is *judgment-proof*: let God ſtrike him in his perſon or eſtate, let God ſet the world afire about his ears, yet on he goes. He is like the man of whom *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 23. 34.) who lies ſleeping in a ſtorm upon the top of the Maſt.

Eighthly, The hard heart ſits down in the chair of the ſcorner; he derides the Word, and mocks at the Judgments of God. When *Lot* ſpake to his Sons-in-Law about fire and brimſtone ready to fall upon *Sodom* and conſume it, the Text ſaith, *He ſeemed as one that mocked unto his Sons-in-Law.* What, tell us of judgments? of fire deſcending from Heaven? *When the Skie falls, we ſhall have Larks.*

Laſtly, The hard heart gets up to the Tribunal of the perſecutor, and from ſcorner, *commences oppoſer of good men, and of the good wayes of God*; he will do them the uttermoſt miſchief he can, who would do him all the good they can. *Get thee from me* (ſaith *Pharaoh* to *Moſes*, Exod. 10. 28.) *Take heed to thy ſelf; ſee my face no more; for in the day that thou ſeeſt my face, thou ſhalt die.* *Pharaoh*'s hard heart ſpake hard words, and was preparing to give hard blows; he had only ſo much of honour and ingenuity left, as to warn the Prophet to avoid the blow: Which yet is more then hardneſs of heart leaves to all. Many an hard heart uſes the hand before the tongue; and inſtead of ſaying to his reprover, See my face no more leſt thou die, calls him before his face that he may die, or ſeek his death behind his back, and lies in wait for revenge. And here *hardneſs of heart is at hardeſt: It is now a fit cuſhion for Satan; he ſits ſofteſt upon this ſtone.* The Devil is never ſo much pleaſed, as when man is moſt hardened; the ſeed of his temptations takes root and proſpers beſt in this ſtonie ground.

But ſhall man proſper too? Shall any man thrive or make gain by hardening himſelf againſt God? Shall he come off with honour or with profit? *Job* anſwereth, *Who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?* Which may be reſolved into this negative propoſition, *No man ever hardened himſelf againſt God, and proſpered.*

וישלם *Et pacatus fuit, vel in pace abiit* (i. e.) *fœliciter & bene ceſſerit.* Merc.

The Hebrew thus, *Hath any man hardened himſelf againſt God, and had peace?* Mr. *Broughton* renders near it; *Hath any man hardened himſelf againſt God, and found quietneſs?* To have peace or quietneſs, and to proſper, are the ſame in the language of the *Jews*, and in a hundred Texts of the Old Teſtament.

We may underſtand *Job* either of theſe three wayes.

Nemo pertinax gloriari poteſt quod poſt conſecutam victoriam pace potitus fuerit. Pin.

Firſt, No pertinacious hard-hearted man could ever glory that he got the better or the day of God, and ſo proſpered into a peace by war; that's a way of proſperity in which he ſhall never tread. *Gideon* told the men of *Penuel*, *When I come again in peace*, that is, when I have conquered, and return proſperous, then, &c. No man ever conquered God, and ſo returned in peace. Peace was never the Trophy of a war with him.

Nemo cum Deo pugnās, ſic eum aſſidua pugna fatigavit, ut pacem accipiat ultro à Deo oblatā. Idem.

Ab æquipollente pacem aliquis pugnando obtinere poteſt, licet enim eum ſuperare non poſſit, tamen aſſiduitate pugnæ eum fatigat, ut ad pacem reducatur. Aquin.

Secondly, *Who ever hardened himſelf againſt God, and proſpered?* That is, Did ever any man ſo weary out God by lengthening this war, that God was (as it were) forced at laſt to offer him terms of peace? So it happens ſometimes with men, with Nations and Kingdoms: They not getting peace by victory, but being ſpent and tired out with war, begin to think of treating. Did ever any one put the Lord to offer a treaty with articles of peace, to ſave himſelf from further trouble? They who have not ſtrength enough to overcome, may yet have power enough to vex and weary their adverſary. But God can neither be vanquiſhed by force, nor vext with our policies into a peace with man.

Quis permanſit aut perſtetit, ὑπέμεινεν. Sep.

Thirdly, Others give this ſence, Who ever held out, or was able to perſiſt in a war againſt the Lord? The wicked ſhall not ſtand before God in the day of judgment, much leſs in the day of battel; *Who would ſet the briars and thorns againſt me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together* (Iſa. 27. 4.) The moſt ſteely and flinty ſpirits in the world can no more ſtand before God, then briars and thorns can before a flaming fire. The Lord ſoon breaks and deſtroyes all oppoſing power. And ſo there is a figure in the words; for man doth not only not proſper, but he is undone and cruſht for ever, by contending with God. Shall man proſper in a war with God? No, it ſhall end in his own ruine and utter deſtruction.

Hence obſerve, That, *Nothing can be got but blows by contending with God.*

Hoc eſt ſignum evidẽs, quod fortitudo Dei omnem humanam fortitudinem excedit, quia nullus cum eo pacem habere poteſt reſiſtendo, ſed ſolum humiliter obediendo. Aqr. *Viciſti*; Galilæe.

The greateſt Monarchs in the world have at one time or other found their matches, but the great God never found his match. Pharaoh contended with him, but did he proſper in it? You ſee what became of him at laſt, he was drowned in the Red Sea. *Julian* contended with Chriſt, he ſcoffed at him (he came up to the higheſt degrees, he ſate in the chair of the ſcorner, and in the tribunal of the perſecutor) but what got he at laſt? When he was wounded, and threw up his blood toward heaven, ſaid he not, *O Galilean, thou haſt overcome*; I acknowledge thy power, whoſe name and truth I have oppoſed. Chriſt, whom he had derided, and againſt whom he hardned himſelf into ſcorns and ſcoffs, was too hard for him. All that harden themſelves againſt God ſhall be worſted. *Gather your ſelves together, O ye people, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces* (Iſa. 8.9.) Gather your ſelves together; againſt whom? Gather your ſelves together againſt the people of God, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces; why? *Emanuel*, the Lord is with us. If no man can proſper by hardning himſelf againſt the people of God, becauſe the Lord is with them, how ſhall any man proſper by hardning himſelf immediately *againſt God?* If *Emanuel* will not let any proſper againſt his people, certainly he will not let any proſper againſt himſelf. Therefore (*Prov.* 28.24.) *Solomon* layes it down directly; *He that hardneth his heart, ſhall fall into miſchief*; & (*Prov.* 29. 1.) *He ſhall be deſtroyed, and that without remedie*; there is no help for it, all the world cannot ſave him. A hard heart is it ſelf the foreſt of all judgments, and it brings all judgments upon us. *A hard heart treaſureth up wrath againſt the day of wrath* (Rom. 2.5.) *As a hard heart is Satans treaſury for ſin, ſo it is Gods treaſury for wrath.* The walls of that *fiery Tophet* are built up with theſe ſtones, with their hard hearts who turn themſelves into ſtones againſt the Lord.

Then take heed of hardning your ſelves againſt God. You know the counſel which *Gamaliel* gave, *Acts* 5.39. *Refrain from theſe men, and let them alone,* &c. (See how tremblingly he ſpeaks) *leſt you be found even to fight againſt God*; as if he had ſaid, take heed what you do, it is the moſt dreadful thing in the world to contend with God; he ſpeaks as of a thing he would not have them come near, or be in the remoteſt tendency to. Man will not meddle with a mortal man if he be too hard for him; how ſhould we tremble to meddle or contend with the immortal God? Chriſt, *Luke* 14. warning his Diſciples to *conſider aforehand what it is to be his Diſciples*, gives them an inſtance of a King: *What King* (ſaith he) *going to make war againſt another King, ſitteth not down firſt and conſulteth, whether he be able with ten thouſand to meet him that cometh againſt him with twenty thouſand?* Now I ſay to you (if any ſuch be here) that have hearts ſteeled or hardned againſt God, who challenge God the field, and ſend defiance to heaven, O ſit down, ſit down, conſider whether you with ten thouſand are able to meet God with his twenty thouſand, that's great odds, half in half; but conſider whether one ſingle, ſimple man can ſtand againſt his twenty thouſand; whether a man of no ſtrength can ſtand againſt infinite ſtrength; whether you who have no wiſdom, are able to ſtand againſt him who is of infinite wiſdom. Can ignorance contend with knowledge, folly with wiſdom, weakneſs with ſtrength, an earthen veſſel with an iron rod? O the boldneſs and madneſs of men, who will hazard themſelves upon ſuch diſadvantages. *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power: who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?*

And as God is ſo powerful, that no wicked man in the world can mend himſelf by contending with him; ſo neither can any of his own people. If they harden themſelves againſt God, they ſhall not proſper. To harden the heart againſt God, is not only the ſin of a *Pharaoh*, of a *Senacherib*, and of a *Julian*, but poſſibly it may be the ſin of a *Believer*, the ſin of a *Saint*. And therefore the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 3. gives them caution, *Take heed leſt any of your hearts be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin*; and whoſe heart ſoever is hardned againſt God, that man, good or bad, ſhall not proſper, or have peace in it. It is mercy that God will not give his own peace, or let them thrive in ſin. Grace proſpers not, when the heart is hardned; joy proſpers not, nor comfort, nor ſtrength, when the heart is hardned; the whole ſtate and ſtock of a *Believer* is impaired, when his heart is hardned.

And if Saints harden their heart againſt God, God (in a ſence) will harden his heart againſt them, that is, he will not appear tender-hearted and compaſſionate towards them in reference to preſent comforts; he will harden himſelf to afflict and chaſten, when they harden themſelves to ſin and provoke.

When God afflicts his people, he hardens his heart againſt them; and it is ſeldom that he hardneth his heart againſt them, till they harden their hearts againſt him. And the truth is, if they who are deareſt to him, do harden their hearts againſt him, if they quarrel and contend with him, if they riſe up againſt his commands, or neglect his will, he will make their hearts ſubmit, or he will make their hearts ake, and break their bones. If they harden their hearts againſt his fear, they ſhall feel his rod upon their backs and ſpirits too. Which of the Saints *ever hardened himſelf againſt God, and hath proſpered?* No man, whether holy or prophane, righteous or wicked, could ever glory of a conqueſt over God, or triumph after a war with him?

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Which removeth the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth them in his anger.
Which ſhaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.
Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not; and ſealeth up the Stars.
Which alone ſpreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.
Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.
Which doth great things paſt finding out, yea, and wonders without number.

JOB having in general aſſerted the power and wiſdom of God (he muſt have infinite power and wiſdom againſt whom no man ever proſpered by contending.) Having, I ſay, aſſerted this in general, he deſcends to make a particular proof of it; as if he had ſaid, I will not only give you this argument, that God is mighty in ſtrength, becauſe no man could ever harden his heart againſt him, and proſper; he hath foyl'd all that ever medled with him; but beſides, I will give you particular inſtances of it, and you ſhall ſee that the Lord hath done ſuch things, as ſpeak him mighty in ſtrength, and prove him as powerful as I have reported. Theſe particulars are reported in *verſ.* 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. all cloſed with a triumphant Elogie in the tenth, *Which doth great things paſt finding out; yea, wonders without number.*

Subjicit Job *confirmationem proximè præcedentis Syllogiſmi ab effectis potentiæ & ſapientiæ Dei, quæ ampliſſima oratione deſcribit.* Mer.

The Argument may be thus formed,

He is infinite in power and wiſdom who removeth mountains, and ſhakes the earth, who commands the Sun, who ſpreads out the heavens, and diſpoſeth of the ſtars in the firmament.

But the Lord doth all theſe things, he removeth mountains, he ſhakes the earth, he commandeth the Sun, &c.

Therefore he is mighty in power, and infinite in wiſdom.

The firſt part of this argument is here implied. The Aſſumption, or the *Minor* is proved in *verſ.* 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. by ſo many inſtances. Here then is an evident demonſtration of the power of God, from viſible things, from acts apparent to the eye; as if he had ſaid, *If you have not faith to believe that God is infinite in power, let your ſenſes teach it you; for he removeth mountains, and they know it not; he overturneth them in his anger,* &c.

He removeth mountains.

That's the firſt inſtance. The word which we tranſlate *to remove*, ſignifies to wax old and ſtrong, becauſe things

עתק *Seneſcere, quia quæ ſic inveteraſcunt fortiora & robuſtiora cum tempore ſolent evadere, ideo idem verbum ſignificat roborari.*

as they grow in age, grow in ſtrength. There is a declining age, and an encreaſing age. Things very old impair, and things growing older, encreaſe in ſtrength; we have the word in that ſence (*Job* 21. 2.) *Wherefore do the wicked become old? yea, they are mighty in power*; he putteth theſe two together, growing old and mighty in power. The *Septuagint* render, *Who maketh the mountains wax old*, becauſe *that which waxeth old is ready to vaniſh away* (Heb. 8. 13.) or to be removed and taken away, as the Ceremonial Law was, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in that place.

Ὁ παλαιῶν ὄρη. Sept.

And becauſe growing old implies a kind of motion, therefore the word alſo ſignifies motion, even local motion, a moving from, or out of a place, *Gen.* 12. 4. *Abraham departed*; removed from the place where he was. This local motion is either natural, or violent; of this latter underſtand the Text, *Which removeth the mountains.*

The mountains.

There are Natural mountains, and Metaphorical or Figurative mountains; it is an act of the mighty power of God to remove either.

Some underſtand this of Metaphorical or Figurative mountains, and ſo mountains are great men, men of eminency, or of pre-eminency, the Kings and Princes of the world. The Chaldee is expreſs for this ſence, *He removeth Kings who are as ſtrong and high as mountains.* For as God hath ordered the ſuperficies of the earth, and made ſome parts of it plain, others mountains, ſome vallies, and ſome hills; ſo he hath diſpoſed of men; ſome men ſtand as upon level ground, men of an ordinary condition; other are as the low vallies, men of a poor condition; others are as high mountains, over-topping and over-looking the reſt. The word is uſed in this Metaphorical ſence, *Iſa.* 41. 15. *I will make thee* (ſaith the Lord to the Prophet) *a new threſhing inſtrument having teeth:* And what ſhall this new threſhing inſtrument do? *Thou ſhalt threſh the mountains, and beat them ſmall, and ſhalt make the hills as chaff.* Here is a Prophet ſent with a flail or threſhing inſtrument, and his buſineſs is to threſh the mountains, and to beat the hills; the meaning is, thou ſhalt deſtroy the great ones of the world, the hills, the mountains, thoſe that think themſelves impregnable or inacceſſible. But how could the Prophet threſh theſe mountains, and what was his flail? *Gideon* (Judg. 8. 7.) threatens the men of *Succoth*, that he will *tear or threſh their fleſh with the thorns of the wilderneſs, and with briars.* And *Damaſcus* is threatned, becauſe *they threſhed* Gilead *with threſhing inſtruments of iron*, *Amos* 1. 3. That is, they put them to extreameſt tortures. Our Prophet could not thus torture men. His threſhing inſtrument having iron teeth, was only his tongue, the inſtrument of ſpeech; with this he beat thoſe proud mountains to duſt, that is, he declared they ſhould be beaten and deſtroyed. Of ſuch a mountain, the Lord by his Prophet ſpeaks (*Jer.* 51. 25.) *Behold, I am againſt thee, O deſtroying mountain, ſaith the Lord, which deſtroyeſt all the earth. Behold, I will ſtretch out mine hand upon thee, and will roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain.* This mountain was the proud ſtate of *Babylon*, which was oppoſite to the Church of God, this *devouring mountain* ſhall at laſt be a *devoured mountain*, devoured by fire, therefore he calls it a *burnt mountain.* Thus (*Zech.* 4. 7.) *Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou ſhalt become a plain.* The Prophet is aſſured that all the power and ſtrength which oppoſed it ſelf againſt the reformation and re-edification of *Jeruſalem*, ſhould be laid level with the ground. So we may interpret (*Pſal.* 144. 5.) *He toucheth the mountains, and they ſmoke*; the meaning is, when God doth but lay his hand upon great men, upon the mightieſt of the world, he makes them ſmoke or fume, which ſome underſtand of their anger, they are preſently in a paſſion, if God do but touch them. Or we may underſtand it of their conſumption. A *ſmoaking mountain* will ſoon be a *burnt mountain.* In our Language, to make a man ſmoke, is a proverbial, for deſtroying or ſubduing.

Chaldeus *per montes intelligit reges*; Qui loco movet reges fortes, ut mōtes. *Targ.*

Per montes intelligit reges, qui ſicut montes firmitate & robore perſtant. Rab. Dav. *in Pſ.* 144: 5.

And beſides, there are mountains (in this figurative ſence) within us, as well as without us. The ſoul hath a mountain in it ſelf, and it is an act of the great power of God, yea, of an higher and greater power of God, to remove inward, then it is to remove outward mountains, *Iſa.* 40. 4. The Prophet fore-ſhewing the coming of Chriſt, and the ſending of the Baptiſt to prepare his way, tells us, *Every mountain and hill ſhall be made low.* Chriſt did not throw down the outward power of men, who withſtood him; he let *Herod* and *Pilate* prevail: but mountains and hills of ſin and unbelief in the ſoul, which made his paſſage into them impaſſible, he overthrew. Theſe mountains of high, proud thoughts, the Apoſtle deſcribes (2 *Cor.* 10. 14.) *Caſting down imaginations, and every high thing, and bringing into captivity every thought* (every mountainous thought) *to the obedience of Chriſt.*

Theſe are Metaphorical mountains, the power of ſinful men without us, and the power of ſin, the pride of our own hearts within us. It is a mighty work of God to remove theſe mountains.

But theſe are not proper to the Text, for the inſtances which follow, being all given in natural things, ſhew, that thoſe here intended, are natural mountains.

Taking mountains for earthly, material mountains, it is doubted how the Lord removes them.

There are different opinions about the point. Some underſtand it of a natural motion. Philoſophers diſputing about mountains and hills, conclude, that they are ſubject to generation and corruption; by the addition of many parts they are generated, that is, kneaded or gathered together, and become one huge heap of earth; and by the detraction, falling and crumbling off, or taking away of theſe parts, they are removed again. Thus we may expound that (*Job* 14. 18.) *And ſurely the mountain falling cometh to nought.*

Montes natura ſua generabiles ſunt & corruptibiles, additione partium generantur, & detractione partium corrumpuntur. Aq. & Cajet.

Minime mirandum eſt, ſi quas terræ partes quæ nunc habitantur, olim mare occupabat, & quæ nunc pelagus ſunt, olim habitabantur, ſic campos & montes par eſt invicem commutari. Strab. *l.* 17.

Yet this cannot be the meaning of *Job* here. For though we grant that Doctrine of the Philoſophers, that there is a generation of mountains, and ſo a corruption of them; yet that corruption is ſo inſenſible, that it cannot be put among thoſe works of God which raiſe up the name of his glorious power. *That which falls not under obſervation, cannot cauſe admiration. Slow and imperceptible motions make ſmall impreſſions, either upon the fancy or underſtanding.*

Divina potentia in tā longa & ſegni montium remotiones non ſe præbet valde mirabilē, cum removere ſit qui eam rem videat. Pined.

That here ſpoken of, is quick and violent, and by its eaſie repreſentation to the eye, cauſeth wonder and aſtoniſhment in the beholders.

And ſo it imports a removing them by ſome violent motion.

Thus the Lord is able to remove, and hath removed mountains, ſometimes by earthquakes; ſometimes by ſtorms and tempeſts; ſometime thoſe mighty bulwarks are battered with thunder-balls diſcharged from the clouds (*Pſal.* 97. 5.) *The hills melted like wax at the preſence of the Lord.* Hills melt down when he appears as a conſuming fire (*Pſal.* 104. 32.) *He looks upon the earth, and it trembleth, and he toucheth the hills, and they ſmoke.* Thoſe rockie mountains are as ready to take fire, as tinder or touchwood, if but a ſpark of Gods anger fall upon them. God by a caſt of his eye (as we may ſpeak) can caſt the earth into an ague-fit, he makes it ſhake, and more, tremble with a look; he by a touch of his mighty arm, hurls mountains which way he pleaſeth, as a man doth a Tennis-ball. We read (*Iſa.* 64. 1.) how earneſtly the Prophet prayes, *O that thou wouldeſt rent the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy preſence*; where he is conceived to allude to Gods coming down upon Mount *Sinai* at the giving of the Law, *Exod.* 19. which is ſaid *to melt from before the Lord God of Iſrael*, Judg. 5. 3. Some underſtand it of *that day* of Chriſt, when he ſhall come to judge the world; others, of that day when Chriſt came in the fleſh to ſave the world; then the mountains were levelled according to the preaching of the Baptiſt; but rather the Prophet being affected with the calamitous condition, which he foreſaw the *Jews* falling into, intreats the Lord to put forth himſelf in some notable works of his providence, which ſhould as clearly manifeſt his preſence as if they ſaw the heavens (ſpeaking as of ſolid bodies) renting, and God viſibly coming down; then, thoſe difficulties which lay in the way of their deliverance, and looked like huge mountains of Iron or of Adamant, would preſently diſſolve like wax, or ice before the Sun or fire. The Prophet

Ex quo & hoc loco nō abſurdè colligitur fuiſſe proverbiū ad ſignificādum maximam ſoliq; Deo convenientem potentiam. Bold.

Micah deſcribes the effects of Gods power in the ſame ſtile (*chap.* 1. 3, 4.) *Behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth, and the mountains ſhall be molten under him, and the valleys ſhall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters which are powred down a ſteep place.* So, to remove mountains, is uſed proverbially, *Job* 18. 4. *Shall the earth be forſaken for thee, or ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?* that is, ſhall God work wonders for thee? or, God will alter the courſe of nature as ſoon as the courſe of his providence. To ſay God can remove mountains, is as much as to ſay, he hath power to do what he will; and the reaſon is, becauſe mountains are exceeding great and weighty bodies; mountains are firmly ſetled: now, to remove a thing which is mighty in bulk, and ſtrongly founded, is an argument of greateſt ſtrength. The ſtability of the Church is compared to the ſtability of mountains, *Pſal.* 125. 1. *They that truſt in the Lord ſhall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but ſtandeth faſt for ever.* The righteouſneſs of God is compared to a great mountain (*Pſal.* 36. 6.) becauſe his righteouſneſs is firm and unmoveable; *Thy righteouſneſs is like the great mountains*, or the mountains of God. And (*Pſ.* 46. 2.) the doing of the greateſt things, and the making of the greateſt changes that poſſibly can happen in any Nation, or in the whole world, are expreſt by the removing of mountains; *Though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea, yet will we not fear*, &c. That is, things which carry the greateſt impoſſibility to be done, or which are ſeldomeſt done, ſhall be done before we will do this. As men when they would ſhew how far they are from ſubmitting to ſuch a thing, ſay, We will die firſt, *&c.* So here, Who! we fear? No, mountains ſhall be removed firſt. He breaths out the higheſt confidence of the Church, in the loweſt, not only of her preſent, but poſſible dangers. As faith can repreſent to us better things then any we enjoy, to raiſe our joy; ſo it can repreſent to us worſe things (and put us harder caſes) then any we feel, and yet carry us above fear. A faith removing mountains, is put for the ſtrongeſt faith; *Though I had all faith, ſo that I could remove mountains* (1 Cor. 13. 2.) that is, though I had the ſtrongeſt faith, the faith of miracles. When Chriſt (*Mat.* 21. 21.) would ſhew to the utmoſt what faith can do, he ſaith, *If ye have faith and doubt not, ye ſhall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but alſo, if ye ſhall ſay to this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou caſt into the Sea, and it ſhall be done.* As if he had ſaid, if you have faith, you may do the greateſt things imaginable or deſirable; ye ſhall remove mountains. A mountain is immoveable by the meer power of a creature. Faith takes that in hand, becauſe faith acts the power of the Creator. And as the faith of man removing mountains, notes a faith of miracles; ſo the power of God removing mountains, notes a miraculous power.

Iſa. 54. 10. *The mountains*

So then, taking this ſpeech either for the removing of natural mountains, or taking it proverbially, as it noteth the doing of the greateſt things, and putting forth of the greateſt power, it proveth the point which *Job* hath here in hand, *viz.* That *God is mighty in ſtrength*; why? He is able to remove mountains. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *The Lord, if he pleaſeth, can alter and remove the parts of the earth, and change the frame and fabrick of nature.*

He that made the mountains unmoveable to us, can himſelf remove them. The Hiſtories and Records of former times tell us how God hath miraculouſly toſſed mountains out of their places. *Joſephus* in his ninth Book of Antiquities, *cap.* 11. mentions the removing of a mountain; and *Pliny* in the eighth Book of his Natural Hiſtory, *cap.* 30. A latter writer reports, that in *Burgundy*, in the year 1230. There were mountains ſeen moving, which overthrew many houſes, to the great terrour of all the Inhabitants of thoſe Countries. *Joſephus* alſo reports the like done by an Earthquake. And another tells us of Mount *Oſſa* joyned to *Olympus* by an earthquake. So that take it in the letter, the Lord is able to remove mountains.

Mons in Burgundia *à proximo monte dehiſcens, valliſque proximas conſtās multa agricularū millia oppreſſit*, &c. Uvern. *in faſciculo.* Joſephus, *Ant. l.* 9. *c.* 12 *Vide* Senec. *l.* 5. *c.* 15. & *l.* 6. *c.* 15. Nat. Queſt. *Plin.* Nat. Hiſt. *l.* 8. *c.* 38. *Cum in agro Mutinenſi montes duo inter ſe concurrebant crepitu maximo aſſultantes*, &c. *Eo concurſu villæ omnes illiſæ ſunt*, &c.

It ſhould make us fear before the Lord, and give him glory, while we remember that even the outward frame of the world is ſubject to ſudden changes; there is no mountain, no rock, but the little finger of God can remove or pull it down. As *David* ſpake of his Metaphorical mountain, his great outward eſtate, *Lord, thou haſt made it ſtand ſtrong, yet thou didſt hide away thy face, and I was troubled, Pſal.* 30. 6. His mountain began to ſhake, and became a very molehil, uſeleſs to him, when God was diſpleaſed. If the Lord withdraw himſelf from our civil mountains, we are troubled, and if he touch the natural mountains, they are troubled. *Our mountains will skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs* (Pſal. 104. 4.) *when he is diſpleaſed.*

> Secondly obſerve, That, *The power of God is made viſible to us in the changes which he works in the creature, as well as in the conſtitution of the creature.*

The power of God made the mountains and created the hills; the ſame power removes mountains, and turns them upſide down. *It argues as great a power to deſtroy the world, as to ſettle the world.* As the Apoſtle ſhews what divinity the *Gentiles* might have learned in that great Book of the worlds creation (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the Creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* So we may ſay on the other ſide, *The inviſible things of him from the confuſions which are in the world, are clearly ſeen; or, they may be underſtood by the things which are removed and changed, in theſe you may read his eternal power and Godhead.* When God breaks the Laws and courſe of nature, he ſhews his power as well as when he ſetled the laws and courſe of nature. He ſhews his power when he lets the Sea out of his place to overflow the earth, as well as when he bounded the Sea that it ſhall not overflow the earth. Some things are with far leſs power deſtroyed then made, removed then ſetled; but no power can deſtroy the world, but that which made it, or ſuddenly remove a mountain, but that which ſetled it. The power of God muſt be acknowledged in altering, as well as in ordering the natural courſe or conſtitution of the creature.

And if we look to the change of Metaphorical Mountains, it is a truth, an illuſtrious truth, that the Lord diſplayes his mighty power in removing and overturning the great eſtates and eſtabliſhments of Men and Kingdoms. When God removes the Mountain of our peace, of our riches, the Mountain of outward proſperity, and of civil power, it becomes us to ſay, *He is mighty in power* who doth all theſe things.

God hath given great tokens and teſtimonies of his power in this. How many Mountains, *great Mountains*, men who were Mountains, and things which ſtood like Mountains; how many (I ſay) of theſe hath the Lord removed? The power of God and the faith of his people have wrought ſuch Miracles, *He removeth the Mountains.*

And they know it not.

They.] Who? Who or what is the antecedent to this *They?* Are the Mountains? So ſome underſtand it; and then the word [know,] or the *act of knowing* is by a figure aſcribed (as many times in Scripture, to creatures *without reaſon*, ſo) to *creatures without life*, Pſal. 58. 1. *Before your pots can feel the thorns*; the Hebrew is, *Before your pots can underſtand or know the thorns*, that is, before they are ſenſible of the heat of the fire to make them boil, *&c.* An act of ſenſe, and is aſcribed to *pots*, which are things inſenſible.

Nec ſciunt, ſc. *montes, tribuitur rei inanimatæ ſenſus.* Merc.

But others take the antecedent to be *man*; *He removeth the mountains, and they know it not*, that is, men know it not. So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *He removeth the mountains, that men cannot mark how he hath removed them out of their places in his anger.*

Suppoſing men to be the antecedent, there is yet a difference about the interpretation. *Men*, that is, ſay ſome, unskilful men, ignorant men, they know not the meaning of this, they cannot give a reaſon why or how mountains are removed; if God doth it, *they know it not.* Others reſtrain it to men inhabiting the mountains, they were ſecure, and thought their dwellings ſo ſafe, that God removed their mountain before they dreamed of, much leſs feared any ſuch thing; they had no thought that God would remove

Puto eſſe modum loquendi indeterminatum, cui ſupplendum eſt ſubjectum homines. *Bol.* Vatablus *ſuppoſitum verbi ne ſcierent, ita ſupplet, nec agnoſcunt* (ſc. *homines imperiti*) *quis ſubvertit eos furore ſuo.*

Locus ſive ab arte, ſive à natura munitus, reddit homines ab omni bellorū aut ruinæ ſuſpitione ſecuros. San.

move their mountain. Places ſtrongly fortified, either by Art or Nature, make men ſecure, and dangers unſuſpected. The deluge in *Noah*'s time, prevailed over the higheſt mountains; but his ſinful poſterity hoped to make an artificial mountain, wherein they might even dare a ſecond deluge. *Come, let us build us a City and a Tower, whoſe top may reach to heaven*, Gen. 11.4. And then (except the ſtars and firmament be flouded) we ſhall be dry, how much or how long ſoever it rains. Such towring thoughts as theſe, were (ſurely) laid in the foundation of that intended Tower.

Take the Text either of natural or of figurative mountains; and to remove them, ſo, that man knows it not, may have a double meaning.

First, *That it is done with great ſpeed.*

Secondly, *That it is done with great ſecrecy.*

God is able to do great things in a little time, in ſo little time, that men ſhall not know he is doing them, till they are done. He [illegible] do great things ſecretly, ſo ſecretly, that the way of their diſpatch ſhall not be viſible to the eye, or open to the underſtanding of man, till they are diſpatch'd.

Again, this clauſe [**And they know it not.**] notes not only the ſecurity of men before the hand of God is upon them, but their ſtupidity, while it is upon them. So *Prov.* 23.35. *They have ſtricken me, ſhalt thou ſay, and I was not ſick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*; the Hebrew is, *and I knew it not*. Hence obſerve,

> *The works and judgments of God, are often unſuſpected and unobſerved by men.*

He removeth mountains, even their mountains, and they know it not.

'Tis true in reference to natural, but eſpecially to civil mountains. The rich, the mighty are caſt down from their ſeats, or their ſeats are caſt down before they ſaw any hand touching them. The whore of *Babylon*, and mother of fornications, who ſits upon *ſeven mountains* (Rev. 17.9.) ſaith in her heart, *I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow* (Revel. 18.7.) *Therefore ſhall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine*, &c. (*ver.*8.) If her plagues come in one day, ſhe (doubtleſs) thought not of them a day before. *Babylons ſeven mountains* ſhall be removed, ſhe not knowing it; and as *Babylons* mountains ſhall be removed, when ſhe ſhall not know, that is, ſuſpect it; ſo, which is more ſtrange, *Jeruſalems* mountain was removed, and ſhe did not know, that is, perceive it. The Prophets are expreſs (*Iſa.* 42.25.) *Therefore he hath poured upon him* (namely, *Jacob* or *Iſrael*) *the fury of his anger, and the ſtrength of battel, and it hath ſet him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* They were unobſervant of thoſe terrible things the Lord did among them. Some little anger paſſes often without notice, but here was the *fury of anger*; ſome ſleight ſkirmiſhes make no great noiſe, but here was *the ſtrength of battel*; and not ſome few drops of both theſe, but either of them poured upon him, by whole bucket fulls, and theſe buckets of burning fury ſet him on fire, and that not in ſome one corner or out-houſe, but round about, *yet he knew it not*. Which is expounded in the next words, *It burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*

The Prophet *Hoſea* (Chap. 7.9.) ſpeaks as much of *Jeruſalem*, under the name of *Ephraim*; *Strangers have devoured his ſtrength, and he knoweth it not; gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.* Strangers devour his ſtrength, that is, according to the language of *Job*, the mountains wherein his ſtrength did conſiſt, were devoured and overthrown by ſtrangers, and yet he knew it not, he did not obſerve the hand of God in the hand of man againſt him. *Gray hairs are here and there upon him*; gray hairs are a great change; gray hairs note the moſt diſcernable change of a mans life. There are two ſtates of a man, eaſily diſtinguiſhed, youth, and old-age, and gray hairs make the moſt viſible diſtinction between theſe two; ſo that to ſay, *Gray hairs are upon him*, is to ſay there is ſuch a change upon his eſtate, as is between a young man and an old man, and yet he knows, he obſerves it not. Of all things a man is moſt apt to take notice of his own natural gray hairs: and many are ſo troubled at the firſt ſight of them (becauſe they tell us we begin to be old) that they will pick them out: but ſuch is the ſenſleſneſs of many about the dealings of God with them, that when great changes are upon them, *changes like that of youth into old-age*, they are not affected with it; *providential or judiciary gray hairs, are not often known.*

Surely many of theſe *gray hairs* are upon us at this day: it will be ſad, if *England* be like *Ephraim*, and know it not. It is worſe, *not to know we have gray hairs, then to have them*. The one is but *our affliction, the other is our ſin. Gray hairs are upon us*, ſtrangers have devoured our ſtrength: If we know not what God hath done, he can quickly do enough to make himſelf known. *They who will not ſee the hand of God, when it is lifted up* (that they may be humbled) *ſhall ſee it and be aſhamed*, Iſa. 26.11. If the removing and ſhaking of our mountains do not awaken us, the overturning ſhall: That's the next act of divine power in this noble deſcription.

And overturneth them in his anger.

The word ſignifies to *overturn a thing, ſo, as to change the form and faſhion of it, yea, to bring it to nothing*; not only to remove a thing out of its place, but to take away the *very being* of it, and to remove it out of the world. He not only turns mountains into mole-hils, but into plains, yea, into pits, they ſhall not be mountains any longer, nor any thing like a mountain.

הפך *Vertit, ſubvertit, ſignificat verſionem, vi. in nihilum, vel in formam, aut qualitatem aliam, vel in locū alium.*

It is much to remove a mountain, and ſet it in another place: but more to crumble it in a moment all to duſt, that you ſhall not find a piece or a clod of it. The Prophet threatens the obſtinate *Jews* in ſuch a language, *Iſa.* 30.13, 14. *Therefore this iniquity ſhall be to you as a breach ready to fall, ſwelling out in a high wall, whoſe breaking cometh ſuddainly at an inſtant, and he ſhall break it as the breaking of the potters veſſel*, &c. *So that there ſhall not be found in the burſting of it, a ſheard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.*

He overturneth them in his anger.] *Anger in man is a mixt affection made up chiefly of theſe two ingredients; ſorrow and revenge.* Some call *anger* the boiling of the blood about the heart, or the boiling of the heart in blood; the fumes whereof riſe ſo faſt into the brain, that anger ſometimes diſlodges reaſon, and is therefore called by others a *ſhort madneſs*.

The word in the Text ſignifies the *Noſtrils*; and the Scripture frequently applies that to anger, becauſe anger is ſeen and made viſible in the *noſtrils*. Quick breathing is a ſign of *anger*. *God* is without parts and paſſions, he is not angry as man: but is ſaid to be angry when he doth like man in his anger. The Lord is not moved or ſtirred by anger; but he is angry, when he makes motions and ſtirrings in the *creature*; he lets out the effects of anger, but himſelf hath not the affections, much leſs the *perturbation of anger.* Hence obſerve,

Ira furor brevis. אף *Ira, inde transfertur ad naſum, qui eſt inſtrumentum iræ, & in quo ira præcipuè apparet. Fames & morabile in naſum conciunt.* Plaut.

> *That the troubles and confuſions which are in the creature, are tokens and effects of the anger of God.*

As the ſetling and eſtabliſhment of the creature, is an effect or ſign of his goodneſs, or, as theſe tell us, that God is pleaſed; ſo when the Lord hurls the *creature* this way and that way, when he toſſes it up and down, as if he cared not how, this is an argument of his anger; when *Moſes* came down from the Mount, and ſaw what the people of *Iſrael* had done, how they had made a golden calf and poluted themſelves with idols, ſuch a paſſion of anger came upon him, that he threw the Tables of the Law out of his hand, and brake them. So, when the Lord would ſignifie his diſpleaſure, he throws the *creature out of his hand, and breaks man againſt man, Nation againſt Nation* (*as a potters veſſel*) *one againſt another.* The comfort and well-being of the *creature*, conſiſts in this, that God holds it in his hand; if he do but let it go out of his hand, it periſhes, much more when he caſts it with violence out of his hand. The Prophet (*Hab.* 3.8.) deſcribing the great confuſions which God made in the world, queſtions thus, *Was thine anger againſt the Rivers? Was thy wrath againſt the Sea, that that thou didſt ride upon thine horſes, and thy chariots of ſalvation?* God being angry with the enemies of his people, made ſtrange work amongſt them; *Rather then his people ſhall not be delivered, the world ſhall be confounded. Was the*

Lord angry with the Sea? When he compelled the Rivers to change their courſes, and diſcover the bottom of their channels, as in the paſſage of his *Iſrael* through the red Sea? No, God was not angry with the Sea, but with *Pharaoh* and his hoſt, with the oppreſſors and troublers of his *Iſrael*; and when he was thus angry, he check'd the courſe of nature and turned things upſide-down. When *David* was in a diſtreſs, and his enemies encompaſt him round about: what then? *Then the earth ſhook and trembled, the foundations of the hills were moved and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth* (Pſal. 18. 7.) That, God might reſcue *David* out of the hand of trouble, he troubled the foundations of the earth; he made the world ſhake, and Kingdoms tremble, that his *David* might be ſetled upon his throne. The Lord threatneth (*Hag.* 2. 6.) that he *will ſhake the heaven and the earth, the ſea and the dry land*; he will move all creatures, why ſo? He ſhakes them for the ſetling of his *Zion* (verſ. 7.) *I will ſhake all Nations, and the deſire of all Nations ſhall come, and I will fill this houſe with glory, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* When the Lord comes againſt the ſuperſtition, and idolatry, and profaneneſs, and wickedneſſes of the world in anger, no wonder if Kingdoms ſhake: yea, he therefore ſhakes Kingdoms, that he may eſtabliſh *Jeruſalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that ſhall not be taken down, not one of the ſtakes thereof ſhall ever be removed, neither ſhall any of the cords thereof be broken*, Iſa. 33. 20. We are waiting when God will ſhake *Babylon*, and in his anger overturn the ſeven mountains thereof; *Babylon* is built upon mountains, upon ſeven mountains, to note the ſtrength and power of it, yet the Lord will remove *Babylon* out of her place, and overturn thoſe mountains in the fierceneſs of his anger, and in jealouſie poured out, *Then every Iſland ſhall flee away, and the mountains ſhall not be found*, Rev. 16. 20. That is, the remoteſt and ſtrongeſt places which owned and maintained *Babylon*, ſhall either be converted or confounded; they ſhall appear no more under that ſpiritual notion, though in a natural and civil they do remain. *That which is not as it was, is ſpoken of, as if it were not: A great change in our condition, is called a change of our very being.* The anger of God overturns things, as if it did annihilate them. *Job* goes on.

Tanta extitit divinæ iræ vis pro Davide *contra hoſtes defendendo, ut videbatur orbem invertere, omnia miſcere,* &c. Pined.

Verſ. 6. **Which ſhakes the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.**

This is a ſecond inſtance, but in higher expreſſions of the ſame power of God.

Which ſhakes the earth out of her place.

He had ſaid before, God removes mountains. Mountains are great bulky bodies, but no mountain ſo great as the *Globe* of the whole earth. Now (ſaith he) the Lord doth not only ſhake mountains, ſome great parts of the earth, but if he pleaſeth he can take up the whole earth, and throw it out of its place, as a man would take up a little ball, and throw it into the air, *He ſhakes the earth out of her place.*

ὁ σείων τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανὸν ἐκ θεμελίων, i. e. *terrã univerſã.* Sept.

The word which we tranſlate to *Shake*, ſignifies a violent motion of the mind, cauſed either by fear (*Deut.* 2. 25.) or grief (2 *Sam.* 18. 33.) We read of a trembling heart from both (*Deut.* 28. 25.) It is alſo applied to civil ſhakings and commotions by the troubleſom ſpirits of men, (*Prov.* 30. 21.) *For three things the earth is diſquieted.* And to unnatural ſhakings of the earth by the power of God, (2 *Sam.* 22. 8, &c.) So in the Text.

רגז *Non ſignificat motum naturalem, ſed commotionẽ quandã ex metu, trepidationẽ, tremorem.*

Some expound this of a natural motion. Thoſe men have (ſurely) a motion and turning in their brains, who tell us that there is a continued motion of the earth, that it turns and never ſtands ſtill; they would ground the motion of the earth upon this Scripture, tranſlating thus, *Which moveth the earth in her place.* But the Text tells us, that the earth hath pillars, and not wheels. Pillars are made for reſt, not for motion.

Didacus aſtunica putat hunc locũ illuſtrari poſſe ex ſententia Pythagoricorũ exiſtimantiũ terram moveri naturâ ſuâ. Copern.

Further, This Text ſpeaks of it, as of an act of Gods anger, therefore no ordinary act appointed in nature; and the word notes a violent motion, not a natural. But we need not ſtand to refute this motion. As when ſome denied all motion, a Philoſopher to prove it, roſe up and walked: So when any affirm or give reaſon for this motion, we may ſhew their ſenſes that the earth ſtands.

This ſhaking then is extraordinary, the Lord who made the earth firm upon pillars, can make the earth move, as if it went on wheels.

This he doth, firſt, by earth-quakes, theſe ſhake the earth (as it were) out of her place, and make it tremble. Hiſtories are full, and many mens experiences can give inſtances of ſuch terrible ſhakings of the earth. This earthquake is not meant here, for there is a reaſon in nature, for that Philoſophers diſpute much about it, and tell us, when there is a ſtrong vapour included or impriſoned in the bowels of the earth, that vapour ſeeking vent maketh a combuſtion there, and ſo the earth ſhakes. This, indeed, ſhews the mighty power of God, but it is in a natural way; whereas the Text ſeems to imply ſomewhat more, ſomewhat beyond the learning of Philoſophers and Naturaliſts.

Beſides, the Text ſaith, *He ſhaketh the earth* [**out**] *of her place.*

Whereas an earthquake ſhakes the earth in her place, and cauſes it to tremble upon the pillars thereof.

But did God ever ſhake the earth out of her place? We muſt underſtand the Text conditionally. We have not any inſtance that the Lord hath actually done ſo, but this ſuppoſition may be put. *The Lord can remove mountains and ſhake the earth*, not only in, but out of her place. We find ſuch conditional expreſſions often put in *Scripture*, not as if the things ever had been, or ever ſhould be done, but if the Lord will, he is able to do them (*Amos* 9. 5.) *The Lord God of hoſts is he that toucheth the land, and it ſhall melt*; that is, *if the Lord do but touch the land, he can melt it.* As the three children caſt into a fiery fornace, had not ſo much as a garment, or a thread about them touched with it, becauſe the Lord forbad the fire to burn: So, if the Lord bid a ſpark but touch us, it ſhall melt and conſume us, as if we were caſt into, and continued in a fiery fornace. As a word made, ſo a touch ſhall mar the world, when God will; yet he hath not done thus unto this day. So in the Text, *He ſhakes the earth out of her place*, imports what God can, not what he hath or will do. Note from it,

Terrificam capitis concuſſit terque quaterq; Cæſariem cũ qua terram mare ſidera movit. Ovid. *Met.*

That the Lord is able to do greater things, then ever he actually hath done.

He hath not put the *earth out of her place*, the *earth* is where it was, but he can diſplace it. God hath never acted any of his attributes to the height, for they are infinite; he never acted power ſo high, but he is able *to act it higher:* He hath never acted mercy in pardoning ſo far, but he is able to act it further; a greater ſinner then ever yet was pardoned, may be pardoned. A greater enemy then ever was overcome, may be overcome. He hath run with foot-men, and they have not wearied him, and he is able to contend with horſes: in a land of peace he was never wearied, and he knows how to wade through the ſwelling of *Jordan*. It is comfortable to conſider, that the Lord cannot only do the ſame things again, which he hath done, but he hath never done to the utmoſt of what he is able to do: he can out-do all that he hath done, as much as the ſhaking of the whole earth out of her place, is more then to remove a mountain, yea, or a *mole-hill* of earth.

And the pillars thereof tremble.

We have *the pillars of Heaven*, Chap. 26. 11. here of the Earth.

The word in the original ſignifies to ſtand upright, to be erect, becauſe pillars do ſo. There are two ſorts of pillars, upon which there is a different interpretation of the word.

עמדי *Columna erecta à ſtando dicta*

There are, firſt, *Supporting pillars.* And

Secondly, *Supported pillars.* Or, there are *pillars for ornament*; and *pillars for ſtrength.* We ſet up pillars or pinacles upon the tops of great buildings for ornament, and they are ſupported pillars. We may call mountains ſuch pillars: for as when ſome ſtately Palace is built, great pillars or pinacles are ſet upon the towers, and battlements: ſo the Lord having framed the earth, hath ſet up mountains, as great pillars for the adorning of it. *He ſhaketh the earth, and the pillars thereof tremble*; it is true of theſe upper pillars, the mountains they tremble. But I take it rather to be meant of ſupporting pillars, under-pillars, which bear the frame above, and are as the baſes or under-props of the earth (*Pſal.* 105.) *Who laid the foundation of the earth?* the earth hath a foundation: the Hebrew is, *He hath founded the earth upon her baſis*, alluding to a building. Moſt buildings have their foundations in the earth; but ſome upon it, being raiſed upon pillars. So *Hannah* (1 Sam. 2.8.) in her Song, *The pillars of the earth are the Lords, and he hath ſet the world upon them.*

What are theſe pillars that the Lord hath ſet the world upon? Or where ſhall we find them?

David ſhews us (*Pſal.* 24. 1, 2.) *The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: for he hath founded it upon the Seas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the floods.* It is ſtrange that pillars of liquid water ſhould bear up the maſſie earth; the earth ſeems rather to be the pillar and foundation of the waters. Some interpret (*ſuper*) which ſignifies *upon*, by *prope* or *juxta*, *near*; he hath founded it upon the ſeas, that is, he hath founded it by or near the ſeas. But take it in the letter, and it is a truth; for the Sea is as much the pillar of the earth, as the earth is the pillar of the Sea; earth and ſea being a globe and round, the ſea is as much under the earth, as the earth is under the ſea. Thus the pillars of the earth are waters; *And the earth is eſtabliſhed upon the floods.*

Further, If you would know what theſe pillars are, hear what *Job* ſaith (*chap.* 26. 7.) Where he aſſures us that God *hangeth the earth upon nothing*. We are not to think that the Lord in framing and building the earth, did firſt ſet up pillars, and then ſet the earth upon them; for the earth hangeth as a ball in the midſt of the air, without any pillars under it. Hence *Job*'s Philoſophy teaches us, *That he hangeth the earth upon nothing*; there are no material or viſible pillars to ſuſtain it.

What is then the pillar of the earth? What is it that ſupports and bears it up? *The real pillar of the earth it is the power of God.* But the power of God cannot tremble, how then doth he ſay, *When he ſhaketh the earth, the pillars thereof tremble?*

In this place therefore we may expound the pillars of the earth for the lower parts of the earth, and ſo, though the whole globe of the earth taken together, be neither higher nor lower, yet in the parts of it from any point, ſome are higher, and ſome are lower, ſome above, and ſome beneath; upon what *ſuperficies* ſoever we are, the under parts thereof are (to us) the pillars of the earth. So the meaning is, *He ſhaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble*; that is, he ſhaketh it ſo terribly, that if it had any outward viſible pillars, thoſe pillars muſt need tremble.

Terræ columnæ infimas terræ partes ſignificant, quæ reliquam terræ molem impoſitam ſuſtinent; hæc ſunt veluti fundamenta & fulcra terræ.

In this we may obſerve the great power of God in upholding the earth. We ſee what the pillars of the earth are; the ſuppoſed pillars are no other then the lower parts of the earth, and the true pillar of the earth is no other then the power of God: There are no other buttreſſes or pillars upon which the earth is ſet, or by which it is ſuſtained. This huge weight of the whole earth and ſeas is born up by the thin air. Is not this an argument of the mighty power of God, that the air which is a body ſo weak, that if you throw a feather up into it, it will not ſtay there, but deſcend, yet the whole maſs or globe of earth and waters hang there? God poyſeth it meerly by its own weight; *for he weigheth the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in balances*, Iſa. 40. 12. He upholds all things by the word of his power; *and hath built this great Caſtle in the Air.* Could we enter into the ſecrets of nature, and ſet our faith awork by our ſenſes, about theſe things, we ſhould be raiſed above all fears in the greateſt difficulties. If we ſaw but a bullet, or a piece of lead of a pound, yea, of a penny weight, lifted up and hang in the air without any thing to ſupport it, we would conclude it a miracle. What think you, when all the lead and iron, and braſs, and ſtone that is in the world, hang in the air without any viſible ſtay?

Quo pacto terra firma & immota conſiſtit? quidnā pro vehiculo habet? cujus rei adminiculo fulcitur? rationi nihil occurrit cui innitatur, ſi divinam voluntatem exceperis. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 34. *Suis librata ponderibus fixa manet.*

I find ſome interpreting this clauſe as the former, in a figurative ſence, *He ſhaketh the earth*, that is, States, Kingdoms and Common-wealths; *And the pillars thereof tremble*, that is, they who ſeemed to be their ſtrongeſt ſupporters tremble and ſhake. This is a truth, and a profitable one for our meditation. To clear this;

Firſt, We find the earth in Scripture often put for States and Kingdoms (*Iſa.* 24. 20.) *The earth ſhall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and ſhall be removed like a cottage, and the tranſgreſſion thereof ſhall be heavy upon it, and it ſhall fall, and not riſe again.* The earth ſhall do this: what earth? He doth not mean the natural earth upon which men tread, but the people who tread upon the earth, or that Common-wealth wherein people are united and governed, theſe ſhall reel to and fro, and be removed like a cottage: As if he had ſaid, you thought your ſtate and Kingdom was ſetled like a ſtrong Caſtle, but I will take it down as a man takes down a little cottage, raddled only with a few ſticks and reeds. Or the meaning of it is, your Commonwealth that hath been founded by the wiſdom of ſo many Lawgivers, and is eſtabliſhed in ſo much riches and power, ſhall be removed as a poor cottage, through which every puff of wind finds a paſſage. The ſtrongeſt Kingdoms and Bulwarks of the earth are but as thatcht cottages when God takes them in hand.

Fundavit legibus urbes.

Secondly, Pillars are often taken in a political ſence, *Pſal.* 75. 3. *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are diſſolved.* How comes it then to paſs that they are not utterly deſtroyed? It follows, *I bear up the pillars of it*, that is, I maintain Governors and Magiſtrates, ſome in places of power and authority, by whom ſhaking, tottering Kingdoms are upheld.

Further, There are *Church-pillars* as well as *State-pillars*; men of eminency in knowledge and learning, in parts and piety; theſe are pillars of the Church of God. So the Apoſtle calls *James* and *Peter*, Gal. 2. 9. As the Church it ſelf is *the pillar of truth*, ſo ſome particular members are *pillars of truth*, bearing it up and holding it forth, as pillars do the Laws or Edicts of Princes and Commonwealths. As theſe pillars are of Gods ſetting up, ſo of Gods bearing up. In great ſhakings of the earth, Common-wealth-pillars tremble, and Church-pillars tremble; yea, they would fall, did not the Lord ſuſtain them with his hand.

Οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι

From all, learn the inſtability of the creature. If that which is the baſis or foundation of all outward comforts be ſo eaſily ſhaken and toſt up and down, what are the comforts themſelves? If Kingdoms and Commonwealths totter, who can ſtand faſt? When the Saints feel the world ſhake and tremble under them, their comfort is, *They have received a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken.* Neither men nor devils have any power to ſhake it, and God will not ſhake it; nay, with reverence we may ſpeak it, the Lord cannot ſhake that Kingdom, for it is his own: he cannot do any thing to his own wrong or diſhonour. Earth may, but heaven ſhakes not, neither ſhall any of the pillars thereof tremble for ever.

We have ſeen two acts of the mighty power of God; firſt, In removing thoſe mountains, thoſe great maſſie parts of the earth. Secondly, In ſhaking the whole maſs of the earth.

Now the thoughts of *Job* grow higher, and he aſcends from earth to heaven, and brings an inſtance of the power of God there, in the ſeventh verſe.

Verſe 7. **Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not; and ſealeth up the Stars.**

And the inſtance which he makes in the heaven, ſtands (as heaven doth to earth) in a direct line of oppoſition to that which he gave about the earth. The earth in all the parts of it, is a ſetled, fixed body, and therefore the power of God is clearly ſeen in cauſing it to move; but the Sun is a moveable body, a creature in continual motion; and therefore the power of God is clearly ſeen in checking and ſtopping the motion of it. It calls for as ſtrong a hand to make the Sun ſtand ſtill, as to ſhake and remove the earth. The ſtaying of that which naturally cannot but move, and the moving of that which naturally cannot but ſtand ſtill, require a like power; and that which ſtands as the earth doth, or moves as the Sun doth, requires an Almighty power to move or ſtay it.

Sicut de natura terræ eſt immobilitas & quies, ita de natura cœli ut ſemper moveatur. Aquin.

Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.

Which commandeth the Sun.] He deſcribes *God* in the poſture and language of a King, giving out commands. *He commandeth. God is the Soveraign of the Sun.* Yet the word in the Hebrew is no more, but, *he ſaith*, or, *he ſpeaks to the Sun*; ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *He ſpeaks to the Sun, that it riſeth not*: We, clearly to the ſence, *He commandeth the Sun*, becauſe the word of God to the Creature, is a Law or a Command upon the Creature.

יאמר *Dixit, illud dicere eſt cū poteſtate imperandi.*

He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.

The phraſe implies an ordinary or a common event. But when was there ſuch a thing as this? How rare are ſuch events? I may ask, Did the Lord ever command the Sun that it ſhould not riſe? Or did ever any day appear when the Sun did not appear? we may anſwer four or five wayes.

First, Some conceive *Job* ſpeaks only of what *God* can do (as in the former inſtance) not what he ever did: He never actually gave out his command to the Sun that it ſhould not riſe; but he hath power to do it if he pleaſeth. Many things are ſpoken of the power of *God*, as preſently done, which only are things poſſible for him to do. That's a good interpretation of the place.

Non ad factum, ſed ad Dei potentiā refertur, qui ſi velit, poſſit viciſſitudinem ortus & occaſus ſolis tollere. Olymp.

Secondly, We may carry it further; for when he ſaith, *It riſeth not*, we need not take it ſtrictly, as if the Sun were ſtaid from making day at all; but, it may note any ſtop or ſudden diſappearing of the Sun. The Suns riſing is the Suns appearing; and when it diſappeareth, or is hidden, it is to us as if the Sun were not riſen. Thus God hath actually, more then once, given out a command to the Sun not to riſe. *Lavater* (in his comment upon this place) reports, that in the year 1585. *March* 12. ſuch a darkneſs fell upon the earth, that the fowls went to rooſt at noon, as if it had been Sun-ſetting, and all the common people thought the day of Judgment was come. That of the Prophet is true in the *letter*, as well as in the *figure* (Amos 4. 13.) *He maketh the morning darkneſs*. And (*chap.* 5. 8.) *He turneth the ſhadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night.* The holy ſtory records one famous act of God commanding the Sun to ſtand ſtill (*Joſh.* 10.12.) When *Joſhua* was in purſuit of his enemies, he prayed that the day might not haſten down; *Sun, ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon; and the Sun ſtood ſtill*, &c. *Joſhua* ſpeaks as if himſelf could command the Sun. *Sun, ſtand thou ſtill*; he talks to the Sun, as to his ſervant or child, *ſtand ſtill.* It was indeed at the voyce of *Joſhua*, but by the word and power of God, that the Sun ſtood ſtill. So the Text reſolves; *There was no day like that before it or after it* (no day ſo long as that) *that the Lord hearkened to the voyce of a man.* So then, the Lord hearkened to the voyce of a man, and then the Sun hearkened to the voyce of a man. First, the Lord hearkned, and then the Sun hearkened, that is, by a command from God at the requeſt of a man the Sun ſtood ſtill.

Non oritur ſol, tantum eſt non appareat, nam & ortus ſolis apparitio quædam eſt. Bold.

Thirdly, It may be underſtood of ordinary Eclipſes, which are diſappearings of the Sun; and though they come in a courſe of nature, and are by natural light foreſeen many years before they come, yet there is ſomewhat in them which ſhould fill us with high thoughts of the power of God. And though an eclipſe of the Sun be no miracle, yet God once made, and can again make a miraculous eclipſe. When Chriſt *the Sun of Righteouſneſs* was ſhamefully crucified, the Sun in the heavens (as aſhamed to look upon that act (as from man) of prodigious cruelty and injuſtice) hid his face; *and from the ſixth hour* (that is, from highnoon) *there was darkneſs over all the Land unto the ninth hour*; that is, till three in the afternoon, *Mat.* 27.45. This eclipſe was miraculous; firſt, becauſe it was the full of the Moon. Which (as we receive from *Antiquity*) cauſed a great Philoſopher (not knowing what was doing, or who was ſuffering at *Jeruſalem*) to cry out, *Either the God of Nature ſuffers, or the frame of Nature diſſolves.*

Dionyſius Areopagita.

Secondly, Becauſe it was univerſal (as ſome affirm) over all the world; or as others (which makes it more ſtrange) that it was only in the Land of *Judæa*, all the world beſides enjoying the light of the Sun at that time. Which Miracle ſtands oppoſite to that in *Egypt*, which was plagued with darkneſs, when the *Iſraelites* in *Goſhen* enjoyed light; whereas then *Judæa*, where the *Iſraelites* dwelt, was covered with darkneſs, the reſt of the world enjoying light.

Fourthly, Some refer this ſpeech of *Job*'s to that particular plague of darkneſs for three dayes in *Egypt* (laſt mentioned) which they conceive was then freſh in memory; and ſo *Job* had reference eſpecially unto that, when he ſaith, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.* For though God at that time did not give a command to ſtop the Sun from riſing upon all parts of the earth, yet he commanded the Sun not to ariſe upon that part; when his own people had light in *Goſhen*, the Lord commanded the Sun not to riſe upon the *Egyptians.* This is a more diſtinct act of the power of God. For, as he ſpeaks, *Amos* 4. 7. (to note the accurateneſs as well as the power of God in his judgments) concerning the rain, *I commanded the clouds* (ſaith he) *and I cauſed it to rain upon one City, and cauſed it not to rain upon another City:* So the Lord can cauſe the Sun, if he pleaſe, to riſe upon one Countrey, and not upon another; upon one Nation, and not upon another: upon one City, and not upon another. Thus we may underſtand it, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not* upon one people, though it ſhineth upon others, according to the manner of that *Egyptian* plague.

Laſtly, We may interpret it of an extraordinary tempeſtuous time, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not*; that is, he makes ſuch ſtorms and tempeſts, and cauſeth ſuch vapors and clouds in the air, that the Sun is muffled up, and is as if it did not riſe. Such a day (he means of any troubles and afflictions) we have deſcribed in the Prophet *Joel* (chap. 2. 2.) *A day of darkneſs and of gloomineſs, a day of clouds and thick darkneſs, as the morning upon the mountains.* But how is a day of darkneſs as the morning? &c. The ſpeech intends thus much, that this darkneſs ſhall ſpread it ſelf as ſuddenly as the morning-light ſpreads it ſelf upon the mountains, which being higheſt, are bleſt and gilded with the firſt iſſuing rayes of the riſing Sun. God is ſaid to command the Sun not to riſe, when he vails and makes the face of the Sun with ſudden clouds, as if there were no Sun at all but clouds. *Paul*, in his voyage to *Rome*, was under ſuch a tempeſt, and the Text ſaith, *That neither Sun nor Stars for many dayes appeared* (Acts 27. 20.) They were as if the Sun had not riſen for many dayes. Such ſtormy, gloomy weather God can make (*Ezek.* 32. 7.) *When I ſhall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the ſtars thereof dark, I will cover the Sun with a cloud*, that is, I will put a black vail or cloak upon the heavens, that the Sun ſhall not put out any light, when I put them out; when I extinguiſh thee, I will (for a time) extinguiſh the Sun alſo. The conſtellations of heaven are often expreſſed ſympathizing with the diſpenſations of God on earth, *Iſa.* 13. 10. *Joel* 2. 31. *Mat.* 24. 29. *He commandeth or ſpeaketh to the Sun.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The bare word of God is a command.*

He ſpeaks to the Sun, and it riſeth not. The Apoſtle uſeth that word about the creation of light, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *The Lord who commandeth light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts.* The Greek is, *The Lord who ſpake light out of darkneſs*, which we tranſlate, *The Lord who commanded the light out of darkneſs.* The words of God are Laws, and therefore the *ten Commandments*, that part of the word which carries the name of commands from all the reſt, is yet called *The ten words of God.* The Greeks call the ten Commandments the *Decalogue*, or the *ten words*; ſo many words, ſo many commands. The Devil ſeems to acknowledge this great power of God (only that he might abuſe it) in Chriſt, that his word was a command. *If thou be the Son of God* (Mat. 4. 3.) *command that theſe ſtones be made bread.* The Greek is, *If thou be the Son of God, ſpeak to theſe ſtones that they become bread*; or, *ſpeak theſe ſtones into bread*; he would take that as a proof of his Divinity; *If thou be the Son of God, do this*: God can do this, his word is a command to all creatures; for whatſoever he impoſeth upon them, they muſt ſubmit to it, therefore do thou ſo likewiſe, ſpeak to theſe ſtones, or command theſe ſtones to become bread.

Os in Scriptura pro voluntate ſæpe accipitur, ſignificat enim locutionem, locutione enim homines quid volunt manifeſtāt.

εἴπων.

It ſhould be matter of comfort to us; while we remember that every word of God is a command upon all creatures; *He hath made a decree which ſhall not paſs* (Pſal. 148. 6.) The Hebrew is only, *A word which ſhall not paſs*; his word is a decree which none ſhall reverſe.

Secondly, As from the former clauſe [**He commandeth the Sun.**] we learn, That every word of God is a command; ſo, from that which followeth [**And it riſeth not**] we may learn,

That, *Every creature obeys the command, and ſubmits to the will of God.*

Men often ſpeak, and ſpeak in the higheſt language of commanding, and yet the thing is not done; but whatſoever the Lord ſpeaks, is done. Every thing hath an ear to hear his voyce, who made both voyce and ear, *Pſal.* 148.8. *Fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, ſtormy wind fulfilling his word.* Senſleſs *creatures* act at Gods command, and go upon his *errand*, *They fulfil his word.* The Lord ſent a meſſage unto *Hezekiah*, to aſſure him that his ſickneſs was at his command, becauſe the Sun was, 2 *King.* 20.9, 10. *Shall the ſhadow go forward ten degrees, or go backward ten degrees in the dial of* Ahaz? Either way (ſaith the Lord) I can do it; either way, as thou ſhalt ask a ſign, it ſhall be done. And *Hezekiah* anſwered, *It is a light thing for the ſhadow to go down ten degrees, but let the ſhadow return backward ten degrees.* Yet he knew the Lord did not offer him a light thing in either, when he ſaid, *Shall the Sun go forward or backward?* The Suns going *forward* was within a *degree* as great a matter as its going *backward*; but *Hezekiah* calls it a *light matter*, in regard of common *apprehenſion* and *obſervation.* The Suns motion is naturally forward, and though it ſhould mend its pace, many would not much regard it; but all would ſtand and wonder at a *retrograde motion*, or at the Sun going backward. Hence *Hezekiah* calls it a *light matter* for the Sun to go *forward*, comparatively to its going *backward.* And from either the Lord doth teach *Hezekiah* that his *creatures* will do what he bids them; even the Sun will move miraculouſly at his word. How great a rebuke will it be to man, if he move not at the command of God, and as God commands? Shall the Lord ſay to the *Sun*, *riſe not*, and it *riſeth* not; and ſhall he ſay to man, *ſwear not*, and he will *ſwear*; *pray*, and he will not *pray?* Shall the Lord have better obedience from his creatures without life, then from man, who hath not only *life*, but *reaſon?* or from Saints, who have not only *reaſon*, but *grace?* They who have grace, give not ſuch univerſal obedience as things without life; for though there be a part in them active to obey, yet there is a part backward to all obedience. Let it ſhame us that there ſhould be any thing in us (who have *life, reaſon and grace*) reſiſting, or not readily complying with all the commands of God, when the *Sun*, which hath not ſo much as life, obeys his voyce; *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.*

Thirdly, Obſerve from the manner of this ſpeech,

That, *The Lord hath a negative voyce upon the motion of all creatures.*

He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not. It is a Royal Prerogative that the Lord commands the *Sun to riſe*, but that the Lord hath a power to ſtay the Sun from riſing, lifts up his Prerogative to the higheſt. In all diſputes about power, his is reſolved to be greateſt, who hath the negative voyce, which checks and ſuperſedeates all others. This is the Prerogative of God, he can ſtay the motion of the Sun and of man. The Sun dares not do his office to the day, nor the Stars to the night, if the Lord ſay no. The Sun is deſcribed, *Pſal.* 19.5. like a Bridegroom coming out of his chamber, dreſt and prepared; and as a Giant rejoycing to run his race: but though the Sun be thus prepared and dreſt, and ready, yet if the Lord ſend a writ, and a prohibition to the Sun to keep within his chamber, he cannot come forth, his journey is ſtopt. Thus alſo he ſtops man in his neareſt preparations for any action. *If the Lord will work, who ſhall let it?* Iſa. 43.13. That is, there is no power in heaven or earth which can hinder him. But if the Lord will let, *who ſhall work?* Neither Sun, nor Stars, nor Men, nor Devils can work, if he forbid them. The point is full of comfort. God tells *Abimelech* in the caſe of *Sarah*, *Abraham's* wife, whom he took into his houſe, *I know thou didſt it in the integrity of thy heart, but I with-held thee, and I ſuffered thee not to touch her*, Gen. 20. 6. And when *Laban* purſued *Jacob* with hard thoughts againſt him, and ſtrong reſolutions to deal harſhly with him; the Lord gave a negative voyce (*Gen.* 31.24.) *Take heed that thou ſpeak not to Jacob either good or bad.* *Laban* had not the uſe of his own tongue; *He could not ſpeak either good or bad.* Not good or bad! Was there any hurt for *Laban* to ſpeak good to *Jacob?* And the ſtory tells us, That *Laban ſpake many words, and ſome bad enough to Jacob, charging him with a double theft; Firſt, for ſtealing himſelf away*, verſe 26. *Wherefore didſt thou ſteal away from me?* Secondly, *For ſtealing his Idols*, verſe 30. *And now though thou wouldſt needs be gone, becauſe thou longeſt ſore after thy fathers houſe, yet wherefore haſt thou ſtoln away my gods?* Foul language all, though God charged him not to ſpeak a bad word to *Jacob.* For anſwer, know, We muſt reſtrain that reſtraint to the point of bringing *Jacob* back again, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak either good or bad to him*, to ſtop or turn him from his way, thou ſhalt uſe no threatnings to bring him back to thee; no, nor any promiſes or allurements; thou ſhalt make no offers of better entertainment to win him to thy ſervice, which was the thing he ſo much deſired. *Good and bad* are the two terms of all that can be ſpoken; and where the utmoſt extreams of ſpeaking are forbidden, all ſpeaking to that purpoſe, is forbidden. When the ancient people of God *were few in number, yea, very few, and ſtrangers in the Land, when they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdom to another people*, one would think, that all the world would have been upon them; but here was their protection, God had a negative voyce, *Pſal.* 105.15. *He ſuffered no man to do them wrong.* Many had (as we ſay) an aking tooth at the people of God, their fingers itcht to be dealing with them, and the text ſhews four advantages the world had againſt them. Firſt, *They were few.* Secondly, *Very few.* Thirdly. *Strangers.* Fourthly, *Unſetled.* What hindered their enemies? It was the Lords negative voyce. *He reproved Kings for their ſake, ſaying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* We ſee an inſtance of this, *Gen.* 35.5. When *Jacob* and his family *journeyed, the terror of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, and they did not purſue after the ſons of Jacob.* They had a mind to purſue after them, to revenge the ſlaughter of the *Sichemites*, but God ſaid, *Purſue not*: and then they could not purſue, they muſt ſtay at home. And when his people the *Jews* were ſafe in *Canaan*, he encourages them to come up freely to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*, by this aſſurance, No man ſhall deſire the Land, when thou ſhalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year, *Exod.* 24.34. God can ſtop not only hands from ſpoiling, but hearts from deſiring. Our appetite, whether concupiſcible, or iraſcible, is under his command, as well as our actions. The Prophet aſſerts this by way of queſtion (*Lam.* 3.37.) *Who is he that ſaith, and it cometh to paſs, when the Lord commandeth it not?* That is, if the Lord doth not concur, if the Lord vote againſt the ſaying or command of any man in the world, what he ſaith, ſhall never come to paſs.

We ſhould conſider this to help our faith in theſe times. God hath a negative voice upon thoſe counſels and concluſions which are carried with one conſent of men; *And the wrath of man ſhall either turn to his praiſe, or all that is beyond that*, he will ſtop, *the remainder of wrath* (namely, ſo much as remaines over and above what turns to the praiſe of God) *ſhalt thou reſtrain*, Pſal. 76.6. The ſword is in motion againſt us, even as the Sun; and the ſword ſeemeth to have received a charge to paſs from one end of the Land to the other; yet a countermand from God, will ſtop this ſword from going on. If he ſpeak to the ſword, the ſword ſhall wound no more. We may intreat the ſword to wound no more, as they (*Jer.* 47.6.) cried out, *O thou ſword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put thy ſelf into thy ſcabbard, reſt and be ſtill.* The anſwer was, *How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt Askelon?* &c. Our anſwer might be (changing place) the ſame, *How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt* England? A word from God draws, and a word from God ſheaths the ſword. He that commands the Sun, and it *riſeth not*, can command the ſword, and it *ſmiteth not*; the fire, and *it burns not*; the water, and *it drowns not*; the Lions, and *they devour not.* How happy are they who ſerve the Lord over all!

Fourthly obſerve, Seeing *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not,*

That, *The dayly riſing of the Sun is an act of grace and favour to the world.*

The Sun doth not riſe alone of it ſelf; it is the Lord (as we may ſay) that helps us every morning. Therefore it is ſaid (*Mat.* 5.45.) *He makes his Sun to riſe: His Sun,* Mark how Chriſt ſpeaks of the Sun, as Gods own, that

Sun which he can either cauſe to riſe or not to riſe, cauſe to riſe upon one people, *and not upon another*; *He maketh his Sun to riſe*; there is an act of common grace in making it to riſe upon all, *upon the evil, and upon the good*, Mat. 5. 53. That God makes the Sun to riſe to give them light, who uſe their eyes only to rebel againſt the light, how admirable is it?

Laſtly, As to the ſpecial aim of *Job*, we ſee what a proof we have of the omnipotency of God, *He is great in power, and mighty in ſtrength*; Why? Becauſe he can ſtop the Sun. He that can ſtay the Sun, what can he not do? We ſay to men that attempt impoſſibilities, *Climb up to the Moon*; it is more to ſtay the Sun, then to climb the Moon. And if the Lord be able to overcome this difficulty, what difficulty can he not overcome? Here's a clear proof of the infinite power and wiſdom of God, *He ſpeaks to the Sun, and it riſeth not*. And,

He ſealeth up the Stars.

The Sun is the light of the day, the Stars the light of the night; *He ſealeth up the Stars*. Some take it to be a *Periphraſis*, or a deſcription of night and day, becauſe till the Sun riſeth, it is night, and when the day appears, the Stars are ſealed up, or diſappear: The Sun riſeth, and the Stars are obſcured, we ſee them not. So the former clauſe, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not*, is a deſcription of the night; and this latter, *He ſealeth up the Stars*, is a deſcription of the day. *The plain ſence of both being this, He maketh both night and day.*

Qui efficit noctem & diem, nam donec ortus ſol eſt, nox & adveniente die, quaſi obſignatæ occultantur ſtellæ Jun.

Secondly (ſay others) this ſeal is ſet upon the Sun, in behalf of the ſtars, *He ſealeth up the Sun for the ſtars*, that is, in favour of the ſtars; that the ſtars might ſometime appear in their luſtre and glory to the world, he keepeth the Sun from appearing.

Pro ſtellis ſignavit (ſc. *ſolem*) *ſignaculo, quaſi in favorem ſtellarum Deus continet ſolis ſplendorem in altero Hemiſpherio.* Cajet.

But (as we tranſlate) we may better keep the ſeal upon the ſtars, *He ſealeth up the ſtars.*

And ſo, ſealing may import either of theſe two things. Firſt, The ſafe cuſtody of the ſtars, *He ſealeth up the ſtars*, that is, *he preſerveth the ſtars in their Orbs*, in the places where he hath ſet them, they ſhall never drop out. Sealing is often uſed for aſſurance and ſafe keeping. *Darius*, Dan. 6. *ſealed the ſtone upon the Den of Lions, that ſo Daniel might not be reſcued or fetcht out from the danger.* The *Jews*, that they might keep Chriſt faſt enough, *ſealed the ſtone of the Sepulcher wherein his body was laid*, Mat. 27. And in a ſpiritual ſence, the ſealing of the Spirit is to make the ſoul ſafe in the love and favour of God. A ſoul that is ſealed by the Spirit of God, is ſecured of the love of God, and ſhall never drop out of his heart. So, *He ſealeth up the ſtars*, is, *He makes the ſtars firm and faſt in their ſpheres.* But rather,

Annulos nō tam ornatus quam cuſtodiæ gratia olim inventos dicit. Macrob. *l.* 7 Satur. *c.* 3. *Clauſæ videntur, cum non videntur.*

Secondly, Sealing is for ſecreſie, or for the hiding of a thing from the ſight of others: So in the ſealing of Letters, that they may not be ſeen, and of treaſures, that theyb e not ſtoln or taken away, *Deut.* 32. 34. *Job* 14. 17. Thus the Lord ſeals up the ſtars, when he clouds or obſcures the ſtars, and will not let them be ſeen. Some make it an alluſion to a Book. The Heavens are a great volume, wherein many Truths of God are written, his Name is there, and the ſtars are ſo many Characters or Letters of his Name. He often ſeals up this great volume, and ſo blots theſe Letters, that no man can read or diſtinguiſh them.

Stellæ & omnia cœli lumina, velut charactêres quidā efficiunt librum. Pin.

Thirdly, The meaning of *He ſealeth up the ſtars*, may be taken thus, *He keeps in, and cloſes up the virtue and influences of the ſtars*; he ſtops thoſe treaſures which uſually come down from the ſtars upon the earth. Natural Philoſophy teaches us, that all the fatneſs and fruitfulneſs of the earth is conveyed from the heavens. Heaven nurſes and ſuckles the earth; and if the Lord pleaſe, he can dry up thoſe breaſts, ſeal up thoſe influences, ſtop thoſe ſecret workings which the heavenly bodies have upon the earth.

> Hence obſerve, That, *The influences of the Heavens are in the hand of God, to let them out, or ſtay them when he pleaſeth.*

As he can ſeal up the ſpiritual treaſures of heaven, that the ſoul ſhall receive no light, comfort or refreſhing from them in Ordinances, ſo he ſeals up the natural influences of the heavens, that the earth and the fruits of it here below, ſhall receive no quickning, no refreſhing from them. And the earth languiſhes when the Lord ſuſpendeth and ſealeth up the natural influences of heaven; as the ſoul languiſheth, when the Lord ſtops up the ſpiritual influences of heaven, when he ſeals up the Star of *Jacob*, that day-ſtar from on high, *Jeſus Chriſt*.

What we hear of God in natural things, ſhould keep us in continual dependance upon him for ſpirituals; he ſeals with the comforts of his own Spirit, and he ſeals up all comforts from our ſpirits.

Verſe 8. Which alone ſpreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.

This verſe gives us a further argument of the mighty power of God. See how *Job*'s diſcourſe moves from earth to heaven, and from the heavens down to the ſea. He ſearches for the wonders of Gods power and wiſdom, in heaven, and earth, and in the waters. Before he ſhews God ſtopping the courſe of the Sun, and ſealing up the ſtars; now ſpreading out of the heavens, and treading upon the Sea.

He ſpreadeth out the heavens.

The heavens in reference to the earth, are the upper part of the world. The heavens are (as it were) the *roof of the great houſe* which God made, or as a ſpangled canopy over our heads. *He ſpreadeth out the heavens*: The word is of the *Dual Number* in the Hebrew, and hath divers derivations, which are conſiderable to enlighten us in this point.

He ſpreadeth out the heavens.] Some derive it from *Shem*, which ſignifies a name, a name of honour and dignity; *Men of name* are men of *renown*, Gen. 6. 4. The heavens are the moſt glorious, beautiful and renowned part of the Creation, their name is above every name of inanimate creatures.

שמאוים *à* שם *Nomen, gloria, decus, quia cœlum eſt ornatiſſima pars mundi.* Mar. *in Lex Philoſ.* Anſhi Haſhem.

Others, becauſe there are waters above in theſe heavens, derive the word from (*Sham*) which is an adverb of place, and (*Majim*) which ſignifies *waters*; as much as to ſay, *there are waters*, or there is the place where God hath *fountains* and *ſtores of water*. All his waters are not upon the earth, he hath Waters and Springs in heaven.

A third takes it from a ſimple, not a compound word, being near the *Iſhmaeliti*ſh word *Shama*, noting only *ſuperiority* in place, high or above.

Paulus Fagius *in Gen.* 1.

A fourth opinion derives it from *Schamem*, which ſignifies, *to be amazed, or to make one at a ſtand with wonder*: And the reaſon is given, *becauſe the heavens are ſuch a vaſt ſtupendious body, that if a man look upon them exactly, they will amaze him.* Who can obſerve the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, and not wonder and be *tranſported* at their vaſtneſs and beauty, at the ſwiftneſs and regularity of their motions; it is above the reach and apprehenſion of natural reaſon, how the Lord ſhould faſhion and *ſpread* out ſuch heavens.

שמאיים *à* שמם *Obſtupuit, propter inſignem vaſtitatē iſtius corporis, quæ ipſa nos aſpicientes, in ſtuporem rapit.* Piſc. *in Gen.* 1.

But, *What are theſe Heavens which he ſpreadeth forth?*

Heaven is ſometimes expreſſed with an addition, *The higheſt heavens, the third heavens*, in 2 *Cor.* 12. 12. *The heaven of heavens*, 1 Kings 8. 27. *Paul was rapt up to the third heavens*, that is, in viſions and *revelations* he was brought as near to God himſelf as a *creature* poſſibly can. Of this heaven we are to underſtand that, *Gen.* 1. 1. Where *Moſes* ſaith, *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void.* He doth not ſay, the heavens which God created at firſt, was without form and void, but the earth was without form and void; for that heaven was a perfect creature. We read further, of the creating of thoſe heavens which we ſee, of the viſible heavens, which are the continent of the Sun, Moon and Stars. But, *In the beginning God created the heaven*, that heaven, which by way of eminency is called, *The habitation of his holineſs and of his glory*, Iſa. 63. 15. This was created in the beginning, and then, it is conceived the Angels were likewiſe created; but the earth which was then made, was an imperfect creature, and all other corporeal creatures with their ſeveral forms and fulneſs, were extracted out of the earth, which was *without form and void*. The very heavens (which we ſee) were made out of that firſt earth; the *Sun*, *Moon* and the

Stars, yea, the very *light* it ſelf was made out of that *earth*, that general heap of matter which the Lord created at firſt, and is ſaid to have been *without form and void*. But the heaven which we call *the heaven of heavens, the third heaven, or the higheſt heaven*, was a perfect creature the firſt day, made without any pre-exiſtent matter whatſoever by the power of God. This *heaven* is the largeſt of all the *heavens* which God ſpread out.

Secondly, Take *heavens* for the viſible *heavens*. I intend not to ſtay upon Philoſophical conſiderations, only what the Scripture holds forth; we find *heavens* put, firſt for the *ſtarry heavens*, or the firmament where the ſtars have their motion, that's the *heaven* meant (*Gen.* 1:17. *Pſal.* 8. 7. *Pſal.* 19. 1.) This, according to the doctrine of Aſtronomers, is diſtinguiſhed into ſeveral orbs and *ſpheres*, in *ſeven* of which *ſeven* ſpecial ſtars are ſaid to *move*, and all the reſt to be fixed in the *eighth*.

The Apoſtle *Jude* ſeems to give a hint of thoſe planetical orbs (*Jude, verſ.* 13.) where he juſtly reproacheth unſetled ſpirits by the name of *wandering Stars or Planets, to whom is reſerved the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever*.

Thirdly, *Heaven* is taken in *Scripture* for *a nearer heaven*, for all that which is below the *Moon*, for the *air* and the *clouds*. Hence the birds are ſaid to fly in the *heavens*; and (*Gen.* 8. 2.) the rain from *heaven* was reſtrained, that is, the rain from the clouds, for there is no rain in that *heaven* above the clouds.

Triplex eſt cœlum aeriũ ſidereum, ac aliud his ſuperius inviſibile & divinũ. Dam. *l.* 2. *de orthodox. fide.*

Heaven is a building of *three ſtories*. The *firſt ſtory*, is the *air and clouds*, up to the Moon: The *ſecond ſtory* reaches all the *Planets* and *Stars*. The *third ſtory* is alſo called, *the third heaven, or the heaven of heavens*, the place of his moſt glorious reſidence, *who filleth heaven and earth*.

All theſe heavens the Lord ſpreadeth out.

There is a *threefold* ſpreading forth of a thing.

Firſt, By contuſion or beating with hammers, as a maſs of *Gold* or *Silver*, *&c.* is ſpread into thin plates and leaves.

Secondly, By way of *rarefaction* or *attenuation*; water is *rarified* by *fire*, and ſo are metals, when they are melted or cauſed to run with extream heat. In alluſion to which *Elihu* ſpeaks in his challenge to *Job* (Chap. 37. 18.) *haſt thou with him ſpread out the sky which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking-glaſs.* The sky is of a weak, ſleight matter, not hard, maſſie, or elemental, yet *it is ſtrong*; the nature of it being incorruptible, the figure of it round and indiſſoluble. And it is compared to a looking glaſs, for the clearneſs of it; thoſe inſtruments were made, ſome of glaſs, ſome of ſteel or braſs, molten and poliſht for that purpoſe.

נטה *Extendit, diſtendit, ſicut tentorium.*

Thirdly, A thing is ſpread forth by unfolding the parts, as a tent or a curtain is ſpread, and thus the ſpreading of the heavens is deſcribed, *Pſal.* 104. 1, 2. *O Lord, thou art cloathed with honour and majeſty, thou ſtretcheſt out the heavens like a curtain.* God took the vaſt matter folded together, and ſpread it as a curtain, Tabernacle or Tent. And the Latine word which carries the interpretation of this in the Hebrew, is frequently applied by ancient Authors, to the pitching of Tents in War. In this third ſence we are ſpecially to underſtand the Text, *Alone ſpreadeth out the Heavens.*

Hic Dolapũ manum, hic ſævus tendebat Achilles Virg. 2. *Æneiad. Juxta hortos tendebat.* Suet. *in* Galb. *c.* 12. *de* Germanorum *Cohorte. Et milites tendere omnes extra vallum juſſit.* Pac. *l.* 13.

And ſo this ſpreading is either an expoſition of the nature of the heavens (*Gen.* 1. 8.) *The Lord ſaid, Let there be a firmament*; the Hebrew is, *Let there be an expanſion*, or a ſtretching forth. Theſe heavens are ſo much ſpread forth, that they are called, *a thing ſpread forth*; and ſo the Text is a deſcription of the heavens in their firſt Creation. Or, it may refer to the words going before, and ſo theſe are a reaſon to ſhew that God can command the Sun, and ſeal up the Stars, why? *He ſpreadeth forth the heavens*; that is, the heavens are all of his making, and at his diſpoſing; he ſet the Sun there, and put the Stars there, he faſhioned the orbs in which they are placed, and therefore he can ſtay the Sun, and ſeal up the Stars.

Cœlum ſive firmamentũ vocatur רקיע *eò quod eſt expanſum & extenſum ſuper terrã.*

And as he thus ſpreadeth out the heavens, ſo, which is more obſervable, *He ſpreadeth them out alone.* When a piece of hangings, or the like of a large extent is to be ſpread forth, one man cannot do it, many hands are put to that work. It is an axiom in Divinity, *That no creature can be an inſtrument in Creation*: this ſtretching forth of the heavens is an act of Creation, therefore *he alone* doth it, there is none to help him.

Solus ſine cujuſquam auxilio.

Inſtrumentũ creationis creatura eſſe non poteſt.

Yet we find that God had ſome other with him, when he ſtretched out the heavens, though it be here attributed to him alone: and though *Elihu* expoſtulates with *Job* in this point (*Chap.* 37. 18.) *Haſt thou with him ſpread out the sky which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking-gl. ſs? Elihu* would bring down the thoughts of *Job*, which he conceived were too much lifted up, by ſhewing that God did this alone; *Job* (ſaith he) didſt thou hold one part of this great Curtain or Canopy of heaven in thy hand, and God another, and was it ſo ſpread out between you? No, neither man nor Angel was his helper; who then was with God in this work? *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 8. 27.) *When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the depth.* Who was that? *I wiſdom was there. Jeſus Chriſt was there.* Chriſt was he by whom God prepared and ſtretched forth the heavens. No creature was there, only the uncreated creating Son of God. God created alone, that is, without the help of any creature; but he created all things by the *Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* Obſerve from hence,

Solus, quia nemo extra ipſũm cum ipſo, ſed una cum ipſo illi qui in ipſo per identitatem ſubſtantiæ ſunt: verbo enim Domini formati ſunt cœli & ſpiritu oris ejus omnis virtus eorum. Solum enim divinitas facit, quæ ut una ita & ſola.

First, *The heavens are as the royal tent and pavilion of the Lord.*

He ſpreadeth them out.] The Lord is often expreſt coming out of the heavens with warlike preparations: There his tent is pitcht, and he ſitteth there, as a great Commander in his pavilion, to give out orders to his Armies. He hath an hoſt in heaven, and therefore he hath a tent in heaven; or rather heaven is his tent. *The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the ſtorm, and the clouds are the duſt of his feet*, Nah. 1. 3. God pitches his battel in heaven; *The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt* Siſera. *He fought from heaven*; from thence he diſcharged his great Artilery, his Cannons thundered and lightened againſt the enemies of his people. He hath alſo his ſtore-houſes for ammunition, his Magazines there (Job 38.22.) *Haſt thou* (ſaith God to *Job*) *entred into the treaſures of the ſnow? Or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail, which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, the day of battel and war?* He ſpeaks of heaven as of a great ſtore-houſe, where he hath his arms, his powder and ball, all his warlike proviſion laid up againſt the day of battel. Heathens have ſpoken ſuch language, calling ſtorms and tempeſt, hail and thunder, *The weapons and engines of the Armory of heaven.*

Eſt alluſio armamentaria publica, ubi armorũ, machinarum & tormentorũ ingens apparatus reconditur. Bol. *Quicquid habent telorum armamentaria cœli.* Juven. *Sat.* 13.

Secondly, In that he ſaith, *He ſtretcheth out the heavens alone*, Obſerve,

That the Lord needs not the help of any creature to do his greateſt works.

He hath power, and he hath power in himſelf to do what he hath a will ſhould be done; let all the creatures in the world ſtand ſtill, yet God can carry his work forward. What work is like this, the ſtretching forth the heavens: There cannot be a work of ſo much difficulty under heaven, as the ſpreading forth of the heavens. He who did that alone, what can he not do alone? Though men will not, though men cannot help, the Lord can and will alone. *Iſa.* 59. 16. *He ſaw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no interceſſor*; no man to do, no man to ſpeak in that buſineſs, not a man appeared: what then? Doth the Lord ſay, Well, ſeeing there is no man to do, I alſo will let it lie? No, *Therefore his arm brought ſalvation unto him, and his power ſuſtained him*; he did it alone. *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf, that at his firſt appearing before *Nero*, all men forſook him, not a man would own him, but (ſaith he) *The Lord ſtood by me* (2 Tim 4. 15.) This is a great encouragement to us in great affairs and buſineſſes, in the greateſt ſtraits and difficulties of the times; if men forſake and deſert, the Lord alone can do all for us; if men have not power to do what they have will to do, nor will to do what they have power; then remember, *He that ſtretcheth out the heavens alone*, can order our works alone, compoſe our differences alone, conquer our enemies alone. God alone is infinite, greater, ſtronger, wiſer, then all creatures together. God can be now as he will be hereafter, *all in all unto us.* God is enough for us without any creature; yea, God and all that he hath made cannot do more then God without any thing that he hath made.

And treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.

The Sea is a fluid body; to ſail or ſwim in the waters is ordinary, but to tread upon the waters, that's another act of wonder, *He treadeth upon the waves of the Sea*; or he walks on them as upon a pavement.

Verbū Darac *aliquando eſt ducis prælïantis & debellantis hoſtes. Quaſi jure belli ſubjicere.*

To tread upon the waves.] Imports, that God hath a command over the Sea, and the waves of it. To tread upon a thing is to have it under our power, or in ſubjection to us (*Pſal.* 91. 13.) the promiſe is, *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion, and upon the Aſp*; that is, thou ſhalt prevail and triumph over the greateſt evils, over enemies as ſtrong and fierce as Lions, as poiſonous and ſtinging as the Aſp, *Pſal.*108.9. *Over* Edom *will I caſt out my ſhoe.* Which notes either contempt of them; as if he had ſaid, I look upon them as worthy only to ſcrape and make clean my ſhoes. Or ſecondly, Conqueſt over them; I will walk thorow *Edom* and ſubdue it. *Deut.*11.24. *Every place whereon the ſole of your feet ſhall tread ſhall be yours*; that is, yours ſhall be conquering feet, you ſhall tread as Lords upon all lands. Yours ſhall be all the ground you go on, that is, it ſhall be ſubject to you, *Judg.* 5.21. *O my ſoul, thou haſt troden down ſtrength*; and *Mic.* 1.3. *The Lord ſhall tread upon the high places of the earth*; that is, the Lord ſhall ſubject the higheſt things that are upon the earth to his power. That place is very obſervable, *Numb.* 24. 17. Where *Balaam* propheſying of Chriſt, ſaith (as we tranſlate) *A Star ſhall come out of* Jacob; the Hebrew is, *A Star ſhall tread out of* Jacob, noting Chriſt a victorious, a triumphing Star, who ſhould come treading and trampling upon the world as conqueror; though the world, in regard of his out-ſide, trod and trampled upon him: So it is explained in the latter words of the verſe, *He ſhall ſmite the corners of* Moab, *and deſtroy all the children of* Sheth. *A Star ſhall tread out of* Jacob. *A treading Star is a triumphing Star.*

Calcabit ſtella è Jacob.

בּמהי *Excelſa maris Ambulat ſuper altitudinē roboris maris.* Tar. *Robur maris dicit vehementiā maris, quando à ventis turbatur & commovetur. Dorſum immane ſummo mari attribuit.* Virg. *Æneiad.l.*1

The Hebrew is, *He treadeth upon the high places of the Sea*; the word (*Bamoth*) is uſed frequently for the places where idolatrous worſhip was ſet up, *their high places.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *the high waves of the Sea*; becauſe Sea-waves riſe high, ſo high, that the Pſalmiſt deſcribes them, *mounting up to the heaven* (Pſal. 107. 26.) When theſe high waves threaten to ſwallow all, then the Lord treads upon them, that is, his power is above them, and he makes them ſubmit to his command. *As to ride upon the high places of the earth* (Deut. 32. 13. Iſa. 58. 14.) is to have higheſt command, and to be a *chief* upon the earth, or to dwell ſafely and free from annoyance upon the earth: So to tread upon the high places or high waves of the Sea, implies Gods Empire or Soveraignty over the Sea. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, *That the Sea in its higheſt rage is at the beck, and under the treadings of God.*

When the waves are moſt ſtirring and raging, he ſpeaks them quiet, *Pſal.* 89. 9. *Thou ruleſt the raging of the Sea; when the waves thereof ariſe, thou ſtilleſt them.* As to walk upon the Sea, is an argument of a divine power; ſo to command the Sea. When Chriſt (*Matth.*8.26.) rebuked the Sea, and ſaid, as another Goſpel hath it (*Mark* 4. 38.) *Peace and be ſtill*, as if one ſhould huſh a child; *The men marvelled, ſaying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the Sea obey him?* Winds and waves ſeem the moſt diſobedient, ſtubborn and unteachable creatures in the world; yet a word from God calms the one, and ſmooths the other. When the old *Egyptians* would by their *Hieroglyphicks* expreſs an impoſſibility, they did it by the picture of a man treading upon the waves; as if they ſhould ſay, this is as impoſſible as for a man to walk upon the waves. The Heathen Poets deſcribe *Neptune* their Sea-god, ſwimming, not walking upon, or treading the waters. To tread upon the waters is ſo much above man, that meer Naturaliſts thought it too much for God. Man ſhews his pride and arrogancy to the height, when he pretends to Lord it over the waves of the Sea. When the *Helleſpont*, a Streight of the Sea, by a ſudden ſtorm riſing upon it, broke the bridge of Boats, which *Xerxes* had made to paſs into *Greece*, and ſo oppoſed the project of that *Perſian Monarch*, he caſt fetters into it, as if he would teach it to know it's Lord, and cauſed it to be beaten with three hundred ſtripes, to chaſten it's former diſobedience. It is recorded in the Hiſtory of this Nation, concerning *Canute* an ancient *Daniſh King*, that when a mighty ſtorm of flattery roſe upon him, he appeaſed it by ſhewing he could not appeaſe the ſtorms of the Sea. One of his Courtiers told him in his progreſs, as he rode near the Sea ſide, that he was Lord not only of the Land, but of the Sea, and that all thoſe Seas which he ſaw, were at his command. Well, ſaith he, we ſhall ſee that by and by, and ſo walketh down to the ſhore, and pulling off his upper garment, wraps it together, and ſits upon it near the flowing of the waves, and with a loud voice ſpeaks thus, *O ye Seas and Waves come no further, Touch not my feet*, &c. But the Sea came up, notwithſtanding his charge, and confuted that flattery. God only hath this Prerogative, *He treadeth upon the high waves of the Sea.*

Ægyptii ut rem prorſus impoſſibilem demonſtrarent, hominem pedibus ſuper aquas ambulantem in ſuis Hieroglyphicis depingebant. Veteres cum ſuum Neptunum ſuper aquas ambulantem pingere non auderent, à nando ei nomen dederunt. Herod. *l.* 1.

Delectat Canuti regis Anglorum exemplum, qui aſſentationis procellam, procella maris in ſe admiſſa compeſcuit. Bold. *ex* Camb.Brit. *Ex alto incitatum fluctum, ita alloquutus eſt, unda tibi jubeo, utne pedes meas tangas*

There are alſo myſtical waves, which the Lord treadeth upon: people and Nations are called waters, and many waters, in the Book of the *Revelation.* The waves of the Sea cannot be in a greater rage, then the Nations of the earth ſometimes are. And the ſame Hebrew word by which the rage of the Sea is properly expreſt, expreſſes alſo the rage of men (Pſal. 2. 1.) *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* Why are the *Gentiles*, the great waters up, as high waves, threatning a deluge to the throne of Chriſt? The power of Chriſt is as eminent in ſtilling the rage of the myſtical, as of the literal waters; yea, we find theſe two matcht together (*Pſal.* 65. 7.) *He ſtilleth the noiſe of the Seas, the noiſe of their waters, and the tumult of the people.* Hence the Apoſtle *Jude* (verſ. 13.) calls wicked men, *raging waves of the Sea, foaming out their own ſhame. The Lord ſitteth upon theſe floods; yea, the Lord ſitteth King for ever*, Pſal. 29. 10.

There are other myſtical waves, even waves within us, which will not be trodden upon by any foot, but Gods. There is a Sea of wickedneſs in every mans heart by nature. Every wicked man is nothing but a Sea, he is a Sea of wickedneſs. *The wicked* (Iſa. 57. 20.) *are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt.* And as the winds blow from all quarters of the heavens, and ſtrive upon the Seas: So there are divers luſts, which as winds ſtrive upon the face of mans heart; the luſt of pride, the luſt of covetouſneſs, the luſts of ambition, of envy, of malice, theſe enrage and ſwell the waters. The Lord treads upon the high waves of this Sea alſo, he reſtrains and keeps luſt down by his power, it would drown all elſe. Theſe raging waves ſwell too high in his own people; it is the work of his Spirit to tread theſe down; and when the winds of ſeveral temptations raiſe thoſe waves, he it is that commands them down. Who amongſt us is there, that one time or other finds not corruption raging, as the high waves of the Sea? How mighty and powerful is the Lord in that great work of his effectual grace, treading upon the waves of this Sea, remaining corruption in his ſervants and children!

Verſ. 9. **Which maketh** Arcturus, Orion **and** Pleiades, **and the chambers of the South.**

In the verſe immediately before, we heard of the power of God in ſtretching out the heavens; and in this we have his excellent ſkill, and infinite wiſdom diſplayed in adorning, decking and beautifying thoſe heavens which he had ſtretched forth. He hath not only drawn out a vaſt piece of work, like a large Canopy (ſuch are the heavens) but he hath embroidered this Canopy, and ſet it with rich ſparkling ſtones; he hath made ſeveral engravings, images, figures and repreſentations upon it.

In aſtrorum pulchritudine, ſitu, ordine, vi, ſtupendiſq; in hæc inferiora operationibus, admirabilis prorſus creatoris magnificentia & magnitudo plurimum elucet. Bold.

Or we may make the connexion with the latter clauſe of the former verſe. *Job* having ſaid that the Lord *treadeth upon the high waves of the Sea*; that when the Seas are moſt ſtormy and tempeſtuous, they are at his command, and that their confuſions are under his empire and order; he adds this verſe by way of anſwer to a poſſible objection. For ſome might ſay, the motion of the ſeas is from the power and influences of the ſtars, from the riſing and ſetting of the Moon, with other Planets and Conſtellations. True, ſaith *Job*, yet the Lord is he that treadeth upon the waves of the ſea, it is the Lord that orders them, and not the ſtars: Though the ſtars and conſtellations have a dominion over the ſeas in their ebbings and flowings, motions and revolutions, yet there is a Lord who hath power, not only over the ſeas, but over that which overpowers the ſeas, even over the ſtars of heaven. *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South*; which ſtars, according to the doctrine of Aſtronomy, have a ſpecial power upon the ſeas.

Cum multa ſint aſtra hominibus & fluctibus infenſa, eorũ præcipuè meminit, quorum vis ad ciendas tempeſtates hominibus magis eſt explorata. Sanct.

Either of theſe wayes we may make the connexion.

Firſt; That *Job* would expreſs the adorning of the heavens, after he had ſpoken of their making and ſtretching forth.

Or ſecondly, He would teach us, that though the heavens work upon the ſeas, yet God works upon the heavens. *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South.*

I ſhall endeavour to ſpeak of theſe diſtinctly: The holy Ghoſt giving us ſuch a Text, it is not lightly to be paſſed by; and though here are ſtrange words and uncouth expreſſions, yet we may (I hope) bring them down to an eaſie meaning, and fit them to the underſtanding of the ſimpleſt.

I ſhall touch a little in the general, before I come to every one in particular.

Job under theſe names couches many of the ſtars of heaven. A *Star* (according to Philoſophy) *is the thicker part of his Orb or Sphear*; it is thicker then other parts of the heavens; for otherwiſe as it could not hold the light, ſo it could not reflect and ſend forth the light; it could not be a veſſel for light, or a conveyance for light. Light was created the firſt day (*Gen.* 1. 3.) but the Lights were created the fourth day (*Gen.* 1. 14.) that is, certain veſſels were created to hold the light: *And God ſaid, Let there be Lights in the firmament of heaven*, that is, let the light which is now ſcattered through all, be gathered in certain receptacles, fit to keep, and yet fitted to tranſmit and diſperſe it into all parts of the world; *Let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light*, verſ. 15.

Stella eſt denſior pars orbis; ideo lucent aſtra, non cœli; quia hi diaphani ſunt, & rari, aſtra autem denſa, eoq; lucem retinentia & reflectentia. Magir. *Phyſ.*

Of theſe Lights or Stars, ſome are called moving, and others fixed. That's the doctrine of Aſtronomers, and it is the doctrine of the Scripture. The Apoſtle *Jude* (verſe 13.) calling ſome *wandring ſtars*, ſeems to admit of that diſtinction of the ſtars, into wandring and fixed. The unfixt or wandring ſtars are ſeven, known by their names and motions. Theſe in the Text are none of them, theſe are placed above them.

The ſeat of theſe *Aſteriſmes* is in the eighth ſpear (to take that doctrine for granted, though many diſpute it) or ſtory of the heavens (ſo the Prophet *Amos* ſpeaks, *chap.* 9. 2. *He buildeth his ſtories in the heavens*; we put in the Margin, *ſphears*; *He buildeth his ſphears in the heavens*, which being one above another, are elegantly called the ſtories of heaven.) And in the eighth ſphear innumerable ſtars are fixed; ſome of which fall under ſpecial obſervation and numeration. Aſtronomers give us a Catalogue of a thouſand three and twenty ſtars, which they exactly diſtinguiſh; which is the ancient account. And ſince that, we have had many more diſcoveries by thoſe noble Navigators, who have made *thorow-lights to the world*, that the Eaſt might look into the Weſt, and the South into the North: The travel, ſtudy and experiments of theſe Maſters in Navigation, have brought us in an additional number of three hundred ſtars more. And ſo we reckon a thouſand three hundred and twenty three fixed ſtars, known by name; of which, theſe in the Text are a part.

The other ſtars are both innumerable and un-nameable, beyond number, and without name. Hence, when the Lord ſhewed *Abraham* how great his ſeed ſhould be, he carries him out, and bids him look towards heaven, and tell the ſtars, if he were able to number them, *Gen.* 15. 5.

The ſtars (to come a little nearer to the text) obſerved and numbred by *Students* in this great volume of the heavens, are diſtinguiſhed into *forty and one images or repreſentations*, whereof ſome (for Learnings ſake) are fancied the images of men and women, others the images of Beaſts and Fiſhes, others the images of things without life. Of theſe images, twelve are in the *Zodiack*, commonly called the *twelve Signes*. In the Southern part of the Sphear eleven of thoſe Signes are placed, and in the Northern eighteen, which added to twelve in the Zodiack, make up the number of forty one.

Omnes hæ ſtellarum imagines non tantum ordine & ſitu, verum etiam certis nominibus inter ſe diſtincta ſunt.

Now, when it is ſaid in the Text, *That God makes* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South*. We are not to take them for ſo many diſtinct and particular ſtars, but for conſtellations or configurations, becauſe they ſtand in ſuch a form or figure; and ſo for the better knowledge of them, they are called by the names of ſuch creatures as they ſeem to repreſent.

We have three of thoſe ſpecial figures here in the Text, and one more general. *Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades* are three figures or ſtarry repreſentations in the eighth ſphear. I will open their Hebrew names; as alſo the Latine and Greek names uſed commonly in tranſlations, by which we ſhall get a clearer underſtanding in the nature of the things themſelves.

Which maketh Arcturus.

The word *Gneſh* in Hebrew, ſignifies a meeting or congregating of many things together; becauſe in that one, many ſtars are joyned. *Arcturus* in Greek, is as much as to ſay, *The tail of the Bear*, becauſe the ſtars called *Arcturus*, ſtand in a figure like the tail of a Bear.

עש *Congregare, conglobare, huic reſpondet Græcum verbum συνιϛάζειν, quod eſt, commeare, vel undiquaq; convenire.* Arcturus *ſtella eſt in cauda minoris Urſæ, & Septentrio dicitur,* παρὰ τὴν τῆς ἄρκτου οὐρὰν, *ab urſinæ caudæ ſimilitudine.*

The ſecond *Aſteriſme*, which we tranſlate *Orion*, is called in Hebrew (*Cheſil*) and that ſignifies either conſtancy or inconſtancy (the ſence runs both wayes) ſetledneſs or variableneſs. And it is applied to this ſtar or conſtellation in either ſence.

First, For conſtancy or ſetlednes, becauſe there is much ſtrength in the influences of that conſtellation.

Or ſecondly, For inconſtancy and unſetledneſs, becauſe it is obſerved, that upon the riſing of this ſtar, there is much variety, changeableneſs and unſetledneſs in the weather. Hence the *Jews* call that Moneth which anſwers to our *November*, or the ninth Moneth, *Chiſlu* (Zech. 7. 1.) becauſe that Moneth was uſually very ſtormy, and the weather changeable, *Orion* then ariſing in their *Hemiſphere*. The *Arabick* word (*Algeuſe*) by which this *Aſteriſme* is named, ſignifies a *Warrior*; and the *Chaldee* (*Algebar*) a *Giant*, all aiming at the furious, boiſterous winds which uſually attend the appearing of this conſtellation. And ſo the Greek word from which *Orion* cometh, ſignifies, to trouble or to diſturb. And its uſual Epithetes are *bold*, *vehement*, *impetuous Orion*, all betraying its unquiet and various temper.

כסיל *Conſtantiam robur, vel inconſtantiam ſignificat, quod ejus ortus tempeſtatibus orbem variè turbat.* Bold.

Unde November *Hebraicè dicitur* Chiſlu, *ab ortu* Orionis, *quod eo mẽſe magna fit Cœli inconſtantia: Arabicè vocatur* Algeuſe, *i. e. Bellator; à Chaldæis,* Algebar; *i. e. Gigas:* Θερμὸς Ὀρίων, *Audax, vehemens, ardens* Orion. *Plin. l.* 18. *c.* 25. Ὀρίνω, *Græcis eſt turbo, concito.* Pagn. *in Theſ. Dum pelago deſævit hyems & aquoſus* Orion.

The third ſtarry aſſociation we call *Pleiades*; the Hebrews, *Chimah*. This is a very cold conſtellation. The Greeks expreſs winter by this word, becauſe it brings in froſt and cold with it. The derivation of the Hebrew name is very obſcure. Some profeſſedly acknowledge their ignorance, that they cannot tell how to derive it; yet ſome dig the root of it in *Chaldee*, ſignifying *firm*: Others, in the Hebrew, ſignifying *to deſire*, or *earneſtly to wiſh for a thing* and the reaſon of it is (ſay they) becauſe theſe ſtars (the *Pleiades*) the ſeven ſtars we often ſpeak of, are much deſired by Sea-men; for ſeeing them, they have a perfect rule to guide and ſteer their courſe by. And it is an obſervation among ſome of the *Rabbins*, that *Noah* had a little window in the top of his Ark, that from thence he might (when the waters began to aſſwage, and the ſtreſs of the deluge was over) look up to the heavens, and know by thoſe ſtars what courſe his Ark made. Thus much we know,

Quidam Pleiades *dicta putãt, quaſi* πλειόνας, i. e. *plures, quod nunquam ſingula appareant Pleiades,* ἀπὸ τοῦ πλεῖν, *navigare.*

χεῖμα. *Cur vocatur* Chima, *libenter fateor me neſcire.* Bold. *Quidam deducunt à* קים *Chaldaicum, quod denotat rem elevatam ſtabiliter & in ſublime firmiter erectam, quia eſt inſtar cardinis, quaſi polus aut vertex mundi. Alii à* כמה *quod eſt deſiderare, in rem aliquam tendere, quia Nauta affectant videre hoc ſignum.*

know, that the ſtars are the Sea-mens night-guide, and the riſing of ſome of them falls under their more ſpecial obſervation.

חדרי
תימן
Interiora Auſtri. Nam Deus ex ipſis promptuariis, quaſi de theſauris ſuis quoſdã educit ventos, & per ipſos mirabiles ſiderum illorum influxus, intelligit æſtiva ſidera, ut eſt Canicula, &c. *Quæ quia ad Polum Arcticum ſpectant (qui velut inferior ſubeſt Horizonti noſtro) penetralium Auſtri ſidera vocantur quaſi in penetralibus mundi à nobis abſcondita.*

The fourth title of the ſtars is, *The Chambers of the South.* And why *The Chambers of the South?* The Continent is put for the things contained. The word which we tranſlate *Chambers*, ſignifies any thing that is very inward or retired, and therefore tranſlated a chamber, *Judg* 15.1. & *Cant.* 3.4. Mans ſpirit is thus expreſſed, becauſe it lies ſo far inward (*Prov.* 24.4.) *By knowledge ſhall the chambers be filled*; that is the moſt ſecret parts of the ſoul ſhall be filled by knowledge, *Prov.* 18.8. *The inward part of the belly.* Prov. 7.27. *They go down to the chambers of death*, that is, to the inmoſt and moſt retired wayes of death, the grave. Here, *The chambers of the South*, are the moſt remote, hidden and ſecret parts of the South. And the reaſon why after he had expreſt the other conſtellations by ſpecial names, he gives us theſe only in general [**The chambers of the South**] is, becauſe the ſtars which are under the ſouthern pole, are hidden from us, and are encloſed and lodged as in a chamber: God locks them up in his treaſury, and they are ſecrets to this part of the world; the Southern Pole being under or below our Horizon. In the artificial Sphears of heaven we find few Aſteriſmes or deſcriptions of the ſtars about thoſe parts; there are many, but we perceive them not. And the virtue and operation of theſe chambered, hidden ſtars, is as ſtrong as of thoſe which appear in greateſt luſtre and beauty.

Again, When he ſaith, *Which maketh* Arcturus, &c. His meaning is, *Which makes them appear*, or do their office. Theſe ſtars were made when the heavens were made, and *Job*'s diſcourſe is not about creation, but providence. So that to make *Arcturus*, &c. in the ſence of this Text, is only this, to order the times of their riſing and ſetting, to diſtinguiſh the ſeaſons of the year, and to produce their ſeveral effects in every ſeaſon, which providential acts are here eſpecially aimed at. Thus *he maketh Arcturus* to riſe, about the middle of *September*, which is the time of the *Equinox*, when the civil day and night are even, and ſhare the hours of the natural day equally between them. Or, as others account, this ſtar riſes about eleven dayes before the *Equinox*. So, by *Arcturus*, we may underſtand that ſeaſon of the year. *And he maketh Arcturus*, is, he orders and diſpoſeth of the ſeaſon, commonly called *Autumn*. *Orion* ſhines forth in our *Hemiſphear* about the moneth of *December*, and by that winter is deſigned. The *Pleiades* begin at the Spring, therefore called *Vergilia*, becauſe they ariſe (*vere*) in the Spring, and diſappear or go down toward Winter. *The chambers of the South* are fiery ſtars, which have their chief influence upon us in heat of Summer.

And ſo we may put the Text into theſe plain expreſſions, *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South*, that is,

Firſt, He makes and orders *Summer and Winter, Spring, and Harveſt*, becauſe theſe ſtars divide the four ſeaſons of the year.

Or ſecondly, thus, *He makes hot and cold, wet and dry, ſtorm and calm.*

Or thirdly, As theſe four conſtellations are aſſigned to the four chief points of heaven. *Arcturus* is known by all who know any things in the heavens, to be ſeated about the Northern Pole, whoſe oppoſites are thoſe ſtars in the *Chambers of the South*. *Orion* dwells in the Eaſt, and the *Pleiades* in the Weſt.

So the plain Engliſh of the words is this, *That the Lord by his mighty power and wiſdom ordereth and appointeth the motions of heaven, from Eaſt to Weſt, from North to South.*

Laſtly, To clear up the ſence of this Text, we muſt underſtand theſe four conſtellations *Synecdochically*, theſe being put for all the reſt; for as God orders theſe, ſo every ſtar in the firmament; the leaſt are under his eye, and at his diſpoſe, as well as the greateſt. But becauſe theſe are the moſt eminent, uſeful and efficacious in their appearances, motions and influences, therefore theſe are named; *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the Chambers of the South.*

We may obſerve from the words thus opened, divers profitable inſtructions.

First, *All the ſtars are placed in the heavens by the ſpecial deſignment of God for the uſe and good of men.*

Moſes (*Deut.* 4. 19.) gives a caution to *Iſrael* from the Lord, that they ſhould take heed of imitating the Heathens in their abominations, and this is one particular, *Leſt thou lift up thine eyes to heaven, and when thou ſeeſt the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the hoſt of heaven, ſhouldſt be driven to worſhip them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all Nations under the whole heaven.* Obſerve that, *The Lord thy God hath divided them unto all Nations under heaven*; therefore take heed that thou do not worſhip them.

They are the work of God, they are creatures; and worſhip, which is proper to the Creator, muſt not be given to them. It is a remarkable Text, *Leſt* (ſaith he) *thou ſhouldeſt be driven to worſhip them.* How driven? Not by external force and power, but driven by the ſtrong inclination of thine heart, raviſhed with ſuch beautiful objects. The excellency that is in the works of God, hath power to draw, yea, to drive the heart of man to commit Idolatry. *Job* ſhews this, while he acquits himſelf ſo induſtriouſly from it (*Chap.* 31. 26, 27.) *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs, and my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth had kiſſed my hand, this alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg*, &c. Some tranſlate that (*Deut.* 4.) in this language of *Job*, *Leſt thou be deceived to worſhip the Sun, Moon and Stars, and hoſt of heaven.* This is very conſiderable; but the thing I chiefly note in that Scripture, to the point in hand, is this, That the Lord hath made and appointed the ſtars to the ſeveral parts of the heavens, he hath divided them to all Nations under the whole heaven. Some ſtars are the portion of one people, others of another. As the earth is an inheritance divided among the children of men, ſo alſo are the ſtars and heavens. We ſeldom conſider what riches we receive from that part of our inheritance; moſt think they live by the earth only: No, ſaith *Moſes*, *The Lord hath divided the heavens, the Sun, Moon and Stars unto all Nations under heaven.* He hath ſetled it, what ſtar ſuch a Land ſhould have, and in what ſeaſons, as alſo, what proportions of the Sun and Moon, for light, heat and influence. He hath made them for the children of men. Man is fed and cloathed, warmed and cheriſhed from heaven more then from earth; and the lot and diviſions which we have of the earth are naturally and uſually good or bad, rich or barren, pleaſant or unpleaſant, healthy or unwholeſome, according as the Aſpects of the heaven and ſtars are more or leſs benign or favourable unto them. *Moſes* (Deut. 29. 26.) reproves the ingratitude of the *Jews* by this argument, *Becauſe they went and ſerved other gods, and worſhipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given to them.* So we tranſlate. But the Letter of the Hebrew gives it thus; *Who had not given to them, or divided among them any portion.* As if *Moſes* had ſaid, The Lord divided and gave the heavens and the ſtars among you, and theſe baſe dunghil-gods never gave you ſo much as a clod of earth, and will ye depart from *Jehovah* to ſerve them?

Per hanc diviſionem intelligit ordinem & motum Planetarum, qui in ſuis orbibus ita diſponuntur, ut unaquæq; regio ſuo tẽpore eorum gaudeat influxibus. Pined.

Secondly obſerve, *God knoweth the number, the names and the nature of all the ſtars.*

He gives them ſpecial names. Theſe in the tranſlation, are names of mans impoſition. Yet the holy Ghoſt uſes Heatheniſh names in the New Teſtament (*Acts* 28. 11.) We read of a Ship in which *Paul* ſailed to *Rome*, whoſe ſign was *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, two *Pagan* Sea-gods. It is ſaid, that God brought all the beaſts of the earth to *Adam*, that he ſhould give them names; but he brought not the hoſt of heaven to *Adam*, that he ſhould give them names; he named them himſelf, *Pſal.* 147. 4. *He telleth the number of the ſtars, he calleth them all by their names.* Men are not able to tell the number of the ſtars; they tell diſtinctly but to a thouſand three hundred, or a few more, and they are not able to tell all theſe by diſtinct names, but they are conſtrained to reckon them by conſtellations, where a whole family of ſtars are called by one name. The Lord hath made it his ſpecial priviledge to tell the number of the ſtars, and to call them all by their names. And theſe are named in the Text for all the reſt. Hence obſerve, Thirdly, *Some ſtars are more excellent, of greater virtue and name then others.*

When theſe are named, it is for ſpecial reaſon. The Lord nameth theſe as ſtars of more then ordinary dignity. Theſe are in degree next to the Sun and Moon: when a few are named for many, we uſually name the chiefeſt; as the whole people of the *Jews* are ſet forth by the Heads of their Tribes, by the Chiefs; and when a Nation is ſpoken of, it is by thoſe greater names, *the Magiſtrates and the Miniſters.* Theſe are named, becauſe they have moſt to do, and the greateſt buſineſs in a Nation. . So theſe ſtars are here named, becauſe they are of ſpecial uſe and influence. The Apoſtle gives us this clearly (1 *Cor.* 15. 41.) *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one ſtar differeth from another ſtar in glory.* One ſtar hath a more honourable name then another. Some ſtars God doth not vouchſafe to name particularly to us, when others, which are of greater glory, are. As in building, ſome parts of it are chief, *The foundation, the top-ſtone, the corner-ſtone*; the ſtrength and beauty of the whole building are comprehended under theſe. God hath made differences and degrees in all creatures, in the heavenly as well as the earthly. The name of moſt ſtars are concealed, as being of a lower degree. And we find that whenſoever in Scripture ſtars are ſpoken of, ſcarce any are named but theſe, and theſe are often named, which implies their ſuperiority and dignity. The Prophet urges this as an argument of humbleſt addreſſes unto, and dependance upon God (*Amos* 5. 8.) *Seek him that maketh the ſeven ſtars* (that is, *Pleiades*) *and Orion, and turneth the ſhadow of death into the morning*, &c. He doth not ſay, Seek him that maketh all the ſtars; the Lord made all. But becauſe he hath given ſo much virtue and excellency to theſe, theſe only are reported as of his making. Here, *Which maketh* Arcturus; there, *Seek him which maketh the ſeven ſtars*; as if he had ſaid, In thoſe ſtars God hath laid out much of himſelf, and made his power and wiſdom moſt viſible: How much hath God in himſelf, who hath communicated ſo much to one ſenſleſs creature?

And though ſtars differ thus one from another, yet they envy not one another. Which leſſons us to be content, though God make our names leſs named in the world, then the names of many of our brethren; though he truſt more talents to, or put more light into others, then into our ſelves. One ſtar differs from another ſtar in glory, but no ſtar envies anothers glory.

Fourthly, *Job* being about to declare the power and wiſdom of God, gives inſtance (among other things) in this, *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion, *&c.* Hence obſerve,

The power and wiſdom of God ſhine eminently in the ſtars.

The power and wiſdom of God ſhine in every graſs that grows out of the ground, yea, in every clod of earth; much more then in the ſtars of heaven. Much of God is ſeen in thoſe works of God; yea, ſo much, that many have been drawn to make them gods. There is ſo much of God ſeen in the heavens, that not only Heathens, who had not the true knowledge of God; but his Covenant-people, who knew him, and whom he knew above all the families of the earth, have been drawn away to worſhip the Hoſt of Heaven. That place before-cited (*Deut.* 4.) hinteth as much, *Take heed leſt when thou lifteſt up thine eyes to heaven, and ſeeſt the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the hoſt of heaven, thou ſhouldeſt be driven to worſhip them and ſerve them.* If thou lift up thine eyes to the ſtars, and not higher, even to God who made the ſtars, thou wilt quickly miſtake the ſtars for God, or make the ſtars thy god; the heart of man is mad upon Idolatry. Read how often the *Jews* are taxed with this ſin, 2 *King.* 21. 3. & in 2 *King.* 17. 16. & in *Amos* 5. 26. Which clears this truth, that much of the power and wiſdom of God is ſtamped upon the ſtars; if God did not much appear in the ſtars, ſo many had not taken the ſtars for God, or given them, which is proper and peculiar to God, religious Worſhip.

There are five or ſix things which ſhew the power of God, and his wiſdom in making of the ſtars.

Firſt, *The greatneſs of the Stars*; ſuch vaſt bodies ſhew an infinite power in their conſtitution. It is incredible to ordinary reaſon (unleſs men have skill and learning to make it out, and to lay the courſe of Nature together) that the ſtars are ſo great. The Sun is reckoned by Aſtronomers to be one hundred ſixty ſix times bigger then the earth: the Moon indeed, which is called a great Light, is thirty nine times leſs then the earth, yet that magnitude is far beyond common apprehenſion. Some other of the Planets are almoſt an hundred times bigger then the earth. And whereas the fixed ſtars are diſtinguiſhed into ſix magnitudes or differences of greatneſs; thoſe of the firſt magnitude (which are many) are conceived to be one hundred and ſeven times bigger then the whole earth. We look upon a ſtar, as if it were no bigger then the blaze of a Candle, and the Countrey-man wonders if the Moon be bigger then his Buſhel, or broader then his Cart-wheel. If the moſt judicious enter the conſideration of theſe things, they may ſoon come to amazement, that ſo many ſtars in heaven ſhould be more then an hundred times bigger then all the earth. And if there are ſuch vaſt bodies in heaven, what a vaſt body is heaven? That Continent muſt needs be exceedingly exceeding vaſt, which contains ſo many exceeding vaſt bodies in it. If we get but a nook or a corner of the earth for our portion, we preſently think our ſelves great men; yet what is all the earth to the heavens? And what are the heavens we ſee, to that heaven which is unſeen, to which theſe are but a Pavement? The heavens which are to us a roof, are but a floor to the higheſt heavens.

A ſecond thing which ſhews the mighty power and wiſdom of God in the ſtars, is *the multitude of them*; they are innumerable: Man cannot tell them (only God can) they are like the ſand of the ſea for number. A multitude of little ſands make a huge body; then how great a body do a multitude of great bodies make?

Thirdly, *The ſwiftneſs of their motion.* That theſe mighty vaſt bodies ſhould be carried about every day, ſo long a journey, and never tire or wear, ſhews infinite power and wiſdom.

Fourthly, this is more admirable, the exact order of their motion. That innumerable ſtars ſhould move continually in the heavens, and yet not one of them move out of courſe: this regularity of their motion is ſetled by an *Ordinance of heaven* (Jer. 31. 35.) Where the Lord, to aſſure his people that he would be ſteady and ſtedfaſt in the wayes of his love to them, and that he would not caſt them off, tells them that he would be as firm to them in his Covenant, as he is in the Ordinances of heaven: *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the Ordinances of the Moon and of the Stars, for a light by night*, &c. As if he had ſaid, I have made a ſtatute and a decree which is irrepealable and irrevocable concerning the the motion of the ſtars. There is an ordinance of heaven for it; ſo that as the celeſtial bodies cannot but continue the courſe I have aſſigned them for the enlightning of theſe inferior parts, while the world laſts: So the Covenant which I have made with you, ſhall not fail to give you light. Thus he infers in the next verſe, *If theſe Ordinances depart from before me, ſaith the Lord, then ſhall the ſeed of Iſrael alſo ceaſe from being a Nation before me for ever*; but that cannot be, I have eſtabliſhed theſe ſtars by a firm and perpetual decree, therefore you are much more eſtabliſhed.

And ſuch is the exactneſs of their order and motion, that the ſtars of heaven are frequently in Scripture called an hoſt or an army: Now an army, as it conſiſts of many perſons (which is one reaſon why the ſtars are called an hoſt) ſo an army rightly marſhalled, is caſt into an exact form, and ſo regular for motion, that it is one of the goodlieſt ſights in the world. Now the ſtars are the hoſt of heaven, they ſtand (as it were) in Battalia, they *keep rank and file*; there is not ſo much as one of that great multitude out of place; therefore, *Judg.* 5. 20. Where they are ſaid to fight againſt *Siſera*, they are deſcribed fighting in courſes; *The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera*; as if the ſtars had been drawn up, now one Regiment, then another Regiment of them, to charge upon *Siſera* and his hoſt: the heavens fought, and the ſtars fought, that is, the Lord by an heavenly power and influence of the ſtars confounded *Siſera*, and all the enemies of *Iſrael.*

Fifthly, *There is a moſt efficacious virtue in the Stars.*

It is a ſecret virtue, and it is a ſtrong irreſiſtible virtue, no power in the creature can ſtop it: Therefore God challenges *Job*, in *chap.* 38. 31. *Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades, or looſe the bands of Orion?* There are influences in the ſtars, and canſt thou bind them? ? Is it in the power of any creature to ſtop the iſſues and out-flowings of the ſtars? Their influences are ſo efficacious, that none can bind them, but he that looſeth them; none can bind them but the hand and power which made them; there is ſo much efficacy in them, that if God let them go on in their natural vigor, their effects are wonderful. *I* (ſaith the Lord, *Hoſ.* 2. 21, 22.) *will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall hear* Jezreel: As if he had ſaid, the heavens are next in power to me, they are ſecond to my ſelf in working; *therefore I will hear the heavens*: the heavens cannot do it unleſs I give them a commiſſion; but *I will hear the heavens*: I will leave a power in the heavens, *and the heavens ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn,* &c. There is a gradation, a deſcent from God to us, and the heavens are the next receptacle, the immediate veſſel, receiving and taking in power and virtue from God to diffuſe and ſend down upon the creatures here below; *I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth.*

πρῶτον δεκτικόν.

Sixthly obſerve, That, *The ſtar's and conſtellations of heaven can do nothing of themſelves, but as they receive order and commiſſion from the Lord.*

עשה

Non tantum facere, ſed etiam aptare, diſponere, dirigere, & præparare ſignificat.

He maketh Arcturus *and* Orion, *&c.* They have great power, but it is the Lord that maketh them. That word [He maketh] doth not ſo much ſignifie the Creation, as the providential diſpoſition of the ſtars, as was noted in the Expoſition of it. *He maketh them*, that is, he orders and diſpoſeth them, or he acts the ſtars, he trims up thoſe lamps of heaven; the word is ſo uſed (2 *Sam.* 19. 24.) *Mephiboſheth*, while *David* was in trouble, *had not dreſſed his feet*; the Hebrew is, *He had not made his feet*, that is, he had neglected his body; now (ſaith *Job*) the Lord is he that makes, dreſſes, or trims up thoſe lamps of heaven; though they have a natural virtue, yet that virtue is quickned by providence. *Providence is a continued creation. He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades.

The ſtars are the ſervants of God, they receive orders and directions from him for all they do. And the reaſon why the Lord did ſo often call his people off from *gazing upon the ſtars*, and reproved *ſtar-gazers*, was, becauſe they looked no further then the ſtars; they thought the ſtars did all, they did not eye God that made *Arcturus, Orion*, &c. but they only eyed *Arcturus*, &c. Therefore he threatens the *Star-gazers and monthly Prognoſticators*, who took upon them to reſolve future events by the conjunction of Planets and Planetary Aſpects; placing an uncontroulable power in the hands of the heavens and ſtars, whereas *I* (ſaith the Lord) *make* Arcturus: I made him, and I make him do what I command, not what you foretel. Therefore (*Iſa.* 44. 24, 25.) the Prophet ſpeaking of Gods work in making the heavens and the ſtars, preſently adds, how he befools men that will propheſie from the ſtars, as if they could tell infallibly what ſhall come to paſs. *I am the Lord that maketh all things, that ſtretcheth forth the heavens alone, that ſpreadeth abroad the earth by my ſelf.* What follows? *That fruſtrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad.* I ſtretch out the heavens: ſome will needs propheſie out of the heavens. I have ſet the ſtars in the heavens, and they are for ſignes (*Gen.* 1. 14.) but I have not ſet them for Prophets: If any preſume to declare or reſolve what ſhall be done, I reſolve to puniſh their preſumption. I take delight to fruſtrate men who delight in this, and to befool them who would be thus wiſe. This is my name, *The God that ſtretcheth out the heavens alone, and that maketh Diviners mad.* Great diſappointments enrage; and ſome men loſe their reaſon, when they loſe the credit of doing things above reaſon. Becauſe they cannot be as Gods to foretel good or evil, they will not be ſo much as men; *He makes the Diviners mad.* The Law was peremptory and ſevere againſt them (*Deut.* 18. 9.) *There ſhall not be found amongſt you any one that uſeth divination, or is an obſerver of times.* Why not an obſerver of times? May we not obſerve times and ſeaſons? May we not look up to the heavens and conſider their motions? Yes, we may obſerve times holily, but not ſuperſtitiouſly, as if ſome times were good, others bad, ſome lucky, others unlucky; as if the power of God were ſhut up in, or over-rul'd by his own inſtruments and inferior cauſes, this is diſhonourable unto God, and thus the *Jews* were forbidden to *uſe any divination or to obſerve times.*

The Heavens and Stars are for ſignes, but they are not infallible ſignes. They are ordinary ſignes of the change of weather, *Mat.* 16. 2, 3. They are ordinary ſignes of the ſeaſons of the year, Spring and Summer, and Harveſt and Winter; they are ordinary ſignes of a fit time to till and manure the ground, to plow, ſow and reap. The earth is fitted and prepared for culture by the motion of the heavens. The heavens are at once the *Alphabet* of the power and wiſdom of God, and of our works: We may read there when to do many buſineſſes, *Gen.* 8. 22. *While the earth remaineth, ſeed-time and harveſt, and cold and heat, and ſummer and winter, and day and night ſhall not ceaſe.* Thoſe ſeaſons ſhall continually return according to the time of the year, meaſured by the Sun, Moon and Stars. Thus, they are ſignes of ordinary events. And God ſometimes puts the ſign of an extraordinary event in them, *Mat.* 24. 29. *Immediately after the tribulation of thoſe dayes ſhall the Sun be darkened, and the Moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken*; which ſome underſtand allegorically, others literally, of ſtrange apparitions and impreſſions in heaven, either before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, or the day of Judgment. So *Acts* 2. 19, 20, *&c.* Thus God puts a ſign in them of extraordinary events.

But ſhall man from them prognoſticate and foretel extraordinary events? as when there ſhall be famine and peſtilence, war and trouble in Nations: This the Lord abhorreth. The counſels of God about theſe things are written in his own heart; what is man that he ſhould tranſcribe them from the heavens? But if men will ſay, they are written there, God will blot out what they ſay, and prove theirs to be but humane divinations, yea, that they were received from hell, not written in heaven (*Iſa.* 47. 13.) *I will deſtroy the ſignes of them that divine; Let now the Aſtrologers, the Star-gazers, the monthly Prognoſticators ſtand up and ſave thee from theſe things that ſhall come upon thee; Behold, they ſhall be as ſtubble, they ſhall not be able to deliver themſelves. It is good to be a Star-beholder, but a wicked thing to be a Star-gazer*; that is, to look upon the ſtars ſo, as if we could ſpell out the ſecret providences of God, and read future events in the Book of thoſe Creatures. It is our duty to look upon the heavens, as they declare the glory of God; but it is a ſin to look upon the heavens, as if they could declare the deſtinies, fates and fortunes of men. All which vanities are largely and learnedly confuted by Mr. *Perkins*, in his Book, called *The reſolution of the Countrey-man about Prognoſtication.*

Now that the ſucceſs of every creature is in God, not in the Stars, we may ſee, firſt, In the order of the Creation; God created the earth, and commanded it to bring forth fruit upon the third day, but the Lights in the firmament were made the fourth day: The earth can bring forth without the Midwifry or help of the heavens. God himſelf made the earth fruitful without, yea, before the Stars were made. Upon which, one of the Ancients gives this obſervation, *Surely* (ſaith he) *the Lord in his providence made the earth fruitful in all its Glory, before he put the ſtars in the heavens, to the intent to make men ſee, that the fruitfulneſs of the earth doth not depend upon the heavens or ſtars.* God needs neither the rain of the clouds, nor the warmth of the Sun, to produce theſe effects. He that made all ſecond cauſes to work in their ranks, can work without the intervention of any ſecond cauſe. And becauſe the Lord foreſaw men would doat much upon ſecond cauſes, and venture to prognoſticate by the heavens the fates of men, and the fruitfulneſs of the earth, therefore he made the earth fruitful before *he made Arcturus*, or placed thoſe Conſtellations in the heavens.

Philo Judæus, *de opificio mūdi.*

Secondly, The providence of God works under the decree of God. *His providence is the execution of his Decree.* Therefore we muſt not bring the decrees down to providence, but we muſt raiſe providence up to the Decrees.

Thirdly, The heavens, and thoſe heavenly bodies, *Arcturus*, &c. are but general cauſes, there are ſpecial cauſes beſides of the earths barrenneſs or fruitfulneſs, of tempeſts at Sea and troubles at Land; and the Lord is able to invert all cauſes, to work beyond cauſes, without cauſes, and againſt cauſes: So that nothing can be infallibly fore-told from the poſitions, conjunctions or revolutions of thoſe heavenly bodies. Obſerve,

Laſtly, *That it is our duty to ſtudy the heavens, and be acquainted with the ſtars.*

In them the wonderful works of God are ſeen, and a ſober knowledge in nature may be an advantage unto grace. Holy *David* was ſuch a ſtudent (*Pſal.* 8. 3.) *When I conſider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and Stars which thou haſt ordained.* Conſideration is not a tranſient or accidental, but a reſolved and a deliberate act. Shall we think that God hath made thoſe mighty bodies, the Stars, to be paſt by without conſideration? Shall men only pore upon a lump of earth, and not have their hearts lifted up to conſider thoſe lamps of light? Shall man make no more uſe of the Stars then the beaſts of the earth do, namely, to ſee by them? *When I conſider thy heavens*, ſaith *David.* Heaven is the moſt conſiderable of all inanimate creatures, and more conſiderable then moſt of the animate: and *David's when, when I conſider the heavens*, notes not only a certainty, that he did it, but frequency in doing it. Some of the *Rabbins* tell us, that when *Iſaac* went out into the field *to meditate* (Gen. 24. 63.) The ſubject of his meditation was the Stars, or the heavens. It is good to take field-room ſometimes to view and contemplate the works of God round about. Only take heed of the former folly, of *Aſtrological curioſities*, confining the providence of God to ſecondary cauſes; avoid that, and the heart may have admirable elevations unto God, from the meditation of the works of God. (*Pſal.* 19. 1.) *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work*; if the heavens declare the glory of God, we ſhould obſerve what that glory is which they declare. *The heavens preach to us every day. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*, Pſal. 19. 4. Sun Moon and Stars are Preachers, they are univerſal Preachers, they are *natural Apoſtles*; the world is their charge, *their words*, ſaith the Pſalm, *go to the ends of the earth.* We may have good doctrine from them, eſpecially this doctrine in the Text, of the wiſdom and power of God. And it is very obſervable that the Apoſtle alludes to this Text in the Pſalm, for a proof of Goſpel-preaching to the whole world, *Rom.* 10. 18. *So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I ſay, have they not heard? Yes verily, their ſound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.* The Goſpel like the Sun caſts his beams over, and ſheds his light into all the world. *David* in the Pſalm ſaith, *Their line is gone out*, &c. By which word he ſhews, that the heavens being ſo curious a fabrick, made (as it were) by line and level, do clearly, though ſilently, preach the skill and perfections of God: Or, that we may read divine truths in them, as in a line formed by a pen into words and ſentences (the original ſignifies both a meaſuring line, and a written line.) Letters and words in writing being nothing but lines drawn into ſeveral forms or figures. But the Septuagint, whoſe tranſlation the Apoſtle citeth, for (*Kavam*) *their line*, read (*Kolam*) *their ſound*; either miſ-reading the word, or ſtudiouſly mollifying the ſence into a nearer compliance with the latter clauſe of the verſe, *And their words into the ends of the world.*

קו *Significat lineam, non modo extenſam, hoc eſt, funiculum, ſed etiam ſcriptam, hoc eſt ſcripturā* Par. *in* Rom. 10. *Pro* קולם קום

Thus I have endeavoured to make thoſe things plain, which are here repreſented (to vulgar ears) under ſtrange, unuſual, and hidden expreſſions.

Job is full of Philoſophy and Aſtronomy, he was a great ſtudent in the heavens, doubtleſs, and a holy ſtudent. *Job* having given theſe ſeveral inſtances, gathers them all into a general concluſion in *verſ.* 10.

Verſ. 10. **Which doth great things paſt finding out, yea, and wonders without number.**

Theſe words are repeated from the diſcourſe of *Eliphaz* in *Chap.* 5. *v.* 9. *I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe, which doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.* I will not ſtay in a particular diſcuſſion of them, but refer the Reader to the place before cited, where the Text is opened at large, and particular obſervations given from it. Take only this obſervation in general.

That, *A godly man labours to exalt God, both in his thoughts and in his words, with heart and tongue, when God depreſſes and humbles him moſt.*

Mark in what a condition *Job* was, when he ſpeaks thus honorably of the name and power of God; one would think *Job* had little reaſon to extol the power of God, which he felt to his own ſmart. *Job* was ſtript of all he had, his outward comforts were taken from him, and the Arrows of the Almighty wounded his very ſpirit. Now when he had wounded *Job* thorow and thorow, thorow fleſh and thorow ſpirit, even at this time, when God appeared, making no uſe of his power but to undo *Job*, *Job* is in his *Encomium*, all in the praiſe and commendation of God. He indites a Chapter on purpoſe to ſet forth the power and wiſdom of God, while he employed both to make his afflictions both great and accurate. This ſhews the admirable frame of his ſpirit; in all his diſtempers his heart ſtood right, and he would ſpeak good of God, what evil ſoever befel him from Gods hand. Let God afflict with his power, yet a gracious heart rejoyces in it. A gracious heart will lift up that power which weakens and throws it down. Let the Lord imploy his wiſdom to undo, to impoveriſh ſuch a man, to bring him into ſuch ſtraights that he cannot get out; yet he hath enlarged thoughts of that wiſdom, *He ſees God is as wiſe in troubling us, as he is in delivering.* That language of *Spira*, is the right language of Hell (I judge not his perſon, but his ſpeech) who in a great temptation ſpake thus, *I would I had more power then God, or, O that I were above God.* He was angry that God had ſo much power, becauſe God uſed his power againſt him. A carnal man would be above God: eſpecially, if God at any time puts forth his power againſt him. *When he is hard beſtead and hungry, he frets himſelf, and curſes his King and his God, looking upward* (Iſa. 8. 21.) to murmur at God, not to pray unto him, or ſpeak good of him. It is obſerved by one of the Ancients concerning the Heathen, *That if God did not pleaſe them, he ſhould be no longer God.* Such are our hearts by nature, if God do not uſe his power, wiſdom, mercy for us, we preſently wiſh he had no power, wiſdom, nor mercy for any in the world; we would be above God, unleſs God will ſerve us: but an holy heart ſaith thus, Let God improve his power and wiſdom which way he pleaſeth, if to afflict and chaſten me, yea to deſtroy and caſt me to Hell, his be the power for ever, I extol his power. Nature can only praiſe God, and ſpeak good of him, when he is doing of us good: But grace prompts the heart to indite a good matter, and bids the tongue be as the pen of a ready writer to advance God, when ſenſe feels nothing but ſmart, and ſees nothing but ſorrow round about. *Then grace is in her heights, when ſhe can lift up God higheſt, while he is caſting us down, and laying us loweſt:* When we can honour God frowning, as well as ſmiling upon us; ſmiting and wounding, as well as kiſſing and imbracing us, then we have learned to honour God indeed.

Tertullian: *Illud eſt impiorum ingenium, ut Deum non ulterius celebrent, quā cum bene facit.*

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

Lo, he goeth by me, and I ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not.

Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who ſhall ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?

If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him.

JOB having in the former context exalted the power and wiſdom of God in many inſtances, and cloſed all with an admiring ſentence, *He doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.* He, in theſe words ſeems to give a proof of thoſe attributes of Gods works, that they are innumerable and unſearchable, &c.

Verſ. 11. **For lo, he goeth by me, and I ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not.**

As if he had ſaid, I am not able to reckon how often he worketh, for I cannot alwayes perceive him when he worketh, I am not able to ſearch out all his great and wonderful actings, for I cannot ſee him in many of his actings.

He goeth by me, and I ſee him not.

The Lord is ſaid to *go by us*, not in regard of any local motion: for, he that filleth all places, moves to none, *Do not I fill heaven and earth?* Is the Lords query of himſelf to thoſe who thought to play leaſt in ſight with him. And he convinces them that they could not be hid from him in ſecret places, becauſe he fills all places. There is no place to be found beyond the line of heaven and earth, both which God fills (*Jer.* 23. 24.) Then his motion is not local, but providential; *God doth not move to act, but his acting us his moving.* He goeth by us, doing marvellous things for us, and we ſee not when he is doing, or what he is doing.

The other word here uſed [**He paſſeth on**] is of the ſame ſence, yet more peculiar and proper to the motion of ſpirits: we had it in *Chap.* 4. 15. *A ſpirit paſſed before me,* ſaith *Eliphaz*, when he ſpeaks of the viſion that appeared. It ſignifies to change and vary, either place or condition. The tranſitory changeableneſs of the creature, is expreſſed by it (*Pſal.* 102. 27.) *Thou doeſt change them, and they ſhall be changed*; the creatures paſs on, as from place to place, ſo from condition to condition, *The faſhion of them paſſeth away* (1 Cor. 7. 31.) They have not only a perfective change, but a corruptive change; but of the Lord he ſaith, *Thou art the ſame, and thy years ſhall have no end.* The word is uſed for changing by oppreſſive deſtruction, (*Prov.* 31. 8.) *Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cauſe of all ſuch as are appointed to deſtruction*, or *death.* Such as are appointed to that great change, are called, The Sons of change or deſtruction: Thus the Original. So that the word ſignifieth any change or motion, whether perfective or corruptive. The Lord (ſaith *Job*) *paſſeth on*, he maketh changes, he worketh ſometimes to perfect, ſometimes to deſtroy, *but I perceive him not*, I am not able to make out what he doth.

חלפ *Mutavit, variavit, rē vel locum, denotat mutationē conditionis vel loci.* Mol. *in* Pſal. 90. 6.

בני חלוף *Filii excidii*, i. e. *qui tradantur excidio.* Jun. *in loc.*

Here are two words, one referring to ſenſe, the other to underſtanding, *He goeth by me, and I ſee him not*; that is, my ſenſes cannot find him: *He paſſeth on alſo, and I perceive him not*; that is, he deſtroyeth, he buildeth, he planteth, he rooteth up, but I am not able to apprehend him, or unriddle the meaning of his wonderful works, *He doth great things, and things unſearchable.*

There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of theſe words. Though I think the meaning is clear in that general I have now given, yet I will touch a little.

Non eſt uni interpretatio hujus divini acceſſus & receſſus. Pined.

Firſt, Some interpret *Job's* diſcourſe converſing ſtill, in and about the natural works of God, the earth, the heavens, the waters and the air (of which he had ſpoken before) as alſo about the body of man (*Act.* 17. 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* God is about us, he is ever with us, and yet we obſerve not, either when he begins to work, or reſteth from working. How he is in all things, without all things, and above all things, is not known.

Multa ſunt naturalia quorū ſupremū auctorem Deum, vel opus inchoantem, vel ab opere ceſſantē non obſervamus, atq; ita præcedenti ſententiæ hæc innectitur, tanquā illius ſubjecta ratio. Id.

Secondly, Others take his *going and paſſing* for the acts of his favour or diſ-favour, *He goeth by me* in beſtowing favours, and *He paſſeth on*, in taking them away: his acceſſes or receſſes in mercy or judgment, his love and his wrath are often indiſcernable, *He goeth by me, he paſſeth on*, he varieth his workings, and I perceive him not. *To paſs by* is taken ſometimes for ſparing, pardoning, or ſhewing mercy. The Lord by his Prophet (*Amos* 7. 8.) reports ſeveral judgments, from a full execution of which he was taken off, yet at laſt he reſolves, *I will not paſs by them any more* (it is the word here) that is, I will not have mercy on them any more, I will not ſpare them any more, the next time I come with my drawn ſword in my hand, I will be ſure to ſmite and wound before I put it up, *I will not paſs by them any more.* So [*He paſſeth by me*] may note the ſparing mercy of God. The Lord ſpareth man many times, and pardons him, not ſuffering his whole diſpleaſure to ariſe, when man takes no notice, but is inſenſible of it. The word is uſed in this ſence (*Prov.* 19. 11.) *It is the glory of man to paſs by an offence*; that is, to ſpare a man that hath offended, not to puniſh him or take revenge: and it is ordinary in our phraſe of ſpeech to ſay, *I will paſs you by* for this time, that is, I will not take any ſevere notice, or ſtrict account of what you have done. And we find in the ſame prophecy of *Amos*, that *to paſs thorow*, notes judgment and wrath, in the oppoſite ſence; In *Chap.* 5. 17. *In all vineyards ſhall be wailing*; *Why? For I will paſs thorow thee*, or I will paſs into thy bowels or inwards: So the letter of the original; that is, I will come to judge thee, I will paſs thorow thee as a revenger, and wound thee deeply, inſomuch that in all *vineyards there ſhall be wailing*; why in all vineyards? When he ſaith, There ſhall be wailing in all vineyards, it implies there ſhould be wailing every where: for if there were joy in any place, it would be in the vineyards; vineyards are places of mirth and refreſhing; grapes make the wine, which makes glad the heart of man. Therefore when he threatens, *That in all vineyards there ſhall be wailing*; it is as much as if he had ſaid, There ſhall be ſorrow in thoſe places where uſually the greateſt joy was found, or there ſhall be ſorrow in every place. Joy ſhall diſlodge and give place to ſorrow, *for, I will paſs thorow thee, ſaith the Lord.* So that as the work of providence in ſparing, and the work of providence in puniſhing, may be underſtood by this word, with a little varying of the conſtruction. He paſſeth by me in the wayes of mercy, and I ſee him not; and he paſſeth thorow me in the wayes of judgment, and I ſee him not. I cannot ſee or underſtand him as I ought, either in wayes of judgment, or of mercy.

Quemadmodum ſit in omnibus extra omnia ſciri non poteſt. Olymp.

* *Deum venire miſerentis eſt, diſcedere punientis.* Phil Presb.

Aquinas *ad beneficia præſtita vel denegata refert.*

Tranſit eum, quē impunitum relinquit. Druſ.

בקרבך *In interiori tuo.*

Thirdly, We may take the words, as they are an argument to prove the power and wiſdom of God, to be ſuch, as man is no way able to match or to deal withal, which is the ſubject *Job* is upon. He would ſet the Lord infinitely above all that is in the creature, and he doth it here by an argument drawn from his nature. What is his nature? Why, he is moſt ſimple, he is a ſpirit without any mixture, without any compoſition, without any materiality, he is inviſible, bodily eyes cannot behold him, therefore certainly bodies are not able to overcome him. Man being a material ſubſtance, is not able to ſee the Lord, then ſurely he is not able to contend with, much leſs to conquer the Lord; What then doth he medling with him? It was ſaid at *verſ.* 4. of this Chapter, *Who ever hardned himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?* is fleſh and blood any match for a ſpirit? If man would ſtrive with God, where ſhould he have him? *He goeth by me, and I ſee him not*; *he paſſeth on alſo, and I perceive him not*; I know not where to meet him, he can come upon me on every ſide, he may take me at all advantages, and deſtroy me, for I know not how to guard or defend my ſelf. If a man were to fight with an enemy, whom he could not ſee, and yet his enemy ſaw him; what an advantage had his enemy againſt him? Doth any man harden himſelf againſt God? *He goeth by, and we ſee him not*; How then can we deal with him, or ſtand againſt him? Thus (I ſay) it may be an argument to make good that great aſſertion, *That there is no contending with God*; fleſh and blood are too weak for a ſpirit. It is the argument which the Apoſtle uſes, to ſhew that the Devil is too hard for man, *We wreſtle not with fleſh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with ſpiritual wickedneſſes*, &c. *Epheſ.* 6. They paſs by us, and we underſtand it not, they are now here amongſt us, and we take no notice of it. We are no matches for evil ſpirits, much leſs are we able to match the moſt holy Spirit. *Spiritual wickedneſſes are ſtrong, but ſpiritual holineſſes are ſtronger.* This third interpretation renders the words a deſcription of an invincible enemy.

Deus ſimpliciſſimus eſt ſpiritus & inviſibilis, itaq; neq; nos adorientem cum venit, neq; cū abit pedem referentem ſentire poſſumus.

Eſt invicti hoſtis deſcriptio.

Fourthly, It may be underſtood in the general, to note the infinite diſtance which is between God and man, or the dignity of God above man. The Lord is omnipreſent, he is going by, and he is paſſing on, he is in all places, and he acts his power and wiſdom where he pleaſes. Poor man is confined to a place, to a ſpot of earth; when he is *here*, he cannot be *there*; but God is every where: And though God be every where, yet he cannot be ſeen any where, where he is. God ſees all, himſelf being unſeen, and fills all places, his preſence being unperceived; nothing is hid from him, yet he is hid to every thing, but the faith of his own people. Thus *He goeth, and we ſee him not*; *he paſſeth on, and we perceive him not.*

Significatur hic ſumma diſtantia inter Deum homines: Deus omnia videt, & rebus omnibus præſentia & efficacia ſua intervenit, homo ſuo affixus loco Deum non videt niſi in effectis. Coc.

And ſo the whole is a confirmation or proof of the general aſſertion, that the Lord is infinite in power and wiſdom, and that man is an ignorant narrow-room'd and narrow-hearted weak creature compared unto him. We may form up the Argument thus:

He is weak and ignorant in compariſon of God, who cannot ſee or comprehend where God is, or what God doth.

But man is not able to comprehend or ſee where God is, or what God doth.

Therefore man is weak and ignorant in compariſon of God.

The ground is this, He that cannot comprehend or ſee what another doth, is not able to hinder or match him in what he doth: But ſuch is the ſtate and condition of man, he is ſo far from being able to equal God in dignity, or hinder what he doth, that he cannot find out or know what God doth.

Yet this is not to be taken ſtrictly, as if man did not at all perceive or underſtand what God doth. *Job* in the former context gave us a large account of the works of God, what wonders he had done. The Saints find out ſome of Gods doings in the world, though the blind world ſee not any thing he doth. But he ſpeaks comparatively; *The Lord paſſeth on, and we perceive it not*; that is, it is little of God that we perceive; it is little of the workings of God that we ſee at the beſt. * There are many perſons who do not ſee him at all, and many works that are not ſeen at all by any perſon. And they, the eyes of whoſe underſtandings are annointed to ſee moſt clearly, are not able to ſee all that God doth. None can ſee all, ſome will not ſee what they may (*Iſa.* 26. 10.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee it*; and in the former verſe, *In the land of uprightneſs will he deal unjuſtly, and will not behold the Majeſty of the Lord.* That which good men ſee is but little, and evil men ſee nothing. So that, as the Lord goeth altogether inviſibly in his eſſence, ſo moſtly in his actions; man ſees but few things of the many, and little of the great things which God doth.

I meet with a groſs expoſition of this Text given by ſome Papiſts. *No man* (ſaith one of them) *can know whether God dwell or abide in him or no.* And *Bellarmine* in his Book 5. and Chap. 5. concerning Juſtification, citeth it to prove, *That a believer cannot know that he is juſtified, but muſt believe blind-fold, or take the work of juſtification by grace, in the dark, For* (ſaith he) *God goeth by us, and we ſee him not; he paſſeth on, and we perceive him not:* That is (as his gloſs ſpeaks) God cometh in favour to juſtifie, or he leaveth under wrath, and yet man remains ignorant both of the one, and of the other ſtate. Surely he was at a great pinch to find a proof for his point, when he was forced to repair to this Scripture to ſeek one. Providence toward man-kind (not the juſtification of a ſinner) is the proper ſubject of this Text. And as there is nothing for a blindfold juſtification here, ſo many other Scriptures are expreſly againſt it. To ſay that a man cannot know when God loveth him, or ſhineth upon him, is to contradict what our Saviour aſſerts, *John* 14. 17. *I will ſend the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you. Ye know him*, ſaith Chriſt to his people; the Saints ſee God in a ſpiritual ſence, or in his workings upon their ſpirits. And though God works much upon our ſpirits, which we know not, yet we have a promiſe of the Spirit, by whom we know God in his workings. Few know when God is nigh, or when he is afar off, what his goings away mean, or what his comings. But when he cometh to the Saints, they know he cometh; and when he hideth or departeth from them, they know his hidings and departures. Hence their joyes and over-flowings of comfort, when he manifeſts his preſence; and hence their bitter complainings and cryings after him, where he ſeems to abſent himſelf and hide his face: yet this Text hath a truth in it, in reference to the inward and ſpiritual, as well as the outward and providential dealings of God, that ſometimes, *He goeth by us, and we ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, and we perceive him not.* Hence learn,

Firſt, That, *God is inviſible in his eſſence, and incomprehenſible in many of his actions.*

Mans eye cannot ſee him: Mans underſtanding cannot comprehend what he doth.

Si quod documentũ potentiæ & ſapientiæ ſuæ edat Deus ob oculos meos, non ſum is qui id perveſtigare poſſum, adeo inſcrutabilia ſunt judicia ejus Jun.

Tranſeundi & tranſmeandi verbis concinnè ſignificat ea documenta ſapientiæ quæ Deus exhibet, quaſi, præſens præſentes erudiret.

**Ita ſignificat, ex operibus Dei vix centiſſimum quodq; ut par eſt ab hominibus expendi.* Pined.

Nemo poteſt ſcire an Deũ habeat in ſe habitantem & in ſe monentem. Jac. Janſon. *in loc.*

Alieniſſimè hunc locum citat Bellarminus *ut probet nullum fidelem ſcire an juſtificatus ſit.* Coc.

But why ſpeaks *Job* this, as a matter of wonder, if it be the common condition of man-kind? *Behold, he paſſeth by, and I ſee him not*; who can ſee him? Who can perceive or comprehend him? When *Moſes* (Exod. 33. 20.) deſired to ſee his face, the Lord anſwers, *No man can ſee my face and live*; God ſpake to *Moſes face to face*, that is, familiarly, as a man ſpeaketh to his friend, yet *Moſes* did not, could not ſee the face of God. No man can ſee God in his eſſence or nature: A ſight of God would aſtoniſh, yea, ſwallow up the creature, *It is death to ſee the living God*; and man muſt die before he can ſee God ſo fully as he may, and know as he is known. But (though the face of God be inviſible) yet his *back-parts* may be ſeen. *Behold* (ſaith the Lord to *Moſes*) *there is a place by me, ſtand thou there upon a rock, and thou ſhalt ſee my back-parts*; thou ſhalt ſee much of my glory ſhining forth, as much as thou canſt bear, as much as will ſatisfie thy deſire (were it a thouſand times larger then it is) though not ſo much as thou haſt (not knowing what thou askeſt) deſired of me. My Name ſhall be proclaimed, *Gracious and merciful*, &c. the back-parts of God may be ſeen; the inviſible God diſcovereth much of himſelf to man; and ſhews us a ſhadow of that ſubſtance which cannot be ſeen.

Some may object that of the Prophet *Iſaias*, crying out; *Wo unto me, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts*, Chap. 6. 5. Seen him? could *Iſaias* ſee him, whom *Job* and *Moſes* could not? *Iſaias* did not ſee him in his eſſence and nature, but in the manifeſtations and breakings forth of his glory. *His train filled the Temple*, ſaith the Text (*verſ.* 1.) or his skirts. It is an alluſion to great Kings, who when they walk in State, have their trains, or the skirt of their royal robe held up. 'Twas this train, which *Iſaias* ſaw. He ſaw not God who was preſent, but he ſaw the manifeſt ſigns of his preſence. That ſpeech of *Iſaiah* ſeemed to ſavour of, and border upon higheſt blaſphemy, and was therefore charged as an article of accuſation againſt him; he was indited of blaſphemy for ſpeaking thoſe words, *I have ſeen the Lord*; his enemies taking or wreſting it, as if he had made the Lord corporeal and viſible with the eye of the body. And it is conceived he was put to death upon that, and one other paſſage in his prophecy, *Chap.* 1. 10. calling the Princes of *Judah*, *Princes of* Sodom, *and the people thereof, the people of* Gomorrah.

But though God be thus inviſible in his eſſence, yet there is a way by which the eſſence of God may be ſeen. And of that *Moſes*, to whom the Lord ſaid, Thou canſt not ſee my face, the Author to the Hebrews ſaith (*Heb.* 11. 24.) *That he ſaw him who was inviſible*; the letter of the Text carries a contradiction in the adjunct, it is as much as if one ſhould ſay, *He ſaw that which could not be ſeen.* The meaning is, He ſaw him by the eye of faith, who could not be ſeen by the eye of ſenſe; faith ſees not only the back-parts, but the face of *Jehovah*: the eſſence of God is as clear to that eye, as any of his attributes, yea his eſſence is as plain to faith, as any of his works are to ſenſe. Thus he is ſeen, *Whom no man hath ſeen nor can ſee* (1 Tim. 6. 16.) not the Saints in Heaven: they are not able to ſee the Lord in his eſſence, *He paſſeth by them there, and they ſee him not*; in Heaven we are promiſed a ſight of him, yet not that ſight; *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit, for they ſhall ſee God:* and *without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, then holy men ſhall ſee him: the ſtate of the Saints in glory is viſion, as here it is faith (2 *Cor.* 14. 12.) *We ſhall ſee him face to face, and as he is* (1 Joh. 3. 2.) Theſe Scriptures which ſpeak of the eſtate of the Saints, beholding God in glory, are not to be underſtood, as if the nature and eſſence of God could be ſeen, for no man hath ſeen that, nor ever ſhall; but they are meant of a more full and glorious manifeſtation of God; *We ſhall ſee then face to face*; that is, more plainly, for it is oppoſed *to ſeeing him in a glaſs*; we ſee him now in a glaſs, that is, darkly, in ordinances, in duties, in his word, and in his works, but there ſhall be no need of theſe glaſſes in Heaven. We ſhall have ſo direct and full manifeſtation of God, that theſe glaſſes which reflect him ſhall be out of uſe. The Saints on earth have ſometimes a ſight of God without a glaſs, that is, out of all ordinances, promiſes and works either wrought in them or for them. God comes near to their ſpirits, and lifts them above means, and ſhews them his love, and their intereſt in him by an immediate witneſs of the Spirit (1 *Joh.* 5. 8.) For although the water and the blood (juſtification and ſanctification) never witneſs without the Spirit; and though the Spirit never witneſſes againſt them, or where they are not, yet the Spirit doth often witneſs above them and without them, that is, they not being called forth to give their witneſs. This is next door to heaven; only, the viſion in heaven will be exceedingly heightned and raiſed, not only above our viſion by ordinances, but above our viſion by immediate revelation or witneſs.

Further conſider, The ſight we have of God is in Chriſt. God is ſeen in every creature (*Rom.* 1.) much more in Ordinances; but Chriſt is *the expreſs image of his perſon, and the brightneſs of his glory*, Heb. 1. 3. He is the *Medium* by which we ſee God now, and ſome have thought we ſhall ſee him only in Chriſt for ever. But it is out of doubt that in this life God is ſeen only in Chriſt ſavingly. We of our ſelves are ſo far off from God, that we cannot ſee him. There muſt be a due diſtance between the organ and the object; we are afar off from God, until Chriſt bring us near; we come to, and ſee *the Father through the Son.* And how near ſoever we are to any object, we cannot ſee it without an eye. We are naturally blind, the eyes of our mind muſt be enlightened before we ſee him; Chriſt cleareth our underſtandings, and cures our blindneſs, *He is made to us of God wiſdom* (to ſee our need of him to be made) *righteouſneſs to us, and ſanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Again, the *Medium* muſt be light; if the eye be clear, yet while the air is dark, we cannot ſee. There muſt be an outward light, as well as an inward light to ſee by; that Jeſus Chriſt makes alſo: for, *He is the light of the world, as well as the enlightner of every one that cometh into the world.* He ſends the means of knowledge, as well as gives an ability to know. He ſends light to the eyes of our mind, and he is light in the eyes of our mind. What we ought to know comes from him; and how to know as we ought, comes from him. Without him, God goeth by us in the Goſpel, and we ſee him not; he may paſs on for ever, and we never perceive him.

> Secondly obſerve, That, *As the Lord in his nature cannot be ſeen at all; ſo (ſuch is the weakneſs of man, that) we cannot ſee him fully in his word or works.*

How little is it that we ſee, that we know of God in either? What admirable alterations are there in the courſe of natural things, in the Sun, Moon and Stars, in the growth of herbs & plants, and in our own bodies, which we ſee not? What admirable adminiſtrations are there in the courſe of civil things? The beginnings, growths and declinings of Common-wealths, the tranſplantations of people from Countrey to Countrey, their oppreſſions by injuſtice, their confuſions by war, their eſtabliſhments by peace, their conſumptions by plague and famine, their encreaſe by health and abundance, are little minded by the moſt of men. How doth God turn Nations upſide down, and hurl Kingdoms together, and we perceive him not? Some take no notice at all of God, as doing ſuch things; none taking ſuch notice as they ought. We obſerve creatures, what this man did, and what the other, ſuch men were malicious and unfaithful, ſuch were valiant and wiſe, ſuch were ſelf-ſeekers, ſuch ſelf-deniers, ſuch conſtant Patriots, and ſuch were Apoſtates. Thus we ſee men, but we ſeldom ſee God in the great tranſactions and motions of Kingdoms. And we ſee him leaſt of all in the courſe of ſpiritual things, in his working upon our hearts; God works wonders in us, and we perceive him not. We regard not his comings or goings, his comfortings or withdrawings, when our ſpirits are heated, or when they are cold; when we are ſtrong, or when we are weak: There are continual varieties and changes in our ſpirits, had we a clearneſs to make obſervation. The work of God in the heart of a Believer, moving it, ordering it, preſerving it, comforting it, purging it, is as wonderful, and more, then any of his works in the whole world.

> Thirdly note, *Man is not fit to ſit as a Judge upon the works and dealings of God.*

Shall we judge God in what he doth, when we cannot apprehend what he doth? A Judge muſt have the full cognizance of the matter before him, how elſe can he paſs ſentence about it? Shall man be ſo bold as to get up into the Throne, and paſs ſentence upon what God doth, when he cannot apprehend or take in evidence of what he doth? *He goeth by thee, and thou ſeeſt him not; he paſſeth on alſo, and thou perceiveſt him not*; and wilt thou cenſure what thou canſt not perceive?

Fourthly, Which is *Job's* ſcope,

> *It ſhould be matter of great humiliation to us, that we ſee ſo little of God.*

God works round about us and in us, and yet we know little of him. Our blindneſs ſhould abaſe us in our own eyes: God is all eye and all hand, and we ſo blind that we cannot ſee what God doth. It muſt lay man low in his own ſight to conſider how little he ſees of God.

Verſe 12. **Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who ſhall ſay unto him, what doſt thou?**

This and the next verſe contain a proof of mans weakneſs, as the former doth of mans ignorance and blindneſs; *He paſſeth by, and I ſee him not.* There is mans blindneſs. *He taketh away, and who can hinder him?* There is mans weakneſs. Suppoſe a man ſhould ſee God in his works, and apprehend what he is about, yet though he hath ſo much light as to ſee God, he hath not ſo much ſtrength as to hinder God: Is not this an argument of mans weakneſs? What, contend with God! God doth many things, and thou canſt not ſee *him*; or if thou ſeeſt *him*, yet it is not in thy power to ſtop him; *Behold, he taketh away, and who can hinder him?* Yea, man is ſo far from being able to ſtop or hinder God in what he is about to do, that man hath not right to queſtion God, or to ask him what he is about to do. Man is neither ſtrong enough to ſtop him from what he will do, nor righteous enough to queſtion him for what he doth. This is the total denying of any poſſibility in man to deal with God. How can he ſtop God in what he doth, who cannot ſo much as ask him what he doth? *Who ſhall ſay unto him, what doſt thou?*

Behold, he taketh away?

The word ſignifies to take away by violence and force, to take away as a robber takes, to ſteal away: As if he had ſaid, ſuppoſe the Lord comes by open violence to take a thing from thee, or ſecretly, and as it were by ſtealth, to bereave thee of thy eſtate, or of thy life, if he take all from thee, and ſtrip thee naked, *what canſt thou do?* So the word is uſed (*Prov.* 23. 28.) Speaking of a wicked woman, of an harlot, *She lieth in wait as for a prey*; the Hebrew is, *She lieth in wait as a robber*, to take away the eſtate, yea, and the life of thoſe whom ſhe ſhall entangle. Some underſtand this more ſpecially of taking away life. If he will ſtop thy breath, and deliver thee up to death; ſo *Auguſtine* upon the place: or as the *Chaldee*, *If he take one out of the world, who can hinder him?* As if *Job* had ſaid, The Lord may not only take away ſo much as he hath taken from me, but more, without wrong to me. He hath taken away my goods, and my eſtate, my children and friends, he hath fetched away my health and ſtrength, my beauty and outward comforts; if he come and take away my life alſo at next bout, I cannot hinder him; I can neither compel him to reſtore, nor call him to an account; I can neither urge him to reſtitution, nor charge him with oppreſſion. He plainly intimates the rapine of his goods by the *Chaldeans*, &c. Of which he ſpake poſitively (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *The Lord hath taken*; and here by way of general ſuppoſition, *If he take away*,

חתף *Rapuit more latronum. Significat velocitatem rapinæ.* Rab. Mord. *Raptim auferre.* Tigur.

Si rapuerit hominem è mundo. Tar. *Si morti tradiderit.* Auguſt. *Quoties ipſi viſum fuerit (ut mihi nunc evenit) quempiam vel bonis ipſis ſpoliare, quis illum ut raptorem ad reſtitutionem coget? imò quis illum jure in diſquiſitionem vocarit? voluntas enim ipſius eſt juſtitiæ norma.* Bez.

Who ſhall hinder him?

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Who ſhall make him reſtore?* So he carries it in alluſion to men, who violently take away the goods and eſtates of another. If a man come with force and take away my goods, I may make him reſtore them again by a greater force; but if the Lord take away and ask me no leave, I cannot make him reſtore. The word ſignifies to ſtop or turn a thing, and becauſe in recovering of a prey, or in making a man reſtore, we ſtop and ſtay his courſe, therefore the word is indifferently applied to both.

ישובנו *à radice* שוב *Vertere aut reducere, quis reſtituere eum faciet, quis recuperabit aut reducet prædam?*

Others underſtand it in this ſence, *If he taketh away, who ſhall hinder him?* That is, who can turn him from his purpoſe? who can ſtop him in the thing he hath a mind to do? The vulgar tranſlation varies much; *If he ſuddenly ask a man a queſtion, who ſhall be able to anſwer him?* The Hebrew word which ſignifies to return, ſignifies to anſwer; anſwering is the return of a word (*Prov.* 8. 13.) *He that anſwereth* (*or returneth a word*) *before he heareth a matter.* But I ſhall lay that by, though the abettors of the Vulgar make great ſtore of it; interpreting their meaning thus, If the Lord cite a man to judgment, and bring him to trial, man is not able to anſwer him, or to plead his own cauſe. Man cannot ſtand before the Lord. Hence obſerve,

Quidam nō de præda, ſed de ipſo Deo intelligunt. Quis revocabit eū à propoſito? Si repentè interroget, quis reſpondebit ei? Vulg. *Vel quòd reſpondens cōvertit ſe ad interrogantem; vel quòd reſponſum regeratur, reſtituaturq; tanquam debitum interroganti.*

First, That, *All our comforts are in the power of God.*

If he taketh away,] ſuppoſeth he can take away, and he can take all away, and do us no wrong. It is no robbery if God rob us; his robbery is no wrong: Why? Becauſe he comes not as a thief, but as a Lord and Maſter of our Eſtates; he may come and take them away as he pleaſeth, and when he pleaſeth.

Secondly, Note this from it, *He taketh away.*

That which God doth by the hand of the creature, is to be reckoned as his own act.

He taketh away when creatures take away. It is ſeldom that God dealeth immediately with us in theſe outward providences; he ſends men, ſtirs inſtruments to do what is done. But that which man doth, the Lord doth (*Iſa.* 42. 24.) *Who gave Jacob to the ſpoilers, and Iſrael to the robbers? Did not I the Lord?* Men ſpoiled and robbed them, yet it was the Lords act to ſend thoſe ſpoilers; *Did not I the Lord?* As that which man doth in ſpirituals, is the Lords act; when man converteth and ſaveth, it is the Lord that ſaveth and converteth; when man comforteth and refreſheth by applying the promiſes, it is the Lord that comforteth and refreſheth; when man gives reſolution in doubts, it is the Lord that reſolveth doubts; mans act is the Lords. So here when man robbeth and ſpoileth us, the act is from the Lord, though the wickedneſs of the act is from the man. The Lord ſuffers men to ſpoil and undo us; yea, the Lord orders them to ſpoil us: It is done not only by his permiſſion, but by his commiſſion; not only with his leave, but by his appointment; *I will ſend them againſt an hypocritical Nation, and againſt the people of my wrath will I give them a charge, to take the ſpoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the ſtreets,* Iſa. 10.

Thirdly obſerve, *Whot the Lord will do either by himſelf, or by inſtruments, no man can ſtop or prevent.*

If he taketh away, who ſhall hinder him? The Lord hath abſolute power; if he will overthrow men or families, or whole Kingdoms, none can ſtay him. There have been four great Monarchies in the world, and the Lord coming in judgment againſt them, hath taken all away. The united ſtrength of all creatures cannot ſtand before him when he is angry and reſolved. The *Babylonian* could not ſay and perform it, I will keep my Throne. The *Perſian* could not ſay and do it, I will keep my State: The *Grecian* could not ſay and maintain it, I will keep my glory: The *Roman* could not ſay and make it good, I will keep my Empire. When the Lord had a mind to it, he came and fetcht away the power and glory, the crown and dignity of thoſe Monarchs, he threw down their thrones, brake their ſtates, darkened their glory, diſſipated their Empires, no man could hinder him. *How are ye fallen from heaven, O* Lucifers, *ſons of the morning? how are ye cut down to the ground, which did weaken the Nations? Though ye ſaid in your hearts, we will aſcend into heaven, we will exalt our thrones above the ſtars of God; We will aſcend above the heights of the clouds, we will be like the moſt high; yet how are ye brought down to hell, to the ſides of the pit? All that look upon you, ſay, Are theſe the men that made the earth to tremble, that did ſhake Kingdoms?* Thus the Lord hath taken away the *Thrones of Princes,* and none could hinder; he hath alſo removed the *Candleſticks of Churches,* and none could hinder. Chriſt threatned the ſeven Churches in *Aſia,* that he would come and take away their Candleſticks; which of theſe hindered him? Both Crowns and Candleſticks muſt down, if he ſpeak the word. It is ſaid, when *David* kept his Fathers ſheep, there came a Lion and a Bear, and took a Lamb and a ſheep out of the Flock; but he aroſe and went out after them, and reſcued both Lamb and Sheep, taking the prey out of their teeth: When the Lord Chriſt, the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah,* will come and tear and take away, no *David* can reſcue out of his hand. The five Kings that came againſt *Sodom,* took away *Lot*; *Abraham* went with his Army and made them reſtore, made them bring back again; it is ordinary with man, when one hath robbed another, for a ſtronger to make him reſtore and vomit up the ſweet morſels which he hath ſwallowed. It is not thus with God.

First, Power cannot do it; though the inſtruments which he uſeth to take away from us, be weak, yet the ſtrong ſhall not be able to make the weak reſtore. A weak Nation may deſtroy a ſtrong Nation, and the ſtronger ſhall not be able to make the weaker reſtore, if the Lord ſend them. When the *Babylonians* encamped about *Jeruſalem,* he warns them by his Prophet, *Do not think you ſhall deliver your ſelves by your great ſtrength,* I have ſent them to take your City and your State. *And though they were all wounded men, yet they ſhall riſe up and take your City* (Iſa. 43. 13.) *I will work* (ſaith the Lord) *and who ſhall let it?* Who ſhall let it? Why, they might ſay, We will have ſome that ſhall let it: No (ſaith the Lord) none ſhall let it; *Behold, I have ſent to Babylon, and deſtroyed all their Princes*: thoſe that ſought to hinder me in my work, by their power and counſel, are broken, though they ſeemed as ſtrong as iron bars (ſo the word is) theſe bars of iron cannot keep me from entring, I will break all oppoſition raiſed againſt my work.

Secondly, As power cannot hinder him, ſo policy cannot; no counſel ſhall ſtop him: They (*Iſa.* 7. 6.) took counſel and reſolved ſtrongly, *We will go up againſt Judah, and deſtroy it, and ſet a King in the midſt of it, even the ſon of Tabeal*; the Lord anſwereth in the next words, *It ſhall not ſtand, neither ſhall it come to paſs.* You reſolve to do it, you make it out in your counſels, how to hinder mine, but it ſhall not be, it ſhall not come to paſs. As no counſel againſt us ſhall ſtand, if the Lord be with us (*Iſa.* 8. 10.) ſo no counſel for us ſhall ſtand, if the Lord be againſt us.

Thirdly, When the Lord is reſolved to take away the peace and glory of a Nation, or of a Church, he will do it, and no ſpiritual means ſhall hinder him, prayer it ſelf ſhall not hinder him. If any thing in the world can move the Lord to reſtore, when he taketh away the peace of a people, it is prayer, and the cry of his people. Prayer hath often met the Lord, as *Abigail* did *David* (1 Sam. 25.) and prevailed with him to put up his ſword, which was ready to deſtroy. At the voyce of prayer the Lord hath reſtored that which he took away, and hath ſtayed from doing that which he ſeemed fully reſolved to do, *Pſal.* 106. 23. *The Lord would have deſtroyed them, had not Moſes his choſen ſtood before him in the breach.* Did *Moſes* out-power the Lord? did he out-wit or out-policy the Lord? No, but *Moſes* prayed, and prayed ſo ſtrongly, that the Lord was hindered, that is, he, as if he had been hindered, did not effect the thing; he reſtored their comforts again, when he had arreſted but ſome of them, and ſeemed to come armed with reſolution to take all away. Yet ſometimes we find the Lord will come and take away, and prayer it ſelf, prayer and faſting, cries and tears ſhall not hinder, God will trample upon all theſe. *God was reſolved to take away the glory of* Iſrael; and to aſſure them that he would, he takes away that wherein their chief aſſurance lay, that he would not (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people, &c.* As if he had ſaid, Ye think to hinder me now, ye will ſtop me, ye will ſend out prayer, your old friend, which hath helped you heretofore at many a dead lift. And if you cannot pray enough your ſelves, you will procure prayers, and pray in the aid of prayer from all the Favourites that I have in the world, ye will get *Moſeſes* and *Samuels*, ſuch as they, to pray for you; ye may do ſo if ye will, but it ſhall not profit you; they and ye ſhall loſe your labour, even theſe labours will not quit coſt, or be worth the while to the end ye aim at; for, *though Moſes and*

Samuel *ſtood before me, and intreated for this people, yet my mind could not be toward them: caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth, ſuch as are for the ſword, to the ſword; and ſuch as are for death, to death; and ſuch as are for captivity, to captivity.* Thus, I ſay, ſometimes the Lord is reſolved to take away life, riches, glory, peace, the all both of perſons and Nations, that nothing ſhall help us, or hinder him; no, not the prayers and cries, not the ſupplications and tears of his own people, which are the ſtrongeſt ſtops of all in the way of provoked juſtice. If prayer cannot ſtay deſtruction, and obtain a reprieve from death; if the prayers of a *Moſes* and a *Samuel* cannot, nothing can; it is, as if God had ſaid, The beſt means ſhall fail you, therefore all means ſhall fail you: if when prayer cannot hinder God, we reſort to other means; it is as if we ſhould think to faſten an Anchor with a twined threed, which hath broken a cable; or to conquer an enemy with a pot-gun and a bull-ruſh, whom we could not with Sword and Cannon. And as God will not ſometimes be entreated, ſo he ought not at any time to be queſtioned; which is the next point.

Who ſhall ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?

Supremus judex eſt à quo non poteſt eſſe provocatio.

That's further conſiderable; man is not only not able to ſtop the Lord from what he would do, but he hath no right to put in a plea againſt what he hath done, no nor to ask him what he hath been doing, or why he did it. The ſuperior may ask the inferior, and call him to an account: Every inferior Judge and Court, is accountable to thoſe above; that is the higheſt Court, and he the higheſt Judge, to whom no man can ſay, *What doeſt thou?* The *Parliament of England* is therefore the higheſt Judicatory in this Kingdom, becauſe their actions are not queſtionable in any other Court; one *Parliament* may ſay to another, What haſt thou done? This *Parliament* hath ſaid to *Parliaments* that have gone before, What have ye done in making ſuch and ſuch Laws? No power of man beſides their own can queſtion ſome men, much leſs can any man queſtion God, and ſay to him, *What doeſt thou?* He is ſupreme, there is no appeal to any other higher Judge, or higher Court. Hence obſerve,

Whatſoever God reſolveth and determineth concerning us, we muſt bear it, and quietly ſubmit.

Quicquid de nobis Deus ſtatuit libenter ferendum eſt.

No man may ſay unto him, *What doeſt thou? Why do ye ſit ſtill* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 8.14.) *Aſſemble your ſelves, and let us enter into the defenced Cities, and let us be ſilent there, for the Lord hath put us to ſilence, and given us waters of gall to drink, becauſe we have ſinned againſt him. The Lord hath put us to ſilence*; that is, the Lord hath done theſe things, and we are not to queſtion him about them, or to ask him what he hath done, or why he hath done thus? Therefore let us be ſilent, ſay they. Let us not murmur at, and complain over our own ſufferings, much leſs tax and charge God for his doings. It becomes us to obey Gods ſuſpenſion; to be ſilent, when he puts us to ſilence. The Lord never ſilences any (unleſs in wrath to thoſe who would not hear) from ſpeaking in his Name, and publiſhing his word. But he hath ſilenced all from ſpeaking againſt his works; and it will be ill with us, if our paſſions (how much ſoever God ſeems to act againſt us) ſhall take off this ſuſpenſion. The Lord is uncontrollable in all his works. When *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan. 4.35.) came to himſelf, and began to think and ſpeak like a man, after he had been among the beaſts, ſee what an humble acknowledgment he makes concerning God: *All the inhabitants of the earth* (ſaith he) *are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?* Here, we have both parts of *Job's* ſpeech; none can ſtay his hand, which is the former; and none can ſay unto him, *What doeſt thou?* which is the later. That great Monarch acknowledged he had no power to queſtion God, though he at that time had power to queſtion all the men upon the earth. *Nebuchadnezzar* ſpeaks like *Job*. A wicked man may make a true report of God. Many ſpeak right of the Lord, whoſe hearts are not right with him. *Nebuchadnezzar* was converted from beaſtlineſs, but I find not that he was converted to holineſs. He came home to his own Court, but I ſee no proof that he came home to the Church of God; yet, ſee how divinely he ſpeaks, and how humbly he walks, not ſo much as offering to ask God (who had chang'd him from a Commander of men, to a companion of beaſts) *What doeſt thou?*

We may ask the Lord (in one ſence) *what he doth?* Yea, the Lord doth nothing in the world, but his Saints and ſervants are enquiring of him about it. He invites them to petition for what they would have, *Ask of me things to come concerning my ſons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me* (Iſa. 45. 11.) Though man cannot order or enjoyn the leaſt thing upon God, yet at the entreaty of his people, he is as ready to do, as if he were at their command. And as we are thus invited to ask things to come, ſo we are not totally denied to ask about things already done. We may ask him in an humble way for information, not in a bold way of contradiction. We may in zeal to his glory, not in diſcontent with our own condition, expoſtulate with him about what he hath done. So *Joſhua* (Chap. 7.7, 8.) *Alas O Lord God, wherefore haſt thou at all brought this people over* Jordan, *to deliver us into the hand of the* Amorites *to deſtroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other ſide* Jordan, *&c.* but how durſt *Joſhua* ſpeak thus? What if God would deſtroy them, was it not his duty to bear it, and let God alone? Yes doubtleſs, and ſuch I doubt not was the frame of *Joſhua's* ſpirit. If *Iſrael* only had been to ſuffer, *Joſhua* had held his peace, at leaſt from ſuch language; but he ſaw a further matter in it; the glory of God was like to ſuffer in their ſufferings: the cloſe of his prayer betrayes this holy diſpoſition of his heart, *verſ.* 9. *And what wilt thou do unto thy great name?* As if he had ſaid, Lord, the matter were not much, though the name of *Iſrael* were blotted out from under Heaven, ſo thy Name were written in fairer characters. But I fear a blow to *Iſrael* will be a blot to thy Name, and therefore I have taken upon me to pray this prayer unto thee, and I have prayed rather for thee, then to thee. All prayers are made to God, and yet ſome are made for him. Not that he hath any want, or is in any the remoteſt poſſibility of any danger, but only for the promoting of his glory; and that the world may not have occaſion of a diſhonourable thought of him, whoſe honour never abates in it ſelf, or in the eyes of his own people. Thus we may ask him what he hath done, and why he hath brought ſuch deſolations upon his people. But we may not ask him what he hath done, either to queſtion his right to do it, or to queſtion his righteouſneſs in doing of it. No creature may put the queſtion upon either of theſe terms, *What haſt thou done?* much leſs conclude, Thou haſt done that which thou haſt no right to do, or, thou haſt been unrighteous in doing it. Either of theſe is higheſt blaſphemy: for, whatſoever the Lord doth, he hath right to do, and whatſoever the Lord doth, he is righteous in doing it.

Hence it followeth by way of Corollary,

That, *The Lord is of abſolute power.*

He is the *Sovereign Lord, Lord over all*; there is no appeal from him, no queſtioning of him. *Solomon* ſpeaketh of the power of a King, in this language (*Eccleſ.* 8.4.) *Where the word of a King is, there is power, and who may ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?* But is there nothing which a King doth, about which it may be ſaid unto him, What doeſt thou? And what is this word of a King? The word of a King, is the Law of his Kingdom: all that a King doth or ſpeaks beſides the Law, he ſpeaks as a man, not as a King; and that's the meaning of *Solomon's* Text; which Court-flatterers have corrupted with their unſound gloſſes, as if every word of a King were of abſolute power, and muſt have peremptory obedience. A King is for his Kingdom; and while he commands according to the rules and Laws of his Kingdom, no Subject may queſtion him, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou? There is no power above his power, as he is armed with the power of his Laws. And becauſe whereſoever the Word of God is, there is his Law; therefore whereſoever the Word of God is, there is power; and no man may ſay unto him, What doeſt thou? Every word of direction, ſpoken by God, is a Law; becauſe his will is the Law of all things and perſons. As the will of man by nature is not ſubject (by obeying it) to the righteous Law of God, neither indeed can be; ſo the will of God by nature is the ſubject, containing all righteous Laws, neither indeed can it not be: for though God be voluntarily, and with higheſt freeneſs righteous, yet he is righteous neceſſarily, and with greateſt undeclinableneſs; as he is freely what he is, ſo it is impoſſible for him not to be what he is. And therefore no man ought to ſay to God, What doeſt thou? Seeing God can do nothing, but what he ought. In vain then is God either attempted by power, or ſollicited by prayer againſt his own mind; For,

Verſ. 13. **If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him.**

Though, *If God taketh away, none can hinder him; though none ought to ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?* whatſoever he doth: yet poſſibly ſome will be venturing upon this hard task, and undertake this impoſſible adventure, attempting to recover Gods booty, and his priſoners out of his hand: but ſee the iſſue, *If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him.* Suppoſe any ſhould come to help, protect and patronize thoſe whom God hath a mind to take away and deſtroy, ſhall they proſper or ſpeed? No, not only they themſelves whom the Lord hath taken away, but their aſſiſtants, and their ſecond, all that appear for them (except God call in his anger) ſhall fall before him.

לא ישיב אפו

Non revocabit naſum, non redibit à furore.

Avertit naſũ ſuũ, quaſi ſe vinci permittat, & ab humiliante ſe peccatore fugeret.

Ipſamet victoria vinci neſcit.

If God will not withdraw his anger.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *If the Lord will not turn away his noſtrils, or his face.* Noſtrils or face are taken here, as in many other Scriptures, for anger, becauſe there is ſuch an appearance of anger in the face and noſtrils; acted paſſion is ſeated there, as was noted (*Chap.* 4.9.) Therefore to turn away the face or noſtril, is to turn away from anger, *Pſal.*78.38. *Many a time turned he away his anger*; it is this word. When the Lord is angry, the turning of his face towards a man ſheweth he is reconciled; and when he is angry, the not turning away of his face, ſhews that he is unreconciled, or reſolved to continue angry. And while God is ſo reſolved, man is in a ſad caſe, his helpers muſt ſtoop. *The ſtrength of* Iſrael *will not lie or repent* (1 Sam.15.29.) The Hebrew is, *The victory of* Iſrael. The Lords ſtrength is victory. Victorious perſons can hardly be overcome, but victory cannot; therefore except himſelf will withdraw, except himſelf overcome himſelf, it is not in the power of all creatures to overcome him (*Job* 23.13.) *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* As if he had ſaid, except the Lord will turn himſelf, and alter what he himſelf hath determined, it is not in men to cauſe him to alter, *He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth*; which is the higheſt expreſſion of power imaginable. How many things do our ſouls deſire which we cannot do? We are deſiring and deſiring, yet our hands are not able to bring it to paſs, *The deſires of the ſlothful* (alwayes) *ſlay them*, becauſe (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov.21.25.) *their hands refuſe to labour; and the deſires of the diligent ſlay them*, ſometimes, becauſe they cannot compaſs the thing deſired, with all their labour; but as for the Lord, *What his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth.* And as his deſires are irreſiſtible, ſo is his anger, his iraſcible appetite is as victorious as his concupiſcible, *unleſs God withdraw his anger*.

רהב

Invaluit robore, inſolens fuit.

Freti ſuperbia. Pagn.

Auxiliatores ſuperbiæ. Reg.

The proud helpers do ſtoop under him.] The word is, *Helpers of pride*, that is, ſuch as think themſelves moſt powerful and able to help, *The helpers of pride*, or the ſtrong helpers. The ſame word (note that by the way) ſignifies ſtrength and pride, becauſe we are ſo apt to be proud of our ſtrength. If a man have a little ſtrength in the world, ſtrength of friends, or of riches, ſtrength of body or of mind, ſtrength of underſtanding, ſtrength of memory, ſtrong parts, he is under a ſtrong temptation to pride. *Pride is one of the greateſt weakneſſes of man, but it is alwayes grounded upon ſuppoſed ſtrength.*

But who are theſe proud, theſe ſtrong helpers?

Some underſtand it of the good Angels, who are the ſtrongeſt, the higheſt of created helpers; Angels ſtoop under the power of God as well as men.

Others expound theſe ſtrong helpers to be Devils, who are evil Angels, to whom evil men ſeek ſometimes for help. If the Lord will not turn away his anger, though men ſeek to the Devil for help (as *Saul* did) that helper ſhall ſtoop under him. *Saul* conſulted with a witch (the Devils oracle) yet he could not be delivered by a witch.

Qui portant orbē. Vulg.

Others underſtand by theſe *ſtrong helpers*, godly men; if the Lord will not turn away his anger, the righteous ſhall ſtoop under him, that is, they ſhall not be able to reſcue a perſon or a Nation from the anger of God by prayer, or by the utmoſt improvements of their intereſt with God. Some places have fallen, becauſe they wanted godly men to ſupport them; and ſome places have fallen, though they had godly men to ſupport them. The Vulgar Latine tranſlation renders, *They that bear up the pillars of the world, ſhall fall.* Godly men bear up the pillars of the world. Though the Hebrew will not bear their tranſlation, yet the ſence is good. Godly men are the worlds ſupporters. It is ſaid (*Revel.* 12.16.) *That the earth helped the woman*; that is, worldly men for carnal ends helped the Church, when a flood of perſecution, caſt out of the mouth of the Dragon, was ready to ſwallow her up. But the Church continually helps the world, and ſwallows up many of thoſe floods of Gods diſpleaſure, which elſe would drown the world. And becauſe the Church was ſo thin, and there were ſo few godly men in the old world, therefore it was drowned, *Gen.*7. And becauſe ten righteous perſons were not found in *Sodom*, fire from heaven conſumed it (*Gen.* 18.) God ſeeks for Saints many times to ſtand in the gap, and ſave a Kingdom, (*Ezek.* 22.30. *Jer.* 5.1.) and yet ſometimes Kingdoms are not ſaved, though many ſuch ſtand in the gap. Except the Lord turn away his anger, *theſe Porters of the world* ſhall not ſupport it, theſe ſpiritual *Atlaſſes* ſhall faint and fall under him. The Heathens had a fiction of a mighty Gigantine man, whom they called *Atlas*, him they fancied bearing up the frame of nature: it is moſt true in a ſpiritual ſence, the Saints bear up the world; yet if the Lord turn not away his anger, the world muſt totter and fall too, notwithſtanding theſe helpers. For the Saints do not bear up the world, or ſave Kingdoms from wrath, by giving the leaſt ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God (that's the ſole Prerogative of Jeſus Chriſt) but only by imploring the mercy of God. Or they are therefore ſaid to turn away the wrath of God from a people, becauſe God will not pour out his wrath upon that people, while his Saints are mingled with them. The tares are let grow, leaſt in pulling them up, the wheat ſhould be pulled up alſo. It is good for the worſt to have the neighbourhood of thoſe who are good.

Rab. Sol. Ei ſuccumbent conſpiratores potentiſſimi; Illi ſcilicet qui cũ arrogantia & ſuperbia aliis auxiliũ pollicentur. Vatabl.

Superbi & corũ patroni; appellatur Ægyptus hoc nomine, propter ſummam ſuam ſuperbiam.

Further, More generally theſe proud helpers are ſuppoſed to be Kings and Common-wealths, joyned in ſtrongeſt confederacies; and then the ſence is, If God come againſt a Nation, though it joyn with other Nations, though hand joyn in hand, the hand of one King in the hand of another, yet it ſhall not eſcape or go unpuniſhed.

The proud helpers ſhall ſtoop under him.

Ex circumſtantiis horũ locorũ non valdè incongruũ eſt, hanc vocem ſumi pro Ægypto & pro Phaarone in mare demerſo. Bold. & Rab. Sol.

There is yet another interpretation, which reſtrains and limits the word *Rahab* particularly to *Egypt*, *Unleſs the Lord turn away his anger, helpers out of* Egypt *ſhall ſtoop under him*, or *Egypt helping ſhall ſtoop under him.* We find frequently in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, that *Egypt* is called *Rahab*. And that name did well ſute with *Egypt*, which was both a ſtrong and a proud Kingdom, *Pſal.*87.4. *We will remember* Rahab *and* Babylon, that is, *Egypt* and *Babylon*. *Egypt* and *Babylon* are matcht together for pride, and for oppreſſion, perſecuting the people of God. And *Iſa.*51.9. *Art not thou it that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon?* That is, art not thou (O Lord) he that didſt cut *Egypt* in pieces, when they oppoſed thy people, and woundedſt *Pharaoh* in the midſt of the Red Sea. In *Job* 26. *verſ.* 12. ſome tranſlate *Rahab*, *Egypt*: we render the Text thus, *He divideth the Sea with his power, and by his underſtanding he ſmiteth thorow the proud*; ſo we, *By his underſtanding he ſtrikes thorow* Rahab, that is, thorow *Egypt*, ſay others. And ſo they make that Text and this an argument, that the book of *Job* was penned after the deliverance of the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, and that in theſe paſſages *Job* had reference to the mighty work of God, in deſtroying the *Egyptians* at the Red Sea. Taking the word thus, the Text is, *Unleſs the Lord turn away his anger*, Egypt *ſhall ſtoop under him*; as if he had ſaid, *Do you not remember a late inſtance of Gods power?* Egypt *thought to contend with God, to hold his people in bondage* *whether he would or no, when he had a mind to bring them forth; but you know* Egypt *ſtooped: God brought down the pride, and abated the ſtrength of it.*

Loquitur propheticè. Bold. *Adjutores Ægypti, i. e. angeli ejus gentis. Ut in prophetia Danielis, princeps Perſiæ.* Druſ.

And that other place (*Chap.* 26. 12.) may be gloſſed thus, *He divided the Sea by his power*, that is, the Red Sea, *and by his underſtanding he ſtruck thorow* Rahab; that is, when the *Egyptians* purſued his people, he deſtroyed them. Which interpretation carries a very clear proof that *Job* alludes to the deliverance of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, and therefore lived after the time of that deliverance; though others who grant the expoſition, deny the inference, maintain that *Job* ſpake this prophetically, not hiſtorically. This we know, that *Egypt* was a place much ſought to for help, and therefore it is elegantly ſaid, *If the Lord turn not away his anger*, Egypt *ſhall ſtoop*; that Nation which hath been ſo often called out to help and relieve other Nations, that Nation which hath ſo often helped and relieved other Nations, ſhall not be able to help, *Iſa.* 31. 1. *They go down to* Egypt *for help*, as if *Egypt* had been as a City of refuge, or the place of common reſort for help. And *Iſa.* 30. 7. *The Egyptians ſhall help in vain*; the Text is very appliable to this point; we read it thus, *The Egyptians ſhall help in vain, and to no purpoſe, therefore have I cried concerning this, their ſtrength is to ſit ſtill.* Their ſtrength ſhall not deliver you, they ſhall help in vain, therefore I have warned you (ſaith the Prophet) to ſit ſtill, to be quiet with your own ſtrength, and it is better to do ſo then to go down thither for help. But the word which we tranſlate *ſtrength*, is that in the Text, *Rahab*; and we may render the whole thus, *The Egyptians ſhall help in vain, and to no purpoſe; therefore I cryed to them in this thing, They are proud, or only pride, Therefore ſit ſtill.* As if he had ſaid, Will ye go to *Egypt* for help? Ye go but to a proud people for help, and ye had better have no helpers, then proud helpers; ye had better be quiet and ſit ſtill at home, for they ſhall help you in vain. So it is an elegant alluſion to their nature and diſpoſition. The truth is, proud helpers are very unſafe helpers, for the Lord reſiſteth the proud; and I wonder how they can help us to reſiſt our enemies, who are reſiſted by the Lord himſelf? They will prove but ill friends to us, who have the Lord for their enemy.

Superbia tantum eſt, quieſce: fortaſſe vult dicere, nihil aliud eſſe in ea quam ſuperbiam.

שחוח: *Eſt valde dejici & penitus humiliari, hoc loco ſervilē potiſſimum conditionem deſignat.*

They ſhall ſtoop under him.] The word is often uſed for worſhipping, it imports likewiſe any caſting down or abaſement, becauſe we in the worſhip of God ought to be exceedingly abaſed and humbled before him, *Pſal.* 38.6. *I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly.* So *Habak.* 3. 6. *The perpetual hills did bow*, that is, the power (for it is conceived to be a continued Allegory) of the great Monarchs, who were as the mountains and hills of the world, bowed under the Lord. The word is uſed to the ſame ſence (*Iſa.* 49.23.) where the Lord promiſeth his people, *That Kings ſhall be their nurſing Fathers, and Queens their nurſing Mothers, they ſhall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick the duſt of thy feet.* The Church ſhall have the honour to be honoured by the Kings and Princes of the world, they being converted ſhall bow down ſo low to the Scepter of Jeſus Chriſt, held forth by the Church, as if they would lick up the very duſt, and ſhall employ their power and authority for the good and protection of the Church. The ſpeech of *Iſrael* (Gen.27. 29.) in his prophetick bleſſing upon *Jacob*, *Let thy mothers ſons bow down to thee*; and of *Jacib*, in his, upon *Judah* (Gen. 49. 8.) *Thy fathers children ſhall bow down before thee*, note greateſt honour and ſubjection to them both.

The meaning of all is plainly this, *That except the Lord himſelf ſuſpend his own act, and reſtrain his anger, no power in heaven or earth, how ſtrong, how proud, how confident of ſucceſs ſoever, is able to force him, or to alter him. Helpers ſhall not help themſelves, much leſs thoſe to whoſe help they come, againſt the mind and purpoſe of God.* Obſerve here,

First, *Thoſe paſſions which are aſcribed to God, are fully under the command of God.*

The paſſion of anger is aſcribed to God, yet the anger which we ſay is in God, hath no power over God: Mans anger uſually *maſters* him; but God is alwayes *maſter of his anger*; that is, he can turn and withdraw his anger when he pleaſeth. There is no perturbation in God; when he is offended, he is not moved; his motions are all without upon the creatures, he hath none in his own boſom. The paſſions of the Lord are his moſt ſerious counſels and determinations; and we therefore ſay, he is angry, becauſe thoſe counſels of his acted, look like the effects of anger. Obſerve,

Secondly, That, *It is not in the power of man to turn away the anger of God.*

He doth not ſay, except men by prayer or other means ſtop the anger of God, but, *Except the Lord withdraw his anger, all help is vain.* Prayer is ſaid to appeaſe the wrath of God, and to ſtay his anger; *Moſes* ſtood in the gap, and *Aaron* came out with incenſe to turn away his wrath; yet it is an act of Gods will, which turns away his anger, not the force of our prayer; prayer therefore prevails with God, becauſe he hath ſaid, it ſhall. He is infinitely free when himſelf acknowledges that we lay the powerfulleſt reſtraint upon him: when the Lord is turned by prayer, it is his will to be turned; it was his counſel, and is his command that prayer ſhould be made as a means to turn him; and it is his promiſe, that he will turn to us when we pray. Then it appears to us that the Lord hath decreed to do a thing, when he ſtirs up the hearts of his people to pray for the doing of it; and that he is purpoſed to withdraw his anger, when he draws out their hearts ſtrongly to entreat his favour. Obſerve,

Thirdly, That, *until God be appeaſed towards a perſon or a people, there is no remedy for them in the world.*

The proud helpers ſhall ſtoop under him. If the helpers themſelves fall, who can riſe by theſe helpers? If they are caſt down, how ſhall we be upheld by them? What if the people of a provoking Nation aſſociate themſelves together, or aſſociate themſelves with other Nations, or call in help and aid from all that are round about them, ſhall they therefore eſcape in their wickedneſs? they ſhall not eſcape. Unleſs God help our helpers, they are helpleſs to us. When many companies, and great Commanders repaired to *David* at *Ziklag*, *David went out to meet them*, (1 Chron. 12. 17.) *and ſaid, If ye be come peaceably to help me, mine heart ſhall be knit to you; but if ye be come to betray me*, &c. *Amaſai* who was chief of the Captains, anſwers (*v.* 18.) *Thine are we*, David, *and on thy ſide, thou ſon of* Jeſſe: *peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers, for thy God helpeth thee.* Our helpers cannot give us peace, unleſs God give them peace; our helpers muſt be helped by God, before they can give us help. The anger of God breaks all the ſtaves we lean on, and makes them as reeds, which wound rather then ſupport; till God is quiet all is unquiet, and when he is unpacified, men ſhall be unpacified, or their peace ſhall be to our loſs. As, if he withdraw his anger, enemies ſhall oppoſe in vain: ſo except he withdraw his anger, friends ſhall help in vain.

Laſtly, *They who ſtrive to deliver thoſe whom God will deſtroy, ſhall fall themſelves before God.*

If God be reſolved upon the thing, not only they that are helped, but the helpers alſo ſhall ſtoop under him: helpers cannot help themſelves when he is angry; they ſhall be like Idols, which have eyes and ſee not, hands and cannot act, either to ſave themſelves, or thoſe that truſt upon them. The greateſt ſtrength in the world without God, it is no better then an Idol, which is nothing in the world. Strength cannot be ſtrong for it ſelf, and help cannot help it ſelf. Our help ſtands in the Name of the Lord, which made heaven and earth, and not in the name of any creature under any part of heaven, or upon the face of the whole earth.

VERS. 14, 15.

How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my words to reaſon with him?

Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not anſwer, I would make ſupplication to my Judge.

JOB having in the former paſſages of this Chapter lifted up the glory and majeſty of God, in his power and juſtice, and ſhewed the utter inſufficiency of creatures to implead his Juſtice, or to reſcue themſelves out of the hand of his power; he now draws his ſpeech nearer home, and calling his thoughts from thoſe remoter journeyes up to the heavens, and among the ſtars, over the mountains and hills, down to the depths of the ſea, and foundations of the earth, about all which he had diſcourſed; I ſay, calling his thoughts from theſe remoter travels, he comes now cloſer to the matter, and from all thoſe premiſes, deduces a concluſion in the words of the Text, to vindicate himſelf from that charge which his friends laid upon him, as if he were a contender with the power, or an accuſer of the wiſdom and juſtice of God. From the folly and blaſphemy of both which imputations, he diſaſperſeth himſelf in theſe two verſes, by an argument taken from the greater to the leſs; and we may form it up thus.

He who is ſo ſtrong, wiſe and juſt, that all the powers in heaven and earth are not able to oppoſe or ſtay him; ſurely I alone, or ſingle I, a poor, weak creature, am not able to oppoſe or ſtay him.

But (as I have cleared by thoſe former inſtances) *God is ſo ſtrong, wiſe and juſt, that all the powers of heaven, the ſea, the mountains, and the pillars of the earth, the Sun, Moon and Stars, together with the greateſt and mightieſt of all the children of men, are not able to reſiſt him.*

Therefore I, a poor, weak creature, lying here in this ſad condition, am not able (nor have I any deſign) to do it.

Cum robuſtiſſimæ illæ creaturæ, montes, mare, cœli, ei cedant, & quæcunque robore efferuntur & præſtant, quãto minus ego? Merl.

Only the concluſion of this Syllogiſm is expreſt, in the fourteenth and fifteenth verſes, the premiſes are couched in the foregoing context.

Here take notice in general, that *Job* falls in the concluſion ſomewhat below the premiſes. There the intendment was to demonſtrate the ſtrongeſt creature unable to reſiſt the power of God; but *Job* ſpeaks lower of himſelf, I am ſo far from being able to ſet my ſtrength againſt the ſtrength of God, that I acknowledge I am not able to hold diſcourſe with him, or ſpeak with him about theſe things; I have not only no power to oppoſe, but I have no words to oppoſe him.

Verſe 14. **How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my words to reaſon with him?**

Si robuſti nihil valent contra illum quanto minus ego debilis & infirmus homuncio? Druſ. *Nunquam animo finxi quod vos de me fingitis, me poſſe aut velle illi ex æquo reſpõdere.* Pined.

How much leſs.] The word is uſed in the fourth Chapter; *How much leſs in them that dwell in houſes of clay?* Both Texts bear the ſame ſence. *If he charge his Angels with folly, and put no truſt in thoſe his ſervants, then, how much leſs in them who dwell in houſes of clay?* So the argument lies here, If thoſe mighty and powerful creatures, and the mightieſt of the children of men are not able to contend with God, *how much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my words to reaſon with him?* As if he had ſaid, It never ſo much as came into my thoughts to contend with God; I confeſs I have complained grievouſly about my troubles, and have ſpoken ſome things unadviſedly, but it never entred into my heart to quarrel with God, or ſtand in battel array againſt him, no not ſo much as in a battel of words.

How much leſs ſhall I anſwer?

Shall I anſwer.] There is a twofold anſwering, both appliable to this Text.

Firſt, There is an anſwering by way of fact, a real anſwer, or anſwering to a condition. Thus one man anſwers another that is of equal power and ſtrength, of the ſame meaſure in abilities and gifts with him. Thus alſo, as *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 27. 19.) *Face anſwers face in the water*, that is, the face ſeen in the water, is of the ſame feature and complexion with that which looks upon the water. Thus bodies and buildings anſwer one another, when they carry the ſame dimenſions; and thus money anſwers all things, becauſe it bears value with every thing.

Secondly, There is anſwering by words, which is twofold. Firſt, Contradictory. Secondly, Satisfactory. The former is that which the Apoſtle forbids ſervants to uſe (*Tit.* 2. 9.) *Exhort ſervants to be obedient unto their own maſters, and to pleaſe them well in all things, not anſwering again.* Servants cannot pleaſe their maſters unleſs they anſwer to what they are demanded; and they cannot pleaſe their maſters if they oppoſe what is duly commanded; this anſwering again is unſeemly in ſervants.

The latter kind of anſwering is that which the Apoſtle *Peter* charges upon all Chriſtians (1 *Pet.* 3. 15.) *Be alwayes ready to give an anſwer to every man that asketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you, with meekneſs and fear.* To anſwer thus is every mans duty, both to God and man. To anſwer by contradicting the command of God, is rebellion. To anſwer by ſatisfying the demands of God, is a duty. To anſwer by a proportion to the power or wiſdom of God, is infinitely beyond mans ability. *Job* abhorred the firſt, he was ready (as well as he could) to perform the ſecond; and therefore *Job* is chiefly to be underſtood of the third; *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him?* That is, I do not look upon my ſelf as a match for God; as if I had ſtrength proportionable to his ſtrength, or wiſdom ſuitable to his, as if I could thunder like him. I do not think that I am able to anſwer his reaſon by my reaſon; no, I am ſo far from an ability to anſwer him with reaſon, that I know not how to chuſe out words to reaſon with him; *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him?* &c.

From the whole obſerve, before I come to particulars,

A godly mans thoughts are loweſt of himſelf.

Job had gone through the ſeveral ſeries of the Creatures; and finding them unable to contend with God, concludes himſelf more unable then they. Doubtleſs he might have anſwered God as well as any. If any are able to contend with God, godly men are, they have the greateſt ſtrength; ſuch of them eſpecially as *Job*, a man of that height and elevation of ſpirit in holineſs, of whom God hath given his word, That there was none like him in the earth. What creature (except an Angel) came ſo nigh the Creator as *Job*? and yet when he had looked over them all, he ſaith, *How much leſs ſhall I?* He thought any one might enter the liſts, and contend with the Lord better then he. Man (having reaſon) is more able then all the irrational creatures; and amongſt men, godly men; and among godly men, they who reach the higheſt degrees of godlineſs, are moſt able, and yet *Job*, a man ſet upon the top and pinacle of all perfection attainable in this life, ſaith, *How much leſs ſhall I?*

They of whom God hath the higheſt thoughts, have the meaneſt thoughts of, and put the loweſt rates upon themſelves.

No man ever received a fairer or more valuable Certicate from God then *Job* did, and yet no man could ſpeak more undervaluingly of himſelf then *Job* did.

Secondly obſerve, *The more we know God, the more humble we are before him.*

Job having much knowledge of God, quickly found out his own utter inſufficiency to deal with God; *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him?* Not that he had leſs ability to anſwer God then others, but being more acquainted with God, and living nearer God then others, he ſaw his own inſufficiency more then others. The more communion we have with God, the more knowledge we have of God, the leſs and the lower we are in our own eyes. The reaſon why men are ſo full of pride, is, becauſe they are ſtrangers from God, they know nothing of him as they ought. And proportionably, as any one is further diſtant from, or more ignorant of God, the more doth pride prevail upon him, even as humility grows more humble in proportion to his nearer approaches. When *Job* was yet brought nearer to God, he was more humbled, *chap.* 42. 5, 6. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee*; that is, I have a clearer and more glorious manifeſtation of thee to my ſoul then ever, I now perceive thy power, thy holineſs, thy wiſdom, thy faithfulneſs, thy goodneſs, as if they were corporeal objects, as if I ſaw them with mine eye; *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf in duſt and aſhes*: he could not go lower in his thoughts of himſelf then this expreſſion laid him. Abhorrence is a perturbation of the mind, ariſing from vehement diſlike, or extreameſt diſeſteem. Abhorrence, ſtrictly taken, is hatred wound up to the height. As exulting is the higheſt act of joy, and delighting the higheſt act of love, ſo abhorring is the deepeſt act of hatred; and to *abhor, repenting in duſt and aſhes*, is the deepeſt act of abhorrence. Thus low *Job* goes, not only to a diſlike, but to the furtheſt degree of it, abhorrence of himſelf, when he ſaw the Lord. So *Iſaiah* (in the ſixth of his Propheſie) when God came near him, and he ſaw ſo much of God, cries out, *I am undone, for I am a man of polluted lips*; but did not *Iſaiah* know he was a ſinful man, a man of polluted lips till then? Yes, but he was never ſo ſenſible of it, as then. He ſaw his own pollution more then ever by the light of the glory of God that ſhone round about him. He never ſaw himſelf ſo clearly, as when the Majeſty of God dazel'd his eyes. When the Sun ſhines bright into a room, we may ſee the leaſt mote in the air; ſo when the glory of God irradiates the ſoul, we ſee all the motes and atomes of ſin, the leaſt ſpot and unevenneſs of our hearts or lives; this brings the ſoul low, and will keep it ſo: *The more we know of God, the more we honour him, and our ſelves the leß.* Theſe two are eminent effects of knowing God. As God riſes in our thoughts, ſo we fall. *Paul*, who had been rapt up into the third heavens, and had a multitude of divine revelations, calls himſelf *The leaſt of the Apoſtles* (1 Cor. 15. 9.) and *leß then the leaſt of all Saints* (Eph. 3. 8.) Not that any thing can be leſs then the leaſt. The Apoſtles holy Rhetorick doth not croſs *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy. But (the original being a double diminutive) his meaning is, he was as little as could be, therefore he puts himſelf down ſo little as could not be, *leß then the leaſt.* *Job* ſpeaks near him, *How much leß ſhall I anſwer him?*

ἐλαχιστότερος.

The Queſtion imports an inability in him for reſolution. He thought himſelf ſo much leſs able to anſwer then they, that he could not tell how much leſs; and therefore leaves others to caſt it up, and take the account how ſhort he was of that buſineſs; he knew it was much, but how much it was, he knew not: *How much leß ſhall I anſwer him?*

And chooſe out my words to reaſon with him?

בחר *Elegit. LXX. vertunt per* ἐκλέγω *&* ἐπιλέγω. Exod. 17. 9. c. 18.25. Per αἱρέομαι (Job 34 4.) & προαιρέομαι, Deut. 7. 6. *Hinc* בחרי *Juvenis ad militiam & negotia electus & idoneus. Loqui ſelectis verbis, ornata & compoſita oratione.*

The word ſignifies choice upon exact trial; it is uſed in that ſence, *Exod.* 17. 9, *Moſes* biddeth *Joſhua* chooſe out men to go and fight with *Amalek*; he did not take them as they came to hand, or lay his hand violently upon them to preſs them, but he adviſedly took his choice; he had pickt men for that ſervice. *David gathered all the Children of Iſrael*; he had a ſelect company to fetch up the Ark (2 *Sam.* 6. 1.) And when he undertook the Duel with *Goliah*, the Text ſaith, *he went to the brook, and choſe him out five ſmooth ſtones*; they were choice ſtones, fitteſt for his ſling. As it is among perſons and things, ſo among words; there are choice words: Some are but rubbiſh, refuſe words; others are precious, wiſe, ſuitable words: *How ſhould I chooſe out my words to reaſon with him?* Shall I think by ſetting words in a curious frame, to prevail with God? or ſhall I by ſpeaking rhetorically and elegantly, overcome him? There is much power in Oratory, in choice of words, and therefore the holy Ghoſt forbids the Miniſters of the Goſpel to ſpeak with choice words, in that ſence, namely, with rhetorical and artificial ſtrained eloquence, which naturally pleaſeth the ear, and takes the heart; which kind of ſpeech is called *wiſdom of words* (1 Cor. 2. 17.) *and the enticing words of mans wiſdom* (chap. 2. 4.) They, having an aptneſs in them to entice or perſwade, are called enticing or perſwaſive words. And becauſe he would have little or nothing of the creature ſeen in winning ſouls, therefore the Apoſtle profeſſes he uſed not ſuch eloquence of words. Great Orators have carried whole Aſſemblies by the ears. And leſt it ſhould be thought that the Miniſters of the Goſpel convert men with Oratory, therefore they muſt not uſe ſuch *choice words.* It becomes them not, like Rhetoritians and Orators, to poliſh their ſtile with an affected curioſity and exactneſs of Language. But as affected language is ſinful, ſo neglect or rudeneſs of ſpeech is not without blame. We ſhould labour to ſpeak properly and weightily; ſo it becomes us to chooſe our words, and not to ſpeak till we have heard what our ſelves would ſay. And thus *Job* knew he ought to chooſe his words, when he ſpake to God; but he knew alſo he could not make any ſuch choice, either of rhetorical and perſwaſive words, or of logical and argumentative words, as might fit him to anſwer God, or reaſon with him. He was aſſured that neither the eloquence of his ſtile could perſwade him, nor the ſtrength of his arguments convince him; *How ſhall I chooſe out words to reaſon with God?*

In the Original, the word [reaſon] is not found; only thus, *Shall I chooſe out words with him?* To chooſe out words with another, bears this elegancy, as if *Job* had ſaid, If I ſhould ſet my ſelf to chuſe words with God, he would chuſe better words then I, more forcible words then I; he is more able infinitely to make choice of words and matter to convince me, then I to convince him: For the word which we tranſlate [words] may ſignifie not only words with which matter is cloathed, but the matter it ſelf cloathed with thoſe words. The ſum of all is, I can neither chooſe matter nor words to diſcourſe and argue with God, his invention and judgment about both, infinitely exceeds mine.

דבר *Significat cauſam aut rationem, & ſic eligere verba, eſt novas invenire rationes vel argumenta ad ſuam cauſã fulciendum.*

Mr. *Broughton* refers the word [chooſing] to *Job*, and not to words, thus; *Shall I chooſe to word it with God?* to plead and debate the buſineſs with God? Surely of all elections, I would not make that; I will not chooſe to make any words with God: ſilence and ſubmiſſion becomes me better. That's a good ſence.

But here a doubt may ariſe from a paſſage (*chap.* 13. 3.) Where *Job* ſpeaks thus, *Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and deſire to reaſon with God*; how then doth he here ſay, *Shall I chooſe out words to reaſon with God?* As if he had ſaid, by no means, I will not do this thing; and yet there he ſeems very ambitious of the attempt, and confident of the ſucceſs; *I deſire to reaſon with God.*

I anſwer, There is a twofold reaſoning with God. There is a reaſoning of declaration, and a reaſoning of conteſtation. When *Job* ſaith, *I deſire to reaſon with God*, his meaning is only this, I deſire to declare and ſet forth my caſe and condition before him. We may reaſon with God by way of narrative; he allows us to tell him how it is with us.

Further, *Job* ſpeaks in *chap.* 13. comparatively, ſhewing how much he had rather declare his caſe to God, then to his friends: God was a better friend to unboſom himſelf to, then any of, or all his three friends; for he ſaith of them in the very next words, *Ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Phyſitians of no value*; to what purpoſe would it be for me longer to make known my caſe, and ſhew my grief to you? I had rather reaſon with God then man. But as for that other reaſoning by way of conteſtation and quarrelling with the providence and works of God, *Job* profeſſeth in this place, he had no mind to it; he would never chooſe that task, or ſet himſelf to chooſe out words for that end; it was too high for him. He ſaw it was neither wiſdom nor duty to deal with, and undertake God, either with an open, or a cloſed hand; either with Logical ſubtilties, or Rhetorical flouriſhes.

Again, Whereas *Job* ſaith, he would not reaſon with God; it will be queried, May we not reaſon with God at all? The Lord himſelf ſaith (*Iſa.* 1. 18.) *Come, let us reaſon together.* If the Lord calleth us to reaſon with him, may we not then reaſon with him? Is it not ſinful modeſty to refuſe what God offers? To clear that,

I anſwer, There are two wayes wherein we may not reaſon with God.

Firſt, We muſt not reaſon with him in our own ſtrength.

Secondly, We muſt not reaſon with him upon our own worth.

And that is the full meaning of *Job*, *I would not chooſe to reaſon with God*, that is, to reaſon with God in my own ſtrength, as if I had power to deal with him. Or ſecondly, I would not reaſon with God upon my own worth, as if there were any thing in me upon which I were able to make it out that God ought not to deal thus with me; and that's clear by the words which follow, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not anſwer*; that is, I would not at all ſpeak with God ſtanding upon this bottom, or under the title of my own worthineſs. In either of theſe wayes it is ſinful to reaſon with God: But we may reaſon with God in the way of declaration, before ſpoken of.

In prayer there is a reaſoning with God; and the reaſonings and pleadings that are in prayer, are the life and ſtrength of prayer. Prayer is not only a bare manifeſtation of our mind to God, by ſuch a ſuit or petition; but in prayer there is, or ought to be a holy arguing with God about the matter which we declare, which is a bringing out and urging of reaſons and motives, whereby the Lord may be moved to grant what we pray for. The prayers of the Saints recorded in Scripture, are full of arguments.

I ſhall ſhew it in one example, as a taſte for the reſt; *Jacob*

cob in his diſtreſs at the approach of his brother *Eſau*, flees to God in prayer (*Gen.* 32.) And he doth more then ſpeak in prayer, he argues, yea, he wreſtles with God in prayer. The ſum of it is ſet down (*v.* 11.) *Deliver me, I pray thee*: To the undertaking of this deliverance, he urgeth the Lord by no fewer then ſeven arguments. Firſt, From Gods Covenant with his Anceſtors, *O God of my Father Abraham*, &c. As if he had ſaid, remember thoſe names with whom thou madeſt ſolemn Covenant of protection, both to them and their poſterity. The ſecond is from Gods particular command for this journey; *Thou ſaideſt unto me, return*: I departed not on my own head, but by thy direction; and therefore thou canſt not for thy honour, but free me from danger, ſeeing at thy word I am fallen into it. Thou O Lord, art even engaged to give me defence, while I yield thee obedience. Thirdly, He puts him in mind of his promiſes; *Thou ſaideſt, I will deal well with thee*; and that includes all other promiſes made unto him: theſe he makes as a Bulwark to defend him, or as his Anchor in the ſtorm. This Anchor muſt fail, and this Bulwark be broken down before the danger comes to me. If thy promiſe ſtand, I cannot fall. The fourth is the confeſſion of his own unworthineſs. Faith is alwayes humble, and while we are moſt confident in Gods word, we are moſt diſtruſtful of our own deſert; *I am not worthy of the leaſt of thy mercies.* Though I am thus bold to urge thy Covenant, yet I am as ready to acknowledge my own undeſert: Thou art a debtor by the promiſe thou haſt made to me, not by any performance of mine to thee. Fifthly, He ſeeks to continue the current of Gods favour, by ſhewing how plentifully it had already ſtreamed unto him, which he doth by way of *Antitheſis*, ſetting his former poverty in oppoſition to his preſent riches; *With my ſtaff I paſſed this* Jordan, *and now I am become two bands*; that is, thou haſt bleſſed me abundantly, and ſhall my Brothers malice blaſt all? Am I encreaſed only to make him abound? The ſixth Argument is, the greatneſs and eminence of his peril, *v.* 11. *I fear leſt he will come and ſlay the mother upon the children*; a proverbial ſpeech in the holy Language, like that of cutting off branch and root in one day, both denoting total exciſion, or an utter overthrow. Seventhly, He ſhuts up by reenforcing the mention of the promiſe, which he urgeth more ſtrongly then before; there it was only, *Thou ſaidſt, I will deal well with thee*; but here it is, *Thou ſaidſt, in doing good, I will do thee good*, that is, as it is rendred in our tranſlation, *I will ſurely do thee good*; and therefore let not my Brother do me evil. We ſee *Jacob*'s praying was reaſoning with God, and himſelf in the iſſue got not only a new bleſſing, but a new name, *Iſrael, a Prince with God, a prevailer both with God and men.*

And thus we may reaſon with God in the ſtrength, and for the ſake of Chriſt in all our prayers. For as when God calls for our obedience, he uſually adds perſwaſion to his precept, and reaſons with us, as well as directs us; his commands are not alwayes barely authoritative, and the reſolves of his prerogative: ſo when we call upon God for audience, we ſhould add perſwaſions to our petitions, and reaſon with him, as well as intreat him. Only we ſhould be careful to reaſon from right Topicks and heads of argument, ſuch as theſe;

First, From the freeneſs of the Grace of God.

Secondly, From the firmneſs of his Promiſe.

Thirdly, From the greatneſs of our need, or of the Churches miſery.

Fourthly, From all the concernments of his own Glory, *&c.* Thus we may reaſon with God for the doing of any thing we ask according to his will; and in theſe reaſonings, the ſpirit, life and ſtrength of prayer conſiſts.

So then, the only thing which *Job* declineth as ſinful and unbecoming, is, to reaſon with God as a contender; he might humbly reaſon with him as a petitioner, or as a remembrancer; *Put me in remembrance* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 43. 26.) *Let us plead together; declare thou that thou maiſt be juſtified.* We may declare our cauſe, and we need not fear to declare our ſins, that God may juſtifie us; but we muſt not preſume to declare our righteouſneſs, that we may juſtifie our ſelves; this *Job* diſclaims.

How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and choſe out words to reaſon with him?

Towards the further clearing of theſe words, we may take notice that *Job* puts himſelf under a double relation. In the former part of the verſe he puts himſelf in the Reſpondents place; *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him?* And in the latter part of the verſe he puts himſelf in the Opponents place; *And chooſe out words to reaſon with him?* His meaning is, If the Lord will object againſt me, I am not the man who dares, or is able to anſwer him. And if I ſhould take upon me to object againſt the Lord, the Lord may, and can eaſily anſwer me. From which notion of the words, two points may be obſerved.

Firſt, *No man can anſwer what God hath to object againſt him.*

The Lord hath a thouſand arguments which we are not able to give him ſatisfaction in (as was touched in the beginning of this Chapter, *verſ.* 3.) *We cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.* If God ſhould caſt a man to hell, what hath he to ſay for himſelf, as from himſelf, when God objects, *Thou haſt ſinned.* If God afflict a man, and lay him low, giving him this argument for what he doth, *I am thy Creator, I formed and made thee; if I break thee to pieces*, what canſt thou ſay againſt me? If the Lord ſhould ſay, *I am thy Sovereign*, I have ſupream power over thee, may I not do with thee what I will? what hath man to anſwer? Man muſt be ſilent, and lay his hand upon his mouth; he hath not a word of reaſon or holineſs to reaſon againſt God in any of his diſpenſations.

Let man (on the other ſide) gather as many arguments as he can to object againſt God, he is able to wipe them all off preſently, to blow them away with a breath. All the ſhifts and apologies, the excuſes and arguings which any make for their ſins, or which they make for themſelves againſt the juſtice and wiſdom of God, are anſwered with a word; ſo that, put man in the Opponents, or in the Reſpondents place, he can make no work of it.

Secondly, Obſerve from this phraſe, *Shall I chooſe out words to reaſon with him?*

God is not taken with words.

Fine phraſes and eloquent ſpeeches will not carry it with him; *If we would prevail with God, we muſt ſpeak our hearts to him rather then our words*: yet we ought to chooſe out words (as was touched before) when we ſpeak to God. As we muſt take heed how we hear, while he ſpeaks; ſo we have need to take heed what we ſpeak in his hearing. That's *Solomon*'s advice, *Eccleſ.* 5. 2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God.* That is, ſpeak not vainly and unadviſedly, thy tongue running before thy wit. Let wiſdom guide thy tongue, and let thy heart ſhew thee wiſdom; *Let not thy heart be haſty to utter*, when its office is to conceive, not to utter. But how ean the heart be haſty to utter? Utterance is the buſineſs of the tongue. The heart is then haſty to utter, when it ſuffers the tongue to utter what it ſelf hath not throughly concocted by meditation, and made its own. As in the body, ſo in the mind, the third concoction is that which nouriſhes and aſſimilates. So then *Solomon* s meaning is, Let not raw, unboiled, undigeſted thoughts paſs out into diſcourſes, or be ſtampt into words before the Lord. As there is a ſin of curioſity, ſo there may be a ſin of neglect. *Extreams are equally dangerous.* The diſtance that is between God and us, proclaims this duty of our moſt reverent addreſſes to him. *He is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few*; and yet the fewneſs of words pleaſes God no more then the multitude of them doth. We ſay, *In many words there can hardly be a ſcarcity of errors*; and in a few words there may be not a few errors, poſſibly more errors then words. *Fewneſs*, ſimply taken, is not the grace of words: But becauſe they who ſpeak but little, do uſuall think the more, and ſo their words are ſteep'd long in their hearts, therefore few words are uſually *choice words*. It is a ſin, if we are well conceited of our words; and it is a ſin, if our words be not our beſt conceptions. *How ſhall I chooſe out words to reaſon with him?*

Verſe 15. **Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not anſwer; but I would make ſupplication to my Judge.**

אם־צדקתי

This brings the matter to the height; Who, I reaſon and plead with God? I anſwer him? No, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not anſwer him.* The ſtrength of the argument lies thus; as if *Job* had ſaid, *I am ſo far from entring a conteſt with God, that I profeſs I would not do it, though I had the greateſt advantage and fitneſs to do it of any man in the world; though I were righteous, I would not do it. I do not ſay, that the reaſon why I would not plead with God, is becauſe I am wicked, ſinful and abominable, more guilty and unrighteous then my neighbours, or then you, my friends; but how righteous ſoever I were, I would not do it. Job* ſpeaks as a man who would ſhew how much he dreads the power and ſtrength of another; *What, I fight with ſuch a man? I contend with ſuch a man? No, I profeſs I would not fight with him, though I were as well weapon'd, arm'd and prepar'd as any man in the world, I would not come near him.* If there be any armour or weapon, any furniture or preparations which may enable man to contend with God, it is the *armour of righteouſneſs*, and the furnitures of Grace. Now, ſaith *Job*, though I had that armour, *though I were righteous, I would not contend with him.* The Apoſtle argues much after this rate, 1 *Cor.* 13. about that great point of Goſpel-charity; where he telleth us, that all things are as nothing without charity; and he inſtanceth in thoſe things which ſtand higheſt in the thoughts of man, to commend him to the acceptation both of God and man, *verſ.* 2, 3. *Though I have the gift of propheſie, and underſtand all myſteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, ſo that I could remove mountains; and though I ſhould give my body to be burned, and have not Love, what would it advantage me? Though I ſhould give all my goods to the poor, and have not Love,* &c. It is poſſible for a man to give abundance to the poor, and yet have a dearth of love, both to them and to God, in his heart; all the love that moveth him, may be love to himſelf: therefore (ſaith he) *Though I give my goods to the poor, it profits me nothing*; he puts all theſe ſuppoſitions, which are the greateſt advantages for heaven (except Chriſt) imaginable, and yet concludes all but as ſounding braſs or a tinckling Cymbal, nothing but noiſe without Charity. So here, to ſhew how impoſſible a thing it is for creatures, in their own ſtrength, to contend with God, he puts a ſuppoſition upon that which is moſt probable to carry us thorow it, *Righteouſneſs; Though I were righteous, I were not able to anſwer him,* no not I.

Though I were righteous.

It is, as if *Job* had further expreſt himſelf to this ſence; *I am ſo far from juſtifying my ſelf in all my complainings* (which was the thing his friends taxed him with) *as if God could find nothing amiſs in what I have ſpoken, that I freely confeſs there is not the moſt conſiderate, righteous or holy action that ever I did in my life, which I durſt bring to the touchſtone, to the balance, to juſtifie my ſelf before God by; no, but inſtead of that, I would fall down and abaſe my ſelf, as knowing that I am before him whoſe eyes (being ten thouſand times brighter then the Sun) are able to ſee unrighteouſneſs, where I ſee nothing but righteouſneſs: Do not think I am juſtifying my ſelf as a righteous man, in what I have ſpoken or done; for though I were righteous, yet I would not (upon that ground) go about to plead my cauſe, or ſtand it out with God.* Or thus, *I know I am unrighteous and unclean, but if I were righteous, I would not anſwer him.*

Here a Queſtion or two muſt be reſolved: As,

Firſt, *Was not* Job *righteous?* He puts the Queſtion, *Whom, though I were righteous*: Was *Job* an unrighteous man? Doth not he himſelf ſay (*chap.* 29. 14.) *I put on righteouſneſs, and it cloathed me.* Why then doth he here only make a ſuppoſition of it? *Whom, though I were righteous*; when-as there he makes it a poſition, that he was cloathed with righteouſneſs.

I anſwer (to clear this Scripture) Man is righteous in a double oppoſition: Righteous, Firſt, In oppoſition to the wicked; and theſe may be taken in three ranks; either, Firſt, The abominable and prophane: Or ſecondly, Hypocrites and unſincere: Or thirdly, Oppreſſors, and ſuch as are unjuſt in their dealings toward men. As righteous is oppoſed to wicked in theſe three, *Prophane, Hypocrites* or *Oppreſſors*, ſo *Job* was a righteous man. *Job* was not prophane, he feared God; *Job* was not an hypocrite, he was perfect and upright; *Job* was not an oppreſſor, the loins of the poor bleſſed him. And that's the peculiar ſence of *chap.* 29. *I put on righteouſneſs*, that is, righteouſneſs in all my dealings with men.

Secondly, Righteous is oppoſed to imperfect, or that which hath any failing or want in it. And in this ſence *Job* was not righteous; and that's his meaning here; *Though I were righteous*, that is, though I had the uttermoſt perfections which a creature is capable of, yet I would not ſtand upon them, and plead it out with God. The teſtimony which the Lord gave concerning *Job* (chap. 1. 1.) is in words of an inferiour ſence; this in the text is above them both. The Lord there certifies, that *Job* was *perfect* and *upright*. But though he was perfect and upright, yet he was not *righteous*. He was perfect in oppoſition to inſincerity, and he was upright in oppoſition to injuſtice; but he was not righteous in oppoſition to imperfection, *If I were righteous*; as I know I am not.

Further, Righteouſneſs is twofold. There is a righteouſneſs of the perſon, and a righteouſneſs of the cauſe, *Though I were righteous*: *Job* doth not forſake the righteouſneſs of his cauſe, he only diſclaimeth the righteouſneſs of his perſon. I acknowledge I am not righteous in my ſelf, and I will not yield that my afflictions and ſufferings argue me unrighteous.

Juſtus in judicio opponitnr improbo reo, qui cauſa cadit. Druſ.

Here another queſtion ariſes, if we take *Job*'s ſuppoſition of a man righteous, it will be demanded, May not a righteous perſon anſwer God?

I anſwer, There is no created righteouſneſs can anſwer God. *God chargeth his Angels with folly*; he ſaw evil in them, compared to himſelf. A righteous Angel cannot ſtand it out with God, much leſs the moſt righteous man. God indeed would have accepted man in the righteouſneſs of works, had he continued in innocency; and yet he might have ſeen folly in man abiding in innocency, as he doth in thoſe Angels which continue innocent. No created righteouſneſs can anſwer God.

But there is a righteouſneſs in which we may anſwer God; *Job*'s ſuppoſition excludes not that; namely, the righteouſneſs of faith which we have by Chriſt. Man righteous by faith, or by imputed righteouſneſs, may anſwer God; but man righteous by works, or inherent righteouſneſs, cannot. He that is righteous by the righteouſneſs of faith, hath to anſwer God, becauſe hath ſomewhat of God to anſwer God with; Faith doth not bring man to anſwer God, but God to anſwer God; Chriſt anſwers God for every Believer: and Chriſt can anſwer God fully to all the demands of juſtice, without abatement. Chriſt hath not compounded with our Creditor for our debts, but paid them to the utmoſt farthing. A believer is able to anſwer God, and doth anſwer him every day; when he asks the pardon of ſin, he offers the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. And that which he offereth by faith, he will ſtand to, and plead with God upon; God hath what he can deſire, or his Juſtice expect; the believer bids him try to the uttermoſt, if there be any imperfection or flaw in it, he will venture his ſoul upon it. In this ſence man anſwers God. But *Job* ſpeaks about inherent perſonal righteouſneſs, the righteouſneſs of his wayes. Upon this he will not venture a hair of his head, much leſs his ſoul and everlaſting peace.

Cum hic juſtitiam ſibi tribuit, non de ea agit quæ ad legis normam poſſit ſubſiſtere: Solum enim Dei tribunal ſeveriſſimum Chriſti juſtitia non reformidat, ſed agit de de juſtitia inchoata, quæ quantumvis Deo grata ſit, non tamen ad amuſſim reſpondet perfectioni illæ quam lex requirit. Merl.

Though I were righteous, I would not anſwer him.

There is ſomewhat further conſiderable, for as [*righteous*] is a judiciary word, ſo likewiſe is [*anſwer.*] And it implies, that *Job* would not only not anſwer God objecting or reaſoning, but that he would not anſwer him accuſing or charging him, judging or ſentencing him. I muſt acknowledge my ſelf to be what God judgeth me to be, and that I am worthy to ſuffer what he judges me to ſuffer.

Reſpondere, verbum eſt forenſe, &c. Sanct.

Si ille me arguet, aut in me ſententiā feret, etſi cauſa mea juſta ſit, non audebo illi reſpondere aliquid objicienti, aut in me pronuncianti; me enim rationibus obruet, & ſua opprimet Majeſtate. Merc.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Job* having ſhewed the weakneſs and ignorance of the creature in his former diſcourſe, here you ſee whither it tended; namely, to prove man to be ſinful and unrighteous. This teaches us,

That, *All the failings, infirmities and weakneſſes which are in man, are the iſſues and effects of the ſin of man.*

Man

Ex effectis cauſam declarat, unde enim tanta in mentibus hominum caligo & inſcitia, unde tanta infirmitas corporum & animorum, niſi ex peccato? Merl.

Man is an unrighteous creature, therefore a weak creature. *Job* argues from the effect to the cauſe, from the fruit to the root: man hath infirmities upon him, therefore he hath ſin in him. Where there is no ſin, there is ſtrength; and where there is no ſin, there is knowledge. Perfect holineſs ſcatters all the clouds of darkneſs and ignorance.

Secondly, *Though I were righteous, I would not anſwer him*; then it follows,

Unrighteous men cannot anſwer God.

If a righteous man cannot, can an unrighteous? No marvel if *David* ſaith in *Pſal.* 1. *The wicked ſhall not ſtand in judgement*, for (in a ſence) the righteous cannot ſtand in judgement, that is, they cannot plead their own righteouſneſs before God. Wicked men have nothing to help them, no help without, and none within, they have nothing but ſin in them, and they have no Saviour without them. Hence the Apoſtle *Peter* argues (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and ſinners appear?* If *Abel* be not able to anſwer God, how ſhall *Cain?* If *David* cannot, how ſhall *Saul?* They who have not the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, have nothing but unrighteouſneſs of their own. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *The vaſt difference that is between the ſpirit and temper of a godly man, and of a wicked man.*

O the humility of *Job's* ſpirit! *Job* will not juſtifie his own righteouſneſs, or juſtifie himſelf in his righteouſneſs. A wicked man will juſtifie his ſin, or juſtifie himſelf in his ſin. A *Saul* will juſtifie his diſobedience, but a *Job* will not juſtifie his obedience. *Job* will not take upon him to be a righteous man; though God had told him he was perfect and upright. A wicked man will take upon him to be righteous, though God tell him to his face a thouſand times, that he is vile and filthy. How do wicked men ſeek for pleas and covers to make themſelves appear righteous! How do they gild the baſe metal of their hearts, and paint over thoſe rotten poſts to make them appear beautiful! Chriſt tells the Phariſees that they were like filthy ſepulchres, full of dead mens bones, yet they would be painted over with the notion of a righteous generation. *Job* who had much righteouſneſs and faithfulneſs in him, would not own them, and modeſtly bluſhes at the praiſe of God, *Though I were righteous, yet I would not anſwer.* Obſerve,

Fourthly, *The righteouſneſs of man is not pleadable before the righteous God.*

Though I were righteous, yet I would not anſwer him. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 4. 4.) gives a parallel teſtimony, *Though I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified. Paul* knew nothing by himſelf, that is, he had not any guilt upon him that he knew of; he did not allow himſelf in any ſin, but kept his conſcience void of offence, both toward God and toward man; yet (though it was thus with him) he diſclaims all opinion of himſelf, *I am not hereby juſtified*, this is not the plea I have to make before God; he is able to find out failings where I find none, he knows better then I, what I am. Obſerve,

Fifthly, *A godly man looks upon his own righteouſneſs as no righteouſneſs.*

Whom though I were righteous, I would not anſwer. His ſuppoſition hath a negation in it, *I am not righteous.* Job did not deny the work of the Spirit, or the grace of God in him; but he would not own them in his pleadings with God. He could ſtand upon his terms with men, and let them know who he was, and what he had done (and it was reaſon he ſhould) but before God he had nothing to mention but Chriſt: In reference to the higher degree of grace, for ſanctification we muſt *forget all that is behind*, and preſs *on to that which is before*: And in reference to the whole grace of juſtification, we muſt forget all our ſanctification. The leſs we remember our own righteouſneſs, the more righteous we are in Chriſt. As we abate in our ſelves, we encreaſe in him. Chriſt draws the picture of an hypocrite to the life (*Luk.* 18.) in that Parable of a *Phariſee and a Publican*, going up to the Temple to pray; and the deſign of Chriſt in that Parable, is held forth at *verſ.* 9. to be the conviction of ſuch *as truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others.* Now what did this Phariſee? *He thanks God he was not as other men, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or as that Publican; and then he minds God that he gave tithes, and kept faſts twice a week*; and ſo makes a goodly report of himſelf, both in the negative and in the affirmative, what he was, and what he was not. Never did any good man tell God ſuch a ſtory of his own life, as the Phariſee told. The Saints love to do well, more then to hear well from others, much more then to hear well from themſelves; they love to do good, more then to receive good, much more, then to ſpeak good of themſelves. When Chriſt is repreſented ſitting in judgment (*Matth.* 25. 35.) he tells the faithful of all their good deeds, or acts of charity, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloathed me*, &c. Hear how the Saints anſwer, as if they had done no ſuch thing; *When was this Lord? When ſaw we thee hungry, and fed thee*, &c. We have forgot the time. They did ſo little mind the good they had done, that they remembred not they ever did it. The Lord keeps a faithful record of what his people do, but themſelves do not. It is our duty to remember to do good, but let God alone to remember the good we have done. *The Lord is not unrighteous to forget our labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10.) but we loſe our righteouſneſs, unleſs we forget it. If we much remember what we do, God will remember it but little: The ſervants of God know well enough when they do good (to do good ignorantly, is a degree of doing evil.) They know when they do good, and they know what good they do; but when 'tis done, 'tis to them as unknown.

Hezekiah (Iſa. 38. 3.) put God in mind of his good deeds, *Lord* (ſaith he) *remember how I walked before thee with an upright heart*, &c. *Hezekiah* deſired the Lord to remember his *uprightneſs.* So *Nehemiah* in divers paſſages of that book (*Chap.* 13. 14, 22, 29, 31.) puts the Lord in remembrance of his righteouſneſs. But it is one thing to put the Lord in remembrance of what we have done *hiſtorically*; and another thing to plead what we have done *legally.* It's one thing to ſhew to the Lord the work of his own grace in us; and another thing to mind the Lord of our works to obtain his grace. *Hezekiah* would have God to take notice of what he was, to pity him in his ſickneſs, Lord, I am thus, remember the work of thy hands, as I am thy creature; remember the work of thy Spirit, as I am a new creature, as I am thy ſervant. And *Nehemiah* puts all upon the ſcore of mercy: He did not ſay, Lord, remember me for what I have done, anſwer me according to what I have done, but, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and ſpare me according to the greatneſs of thy mercy* (Chap. 13. 22.) If Saints at any time remember God of their works, it is not to ground an argument of merit upon their works, but to ſhew God the workings of his grace and ſpirit.

Though I were righteous, I would not anſwer him; What then? What will *Job* do? What courſe will he take for himſelf, if he will not anſwer the Lord? What? This courſe he takes, and it is the beſt.

I would make ſupplication to my Judge.

τοῦ κρίματος αὐτοῦ δεηθήσομαι. Sept.

The Septuagint render it thus, *I would deprecate his judgment*; that is, I would ſue for mercy. As if he had ſaid, I am not without hope, becauſe I have none in my ſelf: I am not loſt, becauſe I am loſt to my ſelf: I have a ſure way yet left, *I will make ſupplication to my Judge*; or as Maſter *Broughton* reads it, *I would crave pity of my Judge:* As if he had ſaid, Though juſtice caſt me, yet mercy will relieve me. Mercy will help me as well, and honour God more.

למשפטי *Ad facientem judicium me.* Mont. *Eum qui me judicare facit.* Pagn.

The word notes humbleſt ſubmiſſion, as when a man begs for his life. *Jacob* (Hoſ. 12. 4.) *wept and made ſupplication.* The brethren of *Joſeph* (Gen. 42. 21.) were exceedingly afflicted at the remembrance of their hard uſage toward him their brother, when they ſold him to the *Egyptians, We would not hearken when he beſought us*; it is this word, Think with how much ſubmiſſion *Joſeph* being ready to be ſold unto ſtrangers, ſupplicated his brethren for pity; Or how a man will lie begging at an enemies feet, who is ready to kill him. With ſuch ſubmiſſive language *Job* reſolved to crave pardon and pity at the hands of God.

Thus he obeyes the counſel of *Bildad* in *Chap.* 8. *If thou ſeek unto God, and make thy ſupplication unto him betimes. Job* ſeems to anſwer, Your counſel is good, friend *Bildad*, *Though I were righteous, I would not anſwer him*; but (according to your advice) *I would make ſupplication to my Judge.* The prayers of the Church in greateſt ſtraights and and diſtreſſes, are uſually expreſſed by this word [*Supplications.*] *All petitionary Prayer is ſupplication*; but becauſe we are much abaſed, and laid very low at ſuch times, therefore prayer then put up, is ſpecially called ſupplication. Hence *Solomon* at the dedication of the Temple, putting caſes and ſuppoſitions of many afflictions incident to that people, ſtill concludes, *At what time they ſhall confeſs their ſins, and pray, and make ſupplication, then*, &c. (1 *King.* 8.) And (*Eſth.* 4. 8.) *Mordecai* ſends to *Eſther*, charging her to go in to the King, What to do? *To make ſupplication unto him.* The lives of the Jews being given away to ſatiſfie the malice of *Haman*, it was time for her to ſupplicate in the lowlieſt poſture. Thus *Job* had it in the thoughts of his heart *to make ſupplication to his Judge*; as if he had ſaid, *If I were to ſtand at the tribunal of an earthly Judge, I would not ſupplicate, but plead; I would not petition his favour, but ſtand upon my right; I would not crave his pity, but expect his juſtice; I would bring forth my reaſons and arguments, my proofs and witneſſes, this courſe would I run with an earthly Judge: but my cauſe being with God, I will only put a petition into the Court, and ſubmit unto him, let him do with me what he pleaſeth.* Hence we may obſerve,

First, *That there is no weapon can prevail with God, but only prayer and ſupplication.*

Job's thoughts had travel'd thorow all the creatures, and found not one of them could ſtand before God; therefore he reſolves to fall down before him: I will make ſupplication. *Prayer overcometh when nothing elſe can.* Chriſt conquered by dying, and we conquer by ſubmitting. And yet it is not ſupplication as an act of ours, but ſupplication as it is an ordinance of Gods that prevails with him: he looks upon prayer as having the ſtamp of his own inſtitution; otherwiſe our greateſt humblings could prevail no more then our proudeſt contendings. The Word preached prevails upon the heart, not as it is the act of a man, who diſpenſeth it (there is no ſtrength in that) but as it is an ordinance of God, who hath appointed it: So humble ſupplication obtains much with God, becauſe he hath ſaid it ſhall.

Etſi opus virtutis exercuero ad vitam, non ex meritis, ſed ad veniam convaleſco. Prece itaq; innitendū eſt cū recta agimus, ut omne quod juſtè vivimus, humilitate condiamus. Greg.

Secondly, *To make ſupplication is to crave pitty.*

As prayer prevails, ſo no plea in prayer can prevail, unleſs we plead *pity, pity, mercy, mercy*; a ſuppliant looks for all good at the hand of Free grace. We at any time have ſin enough to procure us evil (*Jer.* 4. 18.) *Thy ſins have procured theſe things unto thee*; But we never have goodneſs enough to procure us any mercy. Mercy comes for mercy's ſake.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *I would make ſupplication to my Judge.* Obſerve,

God is the Judge of all our actions and intentions.

Job was in a great conteſt with men, but (ſaith he) men are not my Judges, God is my Judge, *It is a comfort to the Saints to remember that God is their Judge. Job* was not afraid of God in that relation: no, it was a rich conſolation to think that God was his Judge. He is a righteous Judge, a merciful Judge, a pitiful Judge; we need not be afraid to ſpeak to him under that notion. *Job* ſaith not, I will make ſupplications to my father (which is a ſweet relation) but (which is moſt dreadful to wicked men) he conſiders God as a Judge: The Saints are enabled by faith to look upon God as a Judge, with aſſurances of mercy.

Laſtly obſerve, *The whole world ſtands guilty before God.*

Rom. 3. 19. *Every mouth muſt be ſtopped: Job* will only make ſupplication, he had nothing elſe to do or ſay. *We do not preſent our ſupplications unto thee for our righteouſneſs, but for thy great mercy* (*Dan.* 9. 8.) We can get nothing from God by opening our mouths in any other ſtile, or upon any other title then this, of an humble acknowledgment of our unworthineſs: the lower we go in our own thoughts, the higher we are in the thoughts of God; and we find the more acceptance with him, by how much the leſs acceptance we think we deſerve. *Nothing is gained from God, either by diſputing or by boaſting. All our victory is humility.*

VERS. 16, 17, 18.

If I had called, and he had anſwered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice.

For he breaketh me with a tempeſt, and multiplieth my wounds without cauſe.

He will not ſuffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterneſs.

THis holy man having abaſed himſelf in the ſenſe of his own inability and unrighteouſneſs before the Lord, and diſclaimed the leaſt intendment of contending or diſputing with him (as was ſeen in the former context) now confirms it by a further ſuppoſition, in *verſ.* 16, 17, 18. and ſo forward. As if he had ſaid, Ye ſhall find I am ſo far from wording it with God, or ſtanding upon mine own juſtification with him (though I have pleaded mine integrity before you my friends) that I here make this hypotheſis or ſuppoſition, *If I had called, and he had anſwered, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice.*

There is much variety in making out the ſence of theſe words. The Septuagint read it negatively, *If I had called, and he had not anſwered me, I would not believe*, &c. Moſt of the Hebrew writers fall very foul upon *Job*, and tax him harſhly for this ſpeech. *What? Would he not believe that God hearkned unto him, when he had anſwered him?* Is not this unbelief a plain denial of providence, or at leaſt of ſpecial providence? *I would not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice*, is (in their ſence) as if he had ſaid, *I think God takes no care, or makes no account of particulars, he looks not after this or that man, what he ſpeaks, or for what he prayes. I can ſcarce believe that my condition is under the care of God, or that he will take notice of me; if I ſhould call upon him, or if I plead before him, what ſhall I get by it? Do ye think he will deſcend to the relief of ſuch a one as I am? Why then do ye move me to call upon him?* &c. *If I ſhould pray, and if he ſhould anſwer me, I can hardly be perſwaded that he will pity me, and do me good.*

A ſecond opinion caſts him into the deeps of deſpair; as if *Job* had altogether laid aſide hope of receiving any favour by calling upon God, or of comfort, by putting his caſe to him.

ἐάν τι καλήσω, ϗ μὴ ὑπακούσῃ. Sept.

Atræ loliginis ſuccum hic aſpergit Rab. Lev. *Aſſerens* Jobum *negare providentiam ſive curam particularium.* Coc.

Verba diffidentis deſperantis de divina miſericordia. Opinio Rab. Moyſes & Rab. Levi, *apud* Mer.

But all theſe aſperſions are unworthily caſt upon *Job*, a man full of humility and ſubmiſſion to the will of God: his frequent prayers and applications of himſelf to God do abundantly confute all ſuch unſavoury conjectures. But the Jewiſh Commentators carry on their former ſtrain, being all along very rigid towards this holy man, very apt to put the worſt conſtructions upon doubtful paſſages, and ſometimes ill ones upon thoſe which are plainly good.

Judaicum commentum, atq; Jobi *ſanctitate indigniſſimū* Pined.

More diſtinctly.

There is a difficulty about the Grammatical meaning of one word in the Text, which carries the ſence two wayes.

If I had called, and he had anſwered me.

The Hebrew word, which we tranſlate [**Call**] ſignifies ſometimes to *pray*, and ſometimes to *plead or challenge*: An act of invocation, or an act of provocation: it is rendred both wayes here. By moſt, as we, *If I had called upon him*; that is, If I had prayed or made my ſute unto him. By ſome, *If I had ſent in my plea* (as to begin a ſuit of Law with him) *or my challenge*, as to enter the combate with him, *&c.*

קרא *Alii invocare, alii provocare vertunt.*

As it is taken for a challenge, ſo the ſence lies thus, If I ſhould ſtand upon terms with God, and call him to an account to make good what he hath done; *And he had anſwered me*; that is, if he had condeſcended to give me an account of his wayes; yet I would not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice, that is, that he had yielded to me, or acknowledged that he had done me wrong. Shall I, who am but duſt and aſhes, prevail in my ſuit, and get the day by pleading and contending with the great God of Heaven and Earth?

Take the word as it ſignifies invocation, or calling by way of petition (*Pſal.* 50.15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.* And ſo two or three interpretations are offered.

Tam infirma eſt caro, ut etiam propoſitis divinis promiſſionibus nolit credere. Iſidor.Clar.

First, Some in favour of *Job* conceive that he ſpeaks this only through the infirmity of his fleſh, that it was ſin within him that ſpake, and not *Job*; according to that of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 7. *Not I, but ſin that dwelleth in me:* So *Job* ſpeaks, as if he did not believe that God would hear him when he prayed; but whoſe voice was this? Not *Job's*, but his ſins; the corruption, the infirmity of *Job* gave out ſuch language, not he. As we may ſay in reference to an action, *I did it not, but ſin that dwelleth in me*, ſo to a word, *I ſpake it not, but ſin and corruption that dwelleth in me, gave out ſuch language.*

Pleriq; Latini ad eas conditiones referunt quas oratio efficax requirit; quarum defectu non exaudimur, atq; ea ratione ſibi timere Jobũ

Secondly, *I would not believe that God had hearkned to me, though he had anſwered me*; may refer to the manner of his prayer or invocation, as not coming up to the height and meaſure of the duty, as not fulfilling that Law of prayer which the Lord requireth; and ſo, becauſe his prayers were imperfect and weak, therefore he would not believe that ever God had taken notice of him, or hearkned to his voice: As if he had ſaid, *You bid me make my ſupplication; if I do, yet I will not believe that God takes notice of my prayers.* Why? becauſe mine are but cold and unbelieving prayers, weak and diſtracted prayers, the prayers of a diſtemper'd heart, the prayers of a confuſed ſpirit, ſuch I confeſs mine are; therefore I cannot believe God will hearken to my voice.

Videtur hoc eſſe animi mirabiliter demiſſi, atq; ſibi ſuæq; orationi diffidentis, fidentis vero de ſola divina bonitate. Pined.

But rather in the laſt place, take the ſence thus, that *Job* in theſe words, breaths out the humility of his ſpirit; as if he had ſaid, *I am ſo far from ſtanding upon my terms with God* (as was ſhewed before) *as if I had hopes to carry it with him by contending, that though I come in the humbleſt manner to invocate and call upon his Name, and I find him ſo gracious and merciful to me, as that he doth anſwer me in my requeſts, and grant the thing I deſire; yet I will not believe that he hath hearkned to my voice*, that is, *that he hath done this for any worthineſs in me, in my ſervices, or prayers, I will not believe that the anſwer I receive from heaven is obtained by any value which my perſon hath with God.*

Non ex diffidentia hoc dicit, ſed ex timore, Dei reveritus judicium. Druſ.

Such is the coldneſs and deadneſs, the languiſhment and unbelief of my heart in prayer, ſuch are my prayers, that the truth is, I cannot believe I am heard, when I am heard, I cannot think my petition granted, when I ſee it is granted. Thus it ſets forth the exceeding humility and lowlineſs of his ſpirit, he would give all the glory unto God in granting his petitions, and take nothing at all to himſelf in making thoſe petitions, *I would not believe that he hath hearkned to my voice.*

What voice was it then that he believ'd God hearkned unto? He hearkned to the voice of the Mediator, to the voice of Chriſt: He hearkned to the voice of his own free grace: He hearkned to the ſounding of his own bowels. He hearkned to the motions and interceſſions of his Spirit in me; to the motions and interceſſions of his Son for me. It is not my voice that hath got the anſwer; he alone that hath granted it of his good pleaſure in Chriſt.

I would not believe that he had hearkned to my voice.

אמן *Credere, ſtabile eſſe.*

The word ſignifies both believing and eſtabliſhing, or to believe and eſtabliſh; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe faith ſettles the heart, *Faith is the eſtabliſhment of the ſoul.* An unbeliever hath no bottom, he is built without a foundation, his ſpirit is unfixed.

And that act of believing [**I would not believe**] is the general act of Faith, namely, a firm aſſent to the truth of what another ſpeaketh. An aſſent to the truth of it two wayes. To the truth of it, Firſt, Hiſtorically, that ſuch a thing was ſpoken or for done; and then Logically, that the thing is true which is ſpoken. When he ſaith, I would not believe that God hath done this, his meaning is, I would not aſſent to it, as done for my ſake, or for my voice; not that he would not believe the thing was done at all. He aſſented to the word and anſwers of God, when he did receive it; but in that reſtriction, he would not believe it, namely, in reference to himſelf, that he hath hearkned to his voice.

האזין *Græcè* ἐνωτίζεσθαι. *Auſcultare, inclinationem animi denotat ad alterius dicta. Cujus oppoſitũ eſt, aures claudere & obturare ad alicujus ſermonem. Hinc proverbium,* Surdo narras fabulã. *Hæc verba exactam demiſſi animi ſignificationem continent. Tunc cum arriſerit gratia, time, cum abierit, time.* Bernard.

To hearken] Is more then to hear; it notes the inclination of the mind rather then the attention of the ear. As to ſtop the ear notes the ſhutting of the heart againſt obedience, rather then of the ear againſt audience. To tell a tale to a deaf man, is to ſpeak to one hears, but will not grant.

From all it appears,

Firſt, That, *Job* ſpeaks very highly of the goodneſs of God, namely, that God anſwers prayer, though he hath not reſpect to the voice of him that prayeth; *Though he had anſwered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned to my voice.*

Secondly, That, he ſpeaks exceeding humbly and ſubmiſſively of himſelf, *my voice*; what am I, a poor creature, that I ſhould think I had carried the matter with God?

Thirdly, That, he ſpeaks very wiſely and underſtandingly concerning the nature and efficacy of prayer, and the means procuring anſwers of prayer. When man prayes, God anſwers; but he doth not anſwer becauſe man prayes.

Providentia Dei ſæpe nobis benevola eſt, cũ nulla benevolentiæ externa præbet argumenta, imo aliquãdo quem exaudet turbine conterit malorum.

Fourthly, That, he ſpeaks very highly and glorioully of the providence of God, though providence act darkly towards man. We pray, God anſwers, and doth us good, yet things may go quite contrary in appearance, *If I had called, and he had anſwered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice*; Why? *He breaketh me with a tempeſt. God was breaking him, and hearing him at the ſame time.* God may be doing us good, when the ſigns he gives ſpeak evil; he hears and anſwers us praying to him, when we think we hear him thundring terribly againſt us. Hence we learn,

First, That, *Prayer is calling upon God.*

Then the heart ſhould be very attentive upon God in prayer. How can we expect God ſhould hear us, when we do not hear our ſelves! In prayer we call upon God, therefore we ſhould call upon our ſelves to conſider how and what we pray.

Secondly note, *Prayer granted, is prayer anſwered.*

If I had called, he had anſwered me. The Lord from heaven ſpeaks to us in every act of his providence; his ſpeaking to us, is in doing for us. The works of God are anſwers to man. God doth not anſwer audibly or ſenſibly; there is a voice in his diſpenſations. As men, (*Prov.* 6.13.) So the Lord ſpeaks to us with his feet, and anſwers our prayers with his fingers, that is, his works and wayes are demonſtrations of his will in anſwer to our prayers.

Thirdly, In that *Job* tells us, *He would not believe*, &c. we are taught,

That faith is a neceſſary ingredient in prayer.

This negation of his faith in prayer, implies the need of faith in prayer. When I pray I ſhould believe, but as my caſe ſtands I cannot believe, clouds and darkneſs are upon me. Faith is the ſtrength of prayer, *Whatſoever you ask in prayer believing, you ſhall receive,* Matth. 21.22. Prayer without faith, is like a Gun diſcharged without a bullet, which makes a noiſe, but doth no execution. We may put out a voice in ſpeaking, but except we put out faith in ſpeaking, we do but ſpeak, we do not pray. As the Word of God coming upon us doth us no good, prevails not upon our hearts, unleſs it be mixed with faith (*Heb.* 4.2.) *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* So the word that goes out from us, the word of prayer, prevaileth not at all with God, obtaineth nothing from him, unleſs it be mixed with faith. All the promiſes are made to believers, *All things are poſſible to them that believe* (Mark 9.23.) *Ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea, driven with the wind and toſſed* (Jam. 1.6.) To ask in faith, is to ask, reſting upon the power of God, whereby he is able; upon his truth, whereby he is faithful; and upon his goodneſs in Chriſt, whereby he is ready to make good his promiſes. He that asks thus doth not wave. Few are without doubting, but all ſound believers are without wavering. The Greek word ſignifies to queſtion, or diſpute a thing, a degree beyond doubting; as when a man is at no certainty with himſelf, being ſometime of one mind, ſometime of another; the judgment being ſo carried, that the man is at variance with his own breaſt, or is between two wayes, not knowing which to take. We tranſlate the word (in *Rom.* 4. 20.) by ſtaggering. *Abraham ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief.* The ſimilitude which the Apoſtle *James* uſes, illuſtrates this ſence, *He that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea,* which by tempeſtuous winds is ſometimes carried up to heaven, and anon down to the deep. A man who is toſſed with ſuch waves of unbelief, ſtaggers like a drunken man, in his practice and profeſſion; he is now on this ſide, to morrow on that; he doth not only ſtagger or halt in his way, but he ſtaggers and halts between two wayes; and is therefore called (*verſ.* 8.) *A double-minded man*: The prayers of ſuch a man are faithleſs prayers, and therefore fruitleſs prayers; *Let not that man think he ſhall receive any thing* (unleſs a rebuke and a denial) *of the Lord* (*verſ.* 7.) There are no promiſes made to ſuch, and therefore no mercies conveyed to ſuch. Believing prayer is gaining prayer; yet they who believe leaſt, preſume moſt. Hence the Apoſtles check, *Let not that man think*; as if he had ſaid, I know ſuch will flatter themſelves into a perſwaſion of great matters, they will have high thoughts, but they ſhall receive nothing.

Fourthly obſerve, That, *How ſtrongly ſoever a godly man acts faith for the anſwer of his prayers, yet he hath no faith that his prayer deſerves an anſwer.*

I would not believe that he had anſwered to [**my**] *voyce.* Chriſt calleth the Spouſe to prayer (*Cant.* 2. 14.) *Let me ſee thy countenance, let me hear thy voyce, for ſweet is thy voyce, and thy countenance comly.* Chriſt loves prayer. *The prayers of the Saints upon earth, are muſick in heaven.* That invitation to the Spouſe, *let me hear thy voyce,* ſeems to be an alluſion to thoſe, who loving Muſick, call upon a friend who hath a good voyce, or exquiſite skill to play upon an Inſtrument, *Come, ſing us a ſong, play us a Leſſon, let us have a fit of mirth.* Thus, I ſay, Chriſt ſpeaks to the Church, *Come, let me hear thy voyce, 'tis ſweet, I know thou haſt a ſweet one:* But the Saints judge their own voyces harſh and unharmonical, they are apt to think their prayers jarrings and diſcords, at the beſt, but a rude noiſe, not a compoſed air in the ear of God. Faith makes our prayers melodious, becauſe it carries us out of our ſelves. A believer lives not in the ſound of his own prayers, but of Chriſts interceſſion. What are we that we ſhould expect any acceptance upon our own account? or ſay, this *we* have gained, this *we* have obtained, thus God hath heard *us*, or thus *we* have wreſtled it out with God? As when we have performed all our duties, we muſt ſay, *We are unprofitable ſervants*; ſo when we have obtained all our ſuits, we muſt ſay, *We are unprofitable petitioners*; I will not believe that God hath hearkened unto *my* voice. What's a mans voice, that God ſhould hear it?

Fifthly obſerve, That, *A godly man ſometimes cannot believe his prayer is heard, when it is heard.*

Though he calls, and God anſwers, yet (like *Job*) he believes not that God hath anſwered to his voice; he cannot think his prayer is heard, though one ſhould come and tell him it is heard. When the *Jews* returned from *Babylon,* the mercy was ſo great, that they could not believe they had it, when they had it; *When thou didſt turn our captivity, we were as them that dream* (Pſal. 126. 2.) The deliverance was incredible, they could not think they were delivered: Their return to *Jeruſalem* was ſuſpected for a dream of it in *Babylon.* The Church prayed without ceaſing for *Peter*, when he was in priſon (*Acts* 12. 15.) yet when the Lord brought him out of priſon, and he was knocking at the door of the houſe where they were aſſembled, while they were knocking at the door of heaven for his deliverance, yet they would not believe the report of the Damoſel, who ſaid he ſtood before the gate. They tell her ſhe is mad; and when ſhe affirmed it with ſobriety, as well as vehemency; then they have another help for their unbelief, *It was not* Peter, *but his Angel.* Thus it is to this day with the Saints in their great perſonal ſuits and petitions, both about ſpiritual things and temporal, they are ſo overcome, aſtoniſhed and amazed at the goodneſs of God, that though they ſee the thing done, yet they can ſcarce believe it done. As if a Prince ſhould ſend a meſſage to a poor man by ſome great Lord, and tell him he hath beſtowed honour and favour upon him; the poor man is ready to ſay, I cannot believe it; the bleſſing is too big for him to digeſt and let down in his narrow heart: No, ſaith he, ſure it is not ſo. Though the people of God ever preſerve a high reſpect and eſteem of the works of God towards them, yet their faith is often below his workings, and they cannot receive or take in mercy ſo faſt as it cometh. Faith widens the veſſels of the ſoul to receive much, but God can powr in faſter then faith can widen the ſoul to receive.

Forſan hoc dicit, quia ſæpe præ nimia lætitia non credimus verum eſſe quod maximè verum eſſe optamus. Druſ.

Sixthly obſerve, *Faith hath its decayes.*

Faith doth not keep up alwayes at the ſame height, in the ſame plight and degree: There is a faith which believes that God doth anſwer before he anſwers; and there is a faith that cannot believe that God will anſwer, when he hath anſwered. Faith in ſtrength prevents the anſwer of God. As God in anſwering, ſometimes prevents our askings (*Iſa.* 65. 24.) *Before they call, I will anſwer; and while they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear:* ſo faith ſaith, *Before the Lord giveth, I know I have it; before the Lord doth this thing, I ſee it is done.* Faith in its ſtrength, realizes the mercies of God before they have a being, and is an evidence to us of what we ſee not, When mercies are but in their principles, in their conception and birth, or at moſt, when they are but in their cradle and ſwadling-clouts, faith ſpeaks as glorioully of them, as if they were fully acted and grown up before the eye. Strong faith in God (like God himſelf) quickens the dead, and calleth thoſe things which be not, as though they were. Weak faith deadens the quick, and calleth thoſe things which are, as if they were not. The *Iſraelites* were no ſooner over the red Sea, but they believed themſelves in the Land of *Canaan* (Exod. 15. 13, 14, 15.) And in their Song tell the ſtory of the ſubmiſſion and fears of the uncircumciſed Nations round about, which yet their after-unbelief kept off forty years.

There is a further underſtanding of the words, which I ſhall clear in connexion with that which followeth.

I would not believe that he had hearkened to my voyce; for he breaketh me with a tempeſt:] As if the reaſon why he doubted his [**voyce**] was not heard, lay in this, becauſe of thoſe continual breakings which were upon him; *I would not believe that he had hearkened to my voyce; for he breaketh me with a tempeſt, and multiplieth my wounds without a cauſe:* As if *Job* had ſaid, the dealings of God are ſuch towards me, that I know not how to make it out that I am heard; for though the Lord in ſome things carries it ſo graciouſly towards me, that I have great aſſurance I am heard, yet many things appear, reporting that I am not heard. Afflictions continued are no evidence that prayer is not heard, yet uſually it is very inevident to an afflicted perſon, that his prayer is heard.

Etiamſi Deus me precãtem exaudierit, minimè credo cum malorũ nimbo me obruat.

I ſhall now examine *verſ.* 16, 17. as holding a reaſon why *Job*'s faith was thus weakened.

Verſe 17. **For he breaketh me with a tempeſt, and multiplieth my wounds without cauſe.**

Job's ſorrows put him to his Rhetorick ſtill, *He breaketh me with a tempeſt.* An expreſſion raiſing his afflictions to the height, yet not beyond the reality of them; *He breaketh me with a tempeſt.*

שער *Turbo.*

The word we tranſlate [**break**] ſignifies an utter contuſion, or the total ruining of a thing or perſon, the daſhing of either to pieces. The word is uſed reciprocally of Chriſt and the Devil, in that great promiſe of Chriſt, *The ſeed of the woman* (*Gen.* 3. 16.) *It ſhall bruiſe thy head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel.* Chriſt having infinite power, utterly deſtroyed the Serpents power; he ſpoiled and ruined him for ever: The Apoſtle phraſes it ſo (*Col.* 2. 15.) *He ſpoiled principalities and powers*; he took away the prey or booty of ſouls which they had got, and led them diſarm'd like priſoners of war: And the Devil did what he could to ruine and ſpoil Chriſt, to break Chriſt to pieces. Thus Chriſt and Satan ſtrove and contended one with another. And the word (*Shuph*) hath an elegant nearneſs in ſound to our Engliſh. We call that noiſe which is made by the ruder motion of the feet, *ſhuffling*; and when men contend much, we hear the ſhuffling of their feet. *Job* was ſtriving and ſhuffling with God in prayer, and God was ſtriving and ſhuffling with *Job* in ſtorms and tempeſts.

שוף *Contudit, contrivit, obminuit.*

He breaketh me with a tempeſt.

Chaldæus *legit, uſq; ad filum lineū, vel ad fila pilorū ſubtiliter diſputat mecū.* שערה *Filum ſignificat.*

The word ſignifies not only *ſtorms and tempeſts*; but likewiſe, *a little hair or twined thread.* So the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* tranſlates it here, *He diſputes or contends with me to a hair, or to a thread*; making the ſence out thus, *I will not believe that God hath anſwered me*; why? *He ſtandeth with me upon the ſmalleſt matters; he diſputes with me to a hair, and debates every thing to a thread.* As *Abraham* ſaid to the King of *Sodom* (Gen. 14. 23.) *I will not take any thing that is thine, from a thread, even to a ſhoe-latchet*; that is, I will not make the ſmalleſt gain by thee: So, to diſpute to a hair, or to a thread, notes contending upon or about the ſmalleſt differences.

But generally the word is rendred a *Tempeſt*; and thus God is often deſcribed contending with man (*Nahum* 1. 3.) *His way is in the whirlwind, and in the ſtorm, and the clouds are the duſt of his feet*, that is, he ſends ſtorms and whirlwinds, by theſe he afflicts the children of men; and as an army of horſemen raiſes clouds of duſt from the earth with their feet, ſo the Lord raiſes the duſt of clouds with his; *Behold, a whirlwind or a tempeſt of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it ſhall fall grievouſly upon the head of the wicked*, Jer. 23. 19.

To break with a tempeſt or with a whirlwind, implies two things.

Firſt, A ſudden and an unexpected affliction. Tempeſts are never welcome, and but ſeldom looked for. When the ſea is ſo calm and ſmooth that you may throw a Die upon it, a ſtorm ariſeth in a moment, and the veſſel is in danger of a wreck.

Secondly, It noteth the fierceneſs and violence of an affliction. Tempeſts are the moſt violent motions, they come with power. A Tempeſt is irreſiſtible, who can ſtand before it? Who can contend with ſtorms and winds? When the Lord made total conqueſts of his enemies, he contended (in the letter) by ſtorms and tempeſts. As in *Joſhua* 10. and in (1 *Sam.* 7. 10.) *When the Philiſtims drew near to battell againſt Iſrael, the Lord thundred with a great thunder that day upon the Philiſtims, and diſcomfited them.* The Story is famous of a Legion of Chriſtian ſouldiers, called the *thundering Legion*, becauſe by prayer they obtained a refreſhing rain for the Army in which they were commanded, and a terrible ſtorm of Thunder and Lightning, *&c.* upon the enemy. The word is uſed figuratively in war, when beſiegers coming to a Town or Fort, are reſolved to carry it preſently whatever it coſt them, they are ſaid to *ſtorm the place, or get it by ſtorm.* The Prophet alludes to this (*Iſa.* 25. 4.) *When the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a ſtorm againſt the wall*; that is, when their rage ſhall be at the higheſt, moſt violent and impetuous, then the Lord will be a *refuge from the ſtorm.* The ſame God who ſaves many from the ſtorms of man, did himſelf ſtorm *Job*,

He breaketh me with a tempeſt.

Job was ſtormed, yet ſuppoſes his prayer was anſwered. Hence obſerve,

Prayers may be heard and anſwered when greateſt afflictions are upon us.

Quædam nō negantur, ſed ut congruo tempore dentur, differuntur. Aug. *Exaudit ſæpe ad profectum, licet non ad votū.* Aquin. *in loc.* *Sævitur in vulnus, ut homo ſanetur.* Aug.

Do not think your prayers are loſt, becauſe your afflictions are not removed, or that God hath not heard you, becauſe he doth not preſently relieve you: God forbears, when he doth not deny. He anſwers to our profit, when he anſwereth not to our feeling. He anſwereth to our ſpiritual intereſt, when not to our corporal. The ſick man calleth to the Phyſitian to take away the bitter, loathſome potion; and the wounded man calleth to the Chirurgeon, to take away thoſe corroding plaiſters, and to forbear thoſe torturing operations; but the one gives him his potion, and the other lances his ſores, and layes corroſives to his fleſh; both theſe, while they vex the Patient, anſwer him; for what's the reaſon why the Patient would have his bitter potion taken away? Is it not becauſe he would be better? And why would he have thoſe painful operations forborn? is it not becauſe he would have eaſe? Now for both thoſe very reaſons, the Maſters of thoſe Profeſſions keep him to both; neither could they give him his deſire, but by doing contrary to his will. Thus alſo the Lord is healing us, when we think he is only wounding us; and fulfilling our deſires, while we cry out he is croſſing them.

Secondly obſerve, *Even while we are praying, the Lord may be thundering; he may be breaking us when we are beſeeching him.*

We muſt learn to keep to our duty, whatſoever the dealings of God be; whether it be foul weather or fair, pray ſtill; whether it be ſtorm or calm, go on in prayer ſtill. Pray ſtill, though God break ſtill. It is our duty to pray, and it is Gods priviledge to break.

Thirdly, Obſerve from the loftineſs of the language,

That, *The Lord layes very ſore afflictions upon thoſe that are very dear to him.*

Job expreſſeth his afflictions by *breaking with a tempeſt. Stroaks from the clouds are moſt terrible.* The ſame afflictions and ſcourges which he layes upon his enemies, he layes (in the matter, yea, and often in degree) upon his beſt friends? What can the Lord do to his greateſt enemies, but break them with a tempeſt? He doth not only chaſten with a rod, but ſometimes ſcatter with a ſtorm: He hath not only a ſword, but a thunderbolt for his ſervants: He hath terrible ſtroaks and blows for them who lie in his arms, and live in his embraces. Therefore we cannot diſtinguiſh men by the matter, no, nor by the meaſure of their afflictions; that which is a judgment to one, is but a chaſtening to another; with the ſame weapon he wounds a friend, and deſtroyes an enemy.

Fourthly obſerve, That, *Afflictions continued, cauſe us to ſuſpect that our prayers are not anſwered.*

Why doth *Job* think that God hearkened not to him? *I would not believe* (ſaith he) *that God hath hearkened unto my voyce*; why? *becauſe ſtill he continues to break me.* Faith is put hard to it at ſuch a time; and this is the thing which ſtumbled *Job*, he could not tell how to make it out, that God had heard his prayer for him, becauſe he heard ſo great a noiſe of tempeſts and ſtorms againſt him. It is very difficult for faith to ſee mercy through clouds of trouble. It is a hard thing for faith to look upon the pleaſed face of God through a lowring tempeſt, or to believe the calmneſs of Gods heart to us in troubleſome diſpenſations. Therefore he ſpeaks here as if his faith were even maſtered. The providences of God are often too hard for man. And with this temptation Satan helps on unbelief. If he come to a ſoul in affliction, which keeps cloſe to his intereſts in Chriſt: *Yea* (ſaith he) *you may do ſo though afflictions were upon you, but yours are more then afflictions, yours are tempeſts and ſtorms: God dealeth with you as with an enemy, yours are no ordinary matters, yours are like the portion he gives to thoſe he hates; I would not weaken your faith becauſe of a chaſtening-rod, but you are beaten with Scorpions, and will you ſtill believe?* Can God love you, and deal thus with you? Thus the Serpent whiſpers in thoſe louder tempeſts of affliction.

Licet Deus verè exaudiat, tamen homo in miſeriis conſtitutus ſe exaudiri non credit. Aqu.

Fifthly obſerve, That, *Afflictions continued, cauſe us to ſuſpect that our prayers ſhall not be anſwered.*

And ſo I find ſome rendring the former verſe in connexion with this; *If I have called, and he hath anſwered me, yet will I not believe that he will hearken to my voyce*: As if he had ſaid, I know God hath heard me heretofore, but I fear he will hear me no more, becauſe I find his hand ſo heavy upon me. Surely then, he hath forgottten to be gracious, and hath ſhut up his tender mercies. *Former experiences can hardly keep Faith whole, while we are under preſent breakings.*

Laſtly, If we take the words, as importing a calling to God for anſwer in a way of provocation (as was ſhewed before) then the ſence is, *If I had an ambition to contend with God, and he had anſwered me by condeſcending to that courſe, yet I could not believe he had hearkened to my voyce*; that is, I could not believe that he had yielded the cauſe to me: Why? Becauſe he goes on ſtill to break me with tempeſts; he follows me with trouble ſtill; he ſhews he hath done me no wrong in my former afflictions, by his going on to afflict me ſtill; he is ſo far from acknowledging the leaſt injuſtice in what is paſt of my ſufferings, that I ſuffer more; *He breaks me with a tempeſt*, and,

Multiplies my wounds without cauſe.

חנם Gratis.

But is not this injuſtice, to multiply wounds without cauſe? Is not this a charge of blaſphemy upon God? May we not think that now Satan had his wiſh, and that *Job* curſed God indeed?

Vulnera ſine cauſa ſunt mala & flagella, quæ non ob aliquod mittuntur peccatum.

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate, **Without cauſe,** hath been opened, *Chap.* 1. 9. & 2. 3. and it hath occurred elſewhere. Here, *He multiplies my wounds without cauſe,* is not a charge of injuſtice upon God, *Job's* heart was far from the leaſt thought of that, as you may ſee in all the diſpute: But it is an acknowledgment of the ſoveraignty and power of God, *Though he hath wounded me already, yet he may wound me ſtill, without giving me a reaſon*; *or, though I have given him no cauſe.* What? Do you think God would yield to me, if I ſhould contend with him? *He multiplieth,* or, *He hath multiplied my wounds without cauſe,* that is, without giving me any account hitherto; and do you think that now I ſhall have liberty to call him to an account, or that he will give me one? *He wounds without cauſe,* is, * without cauſe manifeſted. God hath not told me the reaſon of his chaſtenings; and I do not perceive the reaſon; I know not why he contendeth with me. And ſo he expounds what he ſpake at *verſ.* 12. *Lo, he paſſeth by me, and I ſee him not.* There are myſteries in providence. Mans eye is not clear enough to ſee all that God doth before his eyes. *Job is his own expoſitor.* This latter expreſſion gives us a comment upon the former. And it is obſervable, that both in this book, and in the whole body of the Scripture, eaſier Texts may be found to interpret the harder, and clear ones to enlighten thoſe which are darker and more obſcure. *The word of God is not only a light and a rule to us, but to it ſelf.*

* *Sine cauſa manifeſta, & ab homine afflicto perceptibili.* Aquin. *His verbis evidenter ex*[illegible]*it, quæ ſu*[illegible] *occultè* [illegible]*ixerat, ſi venerit ad me, non video. Hoc enim ubiq; ferè in dictis* Jobi *obſervandū, quod obſcurè dicta per aliqua conſequentia exponuntur.* Aquin.

Hæc à Job *dicta ſunt, quod intelligat ſe non tā flagellari quā probari.*

Or, **He multiplieth my wounds without cauſe.**] Is, as if *Job* had ſaid, I know the Lord deals not with me as with a guilty perſon, nor doth he judge me as a malefactor; mine is a probation, not a puniſhment: God doth only try me, to ſee what is in my heart, and how I can ſtand in an evil day. *He multiplieth my wounds without cauſe*; that is, without the cauſe which you have ſo often objected againſt me, namely, that I am an hypocrite and wicked. I know God looks upon me as a child, or a friend, not as an enemy. Therefore I have no cauſe to multiply words with God, though God go on *to multiply my wounds without cauſe.*

Animus in Deum præclarè affectus, ſed tamen affectus doloribus. Sanct.

To multiply wounds] Notes, numerous and manifold afflictions; many in number, and many in kind. *Job's* were deep, deadly wounds, and he had many of them, he was all over wounds, body and ſoul were wounds, he was ſmitten within and without; *as to multiply to pardon*, is to pardon abundantly (*Iſa.* 55. 7.) So to multiply wounds, or to multiply to wound, is to wound abundantly.

Here a queſtion would be reſolved, How the juſtice of God may be acquitted, in laying on and multiplying afflictions *without cauſe?*

I ſhall refer the Reader for further light about this point to *Chap.* 2. *verſ.* 3. where thoſe words are opened; *Thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without cauſe*; yet take here three conſiderations more, by way of anſwer to the doubt.

Firſt, Whatſoever the Lord wounds and takes from any man, he wounds and takes his own. *He is Lord over all.* Our health and ſtrength are his, our riches are his; *The world is his and the fulneſs of it* (Pſal. 50.) *If he be hungry, he needs not tell us*; he can go to his own ſtore. It is no wrong to diſpoſe what is our own, whereſoever we find it. That rule is as true in revocations, as diſtributions: *Friend, I do thee no wrong* (Matth. 20. 15.) *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Though there were no ſin in man, yet there were no injuſtice in God, becauſe he takes nothing from us, but what he gave us, and hath full power to recal, and take away.

Secondly, Suppoſe man could ſay, that, what he had were his own; that, his riches were his own, that, health and ſtrength of body were his own, yet God may take them away, and do no wrong. It is ſo among men, *Kings and States* call out their Subjects to war, and in that war their wounds are multiplied without any cauſe given by them: They gave no occaſion why they ſhould be appointed to ſuch hazards of life and limb, to ſuch hardſhips of hunger and cold; yet there is no injuſtice in this. When God caſts man into trouble, he calls him out to his ſervice, he hath a war, ſome noble enterprize and deſign to ſend him upon. *To you it is given to ſuffer for his ſake* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 1. 29.) he puts it among the ſpecial priviledges, which ſome Saints are graced with, not only above the world, but above many of the Saints, *To whom it is given* (and that's a royal gift) *only to believe.* Now, if in proſecuting this ſuffering task, whether for Chriſt, or from Chriſt, a believer layes out his eſtate, credit, liberty or life, he is ſo far from being wronged, that he is honoured. Thouſands are ſlain in publick imployments, who have given no cauſe to be ſo ſlain. If according to the line of men, this be no injuſtice, much leſs is it injuſtice in God, who is without line, himſelf being the only line and rule to himſelf, and to all beſides himſelf.

Thirdly, I may anſwer it thus, Though the Lord *multiply wounds without cauſe*; yet he doth it without wrong to the wounded, becauſe he wounds with an intention to heal, and takes away with a purpoſe to give more; as in the preſent caſe, God made *Job* an amends for all the wounds, whether of his body or goods, good name or ſpirit. Now, though it be a truth in reſpect of man, that we may not break anothers head, and ſay we will give him a plaiſter; or take away from man his poſſeſſion, and ſay we will give it him again, yet God may. Man muſt not be ſo bold with man, becauſe he hath no right to take away and wound, nor is he ſure that he can reſtore and heal; but it is no boldneſs, but a due right in God to do thus, for he as Lord hath power to take away, and ability to reſtore. And he reſtores ſometimes in temporals, as to *Job*, but alwayes to his people in ſpirituals and eternals. Hence the Apoſtle argueth (2 *Cor.* 4. 7.) *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us an eternal weight of glory.* Afflictions work glory for us, not in a way of meriting glory, but in a tendency to the receiving of glory, and in preparations for it. *There is no wrong in thoſe loſſes by which we are made gainers: Thoſe loſſes being ſent that we may gain, and the ſender of the loſs being able effectually to make us gainers.*

He multiplieth my wounds without cauſe.] Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *Afflictions are no argument that God doth not love us.*

As the Lord hath a multitude of mercies in his heart, ſo a multitude of afflictions in his hand; and a multitude of afflictions may conſiſt with a multitude of mercies. At the ſame time when we are viſibly encompaſt about, and beſieged with an army of ſorrows and oppoſers, an army of inviſible comforts and protectors may be encamping round about us: As *Eliſha* aſſured his ſervant, 2 *King.* 6. 17.

Secondly, (Which I ſhall but only name, becauſe I have met it heretofore.)

The Lord is not accountable to any creature for his actions.

He multiplieth my wounds without cauſe, or, *He multiplieth my wounds without ſhewing cauſe.* God is the only Judge, who may give ſentence without hearing parties, or ſhewing cauſe. It is unrighteous in an earthly Judge to do ſo: he muſt not judge a man to any ſuffering, and not ſhew reaſon of his judgment. But the firſt cauſe needs not ſhew ſecond cauſes. God hath the reaſon of all things in himſelf, and therefore we cannot call him to give his reaſon. Where the will of the Agent may lawfully be all the reaſon of his actions, there is no reaſon he ſhould give any account of his actions, but what himſelf wills.

The next verſe is of the ſame tenor in ſence with the former, the difference is only in expreſſion.

Verſ. 18. **He will not ſuffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterneſs.**

He not only breaks me with a tempeſt, and multiplies my wounds, but *He will not ſuffer me to take my breath.* This implies the unintermittedneſs of afflictions; as if he had ſaid, *I have not only many afflictions, and great afflictions, but continual afflictions.* The Hebrew is, *He will not give me to draw back my breath,* or, *ſuffer my breath to return:* The words are of the ſame importance with thoſe of *Chap.* 7. *verſ.*

Non dedit mihi retrahere ſpiritū.

verſ. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me? Nor let me alone till I ſwallow down my ſpittle?* That is, wilt thou not give me ſo much reſpite as to *ſwallow down my ſpittle?* Here (which is more) he affirms, *He will not give me ſo much as a breathing time.*

Quidam ad morbum referunt, qu ſi Job *Aſtmate laboraſſet.* Beda.

Some interpret this of a bodily diſtemper or diſeaſe: that God had brought a ſickneſs upon him, which did even ſtop his breath, as if *Job* had been troubled with hardneſs of breathing, with the *Tiſſick* (as Phyſitians call it) or a ſtopping in the lungs. But we may rather take it figuratively, my ſorrows put me out of breath; the Lord doth not only afflict me without giving me any account, but I have unceſſant afflictions which cannot be accounted. *No man can tell how often he doth or ſuffers that which he alwayes doth or ſuffers.* I am ſo far from ſeeing a period of my troubles, that I have not ſo much as any pauſe or ſtop. He ſpeaks in that high ſtrain of Rhetorick, called *hyperbole*; for in ſtrictneſs of the letter, not to ſuffer a man to take his breath, is to kill and quite deſtroy him; but when he ſaith, God will not ſuffer me to breathe, it noteth the continuation of his ſorrows, not the expiration of his dayes.

Fortaſſe proverbiū erat, ad ſignificandū facere aliquid indeſinenter & abſq; ulla vel minima morula aut intermiſſione Una ſaliva. Hieron. *in ep.* ἀπνευστὶ, i. e. *uno ſpiritu aliquid facere, eſt diligenter facere.* Theoph. *in Charact. Clivum iſtū uno ſi potes ſpiritu exupera.* Sen. * *Va preſto, & non fietare,* q. d. *uno halitu egreſſum & regreſſum perfice.*

Again, Not to ſuffer a man to take his breath, before he hath done ſuch a thing, is a Proverb for ſpeedy doing. Like that uſed by ſome of the Ancients, to do a thing *with one ſpit*, that is, in as little time as a man may ſpit. When the * *Italians* would expreſs acting without delay, they ſay, *Go about this buſineſs, and do not fetch a breath till you are here again, go and come with a breath.* That direction given by *Eliſha* to his ſervant *Gehezi*, when he ſent him to reſtore the *Shunamites* ſon (2 *King.* 4. 29.) *Take my ſtaff in thine hand, and go thy way; if thou meet any man, ſalute him not; and if any ſalute thee, anſwer him not again,* &c. And that of Chriſt to his Diſciples, when he gave them their Commiſſion to preach the Goſpel (*Luke* 10. 4.) *Salute no man by the way,* are of the ſame intendment. Chriſt did not mean that his Diſciples ſhould be uncivil (nor *Eliſha* his) he did not forbid them to uſe common courteſies to men, when they went to call men to ſpecial grace. No, but his meaning is, Go ſpeedily about the work, do not ſtand complementing and talking, with *How do you, and how do you?* by the way: do not entertain the time, or trifle it away with Ceremonies, having an imployment of ſuch infinite concernment put into your hands. So he ſeems to allude to, and reprove that ill cuſtom of idle ſervants, who when they are ſent forth upon buſineſs, will yet ſtand and talk with every one they meet. Now, as not to ſuffer a man to talk a word while he is upon a ſervice, imports ſudden diſpatch: ſo when *Job* ſaith, *He will not ſuffer me to take my breath* in theſe my ſufferings, his meaning is, mine are no lazy, dull ſufferings, I am forced to be active at them, I cannot ſtand breathing and cooling my ſelf, I have no leiſure, no vacation at all from this paſſive ſervice: *He will not ſuffer me to take my breath.*

But (or, **for**) **he filleth me with bitterneſs,** or **with bitterneſſes.**

Sicut dulcedo omnia jucunda & amica naturæ ſignificat ſic nomine amaritudinis, graviſſimæ quæq; afflictiones intelliguntur. Bold. *Victimæ non dulcuerunt*, Hoſ. 9. 4.

I have opened this word before, *Chap.* 3. 10. As in Scripture, ſweetneſs implies all comfort: ſo bitterneſs all trouble and ſorrow. When God complains about the ſervices of his people (*Jer.* 6. 20. *Hoſ.* 9.) he ſaith, *Your ſacrifices are not ſweet to me:* So the Original; that is, your Sacrifices are not acceptable to me, or pleaſing to me. Sweet things are pleaſing things, bitter things are unpleaſing. Afflictions are unpleaſant to fleſh and blood, (*Heb.* 12. 11.) *No affliction for the preſent is joyous, but grievous.*

Bitterneſs] is put for the extreameſt affliction, and in the plural (as here) for all afflictions; *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt,* ſaith *Agag* (1 Sam. 15. 32.) that is, I have eſcaped bitter death at this time; the Souldier ſpared me in the heat of the battel, ſurely then a Prophet will not ſlay me in cold blood: *To be filled with bitterneſs* notes abundance of afflictions. As to be *filled with the Spirit, to be filled with the fulneſs of Chriſt,* &c. note the plentiful receiving of the Spirit, and of the grace of Chriſt. To taſte of a bitter cup, to ſip a little of it is unpleaſant, but to drink large draughts, to be fill'd with bitterneſs, who can abide it? When Chriſt was come to *Golgotha, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall*; but (though he drank up that cup of his fathers wrath to the very bottom, though he drank up all the gall and wormwood of ſin, for the ſalvation of men, yet) when he had taſted thereof, *He would not drink* (Matth. 27. 34.) If it be grievous to taſte but a little of a bitter cup, then judge how grievous *Job's* ſufferings were, who was filled with bitterneſs; he had his belly full of trouble, his belly full of gall and wormwood, his ſtomach could hold no more, bitterneſs was both his meat and drink. Note,

Firſt, *Afflictions may come unceſſantly.*

Not ſo much as a breathing time between. Then while thou art aſſaulted prepare for freſh aſſaults. Obſerve,

Secondly, *The Lord ſometimes mixes a very bitter cup for his own people.*

Yea, They have not only a bitter cup, but bitterneſs is their cup; and they have not only a taſte of it, but are filled with it. The Pſalmiſt ſhews us a bitter cup, which is the proper portion of wicked men; *There is a cup in the hand of the Lord, and it is full of mixture, the wine is red, and the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them* (Pſal. 75. 8.) The Lord hath a cup of red wine, that is, a cup filled with wrath, fury and indignation. Wicked men (how much ſoever their ſtomachs loath it, and turn againſt it) ſhall drink it up to the bottom, or, he will pour it down their throats, whether they will or no. *They ſhall be filled with bitterneſs* after all their ſweet morſels and pleaſant draughts. The Saints are filled with bitterneſs from God, but not with the wrath of God; many ſorrows may be mingled in their cup, but everlaſting love is ever mingled in it. *Saints never drink pure wrath, as wicked men never taſte pure love.*

To conclude, we may obſerve here a *Climax*, or *gradation* of four ſteps.

Firſt, (*Verſ.* 14.) *Job* acknowledged that he was unable to anſwer the Lord.

And ſecondly, He profeſſed that if he could, he would not, no, he would humble himſelf (*Verſ.* 15.)

Thirdly, If in mercy God ſhould anſwer his petition, yet he would not be confident at all (in regard of himſelf) that God had heard *him*, or hearkned unto *his* voice.

Laſtly, He acknowledged that God might go on to afflict him ſtill; for ſome read this Text in the *future tenſe, He will multiply my wounds, and afflict me without cauſe; He will fill me with bitterneſs.* A godly man reckons up his afflictions as well as his comforts to the praiſe and honour of God. And the more God afflicts him, the more he abaſes himſelf, though he doth not think the worſe of himſelf, becauſe God doth afflict him.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

If I ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong; and if of judgement, Who ſhall ſet me a time to plead?
If I juſtifie my ſelf, mine own mouth ſhall condemn me;
If I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.
Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own ſoul,
I would deſpiſe my life.

JOB goeth on to lay himſelf yet lower before God: and having in the three former verſes proved that weak man is not able to contend with the Almighty; he giveth an additional proof in *Verſ.* 19. from the conſideration of a twofold adjunct in God. Firſt, His *ſtrength.* And ſecondly, His *juſtice.* From both he concludeth according to the former argument given upon the whole matter in *Verſ.* 10. ſeeing God is ſo ſtrong and juſt, *Surely, if I juſtifie my ſelf, my own mouth ſhall condemn me; and if I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.*

If I ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong.

There are two wayes whereby a man makes his part good againſt another man.

Firſt, By the ſtrength of his arm, and dint of his Sword.

Secondly, By the equity of his cauſe, and the goodneſs of his conſcience. *Job* declareth his inability to deal with God in either, *If I ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong,* &c.

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates thus, *As for force, he is valiant*; if I think to carry it by force with God, He is a God of valour, or, as *Moſes* in his Song (*Exod.* 15.3.) deſcribeth him, *The Lord is a man of war*, I cannot deal with him upon that point.

In originali indifferens eſt, nam tantū habetur, ſi ad potentiam: ut ſuppleri poſſit, venero, aut reſpexero, vel aliquid ſimile.

The original ſpeaks only thus much, *If of ſtrength, he ſtrong*; we ſupply the word, *ſpeak*. If men talk of ſtrength, or boaſt of ſtrength, or ſhew forth their ſtrength (we may ſupply it with any of thoſe words) *Lo, he is ſtrong*. As it is uſual with us when we would ſet a man up, in the perfections of any quality, we ſay, What do ye ſpeak of knowledge, why, *There's a learned man!* What do ye ſpeak of riches, why, *There's a rich man!* &c. Such an emphaſis is carried in this expreſſion, *If I ſpeak of ſtrength*, why, *here's one that is ſtrong indeed!*

אמצ *Prevalens, vincens, invicto quodam & obfirmato animo præditus dici ſolet de eo qui viribus ſuperior eſt.*

כח *Vis generaliter,*

אמצ *conotat proportionem ad efficientiam, vel contentionē virium,*

חוק *Eſt durabilitas in agenti & actione*

גבורה *Efficaciam,*

חיל *Vigorem ſignificat.* Coc.

There are five words in the Hebrew which ſignifie ſtrength. The firſt, notes ſtrength in general: The ſecond, ſtrength to endure labour: The third, efficacy: The fourth, vigour: The fifth, which is that of the Text, ſuperiority of ſtrength, or prevailing ſtrength. It is one thing to be ſtrong, and another thing to prevail. *The Lord is not only ſtrong, but ſtrongeſt:* he hath a ſtrength above all ſtrength, he is ſtrong overcomingly, ſtrong prevailingly. Chriſt in the Goſpel ſpeaks of a *ſtrong man* (he means the Devil) that kept the houſe; but he was not *ſtrong prevailingly*, for there came a *ſtronger then he*, that ſpoil'd him, and took away all his armor from him, wherein he truſted (*Luke* 11.22.) but when the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, That the Lord is ſtrong, the meaning is, that he is ſtronger then all: and ſo generally the poſitive is expounded by the ſuperlative, *If we ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong*, that is, he is moſt ſtrong. Thus we find the word uſed, 2 *Sam.* 22.18. *He delivered me from my ſtrong enemy, and from them that hated me, for they were too ſtrong for me:* they were prevailingly ſtrong for me, and therefore unleſs I had found a ſupply of help, unleſs ſome Auxiliaries had come from Heaven to take my part, they had been too hard for me, I had been overmatcht, they were prevailingly ſtrong, or too ſtrong for me. We have the word in the ſame ſence (*Gen.* 25.23.) in that reſolution which the unerring oracle of Heaven gave *Rebekah* enquiring about the children ſtriving in her womb, the Lord anſwereth thus, *Two Nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people*; and then addeth, *The one people ſhall be ſtronger then the other people*; it is this word, the one people ſhall be prevailingly ſtrong, and ſhall overcome the other; both people ſhall be ſtrong, mighty and potent, but there is one of them ſhall have the rule, and ſhall conquer and ſubdue the other. *If I ſpeak of ſtrength, he is ſtrong.* The ſum is, *If the Queſtion be about ſtrength and power, then the Lord carries the day and the honour, he is moſt powerful, he is ſtrong above all.* Hence obſerve,

Regnum regno prevalebit, ſci. *populus præ populo robuſtior.*

That, *God is of infinite and inſuperable ſtrength.*

He hath ſtrength: Many have malice and wickedneſs, boldneſs and preſumption enough to oppoſe, but none have power enough to overcome him. He hath force which none can ſubdue; and he hath authority which none ought to reſiſt. Theſe two muſt concur whereſoever there is full determining-power. A man may have authority or right to do a thing, and yet have no ſtrength to execute and effect it. And many have ſtrength to do thoſe things (as to oppreſs a man, to take his goods or his life from him) for which they have no authority: both meet in the Lord, therefore he is the *Soveraign Lord*; he hath authority to do as much as he can, and he hath ſtrength to do as much as he will. Some men would make ſtrange work in the world, if they had ſtrength ſutable to their authority: and others wou'd make a good world by their works, if they had authority ſutable to their ſtrength: both theſe meet in God, who can contend with him? *If we ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong.*

There are three things wherein this inſuperableneſs of the ſtrength of God appears.

Firſt, He hath ſtrength to do whatſoever he will, *There is nothing not fecible, or too hard for him.*

Secondly, He hath ſtrength to do what he willeth not, the Lord is able to do more then ever he will do; he could preſently take vengeance upon all the wicked, but he will not; he is patient and good toward them, who look not at all towards repentance, to which his goodneſs and patience leads them, *Rom.* 2. 5.

Thirdly, He is ſo ſtrong that he can do whatſoever imports ſtrength, becauſe he only doth what he will do. *To do that which is not our will to do, is a note of diſability.* It argues a want of power to be forced to do a thing, as well as not be able to do it. *He that doth what he would not, is not able to do what he would.* God is therefore able to do whatſoever he wills, becauſe he never did, nor can be drawn to do any thing againſt his will. It follows then, That the Lord is ſo ſtrong that he can do whatſoever names him ſtrong, and only cannot do thoſe things, which if he did, he muſt be weak, as was further ſhewed at *verſ.* 4. of this Chapter. Hence it appears,

Secondly, That, *No creature is able to grapple with God.*

He is ſtrongeſt. The Apoſtle gives that admonition, (1 *Corinth.* 10. 22.) *Do we provoke the Lord to jealouſie? Are we ſtronger then he?* Surely, except man thought he were able to match God, he would not be ſo fool-hardy, ſo vain, to throw down the Gauntlet, or enter the liſts with God: *The weakneſs of God is ſtronger then men* (1 Cor. 1.25.) not that there is any weakneſs in God: but take that which men conceive to be weakneſs, or weakeſt in him, that's ſtronger then man. Or, *The weakneſs of God*, that is, the weakeſt inſtruments which God uſeth, are ſtronger, *ſcil.* in their effects, then the ſtrongeſt which men uſe. God can do more with ten men, then man can do with an hundred. The moſt ſtammering tongue and flatteſt language ſhall perſwade more, if God ſpeak with it, then the moſt fluent tongue and ſparkling Oratory ſpoken meerly by man, *If I ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong.*

And if of judgment, Who ſhall ſet me a time to plead?

If I cannot by force and power, may I not by ſubtilty and wit, by reaſon and argument, by Eloquence and Rhetorick prevail againſt him? No, *If of judgment, who ſhall ſet me a time to plead?* As I cannot deal with God at the ſword, or in the field; ſo neither can I deal with him at the bar, or at the judgment ſeat.

משפט *Iudicium, jus, ratio.*

There are two words in the Hebrew which are uſed for judging, The firſt is, *Dan*, the name of one of the twelve *Patriarchs*, and from him of a Tribe in *Iſrael:* Dan *ſhall judge his people* (Gen. 49.16.) And that word (in ſtrictneſs) ſignifies to give doom or ſentence in a cauſe. The other word is that in the Text, *Shaphat*, which ſignifies more eſpecially the doing of right, or the righting of a man in any controverſie. The Greek word takes in both. Now, while *Job* ſaith, *If of judgment*, or *if we ſpeak of judgment*, the Queſtion is, What judgment doth he mean?

κρίνω.

Judgment is taken three wayes.

Firſt, For the rule of judging, or for the Law whereby we judge. It is ſaid (1 *Sam.* 10. 25.) that *Samuel* (after he had annointed *Saul* for King) *told the people the manner of the Kingdom, and wrote it in a book. This manner of the Kingdom* was not the common practice and cuſtom of the Kingdom, but (it is the word of the Text) the *judgments of the Kingdom*, that is, thoſe rules and laws by which the Kingdom ought to be governed and judged.

Secondly, Judgment is put for an ability or fitneſs to judge, to diſcern and weigh things, to ſcan a cauſe, and try out the uttermoſt truth of every circumſtance: judgment is the ability of the perſon judging. And

Thirdly, Judgment is taken for the ſentence given upon the perſon judged, after the evidence of his cauſe is heard and taken. Judgment in this third ſence is the reſult of the former two. For when by judgment, as it is the rule of judging, and an ability to judge, the Judge hath wrought and tried out what the merit of a mans cauſe, and the truth of a buſineſs in controverſie is, then the iſſue of both is, *Judgment in this third ſence*; that is, an act which is paſſed, or a ſentence pronounced upon the perſon that ſtandeth in, or the cauſe which is brought to judgment.

So, *If of judgment*, is, If I bring forth my cauſe to be tried by the abilities of the Judge, and by the rule of the Law, this will be no relief to me, I ſhall be in as ill a caſe, as if I were to deal with God by plain ſtrength.

There is an opinion that takes in a fourth ſence about this word *Judgment*, as if judgment were not *a forenſical, or a judicial term* in this Text, but ſignified only afflictions

Judicium ſumitur hoc loco pro divinis operibus, humanum captum excedentibus, non pro forenſi & judiciali actu. Oly.

or puniſhments upon a people or perſon. Theſe are called the judgments of God, *Rom.* 11. 33. *How unſearchable are his judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out?* That is, the ſeveral acts which he paſſes upon men, his providences and outward diſpenſations (for he ſpeaks of caſting off of the *Jews*, and laying them aſide for ſo long a time, which is one of the greateſt, if not the greateſt judgment which God ever burdened his own Covenant-people with) *Theſe* (ſaith he) *are paſt finding out.* And then, *If I come to ſpeak of judgment*, is, If I ſpeak with God about his judgments ſhewed in thoſe terrible providential acts upon others, or upon my ſelf, and cite him to anſwer for what he hath done towards me or them, Who is able to plead? Who will undertake this cauſe againſt the Lord?

Who ſhall ſet me a time to plead?

יעד

In ſuo Kal *condicere, convenire & tempus conſtituere, propriè ſignificat. In* Hiphil (*ſicut hic*) *convenire facere.*

עדת

Conventus ſtatis horis & locis aggregari ſolitus, cœtus, collegium, eccleſia, congregatio.

It is but one word which we tranſlate [*To ſet a time to plead*] but the ſence is very large and various; it ſignifies to appoint, conſtitute or preſcribe either time, place or perſons, any or all the circumſtantials of action. It is here tranſlated by divers in reference to the time, and by ſome in reference to the place. And becauſe the people of God are to meet at appointed times and places for ſolemn and publick worſhip, therefore this word ſignifies the Church or the congregation, which is alwayes to meet by publick appointment at ſuch a time, or in ſuch a place, leſt there ſhould be ſcatterings and confuſions amongſt thoſe who ſhould be moſt unanimous and harmonious. It is taken alſo for any meeting, *Pſal.* 48. 4. *Lo, the Kings were aſſembled or gathered together.* And, *Amos* 3. 3. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* That is, except they be friends. *They who have not one heart, ſeldom have one way.* Or, *except they be agreed*, that is, upon time and place; two men cannot converſe or have any buſineſs one with another, unleſs they conſent and appoint *where and when*; if one be for this time and place, and the other for that, they can never walk together. It is put for a ſet time, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. The Lord having ſent the peſtilence upon *Jeruſalem* for the ſin of *David* in numbring the people, it is ſaid, the peſtilence deſtroyed *from the morning, even to the time appointed*; the Lord had ſet the peſtilence a time, it wrought to that time and no longer.

Obel. Magned. Tabernaculum teſtimonii, i.e. *publicæ fidei in Deum & homines conteſtatæ, &c.* Pined.

Further, The word is applied to any covenant, pact, or mutual agreement: Hence the Tabernacle is indifferently called *The Tabernacle of the Teſtimony*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Congregation*; becauſe there God confirmed and ſetled his Covenant, and made an agreement with his people, and his people reſorted to the Tabernacle, to have the Articles of that Covenant made good to them by his own appointment. Hence (I ſay) it was called *The Tabernacle of witneſs, The Tabernacle of the Teſtament*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Covenant.* Upon this ground alſo all the ſolemn feaſts of the *Jews* were expreſt by this general word, they being all obſerved at ſet times and places. And for this reaſon the word is uſed for the *Grave.* So in *Job* 30. 23. Which we tranſlate thus, *The houſe appointed for all living*; there is a time when, and a place appointed where all that live ſhall be laid down when they die, or where their bodies ſhall be houſed after they are diſſolved, therefore it is called *The houſe of appointment*; the houſe which the Lord hath ſetled both for time and place where it ſhall be made, and when we ſhall be carried to it. No man goes to his grave by accident; the Lord hath appointed man his place, and bounded his habitation, when he is dead, as well as while he lived.

Beth Mogned.

Again, For a clearer underſtanding of this, it may have an alluſion to that courſe which is obſerved in *Courts of Juſtice*, where, when either *Plaintiff* or *Defendant* wants Council to plead for him, the *Court aſſignes Council*; and it is obſerved by the Learned, that among the *Romans*, the *Pretor* would ſay, *What, is there none to plead for him? I will appoint one to take his cauſe into conſideration, and to plead for him.* It is ordinary with our Judges to appoint Council, as alſo time and place, when and where to hear cauſes. The words may have an alluſion to this courſe of Judges; *If I come to judgment*, who will aſſign me council? where ſhall I get any one to plead this cauſe, and to ſtand up for me againſt the Lord?

Prætor dicere ſolebat, Si advocatū non habet, ego dabo.

There is yet another underſtanding of the word; as having reference to the teſtimony or witneſs which is brought in. So the Vulgar reads it, No man will be ſo bold as to give in evidence for me, or to be a witneſs on my behalf.

Nemo audet pro me teſtimonium dicere. Vulg.

Take all theſe ſences, *If I come to judgment, who?* &c. *I ſhall get none to give in evidence for me, none to plead for me; I ſhall get none to aſſign counſel for me, none to appoint time and place for a hearing*; therefore I may as well contend with God by ſtrength, as by judgment. The ſum of all is, *Job* confeſſes, in caſe he had a mind to go this way, he ſhould not find any in the world to aſſiſt or help him in it.

We have had divers paſſages of like nature with this, wherein *Job* declared his utter inability to plead with God; therefore I ſhall but briefly note one thing from it.

There is no ſtanding before God in judgment by the help of any creature.

Who ſhall ſet me a time to plead? Or, Who ſhall be my pleader? One man cannot do it for another; all the Angels in heaven are not able to do it for any man. If man enter into judgment with God, men and Angels cannot help him. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe, about the want of love, *If I ſpeak with the tongue of men and Angels, and have not charity, it profits me nothing:* So, if we ſhould ſpeak for our ſelves, or others for us, with the tongues of men, that is, with the tongues of the moſt excellent Orators or Pleaders; yea, with the tongues of Angels, with tongues that exceed all that men can ſpeak, yet in judgment with God theſe will be but *ſounding braſs and tinckling Cymbals.*

Job goes yet a ſtep further. If I ſhould undertake to manage my cauſe my ſelf (ſome Clients will deſire their Counſel to ſtand by, and they will argue their own cauſe) why, ſaith *Job*, if I ſhould do ſo, if I ſhould be my own Advocate or Attorney, and appear my ſelf in my own cauſe, it would be all one; *If I juſtifie my ſelf, my own mouth ſhall condemn me*; I ſhall be as bad, if not worſe then before. I can get none to plead for me, and if I plead for my ſelf, I am ſure to be caſt; I cannot mend my ſelf by ſpeaking in my own cauſe: That's the meaning of this twentieth verſe, which is but a continuation, with a further illuſtration of what he had ſpoken before, therefore I ſhall but touch upon it.

Verſe 20. If I juſtifie my ſelf.

That is, If Witneſs fail, and Counſel fail, if all help and ſuccours fail me, and then I reſolve to go to work with my own ſtrength and wit, if I go about to make or declare my ſelf juſt before God (for ſo the word is to be underſtood, as in the doctrine of Juſtification) what ſhall I gain? The profit will not countervail the charge or pay for the expence of one breath; For,

Mine own mouth ſhall condemn me.

My tongue would cut my own throat; the ſentence or words which I ſhould bring forth to plead my cauſe before God, would be found againſt me; the Lord would turn all my arguments back upon me, and wound me with mine own weapons.. I ſhould go out condemned, and my plea ſhould be turned into ſin. I ſhall certainly ſpoil my cauſe, if I handle it. As, if I ſhould put it into the hands of Angels or men, they could make nothing of it, ſo, neither can I make any thing of it if I manage it my ſelf.

Os meum; i.e meum teſtimonium, mea oratio Ex *ibo ex hujuſmodi judicio condemnatus, & oratio mea fiet in peccatum.*

There are three things which evince that if man undertake the matter with God, he ſhall be condemned by his own mouth.

Firſt, Man is inſufficient. How can he who is ignorant, weak and unrighteous, plead his cauſe with God, who is infinite in wiſdom, righteouſneſs and holineſs? And therefore mans own mouth will condemn him, his words will ſpeak him guilty while he pleads, *Not guilty.*

Secondly, He that juſtifies himſelf, muſt appear in his own commendation, he muſt bring forth all his good works, and ſhew the Lord how he hath faſted, prayed and mourned, how humble, how liberal he hath been, what alms he hath given; he muſt (as it were) paint and adorn himſelf in all his excellencies, and ſtand before the Lord in this array. Now mans own mouth muſt condemn him, if he do thus. The Heathen could ſay by the light of nature, *That a mans praiſes are ſullied by paſſing through his own lips. To ſound*

Ut laus, ſic teſtimonium proprio ſordeſcit in ore *ſound our own praiſe, ſounds our ſhame.* If a man have never ſo much worth in him, he diſhonours himſelf by being the trumpet of it.

Thirdly, A mans own teſtimony is not legal in his own cauſe. *The ſame perſon muſt not be a witneſs and a party.* He that juſtifies himſelf, condemns himſelf; for his very juſtification is an accuſation. If a mans own witneſs may be taken, who ſhall be condemned? Who will not acquit himſelf? The witneſs of our own hearts is much (1 *John* 3.21.) but not enough; *If our own hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* But the reaſon of this confidence is not in the bare, ſingle witneſs of our own hearts, but in the co-witneſs of God with our hearts. Conſcience is therefore a thouſand witneſſes, becauſe God who is more then a thouſand Conſciences, joynes with Conſcience, both in accuſing and in acquitting. The Phariſees ſaid unto Chriſt, *Thou beareſt record of thy ſelf, thy record is not true* (John 8.13, 16.) They ſpake upon a legal ground or Maxim; Chriſt anſwereth, *Though I bear record of my ſelf, yet my record is true.* Chriſt doth not deny the Rule, but ſhews that he was above it; and therefore adds, *It is ſaid in your Law, that the teſtimony of two men is true, I am not alone, for the Father is with me*: As if he had ſaid, I alone bear not witneſs of my ſelf, *I have another, even the Father that ſent me, he beareth witneſs of me*; therefore mine is not a ſingle teſtimony: in that caſe indeed I were to be reproved, and my witneſs were inſufficient; *My own mouth would condemn me*, if there were no mouth to teſtifie for me, but only mine: If I were but as an ordinary man, I might be kept to the ordinary rule. *God only is a ſufficient witneſs to himſelf.*

Hominis innocentia duobus teſtibus conſtare debet. 1. Deo, 2. Conſcientia. Ergo ſi tibi vides habere bonū conſcientiæ teſtimonium, bene quidem ſed divinum adhuc de tua innocentia expectādum eſt.

Mine own mouth ſhall condemn me. But of what? Surely of folly (2 *Cor.* 12.21.) *I am become a fool in glorying*, ſaith *Paul* to his *Corinthians*; but I am not a fool of my own making; *ye have compelled me, for I ought to have been commended of you.* That is, ye ought to have given a teſtimony of me; if ye had been juſt to me, I had been condemned in juſtifying my ſelf. Then it is a duty to witneſs for our ſelves, when others neglect that duty.

הרשיע *Propriè ſonat impiiſicare, ut* צדק *juſtificare.* Merc. *In forma* Hiphil *non effectionem denotat, ſed declarationem.*

The Original word which we tranſlate *condemn*, is directly oppoſite to that which we tranſlate *juſtifie*; and ſome render it by a new-coyn'd word in Latine, which we cannot put literally into Engliſh, but by coyning a word for it, thus; *If I juſtifie my ſelf, my own mouth would ungodlifie me, or declare me to be ungodly.*

Here two Queſtions ariſe; the one is, Why may not *Job* juſtifie himſelf? The Lord hath juſtified him, the Lord ſaid that he was a perfect man (that's the next expreſſion, *If I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall prove me perverſe.*) The Lord had ſaid of *Job*, chap. 1. *That he was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eſchewed evil*; why may not *Job* ſay as much of himſelf as the Lord had done?

Solomon reſolves this Query (*Prov.* 27.2.) *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth, a ſtranger, and not thine own lips.* Man muſt not ſpeak the evil he knows by others unleſs called, nor the good he knows by himſelf. To ſpeak good of our ſelves with our own mouths, is much like doing good by other mens hands. We muſt not act things praiſe-worthy by *proxie*, but it is beſt to be praiſed by *proxie* for our good acts. Now as man may not praiſe himſelf, though other men may praiſe him, ſo he muſt not praiſe himſelf, though God praiſeth him. *Not he that commendeth himſelf is approved, but he whom the Lord commendeth*, 2 *Cor.* 10.18.

Secondly, Why doth *Job* ſay here, I will not juſtifie my ſelf, I will not ſay I am perfect, Whereas in other places he juſtifies himſelf, and ſaith that he was perfect? If you read the twenty ninth and thirtieth Chapters of this Book, you ſhall find them to be but a continued juſtification of himſelf, or a *Manifeſt of his own innocency.* There he proclaims how holy he had been, and how righteous in all his wayes, that he had *put on judgment as a Robe, and juſtice as a Diadem*; that he had delivered the oppreſſed, and diſtributed of his fulneſs to the neceſſities of the poor. Thoſe two Chapters being a profeſſed Catalogue of his good deeds, why is he ſo ſhie and modeſt here?

Pius ſenſus pulchrè expreſſus in hac Jobi *diſputatione*

I anſwer, In this and the like expreſſions, while *Job* ſaith, he will not juſtifie himſelf, or ſay he is perfect, he declines the plea of perſonal righteouſneſs or perfection in the ſight of God, as hath frequently appeared in this Argument. But in thoſe Chapters, and in other places where he is upon his defence, he ſpeaks only in reference to the charge of his friends; as if he had ſaid, *Ye accuſe me for an hypocrite, and cenſure me deeply, I can juſtifie my ſelf, and plead my innocency with you, though I have not a word to ſay for my ſelf before the Lord; I will bear any thing at his hands, let him ſay of me, and do with me what he pleaſeth, I will take ſhame to my ſelf, and give him glory; but as for you, my friends, I will juſtifie my ſelf in your ſight, I am not the man ye take me for.*

nunc peccatum ſuum dimiſsè confitentis, nunc juſtitiam ſuam acerrimè defendentis. Merl.

Theſe ſpeakings are not croſs to each other, but help us to underſtand *Job*'s ſence in this Argument. He ſtands much upon his integrity, but it is to his friends; he humbles himſelf in the ſight of his own vileneſs, but it is to God. *Paul* (Rom. 7.24.) bewailes his ſinfulneſs; *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſin and of death! I find a law in my members rebelling againſt the law of my mind*: Yet, when he anſwers falſe Apoſtles about his perſonal carriage, and the diſcharge of his Apoſtleſhip, then he ſaith, *I know nothing by my ſelf* (1 *Cor.* 4.4.) I am charged thus and thus, I am ſlandered ſo and ſo, but my conſcience acquits me, *I know nothing by my ſelf*: The ſinfulneſs of his Nature made him groan and ſigh out, *O wretched man that I am!* The ſincerity of his heart made him boaſt and ſing out like *a happy man, as ſorrowful, but alwayes rejoycing. A man may be conſcious of his own natural corruption, and yet confident of his own practical integrity.*

If I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.

רשע & צדק *ad facta,* תם & עקש *ad animum referuntur.*

Theſe words in ſtrictneſs of ſence refer to the inward purpoſe of his heart or bent of his mind, as the former did to the outward way of his life; *If I ſay I am perfect*, that is, if I ſay there is no meditated obliquity in my heart, no intended goings aſtray or wandrings, no cloſe hypocriſie or falſeneſs there; If I ſhould ſay, I am perfect in the bent and purpoſes of my heart, yet this is not ſuch as I dare appear before God in; as if I juſtifie my ſelf by the actings and puttings forth of my life, *my mouth will condemn me*; ſo, if I ſay I am perfect in the thinkings and ſecret motions of my ſpirit, *it will prove me perverſe.*

תם *Qui certo eſt propoſito* עקש *qui vago & diverſo, qui ſe dividit & diſtorquet in duas vias.* Coe. *In Hebræo ſimplex eſt, perverſicavit me.*

The word which we tranſlate [**perverſe,**] ſignifies to wander, as a man uncertain of his way (*Prov.* 28.18.) *Whoſo walketh uprightly* (having the frame of his inward man right) *he ſhall be ſaved; but he that is perverſe in his wayes* (having a wandring, vagrant mind, going ſometime this way, and ſometime that, holding ſomewhat of this, and ſomewhat of that, but nothing to purpoſe or ſteadily of any thing, this man) *ſhall fall at once; a man of an uncertain ſpirit ſhall have a certain downfal.* But was *Job* thus perverſe? No, *Job* was perfect, and not perverſe; yet a boaſt of his perfection, had been a proof of his perverſeneſs: *Nothing diſcovers an evil heart more then a profeſſion of its own goodneſs.*

Perverſus evadam.

It ſhall prove me perverſe.] What ſhall prove me perverſe? Some refer it to the former clauſe, *My mouth* (or the ſpeaking of thoſe words, *I am perfect*) *ſhall prove me perverſe.* Others refer it to God; *God will prove me perverſe*, if I juſtifie my ſelf. The Seventy leave it without reſtriction to any antecedent; *If I ſay I am perfect, I ſhall go away perverſe*, or I ſhall appear perverſe.

Obſerve hence that famous Goſpel-doctrine, *No man can be juſtified before God by the works of the Law.*

Nobilis locus clariſſimè oſtendens neminem ex lege juſtificari. Coc.

It is as noble a proof of *free juſtification* in the Old Teſtament, as any in the New. The Saints have been acquainted with this truth from the beginning, That man is nothing in himſelf, and that free grace doth all. The doctrine of *Free Grace* is no new doctrine: the doctrine of *Free Will* is (*Prov.* 20.9.) *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?* And that he muſt ſay, who juſtifies himſelf before God. Every Legal *Juſticiary* takes up this language, *I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin.* It is a task too hard for men, yea, for all the Angels in heaven to make one heart clean; only Jeſus Chriſt is able to fetch out the filth and rubbiſh that lodgeth in, and pollutes our ſpirits. *To be a heart-cleanſer is the peculiar work and honour of Chriſt.* A man that knows himſelf, and ſees his face in the glaſs of the Word (which flatters no man) will never ſay, *I am clean*: nor will he

Quot tenebræ, quot nubes, quot maculæ? quem non pudebit ſi fidem ſuam & innocentiam ad illuſtre illud legis ſpeculũ contempletur? Coc.

ſay, I can cleanſe my ſelf. How many ſpots and blots, how many defects and deformities will that glaſs repreſent unto him, which he is not able to heal or fetch out? Every mans face will bluſh, who ſees his heart or his life in that glaſs, unleſs he, *Who beholding himſelf, goeth his way, and ſtraightway forgetteth what manner of man he was* (Jam. 1. 24.)

Secondly obſerve, *Job* had received teſtimony from He could produce *Letters teſtimonial, ſubſcribed by the hand of heaven, that he was a juſt and a perfect man, one that feared God and eſchewed evil.* Yet this *Job* (let God ſpeak as well as he will of him) he will not ſpeak well of himſelf to God: Let God report him perfect to men, he will not report himſelf perfect before God. Though *Job* had a free and a full Certificate of his innocency (not one bought, begged, or got with flattery) yet he forbears in this caſe to bring it forth and read it to his friends.

> *They who have moſt real worth and holineſs in them, are leaſt in their own eyes, and loweſt in their own thoughts.*

They of whom God gives the faireſt teſtimony, give the meaneſt of themſelves; he cares not much to appear to be, what God aſſures him he is. God was poſitive (*without Ifs or Ands*) in his opinion of him; *Thou art perfect*, but he puts it into a ſuppoſition, and concludes with an *If, If I were perfect*, &c.

In *ver.* 21. *Job* carries on the ſame buſineſs, and bewraies a more humble and ſelf-denying frame of mind then before.

Though I were perfect, yet, &c.

There is a contention among Interpreters, to which part of the Chapter this verſe 21. belongs, whether to that which went before, or to that which follows after. I ſhall open it firſt, as the ſence of it may be connected with the matter preceding.

Verſe 21. **Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own ſoul; I would deſpiſe my life.**

Though I were perfect.] Obſerve the gradation. He had ſaid before, If I plead with God, and juſtifie my ſelf, I ſhall be condemned and proved perverſe. But put my caſe at the beſt, that I juſtifying my ſelf, the Lord ſhould accept my juſtification, and ſhould concur with my vote that I am perfect, yet I could take no joy in this. If the Lord ſhould condeſcend to know me under that notion, I would not adventure to know my own ſoul under the notions of my perfections. The thing is an abhorring to me.

I would not know my ſoul.

Why not? There are two ſenſes given: Firſt, thus; *If I were perfect*, that is, if upon debate and pleading with God, I ſhould come off perfect in my own judgment, certainly then I did not know my own ſoul. That's one ſenſe, and ſo it falls in well with the former words; *If I ſhould juſtifie my ſelf, my mouth would prove me perverſe.* And ſo the point that I ſhall note from it, is,

> That, *Ignorance of our ſelves is the cauſe of proud and high thoughts of our ſelves.*

He that knows himſelf, muſt know himſelf to be imperfect, ſeeing our greateſt perfection in this life, is, to know our own imperfections. When we ſee any ſtanding upon their own bottoms, and crying up themſelves, poor ſouls, how they are benighted? How little do they know of their own hearts and lives? How little do they know of God? They are in darkneſs, therefore they ſee not their own ſpots. If a man, whoſe face is foul or deformed, ſhould boaſt of his beauty, would you not ſay, this man knows not his own face; or, ſurely he hath not look'd in a Glaſs to day. May we not much rather ſay to him who juſtifies himſelf, and ſaith he is perfect, ſure you never ſaw your face in the glaſs, in the pure Cryſtal glaſs of the Word. He that is in Goſpel-light, ſees himſelf, and as light encreaſeth, ſo doth his ſight of himſelf: And the more he ſees himſelf, the more evil he ſees in himſelf. In a cloudy day we think the air is clear, but the ſhining of the Sun ſhews us millions of motes in the air: if a man ſees no motes in his life (ſome ſee not beams there) it is, becauſe he walks in darkneſs, and hath not the light, *he doth not know his own ſoul.* That's a uſeful interpretation of the words, and the firſt ſence.

Talem de me cogitationẽ non admittam, ſed omnino contemnam, & de mente mea penitus excutiam. Quamvis bene recteq; vixerim, hoc penitus deſpiciam. Bol.

Secondly, *If I were perfect*; If it ſhould be told me I were perfect, I would not know my own ſoul, that is, I would not take notice of my ſelf as perfect, I would be a ſtranger to my ſelf under that title, I would ſhake the thoughts of ſuch a perfection out of my mind, as much as I would ſhake the thoughts of ſinful corruption out of my mind. It is as dangerous to lodge or nouriſh thoughts of our own perfection, as to lodge thoughts of the moſt ſinful corruptions. *A holy heart loves good thoughts, but it loves not thoughts of its own goodneſs.*

Admirabilis & omni acceptatione digniſſima doctrina, ac ſi eſſet ex puriſſimis evangelii fontibus hauſta. E cœlo deſcendit, Noſce teipſum. Noverim me, noverim te. Auguſt.

So then, *I would not know my ſoul*] imports not affected ignorance, but elected knowledge. *Job* was no ſtranger to his own ſoul, he had ſtudied himſelf, and was well vers'd in his own boſom. *Self-knowledge is a duty, and ſelf-knowledge may be a ſin.* Chriſtians ſhould read themſelves more then Books, and yet they may pore too much upon themſelves. Heathens gave us this Leſſon, and they ſay it came from heaven, *Know thy ſelf. Auguſtine* is quick upon it, *Lord, I know MEE, and I know THEE.* To know God and our ſelves, is the ſum of all knowledge. God doth not know him who knows not himſelf. There is a double knowledge of our ſelves.

Talis ignorans à Deo ignoratur.

Firſt, Of *ſinful ſelf*, or of our ſins and failings.

Secondly, Of *renewed ſelf*, or of our virtues and graces. Not to know how frail we are, how ſinful we are, to what corruptions and temptations we are moſt ſubject, is a ſinful and corrupt ignorance. To know our imperfections, is a part of our perfection.

Non noſcere animam, phraſis eſt Hebræa, quæ tantum rei deſpectum præ ſe fert, ut illam etiam reſpicere aut aliquo modo noſcere quis renuat?

Secondly, Not to know our Graces and Virtues, what the work of the Spirit, and the new Nature within us is, this alſo is a ſinful ignorance. *It is no honour to be what we do not know our ſelves to be; it is to be in the ſtate of a beaſt, not to reflect upon our own eſtate.* The new creature is light, and carries a light for its own diſcovery. The reproveable knowledge of our own ſouls is not the *knowledge of intuition*, whereby we apprehend what we are, but the *knowledge of oſtentation*, whereby we are proud of, or truſt upon what we are. We have an ordinary ſaying amongſt us, which reaches this ſence fully, *Such a woman is beautiful, and ſhe knows it; ſuch a one is a proper man, and he knows it; ſuch a one hath many good parts, a very fine wit, and he knows it*; that is, ſuch perſons pride and lift themſelves up in their perfections. You ſhall have a ſoul that will know it ſelf into I know not how much pride; many ſtand reflecting upon their own perfections; either external, how proper, ſtrong and beautiful they are; or internal, how witty and eloquent they are, what excellent parts and gifts, what a mimble tongue, what ſound judgments they have, till they loſe Chriſt in this crowd of themſelves. This is a dangerous knowledge, a knowledge worſe then ignorance. *Better be without knowledge, then know our knowledge thus.* As to reflect upon ſin, to know our ſelves in our unbelief, vanity and paſſions, &c. humble us; and a ſoul in confeſſing of ſin before God, looks long upon his dark part, upon his wants and failings for this end, that he may be humbled; ſo to reflect upon our good deeds or graces, to know our ſelves in thoſe adornings of love, patience, humility, faith, &c. hazards us upon pride, and ſome ſtand gazing ſo long upon theſe excellencies, that they are lifted up, and become very proud.

Thus all men who are proud in ſpirituals, *know their own ſouls.* So *Job would not know his own ſoul.* Hence note,

> That, *A gracious heart rejoyceth in nothing but in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone.*

He will not know his ſoul in his own perfections. A godly man would have God know him in the worſt, but he will not know himſelf in the beſt. He would not have a ſin hid from God, but he would hide all his goodneſs from himſelf. He will know every good thing before he doth it, but when tis done, he cares not to know it any more. So the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 3. 8, 9.) *I account all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Chriſt, and may be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the Law*, &c. *Paul* the Apoſtle would not know *Paul* the Phariſee. Legal righteouſneſs was loſs to him, when he had found Chriſt. Legal righteouſneſs was dung to him, when he had a ſight of righteouſneſs by Chriſt. The Phariſee, *Luk.* 18.

had all upon account, and he hoped to make good gain upon his accounts: he knew how many alms he had given, how well he had paid his tithes, and how often he had faſted. He made a ſtock of thoſe things, and put them among his treaſures, which *Paul* made his loſs, and put among the dung. He that thus knows his own ſoul, hath no true knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

So much of this *verſ.* 21. as it is a ſuppoſition, and hath connexion with the words foregoing; as it refers to what follows.

The words are rendred in the form of a poſition, *I am perfect, I know not my ſoul, I deſpiſe my life.* And ſo divers interpretations are given of it.

Firſt, Thus, *I am perfect*, &c. that is, my heart is upright, and I have ever prized and valued mine own integrity at ſuch a rate, that in compariſon thereof, I have not at all regarded or prized my own life or ſoul, that is, the greateſt comforts and ſweeteſt enjoyment of my life. *My life is but a trifle to my conſcience.* And ſo the meaning is, like that (*Deut.* 33. 9.) where the word *know* is uſed in this ſence, concerning *Levi*, *Who ſaid to his Father and Mother, I have not ſeen him, neither did he acknowledge his Brethren, nor know his own Children.* *Levi* ſlighted all relations, when they ſtood in competition with the diſcharge of that duty which the Lord called him to, he knew neither father nor mother, nor brother nor child, one nor other, he had no regard at all to them, ſo he might do the will of God. This was the commendation of *Levi*, and the priviledge of the Prieſthood was aſſigned to that Tribe upon this Service. Grace will not hearken to the cry of Nature, when it hears the call of God. *Job* is conceived to ſpeak here at the ſame rate as *Levi* did, or higher; *I am upright and perfect in heart toward God, and ſuch hath my perfection and uprightneſs been, that I have not known my own ſoul, I have not regarded any ſelf-intereſts which have ſtood in the way of my obedience unto God, or juſtice toward man.* His friends charged him as if he had been a corrupt Judge, or an oppreſſor of the poor; I (ſaith he) am ſo far from valuing worldly goods or riches beyond my own integrity, that I do not value my life to my integrity. The Apoſtle *Paul* makes a like profeſſion (*Acts* 20. 24.) His ſpirit was never ſo free and royal, as when he was going bound in ſpirit to *Jeruſalem*: *The Spirit witneſſing to him, that bonds and afflictions did abide him in every City. None of theſe things* (ſaith he) *move me, neither count I my life dear* (I will not know my life, let it go which way it will) ſo *I may finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus.* *Paul* was none of your poor Merchants, who are afraid of their skins. *Paul*'s life was cheap in his thoughts, when he was to make an adventure for Chriſt; he (as *Job* here) would not know his life for the omiſſion of a neceſſary known duty, or the commiſſion of a known ſin.

Non novi animam præ integritate mea, i.e. ea integritate ſum, ut nunquam anima aut vita mea ratione abduci potuerim ab integritate mea.

This firſt ſence yields this profitable meditation,

He whoſe heart is upright, prefers his uprightneſs before all worldly commodities, and before his own life.

Chriſt calls his Diſciples to this height of reſolution (*Luk.* 14. 26.) *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and children, yea, and his own life, he cannot be my Diſciple*, that is, the ſervice of Chriſt, and his life into the balance, life muſt be a light thing weighed with the ſervice of Chriſt.

A ſecond interpretation gives this ſence, *I am perfect, yet I know not my own ſoul*; that is, I am ſo preſſed and overwhelmed with theſe afflictions, that I cannot feel my ſelf, I ſcarce know whether I am alive or dead; I know not where I am, my ſoul doth not act its offices, my ſoul is (as it were) benum'd in me, or aſleep; there is not that vigor or activity in my ſpirit which I have found heretofore: I deſpiſe ſuch a life as this is; who would live a life which is a continued death? There is a truth in this. For as extream and exceſſive joyes carry a man ſo far beyond himſelf, that he ſcarce knows whether he be alive or no (ſome have had experience of ſuch raptures and extaſies of joy in communion with God) 'twas ſo with *Paul* in a caſe ſomewhat like (2 *Cor.* 12. (*Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell* (ſaith he) for my part, I could not tell what to make of my ſelf, or what became of my body: As (I ſay) it is thus in the exceſſes of ſpiritual joy and conſolation, ſo ſometimes in the exceſſes of anguiſh and ſorrow, a man ſcarce knows whether he be alive or dead, what his ſtate is, whether in the body or out of the body; he regards neither hot nor cold, friend or foe, wife or children, he forgets to eat his bread.

אני תם *Abſumor dolore, & ſic* תם *aliter ſumetur quam priore verſiculo* Neſcio animam, *i.e. meipſum præ dolore, ideo averſor vitam meã.* Rab. Levi.

A third expounds the words as an admiration, *I am perfect, and do ye think I know not my own ſoul?* Do ye think I am not acquainted with my ſelf? Am I a ſtranger at home? Have I ſo deſpiſed my life (think ye) that I take no notice of it, and am either careleſs or inſenſible how things go with me? As if he had ſaid, *I am perfect, and this is the work of a man, whoſe wayes are perfect before the Lord, he knows and conſiders his own ſoul, and grows aſſured how matters are with him: Ye, my friends, charge me with theſe and theſe failings, and will force them upon me whether I will or no; though I deny your charge, yet ye re-join and re-affirm it upon me, as though I knew not my own ſoul, or as if ye knew me better then my ſelf: But I am perfect in heart, and I know my own ſoul, I do not ſo deſpiſe my life, as if it were not worth the looking after, or as if I were not worth the ground I go upon.*

Laſtly, Others underſtand it thus (which appears the faireſt and moſt ſutable interpretation of theſe latter ones) *I am perfect, neither do I know my own ſoul*; that is, I am not conſcious of any evil in my ſoul, I know of no ſecret guilt or corruption hidden there; and ſo *ſcience* is put for *conſcience*; *I know not*, is, I am not privy to any evil that my ſoul delights in and keeps cloſe, either againſt God or man, yet ſuch evils are upon me, that I deſpiſe my life. *The ſpirit of a man* (ſaith *Solomon*) *will bear his infirmity.* Then what a load or infirmity preſſes that man whoſe *life is a burden to him, though no ſin burden his ſpirit?* Troubles of conſcience do often make the moſt peaceable outward eſtate of this life troubleſome. And troubles in the outward eſtate may make thoſe who have great peace of conſcience weary of their lives. What it is to deſpiſe life, and that afflictions make this life burdenſome, hath been ſhewed in the third and ſixth Chapters, and will come more fully to be conſidered at the firſt verſe of the tenth Chapter, whither I refer the Reader, and forbear to inſiſt upon it here.

Integer ſum, nec ſcio animam meam, i. e. *quicquam perverſi in anima mea.*

I ſhall only add, that *Job* makes theſe words as a tranſition to the ſecond part of his anſwer to the charge of *Bildad*. For having before given glory to God, by acknowledging his Juſtice, Wiſdom, Power and Soveraignty in all his actings, he paſſes to an apology for himſelf, or a defence of his own integrity againſt the inſultations, ſuſpitions and accuſations of his friends: As if he had ſaid, *I have deſired to ſave the honour of God from the leaſt touch of an uncomely thought, much more then do I abhor proud and rude contendings with him; but as for you, my friends, ye muſt give me leave to be plain with you, I am not the man you take me for, I have none of that baſeneſs of ſpirit with which ye charge me, I am no hypocrite, I am perfect in heart with God, and upright in my dealings with men; and yet I cannot but complain of my ſad afflictions, and renew my deſires, that the Lord would give me eaſe by death, and acquit me from the hand of theſe calamities, by cutting the thread of my life. I know ye judge theſe outward evils as the brand of a wicked man, of a man hated by God: but Ile maintain a Propoſition contradictory to that your Opinion; ye ſhall never prove me wicked, becauſe afflicted; for thus I hold, and will hold it againſt you all, as long as I am able to ſpeak, That the Lord deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked.* The Argument may be formed up thus;

Ingreditur in alteram ſuæ reſponſionis partẽ quâ juſtitiã ſuam defendit à gravi & libera integritatis ſuæ & animi bene conſcii aſſertione. Merc.

That cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety, which falleth alike upon good and bad.

But great and deſtroying outward afflictions fall equally upon good and bad.

Therefore great and deſtroying afflictions cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety.

The proof of the *Minor* Propoſition or Aſſumption is contained in the three verſes immediately following. The diſcuſſion and opening of which will give both light and ſtrength to this Argument.

VERS. 22, 23, 24.

This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it, He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?

THis ſpeech of *Job* cauſed a Learned Interpreter to tremble, when he read it, conceiving, that it ſavoured ſtrongly of impiety and blaſphemy, as if *Job* had mingled the ſtate of the wicked and of the righteous in one; or, as if his mind were, that the Lord did not diſtinctively order the affairs of the world by the dictates of his wiſe providence, but left them to be huddled together by inexorable fate or blind fortune; therefore he concludes that *Job* rather perſonates a man void of the true knowledge and fear of God, then ſpeaks his own opinion. Thus he cenſures: but let *Job* be well weighed, and his diſcourſe will appear full of truth and holineſs.

Videtur hic locus impietatem includere, quaſi apud Job *unum & idem ſit piorum & improborum judicium, quodq; Deus hæc inferiora non curet.* Iſid. *Clar.*

This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it.

This is one thing.] As if he had ſaid, You have ſpoken many things to me about the power, greatneſs, juſtice and wiſdom of God, in all which I agree with you, ye, and I have no difference about thoſe points, I have alwayes thought highly of God, and I deſire to think humbly of my ſelf: but *here is one thing*, wherein I muſt for ever diſagree from you, here we muſt part.

So that this verſe is as the *limit-ſtone* between *Job's* opinion, and that of his friends. Here he ſpeaks out the *ſpecial tenet* which he holds in oppoſition to them. As if he had ſaid, I yield and ſubſcribe to your judgment in all but this one, and *in this one thing* I muſt be your adverſary, though I will not be your enemy. *I ſay it, and ſay it again,*

Hoc unum eſt meæ aſſertionis caput.

He deſtroyeth both the righteous and the wicked.

This is one thing.] *This is uniform*: So Mr. *Broughton* reads it, and in this thing I am uniform, or of the ſame mind and judgment, I am not at all moved from my hold, or ſhaken by any thing ye have ſaid.

Therefore I ſaid it.] That is, becauſe I am of this opinion and judgment, therefore I will not conceal, but bring it forth, and tell you plainly what my thoughts are. The manner of ſpeech, *I ſaid it*, ſignifies a vehement aſſeveration, a liberty and boldneſs of ſpeech, or a conſtant adhering and ſticking to what hath been aſſerted, I will abide by this poſition as long as I live, I cannot be beaten from it, not becauſe it is my opinion, but becauſe it is a truth.

Before I come to the aſſertion it ſelf, obſerve from the preface, *This is one thing.*

> *That truth is ever the ſame, and we ſhould be the ſame in maintaining truth.*

When a man ſpeaks a thing, of which he is very ſure, and reſolved to hold, he ſaith, in our language, *That's once*, that is, I have ſaid it, and I will not unſay it, or eat my words. As *Pilate* when he was deſired to change the inſcription which he had put upon the croſs of Chriſt, anſwered, *What I have written, I have written*, I will not alter a letter or a title: So a confident aſſertor anſwers, *What I have ſaid, I have ſaid*; *This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it.* Truth changes not, why then ſhould I, who have born witneſs to this truth? *Truth muſt be ſtood to.* We have reaſon to ſtick to truth, for truth will ſtick to us; we may ſay it, and ſay it again, for it will do us good again and again. The declarative truth of God is like Chriſt the eſſential truth, *The ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever.* Though it be very old, yet, *it waxeth not old.*

And becauſe this in the Text was a great truth, the very hinge upon which the whole diſpute between *Job* and his friends turned, therefore he is ſo reſolute in it. Whence note further,

> *That great and fundamental truths are to be maintained with much boldneſs and ſtrength of reſolution.*

As it is a good bargain to buy a little truth with the expence of much peace: So it is our wiſdom, as well as our duty, to maintain it with the expence of our peace. They are the worſt ſort of cowards who render up the *Holds of truth* upon compoſition. No terms honourable enough can be given for the giving up of that. I grant that our peace and lives are richer commodities, then ſhould be hazarded about *trifling nicities, and the crochets of Schoolmen*: but we ought to *contend earneſtly* (and we cannot contend too reſolutely) *for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints.* Jude *v.* 3. Obſerve,

> Thirdly, *A man that hath got one ſound principle about any point, will from that refute and repel all objections that can come againſt him.*

Job bottoms himſelf upon this principle, That God *deſtroyes both good and bad alike with outward deſtruction.* This is his *great Axiome*, the very foundation upon which he buildeth all he holds contradictory to his friends; the *Fort-Royal* in which he defends himſelf againſt all their oppoſitions and aſſaults. One truth well mann'd and mannag'd ſcatters and foils a whole Army of errors. One Text thorowly underſtood, gives anſwer to all objections, and unites all the knots of a controverſie.

Super hoc axioma tanquā ſuper firmiſſimum fundamentū quicquid ad ſuæ innocentiæ contra eos defenſionem allaturus eſt, ſtabiliat. Bol.

But what's this *one thing* upon which *Job* makes his boaſt, and cries *victoria*? 'Tis this, *He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked. A harſh doctrine, yet a good one. God is to be honoured deſtroying, as well as ſaving, killing as well as making alive.*

The word which we tranſlate to deſtroy, ſignifies an utter blotting out or conſumption of a thing; noting that the outward diſpenſations of God may be ſevere and terrible to the perfect, as well as to the wicked. He doth not ſay, the Lord afflicts the one, and deſtroyes the other; chaſtens the one, and conſumes the other; but he conſumes and deſtroyes the one as well the other, *He deſtroyes*

כלה *Propriè delet, diſperdit, frequenter ad extremam conſummationē & conſumptionē refertur.*

The perfect.] Who is a perfect man in the language of Scripture, and wherein this perfection conſiſts, hath been opened more then once already, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here. Only in general, The *perfect man* is the man in the higheſt form of holineſs; a man full of knowledge, faith and good works, one of the *firſt three in grace*, yea, he may be the *firſt of the three*: yet all this is no ſecurity againſt the ſoreſt affliction, againſt affliction to deſtruction temporal, *He deſtroyeth the perfect,*

תם

And the wicked.] Or the unquiet and tumultuous man. Every wicked man is an unſetled and an unquiet man. *He hath no where to reſt, who hath not Chriſt to reſt upon: He is alwayes out of the way, who is not in him, who is the way.* Wicked men reſt only in doing evil, they are never quiet but in motions unto ſin. God ſhews us their nature in their name. *Unquiet is their name, and unquietneſs is with them. Wicked men trouble and vex others as much as they can, but they trouble and vex themſelves moſt of all.*

רשע *Inquietum per multas hujus ſeculi curas ſolicitudineſq; vagantem.*

By theſe wicked ones the Septuagint underſtand *mighty and rich men.* Riches are ſo often got by wickedneſs, and are occaſions to ſo many of making them wicked, that *wicked and rich* may ſometimes change names, or ſignifie the ſame perſon.

LXX. *Impium pro potente & locuplete ſumunt.*

One of the Greek Expoſitors underſtand the Text, of thoſe who are great in goodneſs, and ſtrong in faith, *He deſtroyes the perfect*, and he deſtroyes him that is moſt perfect, even the moſt eminent in holineſs, *the talleſt Cedars in grace.* As if the words implied only a gradation of good men, and not a diſtinction of good and bad.

Qui pietate inſignis & vita clarus. Polychr. Olymp.

But the letter of the Text hath no ſhew of reaſon at all for ſuch an interpretation, and therefore I ſhall paſs it by, and take the words as our tranſlation renders them, holding forth that grand dichotomy of mankind, *He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked.*

This *Job* affirms againſt *Bildad's* aſſertion (*Chap.* 8. 20.) who there gives his judgment thus. *God will not caſt away a righteous man*: which (though it may have a true ſence, yet *Bildad's* meaning being, that God will not caſt a godly man away in this life, or totally deſtroy him in temporals) *Job* denies, affirming that a godly man may not only be afflicted, but afflicted all his life, and die under that affliction, which in *Bildad's* ſence is *to be caſt away.* For though *Bildad* did not hold (as *Eliphaz*) that every man who is afflicted, is afflicted for wickedneſs (he thought a good man might be afflicted for the trial and exerciſe of his graces) yet he was very confident, that God never ſuffered a righteous man to be overwhelmed with affliction: but after ſome ſhort, though ſharp aſſaults, reſtored him again. And therefore *Bildad* numbered them alſo with the wicked, who were deſtroyed as well as afflicted. This *Job* refutes and argues againſt all along, conſtantly holding the contrary principle, that a godly man may be ſo afflicted, as to be deſtroyed;

ed, that he may be utterly and for ever ſtript of worldly comforts. Hence obſerve,

Good and bad, righteous and wicked are often involved in the ſame outward evils.

The ſpiritual eſtate of a righteous man is ſo ſtrong, and ordered in all things, that he can neither totally nor finally fall from it, or loſe it. *Grace is above theſe hazards.* But the temporal eſtate of a righteous man may be loſt, both totally and finally. Riches, and health and honour, are like themſelves, whoſoever is their maſter, fading and periſhing. A righteous man hath a higher tenure of things below, and holds them upon better terms then a wicked man doth; yet he holds them but for a term, they are not enduring ſubſtance to him, as not to others. *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked,* (Pſal. 37. 16.) But the righteous may be deprived of what he hath, as ſoon as any of the wicked (*Eccleſ.* 1. 9.) *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; as is the good, ſo is the ſinner, and he that ſweareth as he that feareth an oath.* Externals diſtinguiſh not internals. No mans ſpiritual eſtate is knowable by the view of his temporal. *Say to the land of* Iſrael, *Thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I am againſt thee, and I will draw forth my ſword out of his ſheath,* (Ezek. 21. 3.) And what will the Lord do with it? Will he not bathe it in the blood of his enemies, and ſheath it in the bowels of wicked men? he will: but ſhall it be bathed in the blood of none elſe? The next words reſolve the doubt, *And I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* It is a terrible ſentence; ſword, famine, peſtilence, make no difference of men or manners; they know neither *faces nor hearts.* The beſt in a Nation may taſte the bloody cup, and feel the cold iron in their bowels, together with the worſt. The *green tree, and the dry tree* may be devoured by the ſame fire, as the Prophet ſhadows good and bad, or, as ſome think, good and better, falling into the ſame calamity. (*Ezek.* 20. 47.) with which that of Chriſt (*Luke* 23. 31.) ſeems more agreeable. The baſket of good figs goes into captivity with the baſket of evil figs, under which the good and bad among the Jews were typed, *Jer.* 24. 1, 2, 3.

Pœna ſatisfactoria, & medicinalis.

But though they fall under the ſame deſtruction, yet their caſe under it is as different, as the perſons are. Faith and holy Reaſon diſtinguiſh where ſenſe cannot.

Judgments upon the wicked men, are for ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God. They who are heirs of eternal death receive part of their inheritance in this life. *All their puniſhments are payments,* the fore-taſtes and beginnings of further ſorrows. Theſe judgments upon the Saints are only corrective or purgative. Their hopes are not deſtroyed, when their bodies or eſtates are. Their afflictions are medicinable, and heal while they kill. We muſt not wrap up the diſpenſation of God to different perſons in the ſame apprehenſions; though his act be the ſame to both, yet his meaning is not. How the afflictions of the wicked and righteous differ, the Reader ſhall find more diſtinctly opened, *Chap.* 5. 17.

Job goes on to confirm his opinion by a further Argument, in *verſ.* 23. For if any ſhould deny his minor propoſition, That the Lord deſtroyes the righteous and the wicked, he proves it thus, *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the trial of the innocent,* that is, he carries himſelf (ſo far as the eye can judge) toward the innocent in their trials, as he doth toward the wicked under greateſt judgments: *He laugheth* at the one, and *he laugheth* at the other; which words are at once a confirmation and an aggravation of what he ſpake before.

Verſ. 23. **If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the trial of the innocent.**

Nullum eſt verbum hac ſententia & illa, elegit anima mea ſuſpendium durius atq; aſperius in hoc libro. Philip.

The former words gave offence to ſome minds, conceiving them inconſiſtent with grace and holineſs. Others are more offended with theſe. And in the letter it is ſtrange language to ſay, *The Lord laughs at the trial of the innocent.* This verſe, with the fifteenth of *Chap.* 7. *So that my ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling,* are concluded by a learned Writer, the ſharpeſt and moſt queſtionable paſſages in the whole book. Hence his conceit, that in *Chap.* 40. *ver.* 5. *Job* aims at theſe two ſpeeches, *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer;* that is, I will never ſpeak ſuch a word again, that, *I chuſe ſtrangling; yea twice, but I will proceed no further:* I ſaid alſo, *That thou laugheſt at the trial of the innocent,* but I will never ſay ſo any more. I am aſham'd that ever I opened my lips ſo unadviſedly; 'tis too too much that I have ſpoken twice ſo ſinfully, I will not ſpeak ſo thrice. The conceit is witty, but the charge lies too heavy. The ſence of the former hath been made out fair for *Job,* and I doubt not but his meaning may be ſo cleared in this latter, that he will need neither reproof nor apology for ſaying,

שוט *Flagellum à circumeundo vel circumdando dicitur, quod videatur circumcingere hominē.*

If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, &c.] The *Verb* ſignifies to encompaſs or incircle a thing, to twine round about it. And ſo it alludes to the faſhion of a ſcourge, which begirts the offender, and at every blow winds about his body.

The ſcourge in Scripture is put for any affliction: Plague, Sword or Famine, are called ſcourges, *Iſa.* 10. 26. *The Lord of hoſts ſhall ſtir up a ſcourge for him;* what ſcourge? the next words expound it, a ſcourge, not of cords or wiers, but of Swords and Spears; a ſcourge, *according to the ſlaughter of* Midian *at the rock* Oreb, that is, the Lord will ſend a Sword upon him: So *Gideon* ſlew the *Midianites, Judg.* 7. commanding his Souldiers to make that terrible ſhout, when they fell on upon their Camp, *The Sword of the Lord and of* Gideon. That great warrior *Attila* King of the *Hunnes,* who haraſſed a great part of Chriſtendom with Fire and Sword, was called, *Flagellum Dei,* The ſcourge of God. The unbelieving Jews having made a Covenant with death, and an agreement with Hell, were very full of faith, ſuch as it was (*Iſa.* 28. 15.) *When the over-flowing ſcourge ſhall paſs thorow, it ſhall not come unto us.* An *over-flowing ſcourge* ('Tis an elegant metaphor taken from waters) is a common, ſpreading, ſweeping judgment, which like an over-flowing river encompaſſes, circles about, and fetches in all.

Flagellum inundans, i. e. omnes ſine delectu involvens et proculcans.

פתאם *Subito, ſtatim, ita ut non ſentiatur donec es fiat.*

Slay ſuddenly.] Every ſcourge doth not ſlay, and many which ſlay do not ſlay ſuddenly. We uſually hear the claſhing of the ſcourge before we feel the ſmart of it. The Lord ſhews the ſcourge, and threatens it before he ſmites with it; he lets judgment hang like a black cloud over the heads of ſome, long before it falls upon them. But others *He ſlayes ſuddenly.*

Some take this ſuddenneſs of the ſcourge in ſlaying, for a mitigation of the judgment, and others for the heightning of it. In the former ſence ſuddenneſs doth not imply the ſudden coming of it, but the ſudden killing of it, a ſcourge which doth it's work quickly; ſo that a man doth not hang long as it were upon the rack of an affliction. The Church of the Jews (*Lam.* 4. 6.) complains of their afflictions, as if the judgment of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* had been more eaſie and eligible then that which the Lord brought upon *Jeruſalem;* not that they thought God had dealt worſe with them then with *Sodom* and *Gomorrah,* but as to this particular, becauſe *Sodom* was overthrown in a moment, but *Jeruſalem* was pined away by degrees with famine. *A ſudden ſcourge is a kind of mercy.* Better die once then die alwayes: Or, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning the afflictions of the Saints (*Rom.* 8. 36.) *To be killed all the day long.* When one under torture petitioned *Tiberius* the Roman Emperor, a bloody cruel Tyrant, that he might be quickly diſpatcht, he deſired not life or pardon, but a ſpeedy death: the Emperor ſent him word, *That as yet he was not reconciled to him, or become his friend.* His cruelty would neither ſuffer the man to live longer, nor die ſpeedily. And ſome obſerve, that as the Prophet expreſſes his trouble at the proſperity of the wicked in their lives, ſo at this kind of proſperity in their deaths, *There are no bands in their death, but they are luſty and ſtrong,* (Pſal. 73. 4.) that is, when they die, they die in their ſtrength, they are not pined away with long and tedious ſickneſs: *They live in pleaſure, and die with eaſe.* They are not bound to their beds, and tied down with the cords of chronical, lingering diſeaſes. It is ſome favour (if the ſcourge muſt ſlay) to be ſlain, in this ſence, *ſuddenly.*

Nondum tecum in gratiā redii

Non ſunt nodi in morte eorum.

But here the ſcourge ſlaying ſuddenly, is a judgment coming unexpectedly, *They who ſleep in ſecurity ſeldom dream of ſcourges.* Obſerve hence,

God can ſend death and affliction in a moment.

When they ſhall ſay, Peace and ſafety; then ſudden deſtruction

ſtruction cometh upon them, as travel upon a woman with child, and they ſhall not eſcape (1 Theſ. 5. 3.) Wicked men are never ſo near deſtruction, as when they are moſt ſecure. And that (by the way) is the reaſon why we have leaſt cauſe to fear thoſe men, who fear God leaſt: Security ſprings from infidelity, and both from ſleighting, if not contemning the Word of God; no marvel then if the Lord haſten his wrath to juſtifie his truth, and ſlay them on a ſudden, who would not believe, no not at leiſure. But to the point. The Prophet deſcribes it elegantly (*Iſa.*30.13.) *This iniquity ſhall be to you as a breach ready to fall*; that is, this iniquity ſhall produce a judgment, which ſhall be to you as a breach ready to fall, *Swelling out in an high wall, whoſe breaking cometh ſuddenly at an inſtrnt*. If once a high built wall do but ſwell, down it comes. *Such a ſwelling wall fell upon, and ſlew twenty and ſeven thouſand of* Benhadads *ſcattered army* (1 King.20.30.) *And ſuch a tower in* Siloe *fell upon eighteen, and ſlew them* (Luk.13.4.) The Prophet *Jeremy* at once imprecates and foretels a ſpeedy ſcourge upon the gain-ſaying Jews, *Let a cry be heard from their houſes, when thou ſhalt bring a troop ſuddenly upon them*, Jer.18.22. This hath been the caſe of many among us, who thinking of no danger have been ſurprized by a troop, themſelves made priſoners, and their houſes ſpoil'd in one hour. Such was the condition of our *Brethren in Ireland*; it is almoſt incredible how ſuddenly that ſcourge ſlew them: there was ſcarce a Proteſtant that had ſo much as a ſuſpition of the danger; nay, ſome would not believe it, when a great part of the Country was on a flame, and the enemy had butchered thouſands. That ſcourge (if ever any) ſlew ſuddenly the perfect and the wicked. As mercies may come ſo ſuddenly to our ſenſes, that they overcome our faith, ſo may judgments. Some have been ſurprized with mercy, (*Pſal.* 126.4.) *When the Lord turned our captivity as the ſtreams in the South*: that is, *gave us ſudden deliverance*, (Rivers in the South, riſe not from a conſtant ſpring, but from accidental rains, which make violent land-flouds on a ſudden.) At the approach of this ſudden mercy, the Jews were like to them that dream. So when the Lord ſends ſudden judgments, rivers of calamity, rivers of blood, as *rivers in the South*; when he brings in captivity, *as rivers in the South*, then are we in a dream too, and are not only deſtroyed, but diſtracted and amazed. But how faſt ſoever judgments come, they come not ſuddenly upon them who are awake, much leſs on them who are watching for them when they come.

If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly; What then?

He will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

למסת
Vel a radice
נסס
diſſolvit.
Vel à נסה
tentavit.

Mr. *Broughton* reads it thus, *He ſcorneth at the melting away of the innocent*. The reaſon of the different reading is, becauſe the Hebrew word may ſpring either from a root, ſignifying to tempt and try; or from another, *To melt and diſſolve*, *He ſcorneth at the melting away of the innocent*. Afflictions are melting, *They diſſolve our comforts*, *yea, our very hearts*; in the ſame ſence that godly ſorrow breaks our hearts. *Pity ſhould be ſhewn to him that is melted*, Chap.6. *but ye forſake the fear of the Almighty*. So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates there, *The Lord tempted* Abraham (*Gen.* 22. 1.) that is, the Lord tried his faith, to find out of what ſtrength it was, and how much he could truſt him in that great buſineſs of ſacrificing his ſon.

לעג
Ridere eſt irridere, ſubſannare, ut fit ab hoſtibus, cū eos quos captivos detinent diuturnis malis conficiunt.
Pined.
Significat deriſionem quæ fit externo corporis geſtu
LXX.
vertunt per μυκτηρίζειν
Piſc. *in* 1 Cor.14. 21.

He will laugh at the trial of the innocent.] At their melting or trying by afflictions. The difficulty is, How God laughs at this trial? The word notes deriſion or ſcorn, (*Pſal.* 2. 4.) *He that ſitteth in Heaven will laugh*, there he uſeth the ordinary word for laughter, *and he will have them in deriſion*, that's the word in the Text. So that properly and ſtrictly it ſignifies to ſcorn and deride, and that either by words or geſtures, as *putting forth of the finger, ſhaking the head, or gnaſhing the teeth*, which are Scripture expreſſions of higheſt ſcorn by geſture.

But how ſhall we fit this to the buſineſs in hand? Will the Lord thus ſcorn and deride at the trial and probation of the innocent?

The Vulgar was it ſeems ſo much ſtraitned to make out the ſence, that he reads it negatively, *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will not laugh at the trial of the innocent*. Others, though they put not in a negation formally and in terms, yet they do it equivalently, and therefore they render it by an interrogation, *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, will he laugh at the trial of the innocent?* No, he will not, that's their meaning: the Lord will not ſleight or neglect the trial of the innocent: though he deſtroyes them, yet he will not deride them. But we, and moſt of the learned Hebricians, keep cloſe to the affirmative; *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent*.

Suppoſitum verbi ridendi dæmon eſt, qui gaudet videns homines diuturnis malis cruciari. Cajet.

There is a diſpute, *whom* we are to underſtand by this *He*, for ſome taking this laughing and deriding in the broadeſt ſence, think it too low and diſhonourable to be aſcribed unto God, and therefore they carry it down low enough, aſcribing it to the Devil, *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, then the Devil laugheth to ſee the upright tried*. He makes merry with the ſorrows of the Saints: the Devil hath no great cauſe (how much mind ſoever he hath) to laugh, conſidering his condition; but the meaning is, that which gives the Devil moſt content, is to ſee righteous perſons vexed. And that's a truth. *As there is joy in Heaven, when good men ſorrow for ſin*; *ſo there is a kind of joy in Hell, when good men are enwrapt with the ſorrows of ſuffering.*

Impius juſtum ſubſannat malis implicitum.

Others make the antecedent to *He*, a wicked man (ſuch are within one degree of Satan, his children) *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly*, then the *ungodly*, who yet thrive and proſper, rejoyce and make ſport at the trial of the innocent; *See what theſe good, honeſt, innocent men have got, they thought by their prayers and faſtings, by their zeal and ſtrictneſs to exempt themſelves from theſe common afflictions, they preſumed they ſhould be ſpared, though all the world were conſumed: but ſee they are deſtroyed as well as others, they ſmart under the laſh, as well as we their neighbours, whom they looked upon as the only whipping ſtocks, when a ſcourge ſhould come.* That wicked men laugh and deride the innocent under affliction, and jeer them with, *Where is your God now? What's become of all your praying and faſting? Where are the hopes and confidences, the priviledges and protections ye talked of?* is a truth.

But thirdly, We need not eaſe the Text thus, nor relieve it out of this difficulty, by faſtening the interpretation upon wicked men. Let us take the relative to be God himſelf, and ſee how we can make the ſence out, *with a ſaving to his honour. If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, He*, that is, the moſt holy and gracious God, *laugheth at the trial of the innocent*. How ſo?

Firſt, I premiſe this, God doth not laugh or deride properly at the afflictions of his people. No, the Lord is a tender, a gracious and a merciful Father to his people at all times; and moſt tender of them, when they are in their afflictions, when they are in their ſoreneſs, and in their ſorrows: he is more tender then the moſt tender-hearted Mother (*Iſa.* 49. 15.) *Can a mother forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* Will a mother laugh and deride a poor infant, when it lies ſprawling and wants her help? No, much leſs will God laugh at his people: therefore as laughing noteth hard-heartedneſs, or unnatural harſhneſs of ſpirit, the Lord doth not laugh at his afflicted Saints, it is againſt his nature, againſt his practice and all experience.

What is it then he laughs at?

Dicitur ridere, quia ſic judicant hominum vulgus.

First, Poſitively thus, *Job* would here expreſs that the Lord carries himſelf in outward things, with an equal hand both to the good and to the bad, as was touched before. The Lord laugheth at, and derideth the wicked (*Prov.* 1. 28.) *I will laugh at their deſtruction, and mock when their fear cometh.* The carriage of God to his own people is ſuch, as if he did mock and laugh at them alſo. He that laugheth and derideth at a mans affliction, doth not regard what he ſuffers, he gives him no help, nor delivers him out of his ſufferings. Nay, a man that laugheth at another in affliction, will lay more affliction upon him. Even thus in regard of outward diſpenſations, God deals with his own people; that is, when innocent ones are in affliction and cry unto him, he makes as if he did not hear or regard them, but let them lye crying, it may be day after day in their pains and wants; yea, ſometimes in ſtead of eaſing them, he layes more afflictions upon them; poor ſouls, ſince they ſought the Lord they found an increaſe of their ſorrows. God ſeems to deal with them, as *Pharaoh* did with the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, who crying to him for releaſe of their burdens, are anſwered only with, *Ye are idle, ye are*

Ridere dicitur, cum contemnere videtur orationem poſtulantis opem.

idle; *let more work be laid upon theſe men*, Exod. 5. Or, like *Rehoboam*, who threatned his people to make their yoke heavier, while they petitioned he would make it lighter; and told them of ſcorpions, while they complained of whips. *David* gives us this in his own experience (*Pſal.* 77. 2, 3.) *In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord, my ſore ran in the night, and ceaſed not* (or, my hand was ſtretched out in prayer, and bedewed with tears) *my ſoul refuſed to be comforted* (*David* ſought for comfort, but his troubles encreaſing, he could not take in the comforts adminiſtred) *I remembred God, and was troubled; I complained, and my ſpirit was overwhelmed.* If any thing in the world can eaſe a troubled heart, thoughts of God can. Thus *David* once relieved himſelf; *When the people talked of ſtoning him, he encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God* (1 Sam. 30. 6.) Yet ſometime God ſeems to think of us leaſt, when we think of him moſt. A ſoul complaining may be overwhelmed, inſtead of being helped. Now he that layes on further afflictions, ſlights and laughs at the former. And this is the firſt way in which it may be made out, how God laughs at the trial of the innocent. When they complain he doth not preſently relieve them, nay, he layes heavier burdens of affliction upon them, and makes them more matter of complaining, before they have any matter of rejoycing.

Poſt orationes meas, ita me ſemper in miſeriis reliquit, acſi me derideret.

Secondly thus, The Lord is ſaid to laugh, in regard of the pleaſure he takes in the fruits, effects and iſſues of thoſe troubles wherewith his people are exerciſed: *He laugheth*, not at the affliction it ſelf, but at the effects and ſucceſs of it; he knows the iſſue will be matter of high contentment to himſelf, and benefit to the Saints. He laughs at their trial, becauſe he knows they will honour him in their trials. He laughs not becauſe they are pained, but becauſe himſelf is glorified. As a Father, who puts a child upon a very hard task, which yet he is aſſured the child is able to go through with, takes content to ſee him ſweat at it, to pant and blow at it: Or, as a Commander in war, rejoyceth when he puts a *Party*, of whoſe valour and skill he is confident, upon ſome dangerous ſervice; though he knows many of them muſt bleed for it, and ſome of them (perhaps) die for it, yet it pleaſes him to ſee ſuch engaged in it. Thus God laughs at the trials and moſt deſperate adventures of the innocent; for he ſees they are men who will bide a trial; nay will *neither ſhrink in the wetting, nor will their ſpirits conſume in the burning.*

Deus ex virorum fortium, ſc. piorum conflictu non levẽ capit voluptatem.

And thus a Believer is exhorted to laugh at his own trial; *My brethren* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, chap. 1. 2.) *count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations or trials.* The more trials, the more joyes. And thus one Believer may laugh and rejoyce at the trial of another, becauſe he knows *that the trial of our faith, being much more precious then of Gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, ſhall be found unto praiſe, and honour and glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *The Lord may bear himſelf toward his own people in their affliction, as if he mockt at their afflictions.*

As he laughs at wicked men in earneſt, and hath them in deriſion; ſo he puts out an appearance of deriſion in what he doth to his own people.

Secondly, *To ſee good men tried, is a delight unto God.*

Laughter is an expreſſion of our inward content and joy. Though the word of the Text is ſcarce uſed for laughter in a good ſence, yet here it may. The Propheſie ſaith of Chriſt (*Iſa.* 53. 10.) *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*; God the Father was delighted to bruiſe his Son. Not that he delighted in afflicting or ſtriking him, he was tender and dear to him as the apple of his eye: But with reſpect to the iſſue and fruit of it, the Lord was pleaſed; *His father laughed to ſee him caſt down and ſuffering, whom he foreſaw conquering and triumphing:* So it is here. A man delights to ſee wreſtlers ſhew their ſtrength, as alſo to behold men ſtriving for maſteries in fencing or running a race, which are but trials of activity, and contendings for honours. Thus when the Lord bringeth his innocent ſervants into affliction, he doth but bring them to a wreſtling, to a running or a fencing, to ſee how they can make uſe of their hands and legs, how they can make uſe of their ſpiritual armour, how they can wield the ſword of the Spirit, how they can defend themſelves with the ſhield of faith, how they can bear a knock upon the helmet of ſalvation, how they can walk upon thorns and ſharp ſtones, himſelf having before ſhod their feet with the *preparation of the Goſpel of peace.* This is the ſpectacle which God delighteth in and laughs at, and it is a glorious ſpectacle. The *Roman* triumphs were but childiſh playes to theſe of the Saints, called out and clad with the armour of righteouſneſs, which makes them more then conquerors, over tribulations and diſtreſs, over perſecution, famine, nakedneſs, peril and the ſword, yea, over principalities and powers, over things preſent and to come: The Saints in their trial, conquer not only all preſent evils, but all that are poſſible. They are real victors over thoſe evils which they ſhall never feel or ſee. As in doing, ſo in ſuffering, all is reckoned to us which we are willing to engage in, though actually we do not; no marvel if God laugh at the trial of ſuch Champions and Chriſtian Heroes. It is the obſervation of *Seneca*, a *Roman* Moraliſt and Philoſopher, in his Book of Providence, ſpeaking of ſome of the ancient Worthies of *Rome*, *I ſee not* (ſaith he) *what* Jupiter *hath on earth more contentful to him, or to which he would rather turn his eye, then to behold* Cato *ſtanding firm in the midſt of publick ruines, and that, though (after all his wreſtlings, as a noble Patriot, for the ſaving of his Countrey) he found both his honeſt counſels broken, and his unwearied labours loſt, yet he did not loſe his ſpirit, nor was his heart broken.* Now, if an Heathen could ſay, that to ſee ſuch a man conteſt with all manner of troubles, was, he thought, a delight for *Jupiter*, and laughter to the Idol-gods; may not we, changing the perſons, make his ſence the comment of this Text, and a proof of this Obſervation? It is a holy delight to the holy God to ſee his faithful ones, his *Abrahams* in a trial, to ſee his *Jobs* in a trial, his *Pauls* in a trial, to ſee thoſe *Grandees in Graces*, ſhew ſuch admirable skill, ſuch courage, ſuch zeal, ſuch faith, ſuch patience, ſuch ſubmiſſion of ſpirit, to ſee Saints play the men thus in ſuch ſpiritual trials and hotteſt ſervices, is not this juſt matter of laughing and rejoycing to the Lord?

Non video quid habeat in terrus Jupiter *pulchrius ſi cõvertere animum velit, quàm ut ſpectet* Catonem, *jam partibus non ſemel fractis ſtantem hibilominus inter ruinas publicas rectum.* Sen. *l.* 1. *Di Provid.*

And if the Lord take a kind of pleaſure in the trials of his Saints, then ſurely the Saints ought not to be diſpleaſed at their trials. Hence the holy Ghoſt bids the Saints laugh as well as the Lord laugheth, *Jam.* 1. 2. *My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.* Chriſtians, never look upon a trial with ſuch ſad and ſowr faces, the face of God is full of ſmiles to ſee you at it: Shall that make you ſad, which makes God rejoyce? *Never grieve, but when you fear you have grieved God.* Further note,

That, *The afflictions of the Saints are trials of the Saints.*

They are occaſions to ſhew forth their virtues and their graces. They give proofs both to God and the world, what manner of men they are. Tried ones are precious ones: many others are ſo, but theſe appear what they are, they have ſhewed their metal. All true faith is good, but tried Faith is beſt (1 *Pet.* 1. 9.) *That the trial of your faith* (that is, that your tried faith) *being much more precious then of gold that periſheth, may be found unto praiſe*, &c.

Beſides theſe two interpretations, I ſhall add for a cloſe, two more, which may further illuſtrate the meaning of this laughter aſcribed to God, at the trial of the innocent. Firſt, or,

Thirdly, He laughs at the fears and ſad forecaſts of his people, who not being able to look through ſecond cauſes, and ſee the ends of things in their beginnings, preſently judge all's loſt, the Church muſt be ruined, and the Saints undone, becauſe thus tried. Now God knowing the end of all actions, not only at their *beginning*, but *from the beginning* (yea, from eternity) he looking through the blackeſt clouds and darkeſt nights, upon the iſſues of all things, derides the ſimple conjectures of men about them. The very Heathens have given us ſuch a notion of God in laughter.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum caliginoſa nocte premit Deus, ridetque ſi mortalis ultra fas trepidat &c. Horat. *l.* 3. *Car. Od.* 29.

Secondly, or fourthly, God laughs at the laughter, and derides the joyes of wicked men, who ſee his innocent ones tried. For they ſay in their hearts, and it may be with their tongues, *Happy we who have ſcaped ſuch a ſcowring, we would not have been in their coats for a world, better die then live to bring our ſelves into ſuch troubles.* Or thus, *Now the day is ours, we have prevailed, theſe men men are catcht and entangled, we ſhall do well enough with them now.* The Lord hearing ſuch language at the trial of the innocent, laughs, to think how thoſe wretches ſhall ſee themſelves deceived, when they ſee theſe who are fallen riſing again; or, God by their fall raiſing others, and ſetting his King upon his holy hill of *Sion*.

Laſtly, As God laughs at the trial of the innocent; ſo let the nocent and impenitent remember and tremble at it, that God will laugh at the approach of their torments, and mock when their fear cometh, when their fear cometh as deſolation, and their deſtruction as a whirlwind.

Job having thus ſhewed how the innocent are afflicted, ſhews in the next verſe how the wicked are exalted, from both he infers that there can be no judgment made of any mans inward ſtate, whether he be *innocent or wicked*, upon his outward ſtate, whether he be *proſperous or afflicted*: The innocent are under the ſcourge, and the wicked are upon the throne, and who doth theſe things but God himſelf? that's the ſum of this twenty fourth verſe.

Verſe 24. **The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where and who is he?**

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.

The earth.] Earth may be taken ſtrictly for the Element of earth, as it is oppoſed to fire, water and air. Not ſo in this place: But more largely, *earth* is put for all earthly things, *Pſal.* 115. 6. *The heaven of heavens is the Lords, but the earth hath he given unto the children of men*, that is, he hath divided all earthly comforts as a portion or inheritance among men; their lot falleth there.

Thirdly, Earth is put for the inhabitants or people of the earth, *Pſal.* 100. 1. *Praiſe him all ye earth*; ſo the Hebrew, which we tranſlate, *Praiſe him all ye people of the earth*. Iſa. 24. 4. *The earth mourneth and fadeth away*, that is, they who dwell on the earth.

Fourthly, By the earth we may underſtand ſpecial Countries or Nations, Tracts or Parts of the Earth.

Fifthly, The Earth is put for earthly minded men, and for the falſe Church, *Rev.* 14. 3. The Saints are *redeemed from the earth*, that is, God hath fetcht them out from amongſt falſe worſhippers and impure ones, he hath reſcued them from the world of Idolaters, and from the ſuperſtitious multitude.

In this place *Earth* is to be underſtood in the ſecond, third or fourth notion, namely, for all earthly comforts; or, for the Provinces and Kingdoms of the earth; or, for the Inhabitants and People of the earth. *Theſe are given into the hand of the wicked.*

Given.] The Lord makes (as it were) *a deed of Gift* of theſe things unto wicked men. So in the fifteenth of this Book, *ver.* 19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no ſtranger paſſed among them*; which ſome expound of the righteous, *No ſtranger paſſed among them*, that is, none came in to invade them; or, as others render it, *No ſtrange thing*, that is, no unjuſt thing came in amongſt them, they had the earth in their own power and rightful poſſeſſion.

Nihil eſt alienum, ſc. injuſtum. Jun.

To be given, noteth two things; or there is a double act of giving.

There is a gift by providence, and a gift by promiſe. When the Lord is ſaid *to give the earth into the hand of the wicked*, we are to underſtand it of that common providential gift, whereby he diſpoſeth of all things to all men; no man hath any thing but by the gift of God. Thus wicked *Jeroboam* had the Kingdom of *Iſrael* given him, and ſo had hypocritical *Jehu* for four generations: *They ſerved the providence of God, and the providence of God exalted them.* (Acts 17. 26.) *He hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation*, that is, he hath (as it were) chalked out, and drawn a line where the bounds and habitations, whither the dominions and poſſeſſions of ſuch men ſhall be extended, and where they ſhall be confined. That's a gift of providence.

There is a ſpecial gift of promiſe peculiar to Believers (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *He that ſpared not his own Son, but gave him to die for us, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* that is, all worldly things; or we may take in whatſoever elſe concerns our ſpiritual eſtate beſides Chriſt: All the things of Chriſt, yea, and all worldly things come in to the Saints, as a gift by Chriſt, *who is himſelf the greateſt gift that ever man received, or that God could beſtow. How ſhall he deny us any thing, when he hath given him who is above all things?* 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *Whether* Paul or Apollos, *or the world, all is yours* (*for ye are Chriſts.* Believers enjoy earthly things by an heavenly title. *Chriſt is their conveyance.* In this ſence the earth is not given to the wicked; the Lord gives them nothing in Chriſt, or for Chriſt as a Saviour, in the Covenant of Grace: *Chriſt, as a Lord, hath bought the wicked* (2 Pet. 2. 1.) and he gives them what they have, as they are his creatures; as he hath given them a ſubſiſtence and a breathing in the world, ſo he allots them maintenance in the world.

So then, to receive by donation from God, may note any way of poſſeſſion. What wicked men inherit by ſucceſſion and deſcent from their Anceſtors, is a gift of God.

Yea, what they get and hold by violence and oppreſſion, is a gift of God. The earth which wicked men tear out of the hands of the godly, the earth which they ſtain with the bloud of lawful owners, that they may enjoy it; even this is ſaid to be given unto them by God, in that common way of providence. *Nebuchadnezzar* was a cruel oppreſſor, yet he had the earth given him by God, *Jer.* 27. 6. *Now have I given all theſe Lands into the hands of* Nebuchadnezzar *the King of* Babylon *my ſervant, and the beaſts of the field have I given him alſo to ſerve him.* God gave him the Land, yet *Nebuchadnezzar* invaded it and got it by violence; God ſent him, *Iſa.* 10. 6. but he went of his own errand, *v.* 7. He had no thought of ſerving the will and commands of God, but of ſerving his own ambition and covetouſneſs; yet of this cruel oppreſſor the Lord ſaith, *I have given him all theſe Lands*, &c. Thus *the earth is given*.

Into the hand of the wicked.

There is a queſtion, whom we are to underſtand by theſe *Donees*, or the receivers of this gift? Some expound the text (with a ſpecialty of the *Devil*) *The earth is given into the hand of that wicked one*, who is, as *the Prince of the air*, ſo, *the Prince of this world*, and hath great power upon the earth. But take it of wicked men, who are the ſervants and heirs of Satan; as the Saints are the heirs of Chriſt, and receive all thing from him, ſo wicked men are the heirs of Satan, his children, and what they receive as a common gift from God, they receive by a ſpecial gift from Satan. The Devil boaſted to Chriſt (*Mat.* 4.) *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* Though the Devil be a very beggar, and hath not a ſhoe-latchet of his own to give, yet for ſuch ſervices and homages he gives out large poſſeſſions of the world (common providence ſo ordering it) to wicked men, his vaſſals.

ὁ πονηρός.

Hence theſe words are interpreted as a reaſon of that confuſion before ſpoken of. No wonder if innocent men are under the ſcourge, for *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked. When they have moſt power, who have leaſt honeſty*, things muſt needs be turned upſide down, and all put in diſorder. What can be expected from ſuch a tyrannous Prince as Satan, from ſuch wicked inſtruments as rule under him, but continual diſturbance amongſt the children of men; eſpecially that good men ſhould go by the worſt. Godly men are like to have but little peace while theſe have the preheminence. The Devil clouds the underſtandings, and vailes the eyes of thoſe Princes and Judges, whom he (in this ſence) advances: *And juſtice is equally wounded and diſtorted, when Judges cannot ſee Things, as when they ſee Perſons in judgment. The bounty of God to the wicked is an occaſion of their injury to the righteous.*

Si flagellatur innocēs, quid mirum, cum mundi judices corruptiſſimè ſint? Terræ poteſtas permiſſa eſt impiiſſimo dæmoni, qui dicitur mundi rector, ille efficit ut reges, principes, judices, quaſi obvelatos haberent oculos, cæcè & ſine diſcrimine de rebus judicantes. Eugub.

But rather take the words (which was hinted before) as an argument whereby *Job* further proves, that there can be no ground of judgment upon any mans ſpiritual eſtate, by the appearances of his temporal; for as righteous and innocent perſons are under the ſcourge, and laid low in the world, ſo wicked men have the earth given them, and are exalted.

I find ſome reading the text as an expoſtulation; *Wherefore is the earth given into the hand of the wicked? Wherefore doth he cover the faces of the Judges?* As if *Job* did chide with God about this unequal carriage of things in the world, and called him to give a reaſon of it. But we have found *Job* (in other places) acquitting himſelf from the ſuſpitions of ſuch a charge, and therefore I cannot joyn with theſe in laying it upon him here.

Job doth not complain, but affirm, *That the earth is given into the hand of the wicked.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Wicked men may abound in earthly things.*

They may have the earth and the fulneſs of it; The earth, and all that is earthly; their bellies are filled by God himſelf with *hidden treaſure* (Pſal. 17. 14.) Precious things are uſually hidden, and all that's named treaſure (though it be but earthly) hath a preciousneſs in it. Hidden treaſures of the earth fill their bellies who ſleight the treaſures of Heaven, and whoſe ſouls ſhall never have ſo much as a taſte of heavenly treaſures: riches and honour are the lot of their inheritance, who have no inheritance among thoſe *whoſe lot is glory. They have the earth in their hands*, who have nothing of Heaven in their hearts: they bear ſway in the world, who are ſlaves to the world: they govern and order others at their will, who are led captive by Satan at his will. Be not offended and troubled to ſee the Reins of government in their hands, who know not how to govern themſelves; or to ſee them rule the world, who are unworthy to live in the world. *Remember the earth is given into the hand of the wicked.* We muſt ſubmit to the judgment of God, though it leave us under the injuſtice of men. And we have little reaſon to envy them a great portion in this life, who have all their portion in this life.

The moſt wiſe God, who hath all things to diſpoſe, diſpoſes them with infinite wiſdom: He gives good things to thoſe that are evil, but he gives better things to thoſe who are good; He hath a *Benjamins meſs*, a rich portion for his own children, after all theſe diſburſements to the children of diſobedience. Their portion lies not in earth and duſt, or in the rubbiſh of the world: *Heaven is given into the hand of the Saints: Spiritual bleſſings in heavenly things are given into the hand of the Saints:* The pardon of ſin, the love and favour of God, the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, peace of conſcience, joy in the Holy Ghoſt, are gifts worth the having; Theſe are *given into the hands of the Saints.* As for the earth, *he gives that into the hand of the wicked*; and yet all that is not given into their hands. Wicked men have not all the earth, and ſome wicked men have none of the earth. The Lord often makes the portion of his own people fat and plenteous, and the portion of his enemies lean and poor. *Heaven hath not all the earthly poor, nor Hell all the earthly rich.* God doth not give wicked men all the earth; but all the earth which they have, is of his giving. Moſt of the earth is given to be their poſſeſſion; and all the poſſeſſion which is given them, is of earth; therefore it is ſaid, *He giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked.*

And ſeeing *God giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked*, we may obſerve alſo,

> *That wicked men have a juſt title to the earthly things which they enjoy.*

They are not *meer uſurpers*, neither ſhall they be dealt with as *meer uſurpers*. They have no ſpiritual title, no title by Chriſt, they claim not by promiſe, which the Saints do: They have forfeited their title by ſin, all is lapſed and eſcheated into the hand of the great Land-Lord. Their goods are forfeited, and ſo are their lives into the hand of God, and he gives both back for a while into their hands. He gives them their lives back, and reprieveth them; for which time of their reprieve, he giveth them the earth to live upon, or to maintain their lives: and ſo far as they uſe earthly things for the continuance of life, they ſhall not be accounted or reckoned with as uſurpers. They ſhall not be charged for uſing the creature, but for abuſing it; for making the earth ſerve their luſts, not for making it a ſupport of their lives. And ſeeing as the Lord hath given them back their forfeited lives, ſo alſo their forfeited lands by a deed of gift, ſealed with general providence: this is enough to ſecure them in thoſe worldly poſſeſſions (which they have neither got nor hold by injuſtice) from the brand of uſurpation, and from the violence of diſpoſſeſſion. *As what God hath joyned, no man may put aſunder; So what God hath given, no man muſt take away. Neither riches nor rule are founded in grace. He hath given the earth into the hand of the wicked.*

Dominum non fundatur in gratia.

He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.

He covereth.] There is ſome Queſtion *whom* we are to underſtand, as the Antecedent to this Relative, *He: who is he that covereth?* Some make the Antecedent a wicked man. Others ſay 'tis God, *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, and he*, that is, the wicked one *covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* Or, *He*, that is, *God covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* I ſhall a little open this expreſſion, it needeth ſome uncovering, for it is dark in both relations.

Tegit ne videant quod æquum & juſtum eſt. Druſ.

Firſt, Look upon that interpretation, which refers it to wicked men. *He covereth*, namely, *That wicked man*, who is preferred and exalted, *covereth the faces of the Judges*; that is, he ſtops the courſe of juſtice. And there are four wayes by which wicked men cover the faces of the Judges.

Firſt, By gifts and rewards. Bribes vail, yea, put out the eyes of a Judge, that he cannot ſee to give every one his due. Hence that charge (*Exod.* 23. 8.) *Thou ſhalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wiſe, and perverteth the words of the righteous.*

Munera cæcos reddunt judices.

Secondly, The faces of the Judges are covered by threatnings; fear of loſs blinds as well as hope of gain. Some ſend terrible meſſages to the Judge; Will not you do as we would have you? Will not you give your ſentence and opinion thus? At your peril be it. Now the Judges face is covered, his eyes are put out by a threat; the miſt and cloud of a Princes diſpleaſure, of a great mans indignation is before his eyes, *His face is covered.*

Thirdly, The Judges faces are covered by actual putting them to ſhame, by caſting them out of favour, and clouding them with diſgrace, by taking away their commiſſions, or ſending them a *Quietus eſt*, laying them by as unfit for ſervice; any of theſe is a covering of the Judges face.

There is a fourth way of covering the Judges face, to which the ſecond and third are often made a preparatory; And that is, by putting the Judge to death. So much that expreſſion implies in *Job* 40. *verſ.* 13. where the Lord with infinite wiſdom and holineſs, inſulting over *Job* to humble him, bids him ariſe, and do ſome great thing, ſomewhat which might ſpeak him a man of might. *Deck thy ſelf now with majeſty and excellency, and array thy ſelf with glory and beauty; caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud and abaſe him; look on every one that is proud and bring him low, and tread down the wicked in their place; Hide them in the duſt together, and bind their faces in ſecret*; that is, cover their faces as men prepared for death, as men ready to go out to execution. We may expound it by that (*Eſth.* 7. 8.) where as ſoon as ever the word went out of the Kings mouth, *They covered* Hamans *face.* And by that (*Mar.* 14. 65.) where when Chriſt was judged worthy of death, the Text ſaith, *They ſpit on him, and covered his face:* The covering of the face was a mark of a condemned man, held as unworthy to behold and enjoy the light of the Sun, or the light of the Princes countenance. Thus to cover the faces of the Judges is to condemn the Judges, and to take them out of the world by ſufferings, rather then ſuffer them to do right. I find that of *Elihu* (Job 34. 29.) interpreted to this ſence, *When he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble?* That is, when the Lord doth abſolve and acquit a man, giving him a diſcharge, then he is free, no man can ſue him or trouble him, much leſs condemn him; but *if he hide his face, who can behold him?* So we tranſlate it, meaning thus, If the Lord hide his own face. But this expoſition ſaith, *If the Lord hide the face of that man*, that is, If the Lord condemn that man, or paſs ſentence of death upon him (of which covering or hiding the face was a ſymbol) then, *who can behold him?* That is, who then can ſee his face, or have ſociety with him, whom God hath ſeparated to death? It was a cuſtom alſo among the *Romans*, when ſentence was pronounced upon a malefactor, thus to command the executioner, *Take him away, bind his hands, cover his face, hang him up.* And uſually with us, malefactors, who are ready to ſuffer the pains of death, put a covering upon their faces. This alſo may be a good ſence of the words, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, that is, a wicked Prince oppreſſeth and putteth the Judges to death. And whereas good Princes ſay, *Let juſtice be done, though the world periſh:* he ſaith, *Let the Judges periſh, rather then juſtice ſhould be done.*

Quis rei faciem poterit amplius videre, quaſi abſolutus ſit. Bold.

I Lictor, colliga manus, caput obnubito, infœlici arbori ſuſpendito. Cic. *in orat. pro* Rabir.

Yet further, the word **Judges**, in the original, notes not only ſuch as are in actual office to determine controverſies,

שפטים *Judices vel officio, vel aptitudine.*

Nomen judicis apud Hebræos latius patet quam apud Latinos, non enim ille tantum vocatur judex qui controverſiis vacat, ſed etiã qui rempublicam armis tuetur. Bol. *Vidi ſervos, i. e. ſervire dignos, & principes, i. e. dignos imperio.*

ſies, whether criminal or civil; but any man that is worthy to be a Judge, or is fit to govern and mannage publick affairs, whether in peace or warr. And ſo it implies a ſuppreſſing and keeping down of thoſe that are moſt able, and beſt qualified to undertake any ſervice for States and Kingdoms (*Eccleſ.* 10.7.) *I have ſeen ſervants upon horſes, and Princes walking as ſervants upon the earth*; that is, I have ſeen men who are worthy no better imployment then that of a ſervant to rub horſe heels, or do the meaneſt offices, ſuch as theſe I have ſeen in the ſaddle, and in their trappings. And, *I have ſeen Princes walking upon the earth on foot*; that is, men who deſerve to bear rule and to govern Kingdoms, who both for ability and integrity, are worthy to have the reins of Authority in their hand, and to ſit at the helm, theſe I have ſeen walking upon the earth, or tugging at an oar, as common men: that's an evil which *Solomon* ſaw under the Sun: So here, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, may have this meaning, Evil Princes keep down and hold in obſcurity men of parts and gifts, of ſpirit and courage, of honeſty and uprightneſs, and prefer only thoſe who are baſe and corrupt, who will ſerve turns, and comply with times.

> Hence note, *That it is the policy of wicked Princes to corrupt and blind Judges, or to employ ſuch as are blind and corrupt.*

They take away power from thoſe who would uſe power well, and give power to them who are ſlaves to their wills.

> Secondly, *It is the character of a wicked man to bribe a Judge, to put out the eyes, and cover the face of a Judge with gifts.*

A good cauſe fears not the eye of the Judge, and a good man had rather loſe his cauſe, then pervert the Judge.

Tegit, ne videant quod bonum & æquum eſt. Druſ.

So much of mans covering the faces of the Judges: now ſee how God covers them. He who opens the eyes and uncovers the faces of the Judges, that they may diſcern between cauſe and cauſe, doth alſo cover the faces of Judges, that they cannot diſcern between cauſe and cauſe. As the Lord hardens the heart and blinds the eye in ſpiritual things, ſo alſo in civil, not by taking away the ſight which man had, but by withdrawing or denying his own light. The Lord covers the faces of the Judges, when he doth not give them light, nor ſhew them the path of juſtice. If God ſuſpend his light, the greateſt lights are preſently in darkneſs. God doth not hood-wink or muffle up the Judges by putting any thing before their eyes, but by hiding his own eyes from them. The Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of Judges thus covered (*Pſal.* 62.5.) *They know not, neither will they underſtand, they walk on in darkneſs, all the foundations of the earth are out of courſe.* We have here the character of evil Judges, and what the conſequents of it are. *They know not, neither will they underſtand, they walk on in darkneſs* (theſe three expreſſions explain this Text) and what follows? *Then all the foundations of the earth are out of courſe*; Law and juſtice are out of courſe, no man knoweth where to have right, or by whom to be protected againſt wrong.

> Hence obſerve, *Ignorant and evil Judges are ſent by God as a ſcourge.*

Hinc elicimus malos judices etiã à Deo eſſe. Druſ. *Judex oculatiſſimus eſſe debet.* *Solebant judices intra cortinas ſe continere cũ contra reum capitis ſententiam pronunciabant.* Pined.

I gave them a King in mine anger, Hoſ. 13.11.

Laſtly, (for the clearing of this) The covering of the faces of the Judges notes three things.

Firſt, Ignorance and blindneſs, or an inability to judge.

Secondly, Inhumanity and cruelty, *The faces of the Judges being covered*, they will not look upon the caſe of a poor man. It is uſual for an oppreſſed petitioner to ſay to the Judge, *Look upon me, good my Lord, caſt an eye upon me*; the Judge who will not ſee, is covered with incompaſſion.

Antiqui fortunam cæcam pingebant, quod malis bona, mala bonis indiſcriminatim conferrentur.

Thirdly, Covering of the face imports the affected partiality of Judges; many do as if they could not ſee, as if their faces were covered. Affection blinds the judgment, and none are ſo blind as they that will not ſee. The reaſon why the Heathen pictured their *Fortune* blind, was, becauſe ſhe diſtributed things, as if ſhe affected blindneſs, giving good to thoſe that were evil, and evil to thoſe that were good. When Judges give rewards to thoſe that ſhould be puniſhed, and puniſh thoſe that ſhould be rewarded, their faces are covered, they are blind. Judges were anciently pourtray'd or pictur'd *without hands and without eyes*; without hands, as noting that Judges muſt not receive or take gifts: And without eyes, becauſe they muſt not ſee friend or neighbour, great or ſmall, kinſman or ſtranger; they were to diſtribute juſtice according unto every mans cauſe, and not with reſpect to any mans ſtate or relation. It is ſaid of Chriſt (*Iſa.* 11.3.) where his Kingdom is deſcribed, that he *ſhall not judge after the ſight of his eyes*; that is, by what appears to the eye, *but he ſhall judge righteous judgement.* In this ſence, it is the Judg's duty and honour to have his face covered. But the covering here meant, is either of ignorance and inability, or of corruptneſs and partiality: All which hinder the Judge from doing his duty, and are blemiſhes of his honour.

But ſome may object, Shall we attribute this to God? Doth he cover the faces of the Judges? God is pure from all ſin, while he leaves men in their impurity. He is juſt in giving man over to his own injuſtice. So we anſwer, and the next words challenge all to make another anſwer.

If not, where, and who is he?

אם־לא
פאו

Si non, ubi ille? Pagn. *Si non, ergo Quis ille? lingua ſancta conciſa valde. Si non (ſupple, Deus qui hoc faciat) ergo quis eſt? ſupple, qui faciat.*

If it is not the Lord who doth this, tell me who is it? as if he had ſaid, Some may be offended and ſcandalized at my doctrine, that I aſſert, *The earth is given into the hands of the wicked*, that *he covereth the faces of the Judges*; If any man ſhall deny or ſcruple this, let him ſhew me whence theſe things are, and who is the cauſe of them.

There is a three-fold underſtanding of theſe words: Some make the Antecedent to be the *wicked*; As if he had ſaid, *Who but a wicked man will cover the faces of the Judges, and hinder the execution of juſtice?* And ſo they acquit God, accounting it blaſphemy to attribute the act of covering unto him: The Lord is a God of juſtice, he loves judgment; he opens the mind, and clears the eye, he doth not caſt clouds and miſts before it. It's true, ſo far as the act is ſinful, God forbid we ſhould aſcribe it unto God: But (as was ſhewed before) we need not uſe this *ſubterfuge*, leaſt we ſhould lay any aſperſion upon his juſtice and holineſs. God can leave men to their injuſtice without any thought in, or touch of injuſtice in himſelf.

Si non, ubi eſt, ſcil. *qui me falſi arguat? prodeat ſi quis me poteſt falſi arguere* Merc. *Ubi eſt, qui mentiri me cenſet?* Pagn.

Others interpret this Queſtion as a *challenge*; *It is thus, If it be not, where, and who is he?* Who and where's the man that will argue or implead me of falſhood in what I have aſſerted? Who is it that undertakes to convince me of error in the doctrine I have delivered? This is my opinion; theſe poſitions I have laid down for truth, *That the Lord deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked, that he laugheth at the trial of the innocent, that he gives the earth into the hand of the wicked, that he covereth the faces of the Judges*; If it be not thus, if any one hold otherwiſe, Let me ſee the man, Let him appear as my *Antagoniſt, or Opponent. Where, and who is he* that dares charge me with error? I am ready to anſwer him.

But rather take it in the ſence before given, If it be not the Lord who doth this, then ſhew me who it is, *Where, and who is he*? There is an elegant conciſeneſs in the Hebrew, which ſpeaks only thus, *If not, where he*, or, *who he?* The ſence is, If it be not God who doth this, ſhew me, tell me, Who is it? And ſo the words are an excluſion of any other power, ordering and diſpoſing the things of the world. When old *Iſaac* was diſappointed in his intention of giving the bleſſing to *Eſau*, he trembled exceedingly, and ſpake in the language of this Text, *Who, where is he?* (Gen. 27.33.) As if he had ſaid, *I thought thou my ſon* Eſau *hadſt brought me veniſon before, and if it was not thou, I know not who it ſhould be, I was never ſo deceived in my life, if it was not thou.* Such a broken ſpeech *Job* uſes here, *If it be not God who doth theſe things, I am much deceived, for I know not any in the world to whom I might probably aſſign them, but only unto him. You muſt be wiſer then I, if you find any thus powerful beſides God. If not, where, and who is he?* Whence obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *the greateſt confuſions in the world are ordered by God.*

What greater confuſion then this, to ſee the earth given to thoſe who deſerve not to live upon the earth? that they

ſhould

ſhou'd rule the world who are unworthy to breathe in the world? Yet even theſe things are diſpoſed of by the Lord, and are the iſſues of his counſels. *That wherein we ſee no order, receives order from the Lord.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *The very confuſions that are in the world are an argument of the power of God.*

For ſeeing the world continues in the midſt of ſuch confuſions, it ſhews there is a mighty power, ballancing theſe confuſions ſo exactly, that they cannot ruine the world. *If there were not an over-ruling power in God, wicked men ruling would ſoon ruine all. There are myſteries of providence, as well as of faith.* And many are as much puzzl'd to interpret what God doth, as what he hath ſpoken. I find Heathens often ſtumbling at this ſtone, and ungodding their Idol gods at the ſight of ſuch diſtributions among men. When evil takes away good men, this is my next thought (ſaith one of them) *I am ſollicited to think there are no gods.* Another obſerving how unequally men were buried, buries God in that obſervation. *Licinus* a cruel oppreſſor lyes interred in a ſtately monument. *Cato*, a ſober, grave, wiſe, and juſt Senator hath a mean and poor Sepulchre, ſcarce looking above the ground. *Pompey the Great*, that famous Commander and Conqueror had no Tomb at all, he was buried no man knoweth where. *When we ſee* (ſaith he) *things go thus, who would think that there are any gods?*

Cum rapiunt mala fata bonos, ignoſcite faſſo, Sollicitor nullos eſſe putare Deos. Ovid. *Marmoreo* Licinus *tumulo jacet, &* Cato *parvo,* Pompeius *nullo, quis putet eſſe Deos?*

Thus they ſtumbled at the ſuppoſed uneven diſpenſations of their Idol gods. And we find great offence taken, and an horrible blaſphemy belched out againſt the true God, upon the ſame occaſion, and almoſt in the ſame terms (*Mal.* 2. 17.) *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, yet ye ſay, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye ſay, Every one that doth evil is good in the ſight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, or where is the God of judgment?* Though they fell not directly into the former blaſphemy, to conclude that there was no God, becauſe wicked men proſpered; yet they fell into a blaſphemous opinion, that God delighted in, and loved wicked men, becauſe they proſpered. *Wherein have we wearied the Lord?* Yes, ye have: Not that the Lord is at all moved or troubled in himſelf with the contumelious ſpeeches of men: but thus, if any thing would tire, and weary him, this may, to hear himſelf arraigned and judged by the world, as a lover of evil men, becauſe he doth not preſently ſmite them with the viſible marks of his diſpleaſure; that becauſe the earth is given into the hands of the wicked, therefore the Lord muſt needs be a friend to the wicked.

Thirdly, Obſerve, That *no creature is maſter of his own wayes or ends.*

The Lord giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked. Man cannot get the earth into his own hand, let him be as wicked as he will: *The Lord covers the faces of the Judges:* If he enlighten them, no man can cloud them; if he open, no man can ſhut.

No creature can do good without the directing and enabling hand of God.

No creature doth any evil without the ſupporting and over-ruling hand of God (*Iſa.* 41. 23.) *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good or evil, that we may be diſmayed, and behold it together.* Let us ſee you do any miſchief, if ye can. Man is ſet upon miſchief, but he cannot act miſchief, unleſs God (at leaſt) permit. *We were in an ill caſe, if man could do all the evil he hath a mind to.*

It is matter of comfort, to conſider that the wayes and iſſues of good and evil, are in his hand, who is good, and doth no evil.

VERS. 25, 26.

Now my dayes are ſwifter then a poſt, they flee away, they ſee no good.

They are paſſed away as the ſwift ſhips, as the Eagle that haſteth to the prey.

THeſe two verſes are a confirmation of *Job's* former argument: As he had ſhewed in general, that the wicked are exalted, and the innocent afflicted; ſo now he ſhews the latter branch from his own experience or example.

Verſ. 25. **My dayes are ſwifter then a poſt, they flee away, they ſee no good,** &c.

We have here three ſimilitudes, by which *Job* ſets forth the uncertainty of his proſperous eſtate, and how ſoon the time wherein he enjoyed it was blown over.

1. Poſt.
2. The ſimilitude of a Ship.
3. Eagle.

As in *Chap.* 7. he uſed three ſimilitudes, *viz.*

1. A Weavers ſhuttle.
2. Of The Wind.
3. A diſſolving Cloud.

So here he bringeth in three more to clear the ſame point.

Job's thoughts travel'd thorow all parts of the world to find out illuſtrations of mans frailty. In theſe two verſes three of the four elements are enquired into. The Earth, the Air, and the Water. A Poſt upon the Earth, a Ship upon the Water, an Eagle in the Air, are called in as witneſſes to this truth.

Now my dayes are ſwifter then a Poſt, &c.

Now my dayes.] That is, my proſperous dayes, ſo Mr. *Broughton* gloſſes. Troubleſom times are all night and darkneſs, yet we may take it of dayes in general; They *are ſwifter then a Poſt.*

The word which we tranſlate **Swifter**, ſignifies any thing that is light, becauſe light things are quick in motion. We call a man that is *ſwift of foot, light of foot.* And here it is joyned with that which among men is moſt ſwift and paſſing, *a Poſt*, who rides or runs without any ſtop or ſtay, without the leaſt conſiderable ſtop or ſtay: So that it is grown into a Proverb, *To run Poſt*, or, *To ride Poſt*, is as much as to be in haſte: To ſay, *You are in Poſt haſte*, is to ſay, you are in great haſte. *My dayes* (ſaith *Job*) *are ſwifter then a Poſt*, they out-run thoſe curreers ſent out upon the moſt important meſſages. The Poſt, whether ſent to carry news good or bad, or intelligence for the diſpatch of buſineſs, publick or private, is engaged to ride hard; he muſt not ſpare horſe-fleſh, or (as we commonly ſpeak) *ſuffer the graſs to grow under his horſe-heels.* Hence Obſerve,

קלל *Levitas & velocitas, tā ex Græco quam Hebræo etiam Latino pro eodem accipiuntur. Levis armaturæ milites celeriter ſubveniunt.* רץ *Curſor, qui ex una urbe in alteram, &c. proficiſcitur cum liberis aut nunciis.*

First, *Time is very ſwift, 'tis gone ſuddenly.*

My dayes are ſwifter then a Poſt.] We ſeldom conſider, or conſider as we ought, this common truth. We live, for the moſt part, as if we could not tell how to get rid of our time; or, as if we were weary of our time, and knew not how to ſpend it out, as if time were rather chained to a *ſtanding poſt*, then were like a *running Poſt*. The Ancients emblem'd Time with wings, as if it were not *running*, but *flying*.

The next word in the Text comes near that ſence, **They flee away.** My dayes (ſaith *Job*) *flee away*. The word doth not ſignifie flying, as a fowl with wings, but flying as a fugitive from hard bondage, or as a man from ſome imminent danger, which, becauſe 'tis done with ſpeed, therefore the word imports any ſpeedy motion, eſpecially that of a Poſt. A Poſt riding or running, is an excellent embleme of Time. There are many conſiderations in *Poſt-riding*, which ſhew how exceeding ſpeedy time muſt be, to which it is here compared.

Firſt, A Poſt rides upon fleet or ſpeedy Horſes.

Secondly, He rides his Horſes upon their ſpeed; a man may have ſpeedy Horſes, and go ſoftly; but a Poſt ſpurs on.

Thirdly, A Poſt hath change of Horſes at every ſtage, that he may keep them upon their ſpeed.

Fourthly, He hath Horſes ſtanding ready for change; they are not to fetch out of the field, or to make ready when he comes to his ſtage, it is but leaping into the ſaddle and away.

Fifthly, He that rides Poſt, makes no long meals, much leſs feaſts, he takes a bit and away.

Sixthly, He lies not long a bed, he ſcarce goes to bed till he comes to his wayes end.

Seventhly. A Poſt hath extraordinary pay for his ſervice, and that will cauſe him to make ſpeed.

Eighthly, Sometimes he rides upon pain of death, with a halter about his neck. No man will loiter, when his life lies on it.

Ninthly, If a man rides poſt, all muſt give him way, he picks and chooſeth his path, and no man muſt hinder him.

Tenthly, He ſtayes not to ſalute, much leſs, like other Travellers, to gaze and view the Countrey, the Towns, Buildings, Gardens, *&c.*

All theſe things laid together, evince that the Poſt makes ſpeed. Yet ſaith *Job*, *My time outrunneth the Poſt*, my time goes faſter then he; the Poſt muſt ſtay a little ſometimes, but time will not ſtay at all: The Poſt muſt ſtay for change of horſes, but the Chariot of the Sun never ſtayeth to change horſes (the Sun is the meaſure of time) and that makes no ſtop, hath no ſtages or baiting-places; *Our dayes are ſwifter then a Poſt.*

Further, Experiences ſpeak this moſt true of that ſpecial time, the time of proſperity. The beſt things of the world are in a moveable, in a paſſing, poſting condition. They ſcarce abide with us long enough to learn what they are. If a man ride poſt, we can hardly diſcern who he is; the good things of the world, the pleaſures and profits, the *form and faſhion of it paſs away* ſo faſt, that none can perfectly report what they are, excepting this, *Tranſitory and Vain*: As the artificial faſhions of the world, the faſhions in building and in apparel, paſs ſo ſpeedily, that few know what the faſhion is before tis gone; a new one is abroad, before the greateſt number are in the old; ſo the natural faſhions of worldly things (ſome in themſelves, all as to our enjoyment) the excellency and dignity, the luſtre and beauty of the creature are out of ſight, before we can well ſay of what colour and ſhape, or what manner of things they were. When the Painter takes the perfect feature of a mans face, or the lineaments of his body, he muſt ſit. The world ſits not ſo long with any man, as for him to take the picture of it. *Creatures periſh in their uſing*, while they are in our hands we know not what they are, for even then they are periſhing and declining from what they were. One ſaid, when a creature-comfort was taken from him, If I had it again, methinks I could enjoy it; we ſeldom enjoy what we have. And what we have, is alwayes *in tranſitu*, paſſing from us while we have it; it is in motion while in poſſeſſion. We can ſcarce be acquainted with it, becauſe it ſtayes ſo little with us. Hence *Job* concludes this ſimilitude;

They ſee no good.

My good dayes run ſo faſt, that I cannot ſee the good of them. *Not to ſee good*, is, not to have the leaſt experience of good. For the eye takes in its objects, and judges of them (ſo much Philoſophers teach) ſooner then any other ſenſe. The eye is not long about its buſineſs: It is the ſenſe of quickeſt diſpatch. So that it is, as if *Job* had ſaid, The good things of this life are ſo tranſient, that I am ſo far from feeling or taſting them, *&c.* that (which is done with the leaſt delay and expence of time) I have not time enough to ſee them. When men ride upon ſpeed, or when any thing paſſes ſwiftly before us, we have but a glimpſe, ſcarce a ſight of thoſe obiects.

Omnia mihi prærepta ſunt priuſquam ea ſenſerim. Bez.

Beſides, *To ſee good*, is to enjoy good, as was ſhewed. *chap.* 7. 7. And when he ſaith, they (*ſcil.* his dayes) *ſaw no good*, his meaning is, that he ſaw no good in his dayes. Till there is a conſiſtency or a fixedneſs of good, there cannot be a full enjoyment of good. The reaſon why in heaven we ſhall have ſo much happineſs, is, becauſe all the good in heaven is a fixed good. *Time paſſes, but Eternity ſtands. Eternity is a fixed Now.* The things of heaven ſhall not periſh in the uſing, nor ſhall the faſhion of them paſs away. In heaven viſion will be everlaſting, we ſhall ever ſee good, and that ever ſeeing ſhall be an ever enjoying of good. Here on earth we ſee God through a glaſs darkly, and we ſee all good in ſuch poſt-haſte, paſſingly, that we rather ſee it not, then ſee it; eſpecially while we remember that good paſſes by us in the company, yea, in a crowd of evils, our ſight of it (as when we are called to behold one man riding ſpeedily among many) muſt needs be hindered. Yea oftentimes evils ſtand ſo thick about us, while good poſts by us, that we cannot look through them to the good which is before us. In heaven, as good ſtands to our eye, ſo it ſtands alone; there's no interpoſition of evil to eclipſe the beauty, or darken the ſight of it. There we ſhall ſee, and ſee nothing but good. Here we ſee much beſides, yea, ſee either none at all, or very little good, and that but a little.

They flee away, they ſee no good.

From the Poſt, who runneth upon the Land, *Job*'s next compariſon carries us to the motion of a Ship at ſea, and anon to that ſwifter motion of an Eagle in the air.

Verſe 26. **They are paſſed away as the ſwift ſhips, as the Eagle that haſteneth to the prey.**

They are paſſed.

That is, My dayes are paſſed, and with them all the contents and comforts which I had in thoſe dayes: we are to take dayes, as cloathed with with all their contentful occurrences and circumſtances.

They are paſſed away.] Or, they are glided away inſenſibly.

חלף

As the ſwift ſhips.

Not only as the ſhips, but *as the ſwift ſhips.* A ſhip is a fabrick for the ſea, a houſe upon the ſea, a moveable houſe; and as it moveth variably, ſo it moveth ſwiftly: The inconſtancy of the winds makes the motion of the ſhip unconſtant; and the ſtrength of the winds makes the motion of the ſhip ſwift. So that to ſay, His dayes paſſed as a ſhip, is an aggravation of their ſudden paſſage. A ſhip paſſeth without any ſtop from it ſelf: The ſhip needs not ſtay to bait, to ſleep or reſt while it is upon its journey; whatſoever they do who are within the ſhip, the ſhip moves on, if they prepare it for motion.

אני *Navit, ab* אנה. *In* Pihil, *obvenire, occurrere fecit, quæ ſic dicta eſt, quod remigum aut ventorum impetu impellatur & feratur.*

Job puts an *Emphaſis* upon this compariſon; His dayes were not only as a ſhip, but as a *ſwift ſhip*; there is much in that addition.

The Hebrew is, *My dayes are as the ſhips of Ebeh*, which is diverſly rendred.

Firſt, Some take the word *Ebeh* to be the name of a River in the *Eaſtern* part of the world, about *Arabia*, near the place where *Job* lived. A late Traveller hath obſerved a River of very ſwift motion, near *Damaſcus*, and not far from the Sepulcher of *Job*. Now a ſhip that moveth in a ſwift River, beſides that it may have the wind, hath alſo a great addition to the ſpeed of its motion, from the force and ſtrength of ſuch a current. Thus ſaith *Job*, *My dayes move as the ſhips upon Ebeh*, as ſhips upon the ſtreams of that fierce, ſwift River, which go down with ſpeed, as we ſee Boats with the Tide, and ſo proportionably greater Veſſels, where there is a River and a Current proportionably to bear and carry them.

Ebeh, *flumen rapidiſſimum in Arabia.* Rab Sol. *Bold.*

Secondly, Others conceive the word, not as a proper name, but as ſignifying *deſire*, from *Abah*, to deſire with earneſtneſs; and then the ſence is rendred thus, *My dayes are paſſed away as ſhips of deſire*, that is, as ſhips, which being laden with rich commodities, the Maſter and the Pilot deſire earneſtly to bring the ſhip ſpeedily to her Port, that ſo they may put off the commodities, and make ſale of the rich lading that is in her. The wind doth not ſo much fill the ſails of ſuch a ſhip, as deſire doth the minds of her Mariners. Thus *Daniel* was called a man of deſires, becauſe he was a man ſo precious and deſirable. A ſhip richly laden is much deſired; ſuch a ſhip is a great charge to the Owners and Merchants, they therefore ſend to ſpeed the ſhip home as faſt as they can. Thus (ſaith *Job*) *My dayes paſs as a ſhip that hath the moſt deſired commodities.*

אבה *Deſideravit. Naves voluntariæ, vel deſiderii ſc. ſummo deſiderio ad portum properantes. Vir deſideriorum.*

Thirdly, The *Chaldee* and others give a further note upon it, deriving the word from *Abab*, whence *Ebib*, which ſignifies a ſtalk growing up early from the earth, and bringing forth the firſt ripe fruit of any kind; and ſo it is put for any early-ripe Summer-fruit, for early Plums, Apples, Cherries, *&c.* And then the ſence is, *My dayes are like to a Ship which carrieth early fruit*: So the Vulgar, *Like a Ship carrying Apples.*

Fructus primitivus.

Naves poma portantes.

Now a Ship that carries ſuch fruit, makes great haſte, becauſe the fruit will ſpoil and rot, if not ſpeedily put off. Ripe fruit is a commodity that will not keep, unleſs they have

Pertranſiit cum navibus

fructus delicatos portantibus. Targ.

have a quick paſſage, all is loſt. *My dayes* (ſaith *Job*) *paſs even as a ſhip* that carries ripe Summer-fruit, which are haſted away with all ſpeed, leſt they periſh before they come to the port.

איב *Inimicari, piratarum naves, quæ ornarariæ non ſunt, ſed tantum ad capiendam prædam.*

Fourthly, There is another ſence given by thoſe who derive the word from a root which ſignifies, *to hate and oppoſe, or to be an adverſary*; and then it is thus rendred, *My dayes paſs away as a Pyrates ſhip*, or as a ſhip that goes to take a prey, as a Ship that goes out to take prizes upon the Sea. Now we know, when ſhips go out either upon piracy, which is robbery at Sea, or upon any lawful way of taking prizes by publick authority; theſe ſhips of all others are the ſwifteſt, they are prepared on purpoſe to make way and overtake other ſhips; their lading is not burden, but ballaſt, that they may be ſwift of ſail; ſo ſaith, *Job*, *My dayes paſs away like a ſwift ſhip*; not like ſome great Merchant-ſhip deeply laden, which can make no great way in the Sea, but as a ſhip of pyracy, that hath nothing in her but Weapons, Artillery and Ammunition, to oppoſe thoſe they meet, ſuch are as your nimble Frigats, Fly-boats and Catches, which ſail with every wind, or Gallies which paſs without wind, carried with ſtrength of arms and oars, all being Veſſels uſed to run in upon, and ſurprize a booty This alſo is a good interpretation; and ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it, *My dayes do fleet away as the Pyrates ſhips.* That's the ſecond ſimilitude, *My dayes are paſſed awas as the ſwift ſhips.*

And as an Eagle haſteneth to the prey.

This is the third ſimilitude. A ſhip moveth ſwiftly, eſpecially a ſhip upon a ſwift River; or a ſhip laden with deſirable commodities, or a ſhip laden with Summer-fruit, or a Pyrates ſhip, a man of war. But here is an inſtance implying greater ſpeed then that of the moſt ſpeedy ſhip; *As an Eagle haſteneth to the prey.*

An Eagle of all the fowls in the air, is the ſwifteſt and ſtrongeſt of wing: An Eagle is the chief of Birds. We find in Scripture, ſwiftneſs expreſſed by this ſimilitude of an Eagle (*Hab.* 1. 8.) The *Chaldeans*, who invaded the people of *Iſrael*, are thus deſcribed, *Their horſemen ſhall come from far, they ſhall flee as the Eagle that haſteth to eat.* See the like inſtances, *Jer* 48. *Jer.* 49. *Ezek.* 17. And in *Iſa.* 40 31. *They ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles*, &c. Noting the exceeding ſwiftneſs of the Saints in the wayes of God, the ſpeed they ſhall make in the wayes of holineſs; though the youths faint, and the young men utterly fall, yet they that wait upon the Lord, ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles, that is, they ſhall be ſwift and ſtrong.

But here is more expreſſed then the natural ſwiftneſs of the Eagle, here is ſomewhat occaſional, which adds wings to her wings. We had four interpretations of the ſhips ſwiftneſs. Here is one expreſſion exceeding all thoſe four; *An Eagle haſtening to the prey.*

Quoniam avidiſſimè appetit, ideo perniciſſimè volat. San.

An Eagle is a greedy Fowl. Hence that of Chriſt (*Matth.* 24.) *Where the Carkaſs is, there the Eagles gather together*; that is, look where ever there is any prey, there you ſhall have Eagles; if there be a carkaſs to be had, the Eagle ſhall be ſure to make towards it. *My dayes* (ſaith *Job*) *are paſſed away, as the Eagle haſteneth to the prey.* The Naturaliſts obſerve, that the Eagle ſoars aloft in the air, ſo high, that the eye of man cannot diſcern her; yet the Eagle is of ſuch a piercing eye (Eagle-eyed is a proverb for quick-ſighted) that ſhe can diſcern her prey upon the earth, yea, in the water; and as ſoon as the Eagle eſpies her prey, ſhe powrs or ſowces down upon it like a Thunder-bolt, like a Bullet out of a Gun, or an Arrow out of a Bow. Thus *Job*'s dayes paſſed as an Eagle in her flight, and not in her ordinary flight, but as an *Eagle that haſteneth to the prey*, when hunger adds ſwiftneſs to her wings; ſuch was the paſſage of his dayes.

Tanquam fulmen ſe è ſublimi in terram jaculatur.

Numquid eſt navibus veſtigium viæ, aut aquilæ volantis? Sept.

There is ſomewhat further obſervable in this, from the Tranſlation of the Seventy, who render it thus, *Is there any ſign or mark in the way of a Ship, or of an Eagle?* So the meaning of *Job* ſhould be, that his life in reſpect of former comforts and contentments, was paſt away, and had left no mark, no ſign behind it. The ſhip in the Sea paſſeth away, and there is no rode, no tract left; and the Eagle in the air paſſeth, and you cannot ſee where the Eagle made her flight, the air cloſeth preſently, there is no way to be ſeen: *Solomon* uſeth thoſe Similies, *Prov.* 30. 19. *There be three things which I know not, the way of an Eagle in the air, the way of a Serpent upon a rock, and the way of a Ship in the Sea:* And it is frequent in Authors to expreſs thoſe things which paſs away, not leaving any tract or print behind them, by the motion of a Ship in the Sea, and of an Eagle in the Air. Hence note,

Quæ nullum ſui curſus ſignum relinquant per avium volatum & naviũ trãſmiſſionem ſignificantur. Sanct.

That, *The beſt worldly things when they are gone, are as if they had never been.*

There are two motions which will certainly leave a mark behind them: Firſt, Motions in ſin. Secondly, In holineſs. Every ſtep we tread in the wayes of ſin, or of holineſs, leaves a print, a remembrance behind it; but when the riches and honours, the pleaſures and contentments of this life are paſt, nothing remains of them. It is ſaid, *Dan.* 8. 5. (which may ſerve for the illuſtration of this place) in the viſion of the *He-goat*, that *he touched not the ground*; that *He-goat* was a type of *Alexander the Great*, who ſet up the *Grecian* Empire; and he is compared to a *He-goat*, which did not touch the ground, becauſe of his ſpeedy conqueſts. When man or beaſt runs upon the ground with extream ſpeed, we ſay, they do not touch the ground. When the Hare leaves a deep tract, the Hunter knows ſhe runs ſlowly, and is almoſt ſpent. *Alexander* conquered the world ſooner then a man could well travel over it. And as *Alexander* came in, ſo he paſſed out, both in his perſon and poſterity; for within a ſhort time no man could tell what was become of the *Grecian Monarchy*; the conqueſts of *Alexander* could not be found, no more then the way of a Ship in the Sea, or of an Eagle in the air, or of a man running ſo faſt, that he leaves no print behind him.

Secondly, Taking both theſe ſimilitudes in the ordinary notion, as they import the ſwift paſſage of *Job*'s proſperity, 'tis queſtioned, how *Job* can be excuſed for ſpeaking thus ſlightly and undervaluingly of his temporal eſtate, which was ſo raiſed, and ſo enriched, that he was an eye-ſore to the Devil. Satan envied him, becauſe of his abundance: And doth he now make nothing of it? Was it nothing to be the greateſt man in the Eaſt? Is he not very unthankful for, or very forgetful of the goodneſs and bounty of God to him? Should he not rather have ſaid, I have had my dayes of proſperity, my worldly comforts, and I enjoyed theſe a long time?

Jobuſq; *ad Satenæ invidiam, benedictam domum, benedictã familiam habebat.*

I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks not this to obſcure the favours of God to him, or ungratefully to paſs by his bleſſings; but he anſwers the objections of his Friends, and maintains the argument he brought againſt them. His argument was, That the eſtate of a godly man in this life, is as tranſitory and as brittle as the eſtate of a wicked man, and that therefore there can be no diſtinction made of men by outward diſpenſations: To clear which, he ſaith, *Look to my good dayes, they are paſt away ſwiftly*, and there is nothing remaining of them. Hence obſerve,

That, *The outward eſtate of the beſt men in the world, is as tranſitory and fading as that of the worſt in the world.*

My dayes (ſaith *Job*) my comfortable dayes are paſſed away: *Every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*, *Pſal.* 39. 5. It is not only a wicked man, whoſe outward eſtate is vain, but every mans: *David*'s Crown and Scepter were fading, vaniſhing flowers. *Abraham* and all the Patriarchs ſaid (*Heb.* 11.) *We have here no continuing City*; neither City nor Citizens have long continuance here. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 7. 31.) ſpeaks to the Saints, and bids them take their hearts off from the world, and not to drench or ſteep their ſpirits in things here below; why? *The faſhion of this world paſſeth away*, the faſhion of the world in your hands; if you have the world in your hands, the faſhion of it will periſh there, as ſoon as in the hands of other men. Do not think that the world is put into an abiding ſtate, or into an unalterable faſhion for your ſakes. A godly man and a wicked man (though made of the moſt different faſhion) live in a world, and poſſeſs worldly things of the ſame faſhion.

Secondly,

Quemadmodum qui navigat, ſive ſtet, ſive ſedeat, vadit, quia impulſus navis ducitur: ita & nos, ſive vigilantes, ſive dormientes, ſive tacentes, ſive loquentes, ſive nolentes ſive volentes, per momenta temporum quotidie in finem tendimus. Greg.

Secondly, As from the firſt ſimilitude, ſo from theſe we learn *how tranſitory our time is.* See how *Job* multiplies compariſons, That if we will not learn by the firſt, we might yet be convinced by a ſecond and a third. Go to the Land, ſee Time upon the ſpur, in the ſwift riding Poſt. Go to the Sea, ſee Time upon the winds, in the ſwift-ſailing Ships. Go to the Air, ſee Time upon the wing, in the ſwift-flying Eagle. Theſe all preach the ſpeedy paſſage of Time. How ſad is it to ſee men live as if their dayes were *Snail-pac'd*, not *Poſt-pac'd*? As if Time lay alwayes at an Anchor, or were wind-bound, and could not uſe her Sails? As if it had leaden heels, and not wings, or were bound hand and foot, and could not ſtir? The Apoſtles caution is, *Redeem the time*; and now we have the Apoſtles argument to enforce it, *The dayes are evil.* If time go out of your hand, you cannot fetch it back again; there is no Rhetorick can recal it, or Price redeem it. Time is ſuch a commodity, as all the power in the world cannot recover, if loſt and let ſlip. If all the Crowns and Kingdoms of the world ſhould be laid down as a reward for the bringing back of one hour, yea of one moment of time, they could not obtain it. Therefore improve the preſent time: No time is yours but the preſent: the time that's gone, comes no more; the time that is to come, may find you gone before it comes; your time is only the preſent time, and that is paſt as ſoon as preſent.

But not to ſtay upon that which moveth ſo ſwiftly, our dayes and time; I will paſs to the other Branch, wherein *Job* further clears the point in the five following verſes.

VERS. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

If I ſay I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heavineſs, and comfort my ſelf;
I am afraid of all my ſorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?
If I waſh my ſelf with Snow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean;
Yet ſhalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me.

These words contain a proof of the latter part of *Job's* Aſſumption. He had affirmed, That an innocent and righteous perſon may quickly loſe all his outward comforts; which he illuſtrated by three ſimilitudes: now he proves that he may be entangled and lime-twigg'd with afflictions beyond hope of eſcape. This he doth in the twenty ſeventh, twenty eighth, and twenty ninth verſes. Which he amplifies with Hyperbolical ſtrains, in the thirtieth and thirty firſt verſes. The higheſt Rhetorick of his ſorrows being let out, to ſhew how remedileſs his ſorrows were. *If I waſh my ſelf with Snow-water, and make my ſelf never ſo clean; Yet ſhalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me*: Things are ill with me, and I ſee not which way to mend my ſelf. I am ſo far from any probability of help by contending and ſtriving with God, that I have no hope of it by waſhing and cleanſing my ſelf. As carnal and earthly ſuccours fail me, ſo theſe heavenly and ſpiritual duties will not ſuccour me. I will give you the ſum and ſubſtance of theſe five Verſes in a few words together, and then open the Particulars.

The general ſence of the Context may be thus conceived; as if *Job* had ſaid,

I poor man in this condition, ſtudy to forget the troubles which are upon me; and laying aſide all anger, paſſion and diſcontentments with which ye charge me, I labour to refreſh and revive my ſelf with hopes of ſome dawning or near-drawing deliverance; but while I am eſſaying to do this, my ſorrows aſſault me afreſh, and even overwhelm my Infant-hopes, my beginning, budding comforts, with mighty terrors; ſo that now I even deſpair of recovery out of the hand of my affliction, and am perſwaded that I ſhall not only not be delivered that I may appear or be accounted pure and innocent, but if continued afflictions be an argument of wickedneſs (as you affirm) I ſhall have the bonds of my preſent troubles ſo faſtened upon me, and ſuch new ones, it may be, ſtronger ones, added, that I ſhall ſtill look in your eyes, and viewed in the glaſs of your opinion, like a wicked man: Wherefore then ſhould I deceive my ſelf with hopes that I ſhall be delivered? Or that God will awake for me, and make the habitation of my righteouſneſs proſperous? Whenas I believe and am very confident that how pure and righteous ſoever I am, or (by further waſhing and cleanſing, believing and repenting) ſhall appear to be, yet the Lord hath an intent to try me further, even to the uttermoſt; and will caſt me into the ditch, mire and dirt of further afflictions; ſo that they who make up their judgments by your rule, though they were as near to me as the cloaths upon my back, muſt yet abhor and loath me (as ye my Friends now do) as a wicked perſon. He ſeems to ſpeak as the Apoſtle doth, 1 *Cor.* 4. 9. *I think that God hath ſet forth us the Apoſtles laſt, as it were men appointed unto death, for we are made a ſpectacle to the world, and to Angels, and to men.*

This is the ſum and general ſence of theſe five Verſes. The words are full of difficulty, and there is much variety of judgment about them; but I hope in the cloſe to make out a ſence upon every particular, which ſhall be matching and ſuitable with this which hath been given in general.

If I ſay, I will forget my complaint.

If I ſay.] In this *Job* anſwereth directly to the charge of *Bildad* at the eighth Chapter, *verſ.* 2. *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things, and ſhall thy words be like an Eaſt-wind?* To which *Job* anſwers *Bildad*, *If I ſhould ceaſe ſpeaking (as thou ſeemeſt to chide me into ſilence) If I ſhould ſay, I will not complain any more, I will give over theſe mournful diſcourſes, and bite in my ſtrongeſt pains, What then? Will the event prove what thou haſt promiſed? ſurely no, I am afraid of all my ſorrows, and almoſt aſſured that they will return upon me If I ſay, I will forget my complaint.*

I will forget.

שכח *Eſt oblviſci ut* זכר *Recordari cum cura & diligentia.*

The word which we render [**forget.**] may ſignifie a threefold forgetfulneſs.

Firſt, Forgetfulneſs coming from the neglect of our natural abilities; when we are careleſs and take no heed to remember.

Secondly, Forgetfulneſs ariſing from the weakneſs of our natural abilities; when though we are careful, yet we cannot remember.

But *Job* means neither of theſe, he intends a third kind of forgetfulneſs, even a ſtudied and affected forgetfulneſs; when how able ſoever we are, yet we will not, or would not remember. *If I ſay, I will forget my complaint*; that is, If I purpoſely ſet my ſelf, or labour to forget my ſorrows, yet I cannot get off their remembrance. As the Hebrew (*Zachar*) ſignifies not only the natural act of memory, but diligence in remembring; ſo doth the Hebrew (*Sachah*) to forget. It is ſometimes as hard a work to forget, as it is at any time to remember. How do the damned in hell ſtrive to forget their pains and complaints? They would count it a happineſs, if they could put their miſery out of mind and memory one hour; but they cannot. And they can no more forget what they have felt, then not be ſenſible of what they feel: *If I ſay, I will forget*

My complaint.

שיח *Sapit hoc verbum meditabundum quendā ſermonem, & anxium intellectus vociſq; diſcurſum. Miſeriæ memoriam omnem deponam.* Druſ.

The word notes Meditation; and here, *a mournful Meditation*, a breathing forth in mournful expreſſions. The ſame word is uſed, *chap.* 7. 13. *When I ſay my Bed ſhall comfort me, and my Couch ſhall eaſe my Complaint* (or, my mournful meditation) *then thou ſcareſt me with dreams.* So then *Job's* meaning is, If I ſhould ſet my ſelf with greateſt intention to forget, that is, to lay aſide the thought of my troubles and ſorrows, and ſay, I will leave off my heavineſs, and complain no more, I will not pore upon my afflictions, but reſolve to be above them; yet it will not be. I find no eaſe; Forgetfulneſs is a medicine for ſome diſeaſes and pains, but I find no cure, no remedy that way for mine. Hence obſerve,

There are ſome things which man can very hardly forget, or get out of his mind.

We may ſtudy their forgetfulneſs, and yet not be able to forget them. And they are of two ſorts. Firſt, Worldly pleaſures. Secondly, Worldly ſorrows. Theſe will not fail to mind us. We need the art, or rather the grace of forgetfulneſs, to lay theſe aſide. And there are two things which we are ſlow to remember. Firſt. Our own Duties. And ſecondly, The Mercies of God. About theſe we need the art, or rather the grace of memory. And uſually they who have moſt neglected to remember duty, are moſt afflicted with the conſtrained remembrance of their own ſorrow. And they ſhall not be able at all to forget the wrath of God, who would not remember the mercies of God. *If I ſay I will forget my Complaint,*

I will leave off my heavineſs, and comfort my ſelf.

פני

Notat faciem, iram etiam & triſtitiam.

Leave off my heavineſs.] The Hebrew word [for word is, *I will lay aſide my face*; for that which ſtrictly, and in the Letter of that Language, ſignifies the face or countenance of a man, doth alſo ſignifie, Firſt, Anger and wrath; Secondly, Sorrow and heavineſs. 'Tis put for anger, *Pſal.* 34. 16. *The face* (*or anger*) *of the Lord is againſt ſuch as do evil.* So (*Lam.* 4. 16. *Levit.* 17. 10.) *I will ſet my face*, that is, I will ſhew my anger, and manifeſt my diſpleaſure againſt them.

And the reaſon why that word which ſignifies the countenance or face, ſignifies alſo anger and wrath, ſorrow and heavineſs, is, becauſe both anger and ſorrow break forth in the face. If a man be very angry, you ſhall ſee his anger ſcribled in the uneven character of his countenance: If a man be very heavy and ſorrowful, you ſhall ſee the lines of ſorrow drawn in his face. Therefore it is ſaid of *Hannah* (1 *Sam.* 1. 18.) When ſhe received a refreſhing and a reviving anſwer from the Lord in prayer (the poor ſoul ſate drooping and mourning, as much as praying, but as ſoon as ſhe had a hint of audience and acceptance, it is ſaid) *She went away and did eat, and her countenance was no more ſad*; the ſadneſs of her heart appeared no more in her countenance, there was fair weather in her face, and Sun-ſhine in her forehead, the rain and ſhowers of her tears were blown over and dried up. As in ſome ſinners, *The ſhew of their countenance doth teſtifie againſt them* (Iſa. 3. 9.) that is, they are ſo groſly wicked, that you may ſee ſin in their faces; whereas others can keep ſin cloſe enough in their hearts, they can keep the diſeaſe in, and ſhut themſelves up, when they are ſick of the plague in their hearts (1 *Kings* 8.) Nothing but holineſs is diſcernable in the face of their converſation, when nothing but rottenneſs and corruption lies at the bottom of their ſpirits. But as the corruption of many a mans heart breaks forth in botches upon the face of his actions, and the rottenneſs of his ſpirit bliſters upon his tongue in unſavoury ſpeeches; ſo thoſe paſſions and affections of the heart, joy and ſorrow, anger and heavineſs appear in the face, and we may read the diſtempers of the heart in the diſguiſedneſs of a look. The face is the *Index* of the heart, that tells you how things go within. Therefore *Job* ſaith, *If I leave off my face*, meaning, as we tranſlate, *If I leave off my heavineſs*, which is ſo evident in my face, or which is as eaſie to be ſeen as my face: If I reſolve to appear chearful and merry, and will not let clouds darken my countenance any longer, yet, *&c.* The face is put generally for the appearance or outſide of any thing; as we ſay, the face of the earth, the face of the heavens, the face of the Church or Common-wealth. So that, *To leave off heavineſs or the face*, is to leave off all ſhew of heavineſs. As *Joſeph* left off his tears of joy, (*Gen.* 43. 30, 31.) who, having eaſed his heart of his joyful ſorrows, by weeping ſecretly in his Chamber, *waſhed his face, went out and refrained himſelf.* Thus *Job* would have waſhed his mournful tears from his face, he attempted to refrain himſelf; but he could not, his ſorrows were too ſtrong for him; and as he could not remove ſo he could not diſſemble them. For this *leaving off*, is to be taken as the precedent act of *forgetting*, for an affected, reſolved laying aſide. If I make it my buſineſs to be chearful and leave *off my heavineſs, yet*, &c. Hence obſerve,

Cordis index vultus, totuſque homo eſt in facie. Nomen faciei in Scriptura ſignificat exteriorem habitum, ſicut facies terræ, cœli, reipu. Bold. *Latina vox facies ſignificat non ſolum os, oculos, genas, ſed formam omnem, modum & facturam totius corporis, à faciendo dictam.* Aul. Gel.

Sorrow is not eaſily ſhaken off.

Sorrow ſticks cloſe. It is very hard for a man to play the hypocrite with his ſorrow, or diſſemble the ſadneſs of his heart, but is far harder to be really delivered of it. Sorrow is a companion that will not be caſt off with a word. A man may more eaſily cover his ſin then his ſorrow. Many can put a vizard of holineſs upon their faces, when nothing but wickedneſs is in their hearts; but it is not eaſie to make a ſhew of comfort, when nothing but ſorrow is in the heart. Grief will out. Heavineſs in the heart is like *the Ointment in the right hand*, of which *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 27. 16.) *That it bewrayeth it ſelf.* One ſaid of a merry *Atheiſt*, *He laugheth to thee and to me*, that is, he ſeems to laugh, but he mourns to himſelf, the mans heart is heavy. If it be not ſo, yet it may be ſo with all wicked men, when they are merrieſt in the face, they have reaſon to have ſorrow even unto death in their hearts: It is a hard thing (I ſay) to put ſorrow out of the face, much more to get it out of the heart; when it is lodged there once, it will not ſoon be diſpoſſeſſed. The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 1.) exhorts, *To lay aſide every weight, and to caſt off the ſin that doth ſo eaſily beſet us*; he means it of the ſin of nature, which we bear about us; this ſin (ſaith he) doth eaſily beſet us; but let us caſt it off, that is, let us ſtudy and ſtrive to lay aſide this heavineſs of ſin, which is the trueſt cauſe of the heavineſs of ſorrow. One would think that a man needs not much perſwaſion, when he hath a heavy burden upon his ſhoulders, to lay it aſide; yet (ſo it is) man can hardly be perſwaded to lay aſide this burden; and it is the buſineſs we have with your ſouls every day, to perſwade you to lay it aſide: *It is a weight that eaſily beſets us.* Now as we need much exhortation to caſt off the weight of this ſin, which is ſo pleaſing, ſo alſo of ſorrow, though it be unpleaſant. When ſorrow beſets us, it leaves us without eaſe; but ſorrow eaſily beſets us. *Job* found it a hard task to lay aſide his burden. Becauſe his Friends thought he fed too much upon his afflictions, therefore he tried what he could do, but it would not do. *If I ſay, I will leave off my heavineſs, I will comfort my ſelf*, &c. See the iſſue by and by.

I will comfort my ſelf.

Comfort is the very life of our lives, the Spring of our Year, the Light of our Day, the Sun in our Firmament, the complement of mercy; and therefore Chriſt gives his Church the ſum of all mercy, in that one promiſe of ſending the Comforter. The Hebrew word ſignifies to ſtrengthen, becauſe when a man is caſt down with ſorrows, his ſpirit is weakened: *Comfort is the repair of ſtrength. If I ſay, I will comfort*, that is, corroborate and ſtrengthen my ſelf (*Pſal.* 39. 13.) *O ſpare me* (ſaith *David*) *that I may recover my ſtrength*; or, that I may a little comfort my ſelf: The *Septuagint* renders it, *That I may get my life again*; that I may be enlivened, and re-inſouled, or fetch back my ſoul again. Here, if I ſay I will comfort my ſelf, *take heart at graſs* (as we ſay) and play the man, then my ſorrows renew upon me.

בלג

Roboravit, conſortavit, vires collegit. Sept. ἀναψύχω.

But ſome may object; How is it that *Job* takes upon him to *comfort himſelf?* Is it any wonder if *Job* come ſhort of comfort, when he went to himſelf for comfort?

Comfort is not a commodity to be found in the hand or power of any creature; the great God hath all in his own hand; if any man will have comfort, he muſt trade to heaven for it. It is the honour of God to be called, *The God of all comfort* (2 Cor. 1. 3.) that is, the God who hath all comfort at his diſpoſe. As ſome Kings have a denomination from the great ſtaple-commodities of their Kingdoms. Our King is called, *The King of the Wool,* becauſe Wool is the chief commodity, and more plentiful here then in any Countrey of the world. Another is called, *King of the Wines*; and another *of the Flax. Comfort is the Staple-Commodity of Heaven*; and God is called, *The God of all comfort*, not only becauſe the chiefeſt and beſt comforts are in his hand, but becauſe there is not the leaſt imaginable comfort to be had out of his hand. He hath the monopoly of comfort, or rather the ſole gift of comfort, We can trouble and perplex our ſelves, but God only can comfort us. And *he is the God of all comfort*, of all ſorts and of all degrees of comfort: the God, not only of ſpiritual,

tual, but of worldly comfort; of temporal comfort, as well as of eternal. As the joyes of the Holy Ghoſt are in his hand, ſo are the joyes of civil relations; the joy of meat and drink, the joy of riches and honour are in his hand alſo; How then ſaith *Job*, *I will lay aſide my heavineſs, I will comfort my ſelf?* It is a hard thing to comfort others (*Luther* ſaid, *It is as eaſie a work to raiſe the dead, as to comfort the conſcience*) but it is harder for a man to comfort himſelf. *Eliphaz* gave teſtimony to *Job* in (*Chap.* 4. *v.* 3, 4.) that he had *upholden him that was falling, and had ſtrengthened the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt, it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.* Thou, who haſt holpen others, canſt not help thy ſelf. Yet here *Job* was upon a reſolve to comfort himſelf.

I anſwer, Though it be a truth, that no man is able to comfort himſelf, no more then he can convert himſelf; and that a man is no more able to change his heart from ſorrow to joy, then he is able to change his heart from ſin to grace; yet a man may attempt or aſſay, he may uſe means to comfort himſelf. When *Job* ſaith, *I will comfort my ſelf*; the meaning is, I will do the utmoſt I can, I will not be behind in my endeavours, I will take the beſt courſe, and improve all opportunities to get out of theſe dumps, whoſoever will preſcribe me a way, or direct me to a remedy of theſe ſorrows, I will ſubmit to it; *I will comfort my ſelf.* From whence note,

That, *What a man really endeavoureth to do, that he may be ſaid do.*

I will comfort my ſelf; Why? Becauſe though he were not able to attain ſuch an end; Joy and comfort lieth beyond the line of the creature, yet he reached at it, he attempted and aſſayed all means to comfort himſelf. Thus the ſalvation of a man is aſcribed to himſelf; A man is ſaid to ſave himſelf, though ſalvation belongeth to the Lord, even temporal ſalvation, but eſpecially eternal ſalvation; yet, a man may be ſaid to ſave himſelf: As the Apoſtle exhorts *Timothy* (1 *Epiſt.* 4. 16.) to walk by a holy rule, to ſettle himſelf in his ſtudies, to read the Scriptures, and to meditate in them, to be faithful in diſpenſing of the Goſpel, aſſuring him, *If thou doeſt theſe things, thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf, and them that hear thee*; *ſave thy ſelf.* No man can be his *own Saviour*, he may be as well his *own Creator*; *Timothy* was thus encouraged, becauſe in ſo doing, he did all that a man ought, who expects ſalvation. That was the way to, though not the cauſe of ſalvation. *Salvation is all Chriſts*; *yet he who doth his beſt to ſave himſelf, may be ſaid to ſave himſelf.* Thus alſo a man comforts himſelf, converts himſelf, inſtructs himſelf, when he putteth himſelf out to the utmoſt of gifts, graces, and opportunities to do or attain duties and bleſſings. *No man* (ſaith the Prophet) *doth ſtir himſelf up to take hold of the Lord.* The word in the Prophet, ſignifies, to awake, or to watch; no man wakes or watches his opportunity to take hold of the Lord. It notes alſo that action of old birds, who flutter with their wings, and beat up their young ones, to urge and provoke them to uſe their wings, and flie abroad. Thus he complained, becauſe the lazy, dull-hearted Jews did not raiſe up and waken their hearts to do what they could, though to do it was more then they could.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That a man in affliction may help on his comforts or his ſorrows.*

I will comfort my ſelf, I will leave off my heavineſs. Some add to their afflictions, and are active to aggravate and increaſe them: they make their night darker, and obſcure the light of counſel that is brought unto them: they joyn with Satan their enemy, and by the black melancholy vapors of their own hearts, ſtifle the conſolations that are adminiſtred them by faithful friends. Like *Rachel* (Jer. 31.) *they refuſe to be comforted*; when reviving Cordials are offered, they ſpill them upon the ground, and will not take in a drop: they are ſo far from comforting themſelves, that they will not receive comfort from others. The Prophet ſeems to be reſolved upon the point, he would go on in ſorrows; *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me* (Iſa. 22. 4.) As ſometimes a man under great affliction beſpeaks comfort from others: O, I am in a ſad caſe, come, comfort me, ſhew me how I may get eaſe from theſe ſorrows. Many beg prayers, and ſend bills of their afflictions, deſiring to have them ſpread before the Lord in the Congregation, that ſome comfort may be dropt from Heaven into their diſeaſed bodies, or wounded ſpirits. Others ſlight prayers, and care not to be comforted, as if it were an eaſe for them to mourn, and a refreſhing to be in heavineſs. There is a twofold ground, upon which comforts are thus put off.

Firſt, Some put off their comforts upon ſullenneſs of Spirit; black and dark ſpirits love to bathe themſelves in ſorrow. *Sorrow is the bath of drooping ſpirits*, and it is Satans bath too; Melancholly is commonly called, *The Devils bath*; he takes delight to waſh in the ſtreams of our unneceſſary tears. Sorrow for ſin puts the Devil to the greateſt ſorrow. Godly grief is a grief to Satan: but he delighteth in our worldly ſorrows, as the Devil may be delighted: if he have delight in any thing, this is one thing he delights in, our forbidden ſorrows. Some ſorrows are as much forbidden as any pleaſures. The Devil is as much pleaſed with our unlawful ſorrows, as he is with our unlawful pleaſures. And he labours as much to make us pleaſed with them.

Secondly, Others help on their own ſorrows, and leſſen their comforts through forgetfulneſs or ignorance; they (as the Apoſtle chides the Hebrews, *Chap.* 12. 5.) have forgotten the exhortation, which ſpeaks unto them as unto children. Now, as wicked men rejoyce, becauſe they forget or know not their ill condition: So godly men are, when they forget or know not how good their condition is. Yet *Job* ſuppoſes the review of his good eſtate, would neither check his ſorrows, nor eſtabliſh his peace; *If I ſay, I will forget my complaint, I will comfort my ſelf, I am afraid of all my ſorrows.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Man is not able to comfort himſelf.*

We can make our ſelves croſſes, but we cannot make our ſelves comforts. A man may ſay, as *Job* did (*Chap.* 7 13.) to his bed, comfort me; or to his riches, comfort me; or to his wine and good chear, comfort me; or to his friends, comfort me: He may ſay to all outward acts of pleaſure, to merry company, and muſick, comfort me; Yea a Saint may ſay to his graces and holineſs, comfort me; and yet none of theſe can comfort him, or, they comfort him in vain. To ſeek comfort any where but in Chriſt, is to ſeek the living among the dead. Chriſt is comfort cloathed in our fleſh, and he is the comfort of our ſpirits. Till he gives comfort, every man muſt conclude as *Job*, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows.*

I am afraid.] The word ſignifies ſtrong trembling and ſhaking fear.

יגר *Timuit, expavit, præ metu ſe abſtrahere, timorem denotat imminentis calamitatis.*

Of all my ſorrows.] The root hath a double ſignification. Firſt, To afflict with grief (*Iſa.* 63. 10.) *They vexed his holy Spirit.* Secondly, To faſhion or form a thing (*Job* 10. 8.) *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me round about.* The ſame word by a Metaphor ſignifies both to grieve and to faſhion, to vex and to form, becauſe a man that forms and faſhions a piece of wood or ſtone, ſeems to put it to pain by cutting and hewing. And he that forms wax, vexes and chafes it in his hands. Thus I ſay, becauſe in the faſhioning of a thing a man doth bruiſe, cut, and (as it were) put it to pain; therefore the ſame word ſignifies both to vex or grieve, and to form, or faſhion. And this word is applied unto the ill uſage of words (*Pſal.* 56. 5.) *Every day* (ſaith *David*, ſpeaking of his enemies) *they wreſt my words*; or they put my words to pain and grief, or they painfully and grievouſly wreſt my words. *David's* enemies took up what he ſpake, and put a new ſhape upon it, and this they did ſo vexingly, that they are ſaid to wreſt his words; a thing is vexed when it is wreſted, or wrought quite out of the form it before had. The ſame Metaphor the Apoſtle *Peter* uſeth in reference to Doctrine, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. ſpeaking of the Epiſtles of *Paul*, in which *are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable, wreſt*, or put upon the rack; they painfully form his words, and repreſent them in a meaning which he never intended. What is ſpoken may be right, both in the matter and intendment of the ſpeaker, yet another wreſts, forms, and faſhions it in his own mould, and makes it bear a ſence which the ſpeaker never dream'd of,

עצב *Significat dolore afficere, & interdum figurare. Qui materiã aliquam, ut lutum vel ceram figurat manibus & digitis, is illam premendo quaſi dolore afficit.* Bold. *Eſt elegans metaphora; verba alicujus figurare, nam quia ea vi detorquet, aliam figuram, i.e. ſignificationem iis tribuit.*

In this Text we have the *Noun* only, which importeth either the labour or pains, which a man taketh, or the pain and grief, which a man feeleth. Hence in the Hebrew this word ſignifies an *Idol*, and both acceptions fall into the reaſon of it.

Firſt, Becauſe Idols are made, faſhioned and formed up curiouſly, with a great deal of art and labour: the wax, or clay, or ſtone is put to pain; you muſt cut it and carve it to make an Idol.

Secondly, Becauſe Idols are ſerved, attended and worſhipped with much pain and grief. Falſe worſhip, or the worſhip of Idols, is alwayes more ſervile and painful then true worſhip is. Falſe worſhip is a painful ſervice, a ſervile ſervice, a toil rather then a worſhip; but the ſervice of the true and everliving God, is an holy, an ingenuous, a noble and honourable ſervice. Idols are troubleſom, both in their making, and in their worſhipping. From this two-fold interpretation of the word, I find a two-fold tranſlation given.

Verebar omnia opera mea. Vul.

Firſt, Thus, *I am afraid of all my works*, as if *Job*, having a deſign to comfort himſelf in a reflexion upon his good works, and former holy walkings, feared they would not ſerve his turn or bear up his ſpirit in the evil day, which was come upon him. As if he had ſaid; *I have lived as exactly by the rule of the Word as I could; I have had reſpect to all the Commandments of God, that I might not ſin againſt him. Yet I am afraid of all my works, the anger of God will ſurely ſoak thorow them all, or find holes and breaches in them to come in upon me at.*

Thus he is conceived reaſoning with himſelf. But doubtleſs it was not *Job's* meaning to look to the innocency or holineſs of his life paſt, as the ground of his preſent comfort; he that would do ſo, may juſtly be afraid of all his works. When we ſee the beſt of our ſelves, we have more reaſon to be afraid, then to be comforted. As we muſt work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling: ſo we have cauſe to fear and tremble at our works.

But rather as we tranſlate, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; that is, I no ſooner endeavour to comfort my ſelf, but preſently my ſorrows throng about me, they appear before my face, and make ſuch a gaſtly apparition, that I am afraid. Sorrows charge and aſſault me afreſh, when I am purpoſing to make an eſcape from the hands of ſorrow. When I think of leaving of my heavineſs, or of getting out of the ſight of it, ſorrows come upon me with greater violence then before. While a priſoner is quiet and content with his reſtraint, the Keeper layes no great reſtraint upon him; but if he perceive him meditating an eſcape, or attempting to break priſon, and ſet himſelf at liberty, preſently more irons are clapt upon him, and an advantage taken even to load him with chains. Such hard uſage this poor priſoner feared at the hand of his ſorrows, *If I ſay, I will leave off my heavineſs, I will throw off my bolts and fetters, and get out of theſe troubles, I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; I ſhall have all the Keepers and Jailers about me, they will lay more load upon me, and watch me more ſtrictly then before: You tell me I am in love with my ſorrows, but the truth is, fears of ſorrow incompaſs me round about, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows.*

Note hence this general truth,

> Firſt, *That affliction is the matter of fear.*

Natural fears ariſes from the apprehenſion of ſome approaching evil; and as fear grows more boiſterous and inordinate, ſo it repreſents us with ſadder (though but ſuppoſed) evils.

> Secondly obſerve, *A godly man may be much oppreſt with the fear of afflictions.*

When I would comfort my ſelf, I am afraid of all my ſorrows: It is terrible to me to think that they ſtill encreaſe upon me, and that whileſt I hope to eſcape, I am more enſnared. Chriſt himſelf, when he was in our nature, and clothed with our fleſh, was afraid of all his ſorrows: he was *a man of ſorrows*, and he was afraid of his ſorrows too, *Matth.* 26.38. He ſaid, *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful even unto death; and he offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong cryes and tears unto him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard in that he feared* (Heb. 5.) His were extraordinary ſorrows indeed, ſuch as no creature ever felt or taſted. The Cup of ſorrow which he drank was mixed and tempered with all our ſorrows, and with the cauſe of them, our ſins. This was it he feared, being in our nature; though as that nature was hypoſtatically united unto the divine nature, it had infinitely more power to bear all thoſe ſorrows, then we have in our nature to bear the leaſt ſorrow. Now if Chriſt himſelf in our fleſh was afraid of his ſorrows, which yet he knew he ſhould overcome, how much more may the fear of ſorrows overcome us, while we are in the fleſh?

> Laſtly obſerve, *That the fear of afflictions aſſaults and oppreſſes ſome moſt, when they ſet themſelves moſt to conquer and overcome them.*

I, ſaith *Job*, *would comfort my ſelf, but I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; I fear they will be doubled and trebled upon me, therefore I had rather ſit ſtill, then, by ſtriving to unlooſe, ſtraiten the cords of my affliction faſter upon me. The next clauſe ſeems to hint this as a reaſon, why his ſorrows hung ſo cloſe upon him.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

But how did *Job* know this? As God ſaid to *Adam*, (Gen. 3.11.) *Who told thee that thou waſt naked!* So I may ſay to *Job*, Who told thee that God would not hold thee innocent? Or, where hadſt thou this aſſurance of thy condemnation? The Saints may know, or be aſſured that God will pardon them; but a wicked man cannot know or be aſſured that God will not. This knowledge of *Job* was but a ſuſpition, or at the moſt a conjecture. And the giving out of this conjecture was but the language of his fear, his faith could ſay no ſuch thing, for God had no where ſaid it, *The beſt men ſpeak ſometime from their worſer part.* Their graces may be ſilent a while, and leave corruption to have all the talk. When the fleſh is under great pain, the ſpirit is hindered from acting its part, and then ſence gets the maſtery over faith. Had it not been upon ſuch a diſadvantage, *Job* had never offended with his tongue, by ſaying he knew what he could not know.

לא תנקי *à radice* נקה *purus, mundus, per Metaphoram innocens, inſons.*

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.] The word which we tranſlate *innocent*, cometh from a root which ſignifieth pure and clean, and in the Verb to cleanſe, and make pure: And becauſe innocency is the purity or clearneſs of a perſon, therefore the ſame word ſignifies to cleanſe, and to hold or make innocent: In which ſence it is uſed frequently, *Exod.* 20. *Thou wilt not hold him guiltleſs* (or innocent) *that taketh thy Name in vain.* The counſel that *David* gave upon his death-bed unto *Solomon* concerning *Joab*, was, *Therefore hold thou him not innocent*, or guiltleſs (1 *King.* 2. 9.) that is, let the blood which he hath ſhed be upon him, let his honour and his name continue ſtained and blemiſhed in thy thoughts and judgment, *Hold him not innocent.*

Here the Queſtion is, To what Antecedent we are to refer the Relative *Thou*, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent*; Thou, who?

There are two opinions about it. Some refer it to God, and ſome to *Bildad*, to whom *Job* maketh anſwer in this place.

They that refer it unto God, make out the ſence thus, Either, firſt, taking the word properly for cleanſing and healing the ſores and wounds which were upon his body; *I know thou wilt not cleanſe my body from this filthineſs, from theſe diſeaſes that now annoy me:* And ſo it is an anſwer to the words of *Bildad*, telling *Job*, that in caſe he ſought unto God, and humbled himſelf before him, he would awaken for him, and remove thoſe judgments. No, ſaith *Job*, when I think of eaſe and deliverence, all my fears return upon me, and I know God will not yet cleanſe, eaſe or deliver me from them.

Adverſus illud quod amici ſtatuunt, probos, videlicet etiam caſtigatos nunquam ſuccidi, hoc pro certo ſtatuã ô Deus, nunquam eſſe me ab iſtis quibus totus ſcateo fœdiſſimis ulceribus ac vermibus repurgandum. Bez.

Again, Taking it tropically (as we render it) for a judicial cleanſing or purification; ſo, *Thou wilt not hold me innocent*, is as much as this, Lord, ſuch ſorrows and troubles are upon me, that I fear thou wilt not declare, or pronounce, or give teſtimony concerning me to the world, that I am an innocent perſon. Becauſe the ſores and troubles upon him, were as an evidence againſt him in the judgement of his friends, that he was a wicked perſon, therefore (ſaith he) Lord, I am afraid, *Thou wilt not hold me*, that is, *Thou wilt not declare me to be innocent* by taking away

Novi quod non ſit me liberum dimiſſurus. Coc.

Non mundabis, i. e. *purum, juſtum, vel etiam innocentem non declarabis.*

away theſe evils, that ſo this opinion of my friends concerning me may be removed or confuted. From this ſence Note,

Firſt, *That even a godly man in deep afflictions may have miſgiving thoughts of God.*

The ſoul miſ-gives ſometimes about the pardon of ſin, and is even ſwallowed up with deſpair, concluding, *I know God will not hold me innocent*; he will not be reconciled unto me, or blot out my tranſgreſſion.

But eſpecially (which is rather the mind of *Job*) the ſoul miſgives about releaſe from puniſhment. Some being hamper'd in the bands of affliction, conclude, God will never let them looſe, or ſet them at liberty again. Such a concluſion *David's* unbelief made againſt himſelf, *I ſhall one day periſh by the hand of* Saul (1 *Sam.* 27. 1.) When *Jonah* was caſt into the deep, in the midſt of the Seas, when the floods encompaſſed him, and all the billows and waves paſſed over him, then he ſaid (*Chap.* 2. 4.) *I am caſt out of the ſight of thine eyes.* Indeed *Jonah* began to recover quickly, his next words being a breath of faith, *Yet I will look again toward thy holy Temple.*

Secondly obſerve, *That until fear of guilt be removed, fear of trouble will not remove.*

Job was not very clear about the pardon of his ſins, ſomewhat ſtuck upon his ſpirit, while he was under the clouds and darkneſs of this temptation; therefore, ſaith he, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows.* Till the ſoul is ſetled in the matter of pardon, or freedom from guilt, it can never be ſetled about freedom from puniſhment. Hence the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 2. 10, 15.) ſpeaking of the Saints before the coming of Chriſt, calls Chriſt, the Captain of our ſalvation, and aſſures us, he took fleſh, that through death, he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, and *deliver thoſe who through fear of death, were all their life time ſubject unto bondage.* The language is very near this of the Text, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows.* As *Job* was in bondage under his affliction through the fear of his returning ſorrows, So, *they were all their life time ſubject unto bondage* through the fear of approaching death. All the Saints before the coming of Chriſt, were under ſuch a bondage: for the Apoſtle ſpeaks as of a general ſtate, *That he might deliver thoſe, who through the fear of death, were all their life time ſubject unto bondage.* The reaſon hereof, was, becauſe they had not ſo manifeſt and convincing a light concerning the pardon of ſin, the freeneſs of grace, and the abundance of that mercy which was brought in afterwards, and revealed by Jeſus Chriſt, when he actually made our atonement by the blood of his croſs: For howſoever it is undeniable, that the faithful under the Old Teſtament, had knowledge of that ſatisfaction which was to be made by the Mediator for the removing of ſin, and the taking away of guilt (every ſacrifice ſpake this, ſhewing that there was an atonement to be made by ſome other blood, which the blood of the ſacrifice typified) yet notwithſtanding there was not a clearing and a quieting of their hearts, becauſe Chriſt (though in the promiſe ſlain from the beginning of the world) was not actually ſlain, nor offered up for ſinners. The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 10. 1, 2.) argues upon the ſame point, That the Law, with *thoſe Sacrifices, could not make the comers thereunto perfect*, that is, it could not aſſure the heart that ſin was taken away, *for if it could, then* (ſaith he) *the ſacrifices ſhould not have needed to be offered up ſo often.* What needed any repetition, ſeeing they who were once ſo purged ſhould have had no more *conſcience of ſin*, that is, ſin ſhould never have troubled and vexed their conſciences any more? But *now Chriſt by one offering hath for ever perfected them that are ſanctified* (*verſ.* 14.) that is, he hath made a perfect ſatisfaction for them; and compleated the peace of their conſciences. So then, while there remaineth any ſcruple about ſin, fears of evil will hang upon the ſpirit. And we find that the old Saints were very fearful of outward afflictions, becauſe they had as it were a reliſh or taſte of the diſfavour and diſpleaſure of God in them. And in proportion, as any of them had more or leſs of free grace appearing to them, ſo they were more or leſs enthralled with theſe fears. We may obſerve throughout the Old Teſtament, that there was not ſuch a ſpirit of rejoycing in ſufferings and afflictions, as we find breakings forth in the New: *Paul* never ſaith, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; No, he ſaith, *As ſorrowful, yet alwayes rejoycing.* You never hear him complain of his afflictions. He indeed complains of his corruptions, *O miſerable man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death!* But he never ſaid, *O miſerable man, how am I afflicted, I am in deaths often, who ſhall deliver me from this death of the body!* We find the Saints under the Goſpel clothed with a ſpirit of exultation and rejoycing, of which we hear little, if any thing at all under the Law: The want of which we are to aſcribe to their want of a clear light about the removing of guilt, and the pardon of ſin, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

Thirdly obſerve, *That God often deals with his beſt ſervants, in regard of outward troubles, as if they were guilty.*

I know thou wilt not hold me innocent; that is, thou wilt not deal with me as with an innocent perſon. As the Lord dealt with his Son, ſo he deals with his ſervants. God the Father dealt with Jeſus Chriſt as with a guilty perſon (*Iſa.* 53. 9, 12.) He was *numbred among tranſgreſſors, and made his grave with the wicked.* The Lord reckoned him as a ſinner, while he was ſatisfying his juſtice for ſin, and making an atonement for ſinners. *Job* is no where called a type of Chriſt, but he was like him, and their parallel might be drawn in many things, eſpecially in this, that both were numbred with the wicked, and in that both were uſed, as if they had been guilty. The diſpenſations of God to his own beloved Son once did, and to his faithful ſervants often do look like thoſe to the greateſt tranſgreſſors. His ſon was handled ſo that he might redeem ſinners; his ſervants are ſo handled, ſometimes to prevent, often to purge them from ſin; ſometimes to try their graces, alwayes to make them fitter veſſels for glory. Though we cannot make any earnings toward glory by the weightieſt afflictions, yet *theſe light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

Bellarm. *l.* 5. *de juſtif. cap.* 5.

I ſhall paſs from this reference of the word, *Thou*, when I have briefly vindicated the Text from the corruptions of ſome Papiſts, who urge it to prove the uncertainty of our juſtification. *Job* (ſay they) doubted whether God would declare him juſt or no. I anſwer, Juſtified perſons may have doubts, yet that doth not argue the uncertainty of juſtification. Juſtification is a ſure act in it ſelf, and we may be ſure of it, though ſome are unſetled about it. This Scripture gives no ſhelter, much leſs ſupport to that doctrine of doubting. The Vulgar reading, groſly varying from the original, is all the ſhadow it hath in this place. For as that Tranſlator miſtakes the former clauſe, which he renders, *I am afraid of all my works*: So this latter, which he renders, *Knowing that thou wilt not pardon or ſpare him that offendeth.* He that ſeeks to be juſtified by his works, ſhall not want fears about his juſtification: And if this be a truth, which their tranſlation ſeems to hold forth, that God will not pardon him that offendeth, the beſt and holieſt men in the world have reaſon, not only to fear whether they are juſtified, but to reſolve they can never be juſtified in his ſight. If every man that ſinneth muſt doubt of the pardon of ſin, all men muſt doubt. In that common acception of the word *offend*, it is falſe, that God will not pardon him that offends: whom ſhould he pardon but ſuch as offend? They who are above ſin, are above pardon. *Job* never thought God would not pardon him, becauſe he had ſinned, it being one of the royal titles of God, *The God pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin.* But if we take ſinning or offending in a ſtricter ſence, as it imports a man obſtinate and ſtill engaged with delight to ſin (in which ſence the next title of the Lords great name, after, *Forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin,* is to be underſtood, *and that will by no means clear the guilty* (Exod. 34. 7.) The Hebrew is, *And that clearing will not clear.* We ſupply the word *guilty*; which the *Chaldee* well explains by this Periphraſis, *Him that will not convert, or turn to the Lord*) ſuch offenders the Lord will not pardon. But to ſay, that the Lord will not ſpare and pardon ſuch guilty perſons, ſuch delinquents as will not return unto him, but go on to add one wickedneſs to another, is no denial of the Saints aſſurance of pardon, they being already turned and converted to the Lord. So

Sciens quod non parceret delinquenti. Vulg.

much for that clauſe, as the antecedent refers unto God, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

But rather take the *Antecedent* to be *Bildad. I know, thou* Bildad, *wilt not hold me innocent*; as if *Job* had ſaid, *When I think of comforting my ſelf, my wounds bleed afreſh, and my ſorrows preſent themſelves to my thoughts again, by the ſight of which I am aſſured I ſhall not be judged innocent by thee, but rather more wicked, as my ſorrows appear to be more; for ſeeing thou art reſolved to conclude the multitude of my ſins from the multitude of my ſuffering, in vain ſhall I labour to ſhew and approve my ſelf as an innocent perſon before thee, whenas I ſhall ſtill be an afflicted perſon before thee: I know thou canſt not hold me innocent, while abiding afflictions leads thy judgment to conclude that a man is wicked. How ſhall I being in trouble, gain any credit of integrity in thy opinion, ſo long as outward troubles render me a hypocrite in thy opinion?*

In vanum laborabo ut oſtendam tibi afflictum ſimul & innocentem me eſſe poſſe. Bold.

I ſhall only note this from it,

> *He that judgeth of a mans innocency by his outward eſtate, may for ever condemn an innocent,*

Bildad judged ſo of *Job*, this cauſed *Job* to ſay, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent,* or think me good, ſeeing evils are ſtill upon me, and are like to continue upon me ſtill. *Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment,* is the rule of Chriſt (*John* 7.24.) As if they could hardly judge what is right, who judge by what appears. We muſt not judge of things till they appear; nor may we judge of perſons by their appearance. As oftentimes in holineſs, ſo ſometime in ſinfulneſs, men are not what they ſeem to be. All is not Gold that gliſters, and ſome Gold doth not gliſter: Many are not that in holineſs which they ſeem to be by their actings toward God, and ſome are not in ſinfulneſs what they ſeem to be by Gods acting toward them. It is eaſier to do do good then to be good; and uſually they who are good, ſuffer that which is evil.

Verſe 29. If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?

Theſe words may be connected with either of the interpretations given upon the former verſe, *I know, thou* (O God) or thou (O *Bildad*) *wilt not hold me innocent.* Now then,

If I be wicked, &c.

The original word hath been heretofore opened. Only note, that the Hebrew is abſolute, and not by way of ſuppoſition; plainly thus, *I am wicked*, or, *I ſhall be accounted wicked, why therefore labour I in vain?* Or, now therefore I labour in vain. When *Job* ſaith, *I am wicked*, it is not as if he gave the cauſe, and aſſented to his friend; Ye have as had an ill opinion of me all this while, now I begin to have ill an opinion of my ſelf, *I am wicked.* No, he means it only thus, I am handled or accounted as a wicked man; *I am wicked* in your thoughts, and the providence of God ſeems to give you occaſion of thinking ſo; ye look upon me as if I were a wicked man, and I look like one; *Why then labour I in vain?*

אנכי ארשע *Ego impius. Impius hoc loco non qui ſit, ſed qui ut improbus tractetur, vel qui impius videatur, & liquet* Jobum *ſuis amicis impium fuiſſe viſum ut qui in hoc Chriſtum præferret, qui cum impiis reputatus fuit.* Fr Joh.

Why labour I in vain?

The word ſignifies hardeſt labour? why do I travel ſo painfully to vindicate my ſelf, and to ſtand fair in your eyes? It is labouring with toil, or moiling labour, anſwerable to that Greek word (*κοπιάω*) which ſignifies ſore and extream labour. It is too much to beſtow any labour in vain (that is, without fruit and ſucceſs) much more to beſtow hard and ſore labour.

יגע *Laboravit, defatigatus fuit, Græco κοπιάω reſpondet, & notat ex labore ſummã moleſtiam.*

But what was this ſore, hard and painful labour? He means all thoſe labours which he beſtowed, either to extricate himſelf from his ſufferings, or to clear himſelf from their prejudice of his ſinfulneſs, becauſe he ſuffered: As if he had ſaid in particulars,

Why do I labour in Apologues to excuſe my ſelf? Or in Arguments defend my cauſe? Why do I labour in prayer to deprecate theſe troubles, and get out of the bands of my afflictions? Pleading for our ſelves with men, is hard labour; but eſpecially pleading for our ſelves with God. Prayer is ſtrong labour, therefore it is called *wreſtling. Bildad* adviſed *Job* to pray unto God, in the eighth Chapter: here *Job* ſeems to anſwer, *Why labour I in prayer*, and in ſeeking unto God, ſeeing all's in vain and loſt labour? to what end ſhould I labour in any of theſe duties? *for I am wicked* (in the opinion of man) or, *if I am wicked* in the ſight of God, or ſeeing God hath caſt me into ſuch a condition, as appearingly and viſibly caſts me among the wicked?

הבל pro להבל *μάτην.* Aquil.

For the better underſtanding of this, we may conſider the words as an argument by way of *Dilemma, If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain? If I waſh my ſelf with ſnow-water,* &c. As if he had ſaid, Either I am wicked, or I am clean and pure; if I am wicked (as you ſay I am) I deſerve more puniſhment, then I labour in vain to be eaſed of this. If I am pure and clean, as waſhed with ſnow-water, what will the iſſue be? God will yet caſt me into the ditch of affliction; ſo that I am between two walls, hemmed in on both ſides; *Wickedneſs would certainly ruine me, and my righteouſneſs will not deliver me, why therefore do ye feed me with vain hopes that I ſhould be delivered if I were righteous?* So *Bildad* aſſured him in the former Chapter.

More particularly, *If I am wicked, why then labour I in vain?*

Firſt, Some interpret his words as a conteſt with God; thus, If by my ſtudy of holineſs, and care to walk circumſpectly in thy wayes, I have not yet gained the reputation of holineſs; If I cannot yet paſs in thy account for a godly man, ſurely I ſhall ſtill labour in vain about that point, as hitherto I have done.

Si vitæ præteritæ laboribus & pietatis ſtudio ſanctitatem non comparavi, neq; coram Deo juſtus habeor, certè labor meus inanis fuit. Aquin.

But ſecondly (for I lay this aſide) Others thus, *If I am wicked*, it is a vain thing for me to ſeek the Lord, as you adviſe me. Why will you put me upon a buſineſs which will be fruitleſs and without ſucceſs? It was the word of God in *Job*'s time, though no Scripture, *That God heareth not ſinners*: Not ſuch ſinners as *Job*'s friends challenged him to be. So *Job* ſeems to compare their opinion of him, and counſel given him, thus together; your opinion of me, is, that I am a wicked man; your counſel to me, is, tha tI ſhould ſeek unto God: Surely your opinion of me, and your counſel to me, can never agree: for if I am wicked (as you hold me to be) I labour in vain, while I obey your counſel.

Si autem & ſic impius ſum fruſtra laboravi, i.e. *ſi impius ſum ut vos de me dicitis.* Vul.

There is a ſence, wherein it is in vain for a wicked man to ſeek unto God, and a ſence wherein it is not in vain for a wicked man to ſeek unto God. We muſt diſtinguiſh of this interpretation.

If a man be wicked, it is in vain for him to ſeek unto God, while he loveth his wickedneſs, and delighteth in it, *Pſal.* 66.2. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer.* He that is ſo wicked as to love wickedneſs, prayes in vain, faſts and humbles his ſoul in vain. *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, that is, the Lord abominates his ſacrifice; but, *The prayer of the upright is his delight. Solomon* deſcribes an hypocrite in the former words; he is one that will pray and offer ſacrifice, and yet puts the *ſtumbling block of his iniquity before his face* (Ezek. 14.4.) So they (*Jer.* 7.4.) cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are theſe*; The Prophet diſcovers who theſe *zealous Templers were*, verſ. 9. *Will ye ſteal, murder, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſly, and then come and ſtand in this houſe which is called by my Name, and ſay, We are delivered to do all theſe abominations?* Some mingle prayer and faſting with ſtealing and murdering; ſuch praying and faſting are as unacceptable to God, as ſtealing and murdering are: Such labouring to pleaſe the Lord, is diſpleaſing to the Lord. *What haſt thou to do* (ſaith God to the wicked) *to take my Covenant into thy mouth* (*Pſal.* 50.16.) Doth God ſay to the wicked, What haſt thou to do with my Covenant? For whom is the Covenant made, but for the wicked? If men were not wicked or ſinful, what needed there a Covenant of Grace? The Covenant is for the wicked. And the Covenant brings Grace enough to pardon thoſe who are moſt wicked: why then doth the Lord ſay to the wicked, *What haſt thou to do to take my Covenant into thy mouth?* Obſerve what follows, and his meaning is expounded; *Seeing thou hateſt to be reformed*: As if God had ſaid, Thou wicked man, who protecteſt thy ſin, and holdeſt it cloſe, refuſing to return, and hating to reform; what haſt thou to do to meddle with my Covenant? *Lay off thy defiled hands. He that*

that is reſolved to hold his ſin, takes hold of the Covenant in vain; or rather he lets it go, while he ſeems to hold it. Wo unto thoſe who ſue for mercy, while they neglect duty. Thus a wicked man labours in vain.

But there is a ſenſe in which a wicked man doth no labour in vain, how wicked ſoever he is. What elſe means the Prophets invitation? (*Iſa.* 55. 5.) *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Let him forſake his wayes, and then no matter what his wayes have been; let him return to the Lord, and then his former departures ſhall not hinder acceptance. *Chriſt died for the ungodly, Rom.* 5. 6. And *God juſtifieth the ungodly,* Rom. 4. 5. It is not in vain for an ungodly man to come to God indeed, and when he doth, he ceaſes to be ungodly. They draw nigh only with their lips, whoſe hearts are not changed, and they draw nigh in vain. *As God hath not ſaid to the ſeed of Jacob* (real Saints) *Seek ye me in vain;* ſo he hath not ſaid in vain to wicked men, *Seek ye my face.* For with the word which bids them ſeek, he gives them power to ſeek, and the mercy they ſeek for. The Grace of God prevents us that we may ſeek him, and bleſſes us when we do ſeek him. If all who are wicked, labour in vain, then all had laboured in vain, foraſmuch as all were wicked.

Thirdly, You may take the meaning of it thus, *If I am wicked,* that is, if I am reputed by men, and ſtill afflicted by God, as a wicked man, then why ſhould I labour in vain, or trouble my ſelf any further to ſo little purpoſe? if this ſenſe may be admitted, 'tis a paſſionate ſpeech, proceeding from impatience and diſtemper of ſpirit; much like that of *David,* and very near it in words, *Pſal.* 73.13. *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chaſtened every morning. David's* afflictions wrought as hard concluſions in him, as ~~Job's did~~. *Grace acts and ſpeaks ever like it ſelf, but a gracious man doth not. David* ſhewed there was vanity and remainders of defilement in his heart, by ſaying, *I have cleanſed my heart in vain.* Mr. *Broughton* renders to this ſence, *I ſhall be holden as wicked, now why do I labour in vain?* Hence obſerve,

Si adbuc mecum agit Deus tanquam cum impio, quorſum fruſtra laborem? Philip. *Hæc ſunt verba hominis à Deo derelicti.* Vatabl.

That, *Where hope faileth, endeavour faileth too.*

I have no hope, ſaith *Job,* to get out of theſe afflictions which fall upon wicked men, or to get one ſtep beyond a wicked man in your reputation, my labour is in vain, why then do I labour? When the heart ſinks, the hands hang down. Where the one gives over believing, and hoping, the other gives over acting and working. Hence the afflicted are called upon by the Apoſtle, *to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees* (Heb. 12. 12.) Hands and knees are the inſtruments of action and motion; and the hanging down of theſe, imports both retarded or ſtopt: Thoſe afflicted *Hebrews* ſaw little or no hope of deliverance, therefore they gave over endeavouring and moving after deliverance.

Taking the words (as in the original) abſolutely, without any ſuppoſition, *I am wicked, why then labour I in vain?* As if he had ſaid, *I am wicked not only in the opinion of men, but I acknowledge my ſelf to be wicked indeed, conſidered with the moſt holy God;* and then his ſence is, Lord, if thou art pleaſed to go this way to work with me, to ſet the rigor of thy juſtice awork, to find out my ſin, and to judge me according to what thou findeſt, then in vain do I ſeek to comfort my ſelf; for in thy ſight no fleſh can be juſtified: I (as well as others) *am wicked.* In which acknowledgment, he ſeems to meet with, and confute that ſuppoſition of *Bildad,* chap, 8. 6. *If thou wert pure;* pure, ſaith *Job,* alas, I can never be pure before God. When the Lord examines my purity, he will find it impurity. You tell me, if I were pure, the Lord would awaken for me; I ſhall never be pure in your ſence, I am as pure as ever I ſhall be, that is, I am impure, and ſhall be at my beſt; which ſence falleth in directly with the two verſes following: *Though I waſh my ſelf with Snow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean; yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me.* Taking up that interpretation, I ſhall connect it with theſe two Verſes, and open them in order.

In vanum laborarem, ſi coram Deo juſtificare me tentarem ut falsò me hoc velle præſupponis

Verſe 30. **If I waſh my ſelf with ſnow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean.**

Waſhing is an act proper to the cleanſing of the body or of bodily things; and in Scripture-Story we find travellers had water provided for them at their journeyes end, to refreſh and cool their bodies. Theſe were civil waſhings. But beſides theſe, we find many ceremonial waſhings of the body, or bodily things, which implied the removing and taking away of ſin, and ſo were a token of internal purification. Therefore the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 9. 10.) deſcribing the Jewiſh worſhip, and ſhewing the ſeveral parts of it, ſaith, *It ſtood* (we ſupply that word, but it ſuits the Text well; for the ſubſtantials, the pillars upon which their worſhip ſtood, were ſhadows, conſiſting *in meats and drinks, and divers waſhings.* In alluſion to which the Lord promiſes (*Ezek.* 36.25.) *I will ſprinkle you with clean water:* And the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of *the ſprinkling of the blood of Chriſt* (1 Pet. 1. 2.) And *Paul,* of *the Laver of regeneration,* Tit. 3. 5. The Saints who came out of great tribulation, are ſaid to have *waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb* (Rev. 7. 14.) Sanctification, which is cleanſing from the filth of ſin, and juſtification, which is cleanſing from the guilt of ſin, are ſet forth by waſhing, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *But ye are waſhed.* Thus the Prophet counſels the polluted Jews (*Iſa.* 1. 16.) *Waſh you, make you clean;* which he expounds by a moral duty in the next words, *Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well.* It was uſual among the Heathen to waſh, as a ſign of purification, eſpecially before they went to worſhip their gods, or after they had defiled themſelves with ſome grievous crime. One of the Poets gives them a reproof; *O ye who are ſo credulous, or eaſie of belief, to think that the bloody ſin of murdering the bodies of other men, can be taken away by waſhing your own bodies!* They had a great opinion of a cleanſing virtue in the Sea; to which ſome think the Prophet *Micah* alludes (*Chap.* 7. 19.) *He will caſt all their ſins into the depths of the ſea.*

In lege multæ erant purificationes, quas Deus fortè inſtituit ut populum aliarum gentium talibus ceremoniis aſſuetum facilius adduceret ad cultum verum. Pin.

The ancient Chriſtians, uſing to waſh before they prayed, ſhewed a little touch at leaſt of Judaiſm, or of their old Gentiliſm. Some have given this for one reaſon, why the Lord appointed ſo many waſhings among his people, that the Heathens might be the eaſier gained to the Religion of the *Jews,* when they found ſomewhat ſymbolizing with their cuſtoms among them: which, if it were ſo, yet it cannot bear out thoſe who have mixed Chriſtian Worſhip with Heatheniſh Obſervations, thereby to facilitate their converſion. But doubtleſs *Job* had reference to thoſe Rites either of the *Jews* or *Gentiles,* when he ſaid,

Antiquiſſimum fuit uti balneo aut corporis ablutione, ad detergendas animi ſordes. Ah nimium faciles, qui triſtia crimina cædis, Fluminea tolli poſſe putatis aqua? Romani noluerunt parricidas nudos (ſed in culeum inſutos) in flumen abjicere, ne cum delati eſſent in mare, ipſum polluerent, quo cætera quæ violata ſunt, expiari putantur. Cic. *in Orat. pro* Reſc. *Chriſtianus lotus oret.* Tert. *De Orat. c.* 10. Clem. *l.* 8. Conſt. *c.* 88.

Though I waſh my ſelf with Snow-water.

Why with *Snow-water;* That is (ſay ſome) with the moſt pure water, with the cleareſt ſpringing fountain-water, or in the moſt cryſtall ſtreams, not in the water of melted ſnow, but in water like ſnow for purity and orient clearneſs.

Aliqui ex Latinis legunt aquis vivis, non aquis nivis. Pined:

Others conceive it an alluſion to that peculiar Rite in thoſe times, when they took Snow-water to waſh with, rather then Spring, or River-water, becauſe that came from the Heavens, not from the Earth here below, and was therefore (in their opinion) more excellent in its nature, becauſe it had a more excellent Original.

Thirdly, *Job* is thought to ſpecifie *Snow-water,* becauſe in thoſe Countries the Fountain, or River-water was not pure; and therefore they preſerved Snow, and took that water to waſh and cleanſe with. As the cuſtom ſtill is in thoſe places where good water is a rare commodity.

Or laſtly, He may ſay, *If I waſh in Snow-water,* becauſe he would expreſs the cleaneſt waſhing, ſuch as makes the body look like ſnow, white and pure. *White as ſnow* is proverbial (*Iſa.* 1. 18.) for the moſt reſplendent whiteneſs.

And we find in Scripture, a thing is ſaid to be waſhed with that, the likeneſs of which after waſhing it repreſents: Thus the Church glories in Chriſt, *That his eyes were as the eyes of a Dove by the rivers of water waſhed with milk*, (*Cant.* 5. 12.) that is, his eyes were white as milk, after waſhing. So here, *Though I waſh my ſelf with ſnow water*, that is, though I waſh my ſelf, till I become as white and pure as ſnow, *&c.* We read a like phraſe (*Pſal.* 51. 9.) *Purge me with Hyſop, and I ſhall be clean*, in alluſion to the Levitical Law, which appointed the Prieſt to ſprinkle both things and perſons with a bunch of Hyſop (*Levit.* 14. *Numb.* 19.) So the Chaldee Paraphraſe expounds the Pſalm, *Cleanſe me, as the Prieſt ſprinkling with Hyſop cleanſed the people. Though I waſh my ſelf with ſnow-water,*

In Scriptura talibus aliquis dicitur lotus, qualium referre videtur ſimilitudinē. Sanct.

And make my hands never ſo clean.

The Hebrew Text is very emphatical, *Though I waſh my hands in purity*; which ſome expreſs by that which is the inſtrument of purifying the hands, *Though I waſh my hands with ſope*; So Mr. *Broughton*, Though I waſh my hands with waſh-balls, to make my hands clean and ſweet. We tranſlate, though not to the letter of the Hebrew, yet to the ſence, *Though I waſh my hands never ſo clean, yet*, &c:

As the former expreſſion referreth to internal holineſs; ſo this latter to external. The hands in Scripture note our outward works. Hands are the executive part, the inſtruments of action. *Your hands are full of blood*, Iſa. 1. that is, your actions are cruel and bloody: there is not only blood in your hearts, but in your hands too (*Pſal.* 26. 6.) *I will waſh my hands in innocency, ſo will I compaſs thine altar*; that is, I will make all my outward converſation pure and holy. The Lord hath *rewarded me according to the purity of my hands*, (Pſal. 18. 20.) Again (*Pſal.* 73. 13.) *I have, in vain, waſhed my hands in innocency*, that is, I have lived innocently in vain. The Apoſtle *James* calls for the holineſs of the outward man in the ſame language, *Cleanſe your hands, ye ſinners; and purifie your hearts, ye double-minded*, Chap. 4. 8.

Beſides, it was uſual to waſh the hands, as an emblem or token of innocency, and freedom from guilt. The Law of *Moſes* appointed, in caſe a man were ſlain, no man knowing how, that the Elders of the neareſt City ſhould waſh their hands over the Heifer that was offered in Sacrifice, ſaying, *Our hands have not ſhed this blood, neither have our eyes ſeen it*, Deut. 21. 6, 7. So *Pilate*, when he would make it viſible unto all the world (as he thought) that he was free from the blood of Chriſt, called for a baſin of water to waſh his hands: all the water in the Ocean could not waſh *Pilates* conſcience from the guilt of Chriſts blood, yet he called for a baſin of water, and waſhed his hands, ſaying, *I am free from the blood of this juſt perſon, ſee ye to it*. So then, the meaning of *Job* is, *Though I be clean within and clean without*, though my heart be as clean, as waſhing can make my hands, though (as the Apoſtle taught long after) *I lift up pure hands in prayer, without wrath and doubting*, yet

Scio quod quantumvis diligentiſſime vitæ candorem & morum integritatem comparare ſtudeam, tamen non ideo dolorum & pænarum expers ſim. Pined.

Verſ. 31. Thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes ſhall abhor me.

The word which we tranſlate **Plunge**, ſignifies a dipping or immerſion, rather to die or ſtain, then to cleanſe, *Ezek.* 23. 15.

טבל *Tinxit, intinxit, ita lavit ut res non mundetur, ſed tantū attingat humorem.*

There are two interpretations of theſe words, *Thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch.*

They may be underſtood either, firſt thus, that God would adjudge him ſinful, notwithſtanding all his purifyings: and ſo it anſwereth the expreſſion of the latter clauſe of the former verſe; As if he ſaid, *Though I make my ſelf as clean as clean can be, and thereupon judge my ſelf never ſo clean, yet thou mayeſt account me unclean; yea the more I labour to juſtifie my ſelf in my cleanneſs, the more unclean mayeſt thou judge me to be*; Yet, *Thou wilt plunge me in the ditch*; For we are to underſtand the words, *Thou wilt plunge me*; not as of that which the Lord would do, but as of that which the Lord might juſtly do. As if he had ſaid, Thou mighteſt have greater cauſe to plunge me in the ditch, when I am ſo fine and clean in mine own eyes, then before. When I think I have waſhed my ſelf as white as ſnow, thou mayeſt look upon me, as drawn thorow a dirty channel, or as wallowed in the mire. After all my cleanſing and rinſing, and purifying, thy pure eyes can eaſily ſee a ſinner in me, and diſcover that I am polluted, though I am waſhed.

Futura apud Hebræos ſæpe debitum indicant.

This Phraſe of plunging in a ditch, notes the greateſt defilement, it imports a man all over defiled: The Jews ſay of a man that hath loſt his credit, and is exceedingly blemiſhed in his reputation, That he is caſt in the *dirt, or thrown in the mire.*

Phraſis Hebræa eſt, qua famæ nominiſq; nitor pollui dicitur. Bold.

Again, The word which we tranſlate **Ditch**, ſometimes ſignifies corruption only (*Pſal.* 16. 10.) *Thou wilt not ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption.* And ſecondly, it ſignifieth a pit digged and prepared, wherein dead and corrupting carcaſes are laid (*Pſal.* 94. 13.) *Till the pit be digged for the wicked*; that is, till they be deſtroyed and put into the pit.

שחת *Corruptio interitus illas igitur ſordes intelligit, quas affert ſqualida mors, me demerges in locum putredinis.* Varro *l.* 4. *de Ling. Lat.*

Beſides, We learn from Antiquity, that they had ſpecial pits or graves for offenders, who were *ſlain by the Law* (as ſome ſpeak) or cut off by the hand of juſtice; who being enemies to humane ſociety while they lived, were not admitted ſociety with the bodies of honeſt men, when they died. The Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 14. 18, 19, 20.) deſcribing the ruine and ignominious down-fall of the King of *Babylon*, ſaith, *That all the Kings of the Nations, even all of them lie in glory, every one in his own houſe* (that is, in their Fathers Sepulchres) *But thou art caſt out of thy grave like an abominable branch: and as the raiment of thoſe that are ſlain, thruſt through with a ſword, that go down to the ſtones of the pit: Thou ſhalt not be joyned to them in burial.*

And hence, to be caſt into a ditch notes any great humbling or affliction, reproach or contumely.

We may take it here in either ſence, *Thou wilt plunge me into filth and corruption*, or ſhew me to be filthy and corrupt, though I cleanſe my ſelf; or thou wilt caſt me into the greateſt afflictions, notwithſtanding all my purifications. I ſhall give a note, ſuting this laſt ſence, at the cloſe of the whole verſe.

From the firſt, here Obſerve,

They who would make themſelves moſt holy, appear moſt unholy before God.

Thoughts of our own purity, render us impure. We are never ſo black before God, as when we are whiteſt in our own eyes. We find the Phariſee (*Luke* 18.) waſhing himſelf in *ſnow-water*, and making his hands very clean, he tells us that he had Faſted and Prayed, and given Alms, and paid Tithes (this is to waſh our ſelves in ſnow-water, and to make our hands very clean) but the Lord plunged this Phariſee in the ditch, he caſt him for a wicked man. The poor Publican plunged himſelf in the ditch, and judged himſelf fit to be thrown into the mire; But *he went home to his houſe juſtified, rather then the other.* The Lord tells his people (*Jer.* 2. 22.) *Though thou waſh thee with nitre, and take thee much ſope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me.* The ſpeech is of the ſame importance in the letter with this of *Job*; yet there the Holy Ghoſt rather intends an hypocritical waſhing, by excuſing or denying our ſins; or (as ſome gloſs that Text) by ſhewing images or imaginations, fancies or forgeries of holineſs. If thou ſhalt put thy ſelf in theſe dreſſes of holineſs, as if thou wert waſhed with nitre, and cleanſed with much ſope, yet thou canſt not avoid mine eyes, *For thine iniquity is marked before me*, I can ſee thy ſin through all the daubings and paintings, through thy deckings and coverings put upon it. Now, as God ſees iniquity through all the masks and coverings of hypocrites; ſo he can ſee ſpots through all the waſhings and cleanſings of the moſt ſincere. And if we waſh our ſelves to juſtifie our ſelves, our very waſhing is our defiling. *God will not only ſee, but mark their iniquity, who think they can put all their iniquity out of his ſight.* And ſuch ſhall be made ſo vile, that not only God, but their own clothes ſhall abhor them, as *Job* expreſſes himſelf in the next words.

Eſt ſe accuſare, culpam abnegare ſimulamenta pietatis oſtentare.

Mine own clothes will abhor me.

We have the word at *Chap.* 8. *verſ.* 14. *Whoſe hope ſhall loath him*, which we render, *Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off. Clothes* may be taken either properly or figuratively. Taken properly, the words may import, firſt, his degradation from all former dignities. I ſhall be deprived of all honour and eſtimation, and ſo the cloaths which I wore in the dayes of my proſperity, will ſo much unbecome me, that they will abhor me. Or ſecondly, Taken properly, they are conceived to be a circumlocution of death.

Thou wilt plunge me in the pit, that is, *I ſhall die, and mine own cloaths will abhor me.* The dead are ſtript; garments do not become a dead carcaſe. Mr. *Broughton's* paraphraſe upon his own tranſlation intimates this; *Mine own cloathes ſhall loath me*; namely, ſaith he, *When I go naked to the grave, as though my cloaths did loath me.*

Others underſtand it figuratively, *Mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me*, that is, Firſt, Thoſe that are my deareſt friends ſhall abhor me, Thou wilt make them flee from me, who are as near to me, as the cloaths on my back.

Or ſecondly, In a figure, *Mine own cloaths*, that is, mine own works *ſhall abhor me.* Hypocrites are ſaid to come in *ſheeps clothing* (Matth. 7.) that is, doing the works of thoſe who are ſincere, appearing like them in practice. And when we are warned to *keep our garments* (Rev. 16. 15.) the meaning is, that we muſt keep faith and a good conſcience in every act of our lives.

Thirdly, It may have reſpect to lepers, whoſe cloaths did abhor them, becauſe they wore ſome mark of difference upon their garments, ſhewing that they were to be ſhunned, and their company avoided.

But rather in general, *Mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me*, notes extreme pollution. If I juſtifie my ſelf before God, I ſhall be ſo unclean that my cloaths will be loth to touch me. We ſay of one that is very filthy, *A man would not touch him with a pair of tongs.* And it is uſual in Scripture (to give you that rule for the underſtanding of this, and other the like forms of ſpeaking) when a matter is ſpoken of in a way of exceſs, that things inſenſible have ſence, yea reaſon and underſtanding aſcribed to them: abhorring, is an act beyond ſence, it hath a mixture of reaſon and underſtanding; now to note his exceeding lothſomneſs to God and man, who attempts to juſtifie himſelf before God, the Text ſaith, *His cloaths* (which have neither life nor ſence) *ſhall abhor him.* When the Phariſee, envying the acclamations which the multitude of Chriſts Diſciples gave him at his entrance into *Jeruſalem*, deſired that he would rebuke and ſilence them: Chriſt anſwered, *I tell you, if theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out*; importing how juſt an occaſion there was, why his Name and glory ſhould be lifted up; Do ye think much that reaſonable men ſpeak? If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones that have neither life nor ſenſe would ſpeak. Thus (*Gen.* 4. 10.) to note the foulneſs of *Cain's* ſin, and his cruelty towards his brother, God ſaith, *The earth hath opened her mouth to receive thy brothers blood from thy hand*, as if the earth had been ſenſibly affected with the cruelty of *Cain* towards his brother; thou wouldſt not let his blood ſtay in his body, therefore the earth in kindneſs opened her mouth, and took in his blood from thy hand, and that cries up unto me. So here, I ſhall be ſo foul, that if my cloaths had ſenſe, life and reaſon, and could diſpoſe of their own actings, and ſet themſelves upon what body and limbs they pleaſed, ſurely they would put themſelves off from my body, and ever come on again, they would abhor me; I ſhould be as filthy before God in ſoul, as he is in body, who muſt be waſhed before he is fit to have his cloaths put on him: *As to be clothed with ſhame, ſo to have our cloaths aſhamed of us, notes the greateſt diſhonour.*

Tam ſqualidus ero ut ea quibus nullus eſt ſenſus tantũ ſqualorem ſentiri & abominari videantur.

Ubi aliquarum rerum exceſſus eſt dicuntur aliquando in Scripturis ſentire inſenſibilia. Sanct.

Job *ſummã fœditatem animæ per ſummam fœditatem corporis indigitat. Tam fœdus à judicio tuo diſcederem, ut is corpore eſt ſordidus quem veſtes ſuæ horrent.* Coc.

Laſtly, This caſting into the ditch, and the abhorring of his cloaths, may refer to the continuance of his afflictions; though I ſhould make my ſelf never ſo pure, yet the Lord would caſt me again into the ditch of affliction, he will put me into the pit of trouble, till (like a man drawn out of the mire) Mine own cloaths abhor me, or make me an abhorring to all that ſee me. I know the Lord will make further trial of me. Hence note,

Quamvis ego mundus ſum à culpa, tamen pœnis atq; dolorũ & ægritudinam ſordibus & ſqualore obſoloſcam.

> *God caſts his ſervants again and again into the miery ditch, as refiners caſt gold again and again into the fiery furnace, to make them more pure.*

That which defiles the outward man, may be cleanſing to the inward: And the abominable clothing of the body, may be a means to put the ſoul into the moſt handſom dreſs. Hence obſerve,

> Secondly, That, *After purgings and cleanſings, the Lord often goes on with further chaſtenings.*

Though I waſh my ſelf, &c. yet thou wilt caſt me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths will abhor me. Ye our purgings and cleanſings are ſometimes ſo far from cauſing God to take off our afflictions, that they do but fit us for more affliction: For the Lord will not truſt an impure ſpirit, or an heart defiled under many corruptions, under great afflictions. He therefore cleanſes many, and makes them more holy, that they may be more fit to bear afflictions. No certain argument can be grounded upon this, that a man ſhall come out of affliction, becauſe he is cleanſed, for God chuſes (in ſome caſes) to afflict ſuch moſt, who are moſt cleanſed. The Lord hath as much ſervice from us, while we ſuffer, as while we do his will; Paſſive obedience is higher and harder ſervice then active, and an unclean heart is of the two (though it be fit for neither) more unfit for ſuffering then for doing. Therefore *Job's* friends could not groundedly affirm, that he ſhould be delivered, if he were cleanſed. Indeed if Gods thoughts were like mans thoughts, or if he were tied by ſuch rules as we, we might make ſuch concluſions; but (*Job* concludes) *He is not a man as we are.*

VERS. 32, 33.

For he is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment.

Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

JOB doth two things in the cloſe of this Chapter.

Firſt, He again renounceth all thought or intendment of anſwering God by any worthineſs or goodneſs in himſelf. A point he had often touched before, it being the grand objection, which his friends brought againſt him, as if his ſpirit were heightned up to the preſumption of a trial or conteſt with God himſelf. *'Tis a duty to clear our ſelves moſt, where and in what we are moſt ſuſpected.*

This he doth in *Verſ.* 32, 33.

He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment.

Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

In which words *Job* offers two things to aſſure them that he was far enough from ſuch on engaging with God.

Firſt, From the diſparity of their condition (*verſ.* 32.) *He is not a man as I am.* God is not like me, I am no match for God; and I will not be ſo fool hardy, as to contend with one, who is infinitely above me.

Secondly, Leſt any ſhould think, that though himſelf hand to hand (as we ſpeak) would not venture upon God, yet he might (poſſibly) get ſome friend or ſecond, to interpoſe and umpire it between them, or to determine whether Gods dealings with him were juſt and equal, or no: And ſo (though not alone, yet) by a friend, or a third party to them both, he would try out the matter. No (ſaith *Job* in *verſ.* 33.) not ſo neither, as I alone will not undertake him; ſo *neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.*

In the two laſt verſes *Job* makes a petition to the Lord deſiring a favourable condeſcenſion, that he would be pleaſed to abate of the preſent height and extremity of his pain, and then he hoped yet that he might anſwer him, though he would not contend with him, anſwer him in reference to his own integrity, about which his friends had charged and wounded him, though not in reference to his own righteouſneſs, about which the Lord might charge and condemn him, *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me, then would I ſpeak and not fear him; but it is not ſo with me.* He concludes with the difference of his ſtate, from what he deſired of God it might be: And he begins with the difference of his perſon from what God himſelf is. It is not with me as I could wiſh, and God is not ſuch an one, nor can be, as I am, and muſt be.

Verſ. 32. **For he is not a man as I am**, &c.

He doth not ſay, God is not ſuch a man as I am, but God is not a man as I am. One man may ſay unto another man, Thou art not ſuch a man as I am: Every different degree or endowment among men, may bear a man out in ſaying ſo, and pride will prompt a man to ſay ſo, when he is not in degree better, but in kind worſe then other men. Such was the language of the Phariſee (*Luke* 18. 11.) *God I thank thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even as this Publican:* yet no man can ſay to another man, *Thou art not a man as I am.*

But ſeeing God is not a man at all, what is there in this aſſertion of *Job*? *He is not a man as I am.*

The words import a double difference; Firſt, A difference in qualification. Secondly, In nature: here *Job* chiefly intends the difference of quality (which yet in God is his nature) that he was not wiſe, and juſt, and holy, and pure as God.

Non tam eſſentiæ ad eſſentiā quā qualitatis ad qualitatem i. e. *ſuæ ad divinam paritatem collatio fit & denotatur.* Bold.

Moſes in his ſong (*Exod.* 15. 3.) after the overthrow of the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea, ſpeaks thus, *The Lord is a man of War*; that phraſe intends not a humane nature to God; when he ſaith, *God is a man of War*, he meaneth only this, *God is a great Warrior*. We call a *Ship of War*, a *Man of War*. As a *man of words* ſignifies *an eloquent man*, though with ſome only a *talkative man*: So a *Man of War* ſignifies a famous *Warrior*, or one trained up for War; in which ſence *Saul* ſaith of *Goliah*, that he had *been a man of war from his youth* (1 Sam. 17. 33.) God is a great Warrior, the moſt potent Commander, *The Generalliſſimo of all the Armies in heaven and earth, The Lord of hoſts is his Name, He is a man of war*, though he is not a man.

Ratio eſt omnium ſuperiorum, etſi juſtus ſim, cum Deo tamen contendens pro ſonte habeor, quia non eſt par utriuſq; noſtrum conditio. Merc.

Further, when *Job* ſaith, *He is not a man as I am*, he gives us the reaſon of all he had ſaid before, eſpecially of what he had ſaid immediately before, *Though I waſh my ſelf with ſnow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch*; *For he is not a man as I am*, that is, though I by waſhing my ſelf ſhould think I were all white, and not a ſpot to be ſeen upon me (as hypocrites by covering themſelves, think they are all hid, and not a ſin to be found about them) yet he would throw me into the ditch again, as like to like, dirt to dirt, for he is not a man as I am, he hath other eyes, and thoughts, and wayes then creatures have.

Secondly, As they contain a reaſon, why the Lord would judge him impure, though he ſhould waſh himſelf with ſnow-water; ſo alſo, why the Lord would afflict him, though he ſhould waſh himſelf with ſnow-water, *He is not a man as I am.* As if he had ſaid, Should I ſee a man without ſpot or ſpeck, without blame or fault, yet full of wounds and ſtripes, full of troubles and ſorrows: Should I ſee him afflicted, of whom I could not ſay, He had ſinned, it were beyond my reaſon. But though I cannot, yet the Lord can ſee reaſon to afflict a man in whom I ſee no iniquity. He knows why and wherefore; he may and doth caſt them into the fire in whom I can ſee no droſs. *He is not a man as I am.* God exceeds man in his actings, as much as he doth in his nature; as he is what man is not, ſo he can do what man cannot. *Every thing is in working, as it is in being.* God alwayes works like himſelf, and infinitely above man.

As to the preſent buſineſs, he works above man chiefly in two things.

Firſt; Man cannot juſtly commence a ſuit againſt, or contend with another man, except he be able to charge him with ſome wrong that he hath done him, or lay ſome crime to his charge.

Secondly, A humane Judge cannot condemn or caſt a man, unleſs he firſt legally convict him of his crime. Thus it is with men in their judicial proceedings. He that contends muſt know ſome crime; and the Judge paſſes ſentence as he ſees the crime proved and made good againſt him; but *God is not as man*, he may proceed to judgment without an accuſation, and he may give judgment before the crime be proved; *Job* was ſmitten without cauſe truly alledged, much leſs atteſted. God afflicts, that grace may be proved, not becauſe ſin is proved; *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him.*

reſpondere, hoc loco, poteſt eſſe verbum forenſe.

Anſwer him.] It is a judiciary word, or anſwering in judgment; *To juſtifie* is a *Law-term*, and ſo is *to anſwer*; one puts in his Bill, and another his Anſwer; ſome Courts proceed by Bill and Anſwer. If the Lord (ſaith *Job*) ſhould put in his Bill againſt me, I would not put in my Anſwer; *He is not a man as I am that I ſhould anſwer him.*

Or we may take the word [**Anſwer**] in general, for the returning of ſatisfaction to a queſtion. If the Lord demand a reaſon or an account of me, I could not ſatisfie him. Many, who can give a reaſon of the hope that is in them, cannot give a reaſon of the ſufferings which are upon them: But though they know no particular reaſon why they ſuffer, yet they believe it is not without reaſon. Some holy Martyrs have ſaid to their cruel Perſecutors, urging them with Sophiſtical Queſtions, *We can die, but we cannot diſpute.* And ſo the Saints, under the moſt difficult providences of God, are reſolved to ſay, We can die under them, but we will not diſpute them. He is not a man that we ſhould anſwer him in what he ſpeaks or doth. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, *The conſideration, that God is above man, is enough to humble and ſilence man.*

No man is proud in the preſence of another whom he thinks to be his better. The ſight of greater beauty, keeps down pride of beauty. *Pride cannot live in the eye of that which is above the reaſon of it in our ſelves:* Yea, he that finds he is but equal, or upon even ground with others, can hardly be proud of any thing in himſelf. While we ſuppoſe our gifts or knowledge, but like thoſe of other men, we are not lifted up in the opinion of them. Now, If equality check pride, a thought of ſuperiority muſt needs kill it. And if the common ſuperiority of a man kills our pride, how much more doth the knowledge of that ſuper-excellent ſuperiority which is in God? Doth not the beauty and dignity of God, obſcure the luſtre and darken the beauty of all creatures? Is the ſhining of the Stars any thing, when the Sun appears? Much leſs is the holineſs, ſtrength, and goodneſs of man any thing, when the goodneſs, holineſs, and ſtrength of God ſtand forth or appear: we muſt ſay we are nothing, when we ſee what God is. The ſight of him, in whom nothing of our imperfection can be found, cannot but humble us in the ſight of all our perfections. Hence, when the Lord would abaſe man, and extol himſelf, he removes all of man from himſelf, (1 *Sam.* 15. 29.) *God is not a man that he ſhould repent*; Men are full of repentings, and that they are ſo, ſhews them to be men. There is a repentance which is a grace of God, and there is a repentance which is an infirmity in man. By the former, men turn to God from that ſin, in which they were, or have done. By the latter, men turn both from God and man in what they promiſe or purpoſe either to be or do. They are this day of one mind, and to morrow of another; to day they love, and to morrow they hate; now they will, and anon they will not. They are in and out, no man knows where to find them; but God is ever the ſame, he changes not. *Elihu* ſends a challenge to all teachers in the name of God, *Who teacheth like him*? (Chap. 36. 22.) God himſelf challengeth *Job* in his own name, (Chap. 40. 9.) *Haſt thou an arm like God? Or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him? To whom will you liken me* (ſaith God, when he would bring down the pride of the creature) *To whom will you liken me, and make me equal, and compare me that we may be like?* (Iſa. 46. 5.) Why do ye exalt your ſelves? Why have ye ſuch high thoughts of your ſelves? Can ye find out any to compare with me? Or can ye make a parallel of me among all my creatures?

All the unevenneſs of man towards God, ariſes from preſumptuous thoughts of his unevenneſs with God. Take a taſte in two or three particulars.

Firſt, Man grows into a boldneſs of ſinning againſt God, becauſe he thinks God is but ſo holy as man is; he conceits that which ſuits his ſpirit, ſuits Gods Spirit alſo: This cauſeth him to do many things moſt unſuitable to the Spirit of God (*Pſalm* 50. 18.) *When thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſentedſt with him, and thou haſt been partaker with the adulterer: thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit*, &c. *Theſe things haſt thou done.* And what encouraged or hardned him to do theſe things? The next words give us an account of that, *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf*;

that is, thou didſt frame conceptions of me according to the *Idæa* of thine own brain, or the model of thine own heart. Thou waſt well pleaſed with ſuch filthineſs and abominations, therefore thou didſt conclude, I would not be diſpleaſed with them. The true reaſon why moſt men make nothing of evil, is, becauſe they make God nothing in goodneſs (as to that point) beyond themſelves; this doth not trouble our ſpirits, we ſee no hurt in what we do: Surely then God ſees no hurt in it, neither is his Spirit troubled with our doings.

Secondly, Boldneſs in pleading with, and complaining againſt God, when he doth what likes not us, ariſes from thoughts that we are like him. None would quarrel what God doth in cutting out and proportioning their own eſtates to them; or in caſting down the humble and meek, in exalting the proud and vile, if they did fully believe God had as much right and reaſon as they ſee he hath power to do what he doth. Man draws God into his own compaſs, and then wonders to find him work ſo out of compaſs. If I were as God, ſaith one I would do thus and thus; ſurely, God is as I am, he hath ſuch thoughts as I have, ſaith another, then why doth he thus? Till we have fully ſtudied this Point, *That God is not as we are*, we ſhall never reſt fully ſatisfied in what God doth, if he doth what we would not.

Thirdly, Unbelief ſprings from the ſame muddy fountain; unbelief of the power of God to deliver us when we are in outward ſtraights and dangers; and unbelief of the mercy of God to pardon us, when we are in ſpiritual ſtraights and deſertions. What's the reaſon why, when great dangers encompaſs us, we cannot believe deliverances? Do we not make God like to our ſelves? Do we not ſhorten his hand to our own meaſure, and think it cannot be done, becauſe men cannot do it? And for mercy about the pardon of ſin; man being awakened, ſees how he hath provoked God, ſin ſtares upon his face, and he finds out many aggravations upon his ſin; then he begins to collect thus, certainly if a man had ſo provoked his neighbour, he could never pardon or forgive him; can then ſuch ſins as theſe be forgiven by God? Mans mercy cannot reach ſo high as this, therefore ſurely the mercies of God will not. We have a very gracious promiſe, backt with a caution, to prevent theſe jealouſies (*Iſa.* 55.6,7.) *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Now, as when God calls upon man to obey his will, and do his Commandments, he is apt to ſay, at leaſt in his heart, the duties are too many, and the burdens too great to be born: So when the Lord calleth upon wicked men, the worſt of wicked men to repent or turn unto him, and he will abundantly pardon, or he will multiply to pardon (as it is in the original) they are ready to object, what, pardon ſuch as we are? we are too filthy and vile for waſhing, Surely he will not pardon us: Theſe mercies are too many for us, and theſe favours too great for us to receive. Well (ſaith God) I preconceive your conceits of me, ye are meaſuring me by your ſelves, ye think it cannot be done, becauſe ye cannot do it; your hearts are too narrow to paſs by ſo many, ſo great provocations; therefore ye ſay mine is too narrow alſo. Do ye thus meaſure me, the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe? I would have you know, *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes; for as the heavens are higher then the earth, ſo are my wayes higher then your wayes, and my thoughts then your thoughts*, verſ. 8, 9. As if he had ſaid, your thoughts are as much below my mercy, as your wayes were below my holineſs. Ceaſe then from doubting what I have promiſed, as I would have you ceaſe from doing what I have forbidden. Your unbelief that I will not pardon your ſin, diſhonours me as much as your diſobedience did in committing ſin. Till we believe God is holy above us, we fear not to ſin; and till we believe God is merciful above us, we cannot believe he will pardon our ſin.

Thus we ſee how the lifting up of our ſelves in our thoughts to an equality, or to ſome ſimilitude with God, or the drawing down of God to an equality, or ſome ſimilitude with our ſelves, is the ground and cauſe of all our unequal carriage towards God, of our boldneſs in ſinning, of our boldneſs in pleading with, and complaining againſt him, of our extream unbelief in the point of deliverance from troubles, or of the pardon of our ſins.

Secondly obſerve, *There is no compariſon between God and man.*

He is not a man as I am. Man is like to man, face anſwers face, and heart anſwers heart, ſtrength anſwers ſtrength, and wit anſwers wit. *Solomon* concludes this (*Eccleſ.* 6.10.) *That which hath been, is named already, and it is known that it is man.* A man is but a man, be he never ſo great in worldly wealth or honour; as he bears the name, ſo he hath the nature of man ſtill: *Nor can he contend with him that is mightier then he, i. e.* with God. If he venture beyond his line, or move out of the ſphear of his activity, if he would act more then a man, he ſhall quickly find that he is but man; *He cannot contend with him that is mightier then he.* Man was indeed made in the likeneſs of God, *Gen.* 1.27. *In the image of God created he him*; yet we muſt not ſay God is like man; he is not in our image. God put ſome impreſſions of himſelf upon man, but he took no impreſſions of man upon himſelf; *He is not a man as I am.* He hath given us ſome of his own excellencies, but he hath not taken upon him any of our weakneſſes. God hath honoured man to give him ſomewhat of himſelf, but God ſhould diſhonour himſelf to take any thing of man. Thus man is in the likeneſs of God; but God is not in the likeneſs of man. Take heed of ſuch thoughts. *It is as dangerous to frame a likeneſs or a ſimilitude of God to our hearts, as to frame a likeneſs or a ſimilitude of God upon a wall* (Exod. 15.11.) *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongſt the gods?* That is, there is none like unto thee: None amongſt the gods, neither among thoſe who are falſly called gods, the Idols of the Heathen, or among thoſe who are truly called *gods* (for God calls them ſo) the Angels in heaven, and Magiſtrates here upon earth: among theſe truly called *gods*, there is none like the true God, much leſs is there any among the meer pure mortals, like unto the immortal God. *Who is like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders?* So (*Micah* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage? Who is a God like unto thee?* Not only is there no man that can pardon as God, but there is no god that can pardon like God; he puts it upon that: *Who is a god like unto thee?* Not as if he granted that there were any other gods beſides the Lord, but to meet with the thoughts of men, with thoſe ſinful principles and conceits which lodge in man, and make other gods. To ſay of God only this, *He is God*, is to ſay all; we cannot ſay more good of God, then to call him God; as we cannot ſay more evil of ſin, then to call it ſin; when we have called it ſin, we have called it all. The Apoſtle (*Rom.* 7. 13.) puts that upon it, as the worſt he could ſay of it, *Sin that it might appear ſin.* We cannot repreſent it in a worſe likeneſs then its own. All men ſay they ſin, but *ſin appears ſin* to very few. And when the Apoſtle would put a diſgraceful title or epithete upon ſin, he inveſts it with its own name, *ſinful ſin.* Thus to the point in hand, we cannot call God more, then when we call him God: Nothing can be predicated of him better then himſelf. When God appears to be God, all excellency appears. All men (almoſt) acknowledge God, but God appears to very few. 'Tis but little of God that can be known; and there are not many who know that little; very many know but little of that little, and moſt know nothing of it at all.

Thus alſo to ſay that man is man, is proof and aggravation enough of his depraved condition (*Hoſ.* 6. 7.) *They like men have tranſgreſſed the Covenant*; they have done like themſelves. When we ſee men vain, and wicked, and ſinful, and covetous, and earthly, we may ſay of them, they have done like men; and how wondrous and glorious things ſoever God doth, we can but ſay, *He hath done like God.*

As a conſectary from the whole, take this caution, *If God is not a man as we are, then God muſt never be meaſured by the rule and line of man.* Man hath not line enough to meaſure God by. The Lord exceeds man in all; he is not only above mans infirmities, but he is above all his perfections. The Lord is not only not weak as man is weak, or unholy as man is unholy, but the Lord is not ſtrong as man is ſtrong, nor holy as man is holy, nor juſt as man is juſt, nor wiſe as man is wiſe: Then, man muſt not venture to judge of the wiſdom of God by his own wiſdom; or of the juſtice, holineſs and ſtrength of God by his own ſtrength, holineſs and juſtice. Man is not able to meaſure God in any of his Attributes; and in three things eſpecially man ſhould take heed of meaſuring God in his actings.

Firſt, In the great work of election. In this man is very apt to be medling and to be meaſuring God by the line of natural reaſon, or of civil juſtice: The Apoſtles diſpute beats down this preſumption, *Rom.* 9. We read there how man begins to buſtle and ſtartle at that great concluſion (*verſ.* 18.) *Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* If it be thus, ſaith he, if every mans ſtate be peremptorily determined by the will of God, if he loves and hates before men have done either good or evil, *why doth he find fault? for who hath reſiſted his will?* What need any trouble themſelves about the way, when their end is under an unmoveable decree? Why ſhould any ſtrive to forſake evil and do good on earth, ſeeing it was reſolved in heaven what ſhould become of them before they had done either good or evil? Thus the pride and ignorance of man cavils at the decrees of God. But ſtay (ſaith the Apoſtle) *O man, who art thou that repliest againſt God?* He is not a man as thou art: he hath done what he hath done by virtue of his juſt Prerogative, and therefore he is not unjuſt in doing it. Beſides, if ye will needs argu from reaſon, then ſee how common reaſon confutes this Blaſphemy: *Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſel unto honour, and another unto diſhonour?* What if God hath done thus, and what if he will do thus? What haſt thou to do with it? Know thy place, and keep thy rank; art not thou clay in the hand of the Potter?

Secondly, Meaſure not God by your own line in his providential diſpenſations: He may have a method of his own in giving or taking away, in pulling down or building up, in wounding or healing, in abaſing man; or in raiſing him, becauſe all is his own. *He who hath a right to all, can wrong none; and he who poſſeſſeth all, is debtor to none.*

Thirdly, Meaſure not God by your own line in the matter of your ordinary Approvings: And that two wayes.

Firſt, Do it not in your approving of things. And,

Secondly, Do it not in your approving of perſons. Take heed firſt of meaſuring God by your ſelves in your approving of things; as if becauſe you approve it, therefore God ſurely doth: This miſconceit hath been the cauſe of almoſt all, and almoſt all the cauſe of all the Superſtition, Idolatry and Will-worſhip that ever was in the world. Man thinks God muſt needs like any thing which is done to his honour; hence becauſe the adorning and adoring of Images, are directed to the honour of God, therefore man concludes, ſurely God likes them. Whereas he is never honoured but when he is obeyed. As no man hath been his Counſellor, to direct him what to do with us; ſo no man can be his Counſellor, to direct him what to require of us. *Not that which we commend is approved, but that which the Lord commends.*

Secondly, Take heed of this in your approbation or eſtimation of perſons: *Not he whom you commend is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.* We ſhould judge of men as we believe God judges. Or (to come nearer) let no man think himſelf is approved of God, becauſe he is approved by himſelf. *Many flatter themſelves in their own eyes, till their iniquity is found to be hateful* (Pſal. 36. 2.) Chriſt intimates this, ſpeaking to the Phariſees (*Luke* 16. 15.) *Ye are they that juſtifie your ſelves*; ye have high thoughts of your own worth, and glory in your own excellencies, and ye think God hath high thoughts of you, that he glories in you too; but let me tell you, *That which is highly eſteemed amongſt men, is an abomination in the ſight of God.* We are the men, ſaid the Phariſees, ours are excellent gifts; thus they admired and doted upon themſelves: but the Lord found them out, and what they highly eſteemed, he abominated. Some write and ſubſcribe their own Letters teſtimonial, and get no hand to them but their own. *Not he who commends himſelf, is approved, but he whom the Lord commends*: Such ſhall find, that their own good word will do them no good; *He is not a man as they are. He,* ſaith *Job, is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him.*

And we ſhould come together in judgment.

It hath been ſhewed what *Judgment* is at the nineteenth verſe of this Chapter, and at the third verſe of the eighth Chapter, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it, only as to the matter in hand, *Judgment* may be taken three wayes.

Firſt, For pleading, which is but preparatory to Judgment, the opening and arguing of the caſe or fact under trial.

Secondly, For the deciſion and determination of the caſe according to Law, or the award of Judgment.

Thirdly, For the inflicting and executing ſentence according to the judgment awarded.

1. *Diſceptatio & mutuus ἔλεγχος rationum.*
2. *Juris definitio.*
3. *Exactio caſtigationis & debiti.* Merc.

Here *Job* chiefly intends the firſt; *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment*, that is, that I ſhould plead, argue and debate my matters with him before any other Judge: God and man cannot come together to be judged; for all mankind muſt receive their judgment from God. Or nearer the Hebrew (which ſuits the former clauſe better) *He is not a man as I am, that we ſhould come alike to judgment*: No, we ſhould be very unlike, very unequally matched in judgment. Man and man, who are upon even terms in their nature, may yet be upon ſuch uneven terms in their condition, that they cannot come alike to judgment. A poor man cannot grapple with a rich man, nor a mean man with the honourable. Now, if they who are of the ſame nature, cannot come alike in judgment, becauſe of a diſparity in their condition, how ſhall they who differ not only in condition, but in nature? Can God and man, can poor, wretched and miſerable man, come alike in judgment with the great and glorious God? And ſo the meaning of *Job* may be thus conceived, *If I had only a man (like my ſelf) to deal with, then I would venture a trial with him at any ſeat of Judgment or Court of Juſtice; but he is not a man as I am, much leſs ſuch a man as I am. How ſhall I ſet my ſelf with him to be judged, whenas himſelf is the Judge of all, and is himſelf judged of none?*

Ut veniamus pariter in judicium.

Hence obſerve, *Man is not able to contend with God in judgment.*

Who is like me, and who will appoint me a time? or (nearer the Letter) *Who will convent me in judgment? Who is that Shepherd that will ſtand before me?* Iſa 49. 14. Man muſt come before God in judgment. *We muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt* (2 Cor. 5. 10.) None ſhall eſcape his Tribunal. But man cannot ſtand before God in judgment. The wicked cannot ſtand at all before him in judgment, becauſe they ſtand upon their own bottom. The righteous dare not ſtand before him in judgment upon their own bottom; if they ſhould, themſelves and their cauſe would quickly fall together.

There are ſeven conſiderations which tell us, that we cannot come together, much leſs alike together with God in judgment.

Firſt, He is of ſuch ſtrength, that none can wreſt themſelves out of his hand: No power can daunt him.

Secondly, He is of ſuch ſincerity, that bribes cannot corrupt him, nor can gifts put out his eyes.

Thirdly, He is of ſuch wiſdom, that none can over-reach him, nor can our wit entangle him.

Fourthly, He is ſo knowing, that none of our ſins or failings, no, not the leaſt of them, are ſecrets to, or hidden from him.

Fifthly, He is ſo holy, that he cannot bear with the leaſt ſin, and ſo juſt, that he cannot but puniſh it, unleſs he receive ſatisfaction for it.

Sixthly, He cannot be a party in judgment, for he is the ſupream Judge, and there is no appealing from his ſentence.

Seventhly, He is the laſt, yea, an everlaſting Judge, and therefore there is no repealing of his ſentence. Who is able to contend with him whom no power can daunt, no bribes corrupt, no wit over-reach, who knows all our ſins, and will ſpare none of them, from whoſe ſentence there is no appealing, and whoſe ſentence cannot be repealed? There is no Judge above God, therefore we cannot appeal from him; there is none to come after

ter God, therefore what he hath judged, cannot be repealed.

Job having thus waved and profeſſed againſt contending with God in judgment, proceedeth in the thirty third verſe, to ſhew that there is none to whom his caſe might be referred for arbitration. There are two wayes by which controverſies are ended.

Firſt, By the Legal Sentence of the publick Judge.

Secondly, By the moderation of a private Friend. This latter *Job* means, when he ſaith,

Verſe 33. Neither is there any Dayeſ-man betwixt us, that can lay hand upon us both.

The *Septuagint* render theſe words as a wiſh, or as a prayer; *O that there were a Dayeſ-man*, or *a Mediator betwixt God and me, that might lay his hand upon us both!* But the Original bears it clearly in the Negative.

Εἴθ' ἦν ὁ μεσίτης ἡμῶν ϗ ἐλέγχων. Sept.

Neither is there any Dayeſ-man betwixt us.

The word which we tranſlate [Dayeſ-man,] cometh from a root which ſignifieth to argue or reprove, and ſo ſome render it here; *Neither is there any Arguer or Reprover*; none to ſet the matter right between God and me; none to ſtate the queſtion between us, none to reprove the Lord, if I ſhould ſay, or if by the common rule of Juſtice it ſhould appear he hath done me wrong. The word is uſed in that ſence (*Gen.* 31. 24.) Where *Jacob* tells his Uncle *Laban*, *The Lord rebuked thee yeſternight*; the Lord himſelf came as an Umpire, as a Dayeſ-man betwixt *Jacob* and *Laban*, and rebuked *Laban* for his hard and unjuſt thoughts of, and intentions concerning *Jacob*: *Take heed* (ſaith God) *thou ſpeak not unto* Jacob *either good or bad*, that is, do not threaten or perſwade him to return, thou wilt repent it if thou doſt. Thus alſo the Lord appeared, as a *Dayeſ-man* between his people of old and the great ones of the world (*Pſal.* 105. 14.) *He ſuffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he rebuked Kings for their ſakes.* God is alwayes able to, and often doth interpoſe for, and vindicate his people from the oppreſſions of men. *'Tis coſtly medling with the Saints, Kings may get a rebuke for it: Yea, Kings may ſmart, and Kingdoms ſhake for it.*

מוכיח *a* יכח *Arguere.* Heb. *Non eſt arguens inter nos, vel increpans.*

What a *Dayeſ-man* is, is ſo plain and well known by the cuſtom and uſage of moſt places, that it needs little explication. We in our Language, ſometimes call him an *Umpire*, ſometimes an *Arbitrator*, ſometimes a *Mediator*, ſometimes a *Referree*; and in ſome Countreyes with us, when a queſtion ariſes between Neighbours, concerning which they are unwilling to ſpend money and time in Suits of Law, they ſay, *We will refer it unto men*; which kind of ſpeaking ſeems to allude to the Title of Magiſtrates and Judges, whom the Scripture calleth gods; and when a buſineſs is brought before them, it may be ſaid to be referred or put to God. In oppoſition to which, when it is taken up by the Umpirage of friends, it is ſaid to be referred or *put to men*. We in our Engliſh Tongue, call ſuch *Dayeſ-men*, either becauſe they beſtowed a dayes pains upon the ending of a buſineſs, or becauſe they were obliged to end it by a ſet day; whereas Judges may take more liberty to themſelves. Yet ſome of the Greeks expreſs all mans judgment by this word, *Mans-day*, becauſe certain dayes were appointed for Judicature. The Apoſtle *Paul* uſes the ſame phraſe (1 *Cor.* 4. 3.) in oppoſition to the *Lords-day*, the great day of Judgment, to which he there appeals, from all the dayes ſet for mans judgment in this world. The Latines call *Dayeſ-men*, *Sequeſtres*; and Criticks tell us, that as the *Dayeſman* is expreſſed by a word in the Hebrew, whoſe root ſignifies to rebuke, becauſe a *Dayeſ-man* had power to rebuke and reprove him that had done the wrong; So he is called *Sequeſter* in the Latine, from a word that ſignifies to follow, becauſe of a power committed to him, that which way ſoever he ſhould ſtate and determine the buſineſs between the parties, they were bound to follow and ſubmit to his award; or, becauſe he was ſuppoſed a man of ſuch wiſdom, faithfulneſs and integrity, that both parties might ſafely follow him. Hence he was called *Sequeſter*, that is, one whom they muſt or might follow and abide by his ſentence. To aſſure which, the parties uſually engaged themſelves under penalties (of valuable dammage to the buſineſs in queſtion) to ſtand to his arbitration.

Fere omnes interpretes hunc verſum de Mediatore ſeu Arbitro, quem juriſconſulti vocant Sequeſtrem, intelligunt; quaſi Job *optaſſet ordinarium judicem præcedenti verſiculo, mediatorem verò ſeu arbitrum hoc verſu.*

Ideo Sequeſter appellatur quod ejus qui electus ſit, utraque pars fidem ſequatur. Gel. *l.* 20. c. 10. *Sequeſter eſt qui errantibus medius intervenit, qui apud Græcos* μέσος *dicitur, apud quem pignora deponi ſolent, à ſequendo dictus, quod ejus fidem utraq; pars ſequatur.* Iſid. *l.* 10. *Etym.*

There are five things (by which we may more diſtinctly underſtand *Job*'s meaning) belonging to a *Dayeſ-man*, or an *Umpire*.

Firſt, He muſt be agreed upon and choſen by both parties; for unleſs he be accepted by both of them, he can have no power to determine for or againſt either of them.

Secondly, He muſt hear both ſides ſpeak, and alledge what they can for themſelves, before he determines.

Thirdly, He muſt beat out the matter by interrogatories and queſtions; he muſt not ſtay upon the bare narrative of the perſons.

Fourthly, He muſt have power to conclude and determine of the differences betwixt them.

Fifthly, Both parties muſt be bound, at leaſt by promiſe, to ſtand to the determination which he ſhall make. Such an one is a *Dayeſ-man* among men; who is alſo called a *Compromiſer*, and his work, the *Compromiſing* of a matter, becauſe as he is elected by the mutual conſent, ſo confirmed by the mutual promiſe of thoſe who are at variance, to reconcile them, and take up their differences. Now, ſaith *Job*, as there is no *Judge*, ſo there is no *Dayeſ-man* betwixt me and God,

Talis judex vocatur cōpromiſſarius quaſi ex cōpromiſſo à litigatoribus ſumpto.

That might lay his hand upon us both.

Some underſtand the words [*upon us both*] of *Job* and his Friends; *There is not a Dayeſ-man betwixt me and my Friends*, not one that can judge and conſider of my innocency and their charge: As if he had ſaid, *Though I will not plead it out with God, yet I dare refer the controverſie betwixt you and me to an equal Umpire, I dare go to the trial of my innocency with you, but I ſee no Dayeſman; you are all parties in the buſineſs, and I know none of that will ſtand between us indifferently and unprejudiced.*

But the Text refers clearly to God, *There is no Dayeſman*, none to arbitrate the matter between God and me; *None to lay his hand upon us both.*

To lay on hands is diverſly uſed in Scripture. The hand ſignifies all power: Hence, to lay the hands, is to put forth power; and to do ſo, is taken ſometimes in an ill ſence, and ſometimes in a good ſence.

Firſt, In an ill ſence; and ſo to lay the hands, is to ſtrike or ſmite even to death, *Gen.* 22. 12. *Lay not thine hand upon the Child, upon Iſaac*, that is, do not ſlay him. We have the ſame expreſſion (*Gen.* 37. 22.) when *Reuben* pleaded for *Joſeph*, that he ſhould not be murdered; *Shed no blood, but caſt him into this pit, and lay no hand upon him*; that is, do not deſtroy him. This laying on of the hands notes a violent act, either proceeding from holy zeal or juſtice, as in *Nehemiah*, who threatens the prophaners of the Sabbath, *If ye do ſo again, I will lay hands on you*; or from malice, as in the chief Prieſts, *who ſought to lay hands on Chriſt the Lord of the Sabbath* (Luke 20. 19.) And Chriſt propheſying what the condition of his Diſciples and of Believers ſhould be, what uſage they ſhould find in the world, tells them (*Mat.* 21. 12.) *They ſhall lay their hands upon you, and perſecute you.* Thus *Haman thought ſcorn to lay his hands on* Mordecai *alone* (Eſth. 3. 6.) He had a deſign to take revenge upon the whole Nation of the *Jews*.

Secondly, To lay on the hands, is taken in a good ſence; and ſo I find it uſed three wayes.

Firſt, In Benedictions, *Mark* 10. 16. *Chriſt took up the young Children in his arms, and laid his hands upon them, and bleſſed them.* As under the Law, *Lev.* 1. 4. & 4. 15. The people or the Elders laying their hands upon the Beaſt, which was to be offered in Sacrifice, intimated the laying of all their ſins by faith upon Chriſt, of whom that Sacrifice was a type. So Chriſt laying his hands upon thoſe Children, implied the beſtowing and powring out of mercy upon them, in the pardoning of their ſins, and the furniſhing of them with the Graces of his Spirit. The ſame action uſed by the Apoſtles, in the name of Chriſt, had the ſame ſignification and effect. When *Peter* and *John* came to *Samaria*, and ſaw what work the Word had made among that people, *They laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts 8. 17. *Paul* likewiſe laid his hands on the Diſciples at *Epheſus*, and they received the holy Ghoſt, *Acts* 19. 6. It was uſed alſo as a ſign of healing, Mark 16. 18. *They ſhall lay hands on the ſick, and they ſhall recover.* And (*Mat.* 9. 18.) the Ruler ſaith unto Chriſt, *My Daughter is ſick, but come and lay thy hands on her, and ſhe ſhall be healed.* Some interpret the Rulers deſire of this ſign, to be as a ſign he had faith, ſo alſo that his faith was weak. The Centurion (concerning whom Chriſt teſtified, *I have not found ſo great faith, no not in* Iſrael) *deſired Chriſt but to ſpeak the word only, and his ſervant ſhould be healed* (Mat. 8. 8.) As a word is the proper object of faith, ſo faith acts moſt properly, when it reſts and lives upon a *word only.* Signes are mercies to the weak, and they are witneſſes of our weakneſs. *Signes are but Crutches and Spectacles to help the lameneſs and dim-ſightedneſs of faith.* But to our Text.

Secondly, Laying on of hands was uſed in the ordination or ſolemn ſetting of a man apart unto an Office, *The Children of Iſrael,* that is, ſome of the chief of them (under the Ceremonial Law) *laid their hands upon the Levites* (*Num.* 8, 18) Which was either a teſtification that they gave up all carnal and worldly intereſts in them, and bequeathed them wholly unto God; or an approbation of their Office, and of the Levites miniſtration in it on their behalf. The ſame Ceremony (for the matter) was continued in the ſending forth of Goſpel-officers. *Neglect not the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by propheſie, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery,* was *Paul's* counſel to *Timothy,* in reference to himſelf (1 *Tim.* 4.14.) And in reference to others (1 *Tim.* 5.22.) *Lay hands ſuddenly on no man,* And *Paul* and *Barnabas* being immediately deſigned by God for a ſpecial work of the Miniſtry, to which they wer called before, were ſent away with *faſting and prayer, and the laying on of hands,* Acts 13. 3.

Thirdly, The hand ſpecially ſignifies civil power, *Pſal.* 89. 25. *I will ſet his hand alſo in the Sea, and his right hand in the floods,* that is, I will give him power over them who dwell by the Seas. And then *laying on of hands* implies the authority which one man hath over another, to determine or reſolve a Caſe, or to ſettle a buſineſs between them, and that is the intendment of it here; *There is no Dayes-man that might lay his hand upon us both,* that is, who may authoritatively decide and make an end of this controverſie. To impoſe the hand, was to compoſe the difference. I find a threefold poſture of the Dayeſ-man obſerved in the action of his hand.

Impoſitio manuum poteſtatis ſignum, q. d. *qui utrumq; noſtrum valet manu impoſita coercere* Mer.

Ponere manum eſt litẽ componere, & controverſiæ authores ad fœdus concordiamque adducere. Pacificatoris effigies deſcribitur ad alterutrum litigãtium manum alternatim extendens, ut junctis dextris pacis fœdus iniretur. Quintil. *Quibus nulla fœderis ſervati fides mendacem dextram habere dicuntur.*

First, He put forth his hands towards the parties, deſiring them to join hands, or (as we ſpeak) to ſhake hands and be friends. Joining hands ſignifies conſent (*Exod.* 23. 1.) *Thou ſhalt not put thy hand with the wicked,* that is, thou ſhalt make no agreement with him. Some of the Ancients deſcribe the *Pacificator* or *Dayeſ-man,* having his hands cloſed into the hands of thoſe between whom he was to make peace: Hence they who are unfaithful in covenant, are ſaid to have a *lying* or a *deceitful right hand.* The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of a falſe worſhipper, who had engaged his faith to ſerve Idols, concludes, *He feedeth of aſhes, a deceived heart hath turned him aſide that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lie in my right hand?* (Iſa. 44. 20.) or (as other tranſlate) *Is there not a lie at my right hand?* Noting, that the Idol to which he had given his heart and hand, would deceive him moſt, when he truſted moſt to it.

Secondly, The *Dayeſ-man* eying the temper or diſtemper, both of the Complainant and Defendant, laid his hand gently now upon one, and then upon another, uſing his beſt Rhetorick to perſwade, yea, to conjure them to peace and quietneſs: Sir, ſaid he to one, I beſeech you to accept of theſe terms and conditions; 'tis you that have done the wrong, and treſpaſſed againſt your neighbour: and preſently he beſpake the other, that he would paſs by the offence, heal the breach, forget the injury, or take reaſonable ſatisfaction for his dammage.

שורת *Cum quadã attentione, ſtudio & induſtria ponere. Arbiter medius inter litigantes benignè manũ nũc ſuper hunc nunc ſuper illum ponere ſolebat, dicens, Tum hoc hallucinatis tu verò bene egiſti, ſed hoc & hoc facere non debuiſti.* Bold.

Thirdly, The *Dayeſ-man* giving ſentence, laid his hand upon the head of him whom he found faulty and to have done the wrong, in token of condemnation. Among the Ceremonies of conſecrating the Levitical Prieſts, this is given in command (*Exod.* 29. 10.) *Thou ſhalt cauſe a Bullock to be brought before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and* Aaron *and his Sons ſhall put their hands upon the head of the Bullock:* And in the Rules given concerning the Burnt Offerings of the people, it is directed, that the *bringer ſhall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering,* &c. (*Lev.* 1. 4.) Now this laying of the hands upon the head of the Sacrifice, implied the laying of their ſins upon the head of the Sacrifice, and that, the laying of their ſins upon the head of Chriſt, on whom the Prophet aſſures us, *the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all* (Iſa. 53. 6.) And as the laying on of the hand upon the head of the beaſt, transferred their ſins upon him, ſo likewiſe that ſentence of death and condemnation which was due to their ſin, and was preſently executed by ſlaying of the Beaſt; which was a lively type of Chriſt (the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the world) dying under a ſentence of condemnation in the ſtead of ſinners.

Laſtly, The laying on of the hand notes the keeping of the parties in compaſs; for contenders uſe to be very violent one againſt another.

Thus to the preſent Text. The laying on of the hand ſignifies only the compoſing or compounding of a difference. When *Job* complained or affirmed only, *There is no Dayeſ-man betwixt us,* his meaning was, that there was no man who could take up the matter betwixt God and him, there was none ſuch to be found; for he ſpeaks not only (*de facto*) that there was no *Dayeſ-man;* but (*de impoſſibili*) as of a thing which was impoſſible to be: As if he had ſaid, *I would gladly refer this matter to arbitration; but the Lord, who is engaged with me, is above the arbitration of men or Angels: Creatures may not meddle with any of his matters further then they are called, and I know not of any whom God hath called to, or appointed over this matter.*

Non poteſt dari Deo mihique ſimul litigantibus arbiter: quaſi in Deum æquè ac in me poteſtatẽ exercendo.

Hence obſerve Firſt, *When Controverſies ariſe, the rule of Love bids us refer our differences to the determination of Brethren.*

Job ſpeaks according to the uſage of thoſe dayes; men did not preſently run to Law, and call one another before the Judge, they had *Dayeſ-men* and *Umpires* to determine matters between them. Thus *Jacob* beſpeaks *Laban* (Gen. 31. 37.) *Whereas thou haſt ſearched all my ſtuff, what haſt thou found of all thy houſhold-ſtuff? ſet it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.* The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 6. 1, 5.) is very angry with the *Corinthians,* becauſe they were ſo haſty to go to Law; *Verily there is utterly a fault among you, becauſe ye go to Law one with another.* What! is there not a *Dayeſ-man* among you? Is there not a man among you fit to be an *Arbitrator? I ſpeak to your ſhame* (ſaith *Paul*) *Is it ſo that there is not a wiſe man among you, no not one that ſhall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to Law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.* The ſin of theſe *Corinthians* was the greater, becauſe the Judges were heathen; yet ſuch contendings bear a proportion of ſinfulneſs, though Judges be Chriſtians. To bring every matter to the Judgment-Seat, when (poſſibly) a Brother or a Friend might take up the matter, is a tranſgreſſion againſt the Law of Love. We ſhould rather labour after reconcilements, then Suits in Law, which are a cauſe, not only of trouble and expence, but of great breaches and heart-burnings among Friends and Brethren. We have a proverbial ſpeech among us, *A lean Arbitration is better then a fat Judgment.* It is better to the Parties, they ſhall get more by it; the charge of obtaining Right by Law, many times eating out all, and ſometimes more then all, alwayes a conſiderable part of that which the Law gives us as our Right. We uſe to ſay to diſſenters, *Be friends, the Law is coſtly.* 'Tis very coſtly to moſt mens purſes, and to ſome mens Conſciences. *'Tis rare if a man wrongs not his ſoul by ſeeking the rights of his Credit or Eſtate.*

In proverbio eſt, potiores eſſe iniquas pacis conditiones optima judicis ſententia.

Secondly obſerve, That, *No creature can umpire the buſineſs betwixt God and man.*

There is a twofold reaſon of it.

Firſt, He that is our Umpire is ſuppoſed wiſer then our ſelves. They who cannot agree, need more wiſdom then their own to work their agreement. But there is no creature wiſe as God, yea, there is no creature wiſe but God; who is therefore called *The God only wiſe.* God is beſt able to judge of his own actions. No man hath been his *Counſellor,* (Rom. 11. 34.) much leſs ſhall any man be his Judge: Men ſometimes abound too much in their own ſence; but God muſt abound in his. His will is the rule of all,

Oportet ut in judice ſit altior ſapientia, quæ ſit quaſi regula, ad quã examinantur dicta utriuſq; partis.

much more his wiſdom; or rather his wiſdom is the rule of all, becauſe his will is; his will and wiſdom being the ſame, and of the ſame extent, both infinite.

Secondly, He that is a *Dayes-man* or *Umpire*, muſt (according to the rules before ſpoken of) have power to compel the parties to ſubmit or ſtand to what he ſhall determine. But as we cannot lay any reſtraint upon God, from doing what he will; ſo we cannot lay any conſtraint upon him to do what we will. Who ſhall force the Lord? To whom hath he given an *aſſumpſit*, or ingaged himſelf under a penalty to perform what he ſhall award? The Lord doth whatſoever he pleaſeth both in Heaven and Earth, and he will do no more then he pleaſeth. Perſwaſion cannot move him, much leſs can power compel him. He that is above all in power, cannot be dealt with any way, but by perſwaſion. And he who is above all in wiſdom, cannot be perſwaded by any againſt his own will.

Oportet ut in judice ſit major poteſtas, quæ poſſit utrãq; partem comprimere.

There is indeed a *Dayes-man* betwixt God and man, but God himſelf hath appointed him. God hath referred the differences betwixt himſelf and man, unto *Jeſus Chriſt*; and (his own good will and free grace moving him thereunto) he ſtands engaged in the bonds of his everlaſting truth and faithfulneſs to perform what *Jeſus Chriſt*, as Mediator, ſhould ask for us: unto him we may ſafely commit our cauſe and our ſouls, with that aſſurance of the Apoſtle (*2 Tim.* 1. 12.) *I know whom I have believed, and am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day.* Chriſt, God-man is Umpire between God and man; what we truſt him with ſhall not miſcarry: he will make our Cauſe good, and our perſons acceptable before God at that great day. It is infinite mercy, when we were neither able to manage our own cauſe, nor to find out any in Heaven or Earth who could, that then God himſelf ſhould find out one, in wiſdom and power like himſelf, one who *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, to be our *Dayes-man*. Many of the Ancients interpret this Text, either as *Job's* deſire and prayer, that Chriſt would come in the fleſh, *O that there were a Dayes-man betwixt us*: or as a propheſie of Jeſus Chriſt, to come as our *Dayes-man* in the fleſh, *There is no Dayes-man yet, but a Dayes-man ſhall come.* The ſence is pious, but the context will not bear it: In *Chap.* 16. *v.* 21. and *Chap.* 17. *v.* 3. We ſhall find *Job* ſpeaking clearly of the Mediator Jeſus Chriſt, and of his great work of atonement between God and man. But here he ſeems to keep to the preſent controverſie, about the buſineſs of affliction, not of ſalvation.

Take two or three conſectaries flowing from the whole matter.

Firſt, *Job* at the loweſt ſpeaks highly of God, and humbly of himſelf.

The greater his afflictions were, the purer was his language.

He was not able to grapple with God, and there was none to be found who could umpire the matter betwixt them. *The will of God is the ſupreme Law.* What he will do with us, we muſt be content he ſhould. The ſecrets of his providence are beyond our ſearch, and his judgments above our reach.

Secondly, *The greatneſs and tranſcendency of God ſhould keep us low in our own thoughts.*

Our knowledge of God is the preſent cure of our own pride. The knowledge of God cauſeth us to know our ſelves; and that which makes us know our ſelves, cannot but make us low in our ſelves. Though a proud man is commonly ſaid, *To know himſelf too much*, yet the truth is, he doth not know himſelf enough, no, not at all, as he ſhould know himſelf. *Many are proud of, and with their knowledge, yet pride is the daughter of ignorance.* Some pride lodges in every mans heart, becauſe more then ſome ignorance doth. *Job* had ſome of both, in his; why doth he lay the thought of the infinite glory and ſoveraignty of God ſo often to his heart, but to keep down or to cure the ſwellings of his heart.

Thirdly, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God.*

He is not a man as we are (we are not able to match him) *and there is* (among men) *no Dayes man betwixt us. David* made it his election (*2 Sam.* 24.) *To fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of man.* And it is beſt for us to fall into the hands of God (as *David* put himſelf into his hands) with reſpect to his great mercies. But wo unto us, if we fall into his hands, as contenders with his great power. Shall we thus provoke the Lord? Are we ſtronger then he? It is our duty, when we do, and our priviledge that we may, caſt our ſelves into the hands of God, when the hand of man oppreſſeth us; for (as one of the Ancients ſpeaks ſweetly and feelingly) *If thou doeſt depoſit thy injuries with him, he is able to revenge thee; if thy loſſes, he is able to repair thee; if thy ſickneſs, he is able to heal thee; and if thy death, he can raiſe thee up, and eſtate thee in life again.* Thus (I ſay) it is beſt to fall into the hands of God, in expectation of mercy, through the Mediator; but it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, upon contempt of mercy obtained by the Mediator: So the Apoſtle argues (*Heb.* 10. 26.) *If men ſin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation,* &c. Thence concluding (*verſ.* 31.) *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* They who ſleight the blood of Chriſt, and neglect the great ſalvation tendered to ſinners by him, can have no more ſacrifice for ſin. Wicked men *crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to open ſhame* (Heb. 6. 6.) But God will not crucifie his Son, or put him to open ſhame again for them. God will not make another Goſpel for them (as he muſt, if they be ſaved) who contemn this. No, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin, theſe men who once (with all man-kind) fell into the hands of God by tranſgreſſing his Law, are now (under another notion) fallen into his hands, even by the contempt of the Goſpel; and now God ſaith, I will deal with them alone, for they have refuſed the Dayes-man whom I ſent, and who was ready to *lay his hand upon us both.* It had been inconceivably ſad with us all, if, as in the caſe of *Job's* temporal loſt eſtate, there was no *Dayes-man* between God and him on earth; ſo in the caſe of our ſpiritual loſt eſtate, there had been no *Dayes-man* between God and man in heaven: but it will be unconceivably more ſad with thoſe, who having had the tender of ſuch a *Dayes-man*, ſhall be found contemners of him. *Greateſt love neglected, breaks forth and ends in greateſt wrath.*

Satis idoneus eſt patientiæ ſequeſter Deus, ſi injuriam depoſueris juxta eum, ultor eſt; ſi damnum, reſtitutor; ſi dolorem, medicus; ſi mortem, reſuſcitator eſt. Tertul. *l. de Patient.*

VERS. 34, 35.

Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me.

Then would I ſpeak, and not fear him: but it is not ſo with me.

WE have ſhewed (in the two former verſes) *Job* renouncing and proteſting againſt all thought of contending at all with God; *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him,* &c. In theſe two he deſireth God not to contend with him: as if he had ſaid, *Lord, I will not plead or diſpute with thee; and I know (ſuch is thy ſoveraignty) thou mayeſt do what thou pleaſeſt with me; Yet, oh that thou wouldſt be pleaſed to abate of the ſeverity of thy proceeding, and to remit the fierceneſs of that wrath, wherein thou appeareſt againſt me, that I might have liberty to ſpread my condition in thy preſence. I have no friend to take up the matter for me; but I would open my caſe in a few words my ſelf, if I might obtain a ceſſation but for the time of treaty, if thou wouldſt forbear fighting, while I am ſpeaking. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me. Then would I ſpeak,* &c.

Exploratum eſt me non poſſe Deum, coram ſuperiore aliquo judice ſiſtere: quocirca ſupereſt, ut ipſe ſit ſupremus judex, apud quem ego pro me dicere paratus ſum, ſi contrahet flagellum calamitatis quo me cædit, & extenuet formidinē majeſtatis quâ concutior. Pined.

Let him take his rod away from me.

The **Rod** hath divers acceptions: The word *Shebet* in the Hebrew, is taken ſometimes ſtrictly for a branch, bough, or ſprig, growing forth from the ſtock of a tree: and becauſe a rod or a ſtaff is made of the branch of a tree, therefore the ſame word ſignifies both.

שבט *Virga, baculus, qui naſcitur ex arbore aut radice arboris.*

Secondly, It ſignifies a *Scepter*; the Scepter of a King, which emblems the power of a King. *Ahaſuerus* held forth his golden Scepter to Queen *Eſther*, in token of acceptance (*Eſth.* 5. 2.) And becauſe in ancient times (as the Learned

Sceptrum quod priſci reges majeſtatis & ſeveritatis gratia, manu tenebant, baculus erat.

obſerve) they were wont to make Scepters of ſuch rods, and all Scepters have the form or ſhape of a rod, therefore the original expreſſes the rod and the Scepter by the ſame word (*Gen.* 49. 10.) *The Scepter* [Shebet, *the rod*] *ſhall not depart from* Judah, *nor a Law-giver from between his feet. Thy Scepter, O God, is a Scepter of righteouſneſs* (Pſal. 45. 6.) that is, thou uſeſt thy Scepter righteouſly. The Scepter notes two things; Firſt, Authority to judge or command. Secondly, Power to correct or puniſh; both are included in that propheſie of the Kingdom of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 110. 2.) *The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Sion*; that is, he ſhall inveſt thee with power to govern, as the next words expound it, *Rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies.* Commanders in war direct with a rod or *leading ſtaff*; and Magiſtrates puniſh with a rod in times of peace.

Sceptrum ſignificat regium Dominium, cujus ſignum erat ſceptrū. Tribus quæ ex uno patre tanquam baculus ex una arbore nata eſt. Percuſſio, punitio, plaga, quæ fit baculo.

Hence thirdly, By a Metonymy the Scepter imports dominion, rule and government it ſelf, *Amos* 1. 8. *I will cut off him that holdeth the Scepter*; that is, who hath the government in his hand.

Fourthly, The word is often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie a *Tribe*, or a family of perſons, becauſe a Tribe is as a branch ſprung from one ſtock; ſo the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael* (like twelve branches) ſprung from that great and ancient ſtock, the *Patriarch Jacob.*

Laſtly, The word ſignifies puniſhment or correction; correction is often given with a rod, therefore *to be under the rod is to be under puniſhment.* Thus the Lord threatens to viſit the tranſgreſſion of the houſe of *David* with *a rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes*, Pſal. 89. 32. *The rod and reproof give wiſdom* (Prov. 29. 15.) The rod hath a voice, *Hear the rod* (ſaith the Prophet, *Mich.* 6. 9.) but 'tis beſt when a voice is joyned with the rod, and inſtruction mixed with correction.

Quinq; apud Hebræos ſunt nomina pro baculo
משען
מקל
משענה
שבט
מטה
Bold. *in loc.*

There are in the Hebrew (to note that by the way) five words, which ſignifie a rod or a ſtaff. Some reſolve that ſeeming contradiction which is in the two Evangeliſts, *Matthew* and *Mark*, by the different ſignification of theſe words. When Chriſt (*Matth.* 10. 10. as alſo, *Luke* 6. 3.) ſent forth his Apoſtles to preach the Goſpel, among other inſtructions and directions given them for their journey, this is one, *Take no ſtaves.* But (*Mark* 6. 8.) *Chriſt commanded them that they ſhould take nothing for their journey ſave a ſtaff only.* One Evangeliſt ſaith, they muſt not take ſtaves, and in the other they are bidden to take ſtaves. Now (ſay theſe) in *Matthew* and *Luke*, where he forbids his Diſciples to take ſtaves, he expreſſeth himſelf by the word in the Text, *Shebet*, which ſignifies a correcting or ſmiting ſtaff: Take no ſtaves to ſmite and ſtrike with, ye go out with a meſſage of peace in your mouths, let there not be ſo much as an inſtrument of contention in your hands. But in *Mark* he uſeth the word *Miſnan*, which ſignifies a ſtaff to lean upon; Take a ſtaff to reſt or eaſe your ſelves upon, or to help your ſelves on in your travel; *A walking ſtaff, but not a ſtriking ſtaff.* Thus they reconcile the difference. But though this interpretation be good, yet this ground of it apppears not, either in the Syriack, which in both Texts hath the word *Shebet*, or in the Greek, which expreſſes both by (ῥάβδος) So then we muſt rather ſay, that the ſame word ſignifies a ſtaff for both uſes, and that when Chriſt forbids his Diſciples a ſtaff, he means a ſtaff to ſtrike with (*Preachers muſt be no ſtrikers*, according to the Apoſtles rule in *Timothy*) and that when he bids them take a ſtaff, he means a walking ſtaff. *Itineriant Preachers might be wearied with travelling, as well as with ſpeaking.*

שבט
Baculus vel virga ad percutiendū
משען
Virga vel baculus ad ſuſtentandū.

Nihil aliud poſtulat Job *quā ut Deus vel mitigaret, vel penitus auferret ab eo flagella, ſc. morbos, & dolores. Non agat pro jure, ſed gratiæ & moderationi faciat locū.* Coc.

But to the Text. The rod which *Job* deſires might be removed, is, that ſore affliction which the ſoveraign power of God laid upon him, and exerciſed him with. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou dealeſt with me upon the height of thy prerogative, and I acknowledge thou mayeſt do ſo: But my humble ſuit and prayer is, that thou wouldeſt afflict me leſs then thou haſt, though thou haſt not afflicted me more then thou mayeſt. Thou haſt not injured me at all, but O that thou wouldeſt relieve me.*

He ſpeaks to this ſence with a little variety of words, (*Chap.* 13. 20, 21.) *Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee; withdraw thine hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.* And in a language not unlike this, he deſcribes the peace and proſperity of wicked men (*Chap.* 21. 9.) *Their houſes are ſafe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.* We find alſo that *Elihu* (who undertook *Job*, and debated the matter with him, when *theſe three* had no more to ſay, or would ſay no more) He, I ſay, perceiving what it was which *Job* had complained of as an impediment of ſpeaking unto God, promiſes that himſelf would give him no ſuch impediment or cauſe of complaint (*Chap.* 33. 7.) *Behold, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee*; As if he had ſaid, The Lords hand hath been heavy upon thee, and his terror hath made thee afraid, but (take my word) I will deal gently and mildly with thee, *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.* So that, *Job's* deſire is only this, that he might have eaſe or releaſe from his preſent ſorrows. And 'tis (not improbably) conceived, that he alludes to the cuſtom of the Judges in thoſe Eaſtern Countries, who laid a rod upon ſome offenders in token of condemnation, and took it off from others in token of abſolution, of grace and favour. *Take thy rod away from me.*

Affliction is called a rod in a three-fold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe of the ſmart of it. *Afflictions are grievous and painful to fleſh and blood.* They grieve and pain the outward man, while the inward man takes pleaſure in them. *I* (ſaith *Paul*) *take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in perſecutions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake* (2 Cor. 12. 10.) that is, my ſpirit doth, for no affliction (not that for Chriſts ſake) is joyous for the preſent, but grievous to the fleſh. For, as the Spirit would not do thoſe evils of ſin, which the fleſh would and doth (*The evil which I would not, that I do*, was *Paul's* cry, *Rom.* 7. 19.) So the fleſh would not endure thoſe evils of ſorrow, which the Spirit would and doth. And as a believer delights in the Law of God, after the inward man, when corruption is vext and troubled at it; ſo a believer delights in the rod of God, after the inward man, when corruption is moſt impatient and unquiet under it. Hence the Apoſtles counſel to the diſperſed Jews, *Rejoyce when ye fall into divers temptations* (James 1.) that is, into divers afflictions; the fleſh hath its ſenſe, and feels ſmart; but the Spirit is armed with faith, which overcomes the ſmart. Affliction were not ſo much as a rod, if it did not make us ſmart; and we are not ſo much as Chriſtians, if we cannot bear the ſmart with patience, or overcome it with faith.

Secondly, Affliction is called a rod, in regard of the hand that uſeth it. A ſword is in the hand of a Judge, and a rod in the hand of a father. God deals with his people as a father with his children in afflicting them. When we moſt provoke his Fatherly diſpleaſure againſt us, he doth not wiſh (as *Balaam* when his Aſſe offended him) that there were a ſword in his hand to ſlay us; he only takes up a rod to ſcourge us. Hence

Thirdly, Affliction is called a rod, in regard of the end for which it is ſent. A rod is not prepared to kill, nor is it an inſtrument of cruelty. A rod is not for deſtruction, but for correction. There are indeed deſtroying rods, which God will deſtroy, and ſave his people who are deſtroyed by them; *I will deſtroy the rod of the oppreſſor* (Iſa. 9. 4.) *Nebuchadnezzar the rod of Gods anger*, was a deſtroying rod, yet they among the Jews, who feared God, were only corrected, while they were deſtroyed. *The Lord means no hurt to thoſe who are good, when he makes them ſmart and die under the rod of thoſe who are evil.* If ever any man might think he had a ſword in his bowels, rather then a rod upon his back, *Job* might: yet even he calls it a rod, while he calls to God, for the removing of it, *Remove thy rod away from me.* And ſeeing he calls to have it removed, we may Obſerve,

That it is lawful to pray againſt affliction.

We may pray to be eaſed of that, which we muſt be patient under. To be diſcontented with affliction is ſinful, but it is no ſin (it is a duty) to deſire the taking of it away. For

Firſt, We may pray for the preventing of afflictions, therefore we may pray for the removing of afflictions, we may pray, *Lord, keep thy rod off from us*; therefore we may pray, *Lord, take thy rod off from us.*

Secondly, Afflictions themſelves are evil. There is no good in them, nor can they do us any good of themſelves. The good cometh from a ſuperior work, from thoſe admirable influences and concurrences of God upon, and with corrections. The rod is an evil in it ſelf, and will make us worſe, unleſs the Lord make it a bleſſing to us. Some are ſtubborn under the rod: and their hearts are hardened, while themſelves are melted in the fire of affliction. As man lives not by bread alone, ſo man mends not by the rod alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 'Tis little leſs then a miracle that this dry rod (as that of *Aaron* did natural) ſhould bloſſom and bring forth ſpiritual fruit, the fruit of righteouſneſs.

Thirdly, We may pray for the removing of afflictions, becauſe the Lord often ſends afflictions upon this meſſage, to beſpeak prayer. Many a ſoul is ſluggiſh in prayer till awakened by the voice of the rod. When the rod makes the fleſh ſmart, then the Spirit (in whom any thing of the Spirit is) cries mightily unto God, and among the many things about which the ſoul exerciſes prayer under afflictions, this is one, that the afflictions may be removed. As they alwayes ſin, who murmur at and quarrel with God, becauſe he corrects them; ſo alſo do they, who ſay, they care not how long he corrects them, or let him correct them, as long as he will. It is as ill a ſign when a child will not pray his parent to ſpare him, when he is about to chaſten him, or to ſtay his hand when he is chaſtening of him, as it is to reſiſt his chaſtiſement. *There may be greater contempt of God in lying under affliction, then in reſiſting it.* Now, as it is our duty to pray for deliverance out of trouble; ſo it is one end why the Lord caſts us into trouble, that we may be engaged to pray for deliverance.

But take it with a caution, we muſt not pray abſolutely for deliverance, or the removal of afflictions, but at leaſt with an implicit limitation. While we are ſtriving earneſtly for the taking away of the rod, we ſhould be ready to ſubmit, if the Lord will not take it away. A believer may ſay to the Lord (as wreſtling *Jacob*) *I will not let thee go except thou bleſs me*; but he muſt not ſay, I will not let thee go, *except thou now deliver me.* Time, and means, and manner muſt all be laid at Gods feet, and ſubmitted to his wiſdom. And we muſt honour God, though he will not remove the rod, even while we are praying that he would remove it.

For the cloſe of this point, conſider, the rod may be removed, not only by a total releaſe from affliction; But

Firſt, By an abatement of the affliction. As we are ſaid to leave off thoſe graces, from the degrees and lively actings of which we fall and decline: *He that lacketh theſe things* (that is, who aboundeth not, as he hath heretofore, in the exerciſe of them) *is blind*, &c. (2 *Pet.* 1.9.) *Thou haſt left thy firſt love*, ſaith Chriſt to the Angel of *Epheſus*, when the heat of his former love was cooled: So the Lord may be ſaid to remove our troubles, when he remits the extremity, and cools the heat of them.

Secondly, The rod is removed, when it is ſanctified to us, when the Lord (who is excellent in workings) cauſeth it to do us good. The Saints die, yet *death is aboliſhed*, as to the Saints, by the death of Chriſt (2 *Tim.* 1.10.) becauſe Chriſt hath pluckt out the ſting of their death, and made it a gain to them. Thus while Chriſt makes temporal loſſes or ſufferings an advantage to the ſpiritual eſtate of his people, he takes them away. And as outward bleſſings are taken away, from wicked men, while they poſſeſs them; riches are not riches to them, nor is their honour an honour to them, becauſe they are enſnared by them: So the outward croſs is taken away from the godly, while they ſuffer, becauſe they are bettered by the croſs.

Thirdly, Affliction is removed from us, when Chriſt gives us ſtrength to bear affliction. Nothing grieves us, either in active or paſſive obedience, but what is either againſt our wills, or above our power. It is all one to have a burthen taken off our ſhoulders, or to have ſo much ſtrength given as makes it eaſie to us. While the Saints have trouble upon their backs and loins, they have no trouble in their hearts and ſpirits, when their ſpirits are carried above thoſe troubles. *To conquer an enemy is more noble then to have none.* Much more (which is promiſed the Saints in the throng of ſoreſt enemies) to be more then conquerors. In all, or any of theſe wayes *Job's* prayer may be fulfilled, *Take away thy rod from me,*

And let not thy fear terrifie me.

There was ſomewhat more upon *Job* then a rod, or it was an extraordinary rod, a rod like a Scorpion.

אמתו *à radice* אים *Formidabilis, terribilis* *Emathah.*

Let not thy fear terrifie me.] The word which we tranſlate [**Fear**] comes from a root ſignifying that which is very formidable and terrible. *Fear and dread ſhall fall upon them* (Exod. 15.16.) that is, they ſhall be extreamly afraid, even dead with fear, as the next words import; *They ſhall be ſtill as a ſtone*, &c. there is a letter added (as the Hebricians obſerve) to the word uſed by *Moſes*, implying the exceſs of fear. Giants are called by this name *Emims* (Deut. 2.11.) becauſe they are of a dreadful aſpect. The whole hoſt of *Iſrael* trembled at the ſight of *Goliah*, (1 Sam. 17.14.) An Idol is expreſt by this name *Emim*: And there is a double reaſon of it. Either becauſe Idols are a terror to their worſhippers: we hear how at this day poor *Pagans* who worſhip Idols, are extreamly oppreſt with ſlaviſh fear of diſpleaſing them. *The true God is terrible to his deſpiſers: but falſe Gods are terrible to their worſhippers.*

μὴ μὲ στροβείτω. *Ne me tranſverſum agat* Sept. *Alius, ne me conſternet.*

Or Secondly, They were called *Emims* in a way of contempt; *Yours are terrible Gods ſure: They have hands, and handle not; feet, and walk not; eyes, and ſee not.* Here are terrible gods. So then, Idols are *Emims*, either becauſe they are really to be feared ſo little; or becauſe they are ſuperſtitiouſly feared ſo much.

Job's fear was no needleſs fear, he was not terrified with a fancy, though his fancy was ready enough to over-act upon his afflictions, and ſo encreaſed his fear; *Let not thy fear*, that is (ſay ſome) fearful thoughts or ſights *terrifie me.* So (*Chap.* 7.14.) *When I ſay, my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint; then thou ſcareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me with viſions.* There is an humbling and a cleanſing fear; *The fear of the Lord is clean*, not only in the nature of it, but in the effects of it (*Pſal.* 19.9.) There is alſo an amazing, and a terrifying fear: ſuch the letter of the original imports this to be, even a fear bordering upon madneſs, as if he were rather frighted then afraid, and ſcared, rather then troubled.

Ex vi verbi originalis ejuſmodi terror eſt qui hominē exagitat & quaſi extra valde diſtrahit.

Others expound this fear with reference to the two former verſes, eſpecially to the verſe immediately foregoing. There *Job* deſires a *Dayes-man*, or complains that there is none; here he tells us what he might have expected, if he had one. As if he had ſaid, *Had I a Dayes-man, then I know he would take away the rod from me, that is, he would give judgment that I ſhould be eaſed of this affliction; and his fear ſhould not terrifie me, that is, he would never give a ſentence which ſhould be a terror to me.* That's a fair ſence in reference to what he ſpake before; but I rather keep his meaning within the compaſs of what he is ſpeaking here.

And then by fear we may underſtand,

Firſt, Thoſe rayes and beams of Majeſty, which the Lord letting out a little upon *Job*, he was not able to bear them. We find when in thoſe ancient times God appeared, the beholders were terrified. *Manoah's* wife tells her huſband, *A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an Angel of God very terrible*, (Judg. 13.6.) And when God appeared to *Abraham*, *an horror of great darkneſs fell upon him* (Gen. 15.12.) In what a woful plight was *Daniel*, receiving the viſions of God? (*Dan.* 10.8.) God who is the joy of his people, is alſo a terror to them. Things which are not what they ſeem to be, are not ſo terrible near hand as at a diſtance. God who is infinitely more then he can ſeem to be, is more terrible near hand then at a diſtance. Hence it is, that when God, who is alwayes near us, ſhews himſelf to be ſo, our ſpirits fail within us. In that preſence of God which we ſhall have in glory, there will be fulneſs of joy. And in that preſence of God which we have in the wayes of grace, there is abundance of joy. But if while we are here in a ſtate of grace, ſome little of that preſence of God which is proper to the ſtate of glory falls upon us, we are more diſtreſſed then comforted with it. How much more then when God cloaths himſelf with terror, and (as he did to *Job*) ſo reveals himſelf unto us?

Pavoris nomine intelligendū putarem fulgorē, ſplendorem, vel majeſtatem nimiam, qua priſcis illis temporibus nonnunquam Deus, vel Angelus pro Deo ſervis ſuis apparebat. Bol.

Secondly, We may interpret this *fear* (by the former part of the Verſe) the *rod*; his afflictions were terrible, the hand of God lifted up to ſmite him, made him afraid. But whether it were this or that, the Majeſty of God over-awing him, or the Rod of God chaſtening him, the ſence is plain, *Job* was oppreſt with fear from the Lord, yea, with terror from the Almighty, cauſing this vehement deprecation, *Let not his fear terrifie me.* Hence obſerve,

Firſt, That, *God ſometimes appears terribly to thoſe he loves entirely.*

Job was one of Gods darlings, and God was embracing him while he was ſcourging him. *Job* had kiſſes from heaven, when he felt nothing but laſhes here upon the earth. The heart of God was full of love, while his hand was filled with a rod; his bowels yearned upon *Job*, and his face terrified him at the ſame time. That precious man *Heman* was followed with terrors and viſions of amazement all his dayes; *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted* (Pſal. 88. 15.) The terrors of God, even terrors to diſtraction, may be the preſent portion of thoſe whoſe portion is everlaſting mercy. Obſerve,

Secondly *Man is not able to bear the anger of God.*

Though he be but correcting us, yet we cannot bear his anger toward us. This cauſed the Prophet to cry out (*Jer.* 10. 24.) *Correct me, O Lord, but not in thine anger.* The words are not a Prayer for correction (I know no warrant for that) but a ſubmiſſion to it; as if he had ſaid, Lord, I am willing to bear thy correction, but I cannot (and who can?) bear thine anger. The Church complains (*Pſal.* 90. 7.) *We are conſumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled.* The fatherly anger of God is as a conſuming fire, and we are but as ſtubble before it: What then is the fierceneſs of that anger, which he will powr out upon wicked men for ever? *Who knoweth the power of thine anger:* (Pſal. 90. 11.) Man cannot underſtand how powerful the anger of God is, much leſs ſtand before the power of his anger. As man cannot comprehend the love of God (*Eph.* 3. 18, 19.) The Apoſtle exhorts, *To know the love of God which paſſeth knowledge,* that is, to know ſo much of it as is knowable (the love of God is paſt the knowledge, not only of Nature, but of Grace, becauſe it is infinite) So we ſhould labour to *know the anger of God, which paſſeth knowledge,* that is, to know it ſo far as it is knowable. The anger of God cannot be fully known, becauſe it hath an infiniteneſs in it, as well as his love. And as the one ſhall never be fully known, but by enjoying it; ſo neither can the other, but by feeling it. Upon this conſideration, the Lord makes that gracious promiſe to his people (*Iſa.* 57. 10.) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wrath, for the ſpirit ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made.* But is not the ſpirit or ſoul of *man* of an everlaſting make? And ſhall not the damned endure the contendings of Gods wrath for ever, and not fail? The ſubſtance of the ſoul cannot fail, and the ſpirit is incorruptible: The ſpirit is full of moral corruption, but it is not ſubject to natural corruption, or the corruption of its nature. How glad would the damned be if their ſpirits might fail, and their ſouls return to nothing? The failing of the ſpirit under the wrath of God, is the failing of its hope and courage. Thus the ſpirit ſinks, and the immortal ſoul dies away under the ſenſe and weight of Gods diſpleaſure.

But what if the Lord ſhould take away his rod, and change his terrors into ſmiles? what will *Job* do then? when this is granted, ſee what he will do.

Verſe 35. **Then would I ſpeak, and not fear him; but it is not ſo with me.**

Καὶ οὐ μὴ φοβηθῶ. ἀλλὰ λαλήσω. Sept.

But is this the uſe which *Job* would make of the mercy he begs? Doth he entreat the Lord to take his terrifying fear away from him, and then reſolve not to fear him at all? Whoſe voyce is this? Is this the voyce of *Job*, *I will ſpeak and not fear him?* *Job*'s character in the firſt Chapter was, *A man fearing God*; and dares he now ſay, *I will ſpeak and not fear him?* As the fear of God ought to be the ſeaſoning of all our works and actions, ſo it ought to be the ſeaſoning of all our words and ſpeeches: why then doth he ſay, *I will ſpeak and not fear him?*

To clear this, I anſwer, Fear may be taken two wayes: Either for the grace of fear, or for the perturbation of fear. When *Job* ſaith, *I would ſpeak and not fear him,* his meaning is not to lay down that fear of God, which is a bridle to the ſoul, keeping it from ſin, or that reverential affection which fits us for, and ſhould act us in every holy duty we perform to God: When *Job* prayed to be free from the fear of God, he reſolved thus to fear God. 'Tis only the perturbation of fear, diſtracting fear, not ſanctifying, humbling fear, which *Job* would lay aſide, when God ſhould pleaſe to withdraw his terrifying fear. And ſo his mind is plainly this; *If the Lord will be intreated to remit the extremity of my affliction, and remove thoſe terrors wherewith I am affrighted, then I would ſpeak boldly and chearfully to him, I would ſet out the truth of my caſe, and declare the innocency of my perſon. Vehement paſſions hinder my reaſon; 'tis uneaſie to ſpeak, till I am eaſed of my pains: I cannot tell how it is with me, ſo long as it is thus with me.* Hence obſerve,

Qui in judicio conſternatur non poteſt rectè agere cauſam ſuã, ſeq; ita ut oportet defendere ac tueri, terror enim impedimento eſt ei. Pined.

That, *Extremity of fear is an interruption to ſpeech.*

While Senſe is much troubled, Reaſon cannot act much. *When* Ephraim *ſpake trembling, he exalted himſelf in* Iſrael, (*Hoſ.* 13. 1.) There, to ſpeak trembling, is, to ſpeak humbly. Our words to God ſhould be accompanied with low thoughts of our ſelves. *Ephraim's* trembling is oppoſed to pride and hardneſs of heart. They who thus tremble at the Word of God, are fitteſt to ſpeak to God: yet exceſſive trembling hinders us in ſpeaking. And until the Lord quiets and compoſes our hearts by a word from heaven, till he ſpeak to our diſtempered minds, as once to the raging ſea, *Be quiet and ſtill*; we cannot utter our hearts, or declare our minds unto him. When God ſends a gracious meſſage to poor ſinners, and invites them to a conference, as he did his ancient people (*Iſa.* 1. 18.) *Come, let us reaſon together:* then they come boldly to the Throne of Grace, notwithſtanding their crimſon and ſcarlet ſins. Then they are not afraid to ſpeak, they may ſpeak and not fear him.

But (ſaith *Job*) **it is not ſo with me.**

There is much diverſity of opinion about theſe words. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *I am not ſo with my ſelf*; and gives this Note upon it, *I am not ſuch with my ſelf as Gods ſcourge ſeemeth to make me, or ſuch as your words would make me.* The *Septuagint* renders it, *I am not ſo conſcious to my ſelf, or I am not ſo ſelf-guilty.* The Hebrew word for word runs thus, *For not ſo I with my ſelf.* Some difference ariſes from the firſt Particle; we read [*But*] moſt [*For*] the original is rather cauſal then exceptive; *I would ſpeak and not fear him, for it is not ſo with me.*

בילא כן עמדי אנכי

Quia non ſic ego mecũ. οὐ γὰρ οὕτω συνεπίσταμαι *Non enim ſic conſcius ſum.*

But the word which cauſes the greateſt difference, is, that which we tranſlate [*So*] *It is not ſo with me.* The Hebrew is *Chen*, and that hath two principal ſignifications. It ſignifies ſometimes *right* or *juſt*, and is applied both to perſons and to things.

Particula Chen *propter variam quam habet ſignificationem, variis quoque interpretationibus anſam præbet, eſt enim vox æquivoca, plura ſignificans.* Bol.

Firſt, Unto things, *Jer.* 8. 6. *The Lord hearkened and heard, and there was no man that ſpake* (Chen) *aright*, or things which were right. *Jer.* 23. 10. The word is oppoſed to evil; *Their courſe is evil, and their force is not right,* that is, the force, might or power which they have, is not ſet upon or employed about that which is right, but wholly bent to do wrong; or they commit evil with all their might.

Secondly, The word [*Chen*] is applied unto perſons; noting a man that is upright-hearted, faithful and honeſt, both in conſcience and converſation. When *Joſeph*'s brethren (*Gen.* 42. 11, 19, 31.) pleaded for themſelves, they ſay unto him, We are (*Chenim*) *right men, we are no ſpies.* We are not come to find out the weakneſs of the Land, but to get a ſupply of our own wants. *Joſeph* ſaid, *Ye are ſpies,* ye come to circumvent us, to put tricks upon us, to work your own ends, by diſcovering what we are; No, ſay they, pray, Sir, do not miſunderſtand us, we are (*Chenim*) honeſt, right-hearted, plain-meaning men.

Qui bonam habet συνείδησιν, *eſt* (כן) *tectus apud ſeipſũ: teſtatur igitur ſe bonam habere conſcientiam & inde* παῤῥησίαν *apud Deum, ſi non pro jure ſuo agere, vel gratia uti velit.* Coc.

Secondly, The word is uſed adverbially; *It is not ſo with me*, that is, *It is not ſo as you imagine.* In which ſence you find it, *Gen.* 1. 7. *The Lord ſaid, Let there be light, and it was* (Chen) *ſo*; as the Lord commanded, ſo it was, *Eccl.* 8. 10. *I ſaw the wicked buried who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were ſtrangers in the City where they had done ſo.*

Upon both theſe conſiderations of the word, different interpretations of the whole are grounded.

Firſt, Taking the word to note an upright-hearted man, *Job* is conceived to ſpeak interrogatively, as if he put this Queſtion, *For am I not right in my ſelf?* As if he had ſaid, *If you think it too much boldneſs that I have ſaid, I would ſpeak unto God, and not fear him; Am not I right in my ſelf? Am not I ſound and true at heart?* Thus he ſeems to allude unto that teſtimony which God gave of him at the firſt verſe of this Book, a man perfect and upright; As if he had ſaid, *I am no Turn-coat or Apoſtate, I am as I was, and I doubt not but I ſhall be what I am, ſtill perfect before God, and upright with men. And if ſo, why may not I have boldneſs to come unto God, and ſpeak freely with him? They who are ſincere with God, may have great boldneſs in coming unto God.* Uprightneſs hath boldneſs with men, and uprightneſs hath boldneſs towards God; though no uprightneſs or righteouſneſs in man can give him boldneſs in himſelf, yet it may give him boldneſs in another. He may be aſſured, that though he cannot be *accepted for his righteouſneſs, yet being upright, he ſhall be accepted.*

Secondly, Others read it negatively; *I would ſpeak and not fear him, for I am not right in, or with my ſelf.* And ſo the ſence may be made out thus, *I have not gone about to juſtifie my ſelf all this while, I have not ſtood upon my own righteouſneſs pleading with God; if my righteouſneſs were in my ſelf, then I might fear to ſpeak with God, though his fear ſhould not terrifie me, and though he ſhould take away his rod from me; but I have a better bottom then my own, I am not right in my ſelf, I am right only in the free grace of God, and in the righteouſneſs of my Redeemer.* According to this expoſition, he returneth to his firſt propoſition, laid down in the ſecond verſe of this Chapter; *How ſhould man be juſt or righteous with God? I am not right in my ſelf.* As I ſaid in the beginning of my anſwer, *Man is not righteous*; ſo I now conclude in my own particular caſe, *I am not righteous in my ſelf*; and being righteous in another, if God would but give me a little reſpite from theſe ſorrows, I would ſpeak, and not be afraid. This teaches us,

> Firſt, That, *The confidence and the holy boldneſs which the Saints have in coming unto God, is grounded upon the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, not upon any worthineſs in themſelves.*

> Secondly obſerve, *He that is moſt upright in heart, is moſt forward to acknowledge, moſt conſtant in acknowledging his own unrighteouſneſs.*

They who are moſt proud, are moſt empty. And they who have leaſt, uſually ſpeak with the moſt. Sincerity rates it ſelf low; *I am not right*, that is, *righteous*, ſaith upright *Job*.

Thirdly (ſay others) *I am not right in my ſelf*, that is, I am at preſent uncompoſed and unſetled in my own ſpirit: As if *Job* had ſaid, *I deſire that the Lord would remove his fear, and mitigate my afflictions, that I might ſpeak with him, and not fear; for as yet I am not right in my ſelf, my ſpirit is ſo overwhelmed, and my thoughts are ſo troubled within me, that I have not the free uſe of my own underſtanding, nor can my Reaſon do its office, much leſs my Grace. I am ſcarce in my right mind, but rather as a man diſtracted* (ſo was *Heman*) *with the terrors of the Lord; I know not how to manage Faith under ſuch fears, the Majeſty and dreadfulneſs of God oppreſs my ſpirit; as I am, I am not my ſelf.* The Vulgar gives this interpretation inſtead of a tranſlation; *For I cannot anſwer while I am afraid.* Hence note,

Quia non ſic ſum apud me; ut nunc ſum, ſc. in hac afflictione ut me nunc tractat & exagitat Deus, ſum velut extra me, animi impos. Merc. *Neque enim metuens poſſum reſpondere.* Vulg.

> *A godly man in ſore temptations, may for a while appear leſs then a man.*

Fears hinder him from ſhewing the beſt of his natural ſelf, much more any thing of his ſpiritual ſelf.

Further, note two things, experienced by many of the Saints in the day of their diſtreſs.

> Firſt, *A godly man under greateſt afflictions, keeps to the opinion of his own integrity, yet builds his comfort upon the free Grace of God.*

He can, according to the firſt interpretation of theſe words, challenge all with this Queſtion, *Am I not right in my ſelf?* Is there not integrity in my ſpirit? and according to the ſecond, he is ready to make this negative confeſſion, *I am not right in my ſelf*, I ſtand not upon my own integrity.

> Secondly, *The Saints in great afflictions, are often ſo overwhelmed with the Majeſty of God, that they are not able to expreſs their intereſt in God, much leſs make out the comforts of that intereſt.*

The former of theſe ariſes from that ſeed of holineſs and ſtock of Grace abiding in them. The other ariſeth from the natural weakneſs of fleſh and blood, in which they abide, and from the moral corruption of nature abiding in them.

Thus we ſee how the ſence of the Text riſes, as the word [*Chen*] is underſtood nominally, for *right* or *juſt*. We tranſlate it adverbially, *But it is not ſo with me*; or, *For it is not ſo with me.* This reading bears a threefold interpretation.

Firſt, In conſtruction with the former words, thus: *Let him take away his rod*, &c. *then will I ſpeak and not fear him; for it is not ſo with me*, that is, I am not ſo fearful, or of ſo low a ſpirit, I am not ſuch a ſtranger, or of ſo little acquaintance with God, that I ſhould not know how to ſpeak unto him, or that I ſhould be afraid to ſpeak to him. If the Lord would but hide that brightneſs of his own glory, which dazles me, and eaſe me of my own pains, which diſtract me, I ſhould ſure enough ſpeak unto him, and declare my cauſe.

But ſecondly, We rather refer it to the falſe and unkind opinion of his friends, who judged him a wicked man, or an hypocrite, which he here denies; *It is not ſo with me*: As if he had ſaid, *If the Lord would be pleaſed to grant what I have petitioned, I would ſpeak unto him without fear or doubt of being heard; for it is not ſo with me, namely, as you have ſuſpected and imagined all this while, or as you think it is. I am not the man you take, or rather miſtake me to be; if I were, then though the Lord ſhould take all his afflictions from me, and withdraw his terrors, yet I ſhould be afraid to ſpeak unto him, yea, I ſhould be afraid to pray unto him: every prayer* (*were I wicked*) *would be a praying down judgment upon my ſelf: But ſeeing I can boldly affirm, my Conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs, that though I ſin, yet I love not to ſin, that though I am weak, yet I am not wicked, as ye have charged me; my heart being thus clear before God, I cannot fear to open my mouth, and report my cauſe before God.*

Non ſic impius ego apud me. Pag. *Non ſum talis qualem me putatis.* Vatabl. Merc.

Hence obſerve (which hath been offered from other paſſages in this book, and therefore I ſhall only obſerve it,)

> That, *A godly man ſtandeth to, and knoweth his own integrity in the midſt of all the clamors and ſlanders, the miſapprehenſions or aſperſions of friends or enemies.*

Whoſoever loads and charges him with ſtudied or approved hypocriſie, he will (and he ought to) unload and diſcharge himſelf (at leaſt) with *Job*'s plain denial; you ſuſpect me thus, but I am ſure *it is not ſo with me.*

Thirdly, The words may bear this meaning, I have ſought and earneſtly intreated the Lord to abate my afflictions, and to remove his terrors; *But it is not ſo with me*: Alas, I do not find that the Lord hath done any of theſe things for me. His rod is ſtill upon my back, and his terrors ſtand as thick about my ſoul as ever: was ever poor man in ſuch a plight as I? 'Tis not (alas) with me as I have prayed, or as I would have it. The rod ſmarts, and terrors amaze me ſtill. Hence note,

> That, *A godly man may pray in affliction, and not preſently be relieved in or from his affliction.*

Many a ſoul can ſay, It is ſo with me as I have prayed, I have the wiſhes and deſires of my ſoul; yet many (and I believe many more then can) cannot ſay ſo. The Lord lets precious prayers lie unanſwered to our ſenſe. We may pray long before we find it ſo with us as we have prayed, and yet thoſe prayers are not loſt, but laid up; not buried, but ſown. And it becomes us to have patience till the harveſt, though it be a late one.

Laſtly, There is an opinion which gives this verſe connection with the firſt of the next Chapter. As if *Job* had thus reſolved, upon the Lords not anſwering his petition, *Had the Lord condeſcended to take away his rod, and remove his terror, as I requeſted, then I had ſomewhat to ſay, and I*

would

Quia non ita eſt (ſc. *quia à me terrorem ſuum non eximit*) ego mecum, *ſc. loquar mecum, ipſe querar & omnem acerbitatem animi effundā apud me, ut facit in ſequenti capite.*

would have ſpoken it unto him, but becauſe it is not ſo, or becauſe I am not anſwered, therefore I with my ſelf (the word [*Speak*] is not in the Text: but ſuch ſupplies of a word are frequent, not only in the Hebrew, but alſo in other languages) *Seeing I have not liberty to ſpeak to the Lord, I will pour my complaint into mine own boſom, and commune with my own heart.* He purſues this tacite reſolution in *Chap.* 10. which begins thus, *My ſoul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf.*

CHAP. X. Verſ. 1.

My ſoul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf, I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.

Afflicti ſæpe ſe exonerari putant, ſi laxis habenis de ſuo dolore querantur & ſuas enumerent calamitates uberrima oratione. Merc.

Argumentis utitur à natura Dei & ante acceptis ipſius beneficiis, quibus mala hæc quæ immiſit Deus magnopere repugnare videantur: Merl.

Vehemens quidem partibus omnibus & gravis eſt querimonia, ſed modeſta, ſi unum illud optatum exceperis. ver. 8, 19. Merc.

IOB having in the former Chapter juſtified God in afflicting him, and maintained his own integrity, notwithſtanding thoſe afflictions, now returneth to that work, about which he had been too buſie before; yet that, wherein it ſeems he only found (as the caſe ſtood with him) ſome little eaſe and refreſhing; *The breathing out of his afflicted ſpirit in ſad complainings*; He reſumes his former lamentation, and renews afreſh what he had been more then large enough in, at *Chap.* 3, 6, 7. of this Book. Here, as there, he ſhews how ill it was with him, and what cauſe he had to be in heavineſs, under the preſſure of ſo many evils.

And here, more then there, he remonſtrates that he conceived himſelf more hardly dealt with, then ſtood not only with the goodneſs of God in his nature, but with that goodneſs which he had formerly acted both towards others and himſelf: This encouraged him about the cloſe of the Chapter (*verſ.* 20, & 22.) to petition again, that he might have a little refreſhing before he lay down in his grave: and that God would (after theſe ſtorms) return him ſome of thoſe fair dayes he had enjoyed, before he returned to the earth, and ſhould be ſeen no more.

His complaint is very rhetorical and high, yet with an allay or mixture of modeſty. Indeed his ſpirit brake out, and paſſion got head, at *verſ.* 18, 19. where he expoſtulates with God, in the language of *Chap.* 3. *Wherefore haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb*? &c. But abating that exceſs of his tongue and ſpirit, his *complaints* are knit up with ſolid arguments, and his *Queries* put the point reſolutely, yet humbly, home to God himſelf: that he would be pleaſed to ſhew the reaſon of his preſent dealings, and why he varied ſo much from what he had done in former times.

The firſt verſe gives us a general ground of this and of all his ſorrowful complaints; the weariſomneſs of his life.

My ſoul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf.

The Argument may be formed thus,

He hath reaſon to complain of his afflictions, whoſe afflictions are ſo heavy upon him, and ſo bitter, that he hath reaſon to be weary of his very life.

But thus my caſe ſtands, my afflictions are ſo bitter to, and heavy upon me, that I am weary of my life.

Therefore I have reaſon to complain.

The aſſumption of this Syllogiſm is contained in the firſt words of the verſe, *My ſoul is weary of my life.* And the concluſion, in the latter; *Therefore I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf; I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.*

My ſoul is weary of my life.] Life and ſoul are often in Scripture put promiſcuouſly for the ſame, but here they differ. The ſoul may be taken two wayes,

Firſt, Strictly, as it is oppoſed to the body.

Secondly, In a more large ſence (by a *Synechdoche* of the part for the whole) for the whole man conſiſting of body and ſoul: If ſo here, then the meaning of *Job* in ſaying [*My ſoul is weary of my life*] is no more then this, *I* (Job) *am weary of my life*; that is, of the marriage or union of my ſoul and body, O that this band (which I (though moſt are grieved at the weakneſs of theirs) find too ſtrong) were broken, or a bill of divorce granted for their ſeperation. Life is the bond or tie by which ſoul and body ſubſiſt together: And when that bond is broken or cut aſunder by the ſtroke of death, the body goes to the grave, and the ſoul or ſpirit returns to God who gave it.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *My ſoul is weary of my life.* Life may be taken either for the act of life, and ſo the ſence is, *I am weary of living*; or it may be taken for the manner of life, and ſo the ſence is, *I am weary of that courſe or ſtate of life wherein I am.* Life is often put (not ſtrictly for the act of living, but) for the ſtate or condition in which a man lives, or with which life is cloathed; The circumſtances and concomitants of life are called life. Thus in our common ſpeech, when a man is in miſery, another ſaith, *I would not have his life*, or, *what a life hath he*? The Apoſtle's character of all natural men, is, that they are *alienated from the life of God* (Epheſ. 4. 18.) that is, they cannot endure to live ſuch a life as God lives, or as he commands them to live; they cannot endure to be holy, as he is holy, or holy, as he calls them to be holy, in all manner of converſation. Thus *Job* was alienated from his own life; *I* (ſaith he) *am weary of my life*; that is, of a life thus imbittered, thus afflicted.

קוט *Debilitatus, languefactus, per metaphorā tædio affectus, offenſus fuit.*

My ſoul is weary.] The word which we tranſlate [**weary**] varies the underſtending of this ſentence. It ſignifies properly to be *weakned*, as alſo to be *melted* or *molten with heat*; becauſe a man that is extreamly heated or melted by heat, is weakned, his ſpirits and ſtrength being drawn forth and diſſipated. But it is moſt commonly applied to that wearineſs which ariſes from the diſpleaſedneſs or irkſomneſs of our minds. All burdens upon the body are light, compared with thoſe which reach the ſoul. Three things weary and load the ſoul.

Firſt, The filth and guilt of our own ſins. *I will ſprinkle you* (ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* 36. 31.) *with clean water*, &c. What's the effect of this? It follows, *Then ſhall you remember your own evil wayes, and loath, or be weary, of your ſelves* (it is this word) *becauſe of all your abominations.* As if the Lord had ſaid, before I change your hearts, ye ſin, and are not wearied of your ſins; nay, ye make a ſport of, and dally with them: But when I ſhall work that great change upon your hearts, your opinion and apprehenſions of ſin will change too: nothing will be ſo bitter or burdenſom, ſo unpleaſant or weariſom to your ſouls as ſin. *Fools make a mock of ſin; they who are truly wiſe, mourn and groan under the ſenſe and weight of it.*

Secondly, The unſuitableneſs and perverſeneſs of other mens manners or diſpoſitions weary the ſoul. *The righteous ſoul of* Lot *was vexed from day to day, in ſeeing and hearing the unrighteous deeds of the debauched* Sodomites (2 *Pet.* 2. 8.) The ſoul of God is ſaid to be wearied by ſuch courſes of the ſons of men (*Pſal.* 95. 10.) *Fourty years long was I grieved, or wearied, with that generation.* The Lord (as we may ſpeak with reverence) was even weary of his life, he had ſuch a troubleſom people to deal with; they grieved him at the heart (as the old world did, *Gen.* 6. 6.) and were a heavy burden to his Spirit. That's the Apoſtle's language, in his deſcription of that peoples frowardneſs, and of Gods patience towards them (*Act.* 13. 18.) *He ſuffered their manners fourty years in the wilderneſs*; which ſome

ἐτροποφόρησεν *forte pro* ἐτροφοφόρησεν.

ſome render, He bare them as a burthen; the continual murmurings and unbelief of that people were to the Lord (who is yet above all paſſion) as a heivy weight is to a man, or as the peeviſhneſs and unquietneſs of a ſucking child is to the nurſe, as our Tranſlators conceive the Greek word ſhould rather be. Thus alſo he reproves the ſame people by the Prophet (*Iſa.*43.24.) *Thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities.* And Chriſt (though by another word) ſpeaks the ſame thing of his own Diſciples (*Mark* 9.19. when the man poſſeſt with an unclean ſpirit being brought to them, they could not caſt him out) *How long ſhall I be with you? How long ſhall I ſuffer you?* I am wearied with your unbelief, *O ye of little faith.* The Diſciples were ſtill ſo ſlow of heart, and came ſo ſhort of a Goſpel-ſpirit, that Chriſt profeſſeth, He was burthened even with them; *How long ſhall I ſuffer you? The ill manners of all, are a wearineſs to the good, but theirs moſt who are neareſt to them.* Which is alſo the reaſon, why a godly man is wearied moſt of all with the corruption of his own heart, for that is neareſt to him of all.

ἀνέχομαι Tolero, ἀνέχεσθαι autem dicuntur tranſlatitiè qui volentes onus ſubeunt, & ſub eo perdurat.

Now, as our ſins, and the ill manners of others weary the ſoul: ſo

Thirdly, The pains and troubles which are upon the body often cauſe ſuch grief of mind, as is an extream wearineſs to the ſoul: That's the meaning of this Text [*My ſoul is weary of my life*] That is, my life is filled with ſuch outward troubles, as fill my inward man with trouble, and weary my very ſoul.

Verbum קוט *ex ſententia* R. David, & R. Mardoc. *ſignificat excidere aut ſuccidere. Exciſa eſt anima mea in me.* Pag. Vatab. &c. *Actum eſt de vita mea, en morior, vel perinde acſi mortuus planè ſim.*

Secondly, The word is tranſlated by divers of the learned Rabbies, *To cut, yea to cut off*, as with a ſword, or any other edged inſtrument: Theſe render *Job's* mind thus, *My ſoul is cut off in me*, or *My ſoul is cut off from my life*; As if he had ſaid, My dayes are at an end, I am ready to die, the threed of my life is cut, I am but a dead man. While life continues, ſoul and body are as it were one piece, but death divides them; or the recourſe of night and day, runs the threed of time through our lives, till our web (longer or ſhorter) be finiſhed, and then the threed is cut. To which ſimilitude *Hezekiah* alludes in his mourning death-bed ſong, as he ſuppoſed (*Iſa.* 38. 10, 12.) *I ſaid in the cutting off of my dayes,* &c. *Mine age is removed from me, as a ſhepherds tent, I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining ſickneſs or from the thrum*, which being woond about the beam, the Weaver having finiſhed his work, cuts the web off from it. The ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies pining ſickneſs, and a thrum, becauſe of the thinneſs and weakneſs of it. My life (ſaith *Hezekiah*) is ſpent, I am at the very laſt caſt, the yarn of time is all wrought off, therefore my life is ready to be cut off. I am a borderer upon death, and to be numbred among the dead, rather then among the living. Such a ſence this reading gives the Text of *Job, My ſoul is cut off from my life.*

Denotat diſplicentiam qua homo interius tabeſcit præ doloris ſenſu. Propriè ſignificat βδέλυγμα, i.e. rem putidã & quæ nauſeam parit averſari.

Thirdly, The word ſignifies a reluctance or diſplicency of ſpirit, ariſing from the ſight and ſenſe of that which is very loathſom, filthy, and of an evil ſavour. It anſwers the Greek word rendered *Abomination* (Matth. 24. 15.) *The abomination of deſolation*, he means the *Romans*, who being Idolaters, their worſhip was abominable; and who being Lords of the world, their power was formidable, and laid all Countries waſte and deſolate, which oppoſed them, or which they had a mind to oppoſe. And ſo when *Job* ſaith, *My ſoul is weary of my life*; his meaning is repreſented thus, My ſoul refuſes to inhabit, or to act ſo filthy a body as mine; My ſoul loaths to dwell, or ſtay any longer in this naſty lodging. As *David* (*Pſal.*120.5.) ſpeaks of his wearineſs in dwelling amongſt wicked men, becauſe of their moral filthineſs, or the pollution of their minds and wayes. *Wo is me that I ſojourn in* Meſhec; *that I dwell in the tents of* Kedar; So *Job* ſeems to ſpeak, in reference to the natural pollution and filthineſs of his own body. *Wo is me that I ſojourn in ſuch a diſeaſed body, and dwell (which yet will not die) in ſuch a dying carcaſe. The noble tenant, my ſoul, is weary of ſtaying in ſuch a ſtinking and filthy habitation, and I perceive (for I have moved him hitherto in vain) the great Land-lord will neither repair it, nor as yet let it fall.* As then a man, who lives in an ill or incommodious houſe, ſaith, *I am weary of dwelling in it*; or as a man that hath a filthy garment, ſaith, I am weary of wearing it: So ſaith *Job* here, My ſoul is weary of my life, were I well rid of it, I ſhould be well.

R. Moyſes *cum aliis Hebræis doctoribus, exiſtimat propriam vocis ſignificationem eſſe, litigare aut contendere. Litigavit anima mea in vita mea. Litigavi.* Pag.

Fourthly, Many of the Jewiſh Doctors tell us, that the moſt ſtrict and proper ſignification of this word, is, *To contend or ſtrive, to chide or wrangle* (we may give it in that homely language.) As if the meaning of *Job* were, *My ſoul doth even contend, chide and wrangle with my life; my ſoul conteſts and diſputes the matter with my life, why it will not end, that I may get out from this body of mine, and go beyond the reach of theſe afflictions.* The 95. *Pſalm, verſ.* 10. is ſo tranſlated, *Fourty years long did I contend, chide or conteſt angerly with that generation:* The Lord did often chide with the people of *Iſrael*, and they uſed to chide with *Moſes*; whence one place was called *Meribah*; yea, through their unbelief they did chide with God himſelf, and (there is no reaſon duſt and aſhes ſhould have the laſt word) God alſo gave them their chidings, and told them plainly their own, more then once. Thus the ſoul of *Job* chid his life; what's the reaſon that I am held in this condition, why wilt thou not be gone that I may be at reſt? Carnal men chide with their lives for haſtening ſo faſt away, becauſe they know of no reſt, or have hope of none hereafter. A godly man may be brought to chide with his life for making no more haſte away, becauſe he finds none, or ſo little reſt here. *Elihu* (Chap. 33. 19.) deſcribing the method in which God uſes to humble proud man, adds, *He is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pains*; He is chaſtened, the word ſignifies alſo reproving or convincing by arguments, and that in a quick and paſſionate, as well as in a rational and ſolid way. Now, while afflictions chidingly ſmite us, we are apt to chide them, and give them at leaſt a word for a blow. *Job* did not only chide with his afflictions, but with his life, becauſe it would not depart and be gone, being ſo unkindly uſed and imbittered by afflictions. His ſoul did even chide his life out a doors.

Crudelis effecta eſt anima mea. Chald. *Homo qui ſibi-ipſi mortem precatur adverſum ſe ſævire videtur.*

The Chaldee paraphraſt gives the meaning yet higher, *My ſoul is grown cruel againſt my life*; As if he had ſaid, I am ſo exceedingly afflicted and pained, that my ſoul begins to rage againſt my life, I can hardly hold my own hands off from my life, and I would not have God hold his. Let not my life be ſpared; how glad ſhould I be to ſee it poured out? *Anguiſh is come upon me* (as the *Amalakites* reports of *Saul*, 2 Sam. 1. 9.) *becauſe my life is whole in me. O that God would ſtand upon me and ſlay me*; my ſoul is hardned againſt my life (like the Oſtrich againſt her young ones, *Chap.* 39. 16.) as if it were not mine. Let me die, and that ſhall be a favour, ſmite me, and that will be to me as a precious ointment, though it break my head, and let out my troubled ſpirits. Then we are cruel to our lives, when we care not what's done to us, or how we are uſed, ſo we may be rid of our lives.

But (to paſs this) our tranſlation is clear and ſignificant, [*My ſoul is weary of my life.*] I am ſo weary of the pains wherein I live, that I had rather my life ſhould end, then my pains ſhould continue.

Job complained in *Chap.* 3. he complained at *Chap.* 6, 7. he erred twice, yea, thrice upon this point before, yet now we hear him complaining, as if he had not complained at all. This was *Job's* infirmity: though ſomewhat hath, and more may be ſaid to take off thoſe aſperſions which his friends caſt upon him for complaining, yet no doubt it was his ſin to complain; eſpecially to break out ſo often, and in ſuch bitter complainings.

Hence obſerve, *A godly man may (poſſibly) fall often into the ſame ſin.*

Where grace taketh hold of the heart, it breaks the cuſtom and ſpoils the trade of ſin; yet a godly man may ſin over the ſame ſin, and renew the ſame tranſgreſſion. The trade of ſin is ſpoiled, when the ſoul leaves deviſing, plotting, contriving ſin, which Acts denominate a worker of iniquity. The cuſtom of ſin is broken, when though the ſame ſin be committed again, yet the ſoul puts in it's plea and complaint againſt it. 'Tis here as in civil things, if we make our challenge or demand, the cuſtom is gone, though the acts be renewed by the power and prevalency of the oppoſite party; yet, when I ſay a godly man may fall into ſin often, I mean not of groſs and ſcandalous ſins; God doth not let his people fall often into the mire. *Noah* was not often drunk, nor did *David* commit adultery often, or more then once. The grace of God which bringeth ſalvation, teacheth us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts. And if a godly man fall often into any the leaſt ſin, yet he lies not in ſin, becauſe he renews repentance, as often as he ſins, and riſes as often as he falls: he reſolves (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) never to ſin; when through his own weakneſs, and the violence of temptation, he is ſoon after over-taken or ſurpriz'd with ſin. *David* profeſſeth (*Pſal.* 119. 30.) *I have choſen the way of truth*: His election was *Truth*; truth of heart, which is oppoſed to hypocriſie; truth of judgment, which is oppoſed to error; and truth of ſpeech, which is oppoſed to lying; yet he ſlipt with his tongue, more then once; and told an untruth, more then one. He cannot be acquitted from this failing, when he anſwered *Abimelech* the Prieſt, *The King hath commanded me a buſineſs, and hath ſaid unto me, Let not any man know any thing of the buſineſs whereabout I ſend thee, and what I have commanded thee; and I have appointed my ſervants to ſuch a place* (1 Sam. 21. 2.) He again faulters with his tongue, and ſpeaks either falſly or doubtfully, when the King of the Philiſtines asked him, *Whether have ye made a rode to day? And* David *ſaid, againſt the South of* Judah, &c. (1 Sam. 27. 10.) *whenas his invaſion was againſt the* Geſhurites, *and the* Gezrites, *and the* Amalekites (*verſ.* 8.) He that overcame the Bear, the Lion, and *Goliah* the Giant, is overcome by fear, and the mother of it, unbelief. *David's* example ſhould be no encouragement, ſhall be no excuſe to thoſe who willingly fall often into the ſame ſin. A good man is not priviledg'd from doing it, but no man is priviledg'd to do it. Such examples muſt not teach us to ſin, but they teach us how unable we (alone) are to keep our ſelves from ſin: they teach us alſo, what need we have to depend upon, and look up to Chriſt, that we may be kept from ſin: if he leave us but a little unto our ſelves, the fleſh will diſcover much of it ſelf, and we ſhall quickly ſhew what our natures are, though we are renewed by grace. *We muſt truſt to the ſupplies, not to the receipts of grace.*

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, [*My ſoul is weary of my life.*] We learn,

That, *Soul and life in man are two diſtinct things.*

For howſoever (as was toucht in explication) the ſoul is often put for the whole man, and ſo the ſence of *my ſoul is weary*, may be but this, I am weary of my life: yet the Holy Ghoſt would never denominate all man by that, which is not, not a part of man. That's a brutiſh opinion which makes the ſoul nothing, or nothing elſe but life, and this life no more in entity then the life of a beaſt, which vaniſheth, when it dieth. That theſe Opinioniſts tell us, they believe the body ſhall riſe again by the power of God, cannot ſatisfie for this fall, which their opinion gives the ſoul: neither doth the immortality of the ſoul at all contradict (which was threatned for, and is the wages of ſin) the death of the whole man. For death conſiſts not (if we may ſay a privation doth conſiſt) in the annihilation, but in the ſeparation of thoſe parts of man, ſoul and body, which by life are united and kept cloſe together.

Thirdly, When *Job* ſaith, *My ſoul is weary of my life*, we learn,

That the life of man may grow to be a burthen to him.

In *Chap.* 3. *Job* wiſheth for death; his wiſh was examined there, about the lawfulneſs of it; I ſhall now only examine (a touch about which was given lately) whence this wearineſs of life, cauſing wiſhes to be rid of life, doth ariſe. There is a wearineſs of life incident only, and proper to wicked men; And there is a wearineſs of life, which may grow upon the beſt of men. Take a brief account of the uſual grounds of both.

Firſt, Carnal men are often ſick with diſcontent, and die of a humor: If the Lord will not give them their luſts, they bid him take their lives. Neceſſaries and competencies will not ſatisfie them, they muſt have ſuperfluities; they languiſh, if they have not Quails to their Manna, as *Iſrael* once deſired and had. Was it any thing but this, which made *Ahab* go home ſullen and ſad? Sullen ſadneſs is a degree of this wearineſs. *Ahab* had a Kingdom, and yet he could not live without a vineyard. *He that takes away another mans life to obtain what he deſires, thinks his own life ſcarce deſireable, unleſs he may obtain it.* There was a ſpice of this diſtemper in *Jonah*, though a good man, and a Prophet (*Jonah* 4. 8.) becauſe the Lord did but kill his Gourd, kill me too, ſaith *Jonah, He wiſhes himſelf to die, and ſaid* (his Gourd being dead) *It is better for me to die then to live.* It is an exceſs of deſire, when we deſire any outward thing (much more when we deſire things unneceſſary, things not to ſupply our wants, but to ſerve our luſts:) as *Rachel* did children (who are the beſt and nobleſt of outward things) *Give me them, or elſe I die* (Gen. 30. 1.)

Secondly, Some wicked men are wearied of their lives by the horror of their conſciences. A Hell within, makes the world without a Hell too. They who have a ſight of eternal death (as the wages of ſin) without the ſight of a remedy may ſoon be weary of a temporal life. As much peace of conſcience and ſoul-joy in believing, makes ſome of the Saints wiſh themſelves out of the body; ſo alſo doth trouble of conſcience, and grief of ſoul make many of the wicked. A man who is not at all weary of committing ſin may be weary of his life, becauſe he hath committed it. And he, who was never troubled that his wickedneſs is an offence againſt God, may feel his wickedneſs extremely offenſive againſt himſelf. To ſuch a ſoul the evil of ſin is ſo great an evil of puniſhment, that he is ready to cry out with *Cain, My puniſhment is greater then I can bear.* Yea, what his guilty conſcience feared, comes to be the deſire of many under the ſame guilt, *That every one that findeth them would ſlay them:* And ſome are ſo weary of their lives at the ſight of ſin, that they make away their lives themſelves, hoping to get out of the ſight of ſin. There are ſins which cry to God for vengeance, and ſome cry to the ſinner himſelf for vengeance. This cry was ſo loud and forcible in the ears of *Judas*, that it cauſed him to go away and hang himſelf. And what made *Ahithophel* weary of his life, but his wickedneſs? The rejecting of his counſel was not ſo much the reaſon of it, as the ſinfulneſs of his counſel: A good man may be troubled at others, when his good counſel is not accepted, but he grows not unacceptable to himſelf; nay, he is well-pleaſed that he hath given honeſt counſel, though none will take it, though all are diſpleaſed at it. But they who aim not at the pleaſing of God in what they do, think themſelves undone (and dye they will) if they pleaſe not men.

Thirdly, Inordinate cares for the things of this life, make others weary of their lives. He that cannot caſt his care upon God, may ſoon be caſt down himſelf. Chriſt (*Luke* 21. 34.) cautions his Diſciples, *Take heed leſt your hearts be over-charged with the cares of this life.* That which Chriſt would prevent in the Saints, falls often upon carnal men, their hearts are over-charged with cares; cares are compared to a burden, and they are compared to thorns, they do not only preſs, but vex and wound: Their weight preſſes ſome to death, their ſharpneſs wounds others to death: and not a few would go out of the world, becauſe they cannot get ſo much of it, as they would.

Theſe things (among others) make wicked men *weary of their lives.* There are other things which make godly men weary of their lives; ſuch are theſe,

Firſt, The violence of Satans, and the worlds temptations. The ſoul would gladly be rid of the body, that it might be beyond the reach and aſſaults of the Devil, and his aſſiſtants. There's a Serpent every where, but in the heavenly Paradiſe. *Only they complain not of temptation, who are willing ſlaves to the tempter.* The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) aſſures the *Corinthians, There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* As if he had ſaid, Temptations are ſore burdens, and although yours hitherto have been but ordinary temptations, ſuch as uſually befall the Saints; though yours be moderate afflictions, and of a common ſtature, ſuch as in the eye of reaſon any man may deal with by a common aſſiſtance of grace; yet there are temptations, which (if God, the faithful God ſhould not come in with greater aſſiſtances then uſual) you are not able to bear. *They who wreſtle with more then fleſh and blood, alwayes need more then the ſtrength of fleſh and blood to help them in their wreſtlings.*

wreſtlings. And becauſe they are often aſſaulted with greater ſtrength, therefore they are aſſiſted with greater ſtrength. For if God do either withdraw his help from the Saints, or leave them to wreſtle with Satan alone, and to fight ſingle with his Armies, or if he do not proportion the aid he ſends to the temptations he permits, they are ſadly overcharged though they can never be totally overcome; and 'tis poſſible to grow weary of the battel, though we are aſſured of the victory. *It is the honour of the Saints to conquer when they are tempted; but it is their happineſs to be above or without temptation.* How many poor ſouls put up Bills of complaint, and beg prayers againſt temptations. *Paul prayed thrice*, that is, often and much, *when the meſſengers of Satan buffeted him*; whether his were an inward or an outward temptation, is doubted; but without doubt that temptation made his life burdenſome to him, till he received that anſwer from God, *My Grace is ſufficient for thee.*

Secondly, The Saints are wearied with the weight of their ſinful hearts. Inward corruption burdens more then outward temptation; and were it not for corruption within, temptation without could not be very burdenſome. The Devil tempted Chriſt, but becauſe he found *nothing at all in him*, complying with, or ſuitable to his temptations, therefore Chriſt threw them off with eaſe. That enemy without could do us no hurt (he might put us to ſome trouble) if he found no correſpondence within. The traitor in our own bowels opens our ports, and lets in the adverſary. His ſparks could never enflame us, if he found no tinder in us. The baſeneſs and unbelief, the luſts and vanities of our minds are apt to take fire at every injection. *A gracious ſoul cannot live here without ſin, and yet can eaſier die then ſin.* *Paul* (Rom. 7. 24.) cries out, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death*, or, *from this body of death!* That is, *from my body which is ſubject to death by reaſon of theſe remains of carnal corruption or from my carnal corruptions, which are the remains of my ſpiritual death, and are worſe to me then any death.* All the afflictions of his life, and the pains of his body were but a play, and a kind of ſport, compared with the trouble which this body of death put him to. He rejoyced in tribulation, but he could not but mourn under corruption. Many poor ſouls are ſo vexed with theſe myſtical *Canaanites*, that their ſpiritual *Canaan* (the ſtate of Grace) is to them like *Egpt*, the Land of their captivity. And when they are commanded to rejoyce, they anſwer, if we could not ſin, we could rejoyce; *How ſhall we ſing the Lords ſong in a ſtrange Land?* O that we might go home!

Thirdly, The Saints grow weary of their lives through the wickedneſs of other mens lives; not only do their own corruptions burden them, but (which ſhews the holineſs of their hearts more) the corruptions of others. The ſinfulneſs and pollutions of the times and places wherein they live, eſpecially of perſons they are related to, makes their lives grievous, and imbitters all their comforts. *Rebekah*, that good woman, tells her husband *Iſaac* (Gen. 27. 46.) *I am weary of my life becauſe of the Daughters of* Heth; *for if* Jacob *take a wife of the daughters of* Heth, *ſuch as theſe which are of the daughters of the Land, What good ſhall my life do me?* The ſweetneſs of my life is gone if this ſon miſcarry, as his Brother hath done before him. The Prophet *Jeremy* cries out, O that I had in the wilderneſs a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them: What made him ſo weary of living among them? (and that was but a ſtep on this ſide being weary of his life.) The next words ſhew us; *They be all Adulterers, an aſſembly of treacherous men* (Jer. 9. 2.) Better be in a waſte wilderneſs among wild beaſts, then in a populous City, among beaſtly men, 'Tis a part of our compleat happineſs in heaven, that we ſhall have no ill neighbours there. They who are evil, can take pleaſure in thoſe who do evil. *But the more holineſs any one hath, the more is he burdened with the unholineſs of others.* And that's the reaſon why God himſelf is expreſt to be ſo exceedingly burdened with the ſins of men, to be wearied and broken with them, to be laden with them, as a Cart with ſheaves, *He is infinitely holy. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God* (Eph. 4. 30.) The Spirit is ſo holy that ſin (which is unholineſs) grieves him preſently. And in proportion, look how much any man is more holy then others, by ſo much is he more afflicted with the impurity of others. As the holy Spirit of God, who is all holy, ſo the ſpirits of holy men (who yet have a mixture of ſin) cannot but be afflicted with the ſins of men.

Fourthly, Some of the Saints would part with this life, becauſe they have got ſuch aſſurance and evidence of a better life. When much of eternal life appears to a godly man, he is weary of a temporal life. Natural things are but burdenſome trifles to thoſe who are ſtored with ſpiritual. Chriſt ſaith (*Luke* 5. 39.) *No man having drunk old wine, ſtraightway deſireth new; for he ſaith the old is better*: He that taſtes what is better then he enjoyes, is unſatiſfied with all he enjoyes. We can hardly be perſwaded what we have is good, when we ſee better of the ſame kind. How much more hardly is this perſwaſion wrought in us, that earthly things (which differ in kind from heavenly) are any great good, when heavenly things are open before us? When the Diſciples (at the transfiguration) had but a glimpſe of Glory, they ſay, *It is good to be here; let us build three Tabernacles.* They do not ſpeak comparatively, as if now they had met with ſomewhat better then ever they had before; but poſitively, as if they had never met with any good before. When the Spirit carries the Saints into his Wine-cellar, and gives them a draught of everlaſting conſolations, the wine of worldly comforts will not down; they begin to diſreliſh the dainties and delicacies of the Creature. A true ſight of heaven makes the earth ſcarce worth the looking after, or the living in. Such live, becauſe God will have them live to do him ſervice, not becauſe they deſire to live to ſerve their own ends. *Paul* was in a great ſtraight betwixt two (*Phil.* 1. 23.) whether he ſhould depart or abide in the fleſh: but the ſtraight was not in reference to himſelf, he was aſſured dying would be to him but a travelling to *Chriſt*, and therefore death was to him an eaſie election. His ſtraight was only this, whether he ſhould not abide ſtill in the fleſh, to ſupply the needs of the Church, and forbear Glory a while, that he might prepare others for Glory. The ſame Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) ſaith in the firſt verſe, *We know that if the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle be diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe made without hands, eternal in the heavens.* When their Faith was thus upon the wing, ſoaring up to the aſſurance of *an houſe made without hands*; they grew weary of their ſmoakie cottages preſently: they could not endure to live in thoſe poor Lodges, corruptible bodies, having a view of ſuch glorious Palaces; therefore he adds, *In this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon with our houſe which is from heaven.* The word ſignifies groaning, as a man that hath a weighty burden lying upon him, which makes him fetch his wind even from his bowels. The body is the burden, rather then the houſe or the cloathing of the ſoul, when once the ſoul knows it ſhall be cloathed with an houſe which is from heaven. As (I ſaid before) much of hell in this life, makes wicked men weary of this life, ſo alſo doth much of heaven. The *Roman* Orator tells us, that a young man, who lived in great proſperity, having read *Plato* about the Immortality of the Soul, was ſo affected, that he threw himſelf violently from a high wall into the Sea, that he might have a proof of that Immortality, by his experience of it. The Goſpel forbids ſuch haſte, and knows no ſuch wayes to happineſs. As Chriſt (not we) hath purchaſed that eſtate; ſo Chriſt muſt lead us (we muſt not thruſt our ſelve) into the poſſeſſion of it: but yet the earneſts, the fore-taſtes and firſt-fruits of heaven, which the Saints find in this life (though they be ſuch as eat the marrow & fatneſs, ſuch as may have the very cream and ſpirits of the Creature to live upon) make them groan often and earneſtly for the next life. *This is good, but heaven is better.*

Στενάζομεν.

Cic. *in* Tuſcul. *Queſt. de* Cleombroto.

Laſtly, Which is the caſe of this Text, The Saints may grow weary of their lives from the outward afflictions and troubles of this life. Sickneſs and pains upon the body, poverty and want in the eſtate, reproaches and unkindneſſes put upon our perſons, with a thouſand evils to which this life is ſubject every day, cauſe many to wiſh and long for an end of their dayes. And though they are ready to ſubmit to the will of God, if he hath appointed to them a longer conflict with theſe evils, yet they cannot but ſhew their willingneſs, yea their gladneſs to part with their lives, that they may part with ſuch troubles accompanying their lives.

And as the afflictions of the body natural, ſo of the body politick, may make them weary of their lives. How many in *Germany* and *Ireland* have been ſo wearied with hearing the voyce of the Oppreſſor, that they have wiſhed themſelves in their graves, only to get out of their hearing? And with us, ſince theſe troubles began, have not many been tired with living? Have they not cried after death, and wooed the grave, as being weary of the world? The Prophet (*Iſa.* 32. 2.) ſpeaks of a weary Land. *A man* (meaning Chriſt) *ſhall be as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary Land.* The Land it ſelf (being inſenſible) could not be weary; but he calls it a *weary Land*, becauſe the inhabitants living in the Land, were wearied with the troubles and continual vexations which they found there. In theſe caſes the ſoul of a Believer ſtands (like *Abraham*, when the Angels paſſed by) at the Tent-door of his Body, ready to come forth, looking when God will but call; yea, he cries out that he may be called (in the language of *Job*) *My ſoul is weary of my life.*

I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf, I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.

I will leave, &c.] That is, I will carry my complaint no further, it ſhall trouble none but my ſelf.

The Original ſignifies alſo to ſtrengthen or fortifie (*Neh.* 3. 8.) *They fortified* Jeruſalem *unto the broad wall*; we put in the Margin, *They left* Jeruſalem *to the broad wall*: ſo the ſence of *Job* may be this, My pain does not abate, but encreaſe, why then ſhould I remit or abate my complaint? I will ſtrengthen my complaint as long as my ſorrows are ſtrengthened.

My complaint.] That word hath been explained before; it ſignifies an inward, as well as an outward complaint, and that moſt properly. Some tranſlate it ſo here; *I will groan in ſilence with my ſelf.* But the Text requires, rather that we interpret it of an external complaint formed up into words. The Septuagint are expreſs, and ſo is *Auſtin*, *I will leave my words upon my ſelf:* both interpreting it of a vocal declaration of his mind and meaning.

Permittam mihi muſſitationem. Tygur. *Silentio egomet ingemiſcam & Philoſophabor.* Polych. *Deponam à me querimoniam meam.* Jun.

The greateſt difficulty lies in thoſe words [*upon my ſelf*] One renders, *I will leave my complaint off*, or *lay it aſide from my ſelf.* As if *Job* meant to give over this work of complaining, and to compoſe his heart to quietneſs, how unquiet ſoever his eſtate continued. But his following practice ſeems to confute this interpretation, and to deny any ſuch intention.

Others give this ſence, I will ſpeak at my own peril, and if any danger or inconvenience come of it, I will bear it my ſelf, I will run that venture. *Job* uſes ſuch language (chap. 13. 13.) *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.* We may gloſs it with that Heroical reſolution of Queen *Eſther*, (Eſt. 4. 16.) *So will I go in unto the King, which is not according to the Law, and if I periſh, I periſh.* The Hebrew Prepoſition hath various acceptions.

First (as we) It is tranſlated *Upon.* Secondly, *With.* Thirdly, *Againſt.* Fourthly, *Concerning or about.*

We may take in any of, or all theſe tranſlations. And from all, the meaning of *Job* ſeems to riſe thus, *I intend not to ſpeak a word againſt God, I will not charge the Almighty with injuſtice, or with rigor, to do which, were higheſt wickedneſs; I purpoſe indeed to complain, but I will complain only upon or with my ſelf, concerning or againſt my ſelf, I will not utter a word againſt the wiſdom of God, or accuſe his Providence; I will not ſhoot an arrow againſt Heaven, or ſend out a murmur againſt the moſt High.*

Præpoſitio על *frequenter per* ſuper, *nonnunquam per* cum, *& aliquando per* adverſus *redditur. Nihil contra Deum, in me tantum deſæviam.* Pin.

There are two wayes of leaving our complaints upon our ſelves.

Firſt, When we let them lie wholly upon our ſelves, and will not go to God for ſtrength or patience to bear them. Who can ſufficiently mourn over them, who leave their complaints in this ſence upon themſelves? It is ſinful and fooliſh to leave our complaints thus upon our ſelves. 'Tis a duty to leave them upon God, and to powr them into the boſom of *Chriſt*, who can, and who only can either eaſe us of them, or make them eaſie to us; who can, and who only can take off our burdens, or enable us to carry them. The burden of our ordinary cares will break our backs, if left upon our ſelves; how then ſhall we in our own ſtrength ſtand under the burden of extreameſt ſorrows?

Secondly, We leave our complaint upon our ſelves, when we make no excuſes or evaſions, but plainly charge the fault upon our ſelves. Thus we ought to leave all our complaints upon our ſelves. It is ſinful and fooliſh to charge any of them wholly upon the Devil, or at all upon God. An honeſt heart takes them home, and ſaith, God is righteous, but I am a tranſgreſſor; what he hath done, he may do, and he hath done juſtly in all that he hath done. This is the ſence of *Job's* reſolution, *I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf.* Hence obſerve,

> *Whatſoever a godly man ſuffereth, he will not charge God with it, but himſelf.*

He is more careful of the honour of God, then of his his own peace; and had rather die, then the glory of God ſhould ſuffer. *O Lord* (ſaith *Daniel*, chap. 9. 7.) *righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of face*: And (*verſ.* 14.) *The Lord is righteous in all his works which he doth, for we obeyed not his voyce.* When the Angel was ſmiting *Iſrael* with the Plague of Peſtilence, *David* beſpeaks the Lord in reference to the people, *Lo, I have ſinned, and done wickedly; but theſe ſheep what have they done? Let thine hand I pray thee be againſt me*, &c. (2 *Sam.* 24. 17.) I take the blame to my ſelf, Lord, upon me let thy ſtroak be, even upon me, not upon *Iſrael*: So ſaith the ſoul in reference unto God; upon me be the blame of all the troubles and afflictions which I feel, not upon God; What hath God done? All that he hath done is right, and juſt and good. *It is an argument of a holy frame of heart, to be often judging our ſelves, and alwayes acquitting of God*, to be often complaining of our ſelves, and to be ever exalting God; to be alwayes thanking him for our comforts, and alwayes ſaying, we may thank our ſelves for our ſorrows. Whatſoever the Lord ſaith or doth concerning us, we ſhould not only ſay with *Hezekiah* (when a ſad meſſage was brought him, 2 *Kings* 20. 19.) *Good is the word of the Lord*; but alſo, good are the works of the Lord. Many men are ready to lay their ſins (much more their ſorrows) upon God. So the Apoſtle repreſents them (*Rom.* 9. 19.) *Thou wilt ſay unto me, why doth he then find fault?* Why doth God complain of us? We have more reaſon to complain of, and charge our faults on God. If he hardeneth whom he will, why are we blamed for being hardened? *For who hath reſiſted his will?* Thus they queſtion God, who hath reſiſted thy will? whoſe lives are nothing elſe but a continued war againſt, and reſiſtance of his will. They who ſtrive moſt to comply with the will of God, complain often of themſelves for reſiſting it. And though they know God hardeneth whom he will, yet they will not leave the hardening of any upon God, as his fault, but as his prerogative. They confeſs it to be as great an act of holineſs in God, to harden ſome men in ſin, as it is to ſoften others by his Grace: Mercy appears in the one, Juſtice appears chiefly in the other, but holineſs equally in both.

I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.

A bitter ſoul bringeth forth bitter words. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh. If there be abundance of joy in the heart, the mouth will ſpeak joyfully; and if there be abundance of ſorrow in the heart, the mouth ſpeaks ſorrowfully. As when there is abundance of filth in the heart, the mouth ſpeaks filthineſs. We may ſee the Lines and Image of a mans mind drawn upon his words. One man ſpeaks in the anger of his ſoul, and he ſpeaks eagerly; another ſpeaks in the pride of his ſoul, and he ſpeaks proudly: A third ſpeaks in the prophaneſs of his ſoul, and he ſpeaks prophanely. Again, one ſpeaks in the courage of his ſoul, and he ſpeaks couragiouſly. Another ſpeaks in the patience of his ſoul, and he ſpeaks patiently. A third ſpeaks in the faith of his ſoul, and he ſpeaks believingly. There is a nearneſs to this ſence, in that of the ſixtieth Pſalm (*ver.* 6.) *God hath ſpoken in his holineſs*: and we are aſſured he cannot but ſpeak holily, who is *all holy. I* (ſaith *Job*) *will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul*, and he ſpake bitterly; his ſoul was bitter, and ſo was his ſpeech too.

Loquar quicquid mihi afflictio ſuggeſſerit.

What he means by the bitterneſs of his ſoul, hath been opened heretofore in the third Chapter, and in the ſeventh Chapter, *v.* 11. Thither I refer the Reader.

In brief, *I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul*, is either this, I will let out the ſorrow of my heart at my tongue, and it ſhall appear by what I ſay, what I feel. Or,

Further, *I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul,* may be taken as an Apology for what he ſpake. As if he had ſaid, *Do not charge my complaint upon my own account*; *If I ſpeak bitterly, it is not I that ſpeak, but the bitterneſs that is in me.* As *Paul,* when *he did what he would not*, pleads in the ſeventh of the *Romans*, *It is no more I that do it, but ſin that dwelleth in me.* It is not I *Paul*, an Apoſtle, nor I regenerate *Paul*; but the remains of unregenerate *Paul*, of *Paul* a Phariſee, which rebell againſt the Law of God. In the ſame manner ſaith *Job* here, and ſo ſay the Saints; Are we at any time impatient, and complain more then becometh us? know it is not we that ſpeak, but the *bitterneſs of our hearts*; the thing which we would not, that ſpeak we; and therefore it is not we that ſpeak, but the ſorrow that dwelleth in us.

Non tam mea futura ſunt verba quam meæ amaritudinis; hæc enim imperat & extorquet orationem.

So then, ſpeaking in the bitterneſs of the ſoul, notes either the exceſs or greatneſs of a complaint, or the cauſe and ſpring of a complaint. The complaints of *Job* came not from the ordinary temper of the ſpirit, but from the troubles of his eſtate, diſtempering his ſpirit, he deſired rather to be praiſing and glorifying God for his receipts, then complaining over his own wants. But his wants were ſuch, as he could not refrain from complaining; *I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.*

But what ſpeaks he?

As when he firſt ſpake theſe words (*chap.* 7. 11.) he preſently turned his ſpeech to God, deſiring him to deal more ſweetly with him; and puts the queſtion, *Am I a Sea, or a Whale?* &c.

So here, after he hath ſet forth his reſolvedneſs to complain, he preſently turns his ſpeech to God, imploring favour, *I will ſay unto God, do not condemn me* (verſe 2.) and he puts the queſtion (*verſe* 3.) *Is it good unto thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs?* As if he had ſaid, *Lord, I cannot but complain of my condition, and I muſt take the boldneſs to complain to thee; but I will not complain of thee, as if thou wert mine enemy; nor will I contend with thee, as if thou wert a party; my meaning and ſcope is only this, to ſupplicate thee as my Judge; I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me,* &c.

VERS. 2, 3.

I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me, ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.

Is it good unto thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs? that thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands, and ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked?

IN the former verſe *Job* reſolved to complain; in this ſecond he begins his complaint; *I will ſay unto God*, &c. He complains to God, not againſt God. He leaves his complaint upon himſelf, but he rendereth and preſenteth it before the Lord; *I will ſay unto God.*

What he ſaith, may be caſt into a double requeſt.

Firſt, That God would not condemn him.

Secondly, That he would inſtruct or convince him; as if he had ſaid, *Lord, do not uſe thy abſolute power to deſtroy me; do not reject me, becauſe thou wilt: Shew me the reaſon of thy proceedings, that I may either ſit down contented with what is amiſs in my ſtate, or reform and amend what is amiſs in my life.*

Do not condemn me.

The *Septuagint* hath a very different rendring of this clauſe, *I will ſay unto God, Do not teach me to be wicked*, or to do wickedly; but is it not wickedneſs as black as hell, to ſuppoſe that God teaches any man to be wicked? The Lord hates wickedneſs, and can he teach it? The Lord puniſhes wickedneſs, therefore he cannot teach it.

The mind of the Greek Tranſlators is not that God doth formally teach any to be wicked, but that ſome learn wickedneſs, or are enſnared in ſin by that which God doth unto them: As if *Job* had ſaid, *Lord, do not encreaſe and heap affliction upon me: Do not over-grieve and burden the ſpirit of thy poor creature, leſt he ſhould even be forced through impatience, to ſpeak unadviſedly, or to do any thing unbecomingly: Lord, do not occaſion me through the extremity of my afflictions, to ſay or do that which I muſt repent and be aſhamed of.* Which is alſo the ſence of that Petition in the Lords Prayer, *Lead us not into temptation. Great afflictions lay us open to great temptations.* And as great calamity is an occaſion for our Graces and Virtues to ſhew themſelves; ſo alſo for our Luſts and Corruptions. Some never appear ſo holy; and others (I mean of thoſe who are really godly) never ſhew ſo much unholineſs, as in affliction. Hence that requeſt of *Agur* (Prov. 30. 9.) *Lord, feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain.* Such is the meaning of the *Septuagint*, when they ſay, *Lord, teach me not to be wicked.* God teaches man to be holy, both by his word, and by his works; yet ſome of his works may occaſion the fleſh to learn wickedneſs, and to act wickedly.

Μή με ἀσεβεῖν δίδασκε. Noli me docere impium eſſe. Sept. *Fortè graviore aliqua triſtitia obrutus, impiam aliquam vocem emittam,* q. d. *Noli occaſionem quærere mei lapſus.*

Secondly, Theſe words may be underſtood as a Preface, or a Rhetorical introduction to prepare the ears of the Lord to receive the *Bill of Complaint*, which *Job* was about to put up unto him: As if he had ſaid, *Lord (poſſibly) through the tedioufneſs of my pain, and the continuance of my ſorrows, words may ſlip from me, of which I ſhall not be able to give a good account, or others make a fair conſtruction; yet, Lord, do not condemn me: Do not cenſure me; I ſpeak only to excuſe my ſelf, not to accuſe thy Majeſty, to ſpeak only in my own defence; let not what I ſpeak be an offence to thee.* Lord, I have ſo great a weight of affliction upon me, that I cannot but hope thou wilt give my words ſome grains of allowance, if they ſhould want their due weight of wiſdom and of holineſs. As *Abraham* when he was about to pray for *Sodom*, makes his apologies and preparatory ſpeeches unto to God; *Let not my Lord be angry, and I will ſpeak; and I will ſpeak yet this once* (Gen. 18.) So here, *I will ſpeak*, &c. But I will firſt ſay unto God, *Do not condemn me.* If (my infirmities prevailing over me) I ſpeak amiſs, Lord, be not critical with me, examine not every word ſtrictly. Strong paſſions make an unruly Orator; and when the Speaker bears much, he may expect to be much born with by his Hearers. That's a ſecond, But rather,

Verba ſunt hominis ſe excuſantis, & quaſi præcaſtigâtis liberiorē ſuam orationem, Aqu.

Thirdly, We may take the words as a plain deprecation, *Do not condemn me*; the Hebrew is literally thus rendred, *Do not wicked me*, that is, *Do not count me, or caſt me for a wicked man.* But did the Lord account *Job* as a wicked man? Or had *Job* an opinion that the Lord did account him ſo? Surely *Job* had good (yet humble) thoughts of himſelf, though he endur'd ſo many evils; yea, he was perſwaded that the Lord (who laid thoſe evils on him) had good thoughts of him too: and when he ſaith, *Do not condemn me*, doubtleſs he had hopes, poſſibly he had aſſurances that the Lord had juſtified and acquitted him: Why then reſolves he, *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me?*

הרשע *Verbum condemnandi ferè ſemper ad culpam pertinet. Noli me peragere reum aut ſontem pronunciare.*

First, We may expound him thus, Lord, Do not that againſt me which may give the world occaſion to condemn me; or, Lay not thy hand ſo heavily upon me, leſt they that underſtand not the reaſon of thy dealings, ſhould be occaſioned to adjudge me wicked: though *Job* had a witneſs above, and a record on high, though he knew his reputation was unblemiſhed before God in the midſt of all theſe breaches upon his Family, and botches upon his Body, yet he knew men would condemn him as guilty of the moſt notorious evils of ſin, when they ſaw him languiſhing under ſuch unparallell'd evils of puniſhment. This moved him to pray, Lord, Do not condemn me, by making me an Object of the worlds condemnation.

His ſuppliciis videris me velut impium, ſceleratumq; palam declarare. Pin. *Ne quæſo me ita affligas ut omnes qui hoc vident, judicent me propter peccata graviſſima talia pati.*

Again, The words (*Do not condemn me*) may have this meaning; Lord, Do what thou wilt with me, only do not condemn me. His earneſt deprecation of this, may carry in it a willing ſubmiſſion to any thing beſides this. And 'tis very uſual with men to do ſo; we think we could bear any affliction but that, or better then that which is upon us. Yet *Job* had great reaſon to chuſe any affliction rather then this. He might well ſay, I can (through thy Grace enabling me) bear theſe or any other pains of my body, and loſſes in my eſtate, but I know not how to bear the loſs of mine innocency, or the reproach of being thrown out of thy favour. The world and theſe my friends will be confirmed in their miſapprehenſions of me, if thou doſt not ſpeedily deliver me, and confute their raſh judgment by ſome eminent mercy.

Permitto rerum aliarum jacturam, ſed non poſſum non dolere vehementer læſā meæ ſanctitatis & innocentiæ exiſtimationem. Pin.

Condemnation hath three things in it which make it grievous.

Firſt, The penalty of the ſentence.

Secondly, The diſfavour of the Judge.

Thirdly, The ſtain of his integrity who is condemned.

To have but ſo much as a ſuſpition or jealouſie of the diſpleaſure of God, afflicts the ſpirit of a godly man, more then all his other afflictions. Though *Job* had a ſure intereſt in the favour of God, and was freed from the penalty of condemnation, by his union with Chriſt; yet ſometimes clouds and darkneſs came over him, and terrours of the Lord did fight againſt him, which cauſed thoſe ſad lamentations in the ſixth Chapter: but here he is chiefly troubled at the ſtain of his integrity in the eye of the world, who beholding his afflictions. blotted him as a wicked man, and eſteemed him forſaken of God, even utterly diſcarded and caſt out of his ſight. Hence obſerve,

First, That, *Great afflictions carry a charge of wickedneſs upon the afflicted.*

Paul having eſcaped death in a wreck at Sea, could not eſcape a hard cenſure at Land, when a Viper was ſeen upon his hand: *This man* (ſay thoſe *Barbarians* of *Melita*, among themſelves) *is no doubt a murderer, whom though he hath eſcaped the Sea, yet vengeance ſuffereth not to live* (*Acts* 28. 4.) We find alſo that thoſe exemplary judgments which befel the *Galileans*, whoſe blood *Pilate* had mingled with their Sacrifices (it ſeems he cauſed them to be ſlain while they offered Sacrifice) and thoſe upon whom the Tower of *Siloe* fell, leſt them all under a charge of higheſt wickedneſs; elſe Chriſt had not taken it off, ſaying, *Suppoſe ye that thoſe* Galileans *were ſinners above all the* Galileans, *becauſe they ſuffered ſuch things? or thoſe eighteen upon whom the Tower of* Siloe *fell, think ye that they were ſinners above all that dwelt in* Jeruſalem? As if he had ſaid, I, who know your thoughts, know ye are ready to think ſo. It is a very ill, but it is a very common thing, to judge both of perſons and of cauſes by ſucceſs. Doth a man gain and thrive in the world? here's a man ſure whom God loves, ſaith the world. Though a *Jeremy* can ſay, *Why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* He can ſee them to them to be wicked through all their proſperity; yet, how often are they accounted righteous who proſper? and good, who enjoy good? But doth a man wither and go down the wind in the world? He is a man ſure, whom God hates, ſaith the world. Man is apt to think them the worſt, who ſuffer worſt, and that they have ſinned moſt, who have moſt ſorrow. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 53. 4, 5.) foretels that Chriſt himſelf, *while he bore our griefs, and carried our ſorrows, ſhould be eſteemed ſtricken, ſmitten of God and afflicted.* Chriſt was eſteemed a great ſinner, when God gave him up to be ſmitten for ſinners; therefore he adds, *But he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, &c. Hence obſerve,

Secondly, *The diſpleaſure of God is more grievous to the Saints, then all other preſſures and ſorrows whatſoever.*

Job ſaith not, Lord, do not afflict me, do not chaſten me, lay not thine hand upon me more; but, *Lord, do not condemn me:* It is infinitely worſe to be condemned, then to be chaſtened, yea, then to be killed. Condemnation carries in it an argument of diſfavour, and that makes it ſo burdenſome. As the love of God is better to us, then all the good things of this life (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *Many will ſay, who will ſhew us any good?* This is the great Query of the world: but what ſaith *David? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more then in the time that their Corn and their Wine encreaſed.* And as the favour of God is better to us then the good things of this life, ſo then life, which is better then all earthly goods (*Pſal.* 63. 3.) *Thy loving kindneſs is better then life.* Now, I ſay, as the Love of God is better to us then the beſt things in the world; ſo the diſpleaſure of God is worſer to us then the worſt things that are in the world: all the Torments and Racks, all the Sickneſſes and diſtempers, all the Reproaches and Contempts of men have not ſo much evil in them to us, as one Frown from God. Hence, as when two ſore Diſeaſes (ſuppoſe the Gout and the Stone) both very painful, yet one much exceeding, at once afflict the Body, the Patient forgets the leſs; ſo it is, when inward and outward ſorrows at once ſeize upon one man, when the Arrows of God are faſtened in his ſpirit, he forgets his Arrow in his fleſh. *The wounds of the Spirit heal all the wounds of the fleſh*; they make them as if they were no wounds, or not worth the complaining of.

Thirdly obſerve, *To be accounted wicked, is a ſore affliction.*

It is an affliction to have an ill name, though we deſerve it not, and to be accounted wicked, though we are not; it is, I grant, far better to be cenſured, then to be flattered. It is very ill when others count us, and worſt of all, when we account our ſelves better then we are; yet it is no ſmall evil to be accounted worſe then we are, eſpecially to be accounted evil, when we are good, A wound in our honour is not a wound to be ſlighted. It was no ſmall part of the ſufferings of Chriſt, that he was numbred with the tranſgreſſors in his death, and called *Beelzebub*, a friend of Publicans and ſinners, while he lived.

Fourthly, Obſerve from this, *Do not condemn me.*

That, *Condemnation is the adjudging of one to be wicked.*

Condemnation ſuppoſeth a man guilty, and leaveth him under a penalty. As *Juſtification* is the adjudging and declaring of a perſon to be righteous, or the accepting of him for righteous in another, *who* is not righteous in himſelf; ſo *Condemnation* is the adjudging, pronouncing and declaring of a man to be wicked, who in himſelf is wicked. That's *Job*'s firſt Requeſt, I will ſay unto God, *Do not condemn me*: As if he had ſaid, *Seeing thou art the God and Father of all who call upon thee in Faith, and fear thy Name; therefore in Faith and Filial Reverence I beſeech thee to acquit me of my ſin; yea, becauſe I know thou haſt acquitted me, therefore deal not with me as if I were condemned for ſin. Make it appear that thou art my God, either by removing theſe ſtroaks* (*which repreſent me to the world as thy Enemy, rather then thy Son*) *or by removing the dread and terror of them, that they may appear as exerciſes of my Grace, not as revenges upon, or puniſhments of my ſin; that while my Body is pained with thy Rod, my Soul may rejoyce in thy Love; and that while I am under this Croſs, I may triumph over it. Or if thou art reſolved ſtill to detain me at this rate of ſuffering, then I have another humble Suit:*

Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.

That's his ſecond Requeſt.

הודיע *Fac ſcire me.*

Shew me.] The word ſignifies to make a matter intelligible or plain to the underſtanding: *If I muſt feel theſe pains, then make me to underſtand them alſo: Let not the whole weight of my ſorrows lie upon my Senſe, manifeſt them to my Reaſon; the more I know of them, the better I ſhall manage and endure them.*

ריב *Partium eſt non judicis, partes litigant, non condemnant, judex condemnat, non litigat.* Dru.

Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.] The Word which we tranſlate *contend*, ſignifies properly contention between party and party, not the Sentence of the Judge. The Parties to a Suit, contend, but do not condemn. The Judge condemns the delinquent party, but he doth not contend. His Office is, to hear the Cauſe, and upon full evidence on both ſides, to paſs his Sentence. *Job* ſpeaks in the ſtile of both, deſiring the Lord not to condem him as a Judge, and to ſhew him why he contended with him, as a Party. Thus the Lord is ſaid in *Hoſea*, to have a *controverſie with the Inhabitants of* Iſrael (*Hoſ.* 4. 1.) And it ſeems by another Prophet, that he had continued a long one with them, and therefore promiſed, *I will not contend for ever*, Iſa. 57. 16.

Further, *Cauſe me to know*, or, *ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me*, is, as if *Job* had ſaid, *Lord, my troubles and*

Oportet omnibus notam fieri cauſam mearum ægritudinum, nequis ex re manifeſta ad occultiorem aliam cauſam inveſtigandam temerè dilaberetur. Pined.

and ſorrows are very well known, they run into every eye, they are apparent enough to the world; all ſee that thy hand is lifted up, and I feel it: but the reaſon of it I do not underſtand, much leſs do they; there is a curtain drawn between the world, and the reaſon why I am troubled; yea, there is a curtain drawn between me, and the reaſon of my troubles: Now therefore, Lord, draw back the curtain, or unvail my eyes; let me ſee clearly, and let the world ſee why I am thus afflicted; for though I know I am a ſinner and have many failings, yet I know nothing my ſelf: I am not conſcious of any wickedneſs, or cloſe hypocriſie, much leſs of any prophaneneſs or apoſtacy, which ſhould cauſe thee to pour out ſuch full viols of thy indignation upon me; Then, *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me:*

This [Wherefore] may have a three-fold reference;

First, *Shew me,* whether it be for ſin or no?

Secondly, If it be for ſin, Shew me for what ſin it is?

Thirdly, If it be not for ſin, Shew me for what elſe it is? What is the thing thou aimeſt at and intendeſt? What's the end thou propoſeſt to thy ſelf in theſe my unheard of afflictions?

But is it lawful to put ſuch queries, or to deſire ſuch reſolutions from the Lord? Ought not *Job* to have prayed for wiſdom how to bear his croſs, rather then have asked knowledge, why it was laid upon him?

Job deſired a reaſon, firſt, Not to ſatisfie his curioſity, but his conſcience; not that he would be prying into Gods ſecrets, or unlocking the cabinet of his counſel to ſee what was there; but that the ſecrets of his own heart might be opened, and a diſcovery made to him of what was hid there. He deſired a reaſon, not doubting the juſtice or goodneſs of God, but as ſuſpecting ſome evil in himſelf, as yet unſeen.

Or, ſecondly, He deſired a reaſon, not ſo much to ſatisfie himſelf, as that the world might be ſatisfied; that they who judged and condemned him, as an hypocrite, might have their raſh judgment confuted and anſwered by a determination from heaven. As if he had further ſaid, *Lord, if thou wouldeſt but ſhew me this thing, it would either ſtop the mouthes of thoſe who have been ſo forward to cenſure me; or ſtop my mouth from any further complainings to thee: I cannot reſcue my ſelf out of thy hand, nor dare I accuſe thy wiſdom, in laying thy hand upon me. But, Lord, deal not with me by the ſtrict rule of thy ſoveraignty, which is to act above all rules, and to do what thou wilt, becauſe thou wilt, without giving a reaſon to thy creature. I cannot charge thee with injuſtice, if thou ſhouldſt reſolve to keep me ſtill unreſolved. I know thou art not obliged to give me an account of any of thy matters; but Lord, condeſcend ſo far to duſt and aſhes. Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.* If it be for ſin, a ſight of that (through thy grace) will humble me for it, and cauſe me to return to thee from it. If it be for trial, I ſhall undergo it with more patience, and my friends will behold me under it with more charity. Let all or ſome of theſe conſiderations prevail with thy majeſty, to open this ſecret to me, and expound the myſtery of my afflictions; *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.* Obſerve hence,

> Firſt, *An afflicted ſoul is very ſollicitous about the reaſon of his affliction.*

He that knows what it is to be in the dark, loves not to be in the dark. As natural, ſo moral light is ſweet, and ſpiritual light is ſweeteſt of all. Man would not be under concealments, or have all about him myſteries and riddles. Evil men love not that light which ſhews them a rule againſt their ſins, but any man would have light to ſhew him the reaſon of his ſufferings. To be troubled we know not why, is an aggravation of our troubles. *That is more then felt, which is only felt.* As to know the cauſe of a diſeaſe, leads and lets us into the way of a perfect cure, ſo to know it is half a cure. *Job,* as here he doth, ſo heretofore he had complained that his way was hidden (*Chap.* 3. 23.) and here as before, he ſolicites that his way might be cleared to him.

> Secondly obſerve, *A godly man may be long in the dark about the reaſon of Gods dealings with him.*

He labours alwayes to give an account of his own heart and wayes to God, but he is ſeldom able to give an account of the wayes of God toward him. The way of God both in mercy and in judgment is in the Sea, and his foot-ſteps are not ſeen. As there is much of the Word of God, which a ſincere heart after many prayers and much ſtudy, is not able to give a reaſon of: ſo alſo are there many of his works. The Text of both is dark to us, till God make the Comment, and he ſees it beſt ſometimes to make us call and call, wait and wait before he makes it. There was famine in the Land of *Iſrael* three years, year after year, and yet *David* knew not the cauſe; doubtleſs he did often examine his own heart, and look into the Kingdom, to ſee what might be a provocation there, but ſaw nothing, till (after three years) he enquired of the Lord, who anſwered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody houſe, becauſe he ſlew the* Gibeonites (2 *Sam.* 21. 1.) It is more then probable that *David* had enquired of the Lord before that time. A holy heart, eſpecially one ſo holy as *David* was, can hardly let perſonal affliction be a day or an hour old, without enquiring of the Lord about it: And ſhall we think that *David* let this National affliction grow three years old, before he enquired of the Lord about it? Surely, then this enquiry after the end of three years, was that grand and moſt ſolemn enquiry by *Urim* and *Thummim,* appointed as the laſt reſort to God in caſes of greateſt difficulty and concernment; till *David* uſed this means, he found no reſolution of that caſe, why the Lord contended with his Kingdom by famine, year after year. Neither had *Job* got reſolution (when he thus complained) why the Lord contended with him, by ſore diſeaſes and mighty terrors, day after day.

But becauſe it might yet be wondered at by ſome, how he durſt adventure to put up ſuch a requeſt to God; he argues further, in the next verſe, that the ſtate wherein he was, ſeemed to neceſſitate him to it, and to prompt or put that requeſt into his mouth; As if he had ſaid, *My condition cries aloud to me, that I ſhould cry aloud to God, Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me. For, far be it from me to think that the Lord delighteth in oppreſſion, in breaking the work of his own hands, or in maintaining the works of wicked men: wicked Judges uſe to do ſo, whom God will never encourage (as with a light ſhining from heaven) by his example. Far be it from me to think ſo diſhonourably of God, and therefore I am thus importunate to know the reaſon of his dealings with me, and what his thoughts are concerning me.*

Ne cui mirū videatur iſtud à me poſtulari, res ipſa huc me adegit, abſit enim à me, ut tibi placere poſſe exiſtimem violentam cujuſpiam oppreſſionem. Bez.

Verſ. 3. Is it good unto thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs? that thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands, and ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked.

Is it good, &c.] I am ſure it is not, it is not pleaſing unto thee to oppreſs, to deſpiſe the work of thy hands, thou delighteſt not to ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked: Thou canſt not endure any of theſe evils acted by man, much leſs wilt thou act them thy ſelf: Thou who art juſt, even juſtice it ſelf, canſt not love oppreſſion; thou who art merciful, even mercy it ſelf, wilt not deſpiſe the work of thine hands: thou who art holy, even holineſs it ſelf, how ſhouldeſt thou delight in wicked men? Thou art of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, and approve of it. What blaſphemy then is it to imagine that thou doſt practiſe it. Thy juſtice, thy mercy, thy holineſs, are ſuch as cannot admit the taint of theſe aſperſions.

Nequaquam probat aliorum iniquā vim multò minus ipſe alios opprimit. Sanct.

So then, in *verſ.* 3, 4. *Job* reckons up thoſe wayes, by which earthly men corrupt or pervert juſtice; and he removes them all from the Lord. Some men do, but God doth not oppreſs: Some men do, but God doth not deſtroy the work of his hands: Some men do, but God never doth ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked.

Omnes vias injuſtitiæ quibus terreni judices corrumpi & jus pervertere ſolent à Domino conatur amoliri. Mer.

Interrogatio ſenſum reddit omnino contrariam, nequaquam probat, &c. Sanct.

Is it good to thee that thou doeſt oppreſs? &c.

Theſe interrogations (we ſee) are vehement negations, they flatly and peremptorily deny, what they ſeem doubtingly to enquire. The ſence is, It is not good unto thee; yea, it is evil in thy ſight to oppreſs, *&c.* Thou hateſt oppreſſion, wrong dealing ſhall not dwell with thee. *Job* puts theſe queſtions, not as if he queſtioned, whether it were good to the Lord to oppreſs, or good to deſtroy the work of his hands, and to ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked; Theſe were no points of controverſie with him, nor did he

Ab abſurdis argumentatur, quæ in Deo minimè ſunt, tamen cogitari poſſunt ab infirmitate humana. Jun.

ſeek reſolution about them. Yea, he therefore begs a reaſon of the Lord, wherefore he was ſo oppreſſed, becauſe he knew it was not good unto *Him* that he ſhould oppreſs.

טוב

Bonum triplex denotat.
1. *Utile.*
2. *Jucundū.*
3. *Honeſtum.*

Is it good unto thee?] The Hebrew ſignifies three things.

Firſt, That which is profitable.

Secondly; That which is pleaſant.

Thirdly, That which is juſt, right, or honourable, any thing tending to reputation. And there may be this threefold ſence of it in this place.

Firſt, *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Comes there any advantage unto the Lord by oppreſſing? Surely none, What profit is there in our blood?

Numquid tibi proderit? Vatab.

Secondly, *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Is it pleaſing or delightful? Is the Lord taken with the afflicting of his people? I know he doth not willingly afflict the children of men.

Thirdly, *Is it good unto thee*? that is, Doſt thou reckon it thine honour to lay thy hand ſeverely upon thy poor creatures? No, it is thy glory to paſs by a tranſgreſſion. Now ſeeing it is not good unto thee any of theſe wayes, ſeeing thou haſt no gain or profit by it, no joy or delight in it, no glory or honour from it. Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me; That's ſtill the burden of this mournful Song, *Is it good unto thee?*

עשק

Significat opprimere aliquem verbis aut factis. Nunquid bonum tibi videtur, ſi calumnieris me? Vulg.

That thou ſhouldſt oppreſs?] The word which we tranſlate to *Oppreſs*, ſignifies a double oppreſſion. Firſt, An oppreſſion by our words. And ſecondly, An oppreſſion by our actions, the oppreſſion of the tongue, and the oppreſſion of the hand. The tongue is a great tyrant, the tongue will lay on load, and draw blood. The Vulgar underſtands it of this tongue-oppreſſion; *Is it good for thee that thou ſhouldeſt calumniate or ſlander me?* that is, Give others occaſion to ſpeak evil of me. That is a good ſence. Slander and cenſure wound deep, hard words bruiſe the credit and break the heart, as well as hard blows bruiſe the fleſh, and break the bones. But take it here rather for oppreſſion by outward violence: So the word is often uſed, (*Pſal.* 119. 122.) *I have done judgment and juſtice, give me not over to mine oppreſſors,* to thoſe who would wrong me, becauſe I have done right. And it noteth, as an open or violent oppreſſion, ſo a cunning, ſubtil oppreſſion, a cheating, fraudulent oppreſſion. All wrong, how cloſe and cunning ſoever, is oppreſſion. We have that ſence of the word (*Hoſ.* 12. 7.) *He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppreſs.* How doth a Merchant oppreſs? He comes not like a thief or a *Nimrod* with a ſword in his hand, bidding you, Deliver your purſe or your life, commanding you to give up your right, or your liberty; but while in buying and ſelling, in trading and dealing, he offers you a fair bargain, or as we ſay, a pennyworth for your penny, he ſmites you ſecretly, and cuts your throat (as famine doth) without a knife: the balances of deceit are in his hand. Balances are put for all inſtruments, or means of trading, by theſe he deceives: light weights oppreſs the State, as a heavy weight preſſes the body. The word imports alſo oppreſſion by with-holding what is due, as well as by taking away what we duly hold (*Deut.* 24. 14.) *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant that is poor and needy*; that is, thou ſhalt not detain or keep back any part of his wages.

The word (you ſee) is of a large ſence, *Is it good unto thee to oppreſs?* I know thou wilt not oppreſs me, either by ſpeaking evil of, or over-cenſuring me; either by open violence, or by ſecret fraud; either by taking from me what I have, or by detaining from me, what I ought to have. Thou wilt not oppreſs either with tongue or hand; either as a robber with thy ſword, or a merchant with thy balances. Thus *Job* expoſtulates upon higheſt confidence, both of the juſtice and holineſs of God; as if he had ſeid, *Lord, I know thou doeſt not love to oppreſs; no thou art merciful and full of compaſſion. Whence is it then that thou ſeemeſt to act ſo unlike thy ſelf? Is this thy pity to a poor creature, and thy love to the work of thy hands? Thou uſeſt to rejoyce in the conſolation of thy people, and mercy pleaſeth thee; Thou uſeſt to ſend out rivers of goodneſs for wearied ſouls to bathe in, and ſtreams of comfort for thirſty ſouls to drink and be refreſhed in. How is it then that a bitter cup is put to my lips continually, and that I am overwhelmed in a ſalt Sea, in a Sea of gall and bitterneſs?*

Hence obſerve, *God is ſo good and gracious that he loves not to greive his creature.*

Among men (*Micah* 7. 4.) *The beſt of them is as a brier, the moſt upright is ſharper then a thorn hedge.* Even they that ſeem moſt gentle and compaſſionate, will yet ſometimes ſcratch like briars, and tear like thorns: but the Lord changeth not, neither do his compaſſions fail. The actings of God appear ſometimes unſutable to his nature, but they are never ſo. When he breaks us to pieces, he delights not in our breakings; nor doth he ever break his own, but with an intent to bind them up again. God is ſo far from loving to oppreſs, that one of his moſt eminent works of providence is, to relieve thoſe who are oppreſſed (*Pſal.*12.4.) *For the oppreſſion of the poor will I ariſe, ſaith the Lord.* And when the Lord ariſes, oppreſſors ſhall fall. *O Lord* (cryes *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs) *I am oppreſſed, undertake for me* (Iſa. 38. 14.) As if he had ſaid, this diſeaſe like a mercileſs tyrant oppreſſes my ſpirit, death hath even maſtred me, and got the victory over my houſe of clay. Lord, Come to my reſcue, thou waſt wont to deliver poor men, as a prey out of the hand, yea mouths of their oppreſſors. O deliver me from this cruel ſickneſs, which is ready to oppreſs my life, and hale me as a priſoner to the grave. *Is it good unto thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs?* And,

That thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands?

מאס

Significat rejicere cum faſtidio, tanquam vile & contemptum quid. Mer. in Pagn. *Ex faſtidio & contemptu ſequi ſolet rei contemptæ oppreſſio aut abjectio. Hunc hominem quem tuis manibus formaſti de luto terræ.* Dru.

This clauſe hath the ſame ſence in general with the former, *It is not good unto thee*, It is neither pleaſing nor profitable, nor honourable, *That thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands.*

Some tranſlate this clauſe by oppreſſion, *Is it good that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs the work of thine hands?* The word in propriety ſignifies to *deſpiſe*: we have met with it more then once before; it noteth alſo loathing, yea abhorring. And it may very well bear that other ſence of oppreſſing: for when a man loaths a thing and abhors it, he will quickly ſlight and oppreſs it: who cares what becomes of that which he abhors? Theſe two are joyned together (2 *King.* 17. 20.) *The Lord rejected all the ſeed of* Iſrael, *and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of ſpoilers, until he had caſt them out of his ſight.* When once the Lord rejected, or deſpiſed the ſeed of *Iſrael*, they were preſently afflicted and delivered up to ſpoiling.

גיע

Propriè laborem & laſſitudinem quandam in efficiendo opere denotat, ex quo orationis hujus vis amplificatur.

That thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands. He means *himſelf* or any other man; all men being the work of Gods hands. The word which we tranſlate *work*, ſtrictly taken, ſignifies hard work, extream labour, labour with wearineſs. Here underſtand it in a large ſence, for God works not to wearineſs. And when after he had finiſhed the whole work of creation, it is ſaid by *Moſes* (Gen.2.2.) That *he reſted on the ſeventh day from all the work which he had made.* The meaning is only this, he gave over or ceaſed to work, not that his work put him to any pain or need of reſt.

But why is man called, *The work of Gods hands?* Hath God (who is a Spirit) hands or any bodily part?

By an ordinary figure in Scripture, hands and feet, eyes and ears, are aſcribed unto God. He is therefore ſaid to have hands, becauſe he works, not becauſe he works with hands. The hand is the inſtrument of work. Philoſophers call it *The Organ of Organs*; man is called the work of Gods hand, becauſe the hand is mans inſtrument in working. Now whereas man is called, *The work of Gods hands*, it imports three things;

Firſt, An immediety in the work, or an immediate work. God made man himſelf without any help.

Secondly, An exactneſs in the work, the work proclaims an accurate author, *The work of thy hands*, a ſpecial piece of work, No hand but thine could make ſuch a piece.

Thirdly, It notes the fulneſs and compleatneſs of the work, a work conſummate and perfect, having the laſt hand put to it. Man is the work of Gods hands in all and each of theſe ſences.

Heaven is called *a building of God, an houſe not made with hands* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) Man is a building of God, and he is the work of Gods hands, yet God made man without hands, as much as he made heaven without hands. The hand of God implies two things;

Firſt, The Power
Secondly, The Wiſdom } of God.

Man is the work of both, *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head.* Now, if the beams and beauty of the divine nature be viſible in all that was created, then much more in man, who is the epitome or ſum of all that was created.

When *Job* puts the queſtion, *Is it good unto thee to deſpiſe the work of thy hands?* he alludes to Artificers, who having made an excellent piece, will not deſtroy or break it in pieces, no, they are very tender of their work, yea, they are apt to boaſt and grow proud of it. The inſtinct of nature teaches us to love, not only that which is our own by natural production, but that alſo which is our own by artificial conception or operation. Indeed if a man make a mean, or an unworthy piece, he deſpiſes it; ſuch work diſcommends the workman, and he will break or burn it, rather then let it be made publick to the publiſhing of his own weakneſs or unskilfulneſs. Man was the Maſter-piece of the whole viſible Creation. Man was made (not as other creatures) to have a *being* only, but that he might *be in the likeneſs of God, and bear his image.* The Lord needs not be aſhamed of, neither doth he deſpiſe any part of his work, much leſs this, which is the beſt and nobleſt part of his work. Hence obſerve in general,

Alio argumento injuſtitiam à Deo auſert, quod artifices ſua opera amare ſoleant. Merc.

In utero matris mea tam concinnè & aptè formaſti, deſtrues?

Man is the work of God.

All of man, man throughout is the work of God. The fabrick of his body is Gods work. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made,* ſaith *David, marvellous are thy works, and that my ſoul knoweth right well; my ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret,* &c. *In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them* (Pſal. 139. 14, 15.) A skilful Architect, before he builds, draws a model, or gives a draught of the building in his Book, or upon a Table; there he will ſhew you every room and contrivance: in his book are all the parts of the building written, while as yet there are none of them, or before any of them are framed and ſet up. In alluſion to Architects, and other Artiſans, *David* ſpeaks of God, *In thy book were all my members written;* that is, Thou haſt made me as exactly, as if thou hadſt drawn my ſeveral members, and my whole proportion with a pen or penſil in a book, before thou wouldeſt adventure to form me up. The Lord uſes no book, no pen to decipher his work. He had the perfect *Idæa* of all things in himſelf from everlaſting; *But he may well be ſaid to work as by pattern, whoſe work is the moſt perfect pattern.*

As the body, ſo the ſoul of man is the work of Gods hand too. His power and wiſdom wrought it, and work mightily in it. In regard of bodily ſubſtance, the moſt inferior creatures claim kindred of man, and he may be compared to the beaſt that periſheth; but in regard of the ſoul, man tranſcends them all, and may challenge a nearneſs, if not an equality with the Angels. The body is to the ſoul but as a mud wall which impriſons ſome pretious treaſure; at beſt but like a gold ring to a ſparkling Diamond. If the more unworthy part of man, be a work worthy of God, how much more is his more worthy part? There is yet ſomewhat in man of Gods making, which is better then either of theſe parts, and is indeed *all man. There is ſomewhat in man more excellent then man.* The qualities of man are ſuperior to his nature: man by his nature, differs only from a beaſt, but ſome men by their qualities differ from other men: one man hath better qualities then another, but no man hath a better nature then another. As the ſoul is more excellent then the body, and reaſon then ſenſe, ſo inward gifts are more excellent then the ſoul, and grace then reaſon. Theſe are the beauty, the gildings and engravings of the inner man. The *Aſſyrians* are called the work of Gods hands, not only in reference to creation, but regeneration in Chriſt (*Iſa.* 19. 25.) *Bleſſed be* Ægypt *my people, and* Aſſyria *the work of my hand, and* Iſrael *mine inheritance.* 'Tis a promiſe of the calling of the *Gentiles,* when they who were not a people ſhould receive Chriſt, and be made the ſpiritual *Iſrael,* by the mighty work of God. This alſo is the work which *David* intends, when he invites all lands to ſerve the Lord with gladneſs; becauſe *it is he that hath made us, and not we our ſelves* (Pſal. 100. 3.) Hence the Apoſtle calls all believers *emphatically, The work of God* (Epheſ. 2. 10.) *We are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* Man is the workmanſhip of God, as he is fitted for natural and civil works; but he is moſt of all the workmanſhip of God, as he is fitted for ſpiritual and holy works. All is the work of God, but this is curious work, workmanſhip indeed.

From the whole, take three cautions.

Firſt, Be not proud of what ye are, all's the work of God: How beautiful or comely, how wiſe or holy ſoever ye are, 'tis not of your ſelves. What hath any man either in naturals or ſupernaturals, which he hath not received?

Secondly, Deſpiſe not what others are or have, though they are not ſuch exact pieces, though they have not ſuch excellent endowments as your ſelves, yet they are what the hand of God hath wrought them, and they have what the hand of God hath wrought in them. Be more thankful if ye are better framed, and have more workmanſhip beſtowed upon you, ſleight not thoſe upon whom God hath beſtowed leſs.

Thirdly, Deſpiſe not what your ſelves are; to do ſo is a ſin, and a ſin (in reſpect of the body) very common. Many are aſhamed to be ſeen, as God hath made them; few are aſhamed to be ſeen what the Devil hath made them. Many are troubled at ſmall defects in the outward man: Few are troubled at the greateſt deformities of their inner man; they call for no repairs, for no freſh colours to be laid on there; many buy artificial beauty to ſupply the defects of natural, who never had a thought of buying (without money) ſpiritual beauty to ſupply the defects of ſupernatural. The crookedneſs and diſtortions, the blackneſs and uncomelineſs of the ſoul are moſt deplorable, yet are they little deplored; we are called every day to mend and cure them, we are told where and how we may have all ſet right, and made fair again, and yet the moſt ſtir not, or not to purpoſe. God will not know any body at the laſt day, unleſs his ſoul be mended by Grace, and ſome do ſo mend their bodies by Art, that God will not know their ſouls at that day. Depart from me, I know you not (will be all their entertainment) ye have mended your bodies, till ye have mar'd your ſouls. Beſides, *What can the man do that cometh after the King?* ſaith *Solomon* (Eccleſ. 2. 12.) The work of the wiſeſt among men, is beyond the correction of an ordinary man. Much more may we ſay, *What can the man do that cometh after God?* The work of the moſt wiſe God is beyond the correction of the wiſeſt among men. They who thus come after God to mend his work, leſt they ſhould be deſpiſed, will but make themſelves more deſpicable. There is more worth in the very defect of Gods work, then in the perfection of mans. We may uſe means to help many bodily infirmities, but they who are diſcontent with Gods work, are quickly proud of their own, and will one day be aſhamed of their own.

Secondly, Conſider how *Job* argues, *Is it good that thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thy hands?* Hence obſerve,

It is an argument moving the Lord to much compaſſion to tell him that we are his work, as we are creatures, and his work eſpecially as we are new creatures.

When we are under ſuch afflictions, as threaten to ruine us, 'tis ſeaſonable to tell the Lord he made us. *David* ſtrengthens prayer upon this argument (*Pſal.* 138. 8.) *Forſake not the work of thine own hands;* All men love their own works many dote upon them: Shall we think God will forſake his? See how the people of God plead with God in greateſt diſtreſs (*Iſa.* 64. 8.) *But now O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou our Potter, and we all are the work of thine hand. Be not wroth very ſore, O Lord.* Wilt thou be angry with thy work? Lord, be angry with the works of wicked men, and deſtroy the work of Satan; Do not deſtroy the work of thine own hands, thy people are thy work, Haſt thou not formed them for thy ſelf? They will ſhew forth thy praiſe. That invitation to prayer (*Iſa.* 45. 11.) ſeems to intimate that this plea hath a kind of command upon God, *Thus ſaith the holy One of* Iſrael, *and his Maker, Ask of me things to come concerning my ſons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me:* while ye come to me under that notion, that theſe are the work of my hands, I cannot deny you; Do but name this, and it is a law upon me; ye may have any thing of me, or do any thing with me, while ye ſpeak for the work of mine hands. Hence when the Prophet had put the Jews from that plea, they were a loſt people, and their caſe was deſperate; *This is a people of no underſtanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour* (Iſa. 27. 11.) As if he had ſaid, ye were wont (I know) to come to God with this motive of mercy, when he afflicted you; Lord, thou didſt make and form us, therefore have mercy upon us; but this ſhall prevail no more: He that made you will not have mercy on you; He that formed you will ſhew you no favour. There is but one argument ſtronger then this among all the Topicks of prayer, and that never fails; namely that God hath redeemed us, or that we are his redeemed ones. God beſtowed much coſt upon us in the work of Creation, and therefore under that title he can hardly caſt us off; but he hath beſtowed ſo much coſt upon us in the work of Redemption, that he will never caſt us off.

Further, The Scripture makes frequent uſe of this argument to repreſs the pride and preſumption of man, and to ſtop his mouth when he begins to queſtion, and call God to account about any of his dealings, with, why is it thus? or, why am I thus? Thus the Prophet ſilences the murmurings both of mans heart and tongue (*Iſa.* 45. 9, 10.) *Wo unto him that ſtriveth with his Maker, ſhall the clay ſay to him that faſhioned it, Why haſt thou made me thus?* And when the Apoſtle found unquiet, and bold ſpirits buſied in conteſting with God about his eternal counſels, in chuſing ſome and rejecting others; in ſhewing mercy to ſome, and hardening others; he ſtops them with, *Who art thou, O man that replieſt againſt God? Shall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus?* Remember thou art the clay, and he the Potter. *That we are the work of Gods hand moveth his compaſſion towards us, and repreſſeth our preſumption againſt him.* We muſt not proudly diſpute it out with him, for we are the work of his hands, and we may humbly plead with him, not to deſpiſe the work of his hands, or to

Shine upon the counſel of the wicked.

God is light and he hath light, but he hath none for wicked men or for their counſels.

To ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked.] Notes three things.

Firſt, To favour or delight in them.
Secondly, To ſuccour or aſſiſt them.
Thirdly, To make them proſperous and ſucceſsful.

Impiorum conſilia illuſtrare, ideſt quod juvare, illorū cæptis ac conatibus favere.

David praying againſt his enemies, ſaith, *Let their way be dark and ſlippery,* Pſal. 35. 6. And when the Lord anſwered *Job* out of the whirlwind, he queſtions, *Who is this that darkneth counſel by words without knowledge?* (Job 38. 2.) as to darken wayes, and to darken counſel is to hinder and trouble them: ſo to ſhine upon wayes and counſels is to help and favour them. *The Sun is the candle of the world, and Sunſhine is the comfort of the world.* The Pſalmiſt prayes in this language, *Thou that dwelleſt between the Cherubims, ſhine forth;* that is, help and favour us; ſo it is expounded in the next verſe, *Before* Ephraim, Benjamin *and* Manaſſes, *ſtir up thy ſtrength, and come and ſave us* (Pſal. 80. 1, 2.) *Thou wilt light my candle* (was *David's* confidence) *the Lord my God will enlighten my darkneſs: for by thee I have run thorow a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall* (Pſal. 18. 28, 29.) that is, I have done great things, and I have overcome the greateſt difficulties through thine aſſiſtance. Will God ſhine thus upon the counſel of the wicked? Or will he help the evil-doer? *Job* denieth it, and therefore prayeth, Shew me why thou contendeſt with me. I know thou beareſt no good will to thoſe who are wilful in doing evil, nor takeſt thou pleaſure in thoſe who take pleaſure in iniquity.

But doth not the Lord give good ſucceſs to thoſe who are evil? Doth the way of the wicked never proſper? Proſpereth it not ſo far ſometime, that godly men ſtumble in their way, and are offended?

I anſwer, God maketh his Sun to ſhine upon the evil and the good, but himſelf never ſhineth upon the evil. *Wicked men receive benefits from God, but they receive no bleſſings from God.*

There is a two-fold light. Firſt, The light of Gods Providence. Secondly, The light of Gods Countenance. The light of Gods Countenance never ſhines upon the counſel of the wicked, they have only the light of his Providence. He never ſhines upon them to favour them, though he often ſhines upon them to proſper them. *A man may have much good ſhewed him, and yet no good will ſhewed him.* The clouds and darkneſs, which at any time cover the counſels of the righteous, are clearer then all the light which ſhines upon the counſels of the wicked. God varies his diſpenſations often, but he never varies his affections; whatſoever he doth againſt the righteous, he never hates or diſlikes them; and whatſoever he doth for the wicked, he never loves or likes them.

But who are the wicked intended in this Text, upon whoſe counſels God will not ſhine? There are four apprehenſions about it: who are wicked all agree, but who theſe wicked are, is not agreed. Some refer the word to his friends, I know thou wilt not favour their ſinful cenſures and raſh judgments concerning me. Surely they ſhall receive little thanks and leſs reward for theſe diſcourteſies; thou wilt not go forth with them, or give witneſs to what they have done; thou wilt not confirm or atteſt what they have ſpoken.

Job (I grant) found little comfort from his friends: but I do not find that they gave him evil counſel, much leſs that they took wicked counſel againſt him. The Lord reproved them for the error of their ſpeech, but he did not reprove them for the wickedneſs of their perſons. Indeed *Job* charges them deeply (*Chap.* 13. 7.) *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God?* Yet I do not believe that he judged them wicked. A thing in it ſelf wicked may be ſpoken, and yet the ſpeaker not be wicked. Therefore I would not think *Job* aims at his friends, or faſtens ſo deep a charge on them, though they had charged him ſo deep.

Secondly, Others conceive *Job* means the Devil and his Angels, *Wilt thou ſhine upon Satan's counſel?* As when *Ahaſuerus* (being enformed of that conſpiracy againſt the Jews) enquired, *who is he? and where is he that durſt preſume in his heart to do ſo?* Queen Eſther *ſaid, the adverſary and enemy is this wicked* Haman (*Chap.* 7. 5, 6.) So might *Job* have anſwered the Lord. My adverſary and enemy is this wicked Satan. He laid the plot and hath ſtirred up all theſe evils againſt me: I know Lord, thou wilt not take Satans part: thou wilt not help him who would be the deſtroyer and murderer, who is the great malignant and projector againſt thy ſervant.

Thirdly, Others take the *wicked* here, for the *Sabeans* and *Caldeans,* who were the inſtruments of Satan, in ſpoiling and robbing *Job* of his goods and ſubſtance. That they were wicked, we need not queſtion; yet

Fourthly, Take it rather in general, for all or any wicked men, upon whoſe wayes God ſeems to ſhine when he gives ſucceſs to their works of darkneſs. Hence obſerve,

First, *Wicked men are ſometimes proſpered in their counſels, and walk in pleaſant (though evil) wayes.*

God gives delight to thoſe in whom he hath no delight. And they have many good things from him, who never had one good thought from him. Thouſands are proſpered and hated at the ſame time. When *Dionyſius* (in the ſtory) had rob'd an Idol-Temple, and at his return by Sea had a fair gail and pleaſant weather to waft him home with the ſpoils; See (ſaid he) how the heavens ſmile upon us, and how the gods are pleaſed with what we have done. The like concluſions many draw from the premiſes of outward proſperity: ſurely the true God is pleaſed with us: but there is a cloud upon this Sunſhine, and darkneſs in all this light.

Secondly obſerve, *The Lord hates the counſel of wicked men.*

He is ſo far from ſhining upon, that he, indeed, darkens their counſels. He caſts darkneſs upon them, even the
darkneſs

darkneſs of his heavieſt diſpleaſure, when themſelves think, and the world ſaith, all is light about them (*Zech.* 1. 15.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the Heathen that are at eaſe*; They had their pleaſure, but God took no pleaſure in them; *I am very ſore diſpleaſed with theſe Heathens that are at eaſe*; that is, I approve not their courſes, yea my wrath is kindled againſt their perſons. The light which ſhines upon wicked men, turns all at laſt into heat; and they have alwayes the heat of Gods anger mixed with their light: a heat not to warm but to conſume and burn them up. As when the Lord ſends the clouds and darkneſs of outward affliction upon his own people, he ſends likewiſe the beams of his everlaſting love into the hearts: So he clouds and darkens wicked men, while his candle ſhineth upon their heads.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh? Or ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth?
Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? Are thy years as mans dayes?
That thou enquireſt after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt after my ſin.
Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thy hand.

JOB proceedeth upon the ſame Argument; and as in *verſ.* 3. he had removed three things inconſiſtent with, and diſhonorable to the juſtice of God: So in the two verſes following, he removeth two more. And as he thus acquits the Lord from injuſtice or unrighteous dealing with him: ſo he appeals to the Lord (who was able (he knew) to do it upon certain knowledge) to acquit him from all the unjuſt charges, with which his friends had burdened him, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, &c.

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh? Or ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth?

The Queſtion is to be reſolved into this negation, *Lord, Thou haſt not eyes of fleſh*; *Lord, Thou ſeeſt not as man ſeeth*; as if *Job* had thus ſpoken, *Lord, I have been long afflicted with grievous pains, I am as a man hanging upon a rack, to draw out and force a confeſſion from him*; *Lord, why is it thus with me? Why am I brought to ſuch a trial? I am ſure it is not with thee as with mortal Judges, who having eyes of fleſh, can ſee no further then the out-ſide of things, and know no more then is told them*; *and therefore muſt fetch out what lies in the heart of man by examination, and if examination will not do it, they muſt do it by torture*; *Lord, there is no need thou ſhouldeſt take this courſe*; *Thou canſt enform thy ſelf fully how it is with me, though I ſhould not ſpeak a word*; *though I am ſilent, yet thine ear hears the voice and underſtands the language of my ſpirit. Though I hide or cover my ſelf, yet the eye of thy omniſcience looks quite thorow me*; *ſeeing then thou haſt not eyes like the eyes of men, wherefore is it that thou enquireſt by theſe afflictions after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt (as men uſe to do) after my ſin?*

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh? Or ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth?

God hath no eyes, much leſs eyes of fleſh; God is a Spirit, and therefore he cannot have eyes of fleſh; He is all eye; and therefore (properly) he hath no eyes. The eye is that ſpecial organ or member of the body into which the power of ſeeing is contracted, but God is all over a power of ſeeing. The body of man hath ſeveral parts, and ſeveral honours and offices are beſtowed upon every part. The eye hath the great office and honour of ſeeing committed to it. The eye is the light of the whole body, and knowledge is the eye of the ſoul. The eye of God is the knowledge of God. The Greeks expreſs God by a word which ſignifies to ſee: and he is therefore ſaid to have eyes, and to ſee, becauſe the eye is a principal inſtrument, and ſeeing a principal means by which man receives knowledge. Naturaliſts tell us, there is nothing in the underſtanding but that which is firſt in the ſenſe. The ſenſes are doors to the mind, the furniture and riches of that are conveyed in by the eyes or ears. Theſe bring informations to the underſtanding. Natural knowledge cannot have an immediate acceſs to man, and 'tis but ſeldom that ſpiritual hath: Both are commonly let in by ſenſe. The ſuperior powers muſt traffick with the inferior, otherwiſe they make no gain. Though God hath no need of any help to bring in or improve his knowledge, yet that is aſcribed to him by which knowledge is improved; He hath eyes, but not of fleſh; he ſeeth, but not as man.

Ipſum nomen Dei Græcum hanc videndi efficacitatem præ ſe fert, θεὸς nimirum à θεᾶν, ſpectare, contemplari dicitur. Nihil eſt in intellectu quod non prius fuit in ſenſu.

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh?] Fleſh by a Synechdoche is put for the whole nature of man. *The Word was made fleſh*, (*Joh.* 1. 14.) not body or ſoul, but *Fleſh*, that is, *man* conſiſting of ſoul and body. Thus here, *eyes of fleſh*, that is, *mans eyes*. And ſo the latter clauſe of the verſe is an expoſition of the former. When he ſaith, *Haſt thou eyes of fleſh?* It is no more then this, *Doeſt thou ſee as man ſeeth?* To have an eye of fleſh, is to judge according to the fleſh; and to ſee as man ſeeth, is to ſee no more then man.

Oculi carnei ſunt ſecundũ carnem judicantes.

When *Samuel* was ſent to anoint a King over *Iſrael* in the place of *Saul* (1 Sam. 16. 7.) the Lord ſaid concerning the firſt-born of *Jeſſe*, *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed him*; The reaſon added is this, *For the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth, for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.* There we have *Job's* doctrine of Gods ſeeing, delivered by God himſelf. *Samuel* thought he who made the faireſt ſhew to the eye of man, muſt needs be the man who was faireſt in the eye of God; but the Lord ſeeth what is not ſeen, and often finds moſt reality in the leaſt appearance; he who hath not eyes of fleſh, ſees beyond the fleſh.

There are ſeven differences between the eye of fleſh or mans eye, and the eye of God.

Firſt, Mans eye is but a means, or an inſtrument of knowledge: Gods eye is his knowledge. The act and the faculty are not diſtinct in God. All in God is act; neither is God another thing from his act: whatſoever is aſcribed to him, is himſelf. The eye of God is God ſeeing. The knowſedge of God is God knowing. The love of God is God loving.

Secondly, Man muſt have a two-fold light to ſee by; an inward light, the light of the eye; and an outward light, the light in the air; without both he cannot ſee. Man doth not ſee (as Naturaliſts ſpeak) by ſending forth a beam or a ray from his eye to the object, but by receiving or taking in a beam or a ray from the object into his eye; The object iſſues it's ſpecies to the eye, which being joyned with the viſive power of the eye, man ſeeth: But God ſeeth in himſelf, of himſelf, and from himſelf, he needs no outward light. Chriſt is deſcribed having a fiery eye; *His eyes were as a flame of fire* (*Revel.* 1. 14. & 2. 18.) Even nature teacheth us that thoſe creatures which have fiery eyes, ſee in the dark, and ſee beſt when it is darkeſt; becauſe they ſee by ſending forth a beam or a flame from their eyes, which at once apprehends the object, and enlightens the paſſage to it. God who commanded light to come out of darkneſs for the uſe of man, commands light in darkneſs for his own. *The darkneſs hideth not from thee* (ſaith *David*) *but the night ſhineth as the day. The darkneſs and the light are both alike to thee. There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where any of the workers of iniquity can hide themſelves*, Job 34. 22. Thus *God hath not eyes of fleſh*; *he ſeeth not as man ſeeth.*

Thirdly, Man ſeeth one thing after another: his eye is not able to take in all objects at once; he views now one, and then another, to make his judgment of them. But God ſeeth all things together; he beholdeth all at one view; his eye takes and gathers in all objects, and all that is in every object by one act. *The Lord looketh from heaven, and beholdeth all the ſons of men*; *from the place of his habitation he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth* (Pſal. 33. 13, 14.

Fourthly, An eye of fleſh ſeeth at a diſtance, and at ſuch a diſtance. Naturaliſts tell us, there muſt be a due diſtance between the eye and the object. If you put the object too near the eye, the eye cannot ſee it; *That which is ſenſible put upon the ſenſe, takes away ſenſation.* Again, if the object be very remote, the eye cannot make any diſcovery of it. The eye cannot ſee far, and it cannot diſcern ſo far as it can ſee. We may ſee a thing, and not know what we ſee. But the eye of the Lord ſeeth and diſcerneth at all diſtances. There are none ſo near him, but he knows what they are; nearneſs doth not hinder his ſight; and there are none ſo far from him, but he can diſcover what they are, remoteneſs doth not hinder his ſight. And indeed, all

Senſibile poſitum ſuper ſenſum tollit ſenſationem.

all things are preſent with him, as in time, ſo in place; *God is neareſt, even next to every object:* He is in every place, yet not included by any; he is in every thing, yet not mixed with any (*Prov.* 15. 3.) *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. His eyes are upon the wayes of man, he ſeeth all his goings* (Job 34.21.) and that this ſeeing is a diſtinguiſhing ſight, another Scripture clears to us; *His eye-lids try the children of men* (Pſal. 11. 5.) Let them be what they will, and where they will, his eye-lids do not only ſee, but try, that is, he hath a diſtinct, and a certain knowledge, or a critical ſight of the ſtate and condition of every man.

Deus non ſolum eſt proximus objecto, ſed eſt intimè cum illo conjunctus.

Fifthly, Man ſeeth but the colour and skin, the face and out-ſide of things or perſons, but God ſeeth the in-ſides, and looks into the very bowels of them. He is a *ſearcher and diſcerner of the heart:* He ſeeth the ſpirit as ſoon as the face. Our cloaths are not more open to him then our breſts and boſoms. An Heathen wiſhed for a window there, and if we had windows there, we could not ſee what's there. An eye of fleſh cannot read the meaning of our ſpirits; but the Lord can look into the heart without a window, yea, we are all window to him, and he at every turn looks not only upon us, but into us. It was propheſied of Chriſt, (*Iſa.* 11. 3.) *He ſhall not judge after the ſight of his eyes; neither reprove after the hearing of his ears;* that is, he ſhall not judge as a mear man, but as God; he ſhall not judge according to fair appearances, or flying reports; *He ſhall judge with righteouſneſs, and reprove with equity.* Man (whoſe eyes are of fleſh) ſhould not judge according to appearance; yet becauſe his eyes are of fleſh, he cannot judge of that which doth not appear. But God who calleth thoſe things which are not, as if they were, judgeth of thoſe things which appear not, as if they did appear.

Sixthly, An eye of fleſh may be deceived. The ſight of man is ſubject to manifold deceptions. Many things put a ſtop to the ſight of the eye. The eye of man is in danger of as many fallacies, as the underſtanding; and the underſtanding is entangled with many fallacies by the eye. But there is no error in the ſight of God, nor any deception of his eye; you cannot by any art or device, by any policy or hypocriſie, by any masks or diſguiſes, by any ſimulations or diſſimulations make that appear to him, which is not, or make it appear to him otherwiſe then it is. *The heart of man* (ſaith the Lord) *is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* (only the Lord who makes, can anſwer this challenge, ſo he doth in the next words) *I the Lord ſearch the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.* How can that which is deceitful receive according to its doings, but by knowing all it's doings and all it's deceits? As the tongue (the greateſt troubler of the world) no man can tame: ſo the heart (the greateſt impoſtor in the world) no man can diſcover but God, and he can do it eaſily, and doth it continually.

Seventhly, When it is ſaid, the Lord hath not eyes of fleſh, he ſeeth not as man ſeeth, the meaning is, his knowledge is not imperfect as the knowledge of man is. An eye of fleſh hath been but a while, and can be but a while, and therefore cannot attain much knowledge; *We are but of yeſterday, and know nothing* (ſaith *Bildad*, chap. 8.) *He that hath but little experience, muſt needs have more then a little ignorance.* Experience breeds knowledge, and brings to perfection in knowledge. The eye of God is from everlaſting. If he had not (as he hath) all knowledge in and from himſelf, he might have fetcht it in before this time, from what he hath ſeen. And he (having ſeen all things) muſt needs have perfect knowledge, whoſe knowledge had been perfect, though he had never ſeen any of theſe things.

Beſides, As this phraſe, an eye of fleſh, imports thinneſs of experience, and thence imperfection of knowledge, ſo groſneſs of ſpirit, and dimneſs of underſtanding to attain knowledge. When *Peter* made that gracious confeſſion (*Matth.* 16. 16.) *Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God;* Chriſt anſwers, *Bleſſed art thou* Simon Bar-jona, *for fleſh and blood* (that is, *man*) *hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* As if he had ſaid, All men are fleſh and blood, ſo dull-ſighted and blind, that they could never have perceived this truth by any ſtudy or obſervation, it comes only by gift and revelation.

Caro ſignificat aliquid pingue, obtuſum, craſſu, minime ſubtile aut perſpicax.

The eye of God is not an eye of fleſh in this ſence neither. All ſpirits have much clearneſs of underſtanding, much ſharpneſs and quickneſs of apprehenſion. The Devil being a ſpirit, though now a wicked ſpirit, hath one name *from knowledge.* How much more knowing is he, who is *The Spirit*, the Creator of the ſpirits of all fleſh, and the Creator of thoſe ſpirits which ſubſiſt without fleſh?

Dæmon.

Further, Sight is put for judgment, and ſeeing for judging. Judging is an act beyond knowing. Judgment is the reſult of knowledge. So, *Thou doeſt not ſee,* is, *Thou doeſt not judge as man judgeth.*

Firſt, Mans judgment is often hindered by his affections. His judgment is hindered by divers affections, eſpecially by love, and the nearneſs of relations; man can hardly ſee a fault and a friend, a ſin and a ſon together. Love makes knowledge as ignorance, and light as darkneſs. Chriſtian charity covers a multitude of ſins from private revenge, and harſh cenſures; But humane charity covers a multitude of ſins from publick juſtice, and wholſom admonitions. The former keeps from rigid ſeverity, this endangers to cockering flattery. It is not thus with God, *He ſeeth not as man ſeeth.* They who have the greateſt interreſt, the neareſt relation to God, are ſeen what they are, and ſhall be judged as they are. God hath (indeed) an infinite largeneſs of affection to poor ſinners, and the lap of his garment of love covers every day a multitude, yea, many multitudes of ſins. But he doth not this, becauſe his love to the perſons offending hinders his eye from ſeeing, but becauſe his Son having ſatisfied his juſtice for the perſons offending, he turns away his eye from ſeeing their ſins. God proclaims himſelf at once, *The God pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin, and that will by no means acquit the guilty* (Exod. 34. 7.) There is nothing but the Name of his Son, and of his Sons ſuffering, which turns his eye from ſin. He will eſpy, and puniſh, or eſpy to puniſh all our faults through all other titles and intereſts whatſoever.

Non vides more hominum, & ſicut illi ex facie judicas ut affectibus ducaris ſicut illi?

Again, Mans judgment is clouded by wrath and malice. He cannot ſee the innocency of thoſe he hates, or do them juſtice to whom he bears no affection. The want of love hinders an eye of fleſh, as much as the inordinacy or exceſs of it. But though the Lord be angry and diſpleaſed with man, yet he wrongs no man; *The wrath of man cannot work the righteouſneſs of God, but the wrath of God works righteouſneſs to man.* He never gives more then right to thoſe he loves moſt, nor leſs then right to thoſe he hates moſt. That which we call paſſion in God, is acted with higheſt reaſon, his anger never errs.

Secondly, Man is much ſwayed in judgment by the power, pomp and ſplendor of men. We are apt to think they have moſt worth in them, who are worth moſt. And that they are good, with whom all's well. Even the Saints are toucht with this infirmity: The Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 2. 2, 3.) beſpeaks them thus, *If there come into your Aſſembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel, and there come in a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have reſpect to him that that weareth the gay clothing, and ſay unto him, Come and ſit here by me in a good place; and ſay to the poor, Stand thou there, or ſit here under my foot-ſtool; are ye not partial in your ſelves, and Judges of evil thoughts?* that is, Are ye not condemned in your ſelves and convinced in your own conſciences, that you do evil; and ſo that your thoughts have been evil, which moved you to do ſo? Can you chuſe but judge this an evil thought, to think him the beſt man that weareth the beſt cloaths, and him a vile perſon that is in vile apparel? Thus men, yea, good men may miſ-judge of men. But the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth, It is not good cloaths, but a good heart; it is not a gold ring, but a golden converſation which he accepts; wickedneſs is abominable in his eye, though it ſit upon a Throne; and holineſs ſhines in his eye, though it lie upon a dung-hill. Holineſs is not leſs lovely to him, becauſe cloathed with rags, nor unholineſs leſs loathſom to him, becauſe it goes in a gay coat. 'Tis well conceived, that *Job* had reference to his own condition when he ſpake thus; he lay in a woful plight, all over ſores, and boils, and filthineſs; yet (ſaith he) *Lord, I know thou ſeeſt not as man ſeeſt;* Thou

Forte Job *reſpicit ad carneos judicum oculos, qui ex ſpecie & carnis ſplendore judicant, ſordidos vero & ſqualidos contemnunt. At Deus ſordida & humilia non deſpicit.* Sanct.

doſt not therefore think me the worſe, becauſe I am thus ill. I am even a loathing, not only to others, but to my ſelf, yet I know thou doſt not loath me; Thou haſt not a bad opinion of me, becauſe my condition is thus bad.

Thirdly, Man judgeth the cauſe by the effect, the tree by the fruit, the man by his actions; that's the way of mans judgment, and ſo man ought to judge. We ought to think well of them, who do well; and when the hand is clean, charity bids us ſay the heart is clean too. But *the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth*; he in judging men tranſcends the rule he gives men to judge by. He judgeth the fruit by the tree, the effect by the cauſe, and the action by the man; he had reſpect to *Abel*, and then to his offering. If the worker pleaſe him not, neither doth his work; as he makes, ſo he ſees the tree good, and then the fruit good. Till the man mends, his manners never mends in Gods eſteem. When a good tree brings forth evil fruit, or an evil tree good fruit, 'tis accidental to them both, not natural. God judgeth us by what we alwayes are, not by what we ſometimes act, either in good or evil.

In this alſo *Job* comforts himſelf, that whatſoever fruit he might ſeem to bring forth, yet the Lord judg'd him not (as his friends did) by ſome unſavoury ſpeeches that came from him, but by the ſavourineſs of that ſpirit which was in him. He knew God judged him by the ſetled temper of his inward man, and the ſoundneſs of his mind, not by the caſual diſtemper of his outward man, or the ſound of his tongue. *Job* was a good tree, and *the root of the matter was in him.* And *Job* was aſſured God would not condemn him for his fruit, if ſome of it were bitter and unpleaſant, while he ſaw his root was good.

Fourthly, Man muſt take time to hear and diſcuſs every caſe, to find and beat out the truth of every controverſie, but God judgeth all at an inſtant; the matter is no ſooner before him, but he knoweth it fully: indeed the matter was ever before him, and ever fully known, he knew it from eternity: *Things are known to him before they are, by whom all things are.* The Lord needeth not to put queſtions or to be informed by confeſſions. God is able to prevent our queſtions with reſolutions, and to give us anſwers before we give him our doubts (*Joh.* 16. 30.) *Now are we ſure that thou knoweſt all things, and needeſt not that any man ſhould ask thee.* He that is acquainted with our doubts before we propoſe them, can anſwer them as ſoon as we propoſe them. Seeing it is thus (ſaith *Job*) why am I held ſo long upon the rack to draw out the matter from me? I know thou doſt not judge as man judgeth, by enquiring into, or comparing circumſtances and actions, anſwers and queſtions. Thou art able to make out a judgment of me, and of my condition from thy own knowledge; without the contribution of my anſwers to thy queſtions, or of other mens teſtimonies concerning my actions; *Thou ſeeſt not as man ſeeth.*

Laſtly, *To have eyes of fleſh*, and to ſee as man, is to ſee with ſcorn, or with diſdain. The original word which we tranſlate to *See*, put alone, ſignifies ſometimes to deſpiſe. The Prince of *Tyrus* is threatned thus (*Ezek.* 28. 17.) *I will lay thee before Kings that they may behold* (that is, deſpiſe and deride) *thee.* And the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, (Chap. 1. 6.) deprecates, *look not upon me, becauſe I am black, becauſe the Sun hath looked upon me*; that is, God hath looked upon me with a ſcorching eye of diſpleaſure, and made me black with troubles; do not ye look upon me with a ſcornful eye of diſdain, becauſe of my blackneſs. Thus God ſeeth or looketh not as man ſeeth; he looketh not diſdainfully upon a poor afflicted ſoul, as men do upon their friends in their affliction, or as ye my friends do upon me in mine affliction.

ראה *Eſt aliquando deſpicere, & cernere cum contemptu.*

This is the fourth diſhonourable thought, which *Job* removeth from God. *His eyes are not eyes of fleſh, he ſeeth not as man ſeeth,* either in reference to the truth or manner, the clearneſs or ſpeedineſs, the certainty or impartiality, the infallibility or charity of his judgment. Upon all which his former requeſt is again to be inferred, *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.*

He proceedeth to a fifth, which he alſo by way of interrogation removeth from God, and ſo virtually reneweth the ſame petition.

Verſ. 5. **Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? Are thy years as mans dayes?**

I know they are not.

Are thy dayes as mans dayes?] Some Interpreters take the word *Day* for *Judgment. Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* that is, Are thy judging dayes, or thy judgment given upon thoſe dayes, like mans dayes, or the judgment which man giveth? We have the word in that ſence (1 *Cor.* 4. 3.) where the Apoſtle concludes in his own caſe; *It is a very ſmall thing of me to be judged of you, or of mans judgment*, the *Greek* is, *To be judged of mans day:* and according to the idiom of that Language in ſome Countreys, the day of a man is put for the judgment of a man: Though others conceive *Paul* calls it a day rather then a judgment, in alluſion to that laſt day, wherein God will ſit in judgment upon the whole world. So the meaning of *Job* is plainly this, *The Lords judgment is not like mans judgment.* This Expoſition falls in with the ſence of the former verſe; men judge by outward proofs and probabilities, by queſtions and interrogatories, by teſtimonies and witneſſes: God needs none of theſe humane helps in his day of judgment; yet in *Job's* caſe, he carried it, as if he needed them. The Suit depending ſo long before him, and ſuch variety of experiments and trials, being put upon, or taken of him.

Ponitur dies pro judicio ex Cilicum idiotiſmo. Hier. *Putarim* Paulum *potius diem maluiſſe dicere, quam judicium ut alluderet ad diem illum ſupremum in quo Dominus ipſe judex ſedebit.* Bez.

But, we may better interpret *Dayes* for a part of time; and ſo, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* is, *Art thou ſhort liv'd as man is?* The word [*Man*] ſignifies man in his worſt condition, *Are thy dayes like the dayes of a weak man?* of a miſerable ſickly man? Are they like the dayes of a man, whom we number among the dead, and who is giving up the ghoſt every hour? There are ſome men, whom we call *long liv'd*, that is, men who in probability may live very long: we ſay of a healthy ſtrong man, we would take a leaſe of his life, or if we were to take a leaſe for lives, we would put his life in for one: he is a man of a good complexion and conſtitution, a man like to live, and ſee many dayes. But, ſaith *Job*, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of* Enoſh? As the dayes of a weak ſickly man, as the dayes of one, who looks as if he would drop into the grave every day; as the dayes of a very borderer upon death, of the next neighbour, *and heir apparent to the King of terrors?* Lord, I am ſure thy dayes are not as the dayes of ſuch a weakling, of ſuch mouldring, ſickly clod of earth. This ſence may have a double reference.

Enos *cujus vitæ duratio breviſſima & penè nulla.*

Firſt, To the knowledge of God concerning *Job*.

Secondly, To the manner of Gods dealing with *Job*.

Firſt, *Thy dayes are not as the dayes of man*; thou haſt had, and haſt time enough to gather knowledge and experience, if thou didſt need ſuch help to make thee more knowing. It was the ancient complaint of that great *Phyſitian*, when he ſaw how much of his Art he had to learn, and how little time he had to learn it in, *Art is long, and time is ſhort*, what can I learn in ſuch a ſpan-long life as mine? Hence it is conceived, that though the Fathers before the flood (ſome of whoſe lives reached eight or nine Centuries) wanted the help of *Libraries* and *Academies*, which we enjoy; yet, that by the experience of ſo many years, they gathered a great ſtock of knowledge, and proved men of eminent Learning. Men whoſe dayes are not as the dayes of ordinary men, attain knowledge beyond ordinary men. How then can the Lord want any perfection of the moſt perfect knowledge, who numbereth not only by hundreds and thouſands of years, but by an eternity of years? His knowledge muſt needs be full, concerning the ſtate both of things and perſons, who not only hath *Antiquity of dayes*, but is the *Ancient of dayes* (Dan. 7. 9.) Many men have lived ſo many dayes, that they are juſtly called *Ancient*, but no man ever lived or ſhall live ſo long, as to deſerve this title, *Ancient of dayes*. God is called the *Ancient of dayes*, not only, becauſe he hath been many dayes, yea all the dayes that ever have been, but becauſe he is *ancienter then dayes*; *He is the dayes ancient, for he made the day. His dayes cannot be like mans dayes, who made five dayes ancienter then man.* God hath more then all dayes, therefore he hath all knowledge: he hath all experience, therefore he hath neither ignorance, nor neſcience. Upon this ground *Job* argues it out with God, that he muſt needs know all things, who was before all times; and that he was acquainted with him better then all men, who

Perſtat Job *in excludenda ignorantia à Deo judice; Dies hominis ſignificant vitam breviſſimam, quæ cum multa ignorantia conjuncta eſt.* Sanct. *Ars longa, vita brevis.* Hypocr.

who lived at that day, becauſe he lived and was acquainted with what he would be, before man had a day, even from eternity.

Theſe words, *Thy dayes are not as mans dayes*, may refer to the dealing of God with *Job*. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, why then doeſt thou make ſuch haſte to enquire after me? why doeſt thou ſo inceſſantly follow me with afflictions? why doeſt thou keep me upon the rack from day to day, night and day, and wilt give me no reſt? Lord, thou needeſt not fear to looſe time, for thou haſt all time at thy command; thou canſt not want opportunity, who haſt eternity. The reaſon why man is called upon ſo earneſtly to redeem the time, is, becauſe he hath ſo little time given him, and no time at all but what is given him. His dayes are ſhort dayes, and they are but few, and (which ſhould provoke him for to make haſte) he knows not how few: unleſs he lay hold upon the preſent day, he is not ſure of any day. But Lord, thou art Lord of time, and Maſter not only over thy work, but alſo over thy dayes; thou canſt allow thy ſelf as many dayes as thou pleaſeſt to do thy work in. Why then doeſt thou deal thus ſeverely with me, as if thou wert afraid thou ſhouldeſt overſlip thy day, or want a ſeaſon to deal with me in?*

Deo nihil effert novi craſtina dies.

Again, When he ſaith, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* it may refer to the changes which happen in the dayes of man: the dayes of man are ſometimes fair, and ſometimes cloudy, ſometimes he hath good dayes, and ſometimes he hath ill dayes, therefore he muſt take his time, and lay hold upon his opportunity. He muſt make his hay while the Sun ſhines, who cannot command the Sun to ſhine. But the dayes of the Lord are (like himſelf) alwayes the ſame, alwayes alike, *There are no changes of time to him, who is himſelf unchangeable.*

Aliam ſuarum miſeriarum cauſā excludit à Deo, q. d. ſi non eſſet firma Dei voluntas, atq; benevolentia erga ſuos, ſed innata illi eſſet inconſtantia, nihil mirum eſſet ſi me, quē quondā ingentibus beneficiis cumulavit odio proſequatur. Bol.

Laſtly, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* may have reference to man himſelf; man is as mutable a creature, as his time is: and man is mutable, not only in his condition, but in his affection; now he loveth, anon he hateth; now he rejoyceth, anon he ſorroweth; now he eſteemeth, anon he rejecteth; now he imbraceth, anon he contemneth. *Lord* (ſaith *Job*) *I know thou art not in thy dayes as man is in his: Where thou art once a friend, thou art alwayes a friend; whom thou loveſt, thou loveſt for ever. Thy affections are as unchangeable as thy nature.*

There is a difference in the latter clauſe of the verſe; for whereas he ſaith, in the firſt, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* In the ſecond he ſaith, *Are thy years as mans dayes?* The dayes of God in the firſt part, are the ſame with the years of God in the ſecond. But man hath not years aſcribed to him in the ſecond. The time of man is ſo ſhort, that it is reckoned by the ſhorteſt compleat time, a day. And when *David* computes the longeſt date of mans life, he doth not ſay, *The years of man are threeſcore years and ten; but the dayes of our years are threeſcore years and ten* (Pſal. 90. 10.) There is yet another difference in the original about the word *Man*. In the firſt clauſe the Hebrew word for man was *Enoſh*, here it is *Geber*, which ſignifies a ſtrong man, a mighty man, a man of the moſt maſculine ſpirit, and ſtrongeſt body, of the moſt vigorous abilities, and greateſt probabilities to live long; a man of braſs, and heart of oak, rather then of clay, and duſt of the earth. *Lord, Thy dayes are not only not as the dayes of* Enoſh, a weak, ſickly man; but, *Thy years are not as the dayes of* Geber, as the dayes of the mightieſt and healthieſt, of the ſtrongeſt and ſtouteſt among the ſons of men.

כימי נגר

Obſerve hence more diſtinctly the difference between the dayes of God, and the dayes of man.

First, *Gods day is the day of eternity.*

Mans dayes are but dayes of time. God is ſaid, *To inhabit eternity* (Iſa. 57.15.) that is, he is fixed in eternity, he is without beginning, and without end, yea his dayes are without ſucceſſion of dayes. All the dayes of God are but a day. Not only are a thouſand years to him as one day, but eternity is to him as one day. All that God doth, is ſaid to be done *to day*; *Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee* (Pſal. 2. 7.) yet he ſpeaks (ſay ſome) of the eternal generation of the Son: or as it referreth to the reſurrection of Chriſt (ſo the Apoſtle expounds it, *Act.* 13. 33.) God calls that time, *To day*, though it came a long time after: all is preſent with God; *Paſt and to come in relation to God, is neither paſt nor to come, all is now or to day.* That was not paſt to God, which never had beginning, the eternal generation of his Son: nor was that to *come* to God which was alwayes before him: The temporal reſurrection of his Son, *To day have I begotten thee*, is the moſt proper ſtile for God.

Tempus eſt menſura hominū habens principiū & finem; æviternitas eſt Angelorum, principium habens, ſed non finem; æternitas eſt propria Deo, nec principium habens nec finem. Æternitas eſt quæ nihil habet mutabile, ibi nihil eſt præteritū quaſi jam non ſit, nihil futurū quaſi nondū ſit, quia non eſt ibi niſi eſt. Aug. in *Pſal.* 101. *Erat & erit noſtri temporis fluxæque naturæ ſegmenta ſunt. Æternitas eſt ſemper & immutabile eſſe.*

Some diſtinguiſh thus between theſe three, *Eternity*, *Eviternity*, and *Time*. Eternity is that which is peculiar unto God, his are the dayes of eternity. Eviternity is proper to Angels and Spirits, which have a beginning, but ſhall have no end. Time is the portion and lot of man, who hath had a beginning, and ſhall have an end. *Time* is the meaſure of thoſe things, which actually corrupt and change. *Eviternity* is the meaſure of things incorruptible and unchangeable, not in themſelves, but by the appointment of God. *Eternity* is peculiar to God, in whom it is abſolutely impoſſible any change ſhould be. Time hath continual ſucceſſions, Eternity a conſtant permanency, Eviternity partakes of both. Hence the ſecond difference,

Mans dayes are moveable, the dayes of God move not.

Thirdly, *Mans dayes being paſt cannot be recalled; Gods day is ever within his call.*

For, that which is paſt is as much preſent to him, as that which is preſent; and that which is to come is as much preſent to him, as that which is. *Mans day was, is, and ſhall be; Gods day alwayes is; his name is, I am: It was, and it will be, are diviſions and fragments, morſels and bits of time; eternity is an It is.* This teacheth us,

Firſt, *That God hath time enough to do his work in.*

His dayes are not as mans dayes. *He needs not haſten his work, leſt he ſhould loſe his opportunity, who is poſſeſſed of eternity.* And

Secondly, This (by the way) ſhews us, *The infinite happineſs and unconceivable bleſſedneſs of God.*

His dayes are not as mans dayes. One of mans dayes carrieth away one comfort, and the next a ſecond. This day brings one comfort, and the next a ſecond; and ſo he loſeth or receiveth his comforts by dayes and by dayes, by the fluxes and refluxes of time. God hath all his happineſs in eternity, that is, he hath all at once. Time neither bringeth nor carrieth away from God. He enjoyeth as much at this preſent, what ever he had, as what he hath at this preſent; and he enjoyes as much what ſhall be, as he doth what is preſent; he enjoyeth all at once, becauſe he ſeeth all at once. God hath not one thing after another, but all together. Eternity is the longeſt and the ſhorteſt, it is longeſt in duration, and the ſhorteſt in fruition; not that the enjoyment of any thing there is ſhort, but becauſe in the ſhorteſt enjoyment there is all: Every moment of eternity being filled with all the bleſſedneſs of eternity.

Thirdly, This ſhews the reaſon why the Lord taketh ſuch leiſure to do his work; he doth not precipitate or thruſt on his deſigns, becauſe he may take what time he will.

God hath all time at his command.

Men bear ſway and rule over perſons and places: God only ruleth times. Man hath not one day in his power, not only not the day to come, but not the day preſent. *Go to now* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, Chap. 4. 13, 14.) *ye that ſay to day, or to morrow we will go into ſuch a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get gain, whereas ye know not what ſhall be on the morrow.* Nor indeed doth any man know whether he ſhall be on the morrow, or on all the day wherein he is. God can boaſt of to morrow, that is, of eternity, or of all time to come. Man cannot boaſt of to morrow, that is, of the next day, no nor of the the next time to come of the ſame day. Hence it is that man muſt haſten leſt he miſs his ſeaſon. When *David* had *Saul* at an advantage (1 *Sam.* 24. 5.) they about him adviſe him to make uſe of it, and not to let it ſlip, *Behold the day of which the Lord ſaid unto thee*, &c. Sir having ſuch a day, take hold of it; if you let this go, you may never ſee ſuch another. Time is no part of the dominion of Kings. So likewiſe *Abiſhai* counſels *David* upon the ſame advantage (1 *Sam.* 26. 8.) *God hath delivered thy enemy into thine hand this day* (let him go this day, and probably thou ſhalt never have the like day again) *Now therefore let me ſmite him, I pray thee, with the ſpear, even to the earth at once, and I will not ſmite him the ſecond time,* I can diſpatch him at one time, and poſſibly thou ſhalt not have a ſecond time. In a good work, it is good, yea, it is beſt to do our work at once, and not to expect (what we may, or may never have) a ſecond time, when we have a time: *To day if ye will hear his voyce, harden not your hearts.* He hath much hardneſs, but no wiſdom in his heart, who hopes to do that good to morrow, which he reſolves to neglect until to morrow, A wiſe man may hope to do that to morrow, which he cannot do to day; but it is higheſt folly to reſolve upon a neglect of any duty this day upon a hope of doing it next day. It is ſaid, *Rev.* 12. 6. *Wo to the Inhabitants of the earth, becauſe the Devil is come down, having great wrath*; (why ſo angry?) *becauſe he knoweth that his time is but ſhort.* When the Devil knows he hath but a little time, he will do as much work as he can, and do it preſently, he ſees all will ſcape out of his hands elſe. Only the Lord haſtens not, neither needeth he to haſten his work at any time upon this ground, becauſe he hath but a ſhort time. He can take what time he will, and make his day as long, and his dayes as many as himſelf pleaſeth, for the acting of his counſels, whether to puniſh or to ſhew mercy. And hence it is that he delayeth till wicked prophane ſpirits wonder, yea, ſcoff at his delay, and think, ſurely the Lord will never do any ſuch thing as he hath threatened or promiſed, becauſe he ſtayeth ſo long before he doth it; whereas indeed to him *that inhabiteth eternity,* deferment is no delay, though to us it ſeem ſo, whoſe times are meaſured out by inches and hours, by moments and by minutes. Thoſe prophane wretches (*Iſa.* 5. 19.) call the Lord, and provoke him to action; *Let him make ſpeed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it.* The Lord appears ſlow and ſlack to many men, but *the Lord is not ſlack as ſome men count ſlackneſs* (2 *Pet.* 3. 9.) Men think he is ſlack when he is only patient, and themſelves ignorant, *That a thouſand years to the Lord are but as one day*; God doth not meaſure time by our Pole, nor caſt it up by our Arithmetick. Eternity doth not only like the unjuſt Steward, bid us write *fifty for an hundred,* but *one for a thouſand,* and (which bears the diſproportion of divers hundreds in every one of that thouſand) one day for a thouſand years. Time is not only a ſmall thing, but nothing unto God. *Mine age* (ſaith *David*) *is nothing unto thee* (Pſal. 39. 5.) *And if all Nations before him are as nothing, if they are counted to him leſs then nothing* (*Iſa.* 40. 17.) Then not only the age of one man, but the ages of all men added together, are before him as nothing, and are counted to him leſs then nothing. *Surely he cannot want time to do all things, before whom all times are nothing.* He cannot want time to powr out his judgments, and to empty the Vials of his wrath upon wicked men, nor can he want time to fulfil his promiſes, and to make good every word of bleſſing which he hath ſpoken to, or concerning his own people. Wicked men! Do not ye hope? Godly men! Do not ye fear, God will not do what he hath ſaid, becauſe he hath not already done it? He hath not loſt his time or ſeaſon, becauſe he hath not accepted that which ye thought to be the time or ſeaſon. Chriſt warns his Diſciples (*John* 9. 4.) to make haſte about their work, for *the night* (namely of death) *cometh, wherein no man can work*; while you have the day, do your work, for I know what day yours is, your day will be gone, and the night will come, when you can work no more; but Gods day fears no night, whatever comes, he can do his work. The Preacher gives the ſame counſel upon the ſame ground (Eccleſ. 9.) *Whatſoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might*; lay hold upon the forelock of time, why? *There is no wiſdom or counſel in the grave whither thou goeſt*: When thou dieſt, there is an end of all thy working-time; do thy work well, for thou canſt not recall a day of thy life to mend thy work in, neither canſt thou work at all in that night of death. The Lords day knows nothing of a grave, nor is his Sun acquainted with going down; if he ſeems ſlack to his work, or ſlack at his work this day and the next, &c. Yet he hath another day at his call, and after that another and another, all which are to him but one day. Therefore he takes or leaves, defers or haſtens, comes or goes at pleaſure, *Are thy dayes, O Lord, as mans dayes? Are thy years as the dayes of man?* I know they are not.

But why doth *Job* make ſo many of theſe negative Queries?

The next words will anſwer,

Verſe 6. **That thou enquireſt after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt after my ſin.**

Here's the reaſon of theſe former Queſtions, As if he had ſaid, *Lord, ſurely thou needeſt not ſearch and examine me in this manner, ſeeing it is neither thus nor thus with thee; It is not good to thee to oppoſe or to deſpiſe the work of thy hands; thou haſt not eyes of fleſh or dayes of man.*

That thou enquireſt after mine iniquity.

The Original ſignifies an enquiry two wayes. Firſt, By Word. Secondly, By Actions. By ſomewhat done, or by ſomewhat ſpoken. And it ſignifies both to do and ſpeak with great attention and heat of ſpirit. The word is alſo applied to thoſe enquiries which are made by torture, when the party is ſuſpected for concealment of the matter under enquiry. Which way of examination is called by the *Latines,* a bringing of a man to *queſtion.* That laſt Engine which was invented to ſupport the tottering ſtate of *Rome,* wherein poor ſouls are put to extream tortures, to force confeſſion or ſelf-accuſations (that I ſay) is called the *Inquiſition,* and the Judges *Inquiſitors*; becauſe inquiſition or enquiry (according to the word of the Text) is there made after the iniquities of men, after their ſuppoſed hereſies and heretical practices againſt the *Romiſh* Church. *Job* ſeems to allude to ſuch wayes of examination, why doth the Lord enquire after mine iniquity by ſore judgments and terrible afflictions, by ſtrong pains and mighty terrors?

בקש *Significat non tam verbis & interrogatione, quam actionibus & ſummo ſtudio aliquid inquirere, & non rarò de pœna & nece procuranda accipitur.*

At loweſt, the word ſignifieth a diligent ſearch or ſcrutinie with utmoſt induſtry; induſtry, even ſuch as they uſe, who maliciouſly hunt for the precious life. The Lord ſaith to *Moſes,* return into *Egypt, for all the men that ſought thy life are dead* (Exod. 4, 19.) It is this word. So (1 *Sam.* 22. 23.) *Abide thou with me* (ſaith *David* to *Abiathar*) *fear not; for he that ſeeks my life, ſeeketh thy life.* When revenge makes a ſearch, it is a diligent ſearch; malice hath a piercing eye, and enquires narrowly. That gracious promiſe is thus expreſſed (*Jer.* 50. 20.) *In thoſe dayes the iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found. Job* complains here, *Thou enquireſt after mine iniquity*; there the promiſe is, *In thoſe dayes the iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for,* or, *enquired after, and it ſhall not be found*; that is, ſuppoſe the iniquity of *Iſrael* ſhould be ſought after, ſuppoſe there ſhould be an Hue and Cry ſent out after the ſin of my people; yet, ſaith the Lord, it ſhall not be found: why? what hinders the finding of it, or where ſhall it be hid? The next words reſolve the doubt; It ſhall be hid in the pardoning mercies of God. *I the Lord will pardon thoſe whom I reſerve*; The Lord would give ſuch a full and free pardon of ſin, that what ſearch and enquiry ſoever ſhould be made after it, there ſhould not be ſo much as any ſcar or mark, not ſo much as any print or ſtain left to be a witneſs of their ſin, or a plea for their condemnation. Anſwerable to that (*Rom.* 8. 1.) *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus. Job* ſpeaks as if God were ſo far from hiding his iniquity in a pardon, when it came to be ſearched for, that himſelf ſearched for it, as if he were reſolved not to pardon it. *Wherefore is it that thou enquireſt after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt after my ſin?*

Both parts of the Verſe meet in the ſame ſence. The word (*Daraſh*) in the latter, being often applied as the former, to a judiciary ſearch. Yet ſome diſtinguiſh them ſtrictly, thus; the former to ſignifie an enquiry by recalling to memory, or the examining of our ſelves; *Thou enquireſt after mine iniquity,* that is, thou askeſt thy ſelf whether thou haſt not obſerved ſome iniquity in me; thou doſt (as it were) rub thy memory, and take an account of what is laid up there concerning me. Memory is the ſtore-houſe or treaſury, the record or regiſter of the ſoul. *Books are a Memory without us, and Memory is a Book within us.* Then the other word ſignifies ſearching by examination of the ſuſpected party in either of thoſe wayes before explained. The Lord tells the *Jews* (whoſe wickedneſs was grown immodeſt, and roſe a ſtep beyond hypocriſie) that he needed not

דרש *Eſt inquirere in peccatorem per teſtes & judiciariam queſtionem.* Pined. *Quarere notat ſcientiã Dei, & denotat animadverſionẽ & vindictam,* Daraſh à Bakaſh *diſtingui* *poteſt ſi illud in revocatione ad animum, hoc in ſcrutatione occultorũ ponamus.* Coc.

not ſearch after their ſins. *In thy ſkirts is found the blood of the ſouls of poor innocents, I have not found it by ſecret ſearch, Jer.* 2. 34. As noting, that the Lord doth ſometimes make a ſecret ſearch, and that there are ſome who hide their ſins, ſome who ſit cloſe upon, and cover them, as *Rachel* did the ſtoln Idols, when *Laban* came to ſearch *Jacob's* ſtuff; that there are ſome who make excuſes, and Apologies for them; to theſe the Lord comes with a ſecret ſearch for their iniquity. The word in *Jeremy* ſignifies *digging*; I have not found it by digging: Some put their ſins under ground; only deep digging can find theſe out: *Job* enquires of the Lord why he made ſuch a ſearching after his iniquities, why he was ſo curious in looking into every corner, and behind every door, to find out the rubbiſh of his life, ſeeing the cloſeſt ſin is as open to his eye, as the Sun at noon-day; and beſides, God knew that *Job* had no cloſe ſin, no darling beloved ſin in his boſom, no ſweet morſels of any forbidden fruit under his tongue. He tells the Lord as much in plain terms, in the next words; *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* As we uſe to ſay to a man that makes a buſie ſearch after any thing, either in a place or about a perſon, where there is no probability that it ſhould be found; or when we ſuppoſe the perſon ſearching cannot have the leaſt ground of perſwaſion, that the thing is there, or with him; in ſuch a caſe (I ſay) a man will anſwer, why do ye make ſuch a ſearch? ye know what ye look for, is not here; ye know well enough I have it not; ye have ſome other end in this. Thus *Job* ſpeaks here: *Lord, why doſt thou ſearch for mine iniquity? Thou knoweſt well enough that I am not wicked, There is certainly ſomewhat elſe in the wind. Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.*

Sententia plana eſt, non eſt neceſſe ut in peccata mea curioſius inquiras, cum Deus ſis cui nota ſunt & perſpecta omnia, etiam interiora cordis. Bol.

Take a Note or two from theſe words, *That thou enquireſt after mine iniquity*, &c.

First, *God knoweth us before he ſearcheth us.*

Job profeſſes of himſelf as a Judge (*chap.* 29. 16.) *The Cauſe which I knew not, I ſearched out*; but God ſearches out thoſe Cauſes which he knows. God doth not ſearch us, that he may know us, or *to inform himſelf, but to make us know him and our ſelves.* There are not many who know themſelves at all; there are none who know themſelves enough. The Lord ſearches us, that we may ſearch our ſelves. There are not many who know God at all; there are none who know God enough. God ſearches us, that we may ſeek after him. By every affliction the Lord would make us know our ſelves and *Himſelf* better. It is ſaid of *Manaſſeh*, when he was in the Briars, That, *then Manaſſeh knew the Lord*; and then (doubtleſs) he began to know himſelf. *The ſame light that brings us to the knowledge of what God is, brings us alſo to the knowledge of what our ſelves are.* Secondly obſerve,

Afflictions are Searchers.

Thou ſearcheſt for mine iniquity, ſaith *Job*. *Job* ſuppoſed that the Lord came to try him, and to find out the bottom of his heart: When God ſmites our Bodies or our Eſtates, he ſearcheth our hearts, and maketh enquiry in our lives. The Prophet threatens the *Jews* (*Zeph.* 1. 12.) That God would come and ſearch *Jeruſalem with Candles*; That is, as ſome interpret, he would cauſe the *Chaldeans* to ſearch for their moſt hidden treaſures, and find them out. Others underſtand it of God himſelf, ſearching *Jeruſalem*. But God is not like the Woman in the Parable, who had loſt her Groat, he needeth to Candlelight to find out the loſt Groat, or to find out the filthineſs that is in the moſt ſecret corners of the heart. The meaning then is, that God would ſearch *Jeruſalem*, that is, the people of *Jeruſalem*, as exactly, as if they were ſearched with a Candle: he would bring forth their ſecret ſins, and all their hidden abominations. This ſearch was was made by thoſe terrible and ſore Judgments brought upon *Jeruſalem*. God kindled a fire of affliction, and ſearched them by the light of that fire; Troubles are as ſo many Candles lighted up to ſearch our ſelves by, and they will be as ſo many fires kindled to conſume us with, if we ſearch not our ſelves. At this time God is ſearching *England* with Candles. The Prophet deſcribing the great ſorrows of the *Jews*, in their Captivity, directs us what to do (*Lam.* 3. 40.) *Let us ſearch and try our wayes.* When God is ſearching us, it is high time for us to ſearch our ſelves. It is ſad when God is ſearching for our ſins, if we are not ſearching for them too; and it is more ſad, if when God cometh to ſearch for our ſins, we be found hiding our ſins. Theſe are ſearching times; God is ſearching, let us ſearch too; elſe we may be ſure (as *Moſes* (Numb. 32.) tells the people of *Iſrael*) our ſins will find us out. They who endeavour not to find their ſins, ſhall be found by their ſins; *Our iniquity will enquire after us, if we enquire not after it.* But what if iniquity enquire after us? What? If iniquity enquire after us, it will find us; and if iniquity find us, trouble will find us; yea, if iniquity find us alone without Chriſt, Hell and Death will find us. If Iniquity find any man, he hath reaſon enough to ſay unto it (what *Ahab* ſaid to *Eliah* without reaſon) *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* The beſt of men have reaſon to look what is evil in them, when God brings evil upon them, or wraps them up in common evils. They who have no wickedneſs in them to caſt them under condemnation, have yet ſin enough in them to make them ſmart under correction. Though *Job* could ſay from the teſtimony of a pure Conſcience, *Thou knoweſt I am not wicked*; yet he durſt not ſay, thou knoweſt I have not ſinned. *Job* acknowledged he was ſinful, and God knew he was not wicked. In ſearching after iniquity, he found not hypocriſie; yea, he knew he was not an hypocrite before he ſearched him; ſo it follows,

Quum minutatim agnoſcam de peccatis populi, & cum eo inibo rationes mea accuratiſſimè, ut ſolent qui adhibitis lucernis perluſtrant omnia. Jun.

Verſe 7. **Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.**

This ſeventh verſe containeth one of the chiefeſt queſtions of that grand controverſie handled in this Book, whether *Job* were a wicked man or no? Satan repreſented him for ſuch to God; and therefore called that he might be tried; the Lord tried him upon that challenge, and he was brought to a grievous trial; *Job* appeals to the Lords own knowledge, and is contented to ſtand or fall according to his determination, being yet aſſured that he ſtood right in the thoughts of God. *Thou knoweſt I am not wicked.*

Continet verſus ſeptimus id quod præcipuè in hac cauſa & diſputatione ſpectandum eſt, ſc. *Jobũ non eſſe improbum.* Pin.

Thou knoweſt.] The Hebrew is rendered word for word, thus, *It is upon thy knowledge*; or, *It is upon thy know that I am not wicked*: As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt not this knowledge from without, thou doſt not ground thy judgment concerning the ſtate of any man upon what others ſay of him, upon reports or hear-ſayes; no, thy knowledge is from thy ſelf; thou knoweſt upon thine own knowledge, thine is an internal, an immediate, and ſo a perfect, an infallible knowledge, and that tells thee of me, I am not wicked.*

לע רעתך *Apud ſcire tuum eſt. Multo plus dicit per hanc phraſin* apud ſcire tuum eſt, *quam ſi diceret,* tu ſcis *In ſcientia tua eſt, penes notitiam tuam eſt, non aliunde ſed ex te optimè noſti me non eſſe improbum.* Druſ.

That I am not wicked.] He doth not ſay, Thou knoweſt that I am not a ſinner; or, Thou knoweſt that I have not ſinned; *Job* had no ſuch opinion of himſelf, and he knew God had no ſuch knowledge of him. There is a great difference between being a ſinner and a wicked man. The beſt of Saints while they are here upon the earth, are ſinners, but the worſt of Saints, even here upon earth, are not wicked; they have a new nature, they are new creatures, regenerate and born again by the Word and Spirit, therefore they are not wicked; though much ſin be in them, yet no wickedneſs is in them; and they are denominated from their better part; not wicked from their remaining corruption, but holy from their received renovation. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.*

Hæret in regenitis peccatum, improbi tamen dici nec poſſunt, nec debent. Merc.

Again, The word in the Original being in the Verb, we may tranſlate (as many do) *Thou knoweſt that I have not done wickedly.* But the ſence is the ſame; *for every man is in doing as he is in being*: He that is not wicked in his ſtate, cannot act wickedly. So we muſt underſtand that of the Apoſtle (1 *John* 3. 8.) *He that committeth ſin, is of the Devil.*

כי לא ארשע *Quod non impiè egerim.* Mon.

Thirdly, To be *wicked*, is ordinarily oppoſed *to our being juſt*; and ſo, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, is, *Thou knoweſt that I am not condemned or caſt at thy Bar for a wicked man.* I am not condemned, but juſtified in thy ſight. In which ſence the word is uſed in that Prophetick curſe againſt *Judas*, who betrayed Chriſt (*Pſal.* 109. 7.) *When he ſhall be judged, let him be condemned*; ſo we render it: The Hebrew is elegantly tranſlated thus, *When he ſhall be judged, let him go out wicked*; that is, let him go out from before the Bar and Tribunal of his Judges, a condemned man; or, *Let him proceed wicked*, let that be his title and his honour;

Exeat improbus.

Improbus & juſtus verba ſunt forenſia. Druſ.

nour; *wicked and juſt* are Judiciary or Court-terms, equivalent with *juſtified and condemned.*

Some join theſe words with the Verſe going before; *Doſt thou ſearch into mine iniquity that thou maiſt know whether I am wicked?* As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou needeſt not make enquiry about this thing; for as I am not wicked, ſo thou art not ignorant: thou haſt not afflicted me, becauſe I am wicked; nor haſt thou ſearched me, becauſe thou art ignorant; Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* Hence obſerve,

Firſt, That, *The Lord knows the ſtate of every man, and of every thing exactly.*

The foundation of God ſtands ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth them that are his (2 Tim. 2. 19.) And he knoweth them that are not his; not his by the grace of election and regeneration: for all are his by the right of creation and dominion. Thus he knows all the fowls of the Mountains, and the beaſts of the field are his (*Pſal.* 50. 11.) *David* gives this glory to God in his own caſe (*Pſal.* 139. 11.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me*: God did not ſearch to know him, but he ſearched him and knew him. The knowledge of God was not a conſequent, but a concomitant of that ſearch; or it is ſpoken in oppoſition to man; a man may ſearch his neighbour, and yet not know him. There are depths and turnings in the heart of man, which no man can reach or find out; but God hath a thread which will lead him into all, and through all the Labyrinths, a Line which will ſound all the depths of man. Hence *David* makes a particular of the knowledge of God; God knew him in all that he was, and in all that he did. *Thou knoweſt my down-lying and my upriſing, and thou art acquainted with all my wayes.* God is the Judge of all men, therefore he knows all men, *Heb.* 4. 13. *There is no creature which is not manifeſt in his ſight, all things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do.* The Apoſtle by two Metaphors in theſe words, teaches us, that as the out-members and lineaments of the Body, together with their beauty or deformity, are clearly ſeen when the Body is naked and uncloathed; that as the bowels and entrals of the body, together with their ſoundneſs or diſeaſes are perfectly diſcovered, when the body is diſſected or cut up by the hand of a skilful Anatomiſt; even ſo are we in all we do, and in all we are perſectly known; or as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) *manifeſt unto God*, even manifeſt with as much clearneſs to the knowledge of God, as the light is to the eye of man. He knows, 1. Our perſons. 2. Our actions. 3. He knoweth the manner of our actions. 4. He knoweth with what hearts we act. 5. He knoweth not only the means we uſe, but the ends we propoſe in every action. 6. He knoweth what we have been, as well as what we are. And, 7. He knoweth what we will be, as well as what we are or have been; he knoweth what we have done, as well as what we do; and he knoweth what we will do, as well as what we do or have already done. He ſeeth all creatures in the Glaſs of his own counſels through and through. His eye hath thorowlights in all parts of the world, and in the hearts of all men in the world.

γυμνὰ ϗ τετραχηλισμένα.

And ſeeing man cannot be hid from God, it is the vaineſt attempt for any man to think of hiding himſelf from God; yet that's not only the attempt, but the hope of many, who while they do what they would not have ſeen, pleaſe themſelves with this conceit, that they are not ſeen in doing it, or that they can ſecure what they have done from being ſeen. We learned this of our firſt Parents, in whom the firſt thing that appeared next their ſhame, after they had ſinned, was the hiding of their ſin. Man loveth to draw a curtain between God and himſelf, to raiſe up artificial darkneſs, and to walk in thick clouds (as he vainly hopes) undiſcovered.

Again, Doth God know us? Then let us labour to know our ſelves. God knows who are wicked, many are wicked, and know it not. It is a woful miſtake, when we think our ſelves to be in a good eſtate, and God knows us to be in a bad eſtate: It is a wrong to God and our ſelves, when God knows us to be in a good eſtate, and we think our ſelves to be in a bad eſtate; but it is far worſe, when we think our eſtate good, and God knows it to be bad. We ſhould be acquainted with our condition, leſt we (like *Laodicea*) flatter our ſelves into an opinion that we are rich and cloathed, and have need of nothing, when God knows we are poor and naked, and wanting all things.

Secondly, Obſerve from the elegancy of the Hebrew expreſſion, *It is upon thy knowledge that I am not wicked.*

God knoweth all things in and of himſelf

This gives glory to God, and lifteth him up above the Creature in the fulneſs of his knowledge. Men who have the greateſt knowledge, and vaſteſt comprehenſions of things, yet have not that knowledge in and from themſelves, they fetch it in by borrowed helps, and glad they can have it ſo too. It coſts man a great deal of travel and ſtudy to make himſelf maſter of a little knowledge (*Job* 12. 12.) *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes is underſtanding.* Some indeed get wiſdom and underſtanding, and are owners of a vaſt ſtock and treaſure of knowledge; but when? but how? When they are old, when they have had long experience, and have ſtudied hard for it: *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes is underſtanding*: Thus men get knowledge. But mark what is ſaid of God in the next words (*verſ.* 13.) *But with him* (meaning God) *is wiſdom and ſtrength; he hath counſel and underſtanding. With him it is, and he hath it.* The Lord doth not grow more knowing by years, nor doth his underſtanding mend by the multitude of dayes; though he be the *Ancient of dayes*, yet it is not his antiquity which hath got him this knowledge; his knowledge is in him, and with him, and from himſelf: he fetches not his knowledge from ſence, nor doth he take it up by information; he learns it not by demonſtration raiſed from the things themſelves, nor by the collation of one thing with another. He doth not know this to be ſo, becauſe that is ſo, but all things are ſo, becauſe he knows them. He knows all; 1. Fully, not to halves. 2. Certainly, not probably. 3. Actually, not poſſibly. 4. At once, not ſucceſſively; as not one thing by another, ſo not one thing after another. Such are the eminencies and tranſcendencies of the knowledge of God.

The Scripture ſpeaks ſometimes as if God derived his knowledge from report, or as if he did not know whether a people were wicked or no, till he had enquired. When the new world was building their *Babel*, the Lord ſaid, *Let us go down to ſee the City* (Gen. 11. 5.) And when *Sodom* was burning in luſt, the Lord reſolved, *I will go down and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know* (Gen. 18. 21.)

In both thoſe places of Scripture God comes down to our capacity, but he comes not down to any place in the world. He needs not come any whither who is every where. God ſpeaks after the manner of men; but he acts not after the manner of men. God gives us an example what we ſhould do, he doth not work after our example. Leſt we ſhould judge before we ſee, God ſaith I will go down and ſee, before I judge; leſt we ſhould cenſure one another upon fames and common cries without further enquiry, whether it be ſo or no, therefore the Lord ſaith, *I will go down and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry that is come unto me.* God knew *Sodom* was wicked, before he came down, but he came down to make it known that he knew it.

As thoſe Scriptures ſeem to import that God knew not how wicked the Builders of *Babel* were, or the dwellers in *Sodom*, till he took pains to enquire; ſo another Scripture imports, that he did not know *Abraham* was a godly man, till he made an experiment of it, by putting him upon that hard piece of obedience, the offering up of his Son; *Now I know thou feareſt me* (Gen. 22. 12.) As if the Lord had collected his knowledge of what *Abraham* was, from what *Abraham* did. But that teſtimony of God, *Now I know*, is but now I have made it known; or, now I know that in the fruit, which I knew before in the root; now I ſee my fear in thy works, as before I ſaw it in thy faith. That place (*Deut.* 8. 2.) bears a like ſence; where *Moſes* beſpeaks *Iſrael* thus; *Thou ſhalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee theſe forty years in the wilderneſs to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldeſt keep his Commandments or no.*

The Lord needed not forty years, no, nor one minutes experience to make up his thoughts concerning that people; he knew what they were at firſt ſight, and what they would prove (even a ſtubborn, an unbelieving, and a backſliding people) before they were. God proved them, not to know what was in their hearts, but that we might know it; that, what he knew by his internal, immediate inſpection, others alſo might know by external obſervation. It wou'd not have been believed that they were ſo bad, if God had not drawn it out by that forty years variety of his diſpenſations towards them. Or *Moſes* deſcribes God after the manner of men, who prove things, that they may know them, whereas indeed God knows, and then proves them.

Thirdly, Conſidering how *Job* comes in with this aſſurance [*Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*] to relieve himſelf in his diſtreſs, we may obſerve,

> That, *It is matter of higheſt conſolation to the Saints, to know and remember that God knows them.*

That God knows their hearts and lives, is the joy of their hearts and lives. How rejoycingly doth *David* ſpeak (*Pſal.* 139. 1, 2.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me, thou knoweſt my down-ſitting and mine up-riſing,* &c. He ſeems to be as glad that God knew him, as that God would ſave him. *My witneſs is in heaven, and my record is on high,* was *Job*'s retort again, when his friends ſcorned him (*chap.* 16. 19.) There are no miſtakes in God; he will give right evidence, as a witneſs; and a righteous ſentence, as Judge.

Again, That God knows, aſſures us,

Firſt, That what we have done, ſhall not be forgotten; *God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love,* &c. *Heb.* 6. 10. It aſſures us,

Secondly, That we ſhall not be miſs-interpreted for what we have done. The reaſon why many men have ſo ill an opinion of others, is, becauſe they have ſo little knowledge of them. Ignorance makes as corrupt gloſſes, as unſound deciſions upon perſons and actions, as it doth up-Texts or Queſtions. Some pervert knowingly and againſt light, but moſt pervert ignorantly and for want of light. God knows us perfectly, and he never acts againſt his knowledge. It aſſures us,

Thirdly, That we ſhall be well accepted and rewarded. Though men make ill requital, and pay in bad, yea, in baſe coyn; yet every man ſhall receive of God according to what he is, and what his works are (*Gen.* 4. 7.) *If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted?*

Laſtly, It is a comfort to us, while we are uncertain about our own eſtates, to know that God knoweth us. God hath a better opinion of ſome men then they have of themſelves. Some do not think, but judge and conclude themſelves wicked, when God knoweth that they are not wicked. *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

Fourthly, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* Hence obſerve,

> *To do wickedly, or to be wicked, is inconſiſtent with Grace.*

If *Job* had been a wicked man, he had been a loſt man. Sin is not inconſiſtent with Grace, but wickedneſs is.

But you will ſay, What is wickedneſs? And when is a man ſo ſinful that he is to be numbered among the wicked? To clear that, becauſe *Job* ventures all upon it.

I anſwer; Firſt, In every wicked man ſin reigneth, that is, ſin hath not only a being in him, but dominion over him; he yieldeth ready and free obedience to it, as to his *natural Lord*: not a forced and involuntary obedience only, as to a *Tyrant*. Our committing of ſin gives not the rule to ſin; but our ſubmitting to it. As a man may do many good things, and yet Grace not reign and rule in his heart; ſo it is poſſible for a man to do many evil things, and yet not have ſin rule in his heart. A man may lay by the actings of a ſin, and yet that be a reigning ſin; and a man may fall into the act of ſin, and yet that no reigning ſin. The reign of ſin or of grace are chiefly ſeen in that profeſſed ſubjection or reſignation of our ſelves to the dictates and commands of grace or ſin. *No man can be at once Gods ſon, and ſins ſervant; no, nor at once a ſervant to both.*

Secondly, A wicked man is a cuſtomary ſinner, he driveth a trade in ſin. A godly man (poſſibly) may commit the ſame ſin again, yet the cuſtom is broken, becauſe he putteth in a plea againſt ſin, and often moveth God for power, not only againſt, but over it; if he attain not this bleſſed victory, yet he ceaſeth not to complain, and pray, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* When ſhall I be delivered from this burden and bondage of corruption? When ſhall it once be? O that it might once be! Wicked men are ſo far from pleading againſt, that they uſually plead for their ſins; and labour more to make excuſes and apologies for them, then to get power and victory over them. They inſtead of making preparation to reſiſt the luſts of the fleſh, make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof.

Thirdly, A wicked man preſerves in himſelf a purpoſe to ſin, while he ſeems to pray and proteſt againſt his ſin. He is (as *Auguſtine* confeſſed of himſelf before his converſion) afraid God ſhould grant his prayer, while he prayeth that his corruptions may be mortified. He may put up prayers againſt ſin, but he puts up no deſires againſt it. As cuſtom is the rode of our lives, ſo purpoſes are the rode of our hearts. What a mans purpoſes are, ſuch the movings of his heart are (*Iſa.* 56. 12.) *To morrow ſhall be as to day, and much more abundant,* ſay they in their beaſtly abuſe of the creatures; we have been drunk to day, and hope to be more to morrow. (*Ezek.* 11. 21.) *Their heart doth go after the heart of their abominable things,* that is, the inclinations and reſolutions of their hearts go or walk after their abominations. A godly man ſinneth, but he doth not purpoſe to ſin; his purpoſes are not to ſin, holineſs is his way; and as ſin is it ſelf a by-way, ſo it is beſides his way. The honeſt Traveller intends to keep ſtraight on to his journeyes end; if he miſs his way at any time, he miſſes his purpoſe. The Robber skulks about in by-wayes, and comes not into the Rode, but to find and ſeize upon his prey. *Peter* denied Chriſt, but did *Peter* purpoſe to deny Chriſt? No, *Peter* purpoſed not to deny Chriſt; yea, *Peter* promiſed not to deny Chriſt. *Peter* reſolved that he would die rather then deny Chriſt, and yet he denied Chriſt; *Peter* did not go out and make a bargain with the Scribes and Phariſees, as *Judas* did, to betray his Maſter. *Peter was betrayed when he denied his Maſter.* *Peter* was ſuddenly attached with a violent temptation, and arreſted with baſe fear. He did not deny Chriſt becauſe he reſolved to do it, but becauſe he reſolved ſo much not to do it, without due dependance upon Chriſt for power not to do it. A godly man may have ſome deliberations about ſin, yet no reſolutions. He may deliberate upon the acting of ſome ſin, when the occaſion is given, but he doth not deliberate upon the finding of occaſions to provoke him to the acting of ſin. *David* did not go up to his houſe-top to invite an incentive of Luſt, though he there met with one.

Fourthly, Wickedneſs carrieth clearneſs, yea, fulneſs of conſent in ſin. A wicked man may have many checks at ſin from his Conſcience, but he hath none from his Will. And a wicked man may have ſome motions to good from his Conſcience, but he hath none from his Will. When a wicked man abſtains from doing evil he wills it; and when he doth good, he wills it not. In Nature, the act and the conſent go both to evil; *I do evil, and I will do it, is the ſtubborn voyce of corrupt Nature.* In Grace, though the act goes ſometimes to evil, yet the conſent doth not. *The evil which I would not, that I do, is the mournful voyce of Grace.* In Glory, both act and conſent go to good, and neither of them to any evil. *The good which I will, I do; the evil which I would not, I do not; ſhall be for ever the triumphant voyce of Glory.* When the Apoſtle *Paul* (Rom. 7.) bewailed his own bondage under corruption, he yet profeſſed that whatever evil he did, he conſented not to do it. And though there may be ſome kind of conſent in the ſinning of a godly man, yet it is not ſuch a conſent as is in a wicked man: For as a wicked man, though he may ſometimes ſhew his willingneſs, and give his conſent to do good, to hear the Word, to pray, *&c.* Yet it is not a clear, a full and free conſent; the will never comes up heartily in it: ſo there may be ſome kind of conſent, a negative conſent in a godly man doing evil, he may not (as to that act) reſiſt or deny; as when a Queſtion is put to the vote, a man who doth not affirm, may be ſaid to give ſome conſent, when he ſuſpends his voyce, and doth not openly oppoſe.

Thus a godly man when a temptation cometh, never gives a direct *yea* of conſent, yet ſometimes not giving his *no*, there is a kind of conſent, a middle act, not a clear or determinate act of conſent. Now a wicked man, as he is *taken captive by the Devil at his will* (2 Tim. 2. 26.) that is, at Satans will, the Devil takes him captive when he pleaſeth: ſo alſo at his own will; He is pleaſed to be taken captive by the Devil.

Eram gratis malus & malitiæ meæ cauſa nulla erat niſi malitia. Auguſt. *l.*3. *confeſſ. c.*4.

Fifthly, Where there is a wickedneſs in ſinning, there is delight in ſin. Pure delight in ſin is impureſt wickedneſs. To diſobey for nought is the moſt wicked diſobedience, as to ſerve God for nought is the moſt holy ſervice. What is it which ſheweth the eminency of grace? Is it not the joy which the ſoul finds in the wayes of grace? When we can delight in the Law of God, as his Law, abſtracted from ends and fruits. When it is meat and drink to us to do the will of God, though we ſuffer hunger, and are ready to ſtarve in doing it, here is godlineſs at the higheſt: and when any delight in ſin as ſin, as contrary to the will of God, abſtracted from ends and fruits, here is wickedneſs at the higheſt. To act in ſuch a degree of ſin, is inconſiſtent with any degree of grace.

Job appeals to the teſtimony of God, that he had not ſinned in any of theſe degrees, while he ſaith, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.*

Fifthly obſerve, *A godly man may know that he is ſo, and be confident of it.*

He that ſaith, God knoweth he is not wicked, knoweth it himſelf. For though the Lord hath a knowledge of us beyond ours, though he knows us, better then we know our ſelves, yet no man can tell the Lord, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, but he who knows that he is not. The excellency of our condition conſiſts in being godly, the comfort of it conſiſts in knowing that we are godly. When *David* offers himſelf to the tryal (*Pſal.* 139. 24.) *Search me, O Lord, and ſee if there be any way of wickedneſs in me*; He ſpeaks not as doubting whether he were wicked or no, but as being aſſured that he was not. As if he had ſaid, There are many weakneſſes in me I know, but I know not of any wickedneſs. He that offers himſelf to Gods ſearch for his wickedneſs, gives a ſtrong argument of his own uprightneſs. The beſt of the Saints may be at a loſs ſometimes for their aſſurances, and not know they are good. They may ſtand ſometimes hovering between heaven and earth, yea, between heaven and hell, as uncertain to which they ſhall be accounted. Yet many of the Saints are fully perſwaded they are Saints, and ſit with Chriſt in heavenly places, while they are wandering here upon the earth. A godly man may know this two wayes;

First, By the workings of Grace in his heart.

Secondly, By the teſtimony of the Spirit with his heart.

Firſt, By the workings of grace in his heart (1 *Joh.* 2. 3.) *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments:* and (*Chap.* 3. 14.) *We know that we are paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren.* There may be ſuch workings of grace in the heart, as may amount to an evidence of grace. *What our being is, is diſcernable in our workings.* The word is as clear as light, that our juſtification may have a light or evidence in our ſanctification, though no cauſe or foundation there. Grace is the image of Chriſt ſtamped upon the ſoul, and they who reflecting upon their ſouls, ſee the image of Chriſt there, may be ſure that Chriſt is theirs. Chriſt hath given all himſelf to thoſe to whom he hath given this part of himſelf.

Secondly, This may be known by the teſtimony of the Spirit with the heart (2 *Cor.* 5. 5.) *He that hath wrought us for the ſelf ſame thing is God.* God ſets up a frame of holineſs in every believer, He hath wrought us; and how are we aſſured that he hath? *Who alſo hath given us the earneſt of his Spirit.* The graces of the Spirit are a real earneſt of the Spirit, yet they are not alwayes an evidential earneſt; therefore an earneſt is often ſuperadded to our graces. There is a three-fold work of the Spirit.

Firſt, To conveigh and plant grace in the ſoul.

Secondly, To act and help us to exerciſe the graces, which are planted there.

Thirdly, To ſhine upon and enlighten thoſe graces, or to give an earneſt of thoſe graces; This laſt work the Spirit fulfils two wayes.

Firſt, By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work.

Secondly, By preſence and influence, which is an immediate work. This the Apoſtle calls *witneſs-bearing*, (1 Joh. 5. 8.) *There are three that bear witneſs in earth, The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood.* The Spirit brings in the witneſs of the Water and of the Blood, which is his mediate work; but beſides and above theſe he gives a diſtinct witneſs of his own, which is his immediate work, and is in a way of peculiarity and tranſcendency, called the witneſs of the Spirit. Hence that of the Apoſtle *Paul, We have not received the ſpirit of the world, but we have received the Spirit which us of Chriſt, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. The things freely given may be received by us, and yet the receit of them not known to us, therefore we receive the Spirit, that we may know what is given us, and what we have received. The Spirit doth (as it were) put his hand to our receits, and his ſeal alſo, whence he is ſaid, *To ſeal us up to the day of redemption*, Epheſ. 4. 30.

Sixthly obſerve, *A godly man dares appeal to God himſelf, that he is not wicked.*

He dares ſtand before God to juſtifie his ſincerity, though he dares not ſtand to juſtifie himſelf before God: *Job* had often laid all thoughts of his own righteouſneſs in the duſt, but he alwayes ſtands up for his own uprightneſs. *God is my witneſs* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, Rom. 9. 1.) *whom I ſerve in my ſpirit in the Goſpel of his Son*; I ſerve God in my ſpirit, and God knows that I do ſo, I dare appeal unto him that it is ſo, *God is my witneſs.* When Chriſt put that queſtion, & drove it home upon *Peter* thrice, *Simon, loveſt thou me? Lord,* (ſaith he) *Thou knoweſt all things, Thou knoweſt that I love thee* (Joh. 21.) as if he had ſaid, I will not give teſtimony of my ſelf, thou ſhalt not have it upon my word, but upon thine own knowledge. It were eaſie for me to ſay, *Maſter I love thee with all my heart, with all my ſoul*; but I refer my ſelf to thy own boſom, *Thou knoweſt I love thee.* So when *Hezekiah* lay (as he thought) upon his death-bed, he turned himſelf to the wall, deſiring God to look upon the integrity of his life, *Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth* (Iſa. 38. 3.) I do not go to the world for their good word of me, I reſt not in what my Subjects or Neighbor Princes ſay of me, Lord, it is enough for me, that what I have been, and what I am, is laid up ſafe in the treaſury of thy thoughts. This brings ſtrong conſolation, when we take not up the teſtimony of men, nor reſt in the good opinion of our brethren, but can have God himſelf to make *affidavit*, or bear witneſs with us and for us. That ſuch a man will ſay, I am an honeſt man, that ſuch a man will give his word for me, is cold comfort; but when the ſoul can ſay, God will give his word for me, *The Lord knows that I am not wicked*; here's enough to warm our hearts when the love of the world is waxen ſo cold, and their tongues ſo frozen with uncharitableneſs, that they will not ſpeak a good word of us, how much good ſoever they know by us.

Seventhly, Conſider the condition wherein *Job* was, when he ſpake this, he was upon the rack, and as it were, under an inquiſition, God laid his hand extream hard upon him, yet at that time, even then he ſaith, *Lord, thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* Hence obſerve,

A man of an upright heart, and a good conſcience, will not be brought to think that God hath ill thoughts of him, how much evil ſo ever God brings upon him.

The actings of God toward us are often full of changes and turnings, but the thoughts of God never change. A ſoul may be afflicted till he is weary of himſelf, yet he knows God is not weary of him. Whomſoever he hath once made good, he cannot but for ever eſteem good; and all ſuch a mans afflictions, are either to ſhew how good God hath made him, or to make him better.

Eightly, *Job* was under as bad thoughts of man, as (almoſt) any man ever was, when he ſpake thus to God, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* Hence obſerve,

That all the hard cenſures and miſconſtructions of men, cannot beat an upright heart out of this hold, that God loveth him, and hath a good opinion of him.

Let men think what they will of him, and judge him as ſeverely as they pleaſe; this moves him not at all to think that God judges him ſo too. He can ſee the love of God through all the anger of the creatures. He likes not his condition the better, becauſe ſome men tell him it is good; nor the worſe, becauſe any man tells him it is ill, while he finds himſelf bottomed upon the free grace of God, and cheared with the clearneſs of his own integrity. *The gates of Hell ſhall not* (much leſs ſhall the uncharitableneſs of men) *prevail againſt ſuch a man.* Happy is he, who can ſay unto God, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked,* while men are ſaying, thou art wicked. And how miſerable is he, whoſe heart tells him he is wicked, though men ſay, ſurely thou art good. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things* (1 *Joh.*3.20.) Doth conſcience tell you that you are wicked? God can tell you ſo much more. It is a woful thing for any man to be under the juſt condemnation of his own heart, though it is more woful to be under the flatteries of his own heart. *It is bad enough to be daubed by others with untempered morter, it is far worſe to be a ſelf-dauber*; No man hath cauſe to rejoyce in what himſelf, or be troubled at what others ſay of him, unleſs God ſay ſo too.

Two things are further obſervable from theſe words;

Firſt, *There is no medium between a godly and a wicked man.*

Every man is one of theſe two. Some are called civil honeſt men; many conceit that theſe are good men indeed, and not a few, that theſe are in a middle ſtate between good and evil: but the truth is, there is nothing between good and evil, light and darkneſs: there is no *medium* of participation between theſe extreams. *Solomon* (Eccleſ. 9. 2.) ſets all men in two orders, *All things come alike unto all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good, to the clean, and to the unclean, to him that ſweareth, and to him that feareth an oath.* Note by the way, he doth not put the diſtinction betwen him that ſweareth, and him that ſweareth not, but between him *that ſweareth, and him that feareth an oath.* There are many who are not ſwearers (ſwearing is deboyſery, and ſo inconſiſtent with civility) who yet do not fear an oath. It is better to fear to do evil, then not to do evil. This diviſion runs through the whole world. Good and evil (in a remiſs degree) mingle in the ſame perſon, but no mans perſon is in a middle ſtate between good and evil.

Secondly, *God hath a certain knowledge concerning the ſtate of every man.*

This is a tranſcendent, beyond any knowledge which man hath of man; God doth not only know what is in us, but what is not in us; not only what we are, but what we are not. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* The reaſon why a negative oath is not admitted among men, is, becauſe no man can ſwear ſo in knowledge. None can ſpeak negatively of another, knowingly, but God alone. We may ſay of a man, there is that in him for which it is meet for us to judge him godly. But it is impoſſible from any outward evidence to conclude peremptorily he is not wicked. It is more to ſay of a man, he is not wicked, then to ſay he is godly. *It is eaſier to know what is, then what is not.* As it is in voting, ſo in knowing: Negative votes are ſtrongeſt. To ſay ſuch a thing ſhall not paſs or be done, imports the greateſt power: ſo negative knowledge is the higheſt; to ſay ſuch a thing is not, or ſuch a man did it not, imports a certain knowledge, a knowledge ſo certain, as is applicable to none, but God himſelf, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.*

And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.

נצל *In Piel.* נצל *Spoliavit, diripuit, vel ſignificat furto ſe eripuit.*

What none? Then were our condition ſad indeed? *None* excludes meer creatures onely; Chriſt can *deliver* us out of the hand of God; and *Job* believed Chriſt had delivered him, when he ſaid, *There is none that can deliver.*

The hand of God is the power of God; and to deliver out of his hand, is to fetch out or free from his power. The word which we tranſlate to deliver, notes delivering either by power or by policy, by ſtrength or by wit. A priſoner is delivered ſometimes by reſcue or open violence, ſometimes by ſtealth or ſecret conveyance; he picks a lock or breaks a door to deliver himſelf out of the hand of man. But neither of theſe wayes can any man deliver himſelf, or get deliverance out of the hand of God. There is no difficulty in the interpretation of theſe words, but there is ſome difference about the intent of them.

Ne mea quidē integritas, cujus tu mihi teſtis es, facit ut hac plaga liberer ut qui nihil facto meo corā te promereri poſſim. Jun.

Firſt, Some, for *none* tranſlate *nothing*, and ſo joyn theſe words with the former, as an argument of the inſufficiency of mans righteouſneſs; *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked,* yet there is *nothing* (in my righteouſneſs) *that can deliver me out of thine hand.* As *Paul* ſaid (1 Cor. 4.4.) *I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified.* So *Job* ſaith, Lord, Thou knoweſt nothing by me, yet hereby I cannot be delivered.

Secondly, Theſe words may be expounded as tending to move compaſſion, and to ſtir up bowels of pity in God toward *Job*; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, why doeſt thou deal thus ſeverely with me, when there is none that can deliver me out of thine hand? who can reſcue me, while thou layeſt thine arreſt upon me? Thou maiſt keep me under reſtraint as long as thou wilt; I cannot be fetcht off, or out, and wilt thou deal thus hardly with me? Wilt thou puniſh me thus?* Whom we cannot hold long in our hands, we are apt to deal more roughly with, while they are in our hands, and to take our peniworths out of them, while we have them. And 'tis uſual with great Princes ſpeedily to ſeal the Writ of execution againſt an eminent offender, when they hear or ſuſpect many potent ſuiters will move for his pardon, and ſolicite his deliverance out of the hand of juſtice. *Job* ſeems to ſpeak in alluſion to ſuch, *If there were any who could deliver me out of thine hand, or pull me away from thee by ſtrength, or by entreaty, I ſhould wonder the leſs at thy ſeverity.*

Non eſt qui clamat, Deus optime, ne ſtringas gladium, ne ſtrictum extendas in populū tuū.

God doth ſometimes even beſpeak the interceſſion of others, and complains that none come in to deliver a people or a perſon out of his hand. When he was about to deſtroy *Sodome* he tells it unto *Abraham*, probably, for that very end, that *Abraham* might intercede for *Sodom*, and (at leaſt) get *Lot* out of his hand. When God was about to execute his judgments upon *Jeruſalem*, *He ſaw and there was no man, and wondred that there was no interceſſor,* none to take him off from deſtroying that people (*Iſa.*59.16.) The Prophet complains in words of the ſame importance (*Chap.*64.7.) *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee.* Friends, ſeeing a father go out haſtily to correct his child, riſe preſently, or ſtir up themſelves to take hold of the father, or to mediate for the child, Pray ſpare him for this time, and hold your hand: but ſaith the Prophet, *There is none that will ſtir up himſelf to take hold of God.* He is going out in wrath, and no man puts him in mind of mercy, with that cry of another Prophet, *O ſpare thy people, and give not thine heritage to reproach!* When *Abraham* was ready to ſlay *Iſaac* upon the altar, when his hand was ſtretched out to fetch the fatal blow, juſt then, did the Angel take hold of his ſword, and delivered *Iſaac* out of his hand. God ſaith to *Moſes* (Exod. 32. 10.) *Let me alone*; God was about to deſtroy that People, *Moſes* would not permit him, he ſeeks to deliver *Iſrael* out of the revenging hand of God, by that holy violence of Prayer and ſupplication.

Laſtly, Others look upon *Job*, as breathing out a very heroick and magnanimous ſpirit in theſe words. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, Thou knoweſt and thou ſhalt know, that I am not wicked, though none deliver or take me out of thine hand, Thou ſhalt find me holding mine integrity, as long as I hold my life, I am reſolved to honour thee, whatſoever thou doeſt with me.* And ſo he refutes the charge of Satan: Satan ſaid, *Touch his fleſh and his bone, and he will curſe thee to thy face:* No, ſaith *Job*, though he take away my fleſh and my bones, yet I will not curſe him to his face, no, nor ſpeak an ill word of him behind his back. Though I ſhould never be delivered, yet God ſhall never be blaſphemed. Upon the whole, obſerve,

That, there is no means on earth can reſcue us out of the hands of God.

I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand, Deut. 32 39. Till God diſcharge us there's no eſcaping: none can force us out of his hand, whatſoever is in theirs; power cannot, policy cannot, riches cannot: we cannot bribe our ſelves out of the ſight, or beyond the ſtroke of divine juſtice. A golden key will not open Gods priſon door. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath*, and in ſome dayes of wrath, prayer it ſelf cannot prevail. Then take heed how ye fall into the hands of God. No wiſe man will run into his diſpleaſure, from whom there is no deliverance, but at his own pleaſure. See more of this point, *Chap.* 9. 12.

VERS. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Thine hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about; and yet thou doeſt deſtroy me.

Remember I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into duſt again?

Haſt thou not poured me out like milk, and crudled me like cheeſe?

Thou haſt cloathed me with skin and fleſh, and haſt fenced me with bones and ſinews.

Thou haſt granted me life and favour, and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.

And theſe things haſt thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee,

AT *Verſ.* 3. of this Chapter, we found *Job* queſtioning with the Lord, *Is it good for thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs, That thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands?* In theſe words he inſiſteth upon, and illuſtrateth that argument, by fitting it to his own condition; as if he had ſaid, *Seeing thou wilt not deſpiſe the work of thy hands, Why ſhouldeſt thou deſpiſe me? Am not I the work of thy hands? Thine hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about, and yet thou doeſt deſtroy me.* The whole context argues out this point: wherein we may obſerve,

Firſt, His forming or making, ſet down in general at *Verſ.* 8. *Thine hands have made me, and faſhoned me together round about.*

Secondly, The matter out of which he was formed and made, at *Verſ.* 9. *Remember I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay.*

Thirdly, His forming is drawn out in particulars, Wherein we have,

Firſt, His Conception at *Verſ.* 10. *Haſt thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me as cheeſe?*

Secondly, The Conjunction or ſetting together of his parts, at *Verſ.* 11. *Thou haſt clothed me with ſkin and fleſh, and haſt fenced me with bones and ſinews.*

Thirdly, The quickning of his parts thus joyned and ſet together, at *Verſ.* 12. *Thou haſt granted me life.*

Fourthly, The preſervation of his life, in the ſame *Verſe*, *Thou haſt given me life*, and (not only ſo, but) *favour, and thy viſitation doth preſerve my ſpirit.*

Laſtly, We have *Job's* ſtrength of aſſurance, or his aſſertion concerning all this, at *Verſ.* 13. *Theſe things haſt thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee*; as if he had ſaid, *Lord, Thou knoweſt all is truth which I have ſpoken.*

There are three opinions concerning the connection or tie of theſe words with thoſe that went before.

Firſt, Some conceive that *Job* perſiſteth in the ſame matter handled, in the words immediately foregoing, exalting the knowledge of God concerning man upon this ground, becauſe God made man. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* How did *Job* know that? He muſt needs know what man is, who made man; *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me together round about*; foraſmuch as I am thy work, a piece of thy framing, ſurely, thou knoweſt what thou haſt framed: thou who haſt knowledge enough to make me, haſt a perfect knowledge of what thou haſt made. We may joyn it alſo with the latter clauſe; *None can deliver out of thy hand*; Why? *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me.* Is it poſſible for the work to deliver it ſelf out of the hand of him who wrought it? Is that which is formed too ſtrong for him that formed it, when as the ſame hand which gave it form, gave it ſtrength? We find this argument as to the former part (*Pſal.* 94. 9.) where from the work of God in our natural conſtitution, the holy Pen-man proves the fulneſs of his knowledge concerning us in every condition; *Underſtand ye brutiſh* (he ſpeaks to men, who acted more like beaſts then men) *He that planted the ear ſhall he not hear? He that formed the eye ſhall he not ſee?* As if he had ſaid, He that made the ear, is all hearing; and he who formed the eye, is all eye, all ſight. The argument holds ſtrong from Gods power in forming man, to his power of knowing man, and to his power of diſpoſing man. That's the firſt way of dependance.

Secondly, *Job* may be conceived, as rendering an account of thoſe things about which he had taken the boldneſs to interrogate the Lord, at *Verſ.* 3. Here he anſwers his own queſtion; as if he had ſaid, now I ſee well enough why thou maiſt deſpiſe and deſtroy thy work, *It is thy work*; I will go no further for a reaſon to vindicate thee in breaking me to pieces then this, *That thine hands have ſet me together: Thou haſt made me*, and thou mayeſt unmake me; thou haſt raiſed me up, and thou mayeſt pull me down. So the copulative (*Vau*) in the original which we tranſlate by the adverſative, *yet*, is taken for a conjunction cauſal; and ſo it is frequently uſed in Scripture (*Gen.* 30. 20.) *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return*; The ſence is, *Duſt thou art, therefore to duſt thou ſhalt return* (Exod. 15. 23, 24.) *The waters were bitter, and the people murmured*; that is, *The waters were bitter, therefore the people murmured*; thus here, *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me, therefore thou doeſt deſtroy me.* He that builds the houſe at his own charge, and by his own power, may ruine it at his own pleaſure.

Jam teneo hujus rei cauſam; cum enim manus illius me fecerint, jure ſuo poteſt Deus me deſtruere. Cajet.

Thirdly, The words may carry the ſence of a ſtrong motive to prevail with God, to handle *Job* more gently, or to deal more tenderly with him; Why? The Lord had beſtowed much care and coſt to make and faſhion him: therefore he will ſurely pity and ſpare him. There is a natural motion of the heart in every agent, towards the preſervation of that which proceedeth from it. Creation is followed with providence. If a ſpeechleſs and liveleſs creature could ſpeak and underſtand, it would argue with it's Maker (in *Job's* caſe) as *Job* doth, *Doeſt thou yet deſtroy me? David* ſtrengthens his heart to ask good at the hands of God, becauſe he had ſpoken good concerning him (2 *Sam.* 7. 27. *Thou, O Lord of Hoſts, God of* Iſrael, *haſt revealed to thy ſervant, ſaying, I will build thee an houſe, therefore hath thy ſervant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.* Now, if *David* were not only emboldened to ask, but even aſſured to receive mercy, becauſe God promiſed to build him a houſe, that is, to proſper his eſtate and family; how much more might *Job* be encouraged to pray for, and expect mercy from the hand of God, becauſe God had already framed and built that natural houſe, his body? The Prophet *Iſaiah* being about to plead with God for new mercies, preſents him with a catalogue of his old mercies (*Chap.* 63. 7, 8, 9.) *I will mention the loving kindneſſes of the Lord, and the praiſes of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath done unto us; and the great goodneſs towards the houſe of* Iſrael, *which he hath beſtowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindneſſes*, &c. Having thus at large told the Lord what he had done, the Prophet (in a holy zeal) contends with him about what he was doing (*Verſ.* 15.) *Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holineſs, and of thy glory; where is thy zeal, and thy ſtrength, the ſounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards me, are they reſtrained? Doubtleſs thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us*, &c. As if he had ſaid, That great Sea of thy goodneſs, hath ſent out abundant ſtreams of good things heretofore, and are all thoſe ſtreams now dried up, and the ſprings exhauſted? What's become of thy zeal and ſtrength, and compaſſions? Are they all ſpent and gone? Thus *Job* ſeems to plead here, thine hands have made me, thou haſt done thus and thus for me, and wilt thou now deſtroy me? According to this interpretation the latter clauſe of the verſe is rendered by an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me, and doeſt thou yet deſtroy me?* What, thou my Maker deſtroy me! *Remember, I beſeech thee* (ſo in the next verſe) *that thou haſt made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into duſt again?* Thus by a ſpecification of the great outward benefits which he had received from the hand of God, he ſeems to aggravate his preſent ſorrows, and to ſollicite future mercies.

Ex ſua formatione artificis miſericordiam movet, & ex commemorato priſtino beneficio, alia denuò efflagitandi anſam arripit. Pined.

Et ſic repentè præcipitas me. Vulg.

Antitheſi beneficiorum ampliſſimorū in ſe à Domino collatorum, exaggerat iram qua nunc in ſe deſævit, ac afflictiones, quibus exagitatur. Jun.

Thine hands.] Hands are often aſcribed to God, as was ſhewed, *verſ.* 3. Many things are made with the hand; the maker of all things is withont hands, and yet he is all hand. Hence all things that were made, are ſaid to be made by the hands of God; not only the forming of man, but the forming of the Heavens and the Earth, is the work of his hand, *Pſal.* 102. 25. *Pſal.* 95. 5. Both are put together. (*Iſa.* 48. 13.) *Mine hand alſo hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath ſpanned the heavens.* Whereſoever the great works of God are expreſt, a hand uſually is expreſt as the inſtrument working them, yet his hand wrought the leaſt as well as the greateſt, a worm of the earth; as well as man upon the earth, or the Angels in heaven.

The heads of men have run into great variety of opinion about theſe hands forming man.

Ambroſ. *in Hexā. Hom.* 11. *Baſil,* &c.

Firſt, Many of the Ancient underſtand by the hands of God, *The Son of God, the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, and the holy Spirit of God, who is the third*; *Thine hands have made me*, that is, the Son and the holy Spirit, who were aſſiſtant to, and of council with the Father of the Creation of man, *And God ſaid, Let us make man in our image, after our own likeneſs*, Gen. 1. 26.

Others expound hands literally and formal'y, not as if God had hands (that's below their conceit) but thus, it hath been ſaid of old, that when God at firſt formed man, the Son took upon him an outward ſhape, or the ſhape of a man; and ſo (ſay they) Chriſt (not made man, but) in the form of man, formed man.

Cauſis ſecundis veluti quibuſdam manibus utitur Deus ad producendas res ſublunares, Aquin.

Thirdly, The hands of God are all ſecond cauſes, which God uſeth to the production of any effect. All hands work for God, they work for him, while they are ſet a work againſt him; and ſo may be call *The hands of God.* Mans making ſince the Creation, is not an immediate work; the Creation of the firſt man was. Yet it is ſo much the work of God ſtill, that every man is the work of his hands, as well as the firſt man. All inferiour cauſes concurring to the making of man, are the hands by which God maketh man.

Fourthly, The hands of God, are generally taken for the power and wiſdom of God. The hand of power acts, what the hand of wiſdom doth contrive. As the hand is often put for power, ſo to put any thing into the hand of another, is to put it into his power. That grant which was made to Satan at the beginning of this book, runs in this ſtrain, *Behold, he* (meaning *Job*) *is in thine hand* (that is, thou mayeſt do with them what thou wilt) *only ſave his life.* (Ch. 2. 6.)

The Schoolmen determine the hands of God to be the *underſtanding and the will of God*, which they call, *the executive power of God*; by theſe he determines what ſhall be done, and doth what he pre-determines. The very decree and purpoſe of God, is called the hand of God (*Act.* 4. 28.) *Of a truth againſt thy holy child Jeſus, whom thou haſt anointed, both* Herod *and* Pontius Pilate *with the* Gentiles *and people of* Iſrael *were gathered together for to do whatſoever thy hand, and thy counſel determined before to be done. Gods hand* was the ſoveraign power of God over-ruling thoſe evil inſtruments to fulfil his holy counſels, while they intended only to fulfil their own wicked counſels.

Tu pro tua poteſtate tuoque jure. Bez.

We may beſt interpret *Job* in the fourth ſenſe, *thine hands have made me and faſhioned me*, that is, I am made and faſhioned by thy power and wiſdom, I am a piece of thy forming. None but the only wiſe, and all-powerful God could produce ſuch an effect as I am.

Have made me and faſhioned me.

Here are two words which ſome diſtinguiſh by referring the one to the body, the other to the ſoul. We need not be ſo accurate about theſe words. But thus much is plainly noted in them, that the Lord was exceeding accurate about this work, the *faſhioning of man.* Both words have their ſpecial elegancies.

עצב *In ſua prima ſignificatione denotat dolore afficere.*

The firſt which we tranſlate *made*, ſignifies more then to *make*, it ſignifies to make exactly and curiouſly. It is a word proper to Artificers who work, or ſhould work with an equal mixture of diligence and knowledge, of pains and skill: Artificers mingle their heads and their hands in every thing they undertake, and beſtow more ſtudy then toil upon their works.

Panis anxietate magna & labore partus.

This word is alſo tranſlated to grieve, vex, or put one to trouble. The perverſe carriage of the people of *Iſrael* toward the Spirit of God, is expreſſed by it (*Iſa.* 63. 10.) *They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit.* And *that bread of ſorrows*, that is, bread gotten by ſorrowful or hard labour is delivered in this term (*Pſ.* 127. 2.) See a further explication of the word. *Chap.* 9. *verſ.* 27.

Deus non ſe fatigavit in homine condendo, ſed de Deo Scriptura hominis more loquitur, quaſi ſumma cura & anxietate ad eum formandum uſus eſſet Deus, ut nihil ad ejus perfectionē deeſſet. Mer.

God is not put to any pain at all in making man, he doth all his works with infinite delight and eaſe. *Nothing is hard to him who can do all things: Omnipotency never meets with any difficulty.* But God is expreſt in making man by a word, ſignifying ſolicitouſneſs and painful care, implying that man is made as thoſe things are, upon which man beſtows greateſt pains and care. Man doth not look like a peice of work ſlubbred over ſlightly, or clapt up in haſte, The moſt wiſe God, who ſhewed his *manifold wiſdom* in the work of redemption, ſhewed much of his wiſdom in the work of creation; he made man (as we ſpeak) in Print.

Manus tuæ dolore afficiunt me, quæ fecerunt me. Jun.

A learned tranſlator renders, *thy hands put me to pain, which have made me*; as if *Job* had complained here of the pain which God put him to after he had made him, rather then exalted God for the pains he ſeemed to have taken, when he made him. But we may better keep to our rendering, *Thine hands have made me, and,*

עשה *Eſt aliquid facere, ſed ornatè & politè, rem omnibus modis perfectā efficere.*

Faſhioned me.] The *making* of man importeth his being: The *faſhioning* of him, the outward formality of his being. Man receives not only his nature, but his figure from God. The word ſignifies to trim or poliſh, to do a thing curiouſly and compleatly (*Gen.* 1. 31.) *God ſaw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* He ſaw all with delight and higheſt content; for, he had put all into a compoſure of moſt exquiſite comlineſs and perfect beauty. *A due and proper faſhion is the eſſence of comlineſs. Thine hands have not only made me, but faſhioned me*, and that not in part only, but as it followeth,

יחר כנוב *Alludere videtur ad figuli rotam* Pined.

Artifices opus pene abſolutum curioſè circumſpiciunt, ut ſi quid oculis ingratum deprehendant, corrigant. Sanct.

Together round about.] This is no Pleonaſme or ſuperfluity of ſpeech; for though when a thing is made and faſhioned, it is ſuppoſed to be made round about, yet here to ſhew the exactneſs of God in making man, *Job* ſpeaks as if God had reſolved to have all of his own doing, and would not truſt the leaſt part of this work into the hand of any other, *thine hands have made me and faſhioned me together round about.* Which words are ſay ſome,

Firſt, An alluſion to the art of a Potter, who formeth and faſhioneth earthen Veſſels, turning them often about and about upon his wheel. Or it may be an alluſion to a Statuary, or to a Painter, who having a curious coſtly peice in hand, goes about it, and views it round on every ſide: that if any thing ſute not his eye, his fancy, or the rule of art, he may correct it.

Dicit in circuitu, quod corpus videtur animæ eſſe in circuitu, ſicut veſtimentum veſtito, aut ſicut domus habitatori. Aquin.

Secondly, Others conceive that this *round about*, is only a circumlocution for the body, becauſe the body encompaſſeth the ſoul round about, as a garment doth the body, or a houſe the inhabitant.

Totum dicit ut ad ſingula corporis membra referatur. Idem eſt quod Latinus dicit intus & extra, intus & in cute, à capite ad pedes.

Quantus, quantus ſum magna Dei cura & artificio elaboratus ſum. Pined.

Ὅτι ὅλον ἄνθρωπον ὑγιῆ ἐποίησα.

Thirdly, *Together round about*, is (as was touched before) me in every part, or all me. When ſome took offence at Chriſts healing of a ſick man upon the Sabbath-day, he anſwers, *Are ye angry at me, becauſe I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day?* (Joh. 7. 23.) or that I have made the whole man whole, not leaving any unſound limb about him? There is a like phraſe (*Luk.* 11. 40.) which may illuſtrate this; *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within alſo?* That is, did not he that made man, make him *together round about?* Did not he make whatſoever is man? So *Job's together round about*, is, as if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt made me within and without from head to foot; thou haſt made me all that I am; how great, how good, how ſtrong, how beautiful ſoever I am, I am made by thee. Thou* (as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 139. 5.) *haſt beſet or formed me* (ſo the Hebrew) *behind and before, aud laid thy hand upon me.*

צרתני *Formaſti me*

Per circuitū omnia etiā illa intelligamus quæ hominem cingunt, ſc. *facultates, liberos, familiam univerſam.*

Fourthly, By *together round about*, we may underſtand all without man, which man hath about him. Thou haſt made and faſhioned not only my body, but my eſtate, my honour, my friends, my children (children *round about the Table*, Pſal. 128. 3.) Thou haſt given me all that I have about me; whatſoever I am, I am made and faſhioned by thine hands; So the phraſe is uſed, *Chap.* 19. 9, 10. *He hath ſtript me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head, he hath deſtroyed me on every ſide*; or, he hath deſtroyed me round about, that is, all that he hath made round about me, he hath taken away from me; he hath ſtript me of all he once cloathed me with. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates much to that ſence; *Thou haſt faſhioned me and made me in every point*, that is, Look whatſoever I am conſiderable in, under what notion ſoever I may be taken, *Thou haſt made me and faſhioned me in all.* Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *The making of man now, is the work of God, as well as the making of the firſt man was.*

Natura nihil aliud eſt quam divinorum operum ordo. Brent.

Job doth not ſay, The Lord did once make and faſhion man, but, *thine hands have made me:* He aſcribeth his own making to God, as well as *Adam's*. The ſtructure and frame of Nature is the work of God, not of Nature. Nature and natural cauſes are nothing but the order in which God worketh; God turneth or changeth, ſtops or ſets them forward as he pleaſeth. Second cauſes work purely at the will of God, though means be uſed by man, yet the effect is Gods. Corn groweth in the field by the hand of God. You will ſay, What then doth the husbandman? What doth the earth? What doth the Sun and Rain? Do not all theſe work? All theſe are nothing but the order wherein, and by which the hand of God makes the Corn to grow; for let all thoſe ſecond cauſes work as hard as they can, yet the Corn grows not unleſs God ſpeak the word: His ſteps, not the husbandmans, drop fatneſs. It is he, not the Sun or the Rain, which makes the vallies ſtand thick with corn, to laugh and ſing. As in ſpirituals, ſo in naturals, he that planteth, and he that watereth, is nothing, but God that giveth the encreaſe. The Pſalmiſt ſpeaks excluſively of man, as to the point of mans making, and he puts an emphaſis upon it, as if a man did not take notice enough, if at all, of this, that in this man is nothing; *Know ye, that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our ſelves.* There may be a great deal of Grace acted in acknowledging God to be the author of Nature; yet I conceive the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks there rather of Gods making us in Grace, then in Nature.

Pſal. 100.3.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Job* recounting what God had done for him, brings in, *Thy hands have made me and faſhioned me*; then,

Our making and natural conſtitution are to be reckoned amongſt the great benefits received frem God.

Pſal. 139. 14. *I will praiſe thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* The making of man is a wonder; though the frequency of it makes the wonder little obſerved, yet the wonder is not (in it ſelf) the leſs. *David,* who had ſerious and holy thoughts about natural things, confeſſeth, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* A Heathen had three reaſons for which he uſed eſpecially to thank God. One of them was this, becauſe he had made him a man. If men who have but the light of nature, can ſee ſo much of God in nature, how much of God ſhould we ſee in nature, who have the light of Grace to ſee it by?

Thirdly, From the words put together, *Thine hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about*, obſerve,

The whole faſhion and fabrick of man is from God.

From which General take theſe Conſectaries.

See more of this point before at v.3. of this Chapter.

Firſt, Then do not undervalue the body, it is the work of God; *He hath faſhioned it round about.* We alwayes look upon and value our bodies too much, when we are proud of them; but we can never look upon or value our bodies too much, while we are thankful for them; and that we may be ſo, we ought to view every room of this houſe of clay, from ſtory to ſtory, from the Garret to the Cellar, from the Crown of the head to the Sole of the foot, that we ſeeing the wonderful works of God, may have our hearts enlarged in his praiſes. Some have put ignoble titles upon the body of man, calling it a priſon, or a ſhackle. The body is not a priſon, it is a palace; it is not a ſhackle, it is an Organ, a fit inſtrument for the ſoul to uſe and act by. If at any time the body be unuſeful to the ſoul, that proceeds from ſinful corruption, not from its natural conſtitution.

Τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν.

But the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 3.21.) calleth our body *a vile body*, or the body of our vileneſs. Mans body is not vile, as God made it (ſo it is a ſtately ſtructure) but as ſin hath made it. The Apoſtle calls it vile, not abſolutely, and in it ſelf, but relatively. The body cloathed with Mortality, is vile, compared with the body when it ſhall be cloathed with Glory, and that Glory like the Glory of the body of Chriſt, as is aſſured us; *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body.* The words carry an alluſion to thoſe who changing old and broken veſſels, deſire to have them wrought in the beſt and neweſt faſhion. The body of Chriſt is the richeſt piece of Gods work, and this ſhall be the pattern of ours; as here upon earth the ſpirits of Believers are of the ſame faſhion with Chriſts (the ſame mind is in the Saints which was in Chriſt, there is but one draught of Grace (in the main) upon the ſouls of all holy men, and that is a copy of Chriſts, his being the original) ſo in heaven the bodies of all believers ſhall be of the ſame faſhion with Chriſt. There ſhall be but one draught of Glory in the main (for degrees do not vary the kind) upon the body of Chriſt, and the bodies of all his members. In reference to this future change of the body, the body in its preſent ſtate, is vile.

Secondly, Hence it follows, That as we muſt not undervalue the frame of mans body in general, as imperfect; ſo we may not deſpiſe any for their ſpecial bodily imperfections. It is God who hath made and faſhioned them round about. It is ſaid (2 *Sam.* 5. 8.) that the blind and the lame were hated of *David's* ſoul. Yet to hate any for defects in the body, is a very great defect in the ſoul; and to contemn any for natural blemiſhes, is a ſpiritual blemiſh. How then could *David* hate the blind and the lame, and not ſin? or are we to number this among his ſins? There are two expoſitions of thoſe words, upon either of which we may clear the difficulty.

Firſt, That when *David* ſent to ſummon that Fort, the *Jebuſites*, who were the Defendants, truſting in the ſtrength of the place, told *David* in ſcorn, that he muſt firſt conquer the blind and the lame; as implying that blind and lame ſouldiers were Garriſon good enough to deal with his great Army upon the advantage of ſuch a Fortreſs.

Secondly, The blind and the lame may rather be the Idols and ſtrange gods which the *Jebuſites* worſhipped, of whoſe protection they were not the leſs confident, becauſe the *Jews* counted them blind and lame. As if they had ſaid, even theſe gods, which you call blind and lame, ſee well enough what ye are doing, and will come faſt enough, and too faſt for your eaſe, to our aid and ſuccour. Theſe blind and lame gods were juſtly hated of *David's* ſoul, but he had learned better then to hate men who were made lame or blind by God.

Thirdly, Seeing all men are faſhioned round about by the hands of God, then as we muſt not deſpiſe any for their bodily imperfection, ſo not envy any for their bodily perfections. Some are as much troubled to ſee another have a better body, or a more beautiful face, as many are (alike ſinfully both) to ſee another have a better purſe, or a more plentiful eſtate then themſelves.

Fourthly, *Let not the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus?* If thy earthly Tabernacle be not ſo highly, ſo ſtrongly built, if the Materials of it be not ſo pure, or not ſo exactly tempered, if thou haſt not not ſo good a conſtitution, ſo elegant a compoſition, if thou art not ſo adorned and poliſhed as ſome others are; yet be not diſcontented, the hands of God have made and faſhioned thee round about. It is a great honour to a Veſſel, that he made it, though he have made it (in this ſence) a veſſel of diſhonour.

Fifthly, If God hath faſhioned our bodies, then we muſt not put them out of faſhion. It is dangerous to deface the work of God, to undo that which God hath done, to unmake that which God hath made; how ſad is it that any ſhould pull down a building of Gods own ſetting up, without warrant from God? Self-murder, or the murder of another, is an high affront to God, and ſhould have a ſevere revenge from man. He that ſheds his own blood, takes revenge upon himſelf: *And whoſo ſheddeth mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed; for in the image of God made he man* (Gen. 9. 6.) As what God hath joyned by a civil, ſo by a natural band, let no man put aſunder.

Laſtly, If thou art made and faſhioned by God, then let God have the uſe of all thou art. Let God dwell in the houſe which he hath ſet up. Let thy body be employed for God; he that made it, hath moſt right to it. Every thing in man ſhews forth the wiſdom and goodneſs of God towards man, let every thing in man ſhew forth obedience and ſubmiſſion unto God. This was the ground of *David's* prayer (*Pſal.* 119.73.) *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me, give me underſtanding, that I may learn thy commandments*; as if he had ſaid, Lord, I would uſe this body, this ſoul, this all, which thou haſt made, for thy glory, therefore give me underſtanding that I may learn thy will; I would not do the will of another, while I dwell in thy houſe, and am thy tenant at will. I would not imploy thoſe members which thou haſt given me, to fulfil the Law of ſin, or the commands of Satan. The Apoſtle is clear upon this argument in reference to redemption (1 *Cor.*6.19.) *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorifie God with your bodies, and in your ſpirits, which are Gods*; Now as in the work of redemption we are of God by Grace, ſo in the work of creation we are of God by Nature. The reaſon holds in both; glorifie God with your bodies, which are not your own, but Gods. It is uſual in letting out of houſes to put a clauſe in the Leaſe, that the houſe ſhall not be imployed to ſuch and ſuch uſes, but only to ſuch as are expreſſed in the Indenture. Surely the Lord who hath built and furniſhed theſe houſes, hath taught us how to imploy them, and what trade to exerciſe in them, even the trade of holineſs. Take heed you do not let out any room or corner of a room in this houſe for ſin to trade in, or for the work of iniquity. This is to let out a houſe of Gods making to the Devils uſing.

Yet thou doeſt deſtroy me.

בלע *Abſorbere eſt morſicatim deſtruere.* Coc. *Deglutio ſignificat omnimodam exterminationem, rerumq; omniũ profundiſſimũ exitium.* κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος.

The word ſignifies to *ſwallow up*; and to ſwallow up with greedineſs, *Pſalm* 52.4. *Thou loveſt all devouring* (or ſwallowing) *words*; words which ſwallow down thy neighbours credit, and devour his good name, as one morſel. The Holy Ghoſt expreſſeth our final victory over death, by a word which reacheth this ſence (1 *Cor.*15.54.) *Death is ſwallowed up* (or drunk down) *in victory*; death is drunk up at a draught. Chriſt called his ſufferings (by which he got this victory) a cup. The Apoſtle uſes the ſame word again (2 *Cor.* 5.4.) *That mortality might be ſwallowed up of life.* When this mortal ſhall have put on immortality, death ſhall be ſwallowed up in victory, that is, there ſhall be a compleat victory over death, and not only ſo, but mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of life. In heaven there ſhall be no death, nor any thing like death, nothing bearing any the leaſt reſemblance of it's image, or letter of it's ſuperſcription, nothing of mortality ſhall be found or felt there: There mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of life; here *Job* complains that his life was almoſt ſwallowed up of mortality. *Yet thou doeſt deſtroy, or ſwallow me up:* As thou haſt already ſwallowed up my eſtate, ſo thou ſeemeſt reſolved to ſwallow up my very breath. When *Joab* beſieged *Abel*, a wiſe woman out of the City cryed unto him, *Thou ſeekeſt to deſtroy a City in* Iſrael, *why wilt thou ſwallow up the inheritance of the Lord?* 2 Sam. 20. 19. *Job* ſaw a great Army of afflictions encamping about him: and he ſeems to cry out to the Lord of thoſe hoaſts, why ſeekeſt thou to deſtroy thy ſervant? Why wilt thou ſwallow me, who am the work of thy hands?

Diſtinctio Hebræorum magis poſtulat, ut verba præcedentis, ſimul, circumquaq; cum his jungantur, & abſorbiſti me. *Merc.*

Grammarians obſerve from the exacteſt reading of the Hebrew, that the former words [*Together round about*] ſhould be joyn'd with theſe [*Thou doeſt deſtroy me*] *Thine hands have made me, and faſhioned me, and yet thou doeſt deſtroy me together round about*; that is, Thou makeſt an utter end, a total conſumption of me.

Licet ſenſus non multum diverſus ſit, interrogatio tamen ſenſũ reddit valde acrem, & incitatum. Merc.

Again, Theſe words are read by ſome with an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned me, and doeſt thou yet deſtroy me?* The queſtion doth not alter, but quicken the ſence, and render it more preſſing and pathetical; Wilt thou deſtroy me thus exactly, whom thou haſt made ſo exactly? The (*yet*) in the Text ſounds out an admiration. As when God (*Amos* 4.) had brought many judgments upon *Jeruſalem*, and found them ſtill impenitent, he concludes the narrative of every one, with, *Yet have they not returned unto me*; As if he had ſaid, What a wonder is here? So *Job* repeating the favours of God to him, concludes with a *yet thou doeſt, or doeſt thou yet deſtroy me?* As if he had ſaid, What a wonder is here? *How unſearchable are thy judgments, O God, and thy wayes paſt finding out?* Thus he ſets what God then did, in oppoſition to what he had done, that ſo the conſideration of former mercies might provoke him to remove or mitigate preſent judgments. Doeſt thou deſtroy me who haſt made me? Hence obſerve,

Quem diligentiſſimè feciſti, diligentiſſimè deſtruis.

First, *That to mind God of making us, is an argument to ſtay his hand from breaking us.*

See more of this point, *v.* 3.

It repented the Lord (ſaith *Moſes*, Gen. 6.6.) *that he had made man, and it grieved him at the heart.* This repentance and grief did not ariſe from his making of man; but from that neceſſity which his own juſtice and honour laid upon him to deſtroy man whom he had made; as it follows in the next words; *And the Lord ſaid, I will deſtroy man whom I have created.* The words ſhew the reſolution of God, not his propenſion; it went to his heart to do it. If God repented and grieved (underſtand both by a figure) becauſe he had made man, whom he muſt deſtroy, then it cannot but be a grief to him to deſtroy that which he hath made. It is as eaſie to the power of God to undo, as it is to do: but it is not ſo eaſie to his will to undo, as it is to do.

Secondly obſerve, *Afflictions deſtructive to the outward man, may be the lot of the beſt men.*

God never deſtroyes that ſpiritual creature, which the hand of his grace hath made and faſhioned: but he doth ſometimes deſtroy the natural creature of thoſe who are ſpiritual.

Thirdly obſerve, *A good man will make honourable mention of the goodneſs of God to him, while he is under greateſt evils.*

Job writes the natural hiſtory of Gods power and wiſdom in his conſtitution, while deſtruction was knocking at his doors. Though God will deſtroy what he hath made, yet he ought to be glorified for what he hath made. The praiſe of God for faſhioning us, is never ſo comely, as when he is putting us out of faſhion.

Fourthly obſerve, *God doth that ſometimes which is moſt improbable he ſhould do.*

He acts ſtrangely in wayes of mercy, and ſtrangely in wayes of judgment. He ſaves thoſe whom we expect he ſhould deſtroy, and he deſtroyes thoſe whom we expect he ſhould ſave. *The Kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the adverſary and the enemy ſhould have entred into the gates of* Jeruſalem, (*Lam.*4. 12.) and who would have believed that the adverſary and the enemy, ſorrow and deſtruction ſhould have entred into the gates of *Job*? God comes with ſuch afflictions upon his people now, as make him to be admired by all the world. Chriſt will come with ſuch mercies at the laſt, as will make him to be *glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe* (2 Theſ. 1. 10.) Chriſt will exceed, not only our unbelief, but our faith.

In the former verſe *Job* pleaded with God, as his maker; he proceeds ſtill in the ſame argument, and re-enforceth it from a ſpecial intimation of the matter out of which he was made, *clay*.

Verſ. 9. **Remember, I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into duſt again?**

זכר *Recordatus eſt, memor fuit, odoratus fuit, quando de ſacrificiis uſurpatur. Odoretur omnia munera tua.* Jun. Zachar, *mas aut à memoria qua magis pollet quã mulier, aut quia memoriam & nomen familiæ conſervat.* Buxtorf.

Remember, I beſeech thee.] *Job* ſpeaks heartily, his ſpirit was in a heat. *Remember, I beſeech thee.* The original word is applied to a ſenſitive act, as well as to a rational (*Pſal.* 20.3.) *The Lord remember*, or *ſmell all thy offerings.* Memory is the ſavour or ſent of things preſerved in the mind. The Hebrews expreſs man, or a male child, by a word of that root, and they give two reaſons of it. Either, firſt, becauſe man is of a ſtronger memory then the woman. Or, ſecondly, becauſe the man-child preſerveth the memory of the family, and is a monument of his fathers honour, his name being carried on from generation to generation; in oppoſition to which, women or females are called *Naſhim*, which word implieth *forgetfulneſs*, becauſe their names and titles are ſwallowed up in their husbands, and forgotten when they are married.

Memory or the act of remembring is improperly applyed to God. For remembrance is of things paſt, but to God all things are preſent. Memory is the ſtore-houſe wherein we lay up ſeveral notions, and keep records of what hath been done, which by an act of the underſtanding we review and fetch out again. All things are ever open before God. He needs not turn leaves or ſearch regiſters, he needs not ſo much as ſtrain a thought to recal what is paſt; that which was from the beginning, and ſhall be to the end, yea, to that which hath no end, eternity, is alwayes before him. God is ſaid to remember, or to forget, when he acts like a man, who remembers or forgets; but there is no act either of forgetfulneſs, or of remembrance in God.

Remembring implieth two things in God.

Firſt, A ſerious attention to the perſon and conſideration of the thing which he formerly ſeemed to ſlight, or lightly to paſs by. We alſo remember by minding and thinking upon what is preſent, as well as by recalling what is paſt.

Secondly, To remember, notes a ſpeedy ſupply of our wants, or actual deliverance out of dangers. God remembers us, when he favours us; he remembers us, when he pities us; he remembers us, when he relieves us; *Who remembred us in our low eſtate*, Pſal. 136. 23. that is, who brought us out of our low eſtate. *The needy ſhall not alway be forgotten* (Pſal. 9. 18.) not alway, no nor at any time; the Lord doth not at all forget any, much leſs ſuch needy ones, as that Scripture intends. The meaning is, they ſhall not alway be undelivered, their eſtate ſhall not lie for ever unconſidered, and their cry unattended to. God will not deal with them, nor ſuffer others to deal with them, as if he had forgotten them. *Hannah* was long under that affliction of barrenneſs, and when the Lord gave her conception, it is ſaid, *He remembred Hannah* (1 Sam. 1. 19.) his thoughts were ever upon her, and upon her petition; but when he granted her petition, then he remembred her indeed. As we then remember God when we obey his commands: ſo God remembers us then, when he fulfils our requeſts. *Remember, I beſeech thee.*

As it is our duty to remember the Lord: ſo it is our priviledge that we may put him in remembrance.

It is a priviledge, and a very great one to be a *remembrancer to the King of heaven.* The Prophet deſcribes ſuch an office (*Iſa.* 62. 6.) *Ye that make mention of the Lord*, or nearer the Hebrew, *Ye that are the Lords remembrancers, keep not ſilence, and give him no reſt.* Great Princes have an officer called their *Remembrancer*, and they need remembrancers. It is at once their honour and their weakneſs to have them. They cannot retain all buſineſſes, and preſerve a record within themſelves of all affairs within their Kingdoms: It is an honour to God that he hath *Remembrancers*, but it is his greater honour that he hath no need of them. Himſelf is the living record of all that hath been done, or is to be done. Knowledge is above memory, and he that knows all things is above remembrancers. God is willing we ſhould ſpeak to him after the manner of men: but we muſt not conceive of him after the manner of men. We muſt not think he hath forgotten us, though we may beſeech him to remember us.

There are four things which the Saints uſually move the Lord to remember.

Firſt, His own mercies; *Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies*, was *David's* prayer (*Pſal.* 25. 6.) *Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* was *David's* queſtion and infirmity (*Pſal.* 77. 9.) Yet God acts ſometimes, as if he had forgot his nature, or had need to be minded to do what he is. God can no more forget himſelf, then deny himſelf; no more forget to be gracious then ceaſe to be: yet he gives his people leave, yea a charge, to move him to do, what he cannot but do, what he is reſolved, yea what he is ready to do. Mercy pleaſeth God ſo much, that he often appears diſpleaſed on purpoſe, that we may remember him of his mercy. He delights we ſhould deſire, what he delights to grant.

Secondly, The Saints uſually mind God of his Covenant. *God is ever mindful of his Covenant* (Pſal. 111. 5.) yet he loves to be minded of it. His Royal title is, *The God that keepeth Covenant for ever*; yet he loves to be deſired not to break it. Thus *Jeremy* begs for the Jews, the Covenant-people of God; *Do not abhor us for thy name ſake, Do not diſgrace the throne of thy glory; remember, break not thy Covenant with us*, Jer. 14. 21. The Pſalmiſt prayes upon the ſame ground, *Have reſpect to the Covenant, for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*; As if he had ſaid, Lord, Thou haſt made a Covenant to preſerve and protect thy people, but now they are oppreſſed; The *dark places*, that is, places full of ignorance and wickedneſs (which are ſpiritual darkneſs) are full of cruelty: Holy knowledge hath no ſuch enemy as ignorance. Or, *the dark places are full*, &c. may be thus underſtood, there is no ſuch obſcure corner or by-place in the land, but their malice ſearcheth it out for the vexation of thy people. We are ſo far from having liberty to ſerve thee publickly in the light, that we feel the cruelty of bloody minded men, though we do it ſecretly or in the dark. Now Lord it is time for thee to remember thy Covenant.

Thirdly, The Saints uſe to put God in remembrance of the rage and blaſphemies of his and their enemies. Thus the Church of the Jews cries unto the Lord (*Pſal.* 137. 7.) *Remember, O Lord, the children of* Edom *in the day of* Jeruſalem, *who ſaid, raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof.* When a man is wrong'd who intends revenge, he will ſay to the party wronging him, well, *Remember this*, or, *I ſhall remember you for this.* Revengeful men have ſtrong memories: ſo hath the God to whom vengeance belongeth. He will certainly remember the ſinful, revengeful cry of *Edom* againſt *Jeruſalem*, though the ſins of *Jeruſalem* did cry to him for vengeance. The Pſalmiſt is as earneſt in another place, urging the Lord to remember for his own intereſt, as here for the intereſt of his *Sion* (Pſal. 74. 18.) *Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the fooliſh people have blaſphemed thy Name.* As if he had ſaid, Pray, Lord, take a note of this, make a *memorandum* of this, *That the enemy hath reproached thy Name*; God will remember it, if any of his ſervants are reproached, much more when himſelf is.

Fourthly, The Saints remember God of their own frailty, and that two-fold. Firſt, Natural; Secondly, Spiritual. *Remember how ſhort my time is, wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain?* (Pſal. 89. 47.) Man is a frail ſhort-liv'd creature, and it is ſome comfort to him, that God knows he is ſo. That which *Job* puts the Lord in remembrance of, is his natural frailty; ſome underſtand it alſo of his ſpiritual; *Remember, I beſeech thee.*

That thou haſt made me as the clay.

The LXX reads it, *Thou haſt made me clay.* The word ſignifies cement or morter, which are mixt of earth and water, Thou haſt made me as tempered clay. When the original of man is deſcribed, it is ſaid, *The Lord formed man duſt out of the ground*, or, *of the duſt of the ground*, (Gen. 2. 7.) here *Job* ſaith, *Thou haſt made me as the clay*, or, *Thou haſt made me of the clay*; the ſence is near the ſame, whether we take *clay* for the matter out of which man was made, or according to which man was made, or the ſimilitude according to which man was made. *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf with reſpect to creation: for, according to the ordinary courſe of generation, man is not made of clay. The firſt man was made of clay, and of him all men are. We derive our pedigree from the dirt, and are akin to clay. *Job* might ſay, and ſo may any man, *Thou haſt made me of the clay.* However *Job* was, and *man now is made as the clay*; that is, frail, brittle and weak. We are compoſed of materials, which will quickly crack and break. When the Holy Ghoſt would deſcribe how eaſily Chriſt can ſhatter to pieces all the oppoſites of his Kingdom; it is ſaid, *He ſhall daſh them in pieces like a potters veſſel:* A potters veſſel will not bear blows, eſpecially not the blows of ſuch an inſtrument, as is there ſpoken of, *an iron rod: He ſhall break them with a rod of iron* (Pſal. 2. 9.) we may break a potters veſſel with a little wand, or a weak reed, how then ſhould it endure the weight and hardneſs of an iron rod? The Spirit of God ſeems to delight in this alluſion, and therefore takes it up often. Read, *Iſa.* 45. 9. *Iſa.* 64. 8. *Rom.* 9. 21. We have the ſtate of the Jews, deſcribed under this notion (*Jer.* 18. 4.) The Lord bids *Jeremy* go down to the potters houſe, he obeys, and found the potter working a work on the wheel, *And the veſſel that he made of clay, was marred in the hand of the potter, ſo he made it again another veſſel, as ſeemed good to the potter* to

ὅτι πηλὸν μὲ ἔπλασας. Sept.

חמר

Propriè ſignificat cementum, vel terram aquâ mixtam.

In memoriâ revoca, ut me è luto primum, i.e. primum hominem unde orti cæteri, formaris figuli more: Merc.

to make it. Then, the Word of the Lord came to him, ſaying, Cannot I do to you as this potter? ſaith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, ſo are ye in my hand, O houſe of Iſrael. I can form you, and I can break you, I can put you into what condition I pleaſe, and ye ought not to be diſpleaſed at it. A potters veſſel is an emblem of the ſtrongeſt Kingdoms; How much more of the ſtrongeſt men?

That we are made of clay, intimates three things, at all which *Job* ſeemeth to aim, when he ſaith, *Thou haſt made me as the clay.*

Firſt, The excellency of mans frame. He is not thruſt together like a rude lump or maſs of earth, but *curiouſly wrought* (Pſal. 139. 15.) To make a veſſel of clay is an artificial work, not a natural. It requireth much pains, but more skill. Whence *Job* argueth, *Thou haſt made me as the clay*; Thou haſt ſhewed thy heavenly wiſdom in ſhaping and contriving me, as a veſſel of honour for thy uſe; *And wilt thou bring me into duſt again*? The remembrance of that love and care which God hath laid out upon us in our conſtitution, is an argument moving him to pity and compaſſion, as was ſhewed at *verſ.* 3.

Secondly, That God hath made us of clay, ſhews our utter inability to contend with God, and to ſtand againſt his ſtroaks: It is, as if *Job* had ſaid, *Lord, Surely thou forgetteſt of what mettal I am made, thou thinkeſt I am made of a hard Rock, or of invincible Adamant, that I am compounded of Iron, and other the ſtrongeſt materials; Alas, Lord, there is no ſuch matter, I am made but as the clay; A great deal of power and wiſdom appeared in making me, but a little power will ſerve to ruine me; I am no ſooner toucht but crackt. Why then doeſt thou plant all thy Ordnance, and diſcharge ſo many volleys of ſhot againſt me? Lord, What am I? Am I a wall of braſs, or a bulwark of ſtone? Thou knoweſt I am but a wall of clay, a paper wall, a potters veſſel, a little moiſtened earth. Will any man prepare Cannon to batter a cottage, or a beetle to kill a flie? Thy providence needs not make ſuch proviſion againſt me, or handle me ſo roughly: that which is weak calls for tender uſage, and that which is weak may laſt long, if tenderly uſed; a glaſs with care will continue many ages. Deal gently with thy ſervant, Remember, I beſeech thee, thou haſt made me as the clay.*

Thirdly, *That we are made as the clay*, ſhews our eaſineſs to be overcome by temptation, and our obnoxiouſneſs to ſin. Sin is (in its kind) as ſpiritual, as grace is; yet our ſinful corruption is figuratively called, *the fleſh*. One reaſon (I conceive) of which may be this, becauſe fleſh, taken properly, is an occaſion of ſin. As the ſenſitive part is a ſervant, ſo a ſnare to the rational, much more to the ſpiritual. The fleſh is at once the organ, and the burthen of the ſpirit. The Apoſtle calling Saints to run the race of holineſs with patience, gives a very ſutable advice, *Let us lay aſide every weight*, that is, all carnal cumber; he that would ſhew himſelf light of foot, will not take a burden upon his back, he caſts off his very garments; to which the next words of the Apoſtle ſeem to allude, *Caſt off every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us*: So a garment doth, eſpecially a long garment, which in running daggles and folds about our heels. The reaſon why our ſinful corruption is compared to ſuch a garment, is becauſe it is ſo much aſſiſted by this body of clay, the fleſh which is as a long garment to the ſoul, hanging about it, and beſetting it on every ſide.

εὐπερίστατος *ad circumagendū proclivis: Metaphora ducta à laciniosis & talaribus veſtibus, quæ currentibus in ſtadio non ſunt aptæ.*

From which ſence *Job* ſeems thus to move the Lord, *Suppoſe I have ſinned* (he had ſaid, *Verſ.* 7. *Thou knoweſt I am not wicked, but ſuppoſe I have ſinned*) *and have had my failings, yet, Lord, Remember thou haſt made me as the clay, I am not a pure ſpirit, as Angels are, I have a body of earth about me, which clogs and hinders me in every duty, which many wayes endangers me unto every ſin.* God himſelf takes up this as an argument to ſpare ſinful man (*Pſal.* 78. 39.) when the people of *Iſrael* rebelled againſt him, *He many a time turned his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath.* What ſtaid him? The next words give a reaſon; *for he remembred that they were but fleſh*; that is, weak and very ſubject unto ſin. This argument prevails again, (*Pſal.* 103. 14.) *Like as a father ſpareth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; *Why? For he knoweth their frame, he remembreth that they are duſt.* As if the very matter out of which man was firſt made, though without ſin, were ſome diſadvantage to him in the reſiſting of ſin. It was a diſadvantage before man had any ſin in him, how much more is it now when moſt men have nothing at all in them but ſin, and the beſt have very much. *That which is born of the fleſh* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 3. 6.) *is fleſh.* His meaning is, corrupt nature can produce none but corrupt acts. It is a truth alſo, that our *pure nature*, becauſe it was conſtituted (as of other parts, ſo) of fleſh (the ſoul like a ſparkling Diamond, being ſet in clay) was thereby rendered more prone to fleſhly or ſinful acts. *Natural fleſh (in its beſt ſtate) is more apt to bring forth ſpiritual fleſh (namely ſin) then a ſpirit is.* And that's a reaſon among others, which ſome give, why God was ſo irreconcilably angry with the Angels which fell, why he did never ſo much as mention them in a way of mercy, or diſcovered a thought of them for good ſince their fall (I ſay) one reaſon given is this, *Becauſe God could not remember that Angels were made as the clay, or formed out of the duſt*; They were created ſpirits, pure ſpirits, they had no clogs of fleſh and blood about them, no fogs, no miſts vapouring up from a ſenſitive part to cloud their intellectual. They had the more power to continue pure, becauſe they were free from any earthly and elementary mixtures. Their ſin was compound of more evils, becauſe their nature was ſo ſimple. Angels having no tempter without them, no fleſh about them, turned themſelves away from God, meerly upon the freedom of their own wills. As every good action is by ſo much the better, by how much it hath the freer concurrence of our wills: ſo is every evil action ſo much the worſe. The ſin we commit is the greater, by how much we have had the leſs provocation to commit it. The ſin of our firſt parents in eating the forbidden fruit, was aggravated in it ſelf, becauſe God gave them ſuch plenty and variety of other fruits to eat: but it was leſſened in compariſon of the Angels ſin, becauſe they had more provocation to ſin, then the Angels had. The bait of the temptation againſt our firſt Parents, was laid in their conſtitution, which being corporal and earthly, muſt needs be delighted with earthly objects. *The forbidden fruit was pleaſant to the eye*, there the fleſh took it; *And it was pleaſant to the taſte*, there the fleſh took it again. Thoſe provocations man had over and beſides that of the Angels, a hope or a deſire to mend his condition, and to become like unto God. A body of earth hath a ſutableneſs to all earthly allurements. Every like hath a natural tendency and motion towards its like. This moves the Lord to pity ſinful man, though man muſt not hence plead impunity for ſin. The meaſure and degrees of ſin upon ſuch actings are abated, but the acts do not therefore put off the nature of ſin. *A ſinner in duſt and clay cannot be excuſed; yet is not ſo much polluted, and more to be pitied then a ſinning ſpirit.* And that's a third notion in which we may expound *Job*, beſeeching God to *remember, that he hath made him as the clay.*

Angeli idcirco irremiſſibiliter peccaverunt, quia tanto robuſtius ſtare poterāt quanto eos carnis commixtio non tenebat. Greg. *Moral. in loc.*

I might write many things in this clay out of which man was made; but I have met with other paſſages already of the ſame ſubject, eſpecially in *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 19 in thoſe words, *Whoſe foundation is in the duſt*; which Text being near of the ſame importance and interpretation with this in hand, I ſhall rather refer the Reader thither, then inſiſt upon the ſame deduction and inferences a ſecond time. Take only this in general. Our reflection upon the matter out of which we are extracted, ſhould leſſen us to low and modeſt thoughts of our ſelves: for what is lower then the earth. We ſay, *He that lieth upon the earth, hath not whence to fall*; It is as true, *He that riſeth out of the earth, hath nothing in himſelf whence he ſhould be lifted up.*

Materia ex qua orti ſumus nobis ad modeſtiā magiſtra eſſe debet, quid enim luto ſive argilla vilius? Sanct.

Remember that thou haſt made me as the clay, and

Wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?

To be brought to the duſt, is firſt a circumlocution or deſcription of death, *Pſal.* 30. 9. *Shall the duſt praiſe thee? ſhall it declare thy truth?* That is, ſhall I praiſe thee when I am among the dead? *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?* Not that profit ſure; I cannot bring thee in the tribute of praiſe, when my life's gone out.

Secondly, To be brought to the duſt, is a deſcription of any low and poor condition, *Pſal.* 22. 29. *All they that be fat upon the earth* (that is the great and mighty) *ſhall eat and worſhip*; *All they that go down to the duſt* (that is, the mean and baſe) *ſhall bow before him.* As if he had ſaid, rich and poor, high and low, the King and the Beggar, have a like need of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and muſt ſubmit unto him, that they may be ſaved; for as it there follows, *None can keep alive his own ſoul.* The captivity of the *Jews* in *Babylon*, is expreſſed under thoſe notions of *Death*, and of *dwelling in the duſt*, Iſa. 26. 19. To ſhew how low they were brought; even ſo low, that no power but his who can raiſe the dead, could work their deliverance.

Job ſaw himſelf brought to the duſt of a low condition, of poverty and of diſgrace, and he feared he ſhould be brought to the duſt of death and of the grave. That's the meaning of this expoſtulating Query. *And wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?* He was not at all brought out of the duſt of his affliction, and therefore he could not ſay of that, *Wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?*

The words are read three wayes.

1. } As an { Aſſertion.
2. } As an { Interrogation.
3. } As an { Admiration.

Firſt, Many Interpreters give them as a plain Aſſertion; *Remember that thou haſt made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the duſt again.*

Secondly, Others read them (as we) with an interrogation; *Remember that thou haſt made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?*

Thirdly, Some heighten them into an admiration; *Thou haſt made me as the clay, and (what?) wilt thou bring me into the duſt again!* What a wonder is this? Could I have expected ſuch a ſudden change as this!

Quoad naturam viliſſimus ſum, quoad judicium tuum morti addictus, ut in pulverem revertar, utrumq; debet te commovere, ut parcas mihi in vita. Coc *Particula* & *pro ſic ſumenda eſt; & futurum potentiale eſt, decentiã, vel debitũ, vel jus, vel poteſtatem denotans*, q. d. *ſicut me tanquam cementum compegiſti, eadem poteſtate cum volueris, in terram reduces, nulla mihi illata injuria.* Bold.

Take the words as a direct aſſertion, *Thou wilt bring me into the duſt again*: So they may have reference to the Decree of God concerning man, as thoſe before had to the creation of man. As if he had ſaid, *By creation and natural conſtitution, I am frail and weak, made of the clay; by thy purpoſe and decree I am appointed unto death; Thou wilt bring me into the duſt again, therefore ſpare me for the ſhort time I have to live.*

Some change the Conjunction [*And*] into the Adverb of Likeneſs [*So*] to note a right, power or priviledge; and the Text runs in this form, *Remember, that as thou haſt made me of, or as the clay, ſo thou maiſt* (it is thy priviledge, none can contradict thee in it, and thou doſt me no wrong in it, thou maiſt) *as thou haſt purpoſed, bring me to the duſt again.* Though it be common and natural to all creatures mixt of Elements, to be reſolved and turned back into that out of which they were made, that is, to die, yet to man it is more then natural; there is a decree upon it, beſides the naturality of it: *Man dieth by a Statute-Law of Heaven.* To die is a penalty inflicted upon man for ſin; for he had not been under a neceſſity of dying, if he had not ſinned. And therefore though God formed man (as the holy Story informs us, *Gen.* 2. 7.) out of the duſt of the earth; yet ſo long as man ſtood, he never ſaid to him, *To duſt thou ſhalt return.* God only put a ſuppoſition, that in caſe man did fall, he ſhould ſurely die. But when man had fallen by ſin, then he hears what he was, and what he muſt be; *For duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return* (*Gen.* 3. 19.) As if God had thus beſpoken ſinful man; *Thy body was framed out of duſt, and now I charge this burden upon thee, thou ſhalt return to the duſt again.*

It is a Queſtion (and I ſhall touch upon it) Whether death were natural to man or no? Whether man were made mortal, or whether he made himſelf mortal? Some affirm, That death was natural, not accidental or occaſional to mankind. They argue for this Opinion;

Firſt, thus; *Adam* died not the death of the body, or a natural death when he had ſinned; therefore the death of the body was not inflicted for ſin upon his perſon and his poſterity, but was ſeated in, or a conſequent of his nature.

I anſwer, Though *Adam* died not preſently a natural death, yet he was preſently made ſubject or liable unto death; the ſentence was paſt upon him, though the ſentence was not executed upon him. A Malefactor who is caſt at the Bar, is a dead man in Law, though he be repreived from the preſent ſtroke of death.

Again, Though death it ſelf did not inſtantly ſeize upon him, yet the ſymptoms of death, and tokens of mortality did. Fear and ſhame, pains and diſtempers, ſweat and wearineſs quickly ſhewed themſelves as ſo many harbingers or forerunners of his approaching diſſolution: we ſee and feel death in theſe before we ſee or feel death it ſelf. Theſe bid us prepare our bodies for the grave, and our ſouls for heaven.

Secondly, Others reaſon thus, Chriſt hath delivered his people, the elect, from all that puniſhment which the ſin of *Adam* did contract and deſerve; but Chriſt hath not delivered his elect, his own people, from turning to the duſt. Godly men die as well as the ungodly, Believers as well as Infidels; therefore (ſay they) the death of the body was not procured by ſin.

I anſwer, Whatſoever is an evil in death, Chriſt hath delivered his people from; he hath taken away all that from death, which is puniſhment or annoyance, though death be not taken away. Chriſt hath freed us from the effects of ſin, as he hath freed us from ſin it ſelf, that is, from their prevalence and dominion over us, not from their preſence or being in and upon us. Hence the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15.) triumpheth over death; *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?* As if he had ſaid, Death once had a power over man to ſting him to death; death once had a victorious power, and would have been the great conqueror, riding in triumph over all the poſterity of *Adam*; but now death had neither ſting nor ſword to uſe againſt Believers, it hath nothing of victory over the Saints: It is now but a ſleep, a ſleep in Chriſt, a reſt from labour, a putting off the rags, the worn rags of mortality, that we may be dreſſed in the robes of glory. The evil of death is removed, and that which remains of death (the ſeparation of ſoul and body) proves the greateſt good to both, it being but a preparatory to their everlaſting union.

Thirdly, It is argued, That death and corruption were natural to man, becauſe the matter out of which man was made, was dying and corruptible; for that which is made, muſt follow the nature of that Principle out of which it is made. The effect cannot be (ſay they) more noble then the cauſe; nor the ſubject conſtituted, more durable then that which goes into its conſtitution.

Omne principiatum ſequitur naturam principiorum.

To clear up an anſwer to this, we muſt diſtinguiſh of a threefold immortality.

Firſt, A primitive, ſimple, independent, eſſential immortality; this is proper and peculiar to God; in which ſence the Apoſtle affirmeth, *He only hath immortality* (1 Tim. 6. 16.)

Secondly, There is a derivative, dependent, eſſential immortality. Some ſubſtances have no ſeed of corruptibility, nor of death in them: Being either ſeparate from all matter which is the ſeat and root of corruption, as the Angels; or united to matter, yet ſo as not being produced from it, or having any affinity with it, ſuch are the ſouls of men. Whole man in his creation was not immortal either of theſe wayes; a part of man was, but man was not created immortal. Man was of a middle ſtate and condition, neither altogether ſo mortal, nor altogether immortal, but capable of either.

Μέσος ἦν ἄνθρωπος τῶν δύω ὁ γέγονεν· οὐ θνητὸς ὅλος οὔτε ἀθάνατος, δεκτικὸς γὰρ ἑκατέρου. Græc. Int.

Thirdly, There is an immortality by the power or gift, by the mercy or juſtice of God. The power and juſtice of God ſhall give an immortality to the bodies of the damned in hell, they ſhall ever live a dying life, who were dead all the while they lived. They who have ſlighted the mercy of God, ſhall be upheld by his power, to endure his juſtice to all eternity; wicked men would have ſinned with delight for ever upon the earth, if they could have lived for ever upon the earth; and they ſhall live for ever with pain in hell to ſuffer for their ſin.

The power, goodneſs and mercy of God ſhall much more give immortality to the bodies of the Saints in glory; they who have had a will to delight in obeying God that ſhort time they lived on earth, ſhall have a power to live for ever in delight, praiſing God in heaven.

The body of man in the ſtate of innocency, had an immortality by the gift of God, yet with condition that he did ſubmit to that Rule which God gave him to live by. *Do this and live, was the Law of* Adam's *life.* *Adam* had not an impoſſibility to die, but a poſſibility not to die; this was the ſtate of immortality in the ſtate of innocency. Man had not fallen into the grave, if he had not fallen into tranſgreſſion. His life was made as long as his obedience; if he had not turned from God, he had not returned to the earth.

Adamus *habuit potentiam non moriendi, non impotẽtiam moriendi.*

Adamus *peccans non ſolum potuit mori, ſed nõ potuit non mori.*

Death

Quicunque dicit Adamum *primum hominem mortalem factum, ita ut ſive peccaret, ſive non peccaret, moreretur in corpore, hoc eſt, de corpore, exiret, non peccati merito, ſed neceſſitate naturæ, Anathema ſit.* Conc. Mel. *can.* 1.

Death was conveyed in by ſin, and our poſſibility not to die, was not only loſt, but changed into a neceſſity of dying. So then man is brought to duſt, not becauſe his nature was ſubject to corruption, but becauſe ſin hath corrupted his nature. When he abuſed the liberty of his will, he was ſubjected to this neceſſity againſt his will. By an irreverſible ordinance of Heaven, *It is appointed unto all men once to die, Heb.* 9. 27. *Job* ſpeaks to that point of Gods Law concerning man, *Thou haſt made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the duſt again.*

Thus the words are taken as an aſſertion of the power and priviledge of God, to unmake and pull down man, whom he had made and ſet up.

If we read the words by way of interrogation or admiration; ſo *Job* ſeems to intend them, as an allay to mitigate the preſent ſeverity of the Lords proceeding with him; *Thou haſt made me of the clay but a while ago, and wilt thou bring me into the duſt again? O ſpare me a little before I go hence, and ſhall be ſeen no more!* **It will** not be long before there muſt be an end of **me, O let me** have a more comfortable being and **breathing while I am here!**

When Satan provoked the Lord againſt *Jeruſalem*, to deſtroy it, the Lord anſwered (*Zech.* 3. 2.) *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire?* As if he had ſaid unto Satan, Art thou moving me to throw this people into that fire of affliction out of which they were ſo lately ſnatcht? *Jeruſalem* was in the fire but a while ago, and ſhall I caſt it in again? *Job* pleads in the ſame form, though not in the ſame matter; I was clay but the other day, and Lord, ſhall I to duſt again to day? Let me ſee ſome quiet dayes before I ſee the end of my dayes. Gild over this clay of mine with the ſhinings of thy face upon me, before thou rendereſt me duſt again.

I have more then once had occaſion to touch this Argument, and ſhall therefore paſs it here.

Job having thus ſet forth his natural conſtitution, in the matter of it, as he made of clay, goeth on to deſcribe himſelf more diſtinctly: Firſt, In his conception of his whole body. Secondly, In the formation and delineation of his parts.

Verſe 10. **Haſt thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me like cheeſe?**

Lacti ſimile initio ſemẽ, poſtea admirabili Dei opere non ſecus ac caſeus concreſcit & conſolidatur, ut membra paulatim confirmari incipiant.

Under the modeſt ſhadow of this Verſe, that great natural myſtery of mans generation and conception is contained. The former word ſignifies not only the powring forth of Liquids, but the melting and diſſolving of the hardeſt metals, Iron, Braſs, *&c.* that they may be fitted to run, or be powred forth, *Ezek.* 22. 21, 22. And as this ſignifies the ſoftning and melting of that which is hard, ſo the next word (which we tranſlate *crudled*) ſignifies the hardning or thickning of that which is ſoft and fluid. *Moſes* uſeth it in deſcribing the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea, *Ex.* 15. 8. *The floods ſtood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the ſea.* The Prophet *Zephany* uſeth it for the ſetledneſs and reſolvedneſs of a people in ſin (*chap.* 1. 12.) *The Lord* (ſaith he) *will puniſh the men that are ſetled* (we put in the Margin *curdled* or *thickned*) *on their Lees.* I might from theſe proprieties of the original words, illuſtrate that ſecret of mans original. But foraſmuch as the Spirit of God hath drawn a curtain, and caſt a vail of Metaphors over it, therefore I intend not to open or diſcover it. Ancient Philoſophors have ſpoken of theſe natural operations in a like Language, and under theſe ſimilitudes: I ſhall only ſay in general, that theſe two expreſſions, Firſt, *Thou haſt poured me out as milk.* Secondly, *And crudled me like cheeſe*, are appliable to that ſpecial contribution which God hath charged upon each Parent, towards that great work, the continuation of their own kind, and the raiſing up of a poſterity in their place, to ſerve himſelf, and their Generation. Hence learn,

קפא *Notat rei liquidæ concretionem coagulationem vel condenſationem.*

Οἷον δὲ τῇ τοῦ γάλακτος πήξει, τὸ μὲν σῶμα τὸ γάλα ἐστιν, &c. Ariſt. *De gen. Animal. c.* 20.

Miſeret atq; etiam pudet, æſtimantem quam ſit frivola animantium ſuperbiſſimorũ origo. Plin. *l.* 7. *c.* 7.

Firſt, That, *Man hath reaſon to be humbled at the means and manner of his Original.*

What hath he to be proud of in this world, who, that he might be prepared for his coming into the world, was powred out as milk, and curdled as cheeſe? Let not man be high-minded, whoſe beginning was ſo low and homely. Hence learn,

Secondly, *Our natural conception is from God.* Men (in a ſtrict ſence) are called *the fathers of our fleſh*, and *God the father of Spirits* (Heb. 12. 9.) Yet God hath the chief title to the fatherhood of our fleſh, as well as the ſole title to the fatherhood of our ſpirits. *Thou haſt powred me out as milk, and thou haſt crudled me like cheeſe*; here is no mention of his Father, none of his Mother; but as if the Lord had wrought all by an immediate power, he aſcribes the whole effect to him. *Thou haſt powred me out as milk*, &c. *We are alſo his off-ſpring*, as the Apoſtle tells the *Athenians* out of their own Poets, *Acts* 17. 28.

Nihil de genitoribus aut ſeminibus naſcitur, ſi ea non operetur Deus. Aug. *in* Pſal. 118.

Thirdly, This gives caution to all whom the Lord hath called, or ſhall call to the ſtate of Marriage, to be holy in that eſtate. *Marriage is honourable* (Heb. 13. 4.) *and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*: No wonder if God have a reſpectful eye to the undefiled in that relation, and a revengeful eye upon the defilers of it; ſeeing as his own authority inſtituted it, ſo his own power acts ſo eminently in it. Our conception, our formation, our birth and production, are all aſcribed to, yea, aſſumed by God himſelf. Of which ſecond act the next verſe gives us a noble and an elegant proof.

Verſe 11. **Thou haſt cloathed me with skin and fleſh, and fenced me with bones and ſinews.**

Semen in utero mulieris, primis ſeptem diebus conglobatur, coagulatur, fitque ad capiendam figuram idoneũ. Gel.

Gel. *l.* 7. *de Sem. ex doctrina* Hippocr.

Job proceeds like a great Philoſopher, about the production of man. For when by that former work of Nature, the matter is poured out and crudled, God by nature makes a further progreſs, and prepares for another work, the forming and faſhioning of that unſhapen lump, into the parts and lineaments of an organical body. Some Naturaliſts undertake to tell us exactly what is wrought the firſt ſeven dayes, and what the next, when the Brain, Heart and Liver are formed, and when the Fleſh, the Bones and Sinews. The ancient and learned Phyſitians have diſtinguiſhed this whole work of God, in perfecting mankind, into four periods. The firſt is, while the matter or principles out of which man is made, being mingled together, retain their own form. The ſecond is, when thoſe principles are groſſed into a rude fleſhly maſs. Theſe two periods *Job* hath taught us long before *Galen* and *Hippocrates*, in the former verſe, under thoſe notions of *pouring out as milk, and crudling as cheeſe.* The third period is, when a repreſentation is made of thoſe principal parts, the Brain, the Heart and the Liver, together with the threads, and (as ſome allude) the warp of mans conſtitution, or, as others, the lines and ſhadows of a man, ſuch as a skilful Artiſan makes with a ruder pencil, when he is about to draw a curious picture. The fourth period is, when both the ſimilar and organical parts are compleated, and alſo beautified with proper and lively colours. Theſe two latter periods are deſcribed by *Job* in this verſe, and in the beginning of the next.

Thou haſt cloathed me with skin and fleſh.

עור *Pellis* à ערה *Nudavit.*

The original word for *skin*, comes from a root ſignifying *naked*. We commonly ſay he is naked, who hath nothing upon him but his skin. And *Job*, who here ſaith, *Thou haſt cloathed me with skin*, ſaid, *chap.* 1. 20. *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither*: That is, with nothing but my skin. He that wears only skin and fleſh, hath no artificial cloathing, but he hath a natural cloathing. We are dreſt in garments taken out of the Wardrobe of God and Nature before the world puts a rag upon us. Thus man is born naked, yet cloathed; unarmed, yet fenced.

Thou haſt cloathed me with skin and fleſh, &c.] Which ſome interpret in reference to the ſoul, which is covered over, and encloſed with the skin and fleſh.

But this cloathing of skin and fleſh refers rather to thoſe inward, more noble and tender parts, the Heart, Liver, Brain and Bowels; theſe are encloſed with skin and fleſh, leſt they ſhould take cold: Theſe are fenced with bones and ſinews, leſt they ſhould take hurt. Hence death is called an *uncloathing.* Death ſtrips us, not only to the skin, but of the skin. *We that are in this Tabernacle, do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be uncloathed*, 2 Cor. 5. 4. that is, not that we would put off this garment of skin and fleſh, this

Pellis ita dicta, quòd externas injurias tegendo repellat. Druſ.

Ulterius progreditur in formatione fœtus, nã poſt conſolidatum ſemẽ & formata jam membra, accedunt extrinſecus cutis & caro, ad protegenda interiora, quæ abſque hoc velut ſepimento & munimento eſſent obnoxia & expoſita periculis. Merc.

natural cloathing, but we would have a ſupernatural cloathing upon it, even a veſt of glory put upon theſe veſts of frailty. This Scripture in *Job* is of the ſame language with that of *Paul*, *Thou haſt cloathed me with skin and fleſh.*

It is ſaid of a virtuous woman (*Prov.* 31. 21.) *That ſhe is not afraid of the ſnow for her houſhold, for all her houſhold are all cloathed with Skarlet*, or *double garments.* The great and moſt wiſe God hath prepared ſuch cloathing for mans inward parts, that he nedes not fear ſnow or cold, he hath provided double garments, two ſuits, skin and fleſh. Fleſh is an under-garment, and skin is an upper garment; fleſh covers the bones, and skin covers the fleſh. Anatomiſts obſerve, That man hath two diſtinct coats of skin upon his fleſh, or mans skin is a lined garment, yet differing from other garments; for here the lining is uppermoſt. This uppermoſt skin, or as ſome call it, the *ſcarf-skin*, is without ſenſe, you may thruſt a needle through it without pain. There was great reaſon it ſhould be ſo, that it might defend the skin under it from external injuries, as alſo attemper the exquiſite ſenſe thereof, and ſo become the *medium* or mean of touching; for all ſenſation is made by ſome mean: and it is either altogether hindered, or much diſturbed by the immediety of the Object and the Organ. Hence when this cuticle or ſcarf-skin is off or broken, the gentleſt touch upon that bared part, breedeth much pain, but ſpoileth the true ſenſation. Under this curtain or ſcarf-skin, the true and proper skin lieth. The Greeks call it δέρας, becauſe it may be flayed off, or δέρμα, *quaſi* δέμα, a band, becauſe it compaſſeth or knitteth together the whole body. This skin is a ſeamleſs garment, yet it hath divers out-lets made for the relief and eaſe of Nature; ſome of which are obvious to ſenſe, others called *pores*, are both innumerable and imperceptible.

To this double veſture of skin, *fleſh* is added, as having according to *Job*'s Philoſophy, an immediate conjunction or contiguity with one another. But our Philoſophers in their profeſſed deſcriptions of mans Anatomy, place two parts between the skin and the fleſh, namely, *fat* and the *fleſhly Membrane.* Concerning which, they who pleaſe may conſult the writings of learned Naturaliſts. I ſhall not ſtep out into ſuch digreſſions.

Further, As God hath given ſuch a cloathing of skin and fleſh, ſo he hath given us armour under that cloathing. *Thou haſt fenced me with bones and ſinews.*

The word which we tranſlate *fenced*, is the ſame uſed (*ch.* 1. 10.) Where Satan tells the Lord that he had ſecured the ſtate of *Job*, ſo that he could not come nigh it. *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* The Devil made many aſſaults againſt *Job*, but he could not batter down that hedge, it was Cannon-proof. As the ſtate, ſo the body of *Job* was fenced; if we look upon the Skeliton of a man, we ſhall ſee the proportion of an armour, breſt and back formed up with bones and ſinews.

עצמות *Oſſa à robore & firmitate dicta.*

Bones are for ſtrength, and ſinews for motion; bones being firm and ſtiff in themſelves, are moveable by ſinews. There are other parts of the Body which concur to the making up of this Armour, Griſtles, Muſcles, Ligaments, Membranes, all which ſerve for motion, faſtening and defence, as well as *Bones and Sinews*: but theſe being the principal and moſt known, are here expreſſed for all the reſt.

Ὀςέα τῷ σώματι ςάσιν καὶ ὀρθότητα καὶ εἶδος παρέχοντα. Hip.

Bones give the body ſtability, ſtraightneſs and form. They are as the carkaſs of a Ship, whereto the reſt of the parts are faſtened, and by which they are ſuſtained. They are as the poſts, pillars, beams and rafters of a houſe, by whoſe knittings and contignations the whole building is both proportioned and ſupported. And though the bones are for number very many, and in their forms exceeding various, ſome thick, ſome thin, ſome plain, ſome hollow, ſome of a greater, others of a leſſer bore, yet are they ſo connect and fitted together by articulation or by coalition, by contiguity or continuity (as the Anatomiſts ſpeak) that they all appear as one bone, or pack of bones.

Sinews or Nerves derive their pedigree from the Brain, and are the Organs by which the animal ſpirits are conveyed, and flow into the whole body, and with them both ſenſe and motion. Sinews have ſo much of ſtrength in them, that the ſame word is put to ſignifie both ſtrength and ſinews, and to do a thing ſtrongly and vigorouſly, is to do it (*nervoſe*) ſinewouſly. It is wonderful which Naturaliſts write of the conjugations and uſes of the ſinews; to whoſe Labours I refer the ſtudious Reader for further ſatisfaction. I have given enough to ſhew what this Text calls me to, *That God hath indeed cloathed man with skin and fleſh, and fenced him with bones and ſinews.*

Some have quarrelled with the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, for turning man altogether naked and unarmed into the world. This Scripture is enough to confute the unreaſonableneſs of that quarrel. *Job* thankfully acknowledgeth that he was both *cloathed and armed*, though not in the ſence of theſe complainers. It is more honourable for man to make himſelf artificial Cloathing and Arms, then to have had none but natural; God hath given man reaſon to invent, hands to prepare, and a tongue to call for thoſe things which by a Law of Nature are impoſed upon other creatures; the power of reaſon, and the skill of the hand are a better ſafeguard to man then any the beaſts have, and can provide whatſoever man wants to ſecure him either from cold or danger. And though the body, as now it ſtands, be but (as it were) the Sepulcher of that which God at firſt created, though we lie open to ſo many diſeaſes and deaths, that the ſoul may well be ſaid to inhabit an unwalled and an unfortified City, yet man hath great cauſe for ever to extol the bounty of God in thoſe ſtill continued ennoblements of this earthly manſion, his mortal body. Yea, the noble ſtructure and ſymmetry of our bodies invites our ſouls not only to thankfulneſs, but to admiration. One of the Ancients ſtileth man *A great Miracle*: Another, *The Miracle of Miracles*: A third, *The meaſure of all things*: A fourth, *The pattern of the Univerſe*, *The worlds Epitome*, *The world in a ſmall Volume*, or, *A little world.* They alſo have diſtinguiſhed the whole frame of the Body into three Stories, in alluſion to a like frame obſervable in the world. Firſt, The ſuperior, which they call intellectual or Angelical, becauſe they conceived it to be the habitation of Angels or Intelligences. The ſecond or middle part they call Cœleſtial or Heavenly, the ſeat of the Sun and Stars. The third, Elementary, in which all corporeal creatures are procreated and nouriſhed. This diviſion of the world is eminent in man, for he alſo is a building of three Stories. The Head, which is the Seat of Reaſon, the manſion, the Tower of wiſdom and underſtanding, is placed higheſt: The Breſt or middle venter is the Celeſtial part, wherein the Heart, like the Sun, is predominant; ſome have called the Sun *The heart of the world*, and the Heart, *The Sun of mans Body*, by whoſe luſtre, beams and influences, all the other parts are quickned and refreſhed; hence we ſay, when the heart holds, all holds. The third part of the Body, or the lower Venter, containing all parts neceſſary for the nutrition of individuals, or the propagation of the *Species*, carrieth a clear reſemblance with the elementary or loweſt parts of the Univerſe.

There are five things in particular, which as ſo many Rounds of a Ladder, may help us to raiſe our thoughts higher in the duty of holy admiration about this work of God.

Firſt, That God frameth up this goodly and beautiful Fabrick out of ſuch mean and improbable Materials. To conſider out of what ſtuff our bodies are made, advanceth the honour of him who made us. Man can make his work (except the form) no better then the matter out of which he formeth it. But as the form of mans body is better then the matter, ſo the matter becomes better then it was before it received that form.

Secondly, The matter out of which God maketh man, is originally homogeneal, or but of one kind, yet there is a ſtrange heterogeny or variety in the very ſubſtance, as well as in the ſhape of the ſeveral parts; which are therefore divided by the Surveyors of this Building into parts ſimilar and diſſimilar. Is it not incredible to meer Reaſon, that one Lump ſhould be ſpread out into thin, tender skin, wrought into ſoft fleſh, extended into tough ſinews, hardened into ſtrong bones; that one piece ſhould make an outward Jerkin or Caſſock of skin, an under garment of fleſh, Columnes and Rafters of bones, Bands and ties of ſinews; that the ſame ſhould make veins, like channels, to carry, and blood like water, to be carried into every part, to moiſten and refreſh it? When an Artificer buildeth an houſe, he requires more materials then one, he muſt have

Quomodo ex re tantula & ſibi ſimili, tam varia & diſcrepantes partes extiterunt; hæc profecto eſt ſtupenda omnino opificis noſtri ſapientia & vis ad quicquid efficiendum. Merl

Stones and Timber, Iron, Lead, *&c.* to compleat his Fabrick; but the Lord frameth all the parts, rooms and contrivances of the Body out of one and the ſame Maſs. *Thou doſt not know* (ſaith *Solomon*) *how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child* (Eccleſ. 11. 5.) Who can know by a meer rational demonſtration, how a ſolid ſubſtance ſhould grow out of that which is ſo fluid? And that parts materially, as well as figuratively unlike, ſhould ariſe out of a like matter?

Thirdly, The work of God in framing of man is internal, as well as external. A Statuary or an Engraver will make the Image or Pourtraiture of a man, but his work is all outward, he cannot make Bowels, or faſhion a Heart within, he cannot cut out Veins, Bones and Sinews. The greateſt wonders of Creation are unſeen. God hath packt many Rarities, Myſteries, yea, Miracles together in mans Cheſt. All the vital Inſtruments and Wheels whereby the Watch of our life is perpetually moved from the firſt hour to the laſt, are locked up in a curious internal cabinet, where God himſelf prepared the pullies, hung on the weights, and wound up the Chime by the hand of his infinite power, without opening of any part; as our own learned Anatomiſt elegantly teacheth us in the Preface to his ſixth Book.

Fourthly, The dimenſions, proportions and poyſe of mans body are ſo exact and due, that they are made the model of all ſtructures and artificials. Caſtles, Houſes, Ships, yea, the Ark of *Noah* was framed after the meaſure and plot of mans Body. In him is found a circulate Figure, and a perfect Quadrate, yea, the true quadrature of a Circle, whoſe imaginary Lines have ſo much troubled the Mathematicians of many Ages.

Fifthly, In every part uſefulneſs and commodiouſneſs, comlineſs and convenience meet together. What beauty is ſtampt upon the face? What Majeſty in the eye? What ſtrength is put in the arms? What activity into the hands? What muſick and melody in the tongue? Nothing in this whole Fabrick could be well left out or better placed, either for ornament or for uſe. Some men make great houſes which have many ſpare rooms, or rooms ſeldom uſed; but as in this houſe there is not any one room wanting, ſo every room is of continual uſe.

Was ever clay thus honoured, thus faſhioned? *Galen* gave *Epicurus* an hundred years to imagine a more commodious ſituation, configuration or compoſition of any one part of the Body: And ſurely if all the Angels in Heaven had ſtudied to this day, they could not have caſt man into a more curious mould, or have given a fairer and more correct edition of man. *This clay cannot ſay to him that faſhioneth it, What makeſt thou? Or this work, he hath no hands* (Iſa. 44. 9.) The Lord hath made man ſo well, that man cannot tell which way to be made better. This work cannot ſay, he that wrought me hath no hands, that is, I am ill wrought; as to ſay, you have no eyes, you have no ears, are reproofs of negligence and inadvertency, both in hearing and ſeeing: So when we ſay to a man, ſurely you have no hands, our meaning is, he hath done his work either ſloathfully or unskilfully. But this work of mans body ſhall not need to ſay unto God, he hath no hands; he hath given proof enough, that hands and head too were employed about this work. Let us make it appear that we have hands and tongues, and hearts for him, that we have skin and fleſh, bones and ſinews for him, that we have ſtrength, and health, and life, and all for him, ſeeing all theſe are alſo derived from him, as appears in the next words, *Thou haſt granted me life and favour.*

Job having thus deſcribed the natural conception and formation of his body, deſcendeth to his quickning and preſervation. When God had formed man out of the duſt of the earth, he then breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul; and thus when God had formed man in the womb, given him Skin and Fleſh, Bones and Sinews, then he gives Life and Breath, and all things neceſſary to the continuation of what he hath wrought up to ſuch excellent perfections. Our divine Philoſopher teacheth us this Doctrine.

Verſe 12. **Thou haſt granted me life and favour, and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.**

This Verſe holds out to us the great Charter of God to man, conſiſting of three Royal Grants. Firſt, Life. Secondly, Favour. Thirdly, Viſitation. The bounty of God appears much in granting Life, more in granting Favour, moſt of all in his grant of gracious viſitations. *Thou haſt granted me life*, &c.

The Letter of the Hebrew is, *Thou haſt made or fitted for me life and favour.* The Soul is the ornament of the Body, Life the luſtre of our Clay. Thou haſt not thrown or hudled my life into my body, thou haſt put it in exquiſitely and orderly. The frame of the body is an exquiſite frame; but the frame, the faculties and powers, the actings and motions of the ſoul are far more exquiſite: The Inhabitant is more noble the Houſe, and the Jewel then the Cabinet. *As the life is better then meat, and the body then* (artificial) *rayment* (Mat. 6. 25.) So the life is better then the body, which is to it a natural rayment.

עשית חיים

Vitas feciſti Mont. *Vitam diſpoſuiſti mihi.* Sept. *Quaſi debito loco & ordine.*

Thou haſt granted me life.

Life is put Metonymically for the Soul, of which it is an effect, as the Soul is often put for the Life, whereof it is a cauſe.

We tranſlate in the ſingular number, *Life*; the Hebrew is plural, *Thou haſt granted me lives.* But hath a man more lives then one? Some underſtand *Job* ſpeaking not only of corporal, but ſpiritual life; as our natural life is the ſalt of the body, to keep that from corrupting; ſo ſpiritual life, or the life of Grace, is the ſalt of the ſoul, to keep that from corrupting.

Secondly, *Thou haſt granted me lives*, that is, ſay others, temporal life and eternal life.

Thirdly, *Lives* may be taken for the three great powers of life. Man hath one life conſiſting of three diſtinct lives: For whereas there is a life of vegetation and growth, ſuch as is in Trees and Plants; and a life of ſenſe and motion, ſuch as is in the Beaſts of the Earth, Fowls of the Air, and Fiſhes of the Sea; and a life of reaſon, ſuch as is in Angels, whereby they underſtand and diſcourſe; theſe three lives, which are divided and ſhared among all other living creatures, are brought together and compacted into the life of man. Whole man is the Epitome or ſum of the whole Creation, being enriched and dignified with the powers of the inviſible world and of the viſible put together, under which notion we may expound this Text, *Thou haſt granted me lives*; a threefold life, or a threefold acting or exerciſe of the ſame life. *Thou haſt granted me lives.*

Hence obſerve, *Life is the gift of God.*

With thee is the fountain of lives, the well, or *the vein of lives* (Pſal. 36. 9.) The Pſalmiſt alludes, either firſt, to waters which flow from a fountain, and ſo doth life from God. Or ſecondly, To Metals; *With thee is the vein of lives.* As all mineral veins, the veins of Gold and Silver, of Lead and Iron, *&c.* lie (as it were) in the boſom and bowels of the earth; ſo doth life in God. There is not the leaſt vein of this Quickſilver in all the world, but comes from him. Or thirdly, The Pſalmiſt alludeth to the veins of the body, which as ſo many rivers and rivulets derive their blood from that Red Sea the Liver. God hath a Sea of life in himſelf, and all that live are fill'd with life from him. This is one of his royal titles, *The living God*; He is *the living God*, not only *ſubjective*, becauſe he liveth; but *effective*, becauſe he enliveneth and quickneth all living creatures; *From him we receive life and breath* (Acts 17. 25.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, verſ. 28. *In him we live*, &c. that is, *by him*, or *through him*, as the ſame Apoſtle teacheth (*Rom.* 11. 36.) The ſame power giveth us being, and maintains it. This is true, yet the context carrieth the Prepoſition (*In*) further. For the Apoſtle having aſſerted, *verſ.* 27. *He is not far from every one of us*; ſubjoynes this as a proof, *For in him we live*, &c. Implying that man is, in a ſence, contained in, or inveſted with God. The divine nature cannot be circumſcribed with any thing, yet circumſcribeth all things: For which, *Paul* refers the *Athenians* to Heathen Poets, who ſpake this truth in a carnal language, yet ſuch as might be ſpiritualiz'd by a ſanctified underſtanding. The reſult of which is, *That God is the author and conſervator of our lives.* This glory is given alſo unto Chriſt, who is called *The Prince of life*, becauſe he hath life at command; *The Son quickneth whom he will.* Chriſt hath the power, not only of natural, but of ſpiritual and eternal life. *He is the Prince of Lives.*

מקור חיים

Vena vitarum.

Jovis omnia plena. Vulg. *Jupiter eſt æther, eſt terra Jupiter cœlumq; & omnia Jupiter, & ſiquid ſupra:* Æſchyl.

Job ſpeaks in the language of Princes, *Thou haſt granted,* &c. As they make our grants of Lands and Offices, ſo God makes a grant of life. The civil godſhip of Kings and Magiſtrates appears much in this, that they can grant a forfeited life, either by reprieve for a time, or by pardon for ever. It is ordinary with men, to grant others Leaſes for their lives, but they cannot grant them life. Princes can grant an offender a Leaſe of that life which he hath, but no Prince can grant life to thoſe who have it not. That's Gods peculiar, *Thou haſt granted me life.*

חסר *Denotat impenſum ſtudium vel exuberantiā boni.* Coc. *Auguſta innocentia eſt ſecundum leges juſtum eſſe; latius officiorum patet quam juris regula. Quam multa pietas humanitas, liberalitas, exigunt, quæ omnia extra publicas tabulas ſunt?* Sen. *l.* 2. *de ira.*

And favour.] The word ſignifieth the pureſt, ſincereſt, and moſt tender kindneſs, the fulleſt favour, the moſt courteous courteſie, *Gen.* 21. 23. & 24. 49. *Exod.* 15. 13. *Ruth* 1. 8. Hebricians tell us, That it noteth an exuberancy of kindneſs, ſuch as breaks the bounds, and exceeds the ordinary laws of love. It is but a poor way of loving, to love only by rule and meaſure. There is no true love can act beyond the rule which God gives, but love quickly exceeds the rules of men. Hence the Jews call thoſe *Chaſidem,* who are not only juſt by ſtature, giving every man his right, paying every man his due, but noble, heroical, free-hearted and open-handed in their diſtribution of favours.

One Expoſitor by *favour* underſtands the ſeeds of grace and vertue, eſpecially of charity and mercifulneſs, which (ſaith he) ſeem to have been connatural to *Job.*

Virtutum quædam ſeminaria tribuiſti mihi, & preſertim miſericordiæ, quam ſibi innatam ipſe fatetur, Job 31. 18. *Aquin.*

Liberum arbitriū tribuiſti mihi. Cajet.

Another interprets *favour* by *free-will.* But I paſs theſe as perverſions, not expoſitions of Scripture: And ſhall repreſent what is both ſafe and ſutable.

Firſt, Some reſtrain this *favour* to that which he received in the womb before he was born, or the favour which he had to be born, which is to be reckoned among very valuable favours. *Thou art he that took me out of the womb,* was *David's* thankful acknowledgment, *Pſal.*22.9. The womb is to all infants a temporary priſon, and to ſome a grave. It is favour to have thoſe gates unlockt, and the little priſoner ſet ſafe at liberty.

Hebraiſmus eſt quando ex duibus, ſimul poſitis ſubſtantivis unum adverbialiter ſumitur alterumq; determinat. Bold.

Secondly, We may interpret it as an *adjunct,* or an *adverb,* ſhewing how the Lord granted him life. It is an uſual Hebraiſm to put the latter of two Subſtantives adverbially, *Joſh.* 2. 14. *We will deal kindly and truly with thee,* ſay the Spies to *Rahab.* The Original is, *We will deal kindneſs and truth to thee;* which is alſo rendered kindneſs in truth, or kindneſs truly, that is, thou mayeſt truſt us: we do not flatter thee, and we will not deceive thee. So here, *Thou haſt granted me life and favour;* That is, life by favour, or life favourably; importing, That the receit of life, is the receit of a great mercy; as if *Job* had ſaid, *I could not deſerve that thou ſhouldeſt beſtow life upon me: When I was formed and faſhioned in the womb, it was thy favour to quicken me: Mercy put breath into thoſe tender principles, and firſt rudiments of my body.* And ſeeing not only ſenſe and motion, are brought in by life, but reaſon alſo, and all the noble operations of it; *Job* had reaſon enough to ſay, *Thou haſt granted me life,* as a great, or with abundant favour.

Hence obſerve, *Life is a ſpecial favour of God.*

There are divers ſorts of creatures which have not the favour of life beſtowed on them, no not the loweſt degree of life. The Lord hath given man not only life, but the higheſt degree of life; that is a high favour. It was Satans argument (*Chap.* 2.) *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life;* As if he had ſaid, *What is a mans body to his life? What are his eſtate, his lands, his gold and ſilver? What are all theſe dead commodities to his life? Life is the moſt precious of natural bleſſings.* A worm (under this conſideration) is a more noble creature then the Sun, becauſe a worm hath life, which the Sun hath not. *The loweſt of a ſuperior order, is better then the higheſt of an inferior;* Though the Sun be the excellenteſt of all inanimate creatures, yet it moves (though in heaven) in a lower orb, then any thing that lives groveling on the earth. A Leaf is more excellent then a Pearl or a Diamond, becauſe a Leaf hath a life in it, which theſe have not. That opinion of voluptuous Atheiſts or Epicures, delivered us by the Preacher, hath a truth in it; *A living dog is better then a dead lion* (Eccleſ. 9. 4.) For though (as that voice ſpake from heaven, *Revel.* 14. 13.) *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord,* and though curſed are the living that live without the Lord: in which ſence the pooreſt dead Dog is better then the proudeſt Lion alive; Yet, conſider man only within the line and compaſs of natural life; then he that lives in the worſt condition, is better then he that once was in higheſt dignity, but now is dead. It is uſual in Scripture by a Dog to ſet forth the vileſt eſtate of man, and the moſt excellent by a Lion. When *Mephiboſheth* would ſhew how low he was in his own eyes, though the ſon of a noble Prince, he joyns theſe two, *Dead and a Dog together;* 2 Sam. 9. 8. *What is thy ſervant, that thou ſhouldeſt look upon ſuch a dead Dog as I am?* He calls himſelf not only a Dog, as Chriſt did the Woman of *Canaan,* and as ſhe acknowledged her ſelf to be; but to lay himſelf as low as lowneſs it ſelf, he calls himſelf *a dead Dog,* implying, That life giveth ſome honour, and caſteth luſtre upon every ſubject, which it inhabits, though it be the meaneſt. When *Eſau* was near periſhing with hunger (*Gen.* 25. 32.) he reſolves thus, *I am at the point to die, and what profit ſhall this birth-right do to us?* As if he had ſaid, ſhall I keep my birth-right, and loſe my life? My life is more precious. Thus he ſpake, and he ſpake profanely in it; yet there is ſome truth in what he ſpake; for if we take birth-right preciſely in the notion of a civil priviledge, ſo life is better then a birth-right; but he is called prophane *Eſau,* becauſe there was a ſpiritual priviledge in his birth-right, which he ought to have valued above his life. Any ſpiritual good thing is better then natural life; but life is the beſt of natural, and better then all civil good things. When the Prophet would expreſs how great a bleſſing a King was to his people, he called him, *The breath of their noſtrils,* Lam. 4. 29. and *live for ever,* was the higheſt apprecation given the *Babylonian* Kings. The moſt noble imitations of Art are about this piece of Nature; it is the ambition of a Painter to draw to the life, or to ſhadow the motions and actings of life. When we would commend a picture, we ſay, It is done to the life; How precious a favour is real life, the very ſhadow of which is of ſo great a price? He that layeth down his life, payeth the greateſt debt, whether to juſtice or to nature. Chriſt went to the higheſt price for, and ſhewed the greateſt favour to ſinners, when he parted, and pawned this jewel for them, his precious life.

This ſhould mind Parents, as to pray for quickning after conceptions, ſo to give thanks when the embryon is quickned.

Cheſed *omnia beneficia Dei promiſcuè complectitur* Coc.

Now if this natural life be ſuch a favour, What is ſpiritual and eternal life? *Thou haſt given me life and favour,* or *life as a favour.*

Non ſolum vitam dediſti, ſed cumulaſti bonis omnibus, quæ ad victū, honorem, & rem vitæ neceſſariam pertinent: *Hoc nomine complectitur etiam omnia beneficia quæ ultra vitam Deus homini concedit, dum educandum eum inſtituendum, & informandū in lege ſua & timore curat.* Merc:

Thirdly, By *favour* in conjunction with life, we may underſtand the accidents of life; that is, thoſe good things which accompany and accommodate our lives; *Thou haſt given me life,* not a bare life, nor a mear ſubſiſtence or being in the world, but with life thou haſt alſo given me favour, many mercies and comforts to make my life ſweet and pleaſant to me.

Beſides, *favour* takes in not only thoſe outward comforts of health, ſtrength, liberty, plenty, but thoſe inward ornaments of life alſo, good education, and inſtruction in knowledge both humane and divine. It appears *Job* had a fair portion of theſe favours. His was not a naked, but a clothed ſoul, a ſoul gilded and engraven all over with heavenly truths.

So that *Job* in this word reports the bounty and munificence of God towards him, in all the former additions and accompliſhments of his life. Many have lives which they ſcarce look upon as a favour. *Some accidents of life, are more worth then the ſubſtance of it. Our well-being is better then our being.* It may prove a deſirable favour to be rid of life. In which ſence *Job* ſpake of himſelf at the firſt verſe of this Chapter, *My ſoul is weary of my life.* His life was then a burden, but once a favour. *Thou haſt granted me life and favour.*

Fourthly, *Job* may here intend ſpiritual and eternal favour. *Cheſed* ſignifies the grace or favour of God in Chriſt (*Pſal.* 89. 33.) *My loving kindneſs will I not take from*

Quoniam Cheſed *ſignificat aliquid per- ſive ſtud. un fectum in amore: idcirco ſtatuimus* Jobum *hic intelligere iſtam* ἀγάπην *quod Deus exercet erga ſuos quos facit filios ſuos in Chriſto.* Coc.

him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail. If he fail in duty I will chaſten him in mercy, I will not remove mercy from him. The Vulgar tranſlates, *Thou haſt given me life and mercy,* which ſome expound of that ſpecial mercy, the pardon of his ſin, and his waſhing from original corruption; As if *Job* had ſaid, I partake not only of life, but alſo of that which is better then life it ſelf, Thy favour or loving kindneſs, *Pſal.*63.4. The favour of God in ſpiritual things, (in pardoning ſin, in regenerating the ſoul, in ſending the holy Spirit) is the perfection of his favour. What is man without that favour which makes him a ſon of God, but even a beautiful, or at moſt, a rational beaſt? as *David* calls him, *Pſal.*49.21. And ſhould a man give thanks for outward favours only, without any reflection upon ſpiritual; a beaſt, could he ſpeak might give ſuch thanks. The life of ſenſe and growth is as a mercy, but beaſts and plants live thus: The life of reaſon is a greater mercy, but wicked men live thus; many are in Hell, unto whom God granted this life, and they would be glad God would call in his grant, and take it from them: But unto theſe three lives God adds a fourth to his Elect, even a life of grace through Jeſus Chriſt. This is the favour of favours, and the bleſſing of all our bleſſings; except this favour be granted with our lives, it were better for us never to have had a grant of our lives. It is more eligible not to have been born, then not to be born again.

Cheſed ſumitur pro venuſtate corporis. Coc.

There is a fifth Interpretation, taking the word *Cheſed* for corporal favour, or the beauty of the body, we ſay, ſuch an one is well favoured, he hath an excellent feature; the favour of man is ſeen in the feature of his face. Favour is the perfection of beauty; Some have a clear mixture of white and red, yet no favour. In this ſence the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 40.6.) where the Lord makes a proclamation, *The voice ſaid Cry, and he ſaid, What ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs, and the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the field;* The word which we tranſlate *goodlineſs,* is *Cheſed, All fleſh is graſs* (man withers quickly) and *Cheſed, the goodlineſs thereof;* all of man, his favour, beauty, ſtrength, all theſe are as the *flower of the field.* Some read *goodneſs* for *goodlineſs;* the ſence holds, if we take it ſo: the natural, the moral goodneſs of man is but a flower. As no goodlineſs, ſo no goodneſs of man, except ſpiritual, laſteth long, and that laſteth long and long, even for ever. Grace is not as the flower of the field; that is, durable ſubſtance: that (as the Prophet ſpeaks there of the Word of God in *verſ.* 8.) ſhall ſtand for ever. The grace of God is as laſting as the Word of God, for his Word is the external ſeed or principle of grace. But all other goodneſs and goodlineſs of man how good, how goodly ſoever; his other beauty how beautiful ſoever; his ſtrength, how ſtrong; his favour, how well favoured ſo ever, is but as the flower of the field, which is either cut down while it is green, or ſoon fades while it ſtands.

Take favour in this ſence, and the ſence of the whole verſe is harmonious and ſound. *Thou haſt granted me life;* my body is formed and quickned, and more then ſo, *Thou haſt given me favour,* my body is full of beauty and comlineſs. The comlineſs of the body is a favour received, and many receive favour, becauſe they are comly. From either of which conſiderations we may call the comlineſs of the body *favour,* and it is no common favour, God denies this to many; he grants them the life of Nature, but not favour; yea, he grants many the life of Grace, but not favour. *Beautiful ſouls are often ill-houſed; and filthy ſouls cleanly houſed;* 'tis admirable when both beauties meet in the ſame man; *Moſes* was a *goodly child* (Exod. 2.2.) and a good man. As grace in the inward man is the beſt favour, ſo favour is graceful to the outward man. *Thou haſt granted me life and favour,*

And thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.

פקד *Inſpectio* n̄ ἡ ἐπισκοπή σοῦ. Sept. *Viſitatio eſt Dominorum & ſuperiorum, cum ad Deum refertur, denotat providentiā.* Pined.

Here is the third benefit of this *Royal grant, The viſitation of God.* One reads, *Thy preſence.* A ſecond, *Thy aſſiſtance.* A third, *Thy inſpection, thy over-looking or ſuperintendency hath preſerved my ſpirit.* The Hebrew word ſignifies, The viſitation of a ſuperior over an inferior, as when Maſters enquire into their Families, or Governors into their Colledges and Hoſpitals, to ſee whether the Statutes and Orders appointed by the Founders and Benefactors be obſerved. There is a threefold viſitation of God held forth in Scripture.

Firſt, A viſitation of condemnation. God viſits to take vengeance by deſtructive puniſhments, when warning is not taken, nor repentance ſhewed after corrective puniſhments. *Shall not I viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord? Shall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* Jer. 5.9.

Secondly, A viſitation of correction (*Pſal.* 89.32.) *If thy children forſake my law,* &c. *then will I viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes: Nevertheleſs my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from him,* &c. Though they break my Laws, yet I will not break my Covenant, they ſhall ſmart for it, but they ſhall not periſh for it. This is a fatherly viſitation.

Thirdly, A viſitation of conſolation. And this two-fold, Firſt, For deliverance out of an evil eſtate, and that either temporal; the Lord is ſaid to viſit his people *Iſrael,* when he delivered them out of *Egypt* (Exod. 4.31.) or ſpiritual and eternal; *God hath viſited and redeemed his people,* ſaith the bleſſed Virgin (*Luke* 1.68.) that is, he hath viſited his people, to redeem them from ſin and Satan, death and hell, by Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly (Which is moſt proper to this Text) there is a viſitation, for protection in a good eſtate. When God (having cauſed our line to fall in a fair place) draws his line of providential communication round about us; So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Life and loving kindneſs haſt thou dealt to me, and thy providence preſerveth my ſpirit.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Thou didſt not only give me life and favour, but thou didſt protect me for many years in the enjoyment of thoſe favours.* Providence was the hedge, not only of his outward, but of his inward eſtate, *Thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.*

שמר *Summa ſolertia atque diligentia proſpexit, cavit, oberravit, ut ſolent cuſtodia & excubiæ nocturnæ, vel gregum cuſtodes.*

The Verb which we tranſlate, *hath preſerved,* ſignifieth to preſerve, both by ſtrength and watchfulneſs. The Noun expreſſeth a *Watch-tower,* in Hebrew, becauſe a watchman ſtandeth upon his Tower, and looks round about him, to eſpy and give notice of approaching dangers. The Lord preſerveth both wayes, by his watchfulneſs, and by his ſtrength: his eye is wakeful enough, and his arm is powerful enough to preſerve us. *He that keepeth* Iſrael *doth neither ſlumber nor ſleep* (Pſal. 121.1.) *the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary* (Iſa. 40.28.) He that is thus wakeful can eaſily viſit, and he that is thus powerful, can eaſily preſerve thoſe whom he viſiteth.

Thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.

But how did the viſitation of God, preſerve the *ſpirit* of *Job?* Or what are we to underſtand by his ſpirit, which was thus preſerved?

The ſpirit of man is taken three wayes;

Firſt, For *Life.* Thus God keepeth us from death, while he preſerves our ſpirits.

Secondly, For the *Soul.* Thus God preſerveth our ſpirits, while he keeps us from falling into, or from falling in temptation; while he keeps our corruptions from prevailing, and our graces from decaying.

Thirdly, The ſpirit of man is taken for his *Courage.* Thus God preſerveth our ſpirits, while he keeps us from needleſs fears, and cowardly deſpondencies. Doubtleſs *Job* had experience of the viſitation of God preſerving his ſpirit in all theſe ſences; yet here he ſeems chiefly to intend the preſervation of his life, which God had granted him with favour, or of thoſe comforts which were granted him with his life. Hence obſerve, Firſt in general,

That what God granteth, he preſerveth.

It is a part of his grant, that he will preſerve. Should the Lord beſtow the greateſt ſtock of mercy upon us, and leave us to the wide world, he ſhould quickly loſe all; God is not like the Carpenter or the Maſon, who buildeth up a houſe, and then leaveth it to it ſelf, or to the care of others. The Lord ſurveyes what he builds, and keeps up what he ſets up; all would come down elſe. Providence ſucceedeth Creation, or Providence is a continued Creation. As ſoon as ever the Lord had made Man, and a Garden, He took the Man and put him in the Garden which he had made, *to dreſs it, and to keep it* (Gen. 2.15.) God putteth the creatures under mans charge, yet he keepeth all creatures in his own charge, and eſpecially man: A Garden without a man to viſit it, would ſoon be a wilderneſs. And man without God to viſit him would ſoon be, or be in a wilderneſs, either out of order, or in danger. *Achiſh* promiſeth *David*, *I will make thee a keeper of my head for ever* (1 Sam.28.2.) His meaning was, he ſhould be *Captain of his guard*. Great Princes have their guards, they have keepers of their heads. The great King of Heaven and earth is a guard to the meaneſt man, and the keeper of his head. God enquires of *Cain* for his brother *Abel* (Gen.4.) *Where is* Abel *thy brother?* What is become of him? *Cain* was angry at the queſtion, *Am I* (ſaith he) *my brothers keeper?* We ought to be one anothers keepers; our mutual viſitations ſhould preſerve one anothers ſpirits. Some are apt to think themſelves too good for the work: others, that the work is too hard for them. It is our comfort, and it may be our aſſurance, that God hath neither of theſe thoughts; *The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy ſhade upon thy right hand. The Sun ſhall not ſmite thee by day, nor the Moon by night. The Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all evil; He ſhall preſerve thy ſoul: The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and for evermore* (Pſal. 121. 5.) How large a writ or patent of protection is granted here? No time ſhall be hurtful, neither *day nor night*; which includes all times. Nothing ſhall hurt, neither Sun nor Moon, nor heat nor cold: Theſe include all annoyances. Nothing ſhall be hurt, *Thy ſoul ſhall be preſerved, thy outgoings and thy comings in ſhall be preſerved*: Theſe include the whole perſon of man, and him in all his juſt affairs and actions. Nothing of man is ſafe without a guard, and nothing of man can be unſafe, which is thus guarded. They ſhall be kept, who can ſay, *The Lord is our keeper*. And they cannot be kept, no not by legions of Angels, who have not the Lord for their keeper. None can keep us, but he, and he hath promiſed to keep us *for evermore*. Some men are weary of their offices, and ſome are put out of office; God is neither. In that Prophetical curſe againſt *Judas*, 'tis ſaid, *Let another take his office* (Pſal.109.8.) What office? It is this word, and notes there the office of looking to, or of preſerving the ſouls of others, we commonly call it, *The cure of ſouls*. Such is the office of all the Miniſters of Chriſt, That's *Epiſcopacy by divine right*; this in the Text is *divine Epiſcopacy*. That word which here in *Job* we tranſlate *viſitation*, and in the Pſalm now cited, *office*, is called *Epiſcopacy* by the Apoſtle (*Act*.1.21.) Chriſt is the great Biſhop or viſitor both of our ſouls and bodies. He is the œcumenical Biſhop. The whole world is his Dioceſs. He preſerveth man and beaſt. See more of this point, *Chap*.7. 20.

Præfectura ejus accipiat alter, id eſt, omnia quæ in ejus cura ſunt quæ ſub ſua poteſtate habet.

Again, For as much as this viſitation which extendeth to the whole man, is here in the letter determined upon the ſpirit, We may obſerve,

First, Taking *Spirit* for *Life*,

> *That as our well-being, ſo our being in the world is at the daily diſpoſe of God.*

The living God not only giveth, but maintaineth our lives. We live not by bread, while we are healthy, nor by medicines, when we are ſick; but by the Word of God. His viſitation doth all.

Secondly, Take *Spirit* for the *Soul*, then we are taught,

> *That our ſouls are not independently immortal or incorruptible.*

As the life of the whole man is not, ſo neither is the life of the ſoul, of, or in it ſelf, without ſupport from God. The Angelical ſpirits who were never married to bodies of earth, ſtand not meerly by Creation, but by Providence. The viſitation of God preſerveth thoſe ſpirits, how much more the ſpirits of men, which are eſpouſed to duſt and clay?

Thirdly, As ſpirit ſignifieth the ſoul, not only in it's natural, but in it's ſpiritual ſtate, or in the ſtate of grace; We learn,

> *That our ſpiritual ſtock and treaſure are in danger, and would decay, if the power and care of God did not preſerve our ſpirits.*

Grace cannot keep it ſelf, if left to its ſelf. We ſhould loſe, not only degrees of grace, but all grace, were it left in our own hands. But becauſe it is grace, therefore it is not left in our own hands, therefore it cannot be loſt. So the Apoſtle clearly (1 Pet.1.4.) *We are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation*. The word ſignifies to keep, as a City beleaguered without by a ſtrong enemy, is kept by a Gariſon within. Man at the firſt had an excellent eſtate in ſpirituals; though it cannot be ſaid (properly) that he had grace (for that is in the hand of a Mediator) yet he had the image of God, and perfect innocency; but becauſe God did not viſit his ſpirit by freſh aſſiſtances, he was ſtript of all, and fell from the throne of his created glory. As God viſits our ſouls by preventing grace, to give us what we had not: ſo he viſits us by his preſerving and perſevering grace, to continue what he hath given.

Laſtly, Foraſmuch as (though God createth and careth for the whole man, yet) the viſitation of God is expreſſed only, as to the ſpirit; We may Obſerve,

> *That God doth chiefly take care of, and provide for the ſpirit or ſoul of man.*

When God formed the body of man at firſt, out of the duſt of the earth, and breathed into his noſtrils, the breath of life; it is not ſaid he became a living body, or a living man, *But, man became a living ſoul*. So here, the work of providence is not enlarged to the whole man, but reſtrained to his ſpirit; As if the Lord did ſcarce think our bodies either worth, or needing a viſit in compariſon of our ſpirits. And ſeeing God cares for nothing in us, ſo much, as for our ſpirits, ſhould not our care be chiefly for our ſpirits? The ſoul is (upon the matter) all man; ought not man to be moſt of all for his ſoul? Shall the thoughts of God be moſt buſied, his care and inſpection moſt fixed upon our ſpirits, and ſhall not ours? While Chriſt in a manner diſchargeth us for our outward man (*Matth*.6.25.) *Take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye ſhall put on*; his meaning was, to charge us more deeply with the inward man; yet how many are there, whoſe outward man ſtands them in more coſt and care, in more thoughts and viſitations for one day, then their ſpirits or inward man doth for a whole year, yea, for their whole lives! Viſitations are frequent and ſerious for the preſerving of the body: but where ſhall we find ſerious thoughts of viſiting the ſoul?

Take this word further, *If it be the viſitation of God which preſerveth our ſpirits*, we ſhould often viſit God with prayer, intreating him to continue theſe viſitations. Prayer is our viſiting God, as providence is Gods viſiting of us, and we ſhould viſit God by prayer, not only (as they, *Iſa*. 26.) in trouble, but in our peace: we ſhould deſire him to viſit our eſtates, our families, but eſpecially our ſouls and ſpirits in their moſt flouriſhing condition. The Apoſtle uſeth it as an argument to keep us from diſtracting thoughts (*Phil*.4.2.) *Let your moderation be known unto all men: The Lord is at hand. Be careful in nothing, but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication, let your requeſts be made known unto God.* The Lord is at hand, let not your hearts be troubled. Viſit God in duty, who is at hand to viſit you in mercy. Though there be an infinite diſtance between God and man, yet God is not far from any man, and he is ever near ſome men; Let not us be ſtrangers to God, when we hear he maketh continual viſits to us. *Thy viſitation doth preſerve my ſpirit.*

Verſ. 13. **And theſe things haſt thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee.**

Some read the firſt clauſe (which adds ſharpneſs to it) with an interrogation. *And haſt thou hid theſe things in thine heart?* Is it ſo with thee, or haſt thou dealt ſo with me indeed?

The heart of God, is the will, purpoſe or decree of God; Theſe are a vaſt repoſitory, wherein all things are laid up.

And theſe things haſt thou hid, &c.] What things? what is the antecedent to theſe things?

Firſt, Some ſay, His afflictions, *Theſe things*, that is, theſe afflictions, which thou haſt now laid upon me, were hid in thine heart: thou haſt ſhewed me many favours, while in ſecret thou didſt prepare rods for me.

Secondly, The antecedent *to theſe things* in mercy, *life, favour and viſitation*, ſpoken of before, ſay others; As if *Job* had ſpoken thus, *This bill of bleſſings now read, theſe priviledges not reckoned up, were hidden in thine heart: thou haſt had gratious intentions towards me, while thou haſt been ſmiting me.*

Scio quia univerſorum memineris Vulg.

I know all this is with thee.] That is, Thou remembreſt all this, and keepeſt a record of it by thee; The Vulgar makes this the Text, *I know thou remembreſt all things*, or *all men*.

Quaſi hæc mala velut in animo recondita in tempus opportunum aſſervaſſet, ut nec opinantem opprimeret. Atrox querimonia. Merl

Some (ſuppoſing the antecedent to be his afflictions) make out this harſh and unbecoming ſence; As if *Job* had thus uttered his mind to God, *I now perceive thou haſt had coals of anger raked up in the aſhes, while thoſe warm beams of love did ſhine upon me; Thou haſt held out mercy in thy hand, but ſomewhat elſe lay in thine heart.* This interpretation, in the common underſtanding of it, is moſt unworthy of God. It is the wickedneſs of men to ſpeak fair, and to do ſome courteſies, while cruelty and revenges are hid in their hearts. When *Eſau* (*Gen.* 27.41.) ſaw himſelf defeated of the bleſſing by his brother, *He ſaid in his heart, the days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I ſlay my brother* Jacob: Here's the character of malice, he gave neither brother nor mother ill language, but *he ſaid in his heart*. The holy God never ſpeaks good to them, to whom he intends evil. The Creator needs not daub or pervaricate with his creatures.

I grant indeed that the Lord giveth wicked men many outward favours, and ſpeaks them fair in his works, but he never ſpeaks them fair in his word, *Say, Woe to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand, ſhall be given him* (Iſa. 3. 11.) Men are apt to flatter, but flattery is much an abomination to the Lord, as it is below him.

I grant alſo, That the Lord giveth his own people many favours, and ſpeaketh real kindneſſes to them while he hides affliction in his heart. What evil ſoever he brings upon them, he hath thoughts to do them good, and hath nothing but good for them in his thoughts.

We underſtand by thoſe *hidden things*, the mercies which *Job* with his laſt breath had enumerated: then the words import two things.

Firſt, An argument to move the Lord not to deſtroy him, or to aſſure his own heart that he would not. As if he had ſaid, Lord, I know thou remembreſt well what thou haſt done for me, what coſt thou haſt been at in making me at firſt, and in preſerving me hitherto; ſurely then thou wilt not pull all down in a moment.

Secondly, The words may import that the Lord in afflicting *Job* had uſed only a kind of ſacred diſſimulation. A diſſembler carrieth himſelf as if he had no intent to do what he is reſolved to do: It is uſual with men thus to diſſemble hatred, and ſo have ſome their love. He that purpoſeth much good to another, hideth it ſometimes under ſowr language and unkindeſt uſage. *Joſeph* had moſt endeared affection towards his brethren, yet he put a diſguiſe of anger upon it, acting the part of a ſevere man, who lieth at catch to find out advantages and pick quarrels. *Joſeph* uſed many ſtratagems of love, to entangle his Brethren, and wrapt up his good will in hard ſpeeches and rough carriages; nothing appearing leſs then what indeed he moſt was, *a loving Brother, forgetful of nothing but injuries*; *Job* ſeems to have had ſuch a conception of God, while he ſaith, *Theſe things haſt thou hid in thine heart*; and then his ſence riſeth thus, *Lord, I know thou beareſt favour and good will towards me ſtill. The fire of thy love is not extinct, but covered. Thou doſt but perſonate an enemy, thou art my friend; thou draweſt a cloud betwixt me and the light of thy countenance, but thy countenance is ſtill as full of light towards me as ever; and though I ſee nothing but ſorrows on every ſide, yet I know mercies are hid in thine heart.* Thus the words are an aſſertion of *Job*'s faith and aſſurance that God loved him, while his chaſtenings lay moſt heavy upon him. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *The Saints while they are ſtrong in faith, are able to diſcern the favour of God through the clouds and coverings of his moſt angry diſpenſations.*

This they can do, and when they can, they are arrived at a great height in Grace. To maintain our intereſt in Chriſt through diſadvantages, is ſtrong faith. The woman of *Canaan* (Mat. 15. 26.) knew her pardon and acceptance wer hid in the heart of Chriſt while he called her Dog, and would ſcarce vouchſafe to caſt an eye upon her. Faith did this, and Faith can do the like at this day: But every true Faith will not do it. There is a kind of miracle wrought in ſuch believing: So Chriſt concludes with that woman (*ver.* 28.) *O woman, great is thy faith!* Truth of grace is not enough for every work of grace; ſome works will not be done without ſtrength as well as truth. Weak faith is ready to ſay, Mercy is loſt, when it is but hidden, and that God means us no good, when we do not enjoy good. But the ſtrong Faith ſpeaketh on this wiſe, *Lord, I know there is mercy in thine heart towards me, though I ſee nothing in thy face but frowns, and feel nothing from thy hand but blows. Let God do what he pleaſeth with me, I will not have a jealous thought of him, or ſuſpect his intentions towards me, whatſoever his actions be.* Hence obſerve,

> Secondly, *We may gather arguments of ſupport in our greateſt ſufferings from the apprehenſion of concealed mercies.*

The skill and holy ſubtilty of Faith can wind it ſelf in Gods boſom, and from what it finds lying ſecretly there for us, encourages us to bear what is openly laid upon us. Obſerve,

> Laſtly, *A Believer looks upon all his receipts, as coming out of the heart of God.*

As he can look into his own heart, and ſee all the Commandments and revealed Counſels of God hidden there, ſo he can look into the heart of God, and ſee all the comforts he wanteth hidden there. Men of the world take their comforts only from the hand of God, Saints take theirs from the heart of God. It putteth the price upon every bleſſing, when we can look upon ſpecial love as the ſpring of it. Look how much of the heart of our friend we can ſee in a courteſie, ſo much true value there is in it. Hence it is uſual with man, when he would expreſs his freeneſs to thoſe who deſire a favour at his hands, to ſay, Yes, *Take it with heart and good will, you have it with all my heart.* We read of one, who complained he had received but a Golden Cup, when he ſaw another receive a Kiſs from a Noble Prince: A Kiſs is a better gift then a Cup of Gold. Love is the richeſt preſent. How happy then are they, who have the golden Cup and a Kiſs too? Much from the hand, and all from the heart, from the love of God.

Job having thus reviſed and read over the particulars of his former mercies received from the bounty and free love of God, revives his complaint about, and renews his deſire of deliverance from preſent ſorrows, in his next addreſs to God.

VERS. 14, 15, 16, 17.

If I ſin, then thou markeſt me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

If I be wicked, wo unto me; if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head; I am full of confuſion, therefore ſee thou mine affliction,

For it encreaſeth; Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion, and again thou ſheweſt thy ſelf marvellous upon me.

Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes againſt me, and encreaſeſt thine indignation upon me, changes and war are againſt me.

The connection of theſe words lieth ſomewhat in the dark, and this in evidence hath cauſed divers conjectures about it.

Firſt, Some make the connection with the thirteenth Verſe, *I know* (ſaith *Job*) *that this is with thee*; and here he declared what was with him, namely, that, *If I ſin, then thou markeſt me; and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

Secondly, The connection is made by others with the twelfth Verſe, *Thou haſt granted me life and favour, and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit; yet if I ſin, thou markeſt me*, &c. As if *Job* had ſaid, Though thou haſt been pleaſed to make ſo many grants of favour, and haſt done all theſe things for me which were hidden in thine heart, yet I know thou wilt not bear with, or connive at me, *if I ſin againſt thee:* Thou haſt not given me theſe mercies, that I ſhould be emboldened to tranſgreſs the rule of thy juſtice; no, though thou haſt done much for me, *Yet if I ſin, thou markeſt me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

Thirdly, A third goeth higher, and makes theſe words depend upon the third Verſe; where *Job* puts three Queries to God; the laſt of which is, *Is it good unto thee that thou ſhouldeſt ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked?* I know it is not (for 'tis like I might eſcape as well as another, yet) *if I ſin, thou markeſt me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity; if I be wicked, wo unto me.* Mine own experience proves thee far enough from ſhining upon the counſel of the wicked. Behold clouds and darkneſs are upon me.

There is a fair ſence in any of theſe connections; which to determine, is not eaſie; I ſhall leave all three before the Reader.

Verſe 14. **If I ſin, then thou markeſt me.**

If I ſin.] Sin ſtandeth here in oppoſition to wickedneſs; *Thou wilt not ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked.* And, *verſ.* 15. *If I be wicked, then wo unto me; for if I ſin, then thou markeſt me.* Sin is any tranſgreſſion againſt, or deviation (though but an hairs breadth) from the rule; *If I fail*, be it never ſo little.

שמר

Then thou markeſt me.] The Original hath three ſignifications, which occaſion as many different interpretations of the Text.

First, To preſerve, and that two wayes; firſt, By protecting from thoſe evils which others would bring upon us (*Pſal.* 141. 9.) *Keep me from the ſnare which they have laid:* That is, protect me from the danger which their ſnares threaten me with. So at the twelfth verſe of this Chapter, *Thy viſitation doth preſerve my ſpirit.* Secondly, It is rendered to preſerve by *ſparing*, or not bringing thoſe evils upon us which our own ſins have deſerved. So the Vulgar here, who to make out his ſence, puts the latter part into the form of an interrogation, *If I have ſinned, and thou haſt ſpared me for a time, wherefore then doſt thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* As if the meaning of *Job* were this, When in former times I ſinned againſt thee, thou waſt pleaſed to remit of thy ſeverity, and deal gently with me, *Thou didſt ſpare me as a Father ſpareth his Son that ſerveth him.* Why is the tenour of thy diſpenſations ſo much changed from what it was, ſeeing thou art a God that changeth not; and I am but what I was, a weak and changeable man? Why I am I now charged with ſin, and not ſet free, as ſometimes (I have been) from ſorrow the fruit of it? Wilt thou deal with me, who ſin out of infirmity, or againſt my will, as with thoſe who are wicked, and have a will to ſin?

Si peccavi & ad horā pepercisti mihi, &c. Vulg.

Secondly, To prevent others from doing what they deſire, or our ſelves from what we fear (*Pſal.* 18. 23.) *I was upright before him, and kept my ſelf from mine iniquity;* as if he had ſaid, I have maintained ſuch ſtrict watch over my own heart, that I have prevented my ſelf from falling into that ſin which I was moſt ſubject to and in danger of, both in regard of my conſtitution and temptation. Taking this meaning of the word, the whole verſe is rendered thus, *If*, or, *When I am ready to ſin, thou (ſtoppeſt or) preventeſt me, why then doſt then not acquit me from mine iniquity?* As if he had ſaid, Lord, wilt thou deal with me as with a wicked man? Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked, for by thy preventing grace, thou haſt kept me from all wickedneſs, and ſtopt me from many ſins. Hence note,

> That, *The remembrance of the power of God in keeping us pure from greater ſins, is an argument that he will ſpare us, though we have (through infirmity) fallen into ſin.*

He that holds us from iniquity, will not deſtroy us for iniquity. Some are ſtopt from ſin, and ſtorm when they are ſtopt; theſe have no reaſon to think God will ſpare them becauſe he hath ſtopt them. Thouſands are ſtopt from ſin, who neither know what it is to ſin, nor that they have been ſtopt from ſin. Theſe cannot plead this point: As it is no virtue to endure what is not grievous to us, ſo no grace not to do what is not joyous to us when we do it. But to know we are ſtopt from a pleaſing ſin, and rejoyce at it, to ſee how our corruptions have been prevented, and to bleſs God for it, this is a great degree of grace. As there is a preventing grace, which beginneth with us, while we are ſtrangers from God, and are walking on in the wayes of ſin; ſo there is a preventing grace, watching over us after we are turned to God, leſt we fall into ſin. Experience of this may be a ſweet ſupport unto the ſoul, under the ſaddeſt afflictions, and in the darkeſt night of ſpiritual deſertions.

Thirdly, The word ſignifieth to keep in priſon, or in ſafe cuſtody. The Nown is a priſon in Hebrew. And thus the ſence is given three wayes, as an Aſſertion, as an Interrogation, as an Imprecation.

Firſt, As an Aſſertion, *If I have ſinned, thou wilt*, or, *thou maiſt impriſon me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Hence obſerve,

> That, *The beſt and deareſt of Gods ſervants may look for ſtraights, if they walk looſly.*

The Lord will ſhut them up, if they preſume and take undue liberty, or grow licentious. They ſhall be either humbled or deſtroyed, who turn the grace of God (that is, the manifeſtation of his grace, either by his word or by his works) into wantonneſs. God will not cocker his own children, and dandle them ſo, as to forget to correct them, if they forget him and their own duty. If *Iſrael* ſin, *Iſrael* ſhall ſmart for it; and if *Job* ſin, *Job* muſt look to be laid in priſon for it. Thus he ſpeaks, acquitting God from ſhining upon the counſels of wicked men, ſeeing he will not ſpare, no not his own children, if they ſin againſt him.

Secondly, The ſence is given by an Interrogation; *If I ſin, wilt thou therefore ſhut me up in priſon? Wilt thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* And ſo he pleadeth with God, as uſing too much ſeverity and raſhneſs againſt him; *What, ſhall I be laid by the heels for every fault? Shall I be arreſted and clapt up in Irons for every ſin? Wilt thou impriſon me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity?* They who are moſt wicked, deſerve no worſe then this; and ſhall I, if I do but ſin, receive ſuch meaſure? Where are thy compaſſions, and the ſounding of thy bowels? are they reſtrained? It ſhould ſeem ſo, elſe thou wouldeſt not thus reſtrain and impriſon me.

Valde durū videtur, ut ſi quid peccaverim perpetuò me in carcere, cuſtodiaq; arctiſſima detineas, neq; unquam peccati pœnas remittere velis. Pin.

An ſimulac pecco obſervas me, &c. Jun.

Thirdly, As an Imprecation; *If I have ſinned, according as I am charged, impriſon me as long as thou wilt, and do not acquit me from mine iniquity:* If I am ſuch a man as my friends judge me to be, I expect no favour: let me be poor and ſick ſtill, torture me, rack me, do what thou wilt with me. Like that of *David*, Pſal. 7. 4, 5. *If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me*, &c. *Let the enemy perſecute my ſoul and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the duſt.* I ask no favour, if I am ſuch a man as mine enemies have repreſented me; or if I have done that for which they chalenge me.

Verba jurantis & conteſtantis ſuam innocentiam; ſi peccavi, imprecor mihi duriſſimam cuſtodiam. Bold.

Fourthly, To obſerve and mark; and it importeth a critical, a curious obſervation; to mark exactly (*Pſal.* 130. 3.) *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquity who ſhall ſtand?* But doth not the Lord mark iniquity? Doth not he take notice of every ſin acted by any of the children of men, eſpecially by his own children? Why then doth the Pſalmiſt put it upon an *If?* If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquity. 'Tis true, the Lord marks all iniquity to know it, but he doth not mark any iniquity in his children to condemn them for it: So the meaning of the Pſalm is, That, *if the Lord ſhould mark ſin* with a ſtrict and ſevere eye, as a Judge, to charge it upon the ſinning, no man could bear it. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *When I ſin, thou doſt watch me;* watching is more then marking; as if the Lord had taken up a ſtand upon a high place, and did there compoſe himſelf to ſee what's done, or to make annotations upon the whole Text of mens lives all the world over. Hence obſerve,

Refertur ad exquiſitam Dei obſervationem univerſarum humanæ vitæ actionū. Rab. Abr. Tygur, *Reg.* 70.

> That, *God takes notice of the ſins and failings of his own people.*

If I ſin, then thou markeſt me; and in the fourteenth Chapter, verſe 16. *Thou numbreſt my ſteps, doſt thou not watch over my ſin?* Thou numbreſt my ſteps; what ſteps? He meaneth not the ſteps of his outward, but of his inward man; or the ſteps of his outward man in order to the inward. There is a moral walking; *Walk before me and be upright;* walking is converſing or acting; ſo, *Thou numbreſt my ſteps*, thou telleſt my moral motions, the actings of my ſoul and body, what I do, and what I think;

Obſervas me ne unquam lateant peccata. Aug. *Quoties peccavi id diligentiſſimè notaſti.* Mer.

Doſt thou not watch over my ſin? And again (*Chap.* 31.4.) *Doth not he ſee my wayes, and count all my ſteps?* That is, how my converſation is ordered, both toward himſelf, and toward my neighbour? Thus the Lord counteth all our ſteps, we cannot ſtep aſide, or tread awry, but he obſerves us. There are two that keep a record of our lives.

Firſt, God, he followeth us up and down, as with Pen, Ink, and Paper, to write our actings.

Secondly, Our own conſciences (which are as God within us) keep a record too, they write our lives, and count our ſteps. Many cannot read the book of conſcience, and ſo know little that is in it: But a time will come (if conſcience be not purged by the blood of Chriſt) when they ſhall perfectly read all their ſins in the book of conſcience. And if conſcience, which is Gods Deputy, then, much more God, who is the Judge of conſcience, marketh us if we ſin. God needs not judge upon information, but upon his own obſervation. He will reprove every man whom he doth not pardon; And is able to ſet before us in order, whatſoever any of us have done. How then do ſome ſay, *That God ſeeth not ſin in his Children? Job* ſaith, that God marked his ſin; but according to this doctrine, he ſhould rather have ſaid, *if I ſin, thou doſt not mark me.* Some through ignorance ſin, and ſee it not, ſin and perceive it not; but no man (among all the multitudes of men) can ſin unſeen, or unperceived by God. *If I ſin, then thou markeſt me.*

And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

לא תנקני *Non purges me ut ſim immunis ab omni peccato*

Will not the Lord acquit? Why have we a Goſpel then? What's the buſineſs of mercy? And where's the efficacy of Chriſts blood? Doth not this purchaſe, and do not they offer acquittances from iniquity? The words are interpreted three wayes.

Firſt, That *Job* ſpeaks from his unbelief, as if he could not ſee pardon through the thick cloud of his troubles, or have any evidence, that God had mercy in ſtore for him, while he endured ſuch plenty of miſeries.

Secondly, That he ſpake thus, upon a ſuppoſition of impenitency; As if he had ſaid, If I ſin and humble not my ſelf, thou wilt not acquit me.

Thirdly, That by *iniquity* he means his affliction, putting the cauſe for the effect: So, *Thou wilt not acquit me for mine iniquity*, is, Thou wilt not take away theſe afflictions, which are counted as the *proceed or iſſue* of mine iniquity.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Sin is a debt.*

Every acquittance ſuppoſeth an obligation. All men, as creatures, are in a debt of duty to God; and when they fail in that, they are in a debt of penalty, as ſinners.

Secondly obſerve, *When ſin is pardoned, the ſinner is acquitted, his debt is taken off, and his bonds are cancelled.*

Pardon is our diſcharge, our *quietus eſt*, ſealed in the blood of Chriſt. All Proceſs at Law, or from the Law, is then prohibited: there's no more to be ſaid, or done againſt us.

Again, The word ſignifies to cleanſe and purge, as well as to acquit; Note from it,

That as ſin defileth the ſoul, ſo pardon cleanſeth it.

Purge me with Hyſop, and I ſhall be clean; waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter then Snow, was *David's* prayer for pardon after his great defilement, *Pſal.* 51.7. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs*, 1 Joh. 1.9.

Fourthly, Foraſmuch as *Job* groaning under burdens of ſorrow, ſpeaks ſo often about the pardon of ſin, We learn,

That while ſin remaineth (to our ſence) unpardoned, the ſoul ſeeth no way to get out of ſorrows.

The removing of affliction is a ſign that ſin is forgiven, and the ſenſe of our forgiveneſs, is an argument that affliction ſhall be removed.

Fifthly, Taking the former words in conjunction with theſe, *If I ſin* (knowingly and wickedly, as they charge me) *Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Obſerve,

That a perſiſting ſinner, is an unpardoned ſinner.

There is abundant mercy for returning ſinners, but I know of none for thoſe that reſolve to go on in ſin. There is a promiſe of repentance, and a promiſe to repentance, but there is no promiſe which doth not either offer or require repentance; *Repent, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*, is the tenor of the Goſpel, as well as *believe, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* Though many who are going on in their ſins, are overtaken by grace, yet there is no grace promiſed to thoſe who go on in their ſins. The holieſt are threatned with wrath, if they do; ſurely then, none are put into an expectation of mercy, if they do. The promiſes either find us repenting, or they cauſe us to repent. No ſinner is pardoned for repentance, nor without it. *Job* ſpeaks that language more clearly in the words following, which ſome make an expoſition of theſe.

Verſ. 15. If I be wicked, Wo unto me.

If I be wicked.] What it is to be wicked, hath been ſhewed, and the difference between a wicked man and a ſinner diſcovered, at *verſ.* 7. upon thoſe words, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.*

Wo unto me.] The word is derived (ſaith one of the Rabbins) from a root ſignifying to *howl*: Great mourning is a kind of howling: and they who are in wo, are bid to howl (*Iſa.* 13.6. & 23.1, &c.) Wicked men howl rather then pray in their diſtreſs, becauſe of their extream worldly wo; *They have not cryed unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds*, Hoſ. 7. 14.

אללי לי *ab* יללה *Ejulatu deducit Rab.* Moſ. Kimchi.

There are legal woes, and there are evangelical woes. The Law cries wo, and ſo doth the Goſpel: Goſpel woes are the worſer of the two; for if the Law ſay wo to us, the Goſpel may ſay mercy to us; but if the Goſpel ſay, wo to us (as it doth to hypocrites, who abuſe, and to unbelievers, who refuſe mercy) where ſhall we have mercy? All woes may be underſtood in this place, Law woes and Goſpel woes, temporal woes and eternal woes, *If I be wicked, then wo unto me.*

Hence obſerve, *Wo is the portion of wicked men.*

Though they laugh, yet wo is their portion, yea they are therefore threatned with wo, becauſe they laugh (*Luke* 6.25.) *Wo unto you that laugh now, for ye ſhall mourn and weep.* Some wicked men are as merry, as if mercy were their peculiar. But we may ſay to their mirth, What doth it? Or if we ſhould ask them, What they do to make themſelves ſo merry: *David* will reſolve us what their courſe is (*Pſal.* 36.2.) *The wicked flattereth himſelf in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.* He that would be flattered, ſhall never want a flatterer; for if none will do it, he will do it himſelf. He ſpeaks well of himſelf, and therefore he thinks all's well. But uſually he hath ſome others ready enough to ſpeak well of him too. The true Prophets complained of the falſe for *crying peace, peace, when there was no peace*; for ſaying all is well, when they ſhould ſay all is wo. But though wicked men flatter themſelves, and though they get their neighbours to flatter them, yea though Miniſters flatter them, yet God will not flatter them; and at laſt their own conſciences will not flatter them neither. Conſcience will preach them a Sermon of woes at laſt, though poſſibly it hath been ſilent through ignorance, or ſilenc'd through malice for a long time.

As all the promiſes of grace and mercy, hang over the heads of the godly and ſincere; which way ſoever they go, a cloud of bleſſings drops and diſtils upon them. So clouds of wrath and blood hang over the heads of wicked men, dropping upon them, yea dropping upon them when they ſuppoſe the Sun ſhineth upon them.

Secondly, Conſider who ſpeaks this; *If I* (ſaith *Job*) *be wicked, then wo unto me.*

Hence obſerve, That, *A godly man may put the worſt caſes to himſelf.*

The Scripture puts ſuch caſes to godly men, therefore they may put ſuch to themſelves (*Rom.* 8.13.) *If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die*, ſaith the Apoſtle, writing to the

Saints. Though ſuch a ſuppoſition cannot be reſolved into this poſition, *A godly man ſhall die*, yet the ſuppoſition is true, If he liveth after the fleſh he ſhall die. So the Apoſtle of himſelf, and his fellow-Apoſtles, yea of the Angels; *If we or an Angel from heaven, preach any other Goſpel unto you, then that which we have preached, let him be accurſed* (Gal. 1. 9.) And as *Paul* propheſied a curſe upon any, either Apoſtle or Angel, who ſhould preach a falſe Goſpel; ſo a *wo* upon himſelf, if he ſhould neglect to preach the true Goſpel, 1 *Cor.*9.16. They who are above all curſes, may be threatned with a curſe. And they who ſhall certainly be preſerved from doing that which inevitably brings the curſe, may be told of a curſe in caſe they ſhould do it.

They put dangerous ſuppoſitions oppoſite to theſe, who ſay, *Let a godly man be never ſo wicked, yet it ſhall be well with him; let him ſin as much as he will, yet it ſhall be well with him.* The Spirit of God never puts ſuch ſuppoſitions. As the Scripture ſpeaks often to perſwade; ſo ſometimes to terrifie the godly from ſin, but never a tittle which may be an encouragement to ſin. It ſpeaks much to keep up their hearts in an aſſurance of pardon, in caſe they fall into ſin, and much more to keep down their corruptions, and to preſerve them from falling into ſin. Though there be a truth in it, that how much ſo ever a godly man ſinneth, he ſhall be pardoned; yet the Scripture uſeth no ſuch language, and the form of wholſom words teacheth every man rather to ſpeak thus, *If I be wicked, then wo unto me.*

If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.

Theſe words ſtand in an elegant oppoſition againſt the former. Here are perſons and ſtates oppoſite: perſons, *The wicked and the righteous*; *If I be wicked, if I be righteous:* ſtates, *Wo, and lifting up the head*; *If I be wicked, then wo unto me*; *If I be righteous, then will I not lift up mine head.* He doth not ſay, If I be righteous I ſhall be happy, though that be a truth, but (which was more ſutable to his purpoſe) *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.*

Some put this into a *dilemma*, or double argument, by which *Job* would aggravate the greatneſs of his affliction; As if he had ſaid, *Let me look which way I will, my caſe is very ſad, if I be wicked then wo be to me; If I be righteous, yet I am ſo full of ſorrows, that I am not able to hold up my head*; But I rather interpret this latter part of the verſe, as a deſcription of *Job's* humility, in the beſt of his ſpiritual eſtate, then as any aggravation of the ilneſs of his temporal eſtate.

If I be righteous.] He ſpeaks not as if he doubted whether he were righteous or no. *Job* had ſhewed the ſetledneſs of his ſpirit in that aſſurance more then once before, but he puts the beſt of his caſe, to ſhew how low he was in his own thoughts, when he was at beſt. There is a twofold righteouſneſs; Firſt, Of Juſtification. Secondly, Of Sanctification, of ſincerity or uprightneſs: and ſo his meaning is, Suppoſe I am ſuch, as I have aſſerted my ſelf to be, and as God himſelf hath teſtified me to be, perfect and upright, yet *I will not lift up my head*; Some read I cannot, others, I dare not lift up my head.

I will not lift up my head.] Not lift up thy head, *man*, if thou wert righteous? Why, who in the world ſhall lift up their heads, if the righteous ſhall not? Are their any that have ſuch cauſe to lift up their heads as they? He might ſay indeed, If I were rich, or if I were honourable, yet I will not lift up my head; theſe are things which cannot, and therefore ſhould not lift up any mans ſpirit an inch from the ground: but to ſay, If I were righteous, I would not lift up my head, ſeems a degradation or an abaſement of righteouſneſs. To clear this, I ſhall open the phraſe a little.

To lift up the head of another man, is to advance him. Thus *Pharaoh lifted up the head of his chief Butler*, Gen. 40. 13. And the King *of Babylon lifted up the head of* Jehojakin *King of* Judah, *and brought him forth out of priſon*, Jer. 52. 21. In this ſence *David* calls God, *The lifter up of his head*, Pſal. 3. 3.

To lift up our own heads, is to prevail, and to get above preſſing evils victoriouſly, *Judg.* 8. 28. *Thus was* Midian *ſubdued before the children of* Iſrael, *ſo that they lifted up their heads no more*; That is, *Gideon* routed and made ſo compleat a conqueſt over the *Midianites*, that they were totally broken, and could no more inſult over *Iſrael*. The victory of Chriſt over all our ſpiritual enemies, is thus deſcribed, *Pſal.*110.7. *He ſhall drink of the brook in the way*; that is, of the waters of affliction and ſorrow, which either the wrath of God, or the rage of men gave him to drink, while he was in the way of perfecting the work of our Redemption; and becauſe he ſhall do this, *Therefore ſhall he lift up his head*, that is, he ſhall prevail by his paſſion, and overcome by dying, yea, he ſhall overcome death by a triumphant Reſurrection.

Again, There is a two-fold lifting up of the head; Firſt, A lifting up of the head with joy and conſolation (*Luke* 21. 28.) Secondly, A lifting up of the head with pride and oſtentation, *Pſal.* 83. 2. *Lo thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lift up the head*; that is, they have proudly boaſted and vaunted themſelves. The latter is *Job's* ſence, *If I be righteous, I will not lift up my head* in pride; he might and he did lift up his head in joy, becauſe he knew himſelf righteous.

Attollere caput notat gaudium & fiduciam. Coc.

Once more, There is a lifting up of our heads in our ſelves, and a lifting up of our heads in Chriſt. *Job* diſclaims the former here, but he all along aſſumes the latter. We cannot lift up our heads too high, in the thoughts of Free Grace, nor hang them down too low, in the thought of our own Works.

Further, While *Job* ſaith, *I will not lift up my head*, he meaneth leſs then he ſpeaketh. In Scripture there is ſometimes leſs expreſſed then is intended, and ſometimes more. That of the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord*, riſes in ſence higher then the expreſſion; our labour in the Lord ſhall not only not be in vain, but abundantly advantageous. This of *Job*, *I will not lift up my head*, falls in ſence below his expreſſion, for his meaning is, I will abaſe my ſelf before God, I will be ſo far from priding my ſelf, or walking (as the daughters of *Jeruſalem* are deſcribed by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 3. 16.) with a *ſtretched forth neck*; that I will rather hang down my head.

Non levabo caput h. e. demiſſo capite ac mente coram te ambulabo.

To hang or hold down the head, in Scripture noteth humbling and ſorrow; when Chriſt bids his people lift up their heads, with joy, becauſe the time of their Redemption was drawing nigh; it implied that their heads would hang down with ſorrow, while that Redemption was further off. The Jewiſh faſts are deſcribed (in part) by this poſture of ſorrow (*Iſa.* 58. 5.) *Is it ſuch a faſt that I have choſen? A day for a man to afflict his ſoul? Is it to bow down his head as a bull-ruſh?* Times of faſting are times of mourning, and then (it ſeems) they uſed to hang down the head, as a ſign of mourning.

Miſeri & infœlices capite demiſſo, & in terram dejecto ambulant. Sanct.

> Hence obſerve, *That a godly man how upright and holy ſoever he is, walks humbly with God.*

The more holineſs any ſoul hath, the more humility it hath. Humility is a great part of our holineſs; much more then is it an argument of holineſs. The Phariſee (*Luke* 18.) who thought that he was righteous, lifted up his head full high, he would not loſe an inch of his commendation, and therefore commends himſelf. He is his own reporter of what he had done, and who he was; but the poor Publican durſt not lift up his eyes to heaven, his ſpirit hung down as well as his head, yet he was the righteous man, and went home juſtified rather then the other. It is the ſcope and deſign of the Goſpel to make and keep us humble. God hath ſet up the way of ſaving us by faith, that he might take away boaſting, and that no fleſh might glory in his ſight.

Secondly, If *Job* would not lift up his head, though righteous, what ſhall we judge of thoſe, who lift up and carry their heads ſo high, though they are wicked? There is no reaſon any man ſhould be proud of his goodneſs; what a madneſs then it is for wicked men to be proud of, or in their naughtineſs!

Thirdly, Though *Job* was very thankful for, and joyful in, yet he durſt not lift up his head, or be proud of the white robes and coſtly raimen of imputed righteouſneſs. What then ſhall we ſay of them, who are proud of the dirty rags and filthy raiment of their own inherent righteouſneſs? A godly man walketh tremblingly, leſt he ſhould offend, therefore he ſaith, *If I am wicked wo unto me*: and he walketh humbly, when he doth not offend, theretherefore he ſaith, though I am righteous, yet I will not hold up my head. *Job* hath often breathed out the humility of his ſoul in former paſſages, therefore I ſhall not inſiſt upon it here.

I am full of confuſion, therefore ſee thou mine affliction.

Saturitas hæc reſpicit animæ ventriculū, qui tantā ærumnarum copiā vix potuit concoquere. Pined.

I am full.] That is, my mind is full. The ſpirit hath a ſtomach, or a capacious veſſel for the receiving either of good or evil, of joy or ſorrow. *Job's* ſpirit had received in as much evil and ſorrow as ever it could hold, and more then he could well digeſt.

קלון à קלה *Quod eſt cremare, ignominia enim efficit pudorem, qui eſt πύρωσις τις in corde, & in vultu ſicut ignis. Erubeſcentes vultus habent flammantes.* Sanct.

I am full of confuſion.] The word ſignifies ſhame and burning heat, becauſe ſhame appeareth with a burning heat or bluſh in the face, which is alſo called confuſion of face. Bluſhing puts the face into a flame. Some take confuſion here for ſhame, rendering the Text, *I am full of ſhame*, or of ignominy: which ignominy might ariſe two wayes; Either from that reproach which his friends caſt upon him, while they branded him for a wicked man, and an hypocrite; *I am full of reproach*, ſo full, that I might juſtly be aſhamed, yea confounded, if I were ſuch as they deſcribe me. Or from that reproach which his afflictions caſt upon him. Poverty is no ſhame to a begger, who was born poor; but poverty is a ſhame to a man who hath been rich, and lived in honour. The original word holds this forth moſt properly, being oppoſed to that which ſignifies weightineſs and honour, becauſe honour is a weighty thing, as this ſignifies lightneſs and ſhame, becauſe ſhame is a light thing, or a thing of nought.

Our Tranſlators rendering the word *confuſion*, ſeem to intend ſomewhat elſe beſides *ſhame*.

Confuſion notes a diſorder, and an uncompoſedneſs of ſpirit. When a man knows not what to do, or whoſe counſel to follow. When a man cannot make up his thoughts, or bring them to any iſſue: When the mind is like a skain of ravell'd ſilk which will neither wind nor draw, then we are in confuſion. And this I conceive was it, which *Job* chiefly intends, when he ſaith, *I am full of confuſion*.

Hence obſerve, *Great ſorrows diſtract the mind, and bring a man to his wits end.*

While we ſuffer much, we ſcarce know what to do. Trouble upon the ſenſitive part, troubles the underſtanding. Confuſion upon our eſtates, makes a confuſion in our minds. It is very hard to keep our ſpirits in order, while our houſes and buſineſs are out of order: every affliction makes ſome confuſion without us: and it is exceeding rare if affliction make not much confuſion within us. I (ſaith *Job*) *am full of confuſion*.

עני *Eſt imbecillitas, maximè quæ eſt à majore vi vim ſupprimente, ſtatū miſerum cum ſuccūmbentia notat.*

See thou mine affliction.] There is a two-fold ſight of affliction; Firſt, by a bare intuition, diſcerning it. Secondly by a gracious compaſſion, delivering us from it. The former ſight God always hath of all our afflictions; neither our ſins, nor our ſorrows can be hidden from him. The latter he ſometimes ſuſpends, and will not ſee, what he cannot but ſee. He will not ſee ſo as to relieve, what he cannot but ſee ſo as to obſerve. It is this ſecond kind of ſight, which *Job* entreats and prayes for here; *See thou my affliction*, that is, pity me in my affliction.

The word which we render affliction noteth weakneſs, and caſting down, or that weakneſs which ariſeth from caſting down, an oppreſſing affliction, which like ſome great weight lies heavy upon us.

Videt vexationem homo qui vexatur videt Deus qui eam reſpicit & propitius eſt. Druſ.

There are different readings; ſome thus, *I am filled with affliction, and ſee my ſorrows*. The *Chaldee* thus, *I will ſatiate my ſelf with ſhame, and I will ſee my affliction.* Man ſeeth his affliction by feeling it. Sight which is the chief ſenſe, is put for any ſenſe. And ſo the meaning is, Though I am righteous, yet I cannot hold up my head, or take any comfort, becauſe I am ſo full of confuſion, and ſee ſo much affliction; As if he had ſaid, *Can a man at the ſame time mourn and rejoyce? Can a man lift up his head, while he hath ſuch a load upon his heart?*

Hence obſerve, *They who ſee much affliction, can hardly take in any conſolation.*

Come to a godly man, under great outward or inward troubles; tell him of the love of God, of the pardon of ſin, of an inheritance among the Saints in light, as his portion; you can hardly faſten any of theſe things upon him: ſorrow within, keeps comfort out. As till ſin be caſt out we cannot act holily: ſo till worldly ſorrow, or the exceſs of godly ſorrow be caſt out, we cannot act joyfully. The Saints in a right poſture of ſpirit, are joyous in all their tribulations; and Chriſt is able to make conſolations abound, as tribulation doth abound; yet where there is abundance of tribulation, conſolation is uſually very ſcarce. Drops will hardly be received, where Rivers are offered and poured forth.

Satis habeas ignominiæ, & vide impotentiam meam. Coc.

Another reading of the word, repreſenteth *Job* beſpeaking God in prayer, mixed with complaining; *If I were righteous, yet cannot I lift up my head: be thou ſatisfied with confuſion, and behold my affliction.* So Mr. *Broughton.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Let it be enough, Lord, let it now ſuffice, give me ſome eaſe, that I may lift up my head a little before I lay it down for altogether.* Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 36. 11, 12.) *When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth; ſurely every man is vanity; O ſpare me, that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no more.* When *Nehemiah* was humbling himſelf, and confeſſing his ſin, and the ſin of that people, he concludes according to this interpretation, (*Chap.* 9. 32.) *Let not all the trouble ſeem little before thee that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, and on our Prieſts, and on all thy People*; as if he had ſaid, Lord, conſider that now we have been greatly puniſhed, though we have been puniſhed leſs then our ſins deſerve. Thou maiſt juſtly inflict more, but we are not able to endure more.

Rectius in imperativo, q. d. vide Domine quo ſim ſtatu, tū cognoſces ita eſſe ut dico. Merc.

Thirdly, We read imperatively, *Therefore ſee thou mine affliction:* So his meaning is, Lord, take notice of my ſad condition, I am full of trouble.

Hence obſerve, *That when ſorrows are come to a great height it is time for us to pray, that God would caſt a compaſſionate eye upon them.*

When we are paſt the cure and help of man, we are fitteſt objects for God. When the preſſures of the people of *Iſrael* were greatly encreaſed in *Egypt*, then the Lord himſelf ſaith, *I have ſeen, I have ſeen* (Exod. 3. 7.) and when affliction is boyl'd up to the height, then let us ſay, *See Lord, ſee Lord.* When the rage and blaſphemy of *Rabſhakeh*, both by ſpeaking and writing, reached even unto heaven; *Then* Hezekiah *went and ſpread the letter before the Lord*, (2 King. 19. 14.) As if he had ſaid, *Lord, do thou read this letter, Lord, bow down thine ear and hear, Lord, behold and ſee, we are full of confuſion, ſee thou our affliction.* And when the enemies of the Jews in *Nehemiah's* time fell to ſcoffing and jearing the work they had in hand, and them in the work, then that zealous Governour puts it unto God, *Hear, O our God, for we are deſpiſed.*

Secondly, Note, *That when our afflictions are at the higheſt and greateſt, then the Lord is able to maſter and ſubdue them.*

I am full of confuſion, ſee thou mine affliction; As if he had ſaid, It is in vain for me to ſhew my diſeaſes and my wounds to creatures, but I know I am not paſt thy cure, though I come thus late; or thus, I have ſhewed my wounds and my diſeaſes to the creature, I have made my moan to men, but they cannot help: Now I bring them unto thee, *O ſee my affliction.* All our ruines may be under the hand of God, he hath bread and cloathing for us, he can be our healer, when none can either in Heaven or Earth.

Laſtly obſerve, *When our afflictions are at the higheſt, then uſually God comes to deliver.*

When the waters of affliction ſwell over the banks, and threaten a deluge, then God turns the ſtream; when our ſores feſter and are ready to gangrene, then God applies his balſom. He ſeldom appears in a buſineſs which others can do, or undertakes that which is mans work. As in the ſore travel of women in child-bearing, other helpers undertake it not, till (as they ſpeak) it be paſt *womans work*; ſo God ſeldom meddles eminently (he acts alwayes concomitantly) till our deliverance is paſt *mans work*, that ſo the whole praiſe of the work may be his. When danger is upon the growing hand, then deſire God to take deliverance in hand; then pray, and pray earneſtly, that God would ſee your afflictions, when you perceive them to be increaſing afflictions; ſo it follows in the next verſe, *See thou mine affliction.*

Verſe 16. **For it increaſeth; Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion, and again thou ſheweſt thy ſelf marvellous upon me.**

This Verſe with the next, are an elegant and pathetical deſcription of *Job*'s yet growing and prevailing ſorrows; for having cloſed verſe 15. with an Aſſertion and a Petition, *I am full of confuſion, therefore ſee thou mine affliction*; he preſſeth and purſueth both in theſe words, *For it increaſeth; Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion.*

גאה: *In bonum, elevatur, eminuit; in malum, intumuit, ſuperbiit; de inanimatis, crevit, auctus fuit.*

For it encreaſeth.] Mr. *Broughton* renders, *How it fleeth up!* The Hebrew word is taken ſometimes in a good, and ſometimes in an ill ſence. In a good ſence it ſignifies to be lifted up, or be eminent in excellency. In an ill ſence, it ſignifies to be lifted up or exalted with pride. The word is applied alſo to things without life, and then it ſignifies to augment by addition or increaſe.

The Vulgar takes it in that ill ſence, as noting pride and high-mindedneſs, tranſlating by the Nown, thus, *For pride thou doſt catch me as a Lion*; or thou doſt *hunt me as a Lion, becauſe I am proud.* A Lion is a ſtout creature, and may be an emblem of pride.

Another gives a ſence near that. *When it lifteth up it ſelf, then thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion.* When what lifteth up it ſelf? When my head lifteth up it ſelf; he had ſaid in the former verſe, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head; for if I do lift up my head in pride, then thou wilt hunt me as a fierce Lion*; I ſhall be ſure to ſmart for every proud thought and high imagination. Both theſe Tranſlations render the meaning of *Job* thus, *If I ſhould plead my own righteouſneſs and innocency before thee, as thinking therein to lift up my head, and ſo ſhould wax confident in my ſelf, I ſhall preſently pay for it; for I perceive that thou art preparing thine inſtruments againſt me, as men do againſt fierce Lions and wild ſavage beaſts, to hunt, catch and deſtroy me.* Here is a truth in *theſi, God doth reſiſt the proud:* If any head lifteth it ſelf up againſt God, God can quickly lay ſuch an head as low as the ground. But in *Hypotheſi*, or in *Job*'s caſe, I cannot conſent to it, as a truth ſuting this Text.

A third Tranſlation puts it by an Interrogation; *I am full of confuſion, ſee thou mine affliction; Can it be lifted up?* That is, Can my head be lifted up, when I am ſo full of ſorrow and confuſion? Whatſoever my righteouſneſs is, I am not in caſe now to ſtand upon it; 'tis no time for me to talk great words: Can I lift up mine head when thou preſſeſt me with ſuch a weight of affliction? *Grean afflictions will keep down the greateſt ſpirits, or break them down.* Affliction will make the ſtouteſt heart ſtoop, and the higheſt head to bow.

But take the word according to our reading, as it referreth to his afflictions; *it increaſeth*, that is my affliction increaſeth, and ſo a double expoſition is given.

Firſt, As if *Job* had ſpoken his wiſh or his deſire; *I am* (ſaid he before) *full of confuſion, ſee thou mine affliction. O that mine affliction might increaſe, and that I might be fuller of confuſion! O that my troubles might be ſtrengthened upon me; and that I might be weak enough to ſee an end of my troubles! I am yet too ſtrong for death; O that thou wouldeſt quickly diſpatch me! more weight, deeper wounds, harder blows would be welcome.* As if here again *Job* had aſſumed and renewed that complaining deſire mentioned (*chap.* 6. 7, 8.) *O that I might have my requeſt! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!* (What was that?) *Even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let looſe his hand, and cut me off.* But I ſhall let this paſs; *Job* hath ſpoken theſe wiſhes plainly, and in the Letter too often; I will not charge him with another from a queſtionable interpretation.

Rather take the words declaratively, not for a wiſh of greater future afflictions, but for a manifeſtation of the greatneſs of his preſent afflictions; ſo we expreſs them; *I am full of confuſion, ſee thou mine affliction, for it increaſeth.* This is a clear and a fair ſence: *Job* intending to deſcribe his eſtate more fully, ſheweth it ſtill upon the encreaſe, waxing worſe and worſe, greater and greater. As if he had ſaid, mine are a pile or heap of afflictions, and ſtill more are piled up and heaped on.

There is an elegancy in it, as taken in the other ſence, for pride or lifting up. See my affliction, *it waxeth proud.* For as the waves of the Sea are called proud waves, when they ſwell and encreaſe; ſo an affliction encreaſing and ſwelling, may be called a proud affliction. Some afflictions, like a great Sea, riſe above us, and ſtand over us; or like a cruel Maſter, domineer and inſult upon us. *Job*'s afflictions were proud ones, they came upon him with a kind of authority, as if they would lay him at their very feet. Hence obſerve,

Effert ſeſe afflictio mea Eleganti autem figura dicit, quod ſeſe efferat. Elationem & ſuperbiam morbo & dolori tribuit, cum totum hominē poſſidet. Mer

They who have endured very great afflictions, may yet find their afflictions greatning and encreaſing.

He had ſaid before, *I am full of confuſion*; and yet here he ſaith, *My affliction encreaſeth.* When we think we have as much as our backs can bear, yet (poſſibly) more weight may be laid on. When we hope our affliction is upon the declining hand, that thoſe waters are upon an ebb, and the fire ſlacking, then they may flow higher, and the furnace may be heated ſeven times hotter then before. The Lord threatneth obſtinate and rebellious ſinners (*Lev.* 26.) *I will puniſh you yet ſeven times more for your ſins.* Though I have brought ſuch calamities upon you, that ye have been ready to ſay, ſurely now God hath done his worſt, we are in as bad a caſe as we can be; no, ſaith the Lord (who hath infinite wiſdom to find out wayes of afflicting, as well as of ſhewing mercy) *I will puniſh you yet ſeven times more for your ſins; no man knows how much more God can puniſh him*: His judgments in the executing of them, as well as in the laying of them, are paſt finding out. We know not the beginning of them, neither do we know when they will end. Now as the Lord afflicteth ſome ſeven times more for the puniſhment of their ſins, ſo others ſeven times more for the trial of their Graces. Sufferings are ſent in perfection, to make us more perfect through ſufferings. Afflictions ſwell with pride, to abate the ſwelling of our pride, or to ſhew how thoſe ſwellings are abated into humility. God hath unſearchable riches and treaſures of chaſtenings, as well as of wrath or of love. And as when we think we have received as much mercy as God can give us, he can yet give us more, and make our mercies ſevenfold greater to our apprehenſions then before; ſo alſo he can diſpenſe himſelf in the matter of affliction.

For it increaſeth.] This increaſe is ſet forth by an elegant ſimilitude. Though ſimilitudes prove nothing, yet they much illuſtrate what is already proved.

Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion.

Thou hunteſt me as the ramping Shakal: So Mr. *Broughton.* The word *Shakal*, ſignifies a fierce aſſaulting Lion; or, as we ſpeak, a *Lion rampant.* Some tranſlate a *Lioneſs*, others a *Leopard*, ſpoken of in the fourth Chapter. We may take it in general for any fierce, cruel and ſavage beaſt, of the one kind or of the other.

Effert ſe dolor meus, ut Leo, nequaquam cedēs. Merc.

Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion.] For *Thou*, ſome render (*It*) referring to his affliction; *For it increaſeth, and it hunts me* (my affliction hunteth me) *as a fierce Lion.* Sorrows are compared to a fierce Lion. Afflictions hunt and follow, they tear and deſtroy like a wild beaſt. *Like a Lion, or like the young Lion, roaring on his prey* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 45.) *when a multitude of ſhepherds is called out againſt him* (Chriſt is compared to ſuch a Lion there) *will not be afraid of their voyce, nor abaſe himſelf for the noiſe of them.* Such were the afflictions of diſtreſſed, deſpiſed *Job*, they braved him to his very face, and would not withdraw or turn away from him, notwithſtanding all the outcries and loudeſt lamentations which he made againſt them.

Capior ſicut Leo ad occiſionem. Sept.

Tendis mihi & expandis rete, non ſecus ac ad feram capiendam. Rab. Sil.

Secondly, The compariſon is laid between the Lion and *Job*; *Thou hunteſt me as if I were a Lion*: So divers of the Ancients, and the *Septuagint* underſtand it: *I am taken or catched like a Lion*: As if *Job* had ſaid, *Lord, thou uſeſt me as a wild beaſt, thou hunteſt me as thou wouldeſt hunt a Lion or a Bear, thou ſetteſt thy nets and toils, thou makeſt ſnares and pits* (as *Nimrods* do in the hunting of Lions and other wild beaſts) Thou dealeſt with me as if there were no taking, no taming of me, but by ſevereſt and rougheſt wayes: Thou dealeſt with me, as if in my proſperity I had been

Quidam referunt ad prioris ſtatus fœlicitatem; nam ſuperbum & imperioſum animal Leo eſt, regiæque potentiæ ſymbolum.

like a fierce Lion, oppreſſing and preying upon the poor; or, as if in my affliction I had provoked thee to reſolve, that thou wilt never leave off to afflict me, till thou haſt deſtroyed me; *Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion*: How are they hunted? Lions are not uſually hunted to be preſerved, 'tis rare to hunt Lions ſo, but becauſe they are hurtful and deſtroying creatures, therefore they are hunted that they may be deſtroyed, and do no more hurt; as if he had thus expreſſed himſelf, Thou, Lord, ſeemeſt to adjudge me not only as an unuſeful and unſerviceable creature, but alſo as a dangerous and a noxious creature, as a *natural brute beaſt made to be taken and deſtroyed* (2 Pet. 2. 12.) yet I cannot aſſent that *Job* (though under the darkneſs of a ſore temptation) had ſuch dark thoughts of God, as if he had no other end in afflicting him, but to make an end of him.

Non caplor ad vitam, ut animalia quæ ſitent habiti in deliciis. Bold.

I rather expound him in a third ſence, that the compariſon is made between God and the Lion; *Thou, O God, like a Lion, doſt hunt me.* Conſent of Scripture is cleareſt for this interpretation, which often repreſents God in afflicting his people, under the notion of a Lion, as will appear in the proof of the obſervation ariſing from it; which is,

> That, *The Lord ſeemeth ſometimes to put off all his pity and compaſſion towards his people.*

So the Church complains (*Lam.* 3. 10.) *He was unto me as a Bear lying in wait, and as a Lion in ſecret places.* God threatned by the Prophet *Hoſea* (chap. 5. 14.) *I will be unto* Ephraim *as a Lion, and as a young Lion to the houſe of* Judah; *I, even I will tear and go away.* I will afflict them fiercely and terribly. Again (*Hoſ.* 13. 7.) *I will be unto them as a Lion, as a Leopard by the way, will I obſerve them. Hezekiah* ſpeaks the ſame Language (*Iſa.* 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lion, ſo will he break all my bones.* As when man dealeth cruelly with his brother, he is a Wolf to him, or a Lion to him (*Pſal.* 17. 12.) Man acting of beaſtly luſts, is all the metamorphoſis or change of men into beaſts, which Heathen Poets have ſo much fancied, or the Holy Scriptures ſo often mentioned. Now, I ſay, as man acting cruelly upon man, is called a Lion, ſo alſo is God. When God would ſhew the abatements of his wrath, then he ſaith, *I am God, and not man* (Hoſ. 11. 89) *How ſhall I give thee up* Ephraim? &c. Thus he debates, by and by he votes and reſolves negatively, *I will not execute the fierceneſs of mine anger; I will not return to deſtroy* Ephraim; *for I am God, and not man.* But when he would ſhew the higheſt workings of his wrath, then he denies to ſhew himſelf ſo much as man: Thus old *Babylon* and *Chaldea* are terrified (*Iſa.* 47. 1.) *Come down and ſit in the duſt, O virgin Daughter of* Babylon, *&c.* Why ſo? *Babylon* had ſet ſo long upon the Throne, that ſhe knew not how to think of ſitting in the duſt; yet ſhe muſt: for (*verſ.* 3.) *I will take vengeance, and will not meet thee as a man.* How then? I will meet thee as if I were a beaſt, or a Lion; Thou ſhalt find no kind of humanity at all from me, not only not the kindneſſes and mercies of a God, but not ſo much as the kindneſs and mercy of a man. Thus the Lord met with that Literal *Babylon*, and ſo at laſt he will meet with Myſtical *Babylon*. And as he will be to all his proud enemies, a deſtroying and devouring Lion; ſo he appeareth often to his own people; he ſaith even to *Jeruſalem*, and to *Zion*, I will not meet you as a man, when *you are carnal and walk as men.* The uſual dealings of God with his people are full of compaſſion; *In meaſure (peck-peck) when it ſhooteth (or when thou ſendeſt it) forth, thou wilt debate with it; He ſtayeth his rough wind in the day of the Eaſt-wind* (Iſa. 27. 8.) He will not bluſter againſt and ſtorm his people, when their enemies ſtorm againſt them; he alſo meaſures out their afflictions, and marks what is fit and proportionate to their ſtrength, and for their good, as a Phyſitian meaſures and weighs all the ingredients which he mingles in a potion for his ſick Patient: ſo the next words intimate; *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin.* Yet at another time he afflicteth without meaſure, as if he intended to kill rather then to cure, and to take away their lives, rather then to take away their ſins. I grant his greateſt afflictions are as exactly meaſured and weighed as the leaſt. God knows to an hairs breadth, the length and breadth, and to a grain, the weight and burden of the longeſt, broadeſt and weightieſt affliction; but when he afflicts greatly, he is ſaid to afflict without meaſure, becauſe things unmeaſurable, or which cannot eaſily be meaſured, are very great. And if ever the Lord afflicted any of his (in this ſence) without meaſure, ſurely he afflicted *Job* ſo, who thus cries out, *Thou hunteſt me like a fierce Lion.*

And again thou ſhewest thy ſelf marvellous (or wonderful) upon me.

Again.] We render it as an *Adverb*; others, as a *Verb*, *Thou returneſt, and ſheweſt thy ſelf wonderful upon me.* The ſence is the ſame in both, noting the continued or repeated acts of his affliction. Thou art ſtill wonderful againſt me. As if *Job* had ſaid, *Lord, thou no ſooner ceaſeſt, but thou beginneſt again; thou no ſooner takeſt off thy hand, but I feel it again; if thou granteſt me a little breathing, and withdraweſt from me, thou returneſt again; if thou giveſt over the chaſe a while, thou purſueſt it again with as loud a cry, with as fierce aſſaults as ever; my ſorrows know no intermiſſion, my pains know not only no period, but no pauſe, I have ſtorm upon ſtorm, grief upon grief, here much and there much, I am alwayes and every where again afflicted; though already half-dead with affliction.* Hence obſerve,

ותשב

Et redis, licet aliquantiſper remittas, tamen ſtatim redis, &c. *Una vice poſt aliam.* Ab. Ezr. *Iterum iterumque oſtendis miranda tua facta in me.* Druſ. In me *non caret emphaſi,* q. d. *in me jam ſemel, mortuo & pene confecto.* Merc.

> *God doth often renew the ſame, or ſend new afflictions upon his choiceſt ſervants.*

One would think that light ſhould follow darkneſs, and day ſucceed the night, that though ſorrow continue all the night, yet joy ſhould come in the morning, that after wounding; we ſhould have healing, and after ſickneſs, health. So they promiſed themſelves (*Hoſ.* 6. 1.) *Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up.* Yet many have felt wounding after wounds, and ſmiting after blows; darkneſs hath went after darkneſs, and their ſorrow hath had a ſucceſſion of greater ſorrows. It was a ſpecial favour to *Paul*, when *Epaphroditus* was reſtored (*Phil.* 2. 27.) *He was ſick nigh unto death, but* (ſaith he) *God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me alſo*; and why? *Leſt I ſhould have ſorrow upon ſorrow.* God would not do what ſome of his enemies thought to do, *add affliction to his bonds*; therefore he healed *Paul's* helper, and kept him alive, in whom he ſo much delighted. *Sorrow upon ſorrow is a mournful bearing, and yet many a precious Saint hath born that coat.* The promiſe to the Church is, *That her peace ſhall be as a River, and her proſperity as the waves of the Sea* (Iſa. 66. 12.) When the Church ſhall come to her full beauty, and attain a perfect reſtauration, then her peace ſhall be a continued peace, ſhe ſhall have peace upon peace, everlaſting ſucceſſions of peace; a River being ſupplied and fed with a conſtant ſtream, the waters that flow to day, will flow again to morrow; peace like a river is *peace, peace,* or perpetual peace. *Sions* peace ſhall not be as a *Land-floud*, ſoon up, and as ſoon down again; but as a *River*: and (which yet heightens it) *her proſperity ſhall be as the waves of the Sea.* If the wind do but ſtir upon the face of the Sea, you ſhall have wave upon wave, waves rolling and riding one upon the back of another. Such ſhall be the proſperity of *Zion* on earth for a time, and ſuch it will be for ever in heaven; there peace ſhall be as a river to eternity, and proſperity as the waves of the Sea, joy upon joy, and comfort upon comfort, riding and rolling one upon the back of another. As it ſhall be thus with the peace of the Church at laſt, ſo it may be with the afflictions of the Church or of any member of the Church at preſent. Their afflictions may be as a river, and their ſorrows as the waves of the Sea, coming on again and again, renewed as often as abated.

Again thou ſheweſt thy ſelf wonderful, or *marvellous againſt* or *upon me.* Both rendrings are conſiſtent with the Original.

תתפלא בי

Mirabilis ſis in me.

Marvellous upon me.] That is, Thou doſt not puniſh or afflict me in an ordinary way. Marvels are not every dayes work, thou takeſt a new, a ſtrange courſe to try me; ſuch afflictions as mine have no parallel, ſuch have ſcarce been heard of, or recorded in the hiſtory of any Age. Who hath heard of ſuch a thing as this? Thou ſeemeſt to deſign me as a preſident to poſterity, or to ſhew in my example what thou canſt do upon a creature; *Thou ſheweſt thy ſelf marvellous upon me.* As *Moſes* ſaith concerning *Korah, Dathan* and *Abiram*, when they murmured and mutinied againſt

Mirificum fit ſpectaculum homo, qui tam dira patitur tam conſtanti invitoq; animo.

againſt him and againſt *Aaron*, *If theſe men die the common death of all men, or if they be viſited after the viſitation of all men, then the Lord hath not ſent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and ſwallow them up, then,* &c. The Lord to manifeſt his extream diſpleaſure againſt thoſe mutiniers, did (as it were) deviſe a new kind of death for them; *If theſe men die the common or the ordinary death of all men, then the Lord hath not ſent me.* Theſe men have given a new example of ſin, and ſurely God will make them a new example of puniſhment. *Job* ſpeaks the ſame ſence, *Thou ſheweſt thy ſelf marvellous upon me*, thou wilt not be ſatisfied in afflicting me after the rate or meaſure of other men: All the Saints ſhould do ſome ſingular thing, and many of them ſuffer ſome ſingular thing. The Apoſtle aſſures his *Corinthians* (1 Cor.10.13.) *There hath no temptation taken you, but that which is common to man. Job* ſeems to ſpeak the contrary. A temptation hath taken me, which is not common to man.

Further, Theſe words, *Thou art marvellous upon me*, have reference to God who ſent thoſe afflictions, as well as unto the afflictions which he ſent: As if he had ſaid, Lord, thou acteſt now beſides thy nature and thy cuſtom: thou art merciful, and thou delighteſt in mercy; thou art good, and thou doſt good; how or whence is it then, that thou art ſo fierce againſt me, and poureſt out ſo many evils upon me? I could (not knowing thee as I do) have believed, though it had been told me, that thou wouldeſt have been ſo rigorous and incompaſſionate; if a profeſſed enemy had done this, he had done like himſelf, and had been no wonder unto me; but now as thou haſt afflicted me, till I am become a wonder unto many; ſo thou, O Lord, art become a wonder unto me, and to all who hear how thou haſt afflicted me. Meek *Moſes* made himſelf a wonder, when he broke out in anger. Every man is wondered at, when he doth that which he is not enclined to do, or not uſed to do. Is it not a wonder to ſee the patient God angry, the merciful God ſevere, the compaſſionate God inexorable? Thus, ſaith *Job*, *Thou ſheweſt thy ſelf marvellous upon me.* Hence obſerve,

First, That, *Some afflictions of the Saints are wonderful afflictions.*

As God doth not often ſend his people ſtrange deliverances, and work wonders to preſerve them, ſo he ſends them many ſtrange afflictions, and works wonders to trouble them. And as many puniſhments of ſin upon wicked men, ſo ſome trials of Grace upon godly men, are very wonderful. The Lord threatneth the *Jews* (Deut. 28. 59.) That he would *make their plagues wonderful*, he would make ſtrange work among them. And he ſaith of *Jeruſalem*, *I will wipe it as a man wipeth a Diſh, wiping it, and turning it upſide down, or wiping it, and turning it upon the face thereof* (2 *Kings* 21. 13.) To ſee a great City handled like a little diſh, or a ſtrong Nation turned topſie-turvy (as we ſay) or the bottom upwards, is a ſtrange thing. It is an ordinary thing to ſee Cups and Platters turned upſide down, but it is not ordinary to ſee Kingdoms and Nations turned upſide down. To wipe *Jeruſalem* as a diſh, was to do that which was never done before. Some expound that place of the frequency of affliction, that God would ſmite them again and again; as they that make clean a diſh, wipe it over and over, that no filth may ſtay in it. The Seventy and the Vulgar tranſlate, *I will blot out Jeruſalem as they uſe to blot out a Table-book that is written all over*: He that hath a Table-book full of writing, and would write more, takes a cloth or a ſpunge, and blotteth out what was written; and that he may throughly wipe his Table-book, he rubs it often with his ſpunge, to get the Letter clear out. Thus God threatned to do with *Jeruſalem*, *He would wipe or blot out* her golden Characters and honourable inſcriptions, till nothing of *Jeruſalem*, but her ſhame and her ſin, ſhould remain unblotted out. Was not the judgment brought upon *Jeruſalem* a wonder? when the Prophet ſaith (*Lam.* 4. 12.) *The Kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed it.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks thus of his own, and of his fellow-Apoſtles afflictions (1 *Cor.* 4. 9.) *We are made a ſpectacle* (as upon a Theater) *unto the world, and to Angels, and to men.* All begin to wonder at us, what the matter is, what ſtrange creatures we are, whom the Lord ſuffers to be thus uſed. The people of God are often a gazing-ſtock to the world, in regard of what they do, and not ſeldom in regard of what they ſuffer.

Delebo Jeruſalem *ſicut deleri ſolent tabulæ.* Vulg.

Θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν.

Secondly obſerve, That, *When God doth greatly afflict his own people, he goes out of his ordinary way.*

He ſhews himſelf marvellous or wonderful; a man is never marvelled at, when he goes his old pace in his old path. God loves to have his hand in the honey-pot, therefore it is ſtrange to ſee him give his people a bitter cup to drink, or feeding them with wormwood or with gall. Judgment is the ſtrange work of God (*Iſa.* 28. 21.) *The Lord ſhall be wrath in the valley of* Gibeon, *that he may do his work, his ſtrange work; and bring to paſs his act, his ſtrange act.* And if every work of judgment be his ſtrange work, a work he delighteth not to be converſant in, what then are great and ſore judgments? Though the Lord be infinitely pleaſed in the executions of judgment, yet becauſe (if a *more* may be conceived in infinity) he is more pleaſed with mercy; therefore judgment is called *his ſtrange work, his ſtrange act.* To ſee a Prince renowned for clemency and pity, paſſing a ſevere ſentence, is a ſtrange ſight. We ſay he hath ſhewed himſelf marvellous, he hath gone both againſt his practice and his nature, his cuſtom and his inclination. To ſee any man do what he uſeth not, hath ſomewhat of wonder in it; much more, to ſee God do ſo. When he taketh up his Rod, we begin to ſtart; how much more, when he taketh up his ſword, when he hunts thoſe like a Lion, whom he dearly loveth, and uſes thoſe as wild beaſts, who are his precious children? When he ſmites them with rigor, whom he carrieth in his own boſom? Theſe, theſe are acts which repreſent him to admiration; as many acts of his power and mercy cauſe the Saints to cry out admiringly, yet joyfully, *Who is a God like unto thee?* So ſome acts of his viſible ſeverity cauſe others of them to cry out admiringly, yet ſorrowfully, Why, O God, doſt thou in appearance ſo unlike thy ſelf?

Verſe 17. **Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes againſt me (or, thou bringeſt new witneſſes againſt me) and encreaſeſt thine indignation upon me; changes and war are againſt me.**

This ſeventeenth verſe is but a further amplification of what he had ſpoken before, ſetting forth the greatneſs and frequent returns of his trouble.

Thou reneweſt.] The firſt day of the Month is called *Chodeſh* in the Hebrew, from the word here uſed, becauſe then there was a *New Moon*, or a change of the Moon; ſo, *Thou reneweſt*, thou makeſt a change; I have many new Moons, but they are all and alwayes at *full* in ſorrow; *Thou reneweſt*

Chodeſh, *Novilunium primus dies menſis, quo quaſi Luna innovatur.*

Thy witneſſes.] The *Septuagint* ſaith, *thy examinations*; ſo it is an alluſion to the trial of a Malefactor, who is examined by the Judge, and if he deals not plainly in confeſſion, then his examination is renewed. Thus ſaith *Job*, Thou ſendeſt (as it were) new examiners with more Articles and additional Interrogatories, as if I had concealed ſomewhat, and had not told thee my whole heart.

We tranſlate (and ſo the word moſt properly beareth) *witneſſes*; the ſence is the ſame. As ſome Malefactors are often examined, ſo more evidence, and new witneſſes are brought againſt them; though in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word ſhall be eſtabliſhed, yet where there are more witneſſes then two or three, there is more eſtabliſhment.

Again, As they who are of a wrangling and unquiet diſpoſition, will never ſit down in a Suit, when by the examination of ſome witneſſes, they have brought the matter to a trial, and are caſt; yet this doth not ſatisfie them, they will have their Writ of Errour, and bring the matter about in another Court. Thus (ſaith *Job*) as if the Lord were reſolved this Suit ſhould never have an end, *He reneweth his witneſſes againſt me.* When I think all is concluded and agreed between us, I am as much to ſeek as ever; he brings all about again: So that after all my travel, I am as far from an end, as I was at the beginning; I am where I was, and am like to continue there; for I ſee the Lord *renewing his witneſs againſt me.*

Non tam videtur de inſtauratione plurium teſtium quæri, quam de ſententiæ ferendæ dilatione & mora. Pin.

The doubt is, what or whom he meaneth by theſe Witneſſes?

Philippus *in loc.*

One ſaith, Theſe witneſſes were Devils. Satan accuſed him at firſt, and he is not alone either in tempting or accuſing, he can ſoon have a Legion to joyn with him in any deſign of wickedneſs. But I paſs that opinion.

Secondly, Others ſay, The Witneſſes were *Job's* three Friends; they all teſtifie againſt him; *Eliphaz* began, and *Bildad* was his ſecond, *Zophar* ſtood ready to follow; all againſt *Job*.

Pœna unius peccati, quaſi de ſtatione decedente, aliam quaſi ſuccenturiatam ſuffecturus es. Coc.

Thirdly, By Witneſſes, moſt (and they moſt clearly) underſtand his afflictions; *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes*, that is, thou bringeſt new troubles to teſtifie againſt me. When one affliction hath ſpoken at thy Bar againſt me, thou calleſt for the teſtimony of another, and of another, and when there will not be another, I know not, unleſs it be when I am not. When *Naomi* was become *Marah* (her former pleaſures being turned into bitterneſs) ſhe ſaith (*Ruth* 1. 21.) *The Lord hath teſtified againſt me.* *Job* is very expreſs in the point, at the ſixteenth Chapter of this Book, *verſe* 8. Which may be a Commentary upon this; *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, which is a witneſs againſt me; and my leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth witneſs to my face.* Afflictions bring in evidence, and teſtifie many wayes.

They ſometimes witneſs for us, evidencing our Graces, our Faith, Patience, Sincerity and Submiſſion to the hand of God; they are witneſſes alſo of our Adoption or ſpiritual Sonſhip (*Heb.* 12. 8,) *If you be without chaſtiſement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Baſtards, and not Sons.* It is no good ſign to be free from ſufferings. *Hear ye the Rod*, ſaith the Prophet *Micah*; as we ought to hear it, calling us from ſin; ſo we may hear it calling us as Sons. Chaſtenings ſpeak our Priviledges, as well as our Duties.

They often witneſs againſt us;

Firſt, That ſin is ſeated in us, and hath been acted by us. If we had no ſin, we ſhould know no ſorrow. Though ſome afflictions are not ſent out directly againſt ſin, yet every affliction is both a conſequent and a teſtimony of remaining ſin. The bundle of Rods at our backs, ſaith, there is folly and ſin bound up in our hearts; and when once we are purged from ſin, we ſhall hear no more of any affliction, of any rod. We ſhall be paſt ſuffering, as ſoon as we are paſt ſinning.

Secondly, They are witneſſes in ſpecial, of that great ſin, the pride of our hearts and lives. If there were not ſwellings and impoſtumations of pride in our ſpirits, we ſhould not feel ſuch lancings. *Paul* himſelf acknowledges that they were growing upon him, if God had not taken a ſevere courſe to keep them down: *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the fleſh; the meſſenger of Satan to buffet me* (2 *Cor.* 12. 7.) Hence afflictions are called humiliations, both becauſe an afflicted perſon is humbled or laid low by the hand of God; as alſo, becauſe afflictions are ſent to humble and lay us low in our ſelves. Now, if one ſpecial buſineſs which affliction hath with us, be to humble us, then doubtleſs affliction witneſſeth that there is pride in us. That which is ſent to remove an evil, ſhews the preſence of it.

Thirdly, They are witneſſes, by bringing to our remembrance the acting of forgotten ſins. Affliction is a help to memory. That which we forget we have done or ſpoken, witneſſes coming in, make us remember; ſo alſo do our troubles. When the Brethren of *Joſeph* had been put in ward three dayes, and heard him demand one of them to be left as an hoſtage in priſon till they brought *Benjamin*, this diſtreſs cauſed them to ſay, *We are very guilty concerning our Brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us* (*Gen.* 42. 21.) The guilt of that ſin was about twenty years old, but they felt not the ſmart of it till themſelves ſmarted for it; their impriſonment ſet their memories at liberty, and when they ſaw themſelves in danger to become bondmen to the *Egyptians*, they had witneſs enough of their ſelling *Joſeph* for a captive to the *Iſhmaelites*.

Fourthly, Afflictions witneſs obſtinacy and reſolvedneſs in the wayes of ſin, or that afflicted perſons or Nations turn not for ſin. Every wound will open its mouth as a witneſs, and every ſtroak will bring an evidence againſt the impenitent. The troubles which God brought upon *Ahaz*, witneſſed emphatically (2 *Chron.* 28. 23.) *This is that King* Ahaz, *who in the time of his diſtreſs, did treſpaſs yet more againſt the Lord.* If we are not bettered by our diſtreſſes, our diſtreſſes teſtifie that we are naught; how much more when we are worſe in our diſtreſs? As all good things which we have received, ſo all evils which we have ſuffered, will riſe up in judgment againſt thoſe who ſtill continue evil.

Fifthly, Afflictions witneſs two things concerning God. Firſt, That he hath an eye upon us, and care of us. He will not let us want any thing that is needful for us, no, not affliction. Due chaſtiſement given a child, is an argument that his Father loveth him, and looks to him. Secondly, They are witneſſes of Gods fatherly diſpleaſure. Some ſay, God cannot be diſpleaſed with his Children, becauſe his love is everlaſting. But will any man ſay, A Father doth not love his Child becauſe he corrects him? Yet a Father never correcteth his Child but when he is diſpleaſed with him: Parents may not ſtrike unprovoked, and 'tis rare that God doth ſo. A man may be much diſpleaſed with, and much love the ſame perſon at the ſame time; and 'tis very uſual for God to do ſo. Afflictions never teſtifie any the leaſt hatred of God againſt his people, but they often teſtifie ſome, and ſometimes great diſpleaſure againſt his people.

Laſtly, Afflictions upon the godly, are reckoned very ſufficient and credible witneſſes by the world, that either they are not godly, or that ſurely ſome great ungodlineſs hath been acted by them. How many precious men have been caſt upon this evidence, for traytors and rebels againſt God? *Job's* friends took this for proof enough that he was wicked. They could not be perſwaded he was good, becauſe he endured ſo many evils. As the High Prieſt cried out againſt Chriſt, *What further need have we of witneſſes? Behold now ye have heard his blaſphemy:* So ſaid *Job's* friends concerning him; What need have we of further witneſs? Behold we have ſeen his miſery. What do theſe loſſes in his eſtate, and ruines upon his family? What do theſe ſores upon his body, and ſorrows upon his ſoul, but publiſh unto us (what he hath kept cloſe and concealed) the prophaneneſs of his ſpirit, and the hypocriſie of his former profeſſion? *Job* perceiving his friends making uſe all along of this proof, as of their chiefeſt and ſtrongeſt *Medium*, might well complain to God, upon the renewal of every dayes affliction, *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes againſt me.*

And encreaſeth thine indignation upon me, or, Thy indignation encreaſeth upon me.

In the beginning of the Verſe, his own afflictions did increaſe, but here the indignation of God. Indignation is more grievous then affliction, and the indignation of God is the moſt grievous indignation.

The word ſignifies wrath, diſpleaſure, fierce, fiery wrath, hot conſuming diſpleaſure. כעש

Increaſeth.] There is a double increaſe here noted. רב First, Extenſive. Secondly, Intenſive; an increaſe both in multitude and magnitude: As if he had ſaid, I have more troubles in number, and more in weight.

Indignation is here put for the effects of indignation; neither the wrath, nor the love of God do ever encreaſe in him, but in their exertions, or in putting them forth towards us. Hence obſerve,

First, That, *A godly man may conceive himſelf under the indignation of God.*

The Church ſtoops to it (*Micah* 7. 9.) *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.*

Secondly obſerve, That, *The more we ſee of the indignation of God in any affliction, the ſorer is the affliction.*

As the love and ſmiles of God comfort the Saints more then all the outward comforts he heaps upon them; a little with much ſenſible love, is to us a huge mercy: So the disfavour and frowns of God troubles the Saints more then all the troubles which he heaps upon them. A little with much ſenſible disfavour, is to us a heavy croſs. Let trouble increaſe, yet if diſpleaſure abate, the ſpirit of man will bear and ſtand under it, though his fleſh and outward man fall under it. Though the Furnace ſhould be heated ſeven times hotter, yet if the Lord do

but

do but let down one beam or ray of his love into the ſoul, all that burning fire will be but like a warm Sun. But when the ſcorchings of indignation mingle with affliction, this is dreadful. *The anger of a fool* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is very heavy*; yet that is not ſo much as a feather to a milſtone, or a mountain, compared with the anger of God. And though believers are freed from that anger and indignation which he darts upon his enemies, yet they to ſenſe, yea and to their preſent opinion, may be dealt with as enemies. And though the indignation which God pours upon his own people, and that upon the wicked, be as different as their ſtates are; yet the one may be under as much temporary pain and ſorrow as the other is. For as an hypocrite may for a time taſte as much of the goodneſs of God, and feel as much joy in his ſervice, and ſometimes more, then a man who is godly and ſincere; ſo alſo may one who is godly and ſincere taſte more of the diſpleaſure of God for a time, and feel as much ſorrow in his ſufferings, and ſometimes more, then a wicked man.

Pœnæ militant in me. Vulg.

Job concludes with the ſame thing, in a different habit of words. *Changes and war are againſt me.* I have variety of afflictions, a multitude of afflictions, and afflictions in their ſtrength, theſe three things are implied in thoſe two words, *Changes and war*; he had variety of afflictions, for *changes were upon him.* He had many and ſtrong afflictions, *For war was upon him.* One ſtrong man cannot make a war, nor many weak ones. And it is as ſtrange that this ſhould be called a war, which was but againſt one weak man. The *Roman* ſtories cry up the honour of a man, who alone upon a narrow paſs made a ſtand againſt a whole army, till ſupplies came; what ſhall we ſay then of *Job*, who ſingle and alone maintained his ſtanding againſt many armies, and held out a long war? *Changes and war are upon me.*

חלפ *Excidere, quod exciditur immutatur à ſtatu ſuo.*

ערא *Eſt tempus quo quis in ſtatione aut militari officio eſt. Circa hos tantos dolores, mihi certum tempus eſt præſcriptum, intra quod ſū moriturus.* Merc.

The firſt word which ſignifies *Changes*, ſignifies alſo deſtruction or cutting off. Some render it ſo here, *excision or cutting off* (by which he meaneth death) *is upon me.* The other word which we tranſlate *War*, noteth alſo a ſet or an appointed time, as was ſhewed at *Chap.* 7. *verſ.* 1. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* So ſome tranſlate it here, putting all together thus, *Exciſion* (or death, the cauſe being put for the effect) *is upon me, and a determined time of my life.*

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Changes and ſtayed army have I.* Taking in both interpretations of the word, ſo his ſence may be expreſſed in this tenor, *Lord have not I a ſetled and determined time to die? Why then are ſuch extream afflictions prepared againſt, and charged upon me, as if by thoſe thou wouldeſt haſten my death, and bring me to my grave ſooner then thou thy ſelf haſt appointed? I ſhall die at the time thou haſt determined, though thou ſhouldeſt not diſtreſs my life, and even force out my breath with ſuch preſſing extremities.*

Hunc ſenſum amplectuntur Aben-Ezra. *Rab.* Sal.

Further, taking the latter word for a preſcribed time: ſome conceive *Job* carrying an alluſion to thoſe who are ſurprized with Fevers and Agues: they have changes, ſome well dayes, and ſome ſick dayes, yet the Fever returns upon a ſet time, or in a conſtant recourſe, till the diſtemper is checked; As if he had ſaid, *My afflictions are like Fever fits; though I have ſome intermiſſion, yet I find a regreſſion, the fit comes upon me again; Changes, at ſet times are upon me.*

Exerceor contrariis & interſe compugnantibus malis, vel potius variis & ſibi invicem ſuccedentibus malorū agminibus. Merc.

But rather, according to the letter of our tranſlation, *Changes and war are againſt me*; that is, *I am exerciſed with variety of wars.* The word imports any kind of change, change of times, or change of things; it ſignifies alſo change of garments (*Judg.* 14. 12.) That notion of the word, hath an elegancy in it in reference to *Job's* condition. He was a man cloathed with affliction, ſorrow encompaſſed him as a long mourning cloak; and *Job* had changes of his rayment, he went not alwayes in one ſuit, though his ſuits were ſtill of one colour, for he went alwayes in *blacks*.

πᾶν χλίσον τρεπῖδν.

Again, We may interpret this change, of his change from one eſtate to another, from joy to ſorrows, from peace to trouble, from plenty to want, from coſtly robes to filthy rags. Time was when *Job* went in ſcarlet and fine linnen, and, if he pleaſed, might have fared deliciouſly every day; but when he ſpake this, he was in another ſtate and habit, cloathed with ſackcloth, and lying in the duſt. It is ſaid of wicked men (*Pſal.* 55. 9.) *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.* Every creature is ſubject to change, and have ſome changes every day; God only is unchangable. Yet ſome men ſeem to have *no changes*; and though they cannot be free from natural changes one moment, yet they may be free from many years civil changes: they may be ſo far from ſuch changes as *Job* felt, from good to evil, that all the changes they are acquainted with, may be only from good to better, from ſtrong to ſtronger, from rich to richer: that's the intent of the *Pſalm*; *They have no changes* from joy to ſorrow, from health to ſickneſs, from riches to poverty, from honour to diſgrace, *therefore they fear not God*; their hearts were hardned, becauſe their eſtates proſpered.

Agmen quoddam malorum, ut etiā dicitur lernæ vel Ilias malorū Merc. *Vexationes turmatim me invadunt.* Druſ. *Sagittandi & militandi verba ſæpe & eleganter in ſcripturis declarant Dei contra impios per flagella conflictum.*

So then, theſe changes import, either divers ſorts of afflictions, or divers returns and charges of the ſame afflictions. The ſecond word carrieth that alluſion, *Changes and war are upon me*; that is, ſuch changes as there is in war, when firſt one Regiment charges, and another ſeconds, and ſo Regiment after Regiment, Company after Company, File after File, now the right Wing, and then the left, at laſt the Reſerve. Thus the Lord ſeemed to bring up his Bands and Troops of afflictions to aſſault *Job* in turns and changes, till his whole Army had aſſaulted and skirmiſhed with him. Thoſe Military terms of ſhooting and warring are frequent figures in Scripture, ſhewing how God conflicts with ſinful, weak man, after the manner of men. Obſerve hence,

First, *That afflictions are at the command of God.*

He marſhals and diſpoſes them, as Armies are by their Generals in times of war. He can ſay to one affliction, as the Centurion to his Souldiers, Go, and it goeth; to another, Come, and it cometh; to a third, Do this, and it doth it. All Armies of ſorrow are led by God in chief: They charge whom he pleaſeth, and where he pleaſeth, high or low, Perſon or Nation: if he gives the word, they fall on preſently, nor will they return till he orders their retreat.

Secondly note, *That the Lord hath variety of wayes and means to afflict and try his people.*

Changes and war are againſt me. The Phyſitian hath variety of medicines for his ſick patient; if one removes not the diſtemper, he changes and tries a ſecond. There is nothing ſo full of changes, as war, not only in regard of the uncertainty of events, but variety of means, new forces being raiſed, and new ſtratagems uſed, from day to day. *Haſt thou but one bleſſing?* ſaid *Eſau* to his Father *Iſaac.* The hand of man may be ſtraitned to one bleſſing, or one blow; but the hand of God is never ſtraightned. As he hath ſtore of bleſſings, ſo of blows, and can give both out, both in degree and kind diverſified; if one Army of evils doth not humble and conquer us to his obedience, he can quickly leavy a new one. All creatures will come in to his help, if he do but ſet up his ſtandard, or give command to beat his drum. He changed his Armies ten times againſt *Pharaoh*: *Pharaoh* had indeed changes and war upon him, yet no change wrought in him: therefore the war was changed, till he was deſtroyed. This war with *Job* was not a deſtroying one, but it was a terrible one, ſo terrible that he cries out in the language of his former complaints, *Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

VERS. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb? O that I had given up the ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me!

I ſhould have been as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.

Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.

Before I go whence I ſhall not return, even to the land of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death;

A land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf; and of the ſhadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs.

THeſe five verſes are the concluſion of *Job's* reply to *Bildad*; there are four things remarkable in them.

Firſt, He complaineth that ever he lived a day or an hour in the world, at the beginning of *verſ.* 18. *Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth of the womb?*

Secondly, He wiſheth that he had died ſpeedily: ſeeing he could not have that (ſuppoſed) happineſs not to be born into the world, his next requeſt is, that he might not have ſtayed long in the world; he would not have appeared as a man, no nor as a child, but that birth and burial might have been contiguous, not knowing the diſtance of a day, *Verſ.*18,19. *O that I had given up the Ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me! I ſhould have been as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.*

Thirdly, He ſheweth that however he had been diſappointed of both thoſe votes, yet he could not live long; As if he had ſaid, Though I have found much trouble in the world, yet I ſhall not much trouble the world, the time of my departure is at hand, I have lived moſt of my dayes already, and all my dayes are not many, *Verſ.* 20. *Are not my dayes few?*

Fourthly, He entreateth and ſueth that the few dayes (of thoſe few dayes which he had to live) might be good dayes, *Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I ſhall not return,* &c.

Sui obliviſcitur ut ſuprà,vi doloris. Merc.

The eighteenth and nineteenth verſes carry a ſence very like to that which hath been opened at *Chap.* 3. of this Book, where *Job* complained of his birth, and was troubled that he had the favour of a being (becauſe he found ſuch an ill-being) in the world. His paſſion runneth out here into a vehement expoſtulation, **Wherefore haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb**? As there, *Why died I not from the womb?* Verſ. 11.

Job puts the Queſtion, and demanded an account of God, Why he came out of the Womb? There are three ſorts of queſtions.

Firſt, Such as ariſe from a deſire of neceſſary information: 'Tis good to ask that we may learn.

Secondly, Such as ariſe from a needleſs curioſity: 'Tis not good to ask what no duty enjoyns us to learn.

Thirdly, Such as ariſe from pure paſſion, or rather, from mudded perturbation,not ſo much deſiring information from others, as to vent our ſelves. 'Tis very ill to ask when we care not to learn. Such is the queſtion here put (ſay ſome) a paſſionate queſtion, ariſing from the fume and vapors of a diſtempered mind, deſiring to ask, rather then to be anſwered, *Wherefore haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?* As if he had ſaid, *Was I born only to be an object of evil? Came I into the world to be made a ſad ſpectacle to the world, to Angels and to Men? Have my dayes been lengthened out on purpoſe, that my troubles might be lengthened?* Such a troubled ſence there is in theſe words. The complaints of Saints may ſometimes look like the blaſphemies of wicked men.

Job complaineth of his birth, and ſeems forgetful of all former benefits.

> Hence obſerve, *When we want the mercies we would have, we grow angry with the mercies which we have had.*

Dum ita agis mecum, fit ex beneficio tuo non beneficium. Ccc.

David ſpeaks it to the praiſe of God, *Thou art he that tookeſt me out of my mothers womb* (Pſal. 22.) *Job* ſpeaks it as a dammage to himſelf, *Wherefore haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

> Secondly obſerve, *We are ready to think we live to no end, if we have not our own ends.*

That's the voice of nature, and ſo far as nature prevails in us, it ſpeaks in us.

> Thirdly, *Man is apt to ſay, there is no reaſon for that, of which he ſeeth not the reaſon.*

When we are at our wits end, and at our reaſons end, we think there is an end of all wiſdom and reaſon, as if neither God nor man could give an account beyond ours, or anſwer, when we are non-pluſt.

Yet we may conceive *Job* had a further ſence, which yields a more mollifying meaning of theſe words; for though he (as all the Saints in the Old Teſtament) was much in the dark about the benefit of ſufferings, which the Goſpel hath now more clearly revealed to us, and called us unto; yet he might have ſome other intendment in theſe expoſtulations: We may charitably ſuppoſe him troubled that he was in a condition of life, which (as he conceived) hindered the main end of his life, the glorifying of God; *Wherefore haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?* As if he had ſaid, *Lord, I am in a ſtate, wherein I know not how to honour thee, and then what is my life worth unto me? Thy juſtice is greatly obſcured towards me; many are ready to ſay, for my ſake, that ſurely thou art a hard Maſter, leaving them to reap evil who have ſowed good, and paying thy faithful and moſt active ſervants their wages in ſufferings. And as for mercy, I taſte little of that; comforts are dainties with me: my cup is bitter, my ſorrows are multiplyed: Now when neither juſtice nor mercy move viſibly towards me, how ſhall I glorifie thee? And wherein can my life be uſeful or advantagious to thee? Am I not like a broken veſſel, a veſſel wherein there is no pleaſure? Wherefore then was I brought forth out of the womb?*

Nunc in me juſtitia tua obſcuratur, & ego non ſentio fructū gratiæ tuæ; quâ in re ergo gloriæ tuæ inſervire poteſt vita mea? Ccc.

This Expoſition teacheth us, That,

> *A godly man thinks he liveth to no purpoſe, if he do not live to the praiſe and glory of God.*

God hath made all things for himſelf, and it is the deſign of the Saints to be for him. While that end is attained they can eaſily part with all their own; and where that is croſſed, they cannot be pleaſed in the attainment of any of their own. The intereſt of Chriſt is not only their greateſt, but all their intereſt. Any ſtop of, much more a diſſervice to this, cauſeth an honeſt heart to cry out with *Job*, and ('tis eaſie to conceive) it cauſeth *Job* to cry out, *Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

O that I had given up the Ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me!

אגוע

Facilem & ſine dolore mortem innuit.

O that I had given up the Ghoſt!] The original ſignifies uſually a gentle and an eaſie kind of death. Giving up the Ghoſt, is not a pulling or a violent rending of life away from us, but our laying it down, our ſurrender or willing reſignation of it. Some read this clauſe, not as we Optatively, *O that I had given up the Ghoſt!* but declaratively, *Wherefore haſt thou brought me out of the womb? for then I had quickly given up the Ghoſt.* But rather take it as a wiſh, *O that I had given up the Ghoſt!*

And no eye had ſeen me.] That is (ſay ſome) I would I had died before I had been born, for then no eye had ſeen me. Or more generally thus, O that I had died ſpeedily, ſo ſpeedily that I might have gone out of the world, before I was obſerved to have been there: Who delights to ſee the dead? Eſpecially a child dead-born, or dying as ſoon as born? *Sarah* was the delight of *Abraham's* eyes, whilſt ſhe lived, and yet aſſoon as ſhe was dead, he gives any money for a ſepulchre to bury her out of his ſight. Or again, *Job* that he might ſhew how little he regarded life, diſregards that which is moſt deſirable in life. Man naturally deſires, *To ſee, and to be ſeen; to know, and to be known.* That which carries a great part of the world, is an affectation to be pointed at, and taken notice of, as *Som-bodies* in the world. He that liveth unſeen in the world, is as a man out of the world, or as one buried alive. To be in priſon is a great puniſhment, becauſe a priſoner liveth out of view; he cannot freely ſee or be ſeen. *Job* wiſhes no eye had ſeen him, rather then his eyes ſhould have ſeen ſo much evil, or that others ſhould have ſeen him in the midſt of ſo many evils. Hence obſerve,

Innatum eſt omnibus ut cognoſci ſe velint, & ſtudio teneantur res alias cognoſcendi.

> Firſt, *That undue and unreaſonable queſtions, are uſually followed and fruited with undue and unreaſonable wiſhes.*

Having put the queſtion, *Wherefore haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?* See what a wiſh comes upon it, *O that I had given up the Ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me!* He that takes undue liberty to ſpeak or do, knows not where he ſhall reſtrain himſelf. They who alwayes act as far as they may, ſhall often act beyond what they ought. And they who act at all beyond what they are directed, are often carried beyond what themſelves intended.

> Secondly obſerve, *Man had rather not be ſeen at all, then to be ſeen miſerable.*

To be ſeen, is a great part of the comfort of this life; but who would not gladly exchange it for eaſe in obſcurity? It is an honour to be ſeen, but who would be ſeen cloathed with diſhonour? When Chriſt is propheſied of, as the great pattern of patience and ſelf-denial, it's ſaid, *He hid not his face from ſhame and ſpitting*, Iſa. 50. 6. To be a ſpectacle of miſery, is to ſome worſe then their being miſerable. They would count it a piece of their happineſs, to be unhappy in a corner; and their troubles half removed, if they might ſteal their troubles. As to be in a good eſtate, and to know that we are ſo, makes our eſtate better to us: So to be in an ill eſtate, and to be known that we are ſo, makes it to ſome tempers a great deal worſe. As the hypocrite hopes when he ſins, that no eye ſees him: ſo many wiſh when they ſuffer, *O that no eye had ſeen me!*

Verſ. 19. **I ſhould have been, as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.**

Some read this verſe alſo as a wiſh; *O that I had been, as though I had never been! O that I had been carried from the womb to the grave.*

He confirms what he had ſaid, by a further declaration of his condition, in caſe he had not been brought forth out of the womb, or had died before he had been ſeen in the throng of the world; Why, what then *Job?* Then, **I ſhould have been as though I had not been,** and my afflictions ſhould never have had any being: ſo ſpeedy a death had quitted me of all the evils of my life. I ſhould not have ſipt or taſted, much leſs have drunk ſo deep of this cup of ſufferings. It is ſaid of Abortives who die in the womb, and of ſuch as die immediately after they are born, *They are, and they are not*; they who live but a moment in nature, ſhall live for ever. A life here leſs then a ſpan long, will be eternity long: yet as to the world, ſuch a life is no life, ſuch a being no being. Lawyers ſay, They who die before, or as ſoon as they are born, are reckoned as unborn; they make no change in ſtates, they never had a name, or an intereſt in the world, and ſo they go for nothing in the world. The Prophet *Obadia* (verſ. 16.) threatens *Edom*, *That they ſhall be as though they had not been*; that is, they muſt periſh, and their memorial with them. Some are ſo thruſt out of the world, that they ſhall be, as if they had never been; and ſome come into the world ſo, that their being was, as if they had never been.

Eſt & non eſt Octimeſtris partus, Hippocr.

Abortivus pro non nato cenſetur in jure.

A ſhort life is by common eſtimation no life.

As in heaven, where we ſhall live for ever, we ſhall be, as if we had ever been: So on earth, ſome live ſo little, that they are as if they never were: That which hath an eternal duration and ſhall never end, is as if it had ever begun; and that which is but of a ſhort duration and ends quickly, is as if it had never begun. The reaſon why the fruit of ſin goes for nothing, is, becauſe the pleaſure of ſin is but for a ſeaſon, and that a very little ſeaſon; *What fruit have ye of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* That is, Ye have no fruit, or your fruit was nothing: we may ſay of all the pleaſures of ſin, their cradle is their grave, or more near *Job's* language, they are carried from the womb to the grave. So he ſpeaks next of himſelf,

I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.

I ſhould have paſſed without noiſe or notice. There would have been little trouble with me in the world, I ſhould have made but one journey, and that a ſhort one. The ſpeech is proverbial: *From the womb to the grave*, is the motto of *Infant-death*. The Septuagint read it as an expoſtulation; *Wherefore was I not carried out from the womb to the grave?* It would have been a happineſs to me, either not to have been at all, or to have had a being but equivalent (in common account) to a not being. And thus it had been with me, if my firſt ſtep out of my mothers womb, had been into the womb of that *grand mother* the earth. *Job* is often upon the ſame point, renewing his deſires after death: he did ſo (as hath been toucht) at the third Chapter, and at the ſixth, and now he is as fierce and freſh upon it as ever.

Proverbiale eſt, ab utero ad ſepulchrum, cum quis ſimulac natus eſt moritur.

A godly man may often diſcover the ſame infirmity.

Whilſt the ſame ſtock of corruption remains in us, it is productive of the ſame corrupt fruit. There is a ſeminal vertue in the earth, look how often it is plowed and ſowed, ſo often it ſends forth a crop; there is a ſeminal vertue in the earthly part of man, which makes him to put forth evil, as often as occaſion plows, and temptation ſoweth his heart.

Verſ. 20. **Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.**

Are not my dayes few?] There is a difference in the reading: Many tranſlators joyn the Verb *Ceaſe*, with this clauſe: ſo that whereas we read, *Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone*; they read, *Will not my few dayes ceaſe? Then let me alone that I may take comfort a little.* Mr. *Broughton*, and he hath a ſecond, varieth yet further, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* Inſtead of applying the word *few* unto dayes, *Are not my dayes few?* They (taking in the Verb) joyn it to the act of God, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* That is, Will not God forbear a little to trouble me? Will not he give me a breathing time in my dayes, which are but few? Surely he will, he will not be ſo ſtrict with me, I doubt not of a gracious anſwer to this humble petition.

יחדל *Primo adjungunt colo. Numquid non paucitas dierum mearum finiatur brevi?* Vulg. *An non pauci dies mei ceſſantes,* ſc. *deficientes?* Targ. *Annon pauliſper diebus meis ceſſabit?* Jun.

But rather follow our ſence, and let the firſt clauſe be a queſtion, *Are not my dayes few?* And then the next words are an inference or uſe which he makes from it; *Ceaſe then, and let me alone,* &c.

Are not my dayes few?] The queſtion doth affirm, Yes, my dayes are few. The ſence may be made out one of theſe three wayes, and not unprofitably by all three.

Firſt thus, As a juſtification of his former wiſhes and deſires to die: Have I not upon good reaſon wiſhed that I had never lived? Who can be in love with a ſhort life, and a long trouble? *Are not my dayes few?* Or,

Secondly, As an anſwer to ſuch as objected againſt him for wiſhing he had not lived: *Do you know* (ſaid they) *what you have ſaid? Is life ſuch a ſmall matter with you? Or, do you underſtand what you deſire, when you deſire death? Is deformed death become a beauty in your eye? What ever you think of it, life is a precious Jewel; Yes* (ſaith *Job*) *I know very well what life is, and I know if I had died before I was born, I had loſt much life; What's the life of a few dayes? The life of eternity is worth the having and eſteeming; but why ſhould you think I have wiſhed away a matter of moment, when I wiſhed away this life? For are not my dayes few?*

Whence obſerve, *The loſs of a whole life in the world, is no great loſs.*

We cannot loſe a great deal, when all is but a little; nor many, when we have but a few in all. He looſeth but a few dayes, who dieth the firſt day; then, what have we got, when we have lived according to the calculation of nature, many dayes? *Job* makes this an argument to ſatisfie others about his wiſh, that all his dayes had been cut off. May not we ſatisfie our ſelves by it, when a piece, or a part, an end, the worſt end of our dayes is cut off? What if we have abated ten or twenty of thoſe years which poſſibly we might have lived? Twenty years are but a few dayes; for, a whole life, conſiſting of three twenties and ten, is but a few dayes. This we are ſure of, that the few dayes we loſe on earth, ſhall never be miſſed in heaven; it will be no abatement to our comfort there, to think we lived but a little here; all the ſorrows of this life will be ſwallowed up in the next, and ſo will our ſudden parting with this life.

Thirdly, The cleareſt ſence of theſe words [*Are not my dayes few?*] is, that they are the ground of a petition for the mitigation of his troubles; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, I have but a while to live in the world, my dayes are few, therefore do not think much that I ſhould have a little comfort and refreſhing in theſe my dayes; Conſider my life is ſhort, O that thou wouldeſt ſlack thy hand, and yield me ſome eaſe and comfort in this ſhort life.* He had uſed this argument at *Chap.* 7. *verſ.* 16. *Let me alone, for my dayes are vanity*; here, *Let me alone, for my dayes are few. The fewneſs of our dayes is one of the vanities of our dayes.*

Are not my dayes few?] The Hebrew is, *Is not fewneſs of dayes mine?* Yes, That's my portion. Abſtracts often encreaſe, and ſometimes they diminiſh the ſence. Here the ſence is diminutive; as if he had ſaid, My dayes are ſo far from many, that they are fewneſs it ſelf: Mine are not encreaſing

Paucitas dierum, i. e. *pauciſſimi dies. Abſtracta ſignificationem incitant & acuunt.* מעט *Imminutionem decrementumque ſignificat,* q. d. *nunquam creſcit, ſed decreſcit, & ad anguſtias majores indies reducitur, & in perpetua conſumptione evaneſcit.* Bold.

and growing, but declining and abating dayes. My dayes are going down, they are brought into a leſſer and a narrower compaſs every day. The *Chaldee* renders, *Are not my dayes ceaſing?* My dayes fade and wear out every day; *Shew me how ſhort my life is* (cloſer to the Original) how ſoon ceaſing I am; or, as others, What, or of what quantity mine age is, how tranſient, how temporary I am.

מה הרל אני *Quanti ævi ego?* Mont.

Ceaſe then, and let me alone.] Some read it in the third perſon, *Therefore let him ceaſe from me, and let me alone*; we in the ſecond, *Ceaſe then, and let me alone.* *Job* looks upon himſelf as one beſieged and ſtraitned with afflictions: Now (ſaith he) I beſeech thee raiſe thy ſiege, and draw off thy force from me; or if thou wilt not make a final peace with me, yet grant me a ceſſation, let me have a truce for a limited time, let me not have ſuch continual Alarms, or be forced to ſtand armed continually; let me reſt, ſaith the *Septuagint*: *Iſſachar* ſtooped to burdens, becauſe he deſired reſt. Some are ſo burdened, that they cannot reſt, how much ſoever they deſire it. *Job* deſires God to give him reſt, becauſe his dayes were few.

ישית ממני *Deponat à me, ſc. flagellum aut ſupplicium. Deponat exercitus ſuos procul à me.* Jun.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *It is an argument moving the Lord to forbear ſending us many troubles, becauſe we have but few days.*

Thus *David* prayes (*Pſal.* 89.47.) *Remember how ſhort my time is; wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain?* Lord, I have but a few dayes, and ſhall my dayes be nothing but clouds and darkneſs? The ſame argument is uſed, *Pſal.* 39. *ult. O ſpare me, that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no more.* I ſhall ſoon be gone, let me have ſome eaſe while I ſtay here.

Secondly obſerve, That, *Except the Lord withdraw his hand, nothing in the world can give us eaſe.*

Ceaſe then, and let me alone that I may take comfort; as if he had ſaid, If thine hand be upon me, in vain do friends comfort me; creatures offer me their help in vain. *Ceaſe then, and let me alone.*

From the matter of his Argument, obſerve,

The Life of man is ſhort.

It is a common *Theme*, and every man thinks he can declaim upon it, and ſpeak to it; but there are very few can live to, or act by it. A multitude of inſtructions ariſe to us from the fewneſs of our dayes: And did men know indeed that their dayes are few, their evil deeds would not be ſo many, and their good would be more.

Again, That mans dayes are ſo few, yields us not only many inſtructions, but many wonders. Is it not ſtrange that we who have but a few dayes in our lives, ſhould have ſo many afflictions in our lives? That we ſhould have few dayes, and many ſorrows? Is it not ſtrange that we ſhould have few dayes in our lives, and many cares about our lives: Many cares and few dayes, yea, many cares upon one day? *Thou art careful about many things*, ſaith Chriſt to *Martha*. Is it not ſtrange that we ſhould have ſo few dayes, and ſo many ſins? Few dayes, and innumerable ſins; ſo many ſins as no man can number them, and ſo few dayes, that a Child may number them? And is not this a wonder above all the reſt, that we ſhould have but a few dayes, and yet be gravell'd and puzl'd ſo as we are in numbring them? A little humane learning will ſerve to number our dayes, but we need a great deal of ſpiritual learning to number them. A little ſtudy in the Mathematicks will do it, but we need more then ſtudy, experience in Divinity before we can do it, unleſs God himſelf be our Tutor; *He only can teach us ſo to number our dayes that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom.* We ſhall commence fools at laſt, if we have not one wiſer then the wiſeſt upon earth, to teach us this truth.

That I may take comfort a little.] The word which we tranſlate to take comfort, ſignifies ſuch comfort as they find, who being heated extreamly, and extream thirſty, come to drink at a fountain of ſweet waters. The Vulgar readeth it, *Let me alone that I may mourn a little*; yet taking in the former ſence, he ſeems thus to explain himſelf; If the Lord would let me alone, I would go and eaſe my ſelf with complaining; the waters of my head, the fountain of mine eyes would be a refreſhing to my wearied ſoul. *Sorrows are ſometimes joyous, and moderate mourning gives the mind a reviving.*

ברג *Roboravit, confortavit reſpiravit, vires collegit.*

But rather, Take it in the general, *Let me alone that I may comfort my ſelf*, and that theſe ſorrows may abate; I deſire to rally, and recollect my ſcattered thoughts a while, and ſo take in ſomewhat of the ſweetneſs of this life before I die. *Ceaſe from me for ſome refreſhing* (ſaith Mr. *Broughton*) *I do not expect much, Lord, let me have ſome before I go whence I ſhall not return.*

Si dolorem amovere non vult, reſpirandi locum aliquem & ſpatium concedat. Mer.

Here obſerve one common principle of Nature,

Man deſireth his own good.

A well-being as well as a being. What is there in life for Nature to prize, if there be nothing but ſorrow in it?

Secondly obſerve, That, *Great ſufferings make us very modeſt in our demands.*

Job was in great affliction, and now a little comfort would go a great way with him. When the people of *Iſrael* were in bondage under *Pharaoh* and task-maſters, and had heavier burdens laid upon them, they do not ſo much as move for a total releaſe from their task, but modeſtly complain, *There is no ſtraw given unto thy ſervants, and they ſay to us, Make Brick*; as if they had ſaid, Let us have ſtraw, and we are willing to make brick. A poor man cries out for a halfpeny, for a farthing, not for hundreds or thouſands. He that is ready to ſtarve, will not ask good chear, or a plentiful feaſt, but let me have a cruſt of bread, or a little water. When *Dives* was in hell, what did he deſire of *Abraham*? Did he beg to come into his boſom? Doth he ſay, *Lazarus* is in a good place, let me come too; No, he deſired but a drop of water; and what was a drop of water to flames of fire? O how would it delight the damned in hell to think of a ceſſation but for one hour from their pain! What a joy would it be unto them, if it ſhould be told them, that a thouſand or ten thouſand years hence they ſhould have one good day, or that they might be let alone to take comfort a little! *They who are low, make low demands.* Think of this, ye that enjoy much comfort, and ſwim in rivers of pleaſure. Let not the great conſolations of God be ſmall to you, when you hear *Job* thus inſtant and importunate for the ſmalleſt; *Let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.*

But why is he in ſuch haſte for a little comfort? One ground is, in the former words, *My dayes are few*; and he backs it with a ſecond in the next; If it come not quickly, it will come too late. I am ready to take my laſt journey, *Therefore let me take a little comfort.*

Verſe 21. **Before I go whence I ſhall not return, even to the Land of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death.**

Before I go.] That is, before I die. Death is a going out of the world: Chriſt intimates his death under this notion (*John* 16.7.) *If I go, the Comforter will come. And I go from you,* &c. Dying is a journeying from one Region to another. *Death is a changing of our place, though not of our company. Before I go.* Whither?

Periphraſis moriendi, qui moritur dicitur abire; unde abitionem pro morte veteres uſurparunt. Dr.

Whence I ſhall not return.] That's a ſtrange journey indeed. That which pleaſeth us in our longeſt journeys while we live, is a hope of returning to our own homes again. But when we die, we take a journey from whence there is no returning. Not return? Shall not man return when he dieth? Is death an everlaſting departure, an eternal night? No, Man ſhall return, but he ſhall not return to ſuch a life or ſtate as he had before. He is gone for ever out of this world, and out of all worldly intereſts. *Job* believed a reſurrection or a returning from the grave by the power of God, and he knew there was no returning by the power of Nature, or by the help of any creature, in that reference, *we go whence we ſhall not return.* So *David* ſpeaks of his dead Infant, *I ſhall go to him, but he ſhall not return to me*, 2 Sam. 12.25. When once we are ſhut up in thoſe Chambers of death, and made priſoners in the grave, though all the Princes in the world ſend warrants for our releaſe, we cannot get releaſed. The pertinacy and ſtiffneſs of the grave is ſuch as yields to none. We are faſt ſhut up, when we are ſhut up there. Love and the grave will hardly part with that which they have cloſed with, and are poſſeſſed of. The grave is one of thoſe three things which are never ſatisfied, or ſay it is enough, *Prov.* 30.15.

Fidē reſurrectionis non lædit. Pin.

Indicat nullam eſſe vim in natura cui pareat mors & cui receptacula animarum obediant, reddereque cogantur, quem ſemel receperunt. Pin.

And as it is inſatiable in receiving, ſo it is as cloſe in keeping; it will part with nothing. A grave is the Parable of a covetous man, he is greedy to get, and watchful to hold; when his money goes into his purſe, he ſaith, it ſhall not return: The grave hath a ſtrong appetite to take down, and as ſtrong a ſtomack to digeſt. Till God (as I may ſo ſpeak) by his mighty power gives the grave a vomit, and makes the earth ſtomack-ſick with eating mans fleſh, it will not return one morſel. At the Reſurrection this great Eater ſhall caſt up all again. And as they who take ſtrong vomits, are put into a kind of trembling convulſion, all the powers of the body being ſhaken; ſuch will the Prognoſticks be of the Reſurrection; there was an Earthquake when Chriſt aroſe, God made the Earth ſhake, and commanded it to give back the priſoner, becauſe *it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden of it.* And when God ſpeaks the word, it will not be poſſible for the grave to hold us priſoners: till then it will. It was uſual among the Ancients, to ſay of a dead friend, *He is gone, and he will come again*; intimating a Reſurrection. Heathens not knowing nor believing it, call death, *An eternal leave-taking or farewel, never to meet again.*

Veteres Romani dicere ſolebant, abiit & reverſurus eſt, *reſurrectionem carnis haud obſcurè innuentes.* Ter. *Salve æternum mihi maximè Palla. Æternumq; vale.* Virg. Æneid. *Valeant qui inter nos diſſidium volunt.* Ter.

Obſerve from this deſcription of the grave,

That, *The ſtatutes of death are unrepealable.*

Death is an everlaſting baniſhment from the world; *I ſhall go whence I ſhall not return.* This may lie very ſad upon their ſpirits, who have not a better place then the world to go to, when they go from the world: To go whence we ſhall never return, and yet where we cannot endure to be a moment, is deepeſt miſery: Such a man cannot chuſe but ſet out with a ſad heart. And that's the reaſon why wicked men, whoſe conſciences are awakened, go ſo unwillingly to this ſleep, they know whither they are going, only they know they cannot return. *Make ye friends* ('tis Chriſt's counſel) *of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations* (Luk. 10. 9.) *Mammon of unrighteouſneſs*, that is, ſay moſt Interpreters, Mammon gotten unrighteouſly; but ſurely Chriſt would not teach any to make men our friends, by that which makes God our enemy. They tranſlate better, who render it, *Make ye friends of the falſe or unfaithful Mammon*, that is, of that Mammon which will deceive and leave you ſhortly; therefore make you friends of it while you have it; that when ye fail, that is, when ye die, or go out of the world, they may receive you, that is, ye may be received into everlaſting habitations: leave not this habitation till ye have got intereſt in a better. The Saints arm themſelves againſt death by this argument; *We know that if our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) We know there is no return to buildings made with hands; we muſt leave our Houſes for ever, our Lands for ever, and our Relations for ever; but we are aſſured of a building *of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* This ſupported their hearts, when their earthly houſes were falling.

Animula blandula, &c. quæ nunc abibis in loca. Adr.

Quod eſt falſum ἄδικον *ab Helleniſtis uſu Hebræorum dicitur* Heſ. *exercit. Sac.*

Job having thus deſcribed death it ſelf, proceeds to deſcribe the grave, which is the place of death, or the *Black Hall of the King of Terrors.* Would you know what this place is, from whence there is no returning? It is, ſaith he (in the cloſe of this Verſe) *even the Land of darkneſs and the ſhadow of death.* And in the laſt Verſe,

Verſe 22. **A Land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf, and of the ſhadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs.**

This is the place where death dwells, or the ſeat of death; and here's a deſcription of it, which exceeds the Fancy of Poets, and the Rhetorick of all Heathen Orators. The Spirit of God riſeth to the height of eloquence, in diſcovering that unpleaſant Region.

This ſubterranean Geography gives a double character of it. 1. *A Land of darkneſs.* 2. *A Land of the ſhadow of death*; both which are aggravated by their additions. It is a Land of darkneſs, but not of any ordinary darkneſs; *It is a Land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf.* It is a Land of the ſhadow of death, not of an ordinary ſhadow of death, but of the ſhadow of death, 1. *Without any order.* 2. *Where the light is as darkneſs.*

A Land of darkneſs.] That is, abounding with darkneſs, a Land where darkneſs is the ſtaple, and the only commodity to be had. Darkneſs is the hangings and ornament of the houſe of death. The grave is elſewhere called *A Land of forgetfulneſs* (Pſal. 88. 11.) Becauſe there all things are forgotten. We read (*Jer.* 12. 5.) of *a Land of peace*, that is a land where peace abounds, a land in every corner whereof peace ſprings and groweth up. *Canaan* (Deut. 8. 8.) was called *A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that ſpring out of the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barlie, and vines, and fig-trees, pomegranates; a land of oyl-olive, and of honey*: That is, a land where theſe good things were natural and plentiful: A land where Neighbour-Nations might furniſh themſelves, and fraight their ſhips with thoſe commodities. In ſuch a ſence *Job* calls the grave a land of darkneſs; as if he had ſaid, Would you know what the merchandize of the grave is? I will tell you, it is darkneſs, there you may have darkneſs as much as you deſire, and beſides that, nothing, how much ſoever you deſire it.

Cum ſepulchrum dicitur terra tenebrarum, ibi tanquã in nativo ſolo obſcuritas intelligitur provenire.

This ſhews the terror of death to a meer natural underſtanding. Many are afraid to be at all in the dark, how much more to be alwayes in darkneſs: As light is put for joy, ſo darkneſs for ſorrow. Darkneſs, whether ſpiritual or natural, is afflictive. Dark houſes are unpleaſant, what then is a land of darkneſs? The face of a man is darkened with ſorrow, and joy is the light of it. It hath been obſerved that ſome *Great Princes* have had light beaming out from their eyes. *Auguſtus* had ſo ſparkling an eye, that few could look upon him; his eyes caſt forth rayes like the Sun, dazling the beholders. Good, gracious Princes caſt out beams of favour upon their people, which refreſh them as the light. Death and the grave have no light in their face. Death looks black and grim, Hell is extreameſt darkneſs, and the pains of hell are chains of darkneſs.

Suetonius in Auguſto. c. 79.

And the ſhadow of death.

There is more then the ſhadow of death in the grave, death it ſelf dwells there. The words ſound an abatement of the ſence, but indeed they heighten it. *The ſhadow of death* is thick darkneſs, thickeſt darkneſs, the very ſtrength of darkneſs. This ſhadow is the ſubſtance of death, or death with addition of greateſt deadlineſs.

Terra cujus palpebræ ſunt ſicut caligo umbrarum mortis. Targ.

Job having given the land this dreadful name, *A land of darkneſs, and of the ſhadow of death*, makes it yet more dreadful by this further explication.

A Land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf.] Or, *A Land of darkneſs, which looks like darkneſs.* The word ſignifies wearineſs, reſtleſneſs, and vexation of ſpirit. To be in a dark condition, is to be in a weariſom condition. The Vulgar reads it, *A Land of miſery.* Some darkneſs hath a degree of light mingled with it, but this is pure or unmixed darkneſs, darkneſs in its proper hue, darkneſs it ſelf. When a man of skill acts skilfully, we ſay, he acts like himſelf; and when a wicked man doth very wickedly, we ſay, he doth like himſelf. The darkneſs of the grave looks like nothing but it ſelf.

ארץ עפתה

Every evil the more like it is to it ſelf, the worſe it is. When the Apoſtle would ſhew ſin in its colours, he calleth it *ſinful ſin* (Rom. 7. 12.) *Sin by the Commandment became exceeding ſinful*; the commandment cauſed it to look like it ſelf. Sorrowful ſorrow, and painful pain are the worſt of pains and ſorrows. There is ſorrow which may conſiſt with ſome joy, and pain, which may cohabit with ſome eaſe; but he that hath ſorrow like ſorrow it ſelf, and pain like pain it ſelf, hath the extremity of both. Thus alſo every good, the more like it is to it ſelf, the better it is; holineſs like it ſelf, is the pureſt holineſs; grace like it ſelf, is the ſweeteſt grace. When a holy man works like himſelf, his work is beſt. God is ever like himſelf in all he doth; and every thing we do, is then beſt, when it is done moſt like to what God doth.

And of the ſhadow of death, without any order; or,
The ſhadow of death, and not orders.

The word which we tranſlate order, is frequent in the Rabbins; the holy Text hath it only in this place, and here, in the plural number, *A Land of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death, and without any orders*, a land unordered. There's no government, no method in the grave And if it hath no order, then it hath nothing in it but confuſion, nothing but

ולא סדרים *Et non ordines.*

but diſorder. That the grave, or the ſtate of death is without any order, may be underſtood two wayes.

Hebræi ad vices diei & noctis, æſtatis & hyemis, &c. *referunt. Expertem viciſſitudinum.* Jun.

Firſt, Without order, becauſe it hath no changes, or viciſſitudes in it, there is no difference in the grave between night and day, Winter and Summer, hot and cold, wet and dry, between the riſing and ſetting of the Sun: This is the order which God hath ſet in Nature; and when the flood had put all things into a kind of confuſion, God promiſed, *That ſeed time and harveſt, and cold and heat, ſummer and winter, day and night ſhould not ceaſe*; that is, there ſhould be an everlaſting order continued in the creature. The dead know none of thoſe changes and viciſſitudes; as much of the vanity, ſo ſome of the comforts of this life conſiſt in changes; but all is alike in death.

Secondly, There is no order in going to the grave; men do not keep to a rule in dying, nor obſerve their ranks. The old go not always firſt, and then the young; the great before, and the mean following after. Death hath no maſter of the Ceremonies; but takes promiſcuouſly, here a child, and there a man; here a rich man, and there a beggar. And as there is no order in going thither, ſo none when we are there; the grave mingleth the duſt, and bones of one with another. We cannot diſtinguiſh the rich mans duſt from the duſt of the poor, nor the bones of Kings from thoſe of the loweſt ſubject. Though rich men are buried in more eminent places, and Kings under ſtately Monuments, though their Tombs differ from their inferiors, yet their bones do not. An old Philoſopher was obſerved ſearching a Cæmitery, and prying buſily among the Tombs, and being asked, what he looked for, anſwered, I come to ſee if I can find the duſt of rich men, and the bones of Princes, but I cannot ſee which is which; the duſt of the rich and of the poor, of Princes and peaſants, are all alike to my eye.

And ſeeing *Job* makes this an aggravation of the miſery of death that it is without order; We may obſerve,

That order hath an excellency, and a beauty in it.

The leſs order there is in any place or State, the worſe it is; and where is no order, there it is worſt of all. Civil order is the beauty of Common-wealths, and ſpiritual order is the beauty of the Church. The Apoſtle rejoyced to behold the order of the *Coloſſians*, as well as their faith, (*Col.* 2. 5.) His charge to the *Corinthians* is, *Let all things be done decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14. 40.) He had warned them (*verſ.* 33.) to take heed of diſorder, becauſe *God is not the God of confuſion, but of peace.* Where order is not kept, the peace cannot be kept. Death is evil, and that's without order; hell is worſt of all, and there is no order at all. It is a kind of death to ſee any diſorder, and a very hell to ſee all in diſorder.

חפע *à radice* יפע *Floruit, ſplenduit, fulgorem & magnificentiam exercuit. Tenebreſcit, ſicut caligo.* Mon. *Quod in ea ſplendidiſſimum eſt, caligini ſimile eſt.*

And where the light is as darkneſs.] Some read by the Verb, *where it ſhineth like darkneſs*, or thus, *where it lighteth like darkneſs*. The Vulgar paraphraſes rather then tranſlates, *Where there is everlaſting horror.* *Job* ſaid before, it was a land of darkneſs, and like *darkneſs it ſelf*: yet now he ſeemeth to affirm, that there is light in the grave: and if there be, how is that darkneſs like darkneſs it ſelf? His meaning is, that which looks moſt like to light in the grave, is darkneſs; and it is therefore darkneſs like darkneſs it ſelf, becauſe if you can imagine any thing to have a ſhew of light in the grave, that very light is as darkneſs. When the Apoſtle would invincibly argue the infinite wiſdom and ſtrength of God, he ſaith, *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then men, and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger then men* (1 Cor. 1. 25.) God is only wiſe, only ſtrong; how then ſpeaks this Apoſtle of the fooliſhneſs or weakneſs of God? His meaning is, look what act ſoever of God appears to man, as having fooliſhneſs or weakneſs in it, even that fooliſhneſs is wiſer, and that weakneſs ſtronger then men. In what ſence *Paul* ſaith, *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſdom, the weakneſs of God is ſtrength*, or (which is all one) the darkneſs of God is light; in the ſame *Job* ſaith, The light of the grave is darkneſs. For as God is wiſdom, and in him there is no fooliſhneſs at all; ſtrength, and in him there is no weakneſs at all; light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all: So *Job* ſuppoſeth of the grave, that in it there is darkneſs, and no light at all, while he affirms, the light found there is as darkneſs. Chriſt ſpeaks near this language of *Job* (*Matth.* 6. 23.) *If therefore the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs!* He had ſaid before, *The light of the body is the eye; and if the eye be ſingle, the whole body is light*; that is, if a man have right aims and pure ends, theſe will keep him right in all his courſe; but if his eye be dark, his ends baſe, how baſe will his actions be, how great his darkneſs? We may argue thus to the point in hand, if the light of the grave be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs? The Prophet *Amos* ſets forth great changes in States and Kingdoms by prodigious changes in the Air, *Lo, he makes the morning darkneſs*, Chap. 4. 15. Again, *He turneth the ſhadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night*, Chap. 5. 8.

When either civil or moral good is turned into evil, we are paſt all hope of good; if once our light be dark, we muſt expect nothing but darkneſs. The beſt works of hypocrites will be found wickedneſs; how wicked then will they be in their worſt? If their holineſs be unclean, how unclean is their unholineſs? All their moral light is as darkneſs, and all their civil light ſhall be turned into darkneſs.

Some (eſpecially Popiſh) Interpreters underſtand this deſcription, not of the grave, but of hell. The ſame word in the Hebrew ſerves both hell and the grave. Death looks like hell, and bears much of it's image. What is there in hell, but the agonies and ſweat of death, the pangs and paleneſs of death, the chains and bonds of death? The ſtate of the damned in hell, is an eternal act of dying: And all that *Job* ſpeaks of the grave, is fulfilled there to the utmoſt. There is darkneſs, like darkneſs it ſelf, called therefore *utter darkneſs*; there is the ſhadow of death without any order, there the light is as darkneſs. But though the Text be true of hell, yet *Job* had nothing to do or ſuffer beyond the grave, and I ſhall carry his diſcourſe no further, keeping within thoſe confines: We may learn,

That death in it ſelf is no way deſirable.

Noſtri theologizantes ad infernũ referunt, ſed Job *ad ſepulchrum reſpexit.* Merc.

Is there any beauty in darkneſs, in thick darkneſs, where there is no order, in darkneſs, where the very light is darkneſs? One of the greateſt plagues upon *Egypt*, was three dayes darkneſs; what then is there in death (naturally conſidered) but a plague, ſeeing it is perpetual darkneſs?

If death be ſuch in it ſelf, and ſuch to thoſe who die in ſin, how ſhould our hearts be raiſed up in thankfulneſs to Chriſt, who hath put other terms upon death and the grave by dying for our ſins! Chriſt hath made the grave look like a heaven to his. Chriſt hath aboliſhed death, not death it ſelf (for even believers die) but all the trouble and terror of death, the darkneſs and the diſorder of it, are taken away. Chriſt hath mortified death, killed death, ſo that now death is not ſo much an opening of the door of the grave, as it is an opening of the door of heaven. Chriſt, who is the Sun of righteouſneſs, lay in the grave, and hath left perpetual beams of light there for his purchaſed people. The way to the grave is very dark, but Chriſt hath ſet up lights for us, or cauſed light to ſhine into the way. Chriſt hath put death into a method, yea Chriſt hath put death into a kind of life, or he hath put life into death of believers. All the gaſtlineſs, horror, yea the darkneſs and death of death is removed. The Saints may look upon the grave as a land of light, like light it ſelf; yea as a land of life, like life it ſelf, where there is nothing but order, and where the darkneſs is as light.

Job's reply to *Bildad* and complaints to God have carried his diſcourſe as far as death and the grave, he gives over in a dark diſordered place; God ſtill leaving him under much darkneſs, and many diſorders of ſpirit. As his great afflictions are yet continued, ſo his weakneſſes continue too. His graces break forth many times, and ſometimes his corruption: Both are coming to a further diſcovery, while his third friend *Zophar* takes up the bucklers, and renews the battel: upon what terms he engages with *Job*, how *Job* acquits himſelf, and comes off from that engagement, is the ſum of the four ſucceeding Chapters.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
ELEVENTH, TWELFTH,
THIRTEENTH, AND FOURTEENTH,
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

To the CHRISTIAN READER; To thoſe chiefly of this City, who have been the movers, and continue the promoters of this Work.

I*N this Fourth Part I preſent you with* Job's *third Diſpute:* Eliphaz *and* Bildad *having given their judgment upon his Caſe,* Zophar *undertakes him: How he mannaged his Arguments, and what anſwer he received, are (according to the meaſure of received light) diſcovered in this expoſitory Diſcourſe; I ſhall here only (by way of preface) propoſe a queſtion, and offer my apprehenſions towards the reſolution of it.*

Whether *Job* and his friends, who were the interlocutors at this conference, ſpake (as the holy Prophets and other penmen of the holy Scriptures did) by inſpiration of God, 1 *Tim.* 3.16. or, as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21.

That the Book of Job *is a part (as the Apoſtle phraſeth it,* Rom. 15.4.) *of thoſe* things which were written aforetime for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope, *is teſtified not only by the divine grandeur and majeſty of the ſtile, together with the intrinſecal excellency and efficacy of the matter, (in both which it declares it ſelf a glorious beam of his wiſdome, who is light and the father of lights) but alſo by the concurrent Teſtimony of, not a few, other Scriptures.*

For, as the Hiſtory of it (that ſuch a man was) hath a full Prophetical teſtimony by Ezekiel (*ch.* 14. 14.) *and an Apoſtolical one by S.* James (*ch.* 5. 11.) Ye have heard of the patience of *Job*, and have ſeen the end of the Lord: *So the authentity and authority of it is clearly aſſerted by* S. Paul, *calling in and aſſociating the teſtimony of this Book with* David's *Pſalms, to that great Truth, that,* The wiſdom of this world is fooliſhneſs with God.

For, Though it doth not argue a Book purely divine, becauſe ſome ſentence of it is quoted in Scripture (for ſo the Books of Aratus, Menander *and* Epimenides, *Heathen Poets are) yet ſuch a manner of quotation as the Book of* Job *is honoured with, is an undoubted argument of it. While* Paul *quotes the writings of the Heathen, he ſlights thoſe Heathen writers, with,* As certain alſo of your own Poets have ſaid; for we are alſo his offſpring, *Act.* 17.28. *And again,* One of themſelves, even a Prophet of their own, ſaid, The *Cretians* are alwayes liars, evil beaſts, ſlow-bellies, *Tit.* 1.12. *He makes uſe of what another of them ſaid, without ſaying any thing at all of him,* Evil communications corrupt good manners (1 *Cor.* 15.33.) *But when he cites this Book, he doth it in the ſame form wherein moſt of the Books of the Old Teſtament are cited in the New, giving his citation the value of a reaſon, in reference to the point he was upon, with an emphatical cauſal particle,* For it is written, he taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs, 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. *Which are the words of* Eliphaz, *Job* 5. 13. *Now, as when God took the firſt-fruits, he conſecrated and ſanctified the whole kind of which thoſe firſt-fruits were a part; ſo where he takes any part of a Book as an authoritative Scripture-proof, he confirms that whole Book for Scripture.*

And as this Book is there authoritatively cited by the Apoſtle Paul, *ſo divers ſentences and branches of it are tranſplanted and engrafted by the penmen of other Scriptures into the body of thoſe Scriptures which God appointed and called them to pen. Pſal.* 8.5. & 144.3. Lord, what is man, that thou takeſt knowledge of him, or the ſon of man, that thou makeſt account of him? *are fully the ſame in ſence, and near the ſame in the letter with that of* Job 7. 17. *And the compariſon of* man to a ſhadow (*Pſal.* 144. 4.) *ſeems to be tranſcribed from the words of* Bildad, *chap.* 8.8. *That alſo of* Pſ. 107. 4. He powreth contempt upon Princes, and cauſeth them to wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way, *fell firſt from the mouth of* Job, *chap.* 12.21,24. *And the words of* v.42. *of the ſame Pſalm,* The righteous ſhall ſee it and rejoyce, and iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth, *were ſpoken by* Eliphaz, *Job* 5.16. & 22.19. *The like obſervations may be made between* Lev. 26.5. & Job 11. 19. *between* Deut. 10.17. & Job 34.19. *between* Pſ. 7.15. & Iſa 59. 15. *compared with* Job 15. 35. *Now, as the calling out of ſome one ſentence of this Book for a Scripture-proof, ſo the frequent mixing of the language and phraſe of it in the Scripture, is a convincing argument that the whole Book is of God.*

But doth not Job *charge his friends as* forgers of lies? *chap.* 13.4. *If they were ſo indeed, how can we aſſert their diſcourſes for divine truths?* For no lie is of the truth, 1 *Joh.* 2. 21. *If they were not, how can we aſſert the diſcourſe of* Job *for truth, who was thus miſtaken? I anſwer,*

Firſt, Job *ſpake rather paſſionately then poſitively.*

Secondly, The lies he charged them with, were not erroneous aſſertions againſt the truth, but unkind aſperſions (flowing from a zeal for God) upon his perſon.

Thirdly, Job *doth not charge his friends with lies ſtrictly taken, as if they had knowingly ſpoken any thing which was falſe, or as if they had ſpoken at any time purpoſely to enſnare him: his friends ſuppoſed and were confident that they ſpake truth not only in it ſelf (as indeed they did) but alſo to his ſtate, and their aim was to inſtruct or reclaim him, not to enſnare or entangle him by what they had ſpoken.*

Laſtly, They ſpake no doctrinal untruths, though ſome of their applications were (as to this caſe) untrue.

And thus even the Apoſtles themſelves did fail ſometimes; for as Jobs *friends applied their Doctrine to a Saint, as if he had been an hypocrite, ſo did they in their Epiſtolical writings apply their Doctrines to ſome hypocrites, as if they had been Saints.*

But doth not God himſelf in the concluſion and determination of this diſpute, ſay expreſly to Eliphaz *the* Temanite, My wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant *Job* hath (*ch.* 42.7.) *If they did not ſpeak right of God, how then were they taught of God what to ſpeak? I anſwer,*

Firſt, Some expound thoſe words (as the letter alſo ſeems to carry it) comparatively, not as if they had not ſpoken right of God, but not ſo right as Job *had.*

Secondly, That which they ſpake of God in his Nature, *Properties and Works, was all right, only they had not ſpoken right of God about the intendment of his works and diſpenſations towards* Job; *they did not hit the meaning of God in that ſo clearly as God did; though (I conceive)* Job *himſelf was much in the dark about that point too, as* Elihu *laboured to convince him*

To the CHRISTIAN READER.

It may be again objected, That Job *and his three friends oppoſe each other, and maintain different opinions, how then can all be true? Muſt not one ſide be out, he or they? I anſwer,*

Firſt, Job *and his friends did agree in many points (as was ſhewed in the Preface to the ſecond part of theſe Expoſitions) and all thoſe principles wherein they agreed, are the undoubted truths of God.* I know it to *be* ſo of a truth *(ſaith he, ch.* 9. 2.) *And again,* My eye hath ſeen all this, and mine ear hath heard and underſtood it, *chap.* 13. 1. *In both theſe paſſages* Job *votes with his friends, and ſeals to the truth of many things which they had ſpoken; as if he had ſaid,* Though I cannot agree with you in all, yet I will agree as far as I can: In theſe points you and I have no quarrel.

Secondly, Where they diſagreed, the difference was not thus wide, that his friends maintained an errour, and he a truth; but only thus, he maintained more truth, or truth more clearly then they did. They taught truth in all they ſpake, but not all the truth: As for inſtance, That, God afflicts for ſin, *or,* that ſin is the cauſe of affliction, *is a truth, but not all the truth; or, not abſolutely and univerſally true; for ſome afflictions are not ſent for chaſtening and correction, but meerly for trial and probation: Again, they teach, that,* God doth ſeverely puniſh wicked men in this life. *This is true, but not univerſally and abſolutely true; for, as ſome godly men are troubled, ſo ſome wicked men proſper all their dayes.*

Thirdly, Though the opinion which Job's *friends held in oppoſition to him, was not throughout ſound and orthodox, yet their way of expreſſing it was.* Remember, I pray thee *(ſaith* Eliphaz, *c.* 4. 7.) Who ever periſhed being innocent? *or,* where were the righteous cut off? *Here* Job *oppoſed him,* c. 9. 22. This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it, he deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked. Eliphaz *guided by the experience of Gods uſual adminiſtrations in thoſe times, held, that God doth not greatly afflict (for that he means by periſhing and cutting off) any godly man in this life. This was his miſtake; yet the words with which this Opinion is cloathed, contain a clear truth; and being an appeal to experience* (Remember I pray thee) *are very parallel to that of* David(*Pſ.* 37. 25.) I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread.

Fourthly, Job's *friends ſpake truth in* theſi, *or in the poſition all along, they only fail'd in* hypotheſi, *or in the application: yea, all their applications and inferences might have fitted ſome men in ſuch an outward condition as they ſaw* Job *in, but they did not fit* Job, *becauſe his inward condition was not ſuch as they cenſured it to be; and God left them under thoſe miſapprehenſions of his inward condition for the promoting of his own holy deſign in the full trial of* Job's *patience, while his friends wounded him deeper by theſe continual reflections upon his ſpiritual condition, then Satan or the* Sabeans *did by the breaches and irruptions they made upon his outward condition.*

But doth it not abate the divine authority of this Book, if any thing in it be unduly ſtated and applied?

The Scripture reports many things, even of thoſe who wrote or ſpoke it hiſtorically, which are againſt the Scripture doctrinally. All that Moſes *ſpake, was not right; for he once ſpake unadviſedly with his lips* (Pſ. 106. 33.) *And ſo did* David, *when he* ſaid in his heart all men are liars, *Pſ.* 116. 11. *And again* (Pſ. 73. 13.) Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency. *The Prophet* Jeremy *doth not only write a curſe upon his birth-day, but he curſes the man who brought tidings to his Father, ſaying,* a man-child is born (*Jer.* 20. 14, 15.) Jonah *prayed,* take my life from me, *when he ſaw that God ſpared the lives of the* Ninevites: *he was alſo angry for the death of a gourd, and ſaid,* I do well to be angry even unto death (*Jon.* 4. 3, 9.) *Theſe things are written in Scripture for our caution, not for our imitation; and they are diſcoveries, not of the wiſdom and holineſs of God, but of the folly and ſinfulneſs of man. Some ſuch ſad diſcoveries* Job *made in this Book, and ſome ſuch his friends made.* ¶ *But if ſome paſſages in this Book diſcover the weakneſs and miſtakes of the ſpeakers, how can we raiſe Doctrines and Obſervations from them?* ¶ *Every ſpeech and paſſage which the infinite wiſdom of God hath thought fit to put into this or any other Book of Scripture, hath in it ſomewhat for our inſtruction. That blaſphemy of the fool, which contradicts not only the truth, but the very being of God* (Pſ. 14 1.) The fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God, *teacheth us this divine truth, that there are ſeven (that is, all manner of) abominations in the heart of man. We may draw uſeful inſtructions from the words of* Judas *the traytor, after Satan had entred into him, and filled his heart; yea, from the words of Satan in his temptations and propoſals unto Chriſt; much more may we from the ſayings of holy men, which are true for the matter (as all the ſayings of* Job *and his friends are) though there be a failing in the manner of ſpeaking, or in their references to a particular caſe.* ¶ *Nor is it unſafe to affirm, that even ſuch ſayings are from the inſpiration of God, which have an infallible truth in them, though they who ſaid ſo, did not underſtand them ſo. When the chief Prieſts and Phariſees ſate in Council, and debated the deſtruction of Chriſt the Saviour of the world, fearing the* Romans *would deſtroy them, and take away both their name and nation,* Caiphas, *who was high Prieſt that ſame year, ſaid unto them, ye know nothing at all, nor conſider that it is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole Nation periſh not,* Joh. 11. 49, 50. *This was wicked and bloody counſel, according to his intendment and meaning in giving it (for we muſt not condemn the innocent, though but one man, upon politick reſpects to preſerve the greateſt multitude or a whole Nation of men) yet there was a great truth of God in it, even the ſum and ſubſtance of the whole Goſpel; for it was not only expedient, but alſo neceſſary, that one man (Jeſus Chriſt the only Son of God) ſhould be put to death, that the whole Nation of the Jews, and all the Gentile Nations might not periſh eternally. Thus the Evangeliſt explains the cruel advice of* Caiphas, *in the next words v.* 51, 52. This he ſpake not of himſelf but being high-Prieſt that year, he propheſied that Chriſt ſhould die for that Nation, and not for that Nation only, but that alſo he ſhould gather together in one the children of God that were ſcattered abroad. *This ſence was far from the heart of* Caiphas, *though the words which bear it were uttered with his tongue. And thus if we (in ſome places) paſs by the particular meaning of the ſpeakers, and keep to the general meaning of what is ſpoken, we may make a ſavoury and an edifying conſtruction of every paſſage in this Book; in which, as there are abundance of holy truths, and as it were, a* compendium *both of Law and Goſpel, ſo (upon this account) there is no one ſentence in oppoſing any one truth contained and held forth in either. And therefore from all theſe premiſes I conclude the queſtion firſt propoſed affirmatively, That* Job *and his friends* ſpake by the inſpiration of God, or as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

I ſhall not entertain the Reader any longer at the Door or in the Entry of the Book; but commending this brief exercitation with the following expoſitions to the bleſſing of God, for a fruitful improvement of theſe and all other helps, which his gracious bounty continues or renews upon us for the furtherance of our faith and knowledge in, and of our obedience to the whole myſtery of his will revealed in his Word, I ſubſcribe my ſelf,

March 20. 1648.

Your affectionate Friend to love and ſerve you in the Lord,
JOSEPH CARYL.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, THIRTEENTH
AND
FOURTEENTH CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

CHAP. 11. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid,
Should not the multitude of words be anſwered? and ſhould a man full of talk be juſtified?
Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?

IOB hath already ſtood two charges; the firſt from *Eliphaz*, the ſecond from *Bildad*. Here a third begins.

Then anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid.

Sophar ſonat idem quod ſpeculator, & Naamathites pulchrun & jucundum. Greg.Phil.

Who *Zophar* was, hath been ſhewed at the eleventh verſe of the ſecond Chapter. His name *Zophar* imports a *Watchman*, and his additional title *Naamathite*, *pleaſant* or *beautiful* in the Original.

The matter of his anſwer may be conſidered;

Firſt, In the Preface,

Secondly, In the body of it.

The exordium or preface is contained in the three firſt verſes. The body of his anſwer in the following parts of the Chapter: wherein three things are cleare;

Firſt, A general propoſition, containing the matter in debate, or the poſition which *Zophar* puts upon *Job*, as his, and takes upon himſelf to confute, as erroneous. This he layes down in the fourth verſe, *Thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.*

Secondly, We have the confutation of this poſition enlarged, from the 5. verſ. to the 12.

Thirdly, *Zophar* having ſhewed *Job* his errour, and, as he hoped, convinced him of it, proceeds to give him counſel, and cloſeth the Chapter with inſtruction. He inſiſteth in the ſame method, and treads the ſame path that *Eliphaz* and *Bildad* had done before; firſt, chiding and reproving *Job*, then counſelling and adviſing him.

Zophars preface preſents us with a three-fold neceſſity, engaging him to this reply.

Quòd verboſus ad fucandam malam cauſam.

Firſt, From that multitude of words which *Job* had already heaped together for the colouring (as he judged it) of a bad cauſe, verſ. 2. *Should not the multitude of words be anſwered? and ſhould a man full of talk be juſtified?* Is it not high time that I ſhould ſpeak a little, when thou haſt had time to ſpeak ſo much?

Quòd mendax ad obſtinatè tuendam malam cauſam.

Secondly, He argues this neceſſity from the falſity of what *Job* had ſpoken, in the firſt clauſe of the third verſe, *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?* It is thy ſin, that thou haſt ſpoken lies; and it would be mine, if I ſhould not ſpeak againſt them.

Quòd irriſor ad contemnendas veras admonitiones illudendumq; Deo & hominibus.

Thirdly, From the ſcorn and levity of ſpirit, which *Zophar* ſuppoſed he ſaw frothing at the lips of *Job*, *When thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?* It were the ſhame of all men, if none ſhould. Thou art ſitting in the ſcorners chair, Shall I be afraid to raiſe thee up, or pull thee down?

So then, The preface may be formed up into this Argument;

Many words, and thoſe full of lies and ſcorn, muſt be undertaken and anſwered; no man can or ought to hold his peace, when he heareth ſuch diſcourſes:
But thy anſwer is full of words, and as full of lies and ſcorn;
Therefore I muſt undertake thee, I muſt anſwer.

Thus *Zophar* preſſeth upon his friend with violence, if not with virulence and ſourneſs of ſpirit: handling him more roughly, and pouring more gall and vineger into his wounds, then his former Antagoniſts had done. As his ſpirit grew warmer, ſo did his words; and in heat of arguing, he comes very near unto reviling.

Paulo amarulentius agit & aculeatius. Coc. *Zophar Jobum reprehendit acrius quam cæteri incaleſcente ut fit in certamine animo, ita ut à convitiis non abſtineat.* Meri.

Verſ. 2. **Should not the multitude of words be anſwered?**

The multitude of words] *Zophar* taxeth *Job*, as overcopious in language, as a man given to talk, and affecting to hear himſelf ſpeak. Eloquence of ſpeech, or elocution, is an excellent gift of God; but verboſity, and a love to flow out continually at the tongue, is the vanity of man; at once, a ſin in the ſpeaker, and a burden to the hearers. *Paul* was taxed for this at *Athens*, Act.17. The *Athenians* were the great wits of the world, maſters of eloquence; and when *Paul* came amongſt them, they encountred him, and ſome ſaid, *What will this babler*, this *ſower of words ſay?* verſ.18. So ſome give the notation of the Greek word, though others, with better reaſon, take it, as an alluſion to little birds, which pick up the ſeed ſown, and being of no great uſe, either for meat or muſick, are yet troubleſome enough with unceſſant, immelodious chirpings. Such an one thoſe Philoſophers cenſured *Paul*, This man ſpeaks many words, but he makes no muſick, no ear is taken with him, nor underſtanding enriched by him. *Though all we ſpeak is in words, yet we muſt ſpeak more then words.*

הרך דברים *Multus verborum*, i.e. *verboſus.*

σπερμολόγος *vel* ἀπὸ τοῦ σπείρειν τοὺς λόγους, *vel potius*, παρὰ τὸ λέγειν, σπέρματα, *quaſi* ſeminilegas *dicas, quod ſata in agris depaſcantur, metaphora ab aviculis ſumpta, quæ neq; magnopere ſunt eſui, neq; cantu delectant, ſed garritu perpetuo ſunt moleſtæ.* Beza.

I ſhall lay down five particulars, whereby we may diſcern, when a multitude of words are ſinful, or when there is a multitude of ſins in a multitude of words: It is poſſible to ſpeak many words, and all few enough, and no ſin at all in them. They are ſinful,

1. When words are unprofitable, light, vain, frothy, words that have no nouriſhment in them: for as meat is to the palate, ſo are words to the ear, to the underſtanding. *Words are the bread of the mind.* Some words are nothing but wind, there's no food, no tack in them; you cannot pick one good bit out of a whole diſcourſe. He that hath ſpoken one ſuch word hath ſpoken too many: how much more when a multitude of them are ſpoken together? As it ſhews the nobleneſs of action, to do what is worthy to be ſpoken of, ſo of elocution to ſpeak what is worthy to be done.

Secondly, When words are beſide the matter, beſide the buſineſs in hand; when we ſhoot out arrows not eying the mark, arrow after arrow, and all from the mark, this is reprovable. If we ſpeak not to the point, we ſpeak to no purpoſe. Be clear to that, and the feweſt words, will make the fulleſt anſwer. Be off from that, and many words make not a word of anſwer.

Thirdly, When there is but a little matter in a great many words, when plenty of words have a ſcarcity, a dearth of matter in them. Some contract (as it were) the ſpirits of a point into a few words, and can give you much in a little, a large matter in a narrow compaſs. This is an excellent skill, though not alwayes fit: becauſe all are not able to apprehend what is couched and drawn up ſo cloſe together; all are not able to drink ſpirits, but muſt have them infuſed into, and incorporated with larger diſcourſes, and particular demonſtrations; they muſt have line upon line, and precept upon precept, that is a multitude of lines and precepts. Yet matterleſs words are reprovable, how many ſoever they be, and the more they be, the more reprovable they are, *Shall not ſuch a multitude of words be reproved?*

Fourthly, A multitude of words are ſinful, when they are affected; when a man delights to ſpeak much. A man may be that to himſelf, which *Ezekiel* was to his hearers, as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument (*Ezek.*33.32.) Such will ſpeak often and long, not that they care to profit others, but for their own applauſe, or to pleaſe themſelves.

Fifthly, And laſtly, When we think to carry it by the multitude of words: 1. In reference unto man, to ſpeak a man or his cauſe down, to over-bear him with a croud or throng of words. Or ſecondly, in reference unto God (*Eccl.* 5.2.) *Be not haſty to utter a thing before God*, or concerning God, Why? *For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.* There is an infinite diſtance between God and man. We are not able to comprehend, Who, or what God is; we cannot reach God, and therefore we ſhould be very careful and deliberate in ſpeaking to and of God, or about the things of God. The Apoſtle (*Rom.*8.31.) having ſet forth the great myſtery of the love of God to us in Chriſt, concludeth (as ſome conceive) like an Orator, *What ſhall we ſay then to theſe things?* As if he had ſaid, Here is a ſubject about which much might be ſaid, but we had need be very careful how and what we ſay about it, *What ſhall we ſay to theſe things?* No man, no not the tongue of an Angel is ſufficient to deliver and unfold theſe ſecrets: ſuch love, ſuch goodneſs are beyond words. The Moraliſt hath a grave and ſerious paſſage to this purpoſe, while he was falling upon a diſcourſe about the heavens, ſtars, and ſuperiour motions. *When we enter into our Temples, we compoſe our ſelves to reverence; we look even to our garments, that they ſit comely about us; we (as it were) faſhion and ſhape every member into an argument of modeſty. How much more ſhould we do this, when we come to ſpeak of the ſtars, and heavens, but moſt of all, when we ſpeak of the nature of the gods,* (The beſt Heathen Catechiſms ſpeak no better) *Leſt we ſpeak any thing raſhly, or affirm any thing that is untrue.* If an Heathen was thus taken up with the thought of heavenly bodies, and ſtrucken with a reverential awe, when he was to ſpeak about Idol-gods, how much more ought we to come to the Apoſtles *ſtand*, about the Divine things of the great and only wiſe God? *What ſhall we ſay to theſe things?* It is good for us to avoid a multitude of words in all things, eſpecially in things which are ſo high, ſo much above us. The Apoſtle admoniſheth (1 *Tim.*6.20.) *Avoid prophane and vain bablings*; There may be profane and vain bablings about holy and ſacred things: And that not only when we argue about them, but when we pray about them.

Cum in cælo Deus ſit, i.e. *longiſſime à nobis, de divinis rebus ignorari neceſſe eſt.* Hier. *in loc.*

Senec. *l.* 7. *Nat. Queſt.*

In omne argumentum modeſtiæ fingimur.

This exceſs Chriſt reproveth in the prayer of the Phariſees, *Mat.* 6. 4. *They think they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking*, and that they muſt prevail with God for the things they deſire, becauſe they utter many words to maniſeſt their deſires. Thus to uſe many words in prayer is babling, not praying: And thus to uſe many words in preaching, is the uncomelineſs, if not the ſinfulneſs of preaching.

Paul, Acts 20. preached until midnight. There was a multitude of words, yet not too many words; his diſcourſe had not one of theſe evil ingredients; he did not ſpeak unprofitable things, or things beſide the matter, or a little matter in many words; he did not ſpeak, becauſe he affected to ſpeak, or becauſe he thought to carry it by ſpeaking. Thus, to pray long, or to preach long, is no fault: The greateſt multitude of ſuch words, is not one too many.

The Vulgar varieth from our reading, *Shall not he that ſpeaketh much hear alſo?* The Original will bear it: As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt ſpoken a great while, wilt thou not have the patience to hear thy friend? Wilt thou have all the talk thy ſelf? Thou haſt uttered a multitude of words, be content to receive a few. They who have ſpoken, ſhould be willing to hear and receive an anſwer.* Much ſpeaking is then moſt offenſive, when we will not take our turns to hear. Some will have all the diſcourſe, all the argument themſelves, and when they have ſpoken long, will hardly endure another to reply a little. See how God hath diſpoſed the organs of the body: he hath given two ears, and but one tongue, which ſpeaks thus much, That a man ſhould be more ready to hear, then to ſpeak; and that's the Apoſtle *James* his rule, *Chap.* 1. 19. *Let every man be ſwift to hear, and ſlow to ſpeak:* not that he doth *poſitively* commend ſlowneſs of ſpeech, that is not his meaning; heavineſs of ſpeech is no vertue, nor any mans commendation: but he ſpeaks *comparatively*, *Be ſwift to hear, and ſlow to ſpeak*; that is, Be ye more nimble with your ears, then with your tongues; be rather willing to receive inſtruction, then forward to give it, rather attend the mind of others, then open your own. *There is a time to keep ſilence,*

Numquid qui multa loquitur non & audiet? Vulg.

and a time to ſpeak, Eccleſ. 3.7. Every thing is comely in its ſeaſon.

Obſerve, From the whole reaſon, That

It is a duty to anſwer, when much hath been ſpoken.

Eſpecially, when we conceive any thing ſpoken againſt the truth. *Solomons* ſeeming contradiction aſſerts this duty, *Prov.* 26.4, 5. *Anſwer not a fool according to his folly, leſt thou alſo be like unto him. Anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit.* One rule ſaith, Anſwer him not; and the other ſaith, Anſwer him. The meaning is plain to the point in hand; *Anſwer not a fool according to his folly, leſt thou alſo be like unto him*, that is, if he ſpeak fooliſhly and paſſionately, do not thou anſwer him paſſionately and fooliſhly too, for then thou ſhalt be as fooliſh as he, thou ſhalt be like or equal to him, as if thy ſpirit and his were caſt in the ſame mould. *For the anſwer which a man giveth another is the meaſure of himſelf, the image of our minds is drawn with the tongue. But anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit*, that is, If he have ſpoken fooliſhly, do thou anſwer him wiſely and diſcreetly; let thine anſwer be according to his folly, but in thine own wiſdom. Thus to anſwer a fool according to his folly, is indeed to anſwer him contrary to his folly. Thus he muſt be anſwered, or elſe he is not anſwered: and if he have no anſwer, he will think that he is unanſwerable; that, all is oracle which he hath uttered, he will grow into proud and high conceits of himſelf, that ſurely he is a conquerour and invincible, becauſe no man takes up the bucklers, or appears in the field againſt him. Therefore anſwer him, *Leſt he* (whom all that know him, know to be a fool) *be wiſe in his own conceit. Should not the multitude of words be anſwered?*

And ſhould a man full of talk be juſtified?

This latter branch is of the ſame ſtrain with the former, and what I have obſerved there anſwers both, yet I ſhall open the letter of the Text, and ſhew the elegancy of the Original.

איש שפתים

Notat non loquacem modo, ſed etiam facundum. Merc.

Should a man full of talk?] The Hebrew is, *A man of lips.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it, *Shall the lips-man be juſtified?* He ſpeaks of *Job*, as if he were compoſed and made all of lips. *When a man uſeth one member inordinately, he may be ſaid to have but one member.* Denomination is given from that which is moſt, or acts moſt. Thus as he that is a great fighter, is called, *A man of his hands:* ſo he that is a great talker, is called, *A man of the tongue*, or *a man of lips:* as if he laid by the uſe of all the other parts of his body to imploy his lips, or were active only with his tongue. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the variety of Church-members, under the notion of a natural body, ſubjoyns (1 *Cor.* 12.17.) *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the ſmelling?* In like manner if the whole were lip and tongue, where were the eye, where the ear? As we may be ſaid not to have that which we uſe not; ſo to have only that, which we uſe too much.

Or ſecondly, The lips being a ſpecial inſtrument of ſpeech, and a help to pronunciation, are here put for ſpeech it ſelf, and ſo we explain it in our tranſlation, *Should a man full of talk?* A man of lips, is a man full of talk. And there is a natural reaſon for it too. As *Phyſiognomiſts* gather conjectures from the frame of the whole body, from the lines and lineaments of the face about the habits and diſpoſitions of the mind; So they draw arguments from the lips, whether a man be quick or ſlow of ſpeech. Some mens lips have a ſtamp of talkativeneſs upon them, and others of ſilence. Thus we may underſtand that of *Moſes* (Exod. 6.12.) When God was about to ſend him to *Pharaoh*, about the deliverance of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, he made many excuſes, and at laſt falls upon this, *How ſhall Pharaoh hear me that am of uncircumciſed lips?* But was *Moſes* of uncircumciſed lips? as to be of an uncircumciſed heart, ſo to be of uncircumciſed lips may intimate ſpiritual pollution and uncleanneſs. When the Prophet *Iſaiah* cried out at the viſion of the glory of God, *Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips* (Iſa. 6.5.) it is, as if he had ſaid, I am a man of uncircumciſed lips. But though *Moſes* was humble enough in the acknowledgement of his own ſinfulneſs, yet his aim was to note the unfiledneſs of his ſpeech, not the defiledneſs of his nature. For as among the Jews, uncircumciſion was a ſign of all the natural uncleanneſſes of the ſoul, ſo of ſome imperfections upon, or belonging to the body. Thus *Moſes* called himſelf a man of uncircumciſed lips, becauſe *he was not eloquent, but ſlow of ſpeech, and ſlow of tongue*, (Exod. 4.10.) He was (according to the letter of the Hebrew) *heavy-mouthed*, or as we ſay, *meal-mouthed*; and this according to that idiom was to be of *uncircumciſed lips*, as if *Moſes* had pleaded thus, *I have not a polite and curious language to win upon Pharaoh, My tongue has not been pared and ſmoothed for the Court-dialect, I that have kept ſheep ſo long, and have converſed with clowns and ſhepherds, How ſhall I ſpeak to a King? Pharaoh uſeth to have accurate Oratours about him, men of lips, but I am none.* So then, according to this ſecond ſenſe, a man of lips is an eloquent man, a man ready, very ready and apt to ſpeak; a man whoſe tongue is the pen, that is, like the pen of a ready writer.

Si labium valdè deductum ſit, atq; etiam tenue loquacitatis atq; eloquentiæ ſignum eſt, ſicut etiam craſſiora labia loquendi ineptiam & difficultatem indicant.

Craſſiora habeo labia; quam ut coram rege expeditè & facundè loqui poſſim: circumciſione, i.e. extenuatione & expolitione labiorum indigeo. Pined.

Further, when *Zophar* calls *Job a man of lips*, he implyeth, That *Job* had carried himſelf in that diſputation, as if every member of his body had been a lip, or as if he had a lip in every member, that is, as if every member had ſpoken. According to that of *Solomon*, (Prov. 6.13.) *He ſpeaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers*; his carriage, his poſture, his action, ſpeak and proclaim what is in his heart, or what his mind is, *He ſpeaketh with his feet.* When violent and paſſionate perſons are ſpeaking, you ſhall ſee, as it were, a lip in their feet, a lip upon their hands, a lip in their eyes, a lip in their brows, a lip in their arms, that is, they ſpeak with all theſe, they move their hands at you, and their heads at you, and their eyes at you, as if all ſpake. *Theſe are men of lips.*

Toti veluti linguæ ſunt; oculis, naſo; fronte, ore, manibus, cubitis, pedibus colloquuntur. Bold.

Should a man of lips be juſtified?] He ſpeaks not of that great work of grace, the juſtification of a ſinner before God; to be juſtified here is to be approved, *to carry the cauſe*, or *prevail in arguing.* He that prevaileth in any controverſie ſhould be juſtified: *But ſhall a man of lips be juſtified?* Muſt he needs be thought to ſpeak truth, becauſe he ſpeaks much, or in greateſt weight becauſe in greateſt number, *Shall he be juſtified?* We have the word in that ſenſe (*Pſa.* 51.4.) *I will confeſs*, &c. *that thou mighteſt be juſtified, when thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when thou judgeſt:* That, when thou ſhalt judge and pronounce ſentence upon me, thou mayeſt appear in the opinion and eſteem of all the world to have done me right, or not to have wronged me at all; I aforehand confeſs my ſin, and condemn my ſelf. So we may interpret that (*Job* 13.18.) *Behold now, I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified*, that is, I have laid my matters ſo well, and put my buſineſs into ſuch a fair ſtate, that I know I ſhall come off with credit, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* And this is it which *Zophar* ſeems eſpecially to charge *Job* with, That he hoped to get the Garland, and beat all down before him with his lips, with the multitude of his words; as if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt placed thy defence in windy words, and not in ſubſtantial truths; but this noiſe, this talk will ſtand thee in little ſtead, thou ſhalt find that the day will not be won with words.*

Vincet cauſa, ut neceſſario habeatur veridicus quia multiloquus? Janſen.

Hence obſerve,

Good words cannot make a bad cauſe good.

Words ſometimes makes a good cauſe appear bad, and a bad cauſe appear good; but when the rubbiſh maliciouſly or ignorantly caſt upon the one, and the varniſh cunningly laid upon the other, are taken off, both will appear as they are, the one as good as it is, and the other as bad as it is.

Plerumq; pro differentium viribus & eloquentiæ poteſtate etiam perſpicuæ veritatis conditio mutatur. Min. Octavio.

Again, *Shall a man of words be juſtified?* He that ſpeaks much may ſooner enſnare then clear himſelf. In many words there are uſually many errours. Silence ſeldom brings repentance; and it is but ſeldom that much ſpeaking calls not for much repentance. They that ſpeak much, are in danger to offend much. To be ſure, He that hath nothing but words to hold him up, muſt needs fall. You cannot blow away, either a mans aſſertion or objection with your breath, but with your reaſon and authority.

In multiloquio non deeſt peccatum

Verſ. 3. **Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockeſt ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?**

Zophar riſeth higher in language ſtill, reproving *Job*, not only for the multitude, but for the falſeneſs of his words.

בדא *Significat aliquid ſeorſim aſſingere, machinari, cogitare, educere mendacium è cogitatione ad os.* Rab. Mardoch. *Objicit illi vitium, quod Græci λογοποιΐαν, i.e. Famigerationem vocant, quod eſt falſa fingere, & aliis narrare. Plautus vocat hos Geruli-figulos; Ammianus Marcel. Rumi-gerilos.* We call ſuch Talebearers. *Peſſimum genus hominum qui verba geſtarent.* Sen. *epiſt.* 123. *Montanus reddit Baddim, Nugatores: Galli appellant Nugatores Badins & Badaux.*

Should thy lies?] The Hebrew word is of a large extent, ſignifying in the verb, *to frame, faſhion*, and *form* a thing out of a mans own mind; and ſo *Zophar* would faſten this upon *Job*, That the words which he had ſpoken were only ſhap't and wrought in his own ſpirit, he had received no ſuch thing from God, no ſuch thing was ever approved by God; the birth of all was but his own fleeting fancie, and ſickly imagination. So the word is uſed (*Nehem.*6.8.) *There are no ſuch things done, as thou ſayeſt, but thou feigneſt them out of thine own heart*; Thou wouldeſt put me in fear, and bear me in hand (ſaith *that worthy of Iſrael* to his enemy ſuborning falſe fears againſt him) that there are ſtrange plots laid, and many adverſaries combined againſt me: but I perceive it is thy plot to tell me of a plot. Thy information is but to make me afraid of that which is not, not to ſecure me from that which is. We read of *the moneth which Jeroboam had deviſed of his own heart* (1 Kings 12. 33.) It is the word of the Text. Lies are framed and faſhioned out of our own hearts, there is the ſhop wherein they are wrought. The heart is deceitful above all things; *A deceitful heart is a fit ſhop to frame lies in, which are deceitful ware.* Such *Zophar* ſuppoſed *Jobs* to be.

Secondly, Some read, *Should thy toyes*, thy trifling diſcourſes make men hold their peace? Should thy tatling, thy idle tales impoſe ſilence upon thy hearers?

בד *Eſt admodum generale nomen apud Hebræos, ramum, membram, cogitationem ſignificans, quod cogitationes in animæ ſunt tanquam rami in arbore, huc illuc protenſi.* Merc.

Thirdly, The word ſignifies the members of the body, and the boughs of a tree, and by a trope the thoughts and abilities of the mind, which are to the mind, as limbs to the body, and as boughs ſhooting from a tree. *I will not conceal his parts*, ſaith God of *Leviathan*, Job 41. 12. that is, What mighty members he is made up of. Some read the word ſo here, *Should thy parts be conceal'd*, or, *Should men hold their peace at thy parts?* As if he had ſaid, *Thou thinkeſt that thou haſt mighty parts, that, thou putteſt ſuch Leviathan-like members, ſuch Goliah-like limbs of wit and knowledge, of judgement and eloquence, that all the hoſt of learned men needs muſt be afraid and tremble to deal with thee, or accept thy challenge. The weapons of the mind are more powerful, and ſometimes more terrible then the members of the body.* An ignorant or ſlow-witted man, is no more able to argue with one that is quick and judicious, then a child is able to wreſtle with a Giant.

But the word is moſt uſually taken in the ſenſe we render it, for lies or falſhoods; So (*Iſa.*44.25.) *He fruſtrateth the tokens of the liars*, namely, of thoſe that tell lies of the ſtars, and ſay, The conſtellations have reported events to them, of which indeed there is not a letter written, nor a word to be ſpelled out of thoſe heavenly characters. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

מתים *Aliquando denotat viros notabiles & inſignes.* Coc.

Make men.] The word may be limited to great and wiſe men, *Should thy lies make wiſe men hold their peace?* So ſome reſtrain it here; As if *Zophar* had ſaid, *Indeed thy lies may cauſe ignorant men to hold their peace, they may deceive the ſimple, and catch the weak; but ſhould thy lies make men of parts and abilities, men of experience and underſtanding hold their peace?* Thus the word is uſed (*Deut.* 2. 34. *Pſal.* 17. 14. *Iſa.* 3. 24.) to note illuſtrious and wiſe men, men of more then an ordinary pitch and meaſure in dignity, or in wiſdom.

מתים *Eſt generale comprehendens viros, mulieres & parvulos. Hæc vox (à* מות *mors) exorta videtur, quod omnes ſimus morti ſubjecti, ita à Græcis βρότος, & à latinis mortalis uſurpatur.* Mar.

Others take the word indifferently for any rank or ſort of men, one or other: or as we commonly ſpeak, for *any mortal man*. For it cometh from a root which ſignifies death, which is the laſt debt of all mankind; as the Greeks have a word for man in general noting his mortality, ſo have the Hebrews: becauſe all men carry about them the enſigns or ſymptoms of death continually, therefore they are called *Mortals*. So here, *Should thy lies make any mortal man, or any man alive hold his peace?* Be he high or low, knowing or ignorant, I tell thee the moſt ſimple man that goes upon the ground cannot hold his peace, when thou ſpeakeſt, and may well enough anſwer all that thou haſt ſpoken. Thus you ſee the ſenſe is heightned by the lowneſs of the perſons, who are ſuppoſed match enough for *Job* in this controverſie. What thou haſt argued, a woman, even the weakeſt among women, a child, even a little child, may confute and anſwer. We need not ſend for the great Rabbies and Doctors of the Law to deal with thee. Who can be ſilent, or ſpeak without ſucceſs? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

החריש *Obmuteſcere Solet Scriptura per verbum ſilendi & tacendi reverentiæ plenum timorem exprimere.*

Hold their peace?] No, They ſhould not: Should what thou haſt ſpoken falſly be received like an oracle of truth, againſt which no man may open his mouth or mutter? Should it be received as ſome Divine Revelation which all muſt admire, none queſtion? Muſt all the world of reaſonable men ſtand mute at theſe thy reaſonings? Haſt thou any hope that thy lies ſhall find ſuch entertainment, and go off at ſuch a rate of belief or admiration?

Holding the peace importeth greateſt reverence both to ſpeakers and actours, as alſo greateſt worth or weight in what is ſpoken or done. When the Lord ſlew the two ſons of *Aaron* by fire from heaven, *Aaron held his peace*, in token of ſubmiſſion, *Levit.* 10. 3.

הס *Quam vocem Hieronymus interjectionem eſſe docet imperantis ſilentium. Vel eſt imperativum per apocopen ab* הסה *tacuit reverentiæ cauſa.* Buxt.

And when providential actings ſpake aloud the deliverance of the Jews out of *Babylon*, the Prophet like a crier in a court, commands or proclaims ſilence (*Zech.*2.13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord, for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation.* The Hebrew word *Has* (ſaith one of the Ancients) is an interjection, or rather a verb of the imperative mood, enjoyning ſilence or inhibiting ſpeech: we in our language uſe a word near that in ſound, when we would have any, or all, hold their peace, we ſay, *Huſht*: So ſaith the Prophet, *Huſht*, not a word, *For the Lord is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*; his meaning is, Yield all reverence, reſpect and fear, ſtand in awe, budge not, let the wicked ſilence their vain boaſts, and the godly their vain fears: Let neither the one or the other utter a word before the Lord.

Job deſcribing himſelf in his former flouriſhing eſtate, ſaith, *Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept ſilence at my counſel; after my words they ſpake not again* (Chap. 29. 21.) that is, I was a man of ſo much authority and veneration, that when I ſpake, no man would offer to ſpeak after me, much leſs contradict what I had ſpoken; Thus it was once with *Job*: Now *Zophar* puts it as a matter of reproof. What? doſt thou think thy words, yea thy lies ſuch, as no man may examine, much leſs gain-ſay? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Again, As holding the peace, notes reverence, ſo favour and connivence. When we are willing to let an ill word ſpoken, or a thing ill done paſs, as if we ſaw or heard it not, we hold our peace at it. *When the children of Belial ſaid of Saul, How ſhall this man ſave us? and they deſpiſed him, and brought him no preſents*, the Text ſaith, *But he held his peace, He was as if he had been deaf*, 1 Sam. 10. 27. It is wiſdom not to ſee or hear, what we are not in a condition to redreſs. Connivence is better then complaint, when we cannot mend our ſelves, nor reduce others. In this ſenſe we may alſo take, Holding the peace here. Should any man favour or wink at thee? Should any man be afraid to ſpeak truth, when thou ſpeakeſt lies? Hence obſerve,

Firſt thus, *It is a duty to vindicate, or to be an advocate for oppreſſed truth.*

Zophar ſpake true in the general, Lies muſt not make us hold our peace. It is a duty to plead the cauſe of truth, yea to be valiant for the truth. We muſt know no relations in truths caſe. *Socrates* is my friend, *Plato* is my friend, but truth is a better friend then both. Whoſoever dares ſpeak againſt truth, we muſt dare to ſpeak for it. 'Tis noble to ſhew our ſelves friends to truth, though we loſe friends by it; and enemies to errour, though we get enemies by it. There is a three-fold lie which we muſt not hold our peace at.

Firſt, There is a verbal lie, when a man tells a falſe tale, or bringeth up a falſe report, which is the lie of the ninth Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs*: Hold not thy peace at ſuch a lie.

Secondly, There is a doctrinal lie, when a falſe poſition is averred to be the truth of God, and ſtampt with divine authority. Any erroneous Doctrine is comprehended under, and branded with this title, *A lie*; *For this cauſe* (ſaith *Paul*) namely, *becauſe they received not the love of the truth, God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhall believe a lie*, (2 Theſſ. 2. 11.) He means a doctrinal lie, all the doctrine of *that man of ſin*, with which he hath deceived the world under the notion of truth, is but one *great lie*. We muſt contend earneſtly, even wreſtle for the faith once committed to the Saints againſt all thoſe lies.

Thirdly, There is a practical lie, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Joh.* 2. 4, 5.) *He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* This is a lie, not ſpoken, but done, when a mans actions contradict his profeſſion, or when his works unteach what he hath taught by word. The whole life of an hypocrite is but one continued lie. The firſt of theſe is a lie told, the ſecond is a lie taught, the third is a lie acted; and all of them are not only to be abhorred in our ſelves, but oppoſed in others. All lying is hateful to God, being moſt oppoſite unto God, who is the true God, and the God of truth. Lying makes us like the Devil, who was a liar as well as a murtherer from the beginning; the Devil told the firſt falſe tale, and preached the firſt falſe Doctrine; he is therefore juſtly called, *A liar from the beginning.* We may ſometimes forbear to ſpeak the truth, but we muſt never forbear to ſpeak againſt a lie, whether verbal, doctrinal, or practical. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

And when thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?

This is the third charge, and it is higher then the former two: Multitude of words is ill enough; and lies are far worſe; but to mock is worſt of all. And which is yet more, The word which is here uſed ſignifieth the worſt kind of mocking, even that which is joyned with ſcorn and extream deriſion: it notes mocking not only with the tongue by uncomely ſpeeches, but mocking by the eye or hand with uncivil geſtures, or by the affected mimical poſtures of the whole body. The enemies of Chriſt are ſo deſcribed in that noble propheſie (*Pſalm* 22. 6.) *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people; all they that ſee me laugh me to ſcorn, they ſhoot out the lip, they ſhake the head.* The event fulfilled this at the death of Chriſt, *Matth.* 27. Such mocking *Zophar* chargeth *Job* with; thou doſt not only ſpeak lies, but thou ſetteſt them off with ſcornful geſtures.

לעג *Irriſit, ſubſannavit, balbutivit, nam ſi quos cum ſanna excipere volumus blæſitatem effingere ſolemus ad eos ridendos.* Merc. *Sanna eſt deriſio quæ non fit ſimplicibus verbis, ſed geſtu.* Piſc. *in* 1 *Epiſt. ad Cor. cap.* 14. 21. *Quid poteſt eſſe tam ridiculum, quam ſannio eſt, qui ore vultu imitandis moribus, denique corpore ridetur?* Cic. *l.* 2. *de Orat.*

Again, This word ſignifieth not only a light jeaſt, or a merriment, but that which hath virulency, and wears a ſting; not only that which hath ridiculouſneſs in it, but that which hath cruelty in it. That's the Apoſtles Epithete (*Heb.* 11. 36.) *They had trials of cruel mockings.*

Thus he reproves *Job*, as if while he lay in the duſt, and was groveling on the ground, he had like *a mad man caſt fire-brands, arrows and death*; or had behaved himſelf more like a fool in a play, then a mirror of patience; *Deceiving his neighbour, and ſaying, Am not I in ſport?* Prov. 26. 18, 19.

There is much labour among Interpreters, to find out what gave *Zophar* occaſion to break out in ſo much bitterneſs upon *Job*. I ſhall touch that in the cloſe. *When thou mockeſt,*

Shall no man make thee aſhamed?] Some render, *Shall no man confute thee?* We may put both together. Shall no man by confuting thee put thee to ſhame? When a confident man is thorowly anſwered, he is aſhamed.

כלם *Ignominioſo pudore ſuffundor gravius ſignificat quam* בוש *quod eſt in bonum aliquando, hoc ſemper in malum.* R. D. Kimchi. Buxtorf. *Significat eum qui conſcientia turpitudinis hominum oculos fugit, ut profligati milites, qui ſine Ovatione, taciti & clanculo redeunt Domum.* Coc.

The word which we tranſlate, *Make aſhamed*, ſignifies the greateſt ſhame, as that before did the greateſt mocking. Higheſt ſhame is but a fit reward for higheſt ſcorn. Some Criticks in that language have obſerved, that the word is never taken, but in an ill ſence, for the moſt ſhameful ſhame, when a perſon is ſo aſhamed that he is confounded, and dares not lift up his head, or look another in the face. The Lord ſaith to *Moſes* in the caſe of *Miriam*, *If her Father had but ſpit in her face, ſhould ſhe not be aſhamed ſeven dayes?* (*Numb.* 12. 14.) The face is the table of beauty and honour; but when it is ſpit upon, it is made a ſink of ſhame. God did more then ſpit in the face of his undutiful Daughter *Miriam*, when he filled her face with the filthy ſpots of leproſie: *Miriam* muſt be greatly aſhamed, when ſhut out of the Camp and ſociety of *Iſrael* ſeven dayes. When *David*, over-paſſionately lamenting the death of *Abſalom*, blemiſhed the victory of that day, and ſoiled the beauty of that great deliverance; the Text ſaith (2 *Sam.* 19. 3.) that the Souldiery went home, *as men aſhamed?* Souldiers after a battel won are wont to come home gallantly, and in a triumph; but theſe victors gat them by ſtealth that day into the City, as people being aſhamed ſteal away when they flee in battel; they went ſneaking, as we ſay, home to their dwellings, ſcarce a man durſt lift up his head. Such a ſence is here intended, ſhouldſt not thou be made to hold down thy head, and cover thy face for ſhame, who haſt opened thy mouth in ſcorn, and in diſcovering thy own ſhame? Note from it,

Firſt, *Scornful geſtures and mockings are the height of ſinnings.*

Zophar put this in the third place, as the higheſt ſtep in the gradation of *Job's* ſin. There is *a walking in the counſel of the ungodly, and a ſtanding in the way of ſinners, before we ſit down in the chair of the ſcorners* (*Pſal.* 1. 1.) The Vulgar reads it, *In the chair of the malignants.* When men once arrive at ſcorning and mocking, they are come to the uppermoſt form of ſinners. *The chair of mocking, is the chair of malignity.* That which is ſaid of a woman in a peculiar ſence, is true of any man in this ſence, *When he hath loſt his modeſty, he hath nothing elſe to loſe.* The Apoſtle *Peter* being about to ſhew the utmoſt evil of the worlds old-age or dotage in ſin, ſaith, *There ſhall come in the laſt dayes ſcoffers* (2 *Pet.* 3. 3.) There have ever been deceivers, but at laſt there ſhall come ſcoffers, ſaying, *Where is the promiſe of his coming? For ſince the Fathers fell aſleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.* *Julian* was in his time counted, and ſtands upon record to this day among the greateſt of ſinners, *An apoſtate from Chriſt*; and did not the apoſtaſie of his heart break out chiefly at his lips? Did not the very ſpirit of malignity againſt the Goſpel of Chriſt, appear in mocking the Chriſtians? When he had taken away their eſtates, he ſaid, It ſhould not trouble you to be poor, your Maſter was poor, and he ſaid, *Bleſſed are the poor.* And when he had cauſed them to be ſmitten, Your Maſter (ſaith he) hath taught you, *That whoſoever ſhall ſmite you on the right cheek, you muſt turn to him the other alſo.* Thus he turned the holy counſels of Chriſt into prophane jeſts. The vileſt wickedneſs of the Jewiſh ſtate is expreſt thus, *They mocked the meſſengers of God, and miſuſed the Prophets* (2 *Chron.* 36. 16.) It is a great ſin not to hear the meſſengers of God, not to obey the truth that is brought in his name; but to mock his meſſengers is the dregs of ſin. When upon the aſcent of Chriſt into Heaven, many had received ſuch abundant inundation of the Spirit, That they ſpake with divers tongues the wonderful works of God; *Some* (ſaith the Text) *were in doubt, ſaying one to another, what meaneth this? Others mocking, ſaid, Theſe men are full of new wine,* (Act. 2. 13.) *Others mocking*, &c. Mockers muſt ſtand by themſelves, they are marked for wrath: We may warn all ſuch, as the Prophet doth (*Iſa.* 28. 22.) *Now therefore be ye not mockers, leſt your bands be made ſtrong.* If God make the bands of affliction and wrath ſtrong upon any, it will be upon mockers. They break the ſtrongeſt bands of duty, therefore their bands of miſery ſhall be ſtronger then they can break.

Reditus eccleſiis eripuit Sarcaſmis additis, ſe Chriſtianos expeditiores facere ad regnum cœlorum, quia Galilæus magiſter ipſorum dixerit, beatos eſſe pauperes, &c. Pezel. *in* Sleid.

Secondly, Obſerve, *We ſhould not forbear to own, no not a mockt and a derided truth.*

Chriſt will be aſhamed of that man, who ſhall be aſhamed of him, and of his words, in an adulterous and ſinful generation. When truth is honoured and applauded, it is eaſie to own it, but it is our greateſt honour to own a diſhonoured and a deſpiſed truth.

Thirdly, *Mockers ſhould be put to ſhame.*

Yea, Mockers ſhall be put to ſhame. They who caſt ſhame upon the truth, ſhall have ſhame caſt upon themſelves, they ſhall be buried in ſhame. They that lift up their heads againſt Chriſt, againſt the people and wayes of Chriſt, ſhall be made to hold down their heads, to hold them down for ever. *When thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?* If man do not, God will.

It is here enquired, why *Zophar* imputes theſe three faults. Firſt, Multiloquy. Secondly, Lying. Thirdly, and mocking unto *Job*. What occaſion had this poor man given for this accuſation?

For the firſt, nothing appears but this, which comes to nothing: *Job* ſpake a little more then his friend *Eliphaz*, and not much more then *Bildad*. The diſcourſe of *Bildad* is contained in one ſhort Chapter; *Job* lengthened out his anſwer in two, except this will make it out (which muſt be very poorly) I ſee not how he over-acted with his tongue, or failed in ſpeaking too much.

For the ſecond, Some faſten *Zophars* ſuſpition of a lie upon that in *Chap.* 10. *verſ.* 7. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* As if he had obtruded that upon the knowledge of God, which was not, and therefore was not to be known.

Thirdly, He is judged mocking at *Chap.* 10. *verſ.* 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou ſhouldeſt oppreſs, that thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thine hands, and ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked?* But beſides theſe conjectures, *Zophar* himſelf gives the reaſon expreſly in the next words, *For, Thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes:* As if he had ſaid, *If thou thinkeſt that I charge thee unjuſtly, in ſaying that thou haſt ſcattered lies, and art a mocker; I will tell thee plainly, what renders thee guilty in my thoughts, Thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in his ſight.* But how ſlender a foundation this poſition yields, to ſupport ſo heavy a charge (were it *Job's* (*in terminis*) in down-right words, which yet hath not appeared) I ſhall clear in the opening of thoſe words. But before I come ſo far, take two or three Obſervations, upon the Preface in general, as it contains this three-fold accuſation already opened.

Firſt, *That it is no new thing for him that ſpeaks truth to be counted a lier, nor for him that ſpeaks ſeriouſly to be counted a mocker.*

It was ſo with *Job*, There were ſome ſlips of paſſion in *Job*, but no error in his opinion, and yet he is called a lier; poor *Job* who lay upon the dunghil full of ſores, and bodily diſtempers, full of ſorrow and inward temptations, had little leiſure to mock and jear, his very wounds might ſpeak his denial of ſuch behaviour; yet he is judged a mocker. The Apoſtles were ſometimes counted mad men, beſides themſelves, and out of their wits; ſometimes cunning and crafty men, who went about to out-wit others. *Paul* is put to his plea in that common caſe (2 *Cor.* 6. 4.) *as deceivers, yet true*; we are lookt upon as a company of *Mountebanks*, as if our deſign were to cheat the people at once, of their purſes, and of their ſouls: We are eſteemed deceivers, as if we were hired to cry up an Impoſtor, rather then a Saviour, and to fill the world with fables, rather then ſollid truths; but truth of underſtanding is the commodity we deal in, and we deal in it with truth of heart. Again (2 *Cor.* 2. 17.) *We are not as many, which corrupt the word of God.* Even they who received the Word by immediate revelation, were ſuſpected of corrupting the Word, of mixing and mingling it with their own inventions, to ſerve turns, or to make it comply with their own intereſts. But (ſaith he) we are no corrupters, we make not our own markets of the Word, we do not put it off for worldly advantages or gain, we only make this advantage and merchandiſe of it, the gaining of your ſouls.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A good man may cauſleſly charge thoſe that are innocent.*

As we muſt not at all judge a man to be wicked, who is falſly charged, ſo we ſhould be very cautious how we judge a man wicked, who chargeth another falſly. This age is a charging age, The Tongue and Pen have made as hot charges as the Sword. Lier, Heretick, Schiſmatick, Deceiver, Hypocrite, are the common weapons of our paper war. It is a duty to give a meek interpretation of rigid cenſures, much more to be ſparing in our judgments upon rigid cenſures. A good man may paſs an ill ſentence upon thoſe who are and do good. So did *Zophar* upon *Job*, and yet upright in the main.

Prima ſemper irarum tela ſunt maledicta. Sal.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *It is a dangerous thing to ſay that is a lie or falſe, which we are not able to make out for truth.*

That was *Zophar* caſe, he could not bring both ends of *Job's* ſpeech together; he ſuſpects all was nought, becauſe he could not find what was good. *Job* was neither babler, nor lier, nor mocker, though *Zophar* thought him all theſe. We through the glaſs of our own notions, and eſpecially thorow that of our own prejudices, ſee things in ſtrange colours. We ſhould look upon every thing in its own likeneſs; we ſhould prove and try every thing to the bottom before we cenſure, as well as before we approve. That may be found ſerious, which at firſt weighs but light, and that a truth which we called a lie. Such caution was never more needed, nor leſs uſed then at this day.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

For thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

But, O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee.

And that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to that which is: know therefore that God exacteth of thee leſs then thine iniquity deſerveth.

IN the three former verſes we had the Preface of *Zophars* ſpeech.

In this fourth, He layes down the opinion or poſition, which he oppoſeth and ſpeaks againſt in the fifth and ſixth, *Thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.* This *Zophar* interpreted as carrying a ſecret accuſation, and reflection upon the juſtice of God. In ſaying, Thou art innocent, thou ſaieſt, God is unrighteous. *He that (being puniſhed) acquitteth himſelf, condemneth his Judge.*

Thou haſt ſaid.] Or, Thou haſt confidently affirmed: The words imports more then a bare *ſay-ſo*; Thou haſt ſtrongly teſtified for thy ſelf, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean.* That's the force of *David's* infirmity (*Pſal.* 116. 11.) *I ſaid in my haſte, All men are liars. I ſaid*, is, more then a conjecture, and more then a naked affirmation, even an aſſertion, and a confident aſſertion too. So is, *Thou haſt ſaid.* If another had ſaid it, we ſhould ſooner have believed it. A modeſt ſubmiſſion of thy doctrine to the judgment of thy ſuperiors, or of thy friends and equals, would become thee better. We have reaſon to doubt thy doctrine more, becauſe we ſee thy own hand writes the approbation, and thou art not only a witneſs, but the only witneſs in thy own cauſe. Hence Note,

Dicere eſt affirmare & pro certo aſſerere.

When a man bears witneſs of himſelf, he layes himſelf open to jealouſies and ſuſpition.

Thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure.] Thou ſhouldſt have expected the teſtimony of another. What do thy neighbours ſay of thee? What do thy friends ſay of thee? Do they ſubſcribe this certificate, That thy doctrine is pure, and thy life clean? Chriſt holds forth a divine prerogative, when he ſaith (*Joh.* 8. 14.) *Though I bear record of my ſelf, yet my record is true.* God may give teſtimony to himſelf, and Chriſt there ſpeaks in reference to his Godhead, as his next words intimate, *I know whence I came, and whither I go.* It is the priviledge of God alone to be a ſelf-witneſs. Hence that of Chriſt (*Joh.* 5. 31.) *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf, my witneſs is not true.* How ſhall we pacifie and reconcile theſe two Texts? In one Chriſt ſaith, *Though I bear record of my ſelf, yet my record is true*; and in another, *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf, my witneſs is not true.*

I anſwer firſt, Chriſt ſpeaks either by way of conceſſion; though I ſhould grant thus much to you, that if I bear witneſs of my ſelf, my witneſs is not true, yet I have further teſtimony (as he ſhews in the following verſe) *There is another beareth witneſs of me*, and ſo I can eaſily ſpare my own. Or,

Conceſſio Rhetorica. Bez.

Secondly, If I ſhould barely aſſert for my ſelf, I give you an occaſion to ſuſpect whether my aſſertion be true.

Thirdly, The word which we tranſlate *true*, is well rendred *firm*, If I bear witneſs to my ſelf, my witneſs is not valid or authentical; for another man may bear witneſs to his neighbour, and his witneſs not be true; but that which ratifieth a teſtimony (*foro humano*) is when it comes from a ſecond, or a third, *In the mouth of two or three witneſſes, ſhall every word be eſtabliſhed*, Deut. 19. 15.

But may we not bear witneſs to our ſelves?

In ſome caſes we may, in moſt we may not, eſpecially in theſe two.

Firſt, When we teſtifie for our ſelves out of an ambition to commend our ſelves, to ſpread our own plumes, and to grow up into the applauſe of the world: This is phariſaical boaſting of, rather then witneſs-bearing to our ſelves.

Secondly, When what we ſay or teſtifie is untrue. We muſt not bear falſe-witneſs, either for or againſt our ſelves. *Zophar* ſuſpects *Job*'s ſelf-witneſs of both theſe errors, as aiming at ſelf-applauſe, and that by arrogating more to himſelf, then he was able to make out. He offends who affects to blazon himſelf by a worth which is really his; but he that blazons himſelf by a worth which is not his, multiplies offences. Some ſay *they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan*, (*Revel.* 2. 9.) A Jew may offend, in ſaying, he is a Jew; but he that ſaith he is a Jew, that is, a true believer (for under thoſe old Teſtament terms, Goſpel-profeſſors are expreſt in the *Revelation*) and is not, that is, hath neither the inward power, nor the outward evidence of a Saint, his pretended piety is double iniquity. A Jew of Satans Synagogue, is the worſt Diſciple of his Synagogue, *None are ſo bad as they, who only ſeem to be good. They are twice dead, who have but a name to be alive.* The Apoſtle chides thoſe bitterly, who were Jews only in the letter, and in the fleſh (*Rom.* 2. 17, 19.) *Behold, thou art called a Jew, and reſteſt in the law, and makeſt thy boaſt of God, and art confident that thou thy ſelf art a guide of the blind*, &c. *Thou that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf? Thou who makeſt thy boaſt of the law, through breaking the law, diſhonoureſt thou God?* To ſay our doctrine is pure, when it is defiled with error; to ſay our ſelves are clean, when we are either openly prophane, or cloſely hypocritical, adds to the impurity of our doctrine, and to the uncleanneſs of our lives. Moſt appear too too bad; but they are worſt, who would appear better then they are.

But do we not find *Paul* more then once maintaining his own integrity? Saith he not, *I have lived in all good Conſcience before God untill this day*, Act. 23. 1. Saith he not? *I am not mad, moſt noble* Feſtus, *but ſpeak forth the words of truth and ſoberneſs, Act.*26.25. When we are accuſed and called to anſwer, we may ſay, Our doctrine is pure, when it is; and that we are clean, when we are.

In ſuch a caſe, not to teſtifie the truth for our ſelves, is near as bad as to teſtifie a falſhood againſt another. And in any caſe to give a wrong teſtimony of our ſelves, is worſe then to give it of another. *The ſin is the greater, by how much the perſon againſt whom we ſin is nearer to us: and every man is neareſt to himſelf.*

Thou haſt ſaid; And what ſaid he? **My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy ſight.** Divers of the Ancients upon this place challenge *Zophar* of ſlander and calumniation, for faſtning this report or fame upon *Job*. One is very angry with him, How is it poſſible (ſaith he) that *Job* ſhould be imagined to riſe to ſuch a pitch of ſelf-confidence, or to ſpeak at ſuch a rate of ſpiritual pride, when he teſtifies (*Chap.* 9. 20.) *If I juſtifie my ſelf, mine own mouth ſhall condemn me; if I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.* And though *Job* ſaid, *I am not wicked,* ye he ſaid not, *I am clean.* The difference is great between a denial of wickedneſs, and a preſumption of cleanneſs. Theſe two cannot expound each other: He that preſumes he is clean, denies he is wicked: Yet he that denies he is wicked, may be far enough from affirming, that he is clean. Such conſequences have more uncharitableneſs then logick in them, and can hardly expect ſo much charity, as to acquit them from ſlander.

Calumniatoris hæc verba ſunt, non veritatem & juſtitiam proſequentis. Beda. *Non ita dixit, tantum dixit nihil impium feci.* Hieron. *In eadem ſententia ſunt Gregorius & Chryſ.*

But I dare not put an intendment of ſlander upon *Zophars* account; that's too deep, and more then can be juſtified. For, though *Job* ſpake not thus, in ſo many ſyllables, yet to that effect he had ſpoken; words had paſt from him, which might give, at leaſt a colourable pretence for ſuch a charge. And *Zophar* ſeems (in one reſpect) to deal better with *Job* then his other friends; for he collects the matter upon which he minded to debate with him, and layeth it down in an entire propoſition, This is the thing thou haſt ſaid, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in his ſight.* When or where ſaid he ſo? Some ſettle it upon that (*Chap.* 6. *v.* 10.) *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*; that is, (as theſe expound) I have ſpoken truth, and all the truth. Others put it upon that (*Chap.* 10. 2.) *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me*; which hath (ſay they) this ſecret intimation in it, That *Job* did not ſee any ſin in himſelf, and that he thought God himſelf could hardly ſhew him one, for which he contended with him. Thoſe words alſo at *verſ.* 7. of the ſame Chapter, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, are ſuppoſed an appeal to God himſelf to give teſtimony againſt him, if he could; *Thou knoweſt*, and I will ſtand to thy judgment, *that I am not wicked.* Theſe paſſages *Zophar* might conſtrue to the ſence given, As if he had ſaid, *I am clean in thy ſight.* And we find *Job* in his following diſcourſe (*Chap.* 31. 7.) ſpeaking out plainly, *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to my hands; then let me ſow, and let another eat*, &c. If any blot hath cleaved to my hands; amounts to as much as this in the letter, I am clean in thy ſight. And as *Zophar* here, ſo *Elihu* taxeth him with it elſewhere (*Chap.* 33. 8, 9.) *Surely thou haſt ſpoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

What then was faulty in *Zophar*?

This. He managed his diſcourſe more like an Accuſer; then a Comforter. He amplified and ſtrained the words of *Job* to a ſence which he intended not. He ſpake what might be cloathed with ſuch an interpretation; But, *Charity thinketh no evil, and love would have made a better Comment.* He never meant to raiſe himſelf upon his own innocency, or to ſtand upon his terms with God: How often had he diſclaimed and even proteſted againſt ſuch overweenings? Yet his friends impoſe that ſence upon him all along; and will make him ſay, what he never thought, and own what his ſoul abhorred.

Accuſatorum more amplificat, & interpretatione parum benevola, eo rem adducit, ut talia cenſeretur locutus Jobus. Sanct.

Take one Note from their miſtake, and then I ſhall give the ſence of the poſition more diſtinctly.

> *Words are often miſconſtrued, and reckoned for more then the ſpeaker meant them.*

Neceſſe eſt contentioſius loquaris, quod probare non poſſis. Quintil. *Dedam.* 18.

We are apt to put unſound gloſſes upon the Word both of God and man. Many report the matter ſpoken, falſly, and very few report the meaning of the ſpeaker truly. More quarrels and controverſies ariſe from the miſtake of words, then from difference of judgments. There is ſcarce a book written about any Tenet which is oppoſed, but the Author is forced to a great expence of time and pains for the clearing of his meaning from the miſtakes of oppoſites. Yea a man can hardly let a word fall in ordinary conference, but ſome miſ-improvement is made of it. When *Peter* asked Chriſt concerning *John*, *Lord, and what ſhall this man do? Jeſus ſaith unto him, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* Joh. 21. 22. *Then went this ſaying abroad among the brethren, that that Diſciple ſhould not die; Howbeit Jeſus ſaid unto them, He ſhall not die; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* Falſe-witneſſes come againſt Chriſt, and what is their teſtimony? *This fellow ſaid, I am able to deſtroy the temple of God, and to build it in three dayes,* Mat. 26. 61. This was a mere miſtake of the words of Chriſt, *Joh.*2.19. where when he was demanded by the Jews, *What ſign ſheweſt thou unto us, ſeeing that thou doeſt theſe things?* He anſwered, *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up.* How groſly did they corrupt this Text by their expoſition of it! Chriſt ſaid, *Deſtroy ye*, they made it, *I am able to deſtroy*; he ſaid, *This Temple*, meaning his own body; they ſay, the material Temple, or place of publick worſhip: So the Jews ſtumbled at his words, when they fell firſt from his lips, as their reply telleth us, *Fourty and ſix years was this Temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?* The Evangeliſt explains him right in the next line, *But he ſpake of the Temple of his body.* It is to be bewail'd how ſuch miſ-underſtandings have troubled the Church and ſervants of God; and that ſo many have ſuffered upon ſuch miſ-underſtandings. The Wiſeman hath a Proverb, which reacheth this abuſe, though it be not direct to the point in hand, *He that covereth a tranſgreſſion ſeeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth very friends* (*Prov.* 17. 9.) He aims at tale-bearers, who repeat what they hear upon deſign to breed jealouſies, and heart-burning among friends, or, according to the language of the times, to *cajole* the neareſt and the ſtrongeſt *confidents*. But we may apply it to the ſence before us, That uſually they who repeat a matter, ſeparate very friends; for who is it almoſt that repeateth the diſcourſe of another (eſpecially if he hath any prejudice againſt the party, or doth not meet fully in opinion with him) but he ſpoils it in repeating, and ſo ſeparates very friends? This was the fault of *Job*'s friends, they repeated his words, but moſt of their repetitions, were perverſions or unkind Criticiſmes upon, rather then charitable reports of what he ſpake. And therefore he was forced (*Chap.* 23. 3.) to appeal unto God with whom he knew himſelf ſhould find candid dealing, and his words receive a genuine interpretation, *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat; I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.* As if he had ſaid, I have been often wronged by my friends in miſconceiving what I have argued, but were I to argue and plead it with God himſelf, I know he would deal fairly with me, and put a right ſence upon every word, he would make the beſt of what is not ſo well ſpoken, and nothing but good of what is well ſpoken; He would receive what is right, and rectifie what is amiſs. Let us now examine what *Zophar* judged *Job* to have ſpoken amiſs.

Thou haſt ſaid, My Doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy ſight.

His ſuppoſed error was, that he thought his doctrine true, and this was his blot, That he thought himſelf clean. This thou haſt ſaid,

My Doctrine is pure.] That is, I am orthodox or ſound in judgment, both in my general tenets, and in what I have particularly maintained in the preſent diſputation concerning the providence of God in afflicting godly men, and in diſpenſing outward comforts to the wicked. *Thou haſt ſaid thy doctrine,* delivered upon both or either of theſe ſubjects, *is pure.*

לקח *Accipere, doctrina dicitur ab accipiendo,* i.e. *diſcendo, nam diſcere eſt accipere.* Druſ.

The original word which we render *Doctrine*, is derived from a root which ſignifies *to take, or to receive.* And that upon a threefold ground.

Firſt, Becauſe ſuch Doctrines are delivered upon the taking of mature deliberation, or gained by taking much pains for them.

Secondly, Becauſe ſuch Doctrines are in their own right to be received. Sound Doctrine is worthy to be received, it is worthy of all reverence and ready acceptation.

Metaphora ſumpta à venatione. Piſc.

Thirdly, Becauſe there is a power in ſuch Doctrines to take or catch thoſe unto whom they are ſpoken. *Truth is full, not only of ſtrength, but of ſubtilty.* Hence ſome conceive that the alluſion is to Hunters and Fowlers, who lay baits, and ſet traps to catch birds, or other game. So (in a good ſence) a man of wiſdom and underſtanding, publiſhing ſound Doctrine, layes a bait, with holy craft to enſnare and catch his auditors (*Prov.* 11. 30.) *He that winneth ſouls is wiſe*; it is this word. They who are godly and judicious catch ſouls, as a fowler catcheth birds: by laying out ſound, wiſe and faithful arguments, they take and ſnap men; they hold their ſpirits faſt, till they overcome and win them, even as the ſnare of the fowler takes the bird: Such are wiſe men indeed. The whoriſh woman (*Prov.* 7. 13, 21.) is ſaid, to catch or gain the young man (the word is the ſame in the original) *by her fair ſpeech*, her taking language. *A whores doctrine is very taking, her lips drop enſnaring eloquence.* As there is a power in ſinful counſel to take and enſnare; ſo much more in holy and wholſom counſel. The Apoſtle was a Craftsmaſter in this ſoul-trade (2 *Cor.* 12. 16.) *Being crafty* (ſaith he) *I caught you with guile*; I plaid the *cunning mate* with you, I laid a ſnare, and ſet a trap, but all for your good.

Further, The word ſignifies pleaſure and ſweetneſs, noting thus much, That purity of Doctrine is pleaſant, and gives much delight. As meats are to the taſte, ſo are truths to the underſtanding: nothing brings in greater contentment to any faculty, then a clear apprehenſion of the proper object. Sutableneſs is the ground of pleaſure. And the pleaſures of the intellectual part, are as much above thoſe of the ſenſitive, as the underſtanding it ſelf is above the ſenſes. A *Philoſopher* having found out a true and rational concluſion in *Geometry*, ran about the City, where he lived, as if he had been diſtracted with joy, ſaying, *I have found it, I have found it.* When God gives, and we by ſtudy and prayer find out the treaſures of divine truth, it is as the beginning of Heaven (*Math.* 13. 44.) *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treaſure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and ſelleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart,* Pſal. 19. 8. To receive pure Doctrine is as much a pleaſure, as it is an honour; as much the delight, as the ornament of the mind. *My doctrine is pure.*

זכך à זך *Mundus, purus, clarus fuit, eſt lucere ad modum vitri & chryſtalli.*

Pure.] The word ſignifies pellucid or clear, that which a man may look thorow as Glaſs, or to the bottom of it, as a Cryſtal fountain. Pure doctrine is like Glaſs or a Cryſtal ſtream, upon which you may not only look, but look thorow it, and to the bottom of it, and find all clear. Such a purity is here meant, *My doctrine is pure.* Purity of doctrine imports two things,

Firſt, The preciouſneſs of doctrine; for that which is pure is precious, and every thing the more pure it is, the more precious it is in its kind.

Secondly, The unmixedneſs, the uncompoundedneſs of doctrine. Purity is oppoſed to mixture; pure is as much as ſimple or uncompounded; we read of the *ſimplicity of the Goſpel* (2 *Cor.* 11. 3.) which is nothing elſe but the purity of the Goſpel. The contrary whereof is corrupting or *adulterating the word of God*, by the addition of humane inventions, and our own fancies.

My Doctrine is pure.] Pure in both theſe ſences. It is precious and worth much: it is unmixed, nothing but it ſelf. I have not feigned and coyned it out of mine own brain. I have not embaſed it with an allay of inferior mettal; it is the ſincere ſimple Word of God.

Whence Note, *True doctrine is pure doctrine.*

True doctrine is pure two wayes. It is pure *ſubjectively*, and it is pure *effectively*. It is pure in it ſelf, and purifies us, *Joh.* 17. 17. *Sanctifie them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* Pure doctrine will purifie. *Falſe principles breed falſe practices; crooked rules make crooked lives:* That which is polluted is as apt to pollute, as that which is pure to purifie. The nature of things is ſtampt upon their effects. Truth is compared to the moſt excellent metals, and it excels them. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of all ſorts of doctrines built upon *Chriſt the foundation*, calls ſome *gold, ſilver, precious ſtones: others, wood, hay, ſtubble* (1 Cor. 3. 12.) The difference of doctrine is ſet forth under theſe Metaphors: Pure doctrine is *gold, ſilver, precious ſtones:* Falſe doctrine is *wood, hay, ſtubble*, theſe are combuſtible matter, they will burn, they will not bear the trial; whereas the Word of God, and ſo the truths that are bottomed upon that, are (*Pſal.* 12. 6.) Pure: How pure? *As ſilver tried in a furnace of earth, purified ſeven times*; that is, it is altogether pure, having not the leaſt droſs in it. *My doctrine is pure,*

And I am clean.] The word [*Bar*] undergoeth a three-fold interpretation among the Rabbins.

בר à ברר *Mundum reddidit, terſit, polivit, diſcrevit, elegit. Hæc vox cũ filium ſignificat, chaldaica eſt, & in ea ſignificatione tantum,* Pſal. 2. 12. Prov. 31. 2. *reperitur.* Piſc.

Firſt, It ſignifies clean or pure. So we tranſlate.

Secondly, It ſignifies a Son or man-child (ſo it is rather a Chaldee word) *Prov.* 31. 2. *Pſal.* 2. 12. *Kiſs the Son:* and from this word *Bar*, a Son, it is conceived that in our Northern parts, a child is called a *barn*; in the Latin, the ſame word denotes a young child, and pure or clean, and ſo it bears fair to the interpretation of the Text: becauſe howſoever a child is naturally all filthy and unclean, in regard of the guilt and pollution of original ſin; yet in regard of acts, a child is clean, he is white *paper*, as he hath no fair letters, ſo no blots upon him.

Thirdly, It ſignifies elect, choſen or preferred before others (*Cant.* 6. 9.) *She is the only one of her mother, ſhe is* (*Bar*, the word of the Text, *the clean one*, or) *the choice one of her that bare her.* But how is ſhe called the *only one* of her mother, and yet *the choice one of her that bare her*? if there be but one, how can there be any choice? The original is, *She is the one of her mother, and ſuch an one*, as if ſhe had ten thouſand to chuſe out of, ſhe could not chuſe a better; this would be her only child, her flower, how many ſoever ſhe might be ſuppoſed to have. If a man who hath many children likes one more then the reſt, he uſeth to ſay, *There is my only Son, that's he.* One as good as can be, is a choice one, though we have no more; yet properly a choice one, is the beſt among many. In this ſence the word is uſed (*Nehem.* 5. 18.) where the bill of fare for *Nehemiah* his Table is thus drawn up, *He had ſix choice ſheep*, &c. They did not take the flock as they came, but picked the beſt for the Governours Table. Thus the word carries a comparative ſence in it, pointing out not only one that is clean, but one elect before others for his cleanneſs, *I am clean*,

Te, O Deus, judice & teſte, te bene conſcio.

In thine eyes.] That is, Thou, O God, conſidering, trying and judging me, I ſhall yet be found clean. It is an high challenge, but we are not to take it ſtrictly; *Job* was no legal Juſticiary, he ſought not righteouſneſs in the works of the Law, but through faith in the Meſſiah: He ſpeaks here, as in other like places, one or all of theſe three wayes.

Firſt, In oppoſition to the opinion which men had of him: As if he had ſaid, In the ſight of men I am filthy and unclean, an hypocrite and wicked: my friends judge me ſo, but, *I am clean in thine eyes.*

Secondly, *I am clean in thine eyes*; that is, in the general bent of my ſpirit, in the common tenor of my heart and life; though I have my failings, yet my courſe is holy. Denomination is taken from the better and greater part.

Thirdly, *I am clean*, &c. that is, in reference to the ſpecial charge, which my friends lay upon me; they ſay I am an hypocrite, Lord, I am clean from that in thine eyes. Thus *David* (*Pſal.* 18. 24.) *Therefore hath the Lord recompenſed me according to my righteouſneſs, according to the cleanneſs of my hands in his eye-ſight.* The ſame Comment will ſerve *David's* Text and *Job's*. *David* was not in a conteſtation with the juſtice of God upon his own integrity, but upon a vindication of his integrity from the injuſtice and jealouſies of men.

Hence we may obſerve (which is a ſeeming contradiction)

No man is clean in God ſight: Some men are clean in Gods ſight.

No man is clean in Gods ſight, that is, in himſelf or of himſelf, *Job* 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Every man is hewen from a corrupt ſtock, and therefore is corrupt; *Behold the heavens are not clean in his ſight*, Job 15. 15. *Yea he chargeth his Angels with folly*, (*Chap.* 4. 18.) How great then is the folly of that man, who upon his own account diſchargeth himſelf of folly in the ſight of God?

Yet a believer may ſay he is clean in the ſight of God.

Firſt, Clean perfectly by the grace of juſtification. So believers in this life are, as having no ſpot or wrinkle imputed to them, though many ſpots and wrinkles remaining on them. The cleanneſs of Chriſt, is clean in the eyes of God; and that is the Saints cleanneſs. 'Tis theirs for their uſe, though not in their propriety,

Secondly, Clean alſo in the ſight of God through the grace of ſanctification; God gives and ſees, as a deſire of, ſo an endeavour after univerſal, practical cleanneſs, in them that are juſtified. A believers way in this world is clean from crimes, though not from ſins. *If any man ſay he hath no ſin, truth is not in him*; *and if any man commit ſin, grace is not in him*, 1 Joh. 3. 8, 9. Sin lives in a clean perſon; but he that is clean lives not in any ſin. And this is a cleanneſs in the ſight of God.

In the conjunction of theſe two, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy ſight*; we ſee the two heads of religion, or the two main hinges upon which all religion turneth. Firſt, *Purity of doctrine.* Secondly, *Cleanneſs of practice. Holineſs of life and ſoundneſs of opinion, conſtitute a perfect man*; Here's the character of a Chriſtian, in his compleatneſs. This was typified in the Old Law, by the *Urim and the Thummim*, ſet in the *breſt-plate of the High Prieſt. Urim* typed *purity of doctrine*; *Thummim, cleanneſs of life.* This *Motto* fitted not only the Prieſts of the Old Teſtament, or the Miniſters of the New, but befits every Chriſtian: Every believer ſhould bear this upon his breſt, *Purity of doctrine, and cleanneſs of life.* Chriſt checks the Phariſees (*Matth.* 23. 2, 3.) who had the former, but not the latter; they had purity of doctrine, but they wanted integrity and holineſs of life: they ſate in *Moſes* chair, and therefore he biddeth his Diſciples and the people, *That all whatſoever they bad them obſerve, that they ſhould obſerve and do*; *but* (ſaith he) *do not ye after their works*; take heed of treading in their ſteps: you may do their words, but not their works; why? for *they ſay and do not*; though they have purity of doctrine, they have not cleanneſs of life. It is an ill hearing, and a ſad ſpectacle, when theſe two are ſeparated. When purity of doctrine, and cleanneſs of life appear together in one perſon, happy is that man; and he is a fit inſtrument to make others happy: but where either of theſe appears alone, or with its contrary, as a companion, purity of doctrine with uncleanneſs of life, or cleanneſs of life with error and unſoundneſs of doctrine; it is dangerous to embark with, or come near ſuch; for themſelves are in great danger: Themſelves are in an ill condition, and they are fit inſtruments to make others worſe. Unſound doctrine frets like a Canker, and an unclean life is catching like a Leproſie. We are apteſt to take an unſound doctrine from thoſe whoſe lives are clean; and we are apteſt to imitate their unclean lives, whoſe doctrine is ſound.

From the latter branch, **I am clean in thine eyes**, Note,

Firſt, *It ſhould not ſatisfie us that we are clean in the eyes of men, unleſs we can approve our ſelves to God alſo.*

For as not he that commendeth himſelf, ſo not he that is commended by others is approved; but whom the Lord commendeth, 2 *Cor.* 10. 18. It is but cold comfort to be clean in the eye of our neighbours, that they give us a fair teſtimony; if in the mean time our own heart condemn us. Yea, what though we are (like that generation ſpoken of by *Solomon*) *Pure in our own eyes*, and have a *plaudite* in our own hearts, if we are impure in Gods eye. It is moſt deſirable to be a *white in the eye of God*: while we are white in his eye, we need not trouble our ſelves much, though we are black in the eyes of all the world. *It is a ſmall thing with me* (ſaith *Paul*, 1 Cor. 4. 3.) *that I ſhould be judged of you, or of mans judgment*; *yea I judge not my own ſelf, but he that judgeth me is the Lord.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *What we are, and what we do, is all before the eye of God.*

It is a common doctrine, that God ſees and takes notice of us. But as common as the doctrine is in the mouths of men, the uſe is rare in the hearts of men; yet there is no man ſo heightned in grace, but may make uſe of it. Chriſt himſelf made uſe of it, *Pſal.* 16. 8. (The words were ſpoken by *David* his figure, and applied to Chriſt, *Act.* 2. 25.) *I fore-ſaw the Lord always before my face.* Chriſt did not uſe this doctrine to keep or over-awe his heart from ſin (he was infinitely above that) but to ſupport his heart in ſuffering, as appears in the latter part of the verſe, *he is on my right hand, that I ſhould not be moved.* But to us it is uſeful both theſe wayes, and many other wayes. The neglect of this doctrine leaves us under the neglect of many duties, and opens a gap, yea floudgate unto every ſin. Durſt any mock God with out-ſide and bare profeſſion, if the heart had fed upon, and thorowly digeſted this truth; cleanneſs and uncleanneſs, ſincerity and hypocriſie are in the ſight of God? How often do men flatter themſelves with this vain hope, that their work is in the dark, and no eye ſees them? How often doth the *Church-Atheiſt* queſtion, like thoſe (*Job* 22. 13.) *How doth God know? Can he judge thorow the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of Heaven.* Sure he troubles not himſelf with what we do; and though moſt are ready to acknowledge in words, that God ſeeth them, they act as if God (like the Heathen Idols) had eyes, but could not ſee. It was that which *Melancthon* obſerved of the *Italians*, *You* (ſaith he) *are very zealous to believe that God is in the bread, but you walk as if you did not believe God to be in Heaven.* Bleſſed is he that condemneth not himſelf by the truths which he alloweth.

Thirdly, Foraſmuch as the original [*bar*] ſignifies not only purity, but elect and choſen, Obſerve,

Clean and holy perſons, juſt and upright perſons, are fit for choice and election.

Men may not chooſe, as God chooſeth. God chooſeth out of a common maſs without reſpect to good or evil, as the motive of his election; he did not look upon mankind, and ſee one pure, and another impure; one clean, and another

another unclean; and then chuſe the clean, and leave the unclean; No: (*Rom.* 9. 11.) before *Jacob* and *Eſau* were born, before they had done either good or evil; *That the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was ſaid,* Jacob *have I loved, but* Eſau *have I hated*; Gods election is not upon actions. He found them both in a like ſtate, yet he choſe *Jacob*: The reaſon of it is, becauſe he hath power, and a purpoſe to make them clean, whom he chuſeth. God elects to cleanneſs, but he doth not elect any, becauſe they are clean, or cleaner then others. The grace of election is not directed by, but directs and leads to the grace of ſanctification. But when men go to chooſing, they muſt not take this courſe, becauſe they have not this power: when men chooſe, they muſt chooſe upon fore-ſeen, or rather preſent works of holineſs and righteouſneſs. They muſt chuſe men fearing God, and hating covetouſneſs, for Magiſtrates. They muſt chuſe men apt to teach, ſober and blameleſs, for Miniſters. They who cannot make men fit, whom they have elected; muſt conſider who are fit, and then elect them.

Zophar having laid down *Jobs* opinion of himſelf, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes,* (verſ. 4.) proceeds to the confutation of it in *verſ.* 5, 6. which we may give you in this argumentative form.

That perſon is not pure in doctrine, and clean in the ſight of God, whom though God hath greatly afflicted, yet he might juſtly afflict more:

But though God hath greatly afflicted thee, yet he might juſtly afflict thee more;

Therefore thou art not pure in thy doctrine, nor clean in his ſight.

The aſſumption is given in the cloſe of the ſixth verſe, *Know therefore that God exacteth of thee leſs then thine iniquity deſerveth:* and is prefac'd or led in by a wiſh, in *verſ.* 5. and part of *verſ.* 6. a wiſh that God himſelf would undertake *Job*, and diſpute with him.

Verſ. 5. **But O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!**

As if *Zophar* had ſaid, *While I am about to ſpeak, I almoſt think it will be but loſt labour for me to ſpeak; yea, I think thou art beyond the ſpeaking of any man: thou art ſo obdurate and hardened in thy way, ſo wiſe in thine own conceit, ſo ſtiff to thine own principles, ſo unyielding to thoſe better counſels which have already been given thee, by thy grave, learned and godly friends, that I am much (and I conceive any man would be) diſcouraged to argue and debate the matter further with thee. And therefore I would willingly quit my hands of this task, and leave thee to God, I would gladly be eaſed of this burden, and turn thee over (as a man paſt cure by man) to the hand of Heaven. O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!*

Or ſecondly, This Preface may have relation to thoſe ſecret hints, yea ſometimes explicite wiſhes of *Job* (declining the ſentence and cenſure of his friends) that God and he might ſpeak together. He only deſired the Lord to abate the dreadful ſplendor of his Majeſty, or not to clothe himſelf with dazling light, and amazing glory in that congreſs. And, *Then* (ſaith he) *let him ſpeak and I would anſwer* (Chap. 9. 15.) Again (*Chap.* 10. 2.) *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me, ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me?* In both which paſſages *Job* ſeems to petition and preſs the Lord for a *perſonal treaty*; in anſwer to which requeſt, poſſibly *Zophar* might thus begin, *My friend* Job, *It falleth now to my lot to ſpeak unto thee, but I ſhould (with all my heart) rejoyce, if God would grant the wiſh which thou haſt ſo often preſented to him, even vouchſafe to ſpeak unto thee himſelf. We have often heard thee appealing from earth to heaven, calling God to witneſs, that ſuch and ſuch is thine integrity. O that God would anſwer thee, and give thee a meeting! O that he would condeſcend ſo far as to confer immediately with thee! How glad ſhould we be of this? and we believe thou wouldſt be as ſorry; it will be little to thy eaſe, if God once take thee to task, thou ſhalt quickly find it otherwiſe with thee then thou dreameſt or preſumeſt; he would ſoon cool theſe heats, and aſſwage the ſwellings of thy ſpirit, by diſcovering himſelf in holineſs, and thy ſelf in ſinfulneſs. Thy creſt will fall, and thy courage come down as ſoon as ever he enters the liſt with thee, and doth but ſhew thee who he is, and what thou art.* Either of theſe wayes the connexion lies fair, *O that God would ſpeak and open his lips againſt thee!*

Sane aliter rem habere intelligeres quam putas; non ita juſtus apparebis, ut tibi perſuades. Merc.

The Hebrew is, *Who would give*, or, *O that ſome body would get God to ſpeak?* The phraſe is optative, including an ardent deſire of obtaining, and therefore we tranſlate not, *Who would give?* but, *O that God!* As implying the great and inſtant importunity of *Zophar* to ſpeed his ſute, *That God would ſpeak and open his lips againſt him.*

Quis det Deum loqui?

Some too critically and over-curiouſly diſtinguiſh between the *ſpeaking of God, and his opening of his lips.* As if the one, namely *ſpeaking*, did import an *immediate voice*, when God reveals himſelf without the intervention of any inſtrument or ſecond cauſe: but the opening of his lips, *a mediate voice*, when God ſpeaks (though in an extraordinary manner, yet) by man or Angel, or any other creature, whoſe ſervice he is pleaſed to deſign for ſuch a manifeſtation of himſelf. *God can give a lip to liveleſs creatures, and make any thing his tongue.* He that made mans mouth to ſpeak, can make that ſpeak which hath no mouth; and ſo, may be ſaid to open his lips in whatſoever he uſeth to demonſtrate or diſcover his mind to us by. But I paſs this as a nicity, eſpecially becauſe *Zophar* imploring God to deal with *Job* immediately, and not by the ſervice of any creature, yet calls it, *The opening of his lips.*

Loquitur Deus per ſemet-ipſum; aperit vero labia cum vel hominum vel aliarum rerum opera tanquam inſtrumento utitur ad aliquid manifeſtandum. Aquin.

Speaking and opening the lips, are the ſame thing under different expreſſions, or the latter is but an expoſition of the former. Opening of the lips is ſpeaking, we ſpeak by opening the lips; only here is an *hyſteroſis*, a figure frequent in Scripture, when that which is firſt in nature, is put laſt in order, for opening of the lips precedes ſpeaking; here the method is inverted, *O that God would ſpeak, and that he would open his lips againſt thee!*

O that God would ſpeak!] The word carries more then common talking, it is here reſtrained to ſpeech in judgment, or to an exact diſcuſſion of the cauſe preceding judgment. Such is the meaning of that heavenly ſummons (*Pſal.* 50. 7.) *Hear, O my people, and I will ſpeak* (I will debate the matter, and plead with thee) O Iſrael, *I will teſtifie againſt thee.* *Zophar* prays for a day of trial, for a little day of judgment. *O that God would ſpeak.*

דבר *Non ad quemlibet ſermonem, ſed ad eum qui in judicio habetur, vel ad diſceptationem ſpectat.* Bold.

And open his lips.] *To open the lips* implieth grave and deliberate ſpeaking. The Hebraiſme is very frequent, *Pſal.* 78. 2. *I will open my mouth in a parable.* Parables are ſententious ſpeeches, ſpeeches filled with weight of wiſdom. To open the mouth in a parable is to have an active intenſion of the ſpirit, preparing and fitting the mouth to open. The mouth of a wiſe man is under cuſtody, leaſt the treaſures of his mind ſhould ſteal out, or be ſtoln out unobſerved. *Precious things are not left open, they are under lock and key.* He is a wiſe man that keeps a lock and a key at his lips: the lock of ſilence, and the key of ſpeech; or the key of diſcretion to ſhut and open the lock according to the true occaſions of ſpeech and ſilence. *David* prayeth, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips* (Pſal. 141. 3.) As we ſhould deſire the Lord to keep or watch the door of our lips, leaſt we ſpeak ſinfully; ſo we ſhould keep or watch our own lips, that we may ſpeak fruitfully and ſeaſonably. The Scribe which is inſtructed to the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man which is an houſholder, bringing forth out of *his treaſure things both new and old* (Matth. 13. 52.) He hath a ſtore, a ſtock of knowledge laid up there, and he openeth not his mouth, or vents it, till occaſion ſpeaks. That counſel (*Prov.* 22. 17, 18.) fully reacheth this Hebraiſm of opening the mouth. *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wiſe*; (what to do?) *and apply thine heart unto my knowledge*; (let thine heart draw in knowledge) let it be as a bed, or a repoſitory for the words of the wiſe to reſt on, or to be laid up in; for, *it is a pleaſant thing* (there's the treaſure) *if thou keep them within thee, they ſhall withal be fitted in thy lips. If thou keep them within thee*: As if he had ſaid, When thou haſt been a learner, and haſt gained a ſtock of knowledge, then, *they ſhall be fitted for thy lips*; that is, thy lips ſhall bring forth, ſhape and form, thoſe notions of truth into profitable and ſavoury diſcourſes, *They ſhall be fitted to thy lips.* Some ſpeak the words of wiſdom, but ſuch words are not fitted to their lips: It is (as the Proverb teacheth) *The Aſs to the harp, or the Cat to the lute.*

Aperire labia eſt ſapienter & cum pondere loqui; quaſi theſaurus eſſet in corde, cujus os & labia ſint velut oſtium ſub clave vel ſigillo, &c. Bold.

Words muſt be ſeated in the heart before they are fitted to the lips. *Davids mouth did not ſpeak of wiſdom, till the meditation of his heart had been of underſtanding. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh, both good and evil.* And as a good man ſpeaks evil, ſo an evil man ſpeaks good unhandſomely, becauſe it is not in, nor with his heart.

Sincerius erit ſi in ſimplici fandi notione ſumatur hoc verbum quaſi Jobi dulciloquio ſimplex Dei loquela opponatur, ut hac illud facillimè confundi dicat.

Further, To open the lips is no more in ordinary acceptation, then to ſpeak plainly: and then it ſtands in oppoſition to thoſe eloquent orations, which (as *Zophar* ſuppoſed) *Job* had ſtudied to defend and ſecure himſelf againſt God; as if he had ſaid, *If God would but open his lips, and ſpeak unto thee, one plain word might be enough to overthrow all the curious diſcourſes and ſet ſpeeches, enough to anſwer, and cut the ſinews of all the fine ſpun orations, and cunning ſophiſtry which thou haſt uſed in this cauſe. Let God ariſe* (ſaith *Moſes*) *and his enemies ſhall be ſcattered. Let God open his lips*, ſaith *Zophar, and thy mouth ſhall be ſtopt.*

His verbis habita perſonæ & temporis ratione non levitèr pungitat Job. Bold.

Gen. 12. 1, 7, 13. c. 15. 1 c. 17. 1. c. 18 1. c. 21. 12. & 22. 1. 11.

Thirdly, The words may carry a redargution of *Job*, as a man whom God did ſo far neglect, that he would not afford him a word; As if his friend *Zophar* had thus reproved him, *Thou haſt been calling upon God to ſpeak, and ſhew thee why he contendeth with thee, yet thou haſt not prevailed in thy ſute, he vouchſafeth thee never a word, but leaves thee ſtill to us.* This (ſome conceive) hath a reproof in it, conſidering the times wherein *Job* lived; for then it was no very ſtrange thing (though it was an high favour) for God himſelf to ſpeak to the Saints his ſpecial favourites. *God at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the Prophets* (Heb. 1. 1.) And as he ſpake by the Prophets, ſo he ſpake by himſelf; God ſpake nine times unto *Abraham*, as you may obſerve upon diligent reading from *Gen.* 12. to 22. He ſpake alſo to others of the Ancients. And when God refuſed to open his lips and ſpeak to *Saul*, how pitifully doth he complain, *I am ſore diſtreſſed, for the Philiſtims make war upon me, and God is departed from me, and anſwereth me no more, neither by Prophets, nor by dreams* (1 Sam. 28. 15.) *Saul* took it not only as his *diſparagement*, but as his *undoing*, that God refuſed him *conference*. This refuſal (according to the preſent interpretation) *Zophar* layes in *Jobs* diſh, *Thou haſt prayed that God would manifeſt himſelf to thee, and that's an honour which he hath done to many of his ſervants, in the Catalogue of whom thou writeſt thy name, and pretendeſt thy ſelf for one, but he hearkens not unto thee, though I wiſh he would. O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!*

But what is the manner of Gods ſpeaking, and how doth he open his lips?

It is an alluſion unto men. Man is not able to underſtand the way of a ſpirit, but by what is common to man. A ſpirit hath no lips to open, nor any inſtruments of ſpeech: And to ſpeak ſtrictly, a ſpirit doth not ſpeak at all. God is ſaid to ſpeak,

Formatas à Deo ſenſibiles & externas voces negare videtur. Baſil. *in Iſa.* 7. *Quod non auſim admittere.* Bold.

Firſt, When by his mighty power he forms and frames a voice, which is audible and perceptible by the ear, as unto *Samuel, The Lord called Samuel, Samuel*, at the laſt *Samuel* anſwers, *Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.*

Secondly, God ſpake to *Moſes, Face to face*, that is, familiarly and clearly. This was the higheſt degree of revelation, and drew neareſt to that which the Saints ſhall have in glory.

Thirdly, He ſpake alſo by many ſigns, eſpecially by *Urim and by Thummim.*

Fourthly, God ſpake when he intimated or hinted his mind to the ſpirit of man, by the inſtinct of his own Spirit. Moſt of the Prophets heard only an inward word, which is called, *The coming of the word of the Lord unto them.* As God only ſpeaks to the heart, while the word ſoundeth in the ear; So he often ſpeaks to the heart, when the ear hears no ſound. *I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak, for he will ſpeak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* (*Pſal.* 85. 8.) God ſpeaks peace when he ſends or gives peace, that is, all good things. God ſpeaks peace alſo, when he (as it were) by a ſecret Eccho, returns a word of aſſurance to the petitioners heart, that he will give peace. When *Zophar* wiſhes, that God would ſpeak, he means it of ſpeaking by audible voice, or face to face, not by ſigns or ſecret intimations.

Zophar being thus inſtant, That *God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt Job*, teacheth us,

Firſt, *Some men are beyond the conviction of man.*

O that God would ſpeak. We ſay of a ſick man, whoſe diſeaſe is deſperate, as in the plague, *&c. The Lord look upon you, the Phyſicians have given you over, they can do no more, we leave you to the prayers of the faithful, and to the compaſſions of God:* Some in ſpiritual diſtempers are ſo extreamly diſeaſed, that the ſoul Phyſician can do nothing upon them, they are paſt all his medicines and preparations, theſe we give up to the cure of God, who raiſeth the dead, and calleth thoſe things which are not, as if they were. I grant, that whatſoever healing or cure is wrought upon the ſoul of man by men, is from the Lord. *Man and man ſtand upon even ground*; Humane reaſon and humane reaſon are equal; and he that ſpeaks is often upon a lower ground (though he ſtand higher) then he to whom he ſpeaks, and is ſometimes weaker in humane reaſon: Now that which overcometh and convinceth muſt have an advantage, and come in power, elſe there can be no victory. An equal (in all points) cannot be a conquerour. Hence when the Prophets delivered their meſſages, they put Gods authority to the word, *Thus ſaith the Lord:* They knew all they ſpake could prevail nothing. But though God give the effect of mans word to every man, yet ſome men appear more untractable and unteachable by the Miniſtery of man then others, they ſit under it, and (poſſibly) have ſate under it long, yet nothing's done, their mindes are as blind, their wills as ſtubborn, their wayes as crooked as ever. Man is not any thing in the converſion of any man without God (1 *Cor.* 3. 7.) but ſome we refer wholly to God, having ſpent much ſtrength and time upon them in vain. Some men have out-ſtood, and are the reproach of all the prayers and tears, of all the counſels and admonitions of man: What can we do more or leſs then give up ſuch (as neer loſt men) to the work of God. *O that God would ſpeak.*

Secondly, Obſerve, which *Zophar* chiefly intends,

That if God once open his lips, and deal with a ſoul, he will quickly bring down his ſpirit and convince him.

Man cannot hold out againſt the ſpeakings of God. Man is not able to withſtand the immediate, no nor the mediate ſpeakings of God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*; it is our warfare, but the conqueſt is from God. When he cloathes the word with his own power, and bids it go in his might, the ſtrongeſt holds of ignorance and unbelief, of obſtinacy and rebellion fall to the ground, like the firſt ripe figs ſhaken with the wind. When the unlearned or idiot comes into the aſſembly of the Saints, *He is convinced of all, and is judged of all; for the ſecrets of his heart are made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his face, he will worſhip God*, 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. What wrought this ſudden change? Was it the power of men? No, *He will report that God is in you of a truth.* The man perceived God was there, and upon that apprehenſion his heart was ſubdued, he falls down on his face and worſhips. When God works, the work is done. He works for us, and none can hinder; He works in us, and we cannot hinder. The arm of grace in the word of God is invincible. *O that God would ſpeak.*

Verſ. 6. **And that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom**, &c.

As if he had ſaid, *'Tis but reaſon that I ſhould call God to ſpeak unto thee, for the ſecrets and depths of wiſdom are hidden from and above our reaſon.* The natural man perceiveth not any thing of God, and the ſpiritual man may be yet unable to perceive many of the things of God. *O that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom.*

Videtur Jobo impingere quaſi illi abſtruſam Dei ſapientiam ſe aſſequi gloriatus fuiſſet. Merc.

Zophar ſeems to meet with *Job's* ſeeming boaſt, that he was one of Gods familiars, and well acquainted with his will. The conviction riſeth thus, *Thou haſt carried it as if thou wert of the Cabinet-councel in heaven, as if thou hadſt ſtood at Gods ſide, when he gave his orders and diſpatches concerning the affairs and motions of the whole world; thou takeſt upon thee, as if thou wert the favourite of the great King, and knoweſt his heart; But if God ſpeak to thee indeed, he will ſhew thee other manner of ſecrets then thou art yet acquainted with, thou ſhalt at once ſee that thou miſtakeſt much, and knoweſt little.*

תעלמות חכמה

Præcipua arx diſputationis Tſopharis hæc eſt, multa hominibus non patere, deq; iis Deum in controverſiam non debere vocari. Coc.

O that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets.] Or, *The hidden things* [**of wiſdom.**] Here we have *Zophars argument* diſtinct from his two friends. He deals with *Job*, not ſo much to convince him of his own ſinfulneſs, as of the myſteriouſneſs of divine wiſdom. Thou complaineſt and cryeſt out of the hand of God, of thy great afflictions: I tell thee there is a ſecret of wiſdom in this diſpenſation, I will plead no other juſtification of Gods proceedings, but only this, God is infinite in wiſdom, *O that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom.*

Every word, and all the works of God are full of wiſdom, and yet many of them are ſo plain and eaſie, that he that runs may read them: So plain and eaſie, that an *Adonibezeck* may run, ye fall and read them (Judg. 1.7.) *As I have done, ſo God hath requited me.* There was no myſtery at all in that. Senſe and reaſon have their leſſons, as well as grace and faith. But as there are ſome leſſons eaſie enough for ſenſe; ſo there are not a few hard enough for faith. And as ſome ſins of men are plain, very ſinful, yet very plain, while other ſins lie cloſe in the heart, and are not only an iniquity, but a myſtery of iniquity, or iniquity wrapt up in a myſtery (the whole body of Antichriſtian iniquity is a myſtery): So ſome leſſons of the wiſdom of God are plain, full of wiſdom, and full of plainneſs; we may read wiſdom upon the very letter of ſome words, and in the face of ſome works of God, while other leſſons of wiſdom are hard, ſo hard to be underſtood, that none can unriddle the meaning of them. And in this the Lord maintaineth his own honour, and keepeth ſtate; he will not have all he doth, or all he ſpeaks lie level to every apprehenſion, or to be a Text for every mans interpretation; he hath ſome knotty ænigma's and obſcure riddles to exerciſe the holieſt wits, the higheſt parts, the choiſeſt gifts of his people, yea and their patience too: they muſt ſtand waiting and expecting, yea admiring and wondering what God meaneth. 'Tis learned neſcience willingly not to know, what God is unwilling we ſhould know. They are as good Scholars who endeavour not to learn what he is not pleaſed to teach them, as they who have learned what he teacheth them. Though his ſecrets be with thoſe that fear him, yet we muſt fear to be among his ſecrets.

Sunt quædam abyſſi de quibus diſputare, quas ſcrutari, eſt ſeipſum præcipitare. San. *Erudita inſcitia eſt, non ſcire velle quæ magiſter maximus nos voluit neſcire.*

The ſecrets of wiſdom here eſpecially meant, are (I conceive) the ſecrets of providence; That's the ſubject upon which the diſpute runs: God in his actings toward mankind, hath many reſerves in his own breaſt and boſome, which no man is able, or ſhould adventure to give any reaſon or account of, beſides the dictate and meer good pleaſure of his own good will.

Once more, *O that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom*, is, as if *Zophar* had ſaid, Thou judgeſt upon the out-ſide, thou dwelleſt in the bark and rinde of divine diſpenſations, thou canſt not look into their heart, God alone can ſhew that to thee. The word which we tranſlate [*Shew*] ſignifies to interpret and expound that which is dark, myſterious and ænigmatical.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Wiſdom is a ſecret, or hath a ſecret in it.*

1. Then it is precious. That which is very common may be very good (as air and water) but it cannot bear any great price. 2. Then wiſdom muſt be ſought for, and ſought with diligence; *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures*, (*Prov.* 2.4.) Wiſdom lies deep, as the veins of gold ſilver in the earth. *Wiſdom is to be ſought as ſilver.* Silver is not to be had upon the ſurface of the earth there you may find pibbles and flints, but if you would have ſilver, you muſt dig and Mine for it. Secrets are not ſeen at firſt ſight, nor found out upon the firſt ſearch; we muſt enquire and enquire, look and look, enquire and look often, and long for the ſecrets of wiſdom. We may buy gold too dear, and be at more charge to ſeek for ſilver, then the ſilver will be worth when it is found. But we cannot buy wiſdom too dear; and the leaſt vein of divine ſecrets, which we find, will not only bear all our charges in the ſearch, but enrich us alſo.

Again, The word is in the plural, *O that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom.* Hence note,

There are many ſecrets in wiſdom.

The Apoſtle (*Epheſ.* 3.10.) ſpeaks of the *manifold wiſdom of God.* His wiſdom is full of variety, it is of many ſorts and forms, of many folds and plights. The wiſdom of God is ſimple and uncompounded, it is pure and unmixed with any thing but it ſelf, yet it is manifold in degrees, kindes and adminiſtrations, *There are ſecrets of wiſdom*; when you have learned one ſecret, there are more to be learned. As there is not only a ſecret, but ſecrets, many ſecrets of iniquity lie in the heart of man; we may go from one room of the heart unto another (as the Prophet *Ezekiel* was carried from one place to another about the houſe of the Lord, *Chap.* 8.) *to ſee greater and greater abominations.* Thus you may go from ſecret to ſecret, from one ſecret of wiſdom to another, and when you have ſeen both, there are yet greater ſecrets to be ſeen, beſides thoſe which ſhall never be ſeen. Some works of wiſdom are unſearchable, and paſt finding out; they are alſo innumerable and paſt reckoning up. Some things are called ſecrets, becauſe they can hardly be known; other things are called ſecrets, becauſe they cannot at all be known. A third ſort are ſo ſecret, that it is our ſin to attempt, yea to deſire to know them. All the ſecrets of wiſdom are in God, yet ſome belong unto us; and they are called ſecrets, not becauſe they are not at all revealed, but becauſe they are obſcurely revealed. Some ſecrets in God belong to God alone; and they are called ſecrets, becauſe they are not at all revealed. That's the meaning of *Moſes*, Deut. 29.29. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but things revealed unto us, and our children for ever.*

Thirdly, The ſpecial ſecrets of wiſdom here ſpoken of, being ſeated in providence, Obſerve,

The works of God are full of ſecret wiſdom.

As there are myſteries in the Word, ſo in the works of God. There are myſteries in the work of redemption, the whole Goſpel is a myſtery. *The great myſtery of godlyneſs*, 1 Tim. 3.16. Now as the work of redemption is full of myſteries, ſo are the works of providence; How many hath God poſed and put to a ſtand to read and pick out the meaning of his providential motions? why he afflicteth this man, why he proſpereth that; why affairs go ſometimes forward, and why at any time backward; why the deliverance of the Church proceeds no faſter, and why deliverance makes ſo many ſtops and ſtands, why ſuch inſtruments are laid aſide, and ſuch imployed, theſe poſe and gravel the underſtanding of man: nor can we give any account of them till we go into the Sanctuary, and inform our ſelves from the oracle of the Word about the order of the works of God.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *God only can ſhew and teach us effectually the ſecret wiſdom of his works and of his word.*

As we learned from the former clauſe, That a word of Gods ſpeaking humbles the ſoul: ſo here we learn, That a word of Gods ſpeaking enlightens the ſoul. God is the revealer of ſecrets, *There is a God in heaven* (ſaith *Daniel*, chap. 2.28.) *that revealeth ſecrets.* I cannot interpret the Kings dream, or ſpell the meaning of it, but there is one in heaven that can, his name is the *revealer of ſecrets.* If he ſhew them, we ſhall ſurely ſee them. *Thou haſt corrected me* (ſaith repenting *Ephraim*) *and I was corrected*; and if God inſtruct us, we ſhall be inſtructed. The dulleſt Scholar cannot but learn, if God vouchſafe to be his Tutour. *He that made the underſtanding can make us underſtand.* This is one of the articles of the new Covenant, *Heb.* 8.11. *In thoſe dayes I will put my lawes into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and they ſhall not teach every man his neighbour, ſaying, Know the Lord, for all ſhall know me from the leaſt to the greateſt:* God himſelf hath undertaken to be our teacher: though we are unapt, dull and indocible, yet, he hath promiſed to be at the pains to teach us. His teaching doth not acquit us from our attendance upon the teaching of man, but aſſures us that he will teach his, if man doth not: and that while man teacheth, he will make that teaching effectual and ſucceſsful. When he gives us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his Word by, we read and underſtand: And unleſs he give us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his works by, we cannot read them with underſtanding. We are as ignorant in the book of the creatures, as in the book of Scripture, until God inſtruct us; and if he inſtruct us, we prove knowing in both. *What I do* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 13.7.) *thou knoweſt not now; but thou ſhalt know hereafter:* And what was the date of this *hereafter?* even the day of the Spirits operation in him. *Ye have an unction* (as the beloved Diſciple writes, 1 *John* 2.20.) *from the holy one, and ye know all things.* When the anointing teacheth, we have a *qualified, a moderated Omniſcience.* He knows all things (in this ſence) who knows as much as concerns him to know; and except the anointing teacheth us, we know never a Letter, either of what God hath written, or of what he is doing, as we ought to know. His ancient people the *Jews,* (*Pſal.* 106. 7.) *underſtood not his works;* and he reproves them by the Stork in the heavens, by the Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, by all the fowls of the air, as more learned and ſagacious in his works and providences, then the men of *Iſrael. The ſtork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow obſerve the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgment of the Lord* (Jer. 8.7.) My people do not underſtand when it is winter, and when it is ſummer; when it is a ſeaſon of mercy, and when of judgment. Some are ſick, their bodies are ſmitten; others are poor, their eſtates are ſmitten; a third ſort are diſgraced, their names are ſmitten; but they have neither ears to hear, nor hearts to underſtand unto this day. How ſenſleſs are thouſands at this day about the great things which God is doing among us? He works terrible things in righteouſneſs, but few learn either the righteouſneſs of their own wayes, or the righteouſneſs of Gods wayes. Few learn either what God hath done, or what themſelves ought to do. *O that God would teach ſuch the ſecrets of his wiſdom!*

That they are double to that which is.

כפלים *Dualis numeri propriè ſignificat duplicia. Linguæ ſanctæ mos eſt ea duplicia vocare, quæ aliqua dignitate, virtute, aut numero excellunt; ſicut apud Latinos res hujuſmodi Decimanæ vel Decumanæ vocari ſolent.*

The word **double**, is not here taken arithmetically or ſtrictly, as noting juſt *two for one*; but by *double,* is meant much or *manifold*; a certain exceſs being put for an uncertain: it is frequent, in the language of Scripture, to call thoſe things which exceed much, *double*; and but *double,* though they exceed very much, though they exceed ſeven fold, yea an hundred fold, *Iſa.* 40. 2. *Speak comfortably to Jeruſalem,* &c. *for ſhe hath received of the Lords hand double for all her ſins.* But doth it ſuit with the goodneſs of God, or his ſparing mercy, to puniſh his people much for ſin, or double for their ſin? Doth not *Zophar* in this verſe, argue *Job* into patience, and redargue his impatience, by telling him, That *God exacted of him leſs then his iniquity deſerved*; and did he exact of *Jeruſalem* double for all her iniquities?

I anſwer, God is ſo far from exacting double of his people for ſin in a way of ſatisfaction, that he taketh nothing of them, not a penny of them upon that account. Chriſt is the only pay-maſter for believers to the juſtice of God, and he hath paid double, yea, an hundred fold, in ſufficiency, for all their ſins. When the Church receives double, it is double, that is, full chaſtiſement for all her ſins, but ſhe makes no payment for any one of her ſins. So *double deſtruction* threatned upon the enemy, is full deſtruction, (*Jer.* 17. 17.) And when the Church is promiſed *double honour for her ſhame,* Iſa. 61. 7. *and double liberty for her reſtraint and impriſonment,* (Zech. 9. 12.) the Prophets give her aſſurance of compleat honour and perfect liberty.

In ſpelunca duplici, i. e. *excellenti, pulchra & eximia.* Bol.

Again, The word *double* is put alſo for that which is in any kind choice and excellent. The burying place which *Abraham* bought of *Ephron,* is called (from this word) the *Cave of Machpelah*; that is, ſay ſome, a double Cave, one for men, another for women, one within another; or, as others, a fair, beautiful Cave; to which ſence, the words of the children of *Heth,* at the ſixth verſe, ſeem to lead us: *In the choice of our ſepulchers bury thy dead.* That which is beſt or moſt, is double at leaſt. Thus the *ſecrets of God,* being very excellent, *are double,*

לתושיה

To that which is.] The word which we tranſlate, *that which is,* beareth a very various ſence, and ſo renders the Text very difficult.

Secundum legem. Pag. *Et quod multiplex eſſet lex ejus* Vulg.

Intellige legem Noæ datam. Hug. Grot. *in loc.*

Firſt, It ſignifies a Law or Rule preſcribed to live and walk by; Hence ſome tranſlate, *They are double according to the Law. O that he would ſhew thee, that his Law is double, or that there is a great deal more in the Law, then thou apprehendeſt.* Some reſtrain this to the Law given *Noah,* the ſeven precepts whereof are famous among the ancient traditions of the Jews. The firſt whereof, forbad the *worſhip of ſtrange gods.* The ſecond commanded to *bleſs the Name of the true God.* The third prohibited the *ſhedding of innocent blood.* The fourth was againſt the *defilements of filthy luſts.* The fifth againſt *Theft.* The ſixth concerned *judgment and juſtice.* The ſeventh ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not pull a member from a living creature, and eat it.*

Duplicia tibi conveniunt, i. e. *duplo majora ſupplicia quam patiaris, juxta æquitatis normam.* Merc.

But we need not reduce *Zophar*'s text to theſe ſtraights; but enlarge it to the whole revealed will of God, which is often called the Law of God. The Hebrew particle affixed, noteth a relation; *double according to,* or, *by the meaſure of the Law.* As if he had ſaid, Thou haſt narrow thoughts of God, and of his ſecret wiſdom in afflicting thee; but according to law, thy afflictions might be double upon thee, God might make his little finger heavier then his loyns have been. To this ſence Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates; *And that thou ſhouldeſt have double by juſtice.*

Hence obſerve, *There is more righteouſneſs in the law of God then man is able to comprehend.*

As there is more mercy in the Goſpel then we are able to comprehend (no man ever ſaw into the depths of that mercy) ſo there is more holineſs in the Law, then we are able to comprehend: No man ever ſaw into the depths of that righteouſneſs. There is an infinite holineſs in the Law, (*Pſal.* 119. 96.) *I have ſeen an end of all perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*: He ſpeaks not in the concrete, I have ſeen an end of *perfect things*; but in the abſtract, *an end of perfection, and of all perfection*; I have come to the outſide, or to the very bottom of all (a man may ſoon travel through all the perfections that are in the world, and either ſee their end, or ſee that they muſt end.) *But thy commandment is exceeding broad*; that is, it is exceedingly broader then any of theſe perfections, I cannot ſee the end of it, and I know it ſhall never have an end. There is a vaſtneſs of purity and ſpiritualneſs in the Law. Some narrow it up into a ſmall compaſs; the Phariſees of old, with their poor impure ſpirits and groſs imaginations, ſtraightned the Law into their model, and made it very narrow: They thought no man brake the Law, which ſaith, *Thou ſhalt do no murder,* but he that cut his brothers throat: That no man brake the Law that forbiddeth Adultery, but he that actually defiled his neighbours wife, &c. But when Chriſt opened the myſteries of the Law, he ſhewed ſecrets of wiſdom there. His Doctrine aſſureth, That a luſtful thought is a violation of that Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery*: That an angry thought is a breach of that Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not kill.* Thus the Law is of a vaſt compaſs. *I* (ſaith *Paul*) *was once alive without the Law* (Rom. 7. 9.) I thought my ſelf a *brave man, I was ſome body,* my Conſcience never troubled me, I knew not my diſeaſe, while the Law ſtood aloof off, and I was without the Law, (Not that *Paul* had not the Law both written in his heart, and in his book; for as a Phariſee, he was brought up among the Commentators of the Law) but he was without it, or, he was but at the outſide of it (though I give it not for the proper meaning of the place, yet in that ſence alſo) he was without the Law; he had not travelled through the length and breadth of it: *But* (ſaith He) *when the Commandment came,* when it came in the ſpiritualneſs of it, and I ſaw, in ſome meaſure, what holineſs was couched there, I was then in a woful condition, I ſaw my ſelf a loſt man; *then ſin revived, and I died*; and (*ver.* 13.) *Sin by the Commandment became exceeding ſinful*; that is, when the Commandment was cleared to me, then I ſaw that I was extream ſinful, or felt the violent motions of my ſin. My ſin being diſcovered by that light, began to ſpit out its venom, either provoking me with freſh and unwearied aſſaults to commit it, or terrifying and vexing me for what I had committed. There is a multiplicity of purities in the Law, reaching the multiplicity of impurities and ſinful imaginations in us. The Law of God doth, though the Laws of men do not, nor can, take notice of, and deſcend to the leaſt *Items* and *punctilio's.* A man cannot ſo much as go a hairs breadth beyond that which is right, but the Law is upon his back; a man cannot have a wry thought, but the Law meets with it; and a godly man (who is ſpiritual, and hath a new nature in him) ſeldom hath a wrong thought, but he takes himſelf tardy in it, and finds ſomewhat in that holy and righteous will of

Divinæ legis multiplicatio in eo conſiſtit, quod ad minima quæque ſe extendit. Aq. *Lex Dei curat de minimis.*

God, by which he can charge himſelf a ſinner. Whereas, they that are carnal, and ignorant of the Law, can run on in a thouſand ſins, and never tell themſelves of one, nor will they be convinced, when another tells them. *A godly man hath a Preacher in his own boſom*; if he do but ſtep aſide, or do amiſs, ſomewhat within will ſhew him a rule, and bring him a light to take meaſure of, and ſee his failings by. *He* (as the Apoſtle hath it, 2 *Cor.* 10. 6.) *hath in a readineſs to revenge every diſobedience.* He finds a weapon ready to his hand, in the Magazin of the word of God, to avenge every diſobedience of his heart; if but a vain thought ariſe, he hath ſomewhat ready to check it; ſuch is the variety and largeneſs of the Law, that it diſcovers and controlls every aberration. *If God ſhew a Soul the ſecrets of wiſdom in the glaſs of the Law*, he muſt confeſs that it is double to all he knew before, from the light of nature, or from the dictates of humane reaſon.

Præſcriptum rationis quod ſequi oportet in pœnis irrogandis Rab. Levi.
Infinitæ ſunt in mente Dei leges, rationes, & modi quibus utitur in mortalium regimine; qui ſenſus leniſſimus eſt. Bold.

Secondly, The word ſignifies an inward Law, as well as an outward; yea, the height and ſpirit, the extractions and quinteſſence of reaſon come under this notion. There is a reaſon, a preſcript of reaſon in God. He acteth by a rule within himſelf, his righteous will is his rule. He gives us a law to regulate our wills, but his own will is his law. We need give no other reaſon, that what he hath done is right, but this, that he hath done it. We have received one law from the mind of God, but there are infinite laws in the mind of God. Thus the ſence runs very clear; *O that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double (to what thou thinkeſt) according to the internal, eternal movings and thoughts of his own heart.* Hence *David*'s holy rapture (*Pſal.* 40. 5.) *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order to thee: If I would declare and ſpeak of them, they are more then can be numbred.* The works of God toward his people are many and wonderful, but his thoughts are more. The thoughts of God are the eternal purpoſes of his heart. He doth not think and then reſolve, but his thoughts are his reſolutions. His thoughts ſtand, he never loſt or laid aſide any one of them.

Duplo majora eſſe iis quæ exiſtunt Jun.
Vox Thuſiah *complectitur omnes virtutes Dei, ejus ſapientiam & juſtitiam, quæ duplo,* i. e. *multo major & illuſtrior eſt quàm nobis videatur, vel noſtra ratio capere poſſit.*

We tranſlate, *That they are double to that which is*: the word ſignifieth *being*, or the exiſtence of a thing; and ſo others render, *O that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to thoſe things which exiſt:* As if he had ſaid, The Lord hath revealed and made many things apparent, but the things which appear not, are far more then thoſe which do appear; the ſecret wiſdom of God exceeds what he hath revealed; he afflicteth thee according to what he hath revealed, but he might afflict thee more; if he ſhould proceed with thee according to the height of his ſecret wiſdom. Hence obſerve,

> That, *The wiſdom of God which appeareth to us, is not half, or is but little in compariſon of that which is in God.*

The Lord hath not brought forth all the treaſures of his wiſdom; he hath not ſtamped all his wiſdom upon any thing which he hath done, no nor upon any thing he hath ſpoken: It is not poſſible that a finite nature ſhould receive the whole impreſſion of an infinite wiſdom. Our receipts are but drops, he hath an Ocean of wiſdom in himſelf. We are narrow-mouth'd veſſels, we take in by little and little. We are veſſels of a ſmall and narrow gage; when we have taken in all we can, we have taken in but little. God gives us more then we receive, and he hath more then he hath given. As the ſecrets of ſin in man are double to thoſe which appear; no man ever ſinned out all the ſinfulneſs of his heart. Though thouſands have brought forth abundance, though they have acted many abominations, yet as *Solomon* ſpeaks, there are ſtill *ſeven abominations in their hearts.* Monſters and Prodigies of wickedneſs lie in thoſe dens and dark chambers, which the world never ſaw. Now as the ſecrets of ſin in man are double to thoſe which appear; ſo much more are the ſecrets of wiſdom in God. The great God of heaven and earth hath a ſtock, a ſtore of wiſdom by him, which no creature ever ſaw or looked into, or is indeed capable of. No man, but the *Man-Chriſt*, hath known ſo much as is poſſible to be known of God, and moſt of God is impoſſible to be known by man. We ſhould be aſhamed, that we know no more of what is revealed; and we ſhould adore what is not revealed to our knowledge. The wiſdom of God is divided into ſecret and revealed: mans portion is in things revealed; Gods portion is in ſecret things: God hath reſerved a far greater portion for himſelf then he hath given unto man; that which will ſerve man, will not ſerve the Lord; his portion is as much above mans, as himſelf is above man. This *Zophar* layes before *Job*, that he might convince and humble him. Why doſt thou cavil or fret thy ſelf through with impatience, at what God doth, ſeeing thou canſt not ſound the reaſon of what he doth? thou haſt not fathomed God; thou haſt not reported all that God is, or hath, *The ſecrets of wiſdom are double to that which is.*

His next words are an inference upon, or the uſe of this Doctrine.

Know therefore that God exacteth of thee leſs then thine iniquity deſerveth.

Thus he applies what he had ſpoken in general. God hath ſecrets of wiſdom, and they are double; What then? I infer this upon it, *Know therefore* (O Job) *that God exacteth of thee leſs then thine iniquity deſerveth.*. Obſerve from *Zophar*'s method,

> That, *Truths are to be applied and brought home to the Conſcience of the hearer, or to the buſineſs under debate.*

Poſſibly *Job* might not have known the meaning of *Zophar*'s diſcourſe, That God had ſecrets of wiſdom, and that the ſecret wiſdom of God is double to his revealed; he might be to ſeek what uſe to make of this: *Therefore* (ſaith he) *know* (here is the application) *God exacteth of thee leſs then thine iniquity deſerveth.*

Exacteth of thee.] The Hebrew *Naſhah*, ſignifies, to forget, to lend, and to exact what is lent; and from this fruitfulneſs of the Original, there ariſe ſundry interpretations of the Text. Many take the former ſence; as *Naſhah*, ſignifies, to forget, and they differ yet much in giving the meaning of the whole Sentence.

נשה *Obliviſci, & in ſuo Hiphil non tam obliviſci facere, quam notitiam auferre ſignificat.*

Firſt thus, *Know therefore that God maketh or cauſeth thee to forget thine iniquity*; as if he had ſaid, There is infinite wiſdom in God, and if he ſhould break forth upon thee in the full luſtre of his holineſs, and make thee remember all thy ſins, thou wouldeſt be ſwallowed up in the gulf of thy own ſinfulneſs. As no man can ſee the face of God and live, it is ſo glorious; ſo a ſinner cannot ſee his own face and live, it is ſo odious. As God in condeſcention to our weakneſs, ſhews us but the *back-parts* of his *glorious ſelf*, ſo but the *back-parts* of our ſinful ſelves. It is alwayes our ſin to forget our ſins, but it is often mercy in God to make us forget them. *Know therefore that God makes thee to forget thine iniquity*; that is, the Lord doth not ſet them in the eye of thy Conſcience, nor deals he with thee as if thou hadſt committed ſuch ſins, which yet he could bring to thy remembrance, and ſet them in order before thine eyes. So the interlineal gives it, *Know that God doth cauſe ſomewhat of thine iniquity to be hidden from thee, or, to be a ſecret to thee.* God doth not open the pack of thine iniquity, and ſhew thee all the wickedneſs that is in thine heart and life; God lets ſome of it lie hid, and be as a thing forgot, or a ſecret to thy ſelf.

Scito quod Deus latere facit aliquid de iniquitate tua. Ar. Mont.

Secondly, Others refer this forgetfulneſs to God himſelf, who is ſaid to forget the fault, when he remits the puniſhment. This comes up to the ſenſe of our Tranſlators; for when a thing is forgotten, then it is not exacted, or called for (*Act.* 17. 30) *The times of this ignorance God winked at*; he regarded not, he looked not after what was done; (that's the common expoſition of the Text) God did (as it were) forget the ſinfulneſs of thoſe times. As God is ſaid to forget ſin, or to remember it no more, when he fully pardons it; ſo he may be ſaid to forget ſin, when he doth not fully puniſh it. When meer ignorance hinders man from ſeeing, meer mercy hinders God from ſeeing. He is pleaſed to wink, when we cannot ſee. *When men have not much underſtanding what to do, God hath not much memory of what they do*; that is, he doth not ſtrictly reckon with them, or bring them to an account for what they have done. Though a ſin of ignorance is damnable in it ſelf, and may condemn the ſinner, yet the Lord puts a difference between ſins committed ignorantly and knowingly, in the dark and in the light; between thoſe which are committed againſt the light of nature only, and thoſe committed againſt Goſpel-light. Thus the preſent expoſition carries it;

Know,

Scito quod Deus remiſit tibi partem iniquitatum tuarum. Vatabl.

Oblitus, i.e. *pœnam iniquitatis tuæ debitam diſtulit.* Tyg.

Know, O Job, *that God handles thee, as if he had forgotten or were ignorant of thine iniquity.* Which interpretation a learned Writer makes his tranſlation of the Text; *Know therefore, that God hath remitted part of thine iniquity.*

A third renders, *Know therefore that God hath deferred thine iniquity*, he hath put it aſide for a time, and hath not called thee to a preſent anſwer. Deferring is a temporary forgetting; when a man doth willingly forget a thing, he intends not to take a ſtrict or ſudden account of it; as when he forgets unwillingly or through infirmity, he cannot take any account of it at all.

Scito quod oblitus eſt tui Deus propter iniquitatem.

There is yet a fourth interpretation given from this ſenſe of the word, *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, becauſe of thine iniquity*; and ſo the forgetfulneſs lies upon *Job's* perſon, and not upon *Job's* ſin; Thou complaineſt that God regards thee not, hears not thy cry, attends not to thy prayer, haſtens not in with relief and ſuccour in this thy ſad condition, *Know that God forgets thee*, and he hath reaſon to do ſo; *He forgets thee becauſe of thine iniquity.* God forgets thoſe who have forgotten him, *Prov.* 1.28. *Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.* But hath not the Lord promiſed to anſwer when we call, yea to anſwer before we call? Hath he not promiſed to be found of thoſe that ſeek him? yea to be found of thoſe who ſeek him not? Why then are theſe earneſt ſuitors rejected, unanſwered? The cauſe was in themſelves; *They hated knowledge*: therefore God would not know them: *They would none of his counſels*, therefore he would none of their prayers. God put them in mind, but they forgot him; therefore they put God in mind, and he forgot them: *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, becauſe of thine iniquity.* To obey God is to remember him, and none are ſo much remembred by God, as they who obey him; to ſin againſt God is to forget him, and none are forgotten of God, but for their ſin.

נשה *Significat mutuo dare & exigere, more fœneratoris.*

We tranſlate, *God exacteth of thee* **[leſs then thine iniquity deſerveth.]** The word ſignifies alſo to *lend* (as was toucht before) ſo we read (*Deut.* 15.2. *Deut.* 24.10.) in the Laws given to the *Jews* about releaſing; to exact leſs then due, is, *to releaſe ſomewhat of what is lent.* The Adverb *leſs* is not in the Original, no nor the verb *deſerveth*; our Tranſlators have added both in a different letter, to ſupply and clear their ſence upon the place, the words being only thus, *Know that God exacteth of thee for thine iniquity.* Mr. *Broughton* renders it roundly ſo, *Know that the Puiſſant will call thee to an account for thine iniquity.* Another learned Tranſlator gives it thus, *Acknowledge at leaſt that God exacteth ſomewhat of thee for thine iniquity*; as if he had ſaid, *Do not think that all this evil is come upon thee without cauſe; for ſhame ſubmit, and confeſs that thy ſin hath deſerved ſome of it.* Our rendring alludes to the dealing of a merciful Creditor with his Debtor, who is willing to be compounded with, for what is juſtly owing him; or, to the dealing of a merciful Magiſtrate towards a Malefactor, when he layes not the rigor of the Law upon him. Thus the *Jews* would not exact ſo much puniſhment of *Paul*, as they ſuppoſed his iniquity deſerved. The Law admitted forty ſtripes; they would not go to the utmoſt line of juſtice; they, to do him a courteſie, or to avoid the ſuſpition of cruelty (though this mercy was cruel) abated him an ace, and therefore gave him only forty ſtripes ſave one. The mercy of God to man, runs not like this, or any other mercy of man to man. When we ſay, God exacteth leſs then iniquity deſerveth, we mean, God hath not exacted half, no nor a tenth of what our iniquity deſerveth. He ſets down but fifty in his Bill of chaſtnings, for an hundred, which he finds in our Bill of tranſgreſſings: And this half which he exacteth, is not taken, either to ſatisfie himſelf, or properly to puniſh us, but to purifie us, that we may glorifie him. God exacteth ſo little, that he indeed exacteth nothing. The word is harſh, and hears ill among men; but God is ſo good to *Iſrael*, that we know not how to call him an *exacter*, but becauſe he doth not exact.

Agnoſce ſaltem exigere abs te Deum aliquid de iniquitate tua. Jun.

2 Cor. 11. 24.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Every ſin makes us debtors to God.*

We are in his books, and in his bonds for every tranſgreſſion. All men are in a debt of duty to God (as creatures) which if they pay not, they ſin, and ſo run into a double debt; a debt of duty, which they ſhould have performed, and a debt of penalty, becauſe they have not performed it. *Tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil*; there is the *penalty*. Creatures owe God a duty, which they ought to pay; and ſinners owe him him a penalty, which muſt be paid, either by themſelves, or by their Surety. The Apoſtle uſeth that phraſe (*Gal.* 5.3.) *Every man that is circumciſed, is a debtor to the whole Law.* He is a debtor in regard of duty, becauſe he that thinks himſelf bound to keep one part of the Ceremonial Law, doth thereby binde himſelf to keep it all; where the parts are inſeparably united, we pull all upon us by engaging or medling with any one. And he that is a debtor in duty to keep the whole Law, muſt needs be a debtor in regard of the penalty; becauſe he is not able to keep any part of it. And that's the reaſon why Chriſt (who ſtood in the place of ſinners) was put to pay both theſe debts, that ſo he might fully cut ſcores with the Law. He paid the debt of duty, *by fulfilling all righteouſneſs.* He alſo paid the debt of penalty, *by enduring all ſorrows*; even the ſorrows of death it ſelf. We do but confeſs the debt, and God croſſeth the book, and cancelleth all our bonds. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful to forgive us our ſins, and the bloud of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſins*, 1 Joh. 1.9. The red lines of his bloud are drawn over the black and abominable lines of our tranſgreſſions, and ſo the debt is diſcharged.

Secondly, Obſerve, *If God exact not the whole debt of ſinners, it is mercy.*

Zophar would have *Job* to know this, Thou haſt ſpoken hardly of God, becauſe he hath ſmitten and afflicted thee; but God doth not exact of thee what thine iniquity deſerveth; Is not this mercy? *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not conſumed*, Lam. 3.22. and *verſ.* 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins?* It is mercy if life be ſpared. Though a man be not left a rich man, a ſtrong man, yet if he be left a living man, yea though but a man, he hath no reaſon to complain, while he remembers he is a ſinful man, and is puniſhed for his ſin. It is mercy that we have not the whole debt laid upon us: If God defer any time, or remit any part, it is a favour; As Chriſt paid, ſo he paid all for believers: and the damned ſhall pay all in hell; there ſhall be no releaſing, no compounding of their debts. And becauſe they are not able to pay down the full ſumme at once, therefore they ſhall alwayes be paying. How rich is the grace which we have by Jeſus Chriſt, through whom God releaſeth all our debts! We muſt have paid all, if Chriſt had not paid all: Now he hath paid all, and we pay none at all. Chriſt having paid all for his redeemed ones, God doth not exact one farthing from them, much leſs the utmoſt farthing, as he will from the impenitent and unbelievers.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Afflictions are the deſert of ſin.*

God exacteth of thee leſs then thy iniquity, or *then thine iniquity deſerveth.* Moſt are afflicted for their ſin; none had ever been afflicted, if they had not ſinned. The doctrine is true, though *Zophar* failed in his application. *Job* was a ſinner (the beſt of Saints on earth are ſinners) yet God afflicted *Job* for the trial and improvement of Grace, not for the purging or correcting of his iniquity, as hath been obſerved from thoſe words in the ſecond Chapter, *Thou provokeſt me to afflict him without cauſe*; that is, without ſuch cauſe as thou ſuggeſteſt, his iniquity or hypocriſie.

Fourthly, Obſerve, That, *All the afflictions of this life are leſs then our ſins.*

That's *Ezra*'s confeſſion (*Ezra* 9.13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.* Was it a touch, or ſome light ſtroke which God gave *Jeruſalem*? Was their wound but a ſcratch, or their affliction little? Read the *Lamentations* of *Jeremiah*, and you ſhall find how doleful, how ſad, how terrible a judgment was brought upon *Jeruſalem*; even ſuch, as was not done under the whole heaven: and yet *Ezra* ſaith, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.* As all the good which we do in this life, is leſs then the leaſt of the mercies of God; ſo the leaſt evil of ſin which we commit, is greater then all the evils of puniſhment in this life. *In the life to come God will make even with ſinners and with* ſaints. Theſe ſhall receive as much good as Chriſt hath deſerved for them, and they ſhall receive as much evil as themſelves have deſerved: Both are here ſhort of their due, yea, and uncapable of their due. The Saints in this life, cannot hold ſo much glory as Chriſt hath purchaſed, (1 *Cor.* 15. 50.) *Fleſh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.* The frame of nature, though purified and purged, is not receptive of heavenly glory. Thus alſo the frame of mans nature unpurified, is not receptive of ſo much puniſhment as ſin deſerveth. This fleſh and blood cannot enter into the Kingdom of hell. Therefore as the Saints ſhall have ſpiritual bodies, that they may be fit veſſels for the glory of heaven; ſo the wicked ſhall (in a ſence) have ſpiritual bodies too, that they may be fit veſſels for the miſery of hell. Their bodies ſhall not die, their bodies ſhall live without the ſupports of nature, meat and drink, ſleep or refreſhing. Thus they ſhall have an Angelical life; and all to this end, that they may be capable ſubjects of the fury and wrath of God, even of all that vengegeance, which he hath prepared, and will powr out upon thoſe who diſobey the Goſpel, and come not in to receive Jeſus Chriſt. We may ſay of wicked men, in this life, *Verily they have their reward*; they have ſeen the beſt of their dayes, the beſt of their ſtate; but how much ſo ever any wicked man is puniſhed, though he ſpend all his dayes groaning and ſighing, though he be poor and ſick, weak and pained, though he lie upon the rack of the moſt torturing diſeaſes, the Stone, Gout, *&c.* yet it cannot be ſaid of this man, *He hath had his puniſhment.* A miſerable ignorant man is ready to ſay, *I hope I have had my puniſhment, my hell in this life*: Alas! poor ſoul, thou maiſt be pained here and in hell too; thou maiſt go from rack to rack, from torture to torture; preſent puniſhments are but as a ſip of that cup, which ſhall be drunk to the bottom in hell; they are but as ſports to the pains there, and as painted fire to real fire. As the beſt of the Saints portion is behind, their works follow them, their reward waits for them; ſo the worſt of a wicked mans portion is behind; his ſins follow him, his works of ſpiritual darkneſs follow him into eternal darkneſs, his puniſhment waits for him; though his judgment be now aſleep, yet it will be awake, and never ſleep, no, nor ſlumber any more.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper then hell, what canſt thou know?

The meaſure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the Sea.

If he cut off, and ſhut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?

For he knoweth vain man, he ſeeth wickedneſs alſo; will he not conſider it?

For vain man would be wiſe, though man is born like a wild aſſes colt.

THe three firſt Verſes of this context are an illuſtration, or a comment upon the ſixth. *Zophar* having breathed out his wiſh, *O that God would ſpeak, and that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to that which is*; proceeds to prove, that it is but need he ſhould; thoſe ſecrets being ſuch, as none can ſee, till they are ſhewed. This he ſets on rhetorically, with a vehemently negative expoſtulation.

Verſe 7. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?* Thou canſt not. *Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* It is impoſſible. In the two following verſes, the eighth and the ninth, he purſues the ſame argument; advancing the wiſdom of God above the higheſt heavens, and carrying it below the loweſt parts of the earth: *The utmoſt extent of things created is too narrow for the Creator.* Mans natural wiſdom reacheth at the moſt, but to the utmoſt bounds of nature. But Gods wiſdom *is as high as* (that is, higher then) *heaven, yea deeper then hell*; *the meaſure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the Sea.*

From the vaſtneſs of Gods wiſdom, he deſcends to the abſoluteneſs of his ſoveraignty, at the tenth verſe, and gives an account, or an argument of both in the eleventh and twelfth.

Verſe 7. Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?

The word implies exacteſt diligence to find. *Canſt thou by ſearching find?* that is, Canſt thou find by all thy ſtudies and endeavours? There is a finding by chance or accident, as well as a finding by ſearch. Some cannot find what they ſearch for; others find what they ſearch not for, (*Pſal.* 116. 3) *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me, I found trouble and ſorrow.* I found trouble which I look'd not for; I was not ſearching aſter ſorrow, but I found it. There is an elegancy in the Original (note that by the way) *The pains of hell gat hold upon me*, ſo we read; the Hebrew is, *The pains of hell found me* (one word ſignifies both) they found me, I did not find them. But no ſooner had the pains of hell found me, but I found trouble and ſorrow enough, and ſoon enough.

חקר *Perſcrutatus eſt, inquæſivit remota aut abſtruſa.*

But uſually the word noteth a finding (as here) upon enquiring; *Canſt thou by ſearching find?* Canſt thou find out God by thy exacteſt ſcrutiny, by the trial of all thy wits, or by the improvement of all thy abilities? That which is eaſie, is found with little ſearch; that which is hardeſt cannot be found with all our ſearch. When God would ſhew the obviouſneſs and openneſs of the ſin of man, he ſaith, *I have not found it by ſecret ſearch, but upon all theſe,* Jer. 2. 34. Their ſins are evident to every eye. Here when *Zophar* would ſhew the myſteriouſneſs of the wiſdom of God, he ſaith, *Thou canſt not find it* by the moſt ſecret ſearch.

But you will ſay, Cannot God be found by ſearching? God is every where; the inviſible God is every where viſible. Senſe ſees ſomewhat of him; though Faith ſees moſt, (*By faith Moſes ſaw him that is inviſible,* Heb. 11.) Senſe ſhews ſomewhat of him to thoſe who have no faith. You might read much of God in the Book of Nature, if you had not the Book of Scripture to read. Thus the Apoſtle convinceth the *Gentiles*, (Rom. 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of God,* to wit, *his eternal power and Godhead, are ſeen in things that are made*: And how are they ſeen? What! by opening their bowels, or by looking into their heart? No, If you look but upon the face, the ſurface of the Creature, if but upon the rind, the outſide of the things that are made, even their external form and faſhion, their beauty and order draw goodly lines, and make fair repreſentations of God himſelf; *even of his eternal power and Godhead.* Do but pull up a graſs from the earth, or crop off a leaf from a tree, and you may ſee God upon it. How is it then ſaid, that you cannot find out God, no not by ſearching?

Præſentemque refert quælibet herba Deum.

I anſwer, Firſt, We may find God by ſearching, but we cannot find him out; that is, we cannot find the utmoſt of God; as the next clauſe ſeems to explain: *Canſt thou find out the Almighty to perfection?*

Secondly, God may be conſidered, either in his being, or in the manner of his being; in his working, or in the manner of his working.

In his being, God is eaſily found out: This notion lies uppermoſt, or riſeth up in every heart; it is a principle that lives in, and cannot be blotted out of a natural Conſcience: Thouſands deny God, but all (who have not quite put out the very light of nature) acknowledge there is a God. A Heathen ſaid, *There is no Nation ſo barbarous, ſo untaught and ignorant, but confeſſeth there is a God.* When man fell from God, this truth ſtood; as when Cities and great Buildings are overthrown by war, ſome Towers, ſome Pinacles ſurvive the violence; ſo amongſt the ruines and decayes of that perfect nature, which God made at firſt, the notions of a God remained. Atheiſts, who would not find God, find him againſt their wills, even whether they will or no. While they thruſt God out of their Converſations, he continues in their Conſciences. That God is, is ſo eaſily found, that it can hardly be loſt; it is found with ſo little ſtudy, that many who ſtudy much to loſe it, cannot.

But you cannot find out God in the manner of his being, or what a God he is: you cannot find out his power and wiſdom, his holineſs and his juſtice, his faithfulneſs and unchangeableneſs, with all your ſearch; you cannot find theſe diſtinctly in the book of Nature, nor underſtand them eaſily when you find them plainly deſcribed, and highly magnified in the book of Scripture.

Again, We may find out God in his working, or in his works; we may ſee ſuch works done, as ſpeak a God, ſuch, as all muſt ſay with the Magicians of *Egypt*, *The finger of God is here*: We may find this with a little ſearching, poſſibly without ſearching; we can hardly hide this from our eyes; yea, if we ſhut our eyes, we have much ado not to ſee it. Some cannot ſee, though their eyes are open; others ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſhould ſee (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thine hand is lift up, they will not ſee.* Some workings of God are ſo eminent and evident, that if men were not wilfully blind, they muſt needs ſee them. That God works, that there is a divine power, carrying on the affairs of the world, is written as with a beam of the Sun. But if we conſider the manner of his working, there's a ſecret, that's myſterious: Providence hath ſuch various wayes, ſuch intricate turnings, that a ſearching man may be to ſeek about them. God doth not alwayes leave the Print of his footſteps, where he goeth. The way of an Eagle in the air, the way of a Ship in the midſt of the Sea, the way of a Serpent upon a Rock, are not ſo untraceable as many of the wayes of God.

Now foraſmuch as *Zophar* treating of the wiſdom of God, concludeth, That God cannot be found out. Having wiſhed, *O that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom*, he puts not the Queſtion thus, *Canſt thou by ſearching find out the wiſdom of God?* But, *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?*

Hence obſerve, *The wiſdom of God is God.*

So alſo the power of God is God, and the holineſs of God is God. The attributes and qualities of God, are eſſential to God; there is no diſtinction between ſubſtance and quality in God. Man and his qualities are two things, man and his wiſdom, man and his holineſs are diſtinct. Many men are neither wiſe nor holy, yet men ſtill. But God and his wiſdom, God and his holineſs are the ſame; He could not be God, if he were either unwiſe or unholy. *Once have I ſworn by my holineſs*, ſaith God, *Pſal.* 89. 36. that is, I have ſworn by my ſelf, as the Apoſtle explains it, *Heb.* 6. 13. *Becauſe he could ſwear by no greater, he ſware by himſelf.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *The wiſdom of God is unſearchable.*

As they ſaid in the book of *Judges*, *As the man is, ſo is his might*; ſo we may ſay much more, As God is, ſo is his wiſdom. There is more wiſdom of God in making the leaſt thing, then we can make out. Then, what is there in God himſelf? If a man ſhould be examined about the meaneſt Creature, can he reſolve fully, why it is made of ſuch matter, why in ſuch a form? Can he tell why the colour is ſuch, or ſuch the qualities? why for ſuch uſes, and why unto ſuch ends? God hath beſtowed great skill upon ſmalleſt works.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *God is unſearchable.*

Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? It is not in vain to ſee God, but it is in vain to ſearch him. God is *not far from any man* (Acts 17. 27.) but he is far above all men. When a Philoſopher was asked by *Hiero*, What God was? *I cannot anſwer ſuddenly* (ſaid he) *pray give me a day's time to conſider of it*; when that day was ended, and the King demanded an anſwer, he deſired a ſecond day, and after that a third, till at laſt he gave it over, profeſſing he could not find out God. God exceeds and ſwallows up, not only the reaſon of natural men, but of ſpiritual. They who are enlightened by the grace of God, cannot ſee all the light that is i God, or all of God, who is light.

Fourthly, When *Zophar* ſaith, *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?* He ſeems to imply,

That, *There is a way to find out much of God, though we cannot find him by ſearching.*

The beſt knowledge of God is from his own revelation, not by our ſtudy. Would you find out God? Do not think to do it by beating your brains, but by beating the Heavens. The knowledge of God cometh down from God; we know him when he makes himſelf known to us. And uſually he doth not make his fulneſs known to us, till we make our emptineſs known to him. We cannot find out God by reading, but we may by praying. *If any man lack wiſdom* (eſpecially this wiſdom to know God[illegible] *let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not.* It was a good ſpeech of *Luther*, *He hath ſtudied will, who hath prayed well*: Prayer attains the key of myſteries, and faith enters into them. Hence, when *Zophar* had prayed, *O that God would ſpeak, and that he would open his lips, and ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom*; he preſently concludes all ſearches about him ſucceſleſs, without him, *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?*

Bene oraſſe eſt bene ſtuduiſſe. Luth.

Fifthly, *If by ſearching we cannot find out God, then we muſt not boldly pry and preſs into the ſecrets of God.*

Yet this ſhould not quench endeavour, but regulate it, and keep it in compaſs: This ſhould make us humble, but it muſt not make us idle. Though we cannot know all of God, yet we are bound to learn all that may be known. It will be as much our ſin not to deſire to know what we may, as to deſire to know what we may not. It is our duty to enquire and travel to the utmoſt of our line; we muſt not ſit down where we are, becauſe we cannot go as far as we would. As we muſt aim at, and labour after perfection in holineſs, though we cannot reach it; ſo alſo in knowledge. We muſt not reſt in any imperfect knowledge of God, becauſe we cannot know him perfectly. Which *Zophar* teacheth us in the next words;

Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

This latter clauſe gives light to the former: For ſome may obſerve: Cannot we find out God by ſearching? *Great difficulties whet and quicken induſtry, but a total impoſſibility not only dulls, but deads it*: If we cannot find out God, why then do we ſearch? Yes, you muſt ſearch, and you may find; *but you cannot find him out unto perfection by all your ſearchings.*

The word, **Perfection**, in the Original, ſignifies the height, ſtrength, or utmoſt accompliſhment of a thing. A learned Author tranſlates it, *the parts about the heart*, or *the cloſeſt lodges of the heart*; which by a metaphor ſignifies our inward thoughts and moſt retired imaginations. As if he had ſaid, *Canſt thou find out the inmoſt receſſes or ſecrets of Gods heart? Haſt thou ſeen what is laid up in the inner chambers of his Spirit?* The heart of man is deep, only God can ſearch it; but O how deep is the heart of God? no man can ſearch it.

תכלית *Quam Græci* συντέλειαν *reddere ſolent, ſignificat finem vel conſummationē rei. Juxta A*pollinariū *accipitur pro præcordiis quaſi dei præcordia, cordiſq; receſſus penetrare homini ſit impoſſibile.* חקר *ſignificat ultimum ſummumque.* Coc.

I find a like interpretation given of the former clauſe, in anſwer to this: *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?* rendring it thus; *Canſt thou find out the laſt thing of God?* The word (*Hakar*) which we tranſlate *ſearching*, ſignifies the *chief and laſt of a thing*. And ſo that Text of *Solomon* is expounded by the ſame Author (*Prov.* 25. 27) *It is not good to eat much honey, ſo for men to ſearch their own glory, is not glory*; ſo we render: he thus; *It is not good to eat much honey, but the laſt of glory is glory*; The ſence of which reading is to this effect. The beſt of temporal and outward things (honey it ſelf) if you eat much of them, will not be ſweet, you may eat honey till honey be loathſome to you; but glory, or heavenly things (he takes glory for the happineſs which man ſhall have with God in Heaven, not for the fame or reſpect which man hath with man on earth, which is the ſenſe of our tranſlation) glory (I ſay) or the ſtate of Heaven, is ſuch, that the laſt of it is glory; the longer you feed upon glory, the ſweeter it will be, the laſt bit will be as ſweet as the firſt; *The manna which came down from heaven was loathed by the Iſraelites. But no Iſraelite ſhall loath the manna which he finds in heaven*: The laſt of glory will be glory; the longer we eat, the more we ſhall delight; the more we taſte thoſe dainties, the more pleaſant will they be to our taſte. Taking the word (*Hakar*) in that ſence, it may be rendred, *Canſt thou find out the laſt of God?* And ſo it falls in with this, *Canſt thou find him out unto perfection?*

Unto perfection.] Canſt thou come to the uttermoſt of what God is? or of what God doth? Canſt thou know God, as we ſpeak (*a capite ad calcem*) from head to foot, from beginning to end, from firſt to laſt, within and without? Canſt thou take in all the excellencies and dimenſions of God? thou canſt not do it, man, wert thou more then a man; hadſt thou the underſtanding of an Angel thou couldſt not do it. *How much ſoever thou art above man, below God, thou canſt not find out God unto perfection; God only knows God perfectly.*

Inveniri poteſt demſed non ad plenum. Druſ.

Hence obſerve, *Though much of God may be found out, yet all cannot.*

We cannot find him out unto perfection. Finite cannot hold infinite. Some may conceit (but it is a meer conceit) that they can; as a Country fellow thinks, if he were upon ſuch a Mountain which bounds the Horizon, he could touch Heaven, and take a Star in his hand; but when he comes thither, Heaven is as far off as it was, and the Stars as much out of his reach, as they were, where he ſtood before: Such are the gueſſes of men about God: if they could attain ſuch a point, and be reſolved in ſuch a doubt, then (doubtleſs) they ſhould know all the myſteries of the Divine nature: but if they get thither, they are as far from the perfection of God as before; for how near ſoever we come to God, there is an infinite diſtance between us and God. Every Believer is near God in affection, yet is he ſtill infinite removes from his perfection. *When we ſeem to come neareſt the perfections of God, God goes further off from us, and we are as much to ſeek as ever.* When holy *Auguſtine* walked by the ſea-ſide, rapt in the meditation of God and of his wayes, he heard a voice, which bad him *lade the ocean with a cockle-ſhell:* We may ſooner drain the ocean with ſuch a little ſhell, or with a ſpoon, then the perfections of God with our largeſt underſtandings. The Lord beſpeaks *Job* (chap. 38. 22.) *Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow?* There are ſecrets in Nature, which were never entred into by Art: The treaſures of the ſnow deſcend upon us, but we cannot aſcend into the treaſures of the ſnow: we cannot enter into natural things, how ſhall we enter into ſpiritual? how ſhall we enter into the God of ſpirits? *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,* (1 Cor. 2. 9.) And if the things which God hath prepared for man, have not yet entred into his heart, can God, who hath prepared thoſe things, enter into his heart? *Solomon* puts the queſtion (*Eccleſ.* 11. 5.) *Canſt thou know how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child? Even ſo* (ſaith he) *thou knoweſt not the work of God who maketh all.* If natural queſtions poſe us, divine queſtions may amaze us. To know God here is eternal life; and yet we ſhall not know all of God in eternal life. It is our perfection to know God while we ſojourn here upon the earth; yet we ſhall not know God to the utmoſt of his perfection in Heaven: In Heaven we ſhall know him perfectly, but not unto perfection: *Now we know in part, then we ſhall know as we are known*; that is, we ſhall know much, we ſhall know abundantly: *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face* (1 Cor. 13. 12.) that is, clearly, immediately, not by reflection, but by intuition. Then the curtains ſhall be drawn aſide; then all the clouds and dark vapours, which ſtand between us and truth, ſhall be ſcattered from before our eyes: Then, the beautiful face of truth ſhall be unveiled, there ſhall not ſo much as any doubt interpoſe between truth and our underſtandings. Thoſe perplexed queſtions, and fatal controverſies, which have troubled the peace of the Churches, and exerciſed, yea, vexed the greateſt wits to reſolve and compoſe them, ſhall have all their knots untied, and their fallacies diſcovered by the meaneſt Scholar in glory. And yet *Zophar*'s denying queſtion may be put to the higheſt Graduate in glory; *Canſt thou find out God unto perfection?* As there ſhall be *no ſeekers in heaven, ſo, no ſuch finders.* Creatures ſhall there know ſo much of God as will make them perfectly happy, but to know God unto perfection, is more then comes to the ſhare of a creatures happineſs. *'Tis the perfect happineſs of God, to know himſelf unto perfection.*

Cum acceſſeris, longius abit.

Zophar having by way of queſtion laid down this Poſition. That, man cannot find out God unto perfection, exemplifies it.

Verſe 8. **It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper then hell, what canſt thou know?**

Altitudines cœli, Heb. Emphaſin continet plurale, more Hebræorum, maximam altitudinem ſignificans.

It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do?] What is as high as Heaven? The Wiſdom of God is. Wiſdom is the ſoaring Antecedent to this Relative. The Hebrew is plural, *It is as the highneſſes of heaven*; take all the heights and elevations, all the ſpheres and ſtories of Heaven, climb the loftieſt pinnacles of Heaven, Wiſdom is higher, or high beyond them all: ſo it may be rendered from the original, *high above the heavens.*

Some Tranſlators give us the Text in this Interrogation, *What wilt thou do in the height of the heavens?* which ſounds like the Apoſtles caution; *Be not high minded, but fear:* or like *David*'s humble acknowledgment (*Pſal.* 131. 1.) *I do not exerciſe my ſelf in things too high for me:* As if he had ſaid, Seeing thou canſt not mannage the height of the Heavens, ſurely thou canſt not digeſt the height of God who is above the Heavens: If thou ſhouldſt be put to give an account of things in Heaven, of the Sun, Moon and Stars, or of their motion, thou wilt be puzled. How then wilt thou be able to give an account of him who is higher then the Heavens, whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain? (1 *Kings* 8. 17. *Iſa.* 66. 1.) *Who alſo buildeth his ſtories in the heavens*, Amos 9. 6. *Aſtronomers* have left us the doctrine of the Heavens; they tell us of the nature and order, of the qualities and influences of thoſe ſuperiour bodies: but they ſpeak moſt by gueſs, or without book. There is no certainty in that knowledge, though ſome probability. *Aſtronomers* look up to Heaven, but they bring little of Heaven down to us. *What wilt thou do in the height of heaven?*

Quid facies in altitudine cælorum? Sept. Vatabl. Pag. Regia.

Further, when *Zophar* ſaith, *The wiſdom of God is as high as heaven*, he means, his Wiſdom is exceeding high. The higheſt Heaven being the higheſt of all things viſible, that muſt needs be higher then the higheſt of viſibles, which is higher then the Heavens; and becauſe thoſe things which are extream high affect us highly, therefore he gives Divine wiſdom the utmoſt line of the dimenſion. *It is as high as heaven.*

Deus non ſolum in rebus creatis eſt, ſed extra, pro ſua eſſentiæ immenſitatem. Auguſt. *lib.* 11. *de civ. D. c.* 5. Damaſc. *l.* 2. *de orthod. fide, cap.* 6.

Deeper then hell, what canſt thou know?] The word *Sheol*, is taken for all that is deep or low, ſometimes it is put in ſpecial for the grave, here for the place of the damned. As we can do little in the height of Heaven, ſo we know little of the loweſt hell. Some of the upper part of the earth is to us yet (*terra incognita*) an unknown land: but all of the loweſt part of hell, is to us an unknown land: Many thouſands have travelled thither, but none have returned thence to make reports, or write books of their travels. That piece of *Geography* is very imperfect. *It is deeper then hell, what canſt thou know?* Heaven and hell are the greateſt oppoſites, or remoteſt extreams. (*Matth.* 12. 23.) *Thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted up to heaven, ſhalt be brought down to hell:* Heaven and hell are at furtheſt natural diſtance, and are therefore the everlaſting receptacles of thoſe who are at the furtheſt moral diſtance, Believers and unbelievers, Saints and impenitents. And as the height of Heaven, ſo the depth of hell is aſcribed to wiſdom, to ſhew the unſearchableneſs of it. *O the depth* (as well as O the height) *of the wiſdom of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out!* (Rom. 11. 35.) We read of the deep things of God (1 *Cor.* 2. 10.) *The Spirit ſearcheth all things, even the deep things, or the depths of God.* Satan, who is full of ſubtilty and craft, hath his *depths* alſo, (*Rev.* 2. 24.) *But unto you I ſay, as many as have not known the depths of Satan:* That is, who have not approved nor practiſed the policies and devices which Satan inſpires his diſciples with, under the notion of profound wiſdom. Deeps of all ſorts lie far out of our view, and are hard to be found out.

שאול *denotat omnia loca ſubterranea Deus.*

Jupiter eſt ſummus vertex atq; infima placta. Orph. *in Satur. hymno apud* Euſeb. *l.* 3. *c.* 2. *de præpar.* Ev.

Verſe 9. **The meaſure** (or the ſtature) **of it is longer then the earth, and broader then the ſea.**

The former verſe ſhewed us the height and depth of wiſdom; this, its length and breadth.

It is longer then the earth.] He ſpeaks popularly, or to the ſhorteſt and narroweſt capacity; man thinks there is nothing longer then the earth: The length of many parts of the earth is exceeding long; how long then is the whole earth? *Mathematicians* tell us, that the circumference of the earth is about twenty two thouſand miles, a vaſt length; and the meaſure is the ſame in the length of it from Eaſt to Weſt, or in the breadth of it from North to South: Every Sphærical body is of equal dimenſions. The meaſure of wiſdom is longeſt, being longer then the earth, which is the longeſt journey man ever travelled.

Populari modo loquitur, nam hoc ſpatio ac diſtantia vulgus nihil rarius concipit. Bold.

And broader then the ſea.] Latitude or breadth is uſually aſcribed to the ſea, as longitude or length unto the earth. The Pſalmiſt, in his meditations upon the works of God, calls it, *The great and wide ſea*, Pſal. 104. 25. Breadth is aſcribed to the ſea, becauſe of its huge extenſion. The ſea is a lower firmament: and as the upper firmament is called in the Hebrew, *A thing ſtretched out, or ſpread forth. The upper*

ים *Mare & occidens; quod mare magnum erat ad plagam occidentalem terræ Iſrael.*

upper firmament is one expanſion; ſo alſo is this lower firmament, the ſea. The ſea puts out long arms, and thence it is denominated *broad*. The breadth of a man is meaſured by his arms ſtretched forth, as his length is meaſured from head to foot: Thus the ſea ſtretching forth its mighty arms to imbrace the earth (we commonly call them, *The arms of the ſea*) carries away the name from all other creatures for latitude or breadth. There is nothing counted ſo wide and roomthy as the ſea. Such (and how much more no man knows) is the wiſdom and knowledge of God.

Here are four very different dimenſions met together, *height* and *depth*, *length* and *breadth*, yet they all mind and ſpeak the ſame thing, *That the wiſdom of God is infinite*; higher then all natural height, and deeper then all natural depth; broader then all natural breadth, and longer then all natural length. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the love of God in Chriſt (*Epheſ.* 3. 18.) aſcribeth theſe four dimenſions to it, with which *Zophar* here adorns the wiſdom of God, *That you may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge.* Many wits run riot in Geometrical notions about theſe moral dimenſions. And whereas Naturaliſts give us but three dimenſions of a body, longitude, latitude and profundity, the love and wiſdom of God have altitude added, which is a fourth. But all theſe dimenſions ſerve only to ſhew the immenſity both of the love and wiſdom of God.

Obſerve hence, Firſt, *Mans inability to reach the perfection of creatures, ſhould convince him of his utter inability to reach God in his perfection.*

For when *Zophar* affirms the wiſdom of God higher then heaven, deeper then hell, *&c.* He by a leſſer impoſſibility would convince us of a greater. Thou canſt not find out the height of heaven, nor the depth of hell; thou canſt not take the perfect length of the earth, nor the breadth of the ſea; therefore much leſs art thou able to take the height and depth, the length and breadth of God himſelf, or of his wiſdom.

Secondly, When he ſaith, that the wiſdom of God is higher, longer, deeper and broader then heaven, earth, hell and ſea; We may obſerve,

That God is preſent with all his creatures in all places.

The wiſdom of God is every where, therefore God is. Wiſdom is the *eye of God*, and God is ſaid to have *ſeven eyes* (that is, many eyes, or a manifold wiſdom) *running to and fro through the whole earth*, Zech. 3. 9. cap. 4. 10. *There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*, Eph. 4. 6. God is above all, not only in regard of power and authority, but of inſpection and over-ſight. God ſtands aloft, as upon a watch-tower, beholding all that's done below, whether within or without; whether for or againſt the Church. There is no turning, no corner, wherein any can ſtand unobſerved; for as he is above, ſo he is through all, and in all: He is through all the world by his common providence, as well as in all his Saints by his ſpecial grace. *In him we live, and move, and have our beings*, Acts 17. Yea, he is preſent in all places, not only virtually and efficaciouſly, but eſſentially. It is not with God as with the Sun, the Sun is fixt in its orb, and from thence ſends forth its light and influence into all the world: We cannot ſay the Sun is every where, though the light and heat of the Sun are every where; the body of the Sun is only in Heaven. Again, it is not with God, as with a King, who ſits upon his Throne, and yet hath long hands, and many eyes, reaching all places of his Dominion, but it is by his Authority and Commiſſions only. A King is virtually preſent in many places at once, but not perſonally; whereſoever his reſidence is, there his perſon is, and no where elſe. Whereas Gods hands and eyes, his power and wiſdom extend over all perſonally. The Divine nature is as large and vaſt as the Divine power. *Do not I fill heaven and earth*, ſaith the Lord (*Jer.* 23. 24.) Once more, God is every where, not as the Air is every where: The Air is part in one place, and part in another, God is all in every place; God is wholly in the height of heaven, and wholly in the depth of hell, wholly in the length of the earth, and wholly in the breadth of the ſea. All God is in all things, and all God is without all things; he is without all things, and not ſhut out of any thing; he is in all things, and not included in any thing, ſo the Ancients ſpeak of this wonderful myſtery of Gods omnipreſence.

Eſſentia divina tota eſt intra omnia & tota extra omnia. Nuſquam incluſa, aut excluſa, omnia continens, a nullo contenta, nec propterea eſt immiſta rebus aut ſordibus inquinata. Aug. *ep.* 57. *ad* Dar.

Thirdly, Note, *God is not only in, but above and beyond all creatures.*

He is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell. (So the Hebraiſm) 2 *Chron.* 2. 6. *Who is able to build him a houſe* (ſaith *Solomon*) *ſeeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain him?* God hath given a limit to every thing, but himſelf hath none. He that made all things, cannot be circumſcribed by the things which he hath made. Man makes a houſe, and there he dwelleth, his houſe ſhuts him in. God hath made a houſe big enough for all creatures, but not big enough for himſelf; *The heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, how much leſs this houſe which I have builded?* ſaith the ſame *Solomon*. The heaven of heavens is the higheſt heaven, the chiefeſt heaven, the third heaven, the heaven compaſſing and containing all thoſe heavens which we behold. That heaven which containeth the heavens, cannot contain the God of heaven. (1 *Kings* 8. 27.) *God is a ſphere, whoſe center is every where, and whoſe circumference is no where.*

Fourthly, Obſerve, *All that is done in the world, is done by the ordering or over-ruling hand of God.*

God uſeth means, but himſelf is preſent with all the means he uſeth, and *acts in every thing that acts*; He that is every where can as well do all, as any one thing. A man who hath many buſineſſes to do at the ſame time in many places, cannot attend them all, and gives the reaſon, *Do you think I can be every where? I was in ſuch a place, could I be in this too?* Carnal minds think it a ſtrange doctrine to affirm, That God doth all things, and that there is not any motion in the creature, but God is in it. But what difficulty is there in this, when we have once digeſted this principle, That God is every where? *He that is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell*, &c. is ready at every turn to do what is done. Kings ſend their Vicegerents and Deputies, who do their work, while themſelves are abſent. Kings are not in the means and with the means which they imploy, and that's the reaſon why inſtruments work often ſo contrary to the mind of Kings: They not being actually preſent with them, cannot over rule and order them. But God being preſent with all inſtruments and ſecond cauſes that are awork in the whole world, orders them all by his ſovereign will. They who act againſt the revealed will of God, are yet order'd by his ſecret will. There is nothing done againſt the counſel and purpoſe of God, though many things are done againſt the command and appointment of God. For as he is with every hand that helpeth us, ſo he is with every hand that ſmiteth us; as he is with every tongue that bleſſeth us, ſo he is with every tongue that curſeth us. When *Shimei* curſed *David*, he knew God was with that tongue, and therefore he ſaid, *So let him curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe* David, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10. We indeed pray to God *Our Father in heaven.* Heaven is the Throne of God, but Heaven it is not the Priſon of God; God is never ſhut up in Heaven, though his glory ſhine moſt in Heaven. But *Moſes* ſaith to *Iſrael*, *Go not up, for the Lord is not among you*, (Numb. 14. 42.) I anſwer, The Lord is not among a people when he doth not aſſiſt, proſper and bleſs them; but he is then among them, both, to obſerve what they do, and to puniſh what is done amiſs. Thus God is near thoſe who depart from him, as is further cleared in the next point.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *God beholds all the good, and all the evil that is done in the world.*

His wiſdom being higher then heaven, and longer then the earth, brings him in intelligence from all the quarters and corners of heaven and earth; our works are before him, and ſo are our words (*Mal.* 3. 16.) *Then they that feared the Lord ſpake often one to another.* What then? Did they whiſper ſo in one anothers ear, that no ear elſe heard them? *No, the Lord hearkened and heard it*; the Lord liſtened (as it were) at the key-hole, he was under the window; and what then? *A book of remembrance was written before him*; all was kept upon record. And when they who do not fear the Lord ſpeak one to another, when wicked men plot againſt the righteous, or conſpire againſt the righteous wayes of God; *He hearkneth and heareth*, and there is a book of remembrance kept of that too. Let them whiſper as ſoftly as they can, God can hear, and will record all their malicious ſpeeches, all their evil devices and contrivements againſt himſelf, or againſt his ſervants.

Sixthly, Obſerve, *There is no avoiding or getting from the juſtice of God.*

God is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell, *&c.* Some who have done wickedly in one place, eſcape the Law, by getting into another; they will be out of your bounds, and then they are ſafe: But who can go out of Gods bounds? (*Amos* 9. 3, 4.) *Though they dig into hell, thence ſhall my hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; though they hide themſelves in the top of Carmel, I will ſearch them, and take them out thence*, &c. And, *Pſal.* 139. 7, 8. *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence? If I aſcend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea, even there ſhall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me*, &c. There is no avoiding the juſtice of God; for there is no avoiding the preſence of God. He hath power to arreſt and attach a malefactor, where-ever he finds him, and he can find him where-ever he is; *though he fleeth, yet he ſhall not flee away, aod though he eſcapeth, yet he ſhall not be delivered*, (Amos 9. 1.) that is, though he thinks he hath eſcaped, yet I (ſaith the Lord) will overtake him quickly, and my ſentence ſhall be executed upon him. Thus the workings of God, and his wiſdom, are compared unto, and exceed all the dimenſions of the creature; he is above and beyond all their perfections, therefore unſearchable, therefore not to be found out unto perfection.

Zophar, from the infinite wiſdom of God, deſcends to argue his Soveraignty, and the uncontroulableneſs of his power.

Verſe 10. **If he cut off, and ſhut up, and gather together, then who can hinder him?**

As if he had ſaid, The Lord is in all places, and whereſoever he comes, he is within his own Dominions; it is poſſible for the greateſt Prince in the world to travel out of the bounds of his own power. The chief Officer of a City hath great power within that City, but beyond he cannot meddle. Kings have great power within their own Dominions, but get into another Countrey, and they cannot touch you: Should a King act his authority beyond his limits, many would hinder him, no man would obey him. But whereſoever God acts his authority, he is in his own Kingdom; for all the world is his: therefore none can hinder him. This *Zophar* ſhews in three Acts of Soveraignty; *If he*, 1. *cut off*, 2. *ſhut up*, 3. *gather together*; *who can hinder?*

חלף *Muto, permuto, item exſcindo.*

If he cut off.] The word ſignifies, to change and alter; to put things into another courſe, to paſs away, as well as to cut off and deſtroy; that which is cut off, is changed, and that which is deſtroyed, paſſeth away. We have an elegant gradation (*Iſa.* 8. 8.) and this word makes the firſt ſtep of it; *He ſhall paſs thorow Judah, he ſhall overflow and go over, he ſhall reach even to the neck, and the ſtretching out of his wings ſhall fill the breadth of thy Land, O Immanuel. He ſhall paſs thorow*; that is, the King of *Aſſyria*; who is compared to a mighty river, covering all its channels, and overflowing all its banks; he ſhall paſs thorow the Land like a violent torrent, he ſhall deſtroy and cut off much people in *Immanuel*'s Land, that is, in Chriſts Land, *who is God with us:* Yet he will not ſuffer his people to be utterly cut off. The enemy, who once aſſociated and prevailed, ſhall aſſociate and be broken; *for God is with us, verſ.* 10.

סגר *Includere.*

And ſhut up.] The word is taken two wayes; ſometimes in a good ſence, ſo, *If he ſhut up*; is, if he ſecure any from danger, hiding them in his own pavilion of protection, *Deut.* 32. 36. *The Lord ſhall repent himſelf for his ſervants, when he ſeeth that their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left*: that is, when he ſhall ſee that none are out of the power of the enemy, none ſhut up in the City, none guarded and kept ſafe from danger; but all doors & places lying open to the deſtroyer; then God *repents himſelf for his ſervants*; that is, he changes his courſe (though not his decree) and haſtens to the reſcue of his people, thus expoſed to trouble on every ſide.

Again, The word is taken in an ill ſenſe; ſo, *If he ſhut up*, is, if he reſtrain mercy, and expoſe to miſery (*Deut.* 32. 30.) *How ſhould one chaſe a thouſand, and two put ten thouſand to flight, except their rock had ſold them, and the Lord had ſhut them up?* How ſhut them up? As into a priſon, or under durance; except the Lord had delivered them as priſoners, into their enemies hands, they had never come into their hands. The people of God are compaſſed about with ſuch priviledges, that they can never be overcome by man, till God withdraws his *ſafe-conduct*, and gives them to the robbers, and to the ſpoilers, *till their rock ſells them, and their God ſhuts them up.* It is an alluſion to ſtrong Cities or Forts, which are ſo built and mann'd, ſo victualled and provided with ammunition, that it is impoſſible to take them in by aſſault or ſiege, unleſs the Governor, or he that hath the power of the place, ſell, or betray them to the enemie. The People of *Iſrael* were ſo fortified with promiſes, yea, walled about with God himſelf, that except their rock had ſold them, except God had (as we may ſpeak with reverence to his eternal faithfulneſs) betrayed them into their enemies hands, they had continued impregnable. In this ſence take the word here, *If the Lord ſhut up*; that is, if he put men as in a priſon, or into the adverſaries hands, who can hinder?

קהל *Congregari cœtum.*

Or gather together.] This act of providence is oppoſite to the former; by that, men are ſhut up as priſoners, and debarred of liberty; by this, they are gathered together, as friends, unto one ſociety. Scattering imports affliction; and gathering, a return out of affliction. The Apoſtle *James* dedicates his Epiſtle *to the twelve Tribes ſcattered abroad.* And when the Prophet *Zephanie* foretells the reſtauration of the *Jews* (chap. 3. 17.) he brings in God *rejoycing over them with joy, reſting in his love, joying over them with ſinging*, and ſaying (*ver.* 18.) *I will gather them that are ſorrowful, I will ſave her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out.* To gather, is to reſtore, whether to civil, or to ſpiritual ſociety.

There are two words in the Hebrew, noting Church-Aſſemblies, whereof this is one; yet it may be interpreted a Common-wealth-gathering, as well as a Church-gathering, of a civil, as well as of ſpiritual communion. The book *Eccleſiaſtes* receives its title (*Koheleth*) from this root. Two reaſons may be given of it; either becauſe that book of the *Preacher* is a collection of excellent obſervations: *Solomon* there gathered together and congregated many points of higheſt wiſdom. Or becauſe men ought to aſſemble, or congregate themſelves chearfully together, to hear, and drink in at the ear thoſe excellent inſtructions which *Solomon* gives in that Book. A learned Interpreter underſtands all theſe acts, of affliction; if the Lord *cut off* by ſword, *ſhut up* in priſon, *gather together*, and bundle men up as fewel to feed the flame of his fiery indignation, though he doth all or any of theſe things, who can hinder him? The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* tranſlates, *though he gather together his armies*, his military forces; though he muſter nations together in a warlike manner, to vex or deſtroy each other.

Koheleth, *Liber in quo collectæ omnes ſcientiæ, & ad quem audiendum homines congregantur.*

Si congregaverit exercitus aut copias militares. Targ.

Who can hinder him?] The Hebrew is, who can turn him away from his purpoſe? who can ſtop him? The Lord hath no peer, no ſuperior, none to check his counſels, or ſtay their executions; when he hath determined to do a thing, none can ſay, it ſhall not be done, or it ſhall be done another way; his power is ſupream, and he can do what he pleaſeth, without giving an account to any. The ſum of all is, that God may deſtroy, ſpoil, overthrow, burn, conſume if he will; he may do what he will with men and Kingdoms, and no man muſt open his mouth againſt him; or if any do, it is in vain, or at their own peril. Thus he anſwers *Job*, who complained in his afflictions, that the *Lord had cut him off, and ſhut him up*; that the *Lord had gathered together* armies of *Caldeans* and *Sabeans* to deſtroy him. Though he do, (ſaith *Zophar*) yet know the wiſdom of God is unſearchable, higher then heaven, deeper then hell; if he will take theſe courſes with thee, who can hinder him? why doſt thou complain, as if God had done thee wrong? whenas he hath right to do what he will, and he can will nothing but what is right.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *All the changes and troubles, the good and evil in the world, is from God.*

If he cut off, if he ſhut up, if he gather together; he ſpeaks as if there were no hand of the Creature moving, in any of theſe things, but that God himſelf had done all: *Come* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 46. 8.) *behold the works of the Lord, what deſolations he hath made in the earth.* See how the Lord hath made the earth deſolate; ſee how he drives the nations, and drives the inhabitants of the world. We have a great inſtance in this Kingdom; *Behold the works of the Lord:* ſee what deſolations he hath made in the North, in the Weſt; ſee how many houſes are burnt, how many towns impoveriſhed, how many families utterly ruined: Come, behold what deſolations the Lord hath made. Come alſo, and behold what habitations, what reformations he makes in the earth: where you ſee theſe things done, know it is God that hath done them, as the Pſalmiſt adds in the next words; *He maketh wars to ceaſe unto the ends of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the ſpear in ſunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire.* Our eyes are uſually much upon ſecond cauſes, and little upon the firſt; this makes us angry and impatient: if we could ſee God more in what is done, and man leſs, we ſhould be much ſatisfied; or, at leaſt, leſs troubled; we ſhould poſſeſs our ſouls in patience whatſoever is done.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God cannot be hindred of his purpoſe.*

What he hath a mind to do, ſhall be done, though all the world ſay no; he gives no account of, nor can any reſtraint be laid upon his actions. If he caſt one into priſon, and enlarge another; enrich one, and impoveriſh another; give one honour, and lay reproach upon another; who ſhall ſay, What doſt thou? I have often met with this point of the Soveraignty of God, therefore I only touch it here.

Zophar, in the former words, moves *Job* to conſider the unſearchable wiſdom of God, and his unqueſtionable ſoveraignty; *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?* &c. *If he cut off, and ſhut up, and gather together, who can hinder him?* Thou canſt not fadom the bottomleſs abyſs of his wiſdom, nor ſtay him in the reſolved actings of his power. He now proceeds to give the reaſon of both (for the connection may refer to either.)

Firſt, He gives a reaſon why a man cannot reach the wiſdom of God (*ver.* 11.) *He is vain man.* And as man ſhews his vanity in nothing more, then in his aſſayes and offers to find out the ſecrets of God; ſo his vanity renders him under an utter impoſſibility to find out the ſecrets of God.

Vanitas hominum aſſignatur cauſa cur ſecretorum divinæ providentiæ ſunt incapaces. Merc. *Probari videtur à So*phare *cur Deus jure poſſit ſuccidere*, &c. *Quia omnium hominum vanitatem & ſecretiora dignoſcat peccata.* Bol.

Secondly, He gives a reaſon why; *If the Lord cut off, and deſtroy, and gather together*; if he turn the world upſide down, why man cannot hinder him: *He knoweth vain man*; he knoweth that man hath no power to match his; vain man is weak man, and what can weakneſs do againſt ſtrength, impotency againſt omnipotency?

Again, man is vain, and therefore gives the Lord cauſe (if he ſhould deſcend to give a reaſon of himſelf, or of his actions) *to cut off, to gather together, to ſhut up:* Vain man is wicked man; *he ſeeth wickedneſs alſo*: ſo that if God would not act by his prerogative, man gives him ground enough, legal ground according to the line of humane underſtanding, to do what he doth. *He knoweth vain man* well enough, both what he is, and what he hath done.

All this *Zophar* intends againſt *Job*, as if he were the man whom God knew to be vain, and in whom he ſaw iniquity; yea, the brutiſhneſs of a wild aſſes colt, and was about to break and tame him by thoſe judgments. *Zophar* ſpeaks right in this, of mans nature in general; but his cenſure of *Job*, was erroneous. He was not a vain, but a holy man; neither did God ſee wickedneſs, but uprightneſs in him. Grace had changed his nature; and the Spirit in regeneration, had blotted out the image of a beaſt, and ſtampt him with that image, which is after God, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. And as for his afflictions, they were not ſent to tame him, but to try him; not to break his headſtrong ſpirit, but to ſhew that he was already broken, and brought to hand; yea, led by the Spirit of God.

Verſe 11. **He knoweth vain man, he ſeeth wickedneſs alſo; will he not conſider it?**

He knoweth.] To know, is ſometimes taken for a pure act of intuition, or for the diſcerning of perſons and things, what they are. Sometimes it imports an act mixt, or made up with the underſtanding and affections; and then, to know, takes in both delight and approbation, *Pſal.* 1. 6. *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; it is the way, which himſelf hath cut and chalked out for them; therefore he cannot but approve it (2 *Tim.* 2. 19.) *The Lord knoweth who are his*; yea, he knoweth who are not his too; but with a knowledge as different as the perſons; he knows the latter, and rejects them; he knows the former, and is pleaſed with them; *I know Abraham* (ſaith God) I, there s a man; I know what an one he is: he is a good man, and he is one I have in my heart to do him good. The Lord alſo knoweth vain man; there is nothing of vain man hidden from God, though there is nothing of vain man, loved or approved by God. *He knoweth vain man, or men of vanity*; ſo the Hebrew. We put it into an Epithite, *vain man.*

מתי־שוא *Mortales vanitatis,* i. e. *vanitatem mortalium.*

Vain man.] That is, inconſiderate, raſh, heady, haſty man. With all theſe ſences the original word is filled. When men go headlong, and without heed upon buſineſſes, when they move without ſteadineſs of ſpirit, or an inward ballaſt to keep their thoughts in a due and equall poyſe, they are vain men. The Law ſaith (*Exod.* 20. 7.) *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain* (it is this word) that is, Thou ſhalt not ſpeak raſhly of the things of God, or of God himſelf, without reverence and pre-meditation, who God is, and what the errand is thou dealeſt with God about.

ואש *Proprie ſignificat præcipitantiam & temeritatem.*

Further, The word ſignifies *craft, deceit, lying and falſeneſs, whether of heart or tongue.* The Lord knoweth the falſeneſs, baſeneſs and corruption, as well as the inconſideratneſs and raſhneſs that lies in the heart of man; ſome render it ſo here, from the Letter of the Hebrew, *The Lord knoweth men to be liars*; or, *thoſe men who are liars.* Idols are expreſſed by this word, becauſe they are vain, lying, falſe gods, *Jon.* 3. 3. *They that follow lying vanities* (which may be either meant of worſhipping Idols, or of any ſinful way of practice) *forſake their own mercy.* So, *Pſal.* 62. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter then vanity.* Vanity is a light thing, but theſe men will prove the lighter of the two. The Citizen of *Sion* is one, *that hath not lift up his ſoul unto vanity* (Pſal. 24. 4.) unto falſe worſhip, or falſe wayes: he liſteth up his ſoul unto that which is holy, juſt and good, the righteous Law of God.

Novit homines mendaces. Pagn. *Homines falſitatis.* Caj.

In general, this word ſignifies any evil or ſin, eſpecially thoſe which refer to injuſtice, or our neighbours wrong, *Pſal.* 12. 2. *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour*; that is, they ſpeak injuriouſly, every one deceiveth, or would circumvent and over-reach his neighbour. This is to ſpeak vanity with a neighbour (*Pſal.* 16. 4.) *I have not ſate with vain perſons*; who are thoſe? he expounds it in the next words; *Neither will I go in with diſſemblers*; that is, with men that make a fair ſhew to their brethren, whilſt their hearts are full of poyſon againſt them; who ſpeak one thing, and intend another; theſe are vain perſons, and how religious ſoever they may ſeem to be, *their Religion is vain too.*

The Lord knoweth vain man; or, *he knoweth the vanity of men.* Hence Note,

Firſt, That, *Man is naturally full of vanity, very full of vanity.*

To be called a man of vanity, imports vaineſt vanity; as it imports, that God is full of truth, when he is called *the God of truth*; and that he abounds with comfort, when he is called *the God of all comfort*; ſo it is a Hebraiſm, noting how full of vanity man is, who is called *a man of vanity*; and how falſe he is, who is called *a man of falſhood:* So the Apoſtle ſhews how full of ſin that man is, how many thouſands he hath ſent to perdition, whom he calleth *that man of ſin, the ſon of perdition,* 2 Theſ. 2. 3. They who would have ſin, and the fruit of it, perdition, let them go to *that man.* He that would have vanity, needs muſt go to the heart of any man for it; there's enough, and too much of this to be had in the heart of the beſt, of the wiſeſt man. Generally man hath,

1. Much falſeneſs of ſpirit.
2. Much raſhneſs of ſpirit. And he hath a double raſhneſs.

Firſt, Raſhneſs, in not conſidering his end (*Deut.* 32.29.) *O that they were wiſe, that they would conſider their latter end!* Wiſdom looks to what is coming upon us; folly ſtayes upon what is preſent with us.

Secondly, Raſhneſs, in not conſidering the way or means that lead unto a good end. Many a man ſees ſuch an end, but goes a way quite contrary; he ſets up his reſolution for heaven, that's his end; but he walketh hell-ward. This alſo is vanity, and unleſs timely foreſeen and turned from, will prove the greateſt vexation of ſpirit.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God is exactly acquainted with the ſtate of man.*

He needs not enquire of others, or receive information from abroad; *he knows vain man.* In the former verſes, *Zophar* aſſerteth, That man cannot find out man by ſearching; here he ſhews, That God can find out man without ſearching. Man knoweth but little of God, therefore he adds, *Canſt thou find him out unto perfection?* But God knoweth all of man, and therefore finds him out *unto perfection.* That's the oppoſition, *He knoweth vain man thorow and thorow.* The darkeſt room in man, is light to the Lord (*Jer.* 17.9.) *The heart of man is deceitful above all things*; there's a depth in mans heart, and it is a depth of deceitfulneſs; hence the Prophet ſends a challenge to all men; *Who can know it?* Can you find any man able to find the bottom of man? the bottom of mans deceitful heart? The anſwer waves all mankind: God only takes it upon himſelf. *I the Lord ſearch the heart.* God can find out all the deceits and tricks of mans falſe heart; he can eaſily diſcern a wolf under ſheeps cloathing, and rotten bones in a painted Sepulcher; he can ſee a wooden poſt to be but a poſt of wood, though gilded over, and looking very beautiful; the Lord can do it, it is at once his work, and his priviledge, *to know vain man.*

Thirdly, Take the words in connection with what went before; *He cutteth off, ſhutteth up, and gathereth together; for the Lord knoweth vain man.* Hence obſerve,

That, *God is led by his knowledge to do whatſoever he doth.*

When we ſee ſo much confuſion, ſuch cutting off, ſuch ſhutting up, ſuch gatherings in the world, we are apt to think no account can be given of theſe things. Yes, *God knoweth vain man*; he doth not work at a venture: he ſees *that* in man, which juſtifies him in all the works he doth among all the children of men.

Further, From the connection, we ſee the cauſe of all troubles which are in the world, of cuttings off, and ſhuttings up, of deſtructions and devaſtations: *The Lord knoweth vain man.* It is the vanity of man, which ſubjects the Creature unto vanity, *Rom.* 8. *The creature groaneth.* We hear Creatures groan, Kingdoms and Nations groan, when God cutteth off, and ſhutteth up, and hudleth them together; but what cauſeth this doleful groan? Is it not the ſin of man? Vain man brings in all theſe vanities into the world. *We may ſee the ſeed of all our troubles in our ſins*: The nature of man gives you an account of theſe workings of God. There is war, there is famine, and there's the plague, there are diviſions, there are vexations, between man and man, friend and friend, kingdom and kingdom: All theſe breed in the heart of man. The Prophet (*Jer.* 4. 18.) ſpeaking of judgments then abroad, ſaith, *This is thy wickedneſs, becauſe it is bitter.* Troubles are alwayes bitter, often very bitter; but would you know whence this bitterneſs is, and how to call it? *This wormwood is wickedneſs*; you may read what you are, and what you have done, in what you feel and ſuffer. *Mans ſufferings are ſo much from his ſin, that they are called his ſin.*

He ſeeth wickedneſs alſo,

That's a ſecond ſtep.

He ſeeth.] To know, is an act of the underſtanding; to ſee, is an act of ſenſe. Theſe, in God, are not diſtinguiſhed; his eye is his underſtanding, his ſight, his knowledge. *Zophar* puts it under diſtinct terms, to ſhew the exactneſs of Gods knowledge; *he knoweth vain man, and he ſeeth.* That knowledge which we have by ſight, hath a threefold advantage of any other natural knowledge. It is,

Firſt, The Eaſieſt
Secondly, The ſpeedieſt } Knowledge.
Thirdly, The ſureſt

An eye-witneſs is far more authentick then an ear-witneſs is. *God ſeeth*; he doth not trouble himſelf to dig down into a matter by tedious enquiries, he needs no *Committee of Examinations to make diſcoveries*; he need not pump and fetch up the hearts of men; *he ſeeth what waters are in the fountain*; he ſeeth, he doth not learn. And what doth he ſee? *He ſeeth*

Videt non diſcit. Coc.

Wickedneſs alſo.] The word is ſometimes taken for internal wickedneſs, that ſtock and maſs of corruption, which lies cloſe within us; and ſo it falls in with the former expreſſion, the vanity of mans nature.

But beſides, It notes any external evil, and ſo there is a difference, *The Lord knoweth vain man*; what his nature is, *and he ſeeth wickedneſs.* All the actings of vain men, all the evil counſels and crooked conveyances of their lives, whatſoever wickedneſs they do, is immediately before his eye. The Lord knows the vanity that dwells in the heart, and ſees the wickedneſs that is acted by the hand.

און *Intrinſecam malitiam ac mentale deſiderium ad malum importat.*

In propriety, the word imports that which is *without reaſon*: wicked men are unreaſonable, or *abſurd men*; that's the Apoſtles character of them (2 *Theſ.* 3.2.) They can give no account why they are wicked, neither of the end they propoſe, nor of the means they uſe. There is no reaſon in what they do; nor can they give any true reaſon why they do it. Sin is an abſurdity both wayes: *He ſeeth wickedneſs.* Hence obſerve,

All the movings of the ſons of men in the wayes of ſin, are evident to God; He ſeeth them.

What we do, we do in the eye of Conſcience; and though Conſcience be now aſleep or blind, in the ſinners eye, yet Conſcience hath an open Eagle-eye upon every ſin. Now if conſcience ſeeth wickedneſs, God ſeeth it much more; *If our heart condemn us* (and that it could not do, unleſs it ſee us) *God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things*, 1 John 3.20. Take heed of endeavouring to hide ſin from God, or of hoping you ſin unſeen. That was good counſel which one of the Ancients gave; *It is beſt to ſhew that unto God, which we cannot hide from him.* Shew your wickedneſs unto God, by confeſſing it; for you cannot hide it from God, by denying or excuſing it; *He ſeeth wickedneſs alſo.* There is yet a third act inferred upon the former two.

Will he not then conſider it?] Many a careleſs man knoweth and ſeeth his own wickedneſs, or the wickedneſs of others; but he layeth neither of them to heart: But do you think that God knoweth and ſeeth wickedneſs after the rate of careleſs men? Doth he know, and ſee, and not regard? No, *he conſiders it.* And *Zophar* is not ſatisfied to ſay, *he conſiders it*; but he puts it home ſtrongly with a Queſtion, *Will he not conſider it?* Yes, he will; certainly he will conſider the vanity and the wickedneſs of man, becauſe he knoweth the one, and ſeeth the other What is not known and ſeen, cannot be conſidered. One or both thoſe acts are precedaneous to conſideration; but ſome ſee and know what they never conſider; conſideration doth not alwaies follow thoſe acts. God looks weightily upon the world, he ſees judiciouſly, critically; he doth not look upon men to gaze at them, but to diſcern, try and judge them.

The Hebrew word ſignifies a clearneſs of obſervation, and a ſtrength of judgment about the things which are ſeen; or an act of diſcerning, ariſing from greateſt attention and meditation, *Pſal.* 37.10. *Thou ſhalt diligently conſider his place*, ſaith *David*; propheſying the utter ruine and abolition of a wicked man; though he flouriſh, yet it is but for a while; anon he is gone, and when he is gone, though thou diligently conſider his place, though thou ſit down and mark how this man lived, and what he was, yet ſcarce any footſteps of him will be found; *It ſhall not be.* The word is uſed to the ſame ſence (*Lev.* 10.10.) where Laws are given to the Prieſts, about diſcerning the defilements of the people; *That they might put a difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.* So to conſider, as to ſee a difference between perſon and perſon, ſtate and ſtate, is diligent conſideration. Thus God *conſidereth*; he

בין *Ex vi originalis hæc conſideratio eſt attenta quædam, diligens, prudens, & quaſi conſiliatrix meditatio, qua unum ab alio diſcernitur.*

he diſtinguiſheth man and man, the wayes of one man from the wayes of another; and the way of every man in it ſelf: He knoweth man, as a Judge knoweth, upon trial and examination of witneſſes, with all the circumſtances of the fact.

Zophar, in this ſeems to touch *Job*'s ſuppoſed hypocriſie; as if he had ſaid, *Poſſibly thou preſumeſt to impoſe upon God, or put him off with fair ſhews; but thou wilt be deceived: he trieth the ſpirits of the children of men, he weighs all their actions, he will weigh thee out to a grain, he will diſcover the leaſt error and variation from the Rule. Therefore never think by thy flouriſhes of profeſſion and out-ſide devotion, to deceive him. He knoweth vain man, and ſeeth wickedneſs; will he not then conſider it?* Hence obſerve,

God doth not only know and ſee, but he takes deep conſideration of mens wickedneſs.

The Prophet calls the Jews to *conſider their wayes* (Hag. 1. 7.) as if he had ſaid, I know you have kept many faſts, you have confeſt your ſins, and often arraigned your ſelves in the ears of heaven, but all this while you have not conſidered them; *Go now, and conſider your wayes.* God conſiders your wayes, and will not you? Gods conſideration is not a bare knowledge of the fact. He conſiders the perſon *who*, the place *where*, the time *when* the fact was committed. He conſiders the means and admonitions, the warnings and cautions, the threatnings and the judgments which providence adminiſtred to prevent it. All theſe are brought into the reckoning, where there is (ſuch as Gods is) a full conſideration. *Now conſider this, ye* (inconſiderate ones) *that forget God, leſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*, Pſal. 50. 22.

Secondly, To conſider a thing, is to puniſh it; and ſo it anſwers the former Verſe: *The Lord cutteth off, and ſhutteth up*; he makes ſtrange work in the world. Why? *He knoweth vain man, and he ſeeth wickedneſs alſo? will not he then conſider it?* that is, Is it poſſible he ſhould know and ſee ſo much wickedneſs, and not puniſh it? As we ſay to thoſe under our power, concerning the faults which we know them guilty of; well, there will come a time, when we ſhall conſider this; that is, a time will come, when we ſhall puniſh you for this, you ſhall find and feel what you have done. Thus God conſiders the ſins of men. Hence note,

The evils which God knows and ſees, he will certainly puniſh.

Amos 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will puniſh you for all your iniquities.* God knows all the families of the earth, as to know is a work of the underſtanding; but he knoweth only ſome, (and then he knew but one family of the earth, that of the *Jews*) as to know, is a work of the affections, fruited with works of ſpecial mercy: When the Lord ſaith to *Iſrael*, You have I known; he means, I have ſhewed you mercy, I have done you good above all the families of the earth, but now I will bring evil upon you. Abuſed mercy turns to wrath, and the greater the mercy abuſed is, the greater is the wrath. The Lord will not cocker his own children; his neareſt people, who lie in his boſom, ſhall have ſtripes for their ſins, and broken comforts for broken Commandments. Will the Lord thus conſider the failings and backſlidings of his profeſſed friends, and will he not conſider the wickedneſſes of his profeſſed enemies? When *Jehu* was upon the execution of Gods deſign againſt the houſe of *Ahab*, and had ſlain *Joram* his ſon, he thus beſpoke *Bidkar* his Captain, *I remember how the Lord laid this burden upon him, ſurely I have ſeen the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his ſons, ſaid the Lord, and I will requite thee in this plot*, 2 *King*. 9. 29. *I have ſeen.* God ſaw, and he ſaw with an eye of vengeance; He ſaw blood to requite it with blood, (*Pſal*. 10. 11.) *The wicked hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never ſee it.* There's ſelf-flattery at the higheſt: Hence the concluſion is ready, *ver.* 13. *The wicked contemn God; he hath ſaid in his heart, thou wilt not require it.* This is the language of a wicked heart. But what ſaith the heart of *David*, the next words are the language of his heart, *Thou haſt ſeen it, for thou beholdeſt miſchief and ſpight, to requite it with thy hand*: As the hearts of men differ, ſo do their opinions: an evil heart will not allow God to be a beholder of evil: a good heart is afflicted that he is not only a beholder, but an avenger of evil. *Let no man deceive you*, (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 5. 6.) *with vain words.* (And let no man deceive himſelf, ſay I, with vain hopes) *for becauſe of theſe things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience.* Diſobedience is the forerunner of wrath; where ſin opens the door, judgment will enter, (*Pſal.* 34. 16.) *The face of the Lord is againſt them that do evil.* The face of the Lord is either his anger or his knowledge; *The face of the Lord is againſt them*; that is, he ſeeth, and his wrath goeth forth againſt what he ſeeth. Seeing them, he is againſt them: They (perhaps) have caſt their own ſins, as well as the word of God, behind their backs: But God hath not caſt their ſins behind his back; *his face is againſt them*: and what to do? *To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.* The anger of God is ſharp, ſharper then any two-edged ſword; it doth not only cut, but cut off; it cuts off branch and root, wicked men, and their remembrance from the earth. *Then God remembers ſin indeed, when he doth not leave a remembrance of the ſinner.* There was never any ſin committed in the world, but God conſidered it, to puniſh it. The ſins of believers are conſidered, and puniſhed upon Jeſus Chriſt; Juſtice went forth againſt Chriſt, he was arreſted for our debt, and diſcharged it with the full conſideration. Believers may tell God, that Chriſt hath given him *conſideration* for all their ſins. And God tells unbelievers that they muſt pay the conſideration themſelves. The holy God cannot ſee the unholineſs of man, and not conſider it. Man makes no great matter of ſin, but God doth. Man thinks himſelf good enough, though he be ſtark naught; and wiſe enough, though he be a very fool. The next verſe leads us unto that meditation.

Verſe 12. **For vain man would be wiſe, though man is born like a wild aſſes colt.**

For vain man.] The Hebrew word ſignifieth, *hollow* or *empty*, any thing which hath nothing in it; and ſo a perſon who hath (as we ſay) nothing in him. The French call ſuch perſons *Fols*, which comes near in ſound, to our Engliſh word *Fools*; but their language takes it up from the Latine word *Folles*, ſignifying a pair of bellows; becauſe the men they mean to decypher by it, are like a pair of bellows, ſending out nothing but a blaſt of wind or air. The word of the Text is of the ſame intendment with *Racha*, of which we read, *Mat.* 5. 22. *He that ſhall call his brother Racha*, &c. that is, an empty man, a man empty of worth and wiſdom, a man that hath no brains in him (as we ſay) or no goodneſs, ſuch a man as this is *Racha*; and he is *Nabub* too, an empty, hollow fellow.

נבוב *Significat concavum, vacuum, nullam habens ſoliditatem: hinc notat ſtolidos, vanos, qui, ad inſtar vaſis in quo nihil eſt, vacui dicuntur,* ſc. *cerebro & ſapientia. Galli vocant tales* fols, *quaſi* folles, *inſtrumentum, quod nihil continet, niſi aerem.* Bold. Racha *eandem habet ſignificationem à* ריק *evacuare.*

Hence obſerve, *A vain man is an empty man.*

He hath nothing in him, but that which is good for nothing. There is no *natural vacuum* (as Philoſophers ſpeak) in any part of Nature. Neither is there a *moral vacuum* in any man. But a thing or perſon is then ſaid to be empty, when void of that with which it ſhould be fill'd: that which hath not the filling, which of right or duty, which according to its own conſtitution, or the juſt expectation of others, it ſhould have, is empty. The ſtomach is empty when it hath no meat in it, though it be full of wind. Man is called empty, becauſe (though as full of evil as an egg of goodneſs, yet) he is not fill'd with good, he is not fill'd with God, with the knowledge of God, with love to, and faith in God. So the Apoſtle *James* beſpeaks him (*ch.* 2. 20.) *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?* As if he had ſaid, *Thou empty man, thou that haſt but a boaſt of faith, thou whoſe faith is fill'd up with good words, not fruited with good works, wilt thou know* (*thou ſhalt, whether thou wilt or no*) *that thy faith is dead?* Where there is life, there is operation; works are not the form, but they are the fruit of faith: they are not the eſſence of a living faith, but they are the evidence that faith lives; and he is to be numbered among the vaineſt of men, who ſpeaks of his faith, while his works are altogether ſpeechleſs, or ſpeaks nothing but unbelief.

When man fell from God, the Devil emptied him of that which he was full of, the Image of God in uprightneſs, and fill'd him with that which was but emptineſs, his own Image, in unrighteouſneſs. The nature of fallen man, in the beſt notion of it, is but *white paper*, in which nothing is written; in another notion, it is *black paper*, written, or blotted rather with evil. And though ſome notions and general principles (from which conſcience works to conviction) remain there, yet they are ſo weak and languid, ſo like ſparks covered over with, or rather buried in embers and aſhes, that they are ſcarce diſcernable; and are not only utterly unable without aſſiſtance to diſcern between common truth and error, good and evil, but quite dead to ſpiritual good. Hence, though man hath not loſt all, yet he hath as bad as loſt all, becauſe he hath loſt that which was beſt, or ſhould make him fit to act that which is good. Things which act not are but very little better, then thoſe which are not. Man having totally loſt all holy habits, and all power to act in, or toward holineſs, is not wronged, when he is called, *vain empty man*.

And as he is vain, becauſe empty of what he ought to have, ſo he is more vain, becauſe full of all that which he ought not to have. This empty fulneſs the Apoſtle deſcribeth (*Rom.* 1. 29, 30.) *filled with all unrighteouſneſs, fornication, wickedneſs, covetouſneſs, maliciouſneſs, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity*; with ſuch ſtuff as this he is filled, of this chaffe and cockle he hath good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over, to give into your boſom. The heart of man at the beſt of nature, is but like a Childs pocket full of ſtones, and balls, and bables. How empty is that heart which is thus filled? The underſtanding of man, which hath not one holy ſentence written in it, is yet written all over with unholy ſentences; his judgment and conſcience are defiled and fly-blown with falſe principles, with lyes and errors; and if there be any truth there, it is about ſuch things as make him little the wiſer, and never a whit the better. Vain man is empty man, unleſs to be full of vain things, or a fulneſs of evil things (which are worſe then emptineſs) may go for fulneſs.

איש.נבוב ילבב

Vir vanus cordabitur, vel cordatus efficiatur.

Would be wiſe.] There is an elegant *Paranomaſia* in the Hebrew, which our Language doth not admit: but the literal ſence runs thus, *Vain man would have a heart.* This gives us a further evidence, what this vain man is; he is a man without a heart. *Ephraim was a ſilly Dove without an heart* (Hoſ. 7. 11.) without judgment to know, and without courage to do the will of God: here, *vain man* would have a heart: He would be wiſe if he knew how. The heart is the ſeat of wiſdom; therefore we render it well, *Vain man would be wiſe.* Mr. *Broughton* thus, *Vain man would be made hearty:* And the Vulgar, *Vain man is raiſed up to pride*; or as our Proverb ſpeaks, *Takes heart at graſs.* As the heart is the throne of knowledge, ſo knowledge (unleſs ſanctified) is uſually a ſtep to pride: Bare knowledge is windy, *it puffeth up* (1 Cor. 8. 1.) They who are not edified by knowledge, are elated by knowledge. We have cauſe to be humbled, becauſe we know ſo little; and if we once know much, it is alwayes a temptation to, often a cauſe of pride.

Cor eſt ſedes ſapientiæ, unde pro ſapientia ponitur. Vir vanus in ſuperbiã erigitur. Vulg.

Quanto ſtupidiora ſunt bruta, tanto craſſiore pollent corde. Plin.

Cordare nihil aliud eſt, quam ingenioſum, ſapientem magnique conſilii virũ evadere.

But to our reading, *Vain man would be wiſe, he would have a heart.* Naturaliſts obſerve, That, thoſe creatures which have the thickeſt and groſſeſt hearts in bulk, are the moſt ſtupid and uningenious. But to have a great heart in a moral ſenſe, noteth greateſt wiſdom, nobleſt ingenuity, and (in Scripture language) pureſt holineſs, *Prov.* 15. 32. *He that heareth reproof getteth underſtanding*, ſo we tranſlate: The Hebrew is, *He that heareth reproof poſſeſſeth a heart*; or, *getteth a heart.* A man that will not be reproved, hath loſt his heart as well as his ear; have but a patient ear to hear, and you may get a heart to know: underſtanding and knowledge, yea and grace too, come in at the ear.

Vain man would be wiſe; and is not this a good *woulding*? Is it any part of mans folly, that he would be wiſe? What can be better wiſhed then wiſdom? *Solomon*'s prayer was for a heart. When God gave him a blank from Heaven, and ſaid, *Ask what I ſhall give thee: He ſaid, Give thy ſervant an underſtanding*, or (according to the letter of the Original) *an hearing heart*, 1 Kings 3. 5, 9. And was *Solomon* called *vain man*, becauſe *he would be wiſe?* Was not his election highly approved by the only wiſe God? How then is it, that *Zophar* upbraids *Job* with this deſign, and cloſely taxeth him as a vain man, becauſe he would be wiſe?

I anſwer, To deſire to be wiſe is a great point of wiſdom: and whereas *Zophar* makes it a fault, That *vain man would be wiſe*, the faultineſs muſt be found in one or both of theſe ſences.

Firſt, When man would be accounted wiſe, and affects the reputation of wiſdom, more then the reality of wiſdom; when he doth not ſo much care to be wiſe, as to be thought wiſe. The name is better to him then the thing. *Many have a great opinion of their own wiſdom, and would have others take up that opinion of them too. Wiſdom is the beſt thing.* And theſe think themſelves well enough, if they flouriſh in the thoughts of others for wiſe men. The reputation of wiſdom pleaſeth them as much as the enjoyment of it. Thus, to have an itch to be eſteemed wiſer then we are, or wiſe when we are not, is the greateſt piece of folly. It is a loud vanity to affect an opinion of wiſdom among others, or to have an high opinion of our own wiſdom. Thus vain man would be wiſe, and it is his vanity that he would.

Secondly, Man is vain when he would be wiſe beyond his line, or in things above him, not in things about him, or fit for him. The ſcope of the place leads us to this Expoſition, *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God! Canſt thou find him out to perfection? He is as high as heaven*, &c. Though ſuch knowledge of God be too high for any man, yet vain man offers at it, and thinks he knoweth nothing, if he know not ſomething which he ought not to know. *Man naturally deſires forbidden wiſdom*; and his deſire is ſeven times ſtronger after it, as it is *forbidden*, then as it is *wiſdom.* Many will not hear Wiſdom when ſhe calls, who yet would be wiſe in that which they have no call to. *An evil heart cannot deſire any good, but for the ſake of ſome evil that comes with it.* The Devil tempted man to be wiſe in a way of ſin. The firſt ſin came in by an attempt to get forbidden wiſdom: *When the woman ſaw, that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleaſant to the eye, and a tree to be deſired to make one wiſe, ſhe took of the fruit thereof*, &c. *Gen.* 3. 6. But what was the wiſdom which the woman expected from the fruit of this tree? It was not wiſdom to know God, but to be as knowing as God: So the Tempter promiſed, *Ye ſhall be as Gods knowing good and evil*, ver. 5. To know God is eternal life; but a deſire to know, as God, brought in eternal death. The Apoſtle cautions, *Not to be wiſe above that which is written*; and adviſeth, *Rom.* 12. 3. *To be wiſe unto ſobriety.* There is an intemperance of the underſtanding, as well as of the affections. There are two extreams about wiſdom, neglect and affectation. One cares not to know what is neceſſary, what may make him holy, and bring him near to Chriſt. Another cares only to know unneceſſaries: His wiſdom and learning lies in canvaſing *fooliſh and unlearned Queſtions*, which *Paul* bids *Timothy* avoid, 2 *Tim.* 2. 23. He pleaſes himſelf with crotchets and curioſities, with meer notions and niceties; about theſe, his imagination waxes wanton, and runs riot, yea, mad. Or, he muſt be breaking open of Gods Cabinet, entring into his Counſels, prying into his Ark; he thinks he knoweth nothing worthy a man, unleſs he know that which is above man. Thus alſo *vain man would be wiſe*, and it is his vanity that he would.

עיר

Hic vertitur pullus tamen ejuſmodi eſſe conſtat, qui oneribus vehendis, & agrariæ culturæ aptus ſit.

Though he be born as a wild aſſes colt.] That is, like a wild aſs. As Son of man is not a young man, but a man; ſo the *aſſes colt* is not a young aſs, but an aſs, any aſs. The word is often uſed for aſſes under burthen, and fitted for uſe, which colts are not, *Gen.* 49. 11. *Binding his foal unto the vine, and his aſſes colt unto the choice vine*, there to take up their burden, and undergo their labour. So then, when he ſaith, *Vain man would be wiſe, though born like a wild aſſes colt*, his meaning in *plain Engliſh* is only this, man would be very wiſe, wiſer then man, he would be thought as wiſe as God, at leaſt he would ſearch out the wiſdom of God, and yet indeed *he is a beaſt*; and *Zophar* inſtanceth in the wild aſs among all beaſts, becauſe the aſs among beaſts, and the wild aſs among aſſes is furtheſt from wiſdom. Some beaſts have a kind of knowledge, and are very teachable, but the wild aſs is not guilty of either. A man of weakeſt parts and thinneſt intellectuals is in ſcorn (though not without blame) called an aſs; as a crafty man is (without blame) called a fox.

Ad majorem ſtupiditatem declarandam, פרא *vertitur Onager, qui eſt aſinus ſylveſtris.* Merc.

Man hath wit and ſubtilty for the world, and to contrive for his luſts, but being degraded from that dignity of a ſon of God, he walks more like a beaſt then a man towards God. *Eccleſ.* 3. 18. *I ſaid in mine heart concerning the eſtate of the ſons of men, that God might manifeſt them, and that they might ſee that they themſelves are beaſts. That they* *might ſee*; How ſhall they ſee it? They will not ſee it till they are ſhewed it, and ſcarce then. I ſaid in mine heart that God would manifeſt this to them, that they themſelves are beaſts. As whatſoever good we have, comes from God, not from nature, ſo it is from God that we muſt learn the badneſs of nature. *Man is ſo much a beaſt, that he cannot know himſelf to be one, till God teach him. And we never learn to be men, till we have learned that we were beaſts.* Man was made like unto God, but man hath made himſelf like unto a beaſt. In three reſpects man is born like a wild aſſes colt, or like a beaſt.

Firſt, In regard of his ignorance. Knowledge is proper to thoſe who have reaſon, yet ſome who have reaſon have ſcarce any thing which can be called knowledge. And though grace repair the image of God in knowledge, yet the beſt of men may confeſs with *Agur*, (Prov. 30. 2.) *Surely I am more bruitiſh then any man*, or (more near the Hebrew) *then a man, and have not the underſtanding of a man.* Wicked men are more bruitiſh then beaſts, and holy men are more bruitiſh then a perfect man. The beſt have ſomewhat of the beaſt in them, becauſe they have not the whole underſtanding of a man in them. *David* charges himſelf for one *ſinful act*, much more then is it true of a *ſinful ſtate*, *So fooliſh was I, and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee*, Pſal. 73. 22. His diſſwaſion carries the ſame meaning, *Pſal. 22. 9. Be not as the horſe, or as the mule which have no underſtanding.* And ſo doth his concluſion (*Pſal.* 49. 20.) *Man that is in honour and underſtandeth not, is like the beaſts that periſh.* Not as if he meant it of men quite rob'd of reaſon. This *not underſtanding* is to be reſtrained to the duty of their high place, and the providence of God in raiſing them to it. He that underſtands not who raiſed him to honour, and what his honour leads him to, is the more like or below a beaſt, becauſe he is ſo much above other men. *Of all fools a fool in honour looks moſt unlike a man.*

Secondly, Man is like a beaſt, or like that beaſt here expreſſed, *for wantonneſs*, luſt and vanity. The Church of the Jews in her defection to idolatry is compared to a dromedary and a wild aſs, (*Jer.* 2. 23, 24.) *Thou art a ſwift dromedary, traverſing her wayes, a wild aſs* (or, O wild *aſs*, ſo ſome tranſlate it) *uſed to the wilderneſs, that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure; in her occaſion who can turn her away? All they that ſeek her will not weary themſelves, in her moneth they ſhall find her.* The Prophet deſcribeth the ſpiritual wantonneſs of that people in their idolatrous and ſuperſtitious mixtures by the natural wantonneſs of the aſs, *In her occaſion who can turn her away?* ſhe is not to be medled with, when the fit's upon her. *All they that ſeek her will not weary themſelves*, they deſiſt from purſuing her, knowing they may tire themſelves, but not take her with all their travel, till ſomewhat hath tamed her; Then, *In her moneth they ſhall find her.* Not that the wild aſs (as an old *Rabbin* dreams) uſeth to ſleep one whole moneth of the year, and then the hunters uſed to catch her napping. I ſhall remit this among Jewiſh fables. But the *moneth* ſhe is to be found in, may be the moneth near her ſorrows, when her burden takes off her ſpeed, and makes her more eaſie to be brought to hand. Some read the text differently, yet the ſenſe is the ſame. *All they that ſeek her need not weary themſelves: In her moneth they ſhall find her.* As if he had ſaid, A little labour will ſerve to catch her, ſhe is to be had with eaſe, when or where her luſt is to be ſatisfied. Like this wild aſs were the people of *Iſrael* in ſpiritual wantonneſs, *ſo ſet upon it*, that none could turn them from it: The Prophets wearied themſelves in vain to reclaim them from that lewdneſs; *So prone to it*, that none needed to weary themſelves to get their *good-will*, they did even prevent wooing, and went up to the bed of love, or of myſtical fornication, with the Nations round about, as ſoon as they did invite, but with a glance of the eye. And as they were like the wild aſs for ſpiritual, ſo they, together with the moſt of mankind, have undergone as mean a compariſon for their proneneſs to, and violent purſuit of corporal wantonneſs and uncleanneſs.

Thirdly, Man is like a wild aſs, in regard of ſtubbornneſs and unteachableneſs. Wild aſſes are as untractable, as almoſt any creature. Naturaliſts tell us, They are all for liberty. The wild aſs is not uſed to burthens, or brought to hand; he or ſhe are not fed at rack and manger, they eat what the wilderneſs affords, and are not under any mans care or government. God himſelf hath given us this character of the wild aſs in this book (*Job* 39. 5.) *Who hath ſent out the wild aſs free?* (What maſter hath the wild aſs been apprentic'd to?) or *who hath looſed the bands of the wild aſs?* (from whoſe hand hath he received his Indentures, or been manumitted?) *Whoſe houſe I have made the wilderneſs, and the barren land his dwellings. He ſcorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.* The horſe and ox muſt ſerve; the horſe travels, and the ox tills the ground: the ox is under a yoke, and the horſe hath a bit and bridle to keep him in ſubjection: but the wild aſs regardeth not the driver, he cares neither for his whip, nor for his whiſtle. He is altogether a ſtranger to diſcipline, and likes not to hear of any maſter but himſelf, or to be a ſervant to any but his own will. Such is the nature of man, *Man is born like a wild aſſes colt*; he loves to be free, or rather to be diſſolute, he cannot endure to be ſubdued to order; he would know no law but his own luſt, nor rule, but his own deſire. Every man is of himſelf, *A ſon of Belial, A ſon without a yoke.* Man is ſo much for ſinful liberty, that he cares not for true liberty. The liberty he ſeeks, makes him a bond-ſlave to corruption; Thus man is born a wild aſſes colt, he is ignorant, wanton and licentious.

So much for the words as we tranſlate.

Vir vacuus cordabitur, & pullus onagri, homo evadet. Pagn. Jun. *Pullus onagri homo naſcitur. Sub eleganti ironia Sophar Jobum vellicat, vir vacuus ſapiens fiet quando pullus onagri homo evadet.* Bold.

There is yet another reading of good uſe, and worthy our examination. 'Tis given out thus, *So ſhall vain man be made wiſe, and the aſſes colt ſhall be born a man.* This rendering may bear a double interpretation.

Firſt, It may be underſtood *Ironically*, as a ſcorn put upon *Job*, and upon all ſuch as *Zophar* ſuppoſed him to be, vain men. *Vain man ſhall be made wiſe, when an aſſes colt is made a man*; that is, *He ſhall never, or very hardly be made wiſe*; as if he had ſaid, *It is as unheard of, and as ſtrange a thing that ſuch a man as thou, a man ſo proud and high in thine own thoughts, ſo vain in thy imaginations, that ſuch an one as thou ſhouldſt be made wiſe or holy, as it is for a wild aſs to be made a man.* There is a truth in this poſition, if *Zophars* ſuppoſition had been true. For the diſtance between mans nature, and grace, is greater then that between mans nature and a beaſts: *Bare reaſon is further from grace then ſenſe is from reaſon.* It is as eaſie to change a beaſt into a man, or to make a beaſt underſtand reaſon, as to change a ſinner into a Saint, or to make a believer of an Infidel. Converſion is not the change of actions only, but of nature. This ſentence, *Vain man ſhall be made wiſe, when an aſs is made a man*, is of the ſame ſenſe with that Proverb among us, *When the skie falls we ſhall have larks*; or with this, *Such a thing ſhall come to paſs when a black-more is waſhed white*; or rather with that of our Saviour in the Goſpel, *It is eaſier for a camel to go thorow the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*, Matth. 19. 24. Rich men ſhall go to heaven, when a camel or a cable (ſo ſome read) paſſeth thorow a needle; that is, it is impoſſible they ſhould by any power of man; and therefore to eaſe the ſharpneſs of the ſpeech, Chriſt adds by way of explication, *With God all things are poſſible. It is an hard thing, yea an impoſſible thing* (*without God*) *for a rich man to be ſaved*, or for a vain man to be made wiſe. And it is thus hard to make a rich man happy, becauſe he thinks himſelf happy enough; and to make a vain man wiſe, becauſe he preſumes he is wiſe enough. *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool then of him*, Prov. 26. 12. or in the language of this text, there is as much hope of a beaſt as of him. A man had better be ignorant, then conceited of his knowledge. *An opinion of knowledge keeps out true knowledge.* Not only inſtruction, but correction is loſt on ſuch *Opinioniſts*. (*Prov.* 27. 22.) *Though thou ſhouldeſt bray a fool in a morter among wheat with a peſtel, yet will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him.* He means it not of a natural fool, nor of one that is convinced of his fooliſhneſs, but of him (who is the great fool of all) that is in love with his own fancies and ſhadows of wiſdome: take ſuch a fool and beat him to pieces in a morter, that is, let him be afflicted, till he be almoſt deſtroyed, yet his folly departs not from him; you may as ſoon make a beaſt a man, as ſuch a fool to underſtand. *There is but one greater enemy to real knowledge then ignorance, and that is a conceit of knowledge.*

Flagellis eruditur, & quamvis excors & expers omnium ſcientiarum naſcatur, tamen per Dei gratiam redditur intelligens. Vatab.

Only he that can drive a camel thorow a needles eye, and make a beaſt a man; Only he that calls thoſe things which are not, as if they were, can make vain man wiſe, and him to be holy, who is not.

Secondly, This rendering, *So ſhall vain man be made wiſe, and the wild aſs ſhall be born a man,* ſheweth us the effect of thoſe afflictions, which God layeth upon man. He conſiders their ſins to puniſh and chaſten them; What of that? *So ſhall vain man be made wiſe,* &c. As if he had ſaid, The end of the chaſtening of God upon man, is to make him wiſe, or (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 27.9.) *By this ſhall the iniquity of man be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin,* his vanity, that the *wild aſſes colt may be born a man,* or *reborn.* This interpretation gives us the very language of the new Teſtament, about the grace of *regeneration,* or *a new birth,* John 3.5,6. In which this wonder is continually wrought, *A wild aſs is born a man.* Hence obſerve,

That, *afflictions bleſſed and made effectual by God, make a gracious change in man.*

How many ignorant men have, with correction, received inſtruction? how many proud men have been made humble; and of carnal, ſpiritual? how many unruly ſpirits have been brought in compaſs, and ſtubborn ones ſubdued with a rod? The rod and the word work miracles, when God works with them. If God ſpeak to a dry rod, it ſhall bring forth theſe Almond-bloſſoms and heavenly fruits; and unleſs he ſpeak with the word, we continue dry, yea dead, earthly and unfruitful. *Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray;* ſaith *David*: *David* wandred like a ſheep, and was as a beaſt; affliction made him a man, and turned him home. *Ephraim* crieth out, *Jer.* 31.18. *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed;* importing either the ſtrength of the affliction; when God will afflict, no man can ſtay his hand, or take off his blow: or the effect of the affliction; *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed;* that is, I was bettered by my chaſtiſements. The Lord chaſteneth ſome, who are not chaſtiſed; there is no change made, they do not mend with beating. This I rather pitch upon, as the meaning of *Ephraim*'s bemoaning affliction, *Thou haſt chaſtened me, and I was chaſtened*: and obſerve how he ſpeaks of himſelf under the notion of a beaſt; *I was as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke,* I could not endure to come under diſcipline, I could not abide the yoke; or ſubmit unto thy will; *Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God*; But is this the language of a beaſt? No, when once the Lord had chaſtened him, he ſpake like a man, whereas before he ſpake and did like a beaſt, even like a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke; but now he hath the voice of a man, yea the voice of a Saint, *Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.* O happy chaſtenings, which make ſuch changes! And chaſtiſings have many advantages to make ſuch changes, to turn beaſts into men. For,

Firſt, They imbitter the world to us, the world is ſuch a beaſt that it makes men beaſts, and when the world is taken out of our hearts, the beaſt departs from us, and is taken out of our hearts.

Secondly, Afflictions make ſin more viſible, judgements reallize the evil that is in ſin; and ſhew us the poiſon of that ſerpent.

Thirdly; Afflictions are proper to tame our wildneſs, and take down the loftineſs of our ſpirits. *Nebuchadnezzar* for his pride was (in a manner, in his manners he was before) turned into a beaſt. His outward ſhape was not changed, (The Poets Metamorphoſis was in morals, and ſo was this in the Prophet) but he lived like a beaſt, or he lead the life of a beaſt. *Some for ſin are put to live like beaſts, and all men in ſin live like beaſts. Nebuchadnezzar* living among beaſts, and like a beaſt, learned to be a man; For at the end of the dayes, ſaith he, *I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes to heaven, and mine underſtanding returned unto me,* (Dan. 4.24.) Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* was born a man, I do not ſay he was born an holy man, but a man he was born, *His underſtanding returned unto him, and his Councellours and his Lords ſought unto him,* they owned him then not only as a man, but as a Monarch. Afflictions civillize moſt, and they ſpiritualize many. They are more brutiſh then beaſts, who (as the Prophet deſcribes them, *Iſa.* 91.20.) continue *like wild bulls full of the fury* (and empty of the ſpirit) *of the Lord,* when they are entangled in theſe nets, or taken with theſe toils.

And becauſe there is ſo great a tendency in affliction to humble and purifie vain man from his ſin, therefore affliction is brought in as a great aggravation of the ſin of man. How beaſtly are they that will not return from their folly, when they are ſmitten and broken with judgements? Hence that iterated expoſtulation (*Amos* 4.) *I have ſmitten you,* &c. *yet have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord.* God himſelf doth even wonder that the beaſt ſhould not turn man, when he had been ſo long under the burden, and had received ſo many blows. 'Tis ſeaſonable for us of this Nation, to conſider this point. We have been like wild aſſes colts, ignorant, vain, obſtinate, and unteachable; God hath conſidered theſe things, he hath written his obſervation of them in bloudy characters. O that this might be the fruit, that ſuch as have been empty, and without hearts, might learn wiſdom, that ſuch as have been wild aſſes, might be born men, yea good men. This would make all our loſſes gain to us, and our judgments mercies; ſuch a change as this would change our water into wine, and all our ſorrows into joy.

Thus I have done with the firſt part of *Zophars* ſpeech, wherein he reproves *Job,* and argues the matter with him. He is now ready to alter his ſtile, and inſtead of conviction prepares advices for him.

VERS. 13, 14.

If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him.

If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacles.

IN the former part of this Chapter, *Zophar* confuted the opinion of *Job,* and reproved him for aſſerting and ſtanding ſo cloſely to it. In this he gives him counſel and direction; his counſel is contained in theſe two verſes. Toward the receiving of which he propoſeth not a few encouragements, in the words which follow. The whole may be formed up thus,

Eſt paraneſis, qua Jobum hortatur, ut ad Deum redeat ampliſſima illi boni pollicens. Merc.

> *Thou oughteſt willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey that counſel, in the hearing and obeying whereof, thou ſhalt be freed from evil, and enjoy all deſireable bleſſings and good things.*
>
> *But if thou hear and obey my counſel, if thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards God, if thou put the iniquity of thy hand far away from thee, thou ſhalt be freed from all evil, and enjoy all deſireable bleſſings and good things.*
>
> *Therefore thou oughteſt willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey my counſel.*

The concluſion of this ſyllogiſm is delivered in the thirteenth and fourteenth verſes. The aſſumption, (namely that, in preparing his heart, and praying unto God, he ſhould be bleſſed) is laid down, in the 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19. verſes; which is illuſtrated by the oppoſite and contrary condition of the wicked, at the twentieth verſe, *But the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and they ſhall not eſcape, and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.*

If thou prepare thine heart.

The words are an hortatory ſuppoſition, and (as was toucht before) we may obſerve that the three friends of *Job,* caſt their diſcourſes in the ſame mould, and inſiſt in the ſame method. Their ſpeeches are all of one frame and piece, as if they had ſpoken by conſent, or had before-hand reſolved upon a joynt-mannaging of their arguments & proceedings. While they all hit the ſame nail, they hope at laſt to drive it home to the head. As I have ſhewed *Eliphaz* in the fifth, and *Bildad* in the eighth Chapter, ſo now I muſt ſhew *Zophar,* after he had ſufficiently, if not bitterly reproved *Job,* adminiſtring holy and wholſom advice and counſel.

If thou prepare thine heart.] As if he had ſaid, *Come (friend) leave off thy complainings, and diſputings, leave off thy ſelf-juſtifyings and over-weenings of thy own worth; Be perſwaded at laſt to lay down thy weapons, and ſubmit thy ſelf, give over reaſoning, and fall to praying. Prepare thy heart to ſeek God.*

The

Tu autem firmaſti cor tuum, &c. Vulg.

The Vulgar reads it, as a charge brought againſt him, and not as a counſel given to him, *Thou haſt ſtiffened thine heart againſt God, and thou haſt ſtretched out thine hands toward him:* As if *Job* had ſtill continued contumacious and obſtinate againſt God, after all theſe breakings. To firm or ſtrengthen the heart, is to harden the heart, or to be inſenſible under the hand of God. But rather take it according to our tranſlation, as a direction or counſel, *If thou prepare thine heart,* that is, if thou putteſt thine heart into order, or if thou fix thine heart, ſo the word is tranſlated (*Pſal.* 57. 7. & 108. 1.) *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will ſing and give praiſe.* An unfixed, or an unſetled heart, muſt needs be an unprepared heart. *Fixedneſs of heart is preparatory to preparation of heart.* A fixed heart (and that only) is fitted to move towards, and to follow after God. It is very hard to aim right at that which is in motion, but it is harder for him that is in motion to aim right. *The ſteady man hits the mark.*

נכון לבי

Paratum vel fixum eſt cor meum

Yet more diſtinctly conſider,

Firſt, What is here meant by the heart?

Secondly, What by the preparing or fixing of the heart?

Cor eſt primum vivens & ultimum moriens.

Firſt, The heart is not here taken in its natural capacity, for that part of the body, which *Philoſophers* call *the firſt living, and the laſt dying in man.* But by the heart (in a metaphor) we are to underſtand the ſoul, or the whole inward man: For as the heart is the principal part of the body, ſo the ſoul is the principal part of man, and the failings and wounds of the ſoul are to the whole man, like the failing or wounding of the heart in reference to the outward man.

Again, As the heart in Scripture ſignifies the whole ſoul or inward man, ſo it is put diſtinctly for thoſe noble faculties of the ſoul; Firſt, *The underſtanding.* Secondly, *The will.* Thirdly, *The memory.* And for a fourth, which is a reſult or compound of them three, *The conſcience.* The Apoſtle means the underſtanding, while he ſaith of the Gentiles, (*Rom.* 1. 21.) *Their fooliſh heart was darkned:* they had a knowledge of God in the creature, but they waxed wanton, and became vain in their imaginations; and therefore their *fooliſh heart,* that is, their underſtanding *was darkned;* God ſent them a *ſpiritual cloud,* becauſe they did not improve *natural light.* They who abuſe light are moſt uſually and moſt juſtly left in darkneſs. But to the point, the ſame Apoſtle attributes *blindneſs of heart,* that is, of underſtanding, to the ſame Gentiles, *Epheſ.* 4. 18.

Secondly, The heart expreſſeth the *will,* in that anſwer of Chriſt to the Lawyers Queſtion, *Which is the great commandment in the Law?* Matth. 22. 36. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God* (ſaith Chriſt, *v.* 37.) *with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, with all thy mind;* that is, with thy will, with thy affections, with thy underſtanding, and with all of each of theſe. And as the heart of man is his will, ſo alſo is the heart of God. *I have ſought me a man* (ſaith God, 1 *Sam.* 13. 14.) *after my own heart.* He is ſuch a man as I would have, he is ſo much after my will, *That he will perform all my wills.*

Thirdly, The heart of man is his memory (*Pſal.* 119. 11.) *Thy word have I hid in my heart:* Memory is the repoſitory or ſtore-houſe of the Word, the treaſury of holy Truths, *Mary hid the words of Chriſt there,* Luke 2. 19.

Fourthly, The conſcience, which hath in it the light of the underſtanding, the motions of the will, and the recognitions of the memory, comes under the notion of the heart (*Pſal.* 51. 12.) *Create in me a clean heart, O God;* that is, purifie my conſcience, ſet that right; *David*'s conſcience was extreamly out of frame, his ſin had reduced it back into a kind of chaos, this made him pray for a new creation: Ordinary repairs, or a little mending would not ſerve his turn. But if this Scripture convince not the heart, for the conſcience, yet that of the Apoſtle *John* doth beyond all exception. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart* (1 *John* 3. 20.) and ſo doth that of *Job* (Chap. 27. 6.) *My heart* (that is, my conſcience) *ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.* It is conſcience which chideth and reproacheth the ſinner, and tells him his own. It is conſcience that ſpeaks fair, and gives good words to thoſe who walk uprightly: *My heart* (ſaith upright *Job*) *ſhall not reproach me;* that is, I have walked in my integrity, therefore I am not afraid what conſcience can do, or ſay againſt me.

When *Job* is adviſed to *prepare his heart,* we muſt enlarge it to the whole inward man, not fix it upon any one of theſe faculties in oppoſition to, or exemption from the other. *If thou prepare thine heart.*

Dicit cor tuum, non labia tua, quod hypocritarum eſt, hortatur Jobum, *ut ad Deum redeat non fictè & ſimulatè.* Druſ.

Verbum כון *ſemper accipitur in bonum.*

This preparation conſiſteth in two things.

Firſt, In removing and ſweeping out the filth which is in the heart, *Matth.* 15. 19. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies.* Now, as it is the continual work of an evil heart to ſend out theſe; ſo it is the firſt work of preparing a good heart, to purge and caſt out theſe. They come out of the heart eaſily, but, O how hard is it, to thruſt them out! yet this muſt be done, or elſe nothing is done towards the preparation of the heart. If you were to prepare an houſe for the entertainment of a great Prince, what would you do? Would not your firſt care be to carry out the dirt, and waſh the floor; down with the cobwebs there (cries one) away with every unclean thing (ſaith another) Thus we begin to prepare our houſes for ſuch noble entertainments. Again, when you are to prepare a plot of ground to receive ſeed, what do you? Do you not firſt pick out the ſtones, pull up and bury the weeds, and then ſow? Thus the Lord dealt with his vineyard (*Iſa.* 5. 2.) *He fenced it, and gathered out the ſtones thereof, and then planted it with the choiceſt vines.* He gathered out the ſtones before he planted it, he would not ſet vines among ſtones. The firſt work in all preparations is to get out the rubbiſh, and remove impediments.

Secondly, The heart wherein Chriſt is to be lodged, muſt not be a mere *vacuum,* only ſwept and empty; holineſs doth not conſiſt in negatives, in removing and throwing out of evil, though that be a great part of it: Therefore the next part of preparation is the adorning and beautifying of the heart, the quickning and heightning of it to thoſe duties and ſervices which God calls for. If you entertain a Prince, or but a ſpecial friend, as you ſweep your houſe, and waſh away the dirt, ſo you put up your *Arras hangings,* lay on your *Perſian carpets,* ſet up your *Ivory beds,* uncover your *rich ſtools,* bring out your *Plate and ornaments;* till then the houſe is not prepared. Thus to the point in hand, the preparation of the heart conſiſts in the actings of grace, in opening of all your ſpiritual ſtores, in putting on the richeſt furnitures of the inward man, in being cloathed with the Spirit, in ſhewing forth the vertues of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. If you be not thus beautified, as well as emptied, you are unprepared.

It is ſaid (*Matth.* 12. 44.) *That the evil ſpirit returning to his houſe, whence he came out, when he is come, findeth it empty, ſwept and garniſhed.* No marvel if it were empty, for who would dwell in a houſe, which hath had the Devil for its Tenant? But how came it ſwept, and with what broom? How came it to be garniſhed, and with what furniture? Muſt a houſe be made clean to entertain an unclean ſpirit? Muſt it be ſwept to receive him, who hath fill'd the whole world with filth and rubbiſh?

This emptying, ſweeping, and garniſhing, is fit for ſuch a gueſt. A heart emptied and ſwept of goodneſs, a heart adorned and garniſhed with noiſom luſts (ſuch are the ornaments and garniſh there meant) is a heart prepared for the Devil. In this manner, but with the moſt contrary materials muſt the heart be prepared for God. It muſt be emptied and ſwept of ſin, it muſt be garniſhed with grace, before the King of glory enters in.

In theſe two acts, preparation of the heart conſiſts, and without both it is imperfect; if the room be not cleanſed, he who is of purer eyes then to behold any unclean thing, will not lodge in it. God and ſin cannot dwell together, *What communion is there between light and darkneſs, between Chriſt and Belial?* Neither is it enough (if it were poſſible) to caſt out ſin, and to put off the old man, unleſs you put on the new. Some attempt to put the new man upon the old. They are willing (in this ſenſe) to be cloathed upon, but cannot endure to be uncloathed. *Holineſs upon unholineſs is the diſguiſe, not the habit of a holy man.* Others would be uncloathed, ſo they might be ſpared this pains to be cloathed upon. It is eaſier with them not to do evil, then to do good. *Evil laid aſide, and good not admitted or acted,*

acted, makes but half (if ſo much of) a good man. A due preparation of the heart conſiſts in putting off every evil, and in not doing any; in putting on all, and in doing every good.

This is the work which *Job* is adviſed unto. The ſum of all ſafe and wholſom counſel is contracted into this one ſentence, *Prepare thy heart.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *God muſt have the heart.*

He made the heart, therefore he deſerves it. He gives us his heart, therefore he deſerves ours. Whatſoever we give him without a heart, we give him nothing. *There is only ſo much of value in what we do, as there is of heart in it.* It is the voice of our hearts, not the muſick of our tongues that God regards, *My ſon, give me thine heart.* God muſt have your beſt piece, for he is the beſt of all.

Secondly, *Any heart will not ſerve Gods turn, it muſt be a prepared heart.*

He accepts not the beſt ſervice without a heart: How then ſhould he accept an evil heart, which can do him no ſervice, or none but ill? As a good heart is the beſt part of man, ſo an evil heart is the worſt; and there is no heart, but is one of theſe; that which is not good, is evil. and that which is not prepared, is not good. Therefore the heart, which is a gift fit for God, muſt be a prepared heart.

Thirdly, *Our preparations for God muſt begin at the heart.*

When *Zophar* would direct *Job*, he ſaith, *If thou prepare thine heart*; never think to cleanſe your hands before you cleanſe your hearts: who can ſweeten the ſtream, while the fountain is bitter, or make the fruit good, while the tree is evil? (*Act.* 15. 9.) *He put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith:* Where the holy Ghoſt begins, we muſt: They who agree not in purity of heart, ſhall differ for ever. They who agree in purity of heart, though they diſagree in opinion, ſhould put no difference (I am ſure not ſuch wide ones as now are) between themſelves. The truth is, where hearts are really purified by faith, their differences in opinion cannot be very wide: for they who are ſo wide that they cannot be ſaved, were never purified: When once the heart is purified, head and hand cannot continue very long, or very much unpurified. For though purifying begins alwayes at the heart, yet it never ſtayes there. Many a man hath purified his head from falſe principles (he is very Orthodox) and his hands from falſe practices (he is very honeſt) whoſe heart was never purified. But there is no man, nor ever was, whoſe heart is purified; but his head and hands, were, are, or ſhall be purified, even in this preſent life. A man whoſe heart is prepared cannot perſevere to the end in doing or holding evil; but the reaſon of all the evil both done and held in the world, is, becauſe the heart is not prepared. So it is ſaid of *Rehoboam* (2 *Chron.* 12. 14.) *He did evil in the ſight of the Lord,* Why? *Becauſe he prepared not his heart to ſeek the Lord.* Poſſibly he made ſome outward preparations, but he prepared not his heart. And when *Simon Magus,* who made ſuch haſte to be waſhed in the water of baptiſm (*Act.* 8.) did ſoon after appear ſo foul; where lay the fault? He had made ſuch an outward profeſſion, that the Apoſtle could not refuſe him, his tongue was as good, and 'tis like he ſhewed as fair a hand as the reſt did; why then did *Simon Magus* fail? The Apoſtle tells him (and us) the reaſon (*verſ.* 21.) *Thine heart is not right in the ſight of God*; he had waſhed his out-ſide, but his inwards were unclean. *The heart is the worſt part of man, till it be mended, and then 'tis the beſt.* Where moſt evil lieth, there we muſt begin to be good; all is good, when that is good which is the ſeat, the neſt of all evil. When Chriſt was coming into the world, to accompliſh that great work of redemption, he ſaith (*Heb.* 10. 5.) *Lo I come (in the volume of thy book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God, a body haſt thou prepared me,* &c. Chriſt needed not to have a heart prepared him, his heart was prepared from all eternity; there was never any, the leaſt unpreparedneſs in his heart, for he was holy in his temporal conception, and he was the holy Son of God, by an eternal generation; and therefore he doth not ſay, *An heart haſt thou prepared me,* no, he might ſay (in the higheſt ſence with the Pſalmiſt) *My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.* What needed he then to fit him for a ſacrifice? Only a body capable of ſufferings. He had a heart fit both to do and ſuffer, but he wanted a body: *He was in the form of God,* therefore a body, a ſute of fleſh and blood, ſuch as the *Divine Nature* never wore before, muſt be provided for him, and provided it was: God himſelf was at the whole coſt to make it (man contributed nothing) *A body haſt thou prepared me, O God.* But when man is called to do the will of God, he hath a body prepared, but he wants an heart. He hath but need to pray, *Lord prepare an heart for me*; if the heart be prepared, the body is. All the diſtempers and unſerviceableneſs of our bodies ariſe from the unpreparedneſs of our hearts. The heart carries the whole man with it; if once that be ready, all is ready.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *God will not do us good, until we are fit to receive good.*

Grace is free, yet grace prepares us for grace. As the mere favour of God beſtows the firſt grace upon us, ſo the exerciſe of grace fits us for further favour. *If thou prepare thine heart, then, &c.* In all the publick reformations recorded in Scripture, God calls his people to ſet their hearts right (1 *Sam.* 7. 3.) *Put away the ſtrange gods, and Aſhtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord.* The want of this is complained of, as the cauſe of all their wants: Hence the Prophet prayeth (*Pſal.* 78. 8.) that they might not be as their Fathers, *A ſtubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that ſet not their hearts aright.* While our hearts are not right with God, no marvel if things go wrong with us. All the unevenneſs of our lives, whether in what we do, or in what we enjoy, ariſeth from the unevenneſs of our hearts. How can they expect to receive good, who are totally unfit to do good? *The lips of the wiſe diſperſe knowledge, but the heart of the fooliſh (doth) not ſo:* (or nearer the original) *is not right,* (*Prov.* 15. 7.) This latter Tranſlation expounds the former; for the reaſon why he cannot do ſo, is, becauſe his heart is not right. *The lips of the wiſe diſperſe knowledge,* they ſcatter or ſow the good ſeed of knowledge: but the heart of a fool is not right, therefore he cannot do ſo; and becauſe his heart is ſo unprepared to do good, he receives no good. This was the ſtop, or gave check to that good work of reformation (2 *Chron.* 20. 23.) much was done, *Howbeit the high-places were not taken away*; why what hindered? *The people had not as yet prepared their hearts unto the God of their father*; they were not ready for God. And that may be the very reaſon, why at this time we go on ſo ſlowly in duty, and why our mercies come on ſo ſlowly; we are not prepared for the God of our fathers; our pride, our envyings, our worldlineſs, and creature intereſts, are ſo great, and ſtick ſo cloſe to us, that we are unfit for the work God calls for at our hands, and for the mercy which we are waiting for at the hand of God.

Fifthly, How is it that *Zophar* ſaith, *If thou prepare thine heart?* he puts the work upon *Job.* Who is able to prepare his own heart? We may as well create a world, as convert our ſelves. We may as ſoon be our own *Saviours,* as our own *preparers.*

It is indeed Gods work to prepare the heart; yet *Zophar* gives good counſel to *Job,* when he ſaith, *If thou prepare thine heart.* The *Pelagians* of old, with their ſucceſſors in that perſwaſion, *Papiſts* and *Arminians,* miſ-interpret texts of like importance with this, to prove that the converſion of man to God begins at man; or that the grace of God is ſubſequent, or but a ſecundary to the ſelf-preparations of man. Whereas ſuch Scriptures ſhew us our duty, not our ability, what muſt be done, not what we can do. A natural man hath no ſtrength; a godly man cannot improve his ſtrength without aſſiſtance. *Without me* (ſaith Chriſt) *ye* (my Diſciples) *can do nothing,* Joh. 15. 5. Our preparations of heart do not at all begin at us, nor are they compleated by us.

Hence Obſerve, *We may be called to do what is not in our power to do.*

The Apoſtle exhorts, *Work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling* (Phil. 2. 12.) He ſeems to give a ſtrange reaſon in the next verſe, *For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleaſure* (v. 13.) Our inability to work doth not exempt us from working, we having a promiſe from God to make us able: we are commanded to do what we have not ſo much as a will to do, becauſe

cauſe God is engaged to work in us both to will and to do; and that, not according to any prediſpoſitions of ours, but *of his own good pleaſure.* Our Maſter in Heaven ſhews us our duty, and then helps us to perform it: He calls us to prepare our hearts, and then prepares them for us. For they who have received grace, have not a full power to obey this call, and they who are in nature have none at all; yet it is not in vain to ſay to a man of the one eſtate, nor of the other, *Prepare thine heart*; though the latter be dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, yet it is neither improper, nor unprofitable to bid him turn from ſin, becauſe while we ſpeak to the ear, God ſaith he will ſpeak to the heart, and accompany the Word with his own power, yea, *make the word of man the power of God unto mans ſalvation.* And though the former cannot fully obey this call, nor prepare his heart without new actual concurrences, and freſh receits of grace, yet by ſuch invitations God awakens and ſtirs up thoſe old habits of grace, which lay ſlumbering, or unacted, and cauſeth ſuch to ſtir up themſelves, who were aſleep, or very unactive. The Prophet complained (*Iſa.* 64. 7.) *That no man ſtirred up himſelf to take hold of God.* As man muſt ſtir up himſelf, yet he ſtirs not, till God ſtir him; ſo man muſt prepare his heart, yet he cannot prepare it, till God prepareth him; *Pſal.* 10. 17. *Lord, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cauſe thine ear to hear.* It is not only the priviledge, but the purpoſe of God to prepare our hearts; yet if we deſire he ſhould, we muſt ſet our ſelves to prepare our own hearts. *David* in that gratulory prayer for the free oblations and contributions of the people toward the building of the Temple, thus beſpeaketh God, *Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee* (1 Chron. 29. 16.) He bleſſeth God for the preſent preparation, he begs of God to continue their prepared hearts in a gracious frame; and yet as if nothing had been done, he prayeth for further preparation (*Prov.* 16. 1.) *The preparations of the heart in man, and the anſwer of the tongue, is from the Lord.* You ſee all is from the Lord, the root and the fruit, *heart-work and tongue-work*, our thoughts which are the moulds of action, and our words which are the image of our thoughts; God works at the bottom of the heart, and at the tip of the tongue, yet man muſt not ſit ſtill; that God works, muſt not make us idle: when we hear that God doth all, we muſt not take up reſolutions to do nothing, no, the Lord in ſpeaking thus, at once directs us what to do, and aſſiſts us to do it. *Grace is as much magnified in working in us, as in ſaving us without works*; that's the reaſon why we are ſo often called to duty, though we have no power. *If thou prepare thine heart,*

And ſtretch out thine hand toward him.

Or *Spread thy palms to him*, ſo the letter of the original.

ופרשת
אליו כפיך

The word which we tranſlate, *Stretch out*, ſignifies ſometimes an affected oſtentation, or the ſpreading of a thing to have it ſeen. Hence one of the Ancients expounds this place as a reproof upon *Job*, giving the meaning of it thus, *Thou haſt ſtretched forth thine hands towards him*, that is, *Thou haſt vaunted of thy works of piety, juſtice and charity; thou haſt ſpread thy palms, yea thy plumes before God, and ſhewed him what work thou haſt done him.* Some tell us that the word *Phariſee*, is derived from (*Paraſh*) to lay open, to unfold and ſtretch out: and there is a double reaſon given of it; Firſt, Becauſe the *Phariſees* wore the Law openly, with broad enlarged phylacteries: Or ſecondly, Becauſe they loved to do all their duties openly, they would pray in the open Streets, they gave alms with ſound of trumpet, and Chriſt tells them to their teeth, *That all they did was to be ſeen of men*; they kept their evil hearts cloſe, and durſt not let them be ſeen; but their good works they cared not who ſaw them, or rather their care was that all ſhould ſee them; thus they ſpread out their hands. Chriſt adviſeth in the matter of alms, to keep the hand cloſe, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth* (Matth. 6. 31.) The right hand is the working and giving hand; our good works, eſpecially our gifts, ſhould be done in ſuch ſecrecy, that the left hand which is ſo near a neighbour, muſt not know what is done by the right. But the Phariſees made not only their *left hand*, that is their next neighbours, but Town and Country know what their *right hands* had done. *He that deſires all ſhould be known, which his right hand doth, doth nothing at all with a right heart.* It is dangerous to hide the talents which God lends us; but it is as much our duty to hide the talents (ſuch are gifts to the poor) which we lend to God, as it is to lend them. Theſe talents are beſt traded, when wrapt in a napkin, or buried in the earth.

Expandere manus eſt opera pietatis oſtentare & vaniloquentiâ dilatare. Greg.

Some conceive *Zophar* in theſe words taxing *Job* with vain oſtentation of his good deeds; *Thou haſt ſtretched out thine hands*, that is, Thou haſt told God ſtories of thy charity, of thine alms, *&c.*

Others interpret it thus, *Thou haſt ſtretched*, &c. that is, thou haſt carried thy ſelf inſultingly, furiouſly, madly toward God. Stretching forth of the hands, is a poſture of fury: an uncompoſed mind is often viſible in the uncompoſedneſs of an outward member.

Manuum expanſio pertinet ad habitum furentis. Phil.

But thirdly, waving thoſe two, *ſtretching forth of the hands*, as it is here given in counſel, hath a three-fold uſe in Scripture.

Firſt, It is a geſture of ſorrow, mourners ſtretch out their hands (*Jer.* 4. 31:) *I have heard a voice as of a woman in travel, and the anguiſh, as of her that bringeth forth her firſt child. The voice of the daughter of* Zion *that bewaileth her ſelf, that ſpreadeth her hands, ſaying, Woe is me now, for my ſoul is wearied, becauſe of the murderers.*

Secondly, *It is a geſture of bounty or pity.* Stretching out the hands, implieth a readineſs and willingneſs to receive to favour, or to ſhew favour (*Iſa.* 65. 2.) *I (ſaith the Lord) have ſpread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*; that is, I have expreſſed my willingneſs to entertain them, to pardon them, and to do them good. *Open hands are the emblem of an open heart, and arms ſtretched out, of a readineſs to imbrace.* When we ſtretch out our hands to God, it ſpeaks our willingneſs to receive his commands; and when God ſtretcheth out his hands to us, it ſpeaks his readineſs to pardon our ſins and ſupply our wants.

Thirdly, Stretching out the hands is a *prayer geſture.* As he that helps ſtretcheth forth his hand, ſo doth he that would be holpen. When *Moſes* went out from the preſence of *Pharaoh*, he ſaith, *As ſoon as I am gone out of the City, I will ſpread abroad my hands unto the Lord, and the thunder ſhall ceaſe,* &c. *Exod.* 9. 29. That is, I will pray unto the Lord, that the thunder may ceaſe, and I am aſſured it ſhall. So (1 *King.* 8. 22.) at the dedication of the Temple, *Solomon ſtood before the Altar, and ſpread forth his hands towards heaven. Let us lift up our heart with (our) hands unto God in the heavens* (Lam. 3. 41.) or according to the letter of the Hebrew; *Let us lift up our hearts to our hands, to God in the heavens*; that is, let our hearts be lifted up as well as our hands. Some lift up their hands while their hearts hang down in prayer. The Apoſtles charge (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) clears it further, *I will that men pray every where lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.* Heathens have obſerved and deſcribed this poſture of ſuppliants to their Idol-gods, bowing their knees, holding up their hands and praying.

Eſt habitus opem implorantis & orationis ſignum. Merc.

Nixa genibus ſupinas manus ad Deos tendentes, orantesque, &c. *Liv. l.* 39

Ac ſupplex geminas tendens ad ſidera palmas Syl. Ital.

So that putting both together. *Prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him*, are plainly this, *Prepare thine heart and pray, or prepare thine heart to pray.* The ſign is put for the thing ſignified, or the geſture uſed in that duty for the duty it ſelf in which it is uſed. There are four ſignifications which *ſtretching forth the hands* may have in prayer. I will touch upon that (only to ſhew the vanity of it) which the *ſuperſtitious Papiſts* do much inſiſt upon; we pray (ſay they) ſtretching forth the hands or arms, to expreſs *the croſs of Chriſt*; becauſe when a man ſtretcheth out his arms, his body makes the figure of a croſs. This they make one reaſon, why ſtretching out the hands, is appointed or accuſtomed in prayer. But how they who lived where ſuch a kind of death as crucifying was never heard of, as *Zophar* and *Job* did; and ſo many hundred years before Chriſt died upon the croſs; how they (I ſay) could in prayer form their bodies intentionally, to that which was never formed in their minds, the croſs of Chriſt, is beyond all conjecture, and is no point at all of faith. To paſs that, there are (I ſay) four ſignificancies in it.

Firſt, ſtretching out the hands towards God in prayer, implieth a reſignation of our ſelves to the will and work of God. It is as much as to ſay, *Theſe hands of mine, which I have heretofore imployed about the work of the Devil, and the ſervice of ſin, now, Lord, I dedicate them and their work* *wholly to thy ſelf.* They who give their hearts to God, will not ſtick at giving their hands. Holy prayer offers up the whole man to God, and deſires him to take the ſpoils of all. A godly man hath not a finger at his own diſpoſe. The hand being the great organ or inſtrument of action, the ſtretching out of our hands to God, may well imply our readineſs to act wholly at his direction. *The ſureſt way to write our ſelves ſervants to God, is to give him our hands.*

Secondly, Stretching forth of the hands, ſignifieth a holy ſtriving with God in prayer, or the earneſtneſs and ſtrong intention of our ſpirits in prayer. A man that ſtriveth with another, ſtretcheth out his hands, and takes hold of him. So did *Jacob* when he wreſtled with the Angel, he held him faſt, and would not let him go, till he had prevailed for a bleſſing.

Thirdly, Stretching out of the hand imports the lifting up of the mind to God in prayer. Prayer is the aſſent of the ſoul to God. We pray no more then we have communion with God in prayer. *Unto thee, O Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 25. 1.) *do I lift up my ſoul.* We ſhould not leave any thing of our ſouls, no nor of our ſelves here on earth, when we pray to *our Father which is in Heaven.* We ſhould then lock our hearts againſt worldly thoughts, and ſet them open to God only. Satan is very buſie to buſie the heart with temptations, while the tongue is uttering petitions. Let hands lifted up be witneſſes that the ſoul is, that it is in the mount, out of the noiſe and clutter of this world. How can we believe that God heareth us, when we do not hear our ſelves? or that he ſhould be mindful to grant what we aſk, when we do not mind what we are aſking?

Oratio eſt elevatio mentis ad deum. Quæ autem ſegnitia eſt alienari & capi ineptis cogitationibus cum deũ deprecaris, quaſi ſit aliud quod magis debes cogitare quam quod cum Deo loquaris? quomodo te à Deo audiri poſtulas, cum teipſe non audias? vis eſſe deum memorem tui cum rogas; cum tu ipſe memor tui non ſis? Cyprian. *Ser. de Orat. Dominica.*

Fourthly, Stretching out of the hands ſaith, that all our hope and expectation is in God. We ſtretch out our hands to him to tell him that we depend wholly upon him for help, mercy, favour and pardon; that unleſs he deliver us, we are loſt and undone for ever. When a child is in danger of falling, he ſtretcheth out his hands to his mother, or to any next him, crying for their help. If a man be fallen into the mire, or water, he ſtretcheth out his hands preſently; though himſelf cannot ſpeak, yet his hands lifted up ſpeak for hands to lift him up. The priſoner in war caſts down his weapons, and lifts up his hands to the victor for pitty and quarter. Thus hands lifted up or ſtretched out in prayer, beg mercy, and ſhew our dependance upon God for ſuccour. The lifting up of our eyes to God, is of the ſame ſignification: *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the Heavens; as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hand of their maſters, and as the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her miſtreſs, ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God till he have mercy upon us*; Pſal. 123. 1, 2. In this poſture Chriſt prayed to his Father, *Joh.* 17. 1. *Theſe words ſpake Jeſus, and lift up his eyes to Heaven, and ſaid, Father, the hour is come, glorifie thy Son.* He lifted up his eyes as a ſign of confidence in, and holy boldneſs with his Father. This ſign is alſo given, with a hand ſtretched out in prayer, as *Zophar* gives in counſel; *If thou ſtretch forth thine hands towards him.*

Firſt, Obſerve, *That as the heart muſt be prepared for all good duties, ſo eſpecially for prayer. If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him.*

Prayer is a duty of greateſt weight, a moſt ſpiritual duty, it is our acceſs to God in Chriſt, it is *our entring into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus,* Heb. 10. 19. And if ever we had need to look to the holineſs of our hearts, it is when we draw near unto the holy God, who is looking into our hearts. In prayer we deſire God to look into our hearts, and ſhall not we look into them our ſelves?

Secondly, Obſerve, *Prayer is a ſpecial duty of repentance: And the confeſſion of our unpreparedneſs, is a ſpecial part of prayer.*

Zophar thought *Job* had need enough to repent, and he that repents hath need enough to pray: repentance is our returning to God: prayer is our drawing near to God. *I will ariſe* (ſaith the prodigal Son) *and go to my Father, and I will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.*

Thirdly, *If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him*;

Hence Obſerve, *In prayer the whole man muſt be exerciſed.*

Heart and hand muſt joyn in this duty. Not only the ſoul but the body muſt pray; hands muſt pray, knees muſt pray, and eyes muſt pray; *Geſtures are ſpeaking in prayer,* by theſe we pray when we hold our peace, and lift up a loud voice when we ſay never a word; *kneeling or proſtrating the body ſpeaks humility; beating the breaſt, ſmiting upon the thigh, are ſignificative of ſorrow; lifting up the eyes and hands to Heaven, argue a fervent and attentive ſpirit.* But as it is compleateſt duty to pray with hand and heart; ſo it is emptieſt hypocriſie, to pray with the hand and not with the heart. Theſe geſtures (take that caution) may ſoon degenerate; the body may be very active when the ſoul ſits ſtill or is eſcaped from the work. Some uſe much action, who uſe no affection in prayer; ſoul-prayer, though alone, is good, but wo to body-prayer when it is alone; how can it get warmth or heat when it is alone? Soul prayer is abſolutely neceſſary, body prayer is comely. Internal prayer pleaſeth God moſt, external prayer honours God moſt. What God hath joyned together, let not us (while we may keep them together) part aſunder.

Hi geſtus facile degenerant. Optimæ preces quæ minimum ſtrepunt & in abſcondito cordis ad eum effunduntur qui videt in occulto & rependit in aperto, qui non tam vocis quàm cordis auditor eſt.

And as the whole man ſhould be imployed in prayer, ſo eſpecially in that *ſignal concluſion* of it, *Amen.* Some of the ancient Hebrews teach us to gather up all our ſpirits into the *Amen* of prayer, becauſe prayer is (as it were) *gathered all together,* or ſumm'd up into *Amen.* The ſpirits of the whole prayer are contracted into it, and ſo ſhould the ſpirit of him that prayeth. *Amen is a ſhort word, but it is in ſence as long as the longeſt prayer.* Moſt ſay *Amen*, becauſe they uſe to ſay ſo, not becauſe they know what they ſay. *Amen* is often at the tongues end, but 'tis ſeldom at the hearts end. Formality and flatneſs of the ſpirit, pal's and unſpirits it in the ſpeaking. There are three things which the Rabbins have obſerved upon the ſaying of *Amen.*

Firſt, Your *Amen* (ſay they) muſt not be haſty. Secondly, It muſt not be maimed or defective. Thirdly, It muſt not be alone.

Firſt, It muſt not be *haſty*, without a ſetled conſideration of what we have prayed for. We muſt ſay *Amen* with our underſtandings. That's the Apoſtles argument for prayer in a known language: *Elſe when thou ſhalt bleſs with the Spirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay Amen, at thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt?* 1 Cor. 14. 16.

Ne ſit reſponſio τοῦ *Amen raptamanca orba, in Notis ad* Pirke Avorh.

Secondly, *Amen* muſt not be *maimed*, that is, without the proſecution and inſtance of our ſpirits, we muſt ſtretch out our hearts after it, and be ſwallowed up in God.

Thirdly, *Amen* muſt not be *alone, or an orphan,* that is, without faith, love, and holy confidence: for when we ſay *Amen,* we ſay *Let it be done*; and ſhall we ſay to God, *Do all,* and have no faith that any thing ſhall be done? Let not *Amen* ſtand alone as a poor orphan, which hath neither Father nor Mother, *faith nor love,* to ſupport and carry it on to the object of prayer, to the God hearing prayer.

Some Interpreters give it, as *Zophars* ſpecial aim, to remember *Job* that his prayers had been faithleſs and flat; that the ſpirits of his petition were exhal'd and gone. For whereas *Eliphaz* and *Bildad* had exhorted him to humility and patience, *Job* anſwers, he had prayed for both, as alſo that God would either end his pains or him; remove his ſorrows, or ſhew him the reaſon why they were continued. *Zophar* ſteps in upon this advantage: *Thou haſt been praying indeed* (ſaith he) *but thy heart hath not been right, nor thy ſpirit fervent; thou haſt not prayed with a prepared heart, nor with a ſtretcht-out hand unto God; thou haſt prayed rather out of the bitterneſs, then out of the holineſs of thy ſpirit: Thy ſutes are the fruit of preſumption, not of faith; of unwarrantable boldneſs with God, not of an holy confidence in him; now I would have thee pray indeed. Prepare thine heart and ſtretch out thine hands, pray with all thy might, and then hearken what the Lord God will ſay.*

This check (as ſome conceive) cauſed *Job* in his anſwer to *Zophar,* to complain, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he anſwereth him:* (Chap. 12.)

as if he had ſaid, Zophar, *you have mocked and upbraided me with my prayers, you thought I did not prepare mine heart nor ſtretch out my hands to God in prayer; you ſpeak to me as if you had felt me in a cold ſweat at duty, or had ſeen the image of pale death ſitting upon all my addreſſes unto God. But I am ſure I feel you too hot at reproofs, and ſee the image of an unfriendly jealouſie ſitting upon this your addreſs to me. You do but mock me while you ſay unto me, prepare thine heart and ſtretch out thine hand to God.* Yet (in my thoughts) this counſel of *Zophar* is ſo holy and grave, that I ſee not how a gracious heart (ſuch *Job*'s was) could interpret it as a mock, eſpecially conſidered in its connexion with the next verſe.

Verſe 14. **If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy Tabernacle.**

He had exhorted him before, to prepare his heart and ſtretch out his hand; now he bids him prepare his hand before he ſtretch it out.

Si mendaciū ſit in manu tua. Targ. *Intelligit rapinam aliorum bonorū facultatis male partas. Si qua defraudatio manu tua.* Bez.

If iniquity be in thine hand.] The word Iniquity bears any ſin; yet the *Chaldee* ſpecificates it into a lye; *if a lye be in thine hand.* Others (which amounts to a lye) *if deceit, wrong dealing, oppreſſion or any violence be in thine hand, put it far away from thee:* any thing that deceives is a lye. *Iſa.* 44. 20. *He feedeth of aſhes* (that is, ſorrow is his food) *a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lye in my right hand?* As if he had ſaid, His Idol promiſed him better fare then aſhes, yet he is ſo much deceived, that he cannot ſee he is, or ſay there is a lye in his right hand. Oppreſſion is properly and uſually called the ſin of the hand. There are many ſins of the body, which are not ſins of the hand; all thoſe are, wherein the hand acts moſt, as in violence and wrong; in theſe ſins there is ſo heavy a hand, that they deſerve to be called *ſins of the hand.* And though the word may take in any kind of ſin, yet *Zophar* charges *Job* chiefly with that, as his other friends had done, more then once, before. That proclamation to repent, which the King of *Nineveh* cauſed to be publiſhed through the City, ran in this tenor, *Let every one turn from the violence that is in their hands;* and if you would know what that was, read the ſecond of *Nahum,* there we are ſhewed that *Nineveh* was a ſpoiling City, and the men thereof as Lions, tearing in pieces enough for their whelps, and ſtrangling for their Lioneſſes, they filled their holes with prey, and their dens with ravin; they cared not whom they ruined, ſo they might raiſe up their own eſtates. This is iniquity of the hand.

And ſecondly, We may underſtand it not only of outward and violent, but of any cloſe and ſecret wrong; carry it as covertly as you can, even like Juglers, who do that before your face which you cannot ſee; yet wrong dealing and wrong doing is iniquity, and the iniquity of the hand. *Evil done by ſleight of hand, or cunningly, is as bad as that which is done by ſtrength of hand or violently.*

Thirdly, *If there be iniquity in thine hand,* is as if he had ſaid, *if thou haſt gotten any thing wrongfully, which ſtill remains in thy power, put it away,* &c. To be in the hand, is to be in our diſpoſe; and we ſay commonly, *ſuch a thing is out of my hand,* when we have parted with it, or diſpoſed of it. So, *if iniquity be in thine hand,* is, if thou haſt deceived any man, and the matter be ſtill with thee, reſtore it, ſend it home to the right owner, away with it, *put it far from thee.*

Before I come to the other branch, take one Obſervation from this as it hath reference to the former counſel, *Prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards God: if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away from thee.*

The hand muſt be cleanſed as well as the heart.

For as God cannot bear it, that we ſhould come with clean hands, a fair outward converſation, when our hearts are filthy; (ſuch Chriſt diſcovered the Phariſees, who were like platters waſhed on the out ſide, but unclean within; or like ſepulchers fairly painted, but full of dead mens bones and rottenneſs,) ſo neither can he bear it, that they whoſe hands (even to the eye of the world) are filthy and unclean, ſhould yet pretend, *they have as good hearts as others, they mean well;* as the one is *groſs hypocriſie,* ſo the other is *groſs profaneneſs.* Never brag of your good meanings, or that you have good hearts, when your hands are foul. I grant many have clean hands, while they have polluted hearts; but where I ſee polluted hands, I have great reaſon to think there is a polluted heart too: *many appear better, but ſcarce any worſe then they are.* The heart may keep in its filthineſs while the hands are waſhed; but if the heart be waſhed, the hand will not keep its filthineſs. It is very poſſible for a man that hath a clean heart to foul his fingers, but he will not wear them foul: He reneweth faith and repentance, he waſheth off the filth in that *fountain which is always open for ſin and uncleanneſs.* They whoſe conſtant way is evil, and yet ſay they have good hearts, deceive themſelves, but cannot deceive others. Their impiety is too plain to deceive the plaineſt ſoul in grace, that hears them ſay ſo. *The preparation of the heart will be ſeen at the fingers ends: purity of ſpirit cannot conſiſt with impurity of life: if thou haſt iniquity in thine hand, put it far away from thee.*

הרחיקהו *Elonga eam.*

Put it far away from thee.] The Original is one word, but it is a ſtrong one; thruſt it away, remove it to the utmoſt diſtance.

Hence learn, Firſt, That, *ſin muſt be put away.*

There is no inmate or neighbour ſo bad as ſin, if it dwell nigh you it will undo you: it were better a Lyon and a Bear dwelt with you, or that you dwelt among Scorpions, then that you and ſin ſhould dwell together. Sin is a bad commodity, you will never gain by it, you will certainly break if it lye upon your hand; put it off at any rate, or rather whatever it coſt you, put it off. *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it away.* And not only ſo, But

Secondly, *Put it far away from thee.*

We can never put ſin too far from us.

The Apoſtles rule is, *Abſtain from all appearance of evil,* that is, do nothing wherein ſin appears, or which hath a ſhadow of ſin, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 22. *There is no holineſs in having a ſhew of goodneſs, but the very ſhews of ſin are evil.* What the Apoſtle adviſeth for the avoiding of ſin, that it may not be committed, is as good adviſe for the putting away of ſin when it is committed: for as we are to go far from ſin by a holy care leſt we fall into it; ſo we muſt go far from ſin by a holy repentance after we have fallen into it. We ſhould put it ſo far from us, that there may be no returning. We ſhould put it as far from us, as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, which is the greateſt diſtance, not only menſurable, but imaginable. When God pardons ſin he puts it thus far from us (*Pſal.* 103. 12.) and ſo ſhould we (if it were poſſible) when we repent of it. The Original word in the *Pſalm* is that of the Text, and may be rendred thus, *God hath put our ſins as far away from us, as he hath put the Eaſt from the Weſt.* As the grace of God toward us will not ſuffer ſin in the guilt of it to abide near us; ſo the grace of God in us, will not ſuffer ſin in the pollution of it, to abide near us. Beſides, ſin is ſuch both in the nature and effects of it, as no wiſe man can deſire near him. Who would not put poyſon far from him? Who would not thruſt the Plague or the Leproſie far away from him? Who deſires the neighbourhood of a mortal enemy? Sin is all this and more to us, therefore put it far away.

Thirdly, *Zophar* having invited *Job* to pray, counſels him to *put iniquity far away.*

Note from it, *We cannot draw near to God in prayer, except we put ſin far from us.*

If ſin be not put far from us God will remove far from us: The holy God will not come near (unleſs to puniſh) the prayers of an unholy heart. You may ſtretch out your hands to Heaven, but you cannot reach Heaven, if any iniquity be in your hands.

Fourthly, Taking iniquity (as it hath been opened) for the violation of commutative juſtice, for wrong dealing and oppreſſion; Then Obſerve,

That which is ill gotten muſt be reſtored.

Put it out of thy houſe, out of thy family: it will be a fire to burn, a moth to conſume, a canker to fret all thy com-

Rapina hæret diu in manu, facilius eſt bona ſua dividere, quam male parta ſuo poſſeſſori reddere. Agglutinata eſt hujuſmodi iniquitas picatis manibus. Pined. *Notat male parta citò ad ſuos dominos eſſe mittenda tanquam nobis & rei familiari nociva. Animus ad reſtituendum paratus, ſi poteſtas fieret, eſt abſolutè neceſſarius.* Ames. *l.* 5. *de conſ. c.* 4.

forts:

ſorts; *that which is ill got, will poiſon that which is well got. Moſes* beſpeaks the Iſraelites concerning *Corah, Dathan* and *Abiram, Depart I pray you from the tents of theſe wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, leſt you be conſumed in all their ſins:* it is dangerous to be a neighbour to wicked men; the tail of the ſtorm ſent upon them may fall upon our ſelves: it is more dangerous to keep wickedneſs in our own hands, the whole ſtorm will then fall upon us: It is very ſinful to get by wrong, but it is more ſinful to keep what is wrongfully gotten; yet how hardly are men perſwaded to part with it! It is eaſier to do an act of charity then of juſtice; Many are willing to give, but few are willing to reſtore; yet we are more bound to be juſt then to be charitable, and to reſtore then to give; and indeed no man can give till he hath reſtored, nor be charitable till he is juſt. That which is ſtollen is not fit for a gift either to God or man. *God hates robbery both for almes and for burnt-offerings.* They who are unable may be innocent though they reſtore not, but no man can be innocent who is unwilling to reſtore. Some have done iniquity with their hands, who have not iniquity in their hands. What they have taken from others, is taken from them, or ſpent by them. Theſe muſt ſhew, they have it in their hearts to reſtore all, though they have nothing in their hands to reſtore. How can we expect, that God ſhould remit our juſt debts, if we will not reſtore our unjuſt gains?

Let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacle.

As the former clauſe reſpected the reforming of his perſon, ſo this the reforming of his family.

Habitat iniquitas in domo, quando in ea diu manet. Druſ.

Let not wickedneſs dwell.] That is, let it not continue there. But is it well if wickedneſs dwell not with us? may it ſtay a while with us? No, not a moment. As the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks in reference unto thoſe falſe brethren, *who came in privily to ſpie out their liberty in Chriſt, and bring them into bondage, unto whom we gave place by ſubjection, no not for an hour,* (Gal. 2. 5.) So we muſt not give place to wickedneſs for an hour; it is not enough to ſay of wickedneſs, it ſhall not dwell or abide with us for ever; we will have it but for a week or a night, it may be but for an hour: no, it muſt not ſtay with us an hour, no not one moment, with our good leave and liking. When *Zophar* ſaith, *Let not iniquity dwell in thy tabernacle,* he means, haſten it away; and the reaſon why he ſaith, *let it not dwell,* is, becauſe no man can ſo watch his houſe and family, no nor his own heart, but ſin will ſometimes come in; he ſhall find ſuch ſtrangers there as he never invited, ſuch as he never looked for; he ſhall find them not only knocking at the door, but boldly drawing the latch, unlocking the door, and thruſting in; man cannot prevent this, either in regard of his heart or his houſe; but he may ſay, wickedneſs ſhall not dwell with me; as ſoon as he diſcovers it he may remove it, or chide it out of doors. Though we cannot keep evil out, yet we may thruſt it out; though we cannot hinder its coming in, yet we may hinder its ſtaying in; we need not make a bed, or provide a chamber for ſin: this requires ſome pauſe and conſideration. We examine men (if we know them not) whence they are, and whither they will, before we bid them welcome, or admit them to reſt under our roof. The Prophet rebukes the people of *Iſrael* (*Jer.* 4. 12.) *How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* vain thoughts will offer themſelves, but why do you accept and entertain them, why do you ſpeak them fair? *Let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacle.*

Tabernaculorum nomine puto loca ſacra intelligi, quibus tanquam ſacerdos præerat cum eſſet in proſperis, ubi munera iniqua acceptaſſe putavit Zophar. Bold.

In thy tabernacle.] Some underſtand it perſonally: The body of a man is his tabernacle, *When the earthly houſe of this tabernacle* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *ſhall be diſſolved,* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) So *let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacle*, is, let it not dwell with thee, or in thy heart.

But ſecondly, Tabernacles were of two ſorts, Eccleſiaſtical, or Civil, either the place of Gods worſhip, or of mans reſidence. Some expound this Text in the former notion: *Let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacle,* that is, take care to purge the worſhip of God from all idolatry and ſuperſtition: There was a publick worſhip in that age, as we may collect from the diſcourſe of *Job*'s friends; here *Zophar* (according to this ſence) preſſeth *Job* to a reformation of worſhip (he being a publick perſon and the Prieſt) or accuſeth him, as having ſuffered abuſes to creep into it: at which *Eliphaz* ſeems to aim in his rejoynder (*Chap.* 15. 34.) *For the congregation of hypocrites ſhall be deſolate, and fire ſhall conſume the tabernacles of bribery.*

But I rather take tabernacle, for a civil dwelling, ſo, *Let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacle,* is (by a Trope) as if he had ſaid, let not wickedneſs dwell in thoſe who dwell in thy tabernacle: A tabernacle is not a ſubject capable of good or evil, but as perſons abiding there are good or evil.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *He that cleanſeth himſelf, ſhould labour to cleanſe others alſo.*

As it ſhould not ſatisfie us to be happy alone, ſo not to be holy alone. Grace is communicative and catching as well as ſin: A man that hath no wickedneſs dwelling in himſelf, would not have any man a dwelling for wickedneſs: having purified his own heart and hands, he labours as far as his line reacheth, to purifie thoſe about him. Chriſt gives this charge to *Peter, When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren.*

Secondly, In relation to our own tabernacles, Obſerve,

The governour of a family is to look to his family, to all under his charge, that wickedneſs dwell not among them.

It was the commendation of *Abraham,* and that which moved God to entruſt him with his ſecrets; *I know* Abraham *that he will command his houſhold, and his children after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord:* and if *Abraham* would teach his houſhold the way and will of God, doubtleſs *Abraham* would not let that dwell in his houſhold, which was contrary to the way and will of God. When *Jacob* went to *Bethel,* with ſacrifice, he ſaid unto *his houſhold and to all that were with him, put away the ſtrange gods that are among you, and be clean* (Gen. 39.) Such was the reſolution of *Joſhua, I and mine houſe will ſerve the Lord:* And *David* who had the care of a whole Kingdom upon him, yet takes care that no wickedneſs ſhould dwell in his Court and *Royal family,* Pſal. 101. 7. *He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell in my houſe, he that telleth lies ſhall not tarry in my ſight.* The ſins that dwell in our families, become ours, if we labour not to purge them out. A man is guilty of ſo much ſin as he might prevent by ſuch means as God hath afforded him, if he doth not. We have not ſatisfied our duties when we look to our ſelves only, but to all under our ſhadow or within our ſphere. Further, Family ſins bring family judgments, as well as national ſins bring national, or perſonal ſins perſonal judgments. Becauſe *Eli* ſuffered his Sons in ſin, and did not reſtrain them, therefore he ſuffered for their ſins; their ſins were charged upon his account, and he paid dearly for them. When we make other mens ſins our own, they will make us ſmart as much as our own: *And the ſins of thoſe who are ours, may quickly be ours. Where the relation is nearer, the contagion is quicker.* They are ſo, not only when we command and give them counſel to ſin, or take pleaſure in their ſin, but when we do not reprove them for ſin, or not improve all due means to prevent or remove their ſin.

Nota hic tria ad verā reſipiſcentiā neceſſaria, primò cordis preparationem, ſecundò orationem, tertiò iniquitatis propulſionem Merc.

Laſtly, Theſe two verſes preſent us with a platform of repentance in three ſpecial acts or requiſites. Firſt, *Preparation of the heart:* Secondly, *Fervent prayer:* Thirdly, *The putting away, caſting out, or baniſhing of iniquity.* Till the heart be prepared we cannot pray; untill iniquity be purged out, prayer is not accepted; unleſs all three be done we have not repented, or our repentance muſt be repented of. Except we repent thus we cannot be ſaved; and only that repentance is not to be repented of, which is unto ſalvation.

VERS. 15, 16.

For then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot; yea, thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt, and ſhalt not fear.

Becauſe thou ſhalt forget thy miſery, and remember it as waters that paſs away.

IN the former context, *Zophar* gives *Job* good counſel; in this he gives him encouragements to follow that counſel. His encouragements are laid down more generally in theſe two verſes; and they are drawn into particulars in the words following to the end of the Chapter. There are three branches of this general promiſe in the fifteenth verſe.

Firſt, *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot.*
Secondly, *Thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt.*
Thirdly, *Thou ſhalt not fear.*

In the	Firſt	he promiſeth him	an honourable	eſtate.
	Second		a ſetled	
	Third		a comfortable	

Verſ. 15. **Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot.**

We had an expreſſion neer this at the 15. verſe of the 10. Chapter, where *Job* ſeems to ſpeak (as ſome expound) deſpairingly, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head:* or, as others, humbly, *I will not lift up my head though I were righteous. Zophar* anſwers him here: thou ſayſt, *if thou wert righteous thou wouldſt not lift up thy head*, but, I tell thee, if thou wert righteous (according to the counſel given thee) thou mighteſt lift up both thy head and heart, thou mighteſt take both courage and comfort, *Then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot.*

What the lifting up of the head, or of the face imports, may be ſeen(*ch.*10.15.) I ſhall here only add a threefold ſignification about lifting up the face; both phraſes being of near affinity.

Firſt, To lift up the face is a ſign of chearfulneſs, *Job* 22. 26. *For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God*; that is, thou ſhalt lift up thy face unto God with delight. Joy is the light and life of the face; no marvel then, if we lift up our faces when God cauſeth us to rejoyce. *A merry heart*, ſaith *Solomon* (Prov. 17.22.) *doth good like a medicine*; and where that medicine works kindly, it ſets a man upon his legs, and makes him hold up his head like a man. God hath given man an erect countenance in the fabrick of nature; but his countenance is then moſt erect, when grace cauſeth him to rejoyce in God.

Non elevet faciem ad ſenem. Heb. *Non mirabitur faciē ſenis.* Sept.

Secondly, *To lift up the face*, is an act of reverence and reſpect. (*Deut.* 28. 50.) *The Lord ſhall bring a nation againſt thee of a fierce countenance, which ſhall not regard the perſon of the old*, ſo we tranſlate; the Hebrew is, *which ſhall not lift up his face to the old*, that is, which ſhall give no reverence to old men; the Septuagint render it thus, *there ſhall come againſt thee a people of fierce countenance, who ſhall not admire the face of an old man*; an old grave man, according to the common rules of civility, is to be had in admiration or high eſteem. *Young ones ſhould lift up their faces to honour thoſe, whoſe faces hang down with age.*

Elevare caput geſtus eſt erecti animi confidentis & nihil erubeſcentis. Pined.

Thirdly, (Which I rather take for the meaning of this text) *lifting up of the face*, implieth ſtrong confidence. Thus *Abner* ſpeaks to *Azahel, Turn thee aſide from following me; wherefore ſhould I ſmite thee to the ground? How then ſhould I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?* (2 Sam. 2. 22.) that is, how ſhall I come with any confidence or freedom of ſpirit, before *Joab*, if I ſhould ſlay thee? When *Cain* was rejected with his offering, (*Gen.* 4. 5,6,7.) the text ſaith, *He was very wroth, and his countenance, or his face fell:* which is directly oppoſite to lifting up the face. The falling of *Cains* face was in two things: Firſt, He fell from a chearful to a churliſh countenance, he lookt doggedly and ſourly; we ſay of ſuch a man, he hath *a down look.* Secondly, He fell from a confident, to a cowardly countenance. The fall of *Cains* countenance diſcovered the fear which fell upon *Cains* heart; he did not bring the firſt offering with his heart, and he had no heart left to bring another offering. *The face varieth as the mind varieth. That is ſeen in the face which is out of ſight:* The evidences of the heart are read there, and we may take the copy of a mans ſpirit in his countenance. Four things are chiefly ſeen in the face; Firſt, Pride: *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not ſeek unto God*, (*Pſal.* 10. 4.) Secondly, Fear; *Dan.* 5. 6. *Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him.* That is, his thoughts being troubled at that dreadful apparition, his countenance changed. Thirdly, Envy and diſcontent, (*Gen.* 31. 2, 5.) *Labans countenance was not toward Jacob as before*; his face ſuffered an evil change, becauſe God made a good change in the eſtate of *Jacob.* Though *Laban* was a ſubtle man and a diſſembler, yet his envy at the proſperity of *Jacob*, was too big to be diſſembled. Fourthly, Guilt; and ſhame, the fruit of it, appear in the face; *He dares not ſhew his face, whoſe wickedneſs ſtares in his face.* The Lord ſaid unto *Cain* (Gen. 4. 7.) *If thou do well, ſhalt thou not be accepted?* The word which we tranſlate *accepted*, ſignifies properly *to lift up*, and ſo it may be rendred in that place; *if thou do well, thou ſhalt have a lifting up*, that is, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face upon as good terms as thy brother Abel:* uprightneſs hath boldneſs both with God and man. (1 *Joh.* 3. 21.) *If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence (or freedom of ſpeech) towards God.* They that are aſhamed of what they have done, hang down their heads, or pull their hats over their eyes, they dare not be ſeen of men, much leſs of God, *who is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity. Thou ſhalt lift up thy face.*

Index animi vultus.

Quem facti aut pudet aut pænitet oculos dejicit. Erubuit gremio; pudor dejecit ocellos. Ovid. 6. Met.

Si bene egeris elevare, i.e. *elevatio erit tibi.*

Without ſpot.] The Original imports any kind of blemiſh. Some tell us, that the word *Momus*, is derived from it, which ſignifies a *fault-finder*, or one who makes it his buſineſs and ſtudy, to find or make faults in what is done or ſpoken. To *lift up the face without ſpot*, is, to be without blemiſh, or blameleſs.

מום *Denotat vitium corporis vel quicquid pulchritudinem deſtruit. Hinc* Momus.

Spots in propriety of ſpeech belong to the body. *Can the Leopard change his ſpots?* (Jer. 13. 23.) The Lamb for the Paſsover muſt be without ſpot, (*Exod.* 12. 5.) So muſt the Prieſts, (*Lev.* 2. 17.) As whatſoever ſtains the the beauty, and darkens the light of the face, ſo whatſoever diſcompoſeth the harmony, or hinders the comlineſs of the whole body, comes under the proper ſenſe of this word.

There is alſo a metaphorical ſpot, which is twofold: Firſt, Upon the name or credit: ſo a mans diſhonour is his ſpot; any blemiſh caſt upon our reputation, is called an *aſperſion.* Secondly, Upon the mind or inward man; ſo every ſin is a ſpot. The Greek word for *unblameable*, or without ſinful blemiſh, diſcovers it ſelf plainly to be the offſpring of this in the Hebrew. The ſoul takes ſpots as well as the body. Whatſoever blemiſheth the beauty, or obſcures the glory of the mind; whatſoever ſullieth the credit, or obſcures the dignity of man, comes under the metaphorical ſence of this word.

ἄμωμος.

Moſes having exalted God in his perfections, *A God of truth and without iniquity, juſt and right is he*, (Deut. 32. 4.) ſubjoyns (the more to aggravate them) not the imperfections, but the groſs impieties of *Iſrael*, (verſ. 5.) *They have corrupted themſelves, their ſpot is not the ſpot of his children*; that is, their ſin is, not a ſin of infirmity, ſuch as often appears upon the children of God. They ſin as if they had no relation to God; they ſin like aliens, yea like rebels, not like children, not like members of the Commonwealth of *Iſrael.* Any ſpot is bad, but ſome are worſe. Sin-ſpots are the worſt of ſpots, yet they are not all equally bad: There is a ſpot which is, and a ſpot which is not the ſpot of Gods children. The Apoſtle counſels the *Philipians* to take heed of theſe ſpots, as they deſired to live in the reputation of children, (*Chap.* 2. 15.) *That ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke* (ſo we render,) or (as the Greek bears it clearly) *that ye may be ſpotleſs ſons of God*, that is, without all ſuch ſpots as are unſuitable to, or inconſiſtent with your ſonſhip. Some are ſo beſpotted, that they are called ſpots: *Theſe*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Jude* (verſ. 12.) *are ſpots in your feaſts of charity.* He that hath many ſpots, is not forward to hold up his *face*; then how ſhall he who is a ſpot?

τέκνα θεοῦ ἀμώμητα.

But what is the ſpot intended in this text? There are three interpretations about it.

Firſt, Some take it for the ſpot of grief and ſorrow ariſing from affliction. *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, that is, thou ſhalt get clear of theſe afflictions which ſpot thy face with ſorrow. This ſence alludes to that (*Chap.* 9. *verſ.* 31.) where *Job* complaineth, *though I waſh my ſelf*, &c. *yet ſhalt thou plunge me in the ditch*, I ſhall be all mire and dirt, all to be ſpotted with troubles and ſorrows, though I waſh in the waters of repentance: No ſaith *Zophar*, if thou doſt repent indeed, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, God will throw thee into the dirt no more. Some tranſlate from the letter of the Hebrew, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face out of the ſpot*, that is, thou ſhalt riſe out of thy affliction, and recover out of the mire of thy tribulations.

Hence Obſerve, *They who repent and get looſe from ſin, ſhall proſper, and get looſe from ſorrow.*

Though all our repentings, waſhings and purgings, cannot deſerve freedom from the leaſt evil, yet this is the way to ſuch freedom; and when we (through the power of Chriſt) purge our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, we are in the faireſt probability, in the neareſt poſſibility to be freed from the ſpots of tribulation and affliction. *Sin and ſorrow uſually come, and go together:* when we fall into the mire of ſin, God caſts us into the mire of ſorrow; and though he often vary his diſpenſations, yet this is a truth, That when we get out of the mire of ſin, the Lord lifts us up out of the mire of ſorrow.

Secondly, Others take it for a *ſin-ſpot. If thou prepare thine heart,* &c. *then thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot,* that is, the Lord will not take notice of thy ſin.

Hence note, *Though no man is without his ſpot, yet all believers are accounted ſpotleſs.*

Balaam confeſſeth (*Numb.*23.21.) *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſneſs in Iſrael;* that is, he charged no ſpot upon them at that time, they ſinned not perverſly, nor did they lie impenitently in ſin; *Chriſt ſanctifieth and cleanſeth his Church with the waſhing of water by the word, that he may preſent it to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh,* Epheſ. 5.26,27.

Thirdly, Many underſtand it of a *ſhame-ſpot,* which is the conſequent of ſin. *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot,* that is, thou ſhalt not be aſhamed to lift up thy face, or when thou lifteſt up thy face, thou ſhalt have clear and free acceſs to God. No cloud ſhall ſit upon thy ſpirit to interrupt communion with him.

De ruboris ob pudorem non autem de peccati macula Zopharem intelligere exigit faciei elevatio. Bold. *Elevare faciem ſine macula nihil aliud eſt quam nil conſcire ſibi nulla palleſcere culpa.* Id.

Hence Obſerve, *Holineſs of life and purity of conſcience, cauſe boldneſs and confidence in our approaches to God.*

The Apoſtle Peter chargeth huſbands, *to dwell with their wives according to knowledge, and as being heirs of the ſame grace of life, that their prayers be not hindred* (1 Pet.3.7.) Uneven or ſinful walking in any relation, hinders prayer three wayes. Firſt, It deads our ſpirits, ſtreightens our hearts, weakens our gifts for prayer. Secondly, It hinders the effect, fruit and ſucceſs of prayer. Thirdly, It hinders us from the very act, it breeds a ſtrangeneſs between our ſouls and God, and makes us liſtleſs to the duty. The ſoul is unwilling to come into the preſence of God, while ſin ſticks upon the conſcience: ſuch as have no heart to come before God, cannot lift up their faces to him. It is ſaid of the poor Publican (*Luke* 18.) that he durſt not *lift up his eyes to heaven,* he had low thoughts of himſelf, and his poſture was lowly. The Publican had no purpoſe to continue in ſin, yet becauſe his conſcience was not cleared of ſin, he durſt not lift up his face to heaven, but ſtanding afar off ſayes, *God be merciful to me a ſinner.* Guilt clogs the ſoul. How ſhall an unholy heart converſe with a holy God? When we lift up our faces, or give good looks to ſin, we cannot lift up our faces to, or expect a good look from God. They whoſe hypocriſie is ſo vigorous, that they can at once look upon ſin with joy, and upon God with confidence, ſhall at laſt to their ſorrow find God rejecting their confidences; and indeed he is not confident but impudent, who hopes for favour from God, while himſelf makes ſin his favourite. Thoſe hypocrites went thus high, whom the Lord upbraids (*Jer.* 7. 9.) *Will ye ſteal, murder, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſly, and come and ſtand before me in this place? Some hypocrites ſeem to have a very lively hope; yet the hope of all hypocrites ſhall be as the giving up of the Ghoſt.*

Laſtly, The ſpot from which *Job* is promiſed freedom, is expounded for *diſgrace or diſhonour. Job* was beſpattered by his friends as a wicked man, as the worſt of wicked men, an hypocrite.

Hence Obſerve, *It is a great mercy to have our credit cleared up from thoſe blemiſhes which the uncharitable ſuſpitions or raſh cenſures of men have caſt upon us.*

There is no ſpot except that upon the conſcience which is ſo unbeautiful as that upon our credit. He hath little to loſe in this world who hath loſt his good name: And if the loſs of credit be ſo great an affliction, the reparation of it cannot be a ſmall mercy. *David* was a man ſpotted with the imputation of rebellion, *Saul* lookt upon him as a traytour: It was a high favour which God gave him, when he gave him back his good name, when he cauſed him to lift up his face without ſpot, yea without ſpot in the eye of *Saul: Saul acquitted him, and ſaid, thou art more righteous than I. The Lord brought forth his righteouſneſs as the light, and his juſt dealings as the noon-day,* Pſal. 37. 6. His righteouſneſs lay in the dark, and his juſt dealing was adjudged treachery and deceit: Yet at laſt he recovered his credit, and his name was cloathed with honour in the eſtimation of his adverſaries. This is the firſt promiſe, *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot.* The ſecond is,

Yea thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt.] It is a happineſs to get a good eſtate, but it is a greater happineſs to keep it. *Thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt.* The Hebrew word, in the verb, ſignifies to *melt or diſſolve;* and in the adjective, *ſtrong durable and compact;* that which is melted is called compact, either by the figure antiphraſis, becauſe it is uncompact, or, according to the nature of the thing, becauſe mettals which have been melted grow more compact and ſolid when they cool again. Some render it here, *Thou ſhalt be like a molten pillar;* braſs or iron being molten and caſt into the figure of a pillar, are ſtrong and ſteddy; the word is ſo rendered, (1 *Sam.* 2. 8.) *The pillars* (that is the firmeſt and ſtrongeſt parts) *of the earth, are the Lords.* This promiſed ſtedfaſtneſs may be taken two wayes.

יצק *Fudit, liquefacit durus compactus, vel per antiphraſin, vel quòd metalla fuſa conſolidentur. Hinc* מוצק *fuſum, in hoc libro paſſim ſumitur pro* חזק *forti, valido.* Merc.

Firſt, In reference to his externals, as if *Zophar* had ſaid. *Thou waſt once Maſter of a good eſtate, thou waſt once rich and full, but thy eſtate, thy riches were not ſtedfaſt, thou haſt loſt all, thy wealth is conſumed and gone; yet humble thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt lift up thy face, thou ſhalt not only be exalted, but eſtabliſhed: Thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt.*

Secondly, Stedfaſtneſs may refer to his internals, and ſo there may be a fourfold ſtedfaſtneſs.

Firſt, Of judgement; when a man holds to his profeſſion, and fleets not in opinion. The Apoſtle cautions his *Epheſians* (chap. 4. 14.) *Be no more children toſſed too and fro, with every wind of doctrine:* be firm to your principles, be not as a meteor carried about with every guſt, but as a ſtar fixed in your orb.

Secondly, There is a ſtedfaſtneſs of reſolution, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. *Be ye ſtedfaſt and unmoveable,* that is, hold to your purpoſe: ſerve the Lord, and go on in his work, let nothing take you off: Such was the maſculine ſtedfaſtneſs of Queen *Heſter,* reſolving to do her duty in the face of danger, *If I periſh, I periſh.*

Thirdly, There is a ſtedfaſtneſs of faith. When we believe and do not *waver,* or heſitate (*Jam.* 1. 6.) The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of the ſolidity of the firmament of faith, (*Col.* 2. 5.) *Rejoycing in your order and the ſtedfaſtneſs of your faith in Chriſt.* And *Peter* exhorts to reſiſt the devil, being *ſtedfaſt in the faith,* 1 Pet. 5. 9. *He that fights muſt look to his footing. We cannot reſiſt another till we are ſetled our ſelves.*

στερέωμα πίστεως.

Fourthly, There is a ſtedfaſtneſs of conſcience. Conſcience is full of uncertainties till we ſettle upon Chriſt: the ſtedfaſtneſs of conſcience ariſeth from the peace of conſcience, and our peace flows to us in the bloud of the covenant.

We may underſtand this promiſe, of outward, but eſpecially of inward ſtedfaſtneſs; of the ſtedfaſtneſs of his faith and the quietneſs of his conſcience; that he ſhould no longer hang between hope and fear, between perſwaſions and doubtings of the love of God.

Hence Obſerve, *Grace eſtabliſheth the heart.*

Put away ſin, and thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt. Grace is brought into the heart by Chriſt: Grace and Chriſt can never part: the doctrine of grace is therefore ſaid to eſtabliſh the heart, becauſe Chriſt is in it, *Heb.* 13. 9. *It is a good thing that the heart be eſtabliſhed with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein:* when he ſaith *it is good,* he means, *it is better that the heart be eſtabliſhed by grace then by meat.* For meat doth in a ſence eſtabliſh the heart, that is, it recreates and refreſhes the heart. As *Abraham* ſpeaks to the three men whom he invited to his tent (*Gen.* 18. 5.) *I will fetch a morſel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts,* the Hebrew is, *ſtay or eſtabliſh your hearts.* But the laſting comfort and eſtabliſhment of the heart, is by *grace;* that is, with grace wrought in the heart, or with the doctrine of grace (which is a means of

Gratia reddit hominē conſtantem firmum ſecurè & conſtantèr agētem, minimè præſumentem. Pined.

working that grace) for he oppoſeth grace to meats, about which, queſtions were then ſtarted, and many were unſetled; and *with meats* he underſtands by a *Synechdoche* the whole body of the Ceremonial Law, which is oppoſed to the Goſpel, or the doctrine of grace; as if he had ſaid, do not think to ſettle your ſelves by the Ceremonial Law, one part whereof conſiſted in the choice and diſtinction of meats, for they *have not profited them that have been occupied therein*, they have gotten no eſtabliſhment by them, but grace will do it. As your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderneſs, ſo meats of the Sacrifice in *Canaan*, and are dead; but he that feeds upon Chriſt, and is filled with grace, ſhall live for ever. Meats profited them ſo little, that they are ſaid not to profit them; they adminiſtred only a tranſient help to the body: but grace profits ſo much, that it only may be ſaid to profit, that adminiſters a permanent advantage to the ſoul. Grace renders us alwayes the ſame, and preſerves us from change. Inconſtancy is the companion of ſin; yea inconſtancy is the companion of all earthly things; earthly things move and are unſteady; *it is impoſſible to ſtand faſt upon an unſteady foundation.* The Apoſtle (*Epheſ.* 4. 13.) deſcribeth the Gentiles thus, *I ſay unto you* (ſpeaking to the Saints) *that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk*; ye were Gentiles, but now I would not have you walk as other Gentiles, namely as unconverted Gentiles: do not imitate them from whom you have made ſo happy a departure; but how did they walk? *In the vanity of their mind,* that is, in the unſetledneſs and unconſtancy and unſtaidneſs of their minds; you have received grace, and grace ſhould make you firm and ſtable upon your *baſis, upon Chriſt your bottom.* The holy Ghoſt reproves this unſetledneſs in the old Jews (*Jer.* 2. 23.) *Thou art a ſwift Dromedary traverſing her wayes*, (never ſetled in any way, *verſ.* 36.) *why gaddeſt thou about ſo much to change thy way? thou alſo ſhalt be aſhamed of* Egypt, *as thou waſt aſhamed of* Aſſyria; thou wenteſt to this Kingdom and to the other Nation for help, and here thou thoughteſt to ſtrengthen thy ſelf, and there to obtain deliverance; *Why gaddeſt thou about* ſo much? the world being uncertain, leaves thee in perpetual uncertainties; thou couldſt find no help in *Aſſyria*, thou ſhalt find none in *Egypt*, neither the one nor the other ſhall be able to eſtabliſh thee. So *Chap.* 31. 22. *How long wilt thou go about, O thou backſliding daughter?* We are in continual motion till we ſettle in God. As the needle in the Mariners compaſs being toucht with the loadſtone is unquiet till it points to the North, and there it ſettles: ſo it is with the ſoul, to what quarter of the creature ſoever we turn our ſelves, we ſhall be unſetled, wavering, and unſteady, till we point directly unto God, till we look heavenward. *The heart finds no ground, till it gets off the earth.*

Impius non poteſt eſſe firmus.

There is a double unſtedfaſtneſs which ſin brings in, and grace caſts out.

Firſt, About our way. Many are alwayes to chooſe; whether this way or that, is their quere: they not only (which is the infirmity of many of the Saints) halt in their way, but between two wayes. An upright heart may be unſteady in the right way; but a carnal heart is unſteady between the right way and the wrong. Such are ſometimes in good wayes, and ſometimes in evil wayes; they may happen upon a good way, but they cannot chuſe it; or if they chuſe it, it is not for its goodneſs, but commodiouſneſs; it ſerves their turns, and upon that account they take a turn in it.

Secondly, They are unſtedfaſt about the end. A wicked man is often ſecure, but he is never ſetled concerning his end. He preſumes he ſhall be well, but he cannot know it ſhall be well with him. They who walk in dark wayes, muſt needs be in the dark about their end. An evil mind is never quiet upon good termes. They who are morally evil, have no true reaſon to expect eternal good. There is a quietneſs of mind concerning our end, which ariſeth from the ignorance of our ill eſtate; and there is a quietneſs which ariſeth from the knowledge of our good eſtate: in the former ſence many wicked men are quiet, their conſciences do not trouble them, and they wonder why any mans ſhould. Theſe are aſleep in the darkneſs of ſin, and they ſhall lye down in the darkneſs of ſorrow. Only he that finds himſelf united unto Chriſt, and by vertue of that union, cleanſed from the guilt, and relieved againſt the dominion of ſin, is ſteadfaſt indeed. *Him wilt thou eſtabliſh* (ſaith the Prophet) *in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee.* It is a baſtard peace which is the daughter of ignorance: true peace is the daughter of ſaving knowledge.

Laſtly, As this ſtedfaſtneſs is underſtood of his outward eſtate, We learn,

That God only can eſtabliſh the creature to us.

The faſhion of the world paſſeth away, yet God can bid it ſtand. The creature can be no more to us then God makes it, how much ſo ever we make it in our account. *David* calls his outward eſtate a *mountain*, *Pſal.* 30. 6, 7. yet he acknowledgeth that all the ſtrength and ſtanding of his mountain was from God. *Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong.* And he found his mountain ſhaking, yea and his heart ſhaking too, when God did but hide his face. *Thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled.* That's the ſecond thing promiſed. There is yet a third, *viz.*

And thou ſhalt not fear.] He carries it higher yet. There is an holy fear, and there is a ſinful fear. There is a fear of care, and there is a fear of diſtraction. There is a fear of watchfulneſs, and there is a fear of diſtruſtfulneſs. He doth not mean the holy fear of care and watchfulneſs; but the ſinful fear of diſtraction and diſtruſtfulneſs, *Pſal.* 112. 1. *Bleſſed is the man that feareth God.* Why? *verſ.* 7, 8. *He ſhall not be afraid*: he that feareth holily, ſhall not be afraid diſtractingly. Again, This exemption from fear doth leave us ſecure; it is *Babylon* which ſaith, *I ſit as a Queen and am no widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* She is ſo fearleſs that ſhe is alſo careleſs. The more *Jeruſalem* and her children know their ſafety, the more they labour to be ſafe.

Thou ſhalt not fear. This negative promiſe may have a threefold reference. *Thou ſhalt not fear*, Firſt, The continuance of thy preſent troubles. Nor ſecondly, The return of theſe troubles. Nor thirdly, The riſing of new troubles. Thy heart ſhall be far above all theſe fears.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *To get free from ſin, is the way to get free from fear.*

Put away iniquity, and then thou ſhalt not fear. As by fear we keep from iniquity (*The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil,*) ſo by departing from iniquity we keep from fear: An evil conſcience is a troubled conſcience: *God is above all fear; and man is never without fear till he is in God,* (Prov. 21. 1.) *The righteous is bold as a lyon.*

Mala conſcientia nunquam eſt ſine motu. Extra Deum nihil eſt firmum, unde efficitur ut nemo extra Deum poſſit eſſe ſine metu. Sanct.

Secondly, *To be free from the fear of evil, is better then to be freed from evil,*

He doth not ſay barely, Thou ſhalt be freed from evil; but, Thou ſhalt be freed from fear. Happineſs conſiſts more in removing inward then outward trouble. He that is not indeed afraid of evil before it comes, may be happy though it comes. It is the perfection of our ſpiritual eſtate not to fear: *Perfect love caſteth out fear:* (1 *John* 4. 18.) It caſteth out all fear that we ſhall looſe the favour of God, or be caſt out of his love: it doth not caſt out the fear of offending God, but that whereby we queſtion the favour of God. Whatſoever the premiſes of Gods dealings are, ſuch ſouls make this concluſion, That God will do them no hurt, and means them nothing but good. A great part of the Saints portion both on Earth and in Heaven, lies in their deliverance from fear. And if any ask, how can this be? The next verſe anſwers,

Verſ. 16. **Becauſe thou ſhalt forget thy miſery, and remember it as waters that paſs away.**

These words give us a reaſon of the former, *Thou ſhalt not fear, becauſe thou ſhalt forget thy miſery,* or *thy labour.* As we do not feel, ſo we cannot fear that which we have forgotten: and he who is delivered from dangers, is much armed againſt the fear of danger; while he well conſiders how he overcame thoſe which are paſt, he ſees whatſoever may come, as already conquered.

עמל תשכח *Laborum obliviſceris.*

Thou ſhalt forget.] This forgetfulneſs implies two things.

Firſt, That he ſhould be long free from ſuch evils as had oppreſſed him, ſo long, that he ſhould forget that he was ever oppreſſed by ſuch evils: The fruit of a long freedom from trouble, is forgetfulneſs of that trouble. The Lord ſaith of his people in *Babylon*, *They have been loſt ſheep, their ſhepherds have cauſed them to go aſtray, they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their reſting place* (Jer. 50. 6.) Now as ſheep having gone long aſtray, forget their former folds and reſting places, ſo they who have been long freed from miſery, forget their miſery. *Length of time wears out the remembrance both of the good we have enjoyed, and of the evils we have ſuffered.* Thus God encourageth the believing Gentiles (*Iſa.* 54. 4.) *Fear not, for thou ſhalt not be aſhamed, neither be thou confounded, for thou ſhalt not be put to ſhame: for thou ſhalt forget the ſhame of thy youth, and ſhalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood.* The ſhame of their youth, was their bondage in *Egypt*; the reproach of their widowhood, was their captivity in *Babylon*: here the Lord promiſeth ſuch a mercy, as ſhall ſwallow up the memory of both. As a great mercy puts out the memory of a leſſer (*Jer.* 16. 14, 15.) The deliverance out of the Babyloniſh captivity, ſwallowed up that deliverance from Egyptian bondage;) ſo great mercies long continued, ſwallow up the remembrance of all our miſeries.

Secondly, This *forgetting* notes ſuch a removal of former evils, that not ſo much as a ſcar, or any print of them ſhould remain to be ſeen: while the ſcar of a wound remains, the memory of it cannot but remain. When *Joſeph* interpreted *Pharaohs* dream about the ſeven years of plenty, and the ſeven years of famine, (*Gen.* 41. 13.) he ſaith there ſhould be ſuch a famine upon the land after the ſeven years of plenty, that the *ſeven years of plenty ſhould be forgotten*; why forgotten? becauſe there ſhould be no print, no ſign left of plenty: ſo the Lord ſometimes after ſeven years of famine, after ſeven years of poverty or trouble, gives ſeven years of ſuch plenty, peace, reſt and comfort to his people, *as wear out all the marks of their former afflictions.* When *Joſephs* brethren feared he would remember the wrongs which they had done him, he anſwers as if he would aſſure them that there was not the leaſt print of them left in his mind, *Gen.* 50. 21. *Fear ye not, I will nouriſh you and your little ones.* He hath forgotten all received injuries, who reſolves to return courteſies. He is fartheſt from revenge, who is ready to feed his enemy. Thus ſaith *Zophar*, *Thou ſhalt forget thy miſery*, the Lord will heal thy wound ſo perfectly, that there ſhall not be ſo much as any mark of it remaining. The forgetfulneſs of miſery, cannot but ſpring from any eminent ſucceſſion of the contrary mercy. The Prophet deſcribes ſuch a change, and this effect of it, *Iſa.* 65. 13. *My ſervants* (*ſaith the Lord*) *ſhall eat, and ye ſhall be hungry; my ſervants ſhall drink, but ye ſhall be thirſty; my ſervants ſhall rejoyce, but ye ſhall be aſhamed*; hence *v.* 16. *He that bleſſeth himſelf in the earth, ſhall bleſs himſelf in the God of truth, becauſe the former troubles are forgotten*: Eating cauſeth us to forget hunger; ſo doth drinking, thirſt; and rejoycing, ſhame. Thus ſaith Chriſt, A woman after ſore travel *remembers her anguiſh no more, for joy that a man is born into the world*, Joh. 16. 21. Either of theſe ways *Zophar* may be expounded, *Thou ſhalt forget thy miſery*, that is, thou ſhalt have freedom from thy miſery, till the memory and marks of it are quite worn out; ſuch a ſeries of mercies ſhall ſucceed thy troubles, as ſhall make thee doubt whether thou waſt at all in trouble: *Thus to forget miſery, is to be perfectly happy*; and in the iſſue both theſe met in *Job*: The long continuance, and the abundance of mercy which he received, made him diſcount all the evil which he had endured. *Thou ſhalt forget.*

Obliviſcitur priſtina mala, non oblivione memoriæ ſed bonorum ſucceſſione. Hier. *in c.* 54 Iſa.

But how could he forget? For the clearing of this and other Scriptures of the ſame ſtile, take this diſtinction. There is a double forgetfulneſs. Firſt, In reference to the rational part. Secondly, In reference to the ſenſitive part. He is not promiſed (for that were an affliction) forgetfulneſs of his afflictions in reference to his rational part, he ſhould remember them ſtill ſo as to conſider what they were, and to be thankful for his deliverance out of them. In this ſenſe, they who have the greateſt cauſe to forget theſe miſeries, have alſo greateſt cauſe to remember them; it is the will of God we ſhould. *As it is a ſin affectedly to forget the ſins we have committed and are pardoned, ſo to affect a forgetfulneſs of the ſorrows we have ſuffered, and are eſcaped, is ſinful; God receives much glory by our recognizing of pardoned ſins, and of eſcaped ſorrows.*

Quantum attinet ad ſcientiam rationalem memor præteritorum malorum, quantum autem ad experientiæ ſenſum priorſus immemor. Aug. *de civ. Dei l.* 22. *c.* 30.

But in reference to a ſenſibleneſs of thoſe evils, or of any trouble ariſing from the remembrance of them, thus he is promiſed to forget them. As if *Zophar* had ſaid, *When thou thinkeſt of thy affliction, it ſhall not afflict thee, yea it ſhall be thy joy to remember it. It is a great refreſhing to remember the troubles which we have been in, and are freed from.* When *Joſeph* was advanced in the Court of *Pharaoh* to great honour, and was married there, he called the name of his firſt-born ſon *Manaſſeh*, from this word ſignifying to *forget*; and he gives the reaſon of it, *for God hath made me forget all my toil and all my fathers houſe* (Gen. 41. 51.) How had God made him to forget it? Not in regard of the rational act, for he did remember what his Fathers houſe was, together with all the afflictions he met with there from his envious Brethren, and this was his duty: but the Lord made him forget all the pain, ſmart and ſorrow of thoſe afflictions; *He was very ſenſible how much he had ſuffered, but he had no ſenſe of it.* In Heaven we ſhall forget all the troubles and ſtorms of this life, and all our ſins, as they are any hinderance to our joy; but there ſhall be a remembrance, even in Heaven, of the troubles and ſins of this life, ſo far, as to give God the glory of making that glorious change. As we may be ſaid not to know evils two wayes, either becauſe we are ignorant of them, or becauſe we have no experience of them; ſo we may be ſaid not to remember paſt evils two wayes, either becauſe the memory of them doth not ſtay with us, or becauſe the remembrance of them doth not annoy us. And that's the meaning of forgetfulneſs about injuries; when we exhort not only to forgive a wrong, but to forget it: A man may rationally remember the wrong which another hath done him, with all the circumſtances and paſſages of it, and yet forget it ſpiritually. Some ſay, *they are content to forgive an injury, but they can never forget it*; I ſay, forget it ſo far as to forgive it fully, and then remember it as much as you will. *The natural memory of injuries is no ſin, but the angry and revengeful memory.* God in the new Covenant is ſaid to forget the ſins of his people, and to remember them no more; but doth he forget any thing, or doth it ſlip out of his memory? No, he knows all things by one everlaſting act, and he remembers even all the ſins of his elect, he remembers all the ſins which he hath pardoned; but he is ſaid not to remember them, or to forget them, when he pardons them, becauſe they are before him as if they were not remembred, that is, he is not provoked by thoſe ſins; his Spirit is not drawn out in revenges againſt ſuch ſinners as he hath pardoned. Thus in the Text before us: *Job* being delivered from his outward afflictions and inward temptations, is aſſured he ſhall forget them; not that the rational act ſhould be deleted and blotted out, but the ſenſitive: the trouble of his troubles, the afflictiveneſs of his afflictions ſhould be removed, he ſhould remember ſorrow to his ſorrow no more.

Hæc olim meminiſſe juvabit.

Anima beata fruent indeficienter æternorum jucunditate gaudiorum, oblita erit culparum, oblita pœnarum; nec tamen ideo ſuæ liberationis oblita, ut liberatori ſuo ſit ingrata. Aug. *ubi ſupra.*

Seeing it is promiſed *Job* that he ſhall forget his miſery,

Hence Obſerve, That, *The very repreſentation of evils paſt, may be a preſent preſſing evil.*

The repreſentation of paſt afflictions, is ſometimes very afflictive. As a man by conſidering his former comforts, may take in comfort; or by reflecting upon, and remembring his former ſins, may ſin over all his ſins: ſo by remembring his former ſorrows, he may have a new indurance and impreſſion upon his ſpirit of all his ſorrows. It is a mercy when evils are remembred without a taſte of evil; and when a review of former ſorrows doth not revive our ſorrows.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Thou ſhalt forget thy miſery.*

Forgetfulneſs is the cure of all our ſorrows.

The forgetfulneſs of ſome things is a ſin, and the forgetfulneſs of other things is a priviledge. To forget our duties, to forget the mind of God made known unto us, is our ſin; but (as explained) to forget the trouble and affliction which hath been upon us, is a ſpecial priviledge. It is ſin to forget the hiſtory of our troubles, but it is mercy to forget the pain of them. Forgetfulneſs is good for little; only the forgetfulneſs of the evil of ſin, or of evil cuſtoms, ſo as not to practiſe them again; and the forgetfulneſs of the evils of puniſhment, or of our evil condition, ſo as not to be oppreſſed with them, is good, and the cure of all thoſe evils. When the word preached hath wounded the heart of a wicked man, and made it ſmart, what is his cure? his cure is to caſt the word out of his thoughts, and to forget it, or as much of it as he can; if he can but forget the word, his cure is wrought, and he is whole again; though indeed, ſuch a mans remedy is worſe then his diſeaſe; and his plaiſter, then his pain; yet he hath got (ſuch as it is) a cure. Thus alſo the forgetfulneſs of our troubles is the remedy of our troubles, as ſleep is of our soreſt travels (*Pſal.* 127. 2.) *So he giveth his beloved ſleep*; *So*, how is that? that is, notwithſtanding all the hard labour and pains they take, yet the Lord giveth them ſleep, and ſleep makes them forget all their former labour. So ſome interpret thoſe words (*Pſal.* 126. 1.) *We were like them that dream*; that is, when the Lord began to work deliverance, to turn again the captivity of *Zion*, we (as it were) forgot what our ſtate and condition but lately was. A dreamer forgets how it was with him; ſo, we are as them that dream, we have forgotten all the evils we have been in; even the long time of our captivity. When a friend is in great pain, ſuch as the tooth-ach, *&c.* we ſay to him, (in a merriment) *do but forget it a while, and you ſhall be cured.* You may write (*probatum eſt*) upon this receipt, if you can receive it; but it is God only that can cauſe us to receive it; he only can work this forgetfulneſs of evil, as he only works a true remembrance of what is good. Some men have taught an art of memory, but 'tis God muſt teach this art of forgetfulneſs; this forgetfulneſs proceeds from the grace or favour of God. Heathens ſpeak much of the River *Lethes*, of which, if a man did drink, he preſently loſt his memory, and forgot all that he had either enjoyed or endured. *Lemuel* (*Prov.* 31. 4.) would not have *Kings drink wine* (that is, immoderately) *leſt they drink and forget the law* (ver. 5.) but he adviſeth (*ver.* 6.) *to give ſtrong drink to him that is ready to periſh, and wine unto thoſe that are of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his miſery no more* (ver. 7.) Of this wine, ſome underſtand that of the Evangeliſt *Mark*, in his deſcription of Chriſts paſſion (ch. 15. v. 22.) *They gave him wine to drink mingled with myrrhe, but he received it not.* Naturaliſts obſerve, that myrrhe ſtupifies and dulls the ſenſe of pain; but Chriſt bids pain do its worſt, he needed not forget it, who was able to conquer it; his ſpirit was infinitely above ſuch reliefs. But to the point; as there is a natural and an artificial way to cauſe forgetfulneſs of miſery, ſo there is a ſupernatural. God can give his people to drink of ſuch a *myſtical Lethes*, he can give them a cup of ſuch a river of conſolation, as ſhall drown the memory of all their ſorrows. As when a Table-book is written all over, you may take a ſpunge, and wipe out every Letter; ſo when our memories are full of our miſeries, the Lord can ſpunge all out, and not leave ſo much as one line or letter to be read any more.

Multimodis ſeſe commaculat ictibus, myrrhæ preſumptione munitus. Apul. l. 8.

Thirdly, *Zophar* puts this forgetfulneſs of his miſery, as a conſequent of *Job*'s putting away of his iniquity. Hence obſerve,

> *When the hand and heart are clear of ſin, former ſufferings will not be grievous to us.*

So long as a man continues in ſin, not only his preſent, but his paſt ſufferings are his torment: put away iniquity, and thou putteſt away the tormenting thoughts of thy miſery; thou ſhalt not feed upon *the wormwood and the gall*, as the Church did, (*Lam.* 3. 19.) while ſhe remembred her affliction: the blow was paſt, but the remembrance of it was as bitter as gall, and as unpleaſant as a dinner of wormwood. In heaven, or in that perfect ſtate of bleſſedneſs which is promiſed (*Rev.* 7. 17.) *God will wipe away all tears from our eyes*; becauſe then he will for ever caſt every ſin out of our hearts and lives. The captive *Jews* in *Babylon*, kept their ſins too cloſe, and therefore when they ſate down by the river, and remembred *Zion*, they wept, (*Pſal.* 137.) the ſorrows and afflictions which they had in *Zion*, as well as their love to *Zion*, made them weep in *Babylon*; though while they were in *Babylon*, they lived free from ſorrow; ſo free, that many of them could not be got out of *Babylon*, when God called them away (*Zech.* 2. 6.) and when *Cyrus* had proclaimed them a full liberty to go away (*Ezra* 1. 3.) yet ſay they, *when we remembred thee, O Zion, we wept.* The remembrance of former troubles will afflict, till we are cleared from the guilt, and have ſubdued the power of ſin. *Thou ſhalt forget thy miſery.*

And remember it as waters that paſs away.] Some read theſe, and the words before, not as a promiſe, but as an exhortation; *Do thou forget thy miſery, or remember it as waters that paſs away.* As if he had ſaid, thou poreſt too much upon thy ſorrows; I counſel thee to forget them, let them be as a river ſwallowed up in the ſea of an eternal oblivion.

But I conceive this latter clauſe to be an explication of the former: For if any ask, How ſhall he forget his miſeries? Here's the anſwer, he ſhall forget them as *waters that paſs away.* This ſimilitude is more then once uſed in Scripture, to note utter forgetfulneſs. *Job* (chap. 6. 15.) compares his friends to *the ſtream of brooks that paſs away*, becauſe they had forgotten the laws of friendſhip. *David* imprecates vengeance on his enemies in a like phraſe (*Pſal.* 58 7.) *Let them melt away as waters that run continually*; that is, let them and their memorial periſh. Who takes notice or remembers the waters that paſs in a River, or under a Bridge? When the woman of *Tekoah* would ſhew that they were all as loſt and buried in oblivion, if *David* did not fetch home his baniſhed, ſhe expreſſeth it thus; *we muſt needs die, and are as water ſpilt upon the ground, which (paſſeth away, and) cannot be gathered up again,* 2 Sam. 14. 14.

Non recordaberis amplius, nam aquarum quæ præterierunt nulla penitus recordatio eſt.

This may be interpreted, firſt, as an alluſion, either ſtrictly, to *Noah*'s floud: *Thou ſhalt remember it as waters that paſs away*, that is, thou ſhalt remember the flood of all thy ſorrows and afflictions, as thou doſt remember the flood of *Noah*; of which, no doubt, *Job* had heard. The Lord, in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, chap. 54. 9. ſpeaks of the removal of his peoples affliction, under that Notion; *For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have ſworn that the waters of Noah ſhould no more go over the earth, ſo have I ſworn that I would not be wroth with thee,* &c. So here; thy afflictions ſhall be as the waters of *Noah* that are paſt. Thy troubles ſwell now very high, thou ſuffereſt a deluge, an inundation of ſorrows; but they ſhall be dried up, and ſhall not leave ſo much as their ſlime for a token that they have been there.

Or more generally, as an alluſion to all ſudden torrents, or the riſing of waters upon the fall of great rains in the ſouthern parts of the world; of which, *Pſal.* 126. is a great proof: waters in thoſe regions ſwell in a moment, and are down almoſt as ſoon as ſwoln; having no conſtant fountain to feed them, they cannot continue. So ſaith he, a mighty flood of trouble and ſorrow overwhelmeth thee, but it ſhall quickly dry up; it is but a cloud, a ſtorm, it will paſs away, and be ſpent ſooner then thou dreameſt, even ſo ſoon, that thou ſhalt be like one that dreameth.

Secondly, It may be taken as a proverbial ſpeech, *You ſhall remember it as waters that paſs away*, that is, you ſhall not remember it; it ſhall be as if it had not been. Who can tell what waters have paſt, or where to find thoſe waters which are paſt? to remember a thing as waters that paſs away, is to let it paſs out of memory. Some things leave laſting expreſſions behind them, but a ſudden paſſing water doth not.

Proverbialem reor hunc loquendi modum, quo ſignificatur alicujus ſive boni, ſive mali, quod jam præteriit nihil eſſe reliquum. San.

Thirdly, We may interpret it thus, *Thou ſhalt remember it as waters that paſs away*, that is, thou ſhalt remember it as that which ſhall never return again, or is quite gone, and ſhall never trouble thee any more. Some expound that of the Prophet ſo, *Affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time*, (*Nah.* 1. 9.) (which others, and I think rightly, interpret of an utter conſumption; there ſhall be no need for affliction to come the ſecond time; for it ſhall ſpoil all at firſt; thy affliction ſhall make a total devaſtation.) Yet it may be taken in the ſence ſuggeſted. Affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time, that is, *thou ſhalt not be afflicted the ſecond time.* The waters of affliction are paſſed away, and ſhall not flow back again. *Job* (chap. 28. 4.) ſpeaks of *waters forgotten of the foot*; he means (as is conceived) waters ſo deep, that no man could paſs thorow them, and are therefore ſaid to be *forgotten of the foot*, becauſe no foot had paſſed them of a long time, nor was any like to paſs them any more. Thus alſo an affliction through which a man ſhall never paſs again, may be called a *forgotten affliction.* Hence when the prophet had ſaid (*Nah.* 1. 9.) that *affliction ſhould not riſe up the ſecond time,* he adds from the Lord, (*ver.* 12.) *I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.* This I apprehend as the proper meaning of the text in hand, *Thou ſhalt forget thy miſery; or if thou doſt remember it, thou ſhalt remember it but as waters that are paſſed away. Thy miſery will be as nothing to thee, and ſhall never return upon thee.* Hence obſerve,

> *The memory of miſeries which ſhall never return to hurt us, comforts us.*

Miſerrima eſt malorum impendentium expectatio. Merl.

It is our joy to remember thoſe things which were our ſorrow, when we are beyond the borders of ſorrow; ſuch *a remembrance is as joyous, as the remembrance of an evil, whoſe return we fear, is grievous.* The very ſuſpition that an affliction will renew, reneweth our affliction. Then we feed heartily upon the good which is before us, when we are freed from the after-claps or *after-reckonings of evil.* That the *Iſraelites* were delivered from thoſe *Egyptian* task-maſters, was very ſweet, but to ſee them at their heels, and upon their backs again, was exceeding bitter; hence the Lord, to relieve them from thoſe thoughts, gave them this aſſurance by *Moſes* (Exod. 14. 13.) *The Egyptians whom ye have ſeen to day, ye ſhall ſee them again no more for ever.* It is not ſo great a loſs not to ſee, as it is a trouble to ſee what we would not. The King of *Babylon* ſlew the ſons of *Zedekiah* before his eyes, before he put out his eyes (*Jer.* 39. 6, 7.) doubtleſs the putting of his eyes to that uſe, pained him more then the putting of them out. Now as it is a miſery worſe then blindneſs, to ſee that which grieves us; ſo it is a mercy as good as ſight it ſelf, not to ſee what would grieve us; eſpecially to receive a faithful promiſe, that we ſhall ſee it again no more for ever. And as it adds to the affliction of a man in miſery, to remember that he hath enjoyed friends and good dayes, which he ſhall not enjoy nor ſee again any more for ever; ſo it adds to the comfort of a man, encompaſſed about with mercies, to remember he hath endured ſorrows, and been oppreſſed by enemies, which he ſhall not endure, nor be oppreſſed by, no nor ſee again any more for ever. This is the priviledge of the Saints, in reference to that greateſt enemy, *Sin*; they remember their ſins as waters that are paſſed away, they ſhall never return to hurt them, much leſs to condemn them. Thus to remember our ſins on earth, is a piece of heaven, and will be a great part of our happineſs in heaven; where we ſhall ſay in higheſt triumph and exultation of ſpirit, concerning ſin and Satan, death and ſorrow, or whatſoever hath the face, or deſerves to wear the name of a myſtical *Egyptian*, theſe *Egyptians* whom we have ſeen and felt ſo often in the dayes of our mortality, we ſhall not feel, no, nor ſo much as ſee them again any more for ever.

Miſerum eſt fuiſſe fœlicem.

VERS. 17, 18, 19, 20.

And thine age ſhall be clearer then the noon-day; thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning.
And thou ſhalt be ſecure, becauſe there is hope; yea, thou ſhalt dig about thee, and thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety.
Alſo thou ſhalt lie down, and none ſhall make thee afraid; yea many ſhall make ſuit unto thee.
But the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and they ſhall not eſcape, and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.

This latter part of the Chapter, conſiſteth (as was touched before) of divers motives and encouragements, which *Zophar* beſtows on *Job*, to hearten him on in hearkning to his counſel. As he was encouraged before by a promiſe, that his preſent troubles ſhould ſuddenly expire; ſo here, that ancient mercies ſhould ſuddenly revive; as if *Zophar* had ſaid, *Thou ſhalt be bleſſed, not only by deliverances from, or removals of evil; thou ſhalt not only forget miſery, and have the prints of thy afflictions wiped out; but thou ſhalt be fairly ſtamp'd with freſh favours, and the beſt of bleſſings ſhall be heaped upon thee.* This he expreſſeth in thoſe elegant metaphors and compariſons.

Verſe 17. **Thine age ſhall be clearer then the noon-day, thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning.**

All which he exemplifieth in plain aſſertions, aſſuring him, that he ſhall ſpend the latter part of his life in ſafety. ver. 18. *Thou ſhalt be ſecure,* &c. In freedom and honour. ver. 19. *None ſhall make thee afraid; yea, many ſhall make ſuit unto thee.* The ungodly are not ſo. ver. 20. *The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail,* &c.

חלד *Tempus, ſeculum, ævum ſed & vitæ curriculum citò ceſſantem ſignificat, quaſi per Metatheſin à* חדל *ceſſare.*

Quaſi meridianus fulgor conſurget tibi ad veſperam Vulg.

Thine age.] The Hebrew word ſignifies time in general, or the whole ſtate of this world. *David* prayeth to be delivered *from the men of this world*; or, of this age, (*Pſal.* 17. 14.) he means it of men who have nothing beyond the world; all whoſe eſtate lies on this ſide heaven. The word ſignifies alſo the particular age of a mans life; and here diſtinctly the latter part or old age of a mans life. *Thine age,* that is, *thine old age,* or the latter part of thy life, of which thou ſeemeſt to make little reckoning; upon which thou lookeſt as if it were not worth the having; that latter part of thy life, of which thou ſayeſt in thine heart, ſurely it will be as death to me, it will be full of death and darkneſs, of diſeaſes and of weakneſſes; the ſtrength of it will be but labour and ſorrow; that evening of thy life, of which thou judgeſt (according to the experience of others) ſurely it will be dim and miſty, cloudy and uncomfortable; even that age of thine ſhall be

Clearer then the noon-day.] The letter is, *thine age ſhall riſe above the noon-day.* The noon-day is taken two wayes; ſometimes for extream heat, and ſometimes for extream light.

Eſto illis jucundum refrigerium à meridiano æſtu. Jun.

Firſt, At noon, we expect the extremity of heat; the Sun of perſecution is ſignified by the noon-day, *Iſa.* 16. 3. *Make thy ſhadow as the night, in the midſt of the noon-day*; that is, be a refreſhing and a protection to my people, when their troubles are at the hotteſt. And *Cant.* 1. 7. *Tell me where thou makeſt thy flocks to reſt at noon,* that is, in the heat of perſecution. The Church deſired to underſtand where to ſhelter, what cooling place was to be had in the times of greateſt tribulation.

Notum proverbiale eſt, luce meridiana clarius, item lucernā accendit in meridie.

Lux fœlicitatis ſymbolum.

Vita jucunda & luminoſa. Coc.

Summa erit lætitia tua.

Secondly, Noon imports the cleareſt light; it is a common proverb, when we affirm a thing to have the greateſt clearneſs, to ſay, *It is as clear as the light at noon-day.* And, *to light a candle at noon,* is a proverb of reproof to thoſe, who trouble themſelves to make that plain, which hath no obſcurity in it. And as noon is put for light, ſo light is often put for joy; and cleareſt light (ſuch is that of noon-day) for greateſt joy; *light is ſown for the righteous,* that is, they ſhall reap a harveſt of joy.

When *Zophar* promiſeth, *Thine age ſhall be clearer then the noon-day*; his meaning is, *thy latter end ſhall be full of comfort, and thou ſhalt rejoyce in the ſerenity of thy condition.* Hence obſerve,

> *God can make the worſt part of our life the beſt to us; and when we expect (according to the courſe of nature) the leaſt good, he can encompaſs us with the choiceſt good.*

Old age is called the *evil day* (Eccl. 12. 1.) and the deſcription of it is given in terms very appoſite unto this; *while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them; while the Sun, or the Light, or the Moon, or the Stars be not darkned, nor the clouds return after the rain.* He compareth old age to a gloomy day, when ſhower falleth after ſhower, and cloud follows after cloud; yet the Lord can make that age which uſually gives nothing but clouds and ſhowers, but moiſture and wet, to be as clear as the light at noon, and as dry as ſunſhine. *We need not fear our worſt ſtate, if God will undertake to mend it*: be not troubled with tiring expectations of pain and weakneſs, of diſeaſes and ſickneſſes in old age; God is able to make thee, notwithſtanding the diſadvantages of nature, ſtrong and healthy. *Old age will be youth to us at his word. Abraham* was not troubled at *an hundred years old,* when God promiſed him, *thou ſhalt have a ſon. Sarahs* dead womb was no impediment, when God ſaid, *thou ſhalt conceive.* Young men ſhall faint, and old men ſhall renew their ſtrength like the Eagle, when God will have it ſo. The ſummer of your lives ſhall be a winter, and your winter a ſummer; your cloudy dayes ſhall be clearer then the noon, and your noon a cloud, at his command, who made both ſummer and winter, ſun and cloud. *He that put nature into order, can order things againſt nature.*

Thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning.]

This additional clauſe heightens the ſence of the former. The words which we tranſlate, *to ſhine forth*, ſignifies alſo, to *darken*; ſo Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Thy time ſhall paſs the noon-day, obſcureneſs ſhall match the morning*. And another thus; *If thou doſt wax obſcure, or dark, yet thou ſhalt match the morning*.

Licet te ut vita functū exiſtimes novo natali velut aurora conſurges.

Our Tranſlators take *Zophar* continuing the Metaphor of light; *Thine age ſhall be clearer then the noon-day*: and here he ſhews, that it ſhall not be a ſtanding, but an encreaſing light, the light of the morning; *Thou ſhalt be as the noon, in regard of the clearneſs of thy light; and thou ſhalt be as the morning, in regard of the increaſe and continuance of thy light*: For though we have the greateſt light at noon, yet that light is near a declenſion. The Sun being come to his height, is in its *vertical point*; and every hour after noon, (though we cannot perceive it) grows darker and darker, till the ſhadow of the night wrap up all; but the morning-Sun is a riſing Sun, which gains and gathers every moment. That's *Solomon*'s deſcription (*Prov.* 4. 18.) *The path of the righteous is as the morning-light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*. So then, theſe two are excellently joyned together, to make up the higheſt expreſſion of a proſperous eſtate; thy eſtate ſhall be ſo proſperous in the degree of it, that it ſhall be *clearer then the noon-day*; and yet it ſhall be of ſuch continuance, or rather, of ſuch encreaſe, that it *ſhall be as the morning*; thou ſhalt be in a ſtate of perfection, yet receiving addition: though in a ſtrict ſence, Philoſophy defines that only *perfect, to which nothing can be added*; yet there is a kind of perfection in receiving additions: *Job*'s ſtate ſhall be ſo perfect, that it ſhall need no addition, and yet there ſhall be additions to its perfection. *It ſhall be noon for perfection, it ſhall be morning for addition and augmentation*; *Thou ſhalt ſhine forth as the morning*. Hence obſerve,

עוף *Æquè illuſtrandi ac tenebreſcendi ſignificationem habet. Si obtenebreſcas, eris tanquam mane.* Merc.

אם *Si ſubintelligitur.*

> *God is as able to continue his people in a high eſtate, and to encreaſe it, as to raiſe them to it.*

Thy light ſhall be as the noon, and thou ſhalt ſhine forth as the morning. If the Lord pleaſe, he can ſtop the declinings and decayes even of temporals; he can give us an everlaſting noon in the things of this life, and he will certainly do it in the life to come. He who cauſeth our Sun to aſcend till it makes a noon, can command it to ſtand at noon, or aſcend till it makes a clearer noon: As himſelf is *higher then the higheſt*, ſo he can make us higher, when we think our ſelves at the higheſt. As he makes the darkneſs of affliction darker to many, who ſuppoſed it to be at the darkeſt; ſo he makes the light of joy lighter to many, who ſuppoſed it to be at the lighteſt. Some whoſe ſtate is darker then midnight, are yet as the evening encreaſing in darkneſs; and ſome, whoſe age is clearer then the noon-day, are yet as the morning encreaſing in light. Our evil dayes, and our good dayes, our ſorrows, and our joyes, receive their limits from the hand of God. Our ſorrows will every day be more ſorrowful, unleſs God ſtop them; and our joyes will every day be more joyful, if God enlarge them.

Conſolatio nunquam deerit in omnibus adverſitatibus.

Secondly, As the word ſignifies to obſcure and darken, the ſence appears thus, *Thou ſhalt be clearer then the noon, and if any obſcurity ſeize upon thee, yet thou ſhalt match the morning*; thou ſhalt overcome that darkneſs, and thy skie ſhall be clear again; the clouds ſhall break upon thee, day ſhall dawn, and comfort ſhall renew; *thy obſcurity ſhall be as the morning*, which diſperſeth darkneſs, and conquers it by the approaching light. That promiſe (*Iſa.* 58. 10.) is a clear expoſition of this; *Then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy darkneſs be as the noon-day*; that is, thy affliction ſhall be turned into conſolation, and thy evil dayes into good dayes. The vulgar Latin tranſlates the former part of the verſe thus, *Thou ſhalt be clear towards the evening*; or, *thy evening ſhall be clear*; the latter, thus, *when thou thinkeſt thou art conſumed, thou ſhalt be as Lucifer*; or, *as the morning-ſtar*; *even like that ſtar which is the forerunner or meſſenger of the morning*. Hence obſerve,

Et quaſi meridianus fulgor conſurget tibi ad veſperam, & cum te conſumptum putaveris, orieris ut Lucifer. Vulg.

> That, *God can quickly turn all our ſorrows into joy, and our worſt times into pleaſant times.*

Thy obſcurity ſhall match the morning. He can cauſe joy to riſe out of ſorrow, and turn our water into wine, our loſſes into gain; *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning* (Pſal. 30. 5.) And again, *Unto the upright there ariſeth light in darkneſs* (Pſal. 112. 4.) As the Sun of wicked men ſets at noon, ſo the light of the Saints riſeth at midnight, *Amos* 8. 9. *I will cauſe the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day*; which text ſtands in as direct an oppoſition to this, as words can be penn'd. He who cauſeth the Sun to go down at noon, can command the Sun to riſe at midnight; and he who darkens the earth in the clear day, lightens the earth in the darkeſt night. As natural, ſo civil and ſpiritual light and darkneſs take their turns, and make their changes, as God decrees. It is the happineſs of the Saints in miſery, that their friend and father can ſay unto their miſery, *Be gone*; and to happineſs, *Return*. The ſtate of the *Jews* was obſcured by the riſing of that fiery fatal Comet, *Haman*; but anon, *Mordecai* aroſe, like a bright ſtar in their Horizon, and then, *the Jews had light and gladneſs, and joy and honour*, Eſt. 8. 16.

Thirdly, Compare this Verſe with the counſel before-given. *Zophar* adviſeth *Job* to ſeek unto God, and to humble himſelf before him; what ſhall be the fruit of it? *Thine age ſhall be clearer then the noon-day*; *thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning*. Hence note,

> *When we are better, God uſually makes our eſtates better.*

Turn thou to God, and God will turn thy darkneſs into light. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 58. 10.) having deſcribed a faſt, and taught the *Jews* how to humble themſelves aright before God, ſubjoyns this promiſe, *Then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy darkneſs be as the noon-day*. When we depart out of the darkneſs of ſin, the Lord bids the darkneſs of trouble to depart from us. While we caſt our ſelves down, he raiſeth us up, and ſets us in the glory of our enjoyments. We complain we are in darkneſs, but we forget that our ſins ſtand in our light, and hinder good things from us. As promotion comes neither from the eaſt, nor from the weſt, nor from the ſouth, but from God; ſo the ſtop of promotion comes not from any of thoſe quarters, but from our ſelves; if we were empty, God would fill us; if poor, God would enrich us; if low and abaſed, he would exalt us. That advice of the Apoſtle *James*, ſpeaks all this; *Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up* (chap. 4. 10.) As for thoſe, who, being in darkneſs, *kindle a fire, and compaſs themſelves about with ſparks, that they may walk in the light of their own fire, and in the ſparks that they have kindled; this ſhall they have from the hand of the Lord, they ſhall lie down in ſorrow* (Iſa. 50. 11.) *A man continuing in ſin, ſhall find himſelf as much diſappointed in labouring to get out of darkneſs, into light, by his own power, as in hoping that God will bring him out by his power.*

Zophar goes on, and draws this general into particulars. There are five particular bleſſings laid down in *verſ.* 18, & 19. all which, ſummed together, make up the mercy of *ver.* 17. *viz. proſperity like the noon-day, and comforts like the morning*. The firſt is,

Thou ſhalt be ſecure, becauſe there is hope.

Thou ſhalt be ſecure.] The word ſignifies an act, not only of adherence, but of aſſurance; not only of recumbency, but of certainty: when the heart is fully ſetled, and acquieſceth in the ſufficiency and faithfulneſs of him who hath undertaken and ſtands up for our protection.

בטח *Non ſimplicem fidem, ſed certitudinem denotat, eſt ſine formidine acquieſcere in ſufficientia præſidii ſui.*

There is a double ſecurity.

Firſt, Sinful, accompanied with a neglect of good means, and with a preſumption of a good end. Both are compriſed in that rebuke given the falſe Prophet (*Jer.* 28. 15.) *Thou makeſt this people truſt (or ſecure) in a lie.*

Secondly, There is a ſecurity which ariſeth from the actings of a vigorous faith, grounded upon the promiſe and word of God; that's the ſecurity for which *Zophar* engageth: That ſenſe is clearly given in the words following; *Thou ſhalt be ſecure becauſe there is hope*; that is, becauſe thou haſt a ſure word, upon which to caſt the anchor of thy hope. True hope is rooted in the promiſe, and fruited with peace. That's it, which, in this point, we call ſecurity. When a lender hath the word of a good man for his money, he is ſaid to have good ſecurity. How ſecure then may the Saints be, who have the word of the good God for their ſecurity. *Thou ſhalt be ſecure.*

Spes illa ſolum firmitatem habet, quæ Deo nititur. Sanct.

Becauſe there is hope.] That is, Thou ſhalt not only have a preſent good eſtate, and ſtore of bleſſings in poſſeſſion, but abundance in expectation: Hope is of good things to come: An aſſurance of what we have not, is as good a ſettlement to the heart, as what we have; and he that can look for no more then he hath, can never have a ſettled heart. The hope of more is a richer inheritance then the inheriting of much. Were it not for hope, the heart would be unſatisfied in the beſt times. It is never well with us in this life till we can, upon warrantable terms, look beyond what we ſee. Viſion will be enough for us in Heaven, but on earth we cannot have a viſion of any good thing which is enough. This makes the difference between the ſtate of the Saints, and of worldly men, *We walk by faith, and not by ſight*: They walk by ſight, and not by faith. Faith leads us into the Treaſury of God; ſight leaves them among the treaſures of men. Our beſt eſtate lyes in inviſibles: Senſe is of things preſent or ſeen, which are but temporal; Faith and hope are of things abſent, and out of ſight, which are eternal.

Further, Theſe promiſſory words, *Thou ſhalt be ſecure becauſe there is hope*, may refer,

Spes eſt meliorum. Druſ.

Firſt, To the attaining of a good condition. Secondly, To the increaſing or bettering of that good condition to which he ſhould attain. Thirdly, To the keeping or maintaining of the good which ſhould be ſo increaſed. Thou ſhalt have a *morning*, there's good attained; thy *morning ſhall riſe up to a noon-day*, there's good increaſed; *thy noon ſhall not decline*, there's good maintained; and becauſe of all theſe hopes, thou ſhalt be ſecure: and all theſe hopes muſt meet to make up a full ſecurity.

> Hence obſerve, *Hope in God is the ſettlement and ſecurity of the ſoul.*

There is a hope which is ill ſet, ſuch a hope cannot ſettle us. That hope which is right ſet is ſetling. Our hope is as the object is upon which we hope: if we hope upon that which is ſure, hope it ſelf is ſure; hope in God muſt needs be ſure, becauſe God is. So the Apoſtle argues: *God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul both ſure and ſtedfaſt*, (Heb. 6. 17, 18, 19.) God is the Saints anchor-hold, they cannot be removed by any ſtorm, when once they have faſtened upon him. As every one that hath this hope purifieth himſelf, even as God is pure: So every one that hath this hope may aſſure himſelf, becauſe God is ſure. *He is the hope of all the ends of the earth: and hope in him ſhall never end but in a full enjoyment of himſelf in heaven.*

> Obſerve ſecondly, *That the condition of a godly man can never be deſperate.*

Whatſoever he wants in the world he cannot want hope; he hath ſomewhat in hope, though he hath nothing in hand: He hath much in the promiſe, though little in his purſe: He hath plenty of bread in the word, when he hath ſcarce a loaf, or when he hath greateſt ſcarcity at his table. He may expect more of the world then he hath, though he hath much; and he may look upon all that is in the world as his, though none of it be his. He hath a right to all, and he ſhall receive as much as he needs: If leſs then all will not ſupport his needs, he ſhall have all; God will give every Believer a world by himſelf, rather then not give him as much as he hath promiſed. If the good things which God hath already made, be not enough to make good every word which he hath ſpoken, he will ſpeak another word, which ſhall make more. *As the heaven and the earth, which are created, ſhall paſs rather then his word; ſo he will create a new heaven and a new earth, that all his words may ſtand.*

Conſide dum ſpes eſt. Jun.

There is a textual reading of theſe words given by ſome, which reaches the ſence of this Obſervation; *Be thou confident, or ſecure, while there is hope*: So it is a counſel, not a promiſe; an exhortation, not a doctrinal aſſertion; or it is the uſe of the former doctrine, ſhewing us what becomes us to do, when we hear what God hath ſpoken. *When God makes us a promiſe, it is our duty to reſt upon him in it: Promiſes are the pillars of the ſoul; Chriſt is the ſubſtantial pillar of the ſoul; the promiſes are declarative pillars.* As it is the priviledge of believers, that they may, ſo it is their duty, and they muſt reſt upon thoſe pillars. They are invited to cloſe with every word of God, and embrace every offer which he makes. The word is ſpoken in vain, mercies are tendered in vain, except we act faith, and pitch our hope upon them. Shall we be confident when men (*who are a lye, and their breath is in their noſtrils*) give us hopes they will ſtand our friends and help us; and ſhall we not when the great, the faithful and ever-living God ſaith, he will be our friend and helper!

There are three conſiderations which ſhould make us hope whenſoever God offers us a word.

Firſt, Conſider what God hath done. *Experience works hope.* Look into your own experiences, and ask after the experiences of others. The report of both will be, *Thou Lord haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee* (Pſal. 9. 10.) Who would not ſeek him, who hath never forſaken thoſe that ſeek him?

Secondly, Conſider who it is that ingageth: It is God: A God all-ſufficient to make good his word; there is nothing too hard for him: and as not one Iota or tittle of his commands, ſo not one of his promiſes ſhall fail, all ſhall be fulfilled. He gives promiſes, and he can create performances. *The Promiſe is good, but the Promiſer is better*; therefore be thou ſecure and truſt when thou haſt his promiſe.

Thirdly, Conſider the relation which God beareth to his people. It is not an enemy, that ſpeaks to enſnare and circumvent us, to mock and delude us; it is not a juſt man who ſpeaks, who (though he mean well, and hath a mind to do what he ſpeaks) yet may ſoon become unable: but it is God, in relation a Friend to us, a Father to us, one who ſpeaks what he meaneth, and is able to do what he ſpeaks. It is God who is able, and whom no accident can diſable, he it is that ſpeaks unto us. If God tell thee thy light ſhall be clearer then the noon, that thou ſhalt ſhine forth as the morning, be thou confident, act faith, yea let faith have a perfect work; then it hath, when we truſt perfectly; *Be ſecure, becauſe there is hope*; That's the firſt priviledge promiſed. The ſecond is this,

חפר *Fodit hinc talpa à fodiendo.*

Yea thou ſhalt dig about thee.] Some expound this digging tropologically for the works of holy worſhip and obedience to God. Theſe are a kind of digging in Gods earth.

Ad ſepulcrum pertinet, q. d. *ſepultus jacebis ſecurus.* Aquin

Others, *Thou ſhalt dig*; That is, thou ſhalt provide thy grave. As if he had ſaid, *I promiſe thee favour, not only while thou liveſt, but when thou art dead*; thou ſhalt have a comely burial, and be laid in thy ſepulchre with honour. The words which follow, [*Thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety*] are interpreted to fill up this ſence, *Thou ſhalt be laid in thy grave; and when thou art there, none ſhall violate thy aſhes, or diſquiet thy duſt.* It is threatned as a ſore curſe (*Jer.* 8. 1.) that the bones of the deceaſed Kings and Princes, &c. ſhould be pull'd out of their graves, *and ſhould be ſpread before the Sun, and Moon, and all the Hoſt of Heaven, whom they had loved.* Now here (ſay they) *Job* is aſſured, that none ſhall ſtir his bones, or pillage his tomb, when he ſhould ſleep with his Fathers in the grave. But I paſs it.

Jacebis ſecurus velut foſſa circumducta. Tyg.
Securus ages acſi vallo & foſſa munitus. Vatab.

Thirdly, *Thou ſhalt dig about thee*; that is, thou ſhalt draw a line of defence, or a trench about thee: So Mr. *Broughton*, *Thou ſhalt entrench, and lye down ſafely.* The Mole's ſafety (who is named from this word in the Hebrew) is in earthing himſelf; and ſo is the ſafety of men in war. Thus it is an expreſſion of greateſt ſafety, thou ſhalt be as ſafe as if thou wert fortified with walls and trenches, or hadſt planted bulworks round about thee.

Puto alludi ad morem Arabum, qui ſubinde tabernacula ſua & ſedes movebant. Merc.

Fourthly, Others think that *Zophar* alludes to the faſhion of thoſe times: Either firſt, In their removings, when taking up their tents, and intending to pitch them in a new place, they digged to let in the ſtakes and faſten them; ſo, *to dig*, is no more but this, thou ſhalt pitch thy tent, or ſet up thy tabernacle, and be in ſafety: God can protect thee in a tent as well as in a caſtle. *We call the furniture of our houſes, our moveables, but they had moveable houſes.* Or ſecondly, That he alludes to their digging of wells, which was in thoſe ages and places a noted buſineſs, as we may read in *Geneſis*. So, *Thou ſhalt dig*, is, thou ſhalt make proviſion for thy flocks and cattel (water being one part is put for all) and none ſhall contend with thee, as the herdſmen of *Iſaac* and of *Gerar* did, *Gen.* 26. 20.

Fodiendi operam ad rem agrariam refert. Cajetanus.

Fifthly, I rather conceive *digging* is put either ſtrictly for tilling and manuring the earth, or, more largely, for the labour of any calling: *Thou ſhalt dig about thee*; that is, thou ſhalt follow thy buſineſs in the place where providence hath caſt thee; digging is put for the whole ſervice of this life, (*Luke* 16. 3.) the unjuſt Steward, when he feared to be called to an account, queries with himſelf, *What ſhall I do? for my Lord will take away my ſtewardſhip*; *I cannot dig*; that is, I know not how to put my ſe'f to any labour, or calling, eſpecially to a calling of hard labour, and I am aſhamed to beg, what will become of me? But what priviledge is there in this, that *he ſhould dig*? I anſwer firſt, It is a mercy to have a calling. But ſecondly, When it is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt dig*; he means two things further. Firſt, thou ſhalt thrive and proſper in thy calling: Thou ſhalt gain by digging. Secondly, Thou ſhalt be ſafe in thy calling, *thou ſhalt dig without fear or danger*, without let or hinderance. When *Job*'s eſtate was ſurprized, his ſervants were ſome plowing, others keeping ſheep, all at work. Now it is promiſed, that he and his ſhall dig in quietneſs. To clear which ſence, we may connect the latter clauſe of the verſe (which I have propoſed, and ſhall open as a third diſtinct priviledge) with this, *Thou ſhalt dig about thee, and thou ſhalt reſt in ſafety*; That is, in labour thou ſhalt have reſt; or, the reſt of ſafety ſhall be thy portion, in all the motions of thy labour.

Hence obſerve, *It is a great bleſſing when we freely enjoy the exerciſe of our callings.*

It is our duty to have a calling, and it is a mercy to go on profitably and peaceably in it.

There are ſome (though I cannot much approve the interpretation) who expound that (*Cant.*7.1.) where Chriſt ſpeaks to the Church, *How beautiful are thy feet with ſhoes?* to this ſence, thy feet are beautiful in thy calling. When a man hath his ſhoes on, he is fit for buſineſs, and his feet are never ſo beautiful, as when he is at honeſt buſineſs: As the Saints have a ſpiritual and heavenly calling, in which they deal with Chriſt and trade towards Heaven: So Chriſt will have them imployed in earthly callings, and maintain dealings with men; one calling honours and ſupports the other; our general calling gets a bleſſing upon the ſpecial; and in our ſpecial callings we have occaſion to ſhew forth our vertues and graces, and ſo to honour our general calling: It is a high commendation when we can ſay to a Chriſtian, *How beautiful are thy feet with ſhoes?* That is, thou art holy when thou art about worldly things, as well as when thou art about ſpiritual things: This is a truth, and may be a good alluſion, though not a proper expoſition of that Scripture: Now as our feet are beautiful with ſhoes, when we go on juſtly, and righteouſly; ſo when we go on thrivingly, quietly, and peaceably in our callings; when though we have much labour, yet we have no ſorrow in our callings: when though we work hard for the bread we eat, yet we get bread to eat, and others do not eat the bread for which we have wrought.

שכב *Cubare, cubat qui non dormit: hoc verbum de morte uſurpatur hinc* שכבים *mortui.* Druſ.

ἡσυχάσεις ϗ οὐκ ἔϛαι ὁ πολεμῶν σέ. Sept.

And thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety.] That's a third priviledge. The word ſignifies a lying down, whether in the day time for a ſhort refreſhment, or in the night for ſleep. And ſo it is no more but this: As thou ſhalt dig, and thrive at thy work, ſo thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety; thy repoſes in the day, and thy ſleep in the night, ſhall be ſweet unto thee. *Iſhboſheth* was ſlain at noon upon his bed: the night hath been fatal to many.

Note, *It is a mercy to enjoy reſt with quiet.*

They who are continually hurried with fears, who (like *Job*) have had their eſtates plundered and ſpoiled, would count it ſo. How many thouſands, lately, in this Kingdom, have, as it was threatned (*Deut.* 28.26.) *been in fear day and night*, who when they have lain down could not reſt an hour in ſafety? The Scripture gives us many promiſes about this bleſſing, *Prov.* 3.26. *When thou lyeſt down, thou ſhalt not be afraid*; *yea, thou ſhalt lye down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet.* Pſal. 127.2. *So he giveth his beloved ſleep.* Pſal. 3. 5. *I laid me down, and ſlept*; *I awaked, for the Lord ſuſtained me.* Pſal. 4. 8. *I will both lay me down in peace and ſleep, for thou Lord makeſt me dwell in ſafety.* When the Lord undertakes our protection, *we may ſleep on both ears*; that is, ſecurely and comfortably; when he watcheth over us, we ſhall reſt, though thouſands watch againſt us. A good nights reſt is the good gift of God, and deſerves daily acknowledgments by man.

The fourth priviledge follows.

Verſe 19. **Thou ſhalt lye down, and none ſhall make thee afraid.**

רבץ *Propriè de gregibus*

Some interpret this as a repetition, or but as an addition to the former; but we may thus difference them; That, promiſed reſt to his perſon and family; this, to his eſtate and cattel. The word (*Rabats*) here uſed, properly ſignifies the lying down of cattel in their fields and folds. Thus underſtood, it is a diſtinct mercy, Thou ſhalt be quiet in thy bed; as alſo thy cattel, thy ſheep and oxen, ſhall all lye down quietly in their ſtalls and paſtures, none ſhall ſtir them up, much leſs take them away. But ſome may object, The Text doth not ſay, Thy cattel, *&c. ſhall lye down: But thou ſhalt lye down.* I anſwer; A man and his eſtate, whether in things living, or without life, may be wrapt up in one: we are well and in peace (according to common ſpeech) when ours, and all that we have, are well.

Hence note, *A peaceable condition, even for our goods and cattel, is a remarkable ſavour.*

That our eſtates are quiet as well as our perſons, that our beaſts can lye down ſafely as well as our children, is to be numbred among our mercies. The Pſalmiſt prayeth hard for it (*Pſal.* 144. 13, 14.) *That our ſheep may bring forth thouſands, and ten thouſands in our ſtreets: That our oxen may be ſtrong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out*; *that there be no complaining in our ſtreets*: and leaſt any ſhould judge theſe but ſmall matters, he caſts them up into a great ſum, even the ſum of all our deſires, *Happineſs*; *Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe.* Though neither all our happineſs, nor our chief happineſs, conſiſteth in theſe outward things; yet ſuch an enjoyment of theſe things is a happineſs.

There is a fifth priviledge greater then any of theſe, and yet but an outward priviledge: This makes the Sun of his promiſed proſperity as the noon day in his higheſt *Zenith* of perfection.

Yea many ſhall make ſute unto thee.

חלה *Doluit corpore vel animo & cum nomine* פנים *Facies, vultus, eſt fatigare aliquē precibus.* —*prece quâ fatigent virgines ſanctæ minus audientem carmina Veſtam.* Horat. *l.* 1. Od. 2.

The Hebrew is, *They ſhall intreat thy face.* And the word which we tranſlate *entreat*, ſignifies alſo *to weary, or tire one out, to be pained either in mind or body*; and when it is joyned,—as here, with the word *face*, or *countenance*, it ſignifies to weary one with prayer and intreaty; that is, to uſe many intreaties, ſo many intreaties as weary a man to hear them. That parable which teacheth that men ought alwayes to pray, and not to faint, repreſents us with a Judge which feared not God, nor regarded men, and with an importunate Widow, who came unto him, ſaying, *Avenge me of mine adverſary, and he would not for a while*; *But afterward he ſaid within himſelf, Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet, becauſe this Widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, leſt by her continual coming ſhe weary me* (Luke 18. 5.) As many are weary of prayer, ſo ſome are wearied with prayers; and grant the petitions of the poor, not to relieve them, but to eaſe themſelves. So the meaning is this, *They ſhall make many ſuits to thee,* even as many as are made to him that is wearied with ſuitors. Though it be a great honour to have ſuitors, yet there is a burthen in it too: The faces of Kings and Magiſtrates are wearied with hearing ſupplications.

Others underſtand *face* here (as it is often taken in the Hebrew) for anger and diſpleaſure, and give the elegancy of it thus, *Many ſhall abate*, or *weary thine anger*; when they hear that thou art angry or diſpleaſed with them, they ſhall make ſo many ſuits and petitions to thee, as ſhall take off thine anger, and bring it down. It is hard to be angry with thoſe that are humbled; when God is angry, we may be ſaid to weary his anger by prayer; or to cauſe him to give over being angry. The Church wonders when the anger of God outſtood ſo many prayers. *O Lord God of hoſts, how long wilt thou be angry againſt the prayers of thy people?* (*Pſal.* 80. 4.) The anger of God can hold out as long as his love; but God will appear weary of his anger, when we are not weary of praying to him. We weary the anger of God, and make it faint with ſupplications, when we ſupplicate

plicate him earneſtly, and humbly, without wearineſs and fainting. As ſin and unbelief are ſaid to weary the patience of God, (*Iſa.* 7. 13. *chap.* 43. 24.) So prayer and faith (or the prayer of faith) are ſaid to weary the wrath of God. In this ſence the word is frequently uſed, (*Pſal.* 119. 58.) *I intreated thy favour* (or *wearied thy face*) *with my whole heart.* *Saul* ſpeaks ,in the ſame form of words, (1 *Sam.* 13. 12.) *I ſaid the Philiſtims will come down now upon me in* Gilgal; *and I have not made ſupplication unto* (or *wearied the face of*) *God.* So then the bleſſing here promiſed *Job*, is, that many (as ſubjects to their Princes, and tenants to their Lords, yea, as man to God) ſhould make their ſuit, and do homage to him. As if *Zophar* had ſaid, *Many now deſpiſe and undervalue thee becauſe of thine affliction; and heretofore many came boldly to diſquiet thy perſon, and ſpoil thy ſubſtance; but the caſe ſhall be ſo altered with thee, that they, who before deſpiſed thee, ſhall honour and reverence thee:* (As many of them who mocked Chriſt, ſhortly after adored him,) *they that heretofore terrified thee, ſhall be afraid of thee, and ſhall humble themſelves before thee. They ſhall fear thy power, and beg thy favour, with renewed ſupplications, till it ſhall be a wearineſs to hear them. Thou ſhalt be more able to deſtroy them, then deny them. Only take my advice, and hearken to my counſel. Be thou earneſt in ſeeking unto God, and others ſhall quickly ſeek unto thee; do thou make ſuit to him, and weary his face, and thou ſhalt ſee many will come and weary thy face with ſuits: Thy very enemies, and unkindeſt friends, will be glad, not only of thy company, but of a good word, or a good look, from thee.* And in this *Zophar* ſpake truer, in reference unto himſelf, and his friends, then he was aware of: For as others, ſo theſe three, by the command of God (*chap.* 42.) were glad to come and intreat the face of *Job*, that he would intreat the face of God for them.

Te ſuſpicient & colent, tibi ſupplices erũt propter divitias & dignitatem. Drui.

First, Hence obſerve, *It is an honour to have others ſue or ſeek to us.*

In this God gives us a ſhare, and makes us partakers with himſelf in one of his greateſt honours: It is the honour of God, that all creatures ſue to him, and depend upon him; that all need his help, and that ſo many petition him for it every day. *He is the God hearing prayer, therefore to him ſhall all fleſh come.* The higheſt glory which God hath on earth, is, that ſo many thouſands come thronging to, and knocking at the gate of Heaven, with tears and prayers. One reaſon why Princes and Magiſtrates are called *gods*, is, becauſe ſuch as are oppreſſed, or in want, make ſupplication unto them; *Prov.* 19. 6. *Many will intreat the favour of the Prince*: It is the ſubjects duty to do it; and the doing of it is the Princes honour: *Flatterers are the diſgrace of Princes; but Suitors are a grace unto them.* That civil power is draw down to the lees, or is at the loweſt ebb, which no man, or but few, ſue unto. And the loweſt ebb, both of *Zions* ſpiritual power, and outward ſplendor, is thus expreſt (*Jer.* 30. 17.) *This is* Zion *whom no man ſeeketh after.* *Zion* was once ſought unto, for thither the Tribes went up, they went up thither to worſhip the Lord: and when the glory of *Zion* ſhould be reſtored, the Prophet aſſures her (*Iſa.* 60. 14.) *The ſons of them that afflicted thee ſhall come bending unto thee, and all they that deſpiſed thee ſhall bow themſelves down at the ſoles of thy feet: And they ſhall call thee the City of the Lord, the* Zion *of the holy One of* Iſrael. (*Iſa.* 45. 14.) *The labour of* Egypt, *and merchandiſe of* Ethiopia, *&c. they ſhall come over, and they ſhall fall down unto thee, they ſhall make ſupplication unto thee, ſaying, Surely God is in thee, and there is none elſe, there is no God.* To make ſupplication to any one, either ſuppoſeth him to be a God, or that much of God is in him. (*Pſal.* 45. 12.) *The rich among the people ſhall intreat thy favour*; (it is the word in the Text) not only poor mean underlings, but *the worldly rich among the people ſhall ſeek thy heavenly riches*; the honourable ſhall think it an honour to joyn in communion with thee. The *Philadelphian* Angel is promiſed this high priviledge, *Rev.* 3. 9. *Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, which ſay they are* Jews, *and are not, but do lye, behold I will make them come and worſhip before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee*; that is, I will make them ſubmit and ſue unto thee as unto my ſpecial Favourite. The glory of Chriſt himſelf is thus deſcribed (*Iſa.* 11. 10.) *There ſhall be a root of* Jeſſe, *and to him ſhall the* Gentiles *ſeek.* To ſeek or make ſuit to a man, *ſpeaks reverence to, and worth in his perſon: It ſpeaks ability to help, and ſuppoſeth willingneſs; it ſpeaks a fear of having that power uſed againſt us, and an earneſt deſire of having it improved for us*; honour comes in from all quarters to thoſe who have many ſuitors.

Secondly, To whom, and upon what terms, doth *Zophar* make this promiſe? He makes it unto *Job*, and to him in caſe he ſhould ſeek unto God, and humble himſelf before him.

Obſerve, *Holineſs towards God, makes us honourable and venerable among men.*

I grant, ſome are therefore deſpiſed becauſe they are holy; and not a few continue in, or turn to unholineſs, leſt they ſhould be deſpiſed. Holineſs, which is the beauty of men and Angels, yea of God himſelf, is accounted a blot among unholy ones; yet all they who are holy are truly honourable in themſelves, and they are honourable in the eyes and eſteem of many others. Though they are thought unworthy to live in the world, yet *the world is not worthy of them*, Heb. 11. 38. There is more worth in the leaſt Grace, then in all earthly glory. *Them that honour me* (ſaith God, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30.) *I will honour; and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* God is the fountain of honour, and yet he receives honour. We give much honour unto God, when we ſincerely ſeek unto him, and obey him; they that honour God thus, ſhall have a like honour, others ſhall ſeek to them, and obey them. *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight thou haſt been honourable* (Iſa. 43. 4.) All are ready to honour thoſe who are precious in the eyes of earthly Kings, and ſue for the favour of their Favourites. This in a proportion is true of every one that is precious in the eyes of God, he ſhall be honoured, ſometimes in the eyes of worldly men, but alwayes in the eyes of men fearing God. There is a ſpiritual excellency ſtampt upon the face of the meaneſt ſervant of God: they that are ſpiritual ſee and reverence it. The Citizen of *Zion* is deſcribed among other qualifications by this alſo, he is a man, *in whoſe eyes a vile perſon is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.* As Grace is honourable, ſo it is a ſign of grace to honour thoſe who are gracious.

Omnes quodãmodo mali eſſe cogũtur ne viles habeantur. Sal. *lib.* 4. *ad Eccl. Cathol.*

Theſe are the promiſes made by *Zophar* to encourage *Job*, both in general, *ver.* 17. and in particulars, *ver.* 18, and 19. In *ver.* 20. he draws up the concluſion of his ſpeech, ſetting down the contrary eſtate and condition of wicked men, and by conſequence the eſtate of *Job*, if he ſhould continue (as he ſuppoſed him) wicked. While he ſpake of mercy, he ſpake in the ſecond perſon; here he ſpeaks of judgment in the third.

Verſe 20. **But the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail; and they ſhall not eſcape, and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.**

As if *Zophar* had ſaid, *If thou doſt perſiſt in thy ſin, thou mayſt look for good till thy eyes ake, and never be bleſſed with the ſight of it; or thy condition ſhall grow yet more ſad, ſo ſad, that thy eyes ſhall be pained to ſee it, and thou ſhalt have no hope to eſcape it; or if thou haſt, it ſhall be a dying hope, even like the giving up of the ghoſt.*

Here are three branches of this deſcription, concerning the oppoſite condition of wicked men.

Firſt, *Their eyes ſhall fail,* in looking for good.

Secondly, *They ſhall not eſcape,* preſent evil. If they hope they ſhall, then

Thirdly, *Their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.*

The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail.] The failing of the eyes may be conſidered two wayes. There is firſt a natural failing of the eyes through age, as alſo through extremity of want and affliction (which is an accident unto Nature.) The eyes of the wild Aſſes are ſaid to *fail becauſe there was no graſs*, Jer. 14. 6. God threatens the *Jews* with ſuch troubles as ſhould *conſume their eyes*, Levit. 26. 16. When *Jonathan* (1 Sam. 14. 29.) wanted food, his eyes were dim, and as ſoon as he had taſted a little honey, *See, I pray you,* (ſaith he) *how mine eyes have been enlightened, becauſe I taſted a little of this honey.* Neither of theſe wayes are we to underſtand it here. Secondly, There is a failing of the eyes in a moral ſence: Though the optick vertue of the eye be

Hebraiſmus eſt qua extrema deſcribitur virium extenuatio atq; defectus ad mortem uſq; Bold.

like that of *Moſes*, which was as ſtrong and clear at a hundred and twenty years old, as at twenty, yet when a man is diſappointed of the thing which he looks for, his eyes are ſaid to fail. The failing of our eyes is the diſappointment of our hopes. And the reaſon of that expreſſion is, becauſe the eye is the inſtrument, by which we look up, or look out for that, which is the deſire, and would be (as we conceive) the ſatisfaction of our ſouls. Yet further, the eyes may be ſaid to fail two wayes.

Dum expectant bonum & non aſſequuntur. Sic conſumptio oculorum ſumitur in Scriptura. Rab. Sol.

Firſt, (As before) When we obtain not what we have long expected: So the captive *Jews* complain (*Lam.* 4. 17.) *As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have waited for a nation that could not ſave us.* *Job*, in vindication of his integrity, profeſſeth, *That he never cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail* (Chap. 31. 16.) that is, he neither made them ſtay over-long for an anſwer, nor did he chide them away preſently with a bad one. For,

Videndo & invidendo langueſcet. Invidia eſt oculorum dolor.

Secondly, This failing of the eyes doth ariſe from the ſight of that which we would not ſee, as well as from the not ſeeing of what we would. *To meet with that which we look not for, is as troubleſome, as not to meet with that for which we look.* And as want of that good, which we would enjoy, ſo envy at the good, which another enjoyes, is a pain unto the eyes. Envy is the worſt diſeaſe of the eye: when a man ſeeth another flouriſh in proſperity and in peace, whom he hates, that monſter envy tortures him, and his eyes begin to ake.

In both or either of theſe ſences we may underſtand it here.

Firſt thus, Wicked men ſhall look long enough for any good before it comes, their eyes ſhall fall out of their heads with looking for good becauſe it comes not.

De Jobi æmulatoribus & invidis hæc arbitror intelligenda. Bold.

Secondly, *Their eyes ſhall fail*; that is, they ſhall ſee the righteous in ſuch proſperity, and raiſed up to ſuch luſtre and glory, that they ſhall not be able to bear it. This ſome give as the peculiar intent of the place. For though the aſſertion be appliable to all wicked men, yet it ſeems to aim chiefly at thoſe who inſulted over *Job* in his affliction. Theſe mens eyes, ſaith *Zophar*, ſhall be dazled, and ſink in their heads, at the ſplendour of that reſtitution which God will make in thy eſtate, if thou wilt but return to God, and repent. *They who mocked thy fall, ſhall be amazed at thy riſing.*

This firſt clauſe taken in connection with the counſel before given, yields us this Obſervation:

The prayers of the Saints draw down good upon themſelves, and trouble upon their adverſaries.

Prayer is an offenſive weapon as well as a defenſive: as it protects us from evil, and attaineth good for us, ſo it wounds our enemies, and obſtructs the paſſages of their good. What hinders the deſires of wicked men, and breaks their projects? what ſtops the courſe of their counſels? Some poor ſoul, perhaps many, are praying againſt them, and then, the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, they ſhall never partake of their expectations. There is a deſtroying power in the prayers of the Saints, as well as a ſaving and a helping power. The witneſſes have a flame at their lips, fire proceedeth out of their mouthes, which devoureth their enemies (*Rev.* 11.) which moſt interpret to be their prayers: they pray their enemies to deſtruction, they pray them into diſappointments; their enemies lay deſigns, and prayer diſmounteth their deſigns, or turns their Artillery againſt their own breaſts.

Secondly, Take the interpretations given of theſe words in their own compaſs. Then

Obſerve, firſt, *It is a vexation to wicked men, a very pain to their eyes, to ſee the proſperity of godly men.*

A good man is an eye-ſore to thoſe that are evil. *Haman* was in an high eſtate, a great man, and full of honour, yet *Mordecai* was an eye-ſore to him; *Haman's* eyes failed when he ſaw him, and therefore after he had made report to his friends, and to his Wife, *of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him,* &c. he melts into this ſad and diſcontented concluſion, *yet all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee* Mordecai *the* Jew *ſitting at the Kings gate,* *Eſther* 5. 13. All the pictures in the Kings gallery, did not pleaſe and feed the eyes of *Haman* ſo much as the ſight of *Mordecai* ſitting at the Kings gate vexed him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Wicked men ſhall never obtain the good things they long for and gape after.*

Their hopes ſhall be fruitleſs, their projects ſucceſleſs, their labour ſhall be labour in vain. The beſt are ſometimes put to it very hard, their refuge and their hopes fail them long, though not for ever, (*Pſal.* 69. 3.) *Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. David* waited ſo long, that he was even weary with waiting, yet God came at laſt. The ſtubborn *Jews* are threatned, *Deut.* 28. 32. *Thy ſons and thy daughters ſhall be given to another people, and thine eyes ſhall look and fail with longing for them all the day long. Siſera's* Mother, and her wiſe Ladies, looked long through the lattice for his coming, but he came not at all. The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail indeed, they ſhall fail with waiting upon their idols and vanities, upon their luſts and lyes, upon their relations and friends, upon their policies and plottings: It ſhould make the Saints to lift up their heads and their eyes with confidence, that God will cauſe the eyes of wicked men to fail.

ו מנוס אבד מנהם *Effugium peribis ab iis.*

And they ſhall not eſcape.] As they ſhall not receive the good which they expect, ſo they ſhall not be able to deliver themſelves from the evil which they fear. *They ſhall not eſcape*; the Hebrew is, *Their refuge ſhall fail them:* Mr. *Broughton*, *Their refuge ſhall be forlorn.* You may take it either in reference to their eſcaping the hand of men, or to their eſcaping the hand of God. They ſhall not eſcape the hand of men, their refuge ſhall fail them there. When once *Saul* was forſaken of God, he could not eſcape the hand of the *Philiſtims*: ſee (1 *Sam.* 28.) what means he made to eſcape them, whom he had often conquered; he goes to the Devil for help, but he could not eſcape; *Nothing ſhall do them good who are forſaken of God.* And if they cannot eſcape the hands of men, much leſs ſhall they be able to eſcape the hand of God. As his hand is not ſhortned to ſave, ſo not to puniſh. Where he reſolves to ſtrike, he can. *They ſhall not eſcape.* This intimates two things.

Firſt, The falſeneſs of thoſe props and ſupports, whether perſons, or things, upon which they leaned. *I* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 142. 4.) *looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me:* The help of man often fails *good men*, though the help of God never fails them. The help of man often fails wicked men, and the help of God fails them ever. They may look in a ſtreight not only on the right hand and on the left, that is, on all creatures, but upward alſo, on God himſelf, and yet find no refuge. God will not deliver wicked men, and others ſhall not. Nothing can ſave him whom God will deſtroy, or give up to deſtruction.

Secondly, The vanity of their own hopes; they have great hopes that they ſhall get off, and out-run their dangers, but they cannot. Their ſorrows ſhall be too ſwift of foot for them; yea, their ſorrows ſhall purſue them as upon Eagles wings. *They ſhall not eſcape.*

Hence obſerve, *There is no eſcaping the hand of God.*

His is a long hand, every thing is within the reach of it. His foot is a ſwift foot; therefore *the flight ſhall periſh from the ſwift, and the ſtrong ſhall not ſtrengthen his force, neither ſhall the mighty deliver himſelf, neither ſhall he ſtand that handleth the bow, and he that is ſwift of foot ſhall not deliver himſelf,* Amos 2. 14. When a prevailing enemy comes, there's no fighting with him, but there may be an eſcape from him. *A good pair of heels may do us ſervice where hands cannot.* But when a people can neither fight nor flee, neither charge nor retreat, their caſe is deſperate. There is no getting from that vengeance which God ſendeth to attach and apprehend his enemies. As *all outward helps ſhall fail thoſe whom God will not help*; ſo God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him. On that ſuppoſition *Rabſhakeh* thought to daſh the confidence of *Hezekiah*, and to perſwade him that he ſhould not eſcape. *Is not this he in whom thou truſteſt* (ſaith he) *whoſe high places and whoſe altars thou haſt taken away?* Thou truſteſt in God, but will God deliver thee when thou haſt thus diſhonoured him? *They that deſtroy the inſtituted worſhip of God, have little reaſon to hope that God ſhould aſſiſt them, while they*

they offer to truſt him, which is his natural worſhip. Seeing then God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him, and blaſteth every outward thing which they make their confidence, how is it poſſible for them to eſcape? When our Rock will not ſave us, how ſhall we be ſaved by a ſtaff of reed?

The third branch of the Text wrings the very dregs of the wrath of God, into the cup of ungodly men.

Spes eorum. מפח נפש

Their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.

When hope dyes all dyes: hope is the laſt commodity which a man puts off in this life; But what is their hope worth which is as dead?

Proprie hac phraſi ſignificatur deliquiū animæ. Eſt ſpes illorum abominatio animæ. Vulg.

There is much variety in interpreting this expreſſion. The word properly taken ſignifies *ſwooning*, or failing of the ſpirits. The giving up of the ghoſt, is the total and final failing of the ſpirits. He can have but few ſpirits left alive, whoſe hope hath given up the ghoſt. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Their hope is nought but pangs of the ſoul:* The Vulgar, *Their hope ſhall be the abomination of their ſoul:* The ſence of which tranſlation ſeems to be this; That which wicked men receive in lieu of, or in anſwer to their great hopes, ſhall be an abomination to them; they hope for good, but evil cometh. And every evil is then moſt grievous, when it ſucceeds the hope of good. Hope may be ſaid to give up the ghoſt, when either the good we would obtain removes further from us, or the evil we would decline comes cloſer to us: Hope expires when we are preſented with viſions of fear and ſorrow, after our higheſt expectations of joy and comfort: Hence ſome tranſlate the word (*Nepheſh*) *a breath or puff of wind*; to which the hope of the wicked is elegantly compared, becauſe it quickly vaniſheth, and produceth no effect, or not the effect hoped for. That complaint of the Prophet, ſutes this notion fully, (*Iſa.* 26. 18.) *We have been with child* (big with hopes) *we have been in pain*, (endured much to enjoy our hopes, and bring them to the birth, but inſtead of them) *we have, as it were, brought forth wind, we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth.* After long looking, and long labour, all proved but a gripe of wind, or a Collick fit.

Vox Nepheſh hoc loco pro halitu & vento ſumitur. Bold.

Res ſperatæ dignæ ſunt quæ exibilentur exufflentur quas flatus repellat longeque projiciat.

Again, ſay others, *Their hope ſhall be as the ſnuffing of the breath*; that is, they ſhall be ſo angry at their diſappointments, that they ſhall vex and ſnuff at it. Or thus, The things which they ſhall receive upon all their hopes placed in, and credit given to the creature, ſhall not be worth *a ſnuff of breath*; that is, they ſhall be light and vain: So ſome expound that (*Mal.* 1. 13.) where the Prophet brings in that people toyling under the preſſures of (that which ſhould have been their delight) the publick worſhip; *Ye have ſaid, Behold what a wearineſs is it, and ye have ſnuffed at it*; (it is this word) they cryed out, we have brought many weighty Offerings, and Sacrifices, and what a burthen is it to do ſo? *And ye ſnuffed at it*; that is, ye thought much of it, or were vexed at it; ſo we tranſlate: But the letter of the Original is read thus, *Ye have ſaid, Behold what a wearineſs is it, whereas you might have blown it away, or blown it off*; as if he had ſaid, you think you have done a great matter, and ſpeak as if ye were all in a ſweat at my ſervice; whereas indeed you have done little for me, and what you did, you ſpoiled it in the doing, you have done it in an ill manner; you have brought me a poor, a lame, and a halting Sacrifice, ſuch as a man might even blow away with his breath; and your own hearts have been more halting, lame and light, then your Sacrifice. So here, their hope ſhall be as a thing blown or puffed away with a breath, there ſhall be no ſtability, no ſubſiſtence in it.

The words (according to our reading) teach us, that the hopes of wicked men are decaying and dying hopes. *Giving up the ghoſt* is the laſt act of life, and the beginning of death. As all the hopes of wicked men periſh when they dye, ſo while they live their hopes are dying. A godly man hath not only a living, but a lively hope, (1 *Pet.* 1. 3.) A wicked man hath but a dying hope at beſt; and his hope *ſhall be worſe and worſe every day, till it be utterly deſperate.* The Prophet *Joel* deſcribeth the judgments of God upon his ancient people, by pulling off the bark of a tree (*chap.* 1. 7.) *He hath laid my vine waſte, and barked my fig-tree; He hath made it clean bare, the branches of it are white.* The *Caldee* Paraphraſt gloſſes it by the expreſſion of this Text, *He hath cauſed my fig-tree to give up the ghoſt*; hence the meaning is plain, that, look as a tree (take it for a fig-tree, or any other tree) when you pull off the bark, bears no more fruit, but dyes; ſo ſhall the hope of a wicked man be: We may ſay of ſuch a mans hope as Chriſt of the fig-tree which he curſed, *Never fruit grow on thee more*; thou art a dying tree, thou haſt done thy worſt, thou haſt ſeen thy beſt dayes, now thy bark is peeled off, thy boughs are bare; *Thy hope is as the giving up of the ghoſt.*

Spes eorum perditio Sept. ſui ſc. rerumque ſuarum, vel quod de ipſis impiis ſperari poteſt animæ perditio eſt.

Laſtly, The Hebrew, having no particle of ſimilitude, runs thus in the letter, *Their hope ſhall be the giving up of the ghoſt*; that is, *A wicked man is often brought into ſuch a condition, that he hath no hope but this, that his day is almoſt done, and himſelf a near neighbour unto death*: He hath no hope when he dyes, yet all his hope is to dye; and that's a miſerable hope. *Jonah*'s hope (under temptation) was the giving up of the ghoſt; therefore he prayes hard that God would take him out of the world. *Achitophel*'s hope was his death; he being croſſed in his wicked counſel, went and hanged himſelf. They who are paſt all poſitive Hope in this life, retire (as their laſt reſerve) to this privative hope, O that they were dead. *Not to be, is their hope who are oppreſſed with fears of being miſerable. Deſpair of all good while we live, makes evil (ſuch is death) the beſt of our hopes.*

Spes eorum efflatio animæ i.e. *tanto dolore afficientur excidentes ſua ſpe ut ſibi mortem conſciſcant.*

The ſum of all is, *A wicked man is a miſerable man.* Put the three parts of this verſe together, and you may read the worſt of miſery. *He that never receives the good he hopes for, and ſees others receive that good which he grieves for: He that cannot eſcape any danger which he fears, nor meet with any deliverance which he deſires: He whoſe hopes are dying, or who hath no hope but to dye: He that is all this, is any thing but happy, and wants nothing but hell (at the very brink whereof he is, when he is all this) to make him compleatly miſerable.*

The Prophet *Malachi* gives us the opinion of thoſe times concerning wicked men, *You call the proud happy, and they that work wickedneſs are ſet up*; but he tells of a time when they ſhould return, and *diſcern between the righteous and the wicked*: There is the greateſt real difference already between the righteous and the wicked: but God will make a legible difference, a difference ſo plain and legible, that you ſhall not need to call in the help of faith (which hath the moſt exquiſite eye) to read it; ſenſe may do it. The oldeſt eyes, even the eyes of the old man ſhall *diſcern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not*; when the one ſhall be burnt up root and branch in the fire and flames of Juſtice, and the other refreſht with the healing beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs. Wait but a while, and you ſhall ſee God drawing out theſe poſitions in providences towards his people, and making a viſible comment upon this Text of Scripture. The light of the righteous ſhall not fail, but the eyes of the wicked ſhall: The one ſhall be ſecure becauſe there is hope; but the other hath no hope to eſcape, or the hope he hath ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.

CHAP. XII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And Job *anſwered, and ſaid,*

No doubt but ye are the people, and wiſdom ſhall die with you.

But I have underſtanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?

I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he anſwereth him: the juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn.

This, and the two following Chapters, contain *Job's* anſwer to the counſel and objections of his third friend, *Zophar*, not excluding what had been ſaid by the two former. There are four things moſt remarkable in it.

Firſt, *Job* ſharply rebukes that pride of ſpirit, and confidence of their own opinion, which he obſerved in his friends. He purſues this point from the beginning of the Chapter, to the end of *ver.* 4. *No doubt but ye are the people*, &c.

Secondly, He refutes that opinion which they three had maintained againſt him; namely, *that good or evil things diſtinguiſh good and evil men*; himſelf ſhewing by many arguments, taken from the various adminiſtrations of God, that outward evils are often the lot of good men; and that outward good is often the lot of evil men in this life. The Theme begins at *ver.* 5. and is enlarged to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He rejects his friends, *as Phyſitians of no value*; yea, as having wronged God, whilſt they ſeem to be advocates for him. This he proſecutes with much variety, from the beginning of *chap.* 13. to *ver.* 17.

Fourthly, He renews his former plea with God, putting many requeſts to him, and ſtrongly arguing for a releaſe from, or at leaſt, a leſſening and mitigation of his troubles.

The whole diſcourſe is ſomewhat more preſſing and ſharp, then either of the former; *Job's* ſtile taſts much of the gall and vinegar, in this reply; and there was ſome reaſon it ſhould: for ſeeing his friends undervaluing the defence he had made, and charging him afreſh with that old leaven of hypocriſie (as if there were no way to aſſert the juſtice and holineſs of God, but by condemning him for unjuſt and unholy) he could not take it well at their hands, but grows ſomewhat warm in language towards them; we ſhall be ſenſible of it in opening the body of his anſwer.

Then Job anſwered, and ſaid.] He ſeems to aſſert, rather then to diſpute; and is larger in laying down his own poſitions, then in anſwering the objections of his friends. Yet indeed a clear aſſertion of truth, is a ſufficient confutation of error; and a clear ſtating of a queſtion, is the anſwer of all objections.

No doubt but ye are the people.] The word is uſually tranſlated, *the multitude*; and it comes from a root, which ſignifies *to cover or hide*; becauſe a multitude, or a great croud of people hide and cover the face of the earth.

עמם • עם *Operuit, texit, quia multitudo terram tegit*

No doubt but ye are the people: The text is taken two wayes; ſome read it as a plain aſſertion; others, as an Irony; which is a ſpeech fill'd with deriſion; while the letter of it makes no doubt, the ſpirit of it is an abſolute denial.

They who take it as a plain aſſertion, read thus; *Without all queſtion you are to be reckoned* (inter plebem) *but as the ordinary ſort of people, even as the vulgar; and wiſdom is dead with you; if ever you had any wiſdom, your wiſdom is faded, your parts are ſpoiled, you have outlived your prime; you are not the men you pretend to be, the choiceſt and the chiefeſt, the cream and flower of all; no, your ſpeech betrayes you, and ſaith, you are of the vulgar, of vulgar judgments, and common underſtandings. I ſee no depth or myſtery in any thing ye have ſpoken.* Thus the Phariſees ſpeak, *Have any of the rulers believed on him? but this people* (this common people, this vulgar) *who know not the law, are curſed,* John 7.49.

Video quod eſtis populares, & vobiſcum mortua eſt ſapientia. Pagn. *Vos eſtis hominum univerſitas.* Tygur. *Putatis quod vos eſtis ſpecimen totius orbis.* Vat.

Secondly, By *the people*, ſome of the *Rabbins* underſtand the choiceſt, the elect of the people; ſo the language is ironical. *No doubt but ye are the people, the choice the choſen people, the choſen of God, his elect and precious ones, his favorites and familiars, to whom he opens his boſom, and reveals his ſecrets; ye are the Church and people of God, to whom the divine Oracles are committed. We are thruſt out among the prophane.*

עם Populus, id eſt, מבחר עם delectus populi. Rab. Moſ. ben. Nahm. *Vos eſtis lectiſſimi in toto populo, ac velut columnæ totius nationis.* Merc.

Again, *Ye are the people, that is, the choſen of the people, the repreſentative of the whole Nation*; as we may ſay of the *Houſe of* Commons *in Parliament*, *ye are the people of* England, that is, the people have choſen you, and confide in you, as the wiſeſt, the moſt judicious and faithful of your ſeveral Countries, for carrying on the affairs of the Kingdom, and maintaining of their rights. In this ſenſe (though they are but a few hundreds, yet) they are *the people of the Kingdom*. *Job* taxeth his friends as arrogating this; *Ye are the people, ye are they that would ſeem to be a whole Nation of men; ye (ſure) have got away all the wit from the world, ye would be accounted as mankind, or as the flower of the univerſe; ye take it upon you as if all the world were epitomized in you three; as if all wiſe, learned and knowing men had delivered up, and put over their judgments and underſtandings, their all, into your hands; yea, as if wiſdom had yielded her ſelf captive to you, and ye had devoured all knowledge: ſurely ye are the men.* The Lord by the Prophet *Jeremy* (chap. 5. 1.) bids them *run to and fro through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, to ſee if they could find a man:* And the old Cynick went into a throng with a torch by day, to find a man. *A man of wiſdom and integrity is the man; other men compared to him, are but beaſts. Zophar* at the twelfth verſe of the former chapter, compares *Job to the wild aſſes colt*, and numbers him among the beaſts: here *Job* fits him with an expreſſion; you carry your ſelves (ſaith he) as if you only were *The men*, and I, yea, all men beſides, *very beaſts, or wild aſſes colts*, that knew neither what ye ſay, nor whereof ye affirm.

Amicos modeſtè reprehendit aſperſo tamen modico ſive ſale ſive felle ſub ironica forma. San.

Quoniam Zophar Jobum *vellicando, pullo onagri,* i. e. *ſtupidiſſimo bruto comparaveverat, ideo dicit, vos eſtis homines, cæteri ad vos beſtiæ.* Merc.

And wiſdom ſhall die with you.] Moral wiſdom is the knowledge of natural things, and of their cauſes. Divine wiſdom is the true knowledg of God and of our ſelves. We may ſuppoſe both wiſdoms intended here; as if he had ſaid, *you pretend to ſo much wiſdom, that if you ſhould die, all that is called wiſdom muſt ſurely die with you, there will be none ('tis to be feared) left in the world, when you leave the world.* When the Sun goes down, the light goes down; the Sun is the veſſel of light: it was ſaid of *Chryſoſtom* (who held forth much light of knowledge in his time) *that it were better the Sun ſhould be taken out of the firmament, then he from his Sphere.* When ſome men go down, much light goes down with them: *A wiſe holy man is both a burning and a ſhining light. Job* puts it upon his friends as their preſumption, to think ſo highly of themſelves; his thoughts were, that wiſdom would be ſafe, when they ſhould not be; that the common-wealth of learning would loſe little or nothing, though it loſt them, with all their learning; that the day of knowledge would not be darker, whenſoever they with all their light ſhould ſet.

Sapientia eſt rerum divinarum & humanarum, cauſarumq; quibus hæ res continentur ſcientia. Cic. l. 2. de Off.

Quando vos moriemini integra manebit quæ in mundo eſt ſapientia. Lod.

Whether or no *Job's* friends were thus conceited of their own abilities, and preferred themſelves before their brethren, is more then I dare conclude againſt them. Their round dealing with *Job*, and thoſe magiſterial leſſons and advices given him, ſound ſomewhat that way; but let it be granted that *Job* in his paſſion over-acted a little upon his friends, yet there is this truth in it, which ſhall be my firſt Obſervation from theſe words:

That, *Many are apt to over-value and over-rate their own abilities, as if they had engroſſed all knowledge, and had the monopolie of wiſdom in their own breaſts; as if all muſt borrow or buy of their ſtore, and light their candle at their torch.*

Wiſdom is no mans peculiar; and a great opinion of our own wiſdom, ſavors of great folly: The very head of that monſter, *Papal pride*, appears in this point. The Pope thinks himſelf to be *The man*, that *He is the people*; that all the wiſdom and judgment of the world is contracted into him, and faſtned to the pummels of his chair; whence he would be believed to utter Oracles with a ſpirit of infallibility. *No man errs more then he who ſaith he cannot*; nor is any man a greater ſtranger to true knowledge, then he who boaſts he hath more then his neighbours. It is noted of the inhabitants of *China*, that as they are a witty nation, ſo they have a conceit of their own wit above all the nations of the earth. Hence their boaſt, *that they have two eyes, the* Europeans *one, and the reſt of the world is blind.* But they who think all are blind, who ſee not with their eyes, are yet blind, and have never ſeen themſelves. It is the emptineſs of knowledge, not a fulneſs of it, which makes ſo great a ſound. They who expect that all ſhould bow to their judgments, and acquieſce in what they reſolve; they, who would be eſteemed to ſpeak nothing but principles and *poſtulata*, which muſt be ſwallowed, without chewing, by an implicit faith; they, who require aſſent, rather then perſwade it, may juſtly fall under the weight, and feel the ſmart of this ſcornful objurgation, *ye are the men, and wiſdom ſhall die with you.* The Apoſtle is expreſs, *He that thinks* (that is, proudly conceits) *he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know* (1 Cor. 8. 2) What then doth he know, who thinks (which he cannot without higheſt pride) that he knoweth all things, and that all men muſt know (if they will know any thing) from him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *All kind of ſcorn is not alwayes uncomly.*

We may, without breach of charity, or ſtain of holineſs, check pride with deriſion, and ſpeak them below men, who ſpeak themſelves above men, or act what is unworthy of men. The Jews are taught by God himſelf to deride the proud King of *Babylon*, Iſa. 14. 4. *Thou ſhalt take up this proverb (or taunting ſpeech) againſt the King of Babylon, and ſay, How hath the Oppreſſor ceaſed, the golden City ceaſed!* &c. verſ. 9, 10. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming; it ſtirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raiſed up from their thrones all the Kings of the nations; all they ſhall ſpeak unto thee, and ſay, art thou alſo become weak as we? art thou alſo become as one of us?* This is the *Proverb* which was to be taken up againſt the King of *Babylon*, and it is a *taunting proverb* indeed. Not only ſhould the great Princes then alive who (*ver.* 8) are expreſſed under the ſhadow of *Firtrees and the Cedars of Lebanon*, rejoyce againſt him; but even the dead whom he had oppreſſed, are here brought in, inſulting over him. When the *Babylonian* ſhould tumble down to hell, the Princes there are repreſented riſing from their places, to give this great Prince the upper hand, and the higheſt room in that kingdom of darkneſs. Thus hell it ſelf is ſaid to be moved, and to be, as it were, in a hurry, how to entertain that mighty King; that he who had been chief in wickedneſs and in pride, might have his right, to be chief in torment. The dialogue which the dead are ſaid to have with that deceaſed King, is ſomewhat like thoſe in which *Alexander* and others are derided by the dead in *Lucian*; *Art thou become like unto us?* &c. In what a heat of heavenly zeal doth *Eliah* deride the Prieſts of *Baal*? 1 Kin. 18. 27. *Cry aloud, for he is god, either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he ſleepeth, and muſt be awaked.* When the Prophet *Micaiah*, (1 *King*. 22. 17.) was called for to give his opinion about *Ahab*'s expedition to *Ramoth Gilead*, he knowing what they would have him vote, they expected he ſhould join with the reſt, and ſay what they had ſaid; therefore when *Ahab* asked, *ſhall we go up to Ramoth Gilead?* yea, ſaith he, *go up and proſper*; I know you have a mind to go up, I pray go; *Ahab* reſented it as a ſcorn, and therefore adds, *How oft ſhall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord?* They who reſolve upon their way, before they ask counſel, are often counſelled according to their own way, are led to error in ſcorn, becauſe they had no love unto the truth. We find the Apoſtle *Paul*, in the higheſt elevation of his ſpirit, expreſſing himſelf in language extreamly parallel with this of *Job*. It ſeems the *Corinthians*, much like the *Laodiceans*, had boaſted of their ſpiritual fulneſs, that they were rich, and encreaſed with goods, and had need of nothing. Yea, ſaith the Apoſtle, I know ye are, I will be of your opinion too for once (1 *Cor*. 4. 8.) *Now ye are full, now ye are rich* (all things go bravely with you) *ye have reigned as Kings without us*, that is, you exalt your ſelves above us here, as much as a King is above his own ſubjects, you are ſupream. I and *Apollos*, whoſe Miniſtry God was pleaſed to uſe in planting and watering the Goſpel among you, are now looked upon as mean fellows, as men of low and poor parts; or, at beſt, but as ſome good honeſt dull Preachers, not worthy to be named the ſame day with your new and highflown teachers (yet all this is but an holy ſcorn put upon them, as his correction, in the next line, imports) *I would to God* (ſaith he) *that ye did reign* (namely, in deed and in truth; I ſhall not envy you, only I would be bold to put in for a part with you) *I would to God ye did reign, that we alſo might reign with you*; I would be glad to ſhare in thoſe gallant Goſpel-notions you ſo much brag of; but I fear your portion is but ſmall in true ſpiritual Goſpel-knowledge, except in your own conceits, and there you abound ſufficiently. Again, in *v*. 10. though in another ſtile, yet fully to the ſence, and almoſt the words of *Job*; *We are fools for Chriſts ſake, but ye are wiſe in Chriſt; we are weak, but ye are ſtrong; ye are honourable, but we are deſpiſed*; we are nothing, ye are all: This the Apoſtle ſpeaks, as moſt interpreters agree, by an Irony; or if taken properly, the ſence may be given thus, we are fools in the opinion of the world, poſſibly in yours too, becauſe, for the Goſpels ſake, we expoſe our ſelves to ſo much hazard. *But ye are wiſe*; who ſo preach Chriſt, that ye endanger neither life nor liberty, neither perſons, nor eſtates. Read the ſame ſtrain, (1 *Cor*. 14. 36, 37.) *What! came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?* What! do you think that you have all the word and will of God? doth all the knowledge of Scripture, and reſolution of doubts lie in your breaſts, and flow out at your lips? comes all from you? have you the ſole trade of Goſpel-truths? he ſubjoins, *If any man thinks himſelf to be a Prophet, or ſpiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the Commandments of the Lord*: as if he had ſaid, do not think you have got all, I have ſomewhat as well as you, I know what the commandment, what the will of God is. *Job* ſpeaks in the next verſe, as if he had read this Epiſtle of *Paul*, or had ſet him a pattern; for having ſaid, *No doubt ye are the people, and wiſdom ſhall die with you*; he adds,

Ridet ſpiritus carnales, ridet caro ſpirituales. Deſcendit ad graviſſimam ironiam, ut ambitioſos illos ad ruborem vel invitos cogat. Bez. *in loc.* *Poſtquam ſerio & abſque figuris vanam eorum confidentiam repreſſit, tum ironicωs quoque eam deridet.* Cal.

Hæc antitheſis eſt ironica & plena aculeis.

Aſpera objurgatio ne ſoli ſapere Corinthii *ſibi videantur.* Bez. *Objurgatio eſt paulo aſperior, ſed quâ neceſſe fuit retundere ſuperbiam* Corinthiorum, *qui ſibi ultra modum placebunt.* Calv.

Verſe 3. **But I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferiour unto you; yea, who knows not ſuch things as theſe?**

As before, he derided their ignorance, or their preſumption of knowledge; ſo now, he puts himſelf into the ballance with them: you that think you have all the wiſdom and knowledge, let me come in for a ſhare with you; *I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferior to you*; poſſibly I ſhall weigh as heavy as you, when we are weighed together; yea, who doth not weigh as heavy as you? *Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?*

We have here a double compariſon.

Firſt, *Job* compares himſelf with his friends, and that two wayes. 1. For the matter; That, as they had underſtanding, ſo had he: *I have underſtanding as well as you.* 2. He compares himſelf for the degree; my underſtanding is as large as yours: *I am not inferiour to you.*

Secondly, He makes a compariſon between his friends and the reſt of men; even with the vulgar and ordinary ſort of men: as if he had ſaid, *Do not think that I lift my ſelf up above my brethren, or would be reckoned for more then an ordinary man,* when I ſay, *I have underſtanding as well as you; for truly who knows not ſuch things as theſe? yours is but the common Ephah, and your meaſure but the meaſure of a man.*

I have underſtanding as well as you.] The Hebrew is, *Non ſum excors, neque cor perdidi.*

I have a heart as well as you. The heart in Scripture is put, as for the affections, ſo likewiſe for the underſtanding; a man without underſtanding, is a man without an heart: the heart is the treaſury wherein the precepts and maximes of holy knowledge are laid up: *A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things. Hear now this, O fooliſh people, and without underſtanding.* The Hebrew is, *and without heart* (Jer. 5. 21.) And in *chap* 34. of this Book of *Job*, *ver.* 32. *Let men of underſtanding tell me*; the Original is, *Let men of heart tell me*. And the *Latines* call a wiſe man (*Cordatum*) *a hearty peice, a man of heart*. The name of one of the twelve Apoſtles was *Lebbeus* (from *Leb*, the heart) ſignifying as much as wiſe, or underſtanding. Some, for *I have underſtanding*, read, *I have courage and height of ſpirit, as well as you*: The heart, in Scripture, is often put for courage, 2 *Sam.* 17. 10. *He that is a valiant man, whoſe heart is as the heart of a Lion, ſhall utterly melt*; that is, his courage ſhall fail. So the Prophet threatens, that the *mighty mens hearts in* Moab, *in that day, ſhall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs* (Jer. 48. 41.) The failing of the heart is the failing of courage; that's a good ſenſe here, *I have courage as well as you*; or, I have ſpirit to ſtand to my cauſe, and maintain what I have aſſerted, notwithſtanding all the contempt and contradictions which you have poured upon me; you have not yet made my heart fall, though my body, though my eſtate be caſt down. You have loaded me with reproaches and heavy cenſures, but my ſpirit bears your infirmity in doing ſo.

נפל *Non cado à vobis, vel præ vobis, Hebraiſmus eſt, quo cadere ſignificat abjectũ eſſe & inferiorem.*

I am not inferiour to you.] I have the ſame for kind, and I have as much of it as you. The Hebrew is very elegant, *I do not fall before you*; a man that falls before another, is ſubdued and overcome. He that falls under in wreſtling, is prevailed over: I do not fall as the weaker, I yet keep my ground, and ſtand upon my legs. So the word is uſed, *Nehem.* 6. 16. When thoſe enemies perceived how God dealt with his people, the Text ſaith, *they were caſt down in their own eyes*; or, fell before their own eyes, that is, they were aſhamed and dejected, becauſe they ſaw the proſperity of the *Jews*.

There may be a threefold ſence of this, *I am not inferiour to you*; or, *I do not fall before you.*

Firſt, I am not inferiour to you in honour and dignity; *I am as great a man as you.*

Secondly, It may refer to holineſs: I am not inferiour to you in grace; *I am as good a man as you.*

Thirdly, Which is ſpecially meant; I am not inferiour to you in knowledge and underſtanding; *I am as wiſe a man as you.* Some render it thus, *I yet fall, trip, or ſtumble no more then you, and I hope to ſtand my ground in this controverſie as long as you dare ſtand againſt me.* Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, That, *In ſome caſes, ſelf-commendation is not uncomly.*

To boaſt of our underſtanding, proceeds from the want of it; but a man may ſay, *I have underſtanding as well as you*, without a boaſt. This is a very tender point; example from the ſervants of God in Scripture, teacheth us to be more ready to ſpeak and write our blots and failings, then our good works or praiſes: And the rule of Scripture is, *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth; a ſtranger, and not thine own lips* (Prov. 27. 2.) The Apoſtle alſo is expreſs, that ſelf-commendation is no commendation (2 Cor. 10. 18.) *Not he that commendeth himſelf, is approved; but whom the Lord commendeth.* To have praiſe of other men, is better then to have praiſe of our ſelves; but to have praiſe of God, is better then to have praiſe of men. Yet when men diſpraiſe us maliciouſly, we may juſtly praiſe our ſelves. Such praiſe is but to do our ſelves juſtice, which we are more bound to do, then to any other man.

There is a twofold commendation of our ſelves. There is a ſinful ſelf-commendation, when we deſire to be lifted up in the opinion of the world. There is a lawful ſelf-commendation, when we deſire to be lifted up, leſt the glory of God ſhould be caſt down. When the honour of God is in danger to be abated in our abatings, we may ſafely take all due honour to our ſelves; yea, we are bound to honour, and make the moſt (we poſſibly can) of our ſelves with truth, when either the truth, or honour of Chriſt muſt be leſſened, if we do not. *I think* (ſaith *Paul*) *that I have the ſpirit of God* (1 Cor. 7. 10.) He ſpeaks not, as if he doubted whether he had; but to reprove thoſe who ſlighted him, as if he had not the ſpirit of God. While he ſaith only, *I think I have the ſpirit of God*, he ſaith more to this purpoſe, then if he had aſſerted ſtrongly, *I have the ſpirit of God.* The confidence of the falſe Apoſtles, that they had the ſpirit, gave occaſion, not only to ſuſpect whether they had it, but to conclude, that they had it not: *Paul's* modeſty, in but thinking, gave occaſion to be reſolute, in concluding, that he had the Spirit.

Further, *Job* doth not only commend himſelf poſitively, and ſay, I have underſtanding, I have wiſdom; but he commends himſelf comparatively, which is the moſt unpleaſing way of commendation. We uſe to ſay, *compariſons are odious*, and ſubject to miſconſtruction; yet *Job* commends himſelf, at leaſt, by comparing himſelf with, if not preferring himſelf before the formoſt of his friends; *I am not inferiour to you.* Hence obſerve,

> *A man, in ſome caſes, may ſo ſtand upon his own honour, as not to yield or ſubmit to others at all.*

The Apoſtles counſel is, *In lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better then themſelves* (Phil. 2. 3.) and yet a time may come, when a man, with lowlineſs of mind enough, may judge himſelf better then another. When the matter lies between Saints and Saints (of ſuch the Apoſtle there ſpeaks) one Saint ſhould not lift up himſelf above another, they ſhould rather give honour one to another, and think others better then themſelves: *If any man hath whereinto boaſt, I much more* (ſaith *Paul*, Phil. 3. 4.) yet he calls himſelf *leſs then the leaſt of all Saints*; amongſt Saints, he cares not though he were accounted the leaſt of Saints; but when his Miniſtry and Apoſtleſhip was under-rated, he ſpeaks of himſelf at the higheſt rate, 2 *Cor.* 11. 5. *I ſuppoſe I was not a whit behind the very chiefeſt Apoſtles*, fully the language of *Job* here; *I am not inferiour to you*, no, not to the beſt of you. But were ſome of the Apoſtles greater and better then others? was there inferiority and ſuperiority amongſt them? No, Apoſtleſhip, as an office, is of equal honour in all Apoſtles; but even amongſt Apoſtles, ſome had more excellent gifts, and greater enlargements; God did communicate himſelf more to one then to another; one of thoſe ſtars differed from another ſtar in glory: Thus among Apoſtles, ſome one might be chief: thus *Paul was not behind* (which I take for a modeſt expreſſion, that he was *even with*, yea, that he, in ſome things, *went before*, or *outwent*) *the chiefeſt of the Apoſtles*. He indeed confeſſeth at *chap.* 12. of the ſame Epiſtle, *ver.* 11, 12. *I am become a fool in glorying*; as if he had ſaid, it is the guiſe and character of a fool, affectedly to commend himſelf, but (I have not affected it) *ye have compelled me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you* (that is, ye ought to have given teſtimony to my integrity, and to have maintained the honour of my Miniſtry) *for in nothing am I behind the very chiefeſt Apoſtles, though I be nothing*; though you, through envy, account me nothing; and though I, in humility, would account my ſelf nothing, yet (being now put to it) I muſt ſpeak it out, *I am not behind the very chiefeſt Apoſtles*: or, as ſome render from the letter of the Greek; *I want nothing, (not a hairs breadth) of their meaſure, who are Apoſtles above meaſure; I am as much an Apoſtle, as they who are more then much Apoſtles.* All this while, *Paul* was no *Braggadochio*, no vain *Thraſo*: He doth not contend perſonally with the Apoſtles for preheminence or primacy, but he checks thoſe who hoped to be excuſed in undervaluing him, becauſe they valued other Apoſtles above him, or pretended to have received Goſpel-myſteries from ſome other of the Apoſtles (whoſe great *confidents and familiars* they would be eſteemed) beyond all that *Paul* had ever yet taught. *Paul* (I ſay) never wrangled with any of the Apoſtles for the upper hand; he never ſaid to *Matthew*, *Thomas*, or *Andrew*, &c. *I am not behind you*; or, *I am better then thou*. But becauſe they made uſe of the parts and gifts of ſome of the Apoſtles, to ſlight his, he, who ſomewhere ſaith, *I am not worthy to be called an Apoſtle*; ſaith here, *I am not behind the greateſt, the chiefeſt of the Apoſtles.* Thus we may ſtand upon terms of credit with any who lay our perſons low, that they may diſparage our work, and lay that ſervice low to which God hath called us.

τῶν ὑπὲρ λίαν Ἀποστόλων. *Iis qui ſunt ſupra modum Apoſtoli.*

Solomon gives us an excellent obſervation (*Prov.* 25. 26.)

A

A righteous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt ſpring. Some interpret it thus, A righteous man falling into ſin, *before*, that is, in the company or preſence of the wicked, *is as a corrupt ſpring*, many begin to ſuſpect that his waters are not wholeſom, when they ſee ſuch corruption ſwimming at the top, and ſo refuſe to drink him any more, *ſc.* to accept his counſels or inſtructions. This is a uſeful explication; yet I rather give the ſence from the point in hand: *A righteous man falling*, that is, baſely ſubmitting, or creeping poorly to *a wicked man, is as a troubled fountain.* Many a righteous man is made to fall down before the wicked. *Abel* fell down before *Cain*; for he murdered him: and ſo have thouſands of righteous ſouls fallen before their bloody perſecutors; but for a righteous man actively to fall down, to crouch or ſtoop to wicked ones, either through fear or flattery, is an act unworthy a righteous man. A righteous man thus falling before the wicked, what is he? or to what ſhall we liken him? *Solomon* tells us, *he is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt ſpring.* A righteous man is a wholeſom fountain, a ſpring of pure water, many may refreſh themſelves at him; but he, by this his act, becomes a *troubled fountain*, he hath mudded the purity of his own ſoul, with worldly reſpects and carnal intereſts, elſe he had never bowed to that generation of golden Idols, and graven Images. Noble *Mordecai* would not fall before proud *Haman*: He choſe rather (if that muſt have been the iſſue of it) to fall down by his power, then to fall down unto his perſon. Giants are called *Nephalim*, from this word, *Fallers*, becauſe men, beholding their vaſt limbs, and dreadful ſtature (like the Army of *Iſrael* before great *Goliah*) fall before them for fear. There are Giants ſtill in every Land (though not in body, ſuch are very rare, yet in mind) they would be *Nephalim*, all muſt fall before and ſubmit unto them; they would be *Joſephs*, every mans ſheaf muſt make obeiſance unto theirs. *Paul* would never fall down to *falſe Apoſtles*, nay, he would not to a true *Apoſtle*, when he did not walk according to the truth; *he withſtood* Peter *to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed*, Gal. 2. 11, 14. Though Chriſtians ought, in lowlineſs, to ſubmit to one another; and in duty, to ſubmit to Magiſtracy, and the higher powers, yet they muſt not ſubmit to the pride or luſt of any how high ſoever. Thus to bow before wicked men, is ſomewhat like bowing to an Idol. *To adore them, is to diſhonour God; yea, to make them Gods.*

Heb. *Cum quo non ſunt hæc?*

Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?] As he had ballanced himſelf with his friends, ſo he thought any man might. Such a treaſure of knowledge as this, is no mans peculiar: We may gather up ſuch upon the common; we need not travel to the oracles of learning for it, he that knows any thing, knows what you ſay; he that is not (ſuch as you think me to be) *a wild aſſes colt*, a very fool, may fathom all your notions; they carry no ſuch depth, but that line enough may be had in any mans brain to reach their bottom. *Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?* Hence note,

First, *There are ſome common principles, and eaſie truths, which fall under every mans apprehenſion.*

Who knows not ſuch things as theſe? The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 6. 1.) ſpeaks of the *firſt principles of the doctrine of Chriſt.* The objects of knowledge are of various degrees, according to the degrees of capacity in the ſubject. (*Heb.* 5. 14.) we read of *ſtrong meat for men of full age, and milk for babes.* The youngeſt child feeds on milk. Who knows not ſuch things as theſe? Some principles in Religion are of ſo eaſie a digeſtion, that even babes in Chriſt may feed upon them, and ſuck them in. We ſay of thoſe commodities which are rich and high-prized, *they are not every mans money*; ſo we may ſay of thoſe truths which are dark and myſterious, *they are not for every underſtanding*: He that hath an underſtanding, may underſtand ſo much of the myſtery of Chriſt, as may light him ſafe to heaven, though ſome things are too high for thoſe who are higheſt, to underſtand fully, while they are here upon the earth.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?*

It is a ſhame not to be acquainted with common principles.

Every one knows theſe things; what? not underſtand that which the meaneſt may underſtand? We find the Apoſtle improving this argument, *Rom.* 2. 4. Where (having convinced the Gentiles in the former Chapter, for ſinning againſt the light of nature, and the benefits of creation) he proceeds to convince the Jews for ſinning againſt the light of Scripture, and the mercies of redemption. *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of the goodneſs and forbearance of God*, &c. *Not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Art thou a Jew, one that boaſteſt of ſo much knowledge, and doſt not thou know this common principle? doſt not thou know the meaning of the goodneſs and forbearance of God? every child in holy knowledge knows the voyce of mercy, that it beſpeaks our return to God, or *leads us to repentance.* The Apoſtle deals with the *Corinthians* upon the ſame ground (1 *Cor.* 11. 14.) about the wearing of long hair, *Doth not nature it ſelf teach you?* It is a ſhame for you to be ignorant of that which you may learn at the ſchool and univerſity of nature? nature teacheth, *that if a man have long hair, it is a ſhame unto him.* It is not only a ſin, but a diſhonour for a man, to do that, which his being a man tells him he ſhould not do. By a like inſinuation *Paul* labours to keep the *Epheſians* at furtheſt diſtance from groſs ſins; *for this ye know* (ſaith he) *that no whoremonger*, &c. *hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God and Chriſt.* This is a received truth; do you not know this? I know ye know it. Some truths can hardly be known by all our ſtudy, many are known without any ſtudy. *It is almoſt as hard to be ignorant of ſome things, as it is to know other things.* There will be a ſore reckoning with the world one day, becauſe they are not ſeen in the deep myſteries of Chriſt, having been often ſhewed them; but when it ſhall be found, that they are not ſeen in that, which they could not but ſee, except they had ſhut their eyes, this will render them altogether inexcuſable, and ſhut their mouths for ever. *The more eaſie any truth is, the harder will be our ſuffering, and the greater our ſin, if we attain not to the knowledge of it.*

Thirdly, *Job*'s friends carried it, as if their diſcourſe had been all riddle and myſtery; yet he tells them, *Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?* Hence note,

It is a vanity to pretend myſteriouſneſs about vulgar truths.

Some cover the Sun with clouds, and put diſguiſes upon the plaineſt doctrines. They dig deep for that which lies above ground; and in ſtead of enlightning what is dark, darken the cleareſt light. They ſpeak and write of things as new and never known, whenas all that hear or read them, may juſtly reprove them with that ancient proverb, *You tell us news*; or in the language of this Text, *who knows not ſuch things as theſe?*

Job having thus rebuked the pride of his friends, begins to check their ſcorn.

Verſe 4. **I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he heareth him; the juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn.**

I am as one mocked of his neighbour.] The word ſignifies ſcorning joyned with laughter, ſtrictly called deriſion. The letter of the Hebrew is, *I am the laughter* (the ſport or paſtime) *of my neighbour*; he ſpeaks partly in the firſt, and partly in the third perſon: He doth not ſay, *I am as one mocked of my neighbour*; that had caſt it too directly upon his friends; but, *I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour*, and ſo lets it light where it will. *Job*'s comforters had high thoughts of themſelves, and low thoughts of him. A man that is mocked, is under the greateſt contempt, and meaneſt eſtimation. *I am as one mocked*, &c. as if *Job* had ſaid, *In ſtead of comforting, informing, and ſupporting me, you have mocked me in my adverſity.*

Noluit Job *dicere prima perſona, ſocio meo, ſed ſocio ſuo in tertia, ut modeſtius loqueretur.* Merc.

Obſerve, *It is an addition to affliction, to be mocked in affliction.*

Mocking is one of the greateſt afflictions. Amongſt the ſufferings and cruel perſecutions that the Saints endured, the Apoſtle mentions this, *They had trial of cruel mockings*, (Heb. 11. 36.) *Who knows how deep ſharp words will enter, and what wounds they will make?* They not only wound the name, but the ſpirit; they ſtab to the heart. It was one great part of the ſufferings of Chriſt, he was mocked and uſed like a fool in a play; they put a robe on his back, a reed in his hand, and a crown upon his head; and when he hung on the croſs, finiſhing the work of our ſalvation, they (in higheſt ſcorn) *Bid him ſave himſelf.* The Apoſtle *Jude* aſſures us, that the Lord is coming to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly *of all their hard ſpeeches which they have ſpoken. Hard ſpeeches are as bad as hard blows; and amongſt all hard ſpeeches, mockings are the hardeſt. A man will eaſier receive a blow from his friend, then a ſcorn from his friend*: Scorning is fundamentally oppoſite to the fundamental laws of love. This is the ſecond ingredient which imbittered his ſufferings; *I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour.*

Ab amicis acceptæ contumeliæ aculeū habēt moleſtiſſimum.

Secondly, Note, *The nearer they are from whom we receive diſcourteſies, the nearer they go to our hearts.*

A wound from a hand afar off, is far off from our hearts. What? Thou my friend, Thou my familiar uſe me thus? The mock of a neighbour is cutting, almoſt killing. *The unkindneſs of a friend hath moſt of the enemy in it.* When Chriſt perceived his own Diſciples withdrawing, he was extreamly troubled at it. Many of the people were offended, and went back, and walked no more with him; and he complained not, he expected no better from them: But when he ſaw his Diſciples hang a little off, he expoſtulates, *Will ye alſo go away*? (John 6. 67.) What, you my Diſciples? As if he had ſaid, *That will be a croſs indeed, your departure will be a home-affliction; it is no wonder if others do it; but will ye do it? will ye go away too*? And becauſe the ſufferings of Chriſt, were to be the higheſt in all aggravating circumſtances, that they might anſwer all the aggravations of our ſins, therefore he was wounded (as the Prophet ſpeaks) in the houſe of his friends, betrayed by his own Diſciple, and by a Diſciple kiſſing him. *Betrayeſt thou the Son of man with a kiſs*? (Luke 22. 48.) Any treaſon is bad enough, but the treaſon of a Diſciple, and of a Diſciple kiſſing is worſt of all. But as it behoved Chriſt to fulfil all righteouſneſs, ſo to receive all unkindneſſes, and therefore this. Though (as I have noted already) *Job* was not a type of Chriſt, yet their ſufferings were very like: Chriſt was wounded by the lips, and *Job* by the tongue of a friend. I am as a man *mocked of his neighbour*,

Who calleth upon God, and he anſwereth him.

There is a difference among Expoſitors about the Antecedent of this *Who*: whether it ſhould be referr'd to *Job*, or to the neighbour about whom *Job* ſpeaks. *I am as a man mocked of his neighbour*; *who*, which neighbour calls upon God, and he anſwers him. So ſome underſtand it, and then the words are a deſcription of *Job*'s neighbour, *I am as a man that is mocked of his neighbour*; And what kind of neighbour is he? He is one that uſeth to call upon, and to be heard of God; he is a man acquainted with God in prayer. The Hebrew word, which we tranſlate to *call* upon God, notes a ſort of men, whoſe chief buſineſs, or trade, was to call upon, or invocate the Name of God (*Pſal.* 99. 6.) Moſes *and* Aaron *among his Prieſts, and* Samuel *among them that call upon his Name*; *they called upon the Lord, and he anſwered them*: implying, that it was their ſpecial calling to call upon God. So ſaith *Job*, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour*; which neighbour is one that calls upon God; that's his profeſſion, or his work; and 'tis, as a painful, ſo a moſt noble work. Prophets and Prieſts were profeſſed callers upon God. That interpretation of the word gives the ſence thus, *I am derided by neighbours, who yet are ſuch as would be loth that God ſhould deride them: they deride me, whoſe duty it is to pray for me, and to pray with me; you are men of prayer, men that call upon God, and you have the favour to be heard of God; God is facile and favourable unto you, but ye are hard and ſowre to me, you ſhew me no favour: how uncomely a thing is this, that you, who wait to be heard of God, ſhould not hear me? or that you, who are heard of God, ſhould deride me*? This Expoſition, as it may ſtand with the letter of the Text, ſo it may teach us this leſſon:

קרא *Dicitur cui ex officio incumbit invocare Deū.* Bold.

Siccine ludus & fabula ero etiam illis, qui in Dei famulatu ſocii mei ſunt ejuſdemque conſortes miniſterii? Bold.

Ego riſui ſum ſocio meo, qui ſc. *ſocius, quoties deum inclamat eum exaudit*: q. d. *deum in omnibus facilē habent.*

They who have had experience of Gods tenderneſs to help them, and hear their prayers, ſhould be very tender to others, when they call to them, and ſeek their help?

What? Should I be mocked of a neighbour that uſeth to call upon God? ſuch carriage looks like theirs who call not upon God. You that have had anſwers from God in prayer, and know what it is to be anſwered, think what it is for you but to deny a friend, eſpecially to mock a friend, when he calls upon you in the day of his calamity. Will you take it well if God deny you, or ſend a mock in ſtead of an anſwer to your prayer? *You that have any ſuit to God, be not hard, much leſs inexorable, when diſtreſſed friends ſue unto you.*

But the Antecedent ſeems rather to be *Job* himſelf. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour*; who, that is, *which man thus mocked, doth yet call upon God, and he anſwers him*: They mock him, but God doth not mock him. Or thus, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour*; who thereupon takes an advantage to call upon God, to go to God, when he cannot be entertained, or is rejected by men, *and he hears him.* The vulgar tranſlation reacheth this ſence very clearly, *He who is derided of his neighbour as I am, will call upon God, and God will hear him.*

There is a difference in the latter clauſe, *And he anſwereth him*; we put it in the Preſent tenſe, *He anſwereth him*; others in the Preterperfect tenſe, *He hath anſwered him*; ſome in the Future, *He will anſwer him*: He calleth upon God, that he may anſwer him, or to be anſwered by him: So *Abraham* ſpeaks (*Gen.* 23. 8.) *Intreat for me to* Ephron, *that he may give me the cave of* Machpelah: Thus here, *He calls upon God, and he anſwereth him*; that is, he calleth upon God that he may anſwer him; he hopeth to ſpeed well in Heaven with his petition, though he ſpeed ill on earth.

Qui deridetur ab amico, ſicut ego, invocabit deum & exaudiet eum. Vulg.

Et reſpondet illi i,e. *ut exaudiatur ab eo, emollietur interpretatio ſi & ſumatur pro* ut. *Antehac cū ad deū clamarem, me exaudire ſolebat, ſed & nunc eum idem facturum non deſpero, me nunc qui talis ſum vos mei ſocii ridetis?* Merc.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *It is the priviledge of the Saints, when men fail and reject them, to make God their refuge, and their recourſe to Heaven.*

They who have intereſt in God, know how to make this improvement of it: If the world caſt out the Saints, God will take them in: His ſtile is, *The helper of the friendleſs.* And *David*'s experience was, *When my father and my mother forſake me, the Lord taketh me up*, (*Pſal.* 27. 10.) that is, *Though my father and mother*, who are neareſt to me, ſhould be ſo unnatural, as to reſtrain their bowels, and forſake me; or though they ſhould be reſtrained from doing me thoſe offices which Nature dictates, yet the Lord takes me up, *ſc.* in the everlaſting arms of mercy: His love never changes, nor can any thing ſtop the motions of his love. His love is hotteſt to us, when the love of man waxeth cold. The departures of friends bring him nearer to us; and where creature comforts end, the comforts of God begin. *They are in a ſad condition, who being caſt off by men, have not a God to call upon, and go unto.* Only they who can have acceſs to God, need not fear the receſſes of men.

Ubi deeſt auxilium humanum, ibi maximè adeſt auxilium divinū Aquin. *in loc.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That the repulſes which we meet with in the world, ſhould drive us nearer to God.*

I (ſaith *Job*) *am mocked of my neighbour*; What courſe ſhall I take? Shall I lye down and vex? Shall I fret my ſelf, and pine away? I know a better way then that: I will call upon God, I will try what's to be had in Heaven, now that the earth hath nothing for me; men have not an ear for me, but ſure enough God hath not only an ear to hear, but a heart to pity, and a hand to work deliverance. The holy Prophet reſolves, *It is good for me to draw nigh to God*, (*Pſal.* 73. 28.) And when he ſaith, *'tis good*, his meaning is, *'tis beſt.* This poſitive is ſuperlative. It is more then good for us to draw nigh to God at all times; it is beſt for us to do ſo; and it is at our utmoſt peril not to do ſo; *For lo*, (ſaith the *Pſalm*, ver. 27.) *they that are far from thee ſhall periſh; thou ſhalt deſtroy them that go a whoring from thee.* It is dangerous to be far from God; but it is more dangerous to go far from him. Every man is far off by nature; and wicked men go further off: The former ſhall periſh; the latter ſhall be deſtroyed: He that fares beſt in his withdrawings from God, fares bad enough: Therefore it is beſt for us to draw nigh unto God. He is the beſt friend at all times, and the only friend at ſome times. And may we not ſay, that God ſuffers and orders evil times, and the withdrawings of the creature for that very end, that we might draw nearer unto him? doth he not give up the world to a ſpirit of reviling and mocking, that he may ſtir up in his people a ſpirit of praying? This is a gracious deſign of God, and we ſhould interpret the neglects, the contempts and ſcorns of the world, to be as the Voice of God ſaying to us, *Come to me, and ſee whether you ſhall not have* *better uſage*; ſee whether I will ſcorn you; you have loved the world too much, you have too much pleaſed your ſelves with the ſmiles and good looks of men; you have been taken and overtaken with the things of this life, come to me, and take (you cannot overtake) the things of eternal life. The leaſt things of Heaven are more noble then the greateſt things on earth. *Shall we not then prize the great things of Heaven much, when we can hardly enjoy the leaſt things of the earth?* Shall we not, when we are mocked of our neighbours, call upon God, we having this aſſurance, that he will not mock, but anſwer us?

And he anſwereth him.] The anſwer which God makes to ſuch as call upon him, is either to the outward, or to the inward man: he anſwers the inward man, or the ſpirit of man, by a hint from his Spirit. Satisfaction to our ſpirits, is an anſwer from the Spirit. When the Lord (having ſaid to the ſoul, *I am thy ſalvation*) ſaith alſo, *I am thine honour, I am thy credit, I am thy liberty, I am thy riches, I am thy friend*; the ſoul is more abundantly filled then with riches, credit, liberty, friends, or honour. Again, anſwer comes to the outward man, Providence ſpeaks to ſome as the Spirit doth to others. We having called upon God, ſee the creature at work towards a redreſs of our evils, and a ſupply of our preſent wants. Under the Law God anſwered many wayes: He anſwered by *Urim and by Thummim, by Prophets and by dreams, by viſions and revelations.* And though we have not ſuch anſwers now, yet we have as ſure anſwers. God never receives any prayer which doth not receive an anſwer. We may call upon men, and not be anſwered; men may go to idols, to lying vanities, and not be anſwered; but if we go to God, we ſhall.

> Hence obſerve, *Prayer and ſeeking unto God are not in vain, or fruitleſs.*

The Lord will anſwer. Sometimes he anſwers before we call; and he gives before we ask; and he promiſeth, if we ask he will give; and anſwer if we call. Chriſt raiſeth up our confidence, that God will hear us, becauſe men do. (*Math.* 7. 9, 10.) *What man* (ſaith he) *is there of you, whom if his ſon ask bread, will he give him a ſtone? or if he ask a fiſh, will he give him a ſerpent?* Chriſt argues from that readineſs which is in men (eſpecially in thoſe who are in relation to us) to give, that God will give much more. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall your Father, which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him?* If a father will anſwer when a ſon asks him, much more will God: Yea though when a ſon asks, a father will not anſwer; though when a ſon asks, a father mocks, and in ſtead of bread gives him a ſtone; in ſtead of fiſh a ſerpent; though in ſtead of granting, he croſs his ſons petition; yet be confident your Father in Heaven will anſwer; he will not mock; he will not give ſtones for bread, nor a ſerpent for fiſh; he loves to be giving, and to be giving good gifts is his delight.

Further, From theſe words, taken together, we may obſerve,

> That, *As it is ſinful, ſo it is extreamly dangerous to mock thoſe who have the ear of God, or acceptance with God in prayer.*

Will you uſe him ill that can go and tell God how you have uſed him, and ſhall be ſure to be heard? It is uncomely to mock an enemy, it is more for one friend to mock another; it is yet worſe to mock a friend in his affliction; but it is worſt of all to mock any man living that is praying in faith, and humbling himſelf before God. Such the Pſalmiſt brands, *Ye have ſhamed the counſel of the poor, becauſe God is his refuge,* (*Pſal.* 14. 6.) That is, ye have derided godly men, when ye have heard them pray in their affliction. The great Wits and Politicians of the world ſmile at the ſimplicity of thoſe, who make ſuch a buſineſs of prayer in times of diſtreſs: who, when they hear of any troubles ariſing, preſently give this counſel, Come, let us go pray, and ſeek God. This counſel of the poor *they ſhame*, and think them ſilly fellows who give it. They had rather lay their heads together a plotting, then their hearts together a praying. And if ſuch joyn in counſel to call for prayers in times of trouble, it is not out of an opinion, much leſs out of faith that it will do any good, or prevail any thing, but only to pleaſe the people, or comply with a party: for in truth they ſhame thoſe counſels of the poor, as the pooreſt counſels. Some are aſhamed of prayers; and others will put them to ſhame who pray. The beſt I can do for ſuch as deride prayer, or thoſe who pray, is to pray for them, as Chriſt for his crucifiers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Do you know what you do, when you mock a man that can pray? I believe you do not, therefore I will tell you: you mock that Spirit by which he prayes; you provoke God to whom he prayes; you ſtir up the whole Church againſt you, for whom he prayes; you ſet the Chariots and Horſemen of *Iſrael* againſt you, you turn Armies againſt you; that is, you turn the prayers of all the people of God againſt you, when you turn againſt prayer. Do you know what it is to provoke ſuch who can complain to God of your provocations? You were better have tales told of you to the greateſt enemy you have in the world, then to have tales told of you unto God, by thoſe, whom he is pleaſed to number among his friends.

Job having thus ſet forth how he had been aſſaulted by men, and how he had retreated to God; now layes down a general propoſition, as a corrollary, or concluſion, drawn from all, *The juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn.*

The juſt upright man.] *Job* ſpeaks ſtill in the third perſon, he doth not ſay, *I who am a juſt upright man, am derided,* he ſpeaks modeſtly as *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. *I knew a man.* So here, *The juſt upright man.*

צדיק תמים *Juſtus, perfectè juſtus, i.e. juſtiſſimus. Vel integritatis perfectio. Vox Thamim adverbialiter poteſt ſumi.*

Both words are near a kin in ſignification, the one, at moſt, doth but explain and heighten the other. *The juſt upright man, is the man juſtly upright*, or *uprightly juſt.* The latter word is plural in the Original, (as *Gen.* 6. 9.) noting a man that acts in the exactneſs of uprightneſs, even all manner of uprightneſſes; or a man ſo upright, that he hath the uprightneſs of many men in him; for as we ſay of ſome men, who are egregiouſly diſhoneſt, that when diſhoneſt men are ſcarce, they may go for twain; ſo ſome men are ſo exactly upright, that where upright men are ſcarce (as they are every where) they may be reckoned for two, or many.

But how is this juſt man, who hath the uprightneſs of many men in him, entertained in the world? do not all reverence and adore him? The next words ſhew us his uſage, *The juſt upright man*

Is laughed to ſcorn.] He was mockt before; now he is *laughed to ſcorn.* The Original is the ſame, though the ſence be extended; he is not only laughed at, but he is a laughter. *The perfect, juſt, is a mockage,* ſo Mr. *Broughton*, the abſtract is put for the concrete. A man that is through in juſtice, through in integrity and purity, this man is made a laughing ſtock, a jeſt, a ſport, he is loaded with diſgrace, while ſome are unburdening themſelves of ſorrow. They reſolve to laugh and be fat, to be merry and ſing care away, they want a theme, a ſubject; none ſo fit as *the juſt upright man: Come let's paſs upon him:* Thus *He is laughed to ſcorn.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *It is no great wonder to ſee that I am mocked of my neighbour, for this is according to the wont and old cuſtom of the world, the juſt upright man meets with ſuch dealing every where; it is no new thing which I ſuffer, mine is but a common lot with the beſt of the Saints: If I am laughed to ſcorn, ſo have my betters been.*

שחוק *Irriſio juſtus perfectus.* Heb. *Hic te ludos facit.* Plaut.

> Hence note, Firſt, *That holineſs is under diſgrace among unholy men.*

It is not alwayes a diſparagement to be laughed at; the beſt may be laughed at; *The juſt upright man is ſo. Jeremiah* was more then ſo, he was a Prophet of the Lord, yet he ſaith, *I was a deriſion to all my people, and their ſong all the day,* Lam. 3. 14. He was a deriſion, and a deriſion to all his people. Some read thus, *I, together with all my people, am a deriſion*; as noting, that he and all that adhered to him, or owned him, were derided. So ſpeaks the Prophet *Iſaiah* typically of Chriſt, *Chap.* 8. 18. *Behold I, and the children which thou haſt given me, are for ſigns and for wonders in Iſrael.* Our Tranſlation makes all his people deriders of him: And then *all* doth not include every individual, but only ſhews the great and general Apoſtacy of that people, from all reſpect to this Prophet, or to his miniſtry. How often doth holy *David*, that heavenly Singer, complain of thoſe who made helliſh ſongs upon him? And *Job* complains of this more then once, read *Chap.* 12. 2, 6. *Chap.* 21. 3, &c. *Paul* was one of the ableſt ſpeakers, in the myſteries of the Goſpel, that ever lived: yet when he came to *Athens* (Acts 17.) they ſay, *What will this babler ſay? Solomon* gives us a Proverb to this point (*Prov.* 14.2.) *He that walketh in his uprightneſs, feareth the Lord; but he that is perverſe in his wayes, deſpiſeth him.* It is a truth, if we underſtand the antecedent *to him,* to be the *Lord,* and ſo make the oppoſition thus, *He that walketh in his uprightneſs, feareth the Lord; but he that is perverſe in his wayes, deſpiſeth him*; that is, *deſpiſeth the Lord*. But the meaning of the Proverb is this, *A man walking in his uprightneſs feareth God, but a perverſe man will deſpiſe him that walketh in his uprightneſs. You are ſo precise, you go ſo gingerly, as if you were paſſing a narrow bridge over a deep precipice; you will not turn aſide, or ſtep awry, not you:* thus he is deſpiſed. The Apoſtle reports us a great example of this unholy ſcorn, (*Gal.* 4. 9.) *He that was born after the fleſh, did perſecute him that was born after the ſpirit. Iſhmael* perſecuted *Iſaac. Moſes* tells us the manner how, and the weapon wherewith; *Iſhmael* did not lift up his hand againſt *Iſaac,* (as *Cain* did againſt *Abel*) but his tongue: He mocked him, (*Gen.* 21. 9.) Thoſe greateſt differences in *Divine Heraldry,* of being *born after the fleſh, and after the ſpirit,* ſhew where the quarrel lay; it was the ſpiritualneſs of *Iſaac,* which rendred him ſo obnoxious to his carnal brother *Iſhmael. Iſaac* was born after the ſpirit, and doubtleſs he ſhewed ſome fruits of the Spirit, which *Iſhmael* did not reliſh, and therefore mocked him. *Even ſo it is now* (ſaith the Apoſtle there) and we may now ſay, *Even ſo it is now:* The reaſon of it is that of the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 2. 14.) *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him.* A rational man laughs at, and ſcorns a fooliſh thing: Now the natural man hath reaſon enough (he may be a man of the moſt ſublimated reaſon) but having no grace he underſtands not the things of the Spirit of God, therefore *they are fooliſhneſs unto him*: Thoſe things which are fulleſt of Divine wiſdom, are counted moſt fooliſh by him that underſtands them not. As, they are fools who cannot underſtand; ſo ſome wiſe men count many things fooliſh which yet are above their underſtanding. No marvail then, if they uſe them as fooliſh things, if they mock and ſcorn them: No marvail, if they deride thoſe who trouble themſelves with ſuch baubles and toyes as they conceive the things of God to be: No marvail, if they count them a company of hair-brain fellows, who are moſt conſcientious about them. Hence it is that Goſpel ſimplicity is mockt as ſimpleneſs; punctual obedience, as ſcrupulouſneſs; ſorrow for ſin, as dumpiſhneſs; zeal, as madneſs; contempt of the world, as ignorance of the worth of it; ſelf-denial, as a wronging of our ſelves. It is recorded in the life of *Nero,* that the Chriſtians were deſpiſed, and mockt, as a ſect of ſilly fools, by the wiſe Citizens, and grave Senators of *Rome,* becauſe they ſeemed to uſe a ſtrange kind of ſuperſtition, or a new Religion, and would be wiſer in their generation then the reſt of the world. Reproach is one of Satans choice engines to batter *Sion* with; he hath ſcarce ſuch another ſhaft in all his quiver to wound Religion at the heart with. This Lion in the way frights many from entring into, or appearing in the wayes of God. It cauſeth others to apoſtatize, and forſake the wayes of God, after they have entred into, and for a time appeared in them. As *Zedekiah* durſt not obey the word of the Lord, in rendring himſelf to the *Babylonians*; ſo many are afraid to obey the word of the Lord, in rendring themſelves up to *Sion,* leſt ſome finding them there ſhould mock them, *Jer.* 38. 39.

Chriſtiani ab Ethnicis deriſi ſunt, qui videbantur genus hominũ ſuperſtitionis novæ & maleficæ. Suet. in vita Neron.

Secondly, Obſerve, *As holineſs in any degree is ſubject unto ſcorn, ſo they who are moſt holy meet with moſt ſcorn.*

The juſt upright man, who would be holy to the height, ſhall have ſcorn to the height. If a man ſerve God (as *David* danced before the Ark) with *all his might,* a *Michals* wit will mock and teem with a prophane jeſt, though ſhe be curſed with barrenneſs all her life after. That child of the fleſh made her fleſh childleſs unto the day of her death, 2 *Sam.* 6. 23. If a man do (as Chriſt expects) ſome ſingular things, he may quickly be laughed at for ſingularity. *Paul,* in the higheſt actings of his faith, was accounted mad, 2 *Cor.* 5. 13. It is poſſible to move in the ordinary courſe and common round of Religion, and to have fair quarter, yea to have reſpect, and be accounted wiſe in the world; but he that will be *a juſt upright man,* that is, he that ſticks at ſmall matters, and acts the greateſt; he that will not go an hairs breadth from the mind of Chriſt, and will do his whole mind; he that will walk preciſely, accurately, and, as we ſay, *in print,* this man may ſoon have the honour to be called, a fool *in print*; at beſt he ſhall be laughed at, let him look for it. All holineſs may come under contempt; but the more holy you are, the more ſubject you are unto contempt: never think to get credit in the world by your holineſs: It is enough that holineſs hath credit with God and good men. The Apoſtle aſſures us (*Heb.* 11.) That thoſe Worthies of the Jewiſh Church (whoſe names ſparkle like bright ſtars in the firmament of that chapter) *obtained a good report, through faith,* (ver. 2.) But of whom, or with whom? Did the world think the better of them, or well of them, becauſe of thoſe high and heroical actings of their faith? No, *verſ.* 36. tells us, they were both ſcourged, and mockt by the world, for all their faith. Theſe gallant men in grace, had a good report with none but gracious men, and the God of grace. If we will now live after their rate by faith, and walk in the uppermoſt regions of Religion, we muſt expect a good report there only, where they found it. *Thoſe works of faith, which are moſt above reaſon, ſeem to be without reaſon*; and that which is moſt pleaſing unto God, ſeems to have not ſo much as any thing of a man in the eyes of many men: you venture not only liberty, eſtate, and life, but your very diſcretion, if you walk in the cleaneſt paths of wiſdom. *Few have holy wiſdom enough to be accounted fools, or ſeriouſneſs enough in the things of God to be laughed at, eſpecially to be laughed to ſcorn.* No man knows where his worldly loſſes will end, when once he hath gained Chriſt. It is an experienced truth, which is lent us by a *Noble Patriot* yet living; *That man will but deceive himſelf, who hopes to ſave any thing by his Religion but his ſoul. The juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn; and the more juſt he is, the more he is laughed at.*

VERS. 5, 6.

He that is ready to ſlip with his feet, is as a lamp deſpiſed in the thought of him that is at eaſe.

The tabernacles of robbers proſper, and they that provoke God are ſecure, into whoſe hand God bringeth abundantly.

IN the former context, which contained the preface to this enſuing diſcourſe, *Job* taxeth the pride and ſelf-conceitedneſs, the ſcorn and contemptuouſneſs of his friends. They thought themſelves *the chief of men, and mocked him, as if he had not been ſo much as a man, or not to be numbred among men.*

Now he enters upon the Argument it ſelf: And in theſe two verſes layes down two Poſitions in direct oppoſition to what *Zophar* had aſſerted. He at the ſeventeenth verſe of the eleventh Chapter, deſcribes the ſtate of a godly man, exceeding the light of the noon-day, and of the morning: *Thine age ſhall be clearer then the noon-day, and thou ſhalt be as the morning,* &c. And at the twentieth verſe he gives ungodly men their doom: *The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail; and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.* Both theſe concluſions are contradicted by *Job*; the former in the fifth verſe, and the latter in the ſixth. In the fifth, *He that is ready to ſlip with his feet, is as a lamp deſpiſed:* As if he had ſaid, *Thou telleſt me, that a godly man ſhall be brighter then the Sun at noon; that his brightneſs ſhall increaſe like the Morning-ſun, more and more unto the perfect day; whereas, alas, I ſee all the light which many a godly man hath, no bigger then a candle, or lamp, and that not like the light of a great candle neither, or of a goodly beautiful lamp, but like the light of ſome poor candle, or of the meaneſt lamp. There is a great difference between a lamp and the Sun. What is the light of the moſt ſhining lamp, to the light of the Sun? but the difference is greater between the Sun and a baſe blinking lamp. I ſee their light no clearer, then that of a deſpiſed lamp, whoſe light thou talkeſt up to the Sun at noon for clearneſs. The holieſt men, if afflicted, do but ſmother in ſtead of ſhining.* Again, *Thou telleſt me, that the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and that their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt; but I have often ſeen, and can give* *thee proof of it, the eyes of ſuch are bleſt, and refreſht with the deſire of their eyes; they ſee what they moſt deſire, proſperity in their dwellings. The tabernacles of robbers proſper, and they that provoke God are ſecure, into whoſe hand God bringeth abundantly.* Thus the oppoſition ſtands in theſe two verſes, as they are an anſwer to what *Zophar* had promiſed as the portion of the righteous, and threatned as the lot of wicked men.

Frequens eſt in Scriptura uſus vocis נכון *pro eo quod eſt diſpoſitus, deſtinatus.*

He that is ready.] That is, he that is very near ſlipping. The Hebrew (*Nachon*) ſignifies to be prepared or diſpoſed, yea to be deſtinated to ſuch a purpoſe, it ſignifies alſo to be *fixed* and ſetled (*Pſal.* 108.) *O God, my heart is fixed*, or, *my heart is ready*. He that is ready to ſlip, is, as it were, fixed to ſlip, he is ſet in a ſtate wherein he cannot ſtay. All men in the world are in an unſetled eſtate, in a ſlippery condition, but ſome are in a more ſlippery condition then others; They are (as we ſay) next door to deſtruction, within a ſtep of danger, ready to tumble and fall from the pinacle of their proſperity. *There are preparations for ruine as well as for riſing. He that is ready*

מער *Nutavit. Nutatio pedum denotat ruinam, calamitatē, caſū adverſum, & firmitas pedū conſtantem rerum ſecundarū ſtatū.*

To ſlip with his feet.] There is a twofold ſlipping with the feet ſpoken of in Scripture.

Firſt, There is a ſlipping into ſin; of that *David* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 73. 2. *As for me, my feet were almoſt gone, my ſteps had well nigh ſlipt, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked*; that is, I had almoſt ſinned, I was tempted to hard thoughts of God and of his wayes, as he explains himſelf at the 13th verſe of that Pſalm, ſhewing what the ſlip was, *Then ſaid I, verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency*; This was the thing he was ready to fall into, to look upon all his labour, as loſt labour, as labour in vain, which he had beſtowed in attendance upon the duties of holineſs and repentance.

Secondly, *Slipping with the feet*, is to fall into affliction. When we decay and decline in honour, credit, riches, and poſſeſſions, we may be ſaid to have got a ſlip. 'Tis a proverbial ſpeech, and we find it frequent in Scripture; *his foot ſhall ſlip*, that is, he ſhall down, his ſtate ſhall change. *Moſes* deſcribes the Lord thus ſpeaking of his enemies, (*Deut.* 32. 35.) *To me belongeth vengeance and recompence*, what then? *Their foot ſhall ſlide in due time.* Theſe men ſuppoſed themſelves ſetled upon a rock, that they were ſo eſtabliſhed that nothing could remove them; but in due time they ſhall find that they ſtood upon ice, or glaſs, their foot ſhall ſlide, they ſhall fall from their heights and ſeeming holds *in due time.* So (*Pſal.* 94. 18.) *When I ſaid, my foot ſlippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up*, that is, when I gave my ſelf for a loſt man in the world, then the Lord ſupported me, (*Jer.* 13. 16.) *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains. Dark mountains*, are mountains of ſorrow and trouble: to ſtumble upon the dark mountains, is to be ruined among our troubles. To ſtumble, ſlip, fall, run all into the ſame ſenſe. In purſuance of which, the ſtate of wicked men is called a ſlippery ſtate, and the place upon which they ſtand, *a ſlippery place*, Pſal. 73. 18. *David* being much troubled at the proſperity of wicked men, and ſo troubled that his ſteps had well nigh ſlipt, ſtayed, or recovered himſelf, by remembring that his enemies did not ſtand faſt. *I went into the Sanctuary of God, and there I found that thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places:* and when he found that their eſtate was ſlippery, that they ſhould ſhortly fall, then he kept his ground and ſtood upright. Who can envy or be grieved to ſee a man in an eſtate great and proſperous, wherein yet there is no continuance, or from which he muſt ſhortly fall, and in the fall bruiſe and hurt himſelf more, then he did comfort himſelf in his ſtanding? all the things of this life, eſpecially to wicked men, are ſet in ſlippery places. The world it ſelf is ſlippery, and ſo is all that's in it. The world may be compared to that ſea of glaſs, (*Rev.* 4. 6.) It is a ſea for the uncertain motions, and tempeſtuouſneſs of it; and it is like a ſea of glaſs for the ſlipperineſs of it. Glaſs you know yields no good footing, neither doth the world to any that would ſtay themſelves upon it. And as the ſliding of our feet ſpeaks the change; ſo the firmneſs of our feet, the eſtabliſhment of our eſtate, *Pſal.* 121. 3. *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved*; a man cannot go without moving of his feet; and a man cannot ſtand whoſe feet are moved. The foot by a *Synechdoche* is put for the whole body, and the body for the whole outward eſtate: ſo that, *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved*, is, he will not ſuffer thee, or thine, to be moved or violently caſt down. The power of thine oppoſers ſhall not prevail over thee, for the power of God ſuſtains thee. *He will not ſuffer*, &c. Many are ſtriking at thy heels, but they cannot ſtrike them up, while God holds thee up. If the will of thine enemies might ſtand, thou ſhouldeſt quickly fall: But God *will not ſuffer*, &c.

Hence Obſerve, *That the beſt earthly eſtate in it ſelf, is a tottering eſtate.*

An earthly eſtate is ſo, whoſoever is the maſter of it, unleſs God will be the eſtabliſher of it. This text ſpeaks of the afflictions of the godly; their outward eſtate is full of uncertainties, their feet (treading earth) are ſubject to ſlide. *David* once thought himſelf ſo ſetled, that he ſhould never fall, *In my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved: Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong*, Pſal. 30. 6. But he quickly felt his feet ſliding, and his mountain falling. Worldly men phancy and project to themſelves an everlaſtingneſs in worldly things, *Pſal.* 49. 11. *Babylon* boaſts (*Revel.* 18. 7.) *I ſit a Queen*; ſhe doth not ſay, *I am*, but, *I ſit a Queen*; as if ſhe had ſaid, I am not only in a high place, but in a ſure place, I have a warm and a firm ſeat, I am well ſetled. *I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow:* I feel no ſorrow, neither do I fear any, I ſhall have no changes. Preſumption makes the ſoul believe it foreſees, and therefore propheſies as great things as faith can. The Prophet *Zechary* (chap. 1. 11.) hath Chriſt repreſented in a viſion, ſending out the Angels, thoſe heavenly ſcouts or intelligencers, to bring him in a report, how things went in the world, *Theſe are they* (verſ. 10.) *whom the Lord hath ſent to walk to and fro through the earth*; and what is the report they bring? *Behold all the earth ſitteth ſtill, and is at reſt.* The earth of wicked men, did not only, as they thought, ſtand faſt, but had ſet themſelves down ſoft and ſure, they thought themſelves ſitting upon down pillows for eaſe and ſoftneſs, and upon rocks of Adamant for ſureneſs and unmoveableneſs; they ſate ſtill and were at reſt, yea doubtleſs they ſaid in their hearts, who ſhall raiſe us up? Both the poſture and the confidence of literal *Babylon* was like that of myſtical *Babylon*; yet as old literal *Babylon* (though ſhe ſate ſtill and cloſe in her ſeat, yet ſlid and fell at laſt) ſo alſo ſhall myſtical *Babylon.* She that ſaid, *I ſhall ſee no ſorrow, ſhall ſee nothing but ſorrow.* Now if the feet of that great temporal monarchy did ſlide, and the feet of this ſpiritual monarchy muſt, both which have had as ſure footing as the world with all its wit and ſtrength, policy and power, were, or are able to make, what then may the weaker and more uncompacted parts of the world expect? There is no firm ſtanding upon that which is unfirm; if our foundation be unſure, our footing cannot be ſure: moveable creatures will never put us into an unmoveable condition. The ſoul ſtandeth faſt in Chriſt alone; when we once fix upon him, we are fixed; our feet may ſlip or ſlide, I confeſs, though we are in him, but they ſhall not ſlip or ſlide from him at all for ever. *He that is ready to ſlip with his feet.*

Hic verſiculus obſcurus eſt. Merc. *Vox* לפיד *propriè tædam vel facem ſignificat, non illud vaſculum in quo ignis oleo nutritur. Abē Ezra in* לפיד *Lamech ſervile facit ut* פיד *ſit calamitas idem quod* אוד *infortunium, ut hoc de ſe dicat per tertiam perſonam; ſum ut qui eſt deſpectus in mente felicis hominis ob afflictionem & calamitatem.*

Is as a lamp deſpiſed.] The words of this text are ſomewhat dark, and there are not a few who make the *lamp* the darkeſt word in it. One of the Rabbins reades very differently. The word which ſignifies a *lamp*, he divideth into two words. *Lamech* prefixed is ſervile (as Grammarians ſpeak) noting as much as *for*, or *becauſe of*; and *Pid*, deſtruction, calamity, or ſorrow: So it is taken, chap. 31. 29. *If I have rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me:* and then the ſenſe is, as if *Job* in the third perſon had ſpoken thus, *I am as a man deſpiſed in the thoughts of him that is in proſperity, becauſe of my afflictions.* But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this tranſlation of the word, which yields us this ſence, though it ſtand entire under the notion of a torch or link, which are carried in the ſtreets to give light, or (as we render) of a lamp, which is a veſſel, filled with oyl, and fitted with wiek, giving light in the houſe. Every one knows what a lamp is; but what is a deſpiſed lamp? a deſpiſed lamp is a lamp whoſe frame is old, worn, batter'd & out of faſhion, or whoſe oyl is conſumed. A lamp or a torch is very deſirable in a dark night, but when

'tis

Tæda deſpecta eſt tæda conſumpta quæ jam uſui eſſe non poſſit ad prælucendũ. Dum prælucebat in pretio erat, ſed conſumpta contemnitur. Merc.

Lampas contempta propriè pro re viliſſima & inutili habita proverbialis eſt locutio, quo virum nullius pretii ſignificant Hebræi. Bold.

'tis day, or when the torch is burnt down to the laſt inch, and the lamps oyl is ſpent to the laſt drop, then both are deſpiſed, who cares for either? So that, for a man to be looked upon *as a deſpiſed lamp*, is a proverbial ſpeech, importing, that he is of no more value then a thing of naught.

A deſpiſed lamp is of the ſame ſignification with a ſmoaking firebrand. When the people of *Iſrael* were in a great fear, at the invaſion of *Rezin* and *Remaliah*'s ſon, and the heart of *Ahaz* the King, moved as theirs, like the trees of the forreſt ſhaken with the wind, the Lord bids the Prophet, *ſay unto him, Take heed, and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint-hearted:* What? not fear when ſuch mighty enemies are coming againſt us: No ſaith he, *fear not, for the two tails of thoſe ſmoaking fire-brands*, (Iſa. 7.4.) *Ahaz* and the Iſraelites lookt upon them, as the flame of a devouring fire that would burn and conſume all: no, ſaith God, they are but as *ſmoaking fire-brands*, they are but brands ends, they have almoſt conſumed themſelves, they are ſmoaking rather then burning, they will ſoon go out. A *ſmoaking brand* is a proverb for that which is almoſt ſpent, whoſe violence you need not fear, it can do no great hurt, nor can it ſtand you in any ſtead. As *ſmoaking flax* in the Goſpel (*Matth.* 12.20.) notes the loweſt degree of grace, which Chriſt will not quench nor put out; ſo a *ſmoaking fire-brand* notes the leaſt degree of hurtful power remaining, or malice vexed out; and a ſmothering lamp, the leaſt degree of uſeful remaining power, or comforts wearied out. On the other ſide, a bright burning lamp, or the lighting of a candle, expreſſeth the beginnings of honour and excellency, or our continuance in the enjoyment of them, (*Pſal.* 18.28.) *Thou wilt light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darkneſs.* See what an office holy faith puts God unto; *David* believed that God would come and light his candle; what candle? his meaning is that the Lord would renew his eſtate, and chaſe away the darkneſs which lay upon it. *Thou wilt light my candle*; thou wilt cauſe me to ſhine clearly and fairly in the world, though I have been a while as a candle extinguiſht, or burnt out. The Prophet ſets the hoped and prayed for reſtauration of *Sion* under a like metaphor and alluſion (*Iſa.* 62.1.) *For Sions ſake I will not hold my peace, and for Jeruſalems ſake I will not reſt, until the righteouſneſs thereof go forth as brightneſs, and the ſalvation thereof as a lamp that burneth:* That is, till the eſtate of the Church be beautiful and glorious. Now as a burning lamp is the emblem of a happy, ſo a dying deſpiſed lamp is the emblem of a miſerable condition. For what's a broken dying lamp worth? what's the ſnuff of a candle worth? or a candle burnt down to the ſocket? of no more worth is many a gracious ſoul in the thoughts of worldly wealthy men, when once he hath loſt the wealth of the world. Riches are to the reputation of man, as oyl to the lamp, they feed and nouriſh it, they cauſe it to ſhine out with a reſplendent brightneſs: but when riches are conſumed, a mans reputation conſumes too, he is a deſpiſed lamp. Thus the intendment of *Job* is obvious, and may be drawn into this plain obſervation,

Tempora ſi fuerint nubila ſolus eris.

That they whoſe eſtates are ſliding and falling are ſubject to deſpiſing. Or more briefly thus, *They who are afflicted are uſually ſlighted.*

Nil habet infælix paupertas durius in ſe, quam quòd ridiculos homines facit. Juven. Sat. 3. *Contemptus eſt ultima adverſæ fortunæ ſarcina.*

Affliction ſubjects us to contempt. Chriſt appeared meanly in his outſide, he appeared in an afflicted condition, *a man of ſorrows* (Iſa. 53.) and what was the effect of this? *He was deſpiſed and rejected of men* (verſ. 3.) *and we hid as it were our faces from him, and we eſteemed him not. Unhappy poverty* (ſaith the heathen poet) *hath nothing in it more unhappy then this, that it makes men ſcorned and derided.* A man emptyed of riches is uſually filled with contempt. They that ſlide ſhould be lifted up, as the law ordered concerning the aſs overburthened, and the oxe fallen into a pit; but when a man is fallen under the burthen of affliction, uſually another burthen, the burthen of contempt is laid upon him, he is deſpiſed: while we are burning lamps ſhining with riches and greatneſs, we are lookt upon and ſought to; but no ſooner under a vail of want, but thrown by and regarded no more.

This holds true alſo in regard of internal gifts and endowments; while a man hath great abilities and quick parts, he is as a lamp full of oyl, or as a burning light: ſo *John* Baptiſt is deſcribed (*Joh.* 5.35.) *He was a burning and a ſhining light, and ye were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoyce in his light*, all liked him very well, yea they even danced about him, as children about a bonfire (ſo much the word bears) for a ſeaſon. The lamp of *Johns* Miniſtery was alwayes alike, burning and ſhining, his oyl did not waſt. 'Tis ſaid indeed by *John* himſelf (*Joh.* 3.30.) *I muſt decreaſe*; not that *John* did abate or leſſen his light, but becauſe a greater light coming, his light was obſcured (as the ſtars by the ſun) but not at all diminiſhed: but though *Johns* light was alwayes alike, yet the peoples delight in him was only for a *ſeaſon:* Even they whoſe gifts are not at all abated, may yet find a great abatement in the acceptation of their gift; how much more they (which is the caſe of not a few) whoſe gifts are indeed abated? Many are as a burning and ſhining lamp a great while, but at laſt (according to the lamps motto) *by ſhining they conſume:* Their oyl ſpends, their parts impair, their gifts are deaded, *Theſe are deſpiſed lamps.* There are lamps ſpoken of, *Matth.* 25. which Chriſt will deſpiſe. The fooliſh Virgins brought lamps, but they had no oyl in them. Some make a great profeſſion, and would be thought burning and ſhining lights, who yet have no oyl, that is, no truth of grace. Lamps without oyl, Chriſt will deſpiſe: But he will not deſpiſe a lamp becauſe it is not gilded with riches and worldly honour, or becauſe not filled with ſuch or ſuch a meaſure of gifts; that's the way the world goes; let a man have never ſo much oyl of grace and ſincerity in his lamp, never ſo much of God and of Chriſt in his lamp, if he have not golden oyl in his lamp, riches and fulneſs, rare gifts and great parts, he is deſpiſed, and caſt off.

Prælucendo pereo.

There is another reading of the words, take it thus; *A man that is as a deſpiſed lamp by thoſe who are at eaſe, is ready to ſlip with his feet*, that is, to ſin: the words may bear this tranſlation, without any ſtrain to the text, and with the advantage of another truth, which may be given you in this Obſervation,

עשת *Candidus, nitidus, per metaphoram, denotat cogitationes lætas, quæ ſunt veluti radii animæ.*

Affliction layes us open unto temptation.

As holy *David* (*Pſal.* 73.) was ready to ſlip with his feet into ſin, by ſeeing wicked men ſtand ſo faſt in honour while they ſinned: So when a holy and righteous man ſees himſelf diſhonoured, he is ready to ſlip with his feet, to ſin, and ſay, *I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency.* It is a temptation to be deſpiſed; and except the heart be very well ſetled, the feet will ſlide. When a hypocrite is deſpiſed, he not only ſlips in, but falls from that profeſſion he formerly ſeemed to ſtand in; he caſts off the wayes of God, when he ſees himſelf caſt off by men. They who are well rooted and ſound at heart may be ſorely ſhaken; but the rotten hearted, and unſound, are rooted up by the ſtrength of this temptation. The third branch of this verſe, ſhews us by whom the man ready to ſlip is deſpiſed, it is

שאנן *Quietus, tranquillus, & per Metonymiam ſecurus, inſolens, quod tranquillitas homines ſecuros & inſolentes reddat.*

In the thought of him that is at eaſe.

In the thought.] The word ſignifies alſo *clear, or pure*, and by a metaphor it notes a thought, becauſe thoughts are as the irradations and beamings forth of the mind. And the word in ſpecial notes *joyful or delightful thoughts*; that ſence makes the text yet more emphatical. A man compaſſed about with ſorrow is deſpiſed *in the joyful, or rather jolly thoughts of him that is at eaſe:* a man at eaſe hath pleaſant and merry thoughts, and being full of theſe merry delightful thoughts, he deſpiſeth him who like an expiring lamp, ſits ſobbing and ſmothering in ſad and ſorrowful thoughts.

Of him that is at eaſe.] Quiet, ſetled, and (as the word imports by a trope) inſolent and ſecure; eaſe doth uſually make men not only ſecure, but inſolent. *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God*, Pſal. 55. 19. *It is ſeldom that their hearts are changed, whoſe eſtates feel no change. Civil changes occaſion ſpiritual:* None are further from a ſpiritual change then they, who fear not God; and they who have no civil changes are very often far from fearing God. *Jeruſalem* had little eaſe a long time, but ſhe is promiſed it: *Thine eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation*, or, *an habitation at eaſe*, (Iſa. 32.20.)

Jeruſalem that now is, hath been an unquiet habitation, full of troubles, toſt up and down; but at laſt God will make her *a quiet habitation*: *Babylon* hath been at eaſe a great while, but *Jeruſalem* ſhall have her turn to be at eaſe too.

Job ſpeaks indefinitely; he is deſpiſed in the thought [*Of him that is at eaſe.*] Let him be who he will, a good man or a bad man, he is apt to deſpiſe thoſe that are in great affliction. A godly man is not wholly exempt from this, not only unchriſtian, but unmanly paſſion. *Job* ſpeaks here with an eye to his friends, whom, though he rebukes often very ſharply, as acting very ſinfully, yet he did not judge as wicked. The beſt man at eaſe, may not only be unſenſible of his brethrens afflictions, but, in a degree, ſlight the afflicted: *Job* ſuppoſes his friends faulty in this; as if he had ſaid, *you (my friends) are at eaſe and quiet, all things go well with you; I am a poor ſnuff, a conſumed lamp, and you deſpiſe me, you make nothing of my ordinary ſorrows, and but light of my heavieſt burdens.* A good man may fail thus far for a time in his duty towards an afflicted friend, and though he fail not thus far, yet he may come within the verge of this ſin, *deſpiſing*. For we deſpiſe the afflicted, not only by reproaching them with our words, and vilifying them in our thoughts, but by not laying their afflictions to our hearts, and bearing a part in them, by a brotherly fellow-feeling. When we do not ſuffer with them, we under-reckon them in their ſufferings. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, *They who are at eaſe, whoſoever they are, eſpecially wicked men, are apt to deſpiſe thoſe that are in pain.*

Few feel any ſmart, till themſelves ſmart, or any want till themſelves are empty, It is bad enough, not to feel the ſmart or want of others; but it is far worſe to inſult over it. Of ſuch, *David* makes complaint (*Pſal.* 123.4.) *Our ſoul is exceedingly fill'd with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe, and with the contempt of the proud.* And again, *The drunkards made ſongs upon me.* Wine puts the wit in tune for a prophane jeſt. When *David* was eating aſhes, and drinking tears, he was deſpiſed by thoſe who did eat the fat, and drink the ſweet; they cried out, *Where is now thy God?* Pſal.42.3. *David* profeſſeth concerning his enemies, (Pſal. 35.13.) *When they were ſick, my cloathing was ſack-cloth, I humbled my ſoul with faſting, and my prayer returned into my own boſom*; that is, ſay ſome, though they got no good by my prayers, yet my own ſoul did: rather thus; I prayed often and much for them, even from my heart; the *returning* of the prayer, may ſignifie his frequent minding of them; and the *boſom*, both ſecrecy and affectionateneſs in prayer for them. Laſtly, We may read it thus, *Let my prayer return into my boſom*, that is, I wiſhed no worſe to them then to my ſelf; let me receive that of God for my portion, which I have deſired may be theirs; either of theſe interpretations ſhew *David*'s ſympathy, even towards his enemies; which the next verſe (14) clears yet more; *I behaved my ſelf as though it had been my friend and brother, I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother.* Would you not believe, if theſe enemies of *David* ſhould hear of any affliſtion befallen him, that they would be in *blacks*? See how they mourn (as we ſay) in *Sack and Sugar* (ver. 15, 16.) *But in my adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together. With hypocritical mockers at feaſts, they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth*: When they were a feaſting, they were mocking; abuſive ſpeeches were as ſauce to their meat, and ſugar to their wine; and they would forbear a while to employ their teeth at eating, that they might employ them in reviling; *they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth.* The teeth ſpeak as well as the tongue; gnaſhing of the teeth hath a loud voice in it. The damned in hell ſhall gnaſh their teeth in ſorrow for pain; the pain which themſelves feel: and the wicked here on earth, do often gnaſh their teeth in joy or ſcorn at the pain which others feel. The Prophet *Hoſea* deſcribes the tempe of ſuch intemperate feaſters (*chap.* 7.5.) *In the day of our King, the Princes have made him ſick with bottles of wine*, that is, in the day of the celebration of the Kings Birth or Coronation, or ſome of thoſe great feaſting feſtivals, the Princes made him drink more then did him good; and what did he then? he was then fit to do evil, and ſo he did; *He ſtretched out his hand with ſcorners*, that is, ſay ſome, he took up his cups, or put his hand to his cups, as often as vile perſons, ſcorners, uſe to do: or nearer to the point; *He ſtretched out his hand*, thar is, he acted againſt goodneſs and good men, againſt juſtice and thoſe who are juſt, even as *ſcorners* and contemners of juſtice, and goodneſs, of juſt and good men, uſe to do, Neither is it any wonder that men at eaſe are thus ready to deſpiſe the beſt of men in a low condition, ſeeing they deſpiſe even the moſt high God. They who ſerve their luſts, cannot ſerve either God or man, but they can deſpiſe both. And their conſciences ſeldom trouble them (whatſoever they do) who have no trouble in their condition. *Jeſurun waxed fat*; *Iſrael* was called *Jeſurun*, either from *Joſher*, righteouſneſs; becauſe they had received righteous laws, or were called unto righteouſneſs; or from *Shor*, to look or ſee; becauſe this people ſaw more of the glory of God, then any people under heaven; yet even this *Jeſurun*, when he *waxed fat*, that is, rich and great, then *he kicked* (Deut. 32.15.) Kicking is an act of contempt; and againſt whom did he kick? *Moſes* tells us; *then he forſook God that made him, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation.* If men at eaſe venture to deſpiſe God, they will not ſtick at men; leaſt of all, at men in their afflictions.

> Secondly, Obſerve, *It is very ſinful to deſpiſe thoſe that are in affliction.*

Job ſpeaks it, not only by way of Narration, declaring what was done; but by way of conviction, reproving what was done. If it be ſinful not to pity thoſe that are afflicted, then much more to deſpiſe them (*Amos* 6.4.(*They lie upon their beds of Ivory, and ſtretch themſelves upon their couches,* &c. *but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joſeph.* He ſpeaks nothing of their rejoycing at *Joſeph*'s affliction, or that they laughed and paſſed jeſts upon him; no, but they did not grieve, they did not pity him in his affliction; this was their ſin: how ſinful then is theirs, who deſpiſe the afflicted?

There is another reading of this verſe; which I ſhall only name. *He that is fit to guide the feet of others, is as a deſpiſed lamp in the thought of the rich, who are at eaſe*: As if *Job* had ſaid, they whoſe holineſs is moſt eminent and exemplary, even leading-men in holineſs, are deſpiſed.

Lucerna cõtempta judicio hominis opulenti, qui idoneus eſt greſſibus dirigendis. Tyg.

Job having thus croſſed *Zophar*'s firſt aſſertion, repreſenting the righteous as a deſpiſed lamp, whom his friend had compared to the morning-light, or noon-day Sun; he now proceeds to refute his ſecond aſſertion, repreſenting the wicked in fulleſt proſperity and higheſt ſecurity; *whoſe eyes*, his friend had ſaid, *ſhould fail*, and *whoſe hope* he had compared to the *giving up of the ghoſt.*

Verſe 6. **The Tabernacles of robbers proſper, and they that provoke God, are ſecure, into whoſe hand God bringeth abundantly.**

As if he had ſaid, Friend *Zophar*, thou haſt affirmed, *that the righteous man is as the ſhining light*; I ſay, *he is but a deſpiſed lamp*: thou affirmeſt, that *the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail*, &c. but I have ſeen *the tabernacles of robbers proſper, and they that provoke God, ſecure.*

He deſcribes a wicked man, by ſins againſt both Tables. Firſt, He ſins againſt his neighbour by injuſtice; he is a *robber, the tabernacles of robbers proſper.* Robbery is a ſin againſt the ſecond Table; and robbery is here mentioned by a *Synechdoche*, for all ſins againſt the ſecond Table. Secondly, He ſins againſt God; he provoketh God, which is the breach of the firſt Table: and provocation of God is here mentioned by a *Synechdoche*, for all ſins againſt the firſt Table. *They that provoke God, are ſecure.* Though every ſin againſt our brother, be alſo a ſin againſt God, and we may provoke God, when the ſin is immediately or nextly againſt our brother; yet God, in the ſins of the firſt Table, is chiefly provoked, and thoſe ſins are immediately againſt God; therefore he putteth both inſtances. Take a man that breaks the firſt Table, or the ſecond; take a man that cares not how he wrongs his neighbour, or how he prophanes the name of God, the one proſpers, and the other is ſecure; therefore your poſition is falſe, *that the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail*, and that *their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.*

The Tabernacles of robbers proſper.

That is, the dwellings and families, the affairs and undertakings of robbers, they, and all that belong unto them, proſper.

Tabernacula i. e. quæ ad illos pertinent univerſa.

Robbers

שדר *Prædones, vaſtatores.*

Robbers are of two ſorts; there are open and violent robbers, who waſt, ſpoil and deſtroy all that comes near them, and care not who ſees; ſuch are warlike robbers, who bring power to do, what they cannot do by juſtice: Such were thoſe warlike bands (and at them *Job* aims in this argument) of *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, who ſpoiled *Job*'s eſtate and cattel. The uſual effect of war is waſt and ſpoil: It is ſaid of the Turkiſh wars, *That where the Grand Signiors horſe ſets his foot, no more graſs will grow*; he makes havock of all. By robbers here, we may underſtand firſt, thoſe boiſterous ſons of *Mars*, men of blood and violence, who make their will their law, and think they may do whatſoever they have power to do. God himſelf is called *El-ſhaddi, the mighty God*; he is mighty to ſave, and mighty to deſtroy; he is able to lay all the world waſte when he pleaſeth, as he once did, when the world diſpleaſed him. God can deſtroy as much as he will, but he will not deſtroy as much as he can. Theſe robbers have their name from the ſame root, becauſe they uſe all their power to deſtroy: They have a will to deſtroy as much as they can; but they cannot deſtroy as much as they will: If they could, the whole world muſt fall before them, if it will not fall down unto them.

Secondly, There are ſecret robbers; deceit and fraud commit robbery, as wel as power and force. Some rob while they pretend to ſeek for right; they ſue at law, hoping to pervert juſtice. Some are robb'd, others are murdered by the law. The law is a ſhadow to many lawleſs actions. He is a robber, that takes his neighbours right from him by pretence of law, as well as he that takes his purſe in the high way. Again, others rob ſecretly, while they ſeem only to ſell; they ſteal, while they tell you, you ſhall have a penny-worth for your penny. *Ephraim ſaid, ſurely I am become rich, I have found me out ſubſtance; in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity in me, that were ſin, Hoſ.* 12. 8. I have got a great eſtate, and I hope there is none in the world can tax me that I have done them wrong; *in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity*: Who? I wrong! I ſteal or rob! not I; I have not ſtained my trading and commerce with any ſuch foul fact; I confeſs, I have uſed ſome ſubtilties and ſleights, I have a little helped my ſelf by art; my calling is a myſtery, and if I deal myſteriouſly in it, for my own advantage, who can blame me for that? I am ſure, none can charge me with any open wrong or robbery; *in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity*. And it appears plainly, that I have done no ſuch thing, *for that were ſin*; that is, puniſhment would follow ſuch iniquity; whereas I thrive and proſper: *ſuch ſales they make, who have ſold their conſciences*. To clear this ſence, obſerve what the Prophet ſaith in the former verſe; *He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppreſs*: When a buyer comes to him for a commodity, he weigheth it out fairly in the balance, there's no iniquity; but there is deceit in the balance, or he hath a bag of deceitful weights; that's iniquity. To deceive with weights, is robbery, as well as to take by force; a man may rob with a pair of balances or a meet-wand in his hand, as well as with a ſword or piſtol in his hand. Both or either of theſe robbers may be underſtood here.

Ex eo facilè conſtat me non eſſe peccati reum, quod mihi bene eſt: Nam qui rei ſunt, eos Nemeſis *impunè abire non ſinit.* Jun. *in loc.*

Laſtly, Some, in ſtead of robbers, read, *rich men*. Rich men are called robbers, not as if a man could not be rich without robbery (the bleſſing of God, not their wronging of men, makes many rich; a diligent hand, not a violent nor a fraudulent hand, enriches many) but rich men are called robbers, becauſe many, if not moſt rich men, are (in one of theſe ſences) robbers, or becauſe riches are alwaies a provocation to robbery; yea, and a help to it. For, as in one reſpect, poverty is a temptation to robbery (*Prov.* 30. 9.) *Feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be poor, and ſteal*: as poverty is a temptation unto ſtealing, ſo are riches. He that hath power, hopes he may oppreſs, and go unpuniſhed. Some durſt not oppreſs, but for the ſhelter of a high place. A Pirate taken at ſea, and condemned by *Alexander*, ſaid unto him, *I am condemned for robbing at ſea in a little ſhip, but thou robbeſt at land all the world over, and art applauded*: There are more who ſteal by reaſon of their abundance, then by reaſon of their want; what they have, gives them ability to rob for more.

The Tabernacles of robbers,] whether of the one kind, or of the other, [**proſper.**] The Original ſignifies, not only a thriving, but a peaceable condition: They and their ſtoln goods lie (for a time) as ſafe and quiet as a child in the mothers belly. The word bears ſuch a ſence. Hence obſerve,

שלו *Quievit, per* Metaphora *fœlix, ſalvus fuit.*

Unjuſt men, men of violence, may proſper for a while.

Robbers may enjoy proſperous ſafety, and ſafe proſperity. Having met with texts before, about the proſperity of the wicked, I ſhall not ſtay upon it here; the next clauſe alſo, giving further occaſion to touch upon it again. The ſecurity of thoſe who provoke God, is the ſame with the proſperity of the robbers, and they who rob men, provoke God; yet here to provoke God, is a ſin of another claſſis, yea, of another nature then to rob men; therefore I ſhall diſtinctly open it.

They who provoke God, are ſecure.

Here is the ſecond ſort of proſperous wicked men. They who break the ſecond Table, and wrong their neighbours, *proſper*; they who break the firſt, and *provoke God, are ſecure.*

They that provoke God. The word ſignifies, to move, or irritate: it ſignifies, to move corporally and locally (*Job* 9. 6.) *He ſhaketh the earth out of her place.* (Iſa. 23. 11.) *He ſhook the kingdoms.* This word ſerves in both Texts. And hence it is taken for paſſion or inward diſtemper againſt others (2 *Kings* 19. 28.) *Becauſe thy rage againſt me*; word for word, *becauſe thou waſt moved againſt me*: ſuch a one (we ſay) was moved, exceedingly moved when he was in a rage and angry. They may be ſaid to move God, who provoke him, they attempt to put him out of temper.

דרן *Movere, commovere, irritare ad iracundiam.*

To provoke God, is more then to ſin againſt God; it is ſinning with an high hand, or with ſuch circumſtances, as exceedingly aggravate ſin. Provocation notes the higheſt act of diſpleaſure, and therefore that ſin which provokes, is one of the higheſt. (*Pſal.* 106. 7.) *They remembred not the multitude of his mercies, but provoked him at the ſea, even the red ſea.* The confluence or meeting together of many ſins, makes up a provocation.

Such ſinners of the higheſt ſtature, *Job* deſcribes in this ſecure eſtate: *They who provoke God*; As if *Job* had ſaid, *I do not ſpeak of thoſe who ſin lightly, who trade in ſmall ſins, or ſin after the rate and courſe of ordinary men, that theſe only are ſecure; but they who ſin provokingly and boldly; they who ſend defiance to heaven by ſinning, even theſe live ſecurely here on earth*, Theſe

Are ſecure.] The hebrew is abſtract and plural; *They that provoke God, ſecurities, confidences are to them*; as, (*Pſal.* 1. 1.) we read of the *bleſſedneſſes of him that walketh in the Law of God*; which we tranſlate, *The man is bleſſed*: So here; *They that provoke God, are ſecure*; or, *ſecurities are to them that provoke God*: They ſin againſt God every way, and they have ſecurity every way; they ſin againſt God as much as they can, and they have as much proſperity as they will. All kind of ſecurity is their portion, who commit all kind of impiety. Hence obſerve,

בטחות *Numerus pluralis abundantiam ſignificat,* q. d. *magna ſecuritas, & vox originalis tam ſecuritatem denotat quæ audaciam & temeritatem parit.*

God ſometimes gives them greateſt worldly peace, who offer him the higheſt provocations.

Such as will not let God reſt, God lets reſt. Wicked men would throw God out of heaven, if they could; but he doth not throw them out of earth, though he can. It is a wonder of patience, that God ſhould let them have any eaſe, who do their utmoſt to weary him.

I ſhall here touch four grounds of this diſpenſation of God toward wicked men in temporals.

Firſt, The Lord gives them ſecurity, that they may have opportunity to ſhew themſelves, and to bring out thoſe curſed treaſures of iniquity ſtored up in their hearts. If luſt were alwayes pinched with poverty, and burdened with affliction; if luſt were alwayes in bands and chains, in priſon and reſtraint, under the revenging hand of God, luſt could not look like it ſelf, nor diſcover what it can do. *There had never ſo much of the ſinfulneſs of men appeared, if ſo much of the goodneſs of God had not appeared.* As afflictions draw out the graces of the Saints, ſo they keep in, and dead the corruptions of the wicked; many corruptions cannot at all, but in a warm Sun. There are ſome, I confeſs (unbelief, diſcontent, murmuring, &c.) which act eſpecially in cold and froſty ſeaſons; but moſt are ſtopt.

Secondly, 'Tis thus, as to diſcover what men are; ſo to make them more unexcuſable for being what they are. What can they ſay for themſelves, who have received ſo much good from the hand of God, and have requited him with ſo much evil? What plea can they make, who anger God, while he is giving them content? who, while God encompaſſeth them with bleſſings, compaſs him about with their rebellions? Thou art unexcuſable, O man, who makeſt ſuch returns. When *Dives* in the parable, begs for a drop of water, he is anſwered, *Son, remember, that thou in thy life-time haſt had thy good things*: Doſt thou call now for an abatement of fire and torment, who didſt multiply thy ſin as faſt as thy comforts were multiplied? Doſt thou call for eaſe, who didſt abuſe all thy eaſe? He hath not a word more to ſay for himſelf, his next ſuit is for his brethren, that they might not come into that place of torment, out of which he had no hope to eſcape. *Every mouth will be ſtopt by theſe openings of the hand of God.*

Thirdly, Such diſpenſations are both the trial and honour of the Saints. They will not venture into ſinful waies, though others thrive in them. They ſee ſome proſper by robbery, others advanced by flattery; yet they will not ſet up thoſe trades. This is an evidence that they love holineſs for holineſs ſake, and hate wickedneſs (how proſperous ſoever it is) for wickedneſs ſake. Sin is worſe to them then hell. The blackneſs of that coal offends them more then the heat of it.

Laſtly, God doth this, to keep the Saints, while they are in the world (which is their proper way of living here) to a life of faith. If all godly men ſhould proſper and have peace, if all wicked men ſhould ſuffer and be in trouble, if God ſhould leave viſible marks of his diſpleaſure upon every one that provoketh him, and viſible marks of favour upon every one that pleaſeth him, men would live by ſight, and not by faith. In the next life there will be an end of faith, God will then give every one his portion: then no man that provoked God impenitently, ſhall be at eaſe; nor ſhall any ſmart who have ſincerely pleaſed him. Tribulation and anguiſh ſhall be upon every ſoul that ſinneth; and every ſoul that hath taken hold on Chriſt by faith, and walked in love, ſhall have life and immortality: every one ſhall feel what he is, and enjoy what he hath believed. *Heaven and hell have all in ſight: faith will have no work in either.* Here we muſt alwayes walk by faith, and then moſt, when godly men are caſt down, and when *they who provoke God are ſecure.*

Into whoſe hand God bringeth abundantly.

לאשר .. Cujus, *ſumi poſſit pro* propter qnæ, *q. d. Deum irritant confidenter ob ſummam fœlicitatem quam largitur iis.* Mer.

As if he had ſaid, They take courage to *provoke God* through the abundance which he beſtows upon them. Thoſe treaſures of good things which he brings into their hands, cauſe them to bring out thoſe evils which were treaſured up in their hearts. Hence obſerve,

> *Wicked men make the bleſſings of God fewel for their luſts, and beat their outward comforts into the weapons of an unholy war againſt him.*

Their bread and their wine, their gold and their ſilver' their wool and their flax, do but feed and cloath, enrich and ſtrengthen their baſe corruptions, *Hoſ.* 13.6. *According to their paſture, ſo were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.* When the heart is lifted up with the creature, it falls from the creator; and that proves an occaſion of forgetting God, which ſhould be a means of remembring him. The ſmalleſt taſte of benefits ought to put us in mind of our Benefactor: But they had put God out of their minds, while he was putting fat morſels into their mouths, and had filled them with his benefits.

Again, In theſe words, *Into whoſe hand God bringeth abundantly.*

Job ſeems to have a ſpecial reſpect to the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, into whoſe hands God put all his abundance. Hence obſerve,

> *What the worſt of men have, is of Gods giving; he puts into their hands.*

Satan puts wickedneſs into their hearts, but it is God who puts power into their hands; God puts the perſons and eſtates of others into their hands. They indeed aſcribe all to their own power and policies. So the King of *Babylon* (Iſa. 14.) boaſted, *By my hand and by my power have I done theſe things*; he forgot that he was an inſtrument in the hand of God, or that God gave thoſe nations into his hand. The Lord ſtayes himſelf from bringing afflictions upon his people by this argument, *Deut.* 32.27. *Leſt their adverſaries ſhould ſay, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this:* God would not put his people into their hand, becauſe he foreſaw they would not acknowledge it; but *ſacrifice unto their net, and burn incenſe unto their drag, as if by them their portion had been fat, and their meat plenteous.* Man is unwilling to own any beyond himſelf as the author of his enjoyments. He ſcarce accounts any thing worth the having, unleſs it be of his own bringing in.

Further, We tranſlate, *Into whoſe hand God bringeth* **Abundantly.**] The Adverb, *Abundantly*, is not in the Original; our tranſlators add it in a different letter, as an explication, to ſhew the bounty of God, even to many of them, who moſt deſignedly diſobey him. Such receive not only enough to ſupport their lives, but to ſatisfie their luſts. They have, not only as much as they need, but as much as they deſire. God brings Quails into their hands as well as Manna; yet he puts theſe into their hands, not as *love-tokens*, but as *wrath-tokens*. And while the meat is in their mouths, the wrath of God falls, *yea abides upon them*. It is not alwayes a mercy to receive what we would. God brings abundance into their hands, who never had one drop of favour from his heart.

In cujus manum venire facit deus, ſc. *omnia animi ſui vota.* Merc.

There is another reading, which gives an intimation of that particular ſin, whereby theſe ſecure ones had provoked God. They were ſuch, *as brought God in their hands*, that is, *falſe worſhippers and Idolaters*: Such are well deſcribed by this *Periphraſis, they bring God in their hand*: we render, *into whoſe hand God putteth*; theſe render, *who put God into their hand*. The Jewiſh Doctors are much for this ſence; but it receives little approbation amongſt the Latines, and I will not inſiſt upon it; yet this is a truth, *Idolaters put God in their hand*: True worſhippers carry God in their hearts; Idolaters carry God in their hands; that is, they have a God of their own making; an Idol, an Image, is the work of their hands. He that worſhippeth according to mans invention, hath his god in his hand. Again, falſe worſhippers may be ſaid to carry god in their hand, becauſe they act as if God were in his power and diſpoſe (or they deſire he ſhould be ſo) not they in his. The *Tyrians* chained *Hercules* to a poſt, that he might not depart their countrey. Other of the heathen would adopt or reprobate their gods as they pleaſed; unleſs the gods pleaſed them, they ſhould be no longer gods. This is to bring a god in the hand groſly and openly: they do it cloſely and covertly, who are unwilling to be guided by his hand. They who would bring God down to their wills, make laws for God; and they who make a law for God, act as if they had made God. *Every thing muſt receive the rule of its being, where it receives a being.*

Eſt qui adduxit Deum in manu ſua. Ari. Mont. *Deum geſtat in manu ſua, qui facit ſibi Deum, quem habeat in ſua poteſtate, nolens eſſe in manu Dei.* Coc. *Non placet quod nonnulli Hebræorum hæc ad Idololatras referunt.* Merc.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10.

But ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee; and the fowls of the ayr, and they ſhall tell thee.

Or ſpeak to the earth, and it ſhall teach thee; and the fiſhes of the ſea ſhall declare unto thee.

Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?

In whoſe hand is the ſoul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

JOB having checked the pride of his friends, in the four firſt verſes of this Chapter; and oppoſed the opinion of *Zophar*, in *ver.* 5, 6. he in this context brings out his proof, which he takes as low as low can be; that ſo he might raiſe his conviction the higher. He deals not with him upon the dictates of humane reaſon, or upon the authority of Scripture; but from the voice of nature, from the common cry and conſent of all the creatures; he convocates a ſynod of beaſts and birds, of ſenſeleſs trees, and mute fiſhes, to give their ſuffrage for the determination of the controverſie betwixt him and his friends.

Diſſeruiſtis ô amici, pleraque de ſapientia & potentia Dei, quòd omnia creat & cõſervat, quaſi hæc mihi incognita eſſent, nam vobis tacentibus docẽt me hæc creatura. Mer.

Ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall tell thee.

As if *Job* had ſaid, *Friend* Zophar, *thou haſt diſcourſed about the providence of God, as if it were all riddle, or myſtery, which none but learned men could teach, and none but men of extraordinary parts could underſtand: But ſurely thou needeſt not ſpeak ſo high, or in the clouds, foraſmuch as the beaſts of the earth, the fowls of the air,* &c. *may be our maſters, to teach us the wiſdom and power of God, though man ſhould be ſilent. Theſe have a voice, theſe have tongues like trumpets to proclaim a providence in ordering the world, and that God doth, both in Heaven and earth, whatſoever pleaſeth him: And therefore though the wiſdom of God be higher then heaven, deeper then hell, broader then the ſea, and longer then the earth; though there is a wiſdom of God, and much in all his wiſdom, which no creature can comprehend, yet his wiſdom receives teſtimony from every creature, and we need not make ſuch weary and long journeyes to find out ſo much of it as concerns our inſtruction and ſatisfaction. Ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee.*

Hence obſerve, *All creatures have a teaching voice, they read us divinity lectures of Divine Providence.*

Non eſt ullū animalculū tam exiguū in quod non plus diſcere poſſimus quā in omnibus ſculptis, pictis aut fuſis ſimulachris. Lavat.

Chriſtians, who have not only reaſon but grace, may learn from creatures which have not ſo much as life or ſenſe. Images made by man are teachers of lyes; but the things which God hath made are teachers of truth. And hence it is that Chriſt himſelf taketh up parables from the meaneſt of the creatures, to inſtruct his hearers. I confeſs there is no knowledge like the knowledge of Chriſt, and of him crucified: The croſs of Chriſt is the chief ſubject of holy ſtudy: As the Apoſtles reſolve aſſures (1 *Cor.* 2.) *I determined to know nothing among you but Chriſt, and him crucified.* All knowledge, without the knowledge of Chriſt, is but ignorance: Yet there is a uſefulneſs of knowledge from natural things, as ſubſervient unto ſpiritual. Grace in the heart of a Believer improves common earthly objects to holy ends, as having a ſtamp of Heaven upon them. *The world below is as a glaſs, wherein we may ſee the world above.* They who cannot read other books, may run and read this: It is the *Plowmans Alphabet*, the *Shepherds Kalender*, the *Travellers Perſpective*, through which he receives the lively ſpecies of infinite excellencies in God. We may meditate from the Sun, to the Stone; from the Cedar, to the Hyſop that groweth on the wall; from the Angel, to the Worm that creepeth on the ground; from all, from the leaſt of theſe we may know much of the great God; and it is the ſcope of the Apoſtle, (*Rom.* 1.) to convince thoſe who do not. It is reported of one, who had but little or no knowledge at all in Arts and Sciences, or skill in Tongues, and yet was full of knowledge in Heavenly things; that being asked, How he came by that knowledge, having not read books? he ſaid, he had a book which he read continually, which had three great leaves, *The Heaven, the Earth, the Waters*; the creatures contained in theſe, were as ſo many letters, out of which he ſpelled many myſteries, and comfortable truths. Though the creature is not able to lead us into a ſaving knowledge of the myſteries of Chriſt, yet it gives us ſuch advantages to know God, as will leave us unexcuſable in our ignorance.

Seculum eſt ſpeculum

There are four things which the creatures teach us.

Firſt, They teach us that there is a God; and much of that which God is. (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* As faith ſees him that is inviſible, ſo ſenſe ſhews us him that is inviſible: Faith ſees God in himſelf; ſenſe ſhews us God in his works.

Secondly, The whole creation teacheth us ready obedience to the will of God: All creatures obey the law of their creation: *Fire and hail, ſnow and vapours, ſtormy wind and tempeſt fulfilling his word,* Pſal. 148. 8. And if there be any ſtop at all, or interruption in their obedience, if they do not fully anſwer the end for which they were created, it is either to teſtifie, or to puniſh mans diſobedience.

Thirdly, All creatures teach us dependance upon God. Things without life are expreſſed, as putting forth acts of faith towards the living God. (*Hoſ.* 2. 21.) The earth cryes to the heavens; and the corn, and the wine, and the oyl cry to the earth; there is an intercrying from the loweſt to the higheſt, till the cry come up to the moſt high God. The whole preſents us with an *elegant proſopopeia*, All the creatures ſtriving to do them good, to whom God had once betrothed himſelf in mercies, and in loving kindneſs; yet all (in a chain of dependance) confeſſing their inability to do them good, without help from God. The corn, and the wine, and the oyl would feed and refreſh *Jezreel*; but then the earth muſt give theſe rooting, juyce and nouriſhment: The earth is willing to do her office, and give out her ſtrength to theſe, that theſe might ſtrengthen *Jezreel*; but then the heavens muſt open their treaſury, and let down their rain, and heat, and influences into the boſom and bowels of the earth, to make it fertile. The heavens are ready to befriend the earth, at her requeſt, with theſe inriching dowries of rain, heat and influence; but the heavens cannot ſend a ſhower, nor the ſun a ray, till God gives commiſſion, and therefore they cry to God to *unbind the ſweet influences of* Pleiades, *and looſe the bands of* Orion, that ſo, God commanding the heavens, the heavens may feed the earth, and the earth may feed the corn, the wine, the oyl; and theſe may feed *Jezreel*, the beloved ones of God. Thus *the eyes of all wait*, or *look up unto God* (Pſal. 145. 15.) that they may receive good. Such is the very manner of their ſubſiſtence as declares their dependance: they wait upon God, and ſhall not we?

Fourthly, The whole creation teacheth us, that there is ſomewhat more provided for us then we now enjoy. The Apoſtle makes that uſe of it (*Rom.* 8. 19.) *The earneſt expectation of the creature, waiteth for the manifeſtation of the Sons of God:* But how can the creation have an earneſt expectation? Not that the creature is able to put forth ſuch an act directly, for then it muſt have not only life, but reaſon and grace; but there is ſomewhat in the creature, not only like *expectation*, but like *an earneſt expectation*; the creature ſtretcheth out (as it were) its head to look for theſe things, and is weary till it receives them: We know (ſaith the Apoſtle, *ver.* 22.) *That the whole creation groaneth and travelleth in pain together until now.* Now if the irrational and inanimate creatures, which have been tired out by mans ſin, and made ſubject to vanity, by reaſon of mans vanity, if they live under an expectation, how much more ſhould man himſelf? Shall liveleſs creatures be reſtleſs in their preſent condition, which our ſin hath brought upon them; and ſhall we, who are the ſinners, reſt in that condition? Shall the world groan under a ſtate of vanity, and ſhall we rejoyce, and ſatisfie our ſelves in it? The beaſts of the earth may teach us better; and the fowls of the air may inſtruct us to ſoar to a more heavenly pitch of ſpirit.

Ask now the beaſts.] The word *Behemoth*, ſignifies all ſorts of beaſts, whether wild, or tame; yet moſt uſually thoſe that are wild and ſavage, ſuch as will not come to hand: to take the word in that ſtrictneſs inlargeth the ſence; as if *Job* had ſaid, *The worſt, the moſt unteachable of the beaſts, will teach thee; thoſe beaſts which have nothing in them but cruelty and fierceneſs, but rage and ravening, will inform thee.* The Elephant, in this book, is called *Behemoth*, which word is in the plural number; as if we ſhould ſay, *beaſts*; intimating the huge vaſtneſs of the Elephant, that he hath (as it were) many beaſts ſumm'd up in him; here are *Behemoth*, or *beaſts*, in that one Beaſt.

בהמות *Pecora campi.* Eliphas *dicitur* Behemoth *numero plurali, à vaſtitate corporis, quòd quaſi à multis jumentis compoſitus videatur.*

Ask the beaſts. * It is uſual in Scripture to turn us to the irrational creatures, when we depart from, or act below reaſon. To put a man to ſchool to the beaſts, implies beaſtly ignorance: *Ask now the beaſts*, they will convince thee, or ſtop thy mouth. The Prophet brings in the Lord beſpeaking Heaven and earth, (*Iſa.* 1. 2.) *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O earth, I have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me:* So *Deut.* 32. 1. *Give ear, O ye Heavens, and I will ſpeak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth: Moſes* tells the people, that the very Heavens and earth ſhould ſhame them, if they would not hearken. Now as when at any time God appealeth to, or beſpeaketh the Heavens and the earth, and makes them his witneſſes, or hearers, it is to ſhame mans deafneſs and rebellion; as if unreaſonable creatures, were more ready to hear, and receive inſtruction, then man. So when he bids us go, or ſends us to inanimate creatures, to hear them ſpeak, it is to ſhame mans dulneſs; as if they were more ready to give inſtruction, then we to receive and entertain it. Thus *Solomon* ſends the ſluggard to the Ant; *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard:* The little Piſmire ſhall teach thee;

* *Patheticus admodū eſt ille modus loquendi in ſcripturis, quando quis cœlum terram aut animalia ratione deſtituta alloquitur.* Bold.

there thou ſhalt learn a leſſon of laboriouſneſs, and induſtry, to provide for thy ſelf and thine. The Apoſtle ſaith, *He that provideth not for his own houſe, is worſe then an infidel*; becauſe the light of nature teacheth a man to provide for his houſe: But we may ſay, he that provideth not for his houſe is worſe then a beaſt, worſe then the creeping things of the earth; becauſe the light of nature teacheth them to do ſo. *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard; conſider her wayes, and be wiſe.* *Iſa.* 1. 3. Go to the Ox, and to the Aſs, O unthankful man; they will teach thee; *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his maſters crib:* As the Prophet ſpeaks to the Heavens and the earth, he deſires them for his hearers, rather then men; ſo he ſends the people to the Ox, and Aſs, that they ſhould be their teachers, when they refuſed to hear him. *Ask now the beaſts*, they are wiſe and learned enough to direct thee in this point.

They ſhall teach thee.] Theſe words carry a double figure in them; either a *Proſopopeia*, which is the imitation of a perſon, or the attribution of ſpeech and reaſon, to things ſpeechleſs and irrational: or a *Metonimy* of the effect; *Ask the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee*; that is, ſtudy the beaſts, and this knowledge is attained. Meditation is both the daughter and the mother of wiſdom. They who have no wiſdom cannot meditate, and they who meditate ſhall have more wiſdom. The creatures teach us when we think of them: they teach us, though not formally, yet vertually. They anſwer, and reſolve the queſtion put to them, though not explicitely, to the ear, yet convincingly to the conſcience: *Ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee.*

So then, we ask the creatures, when we diligently conſider them, when we ſearch out the perfections, and vertues, which God hath put into, or ſtamped upon them: To ſet our minds thus upon the creature, is to diſcourſe with the creature. *The queſtions which man asks of a beaſt, are only his own meditations.* Again, the creatures teach us, when we in meditation make out collections, and draw down a demonſtration of the Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of God, in making them; or of the frailty of man, in needing them; ſuch concluſions, and inferences, are the anſwers, and teachings of the creature. It is an excellent paſſage of *Auguſtine*, to this purpoſe, in the tenth book of his Confeſſions, *I put the queſtion*, ſaith he, *to the earth, and to the ſea, and to the reſt of the creatures, and they gave me an anſwer. Now if you would know what my queſtion was; it was the deep intention, and conſideration, I had in my heart about the creatures? And would you know what their anſwer was? Their anſwer was that which I collected in my meditations from their ſeveral natures, qualities, and properties.* So then to ask the beaſts, and to be taught of the beaſts, is only in a ſerious, and holy manner, to let out our hearts in meditation; and every true concluſion, derived from ſuch a meditation, is the voice, and anſwer, of the creature.

Hujuſmodi interrogatio eſt mentis operatio quâ creaturarum perfectiones intuemur ac meditamur. Tunc homo creaturas interrogat quando eas diligenter conſiderat; ſed tunc interrogatæ reſpondent cum homo perſpicit quod tanta ordinatio eſſe non poſſit niſi ab aliqua ſuperiore ſapientia diſpenſante. Aquin.

There is one thing further obſervable in theſe words, *Ask the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee.* The Original is in the ſingular number; *Ask the beaſts, himſelf ſhall teach thee.* It is uſual in Scripture to put a plural and a ſingular thus together; though *it croſs Grammar, yet it improves Divinity.* Eccleſ. 10. 1. *Dead flies cauſe the ointment of the Apothecary to ſtink:* The Hebrew Noun is plural, and the Verb of the ſingular number: The reaſon of this kind of ſpeaking, is, to ſhew that any one of the number, about which we ſpeak, will produce the effect of which we ſpeak: And ſo when he ſaith, *Dead flies will corrupt*, it notes, that any one, or every particular dead fly among flies, is enough to corrupt the moſt precious ointment. So when he ſaith, *The beaſts will teach*, putting beaſts in the plural number to a Verb of the ſingular, it notes, that every particular beaſt, or every ſingle creature, is able to give inſtruction. And ſo the ſence is ſtronger, Thou ſhalt not only be taught and inſtructed from the whole congregation and aſſembly of the creatures, or by laying them all together in thy thoughts, but each one ſhall teach thee, every one by himſelf ſhall teach thee; the leaſt as well as the greateſt; the Mouſe as well as the Elephant, or the Lyon; the Shrimp as well as Leviathan; the Hyſop on the wall, as well as the Cedar in *Lebanon*; the Graſs of the field, as well as the Oaks of *Baſhan*. *So many creatures as are in the world, ſo many preachers there are in the world, of the power and goodneſs of God.*

Docebit te, *i.e. unaquæque ex beſtiis docebit te, cum nomini plurali adjungitur verbū ſingularis numeri diſtributio fit eorum quæ nomine continentur. Muſcæ perdit*, i. e. *quælibet perdere ſufficit.*

And the fowls of the air, and they ſhall tell thee.

This clauſe is of the ſame ſence with the former. The word ſignifies any thing that flies in the air, all winged creatures, both the greater and the leſſer: The Eagle, or the Sparrow; the Oſtrich, or the Fly: Thou haſt ſwarms of Teachers. All theſe *can tell thee:* Yea not only ſo, But

עוף *Generali ſuo ambitu quicquid per aërem volitat includit.* Hinc עפעפים *palpebræ à celeri motu*

Verſe 8. **Speak to the earth, and it ſhall teach thee.**

The word imports a ſilent enquiry, or a ſtudious meditation upon, or about a thing: ſpeak to it in thy heart and thoughts, or in thy deepeſt meditations, as was explained before. There is a different tranſlation. Some render, not by a Verb, but by a Noun, and repeating the Verb, *Ask*, out of the former direction, they give it thus, *Ask every ſlip, or ſprig, which grows in the earth, and it ſhall teach thee:* For the word *Shuah* ſignifies a branch, or a ſprig, a ſlip, or a plant, any thing that grows out of the earth. And ſo the ſence is carried thus, *Ask of the beaſt of the earth, ask of the fowls of the air*; yea, ask of every ſprig, or ſlip, or plant of the earth, and that ſhall teach thee alſo. So that as *Job* before ſent him to the beaſts and fowls, ſo now he ſends him to trees and plants, that they alſo may be his teachers. And yet he hath not done, here are more Maſters.

שיח; *Notat quicquid è corde vel ore emanat, meditationes, colloquia, preces, nec non apud ſe meditationes aliosq; actus mentales.* Bold. *Virgultum terræ.* Pagn. שיח *Significat quemlibet fruticem arbuſculum aut herbam.* Gen. 2. 5.

The fiſhes of the ſea ſhall declare unto thee.

The ſilence of fiſhes is grown to a proverb, *As mute as a fiſh.* How then can a fiſh declare? Fiſhes are ſo far from forming up words and ſentences, that they cannot make a ſound, or the rudeſt noiſe; yet they have a ſpeech, though they have no voice. The Scholars of *Pythagoras* were enjoyned ſilence for five or two years; here we have a ſort of Tutors who are alwayes ſilent. Theſe ſay not much, while they ſay little; but they ſay much, though they can ſay nothing. A fiſh is expreſſed by a word in the Hebrew, which ſignifies to multiply; and to encreaſe as a fiſh is an Hebraiſm for a great increaſe (*Gen.* 48. 16.) The very multitude and increaſe of fiſhes, their huge ſhoals, and innumerable numbers, declare much to us.

דגה. *Piſcis.* דג *Multiplicatus, inſtar piſcium auctus fuit.*

I might inſiſt largely upon theſe Teachers, and ſhew you how every creature hath a proper leſſon for us, and what thoſe leſſons are. I will give but a touch.

If you ask the beaſts, They will teach you to know and own God, from whom you receive ſo much good, ſo many benefits. That leſſon the Prophet call's the Jews to learn from the Ox and the Aſs, *Iſa.* 1. 3. *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his maſter's crib, but* Iſrael *doth not know.*

Go to the fowls of the air, and they will inſtruct you. Firſt, That God hath a care of his people, becauſe he hath a care of them who are ſo much inferiour to his people. Thus Chriſt ſupports our faith, and ſcatters diſtracting cares (*Mat.* 6. 26.) *Behold the fowls of the air, for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly father feedeth them; are ye not much better then they?* And as he takes care to feed them, ſo to preſerve them; *A Sparrow falls not to the ground without the will of your Father, ye are of more value then many ſparrows*; therefore be not afraid at the approach of fear. Will not God take care of you, who takes care of Sparrows? Secondly, The obſervation which the fowls of the air make of their ſeveral ſeaſons, teach us to keep time and ſeaſon. The Prophet makes that uſe (*Jer.* 8. 7.) *The Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, obſerve the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.* When we ſee the Swallow coming in the Spring, and going away towards Winter; when we obſerve the Turtle and the Crane timing it ſo exactly, do they not teach us to know the time of judgment, and the time of mercy; when it is Winter, and when it is Spring; when it is warm, and when it is cold?

Look upon the earth, and learn, Firſt, The power of God bearing it up: It is marvellous, even miraculous, that the earth ſhould hang upon nothing, that it ſhould hang in the thin air; that it ſhould hang there, where a tennis-ball, yea where a feather will not ſtay without ſupport. The earth hath nothing but the decree and power of God to bear it up. How doth this teach us the power of God, and the infinite ſtrength of his decree! Secondly, The earth teacheth us what we are, and what we muſt be, *Duſt thou* *art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return.* Ask the earth, and that will teach thee that thou art a brittle creature: Ask the graſs of the earth, and that will teach thee that thou art a withering creature: *Iſa.* 40. 6. *The voice ſaid, Cry; and he ſaid, what ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the field.* Thirdly, The earth calls us to fruitfulneſs, when we are plowed, manured and watered: and that they, who often drinking in the rain of Heavenly doctrine bring not forth fruit, are near unto curſing, *Heb.* 6. Laſtly, All the creatures teach us that ſpecial point which *Job* is upon, namely, *That the tabernacles of robbers proſper.*

For *Job* having ſaid in the former verſe, that the feet of the godly ſlide, or that they are trampled under foot, that robbers are rich, and oppreſſors proſper, he bids *Zophar Ask the beaſts, the fowls of the air, and the fiſhes of the ſea, whether it be not ſo or no.* As if he had ſaid, *Even beaſts and birds teach us, that it is thus among men: For are not the moſt innocent and harmleſs beaſts torn, vexed and devoured by the more cruel and ſtronger beaſts. There is no deſert in thoſe, why they are advanced, and proſper: Neither is there any fault at all in thoſe, why they are deſtroyed, and periſh. The fowls of the air teach this alſo; do you not ſee the greater preying upon the leſs: is not the innocent Dove grip't in the talons of the ravening Vulture; and the poor Partridge by the hauk? The ſea gives us the ſame inſtruction, for there alſo the Sharks and Whales,* &c. *ſwallow whole ſhoals of ſmaller fiſhes.* As there are beaſt-devouring beaſts, and fiſh-eating fiſhes; ſo there are *men-devouring, men-eating men*: There are *civil Canibals* in every Kingdom of the world, whoſe Tabernacles are glutted with proſperity.

Again, The beaſts and birds, *&c.* will tell you that the tabernacles of robbers proſper, if you put them this other queſtion, *In whoſe poſſeſſion are moſt of you? Who is your maſter? Come to the flocks of ſheep, and to the herds of cattel, and ask, whoſe are ye? They will anſwer, ſuch a wicked man is our maſter, a robber is our owner, an oppreſſour is Lord of all theſe flocks and herds. Ask the fowls of the air, and the fiſhes of the ſea, to whoſe tables are ye moſt ordinarily ſerved up? who feeds upon you? The fiſhes will ſay, We are carried up to the great mens tables, the robbers and oppreſſors of the earth feed upon us, we ſcarce ever come to the poor mans trencher, and but ſeldom* (comparatively) *to the good mans trencher; the greateſt ſtore of us is ſpent out upon the wicked, the tyrants of the earth glut themſelves with us, we ſatisfie the luſts, fat the backs, and fill the bellies of oppreſſors. Ask the earth for whom it ſends forth corn, and wine, and oyl, for whom ſhe gives out her treaſures of gold and ſilver, together with her rich materials for ornament and cloathing. The earth will tell you, moſt of my delicates are ſwallowed down by robbers; my ſilks and ſcarlets, my gems and precious ſtones, cloath and adorn the backs of robbers:* Thus paſs through every ſpecies of the creation, and all return this anſwer to the queſtion in hand, *The tabernacles of robbers proſper.* Thus your thoughts may travel through all the creatures, and receive particular inſtruction from them. *Zophar* ſaid, *Chap.* 11. 7. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?* Yea, ſaith *Job*, I can find him almoſt without ſearching, every thing I ſee ſhews me God. I need not go to the heights of Heaven, or the depths of the Sea, as if the knowledge of God were not to be had within the bounds of the viſible creature: whereas indeed every created form, informs us of the Creator; and every object we ſee, is as a teacher to the ear. The Apoſtle *James* gives a Caution (*Chap.* 1. 3.) *My brethren, be not many maſters:* Which we may underſtand either thus, be not Magiſterial and cenſorious (as if every one of you had many Maſters in him) towards your brethren: or thus, let not every one take upon him to be a teacher, or (as ſome) to be a whole univerſity of Teachers. For as it is ſaid, that *there are more Phyſitians then ſick perſons:* Every man almoſt will venture to preſcribe a Medicine. So we may ſay, there are more Maſters then ſcholars: There are more who think themſelves able to teach, then who are convinced that they have need to learn. Thus the Apoſtle would not have us to be *many Maſters:* Yet we ſee God hath provided us *many Maſters*, even as many as there be beaſts in the field, or birds in the air, as many as there be trees and graſs growing upon the earth, and fiſhes moving in the ſea.

Videbatur Zophar *ſapientiam extra fines rerum aſpectabilium coſlocaſſe.* Merc.

Hence take theſe two Corollaries.

Firſt, We who have had ſo many Teachers, that we might know God, and glorifie him as God, ſhall have a many condemners if we do not.

Secondly, If they ſhall be without excuſe, who know not God by the teaching of the creatures, how inexcuſable will they be, who know him not in Chriſt, who is taught and preached every day?

But the points of holy learning which *Job* eſpecially intendeth, are expreſſed in the two next verſes.

Verſe 9. **Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?** &c.

As if he had ſaid, *Though there are manifold leſſons to be learned from the beaſts, and from the fowls, and from the fiſhes, yet I call you in a ſpecial manner to learn that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, and that all theſe things are in the hand of the Lord.*

There are two points in theſe two verſes, which *Job* calls us to learn.

Firſt, *The work of creation*, ver. 9.

Secondly, *The work of preſervation, or providence*, verſ. 10.

The work of creation, *Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?* And if the hand of the Lord hath wrought them all, then the hand of the Lord doth diſpoſe them all too; which is the Argument he was upon.

Who knoweth not.] That is, every one knoweth this; or every one may know from the works of the Lord, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them.

That the hand of the Lord.] Why doth he ſay, *The hand of the Lord?* Was it not the word of the Lord that made the world? The Lord ſaid, *Let there be light, and let there be earth, and let there be ſeas, and let there be graſs;* and all things were ſo; how doth he ſay here, the hand of the Lord hath wrought them? I anſwer, the hand of the Lord, is no more then the word of the Lord; the hand of the Lord is the power of the Lord; and the word of the Lord is the power of the Lord too: Only, here he ſaith, that the hand of the Lord made them, to note, that the Lord made them immediately. *The hand of the Lord* put to a work, noteth his immediate work. *Who knows not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought theſe things?* That is, that the Lord, without any help or aſſiſtance, hath ſet up this mighty frame of Heaven and earth; that he alone hath provided and prepared all thoſe veſſels, which furniſh it for the uſe and accommodation of the ſons of men.

Who knoweth not in all theſe, &c.

That is, in one as well as in another. The loweſt as well as the higheſt works of God, ſhew that God wrought them. Some pieces and parts of the world, are more excellent then the reſt, but there is enough in any one of them to ſpeak out who made it.

Hence note, Firſt, *God alone made the world.*

Creation had but one hand in it. The hand of the Lord hath wrought. Every work of providence hath the hand of God in it, and ſome the hand of God only. But in creation the ſupream cauſe was all the cauſe, that knows nothing either of ſubordinate cauſes, or of inſtrumental. Some have asked, with what tools, or inſtruments, did God make the Heavens and the earth? with what ladders and ſcaffolds did he build ſo many ſtories, and after ſet up the roof over all? *Job* anſwers theſe fools, *Who knoweth not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them?*

Secondly, *The Lord hath ſo made all, that the very things which he hath made, proclaim that he made them.*

Who knoweth not in all theſe? or, *from all theſe.* Many works of providence are ſo done, that man cannot ſo much as be ſuſpected to have done them. God doth like God: He needs not ſubſcribe his name to his work; for *that his Name is near, his wonderous works declare.* It muſt be ſaid by way of affirmation, *This hath God wrought*; as well as by admiration, *What hath God wrought!* Now, if providence (wherein uſually man acts with God) act ſo much above man, that the whole is aſcribed to God: how much more doth creation declare it ſelf to be the ſole work of God, *Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the Lord hath made them?*

Naturalis Theologia. Socinus negat naturaliter ex animadversâ mundi machinâ Dei exiſtentiam & providentiam colligi, ſc. *ut abſurdum non ſit eſſe mundum & non eſſe Deum & providentiam, nempe quia præſtãtiſſimi Philoſophi non agnoverant.* Coc.

But it may be objected, To underſtand that the world was made, is the work of faith; How then do we know it from all theſe? Or how do the creatures demonſtrate their creation? Saith not the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 11.3. *Through faith we underſtand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; ſo that things which are ſeen, were not made of things which do appear?* I anſwer, Faith gives the higheſt underſtanding of theſe things; and there is ſomewhat of theſe things which we cannot underſtand but by Faith; yet the very creature doth demonſtrate a creation. A Chriſtian knows in a higher way then a Philoſopher; yet a Philoſopher may know that by reaſon, which a Chriſtian knows by Faith. A Believer is in a higher form, and hath a higher light then a Philoſopher, though both learn the ſame leſſon.

And this doth more convince, not only Atheiſts, who deny that there is a God, *Who hath wrought all theſe:* but thoſe alſo who improve not the works of God: for though we give God the greateſt glory when we underſtand by believing, yet we may underſtand this principle by reaſoning. The creature well viewed by a natural eye, tells the underſtanding, that a Divine power once created, and ſtill ordereth all theſe things.

Hence thirdly obſerve, in reference both to creation and providence,

That the Lord doth not only the greater things, but the leſſer.

Pſal. 145.6. Whatſoever is in Heaven, earth, or ſea, *he hath wrought them all.* When the Primitive Chriſtians were under the heat of perſecution, they lived upon God under this notion, *Acts* 4. 24. *Thou art God which haſt made heaven, and earth, and the ſea, and all that in them is:* For hence it follows, that he takes care of all. Providence is as large as creation. It was an ancient hereſie, that, but ſome of the creatures, or the beſt of them, were made by God, and that, the more troubleſome, and worſt, were made by the Devil. To which purpoſe that ſtory is famous, reported by *Auſtin*, in his firſt Tractate upon *John*, concerning a *Manichee*, that argued with an Orthodox Chriſtian againſt the Creation; who having perſwaded him, that God never troubled himſelf to make little Flyes, upon that conceſſion cauſed him to confeſs, that he made not the Bee, the Locuſt, and ſmaller Birds; having got this advantage, he leaves not his Sophiſtry, till he forced him to confeſs, that God made neither the Ox, nor the Elephant, no, nor man himſelf. The truth is, if we do not give God glory in making the leaſt of the creatures, we ſhall quickly be drawn to deny him glory in making the greateſt. As it is in ſinning, if we make not conſcience of committing the leaſt ſin (I do not ſay, that if we commit a little ſin, we ſhall preſently commit a great one) but if we commit it out of this opinion, that it is no great matter, if once we admit of a little ſin upon this ground, it will quickly bring the Conſcience to ſwallow the greateſt. 'Tis ſo about the works of God; if we deny his power in the work of creation, or his wiſdom in the work of providence, about the leaſt creature, we ſhall quickly grow to a kind of Atheiſm, and deny, or at leaſt not hold forth with power the work of God in any of the creatures, or that *His hand hath wrought them all.*

Auguſt. *Tract.* 1. *in* Joh. *Cum orthodoxus muſcam dixiſſet à diabolo factam, compulit fateri eum* Manichæus *ab eodem factã apẽ, locuſtã, lacertã, avẽ, bovem, elephantem, hominem.*

Verſe 10. **In whoſe hand is the ſoul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.**

The hand which made all, keeps all that he hath made in his hand. The former verſe holds out the creation, and this the conſervation of the world.

In whoſe hand.] The hand is put for power; and to be in the hand of God, is to be in the power of God.

Hence obſerve, *The ſame power that made the world, preſerveth the world.*

Si creaturæ à deo factæ ſunt manifeſtum eſt, quod in dei poteſtate ſunt ſicut artificiata in manu artificis. Aquin.

When men have done their work, they put it out of their hands; we uſually ſay, ſuch a thing is in, or under, my hand; that is, it is a doing, I am at work upon it; but as ſoon as we have done our work, we ſay, ſuch a thing is *out of my hand*; that is, I have done with it: Man cannot hold his work alwayes in his hand; but God doth: And there is a neceſſity that he ſhould. The world would preſently run out of its being, if it were not upheld by the ſame hand which at firſt gave it a being: When man ſinned, the world had ruined, if Chriſt (by whom all things were made, *John* 1.) had not ſtept in, to be the ſtay and prop of it, *By him all things conſiſt*, Col. 1. 17. *He upholdeth all things by the word of his power*, *Heb.* 1.9. He is that powerful word which made all things, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power; we owe the ſtanding of the world as much to Chriſt, as we do the creation of it. *In whoſe hand*

Is the ſoul of every living thing.] The Hebrew word ſignifies, not only the ſoul of man, but of any creature that breatheth, or the breathing of any creature. And it is put for the whole *compoſitum*, the body and the life. *Every living thing died:* So *Moſes* ſpeaks of the Flood. God put their lives out of his hand into the hand of the mercileſs waters: Yea, not only men, and beaſts, and birds, *&c.* but trees and plants, the graſs in the field, and the flowers in your gardens, live by the power of God: the trees in Winter are as dead, their leaves fall off, and their fruit is gathered, the fields are uncloathed and naked: but when the Spring comes, graſs comes, trees bud and bring forth fruit again; ſhall we aſcribe this to the Sun? ſhall we go no further then the ſeaſon for this? and ſay, the Spring is come, and therefore the graſs comes? No, *In his hand is the ſoul of every living thing:* There is a life in the graſs, and it is of God that the graſs grows, that the trees bloſſom and bring forth. *In his hand is the ſoul*

נפש Anima *qua vivitur cum ſenſu & ſenſibili appetitu ſpiritus hominis qua vivitur cum conſilio voluntatis. Omnis anima eſt in manu dei, quia ut produci ita ab ipſo habet conſervari.* Janſ. *in loc.*

Of every living thing.] Sometimes the word is reſtrained to man, *Gen.* 2. *Eve*, the firſt Woman, was ſo called, becauſe ſhe was the Mother *of all living*, yet ſhe was the Mother only of *living man*. Some take it ſo here, implying that the Lord, who made all ſouls, hath the ſoul of man eſpecially in his hand. But we need not reſtrain it thus; ſeeing the laſt clauſe of the verſe ſpeaks expreſly of the care of God towards man: *In whoſe hand is the ſoul of every living thing,*

And the breath of all mankind.] Or, *The ſpirit of all mans fleſh:* So Mr. *Broughton* reads it: Breath and ſpirit are often uſed promiſcuouſly; and *Ruah* ſignifies both.

Here 'tis taken for the breath, or breathing of man, which is but an act of life. *In whoſe hand is the breath of all mankind.* *Daniel* makes report to *Belſhazzar* (Dan. 5. 23.) what God had done for his father *Nebuchadnezzar*, in what great glory he had ſet him up, *&c.* and then reproves him, *The God, in whoſe hand thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy wayes, haſt thou not glorified. The God, in whoſe hand thy breath is.* *Belſhazzar* was a great Prince, the greateſt Monarch at that time upon the earth, he commanded all, he had the breath of many in his hand, as *Daniel* there ſpeaks of his *father, whom he would he ſlew, and whom he would he kept alive*, ſuch was the power of that great Monarch; but then he minds him, that he was not Lord of his own life; *Thy breath is in the hand of God*; if God will, he can keep thee alive; and if God will, he can take away thy life. It is true of God in the fulleſt extent. *Whom he will he ſlayes, and whom he will he keeps alive.*

ריח ב *Spiritus eſt flatus, ſeu reſpiratio univerſæ carnis.*

It is the comfort of our lives, that our lives are in the hand of God. *That which is in his hand, is in a ſafe hand.* It is not in the power of all the world to take away one life which God will keep. As the ſafety of the ſoul, in the ſtate of grace, lyes in this, that it is in the hand of God, as Chriſt argues in the tenth of *John*, *Ye are in my Fathers hand*; that is, your ſpiritual eſtate is in his hand, and *my Father, which gave you unto me, is greater then all, and no man is able to pluck you out of my Fathers hand.* Here is the ſafety of the Saints; and that's the priviledge we have under the Covenant of Grace by Chriſt, beyond what we had under the Covenant of works in *Adam*. Our ſpiritual life was then in our own hand; now it is in the hand of God. Here alſo in its proportion lyes the ſafety of our natural life; it is in the hand of God; God hath not only taken the life of our ſouls into his own hand, but the life of our bodies too; he diſpoſeth of lives as he pleaſeth; he can ſay to one in a day of common calamity, *Thou ſhalt have thy life for a prey*; and to another, *Thou ſhalt dye by the ſword*, &c. What can we ſay in theſe times of death, when the breath hath gone out of many thouſands; why hath it not gone out of our bodies? No other account can be given but this, Our breath is in the hand of God; were it not ſo, the breath of many of us had not been in our bodies at this time.

Further, It ſhould teach us to honour that God, in whoſe hand our breath is. *Daniel* checked *Belſhazzar*, becauſe he failed in this, *The God in whoſe hand thy breath is, haſt thou not honoured.* How careful are we to pleaſe thoſe who have our eſtates in their hands? We reſpect him alſo very much, in whoſe hand our health is: But if our life be in the hand of another (as ſometimes it is) how do we ſtudy and ſtrive to comply with the commands, yea with the very humours of ſuch a man? Shall we not honour God, *in whoſe hand our breath is?*

Laſtly, If our breath be in the hand of God, it teacheth us, that *the time of our death, and of the going forth of our breath, is ſet down and diſpoſed by God.* Sometimes a ſickneſs indangers our life, and threatens to ſtop our breath preſently; but God ſaith, no, it ſhall not be. Sometimes outward violence invades us; but as *David* comforts himſelf, *Our times are in Gods hand*: And as none can take away life, if He will continue it; ſo none can continue life, if He will take it away. If God ſend for our breath (how unwilling ſoever we are to part with it) it muſt come. One of the Ancients beſpeaks a wicked man thus, *Thou haſt thy breath in thy noſtrils, and thou art unwilling to let it go; but if God ſpeak the word, thy breath will go.* Again (ſaith he) *When God ſhall reunite theſe two, thy body and thy breath, and caſt both into hell together, he will hold thy breath in thy body whether thou wilt or no*: Here is a double puniſhment; he will fetch thy breath out of thy body, when thou wouldſt keep it; and he will keep thy breath in thy body, when thou wouldſt be ſeparated from it. Thou ſhalt dye when thou wouldſt live; and thou ſhalt live when thou wooeſt death, and deſireſt to be diſſolved, yea to be annihilated.

This alſo adminiſters comfort to the Saints, that as when their breath goes forth, Gods hand leads it forth; ſo that hand of God will preſerve their breath for ever. He gives them eternal life, and that is in his hand; *He can lengthen out life to all eternity, in whoſe hand life is.* He that gives us life of a ſpan-long, can give us life eternity-long.

Thus we have ſeen *Job*'s firſt Argument from the creatures, all which acknowledge God their Maker, God their Diſpoſer, and Preſerver; they have their being, and their well being, together with the changes and continuance of both from him.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taſt his meat?
With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes, underſtanding.
With him is wiſdom and ſtrength; he hath counſel and underſtanding.
Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he ſhutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

THe knot of connection, which ties theſe words to the former, lyes ſo cloſe, that many have been troubled to find it out.

First, It is conceived by ſome, that *Job* having in the former verſes, the ſeventh and eighth, called his friends to read the Book of Nature; *Ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee*, &c. Turn over all the leaves of that great Volume, the World, and they will be inſtruction to thee. He now purſues the ſame point, and tells them, that it would not be unprofitable for them, or loſt labour, if they, in purſuance of his counſel, ſhould ſet upon this ſtudy; **For the ear tryeth words, and the mouth taſteth his meat**; that is, every ſenſe will give them information about its proper objects, and ſhew the peculiar end of its inſtitution: he inſtanceth in two ſenſes, Hearing and Taſting, by a *Synechdoche*, for all the reſt; as if he had ſaid, *Each power and faculty with which the nature of man is endowed, will be a contributor towards the attainment of this knowledge; and declare that the wiſdom and power of God is eminent and conſpicuous in the creature.* And becauſe old men have heard many words, and have taſted many meats; that is, have had long experience of things; therefore he addeth in the twelfth verſe, *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes, underſtanding*; they who have run the longeſt courſe in the world, and have ſeen the greateſt variety of changes, muſt needs know moſt of God, becauſe every change holds forth ſomewhat of God.

Agitur de creatoris cognitione percipienda ex creaturis experimento rerum ſenſibilium, quæ per illos duos ſenſus, guſtum videlicet & auditum, ſignificantur. Aquin. *placet etiã* Sanct.

Secondly, The connection appears to others thus; as if *Job* would here again meet with that opinion, which his friends (*Zophar* eſpecially) had more then once inſinuated, that the doctrine which they were upon, and had taught him, was a deep myſtery, and very hard to be underſtood, that it was (which ſome now glory in, *Theologia cryptica*) *Divinity in the myſtery*. No, ſaith he, there is no ſuch matter; the point you are upon is very plain and eaſie; you need not make ſo many preambles, as if it were all under a vail, or within a curtain of ſecrecy (as was hinted in the former Chapter) for the things are plain. As the ear tryeth words, and the mouth taſteth meat, ſo it is here; theſe things are as obvious, as ſenſible objects to the ſenſes; we may learn them by ordinary hearing, which is the uſe of the ear; and by common experience, which is imported by the taſt.

Thirdly, That *Job* refers to his own doctrine; As if he had ſaid, I have held forth my opinion concerning the dealings of God with juſt men. And the truth I have maintained, is as plain and eaſie to the underſtanding, as ſounds and languages are to the ear, or as meats unto the mouth. For as the underſtanding is to things rational and ſpeculative, ſo are the ſenſes to things external and ſenſitive; the palate to meats, and the ear to words.

Fourthly, That *Job* being about to lift up the Name of God, to ſpeak out his glory in the attributes of his power and wiſdom; and that God by his abſolute ſoveraignty over all creatures, may afflict or proſper, do good or evil as he pleaſeth; doth here preface or premiſe this general commendation of his wiſdom, that God doth as exactly apprehend all that is done or ſpoken in the world, as the ear of a man tryeth the words of him that ſtands next him, whether they be true or falſe, for him or againſt him: or as the palate taſteth meat, whether it be ſweet or bitter, liking or loathſome. All the wayes of the children of men are before the Lord, he diſcerns the voice of all their actions, and the language of every mans life: he knows whether their works be ſweet or bitter, whether good or evil. The Pſalmiſt ſpeaks near the language of this interpretation, (*Pſal.* 94. 9.) *He that planted the ear, ſhall he not hear? he that formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee?* God is elſewhere ſaid to have eyes, which try good and bad; *he* is here ſpoken of as having ears diſcerning truth and falſhood. And his ears are ſo quick, that they take in the leaſt whiſper, the ſtilleſt voice; there is not a word ſpoken, but the voice is heard by God: *He hears our ſilence, as well as our ſpeech, and can tell what we ſay, when we ſay nothing*: He hears the voice of our thoughts, our thoughts are as loud in the ears of God, as a trumpet in our ears. God hears the voice of our actions, though we utter no words. *The voice of thy brothers blood crieth*; thou haſt done a bloody deed, and that hath a voice, a crying voice (*Habbak.* 2. 11.) *The ſtone ſhall cry out of the wall.* The Lords ear hears the voice of all creatures, even of thoſe that cannot ſpeak; he can do what he pleaſeth, and he is as clear in all he doth, as the ear is in trying words, or the taſte in diſcerning meats.

Divina ſapientia omnia quæ loquuntur cogitantur aut fiunt, ita cognoſcit quaſi illorum audiret voces, quod auriū eſt; aut guſtaret ſapores, quod faucium eſt. Sanct. *Senſus percipiunt ſonos, ſapores,* &c. *Nonne oportet deum qui hæc dedit omniſciū eſſe?* Coc.

Every excellency in the creature is in God by way of eminency. Doth the ear of man try words? then the ear of God doth much more. Doth the mouth of man taſte meat? much more doth the Lord taſte men. Hence he ſometime ſpeaks diſtaſtingly of men, they are repreſented as a burthen to his ſtomack, and he as ready to ſpue them out.

Further, The words ſeem to carry a reproof of the raſh and inconſiderate judgement of *Jobs* friends about what had been ſpoken. This Expoſition may be taken two wayes. Either

Socios taxat quod non diligenter expenderent à ſe dicta, q. d. *veſtrū ſane erat purgatam aurem afferre non me carpere,* &c Merc.

Firſt, In reference unto what *Job* had offered.

You have heard my judgement about the diſpenſations of God before, and I have ſpoken it a ſecond time, *that the tabernacles of the wicked proſper, that many a godly man is as a deſpiſed lamp*: Now, *Doth not the ear try words? Doth not the mouth taſte meats?* As if he had ſaid, *You have not yet weighed nor conſidered what I have propoſed; if you had, I ſhould not have needed to come upon this point the ſecond time; you have been raſh in your judgements, your ears have not done their office, you have not pondered my ſpeech, nor the arguments and reaſons which I have produced in confirmation of my opinion.*

Or ſecondly, in reference to what *Jobs* friends had offered. As if he had ſaid, *You have declared many things to me* *me, and you think that I have taken no notice of them, but I aſſure you I have, my ear hath as exactly tryed your words, as the mouth or the palate of a man taſteth meats.*

Taking it thus, we may beſt read the words comparatively, (as we find them *chap.* 34. 3.) *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.* Thus the ſenſe is moſt clear. Hearken diligently to my words, and then you may underſtand my meaning as diſtinctly as your taſte doth what you eat.

בחן *Probare, tentare, penitùs explorare, & diligenter expendere. Aurem non externā tātum intellige ſed & internam* i.e. *exactum judiciū quod iis quæ audiuntur eſt adhibendum.* Merc. *Aurium & Stateræ idē eſt nomen in Hebræo, duæ enim aures ſunt velut bilances quibus expenduntur quæ audimus.*

The word which we tranſlate *try*, ſignifies *exact tryal*, a perfect exploration. The ear is the chief Inſtrument of the underſtanding, the ſenſe of diſcipline. Here *Job* ſpeaks not only of the outward ear, but of the ear as it acts with the underſtanding, which not only hears the ſound of words, or knowes *the Engliſh of them*, but diſcerns the meaning and ſcope of them. This *Job* eſpecially intendeth, when he ſaith, *The ear tryeth words.*

Obſerve, *The ear muſt do more then hear, in hearing it muſt try what it heareth.*

He puts that which is properly an act of the underſtanding upon the ear, which is but an outward ſenſe, namely, to try the truth or falſhood of thoſe things that are ſpoken. The Original word for an ear (repreſents us with this duty of the ear) being in the dual number, ſignifies *a pair of ballances*, to note, that when we *are hearing we ſhould be weighing*; we ſhould put every word into the ſcales as we receive it. *Doth not the ear try words?* When you have received a piece of gold you try it, and there is a double tryal, a tryal by the *Touchſtone*, and a tryal by the *Ballance*. Every one that doubteth will go to the Touchſtone to try whether it be good mettal or no, and he will go to his ballances and try whether it be weight or no. Thus when words are ſpoken they ſhould be tryed, tryed by the touchſtone and ballance of the Sanctuary. An attentive ear, and a holy underſtanding, will never put them among our treaſures of knowledge or leading principles, till they have brought them to this tryal.

The point layes a juſt reproof upon thoſe who hear many words, but try none. It is ſaid of the *Bereans* (*Act.* 17.) that when an Apoſtle ſpake, they tryed his words; they might have truſted *Paul* as ſoon as any man alive, that he would not put any falſe Coyn upon them, that he would not ſpeak a word that wanted a grain of weight, yet their ears would try the words of *Paul*, though he ſpake by inſpiration immediately from heaven, though he had an infallible Spirit. If this duty were obſerved, if hearers would try words, ſo many light pieces, light doctrines, which bear no weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary, would not be purſed up, and put in among our treaſures. Many make treaſure of light and erroneous doctrine, of baſe coyn, and counterfeit money: The reaſon is, Becauſe the ear doth not try, the underſtanding and ear joyn not together. *Pſal.* 62. 11. *God hath ſpoken once, and twice have I heard it*; that is, he heard it with his outward ear, and he heard it with his underſtanding: He duly weighed what God ſpake. Thus you muſt do if you will hear to purpoſe, be it who will that ſpeaks; hear it once, and hear it again, that is, hear it with a ſenſitive ear, and hear it with an intellective ear, judge of it and try what it is. Our Saviour Chriſt cautions us to *take heed how we hear*; though to hear be a natural act, yet there is an artificial hearing, there is an heavenly art in it. *The ear muſt be taught by the Spirit to hear, or elſe it can never hear what the Spirit ſaith.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *No doctrine ought to be rejected until it be tryed.*

As none ought to be received till it be tryed, ſo none to be rejected. *Job* taxeth his friends, that they out of prejudice had caſt off what he had ſpoken. Doth not the ear try words? Why have you not done me that right, as to examine the things I have ſpoken, before you cenſure me? you ſlight and contemn me, as if I were a man diſtracted and out of my wits; as though my words were not worth the weighing. *It is as dangerous to refuſe, as to receive what we have not examined.* For, however a doctrine may be worthy to be rejected which we do not try, yet we do not our duty to reject it before we have tried. As we ſay of a judge, he that judges a man before he hears him, though poſſibly the ſentence which he paſſeth may be juſt, yet the judge is unjuſt; ſo it is in this caſe, if we reject a doctrine before tryal, though poſſibly it be worthy to be rejected, yet we are worthy to be reproved for rejecting it. We erre in laying aſide an errour, before we have found it to be an errour. The beſt that can be ſaid of ſuch, is, that they have done well by accident. And as they need pardon who do evil, though they know it not; ſo they have nothing to boaſt of, who refuſe that which is evil before they know it to be ſo. The Apoſtle gives that rule (1 *Theſ.* 5. 21.) when he had ſaid, *Deſpiſe not prophecyings*, be diligent in attending the means, he adds, *Prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good.* As we muſt not reject or refuſe to hear the Word, ſo we muſt not receive every word we hear, *but try all things, and hold faſt that which is good. Doth not the ear try words?*

And the mouth taſte his meat?

The Hebrew is, *Doth not the palate taſte his meat?* There is a diſpute among Philoſophers what is the proper *ſenſorium* or inſtrument of taſting. Moſt give it to the whole *mouth*, ſome to the *palate*, others to the *tongue*, not a few to the tip of the tongue; there is a fifth opinion which aſcribes it to the *nerves* which diffuſe themſelves quite through the tongue; a ſixth places it in the *throat*. Hence *Ariſtotle* reports of *Philoxenus* an *Epicure*, who wiſhed that he had a neck as long as a Crane, that he might the longer taſte the pleaſure, and take the more delight in his meat. Which way ſoever it is in nature, the Moral truth is the ſame, which you may take in this brief Note.

Ariſt. l. 3. *Eth. c.* 10.

Every ſence hath a diſtinct office, the Ear is for hearing, the Mouth for taſting, the Eye for ſeeing, the Noſtrils for ſmelling; Thus the Lord hath made a Polity in the *body Natural*. The body of man is a kinde of corporation, every officer ſtandeth in his place, and hath his duty. The comlineſs of the body natural, and the comlineſs of a body Politique, whether civil or ſpiritual, ſhines in the due diſcharge of each members office: every member needs the help of his neighbour member, and the operation of every member is a help to the whole; The eye ſees, the ear hears, the mouth taſtes, as a ſervant, and for the ſervice of the whole body.

Ut auris voces mens haud mala ſententia. Druſ.

There is yet another tranſlation (obſerved by *Chryſoſtom*) in ſome of the *Greek verſions*, where it is read thus, *The ear tryeth words, and the mind taſteth meats.* One letter added in the greek changes the ſignification from the *mouth to the mind*; taking it with that literal addition, theſe words are an explication of the former: As the ear tryeth words or ſounds, ſo the mind trieth meats. What meats? *Truth is the meat of the mind, the nouriſhment of the underſtanding.* Hence the word of truth is often compared to things edible and potable, to meat and drink, to honey, and the honey comb. And the want of the word of truth is called a Famine by the Prophet. The ſoul ſtarves where the word of truth is not rightly divided, cut out, or carved to it. All the excellencies of God that are held forth in the word, are the ſouls food, (*Pſal.* 34. 8.) *O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good*; what is it that taſteth how ſweet the Lord is? It is the mind working, meditating, and acting faith upon him. *Faith is the ſouls taſter*, faith is the mouth of the ſoul, which not only taſteth but cheweth the promiſes and manifeſtations of God to his people, and ſo makes meat of them; *Meditation turns the promiſes into marrow. My ſoul* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 63. 5, 6.) *ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* As there is all manner of riches, ſo all manner of dainties in the believing meditations of God: every promiſe is a diſh, and all the promiſes are a royal feaſt to faith. Heathens have given this notion about the taſte of words. *Cicero* in his Oration againſt *Piſo*, ſaith, *Pompey could not taſte that Philoſophy.* He was a great Souldier, a man of action, and troubled not himſelf with ſedentary ſtudies, and bookiſh contemplations. And as there is a ſpiritual taſte, ſo a ſpiritual hearing, or rather theſe are the ſame; to taſte ſpiritually is to hear ſpiritually. It was the meat of Chriſt *to do the will of him that ſent him*: it is meat to ſuch as are Chriſts, to hear the will of God by thoſe whom he ſends, and the more they hear, the more wiſdom they get, as followeth,

Pompeius non guſtaret illam Philoſophiam. Cic. in Piſon. *Guſtare ejus ſermonem volo.* Plaut. in Moſtel. *Act.* 6. *Judicare genus eſt ipſius ſentire qui namque ſentit judicat aliquo modo.* Ariſt. l. 2. de An.

Verſ. 12. **With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes underſtanding.**

בשישם *in decrepitis.*

With the ancient is wiſdom.] The ſenſes are a door to the underſtanding, both acting together lay up treaſures of knowledge, therefore with the *ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes underſtanding.* The word which we tranſlate *ancient*, ſignifies not the firſt, no nor the ſecond (for the Hebrews reckon three) but the third and laſt ſtep of Old age. The firſt, by their calculation begins at the year threeſcore, and extends to threeſcore and ten: when man is threeſcore, he enters (ſay they) the borders of old age, and while he is travelling to threeſcore and ten, he is in the firſt territory of old age. The ſecond reaches from threeſcore and ten to fourſcore: he is an old man indeed who attains that reckoning, (*Pſal.* 90. 10.) The third is that whole ſpace be it longer or ſhorter, that man lives beyond fourſcore, and that is properly meant by the word uſed in this Text, *with the ancient is wiſdom*; and the more ancient any are, the more wiſdom they may be ſuppoſed to have.

Triplex ſenectus apud Hebræos, decrepiti ſunt annoſiores ſenibus. Merc.

Not that every old, or every decrepit old man hath wiſdom; ſome have attained the laſt degree or ſtep of old age, who have not attained the firſt degree of wiſdom: They have walked in a vain ſhadow, and have learned nothing. But when he ſaith, *with the ancient is wiſdom,* he means; Firſt, it is the duty of old men to ſhew forth wiſdom. Secondly, old men have had a great opportunity to gather wiſdom, a price hath been in their hands, though poſſibly they have not had hearts to make uſe of it. It is not running through a great many years, that makes men wiſe: *wiſdom is the gift of God, not of time.* And as this doth not infer, that all old men are wiſe, ſo neither doth it infer, that none but old men are. Wiſdom is not ſo with the ancient, as if it could be no where elſe; Gray hairs have not ingroſſed that whole commodity, nor is it all given and granted to them. *Wiſdom doth not alwayes lean upon a ſtaff, nor look through Spectacles: It doth not alwayes* (as ſome deſcribe venerable old age) *go upon three legs, nor ſee with four eyes. Young men may have wiſdom if God give it, and old men cannot have wiſdom unleſs God give it.* Some young men have underſtood as much as the ancient, yea more then the ancient, as there will be a clearer occaſion to ſhew at the thirty ſecond Chapter, *verſ.* 7, 8, 9. whither I refer the Reader, if God ſhall carry on this work ſo far by my hand.

Obſerve, at preſent, Firſt, *Old men ſhould be wiſe men. With the ancient is wiſdom.*

Where ſhould we go for wiſdom but unto them? Some will not ſo much as ſuſpect young men for much wiſdom, but we have reaſon to look for it among the Ancients. The Apoſtle (1 *John* 2. 11, 12.) writ to Chriſtians of all ſorts and ſizes, under the titles of *little children, young men, and fathers,* and he gives a ſpecial reaſon of his dedication to either of them. *I write unto you little children, becauſe your ſins are forgiven. I write to you young men, becauſe you are ſtrong,* &c. *I write unto you fathers, why? Becauſe you have known him which was from the beginning.* He gives a reaſon ſutable to old men, *I write unto you fathers, becauſe ye have known him which was from the beginning.* As if he had ſaid, wiſdom and knowledge are amongſt old men, amongſt the fathers. I take it for granted, that you are knowing men, therefore I write unto you about theſe depths of knowledge. *With the ancient is wiſdom.* The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 5. 12.) gives a ſevere reproof to thoſe who *when for the time they ought to be teachers, yet had need that one teach them again which be the firſt principles of the Oracles of God. When for the time,* that is, they had a great deal of time, and therefore their proficiency in holy knowledge ſhould have been great. And proportionably how much time every one had, ſuch a talent he hath had, and he ſhall be reckoned with, as having had it to get wiſdom. Time in it ſelf cannot advantage us, but time bringeth advantages with it for the compaſſing of the greateſt undertakings, and for the perfecting of thoſe who are moſt imperfect. Time is not an empty duration. God hath filled time with helps to eternity, and with means *to know him the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, which is eternal life.* Wo to thoſe that have not competently learned this great leſſon, *when for the time they ought to be teachers,* &c. An old man ignorant is more childiſh then a child. To ſee an old man in the *firſt rudiments* or *primer* of natural knowledge is uncomly; but how dreadful is it to ſee an old man not able to read nor underſtand the *primmer of the Goſpel,* or the firſt principles of Religion; we have ſeen ſad experiences of ſome who have lived under powerful means, even till decrepit old age, even until this third degree of old age, and yet have not been in their *A. B. C.* of ſaving knowledge, being unable to ſpel or put two letters together in the things of God, or to make out any one concluſion underſtandingly about the neceſſaries to ſalvation. It is bad enough when children and young men are ignorant, and fooliſh in the things of heaven; but with what tears ſhould we lament it, when with the ancient there is no wiſdom, *nor underſtanding in length of dayes.* Which croſſeth the ſecond part of *Jobs* Aſſertion,

Turpis & ridicula res eſt ſenex elementaris.

And in length of dayes underſtanding.] Both parts of the ſentence have the ſame ſence. *In length of dayes,* or in many dayes, that is, by the experiences which we get in length of dayes, underſtanding is improved and heightned. Experience is a great teacher. The Apoſtle tells us that every experience we have of God ſhould teach us to hope in God. *Experience worketh hope* (Rom. 5.) *Experience alſo worketh knowledge.* Experience is a *tedious Maſter,* it keeps us long at School; but experience is a *ſure maſter,* and we may learn much by experience. *In length of dayes is underſtanding.*

Scientia domi paratur ex libris, prudentia ex itinere & uſu rerum.

Obſerve upon the whole verſe, *Old men are to be honoured, and their counſel to be reſpected.*

With them (probably) there is moſt wiſdom, and therefore they deſerve moſt reſpect. Hence the Scripture calleth us often to reverence gray hairs, and that we ſhould riſe up to old men; not that we are to adore, which is indeed to dote upon old age; it is doting to think that every thing muſt be true which an old man ſaith, or which the Fathers have aſſerted. But as it is the dotage of any man, to credit any thing which an old man ſpeaks, or to pin our faith upon the opinion of the Ancients, ſo it is a ſin (beſides the incivility of it) to ſlight or undervalue what old age ſpeaks. Old men having injoyed the like means that young men have, and having made improvement of the means which they have injoyed, are to be looked upon with veneration, and their counſel is to be received with more reſpect then that of young men. What deſtroyed the Kingdom of *Rehoboam?* he followed the counſel of the young men, and would not follow the advice of the old Councellors, who had been with his Father, and had long known the carriage of the Kingdom, and the way of government: He takes young mens counſel, and ſo overthroweth all. The ſame error and danger lyes in ſpiritual, as well as in temporal affairs. An ancient Writer, deſcribing the happineſs of a City, ſaith, *Then a City is happy, when it uſeth the counſel of old men, and the ſtrength of young men:* When it hath the heads of ancient men, and the hands of young men; the one to give counſel and advice, the other to act and execute; then a City, or Commonwealth, is like to be ſafe and flouriſh. Though we muſt not tye up our ſelves to the counſel of the ancient, nor eſteem all truth becauſe the Ancients ſay ſo; Truth is older then the eldeſt; Truth hath the grayeſt hair, the hoarieſt head: And though if truth be ſpoken by a Youth, we muſt reverence it, and reject error, though an old man be the patron; yet old men muſt have reverence in what they ſay, and deſerve preheminence in counſel.

Maximè ſalva eſt civitas, ubi conſilia ſenum, juvenū arma obtinent. Plut.

Job ſeems to apply this to his friends. You are men of years, therefore you ſurely have attained much underſtanding. You may well know what I have taught, and what I am now teaching, That God is tranſcendent in wiſdom, that his knowledge as well as his power is over all. You muſt needs know that God works myſteriouſly and ſecretly, that he works ſupreamly and authoritatively, that he needs not give an account unto the children of men, *With the ancient is this wiſdom, and in length of dayes this underſtanding*; This is the wiſdom which I ſhall now demonſtrate.

Verſ. 13. **That, with him is wiſdom and ſtrength, he hath counſel and underſtanding.**

With him.] The Antecedent is not the ancient man ſpoken of before, with him wiſdom may be, but not ſtrength. Old men do probably increaſe in wiſdom, but they do certainly and unavoidably decreaſe in ſtrength. Here then we muſt look for another Antecedent diſtinct from the ancient man. *With him*, that is, *with God*, about whoſe providence and juſtice I have ſpoken, with him is wiſdom and ſtrength; as if he had ſaid, if men by hearing and taſting gather up much knowledge in a tract of time, and length of dayes; then what treaſures of knowledge and wiſdom are there in God, who is the ancient of dayes, and who is as old as eternity. *Job* argues from the leſs to the greater: with God who is eternal, and inhabiteth eternity, there is wiſdom and ſtrength, and he hath counſel and underſtanding.

With him there is wiſdom and ſtrength.

Ex ſapientia & fortitudine confecit divinâ providentiam eſſe omnibus partibus perfectam.

We met with both theſe attributes of God, *Chap.* 9. *verſ.* 4. *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardned himſelf againſt him and proſpered?* Therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them here, only a word.

Firſt, *God is infinitely wiſe and ſtrong.* He is wiſe to deſign, and ſtrong to effect.

Secondly, *they who want wiſdom muſt go to God for it. With him is wiſdom*, as if he had ſaid, You may gather wiſdom among the creatures, and from obſervation, but all wiſdom is laid up in God. Study alone will not make you wiſe, experiences alone will not make you wiſe, you muſt go to the Fountain of wiſdom; So the Apoſtle directs (*Jam.* 1. 5.) *If any of you lack wiſdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.* And again, (*verſ.* 16.) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights*; (Holy wiſdom is not a vapour which fumes up from the earth, but an influence which falls from that light of heaven) *with whom there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning.*

Some conceive that *Job* here anſwers the counſel of *Bildad*, (Chap.8. verſ. 8.) *Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of their fathers, for we are but of yeſterday*, &c. I grant (ſaith he) we are to enquire of former ages; I am of your opinion too, that, with the ancient is wiſdom; yet I do not expect to find all wiſdom among the ancient, (their Well hath not depth enough to yield theſe waters to all comers, or for all occaſions) no, I muſt go to God; *With him is wiſdom, and he hath counſel and underſtanding.* Though all the ancient men in the world, and ancient Councels, affirm that, which the word of God denies, we muſt not believe them, for *with him is wiſdom.* In the 28. Chapter of this book, *verſ.* 12. the queſtion is put, *Where ſhall wiſdom be found? and where is the place of underſtanding?* Where? All the creatures diſclaim it, *The depth ſaith, it is not in me, and the ſea ſaith, it is not with me.* Though we may gain wiſdom by converſing with the creatures, yet there is no creature hath wiſdom in his keeping, or at his diſpoſing. That's the priviledge of God; *With him is wiſdom. With him*, as with a Maſter, as with a Lord; His it is. *With him*, as with a diſpenſer, as with a Steward; He gives it out as he pleaſeth, he beſtowes it upon whom he will; all wiſdom is Originally in him, and derivatively from him. (*Chap.*15.8.) *Haſt thou heard the ſecret of God, and doeſt thou reſtrain wiſdom to thy ſelf?* As if he had ſaid, Thou talkeſt as if thou hadſt been of Gods counſel, or at leaſt as if thou hadſt learnt knowledge, not only from the mouth of men, but immediately from the mouth of God himſelf.

Thirdly Obſerve, *That all the wiſdom of man, compared with God, is no wiſdom.*

Our wiſdom is fooliſhneſs compared with God. I ground it from the Text, thus. He had ſaid before, *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes underſtanding.* Now ſaith he, *With him is wiſdom, and he hath counſel and underſtanding.* As if he had ſaid, I told you of wiſdom in old men, and of underſtanding in length of dayes, but I aſſure you this wiſdom is nothing to the wiſdom I now ſpeak of. He means not a wiſdom different in kind; for if there be true wiſdom in old men, it is a drop of Gods ocean, a beam of the Father of lights. But the wiſdom that is in God carries the name of wiſdom from the wiſdom that is in old men. As all the light of the Stars is but darkneſs compared to the light of the Sun; ſo there is wiſdom with men, with old men eſpecially, and there is wiſdom with God: But the wiſdom that is in God, who is the ancient of dayes, extinguiſheth and overcometh all the wiſdom in men, though they be never ſo ancient. *With him is wiſdom and ſtrength.*

He hath counſel and underſtanding.

Here are four words uſed in reference to God: we had but two before in reference to old men, *wiſdom*, and *underſtanding.* But with God there is *wiſdom, ſtrength, counſel*, and *underſtanding*; and though three of the four are uſed promiſcuouſly, yet as they ſtand here together we may give them a diſtinct ſenſe.

Underſtanding conſiſts in finding out ſecrets and myſteries, in diving to the bottom of truths. With God there is underſtanding, he findes out the moſt hidden myſteries, his name is the *Revealer of Secrets.*

Secondly, **Counſel** is properly that which fits means to the attaining of an end. When we have a buſineſs to do, we go to counſel, and Counſel is to provide ſutable means for the carrying on of ſuch a deſign, and the accompliſhing of our deſires.

Thirdly, **Wiſdom**, as it ſtands diſtinct from underſtanding and counſel, conſiſts in the due ordering of thoſe means which counſel hath found out. Thus underſtanding findes out the matter, counſel declares the means, and wiſdom manages and diſpoſeth all towards the attainment of the end. All theſe are in God,

And a fourth, which is **Strength** to execute and carry on the means (according to the dictates of underſtanding, counſel and wiſdom) home to the end. If a man be furniſhed with the greateſt meaſure of underſtanding to find out, of counſel to contrive, of wiſdom to diſpoſe, yet if he want an arm of ſtrength, what can he do? 'Tis true, wiſdom is better then weapons of war, yet what can wiſdom do without weapons of war? A good head is better then a ſtrong arm, yet what can a good head do without a ſtrong arm? But where wiſdom and weapons of war, where a good head and a ſtrong arm joyn, what can they not do?

Job to demonſtrate the abſolute compleatneſs of God in all his adminiſtrations, ſhewes all theſe meeting in God. Would you have underſtanding? it is in him, he can ſearch out deep things: Would you have counſel? He can direct you to the moſt proper means. *With him is counſel.* Would you have wiſdom? He can mannage and order means to the beſt advantage: *He is the God only wiſe.* Would you have ſtrength? He can execute and bring to paſs effectually whatſoever he intendeth, his power is over all, and there is nothing too hard for him. Thus the glory of God is lifted up, not only above the actings, but above the thoughts of man.

Hence Obſerve, *God is compleat in all perfections.*

Among men excellencies are ſcattered, and lye divided, one hath depth of underſtanding, a ſecond clearneſs for counſel, a third is enriched with treaſures of wiſdom, a fourth is fortified with a hand of power. 'Tis rare when any two of theſe meet in one man; and he is a kind of miracle of men, in whom they all meet, though but in ſome low or languid degree. But in God they meet all, and continue alwayes in the higheſt degree. Thoſe things which ſingle put honour and value upon man, concenter in God. Who would not ſeek unto and depend on God? Who would not have God his friend, in whom he hath all friends, and who is ſuch a friend, that having him we need not care nor fear who is our enemy?

One God helping, is more then all men oppoſing. When word was brought to a great *Carthaginian* Commander in their war againſt the *Romans*, that the Enemy was very ſtrong and numerous; He anſwer'd the trembling Intelligencer, *How many do you reckon me for?* Some men are of ſuch vaſt wiſdom ſtrength and courage, that one of them may be muſtered for a whole Army of men. *How many then may we reckon God for*, who alone hath all that which all men have among them, who alone can do more then all men combined together can? Men act their ſeveral parts in the ſcene of worldly affairs, but God acteth all parts. As he that rides poſt a long journey, takes freſh horſes to carry him through; one horſe carries him the firſt ſtage, and there he is left: A ſecond ſpeeds him to another Stage, and there ſtayes: In the ſame manner a third to a third. So it is in tranſacting any great buſineſs, one man will help you thus far, and another will carry you ſo far, and a third yet farther. One carrieth us as far as counſel and wiſdom work, but he wants ſtrength; another hath ſtrength, but he wants faithfulneſs. But God carries us through the whole journey of our works, he is never tired, nor can he be taken off. (*Iſa.* 40.28.) *The mighty God fainteth not, neither is weary, and there is no ſearching of his underſtanding.* Yea, not only hath he this unweariedneſs in himſelf, but he communicates it to his, *the young men ſhall faint*, (that is, they that are ſtrong, eſpecially they that boaſt in their own ſtrength) *but they that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles, they ſhall run and not be weary, and they ſhall walk and not faint.* The Lord gives his much of himſelf, *they ſhall act like God who truſt in God.*

Job having arrayed the Lord in all theſe excellencies, proceeds to illuſtrate what he had aſſerted by ſome ſpecial inſtances. As if he had ſaid, leſt any ſhould think that I ſpeak only general notions, I will give you particular proofs, which you who are old men have ſurely made out by your own Obſervation, and are able from experience to atteſt.

Verſ. 14. **Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he ſhutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.**

Here is an inſtance of the ſtrength and power of God, yea of his wiſdom and underſtanding; all theſe concur in one act of providence; though ſome one appear and be put forth more eminently. I will tell you (ſaith *Job*) what God doth: this God of whom I have ſpoken great things, doth great things; Yea, it is far eaſier for him to do great things, then for me to ſpeak of them; for himſelf can as eaſily, and as ſpeedily do them, as ſpeak them. The Works which ſpeak him great, are more then can be ſpoken; Of ſome I ſhall now ſpeak.

Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.

יהרם *Propriè deleverit, diſſipaverit. Ampla valde & vehemens eſt illa ſignificatio deſtruendi, ut etiā denotet Anathematizare, excommunicare.* Pin.

Theſe words relate to the attribute of power: *With him is ſtrength.* And they are more then a bare affirmation that God is *ſtrong*, they prove that he is *ſtrongeſt*, or that there is no ſtrength a match for his: This the inſtance reacheth fully, *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.* No man, no nor Angel, is able to preſerve what God will overthrow, or to reſtore, what he hath once deſtroyed.

The word which we tranſlate *to break down*, ſignifies an utter diſſipation or diſſolution, even the putting of a thing out of its being: Some interpret it by *Anathematizing, curſing, or excommunicating*, which imports the devoting both of things and perſons to a total and perpetual ruine.

Firſt, ſome underſtand *Job* ſpeaking here of his own children and family which God had broken down, with a high and ſtrong hand. Children are a living *houſe*; A ſon in the ſacred language hath his name from building, becauſe ſons build or continue their fathers houſe. When *Sarah* prayed *Abraham* to go in unto *Hagar*, ſhe ſaid, *It may be I may obtain children by her:* The Hebrew letter is, *It may be I may be builded by her*, Gen. 16.2. *Rachel* invited *Jacob* to *Bilhahs* bed upon the ſame hopes, That I alſo (ſaid ſhe) may *have children*, or be *built by her*, Gen. 30. 3. Now as when God gives children *he builds*, ſo when he takes them away *he breaks down: If the Lord break down thus*, if he take away the children which he hath given, who can reſtore them to us again, or repair that breach?

Secondly, others conceive he refers to thoſe two ancient acts of Gods *breaking providence*, the overthrow of *Babel*, and the deſtruction of *Sodom*, which were not builded again to that day.

Meliusquadrat ut in communi dicatur, quicquid vult Deus quacunq; ratione deſtruere. Bol.

Thirdly, we need not reſtrain his ſence to any ſpecial City, or to his own family; expound him rather of the ruining of mans eſtate in general. *If the Lord break down*, and deface their worldly glory, who are moſt fairly built and raiſed up, who have ſtrongeſt foundations, and firmeſt walls, who have higheſt towers, and the moſt aſpiring pinacles; if he pull down an eſtate thus founded, thus raiſed, and break it to pieces, it ſhall certainly be broken, and that without remedy.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *What God will do, he can do, and it ſhall be done.*

He breaks down without asking any man leave: God doth not work by ſufferance, but by authority. The whole world is his work, and he may make what work he will in the world. *If he will work who ſhall let it?* (Iſa. 43. 13.) if he will ſmite, who ſhall let it? He will not put up his ſword at thy word, no nor for fear of thy power. If he give the word, *Break down, down it ſhall.* The word of God plants, and the word of God roots up, and it doth both irreſiſtibly. If God will deſtroy perſons or *Kingdoms, there is no ſaving them.* As none can pull down, what he ſets up, ſo none can ſet up what he pulls down. If he ſaith, Let it lye in the duſt, who ſhall raiſe it up again? The Prophet (*Mal.*1.4.) brings in *Edom* ſurveying the deſolations which God had made upon his Territories. *Edom* began to reflect ſadly upon his ruinous condition, *We are impoveriſhed*, ſaith *Edom:* upon this *Edom* takes counſel, yea he reſolves, *We will return and build the deſolate places.* But what ſaith the Lord to *Edom?* (Do and you will) *They ſhall build, but I will throw down again.* As if he had ſaid, *I once threw down, and made deſolate the palaces of Edom; and if Edom will attempt to better his condition, and build again, I will again make deſolate: as faſt as* Edom *repairs, I will pull down. Man ſhall never make up the works which God hath ſlighted, till he hath leave for it from heaven.* (Pſal. 28. 5.) *Becauſe they regard not the works of the Lord, he ſhall deſtroy them, and not build them up*, that is, he ſhall deſtroy them, and they ſhall not be built. For unleſs God himſelf will build what he hath deſtroyed, no man can, (Hoſ. 6. 1.) *Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us*; If God make the wound, it is not in the skill or Chirurgery of man to give a plaiſter: *He hath ſmitten us, and he will bind us up.* When you have got a wound from God, you cannot get your cure from the creature; man tares, and God heals; man ſmites, and God bindes us up; but if God tare and ſmite, he muſt bind up and heal, or elſe we can never be healed: our wound and our ſalve come from the ſame hand. When *Jericho* was deſtroyed, the Lord ſaid by *Joſhua*, *Curſed be the man that riſeth up and buildeth this city* Jericho, *he ſhall lay the foundation thereof in his firſt-born, and in his youngeſt ſon ſhall he ſet up the gates of it*, (Joſh. 6.26.) We find that for five hundred years none attempted to build this City, the curſe of God lay ſo heavy upon it; but after five hundred years, whether the man forgetting what was ſpoken, or preſuming that now after ſo long a time, God would forget what he had ſpoken and not make it good, One *Hiel* the *Bethelite* (as you may read 1 *King*. 16. 34.) built it, but how? By building that, he pulled down himſelf, for ſaith the Text, *He laid the foundation thereof in* Abiram *his firſt-born, and ſet up the gates thereof in his youngeſt ſon* Segub, *according to the word of the Lord which he ſpake by* Joſhua *the ſon of* Nun. The meaning is this, when he laid the foundation of that city, the curſe of God fell upon him, and his eldeſt ſon died. God pull'd down the beſt part of his living houſe, his eldeſt ſon, and yet he would not be warned of the judgement of God, but went on to finiſh *Jericho* (for ſetting up the gates notes the accompliſhment of his work, as laying the foundation ſignifies the beginning of it) and what came of that? then the Lord ſlew his youngeſt ſon, *he ſet up the gates thereof in his youngeſt ſon* Segub, he built *Jericho:* but he could not deliver himſelf from the curſe; God did not ſay, this city ſhall never be built, but curſed be he that builds it, and this curſe ſhall be upon him, *He ſhall lay the foundation thereof in his firſt-born, and in his youngeſt ſon ſhall he ſet up the gates of it*; and ſo it came to paſs, the Hiſtory fulfilled the Propheſie, and the work of providence gave Teſtimony to the truth of the word. This alſo is very remarkable in the ſtory of *Jeruſalem.* Chriſt threatned *Jeruſalem* that it ſhould be deſtroyed, and the Temple, that *there ſhould not be left one ſtone upon another, that ſhould not be thrown down.* The event anſwered this threat. The *Romans* ruined all, and were that *abomination of deſolation in the place.* Yet in the time of *Julian* ſome had a deſign to build the Temple and reſtore *Jeruſalem:* Yea that Apoſtate *Julian*, on purpoſe to croſs the words of Chriſt, and the counſel of God, of which he had heard, that *There ſhould not be left one ſtone upon another*; therefore he (not out of any good will to the *Jews*, or out of any deſire to have the Worſhip of God and the Temple reſtored, but only in ſpight and malice, to ſee whether he could croſs the word of Chriſt, and reverſe his curſe) gave the *Jews* (like another *Cyrus*) ample commiſſion, and full liberty, to go and build the Temple. In purſuance of which grant they gathered a vaſt ſtore of materials; but when they began to work, the ſtory ſaith, That God from Heaven, by ſtorm and tempeſt, did ſo diſmay and ſcatter them, that they were forced to give it over, and confeſs the hand of God was againſt them; he confounded thoſe builders of the Temple, as he did the builders of *Babel*. *It is* (in ſome caſes) *a dangerous attempt to build when the Lord hath pulled down; but it is (in all caſes) an impoſſible attempt to build what God reſolves ſhall continue down.*

Ammianus Marcel. *l.* 23. *Hiſt. Tripart. l.* 6. *c.* 43.

It is thus alſo with private men, ſome have had fair eſtates in the world, God pulls them down, and breaks them to pieces. We uſe to ſay of a man that fails, *He is broke*; ſuch will be trying to get up again, yet they cannot: ſome after breakings have had more then they had at firſt to ſet up with, beſides their ſtocks of experience; yea theſe men, beſides their experience, have added more diligence in the uſe of all honeſt means: yet God will not let them build their eſtates again, he will not let them thrive in the world. 'Tis ſo alſo with the body: God pulls down a mans health, and ſtrength, and then he goes from Phyſitian to Phyſitian, he asks every one he meets what he may do to build up his body again? Yet this man muſt carry a crazy body to the grave. *He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.* That's the firſt Inſtance.

The ſecond is, **He ſhutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.**

סקר

Ad viæ impedimentum ad carcerem ad vinculū referri ſolet.

The word which we tranſlate to ſhut up, notes any kind of block, impediment, or hinderance laid in a mans way to ſtop his courſe; it is applyed alſo to locking of a door, that none come out, or go in; to the ſhutting of the Heavens, that it rain not, (2 *Chron.* 7. 17.) Shutting and opening note acts of power; and ſo to ſhut that no man can open, or ſo to open that no man can ſhut, are acts of ſupream power. Hence the giving of a key hath been an ancient ceremony, of inveſting men in places of authority and chief command. *He ſhutteth up a man, and there can be no opening*; that is, none till he pleaſeth: God ſaith of *Eliakim* (Iſai. 22. 22.) *The key of the houſe of* David *will I lay upon his ſhoulder; ſo he ſhall open, and none ſhall ſhut; and he ſhall ſhut, and none ſhall open*; that is, he ſhall have the higheſt office in the Kings houſe; to ſhut and open bears the ſame ſence *with going out, and coming in before a people*, Numb. 27. 17. Chriſt, of whoſe Kingdom the houſe of *David* was a type, is deſcribed by opening and ſhutting (*Rev.* 3. 7.) *Theſe things ſaith he that openeth, and no man ſhutteth; and ſhutteth, and no man openeth.* Chriſt hath all power in Heaven and earth given into his hand; and therefore what his hand doth, no man can undo. Now in his abſence he puts this general power into the hand of the Church, to be exerciſed and adminiſtred by ſuch Officers as himſelf hath appointed: Thus he applyes himſelf to *Peter*, after he had made that confeſſion, which is the Foundation of the Church (*Matth.* 16. 19.) *I will give to thee the keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven*: where though the words vary, yet the meaning is the ſame, and give us this aſſurance, that no power can reſcind what is done in and by the Church, according to the will of Chriſt in binding, or in looſing. Further, *ſhutting up*, notes in general the putting of a man into a ſad condition, whether in regard of civil, or ſpiritual things; and *opening* imports deliverance and freedom from either.

Concludere ut nemo aperiat, ſupremæ poteſtatis & liberæ omnium adminiſtrationis ſymbolum eſt. Sanct.

Aperire, aliquid ſignificat lætum fortunatum, contra clauſum, miſerum & ærumnoſum. Aprilis vocatur ab aperiendo cælo.

Hence obſerve, *There is no prevailing againſt God, or repealing any of his reſolves.*

As when he breaketh none can build; ſo when he ſhutteth up none can open. *Balaam* confeſſeth (*Numb.* 23. 20.) *God hath bleſſed, and I cannot reverſe it*; and where God hath curſed, who can reverſe it? *If the Lord ſhut any door againſt us, or upon us, all the Smiths on earth cannot make a key to open it.* If God ſhut, or lock up the Heavens that it rain not, who can open them? *Elijah* comes in as if he had the keyes of Heaven at his girdle, (1 *Kings* 17. 1.) *There ſhall be* (ſaith he) *neither dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word.* We find in the Epiſtle of *James* what the word was, *Elijah prayed that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth, for the ſpace of three years and ſix months. And* Elijah *prayed again; and the Heaven gave rain.* It was not an Imperative word, it was a petitionary word, that locked and unlocked the Heaven: None hath an Imperative word, a word of command to lock and unlock Heaven, but God himſelf, *Amos* 3. 7. *I cauſed it to rain upon one City, and cauſed it not to rain upon another City.* Again, If the Lord ſhut up the womb, there is no bringing forth, *Gen.* 20. 18. *The Lord had faſt cloſed up all the wombs of the houſe of* Abimelech. If the Lord ſhut up the earth, it becomes as iron, and brings forth no fruit; if he ſhut a man up in ſickneſs, in poverty, in diſgrace, in trouble of ſpirit, there is no unbinding, no opening. *He hath concluded, or ſhut up, all under ſin, that every mouth may be ſtopped,* Rom. 3. 19. *He hath ſhut them all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all,* Rom. 11. 32. They are ſhut up as a company of priſoners in a dungeon, that they may receive, whatſoever they receive, at the hand of mercy; for who can open for thoſe men? who can unlooſe theſe Seals of unbelief, till mercy unlooſe them? As none could unlooſe the Seals of that Book, wherein the Myſteries of God were contained, but only Chriſt, *Rev.* 5. 5. So none can open the Seals of ſin which are upon the heart of an unbeliever, but Chriſt only: Chriſt who opened the Book, opens to our ſouls; Chriſt who looſed the Seals, can looſe us from our ſins: Him God hath appointed to be the great *Opener* of priſons, and the *Deliverer* of thoſe who are in bonds: If the Son make us free, we ſhall be free indeed; and until he make us free, we are ſlaves indeed. *Whom Juſtice locks up, Mercy lets out.* There is no opening, either by the force, or by the deſert of man, where God ſhutteth up. The evil Angels have ſo much power, that they are called powers; yet they could never get out of priſon. *They are reſerved in everlaſting chains, under darkneſs, to the judgment of the great day,* (*Jude* ver. 6.) Their chains will never wear out, nor can they be filed off; whitherſoever thoſe wicked ſpirits go, they go in chains, like priſoners who are kept till the day of Seſſion. The Apoſtle *Peter* (1 *Pet.* 3. 19.) aſſures us as much of the ſpirits, or ſouls, of thoſe evil men who lived in the dayes of *Noah*: Theſe being caſt into priſon, could never break priſon, nor make an eſcape unto this day. Chriſt by his Spirit, in the miniſtry of *Noah*, preached to them for the preventing of their impriſonment: He preached to them who are now in priſon, that they might not have been impriſoned. *But ſee how ſure a Goal Hell is*: thoſe diſobedient unbelievers, who were caſt into priſon in *Noah*'s time, were all faſt there in the Apoſtle *Peter*'s time. There is no picking the lock of Hell gates, nor breaking through the walls of that fiery *Tophet*. *Abraham* in the Parable (*Luke* 16.) aſſures the rich man in Hell, that he could not come out of that place of torment, and that no comfort, not ſo much as a drop of comfort could be conveyed to that place (*ver.* 26.) *And beſides all this* (ſaith he) *between us and you there is a great Gulf fixed, ſo that they which would paſs from hence to you cannot, neither can they paſs to us that would come from thence.* The man is convinced that he could not get out, and therefore deſires that no friend of his might come in; but that *Lazarus* might be ſent to *teſtifie to his five brethren, leſt they ſhould come into that place of torment.* He knew well enough, if they were once there, they could come out no more. God will at laſt ſend his Writ to the Grave to bring out the bodies of the wicked that are ſhut up there, and he will ſend a Writ to Hell, to bring out the ſpirits that are ſhut up there, that both together may receive ſentence of eternal impriſonment and torment: God will ſhut them up, and there ſhall be no opening for ever.

VERS. 15, 16.

Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; alſo he ſendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

With him is ſtrength and wiſdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his.

JOB proceedeth upon his former Argument in giving Inſtances to prove the great power and the unqueſtionable ſoveraignty of the Lord. In the former context we had an inſtance in civil affairs: *He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again*; *he ſhutteth up a man, and there can be no opening*. The acts of God are irreverſible by man: Here he inſtanceth in natural things, *Behold, he withholdeth the waters*, &c. As God ſhutteth up men, and they cannot get out; ſo he ſhutteth up and impriſoneth the waters, and they cannot get out. This alſo calleth up our attention and admiration, **Behold,**

He withholdeth.] The word ſignifies, Firſt, to ſtop or to ſtay a thing by ſtrength, and fine force. Secondly, to ſtop or to ſtay a thing by authority, or command. Thirdly, to ſtop a thing by intreaty, or by prayer (2 *Sam.* 24. 21.) When *David* offered a ſacrifice in the floor of *Araunah*, the Text ſaith, *So the plague was ſtayed*: there was a ſtay, a ſtop, a withholding of the plague: *David* intreated the Lord, and the Lord at his intreaty gave that effect; he checkt the malignity of the peſtilence, and bid the deſtroying Angel ſheath his ſword. The ſame word is uſed (*Numb.* 16. 48.) when the plague was begun among the people, *Aaron* took a Cenſer and offered incenſe, *and ſo the plague was ſtayed*, or withheld: the plague was marching on ſwiftly and furiouſly, but at the interceſſion of *Aaron*, God ſtopt its courſe, and bid it ſtand. This withholding, is ſometimes applyed to the laws of men: Laws are as boundaries and limits, yea, laws are as bridles and bonds, as chains and fetters, to ſtay and reſtrain, to ſtop and withhold the ſinful extravagancies and excurſions of the fleſh. I find it often applyed to the withholding of water. *If I* (ſaith the Lord) *ſhut up Heaven, that there be no rain*, (2 *Chron.* 7. 13.) *then if ye pray, &c.* God locks the Clouds, and prayer is a key of Gods own making to open them. This word is alſo applyed to the reſtraint of that other Element, the ſtopping and ſhutting in of fire (*Jer.* 20. 9.) Fire and water are head-ſtrong Elements, *They are good ſervants, but ill maſters.* God puts a bridle upon the fire, a bridle upon the water. *He withholdeth*

עצר *Prohibuit, ceſſare fecit.*

The waters.] What waters? It may be underſtood, Firſt, of waters under or upon the earth; there are *ſubterranean channels* of water: Springs furniſh Rivers, Rivers are *ſubterranean channels*, earthen veſſels, or rather vehicles and conveyances of water. He withholdeth the waters, he withholdeth the under-waters, he forbids thoſe Springs to feed the Rivers, and then they are dryed up. Secondly, it may be underſtood of the waters that are above (the Empire of the Lord reacheth both.) Waters hang in the Clouds, there are ſeas of water above us; it is the mighty power of God which gives thoſe *aiery Sponges*, the Clouds, a retentive faculty, for elſe they would ſoon diſſolve and overwhelm us. And it is from the anger and judgments of God, that thoſe *aiery ſponges*, the Clouds, are ſometimes ſo cloſed up, that they yield no more water then Iron or Adamant. As he alwayes withholds the water from drowning the whole earth, ſo he ſometimes withholds it from refreſhing many parts of the earth, he forbids the Clouds to diſtil a drop. Thirdly, it may be expounded of the waters of the Sea, which feed the Springs, as Springs feed the Rivers, (*Nah.* 1. 4.) *He rebuketh the ſea, and maketh it dry, and dryeth up all the rivers.* Where the Sea is dryed, the Rivers muſt. The Sea is Grandmother to the Rivers. The Prophet *Zachary* ſpeaks the ſame (*Chap.* 10. 11.) *He ſhall ſmite the waves of the Sea, and all the deeps of the Rivers ſhall dry up. Thus alſo he withholdeth the waters,*

And they dry up.] What dryeth up? The Rivers dry up, when the waters of the Sea are withholden; and the things that grow upon the Earth dry up, when the waters of Heaven are withholden; and when they are withholden very long, not only the Fruits of the Earth, but the Rivers dry up too. In that great drought, (1 *Kings* 17. 17.) *The brooks dryed up, becauſe there was no rain in the land.* Again (*Joel* 1. 20.) *The beaſts of the field cry alſo unto thee, for the rivers of waters are dryed up, and the fire hath devoured the paſtures of the wilderneſs.* The fire hath devoured; What fire? It was not ordinary elemental fire that burn'd the paſtures; the fire was the *Sun*, there being no rain to mollifie and mitigate his ſcorching beams; the Sun, as a fire, conſumed the paſtures of the Wilderneſs. So here, *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up*; that is, the Paſtures (as well as the Rivers) together with all Vegetables, that are nurſed and nouriſhed by thoſe breaſts of Heaven diſtilling upon them.

Further, *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up*; takes in the effect which follows the withholding of the waters, and the dryneſs of the earth, namely, *barrenneſs, and famine*: and ſo the cauſe is put for the effect; and, he withholdeth the waters, is, he cauſeth famine in a Land: He withholdeth the waters, and, then Corn, and Graſs, Trees, and Plants dry up. That three years famine (2 *Sam.* 21.) was from an extraordinary drought, as is conceived: The fruit of a drought is famine; and the fruit of rain is abundance. Plenty deſcends from Heaven in ſhowers: God takes away the fruits of the earth by taking away that which ſhould nouriſh and feed the earth in bearing fruit.

q. d. *Quando vult poteſt tum ſterilitatem tum copioſã rerum omniũ abundantiũ elargiri.* Bold.

I ſhall but note two things from this briefly, referring the Reader to the thirteenth verſe of the fifth Chapter, where the power of God, in ordering rain and waters, is more fully opened.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The waters are at Gods command, He withholdeth them.*

He withholdeth them, as it were, by a law; or he withholdeth them as with a bridle. *There ſhall not be dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word*, ſaith *Elijah* (1 *Kings* 17. 1.) This ſpake he in the power of God; for he prayed, and then the rain or the waters were withholden. God complained of his Vineyard, (*Iſa.* 5.) that he had beſtowed much coſt upon it, and yet had received little rent from it, unleſs ſuch as was paid in baſe coin; *He looked for righteouſneſs, but behold oppreſſion*, &c. Well ſaith the Lord, *Go to, I will tell you what I will do*; I will do thus and thus; and beſides all this, *I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* The power of God, and his glory, is wonderfully lifted up in this work of providence (*Amos* 4. 7.) *I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harveſt*; that is, in the time when the Corn and Graſs had moſt need of rain, *I withheld it, and I cauſed it* (ſaith he) *to rain upon one City, and cauſed it not to rain upon another City*: read *Jer.* 5. 24. and 10. 13. *Joel* 2. 23. *Matth.* 5. 45. *Acts* 14. 17. There is a piece of ſecret Atheiſm in ſome about this point: The heart may be ſweetly moiſtened by the acknowledgment of God in the rain: But moſt ſtick too much in natural cauſes, and ſcarce look beyond the Almanack for the changes of the weather. We ſhall have rain (ſay they) at the change of the Moon, or when the Wind turns. 'Tis true, that there is a natural reaſon, why at the change of the Moon, why at the change of the Wind, there may be a change of the weather; yet God hath a power above the Wind, and above the Moon; and therefore ſometimes he lets the Moon change and change, yet no rain; and the Wind blows from all the points of Heaven, and yet no rain: That we might not ſtick in ſecond cauſes, God often acts beyond them, yea againſt them: And that we ſhould not deſpiſe ſecond cauſes, and the order in which God hath diſpoſed the frame of Nature, he often works with them, and by them. When natural cauſes produce their effects, God ſhews his bounty; and when natural cauſes cannot produce their effects, God ſhews his Soveraignty, and teacheth man his duty. Hence the want of rain in an ordinary courſe, is put as an extraordinary occaſion of prayer, and ſeeking God (1 *Kings* 8. 35. *Zach.* 10. 1.) *Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain.* When rain comes not in the ſeaſon of nature, we may ſhew much of grace in asking rain.

Secondly obſerve, *That natural cauſes being ſtopped, natural effects muſt ceaſe.*

There can be no natural effect without a natural cauſe: All ſuch effects are miraculous; withhold the rain, and all dryes up; there is a natural dependance between the fruitfulneſs of the earth and the rain. *David* in his laſt words, ſhewing how bleſſed and how great a bleſſing a juſt and a godly King is: *He ſhall be* (ſaith he) *as the light of the morning when the Sun ariſeth, even a morning without clouds*; *as the tender graſs ſpringing out of the earth by clear ſhining after rain* (2 Sam. 23. 4.) Here he puts in all the natural cauſes. *He ſhall be as the tender graſs ſpringing out of the earth*: But what cauſeth the graſs to ſpring out of the earth? There is firſt, the *rain*, to moiſten; and ſecondly, the *clear ſhining*, to warm and draw out the ſeminal vertue of the earth. When the Lord threatens (*Deut*. 28. 33.) *I will make the Heavens over you as braſs*; he preſently adds, *and the earth under you ſhall be as iron.* If the Heavens be braſs, the earth will be iron. We have this concatenation of cauſes elegantly ſet forth (*Hoſ*. 2. 21, 22.) *I will hear the heavens* (ſaith God) *and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall hear* Jezreel. *Jezreel* muſt have Corn, and Wine, and oyl; Corn and Wine muſt be had from fertile earth; the earth cannot be fertile without benign Heavens; the Heavens can ſhew no kindneſs to the earth, either by moiſtening ſhowers, or quickening heat, without orders from God. Hence the Heavens cry to God, and the Earth to the Heavens, and the Corn to the Earth, and *Jezreel* to the Corn, that he may be fed. *If God withholdeth the waters of Heaven, the earth dryes up*; we are fed by the bleſſing of God upon ſecond cauſes. Again,

He ſendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

This latter clauſe doth not hold out the mercy oppoſite to the judgment in the former; but it holds out a ſecond judgment. For as there, *the withholding of the waters* was a judgment; ſo here, *the ſending of them out* is a judgment too. When God withholdeth the waters over-long, the earth cannot bear fruit; and when God ſendeth out the waters overmuch, the fruit which the earth bears is ſtifled and choaked. Waters are ordinarily ſent to refreſh and revive the earth; but here they are ſent to overturn the earth.

שלח

Si miſſerit aquas tāquā nuncium deferentes aut juſſionem demergendæ terræ ſibi demandatū. Pin.

He ſendeth them.] The word ſignifies the ſending out of a meſſenger upon ſome command. Waters receive a commiſſion to ſtay at home, and they receive a commiſſion to go out in a way of judgment: God gives them a precept, a writ, *Go and overturn the earth*: He looſens their bonds, and enlargeth their borders, to puniſh thoſe who will not be kept in bounds. *Moſes* deſcribing the Deluge (to which *Job* here, as ſome conceive, alludes) ſaith, *All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of Heaven were opened* (Gen. 7. 11.) both the under-waters, and the upper-waters were till that day impriſoned and kept cloſe by the Decree of God: But then God broke open the priſon, and let out the waters, and we ſee what work they made in the world.

הפך

Evertit mutavit ſubſtantiam formam aut locum rei alicujus.

They overturned the earth.] The word notes a change both of place and ſtate; either of which, when they are great, are an overthrow, or an overturning. But is not the earth too big to be overturned? And hath not God promiſed that he will never deſtroy the earth again by water? Beſides, the earth is rather overwhelmed, then overturned by the waters. To clear this. *The earth* may be taken three wayes.

Firſt, for ſome ſpecial Tract, or Province of the earth, which the Lord may overturn, that is, ſpoil and deface without breach of that promiſe, *Gen*. 9. 11. The Bow in the Clouds is a ſign between God and the world, that he will never drown the World any more; this doth not hinder the overthrowing of great Tracts and parts of the World by water.

Secondly, By the earth we may underſtand the Inhabitants of any part of the earth, and the dwellings which they have raiſed for themſelves upon the earth. Theſe the waters are often ſent out to overturn, though the ſite and ſoil of the earth remain the ſame.

Thirdly, By the earth, we may underſtand the fruits of the earth, or the things which grow out of the earth. Thus God overturneth the earth, by ſending out immoderate rains and exceſſive ſhowers: When Corn and Graſs, when the Vines and Olives are deſtroyed, the Earth (for that ſeaſon) is deſtroyed.

> Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The Lord can make any of the creatures mans ſcourge.*

He that made the whole World without any Inſtrument, can make one part of the World an Inſtrument to deſtroy another: He that ſet up the world without help, cannot want help to throw it down. He hath his Fire-works and his Water-works ready; *He ſendeth out the waters, and they overturn the earth.* We uſe to ſay, *Fire and water have no mercy*: Water is a terrible Element, though it is a uſeful and a comfortable Element. I might bring you many ſtories, ancient and modern, of the wonderful effects of water. *Pliny in his natural Hiſtory*, and *Seneca*, in his natural Queſtions, give us ſundry inſtances of Towns and Countries, made deſolate by water.

Plin. *lib*. 2. *cap*. 90. & 92. *Nat.* Sen. *lib*. 6. Nat. *quæſt*. *c*. 23. *Hiſt*.

The queſtion is put (*Job* 28. 22.) *Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow? Or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail, which I have reſerved*: Againſt when? *Which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battel and war?* The Lord ſpeaks here as ſome great Prince, who hath a Magazine ſtored and filled with Ammunition againſt a time of war. *Haſt thou* (ſaith he) *entred into the treaſures of the ſnow?* Haſt thou been in my Magazine, and conſidered what ſtores I have laid up there againſt the day of battel and war? What day of battel and war is this? We may expound it either one or both theſe wayes: Firſt, of ſome day of Gods ſpecial wrath and judgment upon a people, when no enemy appears but himſelf; when he (as it were) in perſon makes war upon them, and comes forth in battel againſt them: In ſuch a day of battel as this, he brings out theſe treaſures of wrath, the Snow and the Hail. God went to war and battel againſt *Egypt* immediately; and one of the foreſt plagues was the Hail, which deſtroyed the earth by killing the Cattel, Corn, and Fruits, *Exod*. 9. 18. God ſent down ſhowers of water made up into bullets, upon *Egypt*, ſuch is Hail. Secondly, We may underſtand it of a day when a war is made againſt his people; for then he ſometimes brings forth this Ammunition out of his ſtore-houſes, he fires his great Guns, and pours out volleys of ſhot from Heaven upon the enemies of his people. We have a clear record, which gives God the glory of this truth (*Joſh*. 10. 11.) When *Joſhua* was ingaged in battel with thoſe uncircumciſed Nations, *The Lord caſt down great ſtones from Heaven upon them, and they dyed; they were more which dyed with hail-ſtones, then they whom the children of* Iſrael *ſlew with the ſword.* Thus whether we underſtand that Text of the day of Gods immediate war againſt evil men, or of the day when evil men war againſt the people of God: both are evidences of his power, in ſending *waters, hail and ſnow, ſtorm and tempeſts* (all which he hath at his command) *to overturn the earth.* Great Princes and States, ſend forth their Generals with command to overturn Cities, and deſtroy all that will not ſubmit unto them; God gives a charge to ſenſeleſs and inanimate creatures to go forth and overturn the earth, and it is done.

> Secondly obſerve, *That the very ſame creature which is a mercy to us, may be a great affliction and a ſcourge to us.*

Waters fatten, and waters deſtroy the earth. We pray in drought for rain and waters; the Lord can give us rain, until rain ſhall afflict as much as drought. There is no earthly thing but we may have too much of it. The exceſs of any creature is a judgment upon the creature. We may ſoon have too much fire, and too much water; too much heat and too much cold; as the want of theſe things troubles us, ſo likewiſe doth the glut of them: we depend upon God as much for the quantity and meaſure of outward mercies, as for the mercies themſelves. See here a difference between the things of Nature, and the things of Grace. We can never have too much of Grace, nor too much of the Spirit. *The more we have of theſe the better; and we are then beſt, when we have moſt.* A gracious heart grows up to glory, through the abundance of grace. *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs*, (is the Apoſtles caution, *Eph*. 5. 18.) *But be filled with the Spirit.* We may drink wine quickly to exceſs; but we cannot be filled with the Spirit to exceſs; there is no exceſs poſſible in that, and therefore the Apoſtle gives no caution about it. Take your fill of the Spirit, you cannot be overfill'd. The wine of the Spirit doth not make us drunk; the more we drink of it, the more ſober we are. And the waters of the Spirit do never drown us; the more and the oftner they fall upon us, or overflow us, the more fruitful we are. The waters of the Spirit are never ſent out to overturn the ſoul; the mightieſt inundations of Grace, make the heart mighty for God. Spiritual things in the leaſt degree are a bleſſing; and the greater the degree is, the greater is the bleſſing. Hence that promiſe, *In the latter dayes* (ſaith God) *I will pour out my Spirit*; you ſhall not only have ſome drops, and ſtill dews, but ſtrong ſhowers, rivers and torrents flowing down from Heaven, upon the dry and parched ground, upon the barren wilderneſs, to make it like *Eden*, the Garden of God; ſuch Rivers ſhall run into you, till you ſhall have Rivers running from you. *He that believeth on me* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 7. 38.) *out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water: This he ſpake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive.*

Verſe 16. **With him is ſtrength and wiſdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his.**

The former inſtance was in the works of Nature; now *Job* inſtanceth in civil things, ſhewing the providence and power of God acting mightily in them: *With him is ſtrength and wiſdom.*

We had theſe words at the thirteenth verſe [*With him is wiſdom and ſtrength*] ſo we tranſlate in both. Why doth he (only two verſes put between) repeat the ſame thing again? He had ſaid, *ver.* 13. *With him is wiſdom and ſtrength*; here, *With him is ſtrength and wiſdom*: Why doth he touch ſo often upon this ſtring?

Note from it, Firſt, *That all repetitions are not uſeleſs and vain.*

Repetitions in Scripture have not only an elegancy in them, but a profitableneſs in them. That's one thing.

Secondly, From the matter, *With him is ſtrength and wiſdom.* (That's the point.) It is no ſmall matter that he repeateth, and it teacheth us thus much,

That we need to hear often of, and meditate often upon, the power and wiſdom of God.

When we have learn'd that leſſon once well, we have learned a great many leſſons: When the heart is but aſſured and ſettled in this truth, and can make the inferences, and draw out the concluſions which flow from thoſe premiſes, we have profited very much in the knowledge of God.

But further, we may anſwer. The reaſon why *Job* repeateth what he had ſo lately aſſerted, may be this, becauſe he beginneth upon a new ſubject: and therefore as he put this Preface [*With him is wiſdom and ſtrength*] to thoſe former Inſtances, ſo now giving Inſtances of an higher nature, he renews that Doctrine, *With him is wiſdom and ſtrength.* He would have the thoughts of men cloſe fully with theſe Attributes of God. As if he had ſaid, *I ſhall ſpeak to you of ſuch things as you will never believe, nor honour God in the manifeſtation of them, unleſs your hearts be very well ſetled upon this foundation, that with him is ſtrength and wiſdom.*

Hence obſerve, *That great truths muſt be uſhered, or led in with great thoughts of God.*

As in prayer, when weighty petitions are made, we find the Saints raiſing up their hearts, and bearing up their ſpirits to high thoughts of God: ſo when any great doctrinal truths are laid before us, uſually there is ſomewhat prefaced about the greatneſs of God, which may cauſe us to reverence and adore ſuch truths. The Prophets, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, or, *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts*, was as if they had ſaid, We ſpeak his words, who is able to make them good.

Or laſtly, *Job* ſpeaks this only in a way of acclamation, as being lifted up and raviſhed with the meditation of Gods Greatneſs, Power, and Wiſdom. And therefore as he had ſaid, ſo he ſaith it a ſecond time, *With him is wiſdom and ſtrength.* He is the ſtrong God, the wiſe God: This, Rhetoricians call (*Epiphonema*) a raiſing up of the voice and ſpirit, in acclamation to the truth of that which is ſpoken. When the Apoſtle had exhorted the Saints to rejoyce, he adds, *And again, I ſay, rejoyce*: ſo here, did I ſay the Lord hath wiſdom and ſtrength? I will ſay it again, with him is wiſdom and ſtrength.

Epiphonemicω̃s dictum, cum eo ſane eſt robur & ratio. Merc.

But though the words in our Tranſlation are the ſame with the thirteenth verſe, yet the Hebrew differs. In the thirteenth verſe the words are *Chochmah* and *Geburah*; but here, *Ghoz* and *Toſiah*; which though they bear the ſame interpretation in the Engliſh, yet they have a greater force in the Original: For the former ſignifies not only irreſiſtible ſtrength, but excellency and dignity joyned with that ſtrength: ſo that it imports a perſon cloathed as much with dignity and honour, as with ſtrength and power (*Pſal.* 29. 1.) *Give unto the Lord glory and ſtrength*; that is, give unto the Lord a ſtrength which is glorious. *Jerome* tranſlates this word often by *Imperium*, ſometimes by *virtus*, noting in both, *an Imperial ſovereignty or power.*

עוז

Ita fortitudinem ſignificat, ut etiã dignitatem, præſtantiã, honorem & excellentiam connotet. Hieronymus *vertit* imperium *ſæpe*, virtus. 70. *Honor regius.*

The latter word ſignifies not only wiſdom in general, but the higheſt and pureſt wiſdom, the moſt *ſublimate and refined wiſdom, the very quinteſſence and ſpirit of wiſdom:* Again, it ſignifies not only the *quinteſſence, and extract of wiſdom*, but *being and exiſtence*: As if he had ſaid, *with him is being, ſubſtance, permanency*: divers of the Rabbins tranſlate ſo, and ſo doth Mr. *Broughton*, *He hath the force, and all that is*; all being is contracted and brought unto God, *for he is the firſt being, and in him all things live, move, and have their being.* Now here is much more then we had at the thirteenth verſe, *With him is force, and all that is*; that is, the being and ſubſiſtence of all creatures is contained in God. God is his own being, he is *ſelf-being, ſelf-exiſtence*; and all exiſtence or being is derived from him. This is the higheſt Elogy of God. Thirdly, It ſignifies not only the firſt being, but the moſt excellent being, the being and ſubſiſtence (ſo ſome of the Rabbins render it) of the *High-Prieſt*, of Kings and Emperours, a being in ſovereign authority; fix your thoughts upon the nobleſt ſubſiſtences, ſuch, and infinitely more noble then ſuch, is the ſubſiſtence of God. With God is *being*, with him is the moſt glorious being; all the excellent beings that are ſcattered through the world, are ſumm'd up, and united in God; yea they are all but ſo many ſtreams, and beams, iſſuing from this *ever-flowing Fountain and glorious Sun of being*. Fourthly, This word ſignifies alſo the rule, or the certain law of wiſdom and judgment: not only that wiſdom which acts in man, but the rule by which that wiſdom acts. The reaſon of government, or the meaſure by which all things are to be governed, lyes in the boſom of this word. Here alſo another ſhining truth breaks forth from under the clouds of this expreſſion; *With him is ſuch wiſdom as is the rule and meaſure of all things which are done in wiſdom. Job* being to ſpeak great things of God, that *the deceiver and deceived are his, that he looſeth the bonds of Kings*, &c. had but need to put this preface to it, *With God is the meaſure, the reaſon of all things.*

כל הויש

Omni ens. Ramb.

Omnium rerum vis & robur, quo fit ut ſint, & eſſe perſeverent id quod ſunt, ab illo eſt. Bez.

Tuſ.ijah denotat ſubſiſtentiam eminentiſſimam qualis eſt dignitas regalis.

Significat certam legẽ & rationem ad quam omnia exiguntur. Mer.

Cum ipſo eſt Tuſcijah & lux perpetua movens omnia ſecundam voluntatem ſuam Antevertentem. Rab. Abra.Peril.

Robore quidem valet, ſed interim etiam certa lege & ratione ac æquitatis formula omnia gubernat.

Prima juſtitiæ & juris Origo eſt optima & ſanctiſſima Dei voluntas partĩ quia ille jus habet in omnia quippe quæ ipſi ſunt. Coc.

Thus we have found theſe words in the Original, far more fruitful and extenſive in ſence, then thoſe uſed for ſtrength and wiſdom at the thirteenth verſe.

From the laſt interpretation, take this Note,

That the will of God, or God himſelf, is the rule of all things.

God hath not a rule without him, but within him, it is himſelf. In this he differs from the beſt of men: Man hath a rule, but the rule is one thing, and the man is another; the Law is one thing, and the King is another: but God and his rule are the ſame; his will and his law are himſelf; this renders him excellent in dignity, *The Lord over all. Tyrants make their will their law*; But what is their will? Their will is crooked, a leaden, Leſbian rule, which turneth and changeth, and will faſhion it ſelf to any occaſion, or immergency: their wills are diſtorted and turned this way and that way, even every way. And therefore it muſt needs produce tyranny for a man to make his will his rule, becauſe his will hath not an everlaſting rectitude and ſtraitneſs in it. But the Lord makes his will a law, and there is no tyranny, nothing but juſtice and equity in it. It is impoſſible for any law to be made ſo ſtrait as the will of God is; it is impoſſible to give a rule ſo holy as Gods will is. If we could have a ſupream Magiſtrate, whoſe will were as holy, juſt, and good, as any law, it were reaſon his will ſhould be the law: but this cannot be; therefore it is the prerogative of God alone, whoſe will is (as we have deſcribed) the original of juſtice, and ſo more then a law, which is but the meaſure of juſtice. *The counſels of God are without conſultation, his decrees without deliberation: he hath all wiſdom without ſtudy or experience; all knowledge and evidence of things without diſcourſing upon premiſes, or drawing down concluſions.* And whence is this? but becauſe with him is this certain rule which cannot err. The Pope challengeth to himſelf, that, though he may err in his private actions as he is a man, yet as he is (in *Cathedra*) ſeated in the Apoſtolick chair, as he is the viſible head of the

Church, he cannot err; his will is the rule: we ſee what rule it is, by the rules which it hath given. Who can ſay that is clean, which brings forth an unclean thing; or ſtrait and true, which brings forth that which is crooked and erroneous? Sinful actings ſpeak ſinful men, and his actings have been ſinful enough to ſpeak him (what is written of him) *The man of ſin.* The actings of God have been ſo holy, that they declare him *The holy God*; and his wayes ſo wiſe and juſt, that they proclaim his Wiſdom to be the unerring rule of juſtice. *With him is ſtrength and wiſdom.*

Job having thus premiſed the unſearchable *wiſdom* and inſuperable *ſtrength* of God, giveth a proof of both in the next words,

The deceived and the deceiver are his.

שגג *Ignoravit* שגה *In Hiphil errare fecit.*

The deceived.] *Is paſſive,* A man miſled through ignorance or inadvertency: **The deceiver,** *is active*; he conſults and plots to catch the ſimple in his ſnare: Yet the word may ſignifie alſo to ſeduce ignorantly; for as all are deceived through ignorance (he is not deceived, who knows that he is) ſo ſome deceive through ignorance; ſuppoſing they give good counſel, and hold out the truth, when they are wrapt up in, and blinded with the darkneſs of error. And though moſt deceivers deceive knowingly, and intend to do the evil which they do, yet ignorance cauſeth ſome to deceive; and did they know better they would not do ſo bad. But under what notion ſoever any man is deceived, or becomes a deceiver, the Text entitles them both to God.

Ex Hebræis multi per facientem errare Satanam nimis arcte intelligunt.

The deceived and the deceiver are his.] I ſhall open two things about it.

1. Who are the deceived and the deceiver.
2. In what ſence they are ſaid to *be his,* that is, the Lords.

There are ſome, who by the *deceiver,* underſtand the Devil, who is indeed *the great deceiver* and impoſtor: he wrought the firſt deceit in the world, and to deceive is his continual trade in the world. Men do but uſe deceit in their Trades and Tranſactions; but the Devils trade and all his tranſactions are deceit. Yet we muſt not reſtrain and narrow up this Scripture to him only. God conſidereth that *great deceiver,* and all that are deceived by him. But *Job* diſcourſeth of men, not of devils; and then the deceivers and the deceived are of two ſorts.

1. In matters of Religion, or in ſpiritual things.
2. In matters of the world, or in civil things.

In matters of Religion, there is much deceiving, and many are deceived: Chriſt foretells it will be ſo (*Matth.* 24. 24.) *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſigns and wonders, in ſo much that (if it were poſſible) they ſhall deceive the very elect.* But though it be impoſſible for them to deceive the elect, yet their attempt ſhall not be without too much ſucceſs. For, *Take heed* (ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples, *ver.* 4, 5.) *that no man deceive you, for many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and ſhall deceive many.* Their deceits ſhall proſper. *Paul* (*Tit.* 1. 10.) ſpeaks of deceivers who *ſubvert whole houſes:* not by outward violence, but by cunning craftineſs, they overthrow their faith, and turn them from the truth: thus they deceived whole families.

Secondly, There is *The deceiver and the deceived* in civil things, or in matters of the world. And theſe are of two ſorts.

Non ſolum hæc quæ loquitur Job, *de ψευδοθρησκίαις intellexerim ſed de omnibus erroribus tũ in politiâ & civitatibus regendis, tum in domo,* &c. Merc.

Firſt, In commerce and trading: Thus we read (*Prov.* 11. 1.) *Of the falſe ballance, which is an abomination to the Lord.* And the Prophet *Micah* brings in the Lord diſdaining at theſe deceivers, (*Chap.* 6. 11.) *Shall I count them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? for the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have ſpoken lyes* (he means Exchange-lyes, Warehouſe-lyes, Shop-lyes, the lyes of the ſeller, or of the buyer) *and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.*

Secondly, In matters of *government and policy,* about which the greateſt deceits and jugglings have been exerciſed in all the ages of the world. What crafty Councellors ſuggeſt, ſimple plain-hearted men are taken with, and often miſled to their own deſtruction. In *Abſalom*'s rebellion there *went two hundred men out of* Jeruſalem *that were called, and they went in their ſimplicity, and they knew not any thing,* namely, of *Abſolom*'s intent of aſpiring to his Fathers Throne: *They were meerly catcht,* and ſurpriſed with his wilely inſinuations. Polititians are skill'd to put fair vizards upon foul faces, and cover their wicked deſigns with honeſt pretences. Theſe are *State-ſophiſters*; their ſtudy is to put fallacies and cheats upon the common people. All theſe deceivers, and they who are deceived by them, are comprehended under this general affirmation, *The deceived and the deceiver are his.*

How **His**?

לא *Ejus vel ei vel ab eo eſt errans & errare faciens.* Merc.

The Hebrew is rendred, or rather paraphraſed three wayes. Firſt, *They are of him.* Secondly, *To him.* Thirdly, *From him.* We tranſlate, *They are his,* and that may include all three. Yea, there is a *five-fold his,* which I may hint to clear this point.

Firſt, *His* by creation.

Secondly, *His* by poſſeſſion.

Thirdly, *His* for uſe and ſervice.

Fourthly, *His* by way of dominion, or diſpoſal.

Laſtly, *His* by way of ſpecial affection and appropriation.

The two former of theſe are too little for the point: For, to ſay *the deceived and the deceiver are his,* by creation, is indeed to ſay nothing peculiar to this point: for ſo is the earth, and the ſea, and the ſtorms, and the winds, every thing is his, they are all Gods creatures. And ſecondly, to ſay *they are his by way of poſſeſſion,* that he is the Lord and Proprietor of them, this alſo is too little, for ſo (*Pſal.* 50.) *All the beaſts of the forreſts are his, and the cattel upon a thouſand hills.* To ſay no more of this deceiver, and the deceived, then you may ſay of the beaſts of the field, or of the fowls of the air, or of the fiſhes in the ſea, that the Lord is the maker and poſſeſſor of them, is below the purpoſe of *Job,* and the honour of God. And as theſe two are not enough, ſo the fifth way of being *his,* is too much, for *they are not his* by way of ſpecial affection and appropriation. That's too great a priviledge for the deceiver and the deceived: for ſo only (among men) the Saints are his. Theſe are Gods peculiars, and beloved ones, as he ſpeaks of his people *Iſrael,* to *Moſes,* Exod. 19. 5. *Now therefore if ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, then ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine.* And though it be poſſible for many that are deceived, and for ſome who deceive at preſent, to be his, even in this way of ſpecial appropriation; yet this were too high a ſenſe to give this Text; therefore we ſhall take the *his* in the third and fourth ſences. *They are his*; that is, *his* to uſe, or he makes uſe of them: and *they are his* to diſpoſe; that is, he diſpoſeth and ordereth, both the deceiver and the deceived, to his own righteous ends and holy purpoſes.

Both which may be more fully demonſtrated, by theſe following interpretations.

Ipſe novit. Vul.

Firſt, *He knoweth them:* ſo the vulgar reads it, *He knoweth the deceiver,* or the deceiver is known to him, and ſo alſo is the deceived: As if he had ſaid, *The Lord is acquainted with the deceiver, though he thinks that he walks in a miſt, or is wrapt up in a cloud, though he flatter himſelf that no eye ſees him; yet whether he be a deceiver in matters of Religion, or in matters of Trade and State-policy, God knows what he is; he whoſe ſeven eyes run through the whole earth, ſees him throughly.* For when it is ſaid, that the Lord knows the deceiver, it is not meant only thus, that he knows his name or perſon, *There goes a deceiver, there's a falſe heart, there's a head full of errors and rotten principles*; but the Lord knoweth with what artifices and fetches, with what devices and projects, by what wayes and engines, he compaſſeth and carrieth on the trade of deceiving. He knows alſo by what miſrepreſentations, falſe gloſſes, and ſemblances of truth, the deceived have been intrapt and drawn into the ſnare. To do this is one of the higheſt acts of wiſdom. To diſcern how, and wherein another hath been deceived, ſhews as much ſoundneſs of underſtanding, as not to be deceived. Any fool commits, or runs into error, only a wiſe man finds it out; *Eccleſ.* 1. 17. *I gave my heart to know wiſdom, and to know madneſs and folly. Solomon* ſtudied as much to know folly, as to know wiſdom. Only truth diſcovers falſhood, and right the wrong.

Novit quã arte quo aſtu fallit decipiẽns, cujus rei ignorantiâ vel inanimadvertentia falſa pro veris amplectitur errans, quod non niſi per ſapientiam fieri poteſt. Merl.

Secondly, *deceiver and the deceived are his,* ſounds thus much, *That God will make them both to be accountable unto himſelf.*

himſelf. A maſter ſaith to his ſteward or ſervant, You ſhall give me an account of theſe actions and expences; ſo ſaith God to the deceiver, and the deceived, you ſhall anſwer for what you have done, you that deceive ſhall be ſure to pay for it; and you that are deceived ſhall not eſcape a tryal and a cenſure, for your careleſneſs and your folly: you ſhould have look'd better to it, 'twas your duty to prove all things and to hold faſt that which was good. Some are deceived in civil things, and are blameleſs; It is their affliction to be deceived, not their ſin: but there is no man that is deceived in ſpiritual things, and is blameleſs; there it is every mans ſin not to know his duty, and not to try before he approves. The ſame word in the Greek ſignifies both to prove, and to approve; implying that no man ought to approve any thing before he hath proved it. It is no honour to a man to approve that which is true, before he proves it: but he that approves an errour before he hath any proof of it, runs himſelf into a double ſin: Firſt, of being deceived: Secondly, of not ſo much as conſidering whether he were or no. But which way ſoever a man is deceived, whether through ignorance or idleneſs, whether becauſe he could not find the truth when he ſearcht for it, or becauſe he would not be at the coſt and pains to ſearch for it, whether it were this or that by which he is deceived, God will reckon with him about it; much more then will he reckon with deceivers, whether they have deceived ſimply, or upon deſign, though theſe laſt ſhall be deepeſt in condemnation. God will arraign all impoſtors and cheaters, all mountebanks and corrupters of truth, whether in ſpirituals or in civils; *They are all his,* and they ſhall ſtand before him to receive according to their deeds of darkneſs and deceit.

Neq; permiſſioni tantũ Domini hoc Scriptura tribuit, ut quidam putant, qui ſapientiorũ ſpiritu ſãcto videri volunt. Merc. Job *vult indicare divina providentia fieri, quod quidã errant, quidam vero alios decipiãt & in errores inducant.*

Thirdly, *The deceiver and the deceived are his,* that is (as ſome underſtand it) he permits and ſuffers deceiving and deceit to be in the world; it is from his ſufferance that there are any ſuch. This is a truth, though not all the truth; The Lord doth not will any deceit, yet there can be no deceit whether he will or no; it is poſſible, yea very eaſie for him to hinder both the deceiver and the deceived, but he is not obliged to do it, neither is he pleaſed to do it: he doth not alwayes give check to deceivers, nor doth he at all times ſet a bar in their way. He alwayes hinders errour morally, by declaring againſt it; but he doth not alwayes hinder it powerfully and effectually by acting againſt it. Thus the deceiver and the deceived are his by permiſſion: but this is not all, they are more his then thus. For,

Fourthly, *The deceiver and the deceived are ſaid to be his, becauſe he ordereth and diſpoſeth them;* he ſendeth out deceivers, and giveth men up to be deceived. He is active in this diſpenſation, yet free from the leaſt touch of pollution. He is not the author of the deceit, though he be the orderer and diſpoſer of it. Mr. *Calvin* gives his judgement upon the place to this effect, roundly and clearly. *To ſay* (ſaith he) *that God doth only permit men to deceive, and to be deceived, is a very cold expreſſion, and ſpeaks little, yea it is a derogation to the honour of God;* for the Lord in infinite wiſdom and holineſs, diſpoſeth of the errours of men, and of thoſe that lead them into errour.

There are four things, in which the providence of God moves to the ordering of this diſorderly work of man.

Firſt, He orders the perſons, who ſhall deceive, and who ſhall be deceived; Hence it is ſaid (*Matth.* 24.) that the falſe prophets, and the falſe Chriſts, ariſing in the latter times, *ſhould (if it were poſſible) deceive the very elect.* Then the elect are perſons exempt; deceivers may diſtemper them, but they ſhall never poiſon them.

Secondly, When or what time any ſhall deceive or be deceived, is alſo ordered by God. We read that Satan was bound for a thouſand years, *that he ſhould not deceive the nations* (Rev. 20.) It was God that bound him. Satan muſt be in a chain of divine providence a thouſand years, *and after that he muſt be looſed a little ſeaſon.* He that bound him looſed him; and as he bound him that he ſhould not deceive, ſo he looſed him to deceive the Nations. But how doth Satan deceive? Not immediately by himſelf; the devil doth not come above-board (as we ſpeak) he doth not walk in his own likeneſs, and appear as he is, that would terrifie men, rather then deceive them; but he acts by transforming himſelf into an angel of light. He ſtirreth up the ſpirits of men, to deceive, as he ſtirreth them up to vex and perſecute thoſe who will not be deceived: as the devil is ſaid to caſt thoſe witneſſes of the truth into priſon, who are impriſoned by men at his inſtigation (*Rev.* 2.10.) ſo he is ſaid to deceive and lead thoſe into errour, who are miſled by men at his inſtigation. It was the devil who filled the heart of *Ananias,* to vent a verbal lye; and the devil fills the hearts of deceivers to vent and maintain doctrinal lies. The times of theſe deceivers are in the hand of God; he hath ſet down the term when they ſhall begin, and how long they ſhall continue their enſnaring Trade.

Thirdly, God orders how far any man ſhall deceive, or to what degree his deceit ſhall prevail. Hence the Apoſtle ſpeaking of deceivers, *men of corrupt mindes, reprobate concerning the faith,* concludes, *but they ſhall proceed no further* (2 Tim, 3.9.) As the maliciousneſs, ſo the deceivableneſs of men would know no bounds, if God did not bound it. But becauſe he doth, therefore though they would, yet they ſhall proceed no further. No man can do good till God aſſiſts him, and no man ſhall do hurt when God will ſtop him.

Thus far the Lord is active in ordering the deceiver, and the deceived. That Scripture is clear for it (1 *King.* 22.22.) *Ahab* was deceived, and the falſe prophets deceived him; Whence was it? The deceivers and the deceived were under the hand of God. *Micaiah* ſpake it out plainly, as *Ahab* had deſired (1 *King.* 22. 19, 20.) *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon his Throne,* &c. *And the Lord ſaid, who ſhall perſwade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?* &c. *And there came forth a ſpirit and ſtood before the Lord, and ſaid, I will perſwade him. And the Lord ſaid, thou ſhalt perſwade him, and prevail alſo, go forth, and do ſo. Now therefore* (ſaith the Prophet) *the Lord hath put a lying ſpirit in the mouth of all theſe thy prophets.* The Lord hath done it: He was active in it, yet full of holineſs and truth in himſelf, as well as of juſtice and wrath againſt *Ahab.* Becauſe *Ahab* hated the true Prophet, therefore he is given up to the teaching of falſe prophets. Here was more then a bare ſuffering: God, as a Judge, put a lying ſpirit, as his executioner, into the mouths of thoſe lying prophets. They who like not plain-dealing, are juſtly flattered into deſtruction. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of that groſs deception under which the Jews then lay, and ſtill lye to this day; aſcribes it to God by Scripture Authority, *According as it is written, God hath given them the ſpirit of ſlumber; eyes that they ſhould not ſee, and ears that they ſhould not hear unto this day,* (Rom. 11. 8.) And the Lord takes it upon himſelf in down right words, (*Ezek.* 14. 9.) *If the Prophet be deceived when he hath ſpoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet.* Not that the Lord did inſtil or infuſe errour into the Prophet; he is the God of truth, he is the author of truth, and therefore cannot be the author of errour; he is the revenger of errour, and therefore alſo he cannot be the abetter of it. Yet the Lord ſaith, *I have deceived him.* Obſerve (ſaith *Calvin*) *God ſlinks not into a corner, ſaying I permitted it, and ſuffered it, I drew a curtain between me and the world, and let men do what they pleaſed, No, but he ſtandeth in the open light, and ſaith, I have deceived that Prophet.* The man of ſin is propheſied coming *with all deceiveableneſs of unrighteouſneſs, in them that periſh, becauſe they received not the love of the truth: For this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lye.* The deluſion is of their deſerving, but of Gods ſending: They deſerve it becauſe they never loved the truth, and God ſends it becauſe he ever loveth juſtice.

And as he ſends theſe *ſpiritual deluſions,* ſo he likewiſe ſends *political deluſions.* When a people are deceived and led away from the wholeſome rules of government, when they have *State tricks* put upon them: We may conclude as the Prophet doth, *when* Egypt *was ſeduced* (Iſa. 19. 14.) *The Lord hath mingled a perverſe ſpirit in the midſt thereof, and they have cauſed Egypt to erre in every work thereof.* Nations, through the juſt judgement of God, run into errour after errour, and ſtagger like a drunken man in his vomit, till they fall into the pit, and into the ſnare of ſome utter deſolation.

Further, *The deceiver and the deceived are his;* that is, the Lord improves both, to ſerve his own ends, to bring about his counſels, and promote his glory. We think nothing ſerves the ends of God but the publication of truth; yes, the publiſhing and ſpreading of errours ſerve his ends too, and bring his purpoſes to paſs. Carnal reaſon ſtartles at this, and cannot make it out. But go into the ſanctuary, and learn what this meaneth: remember *Jobs* preface, *With him is ſtrength and wiſdom*, and you will be ſatisfied. The preface makes the doctrine eaſie: and who is not convinced that there is infinite wiſdom, and a ſtrait rule in him, who can regulate the irregularity and crookedneſs, the errours and abſurdities of man? Who can find out the depth of his wiſdom, who is able to make ſuch improvements out of folly, and give an advantage to truth, by the breaking out of falſity? Doth not the glory of God ſhine bright in this? The queſtion is put by *Auguſtine*, in his 22. book *of the City of God*, Why doth not God remove and ſweep ſin and errour out of the world? He anſwers, *It is better, and an act of greater power to make good out of evil, then not to ſuffer evil to be: As it is one of the higheſt acts of grace in man, to render good for evil: ſo it is one of the higheſt acts of power in God to draw good out of evil.* We may well conclude, *wiſdom and ſtrength are his*, whom the craft and skill of men to deceive cannot circumvent, and whom the ſillineſs and folly of men in being deceived cannot diſappoint. In how clear a light doth God dwell, yea how clear a light is God, who makes his way without one wry ſtep through all the miſts and darkneſs of this world? It argues an infinite ſoveraignty in God, that he doth his work by that which ſeems to work againſt him. Deceivers do the work of God, though they intend nothing but their own.

Hinc patet quod apud ipſum eſt ſapientia. Nam qui ſuperior eſt omni calliditate humana, atq; providentiã habet deceptionũ & errorũ non poteſt eſſe niſi infinitè ſapiẽs. Pined. *Potentius & melius eſt de malis etiam benefacere, quam mala eſſe nõ ſinere.* Auguſt

For firſt, God would have his people tried, and he tries them by thoſe who attempt to deceive them. (*Deut.* 13. 1, 2.) *If there ariſe among you a Prophet, that ſpeaks unto thee, ſaying, let us go after other Gods*, &c. *Thou ſhalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you.* Here is the account which God gives, why he lets deceivers go abroad, and take their ſcope among his people, *It is to prove his people.* The Apoſtle gives the ſame reaſon, (1 *Cor.* 11. 19.) *For there muſt be alſo hereſies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifeſt among you.* It would never appear either what falſe principles corrupt the hearts and underſtandings of men, or what truth and ſincerity are lodged there, if the Lord did not let out deceivers and falſe prophets, to open their packs of lies in their ſight or hearing.

Secondly, God would have us, not only hold truth, but be zealous for the truth, and *contend earneſtly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints*: He therefore ſends out ſome to oppoſe it. Some are buſied in ſpreading deceits, that we may learn to be more buſie in withſtanding them, or more watchful in avoiding them. When we hear that there are *Cut-purſes* in a crowd, every man looks to his purſe; ſo when we hear that deceivers and impoſtors are in the Church, and that they come with ſuch an effectualneſs of deceit, that if it were poſſible they ſhould deceive the very elect, this muſt needs awaken all to look to themſelves; will you not try what ye receive, when ye hear there are deceivers, and teachers of falſe doctrine are abroad, as well as teachers of the truth? and that there are *blind guides*, as well as *Seers* gone forth? If nothing but truth could poſſibly be offered, our care and pains to prove what is offered might be ſpared: Neither would it be needful for us to pray unto Chriſt (the great Prophet) to keep us in his truth, but only to give us faith to receive, and wills to obey his truth. But ſeeing there are deceivers abroad, ſhall we not examine before we receive? ſhall we not weigh and try all in the balance of the Sanctuary, by the touchſtone of the word, ere we believe it?

If any ask, Why are ſo many miſled into errour, and poiſoned with unwholſom doctrine? why doth not God preſerve, and antidote all places againſt theſe infections? The Prophet *Ezekiel* hints us an anſwer (*chap.* 14. *verſ.* 7.) God puniſheth one ſin with another. When men continue in ſins of practice, God lets them fall into ſinful opinions. He juſtly blinds their eyes againſt his truth, who harden their hearts againſt his fear, *and put the ſtumbling block of their iniquity before their faces.* A ſecond reaſon is given by the Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.* 2.) He had ſaid, *verſ.* 11. *God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion*, the reaſon follows, it is, *becauſe they received not the love of the truth*: The underſtanding may ſubmit, while the affections ſtand out. It is eaſier to receive truth, then to receive the love of the truth. And how much truth ſo ever we receive without love to it, leaves us ſtill under the wrath of God. The wrath of God is viſible in his judgements; and this is judgement in perfection, *to be given up to ſtrong deluſion.* Thoſe are the ſoreſt puniſhments which are made of ſins. They are puniſhed with the belief of errour, who love not truth. *Falſe doctrines are fit plagues for falſe hearts.* And as they ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes, who know their maſters will and do it not, ſo alſo ſhall they who know it, and love it not; and indeed theſe and the former are the ſame. The reaſon why any doth not what he knows, is becauſe he doth not love it; and he that loves it, will do it, for love is the fulfilling of the commandment.

By all it appears, how the *deceiver and the deceived are Gods.* Mr. *Broughton* hath put the ſum of theſe ſeveral interpretations into his tranſlation. *By him, and from him, and for him, are deceivers and deceived. From him*, that is, he ſendeth them. *By him*, that is, he ſuffers and orders them. *For him*, that is, they promote his glory, and ſerve his ends, either to try and diſcover who are faithful, or to puniſh thoſe who are falſe.

Take one note by way of inference from the whole. *If the deceiver and the deceived are the Lords, then ſurely they who lead others into truth, and they that are led into truth, are his much more.* Truth teachers, and truths receivers, lye, as, in the boſom of God, and are his by ſpecial approbation; They are to him as the apple of his eye, as his precious jewels; They are his Scholars, he teacheth them; he teacheth thoſe that teach truth, and they who learn truth are taught of him; The Lord feeds them with knowledge and underſtanding; *He maketh them to lye down in green paſtures* (of ſound doctrine) *he leadeth them beſide the ſtill waters* of ſpiritual conſolation. *He will open the gates of ſalvation, to a righteous nation who love the truth*, (Iſa. 26. 1.) They are his, and none ſhall pluck them out of his hands; they ſhall not be left either to the cunning craftineſs of deceivers, or to the rough violence of oppreſſours. And though ſuch as publiſh and receive the truth may ſuffer for it, yet they ſhall never looſe by it. *Truth is ſuch a commodity as never broke the buyer, what ever it coſt him.*

VERS. 17, 18.

He leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled, and maketh the Judges fools.

He looſeth the bonds of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

JOB inſiſteth upon his former argument, to illuſtrate the power and wiſdom of God. He had done it in natural things at the 15th verſ. *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up.* He did it in civil and ſpiritual things, at the 16th verſ. *The deceived and the deceiver are his.* In this context he enumerates more diſtinctly, the ſeveral ſorts and degrees of men, whom the Lord by the wonderful adminiſtrations of his power and wiſdom, ſets up or caſts down.

In the former verſe we heard of deceivers in Religion, and of deceivers in policy: of *Church-deceivers*, and of *State-deceivers.* The inſtances given here are about the latter: we may call them *State-heretic ks*, deceiving, or being deceived in the miniſtery of juſtice, to Kingdoms and Commonwealths. And becauſe the intent of *Job* is to ſhew the mutations of States and Kingdoms, therefore he ſpeaks of thoſe who are the chief ſupporters, the moſt eminent pillars of States and Kingdoms. Of theſe he names, 1. *Councellours.* 2. *Judges.* 3. *Kings*; in whoſe miſcarriages whole Kingdoms miſcarry.

Verſibus his quinq; deſcribitur Monarchici ſtatus Labefactatio atque everſio. Merl. *Affert rara & extraordinaria quæ Deus facit, ut his tremendis operibus & judiciis veterũ à nobis excutiat.* Merc.

It is here obſervable in general, that *Job* being to deſcribe the providences of God in the world, doth not meddle with ſmall matters, as what God doth to a private perſon, or ſingle families; but he deals in thoſe which are moſt eminent, the tranſmutations of Kingdoms, which fall within the obſervation of the whole world. If a particular man be undone or ruined, his next neighbour takes notice of it, but it is ſcarce known in the next village: But when Kingdoms are ruined, all States and Kingdoms ring of it, ſuch events are the talk and wonder of the Nations round about.

Secondly, He doth not inſtance in the founding and eſtabliſhing of Kingdoms, wherein yet the wiſdom and power of God are very glorious; but in their deſtruction and putting down. And the reaſon is, becauſe we take greater notice of God in pulling down, then we do in building up; we obſerve him more when he killeth, then when he maketh alive; his withdrawings are more noted then his preſence, and we are more ſenſible of our privations, then of our injoyments. The Sun is more looked at in an ecclipſe, then when it ſhineth with pureſt luſtre.

Further, He giveth inſtance in theſe, becauſe we are apt to caſt the miſcarriages of Kingdoms upon ſecond cauſes. It was the pride of ſuch, the envy of others, the ambition of a third ſort, or the unfaithfulneſs of a fourth, which undid all; we ſeldom look up to the hand of God, while we complain ſo much of men. In all changes here below, *Job* carrieth our thoughts directly to God, *He leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled:* Do not ſtay enquiring how weakly Counſellours adviſed, or how fooliſhly Judges gave their ſentence, it is God that doth all theſe things, *He leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled, and maketh the Judges fools,* &c. More diſtinctly,

מוליך *Ire faciens.*

יעץ *Conſulere, decernere, deliberare. Conſiliarius eſt, qui ſibi ipſi vel aliis dat ratiōne agendi.*

He leadeth.] The Hebrew is, he makes them go, he makes them go whether they will or no: he leadeth them from the height of their dignity, into a deſpiſed condition. No man hath any mind to ſuch a motion.

Counſellours.] Counſellours (as the word is ordinarily taken) are ſuch as give advice in publick affairs; *they chaulk out the way for action*; that's the proper work of counſel; Counſel is to lay the deſign, and to cut out the means, how buſineſſes are to be carried, how to be mannaged, then others are called to execute. *Counſel tables order the affairs of the whole world:* they give the rule, and draw the method, they appoint the inſtruments and ſet the time how all ſhall be done. A Counſellour is like the Pilot at the helm, ſteering the veſſels courſe, (*Prov.* 11. 14.) *Where no counſel is, the people fall, but in the multitude of Counſellours there is ſafety.* Hence when *Job* would ſet forth the deſtruction of a people, he tells us that God *leadeth Counſellours*

Διάγω βουλευτὰς αἰχμαλώτους. Sept. *Ducit conſultores captivos.*

Away ſpoiled.] The Hebrew is variouſly interpreted. The Septuagint ſaith, *He leadeth them away as captives.* Then the ſence riſeth thus, That the Lord takes the wiſe Counſellours of the earth, as priſoners in war; when they in their counſels and deſigns have ſet themſelves againſt his Throne and Kingdom, when they have been deviſing devices againſt his people; then the Lord comes out with his Army, conquers them, and leads them captive. When Chriſt aſcended upon high, (*Pſal.* 68. 18.) *He led captivity captive,* or, *He captivated captivity*; that is, he led thoſe captive who had captivated his people; or he led his people, who were miſerable captives to Satan, into a bleſſed captivity to himſelf. And as he led *captivity captive,* ſo he can *lead liberty captive,* making thoſe who injoyed the greateſt liberty, even *Counſellours themſelves, his captives.*

There are three wayes in which this leading Counſellours ſpoiled and captivated may be underſtood.

De gradu dignitatis dejicit. Druſ.

Firſt, *Spoiled of their honour and reputation.* It is as eaſie as it is uſual with the Lord, *to ſpoil thoſe of honour in the world, who uſe their counſels and their power againſt thoſe whom he honours.* It is as great an affliction to caſt them out of the hearts of men, (eſpecially of good men) as out of their eſtates. *The hand of God is in nothing more viſible then in making them a deteſtation among men, who were the delight of men.* Honour is one of the richeſt ſpoils that can be taken from any man, eſpecially from Counſellours; who alwayes do as much with their reputation, as with their reaſon, and can do nothing with all their reaſon, when once they have loſt their reputation.

Sapientes hujus ſeculi optato fine dejicit. Pin.

Secondly, *He leadeth them away ſpoiled* of their hopes and expectations, ſpoiled of the booty and of the prey which they deſigned to themſelves; they thought of rich advantages by ſpoiling others, but they are led away ſpoiled. To which ſence the words are well expounded, *He doth caſt the wiſe men of this world from their wiſhed end:* They who preſumed and promiſed themſelves great ſpoils, become a ſpoil. *Eliphaz* treateth at large of this point, (*Chap.* 5. 12.) *He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſo that their hand cannot perform their enterpriſe.*

Hebræi ſpoliatos mente & judicio exponunt. Merc.

Adducit ſapientes in prædā ſcientiæ: i. e. *eorū ſapientiam quaſi prædam & ſpolia diripit.* Rab. Moyſ.

Thirdly, Theſe Counſellours are often ſpoiled, not only of their honour and credit, of their ends and hopes, but alſo of their wits and wiſdom. They whoſe wits and wiſdom continue as high and quick as ever, may yet be diſappointed in their counſels, and looſe both their ends and honour: But the Lord doth ſometimes ſpoil the wiſe of wiſdom, and knowing men of underſtanding. The Hebrew Doctors delight moſt in this interpretation, *He preyeth upon the wiſdom of the wiſe*; they think themſelves able to outreach and outpolicy all the world: Yet God blaſts their gifts, and darkens their underſtandings, he puts them out of their wits, and makes their judgements injudicious. He gives them up (as he did thoſe Gentiles, who waxed vain in their imaginations, *Rom.* 1. 28.) *to a reprobate mind,* to an unjudging, or an unapproving ſpirit. They who knowingly put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs, evil for good, and good for evil, wrong for right, and right for wrong, ſhall do it at laſt for want of knowledge. *They who act againſt their light, ſhall not have light to act by.* And as ſome counſellours are thus ſpoiled for a puniſhment to themſelves, ſo not a few are ſpoiled that they may be a puniſhment to others. For this cauſe they are diſabled to reſolve what is ſafe for a people, and what is unſafe; what may be for their uniting, or what for their dividing; what for the ſetling, or what for the diſturbing of affairs. (*Pſal.* 75. 5.) *The ſtout hearted are ſpoiled*; ſo we read, but ſome tranſlate, *They are ſpoiled of their ſtout heart:* The ſtout hearted, the ſtrong are ſpoiled; the ſtrong man may be ſpoiled by a ſtronger: that's a good ſence, but it is more elegantly rendred, *they are ſpoiled of their ſtout heart,* that is, the Lord takes their heart out of their boſom. Daring men, who fear nothing, are turned into *Magor-miſſa-bibs, fear round about*; their ſtout hearts are taken from them; and then, they are ſo far from being a terrour to other men, that they run from the ſhadow of a man: Their courage is down, they cannot give a child a confident look, much leſs look dangers or enemies in the face. Now, as the Lord ſpoils Souldiers and warriours of their ſtout hearts, ſo he ſpoileth Counſellours of their cunning and politick hearts, of their wiſe hearts; *the politick hearts are ſpoiled,* or, *they are ſpoiled of their politick hearts. Rabbi Moſes* (as was noted) readeth this text ſo, *he bringeth wiſe men into a ſpoil of their wiſdom,* that is, he takes their wiſdom as a prey: and as a man that is ſpoiled, is ſent away without a peny in his purſe, or a garment upon his back, ſo theſe wiſe Counſellours are ſent away without any wit in their heads, or prudence in their breaſts. One of the Greek tranſlatours, (both the Hebrews and the Greeks joyn in this ſence) gives it thus, *He leadeth away Counſellours to uncounſellableneſs,* or he leadeth them away (ſaith another) *into penury or poverty of counſel,* they have not ſo much as a peny worth of counſel about them, if one ſhould come to ask it of them. The Vulgar Latine comes near this ſence, rendering thus, *He leadeth the Counſellours into a fooliſh end,* or, *into a fooliſh concluſion of their buſineſs*; that is, he brings their counſels to ſuch an end, that they ſhall be accounted fools and unwiſe men, by all men of wiſdom.

Spoliati ſūt fortes corde, q.d. *privati animo animoſitate & fortitudine.*

Δάγων βουλευτὰς εἰς ἀβουλίαν. Symach.

Theſe three wayes we may underſtand this text, that God *leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled.* All which are wrapped up in a fourth, he brings them into ſtraits and difficulties, like captives in chains, and ſo drags them after the chariot of his triumphing providence, drawn by *his own infinite wiſdom and ſtrength*: And thus they become a ſpectacle of ſcorn or pity to all beholders.

Adducit ut prædā. Tyg.

Further, Conſider that theſe Counſellours may be of two ſorts. Firſt, Such as give evil counſel againſt a Kingdom or State, theſe are uſually led away ſpoiled of their honour, and of their hopes, of their ends, yea and of their wits. Secondly, Such as give good counſel, and that with all their might, and the beſt of their underſtanding, yet, even theſe are ſometimes led away ſpoiled of all: So that though they would, yet they ſhall not be able to direct or deliver thoſe that truſt them and depend upon them. Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *A ſpirit of counſel is the gift of God.*

It is a ſpecial gift of God to be able to give good counſel: it is a great gift of God, to be willing to receive good counſel. I ſcarce know which is the greater, to be willing to receive good counſel, or to be able to give it. Many can give good counſel, who will not receive it: To give or to receive *are the gift of God.*

Secondly Obſerve, *Kingdoms and States fail, when counſels fail.*

Jobs ſcope is to ſhew the alterations that are in Kingdoms: now as by the Majeſty of Kings, the wiſdom of Counſellours, the prudence of Judges, the eloquence of Orators, and valour of Souldiers, Kingdoms flouriſh and are eſtabliſhed; ſo by the taking away or decay of theſe, Kingdoms decay and come to nothing, or to that which is *next to nothing, a chaos of confuſion.* This judgement is threatned, (*Iſa.* 3.4.) *In that day the Lord will take away from Jeruſalem, the ſtay and the ſtaff, the whole ſtay of bread, and the whole ſtay of water.* There is a twofold ſtaff of a people, there is a *natural ſtaff*, and there is a *civil ſtaff*; the natural ſtaff is bread and water, which by a *Synechdoche* are put for all the neceſſary ſupports of a natural life. The removal of theſe is ruine; yet God when he intends ruine, takes away other ſtayes beſides theſe. The ſame Prophet proceeds in this ſad narrative, *He will take away alſo the mighty man, and the man of war, the Judge, and the Prophet, and the Prudent, and the Ancient, the Captain of fifty, and the Honourable man, and the Counſellour.* Thus the Lord takes away the *civil ſtaff and ſtay* of a people, that is, men inabled for publick ſervices. And when theſe foundations of humane ſociety are out of courſe or removed out of place, down comes the roof and higheſt pinnacles of the moſt potent Commonwealths. For as *when viſion*, that is, the word preached, *faileth, the people periſh*; (the preaching of the word is called a viſion, either becauſe the word was received by viſion from God, or becauſe in it, the Lord is ſeen, and his truth is diſcovered to us.) Now (I ſay) as when this viſion faileth, the people periſh, that is, their ſouls periſh, the ſpiritual part periſheth, they periſh in the capacity of a Church: So when counſel fails, the people periſh in their civil capacity, as they are a politick State or Commonwealth. Learn hence, what need we have to pray for the maintenance of theſe ſtayes. God in judgement may lead our Counſellours away ſpoiled, and then we are ſpoiled.

Thirdly Obſerve, *The ruine of Kingdoms is not from chance and fortune, but by the decree and purpoſes of God.*

He leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled. He in mercy giveth Counſellours, to eſtabliſh and preſerve Kingdoms; and when either Counſellours abuſe their wiſdom, or when a people abuſe the bleſſings which God giveth, or hath reſtored to them by their Counſels, then he takes them away, *he ſpoileth the Counſellours that the people may be ſpoiled.* We ſometimes wonder that Counſellours have no more wiſdom, we ſhould rather be humbled that our ſelves have no more goodneſs. Uſually a people are firſt ſpoiled of goodneſs, before Counſellours are ſpoiled of wiſdom to give advice, or are ſucceſsleſs in what they adviſe. If God doth this, we cannot complain: When he gives Counſellours, he is not indebted to do it; and when he takes them away he is provoked to do it; he takes them not away whileſt good counſels are received, or while we are thankful to him for the good we receive by counſel. When the Lord would deſtroy *Egypt*, he ſpoiled the Counſellors of *Egypt* (Jer. 19.11,12,13.) *Surely the Princes of Zoan are fools, the counſel of the wiſe Counſellors of Pharaoh is become brutiſh; How ſay ye unto Pharaoh, I am the ſon of the wiſe, the ſon of ancient Kings?* The Prophet diſcovers their degeneracy from their anceſtours. And whence was all this? Was this from the turning of *fortunes wheel*, as heathens uſed to ſpeak? No, *verſ.* 17. *Becauſe of the Counſel of the Lord of hoſts, which he hath determined againſt it.* The Lord had a Counſel, and his Counſel was againſt *Egypt*, therefore the Counſel of the wiſe ſhall not help *Egypt*: For the Princes of *Zoan* ſhall become fools, and the Counſel of the wiſe Counſellours of *Pharaoh* brutiſh. When the moſt proper means of ſafety cannot ſave, nothing can. And though Counſellours themſelves continue wiſe, yet they ſhall have no better ſucceſs then fools. *Achitophels* Counſel was in an ill matter, yet it was the beſt Counſel that could be given to facilitate the ends of *Abſalom*, but the Lord turned it into fooliſhneſs: The event is the ſame, whether God turn (as he did *Achitophels*) wiſe Counſel into fooliſhneſs, or (as it follows in this text) *the wiſeſt Counſellours into fools*; both theſe are alike eaſie to God and fatal unto man.

And he makes the Judges fools.

Some expound this as a repetition of the former clauſe. *A Counſellour may alſo be a Judge*; ſo they are coincident terms. But rather take them diſtinctly, for here are three Officers ſpecified: Firſt, He who is ſupream, *the King*: Secondly, They who are ſubordinate, *the Judge*, and the *Counſellour*. Now as *He leadeth Counſellours away ſpoiled*, ſo *he makes the Judges fools.*

שפט *Ita ſignificat ut idē ſit quod regere, remp. adminiſtrare leges & jura præſcribere.*

The Judge (*as diſtinguiſhed from the Counſellour*) *is one who adminiſtreth juſtice according to law. Judges are ſervants to the law, and rulers to the people*, Gen. 19.9. *This fellow came in to ſojourn, and he will needs be a Judge*; he will govern and give us the rule, he will take upon him to teach us what to do, ſay the *Sodomites* to *Lot*. After the death of *Joſhua*, the ſupream Magiſtrate in Iſrael was called a Judge, till *Saul* was elected King. Here the Judge is a ſubordinate Magiſtrate, placed under Kings.

יהולל

He makes the Judges fools.] Not by any poſitive act, infuſing folly. But God may be ſaid to make Judges fools, two wayes. Firſt, By not enlightning their underſtandings, and leaving them in the dark. Secondly, By overreaching their underſtandings, and outwitting them in the light. It is uſual amongſt us, to ſay, of a very wiſe man, *he will make ſuch a one a very fool if he deal with him:* Not that he puts folly into the man, or withdraweth wiſdom from him, but he doth ſo much overpoiſe him in parts, that when he deals or argues with him, he will appear but a child or a very fool. Thoſe Iſraelites that went to ſearch the land of *Canaan* were doubtleſs no dwarfs, yet when they ſaw the huge ſons of *Anak*, they looked on themſelves like graſhoppers. A tall man is but low of ſtature; A rich man but poor; A wiſe man but a fool, in compariſon of him who greatly excels in ſtature, riches or wiſdom. We may take this text either of a privative act, the Lord withdraws and withholds the light, ſo that the Judge cannot ſee the rule of the Law, and then (like a fool) he errs in judgement; or of a ſuperlative act, for though the Judge retain his light, yet the Lord makes a fool of him. Who can tell how much the wiſdom of God exceeds the wiſdom of man, when the Apoſtle tells us, that *the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then men?* 1 Cor. 1.25. *If the fooliſhneſs of God* (namely that which vain men count fooliſhneſs) be *wiſer then men*, then ſurely the wiſdom of God will ſoon make the wiſeſt among men fools indeed.

Again, *Job* doth not ſay, *He makes fools Judges*; that the Lord doth ſometimes (*Iſa.* 3.4.) *I will give children to be their Princes, and babes ſhall rule over them:* The Prophet ſpeaks not of children in age, for *Joſiah was a child*, and but eight years old, yet a great bleſſing to the Kingdom of *Judah*; but he means children in underſtanding. The fore-thought of that, troubled *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 2.19. *I hated all my labour which I had taken under the ſun* (ſaith he) *becauſe I ſhould leave it unto the man that ſhall be after me, and who knoweth whether he ſhall be a wiſe man or a fool? Rehoboam* proved a fooliſh Prince. Now as God to puniſh a people makes fools Judges, ſo which is more, *He maketh Judges fools*; let them be as wiſe as they will, he outwitteth them, and catcheth them in their own devices.

The Vulgar Latine reads it thus, *He brings the Judges into aſtoniſhment*, or *amazement*. The Septuagint, *He brings them into fear and trembling:* Both note the ſame thing, that the Lord caſts them into a conſternation of ſpirit, and then they fall upon erroneous and fooliſh determinations. (*Iſa.* 19.14.) *He mingleth a perverſe ſpirit in the midſt of them.* They turn giddy, or are giddy with turning, and know not well what to do, or which way to reſolve.

Judices in ſtuporem, Vulg. in pavorem, Sept. in conturbatione mentis.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That the wiſeſt men are not alwayes wiſe.*

God can make Judges fools. As wiſdom is the gift of God, ſo is the continuance of it: And unleſs we receive a ſupply of wiſdom from God, we ſhall quickly turn fools, and do things rather like mad men, then like men of reaſon and underſtanding. *We want daily wiſdom for our daily work, as much as we do daily bread for our daily wants.*

Secondly, *Failings in judgment are in judgment from God*; or, *God in judgment makes men fail in judgment.*

It is a high judgment of wrath, to diſable men from judging in reaſon.

This God doth, both to puniſh the ſins of Judges, and of thoſe for whom they judge. When a people truſt in the wiſdom of their Judges, when they make them God, of whom God hath only ſaid, *Ye are Gods*; then God makes them leſs then men. (*Acts* 12.) When *Herod* made an Oration, the people cryed, *The voice of God, and not of man.* Judges ſhould give glory to God, as *Herod* did not, and ſo was conſumed of Worms; yet God may ſend a Worm into the counſels and reſolutions of the Judges, and eat them out, becauſe of ſuch cryes among the people.

Laſtly, It is matter of comfort to conſider, that the Lord can make Judges fools: That (as Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates this verſe) *He brings Counſellors to badneſs, and Judges to ſtark madneſs.* We need not fear what wiſe men act againſt us, while the only wiſe God acteth for us.

Job goes on, and gives an higher inſtance then in Judges and Counſellors.

Verſe 18. **He looſeth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.**

He looſeth.] The Hebrew is, he openeth or untieth the bond of Kings.

The bond.] The word ſignifies any thing that knitteth, or holdeth together. Sometimes it is put for diſcipline and correction: The Greek expreſſeth inſtruction and correction, both the parts of diſcipline, by one word.

מוסר *a rad.* יסר *Quod eſt conſtringere aut ligare vinculo aut quacunq; inſtitutione aut arctiore diſciplina, quam Græci* παιδείαν *vocant.*

We may take this *bond* two wayes. First, Paſſively, and ſecondly, Actively.

First, Paſſively, and then by the bonds of Kings, are underſtood thoſe bonds wherewith Kings are bound. So the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt tranſlates, *He bringeth Kings from bonds to the throne*; that is, Kings who have been bound, captivated, and brought very low, he raiſeth up again: The Septuagint runs upon that ſence, *Placing Kings in their thrones*; as ſpeaking of thoſe Kings who had been put out, or put off from their thrones; theſe the Lord re-inthrones, or ſets up again.

καθιζάνων βασιλεῖς ἐπὶ θρόνους. Sept.

Catenam regum ſolvit, q.d. *e vinculis eos evehit ad regnum.* Tharg

And then in correſpondency to that underſtanding of the word [*Bond*] the latter clauſe of the verſe [*And girdeth their loins with a girdle*] is to be underſtood in a good ſence. He giveth them ſtrength and honour, he ſettleth their affairs and *crowns*, after greateſt ſhakings and depreſſions. *A BOND is for puniſhment, a girdle is both for ſtrength and ornament.* A girdle is the *emblem* of power; and to gird a man is as much as to give him power: So that when 'tis ſaid, *He girdeth their loins with a girdle*, the meaning is (according to the ſence given of the former clauſe) he ſtrengtheneth them in their Kingdom, State, and Government, and reſtores them the obedience of their people; thus the phraſe is uſed (*Iſa.* 45. 5.) concerning *Cyrus, I girded thee though thou haſt not known me*; that is, I ſet thee upon the Throne, I eſtabliſhed thee, and confirmed thee, I put thee into that high condition, though thou little thoughteſt that it was I who did it. There is a profitable truth in this interpretation. *Kings are delivered from bonds, and ſet upon their thrones by the ſpecial providence and power of God.*

But if we view this Text with the Context more ſtrictly; the ſcope of the whole lodges our thoughts in another ſence. For *Job* is ſetting forth the judgment of God upon *Kingdoms*, in the judgments which he brings upon *Counſellors, Judges*, and *Kings*. Therefore we cannot with any ſutableneſs to the Context (though the thing be in it ſelf a truth) underſtand it of a work of deliverance, in looſing the bonds of Kings, and re-eſtabliſhing them upon their Thrones. Here then we muſt take the word *bond*, actively, and ſo we may expound it two wayes.

First, For thoſe *bonds* with which Kings illegally bind their people. Such are the bonds of oppreſſion and tyranny: And ſo the meaning of, *He looſeth the bonds of Kings*, is this; God by his mighty power breaks, or by his wiſdom untyes thoſe bonds of oppreſſion, with which Kings attempt to enſlave their people; ſuch were the bonds of *Rehoboam*, whoſe reſolution was (though it was a raſh one) to bind his people in bonds; and when they petitioned him, complaining of heavy burthens laid upon them in his Fathers dayes, praying, that now his yoke might be made eaſier: Eaſier, ſaith he, nay it ſhall be made heavier, *Whereas my Father made your yoak heavy, I will add to your yoke; my father chaſtiſed you with whips, but I will chaſtiſe you with ſcorpions; my little finger ſhall be heavier then my fathers loins.* I will publiſh ſuch Edicts, and put out ſuch Proclamations, as ſhall be ſo many chains, bonds and fetters upon you, to tye you faſter, and hold you cloſer in ſubjection then ever you were to this day. This ſort of *bonds*, the Lord breaks, he looſeth the *oppreſſing bonds* of Princes. When they act the *Tyrant*, not the *King*, and in ſtead of ruling, vex a people; when they will not let their ſubjects enjoy ſuch liberty as becomes men, or Chriſtians, then he looſeth their bonds. Kings and people too, joyn ſometimes (though in vain) to break the bonds of God. (*Pſal.* 2. 1, 2.) *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the Rulers take counſel together*: And what is it upon? It is this, *Come let us break their bonds aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us*: What? Will Chriſt ſubdue us to his Laws? Will he lay bonds upon us, and make us ſlaves under the Scepter of his Government? Come, *Let us break theſe bonds, and caſt theſe cords from us*: let us get out our necks from this yoke, and our ſhoulders from theſe burdens. We are a free people, our tongues and our conſciences are our own, who is Lord over us? Thus people and Kings conſpire to looſen the bonds which *Jeſus Chriſt, the King of Saints, and King of Nations*, chargeth upon them for their good; they will not abide ſuch bonds, not they; but they muſt, for they do but *imagine a vain thing*. But when Kings and Princes, out of the pertinatiouſneſs and pride of their ſpirits, or out of an ungoverned reſolution in government, ſay, that they will lay bonds and tributes, impoſitions and ſervices upon their people, which make them groan; then the Lord takes counſel in Heaven (and it is not in vain) I will break their bonds, (ſaith he) and caſt their cords off from you, and he doth it. As *Sampſon* brake the withs and bonds wherewith the *Philiſtims* bound him, ſo doth God thoſe wherewith his people are bound, *as a threed, as a threed of tow is broken, when it toucheth* (or as the Hebrew is) *ſmelleth the fire.* Thus he wrought for his holy Name, and for his people in *Egypt*. *Pharaoh* ſaid to his wiſe Counſellors, *Come, let us work wiſely*, let us make bonds for this people, and bring them into perpetual ſervitude; they were firſt commanded to make brick, and then compelled to make brick without ſtraw; they ſerved with rigour. Here were bonds, but God looſened them, and by a mighty hand, and ſtretched out arm, delivered his people, drowning *Pharaoh* in the red Sea. Thus the bond of that King was looſened; and ſo were thoſe of *Rehoboam*; for while he (as was toucht before) prepared bonds for his people, and thought he could never make them ſlaves enough, God in judgment ſtirred up another King, and ten Tribes of twelve departed from his obedience, and never returned again; neither did God permit *Rehoboam* to proceed in his attempt for the reducing of them, but took the revolt upon himſelf, ſaying plainly by the mouth of his Prophet, *This thing is from me*, 1 Kings 12. 24. Thus the bonds of that King were looſened, and himſelf was brought into ſtraits, while he endeavoured unjuſtly to ſtraiten thoſe in whoſe juſt liberties he ſhould have rejoyced. Thoſe are the freeſt Kings who govern a free people; and the more free a people are, the more are they truly ſubject. Slavery doth either embaſe the ſpirits of a people, or heightens them to diſobedience. *Oppreſſion makes a wiſe man mad; but none are ſo mad as oppreſſors, how wiſe ſoever they ſeem to be.* When their bonds are looſed (as they ſhall) they looſe more then they could get, ſhould they continue faſtened.

Activè vinculum quo illi alios vinciunt, ſignificat ſæpe tyrannide aut impotenti regũ dominatione liberari ſubditos dũ jugum excutiunt & è poteſtate tyranni exeunt. Merc.

Secondly, As Kings have *oppreſſing bonds*, ſo *governing bonds.* Wholeſome laws are the peoples bonds; and it is both their duty and their liberty to be thus bound. *It is a far greater bondage to be under no laws, then to be under hard* *ones. When every man doth that which is right in his own eyes, there is ſcarce any man will be found either doing or enjoying that which is right.* Therefore let people take heed, leſt while they complain of the bonds of oppreſſion, that they do not throw off the bonds of ſubjection: Yet thus alſo God *looſeth the bonds of Kings:* He in judgment to Kings, and Kingdoms, leaves a people to forget their duty, and to withdraw from due obedience.

(a) *Baltheū regum diſſolvit.* Vulg. (b) *Authoritatem & imperiū illis adimit.* Merc. *In Baltheo regnantis intelligitur gloria, in fune vero è regno depoſiti ignominia.* Hieron. *Aureus Baltheus inſigne fuit regum, clariſſimique magiſtratus, quare ſpoliari cingulo dicebantur qui magiſtratu & dignitate privabantur.* Pined. (c) *Baltheus non fuit inſigne regale, ſed militare.* Bold.

The Vulgar tranſlateth (*a*) *He unbuckleth or diſſolveth the belt of Kings*; which is gloſſed to this ſence; (*b*) *He deveſts them of regal power.* The *belt* was alwayes a *mark* of honour, and ſome of the Learned obſerve, that it was anciently an emblem of *Kingly power:* And ſo the unlooſing of it muſt imply the taking away of that power. (*c*) The *belt* is taken here by others for the emblem of a Souldiers power only, not of a Kings. Hence girding, or putting on the belt, is as much as preparing for war: *Gird up now thy loins like a man*, ſaith God to *Job* (*Chap.* 38. 3.) when he challenged him to a diſpute, which is a *verbal war.* (Pſal. 93. 1.) *The Lord reigneth, he is cloathed with majeſty: the Lord is cloathed with ſtrength, wherewith he hath girded himſelf. David* giving charge to *Solomon* upon his death-bed concerning *Joab*, who had been his chief *Commander*, or the *Generaliſſimo of his forces*, ſaith, *He put the bloud of war upon his girdle,* (or the belt, ſo *Pagnine* tranſlates) *that was upon his loins,* (1 Kings 2. 6.) *Chriſt* himſelf (*Iſa.* 11. 5.) is deſcribed, having *Righteouſneſs the girdle of his loins, and faithfulneſs the girdle of his reins*; that is, coming forth girded, or belted about, as a victorious Conqueror, with righteouſneſs and faithfulneſs. That's the meaning of that cooling meſſage (1 *Kings* 20. 11) *Let not him that girdeth on his harneſs, boaſt himſelf as he that putteth it off*; that is, do not ſing *Victoria* before the battel; the event of war is uncertain. And it was uſual, when commiſſion Officers of Armies were caſhiered and turned off, for any miſdemeanour, to take away their belt. There is a famous ſtory in *Suidas* about it, of one *Auxenſius*, a great Commander under *Lycinius* the Emperour; He reports, that when *Lycinius came into the Court of his Palace, where there was a great Bath, and ſome Vines growing about it, with the image of* Bacchus *ſet up among the Vines: The Emperour bad* Auxenſius *draw his ſword, and cut off a bunch of Grapes, which as ſoon as he had done, he commanded him to offer it at the feet of* Bacchus, *which was as much as to acknowledge him to be a god:* Auxenſius *anſwered, I am a Chriſtian, I will not do it: What? not do it upon my command, ſaith the Emperour, then you muſt quit your place: With all my heart, Sir, ſaid the Chriſtian ſouldier; and, in token of it, put off his belt; which was as much as the giving up of his Commiſſion, and went away with joy in that ſuffering for Chriſt.*

Noli canere triumphum ante victoriam, nondū depoſuiſti arma nondū pace potiris. Abſit Imperator, chriſtianus enim ego ſum: igitur apage relicta militia (inquit Licinius) *at hic nihil cunctatus ſolvit zonam & ſtatim alacer palatio exceſſit.* Sui. *in* Auxentio.

According to this tranſlation and uſe of the word, *He looſeth the bond and belt of Kings*, the ſign is put for the thing ſignified; and the meaning riſeth thus, God caſteth down Kings, not only from their Soveraignty and Regal power, but from their Military power. He takes not only their Crown from their head, and their Scepter out of their hand, but the Belt and Sword from their loins: So that as their people refuſe to give them any willing ſubjection, ſo they are diſabled to compel them.

Non ſolum regali diademate illos exuit, ſed etiam Baltheo quod eſt ſimplicis militis inſigne, i.e. illuc eos abjicit, ut nec militis quidem nomine digni reputetur. Bold.

Hence obſerve, *Kings are in the hands of God, to ſet up, and to caſt down, as himſelf pleaſeth.*

By me (ſaith God) *Kings reign, and Princes decree juſtice*, Prov. 8. 15. and when Princes refuſe to *decree juſtice*, God can ſay it, and effect it, *Ye ſhall not reign.* (Iſa. 45. 1.) *Thus ſaith the Lord to his anointed, to* Cyrus, *whoſe right hand I have holden to ſubdue Nations before him, and I will looſe the loins of Kings*, &c. God ſet up *Cyrus* King, to put down Kings, yet he ſaith, *I will looſe the loins of Kings. Cyrus* was the Inſtrument, but both the deſign and the ſucceſs was of God. Kings cannot make bonds ſo faſt, either to ſtrengthen themſelves, or ſtrait their people, as God can looſe them. There are four bonds which the Lord uſually looſeth, when he chaſtens the pride and ſin of Kings.

Firſt, The bonds of their *Authority*, that their word is not reverenced, nor received, as before. *Where the word of a King is* (ſaith *Solomon*) *there is power:* Yet when God is angry, he can render their *word powerleſs.*

Secondly, He looſeth the bonds of their *riches and Revenues:* Riches are a ſtrength to Kings: Riches are the ſupport, as well as the fruit of peace; and they are the ſinews of war: When treaſure is gone, power ſtayes not long behind. *Money anſwers all things*; and when that fails, Princes ſeldom receive contentful anſwers. God ſends a Moth upon the publick treaſure, and that eats aſunder many bonds and obligations.

Thirdly, Which is ſtronger then the former two, God looſeth *the bond of a peoples love and affection unto Kings. Love is the bond of obedience, both to God and man.* Princes ſit faſteſt in the affections of their people. That King who hath the hearts of his Subjects, hath their hands and their purſes too at command. *Jehoram* out-lived, or rather, never lived in the love of his people, and *he died undeſired* (2 Chron. 21. 20.) *Some have ſaid, let them hate while they muſt fear: But that fear is ſafeſt which ſprings from love.*

Oderint dū metuant.

Fourthly, The Lord looſeth *the bonds of their Leagues, Allyances, and Confederacies with forreign Nations:* They ſhall not ſtand faſt by covenants with men, who break the covenant of their God. Through this judgment of God, Kings have been oftner entangled, then ſtrengthened with Leagues. Thoſe Leagues and Alliances, ſpoken of by *Daniel* (*Chap.* 11.) between the Kings of the North and of the South, proved ſnares to catch, rather then helps to uphold one another.

Theſe bonds, or what bonds elſe ſoever, the Kings of the earth make, either to ſupport themſelves, or oppreſs their people, are looſed by the power of God. As there is no bond of God ſo ſtrong, but the heart of man will attempt to break it; ſo there is no bond of man ſo ſtrong, but the hand of God can break it, *He looſeth the bonds of Kings.*

And girdeth their loins with a girdle.

In the firſt interpretation of the former clauſe, *This girding of the loins of Kings with a girdle*, was taken in a good ſence, namely, for the ſtrengthening of their State. But in purſuance of the ſecond interpretation, which hath appeared moſt agreeable to this Text, *The girding their loins with a girdle*, undergoes a very different conſideration, and may be taken two wayes.

Per cingulū aliqui vires innuunt, cingulo enī lumbi præcinguntur, in quibus virium ſedes & roboris. Druſ.

Firſt, As a *girdle* is oppoſed to a *belt.* A girdle is of ordinary uſe, a common part of cloathing: Every man weareth a girdle; but every man doth not wear a belt; that hath ſomewhat of honour in it. And ſo the ſence is this, He looſeneth the belt of Kings, and takes off their ſword, ſo that they cannot carry on their wars. And then, *He girdeth their loins with a girdle*; that is, he brings them into a low or common condition.

Habitus hominis abjectiſſimi ut opponitur Baltheo, qui reges ornat. Pined.

Secondly, A girdle, and girding with it, ſignifies, not only a common, but a ſervile, or captivated condition. So ſome expound the words here, as an alluſion to that cuſtom which was amongſt the *Perſians:* (one of the Rabbins is clear for it, and frames his comment upon that notion.) The Kings of *Perſia* were wont to gird thoſe with a girdle, whom they had taken captive; and they miniſtred unto, and attended thoſe great Kings, being girt with a girdle. Now, That to be girt about the loins is a poſture of ſervice, is clear alſo in Scripture, being a Metaphor taken from the uſage of the Eaſtern countreys, where, wearing long garments, they girded them in all preparations for travel, or labour. *Gird up the loins of your minds* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13.) that is, be in a readineſs to ſerve the Lord. When Chriſt went to waſh his Diſciples feet, *John* 13. *He took a towel and girded himſelf.* And when he would ſhew how bleſſed thoſe ſervants ſhall be whom their Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find watching; He tells them (*Luke* 12. 37.) *Verily I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them to ſit down to meat, and will come forth and ſerve them.* And again, when he would prove that no man, by all his watchfulneſs and diligence, can deſerve any thing at the hand of God: He puts a query, *Luke* 17. 7, 8. *Which of you having a ſervant plowing, or feeding cattel, will ſay unto him, when he is come from the field, go and ſit down to meat, and will not rather ſay unto him, make ready wherewith I may ſup, and gird thy ſelf and ſerve me,* &c. According to this approved uſe of the phraſe, *Job's* ſence is this, *He looſeth the bonds of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle*; that is, they who ruled others, are forced to obey, and from Commanders are turned into ſervants: So low the

Cingulum per zonam exponitur, qua ſolebant præcingi, qui regibus Perſarum miniſtrabāt & qua duces exulum Iſraelitarū ante reges Perſarum miniſtrantes accingebantur. Merc. ex Ramb.

q. d. *Commutat eos in famulos.* Druſ.

the Lord hath ſometimes caſt the mightieſt and higheſt Princes of the world.

The vulgar tranſlateth yet more low, *He girdeth their loins about with a rope*; which is the meaneſt matter and making of a girdle: they ſhall not only have a girdle for a belt, but a rope inſtead of a girdle: So that word is rendred (*Iſa.* 3. 24.) by the ſame Tranſlator, The wanton and delicate Dames of *Iſrael*, ſhall have, in ſtead of a *curious girdle, a rope*; to note the extream turn which God would make in the ſtate of thoſe proud women; and thus he can abaſe the pride of the greateſt men.

Præcingit fune lumbos eorum. Funis nomine vilitas zonæ denotatur qua plebeiæ conditionis homines uti ſolent. Bold. *Pro zona funiculus.*

Let that be the Obſervation upon the whole matter,

God ſometimes doth, and he alwayes can bring thoſe that are higheſt in worldly dignity, into the extreameſt depth of worldly miſery.

Rulers become captives; they who ſat on Thrones, live in priſons; the *royal belt* is laid aſide, and a common girdle, yea girding with ſackcloth, taken up by the mightieſt earthly gods, when the God of Heaven is angry. *The greateſt changes are incident to the greateſt perſons. Nebuchadnezzar's dream* was full to this point (*Dan.* 2. 10.) He forgetting it, ſends for the Magicians and Aſtrologers to tell him, both what his dream was, and what the interpretation of it; but they could not. *There is not a man upon the earth* (ſay they) *that can ſhew the Kings matter; therefore there is no King, Lord, nor Ruler, that asketh ſuch things at any Magician or Aſtrologer: none can ſhew it unto the King, except the Gods, whoſe dwelling is not with fleſh.* But unto *Daniel* the ſecret was revealed by God; and before he revealed it to the King, he makes this preface almoſt in *Job's* ſtile and language, but fully with his ſpirit and intent, bleſſing God, becauſe *wiſdom and might are his, and he changeth the times and ſeaſons; he removeth Kings, and ſetteth up Kings; he giveth wiſdom unto the wiſe, and knowledge to them that know underſtanding,* &c. (*ver.* 20, 21.) Then he tells *Nebuchadnezzar* his dream, and the interpretation thereof. A goodly image it was, yet degenerating and gradually abaſing from *a head of gold, to a breaſt and arms of ſilver, thence to belly and thighs of braſs, to legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay.* All theſe repreſented ſome Kings and Kingdoms falling, and others riſing upon their ruines, till a Kingdom doth ariſe which ſhould never fall (*ver.* 44.) In the ſame prophecy (*Chap.* 4. 10.) we have the Kingly power deſcribed by a goodly tree, the height whereof reached unto Heaven, under which the beaſts of the field had ſhadow, and the fowls of the Heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, *&c.* But, *Behold a watcher, and an holy one, came down from Heaven; He cryed aloud, and ſaid thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, and ſhake off his leaves, and ſcatter his fruit*; ſo the body of this flouriſhing tree vaniſhed to nothing, only the ſtump of his roots were left in the earth with a band of iron and braſs. This viſion is alſo interpreted (*ver.* 24, 25.) by the looſing the bond of that great King ſo much, that he was driven from men, and took up his lodging with the beaſts of the field, and was made to eat graſs as Oxen, and was wet with the dew of Heaven. God, to ſhew that he can throw the moſt potent Monarchs, into the loweſt condition of men, ſpeaks of this Monarch, as thrown into the condition of beaſts: Being (as our late Annotators have obſerved upon the place) either ſtricken mad, and ſo avoided mans company, or being caſt out for his tyranny, he wandred among the beaſts, and eat herbs and graſs. Theſe viſions are cleareſt manifeſtations, that God cuts down Kings, and Kingdoms, even to the very ſtumps (as we ſay) to the very roots, and ſometimes pulls up root and all.

And, that God hath actually done thus to the greateſt Princes, all Hiſtories are full: There is no truth hath received greater teſtimony then this. The records of Scripture, give us high inſtances of it (*Judg.* 1. 6, 7.) *Adonibezeck*, a great King, was taken priſoner by the Army of the two Tribes, *Judah* and *Simeon*, and *They cut off his thumbs, and his great toes:* The eminency of the judgment draws from him an acknowledgment of his own former cruelty, and of the preſent juſtice of God upon him, *Threeſcore and ten Kings, having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, ſo God hath requited me.* He cut off their thumbs, that they might be diſabled from handling Arms, or fighting with him; he cut off their great toes, that they might be diſabled to run from him, or eſcape by flight. Suppoſe theſe were petty Princes, yet their number was great; and the hand of God was ſeen greatly, both in caſting them from their dignities, and in catching him at laſt, who had captivated all them. And as thoſe Heathen Kings, ſo alſo ſome of the Kings of *Judah*, who were of Gods ſpecial anointing and ſetting up, were miſerably afflicted, and brought into bondage, by the ſpecial counſel of God. Take the examp'e of *Zedekiah* (2 *Kings* 25. 6, 7.) whom, when the Army of the *Chaldees* took the City, *They purſued, and took, brought to the King of* Babylon, *who gave judgment upon him; and they ſlew the Sons of* Zedekiah *before his eyes, and put out the eyes of* Zedekiah, *and bound him with fetters of braſs, and carried him to* Babylon. How ſad a ſpectacle was here? A King of *Judah*, the Ruler of Gods choſen people, in fetters of braſs? When the latter Greek Empire was overthrown by the Turks, that great Family of the *Paleologi* (in which the Empire had long continued) came to that lowneſs, that ſome of the Royal blood became Servants, and ordinary Tradeſmen. In them the obſervation of the Preacher was fulfilled (*Eccleſ.* 10. 7.) *I have ſeen ſervants upon horſes, and Princes walking as ſervants upon the earth. Sapor*, King of *Perſia*, took *Valentinian*, the Emperor, priſoner, and uſed him as a ſtool for himſelf to ſtep upon, when he mounted into his ſaddle. *Seſoſtris*, King of *Egypt*, ſubduing divers Kings, compelled them to draw his Chariot. *The Roman* Hiſtorians give frequent teſtimony, that in the flouriſhing ſtate of that *Imperious Commonwealth*, conquered Kings and Princes were dragg'd at their Chariots in triumph. Victorious *Tamerlane*, having overthrown and taken *Bajazet*, the Turkiſh Emperor, ſhackled him in fetters of gold, cauſed him to be ſhut up in an iron cage, made in the faſhion of a grate, and ſo carried him like a wild beaſt, as he marched through *Aſia*, to be ſcorned of his own people. *Henry* the fourth, Emperor of *Germany*, having been oft worſted in battel, was at laſt reduced to ſuch exigents, that he had not wherewith to buy him bread, but was forced to come to the great Church at *Spires* (which he himſelf had built) and there beg to be a Choriſter, that ſo he might get a ſmall ſtipend to keep him from ſtarving; but could not obtain it: which repulſe cauſed him to beſpeak the ſtanders by, in the words of lamenting *Job* (Chap. 19. 21.) *Have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* The weight of theſe miſeries brought him ſhortly after to his grave; but he found none ſo humane as to put him in, for he lay unburied five years, no man daring to do it, becauſe the Pope had forbidden it to be done. Theſe examples (more might be added) are clear expoſitions of, or experiments rather of this Scripture. Let the great men of the earth hear and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly; let them take the counſel of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 2.) *be wiſe therefore now, O ye Kings, and be inſtructed ye Judges of the earth: Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling: Kiſs the Son leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little*: There is no ſtriving by the moſt glorious Princes of the earth, with him who is *the King of Heaven, and Lord of glory.*

Pezet. *Meliſicii Hiſt. part.* 3.

Take two Corrollaries from the whole: *If the Lord do thus toſs Kings like tennis-balls, and hurl whole Kingdoms into ruine; if he befools the Judges, and ſpoils the Counſellors of the earth, ſurely he will not ſpare inferiors and weaklings, who ſtrengthen themſelves againſt him.* If God deal thus with *Kings*, what will he do with *ſubjects?* He that ſmites Princes, will he let a people paſs unpuniſht? God hath in all ages ſet ſome Kings and Princes on the ſcaffold, and made them eminent in ſufferings, as well as in dignity, that others beholding the juſtice of God, might glorifie him, and humble themſelves. Hence we may argue, as Chriſt did in his own caſe; *If it be thus done to the green tree, what ſhall be done to the dry?* If the Lord hath been thus ſevere againſt the talleſt Cedars in *Lebanon*, and againſt the Oaks of *Baſhan* (Kings and Monarchs of the world) that are exalted and lifted up: Shall not low and dry ſhrubs (inferiour perſons) feel the axe and ſtroke of his anger, when they ſin contemptuouſly againſt him? Even theſe are often as proud, unjuſt and oppreſſive, according to the line of their power, and the length of their hand, as they *who have longeſt hand, and largeſt power.* It is an admirable diſpenſation, when God layes his rod upon the back of Kings, to warn mean men. The children of Princes are uſually corrected (for their faults) by correcting the children of *Plebeians* in their preſence; their Tutors and Governors do only put them in fear, and make them know diſcipline, by the ſmart which others feel. What ſhall we ſay then, when God corrects the Children of Kings, yea Kings themſelves, in the ſight of the common people, that they may be warned and learn diſcipline?

Secondly, *If the ſtrength of Kings cannot hold out againſt the anger of God, how ſhall the weak ſtand before him when he is angry?* That argument in the Prophet (*Jer.* 12. 5. *If thou haſt run with foot-men, and they have wearied thee, then how canſt thou contend with horſes?*) may be inverted here; if God hath contended with horſes, and they could not weary him, how eaſily will he run with footmen? The ſtatelieſt Palaces, and ſtrongeſt Thrones of Kings, have been conſumed or thrown down at his word: Then what will become of cottages and common mens eſtates, when he ſpeaks againſt them? When the Lord hath once (as lamenting *Jeremy* complains, *Lam.* 2. 16.) *in the indignation of his anger deſpiſed the King and the Prieſt,* his indignation will make quick diſpatch of the reſt, who follow their ſteps in ſin, or partake in their tranſgreſſion.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

He removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty, and taketh away the underſtanding of the aged.

He poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty.

JOB goes on in his enumeration of Inſtances, for the proof and clearing up of his grand Propoſition. In the Context before opened we ſaw how *God leadeth Counſellors away ſpoiled, and maketh the Judges fools*; how *he looſeth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.* Here we find him at the ſame work ſtill, though upon other objects;

He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

Facit principes ut deveniant in dementiam. Jun.
Ducit ſacerdotes ingloꝛios. Vulg.
כהן
Miniſtrare in ſacris aut politicis. Sacerdos princeps in quacunque dignitate conſtitutus.

There is a difference about the word which we tranſlate **Princes**: At the ſeventeenth verſe, *He leadeth Counſellors away ſpoiled*; and here, *He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled:* Spoiled (as was ſhewed before) of their ends, and of their hopes, of their power and honour, yea and of their wits and underſtandings, which cauſeth ſome to render it, *He leadeth Princes into madneſs.* Mr. *Broughton, He bringeth Dukes to badneſs:* And the vulgar, *He leadeth Prieſts into diſhonour, or ſpoiled of their honour.* The Hebrew [*Cohen*] indifferently ſignifies a *Prince,* or a *Prieſt,* and is frequently uſed in the old Teſtament for both: And the Verb whence this Noun is derived, ſignifies to adminiſter, both in political, and eccleſiaſtical affairs, and ſo either a Governour in the Commonwealth, or a Governour in the Church. It is put for a Church-governour, *Iſa.* 28. 7. *The Prieſt and the Prophet have erred,* Pſal. 99. 6. Moſes *and* Aaron *among his Prieſts.* And for a State-governour, 2 *Sam.* 8. 18. *Davids ſons were chief Rulers:* For both, *Gen.* 41. 45. *The Prieſt, or Prince of* On, *Exod.* 2. 16. *The Prieſt, or Prince of* Midian.

Three reaſons are aſſigned, why thoſe two dignities fell under one expreſſion.

Firſt, Becauſe of old time, *the Prieſt and the Prince* were one perſon. The eldeſt in the family (before the giving of the Law) was both: And after the giving of the Law, together with all the ceremonial Inſtitutes, the high Prieſt of *Aarons* order was a great Prince in *Iſrael.*

Secondly, The Prieſthood in general was an office of honour, therefore it is expreſt by a word of honour.

Thirdly, Becauſe the Prieſts were unto God, the King of Heaven, as Princes are unto the Kings of the earth: Princes ſtand but a degree below Kings, and bear the great offices in Kingdoms; they are of Kings ſecret counſel, and know their hearts; they conveigh the mind of Kings to the people, and often as Commiſſioners repreſent their perſons. Such (in their capacity) were Prieſts, in reference unto God; and are therefore called *Gods nigh ones.* This is it which the Lord ſpake (ſaith *Moſes,* when the two ſons of *Aaron* were ſlain by fire, while they offered with ſtrange fire, *Levit.* 10. 3.) *I will be ſanctified in thoſe that come nigh me,* or *in my nigh ones*; ſuch eſpecially were the Prieſts; they approached to God, and received his mind, and were therefore ſaid to ſpeak from Gods mouth, and to *preſerve knowledge,* even the knowledge of himſelf in their lips. God committed his ſecrets, and the myſteryes of his will, to the Prieſts firſt, and by their Miniſtry conveyed both unto the people: They were as the veſſel, or cabinet, in which God laid up thoſe precious treaſures; *The Prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth, for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts* (Mal. 2. 7.) God gave the honour of this title to the whole Nation of the Jews, they were called a *Nation of Prieſts,* (Exod. 19. 6.) *Ye ſhall be to me a Kingdom of Prieſts, or a royal Prieſthood:* A Kingdom of Prieſts, for two reaſons chiefly: Firſt, Becauſe God did eſteem that people above all the people of the earth, he put an honour and a value upon them, therefore ſaith he, *Ye ſhall be to me a Kingdom of Prieſts.* And ſecondly, Becauſe God communicated more of his counſels to that people, then to any other people, and they were more familiar with him then the reſt of the world; even as the Prieſts were more familiar with God, and came nearer to him then the people. So that look what proportion the Prieſts among the *Jews* bear to the people, the ſame did the *Jews* bear to all other people of the world. We may take the word here in either ſence, *He leadeth Princes,* or, *He leadeth Prieſts away ſpoiled.*

Ex omnibus regnis vos eritis mihi regnum nobiliſſimum familiariſſimum amiciſſimum, quibus arcana & ſecretiora conſilia revelabo.

As the word is rendred **Prieſt,** Obſerve,

First, *That the holineſs of the profeſſion cannot keep the perſon from ſin.*

Prieſts provoke God, and therefore they are ſpoiled. Grace it ſelf is not, much leſs is any outward vocation, a bar againſt temptation: And they who fall in temptation are near falling into affliction, whoſoever they are. Which makes a ſecond Obſervation,

They that are near unto God ſhall ſuffer when they ſin, and the nearer they are, they ſhall ſuffer the more, becauſe the nearer they are, the greater is their ſin.

The Prieſts are among the ſpoiled, *Jer.* 14. 18. *Both the Prophet and the Prieſt go about into a land that they know not*; that is, they go into baniſhment, and are carried captives into a ſtrange land. That Text hath a very different reading, for whereas the word which we tranſlate *go about,* ſignifies alſo to *trade or make merchandize,* the whole is rendred to this ſence: *The Prophets and Prieſts together make merchandize of you, and you either diſcern it not, or do not regard it.* This reading gives us a clear reaſon of that which is contained in the former. This ſhews their ſin, and that their puniſhment. *Thoſe Prophets and Prieſts who ſell ſouls in their own land, are juſtly ſold as ſlaves into a land that is not theirs.* (Lam. 2. 6.) *The Lord hath deſpiſed in the indignation of his anger, both the King and the Prieſt*; he puts King and Prieſt together, in ſuffering, becauſe they were joyned in ſinning. *They who aſſociate in doing evil, ſhall be aſſociated in feeling it.* And they ſhall feel moſt evil, when they do it, whoſe office is ſet up by God, and they put into office for the preventing of it: ſuch are Kings and Prieſts. The Prophet *Malachy* reproves the *Levites* (Mal. 2. 8.) *Ye are departed out of the way; ye have cauſed many to ſtumble at the Law; ye have corrupted the Covenant of Love*; that is, ye have been falſe, baſe, and unfaithful in your office: your ſelves have gone out of the way of truth and holineſs, and ye have hindred thoſe who would have walked in it. It was your duty to preſerve the Covenant made with your Tribe, but ye have corrupted it. This is your ſin, and I will tell you your judgment: *Therefore have I alſo made you contemptible and baſe before all the people. Unſavory ſalt is fit only for the dunghill, the ſeat of contempt.*

As the word is rendred (**Prince**) in our Tranſlation, Obſerve,

That the honour of man is no ſhelter againſt the wrath of God.

As the holineſs of the Prieſts-office cannot do it, ſo neither can the power of the Princes office. Princes are called the Shields of the earth (*Hoſ.* 4. 18.) *Her Shields* (or, *her Rulers*, as we render) *with ſhame do love, Give ye.* They are (indeed) the Shields of the earth, but they cannot ſhield themſelves againſt the aſſaults of Heaven. Princes ſhould be Shields to protect men from the oppreſſion of man, but they cannot protect themſelves againſt the juſtice of God. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 43. 14.) tells the people when they were in fear, *Thus ſaith the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy one of* Iſrael, *For your ſake I have ſent to* Babylon, *and have brought down all their Nobles*; the Hebrew is, *I have brought down all their bars*: Faithful *Nobles* are the bars of a Kingdom and Commonwealth, to keep out evils: It is their duty to bolt out impiety againſt God, and unrighteouſneſs towards man: And as they ſhould be a *bar of equity* againſt theſe evils of ſin, ſo a *bar of ſecurity* to keep out the evils of trouble. Now (ſaith the Lord) I have ſent to *Babylon*, and have brought down all thoſe Nobles, who were as bars in the way to hinder your deliverance from, and return out of captivity. Thoſe Nobles (it ſeems) were *croſs bars*, they lay croſs the way of the people of God, to hinder their paſſage out of *Babylon*, therefore God deſtroyed them. *When Nobles, or great Princes, bar up the liberty of Gods covenant-people, their nobility and greatneſs will be no bar againſt their own miſery. He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and*

He overthroweth the mighty.

סלף *Supplantare inflectere, mutare, dejicere, deturbare.*

Here is another act of Divine power. That God is omnipotent, proves he can do all things; but the doing of them is a viſible proof of his omnipotency.

To overthrow, Imports utter ruine: He doth not only ſhake and diſplace; but he ſhakes them to pieces, roots them up, and layes them flat.

He overthroweth the mighty.] Princes are among the mighty ones of the earth, yet ſome Princes have no great might; but how mighty ſoever Princes are, down they muſt, whether they will or no, when the Almighty wills it.

איתן *Robuſtus fortis a rad.* אתן *quæ vox aſſert fortitudinem quandam, quæ non permittit ſe tractari, & duritiem quæ pertinaciter reſiſtit. Fluvios Ethan.*

The Hebrew word ſignifieth the moſt confirmed ſtrength, even that ſtrength which ſeems to laugh at oppoſition, and to have outgrown all fear of being weakened, or overpower'd. Great and impetuous Rivers are ſet out by that word (*Pſal.* 74. 15.) *Thou driedſt up mighty Rivers*; or, *Rivers of might*; Rivers which nothing can ſtand againſt: What can withſtand a ſwelling torrent? The weight and violence of water beareth down all before it: no bonds, no bounds of mans making can ſtay it. Yet the Lord can; he, and he only, beareth down the waters; or he drieth them up: He either *drieth up mighty Rivers*, or ſtoppeth their courſe, while they are running with full ſtreams, in a full career.

Hence learn, Firſt, *That all ſtrength and might is weak, before the ſtrong and mighty God.*

He overthroweth the mighty (1 Sam. 2. 9.) *by ſtrength ſhall no man prevail*: When we conclude the probabilities, whether a party ſhall prevail or no, we count upon their ſtrength, we reckon their numbers, we enquire what Armies they have in the field, what Garriſons in Cities, what Friends and Confederacies abroad, yet in all this we reckon not upon that which will do the thing, ſtrength cannot do it; *by ſtrength no man ſhall prevail, The Lord overthroweth the mighty*: whatſoever ſtrength we have to aſſiſt us, or to oppoſe us, the Lord is ſtronger.

There is a five-fold ſtrength, the overthrowing of which mightily declares the ſtrength and might of God.

Firſt, *The ſtrength of the body. God overthroweth* the moſt robuſtious and giant-like men, *the ſons of* Anak *are but graſhoppers to him*; they (who as we ſpeak) have bodies of braſs, he cruſheth before the moth. *Goliah* had a mighty ſtrength of body, and yet the Lord overthrew him: *Sampſon* had a mighty ſtrength of body, yet when the Lord withdrew from him, he was overthrown. Then remember the Prophets counſel (*Jer.* 9. 23.) *Let not the ſtrong man glory in his ſtrength, but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, who overthroweth the mighty.*

Secondly, *God overthroweth the ſtrength of riches*: Riches are a ſtrong tower. The ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies ſtrength and riches, becauſe a mans ſtrength is computed by his riches: A rich man is a mighty man in the eye of the world; and ſo is a worldly rich man in his own eyes. Yet, as the ſtrength of body within us, ſo the ſtrength of eſtate without us, is ſoon blaſted by the breath of Gods diſpleaſure. Then, take the counſel of the Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 1.) *Let the brother of high degree rejoyce in that he is made low* (that is, low in his own thoughts; rich men are uſually fuller of high thoughts then they are of earthly treaſures) the rich man hath cauſe to rejoyce when he is low in himſelf, *knowing that as the flower of the graſs he ſhall paſs away.* Riches and rich men paſs away of themſelves; how much more when God blows upon them and drives them away.

Thirdly, *He overthroweth the mightineſs of honour*: Many fortifie themſelves with great earthly Titles, but theſe are but paper walls to the batteries of Heaven. *Haman*'s honour among the people, and favour with the Prince, could not ſave him, when God frowned.

Fourthly, *He overthroweth the mightineſs of authority*; that's diſtinct from honour; a man may have great titles, and yet but little authority. Mean men have ſometimes great commands, they may have authority over thoſe who are above them in honour. But though the might of authority be in conjunction with the mightineſs of honour, the Lord overthroweth it. So that he who could (as the Centurion in the Goſpel) ſay to this man, *Go, and he goeth*; *to another come, and he cometh*; *to a third do this, and he doth it*, may at laſt (as our Proverb ſpeaketh) *command his man, and do it himſelf.* When once commands are ſlighted, authority is overthrown. God who gives weight to the word of a man, can alſo make it light; he ſhall ſpeak, and none regard.

Fifthly, *God overthroweth the mightineſs of courage*: He makes the valiant faint, and the man, whoſe heart was like the heart of a Lion, to run, like a Coward, at the ſhaking of a leaf: God who ſaith to them that are of a *fearful heart, be ſtrong, fear not* (Iſa. 35. 4.) *and maketh the feeble to be as* David (*Zach.* 12. 8.) This God can ſay to the ſtrong, be ye afraid; and to him that was as *David*, be thou feeble: He that overthroweth the courageous, can alſo overthrow courage.

Thus the ſtrength of body, the ſtrength of riches, the ſtrength of honour, the ſtrength of authority, and the ſtrength of courage, are all overthrown by the ſtrength of God. Who can conceive how much ſtrength God hath, who is ſtronger then all theſe ſtrengths? And as the Lord alwayes overthroweth the mighty, and gets the day of them, when he engageth with them; ſo he deſires to engage with them. Mighty men ſeem to be ſome match for God; and the fall of theſe makes God more known as he is *Almighty*. Hence that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 2. 12.) *The day of the Lord of hoſts ſhall be upon*, Whom? he doth not ſay upon the low, weak and poor; but it ſhall be upon, *every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up?* What day of the Lord is this? It is the day of the Lords judgment, the day of his wrath: when he contendeth with a people, then he picks out the great ones chiefly, to contend with. His day *ſhall be upon all the cedars of* Lebanon, *and upon all the oaks of* Baſhan, *and upon every fenced wall*; that is, upon men, who are, in the account of the world, tall like Cedars, ſtrong like Oaks, high like Towers, invincible like Walls of braſs; with theſe the Lord will be dealing in his day: and (*ver.* 17.) *The Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day*; as if he had ſaid, theſe men were exalted before; now the Lord overthrowing them, he himſelf ſhall be exalted. For the Text may be taken two wayes; he ſhall be exalted either as the Agent, that is, it ſhall appear that he alone hath overthrown theſe mighty ones: Or ſecondly, the Lord alone ſhall be exalted; that is, he will come into the place of thoſe mighty men; theſe carried it in the eye of the world, as the only great ones; now the Lord comes into their place, they ſhall be exalted no more, his Name ſhall be exalted, and his only. When God appears in his greatneſs, none appear great but he: When he exalts himſelf, none will pretend to exaltation. The Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day.

I ſhall give you four Corrollaries or Deductions from this Propoſition, *The Lord overthroweth the mighty.*

Firſt, *Then, fear not the mightieſt enemies.* God is Almighty, the weakneſs of God is ſtronger then men; ſeeing God is deſcribed overthrowing the mighty, if we keep cloſe to him, we need not fear to be overthrown by the mighty.

Secondly, If the Lord overthroweth the mighty, *Then truſt not in the mightieſt friends.* When great ſeconds, and aſſiſtants appear on our part, then we think we are ſafe; but what can mighty men do for us, if the Almighty God be againſt us? As was further ſhewed (*Chap.* 9. 13) *Unleſs the Lord withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him*; the helpers of ſtrength ſtoop, unleſs upheld by the ſtrong God. As therefore we ought not to fear the worſt of foes, ſo not to truſt upon the beſt of friends, becauſe they are mighty.

Thirdly, *Let no man rejoyce, or boaſt in his own ſtrength*; though that five-fold ſtrength, before ſpoken of, meet in him, yet let him not truſt upon it. He that breaks them ſingle, can break them combined. A threefold, yea a fivefold cord, is eaſily broken by the arm of omnipotency.

Fourthly, (Which was toucht, *verſ.* 18.) *If God overthrow the mighty, how ſoon can he overthrow thoſe who have no might?* You that are weak and poor in compariſon of the mighty Princes and *Nimrods* of the world; you (I ſay) have cauſe to fear and tremble before the mighty God: As they ſaid, (2 *Kings* 10. 4.) *Behold two Kings ſtood not before him, how then ſhall we?* So we may ſay much more of the Lord, two Kings, yea hundreds of Kings, Nobles and men of might, have not ſtood before him, how ſhall worms, and weaklings wraſtle it out, and contend with him?

Verſe 20. **He removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty, and taketh away the underſtanding of the aged.**

This verſe gives us another act of Gods power, towards the altering and ſubverting of States and Commonwealths. Kingdoms are much upheld by the eloquence of Orators, and by the wiſdom of the Ancient. God makes theſe *two removes*, when he would *remove* the beauty and bleſſing of a Kingdom. Firſt,

He removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty.

The Hebrew is, *He removeth the lips of the truſty.* The ſame word ſignifies lips and ſpeech, becauſe the lips are the inſtrument of ſpeech (*Gen.* 11. 1.) *All the earth was of one ſpeech,* or *of one lip*; that is, they all ſpake one Language. *He removeth the ſpeech of*

The truſty.] The word hath a double reading, according to a double derivation in the Hebrew. For ſome derive it from a root which ſignifies *to ſpeak.* Taking it ſo, the ſence is, *He bereaveth Orators of their eloquence*; or (as Mr. *Broughton*, cloſer to the letter) *He bereaveth the Orator of lips, He makes them like men dumb, or tongue-tied, who were once all voice and tongue.*

Labium ponitur pro loquela.

Amovet ſermonem eloquentibus. Jun.

לנאמנים *a rad.* נאם *Dixit locutus elocutus fuit.* Rab. Kinchi.

Thus *Job* toucheth upon all thoſe evils which haſten the ruine of a people; one whereof, and that a great one, is this, when God takes away ſpeech from men, whoſe very trade it is to ſpeak. When God threatened to break the *ſtaff* of *Iſrael*, he ſaith, *I will take away the eloquent Orator* (Iſa. 3. 3.) *Kingdoms, with all their bleſſings, are as much, if not more, upheld, or caſt down by tongues, then they are by hands.*

God is ſaid to remove, or take away the ſpeech of the Orator, two wayes.

Firſt, When he takes the Orators away; his picking ſuch out of Councils by death, hath had a ſad preſage in it, of the approaching funerals of publick proſperity.

Secondly, When though he leaves the ſpeakers, yet he diſables them to ſpeak: When though he leave the Orator, yet he takes away his Oratory, ſo that he cannot deliver himſelf with any command over the attentions and affections of his hearers: That's the excellency of Oratory, to carry the heart by the ear; to make every ſentence perſwaſive; every word *a nail, or a goad*; a nail to faſten reſolution, or a goad to quicken unto action. It was ſaid of a *Grecian Orator,* who was alſo a great Souldier, that he thundred and lightned, moved and awakened all when he ſpake. But if God once *take away the ſpeech of the Orator,* he may ſpeak his hearers into a ſleep.

Pericles (Olympius *propter eloquentiam dictus) fulminabat, intonabat, confundebat Græciam.* Plutarch. *in vita* Peric.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That ability of ſpeech is a ſpecial gift of God.* He removeth and taketh it away, therefore he giveth it. (*Exod.* 4. 10.) We find *Moſes eloquent only to tell God he was not eloquent*: He ſpeaks very rhetorically to excuſe his ſervice for want of Rhetorick. *Lord* (ſaith he) *I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor ſince thou haſt ſpoken unto thy ſervant* (neither yeſterday, nor to day; that is, not at any time) *but I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue.* But how doth the Lord anſwer him? *The Lord ſaid unto him, Who hath made mans mouth?* As if he had ſaid, *Seeing I make the mouth, which is the inſtrument of ſpeech, or the ſhop wherein words are made, I alſo can make the mouth eloquent, and give thee words to ſpeak.* The Lord argues further with *Moſes, Who maketh the dumb?* Is it not I the Lord? I who make the dumb, can make thee ſpeak, and ſpeak eloquently too: I can give thee a flowing tongue. Therefore be not afraid to go on my errand: I, who ſend thee, will ſtore thee with language to do the errand about which I ſend thee: *It ſhall be given thee in that ſame hour, what to ſpeak.*

Secondly obſerve, *Man is not maſter of his own tongue.*

God takes away the lip of the Orator. They (*Pſal.* 12. 3, 4.) bragged much of their tongues; ſurely they thought if any thing was their own, their tongues were, they could ſpeak what they liſt, *Who is Lord over us?* ſay they: Yet they found a Lord over their tongues. God is Lord of the tongue two wayes,

Firſt, Becauſe he will bring every one to an account for his tongue: Thoſe boaſters (*Pſal.* 12.) thought themſelves exempted from any ſuch controul, *Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* Who hath any thing to do with what we ſpeak? Who ſhall audit us for words and ſyllables? Yes, there is one will do it to a ſyllable. God gives the rule what we ſhall ſpeak, and he will call every one to a reckoning for what he hath ſpoken.

Secondly, God is Lord of the tongue, in reference to the power of ſpeech. Man cannot ſpeak what he would, or when he would (*Numb.* 23. 11, 12.) *Balak* had hired *Balaam* to curſe the people of God; and *Balaam* had a good will to it, if ever man had; but *Balak* found *Balaam* in another note, he only publiſhed the glory of *Iſrael,* and propheſied their higheſt bleſſings. *Balak* was extreamly troubled at this; and ſaith, *What haſt thou done unto me? I took thee to curſe mine enemies, and behold thou haſt bleſſed them altogether.* As if he had ſaid, *What* Balaam? *Art not thou maſter of thy own words? I called thee to curſe, and not to bleſs; didſt not thou underſtand what my buſineſs was? I knew* Iſrael *was fenced enough, and too much, with bleſſings: How is it, that when I ſent for thee to blaſt them, that thou haſt bleſſed them altogether? art thou bribed on their ſide? or knoweſt thou not, that I am able to promote thee to honour? ſpeak, man, the ſudden fate of this numerous people, and fear not: Why haſt thou gone ſo contrary to my deſign?* What ſaith Balaam? *He anſwered and ſaid, Muſt I not take heed to ſpeak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? Balaam* ſeems to reply from his conſcience. 'Tis the duty of every man to take heed to ſpeak that which the Lord puts in his mouth. But *Balaam* was only overpower'd: If God would have ſuffered him to ſpeak what *Balaak* had deſired, his own conſcience had never ſtood in his way: He that opened his Aſſes mouth a little before to reprove his madneſs, now ſhut his mouth from uttering that wickedneſs. *The Lord* (ſaith he) *hath bleſſed them, and I cannot reverſe it:* As if he had ſaid, *I have been tugging at it, and labouring to curſe them, but I cannot do it.* The Lord reſtrained his heart, and bound his tongue, that he could not form a curſe, and now he puts it off with this fine language, *Muſt I not take heed to ſpeak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?* No man ever came with fuller purpoſe to curſe the *Iſrael* of God then *Balaam* did, but his tongue was not his own, he could not.

So much upon that rendring of the Text, *He bereaves Orators of their eloquence.*

We tranſlate, *He removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty*: And ſo the word is derived from a root, which ſignifies conſtancy, fidelity, truth, ſtability in word or deed: Men ſo qualified, are worthy to be truſted, and only they. But though it is eaſie to ſay, who a *truſty man* is, yet it may be doubted ſtill who is here meant by theſe *truſty men*: Yet conſidering *Job*'s ſcope, we may well conclude, that he ſpeaks of

לנאמנים *a rad.* אמנ *quæ eſt conſtantia, fidelitas, ſtabilitas in dictis & promiſſis. Qui digni ſunt quibus fides habeatur.* Auth. Catenæ.

of men either actually truſted, or worthy to be truſted with the mannagement of publick affairs. Some *Magiſtrates* are not only *Governours* over the people, but *Feoffees* for them. Thus the Free-holders of *England* in their reſpective places, chuſe the *Members of the Houſe of Commons in Parliament, as their Truſtees*, and commit the protection of their eſtates and liberties into their hand: Of ſuch *Truſty-men*, or of *men thus Truſted,* we may well interpret this text. And as of theſe Counſellours whom the people chuſe, and Truſt; ſo alſo of thoſe whom Kings and Princes chuſe for, and truſt with great offices and employments.

But how doth God remove away the ſpeech of ſuch men: What? doth he make them ſpeechleſs, or ſtrike them dumb? he can do that; but here (I conceive) the removing of ſpeech may be taken two wayes, firſt, only, for an abating of the ability of ſpeech; ſo that they who would, cannot give counſel, either with that clearneſs of judgement, or freedom of language, which they have ſometimes ſhewed. Secondly, For the changing or turning of the tenour of their ſpeech. When a man ſpeaks unlike himſelf, contrary to what he hath ſpoken, when he ſpeaks, as if he were not the *ſame man, then his ſpeech is removed.* When a man, who once ſpake for the truth of God, ſpeaks againſt it: When he that once ſpake for the rights, and juſt liberties of men, is now heard ſpeaking againſt them: When they who in every ſpeech were wont to advance thoſe counſels which tended to the peace and ſafety of Kingdoms, ſhall upon all emergencies ſpeak that which doth but lengthen out their trouble and danger, Then know *the ſpeech of the truſty is removed. The ſpeech is never removed till the heart be. The mind is firſt changed, and then the words.* As the manner of ſpeaking ſhews of what countrey we are, *Thou art a Galilean, and thy ſpeech bewrayeth thee:* ſo the matter which is ſpoken diſcovers of what part we are. We may ſay to many, you are thus or thus, for your ſpeech bewrayeth you: and to ſome, You are removed from the cauſe you once appeared in, *for your ſpeech is removed:* you have certainly turn'd tables, and changed your intereſt, for your language is changed, and your diſcourſe runs counter to all you did before.

This is the removing of ſpeech.

But how can we attribute this to God? I anſwer, God changes or removes the ſpeech of the truſty, not by making them unconſtant and unfaithful, but by leaving them to their own unfaithfulneſs and unconſtancy: All men (even the beſt of men) have a ſeed of unfaithfulneſs, or a principle of apoſtacy in them, and if God leave them to themſelves, they are quickly turned aſide. *No man knows what his heart will do, till he is tryed.*

The time of temptation is the time of diſcovery. Changes in the providence of God, make the changeableneſs of mens mindes, both viſible in their actions, and audible in their ſpeeches. For

This change or remove of ſpeech, ariſeth two wayes.

Sometimes from fear. Some are ſurpriſed and arreſted with dreadful forecaſts, what will become of them, and their eſtates, what of their wives and children, if they ſtand to former profeſſions and engagements. *Fear is a very bad counſellour.* Fear hath removed the ſpeech of the *truſty* more then once.

Secondly, The ſpeech of the truſty is removed through hopes and gifts. Expectation will change a mans opinion, much more will ſomewhat in poſſeſſion. How many have loſt or alter'd their tongues by being felt in the hand, (*Deut.* 16. 19.) *A gift doth blind the eyes of the wiſe, and pervert the words of the righteous.* That expreſſion in *Moſes* of *perverting words,* doth excellently anſwer and expound this in *Job* of *removing ſpeech.* And whereas *Job* ſaith only that *the ſpeech of the truſty is removed, Moſes* ſaith, *the words of the righteous are perverted.* He that was right and went right before, even his words are perverted by a gift. The ancient adage ſaid of ſuch, *The ox is upon their tongue,* that is, money or worldly reſpects hath ſilenced them. The reaſon of that ſpeaking was becauſe the figure of an ox was anciently ſtampt upon their money; we ſay the *black ox treads* upon ſome mens toes; we may ſay, the white, or the red ox treads ſo hard upon many mens tongues, that either they will not ſpeak at all, or not as they did. We read that *Demoſthenes, a great Orator,* being to ſpeak upon a buſineſs of conſequence, came to the bar with *a ſcarff or muffler about his neck,* and ſaid he was not able to ſpeak, he was troubled with a *Quincey*; to which ſome of the wits of the time anſwered, That *the Orator was ſick of the money, not of the Quincey.* Bribes had ſwell'd his throat, that he could not plead. Thus the ſpeech of the truſty is removed, when ſome unrighteous bias will not ſuffer them to ſpeak what they ſhould, or carries them to ſpeak what they ſhould not.

Βȣ̃ς ἐπὶ γλώτ]η.

Non Angina ſed Argentangina correptum Oratorē dicentes. Plutar.

Yet further, Some underſtand *the truſty*, of (men truſted with the ſouls of men) the Prieſts and Prophets of thoſe times. The word may be well tranſlated, *truth-ſpeakers,* or *meſſengers of truth,* God removeth their ſpeech.

Firſt, When they whom he had ſent with promiſes of mercy in their mouths, are now commanded to thunder out threatnings and denunciations of his wrath; when they to whom God hath ſaid, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,* have now no meſſages, but ſad ones, no viſions, but of amazement and deſolation.

Secondly, the Lord removeth away the ſpeech of theſe *truſty ones,* by leaving a people to the ſpeech of thoſe who are *untruſty.* When the Jews would not receive the faithful Prophets, God gave them up to the teachings of falſe Prophets. Speech is removed, when the ſpeakers are thus changed.

Commutat promiſſiones ſuas factas per prophetas, in comminationes, vel efficit ut qui læta polliceri ſolent nihil jā niſi triſte prædicent. Philip.

Thirdly, God changeth or removeth the ſpeech of *Truth-ſpeakers,* by forbidding them to ſpeak. God doth ſometimes ſilence the ſincereſt Prophets. When men will not obey what they ſpeak, God will not let them ſpeak, (*Ezek.* 3. 26.) *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou ſhalt be dumb, and ſhalt not be to them a reprover, for they are a rebellious houſe.* As men when their ſin is at the higheſt, *ſay to the Prophets, Propheſie no more*; ſo when judgement is at the higheſt, God ſaith unto the Prophets, Propheſie not. The wrath of God is extreamly hot, when flattering Prophets are ſent to cry, *Peace, peace, where there is no peace, and to daube up ſinful men with untempered morter:* 'Tis alſo as hot, if not hotter, when God puts a bar upon the lips of his faithful Prophets, that they ſhall no longer denounce his war againſt ſin, or convince the ſinner. *The peace of a people cannot be long liv'd, when once the ſpeech of the truſty is thus or thus removed.*

Take two brief deductions from all.

Firſt, *There is no depending upon the faithfulneſs of man.* God removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye,* (*Pſal.* 62. 9.) they that have done and ſpoken right to day, may ſpeak and do wrong to morrow. *Man is a mutable creature in his qualification, as well as in his conſtitution.* Both his natural, and his moral endowments, are as mortal as his life is: And in many, theſe die and go to the grave before their Maſters.

Secondly, If the ſpeech of the truſty be ſo often removed, Then, *we muſt judge of what is ſpoken by a ſtanding rule, not by the perſon ſpeaking.* It is an evil, and a ſoar diſeaſe under the ſun, that good counſels are refuſed, becauſe ſome have a prejudice againſt the perſon: And it is a worſe evil, when all, even evil Counſels are received upon the good eſteem we have of the perſon. We muſt look to the matter, not to the man, both in the things of God, and in the things of men; there is neither wiſdom nor ſafety in taking any thing upon truſt, eſpecially when we hear that God in judgement *removes away the ſpeech of the truſty.* Whoſoever ſpeaks, if he ſpeak truth, it ought to be embraced. And though an *Achitophel,* an Oracle of wiſdom on earth, or Angel from heaven, ſpeak what is falſe, 'tis our duty to reject it. The wiſeſt men are not alwayes wiſe, neither do the prudent alwayes underſtand their way. The holieſt men are not holy in all things, neither do they who are real friends to truth ſpeak all truth. *Paul* (Gal. 2.) found *Peter* faultering in his ſpeech, and giving not only counſel but example that was not right. The ancient Fathers, men of profound judgement and underſtanding in the Scriptures, have erred, and miſdelivered the mind of God. Whole Councils (which are a collection of wiſe and learned men) have had their miſtakes. We may conclude as the Prophet doth (*Iſa.* 2. 22.) *Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* The honeſt and the wiſe, the holy and the juſt, the eloquent and the truſty, are not alwayes to be truſted, For, *God removeth away the ſpeech of the truſty*, who (poſſibly) may be all theſe.

And taketh away the underſtanding of the aged.

Sapientes ſenes vocantur licet ſint juvenes, propterea quod ſapientia utplurimū in ſenibus invenitur. Rab. Dav.

Underſtanding is ſo proper to the aged, or men of years, that an underſtanding young man, deſervedly draws upon himſelf the honour and account of many years; *as an old man very fooliſh, is young-old; ſo a young man very wiſe, is old-young.*

Age ordinarily heightens underſtanding, and experience maturates and improves natural parts, as was ſhewed at the twelfth verſe: yet they whoſe underſtandings have had the greateſt advantages of experience, may act without underſtanding, yea againſt, not only experience, but reaſon. *Some mens underſtandings are enfeebled with age, and themſelves are old children rather then old men:* that's the judgement which this text holds out unto us.

טעם *Significat guſtare, inde cognoſcere, judicare, metaphora ducta à ſenſu ad animum. Hinc* Sept. *intelligentiam.* Rab. Moyſ. *probationē.* Rab. Mord. *Decretum.* Pagn. *Conſilium.* Tyg. *Judicium.* Regia *Diſcretionem.* Hebræus *apud* Cajet. *ſaporem reddit. Hæc vox in Grammatica ſig. accentū cujuſlibet dictionis, eo quod det ei bonū guſtū & ſenſū ad intelligendā ſapientiam.* Rab. Mard.

בעל טעם *Præſes concilii.*

The word which we render **underſtanding**, ſignifies to *taſt*, or *the ſenſe of taſting*, and it is frequently tranſlated from the ſenſe to the underſtanding, becauſe (as was ſhewed at the 11th verſe) the underſtanding taſts a doctrine, or a propoſition, whether it be true or falſe, as the mouth or palat taſts meat, whether it be ſweet or bitter. This word is very comprehenſive, ſignifying (as ſome critical Rabbins teach us) counſel, judgement, wiſdom, reaſon, both the argument and decree upon which any thing is done, as alſo the diſcretion with which it is done. Grammarians tell us that the due and proper accent of every word, is in the Hebrew called [**Tagnam**] becauſe the accent doth give as it were a right taſte of the ſenſe, and ſo leads to a right underſtanding of the word. When the holy ſinger invites all to that glorious banquet, (*Pſal.* 24.8.) *O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good*, he means, underſtand how good he is. The ſame inſpired heart prayes in this language, (*Pſal.* 110. 56.) *Teach me good judgement and knowledge*, that is, give me a true taſte and reliſh of heavenly truth, *Prov.* 11.22. *As a jewel in a ſwines ſnout, ſo is a fair woman without diſcretion or underſtanding. Beauty without brains is a loathſome deformity.* In the book of *Ezra*, the *Chief or Preſident of a Council*, who ordereth and moderates the whole proceeding there, is thus expreſſed, *The Maſter of Taſte.* He had need to have a quick internal palate, who muſt taſte all men, and all matters, as the Preſident of a Council muſt.

This taſte, this underſtanding, or whatſoever moral excellency comes within the compaſs of this word, God taketh away ſometimes from the aged, or from men (who for that ſervice) are of the moſt perfect age.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Our underſtandings are at the diſpoſe of God.*

He gives underſtanding to the ſimple, and he can take it from the ſubtile. *Old men are not alwayes wiſe:* Not only becauſe ſome never had wiſdom, but becauſe many looſe the wiſdom which once they had. And this is a loſs which we ſuſtain from no hand but the hand of God. Man may take our riches and worldly eſtates from us, and make us poor, but God only can take our underſtandings from us, and make us fools. Men can empty our purſes, but God, and God only can empty our brains.

Quos perdere vult Jupiter hos dementat.

Obſerve Secondly, *That when the Lord will deſtroy a people, he takes away the underſtanding of the ancient.*

Heathens ſaid, *God bereaves them of underſtanding, whom he deſigns for deſtruction.* Now as this is a ſad preſage of ruine to the party himſelf, ſo likewiſe of ruine to thoſe who have relation to him. And as it is a judgement upon a people when Princes refuſe the aged, and follow young Counſellours: So it is the ſame, if not a greater judgement upon a people, when God takes wiſdom from old Counſellours, and leaves them to act like young ones. A young man without underſtanding cannot do ſo much hurt as he that is aged: His youth leaves his advices under queſtion and diſcuſſion. But when old and experienced Counſellours, who have travelled in affairs many years, and have got the reputation of wiſe men, prove like empty casks without any filling of wiſdom, they quickly undo all with authority, and unſuſpected. No marvel then if God put this among his marvellous judgements, (*Iſa.* 29.14.) *Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongſt this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder.* See how attention is raiſed, here is, *Behold*, and then, *Behold I will do a marvellous work*, and then, *a marvellous work and a wonder:* And what it is? *The wiſdom of their wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the underſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid.* No man wonders to ſee ſome men without wiſdom, they were never guilty of it: But to ſee wiſe men unwiſe, and prudent men (ſuch I mean as have given long proof of their prudence) without underſtanding, here's a wonder. As we ſay, young men may die, but old men muſt; ſo young men may be wiſe, but old men ſhould: and thoſe old men, who have once been thought wiſe, are ſeldom thought otherwiſe of, though God have indeed taken away their wiſdom. *Now there are no fools do ſo much miſchief, as they who are thought to be wiſe.* A fool that is wiſe in his own conceit only, endangers no body but himſelf, for no body will truſt him. But a fool that is wiſe in the conceit of others, may endanger thouſands, for all are ready, not only to truſt, but adore his *foolſhip.* It would not be ſo great a judgement to have underſtanding taken from the aged, if the reputation of it were not ſtill left upon them. It is a ſoar ſcourge to a land, when God, as the Prophet threatens (*Iſa.* 3. 2.) takes away that ſtaff, *the prudent and the ancient*, that is, young men who are wiſe, as well as *ancient* wiſe men. But it is a ſoarer ſcourge, when he takes away *the prudence of the ancient:* So that thoſe ancient men, who uſed to be prudent, become light and precipitate in their counſels. When ſtayed and ſober-paced men, run headlong, all, both things and perſons, are like to run headlong with them. By ſuch mens fooliſh counſels, the wiſe and juſt God brings the honourable into contempt, and the ſtrong to weakneſs; and when all this is done, there is nothing wanting for the ruine of a people, but their actual ruining. The next verſe ſhews us God doing both theſe.

Verſ. 21. **He poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty.**

This verſe (I ſay) is a continuation of the former argument: giving us yet more prognoſticks of the approaching ruine of Kingdoms and Common-wealths. He had ſaid (verſ. 19th) *He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled*, now, *He poureth contempt upon Princes.* As *underſtanding* is moſt proper for the *aged*, ſo is *honour* for *Princes*, and *ſtrength* for the *mighty*. God, to make his judgements exact, puniſheth them in that which is moſt peculiar to them. *He poureth contempt upon Princes*, &c.

Solet effuſio magnā profuſi liquoris copiā denotare. Pined.

He poureth contempt.] That is, he makes them very contemptible. To pour out any liquid, implieth plenty of it; as the pouring out of the ſpirit, a plentiful giving of the ſpirit. When the ſpirit was poured out (*Act.*2.) The by-ſtanders ſaid, *theſe men are full of new wine:* No ſaith the Apoſtle, theſe men *are not drunken (as ye ſuppoſe) but this is that which was ſpoken by the Prophet Joel, And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt dayes (ſaith God) that I will pour out of my ſpirit upon all fleſh*, that is, they ſhall have abundance of my Spirit. So, *Iſa.* 44. 3. *I will pour out water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground*; that is, they ſhall have much ſpiritual refreſhing, who now are quite deſtitute of it: ſuch are there ſhadowed out by the thirſty and dry ground. Again, (*Zech.* 12. 10.) *I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace and of ſupplication.* And as pouring, applied to the ſpirit, implies a great meaſure of the ſpirit, ſo in any other. *Pſal.* 42. 4. *When I remember theſe things, I pour out my ſoul in me:* The pouring out of the ſoul is the pouring out of ſorrows; and to pour out ſorrow, is to be exceeding ſorrowful: So the *pouring out of fury*, notes an exceſſive fury, *Ezek.* 20. 33. And when *David* as a Type of Chriſt complaineth (*Pſal.* 22. 14.) *I am poured out like water*, his meaning is, all my bodily ſtrength and comforts are departed. Whatſoever is poured out, poured in, or poured upon us, be it good or evil, we have enough of it. Much contempt is their portion upon whom contempt is poured. Here it is poured upon them, upon whom a little is very much,

Upon Princes.] Princes are veſſels of civil honour, yea many Princes are fountains of civil honor, they pour honour upon others; how great a turn is it, when contempt is poured on them, and they filled with diſhonour! Some are ſo contemptible, that they are not ſenſible of contempt: but nothing touches Princes ſo ſoon as contempt doth. 'Tis worſe to them to be deſpiſed, then to be deſtroyed; and they can eaſier part with their lives then with their honour. Here then is the very pinch of Princes, *contempt*, eſpecially if they be Princes of Noble and Princely ſpirits: Such are pointed at in this word, which properly ſignifies *munificent*, *liberal* and *free-hearted*; Princes are, or ſhould be ſo. Liberality or munificence is the vertue and honour of Princes. Such a free Princely ſpirit God expects from the meaneſt of his people toward his ſervice (*Exod.* 35.5.) *Take ye from amongſt you an offering unto the Lord, whoſoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it.* A true worſhipper is not thruſt and driven on by an outward written law, but findes a law written in his own heart: He (as it is ſaid of *Araunah*) *like a King gives to the King.* *David* prayeth, *Uphold me with thy free ſpirit*, (*Pſal.* 51. 14.) 'Tis this word: the ſpirit of the Lord is a Noble, free, Princely ſpirit. It is free two wayes, Firſt, Subjectively, or in it ſelf, giving out freely and liberally to us. Secondly, It is free in the effects, *Where the ſpirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, it makes us free. They who have received this ſpirit, ſerve the Lord freely, and judge his ſervice freedom. Hence (*Pſal.* 110.3.) *all the people of God are expreſſed by this word, a Princely people*; *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power*, they ſhall be willing as Princes, liberal as Kings, they ſhall give up ſoul, body, name, eſtate, all to Jeſus Chriſt. They who have felt the day of divine power, are not acted by humane power, by the coercions and ordinances of men; they are under no conſtraint, but that of the love of Chriſt. Worldly Princes have that in their name, which the Saints have in their nature. And becauſe many worldly Princes have ſo little of that in their natures, which they have fully in their name, true Nobleneſs, I mean, and freeneſs of ſpirit to do good and defend thoſe who are good, therefore God *poureth contempt upon them.*

נרב *Liberales, munificos denotat, quod liberalitas & beneficentia principes maximè deceat. Nadib eſt homo liberi ſpiritus, non invitè & coactè ſed ſua ſe voluntate impellens ad honeſta & laudabilia.* Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *If Princes uſe not their honour for Chriſt, Chriſt will pour diſhonour upon Princes.*

1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *Them that honour me I will honour, and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* When Princes act unlike themſelves, God makes them unlike themſelves, vile and contemptible. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of himſelf and of his fellow Apoſtles in (1 *Cor.* 4.9.) *I think that God hath ſet forth us the Apoſtles laſt, as it were appointed unto death; for we are made a ſpectacle unto the world, and to Angels, and to men.* As the Lord ſuffers his Saints to have contempt poured upon them by the world, and to be made a ſpectacle of ſcorn; ſo he himſelf poureth contempt upon the greateſt of worldly Princes, he ſetteth them as upon a theater or open ſtage, that all may behold and look upon them, and ſay, Thus hath God done with the men who had no delight to honour him. *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight* (ſaith God of his meaneſt people, *Iſa.* 43.4.) *thou haſt been honourable*, that is, altogether honourable in thy ſelf, and honoured by all men who know thy worth: and when once higheſt Princes are vile in the ſight of God, they become diſhonourable, even altogether diſhonourable in themſelves, as alſo in the eye and eſteem of all men who know their unworthineſs. And when Princes are thus become diſhonourable, they are within a ſtep of becoming miſerable. The Pſalmiſt had no ſooner ſaid, *He poureth contempt upon Princes*, but preſently it follows, *and cauſeth them to wander in the wilderneſs where there is no way*, (*Pſal.* 107.40.) When Princes are under contempt, they are uncertain of their courſe, they are entangled in their counſels, they are in a maze, and know neither their way, nor their end, but are at their wits end, and at their honours end, both together. We have a Prophecy of a glorious Kingdom, (*Iſa.* 32.1.) *Behold a King ſhall reign in righteouſneſs, and Princes ſhall rule in judgement*, &c. Then (*verſ.* 5.) *The vile perſon ſhall no more be called liberal*, or *Prince*. *Nabal* ſhall not glory in this title *Nadib*. *Nabal* is a fool, and *Nadib* is a Prince. In that Kingdom, fools or vile perſons ſhall no more be honoured nor adored like golden Idols. Men ſhall be known what they are, and called what they deſerve. Then, Princes who miſapply their power, and refuſe to be *nurſing fathers* to the Church, then, Princes who bring not their glory to the new *Jeruſalem*, and ſubmit not their crowns unto the Lamb, even all they who are a terrour to the good, and praiſe them who do evil, *ſhall no more be named gracious Lords*, but ſhall go forth with everlaſting ſhame (inſtead of a crown) upon their heads. Swelling titles will be no Sanctuary againſt thoſe vials of contempt, ready to be poured out upon all contemners of Chriſt, and oppoſers of his throne, for ever.

Secondly Obſerve, *They that have received much honour from God, ſhall receive much ſhame from him, if they abuſe their honour.*

Proportional to the honour they have received will the contempt be which they ſhall receive. God doth not drop, but pour honour upon Princes; therefore he will not drop, but pour contempt upon them by whole buckets full, it ſhall come down as a ſweeping rain. As they who have had, not only as *Moſes* ſpeaks of his, *doctrine dropping as the rain, and ſpeech diſtilling as the dew*, but Goſpel knowledge pouring down upon them; theſe ſhall not have ſome drops of anger, but God will pour out his anger and his fury upon them, if they are unfruitful, or bring not forth fruit meet for his (their Maſters) uſe. They that have but a drop or two of the word, ſhall have comparatively but a drop of judgement. That's the reaſon why it ſhall be eaſier for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, then for *Bethſaida* and *Chorazin*, at the day of judgement, *Matth.* 11.22. Juſtice looks to the meaſure, as well as to the matter of ſin, in pronouncing puniſhments. *He poureth contempt upon Princes,*

And weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty.

The Hebrew is, *He weakneth the girdle of the mighty.* The Vulgar and the Septuagint are very bold with this text, in their tranſlations, giving a ſenſe hardly reconcileable to the Original. *He relieveth thoſe that are oppreſſed*, ſaith the one: *He healeth thoſe that are humble*, ſaith the other: Both wide enough from our reading, *He weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty.* The word ſignifies rivers and torrents, which run with a mighty force. *He looſeneth the ſtrength or girdle of the mighty*: the ſame word notes a girdle and ſtrength, becauſe a girdle cauſeth ſtrength, or is an advantage to put out our ſtrength; for though now men uſually ungird themſelves when they go about ſtrong labor, yet in thoſe times it was not ſo; *Job* ſpeaks according to the cuſtom of thoſe Eaſtern Countries, who (wearing long garments) when they prepared for travel or labour, girded up themſelves, that ſo they might be more nimble and expeditious. *Job* had ſaid, *verſ.* 19. *He overthroweth the mighty*; here he ſaith, *He weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty.* There is a difference between theſe two: There, *he bringeth a greater power, and ſo overthroweth them.* As 'tis ſaid in the Goſpel, though a ſtrong man armed keep the houſe, yet when a ſtronger comes, he ſpoils him. But here 'tis ſaid, *He weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty*, that is, *he abateth or draweth out their ſtrength.* As the waters of a great river, being drawn out by ſluces, the ſtrength of the river is weakned: So the Lord drains and draws out the ſtrength of mighty men, and weakens them. It is ſtoryed, that when *Cyrus* beſieged *Babylon*, which was encompaſſed with a mighty river, the river *Euphrates*, he made many ſluces and cuts, which fetched out all the water from the river, and ſo ſurpriſed them in the height of ſecurity, they thinking the place impregnable, and having alſo a propheſie, *That the city ſhould never be taken till the river proved their enemy.* Thus the Lord, he ſluceth out the ſtrength of the ſtrongeſt men, their perſonal ſtrength, the ſtrength of their arms and legs; their relational ſtrength, the ſtrength of their friends, allies, and confederates; ſo ſome underſtand this place: There is a girdle of ſtrength wherewith one Nation is tyed to another, ſuch are leagues of amity and mutual aid: The Lord weakneth this ſtrength alſo, and makes them who were a help, a hurt unto their neighbours. He ſaith, *Gird your ſelves, and ye ſhall*

Humiles autē ſanavi. Sept.

אפיקים *Sunt aquæ cum impetu fluentes.*

מזח *Significat non fortitudinē ſolum ſed cingulū; ſiquidē virium ſedes in lumbis qui cingulo muniuntur, vel quòd vires augeat, cincti enim robuſtiori ſunt, & habiliores ad opus faciendū.* Dru.

Eos qui oppreſſi ſunt relevans. Vulg.

ſhall be broken in pieces ; gird your ſelves, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces ; take counſel together, and it ſhall come to nought, Iſa. 8. 9, 10. *The ſtrength of all creatures aſſociated, is too weak for the ſingle ſtrength of God.*

Hence Obſerve, *All the ſtrength of man is at the pleaſure and diſpoſe of God.*

He overthrows ſtrength, not only by overpowering it, but by unpowering it. He can alwayes bring more ſtrength then we have, or leſſen the ſtrength which we have. As we cannot maſter Gods ſtrength, ſo we are not maſters of our own. *Sampſon's* ſtrength was a terror to the *Philiſtims* ; but as ſoon as God was gone from him, his ſtrength was gone, and then they deſpiſed him, who before trembled at him ; and called him out to make them ſport, whoſe preſence had ſo often ſpoiled their ſport. How many mighty men hath God weakned ? How many invincible Armies and Armadoes of men (as proud men have ſtiled them) hath God conquered ? How many potent Kingdoms and Commonwealths hath God reduced to confuſed heaps ? *Once hath God ſpoken, yea twice have I heard thus, that power belongeth unto God ; alſo unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy* (*Pſal.* 62. 11, 12.) 'Tis ſafeſt for us to fly to this mercy, ſeeing we can neither fly from, nor ſtand before this power. *Thou haſt a mighty arm, O God, ſtrong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand,* (Pſal. 80. 13.) The weakneſs of God is ſtronger then man : And before God all mans ſtrength is turned into weakneſs. All the Inſtances which *Job* hath already given, prove this great truth, *That with God is wiſdom and ſtrength* ; and leaſt any ſhould think it is not yet proved enough, he is ready in the two next verſes to give us yet a further, and (if a clearer may be) a clearer proof.

VERS. 22, 23.

He diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs, and bringeth out to light the ſhadow of death.

He increaſeth the Nations, and deſtroyeth them : he enlargeth the Nations, and ſtraiteneth them again.

WE have ſeen, in the former context, how large a teſtimony *Job* hath given of the power and wiſdom of God ; producing many proofs which ſpeak both no leſs then infinite. And becauſe thoſe were particular and perſonal, therefore he giveth us (in theſe two verſes) two more which are general, and National. *He diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs. He increaſeth the Nations,* &c. Here's providence unlocking ſecrets, opening thoſe things which were ſealed up : theſe acts are attended with ſutable effects, *The increaſing and deſtroying, the enlarging and ſtraitening of the Nations.*

Verſe 22. **He diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs.**

גלה: מגלה: *De revelatione occultorum propriè uſurpatur. Profunda tenebris obducta & aperta ſunt.* Pined.

The word properly ſignifies to unfold that which is wrapped up, or to manifeſt that which is hidden. Deep places are hidden places. God diſcovereth thoſe things which are moſt hidden, even deep things out of darkneſs : *Deep things, and darkneſs,* are put together, becauſe that which is deep is dark. The further we remove from the fountain of light, the more darkneſs prevails over us ; and therefore every degree of deepneſs adds a degree of darkneſs ; all depth being downward, and ſo a departure from the Sun. *In the beginning darkneſs was upon the face of the deep* (Gen. 1. 1.) but darkneſs is alwayes in the bottom of the deep, *He diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs*, that is, the remoteſt, loweſt, and moſt retired depths. Theſe deep things may be referred to two heads.

There are deep things of God : And deep things of men.

The deep things of God are, Firſt his thoughts (*Pſal.* 92. 5.) *O Lord, how great are thy works ? and thy thoughts are very deep* : ſo deep, that all the line of mans underſtanding is not able to ſound or fadom them. The thoughts of God are his Decrees and Counſels ; he doth not think to reſolve, but his thoughts are his reſolutions. The thoughts of God are ſo deep, that the Apoſtle (with a mixture of amazement and adoration) cries out, *O the depth* (Rom. 11. 33.) Secondly, The deep things of God are his Word, containing either Doctrines to be believed, or Prophecies to be fulfilled. The Word of God hath its ſhallows, and it hath its depths : there a Lamb may wade, and there an Elephant may ſwim.

Secondly, There are deep things of men ; which are of divers ſorts.

Firſt, His Word is deep. Though the words of men float upon their tongues, yet *Solomon* aſſures us, that *The words of a mans* (that is, as the word imports, of an excellent mans) *mouth are as deep waters* (Prov. 18. 4.) A wiſe prudent man ſpeaks Oracles ; and when you hear the ſound, and underſtand the Grammatical ſence, you do not preſently reach the depth of what is ſpoken. As ſome ſpeak ſhallowly, ſo they hear ſhallowly ; they dive not into thoſe deep waters which flow from a wiſe mans mouth. He ſpeaks wiſdom in a myſtery, or myſteries of wiſdom.

Secondly, There is a depth in a man, deeper then his words, and that is, the *depth of his thoughts* (Pſal. 64. 6.) *Both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* The heart is often put for the inward thought ; but here, the inward thought is an act of the heart ; and the heart is the faculty, or power of thinking : *Counſel in the heart of a man is like deep water* (Prov. 20. 5.) The heart of man is a great deep, ſo deep, that none can find it out but God himſelf, *Jer.* 17. 10. *I the Lord ſearch the heart,* &c. *What man* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11.) *knoweth the things of a man* (that is, thoſe things which lye in the heart of man) *but the ſpirit of a man which is in him* ? Some men flatter themſelves, that God himſelf cannot find out the things of their ſpirit : Hence that woe in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 29. 15.) *Woe unto them that ſeek deep to hide their counſel from the Lord.* Doubtleſs they had ſome hopes to hide their counſels from God, elſe they would never have ſought to hide them. They ſhewed themſelves fooliſh enough in ſeeking to hide them ; but they had proclaimed themſelves more fools in ſeeking to hide them, if they had been convinced they could not. But though no depth of mans heart can hide his counſel from God ; yet many men have depth enough in their hearts, and to ſpare, to hide their counſels from men.

Thirdly, There is in man a depth of doctrine, or opinion ; which is alſo called the *depth of Satan* (Rev. 2. 24.) *As many as have not known the depths of Satan* : Thoſe depths of Satan were the dark opinions, and falſe doctrines of ſeducers : Theſe called their opinions depths, or profundities : And the holy Ghoſt addeth an Epithete, *depths of Satan.* As if he had ſaid, you call your opinions depths, and ſo they are, but they are ſuch depths as Satan hath brought out of Hell ; they are the whiſperings and hiſſings of that Serpent, not the inſpirations of God. The doctrine of Antichriſt (that great Merchant of error) is called a *myſtery of iniquity* (2 Theſ. 2. 7.) A myſtery is a truth ſhut up, or lying in the deep : The deep and dark myſteries of the wicked, will God reveal, *verſ.* 8. For *he diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs.*

Darkneſs may be taken two wayes. There is a natural darkneſs, which is only the privation of natural light : And there is a metaphorical darkneſs, which is the privation of moral light. This darkneſs is in many through their ignorance ; and this darkneſs is made by others through their knowledge. The infinite knowledge of God makes a darkneſs to hide his ways and counſels in, and ſo doth the knowledge of men. They keep their projects and purpoſes under the vails and viſors of ſpecious pretences, and ſtudied ſecrecies. Out of all this darkneſs God diſcovers deep things.

The latter clauſe of the verſe is but an heightning of this, *He bringeth out to light the ſhadow of death.*

Shadow of death, is taken two wayes.

Firſt, For extream danger.

Secondly, For extream darkneſs.

For extream danger, *Pſal.* 23. 4. *Though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death*, that is, in deadly danger, *yet I will fear no evil.*

But here, *ſhadow of death*, is put for extream darkneſs. The grave is a place of darkneſs ; and things that are buried lye in the dark. (*Job* 34. 22.) *There is no darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves* ; that is, the workers of iniquity cannot be hid in the thickeſt darkneſs. The ſhadow of death is the higheſt, the moſt ſuperlative degree of thickeſt darkneſs : As if *Job* had ſaid, God doth not only bring deep things out of darkneſs, but the deep things out of the greateſt darkneſs; out of that darkneſs that is as deep and dark as the grave.

When counſels lye ſo deep, that the perſons who have laid them, have not ſo much as any jealouſie they ſhall be diſcovered; when counſels lye ſo deep, that others have no hope that ever they ſhould be diſcovered; yet then the Lord diſcovereth them, and this is *to bring out to light the ſhadow of death.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt in general, *All things are known unto God.*

He that makes all things known, muſt needs know all things: And he that makes thoſe things known, which are moſt unknown, cannot but know thoſe things which are eaſily known. He that can expound a riddle, can tell the meaning of a plain ſaying; and he that diſcovers deep things out of darkneſs, cannot but ſee thoſe things that lye in the open Sun. Unleſs God were infinite in knowledge, he could not make theſe things known. (*Eccleſ.* 7. 24.) *That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* The Wiſe man ſends a challenge to the wiſe men of the world, *to find out the wiſdom of God: That's the thing which is far off*, not only from our ſenſes, but from our underſtanding. That's it *which is exceeding deep. Deep, deep*, as the Original expreſſeth it; deep to men, deep to Angels, and too deep for both. Who can find this out? No man can find any thing of it by his own light: and there are none who receive light to find it all out. God is light, and he dwells in light: and as he hath no darkneſs at all in him, ſo nothing is dark to him. He perfectly knows his own creating wiſdom: *Neither is there any creature that is not manifeſt in his ſight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Many things are covered as to the eye of the world; they have masks and clouds caſt over them, which eyes of fleſh cannot ſee through; but theſe are all naked before the eye of God: yea they are as *manifeſt* and open to his eye, as a body is, when diſſected by the hand of a skilful Anatomiſt; he ſees our bowels, and knows whether we are ſound at heart or no. It is not the fairneſs of the skin, the cleanneſs of the outſide, will deceive him; if there be any ſpots upon the ſpirit, he diſcerns them; God needeth none to tell him what is in the heart of man, he makes his way into the depths of that darkneſs with his own eye.

Secondly, Obſerve, *As God knows deep things, ſo he makes them known.*

What is alwayes open to himſelf, he ſometimes revealeth unto man. God diſcovers both the deep things which himſelf or man doth or ſpeaketh.

Firſt, He revealeth the deep things which himſelf ſpeaketh. Unleſs God expound his own word, all our gloſſes will but corrupt it: For, *No Propheſie of Scripture is of any private interpretation* (2 Pet. 2.20.) *By private interpretation*, the Apoſtle means not the interpretation of one or of a few private men, for poſſibly, one or a few, and he or they not inveſted with any publick commiſſion, may give a true ſence of Scripture, when many, and they called to a publick office, miſtake and go wrong. But by private interpretation, he brands that comment which flows from a mans own brain, or fancy, without the conſent of other Scriptures, or the teachings of the Spirit. No Scripture, whether Doctrinal, or Prophetical, is of any ſuch private, that is, humane interpretation. Man with all his wit, learning, and parts, cannot interpret the Word of God, only the Spirit of God can, or they can, who are aſſiſted by the Spirit.

Propriã interpretationem non opponit communi ſive publicæ, ſed adventitiũ Spiritus ſancti donũ, ei ſolertiæ, vel ei ingenii vigori qui fit à natura hominibus quantũvis ingenioſis inſitus. Bez.

So much the Text in *Peter* now cited, holds out clearly in the letter; and yet ſome of the Learned give another expreſſion of it. For the words ſhew us rather the authority and original of the Scriptures, then the way of their interpretation. The Apoſtles ſcope being to prove, that the Prophets did not declare their own private opinions, but the mind of God, in what they ſpake, And that therefore the word of prophecy, as the Apoſtle adviſeth in the former verſe, is to be *heeded carefully.* The words following lead us alſo to the ſame ſence (*ver.* 21.) *For the prophecy came not in the old time by the will of man: but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.* The Prophets were the Interpreters of the mind of God to the people; not the meſſengers of their own minds. The falſe Prophets vended their own dreams, and ran of their own heads before they were ſent; therefore their propheſies were of a *private interpretation*; that is, they opened only that to the people, which themſelves were authors of; ſo did not the true Prophets. They ſaid, *Thus ſaith the Lord*; or as *Paul, We have received of the Lord, that which we deliver unto you.* From all it appears, that the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of the pedigree, not of the expoſition of Prophetical Scriptures. Yet the truth is as evident for the one as for the other. As the Scripture it ſelf is not the interpretation of mans mind, ſo neither is any true interpretation of Scripture from the meer mind of man. *The Spirit of God* (in man) *ſearcheth all things, even the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 10. And without the Spirit, man cannot find any thing of God; no not that which lyeth uppermoſt, or moſt in ſight.

Senſus Petri *Apoſtoli hic videtur eſſe, Prophetas non ſuæ mentis ſenſũ edidiſſe, ſed fuiſſe interpretes conſilii divini, vel prophetas non ſuã ſed Dei mentem hominibus expoſuiſſe.* Camer. Myroth. Evang.

Again, He revealeth the deep things which himſelf doth. *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his ſecret unto his ſervants the Prophets* (Amos 3. 7.) The ſecret intended by the Prophet, was the decree and purpoſe of God to bring evil upon that Land, to take away the voice of mirth and gladneſs, and to make them an aſtoniſhment, an hiſſing, and a perpetual deſolation. The ſecret of ſuch decrees God reveals to his Prophets, that they may warn the people, either to prevent or prepare for the evil which is to come. When God was about to deſtroy *Sodom*, he ſaith, *Shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do?* Gen. 18. 17. God revealed the riſing and fall of the Kingdoms of this world, the riſing and fall of the Kingdom of Antichriſt, the making of the Kingdoms of this world, the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt; all theſe the Lord revealed by the Spirit unto the Apoſtle *John*, by him collected into that book called *The Revelation.* In the eighth of *Daniel* (*verſ.* 13.) Chriſt is ſtiled *Palmoni*, which we tranſlate, *a certain Saint*, but in the Margents of our Bibles we put, *The Numberer of ſecrets*, or, *a wonderful Numberer.* Chriſt is *the Numberer of ſecrets*, he tells them over, and hath them all (as we ſay) at his fingers ends: he can give an account of them at an inſtant, both how many they are, and what they mean. When *Nebuchadnezzar* deſired to hear the interpretation of his dream, *Daniel* aſcribes all to God, *He revealeth the deep and ſecret things, he knoweth what is the darkneſs, and the light dwelleth with him*, Dan. 2. 22.

Qui occulta in numerato habet. Jun.

Beſides theſe deep and dark things which concern future events, the Lord revealeth alſo the deep things of doctrine, the ſupernatural myſteries of Religion; the Incarnation of his Son, the Reſurrection of the body, the myſtery of juſtifying Faith, and of the new Birth, which are abſurdities to Nature; theſe are all revealed in the Word of God to our ears, and by the Spirit of God to our hearts.

Secondly, As the Lord revealeth the deep things which himſelf doth, or ſpeaketh, ſo alſo the deep things of mans doing, or ſpeaking, whether they be good or evil. Though the ſinner go as deep as hell, yet himſelf, and his ſin, are under the eye of God. *Thou* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *haſt ſet our iniquities before thee, and our ſecret ſins in the light of thy countenance.* When God intends to puniſh iniquity, he is ſaid to ſet it before him, but whether he do or no, it is before him. And as our ſecret iniquity is alwayes before him, ſo he ſometimes ſets it before men. (*Eccleſ.* 10. 20.) *Curſe not the King, no not in thy thought; and curſe not the rich in thy bed-chamber; for a bird of the air ſhall carry the voice, and that which hath wings ſhall tell the matter. Solomon* warns thoſe who wickedly conſpire againſt Kings, and perſons in authority, to conſider, as their ſin, ſo their danger; for though they carry the matter never ſo cloſely, God can make it known: 'Tis hard for a man to conceal his own thoughts (when the mind is full it may quickly run over at the mouth) but 'tis eaſie with God to find out a way for the revealing of our thoughts. *A bird of the air ſhall carry the voice:* But what's the voice of a thought? Or, how comes a bird into the bed-chamber? The bed-chamber is the ſecureſt place; and a thought is the moſt ſecret act: What can be more ſecret then a thought? Who can hear the ſound of our thoughts, or underſtand their language? We ſay, *Thought is free.* Thoughts fall not under the cognizance, or cenſure of any Court. That which fears no evidence,

Quæ in cogitatione revolvũtur, de facili verbo proferuntur etiã præter intentionem proferentis. Lyr. in Eccleſ.

fears no ſentence: Yet God, to whom our thoughts are evident, can ſend in evidence againſt our thoughts. *A bird of the air ſhall carry the voice* of that which hath no voice. It is a proverbial ſpeech, to note, that by the moſt unlikely means, if other means fail, God will reveal thoſe curſes, and reveal them ſpeedily. As if he had ſaid, *Rather then ſuch ſecret witkedneſs ſhall be undiſcovered, God will make birds ſpeak, and chamber-doors ſpeak, the ſtone out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhall ſpeak, rather then ſilence ſhall cover ſuch a wickedneſs.* More diſtinctly, when he ſaith, *A bird of the air ſhall carry the voice,* he implyes two things: Firſt, That it ſhall be revealed by ſome unexpected means, or by means as little ſuſpected for the doing of ſuch a thing, as a bird is. *As,* when *Balaam* went on ſinfully, *the dumb Aſs, ſpeaking with mans voice, forbad the madneſs of the Prophet: Balaam* little dreamt of ſuch a reprover; and theſe ſhall as little dream of ſuch a tale-bearer. Secondly, This phraſe of ſpeech implyes, that the matter ſhall be revealed by ſome ſpeedy means. *A bird ſhall do it*: The Meſſenger ſhall not go, but run; he ſhall not run, but fly; *a* Pegaſus *ſhall be the Poſt*, he ſhall have wings added to his feet; he ſhall have wings inſtead of feet. The Angels are deſcribed with wings in Scripture, to ſhew their ſpeed; a winged Meſſenger ſhall be diſpatcht on this errand. Once more, as ſome refer this diſcovery purely to the providence of God, ſo others to the policy of Princes, who have their ſpies flying like birds in all places; men no more feared to carry the report of what is ſpoken, then a bird is. They have their intelligencers in every bed-chamber, men no more feared to carry the report of what is ſpoken, then the chamber-doors are. In the ſame ſence that Kings are ſaid to have *long hands*, we may ſay alſo that they have *long ears*: They have *long hands*, becauſe they can uſe means to ſtrike thoſe that are far from them: and they have *long ears*, becauſe they can uſe means to hear thoſe who are far from them. But whether we take this, or the former interpretation, the point is equally performed; for even thoſe diſcoveries which are made by men, are ordered and brought on by the wiſe and holy providence of God, who doth ſo hate evil, and all the works of moral darkneſs, eſpecially the curſing of Kings and lawful Magiſtrates, that he will diſcover them out of all the deeps, either of natural or artificial darkneſs.

Principes & potentiores ſunt auritiſſimi, vix quicquam fit aut dicitur quod ipſorũ cognitionem fugiat. Jun.

Further, God bringeth good things as well as evil, juſt and holy actions, as well as ſinful and unjuſt, out of the deeps of darkneſs: *Many works of light lye in darkneſs:* Many excellent things are under concealment. *David's* integrity lay in the dark, yet God brought it forth as the light, and his innocency as the noon-day. God is not unrighteous, to forget or conceal, either our labour of love, or labours in holineſs, though men do.

Laſtly, How great an experiment hath God given us of this truth, in that grand diſcovery which he hath made to to the world (in this latter Age) of *another world?* A great part of the world, even ſo great as bears the name of a *new world*, was a deep thing of darkneſs, to this part of the world, for many and many ages and generations. No man ſo much as dream'd of ſuch Nations as are now diſcovered. The ſurface of thoſe huge Countreys was as little known to us as the center of the earth is: yea it was judged a kind of hereſie in ancient times, to ſay there were *Antipodes*. But now 'tis known, that the feet of our Brethren have walked oppoſite to the ſoles of our feet; and we have not only experience, but light of reaſon enough to evince it. God hath made Art a key to Nature, and hath diſcovered many deep things out of that darkneſs to us, which our fore-fathers never ſaw. Thus we ſee, that *deep things*, both Divine and humane, and theſe both practical and natural, are fetcht out of darkneſs by the mighty power, and unſearchable wiſdom of God.

There are three wayes by which God makes diſcoveries of evil plots, or practices, lying in deepeſt darkneſs.

Firſt, By the *confeſſion* of the perſon, whoſe head hath contrived, or his hand acted them. Evil in the heart drops out at the mouth; and this two wayes.

Firſt, By queries and queſtions put to the guilty. Such are often entrapt in their own anſwers, and their own tongues are a witneſs againſt themſelves. As ſpeech bewrayeth whence men are, ſo what they have been doing: (*Prov.* 20. 5.) *Counſel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of underſtanding will draw it out.* He draws it out by queſtions and examinations. When thoſe black waters will not flow out of themſelves, they are pumped up by the art and induſtry of others.

Secondly, A confeſſion of theſe deep things out of darkneſs is made by the workings of a mans own Conſcience. When Conſcience is touched, and beginneth to ake, that will tell tales: It is hard for a man, at ſuch a time, to keep his own counſel. It was the caution of an Ancient, *Be afraid of doing any thing which is ill, though there be no witneſs but thy ſelf:* If thou couldſt do it, thy Conſcience taking no notice of it, thou mighteſt poſſibly keep it ſecret; but whatſoever thou doeſt, is done in the eye of Conſcience, therefore take heed. We have a ſaying, *That murther will out*; and if nothing elſe bring it out, Conſcience will: Conſcience will examine a man as ſtrictly as any *Inquiſitor in* Rome. And as men, examined and tortured by ſevere Inquiſitors, confeſs what they would not; ſo alſo do they who are examined and put upon the Rack by their own Conſciences.

Turpe quid auſurus, te ſine teſte time.

Secondly, *God revealeth deep things immediately by his own Spirit:* As the Spirit revealeth the holy counſels of God to us, ſo the moſt ſecret evil deſigns and counſels of men. (*2 Kings* 6. 11.) When the King of *Syria* could take no counſel, but it was preſently diſcovered, he might well be caſt into a ſuſpition, that ſome about him were falſe to him, and held correſpondence with the enemy, *Therefore* (ſaith the ſtory) *the heart of the King of* Syria *was ſore troubled for this thing; and he called his ſervants, and ſaid unto them, Will not ye ſhew me which of us is for the King of* Iſrael? *And one of his ſervants ſaid, None, my Lord, O King, but* Eliſha *the Prophet that is in* Iſrael, *telleth the King of* Iſrael *the words that thou ſpeakeſt in thy bed-chamber.* The Spirit of God revealed the deep counſels of the *Syrian* King unto the Prophet, and the Prophet revealed them to men.

There is a third way which is more common, by which the Lord diſcovers deep things out of darkneſs, and that is, by *wonderful providences*; he makes ſome acts of his own providence as keys, to unlock the ſecrets of men; as hands, to pluck off the vails; as winds, to diſpel the clouds, and ſcatter the miſts which hid their actions, or intentions. In the hiſtory of *Joſeph* we have an admirable demonſtration of this: It was a ſecret, a deep thing of darkneſs that his Brethren conſpired againſt him, they ſold him into *Egypt*, and brought his torn coat home all bloody to his Father, which cauſed the plain-hearted old man to conclude, *That ſome evil beaſt had devoured him.* Thus the matter was locked up; yet God makes ſeveral acts of his providence as keyes to open it. Firſt, Famine pincheth *Jacob* and his Family; then *Joſeph's* Brethren muſt into *Egypt*; and after one journey, they muſt make a ſecond; and then *Benjamin* muſt be detained, and *Simeon* bound; here was a ſtrange ſeries and ſucceſſion of providences, till the whole matter was diſcovered. The *Gunpowder-plot* was a deep thing of darkneſs, a ſtrange monſter (*Cui lumen ademptum*) which ſaw no light, not only becauſe it never took effect, but becauſe it was kept ſo cloſe a long time, under oaths, and ſtrongeſt concealments, that there was not the leaſt ſuſpition of it; yet by a ſtrange providence God diſcovers this deep thing out of darkneſs: A Letter written with uncouth expreſſions, and by miſtake put into a wrong hand, was the occaſion of bringing all to light. Latter times have given us great experiences of this: The beſt intelligences have we have had of ſecret counſels have been from their cabinets, who contrived them.

Take four Corollaries from this.

Firſt, Be afraid to do, or to plot any evil ſecretly: The Lord diſcovers deep things out of darkneſs. Uſually *they who do things that are not fit to be ſeen, conceive they are not, or ſhall not be ſeen either in doing them, or when they are done.* Flatter not your ſelves in this vain hope; you may caſt a vail upon them a while, but out they will at laſt.

Secondly, Be not afraid of the ſecret plottings of evil men, or of the deep things of their darkneſs; how deep ſoever the wayes and counſels of men are laid, yet they are all above-board to God. Suppoſe enemies are taking counſel againſt us, yet we have a powerful friend behind the hangings, who hears every word they ſay, and ſets down in a book every reſolve they make, and will in fitteſt ſeaſon, both diſcover, and diſappoint them. Let this be encouragement to all the faithful; their Father in Heaven knows and over-rules the darkeſt deſigns of wicked men on earth.

Thirdly, *When men are plotting, let us be praying. David* knew *Achitophel* could give deſperate and deep counſel againſt him, therefore he prayeth, *Lord turn the counſel of* Achitophel *into fooliſhneſs*: As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou knoweſt what he hath adviſed, I do not; he is plotting againſt me, Lord take notice that I am praying unto thee. Plots were never any match for prayer; nor the counſels of the wicked able to ſtand before the ſupplications of the righteous.*

Fourthly, *No mans uprightneſs ſhall be alwayes hid*: God will clear the innocent, for he diſcovereth deep things out of darkneſs; he that manifeſts the guilt of all, will alſo manifeſt the innocency of his. There is ſeldom any eminent or ſingular good thing done in the world, but it falls under miſconſtruction, and often ſuch gloſſes are given as corrupt the contexture of ſinccreſt works; for the concluſions of malice are ever like thoſe of Logick, following (*deteriorem partem*) the weaker and worſer part. How often is holineſs miſcall'd hypocriſie, and zeal vain-glory? How often is contending for the faith, miſjudged faction; and contending againſt error, humour? In the midſt of all theſe dark thoughts of men, concerning our works, this may bear up our hearts, that as God knows them what they are, ſo he will make them appear as they are. The Lord Chriſt comforts his Diſciples againſt all the calumnies, and miſapprehenſions of the world, though they ſhould be called *Beelzebubs*, and made as black as Hell by traducing pens, or tongues; yet ſaith he (*Matth.* 10. 25.) *Fear them not, for there is nothing covered, that ſhall not be revealed; and hid, that ſhall not be known*: Which words may have a double aim.

Firſt, To deter the Diſciples from concealing the Word of God for fear of men. As if Chriſt had ſaid, *Be ye bold and conſtant in delivering the meſſage which I ſhall put into your mouths; declare to the world the whole counſel of God; keep not back, conceal not his truth, betray not his cauſe by a cowardly ſilence: for whatſoever plauſible excuſes you may make, to palliate and hide this lowneſs and falſeneſs of your ſpirits, yet at length all will out; and though you would not declare the truth of God to his glory, yet God will declare the whole truth concerning you, to your ſhame; as the madneſs of your perſecutors ſhall be manifeſt, ſo alſo ſhall your fearfulneſs; therefore fear them not: What I tell you in darkneſs, that ſpeak ye in the light,* &c. *for what ye do, or forbear to do in darkneſs, ſhall come to light, with the reaſons of it.*

Secondly, Theſe words aim at the ſupport of the Diſciples under the ſlanders and ſpiteful opinions of men, when they fully and couragiouſly declare and preach the Word of God. As if he had ſaid, *Your innocency may be hid, and your righteouſneſs unknown; you may be called* Beelzebub, *and Devil, for ſpeaking the truths of God; yet I will take a time to put off theſe ugly diſguiſes, and render you even to the eye of the world ſuch as you are, upright and honeſt men, my zealous and faithful meſſengers: for I aſſure you, there is nothing covered, that ſhall not be revealed*: and *therefore your faithfulneſs to my cauſe and Goſpel ſhall not; do ye reveal my hidden truths, and leave it to me to reveal your integrity, how much ſoever it may be hidden.* Upon the ſame ground that wicked men are to fear, godly men are not to fear: Wicked men have cauſe to fear, becauſe their evil deeds ſhall be made manifeſt; and godly men are not to fear, yea they are to rejoyce, becauſe their goodneſs and good deeds ſhall be made manifeſt: All their uprightneſs, and faithful intentions, for the promoting of the honour of Chriſt, and advancing the Goſpel, ſhall be ſet in the open light.

Yet further, Though we ſhould do much good, which is in the dark too, or hidden from our ſelves (for there are, as ſins, ſo, in a ſence, good works of ignorance) or if we ſhould have forgotten the good which we have done knowingly, yet the Lord will redeem our works out of this darkneſs alſo; the darkneſs I mean, whether of our own ignorance or forgetfulneſs. Neither ſecrecy, nor inſcience, nor oblivion, our own, or others, can long cover a good work; let it be only our care to do good; it is the care of Chriſt, that no good which we have done ſhall be loſt, or left in perpetual darkneſs. God makes many diſcoveries of deep things out of darkneſs here, and he will make an univerſal diſcovery at laſt: As that Apoſtolical caution againſt raſh judgment clearly imports: (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs* (whether good or bad) *and will make manifeſt the counſels of the hearts* (whether juſt or unjuſt) *and then ſhall every man* (who is praiſe worthy) *have praiſe of God.* The Apoſtle in this aims rather at the encouragement of the Saints, whoſe beſt actions are often hid, then at the terror of the wicked, who deſire and hope that their evil actions ſhall be alwayes hid. Thus we ſee how God diſcovers dark and *deep things.* In the next verſe we ſhall ſee him altering and diſpoſing, turning and changing *great things,* even the Nations of the earth.

Verſe 23. **He increaſeth the Nations, and deſtroyeth them; he inlargeth the Nations, and ſtraiteneth them again.**

Here are two acts of providence, like *checquer-work*: a white and a black: An act of mercy, and an act of judgment; an act of the right hand, *increaſing and inlarging*; and an act of the left, *deſtroying and ſtraitening Nations.* God doth not only abaſe particular perſons, how great ſoever they are (*Looſing the bond of Kings, and pouring contempt upon Princes,* &c.) but he hath a controverſie with whole Nations and Kingdoms, they ſhall be abaſed and ſmart under his hand, if they go on provoking and ſinning againſt him.

Non ſolum Deus ſuæ potentiæ ac ſapientiæ documenta præbet, in his quæ unius vel alterius regis ſunt, ſed in univerſa aliqua multitudine & numeroſiſſimo populo. Merc.

He increaſeth the Nations.] The word which we tranſlate *to increaſe*, hath a double derivation. Some take it from a root, which ſignifies to augment, or multiply. Others take it from a root, which ſignifies to err, or wander, and in conſtruction, *to deceive.* Hence ſome render, *He deceiveth the Nations, and deſtroyeth them*: So the Septuagint; and it is a truth, God deceiveth the Nations, he leaveth them to their own miſtakes, or to the evil counſels of others, *and then deſtroyeth them.* Deſtruction is uſually let in by miſapprehenſion. The judgment of God upon the outward eſtate begins at a judgment upon the underſtanding. Seldom hath any Nation periſhed, but they ſee they have been befooled, and that they refuſed their own good before they were deprived of it. As the Text may bear this tranſlation, ſo the truth flowing from it, is very uſeful.

שגא *Creſcere, multiplicare.*

שגה *Errare.*

Πλανῶν ἔθνη ϗ ἀπολλύων αὐτά. *Decipiens gentes & perdens eas.* Sept.

But becauſe the ordinary acception of the word runs faireſt, *He increaſeth the Nations,* &c. I ſhall inſiſt only upon that.

When God made the world, he ſaid to man, yea to every thing that had life in it, and ſo power of increaſing, *Increaſe and multiply: A word from God makes the creature multiply.* The increaſe of every thing is from God, as well as the conſtitution of it. There is a threefold increaſe. Firſt, In number: God ſaid to *Abraham, I will multiply thy ſeed as the ſand of the Sea, and as the Stars of Heaven*; and it was ſo. Secondly, He increaſeth Nations in riches and plenty; he bleſſeth their basket and their ſtore; they lend to others, and do not borrow. Thirdly, He increaſeth Nations in honour and reputation; they are the head, and not the tail; the ſheaves of their neighbours round about, fall down to their ſheave. Such honour is promiſed the Jews, *That ten men ſhall take hold out of all languages of the Nations, even ſhall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, ſaying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you,* (Zach. 8. 23.) Thus the Nations are increaſed by a word of bleſſing from the mouth of God.

And as he *increaſeth*, ſo he *deſtroyeth.* The decayes of Nations are from God, as well as their improvements are. God declareth his power by pulling down, as well as by raiſing up; by killing, as well as by making alive; by deſtroying, as well as by increaſing.

This deſtruction is wrought two wayes, openly, or ſecretly. Sometime *God is a moth and rottenneſs* to a Nation, he deſtroyes them ſilently, and unſeen (*Hoſ.* 5. 12.) they decline and moulder away, they know not how. Sometimes *he is a Lion, and as a young Lion unto a Nation, he will tear and go away, and none ſhall reſcue* (Hoſ. 5. 14.) he deſtroyeth them viſibly, by Diſeaſes and Plagues, by Famine and the Sword. By ſome one, or by all theſe, he deſtroyeth them, till, as he threatned the Jews (*Iſa.* 6. 11.) *The Cities be waſted without inhabitants, and the houſes without man, and the Land be utterly deſolate.*

The laſt branch of the verſe is of the ſame importance with the former.

He inlargeth the Nations, and ſtraiteneth them again.

There is a different reading, for ſome render the former as an act of judgment, *He ſcattereth, or ſubverteth the Nations*; and the latter as an act of mercy, *He reſtoreth them again.* Thus he baniſhed the Jews into *Babylon*, and after ſeventy years brought them back to their own Land. We underſtand the former clauſe as an act of mercy; the latter of wrath and judgment.

The Original word ſignifies, to expand, or ſtretch a thing forth. When God increaſeth a Nation, he inlargeth their borders, and, having multiplied their number, gives them more room. As the inlargement of the Church is deſcribed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 49. 20.) ſuch is the inlargement of Nations. *The children which thou ſhalt have after thou haſt loſt the other, ſhall ſay again in thine ear, The place is too ſtrait for me; give place to me that I may dwell.* As Bees ſwarm when the Hive is overcharged, or as Rivers overflowing break their bounds, ſo do the Nations of the earth, who are compared to great Rivers. God ſometimes opens theſe flood-gates, and lets them out like a mighty torrent. The irruptions of the *Gothes* and *Vandals*, of the *Huns* and *Heruli*, are famous among Hiſtorians. And as barbarous Nations ſpread out themſelves becauſe of numbers, ſo do other Nations by their power. The *Babylonian*, the *Perſian*, the *Grecian*, the *Roman* Empires, extended the wings of their ſovereignty all the world over.

Subverſas in integrum reſtituit. Vulg. 70.
שטח
Significat expandere vel extendere ſicut cum aliquid expanditur ut exſiccetur.
Longè latèque ſuper faciem terræ propagat & dilatat eas. Druſ.

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *He ſpreadeth the Nations, and governeth them*: So both parts of that verſe ſpeak mercy to Nations. Others of the Learned joyn in that tranſlation. The Hebrew word beareth that ſence moſt properly, ſignifying to *lead*, yea, *to lead gently*, peaceably and quietly, as a Shepherd leadeth his Flock, or as a father his child. Many offerings of the Jews in their ceremonious worſhip, were denominated from this word, *Minchah*, becauſe they were brought in ſuch an honourable way, and preſented before the Lord. The providence of God leads all people; his own people are led by a ſpecial providence, as the *Iſraelites* were, in the day by a Cloud, and in the night by a Pillar of fire. *The Lord alone did lead them, and there was no ſtrange God with him* (Deut. 32. 12.) *The Lord in mercy led forth the people, which he had redeemed; he guided them in his ſtrength to his holy habitation* (Exod. 15. 13.) This interpretation runs fair. And while we in ſtead of *he leadeth*, render, *he ſtraiteneth them*; we mean, he leadeth them into ſtraits. As he ſpreadeth them out by proſperity, ſo he ſtraiteneth them by affliction. In this variety of reading, the ſcope and general ſence of the Text is the ſame, ſetting forth the irreſiſtible power of God, in diſpoſing Nations for the better, or for the worſe, as he ſeeth cauſe, or as they give it him.

נחה
Duxit, deduxit placidè & ſenſim ſicut paſtor gregem aut pater filium ſuum. Unde
מנחה
Quodlibet donum ſeu donarium honoris cauſa alicui oblatum, eò quod ſenſim & cum pompa quadam portetur. Rivet.
Expandit eas ſuper faciem terræ, & ducit eas in locum perditionis. Merc. ex R. Kinch.

Firſt, Obſerve, *There is a viciſſitude and change in Nations as well as in perſons.*

In this verſe the ſcales go up and down, *He increaſeth the Nations, and deſtroyeth them*; *he inlargeth them, and ſtraiteneth them again.* Particular men, are ſometimes up, and ſometimes down; ſometimes well, and ſometimes ſick; ſometimes inlarged, and ſometimes ſtraitened. Now as it is with the parts, ſo with the whole; and though the world be a diſſimular body, yet in one notion it is a ſimular body, being all alike in ſubjection to vanity and change. What Nation is there but hath ſuffered many changes? This Nation hath been a great example of it, and ſo it is at this day: And unleſs we humble our ſelves before God, and *kiſs the Son*, leaſt he be further angry, we have cauſe to fear greater changes then ever we have had. Who knows what changes a year, yea, a day may bring forth? Theſe two things are out of all queſtion: Firſt, That we have deſerved the worſt of changes. Secondly, That the face of affairs looks as if we ſhould every day change for the worſe, till we come to the worſt.

Secondly, Obſerve, *All the changes in Nations are from God.*

He increaſeth and ſtraiteneth them; his providence (not fate) watcheth over them, to order all their motions. As the motions of ſingle perſons, ſo the motions of whole Kingdoms are ordered by a higher hand. Divine providence acts upon every ſtage of worldly affairs in the world. There is a wheel in a wheel; Gods wheel moves in all the wheels of the creature: States cannot do what they pleaſe, and go on after their own pleaſure; God governs the Governors, as much as thoſe who are governed. He leadeth them into wayes of peace and proſperity; he alſo leadeth them into wars and troubles. We have both expreſt (*Jer.* 31. 28.) *Like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to deſtroy, ſo will I watch over them, to build and to plant, ſaith the Lord.* No people in the world did ever find God more increaſing, or ſtraitening them, then the *Jews* did: They were as ſet upon a Beacon, for all the world to look and gaze at: They were Gods *peculiar treaſure*; yet he caſt them out as dung, or droſs. He increaſed them in number, in riches, and in honour. When the ſevereſt courſes were taken to diminiſh them (as in *Egypt* by ſlaying the males) he then increaſed them: yet the hand of God was as eminent in deſtroying, as increaſing them. More then ſix hundred thouſand came out of *Egypt*, all whoſe carkaſſes (excepting two) fell in the wilderneſs. God increaſed them again in *Canaan*; they were almoſt innumerable, when *David* numbred them; yet he deſtroyed and waſted them by the *Babylonians*. After their return from *Babylon*, they grew mighty again; at laſt God ſent the *Romans*, who took their City and Temple from them: And how they have been ſcattered and emptied ever ſince, the Records of ancient times, and the experiences of this declare. What God did, and hath done, with the Nation of the *Jews*, he hath alſo done in many other Nations, and can do in all. He can lift them up, or caſt them down; give them a being, or no being; a well-being, or a miſerable being, at his pleaſure. The abſolute ſoveraignty and greatneſs of God, will bear him out in theſe great works, upon the greateſt Nations. What's the greatneſs of any one, or of all Nations put together, to the greatneſs of God? *Behold* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 40. 15.) *the Nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the ballance.* A bucket full of water is no great matter to the Ocean; what then is a drop? All the weight that can be put into a pair of ballances is not much; what then is the light duſt, which hangs about it? We know that bears no weight at all. It is no more for the great God to move the greateſt Nation upwards or downwards, into an increaſe or a diminution, then to blow away the ſmalleſt duſt. And as if a drop, or a duſt were too much, the ſeventeenth verſe aſſures us, that *All Nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him as leſs then nothing and vanity.* Nor can God ever want means to increaſe, or deſtroy whole Nations, who made the whole world without means: *Cannot he ſpeak a Nation into any thing, who ſpake the world out of nothing?* When a people increaſe in ſin as much as in ſovereignty, and are ſtraitened in obedience and thankfulneſs to God, who hath enlarged them, then he reduces them to their former nothing.

Fata quædā regnarum & gentium quidam eſſe volunt, ſed omnia talia nos docet Scriptura Dei nutui & conſilio immutabili tribuere. Merc.

Job hath not yet done with this argument; as he had told us of the judgments of God upon greateſt perſons before he ſpake of Nations; ſo now having ſpoken of the judgments of God upon Nations, he deſcends, in his concluſion, to thoſe again which God ſends upon eminent perſons, in the two laſt verſes of this Chapter.

VERS. 24, 25.

He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and cauſeth them to wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way.

They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to ſtagger like a drunken man.

THeſe two verſes are the continuation and concluſion of *Job's* Argument, lifting up the power and wiſdom of God in his diſpenſations towards men.

In the former part of the Chapter we have diſcuſſed what God doth to perſons, and what to Nations. Here *Job* turneth his ſpeech upon a point which he had touched before, *He maketh the Judges fools*, or turneth their counſels into folly: Now, *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth.*

He

מסיר לב סיר *Eſt recedere, declinare, in Hiphil removere recedere faciens.*

He taketh away.] Some read, *He changeth*; Others, *He removeth*, or *cauſeth to decline*. The Hebrew will bear either of thoſe readings, *He taketh away*

The heart of the chief of the people of the earth.

The heart is the *chief piece* in any of the people of the earth: And here he taketh away the heart of the *chief of the people of the earth*. 'Tis ſad when the chief part is taken away from the chiefeſt of the people.

Cor per metaphorã ſignificat mediũ & interius cujuſq; rei, per ſynechdochen omnia quorũ ſedes eſt in corde, mens, voluntas, &c. Pined.

The heart under a natural conſideration is that noble inſtrument of life ſeated in the midſt of the body: by a metaphor it ſignifies any thing which is ſeated in the middle, or toward the center, becauſe the heart is ſo placed in the body. And by a *Synechdoche*, the heart is put frequently in Scripture for the motions of the heart, or for whatſoever acteth there. The underſtanding, will, affections, purpoſes, reſolutions, or courage of man, any or all of theſe are expreſſed by the heart, becauſe any or all theſe are wrought in, or iſſue from the heart.

To take away the heart, hath reference chiefly to theſe three things.

Firſt, He taketh away the underſtanding, and leaveth men to the guidance of ignorance: and then they are hurried by guſts of paſſion, not ordered by the dictates of reaſon. God benights their minds, their fooliſh hearts are darkned, and ſo they become vain both in their imaginations and reſolves: The *chief of the earth* are then neither able to give good counſel nor recieve it; they who formerly were as Oracles, betray a feebleneſs of judgement, and the graveſt States men prove infants in underſtanding. All wholſom remedies, and proper expedients for their own good, or the publick ſafety, are taken from them when God taketh away their hearts. This was further ſhewed at the ſeventeenth verſe, whither I refer the reader.

Cordis nomen ad voluntatẽ potius quã ad intellectum hoc loco pertinet. Aquin.

Secondly, The heart is put for the will. Some interpret this text, rather of the will then of the underſtanding: God is ſaid to *take away the will,* when he takes it off from what it was ſet upon before, and cauſeth it to move and encline to another object. (*Prov.* 21. 1.) *The Kings heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water, he turneth it whitherſoever he will.* By the *heart* we are to underſtand the will of Kings; *turning* properly concerns the will: The will putteth it ſelf out to proſecute what the underſtanding dictates: *The will uſually walketh in, or after the light of the underſtanding*: God works ſo effectually in *the heart of the chief of the people of the earth,* that though their underſtandings give them light to walk in ſuch a way (whether it be a falſe or a true light or way, is not the point here) yet he can take their wills off from it, *and turneth them whitherſoever he will.* As the perſons of Kings are in the hand of God to protect them, ſo their wills are in his hand to guide and over-power them. *They who are maſters of men, are not maſters of their own will. A King who rules others, is not under his own rule.* The ſimilitude is very elegant, God turneth his heart *even as the rivers*; or *ſprings of water*: Rivers of water are led by their channels, you may draw them this way or that way by cutting out water-courſes. When the will of any one of the *chiefs of the earth* runs ſtrongly in ſuch a conſtant ſtream, God can ſtop it, cut out ſluces (as it were) and give it a new channel, he can empty the ſtream *of a Kings will, into a channel of his own making*, and cauſe this river to run upon what ground he pleaſeth. Some of the Ancients obſerving what ſtrange courſes the hearts of moſt Kings have run, turn the interpretation of this text into another channel, telling us it muſt be expounded of the Saints who are *ſpiritual Kings*. *Do you think*, ſay they, *that the heart of* Pharaoh, Antiochus, Herod, *or of* Julian, *was in the hand of God?* Doth God turn the heart into the wayes of blood and perſecution againſt his people? ſurely ſuch mens hearts are in the hand of the devil, not of God: ſo they argue. But by their leave, we are not afraid to ſay, that even the hearts of wicked Kings are in the hand of God; yet he hath no hand in their wickedneſs, unleſs to bound it. The wills of the moſt wilful Princes are flexible and moveable at the will of God, even while they move, yea ſpurn againſt it: he makes them ſubject to his ſecret will, while they are rebelling againſt his revealed will. They will not do the latter, but the former is done upon them whether they will or no. *Some men are ſo wilful that they turn their whole ſoul into will*; there is nothing of reaſon or underſtanding, nothing of love or affection appears in them, but all of will: Their ſouls are loſt in their wills: yet theſe wills God findes out and diſpoſeth of. The will of Princes (ſaith a heathen) is ſtiff and ſtrong, unready and unwonted to the direction of others. They who are full of power think all muſt obey their wills; therefore to make their wills either ſubject or obedient, argues tranſcendent power. The wills of moſt men are ready to follow the wills of Princes, as the ſhadow doth the body: therefore to make their wills follow, is the work of God (*Eccleſ.* 8. 4.) *Where the word of a King is, there is power; and who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Princes will not be ſtopped but by a ſuperiour power; their priviledge is great, and many times the violence of their ſpirits greater. As *Pilate*, when ſome adviſed him to alter the inſcription upon the croſs of Chriſt, anſwers, *What I have written I have written*, it ſhall ſtand: ſo the *chief of the earth* ſay, *what we have done, we have done, what we have reſolved, we have reſolved.* Yet God who is chief above all the chiefs of the earth, taketh away, or removeth the hearts of the chief of the earth, they ſhall not alwayes will what they would. A good man doth the evil which he would not, and evil men do the good which they would not. God cauſeth them to will that the thing ſhall be done, though they have no will, either to the thing or to the doing of it.

Putas quòd cor Juliani *impiiſſimi in manu Dei fuit? abſit, ſed de illis dicit, qui regnant ſuper peccata.* Hieron. *in* Pſal. 137.

Nec me fugit quàm durus & verè inſolens ad recta flecti regius nolit tumor. Senec. Act. 1.

Principum virorũ illa vox eſt, Quod ſcripſi, ſcripſi.

Thirdly, The heart is put for *courage* and *fortitude*. God takes away the heart under this notion; *he can make the moſt valiant men cowards, and pull down the higheſt ſpirits.* As he gives women the courage of men, ſo he can make men leſs then women in courage (*Amos* 2. 14, 15.) The Prophet ſheweth God taking away, not only fighting courage, but flying courage (ſo ſome underſtand that text) *The flight ſhall periſh from the ſwift*, they ſhall not have a heart to ſhift for themſelves: they once made ſure of it that they had legs to run, though no hands to fight, but their flight ſhall periſh, they ſhall not have ſo much ſpirit left as to run away. The fighting courage of Iſrael was quite ſunk, (*Joſh.* 7. 5.) *The hearts of the people melted, and became as water*, that is, their courage failed. And it is threatned as a judgment, (*Lev.* 26.36.) *I will ſend a faintneſs into their hearts*: And what ſhall the effect of this be? *The ſound of a ſhaken leaf ſhall chaſe them, and they ſhall flee as fleeing from a ſword*: they ſhall not only flee at the beating of a drum, at the ſound of a trumpet, or at an Alarm to the battel, but at the ſound of a ſhaking leaf, *Deut.* 28. 65. *The Lord ſhall give thee a trembling heart.*

Any of theſe wayes, the heart is in the hand of God; he can make an underſtanding heart fooliſh, a reſolved wilful heart flexible, and a ſtout couragious heart faint and fearful. He that had a heart like a lion, ſhall quake and be (as we ſay) *white-liver'd* at the real appearance, yea at the ſhadow of danger. Thus the Lord ſheweth his mighty power among the chief of the earth, in taking away their hearts.

God in Scripture calleth upon man to give him his heart: *My ſon give me thine heart.* This act of God in the text is a chaſtening of the former neglect.

> Hence Obſerve, *God taketh away their hearts, who will not give up their hearts unto him.*

If we graciouſly give our hearts unto God, he will not judiciarily take our hearts from us. We never have our underſtandings, our wills, our courage, ſo much in our own cuſtody, as when we reſign them to Gods keeping. God would ſo order them in us and for us, that we ſhould have the command of them, were they once at his command. But if when he calleth, *Give me thine heart*, we or any of the chief of the earth ſay, no, we will not give our hearts to thee, not our underſtandings to judge for thee, not our wills to ſubmit to thee, not our courage to act for thee: Then ſaith God, I will take away your hearts from you; you that uſe your underſtandings, your wills, your courage againſt me, ſhall not have them to uſe (*Hoſ.* 7. 11.) *Ephraim is called a ſilly dove without heart*: then the chief of the earth are like *ſilly doves* (though indeed ravenous Harpies) when God taketh away their hearts. The Saints are *innocent doves, without gall*; *and the wicked* *are ſilly doves, without a heart.* God threatneth his people to ſend them ſuch Chiefs, Chiefs without an heart, (*Iſa.* 3.4,12.) *I will give them children to be their Princes, and women ſhall rule over them.* He doth not mean children in age, or women in ſex; for ſome women are of maſculine ſpirits, and have done valiantly. 'Twas *Deborah*, a woman, who ſaid, *O my ſoul thou haſt trodden down ſtrength*; no man ever ſpake more like a man: Some children in years have acted like the aged, *Joſiah* did ſo. So then the Prophets meaning is, I will give them rulers that ſhall be as little in underſtanding, as children are in ſtature, their reaſon ſhall ſcarce be a cubit high; I will give them Chiefs, that ſhall be as timerous as women naturally are: Their courage ſhall ſcarce ſerve them to ſee their own bloud without ſwooning, much leſs to venture their blood in any honourable ſervice. Thus God takes away the hearts of the chief of the people, when either they or the people refuſe to give God theirs.

ראשי עם *Capitum populi.*

Again, The Hebrew is, *He taketh away the heart of the* [*Heads*] *of the people of the earth.* The Leaders and Governours of a people, are their Heads: That's the language of the old Teſtament every where. It is ill when the heart is taken from the *heels or loweſt* of the people; but how miſerable is it, when the heart is taken from the *heads or higheſt* of the people. A people whoſe heads have no heart, are upon the matter headleſs. *A heartleſs head, is no better then no head.*

Laſtly Obſerve, *All mankind is not of one rank.*

We have here the people, and the Heads of the people. As the natural body is diſtinguiſhed into ſuperiour and inferiour, into noble and ignoble parts, ſo is the political body: As that body is a monſter, which is all head, or whoſe head is too big for the body, ſo is that which hath no head, or a head too little for the body. Where all govern there is no government, and where all are chief there can be no order. And as God hath appointed ſome to the dignity of Headſhip, for the preſervation of order, ſo it is their duty who are Heads to preſerve order. The head takes care natura'ly for the whole body, the head ſees for the foot, and reſpects the little finger. Magiſtrates are rulers over the perſons of the people, but they are ſervants to the good of the people. A people ought to ſerve their rulers, yet rulers are the greateſt ſervants. As it is the duty of all to ſerve them, ſo it is their office to ſerve all. *He taketh away the heart of the chief*, or, *of the heads of the people.* And what then?

None of the works of God are without effect; when he acteth, ſomewhat will come of it. Here is a threefold effect following this judiciary act of God in taking away the heart of the *chief of the earth.*

First, *They wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way.*
Secondly, *They grope in the dark without light.*
Thirdly, *They ſtagger like a drunken man.*

The firſt of theſe effects is laid down in the latter clauſe of the 24th verſe.

תעה *Uſurpatur de errore cordis æquè ac de errore pedis.*

He cauſeth them to wander.] The word which we tranſlate, to wander, ſignifies both corporal and mental wandering; the errour of the foot, and the errour of the mind. 'Tis put for corporal wandering (*Gen.* 20.13.) *When God cauſed me* (ſaith *Abraham*) *to wander from my fathers houſe*; and again, *Gen.* 37.15. 'Tis put for mental wandering, *Pſal.* 119. *ult. I have gone aſtray like a loſt ſheep, ſeek thy ſervant*; Iſa. 63.17. *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to erre from thy wayes?*

But that which is moſt conſiderable here, is the act of God, *He cauſeth them to wander*; This intimates an efficiency: Hence 'tis queſtioned, How doth God cauſe man to wander? God doth not lead man into falſe wayes: nor doth he hinder man from going in thoſe wayes which are good and right; thus God cauſeth no man to wander: And yet he doth more then barely permit or ſuffer man to wander; he is active in it, *He cauſed them to wander.* For the clearing of it, I anſwer,

Firſt, God judgeth and pronounceth ſuch unworthy of light, who have abuſed it; or that he ſhould clear their mindes with the knowledge of his truth, who have not obeyed his truth, but held it in unrighteouſneſs.

Secondly, Upon the paſſing of this dreadful ſentence, he withdraweth or withholdeth his light from them. They muſt needs wander who walk in darkneſs; and unleſs God continue his light, we return to our own darkneſs. The ſetting of the Sun is enough to make the ſurface of the earth and the air dark, becauſe they have no inherent light: God needs not infuſe darkneſs into us, to make us dark, we in our ſelves are nothing but darkneſs.

Nō quod in falſitatē eos inducat, ſed quia lumen ſuū iis ſubtrahit ne veritattm cognoſcant, &c. Aquin.

Thirdly, Having withdrawn his light, God proceeds to an act of tradition, delivering ſuch up into the hands of their own dark luſts and black affections, yea he delivers ſuch up into the hand of Satan, who is the Prince of darkneſs, and who hath darkneſs enough to caſt into the mind of man, till it be filled with darkneſs. *If our Goſpel be hid* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3,4.) *it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their mind, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* Satan is Gods executioner: the God of this world blindes their eyes who ſee not the offered light of God: and the more it is offered and neglected, the more he blindes them, and the more they wander. They wander who never ſaw the light, but they wander moſt dangerouſly who are blinded with the light, or becauſe they abuſed it.

Fourthly, The Lord is ſaid to cauſe men to wander, becauſe he ordereth the objects and occaſions, the means and manner, the ſteps and degrees of their aberrations. They who wander moſt out of the way of obedience, cannot wander out of the eye and way of providence. The providence of God is ever in its way, even in reference to them who wander out of the way. They who act moſt confuſedly, indiſpoſedly, and erroniouſly, are kept in a due courſe and method, as to the purpoſe and deſign of God. The Prophet *Iſaiah* (chap. 20.20.) ſpeaks of a *bridle that ſhall be in the jaws of the people, cauſing them to erre or wander.* A bridle is rather to keep in the way then to carry out of the way. The place is of difficult interpretation: moſt expound it of the power of the Babylonians, which being put into the jaws of the Jewiſh nation, cauſed them to wander out of their own countrey into captivity, yea and cauſed many of them to erre and wander from the way of holy doctrine and worſhip. However, we may allude to that Scripture for the clearing of the point in hand, though we make no proof of it. The bridle of providence is in the jaws of many men, even in the jaws of the heads of the earth, cauſing them (as *Job* ſpeaks here) to wander; and yet while they are wandering, that bridle rules and holds them within the compaſs of divine pleaſure. Thus the Lord who guides his people in his own way, cauſeth many to wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way, and yet guideth them in their wanderings. For as the darkneſs is no darkneſs to God, ſo the wilderneſs is no wilderneſs to God: his providence is in a clear way to the fulfilling of his own counſels, how much or how long ſoever he cauſeth men to wander from theirs.

In a wilderneſs.] We are not to take this *wilderneſs* literally, as if the meaning were, that God bringeth men into deſerts and waſts, as he did *Iſrael* his people fourty years together. *To wander in a wilderneſs* is a proverbial ſpeech, and implies theſe two things.

Firſt, He is ſaid to wander in a wilderneſs, who is ignorant of his way, or knoweth not how to direct and make his courſe: we ſay, *The man's in a wood*, when we perceive one intangled in ſpeech or action. Hence,

Secondly, To wander in a wilderneſs, notes improbability, yea extreameſt difficulty of attaining our end. A man that is in a wide vaſt wilderneſs, gives himſelf for loſt, every ſtep may be backward as well as forward: As he knows not where he goes, ſo he knows not whither he goes: He is in a wilderneſs, who knoweth not his way, or deſpaireth of his end.

תהו *Inanitas, vacuitas, confuſio, res informis, errare eos facit in invio vel inani ubi nullus ſit difficultatū exitus.* Pined.

The Original word is *Tohu. Moſes* hath it to expreſs the Chaos, *Gen.* 1. 1. *The earth was without form and void:* Before God planted the world, all the world was a wilderneſs, a place without form, it had no method in it: Creation methodiz'd that rude heap, and drew the wilderneſs into a garden. A wilderneſs notes any ſtate or condition without ſhape or order: and thoſe men wander in a wilderneſs, who wanting the true leadings of humane reaſon, and a divine rule, run dangerous and pernicious wayes, both to themſelves and others: He that goes in ſuch wayes, goes out of his way, yea (as the next clauſe of

Mente deſtituti vias & rationes ineunt incōmodas & perniciosas.

of the verſe ſpeaks) he goes without all wayes. *They wander in a wilderneſs*

דרך *Iter, via quæ calcatur pedibus, per metaphoram curſus vel inſtitutum vivendi.*

Where there is no way.] The way is to be underſtood as the wilderneſs, *metaphorically*: The word ſignifieth, not only a way which we tread with our feet, but the way which we tread with our actions: A right courſe of life is the way of man. Theſe (through the juſt judgement of God) *wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way*; that is *no plain, no right, no beaten way*, unleſs beaten by the ſons of Belial, or by the travellers to the land of trouble and darkneſs. When God takes away the hearts of men, they run ſtrange courſes, and go wayes which wiſe men never went; the foot of honeſty or of juſtice, treads not their paths, They who go in ſuch wayes, *go in a wilderneſs where there is no way.*

Obſerve from this effect, Firſt, *That the very miſtakes and errours of men are from God.*

Firſt, Spiritual miſtakes, or miſtakes in ſpiritual things, (*Iſa.* 63. 17.) *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to erre from thy wayes* (ſo the Church crieth out) *and hardened our heart from thy fear?* God made them to erre when he did not effectually ſhew them the truth; he hardened their hearts when he did not ſoften them. God left them a while to the conduct of their own luſts, becauſe they had long refuſed the conduct of his Spirit. They *vexed his Spirit* (verſ. 11.) and therefore he gave them up to their own ſpirits (*Pſal.* 81. 12.) All the motions of man are aberrations, when he moves without, or againſt the Counſel of God.

Secondly, Miſtakes in civil things (which is the buſineſs of this text) are from God too. God took away the heart of *Rehoboam*, and then rejecting good counſel, *he wandered in a wilderneſs where there was no way. Wherefore the King hearkened not unto the people, for the cauſe was from the Lord, that he might perform his ſaying*, 1 King. 12. 15. The Lord left *Rehoboam* to the pride of his heart, and to the blindneſs of his mind, and then he ran into that extream miſtake, which loſt him ten parts of his kingdom.

Secondly, From the connexion, *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the earth*; and what followeth, *They wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way*,

Obſerve, *When the heart is diſordered, the whole man is diſordered.*

Put the heart out of frame, and all is out of frame: The heart is the prime mover in man, whether it be to do good or to do evil. Therefore the work of converſion beginneth at the heart, or is the giving of *a new heart*: God doth not give a new hand, or a new eye, a new tongue or a new foot, but a new heart, becauſe he knows that if once the heart be new, the whole man will be renewed. If the heart be ſetled, all is ſetled: *His heart is fixed* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *and he ſhall not be afraid.* The heart runs before the foot ſtirs, either into the wayes of ſin, or from the approach of danger. The heart is Pilot and guide (under God) of mans life and way. Where God takes away the heart, he never ſtayes himſelf; and he that hath not a heart within him, nor God near him, may do any thing rather then what he ought, or go any whither rather then where he ſhould. *He that is deſerted of God intangles himſelf at every ſtep*, he is in a wilderneſs, and the further he goes, the more he is out of his way. As it was with *Pharaoh*, God took away his heart, he would not hear the counſel that was given him to let the people go, and then he wilder'd himſelf from day to day, till he was utterly ruined, every ſtep he took was out of the way of his own ſafety and honour.

Thirdly Obſerve, *They that will not take Gods wayes, ſhall be carried where there is no way.*

God ſheweth man his way, Go here (ſaith God) it is a way of holineſs; go there, it is the way of juſtice; come hither, this is the way of truth: Thus God beckens and invites man into his way. If we ſay, no, but we will walk in our own wayes, then God reſolves, ſeeing you love to go out of my way, you ſhall go in a wilderneſs where there is no way; you ſhall meet with buſhes, thorns and briers to ſcratch and vex you; yea, you ſhall meet with wild beaſts, with Scorpions and Serpents, to ſting and devour you. God meeteth thoſe that rejoyce and work righteouſneſs, even thoſe that remember him in his wayes (*Iſa.* 64. 5.) But Buſhes and Briers, Serpents and Scorpions ſhall meet thoſe who turn from the wayes of God, even thoſe who rejoyce in and work unrighteouſneſs: Theſe run into danger, as faſt as they run into ſin. *There's no ſafety out of Gods way: many have died in Gods way, but no man ever periſhed in it.* It is ſaid of *Abraham*, (*Heb.* 11. 8.) *That he went out he knew not whither.* The Saints go at Gods call where there is no way, that is, no way known to them, but yet they are aſſured there is a way cut out and meaſured for them, by the wiſdom of God: *Abraham* was ſure of a good way, and of a good end, yet he went he knew not whither. *Abraham* knew he had God for his guide, though he knew not a ſtep of the way he was to go. It becometh us to follow God blindfold; blind obedience (in that ſenſe) is good, but due to none but God. Faith bids us do that, for which we can give no reaſon but this, we are commanded to do it. So ſome expound that of *David*, (Pſal. 119. 104.) *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*; he doth not ſay, the word was a light unto his eyes, but a light unto his feet. The word is a light to the eyes, that is, it ſhineth to the underſtanding; yet the word is ſometimes a light unto our feet, when it is not a light unto our eyes, that is, God will have us go where we cannot ſee our way. Anſwerable to that of the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 5. 7.) *We walk by faith, and not by ſight*; Faith hath a light for our feet, but not to our eyes. Full viſion ſwallows up faith in heaven: And the more viſion we have on earth, the leſs we act by faith. Believers have not a clear ſight, but they have a ſure guide. Wicked men would be thought to ſee much, but their ſight leads them out of the true way, or into the wilderneſs where there is no way, but that of ſin, nor end, but that of ſorrow. Here is the firſt effect of Gods *taking away the heart of the chief of the earth, they wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way.* We have two other effects, *verſ.* 25.

Deus requirit ut ſinamus nos ab illo duci quāvis videamur per inviā duci. Dum enim ille dux noſtri itineris fuerit noſtros pedes diriget quāvis nos viæ rationem nō teneamus. Pined.

Via fidei eſt obſcura non aperta & claræ viſionis.

Verſ. 25. **They grope in the dark without light, and they ſtagger like a drunken man.**

משש *Palpavit, attigit, tangendo exploravit. Deſcriptio hominis cujus mutatū eſt cor, & mens aut erepta aut conturbata vehementer.* Sanct.

They grope in the dark without light.] The word ſignifies to find out or prove our way by feeling, this we call groping. In the dark, hands or ſtaves are to us inſtead of eyes. A blind man though he be in the open Sun, yet he gropes for his way, for he wants the light of his eyes: a man who hath the light of his eyes, yet wanting the light of the air, and being in outward darkneſs, even he muſt grope his way, (*Job* 5. 14.) *Eliphaz* deſcribing the judgment of God upon the men of the world, ſaith; *They meet with darkneſs in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night*, that is, in things that are clear and evident they are puzzled, and know not which way to turn themſelves, when the way lies ſtrait and is without turnings. It is a great judgment of God, when in buſineſſes that are as clear as day, men ſtand beating their brains, and troubling themſelves, as if they were in the dark. It is very ill to want light, but it is worſe to have light, and not to uſe it. Theſe *grope in the dark without light.*

There is a twofold darkneſs; Firſt, Natural, that is not here meant. Secondly, Metaphorical; and that is of two ſorts. Firſt, The darkneſs of ignorance. Secondly, The darkneſs of trouble or of affliction. We may underſtand the text, of darkneſs in either of the two latter ſenſes; *they grope in the dark*, that is, in the darkneſs of ignorance, or, in the darkneſs of trouble. Rather joyn both together, they are in trouble, and they are ignorant, not knowing which way to get out, and clear their way.

But why doth he ſay, *They grope in the dark without light.*

Light and darkneſs are contrary, what agreement is there (ſaith the Apoſtle) between light and darkneſs? Though there be no agreement between light and darkneſs, yet ſometimes there is a mixture of light and darkneſs; ſome darkneſs hath ſome light in it; that's it we call twylight, the dusk of the evening or of the morning, there is a time when it is not perfectly dark, yet the light is gone, the Sun is down. Such a day is deſcribed in the book of

Zechary, A day which ſhall be neither dark nor light, but it ſhall be between both. It is mercy, that when we have not a clear light, yet to have ſome glimmering, or appearance of light. The judgment here is, *They ſhall grope in darkneſs without light*; that is, they ſhall have pure darkneſs.

Hebræis uſitatum eſt dum vim & pondus afferre volunt ſententiæ aſfirmativæ, addunt contrarii negationem. In tenebris & non in luce, i.e. in tenebris omnis lucis expertibus.

The Hebrew is yet ſomewhat more emphatical. *They feel darkneſs, and not light.* Repetitions with a negative are frequent in Scripture, to ſhew a vehement negation (*Amos* 5. 18.) *The day of the Lord is darkneſs, and not light.* Iſa. 38. 1. A meſſage was carried to *Hezekiah*; *Thou ſhalt die, and not live*; that is, thou ſhalt ſurely dye. *John* 1. *He confeſſed, and denied not*; that is, he confeſſed ſtrongly or peremptorily. So here, *They feel darkneſs, and not light*; that is, they feel extream darkneſs, or the extremity of darkneſs, the greateſt darkneſs imaginable.

Two things I ſhall obſerve from this (taking the paſſage as an expreſſion of the judgment of God upon a ſinful people.)

Firſt, *They who abuſe light ſhall be deprived of light.*

He taketh away the heart; then they wander, and then they grope in darkneſs without light. They had light, yet acted like men in the dark, or like blind men: They walked in darkneſs when they had light. Hence God pronounceth againſt them, *You ſhall grope in darkneſs, and have no light.* God threatned his ancient people the *Jews* with this dreadful plague (*Deut.* 28. 28, 29.) *I will ſmite thee with madneſs, and blindneſs, and aſtoniſhment of heart; and thou ſhalt grope at noon-dayes, as the blind gropeth in darkneſs; and thou ſhalt not proſper in thy wayes.* Light is the gift of God; he giveth, and he taketh it away. As when he created the world, there was nothing but darkneſs, and he ſaid, *Let there be light, and there was light*; ſo he ſaith now to perſons, yea to Nations, who are in light, and have abuſed the light, the light of the Goſpel, or the light of outward proſperity, *Let there be darkneſs upon them*, and it is ſo. He can make light without darkneſs, and darkneſs without light. Take heed of ſinning againſt light, leſt ye grope in the dark without light. *Thoſe ſins leave the ſoul, yea the whole man in greateſt darkneſs, which are committed in or againſt the greateſt light.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That perſons forſaken of God, and covered over with darkneſs, are uſeleſs and unfit for any thing.*

He that is in the dark cannot act. *Prov.* 4. 19. *The way of the wicked is as darkneſs; they know not at what they ſtumble*: They who know not at what they ſtumble, know not where they go. A blind man fears in a plain way, and goes ſometimes confidently where there is greateſt danger: Wicked men are blind; they know not whither they go, nor what they do. He that knows not what he doth, may too late know what he hath done; and he that knows not whither he goes, may know too late whither he is gone; having ſtumbled often, he falls at laſt into that pit of darkneſs, from whence he ſhall never ſee nor find his way out. Remember the counſel of Chriſt (*John* 12. 35.) *Walk while ye have the light, leſt darkneſs come upon you; for he that walketh in darkneſs knoweth not whither he goeth*: They who know not where they go, know not whither they go: If our way be hidden from us, ſo alſo is our end. This is the ſecond effect which follows the taking away of the heart, *They grope in darkneſs without light.*

The third effect is,

He maketh them to ſtagger like a drunken man.

Ebrietas eſt turbatio capitis, ſubverſio ſenſus, tẽpeſtas linguæ, procella corporis, naufragium caſtitatis, inſania voluntatis. Aug.

They who are overcome with wine, or ſtrong drink, are unable, not only to manage buſineſſes, but to order themſelves. *Drunkenneſs is the diſturbance of the brain, and the overthrow of our ſenſes. Drunkenneſs maketh a ſtorm in the tongue, and a tempeſt all the body over. Drunkenneſs drowneth reaſon, and maketh ſhipwrack of chaſtity.* There is a mental, as well as a corporal drunkenneſs: A dry drunkenneſs, as well as a wet drunkenneſs. Sober, grave, diſcreet, and prudent men, who by their wiſdom and judgment have overcome all oppoſitions, and carried all before them, even theſe ſhall ſtagger and reel too and fro, not knowing where they are, or upon what ground they ſtand.

The wrath of God taketh away the reaſon of man. The drunkards reaſon is ſuſpended: We ſay commonly, *they are beaſts*; and we call drunkenneſs a beaſtly ſin, becauſe ſuch act more like beaſts then men. *I* (ſaith the good Prophet, *Jer.* 23. 9.) *am like a drunken man, becauſe of the Lord, and becauſe of the words of his holineſs*: That is, I do even ſtagger and reel, I am as a man aſtoniſhed and ſenſeleſs at the apprehenſion of Gods diſpleaſure, and becauſe of that cup of his fierce indignation, which his holy Word threatens againſt an unholy people. The Prophet was as a drunken man, while he foreſaw a cup in the hand of God, the wine whereof was red with wrath; how drunken then were they, who were made to drink it, dregs and all to the very bottom? Of ſuch *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh (*Chap.* 29. 9.) *They are drunken, but not with wine; they ſtagger, but not with ſtrong drink: For the Lord hath poured upon you the ſpirit of deep ſleep.* Men ſin greatly againſt God, when they are drunken with wine; and God puniſheth man greatly, when he makes him drunken without wine: when he takes away the heart, and leaves ſober men to act and perſonate the drunkard.

To clear which, I ſhall ſhew you a ſeven-fold parallel between a man who hath too much drink in him, and no heart in him; God having taken away his heart.

Firſt, They who are drunken, think every thing moves and reels; the very earth ſeems to totter under them, and the whole world to turn about them: Whereas indeed, 'tis only their heads that turn, and themſelves that reel. 'Tis ſo with many great Politicians and Chiefs of the people: God in judgment taketh away their hearts, and then (to their apprehenſion) every thing turns. They fearfully ſuppoſe ſometimes, that all turns againſt them; and ſometimes flatteringly, that all turns for them. This giddineſs of their heads, muſt needs produce giddy counſels, and unſettle all they ſet themſelves unto. God took away the heart of *Cain*, and then in this ſence alſo, as well as in the letter, he dwelt in *the land of Nod*, that is, in a trembling moving land: yea, *Cain* thought every mans hand was turned againſt him to ſlay him, ſo ſoon as God was turned from him, *Gen.* 4. 14. *Pharaoh*'s ſuſpicious head forecaſt great dangers to himſelf from a people, who intended him no harm. Theſe *Iſraelites* (ſaith he) will ſurely turn from me, and joyn with my enemies: This unjuſt and groundleſs fear, put him upon ſuch counſels, as proved the juſt ground of his own overthrow.

Secondly, Drunkenneſs makes the object appear double or crooked to the eye. For as he that looks upon objects through the water that is without him, ſo he that looks upon them through the watry liquor that is within him, ſees that which is ſtrait, as if it were crooked, and that which is ſingle doubles in his ſight. Thus when the Lord poureth a ſpirit of penal drunkenneſs upon the wiſeſt in the world, the ſtraiteſt and juſteſt actings of righteous men are judged crooked and indirect; what they do with greateſt ſimplicity and plainneſs, is counted doubling, yea, juggling with God and man. Chriſt himſelf was called a deceiver by ſuch a generation. And *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf, and his fellow Apoſtles, we are, *as deceivers, yet true.* And as the actions of others, ſo their own dangers and enemies ſeem double, yea treble, and twenty-fold, to what indeed they are. Troubled imaginations are a diſtorting and a multiplying glaſs, to every work, thing, or perſon they look upon.

Thirdly, Drunkenneſs dims the bodily eye. The mental eye of theſe men is ſo dimmed, that they cannot diſcern between right and wrong, between good and evil. They put *light for darkneſs, and darkneſs for light; bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.* Their minds are blinded, and their underſtandings as much diſabled from knowing what is juſt, as their wills and affections are from chuſing and embracing it. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 28 7.) reproving drunkenneſs in the letter, ſaith, *They have erred through wine, and through ſtrong drink are out of the way; the Prieſt and the Prophet have erred through ſtrong drink, they are ſwallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through ſtrong drink; they err in viſion, they ſtumble in judgment.* Now as men that are corporally drunk, wear out their wits, drown their brains, weaken their judgments, and when they are actually drunk are not able to make any judgment at all; ſuch dotards do they proceed, who are intoxicated with the wine of divine revenges. The Prophet deſcribes them fully (*Iſa.* 19. 14.) *The Lord hath mingled a perverſe ſpirit*

rit in the midſt thereof, and they have cauſed Egypt *to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man ſtaggereth in his vomit.* They who err in every work, muſt needs draw them into error, who work by their direction. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. They who have loſt their own eyes, will make but ill guides for others.

Fourthly, A drunken man defiles and pollutes himſelf with his own vomit; he pours that out loathſomly, which he poured in delightfully. Thus alſo men left of God, defile whatſoever they put their hands or tongues unto: They continually vomit up the filthineſs of their hearts, the pride, the cruelty, the injuſtice, the baſeneſs of their ſpirits, in all they ſpeak, or act: Their beſt counſels are like *ſhameful ſpewing upon all their glory*, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Hab.* 2. 16.) *Their ſtink and their ill ſavour goeth up when they do great things* (Joel. 2. 20.) And the greater the things are which they do, the greater is the ſtink that goeth up: Their own dung, or vomit, is of a better ſavour, then their deſigns and workings are. Plain-hearted *Jacob* was afraid that the fraudulent and cruel dealings of his two ſons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, would make him *ſtink among the inhabitants of the land* (Gen. 34. 30.) Cruelty and treachery are odious, both in the ſight of God and man; good and bad; they are ſo in the good, whoſoever commits them; and they are ſo in the ſight of the bad, if any commit them but themſelves.

Fifthly, Drunkenneſs doth not only empty men of reaſon, but filleth them with paſſion, it makes them mad and furious: We ſay of ſome, they are *mad-drunk*. This effect of drunkenneſs is often viſible in the counſels and wayes of men deſerted, and diſhearted by God; they become raging mad; they like *Jehu, drive furiouſly*, they fume and foam, they make all both weary and aſhamed of their company. *Why do the heathen rage* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *and the people imagine a vain thing?* 'Tis a fit of this drunkenneſs that makes them ſo. The inhabiters of the earth being drunk with the myſtical wine of Babyloniſh whoriſh fornication, rage againſt Chriſt and his Laws: yea, then *they are full of the fury of the Lord, lying like a wild Bull in a net at the head of every ſtreet*, Iſa. 51. 10.

Sixthly, The Text tells us, that drunkenneſs makes men ſtagger, they cannot keep their feet, nor ſtand their ground. Such a judgment God ſendeth upon wicked men; their minds are full of irreſolutions, they are not able to ſtand to their own purpoſes and promiſes; they ſtagger from this part to that, from this ſide to that; they change intereſts as faſt as there is any change in affairs, or outward accidents; now they are for the truth, and preſently they oppoſe the truth; they are like the *double minded man*, of whom the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, *Unſtable in all their wayes.*

Laſtly, Drunken men often run upon their own ruine. We have a ſaying, *That drunkards ſeldom take hurt*; the meaning is, they are not ſenſible of the hurt they take; they indeed take hurt oftner then any men, and run deſperately upon their own death. Thus men left of God run courſes as unſafe, as they are unjuſt: And while they make too much haſte to ſave, deſtroy themſelves. They ruſh like *Balaam* upon the ſwords point; and while they are moſt afraid of trouble, no advice, ſcarce any force of friends can keep them off from it. They will ſtagger till they fall; and fall ſo, that they can never riſe again. We may find many parallels of it abroad, and among our ſelves not a few. Do we not ſee men groping in the dark without light, wandring in the wilderneſs where there is no way, ſtaggering like drunken men? It were eaſie to give particular examples of theſe three effects in all Ages and Hiſtories of the world: But I ſhall conclude with three general Inſtances held out in Scripture.

The firſt is that of the Apoſtle concerning the Gentiles, (*Rom.* 1. 21.) *They knew God* (they had light) *but they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened:* They obſcured the light which God gave them in the creature, or benighted themſelves in the day time of natural light: And what followed? *Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools.* They wandred in the wilderneſs of their own *luſts and vile affections*, where there was no way: They groped in the darkneſs of *a reprobate mind*, without light. They ſtaggered like a drunken man, from one evil to another, being *filled with all unrighteouſneſs, fornication, wickedneſs, covetouſneſs, maliciouſneſs, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whiſperers*, &c.

Secondly, We read another parallel in the whole Nation of the *Jews* (Rom. 11. 8, 9, 10.) *God hath given them the ſpirit of ſlumber, eyes that they ſhould not ſee, and ears that they ſhould not hear unto this day*; that is, in the ſtile of *Job*, he hath taken away their hearts; and have not the *Jews* wandred ever ſince in a *wilderneſs where there is no way?* Have they not groped in darkneſs without light?

Thirdly, Take the inſtance of all *apoſtate Chriſtians*, according to that grand Prophecy of the Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.* 2. 11, 12.) They had the light of truth ſhining to them, but did not receive the love of it: *For this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lye*; they ſhould be ſeduced and led into a wilderneſs of error; they ſhould grope in the dark without light, and ſtagger from one lye to another, from one falſe way to another, like a drunken man, till they fell into that bottomleſs pit of deſtruction; as the Apoſtle ſhuts up that dreadful Prophecy (*verſ.* 12.) *That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.* God takes away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, in reference to civil things; he alſo takes away the heart of the people of the earth, in reference to ſpiritual things; wandring, groping, tottering, are the effects of both. When God doth the former, Kingdoms wander, grope and totter: when God doth the latter, Churches do ſo: By the former, the outward glory and beauty of mankind decayeth; and their inward, by the latter. Churches and Kingdoms, the bodies and ſouls of men, decay, dye and periſh for ever, when God taketh away their hearts. And when he in juſtice doth this (as when he doth it, he alwayes doth) then he declares (which is *Job*'s ſcope in this whole diſcourſe) that *with him is wiſdom and ſtrength, and that he alſo hath counſel and underſtanding.* And leſt any ſhould think that *Job* had all this while told ſtories, and ſpoken at random, he aſſures us in the next words, that he had ſpoken only what his own experiences and obſervations gave teſtimony unto: *Lo, mine eyes hath ſeen all this*, &c.

CHAP. XIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Lo, mine eye hath ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard and underſtood it.

What ye know, the ſame do I know alſo, I am not inferiour to you.

Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.

But ye are forgers of lyes, ye are all Phyſitians of no value.

THe Friends of *Job* charged him with ignorance of God, and of his wayes: To refute which, he made that excellent confeſſion, both of the Power and Wiſdom of God, in the Chapter foregoing, and concludeth his diſcourſe upon thoſe points, at the beginning of this, with an atteſtation to all, from his own knowledge and experience. Some joyn the two firſt verſes of this thirteenth, to the laſt of the twelfth Chapter, beginning this at the third verſe. And they who conſent to their ſtanding, as a part of the thirteenth Chapter, yet interpret them as a tranſition, or paſſage to the matter here further diſcuſſed and enlarged.

Caput malim ordiri à ver. 30 ſed tranſitio eſt. Merc.

Lo, mine eye hath ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard and underſtood it.

As if he had ſaid, *To aſſure you that all is true which I have ſpoken and aſſerted, mine own eyes and ears are witneſs.* We may give you the ſum of his reaſoning thus:

That which I have clearly ſeen, that which I have received from good hands, and from approved Authors, that which I have fully underſtood to be, is a truth.

But the whole matter, which I have declared in the former Chapter, is ſuch, as mine eye hath ſeen, mine ear hath heard, and my underſtanding hath fully apprehended.

Therefore thoſe things are true, and ought to be received by you as truths.

Lo, mine eye hath ſeen all this, &c.

Triplex cognitio, 1. oculorum per experientiam, 2. auris per traditionē, 3. intellectus per diſcurſum.

Here is a threefold knowledge laid down in this verſe: First, Knowledge by experience, *Lo, mine eye hath ſeen.*

Secondly, Knowledge by tradition, or by teaching, *Mine ear hath heard.*

Thirdly, Knowledge by diſcourſe, *Mine ear hath heard and underſtood it*; that is, I have underſtood what I have ſeen and heard.

Lo, mine eye hath ſeen.] The eye is taken in Scripture two wayes.

In oculis mens & ratio intelligitur, quâ, quæ cognovimus vidiſſe dicimur. Sanct.

Firſt, Figuratively, So it is put for the underſtanding; becauſe as the eye is the light of the body, ſo the underſtanding is the light of the mind. An ignorant man is a blind man, how clear ſighted ſoever the eye of his body is (*Deut.* 29. 4.) *The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear unto this day.* Here are three faculties, and three acts: Firſt, *The heart to perceive.* Secondly, *The eye to ſee.* Thirdly, *The ear to hear.* The heart is ſometimes put for the whole inward man, and then the eye and the ear are taken properly for the organs of the outward man: But we cannot interpret *Moſes* ſo, for though the Lord had not given them an heart to perceive, yet they had bodily eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, they were neither deaf nor blind ſenſitively: ſo then, the two latter expreſſions import no more then the firſt; he hath not given you eyes to ſee, he hath not given you ears to hear; that is, you are utterly ſhut up in blindneſs and ignorance, or you have not hearts to perceive (*Luke* 24. 31.) *Their eyes were opened, and they knew him.* They ſaw before, but they did not ſee diſcerningly, or with the light of their underſtandings. The buſineſs of the Goſpel is to *open the eye, to turn from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God* (Acts 26. 18.) That is, to convince the underſtanding, that, a ſtate of ſin is a ſtate of darkneſs, and that the grace and favour of God to ſinners is light; that, to be under the power of ſin, is to be under the power of Satan; and that it is both our duty and our happineſs to turn to God. To ſee theſe things, and theſe our underſtandings only can ſee, is to have our eyes opened.

Some underſtand the Text in *Job*, of the eye, in this tropical ſence, and then it is coincident with the latter clauſe, the eye is the underſtanding. But rather take it literally, for the corporal eye, and ſo the eye importeth experience and obſervation, which come in, or are entertained at the eye.

Mine ear hath heard.] The ear is the ſenſe of diſcipline, knowledge enters at this port, when that of the eye is ſhut up, either by a defect in Nature, or by accident. They who are born blind, may be bred great ſcholars; the ear can let in learning enough without the aſſiſtance of the eye. Hearing is a nearer ſervant to the underſtanding, then ſeeing is.

Mine ear hath heard.] The ear hears, either by inſtruction from man, or by revelation from God, of which *Eliphaz* ſpake (*Chap.* 4. 12.) *Now a thing was ſecretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.* Here I conceive *Job* intends the former, having learned what he here avouches, from men learned and knowing in the wayes of God.

Further, We may take both ſight and hearing more largely, and then the whole is no more but a vehement affirmation, that *Job* did underſtand what himſelf had affirmed, as alſo what his friends had ſo largely argued. As if he had ſaid, *I very well perceive what ye (my friends) have ſaid, and indeed they are not new to me, experience hath taught me them before, and I have heard of them often, they are the received principles of wiſe and godly men, even ſuch as I have ſeen, heard and underſtood, before ever I converſ'd or changed a word with you.* And ſo theſe three expreſſions, I have ſeen, heard, and underſtood, are but an amplification of the ſame thing, either implying, that he underſtood them as clearly, as if his eye had ſeen them; or that which way ſoever any mans underſtanding can be helpt, his had, even by the ear, and by the eye, both which had contributed their beſt furtherance, to furniſh him with thoſe notions. *Lo, mine eye hath ſeen,* &c.

Vidi, audivi, intellexi, aſſeverationem continent & amplificationē rei benè perſpectæ ac ſi eadem res per eandem vocem & ſynonimiam repeteretur. Bold.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That our ſenſes are inlets to the underſtanding.*

Job placeth the underſtanding laſt, *Mine eye hath ſeen all this, and mine ear hath heard and underſtood it*; or underſtood it by the ſervice of mine eye, and of mine ear. The ſenſes of the body are advantages to the mind: The eye doth not ſee for it ſelf, or for the body only, but the eye ſees for the underſtanding: The ear doth not hear for it ſelf, or for the body only, but the ear heareth for the underſtanding. The right uſe and diligent improvement of ſenſe, improves us both in knowledge and in holineſs. While we look with the eye upon what God doth, while we attend with the ear what God ſpeaks, we learn who God is, and what we muſt be. As the eye and the ear are ſervants to ſin, ſo they are ſervants to grace: They are alwayes ſervants to ſin in wicked men, and ſometimes they prove ſo in good men: An eye not watched takes in vain objects: *Thine eye* (ſaith *Solomon*) *ſhall behold the ſtrange woman, and thine heart ſhall utter perverſe things:* The eye carrieth the meſſage to the heart, and preſently corrupts the ſpirit with the object which it beholds, if the object be corrupt. Hence the counſel of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 23. 31.) *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup: Look not upon the wine*; Why not? Will the colour hurt us? Yes; The colour of the wine will ſtain the eye, and the eye will ſtain the heart. As ſad objects go quickly from the eye to the heart (*Mine eye affecteth mine heart,* *Lam.* 3. 51.) ſo do luſtful and vain objects; they being taken in at the eye, do both affect and infect the heart in a moment. Let not theſe ſenſes which the Lord hath given us for natural uſes, to the body, and for ſpiritual uſes, to the ſoul; let not theſe (I ſay) be abuſed, or turned to the diſſervice of the body (much leſs) to the deſtruction and damnation of the ſoul.

Secondly, *Job* having ſpoken with much plainneſs and confidence in the former Chapter, about the diſpenſations of God, clears it here, that he had not ſpoken by rote, or without book, or tumbled out what he could not prove: No (ſaith he) mine eye hath ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard and underſtood it.

Note from it, *It becometh us to be well aſſured our ſelves of what we teach unto others.*

He that inſtructeth another ſhould firſt be inſtructed himſelf, and ſhould have, not only a ſound of words at his tongue, but ſound knowledge at his heart. As it is the duty of him that inſtructeth others, to practice what he ſpeaks; ſo, to be well aſſured of what he ſpeaks: As his life ſhould hold forth a pattern of that doctrine which he delivereth, ſo his underſtanding ſhould hold the model of that doctrine which he delivereth: Thou that teacheſt another, art not thou taught thy ſelf? 'Tis ſinful not to do what we teach; or to teach what we do not know. *A good man will adviſe no more then he will do; and a wiſe man will ſay no more then he underſtands.* *Job* was much aſſured that he knew what he taught his friends, when he affirms in the next verſe, that he knew as much as any of his friends.

Verſe 2. **What ye know, the ſame do I know alſo; I am not inferiour to you.**

The Hebrew is, *According to your know or knowledge, is my knowledge*; I am not below you in knowledge; Take knowledge in the matter, or in the meaſure, *I am not inferiour to you.* I know the ſame things which ye know; I have extended my knowledge to as many particulars as you, and I know every particular as fully, and am as clear in it as your ſelves.

Secundum ſcire vel ſcientiam veſtram & ego novi.

But doth not *Job* play the boaſter? Doth not pride put forth its head at his tongue, while he ſpeaks ſuch language as this?

Job ſpake this ſence, and almoſt the ſame language at the third verſe of the twelfth Chapter, where he ſaith, *I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferiour to you; yea, who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?* Thither I refer the Reader for the meaning of this ſeeming, unbeſeeming boaſt. I ſhall here only anſwer in general, that *Job* ſpeaks not this ambitiouſly, or arrogantly, as they do, who love to live in the ſound of their own commendations; who, if others commend them not, will not fail to commend themſelves: *What know ye that I know not?* Neither doth he ſpeak this in contempt of his Friends, as if he ſlighted or undervalued them: *Job* knew it to be, not only uncivil, but ſinful, to trample upon the reputation of his Friends; to ſpeak high words of himſelf, and baſely of other men. *Job* ſpeaks this, not becauſe he delighted in it, but becauſe he was neceſſitated to it. The Apoſtles Apology may be his (*2 Cor. 11. 5.*) *I ſuppoſe I was not a whit behind the very chiefeſt Apoſtles* (here *Paul* ſpeaks in as bragging language as *Job* doth) *but I am become a fool in glorying:* 'Tis folly to do ſo, yet he hath enough to vindicate his own wiſdom, while he ſpake like a fool; even this, *You have compelled me.* If any ſhould ſay, *Job became a fool in glorying*, he had the ſame to ſay of his Friends, which *Paul* had of the *Corinthians*, *You have compelled me*, you have put me upon it, I could not avoid it; while you have laid me low, and ranked me, not only among ignorant men, but even among the beaſts; was I not forced to ſtand up for my ſelf, and tell you plainly, that I know as much as you, and that *I am not inferiour unto you?* Some, in contempt of their Teachers, are ready to ſay, what need we hear Sermons? we know as much as the Preacher can tell us? *Job* was not unwilling to hear the counſel of his ſervant, much leſs did he contemn the counſel of his Friends. So then, Theſe words are a neceſſitated vindication of himſelf, he could not ſo forſake his own honour and reputation, as to let it lye in the duſt, for fear he ſhould ſeem proud in ſpeaking for it. Though all ambitious contending with others, is odious, yet no man ought to betray the truth, or his own integrity, leſt he ſhould be counted contentious. He buyes the opinion of an humble and of a peaceable man too dear, who either payes the Faith of God for it, or his own credit.

Non dicit hæc arroganter & ambitioſè, ſed ſumma neceſſitate impulſus. Pined.

Verſe 3. **Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.**

The word which we tranſlate [*Surely*] is not only a particle of aſſertion, but of illation, rendring a reaſon of what was ſaid before. Some render it here, not *Surely*, but *Therefore I would ſpeak to the Almighty*; as if he ſaid, I am aſſured that God is good and juſt, and I have found men harſh and unequal to me, *Therefore I will ſpeak to the Almighty.*

אולם *Non ſolum eſt particula aſſertiva ſed illativa, cauſam reddens.*

There is alſo a different tranſlation of the whole verſe, thus, *Surely I would ſpeak for the Almighty, and I would reaſon for God.* And ſo he confutes the ſuſpition of his Friends concerning him, and their confidence of themſelves; as if he had darkened the glory of God, and they only were the aſſertors of it; as if he had oppoſed God, and they only had ſtood up to defend and maintain his cauſe. *You think that you only have ſpoken on Gods ſide, and that I have ſpoken either to his diſſervice, or for my ſelf, but indeed, I would ſpeak for God, I deſire to maintain the juſtice, honour, holineſs, mercy, and goodneſs of God as much as any of you all; and I would as readily engage for him, as you or any man elſe; I would ſpeak for the Almighty, and I would plead for God.* We cannot have a better cauſe to plead then Gods; nor can any give us a better fee. It is our duty to be Advocates for God, though we have nothing for our pains; how much more, when all that we have already, we have from him; and what ever we ſpeak or do for God and his cauſe, ſhall ſurely be remembred: God keepeth a book of remembrance of what the Saints ſpeak one to another, concerning their own caſes or troubles: then much more doth he keep a book of remembrance, when (according to this tranſlation) they *ſpeak for the Almighty, and plead for God.*

Profectò ego pro omnipotente loquar & diſceptare pro Deo forti volo. Jun.

But the ſence runs more generally with our tranſlation, **I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.** And then the meaning is, as if *Job* had ſaid, *I ſee I ſhall avail or profit my ſelf but little by any further conference with you, therefore I deſire to turn my ſelf to God, from whom I am ſure of a good anſwer.*

Again, *Job* ſeemeth to comply with what *Zophar* had ſpoken (*Chap. 11. 5.*) *O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!* *Job* accepts his wiſh; *You have ſaid, O that God would ſpeak, I deſire no other; I alſo would ſpeak to the Almighty, I would reaſon with God; what in your account would be my puniſhment, I ſhould receive as a great happineſs; yea I make it my requeſt, that I may ſpeak with the Almighty, and that I might reaſon with God,* Thus he declareth the confidence which he had in the goodneſs of his cauſe, as alſo the clearneſs of his conſcience, both which were ſuch as did not fear, no not the preſence of God himſelf.

And I deſire to reaſon with God.

This part of the verſe is of the ſame intendment with the former. The word ſignifies to reaſon by way of formal diſpute, where arguments or mediums are held out, upon which we conclude the truth of our opinion, or poſition. The *Jews* call Logick by this name.

The Septuagint do ſomewhat allay and modifie the words, ſuppoſing *Job* too bold and free in this offer; therefore they add, *I would reaſon with God, if he pleaſe to give me leave, or if he will accept of me in it:* The ſupplement is pious, and is to be underſtood in all expreſſions of this nature. What any man at any time deſires of God, he muſt do it with ſubmiſſion to the will of God, unleſs God hath already declared his will concerning that deſire.

But ſuppoſe God ſhould have hearkened to *Job*, and granted him this requeſt, could *Job* make any improvement of it? Is it poſſible for duſt and aſhes, for fleſh and blood, to proſper in a contention with the Almighty, or to reaſon the caſe with God, and carry it? Yea, is it poſſible for man to ſpeak at all with the Almighty, or to reaſon with God?

I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks thus, not as if he thought that God and he could perſonally, or, as we ſay, hand to hand, ſpeak together,

יכח *Eſt ratione & argumentis utra citraque habitis veritatem inquirere. Dialectica Hebræis dicitur* חכמה הויכוח *ars arguendi, quod* ἐλέγχειν *Græci dicunt. Septuaginta addunt,* Si voluerit *piè & urbanè,* q. d. *ſi illi accepta fuerit hæc mea diſputandi & loquendi voluntas.* Druſ.

together, and reaſon out the caſe. 'Tis true, God ſometimes hath ſpoken with man; but then it was in a humane ſhape (*Gen.* 18. &c.) And when it is ſaid that he ſpake with *Moſes face to face, as a man ſpeaketh to his friend, Exod.* 33. 11. yet *Moſes* did not, nor indeed could he, *ſee the face of God* (verſ. 20.) God maniſeſted himſelf familiarly and plainly to him; this was ſpeaking *face to face*. So, all that *Job* deſires, is but a liberty to open his mind freely to God, and to receive anſwer from God in what way he ſhould appoint. As if he had ſaid, *I had rather ſpeak with God himſelf, then with you my friends, and I doubt not but I ſhall find at laſt a more favourable hearing from him, then I have yet had from you.*

Non ipſius accuſandi ſed criminationis veſtræ refellendi gratia, cauſam meam apud ejus tribunal agere deſidero; non ut ejus judicia diſputare velim, ſed ut veſtros errores deſtruerem. Aquin.

Again, *Job* doth not deſire to reaſon, or ſpeak with God as an Adverſary, but as a Judge: He had no controverſie with God, but he applyes himſelf to God for the determining and ending of the controverſie which he had with his Friends.

Laſtly, *Job* did not ſuſpect that there was any the leaſt error in the proceedings of God with him, but his hope was to make it appear, even before the Tribunal of God (if he could be admitted thither) that his Friends had erred in their proceedings with him, and opinion of him. Hence Obſerve,

First, *That man naturally ſeeks refuge, when he finds himſelf oppreſt,*

Job found himſelf oppreſt upon earth, therefore he hath recourſe to Heaven. This Text is *Job*'s Appeal. When the Apoſtle *Paul* found himſelf overborn by the clamours of the *Jews*, he ſaith, *I appeal unto* Ceſar: We, in ſuch a condition, may appeal to Chriſt. When we are pinched by men, Faith turns to God. And, that is one of the advantages which the Saints gain by their hard uſage in the world, and the troubles of this life; they converſe more with, and draw nearer unto God, who is the comfort of our lives. We are never happy in our diſtances from God; and when we are near him, nothing can make us unhappy.

There are three things in God, which may encourage us to communicate our condition, and ſpread our cauſe before him.

Firſt, The clearneſs of his underſtanding: He knoweth all things and perſons, and he knoweth them infallibly. 'Tis a miſery to be bound to the award of blind Judges, or of thoſe who will not ſee. There is no ignorance at all in God, neither can any thing pervert his knowledge. That which deters hypocrites, invites the ſincere into the preſence of God, *his omniſcience*. They can daub up their matters with men, but God looks through all their morter, and ſearcheth that which they would not have ſeen at all, *the heart*, Our hearts are as open to him as our faces are; and our thoughts as conſpicuous as our actions. Now (I ſay) that which diſcourageth hypocrites, incourages the upright in heart, though they have many ſins and corruptions about them, yet they know God knoweth that their corruptions are a burden to them, and their ſins their ſorrow: They know, he knows alſo the integrity of their hearts, and the ſtate of their cauſe. God is ſuch a Judge as needeth none to inform him, neither can any, by miſinformations, miſlead his judgment.

Secondly, As God knows the right ſtate of our cauſe, and of our hearts, ſo he will do us right; he cannot be deceived, neither will he deceive; he rewardeth every man according to his works. And as he commands his Miniſters, *to ſay unto the righteous, it ſhall be well with him, ſo he will ſay nothing but well unto the righteous. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

Thirdly, God is patient, he hears us out: He will not ſnap us up, or cut us off in the managing of our cauſe. As he hath a piercing eye, ſo a patient ear; yea, it is no burden to him to hear, how much ſoever he hears; though we are long in drawing out our minds, even ſo long as would be tedious unto men, and tire the ear of an Angel, yet God bids us ſay on, and ſpeak out all. Thus the unerring knowledge, the unſtained juſtice, and the unwearied patience of God, may invite all that are upright into his preſence, *Who would not ſpeak unto the Almighty, and deſire to reaſon with him?* And ſo we do in prayer and holy meditation, in the ſecret diſputes and reaſonings of our ſouls. In all theſe we ſpeak to the Almighty, and he hath promiſed to give us anſwer to our doubts, eaſe and ſatisfaction to our ſpirits. Though God doth not appear viſibly to us, or make anſwer audibly, yet when we ſpeak in faith, and with ſincerity, he anſwers us really, and the effect is often made as clear to our experience, as if God had condeſcended *to a free conference face to face.*

Secondly, Foraſmuch as *Job*, after all theſe arguings with his Friends, being ſtill unſatisfied, deſires *to reaſon with God*,

Obſerve, *That when we cannot get ſatisfaction from men, we may yet expect it from God.*

The reaſon of all things is in God; and though we muſt not reaſon with him, as *contenders*, yet we may and ought, as *learners*. As it is the honour of Chriſt, that we ſhould go to him for ſalvation, ſo for inſtruction. He is our Prophet, as well as our Prieſt; our Oracle as well as our Advocate. He ſpeaks to us, as well as for us. What man cannot teach us, he will: We may carry our doubts from friend to friend, from Preacher to Preacher, and yet remain unreſolved. As ſome ſickneſſes of the body are the *Phyſitians reproach*, he cannot remove them; ſo ſome diſtempers, and trouble of mind are (in that ſence) the *Preachers reproach*, he cannot cure, or quiet them: yet, both body and mind may find remedy in *ſpeaking unto the Almighty, and in reaſoning with God.* 'Tis a fault in many, that they are ſo ſlow in asking God, and ſo forward in asking men. We ſhould ask God before men, and make him not our refuge only, but our choice: We ſhould ſpeak to the Almighty, not only when men give us no anſwer, but before we ſeek their anſwer. It becometh us upon any doubt to inquire, firſt, of God by prayer, and to hearken what he will ſay to us in it. Many have had their ſcruples and troubles taken away by an immediate work, or moving of God upon their hearts; and 'tis ſweeteſt and moſt refreſhing when we have it ſo. It is the will of God that we ſhould uſe means, and take advice, both of Chriſtian friends, and of the Miniſters of Chriſt; God often goeth forth with their counſels, and makes them proſper: But if he withdraw his help from men, and appear not in their teachings, it is to draw us out yet more in ſeeking to be taught by him, and in deſiring that he would give us our comforts with his own hand, and tell us good tidings of peace and mercy with his own mouth. So he may be ſaid to do, when after prayer and wreſtlings with him, we find our ſpirits inlightened with the truth, or refreſhed with the comforts we have been ſeeking for.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That an upright heart is not afraid to reaſon with God himſelf.*

The Juſtice and Majeſty of God, which make rotten hearts tremble, make the righteous rejoyce: It glads them, not only that God is gracious and merciful, but that he is juſt and holy: *Sing unto the Lord (O ye Saints of his) and give thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs*, Pſal. 30. 4. The remembrance of Gods holineſs, fills them with joy who are holy. Such love to reaſon with God, as much becauſe he knows them, as becauſe he is ready to pardon them. A godly man knows himſelf ſo ſinful, that he needs the grace of God to pardon him; and yet he knows himſelf ſo ſincere, that he fears not the juſtice of God ſhould behold and try him. We ſay that is a good piece of cloath, or ſtuff, which the Merchant offers to a clear light; that is a good piece of gold which the Pay-maſter willingly brings to the ballance and touchſtone: So it is an argument of ſoundneſs and integrity, when the ſoul ſets it ſelf in the ſight of God, who is light, and whoſe eye diſcerns what every one is; who alſo hath a ballance and a touchſtone in his hand, to weigh all men, and to try what metal they are. *David* prayeth as hard to be ſearched, as to be ſaved (*Pſal.* 139. 23, 24.) *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and ſee if there be any wicked way in me.* He knew he was a ſinner, and he was aſſured God knew he was not wicked: had he been wicked, he would have had little mind to be ſearcht; or had his way been evil, he had never called to have it tryed. They that are deformed, or foul-faced, hate the looking-glaſs. *And every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved* (John 3. 20.) The Word of God, which is doctrinal light, deters ſinners, how much more doth God himſelf, who is eſſential light? *The ſinners in Zion* (ſaith the Prophet) *are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurpriſed the hypocrites: who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* Iſa. 33. 14. But the Saints in *Sion*, they, *who* (as the ſame Prophet deſcribes them in the next words) *walk righteouſly and ſpeak uprightly*, they rejoyce in God as he is an everlaſting burning, and as he is a devouring fire, for they know he will neither devour nor burn them. God, who is a *devouring fire* to wicked men, is a *reviving ſun* to thoſe who fear his name, *Mal.* 4. 1, 2.

Verſ. 4. **But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Phyſicians of no value.**

But] or, *For* (ſo it may be rendered) *ye are forgers of lies*, &c. This verſe giveth a reaſon why *Job* would not continue any further debate with his friends, but apply himſelf to God. *Ye are forgers of lies.* Lying words can no more cure the mind, then improper medicines can heal the body: And he that ſpeaks lying words, gives not only improper, but poiſonous medicines to the mind.

Ye are forgers of lies.] This is a ſevere charge and a high one. To tell lies is bad enough, but to forge lies is far worſe. The word ſignifies to diſpoſe or put any thing into exquiſite order and method: As if he had ſaid, *You are compoſers of lies, you have the art of it, you are lie-makers, maſter-workmen at the trade, the chief of liars.* It notes alſo the putting of one thing upon another, or the fitting them together, which is a further aggravation, you (which is the cuſtom of common liars) put this lie upon that, and fit one to another, as a Joiner doth board to board in one frame. The *Italian* reads, *ye are hatchers of lies*, you gather up without order whatſoever comes next to hand for the ſtrengthening of your cauſe. But *forging* doth properly belong to a Smith, who puts his Iron in the fire, to heat, and mollifie it, that he may work it with his hammer into what ſhape and form he pleaſeth. Thus liars do: they find a matter which is not ſhap'd fit for their turn and purpoſe, therefore they put it into the fire of their own imaginations, or into the flames of malice, and there they heat it, and then with their wit they hammer and faſhion it, and make it up into an inſtrument to wound the honour and reputation of others. So *David* complains (*Pſal.* 50. 19.) *Thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.* And again (*Pſal.* 119. 69.) *The proud have forged a lie againſt me.*

טפל
Componere concinnare q. d. *vos eſtis compoſitores & quaſi Architecti mēdaciorū: ſignificat etiā unum applicare alteri ut fabricantes ſolent. Hos Auguſtinus vocat fabulones* i.e. *qui fabulas vanas contexerint.* Aug. *Conf. lib.3. c. 6.*

Obſerve from the propriety of the word, which he uſeth to aggravate the greatneſs of their ſin.

That to be a plotter or contriver of ſin is worſe then to be an actor of it.

As every good action is by ſo much the better, ſo every evil action is by ſo much the worſe, by how much it hath more, either of the head or heart in it, (*Pſal.* 5. 9.) *Thou hateſt the workers of iniquity,* (Mat. 7. 23.) *Depart from me ye that work iniquity.* You that ſet your wits on work, you, who as it were keep a ſhop to work evil in, and make trade of it, depart from me. *They that will not part from ſin, muſt depart from God, whether they will or no.* The beſt of Saints on earth, do that which is ſinful; but they are (as we may ſay) bunglers at it in compariſon of theſe who make it their work, or make a buſineſs of it.

The Saints do evil as natural men do good, or perform holy duties; theſe do but ſlubber over holy duties; and they (in this ſenſe) do but ſlubber over evil, they have not the skill, that helliſh skill, to form it up and make it a curious piece. Here lies the ſpirit of wickedneſs: *That ſin is moſt ugly and deformed in the ſight of God and of thoſe who are godly, which is contrived and compleated with greateſt exactneſs and curioſity.*

Ye are forgers of lies.] A lie may be taken two wayes. Either more largely, for any falſity or untruth: Or ſecondly, more preciſely and ſtrictly, for that which is ſpoken, not only falſely, but knowingly, and with an intent to deceive. To lie, is to go againſt our own mindes, or to affirm a thing which we are aſſured is not ſo. *Job* doth not charge his friends with lies ſtrictly taken, as if they had knowingly ſpoken that which wa falſe, or as if they had done it with an intent and purpoſe to enſnare him: Such lying continued in, is inconſiſtent with godlineſs, and any one act of it ſtrikes at the vitals of godlineſs. His friends ſuppoſed, and were very confident that they ſpake truth, and their aim was to inſtruct, not to entangle him by what they had ſpoken. As that which is well-ſpoken, is often ill-taken; ſo, that which is ill-ſpoken, may have a good intent. 'Tis poſſible for a man to ſpeak that which is falſe, with more honeſty then ſome ſpeak the truth: ſo did theſe friends of *Job*, who though they cannot be altogether excuſed, yet they muſt not be raſhly cenſured. To clear up the matter yet further, conſider, that

There is a threefold lie, as was ſhewed at the third verſe of the eleventh Chapter.

Firſt, A verbal lie, When we either make an untrue relation, or being asked, give a falſe anſwer to the queſtion. Such was the lie of *Ananias*, (Act. 5. 3.) *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the holy Ghoſt?* The Apoſtle asked him if he ſold the land for ſo much; yea, for ſo much, ſaid he, when his own heart gave his tongue the lie for ſaying ſo.

Secondly, There is a practical lie, When we act againſt what we ſpeak, and unſay with our lives what we ſay with our lips: Many a mans hand gives his tongue the lie, and his works ſpeak the falſity of his words. Lying is very abominable when it is only a *tongue-craft*, but it is then moſt abominable, when it is alſo a *handy-craft.*

Thirdly, There is a doctrinal lie, So is every errour and unſound opinion. Falſe notions are a lie in the underſtanding: The judgement miſlead, miſleads others. The Lord by his Prophet reproves ſuch liars, (*Ezek.* 13. 9.) *Mine hand* (ſaith the Lord) *ſhall be upon the Prophets that ſee vanity and divine lies*; that is, lying doctrines, as is expounded (*verſ.* 22.) *Becauſe with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous ſad, whom I have not made ſad, and ſtrengthened the hands of the wicked that he ſhould not return from his wicked way, by promiſing him life.* The Apoſtle *John* concludes againſt this ſort of lies, (1 *John* 2. 21.) *No lie is of the truth*, that is, no doctrinal lie, either about matters to be believed, or to be done, either concerning the myſteries of faith, or the rules of a holy life, is of the truth. *Nothing but truth can flow out, or follow from that which is true*; as that old rule in logick teacheth us. Many lies have a likeneſs to truth, and moſt lies are ſo bold as to claim kindred and alliance to the truth, but no doctrinal lie doth indeed receive life or breath or any thing from any doctrinal truth, much leſs from him who is eſſential truth: To both which we extend S. *Johns* negative concluſion, *No lie is of the truth.*

Ex veris poſſunt nil niſi vera ſequi.

The lie which *Job* chargeth upon his friends in this place, is not a verbal lie, no nor a practical lie, but a doctrinal lie, as if he had ſaid, *You have taught and maintained an errour, though you have ſo great an opinion that you have all truth on your ſide, and that you are only upon the ſide of truth.*

Mendacium eo reſtrendū eſt, quod neque rectum in cōſulādo nec in admonendo modū teneant, ſed inutilibus & importunis cōſiliis & orationibus utātur. Pin.

But how doth it appear that his friends had forged doctrinal lies, or maintained errours?

There are four things obſervable in their diſcourſe with him, which give evidence to this accuſation.

Firſt, Becauſe to defend the juſtice of God they concluded *Job* guilty: They knew not how to reconcile it, that God ſhould be righteous in laying ſuch afflictions upon him, unleſs he were unrighteous; this was a doctrinal lie. The ſevereſt dealings of God with man in outward things, are no infallible marks of his disfavour, as hath been cleared more then once from the ſubject of this Book.

Secondly, He might charge them with forging of lies, becauſe when they profeſſed they came *to mourn with him and to comfort him*, (*Chap.* 2.) they, in ſtead of comforting him, made him mourn, and in ſtead of wiping off his tears, cauſed him to weep. Their words were gall and vinegar, not oyl and honey, as he both expected and needed. They ſpake much of the law, much of juſtice, but not a word, or but very little of free-grace, and mercy, and when they did, they did ſo cloud and clog it with conditions, and legal reſtrictions, that the poor man could not at all lift up his head in any ſolid conſolation. They were not careful to ſtate his caſe right, or elſe it was hidden from their eyes, notwithſtanding all their care: hence it was that they ſpake ſo much at random, as if they had not minded his condition, and laid load upon, inſtead of eaſing his wearied ſoul.

De lege multa, de gratia nihil loquebantur. Merc.

Thirdly, He calleth them forgers of lies, becauſe *Zophar* had charged him with an affected curioſity in ſearching into the ſecrets of God, and in prying into thoſe things which he would have hidden, *Chap.* 11. For, while he puts him that chiding queſtion, (*verſ.* 7.) *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* He intimates plainly that *Job* had been attempting to ſearch out God, and had hopes to find him out unto perfection: This he ſpeaks out, *verſ.* 12. *For vain man would be wiſe, though he be born like a wilde aſſes colt.* As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt an itch to be wiſe beyond ſobriety, thou haſt a moneths mind to feed thy fancy with hidden myſteries, the open truths of God will not ſerve thy turn:* Whereas indeed, *Job* only deſired to have his cauſe cleared up to his own ſpirit, and to ſee the reaſon why God contended with him. He did not curiouſly intrude himſelf into the counſels of God, but ſought that he might be better fitted to anſwer the call of God.

Fourthly, He taxeth them as forgers of lies, becauſe they thought he only made a ſhew of holineſs, but was really wicked and falſe at heart. *Is this thy fear* (ſaid *Eliphaz*) *Is this thy hope? Is this thy uprightneſs?* ſee what an upright man thou art: Here's a goodly profeſſion. While they charged him unjuſtly with hypocriſie, which is a practical lie, he juſtly charged them with errour, which is a doctrinal lie. If any man ſaith that himſelf is ſo holy that there is no ſin in him, he lies (ſaith the Apoſtle *John*, 1 Epiſt. chap. 1.) *and the truth is not in him:* and if any man ſay of another, becauſe he is outwardly unhappy, that he lives in ſin, and hath no goodneſs in him, this man lies too, and hath not that particular truth in him, which would teach him not to judge of mens perſons by events. Theſe things laid together might ſtir up the paſſion of *Job* to that high and unfriendly language againſt his friends, *Ye are forgers of lies, and*

Ye are all Phyſicians of no value.

There are two ſorts of Phyſicians, the one in a proper, the other in a metaphorical ſenſe. A Phyſician properly taken, is a Student in nature, and learned in the temper, conſtitution and parts of the body: his buſineſs lies either in the preventing or curing of bodily diſeaſes, which are enemies to the life and ſubverters of the ſtrength of man. *Jobs* friends were not Phyſicians in this ſence, or if they were, yet he oppoſeth them, not in their Philoſophy, but divinity: And their errand to him, was not to heal the diſeaſe in his fleſh, but to remove the ſorrows and diſtempers of his ſpirit. His friends were his Phyſicians in a figure. In the ſame ſence that the ſoul is ſaid to be ſick, and the mind diſeaſed, the ſoul and the mind have their Phyſician. The Soul-phyſician doth not give counſel for the preparing of medicines, but his very counſels are the medicines, his word (that being the word or mind of God) is both the purge and cordial: Such Phyſicians *Jobs* friends would have been, but he complains of them, that, either their medicines were ſpiritleſs, and had no effect at all, or elſe that they wrought too violently; and hence it is that though he call them by an honourable name, Phyſicians, yet he abates it by an undervaluing Epithete, *Phyſicians*

ופאי אלל *Medici nihili, i. e. prorſus vel omnino vos eſtis falſi medici*

אליל *Significat vanitatem, falſitatem, Idolum.*

Of no value.] The word is uſed, though not in the ſame conſtruction (*Zach.* 11. 17.) *Wo to the Idol ſhepherd:* Some render there to the ſhepherd of an Idol, or of a vain thing: others, Wo the ſhepherd of no value, or who is good for nothing, unleſs it be to feed upon, and devour the flock. The word *Elil*, ſignifieth vanity or falſhood, it ſignifieth alſo an Idol, ſome ſay from the root, *Al*, in Engliſh, *not*, and ſo *Elil*, is as much as *nullity*, or *nothingneſs*. Idols are nullities, *an Idol is nothing in the world*, (1 Cor. 8.) and to ſay that a man is an *Idol Phyſician*, is all one, as to ſay, he is no Phyſician, or a Phyſician of no value. Rabbi *Levi* notes that the duplication of the letter *lamed*, ſhews the extream nothingneſs that was (as to this purpoſe) in theſe Phyſicians.

Væ paſtori meo nihili, *Jun. Simpliciſſimum eſt* אליל *pro nihilo exponere ab* אל *non, hinc Idola dicta quaſi nihilitates.* Merc. *Rabbi Levi notat eſſe deductū ab* אל *non, geminata litera lamed, ad extremam nullitatem indicandā.*

There are divers conjectures among interpreters about the reaſon of this ſtile.

Some thus, *Phyſicians of an Idol*, that is, you are to me like thoſe Phyſicians who undertake to cure a dumb Idol, a ſtock or a ſtone: For as they that give phyſick to an Idol, or apply medicines to a liveleſs Image, cannot profit it at all, or cauſe it to live, ſo you have done no more good to me then if you had beſtowed all your potions and medicines upon an Idol, for I am not at all healed nor recovered by them.

Medici Idoli, i. e. ſicut medici qui curant Idolū, truncum aut ſtipitē, qui quāvis multa adhibeant pharmaca nihil efficiunt. Pined.

Secondly, One of the Rabbins tells us from the *Talmud*, that *Alal*, ſignifies the *ſinew in the neck, or the neck bone*, and ſo it is a proverbial ſpeech; when they would expreſs a vain boaſting Phyſician, they ſay he is a *Phyſician of the neck-bone:* he that undertakes an impoſſible cure, is as one that undertakes *to ſet the neck-bone*, which our *Engliſh* proverb puts among impoſſibles, *If you have broke your neck, come to me, and I will ſet it.* This ſenſe may have ſome admittance here. As if *Job* had ſaid, *You are as Phyſicians of the neck-bone, you promiſed to do great matters, to reſolve my doubts, and eaſe me of my ſorrows, but I ſee (the way you go to work) it is impoſſible to be done. If a man*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *be overtaken with a fault; ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a man in the ſpirit of meekneſs.* The word in the Greek ſignifies to ſet a bone, put him in joynt again, handle him gently and tenderly, reſtore him with a ſpirit of meekneſs, ſo it becomes a ſpiritual Phyſician.

Apud Thalmudiſtas אלל *eſt nervus colli, qui ſi læſus fuerit nunquam poſtea curari poteſt, unde medici* אלל *dicti, qui quod promittūt præſtare nō poſſunt.* R.Sol.

Thirdly, *A Phyſician of no value*, or *an Idol Phyſician*, is a Phyſician who can do no more good then an Idol, which is none at all. The Pſalmiſt ſaith of Idols, *They have eyes and ſee not, hands and handle not, ears and hear not, feet and cannot walk;* that is, there is no help to be had from them. *Jobs* friends gave him cauſe to call them *Idol Phyſicians* in this ſenſe alſo. As if he had ſaid, *A ſtatue upon a wall, or the picture of a Phyſician, an Apollo cut in a ſtone, or an Æſculapius in a wood, might have cured me as much as you have done: yea you have rather done me hurt then good. Whereas a man ſhould be not only a Phyſician, but a God to man, you are not ſo much as men, ye are but Idols; your words help me no more then a ſtock or a ſtone, which cannot give to him that is in want, nor refreſh him that is weak.*

Medici Idoli, i. e. veluti Idola mortua ſine ſenſu ſine auxilio, ut lapideus Apollo, aut ligneus Æſculapius. Homo homini Deus.

Fourthly, We may take the words in a more mollifying ſenſe. *Ye are Phyſicians of no value*, that is, you are unskilful Phyſicians, you have neither brought that credit to your ſelves, nor that comfort to me which I expected; your art hath failed you, and your practice is unſucceſsful.

There are four things that make a Phyſician of no value, or his labour of no effect, and all theſe did meet in *Jobs* friends.

Firſt, When a Phyſician doth not fully know the name or nature of that diſeaſe, under which his patient laboureth. We ſay, *If a diſeaſe be known it is half cured; whereas he that doth not know it can never cure it, unleſs by gueſs or accident.* Such cure as Empericks, not as Phyſicians, if they cure at all.

Secondly, As a Phyſician ſhould know the name and nature of the diſeaſe, ſo, that he may be a Phyſician of value, he muſt know the cauſe of the diſeaſe. The cure is found in the cauſe: to diſcover whence the diſtemper grew, and what the occaſion of it was, directs unto the remedy.

Thirdly, He is a Phyſician of no value, who giveth hurtful medicines, medicines that are unſafe and noxious, ſuch as rather kill then cure.

Fourthly, Suppoſe the medicine be in it ſelf good, yet if it be not rightly applyed, or not applyed at a right time, the effect is loſt. A man may do as much hurt by giving a good medicine, as by giving an ill one: For as we ſay of food, *that which is one mans meat is another mans poyſon*, ſo much more of phyſick, *what is one mans help is another mans death.* Theſe four things muſt concur in a good Phyſician, and a failing in any of them makes a Phyſician of no value.

Vanus medicus eſt qui etſi bona medicamēta ægroto exhibuerit, non habita tamē ejus corporis vel morbi ratione, &c. Merc.

Jobs friends (in ſome degree or other) failed in all theſe. They did not ſee into the nature of his trouble: they thought it to be a puniſhment from the revenging hand of God as a Judge, whenas it was but a tryal or a temptation from the chaſtening hand of God as a father: They did not diſcern the true cauſes of it, they thought it was for the diſcovery of his hypocriſie and of the juſtice of God: whereas it was for the diſcovery of his ſincerity and of the goodneſs of God: They prepared ſome medicines of unſound ingredients; as that God will ſpeedily give outward good things to ſuch as are good. And

Aſſerebant bonis ſemper benè evenire quod falſum eſt. Merc.

laſtly, thoſe that were ſound they miſapplyed: Thus *Job* was wounded with their ſalves; made ſick with their medicines; and his very Phyſitians were a diſeaſe unto him.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, From the alluſion, *That the ſoul hath its ſickneſs as well as the body.*

The ſoul hath its Feavers, Conſumptions and Impoſthumations: There is not any diſeaſe of the body, but ſome have curiouſly found out a parallel diſtemper in the ſoul. *Solomon* in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, calls every one to know the *plague of his own heart.* Tis hard to know our own ſpiritual diſeaſes; but it is harder to know the diſeaſes of other mens ſpirits.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Good counſel and wholeſome inſtruction is as phyſick and medicines to the ſoul.*

Animæ ægrotantis medicus eſt oratio.

As the Word is meat, ſo medicine too: The Word is meat to feed and refreſh the healthy ſoul, and the Word is medicine to cure and raiſe the ſoul that is weak and ſickly. There is no ſoul-diſeaſe, but we may find a remedy for it in the Word. *The Lord* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 50. 3, 4.) *hath given me the tongue of the learned* (What learning was it? was it the learning of Philoſophers? No, it was this) *That I ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary.* There is a word which will eaſe the ſoul of its burthen, and cure the ſoul of its diſeaſe, if it be ſpoken in its ſeaſon.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *He is a ſoul-phyſitian of no value, who makes wrong application of truths, as well as he who applyes that which is falſe.*

To preach the Law and the terrors of it, to preach the Juſtice of God and the ſeverity of it, theſe are truths; but for a man to preach theſe to a poor broken ſoul, to a ſoul that lyeth languiſhing and trembling under the hand of God, to a ſoul that hath the pillars of its comfort ſhaken with the breakings in of divine wrath, this man is a *Phyſitian of no value.* For though the things are true, yet they are ill tim'd and applied; ſuch a ſoul ſhould have ſupports and cordials from the Covenant of grace, to refreſh his fainting ſpirits; ſuch a one ſhould have the oyl of gladneſs poured into his wounds, his belly ſhould be filled with the ſtrongeſt wine of conſolation. On the other hand, when a ſoul is ſtubborn in impenitency, or high flown with preſumption, going on in the pride of his heart, yet ſaying, I ſhall have peace: to apply promiſes of mercy, the glad tidings of ſalvation, the freeneſs of grace to ſuch a ſoul, may be its hardening and undoing: Though mercy may be tendered to the ungodly, for God juſtifieth the ungodly; yet we muſt not ſay to a man, that perſeveres in his ungodlineſs, that God will juſtifie him, but that God will condemn him. The worſt of ſinners may be ſaved, but we muſt let him know, God will not ſave him in his ſin. Woe unto us, if we cry peace to thoſe who make war with God. To deal gently with ſuch, is to be cruel both to theirs and our own ſouls. Such muſt be thundred at, as *Paul* did at *Elymas* (Acts 13. 10.) *Thou child of the devil, and enemy to all righteouſneſs:* This was the language even of *Paul*, who preached the grace of the Goſpel as high as ever man did. To flatter thoſe that perſevere in ſin, is to deſtroy them: ſmooth words to the wicked are as drawn ſwords. The doctrine of the law, and the doctrine of free grace, muſt be preached diſtinctly, and ſet out in their ſeveral natures, and rightly applyed to their proper objects. We may be Phyſitians of no value, while we preſcribe that which in its own nature is wholeſome phyſick. The Word of God muſt be rightly divided: Every ſoul muſt have his own portion. The childrens bread is not for dogs: And though they who are dogs in the ſence of their own unworthineſs, may gather up the crumbs that fall from, yea may eat the whole loaf (whole Chriſt) which is upon the childrens table; yet they who are dogs indeed ought not to be offered a crumb of it. The Prophet *Ezekiel* reproves the falſe Prophets ſeverely for miſapplying the threatnings and promiſes of God; for giving bread to the dogs, and throwing ſtones at the children. *Will you pollute me* (ſaith God, *chap.* 13. 19.) *among my people?* How is God polluted? He is infinitely above all pollution. He is polluted when any ſhall make him the author and maintainer of their lyes, or when they ſpeak ſo of his truths, that they incourage any in their pollutions. We pollute the Word of God (yea God himſelf) when we miſapply it, to favour and ſide with the pollutions of evil men; or when we do not apply it to eaſe and revive the ſpirits of good men *Will ye pollute me among my people, to ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not die, and to ſave the ſouls alive that ſhould not live?* The ſouls that ſhould not dye, are ſaid to be ſlain, when we threaten where we ſhould promiſe; and we ſave the ſouls alive that ſhould not live, when we promiſe where we ſhould threaten. Though the unskilſulneſs or unfaithfulneſs of man cannot make the faithfulneſs and counſels of God of none effect, either by ſlaying one ſoul, of whom he hath ſaid, *live*; or by ſaving one ſoul, of whom he hath ſaid, *dye*: Yet they whoſe words run knowingly croſs to the word and will of God, are juſtly charged with ſlaying thoſe whom God will ſave; and with ſaving thoſe whom God will ſlay. As they who willingly ſcandalize a brother by any, to him doubtful, practice, are ſaid to deſtroy him for whom Chriſt dyed (*Rom.* 15. 15. 1 *Cor.* 8. 11.) becauſe they do as much as in them lyes, to deſtroy and cauſe him to periſh, for whom Chriſt dyed; though indeed it be impoſſible for ſuch to periſh, or be deſtroyed. So alſo are we to expound the Prophet, theſe do what in them lies to ſlay the ſouls that ſhould live, though indeed ſuch ſhall not be ſlain: and this, if any thing, is to be, as *Job* rebukes his Friends, *A Phyſitian of no value: An Idol, a no Phyſitian, or one as good as none: ſeeing it were as good to do never a whit, as never the better.*

Job having thus reproved his Friends, and made an appeal to God, gives them advice in the next words, not to ſpeak a word more, unleſs it were to better purpoſe then what they had already ſpoken. *O that you would altogether hold your peace.*

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8.

O that you would altogether hold your peace, and it ſhould be your wiſdom.

Hear now my reaſonings, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?

Will ye accept his perſon? will ye contend for God?

JOB having ſhewed his Friends their error in what they had ſpoken, deſireth they would ſpeak no more, unleſs they could do it to better purpoſe: He calls upon them aloud to ſtop their mouths (*verſ.* 5.) and to open their ears (*verſ.* 6.) being men (as he conceived) more fit to learn then teach. He preſſeth this counſel by divers arguments: two of which we have in this Context.

The firſt at the cloſe of the fifth verſe, *And it ſhould be your wiſdom.* The Argument lyes thus, *It is beſt to do that which will be your wiſdom if you do it. But to ſtop your mouths, and open your ears, to be ſilent and hear, will be your wiſdom: Therefore you were beſt to follow my advice, and hold your peace.*

A ſecond Argument is contained in the ſeventh and eighth verſes; and it is drawn from the ſin and danger of it, in caſe they ſhould proceed to ſpeak as they had done; *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God?* &c. He ſeems to reaſon with them thus, *It is not good for you to go on in ſin and wickedneſs. But in ſpeaking thus, ye ſin, and do wickedly: Therefore it is not good for you to go on in ſpeaking thus: Be ye therefore ſilent, and attend unto what I have now to ſay.*

O that ye would altogether hold your peace.

Quis det ut tacendo taceretis?

O that ye.] The Hebrew is, *Who would give this to you?* Or, *O that ſome body would beſtow this gift*, the gift of ſilence, *upon you*, unleſs you had a happier gift in ſpeaking.

חרש *Fodit, aravit, per antiphraſin, nihil egit; ſiluit.*

That ye would altogether hold your peace.] The word which we tranſlate, *to hold the peace*, or, *to be ſilent*, ſignifies properly, to dig, or plow the ground, to be very buſie; and by an *Antiphraſis* (frequent in the Hebrew tongue, which imployes many words to contrary ſences) it ſignifies, to do nothing, and to be ſilent, to be altogether idle: ſo they are, who neither do, nor ſpeak. Further, Here is more then a bare wiſh for ſilence; here is an inforcement of it, *O that ye would altogether hold your peace:* The letter is, *O that you in being ſilent, would be ſilent*; or, *O that you would be moſt ſilent in ſilence.* *Job* thus ſtrongly beſpeaking the ſilence of his Friends, may have a threefold reference; or, at leaſt, he referreth to ſome one of theſe three things.

Firſt, To the ſpeech of *Zophar*, at the third verſe of the eleventh Chapter, who had thus reproved *Job*, *Should thy lyes make men hold their peace?* Here *Job* replyes, as if he had ſaid, *You told me that it was uncomely, my lyes ſhould make men hold their peace; or that no man could hold his peace at my lyes; but ſurely you have ſpoken ſuch lyes* (ſo he charges them in the verſe foregoing) *and have talked ſo much at random, that it would very well become you to hold your peace, and to be as mute as fiſhes: to ſpeak no more, will be your beſt Rhetorick*; or rather, *you will ſpeak moſt when you ſpeak no more; your ſilence will be more perſwaſive then your ſpeech hath been.*

Secondly, This deſire of *perpetual ſilence*, may have reference to that *ſeven dayes ſilence* which we read of in the ſecond Chapter of this Book; when *Job*'s Friends came to mourn with him, and to comfort him; the Text ſaith, that *They ſat down ſeven dayes, and no man ſpake a word to him.* Now ſaith *Job*, *Ye held your peace a great while when you came to me; truly it had been very well for me if you had altogether held your peace; and I would you would now remember your firſt poſture, and as you began with ſilence, ſo conclude: ſit and ſay nothing. O that you would altogether hold your peace.*

Thirdly, We may refer it to the whole matter of the conteſt between him and his Friends: As if he had ſaid, *Foraſmuch as by all that you have ſpoken, you have not at all abated my pain, nor reſolved my doubts, nor comforted my ſpirit, nor done me any good, I wiſh you would give over ſpeaking. Seeing your ſpeech is ſo fruitleſs, I wiſh you would be ſpeechleſs: O that you would altogether hold your peace: And whereas you have gained no reputation of wiſdom by ſpeaking, you may by forbearing to ſpeak*, as it follows in the Text,

And it ſhould be your wiſdom.] Properly there is no wiſdom in ſilence. Silence is a privative, at leaſt a negative. As dumbneſs is a total, ſo ſilence is a temporary privation of ſpeech: But wiſdom is a poſitive, and among habits the moſt excellent habit. *He that is really a fool, is a fool though ſilent; he is not wiſe, becauſe he hides his folly.* So that, when *Job* ſaith, *It ſhould be your wiſdom*, his meaning is, this would be your wiſeſt courſe; of the two you would ſhew your ſelves wiſer men by ſilence, then by talking at ſuch a rate of indiſcretion as ſome of you have done. Silence may be the covering of folly; but no ſilence can be the cure of it; or ſilence may cauſe others to think we are wiſe; but it cannot make any man wiſe. (*Prov.* 17. 28.) *Solomon* giveth us that rule, *Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wiſe*; he doth not ſay he is wiſe; but he is counted ſo: he is counted wiſe, becauſe he hath this happineſs, not to diſcover his want of wiſdom. Yet further, as a fool may gain the reputation of that wiſdom, which he hath not, if he be but wiſe enough to hold his peace; ſo a wiſe man may ſhew the wiſdom which he hath by holding his peace, when ſpeaking is unſeaſonable, or when himſelf may learn by giving others, who are wiſer and more able then himſelf, the greater liberty of ſpeaking. It is a good piece of learning to learn not to ſpeak, as well as to ſpeak well: Nature teaches us to ſpeak; Art teaches us to ſpeak well; but Vertue and Grace teach us not to ſpeak. A wiſe man will be ſilent as a learner, that he may be fitted to ſpeak as a Teacher. The Apoſtles Canon concerning *women*, hath its uſe in reſpect of many men, *Let them learn in ſilence*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 11.

Atque utinam taceretis, ut putaremini eſſe ſapientes. Vulg.

Diſcamus prius non loqui, ut poſt modum ad loquendum os reſeramus, & poſt multum ſilentium ex diſcipulis efficiamur magiſtri. Hieron *in* 3. *cap. Eccleſ.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That in ſome caſes it is wiſdom to be ſilent.*

Solomon tells us (*Eccleſ.* 3. 9.) that there is a ſeaſon for ſilence, *Every thing is beautiful in his ſeaſon*; ſo is ſilence, and ſo is ſpeech. It is a great part of prudence to know when to be ſilent, and when to ſpeak. *There is* (ſaith he) *a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak:* When it is a time to ſpeak, ſilence is our folly; and when it is a time to keep ſilence, ſpeaking is our folly. There are ſeven ſpecial ſeaſons of ſpeaking, and ſeven of ſilence.

The ſeven ſeaſons of ſpeaking are theſe,

Firſt, (Which is a general) When by ſpeaking we may bring glory to God, and do good to our brethren.

Secondly, When we have an opportunity to vindicate the honour and truth of God.

Thirdly, When we may relieve the credit of a brother that is wronged.

Fourthly, When by ſpeaking, we may inſtruct or direct thoſe that are ignorant.

Fifthly, When we may comfort and ſupport thoſe that are weak.

Sixthly, When we may reſolve and ſettle thoſe that are in doubt.

Seventhly, When we may duly reprove and convince thoſe that do evil.

At ſuch times as theſe we have a ſeaſon to ſpeak; and then it is our ſin, or our weakneſs, nothing at all of wiſdom, to be ſilent.

There are alſo ſeven ſpecial ſeaſons of ſilence, and then it is our wiſdom not to ſpeak. Such as theſe,

Firſt, It is never in ſeaſon to ſpeak, till we have a call. 'Tis as impertinent to be buſie with our tongues, as with our hands, in other mens matters, unleſs they, or the providence of God, or our preſent duty, beſpeaks us.

Secondly, It is a ſeaſon to be ſilent, when we are not rightly informed in or about the ſtate of the matter or queſtion, to which we muſt ſpeak: Such ſhall do well to ſpeak their own doubts, but they are unfit to give others reſolution. He muſt be a maſter of the queſtion, who makes a determination upon it: And until he hath the compaſs of it in himſelf, he can never draw it to a good concluſion.

Thirdly, When we know the ſtate of a queſtion, yet we muſt not ſpeak without a ſutable preparation, either actual, or habitual: Be not raſh to utter a thing before God or man. The Apoſtle *James* bids us be *ſwift to hear, and ſlow to ſpeak*; yet we muſt not hear till we are prepared, then much leſs may we ſpeak.

Fourthly, It is a ſeaſon to be ſilent, when what we ſpeak is like to be a ſnare unto our ſelves. *When they hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and abhor him that ſpeaketh uprightly, when they afflict the juſt, and turn aſide the poor in the gate* (Amos 5. 10, 12.) *Then* (verſ. 13.) *the prudent ſhall keep ſilence, for it is an evil time.* But muſt not evil times, or the worſt evils of worſt times be ſpoken againſt, leſt we bring our ſelves into an evil ſnare? Muſt we never ſpeak, but when we are ſure to come off well, and ſave our skins? Yes, at our peril we muſt ſpeak, when there is greateſt peril: So did the ancient Prophets; ſo did the holy Apoſtles: Yet (though another interpretation may be given of that place in the Prophet, making the ſilence of the prudent in evil times to be their acquieſcence in the evils of puniſhment, which God brings; not their quietneſs with the evils of ſin, which men commit: And ſo their ſilence is oppoſed to murmuring againſt God; not to their ſpeaking againſt, or reproof of men) yet (I ſay) we may be ſilent from reproving men. Firſt, When there is no probability, that the evil which we bring our ſelves into, ſhall be ballanced with any proportionable good to others. Secondly, when thoſe ſins have been ſufficiently witneſſed againſt already; ſo that men ſin, not for want of light, but directly againſt it. In ſuch a time as this, we have no obligation to run upon our own danger. That's the rule of Chriſt (*Matth.* 7. 6.) *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither caſt ye your pearls before ſwine, leſt they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* Where we ſee, as Chriſt will not have his Word offered ſome ſort of obſtinate hardened ſinners (ſhadowed under the names of ſwine and dogs) leſt they ſhould abuſe it; ſo leſt they ſhould abuſe thoſe that bring it. He provides, as for the honour of the Goſpel; ſo for the ſafety of thoſe who publiſh the Goſpel.

Fifthly, As it is a ſeaſon for ſilence, when the paſſions and corruptions of others are up; ſo when our own paſſions or corruptions are up. It had been better for meek *Moſes* to have held his peace, then to have ſpoken when the people provoked him to anger: for then he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips. *Paſſion is an ill counſellor, and as bad a ſpeaker.* A man is not fit to reprove, or ſpeak angerly, when he is angry. Storms at the tongue are never ſo ſeaſonable, as when there is a calm upon the heart: He was a wiſe man, who when he ſaw a man angry, would adviſe him, to ſay over all the letters of the Alphabet, before he ventured to put any two of them together, or ſpeak a word.

Sixthly, It is a ſeaſon for ſilence, when men are not capable of what we ſpeak. Words are loſt, not only upon a meer ſot, a fool, a madman, but upon ſuch as are indiſpoſed to hear them. *Abigail* ſaw it was no time to ſpeak to *Nabal* when he was drunken, and his heart merry with wine, *Therefore ſhe told him nothing leſs, or more, till the morning light*, 1 Sam. 25. 36. Chriſt tells his Diſciples (*John* 16. 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but you cannot bear them now.* The now, was not ſeaſonable, therefore Chriſt was ſilent.

Seventhly, It is a ſeaſon of ſilence, when what we ſpeak may be a grief and burthen to the ſpirits of any, eſpecially of thoſe that are already afflicted. We muſt not make the green wound bleed afreſh; nor at any time ſpeak to the wounding of any whom God would have us heal. In theſe caſes it is our wiſdom to hold our peace.

There are three ſorts of *peace-holders*.

Firſt, There are ſome who hold their peace, and it is their cunning; they are ſilent upon deſign: It is not their wiſdom, but their craft; they will ſay nothing, leſt they ſhould diſcover themſelves.

Secondly, There are others who hold their peace, and it is their weakneſs: They ſpeak not, becauſe they cannot ſpeak, either what they ought, or as they ought.

Thirdly, There are thoſe who hold their peace, and it is their wiſdom; as in the caſes before alledged.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Speech diſcovereth what we are.*

Eloquere ut te videam.

When *Job* ſaith, if you would hold your peace, *it ſhould be your wiſdom*, it was an argument, that the ſpeech of theſe men had diſcover'd their folly: We may ſee what men are by what they ſpeak, as well as by what they do: And by theſe two, all of man, that is knowable by man, may be known. What we are in being, the ſame we are in acting and in ſpeaking, if we act or ſpeak our ſelves. Man is made as viſible by what he ſpeaks, as what he ſpeaks is audible. *Speech is the image of the ſoul, or the looking-glaſs of the mind.* As we may ſee our faces in a glaſs; ſo others may ſee the face or repreſentation of our ſpirits upon our ſpeech. The faſhion of the body ſhines by reflexion in the glaſs; and the form and frame of our hearts is reflected from our lips. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaks*: And as we take veſſels, or glaſſes, and knock upon them, that by the ſound we may perceive whether they be whole or crackt; ſo the ſound which we make diſcovers whether we be crackt or ſound: The crack in the glaſs would not be ſeen eaſily, if it were not heard; and many a mans folly and ignorance would not appear, could he but keep his own counſel.

Oratio eſt imago vel ſpeculum animi: ut vir eſt, ita ejus oratio.

Job, having laboured to ſpeak his Friends into ſilence; now labours to gain audience whilſt himſelf ſpeaks.

Verſe 6. **Hear now my reaſoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.**

Both the parts of the verſe are of one interpretation, only the ſence is heightened in the latter.

Hear now my reaſoning.] The word which we tranſlate *reaſoning*, ſignifies alſo, *reproof*, *redargution*, *correption*, or *conviction*.

יכח *Correptionem, confutationem, reprehenſionẽ, objurgationẽ denotat, ut apud Græcos* ἔλεγχος. *Non imperiosè jubet ſed vehemẽter optat.* Pined.

We may take it for any diſcourſe by way of argument, wherewith a man doth either defend what himſelf, or reprove what others have done or ſpoken.

The form of ſpeech is imperative, or by way of command; yet we are not to take it, as if *Job*, in a *Lordly tone*, impoſed ſilence upon his Friends: Though his language was *Imperative*, yet his ſpirit was not *Imperious*. His words carry a vehemency in counſel; not the authority of a command: As if he had ſaid, *O that I could obtain thus much favour from you, that, forbearing a while to ſay any more, you would now hear what I have to ſay.*

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

To hearken, is more then to *hear*; for it imports a man purpoſely ſetting himſelf in a poſture to hear, or taking pains to hear; we may ſee the attention of the mind in the compoſedneſs of the body. He that hearkens puts himſelf into a learning frame. Careleſs behaviour ſhews a careleſs hearer. The word here uſed, notes mind and body in a readineſs to catch any thing that is ſpoken; or the attention and intention of the ear and heart together.

קשב *Notat geſtũ diligentèr auſcultãtis: plus valet quam* שמע *ſc. non ſolũ attendere, ſed intendere animum.*

To the pleadings of my lips.] Or, *To the chiding of my lips*: As if he had ſaid, *I muſt deal ſharply, ſeverely and plainly with you; I muſt ſpeak home, and tell you your own.* Some conceive that *Job* uſeth this word, to meet with the conception of his Friends concerning what he had ſpoken. *Come* (ſaith he) *I know you think I have been too ſharp all this while; that I have been rather chiding then diſputing; well, if you have that opinion of my former diſcourſe, let it be ſo; now come on, hear my chidings once more; hearken to my earneſt pleadings.* Or (as others) to that *Apologetical narration*, which I make for my ſelf.

ריב *Eſt judicio contendere vel litigare; hinc aliqui, litem, vertunt, & Tygur. contentionem.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *It is the duty of a man to make defence for himſelf, and to apologize in his own cauſe.*

He that is innocent muſt not let his integrity lye ſtained, or blotted, and not ſtir his tongue to vindicate and diſaſperſe it. It is a duty to ſtand up for one another who is wronged, much more for our ſelves, we being nearer to our ſelves then to any other.

Secondly, *It becomes us, not only to hear, but diligently to hearken unto them, who deſire to ſet themſelves right in our thoughts.*

Some ears thirſt for ſlanders, and can greedily drink in an ill report of their brethren, yet, will not have the patience to hear their defence. 'Tis hard to poſſeſs thoſe with the truth of a mans cauſe, who are prepoſſeſſed with an ill opinion of him. Love thinks no evil of others, and is not willing to hear it. Juſtice thinks no evil of others, till it hath heard it; and concludes no evil of others till it hath heard them. As the Judge muſt hear what the witneſs can ſay againſt the party accuſed; ſo what the party accuſed can ſay for himſelf: In this ſence, that of the Apoſtle *James* ſhould obtain with us; *Be ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak, and ſlow to wrath*, Jam. 1. 19. We ſhould be more forward to hear what a man can plead in his own juſtification, then we are to ſpeak to his condemnation; we ſhould be more forward to hear him, then to be wroth and angry with him.

Thirdly, *Man accounts it a diſhonour, if he be not heard and hearkened to when he ſpeaks.*

Not to hear a mans words, is within a degree, as diſgraceful, as to give him diſgraceful words. 'Tis ill when we only give another the hearing, who ſpeaks the truth; but it is worſe, when we will not ſo much as give him a hearing. Some hear much, and do not regard it; others regard ſo little, that they do not hear; either of theſe is a ſleight put upon man. Now if it be a diſhonour to man, to be ſlighted when he ſpeaks; what a diſhonour do they put upon God, who ſlight what he ſpeaks? How often (as *Job* here with his Friends) doth God plead with man for audience? (*Pſal.* 81. 8.) *Hear, O my people, and I will teſtifie unto thee; O Iſrael, if thou wilt hearken unto me.* How often did he ſend his Prophets, with, *Hear now the word of the Lord?* And when after theſe, his own and his Prophets wooings for attention to the words of his counſel and command, he found the people ſtopping their ears, and refuſing to hear, how doth he again open his mouth in wrath, and thunder out words of curſing and conſumption, which whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear, they muſt both ſee and feel. *Neither God nor man can bear it, to ſpeak and not be heard. Hear now my reaſoning* (ſaith *Job*) *and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.*

Job having made his preface, and called for attention, enters upon the matter of his reproof.

Verſe 7. **Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?**

In this, and the next verſe, *Job* doubleth his words; and that he might make them hear twice, he ſpeaks the ſame thing more then once. *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God?* is the ſame with, *and talk deceitfully for him. Will ye accept his perſon?* is the ſame with, *Will ye contend for God?* In the heat of his diſcourſe, he doth not only propoſe, but preſs; not only ſpeak, but repeat what he had to ſay over and over. *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* When we earneſtly oppoſe what another ſaith or doth, we ſay, *Will ye, will ye?*

Jam incipit dictã ſociorum refutare. Merc. הלאל תדברו

Numquid non coram Deo loquamini, & ante conſpectū ejus proferetis dolum?

Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God?] The letter is, *Will ye ſpeak iniquity for God?* There is a threefold reading of that clauſe, *Will ye ſpeak wickedly?* Firſt, *Of God?* Secondly, *To God?* Thirdly, *For God?* Mr. *Broughton* takes the firſt, *Will ye ſpeak unright of the Almighty?* Wee the laſt, *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God?* The ſence comes near to one in all three. The Septuagint render it as an argument why they ſhould take heed what they ſpake, becauſe of the perſon before whom they ſpake. *Do you not ſpeak before God? and will ye ſpeak deceitfully in his preſence? Do you not know where you are? Remember that you are in Gods preſence, he ſees, and he hears you: Do you think that none hears you, but I that am a poor creature in pain and miſery? The great God of Heaven and earth heareth you. Do you not ſpeak before God? and if you believe you do, will you ſpeak deceitfully?* This ſence is very ſavoury, uſeful and cloſe; but this reading is too wide for the Original text: Which though it may bear ſuch an expoſition, yet it cannot bear ſuch a tranſlation.

Dum ejus defenditis juſtitiam me accuſatis ut impiū: itane Dei cauſa agenda ut ejus gratia mihi ſitis iniqui? Merc.

The words are clearer according unto our reading, *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God?* That is, Will you ſtrain the truth for his ſake? Will ye reproach me under pretence of honouring God? *Job*'s Friends had great thoughts of God, doubtleſs they had; yet, their miſtake was great, when, to ſet up the glory of God, they darkened the innocency of man: In ſpeaking thus, they *ſpake wickedly for God.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Speak righteouſly for God as much as you will; ſo I deſire to ſpeak for God as much as you; but you are ſo tranſported in defending the righteouſneſs of God, that you care not how you wrong me: The cauſe of God needs no ſuch Advocates: He will never thank you for condemning me, to juſtifie his dealings with me: He is righteous in afflicting me; and I am not wicked becauſe afflicted.*

> Hence Note, Firſt, *That a good cauſe may be ill mannaged; and we may exceed our duty, while we are doing it.*

There is no greater duty then to ſpeak for God; yet it is poſſible to ſpeak ſinfully when we ſpeak for God. That zeal is without true knowledge, which obſcures one truth, while it is clearing up another.

> Secondly, Obſerve, *We muſt take heed we break not the rules of juſtice and charity to man, while we maintain the juſtice or truth of God.*

Numquid Deus indiget veſtro mendaci? Vulg.

Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, is the firſt and great Commandment; and the ſecond is like unto it, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf: We cannot expreſs our love to God, while we ſhut out love to man. God hath no delight in ſuch love: And that doctrine which diſ-joyns the love of God and man, is a lye for God. The Vulgar reads the Text clearly to that ſence, though with too much variation from the Original, *What? hath God need of your lye? The truth of God hath no need of our lye againſt man:* We may beſpeak many at this day, who undertake the Cauſe of God, or at leaſt pretend they do, *What? hath God need of your ſlanders, or of your paſſions? hath God any need of your anger, of your revilings, wrath? The wrath of man works not the righteouſneſs of God.* It is a diſhonour unto God to be helped thus. As we muſt not do evil, that good may come to our ſelves; ſo we muſt not do evil, that good may come to God, *Rom.* 3. 8. The Apoſtle rejects the very thought of ſuch a deſign, with a kind of horror and deteſtation; for he had no ſooner repeated that impudent and blaſphemous ſlander (ſome affirm that we ſay, *Let us do evil, that good may come*) but preſently he blaſts both it and them, with this dreadful judgment, *Whoſe damnation is juſt:* If they deſerved damnation, who put ſuch an opinion upon the Apoſtles, what do they who practice it? They who ſuppoſe themſelves ſuch skilful Alchymiſts, in drawing good out of evil, that (to try their skill) they will do evil, hoping to draw good out of it, ſhall find at laſt, that they have drawn damnation upon themſelves by that tryal. But ſome may object, Doth not the Apoſtle confeſs at the ſeventh verſe, that he had done evil for that end; and that having attained a good end, he thought himſelf excuſed for the evil of his way: *If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lye, unto his glory, why yet am I judged as a ſinner?* It ſeems then the Apoſtle had told lyes for the upholding of truth; and that the truth of God had abounded to the glory of God through his lyes. I anſwer, The Apoſtle doth not ſpeak thoſe words in his own perſon, or in the perſon of a godly man, but in the perſon of a profane Objector, whom he confuteth: As if he had ſaid, *Some man poſſibly may plead thus for his ſin; The truth of God hath gained by my lye; and if ſo, why am I judged as a ſinner? They are ſhining ſins indeed, which cauſe the glory of God to ſhine more bright. Can I be a looſer where God gains? Surely I cannot. I may rather encourage my ſelf to do evil* (*as we* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *are alſo affirmed to ſay*) *that good may come.* So then the Apoſtle doth but repeat and refute what ſome ſaid for themſelves, and of the Apoſtles; he doth not in the leaſt affirm it of himſelf. God often brings good out of the worſt of evils; but that's no thank to thoſe who commit the evil. Evil can produce nothing naturally but evil; it is a Divine power and wiſdom which overmaſters it unto good. The way which God hath taught us to glorifie him by, is to do that which is good, and to ſpeak the truth; and though he can raiſe glory to himſelf out of the evil which we do, and out of the lyes which we publiſh; yet he never calls for our evil, or for our lye, to raiſe his glory. The Pſalmiſt aſſures us (*Pſal.* 16. 2.) *My goodneſs extendeth not to thee*: And if God hath no need of our goodneſs, ſurely he hath no need of our evil: He wants not our help, though he beſpeaks it, and may command it: Why then ſhould any man *ſpeak wickedly for God?*

And talk deceitfully for him? Or, *Talk deceit for him.*

רמיה *Eſt deceptio, & fruſtratio ut* קשת רמיה *arcus fruſtrans.*

Piger dicitur איש רמיה *Quia decipitur ipſe ſpe & fruſtrantur qui ei quicquam committunt.* Coc.

The ſence is the ſame as before. The word which we tranſlate *deceit,* is a Noun, and ſignifieth hope fruſtrated, or the deceiving of expectation. A Bow which carries the Arrow falſe, is thus expreſt, *a deceitful bow,* becauſe it fruſtrates the Archers aim, ſending the Arrow beſide, or above the mark. It ſignifies alſo a man that is *ſlow of foot,* dull, and lazy, a man of a flegmatick and unactive ſpirit: A ſlothful man is a deceiver, he deceiveth himſelf, and he deceiveth thoſe that imploy and ſet him a work: He doth his own buſineſs but by *halves*; and if any truſt him, he will deceive them *wholly.*

Job giveth yet a further charge upon his Friends, in the expoſtulation of the next verſe.

Verſe 8. **Will ye accept his perſon? Will ye contend for God?**

נשא *In hac phraſi, non tollendi ſed accipiendi notionem habet. Naſa ſuſtinere, ſuſtentare, eo quod patroni clientum perſonam quodāmodo ſuſtentant.* Bold. *Faciem Dei accipere eſt perſonā Dei agere & repreſentare & ejus vice ac munere judicandi fungi.* Philip. Fresb.

Will ye accept his perſon?] There is a different reading of theſe words. Some thus. *Will ye put your ſelves into the room or place of God? Will ye perſonate God?* ſo the word bears; ſignifying, as to accept, ſo to ſuſtain or repreſent another perſon. Will you take upon you the place of God, or ſtand in his ſtead? Will ye be as Gods Deputies and Vicegerents, as if you had commiſſion under the great Seal of Heaven, to deal thus with me? Or will ye take the office of God upon you, to judge the heart, and of the ſecrets which are lodged there? You judge me an hypocrite; let me profeſs what I will of my own integrity, let me produce the faireſt proofs of my uprightneſs, yet you judge me an hypocrite, and conclude me a wicked man: Will ye thus take the ſole priviledge of God upon you, and judge my heart?

> Hence obſerve, *They that take upon them to judge the heart, or to judge of that which doth not appear, take upon themſelves the place of God.*

The heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it? (Jer. 17. 9.) Man cannot know his own heart, much leſs can he know the heart of another man. God takes that honour to himſelf (*verſ.* 10.) *I the Lord ſearch the heart.* Only he that is inviſible, is able to ſee into that which is inviſible. Chriſt gives a rule for judgment: *Judge not according to the appearance* (John 7. 24.) yet we muſt not judge of that which doth not appear; we muſt ſearch before we judge, becauſe many things are not, either in regard of good or evil, as they appear; but if nothing appear after ſearching, we muſt ſuſpend our judgment. That which doth not appear, muſt be left to the judgment of God, at his appearing; ſo the Apoſtle directs (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time:* What is the time? The next words ſhew it, *Till the Lord come*; that is, till he come to judgment. But muſt we reſerve all judiciary proceedings to that day? No, Magiſtrates muſt do juſtice; and therefore they muſt judge every day. His meaning

ing then is, judge nothing which doth not appear: He takes not away civil judgment upon proof (as ſome have abuſed that Text) but only that judgment which hath no proof; as the Apoſtle explains himſelf in the ſequel of that dehortation. *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the counſels of the heart.* As if he had ſaid, That kind of judgment you muſt refer to the day of judgment; you muſt not judge of things hidden in darkneſs, or of the heart of man; ye may judge the works of men, or whatſoever ſhews it ſelf in the open light.

We read, *Will ye accept his perſon?* Here two things are to be opened: Firſt, What it is to *accept a perſon.* Secondly, In what ſence the Friends of *Job* might be ſaid *to accept the perſon of God*; or how his perſon may be ſaid to be accepted.

The letter of the Original is, *Will ye accept, or lift up his face?* This phraſe, *of lifting up the face*, hath a threefold different uſe in Scripture.

Firſt, God is ſaid *to lift up his own face*; and that intimates favour and kindneſs to man (*Numb.* 6.26.) *The Lord lift up his countenance (or face) upon thee, and give thee peace:* That is, the Lord bleſs thee, and do thee good.

Secondly, Man is ſaid *to lift up his own face*; and that noteth boldneſs and confidence, (*Job* 11. 15.) *Then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot*: That is, thou ſhalt not be afraid to look any man in the face.

Thirdly, Man is ſaid *to lift up the face of another*; either the face of another man, or (as here) *of God himſelf:* and this ſignifies alwayes extraordinary favour; ſometimes illegal favour. (*Gen.* 32. 20.) *Jacob* ſends a preſent unto *Eſau*, and ſaith, *Peradventure he will accept*, or lift up *my face:* So (*Deut.* 28. 50.) the Lord threateneth his ancient people, that he would ſend ſuch enemies among them, as *ſhould not regard the perſon* (ſo we tranſlate) or *not lift up the face of the old:* An old man full of gray hairs, and venerable gravity, ſhall have no more regard then a child, or a beardleſs boy. *The honourable man, is the man eminent in counſel, or whoſe face is lifted up* (Iſa. 3. 3.) The Lord threatned that he would make the Prieſts *contemptible, becauſe they had been partial in the Law*, or becauſe *they had accepted faces in*, or againſt *the Law* (Mal. 2. 9.) that is, becauſe they had done, or required ſuch and ſuch things to be done; not becauſe the Law required them, or becauſe they ſaw it was the will of God in the Law, but becauſe they ſaw it was for their own advantage and convenience: They perverted the Law, both in opinion and practice, to pinch or favour men as they pleaſed. 'Tis ſaid of the jealous man (*Prov.* 6. 35.) that *he will not regard* (or *not accept the face of*) *any ranſom*; that is, he will not be moved by any gift, to ſpare him that hath diſhonoured his bed.

Tranſfertur ad res inanimatas ut cum quis rē aliquā revereri & permagni æſtimare videtur, non tam rei dignitate, quam peculiari aliqua ratione, aut ſpe lucri permotus. Pined.

More diſtinctly, *To accept a perſon*, conſiſts in theſe two things. Firſt, *When to thoſe who are like, we give an unlike judgment.* Secondly, *When to thoſe who are unlike, we give a like judgment:* To do this, is to be partial, and to accept perſons in judgment. Liberality or bounty is not obliged to give like to thoſe who are like; but Juſtice is. We may give as we will; but we muſt judge by a rule. God elects according to what is in himſelf; but he judges according to what is in us, or according to what we have done. When *Jacob* and *Eſau were yet unborn, neither having done good or evil, God loved* Jacob, *and hated* Eſau: This was not accepting of perſons, becauſe the Lord did this, not as a Judge, but as an Elector; ſo the Apoſtle ſtates it (*Rom.* 9. 11, 12, 13.) He loved the one, and hated the other, though both were alike, *That his purpoſe, according to election, might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth.* Thus God elects perſons; but he is no reſpecter, or accepter of perſons; for, *In every Nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him, Acts* 10. 34. God will not ask any man what *countrey-man* he is, or of what kindred he is, before he accepts him; *For the Scripture ſaith, whoſoever believeth on him ſhall not be aſhamed, for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the ſame Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him* (Rom. 10. 11, 12.)

Proſopolepſia definitur, ſiquis paribus imparia, vel imparibus paria tribuat. Coc.

But if this be to accept perſons, how could *Job* charge his Friends with accepting the perſon of God?

For the clearing of this Query, I ſhall ſhew firſt negatively, how we are not to underſtand it; and then affirmatively, how we are.

Firſt thus, We are not to underſtand it, as if *Job's* Friends imagined that God had need of their favour in his cauſe; The uſual reaſon, why the perſons of men are accepted, is, becauſe their cauſe cannot bear them out; he that hath a good cauſe never deſires to have the ſentence carried by any byaſs to his perſon; but he that diſtruſts his cauſe, uſeth all the means he can, he turns every ſtone to ingratiate his perſon, or, as we ſay, to curry favour with the Judge. *Job* and his Friends knew well enough, that (as the Apoſtle affirms out of the Pſalm, *Rom.* 3. 4.) *God muſt be juſtified in his ſayings, and overcome when he either judgeth, or is judged:* The juſtice of his cauſe will carry him out againſt all men, *Yea every mouth muſt be ſtopped, and all the world become guilty before God.*

Secondly, As God needs not any reſpect or favour to his perſon from the creature; ſo it's impoſſible that God ſhould receive more reſpect or honour from the creature then doth belong to his perſon: We may quickly out-act our reſpects to the beſt of men, and offer them more then they are fit to receive: but God is infinitely exalted above all our praiſes, and is fit to receive more then we can offer. The Pſalmiſt indeed ſaith, that the *Iſraelites* flattered God: *When he ſlew them, then they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: nevertheleſs they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongues,* (*Pſal.* 78. 36.) But could they flatter God? Man is flattered when that is aſcribed to him which he hath not; or when he is applauded for what he hath, beyond the worth of it. God cannot be flattered thus: He is as much beyond flatterings, as he is beyond ſufferings. The *Jews*, then, are ſaid to flatter God, not becauſe they applauded him by fair ſpeeches more then was his due; but becauſe by fair ſpeeches they hoped to prevent what themſelves did deſerve; or they flattered God with their own promiſes, not with his praiſes. They ſinned againſt him, and he ſlew them; and when the ſword found them, they ſought God, they creep'd to him, and fawn'd upon him, they came as with ropes about their necks, confeſſing they were worthy to dye, yet humbly begging for life; and if God would but ſheath his ſword, and ſpare them, O what manner of men would they be in all holy converſation and godlineſs. Thus *they flattered God with their mouth, while their hearts were not right:* They made great ſhews of repentance and turning to God; but they meant no ſuch thing: this was their flattery; neither can the Lord be flattered any other way. And as he cannot be flattered by over-praiſing him, ſo his perſon cannot be accepted by over-reſpecting him.

So then the meaning of *Job*, in charging his Friends with accepting the perſon of God, is only this, that he conceived his Friends ſo zealous in lifting up the glory of God, that they cared not under what temptations and diſadvantages they left him *poor man*; they did not attend the law of love and pity towards him, in conjunction with the law of love and honour towards God. As if he had ſaid, *You ſee me miſerable, and you know God is juſt (I know he is ſo too:) Hence you infer, God being juſt, he would never puniſh me thus, if I were not unjuſt. Thus to advance the righteouſneſs of God, you ſuſpect me of wickedneſs; and to maintain his truth, you charge me with falſeneſs of heart, and ſecret hypocriſie: The former is your duty, but the latter is your ſin; will ye thus reject my perſon, that ye may accept his?*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That to accept perſons in judgment croſſeth the rule of juſtice.*

'Tis injuſtice to accept the perſon of God (in the ſence explained) how much more to accept the perſons of men? The Apoſtle profeſſeth ſtrongly, (2 *Cor.* 5. 16.) *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh; yea though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh, yet now henceforth know we him no more*; that is, we do not reſpect him for any fleſhly conſideration. That was once our error, we expected a Chriſt in outward pomp, and worldly ſplendor; we looked for a Chriſt in robes of royalty, and in the majeſtick ſtate of earthly Princes; we were offended at his meanneſs and poverty, becauſe we ſaw no form nor beauty in him; but we have learned to think and judge otherwiſe of Chriſt. Now, if it be a ſin, or beſides our duty, to reſpect *Chriſt* after the fleſh, how much more any Chriſtian? We may argue ſo here. If it be a ſin to accept the perſon of God, or by inclining to him to wrong men, how much more to accept the perſon of man, or by inclining to one man to wrong another. *Ye ſhall do no unrighteouſneſs in judgment: Thou ſhalt not reſpect the perſon of the poor, nor honour the perſon of the mighty* (Lev. 19. 15.) As if he had ſaid, ye cannot do that which is right in judgment, if ye reſpect the perſon of any man, high or low, rich or poor: Some, poſſibly, may reſpect the perſon of the poor (though uſually reſpect of perſon is given to the rich) but the Law of God is ſo exact in this point, that if a poor man (or a man *in forma pauperis*) contend with, and ſue him that is rich, yet, thou ſhalt not do the rich man wrong, and ſay he is rich, he can bear it well enough; no, but if his cauſe be right, though his adverſary be poor, let the rich man have his due. Magiſtrates are not called to do acts of charity, but of juſtice. Laws are made without reſpect of perſons; but they are ſeldome executed without reſpect of perſons. While the Law is moulding and framing, the Legiſlators know not what particular perſons ſhall fall under it; therefore it is made without partiality or reſpect of perſons. But the Judge too often remembers and ſtudies the perſon as much or more then the Law: His friend, or his kinſman is in the cauſe; ſuch a man recommends the buſineſs to him, who hath done him a courteſie, or may do it hereafter: Such a great man is concerned in it, who may do him an ill turn, or make an unpleaſing repreſentation of him at Court, and in the Princes ear. Theſe conſiderations corrupt the Judge, and turn him aſide in judgment.

Secondly, Obſerve, *We accept the perſon of God, when under the title of doing him right, we wrong man.*

Some are zealous for God to the hurt of their brethren: And while they can ſuppoſe themſelves acting for God, they care not what they act againſt man. Such a ſpirit the Prophet deſcribes (*Iſa.* 66. 5.) *Your brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my names ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified:* As if he had ſaid, while you ſhew hatred towards your brethren, you ſay it is in love to God; while you caſt their perſons out of your ſociety, you ſay it is for the Name of God: and that the Lord (ſay you) may be glorified, we muſt not ſpare any man, brother, or friend, one or other. So (*Jer.* 50. 7.) *All that found them have devoured them* (he ſpeaks of thoſe that went to ſeek God with their faces towards *Zion*, who ſought to worſhip God in the exacteſt manner) *and their adverſaries. ſaid, we offend not*: (They thought they might eat up a man, with as little offence to God or man, as to their own ſtomachs, when they had this to ſay for it.) *Becauſe they have ſinned againſt the Lord, the habitation of juſtice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.* Theſe men have ſinned againſt God, and we hope we muſt not bear with ſuch: If we did not find them in an error, did they not wrong God and his truth, we would not do thus; but *we offend not*, for *they have ſinned againſt the Lord, the habitation of juſtice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers:* They concluded they might uſe them as they liſt, when they had this plea, it is for the Lord. That's the reaſon of Chriſts premonition (*John* 16. 2.) *They ſhall caſt you out of the Synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you will think that he doth God ſervice.* 'Tis poſſible for men to ſeem inflamed with a zeal for God, while they put their brethren into flames.

And as this is true in regard of the perſons of men, ſo of their doctrine: Some ſay, God is honoured by ſuch an opinion, and therefore it muſt needs be right. *Papiſts* maintain the doctrine of free-will, and tell us it is that God may be glorified; how elſe (ſay they) can we anſwer thoſe exhortations and commands to repent and obey his voice, if man have not free-will, or a power to obey? Were it not a mock if God ſhould bid man do that which he cannot do? Therefore that the honour of God may not be ſtained, the will of man muſt be advanced.

Arminians hold univerſal redemption, or that Chriſt died equally for all men. Now as the Papiſts pretend zeal for God in maintaining free-will, leſt he ſhould ſeem to mock in his commands; ſo theſe maintain univerſal redemption, leſt God ſhould ſeem to mock in his promiſes: For, ſay they, God offers grace and mercy, forgiveneſs of ſins and life eternal unto all; hence they argue, if Chriſt dyed not for all, he doth but delude us in making theſe offers: Thus out of a reſpect to the perſon of God, they deſtroy the truths of God. For the truth is, man hath no free-will (before converſion) either to obey the commands of God, or to believe his promiſes; and yet the Lord in unſpeakable wiſdom and juſtice, yea and in mercy too, commands him to obey, and preſents him promiſes to believe. Theſe adminiſtrations of God are not arguments of mans ability, but of his duty; and while God in them ſhews man his duty, he conveys an ability: he doth not bid a perſon unconverted obey and believe, becauſe he hath an inherent power to do them; but becauſe out of his free love and grace in Chriſt he intends to give him that power. And therefore the expedient for the removing of the former difficulties, is not to be found in the free-will of man, but in the free-grace of God: who though he requires what we are not able to do, yet enables us to do what he requires. If we ſeek other helps to eaſe us of theſe ſcruples, we ſhall be convinced at laſt, to have overthrown the truth of God, while we would be thought zealous for his honour: And that is the ſin of accepting the perſon of God, whom we can never honour enough, either in his perſon, works, or truths. *Will ye accept his perſon?*

Will ye contend for God?

It is not a fault, but a duty, to contend for God; to contend for God with our tongues, and to contend for God with our hands (*Jude* 5. 23.) Meroz *was curſed, becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* Therefore when he ſaith, *Will ye contend for God?* He doth not blame them for the matter, their taking Gods part; but for the manner in which they did it. As if he had ſaid, *If you will ingage as patrons of Gods cauſe, and contend for him, you muſt do it ſo as becomes the cauſe of God; you muſt not, to gratifie God, oppreſs the pooreſt man.*

Secondly, We may give this ſence, *Do ye contend for God?* That is, do ye think God cannot maintain his own cauſe without you? When *Gideon* had deſtroyed the Altar of *Baal*, and *Joaſh* his father defended the action, *Joaſh* ſaith, *Will ye plead for* Baal? *will ye ſave him? if he be a God, let him plead for himſelf, becauſe one hath caſt down his altar* (Judg. 6. 25.) You need not trouble your ſelves, for if *Baal* be a God, he will do well enough; he will ſet himſelf right, and maintain his own divinity. In that ſence alſo *Job* might here ſpeak to his Friends, *Will ye contend for God?* Do you think he is *Baal*, one that cannot ſave himſelf, and manage his own cauſe? Doth he need you? He being the true God will plead for himſelf: therefore hold your peace, and hear what I have to ſpeak. You have ſpoken wickedly for God, and talked deceitfully for him: You have ſo accepted his perſon, and contended for him, that he will give you no thank for your labours. *Job* yet proceedeth to give ſome further Arguments, why they ſhould forbear to ſpeak, and give him further audience.

VERS. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out? or as one man mocketh another, do you ſo mock him?

He will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons.

Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?

Your remembrances are like unto aſhes, and your bodies to bodies of clay.

Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.

JOB ſtill perſiſts preſſing his Friends to ſilence, and requiring audience for what he had to ſpeak. The ninth and tenth verſes are an appendix to, or an inlargement of his ſecond Argument, which began at the ſixth verſe. There he expoſtulates, *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his perſon?* Will ye make ſuch adventures? and run ſuch hazzards as theſe? Here he diſſwades them from it. *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?* (ver. 9.) if he do, you will have the worſt of it: for, *he will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons*, verſ. 10. If you give wrong judgment for God, you ſhall not eſcape the juſt judgement of God.

His third argument is grounded upon the Majeſty and greatneſs of God, *verſ.* 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* &c.

His fourth, upon their frailty and weakneſs, *verſ.* 12. *Your remembrances are like unto aſhes*; and will you who are but duſt and aſhes ſpeak thus, not only before, but concerning the high and the holy God?

From all theſe premiſes, he draws the wiſh of the fifth verſe, *O that you would altogether hold your peace*, into a concluſive charge at the 13 verſe, *Hold your peace*, &c.

Verſ. 9. Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?

The ſenſe of this phraſe (is it good?) was given at the third verſe of the tenth chapter. Good is here put for profitable or advantageous.

Some refer it to God, and expound it as if he had ſaid, *Do you think it will be profitable for God to ſeek after you, to draw you to his party, or to the patronage of his cauſe? Miſtake not your ſelves. God doth not want your help; he can maintain his cauſe, though he fee not you for his advocates, though he make not you of his counſel.* But I paſs this as too ſtrained an interpretation.

Nũquid exiſtimatis utile Deo futurũ quærere & adſciſcere vos in ſuæ cauſæ patronos? Non bene cedet nobis ſi factũ veſtrũ diſcuſſerit & propius inſpexerit ac diligentius expenderit. Merc.

For *Job* intends this directly to his friends: and while he ſaith, *is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?* his meaning is, it will be ill for you. It will be ſo far from your profit or benefit, from your eaſe or credit, that you will find it both your loſs and your ſhame, if once God come and *ſearch you out*. If God look more narrowly into this buſineſs, you will get nothing by it but a chiding, as is expreſſed in the next verſe, *He will ſurely reprove you.*

חקר *Inveſtigare, ſcrutari.*

The word ſignifies not only to ſearch diligently, but to ſearch judiciarily, or as a judge ſearcheth and tryeth a man or his cauſe. *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf under this language in the exerciſe of his Magiſtracy, (*chap.* 29.16.) *The cauſe which I knew not, I ſearched out.* If any, under the law, enticed their brethren to idolatry, *ſaying, Let us ſerve other gods, Then* (ſaith the Lord by *Moſes*, Deut. 13.14.) *ſhalt thou enquire and make ſearch, and ask diligently*, &c. Man ſearcheth what he doth not know; God knoweth all things, and yet he ſearcheth. He doth not ſearch to inform himſelf in what he knoweth not, but he ſearcheth to inform or to aſſure us that he doth know. *David* prayeth, *ſearch me O Lord, and know my heart*, (Pſal. 139.23.) yet he confeſſeth (*verſ.* 1.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me*; yea he knew God knew him without ſearching. There are no ſecrets to God: He knows by immediate intuition, not by diſcourſe or inquiſition.

So then, *Job* ſpeaks of God after the manner of men, who make enquiries that they may know, and ſearch that they may find.

But why would it not be good, or what hurt would it be to his friends, if God ſhould ſearch them out? I anſwer, *Job* ſuppoſed that his friends had not dealt fairly nor ſincerely with him; and though he could not find out the unevenneſs of their ſpirits towards him, yet God could: He ſaw perfectly that they did not move upon right principles, that there was more of anger and animoſity, then of zeal and charity in their diſcourſe; that they had a deſire rather to conquer him, then to comfort him; and that they were more buſie in judging his perſon, then in applying remedies to remove his grief. Now, when God upon the ſearch ſhould find out ſuch ill matter as this againſt them, could it be good to them? Surely ſuch a diſcovery as this could not gain them either reward or approbation. *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God is able to ſearch out and diſcern the hearts and ſecret wayes of all the children of men.*

He knows not only what we do, but with what heart and for what ends we do it. *His eyes* (do not only ſee, but) *conſider, his eye-lids* (do not only behold, but) *try the children of men*, (*Pſal.* 11.4.) The eye-lids of man do not ſee at all, they only protect and fence the ſight of the eye: But to ſhew that God is all ſight, and all eye, his very eye-lids are ſaid to do more then ſee, to try the children of men. *O Lord* (ſaith *David* in the place lately cited) *thou haſt ſearched me, and known me.* Man ſearches man, and cannot know him, for, *what man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man that is in him?* (1 Cor. 2.11.) but the Spirit of God knows what is in man, he hath a threed which leads him unerringly, quite through the labyrinth of mans heart. *Thou haſt known me*, all over, *thou knoweſt my down-ſitting and up-riſing*, that is, whatſoever I go about or take in hand: *Yea thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off*; that is, before I think them, or before they are born.

We cannot draw a curtain between God and our ſouls, nor ſpread a vail of ſecrecy over any of our actions. *The wayes of a man are before the Lord, and he pondereth* (as in a ballance) *all his goings*, (Prov. 5.21.)

Secondly Obſerve, *It will be little to the profit or credit of hypocrites and evil doers, when God comes to ſearch them.*

Chriſt quickly eſpied among all his gueſts, the man that had not on him the wedding garment; and as ſoon as Chriſt ſpake to him, he was ſpeechleſs. He was condemned in himſelf, becauſe he had not prepared himſelf.

Three things ariſe from this conſideration by way of corollary.

Firſt, *Take heed of ſin, for God will ſearch you out. Moſes* tells the two Tribes who deſired to take up their inheritance on the other ſide *Jordan*, that if they ſhould prove falſe to their own propoſals, their ſin would ſurely find them out. But doth ſin make ſearch for the ſinner? or will ſin diſcover and betray it ſelf? When he ſaith their ſin would find them out, his meaning is, the revenging hand of God for ſin would find them out. When we feel the effects, and receive the rewards of ſin, our ſin findes us. Many loſe both the ſight and memory of the ſins they have committed; but their ſins keep the ſight of them, or will follow them (as the hound doth the fleeing game) upon the ſent, till they have found them out.

Secondly, *It is good for man to ſearch himſelf before the Lord ſearches him, or becauſe the Lord will ſurely ſearch him.* It will be our wiſdom to bring our own works to the touchſtone, for God will; to travel into our own hearts and over our own lives, for God will. Let not any region of thy ſelf be (*terra incognita*) an unknown land to thy ſelf, for God walks through thee every day. God threatned to ſearch *Jeruſalem* with Candles, becauſe they had not ſearched themſelves by the clear ſun-ſhine of his word. A ſin of ignorance committed is leſs then a ſin againſt knowledge; but to hide a ſin we have committed, or to be wilfully ignorant of it, encreaſes it.

Laſtly, *It is beſt for us by humble confeſſion to make our ſins known to God, ſeeing God doth ſearch out our ſins, and will know them, whether we will or no.* Concealment doth not hide the eye of God from ſin, but the mercy and pardoning grace of God from the ſinner. The diſguiſes which we put upon the evil which we have done, cannot make them leſs viſible to, but more ugly in the ſight of God. To aſſure that, is *Jobs* ſcope in the next clauſe of this verſe.

Or as one man mocketh another, do ye ſo mock him?

התל *Proprie eſt illudere, mẽtiri, decipere mentiri illudendo, vel illudere mẽtiendo.*

The word ſignifies to illude, to lie, to deceive; to lie that we may deceive, or to deceive by lying. One man, or (as the propriety of the Original ſounds) one poor, weak, ſorry, ſorrowful man, may thus mock and deceive another; but can weak, ſorry, ſilly man put cheats and deceits upon the ſtrong, the wiſe, the only wiſe God?

But may we conceive that *Jobs* friends had any ſuch deſign in hand, or that they were contriving a plot againſt God?

'Tis equally as vain and ſinful to ſtrive with God by our wit, as it is by our ſtrength; and we can as ſoon overcome him, as over-reach him.

Neither did *Job* impute this to his friends, that they ſet themſelves induſtriouſly to deceive or mock God; yet he might ſpeak thus,

First, Becauſe they handled the cauſe with weak and improper arguments ſuch as had only a ſhew of reaſon or divine authority in them, not the ſubſtance or reality of it; which imported, as if they ſuppoſed God himſelf would be taken with appearances and very ſimilitudes: to be ſo, is indeed to be mocked and deceived. Upon this account *Job* chargeth them with mocking God. Neither is it againſt the laws of diſputation to put ſuch inferences upon anothers aſſertions or argumentations as may poſſibly flow

Sane inter diſputandũ ſpectamus non quid quiſque ſibi propoſitum eſſe dicat, ſed quid ex ipſius oratione conſequatur. Merc.

or follow from them, though the arguer be free and far enough from any ſuch intendment.

Secondly, Becauſe they (undertaking to plead the cauſe of God) might ſeem to deal like thoſe Advocates, who to draw on their clients, and multiply their own fees, tell them their cauſe is good, and that they doubt not of the day. Which though it were moſt true in regard of God and the cauſe it ſelf he had in hand with *Job*, yet it was not true in regard of the grounds upon which his friends managed it and held it forth.

Referendum videtur ad incorrupũ Dei judiciũ, quod depravari detorquerìq; à recto humanâ perſuaſione aut fraudulẽtia non poteſt. Phil.

Thirdly, He might ſpeak thus, becauſe they appearing as witneſſes againſt him before the tribunal of God, might ſeem to deal like thoſe witneſſes who give a wrong teſtimony to miſlead the judge, that he may give ſentence againſt the innocent: thus an earthly Judge may be mocked or deceived. *But* (ſaith *Job*) *do ye think to mock or deceive God thus? Do ye think becauſe you have given ſuch a hard teſtimony of me, and ſay I am wicked, that he will take your word, and condemn me upon it? Do ye hope, either to corrupt and darken his underſtanding that he cannot ſee the right, or to over-perſwade his will to act againſt what he ſees, and to overthrow the right? pleaſe not your ſelves with theſe miſ-repreſentations of me and of my cauſe to God: for he will quickly look through all the falſe colours you have laid upon it, and the fallacies that are in it; and you will find at laſt, that you have deceived your ſelves, not God, by all your inſinuations of my deceit and hypocriſie towards God. As one man mocketh another, do ye ſo mock him?*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Man may be mocked and deceived by man.*

Vulgus plerumq; credit omnia quæ à magnis hominibus audit.

That's ſuppoſed by *Job*. As the ſtrength of man prevails over humane ſtrength; ſo alſo doth the wit and underſtanding of man prevail over humane wit and underſtanding. And as ſome men are in reference to ſtrength, ſo others are in reference to underſtanding, *children*. You may mock and coſen them, impoſe upon and delude them, even as if they were a company of little children.

As many wiſe men are led by the multitude, ſo the fooliſh multitude are eaſily led by any one, who is great in power, or eminent in reputation for wiſdom. *Two hundred men went after Abſalom in their ſimplicity, and they knew not any thing,* (1 Sam. 15. 11.) They were not of his councel, nor privy to his conſpiracy, he deluded them into treaſon. *Simon Magus bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himſelf was ſome great one, to whom they all gave heed from the leaſt unto the greateſt, ſaying, This man is the great power of God,* (Act. 8. 9, 10.) But he did but mock them. Such impoſtors and mountebanks have in all ages put cheats upon ſimple people, not only in matters of State, but of Religion. Popiſh Prieſts and Jeſuites have been greateſt deſigners and actors in Soul-mockeries: by theſe, God hath ſent *ſtrong deluſions* among them who have not received the love of the truth, and they have believed lies.

Secondly Obſerve, *God cannot be mocked by man.*

Gal. 6. 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* Man never deceives himſelf ſo much, as when he thinks or attempts to deceive God. He often takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs, but the craft of the wiſeſt never took him. *In vain* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is the net ſpread in the eye or ſight of the ſilly bird:* If a weak man ſee the ſnare, he will not come into it: There is no ſnare can be ſpread out of the eye and ſight of God, and therefore he will never come into any ſnare. And as it is an impoſſible thing, ſo alſo a thing extreamly perillous, to go about to mock God: ſo much the Apoſtle infers from this principle: For he had no ſooner laid down my concluſion, *God is not mocked*, but preſently he ſubjoyns, *Whatſoever a man ſoweth, that alſo ſhall he reap.* Our actions, good or bad, are like the ſeed ſown, the reward of them is the harveſt reaped; ſuch as the ſeed ſown is, ſuch ſhall the corn reaped be: God will not give them a harveſt of wheat and barly, who have ſown tares and cockle. Many evil works are rewarded by men with good, and moſt good works are rewarded by men with evil: but God is not unrighteous, either to give us good for evil, or evil for good. For though God beſtows ſome common temporary benefits upon mankind in common, *making his ſun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſending rain on the juſt and unjuſt,* Mat. 5. 45. yet he beſtows no ſpecial nor eternal favours upon them; and a time will ſhortly come, when they ſhall not enjoy thoſe which are common, and temporary.

Thirdly Obſerve, *We may be found mockers and diſhonourers of God, while we think we are ſerving and honouring him.*

A good end will not excuſe us while our way is unwarrantable.

Laſtly Obſerve, *We may be judged to do that which our actions ſpeak, though we be far from ſuch intentions.*

Jobs friends had no ſuch wicked purpoſe in their hearts as to mock God, yet *Job* had reaſon to charge them with it.

They, who having been enlightned fall away, are ſaid to crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to open ſhame, (Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.) *And they who ſin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, are ſaid to tread under foot the Son of God, and to count the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing,* (Heb. 10. 26, 29.) Yet, poſſibly, neither of theſe do it formally and profeſſedly. It is rare to hear of a *Julian* openly blaſpheming the name, and ſpurning againſt the honour of Jeſus Chriſt. Yet in effect, and by way of interpretation, all they do it, who depart from the known truth, and give themſelves up (after conviction) to the wayes and luſts of their own hearts.

Job having diſſwaded his friends from accepting the perſon of God, and from ſpeaking wickedly for him, proceeds on to ſhew them the danger of it in caſe they ſhould dare to do ſo.

Verſ. 10. **He will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons.**

Arguendo arguet.

He will ſurely reprove you.] As if he had ſaid, *You muſt not expect favour at the hands of God, if ye accept perſons by ſhewing them unlawful favour:* Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?

He will ſurely reprove you.] The Hebrew is, *In reproving he will reprove you.* Which noteth two things. Firſt, The certainty of the action; and Secondly, The ſeverity of it. Firſt, *Certainty*, God will do it. We tranſlate, *He will ſurely*, or without doubt he will, there is no queſtion to be made of it, you ſhall be reproved. Secondly, *Severity*. In reproving he will reprove, that is, he will *throughly reprove you*, he will not do it to halves, no, he will rather do it double, as the words are doubled, *in reproving he will reprove you*; you ſhall have it both ſurely and ſeverely.

Reprove them! for what? He will reprove you for your unjuſt dealing, for your iniquity: the latter words of the verſe clear that ſenſe, *He will reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons*, that is, he will reprove you for accepting perſons. As (*John* 16.) the Spirit is promiſed to come into the world, to reprove or convince the world (that Greek word anſwers this in the Hebrew) he ſhall come to reprove the world of ſin, convincing them that they have ſinned, and ſhewing them what the deſert of ſin is.

Further, This reproving may be taken two wayes. There is a verbal reproof, and a penal reproof; a reproof by ſpeaking, and a reproof by acting or inflicting puniſhment: both theſe wayes we are to underſtand the text, *He will ſurely reprove you*, you ſhall have it both by words and blows.

Job in this ſeems to propheſie: for the event made good what he ſpeaks, as we read in *chap.* 42. of this book *verſ.* 7. where the Lord, upon the concluſion of this debate, thus beſpeaks the friends of *Job*, *My wrath* (he means *Eliphaz*) *is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.* Here is a reproof. *Job* I ſay, did, as it were, propheſie what would come upon them, that ſurely ſooner or later, God would take them into his hand, and give them a ſound chiding, for their unſound arguing.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Sinners ſhall not eſcape the reproof of God.*

This reproof (for the clear underſtanding of the point) may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, For a ſtop to what they would act: Thus he doth very frequently reprove ſinners, ſtaying them from a progreſs in their ſins. (*Gen.* 31. 24, 42.) When *Jacob* departed from his Uncle *Laban*, *Laban* purſues him, but the Lord (*ver.* 24.) overtakes *Laban*, and tells him in a dream by night, *Take heed that thou ſpeak not to* Jacob *either good or bad. Jacob* tells him in plain terms, *God rebuked*, or *reproved thee yeſternight* (ver. 42.) It is the word in the Text: As if he had ſaid, Thou cameſt forth with a purpoſe to make me ſerve thee ſtill, but the Lord hath reproved thee, he hath ſtopt thee in this deſign, and forbidden thee to ſpeak either good or bad; that is, that thou ſpeak not any thing to me, either by way of threatning, or of promiſe, to draw me back, and bring me to thine houſe again. We read of this reproof (*Pſal.* 105. 13, 14, 15.) *When the people of the Lord were few, and ſtrangers in the Land, and did wander up and down from one Kingdom to another people, he ſuffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved Kings for their ſakes. He reproved Kings*, this reproof was a ſtopping of their intendments, he would not ſuffer them to wrong his people. When *Iſrael* was mad in following Idols, the Lord ſaith, *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that ſhe ſhall not find her paths*, (*Hoſ.* 2. 6.) It is an alluſion to beaſts, who are ready to break out of their paſtures: the hedge ſtops or gives a turn. God in purſuance of his Covenant, and with a gracious meaning to a revolting people, hedges them up by affliction to ſtop them from undoing. It is a mercy to be kept out of the pound, though it be by a thorn hedge, ſharpeſt troubles. This ſtop the Lord doth often give, though he doth not alwayes give it unto ſinners: He ſometimes lets them run on to fill up their meaſure of ſin, and to receive their full meaſure of puniſhment. Reproof for ſin is a great favour; though the Lord be angry with us for what we have done, yet it is a favour that he will not let us do more, and ſo make our ſelves more vile and miſerable.

There is a ſecond way of reproof which all ſinners ſhall certainly meet with. All ſinners are not ſtopt in their way; but all ſinners ſhall be blamed for going out of the way. Though the fact proceed, yet they ſhall be convinced that there is a fault in the fact; and that it is an evil and a bitter thing to ſin againſt the Lord (*Pſal.* 50. 21.) the hypocrite is deſcribed going on in ſin, and flattering himſelf that God was like himſelf. But what ſaith the Lord, *I will reprove thee, and ſet thy ſins in order before thine eyes.* Some men are afraid to reprove; many are unable to reprove: or if they be neither afraid, nor unable, yet they may be unwilling to be at the pains and trouble of reproving: But the Lord will not forbear his reproof: God is not afraid of any mans great looks; nor doth he want ability to reprove and convince the ſtouteſt ſinners. He will convince the whole world, and ſtop every mouth; he will make every one know what he hath done, and acknowledge that he hath done amiſs. Ordinary men, yea Miniſters, may flatter a people in their ſins; and the Lord may leave them to ſuch a judgment, that when they hate thoſe that reprove in the gate, at laſt they ſhall have none to reprove in the gate: they ſhall have none but flatterers, even ſuch as dawb with untempered morter, and ſow pillows under their elbows, crying peace, peace, where there is no peace: Thus they ſhall fatten them up with flatteries againſt the ſlaughter of the great day; a mans own heart and conſcience is not alwayes in a caſe to reprove him. It is ſaid of *David*, as ſoon as he had cut off the lap of *Saul*'s garment, *His heart ſmote him*; that is, his Conſcience reproved and checked him: It is a happineſs, that when others reprove not, conſcience doth: But though conſcience fail too, yet God will not; God is greater then our conſciences; and when conſcience is aſleep, God neither ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth, and at laſt he will awaken conſcience too.

So that which way ſoever we are flattered, whether by men, or Satan, or by our own conſciences, yet God will ſurely reprove. Many are upheld by falſe teſtimonies in an opinion of their good eſtate, whenas their eſtate is ſtark naught: For as there is a threefold teſtimony for the ſoul, to aſſure it of a true peace, *The water, the blood, and the ſpirit*; ſo in alluſion we may ſay, that to flatter a man into an unſound peace, there is a threefold teſtimony, 1. from the world, 2. from Satan, 3. from a mans own heart; theſe three joyn together to deceive the ſoul into a moſt dangerous ſecurity; but when they have done their beſt (which is indeed worſt for us) to hide us from our ſelves, the Lord diſcovers all; no ſinner ſhall eſcape his reproof; or if he eſcape it a while here, it is in judgment, and he ſhall not eſcape it when the Lord comes as Judge.

Secondly, Take it for reproving by puniſhment, and then Note,

That no impenitent ſinner ſhall eſcape the vengeance of God.

The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs of men (Rom. 1. 18.) *Tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil, of the* Jew *firſt, and alſo of the* Gentile (*Rom.* 2. 9.) There is a certain Decree gone forth, and the word is ratified in Heaven, that every ſin ſhall be puniſhed; puniſhed either in the perſon that doth commit it, or in his Surety. The wages of ſin is death, and that either the ſinner muſt receive, or Chriſt, upon whom our ſins are laid. *He will ſurely reprove thee, if* &c.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *God will reprove and puniſh ſinners ſeverely; he will do it to purpoſe when he doth it.*

If we come under his hand, we ſhall feel his hand; if he rebuke us, we ſhall know he rebukes us; *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me* (ſaith *Ephraim*, Jer. 31.) *and I was chaſtiſed.* (Gen. 2. 17.) *In the day thou eateſt thereof, dying thou ſhalt dye* (which we tranſlate) *thou ſhalt ſurely dye:* There is a certainty and a ſeverity in it; thou ſhalt have a through death, death in thy body, and death in thy ſoul; a temporal death, and an eternal death. There is a ſeverity to thoſe that continue in their impenitency. Some reprove as if they did not reprove; their reproofs are ſoothings rather then reprovings. *Eli* did not *ſurely reprove*; he in reproving did not reprove; he did rather ſmooth then rebuke his ſons; his words did rather incourage then humble them: If we compare, 1 *Sam.* 2. 23. with *chap.* 3. 13. we ſhall find what account God gave of his reproofs. *Eli* (1 *Sam.* 2. 23.) comes to his ſons, and ſaith, *Why do ye ſuch things? for I hear of your evil doings by all this people. Nay my ſons, for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lords people to tranſgreſs:* And then telleth them, *If one man ſin againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge him; but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* Here is a reproof; and, indeed, there is a great deal in it; but it did not come up to the nature of the ſin of thoſe men; he ſhould have ſtormed and thundred upon them; he ſhould have made his ſons ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble: and becauſe he did not, therefore (*Chap.* 3. 13.) the Lord ſent a meſſage to him by *Samuel*, *Behold I will do a thing in* Iſrael, *at which both the ears of every one that heareth it ſhall tingle*, &c. *Becauſe his ſons made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not*; or (according to the Hebrew) *frowned not upon them.* He either ſmiled, or looked too pleaſingly upon his ſons, when he reproved them: this cauſed God to frown upon *Eli*, and brought ſore diſpleaſure upon his family. It is good for us to reprove as God reproves. Great ſinners muſt have great reproofs: Some muſt be ſaved with fear, pulling them out of the fire; we muſt caſt them into the fire, that they may eſcape the fire: Pitiful cruelty is better then cruel pity. Some in dealing both with the ſinful practiſes and erroneous opinions of men, handle them as men handle thorns, as if they durſt not touch them; this fatteneth ſin, and confirmeth error: For as a cold and heartleſs petitioner invites a denial, ſo a cold and heartleſs reprover heartens the ſinner. The way to cure ſome ſouls is, to beat them black and blew with reproofs, as the word uſed ſomewhere in the Epiſtles of *Paul* ſignifies. *Paul* exhorts *Titus* to rebuke the Cretians *ſharply* (or cuttingly) *that they may be ſound in the faith* (Tit. 1. 13.) Soars muſt be cut and lanced, before they can be healed. God reproves ſeverely, as well as certainly. *He will ſurely reprove you.*

If ye do ſecretly accept perſons.

Etiamſi clam perſonam accipiatis. Jun. *Si occultè & per hypocriſin, &c.* Merc.

As if he had ſaid, You may cover the matter, and put pretences or colours upon it, but God will find you out. Some tranſlate the Original by *although*, which makes the ſence clearer, *Although ye do accept perſons ſecretly*, though ye carry it cunningly, or hypocritically: Yet, *&c.* Many ſin, as it were, by art, and are ſkilful to do evil: They can draw a fair ſkin over a putrified ſoar, and make the blackeſt and moſt deformed actions appear beautiful: The Phariſees were indeed corrupt and rotten carkaſſes, yet they looked like painted tombs; they were but rotten poſts, yet they were gilded over. Herein lyes the cunning of ſinning, to do it ſecretly.

Certiſſimè vos arguet ſi occultè in gratiam cujuſque diſcedatis à recto. Tyg.

Others render this clauſe cauſally, *He will reprove you, becauſe you do ſecretly accept perſons:* The cloſe carriage and contrivance of your ſin, will cauſe you greater ſhame. *Job* ſpeaks not thus, as if they ſhould eſcape the reproofs of God, who accept perſons openly: But

Firſt, Becauſe men ſometimes do it openly, and are not reproved. As if he had ſaid, You may perhaps do this ſo groſly, that every man ſees it, and yet no man reprove or puniſh you for it, but though you do it ſecretly, God will reprove and puniſh you for it.

Secondly, It may have this meaning, If you do it ſecretly, men cannot puniſh you: for they judge and puniſh only thoſe things that appear: Juſtice muſt proceed (*ſecundum allegata & probam*) according to what is alledged and proved. So that if you ſecretly accept perſons, men cannot deal with you; but God can: He will find you out, and make you ſmart for it.

Hence Obſerve (I have opened before, what it is to accept perſons, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.)

Firſt, *That to accept perſons is a provoking ſin.*

He will ſurely reprove you, if you do ſecretly accept perſons. The accepting of, or the ſhewing favour to a perſon, may be as great a ſin as the oppreſſing of a perſon. And the reaſon of it is,

Firſt, Becauſe the oppreſſion of one perſon is alwayes joyned with the accepting of another: And therefore though the very act of accepting a mans perſon, or the ſhewing more favour to a man then is due, may ſeem to have no fault, or but a ſmall one in it; yet becauſe the favour you ſhew to one, doth redound to the wrong, or preſſion of another, the ſin muſt needs be exceeding great.

Secondly, It is a provoking ſin to accept perſons, becauſe it is a ſin that cannot be committed, but with a great deal of reſolvedneſs and premeditation. A man muſt know both perſons and cauſes before he can properly be ſaid to accept perſons. So that this is not a ſin which a man falls into through inadvertency, or infirmity: Now, that which puts a great aggravation upon any ſin, is, to do it knowingly, and premeditately. The more of our underſtanding or of our will is mixed with any ſin, the more ſinful it is; I know no ſin which hath more of either, then the accepting of perſons hath. Therefore God will ſurely reprove thoſe who accept perſons; what ſin ſoever eſcapeth, that ſhall not; you cannot plead an excuſe for it; nor is there any cloak for this ſin. It cannot be committed out of ignorance or infirmity, but upon will and election.

Thirdly, As the accepting of one perſon is a wrong to another; ſo it is ſuch a wrong as a man can have no repair for. He that hath the wrong, knows not where to go to be righted. The accepting of perſons is a ſin againſt all Laws, and yet we can hardly find any Law againſt it.

Fourthly, They who ſit in judgment, perſonate and repreſent God himſelf; and therefore while they accept perſons, they make God a partaker, yea an actor in that which he moſt hateth.

And as this is a great ſin in civil judgment, ſo in ſpiritual. This St. *James* ſhews (*Jam.* 2. 2, 3, 4.) *If there come one into your aſſembly, with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, you have reſpect to him, and ſay unto him, ſit thou here in a good place; and there come in alſo a poor man in vile rayment, and you ſay to the poor, ſtand thou there,* &c. *Are ye not then partial in your ſelves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? We muſt not have the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of glory, with reſpect of perſons.* The Apoſtles reſolve for himſelf and his fellow Apoſtles, is (2 *Cor.* 5.16.) *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh*; that is, we accept no mans perſon, in regard of any outward intereſt, as to the ſwaying of our judgment, to think well or ill, highly or meanly of them. External relations and differences muſt bear no weight at the Goſpel beam. It is as dangerous (if not more) to accept perſons in ſpiritual, as in civil judgment; and the Lord is a ſevere revenger of both.

But ſome may ſay, If it were between man and man, ſo to accept perſons, the Lord might be angry indeed; but will not God favour an accepter of perſons, when it is in favour to his own cauſe? No, he will not. That's the caſe here, *Will you* (ſaith *Job*) *accept the perſon of God?*

Hence obſerve, *God will not bear it, that we ſhould wrong the meaneſt man for his ſake.*

Neither indeed can we do him right by doing injury to others. This doth infinitely advance the holineſs and purity of God; and convince the falſeneſs and wickedneſs of man. The Judges and Magiſtrates of the earth will do right between man and man, in an ordinary caſe, between ſubject and ſubject of equal rank; but if it be the Kings caſe, or if ſome great perſon be intereſſed in it, how apt are Judges to lean towards greatneſs, and to give ſentence with the Prince, though they lay it heavy upon the people. Now if God himſelf will not endure that any creature ſhould be wronged, under a pretence of doing him right: How ſhall any men be born out, who favour the great ones of the world, to the prejudice and undoing of inferiours? The Lord proteſts (*Iſai.* 61. 8.) *I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering:* See how he reproves thoſe who were very zealous to promote his cauſe. But is it blame-worthy to be zealous for God? No, Their zeal was good; but the means they uſed to expreſs it, was evil. They robbed men, the better to enable them to bring offerings to God. They oppreſt their brethren, that they might be liberal at the Temple. God teſtifies againſt this, *I hate robbery for burnt-offering.* Woe to thoſe who rob men to inrich God. Some now promote preaching, and perhaps will ſet up a Lecture out of the overplus of their unjuſt gains. Though it be an excellent work to maintain the preaching of the Goſpel, yet their work is bad enough, who gripe and graſp unjuſtly, and think to ſalve it by this, they are very liberal toward the promoting of the Goſpel, this is to bring robbery for burnt-offering. Others extort and grate in their dealings, who pleaſe themſelves with a purpoſe to be charitable to the poor; they will build Almſhouſes, and give much in their *laſt wills to good uſes:* The Lord hates robbery for charity, as well as for burnt-offerings: He rejects what we give, either to him, or to his poor, if we give what we have unduly gotten.

Thirdly, *Job* ſaith, *He will ſurely reprove you, if ye ſecretly accept perſons.*

Then Obſerve, *Secret ſins, even heart-ſins, are known unto God.*

The Lord by *Nathan* tells *David*, *Thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this thing before all Iſrael, and before the Sun.* Secret ſins ſhall have open puniſhment; that which is done (whether good or evil) in a corner, God will proclaim upon the houſe top: Remember this, you that can ſin ſmoothly and fairly; that can (when you have eat up your brethren) like the Whore in the Proverbs, *Wipe your mouthes, and ſay, we have done no wickedneſs.*

I grant, that in ſome ſence ſecret ſins are not ſo bad as open ſins are: Yet there are conſiderations which render them worſe then open ſins. Secret ſins are not ſo bad as open ſins in two reſpects. Firſt, becauſe they give no ſcandal to thoſe that are good. Secondly, Becauſe they do not infect by example, nor incourage thoſe that are evil. Open ſins are both ſcandalous and infectious; ſecret ſins are neither. But if a man ſin ſecretly, upon deſign to hide his ſin, or hoping to carry it ſo, that God ſhall not find him out, this ſecreſie increaſes ſin, and ſhall have the greater condemnation. He that ſins openly, appears to men what he is; but he that thus ſins ſecretly, thinks that it cannot appear to God what he is, or he hopes that God will never make it appear what he is. This is a great aggravation upon his ſin, and therefore *Job* puts a mark upon it, *He will ſurely reprove you, although you,* or, *if you do ſecretly accept perſons:* Do it as privately as you will, that ſhall be no excuſe to you; though ſome ſecrecy may mitigate ſin, yet no ſecrecy can acquit us of ſin.

Job goes on yet to humble his Friends, and to ſhew them their error: He adds two Arguments further in the eleventh and twelfth verſes. The firſt is taken from the Majeſty of God, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*? And the ſecond is taken from the weakneſs and frailty of man in general, and of themſelves in particular. *Your remembrances are like unto aſhes, your bodies to bodies of clay:* Will you then contend with God? will you ſin againſt him?

Verſe 11. **Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?**

Aliqui ex Hebræis שאתו *flammam exponunt. Annon ejus ignis vos terret?*

Statim ut ſe commoverit, turbabit vos. Vulg. *Commotio ejus verſabit vos.* Sept. *Elevatio ejus.* Reg. Complut. *Elevare ſe idem eſt quod ſurgere & ſe ad puniendum accingere, cum punit Deus dicitur ſurgere, egredi, moveri loco ſuo. Adventus vel commotio domini pœnas inſtigentis hoſtium ſtrepite comparatur in Scriptura,* Merc.

It is queried what is here meant by *the excellency of God.* The Hebrew word is derived from a root which ſignifieth *to lift up.* And ſome of the Jewiſh Doctors tell us, that there is a word of this form, which ſignifies *a fire, or a flame*; and ſo the Verb *Naſha*, ſignifies ſometimes to burn or to conſume, as well as to aſcend, becauſe the natural tendency of fire is upward, aſcending as it burneth. And ſo they give the ſence thus, *Shall not the fire of the Lord make you afraid? ſhall not the flame of God terrifie you*? What flame? what fire? The flame of his anger here, and the fire of his wrath for ever. There is a fire in hell (whether material, or metaphorical, is not a queſtion for this place.) Shall not that fire of God make ſinners afraid? Are you able to dwell with thoſe everlaſting burnings, with that conſuming fire? The Saints, who are acquitted from their ſins, ſhall dwell with God, who is an everlaſting burning: but wicked men, whoſe ſins reſt upon them, ſhall be as the ſtubble, ſuddenly burnt, though never conſumed.

But I paſs that. Another reads it thus, *Shall not he, as ſoon as he moveth himſelf, make you afraid*? When God begins to riſe, man muſt fall: So the words bear an alluſion to Magiſtrates, who ſitting upon the ſeat of Judicature, when they come to give ſentence upon a guilty perſon, begin to ſtir themſelves, to riſe majeſtically, and to compoſe their countenances into an aſpect of terror and ſeverity. Thus when the Lord begins to ſtir and move himſelf, will not you quake? The ſplendor of Majeſty, which ſits in his face, dazles the eyes, and overcomes the ſtrength both of men and Angels.

Alludit ad terrorem quem Deus apparens incutere ſolebat. Bold.

Others conceive *Job* referring to that cuſtom of God in thoſe ancient times, when he appeared in a Cloud, or by ſome viſible ſign to his ſervants the Prophets, and other holy men: When the Lord did ſo declare his preſence, we find (as it hath been obſerved in former paſſages of this book) that the holieſt men were ſurprized with fear, and trembling took hold of them. Hence that humble deprecation of *Job* (Chap. 9. 34.) *Let not his fear terrifie me.*

Iſta commotio eſt levatio vel extollentia, quare alii legunt excellentia ejus turbabit vos, i.e. *ſtatim ut ſuam majeſtatem & excellentiam conſpicuam fecerit turbabimini.* Pined.. נשא *Attollere elevare uude* נשיא *Significat* ducem *aut principem eo quod ſit elevatus ſuper alios.*

Further, This ſtirring up may very well ſtand with our tranſlation: For the Hebrew, *Naſha*, from whence this word cometh, ſignifies *to lift up, to advance and extol:* as it ſignifies the ſtirring and moving of a perſon when he riſeth or lifteth himſelf up; ſo alſo his dignity or excellency, a civil riſing or highneſs, as well as a local. Dying *Jacob* calls *Reuben* his firſt-born, *The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.* The priviledge of primogeniture was very great. The firſt-born were as Princes among their brethren: And from this word, a *Duke* or a *Prince* is called *Naſhe*, becauſe he is lifted up, or exalted above other men. Hence alſo, in an ill ſence, the pride and ſinful loftineſs of man is often expreſſed by this word: for pride is the lifting up of our ſelves above our place and degree: when we in our thoughts riſe beyond what we are, or are over-conceited of what we are, this is pride. Thus *Moſes* and *Aaron* are falſely taxed (*Numb.* 16. 4.) *Ye take too much upon you; wherefore lift you up your ſelves above the congregation of the Lord*? (It is this word) why do you make your ſelves better then others, or greater then you are? Is it not the pride of your ſpirits? So (*Iſa.* 14. 13.) the pride of the *Aſſyrian* is deſcribed, *Thou haſt ſaid in thine heart, I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God.* He was not ſo mad as to think that he could literally get up into Heaven, or that he could ſet his Throne above the Stars; but the phraſe noteth out the exceſſiveneſs of his pride. He was the higheſt Monarch on earth, and it was no pride for him to think himſelf ſo; (it is not pride for a King to think himſelf the greateſt man in his Kingdom, for he is ſo) but when he would be higher then man, and do that which exceedeth the ſtate of a creature, here was pride. The *excellency* of God is that height, dignity, glory, and majeſty which he hath in himſelf, above and beyond all creatures, *Shall not his excellency* **Make you afraid?**] The word ſignifies extream fear, ſuch fear as doth ſwallow up and amaze. *Pſal.* 18. 4. *The flouds of ungodly men*; or (nearer the letter) *The flouds of the ſons of belial*; that is, the abundant ungodlineſs of thoſe who are moſt ungodly, vomiting out reproaches and threatnings upon me, *made me afraid.* (*Heſt.* 7. 6.) Haman *was afraid before the King and the Queen:* when *Eſther* told *Ahaſuerus* that he was the man that had conſpired againſt the *Jews*, he was ſo afraid, that he ſunk under his fear. (*Iſa.* 21. 4.) *My heart panted, fearfulneſs affrighted me* ('tis this word) *the night of my pleaſure hath he turned into fear unto me*; ſuch a fear ſeized upon me, as turned all my pleaſure into dread and terror.

בעת *Perterruit, perturbavit.* στροβήσει ὑμᾶς, Sept. *Torquebit, vexabit.*

Put all theſe together, and there are four or five wayes in which the ſence of this queſtion [*Shall not his excellency make you afraid*] may be made out.

First thus, As if *Job* did ſuggeſt to his Friends how ſuddenly they would diſcover their own weakneſs and fearfulneſs, though they now inſulted over him, if the Lord did but appear in his excellency and greatneſs to them, as he had to him. As if he had ſaid, *You think you ſhall never be in ſuch a plight as I am, whatſoever God doth with you: But you ſhall find it otherwiſe; you will tell me another tale if God do but once ſhew himſelf againſt you, and do with you as he hath done with me: You can now trample upon me, and think I am a man of a very fearful ſpirit; but if the Lord do but appear in his excellency, your ſtrength will be no more then mine. Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you, as it hath done upon me*? That's one ſence.

Objicit illis rerum adverſarum impatientiã, ſemel enim correpta Deo, conſtantiam quam nunc ſani & felices habere videntur, amittent. Aquin.

Secondly, Some conceive that *Job* doth only threaten his Friends with the terror of the Lord, and with the breakings forth of wrath, which they were to expect for what they had done againſt him. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*? Certainly it ſhall; that is, the Lords power and greatneſs will at laſt make you know, that you have handled his cauſe ill, and done me wrong in handling it.

Graviſſimũ ſuis amicis comminatur ſupplicium. Pin.

Thirdly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*? may refer to what he had ſaid before, *You have accepted the perſon of God*, but ſhould not his excellency make you afraid to do it? Mens greatneſs may make you willing to flatter them (*few flatter their equals, and none will flatter their inferiours*) becauſe haply your dependance is upon them, and your expectations from them: but ſhould not the excellency of God make you afraid to flatter him? The excellency of men may provoke you to favour them, and wrong inferiours to ſerve their turns; but ſuch excellency as is in God ſhould make you forbear to do ſo. There are two reaſons why it ſhould. Firſt, God is above all your flattery and favour, he needs none of your help: Great men may have need of lyes and flatteries: but God hath none. Secondly, As the Lord is above the flatteries of men, and hath no need of them; ſo he doth abhor and abominate them. Many men love to be flatter'd, you can do nothing ſo pleaſing to them as that; yea, though you flatter them with the obſcuring and dimming of the true luſtre of others: but the Lord likes it not. *Should not ſuch excellency make you afraid?*

Fourthly, Others interpret the Interrogation affirmatively, *Doth not his greatneſs make you afraid*? Yes, his greatneſs doth make you afraid: You fear the greatneſs of God ſo much, that you thereupon condemn me: you are ſo afraid that you ſhould in any thing tax the juſtice of God, that you muſt needs tax me for unjuſt: As if he had ſaid, *Is not this the reaſon that you deal thus with me? Is it not becauſe the excellency of God doth over-awe you; therefore you would rather offend on my part then on his; you would be ſure (as you hope) not to diſpleaſe God, whatever becomes of me: you think (poſſibly) thus with your ſelves, If we ſhould ſpeak leſs for God then is his due, he is ſo great that he can puniſh it; but if we ſpeak leſs for* Job *then his due, he is but our equal, what can he do? we need not fear him.* Thus many underſtand the words, not as if *Job* did threaten his Friends with, but as if he only told them, that they were over-much afraid of the dignity and excellency of God, and thereupon were weighed down in their judgments to ſpeak they cared not how hardly of him.

Tenendum quod Job *hoc verſu non terreat amicos ſed præpoſtere territos, metu eminentiæ vel magnitudinis Dei accuſat.* Coc. *Judicatis ſecundum perſonam potiorem non ex perſpectione cauſæ.* Id.

Fifthly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*? That is, his excellency ought to make you afraid. (*Mal.* 1. 6.) *A ſon honoureth his father*; that is, a ſon ought to honour his father; it is the duty of a ſon to honour his father. So here, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*? that is, his excellency ought to make you afraid. It is a due and an equal thing that you ſhould be ſo kept in awe by the Majeſty of God, that you ſhould not ſpeak or do any thing to the prejudice of man. *Should not his excellency make you afraid*?

Obſerve from it, Firſt, *That the Lord hath an excellency in him,*

Excellency is an exceſs in any quality, or a gradual heightning of any thing or perſon above another. We are to conſider this, that we may give God glory, *and praiſe him* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh) *according to his excellent greatneſs*. God hath an exceſs of goodneſs in him; not an exceſs, as exceſs notes ſuperfluity, or more then needeth; but an exceſs, as it notes more then is in any other beſides himſelf. The excellency of God may be conſidered two wayes, Firſt, Abſolutely, as it is an excellency in himſelf; Secondly, comparatively to all other excellencies. God is excellent beyond compare; they who have an excellency, have none like unto Gods, or none at all compared with God. The Prophet tells us, that *The Nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the ballance; yea, all Nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs then nothing, and vanity*, *Iſa*. 4. 15, 17. Beſides the greateſt excellency of man is a fading excellency (*Job* 4. 21.) *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away*? Men go away not only as they are poor and mean, but as clothed with excellency, whether outward excellency, or inward excellency: the beauty of the body, learning, wiſdom, eloquence, the endowments and riches of the mind, all theſe excellencies which are in them, go away? *Journeyeth it not with them* (when they make their journey out of the world?) as Mr. *Broughton* reads that place. And as the excellency of all men (I mean their worldly excellency) ſhall go away, ſo eſpecially ſhall the excellency of the hypocrite (*Job* 20. 6.) *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he ſhall periſh for ever.* Hypocrites make a great ſhew, they have not only the profeſſion of Religion, but often the beauty of Religion ſhining upon them; there is a verdure and flouriſhing greenneſs upon their wayes to the view of man: but though their excellency mount up to the Heavens, yet down they ſhall, they ſhall lye down, and everlaſting contempt ſhall cover them.

Further, We may open the excellency of God under a threefold notion.

Firſt, There is an excellency of his Being.

Secondly, Of his Attributes.

Thirdly, Of his Works.

In all theſe we ſhould acquaint our ſelves with his *excellency*.

Firſt, There is an excellency in the Being of God; creatures have a being, but not ſuch a being as God hath. For

Firſt, The Being of God is of himſelf. All creatures have their being of him, and from him. Creatures have a derivative being; God is *Original Being, the firſt Being*. Here is the excellency of his Being. It is ſaid (*Habak*. 1. 7.) of the *Chaldeans, That their judgment and their dignity*, or (it is the word of the Text) *their excellency ſhall proceed of themſelves*. But is any man the fountain of his own happineſs, excellency or greatneſs? Can it be ſaid of any in the world, that his excellency ſhall proceed of himſelf? In one reſpect the excellency of ſome doth: In another reſpect it doth not, it cannot. It cannot be ſaid of any excellency in creatures, ſtrictly, that it proceedeth from themſelves, all comes from God. But take a creature in its reference to any, or all other creatures, and ſo the excellency of ſome proceedeth from themſelves, and not from other creatures. Such is the meaning of that place, *Their judgment and their excellency ſhall proceed of themſelves*; that is, they ſhall not depend upon other perſons, or Nations, they ſhall not imp out their wings with other mens feathers, nor ſhall they ſhine with a borrowed glory. Some Kingdoms do glorious things, but their glory proceeds from neigbouring aſſiſtances: But the *Chaldean* needed not to confederate with any. Thus a creatures excellency may proceed from himſelf, not from other creatures; but all proceeds from God: and the excellency only of God in his Being is from himſelf alone, independent upon the creature.

Secondly, *Gods Being is to himſelf as well as from himſelf*: And thus alſo he excelleth man, whoſe being is not to himſelf, but to another; for all things are and were created unto God. No creature was made to it ſelf. The dignity of God is to himſelf alone: He indeed doth give out himſelf voluntarily, and ſo his Being is for the good of others; but he hath this prerogative, to keep all his Being to himſelf: As it is the holineſs of man to put forth his being for God; ſo it is the holineſs of God, that his Being is for himſelf; he doth and may do all things for his own glory, as man ought to do all for the glory of God.

Thirdly, *Gods Being is an unchangeable Being*: Man is in motion every day, either in his increaſe, or in his decreaſe; he is either growing, or he is decaying, both in his natural and civil ſtate. Man hath no conſiſtency, while he is, he continueth not what he was. Man is a ſhadow, he is alwayes turning; but with God *there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning*. The Pſalmiſt ſets out this oppoſition between God and creatures (*Pſal*. 106. 26, 27.) *They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a garment, as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed; but thou Lord art the ſame, and thy years ſhall have no end.*

Fourthly, Mans being in this life, it is not only changeable, but determinable. Gods is an eternal Being, he is from everlaſting to everlaſting. We are ſhort-breathed, ſhort-lived creatures; if we number three or fourſcore years, we are counted wondrous old; and when we have numbred all our years, they are no number at all to the years of God.

Fifthly, Mans being is but a particular being: The Being of God is an univerſal Being; he is a Being in all things, and yet not included in any; a Being without all things, and yet not excluded from any.

Sixthly, Mans being is ſuch as man may comprehend; one man can meaſure another. No man hath any ſuch excellency in him, but another may be found to take the length, and breadth, and depth of it, even all its dimenſions. But Gods Being is an incomprehenſible Being, there is no meaſuring, either of his Nature, of his Counſels, or of his Wayes.

Seventhly, The Being of God is an abſolute perfect Being. Mans being is reſpective and imperfect; though it be perfect in its kind, as ſuch a creature, yet it is not perfect in all kinds: Somewhat may be taken from man, and added to him, and he a man ſtill; but God is ſo perfect, that nothing can be added to, or taken from him; all things are laid up in him: He is the ſum and comprehenſion of all thoſe excellencies which are ſcattered in the creature, and he infinitely excels them all.

The reſult of all theſe, is *excellency*. God hath not only a Being as we have, but an excellency, a glory in his Being above all other beings: The being of the creature is no being, we are but *Non-entities* compared with God. *I am that I am*, is his ſtile. God is the higheſt Entity, the Entity of all Entities.

Secondly, The excellency of God appears through all his Attributes.

Man is wiſe. There are many wiſe men in the world: But is man wiſe as God? The wiſdom of man is fooliſhneſs to God; and the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then men.

Man hath knowledge, but doth man know as God? Man knoweth not as God knoweth, if we conſider either the matter or manner of knowledge. Man knoweth but ſome parts and pieces of things; God knoweth all things: Man knoweth but in part; God knoweth fully: Man knoweth one thing by another, he muſt beat out his way by argument, and know by demonſtration, deſcending ſometimes from the cauſe to the effect; aſcending at other times from the effect to the cauſe: But God knoweth all things in themſelves; He knows by immediate intuition: He ſeeth cauſes in themſelves, not by their effects; and he ſeeth the effects in themſelves, and not from their cauſes.

Man is juſt. There are juſt men: But is any man juſt as God? O the exactneſs of the juſtice of God! There is no errour in his judgement, he will give to every man according to his work. Where's the man that gives to any man according to his works?

Man is merciful: but is he merciful as God? Hath man ſuch a ſtock of mercy as he? Hath man mercy for ever? Hath man multitudes of mercies? Mans mercies are cruelties compared with the mercies of God.

Man is patient; but is he patient as God? If God had no more patience then man, or then all men and Angels too, his patience would be ſpent out in a day, it would not laſt one hour, amongſt ſo many ſinnings and provocations, among ſinnings after ſo many warnings.

Man hath love, but doth he love as God loveth? ſo freely? ſo fully? ſo conſtantly? ſo without ends and deſigns upon thoſe he loves? Our love is hatred compared to the love of God.

What ſhould I ſay of the power, of the holineſs, of the faithfulneſs, of the bounty of God? What of every thing that is attributed unto God? He is ſo excellent in every one, that he is all excellency.

Thirdly, There is an excellency in the Works of God: what God is in Being, the ſame he is in working. He is (*Iſa.* 28. 29.) *Wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working.* Excellent in working, becauſe excellent in being. *Exod.* 15. 7. *In the greatneſs of thine excellency, thou haſt overthrown them that roſe up againſt thee.* (Deut. 33. 26.) *There is none like the God of Jeſurun* (that is, the God of Iſrael) *who rideth upon the heaven to thy help, and in his excellency on the skie?* God is ſaid to ride to the help of his people, becauſe he helps them ſpeedily; and he rideth in his excellency, that he may ſhew his ſtate and magnificence when he comes to help them. When God works in his excellency, we ſhall ſee the excellencies of God imprinted upon his works. *Haſt thou an arm like God?* ſaith Elihu to *Job, or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him? Canſt thou teach like God?* (ſaith he alſo). We may ſay to the worker, *Canſt thou work like God?* to the Teacher, *Canſt thou teach like God?* to the Souldier, *Canſt thou fight like God?* Now, as there is an excellency in the Being, Attributes and Works of God, ſo this his excellency ſhould ſtrongly affect and overawe our hearts: *Should not his excellency make you afraid?*

> Hence Obſerve, *The excellency of God ſhould keep men in a holy compoſure of ſpirit, in a holy care to pleaſe him, in a holy fear of offending him.*

What? before the excellency of God, before a God ſo excellent in Being, ſo excellent in the manner of his Being, ſo excellent in working, and we walk looſely and careleſly? Let this excellency of his make us afraid. *The Lord moſt high is terrible,* (Pſal. 47. 2.) he is terrible becauſe ſo high. The Preacher in his deſcription of old men, ſaith, *They ſhall be afraid of that which is high,* (Eccleſ. 12. 5.) Old age loves to keep upon even ground, for fear of falling: But the youngeſt and ſtouteſt of men, they who are moſt ambitious of clambring unto high places, have cauſe to be afraid of the moſt high God, and when he diſcovers his highneſs they will be afraid. Men never fear that which is but equal to them; and until they conceive an excellency in God, they never fear him. *David* prayeth that God would be pleaſed to ſhew his excellency, his greatneſs and his highneſs to his enemies, (*Pſal.* 7. 6.) *Ariſe, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thy ſelf becauſe of the rage of mine enemies, for their ſakes return thou on high.* Why would he have God to lift up himſelf and to return on high? The Lord is ever on high: The meaning is, Do thou declare thy ſelf to be on high, let thy excellency appear above all. Why? What will be the effect of this? *So* (ſaith he) *ſhall the congregation of the people compaſs thee about*; that is, they ſhall crouch and fall down before thee when thou appeareſt in thy highneſs. When Chriſt appeared in his highneſs, though but as a Lamb, upon his throne, all the congregation did compaſs him about, terrour and aſtoniſhment ſurprized them all: The kings of the earth and the chief captains, called to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, to hide them from the face of him that ſate on the throne, *Rev.* 6. 16.

Nonne quū erigetur ipſe ſuper ſolium judicii,&c. Tar.

The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* gloſſeth this text of *Job, Shall ye not be afraid when the Lord is lifted up, or ſet upon his throne of judgement?* They who now ſlight the Lord, ſhall then tremble at the Lord, and before the preſence of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.

Laſtly, Foraſmuch as *Job* having charged his friends with accepting the perſon of God, and with ſpeaking falſly in favour of him, ſubjoyns in this verſe, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*

> Obſerve, *That all our undue-ſpeakings and actings for, or in the cauſe of God, ariſe from our undue apprehenſions of God.*

We conceive of God after the rate and proportion of a man, and meaſure him by our own ſpan. Hence it is that many in ſtead of adoring and fearing God, do indeed but play with him, and take the liberty of an ungovern'd boldneſs, both concerning his counſels and his judgements. What becomes of the excellency of God, when he is drawn down to the reaſon, and *narrow'd*, or rather *nothing'd* into the capacities of a creature? We never abaſe our ſelves as we ought, nor keep our diſtance, till we are rapt into the meditation of his divine excellencies and perfections. When *David* puts thoſe humbling, emptying queſtions, (*Pſal.* 8. 4.) *What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* When he (I ſay) puts theſe queſtions, ſee where his heart was (verſ. 9.) *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* When he thought of the excellency of *Gods name*, he did not think himſelf worth the *naming, What is man?* while he thought who God was, he did not think himſelf worthy of one of Gods thoughts, *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* The Angels cover their faces before God; they adore, but they cannot bear his glory. They that know God, fear him, and they who know him moſt (ſo do Angels) fear him moſt. The more excellent any creature is, the more he fears the excellency of the Creatour. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*

And his dread fall upon you?

His dread.] The words bear the ſame ſenſe with the former, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them. *His dread:* The Original imports a fear riſing from ſome outward cauſe. Divine fear is cauſed three wayes; Firſt, by the rule or precept of the law. Secondly, By the penalty or threatnings of the law. Thirdly, By thoſe judgements which are inflicted for the tranſgreſſion of the law. We may underſtand the text of fear, by all theſe. *Shall not his dread*, the dread of the precept, which is ſo holy: the dread of the threatning, which is ſo terrible: the dread of the judgements of God, which are ſo exemplary, *fall upon you?*

פחד *Pavor, timor, ad metū ab externa vi aut authoritate incuſſum ſolet referri.* Riv.

Fall upon you?] The dread of God is from above, as lodged on high, and ſo comes down (as it were) with an advantage upon tranſgreſſours, (*Rev.* 11. 11.) It is ſaid that when ten parts of the city fell, *fear fell upon the reſt.* Fear fell upon them, as a ſtone from an high tower, and cruſht their ſpirits. The Apoſtle ſpeaks this notion, *Rom.* 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven.* As if heaven did open to let his wrath down, or to diſcharge it like a thunderbolt upon unrighteous men. The *Spaniards* have a proverb (which an interpreter remembreth upon this place) *God hath the hill and the ſtones*, which is as much as to ſay, *God hath the upper ground of all creatures,* and his wrath falls upon them as ſtones from an high place. We may contend with angry men upon even ground, creature with creature, but God hath the upper ground of all creatures, his wrath *falls* upon us. He hath the hill, yea he hath the wind and the ſun of us, he hath all advantages on his ſide, there is no ſtanding out againſt him.

Semper ex ſublimi loco pugnare adverſus mortales Deus dicitur; quod in Hiſpanorū proverbio eſt: Ipſius mons & lapides ſunt. Pined.

Hence Note, Firſt, *God is to be dreaded.*

To be dreaded in the juſtice of his law, in the ſeverity of his threatnings, in the greatneſs of his judgements; from each of theſe, dread falls like a mighty milſtone upon the heads of unbelievers and obdurate ſinners. Juſtice appears with open face in the law, threatnings lie virtually in the law: judgements are ſeminally in the threatnings, and threatnings are viſibly in judgements. God is to be dreaded, when we hear the rule of the law; he is to be feared more, when we hear the threatnings of the law; he is to be feared moſt, when we hear or ſee thoſe threatnings executed in judgements. *The man* (ſaith *Moſes*, Deut. 17. 12, 13.) *that doth preſumptuouſly* (by ſinning againſt the rule of the law) *ſhall die* (by ſuffering the penalty of the law) *and all the people ſhall hear and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly.*

Secondly Obſerve, *The dread of God ſhall certainly fall upon ſinners.*

As it noteth a duty, that we ſhould dread God, ſo an event that ſuch as continue in ſin. the dread of God will fall upon them. The dread of God will ſurely take hold of ſinners, unleſs they get Chriſt to be their Saviour: No fence againſt the dread of God but Chriſt: For as one Scripture ſaith, *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs:* So, another ſaith, *He is Jeſus that delivereth us from the wrath to come.* There is no wrath eſcaping, but by a *Mediator.*

Verſ. 12. **Your remembrances are like unto aſhes, and your bodies to bodies of clay.**

This verſe is an *Antitheſis* to the words before. *Job* having perſwaded his friends to ſilence, and to deſiſt their unfriendly carriage towards him, by an argument taken from the excellency of God; now moveth them by an argument from their own weakneſs and infirmity; *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?* *verſ.* 11. There he tells them who God is, and that they ought to ſtand in awe of him. Here in this 12th, he tells them what they are, and how they ought to be abaſed in the ſenſe of their own frailty; *Your remembrances are like unto aſhes, your bodies to bodies of clay. Hold your peace,* &c. Will you, who are clay and aſhes ſtand it out againſt his excellency?

Your remembrances are like unto aſhes.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *Your remembrances are parables of aſhes, or have the ſimilitude and likeneſs of aſhes in them.*

משלי
אפר
Memoriæ veſtræ parabolæ cineris. Mon.
Inſtar cineris. Pagn.

There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of thoſe words. Some expound them as a threatning againſt his friends: *Your remembrances are like unto aſhes*, that is, your remembrances ſhall be brought to aſhes, or, you ſhall be made like unto aſhes. To bring one to aſhes, is an effect of wrath; the fire of Gods wrath quickly conſumes man to aſhes. Aſhes are a ſign and a monument of extreameſt anger. So the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, in his ſecond Epiſtle, *chap.* 2.6. Where, propoſing Gods judgement upon thoſe cities, he ſaith, *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into aſhes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an enſample unto thoſe that after ſhould live ungodly.* And the Apoſtle *Jude*, deſcribing the deſtruction of the ſame cities, ſaith, *They ſuffered the vengeance of eternal fire*, they were turned into aſhes for ever: For, as if that fire burned or were not quenched unto this day; he calls it an *eternal fire*: or the reaſon may be, becauſe they went from one fire to another, from the fire which God rained down from heaven, to the fire which he hath prepared for the ungodly in hell: Hiſtorians ſpeak of the marks of this vengeance of God upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, as ſtill remaining. Some call that place, *The Region of aſhes.* And *Joſephus* reports it, as the tradition of thoſe times, that the apples of *Sodom* were fair and pleaſant to the eye, as if fit to be eaten, but as ſoon as they were touched, they turned to aſhes. Some Interpreters (I ſay) conceive *Job* hinting that judgement of God upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, thereby admoniſhing his friends, that as God turned thoſe cities into aſhes, ſo if they ſhould provoke his excellency, he could quickly deal with them, and make them an everlaſting argument of his diſpleaſure. Though I ſtay not upon this Expoſition;

Invenitur regio cineris. Paul. Oroſius, *l.* 1. *c.* 5.
Qui colore quidẽ ſunt edulibus ſimiles carpẽtium vero manibus in fumũ diſſolvuntur & cinerem Joſeph. *de bello Judaic. l.* 3. *c.* 5.

Yet becauſe it contains a general truth, take one Note from it:

That, *If God be provoked he can ſoon turn all into aſhes, weaken the ſtrength, and blaſt the beauty of man.*

As the Lord ſpeaks to *Abimelech*, Gen. 20. 3. *Thou art but a dead man, becauſe of the woman which thou haſt taken; for ſhe is a mans wife:* As if he ſhould ſay, I can quickly deſtroy thee, turn thee into the grave, tumble thee into the earth, though thou art a king and a great one. The *Roman* Hiſtory ſpeaks of *Cæſar*, that when *Metellus* the Tribune controlled his orders, about the publick Treaſure, *Be quiet* (ſaith he) *leſt I lay thee dead in the place*; yet correcting himſelf, he added, *Young man, it is harder for me to ſpeak it, then to do it*; which he ſpake to mollifie the ſharpneſs of his ſpeech, as not proceeding from his nature, but his paſſion, and as being grieved at the harſhneſs of his own language. If the Kings and Potentates of the earth ſpeak at ſuch a rate, that they can eaſier deſtroy men, then ſay they will deſtroy; how much more may God? This is really true of him who is the only Potentate, the Lord *of heaven and earth*, that it is as eaſie for him to deſtroy perſons and nations, and to make their remembrance to be as aſhes, as it is for him to ſay he will.

Some others ſpeak higher (*a*), and interpret this text, as they ſay probably, of eternal fire: as if *Job* had threatned his friends with damnation. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? Your remembrances are like unto aſhes*, you ſhall be turned into hell, and ſent to everlaſting deſtruction. But I approve this leſs then the former. *Job* was diſpleaſed with his friends for their opinions concerning him: yet doubtleſs he had a better opinion of them, then to judge them under ſuch a diſpleaſure of God.

(a) *Fortè etiam extremũ Gehennæ ſupplicium cineris nomine proponitur, vel ſignificat mortẽ ignobilẽ.* Pined.

(b) *Sẽtentiã hanc, & ex cinere ductã ſimilitudinẽ ad ipſas reſponſiones & argumenta amicorũ refert, q.d. reſponſiones veſtræ pereunt & collabuntur.* Vat

Thirdly, *Your remembrances* is expounded actively thus, *the things which you remember* (*b*), the reaſonings, objections and records which you have brought out of the ſtore-houſe of your memories againſt me, and would have remembred, are like unto aſhes, utterly extinct and eaſily blown away. The word Remembrance, is uſed in that ſence, (*Exod.* 17.14.) Where *Moſes* is commanded to write a *memorial* againſt *Amalek*, that is to record ſomewhat as a *remembrance* againſt them: Records, and the officer that keeps records, are both expreſſed by this word, becauſe they preſerve the remembrances of what is paſt.

Unde מזכירים *Mazchirim dicebantur illi qui erant à commentariis, quiq; negotia ſcriptis mãdabãt.* Liber Lichrinoth, i.e. memoriarum. *Eſt.* 6. 1

Though this hath a fair ſenſe, yet it ſeemeth not to be ſo clear to the connection of theſe words, therefore I rather inſiſt upon a fourth interpretation, (*c*) taking this *remembrance* more generally for any thing which is memorable in man; as riches, dignity, power, credit, learning, wiſdom. As if *Job* had ſaid, *Theſe things by which you hope to be remembred and become famous in the world, are but aſhes*; that is, mean, and of no conſiſtence. (*Prov.* 10.7.) *The memory of the juſt is bleſſed, but the name of the wicked ſhall rot. The memory,* that is, when perſons living in after-ages ſhall remember the juſt, they will bleſs them and highly eſteem them; but the name and credit of wicked men ſhall conſume as a rotten thing to nothing.

(c) *At cinis eſt qui quid tãdẽ turgetis amici.* Mer. Poet

Memoria veſtra i.e. *quicquid in vobis memorabile eſt, ut opes, dignitas, fama, ſplendor & vita, nihil aliud eſt quã cinis omnia in cinerẽ & nihilũ redigẽda ut vana* &c. Merc.

Taking their remembrance for that which was moſt memorable in them, We may Obſerve,

That the beſt things, thoſe things which are moſt remarkable and memorable in man, are but vain, and ſubject to a ſudden decay.

What men lay by, and eſteem as a monument to poſterity, or as a memorial to preſerve their names to all generations, how often is it ſcattered like aſhes in the air, or ſpilt like water upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up? Men for their *remembrance*, uſe to ſet up the moſt laſting materials, pillars of marble, or Pyramides of ſtone. It is ſaid of *Abſolom*, that *he in his life time had taken and reared up for himſelf a pillar, and he called it after his own name, becauſe he had no ſon to keep his name in remembrance*: Yet that remembrance of his, proved like aſhes, and ſo will all that whatſoever it is, which vain men frame or fancy to themſelves to make them memorable and renowned among poſterity or ſucceeding ages. Your remembrances are like unto aſhes; which will receive a clearer evidence when I have a little opened the latter clauſe of this verſe.

גב *Propriè ſig. ſuperiorẽ partem & prominentẽ, unde vox latina* gibbus *credenda eſt fluxiſſe.* Rab. Mard.

Gabbatha eſt ſuggeſtũ eminẽs lapidibus ſtratũ.

Vult quicquid in ipſis potiſſimũ eminet, eſſe cumulum luti. Merl.

Et tumulus luti altiora veſtra. *Jun.*

And your bodies to bodies of clay.

That is, As aſhes are a fit parable or ſimilitude to ſhadow out all the permanency or excellency of your remembrances, ſo a body or a heap of clay, is a ſufficient parable or ſimilitude of all the value and dignity of your bodies.

Your bodies.] The word (*Gab*) which we tranſlate *body*, ſignifies any thing, which is *high, lifted up and eminent, or the upper and ſuperiour part of any thing.* It is ſaid (*John* 19. 13.) that *Pilate ſate down in the judgement-ſeat, in a place that is called in the Hebrew, Gabbatha,* Seats of judgement are erected and ſet up in eminent places,

Cognata voce faſtus & arrogantia vocatur in Scriptura, Ghobah, גבה *unde à Kimchi exponitur omnis altitudo & eminentia.*

ces, that ſo the Judge may be in the peoples view. According to which acceptation of the word, the meaning riſes thus, That which is higheſt in you, your greateſt elevations, are like to a lump of clay. And ſo the oppoſition ſtands fair between this and the former verſe; there *Job* tells his friends, that the excellency of God may juſtly make them afraid. But what is your excellency? As your remembrances, or whatſoever is moſt memorable in you are like unto aſhes, ſo all your excellencies, compared with the excellency of God, are but like a clod of clay.

Hence Obſerve, *That which is moſt high and excellent in man, compared with the excellency of God, is but like to dirt or clay.*

Quicquid in vobis eſt maxime memorabile & altum, ſi cum Deo cōparabitur nihil eſt. Jun. *Eminentiæ veſtræ dignæ ſunt, quæ ad quiſquiliarū & luti cumulos projiciantur.* Bold.

All the dignities and eminencies of man are but fit to be ſwept to the dunghill when God is named. When *Abraham* a Prince, and a great one too, ſtood before the Lord, he hath no valuation for himſelf but by *duſt and aſhes*, Gen. 18.27. We cannot but have low thoughts of our ſelves (what worldly and carnal heights ſoever we are in) when we truly remember the high God. There are three things upon which many men raiſe themſelves very high, even to think themſelves like the moſt High, as it is ſaid of *Lucifer*. Firſt, Their riches. Riches are not only a ſtrong but a high Tower; this eminency is moſt like to clay, yea it is an eminency in clay or *thick clay*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh (*Hab.* 2.) Secondly, Men think themſelves very high if they get upon the pinacle of honour, from this height they look down upon, and deſpiſe all as underlings; yet this is but like clay too, how often have the greateſt earthly honours been laid in the duſt? Thirdly, Others are lifted up with their natural wiſdom, their learning, parts and gifts. They who contemn riches and honour, are yet puffed up with a conceit of their inward endowments: yet as God will deſtroy all the wiſdom of this world, ſo the wiſdom of the beſt men in the world is fooliſhneſs compared to God. If ſome one creature hath ſuch an excelling excellency, that other excellent creatures (as the Stars to the Sun) have no excellency in the preſence of it, how much more are all created excellencies ſwallowed up at the thought of that excellency which is in God? muſt not all go for clay and aſhes, when we have once mentioned him?

Gab eſt extātia clypei. Umbones veſtri i.e. *argumenta veſtra ſunt fragilia. Iſta quæ vos ut diligēter obſervata commemoratis, & in me tanquam certa quædā axiomata decenatis, nō ſunt ſolidiora quā cinis, et lutea propugnacula.* Bez.

Further, The word ſignifies alſo the boſſes of a buckler (*Job* 15.27.) becauſe boſſes are the moſt eminent part of a buckler, being ſet out for the ornament of it. Thus ſome tranſlate it here, *The boſſes of your bucklers*, or *your bucklers are like bucklers of clay.* But what was the buckler of *Jobs* friends? their buckler was their arguments and their reaſons, which they urged againſt *Job*. Arguments are amongſt Diſputants, their weapons, their ſword and buckler. The third interpretation of the former clauſe, and this, comply fairly, *Your remembrances*, that is, the things you have remembred to or againſt me are like unto aſhes, and *Your bucklers*, that is, your arguments and objections are like unto clay, weak and poor, however you think they are ſtrong, impregnable and unanſwerable. The Apoſtle uſeth a ſimilitude which may give ſome light to this (1 *Cor.* 3.12.) where he compares ſound doctrine to *gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones*, but corrupt doctrine, to *wood, hay, ſtubble*.

Et corpora veſtra corporibus luteis, i.e. *acervis luteis. Redigentur in lu ū cervices veſtri.* Vulg.

Thirdly, We tranſlate, *Your bodies*, ſo the word ſignifies by a Trope, becauſe the body of man ſtands upright, and is lifted up: Man doth not go groveling upon or toward the ground as a beaſt goeth, but he hath an erect figure and form, therefore his body is called *Gab*, that is, *lifted*, or *raiſed up*. Others render it by a part of the body, the *back* or *the neck*: So the Vulgar, *Your necks which are lifted up ſhall be brought down to the clay.* But I rather keep to our rendring of the word, by the whole body, then by a part or member of it; As if *Job* had ſaid, *Your bodies, which in regard of the figure and frame of them are lifted up, as if they did ſcorn the earth, are yet but pieces of earth and clods of clay; you trample upon earth and clay as things below you, yet you are no better then the things you trample upon, even earth and clay: and to them theſe bodies of yours muſt ſhortly be reduced and reſolved into as their firſt principles, though now you look big upon me and carry it high.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The body of man, how ſtrong, how beautiful ſoever, is but a piece of earth and clay.*

Firſt, It is clay in regard of the baſeneſs and meanneſs of it: earth is the meaneſt of the elements, the loweſt and worſt of all, ſo is the body the meaneſt part of man.

Secondly, It is clay in regard of the brickleneſs of it, it breaks quickly like a Potters veſſel.

But it may be ſaid, Why doth *Job* ſpeak thus to his friends? Why doth he tell them that their bodies are bodies of clay? Did not they know that before? Need any man be told that his body is formed out of the earth, and that it turneth to the earth again? Eſpecially needed theſe friends of *Job*, who were men of ſuch knowledge and wiſdom, yea of holineſs too, needed they to be taught that their bodies were bodies of clay?

I anſwer, We may know many things which we are not affected with. There is a twofold knowledge of things: There is a knowing of things in the notion, or a ſpeculative knowledge; and there is a knowing of things in the application, or a practical knowledge of them. Doubtleſs they knew this ſpeculatively, but *Job* thought they did not know it practically. They would never (as he ſuppoſed) have been ſo ſtiff towards him, if they had remembred that themſelves were clay. A man hath ſome knowledge wherein he differeth little from a beaſt, which hath no knowledge. The Prophet teacheth this for truth, (*Jer.* 10.14.) *Every man is brutiſh in his knowledge.* A ſtrange ſpeech; it might rather be ſaid, that *every man is brutiſh in his ignorance*; though a beaſt cannot properly be called ignorant, yet a beaſt hath no knowledge: How is it then that he ſaith, every man is brutiſh in his knowledge? It is becauſe though every man knows that which a beaſt cannot, yet he doth not make that improvement of it which a man (eſpecially which a Saint) ſhould and might. This is a kind of brutiſhneſs in knowledge: And when he ſaith, *Every man is brutiſh in his knowledge*, it is a very large word, for are godly men brutiſh in their knowledge? ſurely no; then every man here, is every wicked man, and all ſuch are brutiſh in their knowledge. Though a wicked man knoweth that his body is a body of clay, though he knoweth there is a God, and a Chriſt, and if you ſpeak to him of theſe things, he will ſay, *he knows them as well as you*, yet he is brutiſh in the knowledge he hath of them all. Every wicked man is ſo; yea in every thing he knoweth and doth, he is brutiſh. I conceive alſo that place of the Prophet may take in godly men, in a mitigated ſenſe, even they are brutiſh in their knowledge; Why? becauſe they do not improve their knowledge to that height which they might, they do not that good, nor raiſe that glory to God by their knowledge, which the talents they are entruſted with, call for. The Apoſtle *Jude* concludes of wicked men, *That which they know naturally, in that like brute beaſts they corrupt themſelves:* and I may ſay, what the Saints know ſpiritually, if they corrupt themſelves, or are corrupted in any of that knowledge, ſo far they know but like brute beaſts: Therefore though this is a common leſſon, yet it is but need to preſs it upon all, as *Job* here doth: *It is not without cauſe that men are told that their bodies are bodies of clay. It is no eaſie matter to know our ſelves in thoſe things which are eaſily known.* It is a good determination which one hath made concerning knowledge: Firſt, *He that knoweth not what he ſhould, is a beaſt among men.* Secondly, *He that knoweth no more then needs muſt, is a man among beaſts.* Thirdly, *He that knoweth all that he may know, is as a God among men:* This third muſt be taken thus: He that knoweth all objects knowable within the compaſs of man, and he that beateth out the knowledge of thoſe objects to the full, making the higheſt improvement of them, this man is as a God among men: and he may well be called ſo, ſeeing there are very few who ever arrived to this height about any one object of knowledge, and (I believe) never any one attained it in reference unto all.

Now while we find *Job* teaching this plain piece of knowledge, that *our bodies are bodies of clay*, it teacheth us three Leſſons.

Firſt, *That man is a proud piece of fleſh, and therefore hath need to be told that he is but clay.*

Secondly, *That pride ariſeth either from ignorance, or forgetfulneſs of what we are.*

David deſired the Lord to teach him how frail he was, *Pſal.* 39. Though *David* was a very holy and a knowing man, yet he knew not that plain point. Some think it ſo common a truth that no man needs be taught that *man is* *mortal.* One great reaſon why immortality is ſo little looked after, is becauſe our mortality is ſo little looked into. We know little either of the power of God, or of the weakneſs of man; and many who have ſome knowledge of theſe cannot be ſaid to make any uſe of them: their knowledge lies mouldring by the walls, they do not act the things they know; ſuch knowledge leaveth a man in a worſe condition then ignorance doth. Beſides, a man that forgets what he is, will be as proud as he that knows not what he is: *Forgetfulneſs is a temporary ignorance:* how much ſoever any man knows, yet he can uſe no more then he remembers, and 'tis ſeldom that he uſeth all that.

Thirdly, *The meaneſt things in the world, are parables or ſimilitudes, fit to ſet forth what the outward ſtate of man is.*

What the work of God is upon the ſoul, is not before us now. That's precious indeed both for matter and form, there are engravings and ſtamps upon the ſoul of a glorious excellency: But (I ſay) take man in his outſide, and then the meaneſt and pooreſt things in the world are parables of man, *our bodies are like bodies of clay.* The Apoſtle *Peter* calleth his body an *earthly tabernacle*, (2 Pet. 1. 13.) *I know I muſt ſhortly lay down my earthly tabernacle:* The body is a tabernacle, and that is an uncertain dwelling, it is not built as an houſe that hath foundations. And if you call it an houſe, yet it is not a houſe of marble, but of *clay*, Job 4. 19. Other Scriptures call it, *an earthen veſſel*, (2 Cor. 4. 7.) *We have this treaſure* (ſaith the Apoſtle, but it is) *in earthen veſſels.* They had the treaſure of all Goſpel truths, of Goſpel graces and of Goſpel gifts; theſe precious treaſures they carried about with them, but all in earthen veſſels: Yea, the body of man is not only called earthen, but whole man is called earth, and as if he could never be called earth enough, he is called earth three times over in one verſe, (*Jer.* 22. 29.) *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord:* Which words, though they may well, and (poſſibly) moſt properly in that place be taken as an appeal (uſual in Scripture) to the whole body of the earth, yet they have a clear truth, as applyed to the bodies of men made of earth; all men on earth have earthen bodies, and moſt men have earthen mindes too, and ſo very earth, or earth, earth, earth, nothing but earth. It is reported in the French Hiſtory, that when an old Counſellor would needs depart the Court, and retire himſelf to a private life, the King deſired him to leave him his advice in ſome general rules, what to do in the government of the kingdom; at which motion he took a fair Paper, and wrote upon the top of the leaf, *moderation*, and in the middle of the leaf, *moderation*, and at the bottom of the leaf, *moderation:* His meaning was, as if he had ſaid to that King, *Sir, if you would keep your kingdom quiet, carry the reins of your government moderately quite through.* So here, if the queſtion ſhould be, what is man? and a blank paper were preſented me to ſet down *Jobs* opinion of him, I muſt write on the top of the leaf, *earth*, in the middle, *earth*, at the bottom *earth: His remembrances are like unto aſhes, and his body to a body of clay.*

Job having taken his friends down by theſe arguments, and cooled their ſpirits, thinks now they may be dealt withal, and therefore concludes,

Verſ. 13. **Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.**

From the connection of theſe words, We may Obſerve,

That a man when he is humbled, is in a good temper to hear counſel.

Your bodies are bodies of clay, now, *Let me alone, hold your peace that I may ſpeak*; If you attend your own condition, you will the better attend my counſel. *Pride of heart ſtoppeth the ear.* They who have high thoughts of themſelves, think meanly of what is ſaid unto them by others. Were men low in their own eyes, they would embrace every advice that hath truth and holineſs in it.

At the fifth verſe *Job* ſaid, *O that you would altogether hold your peace*; here he turns his wiſh into a charge.

Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak.

But doth *Job*, as many, who becauſe they love to hear themſelves ſpeak, deſire others to hold their peace? Doth *Job* ſpeak thus becauſe he would have all the talk? Or becauſe he was reſolved to have the laſt word?

Job's modeſty and humbleneſs of mind may acquit him from ſuch imputations. This his forwardneſs to ſpeak, and importunity for audience, did both ariſe, not from his own deſire to ſpeak, but from a willingneſs to rectifie what his friends had ſpoken amiſs, and to ſet himſelf right in their opinions: or he adviſes them to hold their peace, leſt by ſpeaking as they had done, they ſhould loſe their peace. Many break not only the outward peace of others, but the inward peace of their own ſouls, becauſe they cannot (in this ſenſe) hold their peace. There might be much more peace then there is, in our hearts, in our houſes, in the Commonwealth, in the Church, if we could teach our tongues to hold their peace, when it is unſeaſonable to ſpeak. There is a time to be ſilent and a time to ſpeak; could we time our tongues well, how well might we time our actions; becauſe our words are ſo unruly, therefore our wayes are ſo uneven. *Job* ſaw it was time for his friends to hold their peace, and time for him to ſpeak: Therefore he ſaith, *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak.*

But why doth *Job* add, *Let come on me what will.* A ſtrange kind of ſpeech. Doth it become a man to be ſo reſolute, or rather (as the words at firſt view import) ſo deſperate? Is not here the voice of deſperation? Would any wiſe man ſpeak ſo?

Let come on me what will.

The Vulgar tranſlateth this part of the verſe thus, *Hold your peace that I may ſpeak whatſoever my mind ſuggeſteth to me*, or *Hold your peace, let me ſpeak whatſoever comes into my mind*; as if *Job* would ſpeak any thing that came next, or floated uppermoſt in his phancy, ſo ſome gloſs the interpretation of the Vulgar, which is indeed diſhonourable to ſuppoſe of him. Shall we think that he cared not how he ſpake, who had ſo often reproved his friends for ſpeaking careleſly? Would he run headlong into that errour, which he had ſo ſeverely reprehended?

Tacete pauliſper ut loquar quodcunq; mihi mens ſuggeſſerit. Vulg. *Loquar quicquid in buccam venerit.*

Let come upon me what will.] The word [*Let come*] ſignifies to paſs over, or paſs upon; ſo then, *I will ſpeak, let what will paſs upon me*, is no more but this, let what cenſure ſoever paſs upon me, cenſure me how you will, I will ſpeak, or I will ſpeak how ever you take it.

Or, It may refer to the determination of God, I will ſpeak and ſtand to his ſentence, let him paſs what judgement he pleaſeth concerning me, I am reſolved to maintain my cauſe: as we ſay in our language, when we are reſolved to do a thing, *Fall back or fall edge I will do it.*

Loquar & tranſeat ſuper me quid vis. Vatab. *Quocunq; res ſit caſura pro me loquar.* Bez. *Loquar meo periculo quicquid tandē mihi ſit eventurū.*

Job in theſe words removeth a ſecond pretence which his friends made for what they had ſpoken.

Firſt, They ſaid, they did all for the glory of God, and to maintain his juſtice. As to that, he told them roundly before, that God needed none of their patronage, *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? will you talk deceitfully for him?* He deſires not your lies to defend and uphold his cauſe.

There was a ſecond thing which his friends held forth as a ground of their counſels, and that was the tender care and compaſſion which they had of *Job* himſelf, leſt going on thus complaining, yea as they thought, thus blaſpheming, the Lord ſhould bring ſomewhat worſe, then ever yet he had brought upon him. As *Job* therefore takes off the former pretence before, ſo he takes off this here: As if he had ſaid, *You ſeem to be very tender of me, leſt God ſhould lay ſome further judgement upon me for maintaining my integrity, but I will ſpeak, come of it what will, at my peril be it, I will bear all the blame my ſelf, take you no care, have you but patience to hear me ſpeak, let all the trouble that may enſue be on my ſcore, I will be accountable to God for it.* 'Tis true, *Job* being provoked ſpeaks this with ſome heat, and was deſirous rather to caſt himſelf wholly upon God then to hear his friends any longer.

Ego de meipſo rationē reddā Deo & quicquid peccavero luā: Interim non ſine ſtomacho hoc dicit, ſed irritatus à ſociis & domino ſe malens committere quā tales nugas audire. Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *An upright heart is very reſolute; I will ſpeak, and let come to me what will.*

There is nothing that can make a man afraid, who is not afraid of himſelf. *The righteous is bold as a Lyon.* As one of the ancient Martyrs ſpake when his perſecutors terrified him with threatnings, *There is nothing* (ſaith he) *of things viſible, nothing of things inviſible, that I fear; I will ſtand to my profeſſion of the Name of Chriſt, and contend earneſtly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, let come on't what will.* It is ſaid of *Luther*, when he was to go to the Meeting at *Worms*, that being informed by his friends that he had many enemies lying in wait to ruine him, *Tell me not of it* (ſaith he) *for I will go, though there be as many Devils to aſſault me as there be tiles upon the houſes.* Thus the Apoſtle *Paul* (*Acts* 21. 10.) when ſome did weep and mourn over him, becauſe it was propheſied that he ſhould be bound at *Jeruſalem*; *Agabus* had bound himſelf with *Paul's* girdle, and ſaid, *So ſhall the* Jews *at* Jeruſalem *bind the man that owneth this girdle*; and thereupon they intreated him to forbear going up: Forbear? (ſaith he) No, I will go to *Jeruſalem*, *I am ready, not to be bound only at* Jeruſalem, *but to dye there for the Name of the Lord Jeſus*: I'le put it to a venture. When once *Heſters* heart was ſet upon it to engage for the deliverance of the *Jews*, ſhe would on, *I will go in to the King, which is not according to the Law* (I know I run an hazard) *and if I periſh, I periſh*: I am upon a good ground, and in a good cauſe, though I fail in ſome outward formalities, yet I will venture. Thus will an upright heart ſpeak, thus will an upright heart do: An upright heart will both ſpeak and do, let come on it what will; let the world be pleaſed or diſpleaſed; let the world frown or ſmile; let the world be angry or imbrace. And it is the ſame phraſe in the Hebrew which we have (2 *Sam.* 18. 23.) when *Ahimaaz* would go and carry the tidings of *Abſalom's* death unto *David* (*Joab* had ſent *Cuſhi* with the meſſage before, yet *Ahimaaz* would needs run after him) *Let me, I pray thee,* (ſaith he to *Joab*) *run after* Cuſhi: *And* Joab *ſaid, wherefore wilt thou run my ſon, ſeeing thou haſt no tidings ready? But howſoever* (ſaid he) *let me run*; I have a mind to carry this meſſage *howſoever*; that is, *Let come on me what will.* Even ſo ſaith the ſoul in its uprightneſs and reſolvedneſs upon the wayes of God, though checkt with why would you do ſo? Howſoever let me go, though you think it is to no purpoſe, yet let me go on: Let come of it what will, I reſign the iſſue wholly to God.

ויהי־מה
Et ſic quicquid.

Secondly, When *Job* ſpeaks thus, *Let come on it what will*, you muſt know he had very good ground for what he ſpake, he knew whom he truſted; and truſt him he would, though he ſlew him, as we ſhall hear him profeſſing with his next breath.

Hence Note, *An upright heart never feareth any hurt from God.*

You think I am running upon the ſpears point, even upon the diſpleaſure of God; well, I'le try that; *Let come on it what will*, I have not one jealous thought of God: As one in ſickneſs and pain, ready to dye, ſeeing his friends about him mourn, ſaid, *Do not trouble your ſelves, I know God will do me no hurt.* *Job* was willing to bear any thing at Gods hand, even a ſlaying, and yet he believed he ſhould not bear the weight of his little finger (as we ſay) upon the account of reproof. *Job* was not deſperate, nor did he defie or dare God, as wicked men uſe to do: tell them of hell, they care not for hell; tell them God will be angry, they regard not his anger. A gracious heart cannot ſlight, and would not for a world willingly incur the leaſt diſpleaſure, or ſo much as a frown from God; a frown from God would go to his very heart. But he can ſpeak out of the height of his confidence, that in any juſt thing he will on, and bear all the blame which God will lay upon him, being well aſſured, that God will lay no blame upon him at all from his anger or juſtice, though in his wiſe providence, he ſhould lay a multitude of the ſoreſt afflictions upon him.

Non deſperati verba ſunt, ſed bene potius ſperantis de Dei ope quia mox ſuæ ſpei rationem reddit. Merc.

But what is it which makes the Saints ſo reſolute with God, that they fear not any hurt from God?

How can they fear any hurt from God, when they have ſo many promiſes of good from God? God hath not ſpoken one hard word againſt them all the Bible over; nor will he bear it that any ſhould ſpeak any thing but good concerning them. *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him.* The Apoſtle aſſures us, *That the Law* (namely in the threatnings of it) *is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawleſs and diſobedient, for the ungodly, and for ſinners,* &c. The Law was not ſet to bring any of the puniſhments which are threatned there upon the righteous and holy: The godly man needs not fear any hurt from the Law, becauſe the Law is not made to puniſh or to condemn a righteous man, though it be ſet to guide and order the converſation of a righteous man: But the Law is made for the wicked, they have cauſe to fear all the terrors of it, and God will at laſt open the treaſury of his wrath, and bring out all the weapons of his indignation that lye there, and ſtrike them through. Now if the Saints fear not the threatnings of the Law, what need they fear any thing? Other parts of the word are full of their conſolations: *Yea whatſoever was written heretofore, was written for their learning, that they through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope,* and ſo reſt their ſouls ſweetly in the arms of God, as in the arms of a tender Father. Why ſhould they be afraid of any evil from God, who hath promiſed them ſo much good? Yea, that *all ſhall work together for good to them*: May not this make any good man ſay confidently, I will do my duty, come on it what will: What can come of it but good? becauſe the Lord hath ſaid, all ſhall work together for good; though happily I ſhall have a croſs, it will be a good; though the Lord leave me to the cruel dealings of men, it will be good. But eſpecially while we look up and conſider what Jeſus Chriſt hath done, what Chriſt hath ſuffered, what Chriſt hath undertaken, and ſtands engaged in on their behalf, they may well put themſelves upon God, and appeal not only to his mercy, but ſtand to the utmoſt of his juſtice. They may expect hard meaſure from men (and the beſt is, they can do well enough, let men do their worſt) but as for all the hard meaſure they ſhall receive from God, *I dare* (as we ſay in our common ſpeech) *excuſe them for a penny*; I may ſay to any upright and faithful ſoul, ſuch an one as *Job* was, Go on, let come on it what will, I will bear all the chidings, yea all the ſmart thou ſhalt ever hear or feel from God.

Job having by theſe Arguments, taken from the excellency of God, and his Friends baſeneſs, prepared their minds to attention, and taken upon him a reſolution to ſpeak, ſpeaks home in the next words, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth*, &c.

VERS. 14, 15, 16.

Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?

Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him; but I will maintain mine own wayes before him.

He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation, for an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.

JOB reſolved to ſpeak in the former verſe, and here he ſpeaks indeed. But doth he not bite his own tongue? Or rather, Doth not his tongue bite him? while he ſaith, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth?* It is the Apoſtles great *Axiome*, founded in the Laws of Nature (*Eph.* 5. 29.) *No man ever hated his own fleſh, but loveth and cheriſheth it,* &c. *Job* ſpeaks as if he hated, or were cruel to his own fleſh; *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth,* &c? But if we inquire into this ſpeech, we ſhall find it an Argument, not of any hatred againſt himſelf, but of abundant love to, and faith in God.

The words in general ſet forth the temper and ſtate of *Job's* ſpirit, or in what frame of heart he ſtood ready to ſpeak unto God, having before reſolved to ſpeak: As if he had ſaid, *I am far enough from rage, or from deſpair; I am neither out of my wits, nor out of my hopes; I come to plead my cauſe with God, having my heart fill'd with ſtrong confidence in God, reſting and repoſing my ſelf upon him, and giving all that I have or am unto him: Let me ſpeak* (ſaith he in the former verſe) *and let come on me what will; at my peril be it; I will truſt in God.* And he ſeems to explain himſelf here; *Do not think that I mean to tear my fleſh, and to run violently upon my own ruine, when I ſaid, let come on me what will; no, this was not the language either of fury or of deſpair, but of faith and confidence;* (for as it follows) *though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth?

Firſt, There are ſome who conceive, that *Job* being in a commotion of ſpirit, upon ſome ſuggeſtion of the Devil to deſpair, and to give up all for loſt, did therefore indeed tear his own fleſh, and ſeek to caſt away his life; to which *Job*, recalling himſelf, anſwereth here, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?* As if he ſhould have ſaid, *O thou enemy, Satan, why doſt thou tempt me thus? Why doſt thou put me upon deſpairing thoughts? Why wouldſt thou have me let go my hold of God? Why doſt thou provoke me to carry my ſelf as a mad man, tearing my fleſh with my teeth, and even throwing my life out of my hand?* This carrieth a fair ſence, ſuppoſing ſuch a temptation was upon him; and indeed there is no temptation ſo black and devil like, but we may ſuppoſe the Devil preſenting it to this afflicted ſoul.

Aliqui ſuſpicantur Jobum *reſpondentem & repugnantem hoſti interius aliquid, inſtillanti & ad ſe lacerandum ſtimulanti.* Pined.

Secondly, The words may be expounded as an inquiry after the reaſon, or cauſe, why he indured ſuch grievous afflictions: *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand? What's the matter that I am caſt into ſuch extremities, and put upon ſuch grievous tryals as I am at this time? Wherefore am I not only counſell'd, but almoſt conſtrained by my bodily pains, and the troubles of my ſpirit, to ſeek eaſe in tearing mine own fleſh, and in laying violent hands upon my body? If my geſtures or ſpeeches are unuſual, ſo are my ſorrows; the ſence of what I ſuffer even makes me do I know not what, or what I know I ſhould not do. Wherefore do I take my fleſh,* &c? That's a ſecond interpretation, taken from the impatient poſtures of thoſe who are in great afflictions. Such ſometimes rend and tear their garments, ſo did *Job* in the beginning of this book, when he heard the firſt news of his ſad calamities, yea ſuch will ſometimes tear or bite their own fleſh, and gnaw their tongues. 'Tis ſaid, that *when the fifth Angel poured out his vial upon the ſeat of the beaſt, that his kingdom was full of darkneſs* (that is, of trouble) *and they gnawed their tongues for pain* (Rev. 16. 10.) They gnaw their tongues when they are puniſhed, who never ſmite upon their thighs, nor are pricked at the heart, becauſe they have ſinned.

Moris eſt afflictis & indignabundis veſtes & membra lacerare. Merc.

Thirdly, Others interpret the words as a denial of impatience, which his Friends had often objected againſt him: As if he had ſaid, *You think that I carry my ſelf as a man that is deſperate, tearing my fleſh,* &c. *but you are much deceived in me; wherefore ſhould I do a thing ſo unbecoming one that truſts in God, as I do? I truſt in God; yea, though he ſhould ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him; I complain indeed of my own afflictions, ſenſe of pain cauſeth me to doe ſo, but I do not complain againſt God, my faith and truſt in him will not let me do ſo.* Some conceive, that here *Job* anſwers the words of *Eliphaz* at the beginning of the fifth Chapter (*ver.* 2.) *Wrath killeth the fooliſh man, and envy ſlayeth the ſilly one*; wicked fooliſh men are ſo envious and unquiet in their ſpirits, that they even kill themſelves with vexation; but why ſhould I, what reaſon have I, who am aſſured of the good will of God to me, and am reſolved to ſubmit to his good pleaſure? what reaſon have I to *tear my fleſh, or throw my life out of my hand?*

Exiſtimatis me deſperantis inſtar mihi velle mortem conſciſcere, at quorſum ego me lacerem, & mihi ipſi vitam eripiam? Sanct.

There is a fourth interpretation, that *Job* in this query hath reference to his own weakneſs and leanneſs, to the decay of his ſtrength and fleſh; *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth?* As if he ſhould have ſaid, I am ſo waſted and conſumed, ſo far ſpent, that all the fleſh I have will ſcarce make a morſel, a man may take it up in his teeth at once. Thus it is expounded by that (*chap.* 19. 20.) *I am eſcaped with the skin of my teeth*; I am nothing but skin and bones. So, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth?* Why am I brought thus low, thus lean? all my fleſh will ſcarce make one *mouth-full.*

נשא *Eſt tollere, levare. Quare levo dentibus meis carnes meas?* q. d. *Ita confectus ſum, ut quantus ego ſum levare dentibus poſſim, & quaſi uno bolo devorari.* Pined.

Laſtly, Some render, not, *Wherefore do I*, but, *Wherefore ſhould I take my fleſh in my teeth?* That is, wherefore ſhould I be cruel to my ſelf? You think I utterly neglect my ſelf, and have given up all my hopes; but I have not, I am not come to that paſs yet; and I firmly believe I never ſhall. It is bad enough when we eat and devour one another; but it notes the worſt of conditions, when we devour and eat up our ſelves. It is ſaid of the fool (*Eccleſ.* 4. 5.) *He foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own fleſh.* Who is this fool? and, how doth the fool eat his own fleſh? By the fool (in this place) we are to underſtand the ſluggard, or the ſlothful man; *Folded hands are the emblem of idleneſs:* The idle man, or the ſluggard, foldeth his hands together; that is, he will not work, he will take no pains: Now he that will not labour, ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Theſ.* 3. *Neither let him eat.* The ſluggard will not labour, and therefore he eateth his own fleſh, having nothing elſe to eat. But doth the ſluggard indeed feed upon his own fleſh? Is he a *ſelf-Canibal?* will he indure the pain of eating his own fleſh, who will not take the pains to get himſelf bread to eat? No, but he is ſaid to eat his own fleſh, becauſe while he favours himſelf too much, he is cruel to himſelf, he ſtarves himſelf; hunger eats his fleſh, becauſe he hath nothing to ſatisfie his hunger; or he is ſaid to eat his own fleſh, becauſe through ſloth, and the neglect of his calling, he is brought into want, and into ſuch want, that if he will eat, he muſt eat his own fleſh, for he hath got neither boyld nor roaſt, neither wet nor dry to ſuſtain his life. Or laſtly, he may be ſaid to eat his fleſh, while he foldeth his hands, becauſe he grows vext and paſſionate againſt himſelf, when he ſees into what ſtraits and bonds his lazy folded hands have brought him. He is a fool indeed, that thinks folded hands will either fill his belly with meat, or his mind with content. So (*Iſa.* 9. 20.) when the Prophet deſcribeth the trouble of a people under the wrath of God, he ſhews, that at laſt they ſhall grow cruel to themſelves, *They ſhall eat every man the fleſh of his own arm*; that is, they ſhall be ſo forgetful of the Laws of nature and friendſhip, that they ſhall either vex their neareſt friends, as he ſpeaks in the former verſe, *No man ſhall ſpare his brother*; or they ſhall vex themſelves, who are nearer then any friend; no man ſhall ſpare his own fleſh. Thus the Lord threatned the oppreſſors of his people, that he would at laſt make them feed upon their own fleſh, and drunken with their own blood (*Iſa.* 49. 26.) They who have been cruel againſt his ſervants, ſhall be unnatural to themſelves; they ſhall either deſtroy and vex one another, or every man ſhall deſtroy and vex himſelf, till they are all utterly conſumed. *Job* ſees no reaſon, why he ſhould do what ſuch as theſe do for want of faith. *Wherefore ſhould I take my fleſh in my teeth?* I know my duty is to love and take care of my ſelf; and I know God loves and takes care of me too. Some ſelf-love is a vertue in all, a grace in ſome, it being the meaſure of that love we ow unto others, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf.* And as a man is bound to take a ſpecial care of all thoſe (within his compaſs) whom God loves, ſo he ought to be much more careful of himſelf, who hath received any evidence that God loves him: And hence it is (according to this expoſition) that *Job* ſaith, *Wherefore do I*, or, *ſhould I take my fleſh in my teeth?* Shall I who have received ſo much kindneſs from God, and (notwithſtanding theſe wounds) ſhall receive more, ſhall I, ſhall ſuch a one as I be unkind to my ſelf?

En anima mea ſtat ſuper labia mea ſtatim egreſſura videorque ſolis meis dentibus reliquam totius corporis carnem ſuſtentare. Bold. *Lacerare carnes,* &c. *eſt ſeipſum affligere.*

Laſtly, Theſe words (I conceive) carry in them a *ſelf-reproof:* As if *Job* perceiving his ſpirit growing ſomewhat unquiet and unſetled, and himſelf ready to break out into paſſionate geſtures, under the preſſure of his continual troubles, did thus chide and rebuke down theſe commotions, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth?* Why am I thus impatient? O my ſoul, doth this become thee? or doſt thou now walk by that rule of obedience which thou art to learn by the things which thou ſuffereſt? Is this the acting of a patient man? Is this to ſubmit to the hand and rod of a father? In this ſence *David* (upon the apprehenſion of ſome undue ſtrivings and ſtrugglings in his ſpirit) takes himſelf to task, ſchools and catechiſes his ſoul with ſerious queſtions (*Pſal.* 42. 11.) *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God. David* after theſe chidings bids his ſoul hope in God; and *Job* after theſe chidings makes higheſt profeſſions of his hope in God, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth,* &c.? *Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That in great afflictions a man is apt to afflict himſelf, and to add to his own afflictions.*

When we have more upon us then we are well able to bear, we uſually put more weight upon our ſelves. We ſcarce feel leſſer burdens at all, and great ones we feel too much. When God ſmites us, we are ready to tear our ſelves.

Secondly, Conſider the ground of this, why is it that men (as this phraſe importeth) afflict themſelves when they are afflicted? It is becauſe they hope to find ſome eaſe in it.

Ut qui in cruciantibus carnes ſuas mordent allevari ſe ſentiunt, ſic ego dum hæc loquor. Chryſoſt.

Hence Note, *That a pain of our own adding, ſeems to leſſen our received pains.*

And indeed it doth ſomewhat draw the mind from thinking of what it feeleth: Every trouble is the leſs to us, by how much we mind it the leſs; and if we could not mind it at all, it would be no trouble to us at all. For this reaſon, in extremity of pain, as in the Stone, Gout, Tooth-ach, men uſually divert and turn off their thoughts, as much as they can, from what they feel, by diſcourſe, and the company of friends; yea, we ſhall ſee them ſometimes bite their lips, or their finger; ſuch pain added to pain, gives ſome mitigation of pain.

Thirdly Note, *It is ſinful to be active in our own miſeries, or to afflict our ſelves.*

Wherefore ſhould I take my fleſh in my teeth? It is unnatural to do ſo. It is unnatural to take the fleſh of others in our teeth, more to take our own; every man is nearer to himſelf then to any other: therefore a ſin committed againſt our ſelves, is greater; becauſe we ſin againſt a nearer engagement. We ought to ſuffer chearfully from the hand of God or man, but we muſt not ſuffer from our own. No man muſt be his own carver, either in his comforts, or in his ſorrows. We muſt let God alone to cut out, and meaſure our portion of both. *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth?*

Fourthly Obſerve, *A godly man will not take his own part, nor bear with himſelf, when he doth evil, or goes beſide the rule, whether in active or paſſive obedience.*

He is willing to receive counſel or reproof from others; and he is upon all diſcoveries of the naughtineſs of his heart, his own reprover: he uſually caſts the firſt ſtone at his ſin with his own hand, and blames himſelf more then any other man can, for his own ſecret diſtempers, or outward miſcarriages. A carnal heart doth what it can to excuſe its ſin, or to flatter himſelf in it: but a holy heart doth both aggravate and rebuke its own ſin: Wherefore am I ſo vain, ſo earthly? Why am I ſo proud, and ſo impatient? *David* needed no man to accuſe him of his ſinful envy at the proſperity of the wicked, he layes on load upon himſelf (*Pſal.* 73. 22.) *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, even as a beaſt before thee.* He once indeed (being under a deſertion) wanted a *Nathan* to bring his ſin home to his conſcience; but when he was come to himſelf, he could be his own *Nathan: As for me* (ſaith he, *ver.* 2.) *my feet were almoſt gone:* Why was I thus fooliſh? So *Job* here, Why am I thus unquiet? *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth,* &c?

And put my life in mine hand?

These words have the ſame meaning in general with the former. I ſhall only open the importance of the phraſe.

Firſt, *Putting the life in the hand,* is interpreted for a ſolicitous care of life: As if he had ſaid, *Wherefore do I keep life ſo cloſe, as if I were loath to part with it?* If God ſlay me I will truſt in him. What need I take ſo much care of this life, to hold it in my hand? Let it go, I know it ſhall be well enough with me; if I loſe this life, I ſhall find a better; for I believe in God. When a man would preſerve and keep a thing ſafe, he carries it in his hand; he will not lay it out of his hand. And that is one reaſon why the Saints are ſaid to be in the *hand of God,* and to reſign themſelves into his hand; *Into thine hand do I commit my ſpirit:* It is their deſire to be in the hand of God; and Chriſt aſſureth us (*John* 10.) that we being in his Fathers hand, none can take us out. Holy *Job* knew his life, his ſpiritual life was in the hand of God, and that his going out of this natural life was but a paſſage to eternal life: Wherefore then (according to this expoſition) ſhould he ſo ſolicitouſly put his life into his own hand? *We need not fear to part with that which the grace of God hath found.*

Animam meam ſolicitus cuſtodio, non ſecus ac rem pretioſiſſimā, quam nuſquam tutò deponere, nec ulli credere audemus. Pined.

Secondly, Others underſtand by *life, the whole man*; and ſo the putting of his life in his hand, notes bodily infirmity; as if being weak with ſickneſs, he was forced to lean upon his hand. *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* That is, Wherefore am I brought thus low, that I do even go upon my hands? Little children before they can go upon their feet, go upon all four, as we ſay, they go upon their hands. The feet and legs are the pillars and ſupporters of the body. *Job*'s pillars (ſaith this interpretation) ſhrunk under him, he muſt walk and live upon his hands. The learned Author quoted in the margin contends much for this ſence: but I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

Nomen animæ pro tota perſona ſumi poteſt, ut ponere animam in manibus ſit ita debilitari ut homo ſtare pedibus non poſſit; ſed manibus ſuſtentetur, ad modum infantium. Bold.

Thirdly, *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* Is (as another fancieth) a metaphorical ſpeech, implying, that a man is dying, or near to death: The life of ſuch a man ſits upon his lips, or is come out into his hand, ready to ſhake hands with him, and return to God that gave it. As if he had ſaid, my life is gone out of my body, I am in the ſtate of death; or (as his words are alſo gloſſed) my life is ſo waſted and diminiſhed, that it is ſcarce a handful. Why is it thus? Is it becauſe Satan hopes that yet in the extremity of my affliction, he ſhall obtain his wiſh, and hear me with my laſt breath blaſpheme God and dye? If that be his end, he ſhall miſs his end; *For if the Lord ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Volis extremiſque innitens digitis vitam ago. id.

Anima in manibus eſt, anima è corpore exceſſa, quæ enim in manibus habemus, extra nos ſunt Sanct.

Laſtly, We may expound the words yet more clearly and ſatisfactorily by divers other concurrent Scriptures, all which carry this plain ſence, *That putting of the life into the hand,* notes only the expoſing of our life unto peril or dangers. So *Jephthah* beſpeaks the quarrelling *Ephramites* (Judg. 12. 3.) *When I ſaw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and paſſed over againſt the children of Ammon:* That is, when I ſaw you deſerted me, and would give me no aſſiſtance, I reſolved to put it to an adventure; I put my life in my hands, and paſſed over againſt the children of *Ammon:* I went upon great diſadvantages; my Army was not a match for the enemy, nor fit to meet them in the field; yet I ran that hazard: I put my life in mine hands. So (1 *Sam.* 19. 5.) when *Jonathan* pleaded for *David* before his father *Saul,* and told him what good ſervice he had done for him, and what he had deſerved of the Kingdom, he inſtanceth in that unparallel'd act af valour, when he undertook *proud Goliah. He did put* (ſaith he) *his life in his hand, and ſlew the Philiſtine*; that is, he put himſelf into a great danger: The *Philiſtine* was ſuch a monſter of men, that the whole Army of *Iſrael* trembled at his challenge; therefore ſurely a ſingle man was in great danger to deal with him hand to hand: *David* doing ſo, put his life in his hand. The Witch of *Endor* is at this language with *Saul* (1 Sam. 28. 21.) *I have put my life in my hand*; that is, I have ventured my life in raiſing up of *Samuel*; this ſhe ſaid, becauſe there was a Law lately made againſt Witches by *Saul* himſelf. Once more *David* uſeth the ſame expreſſion (*Pſal.* 119. 109.) *My ſoul is continually in mine hand, yet do I not forget thy Law.* The ſouls of the Saints are alwayes in the hands of God, and it is both their ſafety and their honour that they are ſo. Why doth *David* ſay, my ſoul is in mine hand? had he call'd it out of the hand of God, and taken the care of it upon himſelf? Nothing leſs. His meaning is only this, *I walk in the midſt of dangers, and among a thouſand deaths continually*; *I am in deaths often, my life is expoſed to perils every day, yet do I not forget thy Law:* I keep cloſe to thee, and will keep cloſe to thee whatſoever comes of it. *Auguſtine* upon that place doth ingeniouſly confeſs, that he underſtood not what *David* meant, by *having his ſoul in his hands:* But *Jerome,* another of the Ancients, teacheth us, that it is an Hebraiſm, ſignifying a ſtate of extreameſt peril. The Greeks alſo have drawn it into a proverb, ſpeaking the ſame thing.

Eſt Hebraiſmus quo ſignificatur vitam habere periculo expoſitam. Hier, Ep. ad Suniam.

Εν τῆ χειρὶ ψύχην ἔχει. *Græc. proverb. pro verſari inter pericula.*

But why doth the holding, or putting the life in the hand, ſignifie the expoſing of the life to peril? There is a twofold reaſon of it.

Firſt, Becauſe thoſe things which are carried openly in the hand, are apt to fall out of the hand, and being carried in ſight, they are apt to be ſnatcht or wreſted out of the hand. And therefore though to be in the hand of God, ſignifies *ſafety,* becauſe his hand is armed with irreſiſtible power to protect us: Yet for a man to carry a thing in his own hand, is to carry it in danger, becauſe his hand is weak, and there are ſafer wayes of carrying, or conveying a thing, then openly in the hand. If a man be to ride a long journey with any treaſure about him, he doth not carry it in his hand, but puts it in ſome ſecret and cloſe place, where it may be hid, and ſo more ſecure. The *Caldee* Paraphraſt, to expreſs the elegancy of that place fore-cited out of the *Pſalm,* gives it thus, *My life is in as much danger as if it ſtood upon the very ſuperficies or outſide of my hand*; as if he had no hold of it, but it ſtood barely upon his hand; for that

Quod manu portatur, facile excidit; facile etiam diripi poteſt & ſi ſervatur ſola Dei protectione ſervari videtur. Mer.

Anima mea periclitatur, acſi in ſuperficie manus meæ eſſet. Cald. Paraph.

that which is ſet upon the plain or palm of the hand, and not graſped, is in greater danger. Things ſafe kept, are hidden or held faſt. *There was a treaſure hid in the field, which when the man had found, he went and hid it*, (Mat. 13.44.) he did not carry it in his hand, but hid it, laid it up ſafely. So our life is ſaid *to be hid with Chriſt in God*, (Col. 3. 3.) which notes not only the ſecreſie of this ſpiritual life, but the ſafety of it alſo. As ſome things are hid that they may not be ſeen, ſo other things are hid, that they may not be loſt. Hence to carry the life in the hand, imports the danger of looſing it.

Quæ aliquis amittere timet diligenter abſcondit. Aquin. *in loc.*

Secondly, There is another reaſon of that ſpeech, becauſe when a man is about to deliver a thing or to give it up, he takes it in his hand. They that put themſelves upon great perils and dangers for God and his people, deliver up their lives and their all to God: Hence that counſel of the Apoſtle, (1 *Pet.* 4. 19.) *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* So here, the life of men in danger is ſaid to be put in the hand, becauſe ſuch are as it were ready to deliver and commit their lives unto God, that he would take care of their lives to preſerve them from the danger, or to take them to himſelf, if they loſe them in his ſervice, either doing or ſuffering according to his will. That of the Apoſtle comes near this notion, (1 *John* 3.16.) *We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren:* now if we lay them down, we muſt put them into our hands, as a man that is ready to lay down money upon a bargain, or for a commodity, takes his purſe into his hand. *Job* had his life in his hand, ready to deliver it up to God, yea, though God ſhould ſeem to take it violently from him, yet he would willingly reſign it to him and truſt him with it. This ſenſe carries a clear reaſon of ſuch kind of ſpeaking, yet I do not conceive it to be the particular reaſon of it in this place: For, as to ſuch a ſenſe, *Job* ſhould rather confidently affirm, I will or I do put my life in my hand, then either queſtion or expoſtulate with himſelf, *Wherefore do I put my life in mine hand?*

Now, ſeeing *Job* ſpeaking thus refutes a charge that was brought againſt him, that he was careleſs of his life, or through diſtemper and impatience cared not what became of it; We may Obſerve,

> *That though we are to venture or put our lives unto any hazard when God calleth us, yet no man may expoſe his life without a call.*

Job would have his friends know, that he did not carry his life open in his hand as a thing he made no reckoning of. Our lives are given us of God, and till he bid us bring them forth and carry them in our hands, we muſt keep them as ſafe as we can. I only hint this here, becauſe the ſtrength of *Jobs* intendment in theſe words lyeth in their connection with the following verſe, to which I paſs.

Verſ. 15. **Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him; but I will maintain mine own integrity.**

Why ſhould you think that I am impatient? Why ſhould you cenſure me as deſperate and careleſs? This is the temper and frame of my ſoul; judge you of it, whether it look like your conceptions of me. Let God do what he will with me, ſlay me, tear me, take away my life, I am reſolved what to do, *to truſt in him*. Is this impatience or deſpair?

Further, If we conſider the former expoſtulations in the laſt expoſition, as a reproof or a check to the motions of his own heart toward impatience; Then theſe words are the leſſon of inſtruction which he gives his ſoul. What? Thou my ſoul in rage? doeſt thou bid me take my fleſh in my teeth? I tell thee what my former reſolves have been, and what my preſent duty is, even to truſt God in all eſtates. And now I am upon that reſolve again, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Though he ſlay me.] Slaying ſpeaks death, and that a violent death, yet all ſlaying is not death. (*Rom.* 8. 36.) *For thy ſake are we killed*, or *ſlain all the day long.* All the perſecutions and troubles which the Saints endure, are their ſlaying; though they be not all unto death, yet they all go upon the account of death. *For thy ſake are we ſlain all the day long. Paul* was alive, and yet in the number of theſe ſlain. By being ſlain all the day long, he means a being alwayes within the view, or under the ſufferance of bloody perſecutors.

Afflictiones graviores, mortis & occiſionis nomine ſignificantur. Druſ.

Though he ſlay me. Slaying is the utmoſt of outward evils.

Hence Obſerve (before I come to the main), *That there is no outward evil ſo bad, but God may lay it upon his beſt ſervants.*

Job puts this ſuppoſition as his own caſe. *Though he ſlay me,*

Yet will I truſt in him.] There is a double reading of theſe words. Some read them negatively, others (as we) affirmatively.

The reaſon why the negation is added by ſome Interpreters, is, becauſe the ſame Hebrew word in ſound, which we tranſlate, *him*, ſignifies alſo the adverb of denial, *not* or *no*: therefore the *Maſorites* obſerve that this text is to be corrected in the reading. There is a like variety of reading upon the occaſion of this Monoſyllable, *Lo* (2 *King.* 8. 10.) Where when *Hazael* was ſent by *Benhadad* to enquire of *Eliſha* whether he ſhould recover of his diſeaſe whereof he was ſick, *Eliſha* ſaid unto him, *Go ſay unto him, thou mayeſt certainly recover, howbeit the Lord hath ſhewed me that he ſhall ſurely die.* As if he had ſaid, though the diſeaſe in it ſelf be not mortal, yet thou ſhalt die of it. Whereas others tranſlate it, *Eliſha ſaid unto him, ſay, thou ſhalt not certainly recover, for the Lord hath ſhewed me that he ſhall ſurely die.*

Lo, in Hebræo mutatis literis mobilibus, aut non *aut* ei *vel* ipſi, *ſonat. Maſoritæ hunc locum enumerant inter ea quæ cũ ſcribãtur* לא *legãtur* לו Merc. *Vade dic ei ſanaberis, quãquã aliqui exiſtimant amphibologicã fuiſſe reſponſionem, nam vox eadem ſola diverſa Scriptura ſignificat, aut* ei, *aut* non.

Now, the negative in *Job* hath a double reading. Firſt, By way of interrogation, and then the ſenſe is the ſame with our tranſlation, *Though*, or *if he ſlay me, ſhall I not truſt in him?* that is, yes, I will, or I ought to truſt in him; ſhould I diſtruſt God becauſe he afflicts me, when as he afflicts to ſhew his faithfulneſs, I will not do it. Others read it negatively, without an interrogation, thus, *Though he ſlay me, I will not expect*, or *behold he will ſlay me, I will not hope.* So the interlineal.

But would *Job* ſay ſo, can this ſtand with the ſtate of grace and holineſs? Were not this indeed to give up the cauſe, and to blaſpheme God?

I anſwer, There is a ſenſe wherein we may acquit *Job* of this charge, though we ſhould read it negatively, which yet is not the ſenſe I ſhall ſtay upon: For the clearing of it, I muſt premiſe two things concerning the Original Text.

First, That the Hebrew word which we tranſlate *to truſt* (of which more a little after) ſignifies alſo to expect or look for a thing at the hands of another.

Dic nõ omnino revaleſces. Jun. *Si enecaret me nõ ſperarem?* Jun. *Ecce occidet me nõ ſperabo.* Mont.

Secondly, The word ſtands alone in the Hebrew without thoſe words which we ſupply, *in him*, and muſt be rendred thus, according to the ſenſe under hand, *Though he ſlay me, I will not expect*, and then the meaning may be given thus; Although God ſhould pronounce that heavy ſentence of death upon me, yea ſign the Writ for my Execution, yet I would not expect a more gentle ſentence or look for a reprieve, becauſe I know that what God doth to any man, or to me, he is juſt in doing it; I know that if he load me with the heavieſt afflictions, he may do it, and (without any further pleading or expectations) I am ready to ſubmit unto it; and yet in this I do not caſt my ſelf as a wicked man, for *I will ſtill maintain my wayes* (as he adds in the next words) neither in this do I caſt off all my hopes or expectations in God, *for he ſhall be my ſalvation*, as he ſpeaks in the next verſe. Thus much he had ſaid in effect before, (*chap.* 9. 15.) *Whom though I were righteous, yet would I not anſwer*, that is, I would not ſtand upon my terms with God, or expect any other terms from him: though God ſhould wound me deeper, yet I would not hope to have him alter what he had done, as if I thought he had done me wrong. *You, my friends, conceive that I complain of God, as if he had been cruel and too ſevere towards me; no, I do not think ſo, for if he ſhould ſlay me, I would not ſue to him to take off that ſentence as unjuſt, but I would willingly lay my life down at his feet, knowing that he will give me a more deſirable life then this.* Thus we may fairly bring *Job* off in the negative reading; he was ready to undergo the hardeſt meaſure, and yet not to think hardly of God, or ſtand expecting any reverſal of his judgement as too hard.

Quævis ab eo mortis ſententiã recipere, tamẽ meliorẽ ab ea ſententiã nõ expectarem, quippe qui noverim nonniſi juſtiſſimè eũ hoc feciſſe. Bol.

Ecce occidet me nō ſpero me hinc liberandū, vel fore ut convaleſcā, actū eſt de me, deploratus eſt hic morbus. Merc. è Rab. Lev.

Again thus, *Behold he will ſlay me, I will not hope*, that is, I ſee my bodily eſtate and outward comforts brought ſo low, that it were folly to hope; Why, ſhould I hope for life and proſperity here, when providence ſpeaks to me of nothing but death? and me-thinks I ſee the Lord ready to ſlay me; my diſeaſe is not for cure, nor my wounds for healing, why then ſhould I ſtand hoping about theſe poor tranſitory things? yet I would not have you think I am without all hope, I have better things to hope for then theſe; and about them I have a lively hope, though I die, as he adds in the next verſe: *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation, and an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.*

Verba ſunt magnæ ſpei & fidei cujuſvis maximè in cruce & morte oſtenditur, ideo utrūq; conjunxit, mortem & ſpem. Merc.

But I ſhall paſs that negative tranſlation, and give the ſenſe as it lies affirmatively before us in ours. The ſtrength of faith is never fully tried but under and upon a croſs: Death and hope ſeem to be at the greateſt diſtance; here we have death and hope brought together: Death could not kill *Job's* hope, his hope did almoſt enliven his death. *Job* had more life in death, then moſt have in their lives. God could eaſily ſlay *Job's* body, but his faith could not be ſlain. God will not ſlay faith, and no other power can. Behold *Job* dying and believing, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*; and ſo this text is the triumph of *Job's* faith over ſorrow and death: The uprightneſs of his heart, the greatneſs of his ſpirit, the undauntedneſs of his courage, his contempt of the world, and his longing deſires after God, are all wrapt up and ſpoken out together in theſe words. As if he had ſaid, *I ſee the Lord is determined to take my life, but what if he do? do you think that I have nothing to truſt him for beyond that? If he deſtroy my body, I know he will ſave my ſoul; I have matters of greater moment to truſt God with, then thoſe which concern this frail piece of fleſh: Death it ſelf ſhall not caſt me down from the footings of my faith, or beat me off from the hold-faſt of my hope in God.*

Again, As theſe words have in them aſſertion of *Job's* faith, ſo alſo a vindication of his perſon from the ſuſpitions or accuſations of his friends. For how can he be charged as wicked, who profeſſeth truſt in God, and promiſeth that he will truſt in him, even unto death, and in it?

יחל *Eſt expectare cum long animi perſeverantia, cū certitudine futuri boni & lætitia.* Coc.

The word which we tranſlate *truſt*, ſignifies alſo to *expect* or *hope*; and it ſignifies expectation, firſt, with patience and waiting: Secondly, with aſſurance of receiving that which we wait for: thirdly, with preſent joy, or joy concomitant with ſorrow. So then, *I will truſt him*, is not only, I will ſtay more time, but I will ſtay with patience, with aſſurance, yea and with joyfulneſs.

But how can a man truſt God when he is ſlain? He that is dead, is paſt hope, he hath for ever done truſting and believing. For when a man is ſlain and dead, he either goes to heaven or to hell: If to hell, there's no hope: if to heaven, there's no need of hope, what, ſhould a man hope for that which he enjoyes, or truſt when he is in poſſeſſion?

I anſwer, firſt, All ſlaying in Scripture ſenſe is not to bodily death; it notes ſometimes only a civil death, or the putting of a perſon totally out of all his former power or preſent comforts: So the ſlaying of the witneſſes is interpreted, *Revel.* 11. Take ſlaying ſo, and then, to truſt when we are ſlain, is no more then to depend upon God for deliverance in extreameſt dangers.

Secondly, Though a man who is actually ſlain, cannot be ſaid to hope; yet a man may ſay, I will hope or truſt though I am ſlain: For ſo this truſt is the act of a living man concerning ſomewhat which he ſhall enjoy or be after death: So any believer dying, whether it be by a natural or a violent death, may ſay, Though I die yet I will truſt in God: Firſt, For the ſalvation of my ſoul: Secondly, For the reſurrection of my body: Thirdly, For the eternal reſt both of ſoul and body together in glory.

But what was it that *Job* was thus reſolved to truſt God for?

Take ſlaying in the firſt ſenſe, for greater afflictions then any he had yet felt, and then, *I will truſt in him*, is firſt, a ſerious profeſſion of his faithfulneſs and adhering to God and his wayes what ever God ſhould do with him, or how great diſcouragements ſoever God ſhould put upon him. So we may well expound *Job* by that admirable proteſtation of the Church, *Pſal.* 44. 17, 18, 19. *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falſly in thy covenant; our heart is not turned back, neither have our ſteps declined from thy way; though thou haſt ſore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with of death.* Truſting in God, in a large ſenſe, is put for the whole compaſs of our duty to him, eſpecially in evil times. Or ſecondly, I will truſt him, is a high profeſſion of his faith, that God would give remedy to the worſt of his preſent, or poſſible outward evils, and raiſe him up or reſtore him again, how low ſoever he ſhould be brought.

Take ſlaying in the ſecond ſenſe, for death, and then his meaning is, that though God ſhould take away this life, yet he had a hope laid up beyond this life: and this I conceive moſt proper here, or certainly intended here, becauſe he had ſo often given up his hopes of a temporal reſtoring, and adds expreſly in the next verſe; *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The character of a godly man; he is one that truſteth in God.*

This is proper to godlineſs. It is the breath of the new creature, and only by the breath of the new creature can theſe words be ſpoken indeed, *I will truſt in God.* (1 *Pet.* 3. 5.) The Apoſtle deſcribing the holy women of the former time, exhorteth that they may be a pattern to the women of the age to which he wrote, *For* (ſaith he) *after this manner the holy women alſo in old time, who truſted in God, adorned themſelves.* He deſcribes holy women by this, they *truſted in God.* A carnal man is a man without hope, (1 *Theſ.* 4. 13.) *I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that you ſorrow not even as others which have no hope.* Who are theſe? The Apoſtle tells us, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, ſtrangers from the Covenant of Promiſes, having no hope.* A heathen (every carnal man is no better) hath no hope, or if he have, it is like himſelf, a carnal hope, in the nature of it, becauſe it is ſo in the object of it: His hope is in man, (*Jer.* 17. 5.) *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm:* He that is in the fleſh, truſts only in the fleſh, and fleſhly things. (*Pſal.* 52. 7.) *He truſts in the abundance of his riches:* he can truſt in earthly riches, but he cannot put forth an act of truſt upon the unſearchable riches of God: It is an eaſie matter to ſay the words, but it is the hardeſt matter under heaven to ſay, and ſay it truly, to ſay and do it, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Secondly Obſerve, *True truſt can triumph over a worſe condition then what is preſent, how bad ſoever it is.*

Job doth not ſay, I will truſt in God, though now my caſe is very ſad, but he puts a harder caſe then ever he was yet in, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him. David* (Pſal. 3. 6.) puts hard caſes to his ſoul, *If ten thouſands of people ſet themſelves againſt me round about, yet will I not be afraid: David* was not in ſuch ſtraits at that time (though in ſtraits) he was not beleaguered with ten thouſand enemies, but he could put thoſe ſtraits to himſelf, and yet be enlarged in dependance upon God. We have *David* again breathing out the very ſame ſpirit of faith in like expreſſions, *Pſal.* 27. 2. & *Pſal.* 46. 2. *Though the mountains be removed, and though the earth be carried into the midſt of the ſea, yet will not we fear.* He puts not only ſuch caſes as he was not in, but ſuch as there was no probability that ever he ſhould be in; *that the hils ſhould be carried into the ſea,* that earth and ſea ſhould mingle. *David's* faith conquered not only real evils, but all imaginable evils. As the Lord puts the remoteſt ſuppoſitions to ſhew his own faithfulneſs, ſo do the Saints to ſhew their faith, (*Iſa.* 54. 10.) *Though the mountains ſhall depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the Covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord.* Though the whole courſe of nature fail, yet the Lord will not let one jot of the Covenant of grace fail; And that's indeed the reaſon why the Saints rejoyce over all difficulties, even becauſe they know God is able to help them in greateſt difficulties: He hath not ſpent the treaſures nor the ſtores of his wiſdom and power upon former ſalvations, they know if they need ſtronger and ſtranger ſalvations, he hath ſtrength and wiſdom enough to work them, and will, becauſe he is as faithful and true, as he is ſtrong or wiſe.

Thirdly Obſerve, *Truſt is due to God, it is due to God in all eſtates.*

Some truſt in God in fair weather; when they are full they can truſt in God for bread; and when they are ſafe, they can truſt him for protection: but for a man to truſt God for bread in wants, and for ſafety when he ſlayeth him, to truſt God in all turns, this is not only a benefit to our ſelves, but a duty unto God. There is nothing more due to God, as God, then truſt is: even a man in high place looks to be truſted, and the higher any man is, the more he looks to be truſted. And ſhall not the moſt high God? We read (*Judg.* 9. 15.) that when the trees had choſen the bramble to be their King, the bramble puts theſe terms upon them, (*Judg.* 9. 15.) *If indeed you annoint me king over you, then come and put your truſt in my ſhadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon.* Even a bramble looks to be truſted in, if you ſet him up for your king. Now if creatures love to be truſted, though they be but *exalted brambles*, how much more doth the Lord, the great and glorious Lord exalted over all? Surely if he be not truſted by us, we ſhall be conſumed by him, a fire will proceed from him to devour the talleſt Cedars that either diſtruſt or do not truſt in him.

Fourthly Obſerve, *To truſt God is an high honour done to God.*

Truſt is a great part of divine worſhip. It is natural worſhip; the very diſcoveries of God unto us, though he ſhould never manifeſt his will concerning this act, call for this. When it is diſcovered to us (which the word every where doth) that God is above all, that he is all-ſufficient, that he is unchangeable, theſe very diſcoveries, though there were never a rule for it in all the word of God, would teach us to truſt upon God. There are ſome parts of Gods worſhip which we ſhould never have known if he had not given us a direct and expreſs rule for them. Such is all his inſtituted worſhip; The ſpecial forms of worſhip depend upon the revealed will of God, but the general worſhip of God (ſuch as to love him, to fear him, to truſt upon him) flow from the manifeſtation of his nature, or from his very being.

But you will ſay, What is truſt?

Take it in brief thus, *Pure ſpiritual truſt is the higheſt exerciſe of faith, whereby looking upon God in himſelf and in his Son through the promiſes, the ſoul is raiſed above all fears or diſcouragements, above all doubts and diſquietments, either for the removing of that which is evil, or for the obtaining of that which is good.* This is the nature of that truſt which is the honour of God, and his natural worſhip, as natural is oppoſed to ſpecial and inſtituted worſhip.

Fifthly Obſerve, *A believer ſeeth God good to him, or a friend to him, when he receiveth nothing but evil from his hand, and ſees nothing but frowns upon his face.*

Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him. There is no man will truſt a profeſſed enemy at all, nor a reconciled enemy much: therefore *Job* did not think God an enemy, though he ſlew him; foraſmuch as he reſolved to truſt him, though he ſlew him. No man will truſt him that he ſuſpects to hate him; A godly man hath good thoughts of God, let him be doing what he will with him. When God put *Abraham* upon that hard task to ſlay his ſon, he yet knew that God loved him, and therefore he was willing to do it, and he would truſt God for that ſon, of which the promiſe of God ſaid he ſhould live, though the command of God ſaid he ſhall die. Now, as *Abraham* (the Father of believers) was perſwaded, that God loved him when he bid him ſlay his ſon; So though God himſelf ſlay a believer, yet he believes that he lives in the love of God. While a believer is all over as it were in gore-blood, whilſt he is all wounds, and wounded (he ſees) by the hand of God, yet he cannot be beaten out of this hold, God is good to him, yea, that *truly God is good to all his Iſrael.* Chriſt had ſaid to his Diſciples, (*John* 21. 11.) *Our friend* Lazarus *ſleepeth*: but when *Martha* heard him give order to take away the ſtone from the Sepluchre, (*verſ.* 39.) *Lord* (ſaith ſhe) *by this time he ſtinketh, for he hath been dead four dayes.* Chriſt anſwers her, *ſaid I not unto thee, that if thou wouldeſt believe, thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God?* Though I was not ſo friendly to my friend as to come and keep him alive when he was only ſick, or to raiſe him up as ſoon as he was dead, yet do not think but I am a friend to him ſtill, *Did not I ſay, that if thou wouldeſt believe, thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God?* I have not neglected my friend: Though I have let him lie four dayes in the grave, yet he hath lain in my heart all this while. We may ſay in all our extremities, though God lets us die and lie in the grave either of death or affliction till we ſtink, that yet we are his *dead friends, and he is our living friend,* in whoſe boſome and embraces we have lain all the while. See how *Paul* exulteth in the love of God in the midſt of all troubles and perſecutions: Suppoſe ſword and famine ſhould compaſs him about, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. *I am perſwaded that neither life nor death,* &c. *nor any other creature ſhould be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Holy *David* of old rejoyced in this aſſurance. (2 *Sam.* 23. 5.) *Although my houſe be not ſo with God,* yet (I know God is my friend, for) *he hath made with me an everlaſting covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow;* that is, though my houſe ſhould not flouriſh in worldly dignity and outward pomp, yet he is my ſalvation, and I can deſire no more.

Sixthly Obſerve, *Job* had ſaid before, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?* Why ſhould I take ſuch courſes as theſe to eaſe my preſent trouble? *though he ſlay me, I will truſt in him;* as if he had ſaid, my remedy is in God, not in tearing my fleſh, or in impatient geſtures: theſe would prove as miſerable comforts as my friends are comforters: the neareſt way to ſound conſolation, is to *truſt in God.*

Hence Obſerve, *That truſt in God is the beſt eaſe to the ſoul, and a remedy of evils before the remedy comes.*

God often defers the remedy as to our ſenſe, when he gives it to our faith. He that believes not, is condemned already, he hath his judgement before the judgement: and he that believes, is ſaved and eaſed already, he hath his deliverance before deliverance. Whilſt our wounds have no cure, truſt in God cures them. Faith is a remedy before a remedy in all kind of evils. (*Iſa.* 50. ult.) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his ſervants, that walketh in darkneſs and hath no light? Let him truſt in the Name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* Truſt in God, though you are in darkneſs, though you ſee no light; this is light before light, pardon before pardon. Truſt God in temptations, and you are above temptations, while you groan under the burden of them. Truſt God in weakneſs, and you are ſtrong: *Paul* in ſuch a caſe *beſought the Lord thrice* and was anſwered with this, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *My grace* (not thy grace) *is ſufficient for thee, for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs* (he doth not ſay thy weakneſs is perfected into ſtrength) This ſatisfied *Paul* to the full, as he concludes in the next words, *Moſt gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon me.* When we reſt with our weakneſſes upon Chriſt, the power of Chriſt reſts upon us. And then as it was with *Paul* (*verſ.* 10.) *when we are weak, then are we ſtrong;* when we are ſorrowful, then have we joy; when we are in bondage, then are we free. Thus by truſting we have either a remedy from, or a remedy in all our troubles and afflictions.

Further, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him;* his faith was pitcht upon God, and he paſſeth by friends and creatures. As if he had ſaid, *Truly though you endeavour to comfort me, and would give me your utmoſt help, yet I cannot truſt upon you; but if God ſhould ſlay me, I would truſt him: though all the world ſhould engage and promiſe to do their beſt for me, I could not truſt them; but if God ſhould do the worſt againſt me, yet I would truſt in him.*

Hence Obſerve, *That we can never truſt God too much, nor creatures too little.*

We can never truſt God too much, becauſe as he is God, all our truſt is but due to him. And we cannot truſt creatures too little, becauſe they are but creatures, and ſo no truſt is due to them. There is a truſt of charity or civility due to man; it is not good to be alwayes jealous one of another; but though there may be a truſt of charity, yet there muſt not be a truſt of confidence upon any creature. *Some jealouſies of man are againſt the rule of love to man, but all truſt in man is againſt the law of duty to God.* Now, as it is a duty to truſt God, ſo if we look upon God, we have the greateſt encouragements, if upon our ſelves, the greateſt cauſe, to truſt him.

Firſt, Conſider *the Being and Eſſence of God*, and there's enough to draw out truſt. His Being is in and from himſelf. *It is beſt to depend upon him who is abſolutely independant.*

Secondly, Conſider the excellency of his Being. *Job* ſaid to his friends a little before, *Doth not his excellency make you afraid?* I may ſay here as truly, *Doth not his excellency make you confide, or truſt?* The power, the wiſdom, the goodneſs, the mercy, the faithfulneſs, the truth, the unchangeableneſs of God, theſe, all theſe excellencies of his Being, call upon us to truſt in him. Who would not truſt in him that hath all, and is All? Who would not truſt in him that can do whatſoever he pleaſeth, and will do whatſoever he hath promiſed?

Thirdly, Conſider him in his relations to us: He is our Creator, that's the ground of truſt given by the Apoſtle, *Let us commit our ſelves unto him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator.* He that made us, will ſurely take care of us: We may well give up our ſelves and our all unto him, who gave us our ſelves, and our all. And if creation aſſure us of preſervation, then redemption aſſures us of it much more. God was at ſo much coſt in making of us, that he will certainly take care of us; but he hath been at much more coſt in redeeming us, and therefore he will much more take care of us, upon the account of that relation. He hath been at too much charge with us, to lay us aſide and throw us by. Again, He is a Father: *earthly fathers lay up and provide for their children*, and ſhall not our heavenly Father? All the relations wherein we ſtand to God, are grounds of our truſt upon him, and engagements of his aſſiſtance to, and providence over us.

Fourthly, The operations and workings of God, call for this truſt: What hath God wrought? and what cannot God work? He works without, and he works within, he ſtops or moves all the wheels of all creatures as ſeemeth beſt to him. The tongues, the hands, the hearts, the wills, the affections, the love, the hatred, the anger, the deſires of all the ſons of men, are under his power, and at his diſpoſe. Who would not truſt in God?

Fifthly, If we look upon our ſelves as creatures, and all creatures with our ſelves, we ſhall quickly find a neceſſity of truſting God. As creatures are not of themſelves, ſo not in themſelves. We receive life from God, and in him we live. If we depart from him in whom we live, we ſhall ſurely die. Our natural, as well as our ſpiritual life, is preſerved by the power of God. The life of man conſiſteth not in the abundance of that which he poſſeſſeth, but in dependance upon him in whom he believeth. Man is not ſufficient of himſelf (in ſpirituals) to think a good thought, that ſufficiency is of God: and all temporal good things are not ſufficient for man their ſufficiency is of God. A horſe is a vain thing to ſave a man, bread is a vain thing to ſtrengthen a man, wine is a vain thing to chear a man, yea, wiſdom is a vain thing to counſel a man, without God. As there is nothing which the devil doth more oppoſe, or God more require, ſo there is nothing which we more need, or by which we gain more then by truſting God: God gives himſelf moſt out to us, when we truſt moſt in him: As an act of truſt gives moſt glory to God, ſo it fetcheth moſt good from God. Our truſting in creatures make them vain to us; and our not truſting in God, makes him (in a ſenſe) vain to us; that is, God will not give out his ſtrength and help, if we do not truſt him: he is as one weak when we truſt him weakly, he is as one empty-handed when our hearts are empty of truſt.

For the advancement of this grace of *truſt*, take theſe three rules from what we find in *Job*, whoſe truſt was riſen to ſuch a height, that it did not only live, but was lively in the very approaches of death.

Firſt, *Labour to know God. Job* was a man acquainted with God, and therefore he truſted in God, (*Pſal.* 9.10.) *They that know thy Name will truſt in thee.* The reaſon why God is truſted ſo little, is becauſe he is ſo little known. We ſay of ſome men, *They are better known then truſted; and if we knew ſome men more, we ſhould truſt them leſs:* But the truth is, God is alwayes truſted as much as he is known; and if we knew him more, we would truſt him more; every diſcovery of God ſhews ſomewhat which renders him more worthy of our truſt.

Secondly, *Recollect and meditate former experiences.* The conſideration of what God hath done for us, keeps the heart up in truſt that he will do more.

Thirdly, *Be upright.* That which made *Job* confident to truſt upon God, though he ſhould ſlay him, was *the uprightneſs of his heart with God.* He may truſt God, who is faithful to God. *Job* had Gods own hand to his certificate, that his heart was upright. *Beloved* (ſaith that beloved Diſciple, 1 *John* 3.21.) *If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* An hypocrite may preſume, but he cannot be truly confident. Beſides, 'tis a diſhonour to God, when they ſay they truſt him, whoſe lives are diſhonourable to him: They make God (as much as lies in them) a partaker in their wickedneſs, who pretend he will take their parts, while they are wicked and do wickedly. Railing *Rabſhakeh* tells *Hezekiah* (2 King. 18.20, 21, 22.) *Thou ſayeſt (but they are but vain words) I have counſel and ſtrength for war;* and when he had beaten him off from humane helps, he labours to drive him from divine help alſo; thou perhaps wilt ſay, *I truſt in God;* If thou ſayeſt ſo, remember, *Is not that he whoſe Altars and whoſe high places Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath ſaid to Judah and Jeruſalem, ye ſhall worſhip before this Altar in Jeruſalem:* As if he had ſaid, *Thou truſt in God! thou who haſt diſhonoured God, pulled down his altars!* &c. *Rabſhakeh* thought that *Hezekiah* had done God great diſſervice in deſtroying the Altars; and if it had been ſo, this charge had cut off the confidence of *Hezekiah:* But how juſtly may we upbraid many that profeſs they truſt in God, and ſay, Is not he the God whoſe name you blaſpheme? the God whom you provoke? the God whoſe truths and wayes you neglect and kick againſt? the God whoſe ſervants you oppoſe? and will you ſay you truſt in God? For ſhame either diſclaim your confidences, or be reclaimed from your courſes. That man who walks uprightly before God, may truſt perfectly in God. He that contemns the command, hath no part in the promiſe. We do not oblige God to do us good by our doing good; but God hath not obliged himſelf to do us good, while we are doing evil. There are promiſes of grace, but there are no promiſes of reward to wicked men.

Laſtly, Take two characters of holy truſt.

Firſt, It takes us off from all other dependances. As a man cannot ſerve, ſo neither can he truſt *God and Mammon:* As in ſpirituals, ſo in temporals; while, with the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 3.3.) *We rejoyce* (which is an effect of truſt) *in God, we have no confidence in the fleſh.* If God be not truſted alone, he is not truſted at all. Every thing we joyn with him disjoyns us from him. He that takes hold of God, lets go his hold of all other things: We may uſe the help of creatures, but we muſt truſt none but God. He that (in this ſenſe) will needs be ſo wiſe and provident as to get two ſtrings to his bow, ſhall find, when he comes to ſhoot, that he hath not one. If we truſt in God and man together, God will not help us, and man cannot.

Secondly, Holy truſt acts in all eſtates and turns: *As true obedience reſpects all the commandments, ſo true truſt reſpects all the diſpenſations of God.* Truſt repoſeth upon God, not only for ſome, but for and in every thing. Some ſay they truſt God for pardon, for heaven, and for eternal life, who do not, or think they need not truſt him for the needs of this preſent life: For theſe, ſome ſuppoſe they can help themſelves, and others ſuſpect God will not ſtoop ſo low as to help them. *A true Believer depends upon God as much* (in proportion to the thing) *for a piece of bread, as for heaven;* and the Lord (in proportion to the thing) is as careful to provide Believers with the bread of this life, as he is to give them the bread and means of eternal life. This is truſt indeed, when we truſt God for all, for temporals as well as for ſpirituals, in the leaſt as well as in the greateſt matters: Yea, the leſs the thing is for which we truſt God, the greater is the grace of truſt. As it argues the greateſt degree of holineſs, when we will not offend God by committing the leaſt ſin, and when we are thankful to him for the leaſt mercy; ſo it argues a great degree of faith, when we depend upon God (being convinced we have need to do ſo) for his good will in receiving the leaſt comfort, and for his ſtrength in performing the leaſt duty. Some, when they have a great buſineſs to undergo, ſtir up themſelves to truſt God, and ſo they ought; but the ſpiritualneſs of truſt is ſeen, when in the leaſt buſineſſes we undergo, and in the leaſt duty we go about, we go out of our ſelves, and go forth in the ſtrength of God: For as it is the very ſame love of God that ſaveth us eternally, and preſerveth us temporally; ſo it is the ſame power of God which doth great or ſmall things for us: And therefore we ſhould in all depend upon God, knowing, that without him we cannot do the one, and that we ſhall be able to do all things through him ſtrengthening us. Yea, laſtly, we muſt truſt God in our injoyments, as well as in our wants. It is an hard thing to ſay, *Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him*; but it is harder to ſay, Though he make me alive, yet I will truſt in him. It is a glorious tryal of truſt, to ſay, Should God make me not worth a groat, yet I will truſt him; but it is a greater glory of this truſt, to ſay, Though God make me worth thouſands, yet I will truſt in him: *It is hard to truſt God in a low and troubleſome eſtate; but it is harder to truſt God in a full and proſperous eſtate.* When we (to ſenſe) have the leaſt need of Gods help, then to truſt in him, and depend upon him, ſhews we are moſt ſenſible that we need his help: For by this we in one act give teſtimony to the All-ſufficiency of God, and to the emptineſs of the creature; by this we make God all, and the creature nothing at all. Faith gives a more ſpiritual diſcovery of it ſelf, when it convinces us that we are poor in the midſt of our abundance without God, then when it convinceth us, that we have abundance in God, though we are poor. 'Tis noble when we can ſay, though God afflict me, and empty me, I will truſt in him; but 'tis heroically Chriſtian to ſay, Though God comfort me, and fill me, I will truſt in him. *The ſtronger we are in grace, the leſs we go, either alone, or upon the crutches of the creature.*

While I affirm this, I would not at all derogate from the excellency of *Job*'s truſt in God, I only ſhew you a more excellent way of truſting him.

But it may be queſtioned, Doth not *Job* derogate from, yea, contradict his own *profeſſed truſt*, when with the ſame breath, with which he concludes, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*, he concludeth alſo,

But I will maintain mine own wayes before him.

In the former part of the verſe, *Job* diſcovered the higheſt confidence in God. In this latter part, he ſeems to diſcover too much confidence in himſelf, *But I will maintain mine own wayes before him,* The Apoſtle argues the inconſiſtency of theſe two (*Rom.* 11. 6.) *If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwiſe grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwiſe work is no more work.* The wayes of a man are his works: If he truſt in God, he depends on grace; if he maintain his wayes, he may be ſaid to depend on works. How then ſhall we reconcile *Job*'s truſting in God, with his maintaining of his wayes?

I anſwer, There is a maintaining of our wayes before God, which is but a fruit of ſelf-confidence, and an Argument of our departure from the grace of God. But this act of *Job* ſprang from no ſuch root; nor will it yield any ſuch fruit, as will appear in opening of the words.

But (or *neverthelesſ*) **I will maintain.**] The Original word ſignifies three things. Firſt, (As we tranſlate) to plead, diſpute, and maintain a cauſe, or a poſition, as juſt and right. Secondly, To reprove. Thirdly, To correct or amend that which is amiſs, faulty, and erroneous: And according unto theſe three ſignifications, the ſence of this Scripture may be given three wayes. *But I will maintain*

יוכיח *Eſt diſputare, hinc ars diſputandi quam dialecticam vocant ab Hebræis dicitur* הוכוח *Significat etiã cauſam agere apud judicem, verbũ forẽſe.* Druſ.

Mine own wayes.] His wayes were his works, or the manner and courſe of his life; which is therefore called our way, becauſe we paſs and repaſs up and down in it, as a man doth in a way to or from his own home.

Before him.] Or, *Before his face,* ſo the letter of the Hebrew. Which he adds, firſt, in oppoſition to men; and ſecondly, that he might more emphatically ſet forth the ſtrength of his confidence towards God. *I will maintain my wayes before him: I will not only make good what I affirm to thoſe that are like my ſelf; I have not only hope to render my ſelf and my wayes fair to the eye of the world; but I am aſſured that I can render both fair to the eye of God himſelf.* Some can maintain their wayes well enough before men, who cannot maintain them before God; his eyes look through all their coverings and vizards: He can diſtinguiſh between appearances and realities; he can ſee a rotten heart within a painted-skin. Holy upright *Job* was not afraid to come into the preſence of God, there to open himſelf, and to have all his wayes ſcanned and examined. Thoſe wayes had need be fair and well mended which abide the ſurvey of God himſelf.

I will maintain, &c.] That is (according to the firſt ſignification of the word) *Though the Lord ſlay me,* yet I will ſtand to, and abide my tryal, I will not be brought to an ill opinion of my ſelf, nor will I think the worſe of my ſpiritual, internal eſtate, how much evil ſoever the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to deal to me in my outward eſtate: No, I will be as high in purſuance of what I have heretofore aſſerted, namely, that mine heart is upright with him, and my wayes right (in the main) before him, when he is ſlaying me, as ever I was, when he was proſpering me, or ſhall be again if he ſhould proſper me again.

Priũſquam hinc ab ea vias meæ i. e. rationes & cauſam meã arguã. Ego ſane ut perii perii, verum non continebo meipſũ quin jus meũ corã illo aſſeram. Merc. *Sunt confidentiæ verba quod ſperet ſe cauſã ſuam probãdum coram Deo fretus ſua innocentia.* Merc.

Whence Obſerve, Firſt, *An upright heart keeps its ground in all turns and times.*

Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him; and not only ſo, *But I will maintain mine own wayes alſo.* For as an upright heart maintains the ſame practice of holineſs at all times: Though there be ſlaying and killing for the Name and Truth of Chriſt, yet he will not change his way, nor go into a wrong way, wherein perhaps he ſhall have more ſafety, by complying, and chiming in with the opinions or practiſes of other men. As he (I ſay) maintains his wayes in regard of his preſent practice, ſo alſo in regard of his former integrity in that practice: which is the thing *Job* intends chiefly in this Aſſertion.

Secondly, *Job* ſpeaks this as an Argument of his uprightneſs, *I will maintain mine own wayes before him.*

Hence Note, *That it is a ſign of a heart ſound in holineſs, when we can with confidence ſet our ſelves before God, and maintain what we are in his preſence.*

It ſhews that a man is right when he dares come to tryal. I will diſpute it out with God himſelf, ſaith *Job*: Not that he (as I have often ſhewed before) had an opinion that there was no ſin in him; or that God could find no faults in him: *Job* acted upon the principles of the Covenant of grace, and knew upon what ground he went, but (taking that in) he is reſolute to maintain his wayes, and this was a proof of his uprightneſs. It is an Argument that a piece of gold is weight, when a man is willing to have it brought to the ballance; and that it is right metal, not counterfeit and baſe, when a man is ready to offer it to the touchſtone: Try me, prove me, do what you will with me, bring me to the ballance, or to the touchſtone; I will maintain my wayes, I doubt not but I ſhall be found weight and right, ſaith the upright ſoul (*John* 3. 21.) *He that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifeſt.* He that doth the truth is not afraid of the light; *That will but make his deeds manifeſt that they are wrought in God,* as Chriſt ſpeaks in that place. How are the deeds of a man wrought in God? Firſt thus, The deeds of the Saints are wrought in God; that is, in the ſtrength and power of God. Secondly, They are wrought in God; that is, at the command, and by the authority of God. They that work in the power of God, and by the rule of God, *their deeds are wrought in God.* Now, *He that doth the truth, comes to the light*; he loves the light, that his deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God, both according to the mind of God, and by the power of God. Our deeds have no value in them, but as they are done in God: Nor can we maintain any of our wayes before God, but when we walk in God. We may make a flouriſh before men, of what is wrought in man: But what we maintain before God, muſt be of

God. See how you can put your wayes before the light of Gods countenance, and debate them in his preſence. It is an eaſie matter to carry it out with creatures: Conſider what you can do with God. *I* (ſaith *Job*) *will maintain mine own wayes before him.*

Non tam ad anteactæ vitæ pœnitentiā quam ad ſequentis puritatem pertinere exiſtimat. Vatab. *Arguere vias in conſpectu ejus, eſt dare operam ut innocenter vivat coram illo.*

Thirdly, *I will maintain my wayes*, may ſignifie his reſolution to continue in the wayes of holineſs and obedience for the time to come: *Though he ſlay me, yet will I maintain my wayes*; that is, I will not be brought out of love with holineſs, though the Lord ſhould lay me under the greateſt diſcouragements: Here is another Argument of ſincerity. A ſound heart ſaith, What evil ſoever I find in the wayes of God, I will never think ill of the wayes of God: No, I will yet walk in them, I will now run in them; how hardly ſoever I am uſed in thoſe wayes, I will never out of them; though I meet with Lyons in them, though I meet with blows and troubles in them, yea, though God meet me as a Lyon in them, though I receive blows and troubles from the hand of God himſelf, in whoſe wayes I walk, though he ſeem to ſtand there with a drawn ſword to ſlay me, *Yet I will maintain my way.* This is a truth, and true of *Job*; yet I conceive the word in the Hebrew, which we render *maintain*, doth not lead us to it; and therefore (though it hath learned Aſſertors) I will not ſtay upon it.

יכח *ſignificat etiam reprehendere, corrigere, ſic aliqui latini exponunt & referunt ad pœnitētiā de vitæ anteactæ erratis.*

Again, Take the word in the ſecond ſence, as it ſignifies *to reprove*, and then the meaning riſeth ſomewhat different from the former, though it comes to the ſame iſſue: *I will reprove my own wayes*; that is, Though I ſtill aſſert my ſincerity, yet I do not preſume my ſelf free from ſin: I will judge my ſelf to have failed in many things; and that the Lord might juſtly correct me, ſlay me, yea (in regard of the deſert of ſin) caſt me to Hell, thus, *I will reprove mine own wayes before him*; while God is ſmiting me, I will be accuſing my ſelf; I will ſay that I have ſinned, and that he doth me no wrong: I will not only acquieſce and reſt ſatisfied in the ſentence of God upon me, though it be to death, but I will alſo blame my ſelf for whatſoever is blame worthy in my heart or life. So then, he intended not any accuſation of God, but an examination of himſelf, or a ſerious diſcuſſion of his courſe and conſcience as in the ſight of God.

Hence Obſerve, *That when God is ſmiting or ſlaying us, we ſhould be judging our ſelves, and confeſſing our ſinfulneſs.*

I will reprove mine own wayes before him. *Job* did not ſay, I will reprove his wayes, but mine own. He ſaid not, God doth ill in ſlaying me, but I have often done ill in diſobeying him. This is an Argument of a holy heart, when in the midſt of all ſufferings we can acquit God, and lay load upon our ſelves. The Apoſtle aſſureth us (1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord.* There's one truth: And yet this is as great a truth, *When we are judged of the Lord, we ſhould judge our ſelves.* When we are corrected of the Lord, we ſhould correct our ſelves; when he reproveth us, we ſhould reprove our ſelves, and acknowledge that we are ſuch, as in whom God might find enough, not only to lay rods of correction upon us, but even ſcorpions of deſtruction. *I alſo will reprove my wayes before him.*

Laſtly, Taking the word (as ſome do) for *correcting*, *I will correct my own wayes before him*; ſo there is this ſence in it, *When God is ſlaying me, I will be thinking how to be more holy, how I may amend my own wayes before him.* As if he had ſaid, *I will not do like ſtubborn and rebellious ones, who when God chaſtens and afflicts them, they more pollute and corrupt themſelves, or do worſe and worſe: No, I would be, and do, better and better; I would correct my wayes yet before him: I will not only maintain my wayes in holineſs, as I have done; but I would put out a more pure and correct edition of my works, I would take care to have all the errata's (which I have obſerved in any page of my life) amended: and now that the Lord hath caſt me into the fire of affliction, I would come out gold: (I would have all my droſs purged out, and my whole lump refined.* Theſe reſolves, which the ſence of the word now preſented holds out unto us, diſcover alſo much holineſs of heart. What greater diſcovery of holineſs is there, then to make the beſt improvement of the worſt eſtate; and to be mending our ſouls, while our bodies are a ſlaying? Yet I conceive (according to the coherence and drift of the place) that our tranſlation renders it moſt fair, that *Job*, notwithſtanding the Lord ſhould ſlay him, would yet ſtand up with holy confidence to plead his own integrity, even in the ſight of God: *I will maintain my own wayes before him.*

But this was not all, *Job* might poſſibly be checkt: What? *Maintain your wayes?* And that before God? Yes do, ſee what you can get by it; Will you plead with God? What will it advantage you? What? ſaith *Job*, I fear not any loſs by this courſe, and I hope to be a gainer? I am ſo far from being ſtartled with theſe fears, that I am ſettled in this aſſurance; what that was he gives in the next verſe,

Verſe 16. **He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation, for an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.**

As if he had ſaid, *Never put me this doubt, that God will diſclaim me, becauſe I maintain mine own wayes before him; nor do I believe that God will damn me, becauſe he ſlayeth me: No, Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him; and though I maintain mine own wayes before him, yet he ſhall be my ſalvation.*

Hoc evadet mihi in ſalutem. Simile, ero eis in Deum. Druſ.

Some render, *This ſhall turn to my ſalvation*; He will not rebuke me, much leſs condemn me, as he will thoſe who juſtifie themſelves proudly, for this ſhall turn to my ſalvation; that is, he will be pleaſed with, and accept of me; he will not ſay it is raſhneſs or folly, pride or ſelf-conceit, which hath ſtirred me up to maintain my wayes; he will rather ſay, it is the integrity and uprightneſs of my heart; and that I have done no more then I might, yea, no more then I ought for his glory, being thus charged as I am by you my Friends: I do not diſtruſt my cauſe, though you do; yea, I am ſetled in this perſwaſion, that when God hath heard my plea, he will give ſentence on my ſide, though you are my accuſers.

He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.

Salvation is a large word. God is all ſalvations to his people, and the Author of all ſalvation, of temporal, as well as of eternal. Upon whatſoever we can write ſalvation, we may entitle God to it. *He that is our God, is the God of ſalvation* (Pſal. 68. 20.) But what is the ſalvation to which *Job* here entitles God?

Sunt qui de futuro accipiunt, erit poſt mortem, ſed ego de præſenti tēpore accipio. Merc.

Some refer it to temporal ſalvation, *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation*; that is, he ſhall deliver and reſtore me from my preſent troubles; though he now ſlay and quite undo me, yet I believe that he will revive and repair me again.

In ſalutem eſſe dicitur non ratione præſentis opis ſed ratione liberationis ab omnibus malis & tranſlationis ad beatitudinem. Coc.

Others interpret it ſtrictly of eternal ſalvation; *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation*; that is, though he ſlay me here, yet I am ſure he will ſave me hereafter, and be my portion for ever. Three Reaſons riſe from the Text, why *Job* ſhould here rather be underſtood of eternal, then of temporal ſalvation.

Firſt, Becauſe he ſpeaks in the next clauſe about the preſence of God, *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*: coming before God (in the ſence there intended) and ſalvation, are the ſame; eternal ſalvation conſiſts in the viſion of God, *Pſal.* 16. 11. *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy.*

Secondly, Becauſe we find *Job* expreſſing little confidence, but rather much diffidence about any temporal reſtauration; he gave himſelf for a loſt man, as to the riches, honour and greatneſs of this world. He had better aſſurance of the glory he never had, then of the greatneſs he once had.

Thirdly, Becauſe he ſpeaks here upon ſuppoſition of his being ſlain; take ſlaying ſtrictly, for the ſeparating of ſoul and body; and he that is ſo ſlain is beyond temporal ſalvation. For theſe three reaſons we may conceive *Job* here aiming at, and reaching after eternal ſalvation.

He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.] Some connecting this clauſe with that ſence of the former, *I will reprove my own wayes*, give the Obſervation thus.

While we reprove our ſelves, and confeſs our ſins, our hearts may be raiſed up in confidence of the favour of God in the pardon of our ſins.

Quamvis adverſum me coram Deo vias meas tanquam malas arguo, ſcio tamen quod ſententiam in mei favorem pronunciaturus ſit. Bold.

He doth not ſay, If I reprove mine own wayes, God will reprove me too. There are ſome reprovings of our hearts, from which we may infer, that God will reprove us much more: So 1 *John* 3. 20. *If our heart con-*

demn us, God is greater then our hearts, that knoweth all things. 'Tis ſo, when the heart is ingaged to any luſt: When ſuch a mans heart condemns him, God will condemn him a thouſand times more: A man continuing in ſin, cannot ſay upon good ground, I reprove my wayes, yet God ſhall be my ſalvation; yea, while ſuch reprove themſelves, they may be ſure God will reprove them alſo. Only, when we humbly acknowledge the ſinfulneſs of our wayes, and forſake them, we are aſſured of mercy. Theſe, and none but theſe, have warrant from the word, to ſay, ſalvation belongs to them. *Prov.* 28. 13. *He that covereth his ſins ſhall not proſper; but whoſo confeſſeth, and forſaketh them, ſhall have mercy.* (1 John 1. 9.) *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins:* To confeſs ſin is ſelf-condemnation. God is ſo gracious, that he will not condemn; ſo faithful and juſt, that he will forgive thoſe that confeſs. While we implead our ſelves, God will not be our Judge, but Chriſt will be our Advocate: Hence that Goſpel-prophet incourageth drooping ſouls (*Iſa.* 43. 16.) *Declare that thou mayſt be juſtified*: Declare, what ſhould he declare? Declare thine iniquity, and thou ſhalt be juſtified from all thine iniquities. The Lord alſo will be thy ſalvation.

Secondly, Take the former clauſe according to our reading, *I will maintain my own wayes before him: He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.*

From this Connexion Obſerve, *There is a ſelf-juſtification conſiſtent with ſalvation.*

Chriſt chargeth the Phariſees (*Luke* 16. 15.) *Ye are they which juſtifie your ſelves before men, but God knoweth your hearts:* That is, you bear up, and pride your ſelves with this, that men know no ill by you, that no man can ſay, *black is your eye*; but God can ſee, *black is your heart.* They who reſt in a juſtification before men, while their hearts are naught, are condemned before God. And all who juſtifie themſelves before God, upon the goodneſs of their works, ſhall be condemned. But though we may not juſtifie our ſelves upon the goodneſs of our works, yet they (whoſe works are ſo) may juſtifie themſelves that their works are good. 'Tis not pride, but duty (when we are called to it) to ſay we are what we are, and to maintain that our wayes are right, when they are right. God takes it well at our hands, if we ſpeak the moſt (with truth) of our ſelves, when others ſpeak leſs then truth, or that which is not true of us. Self-condemnation is alwayes not only uncomely, but ſinful, except it come under the notion of ſelf-vindication, or of ſuch a ſelf-juſtification as this point leads unto. Thus we may maintain our wayes before men: Yea, thus (while we put our mouths in the duſt, and are deeply humbled before God for the imperfection of our wayes) we may maintain the uprightneſs of our wayes before God, and be aſſured that he alſo will be our ſalvation.

Further, Take the words in their own compaſs, and we may Obſerve,

First, *God is the ſalvation of his people.*

How often do the Saints breath out this faith, *He is our ſalvation*; upon this faith they live, and in this faith they dye, *That God is their ſalvation.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *A thought that God is ſalvation to us, is conſolation enough to us.*

Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him: he alſo ſhall be my ſalvation. When *Jacob* lay upon his death-bed panting and gaſping for life, *O God* (ſaith he) *I have waited for thy ſalvation.* He could not go on bleſſing his ſons, but he muſt make a parentheſis, to take a view, or get a taſte of this ſalvation. To reflect upon our intereſt in the ſalvation of God, is light to us in darkneſs, and life to us in the approaches of death. To be ſaved by any hand carries comfort in it, much more to be ſaved by the hand of God: But the comfort of the Saints is yet higher, God is their ſalvation. We are happy enough that God ſaves us; but we have a further happineſs, in that God is our ſalvation: *If God be our ſalvation, we are not only as ſafe, but (according to our meaſure and receptibility) as happy as God himſelf is.*

Thirdly, *Job* ſpeaks emphatically, *He alſo*; he cryes up the Name of God. And in this open affirmation, that God is his ſalvation, there is a ſecret negation, or a denyal implied, that ſalvation is in any elſe: As if he had ſaid, *He, and he only; he, and none but he.*

The point from it is, *That none but God is able to give ſalvation to his people.*

Salvation belongeth unto the Lord (*Pſal.* 3. 8.) The Hebrew is, *Salvation unto the Lord.* Salvation is ſo much his, that the holy Ghoſt puts nothing between it and him. We ſupply the ſence well, *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.* And it doth not belong unto him in common with others, *'tis his propriety*; He gives it, and none elſe can; (*Iſa.* 43. 11.) *I, even I, am the Lord, and beſide me there is no Saviour.* No? We find in the Book of Judges, that God raiſed up *Saviours* to his people (*Neh.* 9. 27.) True; but, firſt, He never raiſed up any *Saviour* for eternal ſalvation, but only Jeſus Chriſt, who is alſo God. Secondly, They who were *temporal Saviours* did not ſave in their own ſtrength, and by their own power; God is ſaid to raiſe them up *Saviours*, becauſe he raiſed up ſuch Inſtruments as himſelf intended to ſave them by; it was God that ſaved them, though men were imployed to ſave them. *Whoſoever brings us ſalvation, God is the Author of it.* The Prophet concludes (*Jer.* 3. 23.) *Truly in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains.* He ſpeaks but of a temporal ſalvation; and by hills and mountains he means the greateſt means, the higheſt helps, the ſtrongeſt hands, the wiſeſt heads on earth; and yet he ſaith, *In vain is ſalvation hoped for from thoſe hills and mountains*; truly God is the help of his people. It is much more vain to expect eternal ſalvation from any other; in vain is *ſoul-ſalvation* hoped for from hills, or from the multitude of mountains; from this good work or that good work; from hills and mountains of good works; though you pile up mountains of prayers, hills of alms, and deeds of charity; yea, though you dig the loweſt valleys of humiliation, and make rivers and ſeas of tears with weeping, yet in vain is eternal ſalvation hoped for from theſe hills and mountains, from theſe valleys and ſeas, *Salvation is of the Lord: He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.*

When *Job* had ſaid, *I will maintain mine own wayes before him*; Doth he ſay, *And they ſhall be my ſalvation?* Doth he ſay, my righteouſneſs, my integrity, ſhall be my ſalvation? His wayes were indeed the way to ſalvation; but his wayes were not, nor did he intend them to be, his *ſalvation.* The uprightneſs of our hearts, the righteouſneſs of our wayes cannot ſave us; Chriſt only is our ſalvation. How much ſoever we may maintain, or may be compelled (as *Job* was) to boaſt of our wayes, yet we cannot make ſalvation of them; we muſt give that wholly to God. It is an admirable frame of heart, when we are higheſt in ſpeaking for our ſelves, or in maintaining our wayes before God and man, yet then to go quite out of our wayes, and out of our ſelves. To expect all from free-grace, when we have been moſt free at works, moſt active in doing, or patient in ſuffering for God, is the right Goſpel temper.

Fourthly, Obſerve this from it, *That an upright heart in the worſt of times, looks at, and hath an eye upon the beſt things.*

Though he ſlay me, he ſhall be my ſalvation: With the ſame breath he tells us of God ſlaying him, and of God his ſalvation; he ſaw life in death, light in darkneſs, deliverances in deſtruction, repairs in ruine, ſalvation in ſlaying: ſuch are the workings of a gracious heart, ſuch the proſpects of faith in the gloomeſt day, in the darkeſt night. Faith only ſees ſuch ſights as theſe, reflected from the glaſs of precious promiſes.

Laſtly, *Job* expreſſeth his ſpecial intereſt in, or relation to God, *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.*

Hence obſerve, *That a Believer looks upon God himſelf as his ſalvation.*

My God, my ſalvation. God hath (as it were) made himſelf over to Believers: *Job* doth not ſay, God will give, or beſtow ſalvation upon me; but he ſaith, *He ſhall be my ſalvation.* It is God himſelf who is the ſalvation and the portion of his people. *They would not much care for ſalvation, if God were not their ſalvation.* It more pleaſeth the Saints that they enjoy God, then that they enjoy ſalvation,

tion. Falſe and carnal ſpirits, will expreſs a great deal of deſire after ſalvation: O they like ſalvation, heaven, and glory well, but they never expreſs any longing deſire after God and Jeſus Chriſt. They love ſalvation, but they care not for a Saviour. Now that which faith pitcheth moſt upon, is God himſelf; he ſhall be my ſalvation, let me have him, and there's ſalvation enough; *He is my life, he is my comfort, he is my riches, he is my honour, and he is my all.* Thus *David*'s heart acted immediately upon God, *Pſal.* 18. 1, 2. *I love thee, O Lord, my ſtrength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortreſs, and my deliverer, my buckler, and the horn of my ſalvation, and my high tower.* It pleaſed holy *David* more, that God was his ſtrength, then that God gave him ſtrength; that God was his deliverer, then that he was delivered; that God was his fortreſs, his buckler, his horn, his high tower, then that he gave him the effect of all theſe: It pleaſed *David*, and it pleaſes all the Saints more, that God is their ſalvation (whether temporal, or eternal) then that he ſaves them. The Saints look more at God, then at all that is Gods. They ſay (*Non tua, ſed te*) *We deſire not thine, but thee*, or nothing of thine like thee. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* ſaith *David* again (*Pſal.* 73. 25.) What are Saints, what are Angels, to a ſoul without God? 'Tis true of things, as well as of perſons. What have we in Heaven but God? What's joy without God? What's glory without God? What's all the furniture and riches, all the delicates, yea, and all the diadems of Heaven, without the God of Heaven? If God ſhould ſay to the Saints, here is Heaven, take it amongſt you, but I will withdraw my ſelf, how would they weep over Heaven it ſelf, and make it a *Baca*, a valley of tears indeed. *Heaven is not Heaven, unleſs we injoy God.* 'Tis the preſence of God which makes Heaven: *Glory is but our neareſt being unto God.* A *Mephiboſheth* replyed, when *David* told him, *I have ſaid, thou and Ziba divide the land: Let him take all if he will*, ſaith *Mephiboſheth*; I do not ſo much regard the land, as I regard thy preſence; *Let him take all, for as much as my Lord the King is come again in peace to his own houſe*, where I may injoy him. So, if God ſhould ſay to the Saints, take Heaven among you, and withdraw himſelf, they would even ſay, Nay, let the world take Heaven if they will, let them take glory if they will; if we may not have thee in Heaven, Heaven would be but an earth, or rather but a hell to us. That which Saints rejoyce in, is, that they may be in the preſence of God, that they may ſit at his table, and eat bread with him; that is, that they may be near him continually, which was *Mephiboſheth* his priviledge with *David*. That's the thing, they ſay, which they deſire, and which their ſouls thirſt after; that's the wine they would drink. *My ſoul* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 42. 2.) *thirſteth for God, for the living God, when* (me thinks the time is very long, when) *ſhall I come and appear before God?* He ſpake this in the greatneſs and heat of his zeal to injoy God in the Ordinances of his publick worſhip: How much more was his ſoul on fire to injoy God, where he ſhould be above Ordinances? The uſual ſaying of Chriſtians is, *Come let us go to prayer*, or, *let us go to Church*; we ſhould rather ſay, *Come let us go to God.* We ſhould prize duties no further, then as we obey and injoy God in doing them: Nor ſhould we prize Heaven it ſelf further, then as we ſhall have there a more full and perfect injoyment of God. *Salvation it ſelf were no ſalvation, without the God of ſalvation. He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.*

But an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.

In this latter clauſe, *Job* ſecretly refuteth the cenſure of his Friends, who had aſperſed him as an hypocrite. *Bildad* did it in the eighth Chapter, though not directly, by way of aſſertion, yet obliquely, by way of inference, while he ſaid (verſ. 13.) *The hypocrites hope ſhall periſh, and be cut off, and his truſt ſhall be as a ſpiders web.* Here *Job* ſpeaks that out, which no hypocrite can, *I* (ſaith he) *will maintain my wayes before God, and he ſhall be my ſalvation*: 'Tis not ſo with hypocrites, they dare not maintain their wayes before God; or if they do, they ſhall yet fall under the condemnation of God: Thus by way of argument, he denieth, as they by way of argument had affirmed him to be an hypocrite. *Job* could come where no hypocrite can.

Audeo corā Deo apparare, quod non facerem ſi impius & hypocrita eſſem ut vos me eſſe dicitis. Merc.

An hypocrite ſhall not come before him.] The Hebrew is, *All hypocrites ſhall not come before him*; that is, *No hypocrite ſhall come before him. Not all*, is often in Scripture put for *none*; or, *none at all*. *David* (*Pſal.* 47. 17.) ſaith of the worldly rich man, *When he dyeth, he ſhall carry nothing away with him*: The Hebrew is, *When he dyeth, he ſhall not carry all away with him.* The meaning is, (as we tranſlate) he ſhall carry nothing at all away, he ſhall not carry ſo much as a rag away with him. So the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 3. 20.) *By the deeds of the Law there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in thy ſight*: The Greek is, *All fleſh ſhall not be juſtified in thy ſight, by the deeds of the Law*: The meaning is, none ſhall. So here, *All hypocrites*; that is, *No hypocrite.* I have opened ſomething about him at the eighth Chapter, and ſhewed there what an hypocrite is; he is one that acts another mans part; he acts a perſon which he is not. *An hypocrite is a wicked man in a godly mans clothes.*

Non veniet in conſpectu ejus omnis hypocrita. Heb. *Non omnis, in ſacro ſermone ſæpe valet nullus. Hypocrita, Græcis eſt quod Latinis hiſtrio, Larvatus nimirum homo, qui aliud ipſe eſt, & aliud ſe eſſe ſimulat.* Sanct.

Some tranſlate by a general word, *A wicked man ſhall not come before him*: Others render, *An accepter of perſons ſhall not come before him*; He taxed his Friends as ſuch before. Two or three of the Rabbins (though they are ſomewhat hard put to it, to make out that ſence of the word) are much for the latter, *An accepter of perſons ſhall not come before him.* We render it ſtrictly according to the proper ſignification of the word; yet to ſay a wicked men, or an accepter of perſons, ſhall not come before him, is as much as to ſay, an hypocrite ſhall not come before him: For though all wicked men, all accepters of perſons are not hypocrites (ſome ſin, and care not who ſees; they ſin in the very face of the Sun, and *the ſhew of their faces* (as the Prophet ſpeaks) *doth teſtifie againſt them.*) But (I ſay) though poſſibly ſome wicked men (at leaſt in ſome things) are no hypocrites; yet there is no hypocrite, but he is a wicked man; therefore we ſhall not call either of them out of his name, though we give both, or either of the names to each of them: And as their titles, ſo their eſtates are alike, we may as well ſay, *A wicked man*, as *An hypocrite.*

Flagitioſus. Vatab. *Impius.* Pagn. *Coram Deo dolus non ingreditur.* Sept. *Hanc vocis ſignificationem agnoſcere videtur* Rab. Mord. & Rab. Lev. *in lib.* Rad.

Shall not come before him.] Not come before him? Whither can they go? or where can they be behind *him, whoſe face is every where?* I anſwer, *To come before God*, may be underſtood either of this life, or of the life to come. We come before God in this life, while we attend the duties and ordinances of his worſhip. But it may be ſaid, Do not hypocrites come thus before God? None come more before God in that ſence then hypocrites; and herein lyes their hypocriſie chiefly, that they come before God in outward holy duties; and yet are ſo unholy in their lives, or at thoſe duties. The Lord ſpeaks complaining of ſuch an hypocritical people preſſing upon him (*Iſa.* 58. 2.) *This people ſeek me daily; they take delight in approaching to God*: Yet all this was only *as a Nation that did righteouſneſs*; they were not really a righteous Nation. In another Prophet (*Jer.* 7. 10.) the Lord reproveth hypocrites openly, and in terms, for coming before him, *Will ye ſteal, murder, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſely*, &c. *and come and ſtand before me in this Houſe?* They came ſo much before God, that he was put to chide them out of his preſence; he could ſcarce ſtave them off. How then is it that *Job* ſaith, *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, if we underſtand it of this preſent life?

Phraſis Hebraica idem eſt ac illum condemni, & rejici. Bold.

I anſwer, He comes not ſo before God, firſt in regard of right; ſecondly in regard of acceptance. An hypocrite hath no right to come before God in any duty, he cannot call God Father; he cannot lay claim to any promiſe of the Covenant; or if he do, he ſhall not be accepted, much leſs ſuffered to ſee God as his ſalvation. Thus an hypocrite ſhall not come before God in this preſent life, though he appear often perſonally before him.

Secondly, He ſhall not come before God in the life to come, to injoy, or joy in his preſence; he ſhall not ſee God to his comfort, but to his torment; he ſhall only ſee God as a Judge, to be condemned by him, and thus he would not ſee him: He ſhall be driven to the Tribunal, or Judgment-ſeat of God, but he ſhall not ſtand in judgment.

Non veniet in conſpectu ejus ut videat ipſum Deum in quo ultima ſalus hominū conſiſtit, veniet tamen in conſpectu ejus judicandus. Aquin.

There are four expreſſions in Scripture, which gradually ſet forth the rejection of wicked men from the preſence of God.

Firſt, They ſhall not be admitted entrance, *Rev.* 21. 27. *Chap.* 22. 14. *There ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, nor whatſoever worketh or maketh a lye*; that is, unholy ones ſhall not ſo much as ſet one foot over the threſhold of that holy City. He ſpeaks thus (*Iſa.* 59. 14.) in another caſe, *Equity cannot enter.* It was a time, wherein equity was ſo far from having due reſpect and entertainment, that juſtice could not ſo much as get in adoors: *Equity cannot enter.* The wicked *ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; they ſhall not have the leaſt admittance.

Secondly, The Scripture ſaith, wicked men ſhall not ſtand in the preſence of God (*Pſal.* 5. 5.) *The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight. David* treateth there much upon the ſame Argument that *Job* doth; for after he had ſpoken of his own acceptance with God, he adds in a way of oppoſition, *the fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight*; though, poſſibly, he may enter, yet he ſhall not ſtand there.

Thirdly, The Scripture ſaith, they ſhall not dwell with God (*Pſal.* 5. 4.) *Evil ſhall not dwell with thee*; that is, evil men ſhall not, though they ſhould be admitted entrance, though they ſhould be ſuffered to ſtand a while before God, yet they ſhall not dwell with God, they ſhall preſently paſs away.

The fourth expreſſion is that in the Text, which comes between the firſt and ſecond, between entring and ſtanding, that is, *coming before God*; *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*; that is, God will not have any thing to do with him in a way of favour. Thus he is excluded totally; he ſhall not enter, ſaith one Scripture; if he doth, he ſhall not come before God, ſaith another; if he come before God, yet he ſhall not ſtand in his ſight, ſaith a third; if he ſtand, yet he ſhall not dwell with God, ſaith a fourth. I might add a fifth, which ſaith, *He ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God* (1 Cor. 6. 9.) Now in oppoſition to all theſe, the upright and holy are admitted, they have entrance into the Houſe of God, they come before God, they ſtand in his ſight, they dwell with him for ever; yea, they ſhall not only dwell as ſervants, or as friends, but as ſons, as his firſtborn, as heirs; all they ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God. One of the higheſt priviledges promiſed unto *Sion* is, that a time ſhall come when the wicked ſhall not come unto her (*Iſa.* 52. 1.) *Awake, awake, put on thy ſtrength,* O Zion, *put on thy beautiful garments,* O Jeruſalem, *the holy City.* Wherefore muſt *Jeruſalem* the holy City awake thus, and be ready in her dreſs, in her beautiful garments? Why, there is good news for her, *For henceforth there ſhall no more come into thee the uncircumciſed and the unclean*: As if he had ſaid, *In times of* Sions *defection, or oppreſſion, when there was no due reformation of worſhip, nor order among worſhippers, then the uncircumciſed and the unclean came and ſtood, yea, even dwelt with thee, as thy own children*; *but,* O Jeruſalem, *a time ſhall come when the uncircumciſed and the unclean ſhall not ſo much as come into thee, they ſhall be rejected and caſt out for ever.* Prophane ones ſhall find no place at laſt in *Sion* here below; and hypocrites ſhall never come into the *Sion* which is above. Some hypocrites will come into the Church when ſhe is moſt refined; there is no keeping of them out, till they diſcover themſelves, and ſo are caſt out; or apoſtatize, and ſo go out of themſelves. Poſſibly the Church militant may be ſo purged and reformed at laſt, that as there ſhall be no prophane in her, ſo but a few hypocrites. But into the Church triumphant, we are ſure, the cloſeſt hypocrite ſhall not enter: God will waſh off all the varniſh and paint, which they have put upon the face of their profeſſion, with rivers of brimſtone, and will give them the cup of his fierce wrath to drink unto eternity.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Hypocrites are the worſt of wicked men.*

Every wicked man is not bad enough to be called an hypocrite. Hypocrites are the chief of ſinners; not only the children, but the firſt-born of the Devil. We may wrong a wicked man, by calling him an hypocrite; but we cannot wrong any hypocrite, by thinking him all that's wicked. The Moraliſt ſaith, *When you have ſaid a man is ungrateful, you have ſaid all that is ill of him.* I am ſure, when we have ſaid a man is an hypocrite, we have ſaid all that's ill of him; and have called him not only (as we ſay) *all to nought*, but *all that's nought.* To do wickedly, or to be wicked, is bad enough; but to do wickedneſs under pretence of goodneſs; or for a man, whoſe heart tells him he is wicked, to pretend to goodneſs, this is abominable. An hypocrite is not worſe then other wicked men, becauſe he alwayes hath more ſin then they, but becauſe he hides his ſin: Nor doth the greatneſs of his ſin lye ſimply in this, becauſe he hides how ſinful he is; but becauſe he appears holy, which he is not; that he ſeems to be good, is worſe then his being really bad. That Satan is the *Prince of darkneſs*, ſpeaks not ſo much ill of him, as this, that *he transforms himſelf into an Angel of light.* An hypocrite never doth good out of love to God, but out of deſign for himſelf. He thinks he can impoſe upon God, and mock him, as one man mocks another; he makes God an Idol, as if he had eyes and could not ſee; or had no eyes to ſee his wayes, nor underſtanding to ſearch into his heart. And to ſhew that hypocrites are the worſt of ſinners, they are ſentenced to the worſt of puniſhments. *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, ſaith *Job* here; how great a puniſhment that is, will appear in the next Obſervation. When Chriſt would expreſs the soreſt judgment upon any ſort of ſinners, he tells them, *They ſhall have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers*, (Mat. 24. 51.) implying, that the judgment paſſed upon hypocrites is the moſt dreadful judgment. Now if the judgment of an hypocrite be the greateſt judgment, then the ſin of an hypocrite is the greateſt ſin; for the juſtice of God takes the meaſure of puniſhment by the meaſure of ſin. As every ſin deſerves puniſhment; ſo ever, where the puniſhment is greater, the ſin is greater, either in the matter, or in the circumſtances of it. Hypocrites are (as one gloſſeth this Text in *Matthew*) the freeholders of Hell; other ſinners are but as inmates with them, and have but a portion of their miſery. Now as that by which other things are proportioned and meaſured is a perfect meaſure, and that by which other things are weighed is a perfect weight in its kind: ſo that by which the greateſt miſery is weighed and meaſured, is the moſt perfect miſery in its degree: Seeing then the weight and meaſure of that miſery which reſts upon an hypocrite, is uſed by God himſelf, to weigh and meaſure out the miſery of thoſe who ſhall have the greateſt miſery; therefore the miſery of an hypocrite is the greateſt; which clearly argues what is here aſſerted, that his ſin is alſo greateſt.

Secondly, Conſider in what the puniſhment of the hypocrite doth conſiſt: *Job* doth not ſay, *An hypocrite ſhall be caſt to hell,* and tormented in that Lake with fire and brimſtone (which yet other Scriptures ſay) but here *Job* ſaith only, *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, he ſhall be baniſhed out of the preſence of God. This is his puniſhment.

Hence Obſerve, That, *The puniſhment of loſs is a very great puniſhment, one of the greateſt, if not the greateſt puniſhment.*

Sinful man falls under a twofold puniſhment, Firſt, *of loſs.* Secondly, *of ſenſe.* Many diſpute which of theſe is the greateſt; and moſt determine, that the puniſhment of loſs is greater then that of ſenſe. This is the puniſhment of an hypocrite, *He ſhall not come before God.* This loſs is a great puniſhment in this life: Not to injoy God by Faith in Ordinances, Promiſes, and Diſpenſations, is the great miſery of man; hypocrites are denyed this injoyment. For though they come before God (as I ſaid before) and preſs into his preſence, to worſhip him; though they challenge the Promiſes, and are apt to flatter themſelves, that God is with them in providential Diſpenſations, yet they have no acceptance with him. God denyeth them his preſence: They come to God, but God doth not come to them; though they talk of the Covenant, and lay hold of it, yet it is with a falſe finger, and God reproves them for their boldneſs and uſurpations (*Pſal.* 50. 16.) *Unto the wicked God ſaith, what haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my Covenant into thy mouth, ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behind thee?* I grant an hypocrite may have ſome fluſhes of the preſence of God in Ordinances and duties, and that's his Heaven. This the Apoſtle calls, his *taſte of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come* (Heb. 6. 5.) he may have ſome raiſings, yea, ſuppoſed raviſhings of Spirit at the report and ſight of heavenly things: but his taſte of theſe is not ſpiritual, but ſenſitive only, ſuch as the underſtanding gives in to the affections upon any rational diſcourſe or demonſtration of objects pleaſing to the nature of man: any higher injoyment of God then this the hypocrite taſteth not. And uſually he prayeth, and heareth, without any ſenſe of theſe. He doth nothing with God, while he hath to do with him: And here is his puniſhment, though he be not ſenſible of it now, but he ſhall be ſenſible of it in the life to come. As he ſhall not come before God for ever; ſo he ſhall know the meaning of it, what it is not to come before him. Carnal men lightly eſteem the preſence and injoyment of God; yea, they are glad when they are out of his preſence. Few know when God is near them, or when he is far off; what his departures mean, or what his returnings. They who know theſe things, count his preſence their greateſt gain, and his abſence their greateſt loſs. When God ſentenced *Cain* for the murder of his Brother, he complains chiefly of this, (*Gen.* 4. 14.) *Thou haſt driven me out this day from thy face*, or, *from thy preſence.* And what was that? It was but the common preſence of God in Ordinances. *Cain* had been offering ſacrifice, and God did not accept him; he could not go from the univerſal preſence of God; and he was not at all admitted to his comfortable preſence; yet he looked upon it as his greateſt miſery, that he was deprived of his common preſence in publick worſhip, from which he was as a perſon excommunicated. *I am driven out from thy face.* When *Saul* could not get an anſwer from God, neither by Dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets, this he repreſents as the worſt of his affliction (1 *Sam.* 28.) To be ſhut out from the ſight or ſociety of a man whom we much eſteem, is exceeding afflictive. Though *Abſalom* was reconciled to *David* his Father, ſo far as to be admitted to come to the City; yet becauſe *David* gave order that *Abſalom ſhould not ſee his face*, nor come to Court, he could not bear it, but reſents this reſtraint ſo paſſionately, that he ſends to *Joab*, and beſpeaks him thus? *Wherefore am I come from* Geſhur? *It had been good for me to have been there ſtill; now therefore let me ſee the Kings face, and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me* (2 Sam. 14. 24, 34.) As if he had ſaid, I cannot ſatisfie my ſelf with my liberty in *Jeruſalem*, if I ſtand excluded from the Kings preſence: I had rather dye, then indure this piece of baniſhment. How then will hypocrites be tormented with an eternal baniſhment from the face of God! It is the greateſt tryal the Saints have in this life, when they looſe the ſight of God by faith; when they come before God, and cannot find God; when God covers himſelf with a Cloud (as the Church complains) that they cannot come at him; this is the hardeſt exerciſe of the Saints in this life. And O how they are refreſhed, when God returns and comes into their ſpirits; when he ſheds his love abroad into their hearts by the Holy Ghoſt. This is Heaven upon earth; and of this they ſay as the Diſciples at the transfiguration of Chriſt upon the Mount (*Mat.* 17.) *It is good to be here.* When the Lord Jeſus perceived a vail drawn between him and his Father, and that (while he was ſuffering for the ſin, and by the malice and wrath of man) he ſuffered alſo an eclipſe (though he knew it was not a total one, and would be but a ſhort one) of the light of his Fathers face, how did he cry out (who never ſhrunk, nor opened his mouth at the ſcourges and crown of thorns, at the ſpittings and buffettings, at the nails and ſpear which tortured his bleſſed body, how did he cry out I ſay) at this ſhort deſertion, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* (Matth. 27. 46.) Hence take a ſcantling of thoſe torments which ſhall vex hypocrites in Hell, who ſhall be made to know fully (which they have here ſlighted) what the comfortable preſence of God means, and yet ſhall ſee themſelves ſhut out from it, without the leaſt hope of any injoyment. And that which will make the ſuffering of this loſs moſt torturing and inſufferable, is, that they ſhall ever be thinking of it. If a man could forget his loſſes, how great ſoever they are, they would be only a privative evil to him, not an afflictive evil; but to be ever thinking of our loſſes, is to us worſe then the loſs it ſelf. Now, wicked men ſhall ever be poring upon the loſs of Heaven in Hell, and caſting up the ſum of it, though they cannot exactly make out the ſum. This will be the ſting of all their ſorrows, and the very head of that poyſon'd arrow which ſhall drink up their ſpirits. And this ariſes two wayes: Firſt, From the very conduct of Nature, which alwayes leads our thoughts to, and faſtens them upon our loſſes. As where the pain is, there we point with the finger; ſo where the loſs is, there we dwell with our thoughts. Secondly, This ariſes inevitably from the juſtice of God; who having prepared this as the hypocrites puniſhment, will irreſiſtably hold his thoughts and this loſs together; ſo that it ſhall not be in his power to lay them aſide, or ſuſpend them for one moment. From all theſe conſiderations, let the hypocrite underſtand the terror of this ſentence, that he ſhall not come before God.

If any ſhall object, How can hypocrites be ſaid to loſe this preſence of God, ſeeing they never injoyed it?

I anſwer, We may be ſaid to loſe a thing three wayes. Firſt, As having had and poſſeſſed it before; thus hypocrites do not loſe the preſence of God. Secondly, We may be ſaid to loſe that, which hath been offered and tendered to our injoyment: And Thirdly, That which we have hoped to injoy. In theſe two latter ſences, hypocrites loſe the preſence of God, together with all the bleſſed concomitants of it. For ſalvation hath been offered to them, and they have profeſſed, yea, poſſibly, they have had ſtrong hopes that they ſhould be ſaved. Whence elſe is that challenge of admittance (*Matth.* 7. 22.) *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name?* &c. To whom Chriſt will profeſs, *I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.*

Again, *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him.* Then, who ſhall come before him? Take the anſwer to this queſtion, from the mouth of Chriſt himſelf (*Matth.* 5. 8.) *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* And the Apoſtles negative, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, may be reſolved into this affirmative, *Holy ones ſhall ſee the Lord, the holy One*; they ſee God here in a glaſs darkly, and they ſhall ſee him face to face clearly in Heaven. The reaſon why we ſee ſo little of God in the glaſs of Ordinances and Promiſes, is, becauſe there is ſo much unholineſs in our hearts: The hypocrite cannot ſee him at all; and the ſincere cannot ſee much of him, becauſe remaining corruption ſtands between God and them, hindering their ſight. When we ſhall ſee God as he is, we ſhall be like him; and as we grow now to a clearer ſight of him, we ſhall alſo grow into a fuller likeneſs with him.

Laſtly, For as much as *an hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, we learn,

That there is no coming before God without Chriſt.

The reaſon why an hypocrite ſhall not come before God, is, becauſe he cannot bring Chriſt with him; he comes in his own name, and therefore receives nothing from God but frowns, or a command to depart and be gone. Through Chriſt we have *acceſs with boldneſs to the throne of grace*; and we may ſpeak to God as to a friend: But they who come boldly before God without Chriſt, come preſumptuouſly, not believingly; and ſhall find, that fool-hardneſs, not faith, hath acted them up to ſuch a confidence. For as *no man can come unto Chriſt except the Father draw him*; ſo *none can come unto the Father unleſs Chriſt bring him.* Chriſt takes his people (as it were) by the hand, and leads them up to his Fathers Throne. As when a poor ſuitor comes to preſent ſome requeſt to a great King, he (poſſibly) dares not come near, till the Favourite, or ſome eminent Officer of the Court brings him up. 'Tis ſo here: But as for the hypocrite, he may ſtay long enough at the door, before Chriſt vouchſafe to bring him to his Father; and if he ſhall be ſo impudent, as to come alone, Chriſt will quickly turn him back. Man cannot come immediately before God: The hypocrite is out of the Mediator, and therefore *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him.*

VERS. 17, 18, 19.

Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration, with your ears.

Behold now, I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified.

Who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghoſt.

JOB had made his Preface, and called for attention at the ſixth verſe of this Chapter, *Hear now my reaſoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.* Having ſpoken a little, he makes a new preface, and again calls up their attention, *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration, with your ears.*

There are two parts of this ſecond preface.

In the firſt, he requireth a fair hearing from his friends, which, with ſome interpoſitions of his growing confidence, is contained in theſe three verſes.

In the ſecond, he deſireth a fair hearing from God, *verſ.* 20, 21, 22.

In this part of the preface directed to his friends, he calls for attention in general at the ſeventeenth verſe, *Hear diligently my ſpeech.* And ſhews a twofold ground of it, *verſ.* 18, 19.

Firſt, From the goodneſs of his cauſe, and the clearneſs of his conſcience, at the eighteenth verſe, *Behold now, I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified.* A man that is ſure he hath a good cauſe, cares not who hears it, only he would have it well heard.

Secondly, He giveth another ground, from his own neceſſity, he muſt be heard, he ſhall die elſe; in the latter part of the nineteenth verſe, *Who is he that will plead with me? for if now I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghoſt.*

Hear diligently my ſpeech.

Job had found his friends unequal hearers, and therefore he begs a better hearing; and to prepare their attention for it, he layes about him (as we uſe to ſay) thick and threefold, *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration, with your ears.*

Audiendo audite Attentionẽ ab iis nõ qualemcunq; ſed maximam efflagitat.

Hear diligently.] The Hebrew is, *Hearing hear*, that is, *Be ſure you hear when you hear.* As if he had ſaid, *It is not any kind of attention which will ſerve my cauſe, you muſt give attentive diligence and diligent attention to my words.* The doubling of the word imports two things; either firſt, that his friends were unwilling to hear; or ſecondly, that what he had to ſpeak was of very great importance, ſuch as might juſtly command a double hearing. *Hear diligently my ſpeech.*

Ænigmata. *Vulg.*

And my declaration.] The Vulgar reads it, *My dark ſpeeches:* But there is no light at all in the Original, leading them to tranſlate *dark ſpeeches.* They ſay it is becauſe *Job* ſpeaks about a difficult point, or the riddles of providence, ſhewing how the Lord had afflicted the innocent, and yet is himſelf juſt. Theſe indeed are *hard ſayings, dark ſpeeches*; and we may grant, that there is a darkneſs in the matter, a depth and a myſteriouſneſs in what he was about to ſpeak. But *Jobs* deſign was to ſpeak plain, not in parables, to ſpeak in the ſun, not in the clouds. And the Hebrew word in its native importance, is to open or explain, to ſet a thing forth in lively colours: Which ſignification is altogether inconſiſtent with that of the Vulgar, which reades, *Hear my riddle, or my dark ſpeech.* Beſides, the word [*declaration*] ſignifies a grave and a weighty ſpeech, a ſpeech which is not froth'd out with light words, nor wrapt up in obſcure meanings, but is bottomed upon reaſon, and ordered with a clearneſs of diſcretion. Further, the word (*declaration*) is conceived to be a *law term*, for he ſpeaks afterwards of pleading, *who will plead with me?* I will make my declaration. In law-ſuits the Plantiff puts in a declaration of his grievance: ſo ſaith *Job*, *Hear now my ſpeech, and my declaration, with your ears.* I am at the bar, let my declaration be read for the opening of my cauſe.

אחותי à חוה *Patefecit, oſtendit, quæ ſignificatio eſt omnino contraria ænigmati, indicationẽ planam & minimè ambiguam denotans. Vox iſta grave quoddã dictũ & ſententiam notatu dignã importat, atq; in hoc loco ad forũ pertinere putaverim.* Bold.

With your ears.] The ear is the Organ of hearing, and that only, we have nothing to hear with but the ear, why then doth he ſay, *hear my declaration with your ears?* when if they heard it at all, they muſt hear it with their ears. I anſwer, This is but an enforcement of what he ſaid before, *hear diligently*, that is, *hear with your ears*, be ſure you hear, ſet your ear to work upon it, take heed how you hear, or in hearing be ſure you hearken. So in the new Teſtament often, *he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear*, which is as much as this, let him hear with his ears, that is, let the ear do its work, and not be idle. Every man that hath ears, hath not an ear to hear. Moſt are like the Idols of the heathen, who have ears but hear not. All ears are ſhut till Chriſt bores them to a ſaving hearing of the word. Till the heart be opened, the ear is deaf, and cannot hear to purpoſe. Further, take this rule. *It is a heightning of the ſenſe of what we ſay, when we put the Organ and the act together, and joyn them which cannot be ſevered:* So, when we hear one ſay, *I ſaw it with my mine eyes*; we know he could not ſee but with his eyes; yet thus he ſpeaks to note the certainty and clearneſs of the ſight he had of ſuch a thing. And thus, *I heard it with mine ears*, is, I heard it certainly, fully, and attentively. Such is the meaning of *Job* in this admonition to his friends, *hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration with your ears.*

Hence (conſidering the ſtate of *Job* when he called for this hearing) Obſerve,

> *That a man in affliction deſires to be heard with much attention.*

He that can hardly ſpeak for attending upon his own pains, would fain have others attend to his ſpeech; he would not have his words loſt when they come drencht and bedewed with his own tears and blood. The affliction of others ſhould move us to hear them; and they that are in affliction will be ſure to put it as a motive why they ſhould be heard. And that's one reaſon why times of affliction are ſuch ſpecial ſeaſons of prayer to God. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray*, Jam. 5.13. As he hath reaſon to pray then, becauſe of his own need, ſo he hath an encouragement to pray then, becauſe he may have ſtronger hopes to ſpeed. God hears at all times with his ears when we pray with our hearts, but his ear is quickeſt when our wants are ſharpeſt. Afflictions do ſometimes hinder us from hearing counſel, yea afflictions hinder ſome from hearing comforts, (*Exod.* 6.9.) *And Moſes ſpake ſo unto the children of Iſrael* (what ſpake he? Not the law which called them to obedience, but a promiſe which called them out of bondage), *but they hearkned not unto Moſes for anguiſh (or ſtraightneſs) of ſpirit, and for cruel bondage.* Their bondage ſuffered them not to hear of their deliverance out of bondage. But though affliction hinders many from hearing both counſel and comfort, yet they who are in affliction think all bound to hear their complaints.

Secondly, In that *Job* calls ſo often for attention (for I told you this was his ſecond preface: at the ſixth verſe he bids them hear and hearken, now he bids them hear again)

> Hence Obſerve, *They who are at eaſe themſelves, are ſeldom ſo ſenſible as they ought of thoſe that are in miſery.*

Their pains, their prayers, their tears, are not laid to heart as they ought. The ground upon which the Apoſtle aſſures the Saints that they ſhall be heard when they cry to Chriſt, when they make declarations of their miſeries and ſorrows before his throne, is, his ſenſibleneſs of their ſorrows, (*Heb.* 4.13.) *We have not an high Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin:* Chriſt was under temptations; he feeleth ours, becauſe he had many of his own to feel. But they who never had experience of ſorrows, know not how to hear, eſpecially not how to hear diligently the cryes of thoſe that are in ſorrow. See more of this at the fifth verſe of the twelfth chapter. Here I ſhall only add, that there are two ſorts of men who are ill-hearers. Firſt, Such as enjoy worldly pleaſures and contentments to the full. Secondly, They who are over-full or intangled with worldly cares and buſineſſes: both theſe are very ill-hearers. And hence I conceive that Proverb (among us) hath its original, when a ſervant, or any other we have to do with, regards not or forgets what we ſay; we ſay to ſuch, *ſurely you hear with your harveſt ears.* Harveſt time is a time of great pleaſure, and a time of great buſineſs: and ſo the meaning of the Proverb is, you hear as if you were taken up with ſome other delights or affairs. Moſt hear the word of God with *harveſt ears*, and that's the reaſon we have ſo ill a ſeed-time for the word. While we are ſowing the word, moſt men are in the harveſts of their worldly contents and cares, and therefore their harveſt in holineſs is very ſmall, if any: Moſt who bring forth fruit, bring forth but very little, and very many bring forth none at all, and all upon this account.

Thirdly Obſerve, *Job*, though but a man, yet (you ſee) he expects to be heard: Now

If a man ſpeaking to men takes it ill if he be not heard, how ill may God take it if men will not hear when he ſpeaks?

We put God to many of theſe prefaces: the Prophets of old, ſeldom, if ever, came with a meſſage from God, but they begin with, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, or, *Hear what the Lord ſaith*, &c. Chriſt in the Goſpel and in his Epiſtles to the Churches (*Rev.* 2. 3.) repeats this often. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.* So (Pſal. 81. 13.) *O that my people had hearkened unto me:* and verſ. 8. *Hear O my people, and I will teſtifie unto thee.* Thus God calls for, yea even begs for hearing. It's a ſtrange condeſcention, that he ſhould ſtand wiſhing for our attention, who (upon the higheſt terms of Soveraignty) may command our attention. Beſides, God hath no need that we ſhould hear him, he doth not ſpeak to us for our help, or to ſupply his wants, *If he were hungry he would not tell us, for the world is his and the fulneſs of it*, (Pſal. 50. 12.) Now if take it ill, that men will not hear us, when we are hungry to feed us, or when we are weak to help us, how much more may God take it ill at our hands when we will not hear him, who only commands us to our duty, or counſels us for our good? We are apt to think much, if God do not ſpeedily hear our prayers, and grant our requeſts: what cauſe do we give God to be angry, when we will not hear his precepts nor hearken to his laws? And yet the Lord inſtead of anger expreſſes ſometimes nothing but compaſſion, when he is not heard. *O that my people had hearkened unto me!* God is much diſhonoured when he is not heard, and yet he pities thoſe who do not hear him.

Fourthly, *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration, with your ears.* Hence Obſerve,

Weighty and extraordinary matters muſt be heard with more then ordinary ſpirits.

Luke 8. *Take heed how you hear.* There is as much danger in hearing ill, as there is benefit and comfort in hearing well. And according to the concernment of the word we hear, ought to be our heed in hearing. He that hears *the word of life, had need to hear for life.*

Fifthly Obſerve, *It is not unuſeful often to ſtir up our auditors to attention.*

Job makes more prefaces then one to be heard, and he doth more then ſpeak; when he ſpeaks to be heard, he ſpeaks paſſionately. The Preacher tells us, *that, if the iron be blunt, and a man do not whet the edge, he muſt put to more ſtrength*, (Eccl. 10. 10.) So we may ſay in this caſe, if our hearers are dull, and we do not whet their edge, we muſt put more ſtrength to it, or rather we loſe all our ſtrength, how much ſoever we put to it. When ſpirits are low and dead, we muſt ſpeak to raiſe and quicken them, or elſe we ſpeak in vain to inſtruct or reprove them. We ſay in our Proverb, *A whet is no let.* He that is whetting his ſithe mows no graſs, and yet he ſhall mow little unleſs he whet. There is as much work done in preparing the inſtruments with which we work, or the objects upon which we work, as there is in doing the work it ſelf.

Laſtly Obſerve, *That good duties muſt not only be done, but be done diligently.*

Hear diligently my words. We muſt not only pray, but pray diligently: not only love God, but love him with all our ſtrength and with all our heart. The manner in which we perform a duty is as much to our acceptance, as the matter of the duty, *Eccl.* 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* It is very commendable in our worldly or ſpecial callings, to do what we do with our might: but eſpecially when we are about the things of God, which concern our heavenly or general calling, then whatſoever we do, *let us do it with our might*; when you hear, hear with all your might, when you pray, pray with all your might. (*Jer.* 48. 10.) *Curſed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully:* we put in the margin, *negligently*, according to the *letter* of the Hebrew: and thoſe two words may very well interpret one another, for he that doth a thing deceitfully, doth it negligently, and he that doth it negligently doth it deceitfully: he doth it as if he would deceive God or men, or both, but at laſt he deceiveth his own ſoul. Therefore ſaith *Job*, *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and my declaration, with your ears.*

Job having thus renewed his preface for an attentive hearing, proceeds to give them reaſons, why he would be heard thus attentively. We have the firſt in the eighteenth verſe.

Verſ. 18. **Behold now I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified.**

My buſineſs is ready, I have ordered all things, therefore I would be heard. *When we have made great preparations, we do not love diſappointments.* As when the King (in the Parable) ſent out, ſaying, *my ſupper is ready, I have kil'd my oxen and my fatlings*, and all is prepared, come to the marriage, *and they began all to make excuſe, he was wroth.* When a feaſt is provided and ſet upon the table, and the invited gueſts come not, who can take it well? 'Tis ſo in all other preparations, and this is *Jobs* argument: Hear diligently my ſpeech, I do not call for attention, having nothing to ſay, or nothing worth the hearing, *I have ordered my cauſe.*

Primũ argumentũ à bona fide & conſcientia ſua. Jun.

I have ordered.] The word ſignifieth to order with reaſon, to methodize things, it is applyed to the marſhalling of Armies, and ſo to words or things wherein skill and art are ſhewed.

ערך *ſignificat quicquid certa ratione & ordine diſponitur, ut acies,* &c.

My cauſe.] The Hebrew [*Mizpat*] hath a threefold uſe. It ſignifies Firſt, a diſpute between parties. Secondly, the ſentence of the Judge. Thirdly, the execution of the ſentence. In this place the word is taken in the firſt ſenſe, for the ſetting and ſtating of a controverſie about which parties are to plead or diſpute. *Behold I have ordered my cauſe*; as if he had ſaid, *I am not come unprepared to this bar; though you through ignorance or prejudice miſtake my condition, yet I have examined it and purely conſidered mine own cauſe, and upon good grounds I have concluded with my ſelf, that notwithſtanding all mine afflictions God hath not puniſhed me for my ſin, but ſtill accounts me innocent and righteous.* So the words carry that rejoycing which *Job* had in the integrity of his heart, and goodneſs of his cauſe, he having throughly weighed and digeſted what he had to ſpeak. All things being thus ready he made no queſtion but to go away with victory, and get the day after a full hearing. *I know I ſhall be juſtified.*

משפט *tria continet* 1. *rationes litigantiũ.* 2. *ſententiã judicis.* 3. *executionẽ ſententiæ.* Rab. Sal.

Ad cauſam meam diſputandã compareo ſic inſtructus ut me à veſtris criminationibus abſolutum iri nõ dubitem. Bez.

I know.] We may diſtinguiſh of a threefold knowledge.

Firſt, Notional or ſpeculative, which is the work barely of the underſtanding. Of that I conceive the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (1 *Cor.* 8. 7.) *Knowledge puffeth up.* There is a knowledge ſwimming in the brain, which hath ſome light, but no heat, much wind, but no nouriſhment in it.

Secondly, There is an experimental knowledge ſeated in the heart, and viſible in the life: The Samaritans profeſs this (*John* 4. 42.) *Now we believe, not becauſe of thy ſaying, for we have heard him our ſelves, and know that this is indeed the Chriſt*, that is, we are experimentally convinced by what we have heard and ſeen, that *this is He.* (Eccleſ. 8. 5.) *Whoſo keepeth the commandment, ſhall know no evil* (ſo the Hebrew); we tranſlate it, *he ſhall feel no evil*, that is, he ſhall not have an experimental knowledge of evil. A man that keepeth the commandment, knoweth what is evil, or elſe he could not do that which is good; but he that *keepeth the commandment ſhall know no evil*, that is, he ſhall not feel any evil. So we are to underſtand that of the Apoſtle, (2 *Cor.* 5. 21.) where he ſaith, that *Chriſt knew no ſin*, ſhall we think that Chriſt died for he knew not what? He died to take away ſin, and did not he know what ſin was? Yes, Chriſt knew fully what ſin was, he knew what the nature, and what the effects of it were: but he knew no ſin experimentally, he felt no ſin in his own heart, he acted no ſin in his life. We ſay to a man that liveth in proſperity, *You never knew poverty*; and to an healthy man, *You never knew ſickneſs.* This is experimental knowledge.

There is a third kind of knowledge, which we call *fiducial*, when the heart cleaveth to, or is aſſertain'd of what we know. Of this we are to underſtand the Apoſtle *John* (1 Ep. 2. 3.) *And hereby do we know that we know him.* To know that we know, is to be aſſured that we know. And again,

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in the fifth Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle, ver. 13. *Theſe things have I written to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know, that ye have eternal life.* We may believe, and yet not know that we ſhall live, much leſs that we have eternal life. Many have a vital act, who have not a fiducial act of faith: And therefore, while the Apoſtle in this verſe, ſaith, *I have written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God,* he ſaith alſo, *I have written, that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.* If they did believe before, why doth he write unto them that they might believe? They had the faith of adherence and recumbence; but he deſires to raiſe and heighten them to the faith of evidence and aſſurance. Such a faith the Apoſtle expreſſeth (2 *Cor.* 4. 14.) *Knowing, that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus, and ſhall preſent us with you.* (*Knowing this*) How did the Apoſtle know this? Not barely by ſpeculation, not at all by experience, for he was not yet raiſed up: But he was aſſured of it, as if it had been already done, *That he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus.*

When *Job* ſaith, *I know I ſhall be juſtified,* his was not a ſpeculative knowledge, but partly an experimental knowledge, for he found that he was already juſtified; and partly a *fiducial knowledge*; *I know*; that is, I am ſure, that the Lord will juſtifie me, and that I ſhall depart from his bar acquitted in this controverſie. He doth not ſay, I know that I have not ſinned; but I know that I ſhall be juſtified from my ſin; and not only carry this preſent cauſe, but continue in the love and gracious acceptance of God for ever.

I ſhall be juſtified.] Juſtification is the declaring of a man to be juſt: He is juſt, not only who hath no ſin, but he who is acquitted from his ſin; or to whom his ſin is not imputed. He is righteous, whom God pronounceth righteous, though in himſelf ungodly; for God juſtifieth the ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. *Job* knew he was thus juſtified; yet, I conceive the juſtification ſtrictly intended here, is the determination of the queſtion between him and his Friends on his ſide; which yet reached his total ſtanding in a ſtate of juſtification. This he oppoſeth to what he had aſſirmed of the hypocrite in the former words, *An hypocrite ſhall not come before him*; that is, he ſhall not be juſtified; but I know that I ſhall be juſtified.

Juſtus inveniri pronunciarique Juſtum eſſe nihil aliud importat quā in cauſa obtinere & a judice ſententiam in favorem accipere. Juſtus invenitur in judicio, non qui culpa caret, ſed qui juſtus declaratur. Sanct.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That a godly man, even in this life, may arrive at aſſurance that he is, and ſhall continue in a good, in a juſtified condition.*

It is good to be juſtified; but it is better to know that we ſhall be juſtified. There are three Graces ſpoken of by the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 13. 13.) *Faith, Hope, and Love:* And the Scripture holds out an aſſurance in reference to every one of theſe. Firſt, The aſſurance of Faith (*Heb.* 10. 22.) *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of Faith.* This aſſurance of Faith hath a double reſpect: Firſt, to our perſons; Secondly, to our ſervices; that in both we are pleaſing unto God. Secondly, There is an aſſurance of Hope, (*Heb.* 6. 11.) *We deſire that every one of you do ſhew the ſame diligence, to the full aſſurance of Hope unto the end.* Faith hath an eye to the truth of the Promiſe; Hope to the good of the Promiſe; and the aſſurance of Hope is, that we ſhall certainly receive that good. Thirdly, There is alſo an aſſurance of Love (1 *John* 4. 18.) *Perfect love caſteth out fear.* How is Love made perfect? and how doth it caſt out fear? *Herein* (ſaith the ſeventeenth verſe) *is love made perfect, that we may have boldneſs in the day of judgment, becauſe as he is, ſo are we in this world*; that is, as his love is ſincere to us, ſo is ours to him (according to our meaſure) even in this life, and this gives us boldneſs or aſſurance, that all ſhall go well with us in the day of judgment, or in the next life; and ſo this love caſteth out all fear of condemnation in that day; which fear, where it remains (as the Apoſtle concludes) *hath torment*, then which, nothing is more contrary to aſſurance. In perfect love there is no torment, becauſe there is no fear; and there is no fear, becauſe there is an aſſurance of the Love of God. In this love the ſoul doth repoſe, reſt, and delight it ſelf. There is a fourth thing ſpoken of, to which alſo aſſurance is annexed, (*Col.* 2. 2.) *The full aſſurance of underſtanding:* This is the clearneſs of our apprehenſions about the things which we believe, and upon which we faſten by Faith and Love. The light of the underſtanding ſhining upon the myſteries of the Goſpel, and mixing with our other graces, bottoms the ſoul upon the ſtrongeſt foundation, and raiſeth it up to the higeſt pinnacle of aſſurance. We may ſay of aſſurance, in reference unto theſe *four Graces*, as Philoſophers do of the Heavens, in reference to the *four Elements*; they tell us the Heavens are neither *earth nor air*, neither *fire* nor *water*; but they are *a quinteſſence, or a fifth eſſence.* So we may ſay, aſſurance is neither *faith*, nor *hope*, nor *love*, nor *knowledge*, but it is a fifth thing, ſublimated and raiſed, either out of, or above all theſe: It is ſomewhat of each of theſe; but more then all theſe. *I know that I ſhall be juſtified*, is more then knowledge, or love, or hope, or faith, even the reſult of them all in their beſt perfections. Knowledge above knowledge, is the aſſurance of underſtanding: Faith above faith, is the aſſurance of faith: Hope and love above hope and love, are the full aſſurance of hope and love made perfect. This is called by the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 4.) *A full perſwaſion. Abraham* (ſaith the Text, *ver.* 21.) *being fully perſwaded.* It is a Metaphor taken from Ships that come into an harbour with full ſail; ſo doth the Soul ſometimes: It comes into the port of a heavenly peace, with full ſail, with top and top gallant (as we uſe to ſay) with all the ſails ſpread, and colours flying. So it was with *Abraham*, there was not any ſail of his ſoul but was filled with the wind of aſſurance. This is called (*John* 14. 21.) the manifeſtation of Chriſt to the ſoul: *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifeſt my ſelf to him.* Chriſt is manifeſted to many by the reading and preaching of his Word; but he manifeſts himſelf only unto ſome by the light and influences of his Spirit. The former is common to all who live within the ſound of the Goſpel; the latter is the ſole priviledge of thoſe who obey the Goſpel; nor do all theſe receive this priviledge now; very few injoy it at all times. Chriſt loves many a ſoul, to whom he doth not preſently manifeſt his love. God hath love laid up in his heart for all his; but he doth not *ſhed his love abroad into all their hearts, by the holy Ghoſt* (Rom. 5. 8.) *The firſt fruits of the Spirit* (Rom. 8. 23.) *The witneſs of the Spirit* (ver. 16. of that Chapter) *The ſealing of the Spirit* (Eph. 1. 14.) *The earneſt of the Spirit* (2 Cor. 5. 5.) are not beſtowed upon every Believer at all times, and not ſenſibly upon ſome at all in this life: And all theſe are but ſeveral expreſſions of this one thing, our *knowing that we ſhall be juſtified*: Yet in this many of the Saints have gloried before they came to glory. *Habakkuk* had it in the height; (ſo had many) of the old Worthies, *Heb.* 11. 13, 35. Though their Goſpel-light was not ſo clear as the Goſpel-light after Chriſt came, yet *they ſaw the Promiſes afar off, they imbraced them, and were perſwaded of them*; by theſe three ſteps, of ſeeing, imbracing, and perſwaſion, they aſcended to an aſſurance, or knowledge, that they ſhould be juſtified.

But ſome may ſay, Theſe were extraordinary men; can ordinary Believers attain to, or know this?

All do not know it, but all may. There are but ſome Believers who reach this perfection, yet all ſhould be aiming at, and reaching after it. And though they were extraordinary men in whom the Scripture gives inſtance, ſuch as *Abraham, Habbakkuk, Paul,* &c. yet as the Apoſtle ſaith of ſome under eminent temptations, (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) *There hath no temptatitn taken you, but ſuch as is common to man*; ſo we may ſay of thoſe who attained thoſe eminent conſolations, there is no conſolation hath been given unto thoſe, but what is common to Believers. For as few men fall into all thoſe temptations which are common to man, ſo few Believers attain all thoſe conſolations which are common to Believers. Some are ſlothful, and will not give diligence to make their calling and election ſure; others cannot find it ſure to them (though it be in it ſelf) notwithſtanding all their diligence.

If any object further, that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 11. 20.) *Be not high minded, but fear.*

I anſwer, That fear is a duty, which is oppoſed to high-mindedneſs; but, that fear is, at leaſt, an affliction, which is oppoſed to ſtedfaſtneſs. Again, this is not ſpoken to nouriſh doubting, whether we are juſtified, or no; but to preſerve us from preſumption when we are juſtified. So we may anſwer theſe places (*Prov.* 28. 14.) *Bleſſed is the man that*

that feareth alwayes. (Phil. 2. 12.) *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling.* Theſe ſeem to call Chriſtians to live in a doubtful condition, or in a ſtate of trepidation, alwayes fearing : but their intendment is, not to keep the ſoul from being ſetled by faith in Chriſt, but from being high flown in any opinion of our ſelves : or the Spirit ſpeaks thus, not to put us upon doubts of our ſtanding, but to preſerve us from falling. For theſe cautions are ſo far from oppoſing aſſurance, that they ſtrengthen it. The way not to be afraid is thus to fear : Nor are any ſo ſure as they, who thus tremble. They that are working out their ſalvations with fear and trembling, may know without fear and trembling that they ſhall be ſaved : And they that thus fear alwayes, may be aſſured that they ſhall be above fear for ever. But ſay ſome, the Preacher ſpeaks out againſt this knowledge, *Eccleſ.* 9. 1. *No man knoweth love or hatred.* It is true, *not by all that is before him :* We cannot know love and hatred from the works of God without us ; but we may know love and hatred by the work of God upon us, or by the workings of God within us. We cannot fetch an evidence that God loves us out of our cheſts and money-bags ; nor can we read an aſſurance, or a conveyance for Heaven, in the aſſurances and conveyances of our lands ; but we may fetch this evidence, and read this conveyance from, and in the Covenant of grace, received by faith, witneſſed and ſealed to our hearts by the holy Spirit.

Secondly, When was it that *Job* manifeſted this height of aſſurance? *I know that I ſhall be juſtified.* It was after he had ſaid, *I have ordered my cauſe.*

Hence Obſerve, *That true aſſurance, or a knowledge that we ſhall be juſtified, ariſeth from a due conſideration of the ſtate of our hearts and lives.*

I have ordered my cauſe, and now I know. Job's aſſurance did not grow whileſt he ſlept, or was ſecure ; his was not an aſſurance ariſing from negligence, but from diligence. Some conclude what they have no premiſes for : They will conclude for Heaven and glory, they make no doubt but they ſhall be ſaved ; but they have no foundation to build this tower of aſſurance upon, they can ſay nothing to warrant, or bear up their confidence. It is an eaſie thing to ſay, *I I know I ſhall be juſtified ;* but it is an hard thing for a man to ſay, *I have ordered my cauſe.* They who ſay they know they ſhall be juſtified, before they have ordered their cauſe, do *but build caſtles in the air ;* whereas this Caſtle ſhould be built upon Chriſt, he is the foundation. Some are as confident as confidence it ſelf, who yet are as ignorant as ignorance it ſelf : Some are as confident as confidence it ſelf, who yet are as prophane as prophaneneſs it ſelf ; as proud as pride it ſelf ; as worldly as the world it ſelf : Is this the ordering of our cauſe? Or can they order their cauſe, whoſe hearts and lives are thus out of order? A true Believer is able to ſhew ſomewhat for it, why he is ſo ſure : He can ſhew Chriſt (as I may ſo ſpeak) his bracelets and his love-tokens ; he can tell Chriſt of the ſecret ſmiles and kiſſes which he hath given his ſoul ſome time or other : He can ſay, Chriſt is come to me both by water and blood ; he can produce the graces and the actings of his Spirit, and can ſay, by theſe I am aſſured, by theſe I am grown up to this perſwaſion, that nothing ſhall ever ſeparate me from the love of God. If any man ſay he is ſure, he ſhall be juſtified ; let him conſider how he came by his aſſurance : Have you ordered your cauſe, and viewed your ſtate in the glaſs of the Word? Hath that preſented to you juſtification, pardon and peace flowing to you in the blood of Chriſt? If it be ſo, you may ſay as *Job* here, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* But diſordered cauſes can never leave aſſurance of any thing but of wrath and death.

Job having thus made out his firſt ground, why he would be heard and come to a tryal, proceeds to another, in the nineteenth verſe.

Verſe 19. **Who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghoſt.**

Who is he that will plead with me?] Where is the man? The words, as the former, ſpeak the greatneſs of his ſpirit? *Job* durſt bid battel, and ſend a challenge to all oppoſites in the world. He throws down his Gauntlet to all comers, Let me ſee the man that dares undertake me in this diſpute? *Who is he that will plead with me?*

Job ſpeaks not proudly, or vainly, confiding in his own ſtrength, or wit, in his nimble tongue, or quick invention ; he ſpeaks thus, truſting in the power of Chriſt, and as being aſſured of ſuch an intereſt and eſtate in him, as all the oppoſition in the world ſhould never be able to overthrow.

Serenæ admodum conſcientiæ, intrepidæ mentis, & ad certamen ſpirituale quemq; provocantis verba ſunt. Nemo eſt qui me in mea cauſa convincere poteſt. Mer.

Job ſpeaks like another *Goliah*, who (1 *Sam.* 18. 8, 9.) *ſtood and cried to the Armies of* Iſrael, *and ſaid unto them, why are you come out to ſet your battel in array? Chuſe you a man for you, and let him come down to me, if he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your ſervants ; but if I prevail againſt him, and kill him, then ſhall ye be our ſervants, and ſerve us.* In ſuch a manner (but with no ſuch ſpirit) *Job* ſpeaks here, where's the man? Chuſe out who you will to plead and to diſpute with me. Thus *Job* challenged like *Goliah*, but he fought like *David* (ver. 45.) *In the Name of the Lord of hoſts.*

Hence Obſerve, *He that is ſincere, fears not to come to tryal.*

The righteous is bold as a Lyon. He is ſo far from declining tryal, that he invites it ; where is the man that will plead me? But I will not ſtay upon this, having been led to it by a former paſſage.

Secondly Obſerve, *A ſoul that is ſincere and well bottomed upon the grace of God in Chriſt, is unconquerable.*

Job knowing he ſhould be juſtified, calls out, Who is he that will plead with me? As the Apoſtle ſends a challenge in the behalf of Believers (*Rom.* 8. 33.) *Who ſhall condemn? Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* Let me ſee the man, or devil, who dares. So Believers are able to ſend challenges themſelves. Who is it that will plead with us? But are there none will do it? Will none accept their challenge? Yea, many may be found to plead with them, but none can overcome them. This Text in *Job*, and the point grounded upon it, is of the ſame interpretation with that (*Rom.* 8. 31.) *If God be with us, who can be againſt us? Who can be againſt us?* Many are againſt thoſe with whom God is ; yea, many will be againſt them, becauſe God is with them. *They are moſt oppoſed by men, whom God owneth moſt.* But who can be againſt us, to overthrow and conquer us? We ſhall ſtand againſt all oppoſition, if God be with us. So here, who will plead with me? *Job* had thoſe that would plead with him, he wanted not undertakers ; there was *Eliphaz*, *Bildad*, and *Zophar* ; theſe pleaded with him, but theſe did not overcome him. God gives ſentence for *Job*, Chap. 42. 7. *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath.* The Prophet brings in Jeſus Chriſt in ſuch a triumph of ſpirit over all poſſible enemies or oppoſers (*Iſa.* 50. 7, 8.) Whereas he had ſhewed Chriſt profeſſing, that all his power to fulfil the active part of his Mediatorſhip, was derived to him from his Father (*ver.* 4.) *The Lord hath given to me the tongue of the Learned*, &c. So there he ſhews that all the ſtrength and courage with which he was armed to ſuffer or contend in the paſſive part of his Mediatorſhip, was alſo derived to him from his Father, and maintained in him by a continual ſupply of his aſſiſtance. *The Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded ; therefore have I ſet my face as a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed : He is near that juſtifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us ſtand together* (as Plaintiff and Defendant uſe to do in a Law ſuit before the Judge) *who is mine adverſary?* (or maſter of my cauſe, or owner of my judgment, that entreth his action againſt me) *let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me : who is he that ſhall condemn me? Lo, they all ſhall wax old as a garment, the moth ſhall eat them.* Theſe words are a comment upon *Job*, and fully explain his meaning : Both give us the ſtrength of this Obſervation,

That the Lord being near to a ſoul, and ſtanding on his ſide, he can never be prevailed againſt.

The Apoſtle *Paul* applyes that of the Prophet (which originally belongs to Chriſt) to the comfort of every Believer (*Rom.* 8. 33, 34.) *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that juſtifieth : Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that dyed, yea, rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God.* Here are the holy challenges of faith; faith is ready for all comers. If the Law come to plead with us, faith tells it, that Chriſt hath fulfilled the Law for us. If ſin come to oppoſe us, faith tells it, Chriſt *in the ſimilitude of ſinful fleſh hath condemned ſin in the fleſh*. If death come and look the ſoul in the face, faith anſwers, *Chriſt hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Goſpel*: Yea, faith can, not only anſwer, but ſcorn death, *O death, where is thy ſting?* If the Devil come, faith tells him, he is but a conquered enemy, and that *Chriſt hath* (long ſince) *ſpoiled principalities and powers, and made a ſhew of them openly*; that *Chriſt came to deſtroy* (and hath deſtroyed in us) *the works of the devil*. Thus faith repels the charge of the law, of ſin, of hell, and of the devil; yea, if *God himſelf* frown upon the ſoul, and his wrath ſeem to burn as hot as fire againſt us, faith can tell *God himſelf*, that Chriſt hath paid our debt, and given a ranſom to God for us, and therefore knows that he will not require it of us again, becauſe *he is juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus*. If none of theſe, if neither law, nor ſin, nor death, nor devil, no nor God himſelf (conſidering how he hath been pleaſed to condeſcend to poor ſinners, and ingage himſelf to Chriſt on our behalf) can plead down the believing ſoul, then nothing can. Nor did *Job* boaſt beyond his line, when he ſaid, *Who will plead with me?*

Laſtly, Theſe words, *Who will plead with me?* hold forth, not only *Job*'s courage that he durſt, in this caſe, ſpeak with any living but alſo the neceſſity which preſſed him to ſpeak, which was ſuch, that if he did not ſpeak, he could not live, as is clear in the laſt clauſe of this verſe,

For now if I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghoſt.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *If now I ſpeak not, I ſhould ſtarve.*

Nunc enim ſileo & expirabo.

The Original may be literally rendred thus, *For now I ſhall be ſilent, and give up the ghoſt*. And ſo the meaning is, as if *Job* were haſtning his undertakers to this quarrel, wiſhing them to make ſpeed and come to plead with him, that he might try out this buſineſs by dint of argument, becauſe he ſaw death ready to put him to ſilence: *I ſhall dye*, and then it will be too late to argue or ſpeak with me, therefore while I live, and I perceive I ſhall not live long, let us try it out, and ſee what you have to ſay againſt me.

Secondly, Theſe words, *If I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghoſt*, may note two things. Firſt, That *Job* was filled with abundance of matter, which was exceeding burthenſome to keep within his breaſt, therefore he muſt needs vent, and let it out. As if he had ſaid, I have ſo much to ſpeak, that it will even kill me if I ſhould conceal it. *Elihu* was in the ſame caſe (*Job* 32. 17.) *I alſo* (ſaith he) *will ſhew mine opinion; for I am full of matter, the ſpirit within me conſtraineth me: Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burſt like new bottles; I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed, I will open my lips and anſwer*. *Elihu* was conſtrained to open his mind, it would be an eaſe to him to ſpeak. So ſaith *Job*, *Now if I hold my tongue I ſhall give up the ghoſt*. Or ſecondly, It may note, that *Job* was much afflicted, and exceedingly troubled in his ſpirit at what his Friends had ſpoken to him, and charged upon him. And ſo it is, as if he had ſaid, you have ſo tormented me with your reaſonings, that if I have not liberty to juſtifie mine own innocency, my heart will break: It were better for me to dye, then to live ſtained with ſuch imputations; and I know not how to live, unleſs I may wipe them off.

Satius mihi fuerat mori quam ſilentio cauſam meam prodere. Bez.
Non poſſum me continere quin loquar; Alioquin moriendum mihi eſt. Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is a pain not to ſpeak when we are much ingaged to ſpeak.*

Thus the Prophet complains (*Jer.* 20. 9.) *I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay*. As ſome are wearied with ſpeaking; ſo ſome are wearied becauſe they do not ſpeak: They are tired with holding their tongues, as much as ſome are with uſing them. Words kept in are as great a burthen to ſome, as words ſpoken out are to others. When a man is under ſuch a preſſure, he finds no reſt till he hath delivered himſelf. When *Joſeph*'s Brethren came to him, he hid his affections a great while; but as ſoon as he ſaw his Brother *Benjamin*, he could not refrain; he muſt go into a private place to weep, and ſpend his paſſion, elſe it would have broak out before them all. 'Tis ſo with us when we have much to ſay to God in prayer; the heart hath a load upon it, and cannot be quiet, it is ready to break and give up the ghoſt, until we have broken or opened our minds to God.

From the ſecond ſence Obſerve, *That a man can eaſier dye, then ſuffer blots to lye upon his integrity.*

Our reputation ſhould be dearer to us then our lives; therefore ſaith *Job*, *If I keep ſilence, I ſhall give up the ghoſt*; I cannot bear this. He was not ſo ſenſible of any of his ſufferings as of this. And as it is an caſe, ſo it is a duty to repair our own credit, and to take off what we find unjuſtly charged upon us: eſpecially when it reflects upon Religion, as it did in *Job*'s caſe. His Friends ſuſpected him of hypocriſie, *Is this thy fear, thy confidence, and the uprightneſs of thy wayes?* Theſe jealouſies ſtirred up the ſpirit of *Job* to call for his Adverſaries, and provoke them to appear and plead it out with him. I have from other paſſages toucht this point before, and ſhall therefore add no more here.

VERS. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.
Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.
Then call thou, and I will anſwer; or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.
How many are mine iniquities and ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.

IN the three former verſes, *Job* prefac'd to his Friends, and beſpake their attention; being ſo well aſſured of his cauſe, that he ſate down under the comfort of this concluſion, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified*. Here, in the three firſt verſes of this Context, *Job* beſpeaks God himſelf, and ſeems to indent with him upon ſome conditions before he would ſpeak further, or proceed in this diſpute.

Verſe 20. **Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.**

As if he had ſaid, I am willing to argue, but it muſt be upon theſe precautions.

Some underſtand thoſe words, **Only do not two things unto me:** As if *Job* had deſired God not to do two things unto him at once; that is, not to afflict him, and confer with him, not to ſmite him and diſpute with him together; it is too much to be at two ſuch works, or rather to be doing and ſuffering at one time: Therefore do not two things to me, any one of theſe is exerciſe enough for one man at once.

Cautiorem videtur à Deo petere ante diſputationis congreſſum. Pined.
Duo, *ut ſcilicet mecum litiges & ſimul me affligas & terres.*

What the two things he would not have done unto him were, are ſet down in the next verſe. Firſt, *Withdraw thine hand far from me*, &c. Secondly, *Let not thy dread*, &c. *Then call thou*, &c.

In that *Job* deſires God would not do theſe two things unto him,

Obſerve, Firſt, *That all ſufferings are not equal, there is a gradual difference among ſufferings as well a ſpecifical.*

As all ſins, ſo all ſufferings are not equal. Some ſins are more grievous and burthenſome to God then others are, (*Jer.* 44. 4.) *I did ſend unto you all my ſervants the Prophets, ſaying, O do not this abominable thing which I hate. This abominable thing.* There were many other abominable things which the Lord hated, and which he would not have that people do; but their idolatrous worſhip, their burning incenſe to ſtrange Gods, was a ſpecial abomination, *O do not this abominable thing which I hate*. Now, as ſome ſins are more grievous unto God then others, and therefore he deſires earneſtly, that we would not burthen him with them: So the Lord layes ſome afflictions upon his people, which are more grievous to them then any other could be, and therefore they cry out, *O do not this unto us*: This is ſad.

Hence Note again, That, *We are apt to think we can bear any affliction better then that which we fear or feel.*

O do not theſe two things unto me! Were it any thing elſe, I might undergo it, but I am not able to endure theſe. Some ſpeak thus of any affliction; and he that hath pain in any part of his body, is apt to judge; were this pain ſomewhere elſe, I could bear it better: We are very prone to diſpute the diſpenſations of God, and to think that he might place his chaſtenings (if he muſt chaſtiſe us) ſome where elſe, as much to his own glory, and not ſo much to our ſorrow. *Only do not two things unto me.* What then?

Then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.

The Hebrew is, *Then will I not hide my ſelf from thy face.* But ſuppoſe the Lord would not do thoſe two things for *Job*, could he hide himſelf from his face? *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 139.4.) *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?* It ſhould ſeem *Job* had ſome whither to go out of the preſence of God: *Elihu* in the 34th of this book, *verſ.* 22. tells us, *There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death where the workers of iniquity can hide themſelves.* How is it then that *Job* ſaith he would not hide himſelf, when as indeed he could not, upon what terms ſoever God ſhould deal with him?

I anſwer; when *Job* ſaith, *I will not hide my ſelf*, he intends not this, that he could hide himſelf; but that (if God would not do thoſe two things to him) he ſhould have no cauſe to hide himſelf. Hiding proceedeth from a double cauſe. Firſt, from fear, (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) *They ſhall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* Here is hiding for fear. So (1 *Kin.* 22.25.) the Prophet *Micaiah* having received ſuch courſe uſage from King *Ahab*, tells him to his face, *Behold thou ſhalt ſee in that day when thou ſhalt go into an inner chamber to hide thy ſelf.* Secondly, Hiding proceeds from ſhame; a man that is aſhamed dares not ſhew his head. That hiding of our firſt parents was the effect of both theſe (*Gen.* 3.10.) In their innocency they were naked and were not aſhamed: but after they had ſinned they ran amongſt the thickets to hide themſelves, being both aſhamed and afraid: (*verſ.* 10.) *I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelf.* Fear and ſhame made him hide himſelf, when once he had ſinned. When *Job* reſolves, *then I will not hide my ſelf from thee*, his meaning is, I will not be afraid to appear before thee, nor aſhamed to ſpeak unto thee; ſo he explains himſelf at the 22th verſe, *Then call thou and I will anſwer, or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me*, that is, I would come forth boldly, and ſtand with confidence at thy Tribunal. I ſhall give you a note from this, when I have ſhewed the matter of *Jobs* deprecation, *Do not two things unto me*: What two things?

Etſi nihil mihi cōſcius ſum, me tamē abſcōderē & latebras quærerem niſi benevolētia tua oſtenſione roborarer.

Verſ. 21. **Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread terrifie me; or, let not thy dread make me afraid.**

Theſe are the two things which he ſo earneſtly deprecates. And for the removal of both theſe, he prayed as earneſtly once before, almoſt in the ſame words, (*chap.* 9. *verſ.* 34, 35.) *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me; then would I ſpeak and not fear him, but it is not ſo with me.* Having opened theſe two verſes there at large, I ſhall refer the Reader thither: yet becauſe (though the matter be the ſame) the expreſſions vary, I ſhall a little inſiſt upon them.

Withdraw thine hand far from me.] That's his firſt condition. *By the hand of God*, he means either the afflictions which were upon him, and ſo it is as much as this, mitigate my ſufferings, abate my pains, releaſe me from my ſorrows. The word which he uſeth, *Chap.* 9. 34. for *the rod of God*, is the ſame in effect which he uſeth here for *the hand of God*; only with this difference, this properly ſignifies *the palms of the hand*; *Withdraw thy palms from me*: To ſtrike with the palm of the hand, is to ſtrike like a father; a blow with the palm of the hand, may have more ſmart with it, but it hath not ſo much force and wrath with it as a blow with the fiſt or hand cloſed. Yet I conceive *Jobs* intent is the ſame in both, and though he received ſtroaks of all ſorts, ſome with the palm, others with the fiſt, ſome greater, ſome leſs, yet all were with the hand of a father: nevertheleſs, *Job* deſires God would withdraw his hand, though he knew it was a fathers hand, becauſe while the ſmart and pain of that was ſo vehement upon him, he could not ſpeak nor manage his cauſe before him freely; *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

הרחיק *longe fac à me,* כפ *habetur hic nō* יד *quod cap.* 9. 34. *virgam, hic palmā* i. e. *plagā ſignificat.* Merc.

Further, There was another thing, which this requeſt of *Job* may bear an alluſion to, *Remove thine hand away from me.* It was a cuſtome among the Ancients, to lay the hand upon the head of an offender, as a token of his condemnation. And that's the reaſon why the hand was laid upon the head of the ſacrifice, when all the ſins of the people were confeſt over it; ſhewing, that the ſacrifice was (as it were) condemned to die, typifying the death of Chriſt, who was condemned for us, God having *laid upon him the iniquities of us all.* Now ſaith *Job*, *Remove thine hand away from me*: thou ſeemeſt to act towards me as if thou wert angry, or didſt intend to pronounce a ſentence of condemnation againſt me; O do not deal thus with me! How ſhall I treat with thee, whilſt thou ſeemeſt to have ſuch hard thoughts of me? Therefore, *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

But, what was it that lay upon *Job* as the hand of God? I ſhewed before, that it was his affliction, which though in it ſelf, it be no argument that God condemns, yet in the opinion of ſome men it is; and *Jobs* friends did therefore think God condemned him, becauſe they ſaw he afflicted him. So then, the removing of thoſe afflictions, in reference to which his friends pronounced him condemned by God, would be as the withdrawing of the hand from the head of an offender, a ſign of his acquitting and abſolution.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Afflictions are grievous to the ſenſitive part of the beſt and holieſt men.*

Even a *Job* prayeth, *Withdraw thine hand away from me.* There is no affliction for the preſent that is joyous but grievous; and as it is grievous to natural men, ſo it is grievous to the natural part of ſpiritual men. It is nothing elſe but grievous unto carnal men, they find no comfort, no ſweet at all in it, the Saints do: their inward man hath joy and refreſhing in their ſorrows, but their outward man feels ſmart; therefore, *Remove thine hand away from me.*

Secondly Obſerve, *While afflictions are ſharp upon us, it is hard to compoſe the ſpirit to think of, or ſpeak aright to God.*

This diſcovers their folly, who put off the great buſineſſes about which they are to treat with God, to a ſick bed. *Job* ſaith to God, take away thy hand, and then I will ſpeak: theſe ſay we will ſpeak to God when his hand is upon us; we will look to the health of our ſouls when our bodies are ſick: But how rare is it to find a ſick body and a quiet mind together. *Job* could not argue with God about his innocency while he was greatly afflicted, how then ſhall others about the ſetling of their eternal peace and the pardon of their? We are more prone to impatience then to repentance in the day of our diſtreſs.

Thirdly Obſerve, *It is lawful to pray for the removing of afflictions.*

Withdraw thine hand away from me, was a good petition; we may make ſuch petitions unlawful if we put our wills as a law to God, and do not leave all to the will of God. We may pray for the thing, but we muſt ſubmit the circumſtances of it, the time of it, the manner of it, to the wiſdom of God. While we deſire him to withdraw his hand, we ſhould get our hearts willing to bear his hand; that's a gracious frame of heart indeed. As it is the worſt frame of heart to pray for the pardon and removing of our ſins, while we find a willingneſs, much more a reſolvedneſs in our hearts to continue in them; ſo it is the beſt frame of heart to pray for the removing of afflictions, whileſt we find a willingneſs to continue under them, if God ſhall ſo diſpenſe and pleaſe. See more of this, *Chap.* 9. 34. *Withdraw thine hand away from me,*

And let not thy dread make me afraid.

Thy dread.] Giants are called *Emims*, from this word (becauſe they are terrible to beholders.) And ſo are Idols, becauſe

אימה *Terror unde Emim Gigantes*

becauſe though they are indeed but meer ſcarcrows and bugbears, yet they are terrible to the ignorant and unbelieving, as was further ſhewed, *Chap.* 9. 34.

What was this *dread?* It may either be, that terrour which accompanied his afflictions, there being as it were ſome ſparklings of Gods anger mixed with them. When God gives us the bittereſt cup of affliction to drink, if he do but drop in a little of his love we take it down as a pleaſant draught; but if he drop the leaſt of his anger into the cup of affliction, this is dreadful. Hence *David* prayeth, (*Pſal.* 6. 1.) *O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure.* He doth not pray abſolutely, let me not be rebuked, but *rebuke me not in thine anger*, let me ſee thy love in my rebukes. He knew God did love him, but he could not ſee *it*: God rebuked him, and he perceived nothing but anger; God chaſtened him, and he ſaw nothing but diſpleaſure, yea, and hot diſpleaſure; this made him cry out, *O Lord rebuke me not*, &c.

Secondly, This *dread* may be taken for the majeſtical preſence of God; though there be no lettings out of his anger or diſpleaſure, yet the very appearance of God to poor duſt and aſhes hath a dread in it, ſuch a dread, as not only ſtrikes the moſt eloquent man dumb, but the ſtouteſt dead: The majeſty of God is infinitely above the creature; therefore he ſaith to *Moſes*, *No man can ſee my face and live*: there is ſo much dread in the face of God, that man cannot behold it. We may conceive the Lord at this time letting out much of himſelf to *Job*, his terrour was upon him. God ſhews himſelf to man two wayes.

Firſt, In ſome external viſible form, ſo he often appeared to the Fathers in the Old Teſtament. 'Tis the opinion of ſome that the Lord ſhewed his dreadfulneſs to *Job* by an outward apparition.

Secondly, God ſhews himſelf to the mind of man: and as the appearances of God to ſenſe are very dreadful, ſo are thoſe which he makes to faith. They who have no outward viſions of God, are yet often terrified at the mental apprehenſions of his Glory and Majeſty. Faith makes things preſent, and doth evidence them to the ſoul as fully as ſenſe can. God cannot be ſeen, yet faith can give us a ſight of God, a ſight of his power, and of his wrath, as well as of his goodneſs and mercy: and until the Lord withdraw that, and put other evidences before the eye of the ſoul, there's no peace. That's the reaſon why many wicked men have been brought to utter deſpair, and die in horrour of conſcience: they apprehend the wrath of God revealed againſt them, and their conſcienees are affected with it; there is a kind of faith upon their conſciences, ſuch as the devils have, who *believe and tremble*: and ſo do wicked men, they are full of trembling and aſtoniſhment at thoſe repreſentations of the greatneſs, Power and Majeſty of God which their faith makes to them. Now as it is with them, ſo it may be with true Believers much more: they have deep and terrible apprehenſions of God; and according to the degree of this faith, is the degree of terrour which falls upon them, (*Pſal.* 90. 11.) *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear ſo is thy wrath.* Though the diſpleaſure of God be as himſelf, alwayes alike, yet to thoſe whoſe hearts are tender, the diſpleaſure of God is more grievous. Hard hearts have no fear in them, and to them the diſpleaſure of God is nothing, they dread it not, they will venture upon the Pikes, and ruſh upon the Swords point. *Job* was a tender hearted man, he feared God, therefore theſe appearances of God to his faith did exceedingly affect and trouble him: So he ſpeaks, *Chap.* 31. 23. *For deſtruction from God was a terrour to me, and by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.*

> Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The holy God is in himſelf very dreadful to the moſt holy and upright among the children of men.*

Job had ſaid, *Chap.* 10. 7. *Lord, thou kneweſt that I am not wicked*: and at the eighteenth verſe of this chapter, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* What a faith was here! Yet now he confeſſeth, *Thy terrour makes me afraid.* Where was there a holier man then *Habakkuk?* yet read the third chapter of that propheſie, and you ſhall find how he ſhook and trembled, how his lips did quiver, and rottenneſs entred into his bones, and all at the apprehenſions he had of the Majeſty and greatneſs of God. That holy Prophet *Iſaiah*, how was he affected when God appeared to him! he crieth out, *Wo is me, for I am undone, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoaſts.* When the Lord appeared to publiſh that holy Law, how did the people tremble! *O* (ſay they) *let Moſes ſpeak to us, but do not thou ſpeak leſt we die*, Exod. 19.

> Secondly Note, *That God doth ſometimes appear to his people in Majeſty only, and not in mercy.*

He letteth out his glory and his greatneſs, but conceals his goodneſs, his loving kindneſs and compaſſion. They can ſee a holy God, a juſt God, a high God, a glorious God, but they do not ſee a merciful God. God acts not as a natural, but as a voluntary agent, and therefore he can ſuſpend or diſpenſe himſelf as he pleaſeth. The Sun hath light; but the Sun (being a natural agent) cannot ſuſpend its light; it alwayes ſhews its brightneſs and beauty, except ſome cloud interpoſe, or the moon eclipſe it: but the Lord who is light and all light, doth not alwayes manifeſt himſelf in light; he puts clouds and darkneſs round about him, he hideth his face and will not be ſeen. Sometimes he appears all mercy, and at other times all juſtice; ſometimes all goodneſs, and at other times all wrath; ſometimes he lets out nothing but love, and at other times nothing but diſpleaſure: Now as he varies his diſpenſations to us, ſo we are apt to vary in our apprehenſions of him: and as we cannot ſee God at all until he manifeſt himſelf, ſo we ſee him no otherwiſe then he pleaſeth to manifeſt himſelf: Hence the ſame ſoul ſees him to day all mercy, and the next day, poſſibly, the next hour, all juſtice: Now his goodneſs refreſheth, and anon his dread terrifies.

> Thirdly Obſerve, *That as ſome afflictions are more grievous then others, ſo thoſe are moſt grievous to a godly man, which carry any appearance of the diſpleaſure of God.*

O let not thy dread terrifie me. All ſufferings cannot terrifie, where God ſhews his love; and any will, where he ſhews his dread. If a man were in hell aſſured of the love of God, he could rejoyce; and if he were in heaven under thoughts of his wrath, he could not but tremble. His love is better then heaven, and his wrath is worſe then hell.

> Laſtly Note, As a deduction from the whole, *That if a godly man may be thus terrified with the Majeſty of God, how terrible will the wrath of God be to the wicked!*

Job was not afraid of the wrath of God againſt his perſon, for he had ſaid immediately before, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* If the Majeſtical dread of God ſwallow up the beſt, the holieſt men, how will the dreadful Majeſty of God ſwallow up wicked men! how will he conſume them, who is to his own as a conſuming fire! We may argue here as the Apoſtle *Peter* doth in language near to this (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?*

Job having thus deprecated the terrour of the Lord, *Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid*: reſolves (upon the ſuppoſition of this grant) what to do;

Verſ. 22. Then call thou, and I will anſwer, or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.

This is as much and in effect no more then he ſaid before, *Chap.* 9. 3. *Then would I ſpeak and not fear him*: yet here he a little amplifies what he ſaid there; for though *Job* doth often ſpeak the ſame thing for ſubſtance, yet his expreſſions are full of uſeful variety, new flowers of Rhetorick, and new actings of his affections ſhew themſelves. There it was, *Then I will ſpeak and not fear him*: here, *Let him call and I will anſwer, or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.*

Job in theſe words, gives God his choice to take which part he pleaſed. As in law ſutes, one ſuſtains the part of the Plaintiff, and another ſuſtains the part of the defendant:

Actor vocat reũ, reus reſpondet: Ita conſlatur judiciũ cũ vocatione intelligitur actio, & cũ reſponſione defenſio. Coc.

dant: Or as in diſputes, one ſuſtains the perſon of an Opponent, and the other the perſon of a Reſpondent. Unto theſe *Job* alludes, as if he had ſaid, *I am entring upon a diſpute, and commencing my ſuit in Heaven, before the Tribunal of* Jehovah*: As for me, I know mine own integrity ſo well, that I care not which part I take, I will be Opponent, or I will be Reſpondent; I will be Plaintiff, or I will be Defendant; and therefore, Lord, I refer it wholly unto thee; take which part thou pleaſeſt; I'le take up what thou leaveſt, and do what thou appointeſt. Then call thou and I will anſwer.*

Verba ſunt arrogantia & ſcandaloſa. Caj.

Deo dat optionem interim ſui oblitus & immodicus. Merc.

Audacius agit peteret potius patientiam. Merc.

This offer argues only abundance of courage and holy confidence; yet ſome have adjudged it ſcandalous and full of arrogancy: As if *Job* had taken too much upon him, and had ſpoken more boldly to God then became him: As if he thought himſelf match enough for God at any weapon, or were ready to deal with him upon any terms. *Eliphaz* is ſuppoſed to aim at this paſſage (*chap.* 15. 4. *Yea thou caſteth off fear*) yet moſt excuſe him, conceiving that all this did flow from an holy familiarity which *Job* had with God: and that, becauſe he had a gracious friendlineſs in his heart towards God, he would therefore ſpeak to God as to a friend. Or it imports only that *Job* was very ſure of his cauſe; and therefore as when a man would ſhew the confidence he hath to foil his Adverſary in combat, he ſaith, chuſe what place you will, take what weapon you will, bring out two ſwords, take you one, and I will take the other, I deſire not to ſurpriſe you, or deal with you upon diſadvantages. So *Job* being aſſured of a good end, was content to ſtand to the determination of God himſelf, in what way he ſhould proceed to tryal.

Then call thou, and I will anſwer.

Then.] This particle *Then*, implyes that he could not do it till then, and that then he could: As if he had ſaid, *I ſhall be in no caſe, either to anſwer, or to oppoſe, unleſs theſe two conditions be granted; but then I ſhall.*

Call thou.] The Lord calleth us to do our duty, and he calleth us to anſwer, and give account how we have done our duty, or what we have done. He calleth daily to the firſt, in the preaching of the Word. And he will call us all to the latter, in that great day, by the ſounding of the Archangels Trumpet. (*Pſal.* 50. 4.) *He ſhall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people:* And *ver.* 1. *He hath called the earth*; that is, the people of the earth; he will call them all before his Throne; *Job* offered himſelf to a perſonal day of judgment before that general day of judgment. *Call thou*, is (*verbum forenſe*) a Law-term, call me to the Bar, or call me before thy Judgment-ſeat.

And I will anſwer.] The word which we tranſlate, *I will anſwer*, ſignifies often in Scripture, *to teſtifie*, or *give witneſs*; (*Exod.* 20. 16.) *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs:* The Hebrew is, *Thou ſhalt not anſwer falſe witneſs*; that is, when thou art required by a Judge to ſpeak in any caſe, thou ſhalt not anſwer beſides the truth. When *Jacob* had put his part of the cattel on the one ſide, and *Laban*'s on the other, he ſaith, *So ſhall my righteouſneſs anſwer for me in time to come* (*Gen.* 30. 33.) it ſhall teſtifie or bear witneſs for me. The word is uſed in that ſence (*Iſa.* 59. 12.) *Our ſins teſtifie againſt us:* The Hebrew is, *Our ſins anſwer againſt us*; which imports that our actions, whether good or bad, ſhall be called out to ſpeak what we have been and are. And then, good actions will give a good teſtimony; and evil actions will give an ill teſtimony; (*Hoſ.* 5. 5.) *The pride of* Iſrael *doth teſtifie to his face*; or, *doth anſwer to his face.* Thus here, *Let him call, and I will anſwer:* I will give in evidence and teſtimony according to the truth of my heart and life. I will not bear falſe witneſs, though it be in my own cauſe.

Or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.

שרך *Verbum reſpondendi in hac ſecunda parte eſt àb alia radice & lenius accipi debet.* Pin.

There's the other part. **Let me ſpeak**; I will be Plaintiff, or Opponent, and let the Lord anſwer or return; for the word which we render *to anſwer*, in this latter clauſe, is of a different root in the Hebrew from that in the former, and carries in it more reſpect. It intends not any ſummons or citation of God to anſwer, but it is an humble ſupplication, beſeeching him to return what his Wiſdom ſhould think fit in anſwer.

Hence Obſerve, That, *Acquaintance with free grace, gives us mighty confidence towards God.*

Take away thy dread, and then I am ready for a hearing. I acknowledge my weakneſs is ſuch, that I cannot bear thy Majeſty; and I know my own uprightneſs is ſuch, that I am aſſured of thy Mercy. When the Lord had called his people to repentance (*Iſa.* 1. 16.) *Waſh you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings*; then he invites them to a free conference; *Come, let us reaſon together.* He ſpeaks familiarly to them, I will argue it out with you, againſt all your unbelief: *Come, let us reaſon together.* Now, as God ſpeaks familiarly to man, when he hath put his ſins away: ſo, when the Lord hath put his dread away, man ſpeaks familiarly to God; *Come Lord, let us reaſon together*; now let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me: The place where God communed with his ancient people the *Jews*, was the *Propitiatory*, or *Mercy-ſeat*, Exod. 25. 22, and the place where God communeth now with his people is called, the *Throne of grace* (Heb. 4. 16.) *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* We can have no boldneſs but at a Throne of grace: When grace in our own hearts oppoſing ſin, meets with that grace which is in the heart of God for the pardon of ſin, we are carried as upon Eagles wings beyond the regions of fear. *Job* lived long before Chriſt came in the fleſh, yet Chriſt was come into his heart; and when he deſired God to remove his dread, he moved to be looked upon and heard in a Mediator.

Job having thus prepared his way begins to plead.

Verſe 23. **How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion, and my ſin.**

His way of arguing is much like that of the ſeventh and tenth Chapters, and his general ſcope is the ſame, at once to maintain his own former integrity, and to aggravate his preſent miſery. That's the ſum of his diſcourſes, queries and expoſtulations, to the end of the fourteenth Chapter.

How many are mine iniquities?

He ſeems to take the hint of this firſt enquiry from *Zophar*'s wiſh, *Chap.* 11. *ver.* 5. *O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee: and that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to that which is: Know therefore, that God exacteth of thee leſs then thine iniquity deſerveth.* *Job* anſwers, you deſired that God would ſpeak; you doubted not but if he did, he would make it appear my ſins were double to mine afflictions: With all mine heart (ſaith he) this is it I long for; I deſire that God would ſpeak, and that he would ſpeak out what my ſins are. *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.* As if he had ſaid, *I am willing to hear, and know the worſt of my ſelf.*

Some conceive, that *Job* having made that motion, *Let him ſpeak, and I will anſwer*, &c. ſtood waiting a while to ſee what God would do: But receiving no anſwer, he thus breaks out; *How many are mine iniquities?*

Adeone flagitioſus ego, ut ne dignus habear cui improbitatē exprobres? Saltem igitur ſcelera mea oſtende mihi.

And theſe put a very harſh conſtruction upon this Interrogation,; as if *Job* had ſaid, *What? am I ſo wicked and ſinful, that I am not worthy unto whom thou ſhouldeſt ſhew my wickedneſs, and my ſin? if I am ſo vile, let it appear how vile I am, and ſhew me thoſe ſins which have rendred me* (it ſeems) *not only unworthy of acceptation, but of an anſwer.* I like not this gloſs, neither doth it bear the image of a gracious ſpirit, ſuch as *Job*'s alwayes was, though it was ſometimes a little muddy and tumultuous.

Rather thus, *Job* having a purpoſe to defend his cauſe, asks at once from the grief of his heart, and from the clearneſs of his conſcience, *How many are mine iniquities?* As if he had ſaid, *I am ſuſpected of great crimes, and I am in the eye of my friends as a perſon condemned already; but I would thoſe crimes were brought forth, and ſurely they ought, before I am either cenſured, or condemned: Therefore Lord, How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.*

So the words carry a ſtrong deſire, which this afflicted ſoul had diſcovered more then once before, to ſee the bottom of his codition, and to find out the reaſon why God did thus afflict him: And if it were for ſin (about which he had no fear upon his conſcience) O that God would but ſhew him his ſin: His ſin (under that notion) was a ſecret to him, but he was willing to know it. There are two queſtions which would be reſolved before I proceed further to the opening of this. *How many are mine iniquities?*

Firſt, Seeing *Job* at *Chap* 9. *ver.* 22. laid down this concluſion, *He ſlayeth the wicked and the righteous*; and upon that bottom grounded all his anſwers, that the diſpenſations of God are alike in outward things to good and bad: Hence the queſtion riſeth, why he labours ſo much to clear himſelf of ſin, as if his afflictions muſt needs argue him wicked, whereas he before had argued, that the Lord doth as much afflict the righteous as the wicked.

I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks thus, as vindicating his perſon, not as doubting his ſtate. He did not queſtion whether God was his friend, becauſe he was afflicted, but he deſired to remove the ſuſpitions of his Friends. *Zophar* (*chap.* 11. *ver.* 14.) gave *Job* occaſion to call for this diſcovery, while he counſelled him, *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy Tabernacles.* His Friends put theſe jealous ſuppoſitions, theſe if's and an's often upon him, *If iniquity be in thine hand*, &c. The counſel was good; but their jealouſie was not. *Job* ſaw what hung upon their ſpirits, and therefore begs of God to unſecret his ſins, and lay open his tranſgreſſions. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, my friends are unſatisfied with all the profeſſions and proteſtations which I have made of my innocency: They ſuppoſe that I keep my ſin cloſe, & roll it like a ſweet morſel under my tongue; they would rake into my life, and ſee the bottom of my heart. Lord, let them ſee all, ſhew them what I am, and let me know what I have done. If it be as theſe men ſay, let it appear to thy glory, and to my ſhame. How many are mine iniquities and ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.*

Secondly, It is queſtioned why *Job* makes requeſt, that God would ſhew him what and how many his ſins were, was he curious to know their Arithmetical number? Did he think God had over-reckoned him, or that himſelf could know their reckoning? Or did he think his ſins were ſo few, or ſo ſmall, that they could not hurt him? One ſin is enough to juſtifie God in our condemnation, we need not ask for a great many. The beſt of Saints, even they who have lived in no ſin, and comparatively have committed but few ſins, have yet deſired the Lord to cover their ſins, and pronounced him bleſſed, *Whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered* (Pſal. 32. 1.) As the Saints are not forward to proclaim their good works; ſo neither is it pleaſant to them to have their ſins proclaimed: Why then is *Job* ſo buſie about this point of knowledge?

I anſwer, *Job* did not ask this queſtion, either out of curioſity to know the number of his ſins, or as if God had put more to his account then he had committed. He did not deſire this, as if he thought his ſins were either ſo few, or ſo ſmall, that they could do him no hurt; nor doth he ſpeak by way of extenuation, as if they were not many. He knew his ſins were many and great, yea, that if he had but one, and that a little one, he could not boaſt before God.

Nihil aliud eſt quam ſe ſibi bene conſcium.

But Firſt, He ſpeaks thus, becauſe he knew his ſins were neither ſo many as his Friends had reckoned them; nor ſo great as they had aggravated them; nor ſo black as they had painted them.

Secondly, When he deſires to be ſhewed his ſin, it is a proof that he was not guilty of any beloved ſin. He ſpeaks as *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know nothing by ſelf.* Lord, if any filth lye unſeen, make me know it; *His heart did not condemn him*, and therefore *he had confidence towards God*, 1 *John* 3. 21. As if he had ſaid, Lord, My accuſers have no proof, they do but gueſs that I am wicked, my own heart is not ſo much as my accuſer at all; Lord, thou knoweſt exactly what I am, ſhew me, ſhew all, how many are my ſins?

Thirdly, He deſired to know his ſins; Firſt, That he might mourn and repent for his unknown ſins. Secondly, That he might turn from them, and return to God more fully. Thirdly, That he might be more watchful againſt them.

Laſtly, He was bold to ask this queſtion, becauſe he knew God would deal with him, as a Father, by a Covenant of grace through Chriſt; not, as a Judge, by a Covenant of works in himſelf: and therefore he was not afraid to know his ſins, and to have them all ſet in order before him: He was aſſured God would not condemn him, and he did not contend to juſtifie himſelf before God, he only waited till God would juſtifie him againſt the contendings and uncharitable ſurmiſings of men. Theſe, or ſuch as theſe, were the grounds upon which *Job* makes this addreſs to God, and puts both this queſtion and requeſt: *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.*

How many.] The word refers both to quantity and quality; the Vulgar reads it, *How great ſins have I?* or, *How great are the ſins which I have?* We read it quantitively, for the number, *How many are my ſins?* How great, or how many? Make me to know both their number and their nature.

במה *ad utrumq; pertinet, ad multitudinē ſcilicet & magnitudinem. Quantas habeo iniquitates?* Vulg.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God only can give us the number and nature of our ſins.*

No man can tell how many his ſins are; they are more then the hairs upon our head, they are as the ſands upon the ſea-ſhore innumerable. The kinds or ſorts of ſin, yea, the greater acts of ſin may be numbred by man; but he only that numbers the Stars, can number all our ſins. We commit many ſins of ignorance; and we are ignorant of ſome of our ſins of knowledge: we commit known ſins, which we do not know that we have committed.

And as God only knows the number, ſo the greatneſs and the aggravations of our ſins. Who can underſtand his errors? (Pſal. 19. 12.) He means practical, not doctrinal errors. As theſe errors of wandrings are beyond our numbring, ſo alſo beyond our underſtanding. As there is a height and a depth in the love of God, which paſſeth our knowledge. So there is an height and a depth of wickedneſs in our hearts, which paſſeth our knowledge. The Lord only can ſhew us how ſinful we are; as he only can ſhew us how gracious himſelf is.

Further, The multiplication of terms in this paſſage is conſiderable, *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.* Here are three Original words, by which *Job* doth expreſs the ſame thing. Firſt, Iniquity. Secondly, Tranſgreſſion. Thirdly, Sin. The Latines give us four, and they labour much to find out a material diſtinction in this verbal diſtinction: or to ſhew how iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin, as alſo, how ſin in the firſt clauſe, and ſin in the ſecond, differ.

חטאות *Per errorem admiſſa* עונות *ſunt propriè perverſitates* פשע *gravius eſt defectionem & rebellionem ſignificans.* Merc.

The firſt word, which we tranſlate *iniquity*, ſignifies a perverſeneſs and crookedneſs of ſpirit, or thoſe ſins which have a peculiar crookedneſs and perverſeneſs in them. The ſecond ſignifies any, the leaſt aberration from the way or rule of holineſs in our actings, though our hearts ſtand right: every ſtep beſide the line is ſin. The word in the ſecond clauſe, which we tranſlate *tranſgreſſion*, ſignifies *rebellion* and *obſtinacy of ſpirit*, the riſings of our thoughts againſt God.

The Latines make out the diſtinction thus. By *iniquities*, they underſtand thoſe evils which are committed againſt our neighbour. By *ſins*, thoſe which a man commits againſt himſelf. By *tranſgreſſions*, thoſe which are immediate againſt God: And by ſin in the fourth place, *Omiſſions*: As if he had ſaid, *Lord, ſhew me mine iniquities, any evil I have committed againſt others: Shew me my ſins, thoſe which I have committed againſt my ſelf; ſhew me my tranſgreſſions, the rebellions of my life againſt thy Majeſty. And ſhew me my ſins, all my neglects to perform, or negligent performances of holy duties: ſpread all before my face.* This hath a truth in it: yet the holy Ghoſt doth not obſerve ſuch a diſtinctneſs in theſe words, but uſeth much variety and liberty in their application.

Latini utuntur quatuor diſtinctis verbis & curioſius inter hæc diſcrimen conſtituere nituntur, 1. iniquitas in proximū. 2. peccata in ſe. 3. ſcelera in Deū 4. delicta omiſſionis: Lyran. Aquin. *paulo aliter.*

Sometimes ſin, which goes loweſt in ordinary ſignification, is an aggravation: (*Hoſ.* 12. 8.) *In all my labours they ſhall find none iniquity in me, that were ſin*; as if ſin here were more then iniquity, or great iniquity. Sometimes iniquity is put as an aggravation upon ſin (*Pſal.* 32. 5.) *Thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin*: That is, the ſinfulneſs of my ſin; or thoſe conſiderations which have rendred my ſin out of meaſure ſinful. Now ſeeing there is ſuch a promiſcuous uſe of theſe words in Scripture, we cannot clearly eſtabliſh, or build upon ſuch a difference.

Therefore paſſing by thoſe critical niceties, I ſhall take the

Eſt coacervatio quadam artificio plena; Nam ſicut ejuſdem vocis repetitio ita etiam plurimarum eandem rem ſignificantium acervatio vim ſolet addere orationi. San.

the words as *Synonimaes*, ſignifying one and the ſame thing, yet being thus joyned, they ſignifie more then any one ſingly can. For as the repeating of the ſame words heightens the ſence, ſo alſo doth the heaping up of divers words which have the ſame ſence. So that this Rhetorical acervation intimates *Job*s earneſt deſire, that all *his ſins*, *by what name or title ſoever diſtinguiſhed*, might be produced, and made known unto him. *Let my iniquities, my tranſgreſſions, my ſins*, call them what you will, let them all be preſented to my face. When God proclaims his pardoning mercy, he heaps up theſe words in his own title, calling himſelf, *The Lord, the Lord gracious*, &c. *pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin.* Leſt any breach of the Law might be thought unpardonable, all the words which imply a breach, are uſed in the proclamation of pardon. And while *Job* would here ſhew both his repentance and his innocency, that he was far from hiding any darling ſin in his boſom, he begs the diſcovery of whatſoever bare the name, or had the nature of ſin, in his heart or life.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That the better any man is, the more willing he is to know the worſt of himſelf.*

He who is light in the Lord, is willing to ſee his dark part as well as his light. Some are very deſirous others ſhould know the good they have done; but they cannot abide to be ſhewed the evil which themſelves have done. The Phariſee (*Luke* 18) publiſheth to all, how he paid tithes and gave almes, how he faſted and pray'd, *&c.* but he ſpake not a word, either confeſſing his known ſins, or begging a ſight of what he did not know. *Solomon* perceiv'd that this ſpirit of ſelf-flattery poſſeſſed many in his time (*Prov.* 20. 6.) *Moſt men will proclaim every one his own goodneſs, but a faithful man who can find? Hypocrites labour much to ſhew others their goodneſs: The ſincere labour more to ſee their own vileneſs.* A godly man finds delight only in the knowledge of his graces; but he finds profit in the knowledge of his corruptions. We are pleaſed only with the ſight of friends, or of wife and children in our houſes; but if a thief be got in, we thank him that ſhews us who, and where he is. There are two things which argue a gracious frame of ſpirit: Firſt, When we deſire to know how frail we are: Secondly, When we deſire to know how ſinful we are. A natural man loves not to take notice either of the infirmities of his body, or of the preſumptions of his ſoul: And though ſome wicked men will ſay from a ſpirit of impudence, they care not who knows their iniquities, tranſgreſſions and ſins; yet no wicked man ever did or can ſay from a ſpirit of repentance, Lord make me to know mine iniquities, my tranſgreſſions, and my ſins. A carnal heart is more willing that others ſhould know his ſins, then he is (under this notion of knowledge) to know them himſelf; he knows them in the hiſtory or matter of fact, with a kind of delight; it ſometime pleaſes him to remember the evil which he hath done: but he cannot abide to know them in their nature; it never pleaſes him to repent of the evil which he hath done.

Secondly Obſerve, *Whilſt Chriſt is known to us, we need not be afraid to have our ſins known to us.*

To know ſin, and not to know Chriſt, is ſad. One ſin ſeen, without a ſight of Chriſt, ſwallows up the ſoul: but a ſight of Chriſt ſwallows up all our ſins. None can be truly willing that God ſhould ſhew them their ſins, but they to whom God hath ſhewed a Saviour. *Job* had ſaid, *He ſhall be my ſalvation*, before he ſaid, *Shew me my tranſgreſſion.* When we have ſeen heaps upon heaps of mercy in God, we cannot deſpair (though we ought to grieve) when we ſee heaps upon heaps of ſin in our ſelves. *Heaps of mercy caſt down or cover heaps of ſin.* All our mountains of ſin become mole-hills, yea plains, before this *Zerubbabel.*

Again, It is remarkable, that *Job* having asked the queſtion, *How many are mine iniquities?* follows it preſently with this petition, *Make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin:* As if he had ſaid, I may ſee my ſins how many they are; or that they are very many, and yet not know what any one of them is, without thy ſpecial teaching.

Hence Obſerve, *Our ſins may be told us, or we may have the tale of our ſins, and yet not know our ſins.*

It is harder to know the nature, then the number; what, then how many our ſins are. Every man (who knows any thing of the ſtate of man) knows he is a ſinner; but few know their ſins. Chriſt is preached to all; yet Chriſt is not known to all: There is much in this, *Make me to know.* To know ſin, is to be ſenſible of the evil of ſin; as to know Chriſt, is to have a feeling of Chriſt, and to taſte how ſweet the Lord Chriſt is. We may hear of our ſins all our dayes, and yet not know our ſins: It is poſſible for a man to write down catalogues of his ſins, and to keep a record of them every day, and yet not to know them, not only not ſo far as to mourn for them after a godly ſort; but not ſo far as to be affected with them after a moral ſort, or ſo far as an ingenious man might be. It is one thing to know our tranſgreſſions; another thing to write our tranſgreſſions, or to ſpeak of them. For as ſome have whole books written full of *Sermon-notes* by them, who have not one line of a Sermon written in their hearts, or upon their wayes; ſo a man may have whole books written full of *ſin-notes*, and yet not one ſin making impreſſion upon his heart. *There are but few who know what they know.*

There is a threefold knowledge of ſin.

Firſt, In the kind of it, that this or that is ſinful; this knowledge of ſin comes not from our ſelves. There are many actings which we do not know to be ſinnings, till God makes us know them. Some things wherein we thought we did God good ſervice, we may find our ſelves tranſgreſſors in them.

Secondly, There is a knowledge of ſin in the nature of it, that it is a tranſgreſſion of the Law, and a departure from God; that it is a filthy and a polluted thing, a baſe and diſhonourable thing; that it is nothing that is good, and all that's evil; that it is ſo evil that we cannot make it worſe then it is, nor call it by any name ſo bad as its own, *Sinful ſin.*

Thirdly, There is a knowledge of ſin in the effects and iſſues of it: That as it is filthy, ſo it defiles; that as it is a pollution, ſo it pollutes every thing that toucheth it; that, as it is baſe and diſhonourable in it ſelf, ſo it doth embaſe and diſhonour every ſoul that commits it, much more thoſe that love it: That it is big with, and brings forth death; that it is fruited with damnation, that it is armed with all the curſes written in the Book of God againſt ſinners; that the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt it, and ſhall be poured out upon it for ever, unleſs we have part in the blood of Chriſt, which was poured out to waſh and ſave us from it, We never know ſin thus, till God makes us know it. Sin is as a fire to conſume, as a ſerpent to ſting and poyſon us; yet ſinful man eſteems it but as a fire, or as a ſerpent painted upon a wall, or ſet upon a ſign-poſt, which though they have the colour, yet have they not the heat of fire, nor the poyſon of a ſerpent. *Grace only gives us the true ſenſe of our own ſin:* And he who hath received the largeſt meaſures of the grace of God, had need to be inſtant in prayer with the God of grace, *To make him know his tranſgreſſion and his ſin.*

VERS. 24, 25.

Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and holdeſt me for thine enemy?

Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou purſue the dry ſtubble?

WE need not labour much for the connection of theſe words, which are indeed a continued deſcription of the ſorrows of a troubled ſpirit. Some joyn them with the requeſt made in the former verſe thus, *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin. Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* As if he had ſaid, *Foraſmuch as I propoſing that to thy Majeſty, to diſcover the worſt and darkeſt part of me, and yet thou doſt not bring forth any accuſation, or lay any crime to my charge, ſeeing by thy ſilence thou ſeemeſt to acquit me of being guilty of any ſuch tranſgreſſion as my Friends have ſuſpected me of; Wherefore is it that thou hideſt thy face, and holdeſt me for thine enemy? If indeed thou couldeſt produce againſt me any ſtudied wickedneſs, or arraign me at thy bar for an hypocrite, then I ſhould ſee reaſon enough, why thou, who art of purer eyes then to behold any unclean thing, ſhouldſt*

Cum à me rogatus (O ſupreme judex) ut ſi quæ ſunt apud te recondita mea ſcelera proferre velis, taces omnino, ſane videris tuo iſto ſilentio teſtari, nihil tale in me reperiſſe; cur igitur abſcondis faciem & mecum tanquã cum inimico agis? Aqui.

hide thy face from me in ſuch uncleanneſs; and were I ſuch an one, I might ſee reaſon enough why thou ſhouldeſt count me as an enemy, or never own me as a friend. But foraſmuch as that not only appeareth not, but indeed is not, I now further deſire to underſtand what is the cauſe why thou hideſt thy face from me, and why thou holdeſt me as thine enemy.

Verſ. 24. **Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and holdeſt me for thine enemy?**

The words are not ſo much a queſtion, as an expoſtulation, which is a very vehement opening of the heart to let out the grief that lyeth there: Yet *Job* keeps within the bounds of duty and holy modeſty: He did not invade the prerogative of God, whileſt he thus asked an account of him. We muſt here take in a double ſuppoſition that we may clear *Job*. Firſt, That, he knew God had a reaſon why he hid his face from him. Secondly, We muſt ſuppoſe, that in caſe the Lord ſhould ſtill hide the cauſe from him why he did hide his face from him, yet *Job* was reſolved to ſit down and honour God even in that darkneſs about his own condition: for without theſe ſuppoſitions, to put queſtions, much more to put expoſtulations upon God, is unbecoming the ſtate of the creature, much more of a Believer. We muſt ſay God hath juſt cauſe for whatſoever he doth; and he doth not wrong us, if he refuſe to ſhew us the cauſe, though we requeſt him to ſhew it us.

Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?

Here are two things to be opened.
Firſt, What is meant by *the face of God*.
Secondly, What hiding his face doth mean.

This phraſe [**The face of God**] muſt be underſtood by that common figure, an *Anthropopathy*. God is often ſpoken of in Scripture after the manner of men; ſometimes inward paſſions, ſometimes (as here) outward parts are aſcribed to him.

The face of God is put Firſt, For the eſſential glory of God. (*Exod.* 33.13.) When *Moſes* deſired to ſee the glory of God, the Lord telleth him, *ver.* 20. *Thou canſt not ſee my face; for there is no man can ſee my face and live. Thou canſt not ſee my face*; that is, my eſſential glory; thou mayeſt ſee my declarative, or my manifeſtative glory, the glory of my Attributes, as they are expreſſed in that proclamation of his *great Name*. The face of God, as taken for his eſſential glory, is alwayes hid; it is an object too pure and ſpiritual for the eye, and too high for the unſtanding of a creature.

Quare Divinitatem tuam ſubducis. Targ.

Secondly, The face of God ſignifies the general preſence of God: And ſo when God hides his face, he denyes us the comfortable enjoyment of his preſence.

Thirdly, and more particularly, The face of God ſignifies the anger and wrath of God, (*Lev.* 20.6.) *The ſoul that turneth after ſuch as have familiar ſpirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even ſet my face againſt that ſoul, and will cut him off from among his people.* And in the Pſalms often the Lord is ſaid to ſet his face, that is, to manifeſt his diſpleaſure againſt wicked men. The face of God, ſignifies alſo the favour of God, the good will of God. So in this place, and *Pſal.* 18.19. 1 *Sam.* 13.12. *Numb.* 6.25. *Dan.* 9.17. both theſe, the anger and the favour of God, are called the face of God, becauſe the anger and the favour of men appear in their faces. Man can form his face into the ſignification of either of theſe, into an angry look, or into a pleaſing look: We may ſee wrath, or we may ſee love printed upon the countenance. Hence the favour and the anger of God are expreſſed by *the face of God*. *Job* complaineth, that the favour of God, the light of his countenance was hidden from him.

Hideſt.] The hiding of the face of God may be conſidered either as it is, or as we apprehend it to be. His face is never hid, but to our apprehenſions. In his diſpenſations, there are the hidings, and there are the diſcoverings of his face; there are the ſhuttings, and there are the openings of his love. Further, the hiding of the face implyes two things.

Iratorum more qui eos quibus ſuccenſent aſpicere dedignantur. Merc.

Firſt, Diſpleaſure. A man turneth away his face from thoſe with whom he is diſpleaſed.

Secondly, Diſdain. We turn from thoſe we ſlight: and to turn the back upon a man is real ſlighting. Where we will not look, we do not love. As the Prophet ſaid to a great King, (2 *Kings* 3.14.) *Were it not that I regard the preſence of* Jehoſhaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee nor ſee thee.* So here, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* is, Why art thou ſo angry with me? Why doſt thou ſlight me, as if I were not worth a look, or a caſt of thine eye: A man in miſery uſually ſaith, *Pray look upon me.*

Faciem avertere indignantis eſt & ſupplicium inferentis, ſicut faciem convertere benevolentis & benefacientis eſt. Pin.

Again, This alſo (as ſome Interpreters conceive) hath reference to a judiciary proceeding: *Speak thou, and I will anſwer*; or, *I will ſpeak, and anſwer thou me: Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* When a Magiſtrate finds a buſineſs ſoul againſt a man, he turns away from him. Some of the Ancients refer it to a known cuſtom of the Judges in thoſe times, who when they pronounced ſentence of condemnation, cauſed a curtain to be drawn before them, or, hid their faces from the condemned party; for as the covering of a mans face was a token that he was condemned; ſo they who condemned them covered their own faces: Of which cuſtom ſee more upon thoſe words, *chap.* 9. *ver.* 24. *He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof*, &c. And whether the uſages of former times in judiciary proceedings, give any light to this Text or no, yet the general ſcope and intendment of it is plainly thus. *Wherefore, O Lord, doſt thou put thy ſelf into an angry poſture againſt me? Why are all the appearances from Heaven to my ſoul black and lowring? Why is it that I ſee not thoſe former ſmiles in thy face? Why am I not received into the embraces of thy armes? Why doſt thou act the wrathful Judge, who art indeed a loving Father? As my ſoul hath delighted in thy forepaſſed kindneſſes, ſo it deſires to know, with all humble ſubmiſſion to thy will, why thou grieveſt me now with this unkindneſs, the hiding of thy face? Tell me Lord, tell me, wherefore hideſt thou thy face from me?*

Antiqua erat conſuetudo, quod cum judices capitis ſententiā laturi erant interjecto velo ſe continebant abſconditi. Hujus meminit, Baſil. Ep. 79

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That holy men even in this life have a ſight of the face of God.*

Wherefore hideſt thou thy face? It was not uſual with God to hide his face, *Job* had ſeen it, elſe he would not have complained becauſe he could not ſee it. We are not much troubled at the want of that, whereof we never had any experience nor enjoyment. We are not at all troubled at the non-enjoyment of that, of whoſe being, or whether there be ſuch a thing or no, we are altogether ignorant. *Job* ſaw God did not deal with him as he was wont, nor do to him after the manner of a friend. God had been familiar with him, and given him frequent viſits, this made him ſo ſenſible of his preſent ſhyneſs and eſtrangements. *Chap.* 10. *v.* 12. *Thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.* When friends viſit they ſee one anothers faces. It is ſaid of the two Kings (2 *Kings* 14.8.) that the one ſent to the other, ſaying, *Come, let us look one another in the face*; that is, Let us have an interview. The ſoul of a believer hath interviews with God, God and he doth often look one another in the face. Whereſoever the Saints are (except in caſes of deſertion) the place may be called, as *Jacob* called that where he wreſtled with God, (*Gen.* 32.30.) *Peniel*, that is, *the face of God*: yet not in that ſence fully in which *Jacob* calls it ſo: He called it the *face of God*, becauſe he had ſeen God *face to face*. We can call it ſo only (ordinarily) becauſe we ſee his face. It is one thing to ſee *the face of God*, and another thing to ſee *God face to face*. The former is the common priviledge of Saints in this life; the latter is very rarely given the Saints here; or it is the priviledge of but ſome Saints, and thoſe rare ones, to have it here.

There is a twofold ſight or viſion of God.

Firſt, A viſion of grace. Secondly, A viſion of glory. Glory is nothing elſe, but the viſion of God; (1 *Joh.* 3.1.) *We ſhall ſee him as he is.* Both theſe ſights of God are expreſſed by one phraſe of ſpeech, in the Hebrew of the Old Teſtament, and in the Greek of the new, and we tranſlate both by ſeeing God *face to face*. So *Jacob* profeſſed in the place now cited, that he had ſeen God; and the Apoſtle promiſeth that we ſhall ſee him, ſo (1 *Cor.* 13.12.) where he alſo compares the ſight of God here to ſeeing in a glaſs darkly, and calls the ſight of him in heaven, a ſeeing of God *face to face*. Now the reaſon why ſome of the Saints (as *Jacob* and *Moſes*) are ſaid to *ſee God face to face* in this life, which the Apoſtle appropriates to the next, is this as I conceive, becauſe thoſe ſights of God which *Jacob* and *Moſes* had were immediate, God in an extraordinary manner coming down to wreſtle with *Jacob*, and calling up *Moſes* in an extraordinary manner to ſpeak with him in the mount; Theſe diſpenſations being (*præludia gloriæ*) the foreactings of a glorified eſtate, are ſet forth by that act which is peculiar and proper unto the ſtate of glory, *The ſeeing of God face to face.* But as for the uſual manifeſtations of God to believers in this life, they are only the ſeeings of his face.

So then we muſt diſtinguiſh of the viſions of God in this life. Some are extraordinary, ſuch was that of *Jacob* and *Moſes*, ſuch was that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 6. 5.) and of *Job* (*chap.* 42. 5.) By all theſe God was ſeen (in this ſence) *face to face.* There are alſo ordinary manifeſtations of God, in which only the face of God is ſeen, and thoſe may be referred to three heads.

Firſt, We ſee his face in the glaſs of the word, there we have a viſion of God: hence the preaching of the word is called *viſion*, (Prov. 29. 18.) *Where there is no viſion the people periſh.*

Secondly, We ſee the face of God in the glaſs of his works. What God is, appears in what God doth. God needs not ſubſcribe his name to his works (as men do) to ſhew that he is the Author of them, for his works are his name, and in what work ſoever his hand hath been, his face is ſeen. Eſpecially in thoſe three great works, firſt, in the work of creation, (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made.* Secondly, In the works of Providence. And this even in the common works of providence, our daily ſupport and protection, the conſtant recourſe of ſeaſons and times, of nights and dayes, *Pſal.* 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handywork; day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledg*; that is, the providences and turnings of every day, declare the glory of God, and ſhew his handywork: but chiefly in wonderful providences, in his great deliverances and miraculous operations for his people is God ſeen. Thirdly, In the work of Redemption, in which the face of God is more ſeen then in both the former, even his manifold wiſdom, *Epheſ.* 3. 10.

Thirdly, We ſee the face of God in the Ordinances of his worſhip, in them we have moſt viſible viſions of God in this life. For this ſight holy *David* was athirſt, *Pſal.* 63. 2. *O God, thou art my God,* &c. *My ſoul thirſteth for thee in a dry and thirſty land, where no water is; to ſee thy power and thy glory ſo as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary.* The ſight of God in the Sanctuary, is through the Ordinances and worſhip of the Sanctuary. God is ſeen in his works, but he is ſeen more in his word; in that *as in a glaſs with open face we behold the glory of the Lord, till we are changed into the ſame image*, (2 Cor. 3. 18.) The ſight of God is a transforming ſight; we cannot ſee what he is, and be what we are. The beauty of God ſhines in his Ordinances, and that beauty beheld doth not only reflect upon, but aſſimulate the beholder. Hence *David* again (*Pſal.* 27. 4.) makes it the chiefeſt and the choiceſt, the one and the only thing of all his deſires, *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the dayes of my life*; what to do? *To behold the beauty of the Lord.* Where doth beauty ſit? Beauty ſits in the face, and therefore to behold the beauty of the Lord, is to behold the face of the Lord. Theſe are the ordinary viſions of God in this life, or the ſeeing of his face: and when the Lord is pleaſed to give any of his ſpecial favorites extraordinary and immediate manifeſtations of himſelf (which as he did to ſome Saints before the coming of Chriſt, ſo he can renew it (when he pleaſeth and ſees it fitting) to believers now) when I ſay God gives immediate manifeſtations of himſelf, they may be ſaid to ſee God *face to face*, becauſe ſuch manifeſtations are the firſt-fruits of glory, or glympſes of heaven before we come to heaven, where we ſhall as fully and as clearly as a finite nature can take in an infinite, *ſee God face to face.*

Now as unbelievers ſhall never ſee God face to face in glory: ſo they know not what it means to ſee his face in wayes of grace. And therefore they entertain it with a kind of ſcorn, when it is reported that any man hath ſeen the face of God; This is a ſtrange language to the men of the world, who live without God in the world. They who live without God in the world, live without God in the Church: and we are as Barbarians to them, they underſtand not what we ſay, when we ſay we have ſeen God in prayer, or at the word, in private duties, or in publick aſſemblies. In theſe, believers ſee the face of God; they who do not, do nothing in any of theſe. Our buſineſs in ſuch duties is to ſee God: we come not to ſee one another, or to ſee the walls and ornaments of the place we meet in, we come not (as the Diſciples ſpake wondring at the fabrick of the Temple) *to ſee what manner of ſtones and buildings are there, but to ſee what a holy and gracious God is there*; and when the worſhippers in ſpirit miſs this ſight, though they know their labour is not loſt, yet the comfort they expected is not gained, and therefore they mourn, yea humbly complain, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

Secondly Obſerve, *That God doth ſometimes withdraw himſelf and hide his face from his choiceſt ſervants.*

It is the ſole priviledge of the Saints to ſee the face of God, but they live not alwayes in the enjoyment of that priviledge: (*Iſa.* 8. 17.) *I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the houſe of Jacob, and I will look for him.* The Saints are now the *houſe of Jacob*; the eye, yea the heart of God is ever upon this houſe, yet he ſometimes hideth his face from it. Then the Lord hideth his face, when he doth not enlighten as formerly, when he doth not enliven as formerly, when he doth not aſſiſt in doing as formerly, when he doth not ſupport in ſuffering as formerly; when there is a withdrawing of theſe or in any of theſe, then God is ſaid to hide his face from the houſe of *Jacob*; *David* often bemoans himſelf under theſe hidings. And the Prophet puts the caſe in general, that ſuch as fear the Lord and obey the voice of his ſervants, may yet walk in darkneſs and ſee no light (*Iſa.* 50. 10.) We never want light in our ſpirits, till the face of God is hid from us, as we never want light in our eyes till the Sun is hidden from us: but why doth God hide his face from his choiceſt ſervants? *Job* a choice ſervant of his asks the reaſon, wherefore hideſt thou thy face far from me? I ſhall (upon that occaſion, and the clearing of this Scripture) anſwer it in ſome particulars.

Firſt, The Lord hides his face ſometimes, becauſe he will hide his face. What if God ſhould have anſwered *Job* when he enquired, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* It is my pleaſure? God may do it by prerogative, and neither ask us leave, nor give us the reaſon why. *As he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth* (*Rom.* 9. 18.) ſo he may ſay, I ſhew my face to whom I will, and from whom I will, I hide it.

But, Secondly, He hideth his face at one time, becauſe he intendeth to ſhew it more clearly at another. When he means ſhortly to give the ſoul a full ſight of himſelf, he gives it at preſent no ſight of himſelf: when he is about to pour out abundance of love into a boſome, he quite withdraws the ſenſe of his love.

Thirdly, Undervaluings of former manifeſtations are often chaſtned with after hidings.

Fourthly, God denies his preſence, that we may prize his preſence, and pray more earneſtly for it.

Fiftly, When we value the face of the world too much, God hides his face. When we are deſirous to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh, God will not ſhew himſelf to our ſpirits. Our dalliance with the creature, cauſeth God to look off from us, or to look ſtrangely upon us. The heart of a godly man may get a haunt to ſome vanity here below, and then God reſtrains viſion from above. He ſhews us the wandrings and out-lyings of our affections, by the withdrawings and vailings of his own. We cannot love God till he ſhews us his face; and after we have ſeen it, we cannot but love him: yet they who have ſeen him, and love him, may for a time be overtaken with the love of the world, and then God will not be ſeen. Every opening of our ſelves to the world is a hiding of our ſelves from God. When we hide our faces from God, no wonder if God hide his face from us.

Sixthly, When we hide our faces from the wayes or from the people of God, God will hide his face from us. Some who have had Communion with God, and have ſeen his face, may (under a temptation or upon a guſt of carnal fear) if not withdraw from, yet ſcarce own the people or the wayes of God; yea, poſſibly they may ſet their faces againſt ſome of the wayes of God. When it is ſo with them, God will ſurely hide his face from them. Apoſtates draw back totally from profeſſion, when they perceive they cannot bring forward their own profit or other private intereſts by their profeſſion; and of ſuch the Lord hath ſaid, *My ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in them*, (*Heb.* 10.38.) True Believers may draw back partially or in part, and when they do ſo, God will make them know that while they are in ſuch a baſe temper, his ſoul hath no pleaſure in them, and therefore hides his face from them.

As theſe or the like are cauſes in us, why God hides his face, ſo he hath gracious deſignes upon us, which he effects by hiding his face. Chiefly theſe two,

Firſt, To try us. *There is no greater trial of grace then the withdrawing of comfort*; and in that ſtate where we ſhall have a conjunction of all comfort, we ſhall never be put to the trial of any grace; yea, the graces which act in trials ſhall have no exiſtence there. Faith and hope and patience have no place in heaven, becauſe they have no work in heaven: And they have no work there, becauſe God will never hide his face, and Satan ſhall never ſhew his face there. For between the appearing of Satans face, and the hiding of Gods face lieth the work of theſe graces, (*Iſa.* 8.17.) *I will wait upon God who hideth his face*: there's the trial of patience, to keep cloſe to God, when God ſeemeth to depart from us.

Secondly, God hides his face that we might be in love with that ſtate where his face ſhall never be hid. 'Tis beſt of all to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt, becauſe then we and our joyes ſhall never be divided. That joy which depends upon changeable things, muſt needs be changeable. The joy of heaven is a dependent joy, yet becauſe God on whom it depends, will never change a look towards us, therefore our joy ſhall be unchangeable. If the Sun did alwayes continue the ſame aſpect upon the moon, which it doth at the full, the Moon (though hers be a dependent and a borrowed light) would ever continue at the full, and know no change. God will not vary his aſpect toward the Saints in heaven, for one moment, to all eternity, and therefore the joy of Saints in heaven will be for ever at the full. There is a double difference between the manifeſtation of God here upon earth, and in heaven. Firſt, A difference in the degree, the manifeſtations in heaven are clearer; here *in a glaſs*, there *face to face*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. Secondly, The manifeſtations of God to the Saints in heaven are without intermiſſion, there ſhall not come one cloud between the face of God and our ſouls for ever. Hence as the holineſs, ſo the joy of the Saints in heaven ſhall be the ſame for ever. Now God hides his face, and puts us to this queſtion, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* that we may long for that eſtate where this queſtion ſhall never be put, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

Thirdly Obſerve, *That it a great affliction to the ſoul, when the face of God is hid.*

Wherefore hideſt thou thy face? As if he had ſaid, Lord, I could ſuffer any affliction, yea all afflictions better then this one. *Job* was not a type of Chriſt (as I have toucht before) but as in many things, ſo in this, his ſpirit and his condition were very parallel or like to Chriſt. When Chriſt was upon the croſs, he cryed out, and put this queſtion, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Such was *Jobs* cry, *Why hideſt thou thy face from me?* As Chriſt upon the croſs, ſo *Job* upon the dunghil, had a body full of pains; but he paſſeth by theſe, and only complains of the ſufferings of his ſoul in the hidings of his fathers face. Here was the pinch; *Why hideſt thou face from me?* The Lord threatens, *Deut.* 32.20. *I will hide my face from them, I will ſee what their end ſhall be*: Certainly no good end if God hide his face. He ſpeaks in reference to temporal or outward things, *I will hide my face from them*, that is, I will withdraw my protecting preſence, my wonted influence and aſſiſtance; or as he tells them (*Jer.* 18.17.) *I will ſhew them the back and not the face in the day of their calamity*; when I have done this, then *I will ſee what their end ſhall be.* Though God be not ſeen, yet he can ſee; having hid himſelf, and left a ſinful people to ſhift for themſelves, he then (as it were) watches, like *Moſes* ſiſter, when he was put into his boat of bulruſhes (*Exod.* 2.4.) to ſee what will become of them. God knows the end from the beginning, and looks quite through all cauſes into their iſſues; yet thus he ſpeaks after the manner of men, who cannot ſee an hour before them; *I will ſee what their end ſhall be.* God ſees they muſt needs come to a miſerable end, whoſe wayes he will not vouchſafe to ſee. Much more is this true in regard of our inward and ſpiritual eſtate, if God hide his face, he ſeeth what the end will be, even anguiſh and ſorrow, trouble and vexation of ſpirit. What can that ſoul ſee but viſions of darkneſs, which hath no viſion of God, who alone is light? After the people had ſaid (*Hoſ.* 6.2.) *Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn and he will heal us*; he adds, After two dayes *will he revive us, in the third day he will raiſe us up, and we ſhall live in his ſight*: *In his ſight*, which ſome interpret, *when God brings us into his ſight, or into a ſight of him, we ſhall live*, that is, our lives will be ſweet unto us, we ſhall recover when God appears to us, and gives us evidence that we are accepted with him. A ſight of the *face of God* is the happineſs and life of man. As no man can ſee the eſſential face of God and live, ſo no man can live comfortably, unleſs he ſee the providential face of God. It is obſerved, that the heathens exceedingly deſired a ſight of their gods, and that they might ſee them, they invented images, and ſet up ſtatues to repreſent the gods; that ſo they might ſee whom they worſhipped, and at once behold and adore their *dunghil-dieties*. They knew no way of ſeeing their gods, but by their ſence; and therefore they made ſenſible Gods. They would rather have Gods with eyes that could not ſee, then not ſee their gods with their eyes. Yea, I find a learned Chriſtian among the Ancients, giving this as one reaſon why Chriſt took our nature upon him, and ſo became God manifeſted in the fleſh, that, God who in himſelf is altogether inviſible, might be viſible in his Son; God is more viſible in Chriſt, then he is in all creatures; The Apoſtle calleth him *the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, (*Heb.* 1.3.) Jeſus Chriſt is the brightneſs, the *ſent-forth-light*, the beams or ſplendor of his Fathers glory, and the imprinted image of his eſſence or perſon (for the words are a metaphor drawn from a lightſom body, which ſends forth beams of light, and from a ſeal, which leaves its own impreſſion or image where it is ſtampt, I ſay) Chriſt Jeſus is all this, not only in regard of his Divine Nature, and eternal generation, but alſo in reſpect of his incarnation, and ſending in the ſimilitude of ſinful fleſh. For in Chriſt manifeſted in the fleſh, the glory and excellency of God the Father ſhined forth; who as he is in himſelf altogether inviſible, ſo he is in nothing ſo viſible as in his Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore all the former wayes of manifeſting God under the Law, have been laid by and diſuſed, ſince God manifeſted himſelf to us by his Son: the excellency of this being ſo great beyond the former, that to look for them, would be but like calling for Star-light after the Sun is riſen, as the Apoſtles way of argumentation doth clearly evidence in the firſt of the *Hebrews*, *verſ.* 1, 2, 3. But to return to the point (from which, I have upon the overture of this notion, a little digreſſed). It appears by all this, that the manifeſtation of God to the ſoul, is our higheſt both priviledge and comfort, and that the hidings of his face are our greateſt both loſs and ſorrow.

Gentiles ab hoc ſimulacra finxerũt: ut oculis cernerent quod colebant. Chryſologus hinc argumẽtatur incarnationis cauſam, ut ſe inviſibilis deus faceret viſibilẽ ſatisfaceretq; amori, qui quod amat videre cupit.

There are four particulars from which I ſhall briefly evidence this yet further.

Firſt, The need or rather the abſolute neceſſity we ſtand in of the preſence and favour of God. It is needful for us to have the creature, but there is a neceſſity that we ſhould enjoy God. God is enough for us without any creature, but all creatures are nothing to us without God; God and all that he hath made, is not more then God without any thing that he hath made.

Secondly, All our profits come in at the door of divine favour and munificence. And having God, we have all: He that hath the fountain, hath the ſtream; he that hath the Mine, hath the gold and ſilver. He that hath the Sun, hath the light: Whilſt we enjoy Communion with God, we enjoy the fountain the mine, the Sun of all enjoyments. We ſay *there is no fiſhing to the ſea*, becauſe the ſea hath the vaſteſt capacity; there's fiſh enough in the ſea to fill all our nets, and to lade all our veſſels: we may ſay infinitely more truly, there is no enjoyment to the enjoyment of God,

God: God hath enough not only to ſupply all our needs, but to ſatisfie all our deſires. The beſt of meer creatures is but a particular good. All creatures are not an univerſal good. *The One the One-moſt God is all good. God will be hereafter, and he can be now, All in all unto us.*

Thirdly, Nothing is ſo honourable to man as the enjoyment of God. It is an honour to a common man when he is admitted to the preſence of a great man. If a Prince (who is but man in a great letter) ſpeak kindly to us, and ſhew us any countenance, we think our ſelves honoured not a little: what is it then for the great God of heaven to ſhew us his face, and give us countenance?

Fourthly, It is joy and delight unſpeakable to enjoy the face of God. One of the Roman Emperours was of ſo amiable a temper and compoſure, that he was called *The Delight of mankind: God is indeed the delight of Saints.* The joy of glory is this, *We ſhall ever be with the Lord*; the joy of grace is, *when the Lord is with us.* We may have grace, but we can have no joy, when God hides his face from us; and he that hath once ſeen the face of God, can never give over asking, knocking, praying, begging, till the Lord reſtore unto him the light of his countenance, and the joy of his ſalvation. *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

And holdeſt me for thine enemy.

We may expound this latter clauſe by the former: Surely *thou holdeſt me for an enemy, elſe why doſt thou hide thy face from me?*

חשב *exiſtimare, reputare, etiā in pretio habere.*

Non pluris facit nos quā ſi extera & peregrina eſſemus.

Holdeſt.] The word ſignifies the eſteem or account which we have either of perſons or of things. (*Gen.* 31. 15.) *Are we not counted of him ſtrangers?* ſay the wives of *Jacob*, in reference to their Father *Laban*, he deals with us as if we had not been born in his family, or as if he had no relation to us. So here, *Thou counteſt me*, or, *thou holdeſt me for thine enemy*, that is, thou carrieſt it as if thou hadſt nothing at all to do with me upon terms of friendſhip, as if thou hadſt no acquaintance with me, or hadſt never ſeen me before, yea thou dealeſt with me, not only as with a ſtranger, but as with an enemy; not only as if thou didſt not know me, but as if thou didſt hate me.

By nature we are all enemies to God, (*Rom.* 5. 10.) *Whilſt we were yet enemies Chriſt died for us.* Yea, we are his hearty enemies, or enemies with our hearts: we hate God naturally, as we ſhould love him ſpiritually, with all our might and all our mind. *We were enemies in our minds, or, by our minds, by reaſon of wicked works*, (Col. 1. 21.) *Job* was once ſuch an enemy, but he knew he had been reconciled unto God by the death of his Son in the promiſe, and ſo was become his friend. *Job* knew he was juſtified and pardoned, that God was his God in covenant, and therefore it was ſtrange to him to receive the uſage of an enemy. Is this thy kindneſs to thy friend, to number him among thine enemies?

ἥγησαι δέ μὲ ὑπεναντίον σοὶ. *Putas me tibi contrarium.* Sept. *Ita me percutis ut ſoles quos inimicos judicaſti. Sic caro judicat in cruce.* Merc.

For thine enemy.] An Enemy is firſt one whom we hate. Secondly, He is one who hath done or attempts to do us wrong: Thirdly, An Enemy is one whom we oppoſe, and ſeek to deſtroy. *Job* ſeems to have this thought, that God had all theſe thoughts of him. *Thou holdeſt me for thine enemy*, that is, as one whom thou hateſt, as one that had done thee wrong, as one whom thou oppoſeſt and wouldſt deſtroy. *Thus the fleſh judges even in thoſe who are more then fleſh.* The rule of love given by Chriſt is, *Love your enemies: if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirſt, give him drink*: *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf as of an enemy in vulgar notion, or as of an enemy dealt with according to the laws of nature or of nations, not according to the law of Chriſt or of Goſpel-grace; yet God did indeed feed and comfort *Job*, though he outwardly dealt with him as an enemy, pulling the bread from his mouth, and ſtripping him of all his comforts.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God acts towards ſome of his neareſt friends as if they were his greateſt enemies.*

He may not only hide his face from them, but ſhew his wrath againſt them. God wounds his with love, and he wounds thoſe whom he loves. *Whom I love I correct:* there is wounding in correcting. So he acted toward *Jacob*, (*Gen.* 32.) *he wreſtled with him.* Is it the part of a friend when he meets his friend to wreſtle with him? When friends meet, they imbrace and ſalute one another, they rejoyce and confer one with another: God wreſtled with *Jacob*, and wreſtled with him, not in ſport, but very roughly, he put his thigh out of joynt, and made him halt for it. And as God dealt with perſonal *Jacob*, ſo he dealt with national *Jacob*, or the people of the Jews, who were his friends above all the nations of the earth, *Jer.* 30. 10. *Therefore fear not thou O my ſervant Jacob, ſaith the Lord, neither be diſmayed O Iſrael, for I will ſave thee from afar, and thy ſeed from the land of thy captivity.* This was a gracious promiſe that the Jews ſhould return from *Babylon.* But who ſent them into *Babylon?* or was it the part of a friend to ſend them into *Babylon?* It was God who ſent them into *Babylon*, and himſelf interprets his own action, (*verſ.* 14.) *I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chaſtiſement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity, becauſe thy ſins were increaſed.* God who wreſtled with *Jacob* till he lamed him, ſmites the ſeed of *Jacob* till he wounded them, and that not with ſome ſlight wound, but with the wound of an enemy, that is, with ſuch wounds as an enemy is wounded with: God wounds a beloved people with the wounds of any enemy, even with ſuch a wound as an enemy gives, and with ſuch a wound as an enemy receives. God was not an enemy to *Job*, but God wounded him as if he were an enemy. The wounds of God are the wounds of a father, whoſe end is to correct, not to kill; he ſmites us as children, and counteth us children whileſt he is ſmiting us; yet he ſmites ſo hard and wounds ſo deep as if wrathful anger moved his arm to ſmite and wound. Great wounds are the wounds of an enemy; for, as a man is ſaid to hate father and mother, yea and his own life, when he regards not what they ſay to withhold him from the duty which he oweth to Chriſt, in this caſe (though he truly reverence father and mother) he is ſaid to hate them, becauſe we commonly hate thoſe whoſe counſels and deſires we reject, or they at leaſt think we do ſo; ſo, a great wound is called by the Prophet the wound of an enemy, becauſe none but enemies uſe to give ſuch wounds. There is no outward condition ſo ſad, but God ſometimes puts his own into it. As a wicked man can do any thing to God but love him, he prayes to God, he hears the Word of God, he gives an outward conformity to the Law of God, but he cannot love God: So God can do any thing againſt his own people, but hate them: He can impoveriſh them, weaken them, and wound them, he can correct and chaſten them, he can ſpeak curſtly to them, and deal courſely with them, but he cannot hate them.

Ab inimico illata dicitur illa plaga quia gravis eſt qualē inferre ſolet inimicos. Sanct.

Secondly Obſerve, *A Godly man may doubt whether God love him or no.*

Where God loves he loves to the end. All his friends are his ſons. A ſon is not taken for years, as a ſervant is: once a ſon and ever a ſon, and becauſe every friend of God is a ſon of God, therefore once a friend and ever a friend: yet, they who are for ever the friends of God, are not alwayes perſwaded of the love of God. The relation cannot be loſt, but the ſweetneſs of it may. As many wicked men are high flowen in confidences that they are the friends of God, and that God uſeth them as friends, they are rich, and they are full, they have favour and honour in the world, above thouſands of their brethren, upon theſe grounds they boaſt, *ſee how God loveth us*, and yet at that time God hates them and counts them as his enemies. The Jews had an high eſteem of *Moſes*, they truſted in *Moſes*, yet Chriſt ſaith unto them, (*Joh.* 5. 45.) *I will not accuſe you to the Father, there is one will accuſe you, even Moſes in whom you truſt.* So will ſome glory that God is their friend, and they his favourites: But while they think they truſt God, and God helps them, we may ſay, God whom they truſt will accuſe, and not only accuſe but deſtroy them as profeſſed enemies. Now, as ſome have falſe perſwaſions that God is their friend, ſo others are under falſe ſuſpicions that God is their enemy. An upright heart is not alwayes ſetled in this great truth, that God loves him, yea he may come almoſt to a ſettlement in this great errour, that God hates him. Nothing can ſeparate us from the benefits of the love of God (*Rom.* 8. 39.) but many things may ſeparate us from the feelings of it.

Thirdly Obſerve, *To be an enemy to God is the worſt of all conditions.*

God is the beſt friend and the worſt enemy; no love like his, no wrath like his: *Thoſe mine enemies that would not have me reign over them, bring them forth and ſlay them here before me.* His foes ſhall be his footſtool. And as to be a real enemy to God, is to be in the worſt condition, ſo to apprehend our ſelves enemies to God, or not in the favour of God, is a very ſad condition. I have opened this point further at the ſeventh Chapter, verſ. 11. Where *Job* complains in language near this, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden unto my ſelf?* An enemy is the mark againſt whom we direct all our ſhot, and brandiſh all our weapons. We are all by nature enemies to God, bleſſed are they who through grace are his reconciled friends. *Job* having asked the queſtion, why God, hid his face and held him as an enemy, beſeeches him not to contend with him, becauſe he was (if he was) ſo weak and inconſiderable an enemy.

Verſ. 25. **Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou purſue the dry ſtubble?**

There is a twofold conſideration of this verſe, Firſt, as it ſtands in its own bounds. Secondly, As it relates to the words following. I ſhall here open it in its own compaſs, and only explain the meaning of this manner of ſpeaking.

Foliū propulſum concutit, ſecundū vulgare dictum, qui afflicto afflictionem addit. Druſ.

Both parts of the verſe are proverbial, and are nearly allied in ſenſe to that proverbial ſpeech uſed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 42. 3.) repeated by Chriſt (*Mat.* 13.20.) *He will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax.* To break the bruiſed reed, and to quench the ſmoaking flax, is as much as to break a leaf driven to and fro, and to purſue the dry ſtubble. So that both theſe ſimilitudes expreſs ſuch as are weak and unable to reſiſt, or the adding of affliction to thoſe who are already over-burdened with affliction. That for the general.

ערץ *Eſt conterere, cōſringere aut roborare ſe, & potentiā oſtendere in aliquo confringendo.*

ערצים *Potentes dicti qui potentia ſua aliis ſunt formidabiles.* Merc.

Wilt thou break.] The word which we tranſlate, *to break*, ſignifies to break terribly, or to beat a thing to powder: to break with power, or to ſhew much power in breaking. *Sanctifie the Lord in your hearts, and let him be your dread.* He is to be dreaded who can break all power, and whoſe power none can break (*Luk.* 12.4.) *Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into hell; yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.* The mighty man is expreſſed by this word, becauſe men of might are able to break oppoſers. But wilt thou mightily break that which hath no might? What's that?

A leaf driven to and fro?] Wilt thou put out thy power againſt him that is but weakneſs? A leaf upon the tree is a weak thing, but a leaf ſhaken off the tree, driven to and fro upon the ground, is contemptible: Wilt thou break a leaf? and,

Ferè eadē ſententia, niſi fortè ſtipula aliquid ignobilius & inutilius ſignifica'.

Wilt thou purſue the dry ſtubble?] To break a leaf, and to purſue the dry ſtubble, are one thing. And as there he ſpeaks not barely of a leaf, but of a leaf driven to and fro; ſo here he compares himſelf, not only to ſtubble, but to *dry ſtubble*. Stubble will conſume quickly, but dry ſtubble is at once flame and aſhes. Such a poor thing, ſuch a nothing am I; and wilt thou ſtrive with me? While he ſaith, wilt thou do this? he intimates that 'tis not Gods manner to do this.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God uſeth not to afflict thoſe that are afflicted, or to act his ſtrength upon thoſe who have no ſtrength.*

The day of the Lord (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 2.12.) *ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low, upon the Cedars of Lebanon, and upon the Oaks of Baſhan, and upon all the mountains, and upon the hills that are lifted up.* God doth not uſe to deal with the leaves of the Oak and Cedar, but with the body and roots of the Oak and Cedar: his quarrel is not with the ſtubble which grows upon the hills and mountains, but with the hills and mountains themſelves. He loves not to humble the humbled, but the proud; nor to bring down thoſe that are low, but the lofty. 'Tis true the meaneſt ſinner ſhall not eſcape his judgement, but he chiefly deſires to be doing with the mighty. Uſually the Lord gives ſtrength to the weak, he rarely oppoſeth the weak with his ſtrength. That's the report which the ſame Prophet makes (*Iſa.* 25.4.) *Thou Lord haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in their diſtreſs* (thou doſt not put out thy ſtrength againſt the poor and needy in their diſtreſs) *Thou art a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat* (therefore ſurely thou uſeſt not to ſtorm thoſe that are in the ſtorm, or kindle a fire upon thoſe that are in the heat). 'Tis the Lords manner to bind up the broken, not to break the broken; to heal the wounded, to comfort the mourners, to raiſe up them that are caſt down; he uſeth not to ſmite the wounded, to grieve the mourners, or to caſt them lower, who are already caſt down. 'Tis the way of God to weaken the ſtrong, and to ſtrengthen thoſe that are weak. *Will he break a leaf?* he will not.

Non eſt conveniens ut aliquis fortiſſimus oſtenderet ſuā potētiā in re debiliſſima. Aquin.

Secondly, *Job* ſpeaks it as a thing unbecoming, and below the great, the mighty God, to contend with the weak.

Hence Obſerve, *It is no honour to the ſtrong to overcome the weak.*

Itane velis te fortē præbere contendo foliū quod vento rapitur? Pin.

Cōtra foliū cui avellendo ſatis eſt tenuiſſimus ſpiritus, inſurgere jubes vehemētiſſimum ventum?

--An gloria magna eſt, Inſidias homini ſuppoſuiſſe Deū? Tibul.

Is it an honour to the eagle to catch a fly, or for a lion to kill a mouſe? Thus *David* beſpeaks *Saul* (1 Sam.24.14.) *After whom is the King of Iſrael come out? after a dead dog or after a flea?* Am I match for thee? Go rather and lead thy army againſt the *Philiſtims*, engage with thy equals, if thou wouldeſt get honour. To ſee a ſtrong man fight with a child, or conquer a woman, is it any honour to the man? The Poet of old ſaid, *Is it a glory to God to lay ſnares for man?* God is ſo much above man, that he cannot honour himſelf in oppoſing man. The ſtrongeſt men, compared with God, are ſo weak, that when he would get himſelf honour in oppoſing them, he uſually gives them more ſtrength, that ſo his ſtrength may be ſomewhat glorified in overcoming them. God ſets the creature on high, that his highneſs may appear in pulling them down. Strength ſubduing the ſtrong, and wiſdom beſooling the wiſe, get a name in the world. Thus he ſaith of *Pharaoh*, *Even for this ſame cauſe have I raiſed thee up, that I might ſhew my power in thee, and that my Name may be declared in all the world,* (Rom. 9. 17.) *Job* gave us a particular of Gods powerful acts, (*chap.* 12.) and he ſhews all along that God acted his power upon men of greateſt power, *He looſeth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle*; *He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty*: he had not to do with underlings; Kings, Princes and Councellours, the combined ſtrength of whole kingdoms and nations, are no match for God, but theſe carry the faireſt appearance of a match, and therefore he delights to deal with them. He ſuffers *Babylon* to arrive at a great height, to be founded upon *ſeven hills*, to be counſelled by *ſeven heads*, to be defended *by ten horns*: Now when *Babylon* ſits upon ſeven hils, and becomes a beaſt having ſeven heads and ten horns, that is, abundance of wiſdom and policy, ſtore of power and outward force, even the civil power of ten kingdoms to back her, here is wiſdom and ſtrength for the wiſe and ſtrong God to glorifie himſelf upon; and therefore when *Babylon* falls, the Name of God is cried up, (*Rev.* 19.1.) *After theſe things* (that is, after the tragical downful of *Babylon*) *I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, ſaying, Alleluia, ſalvation, and honour, and glory, and power unto the Lord our God.* God needs not break a leaf or purſue the ſtubble to ſhew his power, for the talleſt and beſt rooted tree is before him, but as a leaf, and the hardeſt metals but as the dry ſtubble. The viſion in *Daniel* tells us (*chap.* 2. 35.) that, not only the *clay, but the iron, the braſs, the ſilver and the gold* (that is, the mightieſt Monarchs and Monarchies of the earth) *were broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the ſummer threſhing-floors, and the wind carried them away.* And when at any time God breaks thoſe who are (comparatively to other men) but as a leaf driven to and fro, or purſues thoſe who are but as dry ſtubble, he doth it not to get himſelf honour in the acting of his breaking and purſuing power, but of his preſerving and ſaving power; for he preſerves *his* whom he thus breaks, and ſaves *his* whom he thus purſues. Yea, the very reaſon why he breaks them is, that he may preſerve them, and he purſues them upon deſign to ſave them.

I may add further, that God breaks the leaf, not to ſhew his power, as to ſhew what power the leaf hath received from him: The ſtrength of a believer is never more ſeen then when he endures breaking. *God puniſhes the wicked to ſhew his power, but he afflicts the godly to ſhew their power*; That power I mean, which he hath given them, not only to do, but to ſuffer, whether for him or from him. It were indeed no honour for God to try his ſtrength upon us; but it is a great honour for us when God at once gives and tries our ſtrength. To ſee a leaf whole in the very breaking, and flouriſh in the withering, to ſee dry ſtubble endure the flame (and like the buſh in the book of *Exodus*) to burn and not to conſume, this gives witneſs to all the world how ſtrong weak man is by the power of God, *Being ſtrengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs*, Col. 1. 11. As God never indeed breaks the bruſed reed, nor quencheth the ſmoaking flax, ſo he would never aſſay to break the bruſed-reed, but to ſhew that it will not break; nor would he aſſay to quench the ſmoaking flax, but to ſhew that it will not quench or go out, *till he ſend forth judgement unto victory*: as if he had ſaid, the bruſed-reed ſhall not break till it be made ſtrong, and the ſmoaking flax ſhall not be quenched till it be a perfect flame, that is, it ſhall never be broken, it ſhall never be quenched. Judgement brought to victory, is holineſs, or the principle of grace within us, triumphing over all temptations without us, and all corruptions within us, by the power of Jeſus Chriſt.

Again, A leaf or dry ſtubble are the emblems, not only of that ſort of men who are accidentally weak, but of all men in regard of their natural weakneſs. Thus the ſtrongeſt men are but ſtubble: And ſome conceive *Job* ſpeaking here of himſelf, not only as he was a man in affliction, whom the tempeſt of Gods wrath had ſhaken as a leaf, and the heat of troubles had parched into dry ſtubble, but he ſpeaks of himſelf as a man; and what he ſpeaks of himſelf is applycable to mankind. *Man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*, *Pſal.* 39. He is compared indeed ſometimes to a flower in the field, which hath ſap and moiſture, greenneſs and verdure in it, yet he is of ſo ſhort continuance, that even this green flower is but dry ſtubble: He hath a ſpring wherein he buddeth, and a ſummer wherein he is green; but his Autumn and his winter, wherein he fadeth, and his fruit falleth off, come ſo faſt upon him, that we may call his whole life a winter, and all his dayes the fall of the leaf. A godly man in reference to his ſpiritual eſtate, is like unto a tree, *whoſe leaf ſhall not wither*, (*Pſal.* 1. 3.) but in reference to his temporal eſtate, he is like a withering leaf: So the Prophet complains, *Iſa.* 64. 6. *We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.*

Aptiſſima ſimilitudine utitur Jobus ad hominis imbecilitatē notandā. Pin.

. Laſtly Note this, *The Lord is moved to pity, when we mind him of our frailty.*

The intendment of *Job* was not to charge God with ſeverity, but to move him to mercy. Our ſtrongeſt argument to prevail with God, is to ſhew him our weakneſs: To confeſs our natural weakneſs, moves him much; to confeſs our ſpiritual weakneſs, moves him much more. If a Phariſee come and tell him a long ſtory of his righteouſneſs, the Lord abhors it; but if a *poor publican* look upon himſelf as unworthy to look up to heaven, this ſtirs, not only compaſſion, but acceptation; *He went home juſtified rather then the other.* If you would prevail with God, hold forth your ſoars, your ſickneſſes, your diſeaſes, your diſtempers, your nothingneſs; ſay, you are but ſmoaking flax, and bruſed reeds, that you are but leaves driven to and fro, and as the dried ſtubble. There is yet a further ſenſe to be given of theſe words as they ſtand in connection with the following verſe, to which I paſs.

Dū ſe Jobus foliū & ſtipulā appellat, ſibi acceſſum præparat ad divinā miſericordiā quæ eo ſe facilius īnflectit, ubi majorē eſſe videt miſeriā. Sanct. *Non fuit hæc Jobi mens ut quicquā voluit de Dei gloria detrahere, ſed ut cōmemoratione tenuitatis ſuæ & ſūmæ Dei potentiæ illū ad miſericordiam flecteret.* Merl.

VERS. 26, 27, 28.

For thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth.

Thou putteſt my feet alſo in the ſtocks, and lookeſt narrowly unto all my paths; thou ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet.

And he, as a rotten thing conſumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

At the four and twentieth verſe, *Job* was ſadly inquiſitive, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* &c. here he makes as ſad a narrative. *David* (*Pſal.* 66. 16.) invites all that fear God, *Come and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul.* *Job* ſeems to invite attention from all, while he declares what God had done againſt his ſoul, *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me*, &c. The whole relation is carried on in a continued metaphor, alluding to a judiciary proceeding, as if himſelf were a guilty malefactor, and God the Supream Judge, Firſt, Aggravating his faults and pronouncing ſentence upon him, *verſ.* 26. *Thou writeſt bitter things*, &c. Secondly, Executing the ſentence, *verſ.* 27. *Thou putteſt my feet alſo in the ſtocks.* In the cloſe of all, *Job* declares the effect which that ſentence pronounced and executed, wrought upon him, (*verſ.* 28.) *He, as a rotten thing conſumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.

God hath a double book, and both in a figure. He hath a book of his *reſolved decrees*, and a book of his *acted providences*. This latter (the book of his providences) is but a tranſcript or a copy of the former. Thoſe huge Original volumes of love and bleſſings which God hath laid up in his heart for his own people, thoſe alſo of wrath and judgement which he hath laid up there againſt his enemies from all eternity, theſe volumes (I ſay) of love or wrath, are in writing out every day, by the hand and pen of providence, in the ordering of all thoſe affairs which concern both perſons and nations. *Job* is to be underſtood of this latter book, the book of providence, in which God writ bitter things againſt him, though thoſe bitter things compared and laid together, with the comfortable iſſues in the book of Gods decrees, were indeed, if not ſweet and pleaſant, yet very wholeſome and profitable.

Further, This writing of bitter things, is alſo conceived to be an alluſion to Judges, who command the ſentence againſt offenders to be written. That which is written, is not only recorded but eſtabliſhed. *What I have written, I have written*, ſaith *Pilate*; as if he had ſaid, I may ſometime recal a tranſient word, but what I have written, and is under my hand, ſhall ſtand. Any writing hath a firmneſs in it, eſpecially *laws*, which tell men what they muſt doe, and *judgments* which tell them what they muſt receive or ſuffer: So the people of God are ſaid to *execute the judgment that is written* upon the Kings and Princes who oppoſe the kingdom of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 149. 8, 9.) *To bind their Kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written.* That is, written in the decrees of God, and written by the decrees of men. Thus they ſpake in the book of *Daniel.* *Now, O King, eſtabliſh the decree, and ſign the writing that it may not be changed*, Dan. 6. 8. And when the Lord would ſhew *Belſhazzar* the certainty of his approaching ruine (*Dan.* 5. 24.) he preſented to him upon the plaiſter of the wall of his palace, the fingers of a mans hand, which wrote over againſt the candleſtick, and this writing was written, *Mene, Mene, Tekel* &c. A bitter thing was written againſt that Prince in the midſt of his delicious banquetings. *Thou art weighed and found too light, Thy kingdom is divided*, &c. And as in all civil nations, the ſentence of judgment is written; ſo among the Grecians, *to write* was as much as *to accuſe and impeach*: why not alſo among the Jews? *Jobs* wiſh ſeems to imply it (*chap.* 31. 35.) *O that my adverſary had written a book againſt me*, that is, a book of accuſation, which in the civil law is called a *Libell*, and the act of bringing in an accuſation, *Libelling.* It is the way of our law to bring in writings of inditement, or of charge againſt offenders, as well as to write the ſentence or judgment given upon it. Thus (*Jer.* 32. 30.) *Write this man childleſs* (*ſaith the Lord*) *a man that ſhall not proſper in his days.* As if he had ſaid, the decree is gone out againſt him, he ſhall not eſcape.

Scribere forenſe videtur & pertinet ad firmum & irrevocabile judicis decretū. Tranſlatio ducta eſt a regibus ſententiam ſcriptā mandantibus. Chryſ.

Græci dicunt γράφεϑαι δίκην, quum judex reo latā ſententiā perſcribit & γράφειν eſt accuſare. Merc.

Thou writeſt bitter things.] The Laws of *Draco* are ſaid to be *written in blood*: and this Decree of God againſt *Job* was (as he conceived) *written with gall and wormwood. Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.*

I find ſome variety of opinion about theſe bitter things.

And there are divers ingredients to make up theſe pills.

Firſt, Some expound theſe bitter things of ſin; *Thou writeſt or ſetteſt down my ſins.* Thou keepeſt an account of all my weakneſſes and tranſgreſſions. There are two who write our ſins. Firſt, *God books our ſins*; that is, he knows the ſins we commit as exactly, as if they were written down before him in a book. The formality of writing is infinitely below God, but the effect of writing, which is the evidencing of what is done or ſpoken, is alwayes before him. Secondly, *Conſcience books our ſins*; *Job* intends the writing of God, *Thou writeſt bitter things*, which ſome aggravate; as if *Job* did ſecretly tax God with ſeverity; and had ſaid thus: *I know thou keepeſt a book, thou writeſt diaries and annals, the whole hiſtory of my life: but thou ſetteſt down little of my good works, or of what is praiſe-worthy; thou takeſt little notice of any thing that might render me acceptable to thy ſelf, or commend me to the acceptation of others: only my ſins and failings, which are a bitterneſs to me, thoſe thou ſetteſt down, and keepeſt a perfect account of.* But *Job* was far from ſuch reflexions upon God, yet we may give a ſafe ſence of the whole, though we interpret theſe bitter things by ſin: There be two reaſons why ſins are called *bitter things*.

Notas, obſervas, evolvis ea quæ te amaricent & adverſum me exacerbant. Benè facta omittis, ſi quid unquā male egi, diligenter annotas. Mer.

Firſt, Becauſe they provoke God to anger, even to bitter anger, they imbitter the Spirit of God againſt us (*Hoſ.* 12. 14.) Ephraim *provoked him to anger moſt bitterly.*

Secondly, Becauſe ſin procures us evil and bitter things. Sin is bitter in the effects of it, as well as baſe in the nature of it.

Hence Obſerve, *How ſweet ſoever ſin is in the acting, it will be bitterneſs in the end.*

There is a bitterneſs in the beſt of ſin. One of theſe two things do alwayes follow ſin, Repentance or puniſhment. Repentance is the beſt we can expect when we have ſinned; and they who do not repent, ſhall find puniſhment whether they expect it or no. Now, there is a bitterneſs in Repentance; Repentance is no pleaſant portion. Though the Saints have a holy delight in repentance, yet (take it in it ſelf) repentance is no delightful work, and therefore it is often expreſt by breaking the heart, and afflicting the ſoul: The repentance of the *Jews* is ſo deſcribed, (*Zech.* 12.10.) *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for me as one that mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him:* In bitterneſs and in repentance at the ſame time. So that let the beſt come of ſin which can come, that we repent and are humbled for it, and repent ſavingly, yet bitter ſorrows, bitter tears, and bitter mournings are the iſſues of it. I believe *Peter* did not ſin very ſweetly, when he denied his Maſter, but I am ſure after he had done it, *he wept bitterly*, (*Matth.* 26. 75.) But if the ſin be not repented of, then comes the bitterneſs of puniſhment. Poſſibly a ſin we repent of, may receive bitter chaſtenings: God may correct us medicinally, for the ſins over which we have mourned penitently; but if the ſin be not repented of, then he puniſheth for the ſatisfaction of his own righteous juſtice, as well as for the correction of our unrighteouſneſs; and that's a bitter thing indeed. Thus ſin is a bitter thing, as the effects of it are bitter: It is a bitter thing alſo, as the root of it is bitter: So much that caution of *Moſes* to *Iſrael* imports (*Deut.* 29. 18) *Leſt there ſhould be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood.* In the ſoil of mans heart there is ſuch a root: Our natures bear nothing but gall and wormood; ſinful actions ſprout and ſhoot forth from our ſinful corruptions. Yet this place of *Moſes* is to be underſtood, not ſo much of that general corruption which is in our hearts; for if ſo, then he needed not to ſay, *Leſt there ſhould be among you a root which beareth gall and wormwood.* For every man in the world, regenerate or unregenerate, hath ſuch a root in him: But he means it (as the Text hath it) of ſome apoſtatizing or backſliding perſon that ſhould ſolicite others to ſin; ſaying, *Come, let us go, and ſerve other gods*; he meant it of thoſe whoſe hearts were hardened and heightened in ſin, whoſe original corruption was drawn out not only to do wickedly themſelves, but to provoke their brethren unto wickedneſs; theſe he calleth emphatically *a root which beareth gall and wormwood.* For look what a mans own corruption or original ſin is to him, the ſame is another corrupt and ſinful perſon to him; namely, an inticer unto ſin. So the Author to the *Hebrews* expounds *Moſes* (*Heb.* 12. 15.) while he uſeth the ſame phraſe, or rather borrows it of *Moſes*, *Leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled:* That is, leſt ſome ſcandalous perſons not only trouble the peace of the whole Church, but alſo vitiate the purity of ſome particular members of the Church, by the contagion of their evil example: Now, though theſe Scriptures do rather call ſinful perſons, then the ſin in a perſon, a *root of bitterneſs*, yet thoſe perſons are therefore called ſo, becauſe of their ſin; and their ſin is a root, which as it defiles others, ſo it deſtroyes themſelves. When the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaw he was deceived in *Simon Magus*, he ſaith, *Now I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity. In the gall of bitterneſs* (Acts 8. 23.) that is, in a ſtate of ſin and impenitency, which will at laſt bring forth the bitterneſs of puniſhment. In that ſence alſo the Prophet threatens, *Iſa.* 24. 9. *They ſhall not drink wine with a ſong, ſtrong drink ſhall be bitter to them that drink it*; that is, it ſhall be turned into bitterneſs: We have a common ſaying amongſt us, *Sweet meat hath ſowr ſauce*: So here, ſtrong drink, which goes down merrily, ſhall be turned into bitterneſs, they ſhall not drink it with a ſong. Voluptuous men mingle their drink with ſinging; but theſe ſorrowful men ſhould mingle their drink with weeping; this would make it bitter to thoſe that drank it. *Solomon* deſcribing the harlot (*Prov.* 5. 4.) with the contentments which ſhe offers, concludes, *Her end is bitter as wormwood*; that is, the end which ſhe brings others to. That's her end in which ſhe cauſeth others to end, as well as that wherein ſhe ends her ſelf: Her end both wayes is the ſame, *bitter as wormwood.* The Prophet *Jeremy* ſhuts up his admonition (*chap.* 2. 19.) with, *Know therefore and ſee, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God,* &c. Sin is like that book (*Rev.* 10. 9.) *Sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly.* Or, as *Abner* ſaid to *Joab*, (2 *Sam.* 2. 26.) *Shall the ſword devour for ever? Knoweſt thou not that it will be bitterneſs in the latter end?* Yea, we may call every ſin a bitter thing, not only in reference to the future effects of it, but in reference to the preſent taſte of it. Sin is often bitter, not only in the belly, but in the mouth: It is bitterneſs not only in the end, but in the beginning, yea, the very ſweetneſs which is in ſin, promotes the bitterneſs of it: for as in nature, ſweet meats liberally fed upon, breed choler, and beget bitterneſs in the ſtomack; ſo theſe ſweet morſels of ſin, upon which the ſoul feeds, cauſe bitter taſtes, and ſowr humours, diſaffecting both ſoul and body, and troubling the whole man.

Non mirum eſt peccata quæ primum dulcia videntur amaritudines vocari, cum dulcia omnia in amarorem & bilem facile commutentur. Pined.

Secondly, *Bitter things* are the diſpleaſure of God, take it abſtractedly from the puniſhments which uſually are ſent out after it. Thou writeſt *bitter things againſt me*; that is, thou art angry with me. A man of a bitter ſpirit, and an angry man are the ſame. (*Dan.* 8.7.) In the viſion of the He-goat and the Ram, it is ſaid, *That the He-goat came cloſe unto the Ram, and he was moved with choler againſt him*; ſo we tranſlate it: It is the ſame word in the Chaldee, which we have here in the Hebrew: He was moved with bitterneſs; that is, he was very angry. So (*Hab.* 1. 6.) the *Chaldeans* are deſcribed to be *a bitter and an haſty Nation*; that is, an angry Nation. Anger is bitter both to thoſe who are angry, and to thoſe with whom we are angry. Again (*Prov.* 17. 11.) *An evil man ſeeketh only rebellion*; it is this word, *He ſeeketh only bitterneſs*, which we tranſlate *rebellion*; becauſe they who indeed rebel are full of wrath, rage, and bitterneſs. The word is uſed in the ſame ſence upon the ſurpriſe of *David*'s Carriages by the *Amalekites* at *Ziklag*; 'tis ſaid, *The ſoul of all the people was grieved, or bitter* (1 *Sam.* 30. 6.) That grief was properly anger, as we may collect by the effect of it; *for they ſpake of ſtoning him*; ſtoning is an high act of angry revenge. The learned Phyſitians tell us, that bitter things are naturally very hot; anger and diſpleaſure are the heat of a mans ſpirit; *Anger is the boyling of the blood about the heart*, as Philoſophers teach. So that bitterneſs being cauſed by heat, we may well expreſs bitterneſs by anger, which hath ſo much from heat. Hence *curſing* (which is an act of anger) *and bitterneſs* are put together (*Rom.* 3. 14.) as alſo *bitterneſs with wrath.* Eph. 4. 31. Thus here, *Thou writeſt bitter things*, or bitterneſs againſt me, is, thou writeſt thy ſelf angry and diſpleaſed with him. And ſo the words [*againſt me*]

Scribere amaritudines eſt cum ira & indignatione decernere extremi ſupplicii ſententiam. Amaritudo ſæpe ponitur pro iracundia.

Amaritudo pertinet ad conceptam iram, bilioſamque indignantis animi commotionem. Amara pro bilioſis accipiunt medici. Hippocr. *lib* 4. *de Morbis. Amarum efficitur à caloris exceſſu.* Galen. *Amaros vocat genus bilioſorum qui cum difficultate placantur.* Ariſtot. *lib.* 4. *Ethic.*

me] have an accent, a weight in them: As if he had ſaid *Thou ſeemeſt to vary the courſe of thy dealings towards me, both in reference to former times, and in reference to other perſons: thou waſt not wont to be thus bitter againſt me, and towards others, thou art ſweet and gentle*; (Iſa. 54. 7.) *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlaſting kindneſs I will have mercy on thee; that is, the experience which thy people have had of thee, and ſuch have been my experiences: but now thou ſeemeſt to run another courſe, Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.*

Taking bitterneſs for anger, I might Obſerve,

That God ſometimes appears very angry with thoſe whom he entirely loveth.

He ſeems to be all gall, when he is nothing but honey; to burn with wrath, when an everlaſting flame of love is kindled in his breaſt. I have lately inſiſted on this point, therefore I forbear.

Vox amaritudinis accipitur pro mortis ſententia lata. Bold.

Again Obſerve, *The anger of God is very terrible, it is a bitter thing.*

There is no dallying with Divine diſpleaſure.

Thirdly, Others reſtrain theſe *bitter things* to death. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me*; that is, a decree of death. Death is a bitter thing: Bitterneſs and death are joyned in Scripture, (2 *Kings* 4. 40.) *The Prophets ſaid, Death was in the pot*, when they had put wild gourds or bitter herbs into the pot: Wild gourds are very bitter, ſo bitter, that the *Perſians* called them, *The gall of the earth*; death was in the pot when ſuch bitter herbs were there: So *Moſes* ſpeaks (*Deut.* 32. 32.) *Their grapes are grapes of gall, their cluſters are bitter, their wine is the poyſon of Dragons*; that is, their grapes, their cluſters, their wine, all their deſigns and actions are all deadly; deadly to themſelves chiefly; but deadly alſo unto others (*Prov.* 31. 6.) *Give wine unto thoſe that be of heavy hearts*; ſo we read it, give wine unto thoſe that be of bitter hearts: ſo ſaith the Original: And it it is plain from the context, that he means it of perſons ready to dye, or to be put to a violent death. The borders of death are bitter, much more death it ſelf; yea, to ſome the borders or approaches of death are more bitter then death it ſelf. When *Agag* was ſpared by *Saul*, he doubted not of quarter at the hands of *Samuel*, and therefore *comes out delicately* (both in his gate and garb, 1 *Sam.* 15. 32.) and ſaith, *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*; that is, the fear of death is paſt; ſurely if *Saul* a Souldier ſaved me alive in the heat of the battel, *Samuel* a Prophet will not kill me in cold blood. In this ſence *Hezekiah* complains (*Iſa.* 38. 17.) *For peace I had* (*or on my peace came*) *great bitterneſs*; that is, the fear of death, as the next words explain, while he ſaith, *But thou haſt in love to my ſoul delivered it from the pit of corruption. Job* had the ſentence of death in himſelf, and he thought God had written that ſentence too. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.*

Analogia ſumi videtur ex lethalibus quibuſdam venenis, quæ cum ignea & calidiſſima ſunt, amariſſima etiam ſunt. Fel terræ. Pined.

But I conceive [*bitter things*] are here intended in a larger ſence, being put not only for the evil of death, but for all the evils of this life, for whatſoever renders the life of man bitter and grievous. For as bitterneſs among all taſtes is moſt unpleaſant to the palate: ſo alſo are afflictions both to the mind and outward man. The ſeventy agree in this ſence ſo fully, that in ſtead of *bitter things* they tranſlate, *Thou writeſt evil things againſt me.* It is frequent in Scripture to call any afflicting evil a bitter thing. (*Ruth.* 1. 20.) *Naomi* changeth her name to *Marah*, when ſhe was full of trouble: *Call me not* Naomi, *that is beautiful; but call me* Marah, *that is bitter, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me, I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.* She had loſt all, and was in great affliction, therefore ſhe takes a name ſutable to her eſtate, *Call me* Marah. We read of the waters of *Marah*, that is, bitterneſs (*Exod.* 16. 23.) All the waters of affliction may be called *Marah*, only the Lord ſhews his people a tree (as there he did *Moſes*) which being caſt into them makes them ſweet. *Afflictions in themſelves are not joyous but grievous*; Heb. 12. 11. How grievous or bitter afflictions are to the fleſh, hath been heretofore inſiſted on, therefore I paſs it here. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.*

Amaritudo eſt quicquid poteſt vitam reddere moleſtam. Inter ſapores amaritudo eſt inimiciſſima naturæ & palato. Hinc amaritudo dicitur de re quacunque triſti, ſc. amara anima, amarus fletus, amaræ lachrymæ. Pined.

Κατέγραψας κατ' ἐμοῦ κακά. Sept.

Malim æterna intelligi ſupplicia. Merc.

And makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.

*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate to *poſſeſs*, ſignifies alſo to *diſpoſſeſs or diſinherit*, and by conſequent to conſume and deſtroy: ſo ſome tranſlate it: whereas we ſay, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth*; they ſay, *Thou diſpoſſeſſeſt me by the iniquities of my youth*; or as the Vulgar, *Thou doſt conſume me by the ſins of my youth*; thou makeſt me poor and naked, thou ſtrippeſt me of all my comforts by reaſon of the tranſgreſſions of my youth. And ſo thou diſpoſſeſſeſt me, is the ſame with our rendring, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs*

Verbum ירש *Ex iis eſt quæ contraria ſignificant; denotat enim hæreditate aliquem expellere, & per conſequens conſumere, perdere.*

The ſins of my youth.] What are thoſe?

Firſt, Some expound theſe words [**of my youth**] not of *Job's* youth *perſonally* taken, but of his youth *relationally* taken; that is, of his Children. So, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth*, is, thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my *youths*, or *of my young ones*, who ſinned againſt thee; I ſeem now to be puniſhed for them, and to inherit my Childrens tranſgreſſions. So did *Eli*, God reckoned with him for his childrens ſins: Eli *poſſeſt the ſins of his youth*, of his relational youth, of his ſons whom he did not reſtrain (as he had power to do) when they were not only vitious, but ſcandalous. Sin is an inheritance which aſcends as well as deſcends: As many children poſſeſs or are puniſhed for the ſins of *their old age*, that is, of their fathers (they imitating their fathers ſins) ſo many fathers poſſeſs or are puniſhed for the *ſins of their youth*, that is, *of their children*, they having not ſufficiently reproved their Childrens ſins: While Parents neglect their duty to their Children, they feel ſmart for their Children; and the Father of ſpirits layes thoſe rods upon their backs, which their fooliſh indulgence would not ſuffer them to lay upon the backs of the Children of their fleſh. But I paſs this interpretation, as over-reaching the ſcope of this Text, though it contains a general truth.

Quidam exiſtimavit ſuæ adoleſcentiæ peccata vocari ea, quæ à filiis ſuis adoleſcentibus perpetrata fuiſſent. Pined.

Secondly, Others interpret theſe words as a proof of *Job's* eminent and exemplary piety and holineſs, all the time of his elder and more confirmed years: As if God could find little or nothing to charge him with as ſinful, after he came to be a man, and was maſter of himſelf. 'Tis ſaid by the reporter of *Cardinal Bellarmine* in his life and death, that when the Prieſt (according to the Romiſh cuſtom) came to abſolve him, he could not remember any particular ſin to confeſs, till he went back in his thoughts as far as his youth. If it were ſo, I muſt ſay, that how great a Scholar ſoever this *Cardinal* was in *books*, he was but a mean Scholar in *his own heart and life*, in which the beſt Chriſtians ſee ſin enough to confeſs and bewail in their beſt times; yea, the better any one is, the more he ſees his own ſinfulneſs. The oldeſt and ſincereſt of Saints in this life, needs not go a day back, much leſs back to the beginning of his knowing dayes, his youth, to find matter of confeſſion, ſeeing he ſins every day, yea, every hour. Yet thus they report of *Bellarmine* to advance his piety, that, if he had not confeſt the ſins of his youth, he could not tell what to confeſs. In this ſence, the preſent expoſition makes *Job* ſpeak to God, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth*, as if all the other ſections and parts of his life had been unblameable. But this ſavours not the ſpirit of *Job*, who, as he was very confident of the ſincerity of his heart, ſo he was well acquainted with the ſinfulneſs of his nature, and ſaw himſelf not only a ſinner, but much ſin, all his life over.

Quidam ex hoc loco colligunt eximiam viri ſanctiſſimi ſanctitatem, qui in ætate jam confirmata & matura nihil ſibi conſcivit. Sanct.

Thirdly, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth*, is, Thou makeſt me poſſeſs or remember all my ſins: *Job* had the whole courſe and tenour of his life in view. Old age and youth are the two extreams of mans knowing time upon the earth: We can hardly remember what we were, or what we did before the days of our youth; though before that we are evil, and do evil. Man is born in ſin; and he ſins almoſt as ſoon as he is born; but thoſe ſins fall not under our own obſervation. *Auſtin* ſaid of himſelf, I know not the ſins I committed in my infancy, yet I know that then I ſinned; which he proves, becauſe he had obſerved anger and envy in ſucking Children. *Job* goes not back to the ſins of his infancy and childhood, which others might remember, but he goes as far as himſelf could remember, even to the ſins of his youth: Theſe he poſſeſſed, or the thought of theſe poſſeſſed him. *That poſſeſſes a man which his mind runs much upon.* God is therefore ſaid to make him poſſeſs the ſins of his youth, becauſe

Pœna eſt quaſi culpæ prognata & filia, atque adeo ipſe homo grandævus & ſenex ſuccedit ſibiipſi puero & adoleſcenti. Pined.

the dealings of God with him cauſed him to recollect and read over all his ſins, eſpecially the ſins of youth.

Fourthly, *To poſſeſs the ſins of youth*, is, To feel ſorrow or pain for the ſins of our youth. We may be ſaid to poſſeſs the ſins of our youth two wayes: Firſt, When we feel the ſmart of them: Secondly, When we are affected with the filthineſs of them in our riper years. Some old men poſſeſs the ſins of their youth another way, namely, by delight: For as moſt delight in the act of ſin, and not a few are delighted in the hopes of ſin, a ſin to be committed pleaſes them with a promiſe of future pleaſure, *To morrow ſhall be as this day* (ſaid thoſe Epicures, *Iſa.* 5. 6.) *and much more abundant.* They taſted the ſweet of ſin before they came at it. So there are ſome who take delight in the ſins that are paſt: They that are old in ſin can talk merrily of, and contemplate ſweetly upon the ſins and vanities of their youth; and in this they do not only poſſeſs the ſins of their youth, but react the ſins of their youth: For ſo often as a man remembers a ſin which he hath committed with content, he commits it again. Holy *Job* did not poſſeſs the ſins of his youth thus; he reflected upon them to mourn over them, and repent afreſh for them, not to make merry with them, he chewed them over again in his thoughts, not as ſweet morſels, but as gall and wormwood. *Thus he was made to poſſeſs the ſins of his youth.*

Fifthly, *The ſins of youth are poſſeſſed*, When the guilt of them flies in our faces, and our fears that they are not pardoned return upon our ſpirits: In this ſence alſo (poſſibly) God made *Job poſſeſs the ſins of his youth.* He was as much (or more) exerciſed with inward terrour, as with outward trouble; and when God hid his face from him, he ſaw his ſins with open face.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Youth is eaſily overtaken with ſin.*

Young men are leaſt able to foreſee the iſſues, to reſiſt the temptations or keep out of the wayes of ſin. The Prophet deſcribes the childehood of Chriſt, our Emanuel, under the notion of childehood in general, which knows not how *to refuſe the evil and chuſe the good* (Iſa. 7. 15.) *Paul* ſaith of himſelf (1 *Cor.* 13. 11.) *When I was a childe, I ſpake as a childe, I underſtood as a childe, I thought as a childe:* all in him, or done by him, was childiſh, when he was a child. 'Tis but a little better, (ordinarily) and ſometimes it is much worſe, in the next ſtep of mans life, which is *youth.* He that is a youth, thinks as a youth, ſpeaks as a youth, acts as a youth; all in him and done by him is youthful, that is, imperfect and immature, ſubject to miſcarriages and miſtakes. *David* puts and anſwers the queſtion, (*Pſal.* 119. 9.) *Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?* Young men are apt to go foul wayes, or to defile their wayes, and therefore need inſtruction how to cleanſe them. And, *David* prayes in ſpecial that God would pardon the errours which he found in that paragraph of his life, *Pſal.* 25. 7. *Remember not the ſins of my youth.* And beſides the obnoxiouſneſs of youth to ſin in general, *Youth hath its proper ſins.* The Apoſtle writing to *Timothy*, an holy man, yet a young man, exhorts him (2 *Tim.* 2. 22.) *Fly youthful luſts*, look to that; there are luſts which hang upon youth, & dog that ſeaſon of life more then any other, there are certain ſins to which we are peculiarly endangered in each diviſion of our lives: As every calling, every place, every relation hath its ſpecial ſins and temptations, ſo hath every age of life. Old men are paſſionate and covetous, men of middle age are revengeful and malicious, young men are precipitate and voluptuous. The Hebrews call a young man *Nagnar*, which ſprings from a root ſignifying to ſhake off or to be toſſed to and fro, implying that ſuch are unconſtant to their own reſolutions, and apt to ſhake off the graveſt counſels. Hence the Apoſtle cautions not only *Timothy* but *Titus*, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*: as if he had ſaid, thy youth lies open to contempt, becauſe it lies ſo open to ſin: keep to the rule, and thou wilt keep up thy reputation. Be thou watchful over thy ſelf, leſt thou be deſpiſed: For, I conceive, the charge is not ſo much given unto others (though that be a good fence) as unto *Timothy* himſelf. *Paul* puts it cloſe upon him, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*, do thou ſo behave thy ſelf, that none may have ſo much as a colour or pretence to deſpiſe thee. How he might do ſo, his next adviſe directs: *Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, in purity* (1 Tim. 4. 12.) Make it appear that thy wiſdom and underſtanding have outſtript thy years; make it appear that all gravity doth not wait upon the hoary head; make it appear that ſome, even in the bud and bloſſome of nature, are ripe in grace and mature in holineſs; write after this copy, and all will either imitate thee or not condemn thee: Thus aged *Paul* leſſons and cautions his young ſcholar *Timothy*, as knowing the diſadvantages of youth, and the temptations it ſubjects us to.

Furioſus juvenibus animi habitus. Plat. *l.* 2 *de Leg.*

Hence Obſerve, Secondly. *That ſins of youth may prove the ſufferings of old age.*

As young men who are very active and venturous receive bodily bruſes and blows in the heat of youth, which they feel and groan under when they are old; ſo likewiſe the ſins which young men venture upon and make light of, may preſs their ſouls and lie heavy upon their ſpirits in old age. *Job* ſpeaks of ſome wicked old men (chap. 20. 11.) whoſe *bones are full of the ſins of their youth, which ſhall lie down with them in the duſt.* The ſins of ſome old men are young; while their bodies grow weak, their luſts grow ſtrong: ſuch ſhall feel more ſmart of them in old age, then ever they found pleaſure or delight in them in youth: Their bones ſhall be full of them, though their bellies are never full of them. It is a ſad meeting *when young ſins and old bones meet together:* And it is poſſible that even they who have truly repented of the ſins of youth, may yet feel the grief of them in old age: For though ſuch ſhall not be puniſhed for the ſins of youth, yet they are often chaſtened for them, and though God will not remember their ſins againſt them, yet he may give them ſuch mindings of them as will make their hearts to ake, and themſelves cry out, What fruit have we of thoſe youthful vanities, whereof we are now aſhamed, and wherewith we are now pained? *If our youth be not given as firſt-fruits unto God, he uſually gives us (yet in mercy to his) bitter after-fruits.* Give God the poſſeſſion, yea the dominion of thy youth, leaſt thou ſay (as *Job*) he makes me poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.

Seek firſt the kingdom of God, ſeek it firſt in intention in the firſt place, and with the beſt of thy deſires and endeavours: Seek it alſo firſt *in time*, let him have the flower of thy youthful ſervices, leaſt thou taſte the fruit of youthful ſins.

Hence Obſerve, Thirdly. *That a godly man looks often upon preſent ſufferings as the chaſtenings of his former ſin.*

God did not afflict *Job* for his former ſins, for he told ſatan (chap. 2.) *Thou moveſt me againſt him without cauſe*, that is, without any ſuch cauſe as thou haſt pretended and ſuggeſted, I finde no affected unrighteouſneſs in him: yet *Job* ſaith to God, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.* He look't back upon his life and ſaw ſuch failings and corruptions as might call for the rod of this ſharp and ſevere correction. Whatſoever Gods aim is in afflicting, it well becomes the beſt of Saints to have an eye upon their ſins when God hath them under his afflictions. They who are freeſt from the fear of Gods revenging hand for ſin, are readieſt to remember their ſin, when they feel his correcting hand.

Hence Obſerve, Fourthly. *Sins formerly repented of and pardoned, may be preſented to the ſoul as unpardoned.*

Some conceive *Job* under that temptation, while he was under this affliction. The tenour of the covenant of grace is, *I will forgive their iniquities and remember their ſins no more: and when their ſins come to be ſearched for, they ſhall not be found, becauſe I have pardoned them.* God never revoked any of his gracious pardons, nor doth he ever recharge pardoned ſins: yet a godly man may remember his old ſins with new fears that they are not pardoned. As it is one of ſatans devices to fill them with aſſurance of pardon, who are under guilt: ſo to fill thoſe with doubtings that they are not pardoned, who are acquitted from guilt: while it is an eaſie thing with a ſoul to ſin, it is alſo very eaſie for that ſoul to believe the pardon of ſin: But when once Chriſt helps us to diſpoſſeſs our ſouls of the power of ſin; how doth Satan labour to poſſeſs our ſouls with the guilt of it? yea, God himſelf may for a time or for our tryal make us poſſeſs the guilt of it; and leave us to the queſtionings of paſſed pardon. In ſuch a caſe the ſins which have been pardoned are pardoned again, not that the firſt pardon is recalled, but cleared, and faith ſtrengthned that we are pardoned. For though there are no degrees in pardoning grace it ſelf (in ſanctifying grace there are, that doth or ſhould grow every day in us, and we encreaſe in it with the encreaſe of God) yet pardoning grace may have an encreaſe as to the perſon pardoned. All the ſins of a believers youth are pardoned, yet he often wants evidence of their pardon: The grace of God knows no decay, but there are decays in our ſpirits and upon our faith about it, and thoſe ſins whoſe commanding ſtrength is broken, may ſtand up in much condemning ſtrength. *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.*

Laſtly Obſerve, *That in times of affliction believers are apt to have miſgiving thoughts about the pardon of ſin.*

Affliction carries with it a renovation of guilt, though it be no argument of guilt; As puniſhment is the daughter of guilt, ſo affliction is ſomewhat akin to puniſhment. Now becauſe he who is but afflicted often thinks himſelf puniſhed, and he that is puniſhed ought to acknowledge himſelf guilty, hence it comes to paſs that he who is but afflicted thinks himſelf under guilt, he is full of fears that his ſins ſtand ſtill upon his own ſcore, and that God is reckoning with him upon that account. When the womans ſon was dead, ſhe ſaid to the Prophet, *Art thou come unto me to call my ſins to remembrance, and to ſlay my ſon,* (1 Kings 17. 18.) Her ſorrows brought her ſins to remembrance, and then ſhe feared that God contended with her for her ſins. God maketh us to poſſeſs the ſins of our youth, when in old age (as it follows) *he puts our feet in the ſtocks.*

Verſ. 27. **For thou puttest my feet alſo in the ſtocks, and lookeſt narrowly into all my paths, and ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet.**

I ſhall add only a word of this and of the next verſe, becauſe both are but an aggravation of *Jobs* ſufferings, about which he hath ſpoken ſo much before.

Me coërces iſtis malis quaſi ſontē compedibus vinctū. Jun.

For thou putteſt my feet.] As if he had ſaid, *Thou proceedeſt with all ſeverity againſt me as againſt a grand malefactor, thou layeſt me faſt by the heels.* It is uſual to put offenders into priſon or into the ſtocks. Some tranſlate this word by *ſhackles*, ſome by *ſtocks*, ſome by *priſon*: *Job* amplifies his miſery under all theſe notions. His afflictions were to him as a priſon, as ſtocks, as ſhackles. The Church expreſſeth her ſufferings in this metaphorical language, *He hath builded againſt me, and compaſſed me with gall and travel: he hath ſet me in dark places, as they that be dead of old: he hath hedged me about that I cannot get out, he hath made my chain heavy.* *Jeruſalem* was as a priſoner loaded with irons, bound in chains, and encloſed round about with thick and mighty walls. Such was *Jobs* condition, *Thou putteſt my feet in the ſtocks,*

Lam. 3. 5, 6, 7.

Amplificatio eſt arctiſſimæ cuſtodiæ. Pined. *Singulis his malis circūcludens me, tanquā armatis cuſtodibus.* Jun.

And lookeſt narrowly into all my paths.] This good man was not only a priſoner but a cloſe priſoner; His paths were looked narrowly unto, his troubles like armed keepers went with him whitherſoever he went: if at any time he was let out of the ſtocks, a watch was ſet upon him leſt he ſhould eſcape, or rather it was with him as with thoſe priſoners who are narrowly watcht while they are in cloſeſt priſons. When *Peter* was in priſon, the keepers watched at the door, and more then that, *he ſlept between two ſouldiers bound with two chains*, (*Act.* 12. 6.) Thus narrowly was *Peter* looked unto; And thus in alluſion was *Job* looked unto: *Am I a ſea or a whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?* was *Jobs* queſtion in the ſeventh chapter; His aſſertion here, *Thou lookeſt narrowly into all my paths*, ſeems to carry the ſame intendment; thither I refer the Reader for the further clearing of this.

ἐφύλαξας δὲ μου πάντα τὰ ἔργα. Sept.

Yet others give the meaning thus, *Thou obſerveſt all my actions*, and then *paths* are taken metaphorically: ſo the *ſeventy* tranſlate, *Thou takeſt notice of all my works*: Which reading bears a proportion to the proceedings of a Magiſtrate, who having attached an offendour, and laid him faſt, looks and enquires into his life, and examines his particular offence, that ſo a charge or an inditement may be drawn up and brought in againſt him at his tryal. The next clauſe runs in the ſame ſtrain.

And ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet.] Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates from the letter of the Original, *And thou leaveſt thy prints upon the roots of my feet.* The roots of the feet are, ſay ſome, the ſoles, ſay others, the ſteps of the feet. And whereas we tranſlate *the heel*, which is the hinder part of the foot, the word is tranſlated alſo by the forepart of the foot, which is divided into toes, as the root of a tree divides it ſelf; But though there be ſome variety about the particular ſignification of the word, yet the general ſence is, That *Job* proſecutes the allegory of a priſoner.

Radices pedū ſunt vel veſtigia vel plantæ. Coc. *Radices pedum vocat ipſos primores vel extremos pedes, qui in digitos quaſi radicis partes dividūtur.* Jun. *Simpliſſimū puto ſignū tibi facis, i.e. annotas omnia veſtigia mea.* Merc. *Ita me quacunq; incedā ſollicite obſervas, ut ubicunq; pedē poſui, tu quoq; veſtigium figas.* Bez. *Vel ut ſenſus ſit, ſe nervo & cippo adeo conſtringi & premi, ut vibices appareant.* Lav. *Veſtigia iræ tuæ uſq; ad extremos pedis articulos pertingunt, ut quum pes ſontis totus uritur gravitate compedū.* Jun.

Firſt thus, *Thou ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet*, that is, Thou followeſt me as it were at the heels; Thou doſt not only watch my paths, but even telleſt my ſteps, if I do but ſet down my feet, thou printeſt upon the very ſame place, and ſo it falls in with the ſence of the former clauſe.

Or Secondly, He in theſe words complaineth of his ſoreneſs by reaſon of this impriſonment. *Thou ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet*, the ſhackles and the chains which are upon me, leave their marks behind them in my fleſh, my feet, the very ſoles and toes of my feet ſwell with my heavy fetters. *Jobs* condition was like that of the afflicted Jews in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 1. 5.) *The whole head was ſick, and the whole heart was faint, from the ſole of the foot even unto the head, there was no ſoundneſs in him, but wounds and bruiſes.* There was a wound in the very ſoles of his feet, that is, he was all over wounded, or afflicted quite through. As *Paul* ſaid *I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jeſus*, ſo might *Job*, *Paul* had marks or prints of his ſuffering for God, *Job* of his ſufferings under the hand of God.

I will not draw out any particular obſervations from theſe words, ſeeing they all tend (which hath been more then once obſerved already) to ſhew,

Firſt, *That God caſts his outward diſpenſation towards his choiceſt ſervants into forms of greateſt rigour and ſeverity.*

Secondly, *That great afflictions often draw out great complaints from the choiceſt ſervants of God.*

Thirdly, *That the moſt patient man may ſometimes let fall words of impatience under the hand of God.*

Where faith is higheſt it is not alwayes at the ſame height, and where patience hath a perfect work, ſome of its works may be full of imperfection. But I paſs theſe, and ſhall only note two things.

Firſt, The ſeveral ſtairs or ſteps by which *Jobs* ſpirit aſcended to the higheſt ſence of his afflictions. Here is a ſevenfold gradation, in this and the precedent verſes. Firſt, God hid his face. Secondly, He counted him as his enemy. Thirdly, He broke him like a leaf. Fourthly, He writ bitter things againſt him. Fifthly, He made him poſſeſs the ſins of his youth. Sixthly, He puts him into priſon. Seventhly, He watched him, leſt he ſhould eſcape, and followed him ſtep by ſtep. What could be added to theſe ſorrows? might not *Job* ſay with the Church in the *Lamentations*, *Was there ever ſorrow like unto my ſorrow? They that are greateſt in holineſs, may be greateſt in ſufferings.*

Secondly Note, *Job ſtill keeps his eye and heart upon God in all his afflictions.*

THOU hideſt thy face. THOU counteſt me thine enemy. THOU purſueſt me. THOU writeſt bitter things againſt me. THOU makeſt me poſſeſs the ſins of my youth. THOU putteſt me in the ſtocks, THOU ſetteſt a print upon the heels of my feet. He ſees God in all, and fears not to make him the Author of all theſe evils: *We honour God as much in acknowledging him to be the fountain of all the evils we ſuffer, as of the good things we enjoy.*

The twenty eigth verſe is joyned by ſome to the next chapter, as if that whole chapter were but an explication of this verſe, or at leaſt this verſe the preface to that whole chapter.

Verſe 28. **And he as a rotten thing conſumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.**

And he.] Who is that? He changeth the perſon from the firſt to the third; he doth not ſay, *I*, but *He*, though he meaneth himſelf; ſuch ſpeaking is frequent in Scripture, and hath been noted before in this Book.

He as a rotten thing, &c.] As if he had ſaid, I am not able to continue under theſe afflictions, or bear theſe preſſures any longer. I faint, I fail, I decay, I dye. He asked the queſtion what he was (*Chap.* 6. 12.) *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtone? or is my fleſh braſs?* Here he tells us what he and his ſtrength, what he and his fleſh are, *Even as a rotten thing, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

We have here a double ſimilitude, both implying his inſufficiency to ſtand in the hands of God. Firſt, Of a rotten thing. Secondly, Of a garment eaten with moths. I conſume; and how? As a rotten thing. The Hebrew is concrete, I conſume as *rottenneſs*; rottenneſs it ſelf is conſuming; and rottenneſs conſumeth any thing it toucheth. Time will conſume that which is ſound; but that which is already rotten, how quickly doth it conſume? How can that hold out againſt decay, which is a decay? *I conſume as a rotten thing.*

And as a garment that is moth-eaten.] *David* compares man under affliction to a *moth*, as here *Job* to a *moth-eaten garment*. Pſal. 39. 11. *When thou with rebukes doſt chaſten man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth.* Moths have ſo little ſubſtance in them, that they have ſcarce any ſubſiſtence. The leaſt touch cruſheth and moulders them into nothing. A Moth is as weak as weakneſs it ſelf; yet it eats out the ſtrength of the ſtrongeſt garment. A moth-eaten garment is ſcarce a garment: The beauty of it is defaced, and the uſefulneſs of it is departed. Mans beſt garments of honour and riches, are little better then a moth-eaten garment: (*James* 5. 1, 2.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you; your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.* Where the Apoſtle is conceived to invite rich men (from which they think themſelves at greateſt diſtance) to mourn over their miſeries. Firſt, Becauſe they treaſure up riches, of which they make no uſe, but let them corrupt: and becauſe they provide Wardrobes of apparel, which they wear not, but the Moths eat them up. Secondly, Becauſe they lay out their ſtrength and time in gathering a periſhing portion, riches which are corruptible, and garments which are meat for Moths. As if he had ſaid, how vain are you who labour for that which is more then corruptible? Your riches are actually corrupted, and your garments, how careful ſoever you are to perfume and preſerve them, are more then ſubject to Moths; the Moth actually eats them. Now (I ſay) if mans beſt garments are little better then a moth-eaten garment, what is a moth-eaten garment? And then what is that man (ſuch a one *Job* accounted himſelf) *who conſumeth as a garment that is moth-eaten?* Surely the ſpirit of this holy man could not go lower for a compariſon, then the effects of Moths and rottenneſs.

By which ſelf-abaſement he ſeems to argue with God for compaſſion and ſparing mercies: As if he had ſaid, *Could I bear theſe ſorrows any longer, I would not ſo earneſtly beg an end of them: But alas! if they do not end ſpeedily, I muſt: My ſtrength is gone, and I am but rottenneſs: Thou who teareſt me as a Lyon, by open and violent afflictions, doſt alſo eat me as a moth by ſecret and ſilent conſumptions.*

I might here alſo draw out divers Obſervations about the frailty of man: As,

Firſt, *That man is but weakneſs and rottenneſs.*

Secondly, *That man cannot hold out againſt the hand of God.*

Thirdly, *That even ſome of Gods chaſtenings are deſtroyings and conſumings to all the ſtrength and luſtre of the outward.*

Fourthly, *That a Believer in affliction is apt to miſ-judge the iſſues of his own condition.*

But becauſe theſe points have occurred upon other Texts of like ſence with this, therefore I only hint them, and ſhall ſhut up this whole Chapter, with this brief admonition from the concluſion of it. How ſhould we labour to pleaſe God in walking uprightly with him, before whom we cannot ſtand when he is angry with us? How ſhould we labour to live in his favour, by whoſe diſpleaſure we are ſuddenly conſumed? And if the chaſtenings of God conſume thoſe whom he loves, how will his judgments conſume thoſe whom he hates? *When thou, Lord, with rebukes doſt chaſten man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume, Pſal.* 39. 11. How then will his beauty conſume, when God with ſevereſt revenges chaſtens man for iniquity? *Our God is a conſuming fire*, he can conſume us as a rotten thing, and as a garment that is moth-eaten; therefore *let us* (ask and) *have grace, that we may ſerve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*

CHAP. XIV. Verſ. 1, 2.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down: He fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth not.

IN the laſt verſe of the former Chapter (which ſome connect with this) *Job* ſhewed how poor and pitiful, how weak and miſerable a thing man is under the afflicting hand of God, and he did it under the ſhadow of a two-fold ſimilitude. Firſt, *Of a rotten thing.* Secondly, *Of a garment which is moth-eaten.*

He proſecutes the ſame Argument in the firſt and ſecond verſes of this Chapter; From all, drawing down this expoſtulatory concluſion, *verſ.* 3. *And doſt thou open thine eyes upon ſuch an one?* &c.

Verſe 1. **Man that is born of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble.**

Job doth not ſay, *I who am born of a woman, am of few dayes*; but *Man that is born*, &c. He ſpeaks in the third perſon, rather then in the firſt, for two reaſons, as I conceive.

Firſt, To ſhew that thoſe miſeries which were fallen upon him might fall upon others; *No temptation had taken hold of him, but ſuch as was common to man.*

Secondly, He ſpeaks thus, the more to abaſe himſelf. The third perſon put for the firſt implyes contempt. He thinks himſelf ſcarce worth the naming, who doth not ſpeak of himſelf in his own name. *Man that is born of a woman*, &c.

Tertiæ perſonæ pro prima uſurpatio contemptum denotat. Bold.

Man is here deſcribed two wayes: Firſt, In his original or procreating cauſe, *Woman.* Secondly, In his ſtate or condition, and that from a double adjunct: Firſt, Of time, *He is of few dayes*: Secondly, Of affliction, *Full of troubles*: Both further illuſtrated by two ſimilitudes: Firſt, *Of a flower*: Secondly, *Of a ſhadow*: Of all which this is the ſum or the reſult, *He continueth not*, verſ. 2.

Man that is born of a woman.] That is, Every man, or (as we ſay) every mothers child. Mr. *Broughton* adds an Epithete borrowed from the ſignification of the Hebrew word *Adam, Earthly man born of a woman.* The firſt woman was (in a ſence) born of a man; but ſince all men are born of a woman: And as the firſt man received his proper name *Adam* (which is now become an Appellative or common to all men) from the matter out of which he was formed, earth, or red earth, *Gen.* 2. 7. So the firſt woman received her proper name (which is now become an Appellative or common to all women) from the matter out of which ſhe was formed, the fleſh and bone of man, *Gen.* 2. 23. *And* Adam *ſaid, this is now bone of my bone, and fleſh of my fleſh, ſhe ſhall be called woman, becauſe ſhe was taken out of man.* And as in our language the woman hath but a ſyllable more in her name then the man, ſo alſo in the Hebrew, there it is, *Iſh, Iſhah,* with us, *Man, Woman.* The Rabbins have an obſervation, that in the words *Iſh* and *Iſhah*, the letters of the Name of God *Jah* are contained, which is (ſay they) an Argument or token of the gracious preſence of God with Husband and Wife, while they walk in that relation according to the will of God; but if they depart from that, God departs from them, and taking the letters of his own Name from their names, there remains nothing but *fire* (ſo the words denuded of Gods Name ſignifie) between them both.

Mulier dicitur virago quia de viro ſumpta.

In איש *&* אשה *Continetur nomen Dei.* יה *Quod eſt ſymbolum gratioſæ Dei præſentiæ ſi maritus & uxor juxta Dei præcepta vivant, ſi ab eis decedant & Deum recedere ab ipſis, ut utriuſque nomen excluſo* יה *maneat* אש *ignis* Buxt.

But to the Text. Man is here ſpoken of as born of a woman, rather then as begotten by man, and that (poſſibly) for theſe three Reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe the formation and production of man is from the woman, in her the body of man is framed by the mighty power of God, and all the pieces of it put together; and in her man receives his life and quickening. Hence it was that *Adam*, who at firſt called his Wife *Woman, becauſe ſhe was taken out of man*, calls her afterwards *Eve, becauſe ſhe was the mother of all living*, (Gen. 3.20.) And upon this ground ſome Nations have made a Law, that all deſcents ſhou'd be reckoned by the Mother, becauſe the Mother gives the greateſt contribution towards the birth and bringing forth of man.

Secondly, He ſpeaks of man as born of a woman, thereby leading us to the original of mans ſin. The woman was Satans inſtrument to enſnare the man: Sin began at the woman, though it was finiſhed by the man. *Adam* charged his ſin upon the woman ſinfully, to excuſe his ſin, *The woman whom thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat,* Gen. 3. 12. *Paul* charged the ſin of man upon the woman holily, to humble woman for that ſin, 1 *Tim.* 2. 14. Adam *was not deceived* (that is, he was not firſt deceived) *but the woman being deceived, was in the tranſgreſſion.* While we remember, that we were born of a woman, by whom ſin came into the world, we cannot but remember and be convinced, that we came ſinners into the world.

Apud Lycios ſi quis percontetur, qua familia ortus? &c. *A matribus genus ſuum repetere ſolebant, quod plurima ſubſtantia qua conſtamus materna ſit.* Plut. *de Clar. Mulier. cap.* 9.

Thirdly, He ſpeaks of man born of a woman, to mind man of his weakneſs. Sin and weakneſs enter'd man at the ſame time; and the woman is not only a weak veſſel, becauſe of her tranſgreſſion; but the weaker veſſel, becauſe of her conſtitution (1 *Pet.* 3. 7.) Man being born of a woman, the weaker veſſel, muſt needs be a veſſel of weakneſs. The Apoſtle ſaith, *God ſent forth his Son made of a woman* (Gal. 4. 4.) Which imports, not only the myſtery of Chriſts birth, that he mas made of a woman (a pure Virgin) without the help of man; but alſo, the frailty of Chriſt in his birth, that he was born, into the world paſſible, mortal, and infirm, becauſe born of a woman. Hence when men act weakly, or below men, they are in Scripture called, or compared to women (*Jer.* 51. 30.) *The mighty men of* Babylon *have forborn to fight, they became as women*; that is, weak and puſillanimous. So the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes the degenerate Governours of *Judah* (Chap. 3. 12.) *As for my people* (*ſaith the Lord*) *women rule over them*; that is, men rule over them, whoſe ſpirits are effeminate, and whoſe courage riſes no higher then that of women. Some of the ſuperſtitious Heathen, to advance the ſtrength and abilities of their *Goddeſs Wiſdom*, fancied, that ſhe was born of a Father, without a Mother, And here I conceive the principal intendment of *Job*, in leaving out the mention of man, and aſcribing the whole production of man to the woman, was to imply, or rather to prove how weak and frail a piece of fleſh man is by nature.

Hanc de patre ferunt ſine matris fœdere natam. Martianus in Palla. Hym.

Hence Obſerve, *The original or birth of man ſpeaks the frailty of man.*

As that which is impure cannot ſend out that which is clean; ſo neither can that which is weak produce that which is ſtrong. As man breeds that in him which will conſume him; ſo he is bred of that which ſhews he muſt conſume. If it be asked how a garment frets when it is not worn, or how timber waſts when it is not uſed? We anſwer, the garment breeds a moth which frets it; and the timber a worm which eats it out. If it be alſo asked, How man decayes when no outward violence appears againſt him? We may anſwer, he breeds his own decay; himſelf gives life to a worm in his root, which ſmites his flouriſhing gourd to death: Thus man breeds his own conſumption. But beſides this, he is bred of that which doth conſume, *Man is born of a woman.* And, as God decreed, for the puniſhment of her ſin, *That the woman ſhould bring forth in ſorrow* (Gen. 3. 16.) ſo the woman brings forth a ſorrowful man, Can we expect any thing but ſorrowful from ſorrowful? From frail but frail? Or from her who is of few dayes, and full of trouble, any thing but him who is ſuch himſelf? So it follows in *Job*'s deſcription of man, where having given us the cauſe, he proceeds to the effects. *Man that is born of a woman.* Woman is the procreating cauſe of man, and from her man derives a double effect. Firſt, *He is of few dayes.* Secondly, *He is full of troubles.*

Is of few dayes.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *ſhort*, or *cut ſhort of dayes.* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Short of life.* So the Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 89. 45.) *The dayes of his youth haſt thou ſhortened,* or *cut off.* 'Tis ſaid of *Abraham* (Gen. 25. 8.) that he *died in a good old age, an old man, and full.* The Hebrew goes no further, *He died full.* Full of what? Our Tranſlators, to fill up the ſence, add by way of explication, *Full of years.* *Abraham* had his belly full of living before he died, he had not an hungry deſire after a day more in this life: He was both hungry and athirſt for eternal life. He died *full of years:* but though *Abraham* was full of years, yet his life came alſo into *Job*'s reckoning. *Few of dayes.*

קצר ימים *brevis curtusve dierum.*

The dayes of man are few, or ſhort: Firſt, Conſidered in themſelves (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) *Behold thou haſt made my dayes as an hand-breadth.* That is not long, which is no longer then the breadth of an hand. The breadth of the hand is taken two wayes: Firſt, In the largeſt extent, for a ſpan, or the whole ſpace between the top of the thumb, and the little finger ſtretched out. Secondly, In the leſſer extent, for the breadth only of four fingers, which is the meaſure (as Interpreters conceive) which *David* takes of the dayes of man.

Secondly, The fewneſs or ſhortneſs of mans dayes, may be conſidered comparatively, and that two wayes. Firſt, As man may be compared with man. Secondly, As man is compared with God.

We may collect the fewneſs of mans dayes now, by comparing him with man, under a twofold conſideration. Firſt, Of what number the dayes of man once were. Secondly, Of what number they ſhall be.

Firſt, The dayes of man are few now compared, firſt, with what his dayes were before the *flood*; then many men lived, ſix, ſeven, eight, nine hundred, and ſome almoſt a thouſand years, as *Moſes* hath reported the genealogy, age and death of the Patriarchs from *Adam* unto *Noah* (Gen. 5.) Now, if any man attain fourſcore, or a hundred years, he is wondrous old; and if any reach one hundred and forty or fifty, (as lately one of our Countrey men did) he is ſuch a rarity, that he draws more eyes to behold his wrinckled withered face, then any can with their moſt youthful beauty. I read of one, who had been an *Eſquire for the Body to* Charles *the Great, Emperour of* Germany, who is called in Hiſtory *John of Time*; becauſe he lived three hundred ſixty and one years. Yet three hundred ſixty one, is but a few to eight or nine hundred years: And beſides, the life of that Age is not to be caſt up by what years one man lived; but by what was the ordinary number of mans years in that age.

Johannes *de Tempore* Caroli M. *Armiger, obiit annos* 361. *natus.* Faſcic. Temp.

But as mans dayes are few, compared with what he lived before the flood; ſo they are fewer compared, ſecondly, with the dayes which man might have lived if he had not fallen. The ſtate of innocency had in it a kind of immortality; it was not impoſſible for *Adam* to die before he fell; but it was poſſible for him not dye; this is now changed into a certainty, that we ſhall dye, according to that Law of Heaven (*Heb.* 9.27.) *It is appointed unto all men once to dye.* Now the dayes of man are truly called few, or cut ſhort, becauſe it is determined they ſhall end, and that ſhortly: And though the determined end of theſe dayes is uncertain to us; yet their end is certainly determined.

Now if the dayes of man are few, compared with what they once were, or might have been upon the earth; how few are they in compariſon of what they ſhall be when he ſhall be raiſed out of the earth? Then the dayes of mans life, whether in Heaven or Hell, in happineſs or in miſery, ſhall be as many as the dayes; or rather as long as the day of eternity.

Again, As the dayes of man are few, compared with what he once had and ſhall have; ſo they are feweſt of all, compared with the dayes of God; ſo few, that as his dayes cannot be counted becauſe they are ſo many; ſo ours can hardly be counted becauſe they are ſo few. *David,* who found out a dimenſion (a hand-breadth) for the dayes of man, conſidered abſolutely, or in themſelves, could find out no dimenſion little enough for the dayes of man compared with God (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) *Mine age* (and his age may be the meaſure of every mans age, *Mine age,* ſaith he) *is as nothing before him.* All time is as nothing, compared with eternity; what a nothing then is the age of one man to eternity, which is ſcarce any thing to all time? Some things created and finite are ſo great above others, that they are nothing to them: What is the Ant to the Elephant, oa the Shrimp to the Whale? What is the whole body of the Earth, to the body of the Heavens? Naturaliſts ſay, 'tis but a point. Now if one creature be ſo far exceeded by another creature, that it is ſcarce diſcernable; how indiſcernable are all creatures to the Creator, finite to Infinite? As one part of the earth is but a point to the whole, and the whole earth but a point to the Heavens; ſo one part of time is but a moment to all time; and all time is but a moment to eternity; eſpecially to the eternity of God: which is not only as ſome creatures (by his diſpenſation) ſhall have, *an eternity forwards*; but alſo as no creature is in a capability, or poſſibility to have, *an eternity backwards*; and yet in ſtrict ſence, there is neither *forwards nor backwards*; neither paſt nor to come in Gods eternity; *His Being conſiſts in one eternal Now, or I am; and hath nothing to do with, I was, or I ſhall be:* And therefore the age of man is nothing before him; for mans age, though it be as nothing, undivided, is yet divided, *into paſt, preſent, and to come. Three nothings, which being added together, amount in the total ſum to this nothing of the age and dayes of man.* (as *David* ſpeaks) *before God.*

Hence Obſerve, *Sin is the ſhortener of mans dayes.*

Job leads us to this Obſervation, while he ſaith, *Man that is born of a woman is of few dayes.* Man born of a woman is ſinful man. This truth is ſo general, that it never received an exception in any one man born, after the ordinary way, of a woman. Chriſt was born of a woman; but he was conceived miraculouſly by the holy Ghoſt. Man might have been born of a woman, and yet have been of many dayes, if he had not been born in ſin. 'Tis the birth of ſin in man which is the ſeed of death: And as ſin makes the dayes of all men few in nature; ſo the ſins of ſome men makes theirs fewer then the dayes of nature. For, as though the dayes of a good man at the moſt are but few; yet becauſe of ſome ſpecial goodneſs they are often prolonged: So, though the dayes of a wicked man at the moſt are but few; yet, becauſe of ſome ſpecial wickedneſs they are often ſhortened. *Solomon* gives us both parts of this aſſertion in one verſe (*Prov.* 10. 27.) *The fear of the Lord prolongeth* (or *addeth to*) *dayes, but the years of the wicked ſhall be ſhortened.* And as *Solomon* tells us poſitively, they ſhall be ſhortened, ſo *David* tells negatively, how much they ſhall be ſhortened (*Pſal.* 55.23.) *Bloody and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their dayes:* Poſſibly they ſhall not live out a quarter of their dayes; but he is peremptory that they *ſhall not live out half their dayes.* Thus, as every man, becauſe he is a ſinner, ſhall live but a few dayes; ſo ſome ſhall not live half thoſe few dayes, becauſe they are notorious ſinners. All men are of few dayes; ſome men are of fewer then a few. The ſin of nature ſhortens all mens lives into a few dayes, and ſins of practice ſhorten ſome mens lives into fewer then a few.

From *Job*'s ſolemn Doctrine of mans ſhort life, or few dayes, we may draw out many leſſons of very ſerious admonition.

Firſt, Seeing our dayes are few, let us live all our dayes: Some loſe many out of a few, and live not one of their few dayes. 'Tis poſſible to have a being (according to the account of man) many dayes, and to have lived none of them; or not to have lived at all. *We live no more of our time then we ſpend well.* A Heathen ſaid, *He lived no day without a line*; that is, he did ſomewhat remarkable every day. What a ſhame is it that a Chriſtian ſhould live a day without a line; do nothing in it worth the doing!

Secondly, Be perſwaded that your dayes are few. It is eaſie to ſay our dayes are few; but it is hard to believe it: Every Age hopes to ſee the next Age. The child hopes to be a youth, and the youth to be a man; the man hopes to be an old man; and he that is an old man, hath hopes to be very old; he that is very old hopes to live more then a few dayes yet; or that yet he ſhall not dye theſe many dayes. And becauſe every Age hath hopes to live that which is to come, it doth not live that which is preſent. We ſhould do more work, but that we hope for more dayes.

Thirdly, Seeing the time of this life is ſhort, and haſtens out of our hands, let us make haſte to lay hold upon eternal life. Our dayes here are few, ſuch as a Child may count; but dayes innumerable, ſuch as no man can count, or depend upon them. All our dayes are but few; and every man living hath lived a few dayes already; poſſibly thy few dayes paſt are all that thou ſhalt paſs. Say not of repentance, I will repent to morrow: Say not to Chriſt when he is tendered thee to day, come again to morrow. *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow* (ſaith *Solomon,* Prov. 27. 1.) *for thou knoweſt not what a day* (even the day thou now haſt) *may bring forth.* Poſſibly this day may bring forth thy death (for the dayes of man are few) and then how ſhall to morrow bring forth thy repentance, or make thee another offer of a *This-dayes refuſed Chriſt?* Wilt thou boaſt of the births of to morrow, when as thou knoweſt not whether a morrow ſhall be brought forth to thee? *Man* (whoſoever thou art) *waſt thou not born of a woman?* If ſo, *thy dayes are few,* thy buſineſſes are many, and there is one thing neceſſary. We ſay of ſome men, that they do much in a little time: And truly how much ſoever any man hath to do, he hath but a little time to do it in. *Few dayes* ſure are but a little time; and all the time we have is but a few dayes. Beſides, Theſe few dayes are all the working-dayes that ever we ſhall have: Let this be a ſpur to diligence and to duty. Hear and obey the counſel of the Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 9. 10.) *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.* In Heaven there is nothing but reſt; and in Hell, though there be no reſt, yet there is no labour. In Hell there is nothing but wages; and in Heaven there is nothing but reward; our whole work lyes in the few dayes which are on this ſide both.

Ab hoc momento pendet eternitas.

Fourthly, See in this truth, what falſe concluſions worldly men make unto themſelves, when with him in the twelfth of *Luke, ver.* 19, 20. they ſay to their ſouls, *Souls, ye have good laid up for many years, take your eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* How vainly do men reckon upon *many years* yet to come; when as their whole time paſt, preſent, and to come, can make up but a *few dayes*! The Apoſtle *James* rebukes thoſe upon this ground, who forelaid their buſineſs but *one year*; How much more are they rebukeable who forelay their pleaſures for *many years?* Chap. 4. 13, 14. *Go to now, ye that ſay to day, or to morrow, we will go into ſuch a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what ſhall be on the morrow: For what is your life? Is it not even a vapour, that appeareth for a litte time,* (that's at moſt but a few dayes) *and then vaniſheth away?* So *Paul* pleads down a worldly ſpirit, (1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30.) *I ſay brethren, the* *time is ſhort; it remaineth, that they who have wives be as if they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoyce, a though they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as though they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this world, as not abuſing it.* We ſhould ſhorten our joyes and our ſorrows; we ſhould take up or draw in our affections about worldly things, becauſe our time in the world is ſhort; and our dayes are continually drawing off from the world.

Fifthly, This ſhould check our envy at the proſperity of wicked men. Their day (of account) is coming, and their dayes (of receit) are going (*Pſal.* 73. 18, 19.) *How are they brought to deſolation in a moment, as a dream when one awaketh? ſo, O Lord, when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their image.*

Sixthly, Let the righteous be patient in affliction; all their dayes are but few; and therefore their dayes of ſorrow cannot be many. *Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry.*

Laſtly, Truſt not in man; yea, *ceaſe from man whoſe breath is in his noſtrils,* and whoſe dayes (becauſe they are few) muſt ſhortly ceaſe. Place not the hopes of your life in him, who cannot (with warrant) hope for a long life, much leſs aſſure you of any comfort of your life: ſeeing as his own life is empty of dayes; ſo it is, as it follows in this Text.

Full of trouble.

Few dayes and many troubles make up the character of man. We uſe to ſay, *Short and ſweet*; but here it is, *Short and ſowre*; *yea, ſhort and bitter.* As ſome ſpeak much in a little; much matter in a little diſcourſe; many matters in a few words: And as ſome do much with a little; much good with a little talent: So all men ſuffer much in a little; much trouble in a little time; many ſorrows in a few dayes.

שבע *repletus, ſatur, ad ventriculum & appetentiam refertur.*

רגז *eſt conturbari, inquietari aliquo vehementi doloris effectu.* *Satur Tremore.* Regia. *Plenus iracundia.* Pag.

Full of trouble.] The word which we tranſlate *Full*, alludes to the filling of the ſtomach, and the ſatisfying of the appetite with meat. *Trouble is hard fare, but there is plenty of it.* Man uſually hath his fill, and never knows the want of trouble. Ever ſince man brought forth ſin, the earth brought forth trouble. Sin is the ſeed of trouble; and trouble is all the harveſt we reap by ſin.

The word which we render, *trouble*, contains in it more ſorts of trouble then one. It notes, not only all kind of outward trouble, but inward trouble; vexing trouble, ſuch as diſturbs and unquiets the whole man. Some render it by trembling; ſo the word is uſed *Hab.* 3. 16. *My belly trembled* (or *my bowels were moved*) *rottenneſs entred into my bones.* Holy men are full of trembling at the holineſs of God; and ſinful men have reaſon to be full of trembling at their own ſinfulneſs. The body trembles when the viſions of impendent evil paſs before, or are repreſented to the mind. Others render it by anger, wrathfulneſs, rage. *Man is full of anger:* And that in a twofold conſtruction; Firſt, Paſſively, he feels the anger both of God and man; the ſad effects of mans rage and of Gods diſpleaſure. Secondly, Actively, man is full of his own anger; full of anger. Firſt, Againſt his fellow-brethren. Secondly, Againſt God. Thirdly, At the diſpenſations of God; when God ſends him trouble, he is angry. When God ſends others proſperity, if it like not him, he is angry. Anger makes the proſperity of others our trouble; and our own troubles would be little trouble to us if we were not angry with our troubles. Trouble and anger are well expreſſed by the ſame word, ſeeing moſt of our troubles proceed from the anger of God, and are all increaſed by our own anger.

For the clearing of *Job*'s Propoſition, or Obſervation, That man is full of troubles, I ſhall preſent the Reader with a particular of the troubles of man.

The troubles of man are either inward or outward.

Inward troubles proceed from a threefold cauſe. Firſt, From the terrors wherewith God firſt exerciſeth the ſpirits of his own people. *Job* was full of theſe troubles, as we have opened before; and ſo was *Heman*, *Pſal.* 88. 15. Secondly, There are terrors wherewith God vexeth the ſpirits of wicked men; *Cain*, *Saul*, and *Judas* were full of theſe troubles; and the Prophet pronounceth of wicked men in general, that they are like the *troubled ſea when it cannot reſt*, Iſa. 57. 20.

Secondly, Inward troubles ariſe from the temptations of Satan; we hear many poor ſouls complaining of theſe: As that wicked ſpirit goes about ſeeking reſt, and finding none; ſo he would not ſuffer any man to reſt. Satan is a troubled ſpirit; and he is a troubling ſpirit.

Thirdly, Inward troubles ariſe from the luſts and corruptions of our own hearts. *Paul* who triumphed and rejoyced over all outward troubles, cryes out, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. Who is there that hath any ſpiritual life, who groans not under the body of this death? One bemoans and weeps over unbelief; another over pride; a third over paſſions and baſe fears; a fourth over deadneſs of ſpirit, and hardneſs of heart. Theſe fill the Saints with trouble while they keep them in; much more when they prevail and break out. And as Believers are full of trouble becauſe of their own corruption; ſo alſo by reaſon of the corruptions of others. Their hearts bleed at the prophaneſs, and their eyes weep at the pride of other men.

Theſe inward troubles are enough to fill us; but as *Ezekiel*'s Roll was full of woes, ſo our lives are full of troubles, both within and without.

Outward troubles are of two ſorts.

Firſt, Ordinary, or thoſe which come daily upon us, the labours and buſineſſes of our callings. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of and to thoſe that marry, ſaith *Such ſhall have trouble in the fleſh*, 1 Cor. 7. 28. Fleſh and troubles are married together, whether we marry or no; but they that are married, marry with, and match into new troubles. All our relations have their burdens as well as their comforts.

Secondly, Extraordinary troubles; and theſe are of three ſorts. Firſt, Publick, in the common calamities which fall; Firſt, Upon the Kingdoms: Secondly, Upon the Churches wherein we live. Secondly, Private troubles, which are thoſe which befal our dwellings and Families. Thirdly, Perſonal troubles, which fall upon our own ſelves. To theſe three kinds all our outward troubles are reducible; but the particulars of them are almoſt innumerable. What *Paul* ſaith of his perils (*2 Cor.* 11.26.) we may ſay of our troubles, we are in troubles by waters; in troubles by Robbers; in troubles by our own Countreymen; in troubles by the Heathen; in troubles in the City; in troubles in the Wilderneſs; in troubles in the Sea; in troubles among falſe Brethren. We are in wearineſs and painfulneſs, in hunger and thirſt, in cold and nakedneſs; of all theſe troubles we may ſay as he (*ver.* 28.) *They are without.*

Again, we have troubles in getting, troubles in keeping, and troubles in loſing the things of this life. We have trouble in doing our duties; troubles for doing our duties; and troubles worſt of all for not doing our duties; or for doing that which is not our duties: As ſome have troubles of Conſcience; ſo not a few have troubles for Conſcience.

Laſtly, Beſides all theſe troubles, whether of action or paſſion, we are alſo, or ought to be, (we ſeldom want occaſion to be) full of the troubles of compaſſion at the troubles of others, though we our ſelves be free from trouble. Thus *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf (*2 Cor.* 11. 29.) *Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?* And thus *Paul* charges us, *Weep with them that weep* (Rom. 12. 15.) *Remember thoſe that be in bonds, as bound with them; and them which ſuffer adverſity, as being your ſelves alſo in the body* (Heb. 13. 3.) Sympathy is a Chriſtian duty. Chriſt himſelf (our Head) is afflicted in all our afflictions; we alſo ſhould be afflicted in the afflictions of one another, as fellow-members. He that hath no croſs of his own, muſt take up and bear his brothers: And he that hath many of his own, muſt bear a part of all his brethrens croſſes. Now, what between the troubles which we feel, and the troubles whereof we have a fellow-feeling, we muſt needs be full of troubles; few of dayes and full of troubles. The report which old *Jacob* made before *Pharaoh* of his life (*Gen.* 47. 9.) may be the report of all our lives, when we have lived moſt, and lived beſt; *Few and evil have the dayes of the years of our lives been:* yea, though we ſhould have attained (which *Jacob* ſaid he had not) *to the dayes of the years of the life of our fathers in the dayes of their pilgrimage.*

What hath man (as *Solomon* concludes by way of queſtion concerning man in a natural conſideration) *of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the Sun?* What hath man of all his labours (much more of all his ſufferings) but trouble? *For all his dayes are ſorrows, and his travel grief,* Eccleſ. 2. 22, 23.

From all obſerve two things.

Firſt, Obſerve the difference of the life of Saints on earth, and their life in heaven: Here it is few of dayes, and full of troubles; there it will be full of dayes, and full of comforts: *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.*

Secondly, Obſerve in this conjunction of few dayes and full of troubles in the life of man, the goodneſs of God to man. Few dayes are (in themſelves) an affliction; fulneſs of trouble is (to us) a great affliction, but many dayes and full of trouble, had been a greater affliction. How ſad would our condition be if perpetuity and miſery, a multitude of dayes and a multitude of troubles had met together in our lives? The curſe of hell is eternity and miſery, a life without end, and troubles without end. 'Tis a mercy, when that which is ſharp is but ſhort, when that whoſe very beginning grieves us, ends quickly. Chriſt having foretold the deſtruction of the Temple at *Jeruſalem,* and the great tribulation which ſhould accompany it, even ſuch as was not ſince the beginning of the world, no, nor ever ſhall be, concludes (*Mat.* 24. 22.) *And except thoſe dayes ſhould be ſhortned, there ſhould no fleſh be ſaved; but for the Elects ſake thoſe dayes ſhall be ſhortned.* God did not make the dayes of thoſe troubles ſhorter then himſelf had decreed, but ſhorter then the enemy had determined, or then any wiſe man, who judgeth only by the rules of humane policy, could have expected. The troubles of thoſe dayes ſeemed to be very long-viſag'd, but God ſhortned the dayes, that the trouble of his people might be ſhortned, and that ſome *fleſh,* that is, ſome men, and thoſe men ſome of the Jews (for there is a double Synecdoche in the word *fleſh*) *might be ſaved:* that is, with a temporal ſalvation, from the Roman Sword and devouring calamities which attended that terrible War. Now as it is a mercy when God ſhortens the dayes of ſpecial trouble, into which any ſort or nation of men fall; ſo it is a mercy that God hath ſhortned and leſſened the dayes of mankind, conſidering the general trouble into which we are fallen. Let it not be a trouble to us that our dayes are few, ſeeing if our dayes were more our troubles would be more, and our ſorrows would encreaſe as the number of our years encreaſed. He that is diſpleaſed becauſe his dayes are few, is alſo diſpleaſed becauſe his troubles are ſo few. We have little reaſon to be in love with this life becauſe our dayes are few, and leſs becauſe our troubles are many. But we have much reaſon to love God, who when we had procured to our ſelves many troubles while we live, hath contracted and epitomiz'd our lives into a few dayes.

Job having aſſerted the ſhortneſs and troubleſomeneſs of mans life in a direct propoſition, proceeds to illuſtrate both by a double ſimilitude. Firſt, *Of a flower.* Secondly, *Of a ſhadow,* in the ſecond verſe.

Verſ. 2. **He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth not.**

Man is like a flower and a ſhadow, he is but the ſhadow of a flower, or the flower of a ſhadow.

He cometh forth like a flower.] Some reſtrain this ſimilitude to thoſe who die in childhood or in youth: ſuch indeed are blaſted in their bloſſom, and cropt in their flower. But as one part of mans life compared with another, may be called the flower of his life, ſo his whole life laid together may be called a flower, and that's the meaning of this place. As man in his beſt eſtate, and in all eſtates is altogether vanity, ſo man in his beſt dayes, and in all his dayes is but a flower.

And whereas there are many rarities and excellencies in a flower, three eſpecially. Firſt, Odour or ſweetneſs, affecting the ſmell. Secondly, Beauty and variety of colour, affecting the eye. Thirdly, Softneſs and ſmoothneſs, affecting the Touch: whereas (I ſay) there are theſe three rarities in a flower, *Job* paſſeth them all by, and ſpeaks of it not as flouriſhing but withering, not in its ſpringing up but in its cutting down, or of its ſpringing only in relation to cutting down. *He cometh forth like a flower.*

And is cut down.] Death is the ſithe which cuts down theſe flowers, either firſt, Natural death. Firſt, By ſickneſs. 2. By age: or ſecondly, Violent death, which is, firſt, Caſual, when a man is ſlain by accident. Secondly, Cruel, when a man is ſlain by murderers. Thirdly, Legal, when a man is ſlain by the Magiſtrate.

Hence Obſerve, *Man in his flouriſhing is near to withering.*

He cometh forth and is cut down, his ſtanding is ſo ſmall that it is not ſo much as mentioned. We are born to die, and we die as ſoon as we are born. Chriſt ſpeaks to the Church, *Canticles,* 2. 11, 12. *Riſe my love, for lo the winter is paſt, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the ſinging of birds is come;* ſo we tranſlate, but others thus, *The time of cutting is come.* The ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies both to *ſing* and to *cut;* we taking the former, adde the word *birds* (which is not at all in the Original) to fill up the ſence, or to ſhew what ſinging is there meant; namely that, which is moſt proper in the ſpring when flowers firſt appear, the ſinging of birds. The other reading, as it is clear in the letter of the Hebrew, ſo it elegantly ſuits the point in hand; *The flowers appear, the time of cutting is come,* implying that flowers are cut even as ſoon as they appear: *Such a flower is man. He cometh forth and is cut down.* Thus *David* deſcribes him, *Pſal.* 103. 15, 16. *As for man, his dayes are as graſs; as a flower of the field, ſo he flouriſheth; for the wind paſſeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof ſhall know it no more.* Though the flower be not cut down with any inſtrument of iron, nor cropt by the hand, yet a breath of wind blaſts it, yea the gentle motion of the air quickly blows off its beauty. The Naturaliſt tells us of a plant called *Ephemeron,* becauſe it laſts but one day, as he doth alſo of a worm called *Hemerobion,* becauſe it lives but one day. Such a worm is man; or (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks) *a worm and no man.* Such a flower is man, or (as we may ſpeak) *a flower and no man.* The heathen Poet gives his wonder and obſervation of the Roſe, that it grows old in the very budding. The Septuagint read the words of *Job* in the ſame tenour. *He decayes like a budding flower,* that is, he decayes in his very budding: As if death did riſe early and watch for the flouriſhing flower, to crop or cut it down. And though ſome of theſe flowers ſtand till they wither, or as *Solomon* allegorizeth, (*Eccleſ.* 12. 5.) *Till the Almond-tree ſhall flouriſh,* that is, till gray-hairs; yet all the time of their ſtanding they have been falling, and every hour which increaſeth or ſwells their ſtalks, hath been alſo cutting of them down. And it would have been better for ſome, if they had been actually cut down in that ſtate, which we diſtinctively call their *flower,* while they were well-ſented and beautiful, whereas ſtanding long, they have not only decayed, but ſmelt ill upon their ſtalks. Man in his beſt eſtate is vain, and many who have ſtood beyond that, have proved far worſe then vain.

Tempus putationis advenit. Pagn.

Plin. Nat. hiſt. lib. 25. cap. 13. l. 11. c. 36.

Mirabar celerē fugitiva ætate rapinam. Et dum noſcuntur conſenuiſſe roſas. Virg.

Tanquā flos efflorescens decidit.

Now leſt this firſt ſimilitude of a flower coming forth and cut down, ſhould not reach the tranſitorineſs of this dying thing called man; therefore *Job* puts him upon his fulleſt ſpeed, or rather upon the wing in his motion through the world, by a ſecond ſimilitude, which carrieth in it the haſtieſt ſwiftneſs and the moſt unſetled changeableneſs.

He fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth not.

Shadows are cauſed by the interpoſition of any groſs body between us and the Sun. Every ſhadow is dark, and darkneſs is but a great ſhadow. Hence there are two ſorts of natural ſhadows. Firſt, The ſhadows of the night, to which the Church alludes, (*Cant.* 2. 17.) *Until the day break, and the ſhadows flee away.* Secondly, The ſhadows of the day; theſe are according to the motions of the Sun, in continual motion or variation, ſometimes on our right hand, ſometimes on our left, ſometimes ſhorter, ſometimes longer, and are longeſt in the evening, as the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Jer.* 4. 6.) *The ſhadows of the evening are ſtretched out.* When the Sun riſeth, the ſhadows of the night are not, and while the ſhadows of the day are, they continue not, but receive ſome change every moment.

ment. Such is man, he fleeth as the ſhadow of the night before the day, and as the ſhadow of the day till night return again.

עמד

Stetit, ſubſiſtit, perſtitit, permāſit. Unde

עמוד

columna erecta, à ſtādo dicta.

Et nūquā in eodē ſtatu permanet. Vulg.

He continueth not.] The Hebrew is, *he ſtandeth not.* A pillar is expreſſed by a word of this root, becauſe of its ſtanding and firmneſs. Man is not a pillar, but a ſhadow; or if he be a pillar, he is but a pillar of ſmoak, which is carried and ſcattered with the wind, as a ſhadow is altered or changed with the Sun. We read often of the ſhadow of death, and our life is but a ſhadow; becauſe it continueth not. Death is a perfect ſhadow, and a ſhadow is the ſimilitude of our imperfect life: To have no ſhadow of turning, notes the perfection of God (*James* 1. 17.) To turn like a ſhadow, notes the imperfection of man. The Vulgar tranſlates, *He continueth not in the ſame ſtate.*

There is a threefold ſtate of man. Firſt, A natural ſtate. Secondly, A civil ſtate. Thirdly, A ſpiritual ſtate. The two former of theſe, are of little or no continuance, the third doth not alwayes continue in the ſame ſtate.

The natural ſtate of man may be conſidered,

Firſt, In reference to his body; this ſuffers an alteration every day, either a perfective alteration, as in thoſe that are young; or a corruptive alteration, as in thoſe who are of full age: Yea, the perfective alteration of the body tends to a corruptive alteration, and while we are growing ſtronger, we are haſtning, not only to weakneſs, but to diſſolution.

Secondly, The natural ſtate of man may be conſidered in reference to his mind: This continues not in one ſtate. 'Tis the ſole priviledge of God to be one within. *He* (ſaith *Job*, chap. 23. 13.) *Is in one mind, who can turn him?* Men are in twenty minds, they cannot but turn. We uſe to ſay of ſeveral men, *So many men, ſo many minds*: But we may obſerve in the ſame man, *How many minds!* The mind of man is more mutable then the wind or weather: Now he is pleaſed, anon he is angry; now he likes, anon he diſlikes; now he loves, anon he hates; now he wills, by and by he wills not: The will, the affections, the underſtanding of man, are ſo often in new habits and changes of dreſs, are ſhaped into ſuch various forms of opinion and judgement, that 'tis hard to ſay what any mans mind is; and there are not many who know their own minds.

And as man continues not in his natural ſtate, whether of body or mind; ſo his civil ſtate is of as little continuance: whether we look upon him, Firſt, In his honour; Or, Secondly, In his power; Or, Thirdly, In his riches; Or, Fourthly, In his relations. I leave the Reader to enlarge upon theſe common places of mans mutability. Day unto day makes report, and every dayes experience is a Sermon of theſe things: yea, how many have we ſeen in one day, honourable and diſhonourable, in fulneſs of power, and emptied of all their power; abounding in riches, and brought to beggery, compaſſed about with friends and kindred, with wife and children, and yet forſaken of all before the evening. *Their inward thought* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 49. 11.) *is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations: nevertheleſs man being in honour* (power or riches) *abideth not.* If he abides, theſe do not; and if theſe abide, he doth not: and the longeſt that both theſe have abode in any example ſince the foundation of the world, is not long enough to warrant this concluſion, that, *They did abide.*

Thirdly, Conſider man in his ſpiritual eſtate, where his continuance is moſt ſteady, yet there he continues not in the ſame ſtate. Some have a ſpiritual eſtate, which is of as little continuance as mans natural or civil ſtate is. The hypocrite appears to others, and is often conceited of himſelf, full of the flowers of grace; but he quickly diſappears: he is cut down like a flower, and fleeth away like a ſhadow. The parable ſaith of ſuch a man, (*Mat.* 13. 20, 21.) *He heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himſelf, but dureth for a while*: that is, he continueth not: his leaf of out-ſide profeſſion falls, and his goodly form of godlineſs without power breaks to pieces upon the leaſt blaſt or touch of perſecution. And if perſecution do not kill his profeſſion, it will die alone, or rather, it will decay alone; for indeed it never had any life.

Now, as temporary believers have total decayes, and continue not at all in their ſpiritual eſtate; ſo true believers may have temporary decayes. The way of a man in Chriſt doth not flee like a ſhadow, but increaſeth *more and more unto the perfect day,* (*Prov.* 4. 16.) And that Scripture which takes up *Jobs* ſimilitude, comparing *all fleſh to graſs, and the goodlineſs thereof to the flower of the field, the graſs withereth, the flower fadeth,* doth yet by way of oppoſition, aſſure us, that *the Word of God abideth for ever,* (*Iſaiah* 40. 8.) Now, as the Word of God, ſo that grace which is revealed to us and wrought in us by the Word and Spirit of God, abideth for ever. And yet though a ſtate of grace, whereſoever, it is doth continue for ever, yet it doth not continue alwayes in the ſame ſtate: and that not only becauſe it is gradually changed by way of improvement here (till it take its higheſt degree in glory, where it ſhall know no change at all, either by way of abatement or of improvement) but alſo becauſe it is often changed by way of gradual abatement. *Peter* did not alwayes continue in the ſame ſtate of faith, nor the Church of *Epheſus* in the ſame ſtate of love, though their faith and love did continue. What ſoul can ſay it continues ever in the ſame degree of ſpiritual ſtrength, health, life and enlargements? Though the whole time of a Chriſtian in this world be a growing time, yet conſider it in parts, and we ſhall find many declining times. Thus as man continues not at all in his natural and civil ſtate, ſo his ſpiritual eſtate doth not alwayes continue the ſame: and ſo of all it may be ſaid, *He continueth not.*

VERS. 3, 4.

And doeſt thou open thine eyes upon ſuch an one, and bringeſt him into judgement with thee?
Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

JOB having ſhadowed the frailty of man under divers ſimilitudes, in the cloſe of the thirteenth Chapter, and in the beginning of this, draws down from all, this paſſionate queſtion, at the third verſe, *And doeſt thou open thy eye upon ſuch an one?* Upon ſuch an one as I, who am as *a rotten thing*; or, *as a garment that is moth-eaten!* Upon ſuch an one as I, who am of *few dayes and full of trouble!* Upon ſuch an one as I, who am *like a flower* coming forth, and preſently cut down! Upon ſuch an one as I, who am *like a ſhadow fleeing away and continuing not! Doeſt thou open thine eyes upon ſuch an one; and bringeſt me into judgement with thee?*

אף

על־זה

Etiam ſuper hunc.

Terminus diminuens.

Such an one, is a term of diminution; *Job* debaſeth and lowers himſelf, *Such an one!* Is ſuch a poor one, a man ſo inconſiderable, a man who beſides the common condition of men, which is low enough, is yet brought lower by theſe afflictions?

Such an one, ſometimes increaſeth the ſenſe and heightens it. (*Neh.* 6. 11.) When *Sanballat* and the enemies of the Jews by ſecret practices and cunning plots would have diſcouraged *Nehemiah*, telling him what deſigns were againſt him, and perſwading him timely to avoid his own fall, that ſo the work might fall, he anſwers, *Should ſuch a man as I flee?* ſuch a man! A man in ſuch a place, and having ſuch power; a man ſo truſted, and under ſuch ingagements; a man upon whoſe care and conduct the well-fare of a nation, and the advancement of publick good ſo much depends? *Should ſuch a man as I flee?* there the ſenſe is raiſed: but here it falls; *Such an one*, is a poor one, a mean one; Doeſt thou open thy mouth to ſpeak againſt, or thine eye to look upon ſuch an object?

Job having conſidered his own eſtate in common with that of mankind, concludes, *And doeſt thou ſet thy eye upon ſuch an one?*

Whence Obſerve, *That the due conſideration and knowledge of what we are, leads us to low thoughts of our ſelves.*

There is no man proud of himſelf, but he that is ignorant of himſelf: we are lifted up with high thoughts above what we are, becauſe we have not true thoughts of what we are; if once we ſaw what moth eaten garments, what rotten things, what fading flowers, what fleeing ſhadows, what decaying, dying creatures we are, every one would ſay to God in holy wonder, Doeſt thou take notice of *ſuch an one?* of ſo mean an one as I. We ſhould not aſpire to be counted *ſome bodies*, ſome great ones in the world, but we ſhould look upon our ſelves as *no bodies*, as unaccountable in the world, ſuch as deſerve not, that the great, the high God ſhould vouchſafe us a caſt of his eye. This is *Jobs* ſenſe of himſelf,

Doeſt thou open thy eye upon ſuch an one as I?

Oculi Dei providentiā denotat.

The opening of the eye is taken two wayes.

Firſt, In a way of fatherly care and providence: Thus *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 144. 3.) *Lord, what is man that thou takeſt knowledge of him, or the ſon of man that thou makeſt account of him?* So *Job* (chap. 7. 17.) *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thy heart upon him?* that is, that thou ſhouldſt take care of him, and make ſuch proviſion for him. When *Hezekiah* was in a day of rebuke and blaſphemy, he ſpread *Rabſhakehs* railing letter before the Lord, and prayed, *Lord bow down thine ear and hear, open Lord thy eye and ſee*, 2 *Kin.* 19. 16. that is, take care of me and of the people under me: the mouth of *Rabſhakeh* is open to threaten and revile, let thy eye be open to ſee and prevent all the evils which he threatneth.

Further, Opening the eye is an act of little or no difficulty; it is as eaſie to open the eye as to *turn the hand*; to give a look is a ſmall gift. Thus we may underſtand *Job*, as if he thought himſelf unworthy the leaſt motion of providence. Doeſt thou vouchſafe to open thine eye upon ſuch a one? I am not worthy thou ſhouldeſt take notice of me or of my condition. A glance of thy eye is more then I can look for.

I will not proſecute this ſenſe, both becauſe I handled it, *chap.* 7. 17. as alſo, becauſe though it be a truth, yet, I conceive, it is not the proper truth of this place.

Aperire oculos in aliquē, eſt intentis oculis eū valdè obſervare, quid rerum agat. Druſ.

Secondly, As opening of the eye ſignifies providence and care to do us good, ſo watchfulneſs to diſcover and find out what we are, or what evil we have done: for as in Scripture to open the hand is to be liberal, bountiful, and munificent (*Pſal* 145. 16.) *Thou openeſt thy hand and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* So to open the eye upon a man, notes diligent inſpection over him, or an accurate obſervation of his wayes, goings, actings, to bring him to a ſtrict account for all: he that paſſeth a man by, and will not bring him to judgement for what he hath done, is ſaid (in our common ſpeech) to connive or wink at him. He that winks at another, will not ſee though he doth ſee. It is ſaid (*Act.* 17. 30.) that *God winked at the former times of their ignorance, but now he commands all men every where to repent, becauſe he hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world.* There is another meaning of winking which I have opened (*chap.* 8. 4.) but this is a truth, God winked, that is, he did not take much notice, or follow men up and down, to ſee what they did in thoſe times, becauſe they were in the darkneſs of ignorance; they had but little light to do good by, therefore he was not ſo ſtrict to obſerve what evil they did; ſo that the opening of the eye, implieth a critical, or a judiciary inſpection, as well as a paternal, fatherly, careful inſpection, and ſo we are to expound this place, as is evident from the ſixth verſe of this chapter, where *Job* deſires that which is contrary to opening the eye, *the turning from him, that he might reſt till he ſhall accompliſh as a hireling his dayes.* He that openeth his eye to a man turneth his face to him; now ſeeing man is weak, and his dayes determined, turn from him with thine eye, or why doeſt thou ſet thine eye upon him? As if he had ſaid, *Doth it become thy greatneſs and majeſty, to take ſuch ſtrict notice of all the motions of ſo poor a creature as I am? or doth it become thy goodneſs and mercy to be ſo ſevere to watch me ſo narrowly, to look after me ſo exactly, that I cannot ſtir but thou obſerveſt it, and numbreſt my very ſteps?*

Contextus expoſcit, ut de ſeveritate divini judicii loquatur, Sanct.

Cum ſtomacho & indignatione legendum eſt: Itane ſuper hoc folium & ſtipulā, &c. Mer.

Job ſpeaks in a kind of paſſion, and the gloſs which ſome interpreters put upon his words, renders them, not only very unbecoming, but very ſinful; as if he thought it altogether unfit for God to eye what he did, or to bring him into judgement for it. Heathens ſaid of their *Jupiter*, *he was not at leaſure to look at ſmall matters*; but it is a great diſhonour to God, to ſay he cannot look after the ſmalleſt matters and motions of the creature: We cannot diſhonour God more, then by counting this a diſhonour to him. *The loweſt perſons and actions are not beneath the obſervation of the moſt high God.* *Jobs* intendment was to move God to compaſſion, not to put himſelf beneath his conſideration.

Hence Obſerve, *That our frailty is a good pleadable argument to move God to deal mildely and gently with us,*

I am a weak poor creature, therefore pitty me, therefore ſpare me; we muſt never plead our fulneſs before God, but we may plead our emptineſs; we muſt never plead our goodneſs, nor our worthineſs, but we may our ſinfulneſs and unworthineſs. The latter clauſe of the verſe ſhews us what *Job* deſires, when he deprecates the opening of Gods eye upon him.

And bringeſt me into judgement with thee.

Obſerve here the change of the perſon: He ſpake before in the third perſon, *Doeſt thou open thine eye upon ſuch an one?* here he ſpeaks in the firſt perſon, *Doeſt thou bring me to judgement with thee?* He relates to his perſonal condition and makes application to himſelf, *Doeſt thou bring me into judgement with thee?* I ſhall not ſtay upon theſe words, having often (from like paſſages) ſhewed how unable man is to ſtand before God in judgement. *Job* inſiſteth much upon it, being provoked by his friends, charging him with a conceit of ſelf-righteouſneſs, which he diſclaimed as often as they charge him with it, *Doeſt thou bring me to judgement with thee?* Men of eminency will not contend with thoſe who are much inferiour to them, they cannot honour themſelves by ſuch conteſts, as was lately ſhewed at large (*chap.* 13. 25.) upon that expoſtulation, *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?* &c. Thus *Job* pleads here, *Doeſt thou bring me to judgement with thee?* I am no match for thee, there is no equality between us, thou canſt not raiſe thy Name by caſting me down: thou mayeſt honour thy mercy and compaſſion, by pardoning me, but not thy power by overthrowing me. *The worſt and weakeſt of ſinful men, are the beſt foil to ſet off the beauty and ſtrength of mercy.*

Verbum eſt futuri temporis, quod debitū connotat & decorum, ut Gen. 18. 25.

Huc pertinent omnia quæ hoc loco copioſe diſſerit Job de miſeria humanæ vitæ, ut Deus tā miſero homini miſereatur, nec tam duris experimētis probet. Mer.

Yet men are not therefore free from the judgements of God becauſe they are low and mean, for God will judge the loweſt, even ſuch as lie on dung-hills, or grind in the mill; the great God of heaven and earth will bring the leaſt to judgement, as well as the greateſt. The Rabbins have a conceit that ſome ſhall be exempt or priviledg'd from the judgement of God hereafter, becauſe they endure much pain and poverty here; but theſe are vain conceits: All muſt come to judgement, though but few ſhall ſtand in judgement. God will glorifie his juſtice in caſting the loweſt of wicked men to the loweſt hell, as well as high and lofty ones.

Take one Obſervation from both parts of the verſe laid together, *Doeſt thou open thy eye upon ſuch an one as I am, and bringeſt me to judgement?*

There muſt be a diſcerning of the perſon and cauſe, before either can be brought to judgement.

You muſt open the eye to ſee what the man is, and what he hath done, before ſentence be given upon him. The law forbad the Judge to receive gifts, becauſe gifts blind the eye of the Judge; a Judge had need to have his eyes open, to diſcern the cauſe and every circumſtance of it. If a gift put out the receivers eye, how ſhall the Judge diſcern him that gives it. We cannot judge what we do not know, nor can we judge aright without a right knowledge.

Job having pleaded his weakneſs, pleads his ſinfulneſs.

Verſ. 4. **Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.**

As if he had ſaid, *Lord, if thou openeſt thine eye upon me, thou muſt needs find me unclean, full of ſin and defiled with ſin: Nor canſt thou expect any other of me, for, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? ſurely not one; therefore do not open thine eye ſeverely upon me, do not bring me into judgement with thee, thou art of purer eyes then to behold iniquity.*

I ſhall firſt open the words and give the ſenſe as they contain an entire propoſition, *A clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean*, and then I ſhall conſider *Jobs* ſcope in uſing this plea,

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

טהר *munditiem nitentem denotat.*

טמא *immundus, pulchra eſt illius turpitudinis & ſordium appellatio, in quam ſqualor quidam mœrentis animi & ſorditatus habitus, cruoris & ſanguinis maculæ, nubila, craſſa omnia turbida immundaque cadunt.* Pined.

The word which we render *clean* ſignifies ſhining, beautiful, a ſubſtance ſo pure and tranſparent that we may ſee through it, ſo pure that it is free from all ſpot or defilement, from all blackneſs and darkneſs; Who can bring ſuch a clean thing out of an unclean? the Hebrew word (*Tama*) comes near the word (*Contaminatum*) which is uſed by the Latines for unclean; and it ſpeaks the greateſt pollution, the ſordidneſs and filthineſs of habit, the goar of blood, the muddineſs of water, whatſoever is loathſome or unlovely, noiſome or unſightly: All theſe meet in, and make up the meaning of this word, *Who can bring a clean thing out of this uncleanneſs?*

Clean and unclean may be taken two wayes; either firſt corporally and externally; or ſecondly, morally and internally; *Job* ſpeaks not of the former; the uncleanneſs here meant is moral or internal,

Which is alſo twofold. Firſt, The uncleanneſs of our natures: Secondly, Of our actions; the uncleanneſs which lyes in the inward man, puts it ſelf forth in the outward man; and ſo we are unclean both within and without.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This queſtion may undergo a threefold expoſition. Firſt thus, Who can bring a morally clean perſon out of a perſon originally unclean? The word which we render *bring*, is *give* in the Hebrew; Who can give a clean thing out of an unclean? Which may well refer to the birth of man: So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 17. 16.) God promiſeth *Abraham* to bleſs *Sarah*, and give him a Son of her: So here, Who can give a clean thing? That is, cauſe it to be born of an unclean; *Job* layes his hand upon his birth-ſin; as if he had ſaid, all men are naturally unclean; therefore the children born of them are unclean too.

Secondly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May refer to the action of the ſame man, take *Job* or any other perſon who is morally unclean by nature, this man being unclean, cannot bring forth a clean thing; that is, a clean action: As the root is, ſuch is the fruit; we are ſuch fruit as our parents are, unclean both; and our fruit is ſuch as we the parents are, unclean both.

מן *originis & mutationis nota.*

נתן *dare, pro efficere uſurpatur.*

Thirdly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May note the change of the ſame perſon from his moral uncleanneſs into moral cleanneſs; Who can make a perſon clean who was born unclean? The Hebrew particle (*Min*) rendred, *out of*, hath a double uſe; ſometimes it notes the Original of a thing, *That which is originated is like its original.* Again, it notes alſo change and mutation; Who can bring a clean out of an unclean? That is, who can change unclean into clean? Beſides the word which we render *bring* ſignifies *to make a change*, Iſa. 51. 12. *Who art thou that art afraid of the ſon of man, who ſhall be made as the graſs?* The Hebrew is, who ſhall be given, that is, changed as the graſs.

Thus we have a threefold interpretation of the words. The firſt reſpecting the extraction of one perſon from another. All perſons are unclean, becauſe they come from an unclean root.

A ſecond referring to the actions of the ſame perſon. That which is done by man cannot but be unclean; becauſe man himſelf is unclean who doth it.

A third reſpecting the change of the perſon himſelf from what he was. Who can make an unclean perſon clean? This is a work too hard for any creature, Man or Angel. Man cannot by his own power make a natural man, much leſs a ſpiritual man; he cannot give any man a *being*, much leſs a holy *being*.

Firſt obſerve from the connection, *Job* having deſcribed mans life, *Few of dayes and full of troubles, like a ſhadow, and like a flower cut down and withered*; he now deſcends to mans uncleanneſs, as if he would lead us to the ſpring-head and cauſe of all our ſorrows: This is the method and dependance of *Job's* diſcourſe, which teacheth us,

That the length of our troubles, and ſhortneſs of our lives, are cauſed by the corruption and uncleanneſs of our natures.

Are our lives troubleſome? Is the ſcene of our actions intangled? ſin hath done it. Is the thread of life cut off? have we but a few dayes? ſin hath procured this. We are unclean, therefore we are dying, fading, withering. In all, whether perſonal or publick troubles, we may anſwer our ſelves with this, we have what we deſerve, the root of all our miſeries is within us, we may thank our own evil diſpoſitions, that our condition is ſo full of evil. God made man upright and happy; he gave him a life wherein he might have continued long and long, even for ever. Though man might have died as created, yet there was no neceſſity he ſhould dye till he had ſinned. Both the troubles of this life and death it ſelf are debts of penalty for our uncleanneſs; and when we are once perfectly cleanſed, we ſhall never be under any arreſt for theſe debts.

Secondly Obſerve, *Sin is an unclean thing.*

They who ſee the face of ſin in the glaſs of the Law, ſee it the moſt ugly and deformed object in the world. If Vertue could be ſeen, ſhe would attract all eyes and hearts to her: *Vertue is an inviſible beauty.* So if ſin could be ſeen, all eyes would turn away from it: *Sin is an inviſible deformity.* The Spirit of God doth as it were ſtrive for compariſons to ſet out the uglineſs of ſin: It is compared to the blood and pollution of an Infant (*Ezek.* 16. 6.) to the corruption of a rotten Sepulchre (*Rom.* 3. 13.) to the ſcum of a ſeething pot (*Ezek.* 24. 11, 12.) All theſe compariſons ſhew us ſomewhat of the uglineſs of ſin; but it is ugly beyond compare. How ſad is their miſtake who think to adorn themſelves with ſin? Who put on pride as a cloak upon their backs, and unrighteouſneſs as a Crown or a Diadem upon their heads: who boaſt as if they had their *holy-day clothes* on, when they are cloathed with *unholineſs*, and make to themſelves *beauty ſpots* of the *blackeſt ſpots* of ſin! The Apoſtle (*Col.* 3. 12.) calleth us to put on another kind of dreſs, *to be cloathed with humility, meekneſs, humbleneſs of minde, charity*; theſe are ſhining, pure, white rayment indeed; Our righteouſneſs is a filthy rag, if we boaſt in it, or would be juſtified in it: then how filthy a rag is our unrighteouſneſs, eſpecially if we boaſt of it, or juſtifie our ſelves in it!

Thirdly Obſerve, *Man being naturally unclean, his children and poſterity are unclean too.*

Caro in Scriptura male audit. Mirum non eſt ſi arundinis ramus aut cicutæ vacuus ſit à medulla, aut noxium aliquod habeat; Aut ſi Æthiopiſſæ filius Æthiopicū ab ea colorem trahat. Sanct.

John, 3. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh.* The copy cannot be better then the Original, nor the effect nobler then the cauſe; *This fleſh hath an ill name all the Scripture over:* 'Tis no wonder if that which is poyſonous bring forth a poyſonous ſeed, or that a ſtinging Serpent procreates a ſtinging Serpent, a Toad a Toad, or that a Wolf brings forth a Wolf: The ſon of an *Ethiopian* is alſo an *Ethiopian*: Our father was an *Amorite*, and ſo are we. The natural conſtitution of every thing is tranſmitted by natural generation; man is himſelf unclean, and all his iſſue is like himſelf. God created man pure in his own likeneſs after his Image; and man begets man impure in his own likeneſs after his image.

There are two things in this uncleanneſs.

Firſt, There is a privation of that comelineſs and beauty which was ſtampt upon man in his creation: Some define original uncleanneſs to be *only a privation of original righteouſneſs*, and that it is one part of it, all agree; but there is ſomething poſitive in it too; for it is as if a man, who is richly cloathed, excellently adorned, ſhould not only have all his goodly garments pulled off (which were an abaſement to him) but ſhould be thrown into the dirt, or have dirt caſt upon him; *Joſeph's* Brethren took off his party-coloured garment, and then threw him into a pit; ſo doth ſin: that ſtrips us firſt of our goodly array, our original righteouſneſs; and then drenches, or daubs us rather all over, or over head and ears, in mire and filth.

There are ſeven conſiderable properties in this natural uncleanneſs.

Firſt, It is an internal uncleanneſs; a ſpot upon the garment is bad enough; a ſpot upon the face is far worſe; but an infection in the fleſh is yet worſe; and that is worſt of all which is ſeated in the bowels, or hath ſeized on the vitals: The uncleanneſs here ſpoken of is not as a ſpot upon the garment, or dirt upon the face, but a ſoar in the fleſh, (a ſoar is nothing but the uncleanneſs of the fleſh gathered to a head) yea, it is like a ſoar in the bowels, or intrals,

trals, in the heart or liver; for *even the mind and conſcience is defiled*, Tit. 1. 15.

Secondly, It is an abiding uncleanneſs, all the water in the Ocean cannot waſh it out; all the fire in Hell cannot burn it out; Hell fire ſhall never conſume this droſs: Though wicked men in this life be caſt into the fire of Gods judgments, and he kindle it with the bellows of his wrath, yet their droſs remains, *reprobate ſilver ſhall men call them*; (*Jer.* 6.30.) they will not be purged in this life, and in the next life they ſhall not be purged. They ſhall be for ever in punitive flames; but they ſhall not find (as Papiſts dream) any purgative flames. The corruption of nature will not depart from them. The uncleanneſs of the metal is the droſs of the metal; the droſs of mans nature is harder to ſeparate then the droſs of metal; the lead in that infernal furnace willl not conſume, nor will the bellows break; yet the droſs of luſt will not out of reprobates. And as fire and brimſtone ſhall not fetch this uncleanneſs out of reprobates in the next life; ſo grace and mercy do not fetch it fully out of the elect in this life; they who are renewed and regenerate, are yet in part carnal and corrupt. *Graſe is in a continual conflict with corruption; but glory only makes a total conqueſt.*

Thirdly, It is an abounding uncleanneſs, it is not in the hand or face only, but in and upon the whole man, it goes quite through. There is not the leaſt part free: Man from head to heel, from top to toe is deſcribed unclean (*Pſal.*14. *Rom.* 3.) *The Lord looked down from Heaven, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand and ſeek after God: they were all gone out of the way, and become vile, vile all over.* There is a double univerſality of this uncleanneſs. Firſt, It doth defile all men. Secondly, All of man: Not one man in the world but is unclean; and not one part in any man but is unclean; ſurvey him in his underſtanding, will, memory, affections, conſcience, eye, hand, tongue, feet, all the parts of the body and powers of the ſoul are unclean. *As grace ſanctifies, ſo ſin defiles all where it is, even body, ſoul, and ſpirit*, 1 *Tim.* 5.23.

Fourthly, It is an active or a powerful uncleanneſs, ſtirring up an holy war in man, againſt the holy will of God: An inordinate appetite accompanies it; or it is an inordinate appetite cauſing the inferiour parts of the ſoul ſtubbornly to reſiſt the ſuperiour; or the ſuperiour baſely to ſubmit unto and ſerve the inferiour. This makes Luſt a King, and Reaſon a Slave; yea, this would make Grace a Slave. As *Paul*'s experience teacheth us, (*Rom.* 7.23.) *But I ſee another law in my members warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin which is in my members.* That is, it doth captivate me in part, and hath a deſign to captivate me altogether.

concupiſcentia eſt appetitus inordinatus per quem ſuperiora inferioribus tupitt ſerviun, aut inferiora ſuperioribus contumaciter reluctantur. Janſon.

Fifthly, It is a diffuſive or an infectious uncleanneſs, like a leproſie or a plague. Now, as good is by ſo much the better, by how much it is the more diffuſive, ſo evil is ſo much the worſe by how much it is the more diffuſive. This evil is diffuſive two wayes. Firſt, By way of propagation, from *Adam* to all his poſterity. Secondly, By way of imitation, and ſo one man doing evil, another ſeeth and catcheth it, he is infected and defiled with it: That's the reaſon why *David* (as ſome conceive) was ſo exceeding ſtrict, in this point (*Pſal.* 101.7.) *He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe; he that telleth lyes ſhall not tarry in my ſight*; his wickedneſs may ſpread, it may poyſon the heart of a King, I will not put my ſelf upon the temptation. The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12.15.) warns the Church of this danger, *Leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* Though this uncleanneſs doth not infect by imitation only (which was the error of *Pelagius*) yet it infects ſtrongly and commonly by imitation: Hence *Moſes* chargeth the people of *Iſrael* to have nothing to do with the *Canaanites*, leſt they ſhould be miſled by their example. And when they acted againſt this rule, they quickly broke all rules (*Pſal.* 106.36.) *They were mingled with the Heathen* (then immediately follows) *and learned their works.* He means not works of art, or agriculture, of peace, or war, but of falſe worſhip and idolatry; *They ſerved their idols, which was a ſnare unto them.* Evil men endanger the good, as bad humors do the blood, or an infected houſe the whole neighbourhood.

Sixthly, It is a bewitching and an enſnaring uncleanneſs. All the bodily beauty in the world did never intice ſo many as the deformity and foul face of ſin hath. It was propheſied of Chriſt (in reference to his outward appearance) *He hath no form nor comelineſs; there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire him.* Hence the Prophet foreſees what entertainment he was like to find in the world: *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men; we, as it were, hid our faces from him, and we eſteemed him not*, Iſa. 53.2, 3. Beauty and comelineſs are the attractives, the loadſtone of love. Chriſt was not loved becauſe he did not appear beautiful: Luſt is loved though it be unbeautiful: There is no form nor comelineſs in ſin, nothing why it ſhould be deſired, yet it is admired and highly eſteemed by all ſorts of men. They dote upon it, and run mad with love for it, as the choiceſt beauty in the world.

Seventhly, It is a murderous and a mortal uncleanneſs; there is no eſcaping death if we live in it. This uncleanneſs doth not only ſpoil our inward beauty, and put the ſoul out of faſhion, but it deſtroyes the life of the ſoul, it is the ruine as well as the diſhonour of man.

Now as all men, becauſe unclean, bring forth an unclean perſonal iſſue (which riſeth from the ſecond expoſition.) So becauſe every perſon is unclean, the actions which he brings forth are unclean too. *Whatſoever ſinful man doth, is ſinful:* Conſider mankind under two ranks, regenerate and unregenerate: The unregenerate are ſo unclean, that whatſoever they do is altogether unclean. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thiſtles?* Make the tree good and the fruit good, while the tree is evil, the fruit cannot be good. 'Tis becauſe the heart is evil, that (as God complains *Gen.* 6.5.) *All the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart are only evil continually.* The imagination gives ſhape to every thing which the mind works upon; all that man frames and faſhions, all the creatures he makes within him are unclean. The works of a natural man are unclean for the moſt part in the very matter; but all that he doth is unclean for the manner; his hands are unclean, and (by his handling) he makes all unclean. The mind and conſcience of a wicked man being defiled, he is *abominable, diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*, (Tit. 1.15.) that is, he knows not how to do a good work, he is not handſome-handed, or rather not handſome-hearted at any good work: he knows neither how to contrive, nor act, much leſs to delight in any thing that is good; that's the meaning of being reprobate *to every good work*: Though he may ſet about many good works, yet at beſt they do but bungle at them all. *Some good works are ſo good that no man can do them ill*; they cannot be done ſinfully, though they may be done imperfectly. Such are, to love God, to fear, to believe, to truſt, to rejoyce in him, and to hope for his mercy. Theſe works are ſo good, that, as no wicked man can do them at all, ſo, no good man can ſin in doing them. Theſe works are ſo good, that the leaſt degree of them is good; and therefore though they are acted often weakly, yet they are never acted wickedly. But there are good works which a carnal man will be dealing in, as to pray, to hear the Word, &c. Theſe he will be doing, but he is reprobate to the doing of them; he defiles and ſpoils them in the doing. The caſe is put *Hag.* 2.14. *If a man that is unclean do carry holy fleſh, ſhall it not be unclean?* The Prophet ſtates it affirmatively, ceremonially holy fleſh is defiled with our ſpiritually unholy fleſh: The uncleanneſs of the giver renders his gift unclean: *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord:* Their prayers are ſometimes called *howlings* (*Hoſ.* 7.) ſometimes *bablings* (*Mat.* 6.) Their prayers at beſt are but *wouldings* and *wiſhings*, or meer preſumings, ſuch were *Balaam*'s (Numb. 33.10.) they deſire mercy more then grace, they will have the end, but care not to walk in the way.

Now if the prayers of carnal man be unclean, how unclean are their oaths? If their mercies be cruel, how merciléſs are their cruelties? If their praiſes of God be filthy, how filthy are their prophanations? If the beſt they can do be bad, how bad is their worſt?

Secondly, The works of the regenerate are unclean alſo. *Job* ſpeaks his own caſe, he was a holy man by Gods own teſtimony, yet he ſaith, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? All our righteouſneſs are as filthy rags*, (Iſa. 64.6.) A regenerate man ſins in all he doth: We do not ſay, all he doth is ſin, as the Papiſts charge us: The work of Gods ſpirit upon us, and the motions of grace in us are

Mala mea purè mala ſunt, & mea ſunt: bona autem mea nec purè bona ſunt nec mea ſunt. Hugo.

pure; yet, as clean water paſſing through an unclean pipe, receivs a tincture of that uncleanneſs; ſo ſinfulneſs cleaves to our holieſt actions, we the inſtruments being ſinful.

If it be objected, That which is ſinful is a tranſgreſſion of the Law; but good works are not a tranſgreſſion of the Law; therefore they are not ſinful.

I anſwer.

Firſt, Sin is a tranſgreſſion of the Law; but every thing which hath ſin accompanying it, is not a tranſgreſſion of the Law: We cannot argue from the abſtract to the concrete.

Secondly, There is a twofold tranſgreſſion of the Law: Firſt, Againſt the matter of any duty required. Secondly, Againſt the manner in which the Law requires that duty ſhould be performed: In this latter ſence there is a tranſgreſſion in the beſt works of Believers: Where is the ſoul that is carried out in prayer, *&c.* with that love and delight, with that purity and fervency of ſpirit, which the ſpiritualneſs of the Law doth call for?

If it be again objected, That good works in the regenerate are the works of the Spirit of God in them, and therefore are not ſinful,

I anſwer.

That which proceeds from the Spirit as the immediate and ſole cauſe, is not ſinful: But good works are not wrought ſolely by the Spirit of God; the ſpirit and mind of man are ſubſervient and inſtrumental in that work: Now an effect which proceeds from divers ſubordinate cauſes, takes its qualification from the loweſt as well as from the higheſt. Though a Writer have exact skill, yet if his pen be naught, the writing cannot be exact.

Laſtly, (Say ſome) good works are pleaſing to God; but that which is ſinful doth not pleaſe God.

To which I anſwer.

That our good works do not pleaſe God, as done by us; but as done in Chriſt: He is the Altar which ſanctifies all our gifts; he is our High-prieſt who takes away the iniquity of all our holy things, that we may be accepted in all our offerings. 'Tis through a Mediator that God is pleaſed with what we do, and pardons our defects.

Thirdly, The words may import a change of the ſame perſon, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*

Hence Obſerve, *Man cannot convert or make himſelf clean; nor can any man make man clean.*

Man can no more ſanctifie himſelf or another, then he can redeem himſelf or another. But you will ſay, A man is often exhorted to cleanſe himſelf (*Iſa.* 1. 15, 18.) *Waſh you, make you clean,* (2 Cor. 7. 1.) *Having theſe promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit.*

I anſwer.

Firſt, If theſe Texts be underſtood of perſons regenerate, as that of the Apoſtle clearly is, then it is true, they who are already cleanſed may further cleanſe themſelves; for though we do not cooperate in the firſt converſion (there we are meerly paſſive) yet we do in the ſecond: We cannot begin holineſs, but we may and ought to *perfect holineſs in the fear of the Lord.* We cannot work our own ſalvation; but we may work out our own ſalvation. They who have received the Spirit are fitted to carry on ſpiritual work.

And though the Text in *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of perſons unregenerate, yet it is not in vain to ſay even to ſuch, *Waſh you, make you clean.* An unclean perſon may apply himſelf to the means of cleanſing: They who have no grace, yet have reaſon; and God deals with us, as with rational creatures: They who are dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, may hear the word of life and live. The dead and unclean are invited to the means of life and cleanſing; and God in the uſe of means hath promiſed to cleanſe and enliven them; but man of himſelf cannot cleanſe himſelf, nor make himſelf differ from what he is, or others are As our ſanctification is the will of God; ſo it is the work of God too. 'Tis neither our own power, nor the power of any creature, which gives us the new creation: ſo the laſt words of the verſe reſolve, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*

Not one.] That is, No man can do it. Some read this interrogatively, or by way of queſtion, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Cannot one?* Or, *Is there not one that can?* We negatively, *There is not one that can:* No man can do it..

If we take (as we ſafely may) the former reading, the queſtion affirms; Is there not one? Yea, there is one, and but one, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean: As the Scribes ſaid (*Mark* 2. 7.) *Who can forgive ſins but God only?* So, who can cleanſe a ſoul but God only? *God only of unclean can make us clean.* He who can raiſe up Children to *Abraham* out of ſtones, and alter the courſe of Nature, he can make the Leper change his ſpot, and the Blackamore his skin; to God nothing is impoſſible; but to man many things are impoſſible; and there is nothing more impoſſible then this, the cleanſing of the ſpiritually unclean. As that only can make and continue a cold body hot, which is it ſelf and of it ſelf hot; ſo he only can make an unclean thing clean, who is himſelf and of himſelf clean; God is clean, and there is no ſpot in him; therefore he can make us clean, and take out all our ſpots. The Chaldee Paraphraſt takes the word, *One*, for the deſcription of God, or for the Name of God. And ſo this place is paralleld by that (*Mark* 2. 7.) which according to the letter of the Greek is to be read thus. *Who can forgive ſins but one? or, the one God?*

לא אחד *non unus, nonne unus? Quis dabit mundum ex homine contaminato peccatis, niſi Deus, qui unus eſt qui remittat ipſi?* Chald. *Nonne tu qui ſolus es* Vulg. *Solus Deus poteſt ex immundo facere mundum condonando peccata, nam cujus peccatum condonatum eſt, purus eſt.* Druſ. *Sicut de frigido facere calidū eſt ejus quod per ſe calidum eſt, ita de immundo facere mundum eſt ejus qui per ſe mundus eſt. Unde quicquid mundum eſt à Deo mundiciem habet.* Aquin.

אחד *Unus accipitur à Chaldeo pro Dei deſcriptione & quaſi nomine. Clarum ſatis eſt reſpici mediatorem, qui unus pacificationem faciat.*

Some expound this, *One*, ſtrictly of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who was deſigned to that work when he came into the world, who is the *great cleanſer:* In whom a fountain is opened to waſh for ſin and for uncleanneſs, and *whoſe blood cleanſeth from all ſin:* Who purifieth thoſe he ſaveth, and purgeth all he pardoneth. Chriſt is that *clean, that holy thing:* And he being ſo, makes us ſo; yea, *he is made to us of God, wiſdom, righteouſneſs* and *ſanctification or cleanneſs.* Chriſt bringeth clean out of unclean, by removing a twofold uncleanneſs. Firſt, The guilt of ſin when he pardons. Secondly, The filth of ſin when he ſanctiſies.

From this whole Doctrine of mans uncleanneſs we learn.

First, *Man cannot oblige God.*

What hath man to boaſt of? Will any one be proud of his filthy garments, or of a ſpot in his face? Much leſs can we boaſt who have a ſpot upon our hearts, and are all over ſpotted in our lives.

Secondly learn, *That in our confeſſion of ſin, we ſhould lay our hand upon our birth-ſin.*

The ſenſe of our natural uncleanneſs humbles moſt; and we ſhould often reflect upon it, that we may be more humbled. We cannot ſhift off our ſin upon the temptation of Satan, or the ſolicitation of men; we have the root of the matter in our ſelves. *Job* was moſt ſenſible of the ſinfulneſs of his nature: He had many ſins, but he ſaw this at the bottom of them all. 'Tis our duty to mourn for actual ſins, but chiefly for original ſin. We muſt weep over the ſtreams; but moſt over the fountain: The heart of man hath not laboured wore to corrup any truth, then this about mans natural corruption. The old *Pelagians* dreſſed up Nature very fine, and would at leaſt perſwade us it is not ſo bad, or ſo oppoſite to good as ſome would make it. They told us it hath ſome diſpoſition to good; and that if helped a little, it would come on to do good. Papiſts at this day follow them, if not in the ſame ſteps, yet in the ſame path: Both have darkned counſel by words without knowledge.

Thirdly, *If all men be unclean, then every man hath need of waſhing.*

Thou ſhalt not waſh my feet, ſaid *Peter* to Chriſt, *John* 13. 8. *If I waſh thee not* (ſaith Chriſt) *thou haſt no part in me.* Then he prayes, Lord (waſh) not only my feet but my head, *&c.* Chriſt ſpeaks thus to every ſoul, *If I waſh thee not, thou haſt no part in me:* Chriſt is a clean Head, and he cleanſeth all his members.

Fourthly, *The thoughts of our general uncleanneſs, ſhould provoke us to bleſs God, that there is a fountain open for ſin and uncleanneſs.*

Fountains ſhould be as welcome to thoſe who are filthy, as to thoſe who are thirſty. When *Hagar* was thirſty, God ſhewed her a fountain of water: When *Sampſon* was very thirſty, God opened a fountain in the jaw, and he drank and was revived. We are filthy, and God opens a fountain, he ſends our leprous ſouls to the *Jordan* of his Sons blood, and bids us waſh and be clean. When our hands are unclean, is not a baſon of water welcome? Our ſouls are unclean, O how welcome ſhould the blood of Chriſt be unto us? Bleſs God, who, as he hath diſcovered our uncleanneſs, ſo a fountain, that we may waſh away our uncleanneſs. How wonderful are the workings of Divine love, that we, who were all ſpots and unclean, ſhall at laſt be preſented unto God perfectly clean, *Not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing*, Epheſ. 5. 27.

Having opened the ſence of theſe words, as they contain this doctrinal Propoſition of mans natural uncleanneſs: There is yet ſomewhat conſiderable in their ſcope? Why doth *Job* ſpeak of this uncleanneſs?

Quaſi innuat Job *non debere Deū hominem punire, ob peccatum ad quod eſt pronus ex ſeſe, ſed ſui oblitus hoc dicit.* Merc.

Some give this for his ſcope, as if *Job* from his original uncleanneſs would extenuate his actual uncleanneſs: or that he ought to be pardoned by Grace, becauſe he was polluted by Nature: As if he had ſaid, *Lord, I was born unclean, and therefore cannot but be unclean; no wonder ill fruits grow on me, who have a root of evil in me.* But this was (in proportion) as far from the mind of *Job*, as it is from the truth of God. Beſides, that we are born ſinful, and cannot chuſe but ſin, is no extenuation, but an aggravation of our ſin. That ſin is not only our act, but our nature, leaves us without deſert of pity, or matter of apology. We pity a man, who by accident hath taken poyſon, and is ſick: But who pities a Serpent, whoſe nature is poyſonous? or ſuch creatures, to whom poyſon is as food? When *David* confeſſeth (*Pſal.* 51.) *In iniquity was I conceived*, &c. Was he ſowing a fig-leaf over his uncleanneſs? Or covering it with carnal reaſonings? No marvel though I bring forth ſin, who was conceived in ſin. No marvel if I conceive iniquity, who was brought forth in iniquity. No, *David* doth not excuſe, but humble himſelf; he doth not challenge mercy, but ſees his need of mercy, becauſe he was conceived in ſin, and brought forth in iniquity. Such alſo (I conceive) was the frame of *Job*'s ſpirit in making this confeſſion, and pouring out this complaint upon his birth-ſin.

His deſign was, Firſt to abaſe himſelf, to make his heart more pliable and ready to ſubmit unto ſaddeſt diſpenſations. I am unclean; And is it any wonder that the holy God, who cannot behold any unclean thing, ſhould throw an unclean perſon over head and ears into the waters of affliction?

Ex naturæ ſuæ corruptione ſperat Deum facilius pertrahere, ad veniam ſibi dandum, ne ſe ita graviter affligat. Merc.

Secondly, He ſpeaks this as a motive to compaſſion, deſiring the Lord to mitigate his ſorrows, while he aggravated his ſin; yea, to ceaſe from afflicting, becauſe he knew (by reaſon of this natural uncleanneſs) he could not ceaſe to ſin, till he ſhould ceaſe to be in this world. Thus God himſelf argues for his own compaſſions and ſparing mercies to the renewed World after the Flood: For whereas he had ſaid (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *The imagination of the thought of mans heart is only evil continually, and therefore I will deſtroy, man whom I have created, from the face of the earth.* Yet at the eighth Chapter, ver. 21. the Lord reſolves thus, *I will not again ſmite the earth any more, and every living thing, as I have done:* Why? *For the imagination of mans heart is evil from his youth:* As if he had ſaid, *Though I drown'd the world with water, yet they are not waſhed from their uncleanneſs; I ſee water will not fetch out ſin, nor my judgment make man holy: I muſt alwayes deſtroy, if I ſhould deſtroy as often as men do wickedly, therefore I will not ſmite the earth in this ſort any more.* Thus *Job* might move the Lord to forbear afflicting him, becauſe he could not (being born in ſin) forbear to ſin; though in this he aggravates his own ſinfulneſs. We may beſeech the Lord to ſpare us when, we act ſin, becauſe our natures are ſinful: But wo unto thoſe, who go about, either to palliate or extenuate their acts of ſin, by the ſinfulneſs of their natures.

VERS. 5, 6.

Seeing his dayes are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou haſt appointed him his bounds that he cannot paſs.

Turn from him that he may reſt, till he ſhall accompliſh as an hireling his day.

JOB having pleaded for pity, upon conſideration of the weakneſs and frailty of man, upon the conſideration of the ſhortneſs of his life, and ſinfulneſs of his nature, proceeds here to another Argument from a double conſideration about death.

Firſt, Becauſe death hath a ſet and a fixed time, at which it will come, and will not tarry, in the fifth and ſixth verſes.

Secondly, Becauſe there is no returning from death: When death hath got us into its hand, it holdeth us faſt, and keepeth us ſure enough. This he illuſtrates two wayes,

Firſt, By a diſſimilitude, in *ver*, 7, 8, 9, 10. *There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again*, &c. But it is not ſo with man: *Man dieth and waſteth away, man giveth up the ghoſt, and where is he?* This is a diſſimilitude.

Secondly, He illuſtrateth it by a ſimilitude, *ver.* 11, 12. *As the waters fail from the ſea, and the floud decayeth and dryeth, ſo man lyeth down and riſeth not.* By theſe two are ſet forth the prevailing ſtrength of death. When once we are under the power of the grave, there is no releaſe nor fetching us back by any created ſtrength.

In theſe two verſes, the fifth and ſixth, *Job* openeth his firſt Argument, that there is a ſet time; and not only a ſet time, but a time irrevocable; a time ſo ſet, that there can be no unſetling of it, *The number of his months are with thee, thou haſt ſet him his bounds, which he cannot paſs.*

His dayes are determined.

The Argument ſtands thus,

He ſhould be mercifully and gently dealt with in this life, whoſe life is ſet out by certain bounds and limits, beyond which he cannot paſs, and from which he cannot return.

But thus it is with poor man, *There is a ſet period of his life, and as he cannot get beyond it, ſo he cannot come back from it.*

Therefore turn away and let me have ſome reſt

As if he had ſaid, *Beſides, that this life is full of evil (as was ſhewed before) death, the greateſt of natural evils, is at hand, which ſuddenly takes us away, throweth us into the grave, hides us there without poſſibility of returning to ſuch a life as we here enjoy.* *Job* hath uſed this Argument before: Neither ſhould it ſeem ſtrange, that he now repeats, and modeſtly objects it unto God to move pity, and ſtir the bowels of his compaſſion towards him. The Pſalmiſt, whether *David* or ſome other Pen-man, argues thus; (*Pſal.* 89. 48.) *Remember, Lord, how ſhort my time is; wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth and ſhall not ſee death, and ſhall he deliver his ſoul from the power of the grave?* He urgeth the Lord to grant ſome eaſe, ſome breathing, ſome reſpit and relaxation in this life, becauſe death cannot be far off, from which there is no reſcue, no returning.

The word which we tranſlate *determined*, ſignifies properly to dig, and by a Metaphor to make an exact and curious ſearch; or by ſearching thoughts to dig down into the depth of a buſineſs, and then to ſettle it. Hence it is tranſlated *diligent*, (Prov. 10. 4.) *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*; properly, *The hand of the digger makes rich.* And the word imports not only digging in the ground for ordinary commodities, as for ſtones, or coals, but digging for gold and ſilver, for the moſt precious metals or minerals; How diligent are men when they dig for ſuch treaſure and for riches? Such is the diligent hand which maketh rich. Now becauſe when we make any ſerious determination upon any matter before us, we firſt ſearch or dig into the bottom of it: Therefore the word is tranſlated here to *determine.* 'Tis ſo alſo, *Iſa.* 10. 23. *The Lord God of hoſts hath made a conſumption, even determined in the midſt of all the land.* God makes many conſumptions, he layes whole Countries and Kingdoms waſte; but his are not conſumptions at a venture, or by hap-hazard, accidental conſumptions, but *conſumptions determined*,; that is, the Lord ſets down directly who and how many, where and when, what perſons, what places, what eſtates and things ſhall

חרץ *movit, agitavit quadam alacritate, etiam ſedulò & ſolicitè minutiſſima quæque curavit, ordinavit, ſtatuit, decrevit.*

יד חרצים

Conſumet populum. & præciſis amputatiſq; inutilibus impiis, abbreviabit populum & ad minutiſſinas juſtorum reliquias, rediget. Pined.

ſhall be conſumed; God makes a determined conſumption in the greateſt confuſions and hurry of the nations. When we think nothing is done wiſely, all is done wiſely. And that which croſſeth the revealed, fulfils the ſecret will of God. The moſt diſorderly conſumptions (to us) are determined and ordered by God.

Dies hominis dicuntur definiti ad menſuram certam & anguſtum. Dies breves hominis ſunt, Vulg. Ἐὰν ϗ μία ἡμέρα ὁ βίος αὐτῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. חרץ *idem quod* חתך Rab. Dav.

As this word [**determined**] is applyed to the dayes of man, it hath a twofold ſignification.

Firſt, It notes that the dayes of man are reduced by God to a certain number.

Secondly, That they are reduced to a ſhort number, ſo ſome tranſlate, *Are not the dayes of man ſhort or few ?* and the *Septuagint* yet cloſer : *Is not the life of man upon the earth one day ?* as if all life were contracted into one ſingle day, or determined into the narroweſt compaſs.

Yet I conceive (though the Original may bear it) this latter ſenſe is not ſuteable to this place; *Job* told told us at the beginning of the chapter, that the dayes of man are few upon the earth; And 'tis not probable that he would touch upon the ſame ſtring twiſe in ſo narrow a compaſs.

So then, This determination of our dayes refers *to a certain number or meaſure* of our dayes. Which expoſition as it keeps a difference in the words, ſo it doth much illuſtrate the mind of *Job*, who in this diſcourſe endeavours by various arguments to ſet forth the miſery and weakneſs of man, and to plead with God upon that account of pity and ſparing mercy. This interpretation falls in joint alſo with the next clauſe of the verſe, about which I ſhall add a word before I give the point.

The number of his moneths are with thee;

Apud nos numerum illorum eſſe dicimus quorum numerus a nobis ſtabilitur. Aquin.

That is, In thy power, under thy eſtabliſhment, or in thy knowledge, ſo we render this phraſe (*Chap.* 10.7.) *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, the Hebrew is, *It is with thee that I am not wicked*, ſo, *the number of his moneths are with thee,* that is, they are plain before thine eye, and eſtabliſhed in thy counſel.

Obſerve firſt, into what ſmall portions he diſtributes the life of man, dayes and moneths, *His dayes are determined, and the number of his moneths are with thee.*

> *God hath a diſtinct knowledge of every particular time of mans life, and digeſteth it into the ſmalleſt diviſions ;*

Non de annis ſed menſibus & diebus ſolum fit mētio ad diſtinctam de ſingularibus Dei notitiam exprimendam. Bold.

He knoweth not only thoſe more remarkable ſtages of infancy, of childhood, of youth, of full age and old age, but the moneths and dayes of our lives: yea, his knowledge reacheth unto (which to us are almoſt indiſcernable) hours, minutes and moments, even theſe are meaſured, numbred, caſt up by the infinite foreknowledge of the eternal God.

> Secondly Obſerve, *The dayes and moneths of mans life are ſet and fixed.*

There is a reſolve paſſed upon every man, our times are not now to be diſpoſed of; God hath paſt the account of time from all eternity. As to every thing there is a ſeaſon, (*Eccl.* 3. 1.) ſo to every perſon : and this is true not only of ſingle perſons, but even of whole generations, yea of all the generations of mankind, (*Act.* 17.26.) *He hath made of one blood , all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth , and hath determined the times before appointed.* God hath determined not only how long man ſhall live, but how long the world ſhall live; he ſaid of mankind before the flood, *his dayes ſhall be an* 120. *years,* Gen. 6. 3. He told *Abraham* his ſeed ſhould be a ſtranger *four hundred years.* He told the Jews their captivity ſhould continue *ſeventy years in literal Babylon.* And he hath told us (if we could read the figures) how many years the Church of the Goſpel ſhould groan under myſtical *Babylon. All things and perſons on earth are dated in heaven. Whatſoever man is Lord of, I am ſure he is not Lord of time,* he cannot diſpoſe of one minute for himſelf or others. We live not at our own pleaſure, nor at the pleaſure of any creature, God keeps reckoning for us. The very hairs of our head are numbred, then ſurely the dayes of our lives are numbred. The hairs of the head are meaneſt parts indeed but an excrement of man, and there are ſuch multitudes, ſuch nnmbers of hairs upon the head, that it is a wonder they ſhould be numbred, or any account kept of them : yet to ſhew the providence of God extending to the leaſt things, it extends to the numbring of hairs and dayes.

Now, if God hath determined the dayes of mans life, then enquire not of the ſtars or of ſtar-gazers for the number of them. When *David* would know the number of his dayes, he doth not reſort to Aſtrologers, but to God; *Lord, teach me to number my dayes,* he puts that requeſt to God; nor did he put it to God as enquiring for the preciſe number of his dayes, (about this we muſt not be curious) as to know whether we ſhall live twenty or thirty, whither ſeventy or eighty years, ſuch numbers are not to be ſearched after. It is not for us to know theſe times and ſeaſons, God keeps them in his own hand : *David* I ſay, did not trouble himſelf or God about this) but he prayed that God would teach him that holy skill to number his dayes, that he might apply his heart unto wiſdom; conſidering he had but little time, he would be inſtructed how to improve and uſe it well.

I ſhall open the laſt branch of the verſe, and then add ſomewhat further by way of Obſervation.

As *Job* acknowledgeth that our dayes are determined, and that the number of our moneths is with God, ſo he concludes that this determination is unalterable and indiſpenſable.

Thou haſt appointed him his bounds which he cannot paſs.

חקי עשית *Statuta feciſti Statuta enim & decreta Dei de hominis vita ſunt velut cancelli intra quos homo continetur & ſunt certi fines, quos ultra citraque nequit conſiſtere vita.* Merc.

It is uſual with men to do and undo, to reſolve and reſcind their reſolutions : but the determination of God ſhall ſtand. He ſaith and may ſay it, *What I have written I have written. There are no raſures in the records of heaven : Thou haſt appointed him his bounds which he cannot paſs* ; The Hebrew is, *Thou haſt made him a ſtatute,* thou haſt made him a Law : we rightly tranſlate *law* by *bounds*, for laws are the bounds of mens actions, men would be boundleſs and keep within no compaſs, if there were no laws to rule and order them; God gave a law to bound all men, and men make laws to bound ſuch as are under them. And as God gives us a law to bound our lives in morality, ſo he gives a bound or a law to our lives in nature; and as the way of mans life is ſet out by a Law, ſo alſo is his end or death. The Apoſtle ſpeaks very ſutably to this expreſſion (*Heb.* 9.27.) *It is appointed* (or made as a ſtatute or law) *to all men once to die.* There is a law, or a ſtatute paſſed that man muſt die : and there is a law, or a ſtatute paſſed how long man ſhall live, or when he muſt die, and that Law of death is irrepealable.

Iterato precepto opus non eſt.

When the Apoſtle ſaith, *it is appointed to man once to die*; (as we tranſlate,) The word *once* is not to be referred to *die*, as if there were ſome ſuſpition that man could die twiſe (when the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks of ſome that are twiſe dead in ſpirituals, he means only they are *throughly dead)* But *once* is referred to *appointed*, it was *once* appointed, and that once ſhall ſtand, there ſhall never be any altering or renewing of the ſtatute; there's no need to make a new law upon the point, God hath *once* ſetled it, and it is ſetled for ever : When *Abiſhai* went to the cave where *Saul* was, and asked *David* leave to kill him, *I will ſmite him* (ſaith he) *but once, and I will not ſmite him the ſecond time,* I will make ſure work at a blow; (1 *Sam.*26.8.) Such is the intendment of the particle *once* in that Law : The Lord hath appointed the bounds of life *once*, and the bounds of dearh *once :* he will not appoint them a ſecond. *Thou haſt ſet him his bounds which he cannot paſs.*

Impoſſibile eſt hominē diutius vel minus vivere quam divina diſpoſitio habet, licet hunc hominē nunc vel prius mori ſit contingens, ſi in ſe conſideretur. Aquin.

There are two opinions about the bound of mans life, or what this bound is: Firſt, ſome place it in natural cauſes, as in the temperament and conſtitution of the body. There is a truth in that, but we muſt not reſt there : Natural cauſes are ſomewhat, and men who live long are uſually of a laſting complexion and conſtitution. But ſecondly, the true bounds are ſet by God; *the will of God is the limit of mans life*; for though there be a ſutableneſs in the natural temper of men to ſuch a term of life, yet God often acts beſide and croſſeth that; ſome healthy men die young, and ſome crazy men live till they are old. The bounds may be paſſed which our natural complexion ſets, the bounds cannot be paſſed which the providence and will of God ſets : That, man dies at ſuch a time, may be a contingency in reference to ſecond cauſes, but let him die when he will, it is neceſſary in regard of the firſt cauſe. *He cannot paſs.*

עבר *Verbū prætereundi rectè quadrat legi & ſtatuto.*

The word *paſs*, is proper to laws and *bounds*; bounds are ſet on purpoſe to keep us from *paſſing* beyond them. As all good laws are bounds which we ſhould not paſs: ſo *tranſgreſſion* which is the breach of ſome law, ſignifies a paſſing over or beyond the law. God hath ſet man a bound or a law, how long he ſhall live, as well as a law in what manner he ſhall live. The former bound is paſſed by man every day, the latter was never paſſed by any man. We often paſs the bounds of the moral law of God, but we cannot paſs the bounds of the eternal decree of God.

Hence Obſerve, *That as the dayes of man are determined by God, ſo man cannot live a day beyond that determination.*

Friends cannot protract, enemies cannot ſhorten the life of man one moment. How often did the Jews deſign the death of Chriſt, but they could not accompliſh it, till his *hour was come*. And when his hour was come, he would not paſs it. What was ſaid of Chriſt is true of every man, he lives not after, nor dies before his hour is come. Man is apt to think himſelf maſter of his own life, if not to continue it, yet to end it: and we have a ſaying (which ſome count a ſubtle and a wiſe one) *He that cares not for his own life is maſter of another mans life:* but both ſpeak falſe doctrine, and are confuted by *Jobs* divinity. What God ſpeaks of that law which is the rule of our lives in grace (*Mat.*5.18.) *Till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or title ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled:* The ſame may we ſpeak of this law, which is the limit of our lives in nature, one jot or title of this law ſhall not paſs unfulfilled, and when once this law is fulfilled, the life of man cannot paſs one jot or title further.

Some Scriptures ſeem to ſpeak againſt *Jobs* doctrine of the certain determination of mans dayes by the decree of God. I ſhall briefly clear them.

Firſt, When *Hezekiah* was ſick, and (as he thought) dying, did not God ſend him a meſſage by the Prophet *Iſaiah* (2 King. 20.5.) *Turn again and tell the captain of my people, thus ſaith the Lord the God of David thy father,* &c. *I will heal thee, and* (not only ſo, but) *I will add to thy life fifteen years.* If fifteen years were added, then ſurely his dayes were not determined: either God had not appointed him a ſet time, or he changed his mind and came to a new appointment: and *Hezekiah* did either paſs the bounds which God once fixed, or he might have fallen ſhort of them.

I anſwer,

The fifteen years added to *Hezekiahs* life, were added to *Hezekiahs* date, not to Gods. *Hezekiah* looked upon himſelf as a dead man: he was ſick, and ſick to death in his own opinion, poſſibly alſo in the opinion of all his ſervants and Phyſitians, yet he, & they too were deceived; God had determined him a longer time, and tells him he had, *Thou ſhalt live yet fifteen years:* This addition doth not imply any alteration in the purpoſe of God, as if having once decreed that *Hezekiah* ſhould live but forty years, he afterwards (upon his prayer) granted that he ſhould live fifty five: For as he determined *Hezekiah* ſhould be ſick unto death, and that he ſhould receive ſentence of death in himſelf, ſo he determined alſo, that *Hezekiah* ſhould recover and out-live that dangerous ſickneſs fifteen years.

Secondly, That of the Preacher may be objected (*Eccleſ.* 7.16, 17.) *Be not righteous over-much, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe; why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf? Be not over-much wicked, neither be thou fooliſh, why ſhouldeſt thou die before thy time?*

I anſwer,

He that dies before his time, dies not before the time which God hath determined. An unſeaſonable death to man doth not prevent Gods ſeaſon. To clear which we muſt diſtinguiſh about death, which is twofold; firſt, natural, ſecondly, violent: A man that dieth a violent death, is ſaid to die before his time, becauſe he dieth before that time which he might have reached according to the courſe of nature: ſin cuts man off before nature cuts him off, but then God cuts him off for his ſin. Thus many die before their time; and, except in that ſenſe, no man dieth before his time. That, ſuch was the meaning of *Solomon*, is plain in the text, when he ſaith, *be not wicked over-much*: Which (by the way) doth not imply that there is a mean in wickedneſs, or that the Preacher would perſwade men only to a temper in wickedneſs; be wicked ſo far but no further; all wickedneſs is too much or more then enough. *Every mean in ſinning is an extream.* But when he ſaith be not over-much wicked, he intends only thus much, give not thy ſelf up to wickedneſs, leſt the Magiſtrate (who bears not the ſword in vain) call thee to an account, and ſend thee to the grave by the hand of juſtice, before old age or ſickneſs ſend thee thither. The Hebrew is, *Wherefore ſhouldeſt thou die in a time not thine?* that is, before thine old age, for that is mans proper time of dying. Again, The proper time of mans dying is, when he is ready for death: As when a Steward is ready to make his account, then is his beſt time to give up his Stewardſhip; and therefore be not wicked over-much, leſt God take thee away when thy accounts are altogether unready, that's no time for thee to die in. There is a time of him that dieth, and a time of death; the time of death is whenſoever a man dieth, but the time of him that dieth is only then, when he is fit to die.

Thirdly, Some may object the promiſe which is added to the fifth commandment, *Honour thy father and mother that thy dayes may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee* (Exod. 20.12.) which carries this threat in it; if thou diſhonour thy father and mother, thy dayes ſhall be ſhortened: Whence it may be argued, that, the ſhortening or lengthening of mans dayes depends upon his own actings, upon his obedience or diſobedience, not upon the ſentence and decree of God: for if a mans life cannot be lengthened beyond its ſet time, where lieth the motive or ſtrength of this argument?

I anſwer,

This explicit promiſe of lengthening, and implicit threat of ſhortning our dayes, doth not enforce a mutability in the appointment of God about the date of our dayes; but only holds forth a token or an evidence who they are to whom God hath appointed many dayes. Such as are obedient to parents, may with warrant look upon themſelves as deſigned by God to long life: and they who are rebellious againſt their parents, have a witneſs againſt themſelves, that God hath allotted them but a ſhort life, or will cut them off ſhortly by death. For (as *Solomon* ſpeaks) *The ravens of the valleys ſhall pluck out the eyes of ſuch and eat them,* that is, they ſhall die ignominiouſly and their carkaſſes ſhall become meat for the fowls of the air. Our obedience or diſobedience to the revealed will of God, doth not make any change of, but fulfils and draws out the ſecret will of God.

Fourthly, Saith not *David* (Pſal. 55.23.) that, *The blood-thirſty and deceitful man ſhall not live out half his dayes:* And again (*Pſal.* 89.45.) *The dayes of our youth haſt thou ſhortened:* If our dayes may be halved and ſhortened, then our dayes are not unalterably bounded and determined.

I anſwer,

There is a twofold limit of mans dayes; there is a general limit, and there is a ſpecial or perſonal limit: The general limit, is threeſcore and ten or fourſcore years (*Pſal.* 90.10.) (Thoſe few exceptions which ſome have made by exceeding this limit, do not weaken this general rule). But beſides this general, there is a particular limit upon every perſon. The limit of one may be threeſcore years, when another is limited to fourty, a third to twenty, a fourth to five, and a fift to four, &c. Theſe are ſpecial limits upon ſpecial men; now when the Pſalmiſt ſaith, that *a deceitful man ſhall not live out half his dayes*, the meaning of it is, he ſhall not live out half the dayes of mans general limit, as ſuppoſe a bloody man be cut of at thirty, he hath not lived out half ſeventy or eighty years, which are the common bounds of life preſcribed to mankind beyond which they cannot paſs; but this man lives out all the dayes of his ſpecial limit, or all the dayes which were determined for his portion in the land of the living. Thus the bloodieſt and moſt deceitful wretch that ever was in the world lives out all his dayes. Our dayes are as many as God appoints in ſpecial and no more, whenſoever or in what way ſoever we are brought to the period our dayes.

From the whole context Obſerve by way of corollary,

Firſt, *The decrees of God are abſolute and irrevocable.*

As we cannot add one cubit to our ſtature, ſo not one hour to our dayes. And ſuch as the ſtatute or decree of God is concerning the number of dayes, which every perſon ſhall paſs in this temporal life, ſuch alſo is the decree of God concerning the number of thoſe perſons who ſhall inherit eternal life. The dayes of mortality are determined for every perſon, how many they ſhall be; and it is determined who and how many perſons ſhall enjoy a bleſſed eternity.

Secondly Obſerve, *The abſoluteneſs and irrevocability of Gods decrees concerning the number of our dayes, doth not diſingage us from the uſe of means, and ſecond helps for the continuance and lengthening of our dayes.*

Man muſt not ſay, God hath decreed how long I ſhall live, therefore I need not take any care of my life; this were to reſiſt the command of God, while we think we ſubmit to his decree: Whereas indeed all the commands of God are ſubordinate and miniſterial to the fulfilling of his decrees. Will any man ſay, God hath determined my dayes, which I cannot paſs, therefore when I am hungry I will not eat, when I am ſick I will not take phyſick nor uſe medicines. The decree of God is ſo far from calling us off from, that it obligeth us to the uſe of all due means for our preſervation. When Satan tempted Chriſt to throw himſelf down from the pinacle of the Temple, he anſwers, *Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* While we neglect our ſelves we tempt God: we muſt not throw away our lives, becauſe God keeps them. *Jacob* had aſſurance of his life by a ſpecial promiſe, yet when *Eſau* came out againſt him with four hundred men, he doth not ſay, *Lord, thou haſt undertaken for my protection, what need I trouble my ſelf? I will ſit down under that banner of thy promiſes and providence, which thou haſt diſplaid over me, let* Eſau *rage and threaten, let him muſter and lead all his forces againſt me if he will, what care I? I fear him not, he muſt break through the truth of God before he breaks in upon me; the word of God muſt fall before I fall: I am under the charge of heaven.* Doth *Jacob* make this uſe of the promiſe? no, he falls a praying like a Saint, and he falls a providing for his defence like a Souldier (*Gen.* 32.) Had not *David* a ſure word from God, that he ſhould live to wear the crown of *Iſrael* and *Judah?* yea, he had not only a word but a ſign, he was anointed by *Samuel,* which ceremony aſſured him he ſhould be king, yet how doth he improve all aids and friends to ſave his life: He doth not ſay, *Samuel hath told me from the Lord, that I ſhall be king, therefore I will not ſtir a foot from Saul, let him do his worſt:* no, he withdraws from Court, and gathers an army; he defends himſelf by power, he doth not ſtand to the naked defence of the promiſe. And if it be our duty to labour after the preſervation of a temporal life, though God hath decreed the bounds of it, then much more ſhould we do thus in reference to ſpiritual and eternal life. Some will ſay, God hath made a decree which cannot paſs, who ſhall be ſaved and who damned, therefore what need we uſe the means of ſalvation? what need we avoid the wayes of damnation? but remember, the ſame word commands us to *depart from iniquity,* which ſaith, *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, and he knoweth who are his.* 'Tis as much our duty to give all diligence to make our calling and election ſure, as it is to believe that the election and calling of God are ſure.

Hominū excuſationes ſunt Dei tētationes.

Thirdly Obſerve, *If our dayes are determined by God, then we ſhould not be afraid (when we have a due call) of ſhortening our dayes, by running hazards and hard adventures for God.*

Our life is in Gods hand, he hath ſet the bounds, which no mans malice can ſhorten, nor any cowardiſe of our own lengthen. As none could bring us into the world, ſo none can thruſt us out, till the time appointed. Let not perſecutors take away the truth from us, which God hath given us to believe, for they cannot take away a day from us, which God hath given us to live. This is an excellent ground of courage, but no ground of careleſsneſs: Were we perſwaded of this truth, it would eaſe us of much inordinate fear, though it ſhould not at all abate our orderly care of this preſent life. *Paul* was in *deaths often, but he died not once,* till his day came. *Paul* was in the lions mouth, but the lion could not eat him, becauſe he was not then meat for death.

Laſtly, *God is moſt exact to his own numbers.*

As he is exact concerning duties by him commanded to require them, ſo he is exact concerning dayes by him appointed, that we may enjoy them. *My Spirit* (ſaith the Lord) *ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man, his dayes ſhall be an hundred and twenty years* (*Gen.* 6.5.) The flood came not upon the old world an hour before this number of years was run out, and the old world could not paſs that number of years an hour, the deluge comes, and all are drowned. The Lord foretold *Abraham* (as was toucht before) *Gen.* 15.13. *Thy ſeed ſhall be a ſtranger in a land which is not theirs, they ſhall ſerve them and they ſhall afflict them four hundred years* (beginning the account at the birth of *Iſaac*) The fulfilling of which prophecie is reported in the holy ſtory (*Exod.* 12.40.) *It came to paſs at the end of the four hundred and thirty years* (beginning the account from the day in which the promiſe was made to *Abraham*) *the ſelfſame day it came to paſs that all the hoaſt of the Lord went out of the land of Egypt.* God did not only not fail them a day, but he did not fail them a piece of a day; for they came out in the night, becauſe the four hundred and thirty years were expired that night, and when the time was out, though it were night, God would not ſtay till morning or break of day: he would rather provide them a Torch, an extraordinary night light (then ſtay for day-light) that ſo his word might be fulfilled in its perfect ſeaſon. The *Babyloniſh* captivity continued ſeventy years and no longer. And ſome give that for the reaſon why *Belſhazzar* was ſlain in the night, becauſe then the years of that captivity were expired. The collation of times proves it, that *Daniels weeks* were fulfilled to a day at the death of Chriſt. God the great diſpoſer of time and numberer of dayes, hath alſo calculated all the times of the Churches troubles and deliverances in the book of the *Revelation:* and there the dayes of *Babylon* are determined, and her bounds are ſet which ſhe ſhall not paſs. We have a ſaying, much like our ſelves, *A day breaks no ſquare:* but it is not ſo with God, he keeps time with us to an hour. All the viſions of God are (as the Prophet *Habakkuk* ſpeaks of that viſion, *chap.* 2. 3.) *for an appointed time, but at the end they ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall not lie, though they tarry, wait for them, becauſe they will ſurely come, they will not tarry.* The viſions of God do tarry ſometimes beyond our time, but they never tarry beyond Gods time. He hath ſet a bound to all the affairs and ſtates on earth, which they cannot paſs.

Job having thus aſſerted the certainty and irrevocability of Gods decree about the dayes of man, grounds an earneſt petition upon it in the next verſe,

Verſ. 6. **Turn from him that he may reſt, till he ſhall accompliſh as a hireling his dayes.**

But is this a good petition? Doth *Job* pray in faith or according to knowledge, when he prayeth the Lord to turn from him? Is not the preſence of God moſt pretious and deſirable? Is not the departure of God the ſaddeſt affliction of man? why then doth he deſire the Lord to turn away, ſeeing it is our happineſs to have God near us.

I anſwer,

God may be ſaid to turn away from man in two reſpects, Firſt, In diſpleaſure, when he ceaſeth to do us good, Secondly, in favour, when he forbeareth to lay any further evil upon us, it is this latter turning away which *Job* prayes for.

ἀπόστα ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ. Sept. *Diſcede ne tua præſentia cōſerves me, neque morti permitte.* Aquin. *Abſiſte ab eo ut deſinat, cum jā grato animo excipiet diē fatalē, tanquā mercenarius.* Tygur.

Yet ſome interpret him in the firſt ſenſe, *turn away,* that is, withdraw thy preſence from me, even thy ſupporting and ſtrengthening preſence, which while it remains with me I cannot die, therefore withdraw it, and let me die, let me go to reſt, until I may expect at the reſurrection my reward, even as a hireling doth his dayes-wages for his dayes-work.

There is a threefold truth in this expoſition, yet I cannot give it as the truth of this text.

Firſt, It is a truth that the preſence of God is the ſupport of our lives; if he do but turn away we quickly dye, and return unto our duſt. The damned would dye, but God will not turn away from them, his angry preſence is with them to hold their ſouls in life, that ſo both ſoul and body might be held in pain. The Elect muſt dye if God ſhould turn away from them; his favourable preſence holds their ſouls in life, and will hold both their ſouls and bodies together in joy for ever. As the riſing of the Sun is the cauſe of the day, and when the Sun departs and turns away, darkneſs covers the face of the earth; ſo the preſence of God is the ſupport of our lives, and when God departs and turns away, death covers our faces in the earth.

Secondly, 'Tis true, *death is a reſt*; death is not only (like ſleep) the parentheſis of our labours, but the full ſtop and period of our labours: There's no work in the grave.

Thirdly, 'Tis a truth, that *the toils, troubles, and evils of this life make death deſirable.* 'Tis beſt to deſire to dye, that we may enjoy Chriſt and God, who are the chiefeſt good; yet the fear or feeling of evil cauſe moſt to deſire death. It is ſome mercy to dye before times of judgment; and it is a mercy to dye in times of judgment (*Rev.* 14. 13.) *I heard a voice from Heaven ſaying to me, write, bleſſed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours:* Some lay the emphaſis upon thoſe words, *From henceforth: John* was prophecying of troubles and perſecutions to come upon the Church of God. Now, the Spirit ſaith, *Bleſſed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from henceforth:* As if he had ſaid, The time I am prophecying of, will be ſo full of labour and trouble, that even they who live in the Lord, may account it their bleſſedneſs to dye then, as well as it is their bleſſedneſs to dye at any time in the Lord.

But I paſs this expoſition. The words hold out rather a deprecation of, then a prayer for death: Take it thus; *Job* having ſaid to God, at the third verſe, *Wilt thou open thy eye upon ſuch an one?* here intreats God to turn from him: As if he had ſaid, *Be not ſo ſtrict in marking who I am, or what I have done:* He ſpeaks after the manner of men, who turn away from thoſe whom they intend to ſpare: If a Father would not correct his Child, who hath offended him, he turns away, that he may avoid the temptation, or provocation of doing it. Thus *Job* intreats the favour of God, or the forbearance of his anger, *Turn away from me*, let me be quiet a while; let me have ſome peaceable dayes in the world before I depart the world.

Ne me tam accurate & attente obſerves, q. d. ſimula te non videre.

Turn from him that he may reſt.

The word ſignifies to ceaſe or give over action (*Ezek.* 3. 2.) *He that heareth let him hear; and he that forbeareth let him forbear.* (Gen. 41. 9.) *Joſeph* took account of the corn, till there was ſo much that he left numbring, he numbred no more. God is ſaid to ceaſe from the work of Creation, becauſe he reſted from that kind of action, he created no more. Here, *Let me reſt*, is, let me have a ceſſation from ſufferings, let me be afflicted no more.

חדל *Significat finire & quieſcere, ſive ceſſare ab actione.*

Others read, *Let me alone that it may reſt*; that is, let the affliction reſt: So he prayed (which may expound this place) at the tenth Chapter, *ver.* 20, 21. *Are not my dayes few, ceaſe then and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little:* As if he had ſaid, *Forbear, let this poor man alone.*

Ut ceſſet ſc, hæc plaga vel afflictio. Chal. Metr. *Non vitam longiorem precatur ſed pœnæ relaxationẽ*

Till he ſhall accompliſh as a hireling his dayes.

עד־ירצה: *Verbum* רצה *Significat vehementer velle & delectari re aliqua. Metaphorice complere velut læto animo, res finem velut optare videntur, & gratum habere quaſi eo propendeant.* Merc.

That the dayes of man are like the dayes of an hireling, was ſhewed (*chap.* 7. 1.) I ſhall now only open the accompliſhment of his day.

The word which we tranſlate *accompliſh*, ſignifies properly to *deſire* and *will* with great *delight*, and by a Metaphor to *accompliſh*, becauſe we labour earneſtly to accompliſh that, which we greatly deſire and delight in. So here, *till he ſhall accompliſh* with delight, with willingneſs, his day, or bring his life to that longed for end, as a hireling his day: ſo ſome render, *Till the hour or time comes, which is ſo much deſired:* That is (ſaith the *Gloſs*) till I am as willing to dye, as a labouring man is to go to ſupper and to bed. A hireling is put to hard labour, yet he comforts himſelf that evening will come, and then he ſhall have both reſt and wages: Let me alone, *that I may accompliſh as a hireling* (who is hard wrought) *my day:* That's pleaſing to him, and ſo would this be to me. Again, *The dayes of an hireling*, notes a time ſet out to a ſpecial buſineſs: As the *dayes of a man* note the whole time of our pilgrimage here on earth: And then his meaning is, let me reſt, till I have finiſhed the work for which I came into the world; let me not depart without my errand. One of the Ancients finds it thus in ſome copies, *Turn from me that I may reſt and refreſh my life as a hireling, who hath breathings and times of intermiſſion granted him from his labour.* But ſurely *Job* intends here a period, not a pauſe of his labours.

Donec optata veniet. Vulg. *Hebraizantes putant* Jobum *hic petere, ut tam diu permittatur vivere, quo uſque ipſe ſponte ſua ſenio jam confectus optet mortem, i.e. donec ſponte moriatur.* Chryſoſt.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The life of man is a laborious life.*

He muſt accompliſh his dayes as a hireling: He is a labourer, not a loiterer. Sin brought pain into our labour; but the duty of labour was before ſin.

Secondly Note, *We have but a day of labour.*

A hireling doth not think much of it; it is but a day, and if ſome have a longer day then others, yet ſtill 'tis but a day: This day will end, and it will be as if it had never begun; we ſhall forget all our ſorrows. A woman in travel hath great ſorrow, but when the work is over, ſhe forgets all her ſorrow, for joy that a man is born into the world: When we come to the wiſhed accompliſhment of our labours, we ſhall forget that we were in labour. As our labours are little regarded by the world here, ſo we ſhall as little remember them our ſelves hereafter; we ſhall lay them all under our pillows, when we go to the grave, and talk no more of them.

Thirdly Note, *This life muſt be accounted for*; or, *there is a reckoning to come about this life.*

Every man accompliſheth as a hireling his day; a hireling hath his work viewed before his wages are paid: *Every man muſt give an account of himſelf to God.* Evil workers ſhall be paid with death: They who do good ſhall receive the free gift of eternal life: Our labour ſhall not be in vain, either in the Lord, or out of the Lord: all that we do ſhall be conſidered: Wicked men ſhall have their pay for what they have done, and the Saints ſhall receive their reward: *Their works ſhall follow them:* They ſhall not receive wages for their work; but they ſhall receive benefit by their work, worth more then their work ten thouſand times told. Though Saints are not mercinary (they work, not as hirelings for pay) yet in the iſſue they ſhall have better then pay for all their works. They ſhall receive more for the leaſt work, then the beſt works can deſerve. A cup of cold water ſhall have a reward, rivers of oyl have no merit. It were not worth while to be as an hireling, or to ſet our hand to the nobleſt works among men, if all the return were to come through the hands of men: But as whatſoever we do in this world is in the ſight of God: ſo it is alſo in the memory of God. For, *He is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10.) Both the labour of our callings, and the labour of our ſufferings, ſhall have a full reward.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not ceaſe.

Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the ſtock thereof dye in the ground:

Yet through the ſcent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

But man dyeth and waſteth away; yea, a man giveth up the ghoſt, and where is he?

As the waters fail from the ſea, and the flood decayeth and dryeth up:

So man lieth down and riſeth not; till the Heavens be no more they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their ſleep.

IN theſe ſix verſes, *Job* amplifies and illuſtrates his former Aſſertion, that, *The dayes of man are determined, and the number of his months, which he cannot paſs:* He doth this, Firſt, By a diſſimilitude, Secondly, By a ſimilitude.

The diſſimilitude is laid down, in the ſeventh, eighth, ninth and tenth verſes: We have the explication in the ſeventh, eigth and ninth verſes, and the application of it, at the tenth. *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down,* &c. *ver.*7. *But man dyeth and waſteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghoſt, and where is he?* ver. 10.

The ſimilitude is contained in the eleventh and twelfth verſes, *As the waters fail from the ſea,* &c. *So man lyeth down and riſeth not, till the Heavens be no more.*

Verſe 7. **For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not ceaſe.**

The general ſubject of this context is the ſame with the former, which hath alſo been inſiſted upon from other paſſages in this book; namely, that man dying, returns not from death in this world: So that (here being no new matter) my chief buſineſs will be to explain the terms, and clear the parts of this diſſimilitude:

There is hope of a tree.] Or, *A tree hath hope,* ſo the letter of the Hebrew, and ſo it is rendered by learned Interpreters, aſcribing that to a tree which is proper to a man, hope: That which hath no reaſon cannot have any hope; nor doth the Hebraiſm intend any more then our reading. To ſay, *A tree hath hope*, is only this, *Man hath hope of a tree*: or, *There is hope of a tree.* A tree hath a natural aptitude to ſprout up after it is cut down, and therefore man hopes it will. There are three opinions concerning the ſcope of theſe words.

Quia eſt arbori ſpes. Pagn.

q.d. *Arbor habet naturalem aptitudinem ut reparetur.*

Firſt, Some conceive *Job* expreſſing his hope of the reſurrection by this compariſon: And then the words are a ſimilitude, not a diſſimilitude: As a tree cut down ſprouts again: ſo, though man be cut down by death, yet he ſhall revive and riſe again. What the Prophet ſpeaks of the reſtoring of the people of God, the *Jews*, from the grave of their civil death (their captivity in *Babylon*) is as true of the reſtoring of all the people of God from the grave of a natural death. *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe. Awake and ſing ye that dwell in the duſt, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt out the dead,* Iſa. 26. 19. In purſuance of which expoſition, the queſtion at the cloſe of the tenth verſe, *And where is he?* is read with an admiration, which gives the ſence thus: Doth the tree grow when cut down? And doth man dye, waſte away, give up the ghoſt? And, *Is he no where?* What? Is he no where? That's incredible: man is ſomewhere when he is not here, and in due time it will appear where he is. Some of the Ancients expound the words as a holy triumph over, or ſcorn of death, as if he had ſaid, *What? ſhall ſenſeleſs trees and ſhrubs grow up again? And ſhall not man the nobleſt of the creatures? Is this good Reaſon, or good Divinity, that trees ſhall riſe, and men ſhall not?* The Scripture by the reviving of a dying creature, ſets forth the reſurrection of man after death, (1 *Cor.* 15. 36.) *Thou fool, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened except it dye.* The ſeed dyeth and then groweth, there is an argument from Nature; a tree may dye, and yet grow, there is an argument from Nature. The reſurrection of the dead is an Article of Faith, and yet our eyes may ſhew us an argument of it in Nature. We may ſee a reſurrection in the annual reviving of a tree; the tree in winter caſts its leaves, and looks as dead; but when the Sun returns, and with that the heat, the tree reviveth: Every ſpring is as a reſurrection from death. There is a truth in this interpretation, but to make out ſuch an Irony by the Grammar of the words, or ſuch an inference from the ſcope of the Text is very hard, if at all poſſible: And therefore I lay it by.

Auguſtinus *docet hæc verba continere in ſe vim ſimilitudinis & exponi debere per ironiam,* q. d. *ſcilicet homo non reſurget cum videatur reſurgere, arbor ſic etiã.* Lyranus apud Mer.

Secondly, Others interpret *Job* bemoaning the condition of man (as to this point) inferiour to that of trees. For firſt, The boughs of a tree may be lopt, yea, the body of it quite cut down, and yet it feels no pain: The tree is not grieved how much ſoever you hew, cut, and mangle it; but when God layes his Axe either to the boughs of man by ſickneſs, diſeaſes, and outward afflictions, or to his root by death, man feels pain: every ſtroke puts him to ſmart. Secondly, As the tree is cut and cut down without pain, ſo it will ſprout up again, and renew, which man doth not.

Hence Note, *That a man in extream affliction thinks any condition better then his own.*

Job ſeems to envy the happineſs of a tree. How low will the thoughts of man deſcend when he is laid low? He would even change eſtates, or (as we ſay) turn tables with ſtones and ſhrubs. There is hope of a tree; but I am (as to a temporal reſtoring) paſt hope.

Thirdly, The words carry an Argument to move the Lord to ſpare *Job*, or not to cut him down, though he had beaten off his leaves and fruit (his ſubſtance being ſwept away by robbers) though he had lopt off his boughs and branches (his children being ſwept away by death) yet he deſires that he would not preſs upon his perſon alſo, and cut him quite down, becauſe then he ſhould be loſt for ever out of this world. He was not like a tree, which when cut down ſhouts forth at the root again. We find ſuch Arguments uſed by Orators and Poets to ſet forth the vanity of man beyond that of other creatures. *The ſun ſets* (ſaith one of them) *and riſeth again; But when mans Sun goeth down, it riſeth no more; 'tis alwayes night with man when this night comes. The ſnow diſſolves* (ſaith another) *and then the fields are cloathed with graſs, and the trees with leaves, but neither the honour, nor the eloquence, nor the piety of man can reſtore him to a ſpring after the winter of his death. There is hope of a tree if cut down,*

Soles occidere, & redire poſſunt. Nobis cum ſemel occidit brevis lux, nox eſt perpetua una dormienda. Catullus.

Diffugere nives, redeunt jam gramina campis arboribuſque comæ, &c. *Nõ Torquate genus, non te facundia, non te reſtituet pietas,* Hor. lib. 4. Car. Od. 7.

That it will ſprout again.] The word which we tranſlate to ſprout, ſignifieth to change, and renew to another, or a better ſtate. *Job* makes uſe of it, at the fourteenth verſe of this chapter, *I will wait till my change,* or my ſprouting come. Though he was hopeleſs of a change from death to this life, yet he was aſſured of a happy change in death, yea, of a change from death to eternal life.

חלף

Proprie mutabitur, inſtaurabitur.

But it may be doubted, how *a tree if cut down ſprouts again.* 'Tis true, when only the boughs are lopt off, it ſprouts preſently; but if the body of a tree be cut down, will it grow again? That ſeems to be the ſence of *Job.*

I anſwer.

The bodies of ſome trees (as for inſtance the Willow) being cut down and ſet into the ground, are every where obſerved to grow, and their tender branch doth not ceaſe. Some interpret *Job* not of trees in general, but of this or ſome other particular ſort of trees.

Again, Some trees though the body which is cut off will not grow, yet the root which remains will grow up into a new body. Such a tree is the (*a*) *Laurel*, whoſe deſcription given by *Pliny* in his Natural Hiſtory doth well agree with this diſcourſe of *Job.* And becauſe the Heathen did not believe a reſurrection, therefore they made thoſe trees to be Symbols and Emblems of death, which being once cut down, grow no more: It is obſerved that the Romans were wont to place a (*b*) *Cypreſs-tree* at the threſhold of the houſe of death, becauſe the *Cypreſs* being cut down never ſprings any more.

Laſtly, Many trees (their roots remaining in the earth) will grow after cutting, though not in a full body, yet in ſprouts, their tender branches will not ceaſe; or as ſome render the Hebrew, *Their ſuckers will not leave:* We often ſee young ſlips riſe at the root, when the tree it ſelf is cut down. And this I conceive to be the meaning of *Job*, who calls ſuch ſhoots *ſuckers*, becauſe they live upon the root, like little children at their mothers breaſt. *Job* carries on the explication yet further.

(a) *Quarundam arborũ radix vivacior ſuperficie ut lauri, itaque cum truncus inaruit, reſciſſa etiam læta fructificat.* Plin. Nat. Hiſt.

(b) *Romani moris fuit ut potiſſimum cupreſſus quæ exciſa renaſci non ſolet in veſtibulo mortui poneretur.* Serv. in Virg. lib. 4. Plin. l. 16. cap. 32.

Verſe 8. **Though the roots thereof wax old in the earth, and the ſtock thereof dye in the ground.**

In which words he puts a ſuppoſition of greater improbability. 'Tis much that a tree cut down ſhould grow, much more if the *root wax old, and the ſtock dye in the ground.* It ſhewed not only the improbability, but impoſſibility (in nature) that *Sarah* ſhould have a ſon when ſhe was waxen old, and her womb (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 4.) was dead. And will the dead root of a tree grow naturally again? I conceive this dying of the root is only the decaying of the root; or that he intends only a partial, not a total death. Chriſt tells us (*John* 12. 24.) *That except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and dye, it abideth alone,* (that is, it doth not increaſe or bring forth more corns) *but if it dye, it bringeth forth much fruit.* The death of corn in the ground is not a total death, but only a corruption or alteration of it; for if the ſeminal life and vertue of it be quite extinguiſht or drawn out, it could not yield either blade or ear without a miracle; yet becauſe that alteration of it is a kind of death, therefore it is uſed as an illuſtration of Chriſts riſing, and alſo of ours (by *Paul* 1 Cor. 15.) from a total death. Now as according to the courſe which God hath ſet in Nature, a corn of wheat (in this ſence) dying, bringeth forth fruit: ſo according to the courſe of nature, the root of a tree (in this ſence) dying or dead, buds and brings forth boughs, as it follows in the next words.

Verſe 9. **Yet through the ſcent of water, it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.**

It is an elegant Metaphor, as if a tree ſmelt the water as ſoon as it came near: And it notes thus much, That the tree upon the firſt ſoaking in, or ſpringing up of the water, is refreſhed and made fruitful. When the three Children were caſt into the fiery Furnace, 'tis ſaid, *The ſmell of fire had not paſſed upon them*, (Dan. 3. 27.) that is, their garments were not ſo much as touched or ſinged with fire. The fire had not made the leaſt impreſſion upon them. So 'tis ſaid, when *Samſon* was bound, he broke the cords, even as a thread that ſmells the fire (*Judg.* 16. 9.) A log will endure the fire long, but upon the firſt approach of fire, a thread is burnt aſunder. The Prophet ſaith of Chriſt, *The Spirit of the Lord ſhall reſt upon him, and ſhall make him of quick underſtanding in the fear of the Lord* (Iſa. 11. 3.) The Hebrew is, *Shall make him ſmell in the fear of the Lord*; or, *He ſhall ſmell in the fear of the Lord.* Smelling is put for underſtanding; and (becauſe the ſmell is a very quick ſence) it notes freeneſs or quickneſs of underſtanding, as we render, *He ſhall be quick of underſtanding*; he ſhall underſtand the deepeſt myſteries, and moſt difficult caſes as ſpeedily as the moſt exquiſite ſmell takes a ſcent. So then, when *Job* ſaith, by the ſcent or ſmell of water it will bud, it notes quick growing, or an eaſie bringing forth of a harveſt of boughs (as the Original imports) whereas man will not grow again by an application or uſe of means.

Odor levem rei alicujus contactum denotat. Suavis Metaphora. Dicuntur arbores quaſi ad capiendum aquæ odorem & ad humorem contigendũ ſe ſuaſque radices convertere. Pined.

קצר *Propriè meſſis, ut palmites qui ſunt rami vitium vocantur.* קצירים Pſal. 80, 12.

A tree cut down ſprings again: But how? *Through the ſcent of water.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Every effect hath a cauſe.*

The tree will grow, but it muſt have at leaſt a ſmell of water.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Natural effects have their natural cauſes.*

Through the ſcent of water it will grow; Water is as proper to preſerve or draw out the life of plants, as bread is to preſerve the life of man.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Upon the preſence of the cauſe the effect follows preſently.*

Through the ſcent of water it will grow; give it water, and you ſhall ſoon perceive a growth. How doth this ſhame man! A tree grows, ſends out both leaves and fruit through the ſcent of water; but man hath ſpiritual water, the rain of holy Doctrine from Heaven; he hath not only the ſcent of water, but abundance of water ſoaking upon him, yet how little doth he grow! Yea, how many are there that grow not at all? Many ſouls are continually digged, dreſſed, and rained upon, who ſtand like *old dotards* in a forreſt, not having ſo much as one green bough upon them: Is this to honour the means, or to honour God who gives the means? Trees anſwer all natural cauſes with ſutable effects, when the Sun turneth about, they put on their green ſuits, they ſend out their leaves, their bloſſomes, and their fruits: The Sun of righteouſneſs ſhines, the warm beams of Goſpel-light dart upon thouſands of ſouls, who continue in a winter of ignorance and unbelief, yielding neither the pleaſure of leaves, nor the profit of fruit. And though ſome bring forth leaves, yet how few bring forth fruit, eſpecially fruit meet for repentance from dead works, or for the hopes of eternal life? We ſee many ſpiritual helps; but how rare are ſpiritual effects? The graſs and trees of the earth will condemn thoſe who make no growth in grace, though they have been often watered with the word of grace.

Verſe 10. **But man dyeth and waſteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghoſt, and where is he?**

גבר *Vir potens & clarus.*

The Hebrew is, *Strong and powerful man dyeth*; let him be as ſtrong as he will, dye he muſt, waſte, and give up the ghoſt: Some obſerve an inverſion of natural order in the words. For man goes down to the grave by theſe ſteps. He firſt waſtes, ſecondly, giveth up the ghoſt, and then he dyes. The Spirit of God doth not alwayes exactly attend (*prius & poſterius*) firſt or laſt, according to the order of nature: Neither is there any redundancy in this plenty of words. There is not one tittle in Scripture but hath its uſe and elegancy; and becauſe the Spirit of God would ſhew the certainty of this thing, he heaps many words together into one aſſeveration, man waſtes, dyeth, and giveth up the ghoſt; he is all things, and ſuffers all things which ſpeak mortality.

Sunt qui volunt hic eſſe hyſteron proteron.

Ego hanc geminationem ad copiam linguæ ſanctæ facere puto. Merc.

We render, *Yea, man giveth up the ghoſt*; as if that implyed ſomewhat more then the former two: The particle, *Yea,* (in the Hebrew) heightens the ſence, man waſteth, dyeth, yea, he giveth up the ghoſt.

Some underſtand waſting and dying but as preparatories or antecedents to giving up the ghoſt: Man decayes and waſtes, yea, he dyeth every day, but he doth not give up the ghoſt every day, that's the laſt act. *Paul* ſpeaking of his outward troubles and perſecutions ſaith, *I dye dayly*; and in another place, *I have been in deaths often:* Natural death ſteals upon us part after part, it ſeizeth now upon the eyes, and makes them dim, then upon the ears, and makes them deaf, and ſo takes in now this member, and anon th[illegible], till it conquer the whole man. Death hath its forerunners and harbingers, ſickneſſes and diſeaſes: A ſick diſeaſe, a man hath many ſymptomes of death upon him before he gives up the ghoſt: When he gives up that all is given up, death enters his fort, and takes full poſſeſſion of him.

And where is he?] The queſtion ſeems to carry a negation in it, *Man is no where.* He is not tranſplanted as trees ſometimes are, and ſet in another ground. But is that goodly thing, [illegible] quite gone, and vaniſhed to a nothing when he dyeth? That which is no where is nothing: There muſt be ſome place for every thing: *Every entity muſt have its* ubi, *every what its where:* Therefore to ſay man is no where, is to ſay man is nothing, or to aſſent to a total mortality both of ſoul and body? We muſt therefore reſtrain *where is he?* to, where is he in the world? Look for him in the Countrey, in the City, at home or abroad, he is not to be had: Man gives up the ghoſt, and where is he?

Ubi eſt? Nullibi, ut inde redire poſſit ad eandem vitã quam ſemel reliquit. Non eſt, quia non eſt in vivis. Druſ.

I might here give Obſervations about the mortality of man, but having done it lately, *ver.* 1, 2. I will not do it again.

Note Firſt in general, *Man is a waſting, dying creature.*

He hath received a life which he muſt ſhortly render and repay.

Secondly, *When man dyeth, himſelf and all his glory are gone, gone for ever out of this world.*

Where is he? He and his riches, he and his honour, he and his wiſdom? what's become of all his deſigns, devices, counſels and thoughts? (*Pſal.* 146.) *Truſt not in Princes, nor any of the children of men, their breath is in their noſtrils, they dye, and then all their thoughts periſh.* The things which they have contrived in, or produced out of their thoughts, thoſe curious fabricks of the brain fall and dye with them. So much of *Job*'s diſſimilitude.

The ſimilitude follows in the two next verſes, *Job*'s diſcourſe moves from the root and ſprigs of a tree, to the ſeas and waters.

Verſe 11. **As the waters fall from the ſea, and the flood decayeth and dryeth up.**

The ſimilitude is opened in this eleventh verſe, and applied at the twelfth, *So man lyeth down, and riſeth not,* &c.

As the waters fall from the ſea.

The particle, *as*, is not in the Original. There we read, *Waters fall from the ſea, and the flouds decay and dry up, man lyeth down and riſeth not.* This hath led ſome Interpreters to render it (as the former) by a diſſimilitude: And they make out the ſence thus: *The ſea ebbs and fails from the ſhoar, yet it returns again when the tide turns; and though the flouds decay and dry up through the extremity of heat*

אזלו־מים מני־ים *Verbum denotat abire, proficiſci.* 1 Sam. 9. 7. Deut. 32. 36.

heat and drought, yet the rain comes and fills them up again, but man (whoſe life is like water ſpilt upon the ground 2 Sam. 14. 14.) is unlike the ſea, or river water: for when he ebbs he flows not again, when his moiſture is dried up it returns to him no more.

But the ſtream of interpreters conclude it a ſimilitude, and I ſhall keep to that, it being alſo very ſutable to the purpoſe of *Job.*

As the waters fail from the ſea.] How do the waters fail from the ſea? The ſea is the great veſſel or receptacle of waters, God calleth the *gathering together of waters ſea,* (*Gen.* 1.) And if the waters which are gathered together fail, what will become of the ſcattered waters?

There are different apprehenſions about the making out of a clear meaning.

Firſt thus, As waters after an exundation of the ſea, or of ſome great river are (upon the reflux of either) ſeparated from the channel, and left behind upon the land, which they overflowed, and becauſe they cannot return (for then they muſt aſcend, which is impoſſible to nature) they there utterly dry up and evaporate: ſo man dieth and returneth no more unto his place; As if he had ſaid, *It is as abſurd and incongruous to affirm that man ſhall return again to this preſent life, when he dieth, as to ſay the ſea-water left upon the land, can conveigh it ſelf back into that ancient channel.*

Argumentū ſumi arbitror ab impoſſibili, ſc. *tunc homine̅ ad hanc vitam reverſurum, cū aqua ſurſumverſus ad locū ſe referat unde defluxit.* Sanct.

Secondly, Others make it an argument of the reſurrection, As if he had ſaid, *juſt as the ſea decayes and dryes up, ſo man when he dies ſhall be utterly loſt:* One is as true as the other. We have a Proverbial ſpeech, *This is as true as the ſea burns:* we may ſpeak to the ſame ſenſe, *This is as true as the ſea is empty or dried up.*

Thirdly, This ſence is given, as when the ſea fails from the place to which it hath uſually flowed; and leaves its former bounds, then the floods and ſtreams adjacent dry up (becauſe they are fed and maintained by the ſea, *Eccl.* 1.7.) ſo when natural moiſture decayes in man (which is the ſupplement and oyl o life) man fails and can no more revive himſelf, then a river can recover its ſtreams when it is cut off from thoſe ſecret ſupplies and ſprings which it receiveth from the ſea: Thus the ſimilitude is applyed in the next verſe.

Verſ. 12. **So Man lieth down and riſeth not, till the heavens be no more, they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their ſleep.**

As if he had ſaid, *Death brings man to bed in the grave; from whence he riſeth not;*

שכב *cubui in pulvere ſive in ſepulchro quod Chaldai vocant* שכיב *unde* שכיבים *mortui.*

Until the heavens be no more.

What Heavens? and *how are the heavens no more?* there is a threefold heaven, firſt, the aiery heaven, or all that ſpace between the earth and the moon, birds are ſaid to flie abroad in the heaven, that is, in the air: Secondly, The ſtarry heaven, or the heaven where the ſtars are placed, whether moveable or fixed: Thirdly, The imperial heaven, which is called the *ſeat of the bleſſed,* or, which is more tranſcendent, *the place of the ſpecial reſidence of God,* when he ſaith, *till the heavens be no more,* means he the aiery, or the ſtarry, or the higheſt heaven? there is no queſtion but theſe laſt heavens ſhall continue for ever: then we muſt interpret him of the ſtarry and aiery heavens.

Until the heavens be no more.] *Until* hath a threefold ſignification in Scripture.

Firſt, *Until* ſignifieth a certain period or duration: *The ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come,* (Gen. 49. 10.) So, (*Rom.* 11. 25.) *Blindneſs in part is hapned unto Iſrael, until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in.* In theſe and many other texts, *Until* notes a determinate time with an excluſion or ſhutting out of ſucceeding times, or any ſtop till the acceſſion and accompliſhment of that time.

Secondly, *Until* notes perpetuity, and is put for, *ever, Pſal.* 110. *Sit thou at my right hand until I have made thy foes thy foot-ſtool.* Chriſt ſhall not ſit at the right hand of God till that time only, and then be put from his place; For, *Unto the ſon he ſaith, Thy throne O God is for ever and ever,* Heb. 1. 8. yet we muſt diſtinguiſh between the ſubſtance and the circumſtance of Chriſts Kingdom, between the thing it ſelf and the form or manner of adminiſtring and diſpenſing it. In the former ſenſe it is abſolutely everlaſting, in the latter it ſhall remain only until the conſummation of all things.

Thirdly, *Until* ſignifies as in ſome places, *for ever,* ſo in others, *never,* 2 Sam. 6. 13. *Michol had no child until the day of her death,* that is, ſhe never had a child. And ſo *until* is moſt generally interpreted (*Mat.* 1. 25.) *Then Joſeph took unto him his wife, and knew her not, till ſhe had brought forth her firſt born ſon.* That is, he never knew her, it being (though no article of faith, yet) a received opinion, that *Mary* was a virgin as before, ſo ever after the birth of Chriſt.

When it is ſaid here, man ſhall not riſe *till the heavens be no more,* Some conceive *Job* expreſſing one impoſſible thing by another, or implying that it is as impoſſible to nature for man to riſe from the grave of corruption, as it is for the heavens to corrupt. As if he had ſaid, *Man ſhall never riſe by natural power, as the heavens ſhall not decay by natural weakneſs.* The heavens have no ſeed of corruption in their conſtitution as not being mixed or made up of different qualities: hence *heaven* in Scripture notes perpetuity. *To have a throne as the dayes of heaven, is to have a throne for ever,* (Pſal, 89. 29.) And ſo *Daniel* ſpeaks in that prophecie of the Kingdom of Chriſt, (*Dan.* 2. 44.) *And in the dayes of thoſe Kings, ſhall the God of heaven ſet up a kingdom, which ſhall never be deſtroyed, and the Kingdom ſhall never be left to other people:* ſo we render, but whereas we joyn *heaven* to *God,* ſome of the learned joyn *heaven* to *Kingdom,* and read it thus, *In the dayes of theſe Kings ſhall God ſet up the Kingdom of heaven,* or *a heavenly Kingdom,* that is, an everlaſting Kingdom, for ſo he explains it, *which ſhall not be deſtroyed,* in this ſenſe the Goſpel is called *the kingdom of heaven,* becauſe of the perpetuity of it: No ſin of thoſe that profeſs it, no violence of thoſe who oppoſe and perſecute it, ſhall prevail againſt it or totally aboliſh it: The Kingdom of heaven is (in this ſenſe) above the poſſibility of earthly violence. So then *mans lying in the grave till the heavens be no more,* notes continuance in the grave, even as long as this world continues, or that it ſhall be night with every man that dies till the day of judgement.

q. d. *Sicut impoſſibile eſt cœlum corrumpi, ita homine̅ mortuū reſurgere.* Aquin. *Elegans Hebraiſmus eſt, quando unum impoſſibile per aliud impoſſibile declaratur.* Bold. *Ex cœlorum diuturnitate probat quod nunquam juxta naturam ſit reparandus homo.* Merc. *In diebus aute̅ regum illorū ſuſcitabit Deus* cœli regnum: *ubi nome̅* cœli, *nō conſtruitur cū nomine* Deus, *ſed cum nomine regnū,* q. d. *ſuſcitabit Deus* cœleſte regnum.

Here 'tis queſtioned, Shall the heavens be no more after the day of judgement? or ſhall the heavens corrupt when man is raiſed from corruption?

The Vulgar Latine reads, *Till the heavens be torn or worn out.* As if the heavens ſhould be at laſt like old garments ſpent and thread-bare with long uſe and wearing. But the heavens are made of ſuch ſtuff as will not waſte or decay with age or uſe: when or which way ſoever they end, they ſhall end by the will of God (by which they began) not by doing ſervice unto man.

Donec atteratur cœlū, Vul. *ac ſi* בלתי *eſſet à* בלה *ſeneſcere, veteraſcere. Sed fere omnes ſumunt verbū* Bilthi *pro dictione indeclinabili negativa* Non. *Hackwel.* Apol. of the power of God in governing the world. *lib.* 4. *c.* 13. *Sect.* 4.

There are divers opinions in the point. Firſt, Some think that all creatures ſhall be reſtored to that perfection they had before the fall. Secondly, Others, that the heavens and elements only ſhall be reſtored. A third ſort ſay that the heavens and only two of the Elements, the air and the earth ſhall be reſtored. A fourth ſay that the old world ſhall be totally aboliſhed, and a new one created in the room of it. A fifth opinion affirms that the whole world with all the parts and works thereof, excepting Angels good and bad, the heaven of the bleſſed and hell, the place of the damned, ſhall be totally and finally annihilated; as they were once made out of nothing, ſo they ſhall turn to nothing and not return again: And theſe interpret this Scripture, *till the heavens be no more,* as teaching this utter abolition. To which they add many texts of Scripture, which they conceive ſpeaking the ſame ſenſe, and countenancing their aſſertion, *Pſal.* 102. 25, 26. *Heb.* 1. 10, 11. *Iſa.* 34. 4. *Iſa.* 51. 6. 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. *Rev.* 6. 14. In theſe quoted places we read, *that the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, that the heavens ſhall periſh and vaniſh away as the ſmoak, that they ſhall be diſſolved and rowled together as a ſcroll, that they ſhall fall as a withered leaf or as a dry fig from the tree, that they ſhall paſs, yea, paſs away with a great noiſe:* from all which it is collected and concluded that there ſhall be a total abolition of the viſible heavens at the day of the reſurrection.

Many arguments are brought to confirm this, chiefly from the uſeleſneſs of theſe creatures in that ſtate: when man ſhall have no more need of the heavens, why ſhould the heavens be any more? what ſhall man do with the Sun, or the ſtars to enlighten him, with earth or water, with beaſts or fouls to feed or ſerve him, when he ſhall have a ſpiritual body, and be raiſed to a ſtate of incorruption? he ſhall be lifted above the uſe of theſe things, and why ſhould that be, which will be of no uſe?

Again heaven and earth ſerve here to ſhew us the inviſible things of God, the footſteps of his eternal power and Godhead are ſeen in the things which are made. But when man ſhall ſee God face to face, when God ſhall fully manifeſt himſelf, what need we any more theſe glaſſes? He that hath a good eye cares not for ſpectacles: man who is the nobleſt of viſible creatures in his preſent condition, ſhall be above the uſe of creatures in that condition. Hence ſome ſtate the queſtion thus, That when it is ſaid the heavens *ſhall be no more*, The meaning is not, that they ſhall not be at all, but that they ſhall not be for thoſe ends and uſes, to which they now ſerve and were at firſt ſet up.

Vetuſtas iſta in cælis non ſecundũ diminutionẽ intelligẽda eſt, ſed quantum ad uſum & miniſterium quod poſt judicium ceſſabit. Bold.

Hæc in ſubſtantia ſemper ſunt permanſura & tantũ immutanda in meliorẽ ſtaſtatũ, electorũ ſplendori & gloriæ accommodatiorem. Merc.

Laſtly, Many reſolve it thus, that the heavens ſhall continue according to their ſubſtance, not according to their preſent quality; they ſhall not be annihilated (ſay they) but bettered. As if when God brings man to glory in heaven, he will bring the heavens to glory alſo. And that as the beauty of the creature hath been darkned by the ſin of man, ſo it ſhall receive greater beauty when the ſin of man is done away. The Apoſtles language enclines to this (*Rom.* 8. 21.) *The creature it ſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God.* So that *till the heavens be no more* is according to this poſition, *till the heavens continue no more in their preſent ſtate*, but are brought to one more perfect, where the alteration will be ſo great, that it may well be ſaid, they ſhall be no more what they now are. As we ſay of a man who is much changed either in mind or body, *he is not the ſame man.* For (ſay they) *as the vile body of man ſhall then be faſhioned like to the glorious body of Chriſt, according to the mighty power of God, whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf*; So the vileſt part of the frame of the world, much more the heavens, ſhall be put into a more excellent faſhion then now they are: *The faſhion of the world paſſeth away*, but God will put it in a faſhion which ſhall not paſs.

I ſhall not here interpoſe my own ſenſe in ſo great a variety of judgement among learned men, eſpecially, becauſe it is all one to the ſcope of the text I am upon, whether we underſtand it of a total abolition of theſe heavens, or of the reſtitution and renovation of them. For as according to the former interpretation theſe heavens will be no more at all, ſo according to the latter, theſe heavens will be no more as now they are, and ſo though then they be, they yet may be ſaid to be no more. And *until the heavens in one of theſe ſenſes ſhall be no more, man lyeth down and riſeth no more*, yea, as it followeth in the cloſe of the verſe,

They ſhall not awake nor be raiſed out of their ſleep.

Death is here compared to ſleep, and the reſurrection to awaking. The metaphor is very elegant, and it hath been opened at the thirteenth verſe of the third chapter, thither I refer the Reader.

Obſerve Firſt, from the former words, *That the moſt durable creatures are periſhing, changeable creatures.*

The heavens are an emblem of continuance: and (as hath been ſhewed) to ſay ſuch a thing ſhall be till the heavens be no more, is to ſay it ſhall ever be: yet theſe heavens are in a periſhing condition, and ſhall be, if not totally annihilated, yet ſo much altered from what they are, as will amount to this, *they are no more*: all thoſe Scriptures come up to that, if they reach not the other ſenſe, to which they put very hard. What is there of the creature to be truſted? earth is fading, yea, and heaven too: truſt not in the heavens, but in the God of heaven, of whom it is ſaid, *in him there is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of change.* God is ſo far from a real change, that he hath not the leaſt ſhadow of change. But creatures are ſo changeable that there is not in them a ſhadow of unchangeableneſs; It is no wonder to ſee the ſublunary world change, to ſee the ſtate of men change, the riches and peace of kingdoms change, the beauty and purity of a Church change, when even the heavens ſhall change and be no more what they have been; when we are taught that the moſt durable things periſh and change, how changeable are thoſe things which are moſt ſubject to periſhing?

Secondly, Conſider under what notions *Job* repreſents death, *they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their ſleep.*

Hence Obſerve, *We ought to familiarize death to our ſelves, to put it under the faireſt and eaſieſt apprehenſions.*

Some tranſlate death into ſuch terrible ſhapes, and repreſent it to themſelves under ſuch affrighting forms, that they live in bondage through the fear of death all their dayes; do as the ſpirit of God teacheth you: cloath it with pleaſant expreſſions, call it the undreſſing and uncloathing of your ſelves, call it reſt, conceive it under the notion of ſleep, and then you will not fear but wellcome it; Is any man afraid to go to bed? thus we ſhould allay the bitterneſs, beautifie the deformity, take off the edge, and pull out the ſting of death by ſuch ſweet and ſoft thoughts of it, as the ſpirit of God ſuggeſts. Sleep is a ſhort death, and death is but a long ſleep. The Babylonians are threatned with death under the name of a long ſleep; (*Jer.* 51. 57.) *I will make drunk her Princes and her wiſe men, her Captains and her Rulers, and her mighty men: and they ſhall ſleep a perpetual ſleep and ſhall not awake.* 'Tis a judgement to be caſt into a ſleep like death, but 'tis a mercy that death is but like a ſleep; To ſleep a perpetual ſleep and not to awake, is to die: but they who are dead ſhall awake out of ſleep. For as death is a ſleep, ſo it is but a ſleep: death is not a perpetual ſleep, though he who in ſtead of ſleeping, dieth, is ſaid to fall into a perpetual ſleep; Death compared with ordinary ſleep, is a perpetual ſleep, but death in it ſelf conſidered, or conſidered rather according to the appointment of God, is not a perpetual ſleep. There ſhall be an awakening and a riſing, we ſhall ſleep no more, when the heavens are no more. *Job* is expreſs for this in the ninteenth chapter, and here he aſſures us that man ſhall awake from the grave at laſt, while he ſaith it will be long ere he awake. Man hath done his work before he falls into this ſleep, but man muſt awake before he receive either his wages or reward, *we muſt all appear before the judgement-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive according to what he hath done in the fleſh, whether it be good or evil.* They (as was lately toucht) who have done evil ſhall receive their wages, and they who have done good ſhall receive a reward; Such as our work was when fell aſleep, ſuch will our receit be when we awake. *Job* was ſo full of this hope, that he ſhould both awake at that day, and receive a good reward, that he is even in haſt to go to bed, and petitions for a grave in the next verſe, to which I alſo haſten.

VERS. 13, 14.

O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave, that thou wouldeſt keep me in ſecret, until thy wrath be paſt, that thou wouldeſt appoint me a ſet time, and remember me.

If a man die, ſhall he live again? All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

JOB is an earneſt and an humble ſuiter, for that which nature leaſt deſires, yea for that which nature abhors. He petitions for the grave and woes death, as if there were ſome beauty in darkneſs or lovelineſs in that king of terrours.

Verſe 13. **O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave, that thou wouldeſt keep me in ſecret, until thy wrath be paſt, that thou wouldeſt appoint me a ſet time, and remember me.**

The words fall under various interpretations. Some conceive *Job* begging to be hid in the day of account, which is a day of wrath to the wicked, and of *the Revelation of the righteous judgement of God to all.* The Popiſh writers find here their *Limbus patrum*, or their imaginary receptacle of thoſe ſouls which died in faith, before Chriſt came in the fleſh; this, ſay they, is the *ſecret place* to which *Job* wiſhes he might retire; that by a preſent baniſhment from the world he might get out of the noiſe and ſence of thoſe evils, with which the ſcene of his life was fill'd and made uncomfortable.

Secondly, Say others, *Job* in this prayer for a grave, doth plainly renew that ſuit which he had made more then once before, *to dye:* As if he had ſaid, *Conſidering my ſad eſtate, the burden and preſſures that lye upon me, death is better to me then life, and the grave more eligible then my bed-chamber; 'twere better for me to be under the earth, or in the earth, free among the dead, then to walk upon the earth, fettered with theſe afflictions, among the living.*

Thirdly, That having ſaid, *Man lying down ſhall not awake till the Heavens be no more;* he only ſubjoyns that death would be welcome to him; nor would he move againſt it, if after he had paſſed that darkſome valley, he might in ſome reaſonable time return again to the land, and enjoy the light of the living; if a time for ſuch a return might be ſet, then he could chearfully deſcend into the grave: but as *Job* had often argued the impoſſibility (conſidering the Decrees of God concerning dying man) of ſuch a return, ſo I cannot conceive him aiming at the grant of it in this requeſt, and therefore I lay it by, as an unſuteable and improper interpretation.

Fourthly, That which carrieth the ſence moſt clearly is, that *Job* ſpeaks like a man beſieged with trouble, and compaſſed about with ſad diſtractions: who makes requeſt for this and that, and he knows not what; he looks for ſomething to eaſe his grief, and therefore wiſheth for any thing, whatever comes next to hand, or lyes uppermoſt in his thoughts, he cares not what it be, ſo it be not what it is; put me under ground, hide me in the earth, Lord, do what thou wilt with me, ſo I may be ſet at liberty, from the bonds and chains of my preſent preſſing miſeries, if I could but get releaſe from this priſon, ſend me to the priſon of the grave, and I readily ſubmit to thy good pleaſure, yea, that would be pleaſing unto me: *O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave.*

מי יתן *Quis dabit? Hebraiſmus optantis, valet idem quod utinã, & rei optatæ aut difficultatem impoſſibilitatem affert.* Pined.

The grave hath been opened before, and the manner of this wiſh about it (*Chap.* 6. 8.) *Who will give,* who will beſtow the favour of a burial upon me, and put me into the poſſeſſion of the houſe of death. He ſpeaks as if his requeſt were not only difficult, but only not impoſſible: or as if it would be coſtly to the granter.

צפן *recondere, hinc* מצפנים: *theſauri à recondendo, ſic* θησαυροὶ *à reponendo, quòd in diẽ craſtinum,* i. e. εἰς αὔριον *reponerentur.* Druſ. *Sepulchrum eſt quaſi ſcriniũ vel capſa in qua reponitur corpus.*

Who will hide me in the grave?] Hide me as a treaſure, ſo the Original intimates. Treaſures are hidden things, as the notation both of the Greek and Latine words teacheth. A treaſure is ſubſtance or riches laid up for the day following, or for the time to come: *O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave,* yet not as traſh, but treaſure; not as a rotten carcaſs, but as a precious jewel: *The bodies of Believers are treaſure as well as their ſouls; their earthly part is precious as well as their heavenly.*

The grave may be taken two wayes: Firſt, Strictly and literally, for the place of burial, or for the houſe of death.

Whence Note, *That the grave is a hiding place; the grave is a ſure hiding place.*

When we are once hidden there, we lye open to no more violence: The grave is a ſhelter from all ſtorms: We need not fear that it will either rain or blow through that houſe; that's the reaſon why they in the Book of the *Revelation* deſired death when the vials of Gods wrath were pouring out upon the earth. Though ſome have not been free from the rage of men in the grave, yet none have felt it. *O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave:* I have met with this ſtrain of ſorrow before, therefore I do but touch it here.

Secondly, As the grave in Scripture is taken for the place of the dead: ſo for any place where the living are hid, or hide themſelves.

Qui a communi hominum conſortio ſuperari, ſive ut imminentia ſibi pericula ſive debita ſupplicia declinarent, in cavernis etiam in ſepulchris habitare ſolebant. Bold.

A ſecret place is the grave of a living man.

In times of perſecution the Saints were forced to bury themſelves alive, becauſe the malicious enemy ſought their lives, (*Hab.* 11. 36.) *They wandred in deſarts, and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth:* Thus the old Believers were buried alive: It is ſaid of *Obadiah* (1 Kings 18.) *That he hid the Lords Prophets by fifty in a cave:* Theſe caves were graves of living men. Some underſtand *Job's* meaning of ſuch a grave: and that he did not deſire death, but the ſecuring of his life, or to be hid alive, not to be hid in death; He would be ſomewhere in ſafe cuſtody, out of the reach of thoſe troubles which annoyed him; The next clauſe doth ſomewhat favour this ſence, *O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave.*

And keep me ſecret.] Theſe words are but an explication or repetition of the former; *Job* doubles his requeſt, to ſhew how ſtrongly his heart was fixt upon it: *O that thou wouldeſt keep me ſecret.* How long?

Until thy wrath be paſt.] That is, the effects of wrath: The letter of the Original is, *Thy noſtril,* becauſe in the noſe or noſtrils wrath and anger ſhew themſelves; we breathe anger; and the breath of the Lord is nothing elſe but his wrath, which like a ſtream of brimſtone kindles the fiery *Tophet,* (Iſa. 30. 33.) *Job* deſires the Lord to let this breath paſs, and then he is willing to appear out of his grave, or to be kept no longer ſecret: As if he had ſaid, I cannot ſtand in the open view of thy wrath, or in the face of thy fierce diſpleaſure; *Oh that thou wouldeſt hide me till thy wrath be paſt. God put* Moſes *in the clift of the rock, and hid him with his hand, while his glory paſſed by* (Exod. 33. 12.) much more have we need to be hid while the wrath of God paſſeth by, or until his wrath be paſt.

Naſus, ira, quæ tumente & fumante naſo manifeſtari ſolet.

שוב *Non ſemper eſt reverti, redire; ſæpe eſt averti, recedere. Hinc* תשובה *converſio animi ſc. ad Deum, &* משובה *averſio, receſſio.* Druſ.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God in his actings towards man ſhews himſelf like a wrathful man.*

The wrath of God is not a paſſion in him, but an action towards us. He acts as men when they are angry; but he ſuffers nothing by his anger: He ſmites and wounds, and pulls down and deſtroyes like a wrathful, yea, an inraged man; yet he doth this in the exacteſt frame, and ſweeteſt compoſure of his ſpirit: The wrath of God never diſjoynts him, never puts him out of order, as the wrath of man doth. *The wrath of man is the rage of man; but the wrath of God is the reaſon of God.* His wrath toward all is full of ſerenity, and it is full of tender mercy to his own.

Secondly, *Job* fearing the wrath of God reſorts to God for ſhelter and hiding, *O that thou wouldeſt hide me till thy wrath be paſt.* When a man (whom we fear) is angry with us, we run from him, and go to ſome friend with this requeſt, O that you would hide me till the wrath of this man be over. When *Rebeckah* underſtood that her ſon *Eſau* was wroth with *Jacob, and comforted himſelf purpoſing to kill him,* ſhe adviſeth *Jacob* to flee to his Uncle *Laban,* and tarry there, till his Brothers wrath ſhould turn away (*Gen.* 27. 43, 44.) She doth not direct him to go to *Eſau,* and deſire protection from him till his own wrath were turned away. Were it not ſtrange if a King being wroth with one of his ſubjects, he ſhould go to the ſame King and ſay, *O hide me till thy wrath be paſt;* yet thus *Job* ſpeaks.

Hence Obſerve, *That our only refuge from the wrath of God, is God himſelf.*

Nothing can hide us from the wrath of God but the mercy of God. As God hides his people from the wrath of men (*Pſal.* 27. 5.) *In the time of trouble he ſhall hide me in his Pavilion, in the ſecret of his Tabernacle ſhall he hide me.* And again, *In the ſhadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until theſe calamities be overpaſt:* As (I ſay) God hides his people from the wrath of men, ſo alſo from his own wrath. When a Believer apprehends God angry, he knows not whither to go, but unto God: He appeals from God to God; from an angry God to a pleaſed God; from the wrath of God to the mercy of God; from God in himſelf to God in his Son. Carnal men have poor ſhifts, when God is angry they hide in man: Can the power and mercy of a creature be a covering againſt the wrath and indignation of the Creator? Yet this is all the covering which a carnal man inquires after. *The Kings and Captains* (Rev. 6.) *call upon the rocks and mountains to hide them;* that is, they apply themſelves to worldly means, to worldly helps and powers, to theſe they cry, hide us from the wrath of God; but they know not what this meaneth, to make the love of God a refuge from the anger of God. Such a ſpirit Chriſt diſcovers while he forbids the tears of the daughters of *Jeruſalem* (Luke 23. 30.) *Weep not for me, but weep for your ſelves, and for your children:* Why ſo? Sad dayes are coming, ſo ſad, *That* *they ſhall ſay to the mountains fall on us, and to the hills cover us*; not as if they ſhould think the hills would hear or pity them; but becauſe they cou'd find none to do it, and they might as ſoon make a mountain move to their help, as move men to help them.

Again, Mountains and hills may be taken there for the greateſt powers and ſtrengths of men; or for men of great ſtrength and power: In which ſence it is ſaid in the ſecond of *Iſaiah, The day of the Lord ſhall be againſt the high mountains*: So then, to call to the mountains for covering in a day of trouble, is at beſt but to expect it at the hand of man. Theſe are miſerable ſhifts. God doth ſo overrule the world by his providence, that ſometimes the earth helps the woman (*Rev.* 12. 16.) in a day of trouble; but the woman (that is, the true Church) doth not cry to the earth (meer men of the world) for help; God makes the hills and mountains cover his people in a day of his wrath; but they do not go to hills and mountains for covering againſt his wrath. *David* puts the queſtion (*Pſal.* 139. 8.) *Whither ſhall I fly from thy preſence?* He reſolves it preſently, that neither Heaven, nor hell, nor the uttermoſt parts of the earth could afford him a corner for ſecurity, or a hiding-place from the hand of God: We muſt look for a protecting hand in God, when we are afraid of his ſmiting hand; *Only divine love hides from divine wrath.* This was ſhadowed in the deſcription of the Ark, in which the Tables of the Law were laid up (*Exod.* 25.) There the Mercy-ſeat was put upon the Ark, the Cherubims covering it with their wings, implying that the mercy of God only protects us from his wrath. The wrath of God is cauſed by ſin (which is the tranſgreſſion of the Law) but to ſhew that mercy covers from wrath, the Mercy-ſeat was made to cover the Ark wherein that Law was reſerved, which diſcovers both the ſin of man, and the wrath of God againſt it. The wrath of God had never been revealed againſt man, if man had not ſinned againſt the Law; yet now God ſits between the Cherubims over the Mercy-ſeat, to cover that Law which through ſin cauſeth wrath: With one hand he gives a Law, and with another hand he hides us from wrath: *Out of his hand went a fiery Law,* (Deut. 33. 2.) and *out of his hand went a ſhining Goſpel,* and with that *a Sun of righteouſneſs with healing in his wings:* When that fire would burn us, this Sun warms us; while the flames of that would conſume us, the wings of this overſhadowed us, and hid us till the wrath of God be paſt. Thus our hiding from the wrath of God is in the love of God. Hence alſo that gracious invitation (*Iſa.* 26. 20.) *Come my people, enter into your chambers, until the indignation be overpaſt:* Thoſe chambers into which God invited his people are none other, but himſelf: When they could not build, or find out chambers to hide themſelves while his indignation ſmoaked, himſelf will be their chamber. One of the Ancients interprets thoſe chambers to be the grave, into which the Saints ſhould willingly go to hide themſelves in the time of Antichriſts rage, of which he conceives that to be a prophecy. However, we are ſure *the name of the Lord is not only a hiding chamber, but a ſtrong tower; the righteous run into it, and are ſafe. O that thou wouldeſt hide me until thy wrath be paſt.*

Tertul. lib. de reſur. carnis. Bold.

Thirdly, *Job* perceiving a ſtorm of wrath about him, dares not hide it, but ſeeks a hiding place.

Hence Obſerve, *Man is not able to bear the wrath of God, or to ſtand before God when he is angry.*

Job was a man of unſpotted integrity, perfect, upright, fearing God, eſchewing evil, yet he was afraid when God appeared in wrathful diſpenſations. The wrath of God as threatened in the Word, is ſlighted by unbelievers; but when it is felt either in the conſcience or upon the fleſh, the ſtouteſt run and hide: The love of God is undervalued by thoſe who know it not; but a ſoul that hath once taſted that the Lord is gracious, and lives in the love of God, this ſoul is ſwallowed up with love, and values it more then life. 'Tis ſo with thoſe who know not the wrath of God, their hearts being hardened: They ſay with *Pharaoh, Who is the Lord?* But when conſcience is awakened, the heart touched, the eye opened, then horror and amazement take hold of them, as pain upon a woman in travel; (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) *They ſhall go into the holes of the rocks, and to the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* When God comes with terrible ſhakings, they ſhall hide themſelves, whoſe terror made others ſhake. The wrath of a powerful man is dreadful, *The wrath of a King* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is as the roaring of a Lyon*; What then is the wrath of God? If *Rebeckah* was ſo ſenſible of the wrath of *Eſau* againſt *Jacob*, that ſhe durſt not venture *Jacob* into his angry preſence: What are they, who make no haſte to be hidden from an angry God; or to have the anger of God appeaſed, and turned away from them?

Fourthly Obſerve, *There may be ſenſible feelings of the wrath of God, even upon thoſe who are deareſt unto God.*

It is *Job* that prayes, *Hide me till thy wrath be overpaſt:* There was indeed more fear of wrath among Believers under legal adminiſtrations, then after that fuller breaking forth and appearance of the grace of God, bringing ſalvation under the Goſpel: So we may underſtand that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8. 15.) *Ye have not received the ſpirit of bondage to fear again. Paul* (according to this interpretation) ſpeaks not of a perſon, but of the whole ſtate of the Church; giving the ſence thus, Ye have not received the ſpirit of bondage to fear, ye are under the Goſpel; the ſpirit of bondage was that which properly belonged to the times of the Law; when little of Goſpel light appeared, fear and terror held the people of God in bondage. But this is the time of grace, the day of love, the day of ſhedding the love of God abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt; therefore be of good chear, live like free-men and like ſons, not like bond-men or ſervants.

Ante Chriſtum erat δουλεία, δειλία & φόβος θανάτου.

Fifthly, He prayes, *Hide me till thy wrath be paſt: Job* was ſenſible of wrath, but he knew aſſuredly that it was not abiding wrath.

Hence Obſerve, *The wrath of God to his own people, is not an everlaſting wrath.*

The wrath of God againſt wicked men is an everlaſting wrath, they cannot be hid till the wrath of God be overpaſt, for it will never paſs, (*John* 3. 36.) *He that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him,* and ſhall abide to all eternity. The appearings of wrath are terrible, but who can abide the abidings of wrath? *Who may abide the day of his coming? And who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth? For he is like a Refiners fire* (*Mal.* 3. 2.) Wicked men cannot abide the coming of *Chriſt*, when he is but like refining fire to purge out their droſs; How then will they abide the day of his coming, when he is like conſuming fire, to devour both them and their droſs?

Sixthly, *Job* was under grievous pains, a cup of ſorrow was put to his mouth; yet he moves not ſo much to have the cup of ſorrow paſs from him, as to have the wrath of God paſs from him.

Hence Obſerve, *A good heart is more ſenſible of divine diſpleaſure, then of outward pain.*

He fears the appearance of wrath more then the feeling of ſmart. It is a work of grace to be afraid of the anger of God, and it provokes him as much when his wrath, as when his love is ſlighted. *Many tremble at the corrections of God; but there are few who tremble at the anger of God.* The holy Prophet (*Jer.* 10. 24.) ſeems to invite correction, ſo he might be free from anger, *Correct me, O Lord, but not in thine anger:* Let me ſee thou loveſt me, and then ſmite me if thou wilt: Anger ſmarts worſe then any rod upon the ſoul of a believer; but 'tis the rod of God, not the wrath of God which makes an unbeliever ſmart. *Let there be no more mighty hail and thunder, take away this death,* ſaith a *Pharaoh*; *Take away thy diſpleaſure, let thy wrath paſs,* ſaith a *Job*, a *David*; yet at laſt the wrath of God will be more painful then pain, more deadly then death it ſelf to a *Pharaoh*, wrath will burn hotter then fire in hell for evermore.

Patet hinc tam acerbū eſſe omnibus iræ Dei ſenſum, ut nihil ſit quod homines non perferre malint. Merl.

Laſtly, See *Job*'s temper here; he trembled at the wrath of God, and was afraid: We read him full of faith and confidence, *Chap.* 13. 16, 18.) *I know I ſhall be juſtified, and he alſo ſhall be my ſalvation:* There he ſtood in the light of the favour of God; here he is clouded with fear, and compaſſed about with darkneſs.

Hence Obſerve, *That the beſt of Believers do not alwayes retain the ſame degree, and evidences of holy faith.*

Their eſtate is alwayes ſure; but their eſtate is not alwayes clear: Their condition is the ſame; but their apprehenſions about it vary: Now they overflow with joy becauſe they ſee the pleaſed face of God; ſoon after they are filled with fear, and would be hidden from his wrath. *O that thou wouldeſt hide me till thy wrath be paſt*; that's his firſt wiſh.

That thou wilt appoint me a ſet time.

תשית לי חק *conſtituas mihi legem aut præceptum, ſtatutum,* i. e. *certum & præfinitum terminum.* Merc.

This is his ſecond wiſh.

But for what? or to what purpoſe would he have a ſet time? Times relate to things or actions. As *to every purpoſe there is a time ſet* (Eccleſ. 3. 1.) ſo, to a ſet time ſuppoſeth a purpoſe for it: What was *Job*'s purpoſe for which he thus earneſtly deſires a time might be ſet.

We may very clearly refer it to the wiſh foregoing, *O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave:* As if he had ſaid, as I beg to go to bed in the grave, ſo I beg of thee to appoint me a ſet time when I ſhall go to that deſired and longed for bed of the grave. *O that thou wouldeſt appoint me a time.*

The word which we tranſlate *ſet time*, ſignifies properly a Statute, a Law, or Ordinance: There is a double Law, a Law of things, and a Law of times, and the word bears both, therefore we tranſlate well, *O that thou wouldeſt appoint me a ſet time*, or a law concerning the time; but dares *Job* ask God a ſet time? God ſets us a time, but may we deſire God to ſet us a time? The Jews were reproved for this by *Moſes* (Pſal. 78. 47.) *They limited the holy One of Iſrael*; they put him to a time, or ſet him a day, by which if he did not help them, they did not believe he could help them. It is inſufferable preſumption to ſet God a time. And it wants not danger to move God to ſet us a time. All the actings of *Job* in this ſtate are not warrantable: Many of them are not for our imitation, but caution: *Job* expreſſeth a troubled ſpirit while he prayes for an abatement of his trouble: This prayer was not the breathing of his grace, but the breaking forth of his ſorrow: He would be in the grave, he would have a ſet time, he muſt have things brought to an iſſue: In all this we ſee not a rule for prayer, but an error for paſſion.

Sciamus hæc perturbatum vi mali, Jobū *dicere, nec cērtè nec quicquam hinc poſſe colligi, niſi quod levationem mali quoque modo poſtulat.* Merc.

Non eſt quod hæc quis accuratius ad legitimæ orationis leges exigat. Merl.

Hence Note, *That extremity of pain may put a good man upon unadviſed petitions.*

A diſtreſſed ſoul often makes diſtracted prayers, and deſires more that his own will, then that the will of God may be done. The will of God, his word of command, or his word of promiſe are our rule and warrant what to ask. They ask beſides all the rules which God hath ſet who ask a ſet time. Hence take two deductions.

Firſt, *That it is the ſole priviledge of God to ſet and appoint times.*

As God hath appointed to men the bounds of their habitation, *ſo alſo he hath determined the times*, (Acts 17.26.) And as he hath ſet the time of nations and people in general, ſo of ſingular perſons, *My times are in thy hand* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 31. 15.) That is, thou haſt the diſpoſe of them: While he ſaith *my times*, he doth not ſpeak himſelf the Maſter, but the ſervant of time. Again, *My times are in thy hand*; that is, all my times, I reſerve none of them in my own hand: My times of trouble, and my times of comfort; my times of joy, and my times of ſorrow; my times of honour, and my times of reproach; when I ſhall fall into affliction, and when I ſhall be delivered out of affliction; how long I ſhall live, and when I ſhall dye; all theſe times are in thy hand. Nor did *David* at all deſire to have his times, or any part of his times out of Gods hand: And as it is our duty to leave our times in Gods hand; ſo it is our comfort that they are in ſo good, in ſo wiſe a hand: We ſhould not only be content, but rejoyce that our times are there. Man is not wiſe enough to uſe the times which God ſets him; much leſs is he wiſe enough to ſet his own times.

Secondly Note, *It is our duty to refer all the circumſtances of our petitions to the wiſdom of God.*

We may be ſuiters to God, but we muſt not be his counſellers, nor our own carvers when or where, how much or by what means we would have the mercies which we ask for. *Job* ſpake well in one reſpect, though he would have a ſet time; yet he took not upon him to ſet the time. It was his failing to deſire a ſet time; but it had been a great ſin for him to ſet the time. Man muſt expect a law from God; he muſt not give himſelf a law; much leſs may he give the law to God. *O that thou wouldeſt appoint me a ſet time,*

And that thou wouldeſt remember me.

Et conſtituas mihi tempus in qua recorderis mei. Vulg.

This is his third deſire; *He would be remembred:* Some joyn theſe two latter wiſhes into one, *O that thou wouldeſt appoint a ſet time wherein to remember me:* But for what, or in what would he be remembred? Either thus, Remember to hide me in the grave at that ſet time; or Lord when thou hideſt me in the grave be pleaſed to remember me: The grave is a place of forgetfulneſs; *David* complains (*Pſal.* 31. 12.) *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: Job* is willing to be among the dead; but not to be forgotten, or out of the mind of God: Let the world forget me, I can bear that; but I cannot bear it that God ſhould forget me: *O that thou wouldeſt remember me.* Heman (*Pſal.* 88. 5.) deſcribing his ſorrows, ſaith he, was *free among the dead, like as the ſlain that lye in the grave, whom thou remembreſt no more.* Dead men are, as if they were, not only out of the memory of men, but of God himſelf: *Job* was content to dye out of the world, but not to dye out of the memory of God: He liked a grave of earth; but he liked not the grave of forgetfulneſs: *Set me a time for the grave, and remember to hide me there, or remember me when I am hidden there.*

Laſtly, This prayer, *Remember me*, may be underſtood as a general prayer for good at the hand of God: The remembrance of God intimates all good to man. 'Tis good enough if he remember us for good, as *Nehemiah* prayed he would: To remember notes chiefly theſe two things,

Firſt, To value and eſteem: Worthleſs things are not fit for a treaſury, much leſs for our memory: Who would keep a record of that which no man cares to know; nor ſhall be the wiſer if he do know it?

Secondly, It notes care. When we would help a friend or do him a curteſie, we remember him and have him often in our thoughts.

Aquinas *putat divinam recordationem ſumi pro reſurrectione & vita. Iſta phraſis recordari alicujus in ſacro codice ſæpe uſurpatur ab iis qui prolem à Deo poſtulant, præſertim maſculinam.* Bold.

A זכר *quæ hic habetur venit,* Zachar i.e. *maſculus quaſi patris memoria.*

Some reſtrain *Job*'s requeſt for remembrance to that ſpecial act of power and mercy, the raiſing of his body from the grave. Others confine it to the repairing of his broken family, and the gift of children in ſtead of thoſe who were ſlain: As if he deplored the loſs of his ſons and daughters, and that he was as a tree cut down, which ſends out no ſuckers; or that he was (as that Eunuch ſaith of himſelf in the Prophet) *a dry tree*, which bears neither leaf nor fruit. And therefore prayes, *O that thou wouldeſt remember me in this.* The word is often uſed by God in reference to that ſpecial mercy, The giving of children; *Rachel* was barren a great while, yet at laſt, (the Text ſaith) the *Lord remembred* Rachel (*Gen.* 30. 22.) *Hanna* being barren prays in this ſtile (1*Sam.*1.11.) *O Lord of hoſts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then*, &c. The Hebrew word ſignifying a man-child (not that uſed by *Hanna*) ſprings from this root, becauſe a man-child preſerves the memory of the family; whereas the female, or daughter, looſeth her name in marriage. The anſwer which God gave to *Hanna*, runs alſo in the ſame ſtile (*ver.* 16.) *And* Elkanah *knew* Hanna *his wife, and the Lord remembred her.* When the Lord took away *Job*'s children, he took from him his remembrance; or thoſe who would have preſerved his name and memory: which *Bildad* ſeems to aim at in his deſcription of the judgments of God upon wicked men (*Job* 18. 17.) *His remembrance ſhall periſh in the earth, and he ſhall have no name in the ſtreets:* That is, he ſhall have no ſon to bear his name, or to keep his memorial alive, when he is dead.

Now whether we underſtand this paſſage in general, or reſtrain it to either of theſe particulars, we may learn,

That there is nothing more deſirable then to be remembred of God; and that to be remembred of God is the accompliſhment of all our deſires.

We can ask no more of God but to remember us: For as our remembrance of God is the ſum of all our duty to him: ſo Gods remembrance of us is the ſum of all his mercies to us. When the Ark had floated and had been toſſed many dayes upon the waters of that mighty deluge, the Text ſaith, *God remembred* Noah (*Gen.* 8. 3.) Though our Ark be driven in a tempeſtuous ſea, yet it ſhall neither ſink nor ſplit, while we ſail in the thoughts of God. It may be much if ſome men remember us: When *Joſeph* a priſoner had expounded the Butlers dream to liberty and enlargement, all the fee he asked for his pains was, *Remember me when thou comeſt to* Pharaoh: That is, ſpeak a good word for me, do me a curteſie at Court, when thou art reſtored thither. The ungrateful Butler forgot *Joſeph*, but God did not: And though *Pharaoh's* Butler did not remember *Joſeph* for interpreting his dream, yet God ſent *Pharaoh* a dream, which at laſt cauſed the Butler to remember both his own fault againſt *Pharaoh*, and his forgetfulneſs of *Joſeph*. *If God remember us, he will find out ſome way or other that men ſhall.* And though a friend, who loves us and keeps us in his memory, may not be able to do us good (he may want power though he want no good will) yet the power of God is as ſtrong as his memory, he is able to do us good, and can command all, both perſons and things, to work together for our good. 'Tis a mercy, *If God think upon us, though it be to afflict us*, if he remembers us, though it be with a rod; (even that remembrance is an evidence of his care over us, and love to us.) Then how comfortable is it for him to remember us with a ſtaffe for our ſupport and comfort!

The thief upon the croſs gathers all his petitions into this one, *Lord, remember me when thou comeſt to thy Kingdom. If we have but a place in the memory of Chriſt, we ſhall not want a place in the Kingdom of Chriſt.* Let us get into the heart of God, and we are ſure enough to have all the holy deſires of our own hearts: If we once have a place in the heart of God, he will not caſt us out of his memory, though he caſt us into trouble. He remembers his in priſon and in chains, in ſick beds, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death: Though he bury us in the grave, yet he will not bury his thoughts of us. We uſe to ſay of men, *Out of ſight, out of mind*; but, as we cannot be hid in any ſecret place out of the ſight of God, ſo God will never let us fall out of his mind.

From all take this deduction.

> *If it be ſuch a treaſure of love and mercy to have God remember us, what a treaſure of wrath and miſery is it to be everlaſtingly forgotten by God!*

Wicked men ſhall never be remembred by God for good; nor ſhall they ever be forgotten for evil. The memory which God keeps of them, and of what they have done, will torment them as much as their own memory of it will. How glad would they be if God would but forget them! How would they be if they could forget themſelves! But as they can remember no good they have done; ſo they ſhall not forget the evil they have done: And as God will not remember them for good; ſo he cannot (becauſe he will not, and he will not becauſe he is juſt) forget to pour out upon them the utmoſt and extreameſt evils.

Job having preſented God with this threefold requeſt; to be hid in the grave, to have a ſet time appointed him, and to be remembred: He paſſeth from petitioning to a ſtrange kind of queſtioning, and from both to the higheſt and nobleſt kind of reſolving.

Verſe 14. **If a man dye, ſhall he live again? All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.**

There is much variety of conjecture about the meaning of theſe words.

Take this precaution, *Job* doth not ſpeak here as doubting, whether a man that dyes ſhall live any more: He is clear for the reſurrection of the body unto life, and for the life eternal of whole man after the reſurrection. It is uſual both in Scripture and common uſage to propound that by way of doubt or queſtion, which yet is held as an undoubted poſition. *Job* did neither doubt that man ſhall dye, nor that he ſhall live again, though he put an *if* to the one, and a *queſtion* about the other.

Non eſt dubitantis de reſurrectione mortuorũ ad vitam æternam.

The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* ſeems to underſtand him of eternal life, but applyes it to a wicked man: *If a man dye:* That is, if a wicked man dye, ſhall he live again? Shall he injoy eternall life? No, though he live eternally, yet he ſhall not enjoy life one moment. His ſecond life ſhall be the ſecond death. He ſhall live as life notes the union of ſoul and body; but he ſhall not live as life notes the communion of man with God.

Si mortuus fuerit vir impius, fierine poteſt ut vivat? Chald.

But though this be true, yet I conceive it quite beſides *Job's* ſcope.

Philippus.

Secondly, Others interpret it of the reſurrection in general: And render the queſtion as an admiration: *If a man dye, ſhall he live again!* He ſhall live; and is it not wonderful that he ſhould! The reſurrection is a miraculous work; it ſhould raiſe our thoughts about the power of the everliving God, when we hear his power can raiſe man from death to everlaſting life.

Tantum opus admiratur, non negat. Merc.

Yet uſually in Scripture when the interrogation is put with a negative particle, the ſence is negative, as (*Pſal.* 56. 7.) *Shall they eſcape by iniquity?* No, they ſhall not eſcape: And when the interrogation is put with a negative particle, the ſence is affirmative: As (*Jer.* 5. 9.) *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord, and ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* Yes, I will viſit for theſe things, and my ſoul ſhall be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this. According to this interpretation, *If a man dye, ſhall he live again?* muſt be rendred by a denial, he ſhall not live again. Hence

In ſcripturis interrogatio aſſerens negationi ſimilis eſt, & negans aſſertioni.

A third opinion expounds it by a plain negation, *If a man dye, ſhall he live again?* No, he ſhall not; that is, he ſhall not live in this world, nor return any more to a natural life. And hence

A fourth interprets *Job* as ſpeaking conditionally, or upon an impoſſible ſuppoſition: As if he had ſaid, I know and am aſſured, That if a man dyes he cannot live again a life of nature. But if ſuch a thing might be, and God would appoint me a ſet time when it ſhould be, how willingly would I dye and wait all thoſe dayes of my appointed time (how many ſoever they ſhould be) till my change come; that is, till God reſtore me from the ſtate of death and the grave, to ſuch an eſtate of outward comforts and abundance as I once enjoyed. But I cannot conceive *Job* ſo in love with a natural life, as thus to hanker after it by ſuch remote conditions, and groundleſs wiſhes; And therefore,

Conditionaliter ſumi putat Cajetanus.

Fifthly, I incline to thoſe, who expound the queſtion in the firſt part of the verſe, as an abſolute negation: *If a man dye, he ſhall live no more*; that is, a natural life. And the latter part of the verſe, (*All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*) as a teſtimony either of his ſubmiſſion to the will of God for the time of his death, or of his faith, and full aſſurance of a reſurrection to eternal life: As if he had ſaid, *Though when I dye I ſhall not live again in this world, yet I am willing to dye when God will, and I believe I ſhall live again in the world to come, and do therefore wait in faith till this change ſhall come.* Hence

Sixthly, *Job* is here conceived correcting his former wiſh, and reprehending himſelf for it: As if he had ſaid, *I indeed deſired the Lord to appoint me a ſet time, when he would reſtore me; but why do I vex my ſelf and trouble the Lord with vain wiſhes, as if this were a petition befitting me to ask, or God to grant? Why ſhould I expect that which was never granted to any man, That being dead I might live again?*

Quaſi ſeipſũ reprehendat, quod talia oret, &c. Sanct.

Laſtly, Some give out his meaning thus, If thou wouldeſt grant me my wiſh, and hide me in the grave, appointing me a ſet time, when thou wouldeſt be pleaſed to do this for me; then ſhould I think my ſelf happy, becauſe if I were once dead, I know I ſhall return no more to the miſeries of this life, upon which condition I would be glad to wait with patience for the grave, what time ſoever thou ſhouldſt appoint me, till that my change by death ſhould come: or, being dead and laid in my grave, I would wait thy appointed time for my reſurrection unto life.

All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.

That God appoints out the time of man, and that man ſhall live out and cannot outlive that appointment, was ſhewed at the fifth verſe: I will not here renew that diſcourſe.

The Hebrew is, *All the dayes of my warfare.* The reaſon of which hath alſo been ſhewed (*Chap.* 7. 1.) The dayes of man are but travel and warfare, a continual combat with temptations and tryals, as was opened there: The Scripture delights to ſet forth the ſorrows of mans life under thoſe two ſimilitudes of a wayfaring man and a warfaring man. Under both notions, the duty of the Text (waiting) is alſo ſhadowed.

כל ימי צבאי איחל

Cunctis diebus militiæ meæ expectabo. Mon.

To wait hath four things in it.

Firſt, An act of patience; he that waits muſt be content to ſtay: *He that believes will not make haſte*; that is, he waits; and he that waits makes haſte to believe, or hope, which is the ſecond thing.

Secondly, It hath an act of hope in it; he that waiteth is in expectation to receive: He hopes mercy will come at laſt: To wait upon God implyes there is ſomewhat to be had from God. He that hath no hope will never wait.

Thirdly, An act of humility; he that is in a waiting condition is in a low condition: And as his condition is low, ſo his ſpirit ſhould be lowly; waiting ſpeaks the duty of a ſervant.

Fourthly, The waiting here intended carries in it utmoſt perſeverance, *All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait.* Some wait, but 'tis only for a time: They are ſhort-breath'd, and their patience quickly tires. That wicked King ſaid, *This evil is of the Lord, why ſhould I wait upon him any longer?* (2 Kings 6. 33.) He that waits indeed, continues waiting, he waits long, and he will wait yet longer. As a good heart will not let God wait long, no nor at all (willingly) for obedience; ſo he is willing to wait as long as God ſees good for deliverance. We muſt not let God ſtay long for our work; but we muſt ſtay as long as God pleaſeth for his work.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is our duty to wait Gods time fully.*

All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait; and this both in regard of perſonal and of publick deſires or needs, (*Hab.* 2. 2, 3.) *The viſion is for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak and not lye*; that is, it ſhall not fail: All failing is a kind of lying: He that fails of truth when he ſpeaks, lyes in a word; and he that fails of performing what he ſpeaks, lyes indeed. The viſion of God ſpeaks and will not lye; but it ſpeaks not till the end; therefore we muſt wait till the end: So the Prophet adviſeth in the next words, *Though it tarry, wait for it, for it will certainly come, and not tarry.* It will not tarry beyond the time; but it may tarry to the very end of the time: then wait the longeſt day, and to the utmoſt of that day. It is ſaid, that the people of *Iſrael were aſhamed, when they ſaw that* Moſes *ſtaid ſo long* (Exod. 33.) they could wait no longer, they thought he was loſt in the Mount: *Come, let us make us Gods, to go before us, for as for this* Moſes *we know not what is become of him*: They who will not ſtay for God, make haſte to Idols; and they who will not wait in the way of God, run deſtructive wayes. *Samuel* directed *Saul* to go down to *Gilgal*, and there to ſtay for him ſeven dayes (1 *Sam.* 10. 8.) according to this appointment *Saul* tarried ſeven dayes (1 *Sam* 13. 8.) but *Samuel* came not, and the people were ſcattered from him: hereupon *Saul* calls for the burnt-offering and peace-offerings, and he offered his burnt-offering: And was he not to be excuſed in this? Had not he waited long enough? *Samuel* ſaid he could come the ſeventh day, and *Saul* waited for him ſeven dayes: Why then doth *Samuel* chide with him (at the eleventh verſe) ſaying, *What haſt thou done? Saul* anſwers, *Becauſe thou cameſt not within the dayes appointed, I forced my ſelf and offered a burnt-offering.* But would *Samuel* break promiſe? Was there *yea* and *nay* with him? How is it then that *Saul* ſaith, *He came not at the time appointed: Saul* ſtaid ſeven dayes, but he ſtaid not ſeven dayes quite out; he ſtayed the ſeventh day, and a great part of it, and no *Samuel* came, but *Saul* would not ſtay the laſt hour: *Samuel* came at the end of the ſeventh day, and ſo made his word good; but becauſe *Saul* waited not to the end of the ſeventh day, he fell into that great evil. *Thou haſt done fooliſhly*, ſaith *Samuel*, (ver. 13.) *and thy Kingdom ſhall not continue*, becauſe thy patience was ſo ſhort, thy power ſhall be ſhortened. Take heed of giving up your hopes: Say not the Lords time is paſt, he will not come. We know what they do who are obliged to pay money upon bonds, on a certain day. It ſatisfies not the Law, that they waited at the place appointed, about noon or toward the evening of that day, and the Creditor came not, they muſt wait till the going down of the Sun, and then make the tender, or elſe the forfeiture may be taken. Thus we muſt wait on God to the laſt day, and every part of the laſt day, till our changes or our comforts come. If we give over before the Sun go down, we ſhall go down in darkneſs. *Ye have need of patience* (Heb. 10. 36, 37.) *that when you have done the will of God, ye may receive the promiſe*: That is, the thing promiſed. As we need the patience of labourers to do the will of God; ſo the patience of waiters, to tarry for our anſwer and reward.

I will wait till my change come.

And one would think *Job* needed not to wait long for that: for, ſaid he not (*chap.* 10. 17.) *Changes and war are upon me? Job* was under perpetual changes, and his were great changes, changes from a proſperous to an afflicted eſtate, from health to ſickneſs, from honour to diſgrace, from riches to poverty, and though his afflictions hung long upon him, yet he had changes of affliction; freſh and freſh evils, *changes and war*, or changes of war were againſt him: As he complained (*chap.* 10. 17.) God brought freſh Armies to charge him every day, and doth he now want a change? And who is there that liveth and doth not change? We change (though not ſenſibly, yet) in ſome ſence or other every moment. Changes are upon us, changes of time, of place, of condition, and of affection. *Man continueth not* (ſaith *Job* at the beginning of this Chapter) we are only conſtant in changes: What then is the meaning of this deſired change?

Man hath three great changes, and they are all three taken in here; according to a threefold opinion about the ininterpretation of theſe words.

Firſt, Some underſtand the change for which *Job* waited, to be a change in his outward condition. A change from weakneſs to ſtrength, from poverty to riches, from ſorrow to joy; he waited for deliverances from his preſent evil, and to be re-eſtabliſhed in his former comforts. Though *Job* needed (if ever man did) ſuch a change as this, yet (I conceive) this was not the change for which he promiſeth here to wait. But

Donec veniet rerum viciſſitudo & ſtatus hic meus mutetur in melius. Bold.

Secondly, *Till my change come*; that is, till death come. Many both of the Rabbins and others go this way, and judge it the moſt proper interpretation, *All the dayes of my appointed time I will wait*, till I dye: Or, I will live waiting for a change by death: Death is a great change, the great change, not only of this or that man, but of mankind. Death brings a change to all, to good and bad, to believers, and to Infidels, though the change which it brings to theſe differing perſons be as different as their natures. When the Saints dye, they have a change, and no change: As a Worthy amongſt us once ſaid, when he was ready to dye, *I ſhall change my place, but not my company*: I ſhall have a new houſe, but my old ſociety: The Saints converſe with God, they live with God; while they live in the world, they converſe with Chriſt, and have communion with the Spirit; they converſe (among men) chiefly with good men on earth, and with all theſe they ſhall converſe in Heaven; here is no change: Yet the Saints have a great change, and a bleſſed one when they dye: They change from all outward evils, all their troubles ſhall be removed; they change alſo from ſpiritual evils, all their corruptions ſhall remove, there ſhall not be ſo much as any ſin or any remnant of ſin remaining in them, when they remove from hence; here is a happy change: yea, they ſhall have not only no ſin in them, but no temptation without them; no Satan to tempt, as well as no corruption to ſide with temptation: When wicked men dye they have a change too, but it is a miſerable change; theirs is a change from evil to worſe, from bad to worſt of all; they have a change from fading comforts to laſting ſorrow; or they have a change from temporary ſorrows to everlaſting ſorrows; *Son, re-*

Aben Ezra *exponit diſceſſus meus,* i e. *donec hinc migrẽ, de morte intelligit tanquam ſimplicius.* Merc.

member (ſaith *Abraham* in the parable to *Dives*) *that thou in thy life time haſt received thy good things:* thou faredſt deliciouſly every day, thou waſt cloathed with purple and fine linnen, but ſee thy change: thou who hadſt a table ſpread and furniſhed with delicate meats, thou who hadſt a cup brim full, yea running over with delicious wines, now thou haſt not ſo much as a drop of water to cool thy tongue. This is the change which wicked men ſhall have in death, from pleaſure to pain, or from ſhort pains to eternal pain, from a few moth-eaten, worm-eaten, dying, decaying delights, to thoſe griefs which cannot die, to thoſe griefs which as a worm ſhall gnaw upon their ſouls and conſciences worſe then death. Some wicked men are as miſerable as they are wicked in this world; *The wicked travel with pain all their dayes* (*chap.* 15.) yet they ſhall travel with greater pain when they die: their preſent ſorrows are but the beginning of ſorrows: now they do but ſip of that cup, which they muſt drink up dregs and all for ever. Death is a change to all, dying Saints change from bad to good, from good to beſt: when wicked men die, they change from bad to worſe, from worſe to worſt of all.

Hypotheſis Jobi, quod ira Dei abitura, quod annus gratiæ venturus, quod ſtatio ipſius & militiæ certis diebus definita, quod ſpes ſit, quod deceſſio ejus ventura præbant argumẽtũ magnũ reſurrectionis mortuorum. Tota enim diſputatio Jobi eo collimat, ut probat in rebus externis non eſſe ſigna iræ vel gratiæ, in hac vita non dari id quod fideles ſperãt, ideoque nihil ipſis cõvenientius eſſe, quã anhelare ad mortẽ. Coc.
ἕως πάλιν γένωμαι. 70. *donec rurſus fiam. Donec veniat ſancta nativitas mea.* Sym. *Renaſcitur qui reſurgit & ingreditur novum vitæ curriculum.*

Thirdly, This change is interpreted of the reſurrection, *Job* deſires to die preſently, and would wait willingly till the reſurrection, knowing that then he ſhould be freed from all affliction; One of the ancients renders it, *I will wait until my holy birth-day come*: The reſurrection is a birth-day to the world. The earth and ſea ſhall be in travel and be delivered (he that is raiſed from death begins a new life) They took dead men into their womb, and ſhall (by the power of God) return them living. There ſhall not be one abortive or ſtill-born in that great birth-day. Some expound that regeneration which Chriſt ſpeaks of (*Matth.* 19. 28.) of the reſurrection, and give the ſenſe only with the alteration of a point, thus, *Ye which have followed me, ſhall in the regeneration* (or reſurrection) *when the ſon of man ſhall ſit in the throne of his glory, ſit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael.* Which reading *Beza* a learned interpreter affirms, that he hath obſerved in five ancient copies, implying that when the bodies and ſouls of the Saints ſhall be married again together, never to be ſeparated by death, that will be as a new birth-day to them all. However 'tis clear beyond diſpute that the reſurrection day of Chriſt is called in Scripture both the day of his begetting, and of his brith. For that of (*Pſal.* 2. 7.) *Thou art my ſon this day have I begotten thee*, is interpreted by the Apoſtle of the reſurrection of Chriſt, *Act.* 13. where having ſaid (*verſ.* 30.) *God hath raiſed him from the dead*, he ſubjoyns (*verſ.* 32. 33.) *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promiſe which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the ſame unto us their children, in that he hath raiſed up Jeſus again, as it is alſo written in the ſecond Pſalm: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And that the reſurrection of Chriſt is his birth as well as his begetting is proved by the ſame Apoſtle, who calleth him expreſly *The firſt-born from the dead* (*Col.* 1. 18.) Now as the firſt birth-day of man into the world is a change: So this ſecond birth-day will be a greater change. As the Apoſtle diſputes it all along (1 *Cor.* 15.) how great a change will that be when mortality ſhall put on immortality, when corruption ſhall put on incorruption, when that which is ſown a natural body ſhall be raiſed a ſpiritual body; Hence the Apoſtle concludes at the fifty firſt verſe, *We ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed:* which the Vulgar Latine reads thus, *we ſhall all riſe, but we ſhall not all be changed*, and another, as the learned *Beza* hath obſerved upon that place: *we ſhall all ſleep, but we ſhall not all be changed.* For theſe not obſerving that the Apoſtle in this place ſpeaks only of the bodies of the Elect, and knowing that the bodies of the wicked ſhall not have (though they ſhall have ſome change) ſuch a change as is here ſpoken of, upon theſe grounds they have thus boldly altered the text, to ſerve their own ſenſe: whereas both the Syriak and Arabike interpreters keep to the Original Greek, from which we tranſlate, *we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed.* For the Apoſtle treating of the ſtate of all Saints at the laſt day, of whom many ſhall then be found alive, he declares what ſhall be done to them: *They* (ſaith he) *ſhall not ſleep*; that is, they ſhall not die, yet they ſhall be changed; So that, though ſome of the Saints ſhall not be raiſed becauſe they ſhall not die, yet all at that day ſhall find a change: *We ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed.* This is the great change: In the morning of the reſurrection we ſhall all put on freſh ſuits, freſh ſuits of fleſh and robes of glory upon them, ſuch as ſhall never change, much leſs wear out, ſuch as ſhall be freſh, not only as the garments of the Iſraelites fourty years in the wilderneſs, but for ever. After this change we ſhall hear no more of changing. And that we ſhall have ſuch a change the Apoſtle ſpeaks again (*Phil.* 3. 23.) *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like to his glorious body.* The body ſhall be caſt into a more excellent mould, even as a veſſel that is broken or out of faſhion, is put into the Gold-ſmiths hand to be changed or new made; yea, there ſhall be a change at that day not only of the body but of the whole man, the ſoul ſhall be changed, not in the ſubſtance of it, but in the perfections of it, for then full glory ſhall be poured into the ſoul, and it ſhall have a better eſtate, though not in the nature of it, yet in the degree of it, then it had before. Then mans glory ſhall be compleated when ſoul and body ſhall meet again, and be re-united: the union of ſoul and body conſtitutes man, a ſoul alone is not man, as a body alone is not; Now in the day of their re-eſpouſals, what gifts will the Lord beſtow? what tokens of his royal bounty? Such gifts, ſuch tokens ſure, as will convince man that his change is come, and abundantly recompence all his dayes of waiting for it.

Again Obſerve, *That the aſſured hope of the reſurrection to eternal life, will ſupport the ſoul with patience under all the evils of this life.*

Job could willingly undergo any condition, becauſe a change was coming: Though we fight with beaſts as long as we live, we have advantage enough in this one truth, *the dead ſhall riſe* (1 *Cor.* 15. 31.) what though we endure hardſhip in this life, we ſhall ariſe to a better life. The Authour to the *Hebrews* (*chap.* 11. 35.) reports the courage and conſtancy of the Jewiſh Martyrs upon this account, *They were tortured not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better reſurrection.* But are there two ſorts or two degrees of reſurrection? one good and another better, that he ſaith, they looked to obtain a better reſurrection?

I anſwer.

He calls that which they expected a bettr reſurrection, not comparatively to another reſurrection, but either firſt, in compariſon of that life which they were to loſe, if they would keep the faith; or Secondly, in compariſon of that life which they might have kept if they would have let go their faith, or ſubmitted to idolatry. And their life in this latter ſenſe may elegantly be called a reſurrection, becauſe they being but as dead men in the hands of thoſe tyrants for profeſſing the faith, were offered their lives again, or ſhould have been reſtored to a free enjoyment of their lives, if they would have renounced or denied the faith. But theſe noble profeſſors thought the offer of ſuch a life too vile a price to ſell their faith for. And therefore they deſpiſed that deliverance which was only a reſurrection from a threatned death, to a tranſitory life, in compariſon of that true or better reſurrection, which would be from an inflicted death to eternal life. Now if the Saints under the old Teſtament were thus Heroical in ſufferings upon the hope of a future reſurrection, about which they had no open direct promiſe, nor any very clear evidence; how much more ſhould we who have the doctrine of the reſurrection written as with a beam of the Sun, together with the glory and the happineſs which ſhall follow? aſſurance of a change to any better ſtate, is apt to raiſe in man high reſolutions in any the worſt eſtate wherein he is. And the hope of mending our condition enables us to bear a bad condition: hope is the ſupport and pillar of the ſoul, in its heavieſt preſſures; that which adds infinitely to the puniſhment of the damned in hell, is, that as they are in an ill condition, ſo they know their condition will never mend, they cannot ſay *they will wait till their change come*; they muſt ſuffer, but they cannot hope; Their change ſhall never come, though they ſhould hope for it, becauſe they have no ground of hope, everlaſting wrath is determined upon them. This makes them compleatly miſerable.

ble. To be without hope of good, is worſe then the enduring of evil: the damned in hell are more pained with thinking that their miſerable condition will never change, then they are in bearing their preſent miſery. The Saints in heaven are in a happy eſtate, and they know it will never change, they joy as much in this aſſurance, as they do in the ſenſe of their preſent happineſs: they enjoy all their joyes at once, becauſe their joy is one, and ſhall ever be the ſame; Their condition is ſo good that they need not deſire a change, and ſo ſure, that they need not fear a change. It is the extremity and the height of a good eſtate to be beyond the fear, and of an evil eſtate to be beyond the hope, of change: it is an abatement of our comforts, to enjoy good which may be changed for evil, and an abatement of our ſorrows to endure evil which may be changed for good. 'Twas thus with *Job*, he was in a ſorrowful condition, but he believed a change was coming, and therefore he reſolved. *All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer thee: thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thine hands.

For now thou numbreſt my ſteps, doſt thou not watch over my ſin?

My tranſgreſſion is ſealed up in a bag, and thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity.

IN the cloſe of the fourteenth verſe, we heard *Job* reſolving *to wait all the dayes of his appointed time, till his change ſhall come:* and according to the various interpretations of that *change*, opinions vary about the *call* and *anſwer* of this fifteenth verſe.

Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer.

They who interpret that change by death, ſence it thus, *when-ever thou ſhalt ſend out thy writ, or ſummons to the grave, I ſhall readily ſubmit unto it and obey: thou ſhalt call and I will anſwer, why ſhould I be ſlow-footed or faint-hearted, when I am called to the grave? ſeeing I am aſſured, that I ſhall not be loſt in the grave, no, nor forgotten there: though the grave be the land of forgetfulneſs, thy affections towards me will preſerve thy memory of me; and ſeeing I live in thy love, I cannot live out of thy thoughts: Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hand.*

Si me voces moriq; jubeas paratus ſum. Rab. Moyſes. *Quum me vocabis ad migrandum ex hac vita, ego libens tibi reſponderem.* Merc.

Hence Obſerve, *That a godly man* (in a due frame of ſpirit) *willingly obeys the call of God to die.*

The Apoſtle had not only a willingneſs, but a forwardneſs to die, even a zeal or a kind of ambition to die, *I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all.* The Saints receive their call to death as a call to reſt: and though the body for a while lie down in the duſt, yet they know what is prepared for the ſoul, and when they two meet together again, both ſhall be called to an everlaſting reſt. Some interpret theſe words, *of calling and anſwering*, by the common cuſtome of inviting, and of the readineſs of thoſe who are invited, to come unto a feaſt: How willing are we to feaſt with our friends? Saints never go to a feaſt indeed till they have done eating: the hunger of the ſoul after this feaſt conquers the fear of death. I grant there is a natural fear of death, and 'tis poſſible that a believer who (in his own thoughts) hath often acted the dying man, may yet find ſome regret and unwillingneſs to die when death comes: the very looſing of the bond, the untying of the marriage knot between ſoul and body, is unwel-come to nature, while grace bids it wel-come. *Paul* did not ſo much deſire to be uncloathed as to be cloathed upon: he was willing rather that mortality ſhould be ſwallowed by eternal life, then that natural life ſhould be ſwallowed up by mortality. Yet at laſt faith conquers natural fear, grace laughs while nature mourns, and a believer can with as much chearfulneſs anſwer the call of God to die, as the call of a friend to dinner when he is hungry, or to bed when he is weary.

Secondly, They who expound this *change* for that of the *reſurrection*, give another meaning of this call and anſwer. As the former take it for a call to the grave, ſo theſe for a call from the grave, and his anſwer to be a willing return from thence: he would not let God call twice, much leſs demur upon the matter, whether he were beſt come out of the grave or no. *Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer, here I am, Lord, I come.* The Septuagint render *I will obey thy call.* In that day God will call, yea, he will make the greateſt call that ever yet was made. *Then our God ſhall come, and will not keep ſilence, he ſhall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth that he may judge his people* (Pſal. 50. 3, 4.) *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump, for the trumpet ſhall ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we ſhall be changed* (1 Cor. 15. 52.) And again, *The Lord himſelf will deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt,* (1 Theſ. 4. 16.) he ſhall deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with a loud exhortation, ſo loud that all who are in the grave ſhall hear him: the word in propriety ſignifies that encouraging voice, which is among marriners, or rowers in a galley, who are called with one conſent to buckle to their oars: the Lord ſhall deſcend with a ſhout like that, and rouſe the dead at once out of their graves. In the parable of the Virgins 'tis ſaid, *at midnight there was a great cry, behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.* (Mat. 25. 6.) This is not the cry of thoſe who are called, (there will be a cry among them) but a cry from heaven calling them to meet the bridegroom. Chriſt ſpeaks of two ſorts of dead men, and of a twofold call to a twofold reſurrection, *Joh.* 5. *The hour is coming and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live:* Theſe are the dead in ſin, who are called to ariſe in newneſs of life, or to a new life, the life of grace: *Marvel not at this* (ſaith Chriſt) *for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come forth, they that have done good to the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the reſurrection of damnation.* As a great cry cauſeth the ſpiritual reſurrection from ſin, ſo the corporal from the duſt. Both are effects of the mighty power of God. When Chriſt raiſed *Lazarus*, he ſpake with a loud voice (*John* 11. 43.) *Lazarus come forth, Lazarus* anſwered this voice and came forth. And as he then, ſo all mankind ſhall hear and obey the voice of Chriſt commanding them to come forth. God calls now, and few will anſwer or obey: *O that my people had hearkned unto my voice,* (*Pſal.* 81. 11.) God will at laſt ſpeak ſo loud and ſo effectually, that the deafeſt Adders ſhall hear the voice of the charmer, and appear out of their holes; The Lord commands the Prophet (*Ezek.* 37. 4.) *Son of man propheſie upon theſe dead bones:* he means it typically of the Jews in captivity, yet there the reſurrection is ſhadowed: God will propheſie upon our dead bones: And if any ask, Can theſe bones live? yes, theſe bones ſhall live. *God will lay ſinews upon them, and he will bring up fleſh upon them, and cover them with skin, he will put breath into them and they ſhall live.* Now a gracious heart anſwereth the call of God in the actings of a ſpiritual life (*Pſal.* 17. 8.) *When thou ſhalt ſay ſeek my face, my heart anſwers, thy face Lord will I ſeek.* Then every man gracious or without grace, good or bad, ſhall anſwer the call of God to the receiving of another life: a life to ſome better then that they once lived, a life moſt unconceiveably worſe then the death from which they are called. *Thou ſhalt call and I will anſwer*, that's a ſecond ſenſe.

Ἐν κελεύσματι, *cum hortationis clamore. Keleuſma proprie eſt hortamen quod apud nautas eſt ſolenne, quo uno veluti concentu remos ducunt.* Bez.

Thirdly, That change was interpreted by others for a change in his preſent ſtate, from ſickneſs to health, from pain to eaſe, from ſorrow unto joy.

Hence ariſeth a third interpretation of this call of God and anſwer of *Job*, in reference to a judiciary diſceptation or debate, which *Job* had profeſſed himſelf willing to abide and carry through with God, in caſe he would be pleaſed to grant him that deſired change: he ſpake that deſire before; And I find one interpreter fixing him in it here. *It is manifeſt* (ſaith he) *that Job doth not ſpeak here of the reſurrection of his fleſh, but of that call and anſwer for the ending of his preſent controverſie:* about which we read his offer (*chap.* 13. 21.) *Withdraw thy hand far from me, let not thy dread make me afraid: then call thou and I will anſwer, or, let me ſpeak and anſwer thou me.* And ſo, *withdraw thy hand*, is as much as this,

Manifeſtum eſt Jobū nō loqui de carnis ſuæ reſurrectione, ſed de ea vocatione, et reſpōſione de qua (c. 13. 12.) *ut præſentem litē dirimat eſſe intelligendum.* Eōld

change my ſtate, and then I will anſwer thy citation or thy call, and give an account of my ſelf, in whatſoever thou ſhalt demand of me: I have opened his mind in this propoſal upon thoſe words of the thirteenth chapter, thither I refer the Reader.

Take only this note from it, *That when the body is unburthened of outward afflictions, and the ſoul eaſed of inward ſorrows, then we have a great advantage both to plead with and pray to God.*

How much the inward man is preſſed by the outward, and how the ſpiritual part of the inward man is preſſed by thoſe fears that ariſe from its carnal part, might be ſhewed from this expoſition, but (though it hath a fairneſs in it, and a learned pen to maintain it, yet) I wave it as not ſo proper and pertinent as either of the former two, to the ſcope of this call and anſwer, which this Scripture leads us to.

Job having promiſed a readineſs in himſelf to anſwer the call of God, ſhews his aſſurance of Gods readineſs to call him, and of his acceptance with him.

Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thine hand.

It hath been ſhewed (*chap.* 10. 3.)
Firſt, That man is the work of Gods hand.
Secondly, In what ſenſe hands are aſcribed unto God.
Thirdly, How man is the work of Gods hand.

For the clearing of theſe particulars in a way of explication, I ſend the Reader to the chapter and verſe fore-cited, and ſhall deal with this clauſe only as it ſtands in connexion here with the call and anſwer laſt opened.

Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hand.

Which ſome conceive to be the very form of words in which *Job* intended to anſwer God: *Thou wilt call, and thus I will anſwer: O God, thou haſt, or thou wilt, have a deſire to the work of thy hand*, As if he ſhould ſay, *When thou calleſt me, I know thy call muſt ſpring from the good will thou beareſt me, thy affections will come forth to me, when thy voice comes forth; thou wilt therefore ſpeak becauſe thou haſt a deſire to the work of thy hand*; ſo the words ſtand in oppoſition to thoſe (*chap.* 10. 3.) *Is it good that thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thy hand?* Which ſome expound as his expoſtulation with God, upon an apprehenſion that he ſlighted him: but now he is confident God hath another opinion of him, and would be ſo far from deſpiſing, that he will have a great deſire to him who was the work of his hand.

Nūquid perdere deſiderabis? Rab. Lev.

Τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου μὴ ἀποποιῇς. *Ne repellas opera manuū tuarum.* Sept.

כסף *deſiderare, amare, hinc nomē argenti, quod deſiderabile eſt.*

Operi manuū tuarū porriges dextrā, Vulg.

Secondly, Many of the Hebrew writers expound *Job*, as if he thought God had a mind or a purpoſe to deſtroy the work of his hand: and they read it with an interrogation, *Wilt thou deſire or be forward to deſtroy that which thou haſt made?* Hence alſo the Septuagint render it as a deprecation, *Do not reject or unmake the work of thy hands.*

Thirdly, The Original word which we tranſlate, *Thou wilt have a deſire*, imports a ſtrong coveting deſire, ſuch as is after ſilver. The ſame root in the Hebrew ſignifies ſilver and to covet, becauſe ſilver is ſo much coveted, *thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hand.* As a covetous worldling hath a great deſire after gold or ſilver, he longs for it, and it pleaſeth him when he can get it, ſo the Lord himſelf hath a longing, covetous deſire after man, who is the work of his hand. The Lord ſeemed to uſe *Job* as if he were but rubbiſh and droſs, no way deſireable, yet he believed God would look upon him as a ſilver veſſel, and as a veſſel of honour: The Vulgar Latine tranſlates wide from the letter of the Hebrew, but near to this ſenſe; *Thou wilt put forth thy right hand to the work of thy hand*: this departs from the letter of the words, but the ſenſe is fair to the ſcope of the words; for it is an argument of love and friendſhip, to put forth the right hand to a man; if we meet one whom we love and delight in, we cannot paſs him, without taking him by the hand; And as it is an argument of love and friendſhip to allure with the hand, ſo of charity or pity to reach out the hand: *Thou wilt have a deſire*, may be well expreſſed thus, *thou wilt put forth thy hand to the work of thy hand, and help me up* when thou biddeſt me riſe. A true friend reacheth his heart out before he reacheth out his hand. God had caſt *Job* into the mire and ditch (as he ſpake *chap.* 9.) yet he believes he would take him by the hand, and lift him not only out of the ditch of affliction, but out of the grave of death. Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *That God bears much affection to man as he is the work of his hand.*

Conſuevit artifex appetere opus manuū ſuarum, ejuſq; videndi cupiditate teneri. Druſ.

It argued high diſpleaſure when God ſpake thus againſt his people, *He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no pity* (Iſa. 27. 11.) The meaneſt creature in the world is the work of Gods hand, and under that notion, the deſire of his heart; it is natural to all men to love their own works; and it is the diſtemper of moſt men to over-love and dote upon, yea, to be proud of the work of their hand; God hath a deſire to, and a liking of all his works, (*Gen.* 1. 31.) when he had finiſhed that great ſtructure, that noble fabrick of the world, *he ſaw all that he had made*, and he ſaw it with content. God did not make the world, and then take a view of it, all was one act; yea, he ſaw the idea or platform of it in his own breaſt from eternity; but the Scripture ſpeaks thus, to ſhew what price and value he put upon his work. And if the natural frame of man be ſuch as God hath a deſire to, and looks upon with delight, as it then came out of his hand in the firſt creation; what deſires hath God to the work of his own ſpirit in our hearts, which is the ſecond or the new creation? Hath he not a deſire to the new creature, who hath a deſire to every creature? If he hath a deſire to the work of his power in creation, then much more to the work of his ſpirit in regeneration, which is the moſt beautiful piece of work which he ever made? Angels are excellent creatures, being confirmed in holineſs; the Soul of a believer formed up by grace, is a creature matching Angels. When *Stevens* face was full of beauty, the Text ſaith, it did *ſhine as the face of an Angel.* If an Angel were corporal, he could not have more luſtre and beauty than *Stephen's* face had. Every Saint hath a heart like the face of an Angel, full of divine beauties and glorious excellencies. To ſuch a work of God, how great a deſire hath God? *Daniel* was called *a man of deſires* by the Angel; (*chap.* 9. 23.) we tranſlate *greatly beloved*, but the Chaldee is, *Thou art a man of deſires*: Though every believer cannot be called a man of deſires in *Daniels* height, yet every believer is a man of deſires, a man whom God deſires. It is an honour to man to be deſired among men (and thoſe Princes died in diſhonour, of whom the holy Story ſaith, that they died undeſired; but how great an honour is it to that man who lives deſired of God, and (whereof *Job* was aſſured) to whom God will have a deſire as to the work of his hands, when he is dead! Take this Corollary from it.

If God hath a deſire to the work of his hand, how ſhould they who are the work of his hand have a deſire unto him?

What deſire ſhould we have to God, who hath wrought us, when we hear that he hath a deſire to us, becauſe he hath wrought us? Shall the Potter have a deſire to the clay, and ſhall not that clay (which hath deſires) have a deſire to the Potter? One of the Ancients ſpeaks paſſionately to this point; *I was made by thee, O Lord, and my heart is reſtleſs till it return to thee*; the work ſhould have a deſire to the hands that made it, and that which hath received a being, to the fountain of its being. Sinful diſtempers cauſe us to depart from God, the work hath then no deſire to the hand that made it. Holy actings are all from God, and they carry us back to God from whom they are. A holy heart cannot but have a deſire to God, the work of whoſe hands it is.

Thirdly, *Job* was in a very ſad condition, when he ſpake this, he was pleading with God for a change, a change by death, he will needs die rather than continue ſuch a life; The hand of God had caſt him as low as a man could be on this ſide the grave or hell: and yet he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt have a deſire to the work of thy hand.* Hence Obſerve,

Faith can diſcern ſome light of favour, ſome glimmerings of love, through the clouds of darkeſt diſpenſations.

It is the holy skill, the art of faith, to make concluſions of life in death, and of light in darkneſs; *This is the right Logick of Faith*: Faith can propheſie, and faith is a true Prophet, *thou wilt have deſire*, he ſpeaks of the time to come. The preſumption of evil men propheſies ſometimes, or dreams rather, that God will have a deſire to them; but faith makes ſure propheſies, becauſe 'tis bottomed upon the ſure word of God; *Jobs* faith propheſied more than once. *He ſhall be my ſalvation*, (chap. 13.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I ſhall ſee him*, &c. (chap. 19.) Faith hath a quick eye, and ſees good in the end from the beginning. Faith ſees the movings of that holy concupiſcible appetite in God towards poor ſinners, when it feels nothing but the movings of his iraſcible appetite. While *Job* perceived wrath, or ſomewhat in the likeneſs of wrath, mixt with the dealings of God towards him, he promiſed himſelf (and that not coldly but confidently) not only ſomewhat in the likeneſs of the favour of God towards him, but his real favour; *Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hand.*

But had not the Lord a deſire to *Job* before? Was the ſpring of his affections ſhut up till that day ſhould come? or was his love to him yet to begin? No, the love of God and his deſires had flowed to him from everlaſting; as whom he loveth, he loveth to the end, ſo whom he loves, he loved without beginning; but his love and his deſires had been a little while hidden, and (as ſome rivers) had run under ground. *Job* ſaw nothing in his latter dayes, but the actings of his anger, and was ſenſible only of ſeverity in his proceedings, as the complaint of the next words teacheth us.

Verſe 16. **For thou numbreſt my ſteps, doſt not thou watch over my ſin?**

Concluſio pathetica ex comparatione ſeveritatis judiciorum Dei hoc & ſequente verſu, cum infirmitate omnium rerum creatarum, ver. 20, 21. *nominatim vero hominis uſque ad finem*, Jun. צעדי *greſſus meos.* ἐπιτηδεύματα 70. *ſtudia, ſumitur tropologicè pro actionibus tum animæ tum corporis. Greſſus ſunt affectus & actus quibus animus hominis incedit, bonis quidem ad palmam, malis vero ad pœnam.* ספר *eſt numerare vel ſuppatare, Hinc libellus ſupputatorius. Numerare greſſus eſt ſtudioſe aliquem obſervare, & omnia ejus facta inquirere, quod fere fit hoſtili animo* Bold. *Singula facta mea recenſes & ad amuſſim metiris.* Jun.

In this and the verſe following, *Job* makes a pathetical compariſon, between the preſent ſeeming rigour of Gods dealing with him, and that ſweetneſs which he hoped to find ere long or at the laſt: *Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hand, but now thou numbreſt my ſteps.*

Two things are here to be opened.

Firſt, What he means by his *ſteps.*

Secondly, What he means by Gods numbring his ſteps. *Job* ſpeaks both by a figure.

By *ſteps* we are to underſtand his actions, all that he did, yea, all that he thought, his inward motions as well as his outward motions. So the Septuagint tranſlates, *thou numbreſt my meditations*, or, the workings of my heart. As the whole courſe of a man is called his way, ſo the ſeveral actions of that courſe, are his ſteps: holy actions are ſtrait ſteps, and ſinful actions are uneven ones, *he went on frowardly in the way of his heart*, Iſa. 57. 17. that is, in the way which his heart moſt delighted in, that was a crooked way, and ſuch were his ſteps, ſuch diſorderly walkers uſe not to number their own ſteps, but God doth.

Numbring the ſteps notes an exact account, and an accurate obſervation of our actions, we ſay of a man who goeth ſoftly, *ſurely you tell your ſteps*, The Lord is ſaid to number our ſteps, when he makes a ſtrict inquiſition concerning all our tranſactions, and ſets down ſtep by ſtep, every paſſage of our lives, when he keeps (as it were) *a day-book* of all we do, and records us to a word or a thought. *David* ſpeaks of his enemies, (*Pſal.* 56. 6.) *they gather themſelves together, they hide themſelves, they mark my ſteps, when they wait for my ſoul:* that is, they mark every thing I do or ſay: he that would be watcht exactly, were beſt to have an enemy to watch him: love makes us watchful over one another, leſt we take hurt, but malice makes a man obſervant enough of another to do him hurt: thus *David's* enemies were double diligent upon their watches, *they mark my ſteps when they wait for my ſoul*: And again, (*Pſal.* 17. 11.) *they compaſſed us in our ſteps, they have ſet their eyes bowing down to the earth.* It is an alluſion (as I conceive) to hunters, who go poring upon the ground to prick the hare, or to find the print of the hares claw, when the hounds are at a loſs, and can make nothing of it by the ſcent. Thus his enemies caſt about to find where he had gone, or what he had been doing, that their blood-hounds might follow the game with a freſh cry. So then, *thou numbreſt my ſteps,* is no more but this, whatſoever I do or ſpeak, thou art very curious and critical in the obſervation of it; I will not ſtay in the inlargement of any points from theſe words, but referr to (*chap.* 10. 14.) where *Job* ſpeaks the ſame ſenſe, *If I ſin, then thou markeſt me*, &c.

Only note in paſſage.

Firſt, *God knows all the motions of our hearts, and the actions of our lives.*

He that is unacquainted with our wayes, cannot number our ſteps: it is beſt for us to number our own ſteps, and to take heed to our own wayes, when we hear that God is ſo exact at it: it would make us cautious what we do, if we knew of a man who took notice of all we did.

Secondly, The perſon, *Job* was a holy man, whoſe ſteps God numbred, whence we may learn,

That God ſees the ſin of his own children.

Job was not of opinion that God ſees no ſin in his children, he knew himſelf to be a child of God, and he knew his ſteps were numbred, yea, and his ſin watched over, as he ſpeaks in the next clauſe.

Doſt thou not watch over my ſin?

Parce peccatis meis, Vulg. *Hæc præcatio filo orationis non convenit.* Merc. תשמור q. d. *excubias agis ſuper peccatum meum; verbum de verbo, Nec cuſtodis ſuper peccatum meum. Non prætteribit te ullum peccatorum meorum* 70. *Verbum* שמר *pro expectare & differre cum magna parte Hebræorum ſumo.* Merc.

Some render this as a Prayer, *Do not keep my ſins, or ſpare me my ſins*, that is, do not puniſh them: but this is inconſiſtent with the tenour of *Jobs* diſcourſe, and ſo I leave it.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Doſt thou not keep or obſerve upon my ſin?* The ſenſe is the ſame with what we ſaid laſt, or we have here but an expoſition of it. Some read it without an interrogation, *Thou watcheſt over my ſin*, in both there is an alluſion to a ſevere creditour, who gives no day, but preſently exacts the forfeiture or penalty of his bond. So the Septuagint render, *None of my ſins paſs thee*, thou takeſt notice of all, to puniſh and bring me to judgment for them. Others tranſlate, *Thou doſt not wait*, or *expect at all upon my ſin*; As if he had ſaid, *As ſoon as ever thou haſt ſeen me commit any ſin, thou layeſt thy arreſt and charge upon me, thou doſt not give me time, but calleſt me to a preſent account.*

We may here again note, the inſpection or ſuperintendency of God over the wayes of man: he is ſo perfect a numberer, that he watcheth to number: he that will number how many ſteps another takes, had need watch him well. Let no man wonder that God numbreth his ſteps, when he watcheth to number them: and indeed, it is as eaſie for God to ſee every ſin in us, as to ſee one ſin; there is no difficulty to omniſciency, in knowing all things. Let this be alſo for our caution and admonition: if God watcheth over our ſins, how ſhould we watch over our ſelves? Chriſt gives this charge, *What I ſay to you, I ſay to all, watch:* we muſt watch for our own outward ſafety, though God watcheth to ſave, his watchfulneſs is no plea for our careleſneſs: much more have we need to watch, leſt we ſin, becauſe God watcheth to obſerve our ſins. His watchfulneſs ſhould provoke our carefulneſs. The Lord (as it were) watcheth advantages to bring evil upon them, who are not watchfull againſt evil; (*Dan.* 9. 14.) *Therefore hath the Lord watched the evil, and brought it upon us*: they were not watchful againſt the evil of ſin, therefore the Lord watched to bring upon them the evil of puniſhment. Have not we cauſe to watch, leſt we tranſgreſs, when God watcheth to chaſten our tranſgreſſions? The Prophet (*Jer.* 20. 10.) complained, *All my familiars watched for my halting*: God (in a ſenſe) *watcheth for our haltings.* He doth not watch as wicked men do, with a hope to ſee us halt, as the Prophet perſonates his unkind familiars there, ſaying thus among themſelves, or every man in his own heart, *Peradventure he will be enticed, and we ſhall prevail againſt him, and we ſhall take our revenge on him.* It pleaſeth wicked men to ſee the godly halt or ſtumble, much more to ſee them fall: God is infinitely above ſuch thoughts or deſigns, he watcheth for our haltings to make us know them, not to inſult over us for them. He watcheth for our haltings, not hoping to ſee us halt, but to prevent us from halting, or if we halt, then to preſerve us from falling. He at moſt watcheth for our haltings, to correct us for them, not to take his revenge upon us for them. He watcheth us to make us watchful.

There is a double watchfulneſs which this ſhould lead us to.

Firſt, A watchfulneſs in reference to God.

Secondly, A watchfulneſs in reference to our ſelves.

We ſhould watch 1. What God doth. 2. What God ſaith. And we ſhould watch, 1. What we do. 2. What we ſpeak. 3. What we think. Every thought, word, and work muſt be accounted for, and brought to judgment: and therefore it is as much our wiſdome, as it is our duty to watch over them. *Thou watcheſt over my ſin* (ſaith *Job*) And ſuppoſe God find his ſin, what will he do next? that *Job* ſeems to tell us in the next verſe. Our ſins are but traſh, yet *Job* ſuppoſed that God put his into a bagg; they are no treaſure, yet *Job ſuppoſed*, God ſealed up his ſins in a bagg, and leſt the ſeal ſhould not be ſtrong enough, he repreſents God ſowing up this bag-full of ſin, ſuch were the apprehenſions of this ſorrowful man.

Verſe 17. **My tranſgreſſions are ſealed up in a bag, and thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity.**

There are two expoſitions of theſe words.

Firſt, That *the ſealing of tranſgreſſions up in a bag*, implies the utter removing of tranſgreſſion: as if they were ſealed up never to be ſeen or brought forth any more: the word is uſed (*Job* 9. 7.) *he ſealed up the ſtars*; that is, he covers them with clouds and darkneſs, or overcomes them with greater light. The clearneſs of the day ſeals up the ſtars alwayes, and ſo doth the cloudineſs of the night ſometimes. Some give this ſenſe of the ſealing here, *my tranſgreſſions are ſealed in a bag*, that is, they are hid, and ſhall not be remembred at all for ever. *Daniel* prophecying of the ſufferings of Chriſt, ſaith, (*chap.*9.24.) *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and the holy city to finiſh tranſgreſſion:* The Chaldee word is, *to ſeal up tranſgreſſion,* what that is, the next words ſhew, *and to make an end of ſins, to make reconciliation for iniquity,* this was done by the death of Chriſt. The death of Chriſt was the death of ſin, and when reconciliation is made for ſin, the end of ſin is made. This is a great Goſpel truth, when ſin is pardoned, it is ſealed up ſo faſt, that *when it is to be ſought for, it ſhall not be found, and when it is enquired after, it ſhall not be.*

Elegans Hebraiſmus pro eo quod eſt rem ita claudere, ut nullo modo eam videre aut tangere liceat. Sigillare peccata eſt eorum memoriam penitus delere. Pined.

Yet I conceive it ſutes not this place, nor anſwers the ſubject upon which *Job* ſtill inſiſts, for he is aggravating the dealings of God with him, as ſevere, *he numbreth my ſteps*; So that to ſay *my tranſgreſſions are ſealed up*, that is, they are pardoned and covered, is an expoſition of ſo great a variation from the ſcope of *Jobs* diſcourſe, as cannot be admitted in this place. Therefore to clear his meaning, I ſhall offer, that ſealing is uſed in three caſes.

Firſt, To keep things ſecret that they may not be ſeen.

Secondly, To keep things diſtinct, that they may not be confuſed.

Thirdly, To keep things ſafe (as we uſually ſpeak) that they may be forth-coming.

When *Daniel* was caſt into the Lions den (that he might be ſafe; not ſafe from the Lions, but ſafe that none ſhould fetch him out from the Lions (that there might be no deluſion in the buſineſs,) 'Tis ſaid, *a ſtone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the denn, and the King ſealed it with his own ſignet* (chap. 6. 17.) Seals were anciently put upon cheſts of goods, eſpecially of their choiceſt goods. *Pliny* gives it as an argument of the integrity of the times before him, that then *nothing was ſealed up, ſervants might then* (as we ſpeak of thoſe that are very truſty) *be truſted with untold gold, but now* (ſaith he) *houſe-keepers ſecure their very meat and drink with ſeals, leſt their ſervants ſhould ſteal, and imbezzle them.* In alluſion to this or that other ſervice of the ſeal, *Job* ſaith here, *my tranſgreſſion is ſealed*; as if he had ſaid, my tranſgreſſion is kept ſafe, that it may be ready as matter of accuſation and charge againſt me. In purſuance of which ſenſe, ſome interpret theſe words, as a metaphor taken from Sollicitors about Law-ſuits, who carry their papers and bills of inditement ſealed up, and put into a bag, which cuſtome is continued at this day. As if *Job* had ſaid, *my inditement, or charge, is ſealed up in thy bag, ſurely thou intendeſt ſhortly to proceed to a tryal againſt me.* When God tells the people of *Iſrael, their vine is as the vine of Sodom,* &c. he minds them preſently, *Is not this laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed up among my treaſures?* (Deut. 32. 34.) that is, this evil which you have done, the ſins which you have committed, like *Sodom* and *Gomorrah,* are laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed among my treaſures; I have taken ſure notice of all, and ſhall bring all forth in due time: you have ſcattered your ſins and wickedneſſes abroad, but I have gathered and ſealed them up. God treaſures up mercy for an obedient people, but he treaſures up wrath for the rebellious. Or, if God ſhould not do it, yet ſuch do it for themſelves, (*Rom.* 2. 5.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath.* As impenitence ſeals our ſins upon us, ſo it treaſures and ſeals up the wrath of God upon us for our ſins. *The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his ſin is hid* (Hoſ. 12. 13.) From whom was it hid? Not from the eyes of God, (poſſibly not from the eyes of the world) but it is bound up and hid, as reſerved to a day of reckoning. It is bound up, not let looſe by pardoning grace; it is hid, not with a covering of mercy, but with a covering from mercy; it is hid, not for protection, but (as *Job* thought his ſin was ſealed) for puniſhment.

Obſignate cellas, referte annulum ad me. Plaut. in Caſin.

Quæ fuit illa priſcorū vita? qualis innocentia? in qua nihil ſignabatur, & nunc cibi quoque & potus annulo vindicant à rapina. Plin. lib.31.c.1.

My tranſgreſſion is ſealed up in a bag.

Further, This *ſealing up in a bag* is an elegancy heightning the ſenſe: A man counts or tells over his ſpending money; but when he ſeals it up in a bag, it is an argument he means to lay it by as a ſtock. A ſtock of money is not ſcattered about, but put in a bag; and when it is in the bag, it is not only tied, but ſealed up. Thus *Job* ſeems to conceive, that God had taken a note of all his ſins, and laid them up till a fit time, to call him to an account about them, and puniſh him for them.

And thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity.

Job proſecutes the ſame metaphor, and hath the ſame mind in this, as in the former part of the verſe.

The words undergo different readings, ſome thus, *thou ſoweſt iniquity to iniquity*; the Original ſignifies to joyn, or, to make an application of one thing to another, like an artificer, who puts piece to piece in any fabrick. In which ſenſe *Job* ſaith of his friends, *Ye are forgers of lies* (chap. 13. 4.) that is, you curiouſly frame up a lie, or put one lie to another, (*Pſal.* 119.6,9.) *The proud have forged a lie againſt me: ſo, thou ſoweſt iniquity to iniquity*; the iniquity of one year to the iniquity of another; the iniquity of one relation to the iniquity of another; this is a ſowing, or joyning of iniquity. Others thus, *Thou ſoweſt to mine iniquity,* that is, thou ſoweſt the puniſhment of iniquity to my iniquity, thou addeſt affliction to my ſin: *Job* thought God heaped all his ſins upon him together, and with them the puniſhment of all his ſins. Again, *Thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity*, is but an explication of, *thou haſt ſealed up my tranſgreſſions in a bag*; or, the bag of my tranſgreſſion is not only ſealed but ſowed. Hence obſerve,

> *A gracious heart looks upon his own ſinnings as the occaſion of his ſufferings.*

He fears there is ſomewhat in deck againſt him. And 'tis a truth, that as God hath a *bottle* wherein he puts the tears of his afflicted people, ſo he hath a *bag* wherein he puts the ſins of an offending people. God puts none of the ſins of his people in a bag to condemn them, yet he often puts their ſin in a bag to chaſten them. Hence a godly man is apt to judge all his afflictions as the fruit of his ſins: and though it was not ſo in *Jobs* caſe, yet he good man, put all upon his ſin. It is good to judge our ſelves when we are judged) that is chaſtened) of the Lord.

Secondly, Though this be a truth in general, yet *Job* is not to be excuſed in having ſuch dark thoughts of God, and ſuch black thoughts of himſelf; That ſurely *God ſealed up his iniquities in a bag*, and was reſolved to afflict him for them. *Job* miſtook his own condition, and the mind of God towards him in ſome things, as well as his friends did. God had not ſealed up his tranſgreſſions in a bag, but he had caſt them behind his back. God did not afflict him for the puniſhment of his ſin, but for the proof and exerciſe of his graces, as hath been ſhewed all along. *The holieſt man on earth is ſubject to miſconceive the reaſon why he ſuffers, as well as the rule of what he ſhould do.* Thirdly obſerve,

Fallitur hac in re Jobus, *non eſſent hæ afflictiones pœna peccati, ſed fidei probationes, quod Dei conſilium non ſatis intelligebat* Job. Druſ.

> *That though a gracious heart will not bear the hard cenſures of others about his ſins, yet he is ready enough to cenſure and accuſe himſelf.*

Job did as often confeſs his iniquity before God, as he had pleaded his innocency before men. He would not have taken it well at the hands of his friends, if they had told him that God had filled a bag with his tranſgreſſions, and that

God had ſealed it up againſt a day of account, yet thus he ſpeaks of himſelf. As his faith appeared little while he thought that God had ſealed up his tranſgreſſions, ſo his humility and ſelf-abaſement appeared very great in this acknowledgment of his tranſgreſſion.

Further, *Job* imployes three words in theſe two verſes about the ſame thing, the acknowledgment of his ſinfulneſs; 1. Sin. 2. Tranſgreſſion. 3. Iniquity. Theſe are taken ſometimes promiſcuouſly, as was ſhewed, (*chap.* 13. 23.) here we may give them a diſtinct ſenſe.

The firſt ſignifies properly a falling through ignorance or infirmity, a ſtepping out of the way beſides our intention, (poſſibly) againſt our full reſolution.

The ſecond ſignifies a diſſent from, or diſlike of that which is juſt and right.

The third imports rebellion, and prevarication, when we ſin ſcorning obedience, or judging it a thing below us. One of the Ancients confeſſes of himſelf, that when he was (in his youth) admoniſhed by his mother to take heed of ſinful wayes, and to walk with God, he was aſhamed to follow her counſel. This is rebellion indeed, and the height of of iniquity; it is bad enough to do ill, but it is worſe to be aſhamed to do good, worſt of all to be aſhamed to leave off doing evil. *Job* chargeth himſelf with ſin, tranſgreſſion, and iniquity, not with all of them in their full extent and aggravations, but with all of them in their kind. Hence obſerve,

חטא *eſt peccatum ex ignorantia vel infirmitate.*
עון *ἀδικία, eſt diſſentio juſti & injuſti.*
פשע *quando peccatum fit ex dedignatione parendi vel ex amore licentiæ.* Auguſt. Conf.

That a godly man is ſubject to all ſins, even the worſt of ſins.

Not only to ſins of infirmity, but of prevarication; not only to ſins of ignorance, but to ſins againſt knowledge: he may ſin, not only becauſe he cannot diſcern the rule clearly, but even againſt a clear rule. There is no ſin but a regenerate man may fall into, except that from which no man can be raiſed, the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Now as the beſt diſcover ſomewhat in them productive of the worſt ſins, ſo God hath diſcovered himſelf ready to pardon the worſt of ſins: if we commit tranſgreſſion, iniquity and ſin, he proclaims himſelf, *the God pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin*; yea, his nature is infinitely more ready to pardon, than our nature is to ſin. We ſhould fear to commit the leaſt ſin, even a ſin of infirmity, but we need not fear whether God will pardon (for he certainly will) more than ſins of infirmity, even the greateſt ſins. And though now not only our iniquities and ſins, but even our leaſt tranſgreſſions, or ſteppings aſide, are ſealed, and ſowed up in a bag; yet Believers ſhall ſhortly ſee all their ſins, bag and all, thrown into the bottom of the Sea, and ſinking, like a talent of lead, or a weighty mill-ſtone, in thoſe mighty waters of free grace and undeſerved mercies.

VERS. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

And ſurely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

The waters wear the ſtones, thou waſheſt away the things which grow out of the duſt of the earth, and thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man,

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he paſſeth, thou changeſt his countenance, and ſendeſt him away.

His ſons come to honour, and he knoweth it not, and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.

But his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn.

IN this context *Job* gives us a proof that he had not loſt his Philoſophy, much leſs his grace, in a ſick bed. An Interpreter breaks out into admiration, that a man diſtreſſed with ſo many troubles, ſmitten with ſo many ſores, grieved with ſo many pains, could intend his thoughts ſo much about the ſecrets of nature, and the providential tranſmutations of the creature; that he, who had been confined ſo long to a chamber, could travell thus in his thoughts, for illuſtrations of his own caſe, over mountains and rocks, among ſtones and trees, through the winds and waters.

Mirum eſt audire Jobum *in mediis ærumnis Philoſophantem.* Olymp.

The 18th and 19th verſes are a collection of compariſons for this purpoſe.

The words are plain, but there is much variety of judgment about their ſcope, and *Jobs* intendment in them.

Some conceive, that under theſe ſimilitudes he bewails laſtingneſs and long continuance of his ſorrows, or rather, that he laſted and continued ſo long in his ſorrows: As if he had ſaid, *The ſtrongeſt pieces of the lower world are eaten out by time, or forced into a decay by outward violence: mountains and rocks cannot ſtand their ground when the earth ſhakes: The hardeſt ſtones cannot ever contend with the ſmalleſt droppings, nor can the deepeſt roots hold their poſſeſſion againſt an overflowing deluge: all theſe are ſubject unto change, when thus aſſaulted: how is it then that I ſubſiſt under ſo many ſorrows, and yet bear ſuch burdens of affliction, who am neither mountain, nor rock, nor ſtone, nor tree? how is it that I am not waſted, and removed by the tempeſt of thine anger, and quite waſhed away with theſe inundations of thy diſpleaſure? Surely, if I had been a mountain, I might have been pulled down before this time; had I been a rock, theſe ſtrokes and diggings might have undermin'd me; had I been a ſtone, theſe continual droppings might have worn me out; and how green and flouriſhing ſoever I had been, theſe flouds might long ſince, not only have diſcoloured, but drowned all my beauty.* Thus he argues from the greater to the leſs, if ſuch robuſtuous creatures fall and fail by theſe accidents, whence was it that he who was but weakneſs had held out ſo long? how was it that he (almoſt a dead man at firſt) did yet live in the midſt of ſo many deaths? Hence,

Secondly, Others conceive, that *Job* under theſe ſimilitudes renews his old ſuit to die; as if he had ſaid, *There is nothing ſo firm, nothing ſo ſtrongly ſetled, but muſt yield at laſt unto corruption, and change its ſtate: therefore let my change come. Let me be removed, for rocks muſt remove; let me be conſumed, for mountains muſt conſume: Stones wear, and trees are waſhed away, let me be worn and waſh'd out of the world, let me paſs away, and die.*

Thirdly, That *Job* doth here move the Lord to pity him, and haſten his releaſe, ſuſpecting that at the laſt he might break out into ſome impatiency, or diſcover uncomely paſſions: As if he had ſaid, *Lord, mountains cannot ſtand alwayes, and rocks will fail at laſt; how much ſooner may my patience? My ſtrength is not the ſtrength of ſtones,* (as he ſpake, *chap.* 6. 12.)

Fourthly, All theſe ſimilitudes are conceived to aim at the ſame point, which *Job* had been upon a little before; namely, to ſhew that a man dying ſhall return no more to his former ſtate, as was there opened. Death giveth us ſuch a wound as ſhall never be healed here, it is an irreparable loſs of our worldly comforts. This he ſhadows out by mountains, rocks, ſtones, trees, and fruits of the earth, which are changed and conſumed, as if they had never been. Thus in general; I ſhall now open the diſtinct parts of theſe compariſons.

Has ſimilitudines eodem ſpectare puto quo præcedentes de aquis è mari abeuntibus, &c, *ad oſtendendam* ſc. *mortem hominis irreparabilem.* Merc.

Verſe 18. Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

Here are two ſimilitudes; Some read, *Surely the high mountain, or higheſt mountain, cometh to nought*, for the Hebrew word here uſed ſignifies not only to *fall*, but to be very *high and great*, ſo high and great, that a man beholding it, or looking down from it, is giddy, and falls for fear. Hence Giants (*Gen.*6.) are called *Nephilim*, which properly ſignifies *Fallers*; not becauſe they fall, but becauſe they make others fall: yea, they being ſo high, or men of ſuch ſtupendious limbs and ſtature, others ſeeing them, tremble, and fall before them: So here, for the *mountain falling*, we may read, *the high and huge mountain, the gigantick mountain*, the mountain above ordinary mountains, as much as the giant is above the ordinary pitch of men; As if *Job* had ſaid, *the higheſt mountain comes to nought*, he ſpeaks not of annihilation, but alteration, they moulder and break, they are not what once they were.

Rab Kimchi *exponit* נופל, *non cadens, ſed altus, editus, ut* נפלים *gigantes,* q.d. *Mons editus & giganteus decidit.* Lib. Rad.

The word which we tranſlate *cometh to nought*, ſignifies properly ro *wither as a leaf*, or to fall as a withered leaf: when the ſap or moiſture of the tree goes down to the root, then the leaves fall off. Thus (ſaith *Job*) the great mountains, the huge giantly mountains come to nought; they wither, they fall off like the leaves in Autumn: the Prophet *Iſaiah* prayeth (*chap.* 64. 1.) *O that thou wouldeſt bow the heavens, and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy preſence*: by mountains he means the greateſt worldly powers, not natural, but metaphorical mountains;

נבל *proprie ſignificat illum defluxum deciduorum foliorum ex arbore cum marceſcunt ex ipſo humore.*

yet it is a truth in the letter, for if the Lord do but bow the heavens, and ſhew his power; if he bow the heavens, and comes down in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, then the hardeſt mountains, like the liquid waters, ſhall flow down at his preſence.

And the rock is removed out of his place.

A rock is harder than a mountain; a mountain is earth heaped together, but a rock is earth hardned together: but though it be not only a mountain, but a rock, yea, though it be a mountain of rocks, remove it ſhall.

עתק *conſenuit* παλαιωθήσεται, *veteraſcit*. Sept

The word ſignifies properly, *to wax old*, becauſe things that wax old are removing and paſſing away; Hence the ſame word ſignifies to wax old, and to be removed; that's the Apoſtle's deſcription of a thing that waxeth old, (*Heb.* 8.13.) *that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vaniſh away*; he ſpeaks to a ſpiritual point, yet from a maxim in nature. So here, the rock is removed out of his place, is the ſame with, the rock waxeth old; becauſe that which waxeth old is ready to be removed out of his place. From theſe two ſimilitudes, Obſerve,

Firſt, *There is no creature ſo ſtrong or firm, but is ſubject unto change.*

The mountains and the rocks change ordinarily by the power of time, how much more when God contends with them by an extraordinary power? The Prophet *Nahum* ſpeaks this in higheſt Rhetorick (*chap.* 1.4,5,6.) *he rebuketh the ſea, and maketh it dry.* (If any thing keep water, it is the ſea, which is the greateſt veſſel prepared on purpoſe by God to keep the waters; yet God can lade the Ocean with the hollow of his hand, and dry, not only a pond or a river, but the Sea; *He rebuketh the ſea, and maketh it dry*;) *Baſhan languiſheth and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languiſheth, the mountains quake at him, the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his preſence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein, then who can ſtand before his indignation, and who can abide the fierceneſs of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* This piece of *Nahum's* prophecy is a clear commentary upon the Text of *Job*: what can be ſaid more, and nothing leſs deſerves to be ſaid, either of the inſtability of the ſtrongeſt creatures, or of the omnipotency of the God of ſtrength. He toſſeth the hills like tennis-balls, and cracks the rocks like a nutſhell; before him the hills melt, and the foundations of the earth are diſcovered. The creature will change by reaſon of its own weakneſs, though God ſhould not exert or put forth his power againſt it. Every mixt body hath the ſeed of corruption in it, and therefore muſt corrupt naturally, though God ſhould not deſtroy it providentially or judiciarily: Now if theſe creatures are changeable in themſelves, ſurely when God changeth them they ſhall be changed: all creature ſtrength muſt yield to his ſtrength, whoſe weakneſs is ſtronger than all creatures; If God ſend out a commiſſion againſt a mountain, it falls, and muſt come down; if he bids a rock remove, the rock ſhall be removed; if God ſay to the wind, blow away that mountain, or to a tempeſt, blow down that rock, it ſhall be done; ſtormy winds and tempeſts go preſently upon his errand, and fulfill his word. Faith is ſaid to remove mountains, but it is only upon this account, becauſe it engageth the power of God, who alone can do it.

Secondly, Obſerve, (which is alſo applicable to the other ſimilitudes;)

That the ſtrongeſt creatures read man a lecture of his weakneſſe.

When *Job* would ſhew man his frailty, he ſends him to the mountains and rocks, which are the moſt durable among earthly ſubſtances: the weakeſt creature is an embleme of mans weakneſs, and the ſtrongeſt teacheth him, there is no truſting to his ſtrength. As *Solomon* ſends the *ſluggard to the piſmire*, ſaying, *conſider her wayes and be wiſe*; ſo we may ſay to the ſtrong man, to the confident man, to the proud man, to all who think they ſhall never be removed; go to the mountains, repair to the rocks, and be wiſe; go to the ſtones which wear away with water drops, go to the trees which are rooted up by a deluge of waters: go to theſe, and learn the vanity and mutability of your beſt eſtate. We may learn of that which cannot ſpeak; things inſenſible may reaſon the matter with us: they have a voice, though not a tongue, to tell us what we are; For as *the inviſible things of God, to wit, his eternal power and Godhead, are ſeen in the things which are made*; ſo the inviſible things of man, even his temporal weakneſs and frailty, are ſeen in the things which decay ſince their making. The power of God is inviſible, and ſo is much of the weakneſs of man. The conſtitution of the creature makes the former viſible, and the corruption of it makes the latter viſible. Every thing that man ſees remembers him what he is, and what he muſt ſhortly be. And becauſe abundance of caution in this point is no burthen, *Job* gives further caution: And as I have opened the former, ſo I ſhall now theſe latter inſtances, by which he confirms this truth.

Verſe 19. **The waters wear the ſtones, thou waſheſt away the things that grow out of the duſt of the earth, and thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man.**

In this verſe we have two ſimilitudes more, together with the application of all the four, in thoſe words, *Thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man*, in conjunction with the twentieth verſe, *Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he paſſeth*, &c.

Gutta cavat lapidem. Ovid. *lib.* 4. de Ponto.

The waters wear the ſtones.] Waters are ſoft and liquid, yet they make impreſſion upon that which is hard, and almoſt impenetrable: it is a Proverbial ſpeech, *water by continual running, or often dropping hollows and dents a ſtone.* This ſimilitude intimates, that though *Jobs* afflictions had been ſmall or light, whereas indeed they were great and heavy, though they had been but as little drops whereas indeed they were a mighty deluge, yet their long continuance and frequent repetition, would utterly weaken and wear him out at laſt: *dropping will conſume a ſtone.*

Hence Obſerve, *That continued and repeated acts though ſmall, produce great effects.*

What ſingle force doth not, many doublings of it will. Many lighter blows will kill as well as one great wound. A man may be whipt as well as club'd to death. He that goes but a little way in an hour goes a great way if he continue going many hours. A Student in any profeſſion may have got ſo little learning by one dayes ſtudy, that he cannot perceive he hath got any, yet continuing to ſtudy he may attain the higheſt degree of learning. A believer findes little or no growth in grace or in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, by ſome one exerciſe either in prayer or hearing the word, yet by a conſtant attendance upon the Lord in theſe duties, he grows to a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fullneſs of Chriſt. Smalleſt ſins lived in (which ſome do not ſo much as ſuſpect to be dangerous) deſtroy the ſoul, as well as that (whatſoever it is) which is called by this name, *a ſin unto death* (1 *John* 5.16.) The greateſt number is made up of conjoyned unities. Here a little and there a little, comes to much. The mightieſt oak is hewed down, and the ſtrongeſt wall is undermined by many ſtroaks of the axe and mattock. A ſhip may be ſwallowed up with a multitude of little ſands as well as broken upon a rock: you may make a burden of many feathers as well as of one maſs of lead. A multitude in any kind whether of actions things or perſons, though inconſiderable apart, yet put together or following each other cloſe, will carry all before them, and overcome all difficulties. *The waters wear the ſtones.*

Thou waſheſt away the things that grow out of the earth.

Thou waſheſt] Who is that? the antecedent is God himſelf. *Thou* (O Lord) *waſheſt away the things*, &c. Here *Job* expreſſeth the ſupream efficient of all thoſe alterations in the creature, who it is that pulls down the mountains, that temoves the rocks, all theſe changes are wrought by the power of God, *thou waſheſt away the things that grow out of the earth*, or, *thou bringeſt a deluge upon them.* God brought once an univerſal deluge, which waſhed away not only all that grew out of the earth, but all that lived upon the face of the earth. God hath given mankind his covenant, and ſet *his bow in the cloud* as a ſign of it, *that all fleſh ſhall not be cut off any more by the waters of a floud, neither ſhall there any more be a floud to deſtroy the earth*, (*Gen.* 9.11.) yet God hath often ſince brought flouds upon particular places and countreys, which have deſtroyed and waſhed away that which grows upon the face of the earth, as herbs, graſs and trees.

ספיח *germina*, Pag. *ſponte naſcentia.* Vatab. *Quæ ſponte fundit pulvis terræ.* Complut.

The word ſtrictly taken ſignifies only thoſe things which grow naturally out of the earth without the labour of man, without plowing, digging, or ſowing. So we find the things that grow out of the earth diſtinguiſhed (1 *King.* 19.23.) *This ſhall be a ſign to thee, thou ſhalt eat this year ſuch things as grow of themſelves, and the ſecond year that which groweth of the ſame, and the third year ye ſhall plant and ſow:* The Levitical Law mindes us alſo of this diſtinction, (*Lev.* 25. 5.) *that which groweth of its own accord of thy harveſt thou ſhalt not reap.* As the Jews were forbidden to ſow their field in the year of *Jubile*, ſo alſo to reap that (as a peculiar crop to any one of them) which grew up without their ſowing. The ſtanding corn (if it ſtand too long) ſheds ſome grains, which ſpring up without plowing or ſowing: This is ſaid to grow *of its own accord*; yet (I conceive) we need not take it here in ſuch a reſtrained ſenſe, but in general, for all or every thing that *groweth out of the duſt of the earth,* whether by or without the labour of the husbandman: *Thou waſheſt away the things that grow out of the duſt of the earth.* Hence obſerve,

First, *The ſame thing may be both a bleſſing and an affliction.*

Things grow out of the duſt of the earth, by water flowing out of the earth, or by the rain falling upon the earth from heaven; and yet the falling of the rain, and the flowing of the water, may deſtroy the things that grow out of the duſt of the earth: if the rain fall not on the duſt of the earth, nothing will grow. God threatens to make the rain of the land powder and duſt (*Deut.* 28. 24.) that is, to ſend ſo much drought, that the duſt ſhall riſe from the earth up into the air, and fall down upon the earth inſtead of rain. Now when the rain is duſt, nothing will ſpring out of the duſt of the earth. The earth is barren; the earth opens its mouth, and gapes to heaven for rain (as a thirſty man) to make it fruitful: yet, this water, this rain, which ſometimes is a great bleſſing to the earth, and cauſeth it to bring forth fruit abundantly, even this deſtroyes the fruit of the earth: *too much of any thing in nature is hurtful*: there may be too much of nature, but there cannot be too much of grace; ſome things are ſo good, that we cannot have too great a quantity of them. The dews and drops of heaven upon the ſoul in greateſt abundance, will not deſtroy the things that grow in or out of our ſouls, but make them grow more. Our ſin and the wrath of God turn our greateſt worldly comforts into curſes; but that is alwayes a bleſſing to us which cures us of our ſin, and the more we have of it, the more bleſſings we alwayes have.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The Lord who makes things to grow out of the earth, makes them wither.*

He who giveth us the fruit of the ground, takes the fruit of the ground away: Mercies and Judgments come from the very ſame hand, and both from the hand of God; The Lord ſaith to the fields, encreaſe and multiply: His word, yea, his ſteps drop fatneſs. Where God walketh in mercy, every ſtep he ſets is a drop of fatneſs, and where he walks in anger, every ſtep he ſets is a drop of leanneſs; He that makes the fields flouriſh, makes them droop; *he waſheth away the things that grow out of the duſt of the earth.*

Thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man.

As if he had ſaid, *Thou who cauſeſt the mountains to fall, and rocks to conſume; thou who cauſeſt ſtones to wear, and waſheſt away the things that grow out of the earth, thou, even thou, deſtroyeſt the hope of man*: that is, in deſtroying theſe things, thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man; or, as thou deſtroyeſt theſe ſtrong, durable, and beautiful creatures, ſo the hope of man ſet upon any creature. The Hebrew particle (*Vau*) is often put as a note of likeneſs; *And thou deſtroyeſt*, is, *ſo thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man.*

But ſhall the hope of man be deſtroyed? What hope, and whoſe hope ſhall be deſtroyed? There is a hope of man, ſtronger than the mountains, and more durable than rocks or ſtones. Though theſe conſume and come to nought, yet that ſhall not. The hope of the Saints endures for ever, and they ſhall never be aſhamed of their hope: their hope is an *Anchor,* (ſo the Apoſtle calls it, *Heb.*6.) *ſure and ſtedfaſt*: and as the hope of the Saints is a ſure anchor, ſo it is faſtned by ſuch a cable as will never crack, let the winds blow, and the waves riſe as high as they will. The word of promiſe is the cable which holdeth this anchor, that word of promiſe is ſtronger than a threefold cord, and cannot at all be broken.

Again, as this anchor is ſtrongly faſtned above, ſo it is let down upon, and is faſtned in a rock beneath. That anchor of hope will never drag which falls into Chriſt, the clifts of that rock hold it, and will not let it go. *It is impoſſible to deſtroy ſuch a hope as this: The hope of Saints ſhall indeed be deſtroyed, or perfected rather, by enjoyment*; but it ſhall not be deſtroyed by diſappointment. When we enjoy all things, what need we hope for any thing? Hope is ſwallowed up in fruition. *Saints never loſe their hope, till they have found all that they hoped for: If in this life only we had hope in Chriſt, we were of all men moſt miſerable,* 1 Cor. 15.19. We ſhall not hope any longer than we live here, but we have a hope of good beyond this life: our hope laſteth no longer than our lives, but the things we hope for, laſt longer than the mountains, yea, longer (as old *Jacob* ſpeaks in his benediction upon *Joſeph*) than the *everlaſting hills*: our hope will laſt, that is, we have hope of that which will laſt as long as everlaſtingneſs.

Seeing then the hope of Saints is no periſhing hope, whoſe hope doth *Job* mean, when he ſaith, *Thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man?*

He means the hope of vain men, or the vain hope of good men. God deſtroyeth all the hopes of vain men, and all the vain hopes of any man, ſuch hopes as thoſe proud men had after the floud ſhall be deſtroyed; who ſaid, *Go to, let us build us a city and tower whoſe top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, leſt we be ſcattered abroad upon the face of the earth.* (*Gen.*21.4.) God ſcatters their hopes, who by worldly power or policy, hope to ſecure themſelves againſt ſcattering: a hope to get our ſelves a name, and ſo to faſten our ſelves upon earthly foundations, as never to be removed, ſhall ſurely be removed. The Pſalmiſt diſcovered, that the inward thoughts of covetous men are, *that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations,* (Pſal. 49.11.) this is their thought and hope: God deſtroyeth ſuch hopes often, letting their houſes fall to the ground, before themſelves fall into the grave: or if their outward glory out-live them, yet their poſterity ſhall out-live their glory; their ſons ſhall either wantonly ſcatter what they have miſerably gathered, and at laſt be eaten up with wants, or the wrath of God will ſcatter what the father gathered, and the ſon hath mind enough to keep. And as God deſtroyes the hope of covetous men, that their riches ſhall abide, ſo the hope of voluptuous men, that their pleaſures ſhall be renewed: ſuch a hope the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes the idle, idoll ſhepherds full of; (*Iſa.* 56.12.) when they ſay, *Come ye, and I will fetch wine, and we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drink, and to morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant.* The hoped for cup ſhall be pulled from their mouths, who do not drink for thirſt, but thirſt for a drinking.

Further, God deſtroyeth all their hopes, who *hope in the arm of fleſh.* The Jews thought *Egypt* help enough againſt all enemies, even while they neglected to keep God their friend. But ſee how the Prophet reproves them, or befools them for it: *Why gaddeſt thou about ſo much to change thy way?* As if he had ſaid, When one worldly means fails thee, thy reſort is to another: if *Aſſyria* help thee not, thou art confident that *Egypt* will, *but thou ſhalt be aſhamed of Egypt, as thou waſt aſhamed of Aſſyria.* That is, theſe hopes ſhall fail thee, and thy expectations, they ſhall be fruſtrate in the one as well as in the other. For *God hath rejected thy confidences, and thou ſhalt not proſper in them,* (*Jer.* 2. 36,37.) Thus God deſtroyeth the hope of vain men, and not only ſo, but

He deſtroyeth alſo the vain hopes of good men ('tis poſſible for ſuch to have vain hopes) hopes of long life, of proſperous dayes, of riches, and of great things for themſelves: They ſometimes project as vainly as the world, and joyn with thoſe in action, from whom they are ſeparated by profeſſion. The Lord in mercy blaſteth theſe hopes of good men, that they may be taught to fix their hopes on better things. He ſhews how weak and withering the creature is, though in their hands, that their hearts may be wholly ſet on him. We enjoy God moſt, when we hope leaſt in man; and God doth therefore deſtroy the vain hopes of ſome men, that they may enjoy himſelf more. As all the hope of hypocrites ſhall be deſtroyed, ſo ſhall ſome hopes of thoſe who are ſincere.

Thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man; that is, in deſtroying thoſe things upon which man hopes; thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man: the act or habit of hope is often put for the object of it. Man hopes in mountains material and metaphorical; he truſts in the rocks and ſtones of the earth? or in the things that grow out of the earth; riches and plenty. All theſe things are deſtroyable, and when theſe are deſtroyed, the hope of moſt men is deſtroyed: if the matter upon which our hopes are fixed be periſhing, our hopes ſhall periſh: We cannot raiſe a ſafe or a firm building upon a rotten or unſound foundation. Earthly things, the mountains of the earth cannot make a pillar to prop up the hope of man, when God will pull it down.

I have from former paſſages in this book, ſhewed, how great a poſſeſſion hope is; and that even the light of Nature in ſome, hath preferred it before all their poſſeſſions. I have alſo ſhewed, that it is the laſt piece which man quits the poſſeſſion of in his greateſt extremities, and that when that's gone, all is gone. Man hath nothing more to be deſtroyed, when once his hope is deſtroyed: if our hope be prevailed over, we are prevailed over for ever: *Jobs* diſcourſe leads us to this concluſion in the next verſe.

Verſe 20. **Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he paſſeth, thou changeſt his countenance, and ſendeſt him away.**

This verſe explains the application of the ſimilitude, when the Lord deſtroyeth the hope of man, he prevaileth againſt him for ever.

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he paſſeth.

Thou prevaileſt] The word is, *thou waxeſt ſtrong upon him*, or, thou art ſtronger than he: all prevailing proceeds from greater ſtrength, either of body or mind: equality makes no conqueſt. And though (as *Hannah* ſings 1 *Sam.* 1, 9,) *by ſtrength ſhall no man prevail*; yet the ſtrength of God will prevail. The reaſon why no man prevails by ſtrength is, becauſe God alone hath more ſtrength than all men put together, and becauſe he hath, theretherefore he can prevail by his own ſtrength over man, and that for ever.

תתקפהו *prevalebis ei*, Mont. *fortior eo fuiſti*, Pagn.

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him] The word which we tranſlate *for ever*, ſignifies alſo in the verb to prevail, to triumph, or to overcome; thou waxeſt ſtrong over him triumphingly and victoriouſly; or, thou triumpheſt over him, and thou ſhalt alwayes triumph over him. A triumph is the ſignal of perfect victory, and where victory is perfect, it is victory for ever: God prevails ſo over man, that he may triumph, and therefore he is rightly ſaid to prevail triumphantly, or to prevail for ever.

נצח *quod eſt triumphare aut vincere, idē eſt quod aliquid ad finem victorioſè & triumphanter perducere.*

Thou prevaileſt for ever; which may be underſtood two wayes.

Firſt, That man is ſo prevailed upon, that he cannot repair himſelf again. If God break down, man cannot build up, and if he wound, man cannot heal: both breach and wound muſt continue for ever, unleſs the ſame hand that made them make them up again.

Secondly, That, how often ſoever God taketh man in hand, he is ſure to carry the day againſt him; *he prevaileth for ever*. God is alwayes armed with ſufficient ſtrength to ſubdue all ſtrength unto himſelf. Nor can we ſurprize God, or come upon him, before he hath drawn out his ſtrength, and made it ready. He muſt be a perpetual Victor or Triumpher who hath alwayes ſtrength enough to get the victory, and whoſe ſtrength is alwayes ready enough to go to battel. There was never any man alwayes a conquerour, but God is. Men have been mighty conquerors, and have had conquerour juſtly affixed to their titles. Yet not one of theſe was alwayes a conquerour, the beſt of men have been ſometimes worſted, or could not prevail; Only God prevaileth ever. If he undertake a work or a deſign, whether for or againſt man, he will be ſure to have his ends: for nothing can ſtand in his way. All that is in the way is of his own ſetting, and he is wiſer than to ſet any thing in his way, which ſhall hinder him in the bringing about his own ends. What ſtrength ſoever the creature hath, it hath from God, and ſurely he hath not given out more than he keeps to himſelf. He will not be maſtered with his own gifts, nor make derivative power too ſtrong for original power. Indeed all the power which God gives is weakneſs, and the wiſdome folly, compared with that he keeps: and what is weakneſs to omnipotency? what is folly to wiſdome? what is mortal and changeable, to eternal and unchangeable, that it ſhould hinder its prevailing?

The vulgar reads differently, referring this act of prevailing, not to the ſtrength of God prevailing over man, but to the bounty of God giving man ſtrength to prevail: *Thou haſt ſtrengthened him for a little while, that he might paſs away for ever*. As if God exalted man only to caſt him down with a more fearful ruine: or, as if *Job* had ſaid, *Thou didſt heretofore ſtrengthen me, but now thou abateſt my ſtrength*; *I was once ſet up, but now thou trampleſt me under foot*. 'Tis, I grant, the deſign of God againſt his enemies, to advance them on purpoſe that he may overthrow them with greater advantage. Thus the Lord ſaid of *Pharaoh*, *for this ſame purpoſe have I raiſed thee up, that I might ſhew my power in thee* (Rom. 9. 17.) But God deals not thus with his own ſervants; for though he gives them ſtrength, and then tries them, yet he never gives them ſtrength that he may (with a greater reputation to his own ſtrength) triumph over them. And therefore I lay this tranſlation aſide, and embrace our own, as cleareſt to the intendment of theſe ſimilitudes: *Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him.*

Roborâſti eum paululum, ut in perpetuum tranſiret. Vulg. *--tolluntur in altum, --ut lapſu graviore ruant.*

And he paſſeth.] That is, he dieth; ſo the word is uſed (*chap.* 10. 21.) death is our paſſage out of the world; we come in, and we paſs out: man muſt paſs when God giveth him a paſs to travel out of the land of the living.

Thou changeſt his countenance, and ſendeſt him away.

This change of his countenance is taken three wayes.

Firſt, Some underſtand it of the habit of a dying or dead man: Death brings a change upon the whole man; eſpecially upon the face or countenance: both the beauty and the feature of the face change at the appearance of death: fairneſs is then turned into paleneſs, ſweetneſs into ſwarthineſs. The noſtrils are ſharp, the eyes hollow, the ears are ſhrunk, and the jaws fallen: the dead man looks not like himſelf, not like the man he was, when he was healthy and alive. Phyſicians give us the deſcription of that change, and teach us to ſpell the letters, and read the characters of death printed upon the face. Death ſends its image as a harbinger to take up every room of our bodies, before it ſelf comes to lodge in our bodies. Standers by may ſee death in their ſick friends, long before their ſick friends feel it. Hence obſerve,

Nitidum & vividum vultum cum lurido & pallente commutat. Merc. *In morte tota facies redditur ſibi contraria. Acutus enim fit naſus, oculi cavi, tempora collapſa, aures contractæ,*&c. *ut docet* Hipp. lib. prænot.

Death defaceth the beauty, and doth blaſt the comlineſs of man.

How much ſoever any glory in the beams of beauty now, ſickneſs will ſhortly eclipſe and death will totally darken it. Spiritual beauty will never change, but for the better: the countenance of the ſoul adorned with grace, changeth into glory, when a believer dies: Soul-beauty will be more beautiful, and attain its full perfection, when bodily beauty is none at all, but is turned into corruption: when the frame of nature is ruined in us, the frame of grace ſhall be compleated in us; And we ſhall be all glorious within, when there is no glory left without. *Thou changeſt his countenance.*

Secondly, *This change of the countenance* is expounded not for that inſtantaneous change which death brings into the body, or not for that only, but for that continual change which man is ſubject to in his body while he lives: the countenance is put for the whole outward man. Death is our moſt remarkable change, but it is not at all our change: Every day carries away ſome ſpoils of beauty and ſtrength from the ſtrongeſt and moſt beautiful body. No day looketh upon us, or we upon it, with the ſame face.

--Nulla non dies formoſi ſpolium corporis abſtulit. Sen. in Hypol.

Thirdly, Others take the countenance more largely, not for the face or whole body onely, but for the whole ſtate of a man: it is uſual to apply the word *face* or *countenance* to all changes: we ſay, *there is a new face of things*, or of affairs,

Mihi friget iſte ſenſus, melius omnino hanc faciem interpretari poſſumus generalem ſuarum rerum ſtatum. Bold.

affairs, when affairs whether perſonal or publick are much changed. As if he had ſaid, *Thou changeſt his whole ſtate, and ſendeſt him away: becauſe all changes appear in the face, therefore in whatſoever our change is, 'tis ſaid our face is changed.*

Man hath one face in riches, another in poverty; one in honour, another in diſgrace: The copy of a mans countenance changeth, not only as his body, but as his condition and relations change. You may ſee how it is with us in our faces; for, as our conditional countenance changeth, ſo doth our perſonal. 'Twas ſhewed at the ſecond verſe of this Chapter, that man continueth not in any condition alwayes the ſame; his natural, his civil, his ſpiritual eſtate, are liable unto changes: what they are, I refer the Reader back to the verſe mentioned; *Thou changeſt his countenance,*

Ablegas eum hinc non rediturum, velut extrudis & amandas eum ex hoc ſeculo prorſus.

And ſendeſt him away.] He ſaid before, *He paſſeth away*; here he varies the phraſe, *Thou ſendeſt him away*, that is, he dieth, there's the end of all. Man hath many changes while he lives, and ſhortly he muſt change from life to death: the manner of expreſſing it is conſiderable.

Thou ſendeſt him away. Man dieth by diſpatch from God; God ſends him a writ to die. *Thou ſendeſt him away.* Death is mans diſmiſſion out of the world. The word imports *a ſpecial direction.* When *Adam* had ſinned, *the Lord God ſent him forth from the Garden of* Eden, *to till the ground from whence he was taken* (Gen. 3.23.) He bid *Adam* be gone out of the Garden, and he bids the ſons of *Adam* be gone out of the world. Old *Simeon* ſaid, *Now let thy ſervant depart in peace; give me my diſmiſſion or my writ of eaſe.* God ſends wicked men away whether they will or no: Saints would be ſent away and depart with leave. Wicked men are put out of the world, as the Leprous perſon was put out of the Camp of *Iſrael*, leſt he ſhould infect others. Godly men are ſent out of the world, when they have done the errand they came about, for the good of others.

Verſe 21. **His ſons come to honour, and he knows it not; they are brought low, and he perceiveth it not.**

Cum multi fuerint filii ejus neſcit ſin autem pauci fuerint ignorat Sept.

כבד *Pondus: & gravitatem, hinc honorē, divitias,* &c. *denotat.*

His ſons come to honour.] Some refer it to number; *his ſons are multiplied*: others, to riches; *his ſons get wealth*; we, to greatneſs; *his ſons come to honour.* Some are born to honour, and others come to it; ſome receive it from their parents, others get it by their atchievments; it runs to ſome in their blood, others riſe to it by their virtue and worth, by their parts and abilities: 'Tis better to get honour, then to have honour, and to make our ſelves honourable, then to be made honourable. It is eaſie to inherit honour, but it is hard to attain honour. *His ſons come to honour*;

And he knoweth it not.] An act of knowledge is often put for an act of the affection: We are ſaid not only not to know that which we are ignorant of, but that which we are regardleſs of, ſo here, he knows not when his ſons come to honour, that is, he is not affected with it: Uſually a parent knows nothing more then the preferment of his children, and he ſeldom ſtudies any point more. *Job* deſcribes a father ignorant or inſenſible of his ſons preferment. And as he knows not the good which his ſons come to, ſo not the evil which comes upon his ſons, as he tells us in the next words.

And they are brought low, or *diminiſhed.*] They are diminiſhed in number, but few are left; or they are made low and poor in ſtate, there is but little left to them.

And he perceiveth it not.] That is, He is not grieved at it. But who is this inſenſible ignorant father? or what is it that renders him thus ignorant and inſenſible of all the providences of God, whether good or bad, to his own bowels?

Some expound both clauſes of a dead father; *Thou ſendeſt him away*, he dies, and then *his ſons come to honour, and he knoweth it not*, &c. A dead man hath no knowledge at all of what is done among the living: They that are out of the world, perceive not what is done in the world; no, not with thoſe that are neareſt and deareſt to them, their own ſons; and as they have no knowledge of, ſo no affections to the world; the dead neither rejoyce with, nor mourn over thoſe that live. *Solomon*'s deſcription of an Atheiſt, and of his falſe conceits about death, may (though not in his ſence) be applied for the illuſtrationn of this truth (*Eccleſ.* 9.5,6,) *The living know they ſhall die.* Atheiſts ſpeak thus, not from a certainty of knowledge cauſing them to prepare for death, but from a careleſneſs mixed with their knowledge, cauſing them to ſlight death; they know they muſt die, and therefore care not though they die. Death (ſay they) befals all, and therefore ſhould not trouble any. This is all the care they take about death, when they profeſs their knowledge of death. *The living know they ſhall die, but the dead know not any thing.* The Atheiſt ſpeaks it downright, as if when a man dies, there were an end of him. He knows no more, that is (in their divinity) he is no more. But though the dead in Chriſt know many things, they know their own happineſs and eternal life, and though the dead who die out of Chriſt, know many things, they know their own torment and miſery, they know alſo the falſeneſs of this opinion, that the dead know nothing; yet there is a truth in what they ſay, though not in what they mean: For the dead know not any thing of this preſent life, or of the things done here on earth. They know not any thing of theſe things, as knowing is taken for apprehending; and they know nothing of them, as knowing is taken for grieving at, or rejoycing in them; ſo the Preacher ſpeaks at *ver.* 6. in the language of his Atheiſt ſtill: *Alſo their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now periſhed, and they have no more portion for ever in all that is done under the Sun.* They therefore have no love nor hatred, nor envy about thoſe things that are doing under the Sun, becauſe they have no portion in all that is done under the Sun. When man dies, he hath a portion, but it doth not lie under the Sun. Wicked men have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers: The godly have a portion with Chriſt and all the Saints in glory; as for earthly things, they are none of their portion, and therefore none of their care, and they have as little affection about them as they have uſe of them, their ſons come to honour, and they rejoyce not; their ſons are made low, and they grieve not. The Prophet *Iſaiah* prayes earneſtly (*chap.* 63. 16.) *Look down* (*O Lord*) *from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holineſs and of thy glory, where is thy zeal and thy ſtrength, the ſounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards me? Are they reſtrained? Doubtleſs thom art our father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Iſrael *acknowledge us not*; that is, as ſome expound the place to the point in hand; though *Abraham* and *Iſrael* our forefathers are ſo far from being able to relieve and deliver us out of our troubles, that they are utterly unacquainted with them; yet we are aſſured thou knoweſt what our troubles are, and art able to relieve us. Though *Abraham* and *Iſrael* our deceaſed forefathers have no zeal, nor any ſounding of bowels, that is, pity and compaſſion towards us their bowels, though they are not grieved becauſe we are made low, yet Lord, thou liveſt for ever, and ſo do thy zeal and compaſſions to thy people; therefore look down from heaven and help us. There is another expoſition of the Prophet, which gives the ſence as a prevention of an objection againſt the former petition; why ſhould you expect to be heard though you are the children of *Abraham* and *Iſrael*, when your walk is ſo unanſwerable to that of *Abraham* and *Iſrael*, that if they were alive again here upon the earth, they would not own or acknowledge you as their children? To this the Prophet is conceived to anſwer, let it be granted or confeſſed that we are a people ſo degenerate, that even our forefathers, if they were ſent among us from the dead, would not own us for their children, let it be granted that we are unworthy in our ſelves to be counted *Abraham*'s children; yet through thy free grace, we may be numbred among thy children. *Doubtleſs thou art our father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us.* Thy love changes not, though the love of men doth; thou wilt not caſt us off, though *Abraham* do: This is a very ſpiritual interpretation, nor is it inconſiſtent with the former; we may joyn both together thus, If *Abraham* were alive, he (poſſibly) would neither own nor help us, we are ſo ſinful; but *Abraham* is dead, and doth not ſo much as know that we want help; therefore Lord, look down from heaven, and help us thy ſelf; *Abraham*'s bowels are not moved towards his ſons, *O let not thine be reſtrained!*

Let this admoniſh parents who take inordinate and immoderate care, by right or wrong to advance their children: Some live miſerably, that their children may flouriſh; yea, not a few have deſtroyed their own ſouls, that their children might be great and rich when they are dead; what a pitiful deſign is this! Thou ſhalt not rejoyce in the grave that thy ſon is rich, neither ſhalt thou grieve for thy ſon that he is poor, when thou ceaſeſt to be among men; for as thy knowledge is periſhed, ſo thy love, thy envy, thy ſorrow are periſhed as to the creature here below. A ſons preferment is nothing to the deceaſed father; therefore let not fathers venture their Conſciences, and hazard their ſouls to prefer their children: be not anxiouſly afraid, that when you are dead, your children may be poor, this trouble will never come near your heart when you are dead. God promiſed *Joſiah* (2 Kings 22. 20.) *I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered into thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all* (that is, not any of) *the evil which I will bring upon this place*: As if he had ſaid, I am reſolved as I have decreed, to bring evil upon this place; but it ſhall be no grief to thee; for thou ſhalt firſt be taken out of this place. And when the Prophet *Iſaiah* brought *Hezekiah* a ſad meſſage, *Behold the dayes come that all that is in thy houſe, and all that thy fathers have laid up in ſtore until this day, ſhall be carried to* Babylon; *and of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, ſhall they take away, and they ſhall be Eunuchs in the palace of the King of* Babylon (*Iſa.* 39. 6, 7.) *Then ſaid* Hezekiah *to* Iſaiah, *good is the word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken; he ſaid moreover, for there ſhall be peace and truth in my dayes*: He ſpeaks not ſlightingly of the evil to come; *Hezekiah* was far from the ſpirit of that *Roman* Emperor who ſaid, *When I am once dead, let heaven and earth mingle, what care I what becomes of the world when I am once out of it*: *Hezekiah* was not a man of this temper; yet it was ſome abatement of thoſe evils to him, that they ſhould not come till he was paſt feeling them, or being ſenſible of them. The reaſon which the Prophet gives, why God takes good men out of the world ſometimes, is, becauſe he knows a ſtorm is coming, and he would not have them overtaken with it, and therefore he houſes them before it come (*Iſa.* 57. 1, 2.) *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* The evil to come is no hurt to them when they are gone. This is Gods deſign, though few conſider it: And as they who are taken away, have no feeling of the evils to come, ſo no fellow-feeling; there is no ſympathy in heaven: Saints are not troubled there at the troubles of any here on earth. It is a grace while we are here troubled at the troubles of others; and it is our priviledge, that in heaven we ſhall not. The Author to the *Hebrews* exhorts us, *to remember thoſe that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them that ſuffer adverſity, as being our ſelves in the body* (Heb. 13. 2.) 'Tis our being in the body which makes it either a duty or poſſibility for us to partake in the ſufferings of other men.

Me mortuo miſceatur igne terra. Calig.

We may hence confute the Popiſh Doctrine and Practice of praying to Saints departed. When they are ſent away, they know neither our ſpiritual nor our temporal eſtate, why then ſhould we pray to them about either? The Saints cannot ſee from heaven to earth, nor can they hear from heaven to earth; 'tis God, whoſe name is *the God hearing prayers*, and therefore to him *ſhall all fleſh come*; if all fleſh are obliged to come to him, where is our warrant to come to Saints departed? And if we do, where is our hope to receive their help, when they are ignorant that we want help? *Though we are made low, they perceive it not.*

A ſecond interpretation tells us, that *Job* ſpeaks not here of a man in the ſtate of death, but of a man about to die, or upon his death-bed: ſuch a mans *ſons come to honour, and he knoweth it not*; and then we muſt expound *knowing* in the ſecond ſence, for regarding or being affected with what we know. *Great perſonal afflictions make us forget all worldly relations, together with the comforts and ſorrows which attend them.* A ſick man, eſpecially a dying man, takes no pleaſure in his life, and is uſually ſo buſied with his own pains, that he takes little or no notice of the pain or pleaſure of others. A man in ſuch a condition, can hardly be perſwaded to take in ſpiritual comforts, or to refreſh his ſoul with a taſte of that ſweet wine, with a morſel of that marrow and fatneſs which the promiſes of eternal life preſent unto him, much leſs can he delight himſelf in ſenſitive, leaſt of all, in ſenſual objects. Come, and tell him his ſons are advanced, and his eſtate thrives, he regards it not; alas (ſaith he) I am going out of the world, what's all this to me? Mr. *Broughton*'s tranſlation anſwers this ſence with much clearneſs: *Only his fleſh is grieved for it ſelf, and his ſoul will mourn for himſelf*; as if he had ſaid, his own grief will ſpend out all his poſſibilities of grieving, he will have none in ſtore to beſtow elſewhere: Our ſons are our own fleſh and blood, and if any thing would affect a man, it would be to hear of his ſons; and if any thing concerning his ſons would affect him, to hear of their welfare or affliction, would. How do parents rejoyce when their ſons come to honour? how are they afflicted, when their ſons are made low? As our ſons are our own, ſo we reckon upon their good or evil, upon all the occaſions of their joy or ſorrow, as our own. Our children are our ſelves multiplied, and (in a ſence) immortaliz'd; and love to our children, is but one degree in nature removed from that of our ſelves: Yet a time is coming, when our ſons and our daughters, about whom we have had ſo many joyes and ſorrows, for whom we have laid out ſo many thoughts and cares, even theſe ſhall not have either our joy or ſorrow, our thought or care. It was an argument of the wonderful love of Chriſt, as ſome of the Ancients obſerve upon this place, that when he was nail'd to the Croſs, ready to die; he (as it were) forgot his own ſorrows and grievous ſufferings, and remembred his relations (*John.* 19. 25.) He ſaid to his Mother, *Woman, behold thy ſon*; and to the Diſciple, *behold thy mother*. Now was *Simeon*'s propheſie fulfilled upon the bleſſed Virgin, *Yea, a ſword ſhall pierce through thy own ſoul alſo*, Luke 2. 35. And therefore Chriſt applies theſe comfortable words, as a ſalve to her wounds, even while his own were bleeding unto death: *Woman, behold thy ſon; Diſciple, behold thy mother.* He calls her *woman*, and not *mother*, not as unwilling to own her for his mother; but either as fearing that ſuch an owning her, might have created her further trouble; or, as ſhewing that being ready to die, and return to his father in heaven, he was above earthly relations, and knew none after the fleſh, no not his own mother. And yet though he was not only above, but leaving his mother, he leaves her to the care of his beloved Diſciple. And that remembrance which Chriſt at his death expreſſed to his mother, in committing her to a diſciple, the ſame he had expreſſed a little before to all his Diſciples; yea, and to all believers, both in committing them to his father when he was gone, and by telling them that he was but gone (as a harbinger) to take up lodgings, and prepare a place for them; aſſuring them alſo, that in his abſence he would ſend the Spirit, who ſhould (with advantage to them) make up the want of his bodily preſence. And laſtly, that himſelf intended to return to them again; he would now ſend one to them, but hereafter he would not ſend a meſſenger for them, but come himſelf, that where he ſhould be, there they might be alſo. Was not the love of Chriſt to his children, ſtronger then death, when he thus remembred and took care of them, both in the approaches and agonies of death? Earthly parents may neglect both the wo and welfare of their children, but Chriſt will not; ſurely he will not do it now, when his fleſh upon him is cloathed with glory, and his ſoul within him is filled with joy; for he did not when his fleſh upon him was full of pain, and his ſoul within him did mourn; which is the reaſon or excuſe rather which *Job* gives in the next verſe, why earthly fathers do not ſometimes know their own ſons either in honour or diſgrace.

Verſe 22. **But his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn.**

They who expound the former verſe of man in the ſtate of death, give the ſame expoſition of this, *his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn, when he is dead.* But hath a dead man pain? or can he mourn? Death is a total privation of all ſenſitive powers, there's no feeling in the grave. The meaning is this, he is afflicted while he lives at the thought of what he ſhall be when he is dead; he grieves that worms ſhould eat him, and that his fleſh ſhould corrupt and rot in the earth. What *Job* ſpeaks (*chap.* 21. 23.) in direct oppoſition to this point, is yet a clear proof of this interpretation: *He ſhall be brought to the grave, and remain in the tomb, the clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him*: Now in the ſame ſence that the clods of the valley are ſweet to ſome dead men, they may be ſaid to be painful unto others. Some are very deſirous to die; to ſuch the clods of the valley are ſweet, that is, it pleaſeth them as much to lie in the grave, as to go to a perfumed bed, or to reſt upon a bed of Roſes: Others are very unwilling to die, to ſuch the grave is a priſon of darkneſs and aſtoniſhment. Their living fleſh hath pain upon them, while they conſider that their dead fleſh muſt conſume. Or pain and mourning are here aſcribed to dead men, as ſpeech and joy are often in Scripture aſcribed to Trees and Stones, and Corn-fields. (liveleſs, inſenſible or irrational creatures perſonating or taking upon them thoſe actions which are proper unto man) by the Figure *Proſopopeia*.

Intelligo per Proſopopœiā poſt mortem, cum Aben Ezra. *Mer.*

Secondly, The Text may be rendred out of the Hebrew thus, *While his fleſh is upon him, he ſhall have pain; and while his ſoul is within him, he ſhall mourn*; that is, he ſhall be in pain and miſery as long as he lives, eſpecially while he lives (as a ſick man doth) upon the borders and confines of death. The life of man, while he lives in health, is painful; but when he is ſick and dying, he is fuller of pain. *Then his fleſh upon him hath pain, and his ſoul within mourns*; he hath ſorrow without, and ſorrow within; which comprehends all ſorts of ſorrow: when the fleſh is pained, and the ſoul mourns, what can be added to that pain and mourning? If the ſpirit be whole, it will ſuſtain the infirmities of the body; if the body be whole, it will ſomewhat allay the infirmities of the mind; but when the fleſh is in pain, and the ſoul mourns, natural miſery is compleat; for then all man is in miſery. Fleſh and ſpirit, body and ſoul, are all of man. And in all this *Job* doth not ſpeak his ſpeculation, but his experience; he felt what he ſaid, and endured himſelf what he delivered unto others.

A verme ſuper eo dolebit. Targ.

I might here draw out obſervations about the troubles of mans life, and the quickneſs of his ſorrows in the approaches of death: but theſe points have occurred before, and therefore I ſhall not renew any diſcourſe upon them in this place.

Thus I have (through the continued help of Chriſt) finiſhed the Commentary of this fourteeenth Chapter, and of *Job's* whole Anſwer to the Charge of *Zophar*, the laſt of his three Friends; and ſo of the whole firſt Charge of his three Friends, and of his Anſwers to all three. It ſeems they were all unſatiſfied in his Anſwers, as much as they were about his perſon; and therefore they begin in order as they began. *Eliphaz* leads the Battel a ſecond time, and that more fiercely then before; he falls upon *Job*, not ſo much with ſtronger arguments, as with harder words; rather reproving, then arguing with him, and reproving him with much heat, if not with ſome bitterneſs of ſpirit; as will appear (if the hand of God ſhall lead us yet further) in publiſhing the explication of that his ſecond congreſs.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH
AND SEVENTEENTH CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER:

To thoſe eſpecially of this *CITY*, who have been the Movers, and continue the Promoters of this WORK.

SOLOMON, *who made many Books, tells us (towards the end of one of them,* Eccl. 12.12.*)* That, of making many Books there is no end; and, that much ſtudy is a wearineſs to the fleſh. *But, while* Solomon *ſpeaks thus, doth he not at once blot thoſe many Books which himſelf had written, and diſcourage others from writing any more?* Though ſtudy be a wearineſs to the fleſh, *yet ('tis granted) that's no ſufficient reaſon why we ſhould deſiſt (the fleſh muſt be wearied and hard wrought, 'tis good it ſhould be ſo) but there's no colour of reaſon, why we ſhould begin that, which either cannot be finiſhed and brought to an end, or which is to no end, when 'tis brought to an end and finiſhed. How then ſaith* Solomon, *that* of making many Books there is no end? *His ſcope clears this ſcruple; for, having read his Son a Lecture upon the vanity of the Creature, and having given him many excellent advices, for the due ſteering of his courſe through this world, he applies all in the former part of this Verſe.* And further, by theſe, my Son, be admoniſhed. *Let what is now written take upon thy heart, and be accepted with thee. For* (verſ. 10.) The Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. *Again* (verſ. 11.) The Words of the wiſe are as Goads and Nayles faſtned by the Maſters of Aſſemblies, which are given from one ſhepherd: *Therefore, let theſe words, like goads, put thee on, and like nayles, faſten thee to the obedience of my counſels.* By theſe, my ſon, be admoniſhed: *As if he had ſaid,* Let not this Book, which diſcovers the vanity of all worldly things, be accounted vain: If this Book prevail not with thee, if it maſter not thy judgment, and mannage not thy affections, 'tis to no end for me to make many Books; ſeeing this is cloathed with as much compleatneſs of rule to direct, as a Book of this Argument, can be; and is ſtampt with as much ſtrength of authority to command, as any Book, of any Argument, can be: And further, why ſhouldeſt thou my ſon, put me to the making of many Books? What if I could make many with as much eaſe to my own ſpirit, as I have made this one, which was given me in immediately by the Spirit; yet thou canſt not ſtudy (*or, as we put in the Margin,* read) many Books without wearineſs to the fleſh.

So then, though Solomon *might have had juſt ground to put the affectation both of writing and reading many Books, upon the file of his obſerved vanities; yet he doth not diſoblige from the ſtudy of neceſſary and ſerious Books; nor at all condemn thoſe many Monuments of profitable Learning, which induſtrious Pens have in any Age bequeathed to Poſterity. He indeed (which is yet but a ſecond deſign, if it be at all the deſign of that place) takes us off from vain ſtudies, and cenſures thoſe Books (be they few as well as many) which have no tendency to make any man, either the wiſer, or the better by reading them. Nor can thoſe* Books, *how many ſoever they are, be (to their diſparagement) called* Many, *which center in, and promote (what is but one in every kind) any kind of truth, chiefly that which we call divine or holy Truth. Any one uſeleſs, or erroneous* Book *is* too many: *Many uſeful and Orthodox* Books *are but* One. *The* five Books *of* Moſes *are but* One Law. *The* four Books *of the Birth, Life and Death of* our bleſſed Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt, *are but* One Goſpel: *All the* Books *of both Teſtaments are but* One Book. *Upon which account, we may alſo ſay, that, all thoſe* many and many Books *which faithfully interpret that* one Book, *are but* one Book. *And though of making many ſuch Books, there ſhould (as I conceive there will) be no end till this World ends, as End is taken for a ceaſing to make them; yet of making many ſuch Books, there is an end; yea, many noble ends, as End is taken for the good or benefit which comes by making them. The* making *of ſuch* Books *is good, and a benefit to the* Reader, *as communicating to him thoſe* manifeſtations of the Spirit which are given to every man (*to whom they are given*) to profit withal: *The word* (τὸ συμφέρον) *there uſed by the Apoſtle, ſignifies ſuch a profit as ſtreameth out to community. The* making *of ſuch* Books *is alſo good, and a benefit to the* Maker, *as being an improvement of his Time and Talents, to his own peace and his Maſters glory. 'Tis reward beyond all the world can give, for any* Work, *that God hath glory, and man peace, in doing it. As this ſmall piece of* work *is directed to theſe laſt mentioned ends, and (as it ought) principally to the firſt of them; ſo, that it may reach the former, by adding a Mite or two to the Treaſury of the Readers* knowledge *in the* beſt things, *and by being his encouragement to walk in the* beſt *wayes, is the Hope and Prayer, and the reaching of it, will be indeed a very rich reward and payment of*

May 22. 1650. Your very Affectionate Friend and

Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

A N

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XV. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Then anſwered Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *and ſaid,*

Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge? And fill his belly with the Eaſt-wind?

Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk? Or with ſpeeches wherewith he can do no good?

Yea, thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God.

For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chuſeſt the tongue of the crafty.

Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: Yea, thine own lips teſtifie againſt thee.

WE are come to the ſecond Section of this great diſpute, between *Job* and his three Friends: they have all ſpoken one turn, and now they return to ſpeak: *Eliphaz*, who led the firſt charge, leads the ſecond, and that with a very violent march, againſt this ſorrowful man. Yet we are not to conceive *Eliphaz* upon any deſign to revile his perſon, or to vex his ſpirit: That were moſt unſuteable in any Friend, much more (ſuch we ſuppoſe *Eliphaz* to have been) in a godly friend: Charity ſuggeſts a fairer interpretation of this procedure, that he ſpake thus harſhly, and dealt thus roughly, being moved by ſome unwary paſſages in *Job*'s diſcourſe, not well underſtood or miſapplyed. At which ſtone how many ſtumble at this day! Firſt, Miſconceiving, and then cenſuring their Brethren; being firſt offended without any juſt cauſe given, and then giving juſt cauſe of offence. Had we once learned to expound each others actions, ſpeeches, and opinions, by the rules of Charity, we ſhould not ſo often, no nor at all break the Laws of Love. We ſhall make a good improvement of this failing in *Job*'s Friend, if it may be our warning (in dealing) to deal better with our Friends.

Non maledicendi ſtudio ferebatur, quod à bono viro prorſus alienum eſſit. Pined.

There are three parts in this ſpeech; In the firſt *Eliphaz* appears by way of reproof, and reprehenſion, which extends it ſelf from the beginning of the Chapter, to the end of the thirteenth Verſe; and he reproves *Job* upon five points of error, or miſbehaviour, of all which he conceived him guilty.

Firſt, He reproves him of folly, or for ſpeaking that which was unworthy a wiſe man, in the ſecond and third Verſes, *Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge?* &c.

Secondly, He reproves him of prophaneneſs, or for doing that which was unworthy a godly man, at the fourth Verſe, *Yea, thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God.* The ſum of both is, *Thou ſpeakeſt unwiſely, and thou acteſt wickedly:* Which he takes for ſo plain a charge, that he makes him his own Accuſer, as if there needed no evidence but his Conſcience, though he had (as *Eliphaz* miſjudged) daubed up the matter with fair words, and colourable pretences (*ver.* 5.6.) *Thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity: Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips teſtifie againſt thee.*

Thirdly, He reproves him of pride, and arrogance, of ſelf-conceit, and overweening his own parts, and poſitions (*ver.* 7.8, 9, 10.) *Art thou the firſt man that was born, or waſt thou made before the hills,* &c. As if he had ſaid, *Thou carryeſt it, as if thou hadſt engroſſed all wiſdom, as if thou hadſt more knowledge and underſtanding, more learning and experience, then any man; yea, then all men living.*

Fourthly, He reproves him, for ſlighting and undervaluing the counſels and the comforts tendered to him by his Friends, at *Verſ.* 11. *Are the conſolations of God ſmall with thee?*

Fifthly, He reproves him for his confident ſticking, or adhering to his own principles, at the twelve and thirteen Verſes, *Why doth thy heart carry thee away,* &c. Thus he repoves his morals in the firſt part of his diſcourſe,

In the ſecond, he confutes his Doctrinals, or that which he ſuppoſed *Job* had aſſerted; *ſc. His own purity and perfections* (Verſ. 14, 15, 16.) *What is man that he ſhould be clean? Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints,* &c.

Eliphaz *aſſeruiſſet tantum malos hic à Domino affligi, idem ille nunc ſed apertius oſtendit.* Merc.

In the third place, he labours to maintain his own Aſſertion, that God doth afflict none but wicked men, *Who ever periſhed being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?* Chap. 4. 7. This he doth by the authority of the Learned, and from the experiences of the Ancient, *vor.* 7. to the end of the Chapter: *I will ſhew thee, hear me, and that which I have ſeen I will declare; which wiſe men have told from their Fathers, and have not hid it,* &c. Theſe are the parts, and this is the reſolution of the whole Chapter.

Verſe. 1. **Then anſwered** Eliphaz **the** Temanite, **and ſaid.**

ὑπολαβὼν excipiens. Sept. *Quilibet pro ſuis sociis velut* in ſolidum *reſpondet, ut nunc patet. Sophari enim defenſionem contra* Jobum *manifeſte aſſumit* Eliphaz. Bold.

Then; That is, when *Job* had made an end of anſwering *Zophar,* then *Eliphaz* anſwered or replyed upon *Job.* That's properly a replication, which takes off the anſwer given to a former Argument; and in this *Eliphaz* alſo makes a defence for his Brethren, *Zophar* and *Bildad.* Theſe three ſtood to one another, as much as any one of them did for himſelf; as if they had all entred Bond, and given ſecurity for reciprocal aſſiſtance. Thus the diſpute grows hot, but ſtill 'tis orderly, according to that Apoſtolical Canon, (1 *Cor.* 14. 29.) *Let the Prophets ſpeak two or three, and let the other judge. Eliphaz* is now up, let us conſider what he ſaith.

Verſe 2. **Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge?**

The Queſtion denyes; he ſhould not: No man ſhould; leaſt of all he.

The **Wiſe man** is here oppoſed to the *crafty man,* at the fifth Verſe. There is a wide difference between wiſdom and craft, between prudence and cunning: *A crafty man knoweth what is good, but he commonly doth what is evil; he is able to ſee the right, but if it be not for his turn, he turns from it, and cares not to do wrong. A wiſe man is he that knoweth how to diſtinguiſh between good and evil, and ever aims to act what is good; his underſtanding is well enlightned, and his conſcience binds him to follow the light of his underſtanding; as he can ſee what is juſt and right, ſo he cannot but embrace and do it.* A wiſe man, in Scripture-language, is a holy man, and a fool is a wicked man; holineſs is the beſt wiſdom, and wickedneſs is the worſt of folly. *Eliphaz* ſeems to admit *Job*'s challenge of being a wiſe man, that he might check him with more advantage for ſpeaking ſo unlike one: As if he had ſaid, *Should a moral wiſe man,* much more a ſpiritual wiſe man; ſhould he that is, or pretends to be thus wiſe (as thou doſt, ſhould he) *utter vain knowledge?*

Job at the twelfth Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 2, 3, 4. objected ignorance, or but popular knowledge to his Friends; *I have underſtanding as well as you; I am not inferiour to you; who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?* As if he had ſaid, *You think your ſelves among knowing men, the higheſt in knowledge; but who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe? Eliphaz* turns it here upon *Job,* by the way of recrimination or counter-charge, he brings in a croſs Bill: *Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge? Thou doſt arrogate to thy ſelf the reputation of a wiſe man; but art thou wiſe, who ſpeakeſt at ſuch a rate of folly? The image of thy mind is ſtampt upon thy words, it may be ſeen as well as heard what thou art, by what thou ſpeakeſt.*

דעת־רוח *Scientiam venti vel ventoſam,* i. e. *vanam. Numquid ſapiens reſpondebit ſcientiam venti, vel ſcientiam ventoſam.* Merc. *Numquid ſapiens reſpondebit quaſi in ventum loquens.* Vulg.

Vain knowledge.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *Knowledge of wind,* or *windy knowledge:* The Metaphor is elegant; vain knowledge is juſtly called windy knowledge: Vain knowledge makes a great bluſter, and noiſe, like the wind, but it paſſeth away, and though we cannot tell whither it goes, yet we may eaſily tell whence it comes, even from the fancy, and out of the mouth of a fooliſh man. It was uſual of old, to call that which is *vain, windy;* thoſe deſpiſers of holy Counſels, and Divine Alarms, given by the Prophets, ſaid, *The Prophets ſhall become wind, and the word is not in them,* Jer. 5. 13, That is, both the Doctrine and the threats which theſe Propphets utter, are vain and ineffectual; they will do us neither good nor evil; no mans finger ſhall ake, though their tongues ake with talking.

The Prophet *Hoſea* at once reproves and terrifies the *Jews* in this language, *They have ſown the wind, and they ſhall reap the whirlwind* (Hoſ. 8. 7.) To ſow the wind, is to do a vain thing; our actions are as ſeed; ſuch as we ſow, ſuch ſhall we reap; they ſowed ſin, and they reaped trouble. Themſelves ſowed the wind by what they did; and they thought the Prophets ſowed the wind in what they ſpake: And indeed the words of the Prophets were wind, as the peoples works were, in referenee to the iſſue; thoſe produced a whirlwind to ſcatter their contemners, as theſe did to ſcatter their actors. The old Satyriſt calls *vain words, bubly toyes,* becauſe ſuch words are like a bubble, full of wind (poſſibly full of wit) but empty of wiſdom and good inſtruction.

Bullatas nugas utpote ſimiles bullis vento plenis, Perſ. *Sat.* 5.

Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge?] The Scripture calls that vain:

Firſt, Which is unprofitable, theſe mutually expound each other, *Eccleſ.* 1. 2, 3.) *Vanity of vanity, ſaith the Preacher,* &c. *What profit hath a man of all the labour which he taketh under the Sun.* There's moſt vanity, where there is leaſt profit; and where there is no profit at all, there is nothing at all but vanity. *Turn not aſide from following the Lord* (ſaith *Samuel*) *for then ſhould you go after vain things which cannot profit.* 1 Sam. 12. 20, 21.

Secondly, The Scripture calls that and thoſe vain, which hath or have no ſolidity in them; vanity hath ſo little weight in it, that when the Spirit would expreſs men who have no weight in them, he ſaith, *They are lighter then vanity,* Pſal. 62. 9.

Thirdly, The Scripture calls that vain which is alwayes moving, varying, and unſetled; (*Pſal.* 144. 4.) *Man is like to vanity, his dayes are as a ſhadow that paſſeth away:* He is therefore like to vanity, becauſe he is ſo like a ſhadow, continually paſſing, but never continuing.

Fourthly, The Scripture often calls that vain which is ſinful in practice, or unſound and erroneous in opinion, *I hate vain inventions* (ſaith *David*) *but thy Law do I love.* Whatſoever oppoſes either truth of Doctrine, or purity of Worſhip, is a vain invention of man, and oppoſite to the Law of God; he *utters vain knowledge,* who utters falſe Principles which ſubvert the Faith, or ſuperſtitious forms which endanger the life and power of godlineſs. *Eliphaz* ſuppoſed, that ſomewhat of vanity in all theſe notions, was rallyed together into the diſcourſe of *Job,* that it was light and frothy, that it was erroneous and full of incongruity, eſpecially (which carries all theſe in it) that it was worthleſs and unprofitable to the receiver, as he expreſſeth in the third Verſe, *Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk?*

Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge?

Hence Obſerve, *There is a vanity in ſome kind of knowledge, and folly in that which not a few call wiſdom.*

It hath been the buſineſs of ſome mens knowledge, to find out a vanity in all ſorts of knowledge. *Eliphaz* ſpake well for the matter, though ill to the man. *Job* did not utter vain knowledge; but, we know, too many do. The old Gentiles waxed *vain in their imaginations*, their very reaſonings were vain; ſo the Original word tells us: It was not their fancy, but their underſtanding which was vain. The Apoſtle cautions the *Coloſſians*, *Let no man ſpoil you through Philoſophy and vain deceit* (Col. 2. 8.) Philoſophy in it ſelf is an excellent knowledge, yet it may be vainly taught, and ſo deceive us, as to ſpoil us: I may ſay alſo, let no man ſpoil you through Divinity and vain deceit. Divinity, which is in it ſelf the moſt excellent knowledge, the knowledge of God, may be vainly taught, and ſo deceive us, as to ſpoil us: *That knowledge which is beſt in it ſelf, is vaineſt to us, when it is unduly or falſly uttered.*

ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν, vani facti ſunt in ratiocinationibus ſuis. Baz.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is moſt uncomely for thoſe, who either have, or would have the reputation of wiſdom, to ſpeak vainly.*

Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge? 'Tis no wonder to hear a vain man ſpeak vainly, and for a fool to utter folly. *Do men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles? The vile perſon will ſpeak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocriſie, and to utter error againſt the Lord* (Iſa. 32. 6.) If a fool, a vain man, or a vile perſon, ſpeak thus, he ſpeaks like himſelf; but if a wiſe, or a good man ſpeak thus, he ſpeaks ſo unlike himſelf, that the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe puts not only an undecency, but an impoſſibility upon it, *Can a wiſe man utter vain knowledge? It is impoſſible.* Men act according to their principles; *Every thing is in working, as it is in being:* If there be wiſdom in the heart, it will be heard at the tongue: A wholſome Fountain will ſend out wholſome waters: *He that is born of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John*, 1 *Epiſt.* 3. 9.) *cannot ſin*; though he hath not a natural impoſſibility to ſin, yet he hath a moral impoſſibility to ſin, becauſe *the ſeed of God remaineth in him*, the frame and bent of his heart is ſet another way: Now, as there is a moral impoſſibility, that a godly man ſhould commit ſin, ſo that a wiſe man ſhould ſpeak ſin, or utter vain knowledge. A wiſe man ſpeaks, as well as acts, by meaſure; he weighs what he ſaith, as much as what he doth; the tongue of the wiſe is as a Tree of life: Grace in the heart bloſſoms at the lips, in ſavory words, which miniſter grace unto the hearers. *Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge?*

Eſtne poſſibile, &c. Chald. Paraph.

Sapiens ad menſuram ſermones profert libra examinatos juſtitiæ, ut ſit gravitas in ſenſu, in ſermone pondus, in verbis modus. Ambroſ. l. 1. Offic. c. 3.

And fill his belly with the Eaſt-wind?

A belly full of windy meat is bad enough; a belly full of wind is far worſe: But what is here meant by the belly? what by the Eaſt-wind?

The belly is put for the heart and affections, together with all the intellectual powers of the mind, *John* 7. 38. *Out of his belly* (that is, out of his whole ſoul) *ſhall flow Rivers of living water.* This water is the holy Spirit; the holy Spirit is ſometimes compared alſo to the wind. A wiſe man ſhould deſire that his heart may be filled, with the ſweet gales and holy breathings of the Spirit of God, by heavenly inſpirations: And ſhall he fill his heart with the Eaſt-wind of earthly paſſions?

The word which we tranſlate *Eaſt-wind*, ſignifies only the Eaſt; *Should he fill his belly with the Eaſt*; we rightly add the *Eaſt-wind*: He compares *Job*'s paſſions unto the wind, and unto the Eaſt-wind: To the wind, becauſe of the vanity of them; to the Eaſt-wind, becauſe of the hurtfulneſs of them. For, as by wind in the former clauſe he means worthleſs things, ſo by *Eaſt-wind* in this he means dangerous things. There are two Reaſons why he expreſſes ſuch inward motions by the *Eaſt-wind*.

Venter pro corde, cor pro intellectu & mente accipitur in Scriptura.

קדים Pro רוח קדים Rab. Mardoch. *Obſervat hunc ventum à Græcis appellari* Apeſtoren *quod à ſole ſpiret atque eadem ratione appellatur à Latinis* ſubſolanum.

Poetæ Eurum Appellant truculentum, rapidum, animoſum, tumidum & indomitum.

Firſt, The *Eaſt-wind* is a vehement and ſtrong wind; we read *Exod.* 14. 21. that when God divided the Red Sea, to make a paſſage for his people, he cauſed an *Eaſt-wind* to blow all night, and divided the Sea with the force of it. Poets deſcribe the Eaſt-wind to be fierce, heady, turbulent, and impetuous; that's one ground of it.

Secondly, The Eaſt-wind is obſerved by Naturaliſts to be a hot and fiery wind: Hence the Vulgar tranſlates, *Thou filleſt thy belly with heat:* The Eaſt-wind parcheth and blaſteth Corn and Fruits. *Pharaoh* beheld in his Dream ſeven Ears withered, thin, and blaſted with the Eaſt-wind (*Gen.* 41. 23.) So then, under this notion of the Eaſt-wind, *Eliphaz* cloſely cenſures *Job*: Firſt, That his thoughts were violent, and impetuous: Secondly, That they were angry, fiery and furious; as if coals were kindled in his boſom, and a flame ready to blaze at his lips: As if like *Paul*, while *Saul* (*Acts* 9. 1.) he *breathed out threatnings and ſlaughter*, or was inwardly heated with reſolutions of revenge. The Prophet *Jeremy* ſaith, *The Word of God was as a fire in his boſome, and he could not refrain:* Many a mans breaſt is like a heated Oven, he is ready to conſume all with the breath of it.

Ardore. Sub calidi & æſtuantis aeris ſimilitudine ſermones ejus exaſperatos & excandeſcentia plenos deſcribit.

But why doth *Eliphaz* charge *Job* with ſuch unruly perturbations? Some aſſign the reaſon from thoſe words, *Chap.* 14. *v.* 14. where he deſires that *God would even hide him in the grave*; he was ſo vext and troubled at the ſtate wherein he lived, that he preferred death before it, and thought a not being in the world, better then a being in his condition. But we may rather leave the reaſon more at large, to all that vehemency of ſpirit, with which *Job* had proſecuted and pleaded his ſorrowful caſe.

Jobo *attribuit vanitatem in ſententia, tempeſtatem in affectu, imbecillitatem in argumento, ſuperfluitatem in verbis.* Ccc;

From the ſcope of *Eliphaz* in this part of his reproof, we may obſerve:

Firſt, *That violent paſſions are the diſguiſe of a wiſe man.*

We cannot ſee who he is, while he acts unlike himſelf: Anger lodgeth in the boſom of fools; and when it doth but intrude into the boſom of a wiſe man, he (for the time) looks like a fool.

Secondly, *Paſſions in the mind are like a tempeſt in the air they diſturb others much, but our ſelves more.*

Many a man (like a Ship at Sea) hath been overſet and ſunk with the violent guſts and whirl-winds of his own ſpirit.

Obſerve thirdly, *He that fills his own mind with paſſionate thoughts, will ſoon fill the ears of others with unprofitable words.*

This is clear from that which goeth before, *He utters vain knowledge*; and it is clearer from that which follows after; when a mans thoughts are like a wind, his words (which are the firſt born of his thoughts) muſt needs be windy. A paſſionate man ſpeaks all in paſſion, and ſometimes cannot ſpeak at all for paſſion; his extream deſire to ſay much ſtops him from ſaying any thing: But whatſoever he ſaith, is the copy of his preſent ſelf, fierce and boyſterous. *The image and ſuperſcription of our hearts is ſtamped upon our words.* Some can ſpeak better then they are; but uſually men ſpeak according to what they are, and then eſpecially when they are (which paſſionate men for the moſt part are) not themſelves. Thus it follows in the next Verſe.

Verſe 3. **Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk?**

Eliphaz ſpeaks all Interrogatories; and theſe ſpeak him in anger, if not in ſome diſtemper. Should he do this? and ſhould he do that? do ſhew that either another hath very much done, what he ſhould not; or that he who reproves him hath not ſuch a ſpirit of meekneſs, as a reprover ſhould, *Gal.* 6. 1.

The words ſhew the effect of what he taxed him with before: As if he had ſaid, *Would you know what to expect from a paſſionate man, from a man whoſe belly is filled with the Eaſt-wind? You ſhall have him ſhortly filling your eares with an Eaſt-wind, even reaſoning with unprofitable words:* And (as the next clauſe gives it, which is only an expoſition of this) *With ſpeeches wherewith he can do no good:* Some words are great doers; they do much hurt, or they do much good; and thoſe words uſually do ſome hurt, which can do no good; yea, that which is weak and unable to do good, may be ſtrong and powerful to do evil. However, not to do good is to do evil, becauſe it is every mans duty, whatſoever he doth, to be doing good: Here *Eliphaz* reproves *Job*'s words as evil, while he only ſaith, they do no good. And yet he ſaith ſome-

Cum interrogatione & ſtomachò legenda ſunt hæc. Merc.

ſomewhat more then that, for he ſaith, *They can do no good*: It is ill not to do good actually; but not to have a poſſibility of doing good is far worſe, When the Apoſtle would ſay his worſt of the beſt of mans ſinful fleſh, he doth not only ſay, *It is not ſubject to the Law of God*, but adds, *Neither indeed can be* (Romans 8. 7.) So here, *Words wherewith a man can do no good*; How bad are they?

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That which can do no good ſhould not be ſpoken.*

Cui bono

Before we ſpeak a word, we ſhould ask this queſtion, To what purpoſe, to what profit is it? Shall he that hears it be made more knowing, or more holy by it?

Obſerve Secondly, *Unprofitable talk is ſinful, and ſpeeches which do no good, are evil.*

Every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of judgment, *Matth.* 12. 37. And though a man be very buſie, and take much pains in ſpeaking, yet if his words be unprofitable, and his ſpeeches ſuch as can do no good, they will come under account as idle. Now, if unprofitable talk be ſinful, and ſpeeches that can do no good; then what is prophane talk, and ſpeeches which do hurt, (infection gets quickly in at the ear) defiling the mind and corrupting the manners of thoſe that hear them. The Apoſtle gives us the rule of ſpeaking, both in the negative and in the affirmative (*Epheſ.* 4. 29.) *Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouths, but that which is good to the uſe of edifying, which may adminiſter grace to the hearer.* Again, (*Coloſ.* 4. 6.) *Let your ſpeeches be alwayes with grace*; that is, ſuch as teſtifieth that there is grace in your heart, never ſpeak a word but ſuch as may ſtand with grace; yea, ſpeak ſuch words as may be a witneſs of grace, wrought in your ſelves, and a means of working grace in others. Let your words be *ſeaſoned with ſalt*; the ſalt of our words is holineſs and truth; prudence alſo is the ſalt of words; good words, and true, ſpoken unſeaſonably, may do hurt: Prudence teaches us the time when, and the manner *how to anſwer every man.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *It is matter of juſt reproof againſt every man, to be unprofitable, and to do no good:*

Belial *ex* ובלי *non &* יעל *quod in hiphil ſignificat prodeſſe; ut denotet inutilem, qui nec ſibi, nec aliis prodeſt.*

Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen down and caſt into the fire (Matth. 3. 10.) Some conceive that the word *Belial* comes from *Beli*, which in Hebrew ſignifies *Not*, and the word *Jagnal*, which here in the Text ſignifies to do good: Becauſe a *Beliaſt*, or a Son of *Belial* is ſuch a one as neither doth good to himſelf nor to any other. The unprofitable Servant who hid, and did not improve his Talent, ſhall be condemned: And he who uſes his talent unprofitably and vainly, ſhall not eſcape: *Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk?*

Thus far we have ſeen *Eliphaz* reproving *Job* of folly in ſpeaking unlike, and below a wiſe man; he proceeds to reprove him for acting unlike, and below a godly man: This he ſets home with a particle of aggravation.

Verſe 4. **Yea, thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt Prayer before God.**

פור *Labefactaſti, irritum feciſti, diſſolviſti, fregiſti.*

As if he had ſaid, beſides, or above all this, that thou haſt uttered vain knowledge, words that cannot profit, thou haſt alſo *caſt off the fear of God*, &c. The word which we tranſlate *to caſt off*, ſignifies *to make void, to ſcatter, to diſſolve, to break in pieces*; to make as nothing, or to make nothing of. It is often uſed in Scripture, for *breaking the Commandments of God*, implying ſuch a breach as makes the Commandments void, which is the proper character of an evil heart; *A godly man may ſin againſt the Commandments, but a wicked man would ſin away the Commandments*; he would repeal the Law of God, and enact his own luſts: Such is the force of the word here, *Thou caſteſt off fear.*

There is a natural fear, and a ſpiritual fear; we are not to underſtand this Text of a natural fear (which is a trouble of ſpirit, ariſing upon the apprehenſion of ſome approaching evil) but of a ſpiritual: Fear is here put alone, but we are to take it with its beſt adjunct, *The fear of God*; for as the *word* ſometimes is put alone, to ſignifie the word of God, as if there were no word but his; and as the word *Commandments* is put alone, to note the Commandments of God, as if no Commandments deſerved the name, but only the Commandments of God; ſo *fear* is put alone, by way of excellency, for the fear of God; as importing, that his fear is excellent, and no fear to be deſired but his. This Divine fear comes under a double notion:

Firſt, It is taken for the holy awe or reverence we bear to God in our ſpirits, which is the worſhip of the firſt Commandment, and the ſanctifying of God in our hearts.

Secondly, For the outward acts of Religion, which is the worſhip of the ſecond Commandment, *Their fear is taught by the precepts of men* (Iſa. 29. 13.) that is, their outward worſhip and Religion, is ſuch as men have invented, not ſuch as God hath appointed: Some take it here in the firſt ſence only, *Thou caſteſt off fear*; that is, thou caſteſt off that awe, reverence, and regard thou oweſt to the Name of God; others underſtand it in the ſecond, *Thou caſteſt off fear*; that is, the outward worſhip and ſervice of God: but I conceive we have that expreſſed in the next clauſe, *And reſtraineſt prayer before God*; there he taxeth him with neglect of outward worſhip, and here with neglect of inward, *Thou caſteſt off fear*; fear is as the bridle of the ſoul; fear holds us in compaſs, it is the bank to the Sea; fear keeps in the overflowing of ſin, *Thou caſteſt off fear.*

Timor hoc loco pro reverentia & tremore, potius quam pro religione & cultu, licet utrumque cohæreat. Pined.

But what cauſe had *Job* given *Eliphaz* to charge him with caſting off the fear of the Lord; we find *Eliphaz* touching upon this point before, and upbraiding *Job*, (*Chap.* 4. 6.) *Is this thy fear?* Is this thy confidence? As if he had ſaid, *Is all thy profeſſion come to this?* Here he chargeth him expreſly, *Thou haſt caſt off fear*: *Job* had not given him any juſt cauſe to ſpeak or think thus hardly of him; but *Eliphaz* might poſſibly ground this accuſation upon thoſe words (*Chap.* 9. *v.* 23.) *This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it, he deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked*, &c. Which *Eliphaz* did interpret as a caſting off the fear of God; hath he awful and reverent thoughts of God, who affirmeth, that God laugheth at the afflictions and tryals of his people? Again, *Chap.* 12. 6. *The Tabernacles of Robbers proſper, and they that provoke God are ſecure, into whoſe hands God bringeth abundantl*[illegible] Hath not this man caſt off all fear of God, who dares ſa[illegible]e wicked proſper, and are ſecure? Is God become a friend to thoſe that profeſs themſelves enemies to him? Others refer the ground of this to *Chap.* 13. 21, 22. where he ſeems to ſpeak boldly, and as ſome have taxed him, impudently, *Do not two things to me, withdraw thy hand from me*, &c. *Then call thou, and I will anſwer; or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me*: Hence *Eliphaz* concludes, ſurely, the man hath caſt off the fear of God; he ſpeaks to God as if he were Gods fellow, *Speak thou, and I will anſwer; or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me*: Are theſe words becoming the great God of Heaven and Earth? Art not thou grown over bold with God? Doſt thou ſpeak as becomes the diſtance, that is between the Creator and the Creature? The Greek tranſlates to this ſence, *Thou ſpeakeſt to God without any modeſty*; thou haſt put on a brazen face, and hardened thy heart againſt the fear of the Almighty. Theſe ſhews of a ground *Eliphaz* might take, but *Job* had given him no real ground to pronounce this heavy cenſure, *Thou caſteſt off fear*: But paſſing by the rigid Hypotheſis of *Eliphaz*, we may from his words, as they are a Theſis, obſerve,

Nullo pudore loquutus es coram Deo. Symmach.

That to caſt off the fear of God is higheſt wickedneſs.

To caſt off the fear of God is the beginning of wickedneſs; as to entertain *The fear of God is the beginning of wiſdom*: The word here uſed, ſignifieth not only the beginning but the top, the chief, the head and higheſt perfection of a thing: The fear of God is both firſt and laſt, the beginning and end of holineſs. *To fear God, and keep his Commandments, is all man in goodneſs; to caſt of the fear of God, is all man in ſinfulneſs*: The beginning and end of wickedneſs: *It is ill not to have the fear of God; but it is far worſe to caſt off the fear of God*: It is ill not to chuſe the fear of God (*Prov.* 1. 29.) but to reject the fear of the Lord, that is deſperate; if once fear be caſt off, all wickedneſs is let in; at the ſame door, at which the fear of the Lord goes out, any ſin may enter: As *Abraham*, ſaid, *The fear of God is not in this place, and they will kill me for my wives ſake*: They have no impediment of luſt to caſt off, who have once caſt off the fear of God. And as they who caſt off this fear are ready to do or ſay any thing that is good; as they have no reſtraint upon them from iniquity, ſo they can eaſily reſtrain themſelves from duty: The next words ſhew this.

Thou reſtraineſt prayer before him.] Prayer is a principal part of the outward worſhip of God, and is both here and elſewhere put for the whole outward worſhip of God.

The word ſignifies alſo, *meditation*, *muſing*, or *thinking*: So ſome render here, *Thou takeſt off conference with God*; thou waſt wont to keep continual correſpondence with Heaven, and maintain a ſweet humble familiarity with God by holy meditation, but now thou art like a ſtranger, and comeſt not at him. But whether we tranſlate the word by Prayer, or Meditation, the ſence is the ſame; for praying is ſpeaking to God; yea, an arguing and pleading with God: And ſo 'tis uſed in the titles of *Pſal.* 102. & 142. The word which we render *to reſtrain*, ſignifies two things: Firſt, To withdraw or ſtop: Secondly, To leſſen and diminiſh, *Jer.* 48. 37. *Every beard clipt* or *diminiſhed*: We may take it in both ſences here, as reproving *Job* either for a total forbearance, and throwing up the duty of Prayer, or for ſhortning and abating it: Yet there is an opinion that *Job* is not here charged for leſſening or abating, but for lengthening and increaſing Prayer; *Thou caſteſt off fear, and multiplieſt Prayer*: The Hebrew word notes the cutting or dividing of a thing into ſmall pieces or portions; which is indeed to multiply it, and to make it, though not more in bulk, yet more in number, *Job* 36. 27. *Thou makeſt ſmall the drops of rain*; that is, thou multiplieſt the drops of rain: So here, thou makeſt ſmall thy Prayers, as ſo many drops of rain, thou haſt never done dropping Prayers; thou doſt mince thy ſupplications, or cut them out into many ſmall ſhreads, as if thou didſt hope to be heard for thy much ſpeaking: Such were the ſilly devotions of the old ſuperſtitious Gentiles, which the hypocritical Phariſees imitated, and were therefore reproved by Chriſt, under the name of *vain repetitions* (*Matth.* 6. 7.) Of which fault a learned Interpreter, judges *Eliphaz*, reproving *Job* in this place. But I rather keep to our own Tranſlation, *Thou reſtraineſt Prayer*.

Detrahis confabulationem cum Deo. Jun.

שיחה *Meditatio, loquela, etiã oratio.*

גרע *Significat, 1. prohibere, 2. diminuere*

Non eſt intelligendum quaſi arguatur Job, *quod remiſerit vel prohibuerit orandi ſtudium: ſed potius è contra, quod multiloquio, vel battologia uſus erat.* Bold.

Hoc eſt vitiũ dictum à Theophraſto. μικρολογία *& proprie à Græcis dicitur* λεπτολογία *minutiloquium.*

Minuere ſtillas aquarum, eſt minutiſſimas frequentiſſimaſque pluviæ guttas mittere.

Here again it may be queſtioned, What cauſe had *Eliphaz* to charge *Job* with *reſtraining prayer*? The Jewiſh Writers ſay, it was becauſe he denyed Providence, and ſo by conſequence Prayer; for if God do not order the affairs of the world, the afflictions and deliverances of his people, why ſhould we pray to him about them? Others refer it not to his denial of Providence, but to that which *Eliphaz* ſuppoſed a fundamental error againſt the Doctrine of Providence, *That God deſtroyeth the righteous and the wicked; that he laughs at the tryal of the innocent.* Now will any innocent man pray to God in his affliction, when he is told that God laughs at his affliction? Will any righteous man call upon God for help, when he is taught that God deſtroyeth the righteous? Who would ſerve a Maſter who gives ſuch wages, and payes thoſe that honour him with diſgrace, yea, with deſtruction? So that *Job* is charged with reſtraining Prayer, according to this anſwer to the queſtion, not becauſe he totally forbore prayer himſelf, or perſwaded others to forbear it; but becauſe *Job*'s aſſertions were ſuch as might yield thoſe conſequences, and cauſe many to ſuſpend Prayer, or give over calling upon the Name of God in the day of trouble. We may be charged to ſay or do that, which flows from what we do or ſay, though we neither ſay nor do the thing it ſelf.

Hebræi ad id referunt, quod putant Jobum *Dei providentiã negaſſe, quod nos non putamus.* Mea, q.d. *iſta aut aſſertio & doctrina, quod mala & ſupplicia eveniant bonis & juſtis tollit religionem, & publicum divini numinis cultũ.*

Many are guilty of thoſe errors conſequentially, which yet they never affirmed thetically or directly. We may be ſo far from aſſerting, that we may profeſſedly abhor an opinion which yet lyeth ſecretly under ſome of our aſſertions. We ſay juſtly, That the Pope is Antichriſt, and that pure Popery is Antichriſtianiſm; yet the Pope doth not deny Chriſt, for the Pope thinks himſelf Chriſts Vicar upon earth, and therefore muſt needs acknowledge him to be come in the fleſh; yet by conſequence, the Pope is an oppoſer both of the Perſon and Offices of Chriſt, and Popiſh doctrine fights againſt the Truth of Chriſt. As prophane men *Profeſs they know God, yet in their works they deny him* (*Tit.* 1. 16.) So many erroneous perſons profeſs they love and honour thoſe holy truths and ſpiritual duties, which by conſequences they indeed deny, as *Eliphaz* (though unduly) ſuppoſed *Job* had done the duty of Prayer. *Thou reſtraineſt prayer before God.*

Taking the words abſtractly, they yield us this uſeful Obſervation,

> *That it is an Argument of an evil heart, to ſhorten, or reſtrain, to leſſen, or to give off Prayer in times of trouble.*

Hic proponitur tanquam ingens piaculum quod homo afflictus remittat orandi ſtudium.

That King ſpake to the height of prophaneneſs, when he ſaid (2 *Kings* 6.) *This evil is of the Lord, and why ſhould I wait on the Lord any longer?* When we have done waiting, we have done praying. No man will aſk for that which he doth not expect to receive. How long ſoever affliction laſteth, ſo long prayer-ſeaſon laſteth: If the Winter day of our trouble be a Summer day in length, if it be continued many dayes, yea, many months, and years, prayer ſhould continue (*Pſal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will hear, and thou ſhalt glorifie me*: Let the day of trouble be ſhort or long, God looks to hear of us all that day. *Is any afflicted, let him pray*, ſaith the Apoſtle *James*; it is a duty to pray, when we are not afflicted, when we proſper in the world: But *is any man afflicted*, then is a ſpecial ſeaſon for prayer. A ſincere heart prayes alwayes, or continues in prayer; an hypocrite never loves to pray, and at two ſeaſons he will reſtrain, or lay aſide prayer: Firſt, When he is got out, or thinks he hath prayed himſelf out of affliction. Proſperity and worldly fulneſs ſtop the mouth of prayer; and he hath no more to ſay to God, when he hath received much from God. Secondly, A hypocrite reſtrains prayer, when he perceives he hath got nothing by prayer; he ſees he cannot, or fears he ſhall not get out of trouble, and therefore he will pray no more in trouble; his ſpirit fails, becauſe his afflictions hold out. Upon which ſoever of theſe two grounds the hypocrite reſtrains prayer, he ſhews the wickedneſs of his heart. If from the former, he ſhews, that he bears no true love to God; if from the latter, he ſhews, that he hath no true faith in God, or dares not truſt him. Further, to caſt off prayer, is to caſt off God; and he that lives without prayer in the world, lives without God in the world: Hence *the Heathen who know not God, and the Families that call not upon his Name*, are joyned together, or rather are the ſame (*Jer.* 10. 25.) Further, to reſtrain prayer, is worſe then not to pray: The latter notes only a neglect of the duty; the former a diſtaſt of the duty. To give over an holy exerciſe is more dangerous then not to begin or take it up. The one is the prophane mans ſin, the other is the hypocrites. *Thou reſtraineſt prayer*: And he that doth not utter prayer with his mouth, will ſoon utter wickedneſs with his mouth, as it follows.

Verſe 5. **For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chuſeſt the tongue of the crafty.**

Here *Eliphaz* explains, and proves what he ſaid before, that *Job* had caſt off the fear of God, and reſtrained prayer: As if he had ſaid, *If thou hadſt kept in holy fear, that would have kept in thine iniquity: Hadſt thou not reſtrained prayer, that would have reſtrained and bridled down thy ſin; but thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and that ſheweth that prayer is reſtrained, and that fear is caſt off*: Here is a demonſtration of it; If you ſhould come to a Princes Court, and ſee a great croud about the door, you would ſay, the Porter is there, he ſtops and examines them; if at another time you ſee all going in as faſt as they pleaſe, you will ſay, the Porter is out of the way. Thus while the fear of the Lord ſtands like a Porter at the door of the ſoul, we keep our thoughts and actions in compaſs; we examine what goes in, and what comes out: but when once that's gone, order is gone. Any thing may be ſaid, any thing may be done by him, who fears not, who prayes not. Thou haſt caſt off fear, and reſtrained prayer, for thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, out it comes as faſt as it can: I need not tell thee wherein thou haſt offended, thy mouth pours it out.

Non opus eſt ut te doceã in quo pecces, cum ipſe tuus ſermo doceat te iniquum eſſe. Reus verbis oris tui. Sept.

Hence Note, *That the evil which is in the heart will out at the mouth, unleſs prayer and the fear of God reſtrain it.*

As the good that is in the heart will come out of the mouth, eſpecially when prayer unlocks the mouth. *David* prayes, *Lord open thou my lips*, and then he undertakes for his mouth, that it ſhall *ſhew forth the praiſe of God.* (*Pſal.* 51. 1.) *My heart is inditing a good matter* (the heart doth this in prayer or meditation) What follows? *My tongue is as the Pen of a ready Writer:* Heavenly thoughts in the heart ſhoot out at the tongue in heavenly words. When the heart is deviſing of a good matter, the tongue will be ſwift to ſpeak, and ſet all to a good tune. Thus alſo while the heart is inditing an evil matter, the tongue runs to evil: Such a man needs not learn from others, he hath a root of bitterneſs in himſelf: Hence our Saviour concludes (*Mat.* 12. 37.) *By thy words thou ſhalt be condemned, and by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified:* Why ſhall we be condemned by our words? The Prophet complains of thoſe who made a man an offender for a word; I anſwer, our words ſhew what we are, they declare our hearts; as a man may be diſcovered of what Country he is, when he ſpeaks, ſo of what ſpirit he is. *The tongue is the ſcholar of the heart, and ſpeaks what that dictates:* A man is juſtly condemned by evil words, becauſe they teſtifie that he is evil. *Thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity.*

Qualis vir talis oratio, Mens mala linguam movet & vos fingit ad improbos ſenſus neque aliud os loquitur quā quod interior ſuggerit atque imperat ſenſus.

Obſerve Secondly, *There are ſome iniquities which are more properly ours then ſome others are.*

Thine iniquity: *Job* had (as *Eliphaz* ſeems to ſuggeſt) a kind of peculiarity in it. As God owns ſome people in a ſpecial manner; though all the people of the earth be his, yet they are his beloved people: So man owns ſome ſin in a ſpecial manner; though a corrupt heart hath a relation to all the ſins in the world, yet ſome one is his beloved ſin; and may be called by way of eminency, his iniquity. 'Tis his, as his Houſes and Lands, as the Money in his Purſe, and the Garments on his back are his.

Obſerve Thirdly, *Every man is moſt ready to act and utter his ſpecial iniquity.*

Thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity. There are ſome ſins in a mans heart, which poſſibly he may never utter all his dayes; but he muſt be talking of, or acting his beloved one. Hence *David* ſpeaks it, as a high work of grace in him (*Pſal.* 18. 23.) *I have kept my ſelf from mine iniquity.* Even a godly man, who diſowns every ſin, hath ſome one ſin more his own then others. This finds him work (not to do it) but to keep himſelf from doing it.

And thou chuſeſt the tongue of the crafty.] As if he had ſaid, Thou waſt wont to ſpeak prayer, now thou ſpeakeſt pollicy, thou dealeſt cunningly and deceitfully with us, not plainly and clearly. Why, what had *Job* ſpoken or done, that ſhould gain him the diſreputation of *a crafty man*: Some conceive *Eliphaz* hinting at thoſe words (*Chap.* 6. 24.) *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue,* &c. Thou ſpeakeſt as if thou wert willing to be taught, ſhew me my error, and I will turn from it; yet this is from craft, not from conſcience. For though thou ſeemeſt to be willing to receive inſtruction, yet thou keepeſt cloſe to thy opinion, and wilt not part from it. We ſhall ſometimes hear a man ſpeaking very ingenuouſly, convince me that I am in an error, and I will relinquiſh it; and yet he reſolves to hold his own. To deſire inſtruction is grown into a complement, but 'tis by the *tongue of the crafty:* The inſtrument is here put for the effect, the tongue for ſpeech, as *Iſa.* 50. 4. *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned*; what to do? *that I may know to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon.*

Lingua pro doctrina Metonymicè, cauſa vel inſtrumentū pro effectu.

Again, the word (**Crafty**) is taken in a good ſence by ſome Interpreters: So the tongue of the crafty is the tongue *of the wiſe*; as if he had ſaid, Thou ſeemeſt to ſpeak very wiſely, ſoberly and holily: Others render it thus, *Thou ſhouldeſt have choſen the tongue of the wiſe*; that is, thou ſhouldſt have ſpoken more reverently and diſcreetly, whereas thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity; but rather *the crafty*, is the ſubtil man. As if he had ſaid, Thou loveſt to play the Sophiſter, to put fair colours on a bad matter, and wilt not let things appear as indeed they are. *Be wiſe as Serpents*, is Chriſts advice; but he adds, *Be innocent as Doves:* Serpentine wiſdom muſt be mixed with Dove-like innocence; the craftineſs of the Serpent alone, belongs only to the ſeed of the Serpent.

Lingua erudita vel doctrinarū, i. e. ruditè, ſapienter, ornatè, ſuaviter loquēdi facultas.

ערם *Verſutus, malignus, calidus. Calidos hic vocat, qui cum male ſentiant & agant, inveniunt tamen cauſationes & colores.* Coc.

Laſtly, Whereas he ſaith, *Thou chuſeſt the tongue of the crafty*; he heightens his accuſation, and would repreſent this good man to the eye of the world in a blacker hue. To chuſe, notes a mixt act both of the underſtanding, will, and affections; and it ſeems here to be oppoſed to that wicked act (but not in the wickedneſs of it) wherewith he beſpattered *Job* in the former Verſe, *Thou caſteth off fear.* To *caſt off*, or reprobate, is contrary to electing, or *chuſing*, and ſo is the fear of God to craft. The fear of God is the beginning of wiſdom; a good underſtanding have all they that do thereafter; but craft is only the corruption of wiſdom, and they have no good underſtanding who do thereafter. Now, when Divine fear and humane craft ſtand in competition, for a man to give his vote for craft, and to refuſe, at leaſt to let paſs the fear of the Lord, this is one of the higheſt growths of ſinful corruption. He that doth thus, needs neither Judge nor Witneſs againſt him, he is both himſelf: So *Eliphaz* reſolves it in the next Verſe.

Verſe 6. **Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I; thine own lips teſtifie againſt thee.**

This Verſe hath nothing in it that needs a Comment. The intendment of it may be thus given, *It as clear as the light, that thou caſteth off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God*; for as much as *thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou haſt choſen the tongue of the crafty*; *theſe things are ſo plain that I need not prove them, thine own mouth ſhall condemn thee, and not I.* As the Judge ſaid at Chriſts tryal, *What need we any Witneſſes, ye have heard his blaſphemy, Matth.* 26. 65. Witneſſes of old were wont to put their hand upon the head of the Offender, and ſay, *It is thy own wickedneſs which condemns thee, and not we*; much more doth their own wickedneſs condem them, who may juſtly be condemned without witneſs.

Teſtes olim manus ſuper caput rei imponentes dicere ſolebant,. Malitia tua te adduxit ad mortem non nos. Lyran.

Hence Obſerve, *That ſelf condemnation is the ſtrongeſt condemnation.*

Luke 19. 22. Chriſt tells the unprofitable Servant, *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked Servant.* The obſtinate Heretick is *condemned of himſelf*, Titus 3. 14. Not that the Heretick doth condemn himſelf, formally, he doth not ſay, I am in an error; you can hardly bring an Heretick to that; and when you do, he ceaſeth to be an Heretick. It is his ſtiffneſs in opinion, which faſtens the reproach of Hereſie upon him; but he is ſaid to condemn himſelf, becauſe holding ſuch an erroneous opinion, he doth virtually condemn himſelf, and plainly declares, that he is fallen from the truth, or hath alwayes oppoſed it.

The Prophet, (*Iſa.* 44. 9.) ſaith of Image-makers, *They are all of them vanity, their delectable things ſhall not profit them, and they are all their own witneſſes; they ſee not, nor know, that they may be aſhamed:* Images ſhew what both they and their worſhippers are; though no man ſhould ſpeak a word againſt them, they having tongues and cannot ſpeak, ſpeak enough againſt themſelves; their ſilence, or dumbneſs rather, proclaims aloud to all the world, that they are vain and dunghil Deities; they can do neither good nor evil, to ſhew themſelves Gods; and they who worſhip them do not ſo much *as ſhew themſelves men*, Iſa. 46. 8. In all this they are their *own witneſſes*. They cannot but ſee their own blindneſs and folly, who ſpeak to that which cannot hear, and lift up their eyes to that which cannot ſee: Every ſinner hath reaſon to condemn himſelf with his own mouth, and why an Idolater doth it not, no reaſon can be given, but that which was toucht even now from the Prophet, he wants his reaſon, and is therefore in a holy ſcorn adviſed, to *ſhew himſelf a man*. While we acquit our ſelves with our own mouths, and bear witneſs to our ſelves, our witneſs is of no validity, nor are we at all acquitted; but while we condemn our ſelves with our own mouths, and bear witneſs againſt our ſelves, our witneſs is ſtrong, and we are abundantly condemned.

VERS.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Art thou the firſt man that was born, or waſt thou made before the Hills?
Haſt thou heard the ſecret of God? and doeſt thou reſtrain wiſdom to thy ſelf?
What knoweſt thou that we know not? what underſtandeſt thou that is not in us?
With us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder then thy Father.
Are the conſolations of God ſmall with thee? is there any ſecret thing with thee?

THe firſt part of this Chapter, is reprehenſory. In the former context two points of reproof were opened: Firſt, *Jobs* ſuppoſed folly in the ſecond and third Verſes: Secondly, his wickedneſs, in the fourth, both which were aggravated in the fifth and ſixth.

In this Context *Eliphaz* gives him a third and a fourth reproof; a third, for the high conceit he had of himſelf, and a fourth, for the low conceit he had of the comforts of God, tendered to him by his Friends; he reproves him for the high conceit he had of himſelf, in two things: Firſt, as if *Job* had thought his experience greater then any mans, *Art thou the firſt man that was born?* &c. *Verſ.* 7. Secondly, as if he had thought himſelf immediately inſpired, *Haſt thou heard the ſecret of God*, &c. *Verſ.* 8.

This he illuſtrates by a twofold oppoſition in the ninth and tenth Verſes; Firſt, by the oppoſition of himſelf and his Friends in point of knowledge and underſtanding unto *Job*: As if he had ſaid, *Thou lookeſt upon us as underlings, as men unworthy to carry thy Books after thee, or to be named the ſame day, but what knoweſt thou, that we know not? What underſtandeſt thou, which is not in us?* Verſ. 9. *Thou art not ſo weighty, but we hope we may very well ballance thee, and ſay* (without pride or partiality) *that our parts are as good as thine.* Secondly, by the oppoſition of their party to him and his, *Verſ.* 10. *With us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder then thy Father:* As if he had ſaid, *Our party equalls thine, as well as our parts; Haſt thou aged men on thy ſide? ſo have we; Haſt thou the authority of gray-hairs to back thy opinion? So have we. Haſt thou thy Fathers Copy to ſhew for theſe thy Tenets? So have we. We are able to make as great a boaſt of Antiquity as thou thy ſelf canſt: Do not think that we have received our Learning from ſome new fangled Sect, or from upſtart Opinioniſts of yeſterdayes edition: No, be it known unto thee, With us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men*, &c.

As thus he reproves *Jobs* high thoughts of himſelf, ſo in the fourth place, The low thoughts which he had of them, and the pains they had taken with him, *Verſ.* 11. *Are the conſolations of God ſmall with thee?* &c.

Verſ. 7. Art thou the firſt man that was born.

Or, as ſome read it, *Art thou born before the firſt man?* This is a high ſtrain of Rhetorick, it is impoſſible to be before the firſt; for as there *is nothing leſs then what is leaſt*, ſo nothing was before the firſt; but as we ſay, *Such a man will ſee the laſt man born*, when we ſee him reſolved to ſtay the longeſt upon a buſineſs, or deſirous to live very long: So we may ſay, *Such a man was born before the firſt*, or *ſurely he is the firſt man that was born*, whom we ſee highly conceited of his own antiquity: And indeed when *Eliphaz* asks the queſtion, *Art thou the firſt man that was born?* His meaning is to taxe *Job* for *a Puny*, or a young man, yet arrogating to himſelf the glory of longeſt experience; as if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt told us that we are but of yeſterday, and objecteſt novelty againſt us, to derogate from our authority, yet ſurely thou art none of the oldeſt, thou art not older then* Adam (I believe) *thou waſt not before the firſt man, that ever was, no nor the firſt man:* It is uſual in many Languages, to compare thoſe who are loweſt in any degree to the higheſt, and the meaneſt to the greateſt, Ironically, or in a way of ſcorn; thus 'tis ſaid to a Coward, or a white-liver'd-fellow, *Thou art no Achilles*; to a Dwarf or one of a low ſtature, *Thou art no Goliah*; to one of weak parts, ſurely, *Thou art no Solomon, no Ariſtotle*; ſo of one that is but young, *Surely thou art not Neſtor, thou art not Adam, the firſt man that ever was.*

Nũquid ante primum hominẽ natus es, Pagn. *Non natu minus minimo. Eſt uſitatum in omni, ut reor, lingua, ut qui in gradu aliquo ad quãdam mediocritatẽ non pervenere, imo qui in infimo conſtitere gradu, cũ eo qui maxime excellit comparentur; cum ironia tamẽ, ut ſi de homine timido dicas, non es cum Achille conferendus &c. neq; aliud voluiſſe* Eliphazem *arbitror quã ejus eſſe ætatis* Jobum *in qua non multũ ſoleat eſſe ſapientia.* Sanct.

Job gave *Eliphaz* and his Friends ſome colour to twit him thus, while he ſaid (*Chap.* 13. 5.) *O that you would altogether hold your peace, and it ſhould be your wiſdoms.* This was as if he had ſaid, *You are but ignorant, and the more you ſpeak the more you diſcover your ignorance*; And again, *Chap.* 12. 12. *With the ancient is wiſdom, and with length of dayes is underſtanding*; where he ſecretly upbraided them as Juniors, and that therefore little or no heed was to be taken to what they ſpake; now ſaith *Eliphaz, Art thou the firſt man born?* that is, *Art thou the wiſeſt man living?* He who thinks himſelf the firſt man, takes himſelf for a very wiſe man, even as wiſe as *Adam*, who was not only the Father, but the Teacher, and Inſtructer, of his poſterity: In which ſenſe the Jews ſaid to Chriſt, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and haſt thou ſeen Abraham, Joh.* 8. 57. Thou ſpeakeſt as if thou wert an old man: we know thy age, thou art but a young man, yet thou ſpeakeſt at the rate of thouſands, as if thou wert as old as *Abraham*, or the *ancient of dayes* among men, *Art thou the firſt man?* Or,

Waſt thou made before the hills?

Some conceive, that by the *Hills* he means the *Angels*, but that Expoſition ſmells too much of the Allegory: Take the *Hills* litterally, for the uppermoſt parts or boſſes of the earth; the Original is, *Waſt thou formed or made before the face of the hills?* which is an Hebraiſm. Some interpret the Hills by a Synecdoche, for the whole earth, then the ſenſe is, Waſt thou formed before the earth? The firſt man was formed out of the earth, & art thou older then the earth? So that here *Eliphaz* puts him off by a challenge of greater antiquity then in the former part of the Verſe, *Waſt thou the firſt man that was born, or waſt thou made before the earth?* the earth is elder then man, both had not the ſame birth-day.

Philippus ſequutus Auguſtinũ, contendit hoc loco angelos colliũ nomine intelligi.
Ad facies colliũ. Heb.
Num formatus es ante mundũ conditum; nam colles una cũ terra formati fuerũt aliquot diebus ante hominẽ. Druſ.

Again, as the Hills are a part of the earth, ſo they may be ſaid to be born the firſt of any part of the earth: For the earth was covered with water, it *was a great deep*, till a word of command came from God, that the waters ſhould retire to certain Channels, and receptacles which his wiſdom had aſſigned them; now when the waters were thus gathered and put into thoſe vaſt Veſſels, then the Hills, and Mountains, which are the higheſt parts of the earth appeared firſt, and ſo the Mountains are elder in regard of view, then the Plains and Valleys of the earth. That is ſaid to be firſt which appeareth firſt: So then, whether we take hills by a Synecdoche, for the whole earth, or plainly for a part of the earth, both reach at higheſt antiquity. There is an opinion (I confeſs) which if true, takes away the ground of this notion, That hills and mountains grew up, or were as ſo many excreſcencies of the earth, ſince it was created, and that they grow daily (as Naturaliſts expreſs it) by *Juxtapoſition*. But I fully adhere to their judgement (under which this notion ſtands ſafe) that the earth was diſtinguiſht into hills, plains, and valleys, by the ſame immediate power which created it, though I eaſily grant that many hills have been accidentally cauſed, and caſt up ſince, eſpecially in the deluge. And this doth more advance the wiſdom of God in the frame of this mighty maſs, which hath in it greater ornament, and yields greater delight by this variety, then if it had been ſmoothed all over into Plains and Levels.

Quod prius conſpicuum eſt antiquius eſſe videtur.

Further, to clear the Text, conſider, that it is uſual in Scripture, when a thing of great antiquity is ſpoken of, to compare it to the Hills, *Prov.* 8. 23, 24, 25. *Wiſdom* (which is *Chriſt*) ſpeaks thus, *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, ere the earth was, when there were no depths I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were ſetled; before the Hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the higheſt part of the duſt of the World.* Where note alſo by the way a full confirmation of the opinion even now aſſerted, that God made the Hills immediately, which are here alſo called *The higheſt part of the duſt of the earth.* Again (*Pſal.* 90. 2.) *O Lord thou haſt been our dwelling-place in all generations*; which he explains in the next words, *Before the mountains were brought forth from everlaſting*

Quod longe antiquum, montium & colliũ comparatione indicari ſoleta *laſting to everlaſting, thou art God.* Old *Jacob* ſpeaks this Divine Philoſophy upon his death-bed, while he was bleſſing his ſon *Joſeph* (*Gen.* 49. 26.) *The bleſſings of thy Father have prevailed above the bleſſings of my Progenitors, above the utmoſt bounds of the everlaſting Hills:* Once more, *Hab.* 3. 6. *He ſtood and meaſured the earth, he beheld, and drove aſunder the Nations; and the everlaſting Mountains were ſcattered, the perpetual Hills did bow:* Now a thing is called *everlaſting*, either ſtrictly, becauſe it ſhall laſt for ever, or becauſe it laſteth very long; in this latter ſenſe, the Hills are everlaſting: The Hills were from the beginning, and ſhall continue to the end. As for *Job*, he began to live but lately, and he muſt ſhortly die: *Waſt thou made before the Hills?* *Eliphaz* proceeds to a ſecond branch of his third reproof.

Verſ. 8. **Haſt thou heard the ſecret of God, or doeſt thou reſtrain wiſdom to thy ſelf?**

As if he had ſaid, *Poſſibly thou wilt wave or not ſtand to this plea of thy great antiquity.* What is it then that ſwells thee into ſuch proud and daring thoughts of thy infallible knowledge? Is it becauſe

Thou haſt heard the ſecret of God.] The Hebrew word ſignifies either counſel, or any thing that is ſecret and myſterious; ſome render it, *Haſt thou heard things unſpeakable:* when the Apoſtle was caught up to Heaven (2 *Cor.* 12.) *He heard words unſpeakable which it is not lawful for a man to utter:* Haſt thou heard unutterable ſecrets? A ſecond tranſlates, *Haſt thou heard the myſteries of God?* A third, *Haſt thou had diſcourſe with God?* or haſt thou heard God diſcourſe about the great things of wiſdom? The Septuagint, *Haſt thou heard the conſtitutions of Heaven, or knoweſt thou in what manner God hath ſetled all the affairs of mankind, natural, civil, and ſpiritual?* Art thou of privy counſel to the King of Heaven? or art thou a member of the Celeſtial conclave? Thus he reproves him for arrogating to himſelf ſuch knowledge, as is not attainable, but by ſpecial inſpiration, or revelation from God himſelf. The Prophet puts the queſtion (*Jer.* 23. 18.) *Who hath ſtood in the counſel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word? Who hath marked his word and heard it?* So the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 11. 34.) *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counſellor?* God is able to make known the whole myſtery of his will in a moment to the meaneſt ſoul, he can let in floods upon the underſtanding without our ſtudy; he can make a fool wiſe, and drawing back the curtain of ignorance, irradiate the darkeſt mind with the cleareſt light of all things knowable: But haſt thou heard ſuch ſecrets?

סוד *Secretū vel conſilium.* ἀπόρῥητα, *arcana indicenda* Aquil. μυςήειον, Theod.

σύνταγμα κυρίȣ ἀκήκοας. *Conſtitutionē domini audiviſti & conſiliario te uſus eſt Deus.* Sept. *Eadem vox quæ eſt ſecretū, eſt etiam conſiliū aut concilium, quod in conciliis arcana tractantur, & conſilia non niſi ſecretò iniri debēt.* Pined.

There are two ſorts of Divine ſecrets:

Firſt, Secrets of Providence:

Secondly, Secrets of Doctrine.

The former are of ſuch things as God will do; the latter, ſuch as Man is either to do or believe: God reveals both to his people. The ordinary way for us is by the Word written, the extraordinary by a word ſpoken: Thus God opened his ſecrets to the ancient Prophets and Apoſtles. The Prophet *Amos* (*Chap.* 3. 7.) ſpeaks of the ſecrets of providence, *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his ſecrets to his Servants the Prophets:* And the Lord himſelf ſaith of *Abraham*, *Shall I hide from Abraham the things that I am about to do:* Now as there is a revealing of Providence, or of the works of God, ſo there is a revealing of Doctrines and of the holy Truths of God. This he promiſeth (*Joel* 2. 28.) *I will pour out my ſpirit upon all fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall propheſie, your old men ſhall dream dreams, your young men ſhall ſee viſions:* Young men, cannot claim to be the firſt men, they were not before the Hills, yet to them the viſions of Heaven are promiſed: Yet we muſt not neglect that command of our attendance upon the teachings of the Word, becauſe we have received a promiſe of the teachings of the Spirit. The Spirit uſually teacheth by the Word, never againſt it; and it is a temping of God, while he gives us means, to linger after immediate Revelations: yea, when the Lord reveales himſelf immediately, he uſes to do it without mans fore-thought or expectations. The Prophets did not ſet themſelves to receive Revelations from God, but his Spirit came upon them with mighty power and irreſiſtible evidence. And though God doth reveal ſome of his ſecrets, yet he hath ſecrets which he will not reveal: *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him* (*Pſal.* 24. 14.) *And his ſecret is with the righteous* (*Prov.* 3. 32.) This ſecret is either the good will and favour of God, of which the World knows nothing, or the good Word and Faith of God of which the World knows as little: Both theſe ſorts of Divine ſecrets are with the righteous, and men fearing God; but the ſecrets of his Counſel are reſerved in his own breaſt. He reveals to his people the ſecrets of his bounty, and of their duty, what he will do for them, and what they muſt do for him; but many things which himſelf will do ſhall never be revealed by the doing of them; *Haſt thou heard the ſecrets of God:*

And doeſt thou reſtrain wiſdom to thy ſelf?

That is, Doeſt thou think there is no wiſdom beſides thine? art thou at the very border and utmoſt limit of knowledge and underſtanding? is all beyond thee ignorance and folly? Haſt thou got and engroſſed all the learning from others, and reſerved it to thy ſelf alone as thy peculiar, with which none muſt intermeddle without a licenſe obtained from thee? haſt thou the monopoly of wiſdom? or is all but enough for thee? Shall none of thy neighbours ſhare with thee? This is either a charge of greater arrogancy then the former, *Doeſt thou reſtrain wiſdom to thy ſelf?* or at leaſt a charge of greateſt uncharitableneſs; goodneſs is diffuſive, and ſo is wiſdom, and it is the duty of good men to diffuſe wiſdom. When they have heard the ſecrets of God, they muſt communicate them to others, not reſtrain all to themſelves. But I conceive *Eliphaz* intends only the former charge.

תגרע אליך *Detrabis ad te; quod ſenſu in idē, recidit cum eo quod eſt tibi aſcribis fraudando alios, negatam aliis ſapientiam tibi aſſūpſiſti ex divino arcano. Sapientia ultra te ſuos terminos nō porriget?* Tygur.

Hence Obſerve, *It is the higheſt ſtrain of pride for a man to reſtrain wiſdom to himſelf;*

Or, to think himſelf ſo wiſe, that all muſt addreſs to him for wiſdom: God hath not given all wiſdom to any one man, or ſort of men, though he hath truſted ſome with more Talents of it then he hath done others. The Prieſts lips of old under the Law, and ſo the lips of Miniſters under the Goſpel, ſhould preſerve knowledge; and the people ſhould ſeek both Law and Goſpel at their mouth (*Mal.* 2. 7.) Yet neither might the Prieſts then, nor may Miniſters now, reſtrain wiſdom to themſelves. The rule of the Apoſtle is, *Be not wiſe above what is written;* that is above *holy Writ*, or above what is written from the immediate dictates of the Spirit of God. *They are* (as we ſay) *fools in Print, who ſay they are wiſe above what is thus written;* but we may be wiſe above what is ſpoken or written by any man, for no man ought to reſtrain all wiſdom to himſelf; to do ſo is the *top-ſtair of Antichriſtian pride. The Pope reſtrains wiſdom to himſelf*, he boaſts that he hath the ſecrets of God, and that all muſt come to him if they will have them unlockt and opened: *His ſentences from the Chair are Oracles, and there he is infallible;* all are obliged to receive what he ſaith, becauſe he ſaith it: no man muſt ſcruple, much leſs oppoſe or contradict it. Thus to impoſe upon men is to ſet our ſelves in the place of the God of Heaven; yea, to arrogate to our ſelves that we are Gods on earth. So the Apoſtle hath characteriz'd that *man of ſin* (2 *Theſ.* 2. 4.) *He oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped* (that is, above all civil powers or Magiſtracy) *So that he as God ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God.* And as *he* out of all meaſure wickedly, ſo many others in a very great meaſure have ſhewed themſelves as God, while they have taken upon them (as we ſpeak proverbially) *To give the Law*, yea, to give the Goſpel to other mens conſciences, or to bind up all mens tongues and judgements unto the rule of their apprehenſions. When the Apoſtle had called God to record, that he alwayes purpoſed to be bold and plain with the *Corinthians*, he preſently ſubjoyns this corrective (2 *Cor.* 1. 24.) *Not that we have Dominion over your Faith, but are helpers of your joy:* As if he had ſaid, Do not think that I take upon me as a Lord over your conſciences, to charge any command or obſervations of my own upon them: No, I am but as a ſervant of God to inſtruct you in his counſels, and to comfort you with his promiſes.

The Grecians, who were men of great knowledge and learning, a very witty and Philoſophical people, called all other Nations *Barbarians:* Such pride appears among ſome (in name) Chriſtians, they ſpeak and act as if all knowledge and truth were centred in them, or as if all were in the dark who ſee not by their light. Knowledge is apt to puff up; how are they puffed up, who think they know all? though indeed they who think they know any thing, know nothing as they ought to know, 1 *Cor.* 8. 2. God reveals that to Babes and Sucklings, which he hides from ſuch wiſe and prudent ones, who *reſtrain all wiſdom to themſelves*. God in judgement reſtrains wiſdom from them, who in pride reſtrain it to themſelves; and as God takes all wiſdom from them, who in another ſenſe *reſtrain wiſdom to themſelves*, that is, who will not uſe it becauſe they have but one Talent of it, or but a little; ſo he will give them no wiſdom at all, who think they are poſſeſſors, or *Lord-Treaſurers* of all the Talents of it, as if all wiſdom were laid up in them. The Babes and Sucklings, ſuch as are low, humble, and meek, are the objects of this bounty; as for the proud, God beholdeth them afar off: and they can never get neer wiſdom who are far from the God of wiſdom. While ſuch vainly reſtrain wiſdom to themſelves, the hand of God is juſtly reſtrained from beſtowing it upon them.

Eliphaz having thus reproved *Job* for entitling himſelf to ſo rich a ſtock of knowledge, either brought in by his own long experience, or from the ſpecial inſpirations and teachings of God; proceeds to challenge to himſelf and his Friends a knowledge equal at leaſt to what he really had, in the ninth and tenth Verſes.

Verſ. 9. **What knoweſt thou that we know not, what underſtandeſt thou that is not in us?**

He retorts what *Job* ſaid, *Chap.* 12. 3. *I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferiour to you.* Here *Eliphaz* tells him, we have underſtanding as well as you: Hath God revealed all knowledge to thee? ſurely we know as much as thou.

Dic age quæ ſunt tuæ partes.

What knoweſt thou which we know not?] The words are plain, and need no explication; they ſound as if he had ſaid, *Come ſhew thy skill, and open thy hidden treaſures: thou haſt ſhewed nothing yet, but what is common to us and others; thou ſeemeſt to ſpeak of myſteries, of things that are unknown, and ſecret to this day, but ſurely thou haſt not traded much in theſe;* For, *What knoweſt thou that we know not? thou haſt not yet produced any ſuch piece of knowledge; if ſuch precious matter be in thee, wrap it not up in the napkin of ſilence any longer, bring it forth, that we alſo may know it.*

Qui velit ingenio cedere rarus erit.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Man is apt to ſtand upon terms of compariſon with man; he cannot bear it that another ſhould be thought or think himſelf wiſer or more knowing then he.*

Some are not troubled becauſe they know little, but becauſe they are eſteemed leſs knowing then others, *What knoweſt thou that we know not?*

Secondly Obſerve, *Though ſome men are of higher parts, and better natural abilities then others, yet what one man knoweth, others may.*

No man can boaſt himſelf beyond the line and degree of man: For *as the heart of man anſwers the heart of man in ſinfulneſs, ſo in a poſſibility of goodneſs.* One man may be as holy as another, as wiſe and knowing as another; only God is more holy, wiſe, and knowing then any man can be; he knoweth many things which no man knoweth nor can know. But though it be a ſtrain of pride, for one man to ſay to another, *What knoweſt thou that I know not?* Yet it is a truth that one man may know as much as another: and though ſome men know that which another man (in regard of ſome perſonal impediments) neither doth nor can know, yet the humane nature in every perſon is capable of the ſame, both kind and degree of knowledge.

Thirdly, *Eliphaz* is about to reprove the pride of *Job*, as he conceives, and he doth it (as was but now toucht) in ſuch a manner as ſpeaks his own pride, *What knoweſt thou that we know not*, is the language of a high mind: I am as good and as wiſe as thou: though it may be ſo, yet it is uncomely to ſay ſo.

Hence Obſerve, *Some in reproving other mens faults, run into the very ſame faults themſelves.*

The reproof of a fault may not only be faulty, but the fault which is reproved. A man may reprove pride with much pride, and leſſer vanities, with abundance of vanity. All that good men ſpeak for good, doth not begin at a principle of goodneſs; their own corruption may riſe up againſt the corruption of others, and ſin is often heard chiding vice. How many are there who check paſſion, with paſſion, and are very angry in diſlike of anger; you ſhall have ſome men ſpeak againſt bitterneſs of ſpirit with a bitter ſpirit, and while they are taxing their Brethren with making breaches or with an unwillingneſs to peace, diſcover much unpeaceableneſs, yea an unwillingneſs to have thoſe breaches healed.

Diogenes was obſerved to trample upon the pride of *Plato* with greater pride; and he who to rebuke pride in Apparrel, wore himſelf an unhandſome and torn Coat, was rightly told that his pride was ſeen through the holes of his Coat. There may be as much oſtentation in wearing ſordid, as there is in wearing the gayeſt Cloathes. It was a ſhame for Heathens to declare their own folly, while they declaimed againſt the folly of their neighbours; how ſcandalous then is this in Chriſtians?

Verſ. 10. **With us are the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder then thy Father.**

This Verſe is the proof of the former; ſome think the compariſon lyes between *Jobs* Friends and himſelf. We are thy Seniors, yet thou ſpeakeſt as if thou wert the oldeſt man amongſt us: Here are two terms in the Text, which ſeem to diſtinguiſh old age.

First, **Gray-headed.**

Secondly, **Very aged, much elder then thy Father.**

Prima ſenectus וקנה *dicitur, unde* וקן *ſenex: media ſenectus* שוב *dicitur & incipit ab anno 70. & durat uſq; ad 80. annum; ad quã qui pervenit poſtea* ישיש *decrepitus dicitur, quod eſt ultima ſenectutis vocabulum, quæ durat uſque ad vitæ finẽ vel uſq; ad annum 100. Nam filius centũ annorũ habetur pro mortuo.* Druſ. *Etiã Eliphaz qui canus eſt, & Bildad qui decrepitus eſt inter nos, & Sophar qui major eſt patre tuo diebus.* Targ.

Among the Jews, a man was counted old at threeſcore, which they called, The firſt old age: At ſeventy he was expreſſed by the word which we tranſlate *Gray-headed*, and that was his title till he arrived at *Fourſcore*; from that to the end of life, the whole ſtate was called, *Decrepid old Age*; and they who reached thoſe years, were expreſſed by the word which we render *Very aged men*, or as we ſay, *men having one foot in the Grave*; for he that was an hundred years old, was not numbred among the living, but among the dead. The Chalde Paraphraſt applys the diſtinction thus; *With us is Eliphaz, who is gray-headed, and Bildad who is decrepid, and Zophar who is older then thy Father. Hierom* gives *Eliphaz* the precedency in age, affirming that he was the eldeſt Son of *Eſau*, and that at the time of this diſpute, he was no leſs then a hundred and fifty years old, *Jobs* Father ninety, and *Job* himſelf ſeventy. But I ſtay not upon theſe conjectures.

The ſcope of *Eliphaz* in theſe words may be reduced to this account: As if he had ſaid, *We need not depend on thy Authority or antiquity; For with us, that is, on our ſide, or of our party and opinion, there are men gray-headed, yea, very aged, much elder, not only then thy ſelf, but, then thy Father. Therefore do not thou charge us with novelty, know, that we have received our Doctrine from venerable Anceſtors; if thou haſt learned theſe things of thy Father, and drunk in thy opinion from the Aged, ſo have we: Nor do we eſteem the Tenets of our fore-fathers meerly by the number of days which they lived, but by the wiſdom and and piety* [illegible] *which they were enriched.*

It is obſervable in Scripture, that *Teman* (from whence *Eliphaz* came) was a famous *School of Learning* (*Jer.* 49. 7.) *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, is wiſdom no more in Teman?* He ſpeaks of it, as of a known place for knowledge and wiſdom; What? *Is wiſdom no more in Teman?* As if we in *England* ſhould ſay, *Is there no more learning at* Oxford *or* Cambridge? are the lights extinguiſht, and the fountains dry? Thus *Eliphaz* aſſerts that his abettors and inſtructers in the opinion he maintained, were both old, and learned old men.

From this conteſt about Antiquity and ancient men ſo often renewed and ſo much urged between *Job* and his Friends, We may Obſerve,

Firſt, *That they who have moſt years upon their backs, are, or may be ſuppoſed to have moſt knowledge and wiſdom in their heads and hearts.*

Secondly, *They who have Antiquity on their ſide, are apt to conclude that they have Truth on their ſide.*

That which is indeed moſt ancient is moſt true; yet there are very many very ancient untruths: It is no new thing to ſee a gray-headed errour, and a falſe Doctrine much older then our Fathers.

But I ſhall not proſecute either of theſe points, having met with matter of this ſtrain before, *Chap.* 8. *verſe* 8, 9, 10. *Chap.* 12. *verſe* 12. to which places I refer the Reader.

Eliphaz having finiſhed his third reproof of *Job* for his arrogancy, and the high conceit he had of himſelf, proceeds to a fourth, and that is (as hath been ſaid) for the low conceit which he had of the comforts tendered him in the Name of God.

Verſ. 11. **Are the conſolations of God ſmall with thee, or is there any ſecret thing with thee?**

Num parum à te conſolationes Dei. Heb. *Supplendum eſt verbum reputantur. Numquid grande eſt ut conſoletur te Deus?* Vulg. q.d. *facile eſt Deo ut te ad ſtatum proſperitatis reducat.* Aquin. *Exiſtimáſne tuis ærumnis non poſſe Deum parē conſolationē afferre. An minores ſunt conſolationes dei, quàm ut te conſolari poſſint?* Vatab. *Pauca præ iis quæ peccaſti accepiſti vulnera.* Sept. *An conſolationes Dei tā contēptibiles judicas, ut projiciat eas ante blaſphematores.*

Theſe words undergo much variety of interpretation; the Vulgar Latine, neer which ſome others tranſlate, gives a fair ſenſe, but at too great a diſtance from the letter of the Original; thus, *Is it a great thing that God ſhould comfort thee?* As if he had ſaid, *Art thou ſo low that all the conſolations of God are not able to raiſe thee up? Is it a work too big for God himſelf to comfort thee? Cannot he change thy outward and inward ſorrows into joys?* Will not the conſolations of one that is infinite ſerve thy turn? Hath not he balm enough in ſtore to heal thy wounds, nor treaſure enough in ſtock to repair thy loſſes? 'Tis no hard thing with God to comfort the moſt diſconſolate ſoul that ever was; he that made light to ſhine out of darkneſs, can give us light in our thickeſt darkneſs: This is a truth, but for the reaſon above, I ſtay not upon it.

The Septuagint tranſlation is far wider then the former, *Thou haſt received but few wounds, in compariſon of the ſins that thou haſt committed*; which is a Paraphraſe, not a tranſlation, and ſuch a Paraphraſe as ſeems to lie quite without the compaſs of the text: The meaning and intendment of it may be given thus; as if he had ſaid, *Thou complaineſt that thou art greatly afflicted, that thy ſorrows are innumerable, but if thou conſidereſt thy great and many ſins, thy ſufferings are few, yea, thy ſufferings may rather be called conſolations, and thy loſſes gains: Are the conſolations of God ſmall to thee, ſeeing thou haſt ſinned ſo much?* When God lays but a little affliction upon ſinful man, he may be ſaid, to give a great deal of mercy.

A third gives this ſenſe, *Are the conſolations of God ſmall to thee?* That is, Doeſt thou eſteem the conſolations of God ſo cheap, that he will give them to ſuch a one as thou? or that he will laviſh them out upon the wicked, and caſt theſe Pearls to Swine, to ſuch as are blaſphemers and contemners of God?

But why doth *Eliphaz* call theſe the conſolations of God? Did God adminiſter them to *Job* with his own hand, or did he ſpeak to *Job* from Heaven? Some conceive that though he and his Friends ſpake them, yet *Eliphaz* calls them the conſolations of God, by an *Hebraiſm*, becauſe he judged them great conſolations. Thus in Scripture, *The Mountain of God, and the River of God*, are put for a great Mountain, and a great River; ſo here. As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt received many great conſolations from us thy Friends, and do*[illegible] *thou account them ſmall?* But I rather take the ſenſe plainly, that he calls them ſo, becauſe God is the author and giver, the fountain and original from whom all conſolations ſpring and flow.

Suas & ſociorū conſolationes, vocat Dei cōſolationes nō ſine arrogātia & faſtu. Druſ.

The *Conſolations of God* are two-fold:

Firſt, Ariſing from good things already exhibited to us.

Secondly, From good things promiſed to us.

The Conſolations of God in this place, are good things promiſed, or offered: *Promiſes are Divine conveyances of Conſolation.* The Friends of *Job* had made him many promiſes, that he repenting, *God would make his latter end better then his beginning*, &c. Hence *Eliphaz* tells him that he had ſlighted the conſolations of God. Any man who reads his ſtory may wonder why he ſhould: Surely *Job* was not in caſe to refuſe comfort, conſidering how he was ſtript of all comfort. *The full ſoul indeed loatheth the honey Comb, but to the hungry ſoul, every bitter thing is ſweet*; that is, thoſe things which dainty palates diſtaſt, he eats very ſavourly. *Job* was kept ſhort and low enough, he had nothing of conſolation left, either without or within; he was poor and ſore without, he was full of horrour, and terrour within: the arrows of the Almighty had even drunk up his ſpirit, and laid all his comforts waſt, and doth he yet neglect or undervalue comforts? 'Tis true, he had real conſolations, as appears by that profeſſion of his aſſurance of Gods favour towards him, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified*; yet he had no ſenſible conſolations; his frequent complaints ſhew he had not. So then, the conſolations of God (for eſteeming which little he is reproved) were the promiſes of conſolation made to him in the name of God by the Miniſtry of his Friends. *Are the conſolations of God ſmall unto thee?*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That conſolation is the gift, and proper work of God.*

Thou (ſaith *David, Pſal,* 71. 21.) *Shalt encreaſe my greatneſs and comfort me on every ſide: The Lord ſhall comfort Sion, he will comfort all her waſt places* (*Iſa.*51.3.) And again, *As one whom his Mother comforteth, ſo will I comfort you, and you ſhall be comforted in Jeruſalem.* God comforts as a Mother, *tenderly*, and he comforts as a Father, yea as a Maſter, *effectually*; I will comfort you, and ye ſhall be comforted. As the corrections of God are effectual, and proſper in the work for which they are ſent, ſo alſo are his conſolations. *Ephraim* ſaid (*Jer.* 31. 18.) *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed.* So every ſoul, whom God comforts, ſhall ſay, *Thou haſt comforted me, and I was comforted.* This the Apoſtle ſpeaks out to the praiſe of God (2 *Cor.* 1. 3, 4.) *Bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the Father of mercies, and the God of all conſolations*; all conſolation belongs to God; he hath all comfort in his own power, and diſpoſe; there is not any creature in the World can give out the leaſt dram of comfort to us without the commiſſion or leave of God; it is poſſible for one man to give another man riches, but he cannot give him comfort; man may give honour to man, but he cannot give him comfort. A man may have a pleaſant dwelling, a loving Wife, ſweet Children, and yet none of theſe a comfort to him.

The conſolation of all our poſſeſſions and relations is from God: Whoſoever would have comfort, muſt trade to Heaven for it: that's a commodity can be found upon no earthly coaſt; you may fetch in wealth from many coaſts of the earth, but you cannot fetch in comfort, till you addreſs your ſelves to the God of Heaven. We can procure our own ſorrow quickly, but God only makes us to rejoyce; our relief from outward affliction or inward grief is the gift of God. *He only can comfort us in outward afflictions who can command the creature, and he only can comfort us againſt our inward griefs, who can convince the conſcience.* None can do either of theſe but God; therefore conſolations are from God. *Luther* ſpake true, *It is eaſier to make a World then to comfort the conſcience*; the Hebrew phraſe to comfort, uſed in divers places of the Old Teſtament, is, *To ſpeak to the heart*: Now God only can ſpeak to the heart; man can ſpeak to the ear, he can ſpeak words, but he can go no further, Therefore the act and art of comforting belongs properly to God; *Chriſt is the true Noah: Lamech* ſaith of *Noah, Gen.* 5. 29. *This man ſhall comfort us, concerning our work and the toil of our hands*; it was not in *Noah* to comfort, but as God made him a comfort: and he was ſaid to comfort as a type of Chriſt; Chriſt is true comfort, *He is comfort cloathed in our fleſh*, he is (as it were) *comfort incarnate*: *Noah* ſent a Dove out of his Ark, which returned with an Olive-branch, Jeſus Chriſt ſends the holy Ghoſt who is called *the Comforter* with the Olive-branch of true peace to our wearied ſouls; and to ſhew that it is now the higheſt act of Chriſts love and care as mediator, to give comfort: he promiſed to ſend the holy Ghoſt, when himſelf was taking his leave of the Church, in regard of any viſible abode or bodily preſence: being ready to aſcend and ſtep into Heaven, he ſaid, *I will ſend the comforter.* When God rained fire and brimſtone from Heaven upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, it is ſaid by ſome of the Ancients, that he ſent a *Hell out of Heaven*: But when he powers the holy Spirit from Heaven upon his *Sion*, we may ſay he ſends *a heaven out of heaven.* Heaven above is nothing elſe but holy comfort, and the comforts of the holy Spirit are the only Heaven below.

How highly then ought we to eſteem, how carefully to maintain communion with God, who hath all comfort, ſeeing comfort is more to us then all we have. If we have comfort, let our eſtate be what it will we are well enough; comfort is as the ſpring of our year, as the light of our day, as the Sun in our Firmament, as the life of our lives. Have we not reaſon then to draw, yea, to preſs neerer unto God, who hath all comfort in his hand, and without whom the beſt things cannot comfort us? Nor our riches, nor our relations, nor Wife, nor Children, nor health, nor beauty, nor credit nor honour, none of theſe can comfort us without God, and if God pleaſe he can make any thing comfort us; he can make a cruſt of dry bread a feaſt of fat things, a cup of cold water, a banquet of Wine to us. And as he can make our comforts croſſes, ſo our croſs a comfort, as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 23. 4.) *Thy rod and thy ſtaff comfort me,* not only the ſupporting ſtaff, but the correcting rod ſhall comfort, if God command it to be a comforter: Who would not maintain communion with this God who can make a comfort of any thing, who can anſwer every croſs with a comfort; *If we have a thouſand croſſes, God hath ten thouſand comforts*; he can multiply comforts faſter then the World can multiply croſſes.

Again, if God be the God of all conſolation, *then go to God for conſolation*; as the Angel ſaid to the women when they came to the Sepulcher enquiring for Chriſt, *Why ſeek ye the living among the dead, he is riſen, he is not here:* So I may ſay, *Why ſeek ye living comforts among dead or dying creatures? Seek then there no longer. Job* complains in this Book, *When I ſaid my bed ſhall comfort me, then thou ſcareſt me with dreams*; (*Chap.* 7.) *Job* went to a wrong place, when he went to his bed for comfort; moſt ſouls miſs of comfort, becauſe they go to a wrong place for it: one goes to his bed, another to his friend for comfort, a third to his wife and Children, theſe, ſaith he, ſhall comfort me; alaſs, why ſeek ye the living among the dead, none of theſe can comfort, though theſe may be means of comfort. *Who or whatſoever is the inſtrument, God is the author of all our comfort; whatſoever hand brings it, God ſends it*; *God* (ſaith *Paul*) *who comforteth thoſe who are caſt down, comforted us by the coming of Titus* (2 *Cor.* 7.6.) *Titus* was a good man and brought good tydings, yet *Paul* doth not ſay that the coming of *Titus* did comfort them; but, ſaith *Paul, God comforted us by the coming of Titus*; 'Tis not your friend who comforts you, but God who comforts you by the coming of ſuch a friend, when you are in ſorrow; by ſending in ſuch relief, when you are poor, by ſending ſuch medicines, when you ar ſick, ſuch ſalves when you are ſore, ſuch counſel when you are in doubt and know not what to do.

Once more, *It is happy for Saints that conſolation is in the hand of God*; if it were in the hand of the creature, ſure they ſhould have but little of it, but it is in the hand of God. There are theſe four conſiderations which may comfort Saints, that comfort is in the hand of God.

Firſt, Conſidering his nature, he is willing and ready to do good; he is full of compaſſion, and to ſhew mercy pleaſeth him more then it relieveth us.

Secondly, Conſidering his relation to his people: he is a Father. Will a Father let a Child lie comfortleſs, when he can help him? he is our Husband, he is our Friend, all relations provoke God to give out comfort to the Saints.

Thirdly, Conſidering his Omniſcience and Omnipreſence; he knows where the ſhoe wrings, he knows what comfort we want; a friend (poſſibly) hath the comfort in his hand, which we need, & he may be willing to give it out unto us, but he knows not wherein we are pinched; God tells *Moſes, I have ſeen, I have ſeen the afflictions of my people in Egypt.* And as he knows how it is with us, ſo we are ever within his reach, he can lay his hand upon every joynt where we are pained, and put a Plaiſter upon every wound: here is our happineſs. Chriſt would take off his people from extraordinary cares about the things of the World, by this argument, *Your Father knows that ye have need of theſe things, Matth.* 6. 32. Your Father who *carry's the purſe* knows your want.

Fourthly, Conſider his Omnipotence, he is able to comfort; he can command, yea create comforts; he can bring his comforts through an army of ſorrows to a poor ſoul: yea he can lead comfort through an Army of Devils and temptations, to a poor ſoul; he is Almighty, there is nothing too hard for him to do, nor is he hard to be entreated to do that which gives eaſe unto his people.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Conſolations rightly adminiſtred by men, are the conſolations of God.*

While man ſpeaks, God commands; *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſpeak comfortably to Jeruſalem, tell her that her warefar is accompliſhed, and her ſin pardoned* (*Iſa.* 40.1.) As all the counſels, reproofs, and Doctrines which the Miniſters of Chriſt diſpenſe according to the form of wholeſome words delivered either in the Law or Goſpel, are the counſels, inſtructions, reproofs and Doctrines of God, ſo alſo are their conſolations. And that's the reaſon why God takes it ſo ill at the hands of men, when his Meſſengers, who bring either inſtruction, or conſolation, are refuſed: becauſe himſelf is refuſed when they are, and his conſolations are diſeſteemed when theirs are.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *To account the conſolations of God ſmall, is a very great ſin.*

Moſes rebukes rebellious *Korah* and his confederates, for undervaluing the priviledge which they (as Levites) had to be neer God in holy Services (*Numb.* 16. 9.) *Seemeth it a ſmall thing unto you, that the God of Iſrael, hath ſeparated you from the Congregation of Iſrael, to bring you neer to himſelf to do the ſervice of the Tabernacle?* &c. If it were their ſin to count it a ſmall thing to be called neer to God in holy adminiſtrations, how great a ſin is it in any man to count it a ſmall thing, that God draws neer to him with heavenly conſolations? Though the conſolations of God to us be ſmall comparatively to what ſome others have, yet we muſt not account any conſolation of God, and that upon two grounds:

Firſt, becauſe of our own unworthineſs; the leaſt conſolations are great, conſidering how little we are, as *Jacob* ſpeaks, (*Gen.* 32. 10.) *I am not worthy the leaſt of all thy mercies:* He thought little mercies too big for him, becauſe he was little in his own eyes. They who have great, yea any thoughts of their own merits, leſſen the mercies of God; but he who ſees he deſerves nothing but ill, ſees abundance of mercy in the ſmalleſt good.

Secondly, Smalleſt conſolations are very great, becauſe they proceed from a great God. As no ſin is ſmall, though comparatively to another ſin it may be ſmall, becauſe it is committed againſt the great God: ſo no conſolation is ſmall, becauſe it comes from the *great God.* God puts an impreſs of his own greatneſs upon the leaſt things that are done or given by him; though he give but a peny, yet it hath the image and ſuperſcription *of him, our infinite and eternal Caſar:* therefore ſee you ſlight it not. As a good heart is careful to perform the leaſt duty, and to avoid the leaſt ſin, or as a good heart calls no duty little, which God enjoyns, nor ſin little which God forbids: ſo a good heart is thankfull for the leaſt mercy, and calls no conſolation ſmall, which God, the great God ſends.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *That great afflictions take away the ſenſe of tendered mercies.*

Conſolations for the matter were offered unto *Job*, but his palate was ſo diſtempered with the gall and wormwood of his afflictions, that he could not taſte them. *Phineas* his Wife regarded not the joyful news, that ſhe had brought forth a Man Child, while ſhe was overwhelmed with ſorrow, that the Ark of God was taken. While the Iſraelites were under hard Task-maſters in *Egypt*, they could not attend to the voice of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, who told them of deliverance; their troubles and burdens wert ſo heavy, that they looked upon *Moſes* as a trouble, or as a burden, when he came to mediate their releaſe. And as the Idolatrous Iſraelites who ſacrificed their Children to *Moloch*, beat up Drums, and uſed loud-ſounding-Inſtruments, to drown the cry of the poor Children, that they might not be heard; ſo ſome afflictions cry ſo loud, and many cry ſo loud in their afflictions, that they drown the ſweet melody and muſick of thoſe conſolations that are ſounded in their ears. Great complaints render great conſolations ſmall: *Job* was not without ſome blame in this, for though his patience was great, yet had it been greater, he might have miſſed this reproof from his Friends; *Are the conſolations of God ſmall to thee?*

And is there any ſecret thing with thee?

Et verbum latens tecū. Heb.

The meaning appears thus, *Are the conſolations of God, which we have offered, ſmall unto thee, becauſe thou haſt ſome ſecret hidden thing in thy breaſt?* This ſecret thing is opened three wayes.

Eſtne apud te divinum aliquid reconditum in mente tua, præ quo noſtras conſolationes Divinas contemnis? Merc.

First, In reference to comfort: As if he had ſaid, *Haſt thou ſome ſecret comfort beſides what we have offered? Haſt thou conſolations of thy own, which cauſe thee to neglect the conſolations of God?* As in the Goſpel, when the Diſciples *prayed Chriſt to eat*, he told them, *I have meat to eat that ye know not of* (John 4. 31, 32.) Chriſt had ſecret bread, his work was his food, *My meat is to do the will of him that ſent me:* So here, What? haſt thou meat which we know not of? Some *hidden Manna* beyond what we have told thee of, that thou careſt not for our proviſions?

Iſtæ quas ab ipſo Deo acceptas affirmus conſolationes leviores ſunt quam ut eas probare poſſis: nimirum quod apud te quidpiam magis recōditū deliteſcat. Bez.

Secondly, others give the meaning thus, *Haſt thou ſome ſecret conceit of thy own wiſdom, above ours?* Or is there ſome unknown worth in thee, that exempts thee from this general rule, or way of comfort? Doſt thou ſo abound in thy own ſence, that thou haſt no need of our Notions? Is all we ſpeak below thee?

Thirdly, They are ſuppoſed to aim at ſome ſecret ſin or guilt, which hindred and unfitted *Job* to take in their Cordials and Conſolations, till it were purged out, or vomited up by ſound repentance.

Aut aliquid abſcondit eas apud te. Jun.

i. e. Ira perſtringit oculos animi tui, ut illas non percipias, quaſi res involucris tectas. Jun.

So one renders the Text, *Doth any thing hide them with thee?* The word ſignifies to hide and cover (2 *Sam.* 19. 4.) David *covered his face:* So here, Doth ſomewhat hide, wrap up, and cover theſe conſolations that thou canſt not receive them? Or what vails the eye of thy mind, that thou canſt not behold what we hold out to thee, or not find out the meaning of it? *If our Goſpel be hid* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *it is hid to thoſe that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them,* &c. (2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.) Thus *Eliphaz* ſeems to beſpeak *Job*. *If the conſolations of God be ſmall to thee*, doth not ſome cloud hide them from thee? Doth not prejudice againſt us, or ſome cloſe ſin in thy ſelf interrupt thy ſight?

Verba tua prava hoc prohibent. Vulg.

This is hinted by the old Latine Tranſlator, who ſaith, *Thy evil words (or the evil matter that is in thee) hinder this.*

Apud te potius eſt incantatio & mendacium etſi præ te veritatem feras. Rab. Abr.

One of the Rabbins gloſſeth it thus, and the Original reaches it, *Some lye, ſome inchantment, or witchery hath ſeized upon thee, though thou pretendeſt truth.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks to this ſence (*Gal.* 3. 1.) *O fooliſh* Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not receive the truth:* Witchery or Inchantment gives a ſecret wound. *Is there any ſecret thing with thee?* Haſt thou any ſecret comfort for thy ſelf, any ſecret conceit of thy ſelf, any ſecret ſin in thy boſom hindering the effectual working, or due prizing of thoſe Cordials which we have given thee?

לאט *Occultum malum incantationem vel mendacium denotat.*

Malo in bonum ſumi, licet hoc in eum Eliphaz *dicat, eum ridens.* Merc.

The firſt of theſe ſecrets things never ſtands in the way of receiving conſolation; he that hath hidden comfort in him, will not refuſe ſpoken comforts; nor do I think that *Eliphaz* aimed at that, unleſs in ſcorn, as ſome reſolve it; but rather at one of, or both the latter, though miſtaken in both. Yet his ſuſpition gives us a ground for theſe two Obſervations.

Intus exiſtens prohibet alienum.

First, *That a man who is full of his own wiſdom, is not fit to receive instruction, counſel, or conſolation from others; that which is within hinders that which comes from without.*

When a man thinks himſelf wiſer then his teachers, he will not be taught, nor learn wiſdom by them. Some might have known much, if they had not preſumed they knew enough. There is no greater impediment of knowledge, then an opinion of it.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A ſin kept cloſe, or ſecret within us, hinders the effect and working of the word.*

Though comforts and counſels are given, they will not operate, where ſecret corruption lyes at heart; the filthineſs and corruption of the ſtomach hinders digeſtion, till it be purged out: Phyſitians remove ill humours before they preſcribe Cordials, elſe they do but nouriſh the diſeaſe. 'Tis ſo in Spirituals; the Apoſtle *Peter* gives the rule (1 *Epiſt.* 2. 1.) *Wherefore laying aſide all guile, hypocriſie, and envy, and evil ſpeaking, as new born Babes deſire the ſincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* As if he had ſaid, Till you caſt out theſe, you will never thrive under the Word: If a man be to ſow Seed in his Garden, he will pull up the Weeds, and throw away the Stones, elſe the Seed will not ſpring up to perfection. The Prophet tells the Jews (*Jer.* 5. 25.) *Your ſins hinder good things from you:* As ſin hinders good from coming to us, ſo it hinders the Word from working good in us. Though the proper buſineſs of the Word be to caſt out, or pull up this ſecret ſin, yet there is a great ſtop given it while any ſecret ſin is nouriſhed, or not caſt out. That's the reaſon why ſo many precious promiſes take not upon the heart, ſome ſin, ſome corruption obſtructs their operation, and (like the thief in the Candle) waſteth away their ſtrength and light.

As the Lord ſaid to *Joſhua*, when the people of *Iſrael* fled before the men of *Ai*, *There is ſome accurſed thing among you, therefore they cannot ſtand before their enemies.* So I may ſay, when any ſtand up againſt the Word of God, or reſiſt the conſolations which are offered them, ſure there is ſome accurſed thing, ſome hidden Wedge of ſtoln Gold, or ſome Babyloniſh Garment treaſured in, or wrapt about your hearts, and therefore ye can neither ſee nor ſubmit to the counſels of God for your good.

This is a uſeful truth for us, though an undue charge on *Job*; and yet his Friend proceeds (if a higher charge can be) to charge him higher, as will appear in the two Verſes following.

VERS. 12, 13.

Why doth thine heart carry thee away? And what doth thine eyes wink at?

That thou turneſt thy ſpirit againſt God, and letteſt ſuch words go out of thy mouth?

מה *admirantis eſt*

לקח *Capere, ſumere, capit pro rapit, ſtectit, allicit.*

לב *eſt animus* θυμὸς, q.d. *permittis te abripiendū & tranſverſum agēdum affectu tuo nimis animoſo.*

Eliphaz inſiſts ſtill upon that unpleaſant ſubject of reproof, the fifth ground whereof here propoſed, is *Job*'s over-confident ſticking to his own principles, or his overweening his own opinion. This reproof is couched in the twelfth and thirteenth Verſes.

Verſe 12. **Why doth thy heart carry thee away?**

Quis te furor cordis exagitat, quæ te extra te rapit ſapientiæ jactantia. Pined.

He ſpeaks by way of Queſtion, or as ſome expound him, by way of admiration: As if he had ſaid, *It is ſtrange, even a wonder to me, that thy heart thus carryes thee away:* The word which we tranſlate, *to carry away*, ſignifies to take up, or barely to take, and lay hold upon; *Why doth thy heart?* The heart is the whole inward man; here more ſpecially, the affections; *Why do thy affections maſter thy judgment? Why are thy paſſions too hard for thy reaſon?* Others give the ſence thus, *How can thy heart hold thee?* As if *Job* had grown too big for himſelf; as if he had been ſo proud and arrogant, ſo tranſported with ſelf-conceit, that he could not contain himſelf, and keep his bounds, or as if he had not ſtowage enough for his own thoughts. A third thus (which comes near the ſame ſence) *What doth thy heart attribute or aſcribe to thee?* Sure thy heart doth give thee ſome great titles, ſuch as theſe, Job *the wiſe*, Job *the holy*, *the juſt*, *the ſincere*; thy heart ſets thee out fure, and gilds thee over with attributes beyond thy deſerving.

Tam ſuperbus apud te es ut vix temet-ipſum capere poſſis; nec quidem tuiipſius capax es. Bold.

Poſſit per dativū ita verti, quid attribuit tibi cor tuum. Bold.

Quid docet te cor tuum. Rab. Sol.

Maſter *Broughton*, following one of the Rabbins, preſents us with a different tranſlation from either of theſe, *What Doctrine can thy heart give thee?* Or, *What can thy heart teach thee?* The word which we render to take, to carry, or hold up a thing, ſignifies alſo to learn or teach Doctrine; but rather to learn then to teach, as Grammarians tell us, which ſomewhat abates the clearneſs of that verſion; yet the *Chalde* Paraphraſe follows the ſame ſence, *What hath thy own thought taught thee?* What learneſt thou there? As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Thou haſt an evil heart, and ſurely an ill Maſter will teach but ill Doctrine*; when *the heart is inditing of a good matter* (Pſal. 45.) then we may learn good

לקח *ſignificat doctrinā, ſed ita dicitur a diſcendo potius quam à docendo.* Druſ.

Quid docuit te cogitatio tua. Targ.

good leſſons from the heart; and then we ſpeak moſt effectually to the hearts of others, when we ſpeak from our own hearts, they having firſt been ſpoken to by the Spirit of God. But a corrupt heart can teach no better then it hath, and that is corrupt Doctrines. Theſe are truths, yet too much ſtrained for upon this Text; and therefore I paſs from them, and abide by the ordinary ſignification of the word as we read it, *Why doth thy heart take thee up, or carry thee away*? As if he had ſaid, Thy heart hath ſeized upon thee, and arreſted thee, thou art led away priſoner, or captive by the violence and impetuouſneſs of thy own ſpirit.

The word is applyed (*Ezek.* 23. 14.) to the motion of the Spirit of God, ſent unto *Ezekiel* to inſtruct him; *The Spirit lifted me up, or caught me away*; that which the good Spirit did unto *Ezekiel* (not only upon his ſpirit, but upon his body, for he was corporally carryed away from the place where he was) that the heart of *Job* (as *Eliphaz* conceived) did unto him, it lifted him up, and carryed him away. There is a kind of violence in the allurements and inticings of the heart. As a man is ſaid to be carryed away by the ill counſels of others, ſo alſo by his own.

In the former ſence the word is uſed, *Prov.* 6.25. where *Solomon* adviſing to take heed of the Harlot, ſaith he, *Keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a ſtrange woman; luſt not after her in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eye-lids:* There he makes uſe of this word, let her not take thee, or let her not carry thee away upon her eye-lids, let not her wanton eye flatter thee to the ſin of wantonneſs and uncleanneſs. As the eye of a whoriſh woman, ſo the whoriſh heart of a man, often takes and carryeth him away.

> Hence Obſerve, *The heart hath power over, and is too hard for the whole man.*

Paſſions hurry our hearts, and our hearts hurry us; and who can tell whither his heart will carry him, or where it will ſet him down, when once it hath taken him up. This is certain, it will carry every man beyond the bounds of his duty, both to God and man: Take it more diſtinctly in theſe three particulars.

Firſt, The heart quickly carryeth us beyond the bounds of grace.

Secondly, The heart often carryeth us beyond the bounds of reaſon; *When paſſion works much, reaſon works not all.*

Thirdly, It may carry us beyond the bounds of honeſty, yea, of modeſty: 'Tis very dangerous to commit our ſelves to the conduct of paſſion; that (unleſs kept under good command) will ſoon run us beyond the line both of Modeſty and of Honeſty, of Reaſon, and of Grace. He that is carryed away thus far muſt make a long journey of repentance, before he can return and come back, either to God, or to himſelf. Some have been carried viſibly away by the Devil, by an evil ſpirit without them (if God give commiſſion, or permiſſion, the Devil can eaſily do it) very many are carryed away by the evil ſpirit within them. An evil heart is as bad as the Devil; the evil ſpirit without, and the evil ſpirit within, carry us both the ſame way, and that is quite out of the way.

Conſider further how the heart carryeth us away, even from ſpiritual duties and holy ſervices; and this is not only the caſe of carnal men (who are given up to their hearts luſts) but of the Saints; their hearts are continually lifting at them, and ſometimes they are carryed quite away from Prayer, and from hearing the Word: The heart lifts the man up, and ſteals him out of the Congregation, while his body remains there; the body ſits ſtill, but the mind which is the man, is gone, either about worldly buſineſs and deſigns, or about worldly pleaſures and delights. He ſtirs not a foot, nor moves a finger, and yet he is carryed all the world over: He viſits both the *Indies*, yet ſteps not over his own threſhold. Thus the heart being carryed away, carryeth the man away. And that's the reaſon why God calls ſo earneſtly, *My Son give me thy heart*; for where our hearts go, we go, or we are carryed with them; *Keep thy heart with all diligence* (Prov. 4. 24.) Or, *With all keeping, or above all keeping*; it muſt have double keeping, double guards, keep, keep, watch, watch, thy heart will be gone elſe, and thou wilt go with it; if thou look not to thy heart, thy heart will quickly withdraw it ſelf, and draw thee along alſo: *Why doth thy heart carry thee away*? is a deſerved check upon every man, when his heart doth ſo; and *Let not thy heart carry thee away*, is a neceſſary caution for every man, leſt his heart ſhould do ſo. *Job*'s heart was too buſie with him, though not ſo buſie as *Eliphaz* judged, when he thus checkt him, with, *Why doth thy heart carry thee away*?

מכל משמר *Cum omni cuſtodia.*

And what doth thine eye wink at?

But is it a fault to *wink with the eye*? It is ſaid (*John* 13. 24.) that *Peter* beckened to, or winked at *John* (the Greek word ſignifieth an inviting geſture by the whole head, or by the eye) he winkt at him, I ſay, *To ask Chriſt who it was of whom he ſpake:* There was no fault in that, but *Eliphaz* finds fault with this: What was the ſuppoſed fault? There is a twofold faulty winking.

Νεύω, *nutu utor, quia nutus fieri ſolet vel capite, vel oculis.*

Firſt, When we wink at faults, our own faults, or the faults of other men, to bear with, or approve them.

Secondly, When we wink at the vertues and good deeds of others to ſlight and undervalue them; poſſibly *Eliphaz* taxeth *Job* for both theſe, as if he winked at his own faults, or would not ſee them, and that he winked at their faithful dealings, as ſlighting, or not regarding them: Yet further and more diſtinctly.

The word which we tranſlate to *wink*, is found only in this Text all the Bible over. It properly ſignifies to inſinuate by the eye, to ſpeak or make ſignificant tokens by the eye; there is a language of the eye, as well as of the tongue; here *Job*'s eye gave ſome ill language to the eye or apprehenſion of *Eliphaz*. There are various opinions about it.

רזם *Eſt vox hoc tantum loco reperta, cujus ſignificationem.* Rab. Mardochai *dicit eſſe inſinuationem vel indicationem.*

Quid annuunt quid innuunt oculi tui.

Firſt, Some interpret it as a note of oppoſition againſt, or of diſſatisfaction with the counſels which his Friends gave him, as was lately hinted. Shutting of the eye, imports ſhutting of the mind, or a refuſal of what is ſpoken. When God iudicially cloſed the eyes of the *Jews*, ſaying to the Prophet (*Iſa*, 6. 10.) *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes*; this ſhewed the ſhutting of their minds againſt the truth: So alſo doth a voluntary or an affected ſhutting of the eye in ſome men, though in others it is an act of ſtronger attention, or intention of their ſpirits to what is ſpoken, which ſome take to be the Engliſh of *Job's winking*, as we ſhall ſee a little after.

Ægre, qui ſibi ſapientes videntur, ferunt, ſive concionentur, ſive diſceptent, non audiri cum externis modeſtiæ attentionis & æſtimationis ſignis. In auditione vitia ſunt ſupercilia, torvitas & triſtitia, vultus obtuitus vagus, nutus, &c. Plut. l. de Aud.

Secondly, This winking with the eye, is expounded by others, though not as an oppoſition againſt what he heard, yet as the geſture of a negligent and careleſs hearer. They who ſpeak, take it ill to have either ill looks, or not to be looked upon by their hearers. The attentiveneſs of the ear may be much diſcerned by the eye: One of the old moral Philoſophers, in his diſcourſe about hearing, numbers *winking* among the vices and offenſive behaviours of a Hearer. When the Lord Chriſt preached (*Luke* 4. 20.) It is ſaid, *That the eyes of all that were in the Synagogue were faſtned on him.* A faſtened eye is the note of a fixed heart, as a wandring eye is of a wandring heart. *They faſtened their eyes upon him*; as if they meant to hear with their eyes, as well as with their ears. A winking eye is a moveable and an unſettled eye, and therefore may well be the diſcoverer of an unſetled Spirit.

ἀτενίζω, *de fixis immotis intentis oculis eſſe interpretatur.*

Nictu oculi prodis nos noſtraſque orationes à te contemni. Pined.

Thirdly, This winking with the eye is alſo a ſign of diſdain and ſcorn. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, The pride of thy heart ſparkles at thine eye; while we are counſelling and comforting thee, thou art ſcorning us. The Ancients were very critical about the eye, much of a man may be ſeen at his eye. As a man ſees, ſo he is ſeen by his own eyes. The frame of the heart appears much in the eye; a joyful or a ſorrowful frame of heart, an humble or a proud frame of heart, a contented, or diſcontented, an amicable, or a ſcornful frame of heart appears at the eye. As the ear and noſtrils of the Horſe diſcover him moſt, according to the rules of Naturaliſts, ſo the eye of man is the greateſt diſcoverer of man, whether we conſider the conſtitution or the actions of it. And that this action of *winking* is an argument of a ſcornful ſpirit, or the action of a ſcorner, appears from *David*'s petition, or deprecation (*Pſal.* 35 19.) *Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoyce over me, neither let them wink with the eye, that hate me without a cauſe:* It may ſeem to be a ſtrange piece of prayer; Why would

Cordis contumacia ex oculis tuis emicat.

Nictu te oſtendis elatū Merc.

In oculis veteribus religio fuit, ſiquidem in iis imago hominis eſt & tacitus ſermo mentis Bold.

In oculis, loculis & poculis, homo cognoſcitur. Sent: Hebr.

not *David* have his enemy wink? What was that to him? The meaning is this, Let not mine enemies have any occaſion to ſcorn and deride me, to boaſt and inſult over me.

There are two ſins which are very viſible in the eye: The firſt is wantonneſs, (*Iſa.* 3. 16.) *Becauſe the Daughters of* Sion *are haughty, and walk with ſtrethed forth necks, and wanton eyes:* The Hebrew is, *Deceiving with their eye:* And the Apoſtle *Peter* in his ſecond Epiſtle, *Chap.* 2. 14. gives this character of ſome, *They have eyes full of adultery*; you may perceive the filthineſs and uncleanneſs of their hearts ſtaring out of their eyes. The ſecond ſin which is ſo viſible in the eye, is *Pride*; *Solomon* ſpeaks of a proud look (*Prov.* 6. 17.) *Six things the Lord hateth; yea, ſeven are an abomination to him*: And the firſt of the ſeven is, *A proud look:* The Hebrew is, *Haughty eyes*: Pride and haughtineſs are ſeated, yea, conſpicuouſly enthroned in the eye.

Ad ſimulatam quandā innocentiæ ſignificationem & ſanctitatis ſpecimen, quod hypocriſin redolet referri poteſt.

Fourthly, Theſe words, *Why winkeſt thou with thine eye?* are expounded as a repoof of hypocriſie and ſeeming holineſs: As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, Thou lookeſt very demurely, and innocently, as if (according to our old Proverb) *Butter would not melt in thy mouth*; or as if thou wert ſpeaking familiarly to God. For as lifting up the eyes, or looking to Heaven, is a geſture of holy worſhip. (*John* 17. 1.) *Then Jeſus lift up his eyes to Heaven:* So alſo is winking with the eye. It is very uſual with many to ſhut or wink with their eyes in prayer, that ſo their ſpirits may be more compoſed, and freer from diſtraction. 'Tis not unlikely that *Eliphaz* obſerved *Job* winking with his eyes, as if he had ſet himſelf to ſeek God; this provoked him, What? ſuch a one as thou, a hypocrite, a wicked man, what thou go to God? Wilt thou wink with thy eyes, as if thou wert wrapt up in ſome Divine meditation; whereas we have ground rather to conclude, that thou art deviſing miſchief: There are two Texts in the Proverbs, which give ſome light to this Interpretation, *Prov.* 6. 13. *He winketh with his eye, he ſpeaketh with his feet, teacheth with his fingers, frowardneſs is in his heart, he deviſeth miſchief continually:* *Solomon* puts a winking eye and a froward miſchief-deviſing heart together: As if he had ſaid, A wicked man (for of him he ſpeaks in the former Verſe) winks with the eye, as if he had ſome high rapture, whereas his mind is ſet upon miſchief, and purſuing the worſt of evils. Again, *Prov.* 10. 10. *He that winketh with his eye cauſeth ſorrow:* But how doth a man that winketh with the eye cauſe ſorrow? What dependence is there between theſe two, ſorrow, and winking, that the one ſhould cauſe the other? Theſe words, *He that winketh with his eye,* are the deſcription of a *deceitful man*; ſuch a one may cauſe ſorrow enough, both to himſelf and others. *Solomon* intends, not a ſimple, but a ſubtil ſly winking with the eye; and ſo the *Syriack* readeth it: *He who winketh with his eye deceitfully, cauſeth ſorrow:* Deceit makes the deceived ſorrowful, and it will make the deceiver ſorrowful; he muſt either be ſorrowful to repentance, or feel the ſorrow of puniſhment.

Qui annuit oculo ſuo cum fraude.

Quid collimant oculi tui. Jun. *Metaphora à jaculatoribus ſumpta.* Id.

Fifthly, This winking with the eye, is conceived to be a Metaphor taken from thoſe who ſhoot with Guns or Bows: Gunners and Archers wink when they ſhoot, that they may take aim the better: The contracting of the ſight, ſtrengthens it. So here, *What doſt thou wink at?* That is, What doſt thou aim at? The eye of a mans mind aims at ſome mark in meditation; and hence it is uſual for a man in vehement meditation, to wink with his eye: As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, Surely thou haſt ſome great deſign, ſome grand plot in thy brain, thou pretendeſt to ſome deep wiſdom, or unheard of policies; thou haſt ſet up ſome fair mark before thy fancy, and thou wilt be ſure to hit it; What is it that thou aimeſt at? We find the phraſe uſed in this ſence, *Prov.* 16. 30. *He ſhutteth his eye to deviſe froward things, moving his lips he bringeth evil to paſs:* He ſhutteth his eyes, as if he would make his thoughts more ſteddy and fixt, to hit or reach that froward device which he is caſting about how he may effect. And as a wicked man ſhuts his eyes to deviſe froward, that is, ſinful things; ſo a good man ſhuts his eyes (leſt variety of objects ſhould divert or call off his mind) when he is deviſing and ſtudying what is beſt both for himſelf and others. The rendring of the Vulgar Latine, though it be far from the letter of the Original, and is rather a Paraphraſe than a Tranſlation, yet it reacheth this ſenſe fully; *Wherefore doth thy heart carry thee away, and why lifteſt thou up thine eyes, as if thou wert thinking of ſome great matter?* Or, As if the affairs of Kingdomes and States depended upon thy care, or were committed to thy truſt.

Et quaſi magna cogitans attonitos habes oculos. Vulg. *Oculos in cœlo defigere ſolent cogitabundi & quibus gravis ineſt ſolicitudo.* Sanct.

All theſe interpretations are ſerviceable to the Text before us; and though we cannot poſitively and particularly reſolve which of them was here intended by *Eliphaz*, yet conſidering that his ſcope was to reprove *Job*, we may take in the ſenſe of them all, and conclude, that he cenſured *Job* in this one word, of all thoſe miſcarriages of the heart, which may be ſignified at the eye; as appears by the inference which he makes in the next Verſe: For having ſaid, *What doth thy eye wink at?* He preſently ſubjoynes:

Verſe 13. **That thou turneſt thy ſpirit againſt God, and letteſt ſuch words go out of thy mouth?**

Explicationem continet præcedentis verſiculi. Bold.

So that this Verſe is an explication of the former, and gives us more clearly what *Eliphaz* meant by the *carrying away of the heart, and the winking of the eye*: His heart is carried out of all bounds, who *turneth his ſpirit againſt God*: His eye winks ſinfully, whoſe mouth preſently upon it ſpeaks unduely. Thou winkeſt with thy eye, thou art very thoughtfull, and what the fruit or birth of thy thoughts is, we may diſcern by thy ſpeech, while *thou letteſt ſuch words go out of thy mouth.*

Thou turneſt thy ſpirit againſt God.] As if he had ſaid, Inſtead of humbling thy ſelf under the puniſhment of thy ſin, thou with an incenſed mind conteſteſt againſt God himſelf: and though while he ſaith *againſt God*, he doth not mean God directly, but God in his judgments and counſells, in his Word, or in his Works; yet this is a very high charge, one of the higheſt that is in the whole Book, but very unjuſt. Indeed *Job* uſed ſome paſſionate ſpeeches to his Friends; and theſe *Eliphaz* judgeth to proceed from an oppoſition againſt God. *Thou turneſt thy Spirit againſt God.*

There is a twofold turning the ſpirit againſt God:

Firſt, Natural, *Rom.* 8. 7. Enmity is the turning of the ſpirit. The wiſdome or luſt of the fleſh is enmity againſt God.

Secondly, Improved, when we heighten this oppoſition in our practice, and are enemies to God in our minds; or Gods hearty enemies by wicked works, *Col.* 1. 21.

Quod rediri feceris ad Deum ſpiritum tuum. Heb. *Quia reſpondit ad Deum ſpiritus tuus.* Mont. *Perire facit verbum qui reſpondet* Druſ.

The Hebrew is, *Thou makeſt thy ſpirit to return to God*, which is expounded two wayes; Firſt, thou makeſt thy ſpirit to turn upon, or againſt God: Secondly, thy ſpirit anſwers or replieth upon God; both meet in one meaning; for though there may be a turning away of the ſpirit without anſwering, yet (in one ſenſe) all anſwers are the turning of our ſpirit: if any man ask a queſtion, the anſwer is the return of his mind who makes the anſwer; ſo ſome render, *Why doth thy ſpirit return anſwer to God*; as if he rebuked him for his boldneſs in replying. Thy ſpirit returns upon God, if he ſpeak one word, thou wilt have two; in that ſenſe the word is uſed, *Titus* 2. 9. where the Apoſtle giving rules (among other relations) to Servants, charges them; *Servants be obedient to your own Maſters, and pleaſe them well in all things, not anſwering again.* But, is it a fault for a Servant when asked a queſtion, to make an anſwer? No, it were a fault not to anſwer. The meaning is, that a Servant being reproved for a fault, muſt not anſwer; that is, his ſpirit muſt not riſe, and return againſt his Maſter; or if a Servant be directed to do any warrantable work, he muſt not *anſwer again*; that is, he muſt not contradict or murmur at the orders which he hath received, but addreſs himſelf to the fulfilling of them; this is the *anſwering again*, reproved as a fault in Servants, which is *rather gainſaying than anſwering*, as we put in the margent of our Bibles: in which ſenſe, anſwering is taken here, according to this interpretation. Thy ſpirit anſwers God, or turns againſt him. We may clear it alſo by that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 9. 20.) Where, having ſhewed the abſolute ſovereignty of God in his decrees and purpoſes, by the example of *Jacob* and *Eſau*, as alſo by that of *Pharaoh*, He concludes, *Verſ.* 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth:* Saint

Paul fore-ſaw that this Doctrine would raiſe a great deal of duſt, and cauſe many to turn their ſpirits againſt God, which he thus repreſents (*Verſ.*19.) *Thou wilt ſay unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath reſiſted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God?* What? wilt thou chop Logick with God himſelf? Wilt thou (as the Margent ſaith) anſwer again, or diſpute with God? Hold thy peace, quiet thy ſelf, What's the matter, *that thou turneſt thy ſpirit againſt God?*

Spirit is here put for the will, thoughts, and counſels of man, cloathed and elated with arrogancy, ſtoutneſs, and pride: In all Languages, *Spirit* imports that which is high. And to ſay, *ſuch a one is a man of ſpirit*, notes not only the activeneſs of that man, but often his pride and haughtineſs.

Beſides, *Spirit* is ſometimes put for indignation, for fury, and wrath; in all which acceptious, the word may be rendred here, *Thou turneſt thy ſpirit*; that is, thy anger and wrath, thy fury and indignation againſt God. So the word is uſed, *Iſa.* 25.4. *When the ſpirit, or blaſt of the terrible ones, is as a ſtorm againſt the Wall*; that is, while the fury of the terrible ones is in its higheſt march and motion, God promiſeth to be a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength and a refuge to the needy in his diſtreſs: So *Prov.* 29.11. *A fool uttereth all his mind, or all his ſpirit*; that is, all his anger, he lets it out, and diſcovers himſelf preſently; but *a wiſe man* (if there be cauſe of anger) *keepeth it in till afterwards*; that is, till a fit ſeaſon. He hath a retentive faculty which the Fool hath not. Now in which ſenſe ſoever of theſe explained, we underſtand *Spirit* in the preſent Text, the charge is as high as it can go upon any man, when 'tis ſaid, He turneth his Spirit againſt God. Hence Obſerve:

Spiritus pro arrogantia. Latine dicitur magnos gerere animos qui ſuperbia tumet. Merc. *Quid tumet adverſus Deum ſpiritus tuus?* Vulg. *Quid torva convertis in cœlum Lumina? quid in Deum refundis ſtomachum & evocas conceptam iram.* Pined. *Animum indignatione accenſum.* Jun. *Omnem ſpiritum ſuum depromit ſtultus.* i.e. *iram.* Aben Ezra. *Rege animum.* i.e. *iram.* Horat.

> *To turn the ſpirit againſt God, is the very ſpirit of ungodlineſs; there is no greater wickedneſs than this.*

A godly man may do an act which is againſt God, but his ſpirit cannot act againſt God; that's the character of the wicked. A godly man *delights in the Law of God, according to the inward man*, whilſt the outward man ſins againſt the Law of God; an ungodly man turns his inward man againſt the Law of God, while his outward man pretends obedience to it; and as it is an act of higheſt diſobedience, ſo of the proudeſt pride to turn the ſpirit againſt God. The Vulgar Latine tranſlates it well, *Why doth thy ſpirit ſwell againſt God?* Thou haſt an impoſthumation in thy ſpirit againſt God; yea, it is not only an act of the proudeſt pride, but of the *maddeſt madneſs*, to turn the ſpirit againſt God; ſo the Septuagint gives it, *Thou haſt cauſed thy fury or thy madneſs to break forth before God*; he that acts againſt God, is a mad-man indeed, *Will ye provoke the Lord? are you ſtronger than he?* Is the Apoſtles chiding queſtion to ſuch mad-men; Are you ſo mad after your luſts? hath ſin made you ſo fooliſh? *Have you loſt both grace and reaſon at once?* that you dare thus provoke the Lord, and challenge the Almighty? *God reſiſteth the proud*, and the proud aſſault him; Grace turns the ſpirit to God, repentance is the return of our ſpirits to God; then what is the turning of our ſpirits againſt God, but a clear demonſtration of a totally impenitent and graceleſs ſpirit?

Furorem erupiſti ante dominum. Sept.

Again, when *Eliphaz* ſaith, *Job turned his Spirit againſt God*, he doth not mean it of a direct or profeſſed oppoſition againſt God, as if *Job* had openly defied him, and blaſphemed his Name; but his meaning is, that *Job* ſhewing ſo much impatience and unſatisfiedneſs of ſpirit, under the dealings of God with him, did not ſubmit to God as he ought. *Eliphaz* (I conceive) did not ſo much as ſuſpect that *Job* turned his ſpirit immediately; or, as we ſay, *point blank* againſt God himſelf, but only againſt his diſpenſations. Hence obſerve:

> *That while we ſpeak, or our hearts riſe up againſt the dealings of God with our ſelves or others, we may be ſaid to turn our ſpirits againſt God himſelf.*

Many who think they have not neglected Chriſt, will be found to have neglected him, becauſe they have neglected thoſe by whom, or that wherein Chriſt is offered. The Evangeliſt brings in Chriſt ſpeaking thus (*Matth.* 25.) *I was hungry and ye fed me not, thirſty, and ye gave me no drink*; they to whom he ſpeaks, wonder at this; *Lord*, (ſay they) *when ſaw we thee hungry, and gave thee no meat, or thirſty, and gave thee no drink?* ſurely, we have not been guilty of ſuch a wickedneſs: Yea, ſaith Chriſt, *In as much as ye did it not to one of theſe, ye did it not to me*; when ye refuſed to feed theſe, ye refuſed to feed me; I was in theſe, and theſe were in me. Now in the ſame manner, many will ſay, when we charge them with *turning their ſpirits againſt God, with fighting againſt, and oppoſing God*: Who? we oppoſe God? we never oppoſed God as we know of; yea, peradventure, they will ſay, we have honoured God, and do you charge us that we have turned our ſpirit againſt God? To many ſuch God will ſay, Inaſmuch as ye oppoſed my word, and murmured againſt my works; inaſmuch as ye were angry with my diſpenſations, and diſcontented with what I have done; ye have turned your ſpirit againſt me. We may become guilty of this ſin before we think of it; for as there is a direct and literal contending with God, ſo an equivalent, or conſtructive contending with him. As ſome men commit plain, open Treaſon againſt a State, but others commit only *conſtructive Treaſon*: 'Tis ſo here; the God of heaven knows when ſpirits turn againſt him directly, and when by conſequence; and he will take vengeance, not only of direct and avowed, but alſo of conſequential and conſtructive Treaſon againſt his Sovereignty, unleſs the offender repent, and be humbled before him. He will judge thouſands at the laſt day, for oppoſing him, who, it may be, in ſome things have pleaded for him; yea, who have in ſome things not only acted, but ſuffered for him; though uſually, when the ſpirit of any man turneth againſt God, that mans works and words turn againſt him too: So *Eliphaz* further taxeth *Job* in the latter clauſe of the Verſe.

And letteſt ſuch words go out of thy mouth.] As if he had ſaid, *Such ſtuff as thou haſt in thy heart, even ſuch flows out of thy mouth*; the word *Such* is added by moſt Tranſlators; the Hebrew is, *And letteſt words go out of thy mouth*; It is no fault to let words go out of the mouth: 'tis no ſin to ſpeak, but to ſpeak ſuch or ſuch words, may be very ſinful; and therefore we, and others, for explication ſake, make this ſupplement, *Such words*; But what words were they? *Eliphaz* doth not quote any paſſages in his ſpeech, but leaves them, as we and others tranſlate, under a term of general diſtaſte, *Such words*; as if they were not worth the naming; or as if no epithite could be found worthleſs enough to name them by. For as when *Ezra* would deſcribe a deliverance, in the reality of it, beyond words, he doth not tell us what it was, but ſaith only, *Seeing our God hath given us ſuch deliverance as this.* (Ez. 9.13.) So when *Eliphaz* would deſcribe words in the vanity or ſinfulneſs of them, below words, he doth not tell us what they were, but ſaith onely, *Such words as theſe*; yet poſſibly the words he means were theſe, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf* (Chap.7.20.) or theſe (Chap. 9.30.) *If I waſh me with Snow-water, and make my hands never ſo clear, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch*; or theſe, (Chap.13.26.) *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth*: Theſe, or ſuch as theſe, were the words which *Eliphaz* leaves under this note of diſdain, *Such words.* Yet theſe *Eliphaz* ſhould have mollified with a charitable conſtruction, and not have ſharpned his own tongue againſt them, much leſs ſhould he have interpreted them, as the turning of *Jobs* ſpirit againſt God himſelf. For as ſome draw near to God with their lips, and give him ſmooth words, while their hearts are far from him, and their ſpirits turned againſt him; So others may ſeem to depart from God with their lips, and give him harſh language, while their hearts are near, and their ſpirits cleave unto him.

הוצאת *Fœminine vel ut animum muliebri impotentia laborantem fodieet, aut format Chaldaica Pungit etiam voce.*

מלים *Logos, nugas, verba?* Coc.

I ſhall further give you a four-fold character of theſe words, ſutable to the miſpriſion which *Eliphaz* and his Friends had of him all along. Such words, or words ſo apprehended, muſt needs ſound harſhly in their ears, and in the ears of any man fearing God.

Firſt, *Proud words of himſelf*, inſiſting upon his own righteouſneſs, as they conceived, for in the next words *Eliphaz* ſaith, *What is man that he ſhould be clean?* they thought *Job* ſpake much to paint and bedeck himſelf with his own goodneſs and innocency.

Secondly, *Blaſphemous words of God*, though not directly, yet by conſequence, againſt his works and dealings.

Thirdly, *Reproachful, ſcornful words againſt them*, as if they were neither able, nor worthy to be his counſel; *You are the men, and wiſdome ſhall dye with you.*

Fourthly, Falſe words upon the whole matter in controverſie, maintaining (as *Eliphaz* judged) contrary to the truth; that he was not puniſhed for his ſin. Words under this fourfold notion are reproveable and ſinful enough; ſuch *Eliphaz* eſteemed the words of *Job* to be, proud, blaſphemous, reproachful, falſe; *Why letteſt thou ſuch words as theſe go out of thy mouth*? Hence Obſerve:

Firſt, *Paſſion within will vent it ſelf by words without.*

When the heart is carried away, and the ſpirit turned againſt God, no marvel if the tongue be carried away, and the words of ſuch a man be turned both againſt God, his truth, or people.

Secondly, Note: *Our words are ſuitable to our ſpirits.*

Some can diſſemble much, and ſpeak golden words, while themſelvs are droſs; but ordinarily, our words are ſuch as we are: *The vile perſon will ſpeak villany*, (*Iſa.* 32. 6.) A man that is all for the world, ſpeaks worldly (1 *John* 4. 5.) *They are of the world, therefore ſpeak they of the world.* Every man is of the world ſo, as that he is a part of the world; but ſome are ſo of the world, that the world is all them; they who are thus of the world, muſt needs ſpeak of the world, if they ſpeak any thing, for they have nothing elſe to ſpeak of. Thus a covetous man ſpeaks covetouſly, and a proud man proudly (*Jerem.* 43. 2.) Some told the Prophet to his face, *Thou ſpeakeſt falſly, the Lord our God hath not ſent thee to ſay, Go not into Egypt to ſojourn there*; Theſe were proud words indeed, but who ſpake them? The Text tells us, *Then ſpake Azariah the Son of Hoſhaiah, and all the proud men*: The proud men ſpake proudly; ſo on the contrary, a ſober man will ſpeak ſoberly, an humble man humbly; *The poor ſpeak ſupplications*, ſaith *Solomon*; rich men ſpeak their commands, poor men ſpeak their wiſhes and deſires.

Thirdly, Obſerve: *He that dares to ſpeak evil, is arrived at a great height of evil.*

Eliphaz puts this as an effect of a *heart turned againſt God*; *Such words as theſe*, ſhew that thou art not onely a ſinful man, but impudent in ſinning. For though an evil heart is *worſe than an evil tongue*, and an ill thought than an evil word; yet when ill words ſpring from ill thoughts, and are as branches growing from the root of an evil heart, this ſhews a man heightned in ſin; *Sin hath got the maſtery of the heart, when it freely vents it ſelf at the tongue.* Some keep their ſins down by hypocriſie, and ſome by common modeſty; they are either ſo cunning that they will not, or ſo baſhful that they dare not ſpeak out the filth that lies within. But they are beyond, not only modeſty, but hypocriſie, whoſe tongues can ſpeak all the evil that is in their heart; though the ſin of the heart be worſe than the ſin of the tongue; yet when tongue ſins are ſteep'd in the puddle of a corrupt heart, they are moſt unſavoury: *David* ſinned, when he ſaid, *in his haſte, all men are lyars*: How greatly then do they ſin, who tell lyes at their leiſure, and ſpeak evil with deliberation. That which is ſaid in haſte, is ſaid by the tongue alone, without the privity of the heart, but the heart is alwayes privy to that which is ſaid at leiſure. The Prophet taxeth thoſe, *the ſhew of whoſe countenance did teſtifie againſt them* (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) They fall juſtly under as ſevere a cenſure, the ſound of whoſe tongues doth teſtifie againſt them, for they alſo (as it follows in the Prophet) *declare their ſin as Sodom, they hid it not.* Further, this alſo argues the evil of evil ſpeaking, becauſe it wrongs others, and infects the Auditors: the vanity or errour of the mind ſpoken out, is contagious; better keep it in, than ſpeak it out, but both are naught: 'tis onely good, when we purge it out. Though it be ſome allay and leſſening, yet it is no excuſe for ſin, that we keep it in; God hates it, let it lye as cloſe as it will; and though a ſin kept cloſe doth not hurt others; yet it is not onely hurtful, but deadly to its keeper. They onely are out of danger, who, as they do not let evil go out of the door of their mouths, ſo not lodge in the chambers of their heart.

Thus I have opened the charge contained in this part of the Chapter; in all which, *Eliphaz* hath reproved the ſpeech of *Job*, as vain, empty, proud, paſſionate, and erroneous. He now proceeds to ſhew him (as he ſuppoſed) the errour of his opinion, and to confute it.

VERS. 14, 15, 16.

What is man that he ſhould be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he ſhould be righteous?
Behold, he putteth not his truſt in Saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his ſight:
How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

Eliphaz hath done reproving *Job* for his unprofitable words, and uncomely carriage; he now proceeds to convince him of his ſuppoſed errour in judgment, and unſound opinion; namely, That he boaſted himſelf free from errour in practice, and ſound at heart: This he looked upon as the Bulwark in which *Job* defended himſelf, and againſt this he now raiſes his battery to beat it down. And this takes up the ſecond part of the Chapter, which I called *Confutation.*

Jam rem aggreditur & Jobi præcipuum firmamentum quo ille nitebatur evertit, quod ille ſe innocentem & juſtum diceret. Qua fronte inquit audes id dicere. Merc.

Verſe 14. **What is man that he ſhould be clean?**

As if he had ſaid, *Though I ſhould grant that thou art not conſcious to thy ſelf of any crime or wickedneſs acted, for which thou art thus afflicted; yet this is enough to prove thee a ſinner, that thou art a man, and that thou art unrighteous, becauſe thou art born of a woman; What is man that he ſhould be clean, and he that is born of woman that he ſhould be righteous?*

What is man?] He ſpeaks contemptuouſly, What is man? As *Hiram* ſaid of the Cities which *Solomon* aſſigned him, *What Cities are theſe which thou haſt given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul*, that is, diſpleaſing, or dirty (1 *Kings* 9. 13.) Thus *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of man, as if he were diſpleaſed with the ſight of him, or remembred onely the duſt and clay out of which he was made, *What is man* (my friend *Job*) *that he ſhould be clean*?

Job had ſpoken the ſame language before (*Chap.* 7. 17.) *What is man that thou art thus mindful of him, &c.* He alſo empties man of all worth, which ſhould attract the leaſt reſpect from God upon him: *What is man?* puts a five fold ſlight upon man.

First, In his nature.
Secondly, In his birth.
Thirdly, In the matter out of which he was made.
Fourthly, In reference to his preſent condition.
Fifthly, and chiefly, In reference to his corruption, or ſinful depravation, *What is man that he ſhould be clean?*

But had *Job* any where aſſerted himſelf clean? Did he not aſſert his own uncleanneſs, while he proclaimed that Negative Queſtion (*Chap.* 14. v. 4.) *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* not one. Why then doth *Eliphaz* charge *Job* with this boaſt of cleanneſs, who never thought himſelf clean, as his diſcourſe every where demonſtrates, but under two notions: Firſt, as righteous by another, or through Faith in the *Meſſias*: Secondly, as not ſcandalous to others by any notorious crime, or conſcious to himſelf of any cloſe hypocriſie; in any other ſenſe than this *Job* never aſſerted himſelf clean, and in this he was, yea, every believer is clean. Yet *Eliphaz* faſtens it upon him, as if he had trim'd up himſelf with his own ornaments, or had advanced the Doctrine of *Self-perfection.*

Hence obſerve in general; That, *When perſons are ingaged in a diſpute, ſpecially in a difficult controverſie, they ſeldome underſtand, but ſeldomer report the truth of each others poſition.*

Some of *Calvins* adverſaries called his Doctrine by the odious names of *Turciſm* and *Judaiſm*: And the Papiſts call us *Solifidians*, as if we denied all good works, becauſe we affirm, that a man is juſtified (though not by that Faith which is alone) yet by Faith alone without works. *Job* indeed had ſpoken much to vindicate himſelf, but he ſpake much more to abaſe, and lay himſelf low in the ſight of God; and therefore *Eliphaz* might have made a fairer collection for him than this, that he affirmed himſelf *clean.*

Calvinoturciſmus. Hun.
Calvinus Judaizans. Oſiand.

What is man, &c. The Hebrew is, *Miſerable man.* Miſeble is his name, and miſery is with him, frail is his name, and frailty is with him. Hence Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *What is woful man, to be cleared?*

אנש *Nomen humanæ fragilitati ſignificanda appoſitum.*

What is man that he ſhould be clean?] The words contain a great and neceſſary truth, but becauſe we met with it *Chap.* 14.4. where the point was opened, and the impoſſibility of ſelf-cleanneſs cleared from thoſe words: *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* (which queſtion anſwers for *Job*, that he was poſitive for the univerſal pollution of the nature of man) I ſhall not therefore ſtay upon it; take onely this brief hint. Here is a ſtrong proof of original ſin, we are clean, but not of our ſelves; we are clean, under a four-fold notion.

Firſt, Clean, meritoriouſly, by Chriſt.

Secondly, Clean efficaciouſly, by the ſpirit uniting us to Chriſt, and ſanctifying our hearts.

Thirdly, Clean inſtrumentally, by the Word, which diſcovers Chriſt the fountain to us, and ſo purifies us (*John* 15.4.) *You are clean through the word which I have ſpoken unto you.*

Fourthly, We are clean impulſively and attractively, by faith, (*Acts* 15.8.) *He made no difference, purifying their hearts by Faith*; thus many are clean, and but thus there is no man clean; *What is man that he ſhould be clean?*

And he that is born of a woman that he ſhould be righteous?

יצרק & יזכה *Quando conjunguntur diſtinguenda ſunt, illud latius patet; hoc dicitur cum reus à judice abſolutus dimittitur. Illo autem non tantum innocentia ſed & dignitas notatur.* Coc.

Both parts of the Verſe import the ſame thing. *Clean* and *righteous* are near of one ſignification, yet in this place we may diſtinguiſh them; *To be clean*, refers to the purity of mans nature; to be righteous, or to be juſtified (for ſo the word may be tranſlated) refers to the integrity of his life; from both it follows, Man cannot merit, for he is not *clean*: he cannot anſwer God, for he is not *righteous*. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *What is man that he ſhould either have any cleanneſs in himſelf, or that he ſhould be reputed and looked upon as righteous by others,* (*Both which he intends as applicable to Job.*) *If God ſhould ſearch thy nature, what art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be clean? If God ſhould ſearch thy life, what art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be righteous?* The point of mans utter inability to ſtand before God in himſelf for juſtification, hath been met with, more than once before, and therefore I will not ſtay upon that neither, only conſider the form of expreſſion, or the periphraſis of Man.

Emphaticè mulieris meminit. Ut Cap. 14.1. Merc.

He that is born of a woman.] In the firſt clauſe he ſaith, *What is man*, in this latter, What is *he that is born of a woman*: He ſpeaks of man in both, yet with an additional emphaſis, to mind us of our birth and original, as was ſhewed upon thoſe words (*Chap.* 14. 1.) *Man that is born of a woman is of few dayes, and full of trouble*: where the Reader may find what that teacheth, even an aggravation of mans ſinfulneſs, in that he is born of a woman, who ſinned firſt, or was, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Tim.*2.14.) *Firſt in the Tranſgreſſion.* How prone is man to ſin, being born of a woman, who was ſo prone to ſin, that ſhe was the firſt ſinner? *What is he that is born of a woman that he ſhould be righteous?* The whole race of mankind hath yielded but one exception to this general Rule, and that was in the perſon of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: He indeed was *born of a woman*, and yet *righteous*, becauſe his Mothers conception *was of the Holy Ghoſt* (*Matt.*1.20.) and by *the power of the moſt High over-ſhadowing her, Luke* 1.35. But we may ſay of all men, except him, (who was alſo infinitely more than man, even *God-man*) *What is he that is born of a woman, that he ſhould be righteous?*

Secondly, *Eliphaz* proceeds (though the point be clear in it ſelf) to give a proof of it, which he urgeth from the greater to the leſs.

Verſ. 15. **Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints, and the heavens are not clean in his ſight: How much more abominable and filthy is man, &c.**

The Argument riſes thus:

If they who are the pureſt, the holieſt creatures, are not able to ſtand before God in their own purity, how ſhall he who hath no purity, no holineſs at all in him?

But the Heavens, yea, the Angels in Heaven, who are the pureſt, the holieſt creatures, are yet unclean in the ſight of God;

Therefore man who is abominable and filthy, drinking iniquity like water, cannot be clean in his ſight.

Behold, he puts no truſt in his Saints] *Eliphaz* urged this argument, (for the ſubſtance of it *Chap.* 4. 18.) here he repeats and re-inforceth it.

Behold, is uſually a note of attention, here it is more, a note of admiration; as if he had ſaid, *Would you think it, that God puts no truſt in his Saints? yet he doth not: or is not this a wonder, that God puts no truſt in his Saints? whom will he truſt, if not his Saints?*

לא יאמין Vid. cap. 4. 18

אמן *Eſt credere tanquam rei fideli & conſtanti aut fidele & conſtans cui credi debeat.*

אומנות *Genus columnarum,* 2 Reg. 18. 16. *In Sanctis ſuis non eſt fides,* i.e. *firmitas vel immutabilitas naturæ.* Aug. *Ecce inter Sanctos ejus nemo immutabilis.* Vulg. *Aliqui legunt, Non credit ſanctis ſuis.* 2. *In ſanctos ſuos.* 3. *In ſanctis ſuis. Sic credere in Deum, in Deo, & Deo, Synonyma ſunt.* Druſ.

The word which we tranſlate, **to put truſt**, ſignifies properly to believe, he doth not *believe in his Saints*, or not give *credit to them*; he doth not (as our word hath been) *confide* in them; a perſon is confided or truſted in; either becauſe of his faithfulneſs, or becauſe of his ſtrength and ſtability; the word which we render here to truſt, ſignifies ſometimes ſtrength or firmneſs, as alſo a *Pillar*, which is not onely firm, but upholds and confirms the Building, or that which leans upon it. The ſame word doth elegantly ſignifie both to truſt, and to be firm, becauſe every thing (that is truſted) is truſted upon ſuppoſall, either of a natural, or moral firmneſs. Hence the Vulgar tranſlates, *immutable*; *Behold, among the Saints there is not one immutable, or unchangeable*: And another of the Ancients, *There is no faithfulneſs in his Saints*; that is, firmneſs, or unchangeableneſs of nature is not to be found in them.

There are three different uſes of the word.

First, To *truſt*.
Secondly, To *truſt in*.
Thirdly, To *truſt upon*. So the Tranſlation varies here.

For, firſt, ſome read, *He doth not truſt his Saints.*

Secondly, others, *He doth not truſt in his Saints.*

A third, *He doth not truſt upon his Saints.*

Thus, ſome put a difference between *believing God*, and *believing in God*, and *believing upon God*; though we find them uſed promiſcuouſly in Scripture. It is ſaid by *Moſes* (*Gen.* 15. 6.) *Abraham believed in the Lord, and it was accounted to him for righteouſneſs*; but the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 4. 3.) ſaith plainly, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs*: So that there is not any material difference between thoſe two expreſſions; yet ordinarily to truſt in or upon, is taken in a higher conſtruction than barely to truſt: *Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints.*

קדש *Eſt ab uſu communi ad divinum ſeparare.*

Here it is queſtioned, who are meant by **Saints**; there are three opinions about it. The word *Saint* in general ſignifies a perſon ſeparated, or one ſet apart from others; *Holineſs is our ſeparation from the world unto God: holy perſons are ſeparated perſons*; that's their ſtate. But more diſtinctly, who are theſe holy perſons, theſe Saints? The Greek Interpreters reſtrain the Text to *the old Patriarchs, Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob*, as alſo *Moſes* and *Aaron*, with whom God at ſometimes was angry, or found fault with ſome of their actings: Secondly, others, by the *Saints* underſtand the confirmed Angels, who are called *Saints* by way of excellency; becauſe among all creatures they are (in one ſenſe) the moſt holy, as having ever been without the leaſt ſpot or taint of ſin, whether in their natures, or in their lives; and having ever continued as the *Houſhold ſervants of God*, obſervant of, and obedient to all his commands.

Angeli vocantur Sancti Dei, quaſi ei familiariſſimi atque illius obſequio addictiſſimi. Dan. 4. 8.

But we may rather take it in general, both for the *holieſt of men*, and for the *holy Angels*: *Behold he puts no truſt in his Saints*; no, not in thoſe who are moſt holy.

Hence Obſerve: *There is no created holineſs ſure, ſtable, and perfect in it ſelf*:

The glorious Angels which are, and ever ſhall be Saints in Heaven, and the Saints in Heaven who are like Angels, ſtand not in that holy and happy eſtate, by their own ſufficiency, but by the decree and grace of God. Thoſe Angels which fell at firſt were holy, and they who now ſtand, might have fallen notwithſtanding their created holineſs, if God had not ſuperadded confirming grace, which eſtabliſheth them for ever. Yet this is not all, that the Angels are imperfect, becauſe they might fall if not ſupported; there is ſomewhat more in it; for though the Angels are perfectly righteous in reference to the Law, (for the whole bent of their hearts is to God, and they love God with all their hearts, which is the fulfilling of the Law:) So that the obedience of the Angels in heaven is made the copy and pattern of our obedience here on earth, as Chriſt hath taught us to pray; though (I ſay) the Angels are thus perfectly righteous in reference to the Law) yet there is a higher righteouſneſs and holineſs in God. *There's but the holineſs of obeying a Law, God hath the holineſs of being a Law*: They have a holineſs without ſpot, yet it is but a finite, a created holineſs; now what compariſon is there between finite and infinite, created, and uncreated; therefore, though there be no blemiſh in the obedience of Angels, none in their nature, none in their lives, yet God puts no truſt in them, he cannot lay the weight of his confidence upon them, becauſe they are creatures.

The next clauſe doubles this point.

And the heavens are not clean in his ſight.] There is a difference among Interpreters, what theſe heavens are; The Chaldee Paraphraſt, and ſome of the Ancients, underſtand the Angels, as in the former part of the verſe, and they ſay, the Angels are called the Heavens under a two-fold conſideration:

Firſt, Becauſe Angels are like the Heavens, in their ſpirituality and incorruptibility, in their order and ſubordination among themſelves; as alſo in their power over ſublunary or earthly bodies.

Secondly, By a Synechdoche, becauſe the Angels have their habitation in Heaven, that's their dwelling-place; ſo Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates, *Nor they of heaven be clean in his eyes*; that is, the Inhabitants of Heaven are not clean in his eyes. *The Heathen Poet calls thoſe whom he ſuppoſed dwellers in Heaven, by the Name of Heaven*; deſcribing a pleaſant River, he calls it, *A River pleaſant to Heaven*; that is, to thoſe who are in Heaven.

Cæruleus Tibris cælo gratiſſimus amnis. i. e. *diis vel cœlicolis.* Virg. *l.* 8.

Others, by *Heaven*, underſtand the Saints in Heaven, not the Angels; and that alſo upon a two-fold reaſon.

First, Becauſe God is ſaid to dwell in the Saints, they are his habitation; and whereſoever God dwells, he makes a Heaven.

Secondly, Becauſe the Saints, not only thoſe in Heaven, but they on earth, *have their converſation in heaven*; (*Phil.* 3. 20.) As carnal and earthly minded men are called *Earth*, becauſe their hearts and converſations are fixed to the earth; ſo ſpiritual and heavenly-minded men may be called *Heaven*, becauſe their hearts and converſations are fixed in Heaven.

Sancti in quibus tanquam in cœlis habitare dicitur Deus, cœli dicuntur, quæ allegoria frequentiſſima eſt inter antiquos patres. Pined.

Thirdly, We may rather underſtand it in a proper ſenſe; *the heavens*, that is, *The heavenly bodies are not clear in thy ſight*; the heavens are the moſt excellent, and pureſt part of the Creation: And therefore this interpretation, or rather plain conſtruction of the words, ſuits the ſcope of *Eliphaz* fully, who, as he ſpake before of the Angels, who are the pureſt of all rational creatures; ſo here of the heavens, which are the pureſt of all inanimate creatures; yet theſe are not pure in the ſight of God, therefore no man is. The heavens have a kind of uncleanneſs in them: the *Moon* hath her ſpots, yea, the Moon is but a ſpot, if Philoſophers may be credited, who tell us that all the Stars, (in their ſenſe the Moon is a Star) are but as the ſpots of Heaven. A *Star* (as they define) *being the thicker and groſſer part of its Orb*: The Heavens themſelves are ſo fine and liquid, ſo thin and fluid, that they cannot hold the light; therefore the Lord made thoſe Celeſtial bodies, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, more compact and groſs, that ſo they might both receive, and retain the light, as alſo tranſmit and give it out to the World here below. Theſe are ſpots in the heavens; and though they appear as the glory or *Beauty-ſpots* of Heaven to our ſight, and are ſo indeed, yet *theſe are not clean in the ſight of God.*

Cœli qui maxime ſunt lucidi ſuas habent maculas, parteſque craſſiores magiſque opacas & materiales, in re igitur perfectiſſima vidit Deus maculas. Pined.

Again, the heavens are furtheſt removed from all earthly dregs and droſs, ſo that they are clean, not only in regard of their nature and conſtitution, but alſo in regard of their ſite and poſition; being placed ſo far from the ſink of the World, the earth, they never received any ſtain or defilement from it; yet theſe heavens are not clean in his ſight. God doth not make that which is clean, not clean, by his ſeeing it; but his ſight is infinitely above all the cleanneſs which he ſees. That may be clean, conſidered ſimply or in it ſelf, which before God, or to the eye of God, is as an unclean thing.

In conſpectu ejus. *Aliud eſt purum eſſe ſimpliciter, & aliud purum eſſe coram Deo; ut juſtus, & juſtus coram Deo differunt.* Luc. 1. 6. Druſ.

Hence Note: *God is ſo clear ſighted, that the cleaneſt creatures are unclean in his ſight.*

The very cleanneſs of the creature, is uncleanneſs before him, much more, compared to him. For if one creature may be ſo clean, that another creature which is clean may be ſaid to have no cleanneſs in compariſon of it; then ſurely God is ſo clean, that the cleaneſt creatures have indeed no cleanneſs in compariſon of his. The Stars are very beautiful bodies, and full of light, yet the Sun hath ſo much light, that it darkens all the Stars, and cauſeth them to diſappear, when it appeareth: Now if the Stars have no light in the ſight of the Sun, what light hath the Sun in the ſight of God? he that puts all the perfections that the creature hath into the creature, hath infinitely more perfection in himſelf. Thoſe excellencies which are divided and ſcattered all the Creation over, are not onely contracted and united in God, but unconceivably exceeded by him.

Job having thus laid down the former part of his argument, applies it,

Verſe 16. **How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?**

Concerning the Saints, he ſaid onely, *God puts no truſt in them*, and concerning the Heavens, *They are not clean in his ſight*: But now that he ſpeaks of man, he doth not ſay, God puts no truſt in him, or he is not clean in his ſight; but he layes load upon him, *He is abominable and filthy*: and as if that were not enough, he aggravates it with, *How much more abominable, &c.* If he put no truſt in glorified Saints, in whom yet there is no iniquity, then no marvel, if man be called abominable, *who drinketh iniquity like water.*

The whole Verſe is a deſcription of mans ſinfulneſs: Firſt, of the ſinfulneſs of his nature, in thoſe words, *He is abominable and filthy*: Secondly, of the ſinfulneſs of his life, *He drinketh iniquity like water.*

How much more] Some read, *Much leſs*: So Maſter *Broughton*, *Much leſs the unclean and loathſome.* The Original may bear either (as alſo a third reading, *Surely then*) without any impeachment to the ſcope of the place, *The heavens are not clean in his ſight: Much leſs is abominable and filthy man clean in his ſight.* Again, *The heavens are not clean in his ſight; how much more abominable and filthy is man in his ſight?* We may take it alſo as a direct inference without any compariſon, either from the greater or the leſs. *The heavens are not clean in his ſight; ſurely then, man is abominable and filthy.*

נתעב *Abominabilis propriè quem nemo dignari debeat auditu, viſu, familiaritate, contactu.* ἐβδελυγμένος. *Abominari nos dicimus, quæ in cogitatione noſtra non patimur.* Bold.

The word which we tranſlate abominable, notes that which is moſt *abhorring* to the nature of man; that which is not onely ſo nauſeous that the ſtomach cannot digeſt it, but ſo baſe, that the mind is burdened to think of it; yea, the word imports that which is rejected by all the ſenſes, abominably rejected; that which the eye cannot endure to look upon, that which the ear cannot endure to hear of, that which is a ſtink in the noſtrils, and which the hand will not touch; ſuch an abominable thing the word bears, and ſuch is man; God loaths him, and is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, much more a lump of iniquity; he is as a ſtink in the noſtrils of God, nor will he touch him (for any thing in him) unleſs with a hand of juſtice, to deſtroy him.

Further, ſome explain *abominable* by that of the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 16. 26.) *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema, Maranatha*: that is, let all abominate, and caſt him out of their ſociety: When the Lord would ſhew the worſt thought that he had of the beſt ſervices of the Jews, he tells them, *Incenſe is an abomination to me*; and when the Pſalmiſt would convince us how the people of Iſrael had defiled themſelves with their own works, and polluted the Land with blood; he gives it in the word of the Text, *Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled againſt his people, inſomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance* (*Pſal*, 106. *v.* 40.) His Inheritance was ſo abominable to him, that he would not touch it, nor take it into his own hands; but as it follows in the Pſalm, *He gave them into the hand of the heathen.* Hence Obſerve;

Hoc videtur dictum per antitheſin, propter Sanctorum & cœlorum pulchritudinem, quorum ſpecies, mundicies, lux, ordo, concentus mirabilis, conſpectus multo jucundiſſimus.

Sinful man is loathſome, and abominable unto God. How much more abominable is man?

This is not to be underſtood of ſome particular man, or of ſome ſort of men, who are more vile than others; but take the beſt of men, the moſt accompliſht and compleat in the whole courſe of nature, theſe are abominable; they are deprived of the Image of God, they are ſtampt with the Image of Satan, they are not only unable to do that which is good, but they are totally averſe from it, yea, enemies to it; Is not all this enough to render man abominable in the ſight of God? And ſo abominable is man, that he doth not onely diſpleaſe the eye of God, but the very eyes of thoſe who have received the grace of God. A godly man turns away from the wicked, as the wicked man doth from the godly; (*Prov.* 29.27.) *An unjuſt man is an abomination to the juſt; and he that is upright in his way, is an abomination to the wicked.* The diſtaſte is mutual; 'tis called enmity (*Gen.* 3.15.) here abomination. The wicked man ſaith (as the Devil to Chriſt) *What have I to do with thee, thou Son of David?* The godly man ſaith, *What have I to do with thee, thou ſon of Belial?* 'Tis the ſin of the wicked man to abhor the righteous, for he abhors him for his righteouſneſs: 'Tis the duty of a godly man to abhor the wicked, and he abhors him only for his wickedneſs. To do ſo is a piece of his character, *Who ſhall dwell in the mountain of God?* He is a man, *in whoſe eye a vile* (that is, a wicked) *perſon is abhorred, Pſal.* 15.4. Much leſs can he look pleaſedly or pleaſantly upon a wicked man; his heart riſeth againſt him, not out of pride, or high thoughts of himſelf, or from the lowneſs of his condition, if he be poor, but from the odiouſneſs of his diſpoſition, and his oppoſition to goodneſs. Such a man is vile in his eſteem, how honourable ſoever he is in the eye of the world.

Again (which ſhews yet further, that a man in nature is abominable) when any man repents and turns to the Lord, he is an abomination to himſelf; he is abominable to God, and good men, before he repents; and upon the ſame account, he is abominable to himſelf when he repents. For as God and good men before, ſo he then ſees his own vileneſs and deformity, then he ſmells the filthineſs of his own corrupt heart: This the Prophet aſſures us (*Ezek.* 36.31.) where the Lord promiſeth to pour out the ſpirit of repentance upon his people, *To take away the heart of ſtone, and give them a heart of fleſh*: and then, *They ſhall loath themſelves for all their abominations*, as not being able to endure the ſtench of their own corruptions: When *Job* at the ſight of God, ſaw himſelf more clearly, then he cries out, *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes*: If a good man, ſeeing himſelf, is an abomination to himſelf, how much more is ſinful man abominable in the ſight of God?

And (which aggravates the point to the higheſt) Not only is a man repenting abominable to himſelf, but even a wicked man, upon a clear diſcovery of himſelf to himſelf, becomes an abomination to himſelf, though he be far from repentance. That's the reaſon why a wicked man cannot abide to ſearch his own heart, or return into his own boſome. (*Iſa.* 46.8.) *Remember this, ſhew your ſelves men, bring it again to mind*; The Hebrew is, *Bring it to your hearts: They who love their ſin, love not to look to their ſinful hearts*: they dare not turn their eye inward or upward: not upward, becauſe there is ſo much holineſs in God: not inward, becauſe there is ſo much filthineſs in themſelves. Hence the Lord threatens, (*Na.* 3.5, 6,) becauſe they would not look on their own filthineſs, that he would ſhew their filthineſs to all the World, *He would ſhew the Nations their Nakedneſs, and the Kingdomes their ſhame*: And howſoever a natural man hides his abomination from his eye now, or will not ſee it, yet all ſhall be laid open to him in the day of Judgment, which will be as a day of *the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*: So a day of the revelation of the unrighteouſneſs of man: And then he ſhall (though too late) abhor himſelf for ever. There hath been a diſpute whether the ſins of Believers ſhall be opened at that day, but there is no queſtion but the ſins of unbelievers ſhall, and that not onely to ſhame them, but to puniſh and torment them; yea, poſſibly, the ſight of ſin will be a greater torment to them then all their other torments, and to be led about (as the Prophet was in reference to others) from one unclean room of their hearts to another, there to behold all the abominations of their hearts, will be the very pit of Hell. *O how abominable* and, as it follows in the Text,

Filthy is man.] The word is derived from a root that ſignifies corrupt, rotten, putrified, the ſcum of a Pot, the ruſt of metals, the dung, or excrement of man and beaſts; there are not words filthy enough to expreſs the filthineſs of man. The word is found but three times (as ſome obſerve) in the Scripture in this conſtruction, and in all of them it is applyed to ſhew the abominable wickedneſs of man; the firſt place is this of *Job*; it is found alſo, *Pſal.* 14.3. *Pſal.* 53.3. Which Pſalms are moſt pregnant deſcriptions of the corrupt ſtate of man; as if this were a word pickt out on purpoſe, as a glaſs to ſhew man his face and natural complexion in.

נאלח *Putridus, fœtidus, graveolentus, tranſlatio à carnibus rancidis non deſpumatis.* Druſ. *Pagninus exiſtimat deduci à* דוא *rubigo ollæ, Spuma, excrementum.*

There is a ſecond tranſlation of the word which gives more light to this, *How much more abominable and unprofitable is man?* One word ſignifies filthy and unprofitable, becauſe that which is corrupt and filthy, is alſo unprofitable, and unfit for uſe. It is an extream debaſement unto man, that he is unprofitable, ſo filthy that he is good for nothing: The Apoſtle puts theſe together, (*Tit.* 1.16.) *Abominable, diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*; that is, unfit for every good work: We may ſay of man (in this ſence) as the Prophet (*Ezek.* 15.3.) doth of the Vine, *Son of man, what is the Vine-tree more then another tree?* Excellent to yield Wine: But in the third Verſe we have another anſwer, *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work, or will men make a pin of it to hang any veſſel thereon?* Will you build a houſe of *Vine Timber*, or will you ſo much as make *a Pin of it?* The Vine is not fit to make a Pin of; thus we may ſay of a carnal man, he is unprofitable; will the Lord uſe him in any work? No, he is reprobate to every good work: Will he ſerve the Lords turn, ſo much as to make a *Pin of?* That is, Is he profitable for the leaſt ſervice? No, he is not. He is alſo like the Corn growing upon the houſe top, whereof *The Reaper filleth not his hand, nor he that binds up the Sheaves his boſom.* The reaſon why man appears thus filthy, is, becauſe he deals ſo much with filth; and he is thus unfit to do any good, becauſe he is continually doing evil, as it follows in the laſt clauſe of this Verſe.

Inutilis. Fulg. *Quæ putrida ſunt inutilia ſunt.*

Qui ſibi nequam eſt, cui uſui bonus eſt?

Which drinketh iniquity like water.] Will you know what declares man abominable and filthy in the ſight of God? It is not his poverty, his ſickneſs, his rags, or any external defilement, nothing but ſin makes him ſo: *He drinks in iniquity like water*; this makes him as filthy as the dirt and mire he treads upon, or as the vomit and dung which he caſteth out.

Hence Note in general.

Sin, and ſin only, makes man abominable and filthy in the ſight of God.

Nothing can defile the ſoul but ſin; though a man be cloathed with filthy garments, though his skin be over-run with filthy ſores, though he lye in a ſtinking Channel, yet the Lord will not ſay, he is abominable, or filthy, in theſe reſpects; for even in ſuch a ſtate, or at ſuch a time, Chriſt may have taken him in his arms, and kiſſed him with the kiſſes of his lips. But though he go cloathed in Scarlet, though he lye in a bed of Ivory, and is perfumed with all the Spices of *Arabia*, yet ſin makes him filthy and abominable in the eye of the Lord.

Secondly Obſerve, *The multiplied acts of ſin are an evidence that man is habitually ſinful, or that he is abominable and filty.*

He that doth righteouſneſs is righteous; and he that doth unrighteouſneſs is unrighteous. If man were not filthy, he could not drink iniquity; that is, feed upon, and delight in ſin, which is but filthineſs.

This expreſſion of mans ſinfulneſs is further conſiderable; he doth not only commit iniquity, but *he drinks iniquity*; and he doth not ſip at it, but *he drinks it like water.* *Elihu* ſpeaks thus (*Job* 34.7.) *What man is like* Job, *who drinketh up ſcorning like water*; And ſo doth *Solomon* (*Prov.* 26.6.) *He that ſends a meſſage by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet, and drinketh dammage*; that is, he ſhall have dammage enough, a full draught of it, his belly full of it, by ſending ſuch an empty-headed meſſenger upon his errand. So *to drink iniquity*, and to *drink it like water*, is to do abundance of iniquity. I ſhall give ſeven Obſervations, which will diſcover the intendment of this man ner of ſpeaking, and draw out the meaning of *He drinks iniquity like water*.

Firſt thus, *Man naturally hath a ſtrong appetite or deſire to ſin.*

Mans natural deſire is to nothing elſe but ſin. Drinking implyes appetite; a man doth not drink (ordinarily) till he is thirſty: And though Drunkards have ſometimes no thirſt, yet they have alwayes a ſtrong deſire to drink. Sinful man is athirſt for, and deſires the drafts of ſin (*Epheſ.* 4. 19.) *He commits iniquity with greedineſs*; which is a Metaphor taken from eating and drinking: And becauſe man hath not a greater deſire after any thing then to drink, therefore it is grown to a Proverb among us, when we would ſhew our willingneſs to do a thing, we ſay, *We will do it as willingly, as to drink when we are athirſt.* Such is the bent of man to ſin, that he hath no more reluctance to commit it, then the thirſty man hath to drink: He thirſteth after it as vehemently, as *David* did after God (*Pſal.* 42. 2.) *My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God*; *as the Hart panteth after the water brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God.* Or again, the heart of man thirſteth after the waters of iniquity, as *David* thirſted after the waters of the Well of *Bethlem*; *Who will give me to drink of the waters of the Well of* Bethlem? At which word, ſome of his mighty men brake through the whole Hoſt of the Enemy, to fetch that water. When man thirſts for this water of iniquity, his own heart, or hand, will break through all oppoſitions, through Law, through Conſcience, through Counſel, through an Hoſt of threatnings armed againſt him, through judgment inflicted on him, he will break through all theſe, that he may have a draught of his beloved *inityquity-water*.

Secondly, To drink, notes a ſtrong deſire, ſo pleaſure and content; and where there is a great deal of deſire, there is alſo much content, and pleaſure in drinking.

Hence Obſerve, *That it is a very pleaſant thing to a carnal man to ſin, he drinks iniquity, not only like water, but in this ſence, like the ſweeteſt wine; a draught of ſin is the only merry-go-down to a carnal man.*

A Drunkard likes his drink well, but he likes his drunkenneſs better: His liquor is ſweet to him, but O how ſweet is the ſatisfying of his luſt! When he hath his deſire he is pleaſed; when he is fruſtrated of his deſire he is ſullen, and like *Ahab*, when he could not obtain *Naboth's* Vineyard, he is diſpleaſed, and refuſes, (as he did) to eat bread, becauſe he cannot have this water of iniquity to drink.

Thirdly, Conſider the eaſineſs of it, to drink is no hard labour; hence we ſpeak proverbially, *I can do ſuch a thing as eaſily as I can drink*; there are no bones in drink: *Good liquor* (we ſay alſo) *needs no chewing*: Beſides, it is eaſie to drink, becauſe it is natural to drink; Children have no Tutors to teach them to drink. Again, to drink water is eaſie, becauſe we may get it eaſily; water is not kept under Lock and Key, but in the common Storehouſes or Cellars of Nature.

Hence Note, *A natural man ſins with eaſe.*

It is no pain to him to ſin: Sin is not eaſie in the effects, ſo it leaves us in *Little-eaſe*, pain and ſorrow enough are the fruits of it; but it is eaſie in the act of it; it is to a wicked heart, as eaſie as to drink water, which is every way eaſie.

q. d. *Facillime laxatis conſcientiæ habenis in omnia omnis gineris ſcelera ſe dat præcipitem.* Bold.

For firſt, Sin is a common thing, every where to be had; ſin may be found (like water) in every Ditch; ſin alſo is like thoſe waters which flow naturally, you need not pump for it, or fetch it up with Buckets.

Secondly, No man needs be taught to ſin, Children learn that leſſon (and till the Spirit of God teach them, they cannot unlearn it) without a School-maſter.

Thirdly, Moſt ſins in the act of them, have little labour or difficulty in them (*Pſal.* 50. 20.) *Thou ſatteſt and ſpakeſt againſt thy Mothers Son.* A man may both ſpeak and do evil, while he ſits ſtill and doth nothing; an idle poſture may ſerve the turn for ſuch work as that.

Quaſi per incuriam & otium, quaſi nihil agens.

Fourthly, Water is but ſmall drink; water hath little pleaſure in it, and leſs ſtrength in it. And therefore when Chriſt would ſhew that the loweſt curteſie or charity done to one of his, ſhall be highly eſteemed by him, he ſaith, *Whoſoever ſhall give to drink unto one of theſe little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a Diſciple, he ſhall not looſe his reward*, Matth. 10. 42.

Hence Obſerve, *Man will ſin upon very eaſie terms, and ſmalleſt conſiderations.*

Though there be little got by it, though he get but a draught of water by it; though his ſin bring him in ſcarce any thing of advantage, yet ſin he will; the act of ſinning pleaſeth ſome, more then the conſequence or gain of ſin. *The care not much whether it is water or wine which they drink, ſo it be iniquity which they drink.* As the Saints, in a height of holineſs, will do good, though they do themſelves little good, or get no outward advantage by it: They reſolve to do good for good ſake; the duty abſtractly conſidered, or the act it ſelf, is the thing that pleaſeth them; ſo to a natural man, the very committing of ſin ſatisfieth him more then the outward income or revenue of his ſin: *He doth evil for evil ſake, and ſerves his luſt for love, not for wages.*

Eo improbitatis evadit impius, ut vel ſolo peccati & impietatis nomine, nulla præterea mercede propoſita, peccato inſerviat.

Fifthly, Drinking is a frequent act; a temperate man drinks every day, and often every day; healthy men eat often, and moſt men drink oftener then they eat: So that to drink iniquity hints alſo the frequency of committing iniquity.

Hence Obſerve, *A carnal heart ſins often.*

He ſins, and ſins, he cannot but ſin, it is a continual, yea, a continued act; he hath never done; he is like the Drunkard that muſt alwayes be tipling. Or like the covetous man, who is alwayes *having*, and the more he hath, the more he deſires to have: Covetouſneſs is a dry drunkenneſs; and drunkenneſs is a wet covetouſneſs; both return often upon the ſame acts; and ſo doth every ſinner naturally. *He cannot ceaſe from ſin*, as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks, *Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil, and that continually.* The cup of iniquity is never from his mouth.

Inveteratū ac inſeparabilem peccandi habitum & conſuetudinem denotat.

Sixthly, *To drink iniquity like water*, notes not only the frequency of ſinning, but the abundance of ſinning; they take great draughts of ſin, who drink iniquity like water: Such as are accuſtomed to drink water (in many places it is the common drink) ſuch, I ſay, drink more then men uſually do of wine, or ſtrong drink: Firſt, Becauſe wine and artificial liquors are coſtly; but you may drink water good cheap, and none will grutch you. Secondly, Water is not ſtrong nor vaporous, it doth not burden the brain like your heady liquors. Now though iniquity be ſomewhat unlike water in both theſe reſpects (for to ſome their ſins are coſtly enough at preſent, and they will coſt all very dear (except they repent of them before) at the day of reckoning; ſin alſo flyes up into the brain, and doth as much beſot, as defile the ſoul. Now, I ſay, though ſin be thus unlike water) yet the natural man drinks it like water, he takes in and ſends out abundance of it; what cares he what it coſts him, or how it beſots him, neither the preſent diſtemperings of it, nor the after reckonings for it, trouble him.

Seventhly, Eating and drinking are the ſupport of nature, by theſe the body is maintained in life: Now as the body of Nature is maintained by eating and drinking, *ſo the body and life of ſin, the corrupt ſtate and ſtrength of man are maintained by the continual actings of ſin*: The old *Adam* is nouriſhed by theſe waters of iniquity. We ſay in nature, we are nouriſhed by that of which we are made; that which is the matter of our conſtitution, is the matter of our nutrition; ſo in this caſe, a man in nature is compoſed or conſtituted of ſin; and a natural man is nouriſhed, and preſerved by ſinning. Continual acts increaſe the habit; and as a godly man is nouriſhed by holy acts, and ſtrengthened in ſpirit by ſpiritual obedience; doing the will of God is the food of the ſoul. As Chriſt ſpeaks (*John* 4. 21.) ſo doth every true Chriſtian in his degree, *It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father which is in Heaven*; or as *Job* profeſſeth of himſelf (*Chap.* 23. 12.) *I eſteem the words of thy mouth more then my neceſſary food*: Thus alſo the old man ſaith, It is my meat and drink to do the will of the fleſh, and that is indeed the will of his Father which is in Hell. The words of his mouth, his

Perbibiſti iniquitatem & ita viſceribus immiſcuiſti, ut niſi cum ipſis exire non poſſit. Sen. lib. P. *de ira.*

Ut deficienti humido reſarciendo, nihil aptius eſt aqua, & utilius; ita hominis beatitudini, ipſi deeſt, conſummandæ, natura nihil ſuggerit niſi peccatum. Coc.

his Counſels and Laws I eſteem more then my neceſſary food.

So much for the opening and illuſtration of this Scripture phraſe, *Drinking iniquity like water.* I ſhall propound one Querie in general, concerning the whole Verſe, and ſo conclude it. Here is a full deſcription of ſinful man: But whether *Eliphaz* ſpeaks this ſtrictly of a perſon unregenerate, and ſo applyeth it to *Job*, or whether this deſcription be not alſo applicable to a man who is regenerate and godly for the main, and was ſo intended by *Eliphaz*, is here a queſtion.

Some conceive that the words will ſuit none but an unregenerate man; and 'tis granted upon all hands, that they are moſt ſutable to him. An unregenerate man is *abominable and filthy, he drinks iniquity like water:* And yet in a qualified ſence, we may ſay all this of a man regenerate: Even *He*, in reference to the remains of corruption, is *abominable and filthy*; and *He*, under ſome diſtempers and temptations, *drinks iniquity like water:* Which words of *Eliphaz*, a modern Interpreter parallels with thoſe of *Paul* concerning himſelf (*Rom.* 7. 25.) *With the fleſh I ſerve the Law of ſin.* And delivers his opinion in this caſe, That though *Eliphaz* aimed at *Job* in all this, yet he deals with him not as with a wicked man, but as with an erring brother. For whereas he had ſaid (*Chap.* 13. 23.) *How many are mine iniquities? Eliphaz* might judge by his words, that ſurely he thought his iniquities were not very many: And whereas he had ſaid at the twenty ſixth Verſe of rhe ſame Chapter, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth: Eliphaz* might collect, ſurely this man thinks his elder years have been ſo free from ſin, that God can find nothing in them, which might juſtifie him in theſe ſevere puniſhments. Now *Eliphaz* oppoſeth theſe apprehenſions, and would both teach and convince him, that as original ſin pollutes every man wholly, till he is waſhed and born again by the Spirit; ſo no man is ſo far waſhed by the Spirit, but that many ſpots and pollutions of the fleſh, do ſtill cleave to him, and often appear upon him. And *Eliphaz* may be conceived to handle *Job* in this manner,

Agit Eliphaz *cum* Jobo, *non ut improbo, ſed ut erran-te.* Coc.

Firſt, To ſhew him, that though a man be in a ſtate of regeneration, yet he can deſerve nothing at the hand of God, becauſe his holineſs is ſtill imperfect, and his corruptions are abominable.

Secondly, That the greateſt ſufferings and afflictions of good men in this life, are very conſiſtent with the Juſtice of God,

Thirdly, That he might humble *Job*, who (as he feared) was ſtill too high in his own opinion, and thought better of himſelf then did become him.

Fourthly, To provoke him to reſiſt his own corruptions ſtedfaſtly.

And laſtly, To bear the croſs (which the Lord had laid upon him for his good, eſpecially for the taming and ſubduing of his corruptions) patiently.

So that *Eliphaz* doth not diſpute with him upon this Hypotheſis, or ſuppoſition, or not upon this only, *That man by Nature, and without the Grace of God, is filthy and abominable, drinking iniquity like water*; but upon this, or this in conſort with the former, *That man in a ſtate of Grace, or a godly man, is filthy and abominable, in reference to the fleſh that dwelleth in him, and that in reference to his frequent ſinnings, he may he ſaid to drink iniquity like water.:* And therefore *Job* had no reaſon to be proud, how good ſoever he was, or how much good ſoever he had done; and that there was all the reaſon in the world he ſhould be patient, and take it well at the hand of God, how much evil ſoever he ſhould ſuffer.

This reſolution of the Querie, as it is profitable, ſo probable. For howſoever *Job*'s Friends had branded him in divers paſſages of this diſpute, as a wicked man and an hypocrite, and were ſo underſtood by *Job*, as appears in his anſwers and replyes; yet 'tis moſt likely his Friends ſpake ſo in reference to his actions, not in reference to his ſtate. That he had done like an Hypocrite, or a wicked man, was clearly their opinion; but there is no neceſſity to conclude from what they ſaid, that they judged him abſolutely to be one.

VERS. 17, 18, 19, 20.

I will ſhew thee, hear me, and that which I have ſeen, I will declare.

Which wiſe men have told from their Fathers, and have not hid it.

Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no ſtranger paſſed among them.

The wicked man travelleth with pain all his dayes, and the number of years is hidden to the oppreſſor.

E*Eiphaz* having argued againſt *Job*'s ſuppoſed opinion, of *ſelf-cleanneſs*, and *perſonal righteouſneſs*, proceeds to the confirmation of his own Poſition, to which he leads us, by a new Exordium, or Preface, in the ſeventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth Verſes of this Chapter: Secondly, He largely handles and illuſtrates it from Verſe 20. to Verſe 31. Thirdly, He applyeth the whole Doctrine to *Job* by way of dehortation, at Verſe 31. and ſo forward to the end of the Chapter.

The general Argument which he brings to confirm his Tenet, may be thus formed up;

That is true which continued experience, and the conſent of wiſe men in all Ages have taught and delivered to us:

But the experience, and conſent of wiſe men in all Ages, have taught and delivered this, that a wicked man travels with pain all his dayes, that he is puniſhed outwardly by want and ſickneſs, and inwardly by the gripes and ſcourges of his own conſcience.

Therefore this is a truth.

The major Propoſition is the ſum of the Preface contained in the ſeventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth Verſes: The minor, or ſecond Propoſition, is held forth in the twentieth Verſe, and is proſecuted to the one and thirtieth.

I will ſhew thee, hear thou me. and that which I have ſeen I will declare.

So the Preface begins: He layes down a double proof in this Preface; a proof firſt from his own experience, ſecondly from the conſent of others. From his own experience, in this Verſe, *I will ſhew thee, hear thou me, that which I have ſeen I will declare*; The conſent of others is expreſſed in the eighteenth and nineteenth verſes, *Which wiſe men have told me from their Fathers.*

I will ſhew thee, hear thou me.] As if he had ſaid, *Thou art out of the way, thou art in the dark, and therefore in charity, I will lend thee a thread of true Doctrine, to lead thee out of that labyrinth of error, wherein I ſee thou art intangled; I will ſhew thee, and all that I deſire of thee as a reward of my pains, is but this, Hear thou me, be attentive,* or (as the *Chalde* Paraphraſt renders) *receive it, take it of me; he that ſpeaks truths deſerves to be heard, and that is all I deſire.*

Cæcutienti tibi & in maximis tenebris verſanti, veriſſimæ doctrinæ lumen præferam. Accipe à me. Targ.

I will ſhew thee, hear thou me.] But what will *Eliphaz* ſhew him? Not that which he had fancied, but that which he was aſſured of.

That which I have ſeen I will declare.] Seeing is a ſure and particular ſenſe; yet as the act of one ſenſe is often put for the act of another; ſo *Seeing*, which is the moſt noble of the Senſes, is often put for all. *That which I have ſeen*; is, that which I have learned, that which I have fetched in, or collected by the help of all my ſenſes; yea, by my reaſon and underſtanding, *That do I here declare unto thee.*

More ſtrictly, *Seeing* may be taken two wayes: Firſt, As noting experience; I have not only heard ſome reports about theſe things, but I have ſeen, and obſerved them my ſelf; there is a ſtronger conviction in this, becauſe the ſenſe of ſeeing is leſs fallible then that of hearing; and we ſay, *One eye witneſs is better then ten ear witneſſes.* Secondly, *As I have ſeen*, may be taken for common experiences among men; ſo for ſpecial revelation from God. Some Divine revelations were made in viſions; and all Divine revelations were ſo clear and evident, that they were or might be called Viſions, as if the matter of them had been repreſented to the eye; and hence ſuch as God honoured and truſted with thoſe Revelations were called

Certius eſt, vidi, quam audivi, oculatus teſtis potior eſt aurito. Druſ.

Seers (1 *Sam.* 9.9.) *He that is now called a Prophet was before time called a Seer:* And he was called a Seer, becauſe the clearneſs of thoſe meſſages and manifeſtations was ſo great, that they might be judged as objects of the eye, rather then of the ear, or of the underſtanding. Thus the whole Book of the Propheſie of *Iſaiah* is called, *A Viſion, or a thing ſeen*; *The Viſion of* Iſaiah *the Prophet, which he ſaw concerning* Judah *and* Jeruſalem, (*Chap.* 1. 1.) Yet the Prophet did not receive all the Doctrines which he preached, and Propheſies which he publiſhed in that Book, by viſion; but the manifeſtation from God, was ſo full of light to his underſtanding, that it was as if he had ſeen it with his eye. Some expound ſo here, *That which I have ſeen*; that is, that which I have had a ſpecial revelation about. As if he referr'd to the fourth Chapter, where *Eliphaz* reports to *Job* what a dreadful Viſion he had, and what the matter of it was, even much like that which is repreſented in the following part of this Chapter. A learned Interpreter agrees, that it was a Viſion; but, ſaith he, it was either a fained artificial Viſion (ſuch are frequent in Popery) or it was a deluſion of the Devil. I do not at all admit this latter branch of his opinion; but I muſt reject the former, as altogether unworthy of *Eliphaz*, who was ſurely a man of integrity, and fearing God, and was therefore above ſuch affected falſhoods, and ſtudied deceits, to gain reſpect and credit among men.

Mihi non videtur improbabile aut deluſum fuiſſe à diabolo, vel ipſum ſomnium aliquod aut inſpirationē commentum eſſe, ut ſibi conciliaret authoritatē. Sanct.

I ſhall therefore inſiſt upon the former ſence, *That which I have ſeen*, that is, by common experience, *that will I declare unto thee.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *What we declare, or communicate to others, we ſhould be well aſſured of our ſelves.*

That which I have ſeen declare I unto thee: while we declare, either by way of inſtruction, to teach true Doctrine, or by way of information, to report the truth of action, 'tis our duty to declare upon knowledge. So the Apoſtle *John*, in his firſt Epiſtle, *Chap.* 1. 1. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, that which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you:* He brings in the operations of three Senſes, Seeing, Hearing, and Feeling, as witneſſes to avouch for, and aſcertain that which he had declared; we muſt take heed of declaring upon ſurmiſes, and probabilities, upon a bare *hear-ſay*, or *I thought ſo:* That which we have clearly learned, we may teach confidently, and nothing beſides that.

Obſerve Secondly, *As we muſt have a ground for what we declare to others, ſo when we have a good ground we muſt declare.*

That which we know we ſhould make known; *That which I have ſeen I declare unto you*; holy knowledge muſt be communicated, ſuch light muſt not be put under a buſhel, nor muſt ſuch a Talent be wrapt up in a Napkin: *He that is taught ſhould teach. When thou art converted* (ſaith Chriſt to *Peter*) *ſtrengthen thy Brethren:* Let others partake of thy experiences. *Come* (ſaith *David*) *and I will tell you what God hath done for my ſoul: Philip* (John 1.43.) being found by Chriſt, finds *Nathanael*, and ſaith unto him, *We have found him of whom* Moſes, *and the Prophets did write,* Jeſus *of* Nazareth, *the Son of* Joſeph: He quickly declared what he had ſeen, and ſo ſhould we. This is the firſt proof, *That which I have ſeen, I declare*, experience is my ground.

The ſecond proof, is from the conſent of others, from the authority of the Ancients.

Which wiſe men have told from their Fathers, and have not hid it.

Eliphaz treads the ſame ſteps, as in his firſt diſcourſe with *Job*. For after he had there delivered the contents or ſum of his Viſion, he appeals to the judgment of the Saints, *Chap.* 5. So here, having told *Job* that *he would declare what he had ſeen,* he refers him alſo to the judgment of others, *That which wiſe men have told their Fathers, and have not hid it.* I refer you to men, and thoſe not men of a mean rank, but to godly wiſe men; in which *Eliphaz* ſeems again to anſwer what *Job* had objected, that the points he had offered were of common and vulgar obſervation (*Chap.* 12. 3.) *Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?* *Eliphaz* replyes, theſe things are no common diſcourſe, they are ſuch as *wiſe men have told from their Fathers*: As if he had ſaid, Do not deſpiſe what I ſay, as ordinary, or as a novelty, no, nor as received from corrupt antiquity, for beſides what I have ſeen, I have good authority for what I ſpeak; the ancient and the wiſe vote with me; *Wiſe men have told it from their Fathers,* here is the conveyance.

Wiſe men.] He doth not mean worldly wiſe men, Philoſophers and Polititians; but godly wiſe men, theſe have told it from their Fathers; their Fathers told it them, and they told it me; ſo that this poſition claims by two deſcents at leaſt. One of the Rabbins gives it three, if not more: for by the Fathers of the wiſe men he underſtands, not their immediate Fathers only, but thoſe who were more remote and further off; yea, poſſibly thoſe who were furtheſt off, even as far as *Adam*.

Rambam ſubtilius à patribus ſuis exponit, à patribus eorum. Vt hic tres ætates conſiderentur una ſapientum hæc indicantiū, altera patrum, tertia majorum & atavorum. Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is an ingenuity to acknowledge by whom we profit.*

Wiſe men have told me this, I received it from others, as well as collected it by my own experience.

Secondly Note, *Truth ſhould be conveyed down to our Poſterity.*

Truth is a more precious inheritance then Land or Money; if Parents are careful to ſecure (as much as they can) earthly things to their Children, how much more ſhould they be careful to ſecure heavenly? In the firſt Ages of the World, till the Law was given on Mount *Sinai*, faithful men were in ſtead of Books, and Tradition ſupplied the want of Scripture: But now, our recourſe muſt be to what God hath commanded to be written, not to what men have ſaid. No Tradition is of any force, but as conſentient with Scripture, and none of ſo much force as Scripture. The *Council of Trent*, in the fifth Seſſion, thunders out *Anathemaes* againſt thoſe who receive not Tradition with the ſame godly affection, and devotion, with which they receive the Scripture it ſelf; *Bellarmine* in his controverſie about Tradition, entitles his Book thus, *Of the Word of God not written*; as if the Word of God were to be divided into theſe two orders, *The Word written*, and the *Word not written:* Tradition with him is the *Unwritten word*, and muſt be held of as much authority as the Word written; *This is* (as Chriſt taxeth the Phariſees) *To make the Word of God of none effect, through mans Tradition:* It is ſtill a wiſe mans duty to tell Poſterity what the Word and Truth of God is; but we muſt not receive any thing, as a truth of God, upon the bare Word of the wiſeſt men. *Wiſe men have told their Fathers,*

And have not hid it.] There is a twofold hiding: Firſt, a hiding to keep a thing ſafe, that we looſe it not: Secondly, A hiding, that we keep it cloſe, and not communicate it: In the former ſence, we muſt hide the truth of God, but we may not in the latter. When *David* ſaith, *I have hid thy Commandments in my heart*; when *Mary hid the ſayings of Chriſt in her heart*; and when the man that found the treaſure (*Matth.* 13.44.) *Went away and hid it, and for joy thereof ſold all he had, and bought the field:* All theſe hid it, that it might be forth coming for their own uſe, they did not hide it, as unwilling to bring it forth, for the uſe of others; ſo the idle Servant hid his Talent, and was juſtly condemned for hiding it, *Matth.* 25.

Hence Obſerve, *Truth muſt not be hid from others.*

Truth is a common good, no man hath the ſole property of it; every one may challenge his part of this poſſeſſion; and the more we part with it to others, the more we increaſe our own poſſeſſion. Truth multiplyes in its degree to us, while we make diviſion of it to thouſands. A Candle gives not the leſs light to the owner, becauſe many ſtanders by ſee by it; and this Candle gives a clearer light to us when we let many ſee by it: *Our knowledge is perfected while it is communicated.* This Candle therefore is not to be put under a buſhel, but muſt be ſet upon a Candleſtick, that all may ſee by the light of it. *Shall I* (ſaith the Lord, *Gen.* 18.) *hide from* Abraham *the thing that I am about to do?* No, I will not, For *I know* Abraham *will not hide it: He will command his Children and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord.* The *Iſraelites* were charged to communicate the wonders which God wrought for them, and the Ordinances which he appointed them, when they were delivered out of Egypt, *Exod.* 12.

I will open my mouth in a Parable (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *I will utter dark ſayings of old, which we have heard and known: And our Fathers have told us, we will not hide them from their Children, ſhewing to the Generations to come, the praiſes of the Lord, and his ſtrength, and the wonderful works which he hath done* (*Pſal.* 78. 2, 3, 4.) 'Tis our duty to preſerve memorials of the works of God, and to declare his word to all that are about us. What wiſe men know from their Fathers, they will not hide.

Eliphaz yet goes on to deſcribe the men whoſe conſent in opinion he had received about the controverſie in hand.

Verſ. 19. **To whom alone the earth was given, and no ſtranger paſſed among them.**

If any man ask who were theſe wiſe men? He anſwers, They were wiſe men,

To whom alone the earth was given.] In theſe words *Eliphaz* ſeems to remove a prejudice that might lie in *Job's* Spirit againſt the teſtimony of thoſe Ancients: For ſuppoſe they were *wiſe men*, yet he might ſay, 'tis like they were but *mean men*, men of no rank or quality, men of ſmall credit or authority, and (we know what *Solomon* ſaith, *Eccleſ.* 9. 16.) *A poor mans wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words not heard:* Therefore ſaith *Eliphaz*, you ſhall not put me off thus, nor diſable my witneſſes upon a ſuppoſition, that theſe wiſe men were mean men, for theſe were *Chiefs and Princes in their Generation*; And he advanceth their honour two wayes; Firſt, in regard of their riches and power, *To whom alone the earth was given:* Secondly, in regard of their righteous and juſt adminiſtrations, *No ſtranger, or ſtrange thing paſſed among them*; as if he had ſaid, *Job, I ſpeak of men that were fit to ſit at the helm of a Kingdom, and govern Nations, yea, to have the reins of the World put into their hands; I ſpeak of wiſe men who by their wiſdom, and the bleſſing of God, have kept the earth quiet, and ſo have poſſeſſed it alone.*

Aſſertur hoc ad amplificandum authoritatem horũ ſapientum, q. d. hi tales & tãti fuerunt ut, &c. Merc.

But it may yet be ſaid, who were theſe Monarchs of the world, and ſole poſſeſſors of the Earth? *To whom alone the earth was given:* Some conceive that *Eliphaz* means it of *Noah and his Sons*, who indeed had the World to themſelves; for the Flood having ſwept away all mankind, except that Family, to him and his Sons the earth was given alone; theſe were the wiſe men (ſaith this opinion) from whom *Eliphaz* received the Doctrine which he communicated to, and preſſed upon *Job*; there was never ſuch a Monarch (except *Adam* the firſt man) as *Noah* was, he had the whole World given him: Hence the Ancients ſtile *Noahs three Sons, The Commanders and Colonels of the whole World:* But I conceive, we need not determine it upon thoſe, though poſſibly *Eliphaz* might have an aim at them. Moſt interpreters take it in general, of the old good Princes, of whom it may be ſaid, *The earth was given to them alone*; *Abraham* was a great Prince, and to him, *The earth* (in one ſenſe) *was given alone.* But who made this great *deed of gift, even the moſt high God*, whom *Abraham* calls (*Gen.* 14.) *The poſſeſſor of Heaven, and Earth:* He it is that then gave, and ſtill gives the earth, and he gives it two wayes; firſt, by an act of common providence, thus (as *Job* expreſſeth it, *Chap.* 9. 24.) *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked:* Secondly, he gives the earth by an act of ſpecial providence, or by vertue of a promiſe, ſo *Canaan* was given to *Abraham* and his ſeed, the people of Iſrael; and thus the Kingdom of Iſrael and Judah, was given to *David* and his ſeed.

Iſta phraſi circumloquitur mihi patiarcham Noe *cũ tribus ejus filiis.* Bold. *Methodius aliiq; patres antiqui vocant* Noe *tres filios* Mundi chiliarchos.

When it is ſaid here, that the earth was given to ſuch alone, the meaning is not that none had any of the earth given them but they, but none had the earth given them as they, by peculiar promiſe, and ſpecial providence. Further, the giving of the earth may be conſidered, either as the giving that which is good, or as the giving it for good; as a gift of bounty, or as a gift of mercy; in the latter conſiderations, the earth is given to good men alone: None have it for good but they who are good, and they only make a good uſe of it. Hence Obſerve,

Sapientibus ſolis terra data eſſe dicitur, quia bonorũ terrenorum ipſi ſunt domini, utentes iis ad ſuum bonũ. Aquin. *in loc.*

> *That the earth, or earthly things, are diſpoſed to the Sons of men, by a deed of gift from God:*
>
> Secondly, *Wiſe, holy men, receive the earth and the things of the earth, by ſpecial gift.*

Theſe alone receive the earth from a Fathers hand and good will; it comes to them in the Covenant of grace, to which the promiſe of the earth belongs, as well as of Heaven, *Godlineſs hath the promiſe of this life, and of that which is to come*; Saints have the earth and all earthly things given to them, in reference to their being in Covenant with God; and thus the earth is given to them alone.

Again, we may expound that term *Alone*, by the next clauſe, *To whom alone the earth was given*; that is, as they had great poſſeſſions in the earth, ſo they had thoſe poſſeſſions to themſelves without any to trouble, vex, or moleſt them, which *Eliphaz* thus expreſſeth:

And no ſtranger paſſed among them.] Some read, *No ſtrange thing paſſed among them*; Both readings are a deſcription of wiſe and godly Princes, who having the earth given them, *No ſtranger*, or *no ſtrange thing paſſeth among them.*

Optimorum principum circumloqutio eſt, quorũ adminiſtratio reſpublicas ſuas tuebatur, omnemque hoſtiũ injuriã propulſabat. Pined. *Authoritate ſua uſi ſunt ad jus bonũ & æquum tuendũ, & ad injuſtum quodvis & alienũ propulſandum.* Jun. *in loc.* *Alienus hoc loco idẽ eſt qui hoſtis.* Sanct. *Hoſtis apud majores noſtros, quem nunc peregrinũ dicimus:* Cic. lib. 1. Offic.

Strangers are here taken under a double notion: Firſt, no ſtranger, that is no enemy: To clear which notion of the word *Stranger*, we muſt remember that as the *Grecians* (conceiting themſelves the beſt bred people in the World) called all other Nations Barbarians; ſo *the people of Iſrael, the ſtock of Abraham* (being Gods peculiar Covenant-people) called all other Nations aliens, or ſtrangers: and becauſe they were hated and maligned by all other Nations, therefore they called all profeſſed ſtrangers enemies; ſo the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 1. 7.) *Your land ſtrangers ſhall devoure*; that is, enemies ſhall invade and prevail over you (*Pſal.* 144. 7.) *Deliver me out of the hand of ſtrange Children*, or out of the hand of ſtrangers; that is, out of the hand of mine enemies: The Latine word *Alienus*, is often put for *Hoſtis*, & the *Roman Orator* telleth us, *That he who is now called a ſtranger was called an enemy by our Anceſtors.* The reaſon was, becauſe ſtrangers proved unkind to, yea turned enemies againſt thoſe that entertained them: As formerly Kings were called Tyrants, but becauſe many Kings oppreſſed their people, therefore now oppreſſing Princes only are called Tyrants. So then, to ſay no ſtranger paſſed among them, is as much as to ſay, no enemy, none to moleſt or afflict, paſſed among them.

Again, the word *Stranger* is taken for one that is erroneous, or idolatrous; for a man unſound in Doctrine, or ſuperſtitious in Worſhip: Wiſe men to whom alone the earth was given, had no ſuch ſtranger paſſing among them; they were not mixed with idolatrous and uncircumciſed Nations, they did not communicate with them in worſhip, as in after-times the people of Iſrael did.

Satis apparet non de hoſte temporali; ſed de eo qui alterĩ quam veræ religioni addictus eſt, vel qui numina extranea colit. Bold.

This notion of the ſtranger, is an advantage to *Eliphaz*; as if he had ſaid, The wiſe men whoſe authority I produce in this cauſe, were ſound in judgement, and pure in worſhip, they did not mingle themſelves with Idolaters and Hereticks, they neither learned their works, nor received their Doctrines, and are therefore witneſſes worthy of credit, and againſt whom there lies no juſt exception. *No ſtranger paſſed among them.*

If we take ſtranger in the firſt ſenſe for an enemy, then the word *Paſſed* ſignifies as much as invaded, and may well be tranſlated to a military motion: No ſtranger or enemy paſſed; that is, none marched among them, or through their Land, to diſturb, or plunder them; when God is ſaid to give Laws to the Sea, or ſet it bounds which *it ſhould not paſs*; this imports that the Sea like an enemy would march through the earth, and overwhelm all, unleſs bridled by a Divine decree.

But if we take *Stranger* in the ſecond ſenſe, for an Idolater, or a man of unſound Principles, then, *No ſtranger paſſed among them*, is, ſuch were not received, and embraced by them, nor admitted among them.

> From the firſt Obſerve, *That it is* (as the honour of a people to relieve oppreſſed ſtrangers, ſo) *the happyneſs of a people to be freed from the oppreſſion of ſtrangers.*
>
> From the ſecond Obſerve, *That it is the happineſs of a people to be free from the mixture of evil men, whether ſuch whoſe worſhip is impure or, Doctrine untrue.*

The Lord made frequent promiſes of this happineſs to his people (*Iſa.* 52. 1.) *From henceforth there ſhall no more come into them, the uncircumciſed, and the unclean*; which is as much as to ſay, *The ſtranger* (for all uncircumciſed perſons were ſtrangers) *ſhall not come into thee.* We have the like promiſe (*Joel* 3. 17.) *So ſhall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Sion, my holy Mountain, then ſhall Jeruſalem be holy, and there ſhall no ſtranger paſs through her*; Why not any ſtranger? *Forget not to entertain ſtrangers, ſaith the Apoſtle* (*Heb.* 13.2.) Jeruſalem in her beſt dayes ſhall have ſtrangers, to be viſited and relieved by her, but Jeruſalem ſhould have no ſtrangers in thoſe dayes to defile and pollute her (*Nah.* 1. 15.) *Behold upon the Mountain the feet of him that bringeth good tydings; for the wicked ſhall no more paſs through thee, for he is cut off:* The Hebrew is, *Belial ſhall no more paſs through thee. Belial* is he that cannot endure to ſerve; he will not yield obedience to the holy commands of God, he caſts off the yoak of Chriſt, and pulls the ſhoulder from his burden. This *Belial ſhall no more paſs through thee.* The pureſt times of the Goſpel are preſented under a like promiſe (*Zach.* 14.21.) *In that day there ſhall be no more the Cananite in the houſe of the Lord of Hoaſts*; That is, the ſtranger and uncircumciſed, the wicked and ungodly, ſhall no more be mixed with his people.

Thirdly, in that he puts ſuch under the notion of ſtrangers, we learn, *That wicked and Idolatrous perſons ſhould be as ſtrangers to us*; we muſt not lay ſuch in our boſom, to maintain any ſpiritual ſociety with them, though in ſome caſes, we may have civil ſociety with them. (2 *Cor.* 6. 13, 14.) *Be not unequally yoaked together with unbelievers, for what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs, and what communion hath light with darkneſs, and what concord hath Chriſt with Belial,* &c. Theſe can never agree together: Let no ſuch ſtranger *paſs*, or be approved among us in the fellowſhip of the Goſpel; there is not only ſin in letting ſuch paſs with our approbation, but danger; and that a double danger. Both which are aſſigned as reaſons why we ſhould come out of Babylon (*Revel.* 18. 4.)

Firſt, we are in danger of partaking of their ſins, and that both by contracting the ſpot of their ſins, as alſo the guilt of their ſins.

Secondly, we are in danger of partaking of their puniſhments, as it there follows, *That ye receive not her plagues.* There is no ſafety in being neer thoſe, who are under the curſe of God: *The companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed* (*Prov.* 13. 20.) Though poſſibly he be not a fool in any other reſpect, but becauſe he is in ſuch company.

Fourthly, Taking it for *a ſtrange or wicked thing.*

Note, That, *It is the honour of Magiſtrates, when no evil paſſeth quietly in their Territories.*

When neither Idolatry in the things of God, nor injuſtice, nor oppreſſion in the things of men, find any favour with them, this is at once their duty, and their glory.

Eliphaz having by way of preface, given proof of what he was about to preſs upon *Job*, both from his own experience and the conſent of Antiquity: He now propoſes the point it ſelf.

Verſ. 20. **The wicked man travels with pain all his dayes, and the number of years is hidden to the Oppreſſour.**

In this general Poſition, *Eliphaz* intends *Jobs* perſonal conviction, that he was wicked, whom he had heard appealing to God (*Chap.* 2. 10.) *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* As if he had ſaid, *Thou wouldeſt make us believe that God will be thy compurgator, and give witneſs for thee upon his own knowledge thou art not wicked: But we who are but men may know the contrary, for we ſee all the marks and brands of a wicked man upon thee: The wicked man travelleth with pain all his dayes, and ſo doſt thou: Theſe ſnares and ſorrows ſpeak who thou art, though we ſay nothing.*

Mr. *Broughton* reads, *The wicked killeth himſelf all his days,* he is a ſelf murtherer; that was the report which *Eliphaz* made of him at the fifth Chapter, *Verſ.* 2. *Envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.* Both *Job* and his Friends repeat the ſame thing often, yet with ſuch variety of illuſtrations, that though for the matter it be the ſame, yet it is new for the manner. Such repetitions do not only delight, but profit.

The wicked man travelleth with pain all his dayes:] Who is a wicked man, hath been opened at large, *Chap.* 10. 7. where *Job* affirms, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*; There ſee the temper of a wicked man, I will not ſtay upon it here. Only conſider how his appellation and condition ſuit one with the other, *The wicked man travels:* the Original word for a *wicked man* ſignifies an unquiet motion, and ſo one whoſe life is a continual, not only motion, but unquietneſs. *Unquiet* is the name, and unquietneſs is the ſtate of a wicked man; he is always raiſing ſtirs, and acting Tragedies, *His life is always in a hurry, he travels with pain all his dayes.*

He travelleth with pain.] This ſentence is but one word in the Hebrew; the word ſignifies any grief, or ſorrow, any torture or torment: The tranſlations are various, but all meet in this one ſenſe, that a wicked mans life is a miſerable life; *All the life of a wicked man is ſpent in carking care:* So the Septuagint. Another renders, *It is ſpent in ſorrow.* But all may be reduced to that which is moſt proper to the word: *He is in pain as a woman in travail*; and whereas we have heard of ſome Women in travail many dayes; here is a man in *travel all his dayes.*

חול
a מתחולל *Proprie ſignificat cruciatū, lāguorē, pavorem vel dolorem parturiētiū, vel enitentiæ & molientiæ facinus aliquod.*
Omnis vitæ impii in ſolicitudine.
70. *in dolore.* Aquila.
Dolet ut parturiens. Pag.
Cunctis diebus ſuis impius ſuperbit. Vulg.

The wicked man *travelleth in pain* **all his dayes**; his whole life is nothing elſe but continual pain, or painful throes towards the birth of ſome filthy *Monſter-ſin, which ſin when it is finiſhed, brings forth death:* Somewhat he hath conceived, the Pſalmiſt tells us what; *He hath conceived miſchief, and he would bring forth iniquity.*

The Vulgar Latine tranſlates, *The wicked man is lifted up with pride all his dayes*; which is as much as to ſay, *He travelleth in pain all his dayes*; for though as ſome ſay, *Pride feels no cold,* yet there is nothing feels ſo much pain as pride doth: And becauſe a wicked man is proud all his dayes, therefore he travelleth with pain all his dayes.

Hence Obſerve, *The life of a wicked man is a very painful life:* or thus, *The pain of a wicked mans life is the greateſt pain.*

It is like the pain of a Woman in travel; when the holy Ghoſt would ſet forth great pain, he expreſſeth it by *the pain of a woman in travel.* But what kind of pain is it, with which a wicked man travels? He hath two ſorts of pain.

First, external:
Secondly, internal.

His external pain is of two ſorts:

Firſt, Such as God layes upon him, or caſts him into; for though many are the afflictions of the righteous, from the hand of God, yet the righteous have not all the afflictions, wicked men have ſome: They are not only beaten with ſcourges, but ſmitten with Scorpions; *God rains down upon them ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt; this is the portion of many of their cups, even in this life.*

Secondly, Such as a wicked man brings upon himſelf; Mr. *Broughtons* reading aims at theſe pains, *The wicked kills himſelf all his dayes.* A wicked man is often very active, ſometimes extreamly malitious againſt others, ſo malitious that he murders them; and yet it may truly be ſaid he only *kills himſelf* all his dayes. The ſelf-love of a wicked man deſtroys him, and his very earneſtneſs to avoid trouble, tumbles him into it: And this is clear, if we conſider either the way which a wicked man takes, or the end which uſually he comes unto; his way is a very ſad way: A godly man is deſcribed (*Pſal.* 118. 2.) *Eating the labour of his hands*; that is, the very work which he doth, feeds him; and before he hath any reward for his work, he finds a reward in his work, in which ſenſe, he may well be ſaid, to *Eat the labour of his hand:* On the other ſide, the labour of a wicked man eats him, the labour of his hand, and the labour of his head, eat him out. The way of ſin is a wearyſome way (*Jer.* 9. 5.) *They weary themſelves to commit iniquity* (*Ezek.* 24. 12.) *She hath wearied her ſelf with lies:* A Lie is not taken ſtrictly there for *an untruth told to deceive* *others :* A lie is any ſin, for every ſin is a Lie. Sin tells us a fair tale, but it will deceive us at laſt.

Again, (*Iſa.* 47. 13.) *Thou haſt wearied thy ſelf, in the multitude of thy counſels.* (*Iſa.* 57. 10.) *Thou art wearyed in the greatneſs of thy way.* Thoſe counſels were ſinful counſels, and theſe wayes were ſinful wayes, both were a wearineſs, and tired their undertakers. The Lord challenges the Jews (*Mic.* 6. 3.) To ſhew wherein he had wearied them; *O my people what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee, teſtifie againſt me.* God is very tender in laying burdens upon us, but we are very cruel in overburdening our ſelves.

And whereas the pain of a wicked man is compared to the pain of a Woman in travail; it is not only like it, but exceeds it: For though *when her pain comes upon her, ſhe hath ſorrow becauſe her hour is come, yet when ſhe is delivered, ſhe remembreth her anguiſh no more, for joy that a Man is born into the World* (*John* 16. 21.) The Womans pains end in joy, but the pain of a wicked man is ſo far from ending in joy, that it hath no end at all, and therefore he is ſaid to travel in pain all his dayes. A wicked man hath the pain, but not the deliverance of a travailing Woman, a Son ſhall not be born to him. And though he ſometimes ſeems to proſper, and attain his end, yet there is ſomewhat or other, that ſticks ſtill in the birth, and paineth him in the midſt of all his proſperity. The Author of that uſeful Hiſtory, *The Travels of the old Patriarcks, Kings, and Prophets,* when he comes to write the motions of *Antiochus Epiphanes,* who was a great King, but of a moſt malitious ſpirit, againſt the people of God, he obſerves that this *Antiochus* in purſuance of his bloody deſigns, had run more hazards, and taken more tedious journeys to ſatisfie his malice, and reach his ambitious ends, then any of the Saints had done, upon any command or ſervice of God; upon which conſideration, he makes this excellent concluſion, *That wicked men take more pains to go to Hell and eternal deſtruction, then godly men do in the way to eternal life, and ſalvation. A wicked man cannot go to Hell with eaſe; he goes with pain to eternal pains.* Thoſe wayes of ſin which have moſt pleaſure in them, have much vexation in them. (*Prov.* 23. 29.) *Who hath wo, who hath ſorrow, who hath wounds without cauſe?* The anſwer is at hand in the next words, *They that tarry long at the Wine, they that go to ſeek the mixt Wine:* The Wine is ſweet *but it bites like a Serpent, and ſtings like an Adder, Verſ.* 32. The voluptuous man drinks larger draughts of ſorrow then he doth of Wine; and while the Adulterer goes to the Harlots houſe, *he goes as a fool to the ſtocks, or as an Ox to the ſlaughter* (*Prov.* 7.) As pleaſure is the Epicures God, ſo gain is the covetous mans God, yet to get it, he *pierceth himſelf through with many ſorrows,* and falls into a ſnare; (1 *Tim.* 6.) Further, as a ſinful converſation among men, ſo a ſuperſtitious ſervice of the true God, and the ſerving of falſe Gods is full of trouble.

The falſe worſhipper travelleth in pain all his dayes: All falſe worſhip hath a tang of baſeneſs and ſlavery in it; they that worſhip the Devil, in what a wretched ſervitude do they live? In Popery, what vexatious penances do they put upon their blinded Votaries? The Goſpel is noble, and the ſervice of it ingenuous, as well as pure or ſpiritual: Chriſt hath not called us to drudgery, but to liberty. *They are moſt free, who ſerve him moſt.*

What pain the Jews travelled in when they Apoſtatiz'd from God to Idols, *Tophet,* and the Valley of *Hinnon,* where they offered their Children in the fire to *Moloch,* are abundant witneſſes. Did God put them to ſuch pain in his ſervice? God called them to offer their Beaſts in Sacrifice to him: But they offer their Children in Sacrifice to that abominable Idol. *Wicked men live under a hard task-maſter.*

Now beſides all theſe outward pains which either are concomitants, or conſequents of wickedneſs: There is an inward pain far worſe then theſe. Inward pain ariſeth ſometimes upon the diſappointment of his hopes. A wicked man is exceedingly pained with labour in the attaining of his end, but he is much more pained with grief, when he cannot attain his end; he hangs between hope and fear, while he is at work (for he that cannot walk by faith to his end, ſhall meet with fears enough before he comes at it) but when his ſenſe tells him that he cannot come at it, he falls into the gulf of deſpair. Beſides this pain of fear that he ſhall not, and that of deſpair, when he cannot compaſs his deſigns or ends, he is often afflicted with a fiercer pain then either of theſe, even with the gripes and gnawings of his own evil conſcience for the evil he hath done. This pain follows ſome wicked men all the dayes of their life; and it ſhall be the portion of all wicked men after death. *Eliphaz* aims at this in the next Verſe, while he ſaith, *A dreadful ſound is in his ears;* there I ſhall further inſiſt upon it. We have yet another very conſiderable part of the wicked mans miſery held forth in the cloſe of this Verſe.

And the number of years is hidden to the oppreſſor.

The word which we render, **Oppreſſor,** ſignifies a man exceeding powerful and terrible, or by his power terrifying others; He that oppreſſeth muſt have power, and ſome deſire power for no other end, but to enable them to oppreſs. *Solomon* ſpeaks of a *poor man that oppreſſeth* (*Prov.* 28. 3.) but he oppreſſeth only thoſe who are leſs powerful then himſelf. *A poor man that oppreſſeth the poor, is, &c.* One poor man may be as much above another poor man in power, as ſome rich men are above the poor. Equals in power cannot oppreſs.

עָרִיץ *Violentus, crudelis, robuſtus tyrannus, qui ſuis nititur opibus, & aliis terribilis eſt.*

But who is this Oppreſſor to whom the number of years are hid? The Oppreſſor in this part of the Verſe, is the wicked man in the former part; *Eliphaz* ſpeaks ſtill of the ſame perſon, though under another name, whom he there called wicked, he calls here an Oppreſſor.

Hence Note, *That to oppreſs is a very great wickedneſs;*

For an oppreſſor and a wicked man are the ſame man.

Again, in that the word which ſignifies an oppreſſor, ſignifies alſo a *mighty man,* or a man of great ſtrength.

We may further Note, *That men who have much power are apt to abuſe it for the oppreſſion of others.*

It is in the power of my hand ſaid Laban *to* Jacob, *to do thee hurt;* And *Laban* had hurt *Jacob,* if God had not ſtopt him; *They that have much power in their hands, need much holineſs in their hearts, that they may uſe it well; much power is a temptation to do much hurt.*

Pauci anni reconditi ſunt violento. Jun.

The number of years is hidden to the Oppreſſors.

The number of years,] Say ſome, is an Hebraiſm, for few years, or years that are eaſily numerable; a Child may tell the years of an Oppreſſor, they are ſo few: Hence the words are alſo rendered thus, *Few years are laid up for the Oppreſſor.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates plainly to the ſenſe, *Soon numbred years are ſtored to the Tyrant.*

Numerus annorũ, i.e. *facile numerabiles.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That wicked Oppreſſors are often ſpeedily cut off by the hand of God.*

(*Pſal.* 55. 23.) *Blood-thirſty and deceitful men, ſhall not live out half their dayes;* If God ſhould lengthen out the lives of men ſet upon miſchief, who could live? 'Tis a comfort for us, as well as a curſe on them, that *Soon numbred years are ſtored to the Tyrant, his treaſure is not great in dayes; who daily treaſures up wrath againſt himſelf.*

Another reſuming theſe words, *He travelleth with pain;* out of the former part of the Verſe, reads it thus, *And in the whole number of years which are laid up for him, he travelleth in pain:* That is, his whole life is miſerable: As if that which is a truth of all wicked men, were more ſpecially applicable to oppreſſors; That they travel in pain.

Hence we may Note, *They who love to trouble others, ſhall be ſure to meet with trouble themſelves.*

He that deſires to be feared, ſhall be often afraid. Oppreſſors and Tyrants in all ages have experimented this truth; which flows both from the nature of their unjuſt actions towards men, as alſo from the juſt retaliation of God.

Qui vult à multis metui, multos timeat oportet.

Our reading leads us to a further conſideration; *The number of years is hidden to the Oppreſſor:* That is (as ſome expound) they are determined, or defined in the ſecret counſel of God. It is under a hidden decree how long his oppreſſing power ſhall continue, and when he ſhall receive the reward of his oppreſſions: Or rather thus, *The number of years of his own life is hidden to the oppreſſor*; that is, he knows not how long he ſhall live.

But is that any ſpecial judgement upon the Oppreſſor, that the number of his years, or how long he ſhall live is hidden to him? Is not the number of a good mans years hidden to him? Are not the number of every mans years hidden to him? Doth any man know how long he ſhall live? *David* indeed prays, *Teach me to number my dayes* (*Pſal.* 90.) and *Make me to know mine end, and the meaſure of my dayes, what it is*, *Pſal.* 39.4. Yet he doth not deſire to know preciſely the number of his dayes, or time of his end, he only deſires to know their general number, or utmoſt extent ſpiritually; namely, that at the moſt they were not many, that ſo he might make a wiſe improvement of his life, and a holy preparation for his death.

Seeing then the number of every mans years is hidden to him, how is this reckoned as the peculiar puniſhment of a wicked man, that the number of his years are hidden to him? I anſwer, It is true, the number of years is hidden from all men, both from good and bad, the Lord hath made that a ſecret. Two numbers are ſecret.

Firſt, The number of the years of the World, when that ſhall end; *Of that day and hour knows no man, no not the Son of man, but the Father only.*

Secondly, The number of the years of a mans own life, or the day of his death is a ſecret which no man knows, though many have been buſie to pry and inquire into it. But though godly men know not the number of the years of their own lives, yet this is no affliction to them, under which notion it is here ſaid of the Oppreſſor; *The number of years is hidden to him.*

A wicked man is thoughful about this, how he may live long, not how he may live or do well; he would fulfil many dayes and years in the World, that ſo he might have his fill of worldly profits and pleaſures. He is therefore troubled to think his life hangs upon uncertain tearms, becauſe he is uncertain of any good beyond this life. A godly man knows not the number of his years, but he knows by whom they are numbered; that ſatisfies him, be they longer or ſhorter, more or leſs. But a wicked man would have the account in his own hand, he would be Lord of all, even of time too, but he cannot, *The number of years are hidden to the Oppreſſor.*

> Obſerve Hence, *That the number of the years of mans life is a ſecret which none knows but God himſelf:*

And as it is ſo, ſo it is beſt for man, that it ſhould be ſo, The certain knowledge when our lives ſhould end, would hinder us in many duties and ſervices of our lives. Men would be at a ſtand in their worldly callings, if they were acquainted with the preciſe date of their ſtanding in the World. Our not knowing this, is not ignorance, but neſcience; and were it not for this neſcience, we ſhould be taken off from the ſtudy of much profitable knowledge. Beſides, our not knowing the number of our dayes, ſtirs up in us a care of improving every day, and to pray with *David*, *Lord teach us to number our dayes.* Our not knowing which day ſhall be our laſt, ſhould provoke us to ſpend every day ſo, that we may have comfort if it prove our laſt. It is beſt for us not to know that, the not knowing whereof is a motive to be alwayes doing good.

> Secondly, Obſerve, *That it is a great vexation to the oppreſſor, or wicked man to think of the uncertainty of his own life.*

Numerus annorũ incertus eſt tyrãnidis ejus. Vulg. *Ex iſta incertitudine, ſequitur ſuſpicio & timor.* Aquin. *in loc.*

The Vulgar makes this Obſervation from the Text, his tranſlation of the Text is, *The years of his Tyrannical power are uncertain.* If ſuch could but live long enough, what work would they make? Yea what a world would they make? The Jeſuits ſay, *Take time and you may do any thing.* So alſo ſaith the oppreſſor, *If I had but time enough, I could do any thing*; though I am diſappointed now, yet I ſhall have a day to act what I project, and to pour out my revenges; But this cuts the oppreſſors heart, he doubts his life may end before he can accompliſh his ends. A wicked heart is not more pleaſed in doing evil, then troubled when he is but under a ſuſpition that he ſhall want either opportunity, or time to do it. This is added to the painful travel of a wicked man, that he knowes not how long he ſhall travel in this pain; for though all his be painful dayes, yet he had rather continue in pain, then not continue his dayes. But the number of years is hidden, or a hidden thing to him.

Cum ait numerũ annorũ abſconditum eſſe, intelligit annos quibus victurus, aut regnaturus ſit improbus tyrannus. Druſ.

VERS. 21, 22.

A dreadful ſound is in his ears, in proſperity the deſtroyer ſhall come upon him.

He believeth not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs, and he is waited for of the Sword.

Eliphaz having laid down this poſition, *That pain is the portion of a wicked man*, goes on to the proof, and illuſtration of it; firſt, in reference to the terrours of his conſcience; and ſecondly, in reference to the troubleſomeneſs of his outward ſtate, and the ſad changes that are incident to him. That a wicked man travels with inward pain, or terrour of conſcience; the firſt words of this context tell us,

Verſ. 21. **A dreadful ſound is in his ear.**

קול פחרים *Sonitus terrorũ, numerus multitudinis ſignificationem auget,* i. e. *ſonitus maximè terrificus, vel non unius ſed multiplicis terroris.* Merc,

The Hebrew is, *A voice of dreads*; the word is Plural, becauſe, not one ſingle terror, but a multitude of terrors, an Army of terrors incamp about the ſpirit of a wicked man: and theſe charge him without intermiſſion; as ſoon as one hath done, another draws up againſt him.

And he ſaith, *A ſound of terrour*, becauſe a ſound carries fear with it; *Fear is a perturbation of the mind, ariſing from an apprehenſion of ſome approaching evil:* Now, by how much the nearer evil draweth to us, by ſo much doth fear increaſe upon us; and then an evil may be ſaid to be very near us, when we hear the ſound of it. We quickly ſee and feel an Enemy, when once he is come within our hearing. When the King of *Iſrael* ſent a meſſenger to take off the head of *Eliſha*, *Shut the door* (ſaith *Eliſha*) *and hold him faſt at the door, is not the ſound of his Maſters feet behind him?* (2 *King.* 6.33.) That is, is not his Maſter near. And when *Eliah* ſaw the rain at hand, he thus beſpeaks King *Ahab*, *Get thee up, eat, and drink, for there is a ſound of abundance of rain* (1 *King.* 18.41.) So here, *The ſound of terror*, notes the ſpeedy approach of it; the Prophet (*Jer.* 4.19.) complains lamentably, *My belly, my belly, I am pained at my very heart, my heart makes a noiſe within me* (and why all this?) *becauſe thou haſt heard O my ſoul, the ſound of the Trumpet, and the alarm of War*; that is, becauſe now it appears that the enemy is at hand. When once we hear the ſound of the Trumpet, War is not far off, yea it is even at the door, and death is ready to climb up at our windows. Uſually the ear receives the firſt blow; we firſt hear, and then feel the Sword.

When *Eliphaz* ſaith, *A dreadful ſound is in his ear*, we may underſtand it two wayes; either firſt, that a wicked man hearing the ſad reports of approaching evil, is greatly troubled; or ſecondly, that a wicked man frames to himſelf an imaginary ſound of evil. His fanſie makes a noiſe, he thinks he hears the ſound of Drums and Trumpets, the clattering of Armour, and the claſhing of drawn Swords, he hears (as the Prophet *Nahum* elegantly deſcribes it) *The noiſe of the whip, and the noiſe of the ratling of the Wheels, and of the pranſing Horſes, and of the jumping Chariots.* Now, whether we underſtand it of the approach of real dangers, the ſound of which, are a terror to him, or whether we take it for thoſe fantaſtick, panick fears and Satanical deluſions, both or either of them render his life uncomfortable, and are the effects of an unquiet, or of a guilty conſcience.

> Hence Obſerve, *A wicked man is alwayes ſubject to fear; he that is a ſervant to ſin cannot but be a ſlave to fear. And he that hath done much evil, ſuſpects much.*

While we have Peace within, War without doth not much trouble, though it much afflict us. And while our hearts, toucht by the Spirit of God, make us muſick, a ſound of terrour to the ear is not terrible.

Impius tātū metuit, quātum nocuit.

It is ſaid of a godly man (*Pſal.* 112.7.) *No evil tydings ſhall make him fear* (though there be a dreadful ſound in his ear, a ſound of danger, yet) *his heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord.* A wicked man is terrified with conceited danger; a godly man is not afraid when there is real danger. A godly man hath a witneſs for him in himſelf; a wicked man carries a witneſs againſt him in himſelf; and this witneſs is alſo his judge to condemn him, yea his executioner to torment, and vex him; as ſoon as our firſt Parents had ſinned (*Gen.* 3.8.) *They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden, in the cool of the day, and Adam and his Wife hid themſelves from the preſence of the Lord:* Here was no appearance of terrour, it was the voice of God *walking* as a friend, not *marching* as an enemy, and it was in *in the cool, not heat of the day*; theſe circumſtances argue the guiltineſs of *Adam* and his Wife, who fled and hid themſelves at this appearance of the Lord. The voice of God walking, was a dreadful ſound in their ears, becauſe they had not hearkned to the voice of God commanding. Wicked *Paſhur*, who oppoſed the good Prophet, is branded with a new name (*Jer.* 20.3. 4.) *The Lord ſaid, his name ſhall no more be called Paſhur, but Magor-Miſabib*; that is, *Fear round about*, and in the next Verſe, the reaſon is given why this name was given him, *For I will make thee a terrour to thy ſelf:* He that is a terrour to himſelf, can no more be without terrour, then he can be without himſelf. Nor can any thing be a comfort to him, who is his own terrour. And therefore a guilty conſcience hears a dreadful ſound, what ſound ſoever he hears: he ever expects to hear bad news, and he puts fearful gloſſes and comments upon that which is good.

Nemo ſe judice nocens abſolvitur.

Peſſimus in dubiis Augur timor. Stat.

A wicked man interprets all reports in one of theſe two miſchievous ſenſes, either *To the diſcredit of others, or to the diſquiet of himſelf:* Bring what text of providence you can to him, he corrupts it with one of theſe gloſſes. Yea, the faithful counſels of his own Friends, are dreadful ſounds unto him, for he hath a ſuſpicion that while they are counſelling him for good, it is but a contriving of evil againſt him, or a ſetting of ſnares to catch him.

Again, ſometimes God creates a ſound, or cauſeth the wicked to hear a dreadful ſound (2 *King.* 7. 6.) *The Lord made the Hoaſt of the Syrians to hear a noiſe of Chariots, and a noiſe of Horſes, even the noiſe of a great Hoaſt*, &c. Upon this dreadful ſound, they aroſe and fled. Sometimes a wicked heart creats a ſound, and what the Prophet threatens, he hears, *the ſtone out of the Wall, the beam out of the Timber crying againſt him.* The Story tells us of one who thought that the Swallows in the Chimney ſpake, and told tales of him. We ſay in our Proverb, *As the Fool thinketh, ſo the Bell clinketh*; much more may we ſay, *As an evil conſcience thinketh, ſo every thing clinketh.* As he that hath a prejudice againſt another, takes all he hears ſpoken of him, and all that he hears him ſpeak in the worſt ſenſe, and moſt diſadvantageous conſtruction to his reputation; ſo he that hath a prejudice againſt himſelf, conſtrues all that he either hears or ſees againſt his own Peace: Hence it is that he doth not only flee when he is purſued, but when none purſue (*Prov.* 28. 1.) *The wicked flies when none purſueth* (except his own fears) *but the righteous is as bold as a Lyon:* This terrour was threatned in the old Law (*Levit.* 26. 36.) *They that are left alive of you in the time of your Captivity, I will ſend fainting in their hearts, in the Land of their Enemy, and the ſound of a ſhaking leaf ſhall chaſe them*; What poor ſpirits have they who are chaſed by the motion of a leaf? The ſound of a leaf is a pleaſant ſound, it is a kind of natural muſick. Fear doth not only make the heart move, *As the Trees of the Forreſt are moved with the wind* (*Iſa.* 7.) but it makes the heart move, if the wind do but move the Trees of the Forreſt. The Prophet *Iſaiah* tells Jeruſalem, *Thy ſlain men are not ſlain with the Sword, not dead in Battel* (*Iſai.* 22. 2.) With what then were they ſlain? And how died they; a learned Interpreter tells us how: They were ſlain with fear, and died with a ſound of Battel before ever they joyned Battel. This anſwereth the judgment denounced by *Moſes* in another place (*Deut.* 28.65.) *The Lord ſhall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and ſorrow of mind, and thy life ſhall hange in doubt before thee, and thou ſhalt fear day and night, and ſhalt have no aſſurance of thy life.*

Homines tui, nō expectato adventu hoſtis, velut transfoſſi exanimātur metu. Jun.

But here ſome may object, Is this the portion of wicked men? Doth a dreadful ſound in their ears afflict their hearts? Have not many ſuch, much peace? and do they not either ſmile or wonder to hear others complaining of an afflicted ſpirit, and beg prayers for the appeaſing of their troubled conſcience? which are matters they have no acquaintance with, nor knowledge of.

I anſwer, Firſt, We are not to underſtand the propoſition, as if all wicked men have, or that any wicked man at all times, hath this dreadful ſound in his ear; but thus it is very often, and thus it may be always: thus it is with many, and thus it may be with all wicked men. A wicked man hath (as we ſay) no fence for it, no priviledge nor promiſe to ſecure him from it.

Again, though ſome wicked men have not this dreadful ſound in their ears; yea though they have pleaſant ſounds in their ears, like them *who ſang to the Vial, &c.* (*Amos* 6.) Yet firſt, their peace is not a true peace; Secondly, it is not a laſting peace; Thirdly, that which they have, ariſeth from one of theſe two grounds; either from neglect of their conſciences, or from ſome defect in their conſciences. The neglect of conſcience from whence this ariſeth is twofold, either firſt, when they neglect to ſpeak to conſcience, conſcience and they never have a word, much leſs any ſerious conference, or diſcourſe; either concerning the ſtate of their hearts, or the courſe of their lives, and then all's peace with them. Secondly, when the ſpeakings of conſcience are neglected, conſcience hath a double voice of direction, and correction; conſcience tells a man what he ought, and what he ought not to do: conſcience checks a man for not doing what he ought, or for doing what he ought not. Yet many over-power and reſtrain conſcience from this office, and never leave oppoſing, till they have ſilenced, yea conquered it: Such as theſe have peace, ſuch a one as it is, and hear nothing but a ſound of delight in their ears, while this ſilence laſteth.

Again, this may ariſe from ſome defect diſabling conſcience, to do its ordinary, or natural duty. (the conſcience of an evil man may have ſome goodneſs in it) Conſcience may be conſidered two wayes, either morally, or naturally; that only is a morally good conſcience, which is pure and holy, a conſcience cleanſed from the guilt of ſin by the blood of Chriſt; thus no wicked man can be ſaid to have a good conſcience. That is a naturally good conſcience which performs the office or duty to which conſcience is appointed; conſcience is ſet up in man to perform certain offices: If the conſcience of a bad man perform them, his conſcience (in that ſenſe) is good.

The firſt office or work of conſcience is to obſerve, and take notice of what we do, conſcience ſhould, as it were, keep a Day-book, and follow us up and down with Pen and Ink, to write all our motions.

A ſecond work of conſcience is to teſtifie what we have done, and which way we have moved.

A third, is, to accuſe us when we do evil, and to acquit us when we do well: Now as a wicked mans conſcience is alwayes morally evil, becauſe ſtained, and polluted with ſin: So many times his conſcience is naturally evil too; that is, it will neither take notice of, nor check him for his ſin. When the wicked mans conſcience is in this evil ſtate, he thinks his ſtate good enough, and ſo he is at quiet.

Caſuiſts tell us of four ſorts of evil conſciences, all which may live out of the hearing of theſe dreadful ſounds.

Firſt, A blind ignorant conſcience that cannot diſcern between moral good and evil.

Secondly, A ſecure conſcience, which thinks not of any penal evil.

Thirdly, A dull, lazy, ſleepy conſcience, which hath little or no ſenſe, either of what is done or ſuffered.

Fourthly, A ſeared conſcience, which is altogether ſenſleſs.

A conſcience thus diſabled to perform its work, being either blind, ſecure, ſleepy, or ſeared, is tame and quiet with the worſt of men. But all this while, though this wicked man hath ſome eaſe, yet he hath no peace;

his conſcience while ſeared, is far enough from being ſetled; his conſcience while aſleep, is far enough from reſt. It is with ſuch, as with ſome ſick men, ask them how they do, they will ſay, Very well, when as indeed they are ſo ſick, that they know not how ill they are; they take death it ſelf for health, and their not feeling of pain, for the curing of their diſeaſe.

But when the conſcience of a wicked man is once enlightned, ſoftned, and awakened, he cannot but have theſe dreadful ſounds, which will neither give, nor let him receive any reſt. Conſcience will awake at laſt, and ſpeak terrible things; conſcience will be a *Boanerges*, a terrible Preacher, thundring out, not onely a chiding reproof, but a ſentence of condemnation, and then the wicked will even gnaſh their teeth, becauſe conſcience did no ſooner uſe its teeth, they will gnaw their tongues for ſorrow, becauſe conſcience had no tongue to ſpeak, or they no ears to hear what it ſpake, till it was too late. *A dreadful ſound in his ear.*

In proſperity the deſtroyer ſhall come upon him.

בשלום *In pace.*

The Hebrew is, *In peace the deſtroyer ſhall come upon him.* Peace is ſo near allied, and ſo great a friend to proſperity, that one word may well ſerve both. The wicked mans deſtroyer ſhall be to him like *Joab* to *Abner*, and *Amaſa*, ſhedding the blood of War in Peace, and putting that blood upon the Girdle about his loynes, *&c.* (1 Kings 2. 5.)

But ſome may demand, How doth this ſuit with the former Verſe? Where *Eliphaz* told us, that *A wicked man travels in pain all his dayes*: How is he in proſperity, if he travels all his dayes in pain? I anſwer, The denomination is given from the greateſt part of a wicked mans life, and that is trouble and pain. Or, ſecondly, if an inſtance can be given of any wicked man that hath had more good dayes than evil, or that hath had no ill dayes at all, in regard of any outward trouble and pain, then we may reconcile the Text thus; his proſperity is beſide his ſtate, yea, in his very proſperity he is in pain: *In the midſt of laughter his heart is ſorrowful, and the end of his mirth is heavineſs.* (Prov. 14. 13.) His is but a ſeeming, not a real proſperity.

Eſt amplificatio malæ cujuſdam impiorum ſecuritatis q.d. ſi contingat impium nihil timere ſed ſecure agere tunc & inopinato opprimetur. Pined. *Et cum pax ſit ille inſidias ſuſpicatur.* Vulg. *Omnia etiam tuta tyranni & impii timent.* Merc.

Further, theſe words are an aggravation of his miſery, becauſe if at any time he appears proſperous, and free from fear, then ſudden deſtruction overtakes him.

Or, laſtly, The deſtroyer may be ſaid to come upon him in proſperity, becauſe in his beſt dayes he fears the deſtroyer: he ſuſpects danger, when he ſees none; and is therefore never out of danger. Who this deſtroyer is, is left here at large; no particular one is ſpecified, but any terrible one is intended; *Eliphaz* doth not ſay, A Deſtroyer, but *The Deſtroyer*. One both powerful, and skilful to deſtroy, ſhall *come upon him.* He ſhall not onely *come to him*, but *come upon him*; to come upon, is to invade, or to aſſault: A friend comes to a man with kindneſs and embraces, to viſit or ſalute him, an enemy comes upon a man with blows and violence, to wound and deſtroy him. *In proſperity the deſtroyer ſhall come upon him.*

Hence obſerve; *When wicked men think themſelves moſt ſafe, they are neareſt to deſtruction.*

'Tis ſeldome that they think themſelves ſafe, and when they do, they are furtheſt from ſafety. *When the wicked ſpring as the graſs, and when all the workers of iniquity do flouriſh, it is that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever* (Pſal. 92. 7.) Their temporal, ſhort ſpring, is not onely an antecedent, but an Argument of their eternal Winter. And their Winter is not the going down of the ſap to the root, but the pulling of them up by the roots; they ſhall be *deſtroyed.*

(*Job* 20. 22.) *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits:* When it is full Sea with him, his Channel ſhall be dried up. It was ſaid to that Fool (*Luke* 12. 20.) *This night thy ſoul ſhall be taken from thee*: The deſtroyer came upon him indeed in his proſperity, when he ſang himſelf aſleep, with *Soul, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*, he could not keep his ſoul one night. (1 *Theſ.* 5. 3.) *When they ſhall ſay peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they ſhall not eſcape*: The general deſtruction of wicked men in the day of Judgment, ſhall come as a thief in the night. We have a repreſentation of this, in that woſul tragedy which the Lord acted upon the Egyptians (*Exod.* 12. 13.) *At midnight there was a grievous cry,* (he came upon them as a thief in the night) *for the Lord ſmote all the firſt-born of the land of Egypt*; they dyed in their warm beds, in proſperity the deſtroyer came upon them. This is bad enough, yet not the worſt of the condition of wicked men: For,

Verſ. 22. **He believes not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs, he is waited for of the Sword.**

This is a further account of the inward miſery or pain which afflicts the ſpirit of a wicked man.

He believes not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs] *He looketh not that he ſhall eſcape from darkneſs.* So Maſter *Broughton*. There are five interpretations given about this darkneſs, out of which the wicked man believes he ſhall not return.

Pii ſpe ſe armant & in ſpem contra ſpem ſperant. Merc.

Firſt, Some underſtand it of the darkneſs of ſin; but a wicked man cannot be ſaid to deſpair of that about which he never had any hope or deſire.

Secondly, Some underſtand darkneſs literally and plainly, of the darkneſs of the night, and interpret thus, *He believes not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs*; that is, he is ſo haunted with fears every night when he lies down, that he thinks he ſhall never live till the morning: This is a good ſenſe.

Thirdly, Others underſtand this *darkneſs* to be *death*, he hath a perfect ſound of dread when death comes, becauſe he believes not that he ſhall return out of that darkneſs. The Reſurrection is the conſolation of the Saints, in the midſt of greateſt dangers and thickeſt darkneſs; becauſe, though they dye, yet they believe they ſhall return out of darkneſs. But a wicked man, who believes or hopes for nothing beyond the time of this life, if he be once caſt into the Grave, either thinks he ſhall lye there for ever, or if he believes he ſhall riſe, yet he doth not believe that he ſhall riſe out of darkneſs, for he ſhall riſe in darkneſs, and go down to everlaſting darkneſs.

Fourthly, A fourth expounds it of internal darkneſs, the darkneſs of his ſpirit, or of thoſe miſts and clouds which hang about his mind. A godly man falling into this darkneſs, doth not actually believe he ſhall return out of it (for ſuch a faith were his return out of it) but a wicked man, as he hath no ground, ſo no poſſibility (continuing in the ſtate he is) to believe it. *Saul* had a woful dark ſpirit, and believed not that he ſhould return out of it, by the help of God; therefore he went to a Witch (a Counſellour of the Prince of of darkneſs) for help.

But fifthly, I rather conceive, as often elſewhere, ſo here, by darkneſs is meant outward affliction. When the deſtroyer comes upon him, and he is caſt into a ſad dark condition, he hath no faith for himſelf, that he ſhall return out of it, or be delivered from it. This is an extream aggravation of the miſerable ſtate of a wicked man, who either hath no outward proſperity, or his proſperity is nothing to him, he enjoyes it not; but if ever he fall into outward miſery, how great is his miſery? ſo great that he gives himſelf for gone, a loſt man for ever: *He believes not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs.*

Obſerve hence, *That a wicked man neither doth, nor can believe deliverance from evil.*

Firſt, He hath no ground to believe promiſes are the foundation of Faith. A wicked man may be under promiſes of converſion from his ſin, but he is not under any promiſe of mercy while he continues in his ſin; the whole Book of God yields him not (in that ſtate) any ſpecial promiſe, for ſo much as a bit of bread; when he hath bread, he hath it from providence, not from a promiſe, or but from a general promiſe. He is fed as a Beaſt is fed, the Lord being the *preſerver of Man and Beaſt*: He cannot have a ſpecial promiſe himſelf, not being an *heir of promiſe*: Therefore when he falls into darkneſs, he hath no ground to believe. Whereas a godly man never hath ſo much ground to believe, as when he falls into darkneſs, becauſe then he hath more promiſes than before; his outward loſſes gain him the advantage of many ſweet promiſes, which till then he could not plead, for the ſuccour and nouriſhment of his faith. As a wicked man hath no promiſe of God (in the ſenſe explained) at any time; ſo a godly man hath moſt promiſes of God in evil, yea, in the worſt of times.

And as a wicked man hath no ground to believe, ſo he uſually hath *no heart to believe*: and as he hath no reaſon to hope for better things, ſo he hath no courage, his ſpirit ſinks and fails when his ſtate doth. *Abigail* had no ſooner told *Nabal* that the deſtroyer was comming upon him in his proſperity, but his heart ſunk within him like a ſtone, and he dyed away preſently.

Secondly, The beſt of a wicked mans faith (that he ſhall return out of darkneſs) is but a preſumptuous fancy, or meer Fool-hardineſs. A good man is like a Child in his Fathers houſe, who takes no care, but caſts all upon his Parents; in the greateſt ſtorm he commits the helm to Chriſt, as Pilot; he can ſay as *David* (*Pſal.* 42.) when he is in trouble; *Why art thou diſquieted, O my ſoul?* He calls his ſoul to queſtion, and would have his ſoul give him a reaſon, *Why art thou troubled, my ſoul? hope in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him*: But a wicked man hath no God to hope in, therefore he cannot ſay, *I ſhall yet praiſe him*: That man cannot caſt his burden of cares upon the Lord (*Pſal.* 55. 22.) who cares not how he burdens God with his ſins; therefore he muſt bear and ſink under both burdens himſelf: He cannot believe that he ſhall return out of the darkneſs of trouble, who delights and ſports in the darkneſs of iniquity.

Again, Conſider, this is brought as a proof of the woſull condition of a wicked man. It is miſery enough, *that the deſtroyer ſhall come upon him*; but this is more miſerable, he cannot believe deliverance from deſtruction.

Hence Obſerve; *That want of faith in time of affliction, is more grievous than affliction.*

It is worſe not to believe deliverance, than to fall into trouble; as the life of Faith is the beſt life, ſo the life of Unbelief is the worſt life. *Deſpair of good is the greateſt evil*: Faith is not onely the ſupport and relief of the ſoul in trouble, but it is the victory and triumph of the ſoul over trouble. Faith doth not onely keep the ſoul alive, but lively; Faith keeps the ſoul fat, and in good plight; Faith is a ſhield, both againſt temptation and affliction. But every blow falls upon the bare skin of an unbeliever; Faith is a ſhield both againſt the fiery darts of the Devil, and (with a difference) againſt the fiery darts of God alſo. Let God himſelf caſt his darts at a Believer, Faith ſecures him from hurt, though not from wounds, yea, his very wounds, through a work of Faith, ſhall work his good.

It is the comfort of a man that *feareth God, and obeyeth the voice of his Servants, that while he walketh in darkneſs and hath no light, he is bid to truſt in the name of the Lord, and to ſtay upon his God* (*Iſa.* 50. 10.) But while a man that doth not fear God, walks in darkneſs and hath no light, his miſery is, that he can neither truſt in God till light comes, nor that light will ever come. How happy are the righteous, to whom light ariſeth in darkneſs? How unhappy are the wicked, who being in darkneſs, conclude that the light will never ariſe.

Faith makes all evil good to us, and all good better; unbelief makes all good evil to us, and all evil worſe. Faith (like the Horſe, *Job* 39. 19.) laughs at the ſhaking of the ſpear; unbelief trembles at the ſhaking of a leaf. Faith finds good in Famine, and a Table in the Wilderneſs. In greateſt dangers, Faith anſwers, I have a great God; when outward ſtrength is broken, and all lyes a bleeding, Faith anſwers, The promiſes are ſtrong ſtill, they have not loſt a drop of blood, nor have they a ſcar upon them. When God himſelf appears angry, Faith anſwers, I know how to pleaſe him, and I can go to one in whom he is, and will be well-pleaſed for ever. Thus Faith pulls out the ſting of trouble, draws out the gall and wormwood of every affliction. But where Faith is wanting, every affliction is full of gall and wormwood, and every trouble vexeth with a double ſting. It ſtings ſuch, as it is a trouble, and it ſtings them more, as they ſee no comfort in, nor way out of trouble. The darkneſs of darkneſs is this, Not to believe, *that we ſhall return out of darkneſs.*

And he is waited for of the ſword] This clauſe is near in ſenſe to the latter part of the former Verſe, and yet in this variety of expreſſion, there is ſome variety of intention. For the clearing of it, two things are to be enquired:

First, What is meant by the Sword.

Secondly, What is meant by, *waited for of the Sword.*

The Sword is taken two wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, literally, for, *That weapon of War*, and by a Synechdoche the Sword is put for all weapons of War; as alſo by a Metonymie, for War it ſelf: When the Sword is threatned in Scripture, War is threatned.

Secondly, The Sword is taken for the power of the Magiſtrate, who bears not the Sword in vain: Chriſt is deſcribed as a King armed with his Sword. (*Iſa.* 11. 4.) *By the Sword* (that is, with the Word) *of his mouth, he will ſlay the wicked*: Chriſt will pronounce a ſentence of condemnation, and deliver them up to execution: Thus the Judge ſlayes the malefactor with the ſword of his mouth.

Nempe ſua ſententia tradens eum juſtitiæ miniſtro.

Further, By a Synechdoche, the Sword is taken for all manner of evil and trouble; whatſoever hurts or afflicts is comprehended under the notion of a Sword (*Luke* 1. 35.) Old *Simeon* tells the holy Virgin in his ſong, *Alſo a Sword ſhall paſs through thy Soul*; his meaning is not, that ſhe ſhould be cut off in War by the hand of a Souldier, or in peace, by the ſentence of the Judge; but that ſore troubles and afflictions, like a ſharp ſword, ſhould pierce her ſoul.

Quicquid pungit & percutit, & torquet, & cruciat in ſcripturis ſanctis gladius appellatur. Hieron. in cap. ult. Iſa.

Here the Sword may be taken either for the Sword of War, or of Peace, or for any evil that befalls the wicked Man.

But how is he *waited for of the Sword?* The Original word is rendred two wayes;

Firſt, Actively.

Secondly, Paſſively.

Some render actively, *He is waiting for of the Sword*: He ſtands expecting the Sword, and that in a double ſenſe; he waits for the Sword which he fears will deſtroy him, or he waits for a Sword, which he deſires to defend him. Mr. *Broughton* gives this ſenſe, *Having watch, he thinketh upon the Sword.*

Circumſpectans undique gladium. Vulg.

Sc. vel quo pereat, vel quo ſe defendat.

Tanquam ex ſpecula expectat. Tigur.

Again, Others render it paſſively, *He is waited for of the Sword*, when he thinks not of it; The Sword lies in ambuſh to ſurprize him. A man is ſaid to be waited for by an Enemy, when he intends to aſſault him unawares; To be thus waited for by the Sword, is to be waited for by Sword-men. And it is as great a diſadvantage to be ſeen of the Sword, before we ſee the Sword; as it is (according to the old Proverb) to be ſeen of the Wolf, or of the Crocodile, before we ſee either.

Hebraizantes tenent eſſe participium paſſivum: hinc Rab. Levi *exponit, Conſpicitur à gladio. Aſpectus gladio.* Vatabl.

The wicked is waited for of the Sword, not for any ſervice, but for the revenge it owes him, the Sword lyes behind the door, or under a buſh, to ſnap him as he paſſeth.

Eſt Hebraiſmus, ut viderri à gladio ſit ab hoſtibus obſervari per inſidias.

The Septuagint, inſtead of, he is waited, or watched, or looked for by the Sword, render thus, *He is decreed into the hand of the Sword*; leading us to the appointment and deſtination of God, who hath ſet him out, and marked him for judgment. *He is appointed to the Sword*: Such a decree the Prophet ſeems to point at (*Jer.* 15. 2.) where he brings in the Lord, as reſolved to proceed in judgement againſt all prayers and intreaties, though made by his greateſt Favorites; *Though Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be unto this people, but ſuch as are for death, to death, and ſuch as are for the ſword, to the ſword*: That is, ſuch as are decreed into the hand of the Sword, let the Sword take them; the decree ſhall ſtand, *the ſentence is irrevocable.*

Decretus in manu ferri. Sept.

Conſpectus ipſe ad gladium. Mont.

Nempe à Deo conſpectus & deſtinatus ad gladium. Præviſus enim eſt ad gladium. Sym.

Taking the Text actively, Obſerve; *That a wicked man thinks every one his enemy.*

He dreams of danger when he ſleeps, and where-ever he comes, he waits for the Sword; *He that hath a mind to hurt others, fears it is in the mind of every one to hurt him*: He that is harmleſs is fearleſs; and while we go about doing good, we are free from the ſuſpition of evil. *Cain* having murthered his Brother, complains of the Lords ſentence againſt him, *Thou haſt driven me out this day*

Nunquam non divinã ultionem expectat vel metuit. Merc.

from the face of the earth, and from thy face ſhall I be hid, and I ſhall be a fugitive and a Vagabond on the earth, and it ſhall come to paſs, that every man that finds me ſhall ſlay me, (*Gen.* 4.14.) *Cains* complaint is the Comment of this Text, *Every one that finds me ſhall ſlay me*, is, *I wait for, or I expect the Sword: Cain* ſpeaks as if an Army were continually purſuing him, or, as if the avenger of blood were alwayes ready at his heels. And that which aggravates the wonder of this jealouſie, is, that we can give account but of one man alive in the world beſides himſelf at that time, and that was his own Father *Adam*; We read not of any Son that *Abel* left behind him, nor had *Cain* any Son (upon record) at that time; and yet he cries out as if the World had been full of Inhabitants, and every one of them his Enemy; *Every one that meets me will ſlay me.* What is ſaid of *Iſhmael*, is true of Oppreſſors, *Their hand is againſt every man*; and therefore they have cauſe enough to ſuſpect that every mans hand is againſt them, they are ever *waiting for the Sword.*

Ex omni parte inimicos ſibi imminere videns. Aquin. *Qui de nullo confidit de omnibus timet.* id.

Secondly, from the paſſive ſenſe, *He is waited for of the Sword*, Obſerve,

That a wicked man is in danger whereſoever he is.

He cannot ſet his foot over the threſhold but miſchief may arreſt him; the Lord ſaid to *Cain*, *If thou doeſt ill, ſin lyes at the door*; that is, (according to the ordinary interpretation) puniſhment lyes at the door; it lyes at the door, yea, it will draw the latch, or turn the key, and come in at the door; *There is no evil but a wicked man is ſubject to it*; as there is no good but is the inheritance of a godly man, who is therefore called *an heir of the promiſe*. He that is an heir of the promiſe, hath all the good things of this life, and of the next for his inheritance. When he goeth forth, mercy hath him by the hand, yea, mercy lyes under his feet, and holds a canopy of protection over his head. A wicked man is an heir of the curſe, and therefore he alwayes ſtands under the droppings of Divine anger; his breaſt is the Butt or mark at which God levels the deadly Arrows of his indignation; and *he is waited for of the Sword.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That the expectation of evil is more afflictive than the feeling of evil.*

He doth not ſay, he is ſlain with the ſword, or cut off with the ſword; but he is waited for, or he waits for the ſword: All evil attends him who is thus attended, or who gives ſuch attendance. He that is alwayes looking for evil, cannot enjoy the good which he ſees. For as the aſſured hope of approaching comfort ſwallows up our preſent ſorrows, ſo the continual expectation of approaching ſorrow ſwallows up our preſent comforts.

Fourthly, It is not ſaid either by what ſword, or whoſe ſword, he is waited for, but *he is waited for of the ſword*; here is the ſword, but here is no hand named, neither the hand of God, nor the hand of man, drawing and weilding this Sword.

Hence Note; *That the deſtruction of a wicked man is inevitable.*

When we neither know whoſe the Sword is, nor whence the Sword is, how ſhall we prevent it, or provide againſt it. When the Lord would aſſure us that an unavoidable overthrow ſhall come upon the Kingdomes of the earth, which oppoſe the Kingdome of Chriſt, he ſaith, *A Stone cut out without hand* ſhall do this; it ſhall be done no man knows how or which way; and therefore no man can know how or which way to hinder the doing of it. As there is a Stone cut out without hands, ſo here is a ſword to cut without hands. The judgment of *Babylon* is thus expreſſed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 47.11.) *Therefore ſhall evil come upon thee, thou ſhalt not know from whence it ariſeth, and miſchief ſhall fall upon thee, that thou ſhalt not be able to put it off.* The former words expound the latter: Why ſhould not *Babylon* be able to put off the miſchief? Becauſe it comes upon her, ſhe knows not from whence. We ſay in our Proverb, when we threaten a miſchief, from which there is no eſcaping, *You ſhall never know who hurt you*: He that knows not who hurts him, ſhall never know how to help himſelf; and while the hand that ſtrikes us is not ſeen, how ſhall we ſee to defend our ſelves againſt the ſtroke. He that waits for the ſword is alwayes in fear, and he that is waited for by the Sword, is alwayes in danger. Either of theſe is bad enough; and he that is under both, cannot be worſe.

Cum Supplicium dicitur, & non dicitur à quo inferendum ſit, inevitabile ſupplicium ſignificatur. Sanct.

VERS. 23, 24.

He wandreth abroad for bread, ſaying, Where is it? He knoweth that the day of darkneſs is ready at hand.

Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhall prevail againſt him, as a King ready to battel.

THeſe two Verſes are a further deſcription of the perplexed condition of a wicked man, *A dreadful ſound is in his ears*, &c. *He is waited for of the Sword.* And what more?

Verſ. 23. **He wandereth abroad for bread, ſaying, Where is it?**

We put in thoſe words, *Saying*, and *Is it*? the Hebrew being onely this, *He wandreth abroad for bread, where*; as if he had ſaid, *No man knows where, and he knows not whither himſelf.*

In Hebræo tantum eſt movetur pro pane.

There is a two-fold interpretation of this *Wandring*; ſome underſtand it of a powerful roving abroad for bread; he takes what he can from thoſe who are next, or he takes what comes next to hand: He muſt have it, it matters not much with him, how or from whom. Such are called *Rovers*, they rove abroad for bread, they ſpoil and plunder others, for the ſupply of their wants, ſhall I ſay, or of their luſts. But I conceive this Expoſition unſuitable; and the reaſon is, becauſe *Eliphaz* is not here deſcribing the ſin of a wicked man, but his puniſhment; to ſpoyl and plunder for bread is his ſin; to wander for bread is his puniſhment, and implies the evil and miſery that comes upon the wicked, not the evil and miſchief that is done by the wicked.

Tyrannorum furta & rapinas hic deſcribi putat Cajetanus.

Secondly, To wander, is the condition of a man who hath no ſetled dwelling. *Paul* was once in ſuch a ſtate, *Even to this preſent hour we both hunger*, &c. *and have no certain dwelling-place* (1 *Cor.* 4.11.) This was alſo the lot of the Jewiſh Martyrs, *They wandered about in Sheepsſkins, &c.* (*Heb.* 11.37.) Theſe were *holy wanderers*: They wandered in the world, that they might not wander from God. Here we have an *unholy wanderer*, who having gone aſtray from God, found no reſt among men, a downright Vagabond; for ſo the word is applied to *Cain* (*Gen.*4.) *A fugitive and a vagabond ſhalt thou be*; and we in our Law, call a ſort of idle Beggars, *Vagabonds*, ſuch as go from Countrey to Countrey, from houſe to houſe, to ſeek their bread. Such alſo were among the Jews, who are therefore called *Vagabond Jews*, (*Acts* 19.13.) To be a wanderer was one of the ſharpeſt threats that God ever denounced againſt his people, *My God will caſt them away, becauſe they did not hearken to him, and they ſhall be wanderers among the Nations*,

He wanders about for bread] In Scripture ſenſe, bread takes in all good things, even the beſt which concern this life: So Chriſt teacheth us to pray, *Give us this day our daily bread.* But here by *bread*, we are to underſtand the meaneſt proviſion, diſtinct from fleſh, and other Food; a man that lives meerly upon bread, hath but poor fare; though bread be the ſtaff of life, yet he that hath nothing but bread to eat, lives meanly, and hath onely enough to keep life and ſoul together.

Yet further, They that *wander for bread*, muſt be content with the courſeſt bread, and with a little of that; they are often glad if they get but a dry or mouldy cruſt of bread to ſatisfie the cry of hunger. So then, *To wander about for bread*, is to live a a beggars life, or to be driven to the utmoſt ſhifts to ſuſtain life, and keep from ſtarving.

Panis hoc loco non ſignificat, ut aliâs ſæpe, quodcunque eſculentum; ſed viliſſimum quemque cibum quo poſſit ſuſtentari. Pined. *His verbis notatur aliud Dei flagellum nempe extrema inopia.* Bold.

To be brought to a piece of bread (of our own) is to be brought to the loweſt ebb in worldly things, (*Prov.*6.26.) *By means of a whoriſh woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread*; That is, he is made very poor. And if he be at a low ebb, who hath but a piece of bread of his own: what are they who are forced to ask ſo low as a piece of bread of others? To want bread is ill, but wander about for bread is far worſe. He that wants bread is pincht, but he rhat wanders for it is diſgraced.

Exul, inops erres, alienaque limina luſtres. Ovid. in Ibin.

Obſerve hence, Firſt, *To wander about for bread, is a ſore affliction.*

Such an affliction, as *David* profeſſeth he never obſerved the righteous mans ſeed fallen into (*Pſal.* 37. 25.) *I have been young, and now am old, yet never ſaw I the righteous forſaken, nor their ſeed begging their bread*: The righteous are often troubled, yet never forſaken, or if forſaken of men, yet not of God; when all men, even godly men, forſook *Paul*, yet God did not: *The Lord* (ſaith he) *ſtood by me*, (2 *Tim.* 4. 16, 17.) And though a righteous man may be brought to begg, yet his ſeed (that is, his whole poſterity) is not; or if we take ſeed for a ſingle perſon, to ſee him beg for bread is very rare; ſo rare it was in thoſe times, that *David* had not obſerved it; for he ſpeaks not of that which cannot be, but of that which is ſeldome or never ſeen to be. 'Tis a mercy to be denied ſuperfluities, but it is an extream miſery to be denied neceſſaries. The Jews had poor amongſt them, but the Law made ſuch proviſion, that they had no Beggars, or wanderers for bread (*Deut.* 15.) He is not a Beggar that asks Bread upon a pinch, (for ſo did *David* himſelf, more than once) but he that makes a trade of it.

Caſus tranſitorii non reddunt mendicum. Muſc. *in* Pſal. 37.

Poverty or want is not a mark of Gods diſfavour, no more than riches are a mark of his love: Yet ſome want and poverty, that eſpecially, which is accompanied with a continual wandering for bread, is a mark of Gods diſfavour. It was a Prophetical curſe upon the Traytor *Judas* and his Poſterity, (*Pſal.* 109. 10.) *Let his Children be continually Vagabonds, and beg, let them ſeek their bread out of deſolate places.* And experience tells us, that though ſometimes a *Lazarus*, a good man beg, yet the race and generality of profeſſed Beggars are the worſt of mankind.

Secondly, Whereas *Eliphaz* ſpeaks ſpecially of the Oppreſſor, and tells us, that he *wanders about for bread*; we may obſerve,

> *Oppreſſion is the neareſt way to poverty: They who make Beggars to ſatisfie their luſts, ſhall be forced to beg for the ſatisfying of their hunger.*

It is very dangerous to make proviſion for the fleſh by lawful means, to fulfill the luſts of it; but it is moſt dangerous to make proviſion for the fleſh by unlawful means (by wrong and oppreſſion) to fulfil the luſts of it. They who ſo fulfil their luſts, ſhall ſoon be brought to want. *Hannah* ſung out this ſudden change (1 *Sam.* 2. 5.) *They that were full have hired themſelves out for bread, and they that were hungry ceaſed.* Not that they ceaſed to be, but they ceaſed to be hungry, or their hunger ceaſed. Godly empty ones were filled, and wicked full ones were emptied; and that which makes the want and emptineſs of a wicked man ſo great a miſery, is his want of faith and patience when he is empty; he hath done ſo much evil, that he hath no faith to believe that any man will do him good; therefore his poverty fills him with impatience, and his mind is more unſetled than his eſtate.

Thus ſuch as are here deſcribed (*Pſal.* 59. 14, 15.) *At evening let them return, and let them make a noiſe like a Dog, and go round about the City: Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not ſatisfied:* A good man may want meat, but he doth not grudge. He that waits upon God, and believes, ſhall be ſatisfied, though not filled.

Again, 'tis propheſied of wicked men (*Iſa.* 8. 21.) *They ſhall paſs through it hardly beſtead and hungry, and it ſhall come to paſs, when they ſhall be hungry, that they ſhall fret themſelves, and curſe their King and their God, and look upward*: When an unbeliever hath nothing to eat, he eats himſelf. His own fretting waſtes him more than his hunger. He then *looks upward*, not as ſubmitting himſelf to God in his hunger, not as depending upon God, for the ſatisfying of his hunger: In which ſenſe it is ſaid (*Pſal.* 145. 15, 16.) *The eyes of all wait upon thee*, or (as we put in the Margin) *look unto thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon, thou openeſt thine hand and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* A wicked man cannot look upward, *thus*, when he is hungry, he cannot look up and pray, he cannot look up and truſt in God; but he looks upward to curſe the God of Heaven in his heart, if not with his tongue; he looks upward, becauſe he is vext with all that is done below; he looks upward, not becauſe he hath any pleaſant ſights in Heaven, but becauſe he is diſpleaſed with all he ſees on Earth.

He wanders abroad for bread.] Where? or whither doth he wander? That which *Eliphaz* is conceived to aim chiefly at in this paſſage, is not ſo much the real, as the imaginary and conceited want of a wicked man. He wanders while he ſtayes at home, and ſeeks for bread, while his Barns and Tables are filled with it. He is terrified with forethoughts of poverty, in the midſt of his riches, and when he hath bread, ſaith, Where is it? He is ſo troubled with ſuſpected evils, that he cannot take comfort in his poſſeſſed goods. Hence obſerve;

Terroribus conſcientiæ ita divexatur ut in maxima abundantia ſummè egeat, laboret de victu ſupra modum. Jun. *Vagatur, vel in mediis opibus, egeſtatis metu, nec partis ſecurè fruitur.* Merl.

Firſt, *That abundance cannot ſatisfie.*

God only is fulneſs to us. A man may wander about in his thoughts for bread, when he hath bread enough about him, and ſay he ſhall be undone, and die a beggar, when he hath abundance. *A covetous man is an unſatiable gulf; He only is well who hath enough, and he is beſt who hath (in temporals) the leaſt enough*: But a covetous man hath not enough though he hath more than enough, and much more than needs; he alwayes dreams of dearths, and ſuſpects the Earth will be barren: with theſe fears he pines, yea martyrs himſelf, and is not at all enriched with all his riches; he hath ſufficient to maintain twenty, yet is told by his unbelief, that he hath not ſufficient for one. This is vanity and vexation of ſpirit; The life of man doth not conſiſt in what he hath, but in what he is, and hopes to be: his life doth not conſiſt in abundance, either for the continuance of it, or for the comfort of it. A man doth not live more dayes, nor more chearfully any day, becauſe he lives plentifully. The creature were a God to us, if it could do this to us; but this, God hath reſerved in his own hands (how much ſoever of the creature he gives out) that we may know our dependance on him.

Secondly, obſerve. *That imaginary wants, or to have an unquiet ſpirit in the midſt of our enjoyments, is more afflictive than to be in real want.*

The worſt worldly poverty is to be poor when we are rich; as it is the excellency of our ſpiritual eſtate to be poor in ſpirit, in our greateſt ſpiritual plenty to be little or nothing in our own eyes, when we have a great ſtock of grace: So it is the miſery of our temporal eſtate, to be thus poor in ſpirit, when we have plenty in the purſe; to ſay we have little or nothing, when we have a great ſtock of worldly goods.

Zophar concludes of the Hypocrite (*Chap.* 20. 21.) *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtreights*; which may be underſtood, either firſt, That when he is full, troubles ſhall empty him; or ſecondly, That while his fulneſs continues, even in his fulleſt fulneſs, he ſhall live, as if he were indeed as empty of wealth, as he is of goodneſs, alwayes ſpending himſelf with fears that all will be ſuddenly ſpent, and ſaying in his heart, *This will not hold out, I ſhall never be able to bring the year about, or bring* (as we ſay) *both ends together.* Hence his cares are endleſs, and he grudges himſelf ordinary comforts, his worldly ſorrow conſumes him, and he is willing to dye, onely to ſave charges: That man is in an ill caſe, who is grudged what he eats or ſpends by others, but it is far worſe for a man to grudge himſelf his neceſſary expences.

Some worldly men, whoſe Barns are full, are ready to ſay every one to his ſoul, as he (*Luke* 12. 19.) *Soul take thine eaſe, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*: Another hath his Barn full, and yet ſaith, This will not hold one year, and ſo gives his ſoul no eaſe at all. What the Apoſtle ſaith of himſelf, is true of all thoſe who have an intereſt in Chriſt, (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) *As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things*: But there are ſome rich, who make many poor, and themſelves pooreſt of all; for though they have all thoſe things, yet they are as if they poſſeſſed nothing. It is an affliction to be poor for want of riches, but it is a curſe to be poor in the poſſeſſion of riches. *He that loves Silver ſhall not be ſatisfied with Silver* (*Ecclef.* 5. 10.) To be ſatisfied, is more than to be rich, and he is alwayes poor who is unſatisfied; he that expects ſatisfaction from the creature, ſhall never find contentation in the creature; and he that expects no ſatisfaction from the creature, hath contentation in any portion of the creature. A godly man learns in every eſtate to be content; A carnal man is content in no eſtate; when he is poor, he ſees he hath nothing; and when he is rich, he ſaith, he hath not enough. Thus he wanders as well when he is rich, as when he is poor, and is therefore never ſatisfied.

Again, *He wanders about for bread*, **Where**? Or ſaying, **Where is it**?

Hence Obſerve, *A man that is not good, is uncertain where to receive any good.*

Where is it? Though a Believer want bread, yet he knows whither to go for it, and where it is to be had. *The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof; he goes to Heaven for bread as well as for grace*; he knows there is bread in the promiſe, and to the promiſe he goes. The promiſe hath all things both concerning life and godlineſs. Chriſt, who is the bread of life, gives us bread for this life; and having Chriſt with him, we have all things elſe; bread and cloathing, gold and Silver, are laid up in Chriſt.

An Unbeliever (as hath been ſhewed) hath nothing to do with promiſes, nor with Chriſt the fulfiller of promiſes, and therefore he is ever in doubt, when he is in want; and ſaith, Where is it? He knows not whither to go, nor to whom for the ſupply of his wants. A wicked man is never in his way, and, in one ſence, he is never out of his way. They may go any where, who know not whither to go. They are never out of their way, who have no home. Eaſt, Weſt, North, or South, it is all one to them; which way the ſtaff falls, they go, they have no rule nor line to go by; but though a wicked man know not his particular way, yet he often knows his general end, and that is miſery, as the next words tell us.

He knows the day of darkneſs is ready at hand

At *Verſ.* 22. *He believes not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs*; that is (as was opened) in caſe he falls into evil, he thinks he ſhall never get out of it; he hath no faith that he ſhall recover out of trouble, but he hath a ſtrong faith, that he ſhall fall into trouble: *He knows that the day of darkneſs is ready at hand.*

Here are three things to be cleared.
Firſt, What is meant by *knowing*.
Secondly, What by the *day of darkneſs*.
Thirdly, What by *being ready at hand*.

To know, it is here oppoſed to an uncertain gueſs, or to conjecture; to know is as much as to be fully perſwaded; to know, is to be aſſured; the higheſt act of faith is often expreſſed by knowledge: *Hereby we know that we know him* (1 *John* 2. 4.) That is, hereby we are aſſured that we know him: ſo here, *He knows*; that is, he is aſſured; it is ſetled upon his ſpirit, that *the day of darkneſs is ready at hand*. This knowledge riſeth not from reports abroad, but from his own breaſt; ſo the Septuagint tranſlates, *He knows in himſelf that evil ſhall be upon him*: As a godly man hath a witneſs for him in himſelf; ſo a wicked man hath a witneſs againſt him in himſelf.

Novit in ſeipſo quod maneat in ruinam. Certo ſibi perſuadet atque hujus rei præſagium ex ſui cordis ſenſu facit.

What the **day of darkneſs** is, learn upon the former Verſe, *He believeth not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs*; There I ſhewed a fivefold darkneſs; here I ſhall reduce it to one of theſe two.

The day of darkneſs is either the day of death, or the day of affliction; ſo 'tis taken (*Eccleſ.* 5. 17.) *All his dayes he eateth in darkneſs*; that is, he is in ſorrow all his dayes: Though he hath Sun-light, or Candle-light enough at his Table, yet he hath no light in his heart. So the Prophet (*Amos* 5. 20.) *Shall not the day of the Lord be darkneſs, and not light? Even very dark*) *and no brightneſs in it?* There is a day of the Lord which is nothing but light; and there is a day of the Lord which is nothing but darkneſs; that is, of tribulation and anguiſh upon the ſoul that ſins. The Prophet *Joel* calls it, *A day of darkneſs, and of gloomineſs, a day of clouds and of thick darkneſs. He knows that the day of darkneſs is*

Ready at hand.] The word which we tranſlate *ready*, ſignifies two things.
Firſt, That which is prepared.
Secondly, That which is eſtabliſhed, or confirmed.

נכן *Paratū, firmū, ſtabilē, certū eſſe denotat.* Druſ.

We tranſlate to the former, the day is ready or prepared; others render to the latter ſence, the day is eſtabliſhed, and ſetled; his day of darkneſs ſhall certainly come upon him. And whereas we tranſlate *Ready at hand*, noting the nearneſs of the danger. Others, to note the cauſe of the danger, render, *He knows that his own hand hath made a day of darkneſs*; that is, The villanies and wickedneſſes which he hath committed, cauſe the clouds of judgment to gather, and look black upon him; his unrighteouſneſs hath haſtened on his ruine, and wrapt him up in darkneſs, *He hath brought an evil day upon himſelf, by his evil deeds*; or as the Prophet ſpeaks, *His deſtruction is from himſelf*: He hath pulled down his Houſe with his own hands, and is the ſole author or contriver of his own ſorrows.

Tygurina per manum intelligere videtur ipſa impiorum ſcelera, & per paraphraſim ſic ſententiam elucidat. Scit quod ſuis factis periculoſa tempora accerſierit.

This is an experienced truth; but I rather take the words as we render, *The day of darkneſs is ready at hand*; that is, it is near, and will ſhortly ſeize upon him.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Many a wicked man grows into an aſſurance of his approaching miſery.*

It is as hard to perſwade ſome wicked men that their ſtate is naught, as it is to perſwade ſome good men that their ſtate is good; yet as many of the Saints conquer unbelief, and come not only to have ſome hopes, but high aſſurances, that there is a day of mercy at hand for them, that they are in a preſent happy ſtate, and eternal happineſs waits for them; ſo a wicked man (after long debate) may have his unbelief conquered, and though he hath been ſowing pillows under his own elbows, though he hath ſlighted all the counſels, admonitions, and threatnings of faithful Friends, though, notwithſtanding all this, he continue long, ſpeaking peace to his own ſoul, and ſaying, all is well, yet (I ſay) this man may have his unbelief conquered, and know at laſt that there is a day of darkneſs ready at hand; when his eyes are opened to ſee what he hath done, and what he hath been, he ſees that God hath rejected all his confidences, and that he ſhall never proſper in them.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That for a man to be aſſured of his own miſery is the height of miſery.*

Eliphaz puts it here among the puniſhments of wicked men. This aſſurance makes his heart ſhake; this knowledge is full of fear, and therefore full of torment. As to know that a day of light and deliverance is ready at hand, is light while we are in darkneſs, and deliverance while we are in trouble: So to know that a day of darkneſs and miſery is ready at hand, is darkneſs to wicked men while they are in external light, and miſery in the midſt of all their mirth. And as it is the higheſt comfort of the Saints to know that they have eternal life, to know that they are in the favour, and live in the love of God; (a man may be in it, and not know it, and then though he ſhall do well at laſt, yet his ſtate is but uncomfortable, and he that is an heir of Heaven, may walk as an heir of Hell, with a troubled ſpirit) but to know that it is ſo, this is Heaven before we come at Heaven; ſo it is the deepeſt ſorrow of any man in this life, to know that he hath eternal death; an aſſurance of this, ſetled upon the ſpirit (though I conceive a man cannot have an abſolute aſſurance of it, yet to have ſtrong impreſſions upon the ſpirit, that he ſhall never be ſaved, or that Hell is prepared for him) this is Hell before he is caſt into Hell.

A ſoul that doubts of mercy and of the favour of God, is in a very ſad condition, but the condition of that ſoul is unexpreſſibly ſad, which is aſſured of judgment, and of the wrath of God.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That as a wicked man may knows that he ſhall be miſerable in the end, ſo he may know that his miſery is near at hand.*

An evil conſcience awakened is the worſt Prophet, it is full of ſad preſages; like *Micah* to *Ahab*, it never propheſied good, but evil; and it doth not only propheſie of evil afar off, but near, or *ready at hand*: 'Tis true, an evil conſcience uſually puts the evil day far off (2 *Pet.* 3. 4.) There ſhall be ſcoffers, ſaying, *Where is the day of his coming*, &c. The day of darkneſs is far enough off, it hath been long talked of, but we do not ſee it, ſay theſe deſpiſers: But when an evil conſcience is awakened, then he ſees evil near, and himſelf dogg'd at the heels, or (as the former Verſe ſpeaks) *Waited for of the Sword.*

Hæc eſt pœna impii pars non modica quod cogatur ipſe ſibi ominari malum. Pined.

As a Believer, when the eye of faith is clear, ſees mercy near at hand (Faith makes God near, and then all good is near.) So an Unbeliever, when the eye of his conſcience is cleared, ſees miſery near.

Obſerve Fourthly, *The miſery of a wicked man is unmoveable.*

His day of darkneſs is eſtabliſhed by an irrevocable decree, there is no getting it off; he is under a Divine Fate. A day of darkneſs may come over the Saints, but that day blows over: *David* ſaid once of his day of light, It ſhall never be dark; and of his Mountain, it ſhall never be removed; yet he was deceived: But a wicked mans day of darkneſs ſhall never be light, nor can he uſe any proper means to turn his day of darkneſs into light. He cannot pray, and it is prayer that turns darkneſs into light; he cannot believe, and it is Faith that turns a day of darkneſs into light; he hath not a Chriſt to go unto, and it is Chriſt only who can turn darkneſs into light, death to life, and the waters of ſorrow into the wine of joy; his darkneſs ſhall never be removed, who hath not Chriſt (who is light) to remove it.

Verſe 24. **Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhall prevail upon him, as a King ready to battel.**

In this Verſe we have a double effect of thoſe troubles, which are the portion of a wicked man; the firſt effect is, *They ſhall make him afraid*: the ſecond effect is, *They ſhall prevail upon him*; both which are illuſtrated by an elegant ſimilitude, *They ſhall make him afraid, and they ſhall prevail upon him, as a King ready to Battel.*

Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid.] *Trouble* without, and *anguiſh* within (ſo ſome expound) He ſhall have ſtraits in his ſtate, and a ſtrait upon his ſpirit; both meeting, ſhall not only afflict him, but *make him afraid*. The word may be tranſlated to *fright*, rather then to *make afraid:* They ſhall ſcare him, not only out of his comforts, but out of his wits and ſenſes. There is a threefold fear.

רצ *Idem quod* צרה *anguſtia.*

Firſt, Natural.

Secondly, Spiritual.

To be ſpiritually afraid is good; and to be naturally afraid is not evil: So Chriſt was not only afraid, but amazed (*Mark* 14. 33.)

בעת *Perterruit, perturbavit.*

Thirdly, There is a diſtracting, vexing fear, which is both a paſſion and a perturbation: This is at once the ſin and puniſhment of wicked men.

Conſider with what weapons and inſtruments God fights againſt a wicked man: he doth not ſay, Sword and fire ſhall make him afraid, Armies of enemies ſhall make him afraid, but trouble and anguiſh ſhall do it; God can create and form weapons in our own hearts, to fight againſt us: Inward anguiſh is far more grievous then any outward ſtroke. (*Rom.* 2. 9.) *Tribulation and anguiſh ſhall be upon every ſoul that ſins, whether of Jew or Gentile*: Anguiſh is the edge of tribulation, both joyned, wound ſoul and body; yea, ſtrike through both at every blow.

Hence Note, *It is worſe to be afraid of evil, then to feel it.*

Every thing is to us as we apprehend it, good is not pleaſing to us, nor evil afflictive to us, unleſs we think it ſo: They who are not afraid of death, welcome it when it comes; others, through fear of death, are held in bondage all the dayes of their life.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Diſtracting fear is the portion of a wicked man.*

The troubles of the righteous are many, but their fears are few (*Pſal.* 112.) *His heart is fixed, he ſhall not be afraid*: 'Tis not ſaid, he ſhall not hear evil tidings (I know no man whoſe ears are priviledg'd from ſuch reports) but he ſhall not be afraid; *I will not be afraid of ten thouſands of people, that have ſet themſelves againſt me round about,* (*Pſal.* 3. 6.) *Though I walk in the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil*, Pſal. 23. 4. are the reſolves of Faith: Whoſoever hath much fear, hath but little Faith, *Wherefore are ye afraid, O ye of little faith?* Mat. 8. 26. And how can they but be afraid (when ſtorms ariſe) who are of no faith? When Faith increaſeth, fear decreaſeth; and when Faith is come to the height, fear is gone; where there is no Faith, there can be nothing but fear; *Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid*, that's the firſt effect.

But that's not all, anguiſh doth not only fear the wicked man, but *prevails againſt him*: Some render, *Trouble and anguiſh intrench about him*: The ſence is the ſame, it is ſuch an intrenchment as concludes in a conqueſt; the beſieger prevails. A ſecond reads it thus, *Trouble ſhall make him afraid, and anguiſh ſhall intrench about him.* The Original joyns the two Subſtantives together, and the Verb is plural, *Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhall prevail againſt him.*

תיתקפהו *a radice* יקפ *circumivit. Anguſtia vallabit.* Vulg. *Terrebit eum tribulatio & anguſtia vallabit eum.*

From this ſecond effect obſerve.

Evil ſholl get the upper hand of evil men.

A good man, poſſibly, may be afraid, and afraid ſinfully: exceſs of fear may take hold of him, but he ſhall not be prevailed againſt (*Prov.* 24. 16.) *The juſt man falls ſeven times a day* (into affliction and trouble) *and riſeth up again*; trouble may throw him down, but it cannot keep him down (*Mic.* 7. 8.) *Rejoyce not againſt me, O mine enemy, when I fall, I ſhall riſe*: The Church riſes in her falls, and ſhe ſometimes foreſees her riſing, when ſhe is fallen: The wicked fall, and riſe no more. And whereas *the Saints are more then conquerors through him that loveth them*; wicked men are more then conquered, they are utterly ruined, loſt, and vanquiſhed, becauſe not beloved. There are two battels wherein we cannot ſtand without the ſtrength of Chriſt.

Firſt, The battel of inward temptation.

Secondly, The battel of outward affliction.

We are no match for either, unleſs Chriſt be our Second. *Satan hath deſired thee* (ſaith Chriſt to *Peter*) *to winnow thee as Wheat* (hoping to find, or make thee Chaff) *But I have prayed that thy Faith fail not*: *Peter* fell into temptation, yea, he fell in the temptation, yet becauſe Chriſt undertook for him, the temptation could not prevail againſt him. And as there is no conqueſt over Satans temptation, but by the ſtrength of Chriſt; ſo none over affliction (which is Gods temptation) but by the ſtrength of Chriſt (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) *There hath no temptation* (that is, no affliction) *taken you, but what is common to man*; yet no man can ſtand under that alone, which may befal any man, therefore it follows) *But God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able*, &c. Man alone is not ſufficient, ſo much as to think one good thought, how then ſhall he think good thoughts enough alone, either to ſcatter a temptation, or to bear an affliction? To carry the ſoul out in ſuch a conflict requires more then one good thought, yea, more then many good thoughts; it requires good actings; yea, and ſufferings too; How ſhall he do this without the ſtrength of Chriſt? No wonder then if the leſſer of theſe, yea, the leaſt of the leſſer, the leaſt affliction prevail againſt a wicked man; and if while he runs with Foot-men they weary him, how ſhall he contend with Horſes, with trouble and anguiſh, ſhall not theſe prevail againſt him, as a King ready to battel? Which is the illuſtration of the wicked mans downfal: *Trouble and anguiſh prevail againſt him*: But how? Not a little, not with ſtrength only enough to turn the ſcale of the conflict, but mightily, even with much ſtrength to ſpare.

As a King ready to battel.] There are four interpretations for the making out of this ſimilitude; ſome place it between a wicked mans trouble and anguiſh, and the trouble and anguiſh of a King ready to joyn battel with a potent Adverſary: For, then his ſpirit is much troubled, knowing how great an adventure he makes, in reference to his ſtate, and how great a hazard he runs, in reference to his life, and perſon. The charge being ſometimes given, to fight neither againſt ſmall nor great, but only againſt the King. So wicked man when trouble comes, is like a King going to battel, full of fears and anxious thoughts what the iſſue and event may be: He looks upon himſelf as the mark, both of the wrath of God and man, and that every blow ſhall be directed againſt his breaſt.

Trouble and anguiſh ſingle out wicked men; when God ſends out his Armies of judgments, he charges them not to fight againſt the ſmall or great of his own people, but againſt the wicked of the world: Wrath aims at them, and therefore they are terrified at the approaches of wrath.

Secondly, Others give out the ſimilitude thus, *Trouble and anguiſh ſhall come upon him, as a King ready to battel:*

As when a King goes to Battel he is compaſſed with a ſtrong guard. (Every General hath his *Life-guard*, much more *Kings*) So, trouble and anguiſh ſhall compaſs a wicked man, as yet with wideſt difference; for the Guard compaſſeth the King for the ſafety and preſervation of his perſon; whereas trouble and anguiſh gather about wicked men for their deſtruction: But the Text will hardly admit this explication, and therefore I paſs it.

Prœliaturū regē circundare ſolebat globus militū, ut lectio Jygurinæ indicat. Anguſtia & circūvallatio eū circūſtāt ut regē confertis globis prœliaturum.

Thirdly, The Hebrew word which ſignifies a day of Battel, ſignifies alſo a *Sphear*, or *round Globe*, we tranſlate it, *a Ball* (*Iſa.* 22. 18.) where it is propheſied againſt *Shebna*, that the Lord would make him an example, and that (as the Hebrew is) *Toſſing, he would toſs him with a toſſing*, that is, he would ſurely toſs, and turn him like a Ball, into a far Countrey; as a Ball is toſſed or thrown, ſo the Lord would throw him into Captivity. Now becauſe it is a uſual way of embattailing; to draw an Army into the form of a Globe, or Ball; therefore the ſame word which ſignifies a *Sphear*, or *Globe*, ſignifies alſo a *Battel*, from the form of it. Taking it in this ſenſe, for any thing that is round, or circular as a Ball, or Sphear. This third interpretation of the ſimilitude riſeth thus, *Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhall prevail upon him, as a King put in Chains, or into a hoop of Iron*; ſome labour much for the maintaining of this interpretation, That *Eliphaz* intends to ſhew how wicked oppreſſors ſhall be ſurrounded & held faſt with trouble, like ſome great Kings, who falling into the hands of their Enemies, have been ſhut up in round Iron Cages, as *Tamerlane* carried *Bajazet* the Turkiſh Emperor; or bound in Chains, as it is Propheſied in the 149. *Pſalm*. It was the uſe of thoſe times, to make *hoops of Iron*, for the ſecuring of Kings and Princes taken in Battel; the forms of which, and how thoſe captivated Kings were lockt up in them, with the poſture of their bodies in that baſe impriſonment, may be ſeen in *Boldoc* upon this Verſe; and he annexeth divers texts of Scripture, in which he conceives there is an alluſion to this courſe way of handling Kings.

כדר *Significat globū pilam aut Sphærā. Apud Latinos Globus eſt hoſtiū aut Armatorum militū cuneus.* Liv. l. 1. Annal. *Romulus cum globo Juvenum.*

ובידור *Erit.* למלחמה *Ad prœliū à forma orbiculari, Caſtra in orbicularē formā diſponuntur ut fortiora ſint.* Merc. *Declarare volens extremas impii anguſtias, ut illū eo pacto undiq; ſtringi tribulationibus, quo Rex ab hoſte ſuperatus & captus, pro ſpectaculo publicè ponebatur in Ferricernio.* Bold. *Ita etiam textū explicat*, Vatablus.

Fourthly, Our reading compares trouble and anguiſh to a King, ready to Battel; as if he had ſaid, *Trouble and anguiſh ſhall prevail upon him irreſiſtably:* This is but a high expreſſion of greateſt preparation for a Battel; for when a King goeth forth to Battel in perſon, he will have all the ſtrength of his Kingdom with him, which *Job* himſelf clears in the 29. *Chapter, Verſ.* 25. where deſcribing his own former felicity, he concludes, *I choſe out their way, and ſat chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army:* That is, in great ſtrength and power. So the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *You have reigned as Kings without us, and I would to God ye did reign*; that is, you conceive you have had the confluence of all comforts, and ſtrengths, *You have reigned as Kings*, I would you had, that we alſo might reign with you, or ſhare in your felicity. So that when *Eliphaz* ſaith, Trouble and anguiſh ſhall prevail, as a King armed, and ready to ſet forth to Battel; his meaning is, They ſhall prevail ſtrongly, yea irreſiſtably. The wicked man ſhall not be able to ſtand their charge, much leſs repulſe it. Theſe ſeveral explications of the ſimilitude meet in one common truth: That as the wicked ſhall not ſtand in judgment, when God comes to judg all the World; ſo when the Lord ſends forth his judgments upon any part of the World, they are the men that ſhall ſurely fall; trouble and anguiſh ſhall terrifie them, as a King going to joyn Battel, or as a King taken and captivated in Battel, or as a King conquering and prevailing over his Foes in Battel. Sin prevails always upon wicked men, as a King commanding and ruling over them; at laſt, trouble (which is the fruit of ſin) ſhall prevail upon them as a King oppreſſing and deſtroying them. They who will not ſubmit to the rule of the Law as a King to guide them: ſhall be forced to ſubmit to the curſe of the Law, as a King to puniſh them.

VERS. 25, 26.

For he ſtretched out his hand againſt God, and ſtrengthened himſelf againſt the Almighty.

He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick boſſes of his Bucklers.

Eliphaz having explained much of the inward puniſhment of wicked men, the torture which they indure upon the rack of conſcience, as alſo ſome of their outward puniſhments, he ſubjoyns the reaſon of both, their ſin, in theſe two Verſes, and that not an ordinary ſin, but a ſin committed with a high hand.

Verſ. 25. **He ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God.**

And is it any wonder then that God ſhould ſtretch out his hand againſt him? Every ſin deſerves puniſhment, and ſhall be puniſhed either upon the ſinner, or upon his Surety; but extraordinary ſins call for extraordinary puniſhments: they who have done much evil, ſhall endure much. Juſtice hath an eye to the quantity, as well as to the quality of our works; and that's a work of wickedneſs in *Folio*, or of the largeſt ſize, which is done with a *hand ſtretched-out:* What revenge is big enough for a ſin thus big?

He ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God.] Here are three things to be opened:

Firſt, What is meant by the *hand*.

Secondly, What is meant by *ſtretching out the hand*.

Thirdly, How the *hand may be ſtretched out againſt God*.

Tanto ſupplicio nunc ſcelus digniſſimū explicat. Pined.

The hand may be taken properly, or improperly; properly for that member of the body, which is ſo uſeful and inſtrumental in all the ſervices of this life; and then to *ſtretch out the hand*, muſt be taken in a proper ſenſe, for ſo wicked men ſometimes do; they ſtretch out the hand of the body againſt God, by acting ſins of violence, and by acting violently in many ſins.

The outward members, eſpecially the hand and tongue, are made the weapons of unrighteouſneſs, both againſt God and Man.

The Church-Hiſtorian reports of *Julian the Apoſtate*, that when he was wounded in the Battel againſt the *Parthians*, he took of his blood, and threw it up to Heaven, he ſtretched out his hand againſt God, ſaying, in deriſion of Chriſt, *O Galilæan thou haſt overcome:* This outward geſture of his body, expreſſed the ſecret indignation of his mind. And it is obſerved by *Jerom*, who ſaith, he received it from the Tradition of the Jews, that the *Amalakites*, who were profeſſed Enemies to the Jews, did lye upon the watch, to take all advantages againſt them, in their march from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, and when at any time they turned aſide out of the way, either becauſe of legal uncleanneſs, or upon any natural neceſſity, they would fall upon them and ſlay them; which being done, they cut off that member which had the Seal of the Covenant (Circumciſion) upon it, and with their hands ſtretched out, threw it up towards Heaven, as if they would challenge God himſelf to revenge their blaſphemy of him, and the contempt of that Sacred Inſtitution.

Theod. *l.* 3. *cap.* 20. Niceph. *l.* 10. *cap.* 35.

Amalachitæ Iſraelitas in Exitu de Egypto vel ob laſſitudinem vel ob legalem immunditiē extra caſtra degentes occiderunt, & eorū circūciſionē amputatam in ſubſannationē Dei projecerunt in cœlum. Hieron.

Secondly, The hand is taken improperly, or metaphorically; ſo, the power of a man is his hand, the ſtrength of his whole body, ſtate, and mind, may be called his hand; his riches are his hand, his credit is his hand, his wit, and parts, Learning, and Eloquence, are his hand, as there is a power in all theſe. And when it is ſaid here, *He ſtretcheth forth his hand againſt God*; we may underſtand it in that latitude; for a wicked man improves the ſtrength of his body, the power of his Eſtate, his Credit, his Wit, all his accommodations in the way of Rebellion againſt God. A man is ſaid to ſtretch out himſelf, when he doth his utmoſt to attain his end, and makes the moſt of himſelf to any purpoſe: In ſuch caſes he ſtretcheth all that he is (as we ſay) upon the Tenters; and this all of his put together, is his hand ſtretched out againſt God.

Further, *To ſtretch out the hand*, imports four things.

Firſt, To do a thing with the utmoſt intention of mind and body, to do it with all our might and fulleſt reſolution. *Joſhua* being reſolved to bring total deſtruction upon the men of *Ai*, *Drew not his hand back wherewith he ſtretched out his Spear, till he utterly deſtroyed all the Inhabitants of Ai* (*Joſh.* 8. 26.) The ſtretching forth of his hand was emblematical, ſpeaking, or implying that his ſpirit kept up to the height of reſolution, for the ruine of that City and people.

Extendere manum eſt omnē adhibere conatū ad percutiēdū hoſtē aut aliquid aliud aggrediendum.

When the Scripture ſpeaks of God, acting towards Man, either in a way of judgment or mercy, this phraſe is often uſed, (*Exod.* 6. 6.) *Wherefore ſay to the Children of Iſrael, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an out-ſtretched arm.* (*Exod.* 14. 8.) *The Children of Iſrael went out with an high hand*; and at the ſixth Verſe of the ſame Chapter, the Lord bid *Moſes, Stretch his hand over the Sea*; to ſhew that he was purpoſed to work a Miracle, for the deliverance of his people. The Prophets are frequent in this language (*Iſa.* 5. 25.) *Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled againſt his people, and he hath ſtretched forth his hand againſt them:* Read *Chap.* 9. *Verſ.* 12, 17, 21. *Chap.* 10. 4. *Jer.* 51. 25. *Ezek.* 14. 13. *Chap.* 15. 7. In all theſe places when the Lord went with full purpoſe to puniſh, he is ſaid, *To ſtretch out his hand.* Now as when God ſtretcheth out his hand againſt Man, it ſhews his reſolvedneſs to ſmite, ſo when man ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God, it ſhews his reſolvedneſs to ſin, or his actual ſinning with full intention and ſtrength of ſpirit.

Secondly, *Mans ſtretching out his hand,* ſpeaks the confidence of a man, that he ſhall carry all before him, and win the day; it is uſual with contenders, eſpecially with Souldiers, before they joyn Battel, to ſtretch their hands out, to draw and brandiſh their Swords, in token both of their courage to fight, and of their confidence to prevail. Obſtinate ſinners are full of falſe hopes that they ſhall obtain what they deſign, and proſper in their projects of wickedneſs, and therefore they are ſaid to ſtretch out the hand againſt God.

Extendere manũ eſt habitus confidentis & potentiã vireſq; oſtendentis.

Thirdly, *Stretching out the hand,* is a poſture of pride and impudence; pride is written upon a ſtretched-out-hand. To ſin preſumptuouſly, is in the Original to ſin *with a high hand* (*Numb.* 15. 30.) The *Septuagint* render that place, *The ſoul that in the hand of pride thinks ſo, ſhall be cut off:* The *Caldee Paraphraſe* gives it thus; *He that ſins with an uncovered head*; An uncovered head is an argument of boldneſs, and that he who acts, cares not who ſees him. Modeſty cauſeth us to hang down, or cover the head, when we have done ill, and ſhame makes us cover the head when we receive evil, or are puniſhed (*Jer.* 14. 4.) *The Plowmen were aſhamed, they covered their heads becauſe the ground was chapt: for there was no rain in the Earth:* So that to do, or ſuffer with an uncovered head, is like doing or ſuffering with a high, or ſtretched-out-hand, boldly, preſumptuouſly, and as it were, hanging out a Flag of defiance again the God of Heaven.

Anima quæ in manu ſuperbiæ. Sep.

Fourthly, *Stretching out the hand,* is the poſture of a furious mad man; he that wants the uſe of his reaſon, makes this uſe of his hand, laying about him, as if he would do wonders; ſuch madneſs lodgeth in the hearts of debauched ſinners, they do they know not what; they rage and are furious, as if they would pull God out of Heaven, and throw the Houſe, yea the World, out at the Windows: Theſe ſtretch their hands againſt God, and they do it three wayes.

Firſt, Againſt the very being of God; ſuch a wicked man oppoſeth God as God, he wiſheth there were no God, or that himſelf were God; he would have all power in his own hand: *Francis Spira* in his deſpairing diſtraction ſaid, *I would I were above God:* In him nature ſpake her mind plainly, and not in Parables: Nature heightned in wickedneſs would be above God; therefore a carnal man is called, *A hater of God:* Now that which we hate we would deſtroy, and take out of the way.

Secondly, There is a ſtretching out the hand againſt God, not only in this open bold challenge, or profeſſed oppoſition; this very few will own. Few Atheiſts will ſpeak out their blaſphemy, or ſend their Trumpet to defie God; and moſt wicked men take a ſuſpicion of this, as the higheſt diſhonour and affront that can be put upon them. What? They oppoſe God? They ſtretch out their hand againſt God? They will tell you, they love God, and it may be they will tell you that God is their God, and yet will be found ſtretching out their hand againſt God: therefore not only do his profeſſed Enemies ſtretch out their hand againſt God, but even thoſe his profeſſed Friends, who live in the open violation of his righteous Laws; they who oppoſe the will and Word of God, the Statutes and Ordinances of God, theſe will be found to ſtretch forth their hand againſt God himſelf.

The Lord complains (*Mal.* 3. 13.) *Your words have been ſtout againſt me:* Who? we ſtout againſt God? when did we ſpeak againſt God? we never had ſuch a thought in our hearts, much leſs, ſuch words in our mouthes: So it followes, *Yet ye ſay, What have we ſpoken ſo much againſt thee?* The Lord tells them (becauſe it ſeems they could not) *Verſ.* 14. *Ye have ſaid it is a vain thing to ſerve the Lord, and what profit have we, that we have kept his Ordinances, and ye call the proud happy, &c.* To ſpeak, or think thus (though ſuch a word be not ſpoken formally, as it is probable they did not) is to be ſtout againſt God. To ſay, *It is a vain thing to ſerve the Lord,* is not only a diſſervice, but a Rebellion againſt the Lord: To ſay, *There is no profit in keeping his Ordinances,* is the higheſt prophanation of his Ordinances; to call, *The proud happy,* is to ſtretch out the hand againſt God, for he ſtretcheth out his hand againſt, and reſiſteth the proud.

Thirdly, The hand is ſtretched out againſt God, when it is ſtretched out againſt his people, his Servants, or any that are under his tuition, and ſpecial protection; to oppoſe, or ſtretch out the hand againſt theſe, is to ſtretch out the hand againſt God. The Prophet *Zachary* ſets forth both the care of God to keep his people from trouble, and his Sympathy with them in trouble, by an elegant Similitude: *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye* (*Zach.* 2. 8.) What part is more ſenſible of the leaſt hurt, then the eye, or being hurt, cauſeth a greater ſmart? God is as tender of his people as any man is of his own eyes. *He that toucheth them, ſc.* to wrong or vex them, toucheth the apple of Gods eye, he lifts up his hand againſt Gods face, and againſt the moſt excellent part of his face, his eye, and againſt the moſt excellent part of his eye, the apple of it or ball of the eye which is the proper inſtrument of ſeeing. We uſe to ſay, There is no ſporting with the eyes; men do not like it, to have their eyes played with: Surely then God will not bear it, that any ſhould ſmite or wound his eyes. And he interprets any hurt done to his people, as done to his own eye, yea to the apple of his eye. When it was under debate in the Councel what ſhould be done with the Apoſtles, *Gamaliel* adviſes, *Refrain from theſe men, and let them alone, &c. Leſt haply ye be found to fight againſt God* (*Acts* 5. 38, 39.) Some poſſibly would reply, We fighters againſt God? We love God; here is a company of turblent Fellows called *Apoſtles,* who diſquiet the City, may we not puniſh them, but we muſt preſently be judged fighters againſt God? No, ſaith *Gamaliel,* you fight againſt God, if they and their Apoſtleſhip be of God.

Dicimus vulgò cum oculis non ludendum eſt.

Saul was zealous of the Law, and (as he thought) for God; yet Chriſt rebukes him from Heaven, with *Saul, Saul, Why perſecuteſt thou me?* Thou ſtretcheſt forth thy hand againſt me, when thou doſt it againſt the Saints; then, there is a ſtretching out the hand againſt God, not only by a boiſterous oppoſition of God, As *Pharaoh, Senacharib,* and *Julian* did, but by oppoſing the wayes or word, the Meſſengers or Servants of God.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Though every ſin be againſt God, yet ſome ſins are more againſt God.*

We cannot ſay that every one who ſins, ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God; there is a difference of ſins in degree, though they are all in their nature deadly; there is a preſumptuous ſin, a ſin committed with a high hand, which hath theſe two things chiefly in it.

First, A ſinning againſt clear light.
Secondly, A ſinning with full conſent and ſwindge of will.

In that place of *Numbers,* where this ſin is deſcribed (*Chap.* 15. 30.) There are two other Characters put upon it: Firſt, it is called, *A reproaching the Lord:* And ſecondly, a deſpiſing *of the Word of the Lord*; Every ſin is a tranſgreſſion of the Word of the Lord, but every ſin is not a deſpiſing of the Word of the Lord; every ſin is diſpleaſing to God, but every ſin is not reproaching of God: Every ſin, even the leaſt, is a departure from God, but ſome ſins are full of activity againſt God.

It is conceived, that the *preſumptuous ſin* in the old Teſtament, is the ſame with, or anſwers to, *the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt* in the New; and that which leads to this apprehenſion is, becauſe no ſacrifice was appointed for that under the Law, as this is ſaid to be unpardonable under the Goſpel. And the Author to the *Hebrews* is expreſs (*Chap.* 10.26.) *If we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins.* The Goſpel knowes but of one Sacrifice for ſin, and that but once offered; they who deſpiſe that, have deſpiſed all, for there remains no more Sacrifice for ſin. God will not ſend his Son to die a ſecond time for thoſe who have trodden the Son of God in his death under foot, and have counted the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing. God indeed ſtretcheth out his hand all the day long, to a gain-ſaying and rebellious people, that is, to thoſe who ſtretch out their hands againſt him in his Law: But he will not ſtretch out his hand (unleſs to ſmite) to a gain-ſaying and rebellious people, who (in this ſenſe) ſtretch out their hands againſt him in the Goſpel.

Secondly, From the connexion of this Verſe with the former,

Obſerve, *That God proportions the puniſhment of man unto his ſin.*

There is a twofold proportionating of puniſhment to ſin.

Firſt, In the quality, or manner of it.

Secondly, In the quantity, or degree of it.

The Juſtice of God is viſible in both, according to the exact rules of retaliation: As I have done, ſo the Lord hath requited me, ſaid *Adonibezek* (*Judg.* 1.) He was puniſhed in the ſame manner that he had ſinned, and ſo have many others. But all ſhall be puniſhed in the ſame degree that they have ſinned. If ſin be great, ſo ſhall the puniſhment of it be. When the iniquity of Amorite was full, he had his fill of wrath. *When God himſelf was preſſed with the ſin of Iſrael, as a Cart with Sheaves:* then he laid on load in judgment. If any wonder why the wicked man ſhould be hurried, troubled, vexed, why he travelleth in pain all his dayes, he may ceaſe to wonder, when he reads, that the wicked man ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God. Is it any wonder God ſhould ſhew himſelf an Enemy to them, who practice the Enemy againſt him? Or that they ſhould be higheſt in ſuffering, who have been higheſt in ſin? The Prophet *Amos* reproves and complains of thoſe, *who made the Ephah ſmall, and the Shekel great* (*Chap.* 8. 5.) That is, who abated the meaſure, and enhanſed, or raiſed the price of their commodities: But if man makes the *Ephah*, or meaſure of his ſin ſmall, God will not make the *Shekel* of his puniſhment great. The wages which the Juſtice of God payes the ſinner, ſhall not be a peny more then his ſinning-work hath deſerved.

Thirdly, In that the ſtretching out the hand againſt God, is a ſin againſt light,

Obſerve, *That ſins committed againſt light, leave the ſoul in the greateſt darkneſs.*

A ſin committed in the darkneſs of ignorance, deſerves yet to be puniſhed with darkneſs, even with everlaſting darkneſs; much more thoſe ſins which are committed, not only in, but againſt the light of knowledge. Some ſhall periſh for want of light; they cannot but periſh who live and die in the abuſe of light. Many ſhall periſh becauſe they have not ſtretched forth their hands according to the light received, to work for God; how deeply then ſhall they periſh, who in the midſt of received light, ſtretch out their hands to work wickedneſs againſt God?

Fourthly, *Eliphaz* deſcribes the wicked man ſtretching out his hand; that is, all the power which God hath truſted him with, to provoke God with.

Hence Obſerve, *That wicked men abuſe the good gifts of God, and turn them againſt God himſelf.*

They uſe their hand, properly taken, againſt God; as alſo their metaphorical hand, their whole ſtrength againſt God; they ſtretch their authority, their high places, their parts, and wits againſt God; they form weapons out of all the good gifts of God, to fight againſt God; ſuch ſinning is out of meaſure ſinful. The idle Servant was condemned, who did not employ and improve the one Talent which he had received, to his Maſters advantage; of how much ſorer condemnation ſhall they be thought worthy who employ their many Talents to their Maſters loſs, and diſadvantage?

Laſtly Obſerve, *Sin is the greateſt evil.*

That muſt needs be the greateſt evil which oppoſeth the greateſt good: God is the greateſt good, every ſin is againſt God, and ſome ſins directly oppoſe God. The Apoſtle argues the evil of ſin, from the oppoſition it makes againſt us (1 *Pet.* 2.11.) *Dearly beloved, I beſeech you as ſtrangers, and pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly luſts* (he doth not ſay, which fight againſt, or diſhonour God, but) *which war againſt the ſoul:* We have no reaſon to be dallying with luſts, or to be friends with them, when we hear that our luſts war againſt us; but when we remember that our luſts war againſt God, we ſhould not only abſtain from them, but abhor them. Every thing is by ſo much the worſe, by how much that is better which it is contrary unto: There are four conſiderations which heighten the evil of ſin upon this account, that it is a ſtretching out of the hand againſt God.

Firſt, Stretch out a hand againſt God! No man ſhould dare ſo much as to lift up a word againſt God.

Secondly, Stretch out a hand againſt God! No man ſhould dare ſo much as to lift up a thought againſt God.

Thirdly, Stretch out a hand againſt God! Every man ought to fall down before God, and be well-pleaſed with whatſoever God ſaith or doth.

Fourthly, Every man is bound to ſtretch out heart and tongue, and hand, to think and ſpeak and do for God, and when all this is done, we have done but our duty, and the utmoſt that any man doth or can do in theſe, is not half his duty. How wide then is he from, how oppoſite to his duty, who ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God? *And* (as it follows in the next words.)

Strengthens himſelf againſt the Almighty.] That is, As the Original imports, who makes himſelf a ſtrong Warrier, and will ſhew his valour againſt the Almighty: So Mr. *Brougton, He would be valiant againſt the Almighty:* Or as another tranſlates to the letter of the Text, *He ſhews himſelf a man againſt the Almighty*; as if he had ſaid, *This wicked man ſtrains all the ſtrength he hath, to ſhew himſelf a man of his hands, or to play the man againſt God.* The Apoſtle uſeth that word, in reference to temptation, *Play the men,* or *quit your ſelves like men: Saints play the man againſt Satan; wicked ones play the man againſt God: he ſtrengthens himſelf againſt God.* But how? What doth the wicked man to ſtrengthen himſelf? Doth he gather Armies, lay in Ammunition, fortifie Cities, and Caſtles? Doth he thus ſtrengthen himſelf againſt the Almighty? All theſe are no ſtrength againſt God, and this is not the way the wicked man takes to ſtrengthen himſelf againſt God; how then? He ſtrengthens himſelf againſt God, *by hardening his heart*, by ſtopping his ears, by ſetting his face, by debauching his conſcience againſt the call and command of God. Thus,

יתגבר *Roboravit, fortē bellatorē conatur ſe præbere, virum atq; maſculū; in Deū ſe erigere & inſultare præſumpſit, Contra omnipotentē ſe virum exhibuit.* Jun.

ἀνδρίζεσθε. 1 Cor. 16.13

He ſtrengthens himſelf againſt the Almighty.

Before we had the word *God*, the *ſtrong God*, here *the Almighty*, which word in the Hebrew, ſignifies not only one that hath great power: But,

שדי *Qui omnia poteſt.*

Firſt, All power; *Shaddai* is he that hath power to do all things: Omnipotency is one of the incommunicable Attributes of God: All the power of man is of his giving, but he hath not given all power to any man, no nor to all men. Only Chriſt as Mediator, or *God-man* hath all power given to him. It is not the will of God to do all that is in his power, but it is in his power to do whatſoever he will. If the wicked mans power were ſuch, what work would he make? If he could do as much as himſelf pleaſeth, he would do nothing, which ſhould pleaſe either God or good men.

Secondly, The word ſignifieth, ſuch a one as hath a ſufficiency in himſelf to do what he will; God needeth not to go out for any aid, or call in the aſſiſtance of any creature: *Shaddai* is the Original of power, he hath all his power laid up in his own compaſs, and his compaſs is infiniteneſs; he is ſelf-ſufficient. Some Princes think they have power enough to do what they will, but they muſt do it with other mens hands. Though they have a civil power or authority to command all, yet they have not a natural power, ſtrength,

Qui ſibi ſufficit & nullius ope indiget, nullis externis armis aut munimentis.

ſtrength, or ability to execute all. God hath both theſe powers, he hath abſolute authority to command all to ſerve and help him; and he hath ſuch an abſolute ability, that he needs none to ſerve or help him: He that made the World alone, what cannot he do alone? God calls for our help that we may have the honour of it, not that he hath any want of it.

Qui ſufficit omnibus aliis.

Thirdly, *Shaddai* is he who hath not only enough for himſelf, but for all others; the five wiſe Virgins had Oyl in their Lamps, and they had enough for themſelves, but they had none to ſpare, they could not furniſh the five fooliſh Virgins. But the Lord God Almighty hath ſtrength and wiſdom for all that come to him, and call upon him: As he is ſelf-ſufficient, ſo he is all-ſufficient; his Ocean can quickly fill all our empty Veſſels, and his treaſury ſupply and bear all our charges. This Almighty God, who hath power to do what he pleaſeth, who hath all this power in himſelf, and who hath power enough to give out to all that need, and ask it of him, this is *the Almighty*, againſt whom the wicked man ſtrengthens himſelf.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That the heart of man is very buſie to arm againſt God.*

As when a people are threatned with an invaſion, they then ſtrengthen themſelves, they lay in their Proviſions of War, and get Forces in a readineſs: even thus doth the heart of man: Man hath three uſual wayes of ſtrengthening himſelf againſt the Almighty. Firſt, By carnal pleas and reaſonings. He pretends reaſon for what he doth; and he ſtrengthens himſelf againſt all that God ſaith, by reaſon: he ſets up reaſon againſt that Law which is the quinteſſence of reaſon, and will not be mad but by reaſon, ſuch as it is, and that is, ſuch as he is, a mad one. Theſe reaſonings are *the ſtrong holds* ſpoken of by the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down imaginations, and every high thing, that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God:* As the weapons of this warfare are not carnal but ſpiritual, ſo the ſtrong holds which theſe caſt down, are not corporeal, but carnal; they are not made of Stones, and Timber, of Earth, or Iron, but of the ſubtilties, ſlights, excuſes, ſubterfuges, and arguings of fleſhly minded men. All which the Apoſtle wraps up in the latter words calling them *imaginations, or ratiocinations, and high things*; that is, ſuch things as are formed in the high and proud conceits of the creature exalting it ſelf againſt the ſound and ſaving knowledge of God: Such as theſe:

First, *Others do ſo.*

Secondly, *Great ones do ſo.*

Thirdly, *This is the cuſtom of the World.*

Fourthly, *If I ſhould not do ſo, I ſhould diſhonor, yea and undo my ſelf: And why ſhould I refrain what others do, or what would be my own undoing?* No reaſon for any of theſe. Thus he ſtrengthens himſelf againſt the Almighty: his reaſon (ſuch as it is) will bear him out.

Secondly, He ſtrengthens himſelf againſt God upon preſumption of mercy from God; why may not I do thus? God hath mercy for ſinners, why not for me though I ſin? The Apoſtle cautions the *Epheſians* (*Chap.* 5. 6.) againſt ſuch preſumptions. *Let no man deceive you with vain words, for becauſe of theſe things, the wrath of God comes upon the Children of diſobedience:* It is good to plead mercy to ſtrengthen Faith, that ſin committed ſhall be pardoned; but wo be to thoſe, who plead mercy to ſtrengthen themſelves in the committing of ſin.

Thirdly, Others ſtrengthen themſelves againſt the Almighty with hopes of worldly gain, and they incourage themſelves in an evil matter, with promiſes of good; *We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance, we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil, caſt in thy Lot among us, let us all have one Purſe:* Thus *Solomon* perſonates the inticements of ſinners (*Prov.* 1. 13, 14.)

As a gracious heart ſtrengthens it ſelf for God:

Firſt, By the promiſes of God.

Secondly, By the experiences which himſelf, or others have had of Gods diſpenſations.

Thirdly, By conſidering the nature of God, how gracious, how good, how powerful, how faithful he is.

Fourthly, By remembring his relations to God; he is my Father, my King, &c. Shall I not venture to do or ſuffer for him?

Now (I ſay) as a gracious heart ſtrengthens it ſelf for the Lord, or (as the Apoſtle adviſeth, *Epheſ.* 6. 10.) *Grows ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, putting on the whole Armour of God:* So a wicked heart ſtrengthens it ſelf againſt the Lord, or grows ſtrong againſt the Lord, and the power of his might, yea of his Almightineſs, putting on the whole Armour of the Devil, that he may be able to ſtand againſt all the encounters of the Word, and of his own conſcience. For as the Word of God, and the graces of the ſpirit are the Armour and weapons by which the Saints ſtrengthen themſelves againſt Satan; ſo carnal reaſonings and the luſts of the fleſh, are the Armour and weapons by which wicked men ſtrengthen themſelves againſt God.

A wicked mans chief care is to fortifie and incourage his luſts; to put warm cloaths to his ſinful heart, and make it ſtout againſt God: *Sin begins with turning the heart from God, and ſin ends in turning the heart againſt God:* The firſt ſtep in ſin is a neglect of God, the ſecond ſtep is contempt of God, the third and laſt is a War with God: He ſtrengthens himſelf (for the Battel) againſt the Almighty.

Secondly Obſerve, *Sin runs us againſt reaſon, and cauſeth us to act not only wickedly, but fooliſhly.*

Is it not folly and madneſs for weakneſs to contend with Omnipotency? When a ſinner hath ſtrengthned himſelf the beſt he can, the very weakneſs of God (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) is ſtronger then he. *What King* (ſaith Chriſt, *Luk.* 14. 31.) *going to make War againſt another King, doth not firſt ſit down, &c.* As if he had ſaid, The Kings of the Earth are not ſo fooliſh, ſo brainleſs, and counſelleſs to contend with thoſe, whom they cannot match; they will hardly venture a Battel with ten thouſand againſt twenty thouſand, they will rather make a diſadvantageous Peace, then proceed in a War upon ſuch diſadvantages. The King of *Iſrael* reproved the challenge which the King of *Judah* ſent him, by the Parable of the Thiſtle in *Lebanon*, aſpiring to match with the Cedar in *Lebanon* (2 *King.* 14. 9.) What's a Thiſtle to a Cedar? Then what is man to God? See then what a reaſonleſs, yea ſenſleſs creature man is, who will needs go out againſt God to Battel, though all the number he can muſter, is not only as diſproportionable as ten thouſand to twenty thouſand, as a Thiſtle to a Cedar, but more then one ſingle man is to a Million of men, or then a bruiſed Reed to the ſtrongeſt Oak. God with eaſe made all the power of man alone, and he, though alone, can more eaſily deſtroy it: it coſt him but the ſpeaking of a word to ſet it up, and he can pull it down with, yea without a word ſpeaking. Many men have been ſtyled, *The great, The ſtrong, The mighty:* But no man ever durſt own this ſtyle, *The Almighty:* This title of God in the Text, *The Almighty*, ſhould make *the mightieſt of men*, the *Nimrods* of the World afraid to meddle, yea to think a thought of medling with God. The abſurdity of men in ſtrengthening themſelves againſt the Almighty, may appear yet more diſtinctly in three particulars.

Firſt, He that is Almighty is ſtronger then All; there cannot be two Almighties. Hence the Apoſtle argues (1 *Cor.* 10.) *Will you provoke the Lord to anger, are you ſtronger then he?* It is baſe and cowardly to provoke thoſe that are weaker then our ſelves; it may give us trouble enough to provoke thoſe who are as ſtrong as our ſelves, but it is either madneſs or deſperateneſs to provoke thoſe who are ſtronger then our ſelves. And when the Apoſtle demands, or rather expoſtulates, *Are ye ſtronger then he?* His queſtion calls for this poſitive aſſertory anſwer, we are infinitely weaker then he; and therefore there is no prevailing againſt him, not only not in all things, but not in any thing. It is poſſible for a weak Enemy to prevail ſometimes upon a mighty Enemy. The *Romans* who commanded the world for many ages, and were too ſtrong for any Nation, did yet receive ſome foils; though they were never conquered, yet they were ſometimes worſted, not only by ſurpriſals and Ambuſcadoes, but in the open field; and even petty Princes gave checks for a while, to ſome of their deſigns. But *El-ſhaddai*, the Almighty God, never received any defeat, nor is he within the poſſibility of a ſurpize.

Secondly, Not only cannot the Lord be defeated, but he cannot be endammaged; he never loſt (as we ſay) ſo much as a hair of his head, nor did he ever ſuffer ſo much as the ſcratch of a Pin. The *Romans* obtained ſome Victories with ſuch extream loſs and hazzard, that it hath been ſaid, Two or three more ſuch Victories, would utterly undo them; they who were never defeated or foiled, have yet been greatly endammaged in Battel; and their cleareſt gains have not been without ſome loſs: but the Almighty never loſt the worth of a thread, or drop of blood, in all thoſe innumerable Victories which he hath gained.

Thirdly, Man cannot ſo much as hinder or retard the deſigns of God. He tranſcends all the impediments, and throws open all the Barracadoes that are ſet in his way. *He will work, and who ſhall let him?* (*Iſa.* 43. 13.) There is no putting of a bar in his way; and therefore if any ſhould anſwer the queſtion, *Who ſhall let it?* Yes, there are ſome will let it, the great men, the Nobles of the Earth, ſay no; they will let it. But they ſhall not, ſaith God, in the next Verſe (*Verſ.* 14.) *For your ſake* (ſpeaking to his people in Captivity) *I have ſent to Babylon, and have brought down all their Nobles.* The Original word for Nobles, ſignifies alſo *Bars*, the Bars of a door, or Caſtle-gate, as we put in the Margin of our Bibles; to note, that Nobles and great men ſhould be the ſtrength of a People, and a ſtop to the entrance of any evil among them: but if in ſtead of that, they prove like *Bars*, only to hinder the good of a People, and to lie croſs in all publike proceedings; then the Lord, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, brings them down, and breaks them all to pieces. *I will work, and who ſhall let it?* The Nobles, the Bars ſhall not, though Bars of Iron to Gates of Braſs.

It was ſaid in opening the words, that ſtretching out the hand is the poſture of a mad man: Conſider this, and then ſay, Is it not the maddeſt madneſs to ſtretch out the hand againſt God, or to ſtrengthen our ſelves againſt the Almighty, to oppoſe him, againſt whom it is impoſſible not only to prevail, but to do him the leaſt hurt, or give him the leaſt check or ſtop in his way? If we ſhould ſee a man ſet his ſhoulder againſt a Wall of Braſs, or blow a Feather againſt it, hoping to overturn and batter it down, would not we ſay, this man is either a Fool, who never had the uſe of reaſon, or a Mad-man, who hath loſt his reaſon? He that oppoſeth the counſels and ways of God, can no more overthrow them, then a Feather can a Wall of Braſs, or the touch of a little finger, the ſtrongeſt Tower. The Pſalmiſt repreſents us with theſe ſimple attempts (*Pſal.* 2. 1, 2, *&c.*) *Why do the Gentiles rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth take counſel,* &c. *Come let us break their bands and caſt their cords away from us:* What follows? *He that ſits in Heaven ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion:* He ſees how poor, how inconſiderable, theſe motions and commotions, both of the *Many* and of the *Mighty* are, to give check to that Decree of his Almightineſs, *to ſet his Son upon the holy Hill of Sion.*

Eliphaz hath not yet done with his deſcription of the impotent rage of man againſt the *Almighty God.* O ſinful vain man, whither wilt thou go? What wilt thou do next? The next Verſe tells us,

Verſ. 26. **He runs upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick Boſſes of his Bucklers.**

This 26. Verſe is an amplification, or aggravation of the madneſs of a wicked man, who, when he hath ſtrengthened himſelf againſt God (as he thinks and hopes) ſufficiently, then he *runs upon him, &c.*

Eliphaz carrieth on the metaphor of a Battel, which before it is fought, Armies are muſtered, and drawn up in view of each other; and then to ſhew their courage, they ſtretch out their hands, draw their Swords, and as ſoon as the *Signal of the Battel* is given, by ſound of Trumpet, beat of Drum, or diſcharge of Cannon, they run on upon one another; and when the Battel comes to the heat and hight, they charge home, *even upon the necks of one another, and upon the Boſſes of their Bucklers:* Here's the deſcription of a fierce charge. This wicked one is a Champion for Hell, he challenges the God of Heaven, *and runs upon him, &c.* with utmoſt violence: That's the ſum of the words, I ſhall now open them a little further.

He runs upon him, even upon his neck.

There is a difference among Interpreters about that Antecedent, ſome underſtand *God*: As if the meaning were, God runneth upon a wicked man, like a ſtrong Warrier, with incredible ſwiftneſs and irreſiſtible force, to caſt him down. The wicked man having ſtretched out his hand, and ſtrengthned himſelf againſt the Almighty, now the Almighty runs upon *his neck, even upon the thick boſſes of his Buckler;* Come ſaith God, *I will have a bout with thee, if thou dareſt, I will try it out with thee, I am not afraid of thy ſtiff neck, though it hath Iron ſinews, nor of the thick boſſes of thy Buckler, though they be of Steel.*

Quia impius manū in Deū extēdit ideo currit in eū Deus ad collum & in dēſitate dorſorū clypeorū ejus, q. d. in ea quibus iſte maxime roboratur. Rab. Lev. Vatabl. Beza.

Thus ſome, both later Writers, and ancient Rabbins, give the ſenſe, but I rather conceive (with others) that *Eliphaz* ſtill proſecutes the ſtrange progreſs, and hightned wickedneſs of man, who having ſtrengthned himſelf, by hardning his heart againſt God, *runs upon him, even upon his neck, &c.* Taking this ſenſe, there is a different reading; thus, *He runs upon him with his neck;* we ſay, the wicked man runs upon the neck of God; they ſay, A wicked man runs upon God with his neck; their meaning is, He runs upon him audaciouſly and proudly. The neck lifted up, is a token of pride, and preſumptuous boldneſs: And to run with the neck, is to run with the neck lifted up, or ſtretched out; which is indeed the periphraſis of pride. (*Pſal.* 75. 5.) *Speak not with a ſtiff neck;* that is, with a ſpirit unwilling to ſubmit to my diſpenſations. The Prophet *Iſaiah* complains, and threatens (*Iſa.* 3. 16.) *Becauſe the Daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with ſtretched out necks:* That is, becauſe they teſtifie the pride of their hearts, by the gate and poſtures of the body, as much as by the vain attire, and apparel of the body: *Therefore the Lord will ſmite, &c.* The Lord tells *Moſes* (*Exod.* 32. 9.) *I have ſeen this people, and behold it is a ſtiff-necked people:* He complains by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 48. 4.) *I knew that thou art obſtinate, and thy neck is an Iron ſinew: Stephen* the Proto-Martyr gives a breviate of all their rebellions, *Act.* 7. and concludes (*Verſ.* 51.) *Ye ſtiff-necked, &c.* The ſtiff-neck and the proud hard heart are the ſame, all the Bible over.

Multo aptior eſt ut deſcribatur adhuc ille impiorū conatus adverſus Deū. Pined.

Inauditam impii temeritatem deſcribere proſequitur. Bold.

Currere collo eſt collo duro & erecto; ſimilia ſunt cū lana ponitur pro lana alba, &c. Druſ.

Thus the wicked man runneth upon God with his ſtiff, that is, his proud daring ſpirit. As before, *He ſtretched out his hand,* ſo now (which is more) *his neck* againſt God. The metaphor is taken either from Souldiers in battel, who to ſhew their valour, hold up their heads, and ſtretch out their necks, running head to head, and ſhoulder to ſhoulder, when they come to cloſe fight.

In erectione colli faſtus agnoſcitur. Merc.

Metaphora à milite Fortiſſimo in hoſtē impetū faciente.

Or, It is a metaphor taken from a Bullock *unaccuſtomed to the yoak;* who therefore will not ſubmit his neck to bear it. Wicked men are called Children of *Belial*, becauſe they endure not the yoak of obedience; when God would put his yoak upon their necks, they lift up their necks, or run upon him with their ſtiff-necks.

Metaphora à laſciviēti & procaci vitulo. Pined.

Hence Note, *It is pride of ſpirit which cauſeth man to oppoſe God.*

The Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *God reſiſteth the proud* (*Jam.* 4.) which intimates, yea and ſpeaks out, that the proud aſſault God. As the wicked in his pride perſecutes the poor (*Pſal.* 10. 11.) So in his pride he oppoſeth God. And as he that loveth God, follows, yea runs after God to obey him; ſo he that hates God runs upon him by diſobedience. An act of ignorant diſobedience is a going from God; an act of known diſobedience, is a running upon God: Running upon God, is not only ſinning, but impudent ſinning. The Angels in Heaven cover their faces before God, daring not to behold him: Humble ſinners on earth, ſuch as the poor *Publican* (*Luke* 18.) venture not to lift up their eyes to Heaven, but proud ſinners, lift up their necks againſt God. They who care not what God ſaith to them, care as little what they do to God: And they who have no faith in God, ſeldom have any fear of him; theſe *run upon him with their necks.*

Per ſuperbiā homo maximè deo reſiſtit & ſuperbus propter præſumptionē ſpiritus contra Deum currere dicitur. Aquin.

But I return to our Tranſlation, *He runs upon him, even on his neck:* That is, *on the neck of God:* that is, he ſins fiercely, and fearleſly; he doth not dare God at a diſtance, or like a Coward, ſpeak great words, and vaunt of what he will do when his Adverſary is out of ſight and hearing; but he charges on boldly in his very face.

It is ſaid of the Ram (by whom the Prophet means *Alexander the Grtat*, King of *Greece*, *That when he ſaw the He-goat* (that is, *Darius* King of *Perſia*) *he ran upon him:* That is, he aſſaulted him ſpeedily and boldly, overthrowing his whole eſtate, and ſo making himſelf ſole Lord of *Aſia*. The whole courſe of his Victories are deſcribed by this word, *He ran upon him* (Dan. 8. 6.) And when *Job* would ſhew how fiercely the Lord handled him, he gives it in this language, *I was at eaſe, but he hath broken me aſunder, he hath alſo taken me by the neck and ſhaken me to pieces* (*Job* 16. 12.) As God in a way of higheſt puniſhment, or chaſtiſement, is ſaid to take a man by the neck; ſo man in a way of higheſt ſinning and rebelling, is ſaid to take God by the neck, or to run upon his neck: He that ventures upon the neck, cares not where he ventures; and he that runs upon the neck of God, cares not on whom he ventures. And as in height of love, a friend runs and falls upon the neck of his friend; thus *Joſeph* did on his Brethrens necks (*Gen.* 45. 14.) and the Father of the Prodigal (*Luke* 15. 20.) *Ran and fell upon his Sons neck, and kiſſed him*: So in heat of wrath, an Enemy runs upon the neck of his Enemy; and wicked men (who are enmity againſt God) run upon the neck of God.

Cum eo concurrens collū invadet. Tigur.

Some conceive that this *running upon the neck of God* imports two things.

Firſt, That the wicked man imagines himſelf, as having an equality of ſtrength with God.

And ſecondly, That he hath authority above God, or that he is Gods better, and ſuperior.

This latter they ground upon an old cuſtom among Magiſtrates, who finding an offender contumacious, were wont to command the Officer to take him by the neck, and drag him out of the Court, to receive his puniſhment. But I ſhall not inſiſt upon that Criticiſm; eſpecially conſidering the incongruity of it with the next words;

Erat pœnæ genus ut Magiſtratus ſi quem ſuo imperio parum obedientem viderit, in collum invaderent & intorquerent. Liv. l. 4.

Even upon the thick boſſes of his buckler.

Malefactors are never permitted to come armed before the Judge to their arraignments.

The word which we tranſlate *Thick*, ſignifies alſo *Fat*, becauſe fat is thick: Hence the Vulgar Latine tranſlates, *He is armed with his fat neck:* But I paſs that. According to our reading (which keeps cloſer to the Original) *Eliphaz* deſcribes the ancient and preſent form of Bucklers, which as they are defenſive weapons, ſo alſo offenſive, and therefore have not only boſſes for ornament, but (one eſpecially in the center or middle with a ſharp pike in it) for uſe: For as the whole Buckler ſecured the body againſt the Arrow or Sword of the Adverſary, ſo if he preſſed near, this high Boſs, or Pike of the Buckler ſerved to pierce and wound the Adverſary. So that while the wicked man is ſaid to *run upon God, even upon the thick boſſes of his Buckler*; it ſhews the higheſt valiancy of a wicked man in oppoſing God; he fights not only afar off, but near at hand, and preſſes upon him, though within the reach and danger of his Weapon.

בעבי נבי מגניו *In denſitate altitudinū ſcutorū ejus: in craſſitiem corporū ſcutorum ejus.* Merc.

Alludit ad pervetuſtum prœliandi modum cum clipeo, in cujus medio erat prominentia, quæ dicitur umbo, in quo erat cuſpis quo cominus concertabatur. Bold.

Hence Obſerve, *There is no danger can keep a wicked man off from ſin.*

Like the Horſe in this Book (*Chap.* 39. 22.) *He mocketh at fear, and is not afrighted, neither turneth away from the Sword; he ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage, he ſaith among the Trumpets, Aha, aha:* Though God have a Buckler, man will come upon him; yea, though God have a Boſs upon his Buckler to ſtrike and wound him, yet on he comes. The Buckler of God is the Law or Word of God, and the Boſſes of this Buckler are the threatnings and curſes of the Law. Now, when man ſins, notwithſtanding the Law, which is the Buckler by which God ſaves and protects his Honour and his Holineſs, his Name and Glory from the wounds which ſinful man is ready to give him, then man may be ſaid to *run upon his Buckler*. And when notwithſtanding the ſharp threats and terrible curſes of the Law, which are the thick Boſſes with which he wounds thoſe who tranſgreſs his Law, when, I ſay, notwithſtanding theſe, man adventures to ſin and tranſgreſs the Law, he may rightly be ſaid, *To run upon the thick Boſſes of his Buckler.* God gave *Adam* a Law, *Of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, thou mayſt not eat*: Here was the Buckler; and when he added this threat, *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely dye:* Here was the Boſs. God ſent a word to *Pharaoh*, *Let my people go*; this was a Buckler: *If thou refuſe to let them go, I will ſlay thy firſt-born*; this was the Boſs. *Adam* run upon the Boſs of the Buckler, ſo did *Pharaoh*, and ſo do all wilful ſinners.

A wilful heart will go on in ſinning, whatſoever God is ſpeaking, or doing (*Iſa.* 57. 17.) *I was wrath, and ſmote him, yet he went on frowardly in the way of his heart:* Neither the wrath of God, nor their own ſmart, ſtop their progreſs, though ſmitten, yet they went on, Saints ſometimes go on in ſinning, though God be ſmiting; they have run upon the Boſſes of the Buckler, to the wounding both of their ſouls and of their outward comforts; wicked men will run upon them to the damning of their ſouls and bodies. Though they ſee, yea, feel the Boſſes, judgments not only threatned, but executed, yet [illegible] they will, and (like wicked *Ahaz*) *In the time of their affliction ſin more againſt the Lord.* This is the height of ſinfulneſs. As it ſhews the truth and height of holineſs in the Saints, when they will not only run to God in fair times, when men approve, but in the worſt times, when men oppoſe; when they venture to do their duty upon the Bucklers of men, yea, upon the Boſſes of the Buckler, extreameſt danger: So it ſhews a like ſtrength and height of wickedneſs, when men venture upon the Boſſes of the Buckler, upon the point of the naked Sword of Gods diſpleaſure; they will venture, let it coſt what it will; though the Lord ſet a flaming Sword in the way of luſt, as he did in the way of the Tree of Life (*Gen.* 3.) though the Lord ſet an Angel with a drawn Sword in the way of luſt, as he did in *Balaam*'s way, when he was going to curſe *Iſrael*, yet on they will: Till the heart be changed, neither Swords, nor Bucklers, nor Boſſes, neither wrath threatened, nor executed, can cauſe a ſinner to change his courſe.

This the Prophet complains of (*Iſa.* 9. 13.) *The people turneth not to him that ſmiteth them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of Hoſts:* Their incorrigibleneſs under ſevereſt corrections is elegantly deſcribed by another Prophet, enumerating five ſpecial ſtrokes or ſmitings, to every one of which he ſubjoyns, *Yet have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord*, Amos 4. 6, 7, 8, &c. *When the bellows were burnt, and the lead conſumed of the fire* (that is, when all inſtruments and means of refining them were ſpent and worn out, yet their droſs remained in them) *The Founder melted in vain, for the wicked* (that is, their wickedneſſes, or evil things) *were not plucked away* (*Jer.* 6. 29, 30.) They went into the Furnace full of droſs, and they came out as full of droſs as they went in. The Founder blowed his fire till he burnt his bellows, but their luſts had no ſcent of fire upon them; his lead (by which he ſeperates the droſs from the metal) was all conſumed and evaporated, but the droſs of their corruptions waſted no more then the pureſt gold doth in the fire. Hence the Lord reſolved to waſte no more of his judgments upon them: *Why ſhould you be ſmitten any more, ye will revolt more and more* (Iſa. 1. 5.) To revolt from God, and to run upon him, are ſins of the ſame ſtrain; and they who revolt from him, will not fear to *run upon his neck, even upon the thick Boſſes of his Buckler.*

Thus *Eliphaz* hath given us an account, why the Lord afflicts a wicked man all his dayes; he fights againſt God all his dayes. We have a reaſon of this reaſon in the next words; why it is that this wicked man is ſuch a valiant Champion againſt God, why he commits wickedneſs with ſo much greedineſs; It is, *Becauſe he covers his face with his fatneſs*, &c. The fatter and fuller he grows in fulfilling the luſts of the fleſh, the more hungry and ſharp ſet he is to fulfil them. Full-feeding in ſin, doth not ſatiſfie, but increaſe a ſinful appetite.

VERS. 27, 28, 29, 30.

Becauſe he covereth his face with his fatneſs, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks.

And he dwelleth in deſolate Cities, and in Houſes which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.

He ſhall not be rich, neither ſhall his ſubſtance continue, neither ſhall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs, the flame ſhall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away.

As the two former Verſes ſhewed ſin the cauſe of thoſe evils which befal a wicked man; ſo here *Eliphaz* ſhews us two cauſes of their ſin.

First, Their riches.

Secondly, Their power.

The firſt is here deſcribed tropically by *Fatneſs*.

Verſe 27. **He covereth his face with fatneſs, and maketh collops of fleſh on his flanks.**

Both parts of the Verſe mean the ſame thing; ſhewing the wicked mans worldly proſperity by the uſual viſible effects of it; a f[illegible]face, and *fleſhy flanks*.

He covereth his face with fatneſs,

That is, he is exceeding fat; a phraſe like that (*Pſal.* 73. 7.) *Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs:* The Hebrew is, *Their eyes are gone out of their heads through fatneſs:* That is, They ſeem as gone or going out of their heads. 'Tis uſual in the language of the Holy Ghoſt, to deſcribe wicked men by fatneſs, (*Pſal.* 78. 31.) *He ſlew the fatteſt of them*; that is, the worſt of them, thoſe who were moſt rebellious, longing after dainties, when God had given them bread from Heaven. *David* ſets forth his Enemies (and ſo the Enemies of Chriſt, of whom that Pſalm is a Propheſie) under this notion (*Pſal.* 22. 12.) *Strong Bulls, or fat Bulls, came about me:* By the fat Bulls he means the Scribes and Phariſees, the high Prieſt and Rulers, who (as it were) beſet Chriſt with continual conſpiracies. More plainly (*Pſal.* 17. 9, 10.) *Keep me from mine Enemies that oppreſs me: They are incloſed in their own fat, with their mouth they ſpeak proudly.* Again, (*Pſal.* 119. 70.) *Their heart is as fat as greaſe, but I delight in thy Law.*

Exiit præ adipe oculus eorum. i.e. *exiſſe videntur præ genarum tumore & pinguedine.* Bold.

Singulari quodam infamiæ titulo impii & iniqui in ſcriptura vocantur pingues.

The Scripture ſpeaks thus, not as if fatneſs had any moral evil in it, or as if leanneſs had any moral good in it. Fatneſs doth not diſcommend us, nor doth leanneſs commend us to God; yea, a man lean in body may have the worſt fatneſs, he may be proud, ſwoln and puft up in ſpirit; and a man fat in body may have the beſt leanneſs, much ſelf-emptineſs, and poverty of ſpirit. But becauſe they who have abundance, and grow fat with the Creature, are tempted to forgetfulneſs of, and rebellion againſt God; and becauſe a body overburdened with fleſh and fat, renders the mind more indiſpoſed to holy and ſpiritual activity; and uſually they who beſtow moſt care and coſt in pampering their bodies, go with pined, ſtarved, and lean ſouls; therefore fatneſs hears ill in Scripture.

It is obſerved by *Plutarch*, that the Egyptian Prieſts gave their *Apis* (a Deity which they worſhipped in the form of an Oxe) the water of a Pit, or Well, not the water of *Nilus*, to drink; the reaſon was (not as ſome aſſign it, becauſe they thought thoſe waters were prophaned by the Crocodile, for the Egyptians had that River in high veneration, but) becauſe the waters of *Nilus* were fatning, nouriſhing waters; therefore their *Apis*, whom they adored as a God, and from whom they expected continual help, muſt not drink of it, leſt the groſneſs of his fleſh ſhould diſable him for their aſſiſtance. Fat corpulent men are, in common experience, unweildy, ſleepy, and (comparatively) unfit for action. It was a cuſtom, as my Author reports, among the ancient *Spaniards* and *Gaules*, to keep a conſtant meaſure, which if a Woman (ſhe not being with Child) did exceed in the compaſs of her waſte, ſhe fell under diſgrace, and loſt much of her reputation, by having got ſo much of fat and fleſh about her: And doubtleſs it had ſomewhat of diſrepute in it, in *Job*'s time, elſe *Eliphaz* (a man of experience) had not given this as a piece of a wicked mans deſcription. *He covereth his face with fatneſs.*

Hoc Ægyptii inuere videbantur, dum ſacerdotes Iſiaci ſolebant dare Api Bovi quem colebant potũ ex quodam puteo non autem ex Nilo, quia ejus aqua pota creditur pinguedinem carniſque magnum facere incrementũ. Plutarch. Tract. de Iſide, &c.

Iberi etiam & Galli antiqui zonæ menſuram habebant, quam ſi mulier, quæ gravida non eſſet capere non poſſet probro magno afficiebatur. Alex. ab Alex. l. 2. c. 25

And maketh collops of fleſh upon his flanks.

Which Maſter *Broughton* renders thus, *And maketh plaits upon the panch.* Mr. *Calvin* tranſlates it thus, *He hath larded his guts.*

Eſt deſcriptio ſummæ abundantiæ. Jun.

This latter clauſe of the Verſe is of the ſame intendment with the former: And that which both reprove as ſinful, is the intentneſs of mans ſpirit about the pampering of his fleſh.

He covereth his face with fatneſs, he makes collops, &c.

He doth not ſay, Becauſe he is fat, but becauſe he covers his face with fatneſs, *&c.* That is, he ſets his heart upon his belly, and makes it his buſineſs to pamper his body. He is active, yea, full of activity in getting this cover, or mask of fatneſs upon his face; and this mask diſcovers the naughtineſs of his heart.

Hence Obſerve, *That it is a ſign of an evil heart, or a lean ſoul, to intend the fleſh, or to ſtudy the ſatisfying of the bodily appetite.*

A carnal man gives himſelf to deliciouſneſs; his greateſt labour is about that, for which Chriſt forbids our labour, *The meat that periſheth* (John 6. 27.) This covering of our ſelves with fatneſs, and making collops of fat, the Apoſtle reproves in thoſe, *Whoſe God was their belly* (Phil. 3. 19.) and in thoſe *who ſerved not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own belly* (Rom. 16. 18.) They who ſerve their belly, as they ſhould ſerve God, make a god of it; and they who ſerve their belly at all, do not ſerve Chriſt at all. We may provide for the belly, but we muſt not ſerve it; and they who do ſo, deſerve rather to be called Epicures then Chriſtians. That's ſinful fatneſs which is got upon terms of ſlavery, or ſervice to the belly; yea, a man that is intentive upon that queſtion, *What ſhall I eat?* and careful how to feed his fleſh, though he do not grow fat by it; yet he ſhews himſelf full of ſin by it. The deſign of such is for the fleſh, though their fleſh do not thrive under that deſign. As a man may be very covetous though he continue poor and lean in purſe; ſo a man may be very luxurious, and a great ſervant to *Bacchus*, and Belly-chear, though he continue lean and poor in body.

The bleſſing of God fattens ſome, and ſuch fat ones leſs God. *David* propheſies, that when *The Kingdom ſhall be the Lords, and he the Governor among the Nations* (which is very parallel with what thoſe great voices ſaid after the ſeventh Angel had ſounded, *Revel.* 11. 15.) *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever*; and when this ſhall be, ſaith *David* (*Pſal.* 22. 30.) *Then all they that be fat upon the earth, ſhall eat, and worſhip*; that is, the great ones ſhall ſubmit to Chriſt; his Kingdom ſhall be inlarged, and not only the poor, who are deſcribed in the latter part of that Verſe in the Pſalm, under the name and notion of ſuch, *as go down to the duſt*, but the rich ſhall receive the Goſpel. Kings and Queens, perſons of authority and wealth, ſhall come to the participation of the grace of Chriſt (*Iſa.* 60. 3, 10.) They who have their bellies full of the meat that periſheth, ſhall have their ſouls full of that meat which endures to everlaſting life. (*Pſal.* 45. 12.) *The rich among the people:* What people? The firſt words of the Verſe tells us, he means the *Tyrians* who were a wonderful rich people (*Iſa.* 23. 8. *Ezek.* 27.) and the *Tyrians* are here put, by a Synechdoche, for all other Heathens; for though *Tyre* were a City in the Tribe of *Aſer* (*Joſh.* 19. 29.) yet it was at that time poſſeſſed by Heathens. Now, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *The rich among theſe people ſhall intreat thy favour:* That is, the Churches favour. God will work their hearts to an earneſt deſire of admiſſion into the ſociety of the Saints, and to live under a profeſſed ſubjection to the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, who have abounded in worldly poſſeſſions, and hold the World in ſubjection to their power: *Theſe rich and fat ones among the people ſhall intreat thy favour.* This propheſie was in part fulfilled (*Mark* 3. 8.) where we read of great multitudes from *Tyre* and *Sidon* flocking after Chriſt: So that it is not riches and fatneſs preciſely conſidered, but the intending of our skin, or our ſtudiouſneſs to fill our ſelves with earthly delicates, which ſhews we have weak appetites to, or rather a loathing of the things of Heaven.

Secondly, This covering the face with fat, is here preſented by *Eliphaz* as a cauſe or occaſion at leaſt of the wicked mans arming himſelf againſt God.

Hence Obſerve, *That an evil heart turns the bleſſings of God into rebellion againſt him*

Bonorum abundantia vitiorum omnium materiam ſubminiſtrat.

The *Jews* were thus charged (*Deut.* 32. 15.) Jeſurun *waxed*

waxed fat, and kicked. The Lord complains of this, as of a ſin, which he ſcarce knew how to pardon (*Jer.* 5.7.) *How ſhall I pardon thee for this? Thy Children have forſaken me,* &c. *When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and aſſembled themſelves by troops in the harlots houſes.* Thoſe are great ſins indeed, which put the Lord (whoſe title is, *The God pardoning ſin,* and *ready to forgive*) into a query about their pardon and forgiveneſs. Such kind of ſinning made *Jeruſalem* a Siſter to *Sodom*; that is, as like *Sodom,* yea, and *Samaria* too, as if they had been one Mothers Daughters, or as if they had been of one and the ſelf-ſame blood and ſtock (*Ezek.* 16.49.) *Behold this was the iniquity of thy ſiſter* Sodom, *pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her, and in her Daughters:* Plenty of the Creature, and plenty of ſin, went together; and whereas *Jeruſalem* ſhould have ſerved God, ſhe ſerved her luſts in the abundance of all things. We have a ſaying, when men are lifted up upon the enjoyment of outward good things (in alluſion to Beaſts) *Provender pricks them.* They act more like beaſts then men, who kick againſt God, who feeds them, and turn his bread of bleſſings into the ſtones of diſobedience. What outward good thing will not an evil heart abuſe, and wax wanton with, when it is ſo apt to abuſe ſpiritual things, and to turn *the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs*; that is, to grow wanton and laſcivious, becauſe God is gracious?

Thirdly Obſerve, *They take little care for their ſouls, who take overmuch for their bodies.*

They who deſire to pleaſe appetite, cannot endeavour to pleaſe God. When the Apoſtle exhorts to put on the Lord Jeſus, he dehorts from providing for the fleſh (*Rom.* 13.14.) *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof:* As if he had ſaid, Unleſs you forbear providing for luſts, you will have little leaſure, and leſs deſire to put on Chriſt. (*Epheſ.* 5.18.) *Be not drunk with wine wherein is exceſs* (that is, be not inordinate in the uſe of the creature) *but be filled with the ſpirit:* As if he had ſaid, *You will never be filled with the Spirit, if overfilled with wine; if you give up your ſelves to ſatisfie carnal appetite, you will not have any appetite at all to ſpirituals.* There is an inward gluttony and drunkenneſs, when the thoughts run upon dainty diſhes, and full Cups, or when men chew their meat and wine in their thoughts, before they eat or drink. Now as well they (or rather they more) who are inwardly drunken with exceſſive deſires of wine, as they who are viſibly drunken with the exceſſive taking down of wine, are far enough either from the deſire or attainment of a filling with the Spirit. The ſpirit of the Buttery, and the Spirit of God, have no more agreement then the fleſh and the Spirit; yea, that ſpirit is the groſſeſt part of ſinful fleſh, and therefore can neither take care for, nor bear with, the things of the ſpirit. So far of the firſt cauſe of the wicked mans exceſſive ſinning; his exceſs in the uſe of the Creature, ſet forth by the ordinary effect of it, *Fatneſs, He covereth his face with fatneſs:* The ſecond follows.

Verſe 28. **He dwelleth in deſolate Cities, and in houſes wherein no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.**

This Verſe ſhews a ſecond cauſe of the wicked mans fierceneſs againſt God, *His power over men*; which is deſcribed (as the former) by the effect of it, *He hath made Cities deſolate.* It requires much power to overthrow whole Cities; that which is ſtrong cannot be deſtroyed without ſtrength; ſuch was the power of the man whom *Eliphaz* deſcribes, ſuch his ſtrength: He ſubdued ſtrong Cities, he conquered men, and he thought he could conquer God too. But though to deſtroy and pull down intimate ſtrength, yet to build and ſet up Cities requires greater ſtrength.

This ſtrength alſo is here aſcribed to the wicked man, who,

Firſt, Either comes to Cities already overthrown, or overthrows Cities.

And then ſecondly, builds the Cities which are overthrown, that himſelf may dwell in them. He will not dwell in Cities built to his hand, or in Palaces ready made, but he will make goodly Palaces out of the deſolate places; a City waſted by War, by Fire, and Sword, ſhall revive out of the rubbiſh, and recover to its ancient ſplendor, if he undertake it.

Maſter *Broughton* renders clearly to this ſence, *Though he makes dwellings of Cities ruinated, of houſes undwelt, which were coming to heaps of ſtone:* Here's the compleatneſs of his worldly power. He makes flouriſhing Cities deſolate, and deſolate Cities flouriſh; he dwells in deſolate Cities, in Houſes where no man inhabiteth; that is, in Cities which he himſelf once made deſolate (having caſt out their proper Inhabitants) but hath now re-edified and enlarged for his own uſe and honour.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That a wicked man cares not whom he ruines, ſo he may raiſe himſelf.*

Down with Kingdoms, down with Cities, down with all, ſo he may ſtand, or have his own ends.

Secondly Obſerve, (which is the ſcope of *Eliphaz*) *A man that hath great power among men, begins to think himſelf ſtrong enough for God alſo.*

He made earthly Cities deſolate, and none was able to reſiſt him, therefore he hopes to make Heaven deſolate, and diſturb the Throne of God; *He runs upon his neck,* &c.

Again, Some expound this Verſe not of the cauſe of this mans ſin, but of the puniſhment of his ſin; *He dwells in deſolate Cities, in places where no man dwelt:* That is, He ſhall dwell alone, he ſhall either refuſe, or be refuſed by all good company, For this miſerable ſolitude may ariſe two wayes.

Firſt, From trouble of mind; he having oppreſſed others, ſhall find himſelf at laſt ſo oppreſſed with the witneſs of his own conſcience, that to avoid it, he retires into deſolate places, into waſte Wilderneſſes, into old ruinous buildings, where none dwell but the *Owl, and the Screech-owl,* (*Iſa.* 34.) *He that finds not his own conſcience good company, never finds any.*

Terrores de quibus nuper dictum eſt, non patiuntur impium in familiari hominum conſortio vivere, ideo deſolatorium urbium ruinas & latibula quærit.
Pined.

Secondly, This wicked man is caſt out from the company of men, he hath bern a ſcourge to many, and now all are a ſcourge to him. *Tyranny grows intolerable to mankind* (Dan. 4.33.) *Nebuchadnezzar* was the greateſt Monarch in the world, and a proud Tyrant; at laſt he was turned out to graſs: his Nobles, Lords, and Subjects forſook him, and he who ruled men, lived among beaſts; or as the ſame Propheſie of *Daniel* reports it (*Chap.* 5.20.) *When his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was depoſed, or* (as the Chalde) *made to come down frrom his Kingly Throne, and they took his glory from him, and he was driven frrom the ſons of men,* &c. Which we may anſwer with *Job*'s Text, *He was forced to dwell in deſolate places.*

Hujuſmodi tyranni ejiciuntur in exilium.

The Roman Story tells us of *Nero,* that perceiving himſelf a loſt man, by the revolt of ſome Provinces, and the general complaint of the people againſt his inſolent Government, he wandered up and down, and crept firſt into a Thicket, by and by into a Cave with *Sporus* his filthy Favorite, and at laſt when he heard of the ſentence of death given againſt him by the Senate, and that their Officers were haſting to attach him, he, with a little help of one of his Servants, cut his own Throat.

Thirdly, Others interpret theſe words, as noting the wicked mans worldly decay; he ſhall not have a houſe to put his head in: His ſtrong Cities and goodly Palaces, ſhall go to ruine; or he ſhall be forced to dwell in a ruinous houſe, a houſe ready to fall about his ears, who before lived in ceiled houſes; he hath pulled down other mens houſes, and now he dwells in houſes ready to fall down; he impoveriſht others, and now himſelf is turned out among the poor.

Hence Obſerve, *That God often makes the puniſhment of man ſuitable to his ſin.*

The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth, the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands (Pſal. 9.16.)

The judgments of God are alwayes juſt, and ſometimes their juſtice is viſible. As the wicked feel them, ſo all may ſee them, and ſay, *Righteous art thou, O Lord.* The Prophet deſcribes this retaliation of Divine judgment (*Iſa.* 5.8,9.) *Woe to them that add houſe to houſe, and lay field to field, till there be no place* (that is, no place for others to dwell in) *that they may be placed in the midſt of the earth:*

What is the danger of this? *In mine ear ſaith the Lord of Hoſts; of a truth, many houſes ſhall be deſolate, many and fair without Inhabitants*: Here is deſolation, the reward of deſolation; and as they took bread from others, and pull'd the cup from their mouthes, ſo their bread ſhall be taken away, and their cup left empty. Thus it follows in the Prophet (*Verſ.* 10.) *Yea, ten Akers of Vineyard ſhall yield one Bath*: A Bath was a meaſure among the *Jews* of Liquids, containing, as is conceived, about eight Gallons: So that when he ſaith, *Ten Akers of Vineyard ſhall yield one Bath*; the meaning is, there ſhall be a great ſcarcity of Wine: An Aker of Vineyard ſhould not yield a Gallon of Wine; that's a miſerable Vintage. *And the ſeed of an Homer, ſhall yield an Ephah*: An Homer was a meaſure for dry things, containing ten Ephahs: So that when it is ſaid, *The ſeed of a Homer ſhall yield an Ephah*, the meaning is, they ſhall reap but the tenth part of the ſeed ſown, which is a miſerable Harveſt, and the higheſt threat of enſuing Famine. Thus the Lord puniſhed them as they had ſinned; they ſtarved the poor, and God threatens to ſtarve them. Hunger never pinches ſo terribly, as when it is a puniſhment ſent at the cry of the hungry.

Again (*Iſa.* 33. 1.) *When thou ſhalt ceaſe to deal treacherouſly, then they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee*: When the deceiver is deceived, and the treacherous dealer ruined by treacherous dealing men, then the truth and faithfulneſs of God are eminently exalted. And as it is in puniſhments, ſo often in rewards, God doth us good in the ſame way wherein we have done good. The Midwives ſaved the Males of the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, and by this act of pitty built the houſe of *Iſrael*, which the Lord took ſo well at their hands, *That he built their houſes, or made their houſes flouriſh* (Exod. 1. 21.) As the deſtroyer ſhall be deſtroyed, ſo the builder ſhall be built; mercy loves to be exact as well as judgment.

Again, *Eliphaz* tells us of Cities and Houſes ready to become heaps.

Hence Note, *The moſt flouriſhing Cities, the ſtrongeſt Structures in the World, are ſubject to ruine.*

Art cannot prevent the decayes of Nature, much leſs the Decrees of Divine Juſtice. Material *Jeruſalem* was threatened, that one ſtone ſhould not be left upon another which ſhould not be caſt down; the event anſwered that prediction. Myſtical *Babylon* is under a more dreadful doom, and the event will in due time anſwer that prediction. *Babylon* is ready to become heaps, and one ſtone ſhall not be left upon another: There is no cement can hold that together, to which God ſaith, *Fall*.

Eliphaz having ſhewed the cauſes of the wicked mans impudent oppoſition againſt God, and (according to the two latter Expoſitions of this Verſe) ſome part of his puniſhment, proceeds further to ſhew his puniſhment.

Verſe 29. **He ſhall not be rich, neither ſhall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.**

Verſe 30. **He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs, the flame ſhall dry up his branch, and by the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away.**

Here is compleat miſery in externals. The judgment is laid down two wayes.

Firſt, Negatively.

And ſecondly, Affirmatively.

Negatively, what the wicked man ſhall not be, what he ſhall not attain to; and then affirmatively, what the wicked man ſhall be, or what ſhall come upon him; the Negative part hath a gradation of four ſteps.

The firſt is this, *He ſhall not be rich.*

The ſecond is, *His ſubſtance ſhall not continue.*

The third is, *He ſhall not prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.*

The fourth is this, *He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs.*

Thoſe are the Negative parts of his puniſhments, the Affirmative are two.

Firſt, *The flame ſhall dry up his branch.*

Secondly, *By the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away.*

He ſhall not be rich.

The words ſeem to carry an oppoſition all along to the wicked mans purpoſes and projects. The wicked man ſaith in his heart, if not with his mouth, *He will be rich*; to which God anſwers, *He ſhall not be rich.* The Apoſtle (1 *Tim.* 6. 9.) ſpeaks of ſuch a ſort of *Rich Will-bees, They that will be rich fall into temptation*, &c. When a man comes to this height of reſolvedneſs, He will be rich whatever comes of it, or whoever ſtands in his way; he will be rich and ask no mans leave, no nor Gods leave, then God riſes to his high reſolves, *He ſhall not be rich*: Let it come to tryal whoſe word ſhall ſtand, his, or mine: And when once this word is gone out of Gods mouth, then he, and all his trees which ſhould bear him that golden fruit, are blaſted and mildew'd. Then, though he lay the ſtrongeſt projects for riches, yet he ſhall not be rich, though he ſweat and toil to be rich, though he dig deep into the ground, and turn every ſtone above ground, to find riches, yet he ſhall not be rich; though he cares not whom he makes poor, yea, though himſelf live poorly all his dayes, that he may dye rich, yet he ſhall not be rich.

Hence Obſerve, *It is not in the power of man to get riches.*

A man may make it his deſign to be rich, but he cannot make himſelf rich. *Moſes* (*Deut.* 8. 18.) gives it in charge to the people of *Iſrael*, *Thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God*; *for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth*, &c. Man is very apt to forget the Author, not only of his ſpiritual, but of his temporal good things, and is readier to aſcribe his riches to his own getting, then to Gods giving. Temporal good things lye more level to the power of Nature, and humane Induſtry, then ſpirituals; yet we can no more attain temporals then ſpirituals without the power of God. Chriſt teacheth us, that our care can no more add a penny to our eſtate, then *a cubit to our ſtature* (*Matth.* 6. 27.) How often have we ſeen experience ſealing to this truth? Many have endeavoured after, and reacht at riches, in good and hopeful, in fair and probable wayes, yet they have not reacht to riches. Others have ſtriven for riches in baſe and unwarrantable, in unjuſt and ſinful wayes, yet they could never get a ſtep beyond beggery.

Ex quocunque piſcatu non evadet ditior.

The Lord gives them a ſtop, and ſaith, *Ye ſhall not be rich*; evil men do not alwayes thrive; *Peter*, a good man, fiſhed all night, but got nothing, till Chriſt bid him put down the Net. Some have caſt their Net in all ſorts of waters, yet could never catch the great fiſh of worldly wealth. It is the bleſſing of God that makes good men rich; and it is a permiſſion from God that makes evil men rich. Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſe of this life, and of that which is to come, yet every godly man meets not with the profit of this life; ungodlineſs is profitable for nothing, having neither the promiſe of this life, nor of that which is to come, yet ſome ungodly men meet with the profit of this life. Though *ſinners are never on the thriving hand, yet they often thrive in their way*; and though Saints are ever on the thriving ſide, yet they do not alwayes thrive in their way: Neither the one ſort nor the other thrives, if the Lord ſaith, *They ſhall not be rich*: When he ſaith ſo to the Saints, it is to humble them; but when he ſaith ſo to a wicked man, it is to puniſh him; *He ſhall not be rich*, that's the firſt ſtep of his miſery.

But ſuppoſe he get riches, yet he cannot keep them; *The wages which he earns is put into a bag with holes, or pierced through, all's gone* (Hag. 1. 6.) Carnal men are like leaking Veſſels to the Word of God, they (as the Apoſtle cautions Believers, leſt at any time they ſhould, *Heb.* 2. 1.) alwayes let it run out. Now as they let out what they have heard of the Word of God; ſo God lets out what they have got of the World: He makes all the Veſſels which hold their earthly ſubſtance leaky: So it follows,

Neither ſhall his ſubſtance continue.

חיל *robur, pro opibus ſæpe ſumitur. Latine copias poſſis vertere.* Merc.

This is his ſecond woe: The word which we render *Subſtance*, ſignifies alſo Power, and Strength; becauſe riches impower and ſtrengthen men to do great things; but how ſtrong and ſubſtantial ſoever they are in the opinion of men, their time is but ſhort, *They ſhall not continue*; and this ariſeth two wayes.

First,

Summis negitum eſt ſtare diu.

First, From the nature of the things of the World, which are all frail and momentary; and though we call them *Subſtance,* yet indeed they are but a *Shadow*, there is no continuance in them.

Secondly, This ariſeth from the judgment and curſe of God, both upon ſuch rich men, and upon their riches; if the Lord doth not ſtop them from getting riches, yet he can ſpeak a word, and blaſt all that they have gotten.

Hence Note, *That the moſt ſubſtantial of earthly things are of ſmall or no continuance.*

More. particularly.

That ill gotten goods are not laſting, or long-lived.

Sometimes they melt away, and dye in the ſame hands that got them; they alwayes dye and melt away in ſome of their hands, for whom they were gotten. There is no tack in their eſtate, in whom there is no Juſtice. That which is gathered by the unrighteouſneſs of man, ſhall be ſcattered by the wrath of God. As the little which a righteous man hath is better, ſo it is ſurer then the great riches of many wicked. Sin makes no proviſion at all for the ſoul; and it makes very ill proviſion for the body. The title by which we hold worldly things, is more conſiderable then worldly things themſelves. To hold *in Capite* from Chriſt is as the pureſt ſo the ſtrongeſt Tenure: Only he who continues the ſame for ever, and changes not, can give continuance to that which is changeable.

But ſuppoſe the wicked mans ſubſtance doth continue long for bulk and matter, yet the beauty and comfort of it ſhall not continue for a moment; which is the third ſtep of this Gradation.

Neither ſhall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

מנלם *perfectio eorum a* נלה *perfecit, alii* Minlam *unicam, dictionem perinde ac ſi duæ eſſent exponunt, quaſi* מנ להם *ex eo quod eſt illorum, i. e. res illorum non extendentur per terram.* Merc.

Riches are one thing, the perfection of riches is another; as in ſpiritual things there is the ſubſtance of them, and the perfection of them; ſo in temporals: The word ſignifies, the conſummation of any thing, or the bringing it to its perfective end (*Iſa.* 33. 1.) *When thou ſhalt make an end to deal treacherouſly, they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee:* The Prophet doth not mean it of making an end by way of ceſſation, as if hand, heart, or tongue, did ceaſe dealing treacherouſly (for ſo wicked men will never make an end of wickedneſs, if they might have an eternity to act evil in, they would act it eternally) but he means it of making an end by way of conſummation; as if he had ſaid, When they are come to a full ſtature in treachery, and have compleated their conſpiracies againſt goodneſs, and good men, then they ſhall be dealt with in their kind, and as they beſt deſerve. Now as a wicked man would compleat his ſin, and often reaches the very perfection of it, ſo he would compleat his eſtate, and doth ſometimes reach to the perfection of it. The wicked man would be perfectly rich, he is not ſatisfied to have a compleat eſtate, or enough for meat, drink, and cloathing, he muſt have a great eſtate, enough for pride, pomp, and glory; Manna pleaſes him not, he muſt have Quails, ſuperfluities as well as neceſſaries: He thinks a little too much in ſpirituals, but a great deal is not enough for him in temporals: His internal imperfections trouble him not, his aim is at perfection in externals. That is perfect only in a ſtrict ſence, to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away: The wicked man would attain to ſuch perfection, but he cannot; his own heart forbids the firſt, for how much ſoever he hath, he would have more added to it; he ſaith not, it is enough, though it be too much; God forbids the latter, his portion ſhall be abated, or (in the words of the Text) *He ſhall not prolong the perfection thereof.*

Nec mittes in terra radicem ejus. Vulg.

The utmoſt perfection he can attain unto, is but the ſhadow of perfection; and though ſhadows towards the ſetting of the Sun grow longer and longer, yet no ſhadow can be prolonged, they quickly paſs and fly away. *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 12. 3.) *A man ſhall not be eſtabliſhed in wickedneſs, but the root of the righteous ſholl continue:* A wicked man may be ſet in the ground, but he hath no root in the ground: *Their ſtock ſhall not take root in the earth, and he* (that is, God) *ſhall blow upon them, and they ſhall wither* (Iſa. 40. 24.) A tree not rooted falls by a puff of wind, or withers while it ſtands. The tree of a wicked man may have a great body, but he hath no good root, he is not rooted in Chriſt, he hath no hold of the Covenant, therefore his perfection cannot continue.

Hence Obſerve, *That as there is no worldly perfection of any long continuance, ſo the perfection of wicked men is of ſhorteſt continuance.*

Nubecula eſt, cito tranſibit.

Athanaſius ſaid of *Julian* the Apoſtate, when he was in the height, in the very Zenith and perfection of earthly felicity, having aſcended the Impereal Throne, and given the Law to a great part of the then known World, *He is but a little Cloud, he will ſoon vaniſh.* And indeed his glory and the perfection of it did not continue, for when he was but thirty years old, in that prime of his natural courſe. and conſtitution, he was cut off; his power could not protect his perſon, nor prolong his perfection on the earth.

David profeſſeth, as from his own experience (*Pſal.* 119. 96.) *I have ſeen an end of all perfection:* The term of univerſality, *All*, doth not compaſs in every kind of perfection, but all the perfections of one kind. The end of Divine perfections cannot be ſeen; when we have ſeen the moſt of them, there is more of them unſeen; but the end of all humane perfections may be ſeen. There is a twofold ſight.

First, Of the eye.
Secondly of the underſtanding.

David's eye had ſeen the end of many humane perfections, and his underſtanding ſaw the end of them all; he had ſeen ſome ending, and he ſaw all muſt end. Never dream of prolonging your perfection here. No wordly thing can continue long, for the World it ſelf ſhall not continue long: If the Scaffold or Stage upon which theſe perfections are ſhewed, or acted, muſt fall, the perfections themſelves cannot ſtand. There have been but few that ever advanced ſo far as to an earthly perfection; but there was never any one that prolonged his perfection on the Earth. *Adam* did not continue in that created perfection, which had no imperfection in it; How then ſhall any of his Children continue in an imperfect (ſuch is their beſt) perfection.

As *Eliphaz* hath ſhewed us the wicked mans miſery in the not prolonging of his perfection; ſo now he ſhews us a further degree of it, by the prolonging of his affliction.

Verſe 30. He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs.

Here is the fourth ſtep of this Gradation. The wicked mans miſery in miſery: He cannot ſtay in a good, nor get out of an ill eſtate. *Eliphaz* ſeems to take off an Objection, for ſome might ſay, *What if the wicked man do not grow rich for the preſent? What if his ſubſtance doth not continue? What if he prolong not his perfections, or fall from the top-ſtair of his high condition? Yet we hope at laſt he may out-grow all this, and get riches which he had not, or regain thoſe which he had?* No ſaith *Eliphaz*, Either the wicked man ſhall not riſe to riches, or if he riſe he ſhall fall, and when once he is fallen, he ſhall riſe no more; either he ſhall not get into the light, or if he do, he ſhall be ſoon overtaken with darkneſs; and when once he is in the dark, he ſhall come out no more, *He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs.*

When the wicked man is in the light, he ſings, *Loth to depart*, but he muſt; and when he is caſt into darkneſs, neſs, he cryes, *Haſte to depart*, but he cannot: The wicked man, like the evil Angels, is held in chains of darkneſs, which he is neither able to break off, nor to file off: He hath ſaid to God, who is light (yea, becauſe he is light) *Depart from me*; and God ſaith to him, *Thou ſhalt not depart out of darkneſs.*

There is a twofold darkneſs.

First, Inward.
Secondly, Outward.

Both metaphorical. By darkneſs ſome underſtand inward trouble, or grief of ſpirit; others expound it of outward troubles and calamities upon his eſtate: 'Tis true of both, for he ſhall depart neither out of the one nor the other; but rather take it here for outward trouble; and then, *Not to depart out of darkneſs,* imports abiding miſery, irrecoverable ſickneſs, decayes and loſſes, which ſhall never be repaired.

Hence Note, *Wicked men falling into trouble, ſhall not know the mercy of a reſurrection out of trouble.*

The juſt man falleth ſeven times, and riſeth again (Prov. 24. 16.) The juſt man is ſubject to take falls of two ſorts, and both of them *Seven times*; that is, often.

Firſt, He falls into ſin.

Secondly, He falls into trouble.

He riſeth from both theſe falls: He riſeth from the firſt by repentance; he riſeth from the ſecond by deliverance. *Solomon*'s Text is to be underſtood of this ſecond ſort of falls, and may therefore be expounded by the direct words of *David*, (Pſal. 34. 19.) *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all:* The righteous have as many reſurrections as falls, *But* (as *Solomon* makes the Antitheſis in the place fore-cited) *the wicked ſhall fall into miſchief. Solomon* doth not tell us expreſly, what the juſt man falls into, but he tells us he ſhall riſe again: He tells us expreſly what the wicked man ſhall fall into, but he doth not tell us, that he ſhall riſe again; nay, he tells us implicitely, that he ſhall never riſe again. He that riſeth again did not fall into miſchief, how great ſoever the evil was which he fell into; and he that doth not riſe again fell into miſchief, how little ſoever the evil was which he fell into. Nothing makes our falling either into ſin, or trouble, *a miſchief to us,* but our continuing in it. *He goes far* (we ſay in our Proverb) *who never returns*; he falls low, who never riſeth; and he ſtayes long in darkneſs, who never departs out of it. Darkneſs is the portion of a wicked man, and he ſhall never depart out of darkneſs; neither out of that darkneſs of ſin, nor miſery; he hath no deſire to depart out of the former, and he hath no promiſe to depart out of the latter. Thus we have ſeen the negative puniſhment of a wicked man, what he ſhall not be, what he ſhall not receive; this is enough to make him miſerable, but poſitive evil will make him outright miſerable. This *Eliphaz* proſecutes in the next words.

The flame ſhall dry up his branches.

The flame is taken two wayes: Either,

Firſt, For the wrath of God which goeth forth, cauſing judgment to take hold of ſinners: Or,

Secondly, For the judgment it ſelf, which is an effect of his wrath.

The wrath of God burneth againſt the wicked as a flame, and then judgments burn up the wicked; there is no heat to the heat of Divine wrath; neither is there any thing punitively hot, till Divine wrath heats it.

The flame ſhall dry up his branches: Some by his *branches* underſtand his Children, they ſhall dye; Children are branches, they ſtand, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, like Olive plants, or branches, round about the Table of a man fearing God: Such branches *Job* had, but they were dryed up, and probably *Eliphaz* might give him a rub upon that ſoar in this expreſſion.

Sunt qui ejus liberos intelligunt; ſed nos allegoricè intelligimus omnem ejus ſplendorem, opes, &c. Merc.

Secondly, Others by *branches* underſtand *His followers and flatterers*, who live upon him as branches upon a Tree; but to paſs theſe reſtrained Interpretations: I conceive we may take the Branch in general, for all that belongs to a wicked man, his Children, his Friends, his Followers, his Flatterers, his Honour, his Riches, his Power; all theſe look green, and are his beautiful branches; and all theſe the flame dryeth up. The Prophet complains (*Joel* 1. 19.) *O Lord to thee will I cry, for the fire hath devoured the paſtures of the wilderneſs, and the flame hath burnt all the trees of the field:* The flame, of which he cryes out, and which did not only dry the branches, but devour the Trees of the Field, was the extream heat of the Sun; which as it uſually ſends out refreſhing beams, ſo when God is angry, it can ſend out ſcorching flames, and thoſe beams, which tempered with ſhowers of rain, nouriſh the Earth, in the long withholding of rain ſcorch the Earth. And what then befel the Trees properly taken, and their branches, doth often befal both Trees and branches taken in the metaphorical ſence, as here in the Text, a flame dryes them up. A godly man is compared to a Tree flouriſhing and *growing by the water ſide*; wicked men are compared ſometimes to flouriſhing Trees, but they grow *by the fire ſide: The flame dryes up their branches.*

Flamma exurens, in Heb eſt vehementiſſimi ſupplicii atque adeo æterni ſymbolum. Duci videtur tranſlatio à more hoſtium vaſtantium regionem aliquam qui ſegetes & arbores ſuccendunt.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The wrath of God is a drying, yea, a devouring flame; the flame of Gods diſpleaſure puts all into a flame.*

That flame will burn up branches, how goodly, how ſtrong, how high ſoever they are grown; though as ſtrong as the Oaks of *Baſhan*, though as high as the Cedars in *Lebanon*, yet this flame will dry them up. The Prophet *Zechariah* ſpeaks this point, while he thus beſpeaks *Lebanon* (*Zech.* 11. 1.) *Open thy doors, O* Lebanon, *that the fire may devour thy Cedars:* 'Tis interpreted as a Propheſie of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and *Judea*, by the Roman power; as Chriſt after threatened them for rejecting him and his Counſel: The words of the Prophet may be underſtood two wayes, either literally, for the deſtruction of that Forreſt of *Lebanon*, which the *Romans* cut down for the ſervice of their Siege againſt *Jeruſalem*; or figuratively, for the flouriſhing eſtate of *Jeruſalem*, whoſe branches, though like the branches of the Cedars in *Lebanon*, were dryed up by the flame of that dreadful War. In which ſtile and figure the Prophet *Iſaiah* denounceth the judgments of God (*Chap.* 2. 12, 13.) *The day of the Lord ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty,* &c. *And upon all the Cedars of* Lebanon. And the Prophet *Ezekiel* puts forth this Riddle and Parable (*Chap.* 17. 3.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, A great Eagle* (that is, *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*) *with great wings, long winged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came into* Lebanon (that is, unto *Judea* and *Jeruſalem*) *and took the higheſt branch of the Cedar*; namely, *Jehojakim* the King of *Judah*, and carried him captive to *Babylon.*

The Lord can make any affliction a conſumption to the moſt beautiful branches of a ſinful people, or perſon.

Whatſoever he uſeth as an inſtrument of his indignation, is his flame: In this ſence, the very waters which drowned the old World, were the fire and flame of God: He can by poverty, as by a flame, conſume and dry up riches; by diſgrace, as by a flame, conſume and dry up honour; by ſickneſs, as by a flame, conſume and dry up health; God hath ſpecial flames for every ſpecial branch, nothing can continue to do us good, when God gives Warrant or Commiſſion to any of his flames to ſcorch and conſume it. *The flame ſhall burn up his branch,*

And by the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away.

We have the flame of God in the former clauſe, and the breath of his mouth in this: Some Interpreters conceive that *Eliphaz* mentions theſe two, The flame and the breath, purpoſely to put *Job* in mind what God had done to him; for we read in the firſt Chapter of this Book, of the flame of God, a fire from Heaven conſuming that branch, his flocks of Sheep, and *a breath from God*, namely, a mighty ſtrong wind, deſtroying a more precious branch, his flock of Children: *Eliphaz* cloaths this diſcourſe in ſuch terms as might eaſily remind and repreſent to *Job*, what God had done to him, in the day of his calamity.

And by the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away.] There is yet a difference among Expoſitors about the Antecedent to *his: His mouth*; Whoſe mouth? Moſt underſtand it, of the breath of Gods mouth, as hath been hinted already: Some expound it of the breath of the wicked mans own mouth: I ſhall touch upon both.

Firſt, *By the breath of Gods mouth he ſhall go away:* The breath of God may be taken two wayes.

Either firſt (as the flame before) for his anger, which is often expreſſed by puffing the breath.

Secondly, It may be taken for the decree, or determination of God.

Both theſe wayes a wicked man goes away by the breath of God; firſt, by the anger of God; if God do but breath angerly upon him, he is blaſted and gone, *His glory and greatneſs languiſh before the leaſt puff of Divine diſpleaſure:* God needs not make great preparations of Armies, or Forces, to contend with wicked men; he needs not raiſe Mounts and Batteries, to overthrow their beſt Fortifications of Riches and Honour: *The Channels of waters were ſeen* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 18. 15.) *and the foundations of the*

World were diſcovered, at thy rebuke O Lord, at the blaſt of the breath of thy noſtrils. The Prophet tells thoſe, who neglected to build the Houſe of the Lord (*Hag.* 1.9.) *Ye looked for much, but lo it came to little, and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it:* God did but blow upon it, and by the breath of his mouth all their expected encreaſe went away. When *Pharaoh* purſued the Iſraelites in the height of pride and preſumption, the Text ſaith, *It came to paſs in the morning watch, the Lord looked upon the Hoaſt of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire, and of the cloud, and troubled the Egyptians, and took off their Chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily* (*Exod.* 14.24, 25.) God confounded them *by a look*; how eaſily can the Lord riſe up and deſtroy all the power that riſeth up againſt his people? He can do it with a breath from his mouth, With a caſt of his eye. When Chriſt was apprehended by the Officers armed with Staves and Swords; he ſaid, *Whom ſeek you?* They anſwered, *Jeſus of Nazareth:* He ſaith, *I am he.* (Chriſt was not afraid to confeſs himſelf) *As ſoon then as he had ſaid unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground* (*John* 18.6.) What a ſtrange power was here, that Chriſt could caſt them down with a word, and that not an angry word, not a word of conviction but confeſſion; he did not chide them, and ſay, Ye wretches, how dare you lay your hands upon me, who am an innocent perſon; how dare you carry me to judgment, who ſhall one day be your Judge; Chriſt ſpake no ſuch terrible language, but only ſaid, *I am he,* and down they fell. If theſe words of ſubmiſſion had ſuch a force in them, as overthrew thoſe Officers to the ground, how ſhall his Enemies ſtand before the thunder of his ſevereſt increpations, and final ſentence? As the Lord needs not make great proviſions for comforting of his people, if he ſpeaks a word, it is done; if he give but a good look, their hearts revive; *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon me; thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart* (*Pſal.*4.6,7.) So if God do but darken his countenance againſt wicked men, and frown upon them, if he do but breath at them, he puts ſorrow enough into their hearts, even conſuming killing ſorrow; *By the breath of his mouth they go away.*

Verba vel mandato ex ore Dei procedēte. Jun.

Again, take the breath of God, *For the decree of God:* for the word or command which goeth out of his mouth, by this breath of God, *they go away.* The deſtruction of the wicked is under a Decree; *God hath ſpoken in his holyneſs* (*Pſal.* 108. 7, 8, 9.) That is, he hath given out his word from Heaven, the habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory; or, He hath ſpoken it certainly, there is nothing but holineſs in his word (and that's the ſtrength of words) *David* having received this word, ſtands aſſured, That as *Shechem,* and *Succoth, Gilead,* and *Manaſſeh, Ephraim,* and *Judah,* would willingly ſubmit to him, and yield obedience; So alſo, that *Moab, Edom,* and *Philiſtia,* who were his profeſſed Enemies, ſhould be ſubdued to him. He expected to conquer and triumph over them, to put them to the baſeſt offices, as his Vaſſals, becauſe God had decreed and ſpoken it in his holineſs. God hath ſpoken the word (ſaith he) therefore it ſhall be done, yea 'tis done; and therefore *David* cryed, *All's mine, Gilead is mine, Manaſſeh is mine, Moab and Edom are mine,* as ſoon as God had ſpoken the word. All that ever was done in the World, hath been done by the breath of Gods mouth; that is, by the word or decree of God: So ſome underſtand that of the Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.*2.8.) *And then ſhall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit, or breath of his mouth, and deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming:* Antichriſt hath ſtood long, and he hath been for ſome time declining; his downfal haſtens; the breath of God will leave him breathleſs: As he hath ſtood by the flattering breath of men; ſo he ſhall fall by the conſuming breath of God.

This conſuming with breath, notes either (as before) the eaſineſs of that conſumption, 'tis done with a breath, or the way and manner of doing it; 'tis done by the command and decree of God, or by the Preaching of the Goſpel, which indeed gives Antichriſt his fatal blow, and ſhakes all the Towers of myſtical *Babylon,* and is called by the Prophet, The rod of his mouth, and the breath of his lips (*Iſa.* 11.4.) *He ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhall he ſlay the wicked.* Life and death ſit upon the lips of Chriſt, he hath a reviving breath, and a killing breath; he quickens the deadeſt heart, and deads the quickeſt, the proudeſt heart with a word ſpeaking. *By the breath of his mouth the wicked go away.*

Spiritu oris, ſc. ipſius impii, credo potius referendum eſſe ad impium quaſi ille ſibi ipſi fuerit mortis cauſa dum contra Deum loquitur confidēter & libere. Sanct. *Spiritu oris ſui,* i.e. *ſuis verbis quæ ſpiritu & halitu in ore formantur.*

Further, The breath of his mouth, ſay ſome, is the breath of the wicked mans own mouth; *By the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away:* That is, by the words which breath out of his mouth. His paſſionate diſtempered ſpeeches ſhall undo him, while he ſpeaks, either outragiouſly, and blaſphemouſly againſt God, or falſly and ſeditiouſly towards man, his ruine enters at the opening of his lips.

The motion of the breath is the preſerver of life, and while breath laſts, life laſts; yet many a mans life had laſted longer had it not been for his breath. The wicked mans breath proves his death, and his tongue which hath been a ſcourge to others, becomes a Sword to himſelf. His words poſſibly have wounded, and his breath hath been the death of many: But now he is wounded by his own words, and cruſht to death by the weight of his own breath, or by the fall of his own tongue upon him: So the Pſalmiſt gives it (*Pſal.* 64.8.) *They ſhall make their own tongues to fall upon themſelves*; that is, Their own words ſhall be brought as a Teſtimony againſt them, and condemn them. *The tongue is a little member* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James, Chap.* 3.5.) And therefore a light member; *yet it falls heavy, as heavy as lead.* A man were better have his Houſe fall upon him, then that (in this ſenſe) his tongue ſhould fall upon him. Some have been preſſed to death, becauſe they would not ſpeak, but ſtood mute before the Judge; but more have been preſſed to death by their ſinful freedom, or rather licentiouſneſs in ſpeaking; this hath brought them to judgement, and caſt them in judgement: *Their tongue hath fallen upon them, and by the breath of their mouth, they have gone away.*

Laſtly (but I will not ſtay upon it, becauſe the Original doth not well bear it) theſe words are caſt into the form of a ſimilitude, deſcribing the manner how the wicked man, and all his glory ſhall go away; even as a breath, or as his breath; *As the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away*; that is, he ſhall go ſpeedily, he ſhall go ſuddenly: A breath is ſoon fetcht, it is both come and gone in a moment; *A breathing time,* is a Proverbial, *for a little time* (much like that, *In the twinckling of an eye*). Thus man comes and goes, is come and gone (eſpecially a wicked man who is driven by the wrath of God) as ſoon as ſeen by others, as ſoon as he hath breathed himſelf: It will not be long ere he goes, and he will not be long a going. *For as the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away.*

The breath of man goes continually, and ſo doth the life of man; while man ſleeps, his breath goes, and ſo doth his life; while man ſtands ſtill, his breath goes, and ſo doth his life: The breath, indeed, is ſometimes in a hurry, and goes faſter then it doth at other times; but though the life of man doth not go faſter at one time then at another, yet it always goes.

Or if at any time our life may be ſaid to go faſter then at another, it is when our breath is (by ſome ſtop in its paſſage) at a ſtand; and when ever our breath comes to a full ſtop, our life is not only going, but quite gone.

The life of man hath ſo much dependance upon his breath, that it is called *Breath,* and *the breath of life: When God formed man out of the duſt of the ground, he breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul* (*Gen.* 2.7.) And as ſoon as God calls back this breath of life, man becomes a dead body, or a carkaſs: The life of man muſt needs go as his breath, for it goes with his breath; and when the life of a wicked man is gone, all (that he called his) his worldly glory, goes with him: In that day all his thoughts periſh: For, *As the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away.*

Eliphaz having laid down the wicked mans ſad condition, and the cauſes of it, concludes with a uſe or application of the whole Doctrine, at the 31. Verſe, *Let not him, that is deceived truſt in vanity,* &c.

VERS. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity; for vanity ſhall be his recompence.
It ſhall be accompliſhed before his time, and his branch ſhall not be green.
He ſhall ſhake off his unripe Grape as the Vine, and ſhall caſt off his flower as the Olive.
For the Congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate, and fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery.
They conceive miſchief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

ELiphaz laid down his Doctrine, at the 20. Verſe of this Chapter, *That a wicked mans life is a miſerable life, he travels in pain all his days*; and having inſiſted long upon the proof, he now gives us the application of it, in a uſe of dehortation,

Verſ. 31. **Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity.**

He inforceth this dehortation by a ſummary repetition of the Doctrine before delivered; which he doth,

Firſt, Plainly in the cloſe of the 31. and in the beginning of the 32. Verſes, *For vanity ſhall be his recompence; it ſhall be accompliſhed before its time.*

Secondly, He doth it allegorically, in the cloſe of the 32. Verſe, and in the 33. *His branch ſhall not be green: He ſhall ſhake off his unripe Grapes as the Vine, and ſhall caſt off his flower as the Olive.*

Having thus preſſed his Doctrine by this powerful motive, he concludes his whole Sermon, with a freſh aſſertion of his Doctrine, againſt two ſorts of wicked men in particular, which yet may comprehend all wicked men;

Firſt, Of Hypocrites, who corrupt the worſhip of God, or are corrupt while they pretend to worſhip God. *Ver.34. For the congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate;*

Secondly, Of oppreſſors, who pervert Juſtice, or deal falſly among men; *The fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery.*

Under theſe two heads, we may reduce all ſorts of ſinners; ſinners againſt God, under the notion of Hypocrites: And ſinners againſt men, under the notion of Oppreſſors, who pervert Judgment by giving or taking Bribes: All which *Eliphaz* concludes, by a deſcription of their evil actings (the cauſe of all their ſufferings) under that elegant metaphor of Child-bearing; *They conceive miſchief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit:* Thus you have the reſolution and ſcope of the latter part of this Chapter.

Verſ. 31. **Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity.**

Theſe words contain the dehortation; here are three terms to be explained.

First, What is meant by being *deceived.*
Secondly, What by *truſting.*
Thirdly, What we are to underſtand by *Vanity.*

תעה *Deceptus, uſurpatur de errore cordis & pedis.*

Let not him that is deceived.] The Original word ſignifies, either the turning of the foot, or the turning of the heart, or both out of the way (*Pſal.* 119.176.) *I have gone aſtray, like a loſt Sheep*: That is, I have been deceived, and ſo have gone out of the way of thy holy Commandments. Satan is an ill guide, and our hearts are no better: He that follows either, quickly looſeth himſelf: And until God ſeeketh us up (as *David* prays in the next words) we cannot find our way when we are once out of it (*Ezek.*44.15.) *The Prieſts, the Levites, the Sons of Zadock that kept the charge of my Sanctuary, when the people of Iſrael went aſtray from me, they ſhall come near to me:* When the people walked in by places, and were intangled in the briars of their own corruptions; then the Prieſts kept the charge of the Lord: It was a great mercy, that when the people were deceived, the Prieſts were not; that when the Sheep went aſtray, the Shepherds did not: If Prieſts and people go aſtray together, who ſhall reduce them? But to the point, Iſrael went aſtray. *They who led them did not cauſe them to erre* (once they did as the Prophet complains) Who then did? Many go aſtray, when none lead them aſtray: Man can deceive himſelf faſt enough, if none elſe do; yet the *word* implys alſo the cunning activity of an external agent, to lead poor ſouls out of the way. We may take in both here; *Let not him that is deceived*, whether by the fallacious arguings of his own heart, or by the ſubtlety of any other, whether Men or Devils,

יאמן *Credet, ne credat in vanitatem.*

Truſt in vanity.] Or, *Let him not believe in vanity:* Truſting is an act of faith, and though a man may believe, and not truſt; yet no man can truſt, who doth not believe. We tranſlate the word not as ſignifying only bare believing, but as it reaches that higher act of truſting: He that is moſt deceived, is moſt apt to truſt that which will deceive him more; and gives not only his conſent, but confidence to that which either is not at all, or is that leaſt which it pretends to be, fit to be truſted, *Vanity.*

שוא *Temeritas falſitas mẽdaciũ; eadẽ eſt vis vocis quæ apud Latinos vocabuli Vani quod tã pro mendacio quã pro re ridicula accipi ſolet.*

Let him not truſt in vanity.] The word which we render **Vanity**, is not *Habel* uſed by *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* 1.2.) *Vanity of vanities*, which ſignifies only a light thing, ſuch as is a vapour riſing from the earth, a bubble ſwelling out of, and floating a little upon the water, or more ſtrictly, a puff or breath of the mouth; but it ſignifies raſhneſs, falſeneſs, a lie, a deceit; vain things are falſe, lying, and deceiveable; therefore, one word ſerves for both.

Again, *Vanity* may be here taken two ways, either for the ſin, or deceit, with which a man is miſlead; and then the meaning is, Let not him that is deceived by ſin, truſt in ſin: Or ſecondly, Vanity may be taken for any creature comfort, and contentment, eſpecially thoſe which are the revenue, or income of ſinful practices. Sin leads to profit, to pleaſure, to honour, to theſe frail and tranſitory things ſin leads us, in hope of ſatisfaction by them, and then the meaning is, *Let not him that is deceived, truſt in that which ſin promiſeth, and profeſſeth it will do for him, or advance him to:* Sin in its nature is vanity, and all the fruits or iſſues of it are vain too. Therefore, as nothing, and nothing, added together, make nothing, ſo vanity and vanity put together, make but vanity: The total ſumm cannot exceed the *Items* or particulars; *Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity, for vanity ſhall be his recompence.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Man is very apt to be deceived; ſo apt to be deceived, that he is ſcarce ever undeceived.*

Eliphaz ſpeaks here, not only of a poſſibility to be deceived, but of being actually deceived; and this ariſeth two ways, firſt from the impotence and weakneſs, from the blindneſs and ignorance that is in man; he that is blind and weak, is eaſily miſlead; every man naturally, how ſtrong, how wiſe, how knowing ſoever he ſeems to be, is yet weak, blind, and ignorant in a very great meaſure; and therefore very deceivable: Man is full of craft, this makes him deceitful; he is empty of true wiſdom, this renders him deceiveable.

Secondly, As man may quickly be deceived, by reaſon of the ignorance which is in him, ſo alſo by reaſon of thoſe ſubtle enemies, who are alwayes about him, yea and within him. We live (as I may ſo ſpeak) among Cheaters, and Cozenners, and there is a great Cheater lives in us; how hard is it then not to be deceived? If a man be in a Croud among many Cut-purſes, and Cheaters, he is in danger to loſe his Money every moment; it is ſo with us: though carnal men are not at all aware of it, nor they who are moſt ſpiritual, ſo much aware of it as they ſhould. It is dangerous to live among deceivers, though we know them, and are aware of them; it is moſt dangerous to live among deceivers, and not to know them, for then we cannot be aware of them; but it is madneſs to know we live among deceivers, and yet not to be aware of them.

There are three notorious Deceivers, who labour to enſnare us; we need not wonder though ſome who are watchful againſt them, are deceived by them: but it would be a wonder, and ſuch a wonder as yet was never ſeen, if they ſhould not be deceived, who never watch againſt them.

Firſt, Our own hearts which have not only an impotence or weakneſs (as I noted before) whereby they are apt to be deceived, but there is in our hearts an activeneſs, yea an efficacy to deceive; we are not only paſſive, but active; we are ſeldom, if at all, deceived, till we deceive our ſelves: And ſome men are very active in deceiving others, ſo all men are active in a degree to deceive themſelves. (*Jer.* 17.9.) *The heart of man is deceitful and deſperately wicked:* The heart is deceitful in reference to a threefold object.

Firſt, The heart would deceive God himſelf, and impoſe upon the *All-wiſe:* That's the deſign of a Hypocrite, his buſineſs is to deceive God, though the iſſue be the deceiveing of himſelf.

Secondly, The heart of man is deceitful in contriving wayes to deceive and ſupplant other men. The complaint of the Prophet goes very high upon this (*Mich.*7.2.) *The good man is periſhed out of the Earth, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.* To *lie in wait*, Is the act, and *a Net* is the inſtrument of a Deceiver, the Propheſie of Chriſt goes yet higher (*Matth.*24.24.) *For there ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſigns and wonders; inſomuch that (if it were poſſible) they ſhall deceive the very Elect.* Deceit works to its utmoſt poſſibility, when it puts hard to deceive thoſe, whom to deceive is impoſſible. If Elect men could be deceived, God ſhould be deceived in his Election; But this is impoſſible, and therefore that is; the man who is elect is deceiveable, but becauſe he is an elect man, he cannot be deceived: And though an elect man may be deceived in ſome things (for even he is ſubject to errour, becauſe he is ſtill (while in this World) the ſubject of ſin) yet he cannot be ſo far deceived in any thing, as to null or fruſtrate his election. How reſtleſs is man to deceive man, ſeeing he ceaſeth not his endeavour to deceive, where he cannot prevailingly deceive.

Thirdly, (Which I conceive the Text in *Jeremiah* ſpecially aims at) the heart of man is very buſie to deceive himſelf. 'Tis bad enough to deceive others, but to deceive our ſelves is worſe, and that not only becauſe it makes us more miſerable, but more ſinful: Self-deceit is the moſt ſinful deceit. The heart of man is *deſperately wicked*, there is no hope that it will leave off to do wickedly, ſeeing it is of counſel againſt its own peace. And ſurely, man is not only under a poſſibility to be deceived, in regard of the impotence and blindneſs of his heart, but alſo under an impoſſibility not to be deceived, in regard of the skill and unwearied activity of his heart to deceive himſelf.

Secondly, Man hath another deceiver continually about him, *The World*, and all that is in the World, *The luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life*; all theſe are but as ſo many ſnares and juggels to cozen, and deceive poor man.

Thirdly, The Devil, who is *The Deceiver*; of whoſe *devices we are not ignorant* (ſaith the Apoſtle) he is full of tricks and plots; he hath his methods, his arts to deceive. Ever ſince the Devil deceived himſelf, he hath been ſtudying how to deceive man; he doth not only go about like a roaring Lyon, but like a ſubtle Serpent, and a cunning Fox, ſeeking whom he may devour; or he is a Lyon to devour thoſe whom he hath firſt deceived as a Fox, or as a Serpent: *Man is a perſwadable creature (Gen.* 9.27.) *God ſhall perſwade Japhet to dwell in the Tents of Shem:* The Original word there uſed to *perſwade*, ſignifies alſo to deceive, becauſe perſwaſions are often made as Engins, or baits to deceive.

There is alſo a kind of holy fraud in the Goſpel, and man is as it were deceived into the obedirnce of it, *Being crafty I caught you with guile* (I fetcht you over, did I not?) ſaith *Paul* (2 *Cor.* 12.16.) Now as man is ſometimes deceived for his good, ſo he is often and eaſily deceived for his hurt, by theſe three deceivers. Satan, the World, and his own Heart, perſwade him by an unholy deceit to dwell in the Tents of ſin.

בשו *Eis poteſt ſumi & cũ* יאמנ *credet, ne credat in vanitatem, & cum* נתעה *deceptus, deceptus inquã per vanitatem, ne in eam fidat.*

Again, Some who by vanity underſtand ſin, read the word *Vanity* twice, *Let not him that is deceived by vanity, truſt in vanity*; that is, Let not him that is deceived by ſin, truſt in ſin; which interpretation yields us this truth, *Sin is deceitful*, or thus, *Sin doth nothing but deceive.*

The Apoſtle, (*Heb.*3.13.) chargeth ſin with deceit to its very face, *Exhort one the other, while it is called to day, leaſt any of your hearts be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of ſin*; there are three eminent evils in ſin,

Firſt, There is a pollution in ſin, it defiles.

Secondly, There is baſeneſs in ſin, it diſhonours.

Thirdly, There is a deceitfulneſs in ſin, it would make us believe we ſhall be, and receive, that which it is not able to perform.

Hence the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 6.21.) puts the queſtion to thoſe who were once the ſervants of ſin, *What fruit had ye then in thoſe things whereof you are now aſhamed?* He asketh them, and bids them ask their own hearts, what fruit had you? as if he had ſaid, *I know when you were ſervants of ſin, your ſins promiſed you great matters great rewards: the Tree of ſin ſeems to be loaded with fruits, the bows of it look as if ready to break with goodly fruits; fruit pleaſant to the eye, ſweet to the taſte, and deſireable to make one wiſe; but I beſeech you tell me what fruit had you in thoſe things whereof you are now aſhamed?* If you be aſhamed to tell me; I will tell you, *The end of thoſe things is death*; that's all the fruit which the Tree of ſin bears. Sin deals with us, as *Jael* with *Siſera* (*Judg.*4.18.) She ſtood at the Tent door, when he came panting from the Battel, and ſaid to him, *Turn in my Lord, turn in*; ſhe took him into her Tent, and laid him down, covered him warm, and when he asked her for Milk, ſhe gave him Butter, Butter in a Lordly diſh; here were fine words, and ſeeming promiſes: yet ſhe honeſtly deceived him, *She put her hand to the Nail, and her hand to the workmans Hammer, and nailed his temples to the ground.* Thus ſin bids us turn in, promiſes to cover us warm, gives us Butter in a Lordly diſh, but never tells us of that woful end, and wretched cataſtrophe which it intends unto us: Sin deals with us as *Dallilah* with *Samſon*, takes us into its boſome and embraces; but then it hath a plot to cut the lock of our ſtrength, to deliver us over to the Philiſtims, to call in Legions of Devils to ſieze upon us, and make us grind at the Mill of their baſeſt drudgery.

More diſtinctly, ſin deceives by a threefold promiſe.

Firſt, By a promiſe of profit (*Prov.* 1.13.) *Come caſt in thy lot with us, let us lie in wait for blood*, &c. *We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance, we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil:* but this precious ſubſtance, proves only a pernicious ſhadow, and theſe ſpoils taken, ſpoil thoſe who take them.

Secondly, Sin deceives by promiſing content, and ſweet delight; what thoughts had *Ahab* concerning *Naboths* Vineyard? If he could but get it, he were *a made man*; what pleaſure ſhould he have in thoſe ſhady walks? what Grapes and Wine from thoſe fruitful Vines? Sin promiſeth as largly as God doth, to give us not only delight but ſatisfaction; that we ſhall not have ſo much as an empty corner in our ſouls; all ſhall be filled: whereas in truth there is nothing but emptineſs, and diſſatisfaction in any creature, eſpecially when ſin leads or helps us to the enjoyment of it.

Thirdly, At leaſt, ſin promiſeth and gives its word for it, that we ſhall be free from trouble, and feel no evil; *That we ſhall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our heart* (*Deut.*29.19.) That as they flattered themſelves in the Prophet, *we ſhall not ſee Sword, nor Famine:* Theſe vaniſhing dreams of plenty, of good things, and immunity from evil, carry thouſands of ſouls captive to the baſeſt bondage of ſin.

Further, This vanity, from truſting which the deceived ſoul is called off by *Eliphaz*, is conceived to be worldly riches, and the fulleſt poſſeſſion of the creature; theſe are vanity: That they are, is *a common theam*, and yet though it be much ſpoken of, it is very little belived; we are apt to over-rate the things of the World, and under-rate the things of Heaven. The creature is vanity, not only in regard of the nothingneſs of it, but vanity in regard of that which we call the ſomethingneſs of it, or the beſt of it.

The Prophet *Jonah* makes the word which we here tranſlate vanity, the Epethite of that which is commonly tranſlated vanity (*Jon.* 2.8.) *They that obſerve lying vanities:* Idols are vanity, and a lie, becauſe though they can do no good at all, yet they promiſe much: Riches are vanity, and a lie, becauſe they cannot do ſo much good as they promiſe. *Solomon* ſaith in his *Eccleſiaſtes*, *That Money anſwereth all things* (*Chap.* 8.10.) And ſo it doth as the value of all earthly things is made by Money, and

הבלי־ שוא *Vanitates mēdacia ſive mendaces.*

and as Money is the price of all earthly things. But though Money anſwereth all things, by ſatisfying our engagements, yet it anſwereth nothing to the ſatisfying of its own engagements. Money and riches have paid many a mans debts, and enough of them will pay any mans debts, but they have never paid their own debts, no more then Idols have, and therefore they juſtly bear the brand of this reproach, *Lying vanities:* That they are ſo, appears clearly in two particulars.

Firſt, In the report which they make of themſelves.

Secondly, In the promiſes which they make to us.

Firſt, In the report which they make of their own worth; if you look upon the bill of the creature, it puts down, not only a hundred for fifty, but a million for a mite: For, how much ſoever it is worth, yet it bears no proportion to that which it would be eſteemed worth: As ſome rich men are not half ſo rich as they deſire to be reckoned; ſo riches themſelves are not ſo rich by thouſands of thouſands as they would be reckoned.

There is indeed a created worth in the creature, for it is the work of God; but ſince the ſin of man hath (as to us) both imbaſed, and imbittered the creature, it is worth nothing comparatively to that at which it is rated, both in its own, and our Books.

Secondly, The creature (in this notion) is a lying vanity, while it perſwades us; that in the enjoyment thereof we ſhall be happy; whereas our happineſs doth not conſiſt in any creature-enjoyment; unleſs God himſelf be our portion, we are both poor and miſerable in the fulleſt poſſeſſion of the creature. God is the *living ſtream*, the creature at the beſt was but a Ciſtern, and now it is but a broken Ciſtern which leaks out all the waters that paſs into it, unleſs God ſtop the chinks, and mend the cracks of it, by Jeſus Chriſt.

Again, The creature promiſeth to eaſe us of our cares, yet it doth but multiply them: The creature promiſeth to ſatisfie our deſires, yet it doth only encreaſe and enlarge them. Riches are not food, but fewel to our deſires; they do not allay our appetite, as bread doth, when received into the ſtomack, but enflame our appetite, as wood doth, when it is caſt into the fire.

Further, The creature promiſeth to protect us; hence that of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 10.15.) *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong City:* That is, it promiſeth to be ſo, and tells him, it will do that for him, which a ſtrong City doth for its Inhabitants, defend him againſt all Commers and Invaders; yet the ſame *Solomon* aſſures us in the next Chapter (*Verſ.* 4.) *That riches profit not in the day of wrath.* And *Ezekiel* threatens the Jews, That *their Silver and their Gold ſhall not deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord.*

Laſtly, the Creature promiſeth to continue with us. Riches tell us, that though Father and Mother forſake us, yet they will not, though Wife and Children forſake us, yet they will not; they make us believe that they will ſtick cloſer to us, then Chriſt himſelf, and yet they are upon the wing preſently, they flie away as the Eagle, and are gone out of ſight, they do not only periſh in the uſing, but periſh from our uſe.

Is not all this and a thouſand times more, which might be ſaid of their lying, and vanity, enough, and more then enough to juſtifie thoſe titles which the Spirit of God hath beſtowed upon them, that they are vanity and a lie, or as *Jonah* calls them, *Lying vanities.*

And yet (to cloſe the point) we muſt remember that creature-riches are not a lie, nor deceitful in themſelves. There's no more deceit in the greateſt abundance of Gold and Silver, then there is in a wholſome ſavory piece of bread. Riches are not vain and deceitful, as our hearts are ſaid to be deceitful (*Jer.* 17.9.) nor as luſt is ſaid to be deceitful (*Epheſ.* 4.22.) For theſe things are deceitful only through the deceitfulneſs of our hearts, and luſts: Or they are deceitful *Objectively*, not *Actively*; we are deceived about them, not by them. They do not deceive us till we are decived; nor do they deceive us either as poſſeſſed or uſed, but as adored and truſted. *Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity.*

Thirdly Obſerve, *Man muſt and will have ſomewhat to truſt to, or lean upon.*

And therefore rather then fail, he will truſt that which cannot but fail, *Vanity.* Like one that's ready to drown, he catcheth at any thing, a rotten ſtick, or a ſtraw, and would ſupport his whole body, by that which is not able to bear the weight of his little finger. Man is a weak creature, ſenſe and nature are enough to make him ſenſible of his natural weakneſs; and theſe alſo are enough to prompt and provoke him to ſeek help without himſelf, though they are utterly inſufficient to direct him whither to go for the ſureſt help; *It is the priviledge of God alone to have nothing to truſt to, or to be above truſt: He who is all ſtrength needs not truſt.* As he doth not put truſt in his (*Verſ.* 15.) Becauſe he knows they are frail and mutable: ſo he hath no need to truſt them, becauſe he knows himſelf not only ſtrong, but immutable. God is all that he is from himſelf, and therefore he ever continues to be what he is, by himſelf. *But man who is not a ſpring to himſelf of Being, cannot be a ſupport to himſelf for the continuance of his Being; much leſs for the continuace of his well-being.* And as man's neceſſity calls him to truſt, ſo his duty calls him to truſt God: Man fell at firſt by his deſire to ſtand alone, he would be independent; and men fall every day, becauſe they deſire to ſtand by that which cannot ſtand alone. It is a ſpecial part of that worſhip which we owe to God, to truſt him; and whatſoever we truſt beſides God, we make a God of it. He that truſts not in the God that made him, makes many Gods (ſuch as they are) by truſting them. While *Job* puts that negative ſuppoſition (as to his own caſe, *Chap.* 31.24.) *If I have made Gold my hope, or have ſaid to the fine Gold, thou art my confidence:* He more then implyeth that many had: Man ought to truſt God, but few will; many will truſt in Creatures, but none ought: Man will be truſting in ſomewhat, and he is ſo forward to truſt in vanity (which indeed is nothing) that it is the hardeſt thing in the World to take him off. We cannot preſs either our ſelves or others too much, to truſt God, and we cannot repreſs them enough from truſting vanity: Man is very ready to exerciſe and put forth an act of truſt, and he is as ready to miſtake the object of truſt.

Laſtly Obſerve, *Man is apt to truſt that which hath deceived him; or man being once deceived, truſts that which will deceive him again.*

Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity: We ſay, *Such a man hath deceived me once, but he ſhall not deceive me the ſecond time:* But carnal hearts being deceived once by ſin and vanity, are willing to be deceived a thouſand times; being once deceived, they care not how often they are deceived: That of the Prophet is an eminent Teſtimony to this too much experimented truth (*Iſaiah* 44.20.) *He feedeth on aſhes*; that is, he is as much deluded as a man is, who eats aſhes, thinking it to be bread or other good chear; or his Idol which promiſed him great matters and much joy, hath given nothing but aſhes, ſorrow, and miſery; of which, aſhes, and eſpecially feeding upon aſhes, was an emblem: Now though it were thus with him, yet (ſaith the Prophet) *A deceived heart hath turned him aſide that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, is there not a lie in my right hand?* that is, Though he ſees himſelf deceived, yet he hath no power to withdraw from the deceiver, nor to queſtion the deceit; he is ſo bewitched with the ſorcery of ſin, that he cannot deliver his ſoul from the ſnares of it; but being deceived, he is willingly deceived, and looks upon his deceiver as his truſty Friend.

God never deceived, no nor failed any man that truſted in him (*Pſal.* 9.10.) Yet the hearts of the moſt will not be perſwaded to truſt God; ſin and the creature deceive all that truſt in them, yet we can hardly call or beat the heart off from truſting them. Sin ſeldom looſes its credit; ſin hath broken and undone thouſands, yea all who have truſted it; yet ſtill it hath credit among thouſands, and can be truſted with more then this World is worth, the precious ſoul of man, for the asking. But let not him that is deceived, truſt (any longer) in vanity, if he do, he ſhall never be a gainer, no nor a ſaver by it;

For vanity ſhall be his recompence.

Vanity fills both parts of the Verſe, and meets us at every turn, yet with a difference: In the former part by vanity was ſignified either ſin, or the creature; in this latter part, vanity notes miſery, or the effect and fruit of ſin.

Hence

Vanitatis nomē variè hic ſumitur, quā ob rem forſan & variè ſcribitur, priore loco ſig. vanas res quibus fidebāt, ſc. opes: gloriā, poſteriori loco vanitatem in quā hæc omnia redigēda ſint dum ex his decidens miſer fiet. Merc.

Hence Obſerve, *The vanity of miſery overtakes all thoſe who are deceived by the vanity of ſin.*

Vanity is their recompence.] There are two ſorts of recompence.

Firſt, Of wrath.
Secondly, Of favour.

Evil deeds have their recompence, as well as good. *To me* (ſaith the Lord, *Deut.*32.35.) *belongeth vengeance and recompence*; that is, the recompence of vengeance; as the Apoſtle expounds it (*Heb.*10.30.) *For we know him that ſaid, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence ſaith the Lord:* God will not live long in any mans debt: As *holy Goſpel-confidence hath a great recompence of reward* (*Heb.*10. 35.) So *every diſobedience of the Law received a juſt recompence of reward* (*Heb.*2.2.) And God is ſo exact in giving the recompences of puniſhment, that he will not ſpare his own, when they are ſo fooliſh as to truſt in vanity (*Prov.*11.31.) *Behold the righteous ſhall be recompenced in the earth, much more the wicked and the ſinner:* that is, A righteous man ſhall be corrected, though he ſin of infirmity; how then ſhall the wicked be puniſhed who ſin with preſumption and delight. As a wicked man hath all his recompences of good on the earth (*Mat.*6.2.) *They have their reward*; ſo a righteous man hath all his recompences of evil of affliction in the earth; he hath none beyond. But, we may ſtrongly argue, that the wicked, who truſt in vanity ſhall be recompenced with ſorrow for ever; ſeeing the righteous, if they do but a little turn aſide to vanity, ſhall be recompenced with ſorrow here: That's the Apoſtle *Peter's* way of reaſoning (1 *Epiſt.*4.18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and ſinner appear?* Surely, as the Prophet concludes (*Iſa.*59.18.) *According to their deeds accordingly he will repay fury to his adverſaries, recompence to his enemies, to the Iſlands he will repay recompence.*

Secondly, as vanity in the former clauſe is taken for the Creature,

Obſerve, *The Creature is moſt vain to thoſe who truſt it.*

The Creature is a vain thing in his hand, who believes and truſts in God, but it is exceeding vain in his hand, who truſts on it; and the more it is truſted, the more vain it is. If we make it our ſtaff, it will be our ſcourge: if we lean upon it as our rock, it will run into our hands like a broken Reed: The beſt way to keep up our comfort in the Creature, is to keep our diſtance from the Creature. And they ſhall find moſt content in the World, who live furtheſt off it, and expect leaſt from it. God is good, and the more we truſt him, the better he is to us, yea he is not good at all to us, unleſs we truſt him: But the beſt of creatures truſted to become evil, yea an Idol to us. *Truſt not in vanity* (ſuch are all creatures, in their beſt eſtate) *for vanity ſhall be your recompence.*

Again, The word which we tranſlate, *recompence*, ſignifies *a change*, or the exchange which is made of one thing for another: While *Job* exalts the value and excellency of wiſdom above all created excellencies, he ſaith (*Chap.*28. 17.) *The Gold and the Chryſtal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it ſhall not be for jewels of fine Gold.*

A radice מור *mutavit* תמורה *commutatio, vanitas erit commutatio ejus, i.e. in nihilum redigetur.*

So ſome render it here, *Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity, for vanity ſhall be his change:* Whenſoever he changeth, he ſhall change into vanity, or when he hath driven a trade in ſinful vanity, to the higheſt; the beſt exchange which the Merchandize thereof yields him, is miſerable vanity: *Vanity can produce nothing to us but vanity:* The effect is not better then the cauſe, nor the fruit then the Tree; and that which we receive in exchange, though it may be of another kind, yet it is of no better value then that we give in exchange. Hence Obſerve,

That a wicked mans ſtate never changeth for better, but from good to bad, or from bad to worſe.

Till the man himſelf be changed from bad to good, his ſtate can never change from bad to good: And ſuppoſe his outward ſtate be good, then the worſt thing that can befal him, is this, that his ſtate ſhould not change. His ſettledneſs in that which is civilly good, doth but more ſettle him in that which is morally evil. *They have no changes, therefore they fear not God* (*Pſal.*55.19.) What can be worſe for man then this, not to fear God, who is the chiefeſt good? Who would not fear to be without changes, when he hears that being without them, keeps out this fear?

Suppoſe further. That the wicked mans outward eſtate be evil, then it is worſe to him, when he changes to outward good: if he change from ſorrow to joy, from poverty to riches, from ſickneſs to health, from a priſon to liberty, in all theſe, or in any other of like nature with theſe, he changes to his loſs: That man can never change for good, who continues evil. Such a mans outward eſtate often changes from bad to worſe; if it change from bad to good, that is bad for him; and if being good, it change not at all, that is worſt of all.

It is a part of the miſery of man, that his ſtate is changable, but that is incident to the beſt of men: We ſhall be unchangable in our ſtate, till we come into the preſence of God, who is unchangable in his nature. We may ſay alſo (conſidering the many troubles which we are ſubject to in this life) that it is a part of our happineſs, that our ſtate is changable. Thoſe changes which are from evil to good, or from good to better, are to be numbred among our bleſſings; ſuch are the changes of the Saints, all their changes are for the better: yea thoſe changes of the Saints which are from joy to ſorrow, from riches to poverty, from health to ſickneſs, from liberty to a priſon, from life to death, in a word, their changes from any kind of outward temporary good, to outward temporary evil, are yet for their good. He cannot change but for his good, who is good, and who abides always under this promiſe, that all ſhall work together for his good.

An evil and a good man differ in nothing more then in their changes; nor ſhould any ſelf-conſideration provoke an evil man more to deſire that he may be changed to good, then this, that his changes may be for good. Who would continue or truſt in vanity, were he perſwaded that vanity ſhall be his change?

Secondly, Obſerve, *That ſuch as our way is, ſuch will our end be.*

If we walk and truſt in vanity, we ſhall have vanity for our recompence, or our change. Every mans end is virtually in his way: So the Apoſtle argues elegantly (*Gal.*6.7.) *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatſoever a man ſowes that ſhall he reap, he that ſowes to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; he that ſowes to the ſpirit, ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting:* If the Husband-man ſow tares he muſt look to reap tares: A ſeed time of tares, and a Harveſt of Wheat, were never heard of in the ſame ground: As the ſeed is, ſuch is the crop (*Iſa.*3.11.) *Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand ſhall be given him.* There is nothing worſe for ſome, then to have their reward brought in, and all that is owing to them paid: The very receiving of their debts and rewards, is their undoing for ever.

All the miſery of a wicked man is ſummed up in this, He ſhall have the reward of his hands. Wrath, and death, and Hell, are his rewards, and all the wages which the work both of his hands and heart can earn, and theſe he ſhall have fully paid to him: Vain he hath been, *and vanity ſhall be his recompence.*

אַל *Malo ſimpliciter negare quam prohibere* Merc. *Non credit qui vanitate errat quod vanitas erit permutatio ejus* Merc. *Non credet fore ut ejus fœlicitas permutetur & ad meram vanitatem deveniat.* Vatabl.

Some read this Verſe, not as a dehortation, *Let not him that is deceived truſt, or believe in vanity*; but as a negative propoſition (for that particle in the Hebrew, which ſometimes carrieth a prohibition, notes alſo a bare negation; ſo here) *He that is deceived with vanity will not believe* (the ſame word ſignifies both to believe and truſt) *that vanity ſhall be his recompence:* He will not believe a change, much leſs ſuch a change; This is a clear ſenſe, and it hints us this Obſervation.

That a wicked man is full of infidelity or unbelief, that his eſtate is evil, or ſhall ever be worſe then it is.

The unbelief of man is as ſtrong againſt the threatnings, as againſt the promiſes: The Saints are hardly brought to believe, that glory ſhall be their recompence, that the purchaſe which Chriſt hath made of Heaven, and eternal happineſs belongs to them. A wicked man will not believe that tribulation and anguiſh ſhall be upon him, or that the wrath of God is revealed from

Heaven againſt his unrighteouſneſs, he will not believe that he ſhall go to Hell and be damned, or that everlaſting fire ſhall burn him, or the worm that dies not, feed upon him; he that is deceived will not believe theſe things, and the Devil hath as great an advantage upon men, by making them ſtrong in unbelief: As God hath, by making his people ſtrong in Faith.

The firſt aſſault that ever the *Devil* made againſt man, was to weaken Faith, or ſtrengthen unbelief about the threatnings: While he laboured to deceive the Woman, he laboured as much to perſwade her, *That vanity ſhould not be her recompence:* God had ſaid peremptorily, *In the day that ye eat thereof, ye ſhall ſurely die:* The Devil denied as peremptorily, *Ye ſhall not ſurely die* (*Gen.*3.4.) The people were commanded to ſay *Amen* to every branch of the Curſe (*Deut.*27.16,17,*&c.*) Though it be the loweſt way of obedience to obey, becauſe we believe the truth, and certainty of the Curſe; yet it is a high act of obedience to believe it: And Satan is as buſie againſt our faith, in the threatnings, as he is againſt our faith in promiſes. This unbelief opens the way to the committing of ſin, and ſweetens ſin while we are committing it: Were it not for this unbelief ſin could not be bread, much leſs (as it is to many) pleaſant bread. Sin would be Gall and Wormwood in the acting of it, did we believe, that it will be bitterneſs in the end. Who would do the work of ſin, did he believe that *vanity ſhould be his recompence?* Becauſe this threat is not believed, therefore the Law which forbids ſin, is not obeyed. As Faith is a ſhield to the new Man, ſo unbelief is a ſhield to the old Man; as Faith quenches the fiery darts of the Devil, or his allurements to ſin; ſo unbelief quenches all the fiery darts of God, or his threatnings of puniſhment. Tuſh ſay they, We ſhall never ſee Sword nor Famine, we need not fear (which is ſo much talked of) death or Hell: *Vanity ſhall not be our recompence.*

Rab. Kimchi *exponit Sheve, pro æquali ſeu æqualitate.* q. d. *Ne credat qui deceptus eſt æqualem ſẽper & ſui ſimilẽ fore ſibi ſtatum, vel eodẽ ſẽper modo res ſibi ceſſuras.* Merc.

There is a third reading of the Text: The former word which we render *Vanity*, is tranſlated by ſome of the Rabbins, *Equality*, or *a thing that is equal*, the latter, as we, *a lie*, or *Vanity*. This varies the whole ſtrain of the Verſe, and yet the Expoſition given upon it is clear, both to the general ſcope, and to the ſenſe given immediately before. *Let not him that is deceived, believe that he ſhall be always equal, or of the ſame eſtate, for vanity ſhall be his recompence. He thinks to carry it ſmoothly, and with an even thred, but he is deceived.* Things will not alwayes ſtand at the ſame point and poyze with him, and therefore let him not feed himſelf with groundleſs ayery hopes, that they will: His affairs will not always have the ſame face, nor bear the ſame aſpect toward him; now they ſmile and look pleaſantly, but anon they will frown and look ſowre.

Non credet verbo æquo qui errat ſed mẽdaciũ erit loco ejus. Pagn. q. d. *qui errat nõ credit verbo recto; ſed ponet mẽdaciũ loco illius & hoc pacto credet.*

Laſtly, Keeping near the ſame ſenſe ſtill; the words are thus tranſlated: *He that is deceived, will not believe the right word, or the word of truth, but he will believe a lie in ſtead of it:* As if *Eliphaz* had thus ſchool'd and caution'd *Job, I have told you this as from God; but I know he that is* (as you are) *miſled, and deceived, will not believe the word of God, who cannot lie; he will believe a lie rather.* As the carnal heart changes the glory of God into a lie, ſo the truth of God into a lie, or embraceth a lie for truth; he that believed not the right word, will ſoon believe that which is wrong. *As they who receive not the love of the truth, are* (by the juſt judgment of God) *given up to ſtrong deluſions, to believe a lie:* So alſo are they, who *receive not the truth.* As the not doing of good, is not only it ſelf an evil, but leads us alſo, or lays us open to the doing of many evils, yea of any evil: So the not receiving of truth is not only an errour, but it leads us alſo, or lays us open to the receiving of many, yea of any errour.

Eliphaz having thus preſſed his dehortation upon *Job*, not to truſt in vanity, leſt he find vanity the reward and recompence of that unholy faith and truſt; proceeds yet further to preſs his dehortation by the ſame argument for the matter, though varied in the manner of expreſſion, in the beginning of the next Verſe.

Verſ. 32. **It ſhall be accompliſhed before his time, &c.**

Theſe words are a ſtrong enforcement of the motive laid down in the former Verſe, *Let not him that is deceived truſt in vanity:* Why, what if he do? *Vanity ſhall be his recompence:* That's the firſt part of the motive. The ſecond is,

It ſhall be accompliſhed before his time.] What ſhall be accompliſhed? There is no expreſs Antecedent in the Hebrew; we may underſtand, either firſt, the life of the wicked man himſelf, of whom *Eliphaz* had before diſcourſed. Or ſecondly, the eſtate of the wicked man. Or thirdly, the deſigns and plots of the wicked man. Taking in all three, the meaning is, That himſelf and all that he hath gotten, and all that he hath projected, *Shall be accompliſhed before his time;* and what's this but vanity for his recompence?

In non die ſuo cõplebitur. Mont. *Cõpleri ante diẽ,* &c. *eſt potius perire quã ullũ cõplementũ & perfectionẽ accipere.* Pined. *Antequã dies ejus impleantur, peribit ut ſit* תמלא *à* מלל *ſuccido.* *Morte immatura prævenitur vel gladio, vel morbo, vel aliqua alia violẽta cauſa in die non ſuo implebitur ſepulchrum ejus.* Targ.

To be accompliſhed before the time, is not to be accompliſhed at all, it notes rather perdition then perfection. The word which we tranſlate to *accompliſh*, ſignifies alſo *to cut off*, as we put in the Margin of our Bibles, *It ſhall be accompliſhed*, or *cut off before his time:* The Vulgar tranſlation fills up the ſenſe thus, *Before his dayes can be filled, he ſhall periſh.*

As the Relative looks to the wicked man himſelf, Obſerve,

An untimely death is the portion of a wicked man.

He ſhall be accompliſhed in a day that is not his, or before his proper day. In oppoſition to which, *Eliphaz* had promiſed, *Chap.*5. That a godly *man ſhall come like a ſheaf of Corn into the Barn, fully ripe:* Now ſaith he, This wicked man ſhall be like untimely fruit, accompliſhed, cut off, and periſhing before his time. We have ſuch an Expreſſion (*Eccl.*7.17.) *Be not righteous over-much, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe; why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf? Be not over-much wicked* (not that there is any mediocrity in wickedneſs, or that a man can be wicked in due proportion, but ſaith he, take heed of high actings in wickedneſs) *why ſhouldeſt thou die before thy time?* Some wickedneſſes lie cloſe, men live and continue in them long unſeen; others are ſo open and abominable, that their actors are abnoxious to the hand of Juſtice: He that is wicked over-much, that is, extreamly wicked, ſhall be cut off ſome way or other before his time.

Quarrellers die by the Sword, Drunkards die by ſurfet, Adulterers decay into filthy diſeaſes, Sorcerers are killed by the Devil, Malefactors of all ſorts are cut off by the ſentence of the Magiſtrate. Moſt deſire to live long, and yet they take a courſe to make their lives ſhort; they forget that ſhort way to long life (*Pſal.* 34. 12.)

That promiſe (*Iſa.*65.20.) ſtands oppoſite to this threatning, *There ſhall be no more there an infant of dayes, nor an old man that hath not filled his dayes:* A good man fills his dayes, a wicked man ſhall be accompliſhed, or there ſhall be an end of him before his day; both, before that day which he would live to, according to the courſe of his deſire, and before that day which he might live unto, according to the courſe of nature.

Implere dies ad lõgã fælicẽq; ſenectã pertinet, vel denotat illã ætatis maturitatẽ, quæ nõ annorũ numero; ſed pietatis perfectione definitur.

Beſides, a wicked man never fills his dayes, though he be full of dayes; he that is not prepared for death (how old ſoever he is) dies before he is ripe: he is ripe for deſtruction, but he is neither ripe nor fit for death: The youngeſt Saint that dies, dies ripe, though he die before he come to that eſtate, wherein nature uſeth to crop men off; yet, he (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Epheſ.*4.13.) is *come to the fulneſs of the ſtature of Chriſt.*

Pii licet ætate juvenes, ſenes ſunt moribus.

Secondly, Referring theſe words unto the eſtate of a wicked man, it ſhall be accompliſhed, or cut off before the time; that is, his pomp, and greatneſs, all that he hath gotten together (of which he ſpake in the precedent part of the Chapter) ſhall be ſcattered ſuddenly.

Hence Note, *Wicked men often outlive all their worldly enjoyments.*

Some live to be their own Executors; they diſpoſe, or rather diſſipate all; they leave nothing when they die, for others. The pride of wicked men ſhall have a fall, their preſent poſſeſſions and future hopes ſhall come to nought (*Prov.*3.16.) *Solomon* tells us, that *Wiſdom hath length of dayes in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor:* We may ſay of ſin, *Shortneſs of dayes is in its right hand, and in its left hand, poverty and diſgrace.* The former point ſaith, that a wicked mans dayes are ſhort, he ſhall be cut off before his time, death cuts him off. The latter ſaith, his pomp, his riches and honour, all theſe ſhall be cut off before the time. We have ſeen ſome who have raiſed great eſtates by ſin, and they have ſeen an end of all in miſery.

Thirdly, Taking the Antecedent to be the deſigns and contrivements of the wicked man,

Hence note, *The counſels, deſigns, and contrivements of wicked men, do often prove abortive.*

They are accompliſhed before their time. Their plots break out before they are ripe, and then all's ſpoyled. So it was with the Powder-plot, it was *accompliſhed before the time*; it was diſcovered before it could be acted; we have often ſeen grand deſigns laid in the duſt, cruſht in the ſhell, and nipt in the very bud. As the Prophet reproves ſome for ſtaying too long, in the place of breaking forth of children (*Hoſ.* 13. 13.) That is, they have let their purpoſes dye under tedious conſultations, or irreſolutions for acting: So we may deride others for ſtaying too little in the place of breaking forth of Children. God in judgment haſtens them to action before their deſigns are fully matured by conſultation, *It is accompliſhed before his time.*

And his branch ſhall not be green.

In the cloſe of this Verſe, and in the next, *Eliphaz* in ſeveral metaphors, proſecutes the declining condition of wicked men; *His branch ſhall not be green.*

כפפ *Significat & manum & ramum, rami ſunt veluti brachia & manus arboris.*

His branch] Or his hand ſhall not be green; ſo the word ſignifies properly: And, that ſome underſtand in a figure, his hand ſhall not be green; that is, himſelf ſhall be unapt, and unfit for work. When an arm is dryed up, or a hand palſied, it is unſerviceable: The hand of a godly man is green, he is laborious, and fit for labour; the hand of the wicked man, as it is alwayes ſinfully dried up, in reference to the doing of any good, ſo it is often judicially dried up, leſt it ſhould do hurt; his hand ſhall not be green, that is, he ſhall not have power ro do that evil which he would: When *Jeroboam* put forth his hand from the Alrar, *&c.* his arm dryed up, ſo that he could not pull it in again to him (1 *Kings* 13.4.) His hand, his arm was not green, he could not uſe it to hurt the Prophet. (*Zech.* 11. 17.) The wicked Idol Shepherd is threatned, *His arm ſhall clean be dryed up, and his right eye ſhall be utterly darkned*: that is, He ſhall neither have counſel nor ſtrength, he ſhall neither be able to adviſe nor act; his eye ſhall be darkned, ſo that he ſhall not be able to ſee his way; his arm ſhall be dryed up, he ſhall not be able to attain his end (*Pſal.* 75.5.) *None of the men of might have found their hands*; as we ſay of a man that goes lamely or lazily, *He cannot find his feet*; ſo of a man that acts lamely and lazily, or of a ſouldier that fights faintly and cowardly, *He cannot find his hands*; or, in the language of the Text, *His arm or hand is not green.*

We tranſlate metaphorically, ſo the word ſignifies not a hand, but a branch; becauſe a branch or bough of a tree puts forth from the body of it, as the hand or arm is ſtretcht from the body of a man; by this branch we may underſtand either of thoſe two things noted before.

Firſt, The eſtate of the wicked man; for that is as a branch ſhooting and growing out from him;

Or ſecondly, The deſigns and counſels of the wicked man; they alſo are branches ſprouting from the corrupt ſtock of his heart: and ſo this clauſe is of the ſame ſenſe with the former; *It ſhall be accompliſhed before his time, his branch ſhall not be green*: that is, he ſhall not proſper in any thing he poſſeſſeth, or undertaketh.

But, thirdly, There is a diſtinct ſenſe, and ſo the branch is the Poſterity, the Children of this wicked man. As he, and his plots ſhall fail, ſo his Children likewiſe. Children are compared to branches (*Pſal.* 128.) *His Children ſhall ſtand like Olive-plants* (or branches) *round about his Table.*

Priuſquam impius ſeneſcat, interibit; & liberi ejus ſub ætatis flore morientur. Paraphr.

His branch ſhall not be green] *Greenneſs* notes flouriſhing (*Cant.* 1.17.) where the Spouſe and Chriſt ſpeak one to another of their ſeveral excellencies, ſhe ſaith, *Verſ.* 16. *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleaſant, alſo our bed is green.* By bed ſome underſtand holy Ordinances, wherein the Lord communicates himſelf to his people. *Our bed is green*; that is, Ordinances are pure, flouriſhing, and fruit-bearing. In the ſame ſenſe the word is uſed (*Luke* 23.31.) *If they do theſe things in a green Tree, what ſhall be done in the dry*? that is, If they do theſe things in a vigorous, ſtrong, and flouriſhing tree, meaning Chriſt himſelf, who was like a tree full of ſap and life; what ſhall be done in thoſe that are dry? The beſt of men compared to Chriſt, are but dry trees, how ſear and rotten then are the worſt? And if Chriſt ſuffered theſe things for ſinners, himſelf being without ſin, what ſhall thoſe ſinners ſuffer, who are without Chriſt? They, like dry trees, will ſoon be conſumed by the fire of Gods wrath. So that, when he ſaith, They ſhall not be green, it is as much as to ſay, They ſhall have no ſtrength, vigour, life, nor beauty. Taking the branch in this ſenſe for Children, Obſerve,

A wicked Father brings a curſe, and withering upon his whole Family.

His branch ſhall not be green. Though they walk not in the ways of their Fathers, nor inherit their ſins, yet they may receive temporal fadings, and outward decays upon their Fathers account. It is a miſery to be the branch of a wicked ſtock (for though an evil ſtock may have good branches, they who are evil, not onely (as all are) deſcending from a common evil ſtock, but alſo from a particular evil ſtock (as moſt are) even ſome of theſe are made good by tranſplantation into Jeſus Chriſt, yet (I ſay) it is a miſery to be a branch of an evil ſtock) many Children have fared the worſe for the wickedneſs of their Parents, even good Children may fare ſomewhat the worſe for their Parents wickedneſs. Though God will not lay eternal judgment upon them for the wickedneſs of their immediate or remoter Parents, yet they may feel declinings, and loſe much of their greenneſs and beauty. It is a diſadvantage to be in any relation to a wicked man, Servant, Wiſe, Children, his whole Family may groan and ſmart for his ſake, *His branch ſhall not be green.* That's not all yet;

Verſ. 33. **And he ſhall ſhake off his unripe Grape as the Vine, and ſhall caſt off his flower as the Olive.**

That is, His unripe Grapes and Flowers ſhall be ſhaken and caſt off. By whom? Some ſay by God. *He* (that is, God) *will ſnap off his ſour Grape as the Vines,* ſaith Maſter *Broughton*; and indeed whatſoever is the wind that ſhakes them, it is God who blows and ſends the wind.

Theſe words are a gradation to what went before, here are two ſimilitudes to ſet forth one thing, the certain and ſudden deſtruction of all the hopes of a wicked man, *His branch ſhall not be green*; his Children and Poſterity, eſpecially they that follow his ſteps ſhall wither; and, which is yet a greater judgment, *He ſhall ſhake off his unripe Grapes as the Vine*, &c. Though his branch be green a while, though he hath leaves and buds, yet before 'tis perfect fruit, and gives a pleaſant taſte, it ſhall be deſtroyed: This he ſhadows under theſe metaphors, *of the Vine, and the Olive, ſhaking off his unripe Grapes, and caſting off his Flowers.*

Eodem fere tempore vites & oleæ floreſcunt, Plin. l.17. c.25.

The Naturaliſt obſerves, that theſe trees flouriſh near about the ſame time, and that the Vine and the Olive joyn, and are (as it were) ſpouſed together; and if ſtorms, or blaſts of wind ſmite the Olive and the Vine, while they put forth their flowers, the hope of the Husbandman is utterly diſappointed. We may ſum up the meaning of theſe two ſimilitudes into this brief concluſion.

Aliquando vites maritantur oleis. id.ib. c.4. *Peſſimus eſt inter omnia, quum deflorentem vitem & oleā imber percuſſit; quoniam ſimul deflat fructus.* Plin. l.17. c.25.

That God will utterly deſtroy the very appearing hopes of wicked men. Their boughs and branches may be green, ſome flowers, ſome unripe Grapes may appear; here is hope; but, *He ſhall ſhake off*; that is, God ſhall ſhake off by ſome terrible ſtorm which he will raiſe, by ſome ſudden judgment which he will ſend) their unripe Grapes, and their faireſt Flowers.

Hence obſerve, *Violent judgments ſtorm wicked men out of all their comforts.*

Thus the Egyptians are threatned (*Iſa.* 18. 5, 6.) *Before the Harveſt, when the bud is perfect, and the ſour Grape is ripening in the Flower, he ſhall both cut off the ſprigs with pruning-hooks, and take away, and cut down the branches: They ſhall be left together, unto the Fowls of the Mountains, and to the Beaſts of the Earth, and the Fowls ſhall Summer upon them*, &c. The Bud is perfect, while the fruit is imperfect, while God takes away their Buds, he deſtroyes their hopes. And as God hath his winds at hand, to ſhake the fruit from off the branches; ſo he hath his Pruning-hooks to cut off the branches alſo.

Some interpret theſe unripe Grapes of the Vine, and Flowers of the Olive, as the branch before, for Children, as if *Eliphaz* would here re-mind *Job*, how his Poſterity, the Grapes of his Vine, were ſhaken off, before they were ripe, and the Flowers of his Olive blaſted in the Bud; or, as if he would upbraid him with the ſour manners, and ill-taſted converſation of his Children, under this Alluſion of unripe Grapes, which, inſtead of pleaſing the palate by a ſavoury reliſh, do only by their ſharpneſs ſet the teeth on edge.

De immatura morte filiorum duas ſimilitudines affert.

Odioſe Eliphaz *ut acerbos filiorum* Jobi *mores notaret, ipſos omphaci contulit.*

Hence Note, *It is an affliction upon the beſt, and a judgment upon many, to have their Children, their Grapes and Flowers rent from them, and taken away unripe: And then eſpecially it is ſo, when God leaves no Grapes on the Vine, no Flowers on the Olive.*

To loſe a hopeful Child is an affliction, what is it then to loſe them all?

Eliphaz having dehorted the wicked man from truſting in vanity, upon theſe conſiderations; gives in the ſtrength of his whole diſcourſe in the two laſt Verſes of the Chapter.

Verſ. 34. **The Congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate, and fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery.**

Verſ. 35. **They conceive miſchief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.**

Epilogus eſt totius loci. Merc. *Apodoſis ſuperioris allegoriæ* Jobum *perſtringens cui iſta obvenerant.* Jun.

As if he had ſaid, Here is the ſum of all, of all the ſins, and of all the puniſhments of a wicked man. Here are two ſorts of wicked men deſcribed, and theſe two (as was toucht before) by a Synechdoche, include all.

The firſt are ſuch as worſhip God falſly, or with falſe hearts: they draw near to God with their lips, but their hearts are far from him, theſe are Hypocrites, *The congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſtroyed.*

As theſe are falſe with God in his worſhip, ſo others are falſe with men in their commerce and dealings: Theſe are compriſed in the ſecond branch, *Fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery*: Bribery is put for all ſins againſt our Neighbours, and hypocriſie for all ſins againſt God. So that here we have ſinners againſt the firſt Table, and ſinners againſt the ſecond; ſinners againſt God, and ſinners againſt men; in the compaſs of this diviſion all ſins and ſinners are contained.

The Congregation of Hypocrites.] That is, Hypocrites, how many ſoever there be of them, though they be a full Congregation: Hypocrites, how ſtrongly ſoever they are conjoyned and cemented, yet they ſhall be deſolate.

The Hebrew word ſignifies, not only to Congregate, and gather together ſeveral perſons into one place, but to aſſociate them into a Covenant, League, or Confederacy one with another: as if he had ſaid, Though hypocrites combine, and covenant together, yet this *covenanting Congregation*, or theſe *unholy Leaguers*, ſhall be made deſolate.

יעד *Significat non ſolum congregari; ſed in fœdus & pactum aut amicitiam convenire.*

A ſecond interpretation gives it thus, *The Congregation of hypocrites*; that is, all that Hypocrites do congregate; whatſoever they gather together, whether things or perſons, their Riches, their Honours, their Relations, all ſhall be deſolate.

Illa quæ congregantur ab hypocrita. Aquin.

Shall be deſolate:] Or *barren*; the word ſignifies both; that which is deſolate brings forth no fruit, and that which brings forth no fruit will quickly be deſolate.

What an Hypocrite is, hath been ſhewed before, *Chapter* 8. therefore I will not ſtay upon it, but refer you thither, where *Bildad* told *Job*, *The hope of the Hypocrite ſhall periſh*: Only note two things from the whole, *The congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate.*

Firſt, *An Hypocrite is under a curſe.* Of all men in the World, Hypocrites are deepeſt under a curſe: They are moſt curſed, who are moſt wicked; Hypocrites are therefore more wicked than others, becauſe they would ſeem not onely ſomewhat, but much more holy than others. It is bad enough to be bad; but it is worſe to appear good when we are bad. They who delight in the ſhews of moral goodneſs, when they hate, or care not for the reality of it, ſhall ſurely meet with, not ſhews, but realities of penal evil. Their painted ſeigned fire of zeal ſhall be puniſhed with the true fire of Divine wrath.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Hypocrites, how many ſoever they are, how ſtrongly ſoever they are confederate, how much ſoever they have gotten together, ſhall be made deſolate.*

It is not poſſible to make any power to withſtand the power of God. Though like thoſe uncircumciſed Nations, *Gebal, and Amnon, and Amalek, the Philiſtims, and thoſe of Tyre,* they all conſult, and lay their heads together, to make a Congregation, yet God will break them all. How long ſoever their train be, how many ſoever their attendants be, and how ſtrong ſoever their correſpondency be, yet the Congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate.

And fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery.

Fire may be taken two wayes.

Either literally, and ſtrictly, for the element of fire, or for ordinary fire.

Or it may be taken figuratively, and metaphorically, and ſo it ſignifies:

Either firſt, The wrath of God.

Or, ſecondly, Any effect of the wrath of God, any revenge, or judgment which God pours forth on wicked men. And ſo, what judgement ſoever God ſends, we may call it a *Fire*, even that deluge of Water (as hath been noted) which drowned the old World, was (in this ſenſe) a fire.

Divine judgments are repreſented by fire, upon theſe three grounds.

Firſt, Becauſe, as fire, they break forth ſuddenly, and unexpectedly; they are not like the fire that is for uſe, which we are long preparing and blowing before it will burn; but the Judgments of God are like an accidental fire, which breaks out, when no man looks for it, in a moment.

Secondly, They are fire, becauſe of their deſtroying nature, ſo the Text ſpeaks, it eats up, or devours. Fire is a great eater, fire hath a ſtrong ſtomach; what will not fire digeſt? Fire will digeſt the whole ſublunary World at laſt. *The Element ſhall melt with fervent heat*: Fire will digeſt Stones, Adamant, and Iron. Such is the wrath of God, nothing can ſtand before it, it will ſubdue the hardeſt materials, and tougheſt pieces. The hot ſtomach of the Oſtrich (as ſome affirm) concocts Iron; what will not the heat of Gods anger concoct, and conſume to aſhes?

Os & lingua tribui ſolet igni nam dicitur lambere & depaſcere.

Thirdly, There is a mercileſneſs in the judgments of God, as in fire: We ſay, *Fire and Water have no mercy*; there is no intreating them, they are not onely hard, but impoſſible to be intreated. Such (in reference to wicked men) is the wrath of God; as good ſpeak to fire not to burn, or to water not to drown, as to the wrath of God not to conſume wicked men; it muſt and will do it (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Though Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me,* &c. to intreat, yet the ſentence ſhall not be taken off, wrath muſt burn. Though prayer hath in many caſes quenched wrath, yet ſometimes the wrath of God cannot be quenched by prayer, nor intreated down, there is no ſpeaking to it; and ſometimes that it might burn quietly, the Lord hath ſaid, *Pray not for this people. Fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery.*

Tabernacles of bribery, may be taken two wayes: Either for the Tabernacles of thoſe who have taken bribes: Or the Tabernacles of thoſe who have given bribes; for there goes (as we ſay) but a pair of Shears between him that gives, and him that takes bribes; both are of a piece, and both are alike miſchievous and wicked. Some take bribes to pervert Juſtice, and others give bribes to pervert Juſtice: Fire is prepared for both their Tabernacles; that is, for their whole eſtates, or for all that belongs unto them. Yet *Eliphaz* may ſeem rather to aim at bribe-takers, or unjuſt Judges (among whom, he ſecretly numbers *Job*) who ſuffer themſelves to be corrupted with gifts, and to have their eyes put out by rewards: The Septuagint is expreſs in that ſenſe, *Fire ſhall conſume* (ſay they) *the Tabernacles of Bribe-takers.* And indeed, if there were no bribe-takers, there would be no bribe-givers: as we ſay, *There would be no Thieves, if there were no Receivers.* The Receiver makes the Thief; and corrupt Judges, who take bribes, make ſo many bribe-givers.

שחד *Proprie munus quod datur ad corrumpendum judicem.* Druſ.

δωροδέκτων *munera accipientium.* 70.

Further, The word which we tranſlate *Bribery*, ſignifies properly a gift; and the Text may be rendred thus, *Fire ſhall con-*

conſume the Tabernacle of Gifts. There are many gifts which are far from bribes. There are five ſorts of gifts.

First, Gifts of Charity to the poor.

Secondly, Gifts of friendſhip between equals.

Thirdly, Gifts of duty from inferiours to thoſe above them, to teſtifie either thankfulneſs or obedience.

Fourthly, Gifts of bounty and grace, from Superious to thoſe who are below them, to teſtifie their favour to them, and that they are well-pleaſed in them, or in their ſervices; There is no hurt either in giving or receiving theſe gifts. Theſe are onely teſtimonies of reſpect from man to man, and tend onely to maintain humane ſociety.

But there is a fifth ſort of Gifts, which we may call gifts of injury, or in the language of the Text, Gifts of Bribery: Theſe are given, either to pervert, or delay Juſtice, and to overthrow a man and his cauſe.

Quid eſt שוחר *quod facit,* הוד *unum, dantem ſcilicet & accipientem; quam primum accipit munus ab ipſo, tunc accedit anima ejus ad ipſum, & fit ſicut ille ipſe.* Rab. Becei, &c. Buxtorf. Lex.

The Hebrew expreſſeth a gift in general, and a bribe, by the ſame word; becauſe, as all bribes are gifts, ſo very many gifts are bribes. Gifts of charity, of friendſhip, of duty, of favour, are but few in compariſon of bribing gifts. And 'tis exceeding hard for any man that is intereſſed in affairs of Judgement between man and man, to receive a gift from either of them, and not be brib'd by it, to tranſgreſs the rules of equity and righteouſneſs. A gift transforms the Judge into a party, or makes (as the Hebrew Criticks tell us upon that word) the Judge and party to be but one perſon.

Laſtly, *The Tabernacles of bribery*, may be taken, not only in general for the eſtates of thoſe who have given or taken Bribes; but particularly for the very Houſes which have been built by giving or taking bribes. Some have built houſes, with what they have gotten by giving Bribes, and many by taking Bribes, have got enough to build houſes: While ſuch look on their houſes and dwellings, they may ſay, if they will ſay the truth, *Injuſtice hath built us theſe houſes; theſe are the tabernacles of bribery.*

Hæc ſunt peccata Germanorum.

A Traveller coming to *Rome*, and viewing many famous ſtructures, and goodly houſes there, asked who built them? It was anſwered, *Theſe are the ſins of Germany*; the meaning was, that the Money brought for Pardons out of *Germany*, built thoſe Houſes. So we may ſay of many fair places, and goodly dwellings, Theſe are Bribes and Oppreſſions, ſuch a man built theſe by iniquity. Bribes may build houſes, but bribe-takers cannot protect them: *The Tabernacles of bribery ſhall be conſumed.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Bribery is an odious ſin.*

That ſin which is put to expreſs all ſins againſt our neighbours, muſt needs be a very odious, as well as a very comprehenſive ſin. God loves judgment, bribery oppoſeth what God loves. God commands charity, as well as judgment; and delights to ſee men bountiful as well as righteous: Yet charity without judgement, and bounty without righteouſneſs, are an abomination to God. God is a God of judgment, they that are againſt judgment, act not only againſt the rule which God makes, but againſt the example which God gives. It is as much the honour of God, that he is a God of judgment, giving all their due; as that he is a God of mercy, giving to all his what they have not at all deſerved.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That which is ſinfully gotten, ſhall be miſerably loſt. Fire ſhall conſume the tabernacles of bribery.*

There is nothing gained, though much be gotten by injuſtice. Many give bribes to undo others, and all who receive bribes, undo themſelves. What is the advantage of any ſinful gain, when the fire of Gods wrath conſumes the gainer? *What ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* And as the loſs is infinite, that comes by ſin, in reference to the next life; ſo at beſt, the gain is little, in reference to this preſent life: Either the actor of injuſtice, or his heir, ſhall find a fire in the foundation, a fire in the Stones and Timber of his Houſe, and down 'twill come; Bribery never bought any laſting materials to build with. *Woe be to him* (ſaith the Prophet, *Hab.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12.) *that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs; or* (according to the Hebrew) *that gaineth an evil gain to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy houſe,* &c. *For the Stone ſhall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the Timber ſhall anſwer it.* What ſhall the ſtones cry? Or, what ſhall the beam anſwer? The ſtones ſhall cry, that the mortar in which they were laid, was tempered with the bloud of innocents; and the beam ſhall anſwer, that it was ſet up by pulling down the poor.

Thoſe are crying ſins indeed, which cauſe ſtones that cannot ſpeak) to cry: And what anſwer can be given for thoſe iniquities which provoke *Timber beams* to anſwer? Such is the iniquity of oppreſſion and injuſtice, which are the fruits of bribery. See a parallel place (*Jer.* 22. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.) the ſum of which may be drawn up into this concluſion, given by *Eliphaz*, *Fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of Bribery.*

Eliphaz having thus deſcribed the periſhing eſtate of wicked men, as an argument to deterr and ſtave them off from wickedneſs, concludes his whole diſcourſe with an Allegorical recapitulation both of their ſin and miſery, in the laſt words of this Chapter.

Verſ. 35. **They conceive miſchief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.**

The Scripture is frequent in this metaphor; we have it (*Pſal.* 7. 14.) almoſt word for word, *Behold he travelleth with iniquity, and hath conceived miſchief, and hath brought forth falſhood.* (*Iſa.* 59. 4.) *They conceive miſchief, and bring forth iniquity.* The Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 15.) ſpeaks the ſame language, *When luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin, and ſin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death.* All alluding to the natural conception, formation, and production of Children. We have theſe three in the Text before us, the order of the words being a little altered.

Here is firſt, Conception; *They conceive miſchief.*

Secondly, Formation; *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

Thirdly, the Birth; *Bring forth vanity.*

More ſtrictly to the method of *Eliphaz*; we have firſt, the Conception; ſecondly, the birth of ſin: And as if one birth were not enough, they return to their work, providing for a new birth of the old man; *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

עמל *Labor, moleſtia, perverſitas.*

They conceive miſchief.] The word which we tranſlate **miſchief**, ſignifies properly, labour, hard labour, or labour accompanied with a great deal of pains and ſorrow; it ſignifies alſo wickedneſs, perverſneſs, We tranſlate *miſchief*, *They conceive miſchief*, or ſome miſchievous device to the diſhonour of God, and the wrong of man.

They conceive] Conception is here the work of the mind; we ordinarily ſay, *We conceive ſuch a thing*; that is, We take it in, or apprehend it by an act of the underſtanding.

Here's the trueſt character of a wicked man, he is one that conceives miſchief. The alluſion teacheth us:

Firſt, *That a wicked man ſins with much freedom of ſpirit, or he ſins freely.*

He conceives miſchief. The conceptions of the mind cannot be forced, nor can the conceptions of the body; and therefore the Law reſolves it, That there is no rape, where conception follows. Theſe conceptions are the joynt actings of the will and underſtanding, both concur in them. An unregenerate perſon is free to do evil, he needs not be forced to it, he cannot be forced from it; and every evil is the more evil, by how much the more freely it is done. The more voluntarily we ſin, the more wickedly we ſin.

Again, The conceptions of the mind are deliberate, there is a collecting of one thing from another, a debating in conceiving. Hence Note,

Secondly, *Wicked men ſin with deliberation.*

They ſit down and meditate, they lay the frame of wickedneſs in their hearts, and then ſet it up, or act it with their hands.

Note thirdly, *All the conceptions of wicked men are wickedneſs.*

They are very fruitful in wickedneſs, and they bear no other fruit. Miſchief is not onely that which he conceives, but all that he conceives; he conceives nothing elſe. A wicked man cannot think or conceive one good thought; he may think of that which is materially good, but he conceives no good (*Gen.*6.5.) *All the thoughts of the imaginations of his heart are onely evil and that continually.* All the Creatures which he forms in his mind, all the children of his underſtanding are deformed and monſtrous; *He conceives miſchief,* which, as it notes a continued act, ſo an act continued about, or upon the ſame object.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *To be a contriver, a plotter, a conceiver of miſchief, is worſe than to be an actor, or a doer of miſchief.*

It is ill to have a hand in any ſinful evil, it is worſe to have a head in it, but worſt of all to have a heart in it. Conceivers of miſchief alwayes have their hearts and heads in miſchief; and if they are not ſtopt, will have their hands in it too: they who are plotters, and deſigners, would be actors. Hence they are called *Workers of iniquity*. They have an inward ſhop, and an outward ſhop: firſt they work it in their thoughts, and mould it there, and then it comes out. To conceive miſchief, is properly the Devils trade, he rather deviſeth than acts wickedneſs. There are many wickedneſſes in the World which he cannot act; but he is or would be the plotter, ſetter, and contriver of them all: This is the wickedneſs of the Devil: and every conceiver and deviſer of miſchief is of *the Devils trade*. A good man may (poſſibly) do evil, but a wicked man deviſeth evil. As it notes the ſpiritualneſs of a man in holineſs, when he doth not onely act that which is good, but his heart is upon it, he conceives and frames it in his mind. So it notes a man ſpiritually wicked, when his mind frames wickedneſs. The Apoſtle concludes of himſelf, (*Rom.* 7. 25.) *So then with my mind I ſerve the Law of God, but with the fleſh the Law of ſin.* Not that he willingly gave up his fleſh to ſin, but that he was carried through the infirmity of the fleſh to ſome ſinful actings, while his mind, his deviſings, and contrivings, were according to the Law of God, and he *delighted in the Law of God concerning the inward man.* This is the ſpiritualneſs of holineſs, and without this, there is no outward act of any account with God. It is what the mind moves to, not what the mouth ſpeaks, or the hand doth, which commends us to God. What is it to God, that we ſerve his Law with our fleſh, if with our minds, we either ſerve the Law of ſin, or do not ſerve the Law of God? Man is not what he acts, but what he conceives, unleſs he act what he hath conceived. *They conceive miſchief,*

And bring forth vanity.] Now they come to the birth; they are in travel after conception; they bring forth, and the Childs name is *Vanity*.

The Original word is rendred three wayes.
First, We ſay *Vanity*.
Secondly, Another ſaith *Lyes*.
A third ſaith *Iniquity*.

און *Vanitas, mendacium, perverſitas.*

The word will bear any of, or all the three tranſlations. They bring forth vanity, a lye, iniquity. They who conceive miſchief, may bring forth any thing but what is good. Thoſe three words may ſerve the ſame thing; every vanity is a lye, and any lye is vanity, and iniquity is both lye and vanity. The perſons of whom *Eliphaz* diſcourſeth, are ſaid to bring forth vanity, on theſe three grounds.

Firſt, Becauſe they ſometimes bring forth no fruit at all; they are conceiving miſchief, but they can make nothing of it, their conceptions end in abortions; they deviſe and plot, but all is hatching of wind: The Church is ſo expreſſed, though in a different caſe (*Iſa.* 26. 17, 18.) *Like as a Woman with Child, near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and cries out in her pangs; ſo have we been in thy ſight, O Lord; We have been with child, we have been in pain:* The Church had conceptions for good, ſhe hoped that the Lord would have done ſome great thing for her; yet after her conception, and travel, ſee what ſhe brings forth, *We have been in pain, and brought forth wind*; that is, nothing at all, it proved a meer timpany; for ſo he explains it, *We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the Inhabitants of the World fallen*; that is, we have not obtained that deliverance that we hoped for in the earth, neither have our enemies (who are called by the Prophet, *The Inhabitants of the World*) been ſubdued under our power; they have not fallen. Now as the Church and people of God ſometimes are diſappointed in their expectations; they conceive, yet bring forth wind, not that Man-child of mercy which was expected: So, much more do wicked men, after all their pleaſing conceptions, and pangs of travell, they bring forth vanity; and their veſſel is marr'd upon the wheel.

Secondly, They are ſaid to bring forth vanity, or a vain thing; becauſe what they bring forth is not proportionable to their expectation. Their *Mountain* proves a Mole-hill or (as it was ſaid of old) *a Mouſe.*

Parturiunt montes,&c.

Thirdly, Becauſe the birth is not onely alwayes below, but often quite croſs to their expectation; they conceive miſchief againſt others, and bring forth miſchief upon themſelves: this is vanity, yea, and vexation of ſpirit, *They bring forth vanity.*

Obſerve from this alluſion; *Wicked men cannot but act evil.*

They who conceive, muſt do their utmoſt to bring forth conceptions. As a Woman with Child cannot but bring forth when her time is come, and her pains are on her; if you would give her all the World it is impoſſible to divert or delay the birth. So is it with a wicked man, when he hath miſchievous conceptions in his heart; *He ſleepeth not unleſs he do miſchief* (*Prov.* 4. 16.) Whatever comes of it, fall back, or fall edge, he muſt do it. He cannot forbear an attempt to do it, though it coſt him his life; many have been at that coſt, in attempting to do it, but could not.

Obſerve, ſecondly, *Wicked men are oft put to much pain in fulfilling their luſts, or in acting their conceived miſchiefs.*

It is with ſuch men as with the Women in Child-bearing, on whom the Lord hath laid that heavy burthen, *In ſorrow ſhalt thou bring forth children* (*Gen.*3.16.) wicked men feel this to the full, *In ſorrow they bring forth*: *The wicked man travelleth in pain all his dayes*, verſ. 20. It is their delight to ſin, but for the moſt part they ſmarr in ſinning, and run through many ſorrows to accompliſh their ſin. They are ſo mad upon ſinning, that the ſweetneſs of doing miſchief pleaſeth them more, than all the troubles they go through in doing it diſcourageth them. Many evils cannot be done with eaſe, it coſts ſinners dear to effect what they deſign; they often have, as we ſay of women, after long and ſore travel in child-bearing, *A very hard bargain of it*, and pay very dear for that which is worth, or worthy of nothing but repentance or greater pain.

Thirdly, Taking vanity for iniquity; which ſenſe was given in opening the terms.

Obſerve, *Such as our thoughts and conceptions are, ſuch are our productions.*

They conceive miſchief, and bring forth iniquity; ſuch as we plow and ſow in the mind, ſuch is the Harveſt of our actions: The very form, the lineaments and portraiture of a mans ſpirit, is drawn upon the things he doth; his works are the image of his heart. As it is ſaid of *Adam* in nature, *He begat a Son in his own likeneſs*; ſo doth every man in morals. Our actions are as our ſelves are, they are begotten and brought forth in our own likeneſs, whether good or evil, onely with this difference; Good actions are born in our ſupernatural likeneſs, evil actions in our natural likeneſs.

Fourthly, As to bring forth vanity imports, as was interpreted, either no fruit, or that which is not ſutable to the deſigns and deſires of wicked men,

Obſerve, *Sinful conceptions often prove abortive, and miſcarry; they bring forth nothing, or nothing as they would have it, who have conceived them.*

The birth is ſometimes ſhort in degree, and not ſeldome contrary in kind; they have not what they expect, yea, they have what they leaſt expect (*Pſal.* 2. 1.) *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* Why a vain thing? Becauſe they cannot obtain their deſire: it is vain to imagine the pulling down of Chriſts Kingdome, which muſt ſtand for ever. *Pharaoh* deſigned miſchief, *Let us work wiſely*; (here is the language of conceivers) but he brought forth vanity, in all the notions ſpoken of: vanity, as it was a ſinful and wicked act; vanity, as he failed in the thing he did expect; he thought to bring deſtruction upon Iſrael, but he could not; he thought to ſubdue the people of Iſrael, and make them ſlaves for ever, but he could not: He brought forth vanity alſo in the worſt ſenſe, the iſſue was contrary to his expectation, himſelf and his Army were ſwallowed in the Red Sea, and Iſrael was ſaved. *Haman* deviſed miſchief againſt the Jews, but he brought forth vanity; he did not effect what he intended againſt them, this was vanity; nay, it wrought the contrary way, himſelf was hanged on the gibbet he had prepared for *Mordecai*, this was vanity and vexation too; every wicked man brings forth vanity in ſome one, if not in all theſe notions of it, after all his conceptions of miſchief.

Perſeverante allegoria venter ſumitur ex conſueto loquendi modo ſacri ſermonis pro intelligendi facultate. נכן

And their belly prepareth deceit.] The belly is taken here metaphorically, for the underſtanding, or *mind*; becauſe natural conception is in the belly wrought; therefore *Eliphaz* proſecutes the Allegory in ſuitable expreſſions, *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

The word ſignifies,

To prepare { Accurately,
Strongly.

Their belly prepareth deceit: They expreſs a kind of curioſity in working, they are very exact in every point; they prepare with art, they will not have their work like a Cobweb, curious, yet weak; but they muſt have it ſtrong too; they prepare for eſtabliſhment, and plot as if it were for everlaſting. So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 37. 3. *Pſal.* 89. 14.) *Righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of Gods throne.* It is this word, *The eſtabliſhment or ſtrength of Gods throne is righteouſneſs and judgment*: Righteouſneſs and judgment are the baſis and eſtabliſhment of all Thrones; That which hath made Thrones to totter in all ages, hath been the want of righteouſneſs and judgment.

The wicked man in the Text prepares not only curiouſly, but ſtrongly; as he likes no bungling, ſo he is not pleaſed with toyes and bables; he would lay his deſignes ſo cunningly, and ſo firmly, that as they ſaid of the *Powder-plot*, All the Devils in Hell ſhall not diſappoint it: He hopes to catch and hold, not the weak Flyes only, but the ſtrongeſt Eagles, in his deceits and ſnares.

Their belly prepareth deceit.] That is, they prepare to deceive and enſnare: The Prophet denounceth judgment againſt the Prieſts, againſt the houſe of Iſrael, and againſt the houſe of the King, becauſe they had been a *ſnare upon Mizpeh, and a net ſpread upon Tabor* (*Hoſ.* 5. 1.) that is, becauſe they had prepared nets and ſnares to entangle and deceive the people. Their bellies prepared deceit; and ſo did theirs, who ſaid (*Jer.* 18. 18.) *Come, let us deviſe devices*; let us contrive ſomewhat to enſnare the Prophet (*Jer.* 18. 18.) *Their belly prepareth deceit*: He ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe, as if they were alwayes doing it; they know neither vacation nor ceſſation from this wicked work. It is a continued act, *Their belly prepareth.*

Hence obſerve, *A wicked man is conſtant in conceiving and contriving wickedneſs.*

He doth it not by ſtarts and fits, his belly is ever preparing; when one deceit is wrought off, he goes to work upon a ſecond, and then he projects for a third. Some ſpeak of a *perpetual motion*, we find it here; what a man doth naturally, he doth conſtantly. Though there be much art in preparing deceit, yet it is the work of ſinful nature; the frame, the engine of a wicked mans heart moves perpetually, *He prepareth deceit*, he is alwayes at it. As *David* profeſſeth (*Pſal.* 45. 1.) *My heart is inditing a good matter, I will ſpeak of the things which I have made touching the King. David* had ſome holy work ready made, but he had more a making; he ſaith not, I have endited, but *my heart is enditing*; I am upon it, it is my continual ſtudy. So alſo the wicked mans heart is alwayes preparing and deviſing unholy work, or that which is evil.

Again, *Their belly*; that is, their mind prepareth.

Hence Note, *The mind of man is the Shop wherein deceit is framed:*

Yea, the mind is not onely the Shop, but the Artificer; and it is not onely the Shop and the Artificer, but the very Tool that frames it: The underſtanding and wit of a wicked man, hammer out, and ſhape all his deceitful wares.

The hand and tongue begin where the mind ends; the tongue publiſheth, and the hand executes what the mind prepares, and the heart ſuggeſts. That which one of the old Poets ſaid of the Belly, under the notion of Appetite and Hunger, the ſame we may ſay of the belly, in the notion of this preparing; *This belly is the Maſter of all ſinful arts*, and that which gives out, and furniſheth man with all the cunning deceits of wickedneſs. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theft, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies* (*Matth.* 15. 19.) theſe are the wares which are not onely laid up in the heart, as in a *Store-houſe*, but made in the heart, as in a *Work-houſe*; and from thence they proceed *ready made. The belly prepareth deceit.*

Artis magiſter ingeniique largitor venter. Perſ.

Laſtly, Mark how *Eliphaz* deſcribes the wicked man in his actions, *He conceiveth miſchief, and brings forth vanity.* And yet again, he is *preparing deceit.*

Note from it, *An evil heart is never diſcouraged by any diſappointments from going on in evil.*

One would have thought, after he had conceived miſchief, and brought forth nothing but vanity, that we ſhould have heard no more of him; that he would now ſit down and be quiet, but *his belly prepareth deceit* preſently, he will to it again, he will try once more; if he fail in one plot, he hopes to thrive in another; he will ſow his ſeed of ſin in the morning, and in the evening he will not withhold his hand; and though he ſee neither of them proſper, yea, though he ſee both of them blaſted, yet he will to his ſowing again. As a gracious heart receives many diſappointments and diſcouragements, but, ſaith he, I will not give over, *My belly ſhall prepare ſtill, holy, and juſt, and righteous things*; and the more he is diſappointed, the more holily he acts: So doth a wicked man more ſinfully; for he acts as ſtrongly and naturally in his ſtate, as a godly man doth in his; and therefore he will not be put off by diſappointments. He ſaith in the words of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 23. 35.) *They have ſtricken me, and I was not ſick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not, when I awake, I will ſeek it yet again.* Wicked men in general, as well as Drunkards in particular, of whom *Solomon* there ſpeaks, meet with many blows, and are often ſick with following their ſin; yet (becauſe they are never ſick of ſin) as ſoon as ever they awake, and recover a little, they forget all their wounds and ſickneſſes, and reſolve to ſeek it again. They pleaſe themſelves ſo much with what is to come, that they ſlight all that hath been done, and reſolve with thoſe (*Iſa.* 56. 12.) *To morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant*: They are preparing for ſin, even while they are ſinning: It is ſaid (*Revel.* 6.) that he on the Red Horſe *went forth conquering and to conquer*: he had not onely a preſent conqueſt, but a project to conquer; he was actually a Conqueror, and having conquered, he had freſh deſigns in his eye. As Chriſt goes out thus conquering, and to conquer, ſo wicked men go out doing evil, and to do it; deceiving, and to deceive. *Their belly prepareth deceit*: though they have brought forth vanity once and again, yet they prepare, as aſſured of victory.

This ariſeth three wayes.

Firſt, From the extream love and good affection which a carnal heart bears to ſin: as the love which believers bear to Chriſt, is not onely a motive provoking them to do for Chriſt, but alſo to perſevere in doing for Chriſt, though they ſuffer much in doing for him; he that loves Chriſt, will not onely ſweat at his work, but bleed at his work, if his work cannot be carried on without bleeding. Thus alſo the love of wicked men to their luſts, is not onely a motive provoking them to fulfill their luſts, but to endure any thing for the fulfilling of them; *Love is the ſpring of labour, actions are affections put forth, and made viſible*: Love is alſo the ſpring of valour, as well in a bad cauſe, as in a good cauſe: What is it that love dares not attempt, towards the attainment of what we love? *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.* Love is ſuch a vehement flame, that though you caſt the waters of ſorrow, yea, flouds of trouble upon it, yet theſe cannot extinguiſh it; much more then will it keep alive after many deferrs and diſappointments. It is the obſervation of one of the Ancients, that Love built the two Cities; Holy Love built the City of God, and unholy Love built, or is daily building the City of Satan: And though it be much hindred and oppoſed in building this City; yea, though the materials with which it would raiſe and fortifie this City, be often ſcattered and broken, yet theſe Builders will provide more materials, *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

Secondly, This their unwearied projecting and acting after diſcouragements and diſappointments, ariſeth from the extream deſire they have to attain their end. It is a true Axiom, that, *The appetite of the end is infinite.* Whatſoever a man propoſeth to himſelf as his end in any undertaking, will carry him on without end till he do attain it: As reſt is the natural end of motion, ſo till man hath reached his civil (though ſinful) ends, he cannot reſt. A wicked man propoſeth an end to himſelf in evil actions, as well as an honeſt man doth in good: and therefore till that profit, or pleaſure, or honour, or revenge, which he propoſeth to himſelf be enjoyed, he is unſatisfied; let God or Man put as many ſtops as they will in his way, let his firſt, and ſecond, and third *conceptions of miſchief* conclude in the *bringing forth of vanity,* yet he is not concluded by it, he will try a fourth, and a fifth time too, *His belly again prepareth deceit.*

Thirdly, His hope to ſpeed at laſt, puts him forward to new experiments, when former ones have failed; he perſwades himſelf he ſhall obtain, if he continue. As the Saints having prayed, and waited long without an anſwer from God, yet go on praying, *their belly prepareth new prayers,* becauſe they have a good ground to hope that God will hear at laſt: So ungodly men perſevere in plotting miſchief, becauſe they have ſtrong hopes (though but the ſhadow of a ground to hope) that they ſhall one day accompliſh their deſires. As the heart would break for ſorrow, ſo both heart and hand would break off from labour, were it not for hope. But where hope of attaining lives, eſpecially where it is lively, there ſuch will labour as long as they live: Though they have hitherto been deceived in their expectation, *yet their belly prepareth deceit.*

Thus *Eliphaz* proſecutes his dehortation; and though he ſaith not to *Job*, as *Nathan* did to *David*, *Thou art the man*; yet *Job* was the man he meant, *the man, who* (in his opinion) *had conceived miſchief, and brought forth vanity; yea, the man whoſe belly was even then preparing deceit.* How much *Eliphaz* was deceived, appears upon the whole matter; what *Jobs* belly, his mind, his inward man was preparing, will appear by his own anſwer in the two Chapters following.

CHAP. XVI. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Then Job anſwered and ſaid,

I have heard many ſuch things: Miſerable comforters are ye all.

Shall vain words have an end? Or what emboldeneth thee that thou anſwereſt?

I alſo could ſpeak as ye do: if your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead, I could heap up words againſt you, and ſhake mine head at you.

But I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief.

THIS Chapter, and that which follows, contain *Jobs* ſecond anſwer to the ſecond charge of *Eliphaz*. He calls it an anſwer, but in ſtrictneſs of ſpeech it is a rejoynder; and he rejoynes with ſome acrimony and ſharpneſs of ſpeech. *The longer contention is maintained, the hotter are the ſpirits of the contenders; and the more we are put to anſwer, the more angry are our anſwers.*

Verſ. 1. **Then Job anſwered and ſaid;**

And what ſaid he? His anſwer conſiſts of three general parts.

In the firſt, he confutes what *Eliphaz* had aſſerted; which he doth to the eighteenth Verſe of this ſixteenth Chapter.

Secondly, He proceeds to corroborate and confirm his own Tenet or Opinion; which he doth to the eleventh Verſe of the ſeventeenth Chapter.

Thirdly, He renews his former complaints and deſires; which he doth from that eleventh Verſe to the end of the Chapter.

The firſt part of his anſwer, is confutation; and he begins his confutation with an accuſation; with an accuſation of thoſe who had diſputed with him: and that's the ſubject of theſe five Verſes, in all which he taxeth, or checks his friends for their unfriendly and uncomely dealing with him; and he checks them (as *Eliphaz* had done him at the beginning of the former Chapter) upon five points of errour and unfriendlineſs.

Firſt, For ſpeaking unprofitably, or for telling him no more than he knew before, at the entrance of the ſecond Verſe, *I have heard many ſuch things.*

Secondly, He chargeth them for ſpeaking *ſuch things*, as did rather increaſe, and boyl up, than mittigate and allay his ſorrow, *Miſerable comforters are ye,* in the cloſe of the ſecond Verſe.

Thirdly, He accuſeth them for ſpeaking ſo much, or for endleſs ſpeaking; their diſcourſe was tedious, they would not give over, Thus he takes them up at the third Verſe, *Shall vain words have an end?* What, will you be endleſs? will you never have done?

Fourthly, He accuſeth them for their cauſleſs ſpeaking, in the ſame third Verſe, *What emboldeneth thee?* (or what provoketh thee) *that thou anſwereſt?* As if he had ſaid, *Have I given thee any cauſe?*

Fifthly, and laſtly, He reproveth his and their whole carriage towards him, by a ſerious profeſſion of his contrary carriage, or that he was purpoſed to deal better with them, upon ſuppoſition that they were in his caſe; and this he doth two wayes;

Firſt, Telling them what he could do, if they were in his caſe; *Verſe* 4. *I alſo could ſpeak as you do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead, I could heap up words againſt you,*&c.

Secondly, Telling them what he would do; *But I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief, Verſe* 5. That's the courſe which I would take; I could deal as harſhly with you as you do with me, but I would not; you ſhould find me in another ſtrain and temper. *Then Job anſwered and ſaid.*

Verſ. 2. **I have heard many ſuch things: miſerable comforters are ye all.**

We find this point toſſed both wayes; *Jobs* Friends telling him, that he ſpake but ordinary matter, and he telling them that they ſpake ſo too. *Bildad* chargeth *Job* with it, *Chap.* 8. 2. *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like a ſtrong wind?* As if he had ſaid, *Thou ſpeakeſt impertinently, or what thou ſpeakeſt doth not much concern the point in hand, it comes not up to the matter; yea, it is quite beſides the mark.* And ſo *Zophar* (Chap. 11. 2, 3.) *Should not the multitude of words be anſwered? And ſhould a man full of talk be juſtified?* Thou doeſt but *Verba dare,* thou ſpeakeſt to little purpoſe, or little to the purpoſe, though thou ſpeakeſt much.

Eliphaz puts the ſame language upon him, (*Chap.* 15. 2, 3.)

2, 3.) *Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the Eaſt wind? Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk, or with ſpeeches wherewith he can do no good?* Thus his Friends accuſed him of that for which now he accuſeth them; and he himſelf had accuſed them once and again of this before: So (*Chap.* 12. 2, 3.) *Who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?* They are but vulgar truths which you have told me; and (*Chap.* 13. 1, 2.) *Loe mine eye hath ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard, and underſtood it; what ye know, the ſame do I know alſo; I am not inferiour to you.* You produce nothing all this while but what I am well acquainted with; which is fully the ſenſe of this Verſe: *I have heard many ſuch things*: that is, Every man can ſpeak as much as this. Here *Job* playes the Oratour, or Rhetorician, whoſe buſineſs and deſign (as the great Oratour tells us) is as much as he can to extenuate, and lay low the arguments and reaſons of him that he oppoſeth. *Job* ſtands as Defendant here, his Friends as Plaintiffs; therefore he endeavours to render their Charge weak, and what they ſaid, ſinnewleſs; *I have heard many ſuch things as theſe.*

Rhetorico modo principium ſumit ab extenuatione, vice quippe defenſoris agit. Pined. *Defenſor cauſam fuiſſe negabit ſi poteſt, aut eam vehementer extenuabit.* Cic. l. 2. ad Heren.

Job doth not accuſe his Friends, as giving out falſe and erroneous Doctrine: for himſelf had heard and learned thoſe things before; but he accuſeth them for bringing proofs which were not to the purpoſe, or which were inſufficient to prove their purpoſe: As if he had ſaid, *I expected when you would produce ſome ſtronger arguments to maintain your opinion, or clearer anſwers unto mine: I waited for ſome new matter, and to have heard ſomewhat that I had not heard before, but you have deceived my expectation*: For, *I have heard many ſuch things as theſe.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Some truths are of very common obſervation.*

Who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe? Every Child that hath been Catechiſed, knows them. 'Tis no diſparagement to any truth, that it hath been often heard, and is commonly known, The more common a truth is, the more weighty it may be, Yet, Which gives us a ſecond Obſervation.

Ordinary truths will not ſerve in extraordinary caſes, and that which every man knows and hears, will not reſolve us in thoſe points which few men know or hear.

As *Jobs* Perſon was a *Phænix* in the World, his age afforded not his ſecond; *There is none like him in the earth*, ſaith God himſelf to Satan (*Chap.* 1. 8.) So *Jobs* condition was a *Phænix*, it had no ſecond; there was no man tryed like him in the whole earth; and therefore his caſe could not be meaſured by the common Standard, or rule of Providence. *He had need hear that which was never heard before, who bears and feels that which was never born nor felt before.* There are ſome temptations on afflictions, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) *which are common to man*: Common truths may comfort and ſatisfie the conſciences of ſuch. But there are temptations (ſuch were *Jobs*) which are not common to man, we can hardly find their parallel, or a preſident of them in the Records of any age: Common truths will not comfort, nor ſatisfie the conſciences of ſuch. Every diſpenſation hath a doctrine ſuitable to it; diſpenſations which are ſeldome ſeen, call up doctrines which are ſeldome heard.

Secondly, *Job* complains, that he hears only thoſe things which he had often heard.

Hence obſerve, *It troubles a man in trouble, to be often preſſed with the ſame thing.*

A man at eaſe is pained with unneceſſary repetitions; much more a man in pain, and though they who like and love the things which they have heard, do both love and like to hear them often; yet (in ſome caſes) they may hear them too often. Some indeed ſpeak very prophanely, what *Job* ſpake juſtly; who when they would not put off ſubmiſſion to, and attendance upon holy Doctrine, ſay, We know before we go what he will ſay: We know ſuch things as the Preacher uſually ſpeaks; what can he tell us, that we have not heard before? That's the language of the Prophane; *We know as much as he can teach us.*

Though it be granted, that a man knows as much as the Preacher can tell him, yet he ought to hear it again. Though the matter be known before, yet to hear it often may work a better knowledge, and leave a ſtronger impreſſion upon the heart than ever. 'Tis profitable to write the ſame things, therefore it cannot be unprofitable to hear them (*Phil.* 3. 1.) *Brethren, to write the ſame things, to me, it is not grievous, and to you it is profitable*: If to write, then to ſpeak the ſame things is profitable. In the Story of the Acts of the Apoſtles, when *Paul* had preached in the Synagogue; the Jews being gone, the Gentiles beſought him, That thoſe words might be preached the next Sabbath (*Acts* 13. 42.) The repeating and inculcating the ſame thing, is not alwayes blameable, and it is ſometimes deſireable: but when a man is under ſore afflictions and temptations, when he is burthened with many ſorrows, it is very grievous to have thoſe things that have been often anſwered or aſſented to, again objected, or aſſerted. A weak ſtomach muſt have variety and change, to entice the appetite, and ſo muſt a troubled and diſtempered ſpirit: *I have heard many ſuch things*: And hereupon he inferrs:

Miſerable comforters are ye.] As if he had ſaid, This is a miſerable way of comforting, alway to be beating upon, and inculcating the ſame thing; *Job* calls his Friends *Phyſicians of no value*, (*Chap.* 13. 4.) Here he expounds himſelf, while he calls them, *Miſerable comforters*: He is a Phyſician of no value, who inſtead of curing, increaſeth the diſeaſe; and he is a miſerable comforter, who inſtead of abating our ſorrow, adds to it, and heightens it, *Miſerable comforters are ye.*

It ſeems the Friends of *Job* (at leaſt to his ſenſe) had forgotten the deſign they propoſed to themſelves when they firſt undertook this viſit, (*Chap.* 2. 11.) *They made an appointment together, to come, and mourn with him, and to comfort him.* That was the intendment of *Jobs* Friends at their firſt addreſſes. Yet, after ſo long a conference, he makes this report, *Miſerable comforters are ye*; ye rather vex than heal any ſore; you, my Friends, have troubled me more than my wounds, you have wounded my ſpirit more than Satan did my fleſh; *Miſerable comforters are ye.*

One of the Ancients renders the words thus, *Ye are comforters of evil men*; or, *poſſibly, you may comfort evil men*; but you cannot comfort me. As that which is one mans meat is another mans poyſon; ſo that which is one mans comfort is another mans ſorrow. All good men cannot take in their comforts the ſame way; but the way of comforting good and evil men, differs as much as good and evil. The words of flattery and falſhood will ſerve to comfort the one, no words will comfort the other, but thoſe of ſincerity and truth. I dare not conceive *Jobs* Friends ſuch as would ſow Pillows under the elbows of evil men, yet ſurely they put hard ſtones under the ſore and aking arms of this good man.

Conſolatores malorũ, i. e. *malos poteſtis conſolari.* Auguſt.

The Vulgar tranſlation ſpeaks thus, *Ye are burdenſome comforters.* A comforter ſhould take off burdens; ſorrow is a burden: As the judgments that God threatned upon the Jews, and other Nations, are repreſented in the Prophets, under the name of burthens, *The burthen of Judah*; the *burthen of Iſrael*; the *burthen of Moab*; the *burthen of Babylon*; the *burthen of Idumea*: So any affliction upon a perſon, is his burthen; and the buſineſs of thoſe who come to comfort a ſoul in affliction, ſhould be to take off his burthen, at leaſt to lighten it. *Jobs* Friends did indeed bind the burthen faſter upon his ſpirit, and therefore he might well call them *Burthenſome comforters.* Falſe hearts count all truth a burthen: *The land* (ſaith *Amaziah*) *is not able to bear his words* (*Amos* 7. 10.) yet his were words of truth, and tended to peace. Some truths may be burthenſome at ſome times to a good heart. Hard words are alwayes burthenſome; *Job* had ſtore of them.

Conſolatores Oneroſi. Vulg.

The letter of the Hebrew gives the ſenſe thus; *Ye are comforters of trouble*; that is *troubleſome comforters*: As if he had ſaid, *Ye do not comfort me in my troubles, but ye trouble me with your comforts: Ye are comforters made up of trouble; that's the predominant Element, which denominates your complexion and conſtitution; ye are ſo troubleſome, that you ſeem to be nothing but trouble.* Our rendring in the concrete is clear to *Jobs* ſcope, *Miſerable comforters are ye all:*

מנחמי עמל *Conſolatores laboris aut moleſtiæ.* Heb.

Hence obſerve, *Some, while they go about to act the part of comforters, do but add to their ſorrow, whom they pretend to comfort; and inſtead of comforters, prove tormenters.*

But when doth a man deſerve this title, *A miſerable comforter?* That which cauſed *Job* to charge his Friends with this miſcarriage of their pains with him, will reſolve the queſtion; and tell us when.

Firſt, They gave him little hope of good, or they did not open to him a door of hope wide enough: 'tis true, they made ſome overtures that way, which yet (comparatively to what they ought) were ſcarce conſiderable. And *Eliphaz*, who had been ſomewhat large upon the point in his firſt congreſs with *Job*, ſpeaks nothing of it in his laſt: For, as if he thought his caſe deſperate, and had given him for a loſt man, he ſhuts up in the dark, as we ſee, in the cloſe of the former Chapter; where he thunders out the judgments of God upon Hypocrites, and Bribe-takers, without ſo much as one word of comfort to the penitent: This is to be a *Miſerable comforter*. The ſong of comforters ſhould at leaſt be mixt, like that of *David* to the Lord, *of mercy, and of judgment* (*Pſal.* 101. 1.) A ſong of judgment alone, or moſt of judgment to a heavy heart, may be called (like that of *Jeremie*) *A Lamentation*, but it is not *a Conſolation*.

Secondly, They (as was toucht before) tyred out his afflicted ſoul with tedious diſcourſes, and unpleaſing repetitions; they alwayes harped upon the ſame ſtring, and that makes no muſick to a diſconſolate Soul. As God complains of thoſe Prayers as unpleaſing, which are full of unneceſſary repetitions; ſo alſo thoſe counſels are unpleaſing to man, which are made up of needleſs repetitions. To preſs the ſame point, though true, oft and oft, is a wearineſs to the ſpirit; and becauſe it ſuggeſts this ſuſpition, that the hearer doth oppoſe, or reſiſt that truth, it proves an upbraiding, rather than a teaching, or a comforting: Comfort muſt be ſtollen in unawares, by a holy ſlight of hand, it muſt not be beaten in with beetles, as it were by force of hand.

Subrepere debet conſolatio & fucum facere affectibus. Sen.

Solomon tells us (*Prov.* 25. 12.) *As an ear-ring of Gold and an ornament of fine Gold, ſo is a wiſe reprover upon an obedient ear.* What he ſpeaks of a reprover is as true of a comforter; and he onely is fit to be a reprover, who is skill'd, or knowes how to be a comforter. He that will open or launce a ſore, had need be acquainted with the means of healing it. The ſpirit of God, who is *the Reprover*, (*John* 16. 8.) is alſo *the Comforter* (*John* 14. 26.) We may therefore take up *Solomons* Proverb here, *As an ear-ring of Gold, and an ornament of fine Gold, ſo is a wiſe comforter upon an obedient ear.* They who hang Jewels in their ears (as it was the cuſtome of thoſe times, and is to this day) take that which is of great price and value, yet of little weight: No man hangs a Talent, or a great lump of Gold in his ear: Gold is precious, but much Gold is ponderous, and burdens, rather than adorns the ear; the bulk of it is more comberſome, than the beauty of it is conſpicuous. So comfort, which is the moſt pleaſant Jewel of the ear, ſhould be pure and precious as the Gold of *Ophir*; but yet it muſt be like an ear-ring, which, though it be not light, in regard of worth, yet it is light in regard of weight. We muſt not load, but guide a man with counſell, nor muſt we burden him with many, but eaſe him with pertinent words of comfort.

Eſto correptio non levis pretii ſed levis ponderis.

Thirdly, That which rendred them yet more miſerable Comforters, was, their unkind grating upon that ſtring of his ſinfulneſs and ſtudied hypocriſie. *Job* acknowledged himſelf a ſinner, and that he could not be juſtified in the ſight of God by any righteouſneſs of his own; yet ſtill his friends were unſatisfied about his ſincerity; and ſtill they preſented him with ſuſpicions of ſecret wickedneſs, as the cauſe of all his ſufferings; ſtill they told him of the ſad fate of Tyrants, of Oppreſſours, of unjuſt Judges, of unſound, and falſe-hearted Worſhippers; and though they did not apply theſe Parables perſonally to *Job*, yet the general diſcourſe ſounded, as if they had ſaid, *Thou art the man.*

Now as the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning death (1 *Cor.* 15. 56.) ſo may we ſay concerning any affliction, *The ſting of affliction is ſin*; the ſting of ſickneſs, the ſting of poverty, the ſting of diſgrace is ſin: when the leaſt trouble is armed with ſin, the ſtrongeſt tremble at the ſight of it. A godly man can eaſier bear the weight of all afflictions, than the weight and burthen of one ſin; ſo long as he ſees all clear between God and his own ſoul; ſo long as he can look up to God, as having his ſin pardoned, and can approve his heart to God, that he lives not in any known ſin; in this caſe, though the Lord lay the heavieſt burthen of affliction upon him, he can go lightly under it; *The ſpirit of a man will bear all theſe infirmities*: but if his ſpirit be wounded, either with the guilt of ſin, or with the fear of the wrath of God, how can he bear it? This afflicts more than all other afflictions. This was it which cauſed *Job* to cry out, *Miſerable comforters*: His Friends ever upbraiding him with his ſin, his ſin, his ſin, as the root, and therefore as the ſting of all his troubles. They applied nothing but theſe corraſives to his wounded ſoul, which called aloud for the balm of *Gilead*. There are two ſorts of miſerable comforters.

Firſt, They who flatter the ſoul that lives in ſin.

Secondly, They who imbitter, and burden their ſouls, who, being under burdens of ſorrow, are alſo in bitterneſs for their ſin.

Some ſow Pillows under the elbows of thoſe who delight in ſin, and dawb them up with untempered mortar; others thruſt ſwords, and ſhoot arrows into the bowels of thoſe who mourn for ſin; and inſtead of bringing well-tempered mortar to bind and cement their ſouls, lay hard ſtones under them, which vex and gall their ſouls. Both are *Miſerable comforters.*

They who undertake the office of comforting others, ſhould conſider theſe three things eſpecially.

Firſt, The nature of affliction, whether internal, or external; that which will comfort a man in bodily afflictions, will not do it in ſoul afflictions.

Secondly, The degree, or meaſure of affliction: If the Plaiſter be too narrow for the Sore, how can it heal?

Thirdly, They ſhould conſider the temper of the Perſon afflicted, if he be preſſed in conſcience for ſin, they ſhould not preſs his conſcience with ſin; much leſs ſhould they thunder out judgment and terrour againſt him for ſin; if he be very weak, they ſhould uſe few words; if he be paſſionate, they ſhould uſe gentle words, leſt, inſtead of perſwading, they provoke his ſpirit: Many a ſoul is caſt down, and ſwallowed up in deſpair, by the ignorance or unfaithfulneſs of thoſe who would be called Comforters, and Supporters: (*Ezek.* 13. 19.) *They ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not dye, and ſave them alive that ſhould not live.* Unskilful Phyſicians of the body, kill more than bodily diſeaſes. And though the unskilfulfulneſs of Soul-phyſicians doth not indeed kill ſouls that ſhould dye (for 'tis their own ſin that kills them) nor can kill the ſouls that ſhould not dye (for the medicine of Chriſts moſt precious blood will heal and ſave ſuch from their ſins) yet un-skilful ſoul-phyſicians ſhall be judged and dealt with, as having done all this, becauſe they have done their utmoſt to do it; which is alſo the meaning of that Text (1 *Cor.* 8.) *And through thy knowledge ſhall the weak brother periſh, for whom Chriſt dyed*: that is, an indiſcreet uſe of that liberty which thy knowledge teacheth thee, doth that which may be accounted a deſtroying of thy weak Brother. As that knowledge, ſo the ignorance before ſpoken of, ſlayes the ſouls that ſhould not dye. As it requires the power, ſo the wiſdome and teachings of God to comfort and extricate poor ſouls, in and from the Labyrinth of their ſorrows.

The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned: What to do? *That I ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary* (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) It is a great piece of learning to ſpeak aright to a weary ſoul, to deal with them ſo, as neither to flatter them in their ſins, nor oppreſs them under their ſins; to deal with them ſo in their affliction, as that we neither cauſe them to ſlight the hand of God, nor yet to ſink under it. He that can guide and ſteer the courſe of a ſoul that is afflicted, and toſſed with the tempeſt of ſin and ſorrow, between this rock and gulf, the *Scylla* of preſumption, and the *Charybdis* of deſpair, he is a learned Pilot indeed.

This Learning is the ſpecial gift of God; Chriſt himſelf acknowledgeth, that the Lord his Father had given him the tongue of the learned for this end. This learning is not taught in the Schools of men: Philoſophers and Orators never taught ſuch an art of conſolation; nor can it be attained by the bare teaching of the holieſt Doctors and Preachers of Divine truths. We may have a rich furniture of materials for this work, and yet make no work of it, nor be able to put truths and conſciences rightly together, unleſs *the anointing teach us.* As the Prophet brings in our great Maſter and Tutor in this heavenly ſcience, again confeſſing of himſelf (*Iſa.* 61. 1.) *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath ſent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives.* Till we are anointed by God, we cannot ſpeak effectually to man; without the Spirit who is the Comforter, we prove but miſerable comforters; we bungle at the work, and rather undo ſouls, then do them any good: We may preach *good tidings, good news*, from Heaven (the Goſpel is nothing elſe but good news) yet no good comes of it, till the good Spirit comes with it, both inſtructing the hearts of thoſe that hear, and the tongues of thoſe that ſpeak, duly to apply the Word.

Maſter *Calvin* upon this place ſaith, *Some Comforters have but one ſong to ſing, and they have no regard to whom they ſing it:* All perſons, all eſtates, and all conditions are alike to them. The wiſdom of a Comforter conſiſts in diſcerning and making theſe differences: As the Apoſtle *Jude* hints unto us (*Ver.* 22, 23.) *And of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference; and others ſave with fear:* As faith ſaves all, ſo (in a ſence) fear ſaves ſome; that is, they muſt be terrified and made afraid, that they may be ſaved. *Job*'s Friends would needs ſave him with fear, whereas they ſhould have had compaſſion of him, and have ſpoken kindly to him: Becauſe they could not make this difference, therefore they took a wrong courſe with him, and were juſtly taxed without diſtinction, *Miſerable comforters are ye all.*

Verſe 3. **Shall vain words have an end?**

As if he had ſaid, I have got no comfort, I would fain get ſome reſt: your words have not refreſhed me, I deſire you would not trouble me, you have done me no good, will you have done?

דברי רוח *Verba venti, i.e. ventoſa, parum ſolidæ rationis habentia.*

Shall vain words have an end?] The Hebrew is, *Shall words of wind have an end?* That expreſſion hath been opened twice before. *How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like a ſtrong Eaſt-wind,* ſaith *Bildad* (Chap. 8. 2.) *Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the Eaſt-wind?* ſaith *Eliphaz* (Chap. 15. 2.) *Job* retorts it upon them, *Shall words of wind have an end?* You tell me that my words are windy, yours are ſo indeed: I muſt hide my ſelf from theſe blaſts and ſtorms of your tongues, unleſs you grow calmer; *Shall windy words have an end?* Words are windy:

Projicit ampullas, &c.

Firſt, When they have no ſolid reaſon, no ſubſtance in them: Reaſon is the ſubſtance of words, and ſo is truth; theſe two go alwayes together; and where theſe are not, nothing goes out of the mouth but wind we ſay of all words which are not followed with action, *Words are but wind*; we may ſay ſo alſo of all words which are not accompanied with reaſon.

Verba plena ſpiritu ſuperbiæ.

Secondly, Words are windy when they have much pride, and ſwelling conceitedneſs in them: The Scripture calls ſuch words, *Swelling words of vanity:* That which ſwells our hearts, will quickly ſwell our lips; pride doth both. Pride is a wind within us; vain words are a wind without us: The proud man knows not how to eaſe himſelf of this wind within, but by breaking it out in words.

Thirdly, Words are windy when they have much paſſion in them, when they are angry and furious; an angry man bluſters rather then ſpeaks, and makes a noiſe rather then a diſcourſe. While *David* (Pſal. 39. 2, 3.) *was dumb with ſilence, while he held his peace from good, his ſorrow was ſtirred, his heart was hot within him, and while he was muſing, the fire kindled:* While ſome are even hoarſe with ſpeaking, while they cannot hold their peace from evil, their anger is ſtirred, their hearts are ſtorming within them, and all their talk is only a wind blowing without them.

Iſh ruach.

We read of a ſtrange diſtemper in two ſorts of men, who ought of all others to be moſt compoſed and temperate (*Hoſ.* 9. 7.) *The Prophet is a fool, the ſpiritual man is mad:* Our Tranſlators put in the Margin, *The man of the Spirit*; for *Ruach* in Hebrew, ſignifieth both the wind that blows in the air, and the Spirit of God which moveth in our hearts: We take that ſence, *The ſpiritual man, or the man of the Spirit*; that is, the man that pretends to have, or ſhould have the Spirit of God (his buſineſs lying wholly in ſpirituals) this man *is mad*; he is ſo far from acting to the height of thoſe graces which the Spirit gives, that he acts below that Reaſon which Nature gives.

Yet the Original may be rendred thus (and ſo divers learned Hebricians render it) *The man of wind, or the windy man, is mad:* Anger is a ſhort madneſs, and he that ſpeaks angerly, is in danger to ſpeak madly.

Job's Friends were not men of wind, nor were they mad, and the words which they ſpake had a general ſence and ſavour of truth and ſoberneſs in them; yet (as to *Job*'s particular caſe) they wanted ſome grains of truth and reaſon, they were too high and ſwelling, conſidering how low and humble he was; they were too full of paſſion, being ſpoken to a man ſo full of ſufferings. And therefore though that cenſure of his Friends words, *as vain* (who indeed were wiſe and grave men) was too cenſorious and ſharp, yet it muſt be granted, that their words alſo were too ſharp, even ſuch as vexed his ſpirit, and wore out his patience, upon which account he expects and begs an end of them. *Shall vain words have an end?* That is, Will you make an end of vain ſpeaking? I pray do, I wiſh you would: Cut of the thread of this diſcourſe, you have ſpun it out and continued it, but too long already.

קץ *Finis a* קצץ *præcidit abſcidit. Quia finis eſt tam temporis quam rei præciſio & terminus.*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate an end, ſprings from a root which ſignifies to *cut off*, becauſe every end, whether of time, or things, is the cutting off of that time or thing, the end of which it is. While *Job* asks the Queſtion, *Shall vain words have an end?* He ſpeaks the vehemency of his own deſire and expectation, to ſee an end of them. I ſhall not ſtay here to give any Obſervations upon theſe words, but refer the Reader to the Texts before alledged, in the eighth and fifteenth Chapters, where this expreſſion is more fully opened.

Only Note, Firſt, *Vain words are very burdenſome to a ſerious ear, much more to a ſad heart.*

Secondly, *It is good to end that quickly, we ſhould not have begun.*

Profitable words may be too long continued, but unprofitable words cannot be too ſoon ended! It is beſt not to ſpeak vainly, and it is next beſt to ceaſe, or give over ſuch kind of ſpeaking quickly. There is a time to be ſilent from good words, as well as a time to ſpeak them; but there is no time to ſpeak evil words; all times, in reference to them, are times of ſilence. An *Apoſiopeſis*, or ſudden ſtop of ſpeech, is the moſt ſutable figure of Rhetorick which they can uſe, who ſpeak unſutably. As the end of what we ſay or do well is beſt; ſo the ending of what we ſay or do amiſs is beſt. Perſeverance in every good word and work is Angelical, and the higheſt perfection of duty; but perſeverance in an evil, whether word or work, is Diabolical, and the utmoſt departure from duty. Let not thy mouth open to utter vanity; but if it doth, ſhut it quickly: be not heard ſpeaking that twice, which ſhould not be ſpoken once.

Or what emboldeneth thee that thou anſwereſt?

If thou wilt not make an end, then tell me why? Give me a reaſon; what is it that ſtirs thee to reply upon me, *What emboldeneth thee to anſwer?* The Hebrew word ſignifies, firſt, *To ſtrengthen, to fortifie, or confirm*; he that is ſtrengthened, is emboldened. It ſignifies alſo to be ſharp, or bitter (1 *Kings* 2. 8.) *David* on his death-bed, tells *Solomon* his Son, and Succeſſor in the Kingdom, that *Shimei* had curſed him with a grievous curſe; that is, with a ſtrong, bitter, and provoking curſe, of which we read the Story (2 *Sam.* 16. 5.)

נמרץ *Eſt robarare, fortificare acris eſſe.*

This Query is rendred three wayes.

Firſt, As we, *What emboldeneth thee that thou anſwereſt?*

As if he had ſaid, *I thought I ſhould have ſilenced thee before this time, or that thou wouldeſt have put ſilence upon thy ſelf; I wonder who, or what it is that ſets thee on to ſpeak ſtill; Doſt thou think by thy renewed onſets to weary me, and make me yield at laſt? Haſt thou a hope to prevail upon me by thy importunity, when thou canſt not by thy reaſon? Or haſt thou further ſtrength of reaſon, freſh arguments to produce in confirmation of thine opinion? Are theſe but fore-runners, or thy Vauntguard? Is the main battel yet behind? Haſt thou ſome reſerves of greater power then thou haſt yet led up againſt me? Let me ſee them if thou haſt: If not, give over, and hold thy peace; For what ſhall either I or thou get by a further progreſs? What emboldeneth thee to anſwer?*

Job ſpeaks wonderingly, his reaſon was at a loſs about the cauſe of his Friends boldneſs, and therefore he admires it: There are two things which may embolden a man to anſwer.

Firſt, The goodneſs and juſtice of that cauſe which he undertakes.

Secondly, The ſtrength and aſſiſtance of God to carry him through it.

Upon theſe grounds, the youngeſt *David* may be bold to enter the Liſts, and dare the Combate with the ſtrongeſt *Goliah*. But there are two other things which uſually embolden men to anſwer.

Firſt, Self-confidence.

Secondly, Unwillingneſs to yield.

They who are thus emboldened, will not give over anſwering, though they have no further light of truth, or reaſon to hold out in their anſwers: *Job* ſurely had ſuch apprehenſions of his Friend *Eliphaz*, which moved him to aſk, *What emboldeneth thee that thou anſwereſt?*

Hence Note, *Such is the ſtiffneſs and vanity of ſome, that they will hold on a contention, though they have no further grounds of truth or reaſon to continue it upon.*

They will ſpeak on though it be the ſame thing, only in a new dreſs of words. They have ſtore of words, though ſcarcity of matter; we may juſtly ſay to ſuch, *What emboldeneth you to anſwer?* It is more then boldneſs, a kind of impudence in ſuch to anſwer: Pertinacy of ſpirit diſdains to lay down the Bucklers. They who contend for victory, rather then for truth, will not be anſwered, how much ſoever they are anſwered: And they *who are more loath to be foiled, then will to be rectified, will hardly ſubmit to the plaineſt and cleareſt evidence.*

Quid exacerbat te ut reſpondeas. Jun.

The ſecond reading is, *What doth provoke thee to anſwer?* Or, *What imbitters thy ſpirit that thou anſwereſt?* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Surely* Eliphaz *my fair diſcourſe with thee, ſhould have ſtopped the courſe of this ſevere proceeding with me before this time; thou haſt loaded me with hard words, and uncharitable jealouſies; But have I ſpoken provokingly, or bitterly to thee? My conſcience tells me that I have not, and thou knoweſt I have not.*

He that impartially reads over *Job*'s anſwers to *Eliphaz*, may find here and there a ſowre paſſage; but as we ſay proverbially, *You muſt give looſers leave to ſpeak.* The wiſe Phyſitian hears his Patient giving him uncomely language, yet will not hear it, much leſs retort or anſwer ſo again: They who are in pain muſt be born with; though they provoke, it muſt not be called a provocation; and though they give offence, yet it muſt not be taken. When the Child cryes, the Nurſe ſings: God himſelf bears with the manners of his people (ſo the word intimates, *Acts* 13. 18.) as a Mother doth with a froward Child; and ſo ſhould we with the frowardneſs of our weak and afflicted Brethren. So that in this ſence, the provocations which *Job* gave his Friends, were not to be reckoned as provocations; and he might well ſay to *Eliphaz*, *What provoketh thee to anſwer?* If I (in the caſe I am in) have ſpoken paſſionately, Wilt thou be provoked by it? Thou ſhouldſt not. Thou oughteſt to paſs it by, and cover it with the garment of charity.

Yet further, we may take the words as a total denial of any provocation given on his part.

Whence Note, *Some will ſpeak harſhly to, and of thoſe who never provoked, or gave them cauſe.*

Water runs clear till 'tis troubled and ſtirr'd by ſome outward violence: But the ſpirits of ſome men run muddy, though nothing from without ſtirs them. The Prophet compares all wicked men to *the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt* (*Iſa.* 57. 20.) The Sea is not alwayes troubled, when the Winds are quiet, that is quiet; we often ſee a ſmooth Sea, as ſmooth as Glaſs: A wicked man is like the Sea when 'tis enraged, he is ſuch a Sea as knows no calm; he is like the Sea, not only when it is troubled, but when it cannot reſt. Though no breath of Wind from abroad offend him, yet he ſtorms: He hath luſts in his own bowels, which provoke him when nothing elſe doth; yea, thoſe luſts within provoke him, when all without labour to pacifie him.

So *David* complains (*Pſal.* 120. 5, 7.) *Wo is me that I ſojourn in* Meſech, *that I dwell in the Tents of* Kedar; that is, with the Sons or Deſcendants of *Iſhmael*, who have learned of their Father to mock and perſecute; I dwell in the Tents of *Kedar*: But what cauſed them to mock and perſecute? Was it any provocation that *David* had given them? No, for he ſaith in the next words, *I am for peace* (I would live quietly with all my heart) but when I ſpeak, they are for war. A motion for peace, becomes a provocation to war? It is ſinful to ſpeak raſhly, or harſhly, though we are provoked; What is it then to ſpeak ſo when we are not provoked? *They angred* Moſes *at the waters of ſtrife, they provoked his ſpirit*; yet *it went ill with* Moſes *for their ſakes, when he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips* (*Pſal.* 106. 32, 33.) But what was this unadviſed ſpeech. *Moſes* reports his own infirmity (*Numb.* 20, 10. 11.) *And* Moſes *and* Aaron *gathered the Congregation together before the Rock; and he ſaid unto them, Hear now ye Rebels muſt we fetch you water out of this Rock? And* Moſes *lift up his hand, and with his Rod he ſmote the Rock twice*, &c. The error of *Moſes* in this buſineſs was twofold.

Firſt, That he did not only ſmite the Rock, but ſmite it twice with the Rod in his hand, whereas he had order only, *to take the Rod in his hand, and ſpeak to the Rock before their eyes, and it ſhould give out water* (Verſ. 8.)

His ſecond error was, that he did not only ſpeak to the people (for which in that tranſaction he had no order from God) but ſpake bitterly and harſhly to them, calling them *Rebels*, and ſlighting them, *Muſt we fetch water for you?* &c. What, for you, who are a murmuring and gainſaying people? God knew the ſtubbornneſs of that people, and their rebellions againſt him, yet he did not call them *Rebels*, but ſaid in the cloſe of the eighth Verſe, *So ſhalt thou give the Congregation, and their beaſts drink.* God had more reaſon and power to call them *Rebels* then *Moſes* had, yet he did not. And becauſe *Moſes* did, that unadviſed ſpeech of his, and the actions which attended it, were called Rebellion, at the twenty fourth Verſe of the ſame Chapter, *Ye* (ſaith the Lord of *Moſes* and *Aaron*) *rebelled againſt my word at the waters of* Meribah.

Now, if *Moſes* was thus reproved and cenſured by God himſelf, for ſpeaking paſſionately, to a people who had provoked both God their Deliverer, and him their Leader; What reproof do they deſerve, who, either upon none, or very little provocation, call their Brethren, *Hypocrites, Hereticks, Schiſmaticks, Rebels, perjured Perſons, Men of proſtituted conſciences, or at leaſt, of unſetled and uncertain Principles*? Will not the Lord take notice of this bitterneſs, even in thoſe who are his precious Servants, towards their fellow-ſervants, when he laid ſo heavy a penalty (as non-admiſſion into the promiſed Land) upon a pair of the moſt eminent and faithful Servants that ever he called forth to his work, ſince he laid the foundations of the World?

This falls heavy upon the preſent Age: Whence is that bitterneſs, that Gall and Wormwood which falls from many, both Tongues and Pens, every day? What hath provoked them thus to ſpeak and write? I confeſs there have been provocations, and ſome do but give Gall for Gall, and Wormwood for Wormwood; yet it cannot be denyed, but that many ſpeak and write bitterly, when they have had no provocation; yea, moſt who ſpeak bitterly, have been treated gently; and few who anſwer angerly will be able to give a good account what had provoked them thus to anſwer; and how much ſoever any man hath been provoked;

voked, the Lord may juſtly make him ſmart for ſuch ſmartneſs in anſwering. *It will not bear us out in acting or ſpeaking beſides the rule, becauſe others do ſo.* *Paul* ſhews us our duty in his own practice (1 *Cor.* 4. 12, 13.) *Being reviled we bleſs, being defamed we entreat:* We muſt not defame them that defame us; we muſt not revile our revilers. Then woe to thoſe who revile ſuch as bleſs them, and defame ſuch as entreat them: *O what provoketh ſuch to ſuch wayes of anſwering?*

There is yet a third reading of this clauſe, which I will but touch, *When ſhall vain words have an end? But what trouble is it to thee if thou ſpeakeſt?* Or, *Is it any trouble to thee if thou ſpeakeſt?* As if he had ſaid, *I cannot much wonder though thou doſt not end theſe vain ruffling diſcourſes, for I am perſwaded they are no great trouble to thee, how much ſoever they are to others; ſuch words coſt thee little ſtudy; thou needeſt not beat thy brains, or bite thy nails for ſuch matter as this.* That which comes next, and lyes uppermoſt, is all that ſome men have to ſay, when they have ſaid all. *They that ſpeak moſt to the pain of others, take leaſt pains themſelves.* We ſay, *Good words are cheap,* it coſts little to ſpeak fair; but ill words are cheaper. *Foul language coſts little in the preparation, though it may prove coſtly enough in the event.* There is a profitable ſence in this tranſlation, though I will not give it for the meaning of the Text.

Quid tibi moleſtum eſt ſi loquaris? Vulg.

It is our duty to conſider before we ſpeak, as well as before we act; and to put our ſelves to ſome trouble in preparing what we have to ſay, before we give others the trouble of hearing it. When God calls us to ſpeak, either in our own defence, or for the edification of others, on a ſudden, we may expect (according to the Promiſe, *Matth.* 10. 19.) *That it ſhall be given us in that hour what we ſhall ſpeak.* If the Providence of God ſtraiten us, the Spirit of God will enlarge us; that Promiſe will help us, when we have no time to prepare our ſelves; but it will not, if we neglect the time in which we ſhould prepare our ſelves: For when Chriſt ſaith in that place, *Take no thought how or what ye ſhall ſpeak;* we muſt expound it like that (*Matth.* 6. 25.) *Take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink;* which is not a prohibition of all thought about thoſe things, but only of thoſe thoughts which are diſtracting and diſtruſtful.

Job having reproved his Friends theſe three wayes, for the manner of their dealing with him; now reproves them by a ſerious profeſſion of his better dealing with them; in caſe (as we commonly ſay) *The Tables were turned,* they coming in his place, and he in theirs: This he doth in the two Verſes following.

Verſe 4. **I alſo could ſpeak as ye do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead: I could heap up words againſt you, and ſhake mine head at you.**

5. **But I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief.**

Job in this context tells his Friends two things.

First, What he could do.

And ſecondly, What he would do.

The former of theſe is laid down expreſly in the fourth Verſe.

Verſe 4. **I alſo could ſpeak as you do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead,** &c.

The **Soul** is here put (as often elſewhere in Scripture) for the whole man; then, his meaning is (and ſo Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates) *If you were in my place,* or *in my condition.* If God ſhould tranſcribe my wounds and ſorrows upon your backs and conſciences, or if my grief dwelt in your bowels, *I could ſpeak as you do,* &c.

The ſufferings of the ſoul hold out the ſufferings of the whole man, upon a twofold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe the ſoul is the principal part of man. When that which is chief ſuffers, all may be ſaid to ſuffer.

Secondly, Becauſe afflictions which lye upon the ſoul are moſt afflictive: The ſenſitive power of the body, is called the ſoul, and we are moſt ſenſible of thoſe afflictions which fall immediately upon the rational ſoul. That man forgets the ſorrows of his body, whoſe ſoul is ſorrowful. The more inward any ſuffering is, the more grievous it is.

I alſo could ſpeak as you do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead, &c.

Some read the words Interrogatively, *Could I ſpeak as you do? If your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead, could I heap up words againſt you, and ſhake my head at you?* Mr. *Broughton* gives that ſence fully, *Would I ſpeak as you, if you were in my place, would I compoſe bare words againſt you, and nod upon you with my head?* The meaning is Negative, *If you were in my ſouls ſtead, I could do none of theſe things. Could I do them? No* (as we ſay.) *I could as ſoon eat my own fleſh as do them: If I were at eaſe, and you in pain, could I deal thus with you? I would dye rather then deal ſo with you.* This reading is good, and hath a greater emphaſis in it then our bare affirmative reading, though the ſence and ſcope of both be the ſame.

If your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead.] Some read this Optatively, or as a wiſh, *O that your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead;* and then the latter words are taken as a promiſe or profeſſion of offices of love: Firſt, *I would heap up words for you.*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate **to heap**, ſignifies properly to prepare and fit a thing, to faſhion and put it into a good frame; it is not a rude, inartificial heaping of things together, without form or faſhion, as the firſt Chaos was; but a beautiful elegant digeſtion, or compoſure of them, into the exacteſt form and faſhion, like that of the ſeveral pieces of the World, conjoyned in that work of the ſix dayes creation: As if he had ſaid, *O that your ſoul were a while in my ſouls ſtead, ſee how I would uſe you, how I would deal with you; truly, all the hurt I would do to you, ſhould be this, I would prepare the ſofteſt and the ſweeteſt words I could with all my skill and rhetorick, to eaſe your ſorrows; I would ſpeak muſick to your eares, and joy to your hearts; I would ſtudy and compoſe a ſpeech on purpoſe, to revive and raiſe your drooping, deſponding ſpirits.*

חבר
Concinnare, aptè diſponere.

So alſo the ſecond branch may be interpreted, *And ſhake mine head at you, or over you:* For to ſhake the head, notes pity and compaſſion; to ſhake the head is the poſture of thoſe who mourn with, or for their Friends. Hence the word is tranſlated to bemoan (*Nah.* 3. 7.) *Who will bemoan him?* (*Chap.* 42. 11.) Job*'s Friends came to bemoan him;* 'tis this word, *They came to ſhake their heads over him, becauſe of all the evil which the Lord had brought upon him.* One of the Ancients makes this expoſition of the Text, *I would have ſhaken my head over you bemoaningly,* or *with compaſſion:* The ſame word may well ſignifie to ſhake the head, and to pity, ſeeing they who pity others, uſe to ſhake their heads over them, and ſay, *Ah my Friend,* or *Ah my Brother.*

ϗ ἐκίνησα ἂν ἐφ' ὑμῖν τὴν κεφαλὴν συμπαθῶς. *Et moviſſe ſuper vos caput condolenter.* Chryſoſt.

So then, if we read the words as a wiſh, *O that your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead;* yet *Job* did not wiſh it for their hurt, but that he might have an opportunity to ſhew how much he would labour to be their Servant in Love, to do them good.

Hence Note, *A good man doth not wiſh ill to thoſe who have rewarded him with evil upon any other terms, then a diſcovery of his own goodneſs.*

'Tis ſin to wiſh that they who are in a comfortable condition might fall into our miſery, though they have been miſerable comforters to us in our miſery. We may not (in this caſe) wiſh pain or ſorrow to any ſort of men, except upon one of theſe two conſiderations.

Firſt, That we may give them an experiment of our tenderneſs towards them, in doing them all the good we can in their affliction.

Or ſecondly, That God may give an experiment of his graciouſneſs towards them, in doing them good by their afflictions.

The Prophet *Iſaiah* (*Chap.* 14. 10.) foreſhews how they who had been weakened by the power of *Babylon,* ſhould inſult over weakened *Babylon, All they ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto thee, Art thou alſo become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?* The people of God ſhall at laſt rejoyce (in reference to the glory of God, and publick good) to ſee their deſtroyers deſtroyed, and thoſe weak who have weakened them. But the people of God (in reference to any private, or perſonal intereſt) cannot rejoyce at the deſtruction, or in the weakneſs of any man, much leſs can they wiſh them weak that they might have an opportunity to rejoyce over them. *Paul* was a Priſoner, and in bonds, yet he did not wiſh the worſt of his enemies in priſon, or in bonds with him; he only wiſht that they might enjoy the ſame liberty by *Jeſus Chriſt*, which himſelf enjoyed. For when he had almoſt perſwaded King *Agrippa* to become a Chriſtian, he ſaid, *I would to God, that not thou only, but alſo all that hear me this day, were both almoſt, and altogether ſuch as I am, except theſe bonds* (Acts 26. 28,29.) I would keep my chains and troubles to my ſelf, I would have none of you know my ſorrows; but I would that all your ſouls were in as good a ſtate as mine, and knew my comforts. *A holy heart wiſheth all well, as well as it ſelf*; and if at any time he wiſneth that to the worſt of his enemies, which is penally evil, he doth it with an eye both to their ſpiritual and eternal good.

Thus of the words as they are read in the form of a wiſh.

We read them as a Suppoſition, *If your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead*: And then the two latter branches muſt be interpreted as acts of unfriendlineſs, ſhewing what *Job* could, but would not do, as was toucht before.

I could heap up words againſt you.] That is, I could make long ſpeeches, and enlarge my ſelf in diſcourſe, I could ſpeak terror, and thunder out whole volleys of threats againſt you; I could deaf your ears with loud voyces, and ſad your hearts with heavy cenſures. There is a figure in Rhetorick called *Congeries*, or *The heap.* Many words to the ſame ſence, eſpecially when there is little in them but words, are called juſtly, *a heap of words*: Now, ſaith *Job*, I could be as nimble at this figure as you; and with my ſpeech I could mix your action.

Quaſſare caput, *apud authores Latinos geſtus eſt hominis irati aut minantis aut lamentantis.* Druſ. *Ridentes caput motitant.* Druſ.

Shake my head at you.] Shaking the head, notes ſcorn and threatning (*Pſal.* 22. 7.) *All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot out the lip, and ſhake the head, ſaying, He truſted on the Lord*, &c. So the afflicted Church complains (*Pſal.* 44. 14.) *Thou makeſt us a by-word among the Heathen, a ſhaking of the head among the people.* We have this action joyned with two more, which ſignifie the greateſt contempt, by lamenting *Jeremiah* (Lam. 2. 15.) *All that paſs by clap their hands at thee, they hiſs, and wag their head at the Daughter of* Jeruſalem, *ſaying, Is this the City that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole Earth?*

Our bleſſed Saviour (upon whom contempt and ſcorn was to vent it ſelf all manner of wayes, he being to bear all that ſcorn, as well as all that pain which was due to our ſins; our bleſſed Saviour, I ſay) was ſcorned this way (*Matth.* 27. 39.) *And they that paſſed by reviled him, wagging their heads.* So then to ſhake, or wag the head at a man in affliction, ſpeaks, as ſometimes our pity, ſo moſt times our contempt; and as it is uſually accompanied with audible mockings, ſo it ſelf is a viſible mock: Which being interpreted, ſpeaks thus to the perſon afflicted, *Thou evil-doer, or thou hypocrite, thou doſt even well become thy ſufferings, all theſe miſeries are well beſtowed on thee*, &c.

In this ſence *Job* ſeems to ſpeak here, *I could ſhake my head at you*: I have indeed been as one mocked of his Friend (*Chap.* 12. 4.) and I could mock my Friends, I could laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh; but my conſcience bears witneſs with me, that if it ſhould come, I would not.

Hence Note, Firſt, *A godly man hath a power to do that evil which he hath no will to do.*

A carnal man hath a will to many evils, for which he hath no power or opportunity: A godly man would not do any evil, how much power and opportunity ſoever he hath. And indeed though he hath a natural, or civil, yet he hath not a moral power to do any evil. In which ſence the Apoſtle ſpeaks of a regenerate perſon (1 *John* 3. 9.) *He that is born of God cannot ſin*: He hath a natural power to ſin any ſin, to lye, to be drunk, to be unclean, *&c.* He may have a civil power to oppreſs, to deceive, to wrong his Brother; yet he cannot turn either his hand or his heart to ſuch works as theſe are; he hath learned better, and is better. He is born of God, his blood and pedigree is ſo high, that he cannot meddle, nor trade in ſuch low things. *Wiſdom is too high for a fool* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 24. 7.) *and folly is too low for a wiſe man.* When *Joſeph* was ſolicited by his Miſtreſs to commit folly with her, he anſwers, *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* (Gen. 39. 9.) *Joſeph* wanted neither power nor opportunity to do that wickedneſs, yet he ſaith, *How can I do it?*

Paul and his fellow-Apoſtles had wit and parts ſufficient to oppoſe the truth, yet he ſaith (2 *Cor.* 13. 8.) *We can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth. Paul* was a great doer, and he ſaith (*Phil.* 4. 13.) *I can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening of me*; but *Paul* could do nothing to the diſhonour of Chriſt. Doubtleſs *Paul* could have maintained an Argument, and drive on an Objection as far as another man, againſt the truth, if he would have ſet himſelf to it, and have made that his buſineſs; but he had not a mind to do it: The bent of his ſpirit did not lye that way, he was all for Chriſt, and the Goſpel; he was a Giant for the truth; but an Infant, a weakling, as weak as water againſt it; he had neither an underſtanding to conceive, nor a tongue to ſpeak to the diſſervice of Jeſus Chriſt.

Narrat juſtus quid facere potuit, ſed ne juſtitiam deſerat, quod facere potuit declinat. Greg.

It is a good Obſervation of one of the Ancients, upon this place, *A juſt man declares what he can do; but that he may not deſert Juſtice, he forbears to do what he can.* The providence of God ſets bounds to the power of a carnal man; but the Spirit of God ſets bounds to the power of a holy man: if a carnal man keep within compaſs at any time, it is becauſe he is reſtrained; but a godly man keeps within compaſs, becauſe he is renewed. *Laban* tells *Jacob* (*Gen.* 31. 29.) *It is in the power of my hand to do thee hurt*: And why did not *Laban* hurt *Jacob?* Was it from any principle of love or righteouſneſs in *Laban*'s breaſt? The Text is ſilent in that, and *Laban* himſelf ſeems to tell us, whence it was, in the ſame Verſe, *The God of your Fathers ſpake unto me yeſternight, ſaying, Take thou heed that thou ſpeak not to* Jacob, *&c.* And this his ſpeaking to *Laban*, *Jacob* calls, *Gods rebuking of* Laban (*Verſ.* 42.) implying, that if God had not ſtopt him, he would have done him hurt.

It was more then once in the power of *David*'s hand, to hurt, yea, to ſlay *Saul*, and he was ſtrongly moved by ſome of his great Officers to do it, yet he ſtrongly refuſed to do it, or to ſuffer it to be done, becauſe it would have been ſin in him to do it, himſelf being a private perſon, and the way in which he had any opportunity to do it, being only a private way, when *Saul* was in the Cave, covering his feet (1 *Sam.* 24. 3.) or in a Trench faſt aſleep (1 *Sam.* 26. 7.) and therefore (though he had ſtrengthened himſelf againſt *Saul* with an Army, and was ready (upon his provocation) to ſtretch forth his hand againſt him in battel, yet) he ſaith, *Who can ſtretch forth his hand againſt the Lords anointed, and be guiltleſs? David* was not ſtopt from hurting *Saul*, by a rebuke from God, but by the rule and dictate of his own conſcience. The thing might have been eaſily done, but becauſe it could not be innocently done, therefore *David* could not do it.

Secondly, Obſerve more ſpecially to the matter of this Text,

A godly man (when himſelf) cannot be harſh and grievous to others, though he have never ſo much advantage to be ſo.

His cannings are not for ſuch uſes. What the Apoſtle ſaith of his Miniſterial power, a gracious heart ſaith of all his power, It is *for edification, not for deſtruction* (2 *Cor.* 13. 10.) He deſigns his power for the help and comfort of all, not for the hurt or grief of any. A good man is merciful to his Beaſt; how then can he be unmerciful to his Brethren? He pitieth a beaſt fallen under a burthen; how then can he be cruel to his Brother when he is under burthens? Nature, or common humanity abhors ſuch actings; much more doth Grace. *Paul* gives this charge to Believers, *Bear ye one anothers burthens, and ſo fulfil the Law of Chriſt* (Gal. 6. 2.) This Law of Chriſt is written in the heart of every man, who is Chriſts, and therefore he is far from adding to another mans burden: He that hath a fellow-feeling of his Brethrens ſorrows, will not encreaſe their ſorrows: no man will purpoſely encreaſe, or add to that burthen which himſelf muſt bear. *Could I ſpeak as you do?*

Thus for the Negative, what *Job* would not have done, if their ſoul had been in his ſouls ſtead.

But, What would he have done? He tells us in the next Verſe, this is the courſe that I would take.

Verſe 5. **I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief.**

This is my deſign, and all the hurt I intend you. Theſe words in the ſubſtance of them have been opened (*Chap.* 4.4.) where *Eliphaz* tells *Job*, that he had done, what here he promiſed he would do, *Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the feeble knees: Thou haſt inſtructed many, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands. Eliphaz* had given teſtimony for *Job*, that he had done, what *Job* now profeſſeth he was reſolved to do, and would do, in caſe he were put into their condition, and they into his, *I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth:* That is, with the words of my mouth; and (which is the ſame) *The moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief.*

Here are the two parts of conſolation, and the two great duties of a Comforter.

The firſt, is to ſtrengthen ſorrowful man.

The ſecond, is to abate the ſtrength of his ſorrows.

Job was reſolved upon both: Were they weak in faith, and hope, he would ſtrengthen them: were their fears and doubtings ſtrong, he would endeavour to weaken them, *I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief.*

Motio labiorum meorum prohiberet. Heb. *ſc. dolorem veſtrum.*

The word **Grief** is not expreſſed in the Hebrew; there it is only thus, *The moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage*; be it what it will that grieves you, I would labour to aſſwage it: I would aſſwage your fears, your ſorrows, your impatience, your unbelief; whatever ſpiritual evil were upon you, the moving of my lips ſhould be for the removing of it: Or (as others render) *For the turning of it away.* For the word ſignifies,

First, to abate in degree.

Secondly, To turn away, or to ſtop altogether.

My deſign ſhould be upon both, I would ſtudy to the utmoſt of my power and parts, not only to mitigate, but quite to remove whatſoever I ſhould find an affliction to you.

It hath been ſhewed (*Chap.* 4.4.) what power words have, both to ſtrengthen weak faith, and to aſſwage the ſtrongeſt grief, thither I refer the Reader; only take two brief notes from it.

Firſt, *A good man doth not only abſtain from the hurt that he might do another, but he labours to help him, and to do him good.*

Not to heap words in anger upon them that are in miſery, not to ſhake the head at them in contempt, is only a Negative piece of charity and kindneſs: 'Tis our duty to uſe our utmoſt endeavour to refreſh and comfort them. Negative acts of kindneſs are not the fulfilling of the law of love; it is not charity to the poor, to ſay I will not make them poorer, I will take nothing from them; it is our duty to give them of what we have. When a man is ſorrowful, it is not enough to ſay, I will not increaſe his grief: it is our duty to leſſen it, yea, to turn it into joy.

And this is more conſiderable, in reference to the perſons with whom *Job* had to do; they had given him very hard meaſure, yet he would not requite them with hard meaſure; he would meaſure that to them which was good, and he would give them good meaſure. It is the common rule of humanity, to do good to thoſe who do us good; it is more then beaſtly, even devilliſh cruelty, to hurt thoſe that do us good; it is the height of Chriſtianity, to do good to thoſe who have been a hinderance to us, and to comfort thoſe who have cauſed our ſorrow. The Apoſtolical rule is, *Recompence to no man evil for evil* (Rom. 12. 17.) And again (*ver.* 19.) *Dearly beloved, avenge not your ſelves, but rather give place unto wrath:* The Apoſtle doth not mean, that we ſhould give place to our own wrath; if we do ſo, we *give place to the Devil*, as the ſame Apoſtle intimates (*Eph.* 4. 26.27.) Our own wrath muſt be ſtopt and reſiſted, quenched and put out. Then, what, or whoſe wrath is it, that we are commanded to give place unto? This wrath may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, For the wrath of that man who is our enemy; we muſt give place to his wrath, not by approving him or his wrath, but by not anſwering him with wrath. If when another ſtorms we are calm, if when he rages, we ſhew all gentleneſs and meekneſs both of ſpeech and ſpirit, then we give place to his wrath; that is, we make it room to paſs away and evaporate: *Solomon*'s Proverb is the ſum of this Expoſition (*Prov.* 15. 1.) *A ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath; but grievous words ſtir up anger.*

Secondly, When *Paul* adviſeth us not to avenge our ſelves, but *rather to give place to wrath*, we may underſtand it of the wrath of God; and the very next words, which the Apoſtle alledgeth from (*Deut.* 32.35.) carry the ſence clearly this way, *For it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, ſaith the Lord:* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, If you take upon you to avenge your ſelves, you take Gods work out of his hand; it belongs to God as much to take revenge, as it doth to give reward. And therefore as a man, who having done good, is over careful and anxious how to get his reward, takes rewarding work out of Gods hand, and ſhall have no more reward then he can get himſelf; as Chriſt tells the Phariſees in that caſe (*Mat.* 6. 2.) *Verily I ſay unto you, ye have your reward:* And all that a man can get himſelf, is not worth the having.

So the man, who having ſuffered wrong, goes about to revenge himſelf, takes revenging work out of Gods hand, and ſhall be righted no further then he can right himſelf, which is but little, if any thing at all; whereas if he would give place to the wrath of God; that is, let God alone, by ſuch wayes as his Juſtice ſhall raiſe up, to right him, againſt his adverſary, he would right him fully. So that our Intereſt doth not lye in returning evil ſor evil, but in returning good for evil to our enemies; as Saint *Paul* concludes (*Rom.* 13. 20.) *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirſt, give him drink; for in ſo doing, thou ſhalt heap coals of fire on his head:* That is, thou ſhalt either melt and mollifie his ſpirit towards thee, as hardeſt metals are by coals of fire (ſome ſuch melting we may ſee in *Saul* towards *David*, when he ſorbore to take vengeance on him (1 *Sam.* 24. 16. *Chap.* 26. 21.) or thou ſhalt heap coals of divine vengeance upon him, by making his malice and hatred againſt thee more inexcuſable: Which latter, though it may be looked upon as a conſequent of our doing good to our enemies, yet we muſt take heed of making it the end why we do ſo, for that were to ſeek revenge while we forbear it, and to do good for that end, were *to be overcome of evil*; which the Apoſtle forbids in the cloſe of that Chapter.

Job in this Text was far from profeſſing a readineſs to aſſwage the grief of his unkind, or enemy-like Friends, upon hope that God would encreaſe their ſorrow.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Words duly ſpoken and applyed, are of great power.*

How forcible are right words? Is *Job*'s queſtion (*Chap.* 6. 25.) He doth not there anſwer his queſtion, nor tell us how forcible they are, but here he doth. They are of ſuch force, that they ſtrengthen weak ſouls, and aſſwage the moſt ſwelling floods of ſorrow.

God at firſt gave being and motion to all creatures, *with the moving of his lips:* He by the moving of his lips hath ever ſince ordered all their motions: The word of man produceth great effects; the tongue ſets all hands on work; and what almoſt cannot the tongue of man do? *The tongue is a little member* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, *Chap.* 3. 5.) *and boaſteth great things:* Now as the tongue of vain men boaſt great things which they cannot do; ſo the tongues of wiſe men can really do great things. *Vain men* (as we ſay) *will take thirteen to the dozen*, but cannot perform one. *Wiſe men though they ſpeak not much, yet they can perform much with a word ſpeaking.* And though as the ſame Apoſtle declaims moſt holiliy againſt the tongue of a wicked man (*Verſ.* 8.) that his tongue is ſuch an unruly evil, that no man can tame it; yet there have ſcarce ever been found any men ſo unruly, but the tongues of wiſe and godly men have tamed them: Yea, the tongue of a wiſe man is to an unruly man, and often to a multitude of unruly men, as a bit in a Horſes mouth, or as a Rudder to a Ship, turning him or them about which way ſoever he liſteth; as this Apoſtle teacheth us by theſe ſimilitudes (*Verſ.* 3, 4.)

the tongue of every man is to, and doth to himſelf, whether it be good or evil. And as the tongue is thus powerful in civilizing the rude, and in appeaſing the humours of thoſe who are moſt outragious; ſo it is very powerful in ſupporting thoſe that are ready to ſink, and in aſſwaging the grief of thoſe who are moſt diſconſolate and ſorrowful.

Laſtly, Whereas *Job* ſpeaks peremptorily, as if he ſaw the effect, or were aſſured of it aforehand, *I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief:* *Job* knew that the ſucceſs of all his counſels depended upon the concurrence and bleſſing of God; yet thus he ſpeaks.

Hence Note, *A man may ſay he hath done that, for the doing of which he hath uſed ſuitable and faithful endeavours, whether the thing be done or no.*

The Lord ſaith to *Jeruſalem* by the Prophet *Ezekiel* (*Chap.* 24. 13.) *Becauſe I have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged.* Now as God takes it upon him, that he had purged them, though they were not purged, becauſe he gave them ſo many means and helps for their purging; ſo any man in his proportion, may take it upon him, that he hath ſtrengthened their faith, abated their grief, yea, and ſaved their ſouls, among, and towards whom he hath diligently uſed thoſe means appointed by God for the attaining of thoſe great and noble ends, though poſſibly thoſe ends be not attained. God himſelf reckons thus of all the labours of his faithful ſervants, they ſhall be rewarded as having done that which they have been doing with their hearts, hands, and tongues, though they ſee little fruit of either. *Then I ſaid, I have laboured in vain* (Iſa. 49. 4.) but though it was in vain to thoſe for whom he laboured, that is, they got no good by it, yet it was not in vain to him who laboured, he got much good by it; as it follows in the ſame Verſe, *Surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work* (or my reward, one word ſignifies both reward and work, to ſhew that theſe can never be ſeperated, *my work*, ſaith he) *is with my God:* And *Verſ.* 5. *Though* Iſrael *be not gathered, yet ſhall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God ſhall be my ſtrength.*

As we are not to judge of the goodneſs of any cauſe by the ſucceſs, but by the juſtice of it; ſo neither doth God adjudge the reward of any work by the ſucceſs, but by the goodneſs of it, together with the ſweat and ſincerity of him that doth it. *As the will of a godly man is accepted for the deed, ſo his deed is accepted for the ſucceſs.*

VERS. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Though I ſpeak, my grief is not aſſwaged: and though I forbear, what am I eaſed?

But now he hath made me weary: thou haſt made deſolate all my company.

And thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, which is a witneſs againſt me: and my leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth witneſs to my face.

He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnaſheth upon me with his teeth, mine enemy ſharpeneth his eyes upon me.

They have gaped upon me with their mouth, they have ſmitten me upon the cheek reproachfully, they have gathered themſelves together againſt me.

God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over to the hands of the wicked.

IN the five former Verſes of this Chapter, *Job* reproved the perſonal failings of his Friends towards him; he now enters upon the confutation of their opinion. This is the conſtant method, both of *Job* and his Friends; they never come to the matter till they have fallen upon the man; nor touch the opinion, till they have dealt with the perſon. And this is the tenor of moſt mens ſpirits, to this day, in diſputes and controverſies; and ſome do not only deal with the man before the matter, but loſe the matter in dealing with the man, entangling, and engaging themſelves ſo much in perſonal quarrels, that they forget, or deſert the doctrinal quarrel. *Job* and his Friends, though they were too mindful of the former, yet they did not forget the latter, and here *Job* addreſſes himſelf unto it. Yet before he enters upon the ſtate of the queſtion, he ſets forth his own ſtate, and ſhews how it was with him; granting (which *Eliphaz* had made the ground of his accuſation) that he was in an extreamly afflicted condition, yet denying what he from thence inferred, that he was therefore wicked, or continued knowingly in any ſinful courſe. He deſcribes his afflictions with much variety of Argument and Elocution, to the ſeventeenth Verſe.

Firſt, Aggravating them by their unmoveableneſs, or remedileſneſs: His ſorrows were ſtubborn, and ſuch as would not yield to any kind of remedy.

Verſe 6. **Though I ſpeak my grief is not aſſwaged, and though I forbear, what am I eaſed?**

In the former Verſe, *Job* ſpeaks in a high ſtrain of aſſurance, that if his Friends were afflicted, *The moving of his lips ſhould aſſwage their grief:* But it ſeems, his own experience had taught him, that the moving of his lips could not aſſwage his own grief; *Though I ſpeak* (ſaith he here) *my grief is not aſſwaged.*

Hence Obſerve, *A man may do that for others which he cannot do for himſelf.*

He may comfort others in their ſorrows, when he cannot comfort himſelf; he may reſolve others in their doubts, when he cannot reſolve himſelf; he may anſwer to caſes which their conſciences put him, when he cannot anſwer his own; yea, tis poſſible for a man to ſpeak ſuch words to another, as may turn him from his ſin, and ſave his ſoul, and yet himſelf continue in ſin, and loſe his own ſoul for ever. Naturaliſts have a rule concerning the Senſes, That, *when a ſenſible object is brought too near, or laid upon the ſenſe, it not only hinders, but takes away the preſent ſenſation.* This holds a proportion in rational actings: the nearer any one is to us in relation, the harder it is to fix counſel upon him; and becauſe we are neareſt to our ſelves, therefore it is hardeſt of all to counſel our ſelves.

Our Saviour Chriſt prevents what he foreſaw ſome ready to object againſt him (*Luke* 4. 23.) *Ye will ſurely ſay unto me this Proverb, Phyſitian heal thy ſelf.* The Proverb in its Original is (I conceive) to be underſtood perſonally; but as Chriſt ſuggeſts it there, it is to be underſtood Nationally, or Provincially, *Heal thy ſelf,* is, *heal thy own Countrey*; exerciſe thy power of working miracles there, as well as thou haſt done it in other places; that this is the meaning of it, appears plainly by the next words, *Whatſoever we have heard done in* Canaan, *do alſo in thine own Countrey:* For Chriſt as yet had wrought no mighty works of healing there (*Mark* 6. 5.) But why was Chriſt ſo ſlow in manifeſting himſelf to his own Countreymen? He gives the reaſon (*Verſ.* 24.) *And he ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, no Prophet is accepted in his own Countrey:* The Goſpel of *Mark* (*Chap.* 6. 4.) adds two cloſer relations, *His own Kin, and his own Houſe:* They in a mans houſe are nearer to him then his kindred abroad; and his kindred are nearer to him then his Countrey-men; now among theſe, a Prophet hath no honour: They know him ſo much, that they do not reſpect him, or his ſayings. *The* Jews *ſaid, Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of* Mary, *the Brother of* James, *&c.* Chriſt being thus near to them, had little honour among them. Now for as much, *as a man is nearer to himſelf,* not only then his Countrey-men, but then any of his Kin; therefore his own counſels and comforts have ordinarily ſo little effect upon himſelf; he is not accept in his own breaſt, There are ſome indeed ſo gracious, or great in their own eyes, that they will ask counſel of none but themſelves, nor follow any advice but their own; but uſually man ſeeks out, as being neither able to ſatisfie his own doubts, nor abate his own ſorrows, though poſſibly more able for both, then he to whom he ſeeks. *Though I ſpeak, my grief is not aſſwaged; and though I forbear, what am I eaſed?*

Some conceive *Job* ſpeaking here like an Orator, who ſeems to ſtand in doubt what to do, and threfore trembles out his Preface in ſuch words as theſe, *Shall I ſpeak, or ſhall I be ſilent? Shall I open my lips, or ſhall I forbear?* *Job*'s pain received no check which way ſoever of theſe

Eloquar an ſileam? Quid agã? Si locutus fuero, &c. Vulg.

theſe he took, and therefore it ſeemed vain to attempt either.

Nunc eo re, redierunt, ut quo me vertam neſciam aut quid agam, nam nec loquendo nec tacendo quicquam proficio. Merc.

Though I ſpeak.] That is, *If I ſtand up in my juſt defence to anſwer, and take away your Objections, yet my grief is not anſwered; that is as buſie with me, and as talkative as ever it was; yea, then you object my impatience under ſufferings, as an argument of my ſin.*

And though I forbear.] That is, *If I bite in my pain, and ſpeak not, if I ſtand mute, as attentive to hear you ſpeak, yet my ſorrow moves not; yea, then you judge my ſilence an argument of my ſecret guilt, and that all is true which you have ſaid againſt me, becauſe I ſay nothing for my ſelf.* Thus,

What am I eaſed? Saith the Text in our tranſlation? The Hebrew ſaith, *What goeth from me*? That is, *What of my pain, what of my ſorrow goeth away from me, when I ceaſe, or forbear to ſpeak*? So that,

The general ſence of this Verſe is to ſhew that his troubles were paſt hope of redreſs; they found no cure; none by ſpeech, none by ſilence: Grief is ſometimes eaſed by ſpeaking, ſometimes by ſilence, either our own or others.

To ſay nothing is a medicine for ſome mens ſorrow: the ſorrow of others cannot be medicin'd, but by ſaying much: A plaiſter of words hath cured many a wound, and the more words have been uſed, the more ſome wounds have feſtered, and the anguiſh of them hath increaſed.

> Hence Obſerve, *There is no means of remedy left for that evil which is not remedied by the uſe and tryal of contrary means.*

If neither ſpeech nor ſilence eaſe a mans mind, what can? We find ſuch a kind of arguing (though in a different caſe) uſed by Chriſt (*Mat.* 11. 16,17.) Where when he would ſhew how impoſſible, or at leaſt how extreamly difficult it was to pleaſe the *Jews* (they were a humorous people, and let a man put himſelf in what poſture he would, they would find ſome fault, or have ſomewhat to object againſt him) *Whereunto* (ſaith Chriſt) *ſhall I liken this generation*? (they were ſo untoward, that Chriſt ſpeaks as if he were ſtraitened, how to find out a fit compariſon for them, or could ſcarce tell to what they were like; yet he tells us) *They are like unto children ſitting in the markets, and calling to their fellows, ſaying, We have piped and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented.* When a man will neither mourn with us, nor rejoyce with us, what ſhall we do with him? How ſhall we pleaſe him? For what company is he fit? That ſuch was the tendency of this ſimilitude, appears plainly in the application which Chriſt makes (*Verſ.* 18.) *For* John *came neither eating, nor drinking, and they ſay he hath a Devil:* They did not like the mournful, auſtere courſe of *John: The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they ſaid, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and ſinners:* They did not like the free converſe of Chriſt. When a people are of this ſpirit, or at this lock, that neither a man who is affable and courteous, ready both to receive, and give civilities, is welcome to them, nor yet he who is auſtere, and reſerved, cloſe and ſtrict in his way, can give them any content, who, or what can content them? When neither piping nor mourning, when neither dancing nor ſorrowing takes with us, what can? When we would deſcribe a perſon, whoſe troubleſomeneſs of ſpirit ſeems unanſwerable, we ſay of him, *He is quiet neither full nor faſting:* That is, He is never quiet, or nothing can make him quiet. *Abraham* ſaith to his Nephew *Lot* (Gen. 13, 8, 9.) *Let there be no ſtrife I pray thee, between me and thee, and between thy Herd-men and my Herd-men, for we are brethren,* &c. *If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.* Now as it is an Argument of the ſweeteſt ſpirit, and faireſt diſpoſition, when a man is ready to take either hand, rather then break the peace; ſo it argues the ſowreſt ſpirit, and moſt untractable diſpoſition, when a man will neither go to the right hand nor to the left, when he will neither move forward nor backward; when he will neither give nor take, neither buy nor ſell, there is no dealing with ſuch a man, for he waves all the wayes of dealing.

Thus alſo we conclude a people incorrigible, who continue in their ſins, whether God ſmite or heal, whether he deliver them from, or deliver them up into the hand of judgments, becauſe theſe are the utmoſt bounds, or the extreams of all thoſe providential diſpenſations which God uſeth at any time to turn a people from their ſin.

Again, We ſay they are unperſwadeable, whom neither fair means, nor foul, can reduce; ſpeak them fair, they are naught; ſpeak them foul, they are naught ſtill; promiſe them good, they remain evil; threaten them with evil, they will not be good. You may carry it out in all experiments, whereſoever you find an evil frame of mind or body, or of affairs, which mends not, or doth not alter for the better, by the application of the other contrary, when the former hath been applyed without ſucceſs, you may write under it (as to humane helps) *This is a deſperate caſe, a diſtemper incurable.*

Yet further, *Job* in theſe words reflects upon his Friends; as if he had ſaid, *Some men by complaining, and opening their ſoars to thoſe who viſit them in their affliction, find their Friends relieving them preſently with ſound counſel, and pouring the oyl of conſolation into their wounded ſpirits; but alaſs, it is not ſo with me, for whether I ſpeak or hold my peace, it is all one; ye are all againſt me, and are neither perſwaded by my ſpeech nor by my ſilence, to apply proper remedies for the aſſwaging of my grief, or the eaſing of my pains.*

> Hence Note, *It is the duty, and ſhould be the care of thoſe who viſit Friends in affliction, to pick ſomewhat out of what they ſay, or at leaſt to take occaſion from their ſilence, to adminiſter conſolation to their grieved minds.*

When the Servants of *Benhadad* came to *Ahab* to ſue for their Maſters life; the Text ſaith (1 *Kings* 20. 33.) *The men did diligently obſerve whether any thing would come from him* (that is, whether any word of hope would come from *Ahab*) *and they did haſtily catch it:* And *Ahab* had no ſooner ſaid, *He is my Brother*; but they catcht at this word of comfort, they had what they lookt for, and ſaid, *Thy Brother Benhadad.* If thou owneſt him as a Brother, ſurely thou wilt not uſe him as an Enemy: There is (to the point in hand) a holy cunning in catching up words, which drop from the lips of men in affliction; and 'tis our wiſdom to make improvement of them.

As for inſtance, There was an ancient Profeſſor (as I have been informed) in much diſtreſs of conſcience, even to deſpair; he complaining bitterly of his miſerable condition to a Friend, let this word fall, *That which troubles me moſt, is, that God will be diſhonoured by my fall:* This word was haſtily catcht at, and turned upon him to the aſſwaging of his grief, *Art thou careful of the honour of God, and doſt thou think God hath no care of thee, and of thy ſalvation? A ſoul forſaken of God regards not what becomes of the honour of God: Therefore be of good cheer; if Gods heart were not towards thee, thine could not be towards God, or towards the remembrance of his Name.* Thus words ſhould be watcht, yea, and ſilence ſhould be watcht for advantages to eaſe a diſtreſſed ſoul.

Laſtly, Theſe words may refer to God; as if *Job* had ſaid, Whether I ſpeak, or whether I forbear, God doth not come in to my help, I find no comfort from him; he puts no ſtop to my pain, nor doth he aſſwage the floods of grief which are ready to ſwallow me up. He gives me no eaſe at my complaining cryes, nor doth he give me any at my patient ſilence. The next Verſe ſeems moſt ſutable to this expoſition, where *Job* applyes himſelf to God, ſhewing what he did to him, both while he ſpake, and while he held his peace; he wearied him ſtill, and left him in a wearied condition.

Verſe 7. **But now he hath made me weary, thou haſt made deſolate all my company.**

We may ſee (in this context) that the ſpirit of *Job* was much troubled, by the troubledneſs of his ſpeech. At this ſeventh Verſe he ſpeaks in the third Perſon, *He hath made me weary:* And before he gets to the end of it, he ſpeaks in the ſecond Perſon, *Thou haſt made deſolate:* In the eighth Verſe, *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles:* In the ninth Verſe, *He teareth me in his wrath:* The tenth Verſe is Plural, *They have gaped upon me:* Strange kind of Grammar, ſometimes in the third Perſon, ſometimes in the ſecond, ſometimes in the Singular, ſometimes in the Plural number; *His mind was uneven; or unſetled, and ſo was his* *diſcourſe.* We muſt not play the Criticks with the words of man in pain, nor ſubmit their ſentences to a Deſk of Grammarians: Broken language, and incongruities of ſpeech, do well enough become broken hearts, and wounded ſpirits: God will not call his Scholars in the School of affliction to the Ferula for ſuch faults or falſe Latine falling from their mouthes, either in prayer or conferences, while their hearts are true, and the language of their ſpirits pure.

But now he hath made me weary.

אך עתה

Nunc in principio dictionis quandam cordis dulcedinem connotare ſolet. Bold.

But now.] *Now,* is not here a Particle of time only, or a ſpecification of the ſeaſon, noting that then God either began, or ſtill continued to make him weary; but it carries alſo a ſtrong aſſeveration, or the certainty of the thing; as in that promiſſory exhortation (*Hag.* 2. 4.) *Yet now be ſtrong,* O Zerubbabel, *ſaith the Lord, and be ſtrong,* O Joſhua. Though you ſee things yet below expectation, though this be *a day of ſmall things,* yet take heart and encourage your ſelves to carry on this reforming work. *Yet now be ſtrong,* even now, when ſo many things might weaken both your hearts and hands, and be ye aſſured that I will not reject your confidence, but will cauſe you to proſper in it. And in promiſes, beſides the certainty of the thing promiſed, and the ſpeedy fulfilling of them, it intimates much ſweetneſs of affection in him that makes the promiſe. On the contrary, in threatenings, and comminations, beſides the certainty and ſpeed of them, it notes the ſharpneſs and ſeverity of his ſpirit, who gives thoſe threats. So (*Iſa.* 5. 5.) *And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard. Now, go too,* is chiding chear. As if the Lord had thus rated them; *What? Have you ſerved me thus, as ſure as I formerly planted and hedged this Vineyard, ſo ſurely will I now pull down the hedge, and root it up.* In this fulneſs of ſence take it here, *But now he hath made me weary;* certainly, or of a truth he hath; I was once ſweetly and ſtrongly hedged about with mercy, *But now he hath made me weary and deſolate.*

He hath made me weary.] *He,* is not expreſſed in the Hebrew, and therefore there is a doubt who is meant by this *He.*

Nunc autem oppreſſit me dolor meus. Vulg.

Some underſtand it of his grief and ſorrow, and read it thus, *But now it hath made me weary;* my pain hath tyred me.

Secondly, Others underſtand it of what had been ſpoken by his Friends; your tedious diſcourſes, and ſeverer cenſures have quite ſpent my ſpirits, and made me weary.

Our Tranſlation leads us to a perſon, and our Interpretation leads us to God; *He,* that is, *God, hath made me weary. Job* every where acknowledgeth, that God was the Author and Orderer of all his ſorrows: *Now he*

לאדה

Non ſolum fatigationē denotat, ſed & faſtidiū moleſtiſſimū, tum animi tum corporis.

Hath made me [*weary*] Or, *He hath wearied me;* it is but one word, and it ſignifies not an ordinary wearineſs, nor ſuch a wearineſs as comes upon us after a turn or two in the Fields: A man who walks into the air, to refreſh himſelf, may come home weary; but it notes ſuch wearineſs as we feel after long and tedious travel, or after a hard journey; yea, it notes not only wearineſs of body, but the wearineſs of the mind. It is poſſible for a man to weary his body, and yet his mind remain unmoved; bare outward action ſtirs not the mind. To ride, to run, to dig, or threſh, weary the body, not the mind; but thoſe works which with action have contention in them, as to argue, and diſpute, do at once exerciſe and weary both mind and body. The wearineſs of the mind is the moſt painful wearineſs: *Job's* wearineſs takes in both; Thou haſt wearied my body, and wearied my mind too; I am full of ſores without, and of ſorrow within. And ſuch was that wearineſs ſpoken of by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 47. 13.) *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counſels:* That is, In going long journeys, to ask counſel of thy adored Wiſe men, or Wizzards rather, of Southſayers, and Diviners; in this purſuit thou haſt laboured thy body, and vexed thy ſoul, but profited neither. After all thy travels what haſt thou brought home but wearineſs? *Tyred fleſh, and a tyred ſpirit, is all the fruit of our addreſſes for comfort to any but God, or in the way of God.*

Sept. Exponunt de defectu rationis q. d. vix præ dolore ſum mei compos.

The Septuagint tranſlate yet higher, *Thou haſt made me mad, or beſide my ſelf:* The Hebrew word ſignifies to diſtract, or to put one out of his wits: As if *Job* had ſaid, *I am ſcarce my own man, being over-burdened with thoſe ſorrows God hath laid upon me.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *A ſtate of affliction is a weariſome eſtate.*

A man may be wearied who never ſtirs foot from the place where he ſtands or ſits. O the wearineſs of a ſick bed! Suffering wearies more then doing; and none are ſo weary as they who are wearied with doing nothing.

Obſerve Secondly, *Some afflictions are a wearineſs both to ſoul and body.*

There are afflictions which ſtrike quite through; and there are afflictions which are only ſkin-deep: As there is a filthineſs of the fleſh, and a filthineſs of the ſpirit, properly ſo called (for though every ſin of the fleſh, or outward man, defile the ſpirit, yet there are many filthineſſes of the ſpirit, which are never acted by the fleſh, or outward man.) Thus the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth (2 *Cor.* 7. 1.) There are alſo ſome filthineſſes which ſtrike quite through fleſh and ſpirit, body and ſoul. Thus there are ſome afflictions which are meerly upon the fleſh; there are other afflictions which are purely upon the ſpirit; the skin is whole, the body is in health, but the ſoul is wounded, an Arrow ſticks within: And there are a ſort of afflictions which ſtrike quite through body and ſoul; as old *Simeon* tells the Virgin *Mary, A Sword ſhall pierce through thy ſoul* (Luke 2. 35.) Or as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of *Joſeph* (Pſal. 105. 18.) according to the letter of the Hebrew, *Whoſe feet they hurt with fetters, his ſoul came into iron, or the iron entred into his ſoul:* Such afflictions are like the Roll ſpoken of by the Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 2.) *Written with lamentations, mourning, and woe, within and without:* Some woes are written only without, ſome woes are written only within, others are written without and within. Their characters are legible upon the fleſh; and their effects deſcend and ſink into the ſpirit. *Job's* afflictions were of this extenſion, he was ſmitten all over, and written quite through with woes and lamentations.

Thirdly, As the word reacheth the diſtemper of the brain.

Obſerve, *Some afflictions do not only afflict, but unſettle the mind.*

They unſettle not only the comforts, but the powers and faculties of it: A man under ſome afflictions can ſcarce ſpeak ſence while he acts faith, or do rationally while he lives graciouſly.

A ſoul that hath grace, yea much grace, may appear much ſcanted in the uſe of reaſon: As *oppreſſion* (from men) *makes a wiſe man mad* (Eccleſ. 7. 7.) And the more wiſe a man is, the more mad it makes him: Fools can bear oppreſſion, and not be troubled much, becauſe they do not underſtand what juſtice and right means; and that's the reaſon why in thoſe parts of the World where Tyrants reign, they love to keep the people ignorant, poor, and low, for ſuch are not much ſenſible of their oppreſſions; but oppreſſion is very grievous to an ingenious, wiſe, and underſtanding man, and therefore 'tis ſaid to make him mad: *The pureſt intellectuals have the quickeſt ſenſe of injuries.* Thus alſo ſome afflictions from the hand of God may (in a degree) make a godly wiſe man mad, and put him for a preſent plunge beyond the command of his underſtanding. It is the confeſſion of holy *David* (Pſal. 73. 22.) *I was even as a beaſt before thee, ſo fooliſh was I and ignorant:* If *David* a godly man acted below reaſon, when he ſaw the proſperity of the wicked; how much more may a godly man act below reaſon, under the feelings of his own adverſity. *Heman* is expreſs in this (*Pſal.* 88. 15.) *While I ſuffer thy terrors I am diſtracted:* Yet the word in the Pſalm doth not ſignifie properly the diſtraction of a man that is mad, but the diſtraction of a man that is in doubt; or the diſtraction of a man who knows not what to do, not of a man who knows not what he doth, and yet that diſtraction doth often lead to a degree of this; for a man who is much troubled to know what to do, and cannot know it, grows at laſt to do he knows not what. We may alſo take in that about diſtraction ariſing from affliction, which was toucht about diſtraction cauſed by oppreſſion: Thoſe Chriſtians, who are higheſt in ſpirituals, and have the quickeſt ſenſe of Gods diſpenſations towards them, do ſooneſt fall into it; whereas a ſoul upright in the main, yet being of weak and low parts, and of ſmall experience in the things of God, will go, yea groan under a heavy burden of affliction all his dayes, and not be much moved with it.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *A godly man may grow extream weary of his afflictions.*

Affliction is the burthen which God layes upon us, and it is our duty, not only to bear it, but to bear it with contentedneſs; yea we ſhould labor to bear it with joyfulneſs. *My brethren* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James, Chap.* 1.) *Account it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*; that is, Into divers afflictions. But yet the beſt cannot alwayes rejoyce in temptations, nor triumph under a croſs; when affliction according to that deſcription of the word (*Heb.*4.12.) comes *quick and powerful, as a two edged Sword, and pierceth to divide between the ſoul and the ſpirit, the joynts and the marrow*, when affliction (I ſay) cuts to the quick, a Believer is put hard to it; he may be ſo far (for a time) from triumphing and rejoycing, that he can ſcarcely find himſelf contented or patient; his burden may cauſe him to cry out, *O, the wearineſs*!

Carnal men cry out at every burden of duty in the ſervice of God, *O what a wearineſs is it*! They are tired with an hours attendance in holy things; O the burthen! Much more do they cry out under the lighter burdens of affliction. How tedious is a day, or an hour of affliction; two or three fits of an ague, an aking tooth, a ſoar finger, O what a wearineſs is this! They ſink preſently. True Believers, as they have more patience in doing, ſo in ſuffering; yet even their patience doth not alwayes hold out; they, as *Job*, ſpeak ſometimes mournfully, and complainingly: But now, *he hath made us weary.*

Thou haſt made deſolate all my company.

Quod loquitur nunc in ſecūda nunc in tertia perſona nihil in ſententia mutat id quod admodum frequēs eſt in Scriptura Pined.

It was *He* in the firſt clauſe, *Thou* in the ſecond; *he* and *thou* are the ſame perſon in *Jobs* Grammar, as was toucht before.

שמם *Vaſtari ſeu deſolari, ita ut videntes obſtupeſcant & horreant.*

Thou haſt made [deſolate.] The word *Shamam*, ſignifies to waſte, and deſtroy, and that not by an ordinary deſtruction, but ſo to deſtroy, as works the beholders into amazement and wonder: This word ſignifies both to wonder, and to deſtroy; becauſe great deſtructions cauſe wonder.

Thou haſt made deſolate [all my company:] Thou haſt made ſuch a deſolation among them, that all who are about me lift up their hands (as we ſay) *and bleſs themſelves*, admiring to ſee this day. God brought ſuch a deſolation upon *Jeruſalem*, as ſet the World a wondering (*Lam.*4.12.) *The Kings of the Earth, and all the Inhabitants of the World would not have believed, that the Adverſary and the Enemy ſhould have entered into the Gates of Jeruſalem: Chriſt will come* (at laſt with ſuch mercies) *to be glorified in his Saints, as will cauſe him to be admired in all them that believe* (2 *Theſ.*1.10.) He now comes ſometimes with ſuch afflictions to his Saints, as eaſily cauſe them who believe much more thoſe who believe not to admire. *Thou haſt wonderfully deſolated, or waſted,*

Et in nihilū redacti ſunt omnes artus mei. Vulg.

All my [company.] The word which we tranſlate *Company*, is rendred, *The joynts or members of the body* by the Vulgar Latine, *Thou haſt reduced all my members to nothing*: As if he had ſaid, Thou haſt looſened the whole compages, or ſtructure of my bones and body, thou haſt untied, or cut aſunder all the ligaments that held me together. This tranſlation is but an alluſion; becauſe the members of the natural body are like a company of men joyned together in a civil or ſpiritual body, which is therefore commonly called *a Corporation*. Some contend much for this ſenſe, *Thou haſt made deſolate all the members of my body*: Eſpecially, becauſe the ſcattering of his Family doth not ſo well agree, or comply (ſay they) with the wearineſs before complained of, nor with the *leanneſs, and wrinkles*, which are ſpoken of afterward; both which belong properly to the body.

Yet I paſs that, and take the word as we read it, to expreſs a diſtinct affliction, thou haſt wearied me in my perſon, and *haſt made deſolate all my company*; What company?

q. d. deſolaſti omnē Synagogā meā. Bold.

Firſt, Some underſtand it of the company which uſed to flock to his Synagogue, in holy duties, and exerciſes: As if he had anſwered the words of *Eliphaz* (*Chap.*15.34.) *The Congregation* (*or Company*) *of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate*: Here, ſaith *Job*, I grant it, *God hath made deſolate all my company*. The Synagogues, and places of publick meeting were wont to be filled, but now that reſort is ſtayed, they are all ſcattered, or diverted, and thoſe publick places are filled with howlings and lamentations. Thus he grants *Eliphaz* what he had objected, and yet denies what he thence inferred, that he was an Hypocrite.

Secondly, Rather, interpret it of the company he had in his own Houſe, or for his particular Family. So it is a renewed complaint of the loſs of his Children and Servants, of his Friends and Familiars, who uſed to reſort to him, and ſtay about him.

Thou haſt made deſolate all my company: Some of *Job's* company were made deſolate; that is, they were deſtroyed; moſt of his Servants were ſlain by the Chaldeans, and Sabeans, and all his Children were ſlain by the fall of a Houſe (*Chap.*1.) This company was made deſolate indeed: Yet when he ſaith, *Thou haſt made deſolate all my company*, his meaning is, as Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Thou haſt made me deſolate of all my company*; that is, I am left alone.

Hence Obſerve, *The company of Children, and Friends, is a very great mercy.*

Heman complains much when he wanted this mercy, *Lover and Friend haſt thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkneſs. Job* makes, as a more particular, ſo a more pathetical enumeration of this loſs (*Chap.* 19.13, 14.) To be deſolate, is ſo great an affliction. that it is often put for all afflictions; and to be deſolate of company, is the worſt deſolateneſs. When *David* had ſaid, *I am deſolate and afflicted*, he preſently adds, *The ſorrows of my heart are enlarged* (*Pſal.*25.16, 17.) A man may be much afflicted, and yet not deſolate, but a man cannot be at all deſolate, but he muſt be extreamly afflicted. When the Prophet would put all the miſeries of the Jews into one word, he puts it into this (*Iſa.*1.7.) *Your Countrey is deſolate, your Land ſtrangers ſhall devour it in your preſence*: And when a Land is devoured of ſtrangers, either it is made deſolate of its own company, or its own company is made deſolate. *Babylon* boaſts (*Revel.*18.7.) *I ſit a Queen, and am no widow*; that is, as I have power, ſo I have reſort and company enough, I am not deſolate: The Apoſtle puts theſe two together, Widow-hood, and Deſolateneſs (1 *Tim.*5.5.) *Now, ſhe that is a widow and deſolate*, &c. So that when *Babylon* ſaith, *I am no widow*, her meaning is, I am not deſolate; and hence the puniſhment of *Babylon* is threatned in this language (*Revel.*17.16.) *The ten horns which thou ſaweſt upon the Beaſt, theſe ſhall hate the Whore, and make her deſolate*, &c.

Thoſe ten horns are ten Kings, who ſometime doted upon the painted beauty of that Whore, and then made frequent addreſſes to her, and did throng about her from all parts of the World; but when once their eyes ſhall be opened, their hearts will ſoon be alienated; *They ſhall hate the Whore.* And then as they withdraw affection, ſo viſits and meſſages; *Babylons* Courts ſhall be crouded with Suiters no longer: Thus they ſhall make her deſolate of the company of her old friends, before they make her deſolate by bringing in new enemies, who ſhall ſtrip her, not only of her company, but of her cloathes, yea of her skin; they ſhall *make her naked, and eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire* (*Revel.*17.16.) Thus, as the miſery which came upon *Jeruſalem*, ſo the miſery which ſhall come upon *Babylon* meet in this, *The making of their company deſolate*: yet in this they differ, the deſolations of *Jeruſalem* ſhall be (at leaſt myſtically) repaired, but the deſolations of myſtical *Babylon* (when they are fully come upon her) ſhall be irreparable.

Man is naturally (as the Philoſopher calls him) *a ſociable creature*, he loves company; they who are for a ſolitary life, *Monks* and *Anchorets*, ſeem to have put off the nature of man. There is an elective aloneneſs, or retiredneſs, at ſometimes very uſeful for contemplation and prayer, *And we are never leſs alone, then when we are ſo alone*; for then God is more ſpecially with us, and we with him. It is ſaid of *Jacob* (*Gen.*32.24.) *Then Jacob was left alone*, not that *Jacob's* company had left and forſaken him, but that *Jacob* for a time had left his company: So, ſome render the Text actively, *He ſtayed, or remained alone.* *Jacob* ſtayed alone purpoſely, that he might have freer communion with God in that receſs and retirement from the creature: It is good for man to be alone from the company of man, that he may enjoy (more fully) the preſence of God.

Yet God himſelf ſaid at the firſt when man was created, *It is not good for man to be alone:* There was no moral evil in that aloneneſs (for when God ſpake this word, there was no ſuch evil in the viſible World) but God called it evil, becauſe it was ſo incovenient for the civil well-being and inconſiſtent with the natural propagation of man. And therefore as in reference to both theſe evils, God ſaid with his own mouth, *It is not good for man to be alone*; ſo in reference to the former of the two, God ſaid by *Solomon*, *Two is better then one, and wo to him that is alone* (*Eccleſ.*4.9,10.) *Job* puts his aloneneſs among his woes, *Thou haſt made deſolate all my company.*

But it may be ſaid, Had *Job* no company? Were not his Friends about him? Did not theſe three come to mourn with him, and to comfort him? And had they not been in diſcourſe with him all this while?

Yes, he had company, but it was not ſuitable company; he had evil ones about him, as he complains (*Chap.* 19. & *Chap.*30.) and though his three Friends were good men, yet to him they were no good company, becauſe ſo unpleaſant in their converſe with him.

Hence Note, *Some company is a burthen.*

We ſay of many men, *We had rather have their room then their company.* Man loves company, but 'tis the company of thoſe he loves. The comfort of our lives depends much upon ſociety, but more upon the ſuitableneſs of ſociety: *It is better to dwell in the corner of a houſe top, then with a brawling Woman in a wide houſe* (*Prov.* 21. 9.) And it is better to be in a Deſert among wilde Beaſts, then in a populous City among beaſtly men. This made the Prophet deſire a lodging in the Wilderneſs (*Jer.*9.2.) The Countrey about *Sodom* was pleaſant, like the Garden of God, yet how was the righteous ſoul of *Lot* vexed with the filthy and unrighteous converſation of the *Sodomites*? How uneaſie are our lives made to us by dwelling among either falſe Friends or open Enemies?

In the Creation, when God ſaid, *It is not good for man to be alone*; he ſubjoyns, *Let us make him a help meet for him.* *Adam* had all the beaſts of the earth about him, but they were no company for him, man knows not how to converſe with beaſts, or employ his reaſon with thoſe that have none. As, *it is not good for man to be alone*, ſo to be in company that is not meet for him is as bad, or worſe then to be alone. Therefore ſaith God, *Let us make him a help meet for him*; the making of a Woman brought in meet company for mankind; yet ſome men are as unmeet company for men as beaſts are, and are therefore in Scripture called *Beaſts*. *Paul* fought with ſuch *beaſts at Epheſus*; there are few places free of them, and many places are full of them. *David* crys out, *Wo is me that I am conſtrained to dwell in Meſech, &c.*

There was company enough, but it was woful company. The Primitive Saints aſſociated themſelves, they *continued in fellowſhip one with another, as well as in the Apoſtles Doctrine, or in breaking of bread and prayer* (*Acts* 2:42.) They were all of one mind, and were therefore fit to make one body. *The communion and fellowſhip of the Saints, is the lower heaven of Saints.* And the making of ſuch a company deſolate, is the ſaddeſt deſolation that can be made on earth: Communion of Saints in Heaven, is one great acceſſion to the joy of Heaven. And 'tis a great comfort to the Saints in the midſt of all the ill neighbourhood which they meet with here, to remember that they ſhall meet with no ill neighbours there; none but Friends there, none but loving Friends. There ſhall not be a croſs thought, much leſs a croſs word or action among thoſe many millions of glorified Saints for ever; nor ſhall there be any among them there but Saints; no tares in that field, nor chaff in that floor, no Goats in that Fold, no nor any Wolves in Sheep-skins, no prophane ones there, no nor any Hypocrites there. Unſutable company would render our lives miſerable in Heaven it ſelf. If God ſhould ſay to the godly and the wicked (as *David* once did to *Mephiboſheth* and *Ziba*, *Thou and Ziba divide the Land*) divide Heaven among you; might not they anſwer (with reverence) as *Mephiboſheth* did to *David*, Nay let them take it all to themſelves, O our ſouls come not into their ſecret, and unto their aſſembly let not our honour be joyned: if Swearers, Adulterers, Lyers, ſhould be our company in Heaven, Heaven it ſelf, were unheaven'd, and everlaſting life would be an everlaſting death. And that which further argues the burthenſomneſs of unſutable company, is, that even wicked men themſelves cannot but confeſs that they are burthened with the company of thoſe who are good; if ſuch come in preſence where they aſſociate in any ſinful converſe, how weary are they of their company? How do they even ſweat at the ſight of them? And how glad are they when ſuch turn their backs, and are gone: the only reaſon why they like them not, is becauſe they are not like them, and they are not good company, becauſe they are good. All company is made deſolate to us, which is not made ſuitable to us. *Job* had many about him, yet he complains, *Thou haſt made deſolate all my company.*

Job goes on yet to deſcribe his troubles; he wanted deſireable company about him, but he had ſtore of witneſſes againſt him; he was emptied of his comforts, but filled with ſorrows, as might be ſeen in the ſymptoms and effects of ſorrow.

Verſ. 8. **Thou haſt filled me with wrinckles, which is a witneſs againſt me: and my leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth witneſs to my face.**

As if he had ſaid, *Though I hold my peace, and ſay nothing, though I do not aggravate my grief, yea though I ſhould extenuate and hide it, yet there are witneſſes enow of it; my wrinkles ſpeak my grief, and my leanneſs ſhews that I am feaſted with the ſowre herbs of ſorrow:* That's the general ſenſe of this Verſe.

Si vellem cælare aut verbis extenuare dolorē meũ rugæ meæ teſtimonium dant, &c.

Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles.] It is but one word in the Hebrew, we might render it, *Thou haſt wrinkled me*; or as Mr. *Broughton*, *Thou haſt made me all wrinkled.* The word is not found in this ſenſe any where elſe in Scripture; but very frequently among the Rabbins. There are alſo two other ſignifications of it which Interpreters have taken in here.

קמט *Rugas contraxit active corrugavit.*

First, It ſignifies, *To cut off*, or *to cut down* (*Chap.*22.15, 16.) *Haſt thou marked the old way which wicked men have troden? Which were cut down out of time:* That old way was the way of ſin (the way of holineſs is the oldeſt way, but the way of ſin is a very old way.) They who have trod the way of ſin, were cut down by judgment, and they were cut down *out of time*; that is, the courſe of Divine Juſtice prevented the courſe of nature and ſtruck them to death before death uſeth to ſtrike. So ſome render it here, and then the ſenſe riſeth thus, *Thou haſt cut me down by the ſtroke of theſe afflictions, and this is a witneſs againſt me.*

ותקמטני *& corrugaſti me. Non alibi quã in hoc libro in ſcriptura reperitur. Quod ſuccidiſti me, teſtimonio eſt.* Merc.

Secondly, The word according to the Chaldee, ſignifies to bind, and faſten one with Cords, or with fetters of Iron, as Malefactors are bound in Priſon (*Prov.*5.22.) *His own iniquity ſhall take the wicked, and he ſhall be holden with the Cords of his ſin.* The Hebrew word which we render to *hold*, or *faſten*, is expreſſed by this of *Job* in the Chaldee Paraphraſe. Taking this ſenſe of the word, the interpretation given of the whole is, *Thou haſt bound, or ſtraitened me with the cords of my affliction, leſt I ſhould get out, or make an eſcape, and this is a witneſs againſt me:* There is a truth in both theſe readings, as to this place; but becauſe *wrinkles* are more proper to the *leanneſs* which follows, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them, but keep to our own reading.

In ſignificatione Chaldaica exponitur pro ligare & cõſtringere.

Quod his dolorũ vinculis conſtrictum me tenes, ne quã elabi queam, teſtimonium fecit in me. Merc.

Thou haſt filled me with [**wrinkles.**] Wrinckles are cauſed two wayes.

Firſt, Through old age; for then the moiſture of the body being conſumed, and ſo the skin contracted, wrinckles appear: Theſe natural wrinckles cannot be avoided, if nature hold out to old age.

Secondly, There are accidental wrinckles, ſuch as are cauſed by ſtrong diſeaſes, which ſucking up, or drawing out the moiſture of the body, fade the beauty of it. Great ſickneſſes haſten on gray hairs, and make a young man look old. *Job* was not filled with the wrinckles of old age (he was in the ſtrength of nature at that time) but he was filled with the wrinckles of ſickneſs and ſorrow; grief had made furrows in his face, and his tears had often filled them: we commonly ſay, *Sorrow is dry*; 'tis ſo, becauſe it is a drier. *Solomon* tells us, that *A merry heart doth good like a medicine, but a broken ſpirit* (which is the effect of much ſorrow) *drieth up the bones* (*Prov.* 17.22.) The Church crys out in the Book of *Lamentations, My fleſh my skin he hath made old* (*Lam.* 3.4.) How did God make them old? He made them old not by giving them many years, but by giving them many troubles. Many troubles in one year, will make a man older then many years.

We have heard of ſome, whoſe hearts being filled with vexing cares have filled their heads with gray hairs in a very ſhort time. As ſome have an Art to ripen Fruits, before nature ripens them; ſo the Lord hath a power to haſten old age, before nature makes us old. *Thou haſt made my skin old*; that is, full of wrinckles and leanneſs; theſe are the liveries which old age gives. The Apoſtle aſſures us, that Chriſt ſhall one day preſent the Church to himſelf, in the perfection of ſpiritual beauty and glory; that beauty and glory is deſcribed by the removal of that from her ſpiritual eſtate, which *Job* complains of in his temporal eſtate: *Job* was full of ſpots and wrinkles, but ſhe ſhall appear, *Not having ſpot or wrinckle* (*Epheſ.* 5.27.) that is, Without any note or mark of old age upon her. A ſpot defaceth the beauty of a Garment, and wrinckles ſpoil the beauty of the face. An old Garment is full of ſpots, and an old face is full of wrinkles. Old things paſs away when we are made new creatures by grace; yet in that ſtate (becauſe we are not perfectly freed from the old man) our garments have ſome ſpots, and our faces ſome wrinkles upon them: But in the ſtate of glory, when all old things, even all the image of the old *Adam* ſhall be totally aboliſhed, we ſhall not have ſo much as one ſpot or one wrinkle. Believers have now a righteouſneſs in Chriſt without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; they ſhall then have a holineſs in themſelves, without *ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing*; that is, They ſhall not only not have any ſpot or wrinkle upon them, but they ſhall have nothing like it, nothing which hath any relation to it, nothing which either themſelves or others ſhall miſtake for it, they ſhall neither ſuſpect nor be ſuſpected to have a ſpot or a wrinkle about them. *A perfect ſoul-ſtate, and a perfect ſtate of body, hath no wrinkle in it.* *Job* to ſhew the decays and blemiſhes of his body, ſaith he was full of wrinkles.

Again, Theſe wrinkles by an elegant metaphor may refer to his whole outward condition: For as a mans face is wrinkled when he grows old, ſo are his riches when he grows poor, and ſo is his honour when he grows out of repute. Poverty is the wrinkle of riches, and diſgrace is the wrinkle of honour; we may take in all three here, for not only was *Job's* body, but his wealth and honour were extreamly wrinkled, and therefore he had great cauſe to cry out according to all the interpretations, *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles.*

Which witneſs againſt me.] I ſhall give the meaning of that, when I have opened the latter clauſe, where it is repeated, *My leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth witneſs to my face*: both parts of the Verſe have the ſame meaning.

My leanneſs riſing up in me.] Some think, that *Job* anſwers what *Eliphaz* had given, as part of the deſcription of a wicked man, in the fulneſs of his proſperity (*Chap.* 15.27.) where he tells us, that, *He covereth his face with fatneſs, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks*; as if he had ſaid, *Friend Eliphaz, thou haſt told me, that wicked men are fat and full, if ſo, what are they who are lean and meagre? canſt thou according to thy own rule, read wickedneſs in my phyſiognomie? My leanneſs riſeth up in me, canſt thou raiſe an argument from that againſt me?*

My leanneſs.] *Job's* body was lean, his Purſe and Name were lean, his leanneſs and his wrinkles were of the ſame extent, both reaching all his worldly concernments. The Lord threatens Idolaters (*Zeph.* 2.11.) that *he will famiſh, or make lean* (ſo we put in the Margin) *all their Gods.* *Jehovah*, the true God, who ſaith to man (*Pſal.* 50.12.) *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee*, tells theſe falſe Gods, that he will make them hungry: But what was the meat of theſe Gods? It was the honour and credit, the worſhip and ſervice which they had among men. Indeed they who deny the true God, his due honour and worſhip, do what they can to famiſh, or make him lean; and when the true God (as he hath done by the Preaching of the Goſpel) turns men from Idols to ſerve, and worſhip him the living God, then he famiſheth thoſe Gods: When Idols loſe their eſteem, their leanneſs riſeth up, and they go down. Thus alſo it is with man, his leanneſs may be ſaid to riſe when his credit falls.

Further, There is a twofold leanneſs.

First, Of the ſoul, or inward man.

Secondly, Of the body, or outward man.

When the Jews luſted in the Wilderneſs, and called for fleſh to ſatisfie the fleſh: *God* (ſaith the Text, *Pſal.* 106.15.) *gave them their requeſt, but ſent leanneſs into their ſoul.* The ſoul in a proper ſenſe, is neither fat nor lean, and therefore the ſoul in this place of the *Pſalm*, muſt be taken improperly, or elſe the leanneſs of it muſt. The ſoul is put improperly for the body, or for the whole man, and ſo, *he ſent leanneſs into their ſouls*, is, the curſe of God cauſed them to pine ſecretly, or *he ſlew the fatteſt of them* (openly) *and ſmote down the choſen men in Iſrael*: So this leanneſs is expounded (*Pſal.* 78.31.) as if he had ſaid, God made them a thin and a lean company before he had done with them. Yet beſides this (I conceive) the Text doth intend ſome ſpiritual judgment; and then the ſoul is taken in a proper ſenſe, but leanneſs in an improper ſenſe: and ſo, *he ſent leanneſs into their ſouls*, is, while they inordinately deſired meat for their bodies, God withheld the ordinary food of their ſouls: He did not adminiſter his grace and holy ſpirit (which are the fatners of the ſoul) while they were thus hungry after dainties for the fleſh.

Job's Friends thought him a lean ſoul, but he here confeſſes the leanneſs of his body; and in that his continual ſorrow the cauſe of it. So the Prophet crys out, *My leanneſs, my leanneſs, wo unto me* (*Iſa.* 24.16.)

My leanneſs [**riſing up.**] Fatneſs riſeth up, and not leanneſs, when a man grows lean, his fleſh falls and abates; skin and bone ſtick together, Why then doth he ſay, *My leanneſs riſeth up?*

Though, when a man is lean, his fleſh falls, yet his bones riſe: A fat mans bones are (as it were) buried in fleſh, you can ſcarce feel his ribs, but when he grows lean, his bones ſtick out, and riſe up: That is the meaning here, *my leanneſs riſing up.*

Job aſcribes a rational act, both to his wrinkles and to his leanneſs, as if both did ſpeak, and which is more, give evidence concerning him; he brings them forth as witneſſes at the bar, this ſpeaks, and that ſpeaks, he doubles it, *My wrinkles witneſs againſt me, and my leanneſs riſing up witneſſeth to my face*: When a witneſs is to give in his evidence in any cauſe before a Judge, he riſeth up, or ſtandeth forth, that all may ſee him; *Job* preſents his leanneſs in the proper poſture of a witneſs *riſing up.*

Maciei *videtur dare perſonam ut paulo ante* rugis.

The Original varies ſomewhat in the latter clauſe from the former; we render both by witneſſing, but we may read it thus, *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, that hath been, or is a witneſs, or* (as M. *Broughton* reads) *a proof, my leanneſs riſing up* (or which riſeth up againſt me) *anſwers* (or ſpeaketh) *to my face.* The meaning is, Theſe outward evils are evidence enough to my Friends, that God is angry with me, and that I am wicked againſt God.

Job grants that thoſe wrinkles, and this leanneſs were witneſſes of his afflictions, he never queſtioned their teſtimony, as to that point, neither indeed could he. *Jonadab* ſaid to *Amnon, Why art thou being the Kings Son, lean, or thin, from day to day, wilt thou not tell me?* (2 *Sam.* 13.4.) His leanneſs told his Friends plain enough, that all was not well; he read that in his face, only he could not read the particular ilneſs there. If we ſee a young man, eſpecially the Son of a Great man, or of a King (who is waited upon with all worldly delights) wrinkled, and lean, is it not a witneſs that he hath been ſick, or is overwhelmed with ſorrow? theſe teſtifie to his face, he cannot conceal it.

But *Job's* Friends ſaid, theſe were witneſſes of his ſin: they produced the wrinkles of his body as a witneſs of his wrinkled ſoul; and the leanneſs of his outward man, as an argument of his inward leanneſs; they ſaid, theſe teſtified plainly, that he was not only a great ſinner, but an Hypocrite: And thus they argued all along, this was their conſtant plea; *Job* muſt needs be (according to this

Magnū certè peccatum, quod tantū in florente illa ætate deformitatē & ſenilem ſpeciē induxit. Putant tātas afflictiones teſtes eſſe magnæ culpæ & iræ Dei. Coc.

opinion) a man of an evil life, becauſe his life was filled with evils; *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, which is a witneſs againſt me, &c.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Great afflictions leave their marks behind them.*

Little afflictions leave no wrinkles, no leanneſs behind them, we recover out of them, and nothing appears of them; as it is in ſinning, ſome ſins leave no mark, ſuch are our daily infirmities, and common failings; but there are other ſins, which leave a mark behind them, you cannot get them off ſuddenly, it may be you cannot claw off the marks of ſome ſins as long as you live: though the ſin be fully pardoned, yet the mark, the wrinkle, the leanneſs of it may remain to your dying day. *David* being defiled with adultery and murder, prays, *Cauſe the bones which thou haſt broken to rejoyce:* Thoſe two were ſuch ſins as broke his very bones; they were to his ſoul, as the breaking of a bone is to the body: If a man break a bone, though it be well Set, yet it leaves a mak. *David* carried the skar of thoſe ſins to his Grave: Though God had forgiven thoſe ſins, and did not remember them, to impute them to *David*, yet when God had occaſion to ſpeak of *David* to his higheſt commendation, he could not forbear the mention of thoſe ſins (1 *Kings* 15.5.) *David did that which was right in the Lord, and turned not aſide from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, ſave only in the matter of Uriah.* The wrinkle or ſtain of that ſin ſtuck upon *David's* reputation, when the guilt of it was quite removed, and waſhed off from his perſon. 'Tis ſo with afflictions, ſome afflictions leave no mark, others go deep: Though all afflictions are light comparatively to the weight of glory, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Cor.*4.17.) *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory:* Yet afflictions being compared among themſelves, ſome are light, and ſome are heavy: As a Cart that is heavy laden, cuts deep into the earth, and tells you where it hath gone; ſo doth the wheel of a heavy affliction drawn over body, ſoul, or ſtate.

Secondly, Obſerve (which is the natural theology of the Text.)

Wrinkles, and leanneſs in youth, or ſtrength of age are an argument of extraordinary ſorrow.

Thirdly, Take the words according to the ſenſe of *Jobs* friends, which *Job* alſo hints as meeting with their objection, *They witneſs againſt me:* that is, You uſe them, you bring them as witneſſes againſt me:

Then Note, *Great afflictions are looked on as proofs, or witneſſes of great ſins.*

We no ſooner hear of, or ſee a man under great afflictions, but our firſt thought is ſurely he hath committed ſome great ſin. This is almoſt every man's ſuſpicion; but it is an ill grounded ſuſpicion. This point was ſpoken to (*Chap.* 10. 17.) where *Job* tells the Lord, *Thou haſt renewed thy witneſſes againſt me, &c.* There 'twas ſhewed how afflictions are brought in by God and man as a witneſs; and this was the greateſt evidence, and (upon the matter) all the evidence which the Friends of *Job* brought againſt him, his wrinkles, and his leanneſs: I ſhall here only add this caution.

Take heed of paſſing judgment upon the evidence of ſuch witneſſes as theſe, wrinkles, and leanneſs; for though every wrinkle witneſſeth that a man is a ſinner (were it not for ſin we ſhould have remained ever in our body and outward condition, as Believers ſhall be reſtored by Chriſt, without a wrinkle) yet they are not witneſſes that a man is wicked: I may ſay two things of theſe witneſſes.

First, They are alwayes *doubtful witneſſes.*

Secondly, For the moſt part they are *falſe witneſſes.*

It is a very queſtionable and uncertain evidence which afflictions give againſt us: *For no man knows love, or hatred, by all that is before him:* We can but gueſs at the beſt, by what they ſay. But uſually they bear falſe witneſs againſt the innocent; ſo they did againſt *Job*; they witneſſed that of him to his Friends which was not right. Therefore the Vulgar tranſlates the latter branch (though not well to the letter of the Original, yet well as to the ſenſe) *A falſe witneſs is riſen up againſt my face, contradicting me*; that is, Oppoſing or weakning all that I have ſaid concerning my own innocence. Yea if we make affliction a witneſs, we may rather make it a witneſs of ſincerity, and of grace, a mark of adoption and ſonſhip, a mark of divine favour and fatherly love, then of man's wickedneſs, or of God's rejection and diſfavour. The word is clear and expreſs for this (*Heb.*12.6, 7,8.) *For whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth, &c. But if ye be without chaſtiſement whereof all are partakers, then are ye Baſtards and not Sons.* So then, our wrinkles and our leanneſs may upon Scripture warrant, be brought as witneſſes for us, but we have no warrant to conclude upon their witneſs, either againſt our ſelves, or others.

Rugæ meæ teſtimonium dicunt contra me, & ſuſcitatur falſiloquus adverſus faciē meā cōtradicēs mihi. Vulg.

But it ſeems *Job* had a higher witneſs againſt him (if ſuch witneſſes might be allowed) then a wrinkled skin, or a lean face: Behold now his torn fleſh, and his limbs rent in ſunder, as if (not only like *Daniel*) he had been caſt into a Lyons Den, but as if (which *Daniel* did not) he had felt the worſt of the Lyons teeth and pawes.

Verſ. 9. **He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me; he gnaſheth upon me with his teeth, mine enemy ſharpeneth his eye upon me.**

Strange language! *He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me. Job* gives us a deſcription of the Lords dealing with him, in alluſion to the fury of wild Beaſts, Lyons, Tygers, and Bears, who gnaſh their teeth, and ſparkle with their eyes. when they either fight one with another, or fall upon their prey.

He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me.

'Tis doubted whom *Job* meaneth by this *Tearer:* Some judge this Title applicable only to the Devil, and interpret *Job* ſpeaking of him; *the Devil hateth me, He teareth me in his wrath: Job* was delivered into the hand of the Devil (*Chap.*2.) And this is the courtſhip of Hell, *He teareth.*

Secondly, Others underſtand it of his extream pain and torturing diſeaſe, that tore him like a ſavage Beaſt.

A third expounds it of his Friends, as if he compared them to wild Beaſts, who in ſtead of comforting his ſpirit, did (upon the matter) tear his fleſh between their teeth.

Fourthly, 'Tis conceived, he means thoſe vain ones of whom he ſpeaks (*Chap.* 19.) that came about him, and troubled him.

But fifthly, and moſt generally, this Text is interpreted of God himſelf, *He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me.* For though *Job* ſpeaks here diſtractedly, diſcovering rather his grief then his enemy; or as a man wounded and ſmitten in the dark, he pereeives he hath an enemy, he feels the ſmart, and bears the blows, but he is not able to ſee who hurts him, yet in this confuſion of language, his heart was ſtill upon God who ordered, and diſpoſed all thoſe armies of ſorrow, which aſſaulted him on every ſide.

Ejuſmodi querimoniæ in neminem certo jactatæ afflicti hominis propriæ ſunt.

He [teareth] me in his wrath.] The Hebrew word *Taraph* is near in ſound to our Engliſh *Tear*, and it ſignifieth to tear as a Lyon his prey (*Gen.*49.9.) *Judah is a Lyons whelp, from the prey my Son thou art gone up.* The ſame word in the Verb notes Tearing, and in the Noun a prey, becauſe the prey is torn by the teeth, or claws of the Lyon.

טרף *Ferarū prædā rapiētiū & lacerātiū propriū eſt.*

He teareth me in his [wrath.] Wild Beaſts tear not ſo much for wrath, as for hunger; they tear out of a deſire to fill themſelves, rather then out of malice to deſtroy others. But *Job* ſaith, *He teareth me in his wrath who [hateth] me.*

The word ſignifies not an ordinary, but an inward hatred, and with the change of a letter it is the ſame by which the Devil is expreſſed, *Satan, an adverſary,* or *the adverſary*; ſo called becauſe of his extream hatred againſt mankind, yea againſt Chriſt himſelf. *Job* ſpeaks of God as if he bare ſuch a hatred againſt him as Satan doth, an inward perfect hatred.

שטם *Eſt totis viribus adverſari, idē cū Satan, unde & Satanas dictus. Ira ſua rapit quaſi odio inteſtino proſequatur me.* Jun.

Thus ſome tranſlate, *He proſecutes me with inward hatred:* A hard expreſſion of God; Doth he tear a harmleſs ſoul, and tear him in wrath? Yet this is not all; to make up the meaſure of this exceſſive language, take two aggravations more.

He gnaſheth upon me with his teeth.] *Job* purſues the alluſion ſtill: Beaſts (as it were) whet their teeth that they may devour their prey: This action of gnaſhing the teeth is aſcribed to men, and it notes four things.

חרק *Frenduit dentibus; eſt invidētiū, iraſcentium irridentium habitus. Loquitur ad ſimilitudinem beſtiæ quæ homini cōminando dentes contra ipſū parat.* Aqnin.

Firſt, Extream envy (*Pſal.*12.10.) *The wicked ſhall ſee it and be grieved, he ſhall gnaſh with his teeth and melt away; the deſire of the wicked ſhall periſh:* But at what was this wicked man grieved, till he gnaſhed his teeth? Was it a grief of compaſſion at the miſery of others? No, it was a grief of envy at the proſperity of others, as is clear from the words immediately foregoing. *The horn of the righteous ſhall be exalted with honour:* Envy is the vexation and depreſſion of our own ſpirits, at the exaltation of another man in riches or in honour. It is not a ſickneſs catcht from another mans diſeaſe, but a ſickneſs catcht from another mans health.

Secondly, Gnaſhing of the teeth, notes extream deriſion, or higheſt contempt and inſultation over a man in miſery (*Pſal.* 35.15, 16.) *But in mine adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together* (that is, they gathered themſelves together for joy, or to rejoyce) *yea the very abjects gathered themſelves together* (ſuch as all honeſt, or civil men had caſt out of their company and ſociety, aſſociated and knotted themſelves into companies) *againſt me, they did tear me* (that is, my good name) *and ceaſed not; with hypocritical mockers at feaſts, they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth:* Where it is alſo obſervable, that we have the former act complained of by *Job*, joyned with this, *Tearing, with gnaſhing of the teeth.*

Thirdly, Gnaſhing of the teeth is the effect of extream pain; thus the damned in Hell ſhall gnaſh their teeth for ever (*Mat.*8.12. *Mat.*13.42.) That gnaſhing of teeth ariſeth from a mixed paſſion, partly from envy, and partly from ſorrow; envy at the good which the Saints enjoy, and ſorrow at the evil which themſelves feel; hence comes gnaſhing of teeth in Hell.

Fourthly, Gnaſhing of teeth is an argument of extream wrath and anger (*Acts* 7.54.) where it is ſaid of *Stevens* at once Auditors and Enemies, *When they heard thoſe things, they were cut to the heart* (*Peters* Auditors, *Acts* 2. were prickt at the heart with godly ſorrow, *Stevens* Auditors were cut to the heart with ungodly anger) *and they gnaſhed upon him with their teeth.* The gnaſhing of teeth here ſpoken of is the concomitant of ſuppoſed wrath, *He teareth me in his wrath, and gnaſheth upon me with his teeth.*

Yet further:

Mine enemy ſharpeneth his eyes upon me.] This notes the fierceneſs of an enemy: Wild Beaſts when they fight, whet their eyes as well as their teeth; and a man that is extreamly enraged, looks upon his oppoſite as if he would look through him: Thus *Job* repreſents the Lord in all the poſtures of an enemy, *He ſharpneth his eyes againſt me.*

לטש
Acuit, deterſit gladiũ ut ſplẽdeat, ad terrorem polivit inſtrumẽta ferrea aut ærea. Placidis oculis aliquẽ intuemur quãdo facta ejus bene interpretamur Aquin.
Per metaphoram ad ſcintillationẽ oculorũ transfertur, ubi oculi ad modum æris cãdẽtis, vel lãpadis ardentis, vel auroræ radios vibrare dicuntur. Bold.
Ingenii vim in eo fulgor oculorũ oſtẽdebat, quorũ aciem inſtar ſiderum vibrãtẽ intẽtius eum intuentes ferre nõ poterant. Pezel Melliſ. Hiſt. par. 2. Knolles Turk. Hiſt.

The word ſignifies to ſharpen as a Sword, or a Spear, or any inſtrument of Iron is ſharpned (1 *Sam.*13.20.) *There was no Smith in Iſrael; but all the Iſraelites went down to the Philiſtims to ſharpen every man his ſhare, &c.* That word is uſed here, *Mine enemy ſharpneth his eye like a Sword*, as if he would ſtrike me through with his eye; we ſay a man hath *a piercing eye*, when he looks very angerly.

When we are well-pleaſed, kindneſs is ſeen in our eyes; we give our Friends a pleaſant and gentle look; Chriſts tells the Spouſe (*Cant.*4.9.) *Thou haſt raviſhed mine heart, my Siſter, my Spouſe, thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes.* The Hebrew is, Thou haſt taken away my heart with one of thine eyes. *A holy love-look ſtole away Chriſts heart*; he could not but love the Church when (through the comlineſs which he had put upon her) ſhe looked ſo lovely on him. As thus a look of love from the Churches eye ſtole away Chriſts heart, ſo a look of mercy from Chriſts eye broke *Peters* heart, yea and opened the Flood-gates of his eyes too (*Luk.*22.61, 62.) *And the Lord turned, & looked upon Peter, and Peter went out & wept bitterly.*

There are ſoft looks as well as ſoft words, and there are hard looks as well as hard words: The eye is a Spear and an Arrow, yea a ſharp Sword as well as the tongue; *He ſharpneth his eyes upon me*, as if he would ſtab me to the heart with a glance of his eye. The eye hath its ſcintillations, its ſparklings, even as bright burniſht Braſs, or as a burning Lamp, or as the morning Sun ſends forth his rays and beams, ſuch ſcintillations doth the eye of ſome men ſend forth naturally. The Roman Hiſtorians report of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, and our Turkiſh Hiſtorian reports of *Tamerlane*, that ſuch a majeſtick luſtre ſparkled from their eyes, as dazled the eyes of their beholders, which (ſaith my Author) cauſed the latter, in a comly modeſty, to abſtain from looking earneſtly upon ſuch as ſpake with him. What the eyes of theſe great Princes did naturally, the eyes of many do when they look paſſionately. Chriſt hath a ſharp eye, ſo ſharp, that his eyes (as repreſented to *John* in a Viſion) *were like a flame of fire* (*Rev.*1.14.) The eyes of God are ſo ſharp naturally, or according to the excellency of his nature, that no eye can behold his face; and himſelf beholdeth not only every face, but pierceth into every heart: yet beſides this natural ſharpneſs of his eye towards all, he angerly ſharpens his eye againſt his Enemies. God was indeed *Job's* Friend, and *Job* was Gods Favourite, yet here he ſpeaks of God (as he had alſo done before) as of his Enemy; and as of an Enemy, declaring himſelf at his eye, *Mine enemy ſharpneth his eye upon me.*

Job attributes this to God, in the extremity of his pain; this was the voice of his fleſh, it was not the voice of *Job* himſelf: this was the voice of his ſenſe, not the voice of his Faith. Would you know what was the voice of *Job* himſelf, or of *Job's* Faith? Hear that (*Chap.*13.15, 16, 18.) *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him. He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation, and I know that I ſhall be juſtified.* Hear again his Faith ſpeaking (*Chap.*19.25.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I ſhall ſee him again with theſe eyes:* Though ſenſe ſaw God as an Enemy ſharpning his eyes upon him, yet Faith ſaw God his Redeemer, in this aſſurance, that he alſo ſhould behold him with an eye of ſenſe, *I ſhall ſee him with theſe eyes.*

Adverſariũ ſuum vocat Job *nõ amicos ſolũ ſed omnẽ creaturã, quæ reſiſtit Domino reſiſtẽ{re}, accuſat Domino accuſante, damnat Domino dãnante, aut ipſum Deum adverſariũ intelligas.* Brent.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That God dealeth with thoſe whom he loveth dearly, as if he hated them.*

Secondly, *They whom God doth love, may be under preſent apprehenſion that God hates them.*

I only name theſe points as ariſing from this place; they have been handled (*Chap.*13.24. *Chap.*14.13.) upon thoſe words, *Until thy wrath be paſt*; and therefore I ſtay not upon them here.

Thirdly, Note, *God* (*to ſenſe*) *doth ſeem to exerciſe a kind of cruelty* (*even the cruelty of wild beaſts*) *towards thoſe whom he dearly loves.*

What are tearing and gnaſhing of teeth? What is the ſharpning of the eye? Is not any one of theſe, much more all theſe in one, the diſcovery of cruelty? *Job* ſaith all this: and doth not *Hezekiah* ſay as much (*Iſa.*38.13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lyon, ſo will he break all my bones, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.* We find God taking upon himſelf thoſe ſimilitudes, not only in reference to his Enemies, but alſo to his own people; for as he deals with the wicked when they provoke him, ſo in proportion with his own. *Outward diſpenſations make no difference*; *I will take vengeance, I will not meet thee as a man* (*Iſa.*43.3.) that is, I will not ſhew ſo much as any humane pity or compaſſion, much leſs Divine, but I will meet thee as a Beaſt. Thus God threatned to deal with *Babylon*; and thus he appears to deal with Sion, with the choiſeſt Sons and Daughters of Sion.

And thus he profeſſed (*Hoſ.*5.14.) *For I will be unto Ephraim as a Lyon, and as a young Lyon to the Houſe of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none ſhall reſcue him.*

Job having ſhewed what hard uſage he had from God himſelf, who appeared as an enemy, proceeds now to ſhew what hard and courſe uſage he had from men, who were indeed his enemies, into whoſe hands God had delivered him.

Verſ. 10. **They have gaped upon me with their mouth, they have ſmitten me upon the cheek reproachfully, they have gathered themſelves together againſt me.**

The perſon is now changed, as alſo the number; before it was *He*, now *They:* And who were they? We have no Names to give them; only in general. Theſe were the inſtruments which God let looſe upon him; his Friends, ſay ſome; his Enemies, ſay others. Whoſoever they were, doubtleſs they were either down-right Enemies, or Enemy-like Friends; their own behaviour ſpeaks them ſo, *They have gaped upon me, &c.*

He varies, or heightens their enemy-like behaviour by three expreſſions.

Firſt, *They have gaped upon me with their mouth.*

Secondly, *They have ſmitten me upon the cheek reproachfully.*

Thirdly, *They have gathered themſelves againſt me.*

I ſhall open them diſtinctly.

They have gaped upon me with their mouth.

Gaping with, or opening the mouth, implies two things.

Firſt, Scorn and deriſion (*Lam.*2.16.) *All thine enemies have opened the mouth againſt thee, they hiſs and gnaſh the teeth; they ſay we have ſwallowed her up: certainly this is the day we looked for.* The Church in affliction was afflicted with ſcornful geſtures.

Secondly, As gaping with the mouth notes ſcorn, ſo alſo cruelty; he that gapes at another, tells him (though he ſay nothing) that he could devour him, and eat him up (as we ſay) *Without Salt*; Such a one ſhews that he needs no Sauce (*Pſal.*22.13.) *They gaped upon me with their mouthes, as a ravening and roaring Lyon:* A Lyon gapes at his prey to devour it. *Job* often complains both of the contempt and cruelty of many againſt him; and their gaping upon him includes both; which are alſo again intimated in the next clauſe.

They have ſmitten me upon the cheek reproachfully.

Some render it, *Reproaching me, they have ſmitten me on the cheek:* Smiting on the cheek is taken two wayes.

Literally.

Metaphorically.

What literal ſmiting is, all know, and moſt have felt: but had *Job* any about him who uſed him thus rudely? I conceive, not; and therefore we may underſtand him metaphorically. So, ſmiting on the cheek, is to reproach: And theſe words, *They have ſmitten me on the cheek reproachfully,* are no more nor leſs, then, *They have reproached me.* To ſmite on the cheek, is a thing ſo reproachful, that, by an Hebraiſm, it ſignifieth to reproach (*Lam.*3.30.) *He giveth his cheek to him that ſmiteth him,* which is expounded in the latter clauſe by this, *he is filled full with reproach.* The ſufferings of Chriſt, which were full of reproach, are thus Propheſied, *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting* (*Iſa.*50.6.) Chriſt was ſmitten on the face literally (*Matth.*26.67.) *Then did they ſpit in his face and buffetted him, and others ſmote him with the palms of their hands.* He was ſmitten alſo tropically, being put to open ſhame, and diſgracefully dealt with. That of the Apoſtle clears this ſenſe (2 *Cor.*11.20.) *Ye ſuffer a man to bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himſelf, if a man ſmite you on the face,* that is, If he diſgrace you: So the Apoſtle expounds it (*Verſ.*21.) *I ſpeak concerning reproach. Paul* (*Chap.*12.) had a meſſenger of Satan ſent to buffet him, to cuff, or ſmite him with the fiſt, ſo the word ſignifies; what that was, at leaſt in part, he explains (*Verſ.*10.) *I will therefore take pleaſure in reproaches.* Thus the Prophet deſcribes the diſhonour which ſhould be put upon the Judge (*Micah.*5.1.) *Now gather thy ſelf in Troops, O daughter of Troops, he hath laid ſiege againſt us; they ſhall ſmite the Judge of Iſrael with a rod upon the cheek,* that is, The enemy ſhall pour contempt upon thy Kings and Princes; in which ſenſe they may be ſaid to be ſmitten upon the cheek, though no rod nor hand touch them. And ſome interpret that (*Mat.*5.39) *If any man ſmite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left alſo,* not of hand, but tongue-ſmiting, or of ſuffering reproach. As if Chriſt had ſaid, *If any one diſgrace thee a little, bear it, yea though he ſhould diſgrace thee a great deal more, yet bear it:* Smiting upon the right cheek, notes a leſſer injury received. When a man ſmites another on the right cheek, he ſmites with his left hand; the left hand ſtrikes the right cheek, and the left hand is the weaker in moſt, and gives a weaker blow. If thou receive a blow on thy right cheek with the left hand, turn the other, and let him ſmite thee with the right hand, let him give thee a ſmarter, a harder blow: that is, If a man diſgrace thee a little, reward him not with diſgrace, but prepare to bear a greater, turn the left cheek. And the reaſon of this was, becauſe ſlaves and condemned perſons were thus ſmitten, as alſo ſuch as were ſuppoſed to ſpeak irreverently to the Magiſtrate.

Percutere maxillā Hebraica locutio eſt, quæ ſignificat graviſſima contumelia aliquem afficere.

Cum aliquis propter gravē aliquam ignominiam pudefit, licet vis omnis abſit, & plaga verberari dicitur in maxilla. Sanct. in Mic.c.5.v.1

Hence it was that when *Paul* had ſpoken freely to the Councel, ſaying, *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conſcience before God until this day:* preſently *Ananias* the high Prieſt, commanded thoſe that ſtood by him to ſmite him on the mouth (*Act.*23.1,2.) In which caſe Chriſt himſelf was ſmitten by an Officer that ſtood by (*Joh.*18.22.) From all which Scripture teſtimonies it is more then manifeſt, that to ſmite a man on the cheek, is to diſgrace, becauſe they who fell under diſgrace, were uſually ſmitten on the cheek: and this I take to be the moſt ſuitable interpretation of *Jobs* complaint in this place, *They ſmite me on the cheek reproachfully.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The beſt Saints on earth have been ſmitten and deeply wounded with reproach.*

God himſelf gave an honourable teſtimony of *Job*, there was none like him, he had no peer on earth, for holineſs and uprightneſs; yet men gave teſtimony againſt him, as if he had been the ſcum of the World, for unholineſs and hypocriſie. *David, a man after Gods own heart, was* (not only reproached, but) *a reproach among all his Enemies, but eſpecially among his neighbours* (or neareſt Friends both in habitation and relation) *and he heard the ſlander of many* (*Pſal.*31.11, 13.) The word of God was made a reproach to the Prophet *Jeremy* (*Chap.*20.8.) And the ſpirit was made a reproach to the Apoſtles (*Act.*2.13.) *Others mocked, ſaying, Theſe men are full of new Wine: When indeed they were filled with the holy Ghoſt* (*Verſ.*4.) Drunkards made Songs upon *David*, but the Apoſtles were ſung about for Drunkards.

We are fools, ſaith *Paul* (that is, We are ſo called and accounted) for Chriſt, and being *defamed* (or as the word bears, *blaſphemed*; to ſpeak againſt any thing of God in Man, is blaſphemy, as well as ſpeaking directly againſt God) *we entreat.* And to ſhew, that this was no prick with a Pin, or ſmall ſcratch upon their credit, which made him complain, he tells us what this ſame did amount unto, *We are made as the filth of the World, and as the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day* (1 *Cor.*4.13.) *The whole World lieth in wickedneſs* (which is a moral filthineſs) ſo that to be the filth of the World, is to be the filth of filthineſs; the filth of a clean thing is bad enough, what then is the filth of a filthy thing? The off-ſcouring of any thing is baſe, then what is the off-ſcouring of all things, which muſt needs include the baſeſt things? Theſe Apoſtles who were the ornament and glory, the pureſt and moſt refined pieces of the whole inferiour World, were yet made (not that theſe reproaches did at all change them from what they were in themſelves, but they made them to be in the opinion of others, what they leaſt of all were) the rubbiſh, and the refuſe, the ſweepings, and the droſs of the whole World. The Apologies of *Tertullian* and others, do abundantly teſtifie what reproaches the Primitive Chriſtians ſuffered, both in reference to their practice and worſhip. *Athanaſius* was called *Sathanaſius* (as if he had been a Devil incarnate) by the Abbettors of the *Arrian* Hereſie, which he ſtiffly oppoſed: And ſome who were diſpleaſed with the Opinions and Writings of *Cyprianus*, called him in contempt, *Coprianus*, or one that *gathers dung*, as if his Books were nothing but *dung-heaps.*

κόπρος eſt ſtercoreus, hinc Copriō ſcarabeus, à luto ſcilicet. Bech. de Orig. Ling. Lat.

How *Luther, Calvin,* and other Reformers of the former age, were ſmitten reproachfully, both by the tongues and Pens of the Popiſh Party, is known of all theſe parts of the World: And how much this trade (which is indeed the Devils trade) of ſlandering the footſteps of Gods annointed ones, is continued unto this day, we have but too much evidence. A man can ſcarce appear, indeed, for God, but he is thus ſmitten on the cheek by men. Religion and the power of godlineſs have ever been an occaſion of contention; and for the moſt part, to ſmite with reproach, hath been the manner of contending.

There are not many enemies of good men, who have a Sword to draw againſt them, but all the Enemies of good men have ill words enow at command to throw againſt them, and of them they are ſeldom ſparing: And, though (which is bad enough, yet no better can be expected of them) this trade of reproaching be driven moſt by evil men againſt thoſe who are good, yet (which is far worſe) we may learn from this inſtance between *Job* and his Friends (for even they did not ſpare to reproach him) that (which ſhall be a ſecond Obſervation)

A ſecond Obſervation.) *A good man may ſo far forget him-as to ſpeak reproachfully againſt his Brother.*

Yea, the reproaches of Profeſſors one againſt another, have been (as they are the ſaddeſt, ſo) the ſharpeſt and bittereſt reproaches. They who agree in moſt things, take it moſt unkindly when they differ in any thing; and are more ready to revile one another about the points wherein they differ, then to bleſs God for thoſe wherein they are agreed. The Papiſts did not more reproach *Luther* and *Calvin*, whoſe judgements concurred in oppoſing them, then *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* have reproached each other, where they are oppoſite in judgement: The corrupt remains even in good men, tell them that whoſoever differs from them ſtands in their light and obſcures their excellency, and therefore that themſelves may ſhine the brighter in what they hold, they little care (when maſter'd by ſelf and paſſion) how obſcure, yea fowl they render them, who hold the contrary.

While Infidels reproached Chriſtians, it was the glory of Chriſtianity, and while the wicked reproach the godly, it is the glory of godlineſs; but while one Chriſtian reproaches another, the glory is departed from godlineſs. Is it not enough that the Servants of God are thus ſmitten by the world, muſt they needs ſmite their Fellow-ſervants, and revile thoſe who are (upon the main) in the ſame way of God wherein they are, only becauſe they are not fully in their way? Yea, when poſſibly, they may be in a higher and more perfect way then they? Is it not enough that the Bryars and Thorns, which are among the Lillies, tear and ſcratch them? Shall the Lillies degenerate into Briars and Thorns one towards another? Or if at any time a Lilly of the one ſide tear, and be harſh, ſhould not the Lilly on the other ſide be kind and gentle? If *Iſrael* tranſgreſs, let not *Judah* offend too. *Luther* was often at Sharps with *Calvin*, but *Calvin* profeſſed (and that was a Noble profeſſion) *Though* Luther *call me Devil, yet I will honour* Luther *as a Servant of God.*

Holy *Job* cannot be excuſed for his failings in this, who as he complains here, that he was reproached by his Enemies, yea and by his Friends too, yet he gave his Friends ſome advantage to complain alſo of harſh words, if not of reproaches caſt upon them.

Thirdly Obſerve, *Reproach is a very heavy burthen.*

Remember (Lord) the reproach of thy Servant, how I do bear in my boſom the reproach of all the mighty people, wherewith thine Enemies have reproached thee, O Lord, wherewith they have reproached the footſteps of thine annointed (*Pſal.* 89. 50, 51.) And again (*Pſal.*69.9.) *The reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen on me.* Yet more (*Pſal.* 42. 10.) *As with a Sword in my bowels* (or in my bones) *they reproach me, while they ſay, &c.* Reproach is not only a burthen upon the back, but a Sword in the bowels. A reviling, reproaching tongue is compared in Scripture to three things.

First, To a Razor.
Secondly, To a Sword.
Thirdly, To an Arrow.

A Razor is ſo keen, that it takes off every little hair; reproach cuts a hair, it will have to do even with undiſcernable evils. A Sword wounds at hand, and ſmites thoſe that are near; an Arrow wounds afar off: So that whether a man be far off, or near, whether his errour be ſmall or great, or but imaginary, it is all one to a reproachful ſpirit; his tongue ſerves him for all turns. *David* was tryed by all manner of reproaches; but thoſe which pinched and preſſed him moſt, were his reproaches about ſpiritual things. Any reproach is bad enough, but a reproach in Religion, is worſt; to be reproached with our prayers and with our God, *Where is your God?* Such reproaches, how deep do they go? They ſtrike to the very heart. *Credit is a precious commodity*; a man is more tender of it, then of his fleſh; now all reproach falls upon our credit, and the more excellent that piece of our credit is, upon which the reproach falls, the more grievous is that reproach to us. Credit in ſpiritual things is the moſt excellent credit: Thus *David* was reproached, and ſo was *Job*, *Is this thy fear, and thy confidence?* Is this the thing thou haſt ſo long boaſted of? Chriſt was to bear the greateſt burthen of affliction, and therefore he did not only bear the Croſs, but reproach with it; he ſuffered death, and reproach with death; he ſuffered the ſhameful death of the Croſs, in which there was more then a reproach, a curſe, *Curſed is every one that hangeth on a Tree:* Chriſt muſt die an ignominious death, as well as a painful, and the ignominy was a heavier burden then the pain. We are exhorted (*Heb.*13.13.) *To go out bearing his reproach*; as intimating, that to bear the reproach of Chriſt, would be harder to us, and a ſtronger temptation, then to bear the croſs of Chriſt. As the greateſt part of Chriſts ſufferings for us, was to bear our reproach, ſo the greateſt part of our ſufferings for Chriſt, is to bear Chriſts reproach: *Let us go forth unto him without the Camp, bearing his reproach.* And indeed reproach is ſo great a burthen, that were not this conſideration in it; that it is Chriſts, no man would bear it; and they will yield to do any thing rather then ſuffer reproach, who are not able to ſay that their reproach is the reproach of Chriſt. *Moſes* looked upon his reproach, as *the reproach of Chriſt*, he did not eſteem his own reproach, but the reproach of Chriſt greater riches, then the treaſures of Egypt (*Heb.*11.26.) Our reproach is nothing but dung or droſs which hath weight in it to preſs us, but no worth in it to enrich us; but the reproach of Chriſt is treaſure, which though it have weight in it to preſs us, yet it hath abundance of worth in it to enrich and crown us. The Apoſtle calls it, The reproach of Chriſt, both becauſe Chriſt did bear ſuch reproach himſelf, and becauſe Chriſt owned *Moſes* in bearing that reproach; yea he owned that reproach which *Moſes* bare, as if he had born it himſelf; while we are reproached for Chriſts ſake, Chriſt is reproached; and though it ſhould grieve us that Chriſt is reproached in us, yet it may comfort us, that Chriſt takes our reproach as his. *They have ſmitten me on the cheek reproachfully*, and yet they have not done with me.

They have gathered themſelves together againſt me.

It ſeems they contemned and reproached him not ſingly or every man apart; but they joyned all together in conſulting and plotting againſt him.

The word that we tranſlate to *gather together*, hath a ſecond ſignification, namely, to fill, either as a room is filled with Goods, or Perſons, or as the ſtomack is filled with meat, or food, or as an Army with Men. Hence Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *They come by full Troops upon me:* And another, *They will be filled with me, or upon me.* The Vulgar explains it thus, *They are filled or ſatiated with my puniſhment:* or as a third, *They have taken their fill of pleaſure at my miſeries.* The reaſon of this ſenſe ariſeth from the former; becauſe, where many things or perſons are gathered together, they fill up that place.

מלא
1. Implere; complere.
2. Colligere; congregare; quod rebus collectis impleantur loca.

Firſt, It ſignifies to gather together, as men are gathered in a civil Society, and combination: *Job* ſuppoſed his Friends conſpired his hurt, and that they gathered themſelves together againſt him, who pretended to gather themſelves together for him; or we may apply this to his profeſſed Enemies, who were very unanimous to vex and trouble him.

Hence Note, *Men are apt to agree in doing hurt.*

Union is not alwayes a ſign of a good cauſe: 'Tis but ſeldom we can agree to do a common duty. Good men want the cement of love in a good cauſe; evil men ſeldom want it in a bad. *Behold* ſaith God, *Gen.*11.5,6.) *This people are one, and they all ſpeak one language:* their language was one, and ſo were their hearts, to build *a Tower, whoſe top might reach to Heaven:* The builders of *Babel* are more united, then the builders of *Sion.* The Pſalmiſt complains of the Enemies oneneſs (*Pſal.*83.5,6,7.) *They have conſulted together with one conſent (or heart) they are confederate againſt thee. Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the Philiſtims, and them that dwell at Tyre: Aſhur is alſo joyned with them,* &c. All Nations, even Heterogenial Nations, can joyn in miſchief; men of ſeveral Kingdoms, and ſpirits, *Pilate* and *Herod* joyn to crucifie Chriſt; but as it is moſt beautiful and pleaſant (*Pſal.*133.) So, *O how hard a thing is it for Brethren to dwell in unity?* They who have one God, one Lord, one Faith, one Spirit, one Baptiſm, one Hope; yea they who (in one ſenſe) are one Body, and one Spirit (*Epheſ.*4.4,5.) are ſeldom one.

Super me implebuntur. Mont.

Satiati ſunt pænis meis. Vulg. *In manis meis voluptatem ſuam expleverunt.* Tygur.

From that ſecond ſenſe of the word, *They have filled, or ſatiated themſelves with me,*

Note, *It is a kind of pleaſure to ſome to ſee others in pain.*

We ſhould be pained with the pain of others; fellow-feeling is a duty; how far are they departed from this duty, who are ſo far from feeling the ſufferings of others, that they take pleaſure in their ſufferings?

There are two ſorts of pleaſure, which every good man ſhould abhor.

Firſt, Pleaſure in ſin, our own, or others: The worſt that was ſaid of the wicked Gentiles was this, *They not only do ſuch things, but take pleaſure in them that do them* (*Rom.* 1.32.)

Secondly, Pleaſure in the ſufferings and ſorrows of others; ſome do not only put others to the ſuffering of ſorrow, but take pleaſure in the ſorrow which they ſuffer; they make their tears as Wine, their aſhes as Bread; and until they ſee them weeping and feeding on aſhes, their own Wine is as tears, and their Bread as aſhes to them. *Haman* came full from the Queens Banquet, and he was invited by her to a ſecond Banquet the next day, yet ſtill he was hungry, and ſaid (*Heſt.* 5.13.) *All this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee Mordecai the Jew ſitting at the Kings gate:* 'Tis like, *Haman* had eaten and drunk freely, yet the Banquet had not filled his belly: *All this availeth me nothing. More then forty of the Jews bound themſelves under a curſe, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul* (*Act.* 23.12, 13.) It would have been better to *Haman* then meat and drink to have killed *Mordecai*, and all the Jews.

Some have been heard to ſay, *O how ſweet is revenge!* What a pleaſant draught is a draught of blood! Spightful ſpirits hunger and thirſt for the downfal and miſery of thoſe who ſtand in their way; nor will any thing ſatisfie hatred, but the ruine of thoſe who are hated; and when once they ſee them ruined, they are ſatisfied. As envy is troubled at the good which another enjoyes more then at all the evils which it ſelf feels; ſo malice is more ſatisfied with the evils which befal others, then with all the good which it ſelf enjoyes (*Exod.* 15.9.) *The enemy ſaid, I will purſue, I will overtake, I will divide the ſpoil, my luſt ſhall be ſatisfied upon them. Pharaoh* and his Courtiers, yea all the Egyptians hungred and thirſted for the fleſh and blood of *Iſrael:* They had a luſt, or a longing rather (as women with Child have ſometimes inordinate appetites after ſtrange meats) to eat mans fleſh, and drink the blood of the ſlain: Revenge is as craving a luſt as covetouſneſs, but it is a luſt more eaſily ſatisfied then covetouſneſs. This encreaſes by receiving what it deſires, but that (if it may have it) is ſatisfied: That which covetouſneſs receives, is only as fewel to a fire, but that which revenge receives, is as food to the ſtomack; the deſire of the end is infinite, but the end being once attained, deſire is at an end: *Ye are filled with me.*

Appetitus finis eſt infinitus.

Job having thus deſcribed the inſtruments and manner of his affliction, turns his thoughts from them to the ſupream efficient, and orderer of his afflictions.

Verſ. 11. **God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.**

The words ſeem to bear an alluſion to the proceeding of an earthly Judge, who having tryed a Malefactor, and found him guilty, pronounceth ſentence of death upon him, and then delivers, or turns him over to thoſe whoſe office it is to ſee execution done accordingly.

The word which we render to *deliver*, ſignifies alſo *to ſhut up*, which ſuites well with the former notion; for a condemned Perſon is more cloſely ſhut up, and more narrowly watcht, then before: But who were the ungodly to whom he was delivered? and the wicked into whoſe hands or power he was turned? Theſe were not only the *Chaldeans*, and *Sabeans*, but alſo all ſuch as ſhewed any malice againſt him, or willingly afflicted him in his afflictions.

ירט *A via divertit, deflexit, declinavit.*

The words carry in them a correction of his former complaint, as if he had ſaid, *Why do I trouble my ſelf with men, why do I complain of their unkindneſs or cruelty againſt me? God hath done it; he hath delivered, and turned me over (as a Magiſtrate doth a Malefactor whom he hath condemned) into the hands of theſe tormenters, he hath ſealed a writ for my execution.* Thus *Job* aſcribes all to God; he ſometimes wrangles with men, but as often before, ſo now again, he looks beyond them, at once ſeeing and adoring the hand of God, putting him and his eſtate into the hands of men.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Wicked men are ordered by Providence.*

They cannot take till God puts into their hands: a Sparrow falls not to the ground without God, much leſs doth a godly man fall into the hands of the wicked without God. They do but execute what God decrees, though they do it without any reſpect to his decrees, and quite croſs to his commands. Many will be found at once executing the decrees and diſobeying the commands of God.

Secondly, *God delivers his deareſt Children into the hands of wicked men, for trial and correction.*

Their graces and goodneſs appear moſt, when they are under the handling of evil and graceleſs men. Many of their corruptions are purged out, while they are in their power who are not at all purged from their corruption. Foul hands may ſerve to waſh that clean which is foul; and they who are but droſs, may fetch off the ruſt which cleaves to the pureſt mettal.

Thirdly, Note, *It is an aggravation of affliction to be given up to wicked men.*

Eſt hoc in judicio Domini graviſſimũ quod adverſariis videatur Favere, & a parte eorum ſtare, conſilia conatuſque ipſorum contra nos proſperando. Brent.

It is an affliction to be in their company, what is it then to be under their power? Wo is me, ſaith *David*, that I dwell in *Meſhec*; how woful then is it to be a Priſoner in *Meſhec?* While God keeps the Rod in his own hands, the ſmart is not ſo grievous: We learn this in *David's* choice (2 *Sam.* 24.14.) when three evils were offered him, he reſolves, *Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and let me not fall into the hand of man.* A good man can eaſier die by the hand of God, then receive a ſlight wound by the hand of an Enemy: As thoſe comforts are ſweeter, ſo thoſe ſufferings are not ſo bitter which Believers receive immediately from God.

It is hard to ſuffer from equals, much more from inferiours, but moſt of all when we ſuffer the fatherly diſpleaſure of God from thoſe who are the objects of his diſpleaſure as a Judge. *Let the righteous ſmite me* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 141.) a reproof from them is oyl, but a reproof from the wicked is Gall and Vinegar to a godly heart: The reaſon why a godly man chuſes rather to be ſmitten by the righteous, then the wicked, is, becauſe they have ſomewhat, poſſibly, much of God in them; therefore much more doth he ſay, Let the righteous God ſmite me. It is a mercy, if we muſt needs be chaſtiſed, when God will chaſtiſe us himſelf, and not give us into the hands of men whoſe mercies are cruel.

There are two things which make it ſo grievous to the people of God, when they are delivered up into the hands of the ungodly.

Firſt, Their cruelty: Their mercies are cruel, how unmerciful then are they in their cruelties? As they know no meaſure in ſinning againſt God, ſo they keep none in vexing man. The Lord promiſeth (*Pſal.* 126.3.) *The Rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous*; implying, that by the good will of evil men it ſhould reſt there; they would never take it off, if God did not.

Secondly (which troubles more then the former) Their blaſphemy. And that firſt againſt God himſelf, as if he either could not deliver out of their hands (2 *Chron.* 32.14.) What is your God that he ſhould be able to deliver you out of my hand (*Pſal.* 42.) *Where is now their God?* Thus the wicked Jewes into whoſe hand God delivered his Son, did even dare God to come to his reſcue (*Mat.* 27.43.) Or, as if he took their part, and favoured the cauſe which they have in hand. Secondly, They blaſpheme, or ſpeak evil both of the wayes and people of God. What's become of your prayers now? Where's your faſting now, of which you boaſted, that it would do ſuch wonders? It is a ſoar affliction to be under the rule of wicked men, much more to be under their rage: that prophetick curſe which *David* denounceth againſt his Enemy, is thus expreſſed (*Pſal.* 109.6.) *Set thou a wicked man over him:* A wicked man were better be under the power of good men, then of the wicked (for a good man cannot be ſo ſevere to a wicked man, as one wicked man is to another) but if a wicked man be ſo cruel to wicked men who are ſo like him, how cruel muſt he needs be to godly men who are altogether unlike him?

Fourthly, Note, *Godly men look through all ſecond cauſes to the firſt.*

As they reſt not in the creature for the good which they receive, ſo they ſtay not in the creature when they receive evil; they ſee a hand of God in and over all.

Note Fifthly, *We glorifie God as much in acknowledging afflictions, as in acknowledging mercies and bleſſings to come from him.*

He is the Author of both; he takes it as much upon him, that he *creates darkneſs, as that he forms light*; that is, as the next words expound it, *That he creates evil as well as makes peace* (*Iſa.* 45. 7.) Now if the Lord challenges this as a part of that glory which he will not give to Idols, then, we give him the glory of the only true God, while we acknowledge this.

Sixthly, Note, *There is no way to ſettle or quiet the heart, till it look up to God as the diſpoſer of our troubles.*

This was *Job's* laſt reſort: And this was *David's* when *Shimei* curſed him, *God hath bid Shimei curſe:* This kept down thoſe angry motions, which muſt elſe have boiled up as high in his ſpirit, as they did in *Abiſhai's*, himſelf being more deeply concerned in it then *Abiſhai* was. *Job* having diſcovered this frame of ſpirit more then once before, I here only touch upon it.

Laſtly, Take this comfortable Corolary from the whole.

Though God doth often deliver his choiceſt Servants into the power of wicked men, yet he never delivers them up to the will of wicked men: They cannot do with his people what they pleaſe; they ſhall only do what God himſelf pleaſeth, though they diſpleaſe God highly in doing it. God never turns the leaſt of thoſe who believe in his Name, out of his own hand, though he turn them over into the hand of the ungodly: as God keeps his title to them ſtill, ſo he ſtill keeps the poſſeſſion of them. Saints in the hand of the vileſt men, are in the hand, or poſſeſſion of God two wayes.

Firſt, They are in the hand of his power, he can fetch them out of the hands of men when he will.

Secondly, They are under the hand of his care, and this five wayes.

Firſt, To provide, that though they endure much hardſhip in their hands, yet they ſhall receive no hurt; God doth not turn his into the hands of evil men for evil, but for good.

Secondly, He hath them in the hand of his care to furniſh them with ſtrength to ſuffer.

Thirdly, To teach them how to profit by ſufferings.

Fourthly, To moderate the hands of the wicked towards them; their hands ſhall not be heavier then he hath appointed, they ſhall not give you a ſtroak more then he hath numbred-out.

Laſtly, As to order how much, ſo likewiſe how long they ſhall ſuffer: Our times are in Gods hand, when we are in the hand of men. As they cannot add a drop to our cup, ſo not a Sand to our Glaſs, beyond what the Lord hath appointed out.

VERS. 12, 13, 14.

I was at eaſe, but he hath broken me aſunder: he hath alſo taken me by my neck, and ſhaken me to pieces, and ſet me up for his mark.

His Archers compaſs me round about, he cleaveth my reins aſunder, and doth not ſpare; he poureth out my Gall upon the ground.

He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a Giant.

JOB ſtill proſecutes the ſame argument, ſetting out his afflictions in their darkeſt colours to the ſeventeenth Verſe of this Chapter, and then with higheſt confidence atteſting, yea calling Heaven and Earth to atteſt both the righteouſneſs of his wayes towards men, and the rightneſs of his worſhip rendred unto God.

Theſe three, with the two Verſes following, contain two general points.

Firſt, He tells us how, and in what manner he was handled by God in thoſe days of his affliction, *Verſ.* 12, 13, 14.

Secondly, He tells us how he behaved himſelf under the hand of God, or how he was affected with theſe afflictions, *Verſ.* 15, 16. *I have ſowed ſackcloath upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the duſt, &c.* As Gods hand was heavy upon him, ſo he held out all the demonſtrations and emblems of a heavy heart: *I ſowed ſackcloth upon my skin.*

He begins with, or rather proſecutes the deſcription (for he had ſpoken much of it before) of his ſad afflictions. And becauſe contraries illuſtrate, and ſet forth one another, therefore, he firſt ſhews what condition he had been in: Secondly, what he then was in. *Our preſent wants and evils are aggravated by our former comforts and enjoyments.*

This courſe and method *Job* takes to aggravate his;

Firſt, Telling us that he was once whole and at eaſe.

Secondly, What he at that time was, pained and broken to pieces.

I was at eaſe.

But how doth this agree with what *Job* affirmed (*Chap.* 3. 26.) *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, neither was I quiet, yet trouble came.* It ſeems *Job* was never at eaſe, and yet he ſaith here, *I was at eaſe:* He that is not in ſafety, and hath neither reſt nor quiet, ſurely, *He is in little eaſe.*

There is no contradiction between theſe two, we may eaſily reconcile them, and make up the ſeeming difference, thus. When *Job* ſaith (*Chap.* 3.) *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, neither was I quiet*; his meaning is, that his ſpirit did not truſt upon his outward proſperity: He had abundance in the World, but he had no carnal confidence in worldly things. *Job* never ſaid to his ſoul (when his Barns were full, and his ſubſtance multiplyed) *Soul take thy eaſe, eat and be merry, thou haſt enough laid up for many years. Job* had much of the creature in his hand, but he kept it all out of his heart; and when he was furtheſt from miſery, he was far enough from ſecurity; he did not think his life ſafe, becauſe he had ſufficient to live upon, nor was he at reſt, becauſe he was rich. A believers reſt is not in any outward comfort which he receives from God, but in God, from whom he receives all his comforts. So then, *Job* ſpeaks there of the ſpiritual frame of his heart, but here he ſpeaks of the temporal frame of his worldly eſtate, in which he had eaſe, and the affluence of all good things, no man moleſting him: As if he had ſaid, *Time was when I was not at all pinched with poverty in my eſtate, nor blaſted with reproach in my credit, nor tortured with pains in my body; I can remember the time when I was at full eaſe in all theſe:* That's his ſenſe in this Text, and between theſe two there is no oppoſition: *A man may be at eaſe in the World, and yet not make the World his eaſe, nor reſt upon the World.*

I was at eaſe.] Such was my former flouriſhing condition. The word ſignifies to be peaceable, quiet, or well ſetled: the *Vulgar* tranſlates, *I was a rich man:* the ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies a rich man, and a man at eaſe, for two reaſons.

שלו הייתי *Pacificus, tranquillus, quietus eram. Fui opulentus.* Vulg.

Firſt, Becauſe riches and eaſe uſually go together; and unleſs a man live at eaſe, that is, in outward peace, it is hard to gather riches. *Times of War and trouble are ſcattering and impoveriſhing times: The rowling Stone gets no Moſs.* As men have the beſt opportunity, ſo they are moſt active to gather wealth when all is ſtill and quiet: There are but few who know how to fiſh in troubled waters, though ſome make their beſt trade there.

Secondly, The ſame word ſignifies, both to be rich, and to be at eaſe, from the effect; becauſe, men that are rich, uſually take their eaſe: as eaſe and peace give them opportunity to gather riches, ſo riches cauſe them to take their eaſe, both outward civil eaſe, and oft-times inward ſinful eaſe; that is, to ſit down, and make their riches, and outward accommodations, the very baſis of their quiet and contentment. So the rich are expreſſed (*Ezek.* 23. 42.) *Thou ſateſt upon a ſtately Bed, and a Table prepared before it, &c. And a voice of a multitude being at eaſe with her,* *and with the men of the common ſort were brought Sabeans from the Wilderneſs, which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful Crowns upon their heads :* Here's the deſcription of a rich people; and what were they? *A multitude being at eaſe*, having gotten goodly furniture for their houſes, full tables for their bellies, pretious ornaments for their hands and heads; that is, having abundance of all things, they gave themſelves up to ſecurity, and took their fill in the creature: And by how much the greater a carnal man's worldly felicity is, by ſo much doth it the more triumph over all jealouſies and ſuſpitions of evil (*Revel.* 18. 7.) *Babylon* ſaith, *I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* *Babylon* is at eaſe, ſhe feels no evil, and ſhe fears none. *Jeruſalem* was once in ſuch a condition through the favour of God, and ſo ſhe ſhall be in due time again (*Zech.*7.7.) *Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cryed by the former Prophets, when Jeruſalem was inhabited, and in proſperity*(or at eaſe)*and the Cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the South of the plain? The ſouth of the plain*, was a Region or Countrey, extreamly infeſted with Enemies, where no man durſt dwell or make his habitation, for fear of hoſtile incurſions: yet *Jeruſalem* was in ſuch proſperity, or at ſuch eaſe, that *the South of the plain*, the open Countries and unwalled Villages were as ſafe to the Inhabitants as walled and fortified Cities: At ſuch eaſe, and in ſuch ſafety ſhall *Jeruſalem* be again, when the Lord ſhall *appoint ſalvation unto her, in ſtead of Walls and Bulwarks.*

Miſerationē movet à priore ſtatu. Merc.
Primus locus miſericordiæ eſt per quē quibus in bonis fuerit, & nunc quibus in malis ſit oſtenditur. Cic. de Invent.lib.1.

I was at eaſe.] *Job* makes this report of his former proſperity, that he might move his Friends to pity him in his preſent miſery. It is a rhetorical argument: The Oratour gives this rule, when we would ſtir up compaſſion towards a man in miſery, we muſt firſt deſcribe in what heights he hath ſtood, and then ſhew how low he is fallen; we are not ſo much affected with any man's being in a low eſtate, as with his falling from a high eſtate. When *Lucifer* the Son of the morning, falls from Heaven, and falls into Hell, to the ſides of the Pit, this ſets all men a wondering (*Iſa.*14. 11, 12, 15.)

Hence Obſerve, *To have been in proſperity, adds to the burden and bitterneſs of preſent adverſity.*

Cor dolet, quam ſcio nunc, ut ſum atq; ut fui. Plaut. in Moſtel.
Cernite ſim qualis, qui modo talis eram. Ovid.
Fuimus Troes, &c.

It is an affliction, never to have been in proſperity; but it is a greater affliction to be caſt down from a ſtate of proſperity: for him that hath been great, and rich, and powerful in the World, to become mean, and poor, and powerleſs, this pinches ſoar, and goes to the quick. *Job* aggravates his ſorrows at large upon this account (*Chap.*29.*Chap.*30.) *The Candle of God ſhined upon my head, I waſhed my ſteps in butter, my glory was freſh in me,* &c. *But now they that are younger then I have me in deriſion,* &c. So (*Lam.*4.2.) *The precious Sons of Sion, comparable to fine Gold, how are they eſteemed as earthen Pitchers.* And (*Verſ.* 5.) *They that did feed delicately, are deſolate in the ſtreets; they that were brought up in Scarlet embrace dunghils.* From delicate feeding to deſolation, from Scarlet to a dunghil is a great change; the dunghil would not be ſo loathſom, were it not for the Scarlet, nor deſolation ſo grievous were it not for the remaining taſte of the late delicate feeding. Every remembrance of the Wormwood and the Gall of their preſent affliction in *Babylon*, was made more bitter by the remembrance of the Milk and Honey which flowed in the Land of *Canaan*. They who have alwayes been in a low condition ſcarce feel or know the want of great things, becauſe they never knew the meaning of their enjoyment.

Euripides.

The Greek Poet tells us of *Hecuba*, not daring for ſhame, ſo much as to lift up her eyes, or look *Polymneſtor* in the face, becauſe ſhe had been a *Queen*, but was then a *poor Captive*. Common Captives can eaſily lift up their eyes and cryes to thoſe that are in proſperity, for relief and help, whereas others who have lived *at eaſe*, can with more eaſe ſtarve then beg.

As a downfal from a ſeeming height in ſpirituals into the mire of ſin, hath more wickedneſs in it then a bare continuance in ſin; ſo a downfal from a real height in temporals into the mire of miſery, hath more trouble in it, then a bare continuance in miſery. They who have made a fair ſhew, or an outward flouriſh in the Faith, and afterward fall back, are worſe then thoſe who never made any ſhew at all. It is ſad for any one to live openly in ſin; but for ſuch as have made an open profeſſion of godlineſs, to apoſtatize, and fall back to ſin, this is matter of ſaddeſt lamentation: For as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeakes, *It had been better for them that they had not known the way of God, then after they have known it to turn from the holy Commandment :* It is better (in ſpiritual reſpects) never to have been a Profeſſour, then to be an Apoſtate. Thus alſo it is better (in civil reſpects) never to have been high, or great in the World, then after all this to ſuffer a miſerable downfal, and to be numbred among the loweſt of the People.

And in this we may ſee the wonderful love of *Jeſus Chriſt* to poor ſinners, who ſuffered ſo great a change for our ſakes; he might well ſay, *I was at eaſe, but he hath broken me aſunder.* Chriſt was broken all to pieces for us, he was broken and bruiſed for us, but he had been at eaſe: How great was his love who willingly ſuffered not only for ſinners, but as a ſinner, having reigned in righteouſneſs from all eternity? The Apoſtle uſeth this argument, more then once, to advance the kindneſs of Chriſt to ſinful man (2 *Cor.* 8. 9.) Beloved, *You know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who though he were rich, yet he became poor for our ſakes, that we through his poverty might be made rich :* For Chriſt who was rich to become poor, argues the riches of his love; this ſhews the great affection he bare to us, becauſe it ſhews that he bare ſuch great affliction for us.

Again (*Phil.*2.6,7.) *Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant :* He emptyed himſelf, to fill us; and to raiſe our reputation with his Father, laid down his own.

Now ſeeing *Jeſus Chriſt* ſuffered ſuch a wondrous change, from the form of God to the form of a Servant; from the fulneſs of God, to the emptineſs of the meaneſt man; this is the higheſt teſtimony of his love. The courſe which Chriſt did run to ſave us, declares that there went as much of his love, as of his worthineſs to ſave us: For as no creature had worth enough to ſave us any way, ſo no creature had love enough to ſave us ſuch a way. If one had come out of poverty and miſery to die for us, it had ſhewed wonderful love, but to leave riches and become poor, to leave glory and become baſe, to leave fulneſs and become empty, to leave (in regard of viſible manifeſtations) his God-head, and become Man: How unchangable was his heart to us, who yielded himſelf up to ſuch changes for us? He being at eaſe was broken aſunder that we might not be broken, or rather that we might be made whole for ever.

Secondly, *I was at eaſe :* What follows? *He hath broken me aſunder.*

Hence Obſerve, *All worldly proſperity may quickly be daſht and loſt.*

Do not think any new thing happens under the Sun, when you ſee men that were at eaſe, broken; men that were full, empty; men that were rich, impoveriſhed; men that were in health, ſick. The holy Apoſtle (1 *Cor.*7.30.) at once counſels and commands us, *Uſe the World, as not abuſing it,* that is, uſe it well: There is much evil in the World, yet we may, yea we muſt make a good uſe of the World: Why? *Becauſe the faſhion of this World paſſeth away.* As faſhions in the World alter and change every day, ſo doth the faſhion of this World; there is a World to come, the faſhion whereof ſhall never go or paſs away; but the faſhion (or ſcheme)of this World paſſeth continually. The word which we tranſlate *faſhion*, ſignifies a Geometrical figure, or artificial form, habit, veſture, as alſo any rhetorical fineneſs or bravery of words: Now all the beauty of this World is but like ſome of theſe ſchemes, which have more ſhew then ſubſtance in them; and the whole World below put together, is but like a Pageant, or Maſk, on the ſcene whereof many perſons are repreſented to act their parts, but they ſoon diſappear, and the ſtage or ſcene it ſelf is pulled down.

As thus the whole World paſſeth away, ſo doth the ſtate of each man in the World. And as there is in the World an affected varying of faſhions, or a voluntary paſſing from one vain faſhion to another, from one proud faſhion to another; ſo there is an inflicted variety of faſhion in the World; God makes man paſs from one faſhion to another, whether he will or no, or much againſt his will; when his faſhion was fulneſs, he makes it emptineſs; when his faſhion was riches, he makes it poverty; when his faſhion was Peace and quietneſs, he makes it Warr and confuſion; theſe are the changes which God makes among the faſhions of the World. The pride of man changes from one vain faſhion to a other; the providence of God changes man from his moſt delightful, to a mournful faſhion: And when the Garments of outward proſperity ſeem to us ſo ſtrong, that they will never wear out, how much or how long ſoever we wear them, he tears and breaks both them and us, as *Job* complains with his next breath.

He hath broken me aſunder.

ויפרפרני *à radice.* פור *contrivit, irritũ fecit. Verba grandia ſelegit ad exaggerandam mali ſui vim.* Merc. *In conjugatione quadrata auxeſin habet.* Merc. q. d. *Frequentatis ictibus in minutiſſimas partes contrivit me.* Bold.

This ſentence is but one word in the Hebrew, yet more then a ſingle word; it is elegantly doubled in conſtruction to imply double affliction. Grammarians tell us, that two words put together, or the ſame word twice put, increaſe the ſenſe. Ordinary words will not ſerve to expreſs an extraordinary condition; he ſpeaks great and compounded words, becauſe his ſorrows were great and compounded ſorrows. *Jobs* was not a ſingle, but a double breaking; yea, his was a manifold breaking: He was often broken, and utterly broken; the repeated ſtrokes which fell upon him (by divine diſpenſation) from all hands, had beaten him to duſt and atomes: *He hath broken me in ſunder.*

Further, The *root* of the word ſignifies, *to make void*, to diſſipate, to ſcatter, to bring to nought, or to make nothing of (*Pſal.* 33. 10) *The Lord brings to nought the counſel of the heathen.* So again (*Iſa.* 8. 10.) It is uſed often for breaking the Law, by frequent and wilfull ſinning againſt it. Proud ſinners would break the Law in ſunder, or pull it all in pieces: *They have made void thy Law* (*Pſal.* 119.) As if they would not onely ſin againſt the Law, but ſin away the Law; not onely withdraw themſelves from the obedience of it, but drive it out of the World; they would make void, and repeal the holy acts of God, that their own wicked acts might not be queſtioned; and leſt the Law ſhould have a power to puniſh them, they will deny it a power to rule them; that's the force of the ſimple word here uſed, as applied to higheſt tranſgreſſing againſt the Law of God.

Now as wicked men by ſinning, would batter the Law to pieces, ſo God by afflicting doth ſometimes break good men to pieces. Conſider what courſe uſage the holy Law of God hath in the hearts and lives of wicked men; O how they tear it, and vex it, and batter it every day: Thus doth the Lord deal with many of his holy ſervants, who (had they their wiſh) would not make the leaſt breach in the Law, and whoſe hearts are often broken with godly ſorrow, becauſe they cannot but break it, yet to theſe he doth not only give a bruiſe, or a blow, but breaks them aſunder.

Confractus ſum velut uvæ aut olivæ in torculari.

There is yet another elegancy in the ſignification of the word: For, as Hebricians obſerve, it notes a bruiſing, like that of Grapes or Olives, which are trodden in a preſs, to make Wine or Oyl; hence alſo a *Noun* from this *Verb* ſignifies the Wine-preſs (*Iſa.* 63. 3.) Now Grapes and Olives being trodden, are broken and bruiſed in pieces; not only is their form and beauty totally ſpoiled, but all their ſweetneſs, juyce, and Liquor, is wrought out of them, and they are left as a dry lump.

Now look what Grapes and Olives are, when taken out of the Preſs; even ſuch a lump was *Job*; he was broken aſunder in the Wine-preſs, though not of Gods wrath, as his Friends mis-judged, yet in the Wine-preſs of his chaſtiſements and ſevereſt tryals; all his worldly moiſture was ſqueezed out, and his earthly glory was quite defaced, he had nothing left of that, but (as it were) a dry husk; yet his ſpiritual eſtate was ſtill juicy, and his ſoul, by theſe preſſings, treadings, and breakings, had diſtilled much ſweet Oyl and Wine, and much more was ſtill remaining in him. From theſe heightned ſignifications of the word laid together;

> Obſerve in general: *God doth not onely afflict thoſe whom he loves, but afflict them ſorely and ſeverely.*

He afflicts ſome, not onely to the impairing and abating, but to the undoing and ruining of their outward comforts, and worldly enjoyments: Nothing can be ſaid to decipher an afflicted ſtate beyond what this word will bear. And that God doth afflict his choſen ones to the utmoſt rack of this phraſe, will appear alſo from all that follows to the end of the fourteenth Verſe; the opening of which will be a continual proof and illuſtration of this great and often experimented truth, upon, and among the precious Sons of Sion: This I ſhall hint all along, beſides thoſe obſervations which ariſe out of them: *He hath broken me aſunder*; and what follows in the ſame Verſe;

> *He hath alſo taken me by my neck, and ſhaken me to pieces.*

Is not this to deal ſeverely? A loving Father takes his Son about the neck and kiſſes him; what a rough ſalute did the Lord give this Son of his, when he took him by the neck and ſhook him to pieces? Such a carriage ſeems not to be after the manner of men, much leſs after the manner of Fathers; yet this was the manner of God to *Job*, who was alſo his Friend and Father.

He hath taken me by my neck.] The *neck* is as the tower and ſtrength of the body; and when a man is taken by the neck, he is aſſaulted in his chiefeſt ſtrength, and taken at the greateſt advantage.

There is a threefold metaphor, or alluſion in theſe words, which being conſidered diſtinctly, will let out their meaning yet more fully.

Firſt, They bear an alluſion to Wreſtlers, who take one another by the neck, or collar; he that is ſtrongeſt, not onely takes his Antagoniſt by the neck, but ſhakes him, as if he would ſhake him to pieces. God wreſtled with the Patriarch *Jacob* literally and corporally (though the greateſt labour and ſtreſs of *Jacobs* wreſtling was ſpiritual and internal.) *And when he ſaw that he prevailed not* (*Jacob* prevailed with God for ſo much ſtrength, that now God could not (according to that diſpenſation) prevail againſt *Jacob*, yet) *he touched the hollow of Jacobs thigh, and made him halt.* God wreſtled with *Job*, not corporally, yet in corporal things; the ſtreſs alſo of his wreſtling was ſpiritual, and he prevailed with God, and over Satan; yet God was pleaſed not only for the preſent, to touch a joynt, and make him halt, but even to ſhake every joynt and limb to pieces.

Secondly, It is an alluſion to Serjeants or Bailiffs, that are ſent to arreſt men for debt, or for their evil deeds: This ſort of men are boyſterous enough, they having power, will not forbear to lay hold on Perſons obnoxious, and take them by the neck, when they attach them. We have that uſage expreſſed (*Matth.* 18. 28.) The evil Servant, to whom the Lord had forgiven ten thouſand Talents (a vaſt debt) found one of his fellow-ſervants, who owed him an hundred pence (an inconſiderable ſum) and would needs exact the utmoſt from him: the Text ſaith, *The ſame ſervant went out, and found one of his fellow-ſervants, which ought him an hundred pence, and he laid hands upon him, and took him by the throat, ſaying, Pay me that thou oweſt*: He took him by the throat, the word ſignifies properly to choak, or to take another ſo rudely by the throat, as to choak, or (as we ſay) throttle him. It is tranſlated to choak with water, (*Mark* 5. 13.) and is appliable to any violent act by which the breath is ſtopt, eſpecially to taking by the neck, or throat.

Ἔπνιγε *Premebat fauces illius debitoris tanquam ſuffocaturus: obtorto collo premebat.* Eraſ.

Thirdly, It is an alluſion, as ſome conceive, to Conquerors in War, who, when they have worſted an Adverſary, take him by the Neck, and make him their Priſoner: As it is the laſt act of triumph and inſultation over an Enemy, to tread upon his neck (*Joſh.* 10. 24.) *Joſhua* called all the men of Iſrael, and ſaid unto the Captains of the men of War which went with them, *Come neer, and put your feet upon the necks of theſe Kings: and they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.* Now as it is (I ſay) the laſt act of triumph *to tread upon the neck*; ſo it is the firſt act of triumph *to take by the neck*. *Job* thought himſelf uſed thus, *He hath taken me by the neck*, as a Wreſtler, as a Sergeant, or as a Victor in War.

ויפצ פצני *A radice* פרצ *contrivit cum diſperſione, ſicut teſta: vel in minutiſſima fragmenta comminuit.* Druſ.

And hath ſhaken me to pieces.] I will not let it paſs unobſerved, that the word which we tranſlate *to ſhake in pieces*, is but one in the Hebrew; but as that which we render *to break aſunder*, ſo this is doubled to heighten the ſenſe, and intimate no ordinary, but a terrible ſhaking; ſuch a ſhaking as is followed with ſcattering, or a ſhaking, like the breaking of a Potters Veſſel with an Iron Rod. The word is uſed to ſignifie the irreſiſtable efficacy of the Word of God, whether to convert, or to confound, to break the ſtony heart into contrition for ſin; or to batter the obſtinate heart, which continueth in ſin. *Is not my word a fire?* (ſaith God) The word of God is a fire, to conſume the droſs and corruption that is in the hearts and lives of men. *And is not my word a Hammer?* What kind of Hammer? A Hammer *that breaketh the rock in pieces?* Yes, the word of God is all this, 'tis a Fire, and 'tis a Hammer, it burns, it batters all that ſtands before it. Now as the Word of God is to the hearts of men, ſo the Rod of God is to the eſtates of men; it ſhakes, ſhatters, and breaks them to pieces: To ſhake, or break a man to pieces, is in common ſpeech appliable to the eſtates of men, as well as to their perſons; for of ſuch a man we ſay, *He is broken.*

Λαβὼν με τῆς κόμης. Sept.

The Septuagint reads this clauſe with an expoſitory addition; *He hath taken me by the hair of the head, and ſhaken me.* They who follow that reading, interpret it, by a metaphor, *He hath taken me by the hair*; that is, by my outward eſtate, by my riches, honour, and greatneſs (theſe are to men, as the hair is to the head, *ornaments, yet excrements*) he hath taken me by theſe hairs, even all my outward ſplendour and glory, and ſhaken them in pieces.

All this diverſity, whether of reading, or expounding the Text, meets in the main point, *That God deals ſeverely with many whom he loves dearly.*

He hath ſhaken me in pieces, and yet he hath not done with me; as the Lord broke and ſhook me aſunder when I was whole, ſo he wounds me now I am broken: If he can but find enough of me left together to make a mark of, I ſhall be ſure to feel his Arrows.

Proverbialis locutio quo ſignificamus aliquem eſſe omnibus telis & injuriis propoſitum.

And ſet me up for his mark.] *Job* was caſt down by affliction, and yet he was ſet up to receive more affliction: 'Tis a Proverbial ſpeech, ſignifying that a man is made the common receit, or ſubject of miſery. A *Mark* is purpoſely ſet up to receive Arrows, Darts, or Bullets ſhot at it; ſo that for a man to be ſet up as a mark, is to ſtand as a common object, upon which all calamities center themſelves; what *Job* here complains of, he had expoſtulated with God about (*Chap.* 7. 20.) *Wherefore haſt thou ſet me up as a mark, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf?* I ſhall ſpeak the leſs to it here, having ſpoken to it there already.

A נטר *ſervo, quod eum diligenter obſervent jaculatores ne oberrent.*

Σκοπὸς, propriè ſignificat ſignum præfixum ſagittantibus, unde quod animo deſtinamus aut præfigimus ſcopus eſt. Eraſ.

The ſame Original word is not uſed in both places, though the ſenſe be the ſame: There *Job* ſpeaks in a Paraphraſe, *Thou haſt ſet me oppoſite, or over againſt thee*: Here he uſes a ſingle term, which notes a mark, ſtrictly taken; for it comes from a root which ſignifies *to obſerve*; becauſe the mark, or white, is diligently obſerved by him that ſhoots; the Archer keeps his eye upon the mark, that he may ſend his Arrow to the mark. A mark is that to the eye in ſhooting, which the end is to the mind of man in all his wayes of acting; and therefore our Engliſh word *Scope* from the Greek (σκοπὸς) which properly ſignifies an Archers *mark*, is uſed figuratively, to ſignifie the end which we deſign to our ſelves in every undertaking. And hence the eye with which we take aim, is put for the end (*Matth.* 6. 22.) *If thine eye be ſingle, the whole body is light*; that is, if the end, or the thing that thou aimeſt at be juſt and right, all thy actions will be right too: Every man is regulated by his end, all he doth looks that way; therefore, if thy end and aim be honeſt and ſincere, all thy wayes and works will be ſuch. So then, as the end is the mark of the mind, ſo a mark is the end of the eye; it directs all unto it. And while *Job* ſaiths He hath ſet me up as a mark, his meaning is, *I am the But or white, at which the Lord aims all his Arrows, he empties his Quiver at my breaſt.* So the Church cries out (*Lam.* 3. 12, 13.) *He hath bent his bow, he hath ſet me as a mark for the Arrow; he hath cauſed the Arrows of his Quiver to enter into my reins*: The Hebrew is, *He hath cauſed the Sons of his Quiver to enter into my reins.* Arrows are the Sons of the Quiver: Sons are called Arrows (*Pſal.* 127. 4, 5.) *As Arrows in the hand of the mighty, ſo are the Children of the youth: bleſſed is the man that hath his Quiver full of them.* Now as Sons are compared to Arrows in a Quiver, ſo Arrows are compared to Sons; becauſe as Sons are together in their Fathers houſe, ſo are Arrows in the Quiver. Chriſt is deſcribed by old *Simeon*, as a mark ſet up to ſhoot at (*Luke* 2. 34, 35.). *This Child is ſet for the falling and riſing of many in Iſrael; and for a ſign to be ſpoken againſt.* What ſign? *A But-ſign, or a But-mark. A ſign to be ſpoken againſt*; that is, All ſhall direct the Arrows of their words againſt him. Bitter words are compared to Arrows; many ſhowers of theſe were ſhot againſt Jeſus Chriſt: He was aimed at on every ſide, by envious ſpirits and malevolent tongues: He might ſay as *Job, Thou haſt ſet me up as a mark.*

Ego ipſe poſitus fui in ſcopum ut mille jacula, mille ſagittas exciperem.

Significat Chriſtum veluti ſcopum fore, quem omnes certatim figere contendant. Beza.

Obſerve from this Alluſion, Firſt, *The Servants of God muſt expect many afflictions from the hand of God.*

A mark is not ſet up (or it is very rarely ſet up) for one ſhot: As God hath more mercies then one in ſtore for his people, ſo he hath more Arrows then one for them in his Quiver. When thou haſt received one ſhot, prepare for a ſecond, and a third.

Obſerve, Secondly, *God ſeems to take pleaſure in afflicting his people.*

This alſo contributes to the proof of the general Obſervation before given: For the more pleaſure any one takes in afflicting, the more ſeverity he ſhews in afflicting. A Father chaſtiſeth his Child with tears in his eyes; every ſtroke which a wiſe Father gives his Child, is as a wound to himſelf, and this abates the ſmart of the blow; but for Fathers to do it, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Heb.* 12.) *For their pleaſure*, or when it pleaſeth a Father (in that ſenſe) to do it, this encreaſeth the ſmart. The ſufferer feels moſt pain, when it is a pleaſure to another to make him ſuffer. Now, what is ſhooting at a mark? No man ſhoots at a mark for toyl, to make a labour, and a buſineſs of it, but men ſhoot at a mark for their recreation and pleaſure.

God delights not properly in the ſorrows and ſufferings of his people; he is not like thoſe cruel Tyrants, who faſten their Captives to a Poſt, and then ſhoot them dead for ſport: God doth not willingly, much leſs ſportingly, afflict the Children of Men (*Lam.* 3. 33.) yet it pleaſeth him to afflict them; yea, as *Job* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 9.) *He laughs at the tryal of the innocent*; that is, He carries himſelf (as to their ſenſe) as if he did not regard what they ſuffered, though indeed he be infinitely tender of them all in their ſufferings; yet becauſe they do not alwayes underſtand the language of this laughter, it makes them cry out as if God had forſaken them, and were either really turned an Enemy againſt them, or at leaſt, did not uſe them as his Friends; from which near relation, nothing appears more remote, than to be ſet up, and ſhot at as a mark.

Obſerve, Thirdly, *Affliction doth not hit the Saints by chance, but by direction.*

There is a great difference between ſhooting at randome, and ſhooting at a mark. *God doth not draw his bow at a venture* (as he who ſlew *Ahab* did, 1 *Kings* 22. 34.) or ſhoot at the whole hoſt of mankind, let the Arrow light where and on whom it will, but he ſingles out the particular perſon whom he intends to hit. Every one of his Arrows goes upon a ſpecial errand, and touches no breaſt but that againſt which it was ſent: And as this ſpeaks the honour of God, who determines as much, upon whom, as what to do; and chuſeth out thoſe at whom he means to ſhoot, as well as the means by which he ſhoots at them; ſo it ſhould eſtabliſh our hearts to receive his ſhot, and in this ſenſe, to be like a ſenſeleſs mark, which ſtirs not from the Arrow, nor withdraws from the deadly Bullet. It is not onely the grace, but the glory of a Believer, when he can ſtand as a But-mark, and take affliction quietly. The Apoſtle ſpeaks near this language, and fully this truth (1 *Theſ.* 1. 3.) *I would that no man ſhould be moved for theſe afflictions; for you your ſelves know that we are appointed thereunto.* As if he had ſaid, I would have you ſtand as Poſts, notwithſtanding all theſe afflictions: Not that he would have them careleſs or ſecure, but couragious, and full of holy undauntedneſs: I would have no man flinch, or ſtir a foot, no more than a mark that is ſhot at; Why? *Knowing that we are appointed thereto*: As a mark is appointed to be ſhot at, and ſet up on purpoſe that the Arrow may be directed againſt it; ſo the Lord ſets up his Saints and Servants on purpoſe, that he may ſhoot the Arrows of affliction at them; therefore let us keep our ground, and not be moved. We honour God, yea, it is our honour alſo, when we are unmoveable in active obedience, as the Apoſtle exhorts (2 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Wherefore my Brethren, be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, alway abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as ye* *know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* But as it is our honour, and Gods honour too, when we are unmoveable in doing the will of God; ſo it is a greater honour both to him and us, when we are ſo in ſuffering his will, or in paſſive obedience; when we ſtand to it, and move no more in way of cowardiſe and impatience then a Poſt when it is ſhot at. This is the glory of a Chriſtian, and it is his duty; this is the glory of God, and it is his due; though it be put here as an aggravation of the greatneſs of *Jobs* affliction, that he was ſet as a ſtanding mark, yet it is a heightning of our praiſe contentedly to be ſo.

God will make wicked men his *ſtanding mark* to all eternity, againſt whom he will ſhoot the Arrows, the poyſoned Arrows of his indignation, which ſhall drink up their ſpirits, and yet their ſpirits ſhall not be conſumed. God makes his precious Servants and faithful people, his ſtanding mark for a time, they feel the Arrows of affliction, and are deeply wounded; as *Job* further proſecutes his ſad condition, continuing the Allegory in the next Verſe.

Verſ. 13. **His Archers compaſs me round about, he cleaveth my reins in ſunder, &c.**

God hath a Bow, he hath his Arrows, and his Archers, all ready at a call. The decree of God is his Quiver, his Arrows are his purpoſes, and the Inſtruments which execute them are his Archers; whether rational or irrational, whether men, or things, any thing which God uſeth to afflict man by, is his Archer: *His Archers have compaſſed me about:* The word is (*Rabbi*) *His Archers.* from *Rab, great*; ſo ſome read it, *His great Ones have compaſſed me about.* The word *Rab*, doth not only ſignifie greatneſs in bulk, or continued quantity, but in number, or diſcreet quantity. Hence *Archers* are called, *Rabbi, great ones*; not from their *magnitude*, but from their *multitude*, becauſe Archers go in company; two at the leaſt, and uſually many are a ſet; or they are called *many*, becauſe every one hath many Arrows. Men carry but one Sword, and one Spear, but they carry many Arrows, therefore the word ſignifies *many*. His *Archers*, or *many*, *compaſs me round about.* Hence note, in proſecution of the ſame point,

רביך *Magni ejus: ſed hic quadrare non poteſt. Licet enim* רבב *ſig. magnitudinē ſive in quantitate continua ſive in diſcreta, hic tāmen in diſcreta eſt accipienda, a multitudine enim ſagittarii dicuntur.* Rabin.

That, *God hath variety of means to afflict.*

He can make any creature his Archer; and he hath many Quivers full of Arrows. Old *Jacob* ſaid of *Joſeph* (*Gen.* 49. 23.) *The Archers ſhot ſore at him, and grieved him. Joſeph* was a mark of envy, becauſe God had put ſo many marks of honour upon him: His own Brethren were the Archers. *Job* had many Archers ſhooting at him: I can name you ſeven eminent Archers that ſhot at *Job*.

Firſt, Heaven was an Archer; the Heavens ſhot fire, which burnt up his flocks of ſheep.

Secondly, The Air was an Archer, that ſhot wind, and down fell the Houſe upon his Children.

Thirdly, The Chaldeans and Sabeans were Archers, and they ſhot ſpoyling and plundering; they took away all his Cattel, and ſlew his Servants with the edge of the Sword.

Fourthly, The Devil was an Archer, he ſhot diſeaſes, and wounded his body all over with ſores.

Fifthly, The earth was an Archer, and that ſhot Worms, he was cloathed with Worms, and clods of Earth.

Sixthly, His Wife was an Archer, or an Archereſs, ſhe ſhot terrible Arrows, evil and bitter words.

Seventhly, His Friends were Archers, they ſhot reproofs, and uncomfortable comforts; they pierced him with their ſalves, and the very means that they uſed to heal him, grieved him more.

All theſe ſhot at him; he muſt needs have many hurts, who was compaſſed about with ſo many Archers. *David* felt the anguiſh of theſe Arrows (*Pſal.* 38. 1.) *O Lord rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure: For thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore. David* was full of Arrows; what thoſe Arrows were, is not determined in the Text. One of the Ancients ſaith, They were the threatnings of God, with which his conſcience was wounded for ſin: as for his body and outward eſtate, they were in a whole skin. 'Tis true, judgments or wrath threatned, wound the ſpirit deeper then judgments or wrath executed wound the outward man; and as the whole word of God, ſo that part of it eſpecially which conſiſts of threatnings, is, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Heb.* 4. 12.) *Quick and powerful, and ſharper then any two-edged Sword, piercing, even to the dividing aſunder of the ſoul and ſpirit,* &c. Yet I rather conceive, that *Davids* Arrows were bodily troubles or diſeaſes already inflicted, the immediate cauſe of which was the anger of God, and the cauſe of which was his own ſin, both which are expreſſed at the third Verſe, *There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger, neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin:* When ſin ſtirs up the anger of God, the anger of God can quickly ſend his Arrows abroad; nor is there any thing in this World ſo near unto us, but he can make an Arrow, or an Archer of it; *His Archers compaſs me round.*

And ſee what kind of Archers his were, they were no bunglers, they were good *marks men*; like the left-handed *Benjamites* (*Judg.* 20. 16.) *They could ſhoot at a hairs breadth and not miſs.* For it follows:

He cleaveth my reins aſunder.] They are expert Archers who can cleave the reins: The reins are in the middle of the back. He that ſhoots at a Butt, and hits the middle of it, ſhoots exactly; the whole Butt is not the mark, but the White, which is ſet (according to a Geometrical proportion) in the middle of it. He that hits the mark, hits the middle of the Butt; but he that *cleaves the Pin*, (that's the Archers Dialect) which faſtens the mark to the Butt, *That's the Archer*, or *That's He* (as they alſo uſe to ſpeak at their ſport) he wins the prize: An Archer may hit the man, and not his reins; but to hit his reins, is skilful archery: *Jobs* Archers were thus cunning in their art, *They compaſs me about, and cleave my reins aſunder*: That's the firſt.

Further, We may underſtand it by a metaphor, and ſo two wayes.

Firſt, The reins being the ſeat of deſire, as Naturaliſts ſpeak; ſome interpret, *he cleaveth my reins aſunder*, thus, *He ſmites me in that which is to me moſt pleaſant and deſireable*: and then the ſeat of affection is put for the thing which we affect. This holds out a profitable truth.

Renes ſedes ſunt affectus & libidinis vehementiſſimi. Renū nomē in Hebræo à deſiderando dicitur.

כליותי *Vulnerare renes eſt teneriores affectus configere.*

God can wound us in that upon which we moſt entirely ſet our affections.

He knows how to cleave our very reins aſunder, and he often doth it; that which we inordinately love, is uſually the mark at which he aims his Arrow: The readieſt way to loſe any comfort, is to over-love it (I add that by way of caution, not of direction.) And indeed, though it be a great deal of ſmart to us, yet it may prove a great deal of eaſe to us, to be wounded in that which we overlove. God in much mercy to thoſe he loves, takes that from them which they love too much, that ſo they may love him the more, to whom all their love, and more if they had it, is but due: *He cleaves their reins, that their reins may cleave to him.*

Secondly, The reins in a metaphor, ſignifie that which is moſt ſecret and hidden (*Pſal.* 16. 7.) *My reins alſo inſtruct me in the night ſeaſon*; that is, my moſt inward thoughts inſtruct me, I have ſecret communion with my ſelf, and my heart reads me *a curtain Lecture every night. My reins inſtruct me in the night ſeaſon.* This metaphorical interpretation gives us this plain Note.

God pierceth into our moſt retired thoughts, and can puniſh our moſt ſecret ſins.

Thoſe ſins which lye as much out of ſight as the reins do, he ſeeth, and he ſeeth them as plainly as an Archer doth the white, or mark, which ſtands open to the eye; for all things are naked and manifeſt (anatomiz'd, or cut open to the reins of the back, ſo much the word bears, and ſo manifeſt are we) before his eyes with whom we have to do.

Take it literally, and then to *cleave the reins*, is an expreſſion of putting a man to the greateſt ſorrow or pain imaginable; if the back were chined (as we ſpeak) and cut quite down through the reins, this would be an exquiſite torment; the reins are a very tender part: A deep wound in ſome other parts of the body, is but a ſcratch, and ſuch wounding were a kind of embracing, in compariſon of that.

Secondly,

Plumbem reddere.

Secondly, To cleave the reins, is to weaken, becauſe the reins, or the loyns, are the ſtrength of a man, or of any creature; *Loe his ſtrength is in his loyns*, ſaith God of *Behemoth*, which is as ſome think the Elephant (*Job* 40. 16.) And *a man of no loyns is a man of no ſtrength*, in common language.

Mala immedicabilia indicat.

Thirdly, To cleave the reins, is to give a mortal wound. Chyrurgions and Phyſicians obſerve, That if the reins be ſtruck through, there is no help for it; cleaving the reins is much like piercing the heart; this is preſent death, and that leaves no hope of life, the wound of it is incurable.

There is a fourth interpretation, *He cleaveth my reins*, may note the torture of any acute Diſeaſe, eſpecially that of *the Stone in the Reins or Kidneys*; which is as it were the cutting of the back aſunder; poor Patients under it are often heard ſo complaining: Oh, 'tis like a ſharp Knife; the Stone is not only a grinding, but a cutting pain.

I ſhall onely lay in the conſideration of theſe four gloſſes from the literal ſenſe of the word, to a farther making out of the firſt general Obſervation, *That God often deals very ſeverely in outward, or preſent diſpenſations, with many of his deareſt Servants*: He doth that which they may call cleaving of the reins; and that, in the eaſieſt of the four ſenſes, is a very ſevere diſpenſation; much more (which we may ſuppoſe) when the pain of all four meets in one man, as doubtleſs they did in *Job*; *He cleaveth my reins aſunder*.

חמל *Pepercit, ignovit, propitius fuit. Nullam Domihi in me miſericordiam, ſed omnigenam ſævitiam experior.* Merc.

And doth not ſpare.] He that doth not ſpare, uſeth the utmoſt extremity, and ſhews no pity or indulgence: to ſpare, is both an act, and one of the kinds of mercy: Sparing is oppoſed to ſeverity, it is a doing leſs againſt another then we may, and that two wayes.

Firſt, When we do leſs then we can. We having power, though no right to do more then we do, no nor to do ſo much as we do: Thus a thief may be ſaid to ſpare a man, when he doth not take all from him, life and all.

Secondly, When we do leſs againſt another then we may, both according to the right of our cauſe, and the power in our hands: Thus a Magiſtrate ſpares a Thief, or a Creditor his Debtor; when the one exacts not the whole puniſhment, nor the other the whole Sum due. And in this ſenſe God ſpareth the Sons of men; he hath both power and right to puniſh ſinful man to the utmoſt, but he ſpares him: To hold the hand, though but a little, is ſparing mercy; but *Job* found not this mercy, *He doth not ſpare*; as if he had ſaid, *The Lord layes on, layes on, and doth not forbear*.

Hence obſerve; *There is mercy in ſparing*.

There is a five-fold mercy of God.

Firſt, *Rewarding mercy*, towards thoſe who have done well.

Secondly, *Pardoning mercy*, which is exerciſed towards thoſe who have done ill, or towards paſt ſin.

Thirdly, *Preventing mercy*, when he keeps us from evil, whether it be the evil of ſin, or of puniſhment.

Fourthly, *Delivering mercy*, when though he let us fall into the evil of ſin or puniſhment, yet he is pleaſed to help us up, and take us out again.

Fifthly, There is *Sparing mercy*; if, while we are in affliction, God deals gently with us, this is ſparing mercy: As God was not pleaſed to prevent *Jobs* ſorrows, nor to deliver him from them, ſo he did not ſpare him in them; his hand continued heavy upon him, he had no eaſe.

There is a four-fold degree of this ſparing mercy of God.

Firſt, Not to puniſh at all: thus God ſometimes ſpares his own people, *as a Father ſpares his Son that ſerveth him* (*Mal.* 3. 17.) Though they fail, yet he paſſeth it by, and doth not reckon with them for it. The Lord repreſented himſelf to *Amos*, forming Graſs-hoppers, which either in kind, or in a figure (ſhadowing the *Aſſyrians*) threatned to devour the land; this Viſion put the Prophet upon that earneſt prayer, *O Lord God, forgive, by whom ſhall Jacob ariſe, for he is ſmall? The Lord repented for this, it ſhall not be, ſaith the Lord* (*Amos* 7. 1, 2, 3.) Here was ſparing mercy, and this is repeated a ſecond time (*Verſ.* 6.) yet in the third Viſion of a *Plumb-line* (by which God was noted, taking exact notice of all the unevenneſs and crookedneſs of that people in that Viſion, I ſay) as the Prophet ſuſpended Prayer, ſo the Lord being reſolved no longer to ſuſpend their puniſhment, ſaith, *I will not paſs by them again any more*: that is, I will ſpare them no more, which is again repeated (*Chap.* 8. 2.) where by a Basket of Summer fruit the Lord ſhewed their ripeneſs in ſin, and his readineſs to puniſh, and not to ſpare.

Secondly, It is ſparing mercy, when puniſhment is deferred, or adjourned to a farther day; thus the Lord ſpared the old World, a hundred and twenty years, *My ſpirit ſhall not alway ſtrive*: It did a long time, he ſpared them many years to draw them to repentance, and to leave them inexcuſable, becauſe they repented not.

Thirdly, It is ſparing mercy, when judgment is moderated: When, though God puniſh, yet he doth not puniſh to the full; when, though the cloud break, yet he lets but a few drops fall on us, and doth not pour out ſhowers, or make an inundation to overwhelm us; when, though he ſtrike, yet he gives but few ſtrokes; yea, if he abate but one ſtroke, it is ſparing mercy. The Jews (2 *Cor.* 11. 24.) gave *Paul*, *forty ſtripes, ſave one*; and in this they would be thought to be merciful, becauſe they might have given him forty by the Law, (*Deut.* 25. 3.) therefore to abate one, was ſparing mercy. As to puniſh beyond the Law, though it be but a little beyond, is cruelty; ſo to puniſh leſs, though it be but a little leſs, is mercy: And this is brought in as an argument of great mercy (*Pſal.* 78. 38.) *But he being full of compaſſion, forgave their iniquity, and deſtroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath*: They felt his wrath, but God did not ſtir up all his wrath; they were ſmitten, but not deſtroyed, Juſtice did not make an utter end of them, there was mercy in that. The like read (*Jer.* 30. 11. *Jer.* 46. 28.) *I will not let thee go altogether unpuniſhed* (yet I will ſpare thee, though I puniſh thee) *I will correct thee in meaſure, I will not make a full end of thee.* But are not all the corrections of God, yea, and his judgments too, done in meaſure? All the judgments of God are done in meaſure, as meaſure notes a rule of equity, but not as meaſure notes a rule of equality. Again, to do a thing by meaſure, doth not alwayes note the rule by which it is done, but the degree in which it is done. And ſo to do a thing in meaſure, is to do it moderately; as when it is ſaid, (*John* 3. 24.) That *God gives not the ſpirit by meaſure to Chriſt*: the meaning is onely this, he gives him the ſpirit abundantly, infinitely, without ſtint or limit: So when it is ſaid, that he corrects man in meaſure, the meaning is onely this, that he corrects him moderately, mercifully, with many ſtints and limits. *It is of the Lords mercy*, (ſaith *Jeremy*, *Lam.* 3. 22.) What? That we are delivered? That we are crowned with comforts? Theſe are of the Lords mercy indeed: but he ſpeaks not of theſe, the mercy he ſpeaks of is, *That we are not utterly conſumed.* What kind of mercy is this? Sparing mercy. Suppoſe God take away many Children, yet if he leave but one, here is ſparing mercy to the Parents: Suppoſe he take many hundreds and thouſands of a mans eſtate, yet if he leave him a little to buy Bread, and to ſtand between him and Beggary, this is ſparing mercy: Suppoſe we are much conſumed, yet if we are not utterly conſumed, this is alſo ſparing mercy. In the Prophecy of *Daniel*, we read of a goodly tree, *And behold a watcher, and an holy one came down from Heaven, and cryed aloud, Hew down the Tree, and cut off his branches, ſhake off his leaves, and ſcatter his fruit*, &c. *Nevertheleſs, leave the ſtump of his root in the earth*, &c. Though it was judgment to ſhake off the leaves and fruit, to hew down the boughs and ſtock, yet it was ſparing mercy to leave the root, that gave hopes it might grow again, and not to be utterly conſumed; 'tis ſparing mercy when any thing is reſerved: But God did not ſpare *Job*, he took all; he did not leave him (as we ſay) *A ſhirt to his back*, nor a ſound patch in his ſkin: Satans power had no limit put to it, but as to life onely (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Behold, he is in thine hand, but* (or onely) *ſave his life*: There was indeed ſomewhat of ſparing mercy in that, and that was more than Satan would have ſpared, yet it was but ſo much, as without which he could not have groaned out this complaint, as to the loſs of all other comforts, *He doth not ſpare*.

Fourthly, There is a ſparing mercy of God in the very act of afflicting, when he ſhews that he is unwilling to afflict, or diſcovers tenderneſs to them that are afflicted (*Lam.* 3.12.) *He doth not willingly afflict, nor grieve the children of men.* As there are many who will ſerve God in an outward form of worſhip, whom yet they neither ſerve nor worſhip with their will: So God will afflict ſome, whom he doth not afflict with his will; he doth not give out his ſpirit, or take delight in ſmiting, while he ſmites them. Thus the Lord expreſſed himſelf towards his ancient people the Jewes; he threatens Iſrael, *That the Aſſyrian ſhall be his King*; that is, the Aſſyrian ſhall carry them Captives to *Babylon* and exerciſe a tyrannical power over them (*Hoſ.* 11. 5.) *Yea, the Sword ſhall abide on his Cities, and ſhall conſume his branches* (*Verſ.* 6.) Now though God were reſolved to do this, and did alſo bring it to paſs; yet he ſaith (*Ver.* 8.) *How ſhall I give thee up Ephraim? How ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael?* (*ſc.* into the Enemies hand) *How ſhall I make thee as Admah? How ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together: I will not execute the fierceneſs of mine anger, I will not return to deſtroy Ephraim:* that is, I will not deſtroy him wholly, by redoubling evil upon him: I will deſtroy once, but I will not return to deſtroy, a remnant ſhall be ſaved. The Lord gave up *Ephraim*, but he did not make *Ephraim* as *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, he did not utterly ruine him; and what he did againſt *Ephraim*, he did it with a ſecret conteſt in his own ſpirit, *How ſhall I do this?* I do it not with my heart, and whole mind; my heart is turned within me, while my hand is turned againſt thee; it grieveth me while thou art grieved; while I kindle this fire of affliction in thy borders, the fire of compaſſion kindles in my own bowels; *My repentings are kindled together*, while I puniſh thee for thine impenitency, and my heart is turned within me, while I muſt correct thee, *for refuſing to return* (*Verſ.* 5.)

Quam vellē neſcire literas!

Nero being deſired to ſign a Writ for the execution of an Offender, was ſo pittiful at his firſt entrance upon the Empire (though he proved a Monſter for cruelty after) that he could hardly be perſwaded or wrought to ſubſcribe it, and when he did it, in doing it he ſaid, *How glad ſhould I be if I could not write my name*; which wiſh occaſioned *Seneca* his Tutour, to write a Book of *Clemencie*, in which he extols *Nero*, as the pattern and mirrour of clemencie. When either God or man do acts of ſevereſt Juſtice, with meltings of ſpirit, and tenderneſs of affection towards thoſe who fall under their hand, thoſe acts of Juſtice have a great temperament of ſparing mercy in them.

For as it is in ſinning, when a Believer falls into a great ſin, yet becauſe his heart cannot go fully with it, he cannot delight or take pleaſure in it, therefore his may be called *Sparing ſinfulneſs*: whereas a carnal heart committing only a little ſin, for the matter, yet, becauſe he delighteth in it, and is pleaſed with ſin, he doth not ſpare to ſin. Now (I ſay) as it is in ſinning, ſo in puniſhing; he doth not ſpare to puniſh, who doth it with his whole heart, and takes delight in it, though the actual puniſhment be but little, whereas he whoſe heart retreats while his hand is ſtretched out in greater puniſhments, may be ſaid to ſpare in puniſhing.

Hence, to ſhew that God exacted the utmoſt of his Juſtice upon his Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when he ſtood in our place; the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *He ſpared not his Son.* How did he not ſpare him? He did not ſpare him any of theſe four wayes. He did not ſpare him, ſo, as not to puniſh him at all; for the Cup could not paſs from him. He did not ſpare him by deferring the time, but when the hour was come that he muſt ſuffer, he ſuffered in that moment. Nor did he ſpare him in the degree, he ſuffered to the utmoſt for our ſins, God did not abate one drop out of his Cup, not one dram of the weight of his ſorrows: Yea fourthly, God did not ſpare him, in regard of the affection with which he puniſhed him: The Lord may be ſaid *willingly to afflict him for the ſins of the Children of men, though he doth not willingly afflict the Children of men*; *He was pleaſed to bruiſe him* (*Iſa.* 53.) and that ſignifies not only (*Voluntatem Dei*) that it was the purpoſe and reſolution of God, that his Son ſhould be bruiſed for our ſins; but it ſignifies alſo (*Voluptatem Dei*) the delight and contentment that the Lord had in bruiſing his Son. He did not ſpare, but gave him up with his heart, to thoſe puniſhments which were due to ſinners. God ſhewed no more relenting towards his Son, when he ſtood ſuffering in the place of ſinners, then he doth to thoſe ſinners who ſtand in their own place to ſuffer without his Son: Yea, God the Father did not only not relent, or ſhew any yerning of bowels towards his Son in that ſuffering condition, but (as to ſenſe and preſent apprehenſion) he hardned his heart towards him, which cauſed that grievous out-cry of Chriſt upon the Croſs, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

Not that God did really withdraw his love in the leaſt, from his Son, but he did infinitely delight to ſee his Juſtice ſatisfied; and his Son as a Conquerour, bearing up under the weight of it. Thus the Lord took pleaſure in afflicting his Son, or (as *Job* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 9.) *He laughed at the tryal of that innocent and Holy one:* And indeed, without this, the work of our redemption had not been accompliſhed by a full ſatisfaction to divine Juſtice; for it would have had ſomewhat of mercy in it towards the Redeemer, as well as it is all mercy towards the redeemed: But as it is all of mercy to us, ſo it was to be nothing at all of mercy to Jeſus Chriſt, that ſinners are redeemed: he was to have no more of his Father then he paid for, and his Father did not ſpare him, but made him pay the utmoſt Farthing, that upon the caſting up of the account between himſelf and ſinful man appeared a due debt unto his Juſtice. *Job* complains, that he was not ſpared, yet the truth is, that every man, how much ſoever he ſuffers on this ſide Hell, hath ſomewhat of ſparing mercy in his ſufferings.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as *Job* being about to ſhew the extremity of his affliction, tells us, *That God did not ſpare*,

Obſerve, *Sparing mercy is the loweſt degree of mercy: If God deny ſparing mercy, he denies all mercy.*

It is argument enough that God ſhewed Chriſt no mercy, when the Apoſtle ſaith, *He did not ſpare him.* That we ſinners might have all mercy, he that ſaved us from our ſins had none. The Angels who ſinned found no mercy, no ſacrifice was provided for them, *God caſt them down to Hell, and delivered them into chains of darkneſs, to be reſerved unto judgement:* All which puniſhments are affirmed by the Apoſtle *Peter*, as the reſult of this Negative, *God ſpared not the Angels* (2 *Pet.* 2.4.) The ſame Apoſtle tells us alſo in the next Verſe, that, *God ſpared not the old World, but ſaved Noah, the eighth perſon, a Preacher of righteouſneſs, bringing in the Flood upon the world of the ungodly.* Neither the Angels who apoſtatiz'd from God, nor the old ungodly World had any ſhare in ſparing mercy. *Job* looked upon himſelf (in reference to preſent peace) as one in their caſe, *He doth not ſpare*, which appears further in the next clauſe.

He poureth out my Gall upon the ground.

מררה
Fel ab amaritudine.
Viſcera.
Vulg.

The Original word which we render *Gall*, ſignifies properly, *bitterneſs*, becauſe the Gall is ſo. *Peter* ſpeaking to *Simon Magus* (*Act.* 8.23.) puts theſe two together, *I perceive that thou art in the Gall of bitterneſs:* He that continues in ſin, lives in the Gall of ſpiritual bitterneſs; and he whoſe Gall is poured out, is in, or ready to go into the gall of corporal death. For as *cleaving of the reins*, implyed the receiving of a deadly wound; ſo pouring out the Gall upon the ground, is a proverbial, ſpeaking preſent death. When the gall is out, the bowels are out; the gall is affixed to the Liver: So that, it is as much as to ſay, He kills me dead, or I am now upon the borders of death it ſelf: When the gall is indeed powred out, we cannot live; and he who is afflicted to ſuch a height, that he cryes, my gall is poured out, may well be numbred among the dead. The reaſon or original of this ſpeech was this (as I conceive) becauſe when a wild Beaſt, or any other (which are fit for mans eating) are taken and ſlain, it is uſual when the bowels are pulled out, to cut off, and throw away, or pour out the Gall upon the ground, leſt the overflowing of it ſhould diſreliſh the neighbouring parts: So that *Job* in this doth only proſecute the former theam of his grievous ſufferings, or that he was (as *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf (2 *Cor*.1.18.) preſſed out of meaſure, above ſtrength, inſomuch that he deſpaired even of life; which he gives us yet more fully in the next Verſe.

Verſ. 14. He breaketh me with breach upon breach, and runneth on me like a Giant.

Job varies into all manner of inventions and alluſions, to ſet forth both the conſtancy and extremity of his afflictions. As before he compared himſelf to *a mark*, againſt which Arrows are ſhot; ſo now to a *Stone-wall*, or fortified Tower, againſt which, battering Rams of old, and Cannons in latter ages, are uſually planted to make a breach, that the Souldiery may come up to the aſſault.

פרץ *Vi diſrupit, erupit. Poeticè variat orationis modos lugubres.*

He breaketh me with breach upon breach.

Some men are like fortified Cities, which cannot be eaſily entred; yet when the Lord of Hoſts draws up his Armies and beſiegeth them, he hath Artillery and Ammunition enough to thunder down their higheſt Towers, and to make breach upon breach in their thickeſt walls. Satan complains (*Chap.* 1.) *Thou haſt made a hedge about him*: *Job's* hedge was the protection of God; that hedge was ſo ſtrong that Satan could not pull up a ſtake of it, nor make a gap in it, till God gave him leave. But though *Job* (as this ſimilitude implyes) were like a wall or fortified tower, yet God had made breaches in him: God can ſoon break our eſtates, our ſtrength, our health, our comforts, our peace, our all. And when *Job* ſaith, he breaks me *with breach upon breach*; he means a multitude of breaches made together, or continual breaches, made one after another: *Jeremy* laments (*Chap*.4.16.) *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart makes a noiſe in me*: Why doth he thus double upon theſe words, *My bowels, my bowels, my heart, my heart?* The twentieth Verſe gives us an account of that, *Deſtruction upon deſtruction is cryed, for the whole Land is ſpoiled*: Deſtruction upon deſtruction is total deſtruction. Thus *Sampſon* repeats his Victory over the Philiſtines (*Judg*.15.16.) *With the Jaw-bone of an Aſs heaps upon heaps*; or (as the letter of the Hebrew) *an heap to heaps*; that is, I have made a great ſlaughter; or as himſelf explaines it in the cloſe of the Verſe, *I have ſlain a thouſand men*. We have the Prophet *Ezekiels* threat in the ſame language (*Chap*.7.26.) *Miſchief ſhall come upon miſchief, and rumour ſhall be upon rumour*: When the Prophet *Iſaiah* would convince the Jews of their unteachableneſs, that whereas (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb*.5.12.) *They ought to be teachers*; yet they had need to be taught the firſt principles of the Oracles of God, like little Children, who muſt have the ſame precepts and lines often and often inculcated upon them, he gives it us in the form of this Text (*Iſa*.28.10.) *For precept muſt be upon precept, line upon line*; that is, they muſt be continually followed with precepts, they muſt have many, and yet they ſcarce learn one; or (as others expound that place) the Prophet deſcribes the ſcornfulneſs of that people who jeered the Meſſengers of God for their frequency in Preaching, with a riming ſcoff, *Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, and there a little*; which ſingle tearms the Prophets had often uſed in their Sermons. Now which way ſoever we take the proper ſenſe of that place, yet the common ſenſe of the words reaches this in in *Job*: for *precept upon precept*, ſpeaks there a multitude of precepts, even as here, breach upon breach ſpeaks a multitude of breaches, or breaches all over. And the Apoſtle *Paul* expreſſeth himſelf in this ſtrain, while he gives the reaſon of the recovery of *Epaphroditus* from a dangerous ſickneſs (*Phil*.2.27.) *He was ſick* (ſaith *Paul*) *nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him; and not only on him, but on me alſo, leaſt I ſhould have ſorrow upon ſorrow*; that is, many ſorrows heaped up together. So then, when *Job* complains of his breaking with breach upon breach; the plain meaning is, that he had many, very many breaches: His very wounds were wounded, there was nothing in him, or about him to be ſmitten, but what had been ſmitten already. As if he had ſaid, I am ſo full of breaches and afflictions, that there is no whole ſpace or room left for a new breach, for another affliction: As he that lies upon the ground can fall no lower, ſo he that is all broken cannot be broken any more.

Vulnera ipſa vulnerat. Nō habet in nobis jā nova plaga locū.

Job had breach upon breach in his eſtate, his Cattle, and goods were taken away: *Job* had breach upon breach in his Family, moſt of his Servants, and all his Children were deſtroyed: *Job* had breach upon breach in his body, that was ſick and ſoar: *Job* had breach upon breach in his credit, he was called Hypocrite again and again: *Job* had breach upon breach in his ſoul, that was filled with fear and terrour from the Lord.

Hence Note, *The beſt Saints on earth are ſubject, not only to great, but various troubles, to breach upon breach.*

God is pleaſed to ſmite them ſundry times, and he ſmites them ſundry wayes: 'Tis no argument that a man ſhall be no more afflicted, becauſe he is afflicted, or that God will not ſmite again, becauſe he hath ſmitten already. God doth not ſtay his hand by looking upon the number, but upon the effect and fruit of our afflictions: Every Child of his, whom he corrects, muſt look for more corrections, till repentance hath had its perfect work; and every Champion of his whom he tryes, muſt look for more tryals, till faith and patience have had their perfect work. God would not give his Children ſo much as one blow, or one breach, not ſo much as a little finger of theirs ſhould ake, were it not for one of theſe ends; and until theſe ends be attained, they ſhall have many blowes and breaches, even till the whole head be ſick, and the whole heart faint, till from the ſole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no ſoundneſs in them, but wounds and bruiſes and putrifying ſoars. As the Vine-dreſſer cuts, and cuts, prunes, and prunes the Vine, this day and the next day, becauſe once cutting or pruning will not ſerve to make it fruitful: So the Lord prunes, and cuts, and pares, and breaks, and breaks, not to deſtroy his people, but to make them (as pleaſant Vines) bring forth abundantly, either the fruits of godly ſorrow for their ſins committed againſt him, or the proofs and experiments of the graces which they have received from him. This latter was *Job's* caſe, and the chief cauſe why he was *broken with breach upon breach*. And no ſooner had the Lord by his roaring Cannon, made breaches in him, fair, and aſſaultable, but he preſently takes his advantage, as *Job* ſhewes elegantly (purſuing the Allegory) in the laſt clauſe,

Ut in vineis labor labori, cura curæ, ſemper additur, &c. Sanct.

He runs upon me as a Giant.

When a breach is made in the wall, the beſiegers run up to aſſault and ſtorm the place. *Job* keeps to the Souldiers language, the Lord hath made breach upon breach, and and now *He runs upon me as a Giant*. There are three things in this expreſſion.

כגבור *Sicut fortis potens idem valet Gigas & ἰσχυρός.*

Firſt, The ſpeed which God made to aſſault him, *He runs*.

Secondly, The ſtrength that God puts forth in aſſaulting him, he runs, not as a Child, not as a weak man, no nor as the ordinary ſort of ſtrong men; but *as a Giant*, or mighty man, who exceeds other men, as *Goliah* did *David*, both in ſtrength and ſtature.

Thirdly, Running as a Giant, notes courage as well as ſtrength. A Giant runs fiercely and fearleſly.

David compares the Sun at his riſing, to a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and *to a Giant, or ſtrong man* (it is the word of this Text) *who rejoyceth to run a race* (*Pſal.* 19.5.) Giants are ſwift, and Giants are ſtrong. Some men are ſtrong but not ſwift of foot, but no man can be ſwift of foot unleſs he be competently ſtrong: Giants are both in exceſs: And therefore *Job* puts both together, *He runs upon me as a Giant*. And yet (I conceive) this running doth rather imply the fierceneſs of the Giant, then his ſwiftneſs. Giants are dreadful and terrible to behold; they are called *Nephilim* in the Hebrew, of diverſe Texts, which coming from the root, *Naphal, to fall*, ſignifies *fallers*, and that in a twofold ſenſe.

Quando aliquis dicitur aut currere, aut aliquid agere, ſicut Gigas, *nihil aliud denotat, quam magno animo & ſtrenuè rem aliquam aggredi.* Bold.

Firſt, Becauſe they Apoſtatiz'd or fell from God, his truth and worſhip, which *Moſes* ſeems to intimate while he deſcribes the firſt great perſonal defection of the World (*Gen.* 6.4.) *There were Giants in the earth in thoſe dayes*: theſe he oppoſeth to the *Sons of God*, in the ſame Verſe, who had alſo greatly corrupted themſelves, ſo that (*Verſ.* 5.) *God ſaw the wickedneſs of man was great upon the earth*: For the *Sons of God*, they who owned a profeſſion of Religion (being the Poſterity of *Seth*, they) mingled themſelves with the wicked of the World. As for the Giants, they diſowned God, and were totally departed, or fallen from his obedience, and were therefore as ſome apprehend, called *Nephilim*, or *Fallers*.

Secondly, They were ſo called, becauſe either through the vaſtneſs of their ſtrength and ſtature, or through the fierceneſs of their mindes and ſpirits, they were men of violence, great oppreſſours, cauſing others to fall before them: In ſo much that the very name of a Giant was dreadful. And when thoſe unbelieving Searchers of *Canaan* brought up an evil report of that Land, the worſt which they could ſay of it to the diſcouragement of their Brethren, was this (*Numb.* 13. 33.) *And there we ſaw the Giants, the Sons of Anak, which came of the Giants: and we were in our own ſight as Graſs-hoppers, and ſo we were in theirs.* Men of ſtrength and courage were as much afraid at this ſtory of Giants, as Children are of Bugbears and Fairies.

So then, when *Job* ſaid, That God did run upon him as a Giant, his intent was only to ſhew, with how much terrour God was pleaſed to cloath himſelf, and how much ſtrength he put forth, while he thus contended with him. The truth is, God needs not lay out his ſtrength to afflict man, he can cruſh the ſtrongeſt of men as a moth, with the touch of his finger. The weakneſs of God is ſtronger then man; yet God in afflicting his people, will ſometimes perſonate a mighty man, exerciſing his power to the utmoſt, and arming himſelf from head to foot, while he combates with an enemy: which ſtill confirms the general Obſervation, *That God doth not only afflict ſuch as he loves, but he afflicts them ſorely. Doth he not ſo, when he ſhakes them in pieces? Doth he not ſo, when he ſets them as his mark? When a multitude of skilful Archers compaſs them about; when he cleaves their reins aſunder; when he pours out their Gall upon the ground? Doth he not ſo, when he ſets Engines of battery to make breach upon breach, and then runs up as a Giant to the aſſault?* Thus God hath dealt with many precious ſouls, and thus he dealt (beyond his dealings with many) with his precious Servant *Job*.

And as no man, either in his eſtate or health, either in his credit or comforts, is *ſo ſtrong a wall*, but God by his *Artillery* can quickly make a breach upon him; ſo who is able to ſtand in the breach, or make it good, when God comes up to the aſſault? *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong in the dayes that I ſhall deal with thee?* ſaith the Lord (*Ezek.* 22. 14.) When the *Lord as a Giant* runs upon man, the *ſtrongeſt Giant* among the ſons of men, is but as a *Pigmie*, yea but as a *Piſmire*, he is but as the *Chaff* before the wind, or as the *potters Veſſel* before the Iron-Rod. But though *fleſh and blood* cannot ſtand in the breach when God aſſaults; yet *Faith and patience* can. *Moſes by Faith ſtood in the breach, and turned away the wrath of God, when he came to deſtroy Iſrael* (*Pſal.* 106. 23.) *Job* by patience ſtood in the breaches which God made upon him, when he ſeemed utterly to deſtroy him.

For what did *Job* to God, when God did all this to him? Did he oppoſe? Did he ſtrive with his Maker? The two next Verſes ſhew, that prayers and tears were all the Weapons he uſed in this holy War with God.

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

I have ſowed ſack-cloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the duſt.

My face is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the ſhadow of death.

Not for any injuſtice in my hands: alſo my prayer is pure.

THE former words ſhewed in what manner *Job* was afflicted; and becauſe the manner of his afflictions did almoſt exceed words, therefore he ſtrained himſelf to the higheſt pitch of holy rhetorick, to make his unkind Friends ſenſible of it. And as there he told us what God had done to him, ſo here he tells what he did, or how he behaved himſelf under the hand of God; he tells us how he took thoſe tearings, and thoſe wounds; how he received thoſe ſhowrs of Arrows from the Almighties Bow. *Eliphaz* taxed *Job* in the fifteenth Chapter, with height and haughtineſs of ſpirit in his low eſtate (*Verſ.* 12, 13.) *Why doth thine heart carry thee away? And what doth thine eyes wink at, that thou turneſt thy ſpirit againſt God, and letteſt ſuch words go out of thy mouth?* And (*Verſ.* 25.) he more then intimates that *Job ſtretched out his hand againſt God, and ſtrengthened himſelf againſt the Almighty.* In both paſſages he is ſeverely charged, not only with impatience under the hand of God (which is bad enough) but with oppoſition againſt the hand of God, which is far worſe.

Job refutes theſe unfriendly cenſures, and profeſſeth another kind both of ſpirit and practice in this Text. As if he had ſaid, *I am not ſo mad as thou takeſt me to be, to run upon God, or to ſtretch out my hand againſt him while he ſmiteth me; I have learned better, then to ſhoot the arrows of blaſphemy againſt God, whilſt he ſhoots the arrows of calamity againſt me; and if you deſire to know what I have been doing, ſeeing I deny that I have been doing what you ſuggeſt; This is the account which I give of my ſelf, and of my behaviour.*

Verſ. 15. **I have ſowed ſack-cloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the duſt.**

That is, I have humbly ſubmitted my ſelf to receive, and entertain thoſe saddeſt diſpenſations.

> Hence Obſerve, *That the ſureſt way to confute the cenſures, and wipe off the aſperſions which are caſt upon us, is to ſhew our ſelves doing contrary to what others are ſpeaking of us.*

A practical anſwer is the ſtrongeſt anſwer; we may ſpeak more for our ſelves by our hands, then we can do by our tongues in many caſes. The Papiſts mouths are ſtopt (who call us *Solifidians*) when they ſee Proteſtants forward in, and zealous for good works: He that is accuſed of uncharitableneſs, may beſt free himſelf from that charge, by giving freely to the poor; and he that is accuſed of injuſtice, may ſooneſt do himſelf right, by ſhewing that he hath done right to every man. Bare denials that we have done evil, are nothing; but when our doing of good appears, who can deny it? The old Philoſopher anſwered him that denied *motion*, by riſing up and walking, not by arguing: *Job* anſwered *Eliphaz*, who affirmed that he turned his ſpirit, and ſtretched out his hand againſt God, by falling down and ſubmitting to it. *I have ſowed ſack-cloth upon my skin, &c.*

And this *Job* offers, as to remove, and take away that objection of miſ-behaviour towards God; ſo to move his Friends to better behaviour, even to compaſſion and pity towards him. He was in a ſorrowful caſe, and he had acted the part of a ſorrowful man; God had laid him low, and he laid himſelf low; this might have taught them moderation; why ſhould they ſpeak ſo harſhly againſt him, who had dealt but courſely with himſelf? *Sowing ſack-cloth upon his skin*; and ſeeing he abaſed himſelf, even *to the defiling of his horn in the duſt*, why ſhould they abaſe him too? It ſtirs up pity towards a profeſſed adverſary to ſee him in miſery, eſpecially, when he ſubmits unto it, and ſuffers with patience: Much more ſhould the miſery of a profeſſed Friend, he alſo quietly ſubmitting to it, ſtir up the bowels of pity. So then, the ſcope of this report which *Job* makes of himſelf, was not only to anſwer what *Eliphaz* had charged him with, but alſo that he might obtain from his Friends, a milder anſwer.

Hoc affert ut ad miſerecordiã ſocios moveat, pœnitentiã, ſc. ſuã & humilitatẽ, quod ſeſe in his afflictionibus nõ extulerit. Merc.

I have ſowed ſack-cloth upon my skin.] The word which we render *Sack-cloth*, is of the ſame ſound in the Hebrew, and almoſt in all other languages; which is obſerved as an argument of its antiquity, and that it is the mother of all languages. But how did *Job* ſow ſack-cloth upon his Skin? This is a hard piece of Sempſtery.

שק *Saccus, vox quæ hic habetur* Sak *habet eundẽ ſonũ in omni fere lingua, quod unum arguit linguã Hebræã omnium eſſe matrem.*

The Roman Hiſtorian reports of *cruel Nero*, that when he fled out of the City (fearing the ſentence of the diſpleaſed Senate which quickly purſued him) and had got into a grove or thicket like a wild Beaſt, he commanded thoſe about him to make a trench in the earth, fitted to the dimenſions of his body, which he ordered them to line with ſuch pieces of Marble, as were to be had upon the place; thus as it were, preparing his own Tomb, he wept and often cryed out, *See what a workman is here now ready to periſh.* What that wretch ſaid of himſelf, I may ſay of this holy man in the Text, whom I find thus buſied at his Needle, as if he were preparing his own grave-clothes, or winding ſheet, *What a workman have we here ready to periſh? Job* looked upon himſelf as a dying man, and behold he is *ſowing ſack-cloth upon his skin.* When men of worth die, they are wrapt in fine linnen; ſo *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* wrapt the body of *Jeſus* (*Mar.* 15. 46.) And

Qualis artifex pereo.

And a living man full of ſores needs the fineſt and ſofteſt linnen to wrap him in: Sack-cloth is a courſe ſtubborn cloth, grievous to a ſound body, painful to thoſe who have never a breach upon their fleſh; but for a man (as *Job* deſcribes himſelf) full of breaches, having breach upon breach; his body being broken all over, as if it were but one continued breach, to lap up ſuch a one in ſack-cloth, is an extream addition to his pains and ſorrows. How is it then, that *Job* was thus ſevere to his own ſores? To clear this, *Sack-cloath* may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Properly. Secondly, Improperly.

Properly, ſo, ſack cloth is that hairy, rough Garment which was very uſual among mourners, whether in times of ſorrow for ſin or judgement. *Sack-cloth was the Livery of both theſe ſorrows.* The King of *Iſrael* was a cloſe-mourner in ſack cloth (2 *King.* 6. 30.) *The King rent his clothes as he paſſed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold he had ſack-cloth within upon his fleſh.* There being a terrible Famine in *Samaria*, that King wore Sack-cloth as an emblem of his ſorrow, yet he wore it ſomewhat concealedly; it was *within upon his fleſh.* And ſo (2 *Kings* 20.31.) when the Servants of *Benhadad* came to *Achab*, they put Sack-cloth upon them. And (2 *Kin.*21.27.) *Achab* himſelf when he heard that ſore judgement denounced againſt him, *humbled himſelf, and put on Sack-cloth, and went ſoftly.* In a time of common calamity, the Prophet tells us, *Every head ſhall be bald, and every beard clipt: upon all the hands ſhall be cuttings, and upon the loyns Sack-cloth* (*Jer.*48. 37.) And that it was the uſual wear in time of repentance, is taught us in the Propheſie of *Jonah* (*C.*3.8.) Where Proclamation was made, by the King of *Niniveh*, That all ſhould faſt and put on Sack cloth. Chriſt himſelf deſcribing what *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* would have done if the Goſpel had been Preached, or the mighty works done in them which were done in *Bethſaida* and *Corazin*, ſaith, *They would have repented long ago in ſack-cloth and aſhes:* that is, they would have put on ſack cloth, and ſate in aſhes, in token of deepeſt humiliation for ſin. Thus ſack-cloth properly taken was often uſed in times of great affliction, whether perſonal, or publick; as alſo in times of deepeſt and moſt profeſſed repentance.

Secondly, We may take Sack-cloth improperly, and ſo two wayes.

Firſt, As to *Job's* then preſent condition, he was full of ſores, and thoſe ſores were to him as a courſe covering of ſack-cloth; for he was ſore all over: In ſome extraordinary diſeaſes, a ſcab puts forth all over the body, like the bark of a tree. *Job's* ſcabs and ſores were like the bark of a tree, or a garment of ſack-cloth; he ſpeaks near this language (*Chap.* 30.18.) *By the great force of my diſeaſe is my Garment changed:* As if he had ſaid, I have another kind of Garment then I was wont to wear; I was wont to wear the beſt, and the coſtlieſt Garments; but now, *By the force of my diſeaſe is my Garment changed, it bindeth me about as the colour of my coat,* that is, My ſores bind me about as the colour of my Coat. Thus the Greek Expoſitors render this Text, affirming, that his Skin was diſcoloured and black, and began to look like ſack-cloth, through the heat and diſtemper of his inward parts: As health and ſoundneſs of conſtitution put out a freſh and lively tincture, ſo ſickneſs and diſeaſes deface and darken the beauty of the body.

גלד. *Cutis vox Arabica nõ alibi in Scriptura reperitur.* Et Gelad *propriè ſignificare cutim & cruſtã quæ plagæ ſiccæ ſuperinducitur* Rab.Levi. *Nigrorē nacta eſt cutis mea propter cruciatum, acerbitatem quaſi ſaccus quidam ex vellis contextis effectus.* Sanct.

Secondly, Take it again improperly, as to *Job's* then preſent action; and then, *I ſowed ſack-cloth upon my skin*, is, as if he had ſpoken plainly, I have greatly abaſed, or humbled my ſelf, I have been as one who putteth on ſack-cloth. Such was his poſture (*Chap.*2.8.) *He took a pot-ſheard, and ſcraped his ſores, and ſate down among the aſhes.* As he who wore ſack-cloth did humble himſelf greatly, or at leaſt would be accounted to have done ſo; ſo he that is really humbled, and that greatly, may be ſaid to have put on ſack cloth. The ſign is often put for the thing ſignified, in reference both to joy and ſorrow. White garments and unctions were ſigns of joy; and therefore when *Solomon* exhorts to joyfulneſs, he ſaith, *Let thy garments be alwayes white, and let thine head lack no oyntment* (*Eccleſ.*9.8.) which we may expound either by that which goes before, *Eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry heart* (*Verſ.*7.) or by that which follows (*Verſ.*9.) *Live joyfully with the wife of thy youth:* As to bid a man put on white garments, is to bid him rejoyce, ſo to bid a man put on blacks, or ſack-cloth, is to bid him mourn; and he who ſaith as *Job* here, that he hath done it, ſaith, That he hath mourned, though he hath not done it. *Job* did not ſow ſack-cloth upon his skin when he ſpake thus, but his ſorrows did truly ſpeak ſack-cloth: Such alſo is his ſenſe of the next clauſe; where he profeſſeth,

And I defiled my horn in the duſt.] Horns are proper to a beaſt, but they are often by a figure or improperly aſcribed to man. The *horn* imports two things in figure.

Firſt, Strength, and Power.

Secondly, Dignity, and Ornament.

It is often put for ſtrength and power; for the ſtrength and power of good men (1 *Sam.*2.10.) *Hannah* ſings, *Thou ſhalt exalt the horn* (that is, the ſtrength and power) *of thine anointed.* (*Pſal.*132.17.) *There ſhall he make the horn of David to flouriſh. David* was a type of Chriſt, and of him this Pſalm is expounded. (*Luk.*1.69.) *God hath raiſed up a horn of ſalvation for us in the houſe of his ſervant David:* A horn of ſalvation, is, ſtrong ſalvation, or ſtrength of ſalvation: God laid help for us upon one that is mighty, when he laid help for us upon his Son.

The **horn**, notes alſo the ſtrength and power of wicked men (*Pſal.*75.5.) *Lift not your horns on high, ſpeak not with a ſtiff neck:* At the tenth Verſe of that Pſalm, we have both; *All the horns of the wicked alſo will I cut off, but the horns of the righteous ſhall be exalted.* Thoſe ten Kings, who gave their power and ſtrength to the Antichriſtian Beaſt, are ſhadowed under the title of *Ten horns* (*Revel.*17.12.) Strength and power are expreſſed by a horn, in alluſion to Beaſts, whoſe ſtrength to defend themſelves, and to hurt others, is in their horns; and hence it is that the word by which the Greeks expreſs *harmleſs*, ſignifies properly *hornleſs* (*Phil.* 2.15) *That ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the Sons of God without rebuke,* &c.

Metaphorã ab animalibus ducta, quorũ vires fere in cornubus exiſtunt. ἀκέραιος, *Eſt carens cornu.*

Secondly, As the horn is put for ſtrength, ſo for ſplendour, and dignity: The Texts before alleadged may be ſo expounded. And again (*Hab.*3.4.) *His brightneſs was as the light, and he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power:* We in the Margin put, *Bright beams out of his ſide:* For the Hebrew word which ſignifies *a horn*, ſignifies to radiate, and ſhine forth (*Exod.*34.29,30.) When *Moſes* came down from the Mount, the Text ſaith, *He wiſt not that his face did ſhine.* And when *Aaron*, and all the people of *Iſrael* ſaw *Moſes, behold his face ſhone:* The Vulgar tranſlates, *The face of Moſes was horned, or had horns upon it:* that is, beams and rayes of light like horns appeared, or darted from his countenance, ſo that the eyes of the beholders were dazled: And the reaſon why *Moſes* is commonly pictured with horns, is, becauſe this word ſignifies, both beams, and horns. So here, *I have defiled my horn in the duſt:* that is, My dignity, and excellency; thus the Chaldee expreſſeth it: as if he had ſaid, I have taken off, or laid by all ornaments to put my ſelf into the poſture of an humble ſupplicant; *I have defiled my horn in the duſt.*

קרן *Radiavit, ſplenduit.*

Quod cornuta eſſet facies ejus. Vulg. *Inde* Moſes *cornutus pingitur.*

Splendorem meum. Chald.

[**Duſt**] alſo is taken properly, or improperly; properly, duſt is light, ſmall, crumbled earth. Chriſt chargeth his Diſciples (*Mat.*10.14.) *Whoſoever ſhall not receive you, nor hear your word, when ye depart out of that City, ſhake off the duſt of your feet:* That action was emblematical, and noted one of, or all theſe three things.

Firſt, That the earth was polluted, where ſuch refuſers of the precious Goſpel did inhabit, and was therefore to be ſhaken off as a filthy thing.

Secondly, That they were baſe and vile as duſt, ſuch as God would ſhake off.

Thirdly, That the duſt of the Apoſtles feet there left, might be as a witneſs (ſo the other Goſpels expreſs it) againſt them, that the Goſpel had been Preached there.

Duſt alſo in a proper ſenſe, was uſed in times of humiliation and ſorrow among the Jewes; for then, they either ſprinkled duſt on their heads, or lay down in the duſt: *Joſhua* and the Elders of *Iſrael* put duſt on their heads (*Joſh.*7. 6.) and *Job* profeſſeth (*Chap.*42.6.) *Therefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes:* Which we may underſtand either ſtrictly, that he ſate down in the duſt, teſtifying his repentance; or largely, that his was a great and a deep repentance, even like theirs, who are humbled in duſt and aſhes. That carnal worldly ſorrow of the Merchants and Friends of *Babylon* is thus expreſſed (*Revel.*18.18,19.) *And they caſt duſt on their heads, and cryed, weeping and wayling, ſaying, Alas, alas, that great City.*

Improperly, duſt ſignifies any very low condition (*Pſal.* 113.7. 1 *Sam.* 2. 8.) *He raiſeth the poor out of the duſt.* And again (1 *Kings* 16.2.) *For as much as I exalted thee out of the duſt, and made thee a Prince over my people* Iſrael, *&c.* To be exalted from the duſt, is to be exalted from among the common people to a Princely ſtate, as that parallel place tells us (1 *Kings* 14.7.) All men are but level with the duſt in their natural conſtitution; but all Magiſtrates are above the duſt (that is, the common people) by their civil conſtitution. When *Job* ſaith, *I have defiled my horn in the duſt*; it may be underſtood either properly, that he did ſit down in duſt and aſhes as he ſpeaks (*Chap.* 10.) or improperly, that as God had brought him into a low condition, ſo he was willing to ſubmit himſelf to a low condition, and to be, not only as *man*, who is duſt in his nature, and muſt return to duſt, but as becomes *that man*, whoſe power and honour, whoſe excellency and greatneſs is laid in the duſt: *David* imprecates (*Pſal.* 7.5.) *If I have done this, if* (as ſome charge and ſuſpect me) *there be iniquity in my hands,* &c. *Let the enemy perſecute my ſoul, and take it; yea, let him tread my life down to the earth, and lay mine honour in the duſt:* That is, Let him totally ruine me, or lay me as low as low can be. The Church is thus excited to riſe from her captivity (*Iſa.* 52. 1,3.) *Awake, and ſhake thy ſelf from the duſt, ariſe, and ſit down, O* Jeruſalem*: looſe thy ſelf from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of* Zion. To lye in captivity, is to lye in the duſt; and as to ſhake off the duſt, is to return from captivity; ſo to defile the horn in the duſt, is to lay aſide our dignity.

Job gives yet a further deſcription of his ſelf-humiliation.

Verſe 16. **My face is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the ſhadow of death.**

As *Job* put on his mourning garments, ſo he was indeed a mourner; he wept, and he wept plentifully: much eye-water doth not cleanſe, but foul the face, *My face is foul with weeping*; or my face is ſwoln, and my cheeks blubbered with weeping, ſaith the Latine Tranſlator.

Facies mea intumuit à fletu. Vulg.

Note here three ſorts of tears ſpoken of in Scripture.

First, There are tears of worldly ſorrow.
Secondly, Tears of godly ſorrow.
Thirdly, Tears of Hypocriſie.

The laſt ſort is applyable to both the former; it reſpects ſometimes worldly ſorrow, and ſometimes godly ſorrow; for both may be feigned: Such were thoſe tears (*Jer.* 41.) When *Iſhmael* had killed *Gedaliah*, the Text ſaith, *Iſhmael went to* Mizpeh, *and met the men, weeping all along as he went*; as if he had been greatly troubled for the afflictions of the Land; but they were *Crocodiles tears. Iſhmael* wept only till he had gotten thoſe men (as a prey) in his power, and then he deſtroyed them. *Iſhmael* was a State-hypocrite, and ſeemed full of compaſſion, that he might get an opportunity to vent his malice.

There are many Church-hypocrites, who can foul and disfigure their faces with weeping, as Chriſt reproves the Phariſees (*Matth.* 6. 16.) while they have no thought of waſhing or reforming either their hearts or lives. *Job*'s *face was foul with weeping*, but his heart and life were clean; he needed not ſtrain for tears, or weep by art; how could he reſtrain tears, whoſe troubles were inlarged? The word which we render *foul*, is doubled in the Original, which ſpeaks thus much, that his face was double-dirtied, or double-dyed in his own tears: Neither yet was this all the argument of his real ſorrows; for he had not only quite wept away his beauty, but he had almoſt wept away his life too, and was even dead with grief, as it follows in the next words.

פני חמרמרה *Facies mea fœdata eſt à* חמר *lutum, hic duplicatur ut ante ad augendam ſignificationem.*

And on my eye-lids is the ſhadow of death.

That is, Mine eyes are darkened, and I look like one that's ready to give up the ghoſt: As if he had ſaid, *My ſorrow may be ſeen upon my eyes and eye-lids, which with extremity of grief, and multitude of tears are even waſted away, and ſunk in my head, as when a man is dead, or dying:* Much weeping weakens the eye-ſight; yea, ſome are ſaid to weep out their eyes. *David* gives us that effect of weeping (*Pſal.* 6.7.) *I water my couch with tears:* That is, I weep abundantly: Then it follows, *Mine eyes are conſumed becauſe of my grief:* And (*Pſal.* 38. 10.) *My heart panteth, my ſtrength faileth, as for the light of mine eyes, it is alſo gone from me:* I am even grown blind with ſorrow, or (as the Church bemoans her ſad eſtate, (*Lam.* 2.11.) *Mine eyes do fail with tears:* Abundance of tears bring failing of eyes; and he that uſeth his eyes to much weeping, ſhall have little uſe of them for ſeeing: we may aſſign the reaſon of it from Nature, becauſe continual pouring forth of tears ſpends the ſpirits, and ſo weakeneth the viſive power. Now as death is a total privation of ſight; ſo they whoſe ſight is much impaired, look ſomewhat like the dead: Hence *Job*'s complaint, *On my eye-lids is the ſhadow of death.*

Shadow of death.] Notes the cleareſt appearance, the ſtrongeſt ſigns of death: Or this ſhadow of death upon his eye-lids, together with the fouling of his face, in the former clauſe, may be an alluſion to ſome faſhions or cuſtoms of mourners in thoſe times or places. This phraſe (which alſo often occurs in other Scriptures) was opened (*Chap.* 3.5.) thither I refer the Reader.

Hos geſtus in humiliationibus Orientalis etiam Græcos uſurpaſſe teſtatur & ridet Plutarchus in libello de ſuperſtitione. Denſiſſima caligo eſt oculis meis offuſa. Mer.

Thus we have *Job*'s behaviour in his affliction by a twofold act, and a twofold effect of it.

The firſt act was, *Sowing ſackcloth on his fleſh.*
The ſecond was, *Defiling his horn in the duſt.*
The firſt effect was, *Foulneſs upon his face.*
The ſecond was, *Death upon his eyes.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *They are moſt ſenſible of the hand of God, who are moſt ſubmiſſive to it.*

As *Job*'s afflictions were great, ſo was his ſorrow, and ſo was his ſubmiſſion: *Sorrow is not contrary to patience*; *Job* was the moſt patient, and the moſt ſorrowful man in the World. There is an immoderate ſorrow inconſiſtent with patience; but great ſorrow is not only conſiſtent with patience, but an argument of it; and unleſs we have ſome ſorrow, we are not patient at all: How can he be called patient, who either feels not, or ſlights his affliction. It is as ill a ſymptome of a diſeaſed ſoul to be unſenſible of judgments, as to be unſenſible of mercies. Unleſs we feel the rod, we cannot hear the voice of the rod, nor receive inſtruction by it. To be as a Trunk or a Stone, under correction, is not to be patient under it, but to deſpiſe it: *Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God,* is the advice of the Spirit, by the Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* 5.6.) As God humbles us for ſin, or for the tryal of grace, ſo they who have grace receive power to humble themſelves; and to humble our ſelves, is not only an act, but an high act of grace; both the grace of God toward us, and the graces of God in us, are exalted when we are low in our own eyes.

Secondly, From the manner of this ſorrowful humiliation, *He ſowed ſackcloath upon his skin, and defiled his horn in the duſt.*

Obſerve, *That as God letteth out viſible tokens of his afflicting hand upon us, ſo we ſhould let out viſible tokens of our humiliation under his hand.*

As we are viſibly afflicted, ſo we ſhould be viſibly affected. We may make our humblings ſeen, though we muſt not do it to be ſeen. As *the light* of our active obedience, *ſhould ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee our good works, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven* (*Matth.* 5. 16.) So alſo ſhould the light of our paſſive obedience ſhine before men, that they may ſee our holy ſufferings, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven. It is as great a ſin to to boaſt of our poverty, as it is to boaſt of our riches, and as great a vanity to be proud of a croſs, as to be proud of a Crown; yet it is an honour to God, when men ſee that we are not aſhamed either of poverty, or of a croſs. The croſs ſhould be carried upon our ſhoulders, not put up in our pockets: God loves to ſee us own our troubles as well as our comforts; and as he will condemn thoſe who wrap the Talent of their gifts and abilities in a Napkin, and hide it from the uſe of others; ſo he doth not approve thoſe who wrap up their croſſes and afflictions in a Napkin, and hide them from the ſight of others; eſpecially conſidering, that even theſe alſo are Talents for which we ſtand accountable, how we have uſed them, both for our own good, and the good of others. *I have ſurely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf thus* (ſaith the Lord) *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and*

I was chaſtiſed (Jer. 31. 18.) *Ephraim*'s outward moans were as muſick in the ears of God; *Ephraim* did not murmure againſt God, but he bemoaned himſelf; *Ephraim* was not angry at his chaſtiſement, but *Ephraim* mourned being chaſtiſed; God heard this fully; in hearing he heard it, or, it pleaſed him to hear it. It is our duty to teſtifie our ſorrow by the ſaddeſt notes of a troubled ſpirit, and it is a delight to God when we do ſo; not that he delights in our ſorrows; but he delights in the witneſs which we bear to his Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, and Faithfulneſs, in ſending thoſe ſorrows. *I heard* Ephraim *bemoan himſelf*. Will an Offender that looks for mercy come before the Judge in rich apparel, or in ſome affected dreſs? Comes he not rather in his priſon clothes? Puts he not on the garments of heavineſs? The Meſſengers of *Benhadad*, put duſt on their heads, and ropes about their necks, and ſack-cloath on their loins, when they came to mediate for the life of their Maſter. And thus the Lord ſpeaks to the *Iſraelites* (*Exod.* 33. 5.) when they had ſinned, and he was wrath, *Put off your Ornaments that I may know what to do with you:* Ornaments are uncomely when God is threatening judgments: It is time for us to lay by our bravery, when God is about to make us naked. Sack-cloath ſowed upon the ſkin, and our horn in the duſt, are the beſt enſigns of an afflicted ſtate. The Prophets counſel indeed is (*Joel* 2.13.) *Rent your hearts, and not your garments.* (Rending the garments may be taken, not only ſtrictly for that act, but largely for all outward actings of ſorrow.) Yet when he ſaith, *Rent not*, this is not a prohibition of, but a caution about the outward acting of their ſorrow. *Not*, in Scripture, is not alwayes totally negative, it is often directive and comparative: So in this place, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; is, *your hearts*, rather then *your garments*; or be ſure to rend your hearts, as well as your garments: The one muſt be done, the other ought not to be left undone. See more of this (*Chap.* 1. *Ver.* 20.) upon thoſe words, *Then* Job *rent his Mantle*.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Great ſorrow produceth great effects, and leaveth ſuch impreſſions as teſtifie where it is.*

The Apoſtle ſaith of the ſorrow of the World, *That it worketh death* (2 Cor. 7. 10.) The ſorrow of the World may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, For the ſorrow of carnal worldly men, whoſe ſorrow for ſin is only a vexing of their hearts, not a breaking or humbling of their hearts; which being ſeparate both from true faith for the pardon of ſin, and from any real purpoſe of leaving their ſin, *worketh death*, both temporal death, often wearing out their natural life lingringly, and ſometime deſtroying their natural life violently, as in *Judas*, as alſo haſtning them on to eternal death, of which it ſelf is a foretaſt, or beginning.

Secondly, This ſorrow of the World, is a ſorrow for the loſs of, or diſappointments about worldly things. This alſo worketh both of thoſe deaths in meer worldly men; and when it is exceſſive (as under a temptation it may be) in a godly man, it may be ſaid to work the death of the body in him; yea, great and continued ſorrow, though it be not exceſſive, worketh towards this death in a godly man, drying his bones, and drawing out his ſpirits, as is clear in *Job*, on whoſe eye-lids the very ſhadow of death ſate, while he wept and ſorrowed. 'Tis hard to diſſemble a little grief; but a great deal cannot be hid: As godly ſorrow manifeſts it ſelf in excellent effects upon the ſoul, of which the Apoſtle numbers up ſeven at the eleventh Verſe of that Chapter, *For this ſelf ſame thing that ye ſorrowed after a godly ſort, what carefulneſs it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of your ſelves*, &c. Now I ſay, as godly ſorrow manifeſts it ſelf in manifold effects upon the ſoul, ſo doth the ſorrow of the World ſet its marks upon the body: As a good mans heart is made clean by weeping the tears of godly ſorrow; ſo every mans face is made foul by weeping the tears of worldly ſorrow: and as godly ſorrow worketh repentance unto ſalvation and life eternal; ſo the ſorrow of the World worketh an entrance to temporal death; yea, we may ſay that godly ſorrow doth ſometimes work temporal death; *Paul* was afraid leſt the inceſtuous perſon, while he was repenting, might be *Swallowed up with over much ſorrow* (2 Cor.2.7.) which as we are to underſtand chiefly of a ſwallowing up in the gulf of deſpair, ſo we may take in that alſo as a conſequent of the other, a ſwallowing of him up in the grave of death: As if he had ſaid, The poor man may both deſpair and dye under this burden, if you let it lye too long upon him. As ſoon as *Heman* had ſaid (in his deſertion) *My ſoul is full of troubles*; he preſently adds, *And my life draweth nigh unto the grave*; *I am counted with them that go down to the pit, free among the dead* (Pſal. 88. 3, 4, 5.) To which he ſubjoyns (*Ver.* 9.) *Mine eye mourneth by reaſon of affliction*; and then expoſtulates (*Ver.* 10.) *Wilt thou ſhew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead ariſe and praiſe thee?* As if he had ſaid, *Theſe ſorrows will bring me to my grave*; or in the language of *Job*, *On my eye-lids is the ſhadow of death.*

Till we enjoy a life beyond the reach of all ſorrows, we ſhall not be beyond the reach of death. Hence that promiſe (*Revel.* 21. 4.) *God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying; neither ſhall there be any more pain:* And as that life which hath no death in it, ſhall have no ſorrow in it; ſo that life which is a continual death (the life of the damned) is nothing elſe but ſorrow, *There ſhall be weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth, for evermore* (Mat. 13. 42.) Their eyes ſhall ever weep, their faces ſhall ever be foul with weeping, and on their eye-lids the ſhadow of death ſhall dwell for ever.

Fourthly, The hand of God being heavy upon *Job*, *He defiled his horn in the duſt, and fouled his face with weeping*; he regarded neither the beauty of his face, nor the dignity of his condition, all was nothing to him.

Learn from it,

Great afflictions take off our reſpect to the World, and all worldly things.

What is Honour? What is Gold or Silver? What is a goodly Houſe? What is a beautiful Wife, and pleaſant Children? What are fine Clothes, or a fair Face in a day of ſorrow, or in the approaches of death? Spirituals are higheſt prized when we are loweſt: Grace ſhines cleareſt in worldly darkneſs; but the light of worldly enjoyments is darkneſs to us; and that which ſome eſteem as a Sun, is but a Cloud to us in the day of diſtreſs: That is beſt which is good to us in our worſt eſtate. The favour of God, the pardon of ſin, the fruits of the Spirit, are alwayes pleaſant to the Saints; but then moſt, when the years or times are upon them, of which they not only ſay with the Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) We have no pleaſure in them, but, we have much pain and trouble in them. The face of the new creature is never foul with weeping, nor is the horn of our ſalvation defiled when we lye in the duſt, or on the dunghil.

Job having (according to his manner) accurately deſcribed his calamities, and ſhewed with what deep ſenſe, and ſelf-abaſement he had entertained them; he paſſeth to a refutation of that inference which his Friends drew, and had often preſſed upon him from thoſe premiſes of his affliction. *Eliphaz* ſuggeſted him impious and unjuſt, becauſe he was thus ſmitten. *Job* plainly denyes it (*Verſe* 17.) I have not received theſe wounds in my body and eſtate, *for any injuſtice in my hands*, no, nor for any impiety in my heart, *alſo my prayer is pure*. This Verſe takes off both parts of that general aſſertion, as to *Job*'s perſonal condition (*Chap.* 15. *Verſ.* 34.) *The Congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate; fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery.* There *Eliphaz* cloſely hinted that *Job* was an unjuſt man, and an Hypocrite: *Job* anſwers, No, my Tabernacle is not the Tabernacle of bribery, *there is no injuſtice in my hands*; my Congregation, or thoſe with whom I joyned in worſhip, were not a Congregation of Hypocrites, *My prayer is pure:* As if he had ſaid, *Though it be a truth, that the Congregation of Hypocrites ſhall be deſolate, yet it doth not follow, that every man is an Hypocrite, whoſe Congregation is made deſolate, for mine is deſolate, and yet I know my prayer is pure: And though fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery, yet every man is not guilty of bribery, whoſe Tabernacle is conſumed with fire, for ſo is mine; and yet I avouch it, there is no injuſtice in my hands.*

Verſe 17. Not for any [injuſtice] in my hands.

חמס *Propriè rapina violentia injuria.*

The word that we tranſlate *injuſtice*, ſignifies rapine, violence, or wrong done by violence, any open tyrannical oppreſſion. The Harpy being a ravenous Fowl, hath his name from this root in Hebrew (as alſo in the Greek from one of the ſame importance) becauſe he doth not ſubtily ſurprize his prey, but openly aſſault it. It ſignifies alſo violence mingled with ſcorn and contempt; as is obſerved upon that of the Prophet (*Ezek.* 22. 26.) *Her Prieſts have violated my Laws*: The Prieſts did not go behind the door, they made an open breach upon the Law of God; they did not ſin ſecretly, as if they had been afraid to be ſeen, but avowedly and before the Sun. Hence ſome have rendred that Text, *Her Prieſts have contemned my Laws*; noting either that it was a violation with contempt; or that Laws which are once contemned cannot be long unviolated. Thus *Job* profeſſeth, there is no ſuch injuſtice in my hand; *Job* did not diſclaim all failings in doing juſtice, but all intendments of doing injuſtice; he did not peremptorily deny that there was no injuſtice in his hand ariſing from miſtakes of the Law, but none from the contempt of the Law, *Not for any injuſtice.*

In my [hand.] Injuſtice is aſcribed to the *hand*, not becauſe injuſtice is alwayes, though uſually it be done with the hand; with the hand men take away, and with that men detain the right of others. *David* ſpeaks thus (2 *Chron.* 12. 17.) *Seeing there is no wrong in mine hand*; that is, I have done no wrong. The hand is the great inſtrument of action, moſt injuſtice is done by the hand, though much be done by the tongue; and a Judge who gives an unjuſt ſentence with his tongue, may be ſaid to have injuſtice in his hands. Beſides, he may be ſaid to have injuſtice in his hands, who keeps any thing in his hands which was gotten by injuſtice; he alſo may be ſaid to eat injuſtice, who feeds upon what he got unjuſtly (*Prov.* 4. 17.) *They eat the bread of wickedneſs, and drink the wine of violence*: That is, They eat bread, and drink wine, gotten by wickedneſs and violence. *Job* diſclaims injuſtice in all theſe notions, *There is no injuſtice in my hands*: As if he had ſaid, *I have not gotten wealth by injuſtice, nor inricht my ſelf by making others poor*; *I have not been as an Harpy, to ſcratch and tear from others to feed my ſelf*: He gives a full account of this (*Chap.* 29. and *Chap.* 30.) wiping off thoſe aſperſions of injuſtice, by a large narrative of his proceedings in that publick capacity, as a Magiſtrate; the breviate of which is ſummed up in this negative, *There is no injuſtice in my hand.*

Further, Injuſtice may be taken two wayes.

Either ſtrictly, for the act of a Magiſtrate perverting the Law, and going beſides the rules of righteouſneſs.

Or largely; for any wrong that one neighbour in a private capacity, doth another.

To do juſtice is every ones duty as well as the Magiſtrates; We uſe to ſay, *Every man is either a Fool, or a Phyſician*; we may ſay, *Every one is either a doer of juſtice, or a diſhoneſt man*: For though to do juſtice is chiefly the Magiſtrates work, yet no man (who hath any thing to do in the World) can live as he ought, without doing juſtice: In this large ſence alſo we may expound *Job*'s diſclaimer of injuſtice: As if he had ſaid, *I have not willingly failed in any of thoſe duties which the Law of love towards my neighbour calls for, and obliges me unto*: *There is no injuſtice in my hands.*

Alſo my prayer is pure.

Prayer is taken two wayes, as injuſtice is.

Either largely, for the whole worſhip of God, *My houſe ſhall be called the houſe of prayer* (Matth. 21. 13.) That is, All kind of publick worſhip ſhall be performed, and tendred to me there: Prayer being ſo principal a part of worſhip, may well comprehend all the parts of worſhip; that which is chief in any kind, often denominates all the reſt. So *Love* is put for all the duties of the Law, and *Faith* for all the duties, yea, and for all the Doctrines of the Goſpel; though in both, many other duties and doctrines are contained.

Strictly, Prayer is that part of worſhip which conſiſts in calling upon God: *Prayer is the making known of our deſires, or the opening of our hearts to God. It is the aſcent of our ſouls to God. David* being about to pray, ſaith, *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my ſoul.* In this place we may take prayer in both the notions of it, *My prayer*

Is pure.] The word ſignifies ſhining, bright, glorious; a gracious prayer ſhines ſo bright that there is a glory in it; *My prayer is pure. Zophar* charged *Job* for ſaying, *My doctrine is pure* (Chap. 12. 4.) Now *Job* himſelf ſaith, *My prayer is pure.* The truth of Doctrine is the purity of it; and the ſincerity of prayer is the purity of it: *Job* did not boaſt his prayer pure without infirmity, but he did profeſs it pure without hypocriſie. Yet beſides this caſting out of hypocriſie, there are divers ingredients to be taken in towards the compoſition of a pure prayer, of which I ſhall touch more diſtinctly by and by. We read in the Inſtitutes of the Ceremonial Law of pure Myrrh, of pure Frankincenſe, of pure Oyl, of pure Incenſe, all which concurred to pure worſhip among the Jews, and typed out all pure worſhip, both among Jews and Gentiles; of the latter the Lord ſaith (*Mal.* 1. 11.) *From the riſing of the Sun unto the going down of the ſame, my Name ſhall be called upon among the Gentiles, and in every place Incenſe ſhall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offering.* This pure offering *Job* intends when he ſaith, *My prayer is pure.*

Under theſe two, *There is no injuſtice in my hand, and my prayer is pure*: *Job* contains the whole duty of man, both to God and to man: Here is Juſtice comprehending the duties of the ſecond Table; and Prayer comprehending the duties of the firſt Table: Thus *Job* was compleat in all the will of God, and had reſpect to all his Commandments. And thus he verified Gods teſtimony of him (*Chap.* 1. 1.) and approved himſelf to be *A man perfect and upright, fearing God, and eſchewing evil*, which is the whole duty of man.

His duobus membris utramque tabulam complectitur. Merc.

From the words in general,

> Obſerve, Firſt, *Man hath great ſupport in bearing afflictions, from the witneſs which his heart gives of his own integrity.*

'Tis matter of wonder that ever *Job* ſhould bear ſo many burdens, and endure breach upon breach, till we remember, that though he had many breaches upon his body and eſtate, yet he had none upon his conſcience: Indeed his ſpirit had breaches by way of tryal and temptation from God; but it had none by way of diſobedience againſt God. *The ſpirit of a man,* ſaith *Solomon*, *will ſuſtain his infirmities* (Prov. 18. 14.) There are two ſorts of infirmities.

First, ſinful infirmities, ſuch are impatience, doubtings, deadneſs of heart, and vanity of thoughts.

Secondly, Penal, or painful infirmities, ſuch as are poverty, ſickneſs, diſeaſes, or any outward croſs whatſoever.

Theſe latter are the infirmities which *Solomon* means; and theſe the ſpirit of a man will ſuſtain, even while his fleſh or body ſinks under them: Yet here ſpirit is not taken meerly in oppoſition to bodily, or material fleſh (though the ſpirit under that phyſical notion is able to bear much more then the body can) but as ſpirit is oppoſed to ſpiritual and ſinful fleſh; that is, to a carnal corrupt mind: The ſpirit of a man furniſhed with grace, ſupported with the favour of God, and the teſtimony of a good conſcience, will ſuſtain all his infirmities; that is, cauſe him to bear with much, not only patience, but courage and chearfulneſs, the heavieſt burdens of affliction, which either the wiſdom of God doth, or the malice of man can lay upon him. Holineſs makes the weak ſtrong, and the ſtrong like Giants, to endure all ſhocks of trouble and hardſhip. A whole skin feels no ſmart, though you bath it with brine; and if a man have a ſound conſcience, if his ſpirit be not galled and raw, he is able to ſtand at any time, and ſometimes to rejoyce in the ſalteſt waters of worldly ſorrow. For though he be not (as was ſhewed before) ſenſleſs of, or without outward ſmart; yet having no inward ſmart (which is the worſt ſmart) he is above it: The pains and wants of the body are almoſt loſt and ſwallowed up in the comforts and enjoyments of the mind. A wounded ſpirit who can bear? A ſpirit unwounded what can it not bear? He that hath no injuſtice in his hands, hath much peace in his heart; and while our prayer is pure, our ſpirits will not be much troubled in any of our troubles.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is poſſible to live without any known ſin.*

Job knew of no injuſtice in his hand, nor was he conſcious of any impurity in his prayer. The Apoſtle *John* writes to all Saints of all Ages and Statures, under the title of *His little Children, not to ſin* (1 *John* 2. 1.) And in that he doth not only admoniſh them of what they ought not to do, but of what they might attain not to do: For though, *He that ſaith he hath no ſin, deceives himſelf*, and ſins in ſaying ſo (1 *John* 1. 9.) yet it may be ſaid of ſome without ſin, and they (in *Job*'s caſe) may ſay it of themſelves without ſin, that *they ſin not*. The beſt Saints have, and know they have ſin in their natures, and ſin in their lives; yea, and ſometimes they fall into great ſins; yet ſuch a degree of holineſs is attainable in this life, that a man may be ſaid, *not to ſin*: For then (in a Goſpel-ſence) we are ſaid not to ſin, when we caſt off and are free from all groſs and ſcandalous ſins, and do both carefully avoid and make conſcience of the leaſt and the moſt ſecret ſin. *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* (Luke 1.16.) *were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameleſs*: That is, They did not live in any open or known ſin; they lived ſo, that no man could blame them, or bring any juſt complaint againſt them, either in matters of morality, which ſeem to be meant in the word *Commandment*; or in matters of worſhip, which ſeem to be meant by the word *Ordinance*. And when I ſpeak of not living in any known ſin, I mean not only, that Saints may riſe ſo high as not to live in any ſin which the World takes notice of; but they may, yea, and often do arrive at that height of holineſs, not to live in any ſin known to themſelves; if once a true Believer diſcovers ſin, he cannot own it, much leſs live in it; be it injuſtice or wrong towards men; be it any failing in the worſhip and ſervice of God he will not ſuffer it to lodge with him. He that hath grace in his heart, cannot live with injuſtice in his hand; there is an inconſiſtence between theſe two, a life of grace, and to live in ſin. Sin may be much alive in him that hath grace; but he cannot live in ſin; he may be often tempted to the act of it, and ſometimes poſſibly overtaken with it, yet he cannot live in it: He cannot keep injuſtice in his hand, nor frame an impure prayer in his heart. A good man may do an act of injuſtice, but he continues not unjuſt; he reſtores what he hath taken unjuſtly from men, and repents before the Lord; but uſually he is not conſcious to himſelf of doing unjuſtly towards men. If a *Laban* (one with whom he hath had converſe and dealing twenty years together) ſhould come and ſearch his houſe, he is able to ſay to him as honeſt *Jacob* did to his Uncle *Laban* (Gen. 31. 37.) *Whereas thou haſt ſearched all my ſtuff, what haſt thou found of all thy houſhold-ſtuff, ſet it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both*: As if he had ſaid, Is there any injuſtice in my hand? Let it come to tryal. Or as upright *Samuel* to all *Iſrael* (1 Sam. 12. 3.) *Behold, here I am, witneſs againſt me before the Lord, and before his anointed, whoſe Ox have I taken? Or whoſe Aſs have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppreſſed? Samuel* had been long a Judge, yet he knew of no injuſtice in his hand, neither did any man know of any; and therefore all acquit him from the leaſt blemiſh of unfaithfulneſs in his Office (*Verſ*. 4.) *Thou haſt not defrauded us, nor oppreſſed us, neither haſt thou taken ought* (as a bribe) *of any mans hand. And he ſaid unto them* (Verſ. 5.) *The Lord is witneſs againſt you, and his anointed is witneſs this day, that ye have not found ought* (that is, ought gotten unjuſtly) *in my hand*: That man hath reacht the perfection of juſtice, who neither takes out of the hand of others violently, nor of the hands of others covetouſly to byas his ſpirit when he ſits in judgment. Such a perfect Juſticer was *Samuel*, all *Iſrael* could not find ought (ſo come by) in his hand: He might ſay (and he did ſay as much in effect) with *Job*, *Not for any injuſtice in my hand*.

And as a Believer may arrive at ſuch a blameleſs walking towards men, that they cannot ſay, *He hath ſinned*; ſo at ſuch a holy walking before God, that God himſelf will not ſay, *He hath ſinned*. And this God will not ſay, when he ſees a ſoul labouring (as *Paul* was once praying that the *Coloſſians* might) *to walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleaſing; being fruitful in every good work*, *Coloſ*. 1. 10. And when he ſees, that his prayer is pure, and his worſhip tendered with a perfect or ſincere heart.

When a ſoul doth not wilfully neglect any duty towards God, God will ſay he hath performed all duty; and though there may be many failings in prayer, yet God will ſay, that mans prayer is pure. So then, we grant that no man lives and ſins not, yet we affirm, that no godly man lives in ſin; and that ſome godly men are ſo far from living in any ſin, that others cannot tax them, nor can they tax themſelves of acting any groſs ſins; yea, though the beſt of Saints here know they ſin, and know their ſins, yet they may be ſaid not to commit known ſins, that is, not to ſin knowingly: He is not properly ſaid to ſin knowingly, who knows he ſins, but he who ſins againſt his knowledge.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Holineſs conſiſts in a compleat uniformity, or in conformity to the whole will of God.*

Job draws the picture of a holy man, in all his limbs and lineaments; equity and purity contain all; Some are *Firſt Table Chriſtians*; others are *Second Table Chriſtians*. Some are zealous for prayer, who are extream cold in doing juſtice; ſome are extream honeſt and juſt to men, righteous in all their dealings, but they care not for prayer, nor have they any delight in communion with God: The Law of God is one entire thing, and ſo muſt mans obedience be; *He that offends in one point is guilty of all*, James 2. 10. For though he that commits adultery cannot properly be ſaid to break that Law, *Thou ſhalt do no murder*; yet whoſoever commits adultery, may properly be ſaid to break the whole Law: the reaſon is given by that Apoſtle in the next Verſe: *For he that ſaid, Do not commit adultery, ſaid alſo, Do not kill: Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a tranſgreſſor of the Law*. He that breaks any one link of a chain, breaks the chain, though he break not a ſecond link: 'tis ſo here, the whole Law is copulative: and as in this ſence, the Law is one; ſo the *Law-maker is altogether one*: This the Apoſtle *James* hints, as the reaſon of it, *For he that ſaid, Do not commit adultery, ſaid alſo, Do not kill*: As if he had ſaid, There is one and the ſame Legiſlative power commanding all, and therefore, if ye tranſgreſs one, ye tranſgreſs all. And how can there be a ſtate of holineſs, without an equal reſpect to both Tables of the Law, ſeeing the breach of any one Law of either Table, is, though not formally, yet reductively a breach of every Law in both Tables. And therefore 'tis the aim of a Believer to fulfil both Tables of the Law, though he fail in every Law of both: He gives up his will wholly to God; yea, he may be ſaid to loſe his will in the will of God; and this is his doing the whole will of God. And indeed we do nothing, unleſs we be found doing all.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *We may without hypocriſie make report of our own integrity.*

Job doth it here, and had done it before, and we find holy men doing it often in Scripture; *I* (ſaith *Paul*, 2 Tim. 4. 7.) *have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the Faith*: This he ſpeaks of himſelf, but not for himſelf; not out of vain glory, or a deſire of eſteem with men, as the Phariſees, but that others might be encouraged by his example, and that God might have the glory of his free and powerful grace, enabling him to give and hold out ſuch an example. Other paſſages in this Book have led me to this note before, and therefore I only mention it here.

More particularly, Obſerve, *Injuſtice towards men, and impurities in the worſhip of God, are great and provoking ſins.*

Job diſclaims theſe by name: It is as if *Job* had ſaid, Were there injuſtice in my hands, or were I falſe in the worſhip of God, it were no wonder though all theſe judgments ſhould ſeize upon me; yea, though my burden were heavier, I had no reaſon to complain, I muſt thank my ſelf: Injuſtice and falſe worſhip, will certainly bring breach upon breach; they break not only ſingle perſons, but King-

Non ad jactantiam ſed ad divinæ veritatis aſſertionem commemorat.

Kingdoms and Nations. Oppreſſion and Superſtition are Kingdom-ſhaking ſins; much more will they ſhake the walls and foundations of a private Houſe, or Family.

Again Obſerve, *If God afflict where there is no injuſtice, how juſtly doth he deſtroy thoſe who are unjuſt?*

Shall they complain who are beaten for their faults, when ſome are beaten who have no fault? The Apoſtle *Peter* argues (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and ſinners appear?* I may alſo argue, if the righteous be not ſaved (from outward afflictions) if the godly are ſmitten, how ſhall the ungodly and ſinners eſcape unſmitten? Many are ſmitten, not for any injuſtice in their hand (there is ſome other end, and that a juſt one, why they are ſmitten) nor is God unjuſt in ſmiting them. Now, if juſt ones are (without any injuſtice) thus ſmitten; how juſt is it with God to ſmite thoſe who are unjuſt? The repenting Thief rebuked him that blaſphemed, and ſpake evil of Chriſt, upon this conſideration, *Doſt thou not fear God, ſeeing thou art in the ſame condemnation? and we juſtly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds:* This man and we are in the ſame condemnation, but not in the ſame fault; we are all condemned to dye, but we juſtly, and he unjuſtly; *This man hath done nothing amiſs*, but we have done much amiſs (*Luke* 22. 40, 41.) Now as this Thief was patient under his own juſt ſufferings, ſeeing another ſuffer who was juſt; ſo when we hear that the Lord afflicts thoſe who have done no evil, how ought ſuch to lay their hands upon their mouthes, who are afflicted for the evil which they have done. *We know* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 3. 19.) *that whatſoever the Law ſaith* (in a way of threatening) *it ſaith to them who are under the Law* (that is, who are not only under it, as having heard the precept of the Law, but are under it alſo, as having by ſin deſerved the penalty of it) *That every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the World become guilty before God*; or, *ſubject to the judgment of God*, not having a word to object why ſentence ſhould not be executed, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed.

My prayer is pure.] Taking prayer either for the worſhip of God in general, or for that ſpecial duty of calling upon the Name of God,

Note from it, That, *Only pure prayer is acceptable prayer.*

Cain brought an offering to God as well as *Abel*; *But unto* Cain *and his offering God had not reſpect* (Gen. 4. 5.) It is not what we do, but how we do it, which is acceptable to God.

Pure prayer is pleaſing to the pure God, and no other can pleaſe him. Heathens have told us, that their Gods require pure worſhippers, and pure worſhip: The impure ſpirit imitates God, he will be worſhipped, and he will have (according to mans opinion) a pure worſhip; How much more doth the holy God require pure worſhip?

Omnis præfatio ſacrorum, eos, quibus non ſunt puræ manus ſacris arcet. Liv. lib. 41. *Præcipuum eſt non admittere in animum mala conſilia, puras ad cœlum manus tollere.* Sen. li. 3. Nat. Qu.

But what is it which denominates *prayer pure*? Or when is prayer pure?

Prayer is pure:

Firſt, When it is directed to a right object, when we pray to God, and to God only: It is the ſole priviledge of God to receive prayer; *O thou that heareſt prayer, to thee ſhall all fleſh come:* There is but one hearer of prayer, and that is God. *Daniel* withſtood the Decree of the King, when he forbad him to make his prayers to God; he would rather be caſt to the Lyons, then not to pray, or pray to any beſides God; therefore he opened his window (to let them ſee his reſolution) and prayed to God thrice a day openly. We may petition living men, but we muſt pray only to *the living God.* All men (except ſuch as have ſinned unto death) are to be prayed for, but no man muſt be prayed unto: Neither Saint, nor Angel, nor any Creature, are the object of prayer, but God alone.

Secondly, Pure prayer muſt be right in the matter of it, as well as the object; if we pray for that which is unlawful, our prayer muſt needs be unlawful; as it is a ſin to do any thing which God commands not, ſo it is a ſin to aſk any thing which God allows not. God hath ſet ſpecial bounds to three things.

Firſt, To our Faith, he teacheth us what to believe.

Secondly, To our actions, he teacheth us what to do.

Thirdly, To our prayers, he teacheth us what to deſire.

We may make enlarged prayers, but we are not left at large in prayer. *The ſquare or rule of prayer is the will of God* (1 John 5. 14.) *And this is the confidence that we have in him, if we aſk any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* The will of God is the rule, not only of things to be done by us, but of things which we are to aſk God to do for us: As man naturally would rather do, ſo he would rather have his own will, then the will of God. Man would fain be his own carver, but God will not let him: It pleaſes man better to go two miles upon his own errand, then one upon Gods errand; and it pleaſes man better to have any one thing of his own chuſing, then two of Gods chuſing; but it ſhould not. The will of God under a threefold revelation is the rule and matter of prayer.

Firſt, The will of God in Commandments; whatſoever God hath charged upon us to do, we may pray for power and ſtrength to do it, or that it may be done.

Secondly, The will of God in Promiſes; what God hath ſaid he will give, we may pray to receive.

Thirdly, The will of God in Propheſies; what God hath foreſhewed ſhall come to paſs, we muſt pray that it may come to paſs. The prayer of man gives birth to the Propheſies of God. *Thus ſaith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the Houſe of* Iſrael, *to do it for them*, (*Ezek.* 36. 37.) God is a ſure pay-maſter, yet he expects we ſhould ſue him, before he payes. *Daniel* found by Books, that the time drew nigh, for the deliverance of the *Jews* out of *Babylon*; and then (ſaith he) *I ſet my face unto the Lord God, to ſeek by prayer and ſupplications, with faſting, ſack-cloath, and aſhes* (Dan. 9. 1, 2.) The manifeſtation of the will of God in a Propheſie, is a ſtrong ground of prayer: Thus the matter of prayer is the will of God under one of thoſe three manifeſtations, a Command, a Promiſe, or a Propheſie.

A third thing in pure prayer, is the form of it. There is a twofold form of prayer.

Firſt, The internal, or eſſential form.

Secondly, The external, or accidental form of prayer.

The external form, is that habit of words and expreſſions with which we cloath our deſires, when we preſent them unto God: This form varies, not only according to the ſeveral occaſions and emergencies of this life, which call us to the duty of prayer; but alſo according to the ſeveral gifts and abilities of thoſe who pray. We are free as to this form, from all tyes and preſcriptions, except this, that we utter our minds to God ſoberly, gravely, ſpiritually, with an eye to thoſe forms and patterns of wholeſome words delivered to us in the Word of God; and eſpecially to that part of the word which Chriſt gave both as a compendium, and a copy of holy prayer.

But as for the eſſential and internal form of prayer, that is unchangeable, and muſt ever be one and the ſame; Namely, *That we pray in the Name of Chriſt.* One of the Ancients was much delighted in reading *Tully's Hortenſius*, yet this at laſt abated the edge of his delight in it, *That he did not find the Name of Chriſt in it.* As the Name of Chriſt is the greateſt ornament of all Books where it is; ſo *the name of Chriſt is the eſſence of all prayers; and that is no prayer, where his Name is not.* (John 14. 13.) *Whatſoever ye aſk in my Name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: whatſoever ye do, do all in the Name of Chriſt, giving thanks to God, through him*, Col. 3. 17. To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is more then to name Chriſt in prayer: *It is eaſie to name Chriſt in prayer; but it is a hard thing to pray in the Name of Chriſt.* To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is,

Auguſt. l. 3. Confeſſ. c. 4.

Firſt, To look up to Chriſt, as having purchaſed us this priviledge, that we may pray; for it is by the blood of Chriſt that we draw near to God, and that a Throne of grace is open for us.

Secondly, To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is to pray in the ſtrength of Chriſt.

Thirdly, To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is to pray in the vertue of the preſent mediation of Chriſt, which carries this acknowledgment in it, *That what we aſk on earth, Chriſt obtains in Heaven.*

To pray thus is no eaſie matter, and unleſs we pray thus, we do not pray at all. (*John* 16.23,24.) *In that day ye ſhall ask me nothing: Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name, ask and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may be full.* But how do theſe parts of the Text conſiſt? Why doth Chriſt tell them, that they ſhall ask nothing in that day, and yet promiſe, that what they ask he will give? There is a twofold asking.

First, By way of Queſtion.

Secondly, By way of Petition.

The former is, asking, that we may know, or be informed in what we doubt; the latter, is asking, that we may receive and be ſupplied with what we want. Now, when Chriſt ſaith, *In that day ye ſhall ask me nothing:* he had a little before promiſed ſuch a manifeſtation of the mind of God to them, by the Spirit, that they ſhould not need to come and ask him: As if he had ſaid, *Now ye put queſtions* (as we read they did) *about many things, ye underſtand little of the myſtery of the Goſpel; but in that day ye ſhall have ſo clear a revelation about the things of Heaven, that ye ſhall not need to propoſe your doubts, and deſire reſolution, for you ſhall be able to reſolve your ſelves by the light within you.* This the Apoſtle *John* (1 *Epiſt.* 2.20.) tells the Saints, *But ye have an Unction from the holy One, and and ye know all things:* And again (*Verſ.* 27.) *But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; and ye need not that any man ſhould teach you: but as the ſame anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lye; and even as it hath taught, ye ſhall abide in him.* Theſe Scriptures are both a clear expoſition, and an illuſtrious verification of that Promiſe of Chriſt, *In that day ye ſhall ask me nothing:* That is, After my reſurrection.

But when he ſaith, *Whatſoever ye ask the Father in my Name, he will give it:* The meaning is, Your prayers ſhall be heard, while you keep cloſe to this eſſential form, *Asking in my Name.* Beſides this eſſential form of prayer, there is alſo another form, which we may call in a qualified ſence, eſſential: As when the matter we pray about is ſpiritual, and abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation, then to pray in an abſolute form. If it be temporal, and outward, or if it be of a ſpiritual nature, yet ſuch as is only neceſſary to the well-being of a Believer, as ſpiritual gifts, yea, and the degrees of grace are, then to pray in a conditional form, as ſubmitting it to the will of God, not only for the time, and manner, and means, and meaſure, wherein, or by which we ſhall receive thoſe things, but alſo ſubmitting the very things themſelves to his good pleaſure, whether we ſhall receive them at all, or no. Nor doth conditional prayer hinder Faith, but looks to the rule. We may pray without doubting, though we pray with a condition; and when we are fulleſt of ſubmiſſion, we may be fulleſt of confidence; yea, without ſubmiſſion in thoſe caſes there can be no true confidence.

Fourthly, Prayer is pure, when the end which we aim at is pure: The end denominates every action, as to the quality or goodneſs of it. The great end of prayer, as of all other actions, and without which, neither thoſe, nor this, can be called *pure*, is, *the glory of God. Hallowed be thy Name,* is the firſt prayer, and that hath influence into all our prayers: we muſt pray for all, that God may be glorified, and pray for nothing, that our luſts may be ſatiſfied. Though we may pray that our wants may be ſupplyed (that may be an end) yet never that our luſts may be ſatisfied (*James* 4.3.) *Ye ask and receive not, becauſe ye ask amiſs:* Where was the fault which the Apoſtle found, and ſpecified in thoſe prayers? Not in the object, they prayed to God; not in the matter, they prayed for things lawful; not in the form, they prayed in the Name of Chriſt; but the fault was in the end, *Ye ask amiſs, that ye may beſtow it on your luſts.* It is poſſible for a man to pray, not only for evil things, but for good things; and not only for outward good things, but for ſpiritual good things, to beſtow upon his luſts; ſome pray for ſpiritual gifts, to beſtow them on their luſts, pride, vain-glory, and covetouſneſs; yea, it is poſſible for a man to pray for grace, to beſtow it on his luſt (ſo Hypocrites do) though it be impoſſible for any man, who indeed receives grace, to beſtow it upon his luſt: Let your end be pure, that your prayers may be pure alſo.

Fifthly, Prayer is pure when it is mingled with, *and put up in Faith. By Faith* Abel *offered a more excellent ſacrifice then* Cain (*Heb.* 11.4.) and *without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God* (*Verſ.* 6.) Prayer is our coming to God, *He that comes to God, muſt believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* Faith takes hold of Chriſt, by whom only our prayers are purified; and therefore there can be no pure prayer without Faith. As God purifies our hearts by Faith, ſo our prayers are purified by Faith. Faith doth not only take hold of God for the granting of our prayer, in which ſence 'tis ſaid (*James* 1. 6.) *If any one ask, let him ask in Faith;* that is, That he ſhall receive: But Faith takes hold of Chriſt for the purifying of our prayer, that ſo it may come up with acceptance before God. *He is of purer eyes then to behold evil, he cannot look on iniquity* (to approve of it, or to like it, *Hab.* 1.13.) Seeing then there is much iniquity in our holy things; we muſt do all by our High Prieſt, who (as the typical High Prieſt did for the Children of *Iſrael, Exod.*28. 38.) bears the iniquity of our holy things, that we (as they) may be accepted before the Lord.

Sixthly, *That, and only that, is pure prayer, which is breathed in, and breathed out, by the Spirit of God. Edifie your ſelves in your moſt holy Faith, pray in the holy Ghoſt* (*Jude, verſ.* 20.) Or, *Praying by the holy Ghoſt* (as ſome tranſlate) that is, by the ſtrength and help of the holy Ghoſt. We cannot make pure prayer with our own breath, parts, and gifts; the holy Spirit breaths holy prayer into, and draws it out of our hearts: As we know not what to believe or do aright, till the Spirit teacheth us; ſo *we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us* (Rom. 8. 26.) The Spirit maketh interceſſion, not as Chriſt doth; the Spirit doth not mediate between God and us; but as it is the office of Chriſt to intercede for us with God; ſo it is the office of the holy Ghoſt to make thoſe interceſſions in us, which we put up to God: So that the Spirit is ſaid to make interceſſion for us, becauſe the interceſſions and prayers which we make, are made by the Spirit; the Spirit forms them in us. As ſome duller Scholars in a School, who cannot make their Exerciſes, get their Exerciſes made for them by thoſe that are more pregnant; ſo the Spirit makes interceſſion for us. We are dull, and low, and ſtraitened, we cannot make a prayer, the Spirit makes them for us in our hearts: Hence it is ſaid in the beginning of the Verſe, *The Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities:* The Greek word ſignifieth to help, as a Nurſe helpeth a little Child to go, or as a weak decripid old man is upholden by a ſtaff, or rather (as the compoſition of the word implyes) *The Spirit helpeth together:* And then it is a Metaphor taken from thoſe who lift a weight, or a piece of Timber (too heavy for one) together: The Spirit lends us his hand in this duty; and they who have received grace, act alſo with the Spirit: Thus, the *Spirit helpeth together:* The Spirit and a Believer are both at it, to carry on this praying work; yet all that ſtrength which we put to the work flowes from the Spirit; who as he raiſeth us when we are quite fallen, ſo he aſſiſts us when we are raiſed, and then we make good work, pure work of it in prayer.

συναντιλαμβάνεται, particula συν, ad nos laborantes refertur, quorũ tamen vis omnis ab eo ſpiretu proficiſcitur, qui ſicut nos penitus collapſos erexit ita etiam erectos regit; ideoque dicitur ipſe viciſſim onus attollere ne ſub eo fatiſcamus. Bez. in Epiſt. ad Rom.

Laſtly, *That is a pure prayer which comes from a pure perſon:* And there is a double purity of the perſon neceſſary to a pure prayer.

Firſt, There is the purity of his ſtate; he muſt be a converted, and regenerated perſon, otherwiſe his prayer is abominable, though he ſhould be right in as many of the forementioned requiſites, as it is poſſible for an unregenerate man to be; as ſuppoſe he not only prayeth to God, and for ſuch things as are agreeable to the will of God, but alſo (as he thinks) for the glory of God; yet the mans prayer is impure, becauſe himſelf is impure: God hath reſpect to the perſon, before he hath reſpect to his ſupplication. (*Prov.* 15.8.) *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to God; but the prayer of the upright is his delight:* And again, *He that turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer, ſhall be abomination* (Prov. 28.9.)

Secondly, As there muſt be purity of ſtate, before there can be a pure prayer; ſo alſo purity of life; that is, he muſt be renewed in purity, not lying or continuing in any ſin. (1 *Tim.* 2.8.) *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubtings. Holy hands,* note the purity of our actions, as a *holy heart* notes the purity of our ſtate: To lift up the hands is to pray, the ſign being put for the thing ſignified: The meaning is, let your prayers be holy. Firſt, *Without wrath* to men; come not to ſeek the favour of God, with anger and revenge in thy heart againſt man. Secondly, Pray *without doubting*; that reſpects God, and is oppoſed to Faith: As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, Pray both in actual Faith and Love. Yet the Greek word (διαλόγισμος) there uſed, is rendered by ſome, diſceptation, or wrangling; as if the Apoſtle had in that ſpecified one effect of wrath, 'Tis expounded alſo by others, for any internal diſtraction, or diſtemper of the mind; for the mind of man is often carryed away from God in prayer, and maintains ſecret Dialogiſmes, Diſcourſes, and Conferences, in, and with it ſelf, when it ſhould be wholly taken up with God.

The covetous mans heart talks of gold, and the voluptuous mans heart talks of pleaſures, when he ſeems to pray: yea, theſe Fowls will often come down upon the Sacrifice of an *Abraham*, only as ſoon as he eſpies them, he drives them away; yet by theſe interruptions in prayer, as well as by any ſinful action unrepented of before prayer, the holineſs of prayer, or the lifting up of holy hands in prayer, is hindered and defaced, even in thoſe, whoſe perſons are holy. *David* was a man that was pure in ſtate, he was a converted perſon; yet he ſaith (*Pſal.* 66. 18.) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayers.* Though I am pure in ſtate, yet if I am impure in life, the ear of God will ſhut againſt my ſuits (*Iſa.* 1. 14, 15.) God rejects the prayers of his own people, becauſe their hands were full of blood; and hence his counſel, *Waſh you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes,* &c. *Come now let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord* (*Verſ.* 18.) As if he had ſaid, While I ſee your ſins, I cannot hear your prayers; while your iniquities are before mine eyes, your ſupplications cannot enter into mine ear, nor will I anſwer them. How can any ſoul expect with Faith, that God ſhould do what he requeſts, when he will not do what God commands? Or that God ſhould fulfil our deſires, while we in any thing neglect his rules?

As the prayer of an unholy perſon is turned into ſin; ſo the ſin of a holy perſon may cauſe the Lord to turn away his prayer: Then take that counſel of the Apoſtle, writing to, and of Saints (*Heb.* 10. 22.) *Let us draw nigh to God with a true heart, in full aſſurance of Faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and our bodies waſhed with pure water:* There is a twofold evil conſcience.

Firſt, That which lives in any known ſin unrepented of.

Secondly, That which is unquiet and unſetled about the pardon of thoſe ſins which we have repented of.

We ſhould get both theſe evil conſciences, but eſpecially the firſt, cured and removed by the ſprinkling of the blood of Chriſt, before we draw nigh to God in prayer; as alſo *our bodies waſhed in pure water*, which is either an alluſion to the old Ceremonies among the *Jews*, who before they came to worſhip at the Tabernacle, purged themſelves with divers outward waſhings, leading them to the conſideration of that moral purity, both of heart and life, in which God is to be worſhipped; or it is an alluſion to Baptiſm in ſpecial, in which there is an external waſhing of the body, ſignifying the waſhing of the ſoul by the blood of Chriſt, and by the effectual working of the Spirit: The ſum of all is, unleſs the perſon be pure, his prayer is not pure. Theſe are the ingredients which conſtitute pure prayer; all theſe met in *Job*, and therefore he concluded, not only confidently, but truly, *My prayer is pure.*

And as theſe are the ingredients of prayer, ſo they are all neceſſary ingredients; ſo neceſſary, that if any one of them be wanting, the whole prayer is impure: They are neceſſary by a double neceſſity.

Firſt, As commanded by God in prayer.

Secondly, As means without which man cannot attain his end in prayer.

The general end of prayer, is, that prayer may be heard, accepted, and anſwered; God hears, accepts, anſwers, no one prayer, without ſome concurrence of all theſe. The Incenſe of the Ceremonial Law was a ſhadow of prayer, which is ſo great a duty of the Moral Law: But if this Incenſe had not been made exactly according to the will of God, both for the matter and the manner of the compoſition, preſcribed (*Exod.* 30. 34, 35, 36.) If after it had been thus made, it had not alſo been offered according to thoſe rules given (*Levit.* 16. 12, 13.) it had been *an abomination to the Lord*; or as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 66. 3.) *Such a burning of Incenſe had been but as the bleſſing of an Idol.* We may conclude alſo, That, if prayer be either compoſed, or preſented in any other way then God himſelf hath directed, it is not only turned away, but turned into ſin. *That man hath ſpoken a great word, who can ſay* (*in* Job's *ſence*) *My prayer is pure.*

Thus *Job* juſtifies the prayer he made to God, and maintains his juſtice towards men. *There is no injuſtice in my hands, alſo my prayer is pure:* A high profeſſion, yet in the next words he goes higher, and makes both an imprecation againſt himſelf, if it were not thus with him, and an appeal to God for his teſtimony, that it was thus with him.

VERS. 18, 19.

O Earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.

Alſo now behold my witneſs is in Heaven, and my record is on high.

JOB having (with much confidence) aſſerted the integrity of his heart, and the righteouſneſs of his way, both towards God and Man, confirms what he had thus confidently aſſerted, by a double Argument.

Firſt, By a vehement imprecation (*Verſ.* 18,) *O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.*

Secondly, By a free appeal, an appeal to God himſelf (*Verſ.* 19.) *Alſo now behold my witneſs is in Heaven, and my record is on high:* He ſhews the neceſſity of this appeal (*Verſ.* 20.) *My Friends ſcorn me*; therefore I am conſtrained to go to God. When men have done us wrong, and will not do us right, it is both time and duty to appeal to God. Upon this ground *Job* appeals, and he concludes (according to our tranſlation) his appeal with a paſſionate, yet holy wiſh (*Verſ.* 21.) *O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his Neighbour.* The reaſon both of his appeal and wiſh, is given further (*Verſ.* 22.) he looked on himſelf, as a man ſtanding upon the very confines of death, the grave was ready for him; therefore he begs, that this buſineſs might be diſpatched, and his integrity cleared before he dyed. He was loth to go out of the world, like a candle, burnt down to the ſocket, with an ill ſavour. He that hath lived unſtained in his reputation, cannot well bear it, to dye with a blot; and therefore he will be diligent by all due means to maintain the credit which he hath got, and to recover what he hath loſt: This was the reaſon of *Job*'s importunity diſcovered in theſe two Verſes, now further to be opened.

Eſt juramenti deprecatorii forma, quo aſſeverat nullius ſibi iniquitatis conſcium eſſe. Aben. Ezra.

Verſe 18. **O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.**

There are two branches of this imprecation, or rather theſe make two diſtinct imprecations.

The firſt in theſe words, *O earth, cover not thou my blood.*

The ſecond in theſe, *Let my cry have no place.*

Job engages all upon the truth of what he had ſaid, being willing that his worſt might be ſeen, and his beſt not heard, if he had not ſpoken truth.

O earth, cover not thou my blood.] *Job* ſpeaks pathetically, or as ſome render him, Poetically, while he beſpeaks the earth, and makes the inanimate creature his hearer. The ſacred Pen-men do often turn their ſpeech to the Heavens, and to the Earth: Thus *Moſes* (*Deut.* 32. 2.) in the Preface of his Sermon, his laſt Sermon to that people, *Give ear O ye Heavens, and I will ſpeak, and hear O earth the words of my mouth.* So the Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 1. 2.) *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth, I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me:* God ſpeaks to that which hath no ears to hear, either to reprove thoſe who have ears, but hear not; or to raiſe up and provoke their attention in hearing. Thus *Job, O earth,* &c. as if the earth were able to take his complaint, and return

Poeticum ſane & patheticum in dolore aut re alia graviſſima, res mutas mortuaſve, omni ſenſu audituque carentes teſtes & auditores compellare.

an anſwer; as if the earth were able to make inquiſition, and bring in a verdict about his blood.

O earth [cover] not thou my blood.] The word ſignifies not only common, but a twofold metaphorical covering.

Firſt, Covering by way of diſſimulation; to diſſemble a matter, is to cover a matter: In that ſence *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 12. 16.) *A fools wrath is preſently known, but a prudent man covereth ſhame:* That is, He diſſembleth his wrath, or his anger, he will not let it alway break forth, for that would be a ſhame to him.

Secondly, The word ſignifies to cover by forgetfulneſs; That which is not remembred, is hid or covered. (*Eccleſ.* 6. 4.) *He cometh in with vanity* (ſpeaking of man) *and departeth in darkneſs, and his name ſhall be covered with darkneſs:* That is, He ſhall be forgotten, he ſhall be as if he had not been. And thus it is applyed to the pardon of ſin (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) Sin is vailed with the worthineſs and obedience of Chriſt, as with a garment, and is to God as a thing forgotten, or out of mind, when once it is forgiven: In both theſe ſences *Job* ſeems to beſpeak the earth, *O earth, cover not my blood:* That is, If thou haſt any of my blood, do not diſſemble it, bring it forth, be not as if thou knew-eſt of no ſuch matter. As ſimulation makes that to be, which is not; ſo diſſimulation makes that not to be, which is.

Sanguis terra tegitur quando facinus diſſimulatur, nec vindictam expoſcit.

Again, *Cover not my blood:* That is, Forget it not, if thou haſt ſuch a record upon thy File, let it be continued and remembred, that the Generations to come may judge how I have been dealt with by this preſent Age, or how I have dealt in it.

O earth, cover not my [blood.] But what is his [*blood*] which he would not have covered? His blood may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Paſſively, for his ſufferings and grievous afflictions, which were even to blood: The Apoſtle tells the Hebrews, *Ye have not reſiſted to blood, ſtriving againſt ſin* (*Heb.* 12. 4.) There is a threefold ſtrife againſt ſin.

Firſt, Againſt ſin already acting and moving in our ſelves.

Secondly, There is a ſtriving againſt that ſin which others move us to act, whether by promiſes, or by threatenings.

Thirdly, There is a ſtriving againſt that ſin which others act.

The Apoſtle (as I conceive) intends one of, or both the latter ſorts of ſtriving againſt ſin, which is indeed a ſtriving againſt ſinners; and in this ſtrife he ſaith, *Ye have not reſiſted unto blood;* ye have (I grant) reſiſted, to the loſs of your goods, yea, and to the loſs of your credit and reputation in the World (*Chap.* 10. 33, 34.) but know, ye are not come to the heat of the Battel, till your bodies bleed; ye have loſt no blood yet, *ſtriving againſt ſin. Job* reſiſted, or rather ſubmitted to blood; he had loſt blood, in the great fight of affliction which he indured; he was wounded all over. Now, ſay ſome, he cryes, *O earth, cover not my blood:* That is, Theſe my bloody ſufferings; what I have endured, let it be remembred. But we cannot well accommodate this interpretation to the Text: For, firſt, there may be as much vanity in deſiring the evils we have ſuffered, as the good we have done, ſhould be known: We muſt let God alone to erect the monument of our ſufferings; that muſt be none of our care.

Ne tegas ſanguinem meum. i. e. injuriam mihi latam qua innocens pereo. Merc.

Secondly, We cannot ſo much as ſuſpect that *Job* would maintain the memory of his ſufferings againſt God; yet it was he who ſmote *Job,* though by the hand of Satan, and wicked men: This *Job* had acknowledged more then once, with much humble ſubmiſſion, and therefore he doth not deſire that his blood might be forth-coming in a way of conteſtation with him. Further, If we look only to thoſe inſtruments of his affliction, who had indeed done him wrong: Surely the ſpirit of this good man; as it was far from meditating revenge, ſo his ſcope and buſineſs here, was rather to bring himſelf to a tryal then them, rather to have his own innocency cleared, then their guilt proved: And therefore we have called theſe words, an imprecation upon himſelf, in caſe he were guilty, not an accuſation of their guiltineſs. In purſuance of which general ſence, we muſt expound blood under another notion. And therefore,

Secondly, Blood may be taken actively, and ſo it falls under a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, Blood is put for the general ſinfulneſs or corruption of mans nature, as alſo for any particular ſin, as it is wrapt up in mans natural corruption. One of the Ancients interprets *David*'s prayer (*Pſal.* 51. 14.) *Deliver me from blood, or bloods,* or (as we render) *from blood-guiltineſs, O God;* not of that ſpecial ſin, or not of that only, the death of *Uriah,* but of all ſin, which (ſaith he) therefore bears that title, becauſe it flows from the polluted nature of man, which the Scripture calls fleſh and blood. That of the Prophet is more proper to this point (*Ezek.* 16. 6.) *When thou waſt in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee live:* That is, When thou was wrapt in, and defiled with thy ſin and miſery, then I had pity on thee, and ſpake life into thee. Every ſoul tumbles in blood till it is ſprinkled with blood; our blood is our filthineſs, and the blood of Chriſt is our holineſs, freeing us at once from the guilt, and from the ſtain of ſin. This corruption of nature, together with that iſſue of it, the tranſgreſſions of life, may be called blood, for two reaſons.

Auguſtine.

Firſt, Becauſe it deſerves death, and is a ſtate of death; we are dead in ſin, and *the wages of ſin is death;* and as any kind of death may be expreſſed by blood, ſo a violent death is the pouring out of blood.

Secondly, It may be called blood, becauſe ſin is expiated by blood, and *without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion,* no not of the leaſt ſin.

Secondly, *Blood* ſignifies ſome notorious ſin or ſins. Great ſins are not only bloody ſins, but (in Scripture language) blood. (*Iſa.* 1. 15.) *When ye make many prayers, I will not hear:* Why? *For your hands are full of blood:* That is, Of great and foul crimes: For ſhould we take blood there, for any ſin, according to the former interpretation, then whoſe prayer ſhall be heard? Who is it that ſins not? Yea, who is not full of ſin? So that by *hands full of blood,* he means hands ſtained with great ſins; or with ſins, if ſmall in themſelves, yet (which greatens the leaſt ſin) loved and unrepented of (*Ezek.* 9. 9.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, The iniquity of the Houſe of* Iſrael *and* Judah *is exceeding great, and the Land is full of blood:* That is, Of all kind of wickedneſs (*Ezek.* 24. 7.) *For her blood is in the midſt of her; ſhe ſet it upon the top of a rock; ſhe poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with duſt:* Which words deſcribe, as the ſin of *Jeruſalem,* ſo her impudence in ſinning. *Her blood was in the midſt of her;* it was not caſt behind the door, or put into a corner, *She ſet it upon a rock;* and not only ſo, but upon *the top of a rock;* as if ſhe not only cared who ſaw it, but had taken care that all might ſee it; *She poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with duſt:* In which words the Prophet alludes to that Law (*Levit.* 17. 13.) commanding that the blood of a beaſt ſhould be poured out, and covered with duſt. And Again (*Hoſ.* 4. 2.) *By ſwearing, and killing, and ſtealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood:* That is, One wickedneſs is heaped upon another. There is an aggregation, or a combination of many ſins together; their ſins are ſo thick ſet, that there is not the leaſt ſpace, either of time or place between them; they ſin continually; and they ſin contiguouſly; ſin toucheth ſin.

Sanguinis nomine intelligitur peccatum graviſſimū, ac deteſtandum facinus.

Aggregant peccata, peccatis. Chald.

Thirdly, By *blood* in this active ſence, we may underſtand thoſe ſpecial ſins which draw blood; the ſin of oppreſſion, and the ſin of murder. The Scriptures laſt cited include theſe principally, though not theſe alone, or not theſe excluſively to other ſins. Sins of cruelty are often called blood by name; and ſuch are named bloody men, who commit ſuch things (*Pſal.* 55. 24.) *Blood-thirſty and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their dayes:* That is, Murderers and Oppreſſors ſhall not. When *Shimei* curſed *David,* he ſaid, *Go thou bloody man, thou Son of* Belial (2 *Sam.* 16. 7, 8.) He calls him bloody man, in reference to that particular act, with which *David* had ſtained his hands, *the murder of* Uriah. *Hab.* 2. 12. *Woe to him that buildeth a Town with blood, that ſtabliſheth a City with iniquity:* That is, By the iniquity of oppreſſion: He builds with blood, who, to ſet his own neſt on high, throws down the right, or takes away the lives of others. Under this third, as alſo the ſecond notion of blood, we may beſt interpret *Job*'s imprecation, *O earth, cover not thou my blood:* That is, The oppreſſions and cruelties which I have committed, if I have committed any. Some conceive that *Job* refers to the ſtory of *Cain* and *Abel* (*Gen.* 4. 10.) The earth would not cover *Cain's* blood; that is, the blood of *Abel* which *Cain* had ſpilt. *Eliphaz* told *Job* before in a third perſon, that his Tabernacle was a *Tabernacle of bribery*; as much as to ſay, That he had done wrong in his place, and had been a grinder of the faces of the poor. Now ſaith *Job*, *O earth, cover not my blood*; if I have been an oppreſſor, if I have drank the blood of the poor, or am guilty of ſuch like abominations, I deſire that the earth would not cover, or diſſemble it, but let it be publiſhed to my ſhame, and brought forth to my judgment. Mr. *Broughton's* note is full to this ſence, *If there be any injury in my hands, let the earth reveal it.* And the *Tygurine*, *O earth, do not conceal my capital crimes.*

Si quam cædem maleficiumvè quod objicitis patravi, illud revelet & teſtificetur terra. Jun.
O Tellus ne celes ſcelera mea capitalia. Tygur.

The ſecond branch of the imprecation falls croſs to this; for in this *Job* prayes, that his evil deeds might be diſcovered; in that he prays, that his very prayers (which were his beſt deeds) might not be accepted, if he had either been, or done, as was ſuſpected.

And let my cry have no place.] The word ſignifies a loud cry, a grievous cry, the cry of a man extreamly preſſed; yea, even utterly oppreſt: This cry is expounded three wayes.

Firſt, For the very cry of grief, or for a cry cauſed meerly by grief. *Let my cry have no place*: That is, Let not my pains and ſorrows, my groans and ſighs, in midſt of all theſe evils be regarded, either by God or Men, if I have done ſuch evils as I am accuſed of. 'Tis a great affliction which puts a man to his cry, whether to God or Man; but it is a greater affliction to cry and not to be heard, neither by God nor man: The cry of a poor man is then ſaid to have no place with a Judge, when he will not hear it, or take notice of it.

Secondly, Others expound this for the cry of ſin. Great ſins are called a cry, not only becauſe they make others cry, but becauſe themſelves are very clamorous and crying. Sin hath a tongue to ſpeak, and it hath teeth to bite: Every ſin ſpeaks, but ſome ſins have a loud voice, they cry, *The blood of thy Brother, which thou haſt ſpilt, cryes unto me* (ſaith God to *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 10.) The ſin of *Sodom* cryed up to Heaven (*Gen.* 18. 20.) Oppreſſion cauſeth a cry; ſo here, *Let my cry*, that is, my crying ſins, or the cry of my ſins, *have no place*; that is, none to hide, or ſhelter themſelves in: And then this clauſe of the imprecation is of the ſame ſence with the former, *O earth, cover not thou my blood.*

Clamat quia innocens effuſus eſt, & dicitur interpellare dominum, non proſecutione Eloquii ſed indignitate commiſſi Ambroſ.

Thirdly, By this cry we may underſtand *Job's* prayer, and that of two ſorts: Firſt, Prayers, Petitions, or complaints to men; let not any Friend regard my cry. Secondly, Prayers to God; for as there are crying ſins, ſo there are crying prayers; *The Lord ſaid to* Moſes, *Wherefore cryeſt thou unto me?* Exod. 14. 15. *Aſa* cryed unto the Lord (2 *Chron.* 14.) The *Ninevites* were commanded to cry mightily to God (*John* 3. 8.) and Chriſt himſelf prayed with ſtrong cryes (*Heb.* 5. 7.) As there are two things eſpecially which make ſins crying ſins.

Firſt, When they are earneſtly committed.
Secondly, When they are conſtantly committed.
So two things make prayers crying prayers:
Firſt, When we pray with earneſtneſs.
Secondly, When we pray with continuance, or perſeverance.

We find *David* often crying to God in prayer; ſo that when *Job* ſaith, *Let my cry have no place*; his meaning is, *Let not God hear my moſt earneſt prayer*: A dreadful imprecation! When we, who have no help on earth, ſhall wiſh that we may have none in Heaven neither; What can we wiſh worſe to our ſelves then this?

Ne in Cœlū efferatur ſuſcipiaturve clamor meus ſi ſim ejuſmodi. Jun.

From the words in general Obſerve, *It is lawful to uſe imprecations.*

Job did not ſin in this: There are imprecations of two ſorts.

Firſt, Upon others, when we wiſh them evil, or curſe them; this in ſome rare caſes may be done; *David* uſeth imprecations againſt the incorrigible enemies of the Church, and ſo may we; but in reference to perſonal injuries, the Goſpel-rule is, *Bleſs them that curſe you, pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you*, Matth. 5. 44.

Secondly, Upon our ſelves; ſuch are the imprecations intended in this point. *Job* calls down miſchief upon his own head, in both parts of the Verſe, *Let all my ſins be diſcovered, let all my prayers be refuſed, if ever I have done this thing.* Imprecations, or wiſhes of evil upon our ſelves may proceed upon a double ground.

Firſt, For the aſſuring of what we promiſe, or engage our ſelves to do: As to ſay, *I will do ſuch a thing, or I promiſe to do it; if I do it not, I wiſh evil may befal me*: This is to put our ſelves under a curſe, which we do at leaſt implicitely in taking any promiſſory Oath. There are two ſorts of Oaths.

Firſt, Aſſertory Oaths, when we affirm ſuch a thing to be true.

Secondly, Promiſſory Oaths, when we promiſe to do ſuch a thing, calling God to witneſs, and laying our ſelves under a penalty, if we do it not. This is expreſſed in ſome, and implyed in all ſolemn Oaths and Covenants. The preſent point extends not to this ſort of imprecations.

Secondly, Imprecations of penal evils may be uſed for the ſtronger denial, or diſavowing of any ſinful evil, of which we are ſuſpected, or with which we are directly charged. To this ſort of imprecations the preſent point is confined: This was *Job's* caſe, he was deeply charged to have done wickedly; and he as deeply denied that he had done ſo. Thus *David* imprecates evil upon himſelf (*Pſal.* 7. 3, 4, 5.) The title of the Pſalm ſhews the occaſion of it. *Shiggaion of David* (that is, *David's* variable, or delightful ſong, or *David's* ſolace) *concerning the words of* Cuſh *the* Benjamite: That is, Either of *Saul* himſelf, whoſe ill diſpoſition towards him he cloſely taxeth under the word *Cuſh*, which ſignifies a Blackmoor, or *Æthiopian*; or it may deſign ſome of *Saul's* Courtiers, who had done ill offices to *David*, and accuſed him of a conſpiracy, to take away *Saul's* life, as appears (1 *Sam.* 24. 9.) *And* David *ſaid to* Saul, *Wherefore heareſt thou mens words, ſaying, Behold* David *ſeeketh thy hurt.* Now *David* compoſed this Pſalm in his own vindication, and fears not to call down vengeance upon his own head, if he were guilty. *O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands* (that is, this iniquity, if I have done this) *If I have rewarded evil to him that was at peace with me* (what then? He imprecates) *Let mine enemy perſecute my ſoul and take it, yea, let him tread my life down to the earth, and lay mine honour in the duſt.* *David* layes all at ſtake, ſoul, and life, and honour, in the higheſt actings of holineſs towards God, and integrity towards man. He that is in *David's* caſe, and hath *David's* conſcience, may do the like, and fear no hurt. The Woman ſuſpected of adultery was by the Law (*Num.* 5.) to imprecate, and wiſh evil on her ſelf, if ſhe did not ſpeak true in denying it: For the Prieſt was commanded to bring the Woman, and to put the offering on her head, and then to give her the water of jealouſie to drink, ſaying, *This water which cauſeth the curſe, ſhall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to ſwell, and thy thigh to rot*; and the Woman was to anſwer, *Amen, Amen*: As if ſhe had ſaid, *I pray God this miſery may come upon me, in caſe I have been falſe, or unfaithful to my Husband.* Thus the Woman confirmed the curſe, and took it upon her ſelf, if ſhe were defiled; or teſtified her Faith in God, that he would clear her innocency, ſhe being not defiled; and therefore the word *Amen* was doubled.

And here it will not be impertinent to remember how the ſuperſtitious heart of man hath in times of former ignorance and darkneſs invented and adventured upon wayes of tryal in doubtful caſes, with ſome reſemblance to (poſſibly in imitation of) this appointment of God among the *Jews*.

The old *Saxons* had their *Ordeal*, which word ſignifies, *Due part*, or *Dome* and *Judgment*: There were four ſorts of *Ordeal*, by which when manifeſt proofs were wanting, they attempted (or indeed tempted God) to find out whether the party accuſed were guilty, or guiltleſs.

Verſteg. Reſtitut. of decayed *Intel. in Antiquit.* Chap: 3.

The firſt was by *Combat*, in which the perſon accuſing offered with the peril of his life at any weapon, to prove his accuſation: And if the perſon accuſed did refuſe the challenge, or did either yield, or was ſlain in the fight, he was without further evidence adjudged culpable.

The ſecond was by *Fire*, in which the perſons accuſed were to take red hot iron in their bare hands, or to go bare-foot and blindfold where red hot Irons were laid, and if they did either ſtep between them, or ſtepping upon them, felt no harm; this was a declaration of innocency.

The third tryal was made by *Hot boyling water*, into which if the perſon ſuſpected thruſting his naked Arm, found no evil effects, he was pronounced guiltleſs.

The fourth was *by cold water*; into which perſons accuſed, having a cord tyed about them, were caſt, and if they ſunk to the bottom, and continued a little there, till they were drawn up, they were held faultleſs; all theſe tryals were made with prayer and invocation upon the Name of God, that the truth might be made known.

Theſe cuſtoms drew their firſt breath from Paganiſm, and were continued by ſome who profeſſed Chriſtianity, till clearer light convinced them of their vanity, and unwarrantable boldneſs with the Name of God.

Now, as all imprecations uſed with theſe or the like Ceremonies and circumſtances invented by man are wicked and unlawful; ſo thoſe which are in themſelves lawful, are uſed by moſt unlawfully. And therefore I ſhall give ſome rules and bounds, beyond which we may not paſs, without ſinful preſumption.

Firſt, *An imprecation muſt be uſed only in very great, ſerious, and weighty matters*: Woe to thoſe who wiſh evil on, or curſe themſelves about trifles; ſome have been heard to wiſh themſelves *hanged, yea damned*, upon ſmall occaſions.

Secondly, It is not enough that the matter be great, and ſerious, unleſs it be done with ſerious deliberation, and ſelf-examination, as alſo with higheſt reverence of God, who knows our hearts, and will judge both our wayes and words.

Thirdly, It muſt be done with a deſire to honour God, as much as to exonerate our ſelves. *David* knew Gods Name was blaſphemed by thoſe who miſjudged him; *Here's a man that would be thought ſo holy, and religious before God; ſee how perfidious and diſloyal he is to his King.* When *David* ſaw the honour of God concerned in him, he was bold to ſay, *Lord, if I have done this thing, let him perſecute my life and take it*; he hath perſecuted my life, but he could not take it hitherto; but let him take it, if this be ſo.

Fourthly, Be ſure that you are clear in the matter, and that you imprecate in truth; God is an avenger of falſhood, much more of ſtudied falſhood. It is hard to deprecate his wrath, when we have ſpoken falſly; ſurely then he will pour out his wrath upon their heads, who imprecate it, to cover their falſhood. The *Jews* accuſed Chriſt falſly, and as earneſtly prayed judgment againſt him, crying out to the Judge, *Let him be crucified*: But when they ſaw they could not prevail with importunity, and that *Pilate* (who was doubtful of the juſtice of their clamour) took water, and waſhed his hands, and ſaid, *Behold I am free from the blood of this man*; then in a rage they imprecate, *Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children* (Matth. 27. 25.) As if they had ſaid, Be not thou ſo ſcrupulous to condemn him, if thou thinkeſt him innocent, let the vengeance of his innocent blood fall upon us and our poſterity. When a man is accuſed rightly, and the Judge reſts unſatisfied, the Accuſer may ſay to ſatisfie the Judge, *Let his blood be upon my head*; I have ſpoke my conſcience, and the truth. The *Jews* accuſed Chriſt falſly, yet called for his blood upon their heads; therefore God gave them their wicked wiſh, and they lye under the weight of this imprecation to this very day. They prayed that the blood of Chriſt might be upon them, and it is upon them. As God pours the blood of Chriſt upon ſome in mercy, ſo upon others in wrath. The blood of Chriſt is upon Believers, to waſh and cleanſe them from their ſins; but the blood of Chriſt hath been upon the *Jews* to condemn and ſcatter them, as a vile people, all the World over for their ſin: The Lord hath been moſt exact in anſwering this cry, even in the very place where they made it. The Hiſtory of the *Jews* reports, that about thirty eight years after this dreadful curſe upon themſelves, *Herod* called the *Jews* together, and demanded a ſum of Money of them for making a *Water-courſe*, which they refuſing to give, he ſent for Souldiers to come ſecretly armed, who ſlew great multitudes of them in that place, where they cryed, *Let his blood be upon us*, &c. At another time *Florus*, who was General of the Common Souldiers, made a ſecond, and that a more bloody maſſacre of them there. And when *Jeruſalem* was taken by *Veſpaſian*, the blood of Chriſt was poured upon the heads of many hundred thouſands, who were ſlain by Fire and Sword, Famine and Peſtilence; beſides more then ſeven thouſand of them, who were led captive: And the Story informs us further, that *Cæſar* ſold the younger and common ſort of thoſe Captives at that contemptible rate of *thirty a penny*; as they or their Fathers ſold Chriſt for *thirty pence*, ſo by the juſt judgment of God thirty of them were ſold for a penny. There was never any people in the World, who taſted more juſtly, or more deeply of that cup of ſelf-curſing then the *Jews* have done; yet many perſons have taſted deeply of it too beſides the *Jews*. This ſin hath ſo much, not only of wickedneſs, but boldneſs in it, that God never lets it go altogether unpuniſhed, though (being repented of) it may be pardoned. Maſter *Perkins*, in his Book *Of the right government of the Tongue*, touching upon this point, tells of certain Engliſh Souldiers in the time of King *Edward* the ſixth, who were caſt upon the French ſhore by a ſtorm; in which ſtreſs they went to prayer, that they might be delivered; but one Souldier, inſtead of prayer, cryed out, *Gallows take thy right, or claim thy due*; and when he came home he was hanged indeed. Mr. *Fox*, in his Book of *Acts and Monuments*, hath a notable example to this purpoſe, of one *John Peters, Keeper of Newgate*, who was wont to at every ordinary thing he ſpoke (whether it were true or falſe, it made (with him) no great matter) to averr it with this imprecation, if it be not ſo, *I pray God I may rot before I dye*; and ſo it came to paſs. I might give many inſtances of ſuch imprecations which God hath followed with ſevereſt vengeance: I ſhall add one more which is freſh in the memory of many yet living, of a *Gentleman of quality, a Knight, that ſuffered at the Tower-hill, about the death of Sir Thomas Overbury*, who confeſſed it was juſt with God that he ſhould undergo that ignominious death; for oft in gaming (ſaid he) I have uſed this wiſh, *I pray God I be hanged if it be not ſo*. I will conclude this point with a nearer inſtance, *A Woman who accidentally came into the Congregation while this word was preached, did afterwards by writing certifie me, that ſhe being convinced in conſcience of her ſin in wiſhing evil upon her ſelf, thereby to cover a ſin, which ſhe had committed, but denyed, did feel the ſad effects of it according to her wiſh, begging earneſt prayers that it might be forgiven her, and that God would be entreated to take off his hand.*

Sir Gervaiſe Elloways.

Let thoſe wretches hear and fear, and do no more ſo preſumptuouſly, who fear not to wiſh, *The Devil take them*, and *God damn them*, leſt indeed God let the Devil looſe upon them, and take them at their word. And here it may be obſerved, that ſuch as are moſt guilty are moſt apt to imprecate vengeance upon themſelves, that they may appear guiltleſs. They have no way left to perſwade others, that they are good, or have not done evil, but by wiſhing evil to themſelves. Such is the ſtupidity of a miſled conſcience, that when it is deepeſt in ſin, it dares defie Gods juſtice to gain an opinion among men, of its own innocency.

O earth, cover not thou my blood.

More particularly, Obſerve,

Great ſins, bloody ſins, eſpecially this ſin of ſhedding innocent blood, ſhall not paſs undiſcovered.

God will give a tongue to the earth, he will make ſpeechleſs creatures ſpeak, rather then blood ſhall be concealed. Blood may be concealed a long time, but blood ſhall not alwayes be concealed (*Gen.* 4. 7.) *What haſt thou done? The voice of thy Brothers Blood cryeth to me from the ground*: The blood had no voice, and the ground was ſilent; blood hath no more voice of its own, then water hath, or then a Fiſh that lives in the water hath; theſe did not ſpeak formally: but the Lord ſpeaks thus to ſhew that he will certainly bring bloody ſins, chiefly the ſin of blood, to light. The juſtice of God in all Ages hath ſent out his Writ of enquiry after bloody men, and for the blood of the innocent (*Pſal.* 9. 12.) *When he maketh inquiſition for blood, he remembreth them, he forgetteth not the cry of the poor.*

But doth not the Lord make inquiſition for all ſin? Or is there any ſin that God doth not enquire after?

Surely no, there was never any ſin committed in the World, but the Lord hath inquired after it; ſin ſhall not be loſt, God will find it out, and keep it upon record: But when it is ſaid, *God makes inquiſition for blood*, it argues the greatneſs of that ſin: For *while that act of God, which extendeth to every ſin, is appropriated to ſome one particular ſin, it is an argument that God takes ſpecial notice of it, or that it is a very provoking ſin:* Though God makes inquiſition for all ſin, yet as if he would let all other ſins paſs unſought, and un-enquired after, it is ſaid only of this ſin, that he *makes inquiſition* for it. We find not the like expreſſion about any other particular ſin in all the Book of God; though it be a truth, that he inquires for all ſin.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Innocency fears no diſcovery.*

Come who will, Angels from Heaven, Devils from Hell, Men on Earth, let all Creatures be ſummoned into one Jury of grand Inqueſt, an innocent perſon will neither run nor hide his head for it: He whoſe heart bears witneſs with him, fears no witneſs that can be brought againſt him. While Conſcience acquits, the matter is not much who accuſeth, or condemns: He that is righteous knows that all his ſins are covered by the free grace of God in the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt; and he knows that he hath not covered his ſin as *Adam* by excuſes; nor ſewed the Fig-leaves of carnal reaſonings together, to hide his nakedneſs; he knows alſo that he lives not in any known ſin, nor hath wickedly departed from the Lord. Now becauſe in all theſe reſpects he knows nothing by himſelf, therefore he cares not who knows him; he calls not for Masks, or Viſors, for Curtains, or coverings, to obſcure or diſguiſe himſelf, or his actions under, either from the ſight of God or Man, but is willing to ſtand forth in the open light. For though the beſt of men may have done ſome act, which is not fit for the open light, yet conſidering the whole frame of their hearts and lives towards God, together with what hath paſt between God and their ſouls about that act; they are not afraid that the worſt act which ever they have done ſhould ſtand forth in the open light; and as for thoſe crimes which men uncharitably charge upon them, every honeſt heart ſpeaks boldly the ſence of this firſt part of *Job*'s imprecation, *O earth, cover not thou my blood.*

From the ſecond branch of *Job*'s imprecation, *Let my cry have no place,*

Obſerve, *Not to have prayer heard and accepted by God, is the greateſt miſery that can befal man.*

God is the laſt refuge of a diſtreſſed ſoul; and the means by which we make God our refuge, or fly to him for refuge, is believing, and fervent prayer: Prayer is a duty, and yet it is a priviledge; it is a priviledge, not only to receive an anſwer of prayer, but to put up our requeſts in prayer; he therefore that asks a ſtop upon his own prayers, hath at once asked a ſtop upon all his mercies; he cannot look to be relieved, who tells God he doth not look to be heard; and when prayer hath no place of acceptance in Heaven, we can have no place of contentment on the Earth: Upon this account we may conclude,

That, *Man cannot beſpeak any thing worſe for himſelf, then not to be heard when he ſpeaks to God.*

As it is one of the higheſt honours done to God, that men make prayers to him; ſo it is one of the deepeſt afflictions of man, for God not to hear his prayers: Such was *Saul*'s condition (2 *Sam.* 28.) *God doth not anſwer me, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets:* He could get no anſwer from God, his cry had no place: This troubled him more then the invaſion of the *Philiſtims. I am ſore diſtreſſed* (ſaith he) *the Philiſtims make war upon me, and God is departed from me.* When trouble comes, and God goes away, man is in a woful eſtate. We have no promiſe to receive unleſs we ask; and though we do ask, we cannot receive, unleſs our prayer be received: God receives the prayer of man, before man receives any thing from God in prayer. All our treaſure lyes in Heaven; our comfort is in Heaven, our protection is in Heaven; and prayer is the meſſenger which we ſend to Heaven in the Name of Chriſt for all things, or, for whatſoever elſe we need on earth. Now if prayer cannot get in, if God will not hear prayer, if he ſend back our meſſenger without audience, what can we receive?

The ſinfulneſs of man appears in nothing more then in this, That he calleth not upon God (*Pſal.* 14. 4.) *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord:* Now as the ſin of man appears exceedingly in not calling upon God; ſo the wrath of God appears exceedingly in not hearing man when he calls (*Prov.* 1. 20.) *Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me. God will pour out wrath upon the Families that call not upon his Name* (Jer. 10. 25.) but he pours out moſt wrath upon thoſe Families whom he hears not, when they call upon his Name. All our mercies are ſhut out at once, when prayer is ſhut out: nor ſhall that perſon have place or room in Gods heart, whoſe *cry hath no place in his ear.*

Holy *Job* was ſenſible enough of this, nor durſt he have imprecated, that his cry ſhould have no place, but that (being conſcious of no evil) he was aſſured that his cry had place; and therefore as in the ſincerity of his ſoul he made that imprecation; ſo in the confidence of his ſoul, he proceeds to make his *Appeal* to God in the next words.

Verſe 19. **Alſo now, behold my witneſs is in Heaven, and my record is on high.**

As if he had ſaid, *I fear no evidence that can be brought againſt me on earth, and I rejoyce in the witneſs I have in Heaven: though I have none to teſtifie for me here, yet I have one that will teſtifie for me above: My witneſs is in Heaven, and my record is on high.*

Some conceive, that as *Job* had ſpoken to the earth before, ſo now he ſpeaks to Heaven, *O earth, cover not my blood: O Heaven, witneſs for me.* But he ſaith not, my witneſs is Heaven, but my witneſs is in Heaven; nor doth he call the Heavens to witneſs for him; but he calls him who is in Heaven to witneſs, and that is God.

Utitur teſtificatione cœli poſtquam terræ teſtimonium produxit. Eugub.

There are two branches of this Appeal, and they both intend the ſame thing. *My witneſs is in Heaven, and my record is on high.* The words *witneſs* and *record*, are of the ſame ſignification, though they differ in the letter: The one is properly an Hebrew word, and the other Syriack: When *Jacob* and *Laban* were in that conteſt (*Gen.* 31. 47.) *Jacob* took a Stone, and ſet up a Pillar for a witneſs, *And* Jacob *ſaid to his Brethren, Gather ſtones, and they made an heap, and they did eat there upon the heap, and* Laban *called it* Jegar-ſahadatha, *that is, a heap of witneſſes* (as it is in the Margin) *but* Jacob *called it* Galeed, *or* Gilead: *Jacob* ſpeaking the pure Hebrew, and *Laban* the Syriack language, they take in both the words of *Job*'s Appeal, *My witneſs is in Heaven, my record is on high.*

Idem bis dicit conſcientiæ ſuæ integræ declarandæ cauſa. Lav.

סהד *Synonymum eſt* עד Hieron. in Trad.

Job ſpeaks the ſame thing twice, to ſhew how ſtrongly he believed that the Lord would be witneſs for him, *My witneſs is in Heaven, my record is on high.*

Eſt forma juramenti, quo deū invocat innocentiæ ſuæ teſtem atque conſcientiæ ſpectatorem. Cajet.

Heaven and **high** are the ſame, as **witneſs** and **record** are. And when he ſaith, *on high*, or in the high place; he uſeth not the word *Bamoth* by which thoſe *high places* are expreſſed, wherein the falſe gods were worſhipped, or the true God falſely: *Job* puts that word into his Appeal, which belongs properly to God, and ſignifies in Scripture, the place of his glorious reſidence. *Job's record* was not only *on high*, but (*Bemerumim*, the Hebrew is Plural) *in the heights:* Some tranſlate it in the Superlative, not (*in excelſis*) *on high*, but (*in altiſſimis*) *in the higheſt:* As if he had ſaid, *My witneſs is above all witneſſes*, and therefore he is a witneſs above all exception. And *Job* did well, for his purpoſe, to ſay his *record was on high*; not only becauſe of the dignity of that which is high, but for the advantage which he hath, who is on high, or in the higheſt, to be a witneſs. God is ſaid to be a witneſs in Heaven, or on high, to ſhew how eaſily he can obſerve and take notice of thoſe things which are below: God hath eyes infinitely pure and piercing, he beholds all things, and he beholds them from on high, as from a watch-tower, which renders the object more obvious to the eye: The ſight is ſoon intercepted upon a level: but, *The Lord* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 14. 2.) *looked down from Heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand and ſeek God:* If but one had ſought God, God had found him out; but the report which he makes upon that ſurvey, tells us, *They are all gone aſide, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good, no not one* (Ver. 3.)

במרומים *In excelſis, malim in altiſſimis, quia excelſa vocantur quæ Ebræis* במות *in quibus ſacrificabant idolis. Cæterum* מרום *proprie de Deo uſurpatur & de cœlo, de Deo in ſingulari numero, de cœlo in utroque.* Druſ.

Dicitur Deus teſtis in excelſis propter locum aptiſſimū ad contemplandum tanquā in ſublimi ſpecula quicquid agitur. Pined.

Further he ſaith, *My witneſs is in Heaven, or on high*; implying, that he was ſuch a witneſs as was able to protect him; a witneſs who is above all fear, and who needs no favour. Some witneſſes are not only men of no ſtate, but of no conſcience. *Such underlings will be hirelings* upon Oath againſt the truth, and are ready to teſtifie any thing for hope of gain, or for fear of a frown: *My witneſs* (ſaith *Job*) *is in Heaven, my record is on high*; ſuch a witneſs he is as cannot be corrupted by gifts, ſuch as hath no need of any mans gifts, ſeeing he gives to all men life and breath, and all things.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That as God is the Judge of all men, ſo he is their witneſs.*

God is the Judge of all the earth, and God is the witneſs of all the earth too (*Jer.* 29. 23.) *Becauſe they have committed villany in* Iſrael, *and have committed adultery with their neighbours Wives, and have ſpoken lying words in my name, that I have not commanded them; even I know, and am a witneſs, ſaith the Lord:* He ſaith not, I know, and am Judge; but I know, and am Witneſs.

Let no man hope to eſcape the judgment of God, becauſe there is none to witneſs againſt him: for if God hath not the witneſs of man, if our ſin be a ſecret to all the World, yet God hath alwayes two Witneſſes.

Firſt, *Our own conſcience.*

Secondly, *Himſelf.*

An earthly Judge muſt not be a Witneſs; his duty is to give ſentence, not to give evidence; he muſt determine according to what is alledged, and proved upon teſtimony given; but he cannot give teſtimony; he cannot be Judge and Party too: But God is ſo *tranſcendently Soveraign*, that he is both Judge and Party, he pronounceth ſentence, and gives in evidence; Chriſt is called, *The faithful, and the true Witneſs* (Rev. 3. 14.) And yet, *All judgment is given into his hand* (John 5. 22, 27.) God judgeth upon his own knowledge, not upon the knowledge of others, and therefore as there can be no failing in, ſo no avoiding of his judgment.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is lawful to appeal to God, or to take God to witneſs.*

An Oath is the calling of God to witneſs, and whenſoever we appeal to God, or call him to witneſs, it is an Oath. The Apoſtle *Paul* took an Oath, when he ſaid (*Rom.* 1. 9.) *God is my witneſs, whom I ſerve with my ſpirit in the Goſpel of his Son, that without ceaſing I make mention of you in my prayers.* Thus in higheſt holineſs he ſware that he prayed for the *Romans* ſpiritual good, while he was abſent from them, and had never ſo much as ſeen them; and that he paſſionately deſired to be preſent with them, and ſee them, that he might *impart unto them ſome ſpiritual gift*: Becauſe being a meer ſtranger, he had not yet made his actions a witneſs of his love to them, and becauſe no man can be an unerring witneſs of another mans heart, or of the moving of his affections, therefore he calls God to witneſs, who alone knows the heart, and can tell how much we love either himſelf, or one another.

He ſpeaks as much (though in another caſe) to the *Corinthians* (2 *Cor.* 1. 23.) *Moreover I call God for a record upon my ſoul, that to ſpare you, I came not as yet unto* Corinth. As if he had ſaid, By this my earneſt adjuration, I aſſure you, that the reaſon why I have deferred my coming to you, was not from any levity of mind, or change of purpoſe in me, but only becauſe I was unwilling to uſe ſuch ſeverity as the diſtempers among you call for, and would have preſſed me unto being preſent. We find him in the ſame tenour of ſpeech towards the *Philippians* (Chap. 1. 8.) *For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Chriſt:* That is, I call God to witneſs, I love you: And again (1 *Theſ.* 2. 5.) *Neither at any time uſed we flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak of covetouſneſs, God is witneſs:* As if he had ſaid, Had I *uſed flattering words*, you might witneſs it; and that I have not uſed a *cloak of covetouſneſs, God is witneſs.* I might have worn a cloak of covetouſneſs ſo cloſely, that you could not have ſeen it, but God could; he can judge through the darkeſt clouds, and ſee through the thickeſt cloaks and coverings; but I appeal to him whether I have put on ſuch a cloak, or no. As *Paul* by Oath purged himſelf from covetouſneſs of ſpirit; ſo *Abraham* proteſted by Oath againſt all covetous practices (*Gen.* 14. 22.) *I have lifted up mine hand to the moſt high God, the poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth, that I will not take any thing that is thine.* This geſture of lifting up the hand when an Oath is taken, is there put for an Oath it ſelf; by which *Abraham* appealed to God, as a witneſs of his ſincere intentions in taking up thoſe Armes for the reſcue of his *Nephew Lot*; and that as he had overcome his Enemies, ſo he had overcome covetouſneſs, which was, of the two, the far more noble victory.

This calling of God to witneſs is of two ſorts.

Firſt, When we are called by others, who have lawful power, to teſtifie the truth; ſuch is ſwearing before a Magiſtrate.

Secondly, When we offer it our ſelves, for the removal of ſuch jealouſies as are caſt upon us, and we have no other way left, to free, or vindicate our ſelves from them.

This latter was the occaſion of *Job's* Oath, as alſo of thoſe alledged concerning *Paul* and *Abraham*: but whether it be an Oath of the one ſort, or of the other, both meet in this, that God is appealed to, and called to witneſs by ſuch as uſe them: And ſeeing he is a jealous God, who will not hold them guiltleſs that take his Name in vain, I ſhall add ſome cautions for the bounding and directing of our practice.

Firſt, We may call God to witneſs in weighty matters; and unleſs the matter be weighty, either in it ſelf, or in the conſequents of it, we may not: *God is my Witneſs, and God is my Judge*, are not for common, much leſs for vain things. There are two things in every Oath or Appeal to God, which ſhew this.

Firſt, An Oath is for confirmation (*Heb.* 6. 16.) Vain things are not worthy the mentioning, much leſs are they worthy the confirming: We ought not to ſtrive at all about them, much leſs ought we to ſwear about them, which is *an end of all ſtrife.*

Secondly, In every Oath or Appeal to God, there is an invocation of the Name of God; but the Name of God muſt not be taken in vain; which it cannot but be, when it is taken into our mouthes about a vain thing,

Secondly, We may call God to witneſs when men give a wrong witneſs of us, or will not give a right witneſs for us; but if we can have teſtimony upon earth, we muſt not go to Heaven for it; God muſt be our laſt reſort. *Job* found none on earth to witneſs for him, and his afflictions were looked upon as ſufficient witneſſes againſt him, and therefore he was neceſſitated to make his addreſs to God.

Thirdly, When the matter is not only ſuch as others will not teſtifie, when they might, but ſuch as no man can teſtifie (none being privy to it, but only God and our own ſouls) then we have a juſt ground of appeal to God; who will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the counſels of the heart: *Job's* ſincerity was ſuſpected; and that is ſuch a ſecret as man hath no acceſs unto, and therefore can give no witneſs to it: Who is ſincere, and who is an hypocrite, is reſolved only by the teſtimony of God, and of our own ſouls.

Fourthly, We muſt be ſure to call God to witneſs in truth; *Thou ſhalt ſwear the Lord liveth in truth, in righteouſneſs, and in judgment* (Jer. 4. 2.) *Unleſs we have a witneſs within us, we muſt not call God to witneſs who is above us.* God is ready to witneſs with our Conſciences; but woe to thoſe who call God to witneſs againſt their Conſciences. Holy *Paul called God to record upon his ſoul* (2 Cor. 1. 23.) That is, He did as it were (which is alſo done in every Oath) engage, or pawn his ſoul and ſalvation upon it, that he ſpake the truth: When our ſouls bear record with us, we may venture to call God to record upon our ſouls. But ſome, when they have no witneſs from their ſouls, yea, when their ſouls witneſs againſt them, will yet venture to call God to record upon their ſouls. They will needs be tryed by God, who dare not abide the juſt tryal of men; ſuch would make God (who cannot lye) witneſs to a lye: They uſe the glorious God, as ſome do a ſort of miſcreants, called *Knights of the Poſt*, who for a Fee, will not only ſay, but ſwear what you will. This is higheſt profanation of the Name of God: For as he that believes not the truth of God, makes him a lyar; ſo alſo doth he that appeals to God for the witneſs of an untruth.

More particularly, *My witneſs is in Heaven, my record is on high.* *Job* ſpeaks this, not only becauſe he wanted the witneſs of men, but becauſe of the high eſteem he had of the witneſs of God.

Hence Obſerve, *The witneſs of God is the moſt deſireable witneſs.*

The witneſs we have on earth is nothing worth, unleſs we have a witneſs in Heaven: If we have not the inward witneſs of our own conſcience, it is little advantage though we have a thouſand outward witneſſes: Conſcience is more then a thouſand witneſſes; but God is more then ten thouſand Conſciences: Therefore never reſt in any witneſſes, till you have the witneſs of God. *We labour* (ſaith the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 5.9.) and that word ſignifies not only an earneſt, or an induſtrious, but an ambitious labour) *that whether preſent, or abſent, we may be accepted of him:* As if he had ſaid, *Poſſibly we might gain acceptation and applauſe among men,* would we but ſtudy to pleaſe and apply our ſelves to them; but the favour of men will not ſerve our turn, nor can we ſit down and reſt our ſelves under their ſhadow. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord,* was *David*'s prayer (*Pſal.* 19.14.) *David* could not bear it, that a word, or a thought of his ſhould miſs acceptation with God: It did not ſatisfie him that his actions were well witneſſed unto by men on earth, unleſs his very thoughts were witneſſed to by the Lord in Heaven.

Some, as it is ſaid of thoſe Rulers (*John* 12. 42.) *Love the praiſe of men more then the praiſe of God:* So long as they have a *record here below*, they little regard his *record who is on high.* There is no greater argument of a carnal mind, then this: He that loves the praiſe or teſtimony of men as much as he loves the praiſe or teſtimony of God, doth indeed love it more: Seeing there is nothing more unequal then an equal partition of our eſteem between God and Man. Where our obligation unto two is unequal, we can never be diſcharged by paying each of them an equal ſum. We have cauſe to bleſs God when we have witneſs among men; but the witneſs of men ſhould be of no price with us in compariſon of the witneſs of God: Not only may we have recourſe to the witneſs of God, when we cannot obtain the witneſs of men; but we muſt prefer the ſingle witneſs of God before a throng of humane witneſſes; and when we have enough on earth, yet ſay with *Job*, *My witneſs is in Heaven.* The witneſs of the men of this world, or of evil men (while we keep a good conſcience) is a mercy. But as the witneſs of good men is more deſireable, then the witneſs of all other men, and the witneſs of a good conſcience is more deſireable then the witneſs of good men; ſo the witneſs of God is more deſireable then (without which we cannot have it, and with which we ſhall have it) the witneſs of a good conſcience.

For as the teſtimony of God againſt us, is more terrible, then that of our own hearts (1 *John* 3.20.) *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things*; and therefore knoweth more evil by us, and every evil more then our own hearts do; ſo the teſtimony of God for us is more comfortable, then that of our own hearts. If our hearts acquit us, God is greater then our hearts, and knowing all things; he knoweth more good by us, and every good more then our own hearts do. Who can expreſs or tell how pleaſant it is to receive this teſtimony from God, that we pleaſe God? *Behold* (ſaith *David Pſal.* 133.1.) *how good and pleaſant a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity:* But O how good and pleaſant a thing it is for God and man to dwell together in unity; for man to be alwayes giving witneſs to God, that he is good and gracious, and for God to be alwayes giving witneſs to man, that he is upright and righteous. When Conſcience ſpeaks us fair, we have peace, and a continual feaſt; but when God ſpeaks us fair, and gives us an *euge* from Heaven, *Well done good and faithful Servants,* we have peace which paſſeth all underſtanding, and not only a joyful feaſt, but a feaſt of joyes which are unſpeakable, and full of glory. Yea, when we are at the fulleſt tables of this world, this is the ſauce in our diſh, and the ſugar in our cup: *Go thy way* (ſaith the Preacher, *Eccleſ.* 9.7.) *eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart*; (Why? what's the matter now?) *For now God accepteth thy works. Thou haſt a witneſs in Heaven.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *A good man dares appeal and put his cauſe to God.*

A wicked man will ſometimes appeal, and put his cauſe to God out of preſumption, and impudence: but a good man appeals to God in faith, and holy confidence.

As it is an act of grace or favour in God to receive an appeal from man; ſo it is an act not only of grace, but of courage in man, to make an appeal to God. It is an *act of grace,* as it is part of the worſhip of God; but it is an *act of courage,* or as I may call it, *a daring work,* as it is a putting our ſelves under the juſtice of God, yea, an implicit imprecating of the vengeance of God, in caſe we ſpeak untrue: Thus to appeal, or ſwear, is a *daring work,* and ſuch as no man durſt do (if he knew what he did) but in a good cauſe. It is a fearful thing thus to fall into the hands of the living God. Some have ventured upon falſe Oaths and Appeals to God, only for fear of men: Such ſay commonly, *They had rather truſt God with their ſouls* (by ſwearing falſly) *then man with their eſtates, lives, or liberties, by confeſſing the truth.* Which is not only as if a man ſhould flee from a Lyon, and a Bear ſhould meet him; but infinitely more then if a man for fear of the biting of a Whippet, or of the ſtinging of a Bee, ſhould willingly offer himſelf to the mouth of a Lyon, and to the ſting of a Serpent. To ſwear is not only to ſet our naked breaſts before the Cannons mouth, but with our own mouths to give fire to it, if we utter falſhood.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *It is the joy and comfort of an upright heart, that there is a God in Heaven who knows his heart, and bears witneſs of all his wayes.*

It is the terror of wicked men to think that there is a witneſs in Heaven, and a record on high. Hypocrites may pretend they rejoyce, that God is their witneſs, but its only a joy of the tongue, and from the teeth outwards, or to ſerve their turn; but an upright heart rejoyceth indeed at this, he riſeth every morning, and walks all the day long, and at night lyes down and reſts upon this thought, *God is my record, God is my witneſs, he hath ſearched me, and known me, he knoweth my down-ſitting and my up-riſing, he underſtands my thoughts afar off, he compaſſeth my path, and my lying down, and is acquainted with all my wayes.* In the midſt of all the clamours, miſapprehenſions. and miſ-judgings of men, it is an abundant refreſhing and conſolation to the Saints, that there ſits one in Heaven, who as he knows them fully, ſo he judgeth all men rightly, and will render to every man according to his works.

Laſtly, Conſider the place into which *Job*'s faith aſcended while he ſpeaks of God. *My witneſs is in Heaven, my record is on high.* Who is in Heaven? Who is on high? You may know whom he means when he ſaith, *He that is in Heaven, he that is on high,* though his name be not expreſt. There are Angels in Heaven, but they are nothing compared to God; there are the ſouls of juſt men departed, and made perfect, in Heaven, but they are nothing compared to God: There's no name in Heaven but God; God is all in all in Heaven; and he ſhould take up all our hearts and thoughts while we are on Earth, eſpecially when we diſcourſe of Heaven.

Hence Obſerve, *Though God be every where, yet he is eſpecially in Heaven.*

God is upon the Earth, yea, God is in Hell, *If I make my Bed in Hell thou art there* (Pſal. 139. 8.) Yet when *Job* acts faith upon God, he ſaith not, I have a witneſs on Earth, but my witneſs is in Heaven (*Pſal.* 2.4.) *He that ſitteth in Heaven ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.* God doth not ſit as circumſcribed in Heaven; but there the Scripture deſcribes him ſitting (*Pſal.* 123.1.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the Heavens.* Chriſt teacheth us to pray (*Matth.* 6.) *Our Father which art in Heaven*; and when he himſelf prayed, *He lift up his eyes to Heaven, and ſaid, Father, the hour is come, glorifie thy Son,* &c. (*John* 17.1.) Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks to God as in that place, and he ſpeaks of Heaven as of a place, as of a ſpecial and diſtinct place, to which he lifted up his eyes, when he prayed to his Father.

There is *a new Divinity*, which tells us, *that Heaven is every place, and every place is Heaven*: But why did Chriſt aſcend? *Why was he carryed up* (*Luke* 24. 51.) when he went to Heaven? If Heaven be every where, there's no need of aſcending to get into Heaven; and we may as properly deſcend into Heaven as aſcend up to Heaven, if Heaven be every where.

Non in Cœlo Brentii, *quod nuſquam eſt.* Vit. P.Mar.

Peter Martyr lying upon his death-bed, and having many Friends about him, diſcourſed ſweetly of Heaven and heavenly things: *Bullinger* ſtanding by, alledged that of the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 3. 20.) *Our converſation is in Heaven:* True, ſaid the *ſick man*, it is in Heaven, but not in the Heaven of *Brentius*, which is no where. He that makes Heaven every where, makes it no where: Though God be in all places, and whereſoever God is, Heaven is; yet there is more in Heaven, then is common to all places. That's Heaven properly, where the glory of God ſhines moſt, and where there is the ſpecial revealings of his honour and power; therefore it is called, *The habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory* (Iſa. 63. 15.) Heaven is (as we may ſpeak) the place of *Gods glorious reſidence:* This Heaven is not every where, for though God be every where, yet he doth not manifeſt himſelf equally every where. God hath built Heaven (as that great Monarch, *Dan.* 4. 3.) ſpake boaſtingly of *Babylon*, *For the houſe of his Kingdom, and for the honour of his Majeſty.* A meer Naturaliſt hath told us, That this principle is ſtampt upon the nature of man, that God hath his dwelling place on high, or in Heaven. Heaven is ſo proper to God, that God is often (by a Metonimy) called Heaven in the holy Scriptures. *Thy Kingdom* (ſaith *Daniel* to *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. 4. 26. *ſhall be ſure unto thee, after that thou ſhalt have known, that the Heavens do rule:* That is, When thou ſhalt be humbled and brought to this acknowledgment, that the God whoſe Throne and dwelling place is in Heaven, ſits alſo upon all earthly Thrones, and is King in all the Kingdoms of Men. Chriſt puts the Queſtion to the *Jews* (Matth. 21. 25.) *The baptiſm of* John, *whence was it, from Heaven, or of Men?* That is, Was it from God, or from Men? Was it a humane invention, or a divine inſtitution? The prodigal Son cryes out, *Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and in thy ſight:* That is, Both againſt my earthly and heavenly Father. Some, becauſe theſe and the like Scriptures call God Heaven; and becauſe it is ſaid after the reſurrection (when all the Saints ſhall be gathered into Heaven) *That God ſhall be all in all*; upon theſe miſtakes, I ſay, they have run into that groſs error, *That Heaven is God.* But when the Scripture calls Heaven the habitation of God, the Throne of God, the City of God, the building of God, an houſe not made with hands; it cannot be but a perverting of Scripture, and a throwing up of Reaſon, to call it God, or to ſay that God and Heaven are the ſame. Nor doth it at all follow, that God is Heaven, becauſe *God ſhall be all in all* to us in Heaven. *Paul* was not teaching the *Corinthians* there what Heaven is, but wherein the happineſs of the Saints ſhall conſiſt, when they ſhall all be called up to Heaven, after the general reſurrection from the dead: Then Chriſt ſhall reſign up his Kingdom (as Mediator) to his Father, then *God ſhall be all in all*: In All, that is, There will be no more need of a Mediator between God and Man; there will be no more need of Preaching, nor of making Prayers, nor of uſing Seals. All the glaſſes through which we ſaw God, and the outward Ordinances, in which we enjoyed God in this life, ſhall be laid aſide, when we ſee him face to face; and then God will be King, and Teacher, light and life, glory and happineſs, to his Saints, immediately, and for ever.

Quaſi à natura inſitam fuiſſe opinionem Deum in Cœlo habitare aſſeruit Ariſtoteles. lib. 1. *de* Anima, cap. 3.

'Tis granted, That Heaven is nothing to us without God, yet God is ſomething, yea, he is infinitely more then Heaven. *Solomon* beſpeaks God thus in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple (*1 Kings* 8. 27.) *Behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much leſs this houſe that I have builded:* If Heaven, even the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain God, then, it is not God. That which doth contain a thing, is not the thing contained; much leſs is that which cannot contain a thing, the thing which it cannot contain.

Again, that which *Job* calls Heaven in one part of the Verſe, he calls high in the other, *My witneſs is in Heaven, my record is on high.* God dwells in the *high and holy place* (*Iſai.* 57. 15.) And Chriſt, after he had finiſhed the work of mans redemption, is ſaid, *To ſit down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high* (Heb. 1. 3.) This high place is the higheſt place; all that we call Heaven is high; but all that we call Heaven is not alike high. Heaven is a building of three Stories. The Air is called Heaven: The Fowls of the Air are ſaid to *fly above the Earth in the Firmament of Heaven* (Gen. 1. 20.) The Clouds are called Heaven (*Lev.* 2. 19.) *I will make your Heaven as Iron, and your Earth as Braſs:* That is, I will make the Clouds, which are ſoft like Spunges, hard like Iron, they ſhall not yield a drop of water, to refreſh the wearied Earth.

The ſecond Story is the Starry Heaven, where the Sun and Moon move, and where thoſe other glorious Lights are ſet like golden ſtuds to adorn, comfort, and direct the World. *His going forth is from the end of Heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it* (Pſal. 19. 6.)

The third is called, *The habitation of God, the Heaven of Heavens, the third Heaven, the higheſt Heaven.* The Apoſtle ſaith of Chriſt, that *He aſcended far above all Heavens* (*Epheſ.* 4. 10.) And yet he then aſcended into Heaven; the meaning is, Chriſt aſcended above all the viſible Heavens, into that, which is inviſible to us who are on earth. This Heaven *Job* pointed at while he ſaid, *My record is on high.* Take four deductions from it.

Firſt, If Heaven be higheſt, then there is nothing but ſerenity in Heaven. The higheſt places in a civil ſence, are full of ſtorms, and ſo are high places in a natural ſence; but the higheſt places in nature are free from clouds, ſtorms, and vapours. Naturaliſts tell us of *Olympus*, a very high Mountain, lifting up its head beyond the middle Region, whither no breath of wind ever comes: You may draw Letters and Figures in the Sand, and come many years after, and find them no more ſtirred, then if they had been written in Marble; and if the higheſt places in nature are alwayes ſerene, how ſerene is the high place of glory? When you are once in Heaven, you are beyond, not only proper, but figurative ſtorms and winds for ever.

Secondly, Heaven is high, therefore it is a pure place. Every thing in nature, the more high it is, the more pure it is. Earth is the loweſt, and the groſſeſt of the Elements; the Water next to that, is more groſs then the Air; the Air is more groſs then the Fire, which Philoſophers call the higheſt of the Elements: The higher we go, the more purity we find; and when we are (*in altiſſimis*) at the higheſt, there is nothing but purity, perfect purity; there is not the leaſt mixture of droſs, nor the leaſt ſpot of dirt in Heaven: Heaven is all pure, and none ſhall come thither but ſuch as are pure. Pure perſons are fit for a pure place, and only they are fit: No unclean thing ſhall enter there; and he that hath this hope (of entring there) purifies himſelf, not only as Heaven is pure, but as God is pure, in whoſe ſight Heaven it ſelf is impure (*Chap.* 15. 15.)

Thirdly, Heaven is high, *Then Heaven is a ſafe place.* High places are ſecure places; the high places of the earth are ſo accounted; and when God promiſes ſafety to his people, he tells them they ſhall dwell on high, while they are here below. (*Iſa.* 33. 16.) *He ſhall dwell on high, his place of defence ſhall be the munition of rocks; and I will cauſe thee to ride upon the high places of the earth* (Iſa. 58. 14.) When thoſe builders of the Tower of *Babel* thought to make themſelves ſafe, they ſaid, *Let us build a Tower, whoſe top may reach to Heaven:* If there ſhould come another flood, they hoped to be dry, and to get above the danger. Once in Heaven, and we are out of Gun-ſhot; not only beyond the reach of man, but of Devils too: They who are got into that high place, ſhall neither feel, nor fear the Deſtroyer any more.

Fourthly, Heaven is a high place, then it is a large and capacious place: As a Spherical, or round Figure, is the moſt capacious, ſo the utmoſt round of that Figure is the moſt capacious round; in Heaven there is room enough; though we are crouded here, yet there we ſhall not. We may call Heaven (as *Iſaac* did the Well, about which there was no contention between his Herdmen, and the Herdmen of *Gerar*) *Rehoboth, room* (Gen. 26. 22.) In Heaven we ſhall not contend for room; Chriſt aſſures us, that in his Fathers Houſe are many Manſions (*John* 14. 2.) He had ſaid before to his Diſciples (*Chap.* 13. 33.) *Whither I go ye cannot come:* And when *Peter*, troubled at this ſpeech, put the Queſtion (*Verſ.* 36.) *Lord, whither goeſt thou? Jeſus anſwered him, Whither I go thou canſt not follow me now, but thou ſhalt follow me afterwards.* Chriſt perceived his Diſciples more plunged in their ſpirits with this anſwer and promiſe to *Peter*; and therefore adds a prohibition of their fears, at the beginning of this Chapter, *Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe alſo in me: in my Fathers houſe are many manſions:* As if he had ſaid, *Do not think that I told you, ye cannot follow me now, and that* Peter *ſhall follow me afterwards, as if the place I go to were only large enough for me and* Peter; *for believe me, there are many manſions; I tell you not how many, neither can they be told, but there are enough, not only for my ſelf and* Peter, *but for you all; yea, for all thoſe, who either have, or ſhall believe on my Name; if it were not ſo, I would have told you, I would not delude you with vain hopes, I am well acquainted with all the rooms in my Fathers houſe: and though when I came into the World for your ſakes, there was no room in the Inn for me to be born in, but a Stable among Beaſts, yet I will take care that when you come to my Fathers houſe, you ſhall not be ſtraitened for Quarters, I who am your Redeemer, will alſo be your Harbinger, I go to prepare a place for you, and I am certain my Fathers houſe will hold all his houſhold.*

Tophet *is prepared of old, it is deep and large* (Iſa. 30. 33.) Hell is large enough for a Priſon; there's room for all the Children of diſobedience to lye bound for ever: But Heaven is large, as a Pallace, or as a Paradiſe; there's room enough for all the Heirs of promiſe, to walk at liberty for ever.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

My Friends ſcorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour.

When a few years are come, then I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall not return.

JOB having ſtrongly aſſerted his own integrity, at the ſeventeenth Verſe of this Chapter; and thereupon as ſtrongly imprecated the heavieſt vengeance upon his own head, in caſe he had not ſpoken truth (*Verſ.* 18.) Having alſo made his appeal to Heaven, calling God to witneſs, that it was truth which he had ſpoken (*Verſ.* 19.) Here at the twentieth Verſe, he gives us a reaſon why he made that appeal; and the reaſon was, he found no comfort in the creature, he had no hope of help on earth, and therefore he reſorts to Heaven.

מליצי רעי *Verbum* הליץ *in hiphil ſignificat* Eloqui, *facundum eſſe, ſumitur etiã pro illudere, quia id non ſine ſermonis venuſtate fieri ſolet.* Merc. *Colloquutores mei.* Vatab. *Rhetores.* Pagn. *Cum amici mei Rhetorica oratione contra me agunt, manantibus lachrymis Dei opem imploro.* Tygur. *Interpretes ſocii mei.* Mont. ---*Quis talia fando temperet à lachrymis.*

Verſe 20. **My Friends ſcorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears to God.**

There is ſome variety in the tranſlation, but the ſence of all meets in one, *My Friends ſcorn me*; or, *Scorners are my Friends:* The word ſignifies to deride, or ſcorn, not in a rude homely way, but to do it with quaintneſs of ſpeech, or in refined language, to do it wittily, and cunningly, cloſe and home. Hence the word ſignifies a *Rhetorician,* or an *Orator*, and is ſo tranſlated here, by divers of the Learned, *My Friends play the Rhetoricians,* they ſpeak eloquently, they compoſe fine orations, and ſet ſpeeches againſt me; but alas! I only ſpeak tears.

Yet further, it ſignifies *to interpret* (Gen. 42. 23.) *Joſeph* ſpake unto his Brethren *by an Interpreter*, it is this word. That's the interlineal reading of this Text, *My Friends are Interpreters*, or rather (for that muſt be the meaning) *Miſinterpreters*; they put wrong expoſitions upon all my ſpeeches, and corrupt my Text with their unfriendly gloſſes.

We read in the ordinary acception of the word, *My Friends ſcorn me*; or, *My Friends are ſcorners:* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Theſe my Friends, whoſe profeſſion and relation call them to adminiſter ſerious and wholeſome counſel to my troubled mind, even they break forth into ſcorn; they pour the vinegar of their ſharpeſt cenſures into my already rankled wounds, inſtead of the ſuppling, ſkinning Oyl of comfort and conſolation; and therefore mine eye is preſſed to pour out tears to God: Who can forbear weeping, while he is but reporting my ſufferings? How then ſhould I who ſuffer? My Friends ſcorn me,* &c.

Hence Obſerve, *The beſt of Friends may prove unfriendly.*

Men are but men, and ſo they act: There is no repoſe, either upon the wiſdom, or ſtrength, or affection of the creature, they are all mutable, and may do that which is moſt oppoſite, both to their profeſſion and relation: A Friend, a Scorner! What more unſutable? And that may be a ſecond Note.

Scorn is wholly oppoſite to the Law of Love.

He departs far enough from the rules of friendſhip, who doth not pity and aſſiſt his afflicted Friend: How far is he gone from it, who ſcorns and derides his Friend in affliction?

Thirdly, Conſidering the Perſon who was thus ſcorned; *Job,* a man beloved of God, the great *Favourite* of that Age to the King of Heaven,

Hence Obſerve, *They who are highly approved and honoured of God, may fall under the contempt and ſcorn of men.*

As they who are applauded and flattered, yea, adored by men, may be the ſcorn and contempt of God. What Chriſt ſpeaks of things is true of perſons (*Luke* 16. 15.) *That which is highly eſteemed amongſt men, is abomination in the ſight of God:* So they who are highly eſteemed of God are often an abomination to men. God ſeeth not as man ſeeth, no not as good men ſee; God and good men are not alwayes of an opinion, either about things or perſons; and as the worſt of men find ſome to flatter and applaud them, ſo the beſt of men find ſome to undervalue and deride them, and they ſometimes find good men doing ſo. There is no judging either of men or of matters, by what is ſaid of them: In this ſence all men are, or may be lyars, carrying a falſe report in their mouths: Should we judge concludingly of men by the opinion of man, how baſe and contemptible would many precious ſouls appear to us? And how precious would many appear to us, who are only worthy to be contemned? Chriſt gives the rule (*John* 7. 24.) *Judge not according to appearance* (or by the face) *but judge righteous judgment:* We muſt not judge either of things or perſons, till they appear, nor may we judge of them by appearances, eſpecially not by thoſe appearances which the tongues of men put upon them. The Greek, in that Text of *John*, ſaith, *Judge not according to the face:* For though the face in its natural frame be the *Index or diſcovery of the mind*; yet as a man may artificially ſet his face to a look altogether unlike his mind; ſo others may ſet a face upon the wayes and actions of a man altogether unlike both the man and his actions. He that had judged *Job* by the face, which God had put upon his outward condition, or by that which Satan and his Friends put upon his wayes and actions, muſt have judged him either an Hypocrite, ſerving God only to ſerve his own turn; or elſe prophane, caſting off the ſervice of God. All the *morally illfavoured faces* in the World are of one of theſe two features or complexions; the opinions that went abroad of *Job* made him appear like both, and yet he was a man moſt beautiful in the eye of God; a man that had received the faireſt Letters commendatory under Gods own hand, that ever man had to that day, *My Friends ſcorn me:* What then?

κατ' ὄψιν *Secundum vultum vel faciem.*

But mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

As before he had appealed to God; ſo now *his eye poureth out tears unto God.*

The Hebrew is, *Mine eye poureth out:* The word ſignifies to flow forth like water, and to waſt in flowing forth; his eyes were as a Fountain, which flows continually, yet retains a perpetual ſtock of water; but his ſtrength abated, and his ſpirits iſſued with thoſe waters. *Mine eye poureth out*; we add the word *Tears*, becauſe tears are the only *eye-waters*, or all the waters which flow from the eye, *Mine eye poureth out tears.*

דלף *Stillare ſive diffluere inſtar aquarũ & ſtillando quaſi attenuari.*

The word ſignifieth ſometimes only to drop, either as a Limbeck drops down the water which is raiſed up by the heat into fumes, or as the Eaves of a houſe drop in a time of rain; ſo mine eye diſtilleth or droppeth tears. *Job* had a heat within him which might well cauſe thoſe diſtillations,

Tranſlatiõ eſt à ſtillicidiis.

and ſhowers without him, which might well cauſe thoſe droppings.

This diſtilling, dropping, or pouring out of tears, was the pouring out of his ſorrows, and there was more in it then ſilent ſorrow, there was a voice in his ſorrows, or a voice of mourning was mingled with his weeping; yea, this word implyes ſpeaking, in many places of the old Teſtament, where to drop is to Propheſie, and Prophecying is a vocal act (*Micah* 2.6.) *Propheſie ye not, ſay they to them that propheſie*; the word is, *Drop not*: Both are expreſſed (*Amos* 7.16.) *Propheſie not againſt* Iſrael, *and drop not thy word againſt the houſe of* Iſaac. So (*Ezek.* 21.2.) *Drop thy words towards the holy places, and propheſie againſt the Land of* Iſrael. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe words fall into the ear of the hearers, as drops of rain upon the dry and thirſty ground, both to ſoften and make fruitful. *Job*'s tears preacht; the dropping of his eye was a kind of prophecying: Tears are not words formally, but they are virtually. Weeping is inarticulate ſpeaking: And though God (by reaſon of his infinite and unchangeable happineſs) never ſpake that language, yet he underſtands it fully. *There are* (ſaith the Apoſtle, arguing againſt ſpeaking in an unknown tongue) *it may be, ſo many kinds of voices in the World, and none of them are without ſignification* (1 Cor. 14.10.) The voice of tears is very ſignificant, yet God only knows the ſpecial ſignification of it; man knows only the general, that it ſignifies ſorrow. Poſſibly words went with *Job*'s tears; but if not, yet his tears had the force of words: Weeping ſpeaks, though the weeper ſpeak not: *Mine eye poureth out* (or ſpeaketh) *tears*.

Phraſi Hebraica ſtillare *ſæpe pro loqui ſumitur.*

There are ſeven or eight ſorts of tears ſpoken of in Scripture, and every one ſpeaks.

Firſt, Tears of worldly ſorrow. *Eſau* had enough of them; he found ſtore of tears when he loſt the bleſſing: He for one morſel of meat ſold his birthright, but he could not purchaſe it again with floods of ſorrow, *For he found no place of repentance*; that is, he could not prevail with his Father *Iſaac* to change his mind, *though he ſought it carefully with tears* (Heb. 12.17.) *Eſau*'s tears ſpake his hunger after that which he had ſold to buy off hunger, or to pay a debt to Nature.

Secondly, There are the tears of repentance and godly ſorrow; ſuch were thoſe of *Mary* (*Luke* 7.83.) who wept, *and waſhed Chriſt's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head*: She had been a ſinner, ſuch a ſinner as bore away the name from all the ſinners in the City; and ſhe mourned ſo for ſin, that ſhe bare away the name from all the mourners in the City: *Mary's* tears ſpake her tender reſpect to Chriſt who ſaveth ſinners, and her abhorrence of her ſelf for ſin.

Thirdly, There are tears of craft and wicked diſſimulation (*Jer.* 41.6.) *Iſhmael* goes forth to meet the men that came towards *Jeruſalem, weeping all along as he went*: his were *made tears*; he ſhed tears that he might ſhed blood, and weep himſelf into an opportunity of doing miſchief unſuſpected. *Iſhmael*'s tears ſpake treachery, but becauſe thoſe plain-hearted men could not interpret them, they periſhed.

Fourthly, There are tears of love unfeigned and ſtrong affection: Thus David *and* Jonathan *kiſſed one another, and wept one with another, until* David *exceeded* (1 *Sam.* 20.41.) When *Jeſus Chriſt wept* at the Sepulcher of *Lazarus, The* Jews *ſaid, Behold how he loved him* (*John* 11.35,36.) They ſaw his heart at his eyes: Theſe tears ſpake mutual and real endearments.

Fifthly, There are the tears of holy prayers, and fervent deſires. Jacob *wept and made ſupplication* (Hoſ. 12.4.) He cryed and prayed: The voice of his tears was lowder then the voice of his ſupplication; and his prayers were (in this ſence) even drowned in tears: *Jacob*'s tears ſpake the fervency of his ſpirit, and his faith in prayer: The Angel underſtood them ſo, and he prevailed.

Sixthly, There are tears of compaſſion for the miſeries of others. *Weep with them that weep*, is the Apoſtles rule (*Rom.* 12.15.) When *Nehemiah* heard the report of *Jeruſalems* ruine, and of the ſad condition of his Brethren there, *He ſate down and wept* (Nehem. 1.4.) His tears ſpake pity to his Country-men, and zeal for God.

Seventhly, There are the tears of *paſſion*, in reference to our own afflictions: Such tears ſpeak humane frailty, or the common infirmity of the fleſh.

Eighthly, There are the tears of damnation; Hypocrites and their aſſociates in Hell are deſcribed, *Weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth for evermore*: Their tears ſpeak deſpair, or miſery without hope of remedy.

The tears which *Job* poured forth, were of the ſeventh ſort, tears of paſſion, or ſorrow, cauſed by the afflicting hand of God, but eſpecially by the unkindneſſes of his Friends; *My Friends ſcorn me, but mine eye poureth out tears unto God*. *Job* knew that as God had a Book for his prayers, ſo a Bottle for his tears; yea, he knew tears ſhould be heard as well as prayers. *Tears are powerful Orators*: God reads our hearts in thoſe lines which tears draw on our faces. One of the Ancient Philoſophers hath adjudged weeping unworthy a man, and tells us it is only for Women and Children to weep: But as there are tears of effeminate and childiſh puſillanimity, ſo there are tears of heroical and holy importunity. To weep for fear of ſufferings from man, is indeed below man; but to weep to God when we ſuffer, either under the hand of God or man, doth well become the beſt of men; not to weep to God, when we either ſuffer, or have ſinned, proceeds not from courage, but from ſullenneſs, and is not the argument of a noble ſpirit, but of a hard heart. Who ſo couragious as *David*? who feared not a Lyon, nor a Bear, who would not be afraid though an Hoaſt of men encamped againſt him, and though he walked in the valley of the ſhadow of death; yet how often do we read him weeping and crying to God (*Pſal.* 39.12.) *Hold not thy peace* (ſaith he) *at my tears*: *David* in that caſe could not hold his peace from crying to God, and he was perſwaded that God would not hold his peace at his cry; he expected to have his tears anſwered: He did not ſay, Hold not thy peace at my words, or at my prayer, but as importing that his very tears had a voice and language in them, he deſired that they might be anſwered. *David* did not weep for fear of men, but in faith to God. And ſo did *Job*: *Mine eye poureth out tears unto God*: God was the object of his tears, as much as of his prayers. God is above, and yet our tears fall into his boſom: Theſe waters aſcend; this rain doth not fall but riſe; theſe ſhowers do not come from the Clouds, but they pierce the Clouds. As the heat of the Sun draws the water upward, ſo doth the heat of Gods love. Some of the Ancients uſe ſtrange Hyperbolies about the power and motion of tears, I will not ſtay upon them, we may ſay too much of them; but thus much we may ſafely ſay, that from a heart rightly affected, and touched with the ſenſe, either of ſin, or ſuffering, they have much weight in them, and are preſſing upon God: *Mine eye poureth out tears unto God*.

Lachrymæ à viris claris auferendæ ſunt, mulieribus autem relinquendæ. Plat. de rep. Dial. 3.

From the connexion of this latter part of the Verſe with the former,

> Obſerve, *When we are ſcorned by men, it is good for us to mourn to God.*

My Friends ſcorn me, now I weep and pray: It is beſt for us to apply our ſelves to God when we live in the embraces of men; when all men ſpeak well of us, and applaud us, what is all this, if we have not the good word and the good will of God? Unleſs we have an applauſe in Heaven, it will do us no good to have the true applauſe, much leſs the flatteries of men on Earth. Suppoſe they ſpeak right, and give us but our due, yet we muſt not reſt in that, but go to God. The good word of God is better to us infinitely, then the beſt word of the beſt men; to him let us have recourſe when we have the greateſt favour, and faireſt Quarter in the World: but when the World ſcorns and rejects us, then is a ſpecial ſeaſon for us to haſten into the preſence of God; we ſhould live neareſt and cloſeſt to God, when men caſt us off, or throw us out of their ſocieties and affections.

There is a twofold recourſe to God; whereof the firſt is from choice, the ſecond from neceſſity. It is beſt to make our recourſe to God upon choice; but he will not refuſe us if neceſſity drive us to him: God is moſt worthy to be our choice, but he is willing to be our refuge; yet he is indeed a refuge to thoſe only in evil times, who have made him their choice in the beſt times. When all goes well with us in the World, we ſhould not think our ſelves well till we enjoy God: *It is good for me to draw near to God,* ſaith *David* (*Pſal.* 73. 28.) It is good for me to do it in good times, in the beſt times, this I make my election: And when *David* ſaith, *It is good*; he means, *it is beſt*; that poſitive bears the ſence of a Superlative; and therefore he had ſaid a little before (*Verſ.* 25.) *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee:* But in an evil time, God is both the choice and the refuge of his people. He is our refuge properly to whom we come when others caſt us off; and he is our choice to whom we come, when others call for us, and ſeem ambitious to be kind unto us. It is not thank-worthy to make God barely a refuge, to come to him becauſe we can go no where elſe; we ſhould think our ſelves no where till we are in his preſence, whereſoever we are; and that we have nothing till we have him, whatſoever we have. Not to prefer the leaſt of God before all the World, is not only uningenuous in us, but ſinful againſt, and diſhonourable unto God. *Job,* who here wept to God in his low eſtate, had often rejoyced in God in his beſt eſtate, and preferred him before his chiefeſt joy: They may confidently weep to God in ſad times, who have delighted themſelves with God in comfortable times.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Liberty of addreſs to God, when men ſcorn and reject us, is the great priviledge of the Saints.*

Every man cannot do this: Can the men of the world pour out tears to God when they are ſcorned by the world? Can they pour out prayers to God, when they are ill intreated by the world? Can they go into the imbraces of God, when they are caſt out by men? They cannot. They can vex themſelves, when they are vexed by others, and perhaps vex thoſe that vex them; they can be angry when they are ſcorned, and perhaps ſcorn their ſcorners; but how to ſpread their condition before God, or to pour out tears to him, they know not: They who can do thus are honoured by God, when ſcorned by men, and God will pour out comforts into their boſomes who can pour their tears into his; they can never be at any loſs, who find out God to weep to.

Job having thus given the reaſon of his appeal to Heaven, enforceth it farther with a ſtrong wiſh, according to our tranſlation, which is alſo confirmed by the concurring vote of divers other tranſlations.

Verſe 21. **O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his Neighbour.**

The ſum of his deſire may be drawn up into this *Brief, That he might argue his caſe as freely with God, as men of the ſame rank and degree argue out their caſes with one another.* Some expound it as a correction of his boldneſs in appealing to God. As if he had ſaid, *I have indeed called God to witneſs: But what am I, or what is my Fathers houſe, that God ſhould deſcend to my concernments? The infinite diſtance which is between the Creator and the creature ſeems to forbid and check my motion, bidding me keep within my own line, or ſphere, and meddle with my equals; But O that I might ſpeak with God, as man with man, or man for man, I doubt not but I ſhould carry the day, and prove my ſelf innocent:* not that *Job* intended a controverſie with God, or would ſtand upon his defence with the moſt High.

ויובח לנבר *Utinam diſputare poſſet vir cum deo & filius hominis ſodali ſuo.* Pagn. *Optat exæquari hæc duo, hominis cum Deo, & hominis cum homine diſceptationem.* Merc. *Certè hic aliquid ſubauditur ut, & quis det viro, vel ut faciat ac concedat Deus ſc. hoc viro.* Merc.

I have before ſhew'd how far this was from the temper of his broken ſpirit. All that he intends by the propoſal of this deſire, is the gaining of an opportunity to ſet himſelf right in the opinion of men, by that impartial deciſion of his cauſe, which he was well aſſured God would give upon the whole matter in queſtion between him and his Friends, if once he would be pleaſed to vouchſafe him a free and familiar hearing of it. As if he had further ſaid, *I have not appealed to Heaven, becauſe I am unwilling to have my condition known on earth, that men ſhould ſee the worſt of me; for my deſire is, that I might plead before God, as a man for his Neighbour, and that I might be laid open in open Court, by the evidence of witneſſes, and a full examination of my cauſe. Taking theſe explications of the Text, in the form of a wiſh, the ſcope of it ſeems to be the ſame with what he ſpake before* (Chap. 9. 33, 34, 35.) *God is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment, neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us,* &c. In which words, as in theſe before us, while *Job* lifts up the Majeſty of God, and humbleth himſelf, as unworthy to have to do with God, yet he diſcovers the vehement longings of his ſoul to receive a judgment or determination from God in this ſuit or controverſie, which had depended ſo long between him and his Friends.

Utinam mihi concederetur cauſam meam adverſum vos apud Dei Tribunal diſceptare ſicut agere homines cũ hominibus conſueverũt. Bez.

The Obſervations which ariſe from this reading and ſence of the Text, are of the ſame ſtrain with thoſe formerly given upon that, and ſome other paſſages, where *Job* knowing his own uprightneſs and integrity, declares not only willingneſs, but extream earneſtneſs, to have his cauſe tryed at the Bar, and before the Tribunal of God, who both ſaw his wayes, and ſearched his heart; who as he had juſtified him from all guilt in reference to himſelf, by not imputing ſin unto him, ſo he would juſtifie him againſt the ſins, which men imputed to him, by ſaying he was not at all guilty.

Theſe points having been more then once hinted already, I ſhall not inſiſt upon them here.

Secondly, The words are rendred as noting the deſign which *Job* had in *pouring out tears to God*, and then the connection between this and the former verſe ſtands thus, *I pour out tears to God, that he would be pleaſed to plead the cauſe of a man with God, as the Son of man pleads the cauſe of his friend.* Mr. *Broughton* joyns fully with this, *Unto the puiſſant doth mine eye drop, that he would decide the cauſe for earthly-wight before the puiſſant, as the Son of* Adam *doth with his Neighbour.*

Apud Deum ſtillat oculus meus ut diſceptet cauſam viri cum deo, ſicut filius hominis cauſam amici ſui. Jun.

Our tranſlation carries the ſence of a wiſh; that a man might have liberty to plead with God, as man with man; this carries the ſence of a wiſh, that God would plead the cauſe of a man with God, as a man pleads the cauſe of his friend; which is indeed to deſire God to be his Advocate. How God is an Advocate with God, will appear further in the proſecution of the Text.

A third reading keeps to this dependance upon the former Verſe, and to the ſame ſcope of this, yet varies the tranſlation, Thus, *Mine eye poureth out tears to God, that he would judge for a man with God (and that he would judge) the Son of man in reſpect of his Neighbour.*

Ad Deum ſtillat oculus meus ut judicet viro cum Deo, & filium hominis reſpectu proximi ſui. Coc.

The firſt reading makes the latter branch of the words a deſcription of the manner how *Job* deſired to plead with God even as man doth with man. The ſecond makes it a deſcription of the manner how *Job* deſired God to plead the cauſe of man with God, even as man pleads with man. This third makes it a ſecond diſtinct deſire, and the whole Verſe to conſiſt of two diſtinct deſires.

Firſt, *That God would judge for a man with God.*

Secondly, *That God would judge the Son of man in reſpect of his Neighbour.*

In the former he petitions for mercy with God; in the latter for right againſt man; or in the former he ſues for a judgment of acceptation for himſelf, and in the latter for a judgment of reproof and redargution upon his Friends.

This difference is grounded upon the different conſtruction of the words in the Original. For the word which is rendred to plead or judge, is conſtrued with, or governs (as Grammarians ſpeak) the *Dative caſe* in the firſt, and the *Accuſative caſe* in the latter clauſe of the Verſe.

Hence the former is rendred,

That he would judge or plead for a man with God, which notes favour, and a benign defence or patronage of his cauſe with God; ſo this is uſed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 11. 4.) *He ſhall reprove* (argue, judge, or plead) *with equity for the meek of the earth:* That is, He ſhall reprove or plead in favour of the meek, or on their ſide; he ſhall undertake their cauſe, and make their defence for them. And thus at laſt God did judge or plead for *Job*, giving ſentence in his behalf, and caſting the ſcales on his ſide againſt his Friends, and therefore the latter clauſe is rendred thus,

That he would judge the Son of man in reſpect of his Neighbour: That is, That he would reprehend and reprove him for the wrongs which he hath done to, and for the uncharitable cenſures which he hath laid upon his Neighbour. The meaning of the whole Verſe, according to this tranſlation, may be repreſented and paralleld in that prayer of *David* (Pſal. 35. 1, 2, 3.) *Plead my cauſe, O Lord, with them that ſtrive with me; fight againſt them that fight againſt me,* &c. *ſay unto my ſoul, I am thy ſalvation.* Thus *Job*, as *David*, deſires the Lord to ſpeak a word of comfort to him, and to tell his enemies, or his uncomfortable friends, *their own*.

I ſhall only leave one Obſervation upon this Expoſition,

When Chriſt comes graciouſly to aſſert the innocency of his own people, he will ſeverely rebuke thoſe who have done them wrong.

Laban had given *Jacob* hard uſage, while he was a Servant in his houſe; and when he was gone, *Laban* purſued him with hard thoughts: but God pleaded for *Jacob*, and rebuked *Laban* (*Gen.* 31.42.) The Prophet foretels, *That the mountain of the Lords houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the mountains*; that is, he will not only deliver, but advance his oppreſſed Church, *The houſe of the God of Jacob* (*Iſa.* 21.2, 3.) and when he doth this, *He ſhall judge among the Nations, and ſhall rebuke many people* (Verſ. 4.) Some have obſerved the ſame difference in theſe latter words of *Iſay*, which hath been noted in the Text of *Job*, and render it thus, *He ſhall judge among the Nations*; that is, the Heathen Nations, who have vexed his Church, *And he ſhall rebuke or plead* (it is the ſame word in the Grammatical conſtruction, as here in *Job*) *For*, (or in the behalf of) *many people*; that is, for many of his own people, who have been oppoſed by thoſe Nations; the effect whereof we have in the next words, *And they ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares*; that is, God will ſo judge thoſe Nations, that his people ſhall not need to ſtand upon their guard, or learn war any more; becauſe their enemies ſhall either be turned to them, or be totally overturned. Woe to the Nations, when God ſtands up for his people; he will certainly ruine *Babylon*, when he undertakes the controverſie, and pleads the cauſe of *Zion*. Yea, the day haſtens when he will *Convince all that are ungodly, of all the hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him* (Jude v.15.) that is, againſt his people, for his ſake.

Fourthly, Beſides theſe three expoſitions of the Text, I find another which is more literal, and yet more ſpiritual then any of the three; and it is that which our late learned Annotators have given us, *Mine eye pours out tears unto God.*

And he will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend. The mind of which tranſlation is this, *He*, that is, Chriſt Jeſus the Mediator between God and man *will plead for a man*; that is, for me; he ſpeaks in the third perſon for modeſties ſake, though he means himſelf; he will plead for me (though you plead never ſo much againſt me) for me (I ſay) he will plead *with God*; that is, with God his Father: The Hebrew word here uſed for God, is in the ſingular number, *Eloah*, not *Elohim*, and ſo it is in the cloſe of the former verſe, *Mine eye poureth out tears to (Eloah) God, and he will plead with God*, which more then intimates a diſtinct *perſonality*, or ſubſiſtence in the Divine Nature. *One*, who is, and is called God acting towards *another*, who is, and is called God, though God be but one, or (*uniſſimus*) One-moſt in nature. *Job* weeps to God the Son, in aſſurance that he will plead for him with God the Father, *He will plead for a man with God.*

And the Son of man; that is, Jeſus Chriſt. whom he called God before, he calls now, *The Son of man*; this Title is frequently attributed unto Chriſt in the New Teſtament (*Matth.* 8. 20.) *The Foxes have holes*, &c. *but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* So (*Mat.* 10.23. & 11.19.& 12.8,&c.) Jeſus Chriſt is called *the Son of man.*

Firſt, To ſhew the truth of his *humane nature*, he being lineally deſcended from *David*, according to the fleſh, and is therefore ſtiled, *The Son of* David.

Secondly, To ſhew the depth of his abaſement, Chriſt humbled, yea, emptied, and nothing'd himſelf, when *Being in the form of God, he was made in the likeneſs of men* (Phil. 2.) when being *the Son of God*, he ſubmitted to ſo mean a ſtile, *The Son of man. Ezekiel* amongſt all the Prophets is ofteneſt called, *Son of man.* The reaſon which ſome aſſign is very probable, That God ſpake to him under that Title, to keep him humble in the midſt of his many viſions and revelations; for which end, *Paul* in the ſame caſe had *A Thorn in the fleſh, the Meſſenger of Satan to buffet him* (2 *Cor.* 12.) And though Jeſus Chriſt needed nothing either to make or keep him humble (he being infinitely beyond the reach of pride) yet he needed much to ſhew and give proof how humble he was: Nor could there be any greater evidence of it, then this, that he was pleaſed to be *The Son of man.* Yet I conceive, *Son of man* may be here only an Hebraiſm denoting *man*, which kind of ſpeaking is alſo uſual among the Greeks. And that *Job* might ſpeak of Chriſt under this notion, is clear from that faith which he diſcovered in the *myſtery of his incarnation*, that *great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh*, of which he ſpake ſo confidently (*Chap.* 19. 25, 26, 27.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth, whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold*, &c. *Job* believed that he ſhould ſee this Redeemer with *humane eyes*, and therefore he did believe, that his Redeemer ſhould have a humane Nature, or be *The Son of man.* Jeſus Chriſt, was *A Son of man*, in reference to his participation with us in all things, which concern created Nature: And he was *The Son of man*, by way of Eminency in reference to his freedom from any participation with us in corrupted nature, otherwiſe then in the penal effects of that corruption, as the Apoſtle ſtates it (*Heb.* 2. 17. *chap.* 4. 15.) *In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, and he was tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without ſin.* He that is in all things like man, except ſin, is rightly called, *The Son of man*; for ſin is not at all the form, but all the deformity of man: Hence *Job*'s faith propheſied, *The Son of man will plead*

For his friend.] The word in the Hebrew comes from a root, which ſignifies to *feed* either our ſelves or others, becauſe friends uſe often to feed together, and ſometimes one friend feeds, or provides, and offers food to another. It is taken ſometimes largely for a *Neighbor*, and not ſeldom ſtrictly for a ſpecial friend (*Deut.* 13. 6.) *If thy friend who is as thine own ſoul entice thee, &c.* that is, if the neareſt friend that thou haſt in the world entice thee, &c. In this ſtrict ſence the word is to be taken here; *Job* was not one of Chriſts friends at large, he was a ſpecial *Boſom-friend*, *Job* was not (according to the known uſe of that word among us) *A friend of Chriſt extraordinary*, but he was *Chriſts friend in ordinary*, a man who dayly converſ'd with Chriſt, and Chriſt with him; a man who daily performed Offices of dutiful love to Chriſt, and a man to whom Chriſt daily performed the Offices of bountiful and merciful love. Hence his holy aſſurance that Chriſt would perform that office of mercy for him, *The Son of man will plead for his friend.*

The words thus opened are (as I may ſay) *An Epitome of the Goſpel, a little Goſpel*, yea, I may call them, *the whole Goſpel*; what is the Goſpel but this *good news, that Chriſt, God-man, mediates for his people.* All that Chriſt was, is expreſſed in this; whatſoever Chriſt did more then this on earth, is implyed in this, and this is all Chriſt now doth for us in Heaven, *He ever lives to make interceſſion for us*, ſaith St. *Paul*, (*Heb.* 7. 25.) which is the ſame in effect, with what holy *Job* profeſſeth in this Text, *He will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend.*

There is one thing further to be noted, for the clearing of this Text: For poſſibly the Reader may ſcruple how the ſame words ſhould be rendred by ſome, as a wiſh, *O that one might plead for a man with God*; and by others as a concluſion, *He will plead with God for a man.* Again, how the latter branch ſhould be rendred by ſome in the form of a ſimilitude, *As a man for his neighbour*, and by others as a direct aſſertion, *And the Son of man for his friend.*

I anſwer to the firſt, That the ſame word may be thus diverſly rendred according to differing Moods of Grammar; and ſo the ſign of the Optative Mood which is in the form of a wiſh, is by ſome judged moſt ſutable to the ſcope of this place. So that a wiſh may here be underſtood and ſafely ſupplied, though it be not expreſſed.

To the ſecond ſcruple I anſwer, that the particle *Vau*, in the Hebrew, placed at the beginning of a word, though it be uſually taken as a Conjunction, knitting one ſentence to another, yet according to the exigence and ſcope of the Scripture, it undergoes divers other ſignifications.

As firſt, A disjunctive (*Exod.* 12. 15.) *Ye ſhall take it out from the Sheep, or from the Goats*: The Hebrew is, *And from the Goats*; but becauſe the Law did not command both, but gave a liberty to chuſe either of the two; therefore we render not *And*, but *Or*, from the Goats: So (*Judg.* 11. 31.) See the Margin of our Bibles; which ſhews that

Jepthtah did not bind himſelf to offer up whatſoever ſhould meet him, in Sacrifice; but one of the two he did bind himſelf to, either to dedicate that to the Lord, or to offer it up for a burnt-offering.

Secondly, It is often uſed *Adverſatively*, and is rendred, *But* (*Gen.* 42. 10. *Pſal.* 44. 17, *&c.*)

Thirdly, Caſually, and it is rendred *For* (*Pſal.* 60. 11. *Iſa.* 64. 5, *&c.*)

Fourthly, (Beſides divers other acceptions of it, which I ſhall omit) it is uſed *Comparatively*, or as a Note of *likeneſs* (Prov. 25. 25.) *As cold water to a thirſty ſoul, ſo is good news from a far Countrey:* The Hebrew is, *And good news.* So (*Prov.* 26. 7.) and very frequently in that Book. Thus in the Text the particle (*Vau*) is taken by ſome as a note of likeneſs; comparing the two parts of the Verſe with each other; but by others it is taken only as a conjunction copulative, knitting both parts of the Verſe together: *He will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend.*

From the words according to this latter reading,

Obſerve, Firſt, *There is an Advocate between God and Man.*

Sin hath made a breach, there needs a Mediator to heal it. God and ſinful man are (as we ſpeak) *Two*, and they cannot be made *One* but by a *Third.* Man was created in a ſtate of amity with God, that ſtate needed no Mediator; man being reſtored is in a ſtate of reconciliation unto God, that ſtate needs a Mediator, both to ſettle and continue it: And he who is the Mediator between *both parties*, is *an Advocate*, a Pleader, a Patron for the *one party.* There was need of a Mediator, even in regard of God himſelf, that both his *State* might be preſerved, and his *Juſtice* ſatisfied: But there was need of an Advocate, only in regard of man, that ſo his wants and miſeries might be declared, and that mercy, together with help in the time of need, might be obtained. The Apoſtle (*Gal.* 3. 20.) deſcribing the nature of a Mediator, ſaith, *A Mediator is not of one*, or (as we ſupply) *not a Mediator of one.* A Mediator is of two, yea, and for two. But an Advocate, though he be between two, yet he is but for one, or *of one*, either *of one* individually taken, or *of one* ſpecifically taken, either of one man, or of one ſort or company of men, who though they are many in number, yet their ſtate or caſe is one. Thus Chriſt is an Advocate *for one*, or *of one*; all that he is an Advocate for, being in one and the ſame condition for the main, though ſome particulars in every mans caſe may vary.

The Greek word which is rendred *Advocate* in the New Teſtament, is applyed to the *holy Ghoſt:* But there is a great difference between Chriſt his being a Paraclete, or an Advocate, and the Spirit's being an Advocate (*John* 16. 7.) *If I go not away* (ſaith Chriſt) *the Comforter* (or the Advocate) *will not come unto you:* That is, *The holy Ghoſt* will not come unto you. One Advocate goeth away, that the other Advocate may come. Chriſt is an Advocate by way of *impetration*; the Spirit is Advocate by way of *application:* Chriſt is an Advocate with God, to get mercy for us; the Spirit is an Advocate with us, to prevail on our hearts to receive that mercy: Though Chriſt be our Advocate in Heaven, pleading for us with the Father, yet if we had not the Spirit to plead in our hearts on earth, we ſhould never receive the good that Chriſt hath purchaſed for us of his Father. *Chriſt appears for us in Heaven* (*Heb.* 9. 24.) He appears as an Attorney in Court for his Client; he is gone to Heaven to appear for us: the Spirit comes from Heaven and appears in us. Chriſt began the work of his interceſſion here (*John* 17.) He is gone into Heaven to continue and perfect it. The Spirit doth both begin and perfect his interceſſion here; he doth not plead for us, but in us; or the Spirit makes interceſſion for us by ſtirring us up to prayer, by teaching us how to word and mould, or rather how to ſigh and groan our prayers; Chriſt makes interceſſion for us, by preſenting, and tendering thoſe prayers to the Father which the Spirit helps to make, or by making prayers for us himſelf to the Father.

Some diſpute how, they inquire much after the manner how Chriſt makes interceſſion, or performs the office of an Advocate for us; but it is enough for us to know that he is an Advocate, or that he makes interceſſion for us, though we are not able to deſcribe the manner how: Whether it be,

Firſt, Only by preſenting himſelf to the Father, and his appearing for us, which is an equivalent, if not a formal interceſſion.

Or ſecondly, By the tendring of his righteouſneſs, and merits, as ſatisfaction to the Father.

Or thirdly, By expreſſing our wants and his deſires for us: Whether by all theſe, or by which of theſe, or whether by ſome other way, is not determinable by us; yet this is clear, that he performs the office of an Advocate for us, and that we receive every good thing from the hand of God through his hand.

Further, Chriſt may be conſidered:

Firſt, As an Advocate for the whole Church: There are ſome cauſes of common concernment to all the people of God. Thus he was an Advocate for *Jeruſalem*, when under bonds and captivity in *Babylon* (Zech. 1. 12.) *Then the Angel of the Lord* (not a created, but the creating Angel, or *the Angel of the Covenant, who is the Son of God*) *anſwered and ſaid, O Lord of Hoſt, how long wilt thou not have mercy on* Jeruſalem, *and on the Cities of* Judah, *againſt which thou haſt had indignation theſe threeſcore and ten years.*

And as Chriſt pleads for the whole Church, ſo for every particular Member of the Church, and that alſo under a twofold notion.

He is Advocate, firſt, to take away our ſins. *If any man ſin* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John*, 1 *Epiſt.* 2. 1.) *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous*, &c.

Secondly, Chriſt is an Advocate for us with the Father in our ſufferings and troubles, to get them taken off from us, or ſanctified to us. Doubtleſs *Job* made uſe of Chriſt continually as an Advocate, to take off the guilt of ſin; yet here he makes uſe of Chriſt as an Advocate to get off his ſufferings, eſpecially theſe miſ-judgings of his Friends, who deeply cenſured and aſperſed him, becauſe of his ſufferings; yea, a Believer makes uſe of Chriſt as an Advocate, to get any good thing, whether little or great, whether for ſoul or for body, as much as he doth for the removing of any evil, whether of ſin or trouble.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The Doctrine of a Mediator between God and Man was known and believed in the World, long before Chriſt came into the World.*

Many ſaw Chriſt by Faith before he was ſeen in the fleſh: *Faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen* (Heb. 1. 1.) And as it is the evidence of things, ſo of perſons that are not ſeen. Chriſt tells the *Jews* (John 8. 56.) *Your Father* Abraham *rejoyced to ſee my day; and he ſaw it, and was glad:* And when the *Jews* quarrelled at this, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and haſt thou ſeen* Abraham? *Jeſus ſaid unto them, Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, before* Abraham *was, I am.* As *Abraham* ſaw his day by Faith, ſo David *in ſpirit called him Lord* (Matth. 22. 43.) And as theſe perſons, with all the holy Elders, ſaw Chriſt by Faith in the Promiſe, ſo the whole Ceremonial Law was a repreſentation of Chriſt to faith by ſenſe: Every ſlain Sacrifice ſpake the death of Chriſt; and the ſprinkling of that blood, the ſprinkling of their conſciences and ours for the remiſſion of ſins: Yea, *They did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat* (that is, the ſame which we now eat) *and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink*; for they drank of that ſpiritual Rock that followed them (and leaſt we ſhould miſtake what was meant by that Rock, the Apoſtle expounds it himſelf) *And that Rock was Chriſt.* The Rock did not follow them, but Chriſt who was ſignified by that Rock did follow them. They who are built upon Chriſt the Rock, ſhall never be moved; yet Chriſt is a moving, as well as a living Rock, to thoſe who are built upon him; whitherſoever they move, he follows them. Thus Jeſus Chriſt was meat and drink to the *Jews*, as well as to us; for he is *the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the World* (*Revel.* 13. 8.) That is, The vertue of his death ſaved all who have been ſaved from the foundation of the World. As Chriſt was ſlain from Eternity in the counſel of God; ſo he was ſlain from the beginning of time in the promiſe of God (*Gen.* 3. 15.) which was the publication of his death; he was then alſo ſlain as to the heart of Believers, whoſe Faith (having once a word for it) makes that which is abſent, in regard of place, ſpiritually preſent; and that which is not, in regard of time, truly to be.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *The Mediator between God and man hath been known and believed in all Ages under a twofold nature, both God and Man.*

We have both in this profeſſion of *Job*'s Faith: He believed the Mediator to be God, for he ſaith, *Mine eye poureth tears to God.* There is the Divine nature. He believed that the Mediator ſhould be man, and therefore adds, *The Son of man for his friend*; there is his humane nature; ſo that not only the general Doctrine of the Mediatorſhip of Chriſt, but this particular about the conſtitution of his perſon as Mediator, was alſo known. Had not our Advocate been man he could not have ſuffered for us; and had he not been God he could not have ſatisfied for us. Theſe points of Goſpel Catechiſm are ſo neceſſary and fundamental, that in every Age Believers have in ſome meaſure been inſtructed about them. And whereas the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 2.5.) *There is one Mediator between God and men,* or, *of God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus:* He doth not add *man,* to exclude the Divine nature from the Mediatorſhip, but emphatically to demonſtrate that nature, in which he gave himſelf a ranſom for us, of which he ſpeaks in the next Verſe. For though the ranſome was paid by him who is God, or had a Divine nature, yet it was paid in the Manhood, or humane Nature only. The humane Nature was the matter of our ranſome; but the Divine nature gave worth and value to it.

Further, *Job* ſpeaks with much confidence and aſſurance, both of Chriſts willingneſs to undertake his cauſe, and of the ſucceſs or good iſſue of his cauſe, if once Chriſt did but undertake it: *He will plead for a man with God.*

Hence Obſerve, Fourthly, *Chriſt is very ready to ſpeak for, and plead the cauſe of poor ſinners before God his Father.*

He will do it, ſaith *Job*; Chriſt is eaſie to be intreated, he is found of thoſe that ſeek him not, then ſurely he will be found of thoſe that ſeek him. His promiſe is (*John* 6. 37.) *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out:* As if he had ſaid, Whatſoever I do, I will not do this: And when he ſaith, he will not do this, his meaning is, that he will do much more for them, then the not doing of this comes to; he will readily receive their perſons, and undertake their ſuits, though they have no fee to give him, nothing to move him, but the need they have of him.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *Chriſt is a powerful, and an effectual Mediator with the Father.*

He carries the day; he is a prevailing Mediator. Chriſt is ſuch a Phyſitian, that no man ever dyed under his hand; and he is ſuch an Advocate, that no mans cauſe ever miſcarried under his hand. The *Arminians* maintain a propitiation made, or a Sacrifice offered by Chriſt for all; yet they dare not ſay, it is effectual for all; but the interceſſion of Chriſt (in their opinion) is effectual for all. Chriſt dyed (ſay they) for thoſe that he doth not ſave; but Chriſt prayeth for none but thoſe that ſhall be ſaved. They are not for univerſal Interceſſion, though they are for an univerſal Sacrifice, or propitiation; and their reaſon is, Becauſe they cannot deny, but many ſhall periſh for ever, which yet they could not, did Chriſt but pray for them. We believe that his Sacrifice is as effectual as his Interceſſion; and that therefore he dyed for none but thoſe for whom he prayes, his Interceſſion being for the drawing out, and bringing home the benefit of his Sacrifice to thoſe, and to all thoſe for whom he offered himſelf to God. But to the point in hand, The *Arminian* who leaves the death of Chriſt in the hand of mans free will, aſſiſted only by general Grace, to make it effectual to himſelf, or not, he (I ſay) aſſerts the Interceſſion of Chriſt not only ſufficient, but effectual for all, in whoſe behalf he intercedes: So that we are ſure all ſhall go well with us in the Court of Heaven, while we have Chriſt our Advocate with the Father.

And that we may have fulneſs of confidence to come to God by Chriſt, let us conſider theſe five things.

Firſt, Chriſt is moſt wiſe to mannage our cauſe; ſo wiſe, that he is the *Wiſdom of the Father:* If we had an Advocate at the Bar furniſht with as much wiſdom as the Judge, it were a great ſtep to obtain in a right ſuit.

Secondly, Chriſt is an eloquent Advocate, a powerful Orator. *As the Lord hath given him the tongue of the learned, that he ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary* (Iſa. 54.4.) So he hath a learned tongue to ſpeak a word for him that is weary: Chriſt is the *Eſſential word,* and the flower of all declarative words is with him; when he ſpake on earth, he ſpake with authority (*Matth.* 7. 29.) All wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth (*Luke* 4. 24.) Yea, his hearers ſomewhere teſtifie, never ſpake man as this man ſpeaketh: And as no man ever ſpake like him to man; ſo no man ever ſpake like him to God.

Thirdly, Chriſt is a faithful Advocate; his interceſſion is a part of his Prieſtly office; we have a *faithful high Prieſt,* ſaith the Apoſtle, therefore a *faithful Advocate:* He will never either deſert our cauſe, or betray it; he is as ſure to us as our own ſouls; yea, he and the ſouls of his are one.

Fourthly, Chriſt is a merciful Advocate, he layes our cauſe to heart, our cauſe is his cauſe: He hath eſpouſed the Intereſts of his people, and doth all for us upon his own account. When Saints are perſecuted, we may tell him that he is perſecuted, and that he is afflicted when they are: The Church may plead with Chriſt to plead for the removing of her ſufferings, under the title of his ſufferings, he being the head of the Church, and the Church being his body. Chriſt is, as a faithful, ſo a merciful high Prieſt (*Heb.* 2. 17.) and the Apoſtle ſaith, That in all things it behoved him to be like his brethren, that he might be ſo. Chriſt had an ability of *ſufficiency* to be merciful to us, as God, though he had never been made like unto us by becoming man; but he had not that ability (as ſome ſpeak) of Idoneity, or fitneſs to be merciful. His being made like unto us, hath given him a double Idoneity, for the tenderneſs of his heart towards us.

Firſt, *In that he himſelf hath ſuffered being tempted* (*Heb.* 2. 18.) His paſſions in the fleſh were great.

Secondly, In that himſelf ſuffers ſtill in all our temptations, his compaſſions with our fleſh are great.

Now an Advocate, who either hath had an experience of trouble in his own perſon, or is full of the ſenſe of his Clients trouble, and feels his ſmart, will certainly do his utmoſt to relieve him; becauſe in his relief himſelf is relieved alſo.

Fifthly, Chriſt is the Favourite of the Judge; it is a great advantage to have one pleading for us at the *Bar,* who is in favour with the *Bench:* Chriſt is highly in favour with the Bench: God hath teſtified from Heaven, *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed* (*Matth.* 3. 17.) The Judge is our Advocates Friend and Father.

Laſtly, That we may be further aſſured that he will do his utmoſt for us, our Advocate calls us his Friends: As the Judge is his Friend, before whom he pleads; ſo every Saint is his Friend, for whom he pleads. Some will do more for friendſhip then for a fee. We know it is ſo with Jeſus Chriſt, he pleads for his people, becauſe they are his Friends: This *Job* makes uſe of here, *He will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend.* As if *Job* had ſaid, I know I have a Friend of Chriſt, and Chriſt looks on me as his friend, and therefore I have higheſt confidence that he will plead my cauſe, and take off this ſcandal. So much for *Job*'s earneſt deſire upon his appeal, that his cauſe might come to a hearing, and that Chriſt would undertake the pleading of it before his Father.

He gives a reaſon in the laſt Verſe, why he was thus preſſing to have the buſineſs brought to an iſſue; why he did thus appeal to God as his witneſs, why he did pour out tears to Chriſt, that he would plead for him? Why all this?

Verſe 22. **When a few years are come, then ſhall I go the way whence I ſhall not return.**

As if he had ſaid, *For as much as I muſt dye ſhortly, I deſire to have this difference taken up before I dye: I cannot live long in this world, and I would not go out of the world, under ſuch a cloud as is now upon me:* Is it not time for me to haſten my cauſe to an end when mine end haſtens? and to get my buſineſs determined before my years are?

Deum vellem jamjam in preſentia diſceptationem in ſe recipere quia ad mortem propero. Jun.

When

Anni numeri. Heb. i. e. qui numerati ſunt adeo & breviſſima periodo circumſcripti.

When a few years are come.] The Hebrew is, *years of number*, that is, *Years which may eaſily be numbred* (*Iſa.* 10.19.) *The trees that remain ſhall be few that a Child may write them*, they ſhall be trees of number, that is, a ſmall number: and (*Gen.* 34.29.) *Jacob* ſaith, *We are but few*, the Hebrew is, *We are men of number*, we may ſoon be told, a Child may tell us, and yet you provoke City and Country againſt us. We very well tranſlate according to the Hebraiſm, *years of number, a few years. When a few years are come,*

I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall not return.] What way is that (which hath *Veſtigia nulla retrorſum*) where all ſteps are forwards, and none backward: this is ſuch a way as we meet not with in all our earthly travels, yet every man on earth is travelling towards ſuch a way: travel which way you will, you have as many ſteps backwards as forwards, men coming, and going: but (ſaith *Job*) *I ſhall go the way I ſhall not return.*

What way is this? This is the way of all fleſh (*Joſh.* 23. 15. 1 *King.* 2.2.) This is the way to the grave, that way hath no ſteps backwards.

But is there no return from the grave?

It is true, ſome have riſen; there have been ſome firſt-fruits of a reſurrection: but they who have come from the grave are ſo few, that their foot-ſteps are worn out by thoſe many and many thouſands of thouſands who have gone to the grave. What multitudes have gone the way to the grave, and are not returned? ſome few have returned, but theſe ſo few, that we may ſtill affirm, the way to the grave knows no returning. That which is very rarely done (the contrary being very frequently done) is ſaid not to be done at all, or never to be done.

But *Job* ſeems to deny his own return; he ſpeaks as if he ſhould not be only lodged for a while, but loſt for ever in the grave; *I ſhall go the way, whence I ſhall not return.*

I anſwer, That *Job's* faith was clear in the point of the reſurrection of the body appears by the confeſſion which he makes (*Chap.* 19. 25, 26.) and therefore when he ſaith, *I ſhall not return*, his meaning is (as was ſhewed upon a like paſſage *Chap.* 10.21.)

Firſt, That he ſhould not return by any power of nature.

Secondly, That he ſhould not return to a ſtate of nature; he believed fully that he ſhould return by the power of God, to an eſtate of glory. Our bodies which are ſown natural bodies ſhall be raiſed ſpiritual bodies. Though that which was ſowed ſhall return, yet when it returns it ſhall not be as it was ſowed.

Laſtly, whereas *Job* ſaith, *I ſhall not return*, his meaning is, when I die, or if I die, I ſhall no more return to my houſe and dwelling in the world, I muſt take my leave of all thoſe things for ever. *My place ſhall know me no more*, as he ſpeaks to the ſame ſubject (*Chap.* 7. 10.)

From the firſt branch of the verſe Note, *The years of man's life are few, You may quickly number them.*

Secondly, *As the years of man's life come above quickly, ſo when they are come, we muſt go certainly, we muſt go with death.*

I ſhall go (ſaith *Job*) there is no hindring, no ſtopping of that journey. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, *He hath no mind to go*; he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, *He is not at leiſure to go*; he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, he is not fit to go, *He is not prepared to go*; he muſt go as he is, fit or unfit, prepared or unprepared, he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, he will give all the treaſure in his houſe, all the money in his purſe, to be ſpared this journey; he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, he will get another to go for him, or he will ſend one in his room; There is no dying by proxie; every man when his few years are come muſt go in perſon.

Thirdly Obſerve, *A Believer can ſpeak of death familiarly.*

It is a comfort to him in his ſorrows, to think that he ſhall die ſhortly, *When a few years are come, I ſhall go the way, &c.* he ſpeaks pleaſantly, the mention of death was a life to him. *Job's* life was a kind of death, and therefore to him eſpecially death would be a kind of life; were our hearts rightly affected, they that have the moſt lively life, would think death better then this life, *I deſire* (ſaith *Paul*) *to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all.* Dearh was better to him then life; and leſt any ſhould ſay, no marvel if *Paul* deſired to die, who could ſcarce tell where to live; and no marvel if he would die once for all, who was in deaths often: to prevent this cavil, he adds, *Which is beſt of all.* Barely to die is better to ſome then a troubleſome life; but to die and be with Chriſt, is better then the beſt life, much more is it better then that life in this world, which is a continual death, as *Job's* was. How ſhould ſuch a man ſing out *Job's* verſe, *When a few dayes are come, I ſhall go the way, whence I ſhall not return.*

Fourthly Obſerve, *It is good to put death before us under the eaſieſt notions.*

Here *Job* calls it only a going, a going out of the world, that is all; he elſewhere calls it a ſleep, and the Spirit of God every where (in reference to Saints) ſpeaks of it in the moſt comfortable expreſſions. Death it ſelf is ſo embalmed, yea and cloathed in the holy language, that there is even a ſweetneſs and a beauty in it. When a man hath worn a ſuit of Apparel a great while, and hath even worn it out, or it becomes foul and naſty, would he not be glad to put that off, and get a new one upon his back? therefore death is called an uncloathing, a putting off the fleſh; there is no hurt in that; when a man hath tired himſelf all the day at his work, would he not gladly go to bed? therefore death is called reſt or ſleep. Under theſe or the like conſiderations held forth in Scripture, we may (as it were) bury all hard thoughts of death, as was further ſhewed (*Chap.* 14.12.) eſpecially while we remember that as now life is by many degrees, bits or morſels, ſwallowed up of mortallity, ſo then death ſhall (at one bit or morſel) *be ſwallowed up of life* (2 *Cor.* 5.4.) For Chriſt hath not only conquered, but *aboliſhed death, and hath brought*, not only *life*, but *immortality to light through the Goſpel* (2 *Tim.* 1.10.) Life is good; yet when it may be ſaid of a life, it ſhall die, that puts an evil into life: But if life be good, how good is immortality, which is a life that cannot die?

Sixthly, Note, *Job* is very importunate to have a blot upon his good name wiped out; his conſcience was clear, his ſoul was well, he could ſay (*Chap.* 13.) *He is my Saviour, and I know that I ſhall be juſtified*; yet becauſe he was under aſperſions and harſh cenſures, he haſtens to have theſe taken off, becauſe he was to die ſhortly.

If we ſhould on this ground, be careful to ſettle our outward eſtates and credits; how much more ſhould we be careful upon this ground to ſee that our ſouls be well ſetled? How ſhould each one ſay, I will haſten to get my ſins pardoned, my perſon juſtified; I will haſten to have all clear between God and my ſoul; *For when a few years are come, I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall not return*: And if I do not ſee theſe things done, while I am here, I ſhall never come back to ſee them done, nor can they be done at all in the place whither I am going. There is no repenting, no reforming, no believing in the grave: if our ſpiritual change be not before our natural change, it will never be. This argument ſhould provoke us to ſettle the affairs of our ſouls ſpeedily. It is not unlawful, nay, it is a duty to vindicate our credit, and to order the affairs that concern this life, becauſe we have not long to live: The haſt of death ſhould make us haſt our work, even the work of this life; much more upon this ground ſhould we ſee that our hearts be ſetled, that our eternal peace be ſetled; how ſhould the haſt of death make us haſt the work of the life which is to come? But as it ſhould make us haſten that work, ſo it muſt not make us huddle that work, or ſlubber it over, or do it to halves. Such haſt is waſt indeed: For, if we leave our ſouls half ſetled, and our peace half made, and our repentance and turning to God in the mid way, we ſhall never come again to finiſh and perfect them, no more then we ſhall to begin them. Therefore ſet ſpeedily about the work, and give your ſelves no reſt till the work be perfected; for when a few dayes are come, *you ſhall go the way where ye ſhall not return.*

Laſtly, Which was *Job's* ſpecial caſe,

It is an affliction for any man to die under a blot of diſgrace.

Our credit and good name ſhould be precious to us while we live; eſpecially we ſhould be careful to die with good credit, and not to let a blot lie on us when we are going out of the World. *Job* would not die under the name of an

Hypocrite, or an Oppreſſour, with which black titles he had been charged by his Friends. It is a mercy to go to the grave with honour among men, and to die deſired; though it be enough that we go to our Grave having honour with God, and being deſired of him. A good name is a Box of ointment powred forth; and a good report (eſpecially among thoſe that are good) is as the embalming of our memories to poſterity. And yet the Saints are not ſo ſollicitous for repairs in honour, becauſe of that eſteem which they have of their own eſteem (that's the ſtrain of ambition) and they have learned to go through good report and evil report, through honour and diſhonour; they know how to go forth without the Camp, bearing the reproach of Chriſt: But they are unwilling that Chriſt ſhould bear their reproach, or that his name ſhould be diſhonoured through them. And therefore ſeeing they deſire while they live, to adorn the Doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt in all things, they cannot but be careful before they die, to remove from their own names whatſoever might reflect diſhonour upon his. How near *Job* was (in his own opinion) to the valley of the ſhadow of death, is yet more evident in the firſt words of the next Chapter: Here he only tells us, he muſt die ſhortly, there he tells us, upon the matter, that he was dead already; here he ſaith, *When a few years are come, I ſhall go*; there he ſaith not only that he had no more *years* to come, but no more *dayes, my dayes are extinct*, &c.

CHAP. XVII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the Graves are ready for me.

Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eyes continue in their provocation.

Lay down now, put me in a ſurety with thee, who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?

For thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding: therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them.

He that ſpeaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his Children ſhall fail.

THE beginning of this Chapter purſues the Argument laid down in the cloſe of the former: Or as a learned Expoſitour ſpeaks, *Job* in this *doth enliven the premiſes*, and (as it were) put freſh ſpirits into what he had ſpoken before. For whereas he had before deſired the Lord to haſten his cauſe to a day of hearing, becauſe his day of death haſtned (*Chap.* 16. *Verſ.* 22.) *When a few years are come, I ſhall go the way, whence I ſhall not return*: Here to ſhew that he was a dying man, he deſcribes himſelf as a dead man; *My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the graves are ready for me.*

Hoc capite intendit inanimare præmiſſa. Aquin.

Secondly, There *Job* made an appeal to God, *O that a man might plead with God, as a man pleads with his Neighbour.* (*Verſ.* 21.) And he gives the reaſon why, *My Friends ſcorn me.* (*Verſ.* 20.) He doth the ſame here in other language (*Verſ.* 2.) *Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?* And therefore he renews his appeal to God, and begs to be heard before indifferent Judges, or Umpires, *Lay down now, put me in a ſurety with thee, who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?* In the fourth and fifth Verſes he further urgeth the reaſons of his appeal, or he backs his motion, that God would do him right, from the inſufficiency of his Friends to do him right: *Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding*: As if he ſhould ſay, Who would ſtand to the judgement of thoſe, who want underſtanding? *Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding: therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them, &c.* To this honour of judging my cauſe, and deciding this controverſie, yea, I find them ſo unfit to be either my Judges, or my Arbitratours, that they are indeed but *Flatterers*; and therefore they may rather expect ſome ſudden judgement upon themſelves, or their Children, then that God ſhould do them this honour to judge for me: *He that ſpeaks flattery to his Friends, even the eyes of his Children ſhall fail,* (*Verſ.* 5.)

Thus I have opened *Job's* ſcope in the context of theſe five Verſes; which I have put together, becauſe the matter runs in a continued dependence. And though for the main it be the ſame with which he concluded in the ſixteenth Chapter, yet the variety of reading and expreſſion will yield us variety of meditation: I deſcend to particulars.

Verſ. 1. **My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct; the graves are ready for me.**

Here are three things, every of which ſpeaks a dying man.

First, *Corrupt breath.*
Secondly, *Extinguiſhed dayes.*
Thirdly, *A grave made ready.*

Firſt, **My breath is corrupt**: *Ruach.* There are three interpretations given of that word [*My breath*] Some underſtand it of *his mind*, or whole inward man: As if he ſaid, *My thoughts are, or my mind is exceedingly troubled*; and ſo moſt of the Greek Interpreters read it; and then the word which we tranſlate *Corrupt*, may ſignifie grieved, pained, or afflicted, and it is often applyed to thoſe pains which are moſt painful, even the pain of a Woman in travel. And ſo the ſenſe is made out thus, as if *Job* had ſaid, *I am extreamly troubled, or I am pained, like a Woman in the hour of travel*; *as ſhe is in bodily pain, ſo I am pained in mind*; *I have felt many inward pangs, and throwes, and yet I am not delivered*: But I conceive this expoſition unſuitable to the ſcope of the place, *Job* being about to deſcribe the ſtate of his body, or of his outward man, and not the affliction and trouble of his mind.

Pereo ſpiritu agitatus. Sept.
רוחי
חבלה
Vox
חבל
ligavit, conſtrinxit per antiphraſin ſignificat ſolutus, ruptus, corruptus, accommodatur etiam ad dolores intenſiſſimos quales ſunt parturientium, quia cor valde conſtringunt.

Secondly, The word (*Ruach*) ſignifieth the vital powers or ſpirits, which ſupport man, and ſerve him in all the functions of life; ſpirits are the promoters of action, and when the vital ſpirits are corrupted, man is unable, not only to act, but to live. The expence of ſpirits, is the moſt chargeable expence to the life of man, and when a mans ſpirits are much ſpent, he is like a dead man, though he be alive: We ſay ordinarily when we are weary, *Our ſpirits are ſpent*; that is, Our vital ſpirits which give activity and ſtrength to the whole body.

Spiritus vitales qui animæ inſtrumentum ſunt ad vitæ functiones. Aquin.

Thirdly, Rather underſtand it literally, and ſtrictly for the *breath*, which comes forth by reſpiration, *My breath is corrupt*: and then the corrupting here ſpoken of, is not to be taken for any illſavour in his breath: they who have corrupt breath are offenſive to others in breathing. The breath is ſaid to be corrupt, becauſe it ſmells of the corruption of thoſe parts from whence it is drawn; we muſt not underſtand *Job* ſo: But when he ſaith, *My breath is corrupt*, his meaning is, that either he had obſtructions and ſtoppings of breath, which diſtemper Phyſitians call the *Tiſſick*; a man under that infirmity may be ſaid to have his breath corrupted, becauſe he breathes difficultly. And as it is ſo in ſome diſeaſes, ſo it is alway ſo in the approaches of death; a little before a man dies, his breath ſhortens, he breathes hardly, or he hardly breathes, he lies gaſping for life, and catching for breath: Such a ſtate *Job* here intends. The *Tygurine* tranſlation takes that ſenſe, *My life is departing, or I am giving up the ghoſt.*

Corruptio non hic denotat ſpiritum graveolentum, ſed ſpiritum qui cum ingenti niſu & dolore emittitur. Pined. *Medici Aſthma vocant; & quia Aſthmaticus ſuffocari videtur, ideo legitur hic*; jam quidem ago animam. Tygur.

Hence Note, *The breath of man is corruptible, though his ſoul be not.*

Theſe two are very diſtinct: Some make the ſoul and breath one thing, and argue the corruptibility of the ſoul from ſuch Texts as this. But the breath differs, not only from the ſoul, but from the life: The ſoul hath a life of its own, and the life of the body is it union with the ſoul; breathing is the acting of life, proceeding from that union, and ending when that union is diſſolved. Breath may be corrupt, and life may vaniſh, but the ſoul continues; the breath is ſo vaniſhing, that the Prophet gives caution (*Iſa.* 2.22.) *Ceaſe from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils.* The breath of man is ſo ready to ceaſe, that it is our wiſdom to ceaſe from man; for when breath goes, man is gone, and all goes with him, in that day his thoughts periſh; and therefore *Job* had no ſooner ſaid, *My breath is corrupt*, but he adds,

My dayes are extinct.

נועכו *Vox tantū hoc loco reperta ſignificat excidere amputare extinguere.*

[**My dayes**] that is, The time appointed for my life, which is meaſured by dayes, by natural dayes, or by artificial dayes: Our dayes come and go continually; and when our tale of dayes is come and gone, our dayes are [**extinct.**] The word which here we tranſlate extinct, is found no where elſe in the Hebrew of the Old Teſtament: it is rendered three wayes.

*Exciſſi ſunt.*Pagn.

Firſt, Thus, *my dayes are cut off*; which metaphor is often uſed in reference to life; our dayes are (as it were) ſo many threads, and our life is like a piece of cloth woven together by many dayes; when the Web, be it more or leſs, longer or ſhorter, is finiſhed, the thred is cut: *My dayes are cut off.*

Breviabuntur dies mei. Vulg.

Secondly, The Vulgar reads it, *my dayes will be ſhortned*; they ſhall be put in a narrow room, into a little *compendium*, I ſhall ſoon be able to read over the volume of my dayes, they are but ſhort, a meer Epitome.

Thirdly, We read, *my dayes are extinct*, or put out. Which is a metaphor taken from fire, from a Torch, or Candle, which is the ſenſe of the *Tygurine* tranſlation.

*Deus mei vitæ lucernæ deficiunt.*Tygur.

Vita extinguitur quādo humor nativus in quo vita conſiſtit extinguitur.

My dayes fail, as a Candle, or as a Lamp, which, when the oyl is conſumed, goes out: Mr. *Broughton* keeps to the metaphor of fire, *My dayes are quenched.* There is a flame of life in the body, the natural heat is preſerved by the natural moyſture; theſe two, Radical heat, and Radical moiſture, work upon each other; and as long as Radical moiſture holds out to feed the Radical heat, life holds out; but when the heat hath once ſucked and drunk up all the moiſture (in ſome acute diſeaſes it drinks all at a draught) as the flame drinks up the Oyl of the Lamp, then we go out, or as *Job* ſpeakes here, *Our dayes are extinct.* Exceſſive moiſture puts out the fire, and for want of moiſture it goeth out.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Man's life, as a Fire, or Lamp, conſumes it ſelf continually.*

There is a ſpecial diſeaſe called a *Conſumption*, of which many die; but the truth is, every man who dies, dies of a Conſumption; he that dies of a Surfet, may be ſaid (in this ſenſe) to die of a Conſumption. The fewel and food of man's life is waſted ſometimes more ſparingly and gradually, but 'tis alwayes conſumed (except in thoſe deaths which are meerly occaſional, or violent) before man dies.

Again, *Job* ſpeaks peremptorily, *My dayes are extinct.* He was not then dead; but becauſe he ſaw all things in a tendency to death, and was himſelf in a dying poſture; therefore he concludes, *My dayes are extinct.*

Hence Note, Secondly, *What we ſee in regard of all preparatory means and wayes ready to be done, we may ſpeak of as already done.*

The Scripture ſpeakes often of thoſe things which are ſhortly and certainly to come to paſs, as come to paſs. And as the Apoſtle argues in ſpirituals, *We know that we are tranſlated from death to life, becauſe we love the Brethren, and he that believeth hath eternal life:* So we may argue about naturals, he that is ſick beyond the help of means, and the ſkill of the Phyſician, is tranſlated from life to death, and we may conclude of a man in this caſe, he hath temporal death; or he may ſay of himſelf, as *Job* doth in the next words,

The graves are ready for me.] The Original is very conciſe, it is only there, *The graves for me*; we ſupply thoſe words *are ready.* And becauſe of that ſhortneſs of the Language, there have been many conjectures for the ſupply or filling up of the ſence. Some thus, *The graves for me*; that is, there is nothing for me to think of now but only a grave, I may lay aſide all other buſineſs, and attend that alone, how I may lie down in the duſt with peace. I am not a man for this world, it is beſt for me to retire or withdraw my ſoul quite from the earth, ſeeing I have no hope to keep my body long out of it; or if I do let out my ſoul to the earth, it ſhall be only to ſo much of it, as will hold my body, or ſerve to make me a grave. *The graves for me.*

קברים לי Sepulchra mihi. *Cum mutila ſit oratio indifferens eſt ut variis modis perfici poſſit.*

Secondly, *The graves for me*; that is, I deſire or wiſh for nothing but a grave, *A grave for my money*, as we ſay of a thing that we greatly deſire: ſo ſaith *Job*, *A grave for me:*

As if he had more largely ſpoken, thus,

Sepulchra mihi; ſupple opto, quæro, cogito, aut quid ſimile. Sepulchra mihi inhiāt, ego ſepulchris. q.d. *Aliis omnibus rebus valedico atque renuncio.* Jun.

As I perceive I am going to the grave, ſo I deſire to go thither; I have (as to this ſence) made a covenant with death, and an agreement with the grave. The grave and I ſhall not fall out, now that I am ready to fall into it. For if I had my vote, or might put down in writing what I would have, I would write, A Grave, A Grave for me; as I am declining, and decaying in my body, ſo my ſpirit, and my mind are as willing that my body ſhould decay: I am as ready for the grave as that is for me. A grave for me: So the words carry a reciprocation of readineſs between *Job* and the Grave, *The grave gapes for me, and I gape for the grave:* We may parallel this kind of ſpeaking with that in the Book of *Canticles* (*Chap.* 2.16.) where the Spouſe ſaith, *My beloved is mine, and I am his:* The Original is, *My beloved to me, and I to him:* There are no more words then needs muſt be. The largneſs of their affection, bred this conciſeneſs in language, *My beloved to me, and I to him:*

The expreſſion Notes two things.

Firſt, Propriety, *My beloved to me*, or, *my beloved is mine*; that is, I have a propriety in him.

Secondly, It Notes poſſeſſion, *I have him*, I have not only a right to him, but I enjoy him; I have not only a title, but a tenure; God hath given me Livery and Seiſin (as our Law ſpeaks) he hath put me into poſſeſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, and I have given Jeſus Chriſt full poſſeſſion of me, I am no longer my own, but his, and at his diſpoſe. So here, *The grave for me, and I for the grave:* The grave is my right; yea, the grave is my poſſeſſion. The grave is a houſe that every one hath right to, and ſome are ſo near it, that they ſeem poſſeſſed of it. *The grave is mine*, ſaith *Job*, or I am as a dead man, ready to be carried to my grave: The Grave is not made ready, till man is undreſſed by death, and ſo made ready for the grave. We ſay of very old men, though in health, and we may ſay of very ſick men, though young, *They have one foot in the grave. Job* ſpeaks as having *both his feet in the grave:* Yea, we may ſay, that *Job* ſpeaks as if he had not only his feet in the grave, but (which is far more) *his heart in the grave.* There are many who have their feet in the grave, whoſe hearts are at furtheſt diſtance from it, *Job* had both. *Heman* (*Pſal.* 88. 4, 5.) deſcribes his condition in ſuch a language, *My ſoul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh to the grave, I am accounted with them that go down into the pit; I am as a man of no ſtrength, free among the dead; like the ſlain that lie in the grave, whom thou remembreſt no more, and that are cut off from thy ſight:* That Scripture may be a Comment on this, *My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the graves are ready for me.*

Further, *Job* ſpeaks in the Plural number; he ſaith not the grave is ready for me, but, *The graves are ready for me.* Why, how many graves muſt *Job* have? Would not one grave hold him? Or, was *Job* covetous to have many graves? *Many houſes will not ſerve ſome men when they live, but one houſe will ſerve any man when he dieth.* A little room will hold thoſe dead, for whoſe covetous and ambitious minds the whole World was not roomthy enough while they lived. Ordinary men will have here their Winter-houſes, and their Summer-houſes, their City-houſe, and their Country-houſe, their houſes on the Plain, and their houſes on the Hill; men have variety of houſes while they live; but one is all when dead: Why then doth *Job* ſay, *The* [*graves*] *are ready for me?*

He ſaith it to ſhew that death abounded to his apprehenſion, or that he could not eſcape death: As if he had ſaid, Whereſoever I ſet my foot, I ſtep upon a grave. The Poet deſcribing a tragical ſtate, ſaith, *There was much of death to be ſeen, or many appearances of death. Job* ſaw deaths, and beheld graves every where gaping for him. *Paul* was in deaths often, and *Job* was in many deaths at once: *The graves are ready*, there are many Pits making, I am ſure to fall into one, there's no avoiding it.

Plurima mortis imago.

Learn from it, Firſt,

That, *In times of ſickneſs and affliction, diſcourſes of the grave, are the moſt ſeaſonable diſcourſes.*

Death ſhould be much in our thoughts, and much in our ſpeech at all times, but moſt of all in times of ſickneſs, or of danger. Some when they are ſick, cannot abide to hear a word ſpoken of the grave; others will forbid ſuch as come to viſit the ſick, to ſpeak a word of death. *Lewis* the eleventh King of *France*, was ſo exceſſively afraid of death, that he had given command to his Attendants not to give him any warning of the approach of this his laſt Enemy by *Name*. It was worſe then death to him to hear of death; and yet before he died, He was told of it, not only plainly, but rudely. The *French* Hiſtorian reports, that his very Barber, with ſome other inferiour Servants (as if they had rather come as Judges to pronounce the ſentence of death upon him, then as friends to be his remembrancers of death) told him bluntly and abruptly, without preface or preamble, or the leaſt word of comfort to ſweeten ſuch a bitter potion, That his fatal hour was come, that neither his Hermit nor his Phyſitian, could keep him alive a day longer. They who are unwilling to hear, or ſpeak of death, ſhall hear it ſpoken of whether they will or no. Death ſhould be much upon the tongue, and more in the thoughts of good men when they are in health, but when they are in their *natural preparation for death* (ſickneſs is a natural preparative for death) they ſhould be very often in their *ſpiritual preparations*, by thinking and diſcourſing of it.

Comines. lib. 10.

Secondly, From this manner of ſpeaking, *The grave for me.*

Obſerve, That, *A godly man is ſometimes as ready for the grave, as the grave can be for him.*

Let it come as ſoone as it will, it cannot come too ſoon; as the grave gapes for him, ſo doth he for the grave; as the grave hungers for him, ſo doth he for it, and nothing can ſatisfie him but a grave. *I deſire* (ſaith *Paul*) *to be diſſolved:* He was ready for the grave: And ready he was, not in a vain wiſh, O, I would die, and I deſire to die; but from a grounded hope that he ſhould be well in death. *Saul* (2 *Sam.* 1.9.) was ſorely wounded, the graves were ready for him, and he was ready for the grave too: But whence was it? It was not from his preparedneſs to die, but from his impatience to live; as appears both by the true Hiſtory of his death, and by the falſe report of it made by the *Amalekite*. The former ſaith (1 *Sam.*31 4.) *Then ſaid Saul unto his Armour-bearer, Draw thy ſword and thruſt me through therewith, leſt theſe uncircumciſed come and thruſt me through and abuſe me: Saul*, upon this account was ſo ready for the grave, that he begg'd to be thruſt into it, and when he could not obtain that miſerable favour; he thruſt himſelf into it; ſo the latter part of the Verſe informs us, *But his Armour-bearer would not, for he was ſore afraid: therefore Saul took a Sword and fell upon it.* The *Amalekite* reports *Saul* thus beſpeaking him (2 *Sam.*1.9.) *Stand I pray thee upon me, and ſlay me; for anguiſh is upon me, becauſe my life is yet whole in me.*

Man dies not by piece-meal, now a little, and then a little, nor is life diviſible, when it departs it departs together; but when *Saul* had no mind to live, it troubled him that he was no nearer death: A diſhonour was fallen upon him, the day was loſt, and he was wounded: *Saul* could eaſier die then out-live this diſgrace. Such a readineſs to die many have had, it vexeth them to live, die they will, becauſe they cannot live as they would: this is a readineſs of deſperation, not of preparation. *Job* was much troubled, pain and ſmart afflicted him, and they had ſome influence upon his deſire of death; but his chief motive was above: what old *Simeon* deſired, to depart in peace becauſe his eyes had ſeen his ſalvation, *Job* deſired, becauſe he knew by Faith, that God was his ſalvation.

Thirdly, *Job* ſpeakes chearfully of the Grave:

Hence learn, *A believer in the greateſt afflictions of this life, ſees eaſe and refreſhing in death.*

He knowes that he ſhall bury all his ſorrows when himſelf goes to the grave; yea, that then his ſins, as well as his afflictions go to their grave too, and ſhall never riſe again.

Fourthly, *Job* ſpeakes confidently, he ſhall die preſently, the grave was ready for him: But it was not ſo, *Job's* grave was not ready, and he out-lived this black day many a fair year.

Hence Obſerve, *A good man may miſtake the times and ſeaſons of God's diſpenſations to him.*

He thinks, yea concludes, he ſhall die, when he ſhall not die: Wicked worldly men, do not believe they ſhall die, when they muſt; they cannot be perſwaded that they ſhall die, when they are ready to drop into their graves. *Job* ſeemed to have an aſſurance that he ſhould die, yet he did not, God reprived him from death, and reſtored him from trouble. We are never the nearer the grave, becauſe we prepare for it, ſpeak and meditate on it, or reſolve to go into it: It is not our holding back from the grave, that will keep us out of it, nor our willingneſs to go to the grave, that will put us into it. It is good to miſtake upon the beſt ſide; God uſually recalls thoſe from death, who are moſt ready at his call to die.

Fifthly, In that he ſpeaks of Graves in the Plural number: Learn this, *There are many wayes of going out of the World, though there be but one way of coming in.*

Whitherſoever we are going, we are going to the grave; and when we have ſtept over, or ſcrambled out of one grave, we may quickly ſlip into another, and be locked in faſt enough.

Laſtly, Take this from the whole, by way of Corollary; It is our wiſdom to ſtand alwayes ready for death, and the grave, for they ſtand ready for us: Ours is a dying life, a decaying ſtrength, ours are conſuming dayes, our dayes cannot be many, poſſibly they will be but very few; for ought we know the grave is now ready for us, and we are ſure it is a digging and preparing for us: Therefore let us be digging in the Word of life, that we may be ready to meet and welcome death and the grave, which are ſo ready for us: *The graves are ready for me.*

Job proceeds to re-inforce the cauſe of his appeal.

Verſ. 2. **Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?**

Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates by way of affirmation, *Surely mockers are beſtowed on me.* We by way of Queſtion, *Are there not mockers with me?* Yes, there are mockers with me: Some read it as the form of an Oath. It is familiar in the Hebrew to uſe ſuch forms of ſwearing and imprecating; ſo the words are rendred by a learned Interpreter, *Let me periſh if my friends are not mockers, if they go not about to delude me. Job* ſpake this a little before, *My friends ſcorn me (Chap.*16.20.) Here he is at it again, *Are there not mockers with me?* I find three words applyed by *Job* to his Friends, while he reproves this their unfriendly uſage.

חהלים התל *à illuſit deriſit.*

אם לא *Formula jurisjurandi huic linguæ familiaris.* Merc.

Diſperiã niſi amici mei ſtudeant mihi imponere. Vatabl.

The firſt (*Chap.*12.4.) there he uſeth a word which ſignifieth to mock with deriſion. The word (*Chap.*16.19.) notes them ſuch as mocked, with wit and jeſting. The word here uſed ſignifies to mock by deceiving or deluding, as if his Friends had carried matters with him more like Sophiſters, then Comforters: So the word is applied (*Gen.* 31.7.) *Jacob* tells *Leah*, and *Rachel*, *You know that with all my power, I have ſerved your Father Laban, and your Father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times:* that is, He thought by changing my wages to deceive me, and get all the ſtronger Cattel to himſelf. When *Moſes* went out upon the requeſt of *Pharaoh*, to ſue unto the Lord for the removing of a preſent plague: *Moſes ſaid, Behold I go out from thee, and I will intreat the Lord that the ſwarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his Servants, and from his people to morrow; but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more* (*Exod.*8.29.) as if he had ſaid, You have

שחק מליצים

mocked me two or three times, and ſaid you would let the people go, do not ſo any more, leſt your deceiving of my expectation, prove the greateſt deceit of your own.

The deluding Doctors which ſome delighted in, are expreſt by this word (*Iſa.*30.9.) *This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the Law of the Lord:* They did not love the Law of the Lord; What then? *which ſay to the Seers, ſee not, and to the Prophets, propheſie not unto us right things, ſpeak unto us ſmooth things, propheſie deceits.* The wickedneſs of that people lay in two things; either they would have the Prophets ſilent, and not ſpeak at all, or if they did ſpeak, they muſt *Propheſie deceits:* They loved to to be cozoned: truth made them ſmart, and they could not abide it. *A guilty conſcience cannot endure plain words, but it loves ſmooth words*; as many as you will of theſe words (ſay they) or elſe not a word; either propheſie deceit, or ceaſe prophecying. Here *Job* complains, *Are there not deceivers with me?* As if he had ſaid, *You tell me you bring the mind of God, but you bring falſe Doctrine, you preach deceit.* Though we cannot ſay they preached ſmooth things to *Job*, they ſpake hardly enough of him, and harſhly enough to him, yet we may ſay they preached deceitful things to him; for though they did not ſpeak with an intention to deceive him, yet they were deceived in ſpeaking, and he had been deceived if he had yielded to what they ſpake. In which ſenſe *Job* calls them (which one would think he had little reaſon to do, conſidering how roughly they dealt with him, he, I ſay, calls them) *Flatterers*, at the ſixth Verſe of this Chapter: And what's the buſineſs or chief deſign of Flatterers, but to catch others with words, or to deceive them into a compliance with their own ends. And this is often (and was in this caſe) the end, or tendency of the action, when it is not the end, or intention of the Agent. From this notion of the word,

Finis operis & finis operantis diſtinguuntur.

Obſerve, Firſt, *To be among Deceivers is a great miſery.*

Secondly, *To be a Deceiver is a great ſin.*

Thirdly, *To publiſh that which is falſe, though there be no intendment to deceive, is to be a Deceiver.*

As moſt are ignorantly deceived, ſo there are ſome ignorant Deceivers: and as ſome think what they do to be very juſt, and that it is their duty to do it, when indeed it is very ſinful, ſo there are ſome who think what they teach to be very true, and that it is their duty to teach it, when indeed it is very erroneous. There are but few who know they are Deceivers, when they are: now *as that Servant which knew his Lords will, but did not according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes*; and yet, *he who knew it not, and did commit things worthy of ſtripes* (ſhall not eſcape a beating, he) *ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes* (*Luk.*12.47,48.) So he that knowes the truth of God, and yet deceives others with falſe Doctrine, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes; and he who not knowing the truth, deceives others, ſhall not eſcape unbeaten, or unblamed, as *Job's* Friends did not.

There is another reading of this firſt clauſe, differing from ours, *Are there not mockers with me?* The Vulgar thus, *I have not ſinned.* A ſecond to the ſame ſenſe, thus, *For as much as there are no mockings or deceivings with me,* I am a man who deals plainly and ſimply. The word which we tranſlate Mockers, as noting a Perſon, is rendered by the act, and that negatively: *There are no mockings with me*; that is, I uſe no mockings or no falſe play, as I am accuſed; I have ſpoken my heart nakedly and clearly, *And yet mine eye continueth in their provocation: therefore lay down now, put me in a ſurety with thee, &c.* (*Verſ.*3.) This is a good reading, but I will not ſtay upon it; only take two brief Notes from it.

Non peccavi. Vulg. q.d. *innocens heu morior. Quandoquidē non ſunt ludificationes apud me.* Jun.

A good man is upright-hearted, and down-right in all his dealings and ſayings.

There are no mockings with me, I am what I appear, and I appear what I am: An Hypocrite is full of tricks and ſhifts, he diſguiſeth both his perſon and his actions: No man can tell where to have him, or what to make of him. When he ſpeaks, his words do not ſignifie what he means, if they ſignifie any thing; and when he acts, his works do not ſignifie what he is, they ſignifie any thing rather then that. All are mockings of others, though he will find in the end, that he hath mocked himſelf moſt all.

Secondly, As he joyns this with the next clauſe, *There are no mockings with me, and yet mine eye continueth in their provocation.* Note, that,

How plain-hearted ſoever a man is, yet it is very hard to perſwade thoſe who are once prejudiced againſt him that he is ſo.

Let *Job* ſay and profeſs what he would, yet he could not recover his credit, nor ſet himſelf right in the opinion of men till God did it for him (*Chap.*42.) But I paſs that, *Are there not mockers with me?* What the mocking and ſcorning of *Job's* Friends was, hath been opened (*Chap.*12.4. *Chap.*16.19.) And therefore I refer the Reader thither.

Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?

Should he not rather have ſaid, *Doth not mine ear continue, &c.* Mocking is the object of the ear, and not of the eye. There are ſome mockings indeed, by mimical fooliſh geſtures, and they are the object of the eye; but here *Job* ſpeaks of what he had from them in conference, which is properly the buſineſs of the ear; and yet he ſaith, *Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?* By the eye we are to underſtand the eye of the mind. *Doth not mine eye?* that is, Have I not a repreſentation in my ſpirit, or upon my fancy of your mockings, and bitter provocations, even as if they were viſible before mine eyes? Have I not night viſions and apparitions upon my Bed, of what you ſpeak or act againſt me every day?

Again, We may expound the Text properly of his bodily eye, becauſe the trouble which they gave him in the day time, hindred his ſleep in the night. The letter of the Hebrew favours this ſenſe, *Doth not mine eye lodge in their provocation?* So we put in the Margin of our Bibles: Hence Mr. *Broughton* reads, *In theſe mens vexing lodgeth mine eye*; that is, When I go to Bed and hope to ſleep, then in ſtead of lodging in my Bed, I lodge in the thoughts of my Friends unkindneſs; and indeed, *a man may ſleep better upon the bare boards, then upon hard words.* Such words keep the eyes waking, and are as bad to ſleep upon, as a pillow of thorns; eſpecially when (which was *Job's* caſe) the eye continueth in them. Intentneſs of mind, or vehement cogitation about any thing, keep open the eyes, and forbid the approach of reſt; *Doth not mine continue?*

Aſſiduè in id oculos & mentis aciē intentā habeo quod me aſſiduè irritant, in eo defixæ ſunt omnes meæ cogitationes. Merc. *Iſti dies noctéſq; nō ceſſant exacerbare animū meū.* Jun. *Intenta cogitatio ſomnū impedit.*

In their [provocations.] He called them *Mockers*, and their mockings were *provocations*. The word (as ſome derive it) ſignifies that which is bitter. *Provocation is a bitter thing.* Others derive it from a root ſignifying to irritate and ſtir up the ſpirit of a man; which is *provocation* properly. *Provocation is a high act of wrong:* A man may do another wrong, on this ſide a provocation. As the provocation of God is a high act of ſin in man, ordinary acts of ſin do not amount to a provocation (*Pſal.*106.7.) *They provoked him at the Sea* (it is this word) *even at the red Sea,* that is, There they ſinned extreamly. So (*Pſal.* 95.8.) which the Apoſtle quotes (*Heb.*3.8.) The holy Ghoſt calls the whole time of that peoples froward walking, or ſinning againſt God in the Wilderneſs, *The provocation: Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation:* that is, In the time when ye ſinned, not only to the offending, but to the provoking of God againſt you, not to the breaking of his Laws, but to the vexing of his ſpirit. When ſin is compleat, and iniquity grown to a full ſtature, that day is juſtly marked in the Calendar of Scripture, with *a red letter,* implying wrath, and is therefore called, *The provocation:* So when any man deals very unkindly, frowardly, or unfaithfully, againſt his Brother, then 'tis a provocation, *Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?*

Vel a מרר *amarū eſſe. Sive à* מרה *quod eſt irritare ſive exacerbare.*

Now for as much as the ſame word ſignifieth both bitterneſs and provocation, and that moſt provocations are given by uncharitable and unconſiderate ſpeeches;

Obſerve, Firſt, *Unkind words are bitter to the hearer.*

The Apoſtle gives the rule to Husbands (*Col.*3.19.) *Husbands, love your Wives, and be not bitter to them:* that is, Do not give them bitter words in ſtead of faithful counſels. Some Husbands ſpeak their Gall to their Wives, to whom they have given their hearts. Among the Heathens the Gall of the Sacrifice which they ſuperſtitiouſly offered at Marriages, was pull'd out and thrown away, before it was preſented at the Altar, ſignifying that Man and Wife ſhould be (as Naturaliſts ſay the Dove is) without Gall one towards another. Wholſome counſels and ad-

Quo inſtituto legis Author non obſcure innuebat à conjugio ſemper debere bilem iramq; abeſſe Druſ. Prov. Claſ. 2. l. 4.

monitions for the matter, are often adminiſtred with ſuch an undue mixture of heat and paſſion as renders them, not only diſtaſtful but hurtful to the receiver.

Secondly, Note, *Harſh words carry much provocation in them.*

ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμῶσιν, ἀθυμέω, *animum deſpondeo.*

The ſame Apoſtle in the ſame Chapter enlarging his Inſtitutes for the direction of Believers in all Relations, beſpeaks Parents (*Verſ.*21.) *Fathers provoke not your Children to anger:* The word ſignifies any kind of provocation, but that eſpecially which is cauſed by contumelious and upbraiding ſpeeches. A Father provokes his Child, when he ſpeaks haſtily, and threatningly, terrifying his Child, rather then inſtructing him: The reaſon why Fathers ſhould not thus provoke their Children, is added, *Leſt they be diſcouraged,* or (as the word imports) be as if they were without ſouls, moop't (as we ſay) and heartleſs. For as there is a provocation (in a good ſenſe) which heightens the ſpirit in well-doing, and enlivens it for action: The Apoſtle exhorts to that (*Heb.*10.24.) *Let us conſider one another to provoke one another to love, and to good works.* That is, let us ſet ſuch copies of holineſs that others may be ſtirred up, beyond their ordinary pitch, and elevation of ſpirit, to a zealous doing of good: Or ſpeak ſuch winning words, give ſuch preſſing exhortations, that the hearts of your Brethren, may be carried beyond their uſual courſe in holineſs. Thus he tells the *Corinthians* (2 *Epiſt.* 9.2.) *That their zeal had provoked many:* But to what had it provoked them? Not to anger and paſſion, towards any, but to charity, yea and liberality towards the poor. And though the Apoſtle uſeth another word in the Greek, yet he means the ſame thing, when he aſſures us (*Rom.*11.11.) that the Jews *ſtumbled, not that they ſhould fall* (but that they might riſe) for ſo it follows, *But rather through their fall ſalvation is come to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealouſie.* The ſalvation of the Gentiles bred emulation in the Jews, What? Shall they go away with all the ſalvation? Shall the Gentiles poſſeſs Heaven alone, whom we thought the meaneſt people upon the Earth? Come, let us alſo put in at leaſt for a part, and get a ſhare in Goſpel-mercies and priviledges with them. Thus they were provoked to emulation, and this emulation was and ſhall be (through the power of God, who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working) a help to faith in Chriſt, and ſo to their riſing from their fall. And the Apoſtle was ſo intent upon the promoting of this deſign of God, that he profeſſeth (*Verſ.*13,14.) that he *magnified his Office* among the Gentiles, not only to ſave them, but (ſaith he) *If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my fleſh, and might ſave ſome of them:* He hoped the Jews would, at laſt, *believe for anger,* or for *very ſhame,* and go to Heaven *in a holy chaſe.*

Now (I ſay) as there is a provocation which heats and hightens the mind of man to an eager purſuite of the beſt things; ſo there is a provocation which abates and blunts his edge, which chils and flats his ſpirits to any thing that is good, which was the ground of the Apoſtles dehortation, *Provoke not your Children, leſt they be diſcouraged:* And as the effect of ſuch provocations is to ſome a diſcouragement in doing their duty, ſo the effect of it in others is a thruſting them on to do that which is moſt contrary, not only to their duty, but to their diſpoſition.

Railing ſpeeches, uncomely and uncivil language, have provoked many, both to ſpeak, and to do that which they never dreamt of, or which was moſt remote from their natural temper and inclination. For though ſuch diſtempers lie in the bottom of nature, yet unleſs they had been ſtirred and ſpurred up, thoſe diſtempers would not have appeared and broken out. *Moſes* was the meekeſt man upon the earth, yet when they *provoked his ſpirit, he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips* (*Pſal.*106.33.) There are three ill effects of provocations.

Firſt, Provoking ſpeeches raiſe up hard thoughts of the ſpeaker. It is a high work of grace to think well of them, who ſpeak ill of us, or to us.

Secondly, Provoking ſpeeches blow up hard words of the ſpeaker; many excuſe it, when they give ill language, *You provoked me:* And though they be not to be excuſed who do ſo when they are provoked, yet their ſin is the greater, who provoke them.

Thirdly, Provoking ſpeeches are ſometimes the cauſe of revengeful practices, and very often of licentious practices. Sober admonitions and grave reproofs, reclaim thoſe who go aſtray, but violent rebukes make them deſperate. Some care not what they do when they hear others ſay they care not what. Many Children have run ill courſes by over much indulgence, and neglect of diſcipline; and ſo have not a few, by the over-much ſeverity and ſharpneſs of thoſe that are over them. Patience is hard put to it, to keep either mind or tongue or hand in compaſs, when we are provoked: Great provocations are great temptations. When God is provoked he is tempted (*Heb.*3.8.) *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the Wilderneſs, when your Fathers tempted me, &c.* We may expound it two wayes.

Firſt, That while they tempted God, by queſtioning his power for them, and preſence with them, they provoked him, he was greatly diſpleaſed with them for it.

Secondly, That while they provoked God they tempted him, they tempted him to deſtroy them, or to act that power againſt them which they did not believe (after ſo many experiences) able enough to deliver or protect them. If then God himſelf be ſo tempted, that (as he is pleaſed often to expreſs himſelf after the manner of men) he can ſcarce hold his hands, or forbear to do that which he had no mind to do when he is provoked, how much more is weak man tempted to do that which his corruptions are alwayes forward enough (and too too much) to do, when he is provoked.

Again, When he ſaith, *Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?*

Learn, thirdly, *Hard words ſtick upon the ſpirit.*

They hang about the mind, and are not eaſily gotten off. Good words dwell much upon the ſpirit, and ſo do ill words. When a man hath once got a word of promiſe from God, about any mercy ſet home upon his heart, the eye continues in that conſolation: O it is a ſweet word, the ſoul lies ſucking at it night and day. And when a man hath once got a word of command from God about any duty ſet home upon his ſpirit, his eye continues in the direction of it. *O how I love thy Law* (ſaith *David, Pſal.*119.97.) *It is my meditation all the day;* he could not beat his thoughts off from it, when love had faſtned on it. As theſe good words cleave to a gracious ſoul, and dwell with it; ſo it is hard even for a gracious ſoul to diſlodge hard words: O how doth the eye continue in thoſe provocations? And doth not experience teach us, that vain thoughts thrown into the mind by Satan will not eaſily be driven out? How often doth the eye continue in his provocations? The ſpirit of a man hath a ſtrong retentive faculty, it will hold the object cloſe, and as it were live and lodge in it. How many make their abode in provocations, and *reſide upon* bitter words, received from their Brethren? How many lie down with them at night, and riſe with them in the morning; yea, and walk with their eye upon them all the day long? And here it may be queſtioned,

Was not this a ſin in *Job?* That rule of love then was in being, which is now expreſſed (*Epheſ.*4.26.) *Be ye angry and ſin not, let not the Sun go down upon your wrath.* Then, how could *Job* ſuffer his *eye to continue in theſe provocations?*

I anſwer, There was an infirmity in this; 'tis our duty, as to forgive, ſo to forget, or lay aſide the thought of injuries and wrongs received: And it is the Character of wicked men, *They ſleep not unleſs they have done miſchief* (*Pro.*4.16.) Their eye continues in their own corruption, or in the temptation of Satan till they have brought it forth. For as when good men have ſtrong impreſſions unto good upon their ſpirits, they cannot ſleep till they have done good, their eye continues in that holy provocation (*Pſal.*132.4.) *I will not* (ſaith zealous *David*) *give ſleep to my eyes, nor ſlumber to my eye-lids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob:* So wicked men give no ſleep to their eyes till they have done that miſchief, or executed that revenge to which they conceive themſelves provoked. But the eye of *Job* did not continue in thoſe unfriendly provocations, to watch an opportunity for ſelf-revenge upon, or of doing miſchief to his Friends: He did not let the Sun go down upon wrath, that he might deviſe their ruine in the dark. He was not ſo wiſe as he ſhould have been, to hurt himſelf, and hinder his reſt, by ſuch a continual poring upon their unkindneſſes; but he was not wicked at all, much leſs ſo wicked (which ſome from this paſſage may conceive him) as to pore upon their unkindneſſes, with a purpoſe to hurt them: So, that act might have ſomewhat of ſin in it, becauſe he troubled his own peace more then he needed, but it had not this ſin in it, that he ſtudied how to trouble the peace of others.

Laſtly, We may rather interpret theſe words to the blame of his Friends, who continued to provoke him, then to his, whoſe eye (becauſe they did ſo) could ſee nothing but provocation, or at leaſt muſt ſee that, whatſoever it ſaw, and therefore could not but continue in it. How could the eye of *Hannah* chuſe but continue in the provocation of *Peninnah*, when it is ſaid (1 *Sam.*1.6,7.) That as her Husband *Elkanah* gave her ſpecial tokens of his love, year by year, ſo ſhe provoked her to make her fret year by year, therefore ſhe wept and did not eat. *While a provocation is continued, our ſenſe of it can hardly be intermitted.*

Job having complained of received provocations, renews his appeal to God.

Verſ. 3. Lay down now, put me in a ſurety with thee: who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?

The words are an Apoſtrophe to God. That *Job* ſpeaks to God, not to *Eliphaz*, is clearer then needs be proved. The word which we render **lay down**, ſignifies alſo to appoint, (*Exod.*1.11.) *They did ſet* (or appoint) *over them Task-maſters.* And again (*Exod.*21.13.) *I will appoint thee a place whither he* (the man-ſlayer) *ſhall flee.* In the preſent Text both rendrings of the word are uſed. We make uſe of the firſt, *Put, or lay down:* What would *Job* have God *lay down?*

Appone cor tuū, i.e. *adverte quæſo animū meis verbis.* Vatabl.

Some give it thus, Lay down, or apply thine heart to me, attend I pray thee to my words, and conſider my cauſe.

•Secondly, The words may be conceived as an alluſion to thoſe, who going before a Judge, or having a Cauſe to be tryed by Umpires, uſe to lay down an ingagement, or as we call it, an *Aſſumpſit*, that they will ſtand to the award, or arbitrement, which ſhall be made.

ערבוי
à
ערב
Eſt fidei jubere pro aliquo, ſeu aliquē in ſuam fidē recipere. Hinc arrabo ſpiritus. Pone pignus, vadē, aut fidejuſſorem mihi tecum. Pagn. *Diſpone quæſo conſponſorē mihi tecum.* Jun. *Nū Arrabonem dabis?*

Put me in a ſurety with thee.] The Original word properly ſignifying to undertake for, or to give credit and aſſurance in the behalf of another; and hence the Noun derived from it, ſignifies *an earneſt*, becauſe an earneſt laid down, is a *real ſurety*, that ſuch a thing ſhall be performed. In which ſenſe *Thamar* uſeth the word (*Gen.*38.17.) who when *Judah* promiſed to ſend a Kid of the Goats, ſaid, *wilt thou give me a pledge till thou ſend it?* and hence in the New Teſtament the word *Arrabo* is uſed in the Greek, as alſo in the Latine, for the earneſt of the Spirit, or for that aſſurance which the Spirit ſettles upon the hearts of Believers in this life that they ſhall inherit eternal life (2 *Cor.*1.22.) *Who hath alſo ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the ſpirit in our hearts.* And again (2 *Cor.*5.5.) *Now he that hath wrought us for the ſelf ſame thing is God:* God having prepared a place for us, prepares us for the place, and then gives us our evidences, that in due time we ſhall take poſſeſſion of it. *Who alſo hath given us the earneſt of the ſpirit.* The ſame Apoſtle tells the *Epheſians*, that, *After they believed they were ſealed with the ſpirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance, till the redemption of the purchaſed poſſeſſion* (*Epheſ.*1.14.) So that an earneſt is a real Surety, and a Surety is a perſonal earneſt. While *Job* ſaith, *Put me in a Surety*, his meaning is, he would have ſome perſon to be an undertaker for the ordering of his Cauſe, or an enſurer that all ſhould be performed according to the determination that ſhould be given about it, *Put in a Surety with me.*

תקע
Sign. Defigere, infigere, & ſi de contractibus dicitur, percutere manū. Quis eſt manum meæ plaudatur? Jun. *Quiſquis ille ſit fide-juſſor meus, veniat & paciſcatur mecum. In ſponſionibus manus invicē complodebant, hinc manum complodere, pro paciſci, ſtipulari.* Merc.

Who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?] He proceeds in the ſame alluſion. Theſe words are diſpoſed two wayes: Some put the Interrogation after *He*; *Give, or put me in a Surety: Who is he?* I would gladly ſee the man, or know who it is; *Who is he? let him come and ſtrike hands with me, whoſoever he is:* As if he had ſaid, I ſhall eaſily agree that any man ſhould have the hearing and determining of this buſineſs, whom thou ſhalt appoint.

We put the Interrogation after the whole ſentence, *Who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?* And then the ſenſe appears thus, *If God once put in a Surety to undertake for me, who is he that will contend with me, or engage in this Quarrel againſt me?*

To ſtrike hands, is a phraſe of ſpeech grounded upon that ancient form of making bargains or entring contracts, by joyning, or ſtriking hands: And theſe contracts may be taken two wayes, or under a double notion.

Firſt, As they concerned Suretiſhip for Money, in which ſenſe *Solomon* ſpeaks of it more then once (*Prov.*6.1.) *My Son, if thou be ſurety for thy Friend, if thou have ſtricken hands with a ſtranger*; that is, if thou haſt entred into Bond for him, and haſt teſtified it by ſtriking hands, then, &c. (*Prov.*22.26.) *Be not thou one of them that ſtrike hands*; that is, Be not too forward to engage thy ſelf, or to undertake for others; as it is expounded in the next words, *or of them that are Sureties for debts*; ſuch haſty engagements may bring thee into more trouble, then thou wilt be able to get off in haſt: There are many who have ſtruck, yea wounded their own hearts incurably, by ſtriking hands for their Friends. Go to the Courts of Juſtice, and there is nothing more frequently heard of, then the ſighs of Sureties: He diſaſſures his own Eſtate, who aſſures for others.

Hæc eſt ſponſio quæ propriè ad nūmorū negotiū ſpectat. Aben Ezra: in Prov.6:

Secondly, As Contracts and Suretiſhip for Money were confirmed by ſtriking hands; ſo it is very probable that thoſe Suretiſhips which were given about Tryals, and for appearing to the Action of the Plantiff in Judgement, were alſo confirmed by that outward ceremony; in which ſenſe we are to underſtand it here.

Further, The word which we tranſlate to *Strike*, ſignifies alſo to Faſten, which ſhews another part of the Ceremony; for as ſtriking, ſo joyning and claſping of hands was uſed.

Once more, the word ſignifies, and oft is applied to the ſounding of a Trumpet, or the giving of any ſound: This alſo carries on the ſame alluſion, becauſe when two men ſtrike hands, they make a ſound; the interpretation of which is, that the bargain is made, or it ſpeaks the parties agreed; and hence that known expreſſion among us, *Of ſtriking up a bargain, or a buſineſs.*

Clangere tuba. Comploſis manibus ſonus editur.

Thus the whole Text is carried on in terms alluding to the ordinary proceeding, either in becoming Bound with another for Money, or in giving aſſurance to perform, and ſtand to the arbitrement, or award of thoſe who ſhall judge, and determine any matter in difference: But how are we to apply this to the preſent caſe?

Lay down now, put me in a ſurety with thee: who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?

There are three or four expoſitions given about it.

Firſt, That *Job*, in theſe words, deſires God to give ſurety that he would ſtand to the judgment which ſhould be given: or he would have God aſſure him, that he would not deal with him according to the ſeverity of his Juſtice, or the excellency of his Sovereignty as a Judge, but deſcend to ſuch a courſe as is uſual among men, while they are engaged in any controverſie between themſelves. *Job* hath ſpoken the ſame ſenſe clearly before, in ſome other paſſages of this Book, eſpecially (*Chap.*9.33,34.) But this ſenſe is not clear to the ſcope of the preſent place: And therefore as they who maintain it, confeſs, that *Job* was ſomewhat too bold with God, ſo we may ſay that they are ſomewhat too bold with the Text.

Da fide-juſſorē apud te, qui in hac contentione quæ mihi tecū intercidit ſpondeat te ſtaturum iis quæ judicata fuerint; ut te non tanquā judicē geras ſed tanquam litigatorē. Merc. *Familiarius quā par erat cū Deo agit.* Merc.

For the reaſon or ground upon which *Job* deſires that God would give him a ſurety, hath no correſpondence with this interpretation (*Verſ.*4.) *For thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding.* Now, what coherence is there between theſe two, that *Job* ſhould ſay, *Thou haſt hid their heart* (that is, the heart of theſe men) *from underſtanding: therefore give me a ſurety that thou wilt proceed with me after the manner of men.* Beſides the words of the fifth Verſe oppoſe it yet more, *He that ſpeaks flattery to his Friend, the eyes of his Children ſhall fail.* Now, for *Job* to deſire God to put him in a Surety that he would deal thus, or thus with him, becauſe the man who ſpeaks flattery to his Friend, his Childrens eyes ſhall fail, hath no argument at all in it; yet the abetters of this Interpretation mollifie all, by ſaying, that *Job* ſpake from a diſturbed ſpirit, being much moved with the ill-dealing of his Friends; and though there may be ſome inconſiſtence with the context, yet the Text conſidered in its own compaſs, bears it well enough; but I paſs from it.

Secondly, That *Job* deſires God to appoint a Surety between him and his Friends, who ſhould undertake both God's Cauſe and his againſt them three: As if he had ſaid, *Lord, my Friends have wronged me, and they* *have wronged thee too, O that thou wouldeſt provide a man furniſhed with wiſdom, and a ſpirit of diſcerning, both to right thy honour, and to clear up my integrity.* Such a one was *Elihu*, who appeared ſhortly after upon the Stage, and there acted ſuch a part as this.

Pertexe me. Jun.

Thirdly (ſay others) *Job* deſires that God himſelf would be his Surety, and take up the whole matter between him and his Friends; which he alſo did in the latter end of this Book, giving judgement for *Job*, and blaming the miſcarriage of his Friends. So the word is uſed (*Iſa.*38.14.) when *Hezekiah* lay ſick, even unto death, he prayed, *Lord I am oppreſſed, undertake for me*, It is this word, *Be Surety for me*. A learned Tranſlatour renders it, *Weave me through*, or *weave me to the end*; for the word ſignifies the Thred in weaving, called the *Woof*, which being put upon the Shuttle, is caſt through the *Warp*, in making Cloath, whither Linnen or Woollen; thus it is uſed (*Lev.*13.52.) and ſo theſe words of *Hezekiah* carry on the Allegory of the tenth Verſe, *I ſaid in the cutting off of my dayes, &c.* and of the twelfth Verſe, *I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining ſickneſs.* In both which Verſes, *Hezekiah* compares man's life to a piece of Cloath in the Loom, which is made ſometimes ſhorter, and ſometimes longer, and whereſoever it ends, the Woof, or running Thred is cut off: Hence *Hezekiah* prayeth, Lord, theſe ſickneſſes, like a ſharp Knife, threaten to cut the threed of my life, yet I beſeech thee, do thou weave on, weave me to the end of that Warp which is given to man, in the common courſe of nature, and let not this ſickneſs cut my thred in the mid-way: This is a good ſenſe of the Text.

But when our Tranſlators render the word, *Undertake for me*; the meaning is, I am ſore oppreſſed with the violence of this ſickneſs, which like one of the Sergeants of cruel death hath arreſted me, nor is there any way for me to eſcape, unleſs thou, O Lord, reſcue me out of its hands, or (as it were) give Bail, and become ſurety for me: *I am oppreſt, O Lord, undertake for me.*

David having done a great piece of Juſtice which contracted him much envy, and had drawn many Enemies upon him, thus beſpeaks God (*Pſal.*119.121,122.) *I have done judgement and juſtice, leave me not to mine oppreſſours, be ſurety for thy Servant:* that is, maintain me againſt thoſe who would wrong me becauſe I have done right; put thy ſelf, or interpoſe between me and mine Enemies, as if thou wert my pledge. Impartial juſtice upon oppreſſours, layes the Judges open to oppreſſion; but they who run greateſt hazzards, in zeal for God, ſhall find God ready to be their Surety, when they pray, *Be ſurety for thy ſervants.* And thus we may conceive *Job* entreating the Lord to be his *Surety* and Protectour againſt all thoſe oppoſitions and miſapprehenſions which were heaped upon him by man. *David* was aſſured that God would be his Surety (*Pſal.*27.5.) *In the time of trouble he ſhall hide me in his pavilion*; and he aſſures all that fear God, that he will be their Surety (*Pſal.*31.20.) *Thou ſhalt hide them in the ſecret of thy preſence, from the pride of man: Thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in a Pavilion, from the ſtrife of tongues.* To this ſenſe the Vulgar Latine tranſlates the whole Verſe, *Put me near thy ſelf, and then let whoſe will contend with me*; that is, Do thou ſtand by me, and undertake for me, and then I fear not who oppoſeth me: Which anſwers that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8.) *If God be with us, who can be againſt us.*

Pone me juxta te & cujuſvis manus pugnet contra me. Vulg.

This expoſition holds out a comfortable truth to us, yet The Text ſeems to aim at ſomewhat elſe; for the words are not barely, *Put me in a ſurety*, but, *Put me in a ſurety with thee*; which ſhewes that God and the Surety he deſired, were two, or diſtinct; his prayer was not that God would be his Surety, but that he might have a Surety with God. And therefore,

Fourthly, The whole Verſe is thus read word for word out of the Original; *Appoint I pray thee, my Surety with thee, who is he then that will ſtrike upon my hand*; that is, Appoint Chriſt, who is with thee in Heaven (and hath already agreed with thee, to be the Surety of diſtreſſed ſinners, appoint him I ſay) to plead my cauſe, and to ſtand up for me, and then no man will dare to contend with me. So the words are of the ſame meaning with (*Chap.* 16.21.) where *Job* having made his appeal to God, declares his confidence that Chriſt would plead for him, and appear his Advocate.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Jeſus Chriſt is not only an Advocate for his people, but their Surety.*

He doth not only plead our cauſe, but pay our debts. Chriſt entered into Bond for us, and took all our debts and duties, whatſoever we owe to God, upon Himſelf, to ſee all performed, that we might go free, and be accepted (*Heb.*7.22.) *By ſo much was Jeſus made the ſurety of a better Teſtament.* Where the ſame word which is here uſed by *Job*, is (with the difference only of that Dialect) uſed alſo in the Syriack verſion of that Epiſtle. Jeſus Chriſt may be called the *Surety of the Covenant* two wayes.

Firſt, Becauſe he ratifies it on Gods part, making Faith of it unto us, or aſſuring us that all the mercies and good things therein granted and promiſed, ſhall be made good, and fulfilled to every Believer; as the Apoſtle concludes (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) *For all the promiſes of God in him are yea, and in him Amen:* that is, He will give a being and an accompliſhment to them all. Whatſoever God hath ſpoken, he will ſee it done.

Secondly, Jeſus Chriſt is called the Surety of the Covenant becauſe he ratifies it on our part: For though (as *Socinians* object againſt this point) we ſent not Chriſt unto God in our name, but God ſent him to us in his name, yet Chriſt did undertake, as in our nature, ſo in our name, and did reſtipulate with God on our behalf, that whatſoever was owing to his juſtice and holineſs by man, either as a penalty for paſt defaults, or as a duty to preſent commands, ſhould all be ſatisfied and performed by himſelf: And as Chriſt (being our Surety) did both theſe in his own perſon, by active and paſſive obedience, ſo far as it was *ſatisfactory*; ſo (as a Surety) he helps us to perform the latter ſo far as it is *gratulatory*. For whatſoever duty God requires of us, and calls us to, in teſtimony of our thankfulneſs for his benefits, and of our ſubmiſſion to his will, this Chriſt undertakes to his Father that we ſhall do, and accordingly out of his fulneſs gives us grace and ſtrength to do it.

Secondly, Obſerve, *If Chriſt be Surety for us, we need not fear any oppoſer.*

Put me in a Surety with thee (ſaith *Job*) *who will ſtrike hands with me:* who will contend with me, or ſue me? When either the Money or duty which a man is bound to pay, is already paid by his Surety, or is undertaken for by a Surety, who is not only able but willing to pay; what needs he to fear? The Creditor cannot Arreſt the Debtor, if the Surety have diſcharged and cancel'd the Bond. Thus the Apoſtle teaches Faith to triumph (*Rom.*8.33,34.) *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth; it is Chriſt who died, yea rather who is riſen again? Job's* challenge, *Who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?* is very parallel in words, and full to the ſenſe of *Pauls, Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Our Surety is of Gods appointing, not of our own.*

Appoint, I pray (ſaith *Job*) *put me in a ſurety with thee.* We ſinned of our ſelves, but we could not find a Surety of our ſelves. *God ſent his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to deliver thoſe that were under the Law* (*Gal.* 4. 4.) God ſent his Son, man did not ſend for him, no nor ſue for him: The way of our deliverance was as much from the will and wiſdom of God as from his mercy (*Heb.*10.10.) *By the which will we are ſanctified through the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all.* It was as impoſſible for man to contrive this way of his deliverance, as it was to deliver himſelf. *Job* did not direct God to this way of acquitting by a Surety, but God having revealed it to *Job*, he prays for the effect and comfort of it, to his own ſoul: when a Believer burdened with ſin, or diſtreſſed by temptation, ſpreads his condition, and makes his moan to God, he in effect begs of him (as *Job* here did) to appoint and put him in a Surety with him, by perſwading his heart, that Jeſus Chriſt became bound for him, and hath diſcharged all his engagements according to that eternal Decree and Ordination of ſaving lapſed man by his mediation.

To which Ordination Jeſus Chriſt moſt willingly conſented, as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it (*Heb.*10.9.) *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, &c.* Which readineſs and freeneſs of Jeſus Chriſt to undertake for us, is alſo elegantly deſcribed by the Prophet *Jeremiah* (*Chap.*30.21.) by that very word which *Job* uſeth in this place, *For who is this, that engageth his heart to approach unto me, ſaith the Lord?* The Jews had been long under the *Babylonian* yoke, and their Governours were either ſtrangers, or appointed by ſtrangers. But the Lord promiſed in this Verſe, that *their Nobles ſhould be of themſelves, and that their Governour ſhould proceed from the midſt of them:* Which was verified, when God turned their Captivity as Rivers in the South, and raiſed up *Zerubbabel*, and others of the Jewiſh line, to reaſſume the Government of *Judah*. But this Propheſie was chiefly intended and verified in a ſpiritual ſenſe, when God ſent Jeſus Chriſt, a Governour, proceeding from the midſt of them (of whom *Zerubbabel* was but a type) for of him the Lord ſpeaks chiefly in this admiring Queſtion, *Who is this, that engageth his heart to approach unto me?* Or who is this that with his heart (that is, with ſo much chearfulneſs and willingneſs) hath put himſelf as a ſurety for this people with me, to approach to me in their cauſe, and to take upon him the diſpatch of all their affairs and concernments with me in the Court of Heaven? *Who is this great, this forward Engager*, but *he who alſo ſaid, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God?* What will came he to do? Even this, To be a Surety, and ſo a Sacrifice to God for ſinners (*Heb.* 10.) Thus the whole buſineſs of our deliverance, and the firſt motions to it, lay quite without us. God appointed and put in Chriſt our ſurety with him, and Chriſt freely condeſcended to be our ſurety, knowing that the whole debt muſt lie upon his diſcharge: *Put me in a ſurety with thee.*

But here it may be doubted, how this notion of a Surety, ſuites with this place, ſeeing *Job's* controverſie was with man, not with God; and himſelf alſo had profeſſed that all was clear for him in Heaven.

I anſwer, That although men accuſed *Job*, yet their accuſation reach'd not his peace with God: for had he been ſuch a one as they repreſented him, he muſt needs have fallen under the divine diſpleaſure, more then he did under theirs. And therefore while he pleaded *Not-guilty* to their charge, he begs further diſcoveries of the favour of God to him through the Mediatour, by the remembrance of whoſe *Suretiſhip* his heart was confirmed in the pardon of all his ſinful failings againſt God, whereof he was guilty, as well as his heart told him that he was not guilty of thoſe wilful ſins wherewith he was accuſed by men. When we lie under wrongful accuſations, of which we indeed need no ſurety to acquit us, it is good to view and renew our Intereſt in *the Surety*, who will acquit us where there is need.

Job proceeds to re-inforce the reaſon why he deſired God to undertake, or to provide a Surety for him.

Verſ. 4. **Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding, therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them.**

Or, *Thou haſt hid underſtanding from their heart.* As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt caſt ſuch a miſt before the eyes of theſe men, who mock me, and judge me wicked, that they are unfit to be truſted with the determination of my cauſe; for did they not want a due light of underſtanding, they might quickly diſcern my integrity, and clear me from their own ſuſpitions.* God ſometimes (as it were) wraps, or folds up the hearts of the Children of men in ignorance, blindneſs, and darkneſs, and ſo hides not only underſtanding from their hearts, but their hearts from underſtanding. As God is ſaid to circumciſe the heart, to open the eyes, to take away the vail, when he gives the knowledge of his truth; ſo he is ſaid to blind the eyes, to cover the heart with fat, and to cloud the underſtanding, when he denies, or withholds the knowledge of the truth: *Thou haſt hid their hearts from underſtanding.*

שכל *Eſt mens, ratio, intellectus, dexteritas in agendo.*

The word which we tranſlate **Underſtanding**, ſignifies any of, or all the intellectual powers, together with a readineſs, or activity for diſpatch in any ſervice we are called unto, *Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding*, therefore they do but bungle at the buſineſs, and cannot judge aright; they cannot diſcern the manner of thy diſpenſations towards me, nor ſee the bottom of my condition. *Job* did not cenſure his Friends as fools, or ignorant, as if they were witleſs, or worthleſs men; they were wiſe and learned, yea honeſt and godly too. But when *Job* ſaith, *Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding*, we are to reſtrain it to the matter in hand, or to his particular caſe: As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt hid the underſtanding of what thou haſt done to me from their hearts; thy providences are myſteries and riddles which they cannot unfold; and as they know not the meaning of what thou doſt, ſo they know not my meaning, when I ſaid* (*Chap.*9.17.) *He hath multiplyed my wounds without cauſe*; Nor when I ſaid (*Verſ.*22.) *He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked. Theſe ſayings are ſecrets to my Friends: Now, Lord, for as much as theſe men have no true inſight in this preſent controverſie, therefore I beg that thou wouldeſt undertake for me, or put me in a ſurety with thee.*

Further, For the clearing of this Scripture, it may be queſtioned: Firſt, how God is ſaid to hide the heart from underſtanding? God doth this four wayes.

Firſt, By ſpeaking darkly, or in ſuch a manner, as the underſtanding cannot eaſily find a paſſage to the things that are ſpoken. *A Parable is a dark ſaying:* And when Chriſt Preached in Parables, *His Diſciples came and ſaid unto him, Why ſpeakeſt thou to them in Parables?* (*Mat.*13.10.) Now among other reaſons which Chriſt was pleaſed to give of that diſpenſation, this was one (*Verſ.*14.) *In them is fulfilled the Propheſie of Iſaiah, which ſaith, By hearing ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not underſtand: and ſeeing ye ſhall ſee, and ſhall not perceive.* As if Chriſt had ſaid, Theſe men have juſtly deſerved to be puniſhed with ſpiritual darkneſs (which is *not Underſtanding*) and therefore I have ſpoken to them in a dark way. They did not hear to obey what was plain and eaſie to be underſtood, and therefore now they ſhall hear what they cannot underſtand.

Secondly, God hides the heart from underſtanding, by denying, or not giving light; and that a twofold light.

Firſt, The outward light of his Word: Thus all thoſe people are ſaid to *ſit in darkneſs*, that is, to have no underſtanding in the things of God, where the Goſpel is not publiſhed.

Secondly, By denying, or not giving the inward light of his Spirit, though the light of the World abound. For as a man may have the Sun ſhining in his face, and yet be in the dark, if he wants eye-ſight: So (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.*4. 3, 4.) the Goſpel is hid in the moſt glorious ſhining of it to thoſe, whoſe *minds the God of this World hath blinded.* Now, every man is born ſpiritually blind, or he is blind by nature, and he is blinded by the God of *this World*, till the God of *all Worlds* ſends his ſpirit with the Word for the opening of his eyes.

Thirdly, God hides the heart from underſtanding, as by not giving, ſo by withdrawing the light which he hath given. Many have forfeited their eye-ſight and their light, and God hath taken the forfeiture of them: Which he doth firſt, when men are proud of the light, and puſt up with knowledge. Secondly, when men are unthankful for the light, and will not acknowledge God the giver of it. Thirdly, when men grow wanton or vain in the light, when they abuſe it, and having the light walk in darkneſs. All which reaſons of Gods withdrawing light, as many Scriptures teſtifie, ſo they are all teſtified in that one Scripture (*Rom.* 1. 21, 22.)

Fourthly, As God may be ſaid to hide the heart from underſtanding, by a total withdrawing of light, ſo by withholding it for a time, or in part, by clouding or eclipſing it. God hides the heart of ſome men from underſtanding, only in ſuch a point, or at ſuch a ſeaſon, giving them light in other things, yea and in that thing too at another ſeaſon. This fourth way I conceive moſt proper to this Text of *Job*; for his freinds were not under that terrible judgment of a total hiding their hearts from underſtanding; only the light was with-held from them in and about that tranſaction. As when Chriſt after his Reſurrection appeared to thoſe Diſciples (*Luke* 24.26.) the Text ſaith, *Their eyes were held, that they ſhould not know him.* And (*Verſ.* 31.) *There eyes were opened, and they knew him:* Thus God at one time holds the intellectual eye of ſome good men, that they cannot diſcern ſuch or ſuch a Truth, yet afterwards he opens their eyes and they diſcern it.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The wiſeſt men do not ſee all truths, nor are they able to judge of all matters.*

Theſe were wiſe men, very wiſe men; they ſpake excellent things, and very underſtandingly about God, they gave *Job* very good counſel, but yet they failed here. *Elihu* (*Chap.* 32.9.) ſaith, *Great men are not always wiſe*; we may ſay wiſe men are not always wiſe: and as *no man is wiſe at all times, ſo there is no man wiſe in all things.* We cannot conclude, that becauſe a man hath given a right judgement in ſome one, or in many points, that therefore we may truſt his deciſions in all points. As God hides all wiſdom from ſome men, ſo he very rarely, if at all, truſts any one man or ſort of men at one time with all wiſdom. *Job's* Friends were well acquainted with, and they have acquainted us with many excellent notions about that great Doctrine of Providence; but they were much miſtaken about the Providence of God with *Job*, nor did they ſhew themſelves acquainted with that excellent Deſign of God in his afflicting Providences, thereby to try the ſtrength and manifeſt the graces which he hath beſtowed upon his people.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The hiding of the heart from, and the opening of the heart to underſtanding, are the work of God.*

We ſee no further then God gives us light, and ſo far as he leads us, we go right; if he withdraw, we turn aſide, and quickly wander from the way of truth and righteouſneſs. We have nothing of our own but ſin and ignorance, wiſdom is of God; *Every good and perfect gift comes from above.* As God hides all Goſpel-truths and myſteries from worldly wiſe men; ſo no Goſpel-myſtery is known to any man till God diſcover and make it known (*Matth.* 11.25.) *At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, but haſt revealed them unto babes.* By wiſe and prudent, he means worldly wiſe men, meer Philoſophers and Politicians, or Hypocritical Profeſſors, ſuch as the Scribes and Phariſees were, from theſe God (in judgement) hides the things of the Kingdom of Heaven, and reveals them unto Babes; even to ſuch as are at the greateſt diſtance in natural conſiderations from the capacity of ſuch rich and heavenly manifeſtations. There is no greater argument, that God opens the heart to underſtand, then to ſee Babes underſtand: If true knowledge in ſpiritual myſteries were from man, they who have moſt of man in them would have moſt of that knowledge; but we are taught by experience, that ſuch men as the World calls *Fools, do not err in the way of holineſs* (*Iſa.* 35.8.) And that the courſe of all Worldly wiſe men, is a continual erring from that way, and that ſome godly men, who are higher by head and ſhoulders then ſome of their Brethren in natural wiſdom, have run into, and maintained errours; whither can we aſcribe all this, but to the power of God? *Moſes* ſpeaks of the many ſigns and miracles which God wrought in the midſt of that people, which they did not underſtand: Why, what was the reaſon? *Moſes* tells us expreſly, what, *Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to conceive, nor eyes to ſee, nor ears to hear to this day* (*Deut.*29.4.) They had ſenſitive eyes and ears, yea, they had a rational heart or mind, but they wanted a ſpiritual eye to ſee, a ſpiritual ear to hear, a ſpiritual heart or mind to apprehend and improve thoſe wonderful works of God: And theſe they had not, becauſe God had not given them ſuch eyes, ears, and hearts. Wonders without grace, cannot open the eyes fully, but grace without wonders can. And as man hath not an eye to ſee the wonderful works of God ſpiritually, until it is given; ſo, much leſs hath he an eye to ſee the wonders of the Word of God, till it be given him from above; and therefore *David* prays (*Pſal.*119.18.) *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy Law.* And if the wondrous things of the Law, are not much ſeen till God give an eye, then much leſs are the wondrous things of the Goſpel. The light of nature ſhews us ſomewhat of the Law, but nothing of the Goſpel was ever ſeen by the light of nature: Many who have ſeen and admired ſome excellencies in the Law, could never ſee and therefore have derided that which is the excellency of the Goſpel, till God hath opened their heart to underſtanding.

Thirdly obſerve, *It is a great judgement to have our hearts hidden from underſtanding in the things of God.*

It is a ſore judgement not to have the light, but it is a ſorer judgement not to ſee by the light when we have it. To have a heart hid from underſtanding, is far worſe then to have a heart unable to underſtand. Our inability to underſtand, ariſeth two wayes.

Firſt, From a natural infirmity in the underſtanding.

Secondly, From the natural obſcurity of the matter preſented to the underſtanding.

Plain truths are not apprehended by a weak underſtanding, and the ſtrongeſt underſtanding cannot apprehend ſome obſcure truths, as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith of S. *Paul's* Epiſtles, that in them *there are ſome things hard to be underſtood* (2 *Pet.*3.16.) Now as there is an affliction in it, not to be able to underſtand any truth which God hath revealed for our uſe, ſo there is much wrath and judgment in it, when God hides underſtanding from the heart in any of thoſe things which he hath revealed for our uſe; but eſpecially in thoſe things which are neceſſary, either to our future, or our preſent peace. Thus the Prophet *Iſaiah* was ſent to preach that people blind, and deaf, and ignorant (*Chap.* 6.9, 10.) *Go tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but underſtand not, and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not: Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and convert and be healed:* As if the Lord had ſaid, This people ſhall want neither means nor Miniſters, neither word nor light; but they ſhall reap no benefit neither by means nor Miniſters, neither by word nor light; yea, all theſe means ſhall produce contrary effects, they ſhall be hardned and not ſoftned, blinded and not enlightned, their ears ſhall be deafned, not bored by the Word. They would not hear, therefore they ſhall not; they would not underſtand, therefore they ſhall not be able to underſtand. They who refuſe the offers of mercy, ſhall be deſtroyed with the offers of mercy. And as God doth often take away the Goſpel in wrath, ſo he ſometimes ſends it in wrath. It is a great miſery to have the Goſpel hid from a people for want of revelation, but it is loweſt miſery to have it hid in the revelation. *Jeruſalem* ſignifies, *The viſion or ſight of peace*; and this was the glory of *Jeruſalem*; yet at laſt this glory was taken from *Jeruſalem*, though her name continued; *Jeruſalem* (*the ſight of peace*) could not ſee her peace (*Luk.*19.41,42,43.) When Chriſt came near to *Jeruſalem, He beheld the City, and wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace:* What then? Chriſt ſuppreſſes the happineſs which they ſhould have enjoyed by ſuch a ſight, with a ſilent admiration; and only tells them weeping, *But now they are hid from thine eyes*; How hid? Was there no more Preaching in *Jeruſalem*, no publick Miniſtry after that day? Yes, the whole Colledg of Apoſtles preached there, and they preached the things which belonged both to their temporal, and to their eternal peace; yet as the things which belonged to their eternal peace, were hidden from moſt of their eyes, ſo the things which concerned their temporal peace, were hidden from ſo many of their eyes, that their ruine was unavoidable. God hid their heart from underſtanding, therefore he did not exalt them; yea, therefore he caſt them down.

Thus *Job* deſcribes the ſequel of that ſad diſpenſation to his Friends, *Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding:* What follows?

Therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them.] Mr. *Broughton* renders it; *Therefore thou ſhalt not give them Honour*: And is this all, that they ſhall not be exalted or honoured? No, the Negative hath this Affirmative in it, Thou wilt therefore caſt them down, or humble them: As (*Prov.*17.21.) *Solomon* ſpeaks of the Father of a Fool, *He that begets a Fool, doth it to his ſorrow, and the Father of a Fool hath no joy:* Is that all, that he hath no joy? No, the meaning is that the Father of a Fool, hath much ſorrow; yea, the denial of all joy, affirms more then the feeling of much ſorrow, for it ſpeaks all ſorrow. So, *to accept perſons in judgement is not good*; that is extream ill: There is nothing worſe then that, which in this ſenſe is not good. Thus here, thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding, *therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them:* that is, Thou ſhalt humble and abaſe them; and though Non-exaltation, in this place, doth not carry all kind, or the extremity of abaſement, yet it carries a very great abaſement: Why? What was this abaſement, or *Non-exaltation?*

We may interpret it two ways. *Thou ſhalt not exalt them*, that is,

Firſt, Thou ſhalt not give them this honour to determine my cauſe; thou wilt take the matter out of their hands into thine own, or thou wilt put it into ſome other hand.

Secondly, Thou ſhalt not exalt them to the honour of a conqueſt over me, or to carry the cauſe againſt me; yea, they ſhall be overthrown, and the cauſe ſhall go againſt them: Both theſe ways anſwer the event. *Job's* three Friends had neither the honour to end this controverſie, nor did they at all prevail in the end; they went not away with victory, nor could they glory, that they had got the day of *Job: Thou ſhalt not exalt them.*

Hinc colligo te nolle ut de reportata ſuper me victoria glorientur. Bold.

Note hence, Firſt, *Exaltation is from God.*

Promotion comes neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South; that is, it comes not by the power of any creature, in any coaſt or quarter of the earth. Whence comes it then? The next Verſe directs us, For God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another (*Pſal.* 75.6,7.) We can no more make our ſelves great men, then, we can make our ſelves men: Our civil frame is as much from God as our natural; by what hand ſoever we are exalted, it is God that exalts us.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God hides underſtanding from them, whom he is about to abaſe, or caſt down.*

The fall of moſt men is from their own folly, and uſually God takes away their wiſdom, whoſe honour he takes away. They ſhall not ſee the way to their own preſervation, who are intended for deſtruction. All Ages have taught us this Doctrine in the downfal of the greateſt Princes; who have refuſed all counſels and overtures for their own good, till their evils have psoved paſt cure, and themſelves irrecoverably loſt. That which a Child might foreſee, they have had no eyes to ſee, nor hearts to conſider: becauſe God would either not exalt them, or not eſtabliſh them in their exaltations, therefore he hid their hearts from underſtanding the things of their own peace. Fools are not fit to be exalted to high places, and when once we ſee thoſe who are in high places, *acting the fooliſh man*, we ſhall ſoon ſee them tumbling down from their high places, *and acting the miſerable man*. Some who were never very wiſe, have been exalted to, and continued in high places; but there was ſcarce ever any man, who (in this ſenſe) loſt his wits, that hath either been exalted to a high place, or continued in his exaltation.

Quos perdere vult Jupiter *hos dementat.*

Thirdly, Conſidering thoſe particulars wherein the *Non-exaltation* here propheſied of, did conſiſt.

Obſerve, *It is an honour to hear and judge the cauſe of another man.*

God is the Judge of all the Earth, he will hear and determine the cauſes and caſes of all mankind. He that hath the hearing but of any one caſe, ſhares in this honour of God, and they who are ſet apart by office to do ſo, are called Gods (*Pſal.* 82.) God puts ſo much of his own work into the hand of a Judge, that he therefore puts his own name upon him.

Again, We may look upon *Job's* Friends, not as Judges of his caſe, but as Parties, putting in their accuſation, and pleading againſt him.

Hence obſerve, *It is an honour, and an exaltation to win the day in any cauſe, or to get the better.*

Whatſoever the contention be, or in what way ſoever managed, whether by the Sword, or by the Tongue, or by the Pen, to be victorious in it, is honourable; and he that loſes his cauſes, loſes much of his credit alſo. And though prevailing, or ſucceſs doth not at all juſtifie the matter (it is the matter which muſt juſtifie the ſucceſs) yet ſucceſs doth alwayes exalt the man. He that overcomes in a diſpute carries away the honour, though poſſibly he carry not away the truth.

Laſtly, From the connexion of this with the former part of the Verſe,

Obſerve, *They who maintain errour among men, ſhall not find favour with God.*

A heart hid from underſtanding is hid from the truth; God loves his truth ſo well, that he will not exalt thoſe who depreſs his truth. *Job's* Friends being left in the dark (as to that point in queſtion) *did not ſpeak of God the thing that was right* (*Chap.* 42.7.) *And therefore the Lord ſaid to* Eliphaz, *My wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two Friends.* Though an errour be held unknown and in zeal for God (as they did) yet the jealouſie of God waxeth hot againſt ſuch: Theſe repenting were, and ſuch as they, repenting, may be pardoned, but they ſhall nor be exalted. And if they who for want of light of knowledge, and in much heat of honeſt zeal, defend a leſſer errour (ſuch was theirs) ſhall not be exalted, how will the Lord caſt them down who broach, and ſpread blaſphemous errours, and damnable Doctrines, in a time of clear light, and againſt frequent admonitions, if not convictions? *Whoſoever* (ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.* 5. 19.) *ſhall break one of theſe leaſt Commandments, and teach men ſo* (joyning the errour of his practice with, or turning it into the errour of his opinion) *he ſhall be called leaſt* (that is, nothing at all, or No-body) *in the Kingdom of Heaven:* And he who is nothing in the Kingdom of Heaven, is not exalted, how high ſoever he may get in the Kingdoms of the earth. And if the teacher of errour againſt the leaſt Commandment of the Law ſhall have no place in Heaven, where will their place be who teach errours againſt the greateſt Commandments of the Law, yea againſt the moſt precious and abſolute neceſſary principles and foundations of the Goſpel?

Verſ. 5. **He that ſpeaks flattery to his friends; even the eyes of his Children ſhall fail.**

There is ſome variety in expounding theſe words; becauſe of the ſeveral notions into which the Original is rendred: As we read the Text, it is a plain affirmation of judgment upon the poſterity of Flatterers.

The word which we tranſlate *Flattery* ſignifies in the Verb to divide into parts, and hence in the Noun, a lot or portion, becauſe every lot or portion is divided from the whole; it ſignifies alſo a prey or booty, which men take in War, or which Thieves and Robbers take from Travellers upon the high way, and that upon the former reaſon, becauſe when a prey is taken, they divide, or caſt it into ſeveral portions, or parts: Hence alſo (ſay ſome) it ſignifies to flatter; becauſe the tongue of a flatterer is divided from his heart.

חלק *Diviſit in partes, in Hiphil emollivit, lævigavit, blanditus fuit.*

Further, It ſignifieth to ſmooth and poliſh, or (as we ſay) to make a thing very glib and neat. This comes neareſt our tranſlation; for a flatterer hath a ſmooth, poliſhed tongue, and his trade is to ſmooth, or ſooth both things and perſons. The flatterers tongue is like the Harlots tongue, to whom this word is applied (*Prov.* 7.21.) *With much fair ſpeech, ſhe cauſed him to yield, with the flattering of her lips* (with the ſmoothneſs, or as ſome tranſlate, with the lenity of her lips) *ſhe forced him:* Flattery ſeems to be far from force, yet nothing puts, or holds men under a greater force then flattery.

He that ſpeaks flattery to his friend.] Flattery is a ſpecial language, though it be ſpoken in all languages. Men learn *to ſpeak flattery*, even as we learn to ſpeak Latine, French, Italian, Spaniſh, or any other Language: Flattery is an Art, it hath rules of its own, and terms of its own; he that *ſpeaks flattery:* Mr. *Broughton* in this place calls it, *Vain-goodly-ſpeech:* And the Apoſtle *Paul* calls it, *Good words, and fair ſpeeches* (*Rom.* 16.18.) The expreſſions which the Apoſtle uſeth, are moſt proper to the deſcription of flattery; they are both Compounds, as the ſpirit of the Flatterer alſo is: He hates ſimplicity, or ſingleneſs of heart, making a ſhew of much goodneſs in word, but is void of deed and ſubſtance: He promiſeth fair, and when he ſpeaks, you would think he minded nothing, or were ſolicitous about nothing but the Honour and advantage of him to whom he ſpeaks, when indeed he minds nothing but himſelf, and ſelf-concernments, as the Apoſtle in that place deciphers him; *He ſerves not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but his own belly, and by his good words and fair ſpeeches, he deceives the hearts of the ſimple.* The Greeks have another characteriſtical word for this

διὰ τῆς χρηστολογίας καὶ εὐλογίας.

Hæc eſt blãdities quæ à Græcis vocatur ἀρεσκεία, & Ariſtoteles vulgò ἀρεσκοὺς, appellari docet eos, qui comiter cum omnibus cõverſantur, ſed veram amicitiam cũ nemine colunt. Ariſt. *l.* 8. ad Nico. *Pertinax Imperator dictus χρηστολόγος quod blãdus eſſet magis quã benignus.* Bez. in loc. ex Aurelio. Vict.

this ſort of men, by which they mean all ſuch as ſeem to carry it fair with all men, but maintain true friendſhip with no man; we may call them *Men-pleaſers*, but *Self-ſeekers.* As alſo one of the old Emperours had his Sur-name from that word uſed by the Apoſtle in the place laſt mentioned; becauſe he was obſerved very ready to give all men good words, but had no regard to do good, yea, he did very much evil; or as another gives the reaſon, becauſe he was a *Fawning Prince, rather then a kind one. Job* ſeems to charge his Friends, that they were men of ſuch a temperament, and had rather fawn'd upon him then been real friends to him.

But here it may be queſtioned, Why doth *Job* ſpeak his Friends ſpeakers of flattery? He had little reaſon to complain he was flattered; and we find him often complaining that he was roughly dealt with: *Job* heard few poliſhed, or buttered words, but bitter words great ſtore, why then doth he ſay, *He that ſpeaks flattery to his friend?*

We may underſtand it two wayes.

In reference to { *Job.* / *God.* }

Is eſt χρηστολόγος qui verbis multũ pollicetur re nihil præſtat. Bez. *Blandiebantur dum externa bona illi pollicebantur.* Merc.

Firſt, His Friends had ſpoken flattery to him; for though in ſome things they were very ſevere and harſh, yet in other things he might interpret their ſayings to be but ſoothings; they made him large promiſes of a reſtauration, that his eſtate ſhould be like the morning, that he ſhould out-ſhine the very Sun, and be a great man again. Thus they ſpake (*Chap.* 5. 19, 20. *Chap.* 8. 5. *Chap.* 11. 15, 16, *&c.*) he looked on all theſe fair promiſes as flatteries, becauſe in his own thoughts he was a dead man, and his calamities paſt all hope of recovery in this World. As if he had ſaid, *Why do you feed me with ſuch vain hopes, and propheſie to me of Wine, and of ſtrong drink, of earthly honour and riches, of length of dayes, and of a multitude of years yet behind in the race of this preſent life; I cannot but call this flattery, and a departure from the laws of friendſhip: For alas! My dayes are extinct, my breath is corrupt, and yet you are telling me of long life, and good dayes in this World.* And indeed this is at once the cuſtom and the fault of many who viſit their Friends upon the borders of death; they think they are not friendly, unleſs they labour to give them hopes of life, and deliver their opinion peremptorily, *We doubt not but you will do well enough, you will recover from this ſickneſs, and getting over this brunt, ſee many dayes.* This is flattery: it is our duty to ſpeak comfortably to our dying Friends, to ſet forth the love of God, and his readineſs to pardon, to prepare them for a better life, and to make their paſſage out of this more eaſie: But when we ſee them at the Graves mouth; when death is ready to ſieze on them, then to tell them of long life, is rather the office of a Flatterer then of a Friend. We ſhew more love to our dying Friends, by offering our counſels, and tendering up our prayers for their fitneſs to depart out of this life, then by ſhewing our deſire, that they ſhould live, and our loathneſs to part with them.

Secondly, *Job's* Friends may be ſaid to ſpeak flattery to God; and then the words are an Argument from the greater to the leſs; as if he had ſaid, *If he who ſpeakes flattery to his friend, a man like himſelf, ſhall be puniſhed, then much more ſhall he, who ſpeaks flattery to God.* But, you will ſay, How can God be flattered? There are two wayes of flattering men.

First, By promiſing them more then we intend.

Secondly, By applauding them more then they deſerve.

When we cry up thoſe for wiſe men who are little guilty of wiſdom; or commend thoſe as good, who are very guilty of evil; both theſe are ſtrains of flattery: It is impoſſible to flatter God in this latter ſenſe, for we cannot ſpeak of God higher then he is; his glory, wiſdom, and goodneſs, are above, not only our words, but our thoughts. But we may flatter God in the firſt ſenſe, by promiſing him more then we intend; they on their ſick beds do but flatter God, who tell him how good and holy they will be, when their hearts are not right with him: Yet neither is this flattery of God which *Job* may be ſuppoſed to ſuggeſt againſt his friends. The flattery here ſuggeſted, is their juſtifying the proceedings of God in afflicting *Job*, by condemning *Job*; as if there had been no way left to clear up the righteouſneſs of God, but by concluding that *Job* was unrighteous: This manner of arguing, *Job* calls, *Speaking wickedly for God, and talking deceitfully for him:* This he alſo calls, *The accepting of his perſon* (*Chap.* 13. 7, 8.) As if they had been the Patrons and Promoters of Gods cauſe and honour, while they thus pleaded againſt *Job*, and laid his honour and innocency in the duſt. That there is a ſinful flattery of God in ſuch a procedure againſt man, was ſhewed more largly in the place laſt mentioned, to which I refer the Reader for his further ſatisfaction.

He that ſpeaks flattery to his friend, What of him? The next words tell us what.

The eyes of his Children ſhall fail.] But ſhall he himſelf eſcape? Shall not he ſmart for it? Saith not the Scripture, *Whatſoever a man ſowes, that ſhall he reap:* the ſower ſhall be the reaper.

This is not ſpoken to free the Flatterer from puniſhment, but to ſhew that more then he ſhall be puniſhed for his flattery; as he himſelf ſhall not eſcape, ſo he may bring others alſo into danger with him: As ſin ſpreads it ſelf in the pollution of it, ſo in the puniſhments of it. When but one ſins, many may be defiled, and when but one acts a ſin, many may be endangered; a man knows not upon how many he may bring evil, when he doth ill himſelf.

The eyes of his Children ſhall fail. What is meant by the failing of the eyes, was ſhewed (*Chap.* 11. 20.) where *Zophar* ſaith, *The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the ghoſt.* In general 'tis this, They ſhall be diſappointed of their hopes, or they ſhall expect ſo long and nothing come, that their eyes ſhall fail with expectation, *The eyes of his Children ſhall fail.*

Morũ atque vitæ imitatores. Aquin.

Some by Children, underſtand, not his natural Children, or the Children of his body, but his Children in a figure, ſuch as imitate and follow him, who take his courſe, and tread in his paths; for as they are called the Children of the Devil, who are like him, and do his works; and as we are called the Children of God, not only in reference to our new birth and ſpiritual generation, but alſo in reference to our new obedience and holy actions (*Mat.* 5. 44, 45.) So they may be called a mans Children, who reſemble him in his manners, as well as they who iſſued from his loins.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The puniſhment of ſin doth not alway reſt or determine in him that committed the ſin.*

The bitter fruits of ſin are often tranſmitted, and handed over to thoſe who had no preſent hand in them when they were committed. The whole Family and Poſterity of ſinners may ſmart many a day after, and inherit the ſins of their Progenitors, as well as their Lands; when the Father purchaſeth, or provides an Inheritance for his Child by flattery, or any other indirect way, the eyes of his children may fail for it. I have met with this point before (*Chap.* 15. 33, 34.) and elſwhere, therefore I only touch and paſs from it.

Secondly, Conſider the particular ſin againſt which this judgement is pronounced: It is the ſpeaking of flattery.

Hence Obſerve, *The ſin of flattery is a very provoking ſin.*

That ſin which ſhall be puniſhed in poſterity, is no ordinary ſin: Thoſe good actions which the Lord promiſeth to reward in poſterity, or in after-times, have a ſpecial excellency in them: It ſhewed that the deed of *Jehu*, in deſtroying *Ahabs* Houſe, and rooting out his Idolatry (though *Jehu* himſelf was a very bad man, and did it with a bad heart, yet I ſay, it ſhewed that the deed) was very good, becauſe the Lord promiſed to reward his Children for it, with the poſſeſſion of the Throne of *Iſrael* to the fourth generation (2 *King.* 10. 30.) Now as thoſe acts have a great deal of excellency in them, for which God rewards and bleſſeth to poſterity; ſo thoſe ſins have a ſpecial malignity in them, which are threatened and purſued with revenges to Poſterity: Such ſins have a touch of the firſt ſin in them. The puniſhment of *Adams* firſt ſin is hereditary to the laſt man; all have ſmarted for that ſin, and the eyes of his Children have failed, becauſe he looked upon, and eat the forbidden fruit. Now every ſin which is thus ſpoken of in Scripture, as Idolatry in the ſecond Commandment, and here flattery, hath a ſpecial ſtamp of the firſt ſin upon it;

not only as being a ſin, and ſo a derivative from it, but as having much of the ſinfulneſs of that ſin in it: The evils of which did not dye with thoſe who gave it life.

And as all flattery is very ſinful, ſo ſpiritual flattery, or flattery about ſpiritual things, is moſt ſinful; both becauſe about them we ought to be moſt plain-hearted, and becauſe a deceit about them doth moſt hurt Any kind of flattery is bad enough, but this is worſt; ſuch was that of the falſe Prophets, *Who daubed with untempered morter, and cryed, Peace, peace, when there was no peace:* Who ſet themſelves to pleaſe, not to inſtruct the people, and were therefore buſie in ſewing pillows under every elbow. A flatterer would make all men lean ſoft, ſit eaſie, and be well perſwaded of themſelves, though their caſe be ſtark naught: He that thus ſpeaks flattery to his friend, doth indeed ſpeak miſery, yea, and death to his friend. The flatterer is the greateſt hater; and no man ſpeaks worſe of another then he who ſpeaks better of him then he deſerves, or then his ſtate will bear. It is dangerous to ſpeak all the good of a man that is true; but to ſpeak good of him which is not true, may be his utter undoing.

And though it hath been ſaid, and often experienced, that flattery gains friends, and truth-ſpeaking hatred; yet none have run into ſo much hatred as flatterers. For as it is ſaid of Treaſon, That many love the Treaſon, but all hate the Traytor; ſo many love to hear themſelves flattered, but all hate Flatterers. And though true reproofs are bitter Pills, and very diſtaſtful to moſt in the taking down, yet wiſe *Solomon* hath aſſured us, That, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards ſhall find more favour* (even with that man) *then he that flattereth with his lips* (Prov. 28. 23.) There are many who, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 36. 2.) *Flatter themſelves*, they are their own Paraſites. But as they who flatter others do moſt commonly fall under their diſpleaſure; ſo all they (ſooner or later) ſhall fall under their own diſpleaſure (and that's worſe then the diſpleaſure of any, yea, then of all men) who have flattered themſelves. It is our wiſdom and our peace, to be plain with our ſelves and with all men, how much preſent diſquiet ſoever we get by it. *Paul* ſpeaks it out to the *Theſſalonians* (Epiſt. 2. 3, 4, 5.) *Our exhortation was not of deceit, neither at any time uſed we flattering words. But as we were allowed of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak; not as pleaſing men, but God.*

Further, theſe words may be expounded, not as a threat againſt his Friends for their flattering of him, but as a threat againſt himſelf, in caſe he ſhould have flattered them. And ſo they carry alſo the weight of a reaſon, why he uſed ſo much freedom in reproving them, and ſhewing them the danger that hung over their heads: As if he had ſaid, *You, my Friends, may perhaps wonder at my boldneſs and plainneſs of ſpeech, while I tell you that God hath hid your hearts from underſtanding, and that he will not exalt you: But you muſt pardon me, I had rather incur your frowns by my downright dealing with you, then Gods by flattering you; I had rather make your ears tingle by reproving you, then make the eyes of my Children ake by my applauding you; for this I have learned as a certain truth, that he who ſpeaks flattery to his friend, the eyes of his children ſhall fail.*

Hence Obſerve, *That even a godly man doth, and ought to ſtrengthen himſelf in doing his duty, by the remembrance of thoſe evils which are threatned againſt the neglect of it.*

A Believer makes uſe of the threatnings, as well as of the promiſes, to keep his heart cloſe in obedience. That is the beſt obedience which ſprings from the fear of the Lord and his goodneſs; but that may be a good and pure act of obedience which ſprings from the fear of the Lord, and his wrath. Chriſt exhorts and *forewarns his friends to fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell* (*Luke* 12. 5.) 'Tis nobleſt and moſt ſpiritual, to obey God for himſelf, without reſpect either to Heaven or Hell; yet we may have reſpect both to Heaven and Hell, to reward and puniſhment in our obedience. *Joſeph* reſiſted temptation by the higheſt Argument, when he ſaid, *How can I do this great evil, and ſin againſt God?* (Gen. 39. 9.) He reſiſts temptation by a good Argument, who ſaith, How can I ſin againſt God, which will do ſo much evil to my ſelf, or draw many evils upon mine? And thus *Job* argued according to this interpretation, when he ſaid, *He that ſpeaks flattery to his friend, the eyes of his Children ſhall fail:* Or, as Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The eyes of the given that way* (that is to flattery) *ſhall be conſumed.*

There is another reading of the latter clauſe, and ſo of the whole Verſe, *The eyes of thoſe that conſider, obſerve, or attend him, ſhall fail*; and ſo they derive the word (*Bamin*) not from (*Ben*) a Son, or a Child, but from (*Bin*) which ſignifies to underſtand or conſider, *The eyes of thoſe that conſider him ſhall fail:* Then the meaning is, my friends are ſo exact, and acute in flattery, in compoſing and uttering fauning ſpeeches, that they who hear them are wrapt into an extaſie, and their very eyes do fail with their intentneſs in beholding them. They are ſuch powerful Orators, that they can draw the minds and eyes of their Auditors whither they pleaſe, and cauſe their eyes to ake with looking ſo wiſtly on them, having (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in a like caſe) their perſons in admiration.

Vox Banim non filios ſed intelligentes vel conſiderantes ſignificat à Verbo בונ *quod eſt intelligere, hinc ſic conficitur textus.* Et oculi conſiderantium eum deficient. *Bold.*

Job having thus complained againſt, and taxed his Friends of flattery, goes on to aggravate the ſadneſs of his condition, and upon the whole, to move the Lord to haſten an end of his miſeries, or to haſten his end, either to determine them, or to determine him.

VERS. 6, 7.

He hath made me alſo a by-word of the people, and afore-time I was as a Tabret.

Mine eye alſo is dim by reaſon of ſorrow, and all my members are as a ſhadow.

In theſe two Verſes *Job* repeats and aggravates his affliction; and he doth it (as he had done before) by ſhewing the effects of his affliction. We judge of cauſes by the effects; that which produceth a great effect, muſt needs have a greatneſs of caſuality in it. Two effects of his affliction are laid down in this context.

The firſt tells us what his affliction wrought in others.

The ſecond, what it wrought upon himſelf.

What his affliction wrought in others, is ſet forth (*Verſ.* 6.) *He was become the talk of all, poſſibly, the ſport of not a few.*

The Argument ſtands thus,

That it is a very great affliction, which every man ſpeaks of, or which makes a man a by-word.

But ſuch is my affliction, every one talks of it, and I am made a by-word of the people.

Therefore my affliction is very great.

What his affliction wrought upon himſelf, is expreſſed in the ſeventh Verſe: Dimneſs in his eye, and weakneſs in his whole body, *Mine eye alſo is dim, by reaſon of ſorrow, and all my members are as a ſhadow.*

The Argument may be formed thus,

That is a great affliction, the ſorrows whereof dim the eyes, and macerate all the members of the body.

But ſuch is the ſorrow of my affliction, that my very eyes are dim, and all my members are macerated.

Therefore mine is a great affliction.

As if he had ſaid, *Should I hold my peace and ſit down in ſilence, yet my dim eyes and dryed bones, my withered skin and crippled limbs, are as ſo many tongues, yea, trumpets, to ſpeak and ſpeak aloud the ſorrows of my heart, and the ſufferings of my outward man.* This ſeems to be *Job*'s ſcope in the words now under hand.

Verſe 6. He hath made me a by-word of the people.

He] Who is that? The Antecedent is inquired for: Our late Annotations fix it upon *Eliphaz*, who ſpake laſt, and at whom he pointed in the Verſe before, *He hath talked ſo of me, that now I am a common talk: He hath ſpoken ſuch words by me, that now I am made a by-word.* We had need take heed of what we ſay of any Brother, for if one man give out the word, enough will follow to make *him a by-word.*

Others reſolve it upon God himſelf, *He*, that is, God hath made me a by-word. *Job* at firſt acknowledged God the Author of his troubles, and ſo he hath done all along, as hath been toucht in divers paſſages of this diſpute: As no man

Hæc de domino dicit, quem ubiq; facit ſuarum calamitatũ authorem. Merc.

man lifts up his hand, ſo no man lifts up his tongue without God. As afflicting actions, ſo afflicting ſpeeches are at his diſpoſe: *He hath made me*

מׁשל *Poteſtatem quandam habet & excellentiam; ſignificat proverbium, parabolam, axioma quod vocatur propoſitio maxima.*

A by-word.] The Hebrew word in the Verb, ſignifies properly, *to rule, to govern, to have dominion, or ſupreme power, as a Prince or Potentate:* And by a Metaphor it ſignifies any thing that excelleth, or is eminent in any kind: Upon this account it is oft employed to ſignifie thoſe rules of truth and holineſs, to which every mans reaſon muſt yield obeyſance; ſuch are called in a way of excellency by Moraliſts, *Proverbs*; by Orators, *Sentences*; by Logicians, *Maxims*, or *Principles*, which are not to be proved, but ſuppoſed: No man muſt deny them, or if any man do, he is not to be diſputed with; *ſuch rules are Rulers*; and they are thus expreſſed upon a twofold reaſon,

Firſt, Becauſe of the difficulty and myſteriouſneſs of their meaning; they are of few words, but of ſo large and multiplying a ſence, that they do as much maſter, as enlighten the underſtanding.

Secondly, They are ſo expreſſed becauſe of the extent or univerſality of their uſefulneſs, they being ſuch as bear ſway in, and have an influence upon all tranſactions. That one ſentence, or rule of Equity, *What you would have others do to you, do ſo to them*, runs through the whole courſe of mans life, and reacheth us in all acts of Juſtice, whether diſtributive, or commutative. And as thoſe proverbial ſentences, which direct juſtice and good manners, are of great command and authority among men; ſo likewiſe are thoſe which had their riſe from the reproof of any mans injuſtice, or evil manners. If once a man be made a *by-word* (whether the grounds of it be true or falſe, makes no matter as to this point) it will ſtick by him, and overcome his credit; let him do what he can, he ſhall hardly claw it off again as long as he lives. *Thou haſt made me a by-word.*

In parabolizare populorum.Nam eſt infinitum, q. d. *ut ſim illis proverbio & vulgi fabula, vel ut de me proverbium faciant.*Merc.

Further, to clear the Text, we may conſider that the word *By-word* in the Hebrew is of the Infinitive Mood, and ſo ſome render it, *Thou haſt made me for the parabolizing of the people*; or that the people make Parables and Proverbs of me; which we render fully to the ſence, *Thou haſt made me* (a Parable, a Proverb, or) *a by-word among the people.* Two things are uſually implyed when a man is ſaid to be a *by-word.*

Firſt, That he is in a very low condition. Some men are ſo high, that the tongues of the common people dare not climb over them; but where the Hedge is low, every man goes over.

Secondly, That he is in a deſpiſed condition: To be a *by-word* carries a reflexion of diſgrace. He that is much ſpoken of, in this ſence, is ill ſpoken of; and he is quite loſt in the opinion of men, who is thus found in their diſcourſe. It is poſſible (though rare) for a man to be in a low, or bad condition, and yet to be well ſpoken of, yea, to be highly honoured; ſome are had in precious eſteem, while they lye upon the dunghil: But uſually a man greatly afflicted is little valued, and he whoſe ſtate is laid low in the World, his perſon is alſo low in the opinion of the World. *Job* was at that time a By-word in both theſe Notions; he was low in ſtate, and he was lower in eſteem.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Great ſufferers in the things of this World, are the common ſubject of diſcourſe, and often the ſubject of diſgrace.*

Fieri ſolet ut inſignes virorum illuſtrium calamitates in proverbium abeant deque iis fiant cantiones. **Merl.**

Such evils as few men have felt or ſeen, all men will be ſpeaking of. Great ſorrows, eſpecially if they be the ſorrows of great men, are turned into Songs, and Poetry playes its part with the ſaddeſt diſaſters. When *Sihon* King of the *Amorites* had taken many ſtrong Cities from the King of *Moab*, the miſery which fell upon the *Moabites* by that War was put into Verſe, and paſſed into a Proverb (*Numb.*21.27,28,29,30.) *Wherefore they that ſpeak in Proverbs ſay, Come into* Heſhbon, *let the City of* Sihon *be built and prepared: For there is a fire gone out of* Heſhbon, *a flame from the City of* Sihon, *&c.* That is, A fierce hot War is made, which hath *conſumed* Ar *of* Moab, *and the Lords of the high places of* Arnon. Holy *David* met with this meaſure from men in the day of his ſorrows (*Pſal.* 69. 10, 11.) *When I wept and chaſtened my ſoul with faſting, that was to my reproach, I made ſack-cloath my Garment, I became a Proverb* (or a By-word, 'tis *Job*'s language) *to them:* In the next Verſe he tells us who did this, by way of diſtribution, *They that ſit in the Gate* (that is, Great ones) *ſpeak againſt me, and I was the ſong of the Drunkard:* That is, Of the common ſort. When thoſe falſe Prophets, *Ahab* and *Zedekiah* (who to put the *Jews* into a hope of a ſpeedy return from their captivity in *Babylon*, propheſied the ſpeedy ruine of *Babylon* it ſelf, when, I ſay, thoſe falſe Prophets) ſhould be cruelly put to death by the command of the King of *Babylon*, according to the the Prediction of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, then the ſame Prophet foretels alſo, that this judgment of God upon them for their lyes, ſhould be made a By-word, and their names a curſe (*Jer.* 29. 21, 22.) *And of them ſhall be taken up a curſe, by all the Captivity of* Judah, *which are in* Babylon, *ſaying, The Lord make thee like* Zedekiah, *and like* Ahab, *whom the King of* Babylon *roſted in the fire.* That ſignal Victory of *Gideon* over the *Midianites* became a Proverb in *Iſrael* (Iſa. 9. 4.) *As in the day of* Midian. And the Lord promiſes his people, that the fall of the King of *Babylon* ſhall be ſo notorious, that they ſhall take up this Proverb, and ſay, *How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed? The golden City ceaſed?* (Iſa. 14. 4.) The Prophet *Habakkuk* aſſured them that this ſhould be, while he ſaid (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Shall not all theſe* (certainly they ſhall) *take up a Parable againſt him, and ſay, Woe to him that encreaſeth that which is not his? How long? And to him that ladeth himſelf with thick clay.*

Plagæ Zedekiæ *tangant te, ſit frater & ſervus* Zedekiæ. Vatabl.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is a great burden to be made a diſgraceful by-word.*

Thus God threatened his own people, and numbred it among the ſoreſt puniſhments of their diſobedience (*Deut.* 28. 37.) *The Lord ſhall bring thee and thy King whom thou haſt ſet over thee, to a Nation whom thou nor thy Fathers have known, and there thou ſhalt ſerve other Gods, wood and ſtone, and thou ſhalt become an aſtoniſhment, and a Proverb, and a by-word, among all the Nations whither the Lord ſhall lead thee.* This threat was renewed (*1 Kings* 9. 7.) And the Pſalmiſt bewails it, that God had brought his people into ſuch a condition, *Thou haſt made us a by-word among the Heathen, a ſhaking of the head among the people: Thou haſt made us a reproach to our neighbours, a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round about us* (Pſal. 44. 13.) The Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaks terror from the Lord (*Jer.* 24. 9.) *I will deliver them to be removed to all the Kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach, and a proverb, and a taunt, and a curſe in all the places whither I ſhall drive them:* The Hypocrite, who putteth the ſtumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a Prophet to enquire of the Lord, hath his doom denounced in this tenor (*Ezek.* 14. 8.) *I will ſet my face againſt that man, and make him a ſign and a proverb, and cut him off from amidſt my people.* Again (*Ezek.* 16. 44.) *They that ſpeak in proverbs ſhall ſay, Such as the Mother is, ſuch is the Daughter: The* Hittites *and the* Iſraelites *were both alike in ſin, and they ſhould not be unlike in puniſhment:* Such ſhort ſentences are an advantage to memory, and ſerve in ſtead of larger Hiſtories of eminent providences, whether mercies or judgments.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *God often turns that to the honour of his Servants, which men intended to their diſgrace.*

Job was a by-word, in diſgrace; God made him a by-word too, but for his honour. *Job* is famous to a Proverb at this day; for as when we would ſet forth the greatneſs of any mans ſuffering, we ſay, *He is as poor as Job*; ſo when we would ſet forth the greatneſs of any mans patience, we ſay, *He is as patient as* Job, or, *He is another* Job: All the vertues and graces which the Saints have manifeſted under ſufferings, are proverbially expreſt under the ſufferings and patience of *Job*. Never did *Ceſar*, nor *Alexander*, nor any of the great Hero's of the World, obtain ſuch a name and glory, by victories over men, as *Job* did by patient ſuffering under the hand of God.

In proverbium abiit, Jobi *patientia.*

And as he is proverbially ſpoken of for his ſuffering, ſo likewiſe for his holineſs, God made his piety a Proverb too, though his Friends ſuſpected him for an Hypocrite. When the Lord would ſhew himſelf ſo unalterably reſolved,

ved, that nothing ſhould take him off from bringing judgment upon a ſinful people, he ſaith, I will not do it, though *Noah, Daniel, and Job ſtood before me* (Ezek. 14. 14.) As if he had ſaid, I will not do it, though the moſt eminent men in holineſs, or the greateſt favourites that ever I had in the World ſue that they might be ſpared. If any in the World could obtain this of God, *Noah, Daniel,* and *Job* could: but they ſhould not, therefore none ſhall. See with what honourable names he is liſted, *Noah* and *Daniel,* men remembred, yea crowned with honour by God and all good men, are but company good enough for *Job. Thou haſt made me a by-word.*

And aforetime I was as a Tabret.

לפנים *Interpretatur, antea, prius,* i. e. קדם *vel ante facies,* i. e. *in conſpectu hominum & in oculis eorum. Exemplum ſum coram eis.* Vulg. *Sumitur verbum Tophet ut* מופת *portentum, prodigium, res mira,* i. e. *Exemplū quoddam prodigioſū.* καὶ μὴ θέλων αὐτὴν παραδειγματίσαι. *Et nollet eā ignominiæ exponere.* Bez. *Græci dicunt* στηλιτεύειν *nam* στηλίτης *dicitur proſcriptus publicè in cippo.*

Aforetime.] The word may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, As ſignifying what was or hath been done in former times, in which ſence we tranſlate, *Aforetime, or formerly, I was as a Tabret.*

Secondly, As ſignifying what is or hath been done in the preſence of others, *Before them I was as a Tabret:* We put in the Margin, *Before their face, or in their ſight:* That is, They being witneſſes of it. *I was as a* [*Tabret.*]

The Vulgar Latine tranſlates the word which we render **Tabret**, an *Example, I am a by-word, and an example before them;* which is a good ſence; and then the word *Tophet* (of which more by and by) is uſed for *Mophet,* which ſignifies a wonder, or ſome ſtrange unuſual thing which appears, or is reported to the admiration of all beholders and hearers. I am a Proverb, and a ſtrange example: Strange examples grow often into a Proverb. So the Greek expreſſeth it; and we in Engliſh ſay to a man who hath offended greatly, *You ſhall be made an example:* That is, You ſhall be ſeverely puniſhed (*Math.* 1. 19.) *Joſeph* being very tender of the honour of *Mary* his eſpouſed Wife, perceiving that ſhe was with Child before they came together, he was loth to make her a *Paradigm,* or *an example,* of diſhoneſty and diſloyalty; he was unwilling to make her a publick example, and therefore *was minded to put her away privily,* till the Lord gave him warning in a dream about it: So ſaith *Job* here, according to this rendring, I am a by-word among the people, and as it were a *Paradigm,* a publick example. Great afflictions have theſe three things in them, in reference to others.

Firſt, they are a wonder to others.

Secondly, They are a terror to others.

Thirdly, They are an inſtruction unto others.

We find all theſe and more in one Verſe (*Ezek.* 5. 15.) *So it ſhall be a reproach and a taunt, an inſtruction, and an aſtoniſhment unto the Nations round about thee, when I ſhall execute judgments in thee in anger, and in fury, and in furious rebuke: I the Lord have ſpoken it.*

The Apoſtle *Peter* deſcribing the judgments of God, firſt upon *Sodom* and *Gomorah,* ſaith, That, *God turning the Cities of* Sodom *and* Gomorah *into aſhes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an enſample to thoſe that after ſhould live ungodly* (2 *Pet.* 2. 6.) The burning of thoſe five Cities by immediate fire from Heaven, made them examples, or inſtructions to all ſucceeding Generations; we may read the odiouſneſs of thoſe ſins, and the ſeverity of God againſt them, by the light of that fire to this very day. Great afflictions are teaching afflictions; *Thoſe calamities which deſtroy ſome, ſhould inſtruct all:* We are not only to admire and wonder at them, to be amazed and terrified at them, but to be taught and admoniſhed by them. So the Apoſtle concludes concerning the ſeveral judgments which God brought upon the *Jews,* while they murmured and diſobeyed him in the Wilderneſs: *All theſe things happened to them for examples* (or types) *and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come* (1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) There are two ſorts of examples written in the Word.

Firſt, There are examples for our imitation.

Secondly, There are examples for our caution.

Some are examples by the good which they have done, theſe muſt be imitated; others are examples by the evils which they have ſuffered, by theſe we muſt be warned: This tranſlation of the Text intends *Job* an example of Caution.

Again, *Aforetime I was as a Tabret:* That is, Aforetime I was in good repute, or I was pleaſant company: *As if he had ſaid, I am now derided, mocked at, and toſſed upon the tongues of men, yea, I am now voted an Hypocrite, though heretofore in my proſperity, report gave a very pleaſant ſound of me, though abſent, and my perſon was as welcome to them as a Tabret. To ſpeak of me whereſoever I came not was muſick, and I was muſick whereſoever I came; but now what am I? A by-word, muſick ſtill if you will, but in ſcorn, a ſong of diſgrace.* That's the firſt ſence.

Hence take one Obſervation, before I proceed to further explication.

The affections and opinions of men are very variable.

I am now a By-word, before time I was as a Tabret. As the eſtates of men change, ſo uſually do our opinions of them. *Job*'s heart was the ſame as before, he was as holy as ever he was, only he was not ſo wealthy as he was; his ſpirit was as full of Grace as before, only his Purſe was not ſo full of Gold as before; he had not ſo many thouſand Sheep, nor ſo many hundred Oxen, he had not ſuch a Family and Retinue, ſuch worldly riches and honour, and becauſe he endured ſuch a change in his condition, ſee what a change he ſuffered in mens affections, he that before was as a *Tabret,* all were glad of him, is now *a by-word,* the ſcorn of all.

Chriſt giveth teſtimony of *John Baptiſt* (John 5. 35.) *He was a burning and a ſhining light;* and what followes? *And you rejoyced in him for a ſeaſon.* Though *John* did burn and ſhine all the while which God continued him in the Candleſtick of the Church with equal heat and luſtre, yet they rejoyced in him but for a while, or *for a ſeaſon.* The Jewes changed their thoughts of *John,* and their eſteem of him was weakened, though *John* continued in the ſame ſtrength of parts and gifts: Then, how would they have changed if *John* had changed. The peoples hearts were flatted towards him, though his abilities were not; *John* had not that repute and honour after a few years which he had at the firſt. And the word in the Goſpel which we tranſlate to *rejoyce,* comes neer the word which we have in this Text, *a Tabret;* for it ſignifies to leap and dance; and the Tabret is a muſical Inſtrument, at the ſound of which men dance and leap; for a time they leaped about *John;* he was a burning and ſhining light, and they danced and ſkipped about him, as Children do about a blazing Fire in the Streets, but this was only for a ſeaſon: *John* himſelf found the World a changling, his followers kept no conſtant tenour towards him, how conſtant ſoever his tenour was. How great a change did Chriſt himſelf find; *He is yeſterday, to day, and the ſame for ever;* yet one day the Jewes cry *Hoſanna,* they will needs make him a King, he had much ado to keep himſelf from a Crown; the Air eccoes with *Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:* yet preſently after, the cry was, *Crucifie him, crucifie him, he is not worthy to live,* he could not keep himſelf (by all his power as man) from a Croſs; a Murtherer is preferred before him, *Not this man, but Barrabas.* We read (*Acts* 14.) how ſuddenly the tide and ſtream of affections turned, and how opinions varied about *Paul;* when he and *Barnabas* had wrought a great cure, the people came and would needs adore them and offer Sacrifice, and ſaid, *The Gods are come down in the likeneſs of men:* They brought Oxen and Garlands, and would needs worſhip them, there was much ado to ſtave them off from Deifying, or making Gods of them; and yet before that Chapter is at an end, their acceptation of him was at an end; and *Paul* was ſtoned as unworthy the ſociety of men, by the ſame men, and in the ſame place where he was ſaluted as a God. It is no new thing in the World, to ſee thoſe a *by-word* of the people, who even now were their *Tabret:* To adore one while, and to deſpiſe another, to applaud to day, and to diſlike to morrow, now to ſmile, and anon to frown, is the conſtant inconſtancy of the creature.

Therefore, *Live not upon the breath of men, upon popular air, or the ſpeech of people:* Though to have credit with men be a bleſſing, yet let us live upon the credit which we have with God, and rejoyce only in his eſteem. Moſt men are full of change, and are apt to vary their aſpects every moment, their affections are as moveable as their outward condition is. Only God never alters his opinion of any man, he never rejects where he hath accepted, nor caſts off where he hath embraced; once a friend, and alwayes a friend;

freind, once pleaſed with us and always pleaſed with us; yea God is pleaſed with his while he manifeſts a fatherly diſpleaſure againſt them; and they are as a Tabret to him while he makes them a By-word among the people. *Job* was a Tabret in the ears of God, when he was a By-word among the people.

Thirdly, Becauſe a Tabret or Drum is empty of all but Air, and giveth nothing but a ſound; ſome interpret thus, *I am before them as an empty Veſſel, or as one who hath nothing in him but wind, and from whom nothing comes but a ſound of words*; that is, They look upon me as a man of no real worth. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, that though he *ſpake with the tongues of men and Angels*, that is, with the moſt excellent *tongues*. Angels have no tongues, nor have they any faces as men have, yet in Scripture, the face of an Angel is put for the moſt beautiful face, and the tongue of an Angel for the moſt eloquent tongue among all the children of men: Now ſaith *Paul*, though I had the tongue of Angels, or men, and were the beſt ſpeaker that ever was, yet (being void of true charity) *I ſhould become as a ſounding braſs and a tinckling Cimbal* (1 *Cor.* 13. 1.) Such *a tinckling Cimbal* was *Job* eſteemed, a Drum full of Air, or any *empty Veſſel*, as Jeruſalem was left by the King of Babylon (*Jer.* 51. 34.)

Fourthly, Some both of the Rabbins and latter Writers tell us, that *Tophet* is a Chaldee word, ſignifying *Lord, or a Prince*: And they refer us for a confirmation to (*Dan.* 3. 2.) Where we find the word put into the Summons which *Nebuchadnezzar* ſent to his Nobles and great Officers, for their attendance at the Dedication of the Image which he had ſet up: We render it, *Sheriffs*, whether our word hits that, is doubtful, but without doubt it ſignifies ſuch as were in high Authority, being there marſhall'd before the Rulers of the Provinces.

Exiſtimant eſſe vocem Chaldaicam quæ ſignificat Dominum vel principem q. d. *qui princeps eram factus ſum in proverbium & fabulam.* Rab. Lev. Vatabl.

Taking this interpretation of the word, *Jobs* meaning is, *I am now a Proverb*, or a man of no credit, *though heretofore I was as a Prince, or a Ruler in their preſence*. Some reject this becauſe the mixture of the Chaldee with the Hebrew, was long after *Jobs* time, which yet may eaſily be reconciled. And the ſenſe is good, being indeed the ſame in ſubſtance with the ſecond Expoſition.

Fifthly, This word *Tophet* which ſignifies a *Drum*, or (as we) a Tabret, which is a ſmaller Drum (for there is the *Martial Drum*, or the Drum of War, and the Tabret, which is a *Mirth Drum*, a Drum uſed at ſports, and dancing; this word I ſay) gives denomination to a place very famous or infamous rather in the Scripture of the Old Teſtament: A part of good *Joſiah* his reformation is thus deſcribed (2 *Kings* 23. 10.) *And he defiled* (in the opinion of Idol-Worſhippers, though indeed the pureſt worſhip uſed there, was more filthy then any filth which *Joſiah* threw into it: He, ſaith the Text, defiled) *Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Children of Hinnon, that no man might make his Sons and Daughters paſs through the fire to Moloch.* The Prophet *Jeremiah* complained of, and threatned that place (*Chap.* 7. 31, 32.) *They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnon, to burn their Sons and Daughters in the fire*, &c.

Now, the reaſon why that place was called *Tophet*, from the word in the Text, aroſe thus, becauſe when the Jews in thoſe abominable Idolatries offered their own Children, the fruit of their bodies, in Sacrifice to *Moloch*, the reputed God of the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, who was ſo called from *Malac*, ſignifying to Rule or Reign (for as all Idols would rule as Kings, ſo this was a chief, *a King Idol*; hence ſome conceive *Moloch* to be the ſame with *Baal*, which is alſo a name of Supremacy, ſignifying *Lord, or Maſter*) This *Moloch* was an hollow Image of Braſs, into which they put much Fire, having the face of a Bullock, and hands ſpread abroad like a Man; He had ſeven Chappels, and whoſoever offered his Son to him entred into the ſeventh; which when any did, they uſed to beat upon Drums and Tabrets, that the ſhreeks and cries of the poor Child might not be heard by the Father: Hence the place was called *Tophet* from *Toph*, a Drum, which comes from a radical word ſignifying to beat, or ſtrike with the hand, becauſe Drums are artificially beaten, and we ordinarily ſay, *Beat the Drum*, or, *At the beat of Drum*.

Barathrum quod ſupplicii locus erat apud Athenienſes, pro inferno uſurpatur. Becm. de Orig. Ling. Lat.

A nomine Gehinnon, i. e. *Vallis Hinnon. infernus dictus eſt Gehenna.* Hieron. in 10. Cap. Math. גיא *Vallis* & נהם *rugiit, gemuit.*

And hence this place *Tophet*, where thoſe Children were ſuperſtitiouſly tormented by fire and burnt to aſhes, grew to a Proverb; ſo that any place of extream torment was called *Tophet*. As Hell is called *Barathrum*, becauſe *Barathrum* was a place ſo called among the *Athenians*, into which they caſt notorious Malefactors. Hence alſo Hell is called *Gehenna*, from the Valley of the Son of *Hinnon*, where thoſe Children were Sacrificed, or from *Ge*, ſignifying a *Valley*, and *Naham*, roaring or crying: So that it was called *Gehinnon*, from the *cry of the Children*, and *Tophet* from the beating of Drums to drown the cry of the Children. And upon this account ſome learned Tranſlators render the ſenſe thus, *He hath made me a by-word, and I am as Hell*: that is, They judge me worthy of Hell and Damnation; yea, *that I am a very Hell, I am as Tophet before them*; or they look upon me, as a man in Hell already: But I think this Interpretation diſcharged from this Text upon good reaſon, eſpecially by a demonſtration of the invalidity of that reaſon upon which it is grounded, either by the firſt diſcoverers or maintainers of it. For the Idolatry of Sacrificing Children to *Moloch* in *Tophet*, and the fire in the Valley of *Hinnon* were not heard of in the time of *Job*. The firſt mention of the *Valley of Hinnon* is (*Joſh.* 18. 16.) at the diſtribution of the Land of *Canaan* among the Tribes of *Iſrael*; and the name *Tophet* was not given it till ſome Ages after that, not till the Idolatry of the Jews was grown to its height (which was not preſently, but by certain degrees) for that act of theirs in offering their Children to that Idol ſeems to be the higheſt growth and top-branch of it. And therefore I paſs this expoſition.

Et ignis gehennæ prius ero. Rab. Da. Pagn. *Sum velut Gehennæ.* q. d. *Etiam me vivum adjudicant Gehenna. vel miſerandæ alicujus mortis generi. Sed res hæc quadrare non poteſt, nã ignis illius vallis Gehennæ multo poſterior fuit quam* Job. Pined. Merc.

Sixthly, The word *Tophet* is conceived to ſet forth the manner of a puniſhment or torture uſed in thoſe times. Some Malefactors were adjudged to have their bodies ſtretched out by the four quarters upon an Engin, and then to be beaten upon their bellies to ſuch a number of ſtrokes as the Law, or ſentence of the Judge appointed. Which manner of torture was called by the Greeks *Tympanization*, or as we expreſs in our language, *Drumming*, and the perſon adjudged to that puniſhment was ſaid to be drummed, when it was inflicted upon him, becauſe he was beaten upon his body like a Drum, and beaten alſo like a Drum in meaſure, or to a certain number of ſtroaks, the greateſt number not exceeding forty, as the judicial Law of *Moſes* appointed (*Deut.* 25. 2, 3.) which may be a confirmation of this Notion upon *Jobs* Text. To which alſo we may add the preſent cuſtom of the Eaſtern countries, eſpecially among the Turks, who commonly puniſh their Captives and Gally-ſlaves ſtretching them naked upon a broad Plank or Board, and giving them many cruel ſtroaks upon their Bellies: But above all, the Author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews gives a cleer light to this (*Heb.* 11. 35.) where deſcribing the ſeveral torments which the Saints of the old Church among the Jews endured, he ſaith, *Women received their dead raiſed to life again, and others were tortured.* So we tranſlate: The Greek is, *Others were drummed*, that is, they endured the torture of Tympanization, or Drumming; which word is alſo uſed by the Compiler of the Hiſtory of the *Maccabees* (2 *Maccab.* 6. 19. 28.) who tells us that *Eleazer*, and other Martyrs were Tympanized or Drummed; he offered himſelf willing to the Torment or Drum; the manner of which may be eaſily collected from the thirteenth Verſe of that Chapter in the *Maccabees*, where the Author ſaith, *As he was ready to give up the Ghoſt, becauſe of the ſtroaks, &c.* which ſhews two things.

Exiſtimo Toph ſignificare Tympanizatum, i. e. *hominẽ qui paſſus eſt illud ſupplicium, quod Græci vocant τύμπανον, Latini quoque Tympanum.* Bold. *Tympanizatio illa videtur eſſe qua erus per quatuor mẽbra diſtentus bacillis ad numerũ in ventre tanquã tympanum percutiebatur.* Id.

ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν·

αὐθαιρέτως ἐπὶ τὸν τύμπανον προσῆγε.

First, That the torture was by beating with Staves, or Cudgels.

Secondly, That it was not uſual for men to die under ſuch beatings, that puniſhment not being to death, but to paine and diſgrace; as appears alſo from that of *Pilate* concerning Chriſt, who when he found nothing in him worthy of Death, ſaid, *I will chaſtiſe* (or beat) *him, and releaſe him* (*Luke* 23. 15, 16.) And *Paul* received *forty ſtripes ſave one, five times of the Jews* (which ſeems to have been a torture ſomwhat like this we are now upon) *and was thrice beaten with Rods*, and yet ſurvived them all (2 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25.)

The Prophet *Nahum* alſo may be thought to allude to this cuſtom (*Na.* 2. 7.) *And Huzzab* (which ſome take for the proper name of the Queen of *Ninevie*) *ſhall be led away Captive, ſhe ſhall be brought up, and her Maids ſhall lead her as with the voice of Doves, tabring* (or Drumming) *upon their breſts*, it is this word in the Text; that is, They ſhall inflict that puniſhment upon themſelves, which others uſe to inflict on evil doers; as if he had ſaid, They ſhall torture

upon

themſelves, or be their own Tormentors for very grieſe and vexation at thoſe miſeries which their enemies ſhall bring upon them. As the poor Publican filled with godly ſorrow and remorſe for his ſin, *Smote upon his breaſt* (*Luke* 18.13.) So it is uſual for ſuch as are overburdened with worldly ſorrow, to ſmite upon their breaſts, and add a voluntary pain to that which is inflicted.

Job is conceived to aim at this form of puniſhment; and then (taking the former part of the Verſe, not as we render it, *I am a by-word*, but as the word properly ſignifies, *to Govern, or bear Rule*, and then I ſay) the ſenſe appears thus, *I who have been a Ruler, or in place of Authority heretofore, am now looked upon as a man who either had been, or deſerves to be tortured, drummed, or cudgelled; as if I were at once an ordinary man, and an extraordinary Malefactor*: We may alſo keep to our Tranſlation of the former part of the Verſe, and ſuite this Expoſition of the latter part very well unto it; Thus, *He hath made me a by-word of the people, and before them I am in no better repute then a man who for his faults hath undergone publique ſhame*; *as if we ſhould ſay* (*according to our cuſtomes*) *then a man that hath been whipt about the Streets, or hath ſtood upon the Pillory, or that hath been branded with a hot Iron in the hand or face*; both which Applications of this Expoſition center in that Obſervation lately given, about the changeableneſs and inconſtancy of mans opinion concerning and of his affections towrads man: And therefore I ſhall not inſiſt further upon the uſe of it, but onely add, that,

Statuit me ad dominari populis & tympanizatus palam ero. Bold.

Ac ſi publicè fuiſſem tympanizatus & bacillis caſus.

Bolduc.

A learned Interpreter takes much pains to make out a proof of this expoſition from that paſſage of the Prophet *Iſaiah* (*Chap.* 30. *Verſ.* 30, 31, 32, 33.) where the Lord having made gracious promiſes to his own people of their deliverance from the *Aſſyrian* Bondage, thus threatens the *Aſſyrian*, the Rod of his anger, and the Staffe of his indignation (*Verſ.* 30.) *The Lord ſhall cauſe his glorious voice to be heard, and ſhall ſhew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with ſcattering Tempeſt and Hailſtones. For through the voyce of the Lord ſhall the Aſſyrian be beaten down, which ſmote with a Rod. And in every place where the grounded ſtaffe ſhall paſs, which the Lord ſhall lay upon him, it ſhall be with Tabrets and Harps, and in Battels of ſhaking will he fight with it. For Tophet* (which is the word of the Text) *is ordained of old, yea for the King it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire, and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a ſtream of Brimſtone doth kindle it.* In theſe words (ſaith my Author) there is a cleer deſcription of that kind of torture, called Tympanization, or Drumming, with which the King of *Aſſyria* is either threatned (*in ſpecie*) particularly, and properly, or by a *Synechdoche*, to ſhew that God would lay ſevere puniſhments upon him. For (ſaith the Prophet) *Through the voice of the Lord ſhall the Aſſyrian be beaten down, which ſmote with a Rod*: He ſmote with a Rod, but he ſhall be beaten down with a Staffe; for in every place *where the grounded Staffe ſhall paſs*, or, *every paſſing of the Rod founded*; that is, Of the Rod founded in the Decree of God, which ſo eſtabliſheth it, that no power nor policy of the *Aſſyrian* ſhall avoid, or remove it: For though *God will not let the Rod of the Wicked reſt upon the lot of the Righteous* (*Pſal.* 125. 3.) yet the Rod of God ſhall reſt upon the lot of the Wicked, *There ſhall be the reſt thereof* (*Zech.* 9. 1.) The Rod of God, by *the lighting down of his arm* (*Verſ.* 30.) ſhall ſtrike home to, yea into the fleſh of his Enemies, and there make deep gaſhes or cuts, running like ſo many rivulets with blood; and (ſaith he) The Lord ſhall *lay it upon him*, or, as our Margin hath it, *Shall cauſe it to reſt upon him*; when the Lord layes it on, let who ſo will, or rather who ſo can (and indeed none can) take it off, *The Lord ſhall lay it upon him*; and (as it follows) *it ſhall be with Tabrets and Harps*; which, as moſt Interpret of the joy which the Jews ſhould have at the downfall of the *Aſſyrian*, ſo my Author expounds it ſuitably to his Notion, of the manner of Gods ſmiting the *Aſſyrian*; which ſhould be as a Drum or Tabret is ſmitten, with many repeated ſtroaks, which in ſome exerciſings of that Art, paſs ſo thick, and ſo unceſſantly, that the Sticks ſeem to reſt upon the Drum, as alſo the finger upon the Harp, and not to move at all off from either; even thus ſhall God lay his Staffe upon the *Aſſyrian*: *and in Battels of ſhaking will he fight with it, or with them*; that is, by the ſhaking of Battels, or by frequent renewed Battels, will he fight with and deſtroy them. For (as it follows) *Tophet is prepared of old*; that is, The Engin upon which he ſhall be tortured: the form and manner of which is in many particulars deſcribed out of ancient Writers, by the Author of this Expoſition, but I ſhall not ſtay upon them. This *Tophet is prepared of old*, or, *from yeſterday*; that is, God hath prepared it aforehand, and made it ready, *He hath made it deep and large*; that is, proportionable in all its dimenſions for that uſe and purpoſe; *yea for the King it is prepared* (*the great King of Aſſyria*) which is added, becauſe this was a puniſhment for common men, yet the King (ſaith he) ſhall be thus tortured, he ſhall no more eſcape the hand of God, then the meaneſt of his Subjects, and he ſhall be handled in the ſame manner as the meaneſt among them ſhall. The diſhonour of ſuch a ſuffering is a greater puniſhment to a great King, then the pain of it, yet he cannot be diſpenſed with, *yea for the King it is prepared. The pile of it is fire, and much wood*: What's the meaning of that? My Author anſwers, This puniſhment of drumming was ſometimes but preparatory to another: firſt they were beaten, and then they were burned; and therefore (ſaith he) before the Engin a great fire was made, into which when they were tortured by beating, offenders were caſt and conſumed to aſhes. Our Martyrologies tell us of ſome, who have been firſt hanged, and then burned; and ordinarily among us, when Traytors are put to death, a fire is made at the place of Execution, into which their bowels are caſt, when their bodies are cut up and quartered. Thus here, *The pile thereof is fire and much wood*: And the *breath of the Lord as a ſtream of Brimſtone doth kindle it*; that is, The Lord being extreamly angry with, and incenſed againſt the King of *Aſſyria*, will therefore kindle this fire of his wrath totally to conſume him.

Jubet amoveri noxialem ſtipitem plebeia clarum pœna me damnet virum. Prud. in Rom. Martyr.

But here it may be demanded, Did any of the Kings of *Aſſyria*, who captivated and afflicted the Jews, ſuffer ſuch a kind of death as this? I ſuppoſe none of them did: Some tell us that the Army of *Sennacherib* which invaded *Judea*, was overthrown and deſtroyed by the Angel in that place called *Tophet*, or in the *Valley of Hinnon*, which is alſo given as a reaſon why that word is uſed in the Prophet; but *Sennacharib* himſelf was ſlain in the Temple of this Idol (2 *Kings* 19. 37.) Nor is it (as I conceive) the mind of our Expoſitor, to conclude from hence that the King of *Babylon* was put to death by ſuch a torture; but only to ſhew under the deſcription of that kind of death, that the death and deſtruction of the King of *Babylon* ſhould be very terrible, and that God would judge him, even as notorious offenders are, both to a painful and a ſhameful end.

As this Interpretation of the Prophet gives much light to that of *Job*, ſo it is an ingenious conjecture upon that place, and carries a fair correſpondence both to truth and reaſon. Nor is there (that I have met with) any Interpreter who doth not underſtand that Text of *Iſaiah* in its firſt and literal ſenſe, of the temporary judgements which God threatned to powre upon the State and King of *Babylon*; as moſt in a Tropological and Alluſive ſenſe, interpret it of eternal judgment in Hell, which is indeed a *fiery Tophet*, and is prepared of old, yea for the King it is prepared, for the great King of *Aſſyria*, as well as for the meaneſt perſon.

There is a ſeventh Tranſlation and Expoſition of theſe words which takes the former part of the Verſe as was toucht upon the laſt, and reads the whole thus; *For he will make me a Governour among the people, though I have thus been made as matter for the Fiddlers or Taberer's Song.* So that, as the former Expoſition renders the Text as a complaint, proceeding from *Jobs* grief, that he who had been a great Man, a Governour of the people, ſhould be now puniſht as a Slave, or as a Malefactor; ſo this renders it as a Propheſie, proceeding from his Faith, That God would reſtore and raiſe him again to be a Governour among the people, though now he was the ſcorn and deriſion of the people.

Nam fore ut inſtituat me ad præſidendum populis, quamvis tympanotribarum materia ante fuerim. Jun. *Reſtituet me Deus in dignitatem meã & altius provehet.* Jun.

This reading riſes cleerly enough from the words of the Text, yet I have one exception againſt it, as to the conſtant tenour of *Jobs* profeſſion; who though he were full of Faith in God, that it ſhould go well with him for eternity, yet he conſtantly diſclaims a hope of reſtauration to a temporal greatneſs; and having ſaid at the beginning of this Chapter, *My days are extinct, the Graves are ready for me*, it ſeems unſuitable to ſay here (which is the ſenſe of this tranſlation) *My Worldly joyes are bloſſoming, the Thrones are ready for me*; And therefore (with much reverence to the learned Author) I lay by this Interpretation.

Laſtly, Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates thus, *That maketh me a by-word to the people, and I am openly a Taber*: He applies it not (as we) to the former time, but to that time, *I am a Tabret*, and that openly, or in open view, in the ſight of all. We ſay of a man that is abuſed and jeered, *He is played upon*; ſo ſaith *Job* (according to this rendering) *They play upon me as a Tabret*, they rejoyce in my ſufferings, they make themſelves merry with my ſorrows, and rejoyce at my calamity. So the Lords of the *Philiſtims* dealt with *Sampſon*, having put out his eyes and impriſoned him, they ſent for him, *to make them ſport* (*Judg*. 16. 25.) Thus (as the ſenſe of this Tranſlation leads us) *Job* aggravates his ſorrows, by the joy which others diſcovered at it; which is alſo the meaning of the *Septuagint*, whoſe reading is, *Thou haſt made me a talk among the people, and I became a Laughing-ſtock to them.*

Poſuiſt autem me fabulam ingentibus & riſus eis deveni. **Sept.**

Hence Obſerve, *Greif is moſt greivous when others rejoyce at it.*

Thoſe afflictions which make others laugh, make us moſt mournful. When *Nero* had ſet *Rome* on fire, he made himſelf Muſick at it; and that calamity upon the City, was as a Tabret to him; while they were ſorrowing, he was ſinging. As to rejoyce at the evil which others ſuffer, is baſe joy, the worſt of joyes in it ſelf, ſo it makes the evils which we ſuffer worſe to our apprehenſion. The Prophet laments over *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of this (*Lament*. 2. 15.) *All that paſs by, clap their hands at thee, they hiſs and wag their head at the Daughter of Jeruſalem, ſaying, Is this the City that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth? All thine enemies have opened their mouth againſt thee, they hiſs and gnaſh the teeth, they ſay, We have ſwallowed her up certainly, this is the day that we looked for, we have found, we have ſeen it. Jeruſalem* was as much burdened with her Enemies joy, as with her own ſorrows. If when we mourn, we have ſome to mourn with us, we are comforted in our mournings; but when God leaves us to the ſcorn and contempt of men, when they make themſelves merry with our troubles, and exult at our calamities, when our tears are as Wine to them, and the Bread of our affliction becomes the Bread of their deſire, this renders our ſorrows out of meaſure ſorrowfull. Hence *David* (*Pſal*. 25. 2.) prays ſo hard, *Lord let not mine Enemy tryumph over me*: It is eaſier to loſe a Battel, yea to die in Battel, then to be led in Triumph, or to be Triumphed over after the Battle: *David* being freed from that fear, gathers a ſtrong argument that God had reſpect to him (*Pſal*. 41. 11.) *By this I know that thou favoureſt me, becauſe mine Enemy doth not triumph over me.* It is greateſt mercy when we triumph over our Enemies, but it is great mercy when God delivers us from being triumphed over by our Enemies; for as the mercies of the Wicked, ſo the joyes of the mercileſs are cruel. The Apoſtle reports it as a great part of his affliction, that he was made *a gazing ſtock, or a ſpectacle to the World, to Angels and men* (1 *Cor*. 4. 9.) The word which the Apoſtle uſeth is an Alluſion to the Roman Theaters, whither all the people reſorted to ſport themſelves; and their ſpecial ſport was, to behold the combates of Men with Men, or of Men with Beaſts; ſuch a ſporting ſpectacle were the Apoſtles made (in their combates with the World) *to the World, and to Angels, and to Men*: They had Spectators enow, they were a Spectacle to *the World*, that is, to the Inhabitants of the World, who are diſtributed into their firſt and grateſt diviſion in the next word, *Angels and men*: Heaven and Earth are the Fabrick of the whole World, Angels and men are all the Inhabitants of both: yet ſome reſtrain *Pauls* Text, to evil Angels only, or Devils, becauſe it ſounds harſh to the ear, that the good Angels ſhould delight themſelves in beholding the ſufferings of good men; but it is not *Pauls* ſcope to ſhew that every beholder of their ſufferings took delight in their ſufferings, but that all did, or might behold them, for thoſe things were not done in a corner. The Apoſtles were ſet forth by their Adverſaries as if they had invited all the World, Angels and Men, good and bad, to laugh at them; yet as good men could not behold them without weeping, ſo the good Angels could not behold them with rejoycing, unleſs it were at their conſtancy and courage for God, or at that Crown which they ſaw ready prepared for thoſe who overcome: And in this ſenſe good men alſo rejoyced at their ſufferings. But when any mans ſufferings are rejoyced at, becauſe he ſuffers, and is in pain; this is very painful.

ὅτι θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν.

This was *Moabs* burden (*Jer*. 48. 39.) *They ſhall howle, ſaying, How is it broken down? How hath Moab turned the back with ſhame? So ſhall Moab be a deriſion, and a diſmaying to all them about him.* And when the Pſalmiſt would expreſs how highly God was offended at the counſels and plottings of wicked ones, he tells us, *He that ſitteth in Heaven ſhall laugh, he ſhall have them in deriſion* (*Pſal*. 2.)

Job having aggravated his ſorrows, by their effects upon others; now ſhews what effect they had upon himſelf.

Verſ. 7. **My eye alſo is dim by reaſon of ſorrow, and all my members are as a ſhadow.**

Mine eye.] The eye is taken two wayes, either properly for the corporal eye, or tropically for the underſtanding: Some interpret *Job* of the eye of the minde; and that hath compliance with the tranſlation which is alſo given of the latter clauſe, as I ſhall ſhew when I come thither. But I rather take it literally for the eye of the body. *Mine eye*, that is, That Organ of ſight which is as the Glaſs or light of the whole body, even that is dim by reaſon of.

Ut illa de inferiori ſenſibili cognitione quæ fit per phantaſmata, ſic iſta de intellectuali oculo exponi debet. Bold.

Sorrow.] The word ſignifies more then ordinary ſorrow, it ſignifies ſorrow with indignation, or from provocation: *Job's* ſorrow had a touch of indignation, and it ſtirred him up to ſome undue provocations: Sorrow is taken two wayes.

Actively.
Paſſively.

Actively, for the ſorrow, ſorrowing.
Paſſively, for the ſorrow, ſorrowed.

בעש *Denotatur in illo verbo activa provocatio, indignatio, irritatio.*

Caligavit ab indignatione oculus meus. Vulg.

Sorrow is the affliction it ſelf, or ſorrow is that paſſion which moves in us when we are afflicted, *By reaſon of ſorrow mine eye is dim: Sorrow is a waſt both to the vital and viſive powers* (*Pſal*. 6. 7.) *Mine eye is conſumed becauſe of grief*: Again (*Pſal*. 39. 9, 10.) *Have mercy on me O Lord, for I am in trouble; mine eye is conſumed with grief, yea my ſoul, and my belly.* This effect of grief hath been toucht before (*Chap*. 16. 16.) *Mine eye is dim by reaſon of ſorrow.*

Magna cogitatio obcæcat adducto intus viſu in morbo comitiali aperti nihil cernunt animo caligante. Plin. lib. 11. c. 37. *de oculis & lachrymis.*

And all my members are as a ſhadow.

Members.] That is, Firſt, all the members of my body: Secondly (the Hebrew bears it) all the creatures, and imaginations of my mind are as a ſhadow.

יצרי *a* יצר *Formavit.*

The ſame word is uſed (*Gen*. 6. 5.) *The thoughts of the imaginations of mans heart* (that is, the figments, or features of things which are formed up there) *are evil, and only evil continually*: We put, *All my thoughts*, in the Margin of our Tranſlation: As if he had ſaid, *My minde is ſo enfeebled that I can ſcarce think or frame any ſolid notion; my mind is ſo unſetled that I know not how to make up my thoughts, or bring them to a rational iſſue about any point.* Sorrow weakens the intellective part, as well as the ſenſitive: As if he had ſaid, *My minde, which heretofore was apt to conceive, and to bring forth the exacteſt Ideas and platformes of truth; I, who could ſhape and faſhion excellent meditations, am now ſo weak-headed, that I can ſcarce put two thoughts together, and all I do is but a ſhadow to what I have been able to do.*

Creata in ea quaſi umbra omnia. Merc. *Per creata alij membra alii cogitationes volunt.* Rab. Lev. *Vocabulum illud quadrat in ilia omnia quæ externa figura aut interna cogitatione effigiantur; hinc multi legunt cogitationes phantaſias.* Pagn. Reg. Vatabl.

This is a fair ſenſe, yet conſidering the context, I rather underſtand it of the members of his body, which were ſo decayed and poor, that he look'd like a *Skeleton*, or (as we ſay of ſuch) *Anatomy*, nothing being left but skin and bone, nothing but a pack of bones; ſo that he was rather the ſhadow and appearance of a man, then a man.

Hence Obſerve, *The ſorrows of the mind break the body, as well as the mind.*

This effect of ſorrow hath been met with in other places, and particularly (*Chap.* 16.16.) I ſhall only add, that although godly ſorrow (as was there ſhewed) may work deeply to the expence of bodily ſtrength, yet there is a very gracious promiſe (*Iſa.* 58.11.) that God will make *the bones of ſuch fat*, that is, Fill them with marrow, which is the ſtrength of the whole outward man. And they who are weakned by the continual exerciſes of godly ſorrow, here, are in preparation to an eſtate, where they ſhall ſorrow no more: *There will be no dim eyes in Heaven, nor members like a ſhadow:* Our vile body ſhall be faſhioned like unto his glorious body, and all tears and mourning ſhall flee away. Perfect happineſs is inconſiſtent with a blubbered eye. And though in Heaven a Saint may be called *Adam* (becauſe his body, for the ſubſtance of it, ſhall be the ſame that it was here on earth, though extreamly refined and ſublimated, yea, ſpiritualiz'd, yet earth ſtill, now I ſay, though a Saint in Heaven after the reſurrection, may (in this ſenſe) be called *Adam*, made of Earth) yet no Saint can be there called *Enoſh*, that ſtate being incapable of the leaſt mixture of ſorrow.

VERS. 8, 9.

Upright men ſhall be aſtonied at this, and the innocent ſhall ſtir up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite.

The righteous alſo ſhall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands ſhall be ſtronger and ſtronger.

IN the two former Verſes *Job* ſhewed the greatneſs of his affliction from a twofold effect.

In theſe two Verſes he ſhews two reaſons why his afflictions were ſo great; not as *Eliphaz* and his Aſſociates had ſuggeſted, becauſe he was a great ſinner, or had ſinned beyond the common line of man; but,

Firſt, That men, even *upright men* might be aſtonied, at the ſtrangeneſs of this diſpenſation of God, and of his ſtrength, ſupporting a weak creature under it, and carrying him through it: *God will do ſome things which ſhall at once teach and aſtoniſh his people, and gives them not only matter of inſtruction, but cauſe of wonder.*

Secondly, That the innocent and righteous might be encouraged by my example to proceed vigorouſly in the ways of holineſs, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition they find from men, and the afflictions laid upon them by the hand of God; for as much as the favour of God ſhines in upon me through all theſe Clouds, and I have no doubt of his love, though I feel all this ſmart.

Verſ. 8. **Upright men ſhall be aſtonied at this.**

Who is an upright man hath been opened before; yet here the upright man is a man free from paſſion and prejudice, as well as from hypocriſie and falſe-heartedneſs.

Naki nõ tam in conſcientia purum à peccato, quã ab omni paſſione, humanoq; reſpectu immunẽ virũ hic ſignificat. Bold.

שמם *Tacitus miratus eſt, præ admiratione ſtupuit.*

The word which we tranſlate [**Aſtonied**] ſignifies aſtoniſhment with admiration, or ſuch an admiration, as leaves a man aſtonied and ſenſleſs, or puts him quite beſide himſelf. When natural reaſon is much overpowered, we act as if we had had no reaſon.

Upright men ſhall be aſtonied. Maſter *Broughton* reads it in the Imperative Mood, *Let upright men be aſtonied at this:* He carries the ſame form to the end of the context, *Let upright men be aſtoniſhed at this, and let the innocent ſtir up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite: Let the righteous hold on his way, and let him that hath clean hands be ſtronger, and ſtronger:* As if the words contained a uſe of exhortation or direction to ſeveral duties which *Job's* ſtate calls us unto.

We ſay, *Upright men may be aſtonied*, as importing the event, or what was intended in the act: As if he had ſaid, *Men of a right temper will not be tranſported with ungrounded jealouſies and uncertain conjectures concerning me, when they ſee all this upon me, but will refer my ſtrange diſaſters to the unconceiveable wiſdom of God, who thus orders the afflictions of his people, and ſeems to reward their holy ſervices with ſharpeſt ſufferings.*

Upright men ſhall be aſtonied, at what? **At this**, or upon the conſideration of this thing: but what is this thing, the conſideration whereof, ſhall raiſe up ſuch aſtoniſhment? When the Buſh burned and was not conſumed, *Moſes* reſolved, *I will turn aſide now, and ſee this great thing:* Strange ſights call us to conſideration. We have in this Text, *A buſh burning and not conſuming*, upright men may well be aſtoniſhed, and turn aſide to ſee it.

More particularly, there are four things upon which the occaſion of this aſtoniſhment is pitcht.

Upright men ſhall be aſtonied at, or upon this.] Firſt, At your hard dealing with me, at your rigid cenſures of me: your bitter by-words and taunting Proverbs againſt me, will certainly cauſe upright men, men of a clear judgment and conſcience, to ſtand aſtonied: As if he had ſaid, *It is not my ſingle opinion that you have wronged me, but all men of integrity will not only ſay the ſame, but be amazed at your dealings with me.*

Secondly, *At this*, that is, at the deliverance which God will give me out of theſe troubles. Thus the ſenſe is made out by thoſe who render the ſixth Verſe as the Propheſie of *Job's* Faith, that he ſhould be reſtored and ſet up to govern among the people: This turn of things ſhall worke aſtoniſhment in the beſt and moſt ſober ſpirited men, *upright men ſhall be aſtonied*, to ſee me tranſlated from the dung-hill to the Throne, from a ſtate of greateſt contempt to a ſtate of higheſt honour. Good men ſhall glorifie God in me, and ſhall rejoyce at the downfal of Hypocrites; but though the event did verifie this, *Job* was at the laſt reſtored, and was made as a Prince among the people, and his reſtauration was ſuch as might juſtly aſtoniſh and draw all that either ſaw or heard of it into admiration, yet I much doubt whether *Job* had any ſuch ſcope in theſe words, which rather continue and heighten the aggravations of his then preſent troubles, then hold out any intimations of his hope, much leſs of his aſſurance of a raiſing to a future worldly proſperity.

Animis, dictis, factis viri boni glorientur in Deo & de hypocritarũ confuſione exultent. Jun.

Thirdly, Some conceive this matter of aſtoniſhment to be the patience of *Job* under his ſufferings, that he ſhould endure and hold out in ſuch extremities, till his *eye was dim by reaſon of ſorrow, and his members were like a ſhadow: Upright men ſhall be aſtonied at this.* Is it not marvellous that a man ſhould act a life of grace, when it could ſcarce be perceived that he acted the life of nature? As God doth often work miraculouſly for the deliverance of his people out of trouble, ſo they ſometimes (by his power) work miraculouſly under troubles, before deliverance comes. Such patience, ſuch humility, ſuch meekneſs, and faith, are recorded in Scripture, as have cauſed upright men to ſtand aſtonied. This is a good ſenſe, but I rather pitch upon a fourth, as moſt proper to this place.

Fourthly, I conceive when *Job* ſaith, *Upright men ſhall be aſtonied at this*, He points at the greatneſs of his affliction: As if he had thus expreſſed it, *My being made a byword among the people, my dim'd eyes and leane body will make ſuch a report, and be ſuch a ſight, as will ſet all honeſt men a wondring, upright men ſhall be aſtonied at this. What! Hath the Lord dealt thus with Job, a holy man, concerning whoſe integrity he hath given ſuch ample teſtimony? This is indeed the Lords doing, but it is marvellous in our eyes.*

Cladis hæc mea univerſis eſt ſtupenda ſed juſtis præſertim. Pined. *Quod ita atrociter affligar cũ ſim innocens, &c.* Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That the beſt of men, upright men are ſometimes at a loſs how to interpret the outward dealings of God.*

Some providences of God put the wiſeſt to a ſtand; not only are Fools and wicked men, but men of the greateſt experience and underſtanding in the ways of God, ſo puzzled that they know not what to ſay, or how to anſwer? The Lord is pleaſed to give as hard Texts and Chapters in his works as he doth in his Word; many outward adminiſtrations lie ſo cloſe, yea ſo croſs to his ordinary proceedings, that we know not what to make of them: If we ſee a wicked man afflicted, we ſhall ſee a godly man afflicted much more: If we ſee a godly man proſper, we ſhall ſee a wicked man proſper double to it; theſe are ſtrange things, at which not a few are amazed, and at their wits end; ſhould we judge of all the dealings of God by humane reaſon, we ſhould conclude ſome of them without, or againſt reaſon, though indeed they are only above our reaſon, or have a height of reaſon in them, which we cannot reach, and therefore muſt admire.

No man wonders at that for which he can give a reaſon, and therefore we ſay it altogether unbecomes a Philoſopher (who would be thought knowing about the reaſon of every thing) to wonder: There are depths in the providences of God which no man is able to reach or ſadom, the upright men need not be aſtonied at them. The Preacher gives a caution, that we ſhould not be over curious in prying into ſuch ſecrets (as ſome make the connexion of thoſe two Verſes, *Eccleſ.*7.15,16.) *All things have I ſeen in the dayes of my vanity: Solomon* was a man of vaſt obſervation, and though he had not ſeen all things in their particular exiſtence, yet he had ſeen all things in their general nature; and he gives inſtance in two ſorts of things which he had ſeen, *There is a juſt man that periſheth in his righteouſneſs* (*Job* was a righteous man, and he periſhed outwardly) *and there is a wicked man that prolongs his life in wickedneſs.* Among all his obſervations, he thought none of greater moment then theſe two: Now when God puts the righteous into a periſhing condition, and ſets up the wicked in worldly glory; this is matter of much admiration and inquiſition, therefore he ſubjoyns (according to this interpretation) his caution (*Verſ.*16.) *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe*; that is, Be not anxious in ſearching out every particular, or every little little about this adminiſtration of God; make not thy ſelf over-wiſe, do not think that thou canſt reach the reaſon of all that God hath done in cauſing a righteous man to periſh, and a wicked man to flouriſh, there is more in it then thou canſt comprehend, *Why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf?* that is, Thou maiſt amaze and bewilder, yea undo and deſtroy thy ſelf, if thou ventureſt too far upon thoſe ſecrets of providence, but thou wilt not be able to extricate or reſolve thy ſelf by all thy venturing.

Dum plus ſcire vis quā oportet, præ admiratione rei humanum captum vincentis ad mentis ſtuporem devenias. Pined.

Now, *If the providences of God be ſuch a deep, that upright wiſe men are aſtonied at them, then what a deep are the counſels and decrees of God?* Providences are the diſpenſations of God to the eye, they are the objects of ſenſe; if we cannot ſee to the end of that which is before us, as providences are, how ſhall we ſee the end of that which is ſo far off from us, as the Counſels and Decrees of God are? The Apoſtle ſtood as a man aſtonied at both (*Rom.*11.33.) when he had ſpoken of that amazing diſpenſation of God in caſting off the Jews, and receiving the Gentiles, he cries out, *O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his judgements!* and among them, this ſpecial judgement, in taking the Goſpel from the Jews, and breaking them off, who were the natural branches, that the Gentiles who were the wild Olive might be graffed in: *How unſearchable is this judgement, and this way of God paſt finding out! Upright men are aſtonied at this.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *How ſtrange ſoever the dealings of God are with his, yet righteous men are only aſtonied at them.*

They are not ſcandalized, they are not offended at God for them, they do not blaſpheme the name, or apoſtatize from the ways of God, nor do they quarrel at his diſpenſations. For as when they are aſtoniſhed at the proſperity of the wicked, they preſerve high and holy thoughts of God, and only ſeek reſolution at the mouth of God: as the Prophet *Jeremiah* did (*Chap.* 12.1.) *Lord, thou art righteous, yet let me reaſon with thee: Why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* Or as *Habakkuk* (*Chap.*2.2.) propounds his queſtion to find out the knot in the ways and dealings of God: Now I ſay, as it is thus with the righteous, when they ſee the great proſperity of the wicked, ſo when they ſee the greateſt adverſities of the godly, they are only amazed at the dealings of God, they do not deſpond, much leſs blaſpheme becauſe of his dealings. But when carnal men ſee thoſe who have gone for righteous or upright, under afflictions, they run into deſperate extreams.

Firſt, They deſpiſe and ſlight them.

Secondly, They look upon them as the moſt miſerable men in the World: *Afflicted grace and innocence hath no beauty in a carnal eye.*

Fourthly, They judge hardly of God, who deals thus ſeverely with men: what? Are theſe the ſervants of God, and doth he uſe them thus? Doth he recompenſe them thus for the pains which they have taken, and for the work which they have done him?

Fifthly, They grow into an abhorrence of holineſs, and into a diſtaſt of Religion it ſelf. If God pay his Servants wages in ſuch coyn as this (ſay they) let whoſo will ſerve him, we are not ambitious of his Livery. If this be the portion of Profeſſors (as you call them) let who will profeſs; thus they are ſcandalled and offended.

It is ſtoried, that when *Aygoland* a King of the Moors (who had long maintained War againſt *Charles the Great*, hoping to make a fairer agreement with him) and promiſed to receive the Chriſtian Faith, and be Baptized, he coming with a Gallant retinue to the French Court, ſaw there a number of poor men fed and cloathed by the Emperours charity, and enquiring who they were, it was anſwered, *That they were the Servants of God:* What, ſaid he, Are the Emperours Servants ſo rich and brave, and are the Servants of God ſo poor and ſqualid? I had a purpoſe to be baptized, but now I am reſolved never to ſerve that God, who keeps and rewards his Servants no better. What this King ſpake out, many ſpeak in their hearts; they will not ſerve Chriſt upon ſelf-denying and ſuffering terms.

Aygolandus abjecto ſervorum Dei ſtatu & viſu à Chriſtianæ fidei profeſſione abſtinuit. Lampad. in Sleyd. part. 3.

As when the Croſs falls upon Hypocrites, they depart from the Faith, and (with *Demas*) imbrace this preſent World, they will not endure a ſtorm for Chriſt, nor hazzard their worldly poſſeſſions for all the promiſes in the Goſpel; ſo when the godly fall under croſſes and afflictions for the Goſpel, evil and prophane men reject it, they will none of it: The righteous may be aſtonied and wonder, but the wicked blaſpheme *at this.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Good men are apt to have ſtrange thoughts about afflictions and croſſes.*

They who are well acquainted with the Theory of ſufferings, yet when they come to ſuffer indeed, find much loathneſs and averſeneſs to it. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaw this, and laboured to remove it (1 *Pet.*4.12.) *My brethren, think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery tryal, as if ſome ſtrange thing had hapned to you, but rejoyce, &c.* They looked ſtrange on tryals, as if they had never ſeen nor heard of them before: They knew not how to digeſt ſuch hard meat as ſufferings are, under the profeſſion of the Goſpel; their hearts were ſomewhat cold to thoſe fires, and they had no mind to come near leſt they ſhould burn their fingers, and were therefore warned, *Think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery tryal. Jeſus Chriſt* (as the Prophet deſcribes him, *Iſa.* 53.3.) *was a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief.* Chriſt and grief were no ſtrangers, why then ſhould a Chriſtian think ſtrange of it? The Apoſtle uſeth that argument (*Verſ.* 13.) *But rejoyce in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings:* Ours are the ſufferings of Chriſt, not only becauſe we ſuffer for him, and he ſuffers with us, but becauſe he ſuffered the ſame things, yea far greater both before us and for us: Chriſt took our ſufferings upon him, when he took our nature upon him, yet our nature thinks ſtrange to partake in the ſufferings of Chriſt.

The Apoſtle *Paul* (1 *Epiſt.* 3.3,4.) tells the *Theſſalonians*, that he ſent *Timotheus* to eſtabliſh them, and to comfort them concerning their Faith, *That no man ſhould be moved by theſe afflictions:* Intimating that the beſt of men, the beſt of Saints, are apt to be moved by afflictions; he means it of an inward motion, that is, to have their ſpirits diſturbed and troubled, as *Davids* was when he put thoſe queſtions to his ſoul (*Pſal.*42.11.) *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me? But why ſhould no man be moved by thoſe afflictions? The Apoſtle ſhews why, For your ſelves know that we were alſo appointed thereto: for verily, when I was with you I told you before that we muſt ſuffer tribulations, as it came to paſs, and ye know it. Paul* gave them notice before affliction came, leſt they ſhould be moved when they were come. Thus Chriſt warned his Diſciples, and he warned them for this end (*John* 16.1.) *Theſe things have I ſpoken to you that you be not offended:* What things were theſe? *They* (ſaith he) *ſhall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, will think that he doth God ſervice:* Chriſt foreſaw that when theſe things came, they would find work enough to quiet their ſpirits in, and to quit themſelves from troubleſome motions: And as Chriſt, to keep or make their hearts quiet, tells them of their ſufferings aforehand, ſo he therefore tells them that he himſelf had ſuffered before-hand (*John* 15.18.) *If the World hate you, you know it hated me before it hated you*; you know it, and knowing it, you ought not be troubled when

q. d. *Tribulationū juſtorū jā nobis cauſa & ratio explorata eſt; at quondam utpote ignota, multā admirandi & philoſophandi materiam ipſis juſtis præbebat.*

when you meet with hatred in the World: The Servant muſt not expect better uſage then his Maſter. When we ſee ſo much laid in to fortifie our ſpirits againſt outward croſſes, in, or for the profeſſion of the Goſpel, it is an abundant argument that our hearts are apt to ſtartle, and we to be aſtonied at them.

And the innocent ſhall ſtir up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite.

עיר *Evigitavit, excitavit.*

The innocent.] Here is a different Character, or cloathing of words, but the perſon is the ſame. *The innocent ſhall* [*ſtir*] *up himſelf:* The word ſignifies to ſtir up from ſleep, and to ſtir up from ſloath; it ſignifies alſo ſuch a ſtirring as the Eagle uſeth to provoke her young ones to fly (*Deut.* 32. 11.) Thus the innocent ſhall awake and ſtir up himſelf.

חנף *Sunt qui reddunt improbum quomodo ea vox exprimitur apud Hebræos.* Druſ.

Againſt the Hypocrite.] The Hypocrite is taken two wayes: Either ſtrictly, as oppoſed to the upright in the former part; and under that notion I have heretofore ſpoken of the Hypocrite (*Chap.* 8, &c.)

Secondly, The Hypocrite may be taken largely, and ſo every wicked man is he, except he who openly profeſſeth wickedneſs, and yet even he may go for an Hypocrite, for he is more wicked (when he hath profeſſed his utmoſt) then he doth profeſs himſelf to be.

Reddunt iniquum. Sept. *Delatorem.* Targ. *Juſtus ſuper inimicum conſurget.* Olymp.

The *Septuagint* render him, *Unjuſt*, and the *Chaldee Paraphraſe*, *The backbiter or defamer:* And another of the Greek Interpreters calls him *the enemy*; *The innocent ſhall ſtir up himſelf againſt his enemy*, or againſt his oppoſite: And who is that, but the wicked man, under what notion ſoever we put him? The ſingle terms thus cleared, fall yet under a different ſence, as joyned together.

Suam orationem paulo incitatiorē excuſat. q.d. *quid mirum me ita loqui cum res ipſa tam indigna ſit?* Pined.

Firſt, Some conceive that *Job* makes an apology, or an excuſe for himſelf in theſe words, why he expreſt ſo much paſſion, and uſed ſuch ſharpneſs of ſpeech toward his Friends: As if he had ſaid, *Blame me not for doing it, things are carried ſo, as upright men may be aſtonied, it would make a wiſe man mad, and a meek man furious; a very poſt would be awakened and ſtirred, at what my Friends have again and again preſſed upon me; therefore pardon my paſſion, and (if you will needs call it ſo) my impatience.*

Non me latet ad rem tantam ſapientes percelli, atque adeo in ejuſmodi caſu interdum inſontes adverſus eos qui ſic affliguntur, tanquam adverſus hypocritas commoveri. Bez.

Secondly, Maſter *Beza* expounds *Job* aiming at a good man in great troubles miſtaken for an Hypocrite, by thoſe who are good: He repreſents him ſpeaking thus, *I am not ignorant, that not only ordinary and common men, but even the wiſe and the upright will be troubled and aſtonied at my ſufferings, and that ſometimes (in ſuch a caſe as mine is) innocent men will ſtir up, or ſet themſelves againſt him that is afflicted, as if he were an Hypocrite.* When God puts a diſguiſe of great troubles upon his faithful Servants, they who are faithful will ſcarce own them; they are ready to number them among enemies, at leaſt to doubt very much (as they did about *Paul* upon another account, *Acts* 9. 26.) whether he be a Friend or a Diſciple. Afflictions have made the ſincere appear as Hypocrites in the opinion of thoſe who are ſincere.

Indignabitur contra hypocritam quod ille calamitates tribuit peccatis. Cajet.

A third makes this the ground of the innocent mans quarrel againſt the Hypocrite; why doth he ſtir up himſelf, and engage againſt him? Why is he ſo angry with the Hypocrite? Even becauſe he ſees the Hypocrite fooliſhly condemning the godly as wicked, becauſe they are afflicted, or aſcribing their calamities meerly to their ſins.

Excitabit ſe contra impium florentem & fælicem, quod videat illū non recipere digna peccati.

Fourthly, Thus, The innocent ſhall *ſtir up himſelf*; That is, His ſpirit ſhall be troubled at the Hypocrite, or wicked man, whom he ſees in a flouriſhing condition: ſo we may expound it by that caution which *David* gives (*Pſal.* 37. 1.) *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of evil doers, neither be thou envious againſt the workers of iniquity.* Good men have been much moved and fretted at the proſperity of the ungodly: But ſurely *Job* is not here declaring the infirmities of the innocent, but their graces. And therefore,

Laſtly, *The innocent ſhall ſtir up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite*, carries in it the commendation of the innocent perſons perſeverance and conſtancy in the faith and ſincerity of his profeſſion, what changes ſoever are upon him: As if he had ſaid, *Though a godly man be afflicted and brought low, though he be ſcorned and trampled upon when he is brought low, yet he will not forſake his principles, or diſclaim his profeſſion; nay he will be ſo far from ſlacking in, or turning away from his profeſſion, that he will manifeſt more holy zeal for God and his wayes, together with more holy oppoſition againſt wicked men, and all their wayes, then ever he did before: The upright ſhall be aſtonied at this, but they ſhall not be diſheartened, their wiſdom and courage ſhall ſtill appear in maintaining their quarrel againſt the generation of evil doers, whereſoever they meet with them. The innocent ſhall ſtir up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite.*

Quamvis ab eo videatur quod affligatur, haud tamen propterea deſiderio ducetur ejus ſequendi aut ei ſe adjungendi ſed excitabit ſe, &c. Merc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *There is an everlaſting oppoſition between the godly and the wicked.*

The innocent ſtirs up himſelf (like a Lyon) againſt the Hypocrite; His heart riſeth againſt him, not as a man, not as his enemy, but as a wicked man, and as an enemy to God. The foundation of this holy War was laid in that word of God (*Gen.* 3. 15.) *I will put enmity between thee and the Woman, between her ſeed, and thy ſeed.* As there is an enmity, *de facto*, in wicked men againſt the righteous, they will ever be oppoſing them: So there is an enmity, *de jure*, of right and duty, in the righteous againſt the wicked, they ought ever to oppoſe them; that quarrel, thoſe feuds muſt not be laid down: And therefore the Apoſtle *John*, who though he was the beloved Diſciple, and was moſt preſſing and perſwaſive to love among Saints and Brethren, yet he forbids the love of wicked men, *Love not the World* (1 *Epiſt.* 2. 15.) which refers as well to worldly perſons, as worldly things. And the Apoſtle *James* is direct (*Chap.* 4. 4.) *The friendſhip of the World is enmity againſt God.* Our piecing in, or making peace with the World, is a proclaimed War againſt God himſelf. It is our duty, and it is our ſpiritual ſafety, to ſtir up our ſelves ſpiritually againſt the wicked. As we deny not civil peace with Hypocrites, and the worſt of men; ſo there is a ſpiritual warfare which we are bound to continue (how chargeable ſoever it may prove to us) againſt all Hypocrites and wicked men. And if they ſay (of this Sword) as (*Jer.* 47. 6.) *O thou Sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet?* We muſt anſwer as the Sword doth there, *How can I be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given me a charge againſt* Askelon? The Sword of that War receives its Commiſſion from God, and is deſigned now to one Coaſt, anon to another: The Sword of this War hath long ſince received its Commiſſion from God, againſt all the coaſts of ſin, and powers of darkneſs; nor can it be quiet, or put it ſelf up in its Scabboard, while there is an Hypocrite appearing upon the face of the Earth.

Gods quarrel muſt be perpetuated, it can never be taken up. *Let them return to thee, but return not thou to them,* was the Prophets charge (*Jer.* 15. 19.) There's no compounding of this difference; they muſt return and give themſelves up to God, and his wayes, elſe we cannot give them an inch of ground, or make truce with them for an hour, much leſs may we make peace with them, or give them the right hand of fellowſhip.

Secondly, Here we have the Hypocrite in his flouriſh, and the innocent in his affliction; the Hypocrite aloft, and the innocent below; yet when it is thus, even then the innocent is deſcribed ſtirring up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite.

Hence Obſerve, *A godly man afflicted, doth not at all approve or applaud the Hypocrite, but oppoſeth him in his greateſt pomp and worldly ſplendour.*

When the wicked are at the higheſt, even as happy as the World can make them, yet a godly man will not change ſtates with them, or (as we ſay) turn Tables with them; he would not have his outward proſperity, with his heart, if it were worth ten thouſand Worlds: *He ſees and knows there is more excellency and worth in afflicted grace, then in the moſt proſperous wickedneſs:* The love of God is better then life, and if ſo, what are all the things of this life compared to it? Hence a godly man hath no better opinion of the wicked in riches, then in poverty, and he hath no worſe opinion of himſelf when he is poor, then when he was rich: He doth not account grace the leſs glorious, becauſe it hath ſo little of outward glory upon it.

And ſeeing he will not change ſtates with him, he cannot envy him: We envy thoſe only whom we judge in a better condition then our ſelves. *David* under a temptation, *was envious at the fooliſh, when he ſaw the proſperity of the wicked* (Pſal. 73. 2, 3.) and his feet were almoſt gone, his ſteps had well-nigh ſlipt, but when he recollected himſelf, and went to the Sanctuary, ſuch thoughts were quickly down, and envy was extinct, he ſaw much matter enough to pity wicked men, but none to envy them, they ſtand in ſlippery places, and are ſuddenly caſt down. *How are they brought into deſolation, as in a moment they are utterly conſumed with terrors.*

And as he doth not envy them, ſo thirdly, much leſs doth he imitate them; he is ſo far from imitating them, that he ſets himſelf to oppoſe them, and he oppoſeth them all thoſe wayes, and with all thoſe weapons that God hath put into his hand: He oppoſeth ever him by counſel and conviction, by reproofs and prayers. And as he fights againſt the Hypocrite by prayer; ſo by prayer he fortifies himſelf againſt all ſinful compliances with him.

Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 141. 4.) *Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity, and let me not eat of their dainties:* As if he had ſaid, *Though wicked men be fine fed, and dyet upon dainties every day, though they devour the fat, and drink the ſweet, and have all things that their hearts can deſire, yet, Lord, ever keep me from the practice of wicked works with men that work iniquity, and let me not eat of their dainties, who find a ſweetneſs in ſin, and take pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.*

It is the counſel of the Wiſe man (*Prov.* 1. 10, 11.) *My Son, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not*: Do not aſſociate with them, they will tell thee of great matters; they will ſay, *Come let us lay wait for blood, we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil; caſt in thy lot among us, let us all have one purſe. My Son, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their paths; for their feet run to evil,* &c. He that would refrain his foot from walking in, muſt firſt refrain his heart from approving of, the paths of wickedneſs.

This the innocent doth and more, while he ſtirreth up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite. And as he ſets himſelf againſt the way of the Hypocrites, ſo he labours to ſet forward with all his might in the way of holineſs, for that's his way, as appears in the next Verſe.

Ex tanti viri exemplo atque memoria incrementũ accipient ſingulare. Sanct. *Tenebit mordicus.* Merc. *Apprehensã tenebit firmiter, non diſcedit ne latum quidem unguẽ, ſed hærebit firmior in ſuo vivendi inſtituto & pietatem audentius colet.* ἀνθέξεται δίκαιος τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ὁδοῦ, *inhærebit juſtus viæ ſuæ.* Theodol.

Verſe 9. **The righteous ſhall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands ſhall wax ſtronger and ſtronger.**

The righteous.] It is the ſame man ſtill, who ſhould be encouraged by *Job*'s example to a vigorous progreſs; *He,* the righteous man,

Shall hold on.] The word ſignifies to hold with ſtrength, to hold toughly, to hold as with the teeth, reſolving never to let go, but ever to go on

In his way.] What way? It may be taken either particularly for that way of oppoſition which he maintained againſt the Hypocrite; or ſecondly, for the way of righteouſneſs, and that twofold.

First, The way of his heart, or his inward way.

Secondly, The way of his hand, or his outward way.

The righteous man holds on in both theſe wayes; he continues his courſe both in the holy motions of his ſpirit towards God, and in the holy actings of his life towards man: In this way he is full of motion, but he will not move a ſtep, nor willingly decline to the right hand or to the left, out of this way: Here he walks as to induſtry; and here he ſtands as to conſtancy. *The righteous ſhall hold on his way.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The righteous ſhall perſevere; perſeverance is at once the duty and the priviledge of the Saints.*

As they are in a good ſtate, ſo they ſhall go on in a good way, *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day* (Prov. 4. 18.) *The goodneſs of Hypocrites is as the morning cloud, and goeth away as the early dew* (Hoſ. 6. 4.) The wind ſcatters the morning Cloud, and the riſing Sun exhales the early Dew; thus the goodneſs of the Hypocrite is gone; but the goodneſs of the righteous (like the goodneſs of God, of and from whom it is) *endureth* (in its proportion) *continually* (*Pſal.* 52. 1.) As they who joyn works to grace, make grace to be no grace; ſo do they who ſay, the work of grace may be loſt; or that grace may for ever loſe its working: The work of grace may be clouded, but grace is no cloud; the working of grace may decline, but grace cannot dye.

The righteous ſhall hold on his way.] Further, This Scripture tells us, that he ſhall hold on, not only in fair way, and in good weather, but in ſtormy weather, and rugged wayes, when his way lyes among ſharp Stones, and ragged Rocks, through Bryars and Thorns; yea, I may ſay, when his way lyes among Bears and Lyons, he will on.

Hence Obſerve, *A godly man perſeveres, notwithſtanding all ſeeming diſcouragements from God, and all real oppoſitions from men.*

Though God ſeem to caſt cold water on him, yet his fire never goes out, and often (by a holy *Antiperiſtaſis*) he is inflamed the more: While the evil World thinks to daſh him out of countenance, and damp his ſpirit, he is the more emboldened: As the Apoſtles approved themſelves the Miniſters of Chriſt, ſo doth every Believer (in his Sphere) *In much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments, by honour, and diſhonour, by good report, and evil report,* &c. (2 *Cor.* 6. 4, 8.) Let the way be what it will, foul or fair, *a green Carpet way,* or a deep pochy way, let it be what it will, he goes through thick and thin. *Paul* puts the queſtion, and reſolves it (*Rom.* 8. 35.) *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* He puts it of a perſon, Who ſhall? And he anſwers about things, *Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, ſhall theſe ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* That is, Either from that love which we bear to Chriſt, or from that love that Chriſt bears to us; what ſhall make Chriſt out of love with us? Or what ſhall make us out of love with Chriſt? Shall any thing? Nothing ſhall, for thoſe things ſhall not which might ſeem moſt able to make us out of love with Chriſt, or to tell us that Chriſt doth not love us. *Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? Nay in all theſe things we are more then conquerours through him that loved us*: He loved us, therefore he will love us, and we ſhall go on to love him: for through him we ſhall not only conquer, but over conquer, or more then conquer, whatſoever ſtands in the way to divert us from his love, or to render him unlovely. Nothing can ſeparate Believers from the love which Chriſt bears to them; if any thing can do it, ſin can; but ſin cannot, becauſe he hath more then conquered it by his own power: Nothing can ſeparate Believers from the love which they bear to Chriſt, if any thing can, tribulation can, but that cannot, becauſe we ſhall more then conquer it through his power. *The righteous ſhall hold on his way*; he neither turns back, nor ſtands ſtill. *David* was ſorely ſhaken, and tempted (*Pſal.* 73.) yet *his feet were* (but) *almoſt gone, and his ſteps were* (but) *well-nigh ſlipt.* As Hypocrites at the moſt are but *almoſt Chriſtians* they are not Chriſtians altogether; and as they ſtep at their neareſt but *well-nigh Heaven,* they ſhall not enter in; ſo the feet of true Believers may almoſt be gone out of the good way, but they ſhall not go out altogether, and their ſteps may well-nigh ſlip from God, but they ſhall be upheld; and hence it is, that though they have many, not only ſlips, but falls in the way, yet they ſhall neither ſlip nor fall quite out of the way; this *David's* experience taught him, at the twenty third Verſe of that Pſalm: *Neverthleſs* (ſaith he) *I am continually with thee, and thou haſt held me by my right hand:* That is, Though I have many troubles in thy way, yet I depart not out of thy way: I have temptations to leave thee, but I will not leave thee; *I am ſtill with thee,* I am where I was, yet not by any power of my own, but by thy power, for *thou holdeſt me by my right hand*: It is not the hold which we have of God, but that which he hath of us that makes us hold on our way: We ſhould quickly let go our hold of God, if God had not infinite faſter hold of us; *Thou holdeſt me by my right hand.* There is a (*manutenentia Dei*)

Dei) *an inviſible Hand-holding of God*, by which the whole viſible Creation is ſupported, without which no Creature could hold on in the way of Nature; much more is there an inviſible *Hand-holding* of God, by which the ſpiritual Creation is ſupported, and without which the new Creature cannot hold on in the wayes of Grace. 'Tis the hold which Chriſt hath of us, and the rooting which we have in him, by which we are confirmed. *Iſrael* the people of God, is ſaid, *to grow as the Lilly, and to caſt forth his roots like* Lebanon (*Hoſ.* 14. 5.) The Trees of *Lebanon* are high, and ſpread out their branches, but they are alſo deeply rooted, they have as much under ground as above, they have as much hold in the earth as they have ſhew in the air. As the Saints grow up and ſpread forth their branches, ſo they grow down and caſt out their roots like *Lebanon*; ſo that the winds and ſtorms which ſhake them, do indeed but ſettle them. 'Tis the goodneſs of the root which at once makes them fruitful, and makes them firm: He that ſtands by this ſtrength ſhall ſtand; and he that is fruitful by theſe roots ſhall be fruitful ſtill, and bring forth more fruit in age. *The righteous ſhall hold on his way.* As Chriſt ſpeaks terribly to the wicked, that they ſhall hold on their way (*Revel.* 22. 11.) *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill:* Theſe are not permiſſions to wicked men to be wicked ſtill, much leſs are they perſwaſions unto wickedneſs, but they are dreadful comminations; wicked men are threatned with this plague, to be given up to the wickedneſs of their own hearts: Now as Chriſt ſpeaks terribly there to his Enemies, ſo he ſpeaks comfortably and encouragingly to his Friends, *He that is righteous let him be righteous ſtill; and he that is holy let him be holy ſtill:* which carries not only the force of a command upon them, or the direction of a rule to them, but alſo the ſweetneſs of a gracious promiſe, or of a ſpecial priviledge, that they ſhall be maintained in righteouſneſs and holneſs unto the end, or that *they ſhall hold on their way.* Hypocrites may make a fair flouriſh, and ſtand ſome brunts, they may *endure for a ſeaſon*, but they endure not long, much leſs to the end. *They went out from us*, ſaith the Apoſtle *John* (1 *Epiſt.* 2. 19.) they had once an appearance, and a preſence with us, but *they were not of us:* That is, They had no real communion and fellowſhip with us; their bodies were with us, but not their hearts; and when we loſt them, we loſt no more then the Corn doth when the Chaff is winnowed away; or then the Body doth, when hurtful humours are purged away. Who were theſe? He means the Apoſtate profeſſors of that Age, *Ebion, Cerinthus, &c.* *Theſe were not of us:* How did the Apoſtle know that? He tells us how in the next words, *For if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifeſt that they were not all of us.* Saint *John* puts it beyond all diſpute, and himſelf had not the leaſt doubt of it, that they who are once in Church, ſhall continue in it; and that they who depart, do not depart from grace, but from a ſhadow of grace: They do not fall from what they were; but manifeſt what they were not: *They went out from us, that they might be made manifeſt that they were not all of us.* But why doth the Apoſtle ſay they were not *all of us?* Were any of thoſe Apoſtates of them? *Not all*, is a known Hebraiſm for none (*Pſal.* 143. 2.) *In thy ſight* (not all men, that is) *no man living ſhall be juſtified.* So (1 *John* 3. 15.) *Ye know that every murderer hath not*; that is (as we tranſlate) *No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* So here, *They were not all*, that is, *None of them were of us:* Many have forſaken a profeſſion of Faith; but he that hath Faith will not forſake the profeſſion of it. *The righteous ſhall hold on his way:* And not only ſo, but,

Cum creverimus in Domino mittemus radices noſtras ſicut arbores Libani, quæ quantum in auras conſurgunt vertice, tantum radice in ima demergunt, ut nulla tempeſtate quatiantur, ſed ſtabili motu conſiſtant. Hieron.

He that hath clean hands ſhall wax ſtronger and ſtronger.

To continue in the right way is very good; but to encreaſe in it is far better; he that holds his own in ſad times, is to be commended; but he that thrives and gains in godlineſs in ſad times, is to be admired: And who is that? *Job* tells us,

He that hath clean hands.] The words are a Circumlocution, deſcribing the ſame perſon, who was before called, *upright, innocent, and righteous.* And yet ſurely it is not a bare repetition of the ſame perſon, under another title; for though we muſt take this cleanneſs of hands in conjunction with cleanneſs and uprightneſs of heart: And though it be not ſo hard a matter to ſhew a pair of *white clean hands*, as it is to have an upright, or a *clean white heart*; yea, though it be true, that clean hands will not wax ſtronger and ſtronger in a day of affliction, unleſs joyned with an upright heart, yet (I ſay) theſe clean hands imply ſomewhat elſe, not only beſides that uprightneſs, but alſo beſides that innocency and righteouſneſs ſpoken of before.

The **Hand** is the inſtrument of action, and *clean hands* are an emblem of holy actings: So that *Job* ſeems to intimate, that he, who beſides the uprightneſs of his heart, and the general innocency and righteouſneſs of his way, is alſo careful to keep himſelf free from every ſpot which might foul his hands. He (I ſay) who is thus compleat and ſpotleſs, is fulleſt of courage when troubles and ſorrows are upon him. 'Tis true, a mans general uprightneſs and innocency will mightily uphold him in the main; yet if he have got a viſible blot or defilement upon the face or hand of his converſation or dealings with men, this will be a damp upon his ſpirit, and a deadning to his heart, though the bent of his heart ſtands fair towards God.

Again, this may be added in anſwer to a Plea which ſome make when they are taxed with the uncleanneſs of their hands (ſay they) *O we have good hearts, we are upright towards God; we confeſs we fail many times, but we have good meanings, and we would both do and be better:* Is thy hand unclean? Thy heart is a thouſand times more unclean: Is thy way evil? Thy ſpirit is worſe: How can any man have a good meaning, or a good heart, when himſelf is evil? No man can. There is no excuſe for the uncleanneſs of the hands, by ſaying the heart is clean? For where there is a clean heart there will be clean hands. Many have clean hands, that have unclean hearts; but no man hath a clean heart whoſe hands continne unclean; much leſs will ſuch a one plead the cleanneſs of his heart in excuſe for the uncleanneſs of his hand; nor is there any ground for ſuch a Plea. Should a man ſay, here is a Tree that bears ill fruit, but it hath an excellent root, I am ſure it is of a right kind, but (I confeſs) the fruit is naught; would not any man of reaſon condemn ſuch reaſoning? Would he not ſay, This is to bely Nature? For every good Tree brings forth good fruit: Is it not alſo a belying of the Spirit of grace, to ſay, The heart is upright, but the hands are unclean: For an upright heart makes a clean hand, as clean hands are a probable evidence of an upright heart.

He that hath not both theſe, hath neither of them to purpoſe; which (we may conceive) was *Job*'s ſcope while he puts them here together.

Further, while *Job* ſpeaks in the third perſon, *He that hath clean hands*; he anſwers *Eliphaz* for himſelf, who in a third perſon charged him with the uncleanneſs both of his heart and hands (*Chap.* 15. 14.) from which he alſo vindicates himſelf (*Chap.* 16. 17.) As if he had ſaid, *Ton have often charged me with the uncleanneſs of my hands; but though I will not boaſt of my ſelf, yet this I feel and ſpeak by experience, He that hath clean hands ſhall wax*

Stronger and ſtronger.] The Hebrew is, *He ſhall add ſtrength*; that is, He ſhall go on from one degree of ſtrength to another. But what ſtrength ſhall he add? He means not bodily ſtrength: The beſt of Saints may looſe that in the battels of affliction, and grow every day weaker and weaker: But he ſhall add ſpiritual ſtrength, ſo the Apoſtle ſtates it (2. *Cor.* 4. 16.) *Though our outward man periſh, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* The more evil a Believer ſuffers, the ſtronger he is in goodneſs, and to do good; while his fleſh wears off and waſtes, he gets new ſpirits; he takes heart, and is more courageous, as the *Septuagint* render *Job*'s Text.

יסף אמץ *Addet fortitudinem, purus manibus ſumet audaciam.* Sept. *Is cujus vita pura eſt addet robur, i.e. magis invaleſcet ut bene agat.* Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Grace is of an increaſing nature, it grows ſtronger and ſtronger.*

True grace lives, and therefore it muſt needs grow. The grain of Muſtard-ſeed proves a great tree (*Pſal.* 84.)

They go from ſtrength to ſtrength, or from company to company; that is, from one good company to another, ſtill gathering up goodneſs as they go. As the Bee goes from Flower to Flower, to gather Honey; ſo Believers go from Duty to Duty, from Ordinance to Ordinance, from Praying to Hearing, to gather Grace and Strength; every Grace hath ſtrength; and the more Grace the more ſtrength, till we come to that, which is ſtrictly called, *Strength of Grace*.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A through godly man doth not only not fall from Grace in time of trouble, but he increaſeth and groweth in Grace; he addeth Strength.*

As affliction gives a proof of Grace, whether it be true or no; ſo where it is true, it is improved by affliction. Naturaliſts tell us, that the reaſon of Thunder and Lightening is, becauſe the Heat being pent in, and impriſoned by the Cold of the middle Region, breaks out (by an *Antiperiſtaſis*) with terrible noiſe and flaſhings: And thus when Grace is pent in by oppoſition, perſecution, and affliction, it enlargeth it ſelf, and breaks out with greater ſtrength, yea, with a kind of heavenly violence; and not only maintains its own, but is a gainer.

Tanto magis integritati ſtudebit. Bez.

It is ſaid of the *Lacedemonian Republick*, That when all other Kingdoms were undone by War, that only grew rich, was bettered by it. We may ſay, that whereas all prophane perſons, and Hypocrites, are undone by affliction (all their Paint is waſhed off, their Varniſh diſcovered) only true Believers thrive, and are advantaged by it: He that hath an upright heart, and clean hands, grows ſtronger and ſtronger: His inward man increaſeth in outward decayes. It is ſaid of the *Iſraelites* (*Exod.* 1. 12.) that the more the *Egyptians* afflicted them, *The more they multiplied and grew*: They multiplied in number, they grew in ſtrength and ſtature; their oppreſſion was their addition in temporals: It is ſo with all true *Iſraelites* in ſpirituals, the more they are afflicted and troubled, the more they increaſe: And whereas the Lord ſpeaks in reference to wicked men (*Iſai.* 1. 5.) *Why ſhould you be ſmitten any more? Ye will revolt more and more.* (The more evil men are ſmitten for their good, the worſe they are.) We may ſay on the contrary, that the righteous, the more they are ſmitten with evil, the better they are; yea, they ſometimes put wicked men to ſuch a ſtopping expoſtulation, as God makes there concerning wicked men; *Why ſhould we trouble them any more? They will hold faſt more and more; they will not be beaten off with ſowre looks and hard words, no nor with our hardeſt blows: We may trouble and weary out our ſelves, yea, and break our own hearts, but we ſhall never diſhearten them.* All Ages have given experiments of this: The Apoſtles in the *Acts* rejoyced when they were threatened, and were emboldened with ſcourging. 'Tis ſaid of the ſuffering Saints (*Heb.* 10. 34.) *They took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*: They were glad of an opportunity to put off their worldly goods at ſo great a rate, as a proof of the ſincerity of their graces: *Our goods never go off at ſo high a price, nor come to ſo good a Market, as when they are ſpoiled in a good cauſe. Paul* tells us, *That many waxed confident by his bonds* (Phil. 1. 14.) They were ſo far from withdrawing from the profeſſion of the Goſpel, becauſe *Paul* was clapt up in Priſon, and laid by the heels, that they were more bold to avouch it. As ſome have been weakened and terrified by the ſufferings of others; ſo many have been confirmed and heartened; they have not only kept from diſcouragement, but they have waxed confident by bonds, and their Spirits have been at greater liberty by ſeeing others in Priſon, though they had reaſon enough to expect their turn would be next.

One of the Ancient tells us, *The more cunning and exact Perſecuters are, the more conſtant and exact Believers are.* The Chriſtians of thoſe times grew into a kind of artificialneſs in Grace, while the Heathens grew ſo artificial in cruelty; and the oftner they were mowed down by the bloody Sword, the more were begotten and quickened by the Word: The oppoſition which truth and holineſs found, was a provocation to own the truth, and to them a ſweet temptation unto holineſs.

Exquiſitior crudelitas gentium adverſus Chriſtianos, illecebra eſt magis ſecta, plures efficimur, quoties metimur. Tertul.

Thirdly, Note, *When God gives new tryals, he will give new ſtrength.*

The righteous grow ſtronger as their afflictions grow ſtronger: Never fear greater tryals, when you are promiſed greater ſtrength: If you have more burdens, you ſhall have more ſhoulders. Whether the Lord calls us to paſſive obedience, or to active, he is wiſe and faithful to proportion, and gives out ſutable ability. It is not from the improvements of Free-will, but from the freſh anointings of the Spirit, *That we are ſtrengthened with might in the inner man* (Epheſ. 3. 16.) And again, (*Col.* 1. 12.) *We are ſtrengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience, and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs.* Affliction it ſelf cannot ſtrengthen us in Grace, it rather weakens us; the increaſe of ſtrength flows from the ſame Fountain, whence we had the firſt ſtrength: All is from God. *In the Lord have we righteouſneſs and ſtrength* (Iſa. 45. 24.) And *He is an everlaſting ſtrength, the Rock of Ages* (Iſa. 26. 4.) As he is an everlaſting ſtrength in himſelf, ſo he is to his people: And the reaſon why his people are everlaſting ſtrong, is, becauſe he is ſo. *Even the youths ſhall faint and be weary, and the young men ſhall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles, they ſhall run and not be weary, and they ſhall walk and not faint* (Iſa. 40. 30, 31.) But why ſhall the youths faint, and the young men utterly fall? Are not beginners in grace as ſure to be upheld as the ancient, or men of dayes? And why is fainting and falling the lot of youths and young men, who are ſuppoſed in their ſpiritual capacity, or in their natural, to have the greateſt ſtrength? The Apoſtle *John*'s experience of the young men ſeems to differ very much from this Propheſie of them, *I write unto you young men* (ſaith he, 1 *Epiſt.* 2. 14.) *becauſe ye are ſtrong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.* How doth *Iſaiah* ſay, the young men ſhall utterly fall, and yet *John* ſaith, *They have overcome the wicked one?* That is, The Devil. Every Victory is an argument of ſtrength, eſpecially a Victory over him who is very ſtrong.

I anſwer, The Prophet and the Apoſtle do not ſpeak of the ſame young men: The Prophets young men are any men that boaſt of their own ſtrength in ſpirituals, and truſt upon it; theſe, of what age ſoever they be, he calls young men, not becauſe like young men they have a real great ſtrength, but becauſe (which young men are very apt to do in the ſtrength they have) they truſt in a ſtrength which indeed they have not; ſo that theſe are called young men, becauſe they boaſt of, and truſt in their ſuppoſed ſtrength, not becauſe they are really very ſtrong; and therefore theſe young men ſhall not only faint, but utterly fall. But the Apoſtle *John*'s young men are ſuch as have much ſtrength in them, and yet live, and walk, and fight in the ſtrength of Jeſus Chriſt; theſe young men are ſo far from falling utterly, that they ſhall ſtand for ever, and all their enemies ſhall either flee or fall before them, becauſe as the battel reneweth, ſo Chriſt will renew their ſtrength, and recruit their hearts with further aid at every further charge.

Only by going out of our own ſtrength we get ſtrength, that was *Paul*'s experience of himſelf (2 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10.) *When I am weak, then I am ſtrong*: That is, When I am weak in my ſelf, and have low thoughts of my own ſtock, then ſtrength is ſent me in; and I am ſupported by an Almighty power, when I ſee that I have no might: *Therefore* (ſaith he) *moſt gladly will I rejoyce in my infirmities, that the ſtrength of Chriſt may reſt on me: Paul* was no ſooner convinced that the ſtrength he had was not ſufficient, but he heard that comfortable word from Heaven, *My Grace is ſufficient for thee*: We are ſtronger by the Grace in Chriſt, then by the Grace we receive from Chriſt. He that lives upon the Grace received from Chriſt, and not upon the Grace in Chriſt, ſhall quickly feel a want of Grace, and a decay of ſpiritual life.

Now, if Grace received from Chriſt be not ſtock enough to live and continue upon, what is Nature for any man to begin upon? *Peter* had received Grace, and he made an honeſt real profeſſion to Chriſt, not a flattering verbal complement, when he ſaid (*Math.* 26. 33, 35.) *Though all* *men ſhall be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I not be offended; and though I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee:* yet becauſe he did not enough (if at all) renounce his own ſtrength, inſtead of waxing ſtronger and ſtronger, he was weaker and weaker, and did not only deny his Maſter, but forſwore him. Not only they who go out in the ſtrength of nature, but they alſo who go out in the ſtrength of inherent grace, may quickly (notwithſtanding a ſincerity of profeſſion) diſhonour their profeſſion, and fall from their own ſtedfaſtneſs: Therefore truſt in the Lord, and ye ſhall not only hold on, but grow ſtronger and ſtronger in your way.

And if ſuch be the ſtate of a godly man, that he holds on, and waxeth ſtronger in times of trouble, what ſhall we ſay of them, who turn out of the way, or languiſh in it, when nothing troubles them? What ſhall we ſay of them who run out of the way, though there be no Lyon in the way, when we hear that Saints will not out though there be a Lyon in the way? What ſhall we ſay of them that depart from God, when (as *Job* ſpeaks in another place) they waſh their footſteps with Butter, and the rock powers out Oyl to them (that is, when God loadeth them with his benefits daily) when we hear that the righteous, and he that hath clean hands will not out of the way, though every ſtep be up to the knees in Mire, though he be daſhed againſt the Rocks, and killed all the day long? Was there ever truth of grace in thoſe who finding nothing but comfort and outward bleſſings in the way, do yet go out of the way, grow cold and ſink in their profeſſion? When Chriſt gives outward pleaſure to his followers, and they forſake him, may they not juſtly be ſuſpected to take pleaſure in forſaking him? And that they never took any pleaſure in following him, but only followed him for their pleaſure? What would theſe do if they were aſſaulted with ſtrong temptations or troubles, who turn aſide being freed from all ſuch temptations? What would they do if their ways were full of briers and thorns, who go back and Apoſtatize while their wayes are ſtrewed with flowers, and they tread upon Roſes? 'Tis true indeed, that the warm Sun (as we ſay) cauſeth ſome to caſt off their Cloaks, which the cold wind moved them to keep cloſer on; but, though it be a truth, that proſperity makes many forſake God, yet it cannot be denied but that adverſity is a greater temptation to deny him. A ſound heart may (poſſibly) give in a little in boiſtrous times and Winterly dayes, but it is almoſt an infallible diſcovery of a rotten heart, to flinch in fair weather, or in a Summers day. As they who keep cloſe to, and hold in the wayes of God in dark and doubtful diſpenſations, ſhew a pure love to his wayes; ſo they who warp and recede, under clear and comfortable diſpenſations, ſhew a pure diſlike of them.

Laſtly, Note the various expreſſions uſed in theſe two verſes, we have here the deſcription of a godly man under four Titles.

First, *The upright.*
Secondly, *The innocent.*
Thirdly, *The righteous.*
Fourthly, *He that hath clean hands.*

Theſe meet in one perſon, yet they have diſtinct ſignifications: Uprightneſs is ſtrictly oppoſed to hypocriſie: innocency, to guilt; righteouſneſs to oppreſſion; and cleanneſs of hands to all the pollutions of converſation. Every kind of goodneſs, and all the graces concenter in him that is truly godly.

He that is godly, is any thing that is good; and he that is wicked is any thing that is evil. You cannot call a wicked man out of his name, how ill ſoever you call him. And you cannot call a compleat godly man out of his name, how good ſoever you call him, he is *upright*, and *innocent*, and *righteous*; his hands are clean, and his heart is clean, he is clean all over, and holy all over, while we call him all this we do not call him beyond what God hath made him.

VERS. 10, 11, 12.

But as for you all, do you return, and come now; for I cannot find one wiſe man among you.

My dayes are paſt, my purpoſes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.

They change the night into day, the light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.

THough *Job's* Friends had ſeverely reproved and threatned him; reproved him for his ſuppoſed ſin, and threatned him with further ſufferings, in caſe he continued in ſin; yet did they as often counſel, and encourage him; counſel him to repent, and return to God, encourage him with promiſes that God would repent and return to him, yea turn his captivity and afflictions, *as the Rivers in the South*; and that though he then was in a night of ſorrow, yet a morning of joy, or joy in the morning ſhould ſurely break out and ſhine upon him.

Now, as *Job* had before often (and alſo in the former part of this Chapter) ſupported himſelf under the weight of all their reproofs and threatnings, by the power of God, and the conſcience of his own integrity; ſo he had as often before, and he doth it here again in the latter part of this Chapter, caſt off their promiſes and incouragements, together with all hopes of any reſtauration in this life, to ſuch a flouriſhing outward condition as he once enjoyed.

And becauſe his Friends diſcerning this in him by ſome of his precedent anſwers, had judged it as a ſymptome of ſecret guilt, and ſelf condemnation, which would not let him ſo much as expect any good: So *Eliphaz* had perſtringed and ſmitten him (*Chap.* 15. 22.) *He believes not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs:* Therefore *Job* wonders to ſee them perſiſt in that opinion, and concludes them under a great defect of underſtanding, who did not perceive that a man ſo miſerably pined, and worn with ſickneſs and pain, as he was, had nothing to look after, or prepare for, but only a Grave. And this he doth with much rhetorical elegancy, and paſſionateneſs of ſpeech, to the end of this Chapter.

His ſenſe may be drawn together into this brief way of reaſoning.

He who is as a dead man already, ſhould not feed himſelf, or be fed by others, with hopes of life, or of worldly proſperity in this life.

But I (for my part) am as a dead man, or but the ſhadow of a man:

Therefore I will neither feed my ſelf, neither ought you to feed me with hopes of life, or of proſperity in this life.

Yet before he layes down, and illuſtrates this Argument, he invites over his Friends to his opinion, and profeſſeth that they had not yet ſpoken any reaſon, nor argued like wiſe men in all that they had argued to the contrary.

Verſ. 10. **But as for you all, do you return, and come now, for I cannot find one wiſe man among you.**

Though ſome wiſe men go out of the way, yet it is for want of wiſdom that any man goes out of the way; while *Job* calls upon his Friends to return, he implies that they going out of the way were not wiſe, and that it would be their wiſdom to return into it.

But as for you all.] *Job* puts all his Friends into one predicament, and indeed they were much alike to him, having all troden in the ſame path, and met in the ſame judgement of, and reſolutions againſt him. But what would he have them do? As he ſuppoſed them all in one way, and that out of the way: So he ſets them all to the ſame work, that they might come right again.

Do you return, and come now.] Yet, there are three opinions about his meaning, while he ſaith, *Return and come.*

Firſt, Some conceive, that *Job's* Friends, being netled (as we ſay) and provoked with what he had ſpoken before, began to renew the diſpute, and to rally themſelves with conjoyned Forces, for a freſh encounter; which *Job* perceiving, he (according to this Interpretation) dares them in theſe words, and ſends them a Challenge: As if he had ſaid, *I ſee you are providing your*

Quaſi facta teſtudine una omnes concurrite. Nicet.
Ad diſputatione provocat. Sanct.

ſelves, and conſulting for a rejoynder with me; I, do, do if you think good, return, and come, put your ſelves into what poſture you pleaſe, joyn your forces together, I am ready to receive your charge, and make my defence, I am not afraid of you all; you are three, and I have not ſo much as a Second, yet I will not turn my back from you all, therefore, as for you all, do ye return and come now, come, when, or as ſoon as you will.

Veruntamen omnes incumbite & venite quaſo. Sept. *Convertendi verbum cum quocunq; alio verbo junctū, idem ſignificat quod* rurſus, *aut* altera vice *aliquid facere.*

Thus, *He challengeth them to a further diſpute. Return, and come,* is (as the propriety of the phraſe in the Original imports) *come again if you will, come a ſecond time, come a third.* The word that we tranſlate *Return,* when it is joyned with another Verb (ſay Grammarians) ſignifies as much as *Again,* or, *to do a thing the ſecond time.* Take two places of Scripture for it (*Joſ.* 5.2.) *At that time the Lord ſaid unto* Joſhua, *Make thee ſharp Knives, and circumciſe again the Children of Iſrael the ſecond time:* So we tranſlate: The Hebrew is, *Return* (which is the word of the Text) *and circumciſe them a ſecond time:* Not that they who had been once circumciſed, muſt have a ſecond circumciſion: But for as much as circumciſion, which was firſt commanded to *Abraham,* had been long diſ-uſed, while the people of *Iſrael* were moving and unſetled in the Wilderneſs, therefore the Lord gives circumciſion a kind of ſecond Inſtitution, by requiring *Joſhua* to reſtore it ſolemnly a ſecond time, as it was ſet up at firſt. Return and circumciſe them; that is, renew that ancient Ordinance of Circumciſion.

The like way of ſpeaking, read (*Pſal.* 85.6.) where *David* (in behalf of the Church) pleads with God thus, *Wilt thou not revive us again?* The Hebrew is, *Wilt thou not return, and revive us?* We tranſlate the Verb *Return,* by the Adverb, *Again. Wilt thou not revive us again?* Thou haſt given us many *revives:* when we were as *dead men,* and like carkaſſes rotting in the Grave, thou didſt revive us; wilt thou not revive us once more, and act over thoſe powerfully merciful works, and ſtrong ſalvations once more, or again? So here, *Return, and come;* that is, Come again.

The words thus expounded, are an argument of *Job's* magnanimity and holy courage in maintaining his right, and ſtanding up in the defence of his own integrity againſt all comers. As it is our duty to contend earneſtly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints; ſo for our own faithfulneſs.

Secondly, Others expound the words as an adviſe, not as a challenge; not as a profeſſion of his fixed purpoſe to oppoſe what his Friends ſhould ſay in maintenance of their opinion, but only as a deſire of their attention to what he had yet to ſay for his. *Come return now,* as if he had thus expreſſed himſelf, *Ye are not right, let me ſet you right, and inſtruct you better; learn of me; you have need enough to be taught, for I have not found a wiſe man among you.* Thus *David* calls his Scholars about him (*Pſal.* 34.11.) *Come ye Children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* The former gloſs ſhewed the ſtrength and courage of *Job's* ſpirit, this the piety and holineſs of his ſpirit: 'Tis our duty, *in meekneſs to inſtruct thoſe who oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth* (2 *Tim.* 2.25.)

Thirdly, The words are more generally taken for an invitation to repentance, *Come now, return.* Some tranſlate the word *Return* in this Text, by *Repent,* which is the ſenſe of it in a hundred Texts of the Old Teſtament. Repentance is a turning and returning; all returning ſuppoſeth, either our being out of the way, or that we have gone as far as our buſineſs lies in that way; The returning of repentance, ſuppoſeth only the former, for, every ſtep in ſin is quite out of our way; what have we to do in the way of ſin, but only to come out of it, our buſineſs lies not there; all that we do there muſt be undone again, or elſe we are undone for ever.

Invitat amicos ad mutandam ſententiam. Pined. *Reſcipiſcite.* Jun.

In this returning of repentance, we may conſider, firſt, the term from which, and ſecondly the term to which we are called to return. The term from which is twofold.

Firſt, Sinful practices.
Secondly, Falſe and erroneous opinions.

Job doth not deal with his Friends about the former; he did about the latter; they were under a grand miſtake concerning the Doctrine of providence, and from that he invites them to a ſpeedy return.

The term to which we are to return in the actings of repentance, is threefold.

Firſt, To our ſelves.
Secondly, To God.
Thirdly, To him whom we have wronged, or from whom we ſinfully diſſent.

Job may be interpreted as calling his Friends to a return, in this threefold reference.

Firſt, As repentance is a returning to our ſelves: a man that is carried away, either to falſe opinions, or into wicked courſes, is gone from his neareſt home: 'Tis a duty to deny our ſelves, but 'tis a ſin to depart from our ſelves: And as it is a ſin to depart from our ſelves, ſo every ſin is a departure from our ſelves; therefore repentance which is a turning from ſin, muſt needs be a returning to our ſelves. The Goſpel repreſents the repentance of the Prodigal Son, under this notion (*Luke* 15.17.) *And when he came to himſelf, he ſaid, &c.* He had not been with himſelf a long time before, yet at laſt he came to himſelf, this was his firſt ſtep to repentance. An impenitent perſon is not only out of his way, but out of his wits; he is gone, not only from Divine truth and holineſs, but from his own natural reaſon and prudence; if ſo, whenſoever he repents, he returns to himſelf.

Ad ſe redire etiā Latinis dicitur qui ad bonam mentē redit. Grot.

Secondly, Repentance is a returning to God; *If thou wilt return O Iſrael (ſaith the Lord) return unto me* (*Jer.* 4.1.) The grace of repentance is moſt frequently and moſt ſuitably expreſſed by this act of returning to God; and they who do not repent are every where ſaid not to return to God (*Amos* 4.&c.) *Yet have ye not returned unto me.*

Thirdly, Repentance is a returning to man: We muſt not be aſhamed to acknowledge our failings one to another, or to return to them in duty from whom we have departed, either by not giving them their due, or by accuſing them unduly. We muſt not be aſhamed of returning to them, by ſubmitting to the truth, from whom we have departed by following or holding any errour. Thus *Job* may be conceived counſelling and calling his Friends to a return in theſe three ſenſes given: Firſt, to themſelves: Secondly, to God; Thirdly, to him, whom they had ſo long oppoſed. But though all three may be included, yet the ſcope and deſign of *Job* ſeems to intend the third: *Return, and come now;* that is, *Return to me,* let not truth fare the worſe for my ſake, do not you caſt it off, becauſe I hold it. It is not enough to turn from any evil, whether of opinion or practice, and return to the obedience of God, but we muſt alſo return to the love of good men, and unite with them in the truth.

But why muſt they return? *Job* gives the reaſon expreſly in the latter part of the Verſe.

For I cannot find one wiſe man among you.

All the wayes of ſin and errour are wayes of folly; they ſtamp a man for a *Fool and unwiſe,* whoſoever walkes in them; *I cannot find one wiſe man among you:* When he ſaith, *I cannot find,* It ſhews that he had endeavoured to find, he had been ſeeking for a wiſe man among them, but he found none. *The Lord* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 14.2.) *looked down from heaven upon the Children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand and ſeek after God* (but he found none) *They are all gone aſide* (*Verſ.*3.) *Job* ſeems to have been upon ſuch an inquiry: He had looked over his Friends, and weighed them one by one, but he found not one wiſe man among them. The Preacher (*Eccleſ.*7.27,28.) *counting one by one to find out the account, found but one man* (that is, one wiſe or good man) *among a thouſand:* No marvel then if *Job* found not one among three, yet conſidering what three theſe were, men numbred among *the Worthies,* poſſibly, *the firſt three* of that age and place, it may juſtly be marvelled why *Job* ſhould ſpeak at ſo low a rate, or ſo ſlightly of them: Was he not too cenſorious and rigid, too bold and adventurous, to ſpeak thus concerning men of ſuch gravity, authority, and reputation, for wiſdom, and learning, yea, and for holineſs too, as theſe *three* were? Shall we ſay that this cenſure proceeded from *Job's* wiſdom, or from his paſſion? Was he wiſe in ſaying ſo, or ſo much as charitable?

I anſwer, *Job* did not ſpeak this from any ill will to his Friends, or from contempt of them; it had been not only unfriendly, but very ſinful to have done it. That word of Chriſt had its truth in thoſe times, *He that is angry with his brother unadviſedly, ſhall be in danger of judgement; and he that ſaith to his Brother, Racha* (which ſignifies an empty fellow, or a man that hath nothing in him) *ſhall be in danger of a Councel: but he that ſaith, thou Fool, ſhall be in danger of Hell fire* (*Matth.* 5.23.) *Job* did not call his Friends Fools, when he ſaid, *I find not one wiſe man among you*; So much may be ſaid without paſſion or reviling: Nor did he queſtion their wiſdom in general, but (as hath been anſwered for him upon a like paſſage) only to the point in hand: As if he had ſaid, after all this arguing, *You are ſtill beſides the matter, you have not hit the joynt of my caſe; come to me, I will ſhew you your miſtake, and make it plain that you are all out.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is no fault to ſpeak of men as we find them.*

Venite ad me andiendū & oſtendam vos omnes decipere. Druſ.

The rule of Chriſt (*Mat.* 7.1.) *Judge not that ye be not judged,* forbids, firſt, raſh judgement of men; ſecondly, wrong judgment of men; thirdly, final judgment of men (that's peculiar to God) but it doth not forbid all judgment of men. We may call *a Spade, a Spade,* and him unwiſe who is ſo: All reproving is taken away, if all judging be, for we muſt reprove no man but whom we judg faulty, *Let the righteous ſmite me* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 141. 5.) He means it not of ſmiting with the Sword, but of ſmiting with a deſerved cenſure; as if he had ſaid, If I have done amiſs, let me hear of it, yea let me ſmart for it, by a faithful reproof.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A wiſe man may do or ſpeak that which is a juſt forfeiture of his preſent reputation for wiſdom.*

This proceeds ſometimes from a ſpecial judgment of God upon men, who in anger blaſts their abilities, and commands a decay upon their greateſt treaſures of wiſdom (*Iſa.* 29.14.) *The wiſdom of their wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the underſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid:* It ſhall be ſo, ſaith God; the underſtanding of man is as much at Gods diſpoſe, as his riches or honours are. Now as this proceeds ſometimes from the ſpecial judgement of God upon man; ſo it may proceed at any time from the natural frame of man, who at the beſt is a creature compoſed of light and darkneſs, of wiſdom and folly, of knowledge and ignorance, of grace and corruption, of an old man, as well as of a new. The over actings of the worſer part, may ſoon leave a good and a wiſe man (in the main) under an eclipſe, both of his goodneſs and wiſdom. *David ſaid in his haſt* (and as he ſaid it, he ſinned in ſaying ſo) *All men are lyars:* But we may ſay it with fulleſt deliberation (and not ſin at all in ſaying ſo) that *All men are lyars.* The Apoſtle ſaith it (*Rom.* 3.4.) while he ſaith, *Yea let God be true, and every man a lyar*; that is, Let this be acknowledged and confeſſed by all, That God cannot lie, ſuch is his power that he can neither deceive, nor be deceived; but let it be as much acknowledged that every man is under a poſſibility to be deceived, yea and to deceive in the worſt ſenſe, and that in ſome ſenſe every man is actually deceived, or a Deceiver: which proves this to be a truth, *Every man is a lyliar:* The lie, is that, which no man will bear at the hand of man, yet all muſt bear it from the hand of God; it is indeed a diſhonour, but it is no ſlander to ſay, that every man is a liar: and becauſe he is ſo, he may ſoon diſ-intitle himſelf of wiſdom. We muſt not lay too much upon men, for when they ſpeak and do moſt unwiſely, they ſpeak and do moſt like men.

The Prophet (*Hoſea* 6.7.) ſaith, *They like men have tranſgreſſed the Covenant:* The Hebrew is, *They have tranſgreſſed like Adam.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome, *over whom death reigned, who yet had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adams tranſgreſſion* (*Rom.* 5.14.) Infants die, and they die in that ſin which *Adam* committed, though they never come to commit ſin actually as *Adam* did; but all who ſin actually, ſin after the ſimilitude of *Adams* tranſgreſſion: He ſet the firſt Copy, and all his Poſterity have written after him. We do but ſhew what we are, and whence we are, when we ſin, even a company of men, the Sons of *Adam*. To be a man is alſo to be a ſinner. Now, as it may be ſaid, we like men have tranſgreſſed, ſo we like men are unwiſe. It is very eaſie for the wiſeſt man to do unwiſely; we have but ſhewed our ſelves men when we have ſhewed our ſelves unwiſe. That hath obtained us an Axiome, *It is humane for man to erre:* One of the wiſeſt ſentences among men, is, That man may do unwiſely: He that doth all things wiſely is more like God then a Man, nor can we do any thing wiſely, but as God is pleaſed to teach and guide us. As we have need to aſk our *daily bread* from God for the ſupport of our bodies, ſo our daily wiſdom from God for the management of our affairs. As God *takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs* (1 *Cor.* 3.19.) So he can take wiſdom from the crafty; and unleſs he ſupply wiſdom to the wiſe, they will ſoon be ſo overtaken by their own folly, that of a whole throng of them, it may be ſaid, by him that engageth with them, *I have not found one wiſe man among you.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Wiſe men are rarely to be found.*

There are ſtore of ſubtle men, and crafty men there are but too many; but the wiſe man is a rare Jewel: It was for a wiſe man that the Prophet commands a ſearch to be made, when he ſaid (*Jer.* 5.1.) *Run ye to and fro, through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man. Jeruſalem* was full *of men,* and yet *a man* could not be found, when diligently ſought for: What man was this? The next words deſcribe him for a wiſe man indeed, *if there be any that executeth judgment, and ſeeketh the truth.* I cannot ſay that ſuch wiſe men *are thick ſown,* but I am very ſure, *they are thin come up. Paul* found ſo great a ſcarcity and dearth of them, even among the Saints in the Church of *Corinth,* that though he doth not ſay it poſitively (with *Job* here) I have not found a wiſe man among you; yet he ſpeaks it Interrogatively, and chidingly (1 *Cor.* 6.5.) *I ſpeak to your ſhame. Is it ſo, that there is not a wiſe man among you? No not one that ſhall be able to judge between his Brethren?* There are not many *knowing wiſe men,* among all men, *but judging wiſe men* are feweſt of all.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *Wiſe men are apt to ſhew themſelves unwiſe in expounding and judging the providences and dealings of God toward man.*

The works of the moſt wiſe God are all right, but few men are wiſe enough to pick out the right meaning of them. Providence is carried about the world in a Chariot of light, and yet there is much darkneſs in the minds of moſt men about it. This ariſes chiefly two wayes.

Firſt, From the ſeeming confuſions which are in the world. God doth not keep a method, nor govern himſelf by preſidents, no man can tell certainly which way he will go, by looking into the way which he hath gone; for though he uſeth no liberty in the iſſue of his dealings, but rewardeth every man according to his works, yet he uſeth much liberty in the means which lead unto it.

Secondly, This ariſeth from the narrowneſs of mans heart, who meaſuring God by his own line, and comparing what God hath done, by what he would do, cannot (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe) attain unto the righteouſneſs of God in what he doth.

'Tis excellent wiſdom to know how to interpret and improve the dealings of God with our ſelves or others. The groſſeſt miſ-interpretation of his dealings, is, to conclude the guilt or innocency of man, the love or hatred of God from them. *Job's* Friends upon ſuch miſtakes, incurred this cenſure, *I have not found one wiſe man among you.*

Job having by way of introduction, ſpoken to the men, or to the perſons of his Friends, proceeds to ſpeak his own caſe.

Verſ. 11. **My dayes are paſt, my purpoſes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.**

What do you tell me of comfortable dayes? *My dayes are paſt, they are gone by:* as we ſay, *The Shew is gone by*, or, *the Company is gone by*; ſo ſaith *Job*, *My dayes are gone by:* There's no looking after them any more: they are out of ſight, why would you bring them into my mind again? *Dayes* may be taken here in a twofold ſenſe.

עברו *Tranſierunt.*

Firſt, For the term of his life.

Secondly, For the ſtate of his life.

As taken for the term of his life, *My dayes are paſt*, is, I am a near neighbour to death, death and I am ready to meet and imbrace. The life of man is meaſured by dayes; when our dayes are paſt, there's nothing left to meaſure, nothing to meaſure by.

Morti vicinus ſum.

My dayes are paſt.] But how could *Job* affirm, The term, or *dayes of my life are paſt*, when, as he was alive that day to ſay this, ſo he lived many a fair day after he had ſaid it. Can we call that *paſt*, which is ſtill preſent with us? or which is yet to come?

He affirms this, Firſt, becauſe he conceived that the greateſt part of his dayes were actually paſt, and that it was not worth while to reckon upon the few dayes behind, he did not think that remnant ſo conſiderable as to meaſure it, but threw it by, as a piece of *uſeleſs nothing:* Our dayes are ſo paſſing, that (with a little Rhetorick) we may ſay they are paſt, as ſoon as they begin; how much more may we ſay ſo, when we are ſure they muſt ſhortly end, and are really almoſt, yea, only not, paſt.

Secondly, *Job* might ſay, *My dayes are paſt*, becauſe doubtleſs it had ſiezed on his ſpirit, that his Glaſs was run, that he ſhould die preſently, he never looked to out-live that ſtorm: So that his *dayes were paſt* in his account, though not in Gods account. *Job* could ſay of himſelf (as we uſe to ſay of thoſe Women, who have gone out their full time of Child-bearing) that, *He had not a day more to reckon.* As *Job* had a full aſſurance that he ſhould live eternally, ſo he had a kind of aſſurance that he ſhould die very ſhortly: And therefore as to his own apprehenſions, and the calculation which he had made of his dayes, their date was out, and he might ſay, *My dayes are paſt.*

Again, As taken for the ſtate of his life, ſo *My dayes are paſt*, is, My good dayes, my proſperous dayes, are paſt. You tell me of a day of deliverance, what a morning I ſhall have, but I look on all my dayes here, as dayes of darkneſs. We ſay of a man who is not only in an evil, but in a deſperate, or irrecoverably evil condition, *He hath ſeen all his beſt dayes*, or *all his good dayes are gone. Job was full of truſt for a good eternity, but he had no hope of good dayes.* The term of a mans dayes may continue long, when the comfort of his dayes, is, or when his comfortable dayes are quite paſt: Though *Job's* dayes continued, as to the term of his life, yet his dayes (as he judged) were paſt, as to any comfortable ſtate of life, in which ſenſe he might alſo ſay, *My dayes are paſt.*

Nor did *Job* ſpeak this complainingly, or with a low ſpirit, *My dayes are paſt*; he did not whine it out as they do, who are loath to die, and would fain live ſtill in the delights of life; but he ſpake boldly and cheerfully, he ſpake of his Dying-day, as of his Marriage-day, *My dayes are paſt.* As a young man ſaith, *My marriage day is at hand*, I ſhall be married ſhortly; with ſuch a holy alacrity *Job* ſpake, I ſhall die ſhortly, *my dayes are paſt:* He looked upon his comfortable dayes in the World as paſt, and yet he was comforted: *Job* was full of pain, yet uſually in the cloſe of his ſpeeches he gathered up himſelf, and ſpake in a height and heat of ſpirit. As the Cock towards morning flutters his Wins before he Crowes, and gives warning of the approaching day; or as the Lyon ſtrikes his ſides with his Tail, to rouze up his ſpirits before he attempts his prey; ſo *Job* ſtirr'd up himſelf towards the cloſe of his anſwers, and reſumed new ſpirits, acting *That dying man* to the life, who having nothing in this World, either to fear or hope, dies without fear, yet with abundance, yea in aſſurance of hope: *My dayes are paſt.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, As the words are taken in the former ſenſe: *A gracious heart hath peace in the approaches of death.*

His contentments are not done, when the term of his life is done: He can ſay, *My dayes are paſt*, as cheerfully, as *Agag* ſaid, *Surely, the bitterneſs of death is paſt. Some godly men have died far more pleaſantly then ever any wicked man lived.*

Secondly, From the latter ſenſe, Obſerve,

A gracious heart can take preſent comfort, and rejoyce in this World, while he knowes that all his worldly comforts and joyes are paſt.

Faith overlooks, or looks through and beyond all the evils of this life, to a good which ſhall never die; yea Faith ſees and enjoys a preſent good, while ſenſe ſees nothing, and indeed hath nothing elſe to ſee, but evil. A carnal man parts with his good dayes, or with the good of his dayes, as *Phaltiel* went to deliver up *Michal*, *Sauls* Daughter, and *David's* Wife by right, weeping all along as he went (*2 Sam.* 3.16.) There's a ſad parting between a worldly heart and worldly things; but he that is ſpiritually minded, though he doth not deſpiſe the meaneſt of worldly good things, as made by God for the uſe and comfort of man, ſo when God calls him from them, or them from him, he can part with the uſe of them, and yet not be diſpoſſeſſed of comfort; he knows that he hath a preſent good, and that he hath greater good to come, while he ſaith, *My dayes are paſt.*

My purpoſes are broken off.] The word which we tranſlate *Purpoſes*, ſignifies moſt uſually an evil purpoſe, or wicked deſignments; yet it is uſed alſo, as among the Rabbins, ſo by the Penmen of Scripture in a good ſenſe, for a warrantable, yea for a holy purpoſe: In the Book of Proverbs (*Chap.*1.4. *Chap.*2.11.) it is tranſlated *Diſcretion* or *Adviſement*, proceeding from the teachings of wiſdom, which ſtirs up gracious purpoſes in the ſoul towards God, and every good.

זמם *Cogitavit plerumq; in malum aliquando in bonum* זמות *Cujus ſingularis* זמה *quod antiquitus legebant Zemma, ferre ſcelus denotat* מזמה *autem quod ab eodem themate vocabulum eſt mediū.* Druſ.

My purpoſes are broken off: The Septuagint render, *My heart ſtrings are broken:* The heart-ſtrings by a metaphor, may be taken for purpoſes, becauſe purpoſes are as Bands or ſtrings upon the heart; and therefore when purpoſes are broken, we may ſay, the bands or ſtrings of the heart are broken.

Rupti ſunt articuli cordis mei. Sept.

Another reads, *The bindings or faſtnings of my body are looſned, or torn aſunder*; which tranſlation (as alſo the former) taken literally, notes only his nearneſs to death; for when a man dieth, we ſay, his heart-ſtrings break, and his whole body is in a fit of Convulſion.

Convulſæ ſunt compages corporis mei. Aug.

My purpoſes are broken.] The word ſignifies a violent forcible breaking, as if a Giant had broken them.

But what was it which broke his purpoſes? The violence and continuance of his afflictions was this Breaker; or his purpoſes were broken by the confuſed motions and troubleſome repreſentations of his own fanſie, to which ſick men are very ſubject.

Again, what were thoſe purpoſes of his which were broken? If they were evil purpoſes, he had reaſon to rejoyce, not to complain; if they were good purpoſes, was it not his ſin as well as his affliction that they were broken off.

I anſwer to that, Purpoſes may be good, and yet broken without the ſin of the purpoſer, if himſelf be not the cauſe of that breach, and the impediment of their performance: If our holieſt purpoſes are broken off by the inevitable providence of God, the holineſs of man receives no blemiſh by it. The purpoſes of *Job* were good doubtleſs, either ſpiritually good, or civilly good; and they may be taken either for thoſe purpoſes of doing good, which he had, before he fell into trouble, or for thoſe which he had laid up in his breſt, to do, when he ſhould be again reſtored and delivered out of trouble. As if he had ſaid, I once had an expectation of life, and I purpoſed with my ſelf what to do with, or in my new life, but now thoſe purpoſes are all broken off, for I ſee my life is ready to be broken off. The next clauſe ſeems to explain this, and in that we ſhall ſee more fully what he means by theſe purpoſes.

Even the thoughts of my heart.] Every thought of the heart is not a purpoſe; yet every purpoſe is a thought of the heart: our thoughts are made up into purpoſes, either what to do, or not to do: Hence it is uſual to ſay, I thought to have done ſuch or ſuch a thing; that is, I purpoſed to do it. Therefore *Job* might well ſay, *My purpoſes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart*, becauſe purpoſes are nothing elſe but a frame, or pack of thoughts: There is an elegancy in that word which we tranſlate *Thoughts*. The Hebrew is, *The poſſeſſions of my heart*; ſo we put it in the Margin of our Bibles: A learned Tranſlator renders it thus, *The thoughts which my mind was wont to poſſeſs are pull'd or ſnatch'd away*: He means it not of all his thoughts, as if his power of thinking had been loſt; but of thoſe ſpecial thoughts which he had, or hopes, which he nouriſhed about his reſtoring to happy dayes; theſe once poſſeſſed his heart, but they were gone. Thoughts are called the poſſeſſions of the heart two wayes.

מורשי *Poſſeſſiones cordis, à radice* ירש

Cogitationes meæ avulſæ ſunt, quas poſſidere ſolebat animus meus. Jun.

Dicuntur cogitationes poſſideri à corde, quid enim magis proprium aut innatū cordi quam ſuæ ipſius cogitationes? Druſ. Coc.

First, In a paſſive } ſence.
Secondly, In an active }

Paſſively, Becauſe they are poſſeſſed by the heart; the heart doth encloſe and hold our thoughts: The heart is the naturally proper veſſel or receptacle of thoughts, therefore they are called the poſſeſſions of the heart: The heart is the ſoyl and ſeat of thoughts; there they are planted, and there they dwell.

Actively, For as thoughts are poſſeſſed by the heart, ſo thoughts poſſeſs the heart; thoughts are full of activity; they trouble and they comfort the heart; look what our thoughts are, ſuch is the ſtate of our hearts; if our thoughts be quiet, our hearts are quiet; if our thoughts be unquiet, our hearts are unquiet; if our thoughts be joyful, our hearts rejoyce; if our thoughts be ſad, our hearts are ſorrowful. 'Tis ſaid in the Goſpel (*Luke* 24. 38.) *Why are ye troubled? why do thoughts riſe in your hearts?* That is, Why do troubleſome and diſconſolate thoughts riſe in your hearts? 'Tis as natural for thoughts to riſe in the heart, as it is for water to riſe in a Spring; therefore Chriſt did not chide them becauſe thoughts, but becauſe ſuch thoughts did riſe in their hearts: We cannot hinder our hearts from thinking, no more then we can hinder the fire from burning, or water from wetting; but 'tis our duty to hinder our hearts from undue or diſcouraging thoughts, and to check them for thinking ſo. Thoughts rule the heart and put it into ſeveral frames and forms according to their own likeneſs; and therefore it is both our wiſdom and our holineſs to put and keep our thoughts in the beſt likeneſs. The heart (in a figurative ſence) is nothing elſe but the frame of our thoughts; and our thoughts in a proper ſence, are nothing elſe but *the poſſeſſions of the heart*.

Tabulæ cordis. Chald.

Further, The Chaldee Paraphraſe ſaith, *The Tables of my heart are broken*; ſo it is an alluſion to writing: The Law was written at firſt in Tables of Stone, and now a heart of fleſh (not a fleſhly heart) is the Tables of the Law; our hearts are Tables both for our own writing and for Gods. *Job* had written many purpoſes upon thoſe Tables; therefore he might well ſay as in this caſe, My purpoſes, or all that was written upon the Tables of my heart, are broken. In my thoughts I had written and ſet down many particulars which I purpoſed to have done, but now thoſe lines are croſſed, or quite blotted out. God writes many of his own thoughts in our hearts, and our thoughts are the writings of our hearts; when our purpoſes and thoughts are broken, the *Tables of our hearts are broken*.

Scriptura cordis nunc litura eſt. Pined.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Right purpoſes are good, but it is not good to live upon purpoſes.*

Action muſt preſently follow reſolution, and performance muſt be ſpeeded after purpoſes, elſe they are to little purpoſe. When *David* had ſaid, *I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord* (Pſal. 32. 5.) he inſtantly confeſſed them: And when he ſaid, *I will take heed to my wayes* (Pſal. 39. 1.) he inſtantly took heed to them. His purpoſe was in nature, before his practice, but in time they went together: There is a double danger in delaying purpoſes.

Firſt, That the mind of the purpoſer may change, and his ſpirit grow flat towards them.

Secondly, That the ſeaſons may change, and though he have a mind, yet he may want means and opportunity to perform them.

There is danger in both wayes, and much ſin in the former way of breaking purpoſes: The danger of both will be more diſcovered in the ſecond Obſervation.

Secondly, Obſerve, *When great afflictions come, eſpecially when death comes, all our purpoſes are broken off.*

As man is apt to buſie himſelf about many things, which he cannot know, ſo about many things, which (though they are poſſible to be done, yet) he ſhall never do. It is in man to purpoſe, but we muſt ask leave of God, before we can perform: Croſs providences break many purpoſes, but death breaks all. All our purpoſes concerning the World, and the things of the World dye with us. When the breath of great Princes goeth forth (*Pſal.* 146. 4.) *In that very day all their thoughts periſh*. Great Princes are full of great thoughts; but they who cannot keep themſelves from periſhing, ſhall never keep their thoughts from periſhing. The imaginary frames which they ſet up, the contrivances, plots, and projects of their hearts are all ſwept away like the Spiders Web, or broken like the Cockatrices Egg, when themſelves are ſwept away from the face of the Earth, and broken by the power of death. The thoughts of many Princes and Polititians dye while themſelves live: *Ahitophel*'s purpoſes were broken and diſappointed, while himſelf looked on, and he was ſo vexed to ſee it, that he executed himſelf becauſe his purpoſes were not executed. In theſe times of publick ſhaking, how many purpoſes have we ſeen go to wrack? They who have been long laying their deſigns, and brooding upon their counſels, have had their eggs broken in a moment, and their thoughts blown away like chaff before the wind, or the lighter duſt before the whirlwind: Now as the purpoſes of many about gathering riches, about taking their pleaſure, about advancing themſelves to, or eſtabliſhing themſelves in honour and high places, have periſhed before they dyed; ſo when ſuch dye, all their purpoſes ſhall certainly periſh: And as the purpoſes of all about worldly things periſh in the approaches of death; ſo do the purpoſes of ſome about ſpiritual and heavenly things. How many have had purpoſes to repent, to amend their lives and turn to God, which have been prevented, and totally broken off, by the extremity of pain and ſickneſs, but chiefly by the ſtroke of death; when they have (as they thought) *been about to repent*, and (as we ſay) *turn over a new leafe in their lives*; they have been turned into the Grave by death; and into Hell by the juſt wrath of God.

Some interpret this Text, as *Job*'s complaint of the unſettlement of his thoughts about heavenly things, and the breaking of his purpoſes in the purſuit of eternity: He could not make his thoughts about Heaven hold or hang together, even thoſe thoughts were full of gaps and empty ſpaces, or rather like Ropes of Sand. Many honeſt and gracious ſouls have found work enough upon a death-bed, or a ſick-bed to attend the pain and infirmity of their bodies. When they have purpoſely ſet themſelves (the habitual bent of their hearts being alwayes ſet that way) actually to ſeek God, to meditate upon the precious Promiſes, to put forth freſh lively workings of Faith upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, they have been ſuddenly recalled, yea, even forcibly fetcht back by ſome violent aſſault of pain, or a previous charge of death: So that thoſe thoughts which ſhould be (and they deſired that they might be) like their objects, moſt durable and ſteady, were yet more like ſome odd ends or broken pot-ſheards, more like vaniſhing flaſhes, or wandring fancies, then that beautiful frame of heart, or thoſe well combined and faſtened meditations which they intended. For though all the troubles of this life, and the approaches of death it ſelf cannot break, diſappoint or ſcatter thoſe fixed purpoſes, and thoughts which a Believer hath had, or thoſe reſults and reſolves which he hath often made in his own ſoul about the hopes and concernments of eternal life; yet he may be pitifully puzzled, amuzed, and interrupted in his preſent motions and meditations about them.

Non poterat jugi contēplatio in rerum divinarum ut quōdam ſolebat intendere propter vim doloris. Phil.

Propter multiplices animi motus & perturbationes jā dolebat, jam timebat, nūc ſe erigebat in ſpem meliorem, nunc iterum concidebat.

Hence take this Caution.

Seeing not only our worldly thoughts periſh, but our ſpiritual thoughts may be much broken by ſtrong temptations and variety of bodily diſtempers, in times of trouble and ſickneſs, let us haſten to ſettle our purpoſes and thoughts about eternal life, yea, to ſee our ſouls paſſed from death to life, before we ſee ſickneſs and ſorrow, much more before we ſee our ſelves ready to paſs from life to death. Purpoſes to repent, or to mind heavenly things, not only may, but for the moſt part are broken off, and loſt when ſickneſs and ſorrow find us. Beware of this deceit of the Devil, who tells us we ſhall have leiſure to ſeek God when we are ſick, and that we ſhall have a fair opportunity to ſettle all the affairs of our ſouls, when we are going out of the body: Then (he tells us) we ſhall have nothing elſe to do, and therefore we ſhall ſurely do it then. Let not Satan deceive us with theſe vain words, for then he intends us moſt blows; then is his ſeaſon to break our thoughts into a thouſand pieces, and to vex us with the ſplinters, even when we lye upon our ſick-beds, or are bewildred with affliction. There is ſcarce one of twenty, but finds breakings, and convulſions upon his thoughts, at the ſame time when he feels them upon his body: How often have ſick men been heard to ſay, We cannot ſet our ſelves to think ſeriouſly of Heaven, or to act Faith, &c. *To ſuffer and be ſick, is work enough for any man at one time:* He had not need to have his greateſt work to do when he hath ſuch work to do.

They who have had brave ſpirits, and fixed holy purpoſes upon their death-beds, were ſuch as had been long exerciſed in them before. Woe to thoſe who put off their beginnings in Grace, till they are ready to finiſh in Nature: A dying man is unfit for any buſineſs; how much more for this? He is extreamly indiſpoſed for worldly purpoſes, much more for heavenly: And therefore as ſoon as a man that hath any Eſtate, begins to be ſick, Friends will move him, *Pray Sir, ſettle your Eſtate, make your Will, you know not how God may deal with you, if your diſeaſe ſhould encreaſe a little more, you may be totally diſabled to do it; therefore pray haſten:* Yea, we find that moſt men of valuable Eſtates in the World, make their Wills in their health, when they are free from ſickneſs and furtheſt from death, when they have the greateſt activity of mind and body: They wiſely remember how ſome, who had a full purpoſe to make their Wills in ſickneſs, have been ſuddenly overpowered by the malignity of a diſeaſe, and could never do it, but have left all at *ſix and ſevens*. If ſo, ſhall any man leave his ſoul undiſpoſed of, or at *ſix and ſevens*, till ſuch a time? A ſick man being minded of any worldly buſineſs (unleſs he have a great mind to it) thinks it excuſe enough to wave it, becauſe he is ſick; I pray do not trouble me with it (ſaith he) I cannot think of it now, you and I will ſpeak about it hereafter when I am recovered. Do ſick men think it reaſon they ſhould be excuſed from worldly buſineſs becauſe they are ſick? And ſhall any man reſolve that it is beſt to deal about ſpiritual buſineſſes when he is ſick? If *Job*, who had a holy and a ſound mind under a diſeaſed body, ſaid, *My purpoſes are broken off, and the thoughts or poſſeſſions of my heart:* How much more will they feel theſe breaches, whoſe minds are ſick and more diſeaſed then their bodies?

Further, Obſerve, *The difference between God and man, what a vain creature man is, and how excellent God is.*

God never had one of his purpoſes broken; whatever he purpoſed he hath carried to perfection; he never loſt a thought, nor any of the poſſeſſions of his heart. *The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all Generations* (Pſal. 33. 11.) 'Tis the glory of God that his purpoſes ſtand; he is able to make them ſtand, though all the world ſhould combine as one man to caſt them down. 'Tis the diſhonour of man that he ſo often falls from his own purpoſes, and eats up his own reſolves; and 'tis the puniſhment of ſome men, that their purpoſes receive a fall, that their moſt ſolemn debates and ſetled reſolves are ſcattered and confounded; *The Lord* (in judgment) *bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought, he maketh the devices of the people of none effect* (Pſal. 33. 10.) All the thoughts of man are loſeable, and moſt men loſe their thoughts.

It is the comfort of Believers that they are not bottom'd upon their own purpoſes or thoughts, but upon the thoughts and purpoſes of God (that's their baſis) and that ſhall never be broken; God is unchangeable, and therefore his purpoſes cannot break: When mans purpoſes are broken, he either changeth, or ſuffers a change; of which *Job* complains in the next Verſe.

Verſe 12. **They change the night into day, and the light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.**

Here are two things to be opened.

First, What is meant by changing the night into day.

Secondly, Who it is that changeth the night into day.

They change the night into day.] Hath not the Lord made a Promiſe, yea, a Covenant (which is more then a Promiſe) and annexed a ſign to it, which is the ratification of a Covenant (*Gen.* 8. 22.) that to the end of the world, while the earth remaineth, *Seed-time, and harveſt, and Summer, and Winter, and cold and heat, and day and night, ſhall not ceaſe*; that is, they ſhall not ceaſe in their turns and ſeaſons? How is it here ſaid, *They change the night into day*; as if the night and day were out of courſe, when as the Lord hath covenanted, that they ſhall continue in their courſe?

I anſwer, There is a twofold change of times, of day and night.

First, A Natural } Change.
Secondly, A Metaphorical }

The united power of all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, cannot make a natural change of day into night, and God the Creator hath promiſed that he will not make that change; he will not break the ſucceſſion of night and day, while the Earth remaineth.

But a Metaphorical change of night into day, and of day into night, hath been often made; for when the night is ſo full of trouble to us that we cannot ſleep, the night is changed into day; and when the day is ſo full of trouble to us, that we can neither do our work, nor take our comforts, then the day is changed into night: The night is the time appointed for natural reſt, therefore the night may be ſaid to be changed into day, when we cannot reſt, and this is a great affliction; for though in ſome ſence, and in Scripture-ſence too, to have the night changed into day, is a mercy, and notes a change from a troubled eſtate into a comfortable eſtate; yet to have the night changed by our reſtleſneſs, or want of ſleep, is both an affliction it ſelf, and an argument that we are burdened and over-preſſed with other manifold afflictions.

Hoc tormentum cordis, nec nox interrumpebat quæ eſt tempus deputatum humanæ quieti, gravius eſt pati ſomni defectum in nocte quam in die. Aquin.

In this ſence *Job* complains of the change of his night into day; and thus God often changeth times and ſeaſons, both to particular perſons and whole Nations (*Dan.* 2. 21.) Daniel *anſwered and ſaid, Bleſſed be the Name of God for ever and ever, for wiſdom and might are his, and he changeth the times, and the ſeaſons, he removeth Kings, and he ſets up Kings:* He changeth the times and ſeaſons; that is, He makes ſeaſons comfortable, or troubleſome; peaceable, or unquiet; he changeth the night into day, or the day into night, as himſelf pleaſeth.

Meæ cogitationes moleſtæ animum rodentes, noctem mihi convertunt in diem; efficiunt ut noctes ducam inſomnes. Merc.

And the light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.] That is, The day is to me as no day, becauſe of my calamity and miſery; my day is ſhort, becauſe darkneſs ſuddenly overtakes it. Artificial dayes are long or ſhort, according to the diſtance which the darkneſs of the night keeps from them. Our Metaphorical dayes are long or ſhort, according to the diſtance which the darkneſs of trouble keeps from them. Thus the change of day into night, and of night into day, is to be reckoned by the condition we are in: When we cannot ſleep in the night, our night is changed into day; and when ſorrow ſeizeth on us in the day, our day is changed into night; or, *The light is ſhort to us by reaſon of darkneſs.*

Propter calamitates.

But who was it that made this change? *They change the night into day, and the day into night:* Who? Some aſcribe it

Hæ meæ cogitationes noctem mihi in diem convertunt. Merc.

it to his troubled thoughts, of which he had ſpoken before; his thoughts were ſo torn and diſtracted, that their confuſions turned the night into day, and the day into night; that is a plain ſence: As if he had ſaid, *By reaſon of my continual cares and diſtractions, I take no comfort neither night nor day.*

Præſentium malarum cogitationes efficiunt ut dies quamvis lucidus mihi ſit nox. Jun.

Others refer it his Friends, *They*, that is, my Friends, *turn the night into day, and the day into night*; and if his Friends be the Antecedent, it comes much to one, for his Friends did it by filling him with troubleſome thoughts, and unquiet reaſonings; his Friends did it by filling his heart and head (as we ſay) with their Proclamations.

Hence Note, *When the mind is unſetled the man cannot reſt.*

Waking nights and weariſome dayes are the portion of a troubled ſpirit.

Propinquum pro brevi exponit. Rab. Sol.

There is a further elegancy conſiderable in the latter branch of this Verſe, *The light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.* The Original is, *The light is near becauſe of darkneſs.* The word ſignifies *nearneſs*, whether in time or place, and it is uſually put in Scripture for *ſhort*, for that which is of ſhort continuance (*Job* 20. 5.) *The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort.* The Margin is, *The triumphing of the wicked is from near*: That is, It is hard by, it began but lately, and it will ſoon be over, or at an end. In this elegancy the holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of falſe Gods (*Deut.* 32. 17.) *They ſacrificed to Devils, and not to God; to Gods whom they knew not, to new Gods that were come newly up*: The Hebrew is, to *near Gods* (it is this word) *to ſhort Gods*; Gods that are near: That is, Gods ſhort or near in their original, they have been but a little while, they are *newly come up*, as we tranſlate, *Whom your Fathers knew not, nor feared*: Idols are new Gods, near Gods; we need not travel far to find out their deſcent and pedigree, the oldeſt of them are but of a late date, or of a new edition, upſtart Gods, as they are compared with *Jehovah* the true God, who is from everlaſting: And as they are called near Gods, in regard of their original, and riſe; ſo likewiſe in regard of their continuance, they are not for eternity, we ſhall ſee an end of thoſe Gods ſhortly, they are not long-lived, much leſs are they to everlaſting. The true God is the ſame for ever; falſe Gods are nothing; Idols are nothing in the World, and they ſhall in ſhort time be thruſt out of the World; and all the *near Gods* ſhall be put far away. What the Lord ſpeaks of theſe night-Gods, the Gods of the darkneſs of this World, *Job* ſpeaks of the comforts or light which he once received from God. *The light is ſhort, becauſe of darkneſs*: That is, It is ready to end and expire.

Idola dicuntur dii ex propinquo, i.e. qui diu non duraverunt, vel qui de novo pro diis haberi cœperint. Merc.

We may ſay of all the light which we have in this World, that *it is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs*: Spiritual light, or the light of Gods countenance ſhining in, or upon his people, hath a darkneſs attending upon it in this World. The experiences of moſt Chriſtians anſwer that of one of the Ancients about this heavenly light, *It comes but ſeldom, and it is ſoon gone*: We have but ſome glimpſes and glances of Divine favour here, not a ſteady ſence of it; that (except to a very few) is reſerved for Heaven: 'Tis ſo alſo about temporal light; the light of Gods providence towards us hath a darkneſs attending upon it, yea, a darkneſs mixed with it: When our comforts have ſcarce ſaluted us, or ſpoken with us, they are interrupted and taken off by approaching ſorrows. Thoſe creature enjoyments and relations which have moſt light in them, have alſo much darkneſs hanging about them, and hovering over them. *Man at the beſt eſtate is altogether vanity: And his longeſt light here is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.*

Rara hora brevis mora. Bern.

But *Job* ſpeaks not this in reference to the general ſtate of man, much leſs to the beſt eſtate of man in this life; he applyes it ſpecially to an afflicted eſtate, and particularly to his own: How ſhort is the light of an afflicted ſoul? How quickly do Clouds come over him, and Eclipſes ſhut the ſhining from him, when the light of a man in proſperity is but ſhort, and his day in danger of a night every moment? All our light on earth dwells upon the borders of darkneſs; the light of Heaven hath no neighbourhood with it, and therefore is not only long, but everlaſting.

Illæ tenebroſæ cogitationes à mente mea diſcedentes, pro nocte jucundum quietis diem, & pro tenebris lucem matutinam, i.e. optatam pacē conſtituunt. Bold.

Yet I find a learned Interpreter making this Verſe ſpeak the return of *Job*'s light; *The changing of night into day*, is to be underſtood (ſaith he) in a good ſence: And the breaking of his thoughts and purpoſes is (according to this Interpretation) nothing elſe but the ſcattering of his dark and melancholy thoughts and purpoſes, which being removed and gone, the night of ſorrow was turned into a day of joy, and the morning light (here called the *near light*, becauſe it immediately ſucceeds the darkneſs, which the noon-light doth not) this morning light (ſaith he) came before the face of darkneſs.

Et rurſum poſt tenebras ſpero lucem. Vulg.

To which ſence the Vulgar Latine tranſlates the laſt clauſe, *After darkneſs I hope for light*; or, though I be now in darkneſs, I hope for light: As if *Job* had ſaid, *After this dark night and dreadful ſtorm, God hath ſpoken to the angry Sea of my tempeſtuous thoughts, and behold there is a great calm.* But though the Author of this Expoſition be ſo much in love with it, that he counts all other ſpurious; yet I rather perſiſt in, and ſtick to the former; ſeeing the whole context runs upon the aggravation of *Job*'s preſent troubles, with which this Interpretation holds no agreement. Nor is there any neceſſity (as the Author ſuppoſeth) to take it up, for the avoiding of that imputation of a low, weak, and ſinking ſpirit, which the former Expoſition, in his apprehenſion, ſubjects *Job* unto; for though we ſay that *Job* doth, as often elſewhere, ſo here again, make report of his ſorrows in higheſt ſtrains of holy Rhetorick; yet we are ſo far from ſaying that he deſponded, or ſunk under them, that we doubt not to ſay (which is all that this Author would ſay, or have others take notice of in his ſingular Interpretation) that he was more then a Conqueror over them all. 'Tis not only granted, that *Job* did hope for a day of joy after his night of ſorrow, but affirmed, that he had a day of joy in his night of ſorrow (for he could ſay, in a true ſence, what the Apoſtle *Paul* after did, *as ſorrowful, yet alwayes rejoycing*) yet his night (by reaſon of his outward troubles, and many aſſaults of inward terror) was changed into a laborious toyling day, and his outward light of comfort was ſhort and quickly ended, when he had it, *By reaſon of the faces* (as the Original hath it) *or ſudden appearances of darkneſs.*

VERS. 13, 14, 15, 16.

If I wait, the Grave is mine houſe: I have my bed in the darkneſs.

I have ſaid to corruption, Thou art my Father; to the Worm, thou art my Mother, and my Siſter.

And where is now my hope? As for my hope, who ſhall ſee it?

They ſhall go down to the bars of the pit, when our reſt together is in the duſt.

JOB proſecutes the former Argument, and ſhews yet more fully the vanity of thoſe hopes which his Friends would nouriſh in him about a temporal reſtauration. He ſhews alſo, that though himſelf ſhould nouriſh them, and even ſtrive to hope, yet he could no more keep ſuch hopes from languiſhing, then himſelf from dying, *If I wait, the Grave is mine houſe.*

Verbum קוה *affinitatem habet cum* קו *perpendiculū, lineā.*

If I wait.] Waiting is an act of the mind, in expectation of ſome future good: The Original word ſignifies an earneſt waiting, or waiting joyned with much intention of ſpirit, and ſtrong deſires, as if the mind did let out a cord, or line, to take hold of the thing, for which we wait. Waiting is nothing elſe but patience lengthened out upon a promiſe. There are three acts of the ſoul upon the promiſes.

First, Believing.
Secondly, Hoping.
Thirdly, Waiting.

We believe the truth of the promiſe; we hope for the good laid up in the promiſe; we wait till that good be given out unto us. *If I wait* (ſaith *Job*) God waits

Dicitis (amici) ſi me humiliem, manere meā expectationem: atqui cernitis vires meas & vitam meam veniſſe ad ultimam lineam quippe mala mea curam reſpuunt. Coc.

upon us; and we wait upon God: God waits in mercy; we wait in duty: *God waits to be gracious* (Iſa. 30. 18.) and man waits to be refreſhed with the Grace of God. *Job*, in this place, ſeems to make light or little of this duty of waiting: *If I wait*, or, *although I wait*, or, *what if I wait*, what ſhall I get by it? Where's the profit? Or what are my comings in? He tells us what; If I wait, all that I ſhall get by it will be a *Grave*, or *a bed in darkneſs*: And all my preferment will be, *to call corruption my Father*; *and to ſay of the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and my Siſter*: Here's all I am like to have for all my waiting.

But was this all he looked for by waiting?

Yes, it was all he looked for, and all he thought himſelf in a capacity to receive in this World (though in that he was deceived) he had no expectation but to dye, and go down to the duſt; he had no hope to rejoyce in any Kindred or Alliance, but Worms and corruption, theſe were his Mother, and his Siſters, and Brethren: If I wait, here's all I ſhall have. Thus (as I intimated before) the words carry a ſtrong confutation of thoſe hopes which his Friends endeavoured to raiſe up in him, that God would raiſe him up, and make him as a Prince among the people, if he repented and turned to God. No, ſaith he, what do you tell me of a great Houſe, and of a great Name, of a riſing Sun, and of the Morning light? why am I ſo often told of theſe things? I tell you once for all, the Grave is my houſe, Darkneſs is my bed, and the Worms are my kindred and companions; let me hear no more of theſe groundleſs prophecyings, and unſavory flatteries, for my wound is incurable, and I am at the laſt caſt, *If I wait, the Grave is my houſe*.

Docet præciſam eſſe ſibi his malis omnem vitæ ſpem vel ſi eam maximè animo fovere velit. Si expectē i. e. *ſi expectare ſtudeā.* Merl.

Again, The word which we tranſlate to *wait*, coming, as was toucht before, from a Root which ſignifies a Carpenters Line, by which he meaſures his buildings: Some render the Text thus, *If I build, the Grave is my houſe*: As if he had ſaid, I have no other houſe to build but a Grave; or when I have builded my beſt, I ſhall have no other houſe but a Grave.

Si ædificavero, infernus domus mea. Rab. Dan.

The Grave.] The ſame word ſignifieth Hell, as was ſhewed (*Chap.* 11. 8.) and therefore I will not ſtay here upon it: *If I wait, the Grave*

Is my houſe.] He calls the Grave a houſe, becauſe there we reſt as in a houſe: Man goeth forth of his houſe to labour, and comes home to his houſe for reſt: Some tell us *Job* calls the Grave his houſe, in alluſion to thoſe forms of making Graves, or Sepulchres, uſed in ancient (which are alſo continued in theſe) times, with arches, and contrivances like a houſe.

Ægyptii defunctorū ſepulchra, domos æternas appellant. Diodor. lib. 1.

And I have made my bed in the darkneſs.

He ſpeaks ſtill in proſecution of the alluſion: In a houſe there are Dining-rooms, and there are ſleeping Rooms; there is the Bed-chamber, and the Bed in the Chamber. The Grave is my houſe (ſaith *Job*) and there I have a Bed, I have made it,

In the darkneſs.] The Grave is a dark place; and the Grave is called Darkneſs in a double reſpect.

Firſt, Becauſe there is no light of the body there.

Secondly, Becauſe there is no light of the Sun there.

The light of the body is the eye, and the light of the Air is the Sun; but in the Grave the Sun ſhines not, or if it did, yet there the eye ſees not, therefore the Grave is darkneſs: *I have made my bed in the darkneſs*: And darkneſs is moſt fit for a bed; ſleep loves darkneſs: A working Room muſt be light; but 'tis no matter how dark a ſleeping Room be: When we go to ſleep, if it be not dark, we make it dark, that ſo we may ſleep the better. The Apoſtle gives that as an argument why the Saints ſhould not ſleep as do others, becauſe they were once darkneſs; but now light in the Lord. He that is in aerial light can hardly get his body to ſleep; And will you who are in ſpiritual light compoſe your ſouls to ſleep? All ſorts of ſleepers covet the dark, and therefore they who ſleep in death, are elegantly deſcribed making their bed in darkneſs, that ſo they may have (as it were) all accommodations for their reſt, *I have made my bed in the darkneſs*.

Intelligi poteſt de lecto bene ornato ſuper quem reponi ſolebant principum cadavera Mauſoleis, quod juxta Hebræum in plurali dicitur, ſtravi ſtrata mea, *magnificum quid ſonat & Pompaticum.* Bold.

It may be queſtioned (towards the clearing of this Verſe) Did not *Job* wait? Why doth he ſay, *If I wait?* Was he upon Iffs or Ands about that great and neceſſary duty? He reſolved peremptorily (*Chap.* 14. 14.) *All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*: And is he ſo much changed already into an unreſolvedneſs about his waiting?

I anſwer, This ſuppoſition about waiting, is not a negation, nor is it a note of his irreſolution to wait for any thing, but only for that particular, about which his Friends were ſo buſie to awaken and heighten his expectations. *Job* waited upon God for all things which he deſired to have; only he did not wait upon God for that which the viſible diſpenſations of God ſeemed to tell him aloud, that he ſhould not have, a temporal deliverance: yea, when he ſaith, *If I wait*, namely, for this thing, it is an Argument that he acknowledged it a duty to wait upon God for all thoſe things, for the receiving of which he had any rule or ground of hope from God: Every exception confirms the rule. He that ſaith he doth not wait upon God about that for which he hath no warrant, ſaith ſtrongly, that he ought to wait upon God where he hath a warrant.

From which conſequence we may obſerve this unqueſtionable truth.

That it is the duty of man to wait upon God.

Waiting upon God is a duty of the firſt Commandment; it is a part of natural worſhip: It is not in mans liberty, whether he will wait or no, he is commanded to wait: *David* ſpeaks it double, and no doubt he laboured to act it double (*Pſal.* 40. 1.) *Waiting, I waited*; or, *I waited patiently upon God*. The Apoſtle gives that advice to the Saints (*Heb.* 10. 36.) *Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promiſe*: There is doing the will of God, and then there is receiving the promiſe; yet we muſt do ſomewhat after we have done the will of God, before we can receive the promiſe; and that is, we muſt wait upon him: *You have need of patience*, ſaith the Apoſtle: What kind of patience? There are three ſorts of patience.

Firſt, The patience of labouring, that he puts in the former part of the Verſe, it is our *doing the will of God*.

Secondly, There is the patience of ſuffering.

Thirdly, There is the patience of waiting after we have both done and ſuffered the will of God.

We have need of this patience, *the patience of waiting*, that we may receive the promiſe, that is, the mercy promiſed. God hath preventing mercies, and they come to us before we wait for them; but his rewarding mercies muſt be waited for: He will exerciſe the grace of patience in us, by cauſing us to wait for our reward, as he exerciſeth the graces of love and zeal, in commanding us to do his will; and uſually without waiting after we have done his will, there is no receiving of the reward for doing his will. And for the Promiſes and Propheſies in general, *Though God never fail his own time, yet he ſeldom comes at ours*. That great Promiſe about the deliverance of the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, was performed punctually to an hour (*Exod.* 12. 41, 42.) *It came to paſs at the end of four hundred and thirty years, even that very night, it came to paſs, that God brought out all the Hoſt of* Iſrael. The time being out in the night, God did not ſtay till morning, but brought them out that very night: We count it a very venial ſin to break our word for a day, or to let a man wait a day beyond the time promiſed; we commonly ſay, *A day breaks no ſquare*: It is not ſo with God, he keeps his time punctually, he will not break his word one day. We read of the ſhortening of evil times, but not of their lengthening: God never makes his people wait for good longer then he hath promiſed. But though God keep his time exactly, and come juſt at the moment he hath prefixed and foreſhewed, yet we are apt to antedate the promiſe of God, and to ſet it a time before Gods time: We are ſhort-ſighted, and ſhort-breathed; that which is but a moment in the Kalendar of Heaven, ſeems more then an Age to us. Now in this regard there is much need of patience, of waiting patience, to tarry, not only our time, but Gods time; which is the meaning of the Prophet *Habakkuk* (Chap. 2. 3.) *The viſion is for an appointed time, but at the end it will ſpeak and not lye: though it tarry, wait for it,* *becauſe it will ſurely come, and will not tarry:* The Prophet adviſes, *Though it tarry, wait for it*; there's our duty, yet he preſently affirms, *It will not tarry:* So then it may tarry, and yet it tarrieth not; it may tarry beyond our time, but it tarryeth not beyond Gods time; *It will come, and will not tarry*; that is, not beyond the time which God hath prefixed, though it may ſoon tarry beyond the time which we have prefixed; therefore if it it tarry, wait; there is no remedy but patience.

The Apoſtle *James* gives the Rule (*Chap.* 1.4.) *Let Patience have her perfect work:* That is, Let all manner of patience work in you to the end, and let it work to all thoſe ends or purpoſes to which it is appointed. Patience hath her perfect work.

Firſt, When it puts forth perfect acts.

Secondly, When it perſeveres in acting.

Patience aſcends by three ſteps to the perfection of her work.

The firſt is a ſilent (not a ſullen) ſubmiſſion or reſignation of our ſelves to the diſpoſe of God (*Pſal.* 39.9.) *I was dumb* (ſaith *David*) *and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.*

Secondly, A kind of thankful acceptation, or kiſſing of the Rod which ſmites us: *If their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled* (ſaith the Lord, *Levit.* 26.41.) *and they accept the puniſhment of their iniquity:* The phraſe imports a welcome receiving of it, as of a love-token from the hand of a Friend, or that the Rod is not only juſtly, but mercifully and graciouſly inflicted: This is a great perfection of patience; and to this *Job*'s patience attained the very firſt day of his ſorrows, while he bleſſed the Name of the Lord, not only for giving him ſo many good things, but alſo for taking them away (*Chap.* 1. 21.)

The third ſtep, is, ſpiritual joy, and ſerious chearfulneſs under ſorrowful diſpenſations: This the Apoſtle exhorts the Brethren to (*Verſ.* 2.) *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations:* And preſently adds (intimating that the higheſt perfection of patience conſiſts in joy) *Let Patience have her perfect work:* As if he had ſaid, I have told you what the perfect work of patience is, do not give check to your patience till it be got up this ſtep, and hath ſet your ſouls *a rejoycing*, or (as we ſpeak) *a crowing* over all your temptations.

Every Grace ſhould have its perfect work in us, and ſo they have, when patience hath its perfect work; and then patience hath done that perfect work there commanded, when we wait quietly, thankfully, and rejoycingly, till God hath done the work which he hath promiſed. This waiting patience is alſo called (by Chriſt himſelf) *The poſſeſſion of the ſoul* (Luke 21. 19.) *Poſſeſs ye your ſouls in patience.* What title ſoever we have to our own ſouls, we have no poſſeſſion of them without patience: As Faith gives us the poſſeſſion of Chriſt, ſo patience gives us the poſſeſſion of our ſelves: An impatient man is not in his own hand. And as waiting patience gives us the preſent poſſeſſion of our ſelves; ſo it will bring us to the poſſeſſion of all good things elſe that we ſtand in need of to make us happy. The Prophet pronounceth them bleſſed, who wait; every bleſſing is a good thing; but to be bleſſed is all good things; *not only is a bleſſing but bleſſedneſs the reward of a waiter. The Lord is a God of judgment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him* (Iſa. 30. 18.) Waiting is not only a duty, but a benefit, yea, our bleſſedneſs. And if any object, How is it bleſſedneſs, or ſo much as a ſingle bleſſing, to wait upon God under this notion, as a God of judgment? To have ſaid, *God is a God of mercy, bleſſed are they that wait for him*, might have taken upon the heart; but to ſay, *God is a God of judgment, bleſſed are they that wait for him:* How can that be? Is there any deſireableneſs in judgment?

I anſwer, Judgment is not there oppoſed to mercy (there's no bleſſedneſs in being near ſuch judgment.) We may conſider judgment in a threefold oppoſition.

Firſt, Judgment is oppoſed to anger and ſeverity (*Jer.* 10. 24.) *Correct me, O Lord, in judgment, not in thine anger:* It is a bleſſed thing to wait upon a God of judgment, in oppoſition to anger, or as judgment imports the golden bridle of moderation upon the paſſions and affections.

Secondly, Judgment is oppoſed to injuſtice: it is a bleſſed thing to wait upon a juſt God, who will certainly do us right; it is a miſery, one of the greateſt miſeries under the Sun, to wait upon unjuſt and unrighteous men; but how great a mercy is it to wait upon a juſt and a righteous God?

Thirdly, Judgment is oppoſed to folly, ignorance, and unadviſedneſs; thus God is a God of judgment, or wiſdom, and bleſſed are they that wait upon the wiſe; it is a vexation to wait upon raſh, fooliſh, heady men, who do they care not what, or know not what they do; but to wait upon a man, much more upon the God of judgment, who knows how to order and do all things, who hath the full compaſs of every cauſe within him, and will time every circumſtance to our beſt advantage (to wait upon this God, I ſay) is a high piece of happineſs: God being ſuch a God of judgment, *Bleſſed are they that wait for him*; and ſo bleſſed are they, that however he may put them to wait long, yet he at his coming will more then recompence all their waiting; as we find in the exultation of the Church (*Iſa.* 25.9.) *And it ſhall be ſaid in that day, Loe this is our God, we have waited for him, he will ſave us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoyce in his ſalvation.* Poſſibly ſome had ſaid then to the Church (as was ſaid continually to *David*, Pſal. 42. 3.) *Where is your God?* Ye have long looked for him, but he doth not yet appear. The Church having born thoſe reproaches long, ſees God coming at laſt, and then ſhe breaks forth in triumph, as if ſhe had held God forth in her hand, and cryes him up, *Loe this is our God, we have waited for him:* The words have a ſound of victory, yea, of many victories in them. They ſhall in the end overcome all difficulties, who can but overcome their own hearts to a patient waiting upon God: As true repentance for the evil we have done, ſo holy patience for the good we would receive, ſhall never be repented of.

And (to add that further) though, when (as it appeared here to *Job*) God in his providential actings, determines negatively, and ſpeaks it out by the manner of his workings, that his will is not to give, or do for us ſuch a thing, it ceaſes to be a Duty to wait for it; yet to lay down the Duty of waiting, or to throw it up at any time upon ſuch grounds as theſe four (which are the uſual grounds upon which it is laid down or thrown up) is extreamly ſinful, and a high contempt of God.

Firſt, It is extreamly ſinful to give over waiting upon God, as being unwilling to tarry his leiſure. 'Tis the prerogative of God, to date all times, as much as to do all things for us; our times are in his hand as well as our affairs; and he is the diſpoſer of all things, as in regard of the means, ſo alſo of their ſeaſons. Hence 'tis our duty to wait as a time, ſo all the dayes of our appointed time (how many ſoever they are, they are all of Gods appointment) till our change ſhall come, as *Job* profeſſed his reſolution to do (*Chap.* 14. 14.) The *Iſraelites* are charged (*Pſal.* 78. 41.) *For limiting the holy One of Iſrael:* How did they limit him? There is a twofold limiting of God: Firſt, To means, when we think we cannot be ſaved unleſs we are ſaved our own way. Secondly, There is a limiting of God to times, he muſt ſave us by ſuch a day, or elſe we cannot be ſaved: Thus the *Iſraelites* limited the holy One of *Iſrael*, and ſet bounds to him, whoſe Power and Wiſdom are immeaſurable. God may juſtly limit man; and man never doth juſtly, till he keeps within the limits of God: but it is not only a ſin, but a high preſumption, for man to limit God: Nor is it poſſible for man to break his own bounds more by any thing he doth, then by ſetting bounds to God, what, or when he ſhall do.

Secondly, It is exceeding ſinful to give over waiting on God for deliverance out of an affliction, becauſe we are either diſpleaſed with God who ſends it, or are angry at the affliction ſent. When God throws a ſtone at us, we ſhould ſtoop humbly, and taking it up, put it into our boſome (if we do ſo, though it look like a worthleſs Pebble, it will quickly change into a precious Pearl; however, we muſt) not like the Dog rage at it and bite it, which yet many do. Now they who are vexed at the affliction which God ſends, or at God himſelf, for ſending the affliction, theſe will never wait upon God for the removing of it. Such was the frame of that wretched King (2 *Kings* 6. 33.) who ſaid, *This evil is of the Lord, wherefore ſhould I wait on the Lord any longer?* As if he had ſaid, I will never wait for any kindneſs at his hand, who hath already uſed me thus unkindly: He that takes an affliction in ill part at the hand of God, will never expect good from him; or if he do, it muſt come very ſpeedily, or elſe his waiting is over. 'Tis not unlikely that this King, by the advice of the Prophet *Eliſha*, had waited a little, but he was ſoon weary; *Why ſhould I wait any longer?* There was reaſon enough why he ſhould, but his unbelief would not let him ſee what he ſaw, nor underſtand what himſelf had ſpoken: For the reaſon which he gave, why he would wait no longer, is the ſtrongeſt reaſon that can be given why he ſhould have waited longer, *This evil is of the Lord.* 'Tis true, that among men, they, from or of whom evils are, are uſually the unfitteſt to remove them: Men who wound are ſeldom skill'd at curing; but the Lord brings no evil, but what he can remove, nor doth he make any wound but what he can heal; yea, no Power nor Art in the World, can heal the wounds that he makes, or remove the evils which he brings, but his own. Hence the patient Believer cryes out with the Church (*Hoſ.* 6. 1.) Let us return to the Lord, yea, let us wait upon the Lord, *for he hath torn, and he will heal:* But the impatient unbeliever ſaith, Let us turn away from the Lord, let us wait upon the Lord no longer, for 'tis he that hath torn us, therefore ſurely he will not heal us. Grace and corruption may take up the ſame principles, but they draw concluſions from them as contrary as themſelves are.

Thirdly, It is exceeding ſinful to give over waiting, as thinking that God cannot help. Some ſhorten their patience by ſhortening the hand of God. That ſuch were the apprehenſions of the *Jews*, is more then probable by the Prophets Negative aſſertion (*Iſa.* 59. 1.) *Behold the Lords hand is not ſhortened that it cannot ſave.*

Fourthly, It is exceeding ſinful to give over waiting upon God, by turning aſide to ſinful wayes: Some find out (as they ſuppoſe) nearer wayes ro help themſelves, then by attending upon God; they like not (as ſuch have prophanely called them) thoſe *pious delayes*; and ſo over Hedge and Ditch they will, to the overtaking of their own ends. The Prophet *Jeremiah* deſcribes ſuch (*Chap.* 18. 12.) *And they ſaid, there is no hope*; or, our caſe is deſperate, all's loſt. What then? *But we will walk after our own devices, and every one do after the imagination of his evil heart:* The Lord had told them (*Verſ.* 11.) *Behold I frame evil againſt you, and deviſe a device againſt you.* But did the Lord deviſe a device, meerly to enſnare them, or did he frame evil againſt them only to undo them? No, his aim was their repentance, not their ruine, and therefore he adds in the ſame Verſe, *Return ye now every one from his evil wayes, and make your wayes and your doings good:* As if the Lord had ſaid, Though I am about to frame evil againſt you, yet do ye return to me, and all ſhall be well. How do they reſent this threatening and this Counſel? They grow deſperate upon it: And ſeeing God had brought them into ſuch ſtraits, they would get out as well as they could: And as he was deviſing devices againſt them, ſo they had devices of their own, and them they would follow. Thus they would not wait upon God for a remedy in the way of repentance for their old ſins, but they would provide themſelves a remedy by running into new ſins: They had a device in their heads which ſhould match the device of God.

Now what the Prophet ſubjoyns (*Verſ.* 13, 14, 15.) as a ſtrong redargution of that people who refuſed to wait upon God in that way, the ſame we may ſay to all thoſe who refuſe to wait upon God in any way. *The Virgin of* Iſrael (he calls her ſo, to mind her what ſhe ſhould be, not to commend her what ſhe was) *hath done a very horrible thing; will a man leave the Snow of* Lebanon, *which cometh from the rock of the field?* Or, *Will a man* (as our Margin hath it) *leave my fields for a rock, or for the Snow of* Lebanon? That is, Will any Traveller be ſo fooliſh, as to leave the plain fields, where he may paſs with eaſe and pleaſure, without let or hinderance, to climb over craggy Rocks, and precipitious Hills? Will he leave a beaten path, to go through vaſt Woods and deſolate Forreſts covered with Snow, where no track or footſteps are to be ſeen? Or (as it follows in that Verſe) *Shall the cold flowing waters which come from another place be forſaken?* Or, *Shall the cool running waters be forſaken for ſtrange waters?* That is, Will any man who hath freſh Fountain-water of his own at home, go to ſeek water in a ſtinking Ditch, in ſtanding Pools, and miery Puddles, when he is athirſt? Such is the choice or exchange which they make, who ceaſe waiting upon God in his wayes, and turn aſide for help to their own *crooked wayes, Stumbling* (as the Prophet ſpeaks at the fifteenth Verſe of the ſame Chapter) *in their wayes from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not caſt up*, or, *where no Cauſey is.* Though the hand or providence of God doth ſometimes bring his people (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 42. 16.) *By a way which they knew not, and leads them in paths that they have not known:* That is, into a way which they knew not, by any former teachings of men, or experiences of their own; yet his hand never leads them into any way, which is not caſt up, or which may not be made out, by ſome rule or example in the Word: To leave waiting upon God in his ordinary wayes, and to go in any extraordinary way which hath no ground in the Word, is purely to follow our own wayes, and to go after the imaginations of our evil hearts.

Job in this place apprehended it unſeaſonable for him to wait for thoſe worldly attainments and enjoyments which his Friends promiſed him; but he was not unwilling to tarry the Lords leiſure, nor was he diſpleaſed with God for afflicting him, nor did he ſay, God could not help him, much leſs did he turn from God to any wicked way to help himſelf, when he ſaid, *If I wait, the Grave is mine houſe.*

Secondly, Obſerve from it, *A good man may give up all worldly expectations.*

A Believer may in this ſence be an unbeliever, and lay down all his hopes in this life, of long life and of good dayes, of riches and temporal greatneſs: When Friends bid ſuch on their ſick Beds, *Be of good chear, we hope to ſee you abroad ſhortly; we hope God will raiſe you up again, they will even forbid thoſe comforts, and ſay, Do not intice us back into the World with theſe hopes, the Graves are ready for us, and we have made our bed in the darkneſs; it is not for us to look for life here, indeed to live to us is Chriſt, but to dye is gain.* A Believer can willingly part with all his earthly poſſeſſions for heavenly hopes, much more can he joyfully part with all his earthly hopes for the poſſeſſion of Heaven.

Thirdly, From theſe expreſſions, *The Grave is my houſe, I have made my bed in the darkneſs.*

Note, *A Believer looks upon death as a ſtate of reſt.*

As the whole houſe is a place of reſt compared with the World abroad; ſo the Bed is the ſpecial place of reſt (*Rev.* 14. 14.) *Bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them:* They ſhall follow their work no more, who are followed by their works. The Grave is the houſe and bed of the body to all who dye: Heaven is the houſe and reſt of the ſoul to all thoſe who dye in the Lord. Saints have here a reſt in their labours, they ſhall hereafter have a reſt from their labours.

Laſtly, Whereas the bed of death is made in darkneſs.

Obſerve, *There is nothing deſireable in death, as conſidered in it ſelf.*

A dark condition is the worſt condition: Darkneſs, which in Scripture ſignifies all evil, is a word good enough to expreſs the ſtate of death by: What deſireableneſs there is in Death, what pleaſures in the Grave, will appear further in thoſe Arguments which Death uſeth to invite us home to its houſe, the Grave, in the next Verſe, which tells us, our moſt lovely Companions, yea, our ſweeteſt and moſt endeared Relations there, are, Corruption and Worms.

Verſe 14. **I have ſaid to Corruption, Thou art my Father; and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and my Siſter.**

Hyperbolæ ſunt quibus ſignificat ſe omnem jam vitæ cogitationem abdicaſſe. Jun.

This Verſe is of the ſame ſence with the former; only here, *Job* breaks into an elegant variation of new metaphors, and hyperbolical expreſſions.

I have ſaid.] That is, I have (as it were) called to, and ſaluted the retinue and attendants of Death, as my friends and kindred: As I have made my bed in the Grave, and as that is my houſe, ſo now I am finding out my houſhold relations; I ſay to this, Thou art my Father; and to that, Thou art my Mother and Siſter.

קרא *Eſt clamare vocare appellare, & per electionem nominare: elegans proſopopœia, per quam* Job *tumulū alloquitur.* Bold.

The word which we render, *I have ſaid*, &c. ſignifies not barely to *ſay*, but to cry, or call out: I have called out to corruption: So Maſter *Broughton*, *To the pit I cry, O Father; O Siſter, O Mother, to the Worm:* Not barely, *I have ſaid*, but *I cry*; and not barely, *I cry Father to the pit*, but he adds alſo a note of exclamation, *O Father.*

Secondly, The word imports not generally a calling, or crying out, to any one that comes next, but to ſome ſpecial perſon, by way of election and choice, or to ſuch as we know well, and are acquainted with, as the terms of Father, Mother, and Siſter, imply.

Verbum קרא *ſignificat etiam occurrere alicui, nam occurrentem ſolemus ſalutatione vel interrogatione aliqua proprio nomine appellare.*

Further, The word ſignifies, not only to call aloud, and to call with election, but to go forth on purpoſe to call a Friend, or to invite him in: As when we ſee an acquaintance coming towards us, or our dwellings, we ſtep out to meet and welcome him, ſo the word may bear in this place: As if *Job* ſeeing death drawing toward him, had gone out, and ſaid, *O corruption my Father, O Worms my Mother, my Siſter,* welcome, welcome; ſuch an elegancy the word yields us.

I ſhall not here ſtay upon any anxious diſquiſition about the propriety of theſe relations, how *Job* calls corruption his Father, and the Worm his Mother and Siſter, or in drawing out compariſons about them; we are to look only to a general proportion, not to an exact propriety in theſe words; there's no need to make out parallels between corruption and a Father, or between Worms and a Mother, or a Siſter.

Only thus much may be aſſerted particularly.

Firſt, He ſpeaks thus to ſhew that he looked on death, not only not as an enemy, but not as a ſtranger. Death and he were well acquainted.

Secondly, He ſpeaks thus to ſhew, that death was not only not a ſtranger to him, but as one of his kindred: He was upon as fair terms with death, as with Father and Mother.

Vt oſtendat mortem ſibi in votis eſſe, cunctis illum amicitiæ & neceſſitudinis nominis compellat: Pined.

Thirdly, *Job* ſpeaks thus to ſhew, that he did not only look upon death as in a near relation to him, but as having a kind of delight and contentment in death: What is more ſweet to a man, who hath been a long journey, and is returning home, then to think that he is coming to his Father and Mother, his Brethren and Siſters? As Nature gives us Kindred by blood, ſo it is a cuſtom to adopt and ſtamp to our ſelves Kindred by kindneſs; one we call Father, and another we call Mother; one is our Brother, a ſecond is our Siſter, a third our Cozen, by the mutual tyes, or by the receits and returns of courteſie. Thus we are to take theſe compellations, as intimating with what ſpirit *Job* entertained the thoughts of death, even with no other then if he had been to fall into the embraces of Father, and Mother, and Siſter: He ſaid to corruption, as we ſhould ſay to Wiſdom (*Prov.* 7. 4.) *Say unto Wiſdom, thou art my Siſter, and call Underſtanding thy Kinſwoman*, That is, Acquaint thy ſelf with, and be familiar with Wiſdom, ſo ſhalt thou keep thy ſelf (which is both thy wiſdom and thy happineſs) a ſtranger, *from the ſtrange woman,* Verſ. 5.

Further, it may yet be enquired, what it is which *Job* calls *Corruption and the Worm,* **I have ſaid [to Corruption]** &c. What is this corruption? There are two opinions about it.

Firſt, Some interpret him ſpeaking to the corruption, and Worms, which had already ſeized upon his body; for his diſeaſes and ulcerous ſores had bred corruption and worms: As if he had ſaid, *I may well call corruption my Father, for I am already full of corruption, I may well call the Worm my Mother, my Siſter, for the Worms creep in and out at my ſores continually; my body is as if it had lain already in the Grave, full of corruption and Worms.*

שחת *Fovea, corruptio, quod in fovea corpus corrumpitur.*

Secondly, Others expound him ſpeaking to, and of, the corruption and Worms, which waited his coming into the Grave. The word in the Text, which we tranſlate *Corruption*, ſignifies alſo the Grave; becauſe bodies do not only corrupt in the Grave, but quickly turn to corruption. As ſoon as a body is dead, it is a carkaſs; and after it hath been a while a carkaſs, 'tis nothing but corruption: Hence ſome render it, not, *I have ſaid to corruption*, but *to the pit, or grave:* So Maſter *Broughton*, *To the pit I cry, O Father; to the worm, O Mother, O Siſter.* The Grave is ſo proper a place for corruption, that 'tis proper enough to expreſs corruption by the Grave.

And beſides thoſe Worms which are generated out of the putrefaction of mans body, there are Worms ready generated in the Grave to entertain us. Worms are the proper Inhabitants of the Grave; there they keep houſe, as Father, and Mother, and Siſter, to welcome and embrace ſuch as deſcend into it.

Maſter *Fox* reports of Doctor *Taylor*, a famous Martyr of Chriſt in Queen *Maries* time, who was burned at *Hadley* in *Suffolk*, that when he knew he ſhould ſuffer death by fire, he ſaid, *I have been deceived my ſelf, and I ſhall deceive many at* Hadley; when ſome hearing this, began to hope he would recant, and ſhrink from that profeſſion of the Goſpel which he had made: At laſt he explained himſelf, *I am a man of a very full fat body, which I had hoped, ſhould have been buried in* Hadley *Church-yard, but I ſee I am deceived; and there are a great number of Worms there, which might have had good chear upon my carkaſs, but I ſhall deceive them all, my body being to be burned.* The Earth breeds Worms in its own bowels; and our body, which at the beſt and alive are but refined earth, being once dead yield another race of Worms. *Job* may be ſuppoſed ſpeaking unto both, or either, *I have ſaid to the Worm, Thou art my Mother and my Siſter.*

We may hence Obſerve, *That ſome Believers are ſo far from fearing, that they are familiar with death.*

Other Texts in the former paſſages of this Book, have occaſioned like Obſervations; yet as often as this occaſion is renewed it will not be unprofitable to renew this Obſervation: To write the ſame things where we read the ſame things (yet the Reader will not find them the ſame) is not unprofitable.

I ſay, ſome Believers are familiar with death, I am far from ſaying, that he who is not, is no Believer: There are not in all the ſame degree of holineſs; though holineſs be the ſame in all; but a Believer may arrive at ſuch a compoſure of ſpirit, at ſuch a ſtature of holineſs, as not to fear death. There are ſome Believers, (and it is their ſin) who are but little acquainted with death, they ſeldom go out to the Grave, or look into the Pit they are going to; he that hath often converſed with death in the meditation (which is a Believers way) of the death of Chriſt, cannot be afraid to dye, if he know what the death of Chriſt means which he hath meditated upon. He that knows it throughly, may (as the Prophet ſpeaks in another caſe, *Iſa.* 11. 8.) *Play on the hole of this Aſp, and put his hand upon the den of the Cockatrice*; yea, ſuch a Believer may not only play and put his hand upon the Grave, which is the hole of this Aſp, and the den of this Cockatrice, but he can play with the Aſp it ſelf, and take up the Cockatrice in his hand; with this Aſp or Cockatrice he can ſport himſelf as with a Brother or a Siſter.

O how different are the thoughts of carnal men, and their words of death? How dreadfully do they ſpeak and think of the Grave? An unbeliever ſaith of the Grave, *It is a priſon, not a houſe; he finds no bed in darkneſs, 'tis to him a Dungeon; he ſaith to corruption, Thou art my foe, and to the Worms, ye are to me as Feinds and Furies:* He cannot bear the thought of them, much leſs their ſight and preſence. Saints ſpeak courtingly of death; there is a kind of holy courtſhip in the language of *Job*: *Agag* (1 *Sam.* 15. 32.) *came out to* Samuel *delicately*; for ſaid he, *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*: But he was deceived, for *Samuel* hewed him in pieces; and when he ſaid, the bitterneſs of death is paſt, he meant death was paſt. He did not believe, but that death would be bitter whenever it ſhould come; but he thought death was paſt for that time however, and ſo he came out delicately, he ſtood as a Courtier, yea, as a King before *Samuel*, becauſe he had eſcaped (as he ſuppoſed) that King of terrors. Thus the Saints come out delicately indeed, and court it, in the very face of the King of terrors, for they know the bitterneſs of death is paſt, though they were aſſured they muſt dye preſently: They do not ſay, *Death is paſt*, they know death will come, and they muſt dye, but the bitterneſs is paſt, the Gall and Wormwood is taken out; and upon this account they can ſay *to corruption, Thou art my Father, and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and Siſter.*

Thirdly, Note, *Corruption and Worms are the portion and companions of the dead.*

Only Jeſus Chriſt was exempt from this portion, who though he ſubmitted himſelf to death for ſinners, yet having no ſin in himſelf, he was not at all ſubject to death, nor was it *poſſible that he ſhould be holden of it*: He was the holy one, he had no corruption in his ſpirit, and therefore *his fleſh ſaw no corruption* (Acts 2. 31.) But as for all fleſh, they having corrupted all their wayes, their fleſh ſhall ſee corruption in the end.

Take two Corolaries from this.

Firſt, *Let no man glory in bodily beauty, in honours, or alliances.* Corruption will ſhortly ſeize upon the moſt beautiful body, Worms will crawl upon the ſmootheſt cheeks, upon the faireſt face, and into that mouth which now boaſteth great things, and ſpeaks ſo proudly; this earth muſt turn to earth, and then the greateſt Kindreds, and nobleſt Pedigrees, will be loſt or ſwallowed up in this, *Corruption is my Father, and the Worm my Mother, and my Siſter*: Man is corruptible while he lives, and when he dyes he is corruption. Every man living is but a Worm; Jeſus Chriſt, who abaſed himſelf to the loweſt condition of man, ſaith, *I am a worm and no man* (Pſal. 22. 6.) When man dyes, as he goes to the Worms, ſo he makes Worms; who would be proud of his fleſh, did he know that 'tis but corruption and worms once removed, and that it muſt ſuddenly move back again to corruption and worms.

Secondly, *Seeing death hath nothing of its own but darkneſs, corruption, and worms, which are all unpleaſing, and a regret to fleſh and blood, therefore live much in Chriſt, who only gives a remedy againſt all theſe evils*: If we live in the Grave of Chriſt, that will make the darkneſs of our Grave light, and the corruption of it ſweet unto us. He that upon good intereſt can ſay to Chriſt, *Thou art my Father, thou art my Brother, thou art my All*, can ſay rejoycingly to corruption, *Thou art my Father*; *and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and Siſter. Relation to Chriſt is ſo comfortable, that it overcomes the diſcomfort of our moſt unpleaſant relations.* That which raiſed the ſpirit of holy *Job* to theſe free complyances with death, was the light which he had (even in thoſe darker times) about the Redeemer, of which, as the nineteeth Chapter gives us a clear and an illuſtrious proof, ſo the next Verſe gives us more then an intimation.

Verſe 15. **And where is now my hope? And as for my hope who ſhall ſee it?**

He that chearfully queſtions, Where is my hope? puts it almoſt out of queſtion where his hope is.

Where is now my hope?] Had *Job* loſt his hope, or was it to ſeek? *David*'s enemies interrogate him (and that interrogatory was as a Sword in his bones, or as a Dagger at his heart) *Where is now thy God* (Pſal. 42. 10.) Their meaning was, Thy God is no where, he is not to be found, thou haſt none to help, none to deliver thee: *Job* puts the queſtion himſelf, and he puts it to himſelf, *Where is now my hope?* His meaning is not, that it was no where, but that it was not there where ſome would have it.

Hope may be conſidered two wayes, either as taken for a grace acting in us, or as taken for ſome good upon which that grace acts: *Job*'s queſtion concerns not hope as it is a grace acting in us; he that hath that hope knows where it is, and where it is once it abides for ever; *Hope is no remover*, it is an abiding grace (1 *Cor.* 13. 13.) *Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, theſe three*: Theſe are abiding graces; theſe muſt and ſhall keep houſe, not only in the Church militant in general, but in the ſoul of every true member of the Church: And if in reference to this hope, *Job* had queſtioned, *Where is now my hope?* He might have anſwered, It is in thy heart; the grace of hope dwells there. This grace of hope is no fading quality, but a ſetled power: Hope doth not alwayes act, but it alwayes is, where it ever was: It is not alwayes *a lively hope*, but it is alwayes *a living hope*. As *Eliphaz* checks *Job* (Chap. 4. 4.) *Is this thy hope?* So many a Believer deſerves to be checkt and chidden, becauſe his hope is not more ſtrong and ſtirring, becauſe his hope is ſo unlike hope, eſpecially ſo unlike that hope, which he ought to have, after ſo much experience. What? *Is this thy hope?* Is this all? You have talked of hope all this while; is this all you have to ſhew for it? This is a poor piece of hope, a hope unworthy of thee. Some good men may juſtly fall under this check; and whereas hope maketh not aſhamed, they may for a time be aſhamed of their hope; yet it is with them as with thoſe Trees of which the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 6. 13.) *Whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they have caſt their leaves*: So the holy ſeed ſhall be, and is the ſubſtance of it; and though for a time it appear not, and ſo may bear this queſtion, *Where is it?* yet it will appear again, and by bearing fruit, anſwer for it ſelf, *Here I am.*

Secondly, Take hope for that good upon which our hope is ſet, or for the object of hope. There is a twofold object of hope.

Firſt, Eternal, and heavenly.

Secondly, Temporal, and earthly.

Spiritual things are the hope laid hold upon (*Heb.* 6. 18.) *That by two immutable things in which it is impoſſible for God to lye, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us*: This Scripture teacheth us, that as there is a hope by which we lay hold, that's the grace of hope; ſo there is a hope upon which we lay hold, that's the good for which we hope. God himſelf, and all the good things of eternal life, which God hath promiſed, are this hope. This hope alſo *Job* had, and he knew where it was: As he knew he had the grace of hope in his heart, ſo that he had the choiceſt good of hope in Heaven; nor would he have parted with this hope for all the poſſeſſions in the World.

But as hope (whether in the object or in the actings of it) reſpects temporal, or earthly things; *Job* ſaith, *And now where is my hope?* That is, If I wait and hope about theſe things, my labour is loſt, my hopes are vain and vaniſhing, yea, already vaniſhed, as the next clauſe (which is of the ſame ſence with this, and therefore needs no explication) further ſheweth.

And for my hope, who ſhall ſee it?] That is, Who ſhall ſee that which you would have me hope for? You would perſwade me that I ſhall be a great man; if I ſhould take up ſuch a hope, who ſhall ever ſee it made good, who ſhall ſee it fulfilled? No man ſhall.

And becauſe the word which we tranſlate *Hope* in both parts of this Verſe, ſignifies alſo a *Congregation*, or the meeting of many things or perſons together: That firſt and great congregation of waters, or rather the congregating of thoſe waters is expreſſed by it (*Gen.* 1. 9.) and in a like ſence 'tis uſed concerning perſons (*Jer.* 3. 17.) Hence the whole Verſe is thus rendred, *And where now is my congregation? And as for my congregation, who ſhall ſee it?* As if he had ſaid, *If ye ask after my congregation, or family, 'tis in the Grave; there's all that I look for, there's my Father and Mother, there's my Siſters, and will any man go down with me into thoſe chambers of darkneſs to viſit my congregation, to ſee my family: This is all the family which I have in my eye, and whoſe eye elſe is greedy to ſee this?*

Ecquis me talem intuebitur, qualem me futurum dicitis? Bez.

קוה *Significat congregare & congregationem. Et ubi nunc congregatio mea, & congregationẽ meam quis intuebitur?* Bold.

I might from this Verſe turn back to that Obſervation lately given; That a true Believer is ſometimes able to make triumphant reports about the wrack of his worldly hope; he can ſay, Where is it? And who ſhall ſee it?

with dry eyes, when the will of God removes it out of his ſight.

David treating of the vanity of worldly things (*Pſal.* 39. 7.) concludes in the midſt of all his outward enjoyments, *And now Lord, what wait I for? Where is my hope?* Or, *What do I hope for?* ('Tis all one) *my hope is in thee*; not in the World, not after worldly things; he eaſily gave up his hope there: The more hope we have in God, the leſs we have in and about the creature. *Job* had much hope in God; but he had none, not only in, but none for the creature. All thoſe hopes were in his ſight, as himſelf was, dead or dying, and therefore fit only to be buried out of his ſight, as he ſpeaks in the next Verſe.

Verſe 16. **They ſhall go down to the bars of the pit, when our reſt together is in the duſt.**

Spes meæ, omnia mea; recte in plurali dicit, ſignificans non ſpem tantum ſibi ab illis propoſitam ſed & omnes alias ſpes hujus vitæ. Merc.

They ſhall go down.] Who? or what ſhall go down? There is no expreſs Relative in the Hebrew: *They*, that is (ſay ſome) *theſe hopes*: He ſpeaks in the Plural number, as if he had ſaid, *All my hopes about this life are going down to the pit.* The beſt of worldly hopes, and worldly things, are dying and periſhing; mine are to me as dead and periſhed.

Secondly, Others underſtand it of *Job* himſelf; for the word which we tranſlate *Barrs*, ſignifies alſo *the members of the body*: As if he had ſaid, *I my ſelf ſhall go down to the Pit, or Grave.*

בד *Vectes ſignificat, & ea omnia quæ velut vectes aliquid ſuſtentant.*

A third thus, *They ſhall deſcend upon the bars of the Grave*: The meaning is, *Ye ſhall quickly ſee me and all my worldly hopes, which ye ſo much ſpeak of, put together in a Coffin, and carryed out upon a Beir to the Grave for burial.*

Aliqui Rabbini ad ipſum Jobum *referunt, quod ipſius fulcbra,* i. e. *membra, brachia, vires, robur deſcendent. Vectibus ſepulchralibus deſcendent.* Jun. *Mox videbitis iſtas expectationes quas prædicatis, una cum corpore ferretro efferri in ſepulchrum.* Jun.

This going down to the bars of the Pit, according to our reading, imports, that he and his hopes ſhould deſcend to the lower parts of the earth, the Grave, and be buried there; the Pit would ſhut him in, and make him faſt enough. The Grave is a Priſon, and there are bars or bolts belonging to that Priſon which ſhut the Priſoners in; there's no breaking of that Priſon: The Decree of God is the bar of the Grave, and his purpoſe locks it up till the day which himſelf hath appointed for the reſurrection from the dead, and the judgment which is to follow. As the evil Angels are reſerved in chains of darkneſs to the Judgment of the great day; ſo are the bodies of men chained and barred down in the darkneſs of the Grave, till God ſends out the Arch-angel with the ſound of a Trumpet to ſummon them to his Bar.

Per irriſionem hæc dicta ſunt. Cajet.

Yet further, theſe words are interpreted as ſpoken in deriſion of thoſe overtures which his Friends made to him about worldly happineſs: As if he had ſaid, *You perſwade me that I ſhall have much good in the World: Very well, let it be ſo; but do you think that I can carry my Goods, my Houſes and Lands, my Silver and Gold, my Corn and my Wine, to make merry with in the Grave?* Shall I, and the greatneſs you promiſe me, live together in the Grave, and make our abode in darkneſs? The *Septuagint* ſeem to favour that ſence, rendring it, *Shall my Goods go with me to the Grave?* Or, Shall we deſcend into the duſt hand in hand? When I ſurrender this battered Fort into the hands of death, ſhall I march out with bag and baggage to theſe Subterranean dwellings? The Apoſtle affirms, That *we brought nothing with us into this World*; and (he doth more then affirm) *It is certain* (ſaith he) *we can carry nothing out* (1 Tim. 6. 7.) And therefore what doth it avail a dying man to tell him of riches, ſeeing when he dyes he muſt leave all his riches.

An bona mea mecum ad infernos deſcendent, aut pariter ſuper pulverem deſcendemus.

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates plainly thus, *To the midſt of the Grave all ſhall deſcend, when we ſhall go down together in the duſt.* From which our reading of the latter clauſe varies but a little.

When we ſhall reſt together in the duſt.] The word which we expreſs by *reſt*, is derived by ſome, from a root ſignifying to deſcend, or go down; hence the difference of tranſlation. The Hebrew particle *(im)* which we render *When*, ſignifies alſo *For*, or *Foraſmuch*: Further, it is ſometimes taken conditionally, for *If*, as alſo interrogatively for (*utrum*) *whether*; according to all which acceptions, this clauſe hath undergone a variety of reading.

But I paſs them by, and keep to our own, *When our reſt together is in the duſt*, or, *for as much as we ſhall reſt together in the duſt.* Of this reſt I have ſpoken before (*Chap.* 3. 17.) *There the weary be at reſt*, thither I refer the Reader: We may alſo take *Job*'s ſence in this place, by that which he ſpeaks ſo clearly out to this point (*Chap.* 30. *Verſ.* 23.) *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the houſe appointed for all living.* I ſhall not ſtay here to draw out Obſervations; matter of this purport, about the certainty of, and about our reſt in death, having occurred heretofore: All that I ſhall add for the cloſe of this Verſe and Chapter, ſhall only be an offer towards the reſolution of a doubt, which may ariſe upon the whole matter of *Job*'s continued reſolves for death, and his refuſals of any entertainment of the hopes of life.

Hence it may be queſtioned, Did not *Job* ſin in giving up his hope, and in refuſing to be comforted when his Friends, wiſe and godly men, laboured to aſſure him of deliverance?

I anſwer, Firſt, *Job* was willing to be comforted, but he did not like their way of comforting, which was indeed a wounding; for the promiſes which they made him, did all along carry an implication of his guilt; they never promiſing him any deliverance, but upon the ſuppoſition of his repentance from thoſe wickedneſſes, with which they charged him; whereas he utterly denyed their charge in the ſence which they laid againſt him.

Secondly, I anſwer, We cannot altogether acquit *Job* from blame, in judging his ſtate ſo deplorable and remedileſs. For though with an eye to the creature, and all ſecond cauſes, there was no probability, or poſſibility for his recovery, yet *Job* ſhould have raiſed his hopes upon the Power and All-ſufficiency of God; he might have remembred, that as his affliction was extraordinary, and the hand of God very viſible in it; ſo his deliverance alſo might have been as extraordinary, and that God could have put forth as ſtrong, and as viſible a hand to reſtore him, as he did to caſt him down: 'Tis ſaid of *Abraham* (*Rom.* 4. 18, 19.) that *he againſt hope, believed in hope*; nothing appeared for the ſupport of his hopes, yet *Abraham* did not ſay, *Where is my hope?* Or why ſhould I wait for Children? *He conſidered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old; neither yet the deadneſs of* Sarah*'s womb*: Theſe natural impediments came not to his mind, while he had a word from the Lord of nature, *He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving glory to God.* But we may ſay of *Job* (from the continual tenour of his own anſwers) that he conſidered his own body as dead too much, and ſo attained not to *Abraham*'s ſtrength of Faith.

Yet we have three things to ſay for him: Firſt, There was a great difference between his caſe and *Abraham*'s; *Job* had no ſuch ground of Faith as *Abraham* had; *Abraham* received a ſpecial, yea, an abſolute promiſe from God, that he ſhould have a Son; but *Job* received only a conditional promiſe from man, grounded upon the general promiſes of God, that he ſhould be reſtored: This conſideration abates much from the Objection of his unbelief; though it cannot be denyed, but his Faith might and ſhould have riſen higher upon the power of God, who as he was all-ſufficiently able, ſo he did afterwards actually raiſe him up.

Secondly, The deſign of God being in *Job*'s example to ſet forth a pattern of Patience; as his deſign was in *Abraham*'s example to ſet forth a pattern of Faith; he was pleaſed to let *Job*'s Faith run it ſelf out about ſpirituals and eternals, not minding temporals, that ſo his patience might have a perfect work in bearing the full weight of his affliction to the end, while his Faith did not ſo much as put under a little finger to eaſe him with the leaſt belief, that it ſhould (as to this life) be taken off, or have an end.

Laſtly, (As 'twas hinted) *Job* had much Faith to ſome purpoſes, though none to this; he had a full truſt in God, though he ſhould kill him; but he had no truſt that God would not kill him: he believed God loved him while he did afflict him, though he did not believe that God would deliver him from his afflictions. *As no mans Faith works alike at all times; ſo 'tis rare that any mans Faith works alike to all things:* Some who believe and hope mightily for the things of Heaven, have but little, either Faith or Hope for earthly things: Not becauſe a Faith which ſerves for Heaven, is not enough ('tis rather more then enough) to ſerve for Earth: But becauſe moſt of thoſe whoſe Faith is ſtrong and much enlarged for Heaven, take ſo much ſatisfaction there, and are there ſo much at home, that they account themſelves Pilgrims and Strangers here, and are not much mindful (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 11. 15.) or deſirous of their earthly Countrey and concernments, *What we do not much deſire to have, we do not much believe (though we believe) that we ſhall have it. A full ſoul,* ſaith *Solomon, loatheth the Honey-comb:* Thoſe ſouls which are full of Heaven (though they do not loath, yet they) are not hungry after (though they can thankfully receive and enjoy) any *Honey-comb* of this World. *No man having drunk old Wine, ſtraightway deſireth new, for he ſaith the old is better* (Luke 5. 39.) Doubtleſs *Job* had drunk the old Wine of Gods favour and love in the Redeemer, and ſo his thirſt was much ſlacked, if not totally quenched towards the new Wine of a temporal reſtauration. And hence we may not only charitably, but more then probably conclude, That it was not for want of Faith, that *Job* did not believe or hope for what his Friends promiſed him, but becauſe he had employed his Faith upon better and more pleaſing promiſes.

Thus *Job* hath finiſht his anſwer to the ſecond charge of *Eliphaz:* And (through the help of Chriſt) ſomewhat is here tendered for the illuſtration and expoſition of it. His other two Friends, *Bildad,* and *Zophar,* ſtand ready to enter the Liſts with him, and to renew their charge; what they ſaid, and what anſwer they received, ſhall (if God continue life and ſtrength, with theſe peaceable opportunities) in convenient time be preſented to publick view.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
EIGHTEENTH, NINETEENTH, TWENTIETH, TWENTY-FIRST, AND TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER:

To thoſe eſpecially of this *CITY*, who have been the Movers, and continue the Promoters of this WORK.

G*OD only wiſe, who cauſed his holy Word to be written aforetime for our learning and inſtruction, hath in all times appointed the Miniſtry of expounding and Preaching his Word, that it might be the better fitted for inſtruction: The buſineſs of the Expoſitor (or of the Preacher expounding) is to collect and give out the ſence and meaning of the Word aright: The buſineſs of the Preacher (or of the Expoſitor preaching) is to divide the ſence and meaning of the Word aright, giving to every one that portion which is proper to him; his proper* Doctrine (*of Truth*) *his proper* Reproof (*of Error*) *his proper* Correction (*of evil Manners*) *his proper* Inſtruction (*about holineſs of Converſation*) *and all in* Righteouſneſs. *While* Jeſus Chriſt himſelf *was fulfilling his Miniſtry here on earth, he performed not only the office of a* Preacher (*Luke* 4. 18, 19, 20, &c.) *but of an* Expoſitor *alſo* (*Luke* 24. 27.) Beginning at *Moſes* and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf. *The Scripture is indeed its own Expoſitor; dark Texts receive light from clearer, and thoſe which are ſo plain that they need no Comment, are a Comment to thoſe that need. But though the Word of God (as to truth and light) be (as God himſelf is)* ſelf-ſufficient, *and carrieth in ſome one or other part of it, the interpretation of other parts; yet as to man, there is much need of an Interpreter, for the due accommodation of any one part to the interpretation of another: For the Scripture is ſuch an Expoſitor of its own hard Places, as it is a Judge of all hard Queſtions and Controverſies, ariſing from, or grounded upon it: That is to ſay,* A Normal, not a Perſonal Expoſitor. *And therefore as* the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good gift, and every perfect gift, *hath beſtowed This very good and perfect gift, His holy Word upon us; ſo he hath furniſhed ſome with gifts, and ſent them forth as Interpreters of it; yea, he hath ſent forth his* Holy Spirit, *who is not only (as* Elihu *ſpeaks (in this Book) of ſome choice-ſpirited man)* An Interpreter, one among a thouſand, *but the only un-erring Interpreter. For as the Word of God is the only un-erring* Normal Expoſitor *of it ſelf, ſo the* Holy Spirit of God, *whom Jeſus Chriſt hath promiſed to ſend, and of whom Chriſt hath ſaid,* He ſhall take of mine, and ſhew it unto you, *is the only un-erring* perſonal Expoſitor *of the Word; yet the* Holy Spirit *(as I may ſay) in perſon ſeldom doth it; but uſually conveyeth the light of the Word unto man, by ſuch men as himſelf hath firſt enlightned.*

There want not ſome who would have the Word ſet nakedly before all, that ſo every man waiting for the light of the Holy Spirit, may make his own apprehenſion the interpretation of it; and 'tis true, that nothing is an interpretation to any man beyond or beſides what himſelf apprehends; yet the apprehenſions of this or that man, may be very ſerviceable unto many others, and are often the means which God uſeth and bleſſeth for the leading of their underſtandings into the way both of truth and holineſs. Nor can they who are thus led, be therefore juſtly charged to ſee, ſpiritually, with other mens eyes, becauſe others have been inſtrumental for the opening of their eyes; or that they ſee by other mens light, becauſe others *have been helpful in bringing them from darkneſs unto light; no more then they can be charged to ſee, corporally, with other mens eyes, whoſe eye-ſight hath been cured (as a ſecond cauſe) by the ſkill of man; or, that they ſee by other mens light, who ſaw nothing till a window was opened to them. For the light which any man brings and holds forth, becomes every mans proper light, who is enabled to receive it and ſee by it. The Goſpel is held forth to thouſands to whom yet it is hid;* the God of this world having blinded the eyes of their mind, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto (or irradiate) them, *that is, ſhine into them. So that every ſoul muſt have an internal eye or light given him, before he can ſavingly receive that light which is externally offered him; and whoſoever thus receives the light offered, makes that as much his own (in his own capacity) as it was the offerers. And foraſmuch as there are many* unſtable and unlearned *ones (ſo the Apoſtle* Peter *expreſſeth them,* 2 Pet. 3. 16.) who *(at leaſt preſuming to ſee without, if not ſcorning to ſee by the light which others offer)* wreſt not only the Epiſtles of *Paul,* in which *(as the Apoſtle* Peter *there affirmeth)* are many things hard to be underſtood, but all other Scriptures to their own deſtruction, *it cannot be reaſonably judged a diſſervice either to God or to his people, to endeavour (in the utmoſt improvement of gifts and light received) a right interpretation of them. And though we dare not offer our interpretations under the title of* Infallible, *and ſo challenge a* dominion over the faith *of others, yet we may be helpers both of their joy and knowledge. We are commanded to* try the Spirits whether they be of God *(1 John 4.1.) We muſt not reject all Spirits, becauſe poſſibly many are not of God. The Spirit of God is above all trial; but there are Spirits (even the Spirits or ſpiritual gifts of all men) which muſt be ſubmitted to trial, and* ſtand Probationers. *And becauſe they are to be tried, therefore it followeth that they are to be uſed; for to what purpoſe ſhould that be tried which is not to be uſed? To try a thing or perſon, doth indeed ſuppoſe that there may be a failing in either; but it doth not at all infer, that there is no uſe of either, but rather that both are uſeful: And if upon trial much be found which is unſound, and ſo to be refuſed, yet that which is ſound muſt be retained. Thus the Apoſtle directs* (1 Theſ. 5. 21.) Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good.

What is preſented in the following Expoſitions, is not the impoſing of a ſence either upon the Word of God, or upon the underſtandings of men, but an humble tender of what the Expoſitor underſtands as the ſence of it, to the trial of all.

Some, I know, begin to ſay, that there is, or at leaſt, that ſhortly there will be little or no need at all of ſuch poor helps as theſe: Surely it will be the rejoycing of all who honour Jeſus Chriſt, and love his appearing, *to ſee that day, not ſo much becauſe they may then take their eaſe, and reſt from theſe labours (for though the ſervants of* Chriſt, *through the* infirmity of their fleſh, *are often wearied at their work, yet through the ſtrength of his Grace, they ſhall not be weary of it) but becauſe when that which is imperfect, or (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks,* 1 Cor. 13. 10.) in part ſhall be done away, then that will be come which is perfect. *Only my fear is that ſome are ſo buſie in decrying theſe things (which we readily acknowledge to have many imperfections in them) that for haſte they would do them away (in their own and others wrong) before that which is perfect be come unto us.* Propheſie ſhall ceaſe, and knowledge *(of this ſize, and as now attained)* ſhall be done away; *but when theſe ceaſe, in order to God's appointment, thoſe weakneſſes and wants in the ſons of men ſhall ceaſe alſo, to cure and ſupply which, they were appointed by God. How happy and glorious a thing were it, if we could ſee this Age approve it ſelf ſuch as had no need to be taught? or that the ſymptomes of the ſame ſickneſſes and impotencies both of Judgment and Practice did not now diſcover themſelves as formerly? How many are there who ſpeak much of the* holy and bleſſed Spirit *(concerning whom we can neither ſpeak nor boaſt too much) who yet* walk after the fleſh? *How many diſcourſe high (concerning which all our diſcourſes fall too low) of thoſe* new Heavens and of that new Earth wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs, *who yet defile and pollute the old with their unrighteouſneſs? Where almoſt can we behold the Image of that Glory which we ſhould continually wait for, ſtampt upon the wayes of men? And while the actings of men are every where thus low and earthly, doth the age look like that which is either actually above, or hath near out-grown teaching? As for my ſelf, I deſire (ſhould I live to that day) when my Lord and Maſter cometh, to be found* thus doing. *It is dangerous to lay down or depart from the practice of known duties, upon the* *expectation of further priviledges; Or to ſay, we need not now do that which ſhortly (poſſibly very ſhortly) we ſhall need do no more. Each ſtate hath its proper rules and helps, and to them we muſt ſubmit, till we are removed out of ſuch a ſtate. 'Tis no wiſdom for a dim-ſighted man preſently to throw away his Spectacles, though he be aſſured that within a while his eye-ſight ſhall be cleared.*

Chriſtian Reader, *let you and I be not only contented, but thankful that we may behold* the Glory of the Lord in theſe Glaſſes, *till himſelf lead us into his Glory, and give us the Top-ſtone of all Perfections,* to ſee face to face. *The furtherance of ſouls in the way to this Glory, is the deſign of this Work, which now by the aſſiſtance of God, is advanced half way; as for the other half (ſeeing no man can boaſt of to morrow, or knoweth what a day may bring forth) I can only ſay, that it is in my heart, if the Lord continue life and ſtrength with the Call hitherto afforded, to advance with what ſpeed I can (though I confeſs the beſt of my ſpeed is but ſlowneſs) towards the finiſhing of that alſo. The travel of this ſixth Stage, I leave with you, and both you and it to the bleſſing, and under the ſhadow of the Almighty, in whom I am,*

Jan. 3. 1652.

Your very Affectionate Friend and

Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations

UPON THE
EIGHTEENTH, NINETEENTH, TWENTIETH
AND
TWENTY FIRST
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of

JOB.

CHAP. XVIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Then anſwered Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and ſaid;*

How long will it be, ere you make an end of words? Mark, and afterwards we will ſpeak.

Wherefore are we counted as Beaſts; and reputed vile in your ſight?

He teareth himſelf in his anger: ſhall the earth be forſaken for thee? and ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?

E*LIPHAZ* having finiſhed, *Bildad* begins a ſecond diſpute with *Job*; *Then anſwered* Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and ſaid.* Yet he rather reproves then anſwers; and returns invectives more then reaſons. *Bildad* ſtrikes here again upon the ſame ſtone, at which himſelf and his friends had ſtumbled before. His whole diſcourſe falls into three parts.

First, We have his Preface.
Secondly, The body of his Speech.
Thirdly, He winds up, and draws all together into a brief Concluſion.

His Preface is laid down in the four former verſes of this Chapter.

The body of his diſcourſe extends it ſelf from the fifth verſe incluſively to the end of the twentieth, in which his general ſcope is to deſcribe the miſerable condition of a wicked man: and he doth it under a threefold conſideration, as a threefold gradation of his miſery.

Firſt, In his life.
Secondly, In his death.
Thirdly, After death.

So that living, dying, and dead, he is miſerable, and therefore altogether miſerable.

The concluſion of his diſcourſe is contained in the laſt verſe, in which he gives us the ſtrength of what he had ſaid, and re-affirms it; *Surely ſuch are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.*

His general deſign and ſcope is to convince *Job* that he was a wicked man, becauſe he ſuffered thoſe things which none but a wicked man (according to his opinion) ever did, or ſhould ſuffer. For the proof of this he proceeds in his former method, bringing nothing new for the matter, no new argument, no new *medium*, either to confirm his own poſition, or to infirm the opinion of *Job*; but cloathing his former reaſons in a new dreſs, he gives us a very lively and pathetical deſcription of the eſtate of a wicked man; upon which ſubject he had treated in the eighth Chapter. Only two differences appear between this and his firſt diſcourſe.

Nova hic nulla: eſt tamen oratio Allegoriis & Metaphoris illuſtribus improborũ clades oculis ſubjiciens. Merl.

Firſt, At the eighth Chapter he ſets out the happineſs of a godly man in oppoſition to the miſerable eſtate of the wicked; here he leaves out that part.

Secondly, At the eighth Chapter he uſeth many arguments to move *Job* to repent, and turn to God. He leaves out that work alſo here, not ſo much as once mentioning repentance, or exhorting him to return to God; as if he either thought it too late, or that *Job's* obſtinacy was remedileſs, and the wound both of his outward and inward ſtate incurable.

The firſt part or preface is ſpent in reproof, and we may obſerve five things for which *Bildad* reproveth *Job*.

Firſt, He reproveth him for *wording it*, or for talkativeneſs, at the beginning of the ſecond verſe; *How long will it be ere you make an end of words.*

Secondly, He reproveth him of inadvertency, and careleſneſs, in the middle of the ſecond verſe; *Mark*, &c. As if he had ſaid; *You have been heedleſs all this while, you have not well attended what we have been about*; *Mark, and afterwards we will ſpeak.*

Thirdly, He chargeth him with contemptuous thoughts, and an irreverent eſtimation of his friends: (*verſ.* 3.) *Wherefore are we counted as beaſts, and reputed vile in your ſight?* Thou haſt not only numbred us with, but below the loweſt of the people; Thou either lookeſt upon us as if we had forfeited our reaſon and were not men, or had loſt our integrity, and ſo were the worſt of men.

Fourthly, He chargeth him with fury and impatience in the beginning of the fourth verſe; *He teareth himſelf in his anger*; As if he had ſaid; *As thou haſt torn our reputation, ſo thy own peace*; *thou art uncivil to us, and a torture to thy ſelf.*

Fifthly, He chargeth him with inſolency and boldneſs towards God himſelf in the latter part of the fourth verſe; *Shall the earth be forſaken for thee, and ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?* What! muſt God work wonders, and turn the world upſide down for your ſake? Doſt thou think thy ſelf a man ſo extraordinary, that the ordinary providences and diſpenſations of God, will not ſerve thy turn? *Shall the earth be forſaken for thee?* &c. Theſe are the ſteps of *Bildad's* angry addreſs to *Job*; *Then anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid.*

Verſ. 2. **How long will it be ere you make an end of words?** &c.

There is ſome variety of conjecture who is here intended, or to whom *Bildad* directs his ſpeech.

For the original is plural, as if he were not ſpeaking to a ſingle perſon, but to a multitude, *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* And it is queſtioned upon that ground, whether *Bildad* ſpake to *Job* alone or no.

Firſt, Some conceive, that *Bildad's* diſcourſe aims at *Job*, in comfort with *Eliphaz*, who ſpake before, as if *Bildad* had been angry with them both; becauſe *Eliphaz* and he holding out ſo long a diſpute, had hindred him from unburdening his mind, and offering his opinion; *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* As if he had ſaid, *Will you two have all the talk, ſhall not I and my brother be ſuffered to ſpeak our judgments? How long will it be?* Thus he is ſuppoſed to grow angry, not only with *Job*, but with his friend.

Secondly, Others think that *Bildad* ſpake only to his friends and companions in that diſpute, and not to *Job* at all; as if he had altogether diſliked the courſe which they had taken for *Job's* conviction; *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* As if he had ſaid; *Ye have not hit the point, nor ſtated the queſtion right, ye do but ſpeak words all this while, ye are not yet upon the matter.* Others make it out thus; *Why do you wrong your ſelves ſo much, and diſparage your wiſdom to talk with ſuch a man as this* Job *is? A man of ſo little reaſon, and of ſo much paſſion; a man ſo obdurate in and addicted to his own way; a man ſo high in and ſtiff to his own conceit: do ye not perceive that ye labor in vain, that your words periſh into air; and leave no impreſſion upon this hardned man? doth he not caſt your counſels behind his back, and refuſe all your advices? therefore be ye adviſed, give over, make an end of words.* Which way ſoever we take it, whether *Bildad* ſpeak to *Job* in conſort with *Eliphaz*, or only to his friends, the heat of his ſpirit breaks out at his lips. And his own words proclaim, if not his pride, yet his impatience, while he ſaith, *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?*

Miror de veſtra imprudentia, quod cũ perſpicuum ſit, vos inventũ verba proferre & laterem lavare, huic homini duræ cervicis ſatisfacere conamini. Bold.

Hence Note, *Long diſputes kindle paſſions.*

In thoſe acts wherein reaſon ſhould do all, paſſion would do moſt, and comonly doth too much; hence, inſtead of arguing we fall to inveighing, and for real convictions give perſonal provocations. Moſt are ſo immoderate in diſputation, that they need a moderatour, as much to quiet their ſpirits, as to ſtate their queſtions and opinions. *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.*27.17.) that, *As Iron ſharpeneth Iron, ſo a man ſharpeneth the countenance of his friend.* When we whet one Iron upon another, the edge grows keen; thus a man ſharpeneth the countenance of his friend. The word that we tranſlate *countenance*, ſignifies alſo *anger*, or paſſion, becauſe anger quickly appears in the face or countenance. Hence ſome render the Proverb, *As Iron ſharpeneth Iron, ſo a man ſharpeneth the anger of his friend.* He ſtirs up his paſſion, till he grows as keen as a knife, yea as a razor: oppoſition ſharpeneth the ſpirit, and ſome have been ſo ſharpened by it, that they come to ſharps indeed, and when they have long contended by words, have fallen to blows.

This carries a fair ſence, yet I conceive that cleareſt, which reſtrains theſe words to the perſon of *Job* alone. But then the query will be why he ſpeaks in the plural number, *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?*

Some anſwer, *Bildad* ſpeaks to *Job* in the plural number, for honours ſake, and in reverence to his perſon. I find very little reaſon for that, conſidering he ſpeaks of him at ſo low a rate all the Chapter over.

Honoris gratia. Cajet.

Secondly, One of the Ancients tells us, *Bildad* ſpake in the plural number, becauſe he thought *Job* was poſſeſt with an evil ſpirit; That evil ſpirit in the Goſpel, being asked his name, anſwered, *It is Legion, for we are many.* Had *Job* been poſſeſſed with an evil Spirit, he might well have been ſpoken to as *many*: I am ſure, as more then *a Good many.* But I paſs that.

Pravo ſpiritu comitatus. Bed.

Thirdly, It is conceived that *Bildad* ſpeaks plurally, becauſe *Job* had his aſſiſtants, ſeconds, and abettors in that diſpute, who did ſometimes put in a word, and help him at a dead lift.

Fourthly, I conclude, that he ſpeaks to *Job* alone, in a word of the plural number, according to the common and familiar uſage or *idiom* of the Jewiſh Language, rather then from any ſpecial reſpect intended to his perſon, or the plurality of his Aſſiſtants; *How long will it be ere you make an end of words?*

Quod cum ſolo Jobo *diſputans illum appellet numero multitudinis potius ad familiarem linguæ Hebrææ conſuetudinem, quã ad illius honoris grave aliquod momentum referendum eſt.* Pined.

The matter of this firſt clauſe, hath been opened upon thoſe words of *Zophar* (*Chap.* 11.2, 3.) *Should not the multitude of words be anſwered? and ſhould a man full of talk be juſtified?* Where 'twas ſhewed, that words without matter, ayery, empty diſcourſes are very burdenſom to an underſtanding ear: *How long will it be ere you make an end of words?* There is the firſt charge, talkativeneſs or unprofitableneſs in his ſpeech.

His ſecond charge is careleſneſs, and neglect of what his friends were about to ſpeak, or had formerly ſpoken.

Mark, and afterwards we will ſpeak.

Some interpret it ironically, as calling for his direction, not as deſiring his attention; *Inſtruct us, and then we will ſpeak.* As if he ſhould ſay, *Yes, do, preſcribe to us what we ſhall ſay, put matter into our heads, and words into our mouthes; you were beſt take upon you to be our Teacher, and Maſter, as if nothing could be right, but that which you direct.* But the word which we tranſlate to *mark*, doth not

Inſtruite ut poſtea loquamur quod an tu nobis loquendi formulas præſcribis? nec quicquam recte dictum cenſebitur niſi tu id probaveris.

intend direction to others, but attention in our ſelves; and not ſo much the attention of the ear, as of the mind, and heart, when the ſoul as it were ſits upon a buſineſs, with its whole ſtrength, and puts out all its powers, to what it is about: *Underſtand*, or *mark*, *and afterwards we will ſpeak*. Now as the former clauſe was interpreted, either in reference to the friends of *Job*, or to *Job* himſelf, ſo is this alſo.

בין *ſignificat propriè intrinſecus mente conſiderare, & animū certa diſpoſitione intendere.* Merc.

They who expound *Bildad* in the former part reproving his friends, give the ſence thus: *Mark, and afterwards we will ſpeak*. As if he had ſaid; *O my friends, ceaſe to utter your thoughts inconſiderately, ſpeak no longer what comes next, but mark, ſit down, and conſider what you have to ſay, let us mark, and afterwards we will ſpeak.* Thus he reproves their raſhneſs, *as not having attended their own deſign, nor the intendment of* Job *in his foregoing anſwers. Elihu's* zeal breaks out into ſuch Language both againſt *Job* and his three friends (*Chap.* 32. 3.) *Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the ſon of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: againſt Job was his wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God. Alſo againſt his three friends was his wrath kindled; becauſe they had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job. Job's* friends found many anſwers, yet *Elihu* ſaith, they had found no anſwer; their anſwers were not judicious, or convincing (as he conceived) they did not hit the hing of the controverſie: Such anſwers are no anſwers, unleſs we anſwer to purpoſe, we anſwer not at all.

Quis ſit diſputationis cardo nō ſatis attenditis. Bold.

In which ſenſe *Caiphas* reproves the aſſembly of the Phariſees (*Joh.* 11. 49.) when they ſate in counſel againſt Chriſt; and took into conſideration what was beſt to do with him, who had done ſo miracles; *You know nothing at all, nor conſider that it is expedient that one man ſhould die, &c.*

From this expoſition (taking the Text as referring to all his friends,) Obſerve

Deliberate conſideration muſt go before ſpeaking.

We ſhould firſt mark, and afterward ſpeak. Every word ſhould ſtay a while in the heart before it come at the tongue. So, nature ſeems to dictate; who (as we ſee in the fabrick of the body,) hath ſeated the tongue, and the heart at a great diſtance, that ſo we might take time to mould our words in our thoughts, and meditate our ſelves before we adviſe others. And leaſt the tongue, (as Naturaliſts alſo obſerve) ſhould be too nimble at its work, it hath a double hedge, or wall, one of teeth, another of lips to keep it in. The Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.*1.19.) gives this counſel; *Be ſwift to hear, and ſlow to ſpeak.* Some ſlowneſs of ſpeaking is no impediment, but the ornament of ſpeech. There is an uncomely ſlowneſs of ſpeech, ſuch as *Moſes* complained of (*Exod.*4.10.) Some have hearts and heads full of rich and rare commodities, who yet want utterance. But it is not only a duty, but our commendation to have a copie of our words, fairly written in our hearts, before we utter them at our tongues.

Non intelligis O Job; *hinc tuis reſponſionibus ſaltas extra chorum, aliud namq; nos agimus, aliud tu reſpondet.* Pined. *Surdo fabulā narrare.*

Again, As theſe words are applied to *Job*, *Mark, and then we will ſpeak*: As if he had ſaid; *O Job, we are not at all underſtood, no, nor well attended by thee; now do thy part, and we will do ours.*

Obſerve, *It is in vain to ſpeak till men hear and compoſe themſelves to underſtand.*

Who would ſpeak to him that hath no ears, or to him that hath not an attentive ear? while we ſpeak to ſuch, we do but tell Stories to a deaf man. He that hath an ear, muſt have a heart in his ear, elſe he heareth not. Some ſleep at the Word with their eyes open, they ſleep with a kind of attention; though they hear all, yet they mark little, and do nothing of that which they have heard: Such, when the Sermon is ended, may tell you ſomewhat of their own waking dream, but they cannot tell you a word, to purpoſe, of the moſt working doctrine. The Apoſtle exhorts to attend after we have heard (*Heb.*2.1.) which ſhews a double attention: Firſt, An attention while we hear; Secondly, an attention to what we have heard. It is in vain to ſpeak, if there be not both theſe attentions. *Therefore we ought to give the more earneſt heed, or to mark the things that we have heard.* Now, if we muſt mark the things that we have heard, ſurely we muſt mark things as we hear them: if we miſs the firſt, we can never reach the latter; if we do not mark as we hear, we cannot mark the things that we have heard, that is, conſider, and enter into a due meditation of them. Marking is properly a work within; hearing is a work without. The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.*48.13.) calls us to mark the Bulwarks of *Zion: Tell the Towers thereof, mark ye well her Bulwarks.* The phraſe is very ſignificant, *put your hearts upon her bulwarks*; ſo the Hebrew. Now as you are to mark the Towers, and Bulwarks of *Zion*, by putting your hearts upon her Bulwarks, that is, by conſidering how many defences God hath for *Zion*, and *Jeruſalem*, how many wayes of protection he hath for his people; This is the putting of our hearts upon *Zions* Bulwarks. Thus we ought to put our hearts upon the word of God, the voice that ſounds in *Zion*. This is our marking it. Every Miniſter may ſay to his hearers, as *Bildad* to *Job*, *Mark, and then we will ſpeak.* Words exciting attention, are as profitable, as words giving inſtruction and exhortation. This is the ſecond fault he chargeth *Job* with, An un-attentive ſpirit, to what was ſpoken.

The third is,

Verſ. 3. **Wherefore are we accounted as beaſts, and reputed vile in your ſight?**

Vulgari dicterio beſtiā vocamus hominē ſtupidum. Druſ.

Wherefore are we accounted as beaſts?] Here *Bildad* chargeth him with evil ſpeaking, and with pride, as if he had looked upon them as beaſts, and that he only was the man. We proverbially call a man that is either very ſtupid, or very wicked, a beaſt. (*Pſal.*49.21.) *Man that is in honour, and underſtandeth not, is like the beaſts that periſh.* He that wants underſtanding, is (as a beaſt) ruled only by affections, and paſſions: *Wherefore are we accounted as beaſts?*

The Hebrew is ſingular, Wherefore are we accounted *a beaſt before thee?* The word *Behemah* is here uſed, *Why are we accounted a Behemah*, or beaſt before thee? As if all we did make but one beaſt; or had neither reaſon in us to judge, nor abilty to ſpeak, which two diſtinguiſh man from a beaſt.

But why doth *Bildad* tax *Job* with ſuch uncomely language as this? did he ever call them beaſt? *Job* never ſpake thus directly, but he did oblickly and equivalently, while he bids them (*Chap.*12.7.) *Ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they ſhall tell thee*; The Maſter is above the Scholar, and he that teacheth, above him that is taught. Hence, while *Job* ſends his friends to School to the beaſts, he ſecretly taketh them as more ignorant then beaſts. He ſeems to ſpeak this out (*Chap.*17.4.) *Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding.* And again (*verſ.*10.) *But as for you all, do ye return, and come, for I have not found one wiſe man among you.* A company which hath not a wiſe man among them, may go for beaſts, and will hardly be kept from doing like beaſts. From theſe or the like ſpeeches, *Bildad* raiſeth this charge, *Wherefore are we accounted beaſts before thee?*

But though *Job* ſpake thus, yet he did it not with a reproaching ſpirit, but only (in heat of diſpute) to ſhew how they were miſtaken; And as for *Bildad*, who makes this harſh conſtruction, he ſhould have conſidered what words he had given, as well as what he had received; he ſhould have been patient in taking juſt reprehenſions, who had given thoſe which were unjuſt.

Now in that *Bildad* is netled at this, and takes it ſo hainouſly, *Wherefore are we accounted as beaſts?*

Obſerve, *There is nothing that men can hardlier part with then their eſteem; and that which ſticks moſt with them is to be undervalued in the eſteem of their parts and gifts.*

Some account it a kind of happineſs, and are well contented to be undervalued in their outward eſtates, they make ſome advantage of that undervaluing; They had rather be, then be accounted rich; but few love to be undervalued in their inward ſtate; and ſome had rather be accounted wiſe and learned, then take pains to be ſo. He eſpecially that bears himſelf up upon the reputation of his parts, cannot bear it, to be reckoned for leſs then he caſts up himſelf; he cannot endure to be low in the eyes of others, who is high in his own. And indeed to be undervalued is a very great tryal. Hence we ſee the infinite ſelf-denial of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who *made himſelf of no reputation*;

who did not regard for how litttle he was reckoned; Though *he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he emptied himſelf*, and appeared in the *form of a ſervant.*

Again, Had *Job* ſpoken with an intent to vilifie his friends, this charge had come juſtly againſt him.

Hence Obſerve, *To undervalue others, and to put upon them terms of contempt, is not only uncomely but ſinful.*

Chriſt takes notice of this (*Mat.* 5.22.) as a great breach of the law of love; Whoſoever ſhall ſay to his brother *Racha*, (that is, witleſs, brainleſs, empty-head; ſuch a one *Racha* ſignifieth) he that thus vilifies his brother, ſhall *be in danger of a Council; but he that ſaith thou fool, ſhall be in danger of hell fire.*

It is a great folly to affect the name of wiſe, and underſtanding; as Chriſt chargeth the Phariſees (*Mat.* 23. 8.) *Be not called Rabbi, for one is your Maſter, even Chriſt, and ye are brethren.* The Phariſees were ambitious of titles, and loved to be applauded and pointed at, as the only wiſe men, as the Oracles of the times. Now as it is a vanity to affect ſuch an opinion of our ſelves: ſo it is ſinful to aſperſe any man, or to blot him (undeſervedly) out of the good opinion of others. And becauſe we are apt to run into extreams, ſometimes to account men as beaſts, and ſometimes to account them more then men, therefore Chriſt corrects that humour alſo (*verſ.*9.) *Call no man father on earth: for one is your father in heaven.* But muſt we eſteem all men alike? Is it not under a command; *Honour thy father, and thy mother.* And is not this true, as of natural parents, ſo of civil? How then doth Chriſt ſay, *Call no man father*; ſeeing to call any man father, is but to give him honour, and we are obliged by the letter of the Law, to honour every man who is our father? The meaning then of this prohibition, *Call no man father*, is, give no man power over your judgments or conſciences, ſuch as the father hath over the perſon of his child. The Apoſtle dehorts Saints (*Epheſ.* 4.) *Be not as children carried about with every wind of doctrine.* A child is apt to receive every impreſſion, or to think this or that ſo, becauſe his father ſaith it: the reaſon and Authority of a father, will carry and ſway a child which way he pleaſeth. In that ſence, *Call no man father*, honour no man ſo much, be not ſlaves to the opinions of others. As among the Papiſts, Friers are to their ſuperiours or fathers; to queſtion whoſe commands is a high preſumption, to ask a reaſon, curioſity, to diſobey breach of vow: their words muſt ſtand for a law, their opinions for Oracles; thus *call no man father.* Now as we muſt take heed of that extream, not to call men fathers, as if we were to live upon their authority: ſo take heed (on the other ſide) of ſlighting men, of accounting men beaſts, of undervaluing them, and trampling them underfeet, both are equally to be avoided; give every man his due; neither have the perſons of men (as *Jude* ſpeaks, *verſ.*16.) *in admiration*, by reaſon of advantage; neither have the perſon of any man in contempt, that may be, both to your own, and to his diſadvantage. *Wherefore are we accounted as beaſts before thee?*

And reputed vile in your ſight.

The word which we tranſlate vile, hath a double ſignification, according to a twofold root, whence it may be derived. Some derive it from a root which ſignifieth to *ſhut up*, to cloſe, to hide, to obſcure a thing. And hence ſome of the ancient Rabbins, as alſo late Hebricians, render this part of the verſe, *not why are we reputed vile in your ſight?* but, *why are we ſhut up in your ſight?* The meaning is, why are we reputed as men whoſe underſtandings are locked up, and whoſe minds are cloſed; as if a cover were put upon them, or as if we were hood-winckt? So it ſuites well with the former clauſe; *Why are we accounted as beaſts?* and, *why are we reputed as men whoſe underſtandings are ſhut up?* They whoſe underſtandings are either ſhut up, or departed from them, may without any great diſparagement be numbred among beaſts. This alſo anſwers what *Job* ſpake of his friends (*Chap.*17.4.) *Thou haſt hid their hearts from underſtanding, therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them.*

A radice טמה *obturatus, concluſus, abſconditus fuit.* *R. Moyſes & R. David.* *Quare clauſi ſumus in oculis veſtris: dicitur autē corde clauſus qui mentem habet clauſam ne poſſit clare res intueri.*

There is a ſtate, or ſort of men, whoſe hearts are looked up, and hid. The Apoſtle affirms it of the *Jews* in general, *When Moſes is read, to this day there is a vail before their eyes.* That is, upon their hearts, their hearts are ſhut up. And ſo Chriſt (*Mat.*13.15.) deſcribes them, from the Prophet *Iſaiah*; *This peoples heart is waxen groſs, and their ears dull of hearing, and their eyes* (that is, the eyes of their underſtanding) *have they cloſed.* The character of a natural man is thus given by the Apoſtle (*Epheſ.*4.18.) *Having their underſtanding darkned*, or blinded. This is a good ſenſe here; *Wherefore are we reputed as men, whoſe underſtandings are darkned, and whoſe minds are blocked up?*

But rather ſecondly, the word *Tama*, ſignifies *defiled*, unclean, or impure; Grammarians tell us, that from this Hebrew word *Tama*, the Latines have the word *Tamino*, which is uſed only in compoſition *contamino, to defile, or pollute.* And the word ſignifies, not any kind of defilement, or filthineſs, but that which is moſt ſordid, and excrementitious, moſt vile, and foul; as appears from the ceremonial Law, *Levit.* 15.2.

טמא *contaminatus, pollutus, hinc latini acceperunt tamino, quod tantum in compoſitione utuntur contamino.* Avenar. *Excrementoſam ſpuritiem præ ſe fert à cujus tactu tanqā à re abominabili abſtinere lex præcipit.* Levit.15.2.

Some conceive that *Job* carries on the ſenſe of this with the former clauſe; *We are accounted as beaſts, and reputed unclean before thee:* That is, as unclean beaſts, and that under a twofold notion. Either firſt, as beaſts that lie in their dung, and filth, as Swine, and ſtalled Oxen, *&c.* Or Secondly, as beaſts legally unclean; in the Ceremonial Law, beaſts are divided into clean and unclean: ſome were clean, and they were for ſacrifice; others were unclean, and they might not be offered in ſacrifice. Taking the text under this interpretation, it carries the greateſt diminution, of the credit, and goodneſs of his friends, as if he had reckoned them, not only among, but below many beaſts. But I ſuppoſe we need not tie up the ſence to the exactneſs of that alluſion, *Bildad's* ſcope being only to complain of *Job's* unfriendly cenſure of him, and his friends, as if they had been not only ignorant in matters of doctrine, as beaſts, but alſo ſinful and unholy in matters of practiſe, as the worſt of men; *Wherefore are we reputed vile in your ſight?*

Now ſeeing the ſame word ſignifies *polluted* and *vile* too.

Obſerve, *Every thing and perſon, which is defiled and polluted with ſin, is alſo vile.*

Baſeneſs hath pollution in it, either moral or natural: He is not vile, who is low in birth, or low in eſtate; but in Scripture-ſtile, the vile perſon is the wicked perſon, the perſon polluted with ſin. (*Pſal.*15.4.) *In whoſe eyes a vile perſon is contemned.* This vile perſon is not the poor man, but the wicked man. In which ſenſe the Prophet *Daniel* foretels (*Dan.*11.21.) *That there ſhall ſtand up in his ſtate a vile perſon.* This vile perſon was a man in honour, a great King, who is there called vile, becauſe he was a wicked King, a perſecutor of the people of God: wickedneſs obſcures all our greatneſs; nothing makes us truly honourable but grace; and nothing makes us truly vile but ſin: what ſin doth, that it is; if ſin make a perſon vile, then ſin in it ſelf is moſt vile. We are uſually more troubled at the effects, then at the nature of ſin: but we ſhould chiefly look to the nature of things. Sin it ſelf is ſo vile, that whatſoever is vile, is but enough to be the ſhadow of it; it doth not reallize the vileneſs of it.

As grace is ſo excellent that all the excellencies in the creature are gathered together to ſhadow out what that is, (*Ezek.*16.) *I cloathed thee with broidered work, and ſhod thee with badgers skins, and decked thee with fine linnen, and I covered thee with ſilk, I decked thee alſo with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thine hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a Jewel on thy forehead, and earings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.* Here's a collection of the moſt excellent, and precious things in the world. And what are theſe? the ſhadows only of that grace which the Lord puts upon his people, when he hath taken them into covenant with himſelf: (*verſ.*8.) *Then was the time of love, and I ſware to thee, and entred into covenant with thee, ſaith the Lord, and thou becameſt mine.* Gold, and precious ſtones, ſhadow the ſtate of the Church of Chriſt in the pureſt times, when abundance of grace and ſpirit ſhall be powred out, *Rev.*21. On the other ſide, when the holy Ghoſt would ſhew what ſin is, all the filthineſs in the world is ſcraped and thrown together to do it: while the Prophet deſcribes the ſtate of a man in nature, he is compared to an infant in blood, and pollution, unwaſhed, unbound up. (*Ezek.*16.4.) The Apoſtle gives us a like character of a natural man, (*Rom.*3.13.) *His throat is an open ſepulchre:* That which ſtreams out of his heart by his tongue and voice, is nothing but rottenneſs, and an unſavoury ſtench, even as out of a ſepulchre. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (*Chap.*22.18.) compares that people in their wickedneſs to droſs; *Son of Man, the houſe of Iſrael is become to me droſs; all they are Braſs, and Tin, and Iron, and Lead in the midſt of the furnace; they are even the droſs of ſilver*, or *reprobate ſilver*, Jer. 6.28. And which is worſe then this, the ſame Prophet (*Ezek.*24.10,11.) compares their corruptions to the ſcum of a pot; *Heap up wood, and ſet it empty upon the coals thereof, that the braſs of it may be hot, and may burn, and the filthineſs of it may be molten in it, and the ſcum of it may be conſumed.* Scum is the filthineſs of the pot; ſin is the filthineſs of the heart and life.

Verſ. 4. He teareth himſelf in his anger, &c.

O rapiens animam tuã. Heb.

O tu, heus tu, qui teipſum præ ira dilanias feræ more. Merc.

Jobum *accuſat nõ tãtum iracundiæ, ſed etiã rabidi furoris.*

Tenetur à proximis & rogatur ut ipſe ſibi placetur, nã ſua labia mordet, caput quaſſat, veſtimẽta ſcindit & ſe in columnas impingit. Sen.

The Hebrew may be rendred by an exclamation, *O thou who teareſt thy ſelf*, or, *O thou tearer of thy ſelf in anger, ſhall the earth be forſaken for thee?* So *Pſal.* 113.7. *He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt*, or, *O thou that raiſeſt up the poor out of the duſt!* Read a like conſtruction in the Propheſie of *Obad. verſ.* 3. We render, *He teareth himſelf.* The word ſignifieth to tear after the manner of wild beaſts, to tear as a Lyon tears. Thus *Bildad* conceived *Job* enraged againſt himſelf, as a beaſt; anger having maſtered his underſtanding, and paſſion over-ſet his reaſon. *He teareth himſelf.* The Moraliſt deſcribes an angry man forcibly held by his friends, and they begging of him to be kind to himſelf; he bites his own lips, he rends his cloaths, and daſheth himſelf againſt the pillars; yet all anger is not thus angry: There are divers ſorts of anger.

Firſt, There is an anger with our ſelves, which is good and commendable; here *Bildad* rebukes *Job* for ſelf-anger; and therefore he ſuppoſed *Job's* ſelf-anger was not good. We are ofteneſt out, while we are angry with others, but we may ſoon be out while we are angry with our ſelves. Self-anger is good, when we are angry with our ſelves, either becauſe we have done that which is ill, or have not done ſo much good, or good not ſo well as we might. The Apoſtle numbers this among the effects of that *Godly ſorrow* which works *repentance unto ſalvation, not to be repented of:* Indignation and revenge are both the births of anger; both theſe are numbred among the effects of Godly ſorrow, 2 *Cor.*7.11. Indignation againſt others is ſeldom without ſin; and revenge, in our own cauſe upon others, is ever ſinful; Theſe are to be repented of, and therefore they cannot be the effects of true repentance. 'Twas then indignation and revenge upon themſelves, becauſe they had done evil, which the Apoſtle obſerved and commended as good in thoſe *Corinthïans.*

Secondly, There is an anger with others, which is alſo good. It is a duty to be angry, when we ſee others act againſt or depart from their duty; He hath no zeal for God, who, on this ground, cannot be angry with man. And while the anger of man waxes hot, purely, upon this account, the Spirit of God is the fire which boils it up. We are angry for Gods ſake, when we are angry becauſe God is diſhonoured. This is a grave, ſerious, a vertuous, and a holy anger; while the Apoſtle gives a reſtriction to ſome anger (*Epheſ.*4.26.) he gives not only a permiſſion, but a command for this.

Thirdly, There is a pettiſh, or fooliſh anger; when we are angry with we know not what, and angry we know not why, angry with thoſe things which cannot intend us hurt; ſome are angry with the ſtone they ſtumble at, with the rain that wets them, with the wind that blows upon them; if they be not humor'd, they are angred. *Jonas* was angry when he ſaw a gourd withered, and a great City not deſtroyed.

Fourthly, There is a ridiculous cowardly anger, like that of a whelp, or cur, who barks, but runs away. As ſome are more afraid then hurt, ſo others are ſo much afraid, that you need not fear they will do you any hurt. Their anger is but a bluſter, and evaporates into words.

Fifthly, There is a ſlow, wrathful, revengeful anger; an anger which is ſteeped in malice; a ſevere tough anger; an anger, the coals whereof are raked up in the aſhes of a ſeeming forgetfulneſs, but with an intendment to break out into a conſuming flame. Such was that of *Eſau* againſt his brother *Jacob*, when he ſaid, *The dayes of mourning for my father will come ſhortly, and then will I ſlay my brother.* Father and brother ſhould have had but one funeral, if the reſolves of his revengeful ſpirit had not lain croſs to the counſel of God.

Sixthly, There is a vehement paſſionate furious anger, a raging anger, both towards others and our ſelves; with which *Bildad* here chargeth *Job, He teareth himſelf in his anger.*

Zanch. in Eph. 4.

Ira furor brevis.

This anger, though in a reaſonable creature, yet is unreaſonable; it knows no bounds, nor doth it keep any. Grammarians ſay, that *ira* the Latine word for anger, comes from *ire*, which ſignifies *to go*, and they give the reaſon, becauſe a man in anger goes out of himſelf, out of his wits, off from his reaſon; and when a man is pacified, and the ſtorm down, he doth *redire ad ſe*, return again to himſelf. Such anger is a ſhort madneſs, and madneſs is but a long anger. They who are fulleſt of reaſon, are furtheſt from this anger, and moſt diſpleaſed with themſelves for it, if at any time it appear upon them. Yet anger may be improved to excellent ſervices, not only as it warms the ſpirit to reſiſt that which is evil, but as it carries us on to good againſt reſiſtance; in which ſenſe one of the Ancients tells us, that as reaſon ought to be the Chariot-driver in man, and hold the reins; ſo the two horſes, that ſhould draw on the Chariot of man in all his actions, are the *concupiſcible, and the iraſcible appetites*; Theſe two as they are qualified, modified, and kept under the reins of reaſon, are of continual uſe, otherwiſe they break all, and our ſelves too; as here it is ſaid of *Job, He teareth himſelf in his anger.* Of this anger Note;

Plutarchus.

> *Furious anger may hurt others, but it hurts our ſelves moſt.*

None are more their own enemies then angry perſons are; *Doſt thou well to be angry?* ſaid God to *Jonah*; ſaith he, *I do well to be angry even unto death*, Jonah 4.9. He means it not only of being angry till he dyed, but of dying for anger. That muſt needs be hurtful, yea mortal to man, which carries in it a reſiſtance againſt the immortal God. Some anger is not only a grief for what is upon us, but a kind of ſtomacking at him who lays it upon us; if we do not confeſs it to be ſo, the Spirit of God knows it to be ſo, and tells us plainly it is ſo; and therefore ſuch anger cannot but hurt and tear our ſelves.

For the avoiding of this tearing, vexing anger, take theſe brief counſels.

Firſt, In provocations, *have an eye upward*; This will balaſt the ſpirit, and make it ſteady; Heaven is above all ſtorms and tempeſts, and the more we converſe there, the leſs ſtormy are our hearts. *David* had provocation enough to make him angry, and boil up his paſſion to the height (2 *Sam.* 16.5.) *Shimei* curſed him, but he looked up, *God hath ſaid to him curſe David*; and then how calm, and meek was his ſpirit? As that is a good anger which is for Gods ſake, ſo, looking up to God will keep us from evil anger.

Secondly, *Turn anger upon your ſelves*; not to tear your ſelves (as *Job* is ſuppoſed here) but to conſider and reprove your ſelves: The more any man is acquainted with himſelf, the leſs angry will he be with others. A true ſight of our ſelves, ſhews us ſo much cauſe to be diſpleaſed with our ſelves, that we ſhall have little leiſure and leſs cauſe to be angry with our brethren. He that looks much into himſelf, will ſee ſo much to do, and to blame at home, that he will not find much to blame abroad, eſpecially he will not do it with paſſionate anger. Anger alwayes riſeth from ſome over-valuing of our ſelves; we think our ſelves ill dealt with, or dealt with below our worth when we are angry. Now he that knows himſelf fully, can ſcarcely think himſelf undervalued by any; he hath lower thoughts of himſelf, then other can have of him: There are not many receits for the cure of anger, better or more approved then this.

Dr. *Reyn.* Treat. of the Paſſ. Chap. 31.

Thirdly, *Correct your anger before you imploy your anger*; do with this paſſion as Phyſitians do with their drugs; ſome drugs which are healthful for the body, excellent to purge and diſpel noxious humours; muſt yet before they are uſed, be corrected and receive ſome allay; you may poiſon the body with them elſe, and deſtroy it rather then repair its decayes: So in this caſe, your anger will tear, and undo you, unleſs you correct it, and take off the ſharpneſs and virulency of it. And as you do with your horſes, eſpecially with ſtomackful horſes; we firſt bridle and ſaddle them, and then ride them, elſe we cannot have them under command: Thus we muſt deal with anger; it is neceſſary to be angry ſometimes; and he is a fool that cannot be angry at all; only get this wiſdom, to bridle and ſaddle anger before you uſe it; leſt it carry you away, and hurry you without any command.

Fourthly, *Let not your anger hang upon your ſpirits, or continue with you:* That's the Apoſtles advice, *Epheſ.* 4.27. *Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath.* It is ill being in the dark with ſo bad a companion; Anger may paſs through the heart of a wiſe man, but, *Solomon* ſaith, *It reſts in the boſom of fools.* It is lawful to do ſome things, which to continue doing is unlawful; we cannot continue the actings of faith and love too long; But that Spirit which ſaith, *Be ſtedfaſt in faith, let brotherly love continue*; never ſaid, be ſtedfaſt in anger, or let contendings among brethren continue. Anger againſt ſin and enmity againſt the ſeed of the Serpent muſt continue, but the continuance of anger againſt any other, whether things or perſons is ſinful.

Fifthly, If you will avoid this anger, avoid the occaſions of it. They that are ſubject to paſſion, ſhould keep out of the way of paſſion. That King did wiſely who when curious glaſſes were preſented to him, broke them himſelf: And gave this reaſon, leſt another breaking them it ſhould provoke him to anger. 'Tis alſo very memorable, That when *Cæſar* had gotten the Cabinet of *Pompey* his implacable enemy into his poſſeſſion, he would not look over his papers, becauſe he would not diſcover that which might ſtir his paſſion, chuſing rather to burn them, then to be burnt by them. 'Tis wiſdom not to ſearch into that which being found may over-ballance our wiſdom.

Sixthly, Give a candid interpretation, both of words and actions; The glaſs through which we look, gives its colour to the object. Anger is uſually blown up by miſconſtructions. What we judge ill meant, is alwayes ill taken; Love thinks no ill, and therefore believes and hopes that all is well. Give that which troubles thee another name; if there be a miſtake in it, yet ſay, it is thy friends infirmity, or that he did it out of ignorance; if what he ſpake pincheth, ſay it proceeded from familiarity, or freeneſs of ſpirit.

Seventhly, Give not an eaſie ear to reports; do not alwaysh hear what others ſay of thee, or what 'tis ſaid they do. Many tear themſelves with anger, when they hear themſelves torn with ſlander; and while they have a curioſity to hear what others ſay of them, they want patience to bear what they hear. 'Tis better we ſhould be in the dark concerning our own wrongs, then that we ſhould wrong our ſelves by that paſſion which the light we get about them ſtirs up in us.

He teareth himſelf in his anger.

But was this juſtly charged on *Job*?

I conceive that his friend, (as in other paſſages, ſo here) ſinned againſt the Law of Love, while he charged *Job* with ſo much anger. It is hard to diſtinguiſh trouble of ſpirit, from paſſion and diſtemper of ſpirit. Yet the teſtimony of God himſelf concerning *Job*, aſſures us that he was a meek man, a very mirrour of patience; which will not conſiſt with this accuſation in the hight and heat of it. And though it cannot be denied, that *Job* diſcovered ſome paſſion and impatience, in theſe conflicts, yet all put together, did not amount to this total ſum; *He teareth himſelf in his anger*; much leſs to that unquietneſs and diſſatiſfaction, with which *Bildad* preſſeth him further in the latter part of the verſe;

Shall the earth be forſaken for thee? and ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?

Hic loquendi modus hyperbolicus pro re impoſſibili uſitatus eſt in in omni lingua: qui talia expectat, in cœlo quærit piſces, in mari ſtellas; in Italia Tanaim, in Sythia Tyberim. Sanct.

Here *Bildad* taxeth *Job* with pride, as before with anger, or rather with an angry pride; *Shall the earth be forſaken for thee?*

The words are proverbial, and in their general ſence are appliable to any thing which is very hard, or to man impoſſible to be done. Such expreſſions are uſual in all Languages. As when 'tis ſaid, you may as well look for fiſh in the air, or for ſtars in the Sea, as to ſee this thing done. So here, this which thou deſireſt, is as likely to come to paſs, as that all men will ſhortly remove from off the face of the earth, and that the rocks will move.

More particularly, ſome underſtand it thus; *Doeſt thou think thy ſelf ſuch, or ſo great a man, that if thou die, and be taken out of the world, mankind ſhall die with thee, or that the earth ſhall be forſaken when thou leaveſt it?* The Septuagint renders; *What, if thou die, ſhall all under heaven want Inhabitants? Art thou the* Atlas *of the world? doeſt thou bear up the fabrick of it? muſt all things run to deſolation, unleſs thou doeſt order and uphold them? why makeſt thou ſuch a ſtir about thy afflictions, and thy death? Is there no man fit to dwell in this houſe, when once thou art turned out of doors? Job* gave his friend ſuch a ſarcaſtical check (*Chap.* 12.2.) *No doubt but ye are the people, and wiſdom ſhall die with you.* Here *Bildad* payes him in his own coyn, *Shall the earth be forſaken for thee? &c.* Thus he rebukes his pride, as if (according to this interpretation) *Job* had thought that the ſafety of the whole world were wrapped up in his: Or as if ſome prodigious changes muſt needs follow his change. *Bildad* was grown ſomewhat warm, and checks *Job's* ſuppoſed hight of ſpirit, with too much of his own. *Shall the earth be forſaken?*

Quid enim ſi tu mortuus fueris inhabitabilis erit quæ ſub cœlo. Sept. *Ita de tua morte & vita loqueris ac ſi mortalium omniũ ſalus & interitus ex te penderet.* Pined. *Nõ ſine faſtu videtur* Bildad Jobi *faſtum velle proculcare, at excandu erat.* Parap.

And ſhall the rock be removed?] No ſuch matter; how high ſo ever thy thoughts of thy ſelf are, or how neceſſary ſo ever thou conceiveſt thy ſelf to be, to the ſtanding and continuance of the world. Yet know, the world ſhall continue when thou falleſt, yea there ſhall not be the leaſt ſtop obſervable in the whole courſe of nature, when thou haſt paid thy debt to nature. Not only ſhall not the rocks be removed, but not a hillock, not a pebble-ſtone ſhall be taken out of its place, though thou be took and hurled out of thine. Indeed the world is indebted to Jeſus Chriſt for its conſiſtence, the earth had been forſaken, had it not been for him, and the rock had been removed out of his place. But the beſt and wiſeſt of men may be ſpared, and no great hurt done.

Exponitur per Lyptotẽ, ubi minus dicitur quã intelligitur. Millies moriaris, num propter hoc mũdi curſus turbabitur? imo nec aut monticulus à vel calculus loco ſuo dimovebitur. Eo'd.

Secondly, For the clearing of this obſcure paſſage, we are to recal to mind, that the ſtate of the controverſie between *Job* and his friends, was about the providence of God, and the diſpenſations of Juſtice; his friends ſaid that good men receive good at the hand of God, and evil men evil. Hence they had all along charged *Job* for a wicked man, for an hypocrite; becauſe he ſuffered ſuch things. Now for as much as they aſſerted, that God laid evil upon evil men, and withal obſerved that *Job* was ſo impatient under his ſufferings, tearing himſelf in anger, as if he had ſuffered unjuſtly; therefore *Bildad* ſpeaks thus; *Shall the earth be forſaken for thee?* or, *ſhall the rock be removed out of his place.* That is, doſt thou expect that God for thy ſake ſhould change that courſe which he hath ſetled as firmly as the rocks, or as the earth? Doſt thou think to make God alter the method, either of his juſtice, or of his providence? thou mayeſt as well hope to turn the motion of the Sun, that the earth ſhall be forſaken, and the rocks removed out of their place, as to expect this. Friend! do not you think either to juſtle or diſpute God out of his way. Hence

Hæc ſententia, quod adverſitates accidant pro peccatis, firma eſt, ſicut terra & rupes, nũquid ergo poterit removari propter tuas diſputationes. Aquin.

Thirdly, Some interpret the laſt clauſe of God himſelf, who had determined to chaſtiſe the ſinfulneſs of *Job*; *Shall the rock be removed out of his place?* i. e. *Shall God?* God is often called a rock in Scripture, a rock is the Emblem of ſtedfaſtneſs. Doſt thou think to remove God who is ſtedfaſt as a rock? or to put him beſides his purpoſe by thy crying out of oppreſſion, or crying up thine own innocencie. For ſhame give over.

Per rupem deus eſt intelligendus quẽ immutabilem dicit inſtar immoti Saxi neque cõmovendum à loco judicii. Rab. Dav. Vatab.

Fourthly, Others, by the rock interpret *Job's* friends, or the opinion which his friends held. As if he had ſaid; *The opinion which we hold concerning the puniſhment of wicked men, is as ſtrong upon our ſpirits, and as much ſetled there, as the rock is in his place,* and therefore thou ſhalt move us from our opinion, when thou haſt removed a rock, which is numbred among things impoſſible, or extreamly difficult. All theſe interpretations center in one common ſence: implying that the Lord having appointed wicked men to puniſhment, will no more change this appointment, then he will remove the rocks, or alter the whole ſtate of things here upon earth. And *Bildad* ſeems to intimate that it is more unreaſonable to divert the courſe of Juſtice, or to let the wicked go unpuniſhed, then it is miraculous to overthrow the whole courſe of nature. *Shall the earth be forſaken*

Num deus propter tuũ clamorẽ, quod te innocentẽ dicis & præter modum affligi, deſinat ſuam ſolitã exercere juſtitiã. Merc. *Bildad ſe ſuoſq; amicos rupes nominat, firmitur perſtantes in ſua opinione.*

ken for thee? or *ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?* Hence we may learn this general truth, that

God will not alter his counſels, nor the courſe of his providence for any mans ſake whatſoever.

You may as ſoon ſay, he will alter the whole frame of heaven and earth, or that he will remove the rocks out of their place, as he will do it: the courſe of juſtice is as firmly ſetled as the courſe of nature is. It was indeed a miſtake in *Job's* friends, to think becauſe God hath ſetled a courſe of juſtice, that therefore he would never change the form of juſtice; for though all the ways of God are juſt, and he will do juſtice unto all; though we may (as the Prophet is charged peremptorily) *ſay to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him, and wo to the wicked*; yet he varies the manner, the means, the times, and ſeaſons of executing juſtice, as ſeemeth beſt unto himſelf. The juſtice of God ſhall ſtand though the rocks remove, and the earth be totally forſaken; yet take heed of ſaying that juſtice hath forſaken the earth, or is removed, becauſe we ſee it not acting in its wonted ſtate and outward equipage. That which the Lord ſpeaks to ſhew the unmovable ſetledneſs of his mercy, is as true in reference to the ſetledneſs of his juſtice, (*Jer.* 31. 35, 36.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the Moon, and of the Stars, for a light by night; which divideth the Sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hoſts is his name.* What follows? *If thoſe ordinances depart from before me, then the ſeed of Iſrael alſo ſhall ceaſe from being a Nation before me for ever.* As if he had ſaid, when I change the ordinances of heaven, of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, then will I take my mercy from *Iſrael*; I will never do the one, therefore I will not do the other. The Lord promiſed at the renewing of the Covenant with man, *Gen.* 8. *ult. That day and night, ſummer and winter, ſhould not ceaſe while the earth remained.* Now ſaith the Lord, if you can make me to alter the courſe of the heavens, of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, then I may do this againſt my people. We have the like aſſurance given, *Jer.* 33. 25. Where the Lord from that conſideration of the frame of nature, argueth the ſetledneſs of his own Covenant of grace, and promiſe of mercy to his people. Thus alſo we may argue, in reference to his juſtice, that you ſhall as ſoon get the ſtars blotted out of heaven, the rocks removed, the earth forſaken, as God will forſake the right diſtributions of juſtice towards man. It was ſaid of a man, and he but a Heathen; *That the Sun might as eaſily be ſtayed, or turned aſide, as he from doing right.* How much more is this true of the righteous God, with whom there is no ſhadow of turning? And though we cannot ſay to any man, as *Job's* friends to him; If God puniſh you not ſooner or later here in this world, he muſt alter the whole courſe of his judiciary adminiſtrations; yet we may ſay to many, if God ſave you eternally, he muſt alter the whole courſe of his merciful adminiſtrations; he muſt make a new Goſpel, yea a new Chriſt, if you attain eternal Salvation. For by the rules of the preſent Goſpel, and by the way which Chriſt hath already manifeſted to ſave ſinners, you cannot be ſaved, how much ſoever you preſume of ſalvation: Shall the Goſpel be forſaken for you, or ſhall the promiſe be removed out of its place, which as it is more immovable then a rock in helping thoſe that turn to God and believe, (*Iſa.* 54. 10.) So it will move no more then a rock towards the help of thoſe who ſtill turn from God, and continue in unbelief. *Shall the rock be removed out of his place?* Thus much of the preface. *Bildad* hath ſpoken to the perſon, and reproved him; he now ſpeaks to his cauſe.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Yea, the light of the wicked ſhall be put out, and the ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine.

The light ſhall be dark in his Tabernacle, and his candle ſhall be put out with him.

The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitned, and his own counſel ſhall caſt him down.

For he is caſt into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a ſnare.

The grin ſhall take him by the heel, and the robber ſhall prevail againſt him.

The ſnare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

THE miſerable condition of a wicked man is laid forth in this Chapter.

Firſt, Allegorically.

Secondly, Plainly.

By way of Allegory to the ſeventh verſe; and in plain expreſſions to the end of the Chapter. Here are four Allegories.

The firſt from light, *verſ.* 5, 6.

The ſecond from hunting and fowling, *verſ.* 7, 8, 9, 10.

The third from Law-proceedings, or the manner of Proceſs in Courts of Juſtice, *verſ.* 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

The laſt Allegory is taken from Huſbandry, *verſ.* 16.

The fifth and ſixth verſes contain the firſt Allegory; **Yea, the light of the wicked ſhall be put out.** The Vulgar reads it interrogatively; *Shall not the light of the wicked be put out?* But the Original is abſolute; *The light of the wicked ſhall be put out.*

Nonne lux impii aufetur? Vulg.

The firſt word hath an Emphaſis in it; *Yea, the light of the wicked ſhall be put out.* **Yea**, imports a vehement affirmation, carrying what is affirmed againſt all oppoſition, (*Gam*) yea, it ſhall be thus (ſaith he) which ſpecially reacheth two things.

גם *Gam, particula firmitèr corroborat prius dicta.*

Firſt, How much ſoever thou art angry with us for ſaying it, yet it ſhall be thus. Be thou as angry as thou wilt, thou ſhalt not help thy ſelf: thou mayeſt entangle thy ſelf more, but thou ſhalt not at all looſen thy ſelf. A man that hath a burthen upon his back, cannot eaſe himſelf by ſtriving and ſtrugling with it; but the more he ſtruggles, the more he is troubled.

Secondly, This *yea*, may bear reſpect to the exaltation of wicked men, to the height of their proſperity: *yea*, let them have gotten as high as they will, down they ſhall, as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of *Lucifer*, (Chap. 14. 13.) *Thou haſt ſaid in thine heart, I will aſcend into heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the ſtars of God, yet thou ſhalt be brought down to hell, to the ſides of the pit.* The higher we build in our own thoughts without God, the lower is our fall, and the more unavoidable. Thou ſhalt be brought down. Or take the Allegory in the Text, how much light ſoever the wicked man hath, though he ſeem to have as much as the Sun, though he ſeem a fountain of light, yet out he ſhall, he ſhall be put out like a candle. *Yea, the light of the wicked ſhall be put out.*

Here are four expreſſions about one thing; Firſt, *The light of the wicked ſhall be put out*; Secondly, *The ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine*: Thirdly, *The light ſhall be dark in his Tabernacle*: Fourthly, *His candle ſhall be put out with him*: We are not curiouſly to inſiſt upon diſtinctions, to find out the difference between light and a ſpark, between light and a candle, &c. Though a difference there be; yet I conceive the ſpeaker did not ſo much intend that, but heaps up a great many words of a near alliance, or of one ſignification, the more to ratifie his aſſertion, that the thing ſhould certainly be done. A wicked man ſhall be extinct, put him under what notion you will; let him have light, or ſpark, or candle, he ſhall go out in darkneſs.

But what is this light?

There are three ſorts of light; Firſt, Moral; Secondly, Spiritual; Thirdly, Civil Light.

Moral Light, is the light of wiſdom, prudence, and underſtanding. And thus ſome of the elder learned Rabbins, and later Hebricians too interpret this Text. As if he had ſaid, the wicked man ſhall be made a very fool, deſtitute of wit, reaſon, underſtanding, and ability to judge, or know what evil is upon him, or what is good for him: The ſpirit of counſel ſhall be taken from him. That's a ſore judgment.

Secondly, There is ſpiritual light; and that is double. The light of the knowledge of God; and the light of comfort from God. The knowledge we receive from God is light. And the joy we receive from God is light. Some interpret the place of this ſpiritual light; Though a wicked man, an hypocrite hath a great meaſure of this light, yet his light ſhall be put out; as Chriſt threatens *Mat.* 13. 12. & 25. 29. *To him that hath ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance,*

abundance, but from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away, even that which he ſeemed to have. That light of knowledge, with which hypocrites ſeemed to ſhine, ſhall be taken away from them. Many hypocrites are irradiated with much light, and have great flaſhes or fluſhes of joy and comfort; theſe ſhall be taken away, their light ſhall be put out; yea their ſparks ſhall die, they ſhall be left in utter darkneſs: though they compaſs themſelves about with ſparks of their own kindling, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 50.10,11. Though this be a truth, yet (I conceive) it is not the thing that *Bildad* intended. But we are rather to take it for,

Lucis nominibus ſignificatur quicquid lucet in oculis quicquid ſplendet in fortuna, &c. Merc.

Thirdly, A Civil-light, that is, the light of outward proſperity. And ſo theſe words are a gradation, teaching us, that not only whatſoever a carnal man reckons his greateſt ſplendor, but what he calls his ſmalleſt ray of temporal bleſſedneſs, ſhall be wrapt up in darkneſs and obſcurity. Outward proſperity, may be called *light* upon a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe as light refreſheth and cheareth the ſpirits, (there is a terrour in darkneſs, and when light comes, we are freed from that terrour;) So doth outward proſperity, and the preſence of worldly accommodations.

Secondly, Light helps us on in our work; no man can work, till he have either the natural light of the Sun, and fire, or ſome artificial light. Proſperity and peace carry us on in our worldly affairs. A man who hath much light of knowledge about him how to work, may yet have ſo much darkneſs of affliction about him, that he cannot work or move in the moſt proſper ſphere of his Activity.

Thirdly, Light makes us conſpicuous; we are ſeen what we are in the light. Thus outward proſperity makes men appear. Poverty is joyned with obſcurity. *What parts, or gifts, or abilities, or worth ſoever is in a man, he is ſcarce ever ſeen above-board, if he be under the ſtraights of poverty and affliction. The light of the wicked ſhall be put out.* I have heretofore ſpoken of the proſperity, and alſo of the decay of wicked men; therefore I ſhall not inſiſt upon it here. Note, only firſt, That,

> *The glory of wicked men, their excellency, their light ſhall certainly come to nothing.*

They ſhall be quenched as a fire of thorns (*Pſal.* 118. 12.) which any man may ſuddenly quench, and if no man will, it will ſuddenly quench it ſelf. Yet further. The word which we tranſlate *to put out*, is active, or intranſitive; ſo ſome render it here; *The light of the wicked ſhall put it ſelf out.*

cum רעך *ſit activum & quodamodo intranſitivum, rectè dicere poſſis,* lux impii extinguet ſe.

> Hence Note, *A wicked man is uſually the cauſe of his own ruine.*

He puts himſelf out; ſometimes he makes his own tongue to fall upon himſelf (*Pſal.* 64 8.) his tongue undoes him, and he is buried under a heap, or preſſed to death under the weight of his own words. Sometimes his own ſtrength undoes him; ſometimes his wit and parts undo him; His great learning and abilities, prove his ruine; He dies as a fool dies, becauſe he thought himſelf wiſer then any living. The proſperity of the wicked is not like the light of the Sun, but like that of a candle, which conſumes it ſelf; and that, not only naturally, as all worldly things do, which will periſh with the uſing, how warily ſoever we uſe them; but violently by their vain and unwary uſing of it. In this the juſtice of God is eminent upon wicked men: There was ſcarce a wicked man in the world ever extinguiſhed, but he hath contributed, not only meritoriouſly (for ſo all wicked men are wholly the cauſe of it) but inſtrumentally to his own extinction. The wicked man is (*felo de ſe*) a murtherer, a deſtroyer, an extinguiſher of himſelf: If all men ſhould forbear him, or reſolve to let him ſtand, yet he would work out his own downfal here, as well as he doth his own damnation for ever.

Again, **The ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine.**

שביב *vel flammā vel ſcintillā ſignificat.*

'Tis the ſame thing; yet here is a progreſs in the ſence: Beſides Sun-light, there is fire-light, and candle-light. But if a man hath neither Sun-light, nor fire-light, nor candle light, then he is in darkneſs indeed. If he have no fire burning, yet poſſibly he may have a few coals, or ſparks of fire: Wherefore to note the utter extinction of a wicked man, he ſhall not have ſo much as a ſpark of fire; *The ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine.*

Ex illo igne] fœlicitatis nō relinquetur ſcintilla, neq; mica ſplendoris; extinguetur omnino.

It is a great abatement to be brought from Sun-light, to fire-light; For as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe, (1 *Cor.* 15.) *There is one Glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another of the Stars; and one Star differeth from another in glory.* So we may ſay, there is one light of the Sun, another of the fire, another of the candle, and one candle differs from another in glory. Here is the Sun-light put out, and the fire-light, and the very ſpark of fire. So that the threatned deſtruction, or extinction of a wicked man ſhall be total, every ſpark of it ſhall expire. The rich man (*Luke* 16.) was deſtitute of all good, when he had not ſo much as a drop of water to cool his tongue. He that begged a drop, had not a drop. Now, as he that hath not a drop of water, is under the greateſt drought: ſo he that hath not a ſpark of fire, is under the greateſt cold or darkneſs: And as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 30.14.) to ſhew an utter deſtruction, under another notion about breaking a veſſel; *Becauſe you have truſted in oppreſſion and perverſneſs, therefore this iniquity ſhall be to you as a breach ready to fall, ſwelling out in a high wall, whoſe breaking cometh ſuddenly at an inſtant. And he ſhall break it like the breaking of the Potters veſſel that is broken in pieces, he ſhall not ſpare; ſo that there ſhall not be found in the burſting of it, a ſheard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.* I note it for that, He ſhall break the veſſel; and ſo break it, that there ſhall not be ſo much as a ſheard to take fire from the hearth, or a little water from the pit. When a veſſel is ſo broken, that there remains not a ſheard for any uſe, it is totally broken. What the ſheard is to the veſſel, that is a ſpark to the fire; the veſſel is totally broken, when there is not a ſheard left; and the fire is totally extinct, when there is not a ſpark left. So this carries not only ſome extinction of the wicked mans light, but the utter extinction of the leaſt light of a wicked man.

Again, Conſider the difference between theſe two, light and fire. Fire is proper to the houſe and family: lights ſhines abroad every where; which imports, that as the renown, fame, and glory, with which the wicked man ſhines to the world, ſhall be extinguiſhed: So his fire, and his ſpark, that is, his family-glory and luſtre ſhall be taken away; he ſhall be deſtroyed in his publick capacity, and in his private capacity; his glory abroad, and his glory at home; the Sun, with which he ſhines in the ſphere of this publick employment, and the fire, with which he is warmed in the hearth of his private relations and enjoyments, ſhall be utterly extinguiſhed.

He hath not yet done.

The light ſhall be dark in his Tabernacle.

Tum ipſe, tū ipſius domus ex illo ſplendore in denſiſſimas miſeriarū tenebras incidet. Bez.

He had ſaid before, *His light ſhall be put out*; why doth he ſay here, *His light ſhall be dark?* This ſeems leſs then he ſpake before.

I anſwer, no; here is ſtill an increaſe of the ſence. To ſay, *his light ſhall be dark*, is more then to ſay, *his light ſhall be put out*; As was ſhewed *Chap.* 10. 22. upon thoſe words; where *Job* deſcribes the darkneſs of the grave in pureſt ſtrains of Eloquence, and having ſaid, *verſ.* 21. *It is the land of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death, a land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf, and of the ſhadow of death, without any order:* He concludes, *and where the light is as darkneſs.* But ſome may ſay; If it be a place of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf, how can there be any light there? Why doth he ſay, the light there is as darkneſs, when he had ſaid, there is nothing but darkneſs there? It is to ſhew, (as that place to which I refer was opened) that the grave is ſo dark, that even that which hath an appearance of light is darkneſs. Not only is the darkneſs dark; but the very light is darkneſs. Thus here, not only is the light of a wicked man put out, but the light of his Tabernacle (if there be any thing left there, that bears any imaginable likeneſs to it) ſhall be dark, or more like to darkneſs. Hence we may Note; That,

> *God will make the very proſperity of a wicked man an affliction to him.*

His light ſhall go out, even to a ſpark; and if a ſpark of light remain, that ſhall be but darkneſs. He ſhall never enjoy good, if any good remain for him to enjoy. Though after great ſufferings he may have ſome eaſe, yet that ſhall be a pain to him. As it is the priviledge of the Saints, that their darkneſs is light, their ſorrows joyful, their wants a fulneſs; ſo it is the curſe of the wicked, that their light is darkneſs, their joyes ſorrowful, and their ſinfulneſs a want. We may here remember that Argument of our Saviour, which I have formerly made uſe of (*Matth.* 6. 23.) If that which is appointed to comfort a man turn to his ſorrow, how great is his ſorrow? So that here is a peremptory excluſion of all that is, or can be refreſhing to a wicked man; his light is darkneſs to him; and his very bleſſings a curſe to him.

Laſtly, **His Candle ſhall be put out with him.**

Illuſt· ẽ cum tota meis convivia flammis Totque gerã mixos una lucerna vocor. Mart. l.14.Ep.41.

The Candle gives an inferiour light; the Candle is a family, a houſhold light: When the Sun goes down, Candles go up; but when this mans Sun goes down, he ſhall not have the help of a Candle, as not the help of fire. Now he that hath neither the Sun to ſhine on him, nor the Fire to warm him, nor a Candle to ſtand by him, what a condition is he in? Which ſtill aggravates the affliction of a wicked man. Some refer it to that cuſtom of the Ancients, who ſet up many Candles, or Lights, when they made Banquets in the night. So, *His Candle ſhall go out*, is, he ſhall never make Feaſt more, nor have merry meeting with Friends more. But I rather take it in general, for all the uſes of Candles, not for that ſpecial uſe of Candles, Torches, or Lamps in great night Feaſts, when their multitude of blazes ſeemed to turn night into day, and to make darkneſs light. Taking Candle in the loweſt ſence, *His Candle ſhall be put out with him*, is, he ſhall not have ſo much as a ſingle Candle, not the ſmalleſt Candle, not ſo much as a Ruſh-light left him. And this we find once and again in Scripture to expreſs the ſaddeſt calamity of a people (*Jer.* 25. 10.) when the Prophet deſcribes the deſtruction that ſhould come upon *Jeruſalem*; *Moreover* (ſaith he) *I will take from them the voice of mirth, and gladneſs.* And what more? *The voice of the Bridegroom, and of the Bride; the ſound of a Milſtone, and the light of a Candle*: That is, I will remove all their comforts; when the loweſt means of comfort (bread and candle-light) are removed, then all comfort is removed. So (*Revel.* 18. 23.) the deſtruction of *Babylon* is deſcribed; *The voice of Harpers, and Muſitians, and Pipers, and Trumpetters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee, and no Craftſman, of whatſoever Craft he be, ſhall be found any more in thee; and the ſound of a Milſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee, and the light of a Candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee*: That is, Thou ſhalt be utterly overthrown, and ruined; where there is not ſo much as the light of a Candle found, what of mercy can be found? (*Revel.* 22. 5.) When the holy Ghoſt would expreſs a ſtate which ſhall need no creature-comfort, he ſaith, *There ſhall be no night there, and they need no Candle, neither the light of the Sun*: The Sun is the light of the day; and the Candle is the light of the night. Now as the full proſperity of a people is ſet out, when they ſhall have ſo much light, ſo much ſpiritual or glorious light, that they ſhall not need the Sun, nor the Candle: So the total ruine of Nations, or perſons, is ſet forth when they have neither Sun-light, nor Candle-light. *Prov.* 30. 13. *The light of the righteous rejoyceth; but the lamp of the wicked ſhall be put out.*

Antiquitus ante novas nuptas, lampades & tadæ accenſæ præferri ſolebant.

Some interpret Candle and Light by Children or Poſterity; ſo they ſignifie (1 *Kings* 11. 36.) where God being about at once to puniſh, and to ſpare, ſaith to *Jeroboam*, *I will take the Kingdom out of his Sons hand, and I will give it unto thee, even ten Tribes. And unto his Son will I give one Tribe, that* David *my Servant may have a light alway before me in* Jeruſalem. We put in the Margin according to the letter of the Hebrew, *That* David *my Servant may have a Lamp, or a Candle*: That is, ſome of his Poſterity remaining and ruling in *Jeruſalem*; his line ſhall not be extinct. The Woman of *Tekoa* calls her Son, her Coal (2 *Sam.* 14. 7.) *So they ſhould quench my Coal which is left, and ſhall not leave to my Huſband neither name nor remainder upon the earth.*

If we take in this Scriptural ſence of the Light and Candle in the Text, it enforms us yet more fully; that when a wicked man is extinguiſhed, all that is his, ſhall be extinguiſhed; he, and his Wealth; he, and his Honour; he, and his Children; he ſhall periſh, and his Candle with him; his name ſhall be blotted out, and there ſhall be no memorial of him.

Laſtly, A Candle goes out two wayes, either when the matter is ſpent, and the fuel which it works upon conſumed. Thus every mans Candle goes out, his Candle waſtes; waſtes it ſelf while it ſhines on him. Secondly, A Candle goes out by violence, when it is blown out: So we muſt underſtand the Text; The wicked mans Candle ſhall not be left to conſume, and wear it ſelf out; he, and his; he, and his publick light; he, and his family-light; he, and his poſterity light ſhall be put out before they are waſted out. This *Bildad* reckoned as the portion of *Job*; and it is the portion of every wicked man; 'tis that which is due to him, that which he deſerves, though he doth not alwayes receive preſent pay according to his deſerts.

So much of the firſt Allegory, by which *Bildad* illuſtrates the dark condition of a wicked man, his light, the ſpark of his fire, and his candle are put out.

The Context of the four Verſes following, ſhew the miſery of wicked men, under a ſecond Allegory, of hunting and fowling; where we have to do with nets and ſnares, with a grin, and with a trap; all which are implements and engines belonging to Fowlers and Hunters, with which beaſts and birds are enſnared and taken.

The miſery of the wicked man is here ſet down two wayes.

Firſt, In general; *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened.*

Secondly, We have the ſpecial wayes how this ſhall be brought to paſs.

Firſt, He ſhall bring himſelf into a ſnare, as is ſhewed in the latter end of the ſeventh Verſe, and in the eighth; *His own counſel ſhall caſt him down; he ſhall be caſt into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a ſnare.* The man runs into it alone; if there be none to drive him into the net, he will haſten into it; if no man ſet ſnares for him, he will ſet a ſnare for himſelf; he muſt be catcht. That's the firſt way, how his ſteps come to be ſtraitened, he himſelf ſtraitens them by his own counſels.

Secondly, If this wicked man ſhould not go into the ſnare, yet he ſhall ſoon be brought into it (*Verſ.* 9. & 10) *The grin ſhall take him by the heel, and the robbers ſhall prevail againſt him.* The ſnare is laid for him by others, many are contriving the methods of his deſtruction; there are traps ſet in his way, and he cannot eſcape. So that either he ſhall do it himſelf, or if he do not, others ſhall. That's the ſum of this Context.

Verſe 7. **The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened**, &c.

Impii greſſus ſunt actiones opera deſideria & omnia quibus ad optatum finem contendebat.

This ſhews the judgment in general; all Beaſts and Birds taken in nets, or ſnares, are brought into a ſtrait; *The ſteps of his ſtrength.* By [*ſteps*] we are to underſtand his motions, his actions, his undertakings; whatſoever helps him towards his deſired end.

And theſe are not ordinary ſteps, but the *ſteps of his ſtrength*; that is, his ſtrongeſt ſteps. Mr *Broughton* reads, *His violent paſſages ſhall be ſtraitened*: Steps of ſtrength, for ſtrong ſteps, is an Hebraiſm very frequent. And theſe ſteps of ſtrength may be,

Firſt, The ſtrength of his mind, and wit, there lyes much ſtrength within; man orders and layes his deſigns by the ſtrength of his underſtanding.

Secondly, The ſtrength of his authority; for therein a mans ſtrength lyes too; let ſuch a man have never ſo much civil power, he ſhall yet be ſtraitened.

Thirdly, The ſtrength of his body, or of his hand; the ſteps of his outward ſtrength as well as of his inward, and authoritative ſtrength, ſhall be ſtraitened.

Fourthly, A man ſets ſteps of ſtrength, or adds ſtrength to his ſteps, by his friends and relations, by his alliance and confederates, by the helps and aids, by the ſeconds and aſſiſtants which he hath abroad in the World. Every ſtep which ſome men ſet, is upheld from without, they go not alone. We may underſtand the Text in any of, or in all theſe wayes. The ſteps of ſtrength, or the ſtrongeſt ſteps which he ſets by the ſtrength of his underſtanding, or by the ſtrength of his authority, or by the ſtrength of his body, or by the ſtrength of his friends, and relations, the ſteps of all theſe ſtrengths ſhall be ſtraitened.

און *Significat potentiam illam quæ conjuncta eſſe ſolet cum dolore, quem quis peccando ſibi vel aliis infert.* Bold.

Further, The original word ſignifies not ordinary ſtrength, or ſtrength in general; but that ſtrength which is uſually accompanied with trouble, and with that trouble which flows from, or is the iſſue of ſin; a painful ſtrength. For as many have painful weakneſſes upon them; ſo ſome have painful ſtrength. And hence alſo the Hebrew word ſignifies riches, or power, which are unjuſtly gotten, and as unjuſtly kept. This kind of ſtrength, is ſtrength with a pain; when a man gets and maintains what he hath gotten by ſin. And there are none who have had ſo much pain with weakneſſes, as ſome in all Ages have had with ſtrength. *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened.*

Straitened] To be ſtraitened in common Scripture-phraſe, ſignifies only to be afflicted; Mr. *Broughton* renders it by the word diſtreſſed; *His violent paſſages are diſtreſſed.* And hence Chriſt (*Luke* 12. 50.) ſpeaks of his ſufferings, or of the pre-apprehenſions of his ſufferings, what effects they had upon him; *I have a Baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitened, till it be accompliſhed.* Did not *John* baptize Chriſt in *Jordan* ſome years before? What was this Baptiſm?

There is a threefold Baptiſm: Firſt, The Baptiſm of water: Secondly, The Baptiſm of the Spirit: Both theſe Baptiſms Chriſt had been baptized with: He was plentifully baptized with the Spirit, and he had been baptized with water in *Jordan.* But there is a third Baptiſm, that is, the Baptiſm of Blood, or the Baptiſm of ſuffering, and that is it which Chriſt ſpake of there; he had not yet been ſo baptized; drenched, or waſhed in blood, in his own blood, as he was ſoon after in the Garden, and upon the Croſs. This was the Baptiſm that he was to be baptized with: And, ſaith he, *How am I ſtraitened?* That is, How is my ſoul afflicted at the approaches and appearances of it? *How am I beſieged with it?* For to that the metaphor may allude. The ſame word is uſed (*Luke* 19. 43.) where Chriſt foretells the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; *Thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee* (they who are thus kept in are ſtraitened) *in on every ſide.* It may refer alſo to the ſhutting up of a beaſt in a pound, or to a woman in travel, who when her pains take hold upon her, how ſore are her ſtraits? All ſhews how great a ſtreſs, and diſtreſs was upon the ſoul of Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe he had then ſuch a baptiſm to be baptized with.

So then, to be ſtraitened is to be afflicted. Outward afflictions are ſtraits, either upon the body, or eſtate; and the very foreſight of theſe put many to inward ſtraits.

And hence (on the other ſide) to be enlarged, ſignifies proſperity, or a good eſtate. We have *David* ſo expreſſing himſelf (*Pſal.* 31. 8.) *Thou haſt ſet my feet in a large room.* Again (*Pſal.* 66. 12.) *We have gone through fire and water; but thou haſt brought us forth into a wealthy place*; which ſome tranſlate, into a *roomthy place*: That is, into much proſperity. *Solomon* (*Prov.* 4. 11, 12.) gives us a negative to this in *Job*, *When thou goeſt thy ſteps ſhall not be ſtraitened:* That is, Thou ſhalt not be afflicted, or thou ſhalt not come into any trouble. When *Iſaac*'s ſervants had digged a firſt and a ſecond Well, the Herdſmen of *Gerar* contended about it, ſaying, *The water is ours.* Then his ſervants digged a third Well, and for that they ſtrove not; therefore he called the name of it *Rehoboth*, that is, *room*; *for now*, ſaid he, *the Lord hath made room for us* (*Gen.* 26. 22.) We may ſay of all our comforts, and mercies, *Rehoboth*, here is room; but of all our afflictions they are ſtraits. So that, *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened*, is neither more nor leſs then this; he ſhall be brought into trouble.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, Who is it that is threatened with theſe ſtraits? It is the ſinner, the wicked man here ſpoken of, he is the ſubject of the whole Chapter: Then learn,

Sin brings into ſtraits.

There are none brought into ſuch ſtraits, as they who walk in the broad way. If you would be at liberty, keep in the narrow way, and walk, as they who are bound. None are freer from bondage then the Servants of God (indeed none are at all free but they) yet none are more bound then they. As for thoſe who would have more room for their ſteps, then the Commandments of God afford, they ſhall have but little room for themſelves. They will be found ſooner or later in the ſtocks, or in the net, in the ſnare, or in the grin, who walk looſely. Sin brings us into a twofold ſtrait.

Firſt, Into ſtraits of mind; a man ſhall not know what to do, who doth he cares not what. Thouſands have run themſelves into theſe ſtraits, who had room enough in the World; they walked which way they would, they waſhed their footſteps in Butter, and the Rock poured them out Rivers of Oyl; yet how have their poor ſouls been ſtraitened by turning aſide after vanity.

Secondly, Sin ſtraitens the outward man, the body is brought into priſon, into deaths, and dangers. For one who is brought into ſtraits for his Conſcience, there are hundreds who are brought into ſtraits by acting againſt Conſcience. Some are brought into ſtraits for doing their duty; but moſt for doing againſt duty: With whom are Priſons peopled, are they not with thoſe who break their bounds? Who are generally in the ſtraits of poverty, while they walk abroad, are they not ſuch as walk diſorderly? 'Tis ſin which uſually cloatheth a man with rags, and (though ſome are fed by it) which ſnatcheth the bread out of his mouth: Who are they that are brought into the ſtraits of a ſhameful death, and fall under the ſtrokes of Juſtice? Are they not ſuch as tranſgreſs the rules of Juſtice, and practically oppoſe Government?

I grant there is a ſtrait into which ſome are brought by the cloſeneſs of their walking with God, yea, by the enlargedneſs of their hearts towards God. *Paul* was in ſuch a ſtrait (*Phil.* 1. 23.) Then a man is in a ſtrait when he knows not what to chuſe; *I am in a ſtrait between two*; Why? *I know not which to chuſe, whether to live or dye:* It was the height of his grace which put him into this ſtrait: But O the ſtraits that men are brought into by the lowneſs and baſeneſs of their ſpirits, their wickedneſs entangles them in ſuch ſtraits, that they know not how to live, and yet are altogether unfit to dye.

Further, The providence of God hath caſt many into ſtraits too. *Jehoſhaphat* (2 *Chron.* 20. 12.) was brought into a great ſtrait when he ſaid, *Lord, we know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee.* When wicked men bring themſelves into ſtraits, they either deſpair of help, or their eyes are towards the creature for it. But when God brings his own people into ſtraits, their eyes are towards him for help. The providence of God brought *Jehoſhaphat* into thoſe ſtraits; and the providence of God brought him out of them, and gave him not only enlargement, but renown and glory: God can quickly recompence us for all the evils which he layes upon us, but ſin cannot. Sin can wound, but it cannot heal; it caſts into ſtraits, but it cannot enlarge,

And ſin brings not only wicked men, but even good men to ſtraits, even to great ſtraits. What was it that brought *David* into that condition (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) when he ſaid, *I am in a great ſtrait?* Was it not his ſin? When he would needs be numbring the people, and pride himſelf in the multitude of that Nation which he governed, and commanded; this humbled him into a grievous ſtrait. And what was his ſtrait? It was a hard election that God put him upon, whether he would chuſe Peſtilence, or Famine, or Sword; one of thoſe three he muſt; ſuch a liberty of chuſing is a ſad reſtraint. Our wills are then bound, when they have a freedom to make ſuch a choice. Thus *David* was hampered, when he went beyond his line. Sin will bring Saints to ſtraits, much more will it bring wicked men to ſtraits.

God ſometimes brings his own people to ſtraits when they ſin, that he may keep them from further ſins: (*Hoſ.* 2. 6.) *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall* (that is, I will bring thee to ſtraits) *that thou ſhalt not find a path.* God brought them into the ſtraits of affliction, that they might not wander into ſtraits by tranſgreſſion. It is better to be ſtraitened with a hedge of Gods making, then with a hedge of our own making. The care of God makes a hedge to keep us from ſin. Our ſin makes a hedge (not as the efficient, but as the procuring cauſe) to curb our careleſneſs. The Word of God is one hedge, his Rods are another. It is beſt to be kept within bounds by the former; but 'tis well if the latter keep us in. *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened.*

Secondly, Note, *Wicked men ſhall be ſtraitened when they are in their ſtrength, and judge themſelves furtheſt off from ſtraits.*

To have ſaid he ſhall be ſtraitened when he is weak, when he is low, and poor, had not been much: but here he ſpeaks of God, acting like God, againſt wicked men; when they are in their ſtrength, and flouriſh, and verdure, and greenneſs, then they ſhall wither; when they think they have moſt room, and are at greateſt liberty, both in their eſtates and ſpirits, then they ſhall find themſelves ſhut up (as it were) in priſon. There is a Text (*Job* 20. 22.) which is very clear to this ſence, I will but name it here, becauſe it will come ſhortly to a fuller handling, where *Zophar* ſpeaking of the Hypocrite, ſaith, *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits*; that's an amazing expreſſion. Here he ſaith, *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened*; that's very much: but there, *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits.* See the difference between the Saints and wicked men; between upright-hearted godly men, and wicked falſe-hearted Hypocrites. *Paul* ſaith (in a higher ſence, 2 *Cor.* 12.) *When I am weak, then am I ſtrong.* But when a wicked man is ſtrong, then he is weak; and when he walks at large, then he is in ſtraits; that is, weakneſs ſurpriſes him in his ſtrength; and ſtraits attend his greateſt enlargements. *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened.*

Thirdly, Note briefly this, *There is no ſtrength of the creature that can protect it from the wrath, or from the judgment of God.*

Let him ſtep as ſtrongly as he will, if he be againſt God, God can ſtraiten him quickly: As he ſaith of *Sennacherib*, *I will put my hook in his noſe* (2 *Kings* 19. 28.) He thinks himſelf a Leviathan, *Who* (as he is deſcribed *Chap.* 41. 27.) *eſteemeth iron as ſtraw, and braſs as rotten wood, darts are counted as ſtubble, he laugheth at the ſhaking of the ſpear.* One would think then that there is no putting of a hook into the noſe of this mighty Monſter, no drawing him up with an Angle; yet the Lord will put a hook in the noſe of Leviathan, and pull him up with a ſingle hair, as if he were but a Sprat: The Leviathans, the Elephants, the Lyons, are as nothing before *Jehovah*. *Can thine heart endure? or can thine hands be ſtrong in the dayes that I ſhall deal with thee?* ſaith the Lord to *Jeruſalem* (*Ezek.* 22. 14.) No, they cannot. For then *the Dukes of* Edom *ſhall be amazed, the mighty men of* Moab *trembling ſhall take hold upon them,* &c. *Exod.* 15. 15. *Hannah* concludes in her Song (1 Sam. 2.) *By ſtrength no man ſhall prevail*; man cannot prevail over other men by ſtrength, much leſs ſhall man deliver himſelf by ſtrength from the hand of God. How great ſoever the ſingle or united ſtrength of the creature is, if it be ſtrength againſt God, a ſtrength acting againſt the deſign of God for his people; fear not, the ſteps of that ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened. It is no matter what the ſtrength of any creature is, if the ſtrong God be with us, he can quickly ſtraiten it, *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened.*

And his own counſels ſhall caſt him down.

There are two things by which man ſupports himſelf, two pillars, like the two pillars ſpoken of in *Solomon's* Temple, *Jachin* and *Boaz*, which ſignified, *He ſhall eſtabliſh and ſtrength.* There are two pillars, of Nations and Perſons; Firſt, Power; Secondly, Policy or Counſel. Counſel is as much a mans ſtrength as his ſtrength is. Now that it might appear, that a wicked man ſhall have all his props pulled away, and all his pillars thrown down: As 'twas ſhewed in the former part of the Verſe, that his ſtrength ſhall not help him, ſo here, 'tis ſhewed that his craft and counſel ſhall not. And this is ſpoken not barely, but with an aggravation: For firſt, That his counſel ſhall not help him, is bad enough; but *His counſel ſhall caſt him down*, and that is far worſe: Secondly, It had been a ſore affliction to have ſaid of his counſel, as he ſaid of his ſtrength, it ſhall be ſtraitened, or overthrown, but he ſaith that which is far more afflictive, his counſel ſhall overthrow him, *His counſels ſhall caſt him down.* Thirdly, It had been a great judgment to have ſaid, his counſel ſhall be caſt down; but it is a far greater to ſay, *His counſel ſhall caſt him down.* There is no difficulty in theſe words; therefore I will but give you two or three Notes upon them.

First learn, *The vanity of all helps without God.*

Strength cannot prevail, and counſel ſhall not. Gods counſel cannot be thrown down, and therefore it will hold us up from falling. But that counſel (and ſuch is the beſt of mens) which may be thrown down it ſelf, can never keep us from falling. *As riches prevail not in the day of wrath* (Prov. 11. 4.) ſo wiſdom and wit ſhall not prevail in the day of wrath. Though you could give counſels as deep as Hell, yet they cannot protect you from a Hell of troubles here, or a Hell of torment after. There is no truſting to any thing without God, if theſe two pillars be pulled away, ſtrength and counſel, upon what baſis ſhall a man eſtabliſh himſelf.

Again, Here is not only ſhewed the inability of counſels to ſupport a man; but here is ſhewed the activity of counſels againſt a man, his counſels ſhall caſt him down.

Hence Obſerve, *God turns the counſels and projects of wicked men upon their own heads, or againſt themſelves.*

This ſhews the extream vanity of humane policy, as ſeparated from holy Policy, or from the Wiſdom which is from above; ſeeing it is not only unable to help us, but it doth us hurt. As that which ſhews the extream wickedneſs of mans heart by nature, is this, that it is not only unable to do good; but it is vehemently active againſt good, and ſets it ſelf againſt the whole Law of God, and would overthow it, or caſt it down. Nature doth not only pull her hand from the work of God, but puts out her hand to reſiſt it. So that which ſhews the extream vanity of the counſels of men is this, that they are not only weak to help them, but ſtrong to ruine them. The Pſalmiſt tells us (*Pſal.* 64. 8.) *God ſhall ſhoot at them with his Arrow ſuddenly, ſo they ſhall make their own tongues to fall upon themſelves; all they that ſee them ſhall flee away:* (A Text formerly toucht at, yet conſider it again) How doth a mans tongue fall upon himſelf? Or if it doth, what hurt is there in that? What weight is in a mans tongue? It is a little piece of fleſh, there is not a bone in it; and I am ſure it can break no bones where it falls. The tongue is here taken tropically for words ſpoken, or counſels given by the tongue. So that when he ſaith, *Their tongues ſhall fall*, his meaning is, their counſels ſhall fall upon themſelves, and be their fall. It is an old *Adage*, *Evil counſel is worſt to the counſellor.* It may do hurt to thoſe againſt whom it is given; but it ſhall certainly do them hurt by whom it is given: (*Pſal.* 7. 15.) *He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made; his miſchief ſhall return upon his own head.* The making of a pit, is only the laying of plots, or the ſetting of deſigns to do miſchief; theſe ſhall be moſt miſchievous to the deſigners. (*Pſal.* 9. 17.) *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executes:* That is, It appears God hath done it, he doth it ſo exactly: Why? He gives inſtance in the latter end of the Verſe, *The wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands:* That is, His own counſels ſhall caſt him down. (*Prov.* 26. 27.) *Who ſo diggeth a pit, ſhall fall therein; and he that rolleth a ſtone, it ſhall return upon him.* Doth every man fall into the pit that he digs? Is every man bruiſed with the ſtone that he rolls? No; There may be juſt cauſe to dig pits. The meaning is, he that digs a pit to catch others. But ſhall every one that digs a pit to catch others, fall into it? I think not ſo neither. We may as lawfully dig pits, that is, ſet counſels to take ſome men, as we may dig pits to take wild Beaſts, Foxes and Wolves, or any hurtful Creature that would annoy mankind. But the wicked man, who digs a pit for the innocent, who prepares miſchief for thoſe that have done him no wrong, ſhall fall into the pit himſelf. *And he that rolls a ſtone:* That is, He that would roul a ſtone upon a juſt man (for you may roul a ſtone upon a wicked man, and bring the wheel over him; but he that rouls a ſtone, or that moves every ſtone to bring ſome evil upon a righteous perſon, this man) ſhall feel the ſtone returning upon him; that is, his own counſel ſhall caſt him down.

Conſilium malum conſultori peſſimum.

Some of the Ancients have obſerved from the phraſe of rouling a ſtone and digging a pit, that every wicked man digs a pit, and rouls a ſtone; he digs a pit down to Hell, and he rouls a ſtone up againſt Heaven. Every act of ſin is the digging of a pit downward, and the rouling of a ſtone upward. He at once makes his grave in Hell, by ſinning; and throws a ſtone of defiance and rebellion againſt Heaven. That's a profitable meditation, though I cannot give it for the proper meaning of the Text; *Who ſo diggeth a pit ſhall fall therein*, &c.

And yet it is not the ſame hand that digs, which thruſts him into the pit; nor the ſame hand that rouls the ſtone, that cauſeth it to return. The hand of wickedneſs digs the pit; the hand of malice rouls the ſtone; but it is the hand of Juſtice that puts him into the pit, and cauſeth the ſtone to return upon him. And as (*Matth.* 10. 13.) Chriſt ſpeaks to his Diſciples whom he ſent forth to preach the Goſpel, *When you come to any houſe ſalute it; and if the houſe be worthy, let your peace come upon it.* But they might ſay, What if the houſe be not worthy, ſhall we laviſh out our peace at adventure? Were it not beſt to try firſt whether the houſe be worthy or no, before we ſalute it, and offer them peace. No, ſaith Chriſt, venture a peace upon it, worthy, or unworthy; and if they be worthy, your peace ſhall come upon them; and if they be not, what then? Be not troubled, your peace ſhall not be loſt; if they be not worthy, *your peace ſhall return to you.* Thus it is with Saints, and thoſe that are upright; we may ſay to ſuch, be not afraid to beſtow peace, or beſtow a prayer upon thoſe that are unworthy; for if it miſcarry in reference to them, if they get no good by it, you ſhall; your peace ſhall return into your own boſoms, your prayers, and good wiſhes ſhall not vaniſh into air, your peace ſhall return, or let it return, take it home again. On the other ſide, when a wicked man intends miſchief, or wiſheth a curſe upon the godly, when he plots evil againſt them, and hath done his worſt, his curſe ſhall not come: Though God may leave them under ſome outward evil, yet the curſe ſhall not come upon them, becauſe *the curſe cauſeleſs ſhall not come*. As the wicked world, is not worthy of them, or of the bleſſing which God gives with them; ſo they are unworthy of the curſe which the wicked world (of which gifts they are very bountiful) gives out againſt them. What becomes of it then? It ſhall return upon the head of the wicked, and they ſhall be burdened with their own devices. See more of this ſubject, *Chap.* 5. *Verſ.* 13.

Take one thing further from this Verſe; *His own counſel ſhall caſt him down.* Counſel is a very precious thing, yet that ſhall undo the wicked.

> Then note, *The beſt thing which an ungodly man hath, ſhall turn to his hurt.*

There is nothing in the world, of a worldly nature, but may do us harm. Only the grace of God, the favour of God, can never do us hurt, theſe never caſt us down: Your wit may undo you, your parts and your counſels may undo you; but holineſs never undid any man; humbleneſs of mind, ſincerity, faith cannot be accuſed as guilty of any mans fall. I never heard an inſtance of a man caſt down by faith, caſt down by love, undone by meekneſs, or humility. But how many have been undone, by their proud wit, and high parts, by their cunning, and their counſels. Surely, the beſt of natural things may prove our ruine, if counſel may. Counſel is the ſpirit or quinteſſence of reaſon; reaſon drops out and diſtils it ſelf into counſel; yet this may prove mortal and poyſonous. That extenſive promiſe is given to the Saints, (*Rom.* 8.28.) *All things ſhall work together for their good.* Among thoſe all things, we may even take in their ſins; among thoſe all things, we may take in their weakneſſes, their ignorances, their ſimplicity: The vertues of a carnal man work him ill; when as the very ſins of a gracious heart work him good. Though the godly have low parts, and are unable to adviſe themſelves, much leſs others, yet this ſhall not caſt them down. They ſhall thrive better by their ignorances and inabilities, then the other by their knowledge and ſubtlety.

From all we ſee again, that a total overthow is the portion of the wicked man, *His ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened.* And becauſe many a man, who hath loſt all his ſtrength, hath yet a cunning pate, therefore 'tis added, *His counſel ſhall caſt him down:* If a man can neither proſper by counſel, nor ſtrength, in what a condition is he? It was ſaid of old, *Who would require in an adverſary, cunning, or ſtrength?* It is a hard choice which to deſire, whether a mighty, or a ſubtle enemy: But when we deal with an enemy that hath neither ſtrength, nor ſubtlety, or if he have both, his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened, and his counſel ſhall be deſtroyed, why ſhould we fear him? If you ask, How comes it to paſs, that the counſels of a wicked man ſhall caſt him down? I anſwer, Sometimes, notwithſtanding his great wit, he gives fooliſh counſel. Secondly, Though he give counſel like an Oracle, yet God turns that into fooliſhneſs. He can never thrive by counſel, whoſe great underſtanding is either ſo darkned, that he gives fooliſh counſel; or when he hath given wiſe counſel, yet ſees it deſerted, as if he were a fool.

Dolus aut virtus, Quis in hoſte requiret?

Bildad is ſtill deſcribing the miſerable ſtate of a wicked man (in application unto *Job*) under the Allegory of Hunters, or Fowlers.

Firſt, The wicked man throws himſelf into a ſnare, as was ſeen at the cloſe of the former Verſe, and is further proſecuted in this.

Verſe 8. **For he is caſt into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a ſnare.**

Secondly, Others ſhall ſet a ſnare for him.

Verſe 9, 10. **The grin ſhall take him by the heel, and the Robber ſhall prevail againſt him, &c.**

So that the ſtraits, into which this man ſhall fall, are of two ſorts: Some of his own making; and others which are made by his enemies.

In this eighth Verſe, *Bildad* carries on that firſt branch of the manner how he is taken; *He is caſt down by his own counſel*, in the former Verſe; and here, *He is caſt into a net by his own feet*: Some read it, *He is ſent into a net by his own feet*, ſo Mr. *Broughton*; or, *He hath ſent his feet into the net*, ſo the Latine tranſlation: Which way ſoever we read it, the words are but an explication, or amplification of the latter part of the ſeventh Verſe, *His own counſel ſhall caſt him down.*

Immiſſis in rete pedes ſuos. Vulg.

He is caſt into a net by his own feet.

The word in the Hebrew which we tranſlate *net*, is not far in ſound from the Latine, *Rete*, and is derived from a root which ſignifies to poſſeſs; and the reaſon is given, becauſe when once a net hath taken either birds, or beaſts, it holds them faſt, as a man doth his land, or inheritance, as his poſſeſſion; whatſoever comes into the net, is (as it were) poſſeſt by it.

רשת *rete, quidā à* ירש *poſſedit deducunt, quod retinet ea quæ capiuntur.*

But what is this net?

There is a threefold interpretation of that.

Firſt, Some by the net underſtand ſin; **He is caſt into a net:** That is, He is overcome by ſome temptation, or corruption, and ſo is inſnared; ſin is a net, and the worſt of nets; ſin is a net to catch the ſinner. (*Prov.* 5. 22.) *His own iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelf, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſins.* (Prov. 29. 6.) *In the tranſgreſſion of an evil man there is a ſnare, but the righteous ſhall ſing and rejoyce.* The Proverb may be taken two wayes; either that there is a ſnare in his tranſgreſſion for others, a wicked man tranſgreſſing layes a ſnare for his Neighbour; or elſe that in his tranſgreſſion there is a ſnare for himſelf. I rather take the meaning of *Solomon* in this latter ſence: Sins are ſoul-ſnares, ſoul-ſhackles; and the offers which ſin makes are as the bait of the ſnare; for that which draws men into the ſnares of ſin, is the pleaſure, or the profit of ſin; ſome advantage or ſatisfaction is held forth, to entice affection. *Moſes* was invited by ſuch a bait, but he ſaw they were but the *pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*; therefore he would not come into the net.

Peccata ſunt animarum retia, vincula, laquei, voluptates ſunt eſca.

Secondly, By this net, we may underſtand thoſe means or courſes which bring a wicked man into ſtraits, and undo him; and then his feet are his actions and puttings on to execution, by which he hoped to bring his counſels about, of which we read in the former Verſe; but he is every way diſappointed, *His own counſel ſhall caſt him down, and his feet caſt him into a net.* Now, when both a mans moſt ſerious counſels and aſſiduous endeavours turn againſt him, how is it poſſible that he ſhould proſper?

Thirdly, The net may be interpreted, as for the way to his ruine, ſo for the ruine it ſelf into which he falls; his troubles, miſeries, and afflictions are his ſnares; for as the wicked mans ſins are a net, and his own wayes are a net, ſo that is a net to which theſe nets lead him, puniſhment and miſery, theſe hamper and bewilder thoſe faſt enough, who fall into them. *He is caſt into a net by his own feet.*

Retia ſunt ſupplicia per quæ homo à conjectanda & obtinenda voluptate detinetur.

But here it may be queſtioned, Doth any man caſt himſelf knowingly or willingly into a net?

Surely no; he is ſaid to be caſt into a net by his own feet, not as if the man did actively contrive and promote his own undoing, or did weave a net purpoſely to entangle himſelf; but God ſo diſpoſeth of his plots, God ſo orders and over-rules his actions, that he makes his own feet carry him into the net, while he thinks they are carrying him into a Paradiſe of freedom and content; at leaſt, that he is making an eſcape from danger, and that his feet at next ſtep will ſet him beyond the borders of fear or trouble; the over-ruling hand and providence of God that doth all this; as *Joſeph* ſpake to his Brethren (*Gen.* 45. 8.) when he diſcovered himſelf to them in *Egypt*, whither they had betrayed and ſold him; *Now it was not you that ſent me hither, but God:* They ſent him thither inſtrumentally and enviouſly; but it was God that ſent him thither providentially and graciouſly, it was his Power and Wiſdom which ordered that diſpenſation ſweetly, elſe his Brethren had made foul work of it; or, they ſent him thither to make him a ſlave, that was their deſign; but God ſent him thither to make him a Prince and Ruler, to make him a Preſerver of *Egypt*, and of his own Family too; as he concludes in that Verſe, *He hath made me a Father to* Pharaoh, *and Lord of all his Houſe, and a Ruler throughout all the Land of* Egypt.

Deo ſic diſponente & illum ſuo facto deturbante. Jun.

Now as God over-rules the evil actions of men for the good of his own people, ſo that they may ſay, it was not ye that did this, but God; ye thought otherwiſe, but God hath brought good out of it; ſo God over-rules the actions of evil men to their own hurt: when a wicked man caſts himſelf into a net by his own feet, it is not he that doth it, but God; he intended nothing but good, and advantage, not miſchief, or miſery, not a ſnare or a net to himſelf, but God was too hard for him, and beat him both at and with his own weapons; he brought him into the net.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That no man is Maſter of his own deſigns or actions.*

Man intends great things, his head is full of devices, but he cannot carry his work through to the end which he intends; wicked men cannot perfect their own purpoſes and propoſals; neither can the good. This is a common truth; *The way of man is not in himſelf; neither is it in him that goes to direct his own ſteps,* ſaith the Prophet (*Jer.* 10. 23.) That is, He hath not ſuch a command of his way, or of his ſteps, as to be ſure to reach, or attain unto his end; men would never come into ſnares, if the dominion of their wayes were in their own hand. *A mans heart deviſeth his way, but the Lord directeth his ſteps* (Prov. 16. 1.) Not that the heart lyes more out of the command and government of God, then the feet do; for he ſaith (*verſ.* 1.) *The preparations of the heart in man, and the anſwer of the tongue is from the Lord.* But when *Solomon* ſaith, *A mans heart deviſeth his way,* &c. I conceive his meaning to be this, that the Lord permits men a greater liberty of thinking, then he doth of acting (not that it is lawful for them to think any thing which it is not lawful for them to act, but) he gives them ſcope to lay their plots and deviſe their devices, to imagine ſtrange things, and he never checks or takes them off; but when once they come to acting and working, then he comes forth and ſtops them. God hath ſuffered many to take compleat counſels againſt his counſels, and to lay deviliſh plots againſt his divine plots; but he never ſuffered any to compleat their actions againſt his counſels. When once wicked men come to practiſing, let them look to themſelves. God never troubled thoſe firſt men of the ſecond World, while they were drawing the Scheme, and making the model or platform of their *Babel*; but when they fell to building, he quickly came down and confounded them.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That as a wicked man keeps not the way which God hath appointed; ſo he comes not to the end which himſelf expected.*

He is walking in the way of ſin, and God brings him to puniſhment, and into ſnares, there is his end which he looked not for; he goes he knows not whither; as Chriſt ſpeaks (*John* 12. 35.) *He that walks in darkneſs* (that is, in ignorance, or in an evil way, what of him!) *he knows not whither he goes.* But doth not a man that walks in darkneſs and ignorance propoſe ſome end to himſelf? Yes, he doth, eſpecially ſuch as are here ſpoken of; men full of parts, counſel, and wiſdom, theſe are full of deſigns; but though they are, yet they know not whither they go, becauſe they ſhall not go to that which themſelves have deſigned; but they ſhall go to that whither the juſt judgment of God determines them. *He knows not whither he goes:* An ignorant man walks in darkneſs; and becauſe he is ignorant of Gods way, he miſſeth his own end; he propoſeth happineſs to himſelf, and he falls into miſchief; thus he knows not whither he goes; wicked men are great lovers of themſelves, and it is out of ſelf-love that they go in ſuch wayes as prove nets to themſelves. They go meerly to ſave or exalt themſelves; but they caſt down and deſtroy themſelves; thus they know not whither they go.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *It is a ſevere judgment of God upon wicked men, that they ſhould be the means of their own ruine.*

That their own feet ſhould caſt them into a net; this ſpeaks wrath pour'd out upon them. As it is a great mercy when God directs his people to uſe the proper means of their own ſaving and deliverance, helping them to walk in ſuch wayes as have a tendency to their own good; ſo it is a judgment of God upon wicked men, when they through ignorance, or obſtinacy, betray their own peace, or run deſperately upon their own deſtruction, *And are caſt into a net by their own feet.* *Solomon* in the firſt of the *Proverbs*, *verſ.* 18. dehorts the young man from ill company, and inticers to ſin, by this Argument; *Their feet* (ſaith he) *run to evil, and make haſte to ſhed blood,* &c. *And they lay wait for their own blood, and lurk privily for their own lives.* Theſe men ſaid, (*Verſ.* 11.) *Come with us, let us lay wait for blood; let us lurk privily for the innocent without cauſe;* we will take the ſpoil, we will rob and oppreſs; yet when the Holy Ghoſt comes to make up the judgment concerning the actings of theſe men, he ſaith only this, *They lay wait for their own blood, and lurk privily for their own lives:* As if the men had entred that unholy League, on purpoſe to ſpoil themſelves, and cut their own throats. They thirſted for their Neighbours blood, but they drank their own; they coveted their Neighbours goods, but their own became a prey and a ſpoil. It will appear at laſt, that all the waiting and privy lurking of wicked men for their Brethrens either eſtates or lives, hath been againſt their own ſouls, and a cruelty to themſelves; this is a great aggravation of the miſery of a wicked man, that he hath ſo great a hand in it himſelf. The Lord ſaith by the Prophet *Hoſea*, *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf* (Chap. 13. 9.) and by *Jeremy* Chap. 4. 18.) *Thy way and thy doings have procured theſe things unto thee.* There is a great difference between theſe two, between that in the Prophet *Hoſea*, and this in the Prophet *Jeremy*; the one ſaith, *Thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf*; the other ſaith, *Thy ſins and thy doings have procur'd theſe things to thee.* It is true, the deſtruction of all men, of all Kings and Cities is from themſelves meritoriouſly, whatſoever deſtruction comes upon them, their ſins and their doings deſerve it; and this is miſery enough. But when the Prophet would ſhew the greatneſs of their miſery, he tells us, that their deſtruction was from themſelves *inſtrumentally*; not only hath thy ſin procur'd deſtruction from me, or cauſed me to ſend deſtruction and judgments, but thy ſins have been the very means, by which thou art deſtroyed: They have lifted up their hand to pull thee down. In the fourteenth of the *Proverbs* and the firſt, the fooliſh woman is deſcribed by her difference from the wiſe, in this, *Every wiſe woman buildeth her houſe, but the fooliſh woman plucketh it down with her hands;* here is her folly and her miſery; it would have been miſery enough, if (when ſhe had built a houſe, or had a houſe built) other hands had pluckt it down over her head, but it is far greater miſery when a woman ſhall be ſo fooliſh as to pluck the houſe down upon her own head; this is the judgment that God leaves many worldly wiſe men and Politicians to, that when they have plotted a great while to pull the houſe upon the heads of others, it falls upon their own heads; and when they have prepared ſnares, ſet their nets, and are waiting to catch their prey, they are enſnared, and their *own feet caſt themſelves into the net.*

שבכ *ſignificat quicquid in modum retis perplexum & implicatum eſt.*

Eſt proverbiale periculi, ſicut ambulare ſuper prunas. Druſ.

And he walketh upon a ſnare.

That's the ſecond Branch: Mr. *Broughton* renders, *He walketh upon the platted grin.* The ſence is near the ſame with the firſt, and therefore I ſhall but touch it. The former word noted a more violent and ſudden action, *He is caſt*; here, *He walketh*: Walking is an ordinary pace, and implyes an ordinary courſe of life. Now when it is ſaid, *He walks upon a ſnare*, it ſhews, that as (in the former clauſe) a wicked man often falls ſuddenly and violently into danger; ſo his whole life is a life of danger; the wicked man lives, but he lives miſerably, he lives in the midſt of a ſnare. Some interpret this as a proverbial ſpeech; *To walk upon a ſnare*, is like that of walking upon burning coals, or upon fire, both are proverbial, for extremity of danger.

Hence Obſerve, *That an ungodly man is oft-times ſecure, but never ſafe.*

Is he ſafe that walks on ſnares? whoſe ordinary courſe is upon the borders of death? Such is the walk, and the way of an ungodly man; while he would avoid, he falls into the pit; when he thinks himſelf moſt ſure, then is he neareſt confuſion; *He walks upon a ſnare.* Indeed, every thing that a wicked man hath, or that he ſets himſelf about, is a ſnare unto him.

Firſt, His Table is a ſnare; when he comes to his Table, and there finds comfortable proviſion, the fat and the ſweet upon it, then he rejoyceth in his portion, and ſaith, Soul take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry; yet the curſe overtakes him there, *His Table is made a ſnare, and that which ſhould be for his good, is to him an occaſion of falling* (*Pſal.* 69. 22.) It is a ſore evil, when there is no bread upon the Table; but when a Table full of bread is a ſnare and a famine to us, that is far worſe.

Secondly, His riches are a ſnare to him: That which a rich man counts his ſtrong Tower, becomes his ſtrong Priſon. (1 *Tim.* 6. 9) *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a ſnare* (his riches are a ſnare, a greater ſnare then poverty) *and into many fooliſh hurtful luſts, which drown men in deſtruction and perdition.*

Thirdly, His wit, parts, and learning, are a ſnare, for which he is ſo much admired in the World; O he is a very witty man, a wiſe man, a man of a deep reach, a *notable head-piece*, what a nimble, what an eloquent tongue hath he? See how gracefully he expreſſes himſelf; yet all this is a ſnare; it had been better for him if he had been a fool, or dumb, then to have had all that wit, thoſe great abilities, conſidering how he hath imployed them. A carnal man preſumes to enſnare all the World with his wit and words, and theſe are often a ſnare for others, but chiefly for himſelf.

Fourthly, All his Relations, his Wife, Children, Friends, all the comforts that he hath in the World are ſnares to him.

Fifthly, Religion, ſo far as he profeſſeth it (a wicked man may make profeſſion of Religion (I ſay) his very Religion) is a ſnare: Religion as the World bears, and as many conceive, the notation of it, hath its name (*a religando*) from binding; Religion is a bond, it ſhould be a bond to all men, but it is a ſnare to wicked men; it ſhould be a bond to tye them faſt to God, to tye them to duties, to tye and hold them in the way of holineſs; but it is only a ſnare bond to wicked men; their outward profeſſion cauſeth them to flatter themſelves in their inward corruption, and they take to themſelves by ſo much the more liberty in evil, by how much they give up themſelves the more to a kind of bondage in doing good.

Sixthly, and laſtly, Which is more then all, *Chriſt is a ſnare to a wicked man*; when he hath Chriſt in his mouth, when he talks of Chriſt, he doth but walk upon a ſnare. *If the Son make us free, we are free indeed*; but none are more really in bondage, then they who are but ſeemingly freed by the Son. *To thoſe that believe, Chriſt is precious; but to the unbelievers and diſobedient, he is a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, that they may ſtumble and fall, and be broken* (1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.) What a woful condition are ſuch in, who not only caſt themſelves into a net, into troubles and vexations, but whoſe higheſt injoyments, temporal and ſpiritual, their profeſſion of Religion, yea, their pretenſions to Chriſt himſelf, are a continual *walking upon a ſnare.*

Bildad proceeds yet further in the explication of this Allegory.

Verſe 9. **The grin ſhall take him by the heel; and the robber ſhall prevail againſt him.**

We ſaw the wicked man catcht in his own ſnare before; now here is a ſnare laid for him: His overthrow is diſcovered two wayes in this ninth Verſe.

Firſt, A ſecret evil is ſet for him; *The grin ſhall take him by the heel.*

Secondly, Open violence ſhall ruine him; *And the robber ſhall prevail againſt him.*

אחם *eſt apprehendere & apprehenſum firmiter tenere.*

The grin ſhall take him.] The word ſignifies not only to take, but to hold that which is taken, and to hold it ſo as not to let it go, to hold it firm and ſtrongly, to keep in ſafe cuſtody. As the Spouſe ſpeaks of Chriſt (*Cant.* 3. 4.) *I caught him, and I would not let him go.* It is this word; now as the ſoul putting forth faith upon Chriſt, doth not only take him and lay hold upon him, but layes hold ſo, as not to let him go, ſticking cloſe, and cleaving to him. Strong faith doth this, ſuch as her faith was when ſhe ſaid, *I caught him, and held him, and would not let him go*: ſo evil doth not only take, but hold the wicked faſt, ſo faſt, that it will not let them go; that's the meaning of the word.

The grin ſhall take him by the heel.] Before he ſpake of a net, and of a ſnare, now of a grin. Here are all ſorts of hunting, and fowling inſtruments heaped together for the compleating and furniſhing of this Allegory. Here we have *the grin.*

פם *laqueus à* פוח *flavit, perflavit, ſibilavit.*

The Original root ſignifies to blow or puff with the breath; ſo the word is us'd (*Prov.* 29. 8.) *Scornful men bring a City into a ſnare*; ſo we tranſlate; it is the word which is here tranſlated *grin*; and we put in the Margin of our Bibles oppoſite to thoſe words, *Bring a City into a ſnare*, or, *Set a City on fire*; becauſe proud ſcornful men will not give over contentious ſpeaking, till they blow the ſpark into a flame, and ſo ſet a whole City, yea, Kingdom on fire; or as ſome render it, till *they blow it up*, as a Houſe or Tower is blown up by the violence of Gun-powder. That City and State is indeed brought into a ſnare, which is thus blown up or ſet on fire by the unquiet breathings and vexings of ſcornful men.

Exſufflant urbem.

The word alſo ſignifies to *whiſtle ſoftly*, becauſe Fowlers and Hunters uſe to draw the prey into the danger of the grin by a kind of ſoft muſical whiſtle. And indeed every man is brought into the grin or ſnare by a *whiſtle*; that is, by ſome enticing fallacious voice, tempting him to ſin. And hence the ſame word ſignifies both.

Sibilo utuntur Aucupes.

The grin ſhall take him by the heel.] The heel is taken four wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, For the whole body; as in the third of *Geneſis*, and the ſixteenth verſe, *Thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel*: The Serpent bruiſed the whole body of Chriſt, or (as ſome underſtand the heel in that Text) the whole humanity of Chriſt, which is but as the heel to his divinity: The divine nature being far more excellent then the humane, which alone ſuffered. For though he ſuffered who had two natures, yet but one did ſuffer.

Secondly, The heel is taken properly and ſtrictly for the loweſt part of the body; Jacob *took his Brother by the heel* (Gen. 25. 26.) Thus here. For a grin is uſually ſet to catch by the heel, not by the head, or other members of the body.

Thirdly, The heel is put tropically for the actions and motions of this life, (*Pſal.* 49. 5.) *Wherefore ſhould I fear in the dayes of evil, when the iniquities of my* [*heel*] *ſhall compaſs me about?* That is, When my ſins or failings in what I have done, come to my remembrance, or are chaſtened upon me; every mans heel hath ſome iniquity. As we ſhall have ſome dirt cleaving to our heels while we walk in a dirty world; ſo there is ſome dirt, ſome defilement, upon all our actions, which we may call, *The iniquity of our heel.*

Fourthly, In a tropical ſence, the heel ſignifies the latter part of a mans life, or old age; ſo ſome will needs underſtand it here; as if the ſence were thus, Though the wicked man proſper a great while, the firſt, the fore-part of his life, yet towards the heel of his life, that is, the latter end of his life, before he come to his grave, he ſhall be catcht, ſome miſchief ſhall fall upon him, or he ſhall fall into miſchief; he may proſper a great while, but the grin ſhall catch him by the heel, it will have him towards the end of his life. But I paſs that.

צמם *Prædo, latro quod comam alat.*

Conſtringens prævalet ei horridus: nimirum venator ſive auceps. Jun.

And the Robber ſhall prevail againſt him.] Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *The Savage ſhall lay hold on him:* The word which we tranſlate *Robber*, ſignifies any wild barbarous ſort of men, who live out of rule and order; properly a man that lets his hair grow diſorderly, becauſe Robbers and violent perſons uſe to let their hair grow ſo, either to diſguiſe themſelves, or terrifie others. Some by the *Robber*, underſtand the poor; others, his rich Creditors; we, in purſuance of the Allegory, may call the *Robber* the *Hunter*, or the *Wood-man*, who ſets the grin, and layes the ſnare, this man, this cunning Hunter prevails againſt him. When the Hunter hath ſet his grin for the Bird or Beaſt, as ſoon as they are caught, he comes in and prevails upon them. The grin doth not kill, but hold faſt till the Hunter comes. *The grin ſhall take him by the heel, and the Hunter, or Robber, ſhall prevail over him.* So we tranſlate the word (*Job* 5. 5.)

Exardeſcet contra eum ſitis. Vulg.

Further, the word ſignifies alſo *a thirſty one*; hence the Vulgar tranſlates in the abſtract, *Thirſt ſhall prevail, or wax hot upon him*, putting the abſtract for the concrete, thirſt for the thirſty one, *Thirſt ſhall prevail againſt him*; which is thus explained, The wicked man is caught by the grin or toyl, and there he vexeth himſelf till he is weary and thirſty; as Beaſts that are caught in a toyl, vex themſelves, and labour till they pant and breath for life, and are very thirſty: Thus the wicked man ſhall be caught in a grin, wherewith ſtriving to get looſe, he becomes the more troubled: It comes near the ſame ſence in general, which ſoever of theſe we take, namely, that the wicked man, as he runs into the ſnare, ſo there he ſhall periſh; he ſhall be held faſt till the Hunter makes an end of him, and he that ſets the ſnare deſtroyes him. Which falls in with the former interpretation, that the Lord in juſtice againſt wicked men, orders both the grin to catch, and the Hunter, or Robber, to prevail.

Verſe 10. **The ſnare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.**

חבל *Funis à ſtringendo ſeu ligando.*

Here are two words of a different root; for though we tranſlate *ſnare*, as in the former Verſe, yet the Original varies; our language is not copious enough for the Hebrew in this particular. The word which here we tranſlate a *ſnare*, ſignifies properly a cord, or rope, and it comes very near in ſound to our *Engliſh* word, *Cable*, which is a great rope, becauſe ropes and cords ſtraiten and hold faſt as a ſnare doth. The word is metaphorically applyed to cruel Creditors, who will be ſure to tye their Debtors faſt as with a cord, that they ſhall not get looſe: It ſignifies alſo a pledge, or an earneſt; becauſe that tyes us to performance.

מלכדת *à capiendo* לכד. *enim capere denotat. Omnia quæ ad rete pertinent hic cõgeruntur, & per elegantem expoſitionem eadem fere res pluribus ſententiis amplificatur.* Pined.

The other word which we tranſlate *a trap*, is derived from a root which ſignifies to catch, to ſnap ſuddenly; *The trap is laid in the way*; that's another engine by which hurtful Creatures are taken by Hunters. Here are variety of expreſſions, all tending to the ſame thing. Read the like congregating of theſe words, *Pſal.* 140. 5. *Iſa.* 24. 17, 18.

The trap is laid for him in the way.] That is, it is ſet cunningly, cloſely, and ſecretly, it is hid for him; ſo ſome tranſlate.

And how is it hid?

It is a hidden trap two wayes.

Firſt, By the cunning skill of him that layes it: He layes it with care; and that it may not be diſcovered, he covers it with leaves, or ſhadows it with boughs.

Secondly, It may be ſaid to be hidden in reference to their blindneſs who are taken with it: To a blind man all dangers are hidden dangers; they are laid cloſe though they be laid open; eſpecially when there is a Judiciary blindneſs upon men; that is, when God blinds them on purpoſe that they may fall into the net and the ſnare. *Solomon* tells us, (*Prov.* 1. 17.) *In vain is the net ſpread in the ſight of any Bird*; therefore ſnares and traps are laid in ſecret; for, *In vain is the net ſpread in the ſight of any Bird.* Which may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, We may refer the word, *in vain*, to the Bird; as if he had ſaid, it will not help the Bird, or cauſe the Bird to withdraw from the danger, though the net be ſpread in his very ſight. The Bird is ſo hungry after the Corn ſtrowed by the net, that though you lay the net in his ſight, yet it is in vain, the Bird will come and venture for the Corn: We may exemplifie it thus, That when men are given up to any luſt, it is in vain that the net is ſpread in their very eye; though they ſee the danger of ſin, and be told of it; though it be ſaid, if you go there, you periſh; if you go in ſuch a way, you will be damn'd and undone; though the net be laid in their very eye, yet it is in vain, for they ſee the bait, and they muſt go forwards, pleaſure and profit, upon which luſt is ſet, carries them on againſt all counſel and perſwaſion. Thus it is in vain to ſuch ſilly birds, they get no good by it, they will not be warned, though the net be ſpread in their very eye, (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee it:* So it is in this caſe, theſe fools will not ſee what they do ſee; they are ſo blinded with ſomewhat that ſin promiſeth, that though they be told of the danger, they will not take notice of the danger. When man is departed from God, who is light, he ſees no danger, no evil, though he ſee it. He hath no ſpiritual, yea, no rational ſight of that, of which he cannot but have a ſenſitive ſight. He falls into the ſnare which he ſees, yet (which aggravates his miſery) he knows not that he is fallen.

But rather ſecondly, *In vain is the net ſpread in the ſight of any Fowl:* That is, It is in vain for the Fowler; for if the Bird ſee the net, he will hardly come into it; therefore it is that Fowlers make it a great part of their art to keep the net and ſnare ſecret. And *Solomon* intimates, that if any man hearing of the danger, withdraw not, he is more a fool then a Bird, for he will not come into a ſeen danger. Who can pity thoſe who are taken in a trap which they ſaw, and yet would not avoid: They who periſh upon theſe terms, ſeem to be in love with periſhing. *The trap is laid for him in the way.*

From all laid together, the *net*, the *ſnare*, the *grin*, the *trap*, and the ſnare a ſecond time, all prepared for the wicked man,

Obſerve, Firſt, *Wicked men are catcht at unawares.*

A trap, a ſnare, a net, note ſurpriſal: Theſe are like Stratagems or Ambuskadoes in war. It is one thing to meet an enemy in the open field, and it is another thing to lye in ambuſh and uſe ſtratagems to take him. *Snares take unawares. Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* 9. 12.) ſpeaks of the miſery of man, *Man knows not his time: as the Fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the Birds that are caught in the ſnare; ſo are the ſons of men ſnared in an evil time, when it falleth ſuddenly upon them*; the ſnare takes ſuddenly, it gives no warning, there is no prevention, no fence againſt it.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Wicked men are uſually taken when their hopes are higheſt, when they think themſelves in the very enjoyment of their own deſires, and the poſſeſſion of the good they have a long time lookt for, then God takes them away, and deſtroyes them.*

The ground of this Obſervation is, becauſe ſnares, grins, and traps are baited with meat or ſome thing that is pleaſing to the Creature: To be catcht in a trap, is to be catcht with a pleaſant morſel. The Bird looks to be well fed, elſe he would not be enſnared; he ſeeks for meat where he finds a trap. As the table of ſome wicked men becomes their ſnare; ſo many run into a ſnare while they think they are coming to a full and well-furniſhed table. Hence it is, that when wicked men are neareſt their hopes, then good men may be furtheſt from fears; for their hopes, or the things that they hope for, are but as baits

Non eſt quod nos terreant improborum inſolentes minæ; cum enim tuta omnia ſibi pollicentur & aperto rictu jamjā præhenſuri prædam videntur, tum capiuntur, &c. Merl.

to entice them into a ſnare; they are catching at the bait, and think nothing of the ſnare. *When they ſhall ſay, peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them* (1 Theſ. 5. 3.) *Upon the wicked he ſhall rain ſnares* (Pſal. 11. 6.) When it rains we expect plenty, the Clouds uſually drop fatneſs. The wicked mans cloud drops leanneſs, and rains a ſhower of ſnares upon his head. Thus when men are lifted up with hopes of great worldly enjoyments, when they ſay the day is their own, they are but running into the net, and the grin will catch them. True Scripture-hopes never make us aſhamed; but pure Creature-hopes ever leave us diſappointed, and while they offer us a bait, leave us in the trap.

Thirdly, Note, *When wicked men are once catcht, they cannot deliver themſelves.*

Snares are ſet for ſuch Creatures as cannot eaſily be taken, they are ſo ſwift of wing, or foot, that you muſt take them at an advantage, or you cannot take them; but the wings of the Fowl, and the ſtrength of the Beaſt, avail them not, when the trap hath taken them. Wicked men have uſually great abilities, they are ſwift of foot, and nimble of wing; it is hard to take them, their power and policy are their ſecurity; but when the Lord brings them into a ſnare, neither wings, nor feet, neither ſtrength, nor ſwiftneſs, neither wit, nor greatneſs ſhall be able to deliver them. *I* (ſaith the Lord, *Amos* 2. 9.) *deſtroyed the* Amorite, *whoſe height was like the Cedars, and he was ſtrong as the Oaks, yet I deſtroyed his fruits from above, and his roots from beneath.*

Fourthly, Obſerve, *A wicked man when he is taken in a judgment, the more he ſtirs to deliver himſelf, the more he is intangled,*

Thus 'tis with Birds or Beaſts taken in a net or a toyl: Wicked men are *as a wild Bull in a net* (Iſa. 51. 20.) they tumble and toſs to get out, but their bands are made the ſtronger, by their ſtirring, and their attempts to eſcape danger, engage them faſter in it.

Fifthly, Grins, and ſnares, and traps are all artificial, Nature doth not ſet them, the skill and induſtry of man ſets and layes them.

Hence Obſerve, *God prepares inſtruments to take wicked men with.*

He hath his Hunters, and his Fowlers, he hath men skilful to deſtroy all ſorts of wild Beaſts, who riſe up to annoy his people. Some men are wild beaſts, tearing and ſpoiling all that come within their reach, they are Wolves and Foxes, ravenous Birds and Vultures; for theſe the Lord hath Hunters, and Fowlers, that can ſet traps, and grins, and ſpread nets to take them, they have an art in it. The Prophet ſpeaks to this alluſion, (*Jer.* 16. 16.) *Behold, I will ſend for many Fiſhers, ſaith the Lord, and they ſhall fiſh them; and after I will ſend for many Hunters, and they ſhall hunt them from every Mountain, and out of the holes of the Rocks.* Nimrod *was a mighty Hunter before the Lord*: The Lord had him in his eye, or he did not fear to hunt and oppreſs in the eye of the Lord (*Gen.* 10. 9.) The Lord hath his Hunters, and his Fiſhers too; the true Miniſters of Chriſt are Fiſhers of men; and the falſe Prophet was called, *A ſnare of a Fowler in all his wayes, Hoſ.* 9. 8. As God hath Fiſhers to catch the ſouls of men for good; ſo he hath Fiſhers to catch the bodies and powers of men for their deſtruction and hurt, when they uſe their power to the hurt of his. He hath all ſorts of Crafts-men at his call. In the firſt of *Zachary* (*Ver.* 18, 20.) there are *four Carpenters* (ſome read *Smiths*) What to do? *To break the horns:* That is, The Powers that vexed the Saints, that puſhed *Judah* and *Iſrael.* When Tyrants put forth their horns, God gives commiſſion to his Carpenters and Smiths to come with Hammers. And when men begin to play the Foxes and the Wolves among his Sheep, he ſends his Hunters, with nets, and ſnares, and traps to ſpoil theſe ſpoilers.

Sixthly, Obſerve from the accumulation or heap of words here uſed, nets, and ſnares, and grins, and cords, and traps, why all theſe? Do they not intimate to us,

That, *God hath many wayes, variety of wayes, to catch and take evil men with?*

If the net ſhould not take, the ſnare ſhall; if not that, the grin ſhall; if not the grin, the cord ſhall; if not that, the trap ſhall: It is threatened in the Prophet, *He that flyes from the Lyon, the Bear ſhall take him; he that flyes from the Bear, a Viper ſhall ſting him.* His avoiding of one danger ſhall be his falling into another; and while he thinks to out-run his trouble, he runs into it. As God hath infinite wayes to do his people good (he hath more wayes of bleſſing and delivering us then one; though he can make any one way do it, yet he hath variety.) And as the Lord pardons ſin abundantly (*Iſa.* 55. 7.) or multiplies to pardon, that is, he pardons more then one ſin, and pardons more then one time; he multiplies acts of pardon. So the Lord hath many wayes to vex and afflict wicked men; he hath variety of judgments, a treaſury, a magazine ſtored with them: He can ſet up ingine after ingine, inſtrument after inſtrument, if one fail, another ſhall fulfil all his pleaſure. Sword, famine, peſtilence, poverty, captivity, are all at his command: He can puniſh abundantly, or multiply to puniſh; he can multiply puniſhments both of a new kind, and of the ſame kind. He can add a ſnare to a net, a trap to a ſnare, a grin to a trap, or he can ſet up more nets, more ſnares, *&c.* till all the wild Beaſts and ravenous Birds be taken.

Retis, caſſis, laquei funiculi, decipulæ nominibus utitur ut doceat innumeras eſſe in manu dei rationes quibus homines ſua ferocitate ac rapacitate aliis moleſtos capiat, & captos laceret: Merl.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *Wicked men are to be numbred amongſt wild and hurtful creatures.*

I note this from the alluſion of hunting and fowling; they are either wild or hurtful creatures for whom we ſet ſnares and traps; no man ſets a ſnare to take a *Sheep*, or a grin to take a *Chicken*. Beaſts and Fowls that will not come to hand, or that prey upon thoſe which come to hand, we deſtroy with nets and traps. God would have us ſee what wicked men are in the proviſion he makes to take them; they are of a wild nature, they are ſuch as care not for community, all their care is for themſelves alone. Such is the nature of all wild and ſavage creatures, they live to themſelves, they make not a common ſtock, nor look to the publick, but every one is for himſelf. (*Nah.* 2. 12.) They are called Lyons, *Who tear in pieces enough for their Whelps, and ſtrangle for their Lyoneſſes, and fill their holes with prey, and their dens with raven:* And that's all the care they take; juſt enough for their own Wives and Children, who are there called their Whelps and Lyoneſſes; juſt enough to fill their own holes or houſes, let others be as empty as they will, what's that to them. Let the publick ſhift for it ſelf. Such poſſibly will pretend the Commonwealth, but they intend only their private wealth, or the publick no further then themſelves are concerned in it, or may gain by it. Is it not juſt that theſe men ſhould be brought into a ſnare, that every one ſhould ſet up a trap, and uſe means to catch them. For as he is a good Commonwealths-man that feeds the Sheep, and takes care of Oxen; ſo he is a good Commonwealths-man too, that ſets a ſnare for Foxes, and deſtroyes the Wolf. As in a ſpiritual reference it is a part of our duty to take the Foxes, as well as to feed the Sheep; ſo alſo in reference to civils. They who are like wild *natural brute beaſts*, of a ſavage and hurtful quality, are as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks (2 *Epiſt.* 2. 12.) *made to be taken and deſtroyed.* God hath *raiſed them up* (as he ſaith of *Pharaoh*) *even for this ſame purpoſe, that he might ſhew his power in them.*

Thus far *Bildad* deſcribes the wicked mans fall, under the Allegory of Hunters and Fowlers, with their ſnares, traps, cords, and grins.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Terrours ſhall make him afraid on every ſide, and ſhall drive him to his feet.

His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten; and deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide.

It ſhall devour the ſtrength of his skin, even the firſt-born of death ſhall devour his ſtrength.

His confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, and it ſhall bring him to the King of terrours.

It ſhall dwell in his tabernacle, becauſe it is none of his: brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.

THis Context contains the third Allegory, under which *Bildad* ſhadows out the miſerable ſtate of a wicked man, men, which he doth with a very tragical ſtile, in alluſion unto a proceeding at Law, as divers Interpreters ſtate the intendment of theſe words. And this is purſued and ſet forth gradually three wayes.

Allegoria ab exemplo forenſi reorum, qui graviſſimis criminibus tenentur. Jun.

Firſt, By thoſe perplexities, griefs, and gripings which follow the wicked while they live (*Verſ.* 11, 12.)

Secondly, By the torments of their diſſolution, (*ver.* 13, 14.) where we have the *firſt-born of death*, and the *King of terrors*, to whom the man is brought to receive his doom.

Thirdly, From that wrath and vengeance which is poured out, not only upon their perſons, but upon their eſtates, houſes and families, when they are dead, and taken out of the world, *Ver.* 15. *It ſhall dwell in his tabernacle* (when he ſhall be caſt out of his dwelling, and) *brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.*

That I may not interrupt the opening of theſe words in making out the Allegory upon every paſſage, I ſhall ſhew it briefly upon the whole in five particulars.

Firſt, A wicked man is here compared to a notorious Malefactor, whoſe crimes render him as obnoxious to the Laws of man, and the ſevereſt ſentence of a bitter death.

Terrores ſunt quaſi apparitores & lictores regis cujus meminit (v. 14.) Jun.

Secondly, The terrors and diſtractions ſpoken of in the eleventh and twelfth Verſes, are as the Sergeants and Officers of the Court, who proſecute Offenders, to arreſt or apprehend them, and ſo to bring them to Juſtice.

Thirdly, The troubles which this wicked man is caſt into, ſhadow out the ſmart upon his body, fines and confiſcations upon his eſtate, which in legal proceedings are inflicted upon Offenders.

Fourthly, Death it ſelf, which is the chief and ſum of all puniſhments, is here compared to a dreadful King, or to *a King of terrors*, who is as the Judge before whom this Offender is brought for his tryal, and final ſentence.

Fifthly, The abiding of evil upon his Tabernacle, and the pouring out of deſtruction, expreſſed by *brimſtone ſcattered upon his habitation*, is an alluſion to that part of the Judgment which is pronounced upon Malefactors, whoſe houſes are pull'd down, when themſelves are put to death, and their dwelling places made for ever inhabitable. *Nettles ſhall poſſeſs their pleaſant places, thorns ſhall be in their tabernacles* (Hoſ. 9. 6.) The place that harbour'd ſuch wretches in former times ſhall be unfit for man to dwell in; only wild beaſts, *The Owl and Schrich-owl ſhall reſt there, and find for themſelves a place of reſt* (Iſa. 34. 14, 15.) for, *Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.*

In all this *Bildad* ſecretly ſtrikes through the ſides of innocent *Job*; he is the mark at which his parable aims. *Bildad* had heard *Job* complain; Firſt, Of terrors (*Chap.* 6. 4. & 7. 14.) and now he leaves them as his portion. Secondly, He had heard him complaining of ſpoiling and deſolation (*Chap.* 16. 7, 11.) and now he tells him of deſtruction at his ſide, and of a deſolate Tabernacle. Thirdly, He had heard him complaining of pains and dolor upon his body (*Chap.* 9. 17, 18. & 10. 16, 17. & 13. 25, 26. & 16. 13, 14.) and now he tells him, *That the ſtrength of his skin ſhall be devoured.* Fourthly, He had heard *Job* ſpeaking of himſelf as a dying man, as a man already arreſted by death, as a man for whom the graves were ready, and he ſaying to corruption, *Thou art my father, &c.* and here he tells him of the *firſt-born of death*, and of the *King of terrors.*

From all which *Bildad* ſeems to argue the matter thus againſt him in the preſent Allegory.

Only wicked men are terrified and tormented with fears of deſtruction, with the killing thoughts of the firſt-born of death, with the dreadful apparitions of the King of terrors.
But thus it is with thee by thy own confeſſion.
Therefore thou art a wicked man, thou art an hypocrite, and unto thee of right all theſe evils do belong.

So much of the Allegory in general.

I ſhall now open the terms and parts of it diſtinctly.

Verſe 11. **Terrors ſhall make him afraid on every ſide.**

The word which we tranſlate **Terrors**, ſignifies extream terrors, ſuch as put a man out of his wits, or make him not himſelf: Thus it is ſaid (1 *Sam.* 16. 4.) concerning *Saul*, that *The Spirit of the Lord went from him, and an evil ſpirit from the Lord troubled or terrified him.*

There is a twofold terror.

There is a terror from without, and a terror from within.

Terror from without, is the evil which we feel; the terror from within, is the evil which we ſuſpect or fear.

The Text is chiefly to be underſtood of the latter ſort of terrors, *Terrors ſhall make him afraid*: Though he be full of outward trouble, yet inward trouble ſhall be moſt troubleſom and vexatious. The deadly arrow ſhall dwell in his ſide, and the ſorrows of death ſhall take hold of him, before death comes near him. *He dyes alwayes, that lives alwayes in the fear of death.*

Theſe terrors are conceiv'd by ſome to be nothing elſe but the afflictions, twitches, and ſtings of Conſcience, which Heathen Poets call *Furies*: Theſe they fancied continually hurrying and vexing notorious offenders, bloody and treacherous men. Such they ſuppoſed poſſeſt with Furies, which were nothing elſe but diſquietments of Conſcience, when guilt riſing up, looked gaſtly upon them, and ſtared them in the face.

Nos generaliter quoſcunque terrores intelligimus etſi magna ex parte illi per Satanā ſuſcitentur. Merc. *Terrores ſunt Dæmones.* Rab. Sel.

Others interpret theſe *terrors* of Devils, or evil Spirits; *Terrors ſhall make him afraid*: That is, evil ſpirits terrifie him. This differs little from the former; for he may truly be ſaid to be hurried and vexed with Devils, who is terrified with his own evil Conſcience: That Conſcience which hath nothing of God in it, hath much of the Devil in it, and is an open Court for evil Spirits.

Yet we may further diſtinguiſh of three ſorts of terrors.

Firſt, There are terrors from God, and theſe the Saints, the beſt on earth may be filled with. (*Pſal.* 88. 15.) *Heman* complains, *From my youth up, while I ſuffer thy terrors I am diſtracted. Thy terrors*, that is, the terrors which thou (O God) ſendeſt or inflicteſt.

Secondly, There are alſo the terrors of Satan: As God ſets himſelf againſt his people; ſo he lets Satan looſe upon them, who can eaſily dart terrors into their ſpirits; as God ſhoots in his poyſoned Arrows, ſo doth the Devil too; God doth it as a Judge, the Devil as an Executioner.

Thirdly, There are terrors of Conſcience; Conſcience performs many parts in man: Firſt, Conſcience acts the part of an Obſerver, or Watcher: Secondly, Conſcience acts the part of a Witneſs, and brings evidence againſt us; Thirdly, Conſcience acts the part of a Judge, and pronounceth ſentence: Fourthly, Conſcience doth the office of a Tormentor; Conſcience it ſelf can puniſh thoſe, whom it adjudges to puniſhment: Conſcience gives deeper wounds then Care, and may well be compared to the Vulture, which Heathens feigned eating out the heart or liver.

All theſe terrors make wicked men afraid: God terrifies ſome immediately; others are terrified by Satan; and a third ſort by the gripes and convulſions of their own Conſciences. Or we may joyn all together, God awakens Conſcience, and gives Satan liberty to terrifie ſinful men.

Hence Obſerve, *A wicked man is ſubject to continual terrors.*

Terror doth not alwayes ſeize upon him, but it alwayes may; there is no keeping off terrors, unleſs ſin be taken off; unpardoned ſin purſues with fear; guilt and terror are as the ſhadow and the body: as by the ſhining of the Sun, the body caſts a ſhadow; ſo by the darkneſs of ſin guilt causeth terror.

There is a threefold terror upon a wicked man.

Firſt, There is a terror riſing from the evil which he actually feels; whilſt he is pained, he is afraid, and is jealous that his preſent ſufferings are but the earneſt of thoſe which are to come, or but the fore-taſts of a fuller cup of ſorrow.

Secondly, There is a terror from the evil which he really foreſees; though at preſent he feels nothing, yet he foreſees much; and while he is at eaſe, he doubts and ſuſpects he ſhall not.

Thirdly, There is a terror where there is no real evil either felt or foreſeen, but only imagined. The figments of the brain trouble as much as viſible or ſenſible troubles; no fear is more terrible, then that which is a fear of nothing: Evils which are not, nor ever ſhall be, render our lives as burdenſom, as thoſe which are. Of ſuch terror the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 53. 5.) *There were* *they in great fear*; Where was that? In ſome place of great danger ſure, or in *the valley of the ſhadow of death:* The Pſalmiſt tells us, *There were they in great fear where no fear was.*

But can a wicked man be any place where no fear is?

I anſwer, Where ever he is there is a fear that he might fear; but he is often there, where there is no ſuch fear as he feareth; his uſual fear is no fear, or the thing which he fears is meerly a fancy, a ſhadow of fear; that which he fears he would not fear, did he but know what he feared; *There were there in great fear where no fear was. They ſhall fly* (ſaith the Scripture) *at the noiſe of the ſhaking of a leaf*; that is, they ſhall fear where no fear is: There's no hurt in the falling of a leaf, much leſs in the ſhaking of it; and therefore no real fear, or nothing to be feared.

Put theſe three together, and it muſt needs be that the life of a wicked man under ſin and guilt is ſubject to continual terror; what with the trouble he feels, and what with the trouble he really foreſees, and hath juſt cauſe to fear, and what with thoſe troubles that he fancies, *fearing where no fear is,* he muſt needs have a life full of terror; or, as the Text ſpeaks, *Terrors ſhall make him afraid on every ſide.*

Again, Conſider the miſerable ſtate of this wicked man is not deſcrib'd by outward evils, which vex the fleſh, and are grievous to ſence, as poverty, ſickneſs, pain, but by *terror,* which is an affliction upon the ſpirit.

Hence Obſerve, *That terrors are worſe then troubles; the fear of evil is more grievous then the feeling of it.*

The dread of an enemy is more killing then an enemy: The Lord aſſures *Iſrael* (*Exod.* 23. 28. and *Deut.* 7. 20.) *I will ſend Hornets before thee, which ſhall drive out the* Hivite, *the* Canaanite, *and the* Hittite *before thee.* Theſe Hornets may be taken properly; God who ſent an Army of Lice and Flyes to deſtroy *Egypt,* might much more uſe Hornets, which are a more terrible Creature, and have a more cruel ſting, to ſubdue the *Canaanites:* Yet the Hornets may be rather taken metaphorically, for the ſting and terror wherewith God did ſtrike the hearts of thoſe enemies; *I will ſend a Hornet before you:* That is, terrors. Which we find fulfill'd (*Joſh.* 24. 12.) *I ſent the Hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two Kings of the* Amorites; *but not with thy ſword, nor with thy bow.* What theſe Hornets were is plain in the ſecond Chapter of *Joſhua,* verſe 11. where *Rahab* the Harlot made this acknowledgment, *That the fear of them was fallen upon the people of the Land, and that their hearts did melt becauſe of them.* Before ever *Iſrael* did ſtrike a ſtroke, they overcame; before ever the *Canaanites* ſaw the Hoſt of *Iſrael,* they fled before them. God ſent an Army of fears before the Army of the *Iſraelites*; *Your fear is fallen upon us.* Fear is a cruel Hornet, it quickly ſtings to death. It is ſaid (*Heſt.* 9. 2.) *The fear of the* Jews *fell upon all people*; fear overcame them firſt, and then the *Jews* overcame them, putting in execution the Kings commandment; *They laid hands on ſuch as ſought their hurt, and no man could withſtand them.* They who cannot withſtand the fear of an enemy, ſhall never be able to withſtand the enemy himſelf.

Now, as when a people are taken with the terror of an enemy, the enemy needs not take them; they are conquered without fighting, and beaten without a battel. So diſmaying fear of any kind, or from any other cauſe, doth the like; when that once takes hold upon the heart, 'tis no matter whether the evil it ſelf ever come in ſight. For as joy and comfort are better then thoſe things from which they reſult. *Paul* ſpeaking of thoſe dark times and places, when and where Goſpel-light had not ſhined, yet adds (*Acts* 14. 17.) That *God did not leave himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us rain from Heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* Food is a great mercy, but gladneſs is a better. Some have been ſatisfied with gladneſs, who have not been fill'd with food (*Hab.* 3. 17.) but no man was ever ſatisfied with a fulneſs of food, while he was empty of gladneſs. *David* prayes, *Lord reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation* (Pſal. 51. 12.) The joy of ſalvation is more refreſhing then ſalvation; though a man be in the ſtate of ſalvation, yet if he have not the joy of it, what is ſalvation it ſelf to him? As we may have many outward temporal mercies, and yet not have the joy of them; ſo we may have ſpiritual and eternal mercies without that joy which is annexed to them. *David* had the ſalvation of God, his ſoul was in a ſafe ſtate, he was not fallen from Grace, nor out of the love of God, yet he wanted the joy of it. Now (I ſay) as the joy of ſalvation to our feeling, is better then ſalvation it ſelf, and the gladneſs we have with our food, then our food; ſo the terrors, affrightments, and amazements which come with any judgment, are more afflictive then the judgment; and God can ſeparate theſe two when he pleaſeth. For as God can give a man food, and no gladneſs at all, riches, and no comfort at all; ſo he can give trouble and no terror, affliction and no fear at all. Many a good man hath had abundance of the one, and not the leaſt touch of the other. But as trouble is the portion of a wicked man; ſo terrors uſually accompany his troubles, if they come not before his troubles.

Again, The words, **On every ſide**, are an alluſion to a beſieged City. As Chriſt threatens *Jeruſalem* (Luke 19. 43.) *The dayes ſhall come upon thee, that thy enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide:* Thou ſhalt not be able to eſcape any way, there ſhall be no path, no port open; ſo here, terrors ſhall make him afraid *on every ſide,* his ſoul ſhall be ſo ſtraitly beleagerd with armies of evils round about, that he ſhall not have the leaſt hope to make an eſcape. This is the height of the miſery of a wicked man. It is ill to have terror on any ſide; but to have terror on all ſides, how terrible is it? The Prophet *Jeremy* gives *Paſhur* that wicked falſe Prophet this doom (*Chap.* 20. 3.) *Thy name ſhall not be call'd Paſhur* (he would give him a new name, what was that?) *but Magor-miſſabib* (the word of the Text) *fear round about*; which way ſoever thou lookeſt, thou ſhalt ſee fear, or thou ſhalt have viſions of amazement round about thee.

Yea, A man that is under the guilt of ſin, hath fear not only round about him, but above, beneath, and within him; he hath terrors coming upon him from above; *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs*; he hath terrors from beneath, Hell ſmoaks up wrath againſt him, and vomits conſuming fire to burn him up; he hath a ſpring of fear within, his own ſpirit is reſtleſs, and meditates terror every moment. Now he that hath terror falling from above, riſing from beneath, ſpringing from within, and begirting him round on every ſide, ſhall never want his belly-full, his heart-full of terror.

A Believer may have much terror upon him, and manifold terrors about him; but he is not beſet with terror on every ſide; he hath ever ſome paſſage, ſome way free; when many doors of hope are ſtopt, yet he ſees ſome open; or if none appear open, yet he hath hopes to ſee thoſe blocks and bars removed. At leaſt he hath courage to venture, though he hath but litte hope to ſpeed. When he is at worſt, he argues it as the Leapers did (2 *Kings* 7. 4.) *If we ſay, we will enter into the City, then the famine is in the City, and we ſhall dye there; and if we ſit ſtill here, we dye alſo.*

Thus many times a godly man is put to it, if I go ſuch a way, I ſhall dye, I ſee no hopes; or if ſuch a way, I ſhall be loſt too, I ſee no hopes. But though death waited upon theſe two propoſals of the Leapers, yet then they had a third which gave them ſome glimmering beams of light, ſome remote appearances of life. *Now therefore come and let us fall unto the hoſt of the* Syrians, *if they ſave us alive we ſhall live; and if they kill us, we ſhall but dye.* As if they ſhould have ſaid, We cannot make an abſolute concluſion either for or againſt our ſelves, if we go out to the *Syrians*; come, we will try and put it to a venture, at the worſt we can but dye, and 'tis poſſible, that we ſhall live.

Thus at the worſt, a Believer hath ſomething, upon which he can pitch, if not with a probality, yet with a poſſibility of eſcape and deliverance. And if we ſhould ſuppoſe his terrors on every ſide, ſo that the creature can yield him no poſſible relief or remedy, yet the way upward is open, and he can ſend to Heaven for help and comfort, when the earth ſhews him nothing but terror on every ſide. When he walks in much darkneſs of ſpirit, and ſees no light, even then the Prophet counſels him, *To truſt in the Name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God* (Iſa. 50. 10.) And though God ſeem to cloud his face, and cloath himſelf with thunder againſt him, though he ſeem to forbid his truſt, and to beat him off when he ſtayes upon him, ye he can plead intereſt, when he hath no evidence, and ſticks to the Covenant of *his God*, when he hath no encouragement from God. *Saints had rather truſt and ſtay upon an angry God, then a pleaſed creature.* And hence the Apoſtle when he ſpeaks of the ſoreſt temptations which befall the Saints, yet aſſures them (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) *That as there had no temptation taken them, but what was common to man; ſo, that God was faithful, and would not ſuffer them to be tempted above what they were able, but would with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that they might be able to bear it.* Here is a comfortable word, though you have terrors on every ſide, yet you ſhall eſcape; you ſhall have ſtrength to bear it, while it is upon you, and you ſhall not alwayes bear it: God can and will make a way for his to eſcape; only a wicked man is ſo compaſſed about and made afraid *with terrors on every ſide*, that he ſhall not eſcape; though, as it follows in the laſt words of the Verſe,

They ſhall drive him to his feet.

There are different readings of this clauſe.

Confringent eum pedes ſui: ut pedibus in terram allidatur & proſternatur.

Firſt, Thus, *His feet ſhall break him*; or he ſhall ſtumble ſo hard (through his fear) againſt the ground, that he ſhall fall, and his feet (by reaſon of his fall) ſhall break him. As if he had ſaid, When he aſſayeth to flee away from terrors, he ſhall break himſelf by falling, not deliver himſelf by fleeing.

Secondly, Mr. *Broughton* renders, *They ſhall preſs him at his feet:* That is, Where ever he goes terrors ſhall preſs him: As if he had ſaid, If this man, who hath terrors round about, and on every ſide, ſhould at any time make an eſcape, and break through them, yet *terrors ſhall preſs him at his feet*; where ever he goes, terror will follow and overtake him. To preſs *a man at his feet*, as to tread upon a mans heels, may be taken as a proverbial ſpeech, noting a very hard and a cloſe purſuit.

Disjiciunt eum ad pedes ejus. Jun. i.e. *fugientis & vagabundi veſtigiis inſiſtunt, donec ſiſtunt ipſum regi.* Id.

A third renders it thus, *And ſhall caſt him down at his feet; Terrors ſhall make him afraid on every ſide, and caſt him down at his feet:* At whoſe feet? It is reſolved thus; *At the feet of the King of terrors*, or, *of the Judge*. This man thinks to make an eſcape, and get out of the hand of trouble, but terror ſhall arreſt him, and caſt him down bound at the feet of the Judge.

The ſence is fair from each of theſe three rendrings, but I rather take a fourth.

Huc illuc vagus & errabundus præ metu: nullo loco poſſit ſubſiſtere, ubique obverſante ei terrore.

They ſhall drive him to his feet.] That is, *They ſhall make him flee or run for it:* Terror ſhall hurry him up and down, and even *drive him to his feet*. While his mind is unſetled and cannot reſt, his body ſhall not. His heart wanders, and ſo do his feet. He cannot ſtay any where, becauſe whereſoever he comes, terrors follow and dog him; *he may change his place, but he cannot change his company*; in what place ſoever he is, terrors are with him; theſe preſently drive him to his feet, he would out-run his terrors, or find a place, where they ſhould not find him, but he cannot.

The approach of terrors have a different effect, as perſons differ.

First, They drive ſome to their defence.

Secondly, They drive others to their feet.

When terrors and troubles appear to men of courage, and of a ſound mind, they go to their Arms and Weapons, they ſtand upon their guard. (*Heſt.* 8.41.) As ſoon as *Ahaſhueroſh* had granted the *Jews* liberty to defend themſelves againſt their enemies, they preſently gathered together, and *ſtood for their lives*; *they gathered themſelves together*; they did not run away, they were not driven to their feet, but to their hands. Their enemies had authority to deſtroy them (for the Kings Writ was not withdrawn; only he ſent a ſecond Writ whereby the *Jews* had liberty to defend themſelves) terror was on every ſide, yet they gathered together to ſtand for their lives, and to oppoſe their enemies.

Thus when terrors appear and draw near the innocent, God gives them a ſpirit and power to ſtand upon their guard, and to withſtand their dangers. But when terrors meet guilty conſciences, they drive them to their feet, they ſee no hope nor help, but in running away, and that ſhall not help them neither. Such was the judgment upon *Jeruſalem*, as Chriſt intimates (*Matth.* 24. 20.) when he bids them pray, *That their flight might not be in winter, nor on the Sabbath-day.* This implyed, that their beſt help ſhould be in their flight, and their ſtrongeſt refuge in running from the danger: The terror which made *Cain* afraid on every ſide, drove him to his feet; his own tongue could not conceal the courſe which his heart intended; *I ſhall be* (ſaith he) *a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth* (Gen. 4. 14.) The terror which purſued our firſt Parents after they had ſinned, drove them alſo to their feet; *Adam and his Wife hid themſelves from the preſence of the Lord among the Trees of the Garden* (Gen. 3. 8.)

Hence Note, *Flight is an argument of guilt.*

When troubles drive us to our feet, not to our hands, when we dare not reſiſt our dangers, but run from them, in ſuch caſes, either our dangers are extream great, or which is worſe, our ſpirits are extream little, and our fortitude nothing at all. It is a miſerable ſafety which is ſought by running away; ſuch fear ſhews the mans condition to be worſe then his affliction. God threatens his own people, that if his fear did not keep them from ſinning boldly and preſumptuouſly againſt him, their own fear ſhould make them run cowardly and baſely from the face of their enemy; they ſhould *be driven to their feet*, not to their hands for help, and they are but miſerable helpers: They that flee, flee in confuſion, and ſo may as well run upon the danger as from it; they may ſoon run into their hands whom they fear; but they cannot get out of the reach of their fear. When the ſpring of fear is within our ſelves, we cannot be delivered from fear, until we are delivered from our ſelves.

Thus the righteous God either keeps wicked men in on every ſide, as cloſe priſoners, that they cannot flee, or elſe being *driven to their feet*, they flee and run from that which ſuch as they cannot eſcape, as is further evident in the next Verſe.

Verſe 12. **His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten, and deſtruction ſhall be ready on his ſide.**

יהי רעב
אנן

erit fames opulentia ejus.

The Hebrew is very elegant, and ſpeaks in the abſtract; *His ſtrength ſhall be famine*; not famiſhed, but famine; his ſtrength ſhall turn famine, or famine ſhall be his ſtrength. We render, fully to the ſence of the Text, *His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten*.

There are two opinions about *this* **Strength**, what is meant by it.

Firſt, Some underſtand it of his Children. As if having ſhewed calamity falling upon his perſon in the former Verſe, he intended here to ſhew the calamity of his Family. *His ſtrength*, that is, *his Children, ſhall be hunger-bitten.* And the reaſon why this word is applyed to Children, is, becauſe Children, eſpecially the *firſt-born*, are their Parents ſtrength, (*Gen.* 49. 3.) *Jacob* ſaith of *Reuben, Thou art my firſt-born, my might, and the beginning of my ſtrength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.* All Children are their Parents ſtrength, in reference to their birth and generation; Dutiful Children are their Parents ſtrength, or a ſtrength to their Parents by defence and preſervation. (*Pſal.* 127. 4, 5.) *As Arrows in the hand of a mighty man, ſo are Children of the youth; happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them.* Arrows are offenſive weapons; yet becauſe that which ſmites our enemies, is a means of ſafety unto us, we may well call theſe living Arrows our defence. *Jacob* called his youngeſt Son *Benjamin, The Son of the right hand*; as hoping (ſay ſome) that Son would prove a ſtrength, or as his right hand to him; yet that phraſe doth rather ſpeak the nearneſs and dearneſs of that Son to him, whom he would love and take care of, as of his right hand.

And thus we may interpret it here, *His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten:* That is, Want ſhall enter into his Family, and eat up his Children: This curſe is at once propheſied and threatned (*Pſal.* 109. 9, 10.) *Let his Children be fatherleſs, and his Wife a Widdow: Let his Children be continually vagabonds, and beg; let them ſeek alſo their bread out of deſolate places.* It is an affliction when Children are left fatherleſs, and the Wife a Widdow; but for Children to be hunger-bitten, and to beg their bread, or to eat their bread precariouſly, meerly upon courteſie; this is a great judgment: As it is a truth, that the children of many wicked men are hunger bitten; ſo ſome Expoſitors fix upon this interpretation as the truth of this place. But I rather keep to the firſt channel, that the deſcription of the wicked mans perſonal evils is here continued; and therefore,

Secondly, By **Strength**, underſtand his riches, his fulneſs and worldly abundance; his very abundance ſhall be reſolved into want. This Hebrew word is ſometimes tranſlated *riches* or *ſubſtance* (*Hoſ.* 12. 8.) And riches are elegantly called ſtrength.

Firſt, Becauſe riches ſtrengthen a man to attempt great matters; they make him daring and venturous. He that hath a full purſe, and a great ſpirit, what will he not enterprize?

Secondly, Riches are a ſtrength of defence, or as a ſtrong Tower (eſpecially in the opinion of worldly men) to protect againſt the aſſaults of trouble, and the approach of dangers.

Both theſe wayes riches are a mans ſtrength. But in both theſe the wicked rich man ſhall be ſhorten'd, his ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten.

Hence Note, *Creature-fulneſs cannot preſerve from want, creature-ſtrength cannot preſerve from weakneſs.*

Eleganter robori tribuit, quod ipſimet impio erat tribuendum. Merc.

He ſaith not, the ſtrong man ſhall be hunger-bitten, but his ſtrength ſhall, and his very plenty ſhall be famine; the bleſſing of God gives plenty in famine, or ſufficiency in want; but where the bleſſing of God is wanting, there is a want in all outward ſufficiency. Chriſt tells the Devil in anſwer to his firſt temptation in the fourth of *Matthew*, *Make theſe ſtones bread; it is written, Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* A man may have bread, and yet not live; he may fill himſelf with all manner of worldly comforts, and yet be comfortleſs. (*Luke* 12.) *The life conſiſts not in abundance.* A full Purſe, or a full Table cannot maintain life. The Promiſe is, (*Pſal.* 33. 19.) That God *will deliver the ſouls of his from death, and keep them alive in famine.* As God can deliver his in death, and continue life, without the means of life; ſo he can let a wicked man famiſh in fulneſs, as well as take away his fulneſs. Which latter *Hannah* in her Song (1 *Sam.* 2. 5.) ſpeaks as an experience, *They that were full have hired out themſelves for bread; and they that were hungry, ceaſed:* That is, The rich had not ſo much means left as would feed them with ordinary bread, much leſs with dainties and curious fare; they hired themſelves out for bread; they were forced to work for a living, yea, to ſweat for a cruſt. 'Tis extreameſt famine, when they that have bread enough, cannot fill themſelves; but 'tis extream famine when they who were full have no bread. The Prophet threatened famine in that extremity (*Iſa.* 5. 13.) *Their honourable men are famiſhed, and their multitude are dryed up with thirſt.* If there be any water to be had, the multitude, the common ſort will have it; water is a common commodity (even as the air is) and uſually lyes in common to all. And if there be any bread to be had, great and honourable men will have it, though the poor ſtarve. Therefore to ſay, *Their honourable men are famiſhed*, argues the greatneſs of a famine. And that's the reaſon which ſome give of *David*'s choice (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) when God offered him, which he would of thoſe three Judgments, *War*, or *Famine*, or *Peſtilence*; he choſe the Peſtilence; and gives the reaſon, *Let us fall now into the hand of God, whoſe mercies are great; but let me not fall into the hand of man.* He durſt venture himſelf rather to the Sword of God, then to the ſword of man; not as if he thought, that man could ſtrike harder, or wound deeper then God; but becauſe he knew God would temper his ſtrokes with mercy, which man would not. And yet *David* makes choice of that judgment, which put him in equal hazzard of falling by it, with the meaneſt of his Subjects. For had he choſen the Sword, the King might have ſecur'd himſelf in ſome ſtrong Fort or City; thouſands of the people might fall by mans ſword, and his perſon not come near the danger. Again, if he had choſen famine; *David* being King would not want, as long as there had been a bit of bread to be found in the whole Land. The famine might have glutted it ſelf upon multitudes of his people, while he, poſſibly, might have had a plentiful, at leaſt, a ſufficient Table. Therefore *David* to ſhew the ingenuity of his ſpirit in this election, choſe a judgment, to eſcape which his outward Greatneſs and Power gave him not the leaſt advantage; *He putteth himſelf meerly upon the mercy of God, who chuſeth to be puniſhed by the immediate ſword of God:* Whereas if the ſword of man or famine be ſent againſt a Nation, Princes can make the beſt ſhift to avoid the danger in the one, and hunger in the other. For as (according to that of the Prophet) when the poor can get no water; ſo when the great and the rich can get no bread, then famine hath its full ſcope, rides (as it were) in triumph, and hath done its worſt.

His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten.

Yet this hunger is not to be confined literally to the want of material food: For while the man continues in his ſtrength, and hath all creature-comforts about him, ſomewhat pincheth and pines his ſpirit, he is vexed and hunger-bitten in the midſt of plenty.

Hence Note, *A wicked man is never ſatisfied.*

The righteous *ſhall abide ſatisfied*, there ſhall be no hunger upon his ſpirit: *Diſſatisfaction is the hunger, contentment is the fulneſs and ſatiety of the ſoul.* Many are hunger-bitten, who have more bread then they can eat. Was it not ſo with *Haman*? We read him boaſting of a banquet, yea, making proclamation of his ſtrength, power, and greatneſs (*Heſt.* 5. 11.) Haman *told them of his glory, and of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the Princes and ſervants of the King; and he ſaid moreover, yea,* Heſter *the Queen did let no man come in with the King unto the banquet which ſhe had prepar'd, but my ſelf; and to morrow I am invited unto her alſo with the King*, &c.

This man had all the honour and power, which that mighty Monarch could pour upon him; nevertheleſs, we may report him hunger-bitten, as appears in the next Verſe; *Yet all this (ſaith he) availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee* Mordecai *the* Jew *ſit at the Kings gate.* As if he had ſaid, *What though I and the King banquetted with the Queen to day, and ſhall to morrow, yet it is not only hunger, but death to me to ſee this man thrive whom I would not have live.* Thus becauſe he could not have his will upon an honeſt man, to ſubdue and deſtroy him, all that he had was nothing to him, for it availed him nothing. *What we account doth us good, is to us (how good or great ſoever it is) no better then nothing.*

There is ſuch a ſpirit in wicked men, though they live upon the faireſt terms in the world, though they be quiet and peaceable, and have profits and pleaſures more then they can mannage, or tell what to do with, yet all is nothing, unleſs they can have their wills upon ſuch as ſtand in the way of their pride and ambition. What tell ye me (ſaith ſuch a one) that I have a great eſtate, that I may take my fill of pleaſure, unleſs I may alſo take my fill of revenge, and throw down every man that ſtands not by my favour, or with my intereſt. Nor is it any wonder, that wicked men are never at reſt with what they have; ſeeing it is not poſſible that he who makes the world his all, ſhould ever be ſatisfied, if he had all of it, much leſs (which is all that any man but the firſt ever had, or I believe ever ſhall have) with a piece of it. *Ahab* had a Kingdom, he was rich and full; yet though he had the fulneſs of a Kingdom, he was *hunger-bitten for a Vineyard* (1 Kings 22.) This is a ſore judgment, and it is daily inflicted upon the ſpirits of many wicked men; they have bread enough, riches enough, gold and ſilver enough, yet they are bitten with hunger after ſome forbidden fruit; which if they get not, all is loſt to them which they have gotten. And as ſomewhat which they want, hinders their enjoyment of all they have: ſo ſomewhat which another man hath, hinders them more then all their own wants. Such a man proſpers, and is in power; this bites their ſouls, this gnaws their bowels, and they cannot be quiet. *His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten.*

And deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide.

איד propriè vapor & nubes quæ ſurſum attollitur, unde pro infortunio & calamitate, quæ ſuper aliquem ut nubes quædã incidit ſumitur. Merc. Forte parata deſtructio eſt pœna & ſuppliciũ conſtitutũ legibus, & præparatum ſontibus. Pin.

The word which we render **deſtruction**, ſignifies *vapours, aſcending up from the earth*, condenſed into a cloud: and (among the Rabbins) it is uſually applied, to any (as we ſpeak) misfortune, or calamity, which comes ſuddenly and falls down upon us like a cloud when it melts and diſſolves into a ſtorm-ſhower; *Any unexpected evil* may well be called deſtruction wrapt up in and dropt from a cloud. *Deſtruction ſhall be ready* prepar'd or fixt; ſo the word is rendred, (*Pſal.* 108.) *O God, my heart is fixt, or my heart is prepar'd.* So here, deſtruction prepared, or ready at hand, it is not to be now debated or reſolved on, what it ſhall be; That's done long ago. Some interpret this *readineſs*, in alluſion to a judiciary tryal, where the penalty is ſet and determined by the Law. Deſtruction is ready according to Juſtice for the offender: It is ready, as it follows in the Text.

At his ſide.] Some of the Rabbins who interpret the former word *Strength*, for *Children* (as was toucht before) in purſuit of that, interpret *his ſide*, for, *his wife*. The Hebrew word ſignifies either the ſide or the rib; hence 'tis rendred, *Deſtruction ſhall be ready at his rib*, or, *upon his rib*; that is, deſtruction ſhall be upon his wife, who was a rib taken out of Man (*Gen.* 2.21.) Thus the Rabbins deſcant upon it; *His ſtrength*, that is, his children ſhall be hunger-bitten, and *deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide*, that is, it ſhall wait upon his wife whether ſoever ſhe goes. So here is a deſcription of compleat deſtruction. The wicked man, in his perſon, as alſo in his wife and children ſhall be deſtroyed.

Others expound it only of wounds in his own ſide or rib. In the book of *Samuel* we read of wounds given, under *the fiſt rib*, becauſe there wounds are moſt killing and deadly.

Effractor paratus ad coſtas. Cajet.

Another reads it in the Concrete, *not deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide*, but *the Deſtroyer ſhall be ready at his ſide*; His enemy ſhall wait on him to deſtroy him. But the abſtract hath a greater force and elegancy. To ſay, deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide, is more then to ſay, the deſtroyer ſhall be ready at his ſide.

Therefore Fourthly, All that I conceive lies in this expreſſion, (*Deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide*) is this, to ſhew that he ſhall have a ſudden and an unavoidable deſtruction; for thoſe evils which are at our ſide, are ſo near us, that we can hardly acquit our ſelves of them. Evils at a diſtance may be avoided, but if they come up cloſe to our very ſides, how can we eſcape?

Latrones dicti ſunt quaſi laterones, latent enim ad inſidias & ex latere adoriantur. Habere aliquid ad manũ & ad latus utrumq; ſignificat habere aliquid proximũ. Bold.

Some *Criticks* tell us, that *latro* the Latine word for a thief, is *quaſi latero*, becauſe he lies by ſide of a man, he skulks in a buſh, or rides cloſe by the travellers ſide, talking with him, and then falls upon him; that's alſo the elegancy of the Hebraiiſm.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God hath deſtruction ready for evil men; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath alſo prepared for him the inſtruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows againſt the perſecuters*, (*Pſal.* 7.12,13.)

When we ſee a bow bent, and the ſhaft pull'd out of the quiver, and put upon the ſtring, then a man is ready to ſhoot; Divine deſtructions may be acted as ſoon as threatned, they are not to prepare, but prepared.

When the Lord denounceth eternal judgement upon wicked men, he ſaith; *Go to the fire that is prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; The fire is made, the treaſure of wrath is full. As the mercy of God is a ready mercy, and as his pardons are ready for his people; his pardon and mercies are not to ſeek, he hath them at hand, he is *good and ready to forgive*, (*Pſal.* 86. 5.) Whereas moſt men, though they will forgive, yet they are not ready to forgive, they are hardly brought to it, though they do it at laſt. But God is ready to forgive; he hath (as it were) pardons ready drawn (as a man who would be ready to do a buſineſs, he will have ſuch writings as concern the paſſing of it ready) there is nothing to do, but to put in the date and the name; yea indeed the date and the name are put in from all eternity. Thus the Scripture ſpeaks to ſhew how forward, God is to do good; He needs not fit his heart to it, his heart is ever in the exacteſt fitneſs. Now as God hath mercies ready for his own people, ſo he hath deſtructions as ready for the wicked. They are as ready as if he had made, and kept them by him ready made from everlaſting.

Again, As a godly man is uſually ready to do good, *O God, my heart is prepared* (ſaith *David*) ſo God is ready to bring evil upon them who continue to do evil; and therefore fear not when you ſee men ready bent and ſet to do miſchief, their deſtruction is more ready then they are to deſtroy, and God can bring deſtruction upon them in a moment.

Secondly, Note, *Deſtruction comes ſuddenly upon wicked men, and ſurprizes them unawares.*

Chriſt will come at laſt upon all the world ſuddenly, but the ſurprizal ſhall only be upon wicked men. The Apoſtle ſhadows this in two Alluſions, (1 *Theſ.* 5. 2, 3.) *For your ſelves know perfectly that the day of the Lord ſo cometh as a thief in the night; for when they ſhall ſay, peace and ſafety, then ſuddain deſtruction cometh upon them as travel upon a woman with child, and they ſhall not eſcape.* The thief gives no warning, and the travel of a woman with child, many times gives as little.

Now as in the great day of Judgment, God will come as a thief, and as pain upon a woman with child; ſo alſo in the leſſer dayes of judgement, thoſe of this life.

Obſerve, Thirdly, *There is no running away from that deſtruction which God ſends.*

Can a man run from his ſide? deſtruction is at the ſide of a ſinner; where ever his ſide is, there deſtruction is; Evils which have a Commiſſion from above, never fail to find the offender; we may eſcape the evil which man plots, man may make ready a thouſand deaths for us, and we out-live them all; as *Paul* ſaith of himſelf; *In Damaſcus, the Governour under Aretas the King, kept the City with a Garriſon, deſirous to apprehend me: And thorow a window in a basket, was I let down by the wall, and eſcap't his hands.* *Paul* got clear away, though man laid deſtruction at his ſide; but if God lay deſtruction, there is no window to get out at, nor basket to be let down by; we can neither ſtand before the judgements of God, nor out-run them.

Verſ. 13. **It ſhall devour the ſtrength of his ſkin.**

The thirteenth and fourteenth verſes contain the ſecond degree or ſtep of the miſery of a wicked man. *It ſhall devour the ſtrength of his ſkin. Deſtruction was ready at his ſide*; in the former verſe, now it devours; the word ſignifies to ſwallow up at a bit, and ſo to devour as to conſume and bring to nothing; it notes thoſe conſumptions which fire and ſword make. They are terrible conſumers, cruel devourers; theſe ſhall devour like a hungry monſter.

בדי עורו

The ſtrength of his ſkin.] The Original word which we tranſlate **ſtrength**, ſignifies properly a bough or branch of a tree; it ſignifies alſo the bar of a door.

And hence it is that ſome render, *It ſhall devour his branch*; and by this branch the members of his body may be meant, becauſe as the body of a tree ſhoots forth branches, which are as its members, ſo the body hath many members, which are as its branches, and ſo the ſame word may very well ſerve both.

Comedet vectes cutis ejus, comedet vectes ejus primogenitus mortis. Jun. Devoret pulchritudinem ejus. Vulg. Mors devoret ſpecioſa ejus, 70.

Again, Others tranſlate, *It ſhall devour the bars of his ſkin*; bones are as the bars of the ſkin, and therefore the ſtrength of the ſkin, like bars, the bones bear up and ſupport both ſkin and fleſh.

The ſtrength of his ſkin.] The Vulgar reads, *It ſhall devour the beauty of his ſkin*; the *ſtrength*, ſay we, the *beauty* ſaith he. The Septuagint follows that reading, death ſhall devour his moſt beautiful things, or thoſe things which were moſt amiable and pleaſant in his eye.

Our reading is very ſutable both to the context and to the original word; for the members of the body are the ſtrength of it, and the bars of a door are the ſtrength of it; therefore, *it ſhall devour the ſtrength of his ſkin*, contains and takes in both.

It ſhall, what ſhall? What is the antecedent? Some ſay the devourer is famine, of which he ſpake in the former verſe; *His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten*; famine ſhall devour; famine is a great devourer, famine eats up both the ſtrength and the beauty of the ſkin, it ſucks the marrow

row of the bones, all fade before the face of famine, (*Lam.* 4. 5.)

Others underſtand deſtruction or miſery in general, as the devourer, *deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide, it ſhall devour.* That is, deſtruction ſhall devour the ſtrength of his skin; ſo it is only a repetition of the ſame thing, with an elegant force and heightning of the ſence.

The firſt-born of death ſhall devour his ſtrength.

The thing to be opened in this latter branch (the ſence being the ſame with the former) is, what we are to underſtand by the **firſt-born of death**, and how this phraſe and form of ſpeech is us'd in Scripture; There are divers opinions about it.

Firſt, One of the Rabbins conceives, that it is to be expounded by an Hypallage; as if the *firſt-born of death ſhall devour*, were put for *Death ſhall devour his firſt-born:* That is, his ſtrength, as the firſt-born is called. But we need not make ſuch an inverſion in the words; and therefore,

Mors devoret primogenitũ ejus. Rab. Dav.

Secondly, This firſt-born of death ſay others, *is the Devil*, becauſe he was the author of death, he brought death into the world, for he brought ſin into the world, he by temptation, and *Adam* by hearkning to the temptation. The Apoſtle makes the derivation of death from *Adam*, (*Rom.* 5. 12.) *Death entred by one*, and we may ſafely derive its pedegree yet higher by one; for death entred *that one*, by the Devil.

Again, The Devil may be called *the firſt-born of death*, becauſe he hath the power of death in his hands: So the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 5. 14. *For as much then as the Children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the Devil.* He that hath the power of death is the *firſt-born of death.* The Devil hath the power of death, not as if the Devil could by his will cauſe men to die, or paſs a ſentence of death upon them; for this is too high a priviledge for the Devil, he hath no ſuch power of death; It is the ſole priviledge of God himſelf to have this power of death. The power of death, and the power of life are committed to Chriſt; whom he will he ſlayes, and whom he will he makes alive. But the Devil is ſaid to have the power of death as Chriſt gives him a Commiſſion, arms him with a power to inflict death upon wicked men and unbelievers; or he hath the power of death, not as a Judge, but as an Executioner; He is therefore called (*Revel.* 9. 11.) in the Hebrew *Abaddon*, and in the Greek *Apollyon*, that is, *the Deſtroyer*, or, if you will, *the Executioner, the Hangman.* God puts the buſineſs into his hand, therefore he it is that hath the power of death. Some of the Hebrews ſay upon that place, that God doth ſet ſome ſpecial evil Angel over ſome wicked men, he puts the power of death concerning them into his hand; and ſo he is the *firſt-born of death*; but I ſhall not ſtay upon that.

Angelus morti præpoſitus vel mortis princeps, cui à domino poteſtas data eſt homines interimendi. Merc.

Primogenitus mortis eſt morbus graviſſimus. Rab. Joſ.

Morbus graviſſimus, à quo mors abeſt proximè ex uſu ſcripturæ mors appellatur, quod enim parũ differt à forma perfecta illius ſibi nomen vendicare ſolet. Sanct.

Thirdly, Others by the *firſt-born of death*, conceive that we are to underſtand the diſeaſe which firſt ſiezeth upon the body before the man dies; for death when it ſiezeth upon the body, appears firſt in a diſeaſe or a diſtemper, and ſo the diſeaſe is as it were the eldeſt ſon of death. The diſeaſe being that which death ſends forth and neceſſarily follows, it is therefore called the *firſt-born of death*; as it were death it ſelf; for thoſe things which are near accompliſhment, though they are not fully accompliſht, receive the name, title, or denomination of the thing accompliſhed. As a man contending with another, if we ſee he hath a great deal the better of him, though the other make reſiſtance, yet we ſay, he hath the victory over him: And as Chriſt himſelf (*Joh.* 19. 30.) when he was alive upon the Croſs, ſtrugling and ſtriving with the powers of darkneſs about the deliverance of Man, crys out, *it is finiſhed:* and yet the work was not then done, it was not finiſhed till he died indeed; but becauſe he ſaw he had the better of the day, and he was aſſured that he ſhould carry it through, therefore thus he ſpake before the work was totally and compleatly finiſhed. So a diſeaſe, a malignant diſeaſe, a mortal diſeaſe, taking hold upon any man, may be call'd the *firſt-born of death*; that is, ſuch a diſeaſe as death hath begotten; or you may call it death it ſelf, becauſe death will certainly and ſuddenly follow.

Primogenitus mortis eſt mæror animi quem mors præmittit ut ſibi præparet hoſpitium. Cajet.

Fourthly, The *firſt-born of death*, ſay others is that trouble of mind, that anguiſh or ſorrow which death ſends as a harbinger to take up its lodging in the ſpirit of a wicked man; *The afflicting fore-thought of death, is a death, or the firſt-born of death.*

Fifthly, Some take *the firſt-born of death*, to be an early death, or death in the flower and ſtrength of age.

Primogenita mors eſt, quæ naturalis ætatis prævenit finem. Aqu. Liran.

Primogenitus mortis eſt proverbiale dictum, pro morte nõ vulgari ſed violenta & maxime Horrenda.

Primogenita mors. Vulg.

Primogenitus mortis eſt mors quæ præ aliis mortibus, tãquã fratribus, in enecando duplicẽ veluti & potiſſimam poteſtatem habet.

Scriptura ob maxima primogenitorum præ aliis filiis privilegia vocare ſolet primogenitũ quicquid in ſuo genere aliis antecedit. Bold.

Sixthly, The *firſt-born of death*, is ſome unuſual or extraordinary death; that is, look upon that death which is moſt deadly, that death into which many deaths are collected, that death which is (as it were) an aggravation of all that is in death, this death is the *firſt-born of death:* hence it is that the vulgar tranſlation reads, not, *the firſt-born of death*, but *the firſt-born death*; that is, whatſoever death is more deadly, and bitter, more cruel and painful, that death, which among all the wayes of dying, carries away the preheminence, that death, which is the very ſtrength of death, and hath in it a double portion of dying, that's the *firſt-born of death.* And ſo *the firſt-born of death*, is nothing elſe but a proverbial ſpeech for an extraordinary death, for an extream bitter death; For as it is among our children, there is the firſt-born, the eldeſt, and then the younger, as they ſtand in their degree, but among them all, the firſt-born is chief; ſo here, That death which among all other deaths is the chiefeſt, ſuch a death is the *firſt-born of death*, and ſuch a death ſhall ſieze upon the wicked man. And hence alſo Mr. *Broughton* (as I conceive) avoiding the letter of the Original (which he ſeldom doth, yet here he doth it,) inſtead of *the firſt-born of death*, ſaith, *a ſtrange death ſhall eat the branches of his body.* And we find in Scripture this uſage of the word applyed to others, in whom there is an eminency, or a high degree in any kind, though not literally the firſt-born, becauſe the firſt-born hath the preheminence above the reſt of his Brethren; As *Jacob* ſaith of *Reuben*, his real firſt-born; *Thou art my might, and the beginning of my ſtrength, &c.* And the Law provided, that a double portion ſhould be given to the firſt-born, yea though he lay under ſome accidental diſadvantages, (*Deut.* 21. 17.) *He ſhall acknowledge the Son of the hated for the firſt-born, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath*; though he were a ſon of a wife that he hated, yet this muſt not be pleaded as a bar to his priviledge. Though the mother was hated, yet the ſon muſt be honoured. Where note (by the way) that he ſpeaks comparatively of hatred, that is, though ſhe were a wife whom her husband did not love with ſtrength of affection, yet if ſhe hath born him his ſtrength, his firſt-born, he muſt acknowledge his right, by giving him a double portion. According to this Analogy we are to underſtand the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of the *firſt-born of the poor*, (*Chap.* 14. 29, 30.) *Rejoyce not thou whole Paleſtina, becauſe the rod of him that ſmote thee is broken; for out of the Serpents root ſhall come forth a Cockatrice, and his fruit ſhall be a fiery flying Serpent, and the firſt-born of the poor ſhall feed, and the needy ſhall lie down in ſafety.* The *firſt-born of the poor*, is not to be interpreted of the eldeſt ſon of the poor; but by the firſt-born of the poor, the Prophet means thoſe who were moſt poor, extreamly poor, thoſe who were ſo far from having a double portion of worldly things, that they had no portion at all. Or they are called the *firſt-born of the poor*, becauſe they had only a double portion of want and poverty, or were oppreſſed under the very ſtrength of it.

Cætus ſanctorum quos primitivos appellavit, nõ quod omnes primi natura ſolverint matrũ uteros, ſed quia major honor primogenitis lege tribuebatur, eorum præſtantiam ſignificavit per hanc Appellationem. Theod. in 1 Coloſs.

Now, to ſhew that God would raiſe his Church, and lift her up, and give his afflicted people deliverance, he aſſures them, that *the firſt-born of the poor*, that is, ſuch as were doubly poor, doubly afflicted, ſhould feed and be comforted. Thus, in the twelfth of the *Hebrews*, *verſ.* 22, 23. Believers are all called the *Congregation of the firſt-born*; *But ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, and to the Aſſembly and Congregation of the firſt-born, &c.*

Why *the firſt-born*, not becauſe all believers, all Saints are elder brethren, or ſuch as were the firſt-born of their parents; for the firſt-born may be an unbeliever, and the younger may be a Saint, a believer. But he calls them the *Congregation of the firſt-born*, becauſe they ſhall all be dealt with as the *firſt-born*, they ſhall all be lookt upon as the ſtrength of Chriſt, and all ſhall have a double portion,

tion, they ſhall all have that honour which the firſt-born hath, a fulneſs of excellency and dignity; hence their title, is, *the Congregation of the firſt-born.*

So we are to underſtand that of the Apoſtle, (*Coll.*1.18.) where we find two expreſſions, ſtanding directly oppoſite to this in the Text; he calls Chriſt *the firſt-born from the dead: He is the head of the body the Church, he is the beginning, and the firſt-born from the dead.* As *Bildad* here ſpeaks of the firſt-born of death, or the firſt-born death; So Chriſt is called (as it were) in way of oppoſition, *the firſt-born from death.* Chriſt is called *the firſt-born from death,* not only becauſe he was the firſt that did ariſe to an immortal life, (ſome there were that did riſe before, as when Chriſt died the graves were opened, and ſome aroſe, but Chriſt was the firſt that did ariſe to an immortal life) and ſo he was (in a ſence) begotten and born again; there was an heavenly nativity in his reſurrection, therefore he is called the firſt-born from death, death gave him up, and was delivered of him for ever. Now (I ſay) Chriſt was not only called the *firſt-born from death,* (upon this account) but becauſe he was the chief, (as it were) the exemplar and leader in the reſurrection, he was the higheſt in the reſurrection, and his reſurrection was moſt glorious. Thus he was *the firſt-born from death,* he aroſe with the greateſt glory and preheminence.

In the fifteenth verſe of the ſame Chapter, Chriſt is called *the image of the inviſible God, the firſt-born of every creature;* that is, the higheſt, the fulleſt of glory among all creatures; for we are here to take heed of the ſence of the *Arians,* and others that follow them, who take hold of this Scripture, where Chriſt is called *the firſt-born of every creature,* as if the ſence were only this, *that Chriſt is the chiefeſt creature* (though it be a truth, that according to his humane nature he is a creature, and ſo the chiefeſt creature, but they reſtrain it to the whole perſon, as if he were only the chiefeſt of creatures) and not God at all. For he is not only in his humane nature the chiefeſt creature, but according to his Divine Nature, the beginning of all the creatures; ſo he is called (*Revel.*3.14.) *The beginning of the creation of God,* which we may explain by *the firſt-born of every creature;* he is the beginning of the Creation of God, not *principium principiatum* only, *the beginning begun.* Chriſt may be called the beginning of all the creation of God, becauſe God looked on him firſt: but alſo he is *principium principians,* the beginning of the creation, becauſe every creature had its beginning from him. Chriſt is the active beginning, or beginner of every creature; For as the Evangeliſt *John* gives it out (*Chap.*1. *verſ.* 2, 3.) *The ſame was in the beginning with God; All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Again, the Lord ſpeaking of *David* to the height in the Letter, and of Chriſt in the figure, ſaith, (*Pſal.*89.27.) *I will make him my firſt-born, higher then the Kings of the Earth;* that is, he ſhall be my chiefeſt, my higheſt, my only one. Thus as the firſt-born among the living, or from the dead, ſtill denotes the choiceſt of thoſe who live, ſo the *firſt-born of death,* is the chiefeſt, the higheſt, the ſtrongeſt death that any man dies when he is gathered to the dead.

Laſtly, Some labour much to fix it upon a particular death, and would ſhew us what this firſt-born of death, this moſt deadly death is; and upon debate, the vote caſts it upon famine; which ſome conceive alſo moſt proper to to this place, in reference to the words before, *His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten, deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide. The firſt-born of death;* that is, (ſay they) *Famine,* the chiefeſt of deaths ſhall devour his ſtrength, and make an end of him: For though we may ſay, there are as many deaths as there are diſeaſes and wayes to death, yet there are three great deaths, which do as it were ſtrive for preheminence; Firſt, Sword; Secondly, Plague; And Thirdly, Famine; theſe are, as it were, the *firſt three* among the Deſtroyers of mankind: ſometimes in the Prophets God puts a fourth, and ſaith, *My four ſore Judgements;* as if they were Judgments above all the reſt: and then I remember the *evil beaſt* comes among them; but ſword, peſtilence, and famine are the *firſt three,* and according to this opinion famine is put for the firſt of the three, the chiefeſt of the three, like the *Tachmonite* (2 *Sam.*23.) I find one Interpreter ſo confident of it, that he ſaith without all doubt by the *firſt-born death,* he means famine, which is not an infirmity or a diſeaſe tending to or giving us warning of the approach of death, but is it ſelf a continued death, and the moſt bitter death. And indeed the Prophet *Jeremy* in his *Lamentations* ſeems to give the preheminence to famine; *They that be ſlain with the ſword, are better then they that are ſlain with hunger; for theſe pine away, ſtricken through for want of the fruits of the field,* (*Chap.*4.9.)

Dubio procul illa primogenita mors eſt fames, quæ non eſt infirmitas vel morbus ſed continua mors, quâ non datur amarior, &c. Bold.

But I rather take it of any ſort of death, as it is heightned and made grievous by circumſtances, then conclude or faſten it upon any one ſort of death; For as any kind of ſin may by circumſtances be ſo aggravated, and made ſo exceeding ſinful, that it may juſtly deſerve to be ſtiled, *The firſt-born of ſin;* ſo likewiſe may any puniſhment or death, *which is the wages of ſin.*

Hence Obſerve, *The Lord hath various degrees of Judgements, and of deaths, to pour out upon the wicked.*

Some deaths are but like younger Brethren, others are like the firſt-born. It is with puniſhments and judgments as it is with ſins, there is a difference in the degrees of them; though all ſins be of the ſame quality, yet all are not of the ſame quantity. Upon ſome ſins the ſinner layes out his ſtrength, and commits them with all his might, theſe may deſervedly be called the *firſt-born of ſin,* and ſuch ſinners the firſt-born of ſinners; as *Polycarpus* anſwered *Marcion* the Heretick when he came into his preſence, and asked him if he did not know him; *Yes,* ſaith he, *I know thee well to be the firſt-born of Satan.* Now, I ſay, as there are degrees in ſin and ſinners, among whom ſome are as the *firſt-born,* ſo there are degrees in puniſhment; and therein lies the exactneſs of Juſtice to apportion and meaſure out to every one according to his ſin, whether in practice or opinion. To give alike judgments upon all offenders, would be very unlike to Juſtice; And there would be much inequality in ſuch equality. The Lord tells *Babylon,* who was the firſt-born of ſinners, (*Iſa.*47.9.) *Judgments ſhall come upon thee in their perfection;* perfect judgments are the portion of a perfect ſinner; where there is a compleatneſs of wickedneſs, there the compleatneſs of wrath ſhall be powred out, even the firſt-born of death.

ἐπιγινώσκω τὸν πρωτότοκον τοῦ σατανᾶ. *Euſeb.lib.*4. *Eccl. Hiſt. cap.* 13.

Now, as the *firſt-born* is our ſtrength, (which is obſervable) 'tis added in the Text; *The firſt-born of death ſhall devour his ſtrength.*

Hence Obſerve, *That all the power of man fails before the meſſengers of the wrathful power of God.*

Strength ſhall go forth to devour ſtrength; Though ſin be armed, though an aſſociation, or an hoſt of ſinners be in Arms, and ſtand upon their guard, though the ſtrength of each one among them be *the ſtrength of ſtones, and his fleſh of braſs,* as *Job* complained his was not (*Chap.* 6.) yet God can provide a judgement that ſhall devour it all at a bit, and ſwallow it as a morſel, he can have *a firſt-born* judgement to diſpatch the *firſt-born,* the ſtrength of ſinners. The Prophet *Iſaiah* in a holy ſcorne invites all the enemies of the Church to joyn forces and councels, to put their ſtrength and their wit together: *Gather together on heaps, O ye people, and gird your ſelves,* (and again he ſaith) *gird your ſelves.* Of all ſtrength, united ſtrength is the ſtrongeſt; united weakneſs is very ſtrong, how ſtrong then is united ſtrength? Hence Politians adviſe (*divide & impera*) divide your enemies if you would conquer them; but the Lord needs not take his enemies at an advantage, and therefore he ſaith; *Gather together, gird your ſelves, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces,* (*Iſa.* 8. 9.) Make your ſelves as ſtrong as you can, ſee if I cannot devour your ſtrength. Do your worſt againſt me, and the beſt for your ſelves, yet all ſhall be brought to nought. Creatures may be dealt with, and kept out, but there is no fortifying againſt the Almighty. When the Lord comes to aſſault or batter, then all our ſtrong Holds, even our ſtrongeſt hold ſhall be, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Nahum* 3. 12.) as the firſt ripe figs, which if they be ſhaken fall into the mouth of the eater; and by how much any man is the more confident, that his ſtrong hold, will hold out in the day of aſſault or battery, by ſo much the ſooner ſhall it be rendred up or beaten down, as it follows in the next verſe.

Verſ. 14. **And his confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, and it ſhall bring him to the King of terrours.**

As if he had ſaid, though this man was ſo ſtrong, that he grew confident, (ſtrong men are uſually confident) yet not only his ſtrength, but, *his confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle.*

His confidence.] The word ſignifies ſuch an aſſurance and acquieſcence of ſpirit, as puts a man out of doubt; A man of confidence hath no fear, either of danger or about ſucceſſe; He is not afraid that the danger will come, or that the ſucceſs will not; he ſits down ſecure, and feels not the leaſt pain of ſo much as one jealous thought. *Confidence is the mother of ſecurity, and the daughter of pride.*

בטח *ſignificat aliqua in re ſpes omnes poſitas habere & toto animo conquieſcere.*

His confidence ſhall be rooted out.] He doth not ſay, it ſhall be ſhaken, weakened, or much abated, but it ſhall be rooted out, or grub'd up. The wicked mans confidence is compar'd to a tree that takes root, and ſpreads it ſelf in the ground, that grows up and ſends forth goodly fruitfull branches; but when he hopes to devour the fruit, *the firſt-born of death devours his ſtrength,* and his confidence ſhall be rooted out; to root out, notes total deſtruction.

Hence obſerve, *The worſt of men are apt to be confident of good things.*

Such a one *Bildad* deſcribes in this Scripture, and yet he is full of confidence. *None have ſo great hopes, as they who have leaſt reaſon to have any.* Some wicked men have a plerophorie (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) their ſayls are fill'd with confidence, they are ſure of good things in this life, and of eternal life,they are high-built in hope, but they have no ground, no foundation for their hope. Theirs is a meer preſumption, who are full of ſin, and yet full of hope; full of wickedneſs, and yet full of confidence: Saints who are full of holineſs, are yet often full of fear; full of ſincerity, yet full of doubts. Fancies of faith are eaſily gotten, and as eaſily loſt. Many are high-flown, who never knew what the laying of a good foundation means. *His confidence ſhall be rooted out.*

Note, Secondly, *The confidence of wicked men ſhall be deſtroyed totally; it is rooted out.*

The confidence of a godly man may be ſhaken, and much unſetled: now he is well aſſured, and anon he queſtions all, but his confidence ſhall never be rooted out. (*Pſal.* 112. *v.* 10.) *The deſire of the wicked ſhall periſh*; That is, thoſe things that he is moſt deſirous of. His deſires live, yet they live as a puniſhment, not as a bleſſing, becauſe the thing he deſires, dyes; *His deſires ſhall periſh.*

As his deſires periſh, ſo his confidence ſhall. The thing that he was confident of periſheth, and at laſt confidence it ſelf, both root and branch, act and habit,is rooted out. *Solomon* (*Prov.* 10.20.) by way of oppoſition ſets the one over againſt another; *The hopes of the righteous ſhall be glad*; That is, he ſhall ſee the thing he hopes for, or the thing he hopes for ſhall come to paſs,this will make him glad. When the man who hopes is glad, then his hopes are ſaid to be glad; *but the expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh*; that is, the thing he expects ſhall periſh, and then his expectation ſhall periſh too, he is weary of expecting, he waits no longer. *Faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for:* but he that hath no faith, how can his hope have any ſubſtance, *i.e.* He can have no true hope in the good of the promiſe, who hath no true faith in the truth of the promiſe. Unleſs faith live, hope muſt needs give up the Ghoſt,or be as the giving up of the Ghoſt.

A godly mans hope fails not, becauſe his faith doth not; the thing he expects may fail,worldly things fail him often, and ſo may his preſent ſenſe of ſpirituals, yet his expectation fails not: when nothing appears to ſenſe, his hope is vigorous, and his confidence retains not only life but ſtrength. But when the ſence of what a carnal man would have, is loſt, his confidence is alſo loſt; when the one goes, the other ſtays not long behind. If our confidence be rooted in the earth, 'tis no wonder, if it be rooted up. Where the wicked mans confidence ſpoken of in this Text was rooted, will appear yet further from the next enquiry. *His confidence ſhall be rooted out.*

Whence? from what ground, where was his confidence rooted? The text ſaith;

Out of his Tabernacle.] The Tabernacle undergoes here a threefold interpretation.

Firſt, Some conceive that this Tabernacle is his body; He truſted much in his ſtrength, in the ſtrength of his body, as much as in any other ſtrength. Now (ſaith he) his confidence ſhall be rooted out of this Tabernacle; he thought he had ſuch ſtrength, ſuch a good conſtitution of body, that it would have ſtood like a Caſtle againſt all batteries; but it proved a Tabernacle, whoſe ſtakes are quickly pulled up. The body of man is compared in Scripture to a Tabernacle; And the Septuagint clearly adhere to this tranſlation, rendring it thus; *Health ſhall be broken off from his Tabernacle*; that is, his body ſhall decay. *Paul* (2 Corinth. 5.4.) *We in this Tabernacle groane*; That is, in this body. *I ſhall ſhortly lay down this Tabernacle,* ſaith *Peter,* (2 Epiſt.1.14.) that is,my body. The Lord Jeſus while he was in the world did but *tabernacle* with us a while; *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us,* (Joh. 1. 14.) He dwelt amongſt us as in a Tabernacle.

Rumpatur de tabernaculo ſuo ſanitas. Sept.

The body is called a Tabernacle; firſt,becauſe it is weak; ſecondly, becauſe it is moveable. When a Tabernacle is reported for ſtrength or continuance, 'tis extraordinary. (*Iſa.* 33.20.) *Look upon Sion the City of our ſolemnities, thine eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that cannot be removed, and the ſtakes thereof can never be taken away, neither ſhall any of the cords thereof be broken.* This is a ſtrange kind of Tabernacle, this Tabernacle may goe for a houſe, yea 'tis better then any houſe, a Tabernacle that ſhall never be removed. The Prophet ſpeaks thus by way of oppoſition to common worldly Tabernacles; Tabernacles were ordinarily removed and taken down, their ſtakes were ſoon pull'd up, and their cords broken. But *Sion* at laſt ſhall be ſuch a Tabernacle as ſhall not be removed. But how ſoon is the Tabernacle of mans body removed? the ſtakes thereof are eaſily taken away, and the cords thereof broken; There is no truſting to it for a day, yet the wicked man truſts to it, as if it were ſet up for Eternity. Here's his confidence, he thinks to live long, that his body ſhould hold out in all winds and weathers, but down it ſhall, dye he muſt. *Let not the ſtrong man glory in his ſtrength, but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.*

Secondly, By Tabernacle we may (according to Scripture) underſtand *The place of Worſhip*; ſo his confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, is as if it had been plainly ſaid, All the confidence (he may pretend to have very much) that he hath in God ſhall fail him. The wicked mans confidence grows ſtrong upon this conſideration, that he frequents the Tabernacle, that he goes to the publick worſhip, and applies himſelf to a bodily exerciſe in outward ordinances; Thus 'twas with the *Jewes* (*Jer.* 7. 3, 4.) their confidence was rooted in the Tabernacle, and at laſt it was rooted out of the Tabernacle; they cryed, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we*; they thought to carry it againſt all, becauſe they were a Temple, a Tabernacle, and they had the pure inſtitutions of worſhip among them. In this they truſted and were rooted, when there was falſe ſwearing and lying among them, when they committed abomination againſt God, and dealt falſely with one another, yet then their confidence was in the Tabernacle. Some think *Bildad* aymes particularly at the Oratory or publick place of worſhip, which *Job* had formerly frequented, and in which he had a great name; With this his friend checkt and upbraided him, that now his confidence was rooted out of his Tabernacle. *Eliphaz* took him up thus in the 4th Chapter, *Is this thy fear and thy confidence?* thou buildeſt much upon thy religious attendance at the Tabernacle, that thou art a worſhipper, yet God hath rooted out thy confidence, and manifeſted that thy Religion is vain. *Saints are planted in the houſe of God,* (Pſal. 92. 13.) they have a kind of rooting there; but though the Tabernacle be a good rooting place, yet we cannot root firmly there, unleſs we are rooted in Jeſus Chriſt. To root in Tabernacle-work, or in the bare uſe of ordinances, as if that would carry it, and commend us to God, when there is no heart-work, when there is no looking to the power of godlineſs, and to communion with Chriſt; what is this but building upon the ſand? Many come often to the Tabernacle, who are meer ſtrangers to Chriſt; they uſe pure ordinances, but are themſelves impure.

pure. Theſe may have a great name in the Tabernacle for a while, but God blots their names, and roots their hopes out of the Tabernacle, yea he pulls them from the horns of the Altar, or ſlayes them there, as *Solomon* gave commandment concerning *Joab*. *Many ſhall ſay, Lord, Lord, have we not prophecied in thy name? &c. To whom Chriſt will profeſs, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity,* (*Mat.*7.22,23.) That Text is this ſecond interpretation of the Text in hand, and ſpeaks to us fully what it is (in this ſence,) for any man to have his confidence rooted out of the Tabernacle.

Yet, thirdly, I conceive we are to expound this Scripture of a vulgar Tabernacle; and then *his confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle*, is no more but this, it ſhall be rooted out of the place where he dwells; as if *Bildad* had ſaid, the wicked man hath a great deal of confidence in his outward ſtate and worldly proſperity, in the riches, honour, and greatneſs of his houſe, yet all theſe ſhall fail him; And then the act of truſting is put for the thing truſted unto; *His confidence*; that is, that which he confided in, ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, he truſted in and boaſted of the multitude of his riches, when ſuddenly they made themſelves wings, and fled away.

Hence Note, Firſt, *There is no aſſurance of earthly things.*

Confidence in that which periſheth in the uſing, muſt needs periſh when we come to uſe it.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Where a wicked mans greateſt confidences are, there his greateſt diſappointments are.*

The world is his God, the earth is his hope, his Taberbernacle is his delight; As his Tabernacle is full of the creature, ſo he is full of confidence in his Tabernacle; There he lives, and there he loves, yet nothing can protect him from utter extirpation, when the wrath of God begins to dig about him; *His confidence ſhall be rooted up.*

This *Bildad* further aggravates in the laſt part of the verſe;

And it ſhall bring him to the King of terrours.

It ſhall bring him.] What ſhall bring him? his broken confidence will do it; when confidence is ſpoil'd, man is amazed; This brings to the King of terrours.

And who is this King of terrours?

The King of terrours.] A ſtrange title! We have heard and read of many titles given to the Kings of the earth, but rarely, if at all, of ſuch a one as this.

Who is this King of terrours, this black Prince, or (as ſome tranſlate) Prince of clouds and darkneſs? becauſe darkneſs and clouds are full of terrour.

Principem Dæmonū intelligit, ſicut poetæ Plutonem regem inferni finxerunt. Rab.Sel. *Scriptura aliquando poeticè loquitur.* Merc. *Rex terrorū videtur phraſi Hebraica dici maximus & potentiſſimus terror, qui inter cæteros principatum tenet.* Pined. *Nomen ſubſtantivū genitivi caſus & numeri multitudinis junctū alteri ſubſtantivo ſingularis numeri vices gerit ſuperlativi.* Bold.

It was ſhewed before that ſome interpret the *firſt-born of death*, to be the Devil, becauſe he hath the power of death. The ſame opinion concludes *The King of terrours* to be the Devil, or *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils. As the Poets fabled *Pluto* King of thoſe infernal Territories.

The Scripture ſpeaks ſometimes poetically, yet alwayes holily and ſpiritually.

Secondly, The King of terrours, is ſtrong and mighty terrour. As *the firſt-born of death*, notes the moſt deadly death, ſo, *the King of terrours* according to that Hebraiſm notes thoſe terrours which are moſt terrible. Such terrour as overcomes, ſubdues, and keeps down all other terrours, and makes them as ſubjects to it, ſuch a terrour as is chiefeſt and greateſt among terrours, that is, the King of terrours.

This Hebraiſm is frequent in Scripture, in the language whereof *a man of bloods* is a moſt cruel bloody man, and *a man of deceits*, is a man exceeding deceitful; and *a man of ſorrows* (as Chriſt is called *Iſa.* 53. 3.) is a man full of ſorrow; and *a woman of fornications*, is a woman extreamly immodeſt, and given up to unclean deſires. Hence this general rule, *That a ſubſtantive of the genitive caſe plural, joyned with another ſubſtantive of the ſingular number, doth increaſe and aggravate the ſence, and ſtands in the place and force of the ſuperlative degree.*

Again, As becauſe of the excellency and preheminency of the firſt-born; every thing which doth excel in any kind, may be call'd the *firſt-born*; ſo by the like proportion, becauſe of the eminency of a King, that which is great in any kind, may be called *King*. In this ſence (*Job* 41.30.) the Whale is called *King over all the Children of pride*, becauſe he is a creature of a vaſt and mighty body, and is deſcribed *full of contempt*, and prouder then the proudeſt. (1 *Sam.*25.36.) The feaſt that *Nabal* made is ſaid to be like the *feaſt of a King*, that is, a great feaſt. In that ſence, great terrour may ſuitably be called here, *the King of terrour*. Some labour much to place it upon a particular; and ſay, *the King of terrours* is death; and ſo according to legal proceeding, which was toucht at the beginning, we have the wicked man now brought unto execution; *Deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide, it ſhall devour the ſtrength of his skin, the firſt-born of death*, (a ſtrange way or kind of death) *ſhall devour his confidence, and root it out of his tabernacle, and he ſhall be brought unto the King of terrours, to death it ſelf*; there's an end of him. The Philoſopher (in this ſence) call'd death *the King of terrours*, when he called it *the moſt terrible of terrible things*; there we may reſt the interpretation of this Scripture, he ſhall bring him to the King of terrours, that is, to death, or to his laſt end.

There is another reading which I find much inſiſted upon by the Latine Tranſlator, who ſaith not as we, *It ſhall bring him to the King of terrours*, but *terrour ſhall tread upon him as a King*, or, *deſtruction as a King ſhall tread and trample upon him*; and ſo it is an alluſion to thoſe Kings, Emperours, and great ones of the world, who prevailing over their enemies were wont to tread upon their necks; we find *Joſhua* commanding the people of *Iſrael* to tread upon the necks of the *Canaanitiſh* Kings, in token of the victory obtained over them, (*Joſh.* 10. 22.) And as God in his providence gave them power to ſet their feet in triumph upon the necks of Kings, ſo it was a Cuſtom among the ancients, when victorious Princes led captived Princes in triumph, to lay them proſtrate on the ground, and tread upon their bodies, or go over their necks, in token of their total overthrow and ſubjection. Thus (according to the preſent reading) death and deſtruction like a conquering King ſhall tread upon the wiced man. This heightens the ſence ſtill, to tread and trample upon another, is a note of abſolute Conqueſt. (*Pſal.*91.13.) *Thou ſhalt walk upon the Lyon and Aſp, the young Lyon and Dragon ſhalt thou tread under thy feet*; Thou ſhalt tread upon them, not accidentally, as a man treads upon an Adder or a Serpent in the way; but his meaning is, thou ſhalt intentionally tread upon them like a Conquerour, thou ſhalt tread upon them to teſtifie thy dominion over them. So (*Luk.*10.19.) When the Lord Jeſus gave that promiſe to his Diſciples that they ſhould do great things, he ſaith, *And you ſhall* (ſaith he) *tread upon Serpents*, that is, you ſhall have power to overcome whatſoever may annoy you; ſerpentine power is all hurtful power, whether literal or myſtical. As the Apoſtle aſſures all believers, (*Rom.*16. 20.) *God ſhall tread down Satan* (that old Serpent) *ſhortly under your feet.* Thus death or deſtruction ſhall tread upon the wicked like a King.

Calcet ſuper eum quaſi rex interitus. Vulg.

Calcare aut conculcare vincentis, & triumphantis eſt. Mos erat apud Imperatores Conſtātinopolitanos ut captū hoſtem & humi diſtentū in illius cervices & collū inſultando conculcarent. Cedrenus.

Taking *this King of Terrours* for death; which interpretation I pitch upon,

Obſerve, That, *Death is very terrible.*

It is the *King of terrours*; It is very terrible under a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, It is terrible, if we conſider the Antecedents, the fore-runners, or harbingers of death, which are pains, ſickneſſes and diſeaſes, theſe are terrible.

Secondly, It is terrible, if we conſider the nature of it; What is death? Death is a diſunion; all diſunions are troubleſom, and ſome are terrible. And as ſome diſunions are terrible, ſo thoſe are moſt terrible which rend that from us which is neareſt to us. The diſunion of neareſt friends, of a loving husband and wife, how grievous are they? Now death makes a diſunion of thoſe that are nearer then husband and wife, even of ſoul and body. Theſe are (as I may ſay) more then married together; Husband and wife are one fleſh, but ſoul and body are one perſon. This marriage-bond is broken by the violence of death.

And not only is death a diſunion, but it is alſo a privation: every privation hath ſome terribleneſs in it, but this is not an ordinary privation, this is a total privation.

Death is ſuch a privation, as from which there can be no return according to nature, this makes it very terrible; and as it is a total privation of life, ſo of all thoſe things which appertain to life, all worldly riches, all worldly relations, all worldly comforts, all worldly honours are removed by death; it lays all low, it equalls the higheſt with the loweſt; *death is the greateſt Leveller*, as the Poet ſaith; death levels Scepters and Plow-ſhares, it makes all alike.

Mors ſceptra ligonibus æquat.

Thirdly, There is a terribleneſs in death in regard of the conſequents; rottenneſs and corruption conſume the dead, and darkneſs covers them in the grave. Theſe natural conſequents of death are terrible.

But death is yet more terrible if we ſtep beyond this natural conſideration of it; this makes it terrible to Heathens, who lookt no further then the grave: but to look on death as the fruit or wages of ſin, and as ſin is the ſting of death, this renders it moſt terrible. We may make a threefold gradation of the terribleneſs of death.

Firſt, To godly men; Secondly, to moral men, who live without any great wickedneſs, yet ſtill in a ſtate of nature; Thirdly, to wicked men, who have an awakened conſcience as well as a conſcience extreamly guilty.

Death is ſometimes a King of terrours, very terrible to the godly; though they have reaſon to look on death (in a ſence) as the King of Comforts, becauſe when they die they enter upon the enjoyment of their higheſt comforts, yet, I ſay, death ſtrikes them with ſome terrour; eſpecially in two caſes.

Firſt, Death is terrible to a godly man, when his ſpiritual eſtate is unſetled; indeed when he ſees all cleer between God and him, then well-come death, there's no terrour in it; the paleneſs of death pleaſeth him better then the pureſt beauty that ever he ſaw in the world: but when the ſoul cannot ſee an intereſt in Chriſt, when the conſcience is ravell'd, and the actings of faith ſtopt, then the heart is full of fear. He that is in a good eſtate, is not alwayes in ſight of it; This darkneſs breeds doubtings. That which is not ſeen, gives us no more comfort, then that which is not at all.

De non exiſtentibus & non apparentibus eadem eſt ratio.

Secondly, Death may be terrible, as a King of terrours to a godly man, not only when his ſpiritual eſtate is unſetled, but alſo when his worldly eſtate is well ſetled, when he hath deeply engaged in the creature, and his earthly mountain (as he apprehends) ſtands ſtrong. Some godly men have much in the world, and that may quickly have too much of them. Now, if once we over-reckon the creature, though but a little, and cleave, though but weakly, to the world as our friend, we ſhall reckon that as our enemy, which (as death cannot but do) ſeparates us quite from the world. We may obſerve ſome who judge that their ſpiritual eſtate is very well bottom'd (they have no fears about it) and yet the fear of death takes hold upon them, becauſe their outward eſtate is ſo well bottom'd; they are not much taken with the pleaſures of heaven, becauſe they live pleaſantly on the earth; it is their ſorrow to leave the world while they find ſo much joy in it; and they are hungry after life, becauſe full of the things of this life. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome (*Phil.* 3. 19.) *Whoſe end is deſtruction, and whoſe glory is in their ſhame*; But I may ſay of godly men, they ought to be aſhamed of this ſorrow, ſeeing their end is ſalvation. How diſhonourable is it, that they ſhould reach ſo greedily after a life which they cannot hold, whoſe faith hath laid hold upon eternal life?

Secondly, To meer moral men, death is properly a King of terrour; they who cannot ſee any good in death, cannot but ſee it an evil to die. Now it is impoſſible that they ſhould ſee any good (except the ſtop of preſent evils) in their own death, who are not ſpiritually acquainted with, and in ſome degree experimentally intereſſed in the death of Chriſt.

Thirdly, Death is moſt terrible to thoſe who though they have the knowledge of God, and outwardly profeſs the Goſpel of Chriſt, yet walk contrary to it. Death is not half ſo terrible to a moral heathen, as to a wicked Chriſtian; their conſciences are convinced, they underſtand what death is, and what follows death. Heathens live ſo much in the dark, that they ſee little of that, which is the terrour of death. But enlightned Chriſtians (though continuing in the darkneſs of ſin) have heard and know that there is a Revelation of wrath from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs. And that after death they muſt appear before the righteous God in Judgment. They have learned, that death cuts down unbelievers as fewel for the fire; that being carried out of the world, they are caſt to hell. And that as preſent death is the wages of ſin, ſo the greateſt part of that wages is paid in eternal death.

To cloſe this point, ſeeing death is the *King of terrours*, it ſhould be our ſtudy, as it is of our wiſdom, to make this *King of terrours*, a kind of *King of comfort to us*. Many believers have attained to this. And there are many conſiderations held out in the Goſpel, which eaſe the pains of death, and ſet the ſoul above the terrour of it. Natural men can ſay, *All muſt die*; why ſhould any man fear that which is common to all men? The natural man can ſay alſo, that many indure more pain while they live, then all the pains of death. Theſe poor ſhifts the natural man can make to ſtifle the terrour of death. But a believer moves upon higher principles. As

Firſt, That death cannot at all break the bond of the Covenant between God and us; the Covenant is alive though we die. (*Mat.* 22. 31, 32.) *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob.* They were dead, when God ſpake this. Now ſaith Chriſt there; *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; for all are alive to him, even the dead are alive to him; as their ſouls are alive, ſo their bodies are as living bodies to him, and though rotting in their graves, he owns them as much as when flouriſhing in ſtately pallaces. The relation of God to *Abraham* was as ſtrong when he was dead as when he was alive; *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob.*

Secondly, Though death breaks the union between ſoul and body, yet death cannot break the union between the ſoul and Chriſt; this alſo out-lives death: For as when Chriſt died, death could not break that hypoſtatical union between the divine nature and the humane nature; though death diſunited the ſoul and the body of Chriſt, yet it did not diſunite God and man in Chriſt. So though death triumph over the natural union of ſoul and body, it can never break the myſtical union between Chriſt and the ſoul; the union between Chriſt *God-man* and a believer is inviolable, therefore why ſhould they who believe fear death.

Thirdly, The Apoſtle tells us plainly, that there is no terrour in death, while he aſſures us that the ſting of death is out; and if death have no ſting, it hath much honey for believers. Jeſus Chriſt our true *Sampſon* hath ſlain this Lyon, and brought us a honey-comb out of the carkaſs. Chriſt hath been the death of death for us, and why ſhould that have terrour in it, which hath no life in it? We ſay the living Lyon is not ſo terrible as he is painted; what terrour then is there in a dead or in a painted Lyon?

Fourthly, The Scripture often calls death a *ſleep*, *a reſt*; And what terrour is there in reſt and ſleep? what trouble in going to bed? And this ſleep muſt needs be ſweet, becauſe it is ſleep after labour, yea after ſore labour, as *Solomon* ſpeaks of the reſt of a labouring man.

Fifthly, As it puts a period to our worldly comforts, ſo to all our ſorrows, and we have no reaſon to be ſorry for that; It puts an end to our few dayes, and to our many troubles, and we have no reaſon to be troubled at that. And as it is an end of that ſorrow and trouble which ſin began, ſo it is a beginning of that happineſs and joy which Grace begins, and ſhall never end; it is the privation of our looſable habits, but it occaſions the fruition of thoſe that ſhall never be loſt. It is the opening of the door to eternity, and therefore,

Sixthly, It is call'd *a going to God*, in whom we ſhall have an eternal injoyment. Death is often in the Old Teſtament called *a going to our Fathers*, or, *a gathering to our Fathers*; but know that as death is a going and a gathering to our earthly Fathers, ſo it is a going to our God, and a gathering to our Father in heaven.

Seventhly, This may abate the terrour of death; It is a dying to live, as well as it is a dying from life: we die from a life, and we die to a life, and the life to which is better then that from which we die. The Grave is our long home, but it is not our laſt home; we ſhall riſe again and live for ever. As Chriſt argues (*Joh.*12.24.) concerning his death; *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it remains alone, but if it die it brings forth fruit.* A man dies as a Corn dies, which dies ſo as to ſpring out into a blade, and then to bring forth the ear, and at laſt full corn in the ear. Indeed if a man were to die, and there rot and never riſe more, this were terrible; but to die only to live, and to die from a miſerable life that he may live a joyful life, to die as a grain of wheat dies, to grow up in greater beauty then he had, yea in a glory that he never had, why ſhould there be any terrour in this? Though in it ſelf conſidered, as alſo to wicked men, death be a King of terrours, yet all theſe conſiderations laid together, are enough and enough to perſwade the Saints to better thoughts of it, and that Chriſt the Prince of life and King of Comforts, hath deſpoſed this King of terrours; ſo that as ſin ſhall not, ſo death ſhall not have dominion over us: and though our fleſh cannot reſt in this hope, (in which Chriſt reſted) *that God will not ſuffer us to ſee corruption*, yet we may fully reſt in this hope, that *our fleſh ſhould be freed from corruption.*

Some heathen tyrants were wont to ſcorn Chriſtians, who believed a Reſurrection, when they fled to avoid death and perſecution; *Why are you* (ſaid they) *ſo ſparing of a life, which* (you ſay) *will return again.* And indeed why ſhould we be ſparing of our lives, when we know we ſhall receive them again with advantage? why ſhould we be afraid to let that go which we cannot looſe?

For as we ſhould not be over-careful to retain that which we cannot keep, nor ſpend many thoughts upon that which is gone with a thought; ſo we ſhould not be over-careful to keep that, which when we have parted with out of our own hands, we know how to commend to a ſafe hand, even to him who will as ſurely return it ſafe into our hands, as he at firſt put it into our hands.

Thus *Bildad* brings *Job* to execution, and leaves him in the hand of *the King of terrours, Death*, yet (as he conceives) miſery is not come upon him to the utmoſt. There is (as I may ſay) a divine Fate attending the wicked man after death, his troubles die not when himſelf dies; evil ſhall ſurvive him, and dwell in his family, when he is turned out of his dwelling; Though this evil man ſhall know his place no more, yet miſery ſhall know his place, and abide there too, as it follows, *It ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle, becauſe it is none of his, &c.*

Verſ. 15. **It ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle**, &c.

It ſhall.] What ſhall? Who is this inhabitant, or this tenant? who lodges there? who is it? *It ſhall dwell.* There is neither perſon nor thing expreſt, and the conjectures are various in making out an Anſwer to this Queſtion, Who dwells there?

Firſt, The Text is read, not as if others ſhould dwell in his Tabernacle, but as if ſome of his ſhould dwell in the Tabernacle of others. So the Chaldee Paraphraſt, who finding the Hebrew for *dwelling*, to be of the Feminine Gender, tells us, that 'tis the wife of that wicked man who was driven out of his dwelling, and at laſt taken hold of by the King of terrours; and ſo whereas we ſay, *It ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle, becauſe it is none of his*; He ſaith, *His wife ſhall dwell in a Tabernacle which is none of his.* And in compliance with this rendring, he expounds the words as an argument of that miſery which ſhould fall upon the family of this wicked man; A miſery ſo great, that his wife ſhould not have a houſe of her own to dwell in, but be forced to dwell in a Tabernacle which was not his: that is, to be either as a ſervant, or at beſt but as a ſojourner in another mans houſe. It is an affliction for any man, when he dies, to leave a wife, and not to leave her a room of his own to live in.

Uxor ejus habitabit in tabernaculo non ſuo. Chald.

Secondly, The vulgar reading carries a good ſence, but departs too much from the original. Thus; *His companions ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle.* Some expoſitors who favour that tranſlation, take no ſmall pains to fit this to the Text, and to find out who are meant by theſe companions.

Habitent in tabernaculo ejus ſocii ejus. Vulg.

Some ſay, his friends, who were formerly his companions, they ſhall come to his Tabernacle, lamenting their loſs, and mourning for him. But that's an honour rather then a judgment to the dead.

Others ſay, Theſe companions are the worms, *Worms ſhall dwell with him in the grave.* But that cannot be a ſpecial matter of judgment neither, becauſe it is common to all mankind; when any man dies, worms are his companions; or he may ſay (as *Job* ſaid, *Chap.*17.14.) *To the worm, thou art my mother and my ſiſter.*

Therefore, thirdly, It is concluded, that by his companions are meant ſuch as ſometimes dwelt about him, or near him: Thoſe neighbours, whom he living had oppreſſed, and wronged, vexed, and expulſed out of their dwellings, even they ſhall come when he is dead, and take poſſeſſion of his dwelling, they ſhall enter upon all. Maſter *Calvins* tranſlation comes near this explication; *He that is none of his ſhall dwell in his tent*; He joyns thoſe words which we ſet laſt (and render, *Becauſe it is none of his*) to the firſt part of the verſe, and gives them not as a reaſon why evil ſhould dwell in his houſe, but as a deſcription of that perſon, who ſhould dwell in his houſe; *He that is none of his ſhall dwell in his tents*; that is, the man that had nothing to do with him, or was a meer ſtranger to him, ſhall come and dwell in his tent. As if he had ſaid; *Neither his wife, nor his children, nor any of his kindred ſhall poſſeſs what he hath purchaſed, ſtrangers ſhall take it, and divide it among themſelves; he that is none of his ſhall dwell in his tent.* And that's the judgment threatned, (*Deut.*28. 30, 31.) *Thou ſhalt build houſes, and ſhalt not dwell therein; thou ſhalt plant vineyards, and not gather the grapes thereof; thine ox ſhall be ſlain before thine eyes, and thou ſhalt not eat thereof.* It is a great evil when he that is none of ours, that is, a meer ſtranger dwells in our tents, and eats up thoſe good things, which we provide for our ſelves and families. Thus the Lord tells the Inhabitant of *Mareſhah*, that he will bring them an heir, (*Micah* 1.15.) and who was this? not one of their blood and linage, but a ſtranger, the *Aſſyrian* ſhould be their heir, and make himſelf Lord, by the ſword, of all their poſſeſſions.

Secondly, We may carry the interpretation more generally. For ſeeing that the puniſhment of a wicked man after death is here deſcribed, the meaning appears thus; *It ſhall dwell, &c.* That is, *deſtruction or miſery ſhall dwell in his houſe.* We read before, *Deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide*; now, *It ſhall dwell in his houſe.* As if he had ſaid; the deſtruction and miſery I ſpeak of, ſhall not only be perſonal, and fall upon the wicked man himſelf; but it ſhall be, as it were, hereditary, it ſhall deſcend and fall upon the head of all thoſe that belong to him: miſery ſhall inhabit his fair Pallaces.

Habitabit in tentorio ejus cunctarum rerum interitus. Theod.

Another keeping this way of interpretation, fixeth it thus; *Fear, or the King of terrours, ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle.* But whether we ſay, *deſtruction*, or *fear*, ſhall dwell there, it matters little; for the difference is not conſiderable between theſe inhabitants, the one being the iſſue or conſequent of the other.

Habitabit in tentorio ejus timor. Vatab.

A third ſaith; *Want ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle*; *nothing*, or *have nothing* ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle; which is made out by reading the words, *Mibili lo*, for a nominative caſe: *Mibili lo* ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle, that is, *Want*, or, *nothing to him*; he ſhall have nothing remaining in his Tabernacle; when his perſon is gone, his eſtate ſhall be gone too; nothing ſhall dwell there; his houſe ſhall be full of want, repleniſhed with emptineſs; ſcarcity ſhall be the furniture of this mans habitation; his houſe ſhall be (according to that deſcription of the earth, before the Lord put that rude heap into this exquiſite method) *without form and void*; emptineſs and confuſion ſhall lodge in his houſe for ever.

Nobis videtur τὸ מבלי לו *pro nominativo eſſe Græce ſic aptius reddi poteſt*, οἰκήσει ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ αὐτοῦ τὸ μέλλειν αὐτῷ, *ſc.* ὑπάρχειν *vel ut Theodotio reddit*, ἀνυπαρξία, *inopia.* Coc. *Habitat in tentorio ejus* nihil habere.

Laſtly, *It ſhall dwell*; That is (as ſome conceive) ſome wild beaſt, or noiſom creatures ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle; *When one beaſt is out, many other beaſts ſhall come in*; It ſhall be dwelt in by Satyrs and Serpents, &c. And this is very conſonant to other Scriptures. For we find it threatned as a judgment upon wicked places, that the wicked being thruſt out, wild beaſts ſhould ſucceed them, and hateful birds make their neſts, where men of ſuch hateful conditions neſted. (*Iſa.* 13. 19, 20, 21, 22.) *Babylon ſhall never be inhabited, neither ſhall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither ſhall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither ſhall the Shepherds make their fold there. But wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall lie there, and their houſes ſhall be full of doleful creatures, and Owls ſhall dwell there, and Satyrs ſhall dance*

Habitabitur à fera aliqua & beſtia ſanguinaria.

dance there. And the wild beaſts of the Iſlands ſhall cry in their deſolate houſes,& Dragons in their pleaſant pallaces, and her time is near to come, and her dayes ſhall not be prolonged.

Again, *Iſa.*34.11.*&c. The Cormorant, and the Bittern ſhall poſſeſs it, the Owl alſo and the Raven ſhall dwell in it, and he ſhall ſtretch out upon it the line of confuſion, and the ſtones of emptineſs. And thorns ſhall come up in her Palaces, nettles and brambles in the forteſſes thereof, and it ſhall be an habitation for Dragons, and a Court for Owls. The wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall alſo meet with the wild beaſts of the Iſland, and the Satyr ſhall cry to his fellow, the Shrichowl alſo ſhall reſt there, and find for her ſelf a place of reſt. There ſhall the great Owl make her neſt, and lay and hatch, and gather under her ſhadow: there ſhall the Vultures alſo be gathered, every one with her mate.* See how large the Spirit of God is in deſcribing theſe uncouth Inhabitants. When wicked men are gone, then wild beaſts, Owls & Satyrs, whatſoever can be afflictive, or unwelcome to the ſpirit of man, is ſent in to take up its lodgings and gueſt it in the houſes of that ſinful generation.

I find a learned Commentator, who collects this from the latter part of this clauſe, from *Mibili lo*, which we render, *Becauſe it is none of his:* he finds theſe wild beaſts in that expreſſion, and therefore he doth not take the word *Mibili*, for an adverb negative, as we do, but for a none, ſignifying *corruption*, or *putrifaction*, from the Hebrew word *Balah* to decay or wax old. So the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 38.17.) *from the pit of (Beli,) deſtruction, or corruption.* Thus ſome render in the ſixth Chapter of this Book, *verſ.*6. *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt? Can that which is unſavoury,* Mibili, *through the corruption of ſalt*, or which having been ſalted is now corrupted, (can that) *be eaten?* as was ſhewed upon the place. Now taking that tranſlation, here is a plain deſcription of noiſom creatures, or vermine, dwelling in the wicked mans houſe. As if to the queſtion, *Who ſhall dwell there?* This anſwer were returned; There ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle, whatſoever is engendred of corruption, or filthineſs, whatſoever derives its pedegree from, or is the off-ſpring of any naſtineſs or uncleanneſs, adhering to and remaining in his Tabernacle, this is the Tribe that ſhall dwell there. As if he ſaid; *When he is gone out of his houſe, the ſtink, corruption, and filth that he left behind him, ſhall breed filthy creatures, naſty monſters enow to inhabite his Tabernacle; we know many noiſom creatures proceed from putrifaction, ſuch as are mice, rats, and ſpiders*, as Naturaliſts obſerve, and experience teacheth.

Non ſumo cum vocem בלי *Beli, pro negatione, ſeu particula* non, *aut* abſq; *ut fere omnes ſumunt, ſed pro nomine, quod corruptionē macrorem, &c. ſignificat, à verbo* בלה *quod eſt veteraſcere, putreſieris.* Bold.

Thus we ſee what variety of conjecture there is about the antecedent of this word, who are the tenants of this wicked mans houſe when he is ejected, If we follow our tranſlation, that leads us to the third interpretation before given; *It*, that is, deſtruction, or want ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle.

> Obſerve Hence, *The wrath of God dwells in the houſe, and upon the eſtate of a wicked man, when he is caſt out of it, dead and gone.*

That's the ſcope of the verſe; and theſe various interpretations meet in this one ſence, that there is a wrath abiding in this wicked mans houſe. Whether his companions, ſuch as were none of his, ſtrangers dwell in it; or fear and deſtruction dwell in it, or wild beaſts dwell in it, or vermine dwell in it, whoſoever of theſe are the tenants, and poſſeſſors of his houſe after him; this is the meaning, that the wrath of God dwells there. As Chriſt ſpeaks of unbelievers; *He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon him*, *Joh.* 3. It dwells with or inhabits him; it is an abiding wrath. So, here; *It ſhall dwell.* He doth not ſay, ſome evil ſhall fall upon his habitation, ſome evil ſhall happen to him: but he uſeth a word that notes the perpetuity of it, *It ſhall dwell.* It ſhall not come, and lodge for a night, or ſojourn for a week, or a moneth; but there it ſhall dwell, it ſhall be an inhabitant; wrath ſhall continue upon it.

As bleſſings abide upon the Tabernacles and dwellings of the people of God; they do not only happen in ſometimes, but they take up their abode in them. *The houſes of the Saints are the dwelling places, or the abiding places of mercy.* Mercy hath no where elſe to reſt, but in ſuch houſes and hearts. So deſtruction, and wrath, wild beaſts, and whatſoever diſcovers it ſelf in a way of judgment, is the portion of evil men while they live, and ſhall take poſſeſſion of their houſes when they die. When their bodies are paſt feeling, their eſtates, poſſeſſions and families ſhall feel the wrath of God. *It ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle,*

Becauſe it is none of his.

There are divers tranſlations of this clauſe. I ſhall touch only upon three.

Firſt, Some render it, *who is not*; Thus the vulgar; *His companions ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle, who is not.* And ſo the words are a deſcription of man, vile and baſe. For as either things which are low in the eſteem of men, are ſaid not to be, (1 *Cor.* 1.28.) God uſeth *things which are not, to bring to nought thoſe things which are.* Now, I ſay, as baſe things are ſaid *not to be*, ſo are baſe men: and then the Tabernacle of him *who is not*, is the Tabernacle of a vile perſon. Or it is a deſcription of one who is dead. Death is often noted in Scripture by *a not being*, *Jer.* 31. *Rachel weeping for her children, becauſe they are not, would not be comforted, Revel.*17.8. *The beaſt which was, and is not*; That is, who is dead and gone, his power is broken. So, *Ezek.*28.19. *Thou ſhalt be a terrour, and never ſhalt thou be any more*; That is, thou ſhalt die.

Propter non ei. *Reg.* Ex non ei. *Cajet.* Non exiſtente in eo. *Pagn.* Qui non eſt. *Vulg.*

Secondly, Thus; It ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle, *becauſe it ſhall no more be to him*; That is, his Tabernacle ſhall no more be for his uſe or habitation, therefore deſtruction or wild beaſts may dwell in it, or take it up.

Nō ei amplius deſerviet ſuum tabernaculum. Pined.

A third renders as we; or we from him; *becauſe it is none of his.* The negative particle, is alſo cauſal. And then the ſence is this; It ſhall dwell in his Tabernacle, *becauſe it is none of his*; That is, he never got it honeſtly. So our late Annotators give the ſence; He did not come truly by it. This expoſition is clear, as giving an account why judgment dwells in a wicked mans houſe when he dies, even *becauſe it is none of his.* It was unduly gotten, and unjuſtly kept. So, here is a correction, he calls it *his Tabernacle*, in the former part of the verſe; but now he ſaith, *it is none of his.* For this Tabernacle was ſet up by oppreſſion, bribery, and injuſtice, and ſo maintained. He built his houſe by unrighteouſneſs, and now he is gone, nothing ſhall dwell in it but miſery and judgment. When the earthly houſe of his perſonal Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, the Tabernacle wherein his perſon houſed, ſhall be left utterly deſtitute.

Eò, quod non ſit ipſius. Vatabl.

τὸ מבלי *ſæpè cauſam ſubindicat, ut* min *ſit* ex. *q. d.* ex eo, quod non eſt ipſius.

Non eſt ipſius, *quia illud rapuit,* i. e. *rapto conſtruxit.* Merc.

Significat merito impii domum ad alienos tranſiturā, quod ipſe illā non ſuis ſumtibus, ſed alienis diſpendiis ædificarit.

> Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That which a man gets unjuſtly, is none of his, he hath no right to it.*

Man hath no right to poſſeſs that which he hath obtained unrighteouſly. The Apoſtle ſpeaking to the Church of the *Theſſalonians*, (2 *Theſ.* 3.12.) directs all in their callings to be diligent, and laborious; and why? if a man be idle, and negligent, and will not take pains in his calling, all the bread he eats he ſteals, it is *none of his:* therefore he adds; *We command, and exhort you, by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs he work, and eat his own bread:* they who do not work, eat the bread of other men, that is, the bread to which they have no title. As our ſweat and labour are the beſt ſauce to our meat, ſo the price which we muſt lay down for it, elſe, it is none of ours. Indeed a man may be unable to work, much more to ſweat for his bread, and yet the bread which he eats may be his own. Such a one hath a right to every mans bread, and every man is bound in that caſe to relieve him. 'Tis Idleneſs, not inability, which is the thief. But he that hath ability to labour in his calling, and is idle, all the bread which he eats is ſtollen, 'tis none of his own. Hence we may infer, if a man meerly upon his idleneſs may be ſaid to ſteal all the bread he eats, as having no right to it, much more that bread is not his own, that is wrung out of the hands, and pulled out of the teeth of others. That which is gotten by grinding the faces of the poor, or by doing wrong to the rich, this bread is not our own; Houſes and Lands ſo gotten, are not our own. That which is juſtly gotten is a gift from God, but that which is gotten unjuſtly, is ſtoln from men. Deceiving is thieving.

> Secondly, Obſerve, *That which is unjuſtly gotten, ſhall not be kept.*

All worldly things periſh with the uſing, but ſuch worldly things uſually periſh before we or ours can uſe them. Hence we have that dreadful ſentence, (*Jer.*22.3.)

Wo to him that buildeth his houſe by unrighteouſneſs, and his chambers by robbery, that uſeth his neighbours ſervice without wages, and giveth him not for his work; that ſaith, I will build me a wide houſe, and large chambers, &c. This wo doth not only belong to thoſe who build houſes by that which they get unrighteouſly, but it belongs to all who have any thing in their houſes which is gotten unrighteouſly. Houſe is not taken ſtrictly for the dwelling place, (though that be a truth) but any thing that a man poſſeſſeth, or enjoyeth, or is part of his inheritance, is his houſe. *Wo to him that builds a houſe by unrighteouſneſs.* Why? what wo ſhall be upon him? This ſhall be his wo, himſelf ſhall not long inhabit the houſe which he hath built, and the wrath of God ſhall inhabit it long when he is out of it; deſtruction *ſhall dwell there, becauſe it is none of his.*

Bildad goes further to ſhew the miſery of this man. Not only ſhall deſtruction and miſery dwell there, becauſe the houſe is none of his; but

Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.

As if he had ſaid, either the eſtate of a wicked man ſhall be conveyed over to, and poſſeſſed by ſtrangers; or if not, yet it ſhall periſh, it ſhall be conſumed as with fire, and brimſtone, from heaven; *Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.* Theſe laſt words of the Allegory, ſhew the extremity, the utmoſt of the judgment; **Brimſtone** is a dreadful word, it hath a ſavour of hell in it, the ſavour of eternal death in it; *Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered.* And it is conceived, that *Bildad* in this, either intimates the manner of that judgment which God ſent upon *Job* in the firſt Chapter, when the fire of God fell from heaven, and conſumed his ſheep. Fire from heaven is a ſulphurious fire; Here *Bildad* ſeems to ſay, *Thou art the man*; on thy habitation brimſtone was ſcattered, thy flocks of ſheep were burnt with fire from heaven.

Non dubiū quin in Jobum contorqueat cujus facultatum pars igni cælitus delapſo conſumpta fuit. Merc.

Or, That, he in this minds *Job* of the terrible judgment of God upon *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, of which we read (*Gen.* 19. 24.) whom God conſumed from heaven by raining down brimſtone upon them; *Brimſtone was ſcattered upon their habitation.* So the meaning is; The dwelling of this wicked man, ſhall either paſs away to others, or miſery ſhall dwell in it, or it ſhall be utterly conſumed by fire; *Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.*

It is very frequent in Scripture, when any great judgment is ſpoken of, to allude to the dealing of God with *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, in ſcattering fire and brimſtone. *Deut.* 29. 23. *The whole land thereof is brimſtone, and ſalt, and burning, that is not ſowen, nor beareth, nor any graſs groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath, Pſal.* 11. 6. *He ſhall rain down upon the wicked, fire and brimſtone, this ſhall be the portion of his cup, Ezek.* 38. 22. *Iſa.* 34. 9. *Iſa.* 13. 9. *Jer.* 49. 18. In all theſe you ſhall find an alluſion ſtill made to the conſumption of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah.* When God threatneth to bring a total conſumption upon a people, and to deſtroy them utterly from the face of the earth; *then* (ſaith he) *I will do to you as I did to Sodom, and Gomorrah*; that is, according to the Text, *ſcatter brimſtone upon your habitations.*

Secondly, The *ſcattering of brimſtone* is conceived by others, to note that ſpecial judgment, *Barrenneſs*: his beautiful habitation, (ſo the word ſignifies) or (as we may extend it) all his poſſeſſions, his fruitful fields and paſtures, his goodly hills, mountains, all theſe beautiful things, ſhall be as if brimſtone had been ſcattered upon them; that is, they ſhall be barren, God ſhall ſtrike them with barrenneſs, and they ſhall bring forth no fruit at all. (*Deut.* 29. 23.) Brimſtone and barrenneſs go together; *The whole land thereof is brimſtone, and ſalt, and burning, it is not ſowen, nor any graſs groweth therein*; ſo the ſcattering of brimſtone is of the ſame ſignification as *ſowing with ſalt, Judg.* 9. 45. For no ſooner had he ſpoken of brimſtone and ſalt, but preſently adds, *it is not ſowen, nor graſs groweth therein:* as if he had ſaid, it ſhall be deſolate and uninhabited. The Land of *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah* (*Gen.* 14.) was like *Eden*, the Garden of God; but as ſoon as God had ſcattered brimſtone upon it, it was like a deſolate wilderneſs, or fruitleſs deſert. The apples of *Sodom* are a proverb, to this day, for fruitleſs fruit, or a ſhew only of fruit. No fruit (ſay ſome) grows there to ripeneſs, or perfection. Or if brimſtone ſpeak not barrenneſs in general, yet (as others reſtrain it,) barrenneſs as to him and his, who was thus caſt out of his poſſeſſion. The land of a wicked man may bear fruit, and yet be as fruitleſs to him, and his, as if it were ſowed with brimſtone inſtead of corn; he ſhall never have the crop, or harveſt, or revenue of it, he ſhall never eat of the fruit of it, though others do, and though poſſibly it continue as fertile, and be improved as much as ever. A land flouriſhing with milk and honey to others, may be to former owners as a land *whoſe ſtreams are turned into pitch, and the duſt thereof into brimſtone*, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 34. 9.)

Sulphur eſt ſymbolū ſterilitatis.

Salſugo, quia ſal exugit omnem terræ ſuccū.

Thirdly, Others conjecture, that this ſcattering of brimſtone implies only that his houſe ſhould never be inhabited any more, becauſe brimſtone is of ſuch an ill ſavour, that it drives away both man and beaſt.

Fourthly, That it is a deſcription of that mourning, or of thoſe terrible cries and lamentations which ſhould be made for him at his funerals. Some of the ancients obſerve, that it was a cuſtome in times of extream mourning, to ſcatter brimſtone, and things of ill-ſavour, to afflict the ſmell, as it is to wear black Garments to afflict the ſight. Or the reaſon of ſcattering brimſtone at his burial, may rather be given as an argument of his diſhonour, he being a man whoſe very memory did ſtink. And therefore whereas ſweet ſpice, and odours are properly burnt at the funerals of ſuch whoſe names and memorials are as a box of ſweet ointment powred out, this man's Tabernacle (after he is dead,) ſhall be perfumed with brimſtone; while he breathed in it, though his manners left an ill ſavour there, yet he took care to keep it ſweet; but when he hath breathed his laſt, then (according to that which is ſpoken, *Iſa.* 3. 24. of the proud women of *Iſrael*) *It ſhall come to paſs, that inſtead of a ſweet ſmell, there ſhall be a ſtink.* As he lived wickedly, and died miſerably, ſo he ſhall be buried ignominiouſly.

Eſt circumlocutio luctus domeſticorum in obitu patris familias odores tetros & fœtidos adhibentium in ſignū mœroris, ſicut etiam nigræ veſtes ſumuntur à lugentibus. Aquin.

Ad extremā funeris ignominiam pertinet. cum enim in funere divitis aroumata cremarētur, hic ſuccedit teterimus ſulphuris fœtor. Cajet.

But I rather take the former interpretation, that this *ſcattering of brimſtone*, either notes the extremity of the judgment in general: Or in particular, that barrenneſs ſhall be the portion of his poſterity, when once the wrath of God hath ſiezed on and ſwept him away. And ſo it gives a ſutable cloſe to this third Allegory of the wicked man, proſecuted in a legal way, to whoſe doom or ſentence this is added, that his houſe ſhall be pull'd down, or conſumed with fire, that nothing may remain his of him, but a perpetual execration of name and wayes.

Poſtquā cauſa cognita ab illa adjudicata ſunt bona immittuntur lictores ad incendendas ædes ejus in facti perpetuā memoriā. Jun.

Hence Obſerve, *God hath judgments of all ſorts and ſizes for wicked men.*

He hath *Sodoms*-judgments, ſuch judgments as were poured upon *Sodom*, for high offenders, for *Sodom*-like ſinners; He hath not ſpent all his fire and brimſtone upon that City; *brimſtone ſhall yet be ſcattered upon the habitation of the wicked.* And this notes,

Firſt, The ſuddenneſs of the judgment. The *Sodomites* were ſurprized, when deſtroyed; they expected it not; *The Sun roſe upon Sodom*, ſaith the Text, there was not a cloud threatning rain, they did not ſuſpect a ſhower of water, much leſs did they ſee a cloud or ſuſpect a ſhower of fire and brimſtone, when God deſtroyed them.

Secondly, It notes the unavoidableneſs of it; for who is able to withſtand burning brimſtone, or to withdraw from that calamity, which drops from heaven? Our houſes may ſhelter us when it rains water, but when it rains fire, our houſes are no ſhelter.

Thirdly, It ſhews the immediatneſs of the judgment; The text ſaith only, that *brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered*, but by whom, it ſaith not; if no hand of man appear againſt the wicked, God will; when none can deal with them, God can. God only appeared in the deſtruction of *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah.* All creatures are as ready at Gods call for the ſervices of wrath and vengeance, as of mercy and ſalvation. If he do but hold up his finger, fire and brimſtone are at hand to conſume, as ſhowers of rain to comfort the habitations of the world. Thus much of the third Allegory contained in theſe five verſes. The wicked man was firſt apprehended by the meſſengers of death, and then brought to death that King of terrours;

being dead, his goods are confiſcate, others enter upon his eſtate, and brimſtone is ſcattered on his habitation. Here's compleat wrath, and judgment in perfection.

Verſ. 16. **His roots ſhall be dried up beneath, and above ſhall his branches be cut off.**

This is the fourth Allegory, taken from a tree. Men are often in Scripture compared to trees; all ſorts of men, good men, bad men are ſo compared. Good men are compared to trees flouriſhing by the river ſide, (*Pſal.*1.) Wicked men are alſo compared to flouriſhing trees, but with this difference, they flouriſh only for a while; but godly men are as trees that flouriſh continually, (*Pſal.*92.14.) *They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age.*

In this text the wicked man is compared to a tree; and he is compared to a flouriſhing tree, he hath both root, and branches, yet he is near declining, yea he is not far from deſtroying.

His root ſhall be dried up beneath.] He had a root; what was his root? The root of this wicked man, may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, For thoſe ſecret counſels, purpoſes, and deſigns which he layes for himſelf, theſe are to a man as his roots. A mans eſtate and affairs are ſetled and faſtned by counſel, as a tree is by the roots: the root alſo which maintains and feeds his affairs and deſigns is counſel. So ſome interpret this place, *his root ſhall be dried up*; That is, his counſels, his under-ground-plots and projects which he laid deep, and low, quite out of ſight, as the root of a tree is, theſe God will dry up, he ſhall ſee them come to nothing.

Secondly, By the *roots* in this Allegory we may underſtand more generally any thing by which this wicked man thought himſelf ſtrong, or ſecure: For that is the uſe of a root. A root to a tree is as the foundation is to a houſe, the ſtrength of it. His root is whatſoever may ſtrengthen, and hold him faſt, whatſoever may keep him in his ſtate, and greatneſs. Thus not only his contrivances, and counſels, but his riches, and relations, his correſpondencies, and allies, whatſoever we may put the notion of ſtrength upon, all that is his root, by that he is upheld, and by that moiſture is ſent forth into all his branches. But there ſhall come rooters to his root, they ſhall grub, and ſtock him up, they ſhall take that from him in which his ſtrength lay, and from which his enlivening moiſture came.

And above his branches ſhall be cut off.] The word that we tranſlate **branch**, ſignifies, a crop or a harveſt; the fruit of a tree is the crop of it. You ſee compleat miſery in this Allegory; *root and branch*, is all that a tree hath; and to be cut off root and branch, is to be utterly cut off. If the root be dried up, though the branches be not cut off, yet the tree withers and dies. Or if the root be not dried up, yet if all the branches be cut off, there's no beauty in it, nor can it bring forth any fruit; A trees bears not at the ſtock, but at the branches; 'tis but a ſtump if the branches be cut off.

But take it, as here, in both, and then the judgment is univerſal; what hath a tree left, when it hath loſt, both root and branches. (*Mal.* 4. 1.) *Behold the day cometh that ſhall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly ſhall be ſtubble, the day comes that ſhall burn them up, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, it ſhall leave them neither root nor branch*; That is, it ſhall totally conſume them. As it ſpeaks perfect mercy when both root and branch proſper (2 *King.* 19. 30.) *And that remnant that ſhall eſcape of the houſe of Judah ſhall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward*; So it ſhews the compleatneſs of a judgment, when there ſhall be neither root nor branch. The branches of man, are whatſoever man put's forth, to ſhew his excellency or vertues, his pomp or ſplendour by. Some interpret *branches* for *children.* So they are called, *Pſal.* 127. *Thy children ſhall be as Olive branches, &c.* And then his branches ſhall be cut off, is, his children and poſterity ſhall be cut off. This alſo argues the greatneſs of the judgment.

Others by *branches*, underſtand his deſires acted, or the work he had begun, and put forth: The motions and puttings forth of a man's ſpirit in actions, are like the branches of a tree: The thoughts of man in the Hebrew are expreſſed by a word which ſignifies the boughs of a tree: the fruits which our thoughts ſhoot, bloſſom, and bring forth, are our actions. Thus as the wicked man's root, his plots and deſigns ſhall be ſpoiled below; ſo the branches which ſhoot out from him into action, ſhall be broken off; and God will ſay to this man, as Chriſt to the Fig-tree, (*Mat.* 21. 19.) *Never fruit grow on thee more. The root ſhall be dried up beneath, and the branches ſhall be cut off above.*

Some underſtand this more literally, his root, and his branches, that is, his trees ſhall bear no fruit, or he ſhall be deprived of their fruit; the eſtate which he hath abroad in the field, his lands, and woods, his Gardens and plantations ſhall be deſtroyed: according to that (*Deut.*28.16.) *Curſed ſhalt thou be in the field*; that is, thy cattel ſhall miſcarry, thy corn and fruits ſhall wither; or as we may apply that of the Prophet *Iſaiah* (which is ſpoken (I conceive) of the general conſumption which ſhould come upon that people and their poſterity) to this particular Judgment of ſpoiling all the hopes of fruit in the field. (*Chap.*5.24.) *Therefore as the fire devoureth the ſtubble, and the flame conſumeth the chaff, ſo their root ſhall be rottenneſs, and their bloſſom ſhall go up as duſt.* The root is fruit (*in potentia remota*) at a diſtance, the bloſſom is fruit (*in potentia proxima*) at next door, or the immediate antecedent of fruit; the Prophet to ſhew that there was no hope of fruit remaining, ſhews that both their remote and their neareſt hope of fruit ſhould be removed.

Nihil non peribet è rebus impii, peribit quod latet (radix) & quod eminet, ramus.

Hence Note, *Wicked men may be fully furniſhed with means for the attaining of their ends.*

Here are roots, and branches, deep counſels, high actings, many ſtrengths, which are to the wicked man as the foundation is to the houſe, and as root and branches to the tree. The Prophet (*Pſal.* 37. 35.) ſpeaks under this ſimilitude; *I beheld the wicked like a green Bay-tree,* O how he flouriſhed! yea you may behold him ſometimes, as an Oak of *Baſhan,* as a Cedar of *Lebanon*; *He caſts forth his roots* (in worldly and civil things, as a godly man doth in ſpirituals,) *as Lebanon* (*Hoſea* 14. 5.) that is, mighty roots: *and his branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the Olive tree, and his ſmell as Lebanon.* It is no unuſual thing to ſee the worſt of men thus rooted, thus branched, yea and (for a while) fruited too.

Secondly, Obſerve, *When wicked men are in their greateſt ſtrength and beauty, when they have both root and branches, then judgment comes upon them.*

The ſtrength of man cannot protect againſt the juſtice of God, ſinners ſhall feel the impreſſions of his anger; not only ſhall their goodly branches feel it, but their ſtrongeſt roots. What root can keep its earth, when God raiſeth a wind, and ſends out his ſtorm? What branch can keep either leaves or fruit, when God ſends out his blaſting mildew? (*Pſal.* 37. 35.) *David* ſpeaks of ſuch a goodly flouriſhing-tree; *I have ſeen the wicked in great power,* there is his root; *ſpreading himſelf like a green Bay-tree,* there are his branches; yet *he paſſed away, and lo he was not, yea I ſought him, yet I could not find him.* And the very interpretation which the Pſalmiſt makes (in another place) of all the flouriſhing of wicked men, of their ſtrong roots, and goodly branches, is, that they ſhall be rooted up; *When the wicked ſpring as graſs, and all the workers of iniquity flouriſh.* What is the meaning of this? how may we interpret this? *It is that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever,* (*Pſal.*92. 6, 7.) And that which is ſpoken of mankind in general, is moſt true of this ſort of mankind. *In the morning they are like graſs that groweth up: In the morning it flouriſheth, and grows up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth, Pſal.* 90.6. The ſtrongeſt of men are but as graſs, *in the morning they grow*; The beſt of their worldly beauty is but like graſs, for both they and it, they and their glory are cut down and wither in the Evening. At what time ſoever man is cut down, it is his Evening; but to ſhew that man ſhall not continue long, he is here meaſured by the length of an artificial day, whereof the evening is rather the limit, then a part. Now if the beauty of all men be thus ſubject to a ſudden decay, how much more they and theirs, who are the ſpecial objects of the wrath of God, becauſe of their ſpecial ſins. The Prophet *Amos* ſeems to imply, that the *Amorites* had ſome hopes to withſtand their overthrow, and preſerve themſelves from a fall: *Yet I deſtroyed the Amorite before them.* What was this *Amorite? His height was like the height of the Cedars.* There was his flouriſhing branch. *And he was ſtrong as the Oaks (deeply rooted) yet I deſtroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath,* (*Chap.* 2. 9.) Though he were in height like the Cedar, though he were for ſtrength like the Oak, yet up came his root, and down came his top. The creature is no match for the Creator. There is no ſecuring our ſelves againſt God, when he comes to take vengeance; both root, and branch, beauty, and ſtrength muſt wither, and dry up before his conſuming jealouſie.

Hitherto *Bildad* hath covered and wrapt up his meaning in Allegories; in the allegory of light; in the allegory of hunting, and fowling; in the allegory of a judiciary proceeding; and now in the allegory of a tree. In all which, though there be much variety of uſefull meditations for us, yet they all meet in this one great concluſion, that God hath prepared, and will certainly bring forth ruine and deſtruction for the portion of wicked men.

VERS. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

His remembrance ſhall periſh from the earth: and he ſhall have no name in the ſtreet.

He ſhall be driven out from light into darkneſs, and chaſed out of the world.

He ſhall neither have ſon, nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.

They that come after him ſhall be aſtoniſhed at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.

Surely ſuch are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

WHat the Diſciples ſaid to Chriſt, *Joh.* 16. 29. the ſame may we to *Bildad* about this ſhutting up of his diſcourſe; *Now ſpeakeſt thou plainly, and no parable.* Theſe words are the plain Engliſh, or the explication of what he had delivered under the vayle of thoſe Metaphors and Allegories already opened.

In them *Bildad* ſhadowed the eſtate of a wicked man; and here he ſets it in the open light.

In the context of theſe five verſes, we have three things eſpecially to take notice of.

Firſt, A deſcription of the miſery of a wicked man in the 17, 18, 19. verſes.

Secondly, We have the effects which this ſhall produce, *verſ.* 20.

Thirdly, The concluſion or upſhot of all, in a rhetorical exclamation, *verſ.* 21.

The miſery of this wicked man is ſet forth three wayes.

Firſt, By his diſhonour, *verſ.* 17. *His remembrance ſhall periſh, he ſhall have no name.*

Secondly, By his death, or baniſhment, *verſ.* 18. *He ſhall be driven out from light to darkneſs, he ſhall be chaſed out of the world.*

Thirdly, By the deſolation of his family; *He ſhall neither have ſon nor nephew, nor any remaining in his dwellings,* verſ. 19.

The effects which follow this great miſery of the wicked man, at the 20*th* verſe, are conſiderable two wayes.

Firſt, What effect it ſhall have upon thoſe that come after.

Secondly, What upon thoſe that went before, or that lived with him; the one ſhall be aſtoniſhed, and the other affrighted.

The concluſion of all is; *Such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.*

I ſhall briefly paſs the miſery of this wicked man in thoſe three verſes, becauſe it is only the expoſition of what we had before under allegories.

Apodoſis ſive accommodatio ſuperiorum Allegoriarum ad theſim de ſtatu improbi, ut obliquè perſtringat Jobum. Jun. *Dicitur memoria alicujus perire pro eo quòd eſt in æternum ab hominum recordatione divelli.* Bold.

Verſ. 17. **His remembrance ſhall periſh from the earth.**

This ſome take from the former verſe; *His root ſhall be dried up beneath, and his branches ſhall be cut off above.* When root and branch are gone, then the memory of all is gone: what can remain when both theſe are removed?

The periſhing of his remembrance, notes the utter extinction of his remembrance, as Chap. 3. 3. *Job* wiſheth that the day might periſh wherein he was born; his meaning is, that it might no more at all be remembred; ſo here, *His remembrance ſhall periſh.*

And he ſhall have no name in the ſtreet.

No name.] The Hebrew is, *There ſhall not be a name to him.* By *name*, in Scripture, is meant honour or eſtimation among men; For wicked men have a name remaining; but it is an ill name, a name of diſhonour, a blemiſh. So that when he ſaith, *He ſhall have no name*, the meaning is, he ſhall have no good name, or no honourable name remaining. Better have no name, then an ill name. *Cain* hath a name, and ſo hath *Pharoah* in the old Teſtament; *Judas* hath a name, and ſo hath *Demas* in the new, but they are all names of diſhonour, and ſo no names. It is uſual in Scripture to put the name for renown, and men of name by an hebraiſme are men of renown, *Numb.* 1. 16. we render, *Theſe were men renowned:* The Hebrew is, *Theſe were men of name.* Theſe were the renowned of the Congregation. Theſe were men of name in the Congregation. *Numb.* 16. 2. *And they roſe up before Moſes with certain of the children of Iſrael,* 250 *Princes of the aſſembly famous in the Congregation, men of renown,* or, *men of name.* The Apoſtle (*Rom.* 1. 1.) is conceived to advance the honour of his Apoſtleſhip, when he ſaith, *Paul called to be an Apoſtle.* So we tranſlate it, *called to be*; the Greek is, *Paul called an Apoſtle*: that is, *Paul* whoſe name is *Apoſtle.* Which may be taken according to this hebraiſme, as a vindication of himſelf from that diſ-repute which was caſt upon him by many among the *Romans.* Therefore (ſaith he) *Paul named an Apoſtle*, or, *he that hath this honour to be an Apoſtle writes to you.* *Paul* was not ambitious of his own honour, but zealous, leſt the Goſpel which he preached ſhould be contemned through the contemptibleneſs of him whoſe office and charge it was to preach it.

Non nomen ei. *Heb.* *Nomen in ſcripturis famam & celebritatem denotat.*

Viri nominati. Onkelos. *Hi vocati Synagogæ.* Sep. *Elegantèr obſervant Scholia Græca vocem* ἐπικλήτοι *ſignificare nobiles; qua ratione Paulus dicit quòd ſit vocatus Apoſtolus,* i. e. *Apoſtolus ille nominatus & celebris, ut evãgelium ex prædicante ignobilitate non fieret contemptibile.* Pined:

In the Text, *His remembrance ſhall periſh*, is therefore put before *he ſhall have no name*; becauſe a name is that by which we are remembred; The name of a man is his memorial. See both joyned together concerning God himſelf (*Exod.* 3. 15.) *Thus thou ſhalt ſay to the children of Iſrael, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob, hath ſent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all Generations.* That is, by this name I will have a memorial, or be remembred to all Generations. *A man of no name, and a man of no number, are proverbials for a man of no eſteem.*

He ſhall have no name [in the ſtreet.]

In the face of the ſtreet; ſo ſaith the Original: that is, among men he ſhall have no name: men meet in the ſtreet, in publick places, there they diſcourſe both of things, and perſons. This man ſhall have no name there; or if he be there ſpoken of, (as one of the Ancients gloſſes the place,) men ſhall turn away their heads at the mention of him; they ſhall turn away with indignation, as if an ill ſavour diſtempered the ayre every time he was ſpoken of.

Super faciem plateæ Heb: *Superficies cujuſque rei, facies vocatur.* Druſ.

> Hence note, *It is the puniſhment of wicked men to have their names dye when they dye, much more while they live.*

A good name among men, is a great bleſſing: and hence it is a great ſin to bear falſe witneſs againſt another, becauſe that takes away his good name. A falſe witneſs ſpeaks to the diſcredit of his neighbour, and ſets a brand of diſgrace upon his name. If a good name were not a precious commodity; if to be remembred among men were not a great honour, this were not ſo great a ſin. *The memory, or name of the wicked ſhall rot, Prov.* 10. 4. He doth not ſay, his houſe, or his body ſhall rot, though they muſt, but *his memory ſhall rot*; that is, either it ſhall not be remembred at all, or when ever it is, it ſhall be remembred as a rotten thing.

Good men, uſually, have an ill name among many in the world, and indeed they can ſcarce be good, of whom all ſpeak well; yea the beſt may for a time have a blot upon their name among thoſe that are good; but commonly their blot is given by thoſe that are evil. And it is ſome addition of honour to be ill ſpoken of by thoſe that are evil. For as it is a diſcommendation to be commended by ſuch, and a kind of diſreſpect to be reſpected by them, ſo it is our commendation to be diſcommended by them, and an argument of our integrity, when they condemn us. But it is a precious priviledge to have a name with thoſe whoſe names are precious, and to be eſteemed by thoſe who are juſtly had in eſtimation. Further, though the name of a good man for a while be under a cloud, yet his light breaks forth again; and though all the while he lives, his name ſuffer among many, yet when he dyes, his name revives among all. How precious was the name of *Paul*, to the Saints in his dayes? how precious is it among all true Saints to this day? yet while he lived, he was accounted by moſt, as *the off-ſcouring of all things*! Reproached Saints recover honour when they dye, whereas the names of wicked men who lived in honour, fall under reproach when they dye. A good mans name is beſt when he is dead: A wicked man may have a name while he lives. *Nero* is now called a Tyrant; if any had called him ſo while he lived, he could not have had ſafe living in any part of the world. But though flatterers cry up wicked men while they live, in hope to get by them, and though the ſincere dare not cry them down, fearing to be ruin'd by them; yet when they are in their graves, they have no name in the ſtreets, but a name of diſgrace.

Again, Obſerve; *To want a name among men, is moſt grievous to a wicked man.*

Loſs of credit and eſtimation among men, is an affliction to any man, but moſt to wicked men; when they loſe their name here, they have loſt it every where: They have no name in heaven, there they are men of no name; if they loſe their name on earth too, then they are men of no name indeed. Though a Godly man ſhould have no name on earth, yet he hath a name written where it ſhall never be blotted out; his name is written in heaven. Chriſt would have us rejoyce in this more then in all worldly names, (*Luk.* 10. 2, 3.) when his Diſciples rejoyced becauſe they had power over evil ſpirits, and could cure all diſeaſes, ſo that their name was up in the world, and 'twas talked of in all places, what mighty things they had done, and Chriſt denied not that it was an honour to be impower'd for the doing of thoſe great things, *Yet* (ſaith he) *rejoyce not in this, but rather rejoyce that your names are written in heaven.* Now, I ſay, as the Saints ſhould rejoyce in this honour, that their names are written in heaven, above all their rejoycings in an earthly name; and ſhould not onely out-joy worldly joyes, but even joy them out, with the joy they have in God. So, though the Saints have no name upon earth, though their name be written in the duſt, yea,though an evil favour be ſcattered upon their name, yet they have cauſe to rejoyce that their names are written in heaven, that their names are enrolled among Saints and Angels; among Patriarks, and Apoſtles; that their names are fixed where the names of the greateſt Potentates in the world (who know not God) ſhall have no place. 'Tis then a ſpecial evil to wicked men to loſe their name in this world, becauſe when they have loſt that, they have loſt all: And when they have loſt it here, they can find it no where. And we may take notice, that whereas the ambition of carnal men layes it ſelf forth in nothing more then to provide for the perpetuating of their names in the world, that yet they loſe their deſign, their names being blotted out, and their memorial loſt in the world. The natural Hiſtorian obſerves of thoſe famous Pyramides, which were ſet up in *Egypt*; that though the work was ſtupendious, and admirable, and is remembred by many ancient Writers; yet (ſaith he) it doth not appear among all thoſe Writers, who were the founders of thoſe Pyramides. Upon which he gives this obſervation, That by a juſt judgment, their names who raiſed thoſe amazing or rather mad ſtructures, are buried in an eternal night of forgetfulneſs, or (as this Text ſpeaks) *their remembrance is periſhed from the earth.* And as this befel thoſe ſons of ambition, who intended to make themſelves famous with poſterity, by erecting thoſe vain-glorious fabricks; ſo much more will it fall to their lot, who hope to make themſelves famous, by wicked works, by injuſtice, tyranny, and oppreſſion, by voluptuouſneſs, intemperance, or any other abomination. The Lord will ſend a rot upon ſuch names, and their memory ſhall periſh for ever. This is the firſt judgement threatned; He ſhall not have an honourable mention among men; *He ſhall have no name in the ſtreet.*

Cum ſcriptores plurimi de tribus illis molibus inſanis multa prodiderunt, inter omnes tamen illos non conſtat à quibus factæ ſunt, juſtiſſimo caſu obliteratis tantæ vanitatis Authoribus. Plin. l. 36. c. 12.

The ſecond is;

Verſ. 18. **He ſhall be driven out from light to darkneſs, and chaſed out of the world.**

He ſhall be driven.] The word notes a forcible violent or compulſory act, he ſhall be driven, like a beaſt againſt his will, or whether he will or no. But what ſhall drive him, or who ſhall drive him? The Hebrew is plural, and the verb which we read paſſively, is active; ſo it is rendred by a learned tranſlator, *They ſhall drive him.* But who are theſe Drivers? who they are is not expreſt. Some underſtand his troubles, and ſorrows, they ſhall drive him from light to darkneſs, he ſhall dye under the preſſure of his afflictions.

Expellent eum. Mont.

Others refer it to God himſelf, who is the ſupream diſpencer of judgments; He ſhall be driven by God, or God ſhall drive him *from light to darkneſs, and chaſe him out of the world.* But whether we apply it to God the efficient, or to thoſe afflictions which are the inſtrument of his expulſion, the ſence and tendency of the Text is the ſame.

He ſhall be driven, [**from light to darkneſs.**]

From a threefold light to a threefold darkneſs; firſt, from the light of honour, to the darkneſs of diſgrace; ſecondly, from the light of life, to the darkneſs of death; thirdly, from the light of temporal felicity, to the darkneſs of eternal miſery and condemnation: whither ſoever, or into what eſtate ſoever he goes, *He ſhall be driven.* So the wrathful dealing of God with the wicked is expreſt in Scripture. Some conceive, that the Goſpel-language alludes to this paſſage of *Bildad.* (*Mat.* 8. 12.) *The children of the Kingdome ſhall be caſt out into utter darkneſs.* The *Jewes* were children of the Kingdome, and they thought themſelves heirs of the Kingdome; yea, they preſumed, as if the Kingdome had been entailed upon their perſons, becauſe they were *Abrahams* poſterity; yet ſaith Chriſt, even you, for all your confidences, *ſhall be caſt into utter darkneſs*; that is, to hell, where there is nothing but darkneſs, or you ſhall be caſt quite beyond the verge, or utmoſt bound of the Kingdome. The Kingdome hath light all over, but beyond the Kingdome there is no light; being then caſt out of all hopes to enter the Kingdome, they muſt needs be caſt into utter darkneſs, or into that darkneſs, which is without. And as thoſe children of the Kingdome, ſo all unprofitable ſervants are under the ſame doom, *Matth.* 25. 30. And again, (*Matth.* 22. 13.) *Bind him hand and foot, and caſt him into utter darkneſs; there ſhall be weeping, and wayling, and gnaſhing of teeth.*

We may expound the wicked man in the Text, driven from light to this darkneſs. Not onely is he driven from the light of honour, to the darkneſs of diſgrace, and from the light of life, to the darkneſs of a temporal death, but to the darkneſs of eternal death, which is utter darkneſs.

Videtur Bildad id maxime ſignificare, quod omnibus improbis evenit. Omnes autem improbi non ita puniantur in hac vita, ſed omnes tandem detrudentur in tenebras exteriores. Coc.

And chaſed out of the world.] This clauſe is of the ſame mind with the former; To chaſe, as to drive, notes a violent purſuit; and he is chaſed not onely out of the ſociety of his friends, or out of the Land where he lived, but out of the Land of the living.

Hence note; *Wicked men do not go, but are violently caſt out of the world.*

ינדוהו *fugabunt eum à* נדד *vagatus eſt.*

He is chaſed as a wild beaſt; He hath no mind to go out of his fat paſture, from the place he knows, to a place he knows not. (*Luk.* 12. 20.) It is ſaid of the rich man; *This night ſhall they fetch thy ſoul from thee.* He did not reſign, and give it up, but he was driven from it, or it was drawn from him; either of which is to be chaſed out of the world. This is the wicked mans ſecond woe.

Behold, A third;

Verſ. 19. **He ſhall have neither ſon nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.**

This verſe extends the curſe upon him in reference to his poſterity. There is nothing difficult in theſe words; here's total eradication; not onely ſhall he have no ſon, but no ſons ſon. And when he ſaith, **nor ſon, nor nephew**; it is not to be taken ſtrictly; but as including all his kindred, in what degree ſoever. It is as much as to ſay, he ſhall have none of his lineage remain, all ſhall be extinct. Again; He doth not ſay, he never had ſon nor nephew, but he ſhall not have; there ſhall none remain among his people.

And not onely ſhall he have no kindred remaining among his people; but he ſhall not have any remaining in his dwellings: That is, not any friend, not any acquaintance, not any that bears good will to him. A mans children are neareſt, and then his nephews; then profeſt friends, acquaintance, and familiars. But when neither ſon, nor nephew, nor any friend remains, this is a ſweeping Judgement, a very beſome of deſtruction. It leaves none remaining

In his dwellings.] Or in the place of his peregrination and ſojourning in this world, as the word imports. In this *Bildad* ſtrikes at *Job*, and wounds the heart of the good man; from whom God had taken all his children; as if he had plainly ſaid; *God hath dealt with thee as with a wicked man, thou haſt neither ſon nor nephew among thy people, nor any remaining in thy dwellings.* But paſſing by this ſuppoſition in reference to *Job*; we may take up a point or two, as it concerns wicked men in general. Firſt note;

The children and poſterity of wicked men, are ſwept away for their fathers wickedneſs.

Though children ſhall not be puniſhed for their fathers ſin, if they repent, and return to God; yet greater evils fall upon children who do not repent, becauſe of the iniquity of their fathers. Yea good children who walk with God, may have ſome touch, though not in wrath to them, yet in wrath to their fathers, becauſe of their evils. I have met with this before, and therefore onely touch it.

Secondly, Obſerve how he puts this as a ſpecial judgement belonging to wicked men, for though ſometimes it be the lot of godly men, to have neither ſon, nor nephew, nor any remaining in their dwellings (Some good men never had ſon or nephew, and others have been bereaved of all they had) yet this is not ſo great an affliction to a godly man, as it is to the ungodly. For he that can call God father, and ſpeak to Chriſt as his brother, he that is allied to all the Saints in heaven and earth, in a ſpiritual relation, hath no want of natural relations, though he hath them not: it is no great matter to him, though he have neither ſon nor nephew, who is an adopted ſon of God.

As before, in reference to honour, and renown; a godly man can ſpare his honour and credit in the world well enough; becauſe he hath ſo good a name in heaven; he is ſo well reported of with God, that if the wicked trample his honour in the duſt, and reproach him here on earth, he hath no reaſon to be diſcomforted. So, he can ſpare, and be without the outward bleſſing of ſons and daughters, of nephews and friends, becauſe he hath higher alliances, and a more noble conſanguinity, as the Prophet ſpeaks; *God hath given him a name better then that of ſons and daughters*, (*Iſa.* 56. 5.) But for a wicked man, if he want ſons, and nephews, to inherit his eſtate, and to carry on his part in the world; he hath nothing to relieve that want. He that is childleſs, and Chriſtleſs too, hath reaſon to weep for his children, and not be comforted, becauſe they are not. The fruit of the body was put among the promiſed bleſſings to the *Jewes*, (*Deut.* 28. 11.) Children are the comfort of their living parents, and the continuance of their name and memory when they die. That promiſe (*Pſal.* 72. 17.) ſpeaks this fully; *His name ſhall endure for ever; his name ſhall be continued as long as the Sun; men ſhall be bleſſed in him; all Nations ſhall call him bleſſed.* The Hebrew is; *He ſhall be as a ſon to continue his fathers name for ever.* So we read in the Margine. Some render the place; *His name ſhall be ſonned, or ſonnified*, If I may ſpeak ſo; that is, his name by many ſons ſhall be continued. This was a prophecy concerning Jeſus Chriſt. As if the ſeveral acts, (ſo ſome interpret it) and paſſages of Chriſts life ſhould be as ſo many ſons, to declare his name to all Generations. But we may rather interpret it of the ſeed, or children of Chriſt: his name is continued by ſons: he hath a mighty ſeed, and, *He ſhall ſee his ſeed*, (*Iſa.* 53. 10.)

Filiabitur nomen ejus. Mont. *i. e. multi filii nomen ejus deducent in omnes Generationes, vel ita celebria erunt Chriſti geſta, ac ſi ſingula opera eſſent filii, qui ſunt memoriale ſui parentis.* Pined.

In the firſt ages of the world, either not to have a ſon, or to have a ſon die before the father, was an unheard of affliction. One of the Ancients hath obſerved, that there is not in the Geneallogies before the floud, nor in ſome generations after, mention of any father, whoſe ſon died before himſelf. But as all had ſons, ſo their ſons out-lived their fathers; God giving that as a ſpecial comfort to thoſe ages. The firſt ſon that died before his father, is recorded (*Gen.* 11. 27, 28.) *Now theſe are the Generations of Terah, Terah begat Abraham, Nachor and Haran, and Haran begat Lot: and Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity.* It ſeems to be noted as a ſtrange thing never heard of, nor mentioned in the Book of God before, that the ſon ſhould die before the father. And, ſaith my Author, it is to be conſidered, that this *Terah*, whoſe ſon *Haran* died before him, was not onely a worſhipper of Idols, but (as it is conceived) an inventer of Idols; This was the onely man upon record, whoſe ſons death prevented his in thoſe elder times. And in all times it hath been numbred among the afflictions incident to ſinfull man, when any ſon dies before the father, much more when the father hath no ſon remaining when he dies.

Deus in ſolatium naturæ largitebatur primis ſæculis, ut nullus filius moreretur ante patrem, donec in ſupplicium Idololatriæ Thare pater Abraham primus punitus eſt morte filii ſui adhuc vivens. Epiph. lib. 1. contra Hær.

Author & artifex fingendi Idola. Id.

Epiphanius in his Writings againſt hereſies reports that ſome held no reſurrection, but the riſing up of the fathers in their children; when the father dies, the child riſes in his place; this was their reſurrection. Though this were a groſs hereſie, yet there is a truth in it; the father riſeth in his child; parents have a kind of reſurrection in their children, and while they live parents can ſcarcely be ſaid to be dead: upon this account the greatneſs of the affliction riſeth yet higher, he that hath neither ſon nor nephew remaining in his dwellings when he dies, may be accounted more then dead.

Quidam reſurrectionem aliam non admittebant quam eam, qua conſebantur rurſus vivere in ipſis filiis parentes mortui. Epiphan.

This is the third evil that *Bildad* ſets down as the portion of the wicked man, who, as he ſhall be driven out of the world himſelf; ſo his poſterity ſhall be blotted out.

He proceeds to ſhew us what effect this, with the forementioned judgments, ſhould have upon the ſpirits of the living, what the ſight or report of theſe terrible judgments will work, both in preſent and after ages.

Verſ. 20. **They that come after him ſhall be aſtoniſhed at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.**

For the opening of this verſe, we may enquire; firſt, whom he means by, *They that come after*, and, *they that went before him*; ſecondly, what by *his day*; thirdly, what by *aſtoniſhed and affrighted.*

They that come after him, &c.] Thoſe that come after, and thoſe that went before, are all men. If it be ſaid, how could they that went before him be affrighted at his day? they that never ſaw his day, could not be troubled at it?

I anſwer; The Original word doth not ſignifie ſtrictly ſuch as live before we live, but ſuch, who though they were born before us, yet are alive while we live; that is, men more ancient then our ſelves, and yet our contemporaries; ſo here, they who went before this wicked man, are ſuch, who though they were born before him, yet lived with him, and ſaw the judgments of God upon him: So the meaning of it is onely this, That as they who lived at that preſent when God brought thoſe evils upon him were affrighted; ſo they that come after ſhall be aſtoniſhed at him. That is, the one was affrighted at the ſight of thoſe judgments, and others ſhall be aſtoniſhed at the report, and hearing of them. So our tranſlators expound thoſe words in the margine; *They that went before him*, that is, *they that lived with him* ſhall be affrighted. This ſence is alſo expreſly given by Mr. *Broughton*; *As they at preſent took an horror.*

אחרונים *Noviſſimi* קדמנים *priſci, priores, qui ſc. ejus tempore vivebant & judicium ac opera Dei viderunt.* Merc.

Fortaſſe per primos & noviſſimos intelligit non ſolum qui ætate tales ſunt, ſed etiam eos qui quocunque reſpectu ſibi invicem ſunt primi & noviſſimi. q. d. *puſilli & magni, ſapientes & idiotæ, &c.* Bol.

Again, Theſe termes, *They that went before him*, *and they that come after him*, may refer not only to time, but to degree. That is, thoſe that *went before him* in eſtate, and honour; and *they that come after him* in eſtate, and honour. As if he had ſaid, high and low, rich and poor, his ſuperiours and inferiours, one and other ſhall be aſtoniſhed and affrighted at the terrible fall of this man; when firſt and laſt, high and low are afflicted, all are.

קדם *prior fuit, tempore, loco, dignitate:*

שמם *tacitè miratus admiratus fuit, præ admiratione ſtupuit, tacuit:*

They that come after him [**ſhall be aſtonied.**]

The Original word which we tender **aſtonied**, ſignifies to admire greatly and ſilently. Silent admiration is aſtoniſhment; it ſignifies alſo to be waſted and made deſolate. And ſo ſtrictly that aſtoniſhment is meant, which ariſeth from the ſight or view of places or perſons made or left deſolate. In the 143 *Pſalm*, ver. 4. *David* ſaith, (as we tranſlate) *My heart within me is deſolate:* another tranſlates; *My heart within me is amazed.* Thus here the deſolation of the wicked ſhall be ſo great, that they who hear the report of it, or behold the ruines of the place, where once he dwelt and flouriſhed, ſhall ſtand amazed; even as they who lived to ſee it acted upon him

אחזו שער
Apprehenderunt Horrorem. Mont.

Were affrighted.] The Hebrew is, *They took hold of fear, or Horror*; which is equivalent with this; Fear or Horror took hold of them, or ſiezed upon them like an Armed man. Yet ſome of the Jewiſh Doctors think that *Bildad* ſpake thus induſtriouſly; uſing that phraſe; *They took hold of fear,* rather then this, *Fear took hold of them*; to intimate, that when they ſaw ſuch judgments, they were even active to ſtir up fear in themſelves, or to over-awe their hearts with fears, and turn to the Lord, leſt the ſame calamities ſhould alſo befal them; according to that, *Luk.* 13. 3. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh. They that went before him were affrighted*

De die ejus. i.e. *de judicio domini revelato in tum ob exitium ejus, id enim dies ſignificat.* Merc.

At his day.] But, what day is this? This day, is his black day, the day of his calamity. It is frequent in Scripture to put the word *day* alone, without any addition, to note an eminent evil day. The patience of God bears long with the wickedneſs of man, but it will not bear alwayes. (*Pſal.* 37. 13.) *The Lord laughs at him: for he ſees that his day is coming.* While the wicked plots againſt the juſt, hoping to have the day againſt him, and gnaſheth upon him with his teeth, as being vext and filled with envy that he hath a day for himſelf; while he is thus buſie againſt the man whom God loves, God makes ſport at him; *The Lord laughs at him*, (and ſaith, as it were, let him plot, let him go on,) *becauſe he ſees his day is coming:* What day? The day of his ruine, and deſtruction; this ſhall ſuddenly come upon him. In the ſame ſence the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 137. 7.) *Remember O Lord the children of Edom, in the day of Jeruſalem.* Was this the day of *Jeruſalems* triumph, and glory? no, it was the day of *Jeruſalems* miſery, and ſorrow; it was the day, when the children of *Edom* cryed; *Raſe it, raſe it, even to the foundations thereof.* In the Prophecy of *Obadiah* (*verſ.* 12.) *Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy brother*; That is, upon the day of his affliction, or upon the affliction of that day. What! may we not look upon the afflictions of our brethren? yes we may, to pity, and compaſſionate them, but we muſt not look upon them with pleaſure or delight, with contempt or ſcorn, as the *Edomites* did; thou ſhouldeſt not have looked ſcornfully, or contentfully upon the afflictions of thy brother: The day of thy brothers affliction ſhould have been a ſad day to thee.

Thus it is frequent in Scripture to call the day of affliction a day emphatically. And ſo we may interpret that of the Apoſtle, (1 *Cor.* 3. 13.) where he deciphers ſeveral ſorts of doctrines, under thoſe allegorical expreſſions of *gold* and *ſilver*, of *wood*, *hay*, and *ſtubble. Now* (ſaith he) *every mans work ſhall be tryed*, it ſhall be made manifeſt; *for the day ſhall declare it.* What day? the day of tryal; he puts the day alone, for the day of tryal, or of judgment, when God ſhall come to lay the work and the rule together; when he ſhall bring ſtubble, &c. and the fire together; the day of tryal ſhall diſcover and make manifeſt what every mans work is. So here, *They ſhall be aſtoniſhed at his day*; that is, at the day of his affliction.

Dies in quibus impius fæliciter vivit, commodatos habet & quaſi alienos non proprios.

Further, this is called *his day*, to note, that it is his of right, or that it is his due. For all the good and comfortable dayes that he lives, *are borrowed dayes*, they are but lent him, onely the evil day, is *his day*; that's his own.

The Lord will ſend ſuch judgments upon the wicked, as ſhall be an aſtoniſhment and an affrightment to thoſe who behold or hear of them.

As the works of mercy which God hath done for his people are wonderfull, (*Pſal.* 78. 4. *Pſal.* 107. 15.) And as God hath wonderfull mercies and bleſſings in ſtore for his people againſt that great day of his appearing; he will then come *to be admired in all them that believe* (2 Theſ. 1. 10.) That is, he will do ſuch things for believers as ſhall be both to their own and others admiration: So his works of judgments ſhall be admired too; He will make the plagues of the wicked wonderfull. The Lord threatens (*Deut.* 28. 59.) *I will make thy plagues wonderfull.* Such was the deſolation prophecied againſt *Tyrus* (*Ezek.* 27. 35.) *All the inhabitants of the Iſles ſhall be aſtoniſhed at thee; their Kings ſhall be ſore afraid.* They ſhall not be afraid of thee, but for thee. They ſhall not be afraid of thy ſtanding, but at thy overthrow. So (*Ezek.* 32. 10.) at the fall of *Egypt*, *Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee, and their Kings ſhall be horribly afraid for thee. When I ſhall brandiſh my ſword before them, and they ſhall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life in the day of thy fall, &c.* See how the Merchants ſhall be aſtoniſhed at the fall of *Babylon* (Rev. 18. 11, 15.) The judgment upon *Jezabel* (2 King. 9. 37.) is expreſſed by ſome tranſlators in the language of Aſtoniſhment, *The carkaſs of Jezabel ſhall be as dung in the field in the portion of Jezreel: So that they ſhall not ſay, this is Jezabel.* Thus we tranſlate: others render it; *The carkaſs of Jezabel ſhall be as dung in the field in the portion of Jezreel; So that they (being amazed) ſhall ſay, Is this Jezabel?* What, is this *Jezabel?* is ſhe become as dung in the face of the field, who ſo lately ſate upon a throne: what, is this ſhe that painted her face, and looked ſo delicately out at the window, the great commandreſs in *Iſrael*, is this *Jezabel?* Thus they wonder. The judgement denounced upon the houſe of *Eli*, made the ears of thoſe that heard it tingle, (1 *Sam.* 3. 13.) That which makes the ear tingle, will alſo make the heart tremble, and amaze the hearer.

Obſtupentes qui præter ibant, dicebant, illa Jezabel?

Now *Bildad* ſhuts up his argument, having thus laid down the lot of the wicked, and ſet it out in ſeveral portions; he gives (as it were) a confirmation to all, he puts his ſeal to it. As if he had ſaid, I have not ſpoken at randome, I have not ſpoken what may be; but I have ſpoken that which ſhall be, this ſhall certainly come to paſs. And if others ſhall be aſtoniſhed who hear or ſee onely, how ſhall they who bear and feel thoſe calamities?

Verſ. 21. **Surely, ſuch are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.**

Epiphonema totius orationis; Epilogus hujus loci, hæc eſt conditio iniqui hominis, in quo redigatur. Merc.

Surely] He concludes confidently; What I have ſpoken, I will ſtand to for a truth; thus it ſhall be. When *Ahaſuerus* (in the Book of *Heſter*) advanced *Mordecai*, and ſet him in royal apparel upon the beſt horſe, he (according to *Hamans* counſel) cauſed it to be proclaimed before him, *Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom the King delights to honour.* So here *Bildad* having ſhewed the wicked man in a compleat equipage of miſery, ſtript of all his comforts, and good things, and not ſo much as *a good word left him* from any man; but all men ſtanding amazed and aſtoniſhed at his downfall, he ſeems to proclaim, *Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom God reſolves to diſhonour: thus ſhall it be done to the man whom God diſ-favours and frowns upon; ſuch are the dwellings of the wicked*, this their end.

Illud dicitur eſſe res aliqua, non quod aliquandiu eſt, ſed in quod tandem deſinit.

Hence note; *We may certainly conclude, that the eſtate of a wicked man is miſerable.*

As ſome Believers have an aſſurance for themſelves perſonally, that it ſhall be well with them; ſo we may be aſſured in reference to the preſent ſtate of a wicked man, that it ſhall go ill with him and his; *Such are the dwellings of the wicked.* Though we cannot conclude concerning the perſon of a wicked man, that he ſhall be caſt away for ever, for 'tis poſſible he may repent and be ſaved, yet as to his preſent ſtate, and to his perſon as continuing in that eſtate, we may with aſſurance, conclude him undone for ever. The Prophet *Iſaiah* hath this charge from the Lord, (*Iſai.* 3. 10.) *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him: for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him*; and that reward is woe. The reward put into the hand of a wicked man is ſuch as the work of his hand is; he is a worker of iniquity, then what can his reward be, but woe and miſery? Such as a mans way is, ſuch will his end be; If the premiſes be falſe and unſound, the concluſion cannot be ſafe and good. As by a mans fruit we may know what he is, ſo what he ſhall be, unleſs he be changed from what he is. *Such are the dwellings of the wicked.*

And

And this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

Periphraſis impii qui Deum nec novit nec colit, nam colit qui novit, unde pii vocantur יְהוָה יוֹדְעֵי *noſcentes domini.* Druſ.

In theſe words we have the character of a wicked man; the man who knows not God, and the wicked man, are the ſame. No wicked man knows God, and every man that knows not God is wicked. Theſe are termes convertible. *This is the place of him that knows not God.* There is a fourfold *not knowing of God.*

Firſt, There is an utter *not knowing of God*, or a total ignorance of God. He muſt needs be wicked and walk in darkneſs, that hath no light at all of the knowledge of God.

Secondly, They are ſaid not to know God, who have but a falſe or an erroneous knowledge of God. wrong knowledge is a kind of ignorance; they who know not God, as God, and as God hath declared himſelf to be known, theſe know him not. Now as they who are under a night of total ignorance, ſo they who have an unſound knowledge, and live under a falſe light, are numbred with the wicked; for where there are falſe principles, and apprehenſions of God in the head, there cannot be a right frame of heart towards God.

Thirdly, There is a practical not knowing of God, and that is moſt proper to this place (though both the former may be underſtood.) Some have a notional knowledge of God, and that (poſſibly) a right notion, their underſtanding is not wrapt up in errour; yet they may be numbred among thoſe that know not God, becauſe they act contrary to their knowledge. Of theſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 1. 16. *They profeſs that they know him, but in their works they deny him*; This knowledge is practical ignorance. We read of ſuch in the Epiſtle of *Jude* (ver. 10.) who *what they know naturally as bruit beaſts, in thoſe things they corrupt themſelves*; That is, they live not according to natural principles: *as they ſpeak evil* (the former part of the verſe rebukes that) *of thoſe things which they know not*, ſo they do evil about, or in thoſe things which they know. Their knowledge is according to the light of nature, but their actions are againſt the light of nature. They know onely as beaſts do, *naturally*, but they act contrary to this knowledge, which beaſts do not. Now as a wicked man corrupts himſelf in that which he knows by nature, ſo he may corrupt himſelf in that which he knows by doctrine, or inſtruction. And in this reſpect, though he have a higher knowledge then a beaſt, yet he is but as a bruit beaſt in his knowledge; or as the Prophet ſpeaks of thoſe in his time, (*Jer.* 10. 14.) *He is bruitiſh in his knowledge.* To have notions according to knowledge, and actions according to ignorance, is to be bruitiſh in knowledge. And I conceive the Apoſtle aymes at theſe, (1 *Cor.* 15. 34.) *Awake to righteouſneſs, and ſin not* (the Greek is, *awake righteouſly*, that is, give your minds and endeavours unto righteouſneſs) *for ſome have not the knowledge of God: I ſpeak this to your ſhame.* He writes not of thoſe that had no knowledge of God; but either of thoſe who had an erroneous knowledge, or rather, of thoſe that lived in wayes of unrighteouſneſs againſt their knowledge, as the immediate fore-going words intimate; *Awake unto righteouſneſs: for ſome have not the knowledge of God*: That is, they have not ſuch a knowledge of God, as keeps them to the rule of righteouſneſs. Here again is practical ignorance, or a not knowing of God, when he is known. How great a wickedneſs this is in ſuch as have ſcriptural revelations of God, we may eaſily collect, when we find God charging it as a piece of wickedneſs upon the old Gentiles, who had onely natural revelations of God, that is, onely ſo much knowledge of God as might be pickt out of, or learned by an attentive ſtudy in the book of the creature. (*Rom.* 1. *ver.* 21.) *Becauſe when they knew God, they did not glorifie him as God, neither were thankfull, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkned*; and becauſe (though they had a knowledge of God in them, yet) *they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, or to acknowledge God*, as we put in the margin of our Bibles (*ver.* 28.) this provoked God to give them up to vile affections, and to a reprobate mind. We may take meaſure of the ſin by the puniſhment. Spiritual judgements are worſe then corporal. To be given up to vile affections, is more penal then to be given up to the vileſt enemies; yet thus were the Gentiles plagued for ſinning againſt that light which the creature ſheds forth concerning God; then what will their plague be, who ſin againſt Scripture-light, and are ſuch *as know not God* in their own works, when they know him in his word?

In ſcriptura ſacra illa ignorari cenſemur, quæ cognita nullum nobis uſum attulerunt, quomodo dicimus illa non audire quibus non obedimus. Sanct. *Dicit eos Deum non noſſe, qui in peccatis perſeverantes, Deum ſic norunt, ut ejus penitus obliti videantur.* Bez.

Fourthly, There is an affected *not knowing of God*, or (as we may expreſs it) a *ſtudied ignorance of God*; For as we all ought to know God, ſo ſome ſtudy to be ignorant of God, and to keep out the knowledge of holy things. And as, to all, it is a burden to get knowledge, ſo, to many, knowledge gotten is very burdenſome. Man cannot ſin ſo eaſily in the light as in the dark; he puts himſelf hard to it to ſin, who ſins againſt what he ſees. And therefore that they may have liberty to ſin, they have no will to ſee. Such are deſcribed (*Job* 21. 14.) *They ſay to God, Depart from us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes.* Thus as ſome in their practice oppoſe the good which they know, ſo others refuſe to know what is good, that they may the more freely practice evil. And when any man hath long oppoſed light received, he grows unwilling to receive light. He follows on to be ignorant of God; and at laſt is willing to believe, *There is no God.* He that cares not what God ſaith, will not care much to ſay, there is no God. Atheiſm riſeth from prophaneneſs; and he that blaſphemes the word of God daily in his converſation, will at laſt blaſpheme the being of God in his opinion. Theſe know not God indeed, who know not that there is a God; and into this the affected ignorance of God will quickly caſt the wiſeſt (who are ſuch) among the ſons of men.

We may take in all theſe ſorts of not *knowing of God*, into the interpretation of this Text; but ſpecially the third, and fourth; ſuch as know God, yet walk contrary to him; or ſuch as refuſe to know God, leſt they ſhould be troubled to walk according to their knowledge. And indeed a wicked man may have the higheſt knowledge of God, on this ſide the love of God, and obedience to his will, which is attainable; he may have any knowledge of God, but that which gives an experimental taſte and reliſh of the goodneſs of God, or that God is good. And hence it is that he ſometimes hinders his own proficiency in the knowledge of God, leſt if he knew as much as he could, he ſhould be hinder'd from doing (what he hath a mind to) evil as he could.

Cognitio hæc quæ impio negatur eſt practica quædam ſapientia quæ in divino cultu conſiſtit in pietate, & in guſtu quodam & quaſi ſapore divinæ bonitatis.

Hence note; Firſt, *Wickedneſs and ignorance go together.*

Where there is only an *invincible Ignorance of God*, that is, ſuch an ignorance as the man cannot help or avoid, there is nothing but wickedneſs; much more where there is this profeſſed ſtudied ignorance. When the Prophet *Hoſea* ſets forth the great iniquity of that people, he gives this in the cloſe, as the cauſe of all, (*Hoſ.* 4. 1.) *The Lord hath a controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land; becauſe there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land.* It is ſtrange that the Prophet ſhould bring in ſuch a charge againſt *Iſrael*; What could he ſay more of the Philiſtims, of the uncircumciſed Nations, and rude Barbarians, who ſate in darkneſs, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death? What could he ſay more againſt them, then that there was *no knowledge of God in their Land?* could he ſpeak thus truly to the people of *Iſrael*, and *Judah*, Gods own people? Was there no knowledge of God in their Land? This cannot be underſtood of a total Ignorance, or as if there had been none at that time who publiſhed the truth, or knowledge of God in that Land. But the meaning is, either that there was not much knowledge of God in the Land; (for in Scripture that which is not in ſome competent meaſure what it ought to be, is ſaid not to be at all) or though they had the knowledge of God, yet they oppoſed the receiving of it, at leaſt they were not zealous to promote it, nor carefull to walk up to it. Now though a land were full of knowledge, as the waters cover the Sea, yet (in ſuch caſes) we might ſay, *There is no knowledge of God in the Land.* This want of knowledge cauſed that plenty of ſin, and over-flowing of wickedneſs, for which God had a controverſie with their Land. We have ſuch a character of ſinfull times given (2 *Chron.* 15. 3.) *Now, for a long ſeaſon, Iſrael was without the true God, and without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law.* They were not totally deſtitute of theſe, but comparatively; There was a great neglect of teaching and expounding the Law; and then there was ſo little of

God among them, that they were ſaid to be without the true God. Wickedneſs and ignorance grow up together; ignorance is the mother of prophaneneſs, not of devotion, as the Popiſh teachers (with ignorance enough) perſwade their deluded Votaries. The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 14. 2.) joynes theſe two together; *There is none that underſtandeth, or that ſeeketh after God.* Would you know the reaſon why they did not ſeek God? it was becauſe they did not underſtand: and (*verſ.* 4.) *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as bread, and do not call upon the Lord*; As if he had ſaid, if they had but a little true knowledge among them all, they would not thus greedily devour my people; they made no bones of oppreſſion, they ſwallowed the poor as pleaſantly as bread, they did they cared not what, when they knew not what they ought to do. The flood-gates of wickedneſs are open, where the door of knowledge is ſhut.

When Chriſt tells us (*Joh.* 17. 3.) *This is eternal life to know God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent.* Why doth he ſay, this is eternal life, but becauſe it ſets us in a frame of holy life? It works grace, and therefore it is glory. It is a holy life to know God thus, therefore it will be a happy life. As to know God is eternal life; ſo not to know him is eternal death. He that knows God, loves him, and he that loves him keeps his commandments (*Joh.* 14.) And they that do not know God, do not love him; and they that do not love him, do not keep his commandments. Many ſin againſt their knowledge, but they cannot avoid ſin, who have no knowledge. *The blind eat many a fly,* yea poyſon inſtead of bread.

Further, Some underſtand this Text of the knowledge that God hath of man; not of the knowledge that man hath of God; reading it thus; *This is the place of him whom God doth not know.* It is a truth both wayes: for they that do not know God, are not known of God. It is as true a character of a wicked man that God doth not know him, as that he doth not know God. But doth not God know every man? How then is it ſaid that God doth not know a wicked man? As men are ſaid not to know God, when they do not love and reverence him, when they do not fear and obey him; ſo God is ſaid not to know thoſe men whom he doth not love nor approve. (*Mat.* 7. 24.) *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* Wicked men do not know God obedientially, and God doth not know wicked men favourably; and whether we ſay of a man he knows not God, or of God that he knows not ſuch a man, it equally ſpeaks him a wicked man.

—quem non agnoſcit Deus fortis. Jun.

Noſſe Deum eſt reſpicere, revereri, obedire, amare.

Laſtly, Whereas *Bildad* (as his friends before him) makes ſo large a deſcription of the ſtate of a wicked man, and of the portion due to him; firſt, in allegories, and then in plain words, inſiſting upon and repeating it again and again. It is queſtioned by ſome, why his and their ſpirits were drawn forth ſo frequently and unanimouſly to ſpeak of this matter? I anſwer; This might be, firſt, to undeceive the ſimple, who are ready to call the wicked happy, becauſe of their preſent proſperity; Secondly, to conquer the unbelief of moſt who can ſcarcely be perſwaded, that ſin will be ſo bitter in the end.

Many hope to thrive by wickedneſs, and not a few are afraid they ſhould be undone by keeping cloſe to the wayes of holineſs. Therefore the Lord doth ſo often thunder by the voyce of his ſervants, and reveal his wrath from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs; Therefore he hath cauſed the penmen of the holy Scriptures to write the evil of it (as it were) in letters of blood, and to give teſtimony, that it hath ſhed the blood of thouſands already, and will deſtroy all eternally who turn not from it.

Take this anſwer more fully in the following obſervation.

The heart of man is hardly brought to believe that God will indeed pour out wrath upon ſinful men.

As it is a hard thing to believe that God will pour out ſo many bleſſings on his own people: ſo to believe that God will pour out ſo many vials of miſery upon wicked men. Therefore as we hear of the promiſes again, and again; and God oft repeats his mercies to perſwade us that he will indeed perform what he hath ſpoken: ſo we hear threatnings again and again, to overcome the unbelief of wicked men, or to make all know this ſad truth; *Woe to the wicked, woe to the wicked.* If the heart were ready to receive this, it would not be ſo often repeated. Few would take God at his word if he had ſpoke this but once. God ſpake to man in the ſtate of perfection; *In the day that thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die.* No, ſaith the Devil, and the Woman believes him, it ſhall not be ſo: the threatning was but once given, and it was not believed at all. The heart of man doth hardly cloſe, either with promiſes or threatnings. Again, God doth it to render wicked men more unexcuſable. If he had ſpoken but once, if there had been but one word of threatning againſt ſin all the Bible over, ſinners had been without excuſe; but how ſhall their mouths be ſtopped, when theſe threatnings are ſo often renewed? when every Page of Scripture teſtifies the deſtruction of wicked men, and ſeals wrath upon them, if they go on in their wickedneſs. How deeply ſhall they be condemned when they are condemned by the mouths of ſo many witneſſes? *David* ſaith, (*Pſal.* 62. 11.) *God hath ſpoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongeth unto God*; the meaning is, either that God ſpake that often, or that *David* heard it often, though God ſpake it but once; that is, he throughly weighed and conſidered it, at once ſpeaking, *that power belongeth to God.* A holy heart hears that twice, that God ſpeaks but once; Grace hath a quick ear, it makes us, as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, (*Chap.* 1. 19.) *Swift to hear*; but God ſpeaks twice, and thrice, yea a hundred times, to wicked men, and they will not hear once; Then how great will their judgement be, and how will their mouthes be ſtopt, becauſe they ſtopt their ears? Hath not God ſaid it again and again; *This is the dwelling of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God*? Hath he not ſpoken it in figures, and allegories? Hath he not ſpoken it in plain words, and in examples? hath he not ſpoken it in blood? hath he not ſpoken it in fire, in ſword and famine? How often hath he made his wrath ſmoak, yea, blaze and burn before the eye of ſence? how often hath he made ſinners ſmell the brimſtone of his diſpleaſure?

Have they not heard of, have they not ſeen the deſolations which ſin hath made? how it hath left thoſe places which were as the Garden of God, like a waſte or wilderneſs? Have they never read or heard of the old world drowned with water? Have they never heard of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* conſumed with fire? Have they not heard of *Pharoah* over-whelmed in the red Sea, for vexing the people of God? and of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* ſwallowed up alive by the earth for their murmuring againſt *Moſes*? Whole volumes of examples have been collected, wherein the threatnings of God againſt ſin have been made viſible in the ruine and downfall of ſinners themſelves, and in the rooting out of their poſterity. As therefore the Apoſtle argues from the holy lives and happy deaths of the old Patriarchs and others enumerated in the eleventh Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſo may we from the unhappy deaths of many whoſe lives have been unholy in all ages; *Seeing we are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us.*

If ſinners go on, after all this, what can they plead, why their dwelling ſhould not be made deſolate? or why themſelves ſhould not be condemned for ever?

Thus far *Bildad*'s ſecond diſcourſe with *Job*, wherein he ſeverely reproves him of wickedneſs, and ſets before him, the wofull concluſion of the wicked; How grievous and wounding his words were to *Jobs* ſpirit, how unſuitable to his condition, how unappliable to his perſon, will appear in the opening of his pathetical Anſwer in the following Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then Job *anſwered and ſaid ;*

How long will ye vex my ſoul, and break me in pieces with words ?

Theſe ten times have ye reproached me ; ye are not aſhamed that ye make your ſelves ſtrange to me.

Bildad's ſharp reproof of *Job* in the former Chapter, procures from him a ſharp reply in this from *Job* ; whoſe whole diſcourſe declares him the object of mans pity, and God the object of his faith ; the ſum of his anſwer to *Bildad*, is to ſhew how hardly (yea, as he thought how inhumanely) he had hitherto been dealt with ; and that upon a four-fold conſideration.

Firſt, As he was afflicted.

Secondly, As he was their friend.

Thirdly, As he was innocent, not conſcious to himſelf of any evil that he had wilfully committed againſt God, or of any wrong done to man.

Fourthly, That they uſed him thus unkindly while he profeſſed full hope in God, notwithſtanding all the calamities which God was pleaſed to lay upon him.

There are three parts of the Chapter ; in the firſt he very accurately and tragically (as ſome expreſs it) amplifieth his own ſad eſtate ; and this is carried on from the beginning of the Chapter to the twenty third Verſe.

Secondly, He holdeth forth, and maintaineth his own integrity, both by a vehement deſire, and an aſſured hope of his reſurrection and appearance before God at the tryal of the laſt judgment, *Verſ.* 24, 25, 26, 27.

Thirdly, He exhorts his Friends to deſiſt, and repent, leſt they draw down the judgments of God upon themſelves, in the two laſt Verſes: *But ye ſhould ſay*, &c. *ver.* 28. and *ver.* 29. *Be ye afraid of the ſword, for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword, that ye may know there is a judgment.*

From theſe parts of the Chapter laid together, we may collect the general ſence of *Job*'s Argument, in anſwer to *Bildad*, thus ;

Bildad endeavoured to prove, that *Job* was a wicked man, becauſe he was burdened with affliction ; *Job* anſwereth, I indeed endure thoſe afflictions, which for the matter are the portion of wicked men, yet I am not wicked, as my own Conſcience, full of peace and hope in God, doth aſſure and witneſs to me ; therefore the induring of greateſt afflictions, is no ſound proof that a man is wicked ; nor do theſe afflictions befal ſuch only as are wicked. The propoſition, (namely, that he himſelf was under the preſſure of great afflictions) is clear in the firſt part of the Chapter, from the ſixth to the twenty-third Verſe ; the Aſſumption, that he himſelf was not a wicked man, he proves by his faith and hope in God, laid down to the life, *Verſ.* 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. The Concluſion or Inference is implyed.

Job leads us to the deſcription of his afflictions by a pathetical Preface, wherein he taxeth, and reproveth his Friends two wayes : Firſt, By ſhewing their ſeverity againſt him. Secondly, By ſuppoſing his own guilt againſt God. He reproveth them by ſhewing their ſeverity againſt him three wayes.

Firſt, That they had troubled him long, in the ſecond Verſe ; *How long will ye vex*, &c. *Verſ.* 2.

Secondly, That they had troubled him who was troubled before ; *How long will ye vex my ſoul ?* In the ſame Verſe : As if he had ſaid, *My ſoul was vexed with afflictions, why have ye vexed me, who came to comfort me.*

Thirdly, That as they had done it *long*, ſo they perſiſted ſtill in doing it ; *Verſ.* 3. *Theſe ten times have ye reproached me ; you are not aſhamed, that* &c. *q. d.* ye did it, and ye do it.

His ſecond way of reproving, is by a ſuppoſition of his own guilt : Suppoſe I have ſinned, ſuppoſe I have erred, *ver.* 4, & 5. if I had done ſo, yet ſurely ye ought not to carry your ſelves thus towards me ; there is ſome other way of dealing with an afflicted friend, though faulty, then that which you have yet hit on ; therefore he goeth on to tell them, as what his caſe was, ſo how they ſhould have handled the matter with him ; *Know that God hath overthrown me*, &c. *Ver.* 6. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me* (ver. 21.) As if he had ſaid, While the hand of God was overthrowing me, your hand ſhould have been ſupporting me, and your hearts pitying me. So much for the opening of the whole Chapter, which lets in ſome light to the underſtanding of each particular.

Docet minimè æquos in ſe fuiſſe tam graviter ipſum inſectādo etiamſi ſceleris evictus eſſet. Merl.

Verſe 1, 2. **Then Job anſwered, and ſaid, How long will ye vex my ſoul ?**

How long?] The Queſtion concludes againſt his Friends, that they had vexed him already *too long* ; it argues alſo, their perſeverance in troubling him ; ſo the word is frequently uſed in Scripture : *David* ſpeakes much to this ſence, *Pſal.* 4. 2. *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye love vanity ? How long will ye turn my glory into ſhame ?* That is, How long will ye go on diſhonouring me ? And in *Pſal.* 13. we have this, *How long*, four times repeated in two verſes, while *David* complained of his affliction, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord ? For ever ?* (That's long indeed.) *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me ? How long ſhall I take counſel in my ſoul, having ſorrow in my heart daily ? How long ſhall my enemies be exalted over me ?* Here are four times *how long*, to ſhew that *David*'s trouble had continued exceeding long.

How long will ye vex my ſoul ?] The word which we tranſlate *to vex*, ſignifies an internal trouble, ſuch as ariſeth from the contempt and ſcorn that others put upon us ; many know by experience (though grace ſets them above it) how much their ſpirits are burdened when they are contemned : *They who are duly honoured, have a weight in them ; and they who are (though undeſervedly) contemned have a weight upon them.* The word ſignifies alſo ſimply to grieve (*Lam.* 3. 32.) for it is applyed to the act of God ; *The Lord will not caſt off for ever, but though he cauſe grief, yet will he have compaſſion, according to the multitude of his mercies ; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* So the word is uſed again (*Lam.* 1. 12.) *Was there ever ſorrow like to my ſorrow, which is done to me in the day wherein the Lord hath afflicted me ?* The Vulgar reads, *In the day wherein the Lord hath gathered my grapes, or fruits ?* As if the Church had ſaid, I was once like a fruitful flouriſhing Vine, but now the Lord hath ſtript me of all my glory, and left me naked and bare, as a Vine after the Grapes are gathered. So *Iſa.* 51. 21. *Zeph.* 3. 18. The afflictions of the Church and People of God in their ſaddeſt ſorrows, are expreſſed by this word.

יגה *notat internam animi mœſtitiam, illam præſertim quæ ex contēptu quodam, vel ſeveriore alicujus increpatione verbo aut opere naſcitur.* Pined.

Vindemiavit. Vulg.

How long will ye vex my ſoul ?] The word **vex**, alone had ſignified the vexation of the ſoul ; but when he adds **ſoul**, it increaſeth the ſignification of the word, to ſay, *You have vexed my ſoul*, is more then to ſay, *You vex me*, though that be the meaning of it ; ſo that here's the deepeſt ſorrow, that which toucheth not only the fleſh, and skin, but that which pierceth to the very ſoul : As 'tis ſaid of *Mary*, *A ſword ſhall paſs through thy ſoul :* That is, Thou ſhalt be deeply wounded.

Addendo, animam meam, *vis orationis augetur & penetrans graviſque mœſtitia indicatur.* Bold.

In that he complains, *How long will ye vex ?*

Obſerve, Firſt, *The length or continuance of an affliction is more grievous to us, then the weight and burthen of it.*

He doth not ſay, how much? or how great? but how long? *A light burthen carried far is heavy; what then is an heavy burthen carried far? The length of the croſs grieves more then the breadth or bulk of it.* The ſouls under the Altar cryed (*Rev.* 6. 10.) *How long Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on earth?* So *David*, Pſal. 120. 5, 6. *My ſoul hath long dwelt with them that hate peace:* He did not complain that he had been amongſt thoſe that hated peace; but that he had dwelt long with them; he could not get free from that hateful company. (*Dan.* 8. 13, 14.) The queſtion is put concerning the affliction of the Church (*How long?*) As if it would render her affliction ſhorter, but to know how long it ſhould continue, eſpecially to know that it ſhould not continue long; *Then I heard one ſpeaking, and another Saint ſaid unto that certain Saint which ſpake, How long ſhall be the viſion concerning the daily ſacrifice, and the tranſgreſſion of deſolation, to give both the Sanctuary and the Hoſts to be trodden under foot?* As if he had ſaid, Might we but know when this deſolation ſhould end, it would be ſome comfort in the midſt of that deſolation; *And he ſaid unto me, until two thouſand and three hundred dayes, then ſhall the Sanctuary be cleanſed:* Though this anſwer had much obſcurity in it, yet it had ſome comfort in it. To hear of a period of our troubles, though we can ſcarce pick out the time of that period, is ſome abatement of our troubles. It troubles us to ſtay long from the enjoyment of good; but it troubles us much more while we are long, and know not how long we ſhall be under the indurance of evil. Many are ready to ſay in theſe troubleſome times, if we could but ſee an end of our troubles, if we thought there would be an end of theſe wars, we could more chearfully bear the expence both of our blood and treaſure. When will there be an end? But what is all this length to the endleſs length of thoſe troubles, which are the portion of impenitent ſinners? What will they ſay, where good ſhall never be injoyed, and evil for ever felt? *How long*, will be the Cry in Hell for ever. *How long* ſhall we indure? When will this end? No date, no period can be ſet to the *how long* of that miſery. And this makes every moment of miſery as miſerable as the eternity of it. And indeed, every moment of an eternal miſery hath an eternity in it: As every moment of eternal mercies is like an eternity of mercy.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Thoſe afflictions pain us moſt that reach our ſpirits.*

The ſoul it ſelf cannot be pained; it being a ſpiritual ſubſtance, hath nothing to do with ſenſible paſſions; yet pain and trouble in their effects, grief and ſorrow, may quickly paſs through the fleſh to the ſpirit: There are ſome evils which do not make ſo much as a ſkar in the fleſh, which make deep wounds in the ſpirit. Chriſt ſweat drops of blood in the agony of his ſoul, before any hand touched his body; and ſome evils make deep wounds in the fleſh, which make not the leaſt ſcratch upon the ſoul; yea, the ſoul may rejoyce, triumph, and glory, while the body is martyred and torn in pieces. But thoſe afflictions which wound and vex the ſoul, are moſt grievous; as thoſe mercies are ſweeteſt, which refreſh the ſoul, and comfort our ſpirits; many enjoy mercies which comfort and refreſh their bodies, but they know not what it means to have their ſouls comforted. Now as thoſe comforts are moſt comfortable which comfort the ſoul; ſo thoſe ſorrows are moſt ſorrowful which afflict the ſoul: O, ſaith afflicted *Job*, *Ye vex my ſoul*; were it but my fleſh which the Devil wounded at the firſt, I could bear it: The *Sabeans* took *Job*'s eſtate away, and Satan ſmote his body from the crown of the head to the ſoal of his foot with botches and ſores; but his Friends gave ſorer wounds, they vexed his ſoul by their unkindneſſes, and we ſhall ſee his ſoul wounded farther by and by; now only remember that ſoul-wounds are the ſoreſt wounds.

Thirdly, Compare this vexation of *Job*'s ſoul with the intention of *Job*'s Friends in viſiting him, as hath been toucht before upon ſome other paſſages of this book; they did not plot upon him to vex him, nor had they a deſign to trouble him, doubtleſs the men had upright hearts, and feared God; they came really to comfort him, and do him good; yet all the pains they took with him, was only a pain to him, *His ſoul was vexed.* We may intend comfort to our friends, and yet only trouble them; we cannot give our actions that effect which we deſign them to: *Job* found it ſo in his Friends. And he might ſay to them, you came to comfort me; if vexing a ſoul be comforting it, you have comforted me with full meaſure: But *call you this comforting an afflicted friend? Is this the lifting of him up that is fallen?* Only God can make our counſels and our perſons comfortable to others: As for us we may ſpeak words in the matter comfortable, as well as in our intendment, and yet no comfort come to thoſe we have a mind to comfort. (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned, that I may know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary:* To comfort is a gift of God, a ſpiritual gift; and as a power to comfort, ſo the preſent act is the ſpecial gift of God; a man may have the gift of applying the conſolations of the Goſpel, and yet not give comfort. God hath charged the uſe of all Goſpel means upon us, both to ſave and comfort our ſouls; but he hath reſerved the fruit and ſucceſs of both in his own power. We muſt at once ſhew our diligence about the means, and our dependance upon God for the end. *How long will ye vex my ſoul,*

Hoccine eſt mæſtum conſolari?

And break me in pieces with words?

The word that we tranſlate, **to break in pieces**, notes a very vehement breaking, to break with extream violence, to break and bruiſe, as ſeeds or ſpices are bruiſed in a Morter, to pound to duſt or powder. The word is uſed for the breaking of the heart with godly ſorrow: Sorrow is a breaker, it breaks no bones, but it breaks the heart. Worldly ſorrow breaks the heart to death; Godly ſorrow breaks the heart to life, (*Iſa.* 53. 15.) *I dwell with thoſe that are of an humble and contrite or broken ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the ſpirit of the contrite ones.* The ſorrows of Jeſus Chriſt are expreſt by this word, (*Iſa.* 53. 5. & 10.) *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities*; and in the tenth Verſe, *Yet it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him, he hath put him to grief.* Thus the ſpirit of *Job* was bruiſed and broken: But, what was the inſtrument of his breaking? Was he broken with clubs and ſtaves? No, but with hard words and ſevere rebukes. *How long will ye break me in pieces*

דכא *verbum vehemens. Metaphora à contuſione granorum in mortario.*

With words?] *Job* doth not title their words, he ſaith not, ye have broken me with hard, cruel, or bitter words, he ſaith only, *Ye have broken me in pieces with words*, leaving us to conſider what words were fit for ſuch a work; ſoft and kind words may melt the heart; but thoſe are hard and harſh words which break it.

Hence Obſerve, *Unkind and hard words make deep wounds, and break the heart.*

Words are full of power, both to wound and to heal, to break and to bind up, to grieve and to comfort: As the word of God hath an Almighty power to break the heart; ſo the word of man hath a mighty power to do it. Some are more troubled with what is ſaid to them, then with any thing that is done to them: Unfriendly and reproachful ſpeeches have lain heavier upon them, then the heavieſt of other preſſures.

Nihil ſic hominis affligit animū ut ſermo durus. Orig.

David had many hands againſt him, but he was moſt afflicted with the tongues which were againſt him; *As with a ſword in my bones, mine enemies reproached me, while they ſay daily unto me, where is thy God?* Pſal. 42. 10. And as God works upon the heart with two ſorts of words: Sometimes with *ſoft words*, ſuch are his promiſes: Sometimes with *hard words*, ſuch are his threatnings. So alſo (in his proportion) doth man; man hath his ſoft words, and they are of two ſorts: Firſt, Friendly words: Secondly, Flattering words; both theſe inſinuate and ſoak into the ſpirit of man. Secondly, Man hath his hard and bitter words; theſe vex and break the heart, and are written (as I may ſay) upon the broken pieces and ſplinters of it, as with a Pen of iron, and the point of a Diamond, there's no getting them out again, till grace get them out, or holy patience wear them out. Cruel words are the heightning of cruel actions (*Mat* 5.10,11.) When Chriſt had ſaid, *Bleſſed are they that are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake*, it follows, *Bleſſed are ye when men revile you, and perſecute you, and ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly.* The bleſſing is promiſed not only to thoſe who ſuffer evil done to them, but to thoſe who ſuffer evil ſpoken againſt them. Hard words are numbred among our hardeſt tryals: The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 10.32,33.) exhorts the Saints to *call to remembrance the former dayes, in which, after they were illuminated* (that is, after they had received the light of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt) *they indured a great fight of affliction*; they who receive the faith, muſt expect a fight; they might have been in the darkneſs of unbelief and ignorance long enough without a fight of affliction; but as ſoon as ever they were illuminated, the Prince of darkneſs ſtirr'd up a war againſt them: What the war was he tells us at *ver.* 33. *Partly while ye were made a gazing-ſtock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly while ye became companions of them that were ſo uſed:* He calls the bearing of reproaches, *a great fight of affliction.*

Πολλὴν ἄθλησιν, *Ingens, certamen.* Bez. Magnum *dicit quod* multum *ex proprietate vocis Græcæ poſſis dicere, quod ingens eſt exaggeratio contumeliæ, quaſi cum multis hoſtibus confligat qui cum una contumelia depugnat.* Pin.

The word which we render *great*, doth not ſignifie ſo much the greatneſs of any one, as the concurrence of many afflictions: As if he had ſaid, Ye indured a multitude, or manifold fights of affliction. He that indureth hard words, fights with a numerous Hoſt; words come thick, and like an Army renew the charge: He contends with many enemies at once, who is aſſaulted with reproaches. And he is a ſtrong man, that is able to ſtand theſe aſſaults, or receive theſe charges, and not be broken. *Job* was a ſtrong man both in faith and patience, yet he was broken, his peace was much broken, yea, his ſpirit was broken; *Ye have vexed my ſoul* (ſaith he) *and broken me in pieces with words.*

Job proceeds to ſhew us particularly what kind of words his Friends ſpake, they were unkind words; and more,

Verſe 3. **Theſe ten times ye have reproached me, ye are not aſhamed to make your ſelves ſtrange to me.**

Here is an army of evil words, *Theſe ten times*, &c. What? juſt ten times? Did *Job* keep tale, and ſcore up the unkind words of his Friends? Were his reproaches juſt ten? We uſe to ſay, *'Tis unfriendly to keep account of kindneſſes done to our friends*; but it is more unſutable to the laws of friendſhip, *to take an account of unkindneſſes received from friends. The leſs we remember them, the better is our memory.* Why then is *Job* ſo exact and particular in this unfriendly Arithmetick? *Theſe ten times ye have reproached me.*

Numerū denariū ſtrictè accipit Cajetanus. Ipſas Jobi *reſponſiones ei redundaſſe in confuſionem aſſerēs.*

Some conceive that *Job* ſpeaks to the very letter, that when he ſaith, *ten times*, he means *ten times*, and only *ten times*, neither more nor leſs. Which number is made up thus; Five times his Friends had ſpoken, and five times *Job* had ſpoken, here were ten ſpeeches; He was reproach'd as well when himſelf ſpake, as when they ſpake; his own anſwers were reckoned to his diſhonour by his Friends, as he reckoned their replyes: But I paſs this.

Notæ multitudinis ſolent per hyperbolem uſurpari; ita ut Decies *ſignificet* ultra decē plurima, *quamvis res ipſa infra decem conſtiterit.*

Further, we may make it out thus; that in each ſingle anſwer made by his Friends, there was a double reproach, or much reproach, therefore he reckoneth every one of them for two: We find in Scripture, that the word *ten* is uſed in a kind of Hyperbole; yea, though the number of the thing done be under ten, or leſs then ten, yet it's ſaid to be done ten times, only to ſhew that it hath been done oftner then it ſhould, or when it ſhould not have been done at all. So ſome underſtand that ſpeech of *Jacob* to his Wives (*Gen.* 31.7.) complaining of the harſh dealing of *Laban*, *Your Father hath changed my wages ten times.* 'Tis not probable (though ſome attempt to prove it) that *Laban* did actually change his wages ſo often; yea, 'tis conceived that he changed his wages but twice, *ver.* 8. yet *Jacob* ſaw ſo much unkindneſs in that twofold change of his wages, that he ſaith, *He had changed his wages ten times.*

Further, *Ten times* may be taken indefinitely for many times. It is uſual among the Latines to expreſs any unuſual greatneſs by the number *ten*, and ſo doth the Scripture too: (*Eccleſ.* 7.19.) *Wiſdom ſtrengtheneth more then ten mighty men which are in the City*; that is, more then many, or then all the mighty men in the City: *Wiſdom is better then the weapons of war.* The Law given about the keeping of the *Ammonite* out of the Congregation, is thus expreſſed (*Deut.* 23.3.) *An Ammonite or Moabite ſhall not enter into the Congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation, ſhall they not enter into the Congregation of the Lord for ever.* The tenth generation is not to be taken terminatively to their excluſion from the Congregation, as if at or after the tenth generation they might enter in; but the tenth generation is named to ſhew, that they ſhould not be received in for many generations, yea, that they ſhould not at all be received in; for ſo the latter branch explains it, *They ſhall not be received to the tenth generation into the congregation of the Lord, no not for ever.*

Ea latini Decumana vocarunt quæ excellentiſſima & ampliſſima in ſuo quæq; genere eſſent. Hinc Decumanus fluctus, Decumana Ova.

Again, To ſhew the greatneſs of the famine that God would bring upon his own people for their great ſins, 'tis ſaid (*Levit.* 26.26.) *When I have broken the ſtaff of your bread, ten women ſhall bake your bread in one Oven*: As if he ſhould ſay, when Corn is plentiful, two or three women fill an Oven, but *when I have broken your ſtaff of bread*; then (ſuch ſhall be the ſcarcity of Corn, that) ten women, that is, many women may put your bread into one Oven, and not fill it, neither ſhall ye be filled, as the next words aſſure us, *They ſhall deliver you your bread again by weight, and ye ſhall eat and not be ſatisfied.* So the word is uſed (*Numb.* 14.22.) Where the Lord complains, *Ye have tempted me now theſe ten times.* Thus when *Nehemiah* would ſhew how unceſſant the enemies were in bringing ſad reports to terrifie them, he ſaith (*Chap.* 4.12.) *Ten times ye have ſaid from all places, they will be upon you*; that is, ye have often ſaid we ſhould be ſurpriſed and cut off by ſuch a time. Once more (*Zach.* 8.23.) The glory of the *Jews* in the latter dayes is thus deſcribed, *It ſhall come to paſs, that ten men ſhall take hold (out of all Languages of the Nations) on the ſkirt of him that is a* Jew, *ſaying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. Ten men*, that is, many men, even multitudes of men ſhall deſire favour and friendſhip with the *Jews*; *We will go with you, we will be on your ſide, for we have heard that God is with you.*

> Note by the way, *'Tis good being with thoſe with whom God is, as 'tis beſt of all to be with God.*

All men ought, ten men (ſaith that text) ſhall deſire to be with the *Jews*, when God appears among them. *Rev.* 2.10. *Ye ſhall have tribulation ten dayes*; that is, for many dayes, or for a long time. So here, *Theſe ten times have ye reproached me*; that is, ye have reproached me very often, I know not how often; he puts it in ſuch a number, as may note any number, yea, that which is only not innumerable; Who is able to number the reproaches ye have put on me? The number *ten*, ſeems to go burdened with innumerability, becauſe it brings forth the greateſt numbers: When, in numbring, unities ariſe to the number ten, we can go no further, but by reſuming unities, and adding them to ten. So that, ten being the greateſt ſimple number, and all compound numbers being renewed at ten, the number ten ſtands as the chief, and contains the greateſt numbers. *Ye have reproached me ten times.*

Hic numerus videtur infinitate gravidus, eò quòd omnes numeros quantūcunq; maximos gignit. Bol. *Denarius numerus ut qui numerandi finis ſit videtur maximus: nam cum ad decem pervenitur, ulterius non itur, ſed iterum reſumitur unitas & denario adjungitur. Semper ad uſque decem numero creſcente venitur principium ſpatiis ſumitur inde novis.* Ovid. Faſt.]

Ye have reproached me.] The word ſignifies ſuch a reproach, as not only puts a man to ſhame, but makes him greatly aſhamed. So the word is uſed (*Ruth* 2.15.) *Let her glean among the ſheaves, and reproach her not*; we put in the margin, *ſhame her not*; ſay not that ſhe ſtealeth, for if a gleaner come into a field and glean among ſheaves, 'tis ſuſpected that ſuch a one ſtealeth. Therefore *Boaz* gave this as a ſpecial priviledge to *Ruth*, let her come among the ſheaves, it ſhall be no ſtealing to her, reproach her not with it, put her not to ſhame. Thus while *Job* ſaith, *Ye have reproached me*, the meaning is, ye have endeavoured to put me to ſhame, as if I were a wicked man, a thief, or a murtherer, and this (though once had been too often) ye have done *ten times*, or often times.

We may conſider theſe words: Firſt, As they ſet forth the ſin and unkindneſs, or rather the ſinful unkindneſs of *Job*'s Friends: Secondly, As they ſet forth the grace and patience of *Job*, or rather that ſpecial grace of patience.

Firſt, As they ſet forth the ſin of *Job*'s Friends in the frequent and often repeated unkind carriages of that viſitation. *Theſe ten times*, &c.

Obſerve, *To fall often into the ſame ſin, is a great aggravation of ſin.*

To reproach, or to do evil once, is too oft; but to do it often, *ten times*, how much evil is in that? One of the greateſt burdens which we can put either upon our own ſins, or upon the ſins of others, is the number of them. An evil act ſingle is heavy, what then are many bundled up together? As it is one of the greateſt heightnings of the mercies of God, that he is pleaſed to do us good often, who have not deſerved that he ſhould do us good once, that we ſhould have as many and manifold mercies, ſo thoſe mercies daily renewed upon us, and ſent in freſh every morning; ſo, that which heighteneth ſinful actings againſt God or man, is the frequency of them, that they are renewed every day, or often in a day. (*Luke* 17. 4.) *If thy brother treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times in a day, and ſeven times in a day turn again to thee, ſaying, I repent, thou ſhalt forgive him:* Chriſt puts it upon the number, *If thy brother treſpaſs ſeven times in a day*, it is no great matter to forgive a brother, who offends once a day, or who offends us but ſeldom; but if he offend ſeven times in a day, here is the greatneſs of his ſin in treſpaſſing, and the great tryal of our charity and patience in bearing and forgiving. *Peter* put this Queſtion (*Matth.* 18. 21, 22.) *Lord, how oft ſhall my brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him, till ſeven times?* As if he had ſaid, A ſin ſo often repeated is very great, and will put me to the exerciſe of all the love I have in my heart to forgive it. And though he thought this a very hard taſk for his grace to go through with, to forgive to ſeven times, yet he hath a harder taſk ſet him in the reply which Chriſt makes (*ver.* 22.) *Jeſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee until ſeven times, but until ſeventy times ſeven.* Peter's *ſeven* is multiplied to *ſeventy ſeven*; in which as we learn that the multiplication of ſin is one of the greateſt aggravations of it; ſo likewiſe is the multiplication of forgiveneſs: He that multiplies to ſin, ſins abundantly; and he that multiplies to pardon, doth (as God, *Iſa.* 55. 7.) pardon abundantly.

Secondly, If we conſider the ſtate of the men whom *Job* charged to have reproached him *ten times*, they were good men.

Hence Obſerve, *That a good man may fall often into the ſame error.*

He that is upright may do amiſs again and again, he may *ten times* wrongfully *reproach* man, and as often act diſobediently towards God; it is no great matter to hear vile wretches ſpeak evil and do evil an hundred times. They muſt needs do much evil, and do evil often, who being themſelves evil, cannot but do evil, or do evilly whatſoever they are doing. But 'tis very ſad (though very poſſible) when we ſee thoſe who are good, yet do evil, eſpecially when we ſee them do it often. It ſhould keep the beſt humble, that ſtill (by reaſon of their in-dwelling corruption) they are ſubject to fall into ſin, and it ſhould keep them watchful that they fall not.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Reproaches make breaches.*

He ſaid before, *You break me with your words*, now he ſhews plainly what thoſe words were, reproachful words; reproaches make outward breaches between friends, but he that is reproached, finds a breach within. Sorrow breaks him, and ſhame breaks him. That which cauſeth ſhame hath ſorrow in it: When *Paul* wrote ſharply to the *Corinthians*, he ſaith, *I write not theſe things to ſhame you, but as beloved children to warn you.* We rebuke offenders, that we may make them aſhamed, but not to ſhame them; but reproaches are caſt upon others, to ſhame them, not to make them aſhamed. Among all the tryals which Jeſus Chriſt underwent to break and bruiſe him, reproach was one of the greateſt. (*Pſal.* 22. 6.) *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, deſpiſed of the people:* Chriſt was not only reproached among men, but a reproach of men, he was, as it were, reproach it ſelf. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 50. 6, 7.) foreſhewed the wonderful tryal of his patience, in bearing ſhame, *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting, for the Lord will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded; therefore have I ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed:* They did what they could to make Chriſt aſhamed, they reproached and reviled him, yea, they condemned him as a wicked man, therefore it follows in the eighth verſe, *He is near that juſtifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us ſtand together, who is mine adverſary? Let him come near to me.* As if he had ſaid, I am not afraid, either of his tongue, or of his hand, of what he can ſay, nor of what he can do.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *It is uſual for them to be much reproached amongſt men, who are moſt precious with God.*

None receive more contempt on earth, then they whoſe names are written in Heaven; God hath reſerved abundant honour for his people in the next life, but he often gives them up to reproach in this. The men of the world cannot but deſpiſe thoſe who are in eſteem with God; for as 'tis in things, ſo in perſons; *The things which are highly eſteemed among men, are abomination to God*; and the things that are highly eſteemed by God, are an abomination among men; ſo thoſe perſons who are highly prized with God, are an abomination with men: Should the worth of Saints be taken by the rate-book of the world, how vile were their price? To how low and poor a market would many precious ſouls come? The Apoſtle concludes concerning the *old Saints and Worthies* among the *Jews* (*Heb.* 11. 38.) that *the world was not worthy of them*; yet they were adjudged unworthy to live, or have a room in the world.

'Tis ſad when good men, who are precious, yea, who rule with God, are reproached and reviled by the world; but it is moſt ſad when one good man reproaches another: 'Tis a grief to hear thoſe who are vile, revile, and throw dirt in their faces, whoſe faces ſhine through that beauty and comelineſs of grace which God hath put upon them; but to ſee one Saint throw dirt in the face of another, to beſpatter and bemire the credit of another, by Pen or Preſs, by words or geſtures, this is a grief indeed, this is a lamentation, and ought to be for a lamentation among all the people of God, as it is (and will be while it is ſo) a rejoycing to the world that lyes in wickedneſs. But though now ſome of the Saints may ſay (with *Job*) to their brethren in the ſame faith, *Theſe ten times have ye reproached us*, yet we have a promiſe that a time is coming when they ſhall not ſo much as once in one thought reproach one another; Ephraim *ſhall not envy* Judah, *and* Judah *ſhall not vex* Ephraim *any more* (Iſa. 11. 13.)

Laſtly, As theſe words refer to the grace and patience of *Job*.

Obſerve, *'Tis perfect patience when we can indure reproaches, eſpecially many foul reproaches.*

It is a work of patience to indure but one reproach; but when we indure many reproaches, then patience hath a perfect work; as it ſhews the miſerable perfection of a man in ſin, to perſevere in ſinning, or as it argues the perfect hardneſs of a mans heart in ſin, to ſin after he hath been ten times or many times reproved; ſo it ſhews the perfection of a man in patience, to continue patient after he hath been *ten times reproached.* This anſwers that Rule of ſuffering given by Chriſt (*Matth.* 5. 39.) *I ſay unto you that ye reſiſt not evil; but whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other alſo*: That is, When ye have received one wrong, be ye not meditating how to revenge that, but be ye preparing how to receive a ſecond. *Though Grace doth not bid us invite injuries, yet it teaches us to bid them welcome. Theſe ten times have ye reproached me.*

And are not aſhamed, that ye make your ſelves ſtrange to me.

The word that ſignifies to be **aſhamed** here, is of a milder and gentler ſignification, then that we had before, for reproach or ſhame. As if he had ſaid, Ye have reproached me, as if ye intended not only to make me aſhamed, but to confound me with ſhame; but you who have reproached me are not aſhamed at all, you have not the leaſt tincture of a bluſh appearing in your faces, though you have gone about to fill my face with ſhame, and my heart with ſorrow.

Verbum aliquanto lenius qũam ſuperius; q. d. *cum veſtris me approbriis vehementer pudefacitis, vos neque leniter erubeſcitis.* Pined.

Further, The word ſignifies ſuch ſhame or bluſhing as cauſeth a ſtop in the work or enterpriſe which we have in hand. *Many would go on in doing good, and not a few in doing*

Verbum hoc aſſerre videtur eum pudorem, quo quis deterretur ab aliquo opere faciendo. Pined.

evil, were they not ſhamed out of their purpoſes. How holy in outward profeſſion and performances would ſome be were it not that they fear ſhame, this ſtops them in their courſe, and turns them out of the way. Hence that ſevere threat (*Mark* 8. 38.) *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and ſinful generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed,* &c. Chriſt our Lord foreſaw, that as many would take up the profeſſion of the Goſpel for their credit, ſo many would withdraw from it for fear of ſhame. Now as many turn from keeping the holy Commandment for ſhame; ſo many are kept from breaking the holy Commandment only for ſhame. How unholy, how vile would they be, were they not aſhamed that it ſhould be known that they are ſo? Thus ſhame is the check of ſin. But ſaith *Job* to his Friends, *Ye are not aſhamed*; there is not ſo much as any ſhame upon you, cauſing you to bluſh at what you are doing, or to deſiſt from doing yet more. *Ye are not aſhamed.*

That ye make your ſelves ſtrange to me.

תהכרן *Multas patitur interpretationes.*

The word which we render **to make ſtrange**, is found on only here in this ſence all the Bible over, yet it undergoes (according to the various apprehenſions of the learned in the Original Language) much variety both of tranſlation and of interpretation, yet none of them hurt the ſence of the Text, and may all ſtand with the truth of that which is here aſſerted.

Quod appareatis mihi. i. e. *apertè averſamini.*

Firſt, Some render it thus, *Ye are not aſhamed that you ſhew your ſelves openly againſt me*; *q. d.* Are ye ſo bold and confident, as to ſpeak evil of me in my own hearing? It were much for you to vent ſuch words behind my back, but are ye not aſhamed to ſpeak thus to my face?

Quòd obſtupeſcatis mihi.

Secondly, Others give it thus, *You are not aſhamed to ſtand wondring and gazing at me, as if I were ſome ſtrange Monſter never ſeen before:* As ſome men are wondred at for their noble actings, ſo others for their extream ſufferings.

הכר *Arabicè ſignificat ſtuporem.* Rab. Jona. *Significat etiam Arabicè, ſubſannare. Multa ſunt Arabica in hoc libro.* Merc.

Thirdly, The word in the Arabick (with which the language of this Book of *Job* often mingles) ſignifies to ſcorn or deride; in anſwer to which our Text is read, *Are ye not aſhamed to jear and jeſt at me in my miſery?* He hath expreſly charged his Friends with mocking, more then once before, and 'tis not improbable, that he doth touch it here again. We cannot but ſpeak much and often of that, which grieves us much.

Obfirmatis vultūm in me. Rab. Joſ. Kinch.

Fourthly, One of the Rabbins ſpeaks *Job*'s meaning thus, *Ye are not aſhamed to harden your faces againſt me:* He that hath no compaſſion towards man, hardens his face as well as he that hath no repentance towards God. He that hardens his face againſt a man, hath alſo hardened his heart: The ſhew of the countenance teſtifies the frame of the Spirit. A man doth not (uſually or naturally) look or ſpeak hardly till he thinks hardly. Thus *Montanus* tranſlates, *Ye are indurate againſt me:* And ſo Mr. *Broughton, But ye harden your ſelves againſt me, ye take no pity of me.*

Indurati eritis mihi. Mont.

Opprimitis me. Vulg. ἐπίκεισθέ μοι, *incumbitis mihi.* Sept.

A fifth reads, *Ye oppreſs me*; the Seventy, *Ye load me, ye lye hard on me*, or, *ye are not aſhamed to lay your whole weight upon me.*

כרה *Significat.* 1. *Fodere.* 2. *Inſtruere convivium.* 3. *Emere vel cauponari.*

Once more, Others deriving the word from a root which hath three ſignifications, apply them all three to this place.

Firſt, *To dig*, making the ſence thus, *Ye are not aſhamed to dig me*; that is, to pierce and wound me: So the ſufferings of Chriſt upon the Croſs are prophetically deſcribed, (*Pſal.* 22. 16.) *They pierced (or they digged) my hands and my feet.*

Secondly, *To make a feaſt or a banquet.* So 'tis uſed (2 *Kings* 6. 23. *Job* 40. 3.) and then the ſence appears thus; *Ye are not aſhamed to feaſt upon me:* That is, to make your ſelves merry with my ſorrow, to feed upon my troubles. What he ſpeaks at the twenty-ſecond Verſe of this Chapter, hath ſome correſpondence with this reading; *Ye are not ſatisfied with his fleſh:* As if he had ſaid, The ſorrows of my fleſh, or my outward ſufferings are not enough to content and fill you, and therefore you ceaſe not to fill my ſoul with ſorrow.

Cauponari aliquem eſt avari alio

Thirdly, The word ſignifies to *buy, to barter, to bargain and ſell for gain:* And then, this is the ſcope of his reproof; *Ye are not aſhamed to make merchandize of me:* That is, You deal with me, as with a man whom you might uſe at pleaſure, as if I were to be bought and ſold, at any rate, as if I were ſo contemptible, and of ſo cheap a credit, that I were fit only to ſerve turns, or an object for every one to play upon. We ſay of a man that is abuſed, or wronged, either through treachery or revenge, either to make ſport or profit for others, *This man is bought and ſold*; every one makes his advantage, and takes his penny-worths out of him.

ad ſuā gloriā voluptatem vel commodum. Coc.

Inter omnia quæ interpretes in hanc vocem afferunt, hoc accommodatiſſimum puto ut נכר & הכר *idem valeant, ſc. extraneum ſe geſſerit.* Merc. *Alios vos mihi exbibitis.* Vatab.

All theſe tranſlations yield a ſence ſutable to the ſcope of this Scripture, yet, I conceive, ours is more proper then any of them all, and is approved by many learned Interpreters as the beſt, *Ye are not aſhamed to make your ſelves ſtrange to me.* As if he had ſaid, *Ye are my friends, and kindred, I have been long acquainted with you, yet now ye ſtand off, and keep your diſtance, as if I and you were ſtrangers, and had never known or heard of one another until this day, or as if you were much my ſuperiours, and ſo 'twere too much condeſcention in you to be familiar with me.* So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 42. 7.) *Joſeph* knew his Brethren when they came to *Egypt* for bread, *but he made himſelf ſtrange*, he diſſembled his knowledge, or forced himſelf to a neſcience of them, he would not be known that he knew them, he made himſelf ſtrange to them, as if he had been ſome other man. *Joſeph* had abundance of kindneſs in his heart towards his Brethren, and therefore did (with State-Art) but feign a ſtrangeneſs: *Job* feared his Friends had no kindneſs at all in their hearts towards him, but were as real in their ſtrangeneſs, as if they had been very ſtrangers. *Ye are not aſhamed to make your ſelves ſtrange to me.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It adds to the ſinfulneſs of the evil we do, not be aſhamed that we have done it.*

It is good to be aſhamed when we have done evil: Shame is a good effect of a bad cauſe; ſhame is the fruit of ſin: Till there was ſin in the World, there was no ſhame in the World; and ſin will make them aſhamed for ever, who ſin now and are not aſhamed. They who have not the ſhame of repentance, ſhall have the ſhame of puniſhment. As the people of God have this promiſe, that they ſhall never be aſhamed by the diſappointment of their hopes; ſo they have this promiſe alſo, that they ſhall be aſhamed repenting of their ſins. *And indeed to confeſs or bewail ſin, and not to be aſhamed of it, is not repentance, but impudence.* It is one of the greateſt deſigns of Satan at preſent to ſeparate ſin and ſhame, to make men at once bold and wicked. And he ſo far prevails with ſome, that they are ſo far from looking upon ſin as their ſhame, that they count it a kind of honour; and as the Apoſtle gives the character of ſuch brazen faces, with tears in his eyes, (*Phil.* 3. 19.) *They glory in their ſhame*; that is, what they look upon as their glory, is indeed their ſhame. The Prophet alſo ſpeaks of theſe (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *The ſhew of their countenance witneſſeth againſt them, they declare their ſin as* Sodom, *they hide it not*: How did *Sodom* declare her ſin? *Sodom* did not declare her ſin as *Nineveh, Repenting in duſt and aſhes: Sodom* did not declare her ſin as they that are truly humbled before the Lord declare theirs, who, to uſe the Prophets language (*Iſa.* 43. 26.) *Declare that they may be juſtified*; but *Sodom* declared her ſin impudently, ſhe cared not who ſaw it, or who knew it: How ſad is it when *Jeruſalem* patterns her ſelf by *Sodom? Jeremy* complains of this (*Chap.* 6. 15.) *Were they aſhamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all aſhamed, neither could they bluſh:* They who harden themſelves becauſe they would not bluſh, ſhall at laſt be ſo hardened that they cannot bluſh. Shame is the leading act unto repentance; they that are aſhamed of their ſin, are in a good way to turn from it. And hence ſhame is put ſometimes for repentance; *What fruit have ye in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed* (Rom. 6. 21.) That is, whereof ye now repent, and from which ye are converted. The repentance of *Ephraim* is ſo deſcribed (*Jer.* 31. 19.) *Surely after I was turned I repented, and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed, yea, even confounded,* &c. 'Tis beſt to do ſuch things of which we need not be aſhamed; but they that have done evil ſhall do well to be aſhamed: *Job* ſuppoſing his Friends had done ill in making themſelves ſtrange to him, charges this upon them as an aggravation of it, *Ye are not aſham'd to make your ſelves ſtrange to me?*

Secondly, From the matter about which they ought to have been aſham'd, their ſtrangeneſs to him; *Ye are not aſham'd that ye make your ſelves ſtrange to me.*

Obſerve, *To be ſtrange to friends, ſpecially to godly friends, is an act that we ought to be aſham'd of.*

It is a ſhameful thing to be aſham'd of friends, eſpecially of godly friends: This ſhame might juſtly fall upon many at this day; what ſtrangeneſs is there between friends, and godly friends? Such as heretofore lay in one anothers boſom, are grown ſo ſtrange, that they cannot ſtay with content in one anothers ſight, they will ſcarce look upon one another, who not long ſince (at leaſt in profeſſion) dearly loved one another. They who met purpoſely to ſpeak one to another, will ſcarce ſpeak to one another when they meet accidentally. Yea, they who ſhould be ready to dye for one another, can hardly live by one another. When ſhall we be aſhamed of this ſtrangeneſs? When will the love of many which hath waxen cold gather heat again? 'Tis *Englands* ſin at this day, *Strangeneſs among the Saints*; they who profeſs themſelves to be all acquainted with, and Friends to Jeſus Chriſt, are unfriendly and unacquainted among themſelves. They who are near to God, behold each other afar off. Were it not monſtrous, if one member of the body ſhould withdraw offices of love from another member, or ſhould be as a ſtranger to it? Theſe unnatural diſtances among the members of the ſame myſtical body, are too open either to be hid or denyed. Is it not a reproach to Chriſtianity, that they who indeed are members of the ſame Chriſt, ſhould act as if they were not members of the ſame World. To how many thouſands of Saints may we ſay, as *Job* here, *Are ye not aſham'd to make your ſelves ſtrange one to another?* And conſider this further, if ſtrangeneſs, if a meer withdrawing of converſe be ſo uncomely that Chriſtians ought to be aſham'd of it, what then is that which is the root of it, alienation to affections? If Chriſtians have cauſe to bluſh when they are not free and openhearted one to another, how ought they to be confounded, who are guilty of heart-burnings and bitterneſs of ſpirit one againſt another? If we ought to be aſhamed that we are not kind to one another, that we are not ready to do one another good, how ſhould we be *aſham'd to be cruel to, or to deviſe evil one againſt another?* Strangeneſs is not the doing of evil, but a ſuſpenſion from doing good, or from ſhewing wonted reſpects. Now if it be a ſhame not to do good, how ſhould we be aſham'd of doing evil to our Brethren?

Thirdly, We may conſider *Job* not only as a friend, and as a godly friend, but alſo as an afflicted friend, as a man almoſt overwhelmed with ſorrow.

Then obſerve, *It is a ſhameful thing not to own a good man when he is in a low, or in the loweſt condition.*

Job knew the time when enough would own him, when enough would viſit him, and were ambitious of his friendſhip; but being upon the dunghil, few would come at him, and none cared for his ſoul. Strangers deſire the favour of thoſe who are in proſperity, and neareſt friends will ſhew themſelves ſtrange to thoſe that are in adverſity; but is it not their ſhame to do ſo? *Paul* ſpeaks it to the high commendation of *Oneſiphorus* (2 Tim. 1. 16.) *He oft refreſhed me, and was not aſhamed of my chain:* Many are much aſhamed to look upon a godly friend in chains; as they are afraid to wear a chain for godlineſs. No man was ever more proud of his own golden chain, then ſome are aſhamed of the iron chain of others. When Jeſus Chriſt was apprehended and under his ſufferings, this temptation went high even upon his own Diſciples and Servants, whom he had often forewarned of ſufferings, and inſtructed how to ſuffer, (*Matth.* 26. 56, 58.) *Then all the Diſciples forſook him and fled.* They who before forſook all and followed him, now forſook him and fled: Neither was this the act of ſome one or two, but of all the Diſciples. *Then all the Diſciples forſook him.* And though *Peter* followed him, yet his following was as bad as a forſaking, *for he followed him afar off* (ver. 58.) And when he was come near into the houſe, he did worſe then forſake him, he denied him and forſwore him. *Peter* made himſelf ſo ſtrange to Chriſt, that he profeſſed ſtrongly, yea, with an Oath, *I know not the Man:* As if he had ſaid, *If you will not take my word, I will ſwear I know him not:* O what a diſtemper of ſpirit did fear bring him to? How was his ſpirit overwrought with worldly ſhame, when he wrought all theſe ſinful coverings, that he might appear a ſtranger to Jeſus Chriſt? O Peter, *waſt thou not aſhamed to ſhew thy ſelf ſtrange to Jeſus Chriſt when he was afflicted, who was therefore afflicted to make us who were ſtrangers, and afar off from God, near unto him and his friends? It is no eaſie thing to be acquainted with the croſs of others; how hard will it be to be acquainted with our own croſs?* If men be ſtrange to their friends when they are afflicted, O how ſtrange will they be to their own afflictions? When there is no ſutableneſs in our ſpirits to ſuffering and affliction, we cannot ſute with thoſe that ſuffer and are afflicted. The Man in the Goſpel (*Luke* 10. 30.) travelling from *Jericho* to *Jeruſalem*, *fell among thieves, which ſtripped him of his rayment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead*; then cometh a Levite and a Prieſt, and what do they? do they own the Man? No, they go on the other ſide, as if the Man had been ſick of the Plague, and they durſt not come near him for fear of infection; they ſaw him in that lamentable pickle, and paſſed by, they would not do the office of a Neighbour (that's the intent of the Parable, to ſhew who is a Mans Neighbour) if the Man had been mounted on his Horſe, riding gallantly on the way, poſſibly the Prieſt and the Levite would have joyn'd with him, and have ſaid, Sir, whither travel you? They would have fallen into diſcourſe with him, as a Man of their own Tribe, and have gone to the ſame Inn with him; but ſeeing him lye wounded, and groveling upon the high-way in his blood, they made themſelves ſtrange to him. *As men naturally ſhun their own afflictions, ſo thoſe that are in affliction:* 'Tis againſt the light and common principles of Nature to do ſo; yet naturally Men do ſo. And becauſe 'tis againſt the light of Nature to do ſo, therefore 'tis a ſhame to do ſo. And if it be againſt the light of Nature, and the principles of Morality, how much more is it againſt the light of Grace, and the principles of Religion, when this ſtrangeneſs is ſhewed to thoſe who have Grace, and are indeed religious? 'Tis a Goſpel-duty to do good to all, but eſpecially to the houſhold of Faith: They break all the bands and tyes of love, who refuſe to do them good that have received and expreſs the tokens of divine love; or are ſtrangers in affection to them, who are of the houſhold of Faith. Every godly Man may ſay to his uncharitable brethren, as *Job* did here to his friends, *Are ye not aſhamed to make your ſelves ſtrange to me?* Thus *Job* hath reproved his friends undeſerved ſeverity, and he reproves them yet further in the next words, upon ſuppoſition that he had deſerved it.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with my ſelf.

If indeed you will magnifie your ſelves againſt me, and plead againſt me my reproach.

Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compaſſed me with his net.

IN the fourth and fifth Verſes of this Context, *Job* proceeds to reprove his Friends ſeverity towards him, by way of grant, or ſuppoſition. He reproves them, not only, becauſe they dealt thus with him who was innocent; but he ſuppoſes or grants (though he yields it not) that himſelf had been an offender, or had erred, and yet ſhews that their proceeding with him was juſtly offenſive and erroneous.

Verſe 4. **And be it indeed that I have erred**, &c.

He uſeth a figure in Rhetorick called *conceſſion*, when the Reſpondent is willing to grant more then the Opponent can prove, and gives that which is diſadvantageous to his cauſe, upon confidence of the righteouſneſs of his cauſe, or when he yieldeth as much as his Adverſary deſireth,

Conceſſio eſt cum aliquid etiam iniquum videmus cauſæ fiducia pati. Quint.

Profeſſus ſum integritatem meam, ſed ut illam taceam, & confitear me errando provocaſſe iram Dei an continuò dignum eſt vobis ut miſerias accumuletis miſero. Pined. שגה *importat deficere vel errare per ignorantiam.*

and yet maintains what himſelf deſireth. *Be it indeed that I have erred.* As if he had ſaid, *I have often profeſſed (and ſtill do) mine own innocency; but becauſe I ſee you are very greedy to charge me with, and convince me of an error, I will be ſilent in that point, and ſuppoſe, what you cannot prove; put caſe it be ſo, that I have erred, yet you have erred more in your carriage towards me: my error doth not juſtifie you in what you have ſpoken and done to me: Though I by ſin have provoked God to anger, will that bear you out in your anger againſt me? Muſt you needs ſmite me with your tongues, becauſe he hath ſmitten me with his hand? Will you add miſery to him that is in miſery?*

Eſto ignoravi. Vulg.

Be it that I have erred.] Some render, *Be it that I am ignorant*, or have been ignorant. So the Vulgar.

The word in the Hebrew ſignifies two things.

Firſt, To be ignorant.

Secondly, To be in an error, or to fall into error through ignorance. (*Pſal.* 19. 12.) *Who knoweth the errors* (or ignorances) *of his life?*

The force of this word was opened *(Chap.* 6. 24. *)* Therefore I ſhall not here ſtay upon it.

Be it that I have erred.] We may take it three wayes.

Firſt, Be it that I have erred in judgment, and think amiſs.

Secondly, Be it that I have erred in word, and have ſpoken amiſs.

Thirdly, Be it that I have erred in action, and have done amiſs. Lay the ſuppoſition thus large, be it that I have erred in opinion, in ſpeech and practiſe, yet what have you gained, or how can ye be excuſed?

We may conſider this clauſe firſt in it ſelf, and then in relation to this diſpute.

Be it that I have erred.] In as much as the ſame word ſignifies both ignorance, and error, it may ſuggeſt this note to us.

Ignorance and error are very near akin, yea, ignorance is the cauſe or mother of moſt errors.

Ignorantiæ duæ peſſimæ filiæ falſitas & dubietas. Aug. l. 22. de Civit. dei ca. 22.

Ignorance is the Mother of two very uncomely Daughters, as one of the Ancients long ſince obſerved. The firſt Daughter of Ignorance, is named *Dubeity* or *doubtfulneſs*, which is a conſtant wavering in opinion. A knowing Man hath a ſetled judgment, but an ignorant man (though he may be ſtubborn and wilful, yet he) cannot be fixt, or ſteady. The ſecond Daughter of Ignorance is named *Falſity* or *error*, which alwayes ſettles us (if ever it be ſetled) in that which is unſound. It may be hard to convince a knowing man of his error, but he that knows no reaſon, will not be convinced by reaſon. Error ſtrictly taken, proceeds ever from ignorance; for he that maintains either an opinion or a practiſe againſt the light of his knowledge, is more then in an error; 'tis obſtinacy in him, as it refers to practiſe; 'tis hereſie in him, as it refers to opinion.

Secondly, *Job* ſuppoſed that which might very well be, while he ſaid, *Be it that I have erred*; he did not ſuppoſe an impoſſibility.

Hence Obſerve, *It is common to man, to the beſt of men, to godly men, to be in an error.*

A godly man ſhould not ſuppoſe himſelf an Heretick; who as he uſually errs againſt light, ſo he alwayes delights in his error; but he may ſuppoſe himſelf erring for want of light. They who in this life have moſt light in them, have alſo much darkneſs in them; and we are apter to follow the darkneſs of our own ſpirits, then the light of Gods Spirit. He that thinks he cannot err, reckons himſelf for more then a man. And while we confeſs that either we have, or may err, we do but confeſs that we are men. Yea, as he that ſaith, *He hath not ſinned, ſo he that ſaith, he hath not erred, hath no truth in him.* A denial that we have erred, is the grand error; and there are none ſo ſtiff in that denial, as they who are moſt erroneous. While there remains any corruption in the will, the underſtanding cannot be wholly free from corruption. While ſin hath any part in us, it may act it ſelf in every part. Though ſome (poſſibly) do not err, yet 'tis too much for any man to ſay ſo of himſelf; no man is exempt from a poſſibility of erring: Till we arrive at perfect purity, we ſhall not arrive at infallibility.

Thirdly, Note, *Conceſſions are ſometimes the ſtrongeſt refutations.*

We may unanſwerably convince others of an error, by ſuppoſing that we have erred.

Laſtly, Take this brief Note alſo, *It may be our wiſdom to give another leave or ſcope to ſay, that we have erred when we have not: but it is our ſin to charge our ſelves poſitively with error, when we have not erred.*

It is one thing to let it be ſuppoſed that we have erred when we have not, and another thing to ſay we have erred when we have not. No man hath liberty to charge himſelf falſly, to take that ſin or that error upon his own account, whereof he is not guilty. Yea, we ought to be more careful that we bear not falſe witneſs againſt our ſelves, then againſt another. Every man (next to God) owes moſt duty and reſpect to himſelf. And as we muſt not ſuffer the glory of God, or the credit of our brethren to be diminiſhed, ſo neither muſt we ſuffer our own. We may let others work upon a ſuppoſition of that which is not; but we muſt not make poſitions either concerning our ſelves or others of that which is not. We may ſpeak it Rhetorically, but we muſt not ſpeak it Logically, that we have erred when we have not. Thus *Job* ſpeaks, *Be it indeed that I have erred.*

Mine error remaineth with my ſelf.] This ſounds like an aggravation of *Job*'s ſinfulneſs; If he had ſaid, *Be it that I have erred,* yet I am now willing to renounce and depart from my error; or ſuppoſe I have erred, I will now diſclaim and recant mine error; this had ſounded well. But to ſay, *Be it that I have erred, mine error remaineth with my ſelf*, ſeems to imply a love to error, a hugging, and an embracing of it. We ſay, *It is incident to man to err, but to perſevere in error, or willingly to let error remain upon us, is diabolical and wicked.* How is it then that *Job* ſaith, *Mine error remaineth with my ſelf?*

Humanum eſt errare, in errore perſeverare eſt diabolicum.

The word that we tranſlate *remain*, ſignifies, *to dwell, to tarry, to reſt, to take up a nights lodging.* All which expreſſions ſeem to meet in this, that he was willing his error ſhould not be tranſcient but permanent; not as a paſſing ſtranger, but as a welcome friend. We have the word (*Jer.* 4. 14.) where the Prophet chargeth this upon *Jeruſalem*, O Jeruſalem *waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayeſt be ſaved: How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge (or reſt) with thee?* The beſt have vain thoughts, paſſing through them; vain thoughts will come and knock at the door for entertainment; but to open the door and receive them, to like and lodge them, this argues a heart not waſhed from wickedneſs. But did *Job*'s error thus remain and lodge with him?

Mecum morabitur, dormiet, manebit, pernoctabit, habitabit, hæc omnia ſignificat verbum לון

There are three or four Interpretations in anſwer to this.

Firſt, Thus, *Mine error remaineth with my ſelf.* If I have erred, mine error will not hurt you, it hurts no body but my ſelf: What need you be ſo angry with me for mine error? You ſhall not anſwer for it; you ſhall not ſuffer for what I have done amiſs: So divers give the ſence. But this, according to ordinary underſtanding, is very unbecoming a gracious ſpirit. As *Job* tells his Wife (*Chap.* 2.) when ſhe adviſed him to curſe God, and dye, *Thou ſpeakeſt like one of the fooliſh women.* So, according to vulgar ſence, it might be ſaid, that *Job* in ſpeaking thus, *ſpake as a fooliſh man*, who when he is told of his faults, ſaith, *What is that to you; my faults ſhall not dammage you.* Thus waſters and rioters miſ ſpending their eſtates, being told of it, or reproved for it, anſwer, Why do you meddle with us? you ſhall not ſmart for what we do: Such is the language of fooliſh and vain men, who have neither honeſty to do well, nor can be aſhamed when they do ill. Such anſwers ſpeak a man who hath neither any love to holineſs, nor abhorrence of wickedneſs: For as it argues a ſinful frame of heart to let another lye in ſin, or to ſay, what is it to me that my Brother ſinneth, he may look to himſelf, *Am I my Brothers keeper?* So when a man ſaith, Why do you trouble your ſelf about my ſin? What is that to you? Let me alone, take you no care of me; *Mine error remaineth with my ſelf.*

In me ſit iſte error illiuſque punitio, quid ad vos? nihil vos læſi.

Talis reſpōſio eſt illius, qui neq; pudoris habeat illum nec virtutis ſtudiū. Sanct.

Sinete me luere pœnas erroris mei, ego ſum qui ob eum punior, non vos quid ad vos? hoc dicit illorum aſperitatē taxans, ut levius ſibi putet mala quæ patitur perferre, quam eorum contumelias audire. Merc.

Yet ſome who maintain this explication, make a favourable conſtruction of it. As if he had ſaid thus, To bear the worſt that my error can bring upon me, is not ſo bad as your ſevere dealing with me; your reproaches and cenſures grieve me more, then all my afflictions; 'tis more troubleſome to hear what you will ſay to me, then to feel what God doth to me. All the evil which I ſuffer from his hand, is not ſo heavy as your tongue, his blows are not ſo bitter and ſmarting as your words. But I paſs that.

Non propter vos ab opinione mea diſcedam quam vos errorem appellatis, Rab. Set.

Secondly, One of the Rabbins interprets it in the future, thus, *Be it that I have erred, I am reſolved to err ſtill, or my error ſhall remain with me.* As if he had ſaid, That which you call an error, I am purpoſed to hold ſtill. As *Paul* profeſſed (*Acts* 24. 14.) *After the way which they call hereſie, ſo worſhip I the God of my Father.* So *Job* ſpake here according to the tendency of this interpretation. *Job* was not reſolved to ſtick to an error indeed, but (ſaith he) if you call this an error which I have maintained, I am reſolved to maintain it, I will not be driven from my opinion, becauſe you have branded it for an error. This, where it hits right, is a juſt and vertuous pertinacy.

He that judgeth himſelf to be in the truth, ſhould not leave it becauſe others call it error.

As we ſhould not take up error, becauſe ſome (poſſibly wiſe and learned Men) call it truth; ſo neither ſhould we let go or depart from that which is truth, becauſe many (poſſibly wiſe and learned Men too) call it error. As we ought *to try all things,* ſo *to hold faſt that which is good,* whoſoever would pull it from us. The evidence which any way or opinion hath from the Word of God, and the clear light of our own Conſciences, may bear us out againſt any contrary evidence or contradiction of man. It becomes the people of God, to be meek and yielding, that *a little Child may lead them* (Iſa. 11. 6.) in the right way; yet it becomes them as well to be ſo ſtout and true to the Truth, that the greateſt Men in the World ſhould neither lead nor force them out of it.

Thirdly, The words are expounded as a redargution of his Friends inſufficiency in arguing with him; *Mine error remaineth with me:* That is, You have not yet removed mine error, nor convinced me that I am out of the way. All that you have ſaid, doth not ſatisfie my Conſcience, nor give me any light to change my judgment. You have ſpoken much, but you have proved little; your reaſons are more in number then weight; I find not my ſelf at all preſſed with them, nor hath mine opinion received any dammage, much leſs a downfal by them. If I have erred, mine error remaineth with me, ſafe and untoucht, for any thing you have hitherto done or ſaid. *Job* ſpake this ſence before (*Chap.* 6. 25.) *How forcible are right words, but what doth your arguing reprove?* This is a fair Interpretation.

Hence Note, *Many are bitter againſt thoſe whom they ſuppoſe to be in error, whom yet they have not proved to be in an error.*

Job's Friends had reproached him ten times, but they had not anſwered him to purpoſe once. He had ſtore of hard words from them, but few ſound arguments. *It is an eaſier matter to be angry with error, then to argue againſt it.* And the reaſon why many are ſo angry, is becauſe they have ſo little reaſon. *Much paſſion and little reaſon uſually dwell together.* They will often be moſt earneſt againſt an opinion, who have leaſt to ſay againſt it.

Fourthly, The words are interpreted with reference to that which follows, (*Ver.* 5.) *If indeed ye will magnifie your ſelves againſt me:* As if he had ſaid, *Let it be granted, that I am in an error, and not only ſo, but that mine error remaineth,* that I perſiſt in mine error after all your counſels and admonitions; yet, ye ought not to magnifie your ſelves againſt me, or trample upon me. Though you cannot all this while gain me from mine error, and make me ſenſible of my miſtake, yet you may not (without juſt blame) thus reproach and throw dirt upon me.

Hence Note, *He that cannot be convinced nor reclaimed from his error, muſt not preſently be inſulted over and reproached.*

Though *he that is an Heretick after the firſt and ſecond admonition, is to be rejected* (Tit. 3. 10.) yet every one that is in an error ought not. The Apoſtle gives an excellent Rule (2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25.) *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all men, in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.* I ſhall touch at this again by and by.

Verſ. 5. If indeed you will magnifie your ſelves againſt me, and plead againſt me my reproach.

As this Verſe may be connected with the former in the ſence laſt given, ſo with the following Verſe; *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compaſſed me with his net;* and then the meaning is this; Let it be granted that I am in an error, *If ye* (upon that ground) *magnifie your ſelves againſt me, and plead againſt me my reproach, then know that God hath overthrown me, and he hath compaſſed me with his net.* There's an anſwer for you: This may put you to ſilence, and ſtop your mouths, both from villifying me, and overvaluing your ſelves. As if he had ſaid, *The hand of God is upon me, why do you lift up your heads againſt me? Doth it become you to greaten your ſelves, becauſe God hath made me little? Or to heighten your ſpirits againſt me, when God hath laid me low?*

If indeed you will magnifie your ſelves againſt me.

תגדילו. *a* גדל *in hiphil, Magnificavit, auxit, magnificè egit, magna locutus, gloriatus fuit.* Shind.

The word which we tranſlate to magnifie, refers both to words and works, ſignifying as to act highly, ſo to ſpeak big, to boaſt and vaunt. We magnifie God, not by making him Great, but by making it appear how great he is. But when Man magnifies himſelf, either he would make himſelf appear greater and better then he is, or he would make his fellow-brethren appear leſs and worſe then they are. (*Pſal.* 35. 26.) *Let them be aſhamed, and brought to confuſion together that rejoyce at mine hurt; let them be cloathed with ſhame and diſhonour that magnifie themſelves againſt me.* While *David* prayed that theſe ſelf-magnifiers and admirers might be brought to ſhame, he plainly intimates, both that they had taken more honour to themſelves then was their due, and that they had taken that from him, which was his due. Thus he pleads with God again upon the ſame account (*Pſal.* 38. 16.) *For I ſaid, hear me, leſt otherwiſe they ſhould rejoyce over me; when my foot ſlippeth, they magnifie themſelves againſt me:* As if he had ſaid, Lord, hold me up and eſtabliſh my goings, for if I ſlip, mine enemies think they ſtand the faſter, and if I fall, their pride riſeth. Once more, he complains of the inſultations of his falſe friends in the day of his diſtreſs. (*Pſal.* 55. 12.) *It was not an enemy* (that is, an open enemy) *that reproached me, then I could have born it; neither was it he that hated me* (that is, who profeſſed hatred) *that magnified himſelf againſt me, then I would have hid my ſelf from him.* While *David*'s profeſſed or ſecret enemies magnified themſelves, they ever leſſened, and abaſed him.

Quandoquidem vobis viſum eſt ærumnas meas Grandiloquentia tanta deſcribere, &c. Bez. *Ingrandeſcitis.* Heb.

Thus here; *If indeed ye will magnifie your ſelves againſt me,* if ye will grow upon me, or (as we ſay) crow over me in words; if ye will flouriſh it in high language, and come with full mouth againſt me, then know, &c. Maſter *Broughton* refers it to their whole carriage, rendring it thus, *And truly ye deal ſtately over me.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Man is apt to magnifie himſelf over thoſe that he ſuppoſeth fallen into error, or whom he ſees fallen into trouble.*

Man is ready to think highly of himſelf, when he beholds another down. We ſee this in that great caſe (about which the Apoſtle enlarges his diſcourſe, *Rom.* 11.) between the *Jews* and *Gentiles.* The *Jews* were fallen, they were as branches broken off: The *Gentiles,* who were a wild Olive-tree, *were graffed in among* (or *for*) *them,* ver. 17. The Apoſtle had a jealouſie that this priviledge would ſwell the *Gentiles* into great thoughts of themſelves, and into a contempt of the *Jews,* and therefore he cautions them (*verſ.* 18.) *Boaſt not againſt the branches;* that is, againſt the branches that are broken off. For *if thou boaſteſt, thou beareſt not the root, but the root thee?* But it may be objected againſt the Apoſtles way of arguing; Why, what if they did not boaſt? Should they then bear the root, and not the root them? Surely whether they boaſted or boaſted not, they being branches, the root muſt bear them, and not they the root. I anſwer, The Apoſtle doth not at all ſuppoſe, that if they did not boaſt they ſhould bear the root, but uſes this as an argument why they ſhould not boaſt againſt the branches which were broken off, even becauſe themſelves, though graffed in, yet were but branches, and therefore they did not bear the root, but the root them. Now there is nothing more uncomely then to boaſt againſt that thing or perſon which beareth us up, or againſt that which receiveth no benefit from us, but we receive much from it. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks in the cloſe of the ſeventeenth verſe; *Thou with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-tree.* By the *Olive-tree,* we are to underſtand the viſible Church of God (*Jer.* 11. 16.) *The Lord called thy name a green Olive-tree, fair and of goodly fruit.* The root of this *Olive-tree* was *Abraham,* by vertue of the Church-covenant in Chriſt, which was made firſt, by name, with him, who is hence alſo called the *Father of the faithful.* Yet (in paſſage) take this caution, *Abraham* was not the root of the *Olive-tree* (the Church) by way of communication, as if either *Jews* or *Gentiles* did receive any ſap of ſpiritual life from him, as branches do of a natural life from the root; for thus Jeſus Chriſt alone is the root of the Church, or of all Believers; but *Abraham* was and is the root of the *Olive-tree* only in a way of Adminiſtration. The Lord calling him forth as the firſt Man with whom he was pleaſed to treat, and enter that Covenant with, which yet was originally, and (as I may ſpeak) radically made with Chriſt, in the behalf not only of ordinary Believers, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles,* but even of *Abraham* himſelf. Thus I have ſtept a little out of my way, to ſhew in what ſence *Abraham* is called the *root of the Olive-tree.* The *fatneſs of this Olive-tree,* is all the outward Priviledges and Ordinances inſtituted, together with the inward Graces promiſed. Of this *root and fatneſs* the *Gentiles* did partake, being taken into the viſible Church, from which, before, they were aliens and ſtrangers. Now though the *Gentiles* were thus eſtated through free Grace in the priviledges of the *Jews,* yet *Paul* foreſaw that they inſtead of thankfulneſs to God for the mercy beſtowed on them, would be ready to exalt themſelves againſt the *Jews,* who for a time, through their own unbelief, were caſt down and broken off, and therefore he ſaith, *Boaſt not againſt the branches.* And again (*ver.* 20.) *Be not high-minded, but fear:* As if he had ſaid, Thy ſtate is high, let not thy mind be ſo too: The *Jews* are fallen, and unleſs thou walkeſt in holy fear, thou canſt not ſtand. The Apoſtle gives another inſtance of mans readineſs to exalt himſelf againſt thoſe that are weak in faith, as before againſt thoſe who were fallen through unbelief. (*Rom.* 14. 3.) *Let not him that eateth, deſpiſe him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth; for God hath received him.* Here are two ſorts, *him that eateth, and him that eateth not:* He that did eat was the ſtrong Brother; he that did not eat was the weak Brother. Now the ſtrong who had a clear light about Goſpel-liberties, and was fully convinced that the difference of meats was taken away by Chriſt, ſeeing his Brother ſcrupled, and forbearing to eat, judged him preſently as weak, and ſo was ready at once to deſpiſe him, and magnifie himſelf. Theſe two may eaſily enough be diſtinguiſhed, but they are never ſeparated. *He that thinks lightly of another, hath alwayes high thoughts of himſelf. A deſpiſer of the leaſt of his brethren, is no ſmall man in his own opinion.* *Paul* being informed that the ſtrong (among the Saints at *Rome*) deſpiſed the weak, did not only forbid them in this third verſe, but chides them at the tenth verſe, *Why doſt thou judge thy Brother?* Or, *Why doſt thou ſet at naught thy Brother?* And as he took down the *Gentiles, Chap.* 14. with *Be not high-minded, but fear.* So he doth theſe, with *We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.* As if he had ſaid, We muſt all be judged by *One,* and therefore let not any one be ſo buſie in judging: To love is our duty, to judge is Chriſts prerogative, let us be more in charity, and leſs in cenſure.

Paul alſo intimates this harſhneſs of ſpirit towards a fallen Brother, in the dealing of the *Corinthians* with the inceſtuous perſon, whom himſelf had ordered to be caſt out of the Church, and given up to Satan (1 *Cor.* 5. 5. 13.) He perceived their ſpirits too high againſt him, and therefore in the ſecond Epiſtle he mollifies and moderates them (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Sufficient to ſuch a man is this puniſhment which was inflicted of many;* do not puniſh him ſtill, do not imbitter your ſpirits againſt him; *Ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, leaſt he be ſwallowed up with with over-much ſorrow* (ver. 7.) We cannot have over-much faith in God, we cannot have over-much love to God; the greateſt abundance of theſe is no exceſs, but we may have over-much ſorrow; and though we cannot be too preſſing upon Saints to believe, and love, yet we may be too preſſing upon ſinners to mourn and ſorrow. *Wherefore* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *I beſeech you to confirm your love towards him.* Carry it meekly, mildly, and gently with your formerly offending, but now deeply humbled and repenting Brother; do not magnifie your ſelves againſt him, who hath abaſed and laid himſelf low before you.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is very ſinful to magnifie our ſelves againſt thoſe that are fallen.*

Firſt, Such forget their own frailty, how apt they are to fall. We ſhould be taught by the failings of ſome, what we may be tempted to do, as well as we ſhould be taught by the holy actings of others what we ought to do. That corruption, that temptation which hath prevailed againſt thy Brother, and caſt him down, may prevail againſt thee too, and caſt thee down. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth* (not inſult over his Brother that is fallen, but remember that himſelf may fall, and) *take heed leſt he fall;* as the Apoſtle gives us warning (1 *Cor.* 10. 12.)

Secondly, Such forget that themſelves have fallen into other ſins or errors, and poſſibly into the ſame: Some who are deeper in ſin and error of another kind, then their Brethren in thoſe charged upon them, or proved againſt them, yet cannot contain from over-acting in cenſures upon them. Yea, ſometimes they who have fallen into the very ſame ſin, and have been chief in it, will yet heighten themſelves againſt thoſe who have ſinned with them, till they are awakened to conſider their own ſin. *Judah* had defiled *Tamar* (*Gen.* 38. 24.) yet as ſoon as they brought word that *Tamar* was with child, *Burn her* (ſaith he) to the fire with her preſently. Thus he condemned her, being himſelf guilty of the ſame fault. He was a moſt ſevere Judge of that crime in her, for which it doth not appear that he ever ſo much as queſtion'd himſelf, though the principal. The Scribes and Phariſees (*John* 8. 5.) haled the poor Woman taken in adultery before Chriſt, they called for Juſtice, and urged the Law. Yet it ſhould ſeem that they were as bad as ſhe or worſe; for when Chriſt ſaid, *He that is without ſin among you, let him firſt caſt a ſtone at her,* they went out one by one, being convicted within their own conſciences, which ſecretly ſuggeſted, that they could not throw a ſtone at her for that offence, but they muſt alſo hit themſelves. How ſinful is it to vex and judge others for that, of which our ſelves are guilty, and have never asked forgiveneſs. But ſuppoſe a man were free from that ſpot, which he ſees his Brother hath taken, and is defiled with. Yea, ſuppoſe him as far from a poſſibility of taking a ſinful ſpot, as the holy Angels confirmed by Grace, yet it were ſinful even for him to magnifie himſelf againſt thoſe that are fallen into ſin. Doth God inſult over poor ſinners? No, he pities and he ſpares them. The Lord doth not magnifie himſelf againſt any who are fallen, unleſs ſuch as being fallen, riſe up and magnifie themſelves againſt him by their impenitency and preſumption. Now doth God (againſt whom man offends when he falls) pity him, and deal tenderly with him, and ſhall man inſult over an offending Brother? It is our duty to bewail and pray for thoſe that fall, to help, and counſel them up again. To bleſs God who hath kept us from thoſe ſnares and temptations, with which, as we ſee others are, ſo our ſelves might be overcome. Such thoughts will keep us from ſwellings and ſelf-magnifyings againſt our Brethren, though they have erred, yea, though their error remaineth with them. *If ye will magnifie your ſelves againſt me,*

Increpatis probose non ſpiritu lenitatis.

And plead againſt me my reproach.] Some render the whole verſe thus, *Should you magnifie your ſelves againſt me, and plead reproachfully againſt me?* you ſhould not; 'tis not only beſide, but againſt your duty to do ſo.

Hence Note, *We may repreve, but not reproach an erring brother.*

We ſhould have a reſpect to the credit of our Brother, while we are rectifying either his conſcience or his converſation; and while we take care to ſave his ſoul, we muſt not be careleſs of his name, or deſtroy his reputation. *Reprehenſion ſhould not ſavour of reproach.* Our zeal for God muſt be mingled with pity towards man. The Apoſtle gives that Rule (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *Brethren, If a man be over-taken in a fault, you that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a one* (ſet him in joynt again. How? With a rough hand? No,) *with the ſpirit of meekneſs*; Do not plead againſt him his reproach. Do not charge his ſin upon him, as if his ſin were not common to man; *Do it conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.* Deal clearly, and faithfully, but not reproachfully with him; *Reſtore him with the ſpirit of meekneſs. Paul* was unwilling to deal ſeverely with the faulty *Corinthians*, and therefore he, as it were, puts it to their choice, and even begs of them to prevent his coming among them with a rod in his hand (1 *Cor.* 4. 21.) *What will ye? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love, and in the ſpirit of meekneſs?* Now ſurely, he that was unwilling to chaſten them with the rod of reproof, had no will to ſting or bite them with the Scorpion of reproach.

Omnis reprehenſio vacare debet contumelia.

Again, Reproach may be taken for affliction it ſelf: And then the ſence riſeth thus; as if he had ſaid, *Suppoſe I have erred, and that mine error remaineth with my ſelf; Will you plead my afflictions againſt me as an argument that I am in, or remain in an error?* So Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *You bring my wretched caſe as an argument againſt me.* Afflictions are often called in Scripture, *reproaches*; becauſe they are charged on the afflicted as a reproach. Thus *Rachel* ſpeaks (*Gen.* 30. 23.) *God hath taken away my reproach*: That is, My affliction of barrenneſs, which was objected againſt me as a reproach. The ſame *Elizabeth* (Luke 1. 25.) *She having conceived hid her ſelf five months*, and ſaid, *God hath taken away my reproach.* So (*Ezek.* 36. 30.) the Lord promiſeth his people, that they ſhall receive *no more the reproach of famine among the Heathen*: For when the Heathen ſaw the people of God in outward wants, and eaten up with famine, they at once blaſphemed the holy Name of God, and reproached them; *See what a God ye ſerve, you that would be eſteemed the darlings of heaven, ſee your condition, your God ſuffers you to ſtarve, to be hunger-bitten*: Therefore they are comforted with this word, *You ſhall not ſuffer the reproach of famine among the Heathen*: implying, that the Heathen uſually reproached them in times of famine and affliction.

Hence Note, *Affliction layeth us open to reproach.*

And that is one of the greateſt burdens of affliction. The old Poet could ſay, *That poverty had nothing more grievous in it then this, that it leaves men under diſgrace, and expoſes them to ſcorn.* Worldly men eſteem others, by their lands, and riches, not by their goodneſs, or the grace of God.

Secondly, Note, *We are apt to plead the evil which any man ſuffers as an argument of his ſin.*

The reproach or affliction which *Job* ſuffered, was all the argument and proof which his Friends could produce againſt him. They brought no witneſſes to accuſe him, but what they found upon him, his poverty and diſeaſes. *Job's* uprightneſs had never been queſtioned by them, if he had not loſt his riches. Other paſſages of this Book, have yielded the like Obſervation, and therefore I only touch it here; and as *Job's* Friends inſiſt often upon the ſame arguments for ſubſtance, ſo alſo doth *Job* upon the ſame anſwers and replies. *Job* hath already told his Friends more then once, in effect, what he is about to tell them in the next Verſe.

Verſe 6. **Know that God hath overthrown me, and compaſſed me about with his net.**

Will you plead my reproach, or my affliction againſt me? If you will, I deſire you to conſider whence or from what hand my affliction comes; *Know that God hath overthrown me.*

Know.] There is ſometimes a threat, alwayes a reproof in this form of ſpeaking. *Know*, is, I would have you know, or you ſhall know to your coſt. It uſually implyes a teaching by correction, yea, by deſtruction, not by inſtruction (*Exod.* 7. 5.) When God ſaith, *The* Egyptians *ſhall know that I am the Lord*, He means, they ſhould know it to their ſorrow, or by their ſorrow: As if he had ſaid, *You will not acknowledge it, but you ſhall know that I am the Lord; you ſhall know by your own puniſhments that I have power both to command and puniſh.* We have a like expreſſion (*Pſal.* 9. 20.) *Put them in fear, O Lord, that the Nations may know themſelves to be but men.* But were the Nations unskill'd in this piece of knowledge? It is indeed a very hard thing for a man to know himſelf; but, it ſeems, very eaſie for any man to know that he is but a man. The Orator ſaith, There was never any Nation ſo rudely barbarous, but knew there was a God; and ſurely there was never any Nation ſo blindly ambitious, as not to know themſelves to be but men. The Pſalmiſt therefore doth not ſuppoſe that they thought themſelves more then men in the conſtitution of their nature, but in the inſtitution of their lives. They think themſelves Gods, who either will act by their own rules, or are confident they can give ſucceſs to their own actions; when men either do what they pleaſe, or think they are able to carry whatſoever they do, then they forget that they are but men. Hence *David* prayes, O Lord, put them in fear, daſh their counſels, break their plots, then the Nations will know, that is, thou ſhalt make them know that they are but men. So here, *Know that God hath overthrown me*, is, as if he had ſaid, *You have not taken notice of this, I have ſpoken of it before, and you would not receive it, you have acted towards me, as if God had nothing to do in bringing me thus low.* Therefore *I warn you again, Know that God hath overthrown me*: I tell you, it is your error and ſin, to charge my afflictions upon the account of my ſin, *Know that God hath overthrown me.* He hath done it, who may do it to an innocent, and yet be juſt himſelf. And ſeeing God hath done it, how know you that he hath done it, becauſe my ſin provoked him to do it, rather then becauſe himſelf (for ends beſt known to himſelf) was pleaſed to do it?

Mirus habet hæc loquendi formula.

Know that God hath overthrown me.

The word tranſlated **overthrown**, ſignifies in its root, to turn a thing aſide, to put it out of the way, as alſo the making of a thing crooked; and in the Noun, that which is crooked, *Lam.* 3. 36. *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. To cruſh under his feet all the priſoners of the earth, To turn aſide the right of a man before the face of the moſt high, To ſubvert a man in his cauſe, the Lord approveth not.* The Lord doth not ſubvert or overthrow a man in his cauſe. God did not overthrow *Job's* right, but his ſtate. The Vulgar tranſlation ſpeaks that in the Letter (and the Original will bear it) *Know, that God hath not afflicted me according to juſtice.* Yet that reading doth not charge injuſtice upon God, for that were blaſphemy: But the ſence is, he hath not done it according to the way of men, or the ordinary courſe of Juſtice between man and man. God acts that juſtly towards man by his prerogative, which between man and man were perverting of Juſtice. Hence the Lord himſelf tells Satan (*Chap.* 2. 3.) *Thou movedſt me to deſtroy him without cauſe.* To deſtroy a man without cauſe, is to pervert Juſtice. In that ſence we may underſtand *Job* here; *Know that God hath overthrown me*: As if he had ſaid, He hath not dealt with me by the common rule of legal proceedings, but according to the pleaſure of his own will. God never doth any man, nor hath he done me any injuſtice; yet mans juſtice is not the ſquare of what he hath done to me; therefore you are quite beſides the buſineſs, when all along you charge me with ſin, and error, as the reaſon of all my ſufferings; *Know that God hath overthrown me.* Firſt, *Job* ſpeaks this declaratively, not complainingly; he affirms God had done it; but he did not murmur becauſe he had done it.

עותני
עוה *perdere, percutere, ex ſua proprietate afferre, videtur curvitatem quandam & perverſitatē deviantem à recto. Verbum hoc diſtorſionem non modò à ſtatu fœlici & cōmodo, ſed ab æquo & recto ſignificat; ſed* Jobus *de ſtatu, non de jure loquitur.* Coc. *Quod non a quo judicio affixerit me.* Vul. i. c. *Cum ſin innocens me tanquam impium affligit, idq; præter modum.* Merc.

Hence Note, *A godly man freely and chearfully owns the hand of God in all his troubles.*

As when he is raiſed, he owns the hand of God delivering and reſtoring him; ſo when he is overthrown, he owns the hand of God ſmiting and caſting him down. We honour God as much by looking to him as the Author and Orderer of our afflictions, as of our conſolations; of our loſſes, as well as of our gainings; of our overthrows, as well as of our victories. The Confeſſions of the Church run fully in this ſtream, *Pſal.* 44. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Thou haſt caſt us off, and put us to ſhame. Thou makeſt us turn back from the enemy. Thou haſt given us like ſheep appointed for meat. Thou ſelleſt thy people for nought. Thou makeſt us a reproach to our neighbours. Thou makeſt us a by-word among the Heathen.* An evil heart obſerves not the hand of God, either eſtabliſhing or overthrowing. The Prophet ſpeaks this fully (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee:* What had the hand of God been doing that they were thus wilfully blind, and would not ſee? The tenth verſe tells us his hand had been doing good; *Let favour be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteouſneſs,* &c. *in the Land of uprightneſs will he deal unjuſtly, and will not behold the Majeſty of the Lord.* Now as wicked men will not ſee the hand of God in favours, ſo not in judgments. Their ſight is bounded with ſecond cauſes; the Creature is their Horizon, and ſhuts them in, they ſee nothing above or beyond it. 'Tis the malice of this man, or the unfaithfulneſs of that man, which hath overthrown them. 'Twas the negligence of thoſe they imployed as inſtruments, or the activity of thoſe that were oppoſite to them, 'twas a chance, or their ill fortune, upon which they have miſcarried. God is not in all their thoughts.

Nefas in eos invehi, in quos divina animadverſio incubuit, imo vero decet potius eorundem ſortē lugere et formidare. Orig.

Secondly, *Job* tells his Friends, *God hath overthrown me,* that he might abate the keenneſs of their ſpirits towards him, and to move compaſſion.

Hence Obſerve, *We ſhould take heed of troubling or grieving them, who are already grieved and troubled under the afflicting hand of God.*

And if it be unnatural and uncomely to grieve thoſe who are in ſorrow, what is it to rejoyce at their ſorrow? The wiſdom of God gives caution againſt this, even in the caſe of an enemy, (*Prov.* 24. 17, 18.) *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth;* (Why not? The reaſon is ſubjoyned) *Leſt the Lord ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him, and he turn away his wrath from him:* That is, The Lord will take it ſo ill at thy hand, to ſee thee rejoycing at the fall of thine enemy, who hath been overthrown by his hand, that he will turn his wrath upon thee inſtead of him.

Convertet ab illo vel redire faciet iram ſuam, ſc. in te.

Fourthly, *Job* ſaith, *God hath overthrown me;* to ſhew his Friends, that there was no neceſſity why they ſhould charge him with wickedneſs, becauſe he was overthrown.

Hence Note, *God may, and oft doth overthrow his choiceſt ſervants, and ſpoil them of all outward comforts, without reſpect to their ſinfulneſs.*

When we ſee man puniſhed by man, we may well conclude he is a tranſgreſſor, becauſe no man hath power to afflict, or to overthrow an Innocent: Man hath no right to ſmite his Brother, either in body or eſtate, but for his fault. But when God ſmiteth man, we cannot conclude unerringly, that he doth it for his faults or errors. *Know that God hath overthrown me,*

Metaphora à re venatoria.

And compaſſed me with his net.] It is a Metaphor from hunting. The Church bemoans her ſad condition in this language (*Lam.* 1. 13.) *From above hath he ſent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth againſt me; he hath ſpread a net for my feet.* Thus *Zedekiah* is threatened (*Ezek.* 12. 13.) *My net alſo will I ſpread upon him, and he ſhall be taken in my ſnare.*

מצור *à radice* צור *ſignificat rete vel etiā arcem & munitionem altiſſimam & fortiſſimam.*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate **Net**, ſignifies alſo a *Tower*, or *Caſtle*, or *Fort*. A learned Interpreter contends earneſtly for this tranſlation: And gives Reaſons why it ſhould be rather tranſlated *Tower*, then *Net*. Firſt, From the words following in the next verſe, where *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf as if he were crying out at a priſon window, *Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard.* Secondly, Becauſe at the eighth verſe he ſpeaks of darkneſs ſet in his paths; which ſuits better with the metaphor of a Priſon-tower, then of a Net. But whether we render *Tower*, or *Net*, the meaning is the ſame: And by both, afflictions are underſtood. And when he ſaith, *He hath compaſſed me with his net,* he ſhews the extenſion or largeneſs of his affliction; for as when promiſe is made to him that truſteth in the Lord, *That mercy ſhall compaſs him about* (*Pſal.* 32. 10.) the meaning is, that he ſhall have many and manifold mercies, compleat and perfect mercies. So that's a compleat affliction which compaſſeth us about, as a net doth a bird or beaſt that is enſnared in it.

Afflictions may be compared to a net for divers Reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe there is a contrivance in them, a divine hand doth as it were weave divers providences together, and knot them one with another, to make up an affliction. The Lord uſeth a kind of holy art and skill in the preparation of our troubles. There is as much wiſdom ſeen in framing and forming of our afflictions, as there is mercy and kindneſs in working our deliverances and ſalvations. Hence alſo the Church compares them to a building, which is an artificial pile or Fabrick, *He hath builded againſt me* (*Lam.* 3. 5.)

Secondly, Afflictions are like unto a net, becauſe moſt men fall ſuddenly into them, and are taken unawares. *Job* indeed ſaith of his affliction (*Chap.* 3. 25.) *The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.* It ſeems he was jealous of a change; and though his mountain was ſtrong, yet he ſaid not (as *David* once did) *I ſhall never be moved.* But uſually men put the evil day far from them, and look no more for trouble then the ſilly bird doth for the net when ſhe is caught with it.

Thirdly, Afflictions are like a net, becauſe we are entangled with them; we are entangled with doubts what to do, yea, in affliction we are ready to ſay, *Lord, we know not what to do.* If we know and are reſolved what to do, then we are apt to be entangled, either with cares how, and by whom to get it done, or with fears, that when all is done, it will not be ſucceſsful and effectual for our deliverance.

Fourthly, Afflictions are like a net, becauſe we being once entangled in them are held faſt, and cannot get forth, till God, who hath compaſſed and taken us with his net, be pleaſed to open it, and diſingage us from our entanglements. The bird cannot get out of the net till ſhe is taken out. We bring our ſelves into trouble, but unleſs the Lord bring us out, there we ſtick. As our eternal, ſo our temporal ſalvations are of the Lord. The nets of affliction which God makes are ſtrong enough to hold the ſtrongeſt. His nets are not like the Cobweb or Spiders net, which detain the weak Flyes, but are eaſily broken by the greater or leſſer Fowls. Though a wild Bull come into Gods net, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſ.* 51. 20.) yet neither his might nor his madneſs can help him out. It was noted, in opening the Original word here uſed for a net, that it may ſignifie alſo a *Tower*, or a *Fort*. The ſame affliction is both a Net and a Fort; a Net, becauſe it entangles; a Fort, becauſe it holds us faſt.

Fifthly, As afflictions are like a net, becauſe they entangle and hold us faſt; ſo, becauſe the more we ſtrive to looſen and free our ſelves, the more we are entangled, and the faſter held. There is no getting out of, no, nor getting any eaſe in affliction by ſtruggling. 'Tis beſt for us to be quiet and patient. Not but that we may ſtir heaven-ward by earneſt prayer to God; yea, and earthward too in the diligent uſe of lawful means with man to free our ſelves. The ſtirring and ſtriving which ſtraitens the net of our affliction upon us, is only our diſpleaſedneſs and impatience with it, or againſt God, who hath caught us in it. Or it is our ſtriving to get looſe by the uſe of creature hands and helps alone, without dependance upon, or application made to God. Such ſtirring as this will indeed entangle us, and when we have ſtirr'd thus the moſt we can, we ſhall find our ſelves the more entangled. When God compaſſeth us with his net, we muſt neither ſit ſtill ſullenly and negligently, nor move impatiently and unbelievingly. Let us give God glory (as *Job* did) in our net, and he will not only give us eaſe, but ſet our feet in a large place.

VERS. 7, 8, 9.

Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.

He hath fenced up my way that I cannot paſs; and he hath ſet darkneſs in my paths.

He hath ſtript me of my glory, and taken the Crown from my head.

THe words contain a part of *Job's* renewed complaint, and continue the aggravations of his ſorrow. Having ſaid in the former verſe, *That God had overthrown him*; that *he had compaſſed him with his net*; here he tells us two things.

Firſt, What courſe he took to relieve himſelf in that miſerable condition; He petitioned and complained earneſtly, and he cryed out ſo loud, as might make all amazed, and look out, *Behold, I cry out*, &c. And he did not (as ſome) cry out before he was hurt, or complain without cauſe. He was preſſed to it by the oppreſſion that was upon him; *Behold, I cry out of wrong.*

Secondly, He tells us what ſucceſs his ſuit or petition had; *I am not heard*, ſaith he, in the firſt part of the verſe; and he adds, *there is no judgment*, in the ſecond.

Verſe 7. **Behold, I cry out of wrong,** &c.

He did not only cry, but he cryed out, and that aloud.

Behold.] Is a demonſtrative Particle, Some render the Original as a conditional; *If I cry out of wrong there is none to hear.* As if he ſhould ſay, *It is my miſery that I ſuffer wrong; but this is a greater miſery that I find none to do me right in my ſufferings*; *If I cry out of wrong* (there is none to hear, or) *I am not heard.* All my crying avails me nothing; every ear is ſhut, and every hand turn'd againſt me.

We may here conceive *Job* under a twofold notion. Either,

Firſt, As a poor priſoner crying through his grates, or out at the window, telling the paſſengers of his doleful condition, that he is ſhut up within thoſe walls, and irou grates, that he hath been oppreſſed by hard-hearted Creditors, and that after ſo many months or years of impriſonment, he can get none to right or deliver him out of their hand.

Secondly, Some conceive him under the notion of a wounded or diſeaſed man, confined to, or ſhut up in his Chamber, to whom when Phyſitians or Chirurgions come to apply medicines and means for his cure and healing, he cryes out, they torture and trouble him, they hurt and vex him, they are cruel to him, and will kill him. The Patient cryes out of wrongs, but the Phyſitian will not hear him: He that is to have his fleſh lanced, laments pitifully, yet he is lanced; he whoſe fleſh is to be cauteriz'd, complains ſadly, yet the fiery Inſtruments are applyed to him. The Artiſt muſt ſhew a kind of cruelty as well as skill, elſe the cure is not wrought.

Ægyptiorũ more loquitur qui cum in manus medici venirent acti doloribus verba quadam injurioſa in ipſum medicũ non ex judicio, ſed ex amaritudine proloquuntur. Philip.

Thus *Job* is here repreſented, as under the Phyſitians hands, though indeed an experiment was to be wrought upon him rather then a cure. To take an experiment of our graces, may put us to more pain, then the cure of our corruptions. An experiment (I ſay) was to be wrought on *Job* to exerciſe and try him, and he cryes out of wrong, as if their purpoſe had been to cut his throat, or at leaſt to undo him for ever in this World.

Behold, I cry out of wrong.] The word which we tranſlate *to cry out*, ſignifies, properly, that cry which is cauſed by the enduring of extream pains of body, or anguiſh of mind. Yet ſome apply it to the vehemency of his ſpirit, in diſputing and pleading with his Friends (Diſputants and Advocates often fall into heats and paſſionate exclamations.) *Behold, I cry*, in this diſpute and plea, urging Arguments for my ſelf, and making my defence, yet none regards. I can neither find an equal Judge, nor a faithful Advocate. But I rather reſtrain it to that cry, which the rack of grief and ſorrow forced from him, *I cry out*,

צעק *propriè eſt clamare præ dolore, aut alio vehementi animi ſenſu. De diſputatione cum amicis, in qua neminẽ habebat patronum aut judicem intelligit.* Orig.

Of wrong.] The word ſignifies any kind of oppreſſion or injury. Here it may be queſtioned; Firſt, Of whom? Secondly, To whom *Job* made this cry? He cried out of wrong. Who wronged him? Or wherein was he wronged?

חמס *injuria, iniquitas.*

I anſwer, The wrong he cryes out of, was received of men; he doth not challenge the Almighty, that he had wronged him: He indeed ſpeaks it out plainly in the former verſe, *God hath overthrown me, and compaſſed me in his net*, yet he doth not *charge God fooliſhly*, as 'tis ſaid in the firſt Chapter, as if he had done him wrong. The wrong of which he complains was done him by men, and thoſe men his Friends; they wronged him by their hard ſpeeches, and unkind uſages (*ver.* 2.) *How long will ye vex my ſoul, and break me in pieces with words? Theſe ten times have ye reproached me.* That reproach was the wrong he complained of. But to whom did he complain?

Firſt, He complained to men, he told his Friends how they had wronged, and cenſured him, but they would not hear.

Secondly, He complained to God of the wrong done him by men; but as then he did not hear.

Ob violentiam quæ mihi fit vociferor ad Deum. Druſ.

I am not heard.] Or as 'tis tranſlated by many, *I am not anſwered*; the word ſignifieth both *to hear, and to anſwer*, the work both of the ear, and tongue. And the reaſon (as ſome tell us) why in the Hebrew one word ſerves both, is, becauſe there is ſuch a connexion and nearneſs of relation between the ear and the tongue: So that he who doth not anſwer, is ſuppoſed not to hear; and he that doth not hear, cannot make anſwer. In nature, uſually, they who are deaf are dumb; and when a man to whom we ſpeak makes us no anſwer, we ask him, what, do you not, or can you not hear? *I cry* (ſaith *Job*) *but I am not heard.*

ענה *ſignificat audire & reſpondere, hæc enim ſunt inter ſe nexa, ut qui audit reſpõdeat & qui non reſpondet credatur non audiſſe. Inde etiam ut qui mutus eſt continuo etiam ſurdus eſt.* Pined.

We are not to take *hearing* ſtrictly; *For the Lords ear is not heavy that he cannot hear*; and *Job* ſpake loud enough for men to hear. The Lord hears the leaſt whiſperings, the leaſt breathings of the ſoul. He doth not only hear our loweſt ſpeech, but he hears our very thoughts. Thoughts are the firſt-born of the ſoul, the language of our hearts. This language of our hearts is as loud in the ears of the Lord, as thunder is in ours. *Yea, he underſtandeth our thoughts afar off* (*Pſal.* 139. 2.) That is, long before we think them. *He to whom all times are the preſent time, cannot but know that which to us is future, and he from whom all things receive their being, underſtands thoſe things which as yet have no being.* Now, if God underſtand our thoughts at this diſtance, even before we think them, then ſurely he hears all our words (which are thoughts formed and made up) as ſoon as we have ſpoken them.

And if ſo, then hearing (in the Text) is not to be taken for receiving the ſound of words, but for the return which is made to the words which are received. To be heard, imports help, or the giving out of that help, mercy and deliverance, which is deſired and asked, whether of God or man. To be heard in prayer, is to be anſwered in prayer: To be heard when we cry, is to be relieved when we cry. Thus, ſaith *Job*, *I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard:* That is, I have no eaſe, no comfort, nor is any deliverance wrought for me. *David*, as the figure of Chriſt, gives glory to God, becauſe he had been thus heard; *Thou haſt heard me from the horns of the Unicorns* (*Pſal.* 22. 21.) That is, Thou haſt delivered me from the horns of the Unicorns. To be among *the horns of the Unicorns*, is a proverbial ſpeech, for being encompaſt with greateſt danger. The horn is ſharp and ſtrong, and the Unicorn is fierce and terrible; ſo that to be heard *from among the horns of the Unicorns*, is to be reſcued from deadly danger.

Exaudire & reſpondere clamanti eſt adeſſe laboranti & opem atque ſalutem afferre. Eſt enim hujuſmodi reſponſio non tam verbo, quam re & auxilio præſtito. Pined.

This in the Pſalm is of the ſame ſence with that of *Paul*, (2 Tim. 4. 17.) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion: Nero* was this Lion, before whom when *Paul* firſt appeared, he had no ſecond; *At my firſt anſwer* (ſaith he, *ver.* 16.) *no man ſtood with me, notwithſtanding the Lord ſtood with me, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion:* That is, When I was ready to be devoured by the bloody Tyrant, I cryed to the Lord, and he heard me.

So then, when he ſaith, *I am not heard*, it may be referred (as his cry was.) Firſt, To men. Secondly, To God. I was not heard by men, they did not right me as they ought; I was not heard by God, he did not reſcue me as he was able, or as he might. Take it firſt, as his not being heard, refers to men.

Hence Note, *Men are very deaf uſually to the cry of the oppreſſed and grieved.*

There are two voices at which the ear of Nature is exceeding deaf, or thick of hearing.

The firſt is the voyce of holy counſels; when God ſpeaks, many *are as the deaf Adder, who ſtops her ear, and will not hear the voyce of the Charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely.*

Secondly, At the voyce of humble complaints, when the poor and diſtreſſed ſpeak, many turn away their ear, or turn a deaf ear.

And there are (upon the matter) the ſame reaſons why the counſels of God, and the complaints of the poor are not heard.

Firſt, God commands both, and the heart of man naturally withdraws from the command of God concerning man, as much as from that command which immediately concerns himſelf.

Again, They who hear the counſels of God, are more engaged to obey them, and walk up to them. Many could be *ſwift enough to hear,* as the Apoſtle *James* exhorts (*chap.* 1. 19.) if that would ſerve the turn, but they are ſlow to do. Barely to hear the ſound of words, is no great burden to the ear, and 'tis none at all to the heart; but hearing carries an obligation to practiſe, yea, to hear indeed is to practiſe; and therefore counſel is not heard.

So, hearing the complaint of the poor, ingageth to relieve and help them, to ſupply their wants, and redreſs their injuries; yea, to hear their cry indeed, is to relieve and help them; therefore they are not heard. While *Solomon* in his Book of *Proverbs*, ſhews the danger of not hearing the cry of the poor, he alſo implies the commonneſs of it (*Prov.* 21. 13.) *Whoſo ſtoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he alſo ſhall cry himſelf, but ſhall not be heard.* He that hath a ſtone in his heart, or whoſe heart is a ſtone, hath alſo (as we ſay) wool in his ears at the voyce both of God and man.

Secondly note, *Not to hearken to thoſe that cry out of wrong, is very ſinful, a very crying ſin.*

God in judgment burdens them with oppreſſions, who neglect the cry of the oppreſſed; the greatneſs and provocation of the ſin, may be read in the threats denounced againſt it, and in the judgments executed upon it. It is not enough (though it be more then many can ſay) for a Magiſtrate to ſay by way of challenge (as old *Samuel* did, 1 Sam. 12. 3.) *Whom have I oppreſſed?* unleſs he can alſo ſay, *When did I not hear the cry of the oppreſſed?* It is indeed moſt ſinful to make the poor cry, but not to hear their cry, is very ſinful. *To deliver the poor and needy, to rid him out of the hand of the wicked,* is at once the duty and the honour of thoſe who are in power (*Pſal.* 82. 3.) And if man will not, *God will ariſe for the oppreſſion of the poor, and the ſighing of the needy, to ſet him at liberty from him that puffeth at him* (Pſal. 12. 5.)

Thirdly note, *Not to hear when the diſtreſſed cry out of wrong and oppreſſion, is it ſelf a wrong and oppreſſion.*

Job doth not only cry out, becauſe he was in trouble, but becauſe his cry was not heard in trouble: That he was not heard, was more grievous to him then any of his troubles. When they who have power and truſt for the help of thoſe that are oppreſſed, will not hear and help them, their not helping them, is a ſecond, a renewed oppreſſing of them. Yea, whereas an act of oppreſſion is wrong done at once; the not hearing the oppreſſed, is the continuing, or (as I may ſay) the perpetuating of their wrong. The anger of God will burn as hot againſt the Judge who hath not delivered the oppreſſed, as againſt his Adverſary, or the Author of his oppreſſion.

Secondly, As theſe words, *I am not heard*, refer to God, note,

That, *God himſelf ſometimes defers the hearing or relieving of his people when they cry to him.*

The Lord ſometimes anſwers before we pray; *It ſhall come to paſs that before they call I will anſwer, and while they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear* (Iſa. 65. 24.) As there is a grace of God alwayes preventing our converſion, he turns to us before we turn to him; ſo there is a grace often preventing our petitions, and our mercies are given in by God, before our deſire of mercy is made known to God. Yet mercy doth not alwayes out-run our motions, yea, the Lord lets us move and move again, ask and ask again, before the mercy asked and moved for, is given in. God ſees it needful to exerciſe our patience as well as to ſupply our needs, and therefore lets us tarry before he hears our requeſts; as we put him very often, if not alwayes to the exerciſe of his patience, and let him tarry before we obey his counſels and commands. And he doth this not only in a way of juſt retaliation, but in a way of trial. Nor is it any wonder that God delayes his ſervants, ſeeing he was pleaſed to delay his Son, who though he ſaith, *Father, I know that thou alwayes heareſt me*; yet in ſome ſence he was not alwayes heard. The Lord deferred Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, whom we find complaining much after the rate of *Job.* (*Pſal.* 22. 2.) Where *David* as a type of Chriſt, cries out, *O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou heareſt not; and in the night ſeaſon, and am not ſilent* That is, I cry night and day, or continually, but thou heareſt not. Chriſt was not heard, that is, he was not preſently relieved in the thing that he prayed for. God ſeemed even to ſhut up, and ſtop his ears againſt his cry; *He cried, and was not heard.* Chriſt was heard, and not heard. He was not heard for the removing of the Cup from him, the Cup did not paſs; yet he was heard as to the ſupply of ſtrength in drinking that bitter Cup (*Heb.* 5.) *He was heard in that he feared*, or, *for his fear.* He was heard as to the ſupport of his ſpirit, and the carrying him through the ſuffering; yet he was not heard as to the removing of the ſuffering. Chriſt prayed againſt ſuffering, though he was not willing to ſuffer, and God ſuffered wicked men to have their will over him. The Prophet *Habakkuk* hath a very parallel complaint to this of *Job* (Hab. 1.2.) *O Lord, how long ſhall I cry, and thou wilt not hear?* About what did he cry? *Even of violence, and thou wilt not ſave.* When the Prophet ſaith, *How long ſhall I cry?* he doth not ask how long he ſhould yet cry; but he affirms that he had already cried very long: and therefore he adds, *Why doſt thou ſhew me iniquity, and cauſe me to behold grievance?* He means not his own iniquity, but the iniquity of others. As if he had ſaid, *Why do I ſee the unjuſt dealing, and iniquity of wicked men, by whoſe violence thy people are wronged and grieved?* And as the Prophet bemoans himſelf, that notwithſtanding his cry, he had yet converſed ſo often and long with theſe doleful viſions; ſo at *verſ.* 13. he ſeems to ſtand admiring how the Lord could bear the beholding of them. *Wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he, and makeſt men as the fiſhes of the Sea?* &c. Where the greater ſwallow up the leſs. As if he had ſaid, Lord, I have often prayed about, and preſſed thee with theſe things, yet thou giveſt no anſwer; Thou ſeeſt all theſe evils, and though much hath been ſaid to thee about them, yet thou art as a man that ſaith nothing; *Thou holdeſt thy tongue*, even when thy people are ground between the teeth of their cruel oppreſſors. Why doſt thou ſhew me theſe ſad ſpectacles? Why doſt thou not rather hear my cry, ſave thy people, and work deliverance for them?

If it be enquired, how doth this anſwer the promiſe of God to his people, that they ſhould cry, and he not deliver, ſeeing he hath ſaid, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver?*

I anſwer, The Lord doth alwayes hear ſo as to give his people the promiſed good, though he doth not give them the petitioned good. He defers to hear, he lets them cry out of violence and wrong, and will not help for ſuch reaſons as theſe.

Firſt, That they may be more fit to receive deliverance; many cry out of wrong, who are not yet fit to be righted. Deliverances may be our undoing, if we are not prepared to receive deliverance. As we wait for the Grace and Mercy of God, ſo God waits to be gracious (*Iſa.* 30. 18.) We wait for mercy, and he waits till we are rightly diſpoſed to receive mercy.

Secondly, The Lord doth not deliver his preſently from the wrong and oppreſſion of the wicked, becauſe ſome wicked men have not yet done wrong or oppreſſed enough, and are therefore ſuffered to do more wrong to others, that themſelves may be more fit for ruine. They muſt fill up the meaſure of their ſin; therefore they are not taken off with a high hand in the way of ſin. The Lord alwayes puts a moral impediment in the way of ſin, he declares his mind, and gives the rule againſt it, but he doth not alwayes put a judiciary impediment, he doth not alwayes come forth with power and ſtrength, to ſtop men from going on in the way of ſin. He alwayes ſends his earthly Angels or Meſſengers with a word to ſtay the progreſs of wicked men; but he rarely ſends his heavenly Angels (as he did to *Balaam*) with a drawn ſword, to ſtop their progreſs in wickedneſs.

Thirdly, Many cry out of wrong, and God doth not hear, becauſe he deſires to hear more of their cries. When the oppreſſed cry in faith, with fervency, and from a holy frame, their very cry is as muſick in the ears of God. Not that he delights in the miſery of their ſtate, but in the holineſs of their heart. The heart is uſually in the beſt frame for prayer, when our worldly ſtate is out of frame. And then our ſpirits are in the ſweeteſt tune towards God, when we meet with nothing but diſcord, nothing but wrong and violence from men. The Kingdom of heaven ſuffers moſt violence from a gracious heart, and he takes it (as it were) by force, when himſelf ſuffers moſt violence here on earth, or when his earthly portion is taken from him by force. And therefore,

Fourthly, God ſometimes (that he may teach his to pray better) ſuffers their outward condition to grow worſe. Prayer is the gift of God, and he can make his people perfect in a moment (if he pleaſe) in this great duty and heavenly Art of prayer; yet much of it comes in by exerciſe. Our proficiency in any holy duty, lies much in the practice of it; we muſt not forbear the practice of it, till we can do it better; for in the practice of it, we learn to do it better. Now becauſe our continuance in ſuffering, provokes us to continue in prayer and ſupplication (the oppreſſed widow, *Luke* 18. cried night and day, till ſhe got the ear of the Judge, and releaſe from her oppreſſors) therefore the Lord lets the oppreſſion continue upon many of his precious people, that they continually exerciſing themſelves in prayer, may grow more ſpiritual and heavenly in prayer.

Fifthly, The Lord defers to ſend relief, when his people cry out of wrong, that he may make their relief and deliverance from wrong, more ſweet when at laſt he ſends it: It is therefore long a coming, that it may be more welcome when it comes. They who cry out of wrong, and are not heard after many cries, when once they are heard, how do they ſing for joy? We ſay proverbially, *He that gives ſpeedily, doubles his gift.* And 'tis ſo indeed in the nature of the thing given, and in the deſert of the giver; but 'tis rarely ſo as to the prizings and improvement of the receiver. That which is given ſuddenly, is by moſt receivers ſlightly valued, and little improved; whereas thoſe mercies which we have ſtayed long for, and have coſt us much, ſtick longeſt by us, and turn to greateſt profit, whether we reſpect the honour of God, or the good of our own ſouls.

Sixthly, God lets them cry long without an anſwer, for the exerciſe of ſome ſpecial Graces: The Lord loves to ſee Grace at work, and ſome Graces have no long time to work; for though all Graces are eternal in their nature, yet in their uſe they are not: And ſuch are all ſuffering Graces. When we enjoy all (as in Glory) we can ſuffer nothing. Now when God lets his people cry out of wrong all their dayes (which are not many dayes) 'tis becauſe he would have that ſort of Graces kept in exerciſe (as well as other Graces) the Grace of Faith, of Meekneſs, of ſelf-denial, and of Patience, all which (with ſome others) belong to paſſive obedience; that theſe (I ſay) may be kept in breath, he lets the Saints cry out of wrong, and doth not hear them.

Seaventhly, God ſomtimes doth not mind his when they cry, that they may hereby take occaſion to remember how oft he hath cried, and they have not minded him: doth not the Lord cry out to his people of duty, and they do not hear him? Doth he not complain of this neglect, not only as a diſhonour, but as a grief unto him? (*Pſal.* 81. 11.) *O that my people had hearkened to me, and that Iſrael would have heard my voyce.* No marvel then, if God let his people cry out of miſery, and doth not hear them. The Lord ſhuts his ear, that he might conſider how we have ſhut our ears; yea, he ſhuts his ear, that he may open ours. We are moved to hear and anſwer the call and command of God, when we find that he doth not hear nor anſwer our call and cry. If the Lord ſhould alwayes be ſwift to hear us, how ſlow ſhould we be in hearing him? and while we have all our deſires, forget moſt of our duties? In heaven we ſhall have all our deſires fulfilled, and yet not fail in any duty; but while there is corruption in the heart, there will be ſloth in the hand, and when we are waxen fat by the ſpeedy ſucceſs of all our petitions, we are more apt to kick with the heel againſt God, then to work with the hand for him.

Laſtly, God hears alwayes, though he doth not alwayes anſwer in our time, or in our way; yea, it is a hearing, and an anſwer of prayer, that we can pray, though unheard and unanſwered.

Secondly obſerve, *A godly man is under a great trial, a ſtrong temptation, when he cries out to God, and is not heard.*

As when Satan tempts us, there is a great conflict between the fleſh and the ſpirit, about the doing of good, and the refuſing of evil; ſo about our receiving of good, and the removing of evil; when we cry to God, and he is pleaſed to tempt us by deferring to hear us. Then the Spirit hopes, and the fleſh doubts; the ſpirit labours to maintain believing thoughts, and the fleſh labours to raiſe deſponding, yea, deſpairing thoughts. *David* was ſo hard put to it upon this account, that though he made no concluſions againſt the gracioufneſs of God, yet he could not avoid the putting, no nor the doubling, and more then trebling of the queſtion about it (*Pſal.* 77. 7, 8, 9.) *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promiſe fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious?* &c. How full of Queries was the ſpirit of *David* when he could get no anſwers? And though faith lay all this while in the bottom of *David's* heart, yet that which lay at the bottom of theſe Queries was his infirmity, as himſelf diſcovers, *ver.* 10. *And I ſaid, this is my infirmity.* It argues a great degree, and much ſtrength of Grace, when we maintain high thoughts of God, and ſetled reſolves that he is good, when he not only lets us fall low into trouble, but lets us lie unheard in the day of our trouble. Such was the ſtrength of *David's* faith, or rather of Chriſts, of whoſe ſufferings that *Pſalm* is a Propheſie; who as ſoon as he had ſaid, *O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou heareſt not,* &c. (*Pſal.* 22. 2.) adds in the next verſe, *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabiteſt the praiſes of Iſrael.* As if he had ſaid, I will not have an evil, or an uncomly thought of thee, though thou refuſeſt to hear; I know thou art holy, and therefore canſt not but be juſt and good, whatſoever thou art pleaſed to do with me. Every ſoul arrives not at this freedom of faith. The denial of an anſwer to prayer, puts moſt upon complaints and queries; and ſo it doth, eſpecially while they conſider how explicitly and clearly the Lord hath engaged himſelf to anſwer prayer, and to relieve his people when they cry; yea, the Lord hath engaged, not only to hear them when they cry (which notes earneſt ſtrong prayer) but to hear them in their weakeſt ſincere addreſſes in prayer, when they do but whiſper and breath towards him. The promiſe is peremptory (*Pſal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.* 'Tis ſo alſo (*Acts* 2. 21.) *Whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved.* The Prophet *Joel,* from whom thoſe words are borrowed, ſpeaks of a time when there ſhould be ſore troubles in the world, *Fire and Blood, and Vapour of ſmoke,* all in combuſtion, heaven and earth (to ſenſe) mingled, good and bad, holy and unholy mingled (in appearance) and wrapt up in the ſame common calamity; yet then, *Whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved*; as if prayer made us ſhot-free, and were a ſure defence in all ſtorms; as if no evil could touch their perſons, or come near their dwellings, who can touch the Lord by faith, when they draw near to him in prayer. And which is more, the Lord promiſeth to prevent prayer, at leaſt (as was toucht before) that his ear ſhall be open as ſoon as our mouths, *Iſa.* 65. 24. *It ſhall come to paſs, that before they call I will anſwer, and while they yet ſpeak I will hear*: As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will ſometimes give you mercy before you ask it; but when you ask it, you ſhall not go without it;*

Gravis eſt lucta dubitantis carnis & expectantis ſpiritus. Merl.

even while prayer fills your mouths, mercy ſhall fill your hearts. While your deſires are but in forming and framing, your deliverances ſhall be formed and framed. You ſhall have perfect mercies, before you perfect duties. While ye are yet ſpeaking I will hear.

Now when the Lord ſaith, *He will anſwer before we ſpeak*, and yet lets us ſpeak long, and gives no anſwer; how is the ſoul puzzled to reconcile the Word of God, and his Works; the Promiſes of God, and his Providences; this put *Job* hard to it, and ſtrengthned the temptation upon him; *I cry out of wrong, but am not heard.*

This tryal riſeth by a gradation of four ſteps.

Firſt, It is a tryal, when the anſwer is deferred.

Secondly, It is a greater tryal, when we are denyed an anſwer. As God ſeldom gives what we ask at our time, ſo ſometimes he will not at all give us what we ask.

Thirdly, It is yet a greater tryal, when God in ſtead of granting, appears angry with our prayers, or with us when we pray, as the Pſalmiſt ſuſpected (*Pſal.* 80. 4.) *O Lord God of Hoſts, how long wilt thou be angry (or ſmoak) againſt the prayer of thy people?* They cryed out of wrong, they were under the rage and anger of men, and God ſeemed angry with them while they cryed. So ſaith the Prophet (*Lam.* 3. 8.) *Thou haſt ſhut out my prayer.* Which action notes God highly diſpleaſed with his prayer. When a man comes to our door, and we do not only deny, or defer him, but ſhut the door againſt him, this is proof enough, we are angry with him, or that we count him for an enemy. Yet thus the Lord ſometimes deals with his people; in ſtead of opening when they knock, he ſeems to lock or ſhut the door againſt them.

Fourthly, To cry out of wrong, and not be heard, is then moſt grievous when the Lord ſuffers us to be wronged more, and encreaſes that trouble, the removing of which we pray for, even while we are praying. This is a ſore tryal indeed. Thus the *Iſraelites*, who were under heavy burthens in *Egypt*, cryed to the Lord, yet their burthens were made heavier, and their preſſures multiplyed. If our diſeaſe ſhould gather ſtrength while we are taking medicines to cure it; if our wound wrankle while we are applying Balſams to heal it, we are then ready to conclude, that our caſe is deſperate. How are poor ſouls brought to the very brink of deſpair, when their troubles and ſtreights grow more upon them, while (which is the moſt approved means to be eaſed of them, or eaſed in them) they are plying the throne of grace with conſtant fervent cryes and prayers.

I cry aloud, and there is no judgment.

Exponit eandem rem aliis verbis:

שוע *hæc vociferatio eſt ex proprietate vocis implorandæ alutis & opis cauſa cum gemitu & ululatu.*

This ſecond part of the verſe is of the ſame ſence with the former. Only there is ſome variety in the reading, and expreſſions. He ſaid there, *Behold, I cry out of wrong.* Here, *I cry aloud.* It is but one word in the Hebrew, but we can hardly reach it with two in our language; it ſignifies more then to cry, yea more then to cry out; it ſignifies to cry aloud, and not only to cry aloud as a Man, but as Dogs and Wolves, whoſe crying is howling. So ſome render it, *a howling cry.* We put both together in our tranſlation, (*Hoſ.* 7. 14.) though the Original words vary from that here uſed. *They have not cryed to me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds.* Take this Note from it,

Strong afflictions uſually raiſe ſtrong affections in Prayer.

As trouble and grief riſe, ſo we riſe in our ſence of them, and complaints about them. The Apoſtle ſaith of Chriſt, (*Heb.* 5. 7.) *That, in the day of his fleſh,* that is, of his humiliation and weakneſs, while he was ſubject to the common (ſinleſs) infirmities of our nature; For as the word *fleſh* is taken in Scripture for our natural impurity, and for our pure nature, ſo for our natural frailties and infirmities. Jeſus Chriſt never had fleſh in the firſt ſence; he ſtill hath fleſh in the ſecond (Glory hath not aboliſhed, but exalted the humane nature of Chriſt) But in the third ſence, he once had fleſh, but now hath not, he ſhook off all our infirmities in the day that he aroſe from the dead, and aſcended into heaven; therefore (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in the dayes of his fleſh,* while he was continually burdened with temptations and afflictions (*In thoſe dayes*) *he offered prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong cryings and tears.* Chriſt was in a ſtrong conflict; the pains of death took hold of him: And as his conflict was ſtrong, ſo alſo were his cryes. When *Jacob* wreſtled with the Angel, he did not only pray but cry; *He wept and made ſupplication* (*Hoſ.* 12. 4.) Weeping is a loud cry; though we ſpeak not, every tear hath a voyce in it: but uſually they who have the weeping cry, have the ſpeaking cry too. And in proportion, when God, at any time, urgeth his people with greater and greater troubles, his people urge him with louder and louder cryes; *I cry aloud,*

Et non eſt qui judicet. Vulg. *Veluti quidam Athleta in ſtadio conſiſtens vociferor, nec tamen meum inſtituitur judicium.* Orig. *Proprium erat Athletarum curſorum & pugilum clamor & gemitus quo ſe in lucta & certamine confirmarent* Pined.

And there is no judgment,] Some render it, and *there is none to judge.* A learned Interpreter tells us, that this is ſpoken in alluſion to the ancient cuſtom of Fencers, Wreſtlers, or Runners in a race, who in thoſe exerciſes were wont to cry out, to cry aloud, to ſtir up themſelves mightily, and ſhout, and then judgment was given, who had the better, or who had prevailed. According to this interpretation *Job* is conceived complaining thus; I have endured a great fight of affliction, I have been wreſtling with ſtrong temptations, but the matter is not yet determined, no man appears to take up the controverſie, and paſs ſentence for me.

Others refer theſe words to the day of judgment, *I cry aloud, and there is no judgment.* As if he had ſaid, the day of the great trial is not come, therefore my crying is but in vain. There will be a *revelation,* as of *the righteous judgment of God,* ſo of the righteouſneſs and innocency of man; but that day muſt yet longer be waited for. I cry aloud, but it is not yet *judgment-time.* So, 'tis an argument to ſchool and quiet his ſpirit into faith and patience; *Till the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the counſels of the heart, and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God* (1 Cor. 4. 5.) That is, every man who is praiſe-worthy ſhall be approved in judgment.

But I rather take it of the preſent time, *I cry aloud, and there is no judgment*; that is, there is none to judge between me and my brethren in this caſe. There is judgment of two ſorts.

Firſt, In relieving, and acquitting the innocent.

Secondly, In condemning, or puniſhing the guilty.

Job complains of the want of both: he found no Judgment either acquitting himſelf, or condemning his adverſary.

Hence obſerve, *The defect of judgment is a deplorable evil.*

We find God himſelf complaining of this (*Iſa.* 59. 5.) *None calleth for juſtice*; many called for juſtice, by way of entreaty, but none called for juſtice by way of command; there were many ſuiters for juſtice, but there were none to do or award juſtice. But as it follows (*verſ.* 14.) *Judgment is turned backwards, and juſtice ſtands afar off; truth is fallen in the ſtreet, and equity doth not enter.* Here are four words, Judgment, Juſtice, Truth, Equity, all tending to the ſame thing, and all denied entertainment among that people: Which is alſo expreſſed by an elegant gradation in four words. That which we will not receive, we uſually turn back; here the Text ſaith, *Judgment is turned backward*; if not ſo, yet we will not let it come near; ſo here, *Juſtice ſtands afar off*; if it come near us, yet it ſhall not be maintained by us, therefore 'tis added, *Truth is fallen in the ſtreets*; or if it doth not utterly fall, yet it ſhall not prevail, as the fourth expreſſion tells us; *Equity cannot enter*; that is, it cannot find entrance and entertainment: upon all which the Prophet concludes (*verſ.* 15.) *The Lord ſaw it, and it diſpleaſed him, becauſe there was no Judgment.* The Prophet *Habakkuk* laments this (*Chap.* 1. *verſ.* 4.) *Therefore the Law is ſlacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compaſs about the righteous: therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.* Wrong judgment is no judgment; when wrong judgment proceeds, Juſtice is at a ſtand, or *Judgment doth not proceed*; that is, there is none to do any man right according to Juſtice; it is more ſad when judgment is perverted, then when judgment is ſtayed. When wrong judgment is given, 'tis worſe then when no judgment is given. The abuſe of a thing is a ſorer evil then the abſence of it (*Amos* 6. 12.) *They turn judgment into gall* (Hoſ. 10. 4.) *Judgment ſpringeth up like hemlock in the furrows [illegible] the field.* Gall is bitter, and Hemlock is a poyſonous weed:

it were better nothing ſhould grow in the furrows of the field then Hemlock, and that we ſhould have nothing to drink, rather then drink Gall. Juſtice (though the ſentence of it be death, which is bitter as gall or wormwood, yet) is ſweet. Injuſtice (though the ſentence of it be life, which is ſweet as honey or ſugar, yet) is bitter as gall or wormwood. But when wrong judgment (which is it ſelf bitter) is alſo the judgment of death, how bitter is it? God ſends a privy ſearch through *Jeruſalem*, to find a man, (*Jer.* 5. 1.) *Run to and fro through the ſtreets of* Jeruſalem, *and ſee now, and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment.* That City hath not a man in it, that cannot yield a man to execute judgment, though it have multitudes and throngs of men in it. A people are then at the laſt caſt, when God makes ſearch, and finds not a lover of Juſtice among them. *Nothing layes a people more open to the judgment of God, then the want of a man to execute judgment.* When the oppreſſed cry out, and there is no judgment done by man, both oppreſſors and their favourers ſhall cry out becauſe of the judgments of God.

Job proceeds,

Verſ. 8. **He hath fenced up my way that I cannot paſs, he hath ſet darkneſs in my paths.**

Miſerias ſuas comparationibus amplificat, prima eſt à viatoribus, quibus duo in itinere valdè ſunt noxia. 1 *ſepes.* 2 *tenebræ.*

This verſe contains a further amplification of his ſorrow, by comparing himſelf to a diſtreſſed traveller; for here we have a way, and a path, and thoſe things which are moſt offenſive to a traveller in his way. Two things are very troubleſom to a traveller in his way.

Firſt, If he meet rubs in his way, much more if he meet with great blocks or fences ſet croſs his way: Of this *Job* complains in the firſt part of the verſe; *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot paß.*

A ſecond evil which troubles a traveller (though his way be plain) is darkneſs; How can a man go that cannot ſee before him? A man travels a good way with more fear in the dark, then he doth a bad way in the light. *Job* complains of this latter annoyance in the latter part of the verſe, *He hath ſet darkneſs in my paths.*

I ſhall ſpeak but little to this verſe, becauſe the ſubſtance of it was opened (*Chap.* 3. 23.) *Why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in.*

Eſt oratio ſine ſuppoſito

He hath fenced up my way.] But who was it that fenced up his way? No perſon is expreſſed. But as he ſaid before, *God hath overthrown me*; ſo here his meaning is, *God hath fenced up my way.* The Septuagint read not as we, *He hath fenced up my way*, but, *He hath built round about my way.* So *Jeremy* deſcribes the ſtraitned condition of *Jeruſalem* (Lam. 3. 8.) *He hath built about me.* This ſimilitude is uſed in Scripture when either a perſon or a people are brought into great ſtraits, or are at a difficult point, ſo that they know not which way to turn themſelves. The Lord tells the Church of the *Jews*, (Hoſ. 2. 6.) *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that ſhe ſhall not find her paths*; that is, the paths of her former ſinful pleaſures, in which ſhe was wont to walk, and take delight. Now as the Lord hedges up the wayes of ſome, that they cannot do what they reſolve; ſo he hedges up the way of others, that they cannot reſolve what to do. In this ſence *Job* complains, *He hath fenced up my way.*

In circuitu circumædificatus ſum. Sept.

Hence note, *God ſometimes brings his people into great ſtraits.*

Many cannot tell how they come into trouble, and moſt know not which way to get out. The way of that good King was fenced up, when he cryed out, *Lord, we know not what to do.*

Secondly, *Job* ſpeaks this as a heightning of his troubles, which yields this Note,

It is an aggravation of our trouble, to ſee no way out of trouble.

The preſent enduring of any evil, doth not ſo much grieve us, as when we ſee our ſelves concluded and ſhut up in it. The fence which ſtops our way before us, afflicts more then the burden which is upon us. Thoſe afflictions which are not only a pain to us, but a priſon to us, are the greateſt trials of our patience. *He hath fenced up my way.*

And ſet darkneſs in my paths.] As his way was fenced or ſtopt with many difficulties, ſo his path was covered with darkneſs. *Job* cryed out (*Chap.* 3. 23.) *Wherefore is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* He ſpeaks there, as if being in an evil way, he had deſired darkneſs, that he might not ſee the evil of it; or as if becauſe there was a hedge in his way, it had been a trouble to him to have any light in his way.

There is a threefold light.
Firſt, The light of Knowledge.
Secondly, The light of Comfort.
Thirdly, The light of Life.

Job's way was ſo full of the darkneſs of trouble, that it was a trouble to him that he then enjoyed the light of life; and therefore under that temptation, and darkneſs of Spirit, he expoſtulates, *Why is light given?* That is, why is life given *to a man whoſe way is hid?* But as there, that kind of light in his way was a grief to him, ſo now darkneſs is his grief. *He hath ſet darkneß in my paths.* What is this darkneſs?

Darkneſs is taken diverſly in Scripture.

Firſt, Properly for the privation of the natural light, or Sun-light. *Job's* path was troubled no more with this ſort of darkneſs, then the paths of other men; without doubt, the Sun in the firmament ſhone freely enough upon him; therefore

Secondly, Darkneſs is taken improperly, and figuratively, for that which bears the image and likeneſs of darkneſs; Such was the darkneſs ſet in *Job's* path.

This figurative darkneſs is chiefly of two ſorts.

Firſt, 'Tis put for *affliction*, or the uncomfortableneſs of our condition, and that either external or internal, either of body and eſtate, or of mind and ſpirit.

Secondly, 'Tis put for our doubtfulneſs or unſatisfiedneſs, for our ignorance or neſcience about our condition. *Job* had all theſe darkneſſes in his path; yet I conceive, he in this place principally intends, either the darkneſs of inward trouble, which accompanied his outward troubles, or the darkneſs of ignorance and doubtfulneſs, what to do, which way to go in, or to get out of his troubles.

Hence obſerve, *God ſometimes quite withdraws all comfort from his people in affliction.*

Per hujuſmodi tenebras ut plurimum ſignificatur, mentis cæcitas, animi perplexitas, & hebetudo & privatio omnis conſilii. Bold.

Light is the portion of Saints, and yet they may walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light. Not only are their paths darkned by afflictions, but darkneſs is in that darkneſs; Darkneſs dwells upon their affections, and darkneſs covers the face of their underſtandings. They are at once in that darkneſs which is oppoſed to comfort, and in that darkneſs which is oppoſed to Counſel. They can neither tell how to rejoyce, nor what to adviſe. The Pſalmiſt affirms (*Pſal.* 112. 4.) *Unto the upright there ariſeth light in darkneß*; that is, comfort in affliction. He hath comforted others in affliction, and been light to them in their darkneſs, as is ſhewed in the latter end of that fourth, and in the fifth verſe, and therefore by way of gracious retaliation, the Lord will comfort him in his affliction, and command the light to riſe upon him in his darkneſs. Many righteous perſons have experimented the truth and ſweetneſs of this promiſe; yet not a few have been denyed it, and in ſtead of light riſing to them in darkneſs, have had darkneſs riſing in darkneſs, or darkneſs upon darkneſs; inward darkneſs upon outward darkneſs; the darkneſs of an afflicted Spirit, upon the darkneſs of an afflicted State; a darkneſs about what becomes them to do, mingled with the darkneſs of their greateſt ſufferings; their path is at once a painful one, and an obſcure one; they are full of pain when they go, and they are full of uncertainties and doubts, both when and where to go. *He hath ſet darkneß in my paths*; And,

Verſ. 9. **He hath ſtript me of my glory, and taken my Crown from my head.**

This verſe contains a ſecond compariſon, by which *Job* amplifies his affliction. He amplified it in the former verſe by comparing himſelf to a Traveller, who meets with thoſe two great diſcommodities in his way, *Croß-fences, and darkneß*: now he amplifies it by comparing himſelf to a man lately cloathed and furniſhed with rich and excellent ornamens, but now ſtript naked and bare. Thus in a literal ſence *Joſeph's* brethren dealt with him (*Gen.*

37. 23.) they ſtript him out of his coat, his coat of many colours (or pieces) that was on him. The ſame word is uſed in both places, *Job* complains of ſuch hard uſage;

פשט
In hiphil eſt ſpoliare altero ſuadente; ex verbo dicas Fecit ſpoliare, *ut ſignificet multos in ſuam calamitatem alicujus præcipuè hortatu & ſuaſu conſpiraſſe.*

He hath ſtript me of my glory.] The word which we render **Stript**, being in *Hiphil*, imports the doing of a thing at the perſwaſion of another; *He hath ſtript me of my glory*; That is, he hath cauſed, or encouraged others to ſtrip me of my glory.

'Tis the barbariſm of the worſt ſort of thieves and robbers, to ſtrip travellers, or ſuch as fall into their hands, and leave them naked. The word ſignifies alſo a greater cruelty, then ſtripping off the cloaths, even the ſtripping off the ſkin; ſo we tranſlate it (*Micah* 3. 3.) where the Prophet thus beſpeaks the oppreſſing Princes of *Iſrael*; *Hear, I pray you, O heads of* Jacob, *&c. Who alſo eat the fleſh of my people, and flay their ſkin from off them, and break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as fleſh within the caldron.* We give the ſame ſence here; *He hath ſtript me of my glory*; that is, he hath taken it off, even as the ſkin of a beaſt is flain off, he hath left me not only without cloaths, but without a ſkin. When a man hath all taken from him to his ſkin, then we may ſay his ſkin is taken off too. And that's the meaning of the Prophet *Micah*, when he ſaith, *They flay their ſkin from off them.* Not that they did formally exerciſe that act of inhumanity to flay off the ſkin. He that ſleeps (as we ſay) in a whole ſkin, may yet in this ſence have his ſkin flayed off. A man is then ſaid to have his ſkin flayed off, when he is ſtripped to his ſkin, and all is taken from him. Cloaths and other outward conveniences, are to a man as the ſkin is to a beaſt; therefore, they are ſaid to flay a man, or to ſtrip off his ſkin, who take away ſuch conveniencies. Thus to ſtrip a man to his ſhirt, is to flay off his ſkin; much more do they flay off the ſkin, who take ſhirt and all. *Job* ſeems here to bemoan the loſs, not of mean things, or of pure neceſſaries, without which he could not live, but of great things, the honours and ornaments of his life. *He hath ſtript me of*

כבד
Gravitas, pondus; Gloria hominem gravem reddit & ponderoſum.

My glory.] The word ſignifies that which is weighty, or ponderous; glory and honour are weighty, and they make the man weighty in the eſteem, or ballance of the world, who hath them. The Apoſtle calls it, *A weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. They that have no glory nor honour, either in them, or upon them, are light perſons, and they are lightly eſteemed.

But what was this glory, of which he was ſtript?

There are three ſorts of glory.

Firſt, There is Spiritual glory.

Secondly, There is Heavenly or Eternal glory.

Thirdly, There is Earthly or Temporal glory.

Firſt, We cannot underſtand it of the former. Spiritual glory, is the grace of the Spirit wrought in us. Grace is ſpiritual glory. Hence the Kings daughter, typifying the Church, is ſaid to be *all glorious within*, even here in the ſtate of grace (*Pſal.* 45. 13.) God will not ſtrip his meaneſt ſervant of this glory, and all the powers of earth or hell cannot. *Job* was cloathed with this glory when he was naked, and cryed out, *He hath ſtript me of my glory.*

Secondly, Nor can we underſtand it of the ſecond; It was not heavenly, or eternal glory, *Job* had not yet put on that cloathing, and therefore he could not be ſtripped of it.

Therefore we are to reſtrain it to the third ſort, Earthly glory. And earthly glory may be taken,

Firſt, Strictly, for that which we call fame, or renown in the world.

Secondly, We may take glory more generally for that thing, whatſoever it is, which gets us fame or glory in the world; that which gives any man preheminence above other men, that's his glory. Therefore the mercy of God is called his glory (*Rom.* 3. 23.) becauſe it renders him ſo glorious; And for that reaſon the *paſſing over a tranſgreſſion* is called the *glory of a man* (Prov. 19. 11.) Hence alſo the Woman is called the *glory of the man* (1 Cor. 11. 7.) *The man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man.* But is not the woman alſo the image and glory of God? The woman may be conſidered, either firſt, according to her ſpecifical nature, and ſo ſhe was created according to the image of God in righteouſneſs and holineſs, as well as the man; or ſecondly, according to her ſex and perſonal relation to her husband, and in that regard, the woman is not the image of God but the man, becauſe dominion (which is the mans priviledge) is the image of God, and not ſubjection, which is the womans duty (*Epheſ.* 5. 24.) And in this ſence the woman (though her Glory be inferior to the mans) is the Glory of the man; for if the ſubjection of the irrational creatures unto man, be his glory, or honour; then what an honour, what a glory is it for man to have ſo excellent a creature as the woman, a creature endued with reaſon, as himſelf is, ſubject to him? Hence upon the ſame common ground, Civil power, rule, and authority among men, are called the Glory of a man, and ſo alſo are worldly riches and ſubſtance, becauſe they occaſion mans eſteem, and put a kind of glory upon him in the world. In this language the ſons of *Laban* complain enviouſly of *Jacob* (Gen. 31. 1.) *And he heard the words of* Labans *ſons, ſaying,* Jacob *hath taken away all that was our fathers, and of that which was our fathers hath he gotten all this glory*; That is, all this ſubſtance and riches, his flocks and heards of cattel, he hath feathered his neſt well out of our fathers eſtate; this they call *his glory*. *Joſeph* gives charge to his brethren (*Gen.* 45. 13.) to make report to his father how it was with him; *Tell him* (ſaith he) *of all my glory in* Egypt; that is, let him know, how much I am enriched and advanced, being made, by the good hand of God with me; *A father to* Pharaoh, *and a ruler over all the land of* Egypt. *Joſeph* would have this told his father, out of affection to comfort him, not out of ambition to exalt himſelf. *Joſeph* did not vainly ſpread his plumes like *Haman*, who in a kind of ſelf-admiration, or in an extaſie of pride called for his friends, and *Zereſh* his wife, as ſoon as he came from Court, *and told them of the Glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things, wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the Princes and ſervants of the King.* Such promotion and advancement is the brighteſt ſhine of earthly glory; and whatſoever makes us ſhine with any brightneſs, is our glory here on earth. Hence likewiſe children are called *their fathers glory*. So that place is expounded (*Hoſ.* 9. 11.) As for *Ephraim*, *their glory ſhall flie away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.* The glory of *Ephraim* conſiſted in their numerous off-ſpring, according to the propheſie of *Jacob*; *His ſeed ſhall become a multitude of Nations* (Gen. 48. 19.) The departure or rather flight of this glory is ſignificantly threatned, when he ſaith, *Their children ſhall flie like a bird from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*; that is, either their women ſhall be barren and have no conception, or if they conceive, their infants ſhall ſuffer abortion and die in the womb; or if they live to the birth, they ſhall dye as ſoon as they are born; *Their glory ſhall flie away.*

Theſe external things, as children, riches, power, and places of authority, are called the glory of a man; becauſe they render him honourable, and *cloath* him (as the oppoſite word *ſtript* implies) with glory in the eyes of men. Under the Law the High Prieſts ornaments were called *garments for glory and beauty*. (Exod. 28. 2.) And we may call thoſe things which are our glory our garments.

Theſe are as garments,

Firſt, Becauſe they compaſs and cover us as round as a garment.

Secondly, Becauſe they keep us warm, and fence us from the cold of outward ſufferings.

Thirdly, They are as garments, becauſe there is an ornament as well as an uſefulneſs in them. Chriſt implies that *Solomon's* Glory was his cloathing and array, while he ſaith (comparatively to the Lillyes of the field) *Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of theſe* (Matth. 6. 29.) *Solomon* in his Glory, was *Solomon* at the height of his outward pomp and greatneſs. When *Michal* ſaw *David* dauncing before the Lord at the removal of the Ark; *How glorious was the King of* Iſrael *to day*, ſaith ſhe? That is, he was not at all glorious; ſhe thought he had laid his honour in the duſt, and ſtript himſelf of all his Kingly Glory, while he daunced before the Lord with all his might, girded with a linnen Ephod.

Gloriæ dictæ ſunt de te, i. e. quicquid poteſt te glorioſum reddere.

The Church is the *City of God*; and of that City *glorious things are ſpoken* (*Pſal.* 87. 3.) The Hebrew is, *Glories are ſpoken of thee, O thou City of God!* All the Cities of the world are the Cities of God, by his general Title of Soveraignty: For ſo the whole *world is the Lords, and the fulneſs of it* (Pſal. 50. 12.) But there is a City which is his by a ſpecial title of propriety: For as the Lord hath a peculiar people, ſo he hath a peculiar City; and indeed, the peculiar City of God is nothing elſe but the peculiar people of God, living in the order of the Goſpel. Now this City of God hath its Glories, that is, many things which make it glorious. The Cities of men have their Glories, and many have ſpoken glorious things of them. Their Glories are, Firſt, A pleaſant Situation. Secondly, Riches. Thirdly, Populouſneſs, or the multitude of Inhabitants. Fourthly, Beautiful Buildings. Fifthly, Strong Walls and Bulwarks. Sixthly, Good Laws. Seventhly, Good Magiſtrates. Theſe are the chief Glories of the Cities of men. But the Glories of the City of God are, Firſt, Truth of Doctrine. Secondly, Purity of Worſhip. Thirdly, The Unity of Profeſſors. Fourthly, and chiefly, The Preſence of God among them; of which the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeaks in the laſt verſe of his Propheſie; *The name of that City from that day ſhall be, The Lord is there.* Theſe are the Glories of the City of God, and thoſe are the glories of the Cities of men. Now as theſe publick eminencies and advantages are the glory of Cities, both in their civil and ſpiritual capacities; ſo perſonal eminencies and advantages are the glory of a ſingle or particular man: and when he who was rich, is made poor; when he who is ſtrong, becomes weak; when he who had many children, is made childleſs; when he who was exalted in great power and authority, is caſt down and contemned; then he may ſay, as *Phineas* his wife did when the Ark of God was taken, *Ichabod*, Where is the glory? Or as *Job* in the Text; *He hath ſtript me of my Glory*; and (which carries the ſame ſence and ſcope,)

He hath taken the Crown from off my head.

A Crown and Glory are of ſuch near alliance, that they are often put together as one thing. *Solomon* exhorts to *exalt Wiſdom*; and why? *She ſhall exalt thee, and a Crown of Glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee* (Prov. 4. 8, 9.) And the Lord promiſeth (*Iſa.* 28. 5.) That he will be *for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of beauty unto the reſidue of his people:* Yea, that *his people ſhall be a Crown of Glory in his hand* (Iſa. 62. 3.) All Crowns are glorious, and Glory is a Crown Hence the Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 2. 9.) *We ſee Jeſus, who was made a little lower then the Angels for the ſuffering of death*, that is, that he might be fitted to ſuffer death (which he had not been, unleſs he had been made a little lower then the Angels in one reſpect, namely, by his taking upon him our humane nature; for Jeſus Chriſt was made lower then the Angels, that he might ſuffer death, as well as by his ſuffering of death; now (ſaith the Apoſtle) we ſee Jeſus who was made thus low) *crowned with glory and honour*. Thus Glory and the Crown are joyned; and therefore as ſoon as *Job* had ſaid, *He hath ſtript me of my Glory*; he ſuitably adds, And,

מור
Quod hic vertitur auferre, contrarium eſt verbo אשר *quod vincire ſignificat, & veſti poteſt diſſolvit*

Conqueritur ſe regno ſpoliatum nonnulli ſuſpicantur Jobum *regem fuiſſe*, i. e. *regulum terræ* Uz. Dru.

He hath taken my Crown from my head.] Some render, *He hath untied*; Crowns being anciently tied to the heads of Princes.

The word *Crown* may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Properly, for that Royal Ornament of Kingſhip: Some interpet it ſo here; as if *Job* had complained that he had loſt his Kingdom, or was diveſted of Kingly dignity. 'Tis undeniable that he was a great man, a chief Magiſtrate, poſſibly a King.

Secondly, The word *Crown* may be taken improperly, or largely; And then whatſoever a man hath in any eminency, he is ſaid to be crowned with it; or that it is called his Crown. (*Pſal.* 8. 5.) *Thou haſt crowned him with honour and dignity*; that is, thou haſt given him abundance of honour and dignity (*Pſ.* 103. 4.) *Thou crowneſt him with thy loving kindneſs and mercy.* And when the year is plentifully ſtored with the fruits of the earth, the Lord is ſaid to *crown it with his goodneſs* (Pſal. 65. 12.) Thus *a virtuous woman is a Crown to her husband* (Prov. 12. 4.) The husband is the wives head, and a woman of ſtrength (as the Hebrew hath it) that is, a woman of ſtrong and maſculine virtues, is a Crown, that is, an Ornament, or an honour to her head. And thus, *Riches are a Crown to the wiſe* (Prov. 14. 24.) That is, they give him opportunity to do great things, and make excellent improvements of his wiſdom; he rules in buſineſſes like a King, his counſels are as powerful as commands, and he gives the Law to others; whereas *the poor mans wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard*, Ec. 9. 16.

Again, Some reſtrain *Job*'s Crown to his Children. *Thou haſt taken my Crown off my head*; that is, my Children. Children (*Prov.* 17. 6.) are called a Crown: *Childrens Children are the Crown of old men, and the glory of children are their Fathers.* Children are the Crown of old men in a twofold reſpect.

Firſt, Becauſe it is an honour to have children; and the more children, the more honour.

Secondly, Becauſe they encircle their parents as a Crown (*Pſal.* 127.) *They ſtand as Olive-plants round about the Table*; in which ſence, a knot or company of Drunkards are called a Crown (*Iſa.* 28. 1.) *Wo to the Crown of pride, to the Drunkards of* Ephraim. Drunkards (as ſome expound) are called a Crown, becauſe they ſit round, or becauſe they drink round, till the houſe goes round with them. Theſe are called the *Crown of pride*, or a proud company, becauſe as they drink their wits out of their heads, ſo all humility and civility out of their behaviour. This is true of literal Drunkards. Yet that Text may be expounded of Metaphorical Drunkards, whoſe minds are fluſter'd and overcome with the wine of their own preſumption and proud aerie imaginations.

Thirdly, Others refer it to his Acquaintance and ſpecial Friends, who (having been a comfort and an honour to him) he calls *his Crown*. So the Apoſtle ſalutes the *Philippians* (chap. 4. 1.) *My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown.* He ſpeaks as high of the *Theſſalonians* (1 Theſ. 2. 19.) *What is our hope, our joy, or Crown of rejoycing? Are not even ye in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming?* Converſion is the Crown or chief work of the Miniſtry, and converted perſons are the Crown or chiefeſt honour of a Miniſter. What is more deſirable or honourable then to convert, then to win ſouls to Chriſt, and to build them up in Faith? And thus any may call his godly friends and familiars, eſpecially ſuch as he hath been helpful to in their turning to God, his Crown.

Yet I rather take the word *Crown* here in the general notion of it (as Glory was in the former part of the verſe) for any earthly excellency. In which ſence the whole people of *Iſrael* cry out (*Lam.* 5. 16.) *The Crown is fallen from our head*; or, *The Crown of our head is fallen*, that is, all our priviledges and dignities are departed, now that we are carried Captives into *Babylon*.

> Hence obſerve, *The beſt of earthly excellencies may ſoon be taken from us.*

Glory and Crown expreſs the higheſt of worldly attainments or enjoyments; and yet behold *Job* ſtript of his Glory, and his Crown is taken away. Not only is *all fleſh graſs*, but all *the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field* (Iſa. 48. 6.) *The fleſh* of man is his natural conſtitution; *the goodlineſs* thereof is all moral and civil perfections: not only is man of a brittle conſtitution in nature, but all the perfections which he hath, on this ſide Grace, are brittle too. All goodlineſs is fading, only goodneſs or godlineſs is not. As the Prophet (by way of oppoſition) intimates, *verſ.* 8. *But the word of the Lord ſhall ſtand for ever.* As the Crowns of all men, or their chief delights, ſo the Crowns of Princes (who are the Crown or chief of men) decay and wither. Former ages have given teſtimony to it, and ſo hath ours. If the Scripture were ſilent in this point, yet experience ſpeaks it; and if experience had never ſpoken it to this day, nor given an inſtance of a decaying Crown, yet reaſon ſpeaks it, and tells us from the nature of all earthly things, that it may be ſo, though in the event it had not as yet ever been ſo. But when not only Reaſon and Scripture tell us this, but many and many experiences witneſs it, who can doubt it? Nor ſhall I here add any more to confirm it, having at the twelfth Chapter, as alſo from other paſſages of this Book, taken occaſion to touch this Argument, the changes of Princes and of all earthly things. Only take theſe two admonitions by way of Corollary from it.

Firſt, Set not your affections upon things here below; ſet them not upon earthly Glories, earthly Crowns. 'Tis no wiſdom to hold that faſt in our affections, which we cannot hold in our poſſeſſion; or love to that much, which may ſpeedily be loſt. *Solomon* reproves that unadviſedneſs with a vehement expoſtulation (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that that is not? for riches certainly make themſelves wings*, &c. While rich men make locks and bolts, while they make clogs and ſhackles to keep, yea, to impriſon their riches, their riches are as buſie *in making themſelves wings to flie away*. And becauſe few will believe or credit this report of riches, but judge it a very ſlander, therefore *Solomon* doubles the word for confirmation, which we render *Certainly*, riches do it. We are not certain of any thing that riches will do for us, only we may be certain, that they will do as little for us as they can, and a great deal leſs then we expect, when we hear for certain that they are making (not feet) but wings to be gone, yea, to fly from us. Now ſeeing it is ſo, is there not much reaſon in *Solomon*'s reproof, *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes?* or (as the Hebrew Text hath it with much elegance) *Wilt thou cauſe thine eyes to flie upon that which is not?* A covetous mans eye is as greedy after riches, as a ravenous Bird after its prey; and therefore he is, with much ſignificancy ſaid to cauſe his eyes to flie upon riches. But ſhall our eyes, much more our hearts (uſually the eye moves after the heart, though occaſionally the heart may move after the eye; but ſhall either our eyes or hearts) flie upon that which is flying, or make much haſte to get that, which makes ſo much haſte from us when we have gotten it? If our Crown of earthly Glories be not taken from us, yet it will take leave of us, or we muſt leave it.

Secondly, *Purſue ſpiritual, and make ſure of heavenly Glory*; lay hold upon that which may be held. You ſhall never be ſtript of the glory of the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt in Juſtification, nor of the glory of the Graces of Chriſt in Sanctification. Theſe ſpiritual Glories, theſe inward Glories, ſhall not be taken from you. The Soul that is once thus cloathed, ſhall never be found naked. The exerciſe of ſome Graces muſt be left off, becauſe there will be no uſe of them in Glory. But you ſhall never loſe or be ſtript of any Grace. And if we cannot be ſtript of the glory of Grace, then much leſs can we be ſtript of the Grace of Glory, or have the Crown of Glory taken from our heads. And as that Crown cannot be taken violently from our heads, ſo neither will it ever naturally wither or decay upon our heads. *The Crown of Righteouſneſs*, of which the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks (2 *Tim*. 4. 8.) is alſo (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks) *a Crown that fadeth not away* (1 Pet. 5. 4.) A learned Tranſlator conceives, that the Greek word, which we, with others render, *Fadeth not away*, is taken from the proper name of a Flower, of which anciently Crowns or Garlands were wont to be made. *The flower fadeth* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa*. 40. 7.) Yet this flower *Amarantus* (as Naturaliſts obſerve) fadeth not. Not that it never fadeth, but becauſe it retains its freſhneſs and beauty (though cropt) very long; therefore they call it (beyond the nature of any other flowers) *the unfading flower*. Whether the Apoſtle (ſome conceive he did not) did allude to this Flower or not in the uſe of this word, or only attended the Radical meaning of it, is not much material to the point; ſeeing this is clear, that his intendment is to advance the glorious ſtate of the Saints after this life, by the everlaſtingneſs of it, having alſo called it at the fourth verſe of the firſt Chapter, *An inheritance incorruptible, and that fadeth not away*. This Crown, for the beauty and ſweetneſs of it, is like a Crown of Flowers, but in the continuance and laſtingneſs of it, it is like a Crown of Gold, the moſt durable and pureſt Metal. Yea, to ſhew that there is no ſeed or tendency of death or decay in it, it is called *a Crown of Life*. (Jam. 1. 12.)

Bez. *in loc.*

Camer. *Myroth.*

We read of a Crowned Woman (*Revel*. 12. 1.) *Behold, there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a Woman cloathed with the Sun, having the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a Crown of twelve Stars.* Every true Believer is cloathed (in his proportion) as this Woman (who is the Repreſentative of all Believers) with the Sun, that is, with Chriſt; and hath the Moon, that is (the Glory, and the Crown) the beſt of earthly things under his feet; as for his head, that's crowned with Stars, celeſtial excellencies, or the truth and purity of that Goſpel-Doctrine which the twelve Apoſtles (thoſe Stars of the firſt or greateſt magnitude) firſt preached from the mouth of Jeſus Chriſt, *that bright morning-Star*, and hath ſince in all Ages been held forth by all faithful Miniſters, who are *Stars in the right hand of Chriſt* (Rev. 1. 16, 20.) With this Glory Saints are crowned here, and they ſhall be crowned with the fruit of it for ever hereafter. *Job's* Complaint ſhall never be heard in Heaven, which hath often been heard on Earth, and may again be quickly heard from their mouths, whoſe crowns in the opinion of the wiſeſt men, ſit faſteſt on their heads; *He hath ſtript me of my Glory, and taken the Crown from my head.*

VERS. 10, 11, 12.

He hath deſtroyed me on every ſide; and I am gone: and and my hope hath he removed like a tree.

He hath alſo kindled his wrath againſt me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.

His troops come together, and raiſe up their way againſt me, and encamp round about my Tabernacle.

JOB ſtill continues his Complaint; he had done it before in divers alluſions, he takes up three more in this Context, to ſhadow his ſorrowful condition.

The firſt is taken from Buildings in the former part of the tenth verſe.

The ſecond from Trees, in the latter part of the ſame verſe.

The third from War, in the eleventh and twelfth verſes.

Verſe 10. **He hath deſtroyed me on every ſide.**

The word here rendred to *deſtroy*, ſignifies any ruining work, yet moſt properly the ruining of a Building; *He hath deſtroyed me* (ſay we.) *He hath pulled me aſunder member by member* (ſaith another) as a houſe is demoliſht part by part, or room after room, till, as Chriſt foretels the demolition of the Temple, *There ſhall not be left one ſtone upon another*. Thus (ſaith *Job*) *He hath deſtroyed me*. The Hebrew Text is in the Future; *He will deſtroy*; as if *Job's* fear had propheſied utter deſtruction to himſelf; yet moſt tranſlate (as we) in the preterperfect tenſe, *He hath deſtroyed me*. And though *Job* ſaith *me*, yet we are not to confine this deſtruction to his perſon, but muſt extend it to his Family and whole Eſtate; as the next words intimate; *He hath deſtroyed me*

נתץ *Confringere demolire, deſtruere; exprimit omnimodam deſtructionẽ ædificiis propriè convenit.* סבך *pro* סטבוך Merc.

Round about.] 'Tis ſad enough to be deſtroyed in any one part; but *Job* was deſtroyed in every part; therefore he adds, *He hath deſtroyed me round about*: This heightens the ſence. *Job* ſhewing the care of God in the Fabrick of his Body, beſpeaks him thus (*chap*. 10. 8.) *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about*: He that is made and faſhioned, is made and faſhioned *round about*; yet this addition *round about*, hath its force, noting the exact and particular care of God in ſetting up the whole of his outward man in every part. Here the work of judgment is as large and exact as the work of mercy once was: *He was formerly faſhioned round about*, and now *he was deſtroyed round about*.

Further, This expreſſion, *round about*, may have either its reference ſtrictly to a Building of defence, a Fort or Caſtle, which when it is beſieged (as he proſecutes it in the latter words) when Forces lie round about it, they batter and aſſault it on every ſide, till at laſt they level and ſlight it on all ſides, not leaving one Tower or pinacle ſtanding. Or it may refer to the alluſion of a Tree, in the next clauſe of this verſe, which, when we would root up, we dig round about it, and then pull it down. *Thou haſt deſtroyed me round about*. It was the envious and malicious complaint of Satan (*chap*. 1. 10.) that God had made an hedge or wall (which was as an impregnable fortification) about *Job's* eſtate and perſon. *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide?* He doth not only ſay, Thou haſt made an hedge about him, *ſc*. his perſon, and about his houſe; and about all that he hath (which is very particular) but he ſubjoynes *on every ſide*. *Job* once had an hedge round about him on every ſide, but now his defence was on every ſide removed. This complaint of *Job* ſtands in direct oppoſition to that of Satan.

Hence obſerve, *That even univerſal deſtruction (in regard of outward things) may be the lot of the beſt and holieſt of the ſervants of God.*

Job was not only touched (as Satan deſired) but deſtroyed; not only were the pinnacles of his houſe pull'd down, or the battlements and beauty of it defaced, but, the pillars of it looſed, and the foundation razed; all that was deſtroyable was deſtroyed. The ſervants of God have ſomewhat that can never be deſtroyed; 'tis our comfort, that though all *round about us* is periſhing, yet we have ſomewhat *within us* that ſhall never periſh.

Thou haſt deſtroyed me round about: and I am gone.

Excedo è vivis, & jam me exceſſiſſe dicas, mortuum, ſc. *non moribundum.*
Pined.

That is, according to the Arabick Idiom, *I am dead*; dying is a going away, *I am gone*; I am a loſt man, I am removing from the land of the living.

I am gone.] He was not gone when he ſpake this, and yet he ſaith, *I am gone.*

That which we look upon as certainly future, or inevitably to come to paſs, is to us as if it were preſent, or already paſt.

That good which we are ſure to have, is as good as had; and that evil which we either muſt feel, or have deſerved to feel, is as already felt. *Abimeleck* having deſerved preſent death, the *Lord* tells him; *Thou art but a dead man, becauſe of the woman whom thou haſt taken* (Gen. 20. 3.) becauſe in ſtrictneſs of juſtice, 'twas death to take another mans wife, therefore he is ſpoken to as a man among the dead. So becauſe believers are ſure of eternal life, therefore the Scripture expreſſeth them in a preſent poſſeſſion of life, or as *being paſt from death to life*, as if they had not only ſome beginnings, and foretaſtes of it by faith and hope, but were in the full fruition and viſions of it. Thus here becauſe all outward appearances and probabilities ſpake *Job* going out of the world and dying, therefore he concludes himſelf gone out of the world and dead. *I am gone,*

And he hath removed my hope as a tree.

Recedere aut abire facit ſpem.

He hath made my hope to depart, or go away, ſo in ſtrictneſs of the letter; as if he had ſaid, *I am gone, and my hope is gone*; and the reaſon why he ſaid *he was gone*, was, becauſe his hope was gone; hope is the moſt ſtayed comfort that we have, the laſt that departs, yea that which can ſcarce depart; hope cannot be reckoned among our *moveables*, for it is compared to an Anchor, and to an Anchor that will not drag; *We have* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 6. 19.) *this hope as an Anchor of the ſoul, both ſure and ſtedfaſt*; yet, *Job* perceived his Anchor moving, yea *removed.*

He hath removed my hope.] My hope is gone; what hope was this which was ſo movable? It was his hope about or for worldly things; *Our hope about moveables, is moveable*; the hope we have about the world, is like the faſhion of the world, which paſſeth away. *Job's* friends had laboured much to encourage and revive his hope, the hope of a reſtitution to honour and greatneſs in this life. But, ſaith he, *my hope*, this kind of hope is removed, 'tis gone; he had given ſufficient proof that he had a hope which was not gone, but was indeed the Anchor of his ſoul, *ſure and ſtedfaſt*, and that it *ſtood faſt as Mount Sion*, in the midſt of all the ſhakings of this worldly hope, and could not be removed.

He hath removed my hope.] As we are to take it for a worldly hope in general, ſo ſome reſtrain it to his hope of Children; Parents have much and many hopes about their Children: A good child is uſually call'd a hopeful child; Children hope to have an inheritance from their Parents, and Parents hope to have comfort in their Children. He that hath no hope of Children, is called *a drie tree* (Iſa. 56. 9.) Here *Job* bemoans (according to this Interpretation) both the loſs of the Children which he had, and his hopeleſneſs of having any more Children, under the metaphor of a dry tree. *He hath removed my hope as a tree.*

But I conceive we are not thus to ſtraiten his ſence; for not only (to his apprehenſion) was his hope of Children removed, but his hope of life, and of any good which concerned this preſent life. *He hath removed my hope*

עץ *Indifferens eſt ad lignū viride & aridum aut exciſum ſignificandum.*

As a tree.] The word ſignifies both a tree growing, and a tree cut down, or rooted up; here we muſt reſtrain it to the latter; he hath removed my hope as a tree which is removed or pulled out of the ground. *Job* proſecuted this metaphor (*Chap.* 14. 7.) *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again, and that the tender branches thereof will not ceaſe, though the root thereof wax old.* There he ſpake of a hopeful tree, but here he ſpeaks of a tree that hath no hope, or of a tree of which there is no hope; *My hope is removed as a tree*; that is, as a tree of which there is no hope that ever it ſhould ſprout again; for though a tree that is cut down may ſprout again, the root being left in the ground; yet when a tree is pulled up by the roots, there is no hope that it ſhould ever grow again. Indeed a tree that is pulled out of one ground by the roots, may yield hopes of growing, if it be planted in another ground; and thus tree's are ſometimes removed out of the ground, not to the fire, but to a fitter ſoyl. And thus (though I do give it for the meaning of the Text) *Job's* hope was indeed removed as a tree, it was removed from earth to heaven, from things ſeen and temporal, to things which are not ſeen, but are eternal. *My hope haſt thou removed as a tree.*

I have (upon other Texts of this Book) ſpoken of the nature of hope in general, and of hope about worldly things, and therefore I paſs it here; only take this Obſervation,

That worldly hopes are periſhing and looſable.

The Apoſtle aſcribes an eternity to ſpiritual hope (1 *Cor* 13. 13.) *Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, theſe three*; Spiritual graces continue, but ſpiritual gifts are ſubject, not only to declining, but to vaniſhing. Charity never faileth (*verſ.* 8.) *But whether there be propheſies, they ſhall fail*; *whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe*; *whether there be knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away*: but *faith, hope,* and *charity*, are laſting graces, there is no corruptibility in them. In heaven we ſhall be above hope, being taken up to the fruition of that which we hoped for; yet we cannot ſay, that then our hope ſhall be removed, but then we ſhall move in a ſphear beyond hope. Hope is not deſtroyed, but perfected by fruition, as faith is perfected by viſion. Saints may have their hopes of earthly things removed, but themſelves remove into thoſe heavenly things which they hoped for. The tree of this hope ſhall ſtand and flouriſh for ever; but of their other hope, they may ſay as *Job, He hath removed it as a tree.*

Verſ. 11. **He hath alſo kindled his wrath againſt me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.**

Job proceedeth to ſet forth his affliction by a third Alluſion. His affliction was very great, in that his hope was removed; but this made his affliction moſt grievous, that there was an appearance of the wrath of God againſt him in it, and the kindlings of divine diſpleaſure. God doth ſometimes remove the hopes of his faithful people, in regard of worldly things, and yet manifeſts his love to them, in ſpiritual things; they feel not the kindlings of an enemy-like wrath, but the warm beams of a friendly, yea of a fatherly kindneſs in their fiery tryals; but when theſe two meet, when at once earthly hopes are removed, and a fire from heaven kindled, who can bear it? The Prophet *Malachy* queſtions (*Chap.* 3. 2.) *Who may abide the day of his coming? and who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiners fire.* If none can abide the coming of Chriſt with *refining fire*, then who ſhall abide it, when he comes with *conſuming fire?* The fire of divine holineſs is very terrible, then O how terrible is the fire of divine wrath?

He hath kindled his wrath againſt me.] In this and the next verſe, the compariſon is taken from War (as before from trees and buildings) in which God is compared to ſome great Monarch of the world, who being exceedingly offended, and provoked, his anger kindles againſt his enemies, and he ſends his Troops and Armies, to incamp againſt them; *His wrath is kindled againſt me*; and he *counteth me as one of his enemies*.

War begins at anger and wrath; it ſtirs firſt within, and then it breaks out; *Whence come wars* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, Chap. 4. 1.) *and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your luſts, which fight in your members?* Were there not a fight in our ſelves, there would be no fighting with others. There is ſomewhat in the Lord, proportionable to this; Whence are the wars that he hath with the Creature? Their original is deſcribed after the manner of men, from ſome kindlings of jealouſie and wrath in him; not that there is any perturbation in the heart of God, he is infinitely above it; but he is thus deſcribed, after the manner of men, the flame of whoſe wars begins with a fire of wrath; therefore ſaith *Job*, *He hath kindled his wrath*.

חרה *Exarſit, incenſus, aduſtus fuit, hinc latinū ira & iraſcor.*

The word **kindled** in the Hebrew comes from a root, which ſignifies anger, becauſe anger is the kindling of a fire in our boſoms; and from that Hebrew word it is conceived, that the Latine word *ira* is derived, it being as near in ſound, as it is in ſence. Wrath is a fire, and is therefore properly expreſſed by a word ſignifying the heat of fire; wrath in it ſelf is hot, and burning, here the fire is made hot, *He hath kindled his wrath*, theſe put together, note fierce wrath (*Pſal*. 2. 12.) *If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little*. The wrath of God is a fire, but ſometimes it is as a fire not kindled; but if his wrath be kindled but a little, it makes a dreadful fire. 'Tis the nature of fire to be hot, but fire is not only hot but fierce when 'tis kindled (*Numb*. 32.14.) *Ye are riſen up in the place of your forefathers to kindle the fierce anger of God*; the kindled anger of God, is the extreameſt anger of God.

I ſhall not ſtay upon the deſcription of the wrath of God, having ſpoken of it at large (*Chap*. 14. 13.) where *Job* as dreading the appearance of the wrath of God, begs with earneſtneſs, *O that thou wouldeſt keep me in ſecret, until thy wrath be paſt*. Only note here, that the wrath of God (as was touched before) and the kindlings of it, do not imply any paſſion or change in God, he hath infinite ſerenity and quietneſs in his breaſt for ever: what fires ſoever he kindleth in the Creature, himſelf is alwayes in one mind. The Scripture ſpeaks thus in reference to thoſe effects expreſſed upon man, not in reference to any impreſſion wrought in God. When that is done upon the creature which teſtifies the fierceneſs of anger, then anger is ſaid to kindle in God. One of the Ancients tells us, That the wrath of God againſt ſinners is nothing elſe but the puniſhment of ſin; Or the wrath of God is his holy and moſt bleſſed Will, everlaſtingly burning with hatred againſt ſin, and turning from it in high diſpleaſure; even as man diſcovers his hatred of thoſe things which are againſt his will, and lets out his ſpirit in anger againſt them. Had not ſin broke forth in man, there had never been any appearance of anger in God. As the wrath of God draws out puniſhment, ſo ſin is the occaſion which draws out the wrath of God. Yet the wrath which *Job* ſpeaks of here, was not kindled upon that account; God himſelf declaring that he was moved to deſtroy him without any ſuch cauſe. That fire was kindled for the tryal and exerciſe of his patience, not for the puniſhment of his wickedneſs. *He hath kindled his wrath againſt me*.

Ira Dei eſt delinquentium pæna, furor Dei eſt ſupplicium peccatorum. Chryſ.

Hence note, Firſt, *The wrath of God is terrible*.

A fire kindled to warm is comfortable: *Aha* (ſaith he in the Prophet *Iſa*. 44. 16.) *I am warm, I have ſeen the fire*; but a fire kindled only to conſume is dreadful. The wrath of God is ſometimes as a fire raked up, ſometimes as a fire blown up: *The light of* Iſrael *ſhall be for a fire, and his holy One for a flame, and it ſhall burn and devour his thorns and his bryars* (ſuch are all his enemies who ſcratch and tear his people) *in one day*. The Lord is *a conſuming fire* to his own (*Heb*. 12.29) for the burning out of their corruptions; but he is *a conſuming fire* to the wicked, and unbeliever, for the burning up of their perſons; he is a conſuming fire to theſe, and yet they ſhall not conſume; he is a fire, whoſe heat is unſufferable, and yet they muſt ſuffer it; the fire of his wrath is unquenchable by any thing but the blood of Chriſt; and the fire of the wrath of Chriſt is altogether unquenchable. *If his wrath be kindled, who alone quencheth the wrath of the Father, how ſhall his wrath be quenched, or who ſhall quench it?* Pſalm 2. 12. Note,

Secondly, *A godly man may be under ſome preſent apprehenſions of wrath*.

He hath kindled his wrath againſt me. *Job* was not only ſencible of the abatement of his outward comforts, but he felt ſome ſparklings of the wrath of God, in the abſence of inward comforts. Chriſt hath delivered believers *from the wrath to come*, yet even they may ſee and feel wrath kindling and coming upon them.

Thirdly, *The apprehenſions of wrath are more grievous to a believer, then all his other ſufferings*.

It is poſſible to bear all ſorrows with comfort, which are ſeparate from wrath. The Plague of Thunder and Hail upon *Egypt* was grievous, but that which made it very grievous was to ſee Fire mingled with the Hail (*Exod*. 9. 24.) 'Tis the minglings of the Fire of divine anger with the ſtorm of Thunder and Hail, the troubles of this life, which renders them ſo grievous to be born. 'Tis wrath which makes Hell ſo terrible: the Fire in Hell would be (comparatively to what it is) but as a warm Sun, did not the breath, that is, the wrath of the Lord *like a ſtream of brimſtone kindle it*, as it is ſaid of *Tophet* (*Iſa*.30.33.) As the wrath of God makes Hell ſo hot to the damned for ever, ſo it is ſome appearance of wrath, which makes affliction ſo hot to believers for the preſent. *He hath kindled his wrath againſt me*.

And counteth me as one of his enemies.

Job ſpake this language before (*Chap*. 13. 24.) *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and holdeſt me for thine enemy?* there he troubledly expoſtulates the matter with God about it, here he affirms directly; *He hath kindled his wrath againſt me, and counteth me as one of his enemies*; though the words carry the ſame general ſence, yet we have ſomewhat here worthy our obſervation and diſcuſſion, beſides what was there held forth.

חשב

He hath counted.] That is, He hath reckoned and ſet me down, or caſt me up in the number of his enemies; all thoſe tranſlations the word will bear.

Again, **He hath counted me as his enemies.**] The Text is plural in the Hebrew, not as we render, *As one of his enemies*, but, *as his enemies*. That is, as a deadly, not as a common enemy; as if I were ſuch an enemy to him, as had the enmity of all his enemies contracted together in me; he counts me, not as a ſingle enemy, but as an Hoſt of enemies. It is a frequent Hebraiſm in Scripture, to put a word of the plural number, to note ſome ſpecial thing or perſon in the ſingular. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Jephtha*, *that after he had judged* Iſrael *ſix years, he died, and was buried in the Cities of* Gilead (*Judg*. 12. 7.) that is, in one of the Cities of *Gilead*. Again, The godly is *like a tree planted by the rivers of waters* (Pſal. 1. 3.) That is, as a tree planted by ſome eminent river of water; ſo here, *He hath counted me as his enemies*, that is, as one of his enemies, yet ſuch a one as may ſtand for all the reſt.

In fonte eſt, ſicut adverſarios ſuos; i. e. *ſicut unum ex adverſariis ſuis.*

Further, *Job* doth not ſpeak abſolutely, *he hath counted me an enemy*; as if God had proceeded againſt him (*hoſtili animo*) with the heart of an enemy, but he expreſſeth himſelf comparatively or with a qualification, by a note of ſimilitude, *he hath accounted me as his enemies*, or, *like an enemy*.

Præclarè dicit tanquam, *vel,* quaſi. *Neq; enim aut Hoſtili animo aut etiā perturbato Deus ſupplicia irrogat.* Nicet.

Job did not ſuſpect, much leſs conclude that God had written his name in the catalogue of his enemies, no, he knew God was his friend, and his heart told him that he was Gods friend, that he bare no ill will to God; yet (ſaith he, though ſuch be my ſtate, though I know God loves me, and though he knows I love him, yet) he hath counted me (that is) he hath carried himſelf towards me, and dealt with me as with one of his enemies; his heart is with me, but his hand is againſt me.

Hence note, Firſt, *God is really a friend to his people, yet he ſometimes deals with them appearingly, as with enemies*.

The love of God is everlaſting and unchangeable to his people, but his diſpenſations towards them have many changes. Hypocrites make a ſhew as if they were

Gods friends, and God makes a ſhew againſt the ſincere, as if they were his enemies. Hypocrites are as Gods friends, and God deals with them as with his friends; they give him an outſide profeſſion, and he often gives them outſide comforts, and proſperity, he deals with them as if they were his friends: now (I ſay) as hypocrites declare a formal friendſhip or love to God, ſo God declares a formal enmity againſt many who are ſincere, that is, he gives them the uſage of an enemy, the wounds and ſtroaks of an enemy. As the Lord deſcribes the formal profeſſions and practices of love and ſervice to him (*Iſa.* 58. 2.) *They ſeek me daily, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the Ordinances of their God*; So, we may deſcribe the Lords outward diſpenſations and providences of wrath to his; he ſmites them daily, and afflicts them in all their wayes, as a Nation that doth unrighteouſneſs, and hath utterly forſaken the Ordinances of God. Thus he is ſaid to count them as enemies when he acts towards them as we do towards thoſe whom we indeed count our enemies, as was more at large ſhewed upon that place before-cited, *Chap.* 13.

Further, take notice of theſe two things.

Firſt, That God hath enemies; ſome are even fighters againſt God himſelf; And theſe are of two ſorts.

Firſt, Natural enemies, or enemies by Nature, and thus every man that is born, is born his enemy (*Col.* 1. 21.) *Being enemies in their minds, by reaſon of wicked works.* All men are enemies, with all their hearts to God, till he doth overcome and change their hearts (*Rom.* 5. 10.) *While we were yet enemies, Chriſt died for us*; thus all are enemies.

Secondly, God hath enemies by practiſe, ſuch are all they who live and continue in ſin, theſe upon the matter, proclaim and maintain war againſt God himſelf. Sin is not only a turning from God, but a turning againſt him. Theſe enemies are alſo of two ſorts, either ſecret, or open. Moſt are ſubtle enemies to God, going on cloſely in wayes of ſin, and keeping ſecret correſpondence with the luſts of their own hearts, and the temptations of Satan. Others are profeſſed and open enemies to God, they even ſend defiances to Heaven, and will do what they liſt, let God do or ſay what he pleaſe. Such a one was *Pharaoh*, and ſuch was *Julian*, ſuch were they (*Luke* 19. 14.) who ſaid, *We will not have this man reign over us*: of whom Chriſt ſaith, (*verſ.* 27.) *But thoſe mine enemies that would not have me to reign over them, bring them forth and ſlay them before me.*

Again, What he ſaid before, *God hath deſtroyed me on every ſide, and kindled his wrath againſt me*, is reſolved into, or wrapt up in this, *He hath counted me as an enemy*; ſo that, to be an enemy, is made the meaſure, or the ſignification of the worſt eſtate imaginable. He that counts a man his enemy (according to the rule of nature) counts the leaſt good too much for him, and the greateſt evil too little for him. As it implies the greateſt manifeſtation of love and tenderneſs, when it is ſaid, God deals with us, *as with ſons* (Heb. 12. 7.) And ſpares us *as a Father ſpares his Son that ſerveth him* (Mal. 3. 17. A Son may expect, by the laws of Nature, the moſt gentle uſage, and kind acceptance from a Father) ſo it implies the hotteſt revelation of wrath and diſpleaſure, when it is ſaid, that God counts us, or deals with us, as with an enemy. God keeps his friends *as the apple of his eye*, (Pſal. 17.) which notes their ſafeſt keeping; but as for the perſons and lives of his enemies, he caſts them out as out of the midſt of a Sling, which notes their utter periſhing. Hence obſerve,

That it is a moſt dangerous condition to be in a ſtate of enmity againſt God.

Who would live in ſuch a condition as aſſures him of nothing but death? What do enemies expect leſs at our hands? And what can the enemies of God expect leſs at his hand, in whoſe hand the breath of his enemies alwayes is, and all their wayes? God hath given us a rule to love our enemies, *If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirſt give him drink* (Rom. 12. 20.) And in doing this as we obey God, ſo we imitate him, *and declare our ſelves the Children of our Father which is in Heaven*; *for he maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good: and ſendeth rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt* (Matth. 5. 45.) But though God doth this often and long, yet he doth not this alwayes, or ever; nor doth he expect that we ſhould do this alwayes, or to all our enemies. It may be ſin to us not to take vengeance on ſome who are our enemies, even as it would be ſin to avenge our ſelves on any. And if men ſhould quite ſlacken juſtice, and not take vengeance on thoſe who are Gods enemies and theirs, yet God will. But if we be found continuing under a ſtate of enmity againſt God, he will not act towards us according to that law which he enjoyns us, he will not feed ſuch enemies, nor will he give them water to drink; He will not make his Sun to ſhine upon them, but command his fire to conſume them; and he will rain, not fatning and refreſhing ſhowers, but *ſnares, fire, and brimſtone, this ſhall be* (their drink) *the portion of their cup* (Pſal. 11. 6.) 'Tis true, *When we were yet enemies, he ſent his Son to dye for us*, there he acted up to the higheſt degree of that law of love; yet they that believe not on his Son, but ſtand out in rebellion againſt him, ſhall ſurely dye. God hath not prepared bread and water, but fire and brimſtone for preſumptuous ſinners and unbelievers. This abuſed love will turn to the hotteſt wrath. And as God hath ſhewed himſelf the beſt friend to his enemies; ſo he will be their worſt enemy. God will appear an eternal enemy to his enemies in the next life, and he will not ſpare them in this. *Moſes* gives them a dreadful alarm (*Deut.* 32. 40.) *I lift up my hands to heaven, and ſay, I live for ever: if I whet my glittering ſword, and my hand take hold of judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me: I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (and my ſword ſhall devour fleſh) and that with the blood of the ſlain from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoyce, O ye Nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his ſervants, and will render vengeance to his adverſaries.* As the love of God, in many paſſages of Scriptures, triumphs in lofty and pureſt ſtrains of rhetorick over all the unworthineſs of man, ſo doth his wrath in this over all the oppoſitions of man. The enemies of God ſhall be ſure to ſmart and fall; and therefore 'tis well for thoſe that have to do with enemies, if they can but make it out, that their enemies are Gods enemies; for as God will ſurely bleſs thoſe who bleſs his people, and curſe thoſe who curſe them: ſo when his enemies are curſed by us, he curſeth them too; and while we oppoſe them, he joyns with us; whenſoever we go forth againſt the Lords enemies, we go forth *to the help of the Lord* (Judg. 5. 23.) therefore the Lord will help us to deſtroy them. The Lord will deſtroy them according to his own decree, though we ſhould forbear or withdraw our help; much more will he deſtroy them when we help on the execution of his decree. *The Lord* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 110. 1.) *ſaid unto my Lord* (that is, the Father ſaid to the Son, whom he hath given, as for a Mediator to his people, ſo a Lord over them) *ſit thou at my right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy footſtool*: that is, till I ſubdue them all under thee, or make them fall before thee. All the enemies of God are under this decree, and this decree (as the Prophet *Zephany* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 2. 2.) *will bring forth.* The decree (like a woman with child) will be in travail, till it hath brought forth this judgment againſt all the enemies of Chriſt; yea though they ſit upon thrones, and have the Nations under their feet, yet they muſt be made his footſtool. *Job* found hard ſtroaks from the hand of God, who did only count him as an enemy; what then ſhall they receive, who are his enemies indeed?

Job proceeds to give us a more particular deſcription of Gods dealing with him, as with one of his enemies, ſtill proſecuting the Allegory of War.

Verſ. 12. **His troops come together, and they raiſe up their way againſt me, and encamp round about my Tabernacle.**

Here are three things conſiderable.

Firſt, The gathering of the Army; *His troops come together.*

Secondly, Their march; *They raiſe up their way againſt me.*

Thirdly, Their Siege; *They encamp round about my Tabernacle.*

In all which, *Job* elegantly deſcribes the enemy-like proceedings of God with him.

His troops come together.] The Hebrew is *Gad*, the name of one of the Patriarchs (*Gen.* 49. 19.) *Gad, A troop ſhall overcome him; but he ſhall overcome at the laſt*; Both words are of the ſame root, *Gad* ſignifies *a troop*, and to *overcome*.

His troops come together againſt me.] But what are theſe troops?

I anſwer, They are the ſeveral afflictions and troubles which God muſtered and called together to charge *Job* with. Many horſemen make a troop, and ſo do many afflictions; *Job* had ſo many as made not only a troop, but an Army; yea, a great Army. He ſpeaks not only of a ſingle troop, but of many troops; *He hath brought his troops againſt me.*

Copiæ Dei ſunt omnis generis calamitates. Merl.

Some troops in the Letter aſſaulted *Job*, troops of *Caldeans* and of *Sabeans*; but beſides theſe, his ſickneſs and his ſores, his pains and his poverty, the anguiſh and terrors of his ſoul; all theſe were troops, which came upon him as armed men; yea, his very friends who were about his bed, were as troops of enemies to him; at beſt, they were but miſerable comforters to him.

This coming together of his troops may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, *They come together*; that is, they come all at once, or at one time.

Vox originalis non ſolum temporis eſt, ſed etiam conſenſus & voluntatis ejuſdem. Ὁμοθυμαδὸν δὲ ἦλθον τὰ πειρατήρια αὐτοῦ ἐπ' ἐμοί. Sept.

Secondly, *They come together*, that is, they come with one conſent, they have (as it were) made a compact or a confederacy, they are united as one man to afflict my ſoul. So the word is rendred (*Pſal.* 55. 14.) *We took ſweet counſel together*, that is, we were of one heart, we agreed ſweetly in our counſels. *Job* had many troubles, but they were all of a mind; they came all upon him by orders from one hand, and they came with one heart. The *Septuagint* expreſs it by the ſame word, which is uſed in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles (*Chap.* 2. 46.) to ſhew the oneneſs of the pure primitive Church in the worſhip of God. *They continued dayly with one accord* (or unanimouſly) *in the Temple*, &c.

Thus the Army is levied, and the troops are come to their Rendevouz, we ſhall ſee them in their march preſently; take only a Note or two from thoſe words, *His troops are come together.*

First, *Afflictions are as Gods Army.*

Here are troops of them. The name of God is, *Lord of Hoſts*; and as he raiſeth his hoſt to ruine his enemies, ſo alſo to chaſten his own people.

Secondly obſerve, *The Lord ſends many afflictions upon one man at one time.*

Here is not a ſingle affliction to a ſingle man, but a ſingle man to many, to a multitude of afflictions. Here was a man and an Army; *Job* and a whole Hoſt grapling together: *Many are the troubles of the righteous* (ſaith the *Pſalm*) And, *now ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations*, ſaith the Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* 1. 6.) And why were they in manifold temptations? The next verſe anſwers; 'twas for the trial of their faith. It is a ſufficient trial of humane ſtrength and manhood, to combate with one man; he is counted more then a man, a Giant, who contends with two. But for the trial of divine ſtrength and faith, manifold temptations are but ſufficient. A little of God in ono man raiſeth up his ſpirit to do more then many men; even to combat with many troops of temptation.

Thirdly, From this alluſion note, That, *Afflictions are all at Gods command.*

They are his troops, he is their General; they move according to his orders. As God raiſeth theſ troops, ſo 'tis he that ſends them directions what to do, and whither to go; they come when he bids them, and they go when he bids them; when he ſaith, Charge, they charge; and when he ſaith, Retreat, they retreat; according to the ſound of the Trumpet which they hear from heaven, they move on earth. We may ſay to theſe temptations, as he in the Prophet, to the ſword, (*Jer.* 47. 6.) *O thou ſword of the Lord, how long wilt thou be ere thou be quiet? put up thy ſelf into the ſcabbard, reſt, and be ſtill:* Here was a cry to the ſword to be quiet; but the ſword anſwered, or the anſwer was made in behalf of the ſword, *How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt* Askelon, *and againſt the Sea-ſhore, there hath he appointed it.* It is to no purpoſe to ſpeak to the ſword to be quiet, you muſt ſpeak to the General, to him that commands in chief, and is cloathed with a Commiſſion for the war. What can the ſword do? It muſt proceed till he that drew and called it forth, recals and remands it back into the ſcabbard. 'Tis thus alſo in this war or fight of afflictions. The ſoul having been long preſſed and aſſaulted by them, may perhaps cry out to them, O ye ſorrows of the Lord, when will ye depart? O ye pains and ſufferings, when will ye ceaſe? But they anſwer, how can we depart? We are Gods troops, he hath given us a charge to come together againſt you; and with you we muſt ſtay till God call us off?

And ſeeing afflictions are at the command of God, be not angry, let not your paſſion riſe againſt the creature, againſt this or that ſecond cauſe by which you are afflicted; look up to the Lord of this Hoſt, to the Commander of theſe troops. He ſends them out as he pleaſeth, and when he pleaſeth, to puniſh and deſtroy his enemies, as alſo to exerciſe the Graces, and try the holy valour of his own children and ſervants.

Fourthly, *God is able to raiſe troops of affliction out of any of his Creatures.*

He is never at a loſs for an Army. When the wrath of man is kindled, O, if he could get an Army, he would do wonders. The Lord can levie an Army with a word ſpeaking; he can have troops, if he do but ſound his trumpet, and beat his Drum; if he do but hold out his will, and ſay it is his pleaſure, they are preſently at his call. How ſoon did the Lord raiſe Armies againſt *Pharaoh*, of Flies, and Lice, and Hail? *&c.* How quickly did the *Chaldeans* and the *Sabeans* break in upon *Job?* How ſoon did an unkind Wife, Scabs and Sores, and what not, that was grievous to a poor man, either within or without, come in troops againſt him at the Lords appointment? *His troops come together.* Thus they are met and muſtered, now they are upon their March.

סלל *Parare viā & quod videbetur inacceſſum ſternere & ad æqualitatem ducere.*

They raiſe up their way againſt me.] That is (as ſome interpret it) they make themſelves a large and plain way to come againſt me; and ſo 'tis an alluſion unto Armies, who when they are marching, ſend Pioneers before them, to open narrow wayes, to level thoſe that are uneven, and throw down their banks: The ordinary Road is not fit to march in, Armies muſt have room, therefore they raiſe up or prepare their way. This word is uſed (*Iſa.* 57. 14.) To prepare and fit a way, a way which before was wayleſs and inacceſſible; *Caſt you up, caſt you up, prepare the way.* The *Baptiſt* in a ſpiritual ſence fulfilled that Propheſie, he prepared the way of the Lord, by him *the valleyes were exalted, and every mountain and hill was made low, the crooked he made ſtraight, and the rough places plain.* 'Tis the the work of the Miniſters of the Goſpel to take out all the ſtumbling blocks and rubs that lie in the way of converſion, and hinder ſouls from turning to the Lord. The troops in the text did not raiſe up a way for *Job*, but for themſelves, or againſt him.

Significat fore ut Apoſtoli monſtrent, gentibus atque ſternant facilem viam & aditum ad fidem Evangelii, ne hæreant aut deterreantur difficultatibus.

Fecerunt viam ſuper me. Vulg.

עלי *poteſt ſuper me exponi, ut ſit ſenſus velut viam tritam reddiderunt ſuper me, ut ſim illis velut via frequenti ambulantium itione trita.* Merc.

They raiſe up their way againſt me.] That is, they prepare a way to come upon me, or againſt me. The Hebrew word ſignifies *upon*, as well as againſt; they make their way upon me, they go over me, and trample me under their feet, they make me their way. The Prophet ſpeaks this Language (*Iſa.* 51. 23.) implying the extream inſultation of the adverſary afflicting the people of God: *I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee* (meaning *the dregs of the cup of his fury*) *which have ſaid to thy ſoul*, (that is, to thee) *bow down, that we may go over; and thou haſt laid thy body as the ground, and as the ſtreet to them that went over*; that is, thou haſt humbly ſubmitted thy ſelf to their proudeſt cruelties. Indeed, wicked men (according to the letter of this text) would have the ſouls of the Saints bow to them, by yielding to, or following their ſinful counſels and commands, but the ſouls of the Saints (in this ſence) are ſtiff and cannot bow; as for their bodies or outward man, they can lay them down and bow, not only to the ground, but as the ground or as the ſtreet, for their enemies to go over. So here, theſe troops (ſaith *Job*) have made me as the very ground, or as the ſtreet upon which they trod; they have trod upon me. As *Joſhua* gave order to the people of *Iſrael* (chap. 10. 24.) when he had overcome thoſe Kings (who were a type of all the enemies of the Church, over whom the people of God ſhall triumph) *It came to paſs, that when they brought thoſe Kings unto* Joſhua, *that he called for all the men of* Iſrael, *and ſaid unto them, Come near and put your feet upon the necks of theſe Kings*; go over them, make them your way, do not ſtand upon it, becauſe they are Kings and great ones, tread upon them and fear not. As to tread upon enemies, and make our way over them, notes the compleateſt victory, and higheſt triumph, ſo to be trodden upon by enemies, and to be made their way, ſpeaks the loweſt ſufferings and contempt.

But I rather follow our own tranſlation; *They have made their way againſt me*: That is, coming againſt me, they have made or prepared their way. As if he had ſaid, whatſoever lay in the way of my afflictions, they have removed, that ſo they might have a clear mark, and make a full charge againſt me. Hence obſerve,

That, *When God ſendeth evils upon a perſon* ('tis true alſo when he ſendeth them upon a people) *nothing ſhall hinder.*

His troops ſhall raiſe up their way againſt the beſt and ſtrongeſt; though it be a barred way, a rough, mountainous way, a craggy way, like the *Alpes* (which *Hannibal* paſſed with his Army againſt the *Romans*) yet the Lords Army will (as he ſaid) find a paſſage, or make one. We have an expreſſion in *Pſal.* 78.49. very near this; where the wrath of God againſt *Egypt*, is thus deſcribed; *He caſt upon them the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath, indignation and trouble, by ſending evil Angels amongſt them.* Moſt interpret theſe evil Angels of wicked Spirits or Devils that vexed them; others of troubleſome men, who vexed them with evils; ſome expound that Text particularly of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, who, though perſonally conſidered, were very good, yea, the beſt of men then living; yet they were evil Angels in regard of the effect of their meſſage unto the *Egyptians*. A good man may (in this ſence) be an evil Angel, he may be a meſſenger of evil, or a means of executing the wrath of God upon wicked men. Thus *Moſes* and *Aaron* may be called evil Angels; for they brought ſad meſſages or ill tidings to the *Egyptians*, concerning thoſe dreadful plagues wherewith the Lord oppreſſed them for their oppreſſions upon his people: For by the Miniſtry of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, the Lord caſt forth the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath and indignation. But *Egypt* was a ſtrong place, and the *Egyptians* a mighty people, they would not eaſily yield; wherefore (ſaith the Text) when he did ſo, *he made a way to his anger*: As if the Pſalmiſt had ſaid, if there were not a way for his anger, that is, for the execution of his anger, he forced his way; though he did not find a way, yet he made one, and fought himſelf through all difficulties which ſeemed to oppoſe the deſtruction of his enemies. We put in the Margin, *He weighed a path*; he made the path as exact, as if he had put it into a ballance; the way was fitted to the largeneſs of his own anger, and it was fitted to the dimenſions of their wickedneſs. Thus he made a way to his anger, both by ſuiting the way to his anger, and by removing all impediments out of the way of his anger. If God will work to ſave, who ſhall let it? And if God will work to deſtroy, who or what ſhall let it? When God will either try his own people, or puniſh his enemies, nothing can hinder; neither the power nor the politick preparations of evil men, no, nor the prayers of good men (which yet are the ſtrongeſt rubs in the way of his anger) he will make his way through their ſupplications, when he is reſolved to puniſh his people; *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people* (*Jer.* 15. 1.) Now with what weapons did *Moſes* and *Samuel* uſe to ſtand before the Lord? Surely with prayers and tears; nothing makes ſo real a defence againſt the anger of God, as the prayers of his people do; yet God will break through theſe: he will make a way for his anger through theſe, they ſhall not ſtop him; much leſs ſhall the preparations or ſtrengths of wicked men ſtop him. As the weakneſs of God is ſtronger then man, ſo the weakneſs of prayer is ſtronger with God, then all the ſtrength of man. If prayer doth not ſtop his wrath, humane power ſhall never be able to give it the leaſt check. All our ſtrong holds and Forts will be but as the firſt ripe figs, which being ſhaken, fall into the mouth of the eater, when once the Lords army makes a Battery againſt us. His troops will not turn till they have fulfilled all his pleaſure; *They have raiſed up their way againſt me.*

And encamp round about my Tabernacle.] The Lords troops being raiſed, they raiſed up their way, and marched, and now they ſit down, and encamp round about poor diſtreſſed *Job*: *They encamp round about my Tabernacle*; that is, about all that I have, or my whole poſſeſſions. Here's a ſtrange ſight, an Army encamping againſt a Tabernacle: *Job* might ſay, What needs ſuch warlike preparations againſt me? Alas, mine is but a Tabernacle; I am not fortified in a Caſtle, or encompaſſed with impregnable walls and bulwarks; *They encamp againſt my Tabernacle*: A Tabernacle is but a weak houſe, weaker then our ordinary houſes; a Tabernacle can hardly keep out the rain, or ſtand againſt the wind, how then can it keep out an Army, or ſtand their ſtorm? A Tabernacle is a moveable dwelling, faſtened with cords and ſtakes, without foundation; yet here *Job* ſpeaks as if God had brought all his Artillery, planted his Batteries and Engines of war to beat it down; *He hath encamped round about my Tabernacle.*

Hence note, *All that man hath in the creature, amounts but to a Tabernacle.*

Job was a great man, and he had a great eſtate, an eſtate foundation'd and ſetled upon as much ſtrength as the creature uſually can afford, yet all was but a Tabernacle, whoſe cords are quickly looſened, and whoſe ſtakes are ſoon pulled up, and then down it falls. Man himſelf in regard of his natural life, is periſhing, his body is a Tabernacle; *Our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle*, as the Apoſtle calls it (2 *Cor.* 5.2.) Now as the body of man wherein his natural life dwells, is a Tabernacle; ſo are thoſe things which concern the ſupport and continuance of his natural life. Who would truſt to, or ſhelter himſelf in a Tabernacle, when we have the Name of the Lord, as a ſtrong Tower, into which we may flee with aſſurance of ſafety? He that gets moſt of the world, hath got but a Tabernacle; and he that loſeth all that he hath in the world, hath loſt but a Tabernacle. A little true knowledge of what the world is, mingled, though with but a little true faith about the things of the world to come, will eaſily carry us above all the good and evil of the world.

Again (in purſuance of the Allegory) we know when an Army encampeth about a City, and layeth ſiege to it, no man can get out; *Thus it is with many poor ſouls, afflictions hem them in round, they have never a port to get out at; the way is only open to heaven.* The Lord is pleaſed to lay very cloſe ſieges to many of his people, they are ſtraightned in their outward enjoyments, they are ſtraightned in their ſpiritual enjoyments, and can find no comfort. As the ſouls of ſome refuſe to be comforted, ſo comfort refuſeth the ſouls of others; or all comforts are (as by a ſtrong hand, yea, as by a ſtrong hoſt) with-holden from their ſouls. *David's* mighty men broke through the hoſt of the *Philiſtims*, when he longed for the water of *Bethlehem*; but Gods hoſt of troubles and afflictions cannot be broken through by the mightieſt among the ſons of men, though there be a well of water beyond them, which their ſouls long for as much as *David* did for that of *Bethlehem*.

Laſtly, Take this Note from the alluſion alſo; *They encamp againſt me.*

Afflictions may continue long upon us or about us.

There is a difference between the fighting of a Battel and encamping; a Battel is but for an hour or a day; but encampings are for continuance: we have heard of encampings and beſiegings, not only for a few dayes, but for many months; yea, for ſome years. The troops of trouble give ſome only a fierce charge, but they ſit down and *encamp againſt the Tabernacles* of others. Some particular ſouls have endured longer ſieges then ever any City did. Not only do the *terrors of God* (within and without) *ſet themſelves in array againſt them* (as *Job* complained, *chap.* 6. 4.) but *they are afflicted and ready to die from their youth up, ſuffering thoſe terrors*, as *Heman* complains (*Pſal.* 88.15.) Therefore let not our hearts faint, though we are beſieged, though ſorrows encamp againſt us. When God ſeems to tell us in the diſpenſations of his providence, that he will batter us down and level us with the ground, yet all this is but to try how we can ſtand our ground in an evil day, how we can maintain our truſt, and hold out a ſiege; ſome give up the ſtrengths under their command at the firſt ſummons, others hold out till the laſt bit of bread; God doth but try his whether they will perſevere to the laſt, to the utmoſt. *Let patience have its perfect work*, for afflictions will have their perfect work; when they make long work, let patience make long work too. When God encamps againſt us, let us ſpeedily give up the ſtrong holds of ſin, but let us maintain the ſtrong holds of grace, the forts of faith and patience, quitting our ſelves like men, or rather like Chriſtians; let us give proof of holy courage in the hotteſt aſſaults, and in the longeſt ſieges. The Lord doth not intend ruine to our perſons, though he ruine our Tabernacles. Thoſe outward evils ſhall work for our good, which deprive us of all outward good; and if both the Tabernacles which we uſe, and in which we dwell, while we are in the body, as alſo the Tabernacles of our body, be diſſolved and ſhattered to the ground in this war, yet *we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*.

Laſtly obſerve, *There is no ſtriving, no contending with afflictions.*

God hath whole Troops and Armies of them at his command. As his enemies cannot ſtand before him, ſo neither can his friends, when he appeareth as an enemy. There is no prevailing but by ſubmitting. *Who* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 27. 4.) *would ſet the briars and thorns againſt me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together.* Wicked men are briars and thorns, if they contend with God, they contend with a fire, and are burnt. If godly men ſhould ſet themſelves in battel againſt God, when he ſets himſelf in battel againſt them, how ſoon could he go through them alſo and burn them together? When the Lord of Hoſts ſends his troops to encamp againſt us, he doth not intend we ſhould fight them away, but pray them away; nor is it his meaning, that we ſhould raiſe the ſiege by oppoſing his troops, but by falling down before them. We cannot conquer the leaſt affliction by force, but we ſhall be more then conquerors over the greateſt afflictions, even over all afflictions by faith. When Armies of bloody men invade or encamp againſt the people of God, we cannot (without preſumption) expect victory, unleſs we fight as well as believe; and act courage againſt them, as well as faith in God. But when Armies of affliction encamp againſt us, there is no overcoming, but only by believing in God, and humbling our ſelves. We muſt reſiſt the Devil and his troops of temptations, and he will flee from us: But no affliction ſent by God, did ever depart from him that was found reſiſting it. The Army of ſorrows which encamped againſt *Job*, was never fully withdrawn, till he ſaid, *I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes* (chap. 42. 6.)

Thus we have heard *Job* bewailing his condition under the Allegory of war, troops of enemies drawing together, and encamping againſt him; in the next place he bewailes his condition, in the withdrawing of his friends: If when evils and enemies come upon us, our friends ſtand cloſe to us, it is a great ſupport; but when many troubles throng about us, and all our friends leave us, this is ſad. Thus *Job* deſcribes his forlorn eſtate in the next words; *He hath put my brethren far from me*, &c.

VERS. 13, 14, 15.

He hath put my Brethren far from me, and mine Acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me.

My Kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

They that dwell in mine houſe, and my maidens count me for a ſtranger.

JOB hath thus far expreſt his (almoſt) unexpreſſible ſorrows and afflictions by many elegant Metaphors and alluſions; he is now as exact and accurate in ſetting forth the effects of thoſe ſorrows, or what followed upon his affliction.

The firſt effect is deſcribed in this context, to the end of *verſ.* 19. And that is the unkindneſs and contempt, the unfaithfulneſs and unthankfulneſs of his friends and neareſt relations.

Secondly, He ſhews the waſting of his ſtrength, and the general conſumption of his own body, at *verſ.* 20. *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my fleſh, and I am eſcaped with the skin of my teeth*: The burden of all which preſſures enforced him to make a threefold cry.

Firſt, For pity and compaſſion; *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*, verſ. 21.

Secondly, For ſparing and forbearance, in *verſ.* 22. *Why do you perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?*

Thirdly, He cries out for attention to his cry, and ſerious conſideration of his ſad complaint, in *verſ.* 23, 24. *O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in a rock for ever.*

Theſe words hold forth the firſt effect which followed his ſorrows and afflictions; namely, the withdrawing of his friends, the unkindneſs or contempt of all thoſe that were about him; and he ſeems to caſt or diſtribute thoſe into four ranks, from whom he received ſuch unkindneſſes.

Firſt, His kindred, or thoſe of his blood; *He hath put my brethren far from me*, in *ver.* 13. And in *v.* 14. *My kinſfolk have failed.*

Secondly, He complains of the unkindneſs of his own family, in *verſ.* 15, 16, 17. Which he ſets down, Firſt, In general, in the former part of the fifteenth verſe; *They that dwell in my houſe.* Secondly, He names them diſtinctly. Firſt, His *maid-ſervants*; in the cloſe of the fifteenth verſe. Secondly, His *men-ſervants*; in the ſixteenth verſe. Thirdly, His *wife*, in the ſeventeenth verſe; thus his own houſe and family had deſerted him, and proved undutiful to him.

Thirdly, He was likewiſe grieved by the contempt which he received from children, the children of thoſe who lived about him; in *verſ.* 18. *Young children deſpiſed me, I roſe, and they ſpake againſt me.*

Fourthly, He deſcribeth the unkindneſs and unthankfulneſs of his intimate acquaintance and higheſt confidents, to whom he was wont to open his boſom, and with whom he had maintained cloſeſt correſpondence, both by giving and receiving courteſies, in the nineteenth verſe; *All my inward friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved are turned againſt me*: Theſe are diſtinguiſhed from his kindred, and may be intended alſo in thoſe words of the thirteenth verſe; *My acquaintance*; and in thoſe of the fourteenth verſe; *My familiar friends.* Thus we ſee all were turned againſt him, his kindred, his family, his acquaintance and aſſociates. This was an extream aggravation of his affliction; eſpecially if we conſider two things.

Firſt, The univerſality of this deſertion; it was not ſome one or two of his relations; *all his relations failed him*; kindred, ſervants, acquaintance, and, who is more then all theſe, his wiſe.

Secondly, Not only did all his common friends, but even they who had made profeſſion, ſerious profeſſion of love to him; there are ſome friends of whom we make no great reckoning, if they fall off from us; but when intimate friends, ſuch as know our hearts, and have been truſted with our ſecrets, ſuch as we love with much entireneſs, and are endeared to us by long familiarity, when theſe apoſtatize from their profeſſed friendſhip, and renounce the Laws of love, how heavy is this croſs? Yet even ſuch was *Job's* deſertion; as will appear in the opening and proſecution of this context.

Verſe 13. **He hath put my Brethren far from me.**

In the former verſe we heard of Troops drawing about *Job's* Tabernacle, and beſieging it: Now in this nick of time, while troops of enemies draw near about him, his Brethren withdrew and departed far from him; *He hath put my Brethren far from me.* This deſertion of his Brethren is put in equal ballance with the invaſion of his Enemies, and is indeed a heavier burden of affliction, and doth much over-ballance it. *Their unkindneſs troubles us moſt, from whom we have leaſt reaſon to ſuſpect unkindneſs.*

אח *Frater cognationem habet cum* אחד *unus, quia fratres in uno convenire debent, ac proinde res inanimata, quæ in uno conveniunt, fratres dicuntur.*

He hath put my brethren.] The word which we tranſlate *Brethren*, notes not only *nearneſs*, but *oneneſs*: Many brethren, yea, all brethren ſhould be one, and agree in one. They who are near in relation, ſhould not be far off in affection. *Job* calls himſelf *a brother to Dragons* (chap. 30. 29.) becauſe his preſent ſtate was like that of Dragons, ſolitary and withdrawn from friends. And *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 18. 9.) *He that is ſlothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waſter*, that is, he is very like him, or *ſuch another*; yea, things without life, which have a likeneſs, are called in Hebrew brethren or ſiſters (*Exod.* 26. 3.) becauſe brethren and ſiſters have, or are ſuppoſed to have likeneſs in conditions, and oneneſs in affection; *My brethren.*

But what were his brethren?

There are ſeven ſorts of brethren.

Firſt, Natural brethren, who are of the ſame blood; and theſe are ſo called, ſometimes in a larger, and ſometimes in a ſtricter ſence: They are called brethren in a large ſence who are of the ſame linage, though they be not immediately ſprung from the ſame loins. *Abraham* calls *Lot* his brother, who was only his nephew (*Gen.* 14. 14.) *James* and *Joſes*, *Simon* and *Judas*, who were the kinſmen of Chriſt, are yet called his brethren, *Matth.* 13. 55. But ſtrictly they are natural brethren, who are born of the ſame parents.

Secondly, They are called brethren who are of one Countrey or Nation.

Thirdly, They who are of one Neighbourhood, or are near in habitation.

Fourthly, There are brethren by ſtudy, by courſe of life, or profeſſion.

Fifthly, There are brethren in manners and ſuitableneſs of diſpoſition.

Sixthly, Brethren by friendſhip, by covenant and mutual ſtipulation.

Seventhly, Brethren in Religion and Faith of the Goſpel. We may take all theſe ſorts of brethren into the Text; but ſpecially brethren in blood, and nearneſs of alliance; theſe *Job* ſeems particularly to intend, while he ſaith, *He hath put my brethren far from me.* But, how far were they put, or at what diſtance did they ſtand? We may underſtand it of a twofold remoteneſs or diſtance.

Firſt, Of remoteneſs in place; as if he had ſaid, *My Brethren came not at me, they will not ſo much as be where I am, one houſe will not hold us, I have little of their company;*

Secondly, Of remoteneſs in ſpirit, they are far off in affection, their minds are departed or alienated from me; though I enjoy at any time their bodily preſence, I have a little of of their company, but leſs of their hearts.

הרחיק

Again, He doth not ſay, *My brethren are gone from me*; but, *He hath put my brethren far from me.* But who was it that put his friends far from him? *Job* aſcribes this as much as any other part of his affliction unto God; *Job* was as ſenſible that God had put his brethren and friends far from him, as he was that he had ſent ſo many enemies and ſtrangers (*Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*) in upon him. It was from the ſame hand that theſe invaded him, and that they departed from him.

Hence note, Firſt, *Brethren may fail in love to their Brethren, and prove not only forgetful, but unfaithful.*

Yea, not only may brethren prove forgetful of us, but cruel to us. We have an experience of this in the firſt pair of brethren that ever were in the world: As ſoon as the bond of brotherhood could be broken, it was broken; *Cain ſlew his Brother Abel*, he was far from him indeed when he thus drew near to him. Chriſt forewarns us that we may quickly meet with ſuch actings againſt the light of nature, while we follow and act up to the light of Grace; *The brother ſhall deliver the brother to death, and the father the child, and the child ſhall riſe up againſt his parents, and cauſe them to be put to death* (Mat. 10. 21.) To deliver a brother up to death, that is, to deliver him up to others to put him to death, is as bad as if our ſelves had taken away his life. We do that evil which we do not hinder others (according to our place and power) from doing; much more may we be ſaid to do that evil, which we provoke thoſe to do, who have power to do it. To deliver a brother up to death, is to kill our brother. Grace teaches us to lay down our lives for the brethren. Corruption teaches the brother to take away the life of a brother. Our Book of *Martyrs* gives divers inſtances of brethren ſuffering for Chriſt, by the procurement of brethren. There are no bonds of love, but have often received a crack by luſt, and ſometimes a total breach; and where there ſhould be the greateſt love, there have been the greateſt breaches. The Prophet *Obadiah* checks thoſe *Edomites*, who were the Deſcendants of *Eſau*, and and ſo by *Iſaac* their common Father, brethren to the *Iſraelites*; the Prophet, I ſay, checks them for their inſolency againſt their afflicted brethren (*v.* 12.) *Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy Brother.* The day of their brother was the day of their brothers calamity, as is plain in the next words, *In the day that he became a ſtranger*, that is, to his own Land, being carried away into captivity: Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked upon this day of thy brother. But was it a ſin to look upon them in that day? To ſee them was no ſin, and to ſee or look upon them with an eye of compaſſion, was a duty; but they looked upon their brethren with an eye of ſcorn at, or with an eye of delight in their miſery; it pleaſed them to ſee their brethren oppreſſed and carried captives. This kind of ſeeing their brethren, was (within one degree) as ſinful as ſlaying them; ſuch looking upon them when led into captivity, was a leading them into captivity. That which we rejoyce to ſee any ſuffer from the hand of others, they ſuffer alſo from our hand. The Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes this unnatural unkindneſs againſt brethren (ariſing, in ſome, at leaſt, from a pretended or ignorant zeal for God) in the profeſſion of the ſame Religion (*chap.* 66. 5.) *Hear the word of the Lord ye that tremble at his word, your brethren that hated you* (he doth not ſay, your enemies that hated you, this a ſtrange conjunction, *hating brethren, your brethren that hated you*) *that caſt you out for my Names ſake* (there's the ground of the quarrel, it was religious, or about the things of God) ſaid, *let the Lord be glorified*, or, *appear in glory.* Which implies that either they pretended to glorifie God by caſting out their brethren, as Chriſt foretold, *John* 16. 2. *They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, ſhall think that he doth God ſervice.* To do God ſervice is to glorifie him. Theſe brethren judg'd their brethren evil doers againſt the Lord, and that therefore it was good to puniſh and caſt them out; hence, they ſaid, *let the Lord be glorified*; or theſe words, *let the Lord be glorified*, may be expounded ironically, as if theſe perſecutors of their brethren had derided their brethrens expectation and hope of the glorious appearance of the Lord in judgment, to vindicate their innocency and do them right. And ſo it anſwers that of the ſame Prophet, *chap.* 5. 19. *Let him make ſpeed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it.* As alſo that of the Apoſtle, 2 *Pet.* 3, 3, 4. *Where is the Promiſe of his coming?* &c. Hence 'tis added, *But he* (that is, *the Lord*) *ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.* They who either think to bring glory to God by troubling their brethren, or who deride their brethrens hope, that the Lord will appear to deliver them from, or to recompenſe them for all their troubles. Theſe troubling brethren (I ſay) ſhall have ſhame to their portion, and the portion of their troubled brethren ſhall be joy at the appearing of the Lord. The ſame Scripture ſhews the extream hatred of brethren againſt their brethren, and the ſore diſpleaſure of the Lord againſt Brethren-haters.

Secondly obſerve, *The eſtrangement of brethren from us is very grievous.*

Job laid it more to heart that his brethren did not comfort him, then that ſtrangers did afflict him. It is one of the moſt delightful ſpectacles to ſee brethren dwell together in unity (*Pſal.* 133. 1.) *Behold, how good and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* He compares it to the dew of *Hermon*, and to the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the *beard, even Aaron's beard, and that went down to the skirt of his garment.* Now, as it is a pleaſure to behold the union and harmony of brethren, ſo 'tis very bitter to ſee brethren broken off and disjoynted from one another. Whether they be brethren by blood, or brethren by profeſſion; but chiefly if they be brethren in the faith and profeſſion of the Goſpel. *Abraham ſaid unto Lot, let there be no ſtrife, I pray thee, between me and thee, & between my herdmen & thy herdmen.* He would not only have no ſtrife between themſelves, but not between their ſervants, and why? *For we are brethren* (Gen. 13.8.) The diviſions of brethren are both grievous and ſcandalous; grievous to themſelves, and ſcandalous to others. Hence *Moſes* gives counſel to the two contending *Iſraelites* (as *Stephen* reports it, *Act.* 7.26.) *Sirs, why do ye wrong one to another? you are brethren.* The name of a brother, or the remembrance that we are brethren, is enough to pacifie our ſpirits, and haſten us to a reconcilement of all our differences. And that ſo many brethren, who alſo are *Iſraelites*, fall out with, and wrong one another, and will not be reconciled, how ſad is the ſcandal, and how heavy the burden at this day? All gracious hearts have much cauſe to lament this, as all eyes, even the eyes of our common enemies, have too much occaſion to take notice of it.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *He hath put my brethren far from me*; Obſerve,

The changes of affection are from God: or, *it is of the Lord that our brethren are at any time eſtranged from us.*

As God puts health far away from us, or aboundance far away from us, ſo he puts friends far away from us. This doth not excuſe brethren in their unkind departures and eſtrangements from one another; only it ſhould teach us to depend upon God, as much for the eſtabliſhment and continuance of friends in their affections and reſpects to us, as of our Lands and Cattel in their fruitfulneſs to us, or of our own bodies in their health and ſtrength to us. There is an over-ruling hand of God, and his effectual working, as in all other afflictions and troubles which come upon us, ſo in the withdrawings of friends and brethren from us. As God forms the ſpirit of man within him, in reſpect of being and exiſtence (for he is the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, or the Father of ſpirits) ſo likewiſe in reſpect of motion and influence (*Zech.* 12.1.) It is the Lord who makes men to be of this mind, or of that mind, who ſhapes and faſhions their ſpirits, either towards a compliance with, or a diſlike whether of things or perſons. Friends love no longer then God maintains love in them, and they can do us good no longer then God maintains in them a will to do us good; we cannot diſcharge the loweſt natural duty of love unto a brother, unleſs God come in; yea, we quickly grow unnatural, if God leave us. The love or hatred of man is from the Lord.

But ſome may ſay, Is the hatred of man from God? If ſo, how ſhall we acquit God from being the author of ſin?

I anſwer, God is ſaid to put our friends far from us, when he withdraws or withholds that aſſiſtance and influence which inlarges and unites the hearts of friends. We are all by nature (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 3.3.) *Hateful, and hating one another.* And while nature, as corrupted, acts alone, it is not more hateful to God, then full of hatred to men, eſpecially to good men. As God doth not, ſo there is no need he ſhould put enmity and hatred into the heart of a brother againſt his brother, there's too much of theſe already in every mans heart; if God do but leave a brother to himſelf, he quickly ſhews himſelf unbrotherly. Now if brethren hate unleſs God over-rule their hearts, then 'tis no wonder if ſtrangers and enemies do it (*Pſal.* 105.25.) When *Moſes* deſcribes the cruel uſage which the *Egyptians* ſhewed to the people of *Iſrael*, he tells us, *God turned their hearts, that they hated his people, and dealt ſubtilly with his ſervants.* That is ſomewhat a hard ſpeech when 'tis ſaid, *He turned their hearts to hate his people*; God did not drop hatred into their hearts; God turns the heart from ſin, not to ſin; but he is therefore ſaid to turn their hearts to hate his people, becauſe he gave them up to the baſeneſs and ſuſpiciouſneſs of their own hearts, which told them a thouſand ſad ſtories, or propheſies rather, what the *Iſraelites* would do, and how they would burden *Egypt*, and bring it low, unleſs themſelves were brought low by an impoſition of new burdens. This was enough, and this was all that God did when he turned the hearts of the *Egyptians* to hate his people, *and deal ſubtilly with his ſervants.* Unleſs God hold our hearts, and keep them for us, we are not only unſteady in every duty both to God and man, but we act quite beſide, yea contrary to our duty: We love where we ſhould hate, and hate where we ſhould love; we help thoſe whom we ſhould oppoſe, and oppoſe thoſe to whom we ſhould be helpful; we are like brethren to thoſe whoſe enemies we ſhould be, and we are as enemies to our brethren. *He hath put my brethren far from me,*

And my acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me.

Brethren are our neareſt *acquaintance*, and all our *acquaintance* may be called brethren. The Hebrew word ſignifies, *to know.* Some render it ſo here, *they who knew me, or were known to me, are eſtranged.* The knowledge we have of men brings us into acquaintance with them; and the more we are acquainted with them, the more we know them. The word implies, intimate and ſpecial knowledge (1 *Sam.* 3.7.) Samuel *did not yet know the Lord*; Not know the Lord! why, how was *Samuel* bred, that he did not know the Lord? He was come to years of knowledge, and had he lived in ignorance? The meaning is not, that he did not know the Lord at all, but he had not yet known the Lord by way of extraordinary revelation, or viſion: Thus *Samuel* did not know the Lord till that time. God reproves the *Jews* for their hypocriſie and formality (*Iſa.* 58.2.) *They ſeek me daily, and delight to know my wayes*; that is, they pretend to an earneſt deſire of knowing my wayes, they ſeek to me as if they would creep into my mouth, yea and lodge in my heart, to know all my deſire concerning the holineſs of their lives, and the exacteſt conformity of their wayes to my will. Thus they would be thought to know me and *acquaint* themſelves with me; and ſo much the word uſed by *Job* (which we render *acquaintance*) holds forth. Yet becauſe *Job* ſpeaks at *verſ.* 19. of his *inward friends*, therefore I rather take *his acquaintance* here, for common friends, ſuch as were but generally known to him, or ſuch as knew him but generally; *My acquaintance,*

ידעי *Noti mei.* Vulg. *Neceſſarii mei.* Tygur. *Scientes nomen meum obliti ſunt mei.* Sept.

Are verily eſtranged from me.] The word ſignifies, ſuch an eſtrangement, or alienation of ſpirit, as ariſeth from nauſeouſneſs, or the offence which the ſtomach takes at ſuch meats as are improper to it. As if he had ſaid, *My acquaintance loath me, their ſtomachs turn at me, they are ready to vomit at the ſight or thought of me, and of my afflicted condition.* In which ſence, the word is uſed (*Ezek.* 14.5.) Where the Lord complains of the backſliding of his ancient people to Idolatry; *They are all eſtranged from me through their Idols*; as if the Lord had ſaid, *My people whom I have loved begin to loath me, I am out of date with them, and my wayes are out of requeſt with them ſince they have found new gods, or new wayes of worſhipping God.* Old acquaintance are often laid by when we find new. And (which was *Job's* caſe) when old friends fall into a low condition, ſome will loath them, or eſtrange themſelves from them, though they have no new. *My acquaintance are*

זור *Alienatio aut receſſus ejuſmodi eſt ut cum aliquis nauſeā habet.*

Verily eſtranged.] The word *verily*, hath an emphaſis in it, and notes not only the truth of the thing, or that it was ſo, but alſo the degree of the thing, that it was very much ſo. As if he had ſaid, *They are altogether eſtranged*, or, *there is nothing in them but eſtrangement and unfriendlineſs.* We have the like uſe of the word, though to another end (*Pſal.* 23.6.) *Surely goodneſs and mercy* (or, *only goodneſs and mercy*, pure goodneſs and mercy) *ſhall follow me all the dayes of my life*; that is, I ſhall have goodneſs and mercy without any mixture of ſorrow and trouble; ſo here, *They are ſurely or verily eſtranged from me*; that is, they are ſtrange as ſtrange can be; there is not the leaſt mixture of love, not the leaſt appearance of good will to me among them all.

אך זרו
אך טוב
Tantū bonū; bonū merum; nullius mali mixtura adulteratū.

Verſ. 14. **My kinsfolk fail.**

Before he ſpake of his brethren and acquaintance, now of his *kindred.* All our brethren are our kindred, but all our kindred are not brethren. The original word ſignifies one that *is near*, and in the Verb, *to draw near*; ſo 'tis uſed (*Pſal.* 73.28.) *It is good for me to draw near to God.* We draw near to God in any act of worſhip, or in the exerciſe of any grace, eſpecially in the exerciſe of faith, even as we are ſaid in Scripture, to depart or turn from God, when we neglect his worſhip, or when we act any luſt, eſpecially unbelief, *Heb.* 3.12. And becauſe the people of God uſe to draw near unto him thus, and 'tis never ſo well with them as when they do ſo; therefore all the people of God, are called *Gods nigh ones* (Pſal. 148. 14.) *He alſo exalteth the horn of his people, the praiſe of all his Saints, even of the children of* Iſrael; *a people near unto him.* All the Saints are (as we may ſay) Gods kindred (it is this word) *a people near to him.* Our kinsfolk are near to us. How great a priviledge is it to be near God, or of kin to the moſt High.

חדל

Affert ceſſationem ab aliquo opere aut officio.

My kinsfolk fail.] Friends fail. Firſt, In number when they die, that was not *Job's* meaning.

Secondly, There is a failing in courteſie; thus his kinsfolk failed, they ceaſed to perform the office of kindred to him, as *Ruth's* kinſman did. *Job* had many of his kindred living, but none in whom kindneſs lived. He had many kinsfolk, but few friends. *My kinsfolk fail.*

And my familiar friends have forgotten me.

Familiar friends are expreſſed in the Hebrew, by the ſame word which was before tranſlated *acquaintance*, only with a little difference, this is active, the other paſſive; as if *his acquaintance* were rather known by him, then knew him, and his *familiar friends* knew him more then they were known by him. *Familiar friends* are ſuch as we daily or very frequently converſe with. We ſay, *Out of ſight, out of mind.* It ſeems *Job's* friends caſt him out of their mind, while they were in his ſight. Forgetfulneſs is the abſence of a thing or perſon from our minds. Memory is the treaſury of the mind; forgetfulneſs exhauſts that treaſure. *My familiar friends*, ſaith *Job*,

Have forgotten me.] Poſſibly ſome of them forgot that they had ſuch a friend, but all of them forgot him as a friend, they forgot all the courteſies and kindneſſes that ever they received from him, as alſo all the kindneſſes and courteſies that ever they profeſſed to him.

Again, To *forget*, is to neglect, or to ſlight. Though they had him in their thoughts, though he lived in their natural memory (as memory is taken properly for the keeping or laying up of that which is paſt) yet they morally forgot him, that is, they ſlighted and neglected him: And then my familiar friends have forgotten me, is, as if he had ſaid, *Thoſe friends to whom I have expreſſed love, take no care of me, they perform no offices of love to me, nor do they regard what becomes of me, ſink or ſwim 'tis all one with them.* So the word is applied (*Lam.* 2.2.) *He hath violently taken away his Tabernacle, as if it were of a garden, he hath deſtroyed his places of the Aſſembly*; *the Lord hath cauſed the ſolemn feaſts and aſſemblies to be forgotten in Sion.* How forgotten? The Lord did not cauſe the *Jews* to forget that there had been ſolemn feaſts, and Sabbaths in *Sion*; the thing was remembred, and that was an addition to the ſorrow of their captivity; but thoſe feaſts were diſuſed by all, none came at them, none obſerved them, and they were ſleighted by many; thus they were forgotten. And as the Lord at that time in wrath cauſed them to forget their ſolemn feaſts in a ſtrange land; ſo he promiſed in mercy, that a time ſhould come when they ſhould be forgotten in their own Land (*Jer.* 3.16.) *And it ſhall come to paſs, when ye be multiplied and encreaſed in the Land, in thoſe dayes ſaith the Lord, they ſhall ſay no more, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, neither ſhall it come to mind, neither ſhall they remember it,* &c. But what are thoſe dayes, wherein the Ark (which is put Synechdochically for all Ceremonial obſervations) ſhould not be remembred, or ſhould be forgotten? We may underſtand it, either of the dayes of Chriſts coming in the fleſh, when all ſhadows ſhould vaniſh or diſappear; or of the times of their reſtauration, when they ſhould not truſt to, nor boaſt of thoſe external Evidences of Gods preſence, as formerly they had done when they cryed, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord,* Jer. 7.4. They who uſe outward adminiſtrations may be ſaid to forget them while they live in the ſpirit, and have no confidence in a form, though good, uſeful and neceſſary.

Oblivio negligens eſt recordatio vera, diligens & ſtudioſa.

Thus *Job* complains, *My familiar friends have forgotten me*; either they do not at all viſit me as friends, or they do not uſe me friendly in their viſits. To forget, is either to neglect the doing of a thing, or the doing of it negligently; as to *remember a thing*, imports, not only the doing of it, but the doing of it diligently. And ſo thoſe former expreſſions, *They are eſtranged from me, they have failed*, are the ſame with this, *They have forgotten me.* All ſignifying and ſpeaking the unkindneſs of his friends to him in that low condition.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Adverſity and affliction are the touch-ſtone of friendſhip.*

That's the time to try friends, to know what friends are, or who are friends. And as adverſity is the demonſtration, or touchſtone of friends, ſo 'tis a high commendation to continue friendſhip in adverſity. Chriſt tells his Diſciples (*Luke* 22.28.) and he puts an accent of honour upon it, *Ye are they, who have continued with me in my temptation*; as if he had ſaid, *All have not done thus, nor could ye have done it, unleſs it had been given you from above*; and when the temptation, that is, the tryal and ſufferings of Chriſt grew very high, they began to fail in doing it, and ſhrink from their Maſter: yet Chriſt took their former conſtancy to, and continuance with him ſo well, that he did not only give them the honour of this acknowledgment, *Ye are they*; but preſently tells them of an honourable reward; *and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my father hath appointed unto me.* It is an eaſie matter to abide with Chriſt, or with thoſe that are Chriſts, in times of peace, or in the day of their conſolations; but when we are under temptations, afflictions, and troubles, then to abide and keep cloſe to Chriſt, and thoſe who profeſs Chriſt; here's the proof of friendſhip, and Goſpel-love. Many will run to friends to ask ſhelter, when themſelves are in a ſtorm (as we uſe to betake our ſelves to the ſhelter of a ſpreading tree in a ſtorm of foul weather) who quickly leave them when the ſtorm is blown over, and the weather fair. But how few are there who run to their friends when they are in a ſtorm to offer them ſhelter? The Apoſtle complains of his deſertion in ſuch a condition (2 *Tim.*4.16.) *At my firſt anſwer no man ſtood with me: but all men forſook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge:* And he remembers it to the praiſe of *Oneſiphorus*, for whom alſo upon that account he prayes (2 *Tim.*1.16.) *The Lord give mercy to the houſe of* Oneſiphorus, *he oft refreſhed me, and was not aſhamed of my chain.* Many friends come about us when we have a crown of comfort or of honour upon our heads, or when we have our garments of praiſe and joy upon our backs; but when we are in ſackcloath, or wear a chain, then to appear with us or for us, argues ſtrength as well as truth of love. True and ſtrong love hath theſe five things in it.

Firſt, It is not weakned by time, it never waxeth old; true love, the older it grows, the ſtronger and freſher it grows. We ſay, *Time is a great eater*, it conſumes all things; but Eternity cannot eat out true love, either to God or man. True love ſhall be old, but it never waxeth cold, nor vaniſheth away.

Secondly, True love is not hindred by remoteneſs of place, love knows no local diſtances; a friend in the fartheſt parts of the world, is as near to real affection, as he that lodgeth under the ſame roof, and eats bread with us every day. We may ſoon remove out of the ſight, but we cannot remove out of the mind of a friend indeed.

Thirdly, True friendſhip or love is fruitful; ſincere affection will put it ſelf forth, and bud into action, it doth not reſt at the tongues end, or confine it ſelf to fine expreſſions, and complements, but it makes appearance or may be ſeen at the fingers ends, and is laborious in works and offices of friendſhip. As faith, ſo love without works is dead, and as that faith which juſtifies, ſo the love of a juſt perſon is juſtified by works. Hence the beloved Diſciple mingles or makes up his counſel about this duty with a dehortation and an exhortation (1 *Joh.* 3.18.) *Brethren, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed, and in truth*; that is, let our deeds ſpeak the truth of our love; it is an eaſie matter to ſay, but it is a great matter to do or to deed our love. Much love may be expreſſed by the tongue, but actions are the compleature of love. There may be abundance of love-labour in lip-labour, but where love labours truly at the lips, it will not withdraw the labour of the hand, or of the whole man for his good whom we love.

Fourthly, Truth of affection is full of compaſſion, ſorrowing the ſorrows, and being afflicted in the afflictions of thoſe we love; it is ſo far from departing from thoſe that are burden'd, that it bears a part of the burden with them; it weeps with thoſe that weep, and cauſeth us to *remember thoſe that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that* *ſuffer adverſity, as being our ſelves alſo in the body* (Heb. 13. 1, 2.) They who are of one heart, make both their loſſes and their enjoyments common, they all ſhare in what befals any one.

Fifthly, True love is as ready to own the perſon of a friend, as to ſympathize with his condition. As hope makes us not aſhamed of our own eſtate, whatſoever it is, ſo love makes us not aſhamed of the eſtate of another (*Prov.* 17. 17.) *A friend loves at all times*; he is not aſhamed to profeſs or expreſs his love at any time. He loves his friend in good report and ill report, (if that ill report be not raiſed upon his ill deſert) in honour and in diſhonour (if that diſhonour riſe not from his diſhoneſty); he is neither aſhamed of his friends poverty, nor of his priſon, when (not his own ſin, but) the chaſtning hand of God, or the unjuſt hand of man caſts him into either.

Thus a *friend loves at all times*, and he that loves not at all times, is no friend at all. We ſhall quickly ſee the end of their love, who love either God or man mearly for ſelf-ends: but where the ends of love to God or man are pure, that love will endure and hold out unto the end. Chriſt forewarns us (*Matth.* 24. 12.) That in the latter times, *becauſe iniquity ſhall abound, the love of many ſhall wax cold:* cold no doubt to God, and cold to man. The abounding of iniquity in thoſe dayes will make a ſcarcity of love. When iniquity abounds, trouble waxeth hot. And as then all falſe love waxeth quite cold, ſo the true love of ſome both to God and man will wax colder then it was. The blaſts of trouble, whether among or againſt the brethren, may (poſſibly) blow up and more inkindle the love of ſome, but they will blow out and quench the love of many. Trouble is the ſureſt trial of love; and therefore Chriſt tells us plainly (what *Job* found in the time of his perſonal trouble) that in times of great publick trouble there ſhall be but little love.

Secondly, In that *Job* complains of this ſo much and ſo often in his affliction, Obſerve,

The alienation of friends, or their abatements of love, is a very great encreaſe of our ſorrow in times of ſorrow.

The kindneſs of friends is comfortable at all times, much more in ſad times. And as their unkindneſs leſſens our comforts in good times, ſo it adds to our ſorrow in evil times, and that upon a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe they are obliged by received courteſies.

Secondly, Becauſe they have obliged themſelves by promiſed kindneſſes. It doth not trouble us much to ſee them uncourteous to us, who never received courteſie from us; or to ſee them unwilling to do us a kindneſs, who never promiſed any. But when we ſee our courteſies loſt upon any man, or him ſitting looſe to us, notwithſtanding all his own promiſes, this goes to the heart, and cuts deep. An unexpected croſs is not ſo grievous to us, as the croſſing our expectation. God himſelf calls Heaven and Earth to witneſs againſt ſuch as fail him in obedience, when he hath fill'd and followed them with benefits, (*Iſa.* 1. 2.) *I have nouriſhed and brought up Children* (ſaith the Lord) *and they have rebelled againſt me.* Though when any man rebelleth againſt God, he croſſeth his will, yet many rebel againſt him of whom (in a fence) we may ſay, that they do not croſs his expectation; for though he hath deſerved better at the hands of all, yet he looks for no better at the hands of ſome: But when Children, and Children whom he hath tenderly brought up and nouriſhed, rebel againſt him; when they whom he hath even ſtudied to pleaſe, care not to pleaſe him; when they from whom he had reaſon to expect all obedience, and nothing but obedience, pay him with rebellion, he will bear no longer. 'Tis thus in a proportion between man and man, as between God and man. Hence *David* complains often of the unkind alienation of friends, (*Pſal.* 31. 11.) *I was a reproach among all mine enemies* (that was not ſo much, he could expect no better) *but ſpecially amongſt my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance; they that did ſee me without fled from me.* *David* ſpeaks here of three ſorts; Firſt, Enemies; Secondly, Neighbours; And thirdly, Acquaintance. That his Enemies reproached him, was a trouble to him, yet the leaſt of his troubles; the thing which troubled him moſt, was, that his Neighbours reproached, and that his Acquaintance were *afraid of him*; he was *a fear to his acquaintance*, not that they were afraid he would do them any hurt, but they were afraid to own him, or do him any good. We have *David* bemoaning himſelf again for this (*Pſal.* 38. 11.) *My lovers and my friends ſtand aloof from my ſore, and my kinſmen ſtand afar off.* His friends came near enough to him when he was (as we ſay) in a whole skin, or in a good condition, but when ſores were upon him, he means it not of ſores (in proper ſence) upon his fleſh, but of ſores in a metaphor, troubles in his eſtate; then as if his ſore had been a plague-ſore, they ſtood afar off. Read the ſame holy man once more bewailing the unfaithfulneſs of his friends (*Pſal.* 69. 8.) *I am become a ſtranger to my brethren, and an aliant to my mothers Children.* And though *Heman's* greateſt trouble was a divine Deſertion, yet he was not a little troubled that men deſerted him (*Pſal.* 88. 8.) *Thou haſt put away my acquaintance far from me; thou haſt made me an abomination unto them.* *Heman* had a precious ſpirit, yet God at once poured terror upon him, and ſuffered men to pour contempt upon him; and while the terrors of God diſtracted him, he could not conceal how much the contempt of men diſquieted him.

Thirdly obſerve, *The moſt profeſſed and real friends in the world, may prove unſteady and unkind.*

We cannot be aſſured of any friend but Chriſt. Where or whom he loves, he loves to the end; but we may quickly ſee the end of mans love. *Men are mutable in their condition, but more mutable in their affections.* Now they love, anon they hate; now they applaud, anon they calumniate; now they lay us in their hearts, and anon they caſt us out of their houſes; now they cannot tell how to live out of our company, and anon they cannot live in it. There are many rocks upon which love hath ſplit, and friendſhip hath been broken; but uſually 'tis ſome change in our outward condition, which makes the change in our affection. Sometimes the proſperity of friends turns our love into envy: And, which we may (charitably) interpret as an argument of Gods favour to them, checks our friendſhip with them.

It is an ancient obſervation, That proſperity hath many friends, yea, that all men are greedy to call themſelves the kindred of the rich; and like ſwallows to flutter about thoſe who live in the warm ſummer of worldly aboundance. Yet the envy of ſome is too hard for their love, and they grow poor and beggarly in their affections to thoſe who outgrow them in riches and poſſeſſions. Some cannot rejoyce in friends any longer then they ſtand upon equal terms and even ground with them. But the ordinary rock upon which friendſhip ſuffers, is poverty and affliction; that which ſhould be the ſpecial ſeaſon for friends to ſhew themſelves in, becomes the occaſion of their falling off (*Prov.* 17. 17.) *A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity*; as if he had ſaid, there is little or no uſe of a brother, but in a time of adverſity, or that's the ſpecial time in which we have uſe of him, he is born for that very end, to aſſiſt and comfort an afflicted Brother; as Chriſt ſpeaks of witneſs-bearing to the truth (*Joh.* 18. 37.) *To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs to the truth:* As if Chriſt had thus expreſſed himſelf, *I ſhould looſe the very end of my birth, the end why I came into the world, if I ſhould not bear witneſs to the truth*; ſo we may conclude, if brethren and friends help not their friends and brethren in adverſity, they looſe the very end why they were born, and the deſign of ſetting up that relation. To give witneſs to an oppreſſed truth, and to give aſſiſtance to a diſtreſſed brother, are a pair of the nobleſt works, which we have to do in this world. Yet we rarely find either zeal enough in men to give witneſs to oppreſſed truths, or love enough in men to give help to their diſtreſſed brethren.

εὐτυχία πολύφιλος. εὐτυχόντων πάντες εἰσὶ συγγενεῖς. *Græc. Prov.*

Fourthly obſerve, *Holy and good men may be deſerted by friends that are holy and good.*

Job was a good man, and there is no queſtion but *Job* had good men to his friends, and that divers of his kindred feared God, yet how ſhamefully was he diſowned by them all? There is no duty, whether to God or man, but a good man may come ſhort in his anſwer to it; *In many things we offend all*, and all are apt to offend in this. As the law of faith in God, ſo the law of love to man is not eaſily fulfilled. Where the true habit of love is, there may be a great defect in the exerciſe of it. As he that hath faith, doth not alwayes act faith, ſometimes he acts as an unbeliever; and as he that hath the graces of patience and humility, doth not alwayes act the patient and the humble man; ſo he that hath love, and is a friend at his heart, may yet ſhew himſelf unfriendly: Not only may carnal and graceleſs friends, but even ſpiritual and gracious friends prove very vain and unſtable to us. As *Alexander* the Copperſmith, a temporary Believer, turn'd enemy againſt *Paul*, and did him much evil (2 *Tim.* 4. 14.) So they who were true Believers and ſound in the faith, were not true to him in their friendſhip; for they all forſook him, though not through unfaithfulneſs, yet through fear in an evil day, as he complains at the ſixteenth verſe of the ſame Chapter. *At my firſt anſwer no man ſtood with me, all forſook me.* *Paul* had not a friend to own him, or ſhew him any love when he was brought before *Nero*. How great the ſin of this univerſal deſertion was, we may collect from that ſerious interceſſion, *I pray God it be not laid to their charge.* Unleſs free mercy come in with pardon and diſcharge, our cowardly withdrawings from Saints in times of danger, as well as our withdrawings from Chriſt and his Truth, will be charged ſadly upon us. When Chriſt himſelf was betrayed by *Judas*, and attached by the *Jews*, all his Diſciples (even *John* the beloved Diſciple, who but a little before leaned on his boſom) forſook him and fled: And as all they fled from him, ſo *Peter* who followed him, followed him afar off; and when he was come to Chriſt in his bodily preſence, even unto the high Prieſts Palace, he then forſook, and fled from Chriſt more then all his fellow-Diſciples, he denied him, and forſwore him: Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt might ſay indeed, *My familiars and acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me.* Therefore in ſuch forſakings and failings of friends, let us not be ſcandalized, as if ſome new thing had happened, or as if this were not a temptation common to man. While we remember that Chriſt was forſaken, that *Paul* was forſaken, that *Job* was forſaken, who are we, that we ſhould not be forſaken? Men may ſay it, and yet fail; only God hath ſaid it, who cannot fail; *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.*

To cloſe this Point, take theſe four Deductions.

Firſt, *There is no friend upon whom we can fully confide, but God himſelf.*

And indeed to confide fully on any friend (were upon the matter) either to ſuppoſe or make him our God (*Mic.* 7. 5.) *Truſt ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy boſom: for the ſon diſhonoureth his father, the daughter riſeth up againſt her mother, the daughter-in-law againſt her mother-in-law; a mans enemies are the men of his own houſe.* But may we not truſt friend nor brother? May not a husband truſt the ſecrets of his heart with his wife? This ſeems unnatural to all theſe relations, and takes that from them which is a principal end why they are. The Prophet in all theſe cautions againſt creature-truſt, doth not command or teach friends to nouriſh jealouſies concerning each others faithfulneſs (which is the canker of friendſhip) nor would he have the husband torment himſelf with fears of his wives diſloyalty to him, if he ſhould communicate his boſom-ſecrets to her (which were to make marriage a meer bondage.) That which he aims at, is to arm us with patience, if friends fail and prove unfaithful; or to forewarn us that there is no friend but may prove unfaithful; and that therefore, as himſelf did (*v.* 7.) we ſhould reſolve to *look unto the Lord*, that is, to be confident of his help alone.

Secondly, *It is of God that friends are faithful and true unto us.*

When friends are friendly, this is of God; and if our friends are unfriendly, this alſo is of God. The Lord can make our enemies to be at peace with us. And unleſs he uphold the hearts of our friends, they will quickly be as enemies to us. The ſmiles and the frowns, the love and the hatred, the good will and the ill will of man are ordered by a divine hand; riches and honour, with all other accommodations and comforts of this life, are not more the gift of God to us, then the affections of our friends are.

Thirdly, *Though friends have given us much proof of their faithfulneſs, yet they may fail in the offices of friendſhip.*

Not only profeſſed, but experienced friends may prove vain and helpleſs to us. We cannot conclude that any man will do us good, or ſtand our friend, becauſe he hath done ſo; for not only may his hand be ſhortened, and he cannot do as before; but his mind may change, ſo that he will not do as before. Experiencrs of what God hath done for us, are ſtrong grounds of confidence in him; the more experience we have, the more hope; but the experience we have of men, is not a ſure ground of hope; that they have been a ſupport and comfort to us, is no infallible argument that they will be ſo again.

What *Abſalom* ſaid to *Huſhai* (when upon a ſeeming defection from *David*, he offered him his ſervice and advice) *Is this thy kindneſs to thy friend? Why wenteſt thou not with thy friend?* The ſame may be ſaid to many, who make real defection from their friends, and apoſtatize from all their moſt ſerious profeſſions of friendſhip; Is this your kindneſs to your friends? why go you not with your friends? Falſe friends will alwayes fail us for an advantage to themſelves; and true friends may ſometimes fail us, when we expect moſt advantage, and need moſt aſſiſtance from them. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? is *Job*'s denying queſtion in this Book. We may alſo queſtion with as ſtrong a negative concerning perſons; *Who can find a certain friend among men*, who are all (upon one account or other) uncertain? We have no aſſurance of men but this, that *ſurely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie* (Pſal. 62. 9.) Men of high degree and men of low degree, comprehend all ſorts of men: A lie and vanity comprehend all kinds of uncertainty; and therefore (though ſuch men, whoſe hearts God eſtabliſheth to us, may be ſure to us, yet) we may write *uncertainty, uncertainty*, upon all men.

Fourthly, *'Tis beſt to uſe friends as knowing that they may fail us.*

We muſt have them as if we had them not, and love them as if we loved them not. Not that we ſhould be unſound or cold in our love to others (that were not only uncivil, but ſinful) but that we ſhould not be confident, or make our ſelves ſure of the love of any. That man who is unſound or cold in his love, is leſs then a friend; and he that is confident, or makes himſelf ſure of the love of a friend, makes him more then a man. That ſpeech, *So love as if thou ſhouldeſt ſhortly hate*, may have an ill uſe; yet there is a good uſe to be made of it: For though (in regard of the ſincerity of our own affections) we ſhould ſo love, as if we were to love for ever, yet in regard of the inſtability of mans affections, we ſhould ſo love, as if occaſion might be given us to hate every moment. We muſt ſo love God, as knowing that whom he loves, he loves to the end, that is, without any end of loving; yet we muſt ſo pleaſe God, as if we feared his love might end, or be turned into hatred every hour: but though we ſhould be willing to pleaſe and pleaſure men in all lawful things, as if their love towards us could never end; yet we muſt ſo love them, as knowing that their love might quickly end. We rarely give our friends ſo much love as we ought; but we often expect more love from them then we ſhould. We can never give God ſo much love as we ought, nor are we able to hope for ſo much love from him as we ſhould. 'Tis beſt for us to give all our love to God, and not to expect much from man: We may hope for moſt from God, when we expect leaſt from the creature. The freſh ſprings of the conſolation of God flow moſt fully into us, when the freſh ſprings of our affection run chiefly unto God. And the Lord is pleaſed ſometimes purpoſely to ſtain the beauty of all our comforts in the creature, with their failings and uncertainties, that while we uſe them, we may enjoy none but himſelf; and that while we love them, we might live only in and upon his love.

Sic ama tanquam oſurus.

VERS. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

They that dwell in mine houſe, and my maids count me for a ſtranger, I am an aliant in their ſight.

I called my ſervant, and he gave me no anſwer; I entreated him with my mouth.

My breath is ſtrange to my wife, though I entreated for the childrens ſake of mine own body.

Yea, young children deſpiſed me, I aroſe, and they ſpake againſt me.

All my inward friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved, are turned againſt me.

Verſe 15. **They that dwell in mine houſe.**

גור ‧ גרי *Variè redditur, Incolæ, inquilini, advenæ. Inquilini domus meæ.* Vulg. Γείτονες οἰκίας. *Vicini domus.* Sept.

THe word is rendred a Tenant who hires Land to uſe, or a Houſe to dwell in; and ſo ſome underſtand it here; *They that dwell in mine houſe*, that is, they that hire my Houſes, or my Lands, and dwell upon them; *My Tenants count me a ſtranger.*

Others tranſlate *Neighbors*, or ſuch as dwelt near him; *My Neighbors count me a ſtranger.*

Thirdly, The word ſignifies a *Sojourner*, one who hath the conveniencies of Lodging and Diet in the houſe (*Exod.* 3. 22.) *Every woman ſhall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that ſojourneth in the houſe, Jewels of ſilver, and Jewels of Gold.*

Fourthly, The word may note any paſſenger or ſtranger whom we entertain and admit to ſtay with us, and abide in our houſe for a ſeaſon. The ſojourner lives with us at his own charge, he payes for what he receives; but the ſtranger ſtayes with us upon our coſt, and hath his welcome freely. *Be not forgetful* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *to entertain ſtrangers* (Heb. 13. 2.) So the word is uſed (*Exod.* 2. 22.) *Moſes* called his Sons name *Gerſhom*, for he ſaid, *I have been a ſtranger in a ſtrange Land.* And *Job* ſhewing his nobleneſs in Hoſpitality, ſaith (*chap.* 31. 32.) *The ſtranger did not lodge in the ſtreet*; I took him into my houſe.

Eadem vox Gherim *Hebræi vocabant eos quos Græci* προσήλυτους *vocant, illos, ſc. qui non genere, ſed quaſi adoptione initiati profitebantur Judaiſmum, & circumciſionem accipiebant.* Bold.

Fifthly, This word ſignifies a *Proſelyte*, who was not originally of the people of *Iſrael*, but a Gentile, or a ſtranger by birth; yet receiving Circumciſion, was looked upon as one of them, and admitted to the priviledges of the *Jews*. The word is uſed in that ſence (*Exod.* 12. 48.) *When a ſtranger ſhall ſojourn with thee, and will keep the Paſſeover to the Lord, let all his Males be circumciſed, and then let him come near and keep it.* Of ſuch Chriſt ſpeaks (*Mat.* 23. 15.) *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees hypocrites; for ye compaſs Sea and Land to make one Proſelyte* (that is, to bring one into the Jewiſh Religion) *and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell then your ſelves*; for (to open that difficulty only in paſſage) though ſeducers are ſeven-fold the children of hell more then the ſeduced, barely ſo conſidered, in which regard, the ſeducing Phariſees were the elder ſons of Satan, or more the ſons of Satan then the ſeduced Proſelytes; yet becauſe young proſelytes who drink in falſe opinions or ſuperſtitions, at the perſwaſions of others, are uſually far more taken with them, and more zealous for them, then their perſwaders (we have ſeen many Novices very violent, and even to out-act their Leaders) hence it is (as I conceive) that Chriſt ſaith, that the old Phariſees made the young Proſelytes *twofold more the children of hell then themſelves*; ſeeing by how much any do the more advance the deſign of hell, by ſo much the more they are advanced in their portion in hell; *Double work ſhall have double wages.* But to return; though ſome Proſelytes were at once converted and perverted, or, turned from what they were, to what they ſhould not be, yet many were indeed converted from what they were, to what they ſhould be: And 'tis ſuppoſed, that the Pſalmiſt includes thoſe (*Pſal.* 118. 2, 3, 4.) among all ſorts that are invited to praiſe the Lord, Firſt, The whole body of the Jewiſh Nation (*verſ.* 2.) *Let* Iſrael *now ſay*, &c. Secondly, The Prieſts and Levites (*verſ.* 3.) *Let the Houſe of* Aaron *ſay, his mercy endureth for ever.* Thirdly, The Proſelytes (*verſ.* 4.) *Let them now that fear the Lord, ſay, that his mercy endureth for ever.* Some who were not either of the houſe of *Aaron*, that is, of the Prieſts or Levites, nor of the houſe of *Iſrael*, that is, native *Jews*, yet might be of the *Jewiſh* Religion, and *fear the Lord.* All ſuch were called *Proſelytes*, and therefore they alſo were invited to praiſe the Lord. Some underſtand *Job* ſpeaking of ſuch in this Text; *The dwellers in mine houſe*, or proſelytes, ſuch as I have been a means to turn to God, even they turn away from me; *They count me a ſtranger, and I am an aliant in their ſight.*

זר *Alienum ſignificat & hoſtem.*

They counted me a ſtranger.] The word ſignifies not only a ſtranger, but an enemy. *Strangers have devoured the Land* (Iſa. 1. 7.) that is, enemies. And the reaſon why the ſame word ſignifies both an enemy and a ſtranger is, becauſe enemies are the worſt of ſtrangers: And though ſometimes our neighbours and they of our own houſe are enemies to us, yet moſt commonly our enemies are ſtrangers to us, and alwayes they who are enemies, are eſtranged from us. In which ſence *Solomon* often calls the *Harlot a ſtrange woman* (Prov. 2. 16. & 5. 3. *&c.*) Not only becauſe ſhe is a ſtranger, or another, from a lawful wife, but becauſe ſhe is really an enemy, and will deſtroy his peace who is enticed and overcome by her.

Further, This word which we render *Stranger*, ſignifies alſo a *prophane man*, who indeed ſhould be a ſtranger to the Saints, and is a ſtranger to God, as the Apoſtle expreſſeth all ſuch (*Eph.* 2. 12.) *Aliens from the Commonwealth of* Iſrael, *ſtrangers from the Covenant of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world.* So ſome underſtand it here.

Sicut prophanum reputaverunt me. Targ.

They count me a ſtranger.] That is, the men of my houſe, who have ſeen my way of worſhip, and have joyned with me in the exerciſes of Religion, now that I am fallen under theſe afflictions, account me as a ſtranger from the Covenant, as a prophane man, as an out-caſt from the people of God: As if he had ſaid, *They who were ſtrangers and aliens from the true God, now count me a ſtranger and an alien, as if I had renounced my Religion, and had made a defection from the fear of God.*

נכרי *Extraneus fui.*

And I am an aliant in their ſight] An Aliant is a man unknown to us, or if known to us, yet not of the ſame Nation with us. *I am accounted an Aliant*; as if I were not the ſame man, as if I were not *Job*, but a ſtrange kind of creature, newly come into the world, or come from another world. My friends look upon me as if they had never ſeen me before, or any like me; they whiſper among themſelves, or ſay in their hearts, Is this *Job*? Surely it is not he, or if it be, he is not the man he was. Hence note,

First, *Man is ready to receive, and as ready to forget received courteſies.*

Job was not counted a ſtranger by ſtrangers, but by home-dwellers, by perſons obliged, by ſuch as had taſted of his favours, and reaped a plentiful harveſt from his bounty; theſe, theſe were they who counted him a ſtranger. How unnatural and inhumane is it to count him a ſtranger to us, that hath entertained us when we were ſtrangers? Yet ſuch returns man makes to man. And no marvel if ſuch be the carriage of man to man, when man carries it thus to God himſelf. Every ſin we commit againſt God, is a tranſgreſſion, not only of the Law of holineſs, but of Law of the love and kindneſs. The Apoſtle doth moſt ſignificantly put theſe two together, *unthankful, unholy* (2 *Tim.* 3. 2.) Seeing every act of unholineſs hath much unthankfulneſs in it. We are dwellers in Gods houſe. The whole world is Gods houſe; he hath ſet up this great Fabrick; yet to how many that dwell in this houſe is God a ſtranger, and an alien in their ſight? They live without God in the world. Yea, there are many that dwell in Gods more ſpecial houſe, the viſible Church, who yet count God as a ſtranger; or at leaſt have little acquaintance with him. Many profeſs the name of God, who know not what it is to converſe with God. And they who know what it is, are yet ſo ſlow and ſeldom in it, that the Lord may juſtly ſay, *You that dwell in my houſe count me a ſtranger.* We have all our accommodations in the houſe of God; he feeds and provides for our bodies in his common houſe, the world; and in his ſpiritual houſe, the Church, he feeds and makes proviſion for our ſouls, and yet (in a great meaſure) we are as ſtrangers to him, and give the Lord cauſe to be a ſtranger unto us. *Moſes* having told the people of *Iſrael* what God had been to them, and done for them, checks their unthankfulneſs, *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people,*

people and unwiſe? Why? what had the Lord done for them? He had taken them into his houſe, he made them his houſe, he dwelt among them, yet they forgot him and turned aſide unto other gods. They made themſelves ſtrange gods, and ſo made God a ſtranger to them. They who take ſtrange Gods, make the true God a ſtranger; *If God alone be not our God, he is not at all our God.* It is ſaid of good *Hezekiah* (2 Chron. 32. 25.) that when the Lord had healed him, and reſtored him from the grave, whither he gave himſelf for gone; that, yet *Hezekiah rendred not again according to the benefits done to him; for his heart was lifted up*; his heart ſhould have been lifted up in thankfulneſs, but his heart was lifted up in pride. God dwells with an humble ſoul, and humble ſouls dwell with God; but as God beholds the proud afar off, ſo when any of his own people, who are in a ſtate of nearneſs to him, are lifted up with pride, they behold God afar off, he is as a ſtranger to them. While we keep cloſe to God by faith, our hearts are kept low by humility. *Hezekiah* prayed hard to have his body healed, and no ſooner was his body healed of that ſwelling boil, but his ſoul ſweld. They who are proud, whether towards God or man, can never be thankful. When ſhall we who are ſo greedy to receive, ſay, what ſhall we return?

Secondly, Conſider how *Job* taxeth thoſe who had dwelt in his houſe, whom he had entertained when they were ſtrangers, who had received kindneſſes from him. O ſaith he, *They that dwell in mine houſe, count me a ſtranger.*

Hence note, *Man cannot but reſent it ill to ſee thoſe forgetful of him that have received kindneſs from him.*

The former point ſhewed that we are apt to forget the courteſies we receive; this ſhews how deep an impreſſion this makes upon their hearts from whom we receive them: when they that dwell in our houſes count us ſtrangers, when they who have eaten our bread will not own us, what brand is black enough for ſuch unthankfulneſs? Now, if man cannot bear it to ſee thoſe forgetful of him, of whom he hath been mindful, and to whom he hath been helpful, ſurely God will not bear it at the hand of man. This cauſed the Lord (*Iſa.*1.2.) to make his appeal to Heaven and Earth, *Hear O ye Heavens, and give ear O Earth:* What's the matter? *I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me.* God reſented it deeply when ſuch as himſelf had nouriſhed, rebelled; when the Children whom he had brought up were diſobedient againſt him. There is an obligation in nature, to bring up Children, to feed and nouriſh them. Now, if it be ſo offenſive when Children do not anſwer our care in their breeding and education; much more is this true in reference to ſtrangers. The Lord may tell thoſe who are now his Children, that he nouriſhed, yea and redeemed them, when they were not only ſtrangers, but enemies; how greatly then do we provoke the Lord by our unthankfulneſs, when we make him a ſtranger to us, who took us in when we were ſtrangers, and acted ſuch unſpeakable love to us when we were enemies.

Further, the Text holds out another antecedent to theſe words, beſides the dwellers or ſojourners in *Job's* houſe, even his houſhold ſervants.

My maidens count me a ſtranger, I am an aliant in their ſight.

He ſpeaks alſo of his men-ſervants in the next verſe; *I called my ſervant, and he gave me no anſwer.* We are now come to the third ſort whom *Job* taxeth of unanſwerableneſs in duty to him in his afflictions. Firſt, His kindred were unkind; Secondly, His friends were unfriendly; Thirdly, His ſervants proved unſerviceable.

My maidens.] The word which is here uſed for *Maidens,* doth not ſignifie thoſe who are for ordinary ſervice only, but ſuch as have command and truſt, ſuch as keep the keyes of the family. The word imports *truſt:* ſervants are expreſt by that word both for the truſt committed to them, and for their expected faithfulneſs in that truſt. *Abigail* gives a diſtinction of maid-ſervants in that expreſſion (1 *Sam.*25.41.) ſome for government, others for common work in the houſe: that Text ſaith, *She aroſe and bowed her ſelf on her face to the earth, and ſaid, Behold let thine hand-maid be as a ſervant to waſh the feet of the ſervants of my Lord.*

אמה *Ancilla, ſic dicta à fidelitate; ancilla libera & ingenua; cui credita ſunt præcipua domus miniſteria.* Bold.

Let thy hand-maid.] There ſhe expreſſeth her ſelf by the word of the Text, *Let thy hand-maid be as a ſervant;* that word notes a ſervant of an inferior rank, not a directing, or an over-ſeeing ſervant, but a working ſervant; *Let thy hand-maid be as a ſervant* (to do the meaneſt work) *to waſh the feet of the ſervants of my Lord. Job* ſpeaks of the beſt ſort of ſervants, not of drudges; *My maidens* (who had truſt) *accounted me as a ſtranger.*

שפחה *Notat ſervã abjectioris conditionis.*

Verſ. 16. **I called my ſervant, and he gave me no anſwer.**

'Tis the duty of ſervants to be at a call, or to come when they are called. The word implies calling by name, which is a free and a familiar way of calling. It carries ſome reſpect and favour in it to ſpeak to a ſervant by name; *I called my ſervant, and he gave me no anſwer:* Silence is ſometime a ſign of conſent, but ſilence is here taken for a ſign of contempt; not to anſwer when we are called is incivility in moſt, and it is undutifulneſs in ſome; if a ſervant anſwer not when he is called, he forgets what his calling is. The Apoſtle forbids ſervants ſome kind of anſwering (*Tit.* 2. 9.) *Exhort ſervants to be obedient to their own Maſters, and to pleaſe them well in all things, not anſwering again;* yet here *Job* reproves and complains of it as a fault in his ſervant, that he did not anſwer; how then ſaith the Apoſtle, *Not anſwering again?*

There is a twofold anſwering; Firſt, By way of contradiction; Secondly, By way of ſubmiſſion; or there is an anſwer of reluctance, and an anſwer of obedience: when the Apoſtle ſaith to ſervants, *Be obedient to your Maſters, not anſwering again,* he means, not anſwering by way of contradiction, or reluctance, as ſervants are very apt to do. When Maſters give lawful commands, ſervants muſt give anſwer by ſubmitting, not by queſtioning, much leſs by oppoſing: hence we put in the margent, *Not gainſaying.* A ſervant muſt give an anſwer when he is asked a queſtion, but he muſt not gain-ſay when he is enjoyned a duty. Some ſervants are both lowd and lazy, quick of tongue and ſlow of hand. *Job's* ſervant was one if not both theſe; *I called my ſervant, and he gave me no anſwer.*

And I intreated him with my mouth.] I did not only call, but intreat him; the language of a Maſter is imperative, 'tis his place to command, not to entreat; but ſaith *Job, I intreated.* The word here uſed ſignifies the *humbleſt intreaty,* the intreaty of a poor man for an alms; according to that of *Solomon* in the *Proverbs* (Chap.18.23.) *The man uſeth entreaties,* or, *ſpeaketh ſupplications;* it is this word, *he ſpeaketh humbly;* they that are rich and have enough ſpeak big, the words of Great men are uſually like themſelves great and high, but poor men ſpeak ſupplications. *Job* did not ſpeak commands, but ſupplications to his ſervant; he did not ſpeak to him as a ſervant, but as if himſelf had been his ſervant, at leaſt, as if he had been his fellow-ſervant. As his eſtate was brought low, ſo his ſpirit was humble; 'tis comly when our expreſſions bear the image of our condition.

חנן *Eſt blandè loqui & cũ obſecrationibus, ut loquitur pauper.*

I intreated him with my mouth.] There is ſomewhat more in that. The mouth is the ſhop of words (as the heart is of thoughts) there they are wrought and framed, and from thence they are ſent out; yet a man may ſpeak and not with his mouth; a nod with the head, a look with the eye, a motion from the hand, have a language in them, eſpecially from a Maſter to his ſervants; and there are geſtures of the head, hand, or eye, which may ſignifie not only ſpeaking but entreating; but *Job* entreated *with his mouth;* a maſter may entreat by the mouth of another, and ſend a meſſenger to entreat his ſervant. Had *Job* done only ſo, that had been much; but it is much more for a Maſter to entreat with his own mouth, *I intreated him with my mouth,* I ſpake my ſelf, and yet I could get no anſwer. *Job* puts in all theſe aggravations to ſet forth this part of his affliction; he called, he intreated, and that with his own mouth, yet his ſervant regarded not.

Further, His meaning is not only that he could not get a word from his ſervant, but that he could not get any work from him. *Job's* ſervant did not only refuſe to ſpeak to him, but to do for him; when a ſervant makes no anſwer with his mouth, yet if he act with his hand, it makes ſome amends; his induſtriouſneſs is a ſatisfaction for his unmannerlineſs; and his diligence may obtain pardon for his ſilence. We read in the Goſpel of a Father who ſaid to one of his Sons, *Go, and he anſwered, I will go, but he did not;* he anſwered with his mouth, but not with his hand: to another ſon he ſaid, *go*, do ſuch a thing, and he ſaid, *I will not*; he did not only not promiſe to go, but plainly denied to go; but afterwards he repented and went, he denied his Father with his tongue, but he obeyed with his hand; it were well if a ſervant who forbears to anſwer by word, would anſwer by his work. When *Job's* ſervant gave him no anſwer, he gave him neither word nor work, neither tongue nor hand. And though *Job's* ſervant had denied him nothing but an anſwer in words, yet he had reaſon enough to be troubled at it, and to number it among his ſorrows. Not to anſwer when we are called to, is a deſpiſing of him that calleth us; and we can hardly ſpeak any thing of a man, which renders him more worthleſs, then by not ſpeaking to him. What can we eſteem him worthy of, whom we do not eſteem worthy of a word from us? Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *A man in affliction is apt to lay every thing to heart; and is very jealous of every mans carriage towards him.*

We are ſenſible of any diſreſpect from men, when the hand of God is upon us; *Job* could not but take notice of a ſlight from his ſervant: We might think that *Job* a man of a great and truly noble ſpirit, ſhould have over-looked the neglect of his maidens and men-ſervants, and not have troubled himſelf with it, but he could not. Though the thing in it ſelf was light, yet it lay heavy upon his ſpirit; as in his proſperity *he did not deſpiſe the cauſe of his man-ſervant, or of his maid-ſervant, when they contended with him,* (Chap. 31. 13.) ſo in his adverſity he could not deſpiſe the contempt of his man-ſervant, or of his maid-ſervant, when they did not own nor anſwer him. *We take moſt notice of little evils, when great evils are upon us.* And as uſually it is our infirmity to do ſo, ſo there may be both a diſcovery and an exerciſe of much grace in doing ſo. For as it ſhews much holineſs of ſpirit, if when we are loaded with great mercies, we can take notice of little mercies to be thankful for them, ſo if when we are under great afflictions, we take notice of little afflictions to profit by them. He that is ſpiritual, deſires to pick out the meaning of God towards him, in the ſmalleſt croſs-carriage of man towards him. There is much faith ſeen in bearing a heavy croſs, and much tenderneſs in feeling the lighteſt croſs. And as he that hath a tender conſcience is troubled for, and feels the ſmart of the leaſt ſin which he hath committed againſt God, ſo he feels ſome ſmart of the leaſt trouble inflicted upon him by the hand of man, becauſe he looks upon it as a tryal ſent from God.

Secondly, In that he complains thus of his ſervants, Obſerve,

God can create trouble to us out of any of our relations.

They who live and depend upon us, may become a burden to our lives. As ſervants are a help to their Maſters, ſo Maſters are the ſupport and ſtay of their ſervants, they feed them, they cloath them, they lodge them, they have all that they have in the world from them. 'Tis true, ſome ſervants have been great comforts to their Maſters, they have been to them as their right hand, or as their Children; hence *Solomon* gives the wiſe ſervant a part of the inheritance among the brethren, (*Prov.* 17. 2.) yet how often doth that relation prove an affliction? How many ſervants are there, who ſerve their own ends, and not their Maſters, or who care not to ſerve their Maſters any longer or further, then they can ſerve their own ends? The ill diſpoſition and demeanor of ſervants, is none of the leaſt of thoſe troubles, of which the Apoſtle warns them that marry (2 *Cor.* 7.28.) *Nevertheleſs ſuch ſhall have trouble in the fleſh*; that is, in their outward condition. With all our comforts troubles are mingled, the ſtate of marriage is not only an honourable, but a comfortable ſtate, yet many troubles attend and throng about it: there is comfort in Children, but there is trouble in Children too; there is comfort in ſervants, yet they are troubles alſo. A ſervant is the loweſt and laſt reſort of a miſerable man for comfort, if he be denied it there, if a ſervant refuſe to help, and inſtead of ſubmiſſive and ſweetning anſwers, either ſtands mute and ſullen, or gives revilings, how great is the miſery of ſuch a man?

Ad valde acerbam injuriam pertinet, ut domini cum ſervis blandè loquantur, & ſervi contemnant. Pined.

Thirdly, In that he charges it upon his ſervant, that he did not anſwer when he was called, Obſerve,

It is the duty of ſervants to be obedient to the call and command of their Maſters.

The time and buſineſs of a ſervant, is not his own, but his Maſters hand; and 'tis his duty at all times to ſerve his Maſter in every honeſt buſineſs. Gracious hearts pattern themſelves in their attention to God, by the attentiveneſs of good ſervants to their Maſters (*Pſal.* 123. 1.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the Heavens; behold as the eyes of ſervants looks to the hands of their Maſters, and the eye of a maiden to the hand of a Miſtreſs, ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God till he have mercy on us.* The ſervants eye ſhould alwayes be upon his Maſter, and the maidens eye upon her Miſtreſs, not only to hearken what they ſay, but to obſerve what they do, and to pick out the meaning of every motion and turning of their hand. A ſervant ſhould alwayes ſtand ready, and ſet himſelf in a poſture of obedience. Beckening with the hand, or a nod with the head, ſhould be to him as a word of command. The Centurion gives that character of a good ſervant (*Matth.* 8 9.) *I have Souldiers under me, and I ſay to one go, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh, and to my ſervant do this, and he doth it.* Here is no murmurings at, no nor ſo much as any the leaſt diſputings of the orders given. Going and coming and doing, are the beſt language of ſervants; 'tis moſt comly when they ſpeak with their feet, and make anſwer with their hands. The Apoſtle is much upon this obſequiouſneſs of ſervants in moſt of his Epiſtles (1 *Tim.* 6. 1.) *Let as many ſervants as are under the yoak, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blaſphemed:* The doctrine of God is, that ſervants ſhould give honour to their Maſters, therefore the doctrine of God is blaſphemed if they do not: The Apoſtle ſpeaks to believing ſervants, and he preſſeth them upon that very account; *They that have believing Maſters, let not them deſpiſe them becauſe they are brethren.* The Apoſtle ſeems to ſay, that ſome ſervant might thus object, *As my Maſter is in the faith, ſo am I too; what honour do I owe him? there is neither Jew no Gentile, bond, or free, maſter nor ſervant, but in Chriſt we are all one:* It is true ſaith the Apoſtle, yet abuſe not this priviledge; ye are all one as to the participation of Goſpel-Grace, in the pardon of your ſins, and the juſtification of your perſons; but ye are not all one as to the ſtate of your relations. Grace doth not take away or cut aſunder the bonds of duty, whether natural or civil. Read more, *Col.* 3. 22. *Epheſ.* 5. & 6. Now (I ſay) ſeeing the Apoſtle inſiſteth ſo much upon that point, ſurely there is much of the will and glory of God in it, elſe the Spirit of God would not have left ſuch frequent and plentiful admonitions about it. Hence as *Paul* uſeth a negative conſideration in *Timothy*, provoking ſervants to obedience, that the name of God be not blaſphemed; ſo he uſeth an affirmative in direct oppoſition to that in his Epiſtle to *Titus* (Chap. 2. 10.) *That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.* Holineſs being moſt viſible in our relations, relational holineſs muſt needs be the chiefeſt ornament of our profeſſion. Whereas *Job* ſaith, his ſervant would not anſwer, though he intreated him with his mouth, Obſerve,

To act againſt the condeſcention of thoſe who are above us, heightens our ſin.

It is a fault for a ſervant not to anſwer when he is barely called or commanded; but for a ſervant not to anſwer when he is intreated, is exceeding ſinful. Every Maſter is above his ſervant, but when he entreats, he puts himſelf below his ſervant. And by how much the Maſter goes out of his place, in gentleneſs to entreat his ſervant, by ſo much doth a ſervant go the more out of his place in ſtubbornneſs, by not obeying his Maſter. Now, if it be ſuch an aggravation of a ſervants undutifulneſs, not to hear when his Maſter entreateth; how ſinful is it when man doth not hear at Gods entreaty? We are all ſervants to God, how oft doth God call, and we do not anſwer, yea, how often hath he intreated us with his mouth, and yet we have not yielded? God beſeecheth man to be reconciled to him, and he refuſeth; God beſeecheth man to obey him, and he either denieth or delayeth obedience. No man could bear that at a ſervants hand, which God beareth at ours. We are careleſs and negligent, we are ſtubborn and unfaithful, yet God is patient. Did Maſters reflect on their ſervices to God, they

Cum vis ut ſerviat tibi ſervus tuus, & tu non vis ſervire Deo, facis Deo quod tu pati non vis. Auguſt.

they would ſee little cauſe to complain of, or much cauſe to be patient towards their moſt unprofitable ſervants. We are very ſenſible of a ſervants failing in duty to us; when ſhall we be ſenſible as we ought of our failings in duty to God? When we are troubled that ſervants do not come at our call, nor do at our bidding, we ſhould conſider how many calls we have withſtood, and how many biddings we have diſobeyed. Let us be exact in duty to God, and walk to all well-pleaſing, ſeeing we expect exactneſs in duty from man, and to be pleaſed in all things.

Job proceedeth to deſcribe his affliction in a nearer relation. By how much any relation is nearer to us in which our affliction lies, by ſo much doth that affliction come nearer to us. Affliction from a ſervant pincheth much, but affliction from a wife pincheth much more.

Verſ. 17. **My breath is ſtrange to my wife, though I intreated for the childrens ſake of my own body.**

We found that *Job's* Wives breath was ſtrange to him, (*Chap.* 2. 9.) when ſhe bid him *curſe God and die*; now his breath is ſtrange to her. 'Twas ſin which made her breath ſtrange to him; but ſorrow made his breath ſtrange to her.

My breath was ſtrange to my wife.

There are four interpretations of theſe words.

Firſt, Some by the word (*Ruach*, which we render *breath*) underſtand *the mind*, or *underſtanding*; and becauſe the word which we tranſlate *ſtrange*, ſignifies alſo *to be diſtracted*, to be as a mad man who hath loſt the uſe of his reaſon; from both, the ſence is made up thus; *I was as a diſtracted man in the account of my Wife*, my Wife looks on me as if I were out of my wits, and ſo unfit for her converſe or ſociety. The underſtanding of a madman is a ſtranger to himſelf, and we love not to be near thoſe who are mad.

Quaſi uxor Jobi eum pro demente habuerit. Bold.

Secondly, Others tranſlate, not *breath*, but *life*, becauſe *life* is continued by *breathing*. Life is the union of ſoul and body, while breath continues, life continues, and the departing of our breath is the departure of life. According to this ſence of the word, the Text is thus tranſlated, *My life is ſtrange to my Wife*, that is, *I being ſick and full of ſores, my Wife is weary of my life*, and would be glad to ſee me in my grave; *Job* was as a man free among the dead, and theſe conceive his Wife was willing to be freed from him by death.

Thirdly, Others by his *breath* underſtand that which moved upon his breath, his words, or voice, his ſpeech, or complaint. Words are nothing but breath formed and ſhaped to expreſs our minds by; ſo, *My breath is ſtrange*, is, my words, my complaints to her, my diſcourſes with her are ſtrange; ſhe will not hear me ſpeak, my voice is offenſive and unpleaſant to her by reaſon of my affliction; I deal ſo much in groans and ſighs while I ſpeak, that ſhe cannot bear it to hear me ſpeak.

Fourthly, Take breath ſtrictly for that which we reſpire or breath forth while we live. *My breath is ſtrange*, that is, *loathſom*, noyſom, ill ſavoury. So the word is uſed (*Numb.* 11. 20.) where the Lord tells the people of *Iſrael* when they murmured for fleſh, that they ſhould have their fill of it (*verſ.* 20.) *Ye ſhall not eat one day, or two dayes, or five dayes, or ten dayes, or twenty dayes, but even a whole moneth, till it come out of your noſtrils, and be loathſom to you* (ſo we read, or) *till it be ſtrange to you*, or an abhorrence to your ſtomach. As all things are ſtrange to us which we never had or uſed, ſo ſome things grow ſtrange to us, becauſe we have and uſe them ſo much. The ſtrangeneſs of loathing is worſe then the ſtrangeneſs of not having. Ye ſhall be acquainted with fleſh till ye count it ſtrange, that is, ungrateful or unwelcom both to your preſence and your palate. So here, *My breath is ſtrange to my Wife*, 'tis to her as unſavory meat which the ſtomach loatheth, or cannot digeſt; probably the breath of *Job* might have an ill ſavour, through the continuance of his diſeaſe; any long ſickneſs may breed corruption of the breath, and ſome ſickneſſes ariſe from putrifaction in the lungs or inward parts, which neceſſarily corrupt the breath: 'tis like *Job* had inward ſores as well as outward, and that theſe made his breath unſavory, yet he looks on this as a part of his affliction, that his breath (though not ſo ſweet and pleaſant as in former times) ſhould be ſtrange to his Wife.

My breath is ſtrange to my Wife.] He adds an aggravation to this unkindneſs of his Wife, as before to the neglect of his ſervants; as he intreated them, ſo he intreated her; *My breath is ſtrange to my Wife*,

Though I intreated for the Childrens ſake of my own body.

Some render it diſtinctly, and make this a deſcription of the undutifulneſs he found in his Children; *My breath is ſtrange to my Wife, and I intreated my own Children*; implying that they alſo refuſed; I intreated the Children of my own body, I was a ſuppliant to my own bowels. Thus Servants, Wife, and Children, all relations in the family helped on his affliction.

Et orabam filios uteri mei. Vulg.

They who inſiſt upon this interpretation are hard put to it how to make it out, that he intreated his Children; for it may be objected, all his Children were cruſhed to death with the fall of the houſe, in *Chap.* 1. how then can he be ſaid to intreat his own Children here?

'Tis anſwered, Firſt, He might have young Children when his houſe fell, that were not at the banquet; ſo that as the violent death of ſome of his Children was an affliction to him, ſo alſo was the preſervation and life of his other Children, according to this opinion.

Secondly, Others refer it to his Grand-children, his Sons Sons, whom he might reckon as his own; Childrens Children, are as our own Children. Thus *Jacob* ſpake to *Joſeph* (Gen. 38. 5.) *And now thy two Sons*, Ephraim *and* Manaſſeh, *which were born unto thee in the Land of* Egypt, *before I came unto thee into* Egypt, *are mine, as* Reuben *and* Simeon, *they ſhall be mine.*

Filii filiorū ſunt inſtar filiorum.

Thirdly, The Septuagint interpret it for the Children of his Concubines. The Scripture is clear that divers of the Patriarks had Concubines, but that *Job* had any the Scripture is ſilent; and therefore I paſs this, and rather ſettle upon our reading, which both the Hebrew very well beareth, and moſt of the Learned follow: this being only an addition to the unkindneſs of his Wife, to whom (ſaith he) *my breath was ſtrange, though I intreated her for the Childrens ſake of my own body*, or as the letter of the Hebrew is, *Though I intreated towards the Children of my own body.*

Deprecabar ad filios uteri mei. Heb.

Further, The word ſignifies, *to bewail*, or *deplore*, as well as *to entreat*: ſo the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 102. 13, 14.) *Thou wilt ariſe and have mercy upon Sion, for the time to favour her, yea the ſet time is come, for thy ſervants take pleaſure in her ſtones, and they favour the duſt thereof*; ſome read it, *they pitty the duſt*, they bewail and mourn over the duſt of *Sion*. Thus *Job* bewailed his Childrens duſt; and then the meaning may be, *My breath, or my complaint was ſtrange to my Wife, even when I was bewailing, or deploring the Children of my own body*; ſhe did not only abhor me, when I cryed out of the loſs of my eſtate, when I complained of my pains and ſores, and of the injuriouſneſs of my friends, but when I was bewailing the loſs of my very Children, in which ſhe was as much concerned as I am.

Patet uxori anima mea etiam ubi communes liberos deploro. Coc.

Secondly, *I intreated for the Childrens ſake*; may carry this meaning, as if the argument which he uſed to draw his Wife to reſpect him was his Children. I entreated her by the inviolable band of marriage, and the fruits of it, but ſhe regarded me not. *My breath is ſtrange to my Wife*, &c.

Per ſanctum jus conjugii & fructus ejus. Jun.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *They who have taken ſweeteſt content in one another, may quickly be loathſom to one another.*

There is nothing in the Creature of any long continuance, much leſs of any long contentment. Man and Wife ought in duty to take mutual delight and contentment one in another; yet a Wife who is one fleſh with her Huſband, may count his breath a ſtranger, and ſhe *who was given for a help, may prove helpleſs*, in time of greateſt need.

When man was created, the Lord ſaid *it is not good for man to be alone, I will make him a help meet for him*. A Wife is made for a help to man; and when doth a man need her help ſo much, as in the time of ſickneſs, and affliction? That which is good at all times, is at ſometimes better. A Wife ſhould ever be a help to her Huſband, but then moſt when he cannot help himſelf. The vertue of ſome Wives hath appeared gloriouſly at ſuch times; and when diſeaſes have made all others loath their Huſbands, they have delighted in them. True conjugal love out-lives all changes both of time and ſtate, it knows no decay either by age or ſickneſs.

The

Speed's *Chrō.p.*630. *Sect.* 5.

The Story is famous of Prince *Edward*, wounded with a poyſoned knife by a treacherous Aſſaſſine, to whom, when other means of cure proved ineffectual, his wife, the Lady *Eleanor* ſucked out the poyſon, and gave him both eaſe and healing. How rare a pattern was this woman of conjugal fidelity? How far did ſhe out-act *Job*'s wife in love, who was ſo far from ſucking his wounds or licking his ſores, that ſhe could not abide his breath. *Solomon* gives this aſſurance of a virtuous woman, that *ſhe will do her husband good and not evil all the dayes of her life*: What changes ſoever be upon him in outward things, her affections change not; whether he be in health or in ſickneſs, whether in riches or poverty, whether his breath be ſweet or unſavoury, ſhe doth him good, and not evil all the dayes of her life. True love holds out in duty both to God and man.

Secondly obſerve, *That Love between man and wife, which begins and is grounded upon outward motives, may ſoon decay and wither.*

All outward things are decaying, and if the groundwork fall, that which is built upon it, cannot ſtand. If riches be the motive of love between man and wife, when once they grow poor, they will be as poor in love. If corporal comlineſs and beauty be the motive, ſickneſs ſtains that, and there's an end of love. They who love Chriſt for the loaves, and godlineſs for worldly gain, will not love them long. And none know how ſoon their love may end to any earthly and civil relation, if it began upon earthly and meer civil ends.

There are two motives of conjugal love, that will laſt for ever.

First, Grace in the perſon loved.

Secondly, Obedience to an Ordinance of God.

The beauty of Grace withers not, though the grace of beauty do. Grace is moſt beautiful in the greateſt declinings and wrinklings of natural beauty. The breath of Grace can never be unſavoury, nor can obedience to an Ordinance of God decay. Theſe continue ever in the ſame ſweetneſs and ſtrength, and ſo will that love between husband and wife, which began at them.

Thirdly, Whereas *Job* intreated for the Childrens ſake of his own body; obſerve,

Children are ſtrong obligations of love between man and wife.

A husband hath no greater argument to move a wife by, then to beſeech her for the Children that God hath given them. Children are dear to their parents, and an endearing to their parents. As Children encreaſe, ſo ſhould Love encreaſe; Children are one of the principal ends of marriage; the attaining of any end in marriage, puts a further engagement upon us to perform all the duties of it. Children are the living images of their parents; they are their parents multiplied. So that while a husband entreats his wife for his childrens ſake, ſhe is entreated for the ſake of as many husbands as ſhe hath children. Hence obſerve,

Laſtly, *Strong deſires are importunate, and will improve every intereſt for the obtaining of what is deſired.*

What we cannot carry upon our own intereſt, we labour to carry upon any other more prevailing name or intereſt. *Jacob* moves the Lord in prayer by the remembrance of his Fathers, *Abraham* and *Iſaac*; *O God of my Father* Abraham, *and God of my Father* Iſaac (*Gen.* 32. 9.) *Jacob* did not pray to his Father *Abraham*, but he made uſe of his Fathers name, as a motive in prayer, And though all names and intereſts are ſwallowed up in the name and intereſt of Jeſus Chriſt, as to deſerving a grant of what we pray for; yet we may argue and plead with God in prayer, for the Churches ſake; yea, for our own childrens ſake, that God would do us good, that we may be further inſtrumental for their good.

עויל

Quod ſæpe aliis accidit contrarias habet ſignificationes. Stulti quoq; deſpiciebant me. Vulg.

Verſe 18. **Yea, young children deſpiſed me, I roſe, and they ſpake againſt me.**

The word ſignifies not only a *Child*, but a *Fool*; ſo ſome render it here, *Fools deſpiſed me*; none but fools deſpiſe wiſe men, nor are the godly contemned by any but the wicked. We ſay, *young children* newly weaned from the breaſt, or as the original in ſtrictneſs bears, *Sucklings*, who are the youngeſt children, deſpiſed me. Children in that ſtate, are not in a capacity either to give honour to, or to deſpiſe their Elders: And therefore by *young children*, we are to underſtand youths, or the younger ſort of men, not youngeſt children. Youths and young men are in common language called Children, in compariſon of the Aged. The Prophet *Jeremiah* cries out (*chap.* 1. 6.) *Ah Lord God, behold I cannot ſpeak; for I am a Child*: That is, I am but young. And *Solomon* tells the Lord in *Gibeon*, *I am but a little Child*; *I know not how to go out or to come in*, 1 Kings 3. 7. Yet at this time *Solomon* had a Child; as appears (1 *Kings* 14. 21.) for he reigned but forty years, and *Rehoboam* his Son was one and forty years old when he began to reign. So that he called himſelf a Child, becauſe he was young, and with reference to his years, unfit to rule ſo great a people. Thus here, *Young children deſpiſed me*, that is, *young ones deſpiſed me.*

I aroſe, and they ſpake againſt me.

Not only did they deſpiſe when I ſtood upon my authority, as an ancient man may do; but when I aroſe, that is, when I ſhewed them reſpect, and (as it were) did obeiſance to them. To riſe to any man, is a geſture of reverence, as well as to fall down before him. Children ought to riſe up, and ſhew reverence to the aged. *Job* roſe to children, and yet they gave him no reverence. Yet ſome underſtand it barely of the act; *I aroſe*, and went away from them, and aſſoon as I turned my back, they ſpake againſt me. As if his meaning were, *Though they durſt not ſpeak againſt me to my face, yet as ſoon as I turned my back, they reproached and ſcorned me*; what! Is this *Job*? But I rather take it as before, that *Job* condeſcended in reſpects to young ones, who, forgetting their diſtance, gave him none. As he did not only call his ſervant, but entreated him; as he did not only ſpeak to his wife, but entreated her; ſo he did not only deal gently with, but ſhewed reſpect to children, and yet they deſpiſed and ſpake againſt him. Of this he complains, both as their ſin, and as his affliction. Hence obſerve,

Simulac ſurrexero & ab illis receſſi, mihi detrahunt, qui præſentē non auderēt ita tractare Merc.

First, *They that are young, owe reverence to the aged.*

This is ſeated in the Law of Nature, and we find an expreſs Law for it, given by God himſelf to his ancient people the *Jews* (Lev. 19. 32.) *Thou ſhalt riſe up before the hoarie head, and honour the face of old men, and fear thy God; I am the Lord.* He that wears the *Silver Crown*, ſhould be honoured, in his capacity, as well as he that wears the *Golden Crown*. As we are to honour our parents, ſo every old man; for he is as a parent. And if the younger ought to riſe up before the hoary head, and give them reverence, how great a perverſion is it both of the Law of Nature and of Nations, when the hoary head riſing up, is deſpiſed by the younger? *Paul* gives caution concerning *Timothy* (1 Tim. 4. 12.) *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth.* 'Tis a ſin to deſpiſe the young who are gracious; what is it then to deſpiſe grave and gracious old age?

Secondly obſerve, *It is an addition to our affliction, to be deſpiſed in affliction; eſpecially to be deſpiſed by our inferiors, whether in degree or age.*

This is threatned as a ſore judgment upon the *Jews*, when an enemy ſhould invade their borders (*Deut.* 28. 30.) *I will bring upon thee a Nation of fierce countenance, that ſhall not regard the face of the old*; noting that old men ſhould be reverenced, and uſually are reverenced among all Nations. *Job* was once reverenced both by young and old (*chap.* 29. 18.) *The young men ſaw me, and did hide themſelves.* When a man of venerable age comes in preſence, young men ſhould ſtart back and modeſtly withdraw; *Yea* (ſaith he) *the aged roſe and ſtood up*: He had reverence in former times, not only from young men, but from the aged. This ſhewed the height of his worldly felicity. But now (to ſhew the depth of his worldly miſery) the youngeſt of young ones, who could deſpiſe him, did deſpiſe him. It was a crime puniſhable in the *Spartan* Common-wealth, for young men not to riſe up and ſhew reverence to the aged when they paſſed by. Hence that proverbial ſpeech took its original; *It is only good to be an old man in* Sparta. 'Tis comly in all Common-wealths and Families, when every perſon keeps his rank, when honour is given to whom honour is due. *Rebuke not an Elder* (it is the Apoſtles rule to *Timothy*,

Aſſurgendi habitus à pueris & adoleſcentibus in adventu ſeniorum religioſè obſervabantur, præſertim apud Spartas, unde dictum, In ſola *Sparta* expedire fieri ſenem. *Plut.*

(1 Tim. 5. 1.) *but exhort him as a Father.* Though we muſt not flatter or favour any perſon, to the prejudice of the truth, or holineſs, yet while we ſpeak truth, or reprove unholineſs, we muſt put a difference between the perſons of men. We muſt not handle or deal with Elders as we deal with the younger men. When we ſpeak reproof, we muſt ſpeak reſpect unto the ancient. The Prophet gives it as the Character of a confuſed State, when *children behave themſelves proudly againſt the ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable* (Iſa. 3 5.)

Verſe 19. **All my inward friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved are turned againſt me.**

Job proceeds to another rank of friends; he ſpake of his ordinary friend before, now of thoſe who were as his Council: Though a man hath many friends to converſe with, yet ſome few only are fit friends to take counſel with. We may love many heartily, yet but few ſhould know our hearts. The Hebrew is, *The men of my ſecrets,* that is, the men to whom I opened my ſecrets, and with whom I took advice in things of neareſt concernment. In Scripture we find many ſuch Hebraiſmes (*Iſa.* 5. 13.) We tranſlate, *Thy honourable men are famiſhed.* The Hebrew letter is, *Their glory are men of famine.* So (*Obad.* 7.) *The men of thy confederacy,* that is, the men with whom thou hadſt confederacy, or didſt joyn thy ſelf in league or covenant; ſo here, *The men of his ſecrets,* are the men to whom he communicated his ſecrets: Theſe we call *inward friends.* He is an inward friend, with whom we either adviſe what to do, or whom we tell what we have done or are about to do; as Chriſt beſpeaks his Diſciples (*John* 14. 15.) *Henceforth call I you not ſervants, for the ſervant knoweth not what his Maſter doth; but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of the Father, declare I unto you.* As if Chriſt had ſaid, As my Father hath opened his boſom to me, ſo have I to you. Therefore you are not uſed like ſervants, but like inward friends. Of ſuch *Job* complains here, *My inward friends*

Abhor me.] The word implies ſuch an abhorring of him, as if he had been a man unfit for any familiarity at all, much more for inward familiarity. As if he had ſaid, *The men with whom I joyned heart and hand, will not come at me: They ſtand off as if I were unworthy to be ſpoken to, or to be heard ſpeak; they defie my company, and will not have to do with me.* The word is applied to the averſation of all the ſences; it is applied to hearing (*Amos* 5. 10.) To ſmelling (*Iſa.* 1. 13.) To the taſte (*Gen.* 43. 32.) To touching or feeling (*Iſa.* 14. 19.) Thus (ſaith he) by the men that were to me as my own ſoul, am I now the abhorrence of their ſouls, yea, even of all their ſenſes.

תעב

Eſt ita abominari aliquem ut reputetur omni familiaritate indignus.

In that *Job* had common friends (he deſcribed ſuch before) and inward friends; obſerve,

Wiſe men make difference of men, but eſpecially of friends,

A wiſe man knows how to diſtinguiſh perſons as well as things; he hath (as we may ſay) inward friends and outward friends. He hath many to whom he doth courteſies, to whom yet he doth not communicate his counſels. Some men have love and faithfulneſs enough in them to be made the men of our counſel, but they are defective in judgment and underſtanding; others have underſtanding and judgment enough to be the men of our counſel, but they want faithfulneſs; neither every judicious man, nor every faithful man are fit to be men of our counſel, or to be truſted with ſecrets. He that is fit for this, muſt have a compoſition of both in him, and ſuch a man is a rare man indeed. Many will ſerve for friends to eat and drink with, to talk and diſcourſe with; but few are fit to conſult and communicate our hearts with. The heart is a great truſt. Obſerve,

Secondly, *Wiſe men deſire to take advice and counſel of others, they have men of their ſecrets.*

'Tis beſt to ſee with our own eyes, yet 'tis not only good, but neceſſary to uſe the ſight of other mens eyes. They are but fools who are meerly led by others, or who act only by the advice of other men, and they (which is as bad) are over-wiſe, who think they have no need to be adviſed. None have been ſo much miſtaken, as they who take all upon themſelves. They make beſt improvement of their parts and wiſdom, who uſe them much, but truſt them little. As we may not truſt our own wiſdom at all (which *Solomon* calls leaning to our own underſtanding) in reference to our dependance upon God; ſo it is very unſafe and dangerous to truſt to our own wiſdom with contempt or neglect of men. Private men need counſel for the management of their family-affairs, much more do Magiſtrates need it for the managing of publick affairs. The Orator ſaid, *Men of Counſel are to a Common wealth, as the mind, reaſon or underſtanding is to any particular man:* They are to a State, as the foundation is to the building; the whole Fabrick whereof quickly falls and decayes without counſel; therefore in the holy Language *Jaſad* ſignifies to *lay a foundation,* as alſo to *gather together in Council,* becauſe the foundation of the peace and proſperity of a Nation is laid in good counſel. *Job* being a publick man, had his Council. It was the ſaying of one of the Ancients, *That Commonwealth is moſt ſafe and flouriſhing, where the heads of ancient men, and the arms of young men are employed and improved* (Prov. 11. 14.) *Where no counſel is the people fall; but in the multitude of Counſellers there is ſafety.* The worſt of Princes have hated counſel. *Nero* was an utter enemy to the *Roman Senate.* And *Caeſar* cared little for their advice. They who would rule by their own will, would rule by their own wiſdom; and they who would make all the people their ſlaves, have no deſire to make any of them their Counſellers.

Conſilium atque Senatus eſt mens, ratio, intelligentia reipublicae. Cic.

יסד

Significat fundare & convenire in conſilio.

Maxima ſalva eſt Reſpublica ubi conſiliũ ſenum, juvenum arma obtinent. Plut.

And they whom I loved are turned againſt me.

Having ſpoken of his friends before, he now ſpeaks of his friendlineſs to them; *They whom I loved:* There is no friendſhip without mutual love. Loving may be taken two wayes, either as oppoſed to hating, or as oppoſed to a leſs degree of loving. *Job* loved all his friends, but ſome more; here love is oppoſed to a leſs degree of love; *Thoſe whom I loved,* that is, thoſe whom I loved greatly, thoſe who had ſo much of my love, that in reſpect of them, I might be ſaid to love none but them. Chriſt loved all his Diſciples, yet one was called *the Diſciple whom Jeſus loved.* A man that loves many, may ſo love one, that comparatively he doth not love any but him. Such ſhould our love to God be, as ballanced with our love to man. Though it be a duty, and the great Commandment, to love one another; yet God muſt be ſo loved by us, that we may (in this ſence) affirm we love none but God. The Law is expreſs, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, with all thy ſtrength* (Luke 10. 27.) If God be loved with all the heart, then the love that we bear to the creature, is no love in compariſon of that we owe to God. And in proportion, the love we bear to ſome man, ſo far exceeds our love to others, that they may be ſaid to engroſs all our love. *Job* ſpake here diſtinctly, and diſtinguiſhingly of ſuch friends as were higheſt in his favour, and had moſt room in his heart. Theſe he calls the men *whom he loved.*

Habebat Job *quos prae aliis diligeret.*

Again, We may conſider love two wayes; firſt, As it is a love of benevolence; ſecondly, of complacency: *Job* ſpake before of thoſe friends whom he loved with the love of benevolence; but here of thoſe friends whom he loved with the love of complacency, of thoſe in whom his delight was ſet, and in whom all the lines of his affections were firmly centred: Such was the love of *Jonathan* to *David,* of whom he ſaith (2 *Sam.* 1. 26.) *Very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me, my brother* Jonathan, *thy love to me was wonderful, ſurpaſſing the love of Women.* Women love moſt; *Jonathan's* love to *David,* was more then the love of women to thoſe whom they love moſt, their husbands and their children. *Job* had extraordinary out-goings of his heart in love to ſome; what returns they made to him, we ſhall ſee in opening the next clauſe; *Thoſe whom I loved*

Are turned againſt me.] As if he had ſaid, I have had moſt of their hatred, who had moſt of my love. They who were as my Counſellers, are become my Betrayers. It is one thing to turn from a man, and another to turn againſt him; it is if friends turn from us in an evil day (as 'tis ſaid of the Children of *Ephraim,* that being harneſſed, and carrying bows, they turned back in the day of battel. Thus to turn back in the time of need, is (I ſay) bad enough) but when they turn againſt us, and not only do us no good, but do us hurt; this is the utmoſt departure from, and breach of the bounds and bonds of friendſhip. Thus *Abitophel* turned againſt *David* in the conſpiracy of *Abſolom,* and *Judas* againſt our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. To *turn againſt,* is the act of an enemy, and implies an hoſtile ſpirit. *They whom I loved, are turned againſt me.*

Now ſeeing *Job* who had many friends, had alſo ſome inward friends, whom he calls by way of eminency, *thoſe whom he loved.*

First, Obſerve, *That though all friends are loved, yet ſome may have a more ſpecial intereſt in, and portion of our love.*

All the people of God are his friends, yet *Abraham* had the priviledge above many, to be called *the Friend of God.* God calls but ſome Saints, *his beloved ones, his Jedediahs, his favourites*, though he love and favour all that are Saints. He ſpake of the whole people of *Iſrael, You have I known* (that is, you have I loved) *above all the Nations in the world*; ſo men may ſee reaſon to love with a diſtinction, to place the heat and hight of their affections upon ſome beyond others, to whom they bear good affection.

Obſerve Secondly, *The love of man is ill requited by ſome men*; or, *They to whom we have done many good turns, turn ſometimes not only from us, but againſt us, and ſhew themſelves not only no friends, but enemies.*

That man is leſs then a friend who ceaſeth to do us good, but he is a down-right enemy, who contrives or acts our hurt. What Chriſt ſaid to the *Jews* (*John* 10.32.) we may ſay to ſuch friends (in our meaſure) *Many good works have we done among you, and to you, for which of them do ye ſtone us.* When friends decline in their love, they encline to hatred; and while they are not with us, they may be numbred with thoſe who are againſt us: Neutarlity towards a friend is a kind of enmity; but *Job's* friends became his enemies in kind. Of ſuch *David* complains (*Pſal.* 109.4, 5.) *For my love, they were mine adverſaries, they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my good will.* And again (*Pſal.* 55.12, 13, 14.) *It was not an adverſary that ſet himſelf againſt me* (Who was it then? it was one whom he once reckoned his choiceſt friend) *It was thou, O man, my companion, my guide, and my familiar friend; we took ſweet counſel together, and went to the houſe of God as friends.* None prove worſe enemies then they that have received the greateſt kindneſſes, when once they turn unkind. As the ſharpeſt Vineger is made of the pureſt Wine, and pleaſant meats turn to the bittereſt humours in the ſtomack; ſo the higheſt love beſtowed upon friends, being ill digeſted, or corrupted, turns to the moſt unfriendly hatred. The Philoſopher ſaith, *They who love one another too much, hate one another moſt.* As no exceſs of love is of any long continuance, ſo when they whom we have loved moderately begin to hate us, they hate us more then ſuch can whom we never loved. *The diſſentions of brethren, are hotteſt, becauſe they are neareſt:* and the diſſention of friends is hotter then that of brethren, becauſe the love of brethren (ſtrictly conſidered) is founded only in nature, but the love of friends is founded in courteſies and profeſſions, which, though not in themſelves, yet to us, becauſe we have been active or receptive in them, are the cloſeſt obligations to love. Now, the cloſer any obligation is, the wider is the breach, when once that obligation is broken, or miſ-improved: if they whom we have loved begin to fall from us, they uſually fall out with us. We have had ſad experiences of this. And 'tis an argument where ever it falls, that ſuch did never love thoſe who loved them upon Goſpel-principles, or in obedience to the command of God. For as they who turn againſt the truth of God, never received the love of it; ſo they never received the love of men in truth, who turn againſt them. Spiritual love cannot turn to hatred, 'tis meer natural love which doth ſo. Holy love ſeldom turns from, but it never turns againſt a friend. When grace is the cement of affections, what can divide them? The ſpecial love of God overcomes thoſe that are loved of him to love him; and though the Lord may ſay of all the Saints on earth, that they have not anſwered his love, with a due proportion of love, and of many that they are fallen from their firſt love; yet ſo powerful is his love, that they never fall either out of his love, or from their own; but the love of man hath no ſuch power over man. And therefore what *Job* once ſaid, others may have cauſe to ſay, *They whom we loved are turned againſt us.*

Qui ſe nimiũ amant, hi ſe nimiũ odio habent. Ariſt.l.7. Pol.c.7. *Proximorũ odia ſunt acerrima.*

Thus *Job's* affliction ran through all his relations; he was not only loaded with trouble in his ſtate and perſon, but in his kindred, friends, ſervants, wiſe, children, Councellors, and chief familiars. All denied him duty, and therefore he cries out for pity in the next Verſe.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

My bone cleaveth to my skin, and to my fleſh, and I am eſcaped with the skin of my teeth.
Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.
Why do ye perſecute me as God; and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh.

IN the former context *Job* ſhewed what effects his affliction wrought upon others, (all contemned him, or proved unfaithful to him) Here he ſhewes what effect his affliction had wrought upon himſelf, it waſted and conſumed his body, it greived and troubled his Soul; the ſenſe of this took ſuch ſtrong hold of him, that he breaks out into a ſupplication for pittie, (*verſ.* 21.) and into a deprecation of further perſecution, (*verſ.* 22.)

Verſ. 20. **My bone cleaveth to my skin.**

As if he had ſaid, *My afflictions have brought me to skin and bones, I am become a very skelliton. My fleſh faileth, and my heart is almoſt failed, only God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

My bone cleaveth to my skin, and to my fleſh.

The word ſignifieth to cleave together, as thoſe things do that are faſtned with glue; ſo ſome render it here, *My bone is glued to my skin:* and the copulative is rendred as a word of likeneſs by Mr. *Broughton* and others, *My bone cleaveth to my skin as to my fleſh*; that is, whereas my bone (as the bone of any man in health) ſhould cleave to my fleſh, my bone cleaveth to my skin; as if he had ſaid, *there is nothing between my bone and my skin; ordinarily fleſh groweth between the skin and the bone; but my skin is immediate to my bone.* All fleſh is graſs, ready to wither; but my fleſh and the goodlineſs thereof is already withered. The cleaving of the skin to the bones is a proverbial ſpeech, for extream leanneſs, both among prophane Writers, and in the holy Writ. (*Pſal.* 102.5.) *My heart is ſmitten dead,* &c. *by reaſon of the voyce of my groaning; my bone cleaveth to my skin,* that is, I am become very low and lean. This proverb is uſed alſo by complaining *Jeremie*, *Their viſage is blacker then a coal, they are not known in the ſtreets, their skin cleaveth to their bone* (Lam. 4. 8.) Fat men *are skin and fleſh*, bones appear not; lean men are *skin and bones*, their fleſh appears not.

*In pelle meâ & in carne mea adhæſit os meũ.*Heb. *μαρασμὸν id morbi genus appellant Græci quum toto corpore ſucco exhauſto, oſſa cuti agglatinata cernuntur.* Merc. *Conjunctio* & *ſumitur* pro ſicut. *Cuti meæ ut carni meæ adhærent oſſa mea.*Jun. *Oſſa atque cutis ſum miſera macritudine.* Plaut.

And I am eſcaped with the skin of my teeth.

When he ſaith, *I am eſcaped,* he implyes that he had been in danger, and could not eaſily get away. Some evils may be withſtood and conquered, but 'tis well if we can make an eſcape from others. *Job* was as hard put to it, as ever poor man was. He ſpeaks in alluſion to a Battel, or as if he had come lately from the Wars; and indeed his was a ſore war. A man that hath been put to the worſt in a battel, is glad he can eſcape away with any thing; he is glad when all elſe is loſt to eſcape away with his skin, though it be not a whole skin; when all's made a prey, he is well if he hath his life for a prey. *Job* had been in a great battel, and was pittifully battered, he only came off with his life, (that Satan had no commiſſion to touch) but he came off with very little beſides, nothing was left him but the *skin of his teeth*, that was all, and that's a poor all, even as little as may be. The whole skin is not much, but the skin of the teeth is much leſs. This was *Job's* caſe, *I am eſcaped with*

The skin of my teeth.] The Vulgar rendreth it, *I am eſcaped with my lips about my teeth*, or, *there is nothing left me but my lips about my teeth*; They who follow that tranſlation, tell us rather wittily then ſolidly, that his lips were ſpared him not out of pitty, but upon deſign. The Devil who had power to wound him all over, *to touch his bone and his fleſh*, as the Lord ſpeaks (*Chap.* 2.) yet ſpared his lips, leſt he ſhould be diſabled or hindred in ſpeaking, and ſo in blaſpheming God, which was his original plot upon him. A learned Tranſlator, who retains our reading, doth yet expound the skin *of his teeth*, for his lips, the lips being as a skin encloſing

Derelicta ſunt labia tantummodò circa dentes. Vulg.

the teeth; and gives that Gloſs upon it; *He had nothing left him, but the inſtruments of ſpeech,* which Satan hoped would be the inſtruments of ſin.

Nihil remanſit integrum præter ſermonis inſtrumentum. Jun.

Others by the *skin of his teeth*, underſtand the more immediate skin of the teeth, *his gums*, which are ſockets into which the teeth are ſet and faſtned. All theſe tranſlations and interpretations meet in the expreſſion of this one thing, that his beauty was faded, and the ſtrength of his body utterly conſumed, that he was within a ſtep of death, and ready to drop into the grave. When the bone cleaves to the skin, both are near cleaving to the duſt. And he who is eſcaped only with the skin of his teeth, is not like to eſcape the teeth of death. The next thing which the body hath to looſe is life, when all is loſt but skin and bone. *My bone cleaveth to my skin, &c.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *A ſound mind oft lodgeth in a conſumed and crazy body.*

Job had a healthy ſpirit, but his body was unhealthy. While his bone cleaved to his skin, his ſoul cleaved to Chriſt. Some good ſouls are ill-houſed in the body, and ſome beautiful ſtrong bodies are ill-tenanted by the ſoul. *A ſound body and a ſound mind are together a compleat bleſſing.*

Secondly, Obſerve how much *Job* layes this to heart, he makes it his complaint once and again, both here and elſewhere.

Hence Note, *Bodily conſumption may prove very afflictive to the ſoundeſt mind.*

Though a ſound mind can bear the pain of the body, yet it cannot but be ſenſible of the pain of the body. Soul and body are ſuch near neighbours, that they muſt needs know how each other do. If the body be ſtrong, an afflicted mind will weaken it. And if the mind be well, yet an afflicted body will trouble it. Some who have a fulneſs and fatneſs of grace in their ſouls, have been heard bemoaning themſelves in regard of bodily weakneſs in the language of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 24. 16.) *My leanneſs, my leanneſs.* In the former part of the Verſe, he makes report of what he had heard, and what was that? *From the uttermoſt part of the earth have we heard ſongs, even glory to the righteous.* All the men in the world (who know what they ſing) ſing Glory to the righteous, that is, they atteſt and ſet forth the happy eſtate of thoſe who are freely juſtified, and ſo reputed righteous by the grace of God towards them; and who are powerfully ſanctified, and ſo made righteous by the grace of God in them. Now though both the glory of Grace, and the grace of glory, even all the good things, or fatneſs, both of this life, and of the life to come, be the portion, and (by promiſe) the due of the righteous, yet this righteous Prophet cries out, *My leanneſs, my leanneſs.* As leanneſs of body was the effect of his troubled mind, ſo his mind was troubled at the leanneſs of his body.

Job concludes theſe effects of his affliction with an apoſtrophe, and a vehement exclamation to his friends.

Verſ. 21. **Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.**

Some expound theſe words as a reproof, not as a ſupplication; As if he had ſaid, *O my friends, ye have unjuſtly vexed me, ye have troubled me without cauſe; now therefore know, that it is your duty to pity me: ye have profeſſed your ſelves my friends, but hitherto ye have ſhewed me little friendſhip: be aſhamed of this, return to your duty, and trouble me no more. Will ye ſtill perſecute him, whom ye ought to pity?* Thus he is conceived reproving them.

But rather take the words as an humble, yet earneſt intreaty, and ſo we may title them *Job's petition to his friends*; he had argued and diſputed with them long, but now he entreats and ſupplicates. In this ſupplication we may conſider,

Firſt, The ſubſtance or matter of it, or what he deſires, that is *pity*.

Secondly, We may conſider the circumſtances or form of it; there is life and ſpirit in it, 'tis quick, paſſionate, and piercing, and 'tis quickned two wayes.

Firſt, By an exclamation, *Have pity upon me, O ye my friends.* He doth not only ſpeak, but cry to them for pity. Interjections are imperfect ſpeeches, but they carry the moſt perfect ſenſe, both of our wants, and of our deſires. When our thoughts are too big for our words, and our hearts too large for our tongues, we vent them by exclamation.

Secondly, He quickens his ſupplication by a reiteration of it, he doubles it upon them. And there are two doublings in this ſupplication.

Firſt, In reference to the act.

Secondly, In reference to the object.

He doubleth the act in thoſe words; *Have pity, have pity*; he doubleth the object, *me, me: have pity upon me, upon me*; there is *pity, pity,* and, *me, me*; as if he would tell his friends that he was a double object of pity, or that he needed double pity, abundance of pity. *Multiplyed ſorrows, call for a multitude of compaſſions*; and they who ſuffer much, cannot be ſatisfied with a little, or with ſingle pity.

Thirdly, He repreſents the reaſon or ground of his ſupplication, why it was that he thus preſſed them for compaſſion, and cried out for pity at their hands. It was (ſaith he) *becauſe the hand of God hath touched me.* The hand of God hath touched me, let this touch your hearts.

Have pity upon me.] *Pity is the moving of the heart towards thoſe who are in miſery.* The Original word ſignifies to ſhew favour, whether by word, or deed, or rather both by word and deed. Good words, and good works, make compleat pity; good words are comfortable, but good words without good works are lean and miſerable comforters. He that ſpeaks pity doth well, but he that acts it doth beſt.

חנן *Eſt favore proſequi, largiri, & cum objectū miſerum eſt, ſympathiam & voluntatem levandi miſeriam denotat.*

Pity is twofold.

Firſt, Natural.

Secondly, Spiritual.

Natural pity is common to mankind: Man cannot put off pity, unleſs he put off humanity, and almoſt ceaſe to be a man. Some beaſts are pitiful; thoſe men are worſe then beaſts who are not. We juſtly call thoſe men inhumane and unnatural, who have no pity, becauſe pity is ſeated in the very nature of man; unmercifulneſs is a ſin againſt the light of nature, as well as againſt the law of God. And therefore the Apoſtle puts theſe two near together, *Without natural affection, unmerciful* (*Rom.* 1. 31.) This natural pity as it provokes us to relieve others, ſo it is a relief to our ſelves. That pity which moves us to eaſe others, is our own burden. It is a burden to ſee another in affliction, ſpecially if he hath any relation or nearneſs to us; therefore he eaſeth his own burden who ſhews pity to another. We do not alwayes love thoſe perſonally whom we pity. Some ſhew pity only out of a common inſtinct of love to others, and ſome only out of love to themſelves. That Judge who *neither feared God nor regarded men, yet after a while ſaid within himſelf, becauſe this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her* (that is, do her juſtice and relieve her) *leſt by her continual coming ſhe weary me* (*Luk.* 18. 4, 5.) And hence we read in Scripture of the *bowels of pity*, of the *bowels of compaſſion. If any bowels and mercies*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 2. 1.) They who have any bowels cannot but have ſome mercies. In the Hebrew and Greek tongue, the ſame word ſignifies both bowels and mercy or pity, becauſe pity cauſeth a ſecret motion in the bowels, and affects the body. The harlots bowels yerned, when the living child was to be divided (1 *King.* 3. 26.) The pity of God himſelf is called the moving or ſounding of his bowels; (*Iſa.* 63. 15.) *Where is thy zeal, and thy ſtrength, the ſounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards us? are they reſtrained?* The Prophet ſpeaks of God in alluſion to man, whoſe bowels are ſaid to be ſtraitned, when he is ſtraitned in mercy. When the inferior ſenſitive faculties in man, the eye, or the ear, take in ſorrowful ſpectacles or reports, theſe go to our bowels, to our very heart, the iſſue and effect whereof is compaſſion to thoſe, whoſe ſorrows are reported to us. Sometimes the eye carries in a viſion of ſorrow and miſery to the heart; *Mine eye affecteth my heart*, ſaith mourning *Jeremy*, when he ſaw the ruines and deſolate condition of *Jeruſalem.* Sometimes the ear conveyeth a report of miſery to the heart, and then we may ſay, the ear affecteth the heart. When word was brought to good *Nehemiah* of the ſad affliction and reproach of his brethren, the remnant of the captivity that were left in the Province, and how the wall of *Jeruſalem* was

Qui compaſſione moti ſubveniunt indigenti, magna ex parte ſibi ſubveniunt, propriam enim compaſſionem minuunt. Bold.

רחם σπλάγχνα

broken, and the gates thereof burnt with fire, he ſat down and wept, and mourned certain dayes (*Neh.* 1. 3, 4, 5.) his bowels were exceedingly moved. Natural pity may do this, yet that pity of *Jeremy* and *Nehemiah* was more then natural.

There is beſide this a ſpiritual pity, which ariſeth out of pure love. There may be pity (as was ſaid) where there is no love to the perſon, and there may be pity flowing only from natural love to the perſon; but where pity flows from love, and that a divine love, there's ſpiritual pity, ſuch pity as is more an act of grace then of nature; to the exerciſe of this pity the Saints are often called. *Put on* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Col.* 3. 12.) *as the Elect of God holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindneſs, &c.* They who have indeed put on, and are cloathed with the garments of holineſs, will alſo put on bowels of mercy as a Garment. Mercy moves us to cloath the naked, and mercy is alſo our own cloathing. *Have pity upon me,* ſaith pitiful *Job.*

Have pity upon me.] *Job* is not content to ſpeak it once, but he ſpeaks it again, *Have pity, have pity*; ingeminations, or the doubling of words, are frequent in Scripture, importing much vehemency and intention of ſpirit in him that ſpeaketh. What we would be ſure to have once, we call for twice; and whom we reverence and deſire much, we call after more then once. When *Eliah* was rapt up to heaven in a fiery Chariot, his ſervant *Eliſha* calls after him (2 *Kings* 2.12.) *My father, my father, the Chariots of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof. Father,* is a title of eſteem and honour; we count him worthy of double honour, whom we call *Father, Father.* When *David* would ſhew how ambitious he was to ſtand in the Lords books as his ſervant, he ſaith it, and ſaith it again; *O Lord, truly I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant* (*Pſa.* 116.16.) And the ſame *David* being under a ſpiritual deſertion, recalls the preſence of God with a double expoſtulation (*Pſal.* 22. 1.) which is a Prophecy of Chriſt, who alſo took up thoſe words when he hung upon the Croſs (his Father having vail'ed his face from him) *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me.* Once more; The Prophet (*Iſa.* 65. 1.) foretelling the earneſt deſire of Chriſt to receive and be acquainted with poor ſinners, who had no acquaintance with him, nor deſire after him, expreſſeth him doubling his deſire; *I am ſought of them that asked not for me, I was found of them that ſought me not; I ſaid, behold me, behold me, unto a Nation that was not called by my name.* As if he had ſaid to that ſtrange Nation (us ſinners of the Gentiles he means) *Be neither afraid nor aſhamed to look upon me, and I would have you view me well, glut your eyes upon me, and take your fill of my beauty; when you have beheld me once, behold me a ſecond time, and ſee whether ye will not like me as well as at the firſt: look upon me as often as you pleaſe, the oftener you look, the more ye will be pleaſed, and be ſure ye look upon no other, for beſides me there is no Saviour; Behold me, behold me, me only, and me alwayes; behold me as much as you will, and have no will to behold any other.* Scripture repetitions (you ſee) are no where vain repetitions; the more words we have from God, ſtill the more weight; 'tis ſo here in *Job's* repetition; *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me,*

Saltem vos Amici. Vul.

O ye my friends.] Or, at leaſt, *ye my friends* (as ſome tranſlate) do ye ſhew me pity, ye who are friends; let ſtrangers do what they pleaſe, let them paſs by ſenſleſs of my ſorrows, but do not ye; or ye my friends who are preſent with me, let me prevail with you to ſhew me pity, though other friends who live at a diſtance are hardned againſt me. Thus *Job* is conceived making a particular application to his three friends, in oppoſition to thoſe whom he charged with unfriendlineſs in the former context. As if finding himſelf deſerted by thoſe, yea by his kindred, by his wife, and children, by his ſervants, and Councellours, he turned himſelf to his friends then viſiting him, *O ye my friends,* who profeſs that ye came upon that very errand to comfort me, be not ye unkind as the reſt of whom I made that ſad complaint. But ſeeing *Job* in many paſſages hath taxed thoſe three friends with deepeſt unkindneſs, and profeſſeth that he had not experienced any pity from them; I ſee little reaſon why he ſhould make application to them here upon that account; And therefore (I conceive) he directs his ſpeech to them, becauſe it was their duty as well as the duty of others to pity him, not becauſe they had given him more hopes of pity then others had.

Further, Conſider he doth not ſay have pity on me, *O ye men*; though there is an obligation in that to pity; nor doth he ſay have pity on me, *O ye my allies and kindred* (though that be a further obligation to pity) but he puts it upon profeſſing and ſometime acting lovers, *O ye my friends.* A friend is a profeſſor of love; and friendſhip is love not only profeſſed, but frequently acted. As many bare profeſſions of love, ſo ſome one act of love doth not amount to friendſhip. Every man would do himſelf good often and alwayes. A friend is another ſelf; ſo *Moſes* deſcribes a friend (*Deut.* 13.6.) Where to ſhew how impartially the Jewes were to proceed againſt ſeducers, he expreſly forbids any favour to thoſe who might either challenge or deſerve the greateſt favour, whether upon natural or civil relations. *If thy brother, the ſon of thy Mother, or thy ſon or thy daughter, or the wife in thy boſom, or thy friend* (he ſeems to ſpeak leſs, but indeed he ſpeaks more then before, if thy Friend) *that is as thine own ſoul, intice thee ſecretly, ſaying, let us go and ſerve other gods, that thou haſt not known, thou ſhalt not conſent unto him, neither ſhall thine eye pity him, &c.* A ſpecial friend is as our own Soul, and many ſpecial friends are as if they had but one Soul. *Jonathan* and *David* moved in the higheſt ſphear of friendſhip; hence 'tis ſaid of *Jonathan, that his Soul was knit with the ſoul of* David, *and* Jonathan *loved him as his own Soul* (1 Sam. 18.1) So that while *Job* beſpeaks theſe men under the title of friends, he moves them by that argument which with moſt is the moſt preſſing, and which is the moſt laſting argument. For though brother, and child, and wife, are the neareſt ties of love, yet theſe have received more breaches then that of friend; and friends are more famous for acts of love, then brethren or children, and parents, or husbands, or wives. *A friend ſticketh cloſer then a brother* (Prov. 18. 24.) and, whereas man and wife are *one fleſh* (*Mat.* 19.6.) friend and friend are *one Soul.* What common humanitie will not do, what kindred and alliance would not do, friendſhip hath ſometimes done. *Have pity upon me, O ye my friends,*

For the hand of the Lord hath touched me.

The *hand* of God is his power, and this is takeen two wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, For his helping, or his protecting hand; which is called *the good hand of God,* (Iſa. 8. 18.) *And by the good hand of God upon us, they brought us as a man of underſtanding.* So *Ezr.* 8. 18. *Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me*; that is, to help or to do me good.

Secondly, The hand of God is put for the power of God in puniſhing and afflicting. Thus *Naomi* ſpake when ſhe was become *Mara*; *The hand of God is gone out againſt me* (Ruth 1. 13.) We have variety of expreſſions uſed in Scripture in reference to the puniſhing and afflicting hand of God.

As firſt, to lay the hand, *Exod.* 2. 4. *And* Pharaoh *ſhall not harken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon* Egypt, *and bring forth mine Armies.*

Secondly, *To lift up the hand* (Iſa. 26. 11,) *when thy hand is lifted up* (to ſmite thine enemies, and deliver thy people) *they will not ſee.* They had eyes to ſee, but they had no hearts, no wills to ſee what God had done.

Thirdly, *To ſtretch out the hand* (Iſa. 9. 12.) *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

Fourthly, *To touch with the hand,* which was opened in the firſt and ſecond Chapters of this Book; *put forth thine hand now* (ſaith Satan to the Lord) *and touch his bone, and his fleſh* (v. 5.) *Job's* bone and fleſh had felt that touch, and therefore he ſpeaks in the ſame form and phraſe; *The hand of the Lord hath touched me.*

The finger of God is put for his power in Scripture, as well as his hand. *Pharaoh's* Magicians confeſſed at laſt *the finger of God is here* (Exod. 8. 19.) That is, this plague or puniſhment is a demonſtration of a divine power. Some conceive that the word *finger* is there uſed to note ſome ſmall part of the power of God; and that as the hand is greater then a finger, ſo, to ſay, *The hand of God hath touched me*, is more then to ſay, *The finger of God hath touched me*, or, *This is the finger of God*. Indeed the little finger of God is more then the whole hand, yea then the loynes of all Creatures. Fooliſh *Rehoboam*, ſaid, *My little finger ſhall be heavier then my fathers loyns.* The Lord can make his little finger heavier then the loyns of the moſt cruel oppreſſours. The little finger of God is powerful enough to plague and ſubdue the ſtouteſt of his enemies; And there are ſome works of God ſo great beyond other of his works, that the one may be ſaid to be done by the finger of God, the other by his arm or hand; yet the finger of God may be taken in general for the power of God as well as his hand; and therefore Chriſt alluding to thoſe words of the Magicians, when he refuted thoſe who diminiſhed the glory of his miracles, as thoſe Magicians did the miracles wrought by *Moſes*, ſaith (*Luk.*11.20.) *If I with the finger of God caſt out Devils, &c.* Which another Evangeliſt expounds by the Spirit (who is the great power) of God (*Mat.*12.28.) So that hand and finger may ſignifie the ſame divine power, not only in kind, but in degree. However *Job* confeſſeth that he felt not the finger, but the hand of God upon him.

But ſeeing he ſaith, this hand had only touched him, doth it not import ſome lighter affliction? *The hand of God hath touched me.*

ורע *Non ſolum tangere ſed etiam percutere denotat, hinc ſæpe de percuſſione lepræ intelligitur.*

I anſwer, the word which we tranſlate *to touch*, ſignifies *a grievous ſtroak*, and is in Scripture applyed to ſmiting with the plague of Leproſie. This touching is a wounding, and leaves its mark and ſkar behind it, as the Leproſie did. When the Leproſie aroſe in the forehead of *Uzziah*, as he preſumptuouſly uſurped the Prieſts office, the Text (expreſſing it by this word) ſaith, *The Lord had ſmitten him*, (2 *Chron.*26.20.) and though, ſtrictly to touch, eſpecially when the word *finger* is the inſtrument of it, ſignifies but a little ſtroak, or a light dealing with a thing, as (*Luke* 11.46.) where Chriſt rebukes the Phariſees, who bound heavy burthens on the people, but themſelves would not ſo much as touch them with one of their fingers; that is, they would not take the leaſt pains about them; and to ſhew how great vertue there is in a little, or the lighteſt true application by faith to Chriſt, it is ſaid in the Goſpel, that *many beſought Chriſt that they might only touch the hem of his garment* (*Mat.* 14.36.) yet to touch, implies alſo an heavy ſtroak; and we in our common ſpeech joyn it with words of deepeſt impreſſion, as when we ſay, *touch him home*, or *touch him to the quick*: And ſuch I conceive is the meaning here; *The hand of the Lord hath touched me*; that is, he hath made my wound deep, mine are ſore and great afflictions, he hath ſmitten not only my fleſh, but my bone, or he hath ſmitten me to the bone. The Lord hath touched me home, he hath touched me to the quick; *Have you pity upon me, for the hand of God hath touched me.*

Firſt, From the matter of the Petition, *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me*; *Job* being in a troubled condition, what doth he ask for? not for riches, not for honour, he only asketh pity.

Hence Obſerve in General, *Deſire runs out upon thoſe things which are ſutable to our wants.*

'Tis perfect happineſs to enjoy all ſutable good; and the ſupply of any particular good which we want is part of our happineſs. All ſenſitive delight ariſeth from the proportion that is between the object received, and the organ receiving; and ſo alſo doth intellectual delight. Every man frameth (according to his apprehenſion) his Petition to his ſtate, and his prayers to his deficiencies. As all deſire that which is good, ſo that good ſpecially which is the proper cure of their preſent evils. Pity is proper to miſery, and compaſſion to an afflicted condition, therefore the common cry of the afflicted is, *pity, pity*. He that is hungry, begs for bread, he cryes, *Bread, bread*; he that is in pain, begs for eaſe; and he that is ſick, thinks nothing worth the having, unleſs he may have health; he that is condemned, begs for parden, nothing ſo well-come to him as a pardon; he doth not ſue for lands, and large inheritances, for a full Table, or coſtly apparel, no, he ſueth only for pardon. He that is convinced of guilt, crys, *pardon, pardon*; and he that is convinced of his corrupt heart and ſinful defilements, cries, *Grace, Grace.* Jeſus Chriſt is therefore altogether deſireable, becauſe he hath in him a ſutable ſupply of all our wants. If we are weak, he is ſtrength for us; if we are ignorant, he is wiſdom for us; if we are guilty, he is righteouſneſs for us; if we are hungry, he is bread for us; if we are naked, he is cloathing for us; if we are in the dark, he is light for us; if we are dead, he is life for us. *Chriſt is all in all*; and he is all to all. He is all by way of comprehenſion, as having all fulneſs in him; And he is all in or to all by way of diſtribution, as filling all with his fulneſs. In one Chriſt we have all that we want or can deſire for good; He is called *the Deſire of all Nations*, becauſe all Nations ſhall deſire him, and ſhall receive from him the accompliſhment of all their deſires. And as all our deſires are found in Chriſt, ſo that eſpecially which *Job* ſo earneſtly deſired, *pity*. *For it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful high Prieſt, even touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points tempted like as we are, only without ſin.*

Secondly, Obſerve from the vehemency of his deſire, *Great and pinching afflictions cauſe us to put forth ſtrong and preſſing deſires.*

According to the weight of the burthen that grieveth us, is the cry that comes from us; How do poor condemned priſoners cry to their Judges, *Have pity upon us, have pity upon us? David* in the day of his calamities, doubles his prayer for mercy (*Pſal.* 57.1.) *Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my ſoul truſteth in thee, &c. Until theſe calamities be over-paſt.* It was not a ſingle calamity, but a multitude of calamities which compaſſed *David*, and therefore he compaſſeth the Lord about with Petitions. His ſpirit being up in prayer like a bell that rings out, he ſtrikes on both ſides, *Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me.* Chriſt who in the dayes of his fleſh was under ſtrong temptations, *offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from death* (*Heb.*5.7.)

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Miſery calls for pity.*

If man had not made himſelf miſerable, he had not needed the pity of God; And when God caſts his people into miſery, that calls for the pity of man. There is a voice in ſufferings, though the ſufferer be ſilent; his wants cry aloud, though he ſay nothing; his wounds and ſoars petition for him, though he do not; and 'tis our duty to anſwer his petition, though we receive none from him. Simpathy is a work of that grace which is in us, and the grace of God towards us ſhould provoke us to the exerciſe of it. The Goſpel acquaints us with the pity of God to us, and it preſſeth us to pity one another. *Be kindly affectioned one towards another; Rejoyce with them that rejoyce, weep with them that weep.* (*Rom.* 12.15.) Again (*Heb.* 13.2,3.) *Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that ſuffer adverſity, as being your ſelves in the body. To remember them that are in bonds*, is not a bare act of remembrance, or only to think that ſuch and ſuch are in bonds; to remember them is to pity them, to pity them really, that is, to do them good, to miniſter and exhibit ſuch things to them as they ſtand in need of. How often ſoever we either think or ſpeak of thoſe that are afflicted, we remember them no oftner, then we ſupply ſome refreſhing to them; for as to remember God, is not barely to have God in our thoughts, but it is an obediential act. While *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.*12.1.) cautions the young man, with *remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*; his meaning is, obey and honour him: ſo while the Apoſtle exhorts to *remember them that are in bonds*, it implies the acting of our charity towards them. Or as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaketh (1 *Pet.*3.8.) it is *to have compaſſion on them, to love them as brethren, to be pitiful, to be courteous.* They who ſhew no compaſſion to man, ſhew they have little or no acquaintance with the compaſſions of God. And they are both forgetful of and unanſwerable to the compaſſion they have received from God, who withhold compaſſion from man. Hardneſs of heart is oppoſed both to repentance and to pity. That hardneſs of heart which is oppoſed to repentance, is the ſign of a wicked man, who loves his ſin; and that hardneſs of heart which is oppoſed to pity, is the ſign of a cruel man, who hath no love to his brethren. Though the former be the worſer of the two, yet the latter is ſo bad that he cannot be good that hath it. The Apoſtle *John* concludes againſt ſuch (1 *Ep.* 3.17.) *Whoſo hath this worlds good, and ſeeth his brother have need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* That is, the love of God doth not at all dwell in him. Compaſſion is due to every brother in the fleſh who hath need, but moſt of all to Saints, who are brethren in the faith, and partakers of the ſame grace with us.

There are two ſorts of ſufferers; ſome under the hand of God, and that either chaſtning or puniſhing. Others under the hand of man, and theſe are of two ſorts, either ſuch as ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, and, as the Apoſtle *Peter* expreſſeth them (1 *Pet.* 4. 15,16.) *as Chriſtians; others as evil-doers, or as buſie-bodies in other mens matters.* Thus the converted thief rebuked his fellow-ſufferer who railed on Chriſt, ſaying, *We indeed ſuffer juſtly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this man hath done nothing amiſs* (*Luk.* 23.40,41.) They who ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake under the wrathful hand of men, or to try their righteouſneſs under the chaſtning hand of God, as they are the higheſt objects of our pity, becauſe they are good, ſo they are the objects of our joy, becauſe their ſufferings are good; yet even they alſo are to be pitied who ſuffer for their ſins, not only becauſe their miſery is great, but becauſe the root of the ſame ſin is in us, which might have put forth the ſame fruit in us, and ſo have wrapt us up in the ſame miſeries. While we applaud and rejoyce in the juſtice of God upon wicked men, we may pity them as men; in ſome caſes where God deals ſeverely, it becomes man to deal kindly; and not only is it ſinful to vex, but not to eaſe thoſe whom God hath ſmitten. God doth not afflict to teach others to afflict, but to give them an occaſion to ſhew mercy, and an opportunity to be charitable. As many of our graces (as faith and patience, &c.) want an opportunity for their full exerciſe, till we our ſelves are afflicted; ſo ſome of them (as charity and mercy) want an opportunity for their exerciſe till others are afflicted. That hand of God which we ſee wounding others, points alſo to us to pour the oyl of our tendereſt compaſſions into their wounds. And therefore *Job* urgeth his friends by this argument to ſhew him pity; *For the hand of God hath touched me.* As if he had ſaid, Let not your hand be againſt me, becauſe the hand of God is; nay rather becauſe his hand hath ſmitten me, let your hand embrace and ſupport me. Do not ye perſecute him, whom God hath wounded; as he intimates they did in the next verſe, *Why do ye perſecute me as God, &c.*

Non affligit deus ut cæteri affligant, ſed ut quẽ ille percuſſit benignè tractent; & qua poterant ratione leniant. Pined.

Quamvis deus puniat in nobis humanitatẽ vult. Nicet.

Obſervandũ eſt illud quia, *nam divinũ ſupplicium proponit pro ratione commovendæ humanæ miſericordiæ.* Pined.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *Double or great afflictions call for great or double compaſſions.*

We ought not only to pity thoſe who are diſtreſſed, but we muſt pity them in proportion to their diſtreſſes. A narrow plaiſter will not help a wide wound. The Apoſtles word implies both elegantly and comfortably, that the compaſſions of Chriſt are of the ſame extent and dimenſions with our neceſſities. (*Heb.* 5.2.) *He can have compaſſion* (or compaſſion in meaſure) *on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.* If we be in double wants, Chriſt gives double ſupplies; if we be in double ſorrow, he gives us double comforts; and ſo ſhould we one to another; to ſee our brethren over-whelmed with flouds of ſorrow, and to give them but drops of comfort; to ſee them in great diſtreſs, and to give them but little help, is below our duty. He doth much who doth but little, if he doth what he can; but he doth nothing who doth but a little while he can do much, if much be wanting.

μετριοπαθεῖν δυνάμενος. *Qui quantũ ſatis eſt poſſit dolere.* Bez.

Fifthly, In that *Job* lays it home upon his friends to pity him, Note,

There is a ſpecial obligation upon friends to ſhew pity to their diſtreſſed friends.

Common humanity moves for pity, much more doth profeſſed friendſhip. Many enemies have pitied their conquered enemies. When *Alexander* the Great heard of the death of *Darius*, and *Caſar* of the death of *Pompey*, they both ſhed tears. When *Titus Veſpatian* (who came up as the ſcourge of God againſt *Jeruſalem*, according to the prediction of Chriſt, *Luk.* 19) ſaw the miſerable maſſacre of the *Jewes*, both by ſword and famine, he expreſſed much compaſſion. Now if ingenuous enemies cannot withhold their pity to fallen enemies, how ſhould they who have both received and promiſed love, be moved with pity to their afflicted friends?

Sixthly, Though *Job* had received much hard uſage, and many unkindneſſes from his viſiters, yet ſtill he calls them his Friends.

Hence Note, *A good man doth not preſently caſt thoſe out of the number of his friends, who have dealt unfriendly with him.*

True love doth not make us blind, ſo that we cannot diſtinguiſh between the courteſies and diſcourteſies of our friends, but it makes us ſo clear-ſighted, that we can eaſily diſtinguiſh between our friends, and their diſcourteſies. *Job* could ſay, that God acted towards him as an enemy, yet ſtill he reverenced and loved God as his friend and father. So, in proportion did *Job*, take notice of his Friends doing acts of great unkindneſs to him, and yet he retained a good opinion of them that they were his friends.

Laſtly, Foraſmuch as *Job* cryes out in ſorrow, that the hand of God had touched him. Obſerve,

It is very dreadful to fall into the hand of God.

If it made *Job* complain when he did but fall under the chaſtiſing hand of God, how will it make thoſe complain who ſhall fall under his revenging hand? *Who knows the power of thine anger?* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt;) I may ſay (and it is the ſame) who knows the weight of thy hand? God can ſtrike deep, he can make his ſword enter and paſs into the very bones and bowels. As it is in ſpiritual, ſo in outward ſmitings; when the hand of God goes forth with the word, it makes deep impreſſions upon the conſcience; *It is quick and powerful, and ſharper then any two-edged-ſword, peircing even to the dividing aſſunder of the ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,* (*Heb.* 4. 12.) So when the hand of God ſmites the body, or the ſtate, it cuts thorough, and layes all our outward comforts waſt. If the Lord do but *touch the Mountains* (that is, the higheſt and the ſtrongeſt of worldly powers) *they ſhall ſmoak* (*Pſal.* 144.5.) then in what flames and combuſtions ſhall they be, if he lay the weight of his hand upon them, and ſuffer his whole diſpleaſure to ariſe againſt them! *How fearful a thing will it be* for unbelievers and contemners of the Goſpel *to fall into the hands of the living God* (*Heb.* 10. 31.) when we hear a godly man thus lamenting the touch of his hand? They who fall into the hand of God, ſhall certainly fall under it.

Verſ. 22. **Why do ye perſecute me as God, and are not ſatiſfied with my fleſh.**

Some expound this Verſe as a correction of the former, implying that *Job* had petitioned his friends in vain; as if he had ſaid; *I deſired you to pity me, yet ſtill you perſecute me, why are ye ſo unmerciful? Can ye give me any reaſon, why you give me ſo much of your anger?* Indeed we find his friends as ſharp upon him as ever, as if they little regarded, or were not at all moved with his cry. But why were they thus inexorable? Why were their bowels ſhut up, and their hearts ſtill hardned againſt him? Surely they were not void of humanity, no nor of pity; yet when he begs for pity of them, he found none, what ſhould the reaſon of this be?

I anſwer, Firſt, This was from a ſpecial diſpenſation of God, who hath the hearts (as of Kings, ſo) of all inferiour perſons in his hand; friends are kind or harſh to us, eaſie to be intreated, or inflexible, at the diſpoſe of God. The ſenſitive powers are ſtopt by the power of God, the eye while it ſees doth not diſcern if he forbid; as 'tis ſaid of the two Diſciples in whoſe company Chriſt walked after his reſurrection, *Their eyes were holden that they ſhould not know him* (*Luk.* 24. 16.) Now as God holds the eyes from diſcerning, ſo the affections from loving and pitying when he pleaſeth. And becauſe the ſeverity of *Job's* friends ſerved the providence of God for his further tryal, therefore he bound up their ſpirits from any relenting towards him, or ſhewing him any pity.

Secondly, His friends being ſtill prejudiced againſt him, and looking upon him as an hypocrite who had ſinned greatly, and obſcured the glory of God by ſtanding up to juſtifie himſelf and maintain his integrity when the hand of God was gone out againſt him (they (I ſay) ſuppoſing him in this ill-temper) thought it unſeaſonable to pity him, and might poſſibly conclude, that to be favourable to him would be both diſhonourable to God, and diſadvantagious to their deſign, which was to humble him and bring him to repentance. So that leſt they ſhould ſeem to comply with, or flatter him in his ſinful way, they kept on their old way of ſevere reproofs and threatnings, together with bitter inſinuations of his hypocriſie and ungodlineſs. And it muſt be granted, that if this ſuppoſition or ſuſpicion had been juſt, their perſeverance in reproving him, and refuſal to comfort him, had been juſtifiable. Though the patient complain, yet painful operations muſt not be forborn, nor corroding plaiſters taken off till the ſoar be throughly ſearched and cleanſed. To ſhew pity to men in their ſins, is indeed to be cruel to them. As *withholding more then is meet* (from ſpending) *tends to poverty*, and proves a ſcattering of the eſtate, as *Solomon* ſpeaketh (*Prov.* 11.24.) ſo withholding more then is meet from reproving, tends to flattery, and proves a fixing of the ſoul in ſin.

Thus we may make out a fair ſenſe of theſe words, as they refer to his friends hard and ſevere uſage of him after he had made that paſſionate requeſt for pity; yet I ſhould rather expound them as a reprehenſion of their former ſeverity. As if he had ſaid; *You need not ask what aileth me thus to cry, pity, pity; for is there not a cauſe? and have not you given me cauſe? do I complain before I am hurt? is there not as much reaſon as paſſion in my petition? have not you provoked me to it? unleſs I were ſenſleſs as a ſtone, how can I forbear to ſpeak? and unleſs you are ſenſleſs as ſtones, you will now at laſt forbear to ſtrike; Why do ye perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?*

To perſecute is more then to afflict, every act of perſecution hath many afflictions in it, but many afflictions may have no perſecution at all in them; affliction may riſe from irrational, yea from inanimate creatures; any thing may be an affliction to us, but perſecution is the act of a rational creature; reaſon abuſed or clouded is the ſpring of perſecution, and he that perſecuteth thinks he hath reaſon to do ſo. We may take the picture of a perſecutor from that deſcription of *Saul* (afterwards *Paul*) *Acts* 9.1. *And Saul yet breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord, &c.* While a perſecuter hath in him the breath of his own life, he breaths nothing but death againſt others; and thoſe others againſt whom he breathes death, are ſuch as are moſt worthy to live, the Diſciples of the Lord: Nothing will ſatisfie him but the death and deſtruction of ſuch. One wicked man may vex and oppoſe another even to death, but he perſecutes none but Saints. Evil men are puniſhed, but good men only are perſecuted; or if they who are indeed evil are perſecuted, 'tis becauſe they make ſome profeſſion or ſhew (at leaſt) of goodneſs.

Perſecutio eſt actualis quædã conſpiratio in aliquem ex zelo inimicoſ procedens.

Why do ye perſecute me.

Perſecution is the hardeſt tryal which Saints are put to. There are many promiſes to ſuch as endure any kind of affliction from the hand of God, but there are more ſpecial promiſes to thoſe that endure perſecution from the hand of men; Where we are moſt comforted, we are moſt aſſaulted. (*Mat.* 5.10.) *Bleſſed are ye when ye are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, &c. rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.* See 1 *Pet.* 4.12, 13, 14. *Revel.* 2.10, &c.

But did *Job's* friends perſecute him? Perſecution may be conſidered two wayes.

Firſt, Strictly, as it is *the actual oppoſition of any man for the cauſe of God, or for righteouſneſs ſake, proceeding from an enemy-like zeal againſt his perſon or his peace.* Thus *Job's* friends did not perſecute him, they did not at all ſeek to ruine him, but to reclaim him, and bring him to repentance.

Secondly, Perſecution is taken in a large ſenſe, and ſo to perſecute is no more then to proſecute and put to trouble. Thus *Job's* friends had perſecuted him all along, and thus notwithſtanding his many proteſtations of his own integrity, and his late cry for pity, they continued to perſecute him.

Why do ye perſecute me as God?

Job ſpeaks as if his friends had exampled themſelves by God in this perſecution; did God perſecute him? I anſwer by the former diſtinction, God did not perſecute him as perſecution is taken ſtrictly, but as perſecution is taken in a large ſenſe for a violent proſecution, ſo it may be ſaid (with reverence) that God did perſecute him while he followed him with afflictions.

But how is it that he ſaith, They perſecuted him *as God?* as if they had ſet God for their pattern, and had done as they ſaw him do.

Man is not more unlike to God in any thing then in his perſecution of man. The Lord is pitiful when he perſecuteth, he in judgment remembreth mercy; he is kind when he is ſevere. This was the Ground of *Davids* choice (2 *Sam.* 24.14.) *Let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hands of men.* When did he look for mercy? even when the Lord was reſolved to afflict him. *David* did not ſay, his mercies are great, when he gives me wealth, riches, and honour, when he gives deliverance, and works ſalvation for his people, but when he is ſmiting his people, and conſuming them with the dreadful peſtilence. *The woundings of God have more kindneſs in them then the kiſſes of many men.* Man ſeldom ſhews pity to thoſe who are ſmitten, but how rarely doth he ſhew pity while he is ſmiting, or mingle mercy with his juſtice; God uſually exerciſeth ſparing mercy towards his enemies, and he alwayes doth it towards his own people, againſt whom he never ſuffers his whole diſpleaſure to ariſe, though he be often provoked by them, and diſpleaſed with them.

And as men are unlike God in the manner of their afflicting one another, ſo in the deſign and intendment of it. God afflicts to try and purge us, moſt men afflict either to vex and trouble us, or to pleaſe themſelves. *The Fathers of our fleſh* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Heb.* 12.10.) *chaſten us after their own pleaſure*, or as themſelves pleaſe, yea for their own pleaſure ſometimes, or to pleaſe themſelves, but he (that is, the Lord the father of ſpirits) *for our profit.* He doth it *that the iniquity of Jacob may be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin* (*Iſa.* 27.9.) But man doth it that ſome injury may be revenged, and this is all the fruit he looks after, that his enemy may be taken away, or that he may take the ſpoil. It is ſaid of the *Aſſyrian* (*Iſa.* 10.7.) when God ſent him againſt an hypocritical Nation, againſt the people of his wrath, to take the ſpoil, &c. Howbeit he meaneth not ſo, neither doth his heart think ſo. What did he not mean or think? Did he not mean to go to take the ſpoil when he came thither? yes, he was forward enough to go, and he was greedy enough after the ſpoil when he was come: But he had no thought nor the leaſt meaning to do this in any compliance, either with the will or purpoſe of God. All that was in his heart was to deſtroy and cut off Nations not a few, he only deſigned to heap up riches, and advance his honour and intereſt in the kingdoms of the world. This was all that was in his heart, while the work of God was in his hand. There are but few who follow Gods deſign in doing his work. And though *Job's* friends had ſomewhat in their hearts ſutable to the deſign of God upon *Job* in his ſufferings, even a further humbling and abaſing of him in the ſight of his own unworthineſs, yet they were ſo unſutable to God in their handling of him, and of the whole matter, that the wrath of God was kindled againſt them (*Chap.* 42.7.) Why then doth he ſay, that they perſecuted him as God?

I anſwer; Firſt, God afflicted him without cauſe, as he tells Satan in the ſecond Chapter: That is, without any ſuch cauſe as Satan ſuggeſted againſt him. *Job* was a perfect man and upright, according to Gods own teſtimony. Thus *Job* might ſay to his friends; *Will ye perſecute me as God?* God, indeed, out of his prerogative may do it, he hath ſupream power, and may do what he pleaſeth, without giving an account of any of his matters; but it is too great a boldneſs in creatures to imitate God in this; Will

ye

Num idem vobis licet quod deo? An vos dei Majeſtatem & imperium atq; judiciariam poteſtatem adepti eſtis? Tacitè ſummam iis arrogantiã objicit, q.d. *nã quid vos dii eſtis?* Bold.

ye dare to perſecute me, when no reaſon appears but your own ſurmiſes and ſuſpitions ? ye know nothing by me, ye can produce no evidence againſt me, only conjectures. While you deal thus with me, do not you take upon you to perſecute me as God in a prerogative way, and becauſe you will. Forbear any longer to ſet your ſelves in the place of God. It doth not become you, nor is lawful for you who are my fellow creatures, to deal with me as God doth. Are ye cloathed with his Majeſty and power ? Are ye ſupream and abſolute in your proceeding as he ? Are ye Gods? You take too much upon you ye ſons of men. Either then ſhew me better reaſon for what ye do, or do ſo no more. *Why do ye perſecute me as God?*

Secondly, God had counted him as an enemy (as he complained in the ſixteenth Chapter, *verſ. 9. Chap.* 19.11.) *Now* (ſaith he) *will you perſecute me as God ?* What if God ſhew himſelf an enemy to me, will you my friends, between whom and me there hath been a long profeſſion of love ? will you ſhew your ſelves enemies alſo ? While the Lord appears in wrath, you ſhould appear in love to your afflicted friend.

Thirdly, God afflicted him without intermiſſion ; God ſmote him inceſſantly with breach upon breach, blow upon blow, giving him no reſt, no breathing, as was ſhewed before. *Will ye afflict me as God*, and give me no breathing, no reſt ? Will ye follow me with rebuke upon rebuke, and threat upon threat ?

Quæ â deo fiunt & dei ſunt ea maxima eſſe dicuntur.

Fourthly, We may refer it to the degree of affliction ; God hath greatly afflicted me, he hath laid his hand heavily upon me ; will you proportion your hand to his ? Shall your hand be heavy, becauſe the hand of God is ? Will you lay load on me, as God hath done ? In proſecution of which ſenſe, ſome expound the words by an uſual Hebraiſm. To do *a thing as God*, is to do it with ſtrength ; the phraſe importeth the moſt powerful and higheſt acting of ſtrength ; *Will ye perſecute me as God ?* or, as if ye were ſo many Gods ? Thus he might charge them with an unwarrantable imitation of God in the manner of their oppoſition.

But I conceive we need not ſeek out theſe Parallels between the manner of Gods afflicting him and theirs, but only look to the matter, or the thing it ſelf in General. *Will ye perſecute me as God ?* That is, God hath afflicted and perſecuted me, and will you do ſo too, my friends, will you ? What reaſon is there that you ſhould trouble me, becauſe God hath ? Though God be righteous in all that he hath brought upon me, yet you are not innocent. While you thus afflict me, you wound your own ſouls, though, it be ſuppoſed that, you have God himſelf for your pattern.

Why do ye perſecute me as God ?

Hence Obſerve, *We muſt not alwayes imitate God.*

There are ſome things of which God ſaith, *As ye ſee me do, do likewiſe:* He ſaith ; *Be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect* (*Mat.* 5.48.) *and be merciful as I am merciful.* We ſhould be merciful as God, and perfect as God ; but we muſt not be angry as God, nor ſmite as God. The Lord ſaith (*Iſa.* 47. 6.) *I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thy hand* ; yet the Lord reproves them who were extream againſt them too, *Thou didſt ſhew them no mercy, &c.* As if he had ſaid ; Thou ſhouldeſt have ſhewed them mercy when I ſhewed them none. We muſt look to the Word of God, and not to his example for theſe things. It may be ſin in us to do that which God doth, and to will that which God willeth in many caſes. The revealed will of God is our rule, not his ſecret will ; his ſecret will ſhall be done upon us, his revealed will muſt be done by us. A father is ſick, and it is the ſecret will of God, that his ſickneſs ſhall be to death, yet it is ſinful for the child to will that his father ſhould die : he ought to pray for his fathers life, becauſe the revealed will of God is, that the child ſhould pray for the life of his father ; he muſt not ſay (poſſibly) it may be the will of God that my father ſhall die, therefore I will pray that he may die, or I will not pray that he may live. We are in that to look to our duty, not to the decree of God. So when God afflicteth, or layes his hand upon our brethren, we muſt not lay our hands upon them too : God calls us to pity, not to vex thoſe that are oppreſſed with affliction : It is not alwayes the will of God, that we ſhould will that which he willeth. It is the will of God, that many of his pretious ſervants ſhould ſuffer, but he doth not will any to put them to ſufferings, as if that were a thing ſuitable to his mind, or to the duty of man. God is juſt and holy in willing ſome things, which if man wills, he is unjuſt and unholy.

Volebat deus Jobum *affligi, ſed non mandabat, tanquã rẽ conſentaneam imagini dei, quæ eſt in homine vel hominis officio, vel tanquã rem ſibi charam & acceptã.* Coc.

Nec in ea parte homo divinæ adverſatur voluntati, quia vult deus ut homo ſibi cõgruum expleat officiũ, non invadat quæ dei eſt, tantũ intereſt quid deo, quid homini velle congruat. Auguſt. Enchir. cap. 105.

It is the genius or diſpoſition of the world, to bleſs thoſe whom God outwardly bleſſeth ; and to croſs thoſe upon whom God layeth an outward croſs. Whereas God often afflicts thoſe outwardly whom he loves, and heaps many outward bleſſings upon thoſe whom he hates. As every man is not good whom God filleth with worldly goods ; ſo neither is every one evil whom God preſſeth with worldly evils ; therefore the outward dealings and diſpenſations of God to man, are no rule for man either in his opinion of or actings towards man. Yea in this manner to proſecute that which God willeth is to oppoſe his will ; and to act differently from that which God willeth is to do his will ; For the contrariety of mans will to Gods will doth not ariſe from his doing contrary to that which it is the will of God to do, but from his doing contrary to that which it is the will of God he ſhould do. So, to the point in hand, though it be the will of God to afflict any of his people, yet he hath not willed us to afflict them, but to comfort and relieve them, and therefore though in relieving ſuch we do contrary to what himſelf wills to do, yet we obey what he wills us to do. Nor doth our will croſs his, though the object or thing willed be croſs. Man is not diſpleaſed with what God doth and wills according to the higher cauſe, his ſecret will ; nor is God diſpleaſed with what man doth according to the inferior cauſe, his revealed will. So then our contrariety to and compliance with the will of God cannot be concluded from the difference or identity of the object willed, but from the difference or identity of the actings of our wills with reſpect to the will of God. Hence *Job* ſaith, do not you think that you pleaſe God, or comply with his will, while you perſecute me as he doth ; Seeing though it be his will to do it, yet you cannot produce any warrant, that it is his will you ſhould, *Why do ye perſecute me as God*,

And are not ſatisfied with my fleſh.

Et carnibus meis ſaturamini. Vulg. q.d. *Itane vobis refectio & voluptas ſit mei corporis cruciatus ?*

Some read it affirmatively ; *And ye are ſatisfied with my fleſh* ; That is, my fleſh is your feaſt, you feed upon my ſorrow ; my fleſh, that is, the afflictions which wound my fleſh are a refreſhing to you, it is a pleaſure to you to ſee me in pain. It is a ſin not to pity thoſe that are afflicted, what is it then to take pleaſure in their afflictions, and to make our ſelves merry with their troubles, and to drink their tears as ſweet wine ? But the negative particle in the Original forbids this tranſlation, nor may we conceive him charging his friends with this remorſeleſs inhumanity. Yet

Secondly, Others read it (without the negative particle) as a prayer ; *Why do ye perſecute me as God, be ſatisfied with my fleſh*, or, *Pray be ſatisfied with my fleſh* ; then the meaning is this, do not you force on this my affliction as far as God, *Be you ſatisfied with my fleſh* ; God afflicteth my ſoul, I confeſs he doth, his arrows ſtick upon and drink up my ſpirit, he hath ſent trouble into my mind, and tryeth me with inward terrours and temptations. But my brethren; do not you perſecute me as God, *be ſatisfied with with my fleſh*; that is, with the afflictions and troubles of my fleſh, do not vex my ſpirit, as the Lord is pleaſed to do, be you ſatisfied with this pained body, with theſe putrified ſoars, proceed I pray, no farther, O do not vex my ſoul ! Mr. *Broughton* gives this gloſs upon it ; *Be contented, that my fleſh is waſted, go not about like ſavage beaſts to break my bones alſo* ; as if the oppoſition were not between fleſh and ſpirit, but between fleſh and bones. But the former interpretation carries a fuller ſenſe, and a higher aggravation of his miſery. For though to wound and break the bones, be more then to wound the fleſh, and Satan (*Chap.* 2. 5.) moved for both, *Put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh*, yet to wound the ſpirit is far more then to wound the bones. Our tranſlation which expreſſeth the negative particle, *And are not ſatisfied with* *my fleſh*, may very well agree with, and be reconciled to this; for while according to this rendring he ſaith, *Pray be ſatisfied with my fleſh*, he ſuppoſeth, that they were not ſatisfied with his fleſh.

Now while *Job* ſpake thus to his friends, *Ye are not ſatisfied with my fleſh*, his ſorrow tranſported him too far; and while he was begging compaſſion, he ſhewed himſelf too paſſionate. Good men do not alwayes keep the bounds, either of ſpeaking or of doing. *Job's* friends had dealt harſhly with him, but ſurely they were not thus inſatiably cruel. Yet what he ſaith ſomewhat over-largly of his friends, is not at all over-large for ſome mens diſpoſitions. Some there have been, and poſſibly ſuch there are, who are not ſatisfied with the fleſh of thoſe who are in affliction. And therefore we may hence Note in general,

> *Such is the cruelty of ſome men, that they are unſatisfied with the corporal troubles of others, except they trouble their ſpirits, and vex their ſouls.*

Yea ſome have riſen to that height of wickedneſs, that nothing could ſatisfie them, unleſs they could damn their ſouls. Fleſh will not ſatisfie them; to take away the life of the body, is a poor revenge; they muſt deſtroy the ſoul, if they can. Such was that exquiſite malice of that *Italian*, who not ſatisfied with the fleſh of his enemy, firſt threatned him into the denial of God, and then, that he might have a perfect revenge, ſlew him preſently, leſt he ſhould repent. Such an abomination there is in the heart of ſome men. And it was an abomination very like this, which was in his heart, who being at the examination of one who had committed a great murther, for which bloody fact he profeſſed much ſorrow and repentance, ſaid, *It troubles me to ſee the villain ſo penitent, I am afraid he will go to heaven.* The Civil Magiſtrate and Officers of the State ſhould be ſatisfied with the outward fleſh of moſt hainous offenders, as the Church ought to be ſatisfied with the inward fleſh, that is, with the deſtruction of ſin in the greateſt ſinners, and ſhould rejoyce in, yea by all means provoke them to repentance, that their ſouls may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus (1 *Cor.* 5.5.) Double revenge belongs only to him, *Who after he hath killed hath power to caſt into hell* (*Luke* 12.5.) Indeed neither the moſt cruel Magiſtrates nor murtherers can do more (*Luke* 12.4.) yet they ſhall be judg'd as having done more, who have either wiſhed or attempted more. That mixture of pride and malice which appeared in *Haman* was monſtrous and inhumane, *Who thought ſcorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, but ſought to deſtroy all the Jewes who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahaſuerus, even the people of Mordecai* (*Heſt.* 3.6.) Perſonal revenge would not ſerve his turn, it muſt be national; yet the malice and cruelty of thoſe exceeds that of *Haman*, who think ſcorn to lay hands upon the body of a man alone, they muſt reach at his ſoul, and do their utmoſt to make him in one moment univerſally and eternally miſerable. Fleſh is too groſs a morſel for their revenge, they muſt feed upon the ſpirit. Such cannot live like Canibals or ſavage beaſts, upon the carkaſſes of men, they muſt like the Devil (that roaring Lyon who goes about ſeeking whom he may devour) lay waſt their conſciences, and prey upon their ſouls. And ſome there have always been who though they arrive not at this degree of wickedneſs to deſire the damnation of the ſouls of others, yet they are very hungry after and active in the vexation of their ſouls, thinking they do not enough, unleſs they do that, which is a torture to their minds, a grief unto their ſpirits. Of ſuch alſo, we may ſay, *They are not ſatisfied with fleſh.* The cruelty of *Davids* enemies extended only to his fleſh (*Pſal.* 27.2.) *When the wicked, even mine enemies and foes, came upon me to eat up my fleſh, &c.* (That is, to deſtroy, to make an end of me) *they ſtumbled and fell.* To eat fleſh is a proverbial ſpeech, noting extreameſt cruelty; ſo (*Zach.* 11.9.) *They ſhall eat every one the fleſh of another*; That is, they ſhall exerciſe utmoſt cruelty one againſt another; yet this cruelty in eating fleſh, in ſpoiling the lives and eſtates of men, is a kind of mercy in compariſon of theirs who devour ſouls. The wickedneſs of the Adultereſs is expreſſed by *Solomon* (*Prov.* 16.26.) *That ſhe hunteth for the precious life*; the life of the body is a precious commodity, but the life of the ſoul is far more precious. The whoriſh woman may be ſaid to hunt for both, and chiefly for the latter; The taking away of that life is ſometime the end which the Adultereſs aims at, and it is alwayes the end and iſſue of her Adulteries, unleſs the Lord give repentance and pardon. Old *Jacob* ſaith of his ſons, *Simeon* and *Levi*; *Curſed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.* We may ſay of the Adultereſs, Curſed be her love, for it is fierce; and her embraces, for they are cruel; She is not ſatisfied with fleſh, ſhe hunts for the precious life, even the precious life of the never-dying ſoul.

Thirdly, Theſe words are interpreted as expreſſing both the ſpirit and the work of detractors and ſlanderers, their ſpirit is full of ſpight, and their work is to eat up the honour of others. Thus while *Job's* friends judg'd him an hypocrite, and declared him a wicked one, he might ſay they were not ſatisfied with his fleſh. Slander devours a man alive; and it devours more then fleſh, yea that which ſome eſteem more then their lives, their credit and reputation. Now as we may ſay of all ſlanderers, *They are not ſatisfied with the fleſh of thoſe they oppoſe*, ſo it is very rare that any man oppoſeth another without ſome mixture of ſlander. The Chriſtians in the Primitive times were ſubjected and willingly gave up themſelves to a thouſand ſorts of death for the name of Chriſt; but this did not ſatisfie their perſecuters. They always endeavoured as much to ſlay and kill their credits, as they did their bodies; and were as buſie to invent and ſet a face upon horrible lies againſt them, as to invent terrible tortures for them. They could no more bear it that their good names ſhould live, then that they ſhould live. And therefore they ſuggeſted inceſt, murther, and what not, as the common practiſes of their early meetings. That they were Chriſtians, was indeed, their crime, that was capital by the Laws of thoſe times; but their perſecuters *were not ſatisfied with their fleſh*, which they might (at pleaſure) devour, becauſe they profeſſed Chriſt, they muſt fall upon their good names, and charge them with enormities in manners, whom they meant to deſtroy for the faith. The like methods we have found revived in theſe latter days; all ways being uſed to ſtain their reputation, and heap reproaches upon their perſons, whoſe way and intereſt hath been oppoſed. The Apoſtle warns the Church of *Galatia* (and that is our warning) (*Gal.* 5.15.) *If ye bite and devour one another, take heed ye be not conſumed one of another.*

Eſt detractoris periphraſis. Obtrectatores vivis paſcuntur carnibus. Merc.

But ſome may ſay, if men be once bitten and devoured one of another, what is there remaining of them to be conſumed?

I anſwer; By this biting and devouring the Apoſtle means ſlandering, backbiting, and evil-ſpeaking one of another. Words which have ſuch a tendency in them, are devouring words, they devour his good name who is concerned by them: Now ſaith the Apoſtle, Take heed ye do not devour one another by ſharp words, leſt that provoke you to cruel actions; uſually men firſt devour one another by the tongue, and then by the hand; detracting words ſtir up ſuch ſtrife and contention, ſuch diſtractions and diviſions in families, neighbourhoods, and Churches, as prove an utter conſumption to them.

Laſtly, We may refer this to the contempt and ſcorn which they powred upon him; under the weight and ſence of which he had complained more then once before; as if upon a freſh remembrance of it he had thus beſpoken them. O my friends, is it not enough that my body is worn and corrupted with painful ſoars, unleſs you pour in the Vineger of ſharp invectives and bitter ſcoffs, to perplex and afflict my troubled ſpirit? Are theſe the comforts which you have prepared for your friend? *Why are ye not ſatisfied with my fleſh.*

Annon ſatis vobis eſt, quod corpus meum ulceribus cruciatur, niſi inſuper me ludibrio habeatis? O ſævitiam pluſquã ferinã. Merc.

Thus much of *Job's* ſupplication for pity, and his deprecation of their further perſecution; in the next words he calls for audience and attention to what he had yet to offer; *O that my words were written, &c.*

VERS. 23, 24, 25.

O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a Book!

That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in a rock for ever!

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon earth, and though after my skin Worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.

THis ſorrowful Patient having cryed to his friends for pity, at verſe 21, and for ſparing, at verſe 22, that they would both condole his former, and forbear to give him further ſufferings; he now begs (if he fail in thoſe requeſts) at leaſt due attention to, and ſerious conſideration of what he had yet to ſay (*verſ.* 23, 24, 25, &c.) in which (as ſome conceive) he reaſſumes the proof of his integrity, and doth it two wayes.

Firſt, By a vehement wiſh, that all his words might be brought to a ſtricter, yea to the ſtricteſt tryal; *O that my words were written, &c. verſ.* 23, 24.

Secondly, By a ſtrong profeſſion of his faith in the Redeemer, and of an aſſured expectation of a happy reſurrection to a better life, though he ſhould never ſee good day more in this (*verſ.* 25.) The former ſhews, that he had lived in all good conſcience towards men, and the latter that he was ready to die in a right faith towards God.

The argument of the firſt part may be thus framed up;

He who deſires that all his words may not only be heard, but written, and not only written but printed, yea ingraven in a rock, that all poſterity may have the skanning of and commenting upon them; this mans conſcience doth acquit him, and he ſtands clear in the apprehenſion of his own integrity.

But it is my deſire, that my words were written that they were printed, that they were ingraven, that all may skan them, and comment upon them.

Therefore my conſcience doth acquit me, and I am clear in the apprehenſion of my own integrity.

This aſſumption is laid down in the three and twentieth and four and twentieth Verſes, in much variety of high expreſſions, all concurring in this, that he did not only not fear nor decline the judgment of the preſent age, or of any mortal man then living; but alſo that he did neither fear nor decline the judgment of poſterity, who uſe to be more ſevere and critical in their determinations, being freed from all perſonal reſpects and ingagements, which often byas the judgment, and blind the underſtanding, in reference to thoſe who are preſent and alive. And though this be only a probable argument, not concluſive, or demonſtrative of the ſincerity of *Job*, (for many are ſtiff enough to their errours, and are not afraid to commend them over to the cenſure of poſterity by writing) yet conſidering that *Job* looked on himſelf as a dying man, and that he had much more to ſay for himſelf, then this his bare *ſay-ſo*, or verbal aſſeveration, therefore the argument carries weight in it, and a fair ground that he was ſincere, in what he ſpake and did, becauſe he cared not who heard what he had ſpoken, or examin'd what he had done; *Guilty conſciences love not to examine or try themſelves, much leſs to be examined and tryed by others.* Thus we may be led into the general ſcope of the three and twentieth and four and twentieth verſes; I ſhall now briefly open the parts.

Verſ. 23. **O that my words were now written.**

As if he had ſaid; *For as much as after all theſe diſcourſes, I find that there is little will and leſs care in you to tender my condition, and to do me good, there remains only this laſt deſire which I put up unto you, that what I have both ſpoken and done, may be faithfully regiſtred and recorded, that ſome Scribe would now appear while we are in diſpute, and faithfully note and ſet down all the paſſages which have been between us.* Thus he ſpeaks alſo in the cloſe of this diſpute (*Chap.* 31. 35.) *O that one would hear me, behold my deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me, and that mine adverſary had written a Book:* let a Book be written of theſe diſputes, I care not who writes it. I would truſt even an adverſary to write it; O that mine adverſary would write a Book, *I would take it upon my ſhoulder, and bind it as a Crown to me*; I am ſure, mine adverſary could ſay nothing juſtly concerning me, but what I may glory in, and make my Crown.

מי יתן *Quis dabit.*

O that my words.] The Hebrew is, *Who will give me?* As if this were ſuch a ſpecial favour, that he looking about him could not find any man ready to beſtow it on him; as if pen, ink, and paper, and the pains of writing, were a greater bounty then he was like to meet with in the world. The Hebrew expreſſion, imports much difficulty, though not an impoſſibility; who will do it? As if he had ſaid, it is hard to find a man to undertake this task; *O that my words, &c.* 'Tis queried here, what words he meaneth, or what he meaneth by theſe words, there are three opinions about it.

Optandi forma Hebræis uſitata, valet idem quod utinam. Pronomen quis *in ſcripturis ſanctis non pro impoſſibili ſed pro difficili ſemper accipitur.* Hieron. in Eccleſ. 3.

Firſt, Some take words in a general notion for the hiſtory of all his actions and ſufferings in the whole ſeries of his tryal. O that, what I have done, O that, what I have endured were faithfully recorded. Words are put for things by a frequent Hebraiſme.

Cuncta quæ pertulit. Greg.

Verba pro rebus ipſis. Polychr.

Secondly others reſtrain theſe words to what he had ſaid by way of defence or apologie for himſelf, in this conteſt with his friends.

Thirdly we may rather refer theſe words he would have written to what he was about to ſpeak, to which theſe two Verſes ſeem but a Preface; O that the words which I ſhall ſpeak next might be written, though that all that I have already ſpoken be ſcattered in the wind. Golden words indeed thoſe were and worthy to be written in Letters of Gold. Glorious words concerning the Redeemer, concerning the laſt Judgment, concerning the Reſurrection, and his hope of Glory, come next to be opened; *O that theſe words* (ſaith he) *were written, that they were printed in a Book, that they were graven, &c.* There are three ſteps of this wiſh.

Ea quæ poſtea de fide & Auctore reſurrectionis ſubjungit, & de adventu domini. Hier. Epiſt. 61. ad Pammach.

Quæ dicturus ſum de ſpe, quam in deo firmavi. Aquin.

Firſt, That his words might be *written.*
Secondly, That they might be *printed.*
Thirdly, That they might be *graven*; all three note duration, yet with a gradual difference.

To write a thing, notes the preſervation of it; a word heard quickly periſheth, 'tis gone into air, that which is written, is preſerved and continueth; We tranſmit our minds, our opinions and actions to poſterity by writing.

Vox audita perit, litera ſcripta manet.

But *Job* would have his words not only written, but printed, O that they were *printed, printed in a Book.* The word which we tranſlate *printed*, ſignifies, firſt, ſimply to ſet down, or deſcribe a thing Hiſtorically, or by way of narration: Secondly, It ſignifies authoritatively to ſet down a thing as a Law, as a Statute, by way of determination. The word is frequently uſed in the Old Teſtament, to expreſs thoſe Laws, Ordinances and Statutes which the Lord preſcribed unto his people; And ſo this word ſpeaks more then the former; Laws and reſolutions of State are more ſtrongly confirmed and more carefully preſerved, then bare Narrations are.

חקק *Ad ea pertinet quæ tanquā firma & rata perſcribuntur ad publicam memoriam, cujuſmodi ſunt ſtatuta, jura, leges.*

O that they were printed in a book.

That is, that my words were written as publick Statutes, Ordinances, and Lawes, with a ſtamp of authority upon them, that they may be preſerved as the Monuments of a Commonwealth, and the Records of a Court are. (*Iſa.* 10. 1.) *Wo to them that decree unrighteous decrees.* The word that we tranſlate to *print*, is there rendered to decree. (*Iſa.* 33. 22.) *Thou art our Law-giver*, it is this word, or our Statute maker, as we put in the Margent.

Again, When he ſaith; *O that my words were printed*; We are not to take printing in that ſtrict ſenſe uſed amongſt us, for that new Art or invention oppoſed to writing. We have no ground to believe that the Art of printing was uſed in thoſe ages. The firſt time that ever it was heard of in *Europe* (as our Hiſtorians tell us,) was (little more then two hundred years paſt) in the year one thouſand four hundred and fourty. It begun to be practiſed (as it is ſaid) at *Harlem*, and was perfected at *Mentz*. Here printing is taken in a large ſenſe for the ſetting down and deſcribing of any thing in the moſt authentick and ſtrongeſt manner, for the perpetuating of it. And therefore alſo he would have it *printed in a book*, not in looſe ſhattered papers, but in a book; for though that uſe alſo of binding bookes be not very ancient, their writing (for the moſt part) being in Roules or Volumes; yet thoſe Roules were under much care and inſpection; ſo that this addition of printing in a book carries in it a further degree of care to preſerve what was printed. (*Gen.* 5. 1.) *This is the book of the generations of Adam*; (*Matth.* 1. 1.) *The book of the generation of Jeſus*

John Gerrtudenberg firſt inventer of Printing in *Europe. An.* 1440.

Opto (quaſi ſe corrigens) non tantum ſcribi communi ratione, ſed ut exarentur in libro, majus quippe hoc eſt & firmius.

Jeſus Chriſt; Theſe books were written to be preſerved and laid up. That is, of the birth, life, and death of *Adam* and of Jeſus Chriſt. *Job* would have a book of his Generation alſo; *O that my words were printed in a book*; And which is yet more;

Verſ. 24. That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the Rock for ever.

This verſe is the ſame in ſubſtance with the former, and contains only a further amplification of his deſire; it would not ſatisfie him that his words were written with a quill, or printed in an ordinary book of parchment, or paper, (there were divers materials, upon which writings were made in ancient times, as alſo at this day) ſuch books may ſoon be eaten with wormes and moths, at leaſt, time the eater of all things, will eat them up; but (ſaith he) I would have my words written with *a pen of iron and lead in the Rock for ever.*

A pen of iron.] The Prophet (*Jer.* 12. 1.) uſeth the ſame expreſſion; *The ſin of* Judah *is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a Diamond*; implying that it was written to perpetuity: ſo here, *O that my words were graven with an iron pen*; That is, ſo graven, that (as he explaineth his intention in the laſt words of the verſe) it might *laſt for ever.* Thoſe things which continue very long (though they have an end) look like eternity, and ſo are truly ſaid to be done, or to laſt for ever. Rocks have a kind of everlaſtingneſs in them. And therefore that which is written upon a Rock cannot but be everlaſting. God is called *a Rock of Ages* (which we tranſlate, *an everlaſting ſtrength*, Iſa. 26. 4.) not only becauſe his own ſtrength continueth, and is the ſame in all Ages, but becauſe all Rocks are of long continuance, and laſt many, very many, no man knows how many ages. So that to write upon a Rock is oppoſed not only to writing upon the water, or in the ſand which continue not at all, but to all thoſe uſual wayes of writing which are of long continuance; this being once done, may be ſaid to be done for ever. In this all agree; but there is ſome difference what the meaning ſhould be, of this *iron pen and lead*, with which he wiſhed his words might be *graven in a Rock for ever.* The queſtion is whether he means *a pen of lead*, as well as an *iron pen*; And if ſo, it may be doubted, why having called for an iron pen, he ſhould call for a leaden? What can a pen of lead do upon a Rock? lead being ſofter then a Rock, how can it make impreſſion, or draw a letter upon it?

There are three things which may be offered for the removing of this ſcruple, and the further clearing of this Scripture.

Firſt thus; Some render it, *in lead*, as making the pen to be but one, and that of iron; but that the writing ſhould be upon a twofold matter; firſt, upon lead; and ſecondly upon the Rock; as if he had ſaid, *I would not have a skin of parchment, or a ſheet of paper, but a ſheet of lead to write upon*; with which the ancient cuſtom of writing matters of greateſt moment, whether decreed or done in lead, agreeth well.

Publica inſtrumenta plumbeis voluminibus reſervata. Plin. l. 13. c. 11. *Fortè ferro incidebant, quod poſtea plumbo colorabant.* Druſ. Rab. Selom. *Plumbo per ſulcos infuſo.* Jun. *Fortè plumbum temperatura aliqua indurabant adeo ut ſtilo ejus in ſilice aut petra incidi poſſit.* Pine. *Optat* Job *ut ſermones ſui immortales ſint, & in longum ævum durent, hoc enim eſt, ſtilo ferreo inſculpi, & exarari plumbo.*

Secondly, Becauſe lead ſeems to be ſpoken of here as the inſtrument of writing, not as the matter upon which they did write. I conceive it may be an alluſion to another cuſtome among ancient Engravers, who when they had cut the letters in ſtone, or (as he ſaith) in a Rock (that is, in Marble cut out of the Rock) when (I ſay) they had formed the letters with graving inſtruments, or iron pens, then they coloured them with lead, or filled the cuts of the letters with lead. Thus they might be ſaid to grave with an iron pen and lead, becauſe when the iron pen had ſhaped the Characters, they powred lead into the furrows or cuts of the letters, to render them more clear and legible.

Thirdly, They who interpret the lead, by a pen of lead, ſay that there was an art of tempering lead with other mettals, which hardned it, and ſo made it fit for a graving inſtrument. But it is not much material, which of theſe we determine. This is plain, that in this wiſh he alludeth to ſome extraordinary way of writing in thoſe times upon Monuments of publick Pillars, that the contents or matter ſo engraven might be tranſmitted to poſterity, and be made immortal, even to endure for ever.

From theſe two Verſes, which only expreſs the ſtrength of his deſire, that what he had to ſay, might be ſafely preſerved for the Obſervation of after ages; learn firſt,

That our honeſt and juſt deſires, (though ſomewhat paſſionate) and gratiouſly accepted and anſwered by God.

Job ſpeaks here in ſome heat, yet his heart was honeſt, and his aim ſincere in what he deſir'd, and the Lord granted his deſire. He wiſheth his words might be written, and his words were written, God provided him a Secretary. *Job's* tongue was as the pen of a ready writer, and God made ready a writer to pen down what he ſpake with his tongue. Few words have had ſuch a writing, or ſuch a writer; his were written in a book, and written as with an iron pen and lead in a rock for ever; they are preſerved to this day, and ſhall to the end of the World, as Monuments of his patience and uprightneſs, as alſo of the Lords power and faithfulneſs.

Secondly, from this confidence of *Job* in deſiring to have what he had ſaid, or what he had to ſay, written, we may obſerve;

Truth ſeeks no corners.] Truth loves to be tryed, it cares not before whoſe judgment-ſeat it comes; it would be written, that it might be ſeen and conſidered of all men. Pure Gold fears neither the furnace nor the ballance. Errour may ſhew fair till 'tis tryed, but truth ſhewes alwayes faireſt after tryal.

Thirdly, As this writing ſpecially refers to that noble and divine confeſſion of faith, which *Job* made in the next Verſe; Obſerve,

It is a duty to profeſs our faith openly, when we are called to it.

Job had a call to do this; for though he were not directly (and *in terminis*) invited to make a confeſſion of his faith, yet the dealing of God, and of his friends with him, put him upon it, and beſpake it of him. 'Tis high time to declare the ground of our hope, and upon what foundation we are built, when ſtorms either of affliction or perſecution aſſault and ſhake us; and then 'tis beſt to do it freely and openly, that our faith may be as famous as our afflictions are. Or (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks (1 *Epiſt.* 1. 7.) *That the tryal of our faith being much more precious then of Gold that periſheth, though it be tryed in the fire, might be found to praiſe, and honour, and glory,* not only (as he there ſaith) *at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt*, but in the day of our ſuffering. As we muſt not hide our talents in a napkin by our idleneſs, ſo we muſt not hide our faith in a napkin by our ſilence; we ſhould be ſo far from being aſhamed of our hope, that we ſhould glory in it while we are in tribulation, and deſire as (with *Job*) that it might be written with a pen of iron in a rock for durableneſs, ſo that it might be written as with the beams of the Sun for light, and clearneſs. The Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians*; *Ye are our Epiſtle written and ſeen of all men* (2 Cor. 3. 2.) They held forth the faith, both in their profeſſion and practiſe; they were *a breathing confeſſion of faith, a living Epiſtle, read and ſeen of all,* and ſo ſhould we be. As faith muſt be made viſible by our works, *Shew me thy faith by thy works*, ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, ſo it muſt be made audible by our words.

There were a ſort of Hereticks ſpoken of by *Euſebius*, who held this opinion, That there was no need for any man at any time to make open confeſſion of his faith, eſpecially not in times of danger: Then (according to their doctrine) all might conceal and keep their faith to themſelves, that ſo they might alſo keep themſelves in a whole skin, and avoid the danger. This is, indeed, a ſafe way to avoid perſecution and martyrdom, but it is a ſinful way. We have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect that their faith is dead, who thus hide and bury it. Saints are bound to profeſs their faith (when called to it) to the death, and to contend earneſtly for truth, whatever afflictions and ſufferings come after them. The Apoſtle reports his and the Saints troubles in thoſe times for the Goſpel; *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed, but not in diſtreſs; perſecuted, but not forſaken; alwayes bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jeſus, &c.* But what did *Paul* (and his fellow-Saints) in thoſe boiſtrous and bloudy times? Did he politickly preſerve himſelf, or hide his profeſſion? No he, proclaims it, as he ſaith the Saints of old did before, who were ſpirited with the ſame faith (2 *Cor.* 4. 13.) We having the ſame ſpirit of faith, according *as it is written,*

Euſeb. lib. 6. *cap.* 38.

I

I believed, and therefore have I ſpoken; we alſo believe, and therefore we ſpeak. What a Chriſtian believes, he ſhould be ready to ſpeak; and he that believes indeed cannot but ſpeak. The Apoſtles being threatned, anſwer, *We cannot but ſpeak the things which we have heard and ſeen.* Faith is like the oyntment in the right hand, which bewrayeth it ſelf; and as it is an evidence, to the Soul that hath it, of thoſe things which are not ſeen corporally or naturally, ſo it will give an evidence to others of thoſe things which it ſelf hath ſeen ſpiritually.

Fourthly, From the ſeaſon in which *Job* made this confeſſion; Obſerve;

> *There is nothing doth more ſupport and keep up the ſpirit in times of ſorrow and danger, then a free confeſſion of our faith, and confidence in the Redeemer.*

The way to overcome all the evils and troubles in the World, is to ſay, *I believe*; *Faith is our victory* (1 *Joh.* 5.4.) *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Chriſt is the only begotten Son of God.* He that believes overcomes. The profeſſion and holding out of our faith, is our actual conqueſt and victory over the world. *Faith is our Shield, whereby we quench all the fiery darts of the wicked,* whether men or Devils. Faith leadeth us to a fountain of living waters, which at once refreſheth us, and puts out that fire. If once faith get up, all evils and temptations fall before it. *Job* that he might get victory over all the oppoſitions of men and Devils, holds forth his Shield, and makes profeſſion of his faith in God.

What was that? A compendious yet exact confeſſion of faith it was; as will appear in opening the next Verſe, with the context following.

Verſ. 25. **For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the Earth.**

For the cleering of theſe words, I ſhall premiſe two general veins of Interpretation.

Firſt, The Jewiſh Writers interpret this Context of a metaphorical reſurrection, in reference to *Job's* outward condition, or of his reſurrection from a ſtate of affliction. We have this ſenſe of a reſurrection illuſtriouſly held forth (*Ezek.* 37.) where the return of the people of *Iſrael* out of *Babylon* is deſcribed by the reviving of dry bones. God himſelf makes the Comment (*verſ.* 11,12.) *Then he ſaid unto me, Son of man, theſe bones are the whole Houſe of Iſrael: Behold, they ſay, our bones are dried, and our hope is loſt, we are cut off for our parts. Therefore propheſie and ſay unto them: Thus ſaith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come up out of your graves, O my people, and bring you into the Land of Iſrael.* An eſtate of extream miſery and danger is often in Scripture expreſſed by death. *Paul* ſaith, that he had been *in deaths often* (2 *Cor.* 11.23.) and that God had delivered him from a *Great death* (2 *Cor.* 1.10.) that is, from deadly danger. Such a condition deprives us of all the comforts of life, and makes our lives oftentimes more bitter then death; yea, men in ſuch a condition are ſpoken of as buried and diſſolved into duſt. In purſuance of which metaphor, deliverance is called, a quickning, a reviving, a riſing again, *Pſal.* 71. 20. *Thou which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore troubles, ſhalt quicken me again, and ſhalt bring me again from the depths of the earth.* So *Pſal.* 80. 18. *Pſal.* 85. 6. *Iſa.* 26. 19. *Hoſ.* 6. 2. *Rom.* 11. 15. In which laſt place, the calling and reſtoring of the Jews, is called *Life from the dead.* Now (I ſay) the Rabbins generally, as alſo ſome of our learned Expoſitors run upon that ſtrain here; conceiving that *Job* therefore calls God his Redeemer, becauſe he had to that day preſerved him alive in the midſt of ſo many deaths and dangers, as alſo becauſe he had a ſure hope that he ſhould through the power of God ſurvive them, and be reſtored to ſuch an eſtate of honour and riches, as he had enjoyed in the former part of his life; this they call his reſurrection and redemption, and ſo accordingly they fit an explication to the ſeveral paſſages of this Context; yet their opinion is ſtrongly oppoſed by others, with much evidence of reaſon.

Mercer.
Calvin.

Three ſpecial reaſons may be urged againſt it.

Firſt, the height and ſpiritualneſs of *Job's* language tells us, that his thoughts moved, and that his hopes were fixed above this worlds felicity; His faith ſoared aloft in the meditation of a Redeemer, in the præmeditation of the laſt Judgment, and in the viſion of God: all which argue more then a metaphorical reſurrection.

Secondly, Though his expreſſions in the letter may be fitted to that inferior ſenſe, yet if we remember what hath been touched more then once in the former paſſages of this Book, we find that *Job* had as it were diſclaimed all hope of reſtoring unto any temporal happineſs in this life, affirming, that *his hope was gone*, and that he was worſe then *a tree cut down*, of which there is hope, that it will grow again, and put forth tender branches from the root; as for him, as he had no deſire, ſo no expectation of recovering his former beauty and greatneſs, with promiſes of which his friends (upon the ſuppoſition of his repentance) had often endeavoured to raiſe his ſpirits and fill his ſails. Therefore it ſeems altogether improbable, that he ſhould riſe to that height of hope about it in this place, contrary to the current of all his former diſcourſes upon that point.

Thirdly, He ſaith, that *he ſhould ſee God with the ſame eyes, that he ſhould ſee him for himſelf, and not another*; which argueth that he intended not a reſurrection of his outward eſtate; for what doubt could there be, that if he were raiſed from affliction, but that he ſhould ſee God with the ſame eyes, and that he himſelf ſhould ſee him, and not another, or not for another; but to believe the reſtoring the ſame body, or the Identity of the eyes of his body after all had mouldred into duſt, this was a high act of believing. From theſe reaſons it appears that *Job* holds forth his faith in a reſurrection, not to a temporal good in this life, but to eternal life. In which ſecond ſenſe I ſhall open and proſecute the ſeveral paſſages of this Scripture. Beſides many others, one of the Ancients gives his Judgment clearly for it; *What* (ſaith he) *can be more manifeſt then this Propheſie. None ſince Chriſt came in the fleſh have ſpoken ſo plainly of the reſurrection, as this man did before the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh.*

Quid hac prophetia manifeſtius? Nullus tam apertè poſt Chriſtum, quam iſte ante Chriſtū de reſurrectione loquitur. Hieron. Epiſ. 61. ad Pammach.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.

As if he had thus argued; *He that waits by faith in the Redeemer for the reſurrection of his body to eternal life, after death hath done its worſt, is not a wicked man, or an hypocrite, as you have charged me.*

But ſuch is my faith, I believe in the Redeemer, and I look to riſe (after this body is conſumed and eaten of worms) to an eternal happy life; therefore I am not ſuch as you judge me to be, neither wicked not hypocrite. You account me as rejected of God, yet I know that God is my Redeemer, I know that he lives for ever, and that he is mine for ever; and therefore do not think, becauſe I have no hope of this life, that therefore I deſpair of life: do not take upon you, that you only know theſe myſteries, and that I am ignorant of them, as my friend Bildad *concluded in the eighteenth Chapter (this is the portion of the man that knows not God,) for even I alſo know that my Redeemer liveth, and ſhall ſtand upon the earth at the latter day.*

For I know.] What this *knowing* is, hath been opened (*Chap* 13. 18.) upon thoſe words, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified.* In brief, 'tis knowing upon the greateſt certainty, knowing without all wavering; As if *Job* had ſaid, *My judgment is fixed, and my faith confirmed in this thing, it is as clear to me, that my Redeemer liveth, as if I had already ſeen him alive. It is as ſure to me that I ſhall riſe again, as if I had been dead, and were already riſen. My faith makes this as evident to me now, as my experience hereafter ſhall.*

Verbum Originale omnē dubitationē excludit, & notat mentis firmam adhæſionem & rem ſatis ſuperque exploratam.

I know.] This *knowing* came not in either by ſenſe or any natural demonſtration; Faith is the gift of God, and ſo is the knowledge of Faith, or that knowledge which is the full aſſurance of Faith. There is an *exceeding greatneſs of the power of God put forth to thoſe-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Chriſt when he raiſed him from the dead* (*Epheſ.* 1. 19, 20.) *Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen*; who can make things not ſeen evident to us, but he who is every where evident, yet no where ſeen. *Faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for*, as the Apoſtle gives the definition (*Heb.* 11. 1.) Who can make things abſent from our enjoyment, preſent to our comfort, but he who is alwayes preſent? Saints do not ſee what they believe, yet they know what they believe. When *Joſeph* brought his two Sons, *Manaſſes* and *Ephraim* to his father *Jacob* for his bleſſing, *Jacob* put his right hand upon the younger, and his left hand upon the elder; *Joſeph* obſerving this, humbly corrects his fathers error, *Not ſo my father, this is the firſt-born, put thy right hand upon his head*; but his father refuſed and ſaid, *I know it my Son, I know it*, (*Gen.*48.19.) I do not this upon miſtake, I know what I do, though the ſight of my eye be dim, yet I ſee clearly enough what I do. Faith ſees not upon whom it layeth its hand, but it knoweth upon whom it layeth its hand. (2 *Tim.*1.12.) *I know whom I have believed*. Faith gives us acquaintance with God, before we ſee him, and when we ſee him, faith ſhall be ſwallowed up.

I knew that my Redeemer.

גאל *Significat 1 rem aut perſonam venditam redimere. 2 captam liberare. 3 interem tā vindicare aut ulciſci.*

The word which we tranſlate *Redeemer*, comes from a root which is applied three wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, To buying again of that which was alienated by ſale or morgage, and ſo to reduce it unto the poſſeſſion of thoſe whoſe it was before, *Lev.* 25.25.

Secondly, To the reſcuing or bringing back of thoſe who have been taken priſoners and led into captivity. There is a double way of redeeming ſuch.

Firſt, By force and power. Thus when *Lot* was taken priſoner by thoſe four Kings that came againſt *Sodom*, *Abraham* armed his ſervants, and by force redeemed or brought him back, *Gen.* 14. 14, 16.

Redimere eſt quaſi rurſus emere.

Secondly, There is a redemption by price or ranſom; *To redeem is to buy again*; captives are often ranſomed and redeemed by price; Chriſt hath redeemed us both wayes, as will be ſhewed further in the opening of this Scripture. And becauſe when we are ſurprized by or engaged in any preſſing danger, it coſts much or calls for much power to vindicate and reſtore us; therefore this word *redeeming* is often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie deliverance from any eminent or imminent danger. (*Pſal.* 69. 18.) *Draw nigh unto my ſoul, and redeem it*. And again (*Pſal.*72.14.) *He ſhall redeem their ſoul from deceit and violence*; that is, from all ſecret plots and open actings tending to deſtruction. And thus the Lord is ſaid to *redeem his people from the hand of the Enemy*, (*Pſal.* 106. 10.) And *Jacob* ſpeaks of the Angel *that redeemed him from all evil* (*Gen* 48.16.) *Job's* redeemer and this Angel who redeemed *Jacob* from all evil, is the ſame, even Jeſus Chriſt; of whom the Lord ſpeaks to *Moſes* (*Exod.*23 20,21.) *Behold, I ſend an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of him and obey his voyce, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions, for my Name is in him*. This Angel can be none but Chriſt, the creating, not a created Angel. Pardon of ſin belongs not to creatures, nor is the name of God in them; Some creatures have the name of God upon them; but he only hath the name of God in him, who is of the ſame nature with God.

Thirdly, This word is applied to the avenging of their death, who have been wrongfully ſlain. (*Numb.* 35. 12.) *Goel* is the avenger of blood, or the redeemer of blood, becauſe he came to take vengance on ſuch as had unjuſtly ſhed the blood of his kinſman. He may be ſaid to redeem a man from death, who according to juſtice purſues him who took away his life. Chriſt is not only our Redeemer, by reſtoring us to life, but our avenger by purſuing and ſpoiling him (that is, the Devil) who was our murderer, or the contriver of our death.

Again, To be a Redeemer is taken two wayes.

λυτρωτὴν i.e. *liberatorem* רינא *Diremptorē litium.* Syr.

Firſt, More largly for a deliverer, or helper; ſo 'tis one of the names of God; and to redeem is both his work and his honour. (*Exod.*6.6.) *I will redeem you with a ſtretched out arm, and with great Judgments*. In which ſenſe alſo *Moſes* is call'd a deliverer, (*Act.*7.35.) according to the Greek, which the Syriack tranſlates by a word that ſignifies a Judge, or one that determines a controverſie. God ſent *Moſes* to mannage his controverſie with *Pharaoh*, and deliver his people from that ſtate of bondage. And thus God was *Job's* Redeemer, becauſe he pleaded his cauſe, and determin'd for him, delivering him out of his affliction, as is reported in the latter part of this book. Under this more general notion (I ſay) God is often call'd a Redeemer; for as he ſuffers his people to be carried away by, and fall into the hands of their enemies, and ſells them into the enemies hands (that they may know the difference between his ſervice, and the ſervice of the Nations, as he ſpeaks, 2 *Chron.* 12.8.) yea he ſells them for nought (*Pſal.* 44. 12.) As ſometimes they are ſaid to ſell themſelves (*Iſa.* 51. 1.) *Which of my Creditors is it to whom I have ſold you*. It was a cuſtome among the *Jews*, that parents who were poor and unable to pay their debts, ſold their children to their creditors, or their creditors took their children for their debts, as appears by the pitiful complaint of the widow to the Prophet *Eliſha* (2 *Kings* 4.1.) In alluſion to which the Lord challenges the *Jews* to name his creditors (if they could) to whom he had ſold them: As if he had ſaid, *I am not in debt to any man, or Nation of men, that I ſhould need* (as you ſometimes do) *to ſell my children to free my ſelf*; *no, for your iniquities* (as it follows) *you have ſold your ſelves*. Now when God fetcheth his people back again, and delivers them from that captivity or miſery, into which either he ſells them, or they ſell themſelves (though indeed he never ſells them, till they ſell themſelves) then he is call'd a Redeemer, (*Jer.*15.21.) *I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible*. And in *Pſal.* 130. 7. *With thee there is plenteous redemption*; that is, with thee there are many redemptions, thou multiplieſt deliverances as faſt as our troubles multiply.

More ſtrictly to redeem, and the Title *Redeemer*, is applied to Jeſus Chriſt; to whom alſo, I conceive, we may particularly apply all thoſe works of redemption, which in the Old Teſtament are aſcribed to God. For he was God the Redeemer from the beginning, long before he was God manifeſted in the fleſh. And all the Redemptions of his Church and people from temporal affliction, as well as from eternal damnation, do properly belong to him. *It was* (ſaith God) *by the blood of thy Covenant*, that is, by the blood of Chriſt, with whom God made the Covenant in our behalf; that *God ſent forth the priſoners*; that is, their diſconſolate ſtate in *Babylon*, *Zech.*9.11.

In this ſtrict ſenſe the word *Redeemer*, ſuites Chriſt fully. For *Goel* ſignifies one that is near to us in conſanguinity, one of our blood, bone of our bone and fleſh of our fleſh. Hence an ancient Tranſlator renders here, *I know that my kinſman, or he that is near to me liveth*. And ſuch were under a ſpecial obligation to redeem, as appears, *Ruth* 3.12. *Chap.* 4. 4, 5. where the caſe is ſet down between *Boas*, and the other kinſmen. *Boas* was a kinſman and had right to redeem, yet becauſe there was a nearer kinſman, he would not meddle but upon his refuſal. As if he had ſaid, you have the firſt right, and may make uſe of your priviledge if you pleaſe; *If thou wilt redeem it redeem it, but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me that I may know, for there is none to redeem it beſides thee, and I am after thee*. From this proceeding 'tis evident that redemption belonged to thoſe that were near of kin, and firſt to the neareſt. Jeſus Chriſt is near to us, therefore properly and in a ſtrict ſenſe he is (*Goel*) our Redeemer, he is fleſh of our fleſh, and bone of our bone, he is one with us. As we are the children of God by Regeneration, ſo the brethren of Chriſt by Adoption. *For both he that ſanctifieth, and they that are ſanctified, are all of one: for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them brethren* (*Heb.*2.11.) Chriſt and we are *all of one*, that is of one nature; we, and Chriſt as man, are not only *of one* Father or Efficient cauſe which is God; but we are of one nature or material cauſe which is fleſh and blood. In which reſpect he is our Redeemer upon the ſtricteſt tearms and laws of redemption. And in that ſtrict ſenſe, beſides him there is no redeemer. For though God the Father in the Son by the holy Spirit be indeed our Redeemer, yet properly and according to the ſignification of this word, Jeſus Chriſt alone is our Redeemer; who taking our nature upon him, and becoming our brother, had right to redeem us, even as being God in our nature, he had full power to redeem us. We are redeemed by the blood of Chriſt (*Epheſ.*1.7.) *In whom we have redemption thorough his blood*.

ὁ ἀγχιστεὺς μȣ *proximus meus.* Theodotio

Redimere eſt aſſerere & vindicare aliquid vel ab iniquo vel alieno poſſeſſore jure propinquitatis. Redemptoris & propinqui idem nomen in ſcriptura.

Etſi Deus pater in filio per ſpiritum ſanctum veriſſimè redemptor noſter eſt, proprie tamen hebrææ vocis ſignificatio Chriſto convenit; qui quia frater noſter, (aſſumpta noſtra carne) factus eſt, jus redimendi habet, & certiſſimam redimendi poteſtatem quia Deus eſt in carne manifeſtatus.

The blood of Chriſt may be conſidered two wayes in the work of our redemption.

Firſt, As the price of our redemption, *we have redemption thorough his blood*; that is, blood is the price, by which we are redeemed; *We are bought with a price* (1 *Cor.*6.20.) What that is, we are taught (1 *Pet.*1.20.) *Not with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God, as a Lamb undefiled, and without ſpot*.

Secondly, As the blood of Chriſt may be conſidered as it is the price of Redemption, ſo alſo as it carries the right of Redemption: Blood implies nearneſs in relation. *God made of one blood all Nations of men* (Acts 17. 26.) that is, the blood of *Adam* the firſt man hath run in the veins of all his poſterity; and ſo there is a natural relation among all mankind, though not a legal or civil. Now as God made all Nations of men of one blood, ſo he hath made Chriſt and us of one blood. *For as much as the Children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him who had the power of death, that is, the Devil, and deliver them who through fear of death*, &c. (*Heb.* 2. 14.) Thus (I ſay) the blood of Chriſt and ours being one, and ſo one that he is our brother and kinſman, he had the right, yea (we may ſay with reverence) it was his duty to redeem us. Chriſt as God had power to redeem us, but as being (*Immanuel*) God with us, one with us, a kinſman, a brother, he not only had a right, but he was obliged to redeem us.

To clear the point a little further, there are five things concurring to compleat the Office and Service of our Redeemer.

Firſt, The Redeemer muſt be a kinſman.

Secondly, He muſt redeem upon that ground, or under that notion, as a kinſman.

Thirdly, He muſt deliver thoſe who were under reſtraint or captivity, from the hand of their enemies and oppreſſors.

Fourthly, He muſt not pay any price to the oppreſſor.

Fifthly, He muſt pay the price to the true Lord, or into his hands, to whom the redeemed originally and of right do belong.

Theſe five Conſiderations meet in Chriſt our Redeemer; For,

Firſt, He is our kinſman.

Secondly, He redeemed us upon that account, as he was a brother or kinſman.

Thirdly, He hath fetcht us out of the hands of our oppreſſor the Devil.

Fourthly, He paid nothing to the Devil in lieu of our redemption.

Fifthly, He paid the price into his hand who was our firſt Lord, even into the hands of his Father.

Mankind fallen, may be looked upon two wayes.

Firſt, As under the power of ſin and Satan.

Secondly, As under the power and Juſtice of God: When Chriſt came to redeem us, he paid nothing to the Devil but blows; *He ſpoiled principalities and powers* (Col. 2. 15.) but he did not make them ſatisfaction; we owed the Devil nothing, he was only an executioner to vex and afflict us; but he paid the price to his Father, under whoſe juſtice we were fallen; and ſo he exactly fulfilled all the duties, and ſuſtained all the parts of a Redeemer to the utmoſt.

To clear up this Title or Office of Chriſt yet further, we may take notice that Chriſt is called in Scripture, *a Mediator* as well as *a Redeemer*, yet theſe titles are not of equal extent. Chriſt is a Mediator, yea a head for, and to thoſe, whoſe Redeemer he is not. The good Angels have Chriſt for their head and Mediator as well as man, but man only hath Chriſt for his Redeemer. The evil or fallen Angels could not be redeemed, therefore *Chriſt took not upon him the nature of Angels* (Heb. 2. 16.) The good Angels, or thoſe who ſtand in obedience, had no need to be redeemed, yet they had need to be confirmed, and therefore Chriſt took care of the Angels, and became their head and Mediator. So that as Chriſt is Mediator between God and man, to make up the breach that is between them; ſo he is Mediator between God and the elect Angels, to maintain the union that is between them; but he is a Redeemer to man only.

Further, *Job* doth not only profeſs faith in a Redeemer, but in his Redeemer; *My Redeemer liveth*; every word in this confeſſion is precious and weighty. Here he uſeth an appropriating word, yet he doth not engroſs the Redeemer to himſelf excluding others, but he takes his part with others. Thoſe Pronounes, *mine*, *thine*, *his*, are (*voces amatoriæ*) *words of love*, and drop like honey-combs with ſweetneſs of affection. *Job's* heart was carried out abundantly to Chriſt in love as well as in faith. The firſt work of faith is to believe that Chriſt is a Redeemer; the ſecond is to reſt and rely upon Chriſt as a Redeemer; the third is to ſee an intereſt in Chriſt as *my Redeemer*. When the ſervants of *Benhadad* (1 Kings 20. 32.) came to *Ahab* mediating for his life, He no ſooner ſaid, *He is my brother*, but they took hold of it, as of a comfortable word. The *Syrians* (as ſome report them) were South-ſayers, who ſuperſtitiouſly obſerved a good Omen from thoſe words, which they called *Lucky*. 'Tis probable *Benhadad's* ſervants were skild in ſuch obſervations, and took it for a good Omen, when *Ahab* ſaid, *my Brother*. The Text implies ſome ſuch thing, while we read (*verſ.* 33.) that, *the men did diligently obſerve whether any thing would come from him, and did haſtily catch it; and they ſaid, thy Brother* Benhadad; they looked upon it as a love-token when once he ſaid, *my Brother Benhadad*. Thus here, *my Redeemer*, ſhews that *Job* had much intereſt in and love to the Redeemer; his faith did not run upon generals, but was fixed, ſet down, and reſolved, to live and die by his *living Redeemer*.

Erat valdè amicum verbum propter utramq; vocem, & quaſi omen; omen eſt Auguriū ex verbis captatum Syri erant Auguriis dedititi. Pined.

My Redeemer liveth.] To live, implies not only the preſent being, but the eternity of the Redeemer; as if he had ſaid, though I am mortal and dying, as alſo you my friends are, yet *my Redeemer liveth*; he ſaith not, *hath* or *ſhall live*, but *he liveth*; he ſpeaks of the Redeemers life, without any diſtinction of time paſt or to come, *he liveth*. God is for ever, *I am*; Chriſt as God liveth from Eternity, Chriſt as man liveth to Eternity. And as Chriſt God-man was *the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world* in the promiſe, and from eternity in the purpoſe and decree of God; ſo Chriſt as God-man lived from eternity in the purpoſe of God, and from the foundation of the world in the promiſe. Chriſt is compared in the Goſpel to many things without life, to water, to bread, to a ſtone, to a way; yet every one of them hath the addition of life as he is compared to them. He is not called ſimply *water*, but *living water*; nor ſimply *bread*, but *living bread*; ſo alſo *a living ſtone, a living way, and the tree of life*.

Vivit dominus, i. e. *æternus eſt.* Druſ. *Viventem dicit*, i. e. *æternum & incorruptibilis vitæ ac virtutis.* Ccc.

Secondly, When he ſaith, *my Redeemer liveth*, we muſt look on Chriſt, not only as having life, but as the Lord and *Prince of life* (Act. 3. 15.) Chriſt as the Eternal Word *hath life in himſelf* (Joh. 1. 4.) As he is the Son of man he receiveth life of the Father; *For as the Father hath life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf*, (Joh. 5. 26.) and that not as every thing which lives hath life in it ſelf; but by way of Eminency, *as a Prince of life*; for, Firſt, he hath his own life in his own diſpoſe. See how like a Prince he ſpeaks of his own life (*Joh.* 10. 18.) *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* Secondly, He gives life to others; *the Son quickens whom he will*, Joh. 5. 21. As Chriſt hath life in himſelf, ſo he hath life to beſtow at his pleaſure, or upon whom he pleaſeth; *He came that we might have life* (Joh. 10. 10.) *He is the life* (Joh. 14. 6.) *And he is our life* (Col. 3. 4.) We were all dead; and lay under the ſhadow or power of death, the image of death ſate upon us all; yea life it ſelf ſat (as it were) in darkneſs, till *Chriſt brought life and immortality to light through the Goſpel* (2 Tim. 1. 10.)

Thirdly, When *Job* ſaith, *My Redeemer liveth*, it notes the ſtrength, activity, and power of Jeſus Chriſt; not a meer being or ſubſiſtence only, but might and ſtrength. As if he had ſaid, *Though I am weak, poor, and miſerable, though my life be ſo low, and my body ſo diſ-ſperited, that I may more fitly be numbred among the dead then among the living; yet my Redeemer liveth, he liveth and is mighty. David* ſaid of his enemies (*Pſal.* 38. 19.) *Mine enemies are lively and ſtrong, or being living are ſtrong.* Many men live who are not ſtrong; and ſome live who have no ſtrength. But the life of Chriſt and his might are the ſame, and ſhall never be diſjoyned. The Pſalmiſt indeed propheſying of the ſufferings of Chriſt, repreſents him thus complaining (*Pſal.* 22. 15.) *My ſtrength is dryed up like a potſheard, my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou haſt brought me into the duſt of death.* When Chriſt died the ſtrength of his body was dryed up, yet Chriſt did not die for want of ſtrength; for *he gave up the Ghoſt* (ſaith the Evangeliſt) it was not pull'd or ſnatcht from him whether he would or no. Chriſt did not die becauſe he could live no longer, but becauſe in obedience to his Fathers will, and in anſwer to the deſign of our ſalvation, he was willing to lay down his life. And ſo ſtrong was he in death, that he conquered dying, and *ſpoiled principalities and powers, making a ſhew of them openly, and triumphing over them* while he was nailed to the

Vivere eſt vigere.

Croſs (*Col.*2.15.) The death of Chriſt had more life and ſtrength in it, then the lives of all men and Angels. Again, though Chriſt died, as death is the diſunion of the two parts of the humane nature (ſoul and body) yet death did not hurt the union between his two natures, the divine and the humane, this remained untoucht and inviolable. In this union the ſtrength of Chriſt lay, as the ſtrength of *Sampſon did in his locks, which were only a ſign or an aſſurance of the nearneſs and preſence of God with him*; and therefore it is ſaid after his locks were cut, he (attempting to put forth his ſtrength as he had done before) *wiſt not that God was departed from him.* Now for as much as God never departed from our *Sampſon* Jeſus Chriſt, no not in death; for then not only was God his Father with him (though he cryed out, *Why haſt thou forſaken me*) but the God-head of the Son the ſecond perſon continued in firmeſt union with the man-hood which he aſſumed. And ſo it may be ſaid of the Redeemer, that when he died, he lived, as well as now we ſay, he liveth who was dead. Thus he ſpake to *John*, (*Rev.*1.18.) *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keyes of hell and of death.* The keyes ſignifie power, and to ſhew that the life of Chriſt is not a bare ſubſiſtence, but cloathed with power; therefore, as he ſaith, *I live for ever*, ſo, *I have the keyes.* And thus while *Job* ſaid, *I know my Redeemer liveth*, he aſcribed ſtrength and efficiency to him as well as life. From this part of *Job's* confeſſion, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*,

First obſerve, *Affliction doth not ſeparate from Chriſt.*

When *Job* could call nothing in or of the world *his*, he could call Chriſt *his*; though he could not ſay, *my health, my ſtrength, my friends, my riches, my beauty*, for he had none of all theſe, all theſe being departed from him, yet he could ſay, *My Redeemer*; for Chriſt was not departed from him. This was *Paul's* aſſurance, and the triumph of his faith (*Rom.* 8. 35.) *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? I am perſwaded they cannot; nay in all theſe we are more then conquerors through him that loved us.* Unleſs Saints were conquered, yea unleſs Chriſt himſelf were conquered, they cannot be ſeperated from Chriſt. But all theſe things, the leaſt of which ſingle do more then conquer worldly men, are more then conquered by holy men; and therefore notwithſtanding the united forces of all theſe, the union between Chriſt and Saints remains unviolable.

Secondly obſerve, *That a Believer may arrive at an aſſurance, at the full aſſurance of his intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt the Redeemer.*

Here are two words of aſſurance, *I know*, there is aſſurance; *my Redeemer*, there is aſſurance again. Faith acts upon a ſure ground, 'tis bottom'd on the knowledge of a ſure word, not upon opinion, and it takes faſt hold, 'tis not ſatisfied until it can ſay, the Redeemer is mine, and I am his; all's mine, and he is my all. I will not inſiſt upon this point, having in *Chap.* 13. ſpoken to it, upon thoſe words, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified.*

Thirdly obſerve, *That Jeſus Chriſt was the Redeemer from the beginning.*

The old Fathers who lived before that fullneſs of time in which Chriſt came in the fleſh, died in this faith, they waited for the *Meſſias*, they looked for and relied upon the promiſed ſeed. Chriſt ſpeaks of the times as high as *Abraham*, *Abraham ſaw my dayes, and was glad* (Joh.8.) And the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks higher of him, that *Enoch* the ſeventh from *Adam* propheſied of the coming of Jeſus Chriſt to judge the world, therefore certainly he was acquainted with the promiſe of Jeſus Chriſt to redeem the world. This adminiſters a ſtrong confutation of the *Socinian*-hereſie; for if Chriſt who was manifeſted in our nature in the latter end of the world, was the Redeemer of thoſe who lived in the firſt ages of the world; then he was not a Saviour only (as they affirm) by his word and doctrine, or by the example of his life, ſufferings, and reſurrection; but by his ſacrifice and ſatisfaction. For how could either the perſonal teachings or example of Chriſt reach to or be conveyed up to them, who lived before him?

Fourthly learn, *That, there is but one Redeemer.*

My Redeemer.] He ſpeaks in the ſingular number; one is all, as the Apoſtle teſtifies (*Act.* 4. 12.) *Neither is there any name under Heaven whereby we can be ſaved, but only by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Fifthly note, *We have a living Redeemer.*

Our Redeemer died for us, but he lives for ever. *Chriſt being raiſed from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him* (Rom.6.9.) Death never had any abſolute dominion over Chriſt, for he had no ſeed of death, that is, no ſin in him. (The Throne of death is founded upon ſin, as the Throne of life is founded upon righteouſneſs) Chriſt ſubmitted himſelf to death, but *it was not poſſible he ſhould be holden of it*, or ſubjected by it (*Act.*2.24.) But now not only hath ſin no abſolute dominion over him, but no dominion over him; and when the Apoſtle ſaith, *Death hath no more dominion over him*, his meaning is, death hath nothing at all to do with him. In this life of Chriſt our comfort lives. We have a twofold comfort in the life of Chriſt.

Firſt, *In that he liveth, he liveth to us*; that is, he liveth for our good. So the Apoſtle concludes (*Heb.*7.25.) *He is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* We are aſſured of a twofold Salvation by the interceſſion of Chriſt. Firſt, Of a Temporal ſalvation from troubles and outward evils: Secondly, Of an Eternal ſalvation from ſin and condemnation. *Therefore* (ſaith *Paul*, 1 *Tim.*4. 10.) *we both labour and ſuffer reproach, becauſe we truſt in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, ſpecially of thoſe who believe. The living God* is the Saviour of all men, yea he ſaveth man and beaſt (*Pſal.*36.6.) by his general providence; but he ſaveth believers by an act of ſpecial providence; and therefore they are ready, not only to do their utmoſt for him, but to venture the loſs of all for him; *they both labour and ſuffer reproach, becauſe they truſt in the living God*, who ſaveth them above all other men, becauſe Chriſt ever liveth to make interceſſion for them, which he doth not for other men.

Secondly, We have this further comfort in the life of Chriſt, that we live in him; for as Chriſt is *the life* (Joh. 14. 6.) ſo, *he is our life* (Col.3.4.) our life is bound up in him. Chriſt is indeed *the bundle of life* (1 Sam.25.29.) in whom the lives of all believers are bound up. Hence (which is a ſpring of everlaſting aſſurance and conſolation) himſelf infers (*Joh.* 14. 19.) *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.* The life of Saints is not in their *private hands, but in Chriſt their publick head.* And ſeeing the Spirit hath taught us to ſay, that He is our life, we may ſay (with holy reverence, and in an humble dependance upon him) *that our life is as ſafe as His.*

From this double comfort (which indeed includes all comforts) iſſuing out of this great truth, *that our Redeemer liveth*, I ſhall only intimate this ſingle duty (which indeed includes all duties) incumbent upon all believers, *Live to Chriſt. Paul* had made out this Judgment upon this ground (2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15.) and ſo ſhould we, *That if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him that died for them, and roſe again.* If Chriſt had only died for us, that we might live, that had been ſo great a benefit, and ſo unſpeakable a kindneſs, that it would have obliged us for ever to live to his name and memory; but when, as he died, ſo he aroſe or lived again for us, and is thereby enabled to pour down benefits upon us, and do us kindneſſes every day, how much more doth this oblige us to live unto him! Some are apt to forget dead friends, yea though they laid down or ventured their lives for them, yet they are ſoon forgotten. But ſhall not he live in our memories, and be the ſum of all our lives, who died to redeem us, and yet is our living Redeemer. Though every believer doth not arrive at this clearneſs and full aſſurance of faith, to know that the Redeemer is his; yet he that believes cannot but know that he upon whom his ſoul reſteth, as a *Redeemer, liveth.* And therefore, though he doth not yet receive the ſweetneſs of this comfort, *that he ſhall for ever live with Chriſt*; yet he ought with *his all*, and in *his ever* to pay the tribute of his duty in living unto Chriſt. *I know that my redeemer liveth*,

—**And that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth, &c.**

Theſe words contain the ſecond Article of *Job's* holy confeſſion; as if he had ſaid, *I do not only believe that my redeemer liveth,* but *that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth.*

יקום *à radice* קום *Surrexit ad ſtandum, erectus, elatus, elevatus fuit.* יקום *Omne quod ſtat, ſubſiſtit vel vivit in terra. Cadaver, dictum à cadendo, vel ut alii, caro data vermibus. Sic* נבלה *Hebraicè &* πτῶμα, *Græcè idem ſonant.* ואחרון *Poſterior, poſtremus, ultimus vel tandem. Theodotio vertit noviſſimè.*

The word which we tranſlate **to ſtand**, ſignifies *to riſe up to ſtand,* or to be erected, or lifted up; and hence *Jecum,* (from the ſame root) is uſed by *Moſes* (Gen. 7. 4.) to ſignifie, *every living ſubſtance,* ſo we tranſlate, *For yet ſeven dayes, ſaith the Lord, and I will cauſe it to rain upon the earth forty dayes and forty nights, and every living ſubſtance that I have made* (or every thing that ſtandeth up or ſubſiſteth) *I will deſtroy.* A living body ſtandeth up, in oppoſition to which a dead body is (in all the learned Languages) expreſſed by a word that ſignifieth *falling down*; *a dead body is a falling body,* a body fallen to the earth from whence it firſt was raiſed; or it is *fleſh given to the worms,* as ſome make the Latine word ſound, by a nice diſtinction of each ſyllable to a word.

Now, ſaith *Job, My Redeemer liveth, and ſhall live, he liveth and he ſhall ſtand at the latter day.* Jeſus Chriſt was *a falling body,* when he died; but he conquered death, and *became a ſtanding body again, and ſhall ſtand,*

At the latter day upon the earth.] The Hebrew is, *laſt, or latter upon the earth,* our Tranſlaters add the word *day,* in a different letter, both to diſtinguiſh it from the expreſs terms of the original Text, as alſo to determine what they apprehended as the proper ſence and ſcope of the place.

The *latter* or *laſt dayes* in Scripture are taken three ways.

Firſt, More generally for the time following, or for hereafter. That which the Prophet *Joel* expreſſeth thus, *It ſhall come to paſs afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all fleſh* (Chap. 2. 28.) is cited by the Apoſtle (*Act.* 2.17.) *It ſhall come to paſs in the laſt dayes,* &c,

Secondly, The *latter dayes* contain all Goſpel time, or all that time elapſed ſince Chriſt came and was revealed in the fleſh; which, though the Goſpel was publiſhed preſently after the fall (*Gen.* 3. 15.) is ſtrictly called the Goſpel-time, in oppoſition to the legal adminiſtrations. So we may underſtand the old Patriark *Jacob* (Gen.49.1.) When he called unto his ſons and ſaid, *Gather your ſelves together, that I may tell you what ſhall befall you in the laſt dayes,* that is, *at the coming of the Meſſias,* or when *Shilo comes,* as he ſpeaketh (*Verſ.* 10.) Though withal *Jacob* intends there a propheſie to his ſons of their ſtate in all the times following, or as the Hebrew elegancy expreſſeth it, *In the poſterity of dayes,* which Scripture phraſe notes alſo any or all time to come, as was toucht before. Thus the Apoſtle ſpeaks of *the latter times* (1 Tim. 4. 1.) and of *the laſt dayes* (2 Tim. 3. 1.) Theſe dayes are called laſt, Firſt, Becauſe all was then conſummated, which was propheſied concerning the work of mans redemption, and ſo is the perfection of all times; or as the Apoſtle calls it (*Gal.* 4. 4.) *The fulneſs of time.* Secondly, Becauſe the whole time of the worlds continuance being diſtinguiſhed into three Great periods, the Goſpel time is the laſt of the three. The firſt, Was from the Creation to the giving of the Law upon mount *Sinai.* The ſecond, From the giving of the Law till the appearance of Chriſt in our Nature. The third, From that Appearance in humility, till his appearance in Glory. Theſe are *the latter dayes.*

Finis dierū denotat extremos dies, ſive tempus Meſſiæ. Schind.

Thirdly, As the *whole Goſpel time* is called the *laſt time,* or *the latter dayes*; ſo, there is *a latter day,* or a laſt time, (1 *Pet.* 1.5.) which is more ſpecial and particular, and that is the dap *of the Reſurrection,* or the *day of Judgment,* which we may call the laſt of the latter dayes. Under both which notions the words may be taken here; firſt, as referring to the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh to redeem us from death; ſecondly, to the coming of Chriſt in Glory to raiſe the dead, and to Judge both quick and dead.

√

Further, As this word *laſt* or *latter,* is expounded with reference to a time, ſo to a perſon.

And thus it is taken two wayes.

First, Some refer it to the perſon of *Job,* and joyn the words *on the earth,* not with the word *ſtand,* but with the word *laſt*; giving the ſence thus, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and the laſt* (*man*) *upon the earth ſhall ſtand*; that is, he who is laſt, loweſt, or meaneſt upon the earth, meaning himſelf (*Job* ſpeaks of himſelf in the third perſon (ſay they) the more to move compaſſion) ſhall ſtand upon the earth freed from the bondage of theſe afflictions, under which now he groaneth, and which is more, as a conquerer in the cauſe which now dependeth. There is a general truth in this; to call any man *the laſt upon the earth,* is as much as to ſay, he is a poor or a miſerable man. The *laſt upon the earth,* is the loweſt or meaneſt upon the earth. Thus *Job* deſcribeth at once the poverty and weakneſs of his condition, and the ſtrength of his faith; I know that my Redeemer liveth, and though I be laſt upon the earth, yet I ſhall ſtand in this cauſe, and carry it againſt my friends, becauſe I have ſuch a Redeemer, ſuch a Deliverer, to undertake for me.

Ego noviſſimus ſuper terram, &c: i.e. *Ego omnium in terra habitantium miſerimus ſurrecturus ſum & victor exiſtam in hac vita. Verba* ſuper terram *jungunt, non cum verbo* ſurget *vel* ſtabit, *ſed cum nomine* noviſſimus. *Ego noviſſimus* ſuper terram, i. e. *omnium in terra habitantium miſerrimus erigar, &c.* Bold.

And to make that yet clearer, ſome expound thoſe words *upon the earth* comparatively, *I, the laſt upon the earth,* that is, *I, who am viler then the earth,* or (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *the off-ſcouring of all things* in the account of all men. We have ſuch an expreſſion in our Language, concerning a perſon who hath low thoughts of himſelf, or is vile in his own eyes. *He is not worth, or he doth not judge himſelf worth the ground he goes upon*; that is, he judges himſelf, as *Job* is ſuppoſed to do, according to this interpretation, more vile then the earth. And then the ſence of the whole may be thus conceived; as if he had ſaid, *Though I am in my own opinion, or in the opinion of others, more vile then the earth, as the off-ſcowring of all things, the ſcorn of men, and the outcaſt of the people; yet I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I ſhall ſtand right before him, in judgment, when my cauſe comes to tryal.* In which ſence this word *ſtand* is uſed (*Pſal.* 1. 5.) *The wicked ſhall not ſtand in judgment,* that is, they ſhall not be juſtified or acquitted, they ſhall fall before the Judge. Wicked men though they judge themſelves more excellent then the heavens, ſhall yet fall in Judgment when the righteous ſhall ſtand, who thought themſelves, or were thought more baſe then the earth. But I ſhall not ſtay upon this interpretation, there being ſo much ſtraining of the Text to make it out.

Si verba ſuper terram *vel* pulverem, *comparative ſumeremus,* i.e. *abjectus & vilis pluſquam terra Emphaſin habet.* Bold.

Secondly, It is referred to the perſon of the Redeemer, *I believe that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand the laſt upon the earth. The laſt,* is one of the Titles of Chriſt, who is called *Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt* (Rev. 1. 7.) It is as great an honour to be called *the laſt,* as *the firſt* (Iſa. 44. 6.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, the King of* Iſrael, *and the Redeemer the Lord of Hoſt, I am the firſt, and I am* (*acaron,* the word of the Text) *the laſt, and beſide me there is no God*; *firſt and laſt, Alpha and Omega* comprehend and carry all. *Alpha* is the firſt, *Omega* is the laſt letter of the Greek Alphabet; theſe are letters of more eminent note then the reſt, becauſe being firſt and laſt, they encloſe all the reſt. How eminent then is Chriſt, who is Himſelf both theſe letters! How great is he in whom the terms of greateſt diſtance imaginable, *firſt and laſt,* meet and are united; ſo that Chriſt calling himſelf *firſt and laſt,* takes to himſelf abſolute perfection, power, ſoveraignry, eternity, dignity, and Divinity. He is the firſt, becauſe before all beginning, he was in the beginning with God, and from him all things received their beginning. He is the laſt, becauſe he ſhall continue for ever without end, and is the end of all things that had a beginning; *All things were created* (*not only*) *by him, but for him* (Col. 1. 16.) He is alſo *the laſt,* becauſe when we have attained him, we are at the higheſt or laſt of our attainments; we reſt and have no more to ſeek when we have found him, for he brings us to the Father in whom, through himſelf the Son, we have eternal reſt. Thus we may conceive *Job's* faith triumphing in his Redeemer, as the ſum and comprehenſion of all things; *He liveth as the firſt,* and *the laſt ſhall ſtand,*

Vult dicere, poſt omnes qui terram incolunt ipſe manebit: poſtremus omnium erit, ſtabit, i. e. *perſtabit manebit, vivet poſtremus & ultimus.* Druſ.

Upon the Earth, or, upon the duſt.

על עפר *Super pulverem vel contra pulverem* על *importat Hoſtilitatem.*

Which is expounded three ways (as I ſhall ſhew further.)

Firſt, Of his ſtanding upon the earth, when he was made man.

Secondly, Of his riſing up upon the earth (for the word as was toucht before, ſignifies both to riſe up and to ſtand upon) after he had laid down his life, and abode in the grave three dayes.

Thirdly, Of his ſtanding upon the earth, or *over* the earth (the Hebrew bears that alſo) when he ſhall judge man.

Again, Some render, *He ſhall ſtand againſt the duſt*; that is, He ſhall contend with the duſt, and ſhall by his power raiſe me and all men up out of the duſt; he ſhall conquer the duſt; ſo the word (with this prepoſition) is uſed (*Gen.* 4. 8.) *Cain roſe*, or *ſtood up againſt his brother Abel*: *Cain's* riſing againſt him, was a contending with him to ſlay him. (*Judg.* 9.12.) *Ye are riſen up againſt the houſe of my father*. (*Pſal.* 54.5.) *Mine enemies riſe up againſt me, or upon me*. Thus the Redeemer ſhall riſe or ſtand up againſt the earth. What earth?

This earth is interpreted two wayes; firſt, for men, who are but duſt and refined earth; or for that earth into which the bodies of men are reſolv'd in the grave. Chriſt ſhall ſtand up againſt that earth, to recover the bodies of his people out of it; ſo a late Expoſitor gives the ſence. This Verſe (ſaith he) declares the manner how Chriſt ſhall vindicate our dead bodies out of the hand of corruption. He will ſtand upon the earth as upon a conquered enemy. Our bodies are ſown in the earth, there they are held priſoners; but Chriſt will recover them out of the earth, he will ſtrive with the duſt, and putting forth his Almighty Power, break the bars and gates of that Priſon wherein the bodies of his people are detained. Death is an enemy, the laſt enemy, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 15. 25, 26.) where he repreſents Chriſt, contending with it, and conquering it. *He muſt reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the laſt enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed is Death.* Now Death keeps all under its feet, but Chriſt ſhall put Death under his feet, ſtanding triumphantly upon the duſt in the latter day.

Stabit ſupra pulverem ut vindex triumphans, ſpoliato mortis carcere, qui carnem noſtram detinebat. Coc.

For the further underſtanding of theſe words, I ſhall gather the diſtinct interpretations and verſions of them together, that they may lie the fairer to the Readers eye and judgment.

He ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth.

Firſt, The Vulgar tranſlation renders this clauſe, as the former, in the firſt perſon, as *Job's* profeſſion of his faith about his own Reſurrection. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I ſhall riſe in the latter day.* The favourers of that tranſlation ſtrive much to vindicate and maintain it, as alſo to reconcile it to the Original, which is in the third perſon (as all agree) beſides other wide differences, very hardly, if at all, to be agreed. Nor is there any need to expound *Job* ſpeaking in this Verſe of his perſonal Reſurrection (unleſs incluſively with the reſurrection of all mankind) that being the buſineſs of the two Verſes following. For as ſoon as he had ſaid, *He* (that is, Chriſt the Redeemer) *ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth*, he ſubjoyns his aſſurance in the next words, that himſelf ſhould then be raiſed up; *Though after my skin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh I ſhall ſee God.* How ſtrong and confident an aſſertion of his own Reſurrection is couched and contained in that profeſſion, will appear when I come to the opening of it.

In noviſſimo die reſurrecturus ſū. Vulg.

Secondly, This clauſe is underſtood by ſome metaphorically; *To ſtand*, is to overcome and be victorious; *He ſhall ſtand laſt upon the earth*, that is, Chriſt ſhall conquer all his enemies, all that oppoſe him ſhall fall before him; his enemies ſhall lick the duſt, but he ſhall ſtand upon the duſt, or continue laſt upon the earth. This holds out a comfortable truth,

> That, *Chriſt will certainly out-ſtand and vanquiſh all his enemies.*

Perpetual duration triumphs over all. Whatſoever Chriſt hath done, or doth, or is to do, is wrapt up in this, *That he was, and is, and is to come*; or in this, that he is *Alpha* and *Omega*, *firſt* and *laſt*. It is a grand principle among Politicians, *Take time, and you may do any thing*: He that is *firſt* and *laſt*, may take what time he will, and therefore he may and will do whatſoever he wills. *The Eternal* will have the laſt word, and the laſt blow. He that ſtands laſt upon the ground, and keeps the field, carrieth the day againſt all, and is proclaimed Conquerer. What a mercy is it to have a friend who counts all our enemies his, and who is too hard for all his enemies.

Thirdly, Theſe words (as others conceive) at leaſt imply and intimate to us the Incarnation of Chriſt, or his taking fleſh, *I believe that my Redeemer liveth*, or that he is God from everlaſting. There is *Job's* faith in the divine nature of the Redeemer, and *that in the latter day he ſhall ſtand on the earth*, that is, that he ſhall take fleſh and be incarnate; there is *Job's* faith, that the Redeemer ſhould aſſume our Humane nature, and ſo become *God with us*. He could not have had a true faith in the Redeemer, unleſs he had believed this; he could not have called Chriſt *his Goel*, or kinſman, in the former part of the Verſe, unleſs he had believed that he ſhould ſtand upon the earth, as he expreſſeth it in the latter. The Redeemer muſt be God, how elſe could he ſatisfie? The Redeemer muſt be man, how elſe could he ſuffer?

Fourthly, Others conceive theſe words ſpeaking *Job's* faith in the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the earth, or ſtanding up upon the earth. *Junius* (if I apprehend him rightly) tranſlates fully to this ſence, *And ſhall riſe the laſt upon the duſt*. Not that Chriſt ſhall riſe laſt, for he is *the firſt-born from the dead*, and the *firſt-fruits of them that ſleep*; but he aroſe as the *laſt Adam* in oppoſition to *Adam*, who was *the firſt man*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 15.45.) Maſter *Broughton* agrees alſo to this meaning, rendring the words, *And at laſt ſhall riſe upon the duſt*; which he thus explains, *My Redeemer ſhall riſe from death*. See then how rich a ſtore we have here of precious truths about the great myſtery of Chriſt in this one Scripture, which the Holy Ghoſt hath been pleaſed ſo to phraſe, that it may at once hold forth *Job's* faith in the incarnation of Chriſt, that he ſhould ſtand upon the duſt in our nature; as alſo in the Reſurrection of Chriſt, that he ſhould riſe out of the duſt in our nature. Theſe two involve each other, for unleſs Chriſt had taken fleſh, and ſtood upon the duſt, he could not die, and ſo lie down in the duſt; and his riſing from the duſt, neceſſarily implies, that he had taken fleſh, which he laid down by his free ſubmiſſion unto death.

Et poſteriorem ſuper pulverem reſurrecturum. Jun.

Yet (as I conceive) theſe words are more ſtrictly to be underſtood, not of Chriſts taking fleſh, and ſtanding upon the earth in it; nor of the perſonal riſing of his fleſh out of the duſt (both which are yet included) but of his coming to raiſe all fleſh out of the duſt, and then to proceed in judgment with them. And thus a late Expoſiter concludes, *Theſe words* (ſaith he) *have various interpretations, all agreeing with the analogy of faith; yet this is a plain and pertinent ſence which we follow; Namely, that* Job *believeth his Redeemer to be eternal, who ſhall at laſt ſtand upon the earth, and by his ſoveraign power or command raiſe the dead.* Our tranſlation together with our renewed Annotations appear faireſt this way; and Mr. *Mercer* (though himſelf followeth the Rabbins in the opening of this Text, yet) confeſſeth, that it is the Judgment of moſt Interpreters, both Ancient and Modern, that theſe words are to be underſtood of the general Reſurrection, and of the Judgment which ſhall follow. For when *Job* profeſſeth his aſſurance, that his Redeemer ſhall ſtand upon the earth in the latter day, we are not to ſtay our thoughts in a bare poſture, but are led forth to conſider, what his ſtanding there intends, or what the Scripture tells us he ſhall do when he appears and ſtands upon the earth in the latter day. Now the work of that day is plainly reduced to theſe two heads in Scripture, *Reſurrection* and *Judgment*. In reference to both which, I ſhall ſpecificate theſe general words, and draw them out into expreſs and particular Obſervations.

Hæc verba in varios ſenſus trahuntur, & quidem cum analogia fidei congruentes; commodus & ſimplex hic quem ſequimur eſt. Æternum ſc. eſſe hunc ſuum redemptorem, qui tandem pulveri inſiſtens pro imperio mortuo excitet. Merl. *Et noviſſimo ſuper pulverem (vel terram) ſtaturū.* Mont.

> Firſt, Thus, *Our bodies ſhall be raiſed out of the duſt in the latter day by the power of Chriſt.*

Man is a creature conſiſting of viſible and inviſible, of mortal and immortal, a ſoul and a body. His mortal and viſible part the body fell under the arreſt of death, as ſoon as he was tainted with ſin, and by the decree of God it is appointed unto all men once to dye; yet man ſhall not alwayes abide in this death, which is the ſeperation of the ſoul from the body. Theſe ſhall meet again and be re-united; death it ſelf is under the dominion of Chriſt the Lord of life; the keyes of the grave are committed unto him. We read of a twofold Reſurrection from a twofold death, both effected by his power (*Joh.* 5.25, 28, 29.) *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it ſhall live.* All men are naturally dead in ſin, as ſoon as they live in nature. And as ſoon as any of theſe dead hear the voice of Chriſt ſpeaking by his Word and Spirit, they live in grace. This is called a *new Birth*, a *new Life*, as alſo *a Reſurrection*. The hour or ſeaſon of this ſpiritual Reſurrection (ſaith Chriſt) *is coming, and now is* (verſ. 25.) But at *verſ.* 28, 29. he ſpeaks of a Reſurrection which was coming, but then was not; *Marvail not at this, for the hour is coming, that all that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good to the Reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the Reſurrection of damnation.* There are but ſome who attain the ſpiritual Reſurrection, but all ſhall attain the corporal: All that are in the graves (whether buried in the Sea, or upon the dry Land) ſhall come forth, even they who ſhut their ears againſt his voice, calling them out of their ſins, preaching peace, and tendring them eternal Salvation, ſhall hear his voice calling them out of their graves, and ſummoning them to the judgment of their eternal Condemnation. As *Pharaoh* lifted up the head of both his great Officers; the chief Butler and the chief Baker, were both brought out of the priſon, but the one he reſtored to his Office, and the other he hanged up. Thus in proportion will it be in the day when Chriſt lifts up the heads of all the priſoners of death out of the grave. Chriſt is ſo much in the Reſurrection, that he calls himſelf *the Reſurrection.* When he was going to the grave of *Lazarus,* he ſaith to *Martha, Thy brother ſhall riſe again* (Joh. 11. 25.) ſhe anſwered, *I know he ſhall riſe again at the Reſurrection, at the latter day.* Her faith was clear for the Reſurrection, and ſhe expreſſeth the time (as *Job* in the Text) *at the latter day.* Chriſt approved her confeſſion, yet gives her further inſtruction (*verſ.* 25.) *I am the Reſurrection and the life*; and ſo he is, not formally, but cauſally, or virtually, that is, he is the Author of the Reſurrection, and that in reference to both Natures. Firſt, His Divine Nature is the efficient cauſe of the Reſurrection, he ſhall raiſe our bodies out of the duſt, and the duſt ſhall give up its priſoners, by the power of his God-head. Secondly, His Humane Nature is the exemplary cauſe or pattern of the Reſurrection; upon which ground the Apoſtle calls Chriſt, *the firſt-born from the dead,* Col. 1. 18. For though ſome were raiſed from the dead before him, yet ſeeing his Reſurrection was the cauſe of their Reſurrection, and will be the cauſe of theirs who ſhall be raiſed, therefore he is called the *firſt-born from the dead.* Hence the Apoſtle argues the oppoſers of the Reſurrection in the Church of *Corinth* (1 Cor. 15. 12.) *If Chriſt be preached that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you, that there is no Reſurrection of the dead?* As if he had ſaid, Do but grant this, that the body of Chriſt is riſen, and you cannot rationally deny a Reſurrection of our bodies; both becauſe his Reſurrection is the exemplar of ours, and becauſe Chriſt and all believers are one myſtical body, he is the head and we the members; nor indeed is Chriſt perfectly riſen, till we all riſe. For though Chriſts perſonal Reſurrection was perfect when he aroſe, and though all believers aroſe repreſentatively when Chriſt aroſe, yet till all believers ariſe perſonally, the Reſurrection of Chriſt hath not received its utmoſt perfection. For as though the perſonal ſufferings and afflictions of Chriſt in the fleſh were perfect, yet till all his members have ſuffered in the fleſh, that which God hath appointed as their portion in ſufferings; *There is ſomewhat behind* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Col.* 1. 24.) *of the afflictions of Chriſt,* which *Paul* for his part rejoyced *to fill up*; ſo we may ſay, that till all believers ariſe in the fleſh, or body, there is ſomewhat behind of the Reſurrection of Chriſt.

We may further take notice from 1 *Cor.* 15. *verſ.* 16, 17, & 18. how the Apoſtle turns this Argument: as before he ſaid, *If Chriſt be riſen, how do ſome ſay, that there is no Reſurrection of the dead*; ſo here on the other ſide, *If the dead riſe not, Chriſt is not riſen; and if Chriſt be not raiſed, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your ſins, and they that are fallen aſleep in Chriſt are periſhed.* From all he concludes *verſ.* 20. *But now is Chriſt from the dead, and become the firſt fruits of them that ſleep; for ſince by man came Death, by man came alſo the Reſurrection from the dead; for as in* Adam *all dyed, ſo by Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* There are two roots out of which life and death ſpring: Death ſprings from *Adam,* life from *Chriſt*; and as by *Adam* all die, which are *Adam's* ſeed, or his ſons (as all men naturally are); ſo by Chriſt all who are his ſeed and Children, and ſo only the Elect and Faithful are, ſhall be made alive. But then it may be queſtioned, Shall not all men, even all the ſons of *Adam* be made alive by the Reſurrection of their bodies, which is the general ſubject of that Chapter? I anſwer, they ſhall. Hence Chriſt ſpeaks diſtributively, of them that ſhall riſe, as was ſhewed but now (*Joh.* 5. 29.) *They that have done good ſhall come forth to the Reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the Reſurrection of damnation.* But ſhall not the wicked be raiſed alſo by Chriſt? The twenty eighth Verſe anſwers, *All that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice.* Chriſt ſhall raiſe all, yet with a difference; the wicked ſhall be raiſed by vertue of that power or dominion which he hath over all fleſh (*Joh.* 17. 2.) But the godly are raiſed up by vertue of that union which Chriſt hath with their ſpirits, yea with their perſons.

Secondly, Conſider the words as holding out that which follows the Reſurrection, *Judgment*; *Job* is conceived (in reference to his own preſent condition) as having a ſpecial eye at that; for he was hardly judged in thoſe dayes, and therefore might comfort himſelf in this hope, that his caſe ſhould be judged over again at the latter day; as if he had ſaid, *Though I am ſeverely treated by you, and cannot have right judgment here on earth, yet the time will come when I ſhall ſurely have it; My Redeemer ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon earth, to miniſter judgment unto all, and to me among the reſt.*

From the application of the Text,

Firſt obſerve, *That there ſhall be a general Judgment, hath been known and believed in all Ages.*

While *Solomon* ſeems to let the young man looſe to his pleaſures, he preſently gives him a check, or a cooler, upon this account (*Eccleſ.* 12. 9.) *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth,* &c. *but know for all theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment.* The Preacher concludes his penitential Sermon with this point, *God ſhall bring every work to Judgment, and every ſecret thing, whether it be good or evil.* The Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaking of the lapſed Angels, aſſures us at *Verſ.* 6. that, *The Angels that kept not their firſt eſtate, but left their own habitation, he hath reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs, unto the Judgment of the great day.* In *Verſ.* 14, 15. he ſhews how early this doctrine of a judgment was in the Church of God; *Enoch the ſeventh from* Adam, *propheſied of this, ſaying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſands of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convinse all that are ungodly amongſt them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* *Enoch* lived long before *Job,* yet in his time this was a famous well known point of faith; and we find that in the Apoſtles time, it grew into the number of ſacred Proverbs, which are all famous, and commonly known (1 *Cor.* 16. 22.) *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be* Anathema Maranatha, that is, let him be accurſed till the day of Judgment, or till the Lord come to Judgment. The Apoſtle uſeth two words, to note both the vehemency of his own ſpirit in ſpeaking, and the certainty of the thing ſpoken; and he gives the curſe in two Languages (Greek and Syriack, which latter is a daughter of the Hebrew) both to ſhew that men of all Nations and Languages, who love not Chriſt, are under a curſe, and that they are deſervedly curſed among all Nations. The Greek word uſed by the Apoſtle, *Anathema,* ſignifies execrable. The Syriack word *Maranatha,* is a compound of *Maran Lord,* and *Atha He cometh.* This was uſed in the moſt dreadful ſentence of Excommunication; as if they had cited the perſon to the tribunal of Chriſt at his coming to Judge the world, or left him bound under the curſe of that ſentence until the coming of Chriſt. So that *Maranatha,* ſignifying, *the Lord ſhall come,* was a proverbial ſpeech, implying a day of Judgment coming. And as Scripture authorities are full of it, ſo there are many rational demonſtrations of it: For firſt, The judgments which have been, ſhew that there ſhall be a Judgment; Chriſt hath often, as it were, ſtood on the ground already in Judgment both againſt Perſons and Nations; theſe leſſer dayes of Judgment, are a ſtrong argument of a great day of Judgment. Secondly, As leſſer external Judgment-dayes argue it, ſo do internal Judgment-dayes. There is a day of Judgment kept in the Conſcience of man, which tells us that God will keep a day of Judgment at laſt concerning all men. If we were not to be judged, we ſhould never judge our ſelves; nor be troubled at what we have done, were we not to anſwer for what we have done. The Apoſtle is clear in it (*Rom.* 2. 15.) ſpeaking of the Gentiles who had not the Law publiſhed to their ear, *Yet* (ſaith he) *which ſhew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conſciences alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts in the mean while either excuſing, or accuſing one another.* This *mean while*, is, till the Judgment come; as if he had thus expreſſed himſelf, Before the great Judgment comes they judge themſelves; or their thoughts betwixt themſelves are arraigning and impleading them, or Apologizing for and acquitting them. The reaſon of this internal antecedent ſeſſion is, becauſe *as many as have ſinned in the Law, ſhall be judged by the Law* (Verſ. 12.) (the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth Verſes, are but a parentheſis) *In the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt according to my Goſpel.* In this *mean while*, or in this interim till the day that God ſhall judge the thoughts of men by Jeſus Chriſt, mens thoughts fall a judging themſelves. Conſcience is the correſpondence of the ſpirit of man with the Law of God in binding or looſing, in condemning, or abſolving. And though ſome mens conſciences are ſo dark, blind, and ignorant, that they do not judge themſelves at all; and the conſciences of others are ſo brib'd and biaſſed, ſo ill informed and erroneous, that they give a falſe judgment, and juſtifie thoſe whom God and his Law condemn; yet that there is ſuch a work of conſcience (whether it be true or falſe, right or wrong, alters not the caſe) all (who know any thing of its working) do agree; and this is an evident and convincing demonſtration, that there ſhall be a judgment. Conſcience is Gods Deputy, and doth but begin what Chriſt in that Great audit-day, or day of reckoning, will compleat and finiſh. The Apoſtle indeed aſſures us, that *if we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged* (1 Cor. 11. 31.) Yet in this he doth not exempt either good or bad who judge themſelves from appearing in the great day of Judgment, but only directs the good (for he ſpeaks there to Saints in fellowſhip) how to prevent the Lords adjudging them to preſent chaſtnings and afflictions, as is clear from *Verſ.* 32. *For when we are judged, we are chaſtned of the Lord, that we ſhould not be condemned with the world.* Holy ſelf-judging and examination may prevent preſent judgment, but every ſelf-judging is an evidence, yea, an aſſurance of the future judgment.

Thirdly, Judgment hath not been fully executed in any age of the World, excepting one, that of the old World; and yet then it was not a full execution of judgment, there was a wicked one not judged, there was an accurſed *Cham* in the Ark ſpared from judgment, while the reſt of mankind was drowned and overwhelmed with water. And though God hath written wrath and judgment upon thouſands of wicked men in red Letters, even in their own blood; yet there are many whoſe paths ſwim with Butter, and the rock pours out rivers of Oyl unto them; many upon whoſe heads the candle of outward proſperity ſhines, whilſt their heads, and hearts, and hands are full of wickedneſs; judgment is ſo far from being fully executed in this world, that many are hardned in ſin, and ſome ſo ſtumbled or offended in the wayes of holineſs, that they are ready to ſay, *Where is the God of judgment?* And hence it is that the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 2. 5.) calls the laſt judgment, the *day of the declaration of the righteous judgment of God.* The judgment of God is righteous now, but it is not revealed, it is not manifeſted, therefore a time ſhall come, when there ſhall be a revelation of his righteous judgment fully; the ſame Apoſtle gives a fourth reaſon (which comes near the caſe of *Job*) why there muſt be a day of judgment. *Job's* good name was under a cloud, his credit was exceedingly eclipſed, and he was miſ-judged by his friends (as many ſincere ones have ſince been) an hypocrite; now as the Lord will have a time to acquit himſelf, and to declare the righteouſneſs of his judgment, ſo he will have a time to quit the integrity of his people, and to ſet them right in the eye of all the world. In that day as he will deſtroy the vails of miſ-report which have been caſt upon his wayes, and the vails of error which have been caſt upon his Word; ſo alſo he will deſtroy all the vails of reproach and ſlander which have been caſt upon the perſons, ſpeeches or endeavours of his people. He will have a day in which there ſhall be a freſh Edition of the works of all his Saints, with the comment of their own upright and honeſt meaning upon them, not rackt and wier-drawn with the malice and miſ-conceptions, either of enemies, or miſtaken friends. This is the ground of that ſerious and but needful caution given by the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come, who both ſhall bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the councels of the heart, and then every man ſhall have praiſe of God.* What, every man? Will God praiſe thoſe who are praiſe-leſs? Will he praiſe the proud and covetous, the drunkards, and unclean? Shall every man have praiſe of God? Will he flatter men in their ſin, and ſow pillows of commendation under every elbow? No, the Apoſtles meaning is, every man that is praiſe-worthy, ſhall have praiſe of God; every good and faithful man, every true believer; all ſincere and honeſt hearts, though they have been called hypocrites, and diſgraced, though they have had the dirt of a thouſand ſcandals caſt in their faces, yet there is a day coming, when as all tears, ſo all reproaches ſhall be wiped away, and every man, that is, every godly man ſhall have praiſe of God. *Job* who was called hypocrite, and wicked, ſhall then again have praiſe of God, his old certificate or Letters of commendation ſhall be renewed; *A man perfect and upright, fearing God and eſchewing evil.*

Seeing this day of Judgment hath been ſo long ago ſpoken of, and believed, ſeeing there are ſuch undeniable proofs and demonſtrations of it; we have cauſe to be aſhamed that we have not more quick thoughts, more lively and working apprehenſions of it, that we are not more acquainted with it. One of the Ancients ſaith of himſelf, that whereſoever he went, whether he did eat or drink, or travel, or ſtudy, or whatſoever he was about, he thought he heard the voice ſounding in his ears, *Ariſe ye dead and come to Judgment*; it is good for us to carry this day in our thoughts all our dayes. If we do ſo, we ſhall find theſe two profitable effects of it.

Firſt, It will awaken us; Secondly, It will meeken us.

Firſt, It will awaken us, and keep us awake. The ſound of this Judgment made *Fælix* tremble; he that trembles is awakened; and it will keep us awake while we remember that it ſhall come unexpectedly, ſuddainly; it hath been long in coming, but when ever it comes, it ſhall come ſuddainly. So the Apoſtle deſcribes the coming of that day (1 *Theſ.* 5. 2.) *It ſhall come as a theef*; a theef comes ſuddainly. Chriſt deſcribes it by that which is more ſuddain (*Luke* 21. 35.) *It ſhall come as a ſnare*; how ſuddainly doth a ſnare take the bird? That the Judgment ſhall be ſo terrible and dreadful ſhould awaken us; that it ſhall be ſo ſuddain and unavoidable, ſhould keep us awake.

Secondly, It ſhould meeken us. Why ſhould we judge others, ſeeing we muſt all be judged? See how the Apoſtle takes them up, or rather takes them down, who erected tribunals, and ſtood on the earth as Judges over their brethren (*Rom.* 14. 4.) *Who art thou that judgeſt another mans ſervant?* Proud cenſuring perſons know not themſelves, nor doth any man know what they judge themſelves to be, who are over-buſie in judging others. When we in common ſpeech ſay to a man, *Who art thou?* we argue our own ignorance or neſcience of his perſon. But in ſpeeches of this ſtile, when we ſay, *Who art thou?* We either argue the pride of that perſon whom we already know, or that he doth not know his place and duty, but over-weens himſelf, and takes upon him beyond his line, which no man doth more then he who takes upon him to judge another mans ſervant, excepting him only who takes upon him to judge the ſervants of God. And while the Apoſtle ſaith, *Why doeſt thou judge another mans ſervant?* he doth but more convince (by that common rule) ſuch as preſume to judge the ſpecial ſervants of God. As thus he reproves all peremptory judging of others, becauſe they are ſervants to another; ſo he proceeds to a further reproof of it, becauſe they are our brethren (*Verſ.* 10.) *Why doeſt thou judge thy brother? Why doeſt thou ſet at naught thy brother? We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment ſeat of Chriſt.* But may we not at all judge one another; muſt all judgment be deferred till Chriſt comes to judge us all? This the Apoſtle ſeems to give in charge (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time*; What's the time? We have an anſwer in the next words, *Until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs*, &c. What coming is this? None other ſurely, but his coming, or his glorious appearance, when we muſt appear before his Judgment-ſeat, to receive according to what we have done in the fleſh, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Yet this is not a total prohibition of Judgment, as ſome pervert that place, urging it againſt all Magiſtracy, as if it were unlawful for a man to be a Judge. The Scripture forbids only incompetent Judges, or the unjuſt Judgment of ſuch as are competent. It forbids only raſh Judgment about things or perſons without proof, or a Judgment upon perſons about ſuch things, of which there can be no proof; *The hidden things of darkneſs, and the counſels of the heart*, which Chriſt alone can bring to light and make manifeſt, as that Text expounds it ſelf: or the Scripture forbids rigid and final judgment concerning the eternal ſtate of any perſon. For though we may ſay of many men, conſidering their actions and outward courſe, as alſo the appearing frame and diſpoſition of their ſpirits, that they are in a damnable and periſhing condition; yet we cannot pronounce a final ſentence upon any man, that he ſhall be damned, becauſe every mans judgment is of God, and they who are now abominable and diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate, may yet (through Free Grace) be converted and healed, made clean and juſtified.

Laſtly, The Scripture forbids us to judge one another, as having no grace, for the doing or not doing of thoſe things, which may conſiſt with a preſent ſtate of grace. So the Apoſtle argues (*Rom.* 14. 3.) in his diſpute about the ceremonial obſervation of meats and dayes, concerning whoſe abolition by Chriſt, many believers were then unſatisfied; *Let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him*; that is, he hath accepted, and numbred him among his own; therefore do not thou ſeverely reject and caſt him out. And as thus in many caſes we ought not to judge our brethren at all, ſo in all caſes we ought to judge them with tenderneſs and meekneſs, with a kind of trembling and unwillingneſs, becauſe there is a Judgment to which we alſo muſt come to give an account, as of all our wayes, ſo of the Judgment which we at any time paſs upon our brethren.

Secondly obſerve, *The Redeemer ſhall be the Judge.*

Though the three Perſons in the glorious God-head, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, concur in every work upon the Creature; yet ſome works are ſpecially appropriated to each perſon. This great work of Judgment is appropriated to the Son as a part, or as the completion of his Mediatorial Office (*Joh.* 5. 22, 27.) *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to his Son*; that is, the Father alone (as they imagined) without the Son, judgeth no man; for as he created all, ſo he judgeth all by the Son: *And hath given him authority to execute judgment alſo, becauſe he is the Son of man*; for being the Son of man he will be viſible to all (*Rev.* 1. 7.) and ſo moſt fit to be the Judge. *Peter* ſpeaks this as a ſpecial doctrine which he was called to preach (*Acts* 10. 42.) *Him hath God raiſed up, and ſhewed him openly, not to all the people, but to witneſſes choſen before of God; and hath commanded us to preach to the people, and to teſtifie that it is he that is ordained of God to judge the quick and dead.* As the ſaving of man by Chriſt is founded in the will and ordination of God, ſo alſo is the judging of man by Chriſt. The Apoſtle *Paul* (Acts 17. 31.) ſtirs up and awakens all to the duties of holineſs and repentance, becauſe *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given aſſurance to all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead.*

Some may object that of Chriſt himſelf (*Joh.* 8. 15.) as a diſclaimer of this office, *I judge no man*: The anſwer is at hand, *Ye judge after the fleſh, I judge no man*; that is, as ye do, *after the fleſh*, or by outward appearances (as he ſpeaks, *John* 7. 24.) I judge the Spirit, and after the Spirit, mine is righteous judgment. Again, *I judge no man*; that is, my preſent work is to ſave, and to preach ſalvation; my work is to tender conditions of peace, and to call ſinners to repentance, that's my preſent work; my ſecond coming is for Judgment. But though Chriſt be Judge, yet it ſeems he is not the only Judge, himſelf ſaith that he had aſſociated his Diſciples (*Luke* 22. 29, 30.) *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom, and ſit on thrones judging the twelve Tribes of* Iſrael. I anſwer, They ſhall judge, not authoritatively, but doctrinally. As the word which Chriſt ſpake, ſo the word which the Diſciples of Chriſt ſpake (or which any of his faithful Miniſters ſpake according to the truth of Chriſt) *ſhall judge him* (that hath heard it) *in the laſt day* (Joh. 12. 48.) The word is the rule of judgment, as Chriſt is the perſon judging. Yet, I conceive, that Text in *Luke* imports ſome ſpecial perſonal honour and priviledge, which the twelve Apoſtles ſhall have in the Judgment of the great day, beyond the reſt of Saints. Of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 6. 2.) *Know ye not that the Saints ſhall judge the world?* All the Saints ſhall judge the world as approvers, they ſhall Vote as it were with Chriſt, and ſay, This is a juſt and righteous Sentence; but the Apoſtles ſhall judge (if I may ſo expreſs it) as Aſſeſſors with Chriſt, to whom alone the Commiſſion as Judge is given. *The Queen of the South* (ſaith Chriſt) *and the Ninivites ſhall riſe up in the Judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them* (Luke 11. 31.) that is, the example of the Queen of the South, who took ſo long a journey to hear the wiſdom of *Solomon*; and the example of the *Ninivites*, who repented at the preaching of *Jonah*, ſhall be produced as evidence for their conviction and condemnation, who have heard and refuſed the wiſdom of a greater then *Solomon*, and the preaching of a greater then *Jonah*. The great Judgment ſhall be carried on by many, as Aſſeſſors, as Approvers, and as Witneſſes; but the Redeemer only ſhall be the viſible and determining Judge.

This day of Judgment will be very terrible. Chriſt who at his firſt coming was revealed *in flaming love, ſhall be then revealed in flaming fire* (2 Theſ. 1. 7.) This Judgment will be very glorious. The firſt appearing of Chriſt was ſo obſcure, that it was an appearance but to very few; many who ſaw *the man*, did not ſee *the Saviour*; but his ſecond appearing will be ſo full of luſtre and glory, that as all ſhall ſee *the man*, ſo all ſhall ſee *the Judge*. Thus the Apoſtle deſcribes it (*Tit.* 2. 14.) *Looking for the bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* It is ſaid of *Agrippa* (*Acts* 25. 23.) that he came to the Judgment-ſeat and *Bernice* with great pomp; we may render the Text thus, *He came with great phantaſtickneſs or affected vanity.* When the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall come to his judgment-ſeat, it will be with great pomp indeed, but it ſhall be ſerious as well as glorious pomp; *For he ſhall come in the glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels* (Mark 8. 38.) Chriſt ſhall have a train of Angels; as the Arch-angel ſhall give the ſummons, or cite the world to appear at the bar (1 *Cor.* 15. 52. 2 *Theſ.* 1. & 5.) ſo there ſhall be thouſand thouſands of Angels attending the Judge: *He ſhall come in the glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels.* The firſt coming of Chriſt, was in the *form of a ſervant* (Phil. 2.) Yea the Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 53. 2.) *He had no form nor comlineſs.* In his firſt coming, he was followed by Fiſhermen, or men of inferior quality; but his ſecond coming will be in the glory of the Father; his glory will be ſuch, as the Fathers glory is; and his followers ſhall be greater then the greateſt of men, and theſe not a few, but many, even all his holy Angels.

And 'tis but equal that Judgment ſhould be put into the hand of the Redeemer, and that he ſhould come in all this glory, when he comes to ſit in Judgment; becauſe he hath been judged, and condemned; becauſe he hath born ſhame, and diſhonour, while himſelf ſtood in Judgment. Chriſt did not only die for us, but he was condemned to death as an evil-doer; there was not only pain in his death, but ſhame; he in this humbled himſelf indeed, and which is more, he became obedient, and (which is the loweſt obedience) he became obedient unto death, and which is the loweſt and moſt ignominious death, the death of the Croſs. The Apoſtle makes this threefold humiliation, the ground of his threefold exaltation (*Phil.* 2. 9, 10.) *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him*, &c. He exalted him above the grave in his Reſurrection, above the earth in his Aſcenſion, above the heavens in his Seſſion at the right hand of him the Father, *That at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Indeed if God be ſo careful to redeem the honour of his Saints and Servants, who have ſuffered reproach, if he will get them fame in every Land where they have been put to ſhame, and make the Sons of thoſe that have afflicted them to come bending to them, and to know that the Lord hath loved them; and if whereas they have been hated, God will make them an eternal excellency, ſurely then, much more will God be careful of the honour of his Son; he that will not let his ſervants honour lie in the duſt, but will repair their credit, and take off the reproach which they have born for his Name, how can he be unmindful of his Son, or not re-inveſt him in that Glory of which he ſtript and uncloathed himſelf, that he might perfect the work of our Redemption!

This honour of Chriſt the Redeemer, to be Judge of the world, together with the glory in which he ſhall appear when he comes to judge the world, carries a twofold effect in it, according to that twofold diſtribution of thoſe who are the objects of this Judgment, good and bad, the godly and the wicked.

Firſt, It carries terror to the wicked, who know not God, and who have not obeyed the Goſpel. What more terrible to unbelievers, then to be judged by him whom they have not believed? What more terrible then to be judged by him whom they have neglected, to be judged by him whoſe grace and mercy they have refuſed? What more terrible then to be judged by him whom they have deſpiſed, and ſaid (at leaſt in their hearts) *This man ſhall not reign over us?* How terrible will it be to thoſe wicked men, to ſtand before Chriſt as their Judge, whom they have trampled underfoot, and counted his blood (the blood of the Covenant) as an unholy thing, and have done deſpight unto the Spirit of Grace?

There is nothing in condemnation more dreadful, then to be condemned by a Redeemer; they who are without Chriſt, are without hope, how hopeleſs then and helpleſs are they who are caſt out by Chriſt? By whom ſhall they be ſaved, who are condemned by a Saviour? As the love of Chriſt is moſt deſirable, ſo his wrath is moſt inſupportable. Who can ſtand before his wrath as a Judge, who as a Redeemer came to deliver us from the wrath which is to come.

There are five things in this Judge, which make his wrath moſt dreadful.

Firſt, He is ſuch a Judge, as the power of the moſt powerful cannot daunt.

Secondly, He is ſuch a Judge, as the wealth of the wealthieſt cannot bribe.

Thirdly, He is ſuch a Judge, as the wit and ſubtlety of the wiſeſt and moſt ſubtle cannot delude.

Fourthly, He is ſuch a Judge, as there is no appealing from his ſentence.

Fifthly, He is ſuch a Judge as there is no repealing of his ſentence. What he ſets down ſhall ſtand for ever. All which *Job* applies to his friends in the laſt words of the Chapter; *Be ye afraid of the ſword: for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword, that ye may know there is a Judgment.*

Secondly, This carries Comfort, and ſpeaks joy to Saints. How ſweet is it to remember, that their Redeemer is their Judge. For as the Apoſtle argueth, *Who ſhall condemn? it is God that juſtifies*; ſo may they, Who ſhall condemn? it is Chriſt that judgeth us. The time of the Judges coming, is the time of their refreſhing. So the Apoſtle *Peter* calls it in his Sermon (*Acts* 3. 19, 20.) *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.* What theſe times are is expreſſed, (*Verſ.* 20.) *And he ſhall ſend Jeſus Chriſt, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens muſt receive, until the times of the reſtitution of all things.* When Chriſt ſhall reſtore and ſet all right, which ſin hath diſordered (which will be a time of Judgment queſtionleſs, if not the time of the laſt Judgment) then it will be a time of refreſhing to all the people of God; even of ſuch refreſhing (and infinitely more) as the weary labourer or tired traveller takes in his repoſe under the cooleſt ſhades (as the word there uſed implies) which fetcheth up his fainting ſpirits, and renews his ſtrength. When God came at once to judge, and reſtore *Adam* after his fall, he came *in the cool of the day* (Gen. 3. 8.) And when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall come to judge and perfect the reſtauration of man, though it will be the heat of the day, or a day of heat to all his enemies; yet it ſhall be the cool of the day, or as the refreſhing ſhadow after heat to all his Saints. That Chriſt is Judge, cannot but be a rejoycing to the Saints. For

Firſt, He being Judge, the Judge is their friend.

Secondly, The Judge is their kinſman, their brother; for though (as we ought now, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. ſo) Chriſt in that day will not know any man after the fleſh, yet all believers who are as his fleſh, ſhall then be known, that is, accepted with him.

Thirdly, The Judge is alſo their Prieſt and Propitiation; he ſhall judge them, who hath ſatisfied for them, and knows how all reckonings and accounts ſtand between God and their ſouls; for he it is that hath by his own blood ballanced and made them up.

Fourthly, The Judge is their Advocate and Interceſſor; he ſhall judge them, who hath often moved for them, who hath poured out his ſoul in prayer for them, as well as he once poured out his ſoul an offering for them. Surely he who hath ſpoken ſo much for them, will not (though he hath cauſe to blame them for many things) ſpeak or pronounce any thing againſt them.

Laſtly, The Judge is he who was judged in their behalf; and ſeeing he was condemned bearing their ſins, he will not lay thoſe ſins again upon them who have laid hold on him, and ſo condemn them.

All theſe conſiderations laid together, ſhew how ſweet it is for Saints to remember that the Redeemer ſhall ſtand upon the earth to judge them. And hence the Saints are deſcribed.

Firſt, Not fearing but hoping for his appearing (*Tit.* 2. 14. where it is called not only the hope, but the *bleſſed hope*) *Looking for the bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*; it is the bleſſed hope, becauſe the thing hoped for being once attained, we ſhall be for ever bleſſed.

Secondly, They are deſcribed (not fearing, but) loving the appearing of this Judge (2 *Tim.* 4. 8.) *Henceforth* (ſaith *Paul*) *there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them alſo that love his appearing.* To be a lover of the appearing of Chriſt in Judgment, is the character and almoſt the definition of all true believers. None can love it but they, and they cannot but love it.

Thirdly, They are deſcribed (not fearing, but) praying for it, and that not coldly but earneſtly and importunately (*Rev.* 22. 17.) *The Spirit and the Bride* (that is, the Spirit in the Bride ſaith, or the Spirit preſſeth and provoketh the Bride to) *ſay come, and let him that heareth ſay, come.* Who is thus invited to come, and for what to come? The perſon invited to come, is Chriſt, and he is invited to come to fulfil all the Propheſies of that Book revealed to *John*, and therefore to come to judgment, which as it is there Propheſied, ſo it will be the utmoſt fulfilling of all the Propheſies. And to ſhew that Chriſt approved and accepted this earneſt prayer of the Bride for his coming; he anſwers (at *verſ.* 20.) *He which teſtifieth theſe things* (and that is none but Chriſt, *The Amen, the faithful and true witneſs* (Rev. 3. 14.) he (I ſay) anſwers, and) *ſaith, Surely I come quickly*; and this is the third time that he ſaith it in this Chapter; for he had ſaid *verſ.* 7. and again *verſ.* 12. *Behold I come quickly.* Which threefold promiſe of his *coming quickly*, is ſealed up with *Amen*, and the prayer of *John*, ſeconding the Churches prayer, *Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.* What longing is there for his coming, who having been prayed to come, promiſeth to come quickly, and is yet again prayed *to come.* The preparations and prognoſticks of the coming of Chriſt, are dreadfully ſet down, to the amazement of the world (*Luke* 21. 25, 26.) *There ſhall be ſigns in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the earth, diſtreſs of Nations*, &c. mens hearts (that is, the hearts of the men of the earth, or of earthly-minded men) *failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the earth,* &c. *And then ſhall they ſee the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.* This glory & terror of the coming of Chriſt, which ſhall dazle the eyes and aſtoniſh the hearts of all that know not God, ſhall be delight to the eyes, and rejoyce the hearts of all that obey him. Theſe Chriſt beſpeaks in *verſ.* 28. *When theſe things begin to come to paſs, then look up, and lift up your heads* (looking up and lifting up the head, is a poſture of confidence and of joy) *for your Redemption draweth nigh*; that is, you ſhall ſoon receive all the fruits of your Redemption, or Redemption in full. Our Redemption was wrought when Chriſt came firſt into the world, but we reap not all the benefits of our Redemption, till Chriſt comes the ſecond time into the world. Then they who are dead ſhall be redeemed from the power of the grave, and they who ſhall be found alive, ſhall be redeemed from all the troubles and ſorrows of this life. Then Chriſt will wipe all tears from the eyes of every afflicted *Job*; then he will heal all the ſores of his *Job's*; then he will ſupply all the wants, and reſtore the broken eſtates of his *Job's*; then he will repair the credit and honour of his *Job's*; then he will rightly interpret the actions and ſpeeches, the works and words of his *Job's*; then he will give his *Job's* a full eſtate, a double eſtate, a ſeven-fold eſtate to all that they had before; then he will make his *Job's* like himſelf; they that lay on the dunghil, ſcraping their ſores with a potſherd, when Chriſt appears, *ſhall appear with him in glory* (Col. 3.4.) The diſeaſed and leprous bodies of his *Job's* ſhall be faſhioned like the glorious body of Jeſus Chriſt, by that mighty power by which he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf; yea, when the Redeemer ſhall ſtand upon the earth in the latter day, he will marry all his *Job's* to himſelf, he will take them from the duſt, and lay them in his boſom for ever. Therefore well might *Job*, and well may any Saint in his, or in a worſe condition then his (if worſe may be) rejoyce and triumph in this faith; *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand in the latter day upon the earth.*

VERS. 26, 27.

And though after my skin, worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.

Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not another; though my reins be conſumed within me.

IN the former Verſe we have conſidered and improved the confeſſion of *Job's* faith in the Redeemer.

Firſt, As living or eternal.

Secondly, As riſing from the dead, or raiſing the dead to life.

Thirdly, As judging both the quick and dead. He in theſe two Verſes enlargeth the confeſſion of his faith concerning his own perſonal reſurrection. Which

Firſt, He aſſerts in the cloſe of *Verſ.* 26. *In my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.*

Secondly, In the ſtrong actings of his faith he aſſureth himſelf of it, notwithſtanding all the difficulties that might obſtruct and hinder it; in the former part of *Verſ.* 26. and in the cloſe of *v.* 27. *Though after my skin worms deſtroy this body; though my reins be conſumed within me,* yet I believe I ſhall ſee God; theſe impediments do not weaken my faith.

Thirdly, He declares the benefit or happineſs which ſhall accrew to him after the reſurrection of his body, which he doth,

Firſt, In thoſe words, *I ſhall ſee God.*

Secondly, In thoſe, *I ſhall ſee him for my ſelf.* In both which expreſſions, he ſets forth the happineſs of the Saints after the raiſing of their bodies out of the grave, and the reunion of ſoul and body.

Fourthly, He maintains the identity of his fleſh or body in the Reſurrection, or that the ſame body which falls ſhall riſe. And this in a twofold notion.

Firſt, An identity ſpecifical, it ſhall be the ſame body in kind.

Secondly, An identity numerical, or individual, it ſhall be the ſame particular body which he had on earth, and laid down in the earth. Both which are evidenced and evinced from thoſe paſſages in the Text: *I ſhall ſee him in my fleſh; Mine eye ſhall behold him, and not another; I, my, mine, and not another,* imply nothing, if not himſelf, or no other thing but himſelf.

From all we may collect, how excellent a confeſſion of faith *Job* made about that great myſtery of the Reſurrection, and how firmly his ſoul was eſtabliſhed in it.

Verſ. 26. **And though after my skin worms deſtroy this body.**

I will not ſtay either upon the opening or diſproving of the tranſlation of the Vulgar Latine; which as it varieth extreamly wide from the Original in the cloſe of the former Verſe, ſo at the beginning of this. There inſtead of, *He ſhall ſtand upon the earth in the latter day* (as we tranſlate) 'tis rendred, *I ſhall riſe again in the latter day.* And whereas here we ſay, *Though after my skin worms deſtroy this body*; that reading is, *and I ſhall be again encompaſſed about* (*or cloathed*) *with my skin.* This vaſt difference in the tranſlation ariſeth from hence, becauſe the word which we render *to deſtroy,* may be derived from a double root; either from a root that ſignifies *to compaſs, or circle a thing round,* or as we and moſt Grammarians derive it from a root that ſignifies *to break, or to deſtroy, to diminiſh, or crumble a thing* (as it were) *into the ſmalleſt pieces or atoms.*

Et rurſum circumdabor pelle mea. Vulg.

נקפו.

vel à radice יקף *circumdedit, vel à* נקף *contrivit, fregit.*

A ſecond reading we give in the margine of our Bibles; *After I ſhall awake, though this body be deſtroyed, yet,* &c. Whereas we ſay in the Text, *Though after my skin, worms deſtroy this body*; we put in the margine, *After I ſhall awake,* &c. The reaſon is, becauſe the ſame word in the Hebrew which ſignifies *the skin,* ſignifies in the Verb, *to awake* or ariſe from ſleep. Mr. *Broughton* gives light to this, in the expoſition of his own tranſlation, *And after this my skin is ſpent.* Which he gloſſeth thus, in the perſon of *Job, And after worms ſpend this my skin and fleſh, I mean after my Reſurrection, and I uſe a doubtful word to contain both.* As if a word were intentionally uſed by *Job,* which ſignifies both *his skin, and his awaking or Reſurrection,* that ſo we might take it both wayes, and neither of them both againſt, either the ſcope of the Text, or againſt the truth ('tis uſual in Scripture to compare death to ſleep, and the Reſurrection to awaking) *When* (ſaith he) *I awake, though this be deſtroyed, I ſhall ſee God. Or though this skin be deſtroyed, yet I ſhall ſee God.* To this ſence another tranſlates, *After worms have digged through this* (that is, this skin or body) *I awaking ſhall ſee God in my fleſh.* The interlineal varies little, *And after they* (that is, the worms) *have conſumed this my skin, I ſhall ſee God in my fleſh.* The ſtrict letter of the Hebrew is very conciſe, *And after my skin deſtroy this.* So that we ſupply three words in this one clauſe, to make up that which we conceive the ſence; Firſt, The word *Though*; Secondly, The word *Worms*; Thirdly, The word *Body*; neither of which are expreſly in the Original. Therefore our Tranſlators have put them in a different character, implying that thoſe words are added to explain the meaning of the place, which is ſomewhat dark, by reaſon of that conciſeneſs of expreſſion.

Et poſtquam vermes confoderint iſtud evigilante me. Jun.

Et poſtquam pellem meam contriverint hanc. Mont.

Some Interpreters take notice of the elegancy of *Job's* ſpeech, who therefore doth not name his body, or ſay, *this body*; either becauſe with the demonſtrative particle, *This,* he uſed a geſture putting his hand upon his breaſt, *After worms have deſtroyed this, which I now lay my hand upon,* that is, this my body, *I ſhall yet ſee God in my fleſh.* Or as ſome others conceive he ſaith only *This,* not *this body,* becauſe his body was ſo worn and disfigured with his ſores and ſickneſs, that it could ſcarce be called a body; after worms have deſtroyed *this,* call it what you will, I can hardly find a fitting word to call it by. As if he had more largely ſaid, *After I am dead, and laid in the grave, where worms do not only eat my skin, and conſume this upper garment, but my whole body alſo; yea, and not only the outward limbs and members of my body, but my very bowels and entrals. Though my reins be conſumed within me; though worms devour, and rottenneſs invade whatſoever I am, or have of a body; though I am ſpent from head to toe, from skin to reins, without and within, yet notwithſtanding all this, I believe that I ſhall riſe again, and ſee God in my fleſh.*

Credo carnis reſurrectionem & video interim conſumi renes meos in medio corporis mei. Brent.

Conſumor totus ab una parte ad alteram. Jun.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Death may, yea ſhall prevail over the whole outward man.*

Death ſpends both skin, and reins; it devours all. Death ſwallows up fleſh and bones. We may well ſay of death, *It makes no bones of any man.* It takes in one part after another, till all be taken in; skin, and fleſh, and bones, and reins, death unmakes us. Hence the ſame word in the Greek that ſignifies to unmake, ſignifies alſo to die; becauſe death is the unmaking of every creature that lives. Man is unmade man, by the firſt act of death; that ſeparates ſoul and body, and this makes him no man: The ſoul alone is not man, the body without the ſoul is not man; therefore the disunion of theſe unmakes man. And when death hath unmade man, by disjoyning ſoul and body, it proceeds to unmake the body. Though death can do no more to the ſoul then ſeparate it from the body, yet it can do much more to the body then ſeparate it from the ſoul. Death conſumes the body when 'tis alone, it pulls one member from another, till it prevaileth over all; as an old building is pulled down piece after piece, till all be laid in duſt and rubbiſh: not only doth it fade the beauty, and deface the skin, but it enters into the bones, and ſucks the marrow. The Apoſtle *Peter* uſeth a word of this ſence, while he ſpeaks of our death to ſin (1 *Pet.* 2.24.) *Who his own ſelf, bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to ſin,* &c. (ſo we tranſlate:) the word is, that *we being unmade,* or *off-made to ſin:* every converted ſoul is united to, or made up in Chriſt, and unmade to ſin, that is, dead to ſin. Now as ſpiritual death to ſin, is the unmaking of a man, the pulling him in pieces in regard of what he was; the unmaking of his ſinful nature, that he may be made up again by grace: ſo natural death is the unmaking of the body.

ἀπογενόμενοι.

There was never any body made, but death (according to the common appointment of God) had or hath a power to unmake it, one excepted, which one was the body of Jeſus Chriſt. Some indeed, as *Enoch* and *Elias* were tranſlated and did not ſee death; and others though they died, yet were raiſed to life by the power of God before death did actually unmake or conſume their bodies; but there was never any body which being dead, death had not a power to conſume, but only the body of Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore the Apoſtle (*Acts* 2.24.) puts it as a ſpecial excepted caſe: Chriſt died, but death could not do with his body, as *Job* ſuppoſed it might with his, deſtroy his skin and reins; *For* (ſaith he) *God raiſed him up, having looſed the pains of death.* The original which we render *pains*, cometh from a root, which ſignifieth *bands or cords:* for death when it ſeizeth upon man, binds him (as it were) hand and foot, with bands, and cords, and keeps him faſt; that he cannot ſtir till it hath totally devoured him. Death bound the hands and feet of Jeſus Chriſt, and laid him in the grave; *But God raiſed him up, and looſed the bands or cords of death:* And Jeſus Chriſt, who as Mediator, or God-man, laid down his life, had power alſo to take it up again (*Joh.* 10.18.) As *Sampſon* whom when the *Philiſtines* had bound with new cords, he ſnapped them aſunder, like a threed at the Candle: So Jeſus Chriſt when he was laid in the grave, broke the bands of death, or was raiſed up by God looſing thoſe bands; and why? Not only becauſe he had power to do it, for ſo he hath power to looſe the bands of death from any man as ſoon as they are tyed on, if it were his will and purpoſe to do it; but the Apoſtle aſſigns a reaſon beyond this, ſhewing that Chriſt was raiſed before death could conſume his body, not only becauſe it was poſſible, or in the power, as alſo agreeable to the will of God, ſpeedily to looſe thoſe bands, but *becauſe it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden of them.* It was poſſible that death ſhould ſeize on Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo it did, he freely yielding himſelf up to it, becauſe a death was owing and to be paid to the Juſtice of God for ſin. But (ſaith the Apoſtle) death could not hold him, and keep poſſeſſion, That was impoſſible. And that upon a twofold account.

Firſt, In reference unto himſelf.

Secondly, In reference to us.

Firſt, It was not poſſible in reference to himſelf; becauſe *he is life*, and life eſſentially; *I am the Reſurrection, and the life* (ſaith Chriſt to *Martha*, *Joh.* 11.) Chriſt is the Reſurrection, becauſe he raiſeth us. He is not formally the Reſurrection (as was ſhewed before) but effectively. But Chriſt is life formally and eſſentially; now it is not poſſible for death to hold life it ſelf longer under its power, then he who is life pleaſeth. Therefore Chriſt being eſſentially life, could not but prevail over and conquer death; or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Swallow up death in victory* (1 Cor. 15. 54.)

Secondly, It was not poſſible in reference to us; for he having undertaken the work of reſtoring us to life, if his life had been ſubdued by death, if he had been held down by the power of death, alwayes in the grave, we had been loſt for ever; as the Apoſtle argueth, 1 *Cor.* 15. *If Chriſt be not riſen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your ſins.* We had been ſtill under the power of ſpiritual death, if Chriſt had been held by that corporal death. Therefore it was impoſſible (becauſe Chriſt was to carry the work of our Redemption through) that he ſhould be held down by the cords of death, though he ſubmitted to die. So then here is the difference; the body of Jeſus Chriſt was not deſtroyed and totally unmade by death; death could not ſend in its Armies of worms to eat up his fleſh and conſume his reins, no nor ſo much as in the leaſt to corrupt his body; as the ſame Apoſtle expreſſeth it (*verſ.* 27. out of the *Pſalm*) *Thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell, nor wilt ſuffer thy holy One to ſee corruption.* He ſuffred his holy One to die, but he did not ſuffer him to ſee corruption; that is, to feel corruption, or be under the power of corruption. Therefore Jeſus Chriſt roſe the third day; and he roſe upon the firſt account, that it could be called the third day; he lay as little time in the grave, as could truly be reckoned three dayes: and ſo (I conceive) he did that he might not give the leaſt advantage to death, or that death might have him no longer priſoner then needs muſt. And upon this conſideration too, he ſaw no corruption. For three dayes (as Naturaliſts obſerve) a body may continue without corruption; eſpecially as it was with Chriſt, who dying and being buried the evening of the ſixth day, lay the ſeventh in the grave, and roſe early in the morning of the firſt day of the week. *Martha* ſaid to Chriſt when he came to the Sepulchre of *Lazarus*, *Lord, he hath been dead four dayes, by this time he ſtinketh* (Joh. 11.37.) When a body hath been dead four dayes, we may ſay, ſurely it is corrupted; but in three dayes there is no neceſſity of corruption: So that, *God* (as it was propheſied in the *Pſalm*) *did not ſuffer his holy One to ſee corruption*, no not the leaſt corruption; this was peculiar to Jeſus Chriſt. And the Apoſtle is very careful to keep this cloſe to Chriſt; for though it were ſpoken by *David*, yet he ſhews that *David* did not ſpeak this of himſelf, as if he expected any ſuch priviledge (*verſ.* 29.) *Men and brethren, let me ſpeak freely to you, of the Patriark* David, *who is dead, and buried, and his Sepulchre is this day with us.* *David* who ſpake this is dead, and buried, and lies in the duſt ſtill among us; therefore he ſpake this of another, and that other is Chriſt, whoſe body was ſo exempted from corruption, as none, beſides his, ever was. For though Chriſt (as was toucht before) raiſed ſome dead bodies before they were corrupted, yet every body that dies is naturally ſubject to corruption, and continuing under the power of death, muſt needs corrupt and be deſtroyed by worms.

Secondly obſerve, *The total conſumption of the body of man, is no impediment, no bar in the way of faith to ſtop us from believing the Reſurrection.*

Job ſpeaks in ſuch language as might repreſent the greateſt difficulty to faith, and yet conquers it. And we to reach his ſence, ſupply ſuch words as expreſly ſhew it, *Though and though*; *Though after my skin, worms deſtroy this body*; *Though my reins be conſumed within me.* Though it be thus, and thus, yet I believe; as death ſhall triumph over my body, ſo my faith triumphs over death. Chriſt himſelf puts in a *Though* to this point of faith about the reſurrection, ſpeaking to *Martha* (Joh. 11.25.) *He that believeth in me, yea though he were dead, yet ſhall he live again.* But it may be ſaid, *Lazarus* was dead at that time, why then doth Chriſt ſuppoſe that which was no more then actually was? And how can any man be ſaid to live again who was not dead? Why then doth Chriſt ſay, *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live.* I apprehend, that by *dead* in that aſſertion or promiſe, ſomewhat more is intended by Chriſt, then barely to be dead, as *Lazarus* was; *He that believes in me, though he were dead,* ſeems to ſpeak not only the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body, yea, not only (as *Martha* ſuſpected it was with *Lazarus*) the body beginning to corrupt, but even a total corruption and conſumption of it; when (anſwerably to the expreſſion of the Text) skin and bones, and reins, and all are eaten up. Now *though he were* thus *dead* (ſaith Chriſt) *yet ſhall he live again.* Faith ſaith to death, Do thy worſt; and to the grave, put forth the utmoſt of thy power, digeſt me fully, (the grave is a great eater, it hath a ſtrong ſtomach) aſſimilate me to thy ſelf (as by the laſt act of concoction meats received into the ſtomach are) turn me into thine own ſubſtance; make my body look like the grave, make it ſo like thy ſelf, the earth, that no man can diſtinguiſh me from the earth, yet this doth not at all weaken my faith in believing that I ſhall riſe from the dead. Put all theſe diſadvantages upon it, yet the power of God anſwers, or rather tramples upon them all. The faith of *Abraham* (*Rom.* 4. 18, 19, 20.) moved much after this rate, or in ſuch a ſphear of holy hight and ſtrength, in reference to the promiſe of a ſon; that a ſon ſhould be born to *Abraham*, was like the raiſing of one from the dead. So the Author to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks expreſly (*Heb.* 11. 17, 19.) *By faith* Abraham *when he was tryed offered up* Iſaac: *and he that had received the promiſe, offered up his only begotten Son, accounting that God was able to raiſe him up even from the dead, from whence alſo he received him in a figure.* See how *Abraham's* faith acted about the receiving of *Iſaac* in his old age, (when his body was (in reaſon) more fit to go to the grave, then to beget a ſon) like *Job's* for the receiving of his dead body out of the grave. *He* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 4. 18.) *againſt hope, believed in hope.* Every thing ſtood in the way of this hope, that he ſhould have a ſon, *yet he believed that he ſhould become the father of many Nations, according to that which was written, ſo ſhall thy ſeed be. And being not weak in faith, he conſidered not his own body, now dead* (that is, decayed with age) *when he was an hundred years old, nor the deadneſs of* Sarah's *womb.* This probably was the figure of which the Author to the *Hebrews* writes, when he affirms, that *Abraham* was willing at the command of God to offer his ſon to death, from whence (by the promiſe of God) he had received him in a figure. There were two deaths, a double death, to hinder *Abraham* from having a ſon, and yet his faith lived and prevailed over both. *He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully perſwaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform. Faith looking to the power of God, triumphs over our own weakneſs.* Now as *Abraham's* faith triumphed over thoſe two deaths, or decayes and declenſions of his own and his wives body, believing ſtrongly that thorough theſe two figurative deaths, God would raiſe him a ſon: So faith triumphs over, and breaks all thoſe bands, by which death may ſeem to hold the body in the grave beyond all hope of riſing.

We find Faith putting many hard caſes to it ſelf; *David* did ſo (*Pſal.* 23. 4.) *Though I walk in the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no ill.* Again (*Pſal.* 46. 2.) *Therefore we will not fear, though the earth remove, and the mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea.* You ſee what *thoughts* faith propoſeth to it ſelf, and yet gets over and above them. Faith is not only a purifying, but a prevailing and a conquering grace. Faith is our victory over the world, and all worldly objections. As the grace of God towards man triumphs over all the unworthineſs of man, and will do man good, though many ſtops lie in the way, (*Pſal.* 106. 8.) *They underſtood not his works, they remembred not the multitude of his mercies, they rebelled at the Sea, even at the red Sea.* Every one of theſe were as a ſtop in the way of mercy to do that people good, yet mercy got over them all, *Nevertheleſs he ſaved them.* Now (I ſay) as the grace of God triumphs over the unworthineſs of man; ſo faith triumphs over all the improbabilities and impoſſibilities that ſeem to lie in the way of God, to hinder him from doing any thing for us, when once we have his word or promiſe. And as to that ſpecial word, or promiſe of God for the Reſurrection of the body, faith ſeems to ſpeak, yea to glory and boaſt thus; *He that gave me a being when I had none, can eaſily reduce me to the being I am in, when I ſeem not to be what I was before, or no ſuch thing as now I am; though wild beaſts of the Earth, and birds of the Air; though Canibals, or men-eating-men devour this body; though fire conſume it, though the aſhes be ſcattered in the Air* (as the Church ſtory ſpeaks in the reign of perſecuting *Diocleſian*) *or thrown into the River, as loſt for ever, and never to be gathered up again in the opinion of man; though all theſe difficulties and encumbrances grow upon my faith, yet I believe I ſhall be repaired, and ſee God in my fleſh.* Which is the next point of *Job's* faith.

Yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.

The Hebrew is, *from my fleſh*; it is uſual in that language to put the Prepoſition *De* for *In*. Mr. *Broughton* keeps to the letter, and ſaith, *Yet from my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.* His meaning is, I being raiſed and cloathed with fleſh, ſhall ſee God; or, from my fleſh, *When I am in the fleſh I ſhall ſee God.* There are two things further in thoſe words, *In my fleſh.*

Non dicit, per carnem meam, ſed in carne mea, q.d. in carne mea ero cum videbo Deum.

First, He ſaith, **My fleſh**, that is, my own fleſh: In opposition to another fleſh, whether ſpecifical or perſonal, as was intimated before.

Secondly, *My fleſh*, as pointing to his preſent eſtate, *My fleſh*, this fleſh of mine which is now ſo miſerably worn, and will ſhortly be worm-eaten; this my fleſh, which is now unmeet for the preſence of any man, much more for the preſence of the great God; even this fleſh of mine, this diſeaſed and deſpiſed fleſh ſhall be fitted for the preſence of God, the great and glorious God; I, in my fleſh, in this my fleſh ſhall ſee God.

Shall ſee God.] *To ſee*, is often uſed in Scripture to note a divine and ſuper natural act; hence prophetical revelations are called *viſions*, and the Prophets *Seers*. There is a twofold *ſeeing*, Firſt, Seeing with the eye of the body: Secondly, Seeing with the eye of the mind: a corporal and an intellectual ſight: both which may here be underſtood, according to the twofold acceptation of the word, *God. I ſhall ſee God.* The word *God*, may be taken, either, firſt, *eſſentially* for the divine nature, and then we muſt expound the word *ſee* in the latter ſence, I ſhall ſee him with the eye of my mind, or intellectually. Secondly, The word *God*, may be taken *perſonally* for Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, who having two natures, the divine, and humane, united in his perſon, or having aſſumed the humane nature into the divine, which is the perſon, himſelf is often called God: So that, I ſhall ſee God is this alſo, I ſhall ſee Jeſus Chriſt, God-man, who being glorified in the body, ſhall be ſeen with bodily eyes. And ſo *Job* aſſures himſelf that he ſhall ſee God in the firſt ſence, with the eye of the body; as if he had ſaid, *I ſhall have a glorified eye to ſee a glorified Saviour with.* From or in my fleſh, I ſhall ſee God. Thus one of the Ancients gives the interpretation of this Text. *Whereas* (ſaith he) *Job ſaith, in my fleſh I ſhall ſee God, he, without doubt propheſied the reſurrection of his fleſh: yet he did not ſay, By my fleſh, which if he had ſaid, the Text notwithſtanding might be expounded of God, who being in the fleſh, ſhall be ſeen by the fleſh; yet we may underſtand it only thus, I ſhall be in the fleſh, when I ſee God.*

Illud quod ait Job, *in carne mea videbo Deū, reſurrectionem quidem carnis procul dubio prophetavit; non tamen dixit* per carnem meam, *quod quidem ſi dixiſſet poſſet Deus intelligi, qui per carnem in carne videbitur; nunc vero poteſt & ſic accipi, in carne mea ero, cum videbo Deum.* Aug. l. 22. de Civ. D. c. 24.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The body after the reſurrection ſhall be true fleſh, or ſhall have true fleſh.*

That opinion hath been condemned as hereſie, which ſome held long ſince, That when the body riſeth again it ſhall be a ſpirit, ſubtile, and thin, like the Air or Wind, not ſubject to the touch of the hand, or ſight of the eye. To which one of the Ancients anſwereth well from (*Luke* 24. 39, 40.) where Chriſt when the Diſciples were affrighted at his appearance, after his reſurrection, thinking they had ſeen a ſpirit, *verſ.* 37. (for ſo abſurdly they ſpake, as if a ſpirit could be ſeen, Chriſt, I ſay) to free them at once from that abſurdity, and fear, calls to them, *Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts* (that is, ſuch vain thoughts as theſe) *ariſe in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my ſelf* (much in the language of *Job, whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf*) *handle me and ſee; for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones as ye ſee me have.* Mine is a true body, compoſed of fleſh and bones, it hath the dimenſions and properties of a true body, it may be ſeen and handled: Chriſt admitteth the teſtimony of their own ſenſes, to aſſure them it was no deluſion or phanſie which was preſented to them, but his real body.

Corpus noſtrum in illa reſurrectionis gloria erit inpalpabile ventis aereq; ſubtilius. Eutic. Conſtant. Epic.

But, ſaith not the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15. 37, 38.) treating of the Reſurrection, *That which thou ſoweſt, thou ſoweſt not that body that ſhall be, but bare grain, as perchance of* *wheat, or ſome other grain: but God giveth it a body as it pleaſeth him, to every ſeed its own body.* From this ſimilitude ſome argue, if *that which thou ſoweſt is not that body that ſhall be when thou reapeſt*; then the body that dies, and is laid in the Grave, is not that body that ſhall be in the reſurrection; and if it be not the ſame, but ſome other body, then it may be an ayereal body.

Non dicit grano ſeminis deeſſe quod erat, ſed adeſſe quod non erat; qui autem verũ corpus reſurgere denegat, nequaquam dicit adeſſe quod deerat ſed abeſſe quod erat. Greg. in diſput. contra Eutich.

I anſwer, It is true, corn, or grain which is ſowed, doth not riſe again in that manner, or after that likeneſs in which it was caſt into the ground. We ſow bare ſeed, but when it comes up again, it comes with a ſtalk and an ear, and ſhoots up in much beauty, glory, and verdure. There is a great difference between a grain of wheat in the buſhel, and a flouriſhing ſtem, or ear of Corn in the field. God gives it another body in the growing up, but yet it is ſtill a body; and there is the ſame nature in it ſtill, the grain remains ſtill: Only, there is an addition of beauty and greenneſs when it grows up. So the body that is caſt into the ground is like bare grain (the Apoſtle uſeth that word) it is a bare body, a naked body: but when it ſhall be raiſed again, the body ſhall have many great additions, it ſhall have a cloathing, and an excellency of glory put upon it, (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) *We ſhall be cloathed upon*, yet ſtill it is a true body and the ſame body. The Apoſtle *Paul* doth not ſay, that the body ſhall be utterly caſt away or loſt in Glory; but the body that dies is uncloathed, and thoſe bodies of Saints which live at that Great day, ſhall be *cloathed upon with a houſe which is from Heaven.* So that in the Reſurrection there will be an adding ſomewhat to that which was before, not a taking away of that that was before; the fleſh ſhall be refined and purified, it ſhall not be laid aſide, or annihilated. The corn grows up, with ſomewhat that it had not, but it doth not loſe any thing that it had; 'tis ſtill a grain of wheat and better. So the body laid down in the grave is raiſed, not the ſame in all things, but better in many things; it will not loſe any thing of perfection which it had, but it will gain many perfections which it had not, even the excellency and perfection of glory.

Caro noſtra poſt reſurrectionem eadem eſt & diverſa, eadem per naturam, diverſa per potentiam.

Secondly, It is objected, How can it riſe fleſh, when the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15. 50.) ſaith, *Fleſh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption?* If no fleſh ſhall inherit that ſtate, how can it be affirmed, that the true fleſh ſhall be raiſed to enter upon that inheritance?

I anſwer, by way of grant, that by *fleſh and blood* in that Scripture, we are to underſtand natural fleſh and blood, not fleſh and blood as it notes a ſinful, or corrupt condition: In which ſence it is alſo true, that *fleſh and blood ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* But the Apoſtle ſpeaking there of the reſurrection of the body, he means the fleſh and blood of which the body is compoſed and made up; and of that he ſaith, *It ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* 'Tis true, it ſhall not, in the ſtate wherein it is, fleſh and blood, as it is corruptible, ſhall not enter into Heaven. Himſelf ſeems to expound that we are thus to conceive fleſh and blood in the latter clauſe of the ſame Verſe, *Neither ſhall corruption inherit incorruption*; that is, corruptible fleſh and blood, or fleſh and blood that hath the ſeeds and principles of corruption in it, ſhall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; ſuch fleſh and blood is unfit to wear the garland of glory. As our ſouls muſt be changed before they can be fit for glory, ſo alſo muſt our bodies. Meer natural fleſh and blood are too weak to bear the weight of glory. Which the Apoſtle intimated (*Verſ.* 44.) *It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body.* As if he had ſaid, Such a body as man laid down in the grave will not ſerve his turn, when he riſeth again. Man layes down only a *Natural body*, or as the Greek ſtrictly ſpeaks, an *Animal body*, or a *Soul body*; that is, a body quickned and maintained only by a living ſoul, ſuch as *Adam's* was in the Creation, whoſe body being formed out of the duſt of the earth, and the Lord breathing into him the breath of life, he became *a living Soul* (Gen. 2. 7.) yet ſuch was his ſoul that it could not maintain his bodily life without helps from without. And ſo his (as alſo ours who are deſcended from him) was but a meer natural body. But when man is raiſed from the duſt, he ſhall be provided and fitted with *a Spiritual body*. The Apoſtle ſaith not, that the body ſhall be changed into a ſpirit, but it ſhall be raiſed a ſpiritual body, which yet ſome urge ſtrongly to prove that the body ſhall be attenuated into a ſpirit; but for the removing of that objection and the clearing of the Scripture; I anſwer, that the body raiſed to glory is called ſpiritual theſe three wayes.

Firſt, Becauſe the body ſhall ever be ſubject and ſerviceable to the ſpirit; for as the ſpirit of a man while it is ſubject to and ſerveth ſinful fleſh, is called *carnal* in the language of Scripture; ſo the fleſh of man when it is purely ſubject to the ſpirit, may, by the ſame proportion, be called ſpiritual.

Secondly, It may be called a ſpiritual body in regard of the great ſtrength and activity, with which it ſhall be endowed: Spirits are ſtrong, and ſo is every thing which is ſpiritual. Spirit is often in Scripture oppoſed to fleſh, to denote ſtrength. When the Prophet would have the Jews know that the Egyptian Horſes were too weak to be truſted too, he ſaith, *Their horſes are fleſh, and not ſpirit* (Iſa. 31. 1.) The Devil is called *a ſpiritual wickedneſs*, to ſhew that he is a ſtrong and a powerful wickedneſs (*Eph.* 6. 12.) In this reference alſo our bodies after the reſurrection are entitled ſpiritual. It muſt be a body of mighty ſtrength which is able to bear a weight of glory, or as the Apoſtle amplifies it, *An exceeding weight of glory.* There is ſuch a weight in Glory that our frail bodies would be cruſhed under it, unleſs being made ſpiritual, they were alſo made ſtrong to bear it.

Thirdly, 'Tis called a ſpiritual body, becauſe then the body ſhall have no need of natural helps. This the Apoſtle teacheth us in that oppoſition, *It is ſowen a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body.* A natural body ſtands in need of natural ſupports, but a ſpiritual body needs them not. When they in the Goſpel put that tempting Queſtion to Chriſt, whoſe wife the Woman ſhould be at the Reſurrection, who had been ſucceſſively married to ſeven husbands; Chriſt gives an anſwer, implying that ſuch Queſtions ſhall then be out of doors (*Matth.* 22. 13.) *After the reſurrection, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels in heaven.* Marriage will be out in heaven: yea the body ſhall be ſo ſpiritual in heaven, that we ſhall need, neither ſleep, nor meat, nor cloathing, as Angels and Spirits do not. I may give the ſpiritualneſs of the body in four words, according to the Schoolmen in their diſputes about the ſtate of a glorified body.

First, Clearneſs and beauty: the face of *Stephen* did ſhine *as the face of an Angel* (Act. 6. 15.) Not that an Angel hath a face or ſhines viſibly, but ſo 'tis phraſed to note excellent beauty; as excellent bread is expreſſed, by *Angels bread*: there was an amazing beauty ſtampt upon the face of *Stephen*, becauſe he began to border upon Heaven, and had received ſome beams of glory approaching. Then inſtead of thoſe filthy ulcers, with which the body of *Job* was ſpotted; his body, as alſo the bodies of all the Saints with him, ſhall appear (as it were) with ſtars and ſtuds of light, and reſplendent beauty; and which is the beauty of this bodily beauty in Heaven, it will be ſuch as whereof none ſhall be proud themſelves, nor yet by it be a ſnare to others.

Pro immundis ulceribus reſperſũ erit Jobi *corpus atq; illuminatũ, quibuſdam quaſi punctis luminis & guttis lucis & ſtellulis clariſſimis diſtinctum & circumdatum.* Pin.

Secondly, Agility, nimbleneſs, and activity; whereas now our bodies move heavily, they ſhall then aſcend and deſcend like Angels.

Thirdly, Impaſſibility, we ſhall not ſuffer hunger or cold, ſorrow, or pain in the body.

Fourthly, Spirituality, which, I conceive, may rather be the comprehenſion of the other three. Then that of the Apoſtle will be fulfilled, *Chriſt will change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body* (Phil. 3. 21.) Not that a glorious body ſhall be of another faſhion then now it is, in regard of the ſymmetry and diſpoſition of parts and members (the ſame fabrick and frame ſhall continue) but it ſhall be of another faſhion in regard of qualifications and endowments; ſuch as thoſe fore-mentioned, and in all thoſe our bodies ſhall be faſhioned like the glorious body of Jeſus Chriſt (which is the higheſt aſcent of honour which the body is capable of) and excepting theſe changes the body ſhall be the ſame it was; the ſame in nature, inveſted and ſublimated with thoſe noble additions of *clarity, agility, impaſſibility, and ſpirituality.* Thus it ſhall be ſown a natural body, but raiſed a ſpiritual body, yet ſtill a body, a true body ſtill. That's the firſt point, the body after the reſurrection ſhall be true fleſh.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Saints raiſed to life ſhall ſee God.*

It will be our whole work, and our whole wages, our whole buſineſs, and our whole bleſſedneſs to ſee God. *Job* ſpeaks as if there were nothing to be done in the next life but only to ſee God; nothing to be had or enjoyed then, but only a ſight of God; and indeed there ſhall be nothing elſe; *I ſhall ſee God* (ſaith he) that's enough for me, yea, that's all to me (*Pſal.* 16. 11.) *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy:* That is, when I ſhall ſee and enjoy thee preſent (*Matth.* 5. 8.) *The pure in heart ſhall ſee God.* (2 Cor. 13. 12.) *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly; then face to face*; that is, intentively and directly, not reflectively or by effects; we ſhall ſee as we are ſeen, and know as we are known; according to the utmoſt comprehenſion which a creature is capable of, our veſſels ſhall be as full as they can hold, and what would we have more? Yea, our happineſs ſhall be, that we would have no more. Our hearts ſhall be ſo full of joy, and our heads ſo full of knowledge, that we ſhall deſire no more. We ſee the World, and are not filled; *The eye,* ſaith *Solomon, is not ſatisfied with ſeeing.* But the ſight of God is ſatisfying and filling, that will not leave one empty ſpace or corner in the ſoul. God is enough for us, and we ſhall certainly have enough when we ſee him (as then we ſhall) as he is. That priviledge is aſſured to the Sons of God (1 *John* 3. 2.) *We ſhall ſee him as he is.* In this life the Saints ſee God; the life of grace is the viſion of God, as well as the life of glory: and though it be true, that here the Saints do rather ſee what God is not, then what he is; yet 'tis true alſo, that here the Saints ſee God *as he is*, as thoſe words may note a real ſeeing of him, though not (as they intend) a full ſeeing of him. Here we ſee God by faith; *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 7.) *walk by faith, not by ſight.* We neither walk by ſight, as carnal men do, who have no faith, nor do we walk by ſight, as glorified Saints, who are above faith. But we walk by faith, which though it be oppoſed both to the ſight of nature here below, and to that ſight of glory, which we ſhall have above; yet that alſo is a ſight, and by that we ſee God.

Firſt, In his *Promiſes*; Abraham *ſaw my day* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 8. 56.) He ſaw it in the Promiſe; and there God is ſeen.

Secondly, In his *Ordinances*; *David* deſired to dwell in the Houſe of the Lord all the dayes of his life, to behold his beauty (*Pſal.* 27. 4.)

Thirdly, We ſee God in his *Providences*; in them God is ſo eminently to be ſeen, that he is as angry when his People ſee him not in Providences, as when they ſee him not in Promiſes, or Ordinances. In all theſe we have a ſight of God by faith in this life, and we ſee him truly as he is; yea, God hath been pleaſed to make himſelf viſible to ſome of his people in this life, even to their ſenſe, as well as to their faith (*Iſai.* 6. 1.) *I ſaw the Lord,* ſaith *Iſaiah* the Prophet; he ſpeaks not of an intellectual, but of an ocular ſight; and *Job, I have heard of him by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes have ſeen him* (Job 42. 6.) And ſo *Jacob* (Gen. 32. 30.) *I have ſeen God face to face*; and he calls the place *Penuel, The face of God.* Not that he (or they) ſaw God himſelf with the eyes of his body, ſo *no man hath ſeen God at any time* (1 John 4. 12.) and ſo *no man can ſee God and live* (Exod. 33. 30.) But theſe ſaw God in ſome repreſentation of himſelf, in ſome ſuch breakings forth, and evident demonſtrations of his Glory to the eye, as gave them an undoubted argument of the preſence of God with them; yea, ſometimes God hath condeſcended to appear in the form of a man. So that beſides that ſight of faith which all Saints have of God in this life in his Works and Word, ſome have had a kind of ſight by ſenſe in thoſe illuſtrious and familiar manifeſtations of his preſence with them; yet all this is but a glimpſe to that ſight which we ſhall have of God in heavenly glory, when *we ſhall ſee him as he is.* Which words of the Apoſtle *John*, as they are appliable to the perſon of Chriſt, whom we ſhall then *ſee as he is*, as that is oppoſed to *what he was*, while he was here in the form of a ſervant; ſo they are alſo appliable to the Nature of God, or to God eſſentially taken, whom we ſhall ſee in that glorified ſtate, *as he is*, though not with the bodily eye, nor with any full comprehenſion of our underſtandings (for how can finite comprehend infinite) yet our underſtandings ſhall have ſuch a full apprehenſion of God, that comparatively to any ſight of God which we have had here, we may be ſaid to *ſee him as he is.* This intellectual ſight, being unexpreſſibly far more excellent and evident then either that ſight which every Saint hath by faith, or which any have had by the eye, in thoſe appearances he ſometimes hath vouchſafed to duſt and aſhes here. And therefore that ſight of God is called by way (not only of diſtinction, but) of eminency; *The beatifical viſion.*

Thirdly, As this Text is expounded peculiarly of Chriſt the Mediator, then we may obſerve yet further for our comfort, that

Saints glorified ſhall ſee, and ever behold the glorious body of Jeſus Chriſt.

We ſhall ſee Chriſt in our nature glorified. Therefore ſome render the Text, Not, *In my fleſh I ſhall ſee God*; But, *I ſhall ſee God in my fleſh*; that is, I ſhall ſee Chriſt ſitting in glory, cloathed with fleſh, or in the likeneſs of man. *God ſent his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, to condemn ſin in the fleſh* (Rom. 8. 3.) *And he ſhall appear the ſecond time without ſin unto ſalvation* (Heb. 9. 28.) That is, There ſhall be no likeneſs of ſin upon him at his ſecond appearance, as there was no ſin in him at the firſt. But though he ſhall then have no likeneſs of ſinful fleſh upon him, yet he ſhall have the likeneſs of fleſh, and that, not as likeneſs is ſometimes taken, for the reſemblance of that which it is not, but as likeneſs imports the truth of that which is. Chriſt ſhall be ſeen in true humane fleſh, and this ſeeing or beholding of Jeſus Chriſt in the fleſh, will be (if we may conceive a ſecond there) the ſecond great joy in Heaven, To ſee the Saints will be great joy. The Diſciples ſaw *Moſes* and *Elias* in the transfiguration of Chriſt (which was a ſhew of Heaven, *Matth.* 17.) What joy then will it be to ſee the glorious perſon of Jeſus Chriſt? Chriſt is indeed *the Deſire of our eyes.* It was the wiſh of *Auſtin*, that he might have ſeen three things. Firſt, *Rome in her flower.* Secondly, *Paul in the Pulpit.* Thirdly, *Chriſt in the fleſh.* To have a view of Chriſt in the dayes of his humiliation and debaſement, was to them, who knew him by faith, matter of great rejoycing. Old *Simeon* deſired to ſee no more of this world, when once he had ſeen Chriſt; he wiſhes to depart and have his eyes cloſed, when his eyes had ſeen the ſalvation of God, that is, Chriſt, whom God ſent to be our Saviour (*Luke* 2. 30.) What then will it be to the Saints, when they ſhall ſee God their Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt ſitting cloathed in that fleſh that they themſelves wear, though in a more excellent cloathing of glory, then a meer creature is able to bear. The Apoſtle *Peter* foreſhews this joy of Saints (1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8, 13.) *That the tryal of your faith may be found to praiſe, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt, whom having not ſeen ye love.* As if he had ſaid, If ye love Jeſus Chriſt, now you have not ſeen him, but have only heard him ſpoken of, and ſeen him by faith; If ye having not ſeen do love him, O how will ye love him when you ſhall ſee him! for that is the ſtrength of the Apoſtles Argument, *Whom having not ſeen ye love, in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* As if he had ſaid, If ye now rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory, believing in Jeſus Chriſt whom you never ſaw, what rivers of joy will flow in upon you when you ſee Jeſus Chriſt! And therefore at the thirteenth Verſe, the Apoſtle *Peter* gathers up his own ſpirit, and the ſpirits of all the Saints, to the ſerious expectation of this thing; *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be ſober, and hope to the end, for the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* There is a twofold interpretation of that Scripture, according to the twofold ſignification of the word *Grace.* Some read it thus, *Rejoyce for that grace that is brought to you by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* It is matter of higheſt and pureſt joy to remember that Grace (whether we take it for the favour of God to ſinners, that they may be juſtified, or for that heavenly principle which the Spirit works in the hearts of ſinners, that they may be ſanctified) at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt to the ſoul in converſion.

Videbo deũ in carne mea, i. e. *Chriſtum in carne reſuſcitatum.*

When this grace is brought to (and through the effectual working of the Spirit) received by ſinners, there's joy in Heaven, and therefore the thought of it ſhould cauſe joy on earth. Yet

Our tranſlation refers rather to the time future; *Gird up the loins of your mind,*&c. *for the grace to be brought at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* Jeſus Chriſt hath been revealed already, but he ſhall be revealed yet more plainly. But is that the time of grace? We received grace at the firſt revealing of Chriſt, ſhall we receive more grace then?

I anſwer, Grace may be put for glory, or for that unſpeakable favour and wonderful love, which ſhall be given out to the Saints when their bodies ſhall be raiſed, and Chriſt appears to them in Glory. So the word *grace* is uſed (1 *Pet.*3.) where the Apoſtle exhorts Husbands and Wives to walk *according to knowledge, as heirs of the ſame grace of life.* We are poſſeſſors and not heirs only of grace in this life; but in this life we are only heirs of the grace of life, that is, of eternal life, or glory. Such is the grace that is given at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt; that is, when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be ſet forth to the view of our bodily eyes, at the riſing again of our bodies. Then fulneſs of joy is promiſed, and God hath provided for it every way. He hath provided joy for the eye of the mind, by that viſion of himſelf: He hath provided joy for the eye of the body, by the viſion of Jeſus Chriſt. And ſome have piouſly conceived it one part of the deſign why Jeſus Chriſt took fleſh, that we might have compleat joy in him, both by ſeeing the Divine nature in him intellectually, and by ſeeing him glorious in the Humane nature; for ſo at once both mind and body ſhall have fulneſs of conſolation by him.

Fourthly, For as much as *Job,* to comfort himſelf in his preſent ſorrows, hath recourſe to this hope, *I ſhall ſee God in my fleſh*: As if he had ſaid, I ſee nothing but viſions of horror and amazement now; I ſee nothing but friendleſs friends, and miſerable comforters now; I ſee nothing but poverty and want compaſſing me now; but I ſhall ſee God, there's my hope, and there's my happineſs.

Hence Obſerve, *Our compleat happineſs conſiſts in the viſion of God.*

Chriſt placeth the future happineſs of the Saints in the viſion of his Mediatorial glory; *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory that thou haſt given me* (John 17. 24.) Glorified Saints ſhall for ever feed their eyes with unutterable delights in beholding the Glory of Jeſus Chriſt.

The ſight of the eye gives much contentment; *It is a pleaſant thing to behold the Sun* (Eccleſ. 11.) How pleaſant will it be then with the eye of the ſoul to behold God, and with the eye of the body to behold Jeſus Chriſt? *Mine eye affects my heart,* ſaith *Jeremiah* in the *Lamentations*: That's true of joy as well as of ſorrow. Sights refreſh: How do people flock to ſee great ſhews? Now, the clear light that comes into the underſtanding, brings infinitely more refreſhing and gladneſs to the ſoul, then that which comes in only by the body. It is joy and happineſs to Saints to ſee God now, as was ſhewed before, in his Word and Works, in his Ordinances and Adminiſtrations. Good *Hezekiah* lamented his feared loſs of that priviledge (*Iſa.* 38. 11.) *I ſaid I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living*: That is, I thought I ſhould never have gone to Church more (as we uſe to ſpeak) or to the Temple, there to behold the beauty of the Lord, and partake of his Ordinances. But what *Elihu* promiſes in a like caſe (*Job* 33. 26.) was performed to *Hezekiah, He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy.* When ſhall he have this joyful ſight? Even in this life; as 'tis explained at the twenty eighth Verſe; *He will deliver his ſoul from going into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light*: That is, He ſhall be raiſed from his ſick bed to ſee the light of the Sun, and then alſo he ſhall ſee the light of Gods countenance. This will be a joyful ſight to him here, much more will the ſight of Gods Face fill him with joy hereafter.

And the reaſon why this viſion is our joy and happineſs, ariſeth four wayes.

Firſt, Becauſe our ſeeing of God makes us like him; like him two wayes, or in a double conformity. Firſt, In holineſs: And therefore, Secondly, In bleſſedneſs. Theſe two cannot be ſeparated. They that are (according to their capacity) holy as God is holy, ſhall alſo (according to their capacity) be happy as God is happy: Now that our ſeeing of God impreſſeth upon us a ſimilitude of his holineſs, is affirmed by the Apoſtle *John* (1 Epiſt. 3. 2.) *We ſhall be like him,* (Why?) *For we ſhall ſee him.* For if the viſion we have of God here (in proportion to it) draw a likeneſs upon our ſouls (look how much any ſoul ſees of God by faith, by ſo much is that ſoul made like to God in holineſs) *We all as in a glaſs behold the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the ſame Image* (2 Cor. 3. 18.) Now if here in Grace, while we in Promiſes, and Providences, and Ordinances, behold God, we are made like to him, much more ſhall we be ſo, when we ſee him face to face. The true reaſon why we are not more like God in this life, is, becauſe we ſee and truly know ſo little of him.

Secondly, Bleſſedneſs is nothing but ſatisfaction, and content. The Devil is moſt miſerable, becauſe he is nothing but diſſatisfaction, and diſcontent. And hence the Devil labours to put all into a diſcontented mood, that they may be miſerable, as he is. Now as our likeneſs to God riſeth from viſion; ſo our ſatisfaction, content, and reſt, riſeth from both. (*Pſal.* 17. 15.) *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs.* The Pſalmiſt ſpake in the former Verſe of the utmoſt happineſs of worldly men, who have their *portion in this life*; and in this Verſe he ſpeaks by way of oppoſition to that, of his own happineſs, together with the happineſs of all the people of God; *As for me, I will behold thy face,* &c. As if he had ſaid, Let others place their happineſs in what they will, as for me, or for my part, here is my happineſs, To *behold the face of God in righteouſneſs,* (*without holineſs no man can ſee the Lord.*) But what's the benefit of beholding the face of God? The next words expreſs it; *I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs.* If we underſtand the Pſalmiſt (as ſome do) of beholding God here in his favours and mercies, that confirms the point more; for if the ſoul receive ſatisfaction in beholding God here as he is pleaſed in part to reveal himſelf, then we ſhall much more be ſatisfied when he reveals himſelf fully to us. God is ſatisfied in and with himſelf, and therefore he can quickly ſatisfie us. The very gleanings of God being infinitely more then all the vintage and harveſt of the creature.

Thirdly, Our ſeeing God, is the enjoying of God. How then can we be but happy in ſeeing him? We ſee many good things now that advantage us little, becauſe they are none of ours; we do not enjoy them by ſeeing them, it is but a tranſient ſight: But this ſight is enjoyment, and the appropriation of God to our ſelves. Faith appropriates God here, viſion ſhall much more hereafter.

Laſtly, This ſight will make us happy, becauſe when once we enjoy God by ſight, we ſhall be filled with aſſurance of enjoying him for ever. There is nothing but aſſurance in Heaven, and that not only that our eſtate is ſure and ſhall continue, but that we ſhall have a continual ſight or manifeſtation of it. Glory ſhall never be hidden from our eye, *It ſhall be revealed in us* (Rom. 8. 18.) This evidence of Glory compleats our happineſs in glory. And ſeeing this viſion of God, and the revelation of Glory in us, are the compleature of our happineſs, no marvel if *Job* comforts himſelf in this expectation; *After Worms have deſtroyed this body, I ſhall ſee God in my fleſh.* This ſight will recompence all our ſorrows and ſufferings, yea, when once we have attained this ſight, we ſhall not only never ſee, but forget our ſorrows, and remember our ſufferings no more.

Verſe 27. **Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine eye ſhall behold, and not another, though my reins be conſumed within me.**

Job concluded the former Verſe with an aſſurance, that, *In his fleſh he ſhould ſee God.* This Verſe begins upon the ſame point, *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf*; but though it be the ſame in the matter, yet it comes cloathed with new conſiderations and additions. He doth not ſay barely, *Whom I ſhall ſee*; but, *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf*: There is the firſt addition. Secondly, *Mine eye ſhall behold, and not another*: There is a ſecond addition; and this (ſaith *Job*)

Job) I believe *Though my reins be conſumed within me*, that's a third.

Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf.] It is one thing to ſee, and another thing to ſee for our ſelves. In ſome caſes to do or ſee for our ſelves is ſinful. As, *No man ſhould live to himſelf*; ſo in that ſence, *No man ſhould ſee to himſelf, or for himſelf*. *Job* promiſeth himſelf a time, wherein he ſhould ſee, and do for himſelf without ſin. And there is a doing for our ſelves, or a living to our ſelves in this life (much more may it be ſo in the life to come) which is not ſinful, nor at all contrary to thoſe Goſpel rules of denying our ſelves, and living unto God. The Original which we render *for my ſelf*, is in the Dative caſe (as Grammarians ſpeak) which imports favour; I ſhall ſee to, or for my ſelf, that is, for my own good, advantage, and comfort: The Prophet ſpeaks in this conſtruction (*Iſa.* 9. 6.) *To us a Son is given, to us a Child is born.* He is given to us, or for us; that is, for our benefit, and ſalvation: There was never ſuch a birth to us as Chriſt was; and it were better for us never to have been born, then not to have an intereſt in the birth of Chriſt. The promiſe of Chriſt is the foundation of our comfort; *I ſhall ſee him to my ſelf*, (ſaith *Job*) as having my ſhare, my part in him.

Eſt Dativus benevolentiæ, favoris, commodi & utilitatis.

Or, *I ſhall ſee him for my ſelf*; that is, as a friend to me, as he that will take my part, and give ſentence on my ſide. Some expound the latter clauſe of the verſe ſutably to this; *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf; and mine eyes ſhall behold him, and not another*; that is, not *an adverſary*: For the word in the Hebrew ſignifies not only *alium*, but *alienum*, not only *another*, but *an adverſary*. A learned Interpreter puts the word in the Accuſative, not in the Nominative caſe, thus, *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and not as my adverſary (but friend:)* So it refers to God himſelf, I ſhall not ſee God as a ſtranger to me, much leſs as an enemy, but ſhall find his heart opened to me, and him ready to receive me into his everlaſting embraces.

Videbo deũ mihi, non adverſum me ſed pro me ſententiã pronunciaturum. Pin. *Videre, hoc loco, mihi ſapit forum.* Bold. *Exiſtimo vocem zar eſſe accuſativi caſus non nominativi, nec debere referri ad alium vel alios, quam ad deum ipſum.* Bold.

It hath been ſhewed from the former words, that the happineſs of Saints after the reſurrection conſiſts in viſion: Here *Job* riſeth up to a fuller aſſurance of that priviledge, which glorified Saints ſhall have in Heaven; *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf.*

Hence Note; *In Heaven Saints ſhall have their intereſt in God clear, undoubtedly clear to them for ever.*

It is the buſineſs of faith now to believe in God for our ſelves; to take Chriſt for our ſelves. But though this be the work of faith, yet faith cannot alwayes reach it, or read its own evidences by it. There may be true faith, and yet no ſight of Chriſt for our ſelves; we may ſee him, and yet fear we have no intereſt in him. Come to Saints under temptation, or in times of deſertion, and tell them of mercy, and free grace brought in by Chriſt the Redeemer; they anſwer, yes, they believe that it is ſo, Chriſt is *the Saviour, grace is free, mercy endureth for ever*; But what's all this to them? They ſee this by faith in the general promiſe made to ſinners, but they ſee not this for themſelves, nor can they make out their ſhare in it; yea, poſſibly they ſee God angry; they ſee him indeed, but not for themſelves, but as an adverſary to them, or as departed from them; his face is hid, and they doubt whether he will ever unvail it again towards them. This is the ſtate of many Saints here, and there are very few who ſee God alwayes for themſelves in this life, or whoſe hearts are cleared from all ſcruples and fears about their intereſt in Chriſt. This is reſerved for Glory when love ſhall be perfected: *Perfect love will caſt out fear* (1 John 4. 18.) and when fear ſhall be totally and finally caſt out, we ſhall never have ſo much as one ſuſpicious doubtful thought, croſſing our ſpirits, or ſhaking our aſſurances. Heavenly enjoyments ſhall not know the leaſt interruption. Saints in this life are in a happy condition above all people in the world: but they meet with many rubs in the making out, and evidencing of their happineſs: but in Heaven the favour of God ſhall ever be in ſight, we ſhall ſee him continually for our ſelves. *Job* ſaid in this book, *Thou holdeſt me for thine enemy.* He found God againſt him, and dealing with him as if he hated him: but his faith recovered to the higheſt pitch, *I ſhall ſee God*, and he will never act as an adverſary any more. God will not ſo much as perſonate an enemy in Heaven, though here he ſmites and wounds his beloved ones, even with the wounds of an enemy; but there's nothing but ſmiles and embraces in glory; *Whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf.*

Again, This addition to the viſion may refer (by way of oppoſition) to that ſight which wicked men ſhall have of Chriſt in the reſurrection: *I ſhall ſee him for my ſelf.* There are others that ſhall ſee Chriſt as well as I, but I ſhall ſee him ſo as they ſhall not ſee him, they ſhall not ſee him for themſelves (*Matth.* 24. 30.) There will be an univerſal viſion of Chriſt in that great day, *Then ſhall appear the ſign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then all the Tribes of the earth ſhall mourn, and they ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory.* All the Tribes of the earth; he ſpeaks of all Nations in alluſion to the Nation of the *Jews*, who were diſtinguiſhed into twelve Tribes, *All the Tribes*, that is, all the Families and Kindreds of the earth *ſhall ſee him*: But ſhall all the Tribes of the earth rejoyce in ſeeing him? No, all the Tribes of the earth ſhall mourn. Not that every particular perſon of every Tribe ſhall mourn, but many of every Tribe ſhall mourn. And this Scripture may give us light in the explication of thoſe univerſal terms about redemption; for as it is ſaid, Chriſt dyed for all; ſo here he ſaith, *All the Tribes of the earth ſhall mourn* at the appearance of Chriſt; yet then many ſhall rejoyce. *Lift up your heads* (ſaith Chriſt to the Saints) *for the time of your redemption is at hand.* But all the Tribes, that is, a number of the Tribes, or the greateſt number of the Tribes ſhall mourn. All ſhall ſee him, but with a difference: The Saints ſhall ſee Chriſt coming, and it will be a welcome day to them: The wicked ſhall ſee him, but it will be a black and a ſad day to them (*Revel.* 1. 7.) *Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him*, good, and bad. Which he addeth by way of ſpecification; *Every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him.* If every eye ſhall ſee him, then *they that pierced him* muſt needs ſee him; and if ſo, why are they particularly named? It is uſual in other Scriptures, when an univerſal is firſt laid down, yet to nominate a particular kind or perſon, though that be included in the former general. As in the the title of the eighteenth *Pſalm*, *A Song of* David *in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies*: There is the univerſal, and yet it follows, *and from the hand of* Saul. *Saul* was among his enemies, and ſo was included in the general ſtile of all his enemies; but he puts in *Saul* by name for ſpecial reaſon, becauſe he was his moſt mortal enemy. *Samuel* commands *Iſrael to put away all their falſe Gods, and* Aſhtaroth (1 Sam. 7. 3.) If they put away all, they muſt needs put away *Aſhtaroth*; but he names *Aſhtaroth*, becauſe that was a principal Idol. So here, *Every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him.* Under the general *they that pierced him* are included; yet he ſpecifies his piercers, who were of two ſorts, and ſo according to the Text and point in hand, muſt have a twofold ſight of him. Among thoſe who pierced Chriſt, there were ſome that repented, and returned (as we read) at that Sermon of *Peter*) Acts 2. *Peter* told them they were the betrayers and murtherers of Chriſt; this pricked them to the heart, and many repented, embracing and believing on that Chriſt, whom they had betrayed and murthered. Theſe ſhall ſee Chriſt with joy, though they pierced and put him to ſorrow: The death of Chriſt hath procured mercy for thoſe, whoſe cruelty procured his death. They who judged Chriſt worthy to dye, judging themſelves ſo, were through faith delivered from death.

There were another ſort that pierced him, who never repented, and they ſhall ſee him too, but they ſhall ſee him to their ſorrow. They would withdraw from this ſight, they would not behold him whom they pierced, if they could help it; they would fain be excuſed, but they ſhall not. *Every eye ſhall ſee him, even they that pierced him.* What a dreadful thing will it be, when they who wilfully and maliciouſly pierced the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to death, and dyed impenitently in that ſin, ſhall be brought into his preſence? This ſight of a pierced Chriſt will pierce their ſouls with ſorrow; yet they ſhall ſee him not with ſorrow only, but with vexation of heart, and anguiſh of ſpirit. They who have not ſeen a pierced Chriſt in the ſorrows of repentance, can never ſee him whom they have pierced, but in the ſorrows of deſpair. To behold Chriſt with the eye of ſenſe will be moſt grievous to all thoſe, who have not beheld him with an eye of faith. See him! No, they had rather be covered with the mountains, and that the hills ſhould fall upon them. But they ſhall ſee him and be afraid, terror ſhall take hold of them. 'Tis a promiſe to ſome, that they ſhall ſee him whom they have pierced, and mourn (*Zach.* 12. 10.) Tis a threat to others, that they ſhall ſee him whom they have pierced and mourn; every eye ſhall ſee him, even they that have pierced him. To ſee the Saints in happineſs, ſhall be a part of the puniſhment of the damned (*Luke* 13. 28.) *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, when you ſhall ſee* Abraham, *and* Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and your ſelves ſhut out.* You ſhall be vexed with anger and envy as well as with pain and loſs. Now as there ſhall be a different view and ſight at that day in reference to the Saints, Saints ſhall look upon one another rejoycing; but wicked men ſhall look on the Saints mourning. It will be a bleſſed meeting when we ſhall ſee *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and our ſelves let into the Kingdom with them. But the wicked ſhall ſee *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* let into the Kingdom, and mourn that themſelves are thruſt out. Thus alſo there ſhall be a different ſight of Jeſus Chriſt; Believers ſhall ſee for themſelves, and rejoyce: The wicked ſhall ſee him againſt themſelves, they ſhall ſee him as their enemy, and mourn. *I ſhall ſee him* (ſaith *Job*) *for my ſelf.* That's the firſt addition.

And mine eyes ſhall behold, and not another.

ראה verbum conſpiciendi hoc loco aliud eſt à ſuperiori, & ſignificat propriè intendere in rem aliquã oculis & animo, cum peculiari quodam ſenſu & experientia rei conſpectæ.

We have in this Text, *ſee*, and *ſee*, and *behold*. The word in the Original is different from what we had before. *I ſhall behold him.* It ſignifies more then the bare ſeeing, or the gathering in the ſpecies of any object into the eye. It ſignifies a very vehement beholding; a critical diſcerning, view, and ſight of a thing. *Whom I ſhall behold.* That is, with deep intention, both of eye, and mind, to find out and rejoyce in all the excellency, beauty, glory, and worth that is in him. A man may come into a room adorned with goodly pictures, he ſees them in his paſſage, he hath a tranſient view of them, and he takes ſome pleaſure in this view. Another beholds them, to ſee the workmanſhip, how the lines are drawn, and features ſhadowed to the life, he views with ſkill, and art, this pleaſeth much, and gives the accurate beholder high contentment. So here, *Mine eye ſhall behold him*: That is, I ſhall even ſet my ſelf to take a view of him, to gather up (as it were) into my ſelf the idea's of his divine perfections, and ſo to receive all thoſe delights and contents which riſe from ſuch an excellent Object. *Moſes* (*Exod.* 3. 3.) had a viſion of the burning Buſh; *The Angel of the Lord appeared in a flame of fire in the midſt of the buſh. I will now turn aſide* (ſaid *Moſes*) *and ſee this great ſight.* He ſaw it before; for it is ſaid, *The Angel of God appeared to him.* But that did not ſatisfie? *I* (ſaith he) *will turn aſide and ſee it:* He uſeth the word of the Text; that is, I will turn aſide to view it yet more exactly, to conſider it more fully. I will ſee it with diligence and intendment, as well as I have ſeen it with wonder and aſtoniſhment. I will get near to obſerve this miraculous flame, that the buſh ſhould burn and not conſume. So the word is uſed (*Eccleſ.* 1. 16.) *I communed with mine own heart, ſaying, lo I am come to a great eſtate, and have gotten more wiſdom then all that were before me in* Jeruſalem. *Yea, my heart had great experience of wiſdom and knowledge.* The Hebrew is, *My heart had ſeen much of wiſdom and knowledge*; that is, I had not only taken a light view, and conſideration of thoſe things that concern wiſdom and knowledge, but my heart was ſtudying, and beating upon them; I experimented them from time to time, till I was greatly ſeen in wiſdom and knowledge. So here, mine eye ſhall not only take a glance, or a ſight in paſſage, but I ſhall feed and ſatiate mine eye with a fixed obſervation. But Saints in glory ſhall come nearer and nearer to God, they ſhall as *Moſes* ſaith, *turn aſide*, to ſee this great thing the Glory of God, who is *an everlaſting burning*. Saints in glory ſhall ever contemplate the raviſhing Excellencies of God, and have a very intimate ſight, and apprehenſion of him; they ſhall ſee, and behold him; they ſhall have as clear a knowledge of, and as free a communion with God as the ſtate of a creature can bear. This the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth from our preſent ſight and knowledge of God, which is *through a glaſs and darkly*, whereas he calleth this *a ſight, face to face, and a knowing even as alſo we are known. Mine eyes ſhall behold,*

Poſt primũ illum & jucundiſſimum ſui redemptoris conſpectam, ait deinde ſe attentiùs, obſervantiùs, diligentiùs proſpecturum, intenturumq; oculis & animo in tantam gloriam. Pin.

And not another.] The word which we render, *another*, ſignifieth firſt one differing in heart, condition, and affection, as was touched before: It ſignifies alſo any one differing only in name and number: Another perſon, another man, how much ſoever he be a friend, or affected to us. This ſence of the word our Tranſlators ſeem to intend: And then the meaning plainly is this, *Mine eye ſhall behold, and not another*; that is, the ſight which I ſhall have of God in my glorified ſtate, ſhall not be at the ſecond hand, but ſuch as I ſhall feel my ſelf: The joy which I ſhall then receive ſhall not be from any report or narrative that others ſhall give me of the Glory of God, but it ſhall be from mine own perſonal viſion, or ſight of God. I ſhall ſee with mine own eyes, not anothers, or not by another.

זר alienus, vel alius, non videbit pro me alius, nã apertim & clarum videbo ipſe.

Now we know God by the reports made to us of him; as thoſe of *Samaria* knew Chriſt by the report which the Woman made: So, upon the matter the knowledge which we have of God here, is upon the report made to us of God in Ordinances, and in Providences: But as thoſe *Samaritans* came to the Woman and ſaid, *Now we believe, not becauſe of thy ſayings; for we have heard him our ſelves,* &c. So we ſhall ſay at laſt to all, whether things or perſons, which have been as means reporting and conveying to us the knowledge of God; now we know, not becauſe you have ſaid it, or ſhewed it, for we our ſelves have ſeen him. We ſhall behold God our ſelves, and not by another. Such ſhall be the difference between all the knowledge we have of God here, and that which we ſhall have in glory. The knowledge we have here, is but like that which the *Samaritans* had of Chriſt by the Womans report; but that which we ſhall have in Heaven ſhall be like that which they had of Chriſt when himſelf came perſonally among them, and ſpake immediately. Or we may illuſtrate it by that of the Queen of the South: The knowledge which we have of God here, and of his Glory and Excellency, is like that of the Queen of the South in her own Countrey; there ſhe heard a report of *Solomon*'s perſon, of his government, of his riches, and dignity, and ſuch a report as did not only affect and aſtoniſh her, but provoke her to undertake that great journey, that ſhe might ſee for her ſelf, and her eyes behold, and not another; and when ſhe came to the Court at *Jeruſalem*, and there beheld *Solomon* in his perſon, and attendance; when ſhe obſerved the ſervice of his table, and heard his wiſdom, there was no more ſpirit in her (1 *Kings* 10. 5.) that is, ſhe was as one aſtoniſhed, whoſe ſpirits are conquered, and over-matched, or as one in a ſwoon, whoſe ſpirits are ſunk and diſſipated. Where the natural Spirit doth not act, it is ſaid not to be. When we come to the Court of Heaven, as the Queen of the South to *Solomon*'s Court, and there behold how much God is beyond and above all that we have hitherto heard of him here at home in our own Countrey, we ſhall be rapt up into admiration, and there ſhall be indeed no more of this low and narrow ſpirit in us for ever.

Further, The word is taken, not only for another perſon, or for one differing perſonally, but for one differing in condition, and in quality, or bearing any diſſimilitude in manners; and ſo it was applyed to him who was an alien from the faith, a ſtranger to the Covenant, and Commonwealth of *Iſrael*. As if he had ſaid, I ſhall behold him, and not another; that is, not *an alien from the Common-wealth of* Iſrael; *not a ſtranger from the Covenant*; not a man of another frame of ſpirit then I now am of, ſuch ſhall not behold him. Which ſuggeſts this Note,

זר alienus à fide diſſimilitudinem quandã morum & vitæ indicare poteſt, ſignificat etiam id quod amico & familiari opponitur, & quod propter inſuetudinẽ eſt horrori & nauſeæ.

> *All that behold in Glory, ſhall be of one condition, of one faith and frame of ſpirit.*

No ſtranger ſhall behold him, all ſhall be brethren; they all ſhall be as one man, or as if there were not *another* among them all. Heaven hath no mixture. All things and perſons ſhall be as in one ſtate, ſo of one piece. No tares in that field, nor goats in that flock. Saints enjoy unmixt communion here ſometimes, and live together as if there were not *another* among them: This Spirit of holineſs and of unity was eminently poured out upon the firſt Goſpel-Church, (*Acts* 2. 1.) *They were all together with one accord in one place*, as if they had all but one ſoul; and they *continued as in the Apoſtles doctrine, ſo in fellowſhip*, v. 42. Thus it is in the truth and height of ſpiritual commution below; Saints have not a ſtranger among them. And it is promiſed as the great priviledge of *Sion*, *The* Canaanite *ſhall be no more in the Land*; that is, there ſhall be no Alien among them, (*Nahum* 1. 15.) *Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publiſheth peace: O* Judah *keep thy ſolemn feaſts, perform thy vows, for the wicked ſhall no more paſs through thee, he is utterly cut off.* The wicked, or *Belial* (in the Original) he that will not bear the yoak of God, ſhall no more paſs *through thee*, much leſs ſtay and lodge in thee; no man ſhall be yoaked with you, but he that bears the yoak of Chriſt: O rejoyce, and keep thy feaſts. That will be the day of *Sions* glorious liberty, when all (within her liberties) bear the yoak of Chriſt, and none ſhall be unequally yoaked. This is the glory of Saints below; and this ſhall be perfect in the ſtate above. There ſhall be no ſtranger, no *Canaanite* in Heaven, none that are uncircumciſed, or unclean: This is the harmony of Heaven, none but Saints ſhall be admitted there; and all the Saints ſhall be of one mind, and mind the ſame things there. *Mine eye* (ſaith holy *Job*) *ſhall behold him, and not another*.

Thirdly, Mr. *Calvin* carries the ſence of theſe words to an Identity of the object to be ſeen, not to an Identity or conſimilitude of the ſubject ſeeing. *I ſhall behold him, and not another*; that is, I ſhall behold him, and *none other*; I ſhall behold God alone: As he is the adequate, ſo he ſhall be the ſole object of mine eye. He ſhall fill me with himſelf, I ſhall ſee God, and not look after, or take notice of any thing beſides him: Mine eye ſhall not wander upon other objects. From that reading we are taught,

> *That, as in Heaven we ſhall ſee God; ſo we ſhall eye nothing but God.*

We ſhall then indeed love God with all our heart, with all our ſoul, with all our might, yea, then we ſhall ſee him with all our eye, or contemplate him with all our underſtanding. Our whole man ſhall be fixed for ever on God, and God alone. Now the Saints have their eye upon God, they behold God by believing, but there are a thouſand objects that draw us away from God, and mingle with our ſight of him. We behold God, and other things too: We behold God; but we behold men, and many times, *we have mens perſons in admiration*. And whereas we ſhould have God only in admiration, we have the wiſdom and knowledge, the holineſs and graces of ſome men, the power and greatneſs of other men in admiration. But then nothing beſides the wiſdom and knowledge, the holineſs and grace, the power and greatneſs of God ſhall be admired and exalted. *I ſhall behold him, and not another. Then God ſhall be all in all* (1 *Cor.* 15. 28.) All ſhall behold the Face of God, and that ſhall be an eternal ſatisfying feaſt. Glorified Saints ſhall not go for one morſel to any creature, they ſhall have all in the viſion of God. It is the duty of faith to do ſo here; faith is taught to live upon God alone, to behold God, and none other, Chriſt, and none other; to behold Chriſt for juſtification, and none other, that *we may be found in him, not having any righteouſneſs of our own.* This is the leſſon that faith is taught here, to look to Chriſt, and to none other; and ſo to God, and to none other (*Pſal.* 73. 25.) *David* (or *Aſaph*) profeſſeth that ſuch was his faith; he ſpeaks as high of his faith here, as he could of his viſion in Heaven; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And whom have I in earth that I deſire beſides thee?* *David*'s faith beheld God, and none other, in Heaven; and comparatively to God, he valued none upon this earth. I have none in Heaven, neither Saint nor Angel; I have neither *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, nor *Jacob*, to rejoyce in; and upon earth I have none, neither Wife nor Child, neither friend nor ſervant, that I look to, or rejoyce in, in any the leaſt degree with God; *Whom have I upon earth that I deſire beſides thee?* *David* was a man deſervedly deſired by many, and he had doubtleſs duly bounded deſires to many on earth, yet his deſire of God had ſuch a holy exceſſiveneſs in it, that he might ſay, *I deſire none but him.* This is the buſineſs of faith to draw the ſoul purely to God. Saints are invited (*Pſal.* 48. 12, 13, 14.) to walk about *Sion*, as if we were to make it our happineſs to behold her ſtrength and beauty; *Walk about* Zion, *go round about her, tell her Towers, mark her Bulwarks, conſider her Pallaces, that you may tell it to the Generations following.* We are to buſie our ſelves, to imploy both ſenſe and underſtanding upon *Zion*, upon her Towers and Bulwarks, upon her Pallaces and Walls; not as if the Saints ſhould be taken up meerly in the admiration of the beauty and glory of *Zions* Ordinances and priviledges. The laſt verſe tells us, we muſt not ſtay in *Zions* Bulwarks and Pallaces, while it concludes thus; *For this God is our God for ever and ever, he ſhall be our guide even unto death.* He ſaith not, It is this *Zion*, theſe ſtrong Walls and Bulwarks, theſe goodly Pallaces, which I call you to look on as your joy and happineſs: No, this God, the God of *Zion*, you are chiefly to look on, and he is your chiefeſt happineſs: unleſs you ſee God in *Zions* Bulwarks, and Walls, and Pallaces, it is not worth your ſight. *This God is our God.* He quite ſlips the mention of Walls, Bulwarks, and Pallaces, and reſts in the mention of God. Thus we ſhould live upon God, not only in the great myſtery of Redemption and Juſtification: In reference to which Chriſt by the Prophet beſpeaks the whole attention of our ſouls (*Iſa.* 45. 22.) *Look to me, and be ye ſaved*; that is, to me alone; but alſo in all our enjoyments. This, I ſay, will be perfect in viſion above, we ſhall have, we ſhall enquire after nothing there but God, to be filled with, to all eternity.

As God hath none upon the earth that he deſires to look on, but only his Saints; he cares not for all the reſt of the World, he ſcarce can give them a look: *To this man will I look* (ſaith the Lord) *even to him that is poor and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word* (Iſa. 66. 2.) As the Prophet ſaid when there were two great Kings before him, whereof one was very wicked; *Were it not that I regard the preſence of* Jehoſhaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look towards thee, nor ſee thee* (2 Kings 3. 14.) ſo the Lord beholds all the children of men from Heaven, yet he is ſaid to look only to the Saints; He beholds the great, the rich, but he looks only to the poor in ſpirit, and to them he looks, how poor ſoever they are in the fleſh. *To him will I look that is poor*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Mine eye paſſeth over others lightly, but where-ever I find a man of a contrite heart, I fix mine eye upon him, and rejoyce in ſuch a ſight. There is not one humble ſoul, but the eye of God is on him, and will continue upon him for ever. Now as God is taken up with viewing and beholding Saints; ſo the Saints are and ſhall for ever be taken up in beholding God. God ſees through all the perfections that are in us in a moment; God needs not look long on us, as if he were unſatisfied what we are; there is no excellency in us, but is open to him: But we can never draw out the perfections of God, how long ſoever we ſtay beholding him; ſome new glory will break forth to us, or rather the whole Glory of God (ſo far as the moſt perfect creature is able to take it in) will be everlaſtingly new to us.

All theſe conceptions about and interpretations of the Text, are pious and profitable; but that which I rather take to be the proper meaning of theſe words (*Mine eye ſhall behold, and not another*) is this, *Job* (as was touched in giving the Analyſis of theſe two Verſes) ſpeaks here of the Identity of his fleſh in the reſurrection: *I ſhall ſee him, I ſhall ſee him for my ſelf, mine eyes ſhall behold him, and not another.* That is, *I, the man* who now ſtand here before you, this ſame *Job* who now ſpeaketh; I the very ſame numerical perſon ſhall ſee God in this very fleſh, and with theſe eyes; they ſhall be indeed new dreſſed and dyed, trimmed, and made fit to come into the preſence of the great and glorious God; yet it ſhall be even this fleſh, and theſe eyes, in which I ſhall come into the preſence of God, and behold my Redeemer. I ſhall be altered from what I was, but I ſhall not be another then I was; I ſhall be changed into a better condition, but I ſhall not be changed into another perſon. My qualities ſhall have a perfective alteration, but I ſhall retain the ſame matter, and be the ſame man. A man raiſed glorious and immortal, is what he was, except his mortality; and hath no more then he had, except his glory. The Philoſopher acknowledgeth there may be a ſpecifical, but not a numerical reſtauration of

Idem qui ſum; & non alienus. Jun.

Hiſce oculis ego ipſe, hac ipſa carne; &c.

Reſuſcitatus & glorioſus non erit alius à ſeipſo mortali & nondum glorioſo. Bold.

Egomet non in aliud quidpiam commutatus. Bez.

that which is corrupted. But *Job*'s faith was clearer then *Ariſtotle*'s reaſon; He believed a perſonal reſurrection, *Mine eye ſhall behold, and not another*; I ſhall not be changed into another perſon, whatever changes I undergo, I ſhall be *Job* ſtill, the ſame *Job*.

Quorūcunq; ſubſtantia eſt corruptibilis, reiteratur eadem ſpecie non eadem numero. Ariſt. lib. 2. de Gener.

Hence Obſerve, *Every man at the reſurrection ſhall receive the ſame body that now he hath, and be the ſame man that now he is.*

Reſurget cutis mea, quæ perpetitur hæc. Sept.

The Septuagint are full in this; and therefore they tranſlate by way of explication, *My skin that hath ſuffered theſe things ſhall riſe again.* We ſhall be in the reſurrection what we are now, except our infirmities and imperfections, our lameneſs and blindneſs, our ſores and ſickneſſes; all theſe ſhall be done away, but we ſhall remain; we ſhall looſe nothing but that which is not worth the keeping; we ſhall looſe nothing but that which to looſe will be a gain to us. Every man in the reſurrection ſhall be, though not in every conſideration, *The WHAT he was*, yet he ſhall be *The WHO he was*, both name and perſon. Chriſt will not looſe thoſe particular parts and members of the body in the duſt of the grave, which himſelf hath redeemed from the fire of Hell. There are two Pronouns, the one *poſſeſſive*, the other *demonſtrative*, in theſe words, which ſpeak much to this point; *Mine eyes*, and *This*, *Job* did as it were lay his hand upon his breaſt, and ſay, *This fleſh, this body*; as Chriſt (*John* 2. 19.) *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will raiſe it again.* This very Temple, though deſtroyed, ſhall be built up again. The Apoſtle uſeth ſuch Identical expreſſions (1 *Cor.* 15. 53.) *This corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and this mortal muſt put on immortality. This corruptible*, and *this mortal*. He doth not only ſay corruptible ſhall put on incorruption, and mortal ſhall put on immortality, but *this*, and *this*, to ſhew the ſameneſs of it. It was a cuſtom in the primitive times (as ſome have obſerved) when they repeated that Article of the Faith, *I believe the reſurrection of the fleſh*, to point to their own body, and ſay, *even of this fleſh*; I believe the reſurrection of this fleſh, of this body.

Etiam hujus carnis.

One of the Ancients hath a large diſcourſe upon this ſubject, wherein he diſcovers ſome, who though they granted the ſoul immortal, yet denyed the reſurrection of the ſame body: Such were the *Marcionites*, *Baſilidians*, and *Valentinians*. Theſe, ſaith he, went halves with the *Sadduces* in their opinion. The *Sadduces* denyed Spirits. Hence (*Acts* 23. 6.) *Paul* perceiving that the Aſſembly was mixed of *Sadduces* and *Phariſees* (and wiſely conſidering, that if he did but mind them of their differences between themſelves, they would not ſo ſtrongly agree and combine againſt him) he made his advantage of it by profeſſing openly that he was a *Phariſee*. And the ſacred Hiſtorian tells us what the peculiar tenets of the *Sadduces* were (*ver.* 8.) *The Sadduces ſay there is no reſurrection, neither Angel nor Spirit* (they denyed both) *but the Phariſees confeſs both.* They held, that there were immortal ſpirits or ſouls united to the bodies of men, that thoſe bodies ſhould ariſe and be re-united to the ſoul. They alſo confeſſed that there were Angels, who are Spirits ſubſiſting properly without bodies. Now, as the *Sadduces* denyed the reſurrection of the body, ſo others denyed the reſurrection of the ſame body: Theſe he calleth ſharers or halvers in the *Sadduces* opinion: Though not ſo groſly as they, yet too too groſly departing from the faith. And indeed they who deny the reſurrection of the ſame body, do (by implication) altogether deny the reſurrection of the body. For if the ſame numerical body ſhould not riſe, it could not be called a reſurrection: Reſurrection is the riſing of that which fell, and the taking up of that which was before laid. So that it would be the creation of a new body, not the reſurrection of the old, if it were not the ſame body. And it conduceth much to the comfort of Saints, and may be the terror of wicked men, to keep cloſe to the faith of this Article. The Apoſtle ſeems to touch it (2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) *We ſhall all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things he hath done in his body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* That hand which hath been doing for Chriſt, that very tongue which hath been ſpeaking for Chriſt, that whole body, which hath been moved and acted for Jeſus Chriſt, as an inſtrument of his glory, that ſhall receive the reward: As alſo that hand, that eye, that tongue, that foot which hath moved, and ſtirred againſt Chriſt, that alſo ſhall be puniſhed, and receive according to the evil committed in the body. Judgment would not be exact, unleſs as there hath been a co-partnerſhip between ſoul and body in their works, ſo alſo they ſhould be co-partners both in reward and puniſhment.

Tertullianus *eos qui reditum animæ non ejuſdem corporis in reſurrectione admittebāt* (Marcionitas, Barſilidianos, & Valentinianos) *eleganter vocat partiarios ſententiæ* Sadducæorum, *ut qui dimidiā tantum agnoſcerent reſurrectionē.* Tertul. de reſur. car. l. 2.

Si in alio corpore reſurrexero, jam ego non ero qui reſurgo; non enim reſurrectio dici poterit, ubi non reſurgit, quod cecidit. Greg.

Judicium integrum non erit, niſi ſicut fuit inter animū & carnem operarum ſocietas, ita etiam ſit mercedis aut ſupplicii. Tertull. *perſequitur hoc Argumentum l.* 2. *de reſur. car. c.* 14, 15, 16, 17.

If it be objected, How can the ſame numerical body riſe again, eſpecially in ſuch caſes, when thouſands of carkaſſes are mingled, and their duſt promiſcuouſly heaped together, or ſcattered abroad? When the bodies of men are devoured by wild beaſts, and digeſted into the ſubſtance of fowls and fiſhes, eſpecially when the bodies of men are eaten and concocted into the bodies of other men? How can theſe numerical bodies riſe? I anſwer, Firſt, If we will not reſt in matters of faith till we have a clear rational account of them, our faith may quickly be at a ſtand. I anſwer, Secondly, That as it is eaſie to make objections againſt faith; ſo faith hath one anſwer as eaſie as theſe objections. The Apoſtle gives it, and into that all ſuch doubts muſt be reſolved (*Phil.* 3. 20.) for having ſhewed the preſent condition or diſpoſition of the ſpirit of Saints in the former verſe, *Our converſation is in Heaven, from whence alſo we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* He preſently ſhews what the future condition of the Saints bodies ſhall be; *Who ſhall change our vile bodies, that they may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body* (Who is this, who puts this vile body into ſuch a glorious faſhion? Trouble not your ſelves for that, there is power enough to do it, It is done) *according to the working whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* This is an anſwer to the hardeſt objections, Chriſt can ſubdue all things, therefore thoſe which are hardeſt.

There is no difficulty to omnipotency.

You ask how the ſame body can be reſtored? I ask how the firſt body was created? Tell me how God created Heaven and Earth out of nothing? So that as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Heb.* 11. 3.) *Things which are ſeen, were not made of things which do appear:* How were theſe things done? If you argue by reaſon, you will be pos'd and gravell'd in theſe as well as in that other; yea, you will be at a wall, and not able to anſwer about that which is ordinary, and every day done, and ſhall continue to be done in all the Generations of men (*Solomon* puts the queſtion, *Eccleſ.* 11. 5.) *Tell me how the bones grow in the womb of her that is with child:* Can you tell how the Child is framed? Thou canſt not give an account of thy own production, nor find out the work of God in forming the body; How then canſt thou tell me? Or how can I tell thee the work of God in raiſing the body? Or how that ſcattered mingled duſt is ſevered and recollected to each proper body? I muſt ſay as *David* (*Pſal.* 139. 6.) *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it*; or as he at the fourteenth verſe of the ſame *Pſalm* concerning his making, *We are fearfully and wondrouſly made: marvellous are thy works, O God.* And muſt conclude about this point of the reſurrection as the Apoſtle begins about the creation (*Heb.* 11. 3.) *As through faith we underſtand that the worlds were framed*; ſo that the body of man ſhall be raiſed *by the Word of God.* Therefore as to the manner how ſuch things are done, we muſt have recourſe only to the Almighty power of God, to the All-powerful God, *Who is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf. Mine eye ſhall behold, and not another,*

Though my reins be conſumed within me.

I toucht upon the interpretation of this clauſe before, as it ſuits with that paſſage, *verſ.* 26. *Though after my skin, worms deſtroy this body, and though my reins be conſumed within me.* Though I be totally conſumed, skin without, and reins within, yet notwithſtanding, I believe, that I ſhall riſe and ſee God. Thus it was joyned with the firſt words of the twenty ſixth verſe, to ſhew the triumph of faith over all difficulties that lye in the way of the reſurrection. In this ſence I have done with it already; and I take that to be the meaning of our Tranſlators, *Though my reins be conſumed within me.*

Yet a little further to open theſe words, and to give you two or three things from them. The Vulgar tranſlation is extream wide from our reading, though the abetters of it labour to make it out from the Original; *This hope is laid up in my boſom.* *Job* having given a confeſſion of his faith in the Redeemer, and of the reſurrection, he (according to this tranſlation) concludes, *This hope, or the hope of theſe things is laid up in my boſom.* The word rendred *within me* in the Hebrew, ſignifies the *boſom* or *cheſt* (as we call it) of the body; and ſo, by a Metaphor, that wherein we lay up our ſecrets, our deſires, and our hopes; theſe are all laid up in our boſoms. Jeſus Chriſt is ſaid to come out of the *boſom of his Father*, where his ſecrets, his hid treaſures, are ſtored up.

Repoſita eſt hæc ſpes in ſinu meo. Vulg.

כלה *ſignificat conſummari vel deficere, ut aliis modis ſic peculiariter deſiderio alicuius rei. Unde etiam uſurpatur pro deſiderare & diligere. Hinc dicuntur renes* כליות *quaſi concupiſcentes aut conſummantes, quia in illis videntur conſummari deſideria. Hinc vulgatus vertit,* ſpes, *quæ cum deſiderio rei ſperatæ conjuncta eſt.*

We ſay, *Though my reins be conſumed within me*; they ſay, *This hope is laid up in my boſom.* But how come they by the word *hope*, and the word *laid up*? The anſwer is thus given; The ſame root which ſignifies the *reins*, ſignifies alſo to *conſume*, or to *finiſh*. And becauſe our deſires conſume us, (a man by ſtrong deſires is as it were waſted and ſpent:) Or becauſe a man endeavours by all means, to perfect and conſummate his deſires, by attaining and enjoying the thing deſired; therefore the word doth alſo ſignifie to *conſume*, or to *conſummate* as well as to *deſire*. And becauſe the reins are the ſeat of deſire, as Naturaliſts ſpeak, they are therefore in the Hebrew expreſt by deſire it ſelf. The ſame word is rendred both *reins* and *deſire*, becauſe the reins provoke deſire, or to the fulfilling of deſire (*Pſal.* 26. 2.) *Try my heart and my reins*; that is, Lord try my deſires what the things are which I would have. So (*Pſal.* 7. 9.) *The Lord tryeth the heart, and the reins*; that is, he finds out or diſcovers the moſt ſecret deſires of men; He knows what every one would have, as well as what every one doth; He knows what the motions of the reins are, as well as what the motion of our hands are. And hence becauſe what we hope for, we deſire and wait for, therefore the Text is thus read, *This hope is laid up in my boſom.* It's true, Saints treaſure up in their breaſts the hope of the reſurrection, the hope of the glory of the life to come: This they keep among their chiefeſt treaſures; this is the riches, the gold and ſilver which they lay up in their boſoms; whatſoever they loſe in the world, when they are ſtripped of all, yet they have a cheſt full of this treaſure. *This hope is laid up in my boſom.* Saints have their boſoms full of this hope, when ſtript of all. But becauſe this reading, though the ſence be pious, ſtrains too hard upon the Text, therefore I will not inſiſt upon it.

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Further, Whereas we ſay, *Though my reins be conſumed within me.* The word *Though*, is not in the Hebrew; there 'tis only *My reins are conſumed.* Now becauſe ordinarily in Scripture *reins* are taken for *deſires*, therefore this ſence is very clearly made out from it, that *Job* having ſpoken of the ſight he ſhould have of God, and the aſſurance of his own reſurrection, concludes with this expreſſion, *My reins, or my deſires are ſpent*; that is, I have nothing more to deſire, nothing more to wiſh and ſeek after then this, a bleſſed reſurrection, and the enjoyment of God for ever.

Deſideria, vota intima animæ cogitationes & affectiones conſũmata, ad finem & perfectionẽ deducta ſunt. Nihil habeo quod deſiderem.

Hence we may Note, *All the deſires of Saints are conſummate, yea (I may ſay) conſumed in the hope of a happy reſurrection, and of the viſion and enjoyment of God.*

Theſe are the conſummation, and the very utmoſt of their deſires: The ſeventy-ſecond *Pſalm* concludes thus, *The Prayers of* David *the Son of* Jeſſe *are ended:* Which ſome render, The deſires of *David* are conſumed and finiſhed; *David* had no more to deſire. Why doth he put ſuch a concluſion to that *Pſalm, The prayers, or deſires of* David *are ended?* That *Pſalm* is a Propheſie of Chriſt; *David* was ſetting faith on work upon the Kingdom of Chriſt; and when he had done this, he ſhuts up all, *I have no more to deſire*, here I make an end; here is the utmoſt of my joyes and comforts; not an end of conſumption, but an end of perfection, I can go no further; being come to Jeſus Chriſt, I have no more to ask.

Cum hic Pſalmus ſit de petendo & expectãdo Meſſia non ſolum eo Pſalmo ſuum pſalterium clauſit David, *ſed etiã videtur fuiſſe ſumma ſuæ ſpei deſideriorum & precum.*

So alſo *David* (2 *Sam.* 23.) having elegantly deſcribed the bleſſings which follow a righteous Government, ſhuts up thus (*ver.* 5.) *Though my houſe be not ſo with God*: That is, Though I have not ſuch a glorious poſterity, and ſuch an illuſtrious ſucceſſion upon my throne; or, as the former Verſe ſpeaks it, *Though my houſe be not as the light of the morning when the Sun riſeth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender graſs ſpringing out of the earth by clear ſhining after rain; though my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure, that is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire*; here is the end of my reins: What though my houſe do not flouriſh, nor ſhine in that outward brightneſs that now it doth? Are theſe my chief hopes? Do theſe carry my ſtrongeſt deſires? No, my hope is laid up in the Covenant of life and peace, the good whereof is all my deſire: Doubtleſs *David* deſired that his Children ſhould proſper, and that the Throne of *Iſrael* might continue in his line, but comparatively with the ſpiritual benefits of the Covenant of God in Chriſt, and the enjoyment of him, thoſe were no deſires, and therefore referring to them he ſaith, this is all my deſire, or I have no more to deſire, *My reins are conſumed within me.*

Again, Some render thus; *My reins are conſumed by reaſon of my deſire:* As if he had ſaid, I have ſpoken of death, I have ſpoken of glory, of the viſion of God, and now my reins are conſumed, my very deſiring part is conſumed with deſire after theſe things: I deſire theſe things, ſo that I am conſumed with the deſire of them, and my deſiring faculty is ſpent with deſiring. Not only were all his deſires terminated in this, but his deſiring power was ſwallowed up in the purſuit of this deſire; he had ſuch ſtrong affections to God, that he was even ready to fall into a ſwoon, and faint away.

Hence Note, *Saints upon the diſcovery of the glory of God, and the happineſs of the next life, are filled with longing deſires after thoſe enjoyments.*

Lord, I have waited for thy ſalvation, ſaith *Jacob* (Gen. 49. 19.) *Jacob* ſpeaks this upon his death-bed, as that which he had been looking for all his life; as if that were the account of all his actions in the world, and the ſtory of his whole life; *Lord, I have been waiting for thy ſalvation* (Pſal. 119. 81.) *My ſoul fainteth for thy ſalvation*; that is, it fainteth with deſire after thy ſalvation; and (*v.* 127.) *I have longed for thy ſalvation.* All deſires are ſummed up in longing. There is a ſtrong deſire in Saints here to ſee God, and ſuch as makes them faint, even to ſee and enjoy him in his Ordinances. (*Pſal.* 27. 4.) *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, and that I will ſeek after* (that is, never give over ſeeking after till I reach and attain it) *to behold the beauty of the Lord, and enquire in his Temple.* Again (*Pſal.* 42. 1, 2.) *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo my heart panteth after God: When ſhall I come and appear before God?* That is, When ſhall I behold and enjoy him in theſe lower Heavens, his ſpiritual Diſpenſations and Ordinances. Now if there be ſo great and ſo longing a deſire to ſee the Lord through theſe *mediums*, or in theſe glaſſes, how much more to ſee him immediately and face to face? And if that be *The one thing*, the only thing which *David* deſired, if all his deſires were ſummed up in that here, how much more in Heaven, how will that deſire ſwallow all our deſires in glory? And indeed we could not abide in Glory with any other deſire but that. The Saints are deſcribed in their preſent ſtate by this Periphraſis, *Such as love the appearing of Chriſt*; as if they loved nothing elſe. What then will Chriſt be to them when he ſhall appear? They who love Chriſt, whom they have not ſeen, how ſhall they love Chriſt when they ſee him!

We may ſpeak of the precious things of the Goſpel, and of the glorious enjoyments of Chriſt to carnal hearts, and they never deſire them; they are ſo far from having their reins conſumed in the hot love of them, that their ſpleen is only ſtirred againſt them.

From the whole context, conſider upon what ſubject *Job* falls when himſelf was fallen into that ſad condition; he was fallen into the depth and gulf of worldly miſery, and outward affliction, the hand of God was heavy upon him; What was his reſolve, whither doth he betake himſelf? He meditates the reſurrection; he meditates the eſtate of Saints after this life, and this bears up his ſpirit in the midſt of all the afflictions with which he was burdened in this life.

Hence Obſerve, *Faith in the reſurrection to life encourageth us in or againſt all the troubles and afflictions of this life.*

As Saints find preſent ſupport and ſtrength in affliction, by what Chriſt every day adminiſters and gives forth unto them; ſo by what they hope and are aſſured he will give and be unto them in that great day. The hope of future good is a preſent comfort. (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) *For this cauſe we faint not*; What cauſe was that? Becauſe we have this hope, this faith (*ver.* 14.) *That he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus, and ſhall preſent us with you.* Expectations from Chriſt are as the cordials which keep us from fainting under our burthens, and revive us in the ſorrows of death it ſelf. The faith of Chriſt in the reſurrection of his own body to life, is ſpoken of prophetically, as that which bare up his ſpirit in the hour of death (*Pſal.* 16. 9, 10.) *Thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell, nor ſuffer thy holy One to ſee corruption.* Now as that was Chriſts ſupport in his ſorrows, and ſufferings, that he ſhould not be left in the grave, that he ſhould not ſee corruption: So it is the ſupport of Saints, that though they ſee, yet they ſhall not for ever lye under the power of corruption. (*Pſal.* 17. 15. *Pſal.* 49. 15.) *Thou wilt redeem me from the power of the grave.* The Apoſtle makes his Doctrine the Canon of Conſolation (1 *Theſ.* 4. 18.) *Comfort one another with theſe words*: What words were theſe? All thoſe words, beginning at the thirteenth Verſe to the end of the Chapter: *I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are aſleep* (he means dead) *that ye ſorrow not even as others that have no hope: for if we believe that Jeſus dyed and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him,* &c. The Author to the *Hebrews* is abundant in teſtifying how the *Jewiſh* Martyrs comforted themſelves with this thing in the midſt of thoſe various deaths with which they were encompaſſed. (*Heb.* 11. 35.) *They did not accept of deliverance, that they might receive a better reſurrection.* Why it is called a better reſurrection was ſhewed in opening the fourteenth Verſe of the fourteenth Chapter of this Book. The hope of the reſurrection was a ground of ſuch ſtrong conſolation to the Saints of former times, that it was called expreſly, *The Conſolation.* We may collect this from the diſcourſe which Chriſt was pleaſed to maintain with *Martha* concerning the death of her Brother *Lazarus,* whom Jeſus loved. For whereas Chriſt tells her (*John* 11. 23.) *Thy Brother ſhall riſe again. Martha* ſaith, *I know he ſhall riſe in the reſurrection at the laſt day*: What the Greek calleth *The Reſurrection,* the Syriack Paraphraſe calls *The Conſolation*, reading it thus, *I know that he ſhall riſe again in the conſolation.* What ſtrong conſolation did the Believers of thoſe Ages draw from their aſſurance of a reſurrection, ſeeing reſurrection and conſolation were terms equivalent? When this was but named, the other was underſtood; we have now the firſt-fruits of conſolation, but our harveſt will not be, till our dead bodies, which the Apoſtle compares to ſeed ſown, ſpring out of the earth again.

I might further ſhew, that the reſurrection is not only the conſolation of Saints, but the conſolation of the whole creation: The Apoſtle ſpeaks of it under that notion (*Rom.* 8. 19, 22.) *For the earneſt expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifeſtation of the Sons of God.* And again, *The whole creation* (not only living, but ſenſleſs creatures, theſe muſt be taken in to make up the whole creation) *groaneth, and travelleth in pain until now.* But what would the creature have? *It waiteth for the manifeſtation of the ſons of God, and to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. We are now the Sons of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John,* 1 Epiſt. 3. 2.) *and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be. But we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him*: At the appearance of Chriſt, the Son of God by nature, his Adopted ſons ſhall appear what they are, there will be a glorious manifeſtation of them when Chriſt ſhall appear in glory. This glory (which will be compleat at the reſurrection) the whole creation now groaning waiteth for, being ſubjected under hope to participate (each creature according to its capacity) in the glory of it. Now if all creatures are ſuſtained by this hope, much more man, who is chiefly concerned in it. *Job* is a great example of it, who upon his ſorrowful and ſick bed raiſed his ſoul into conſolation, by thoughts of the reſurrection. His friends preſſed him with hopes and promiſes of a temporal reſurrection, if he did repent: but he diſclaimed the hope of ſuch a reſurrection, or was not much affected with it, he little minded a reſurrection to temporal glory; but he had an aſſurance of that which ſerved his turn a thouſand times better, making him even then, if not joyful, yet patient under all his tribulations. *I ſhall ſee God for my ſelf, and not another, though my reins be conſumed within me.*

Job having thus declared his faith, makes an application of all particularly to his Friends in the two laſt verſes; *But ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him?* &c.

VERS. 28, 29.

But ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of the matter is found in me?

Be ye afraid of the ſword: for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword, that ye may know there is a judgment.

THus *Job* concludes, and his concluſion conſiſts of two parts.

Whereof the firſt is a direction.

The ſecond a commination.

He gives direction (*ver.* 28.) where he tells his Friends their duty, or what reſolutions became them concerning him; *Ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him?* He ſubjoyns a reaſon, or the ground of that direction, *Seeing the root of the matter is found in me?*

The commination or threat is laid down (*ver.* 29.) *Be ye afraid of the ſword.* While he bids them be afraid of the ſword, he fore-warns them that the ſword is coming, and that the judgment of God was ready to overtake, and fall upon them, if they ſtill perſiſted in their hard thoughts, and uncharitable cenſures of him.

Here alſo he ſubjoyns a reaſon or ground of this commination; *For wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword.* I warn you of the ſword, and I ſee the reaſon why; wrath ſeems to awaken, and who knows what work it may make among you ere long: This I know from many Authorities and experiences, That, *Wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword, that ye may know that there is a Judgment.*

Firſt, Conſider the direction.

Verſe 28. **But ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him?**

Ye ſhould ſay.] The Hebrew is rendred three wayes.

Firſt thus, *For, you will ſay*, as implying a future ground, or occaſion, yea, an urgent neceſſity, which they ſhould ſee and be convinced of at laſt, to ſay, *Why perſecute we him?*

Secondly thus, *Wherefore do ye ſay?* Intimating their preſent action, or aſſertion.

Thirdly, We render it, *Ye ſhould ſay*; at once ſhewing their duty, and convincing their neglect of it. As if he had ſaid, *O my friends, ye ought to ſay, or it is beſt for you to ſay thus; look to your ſelves, this is your duty to ſay, why perſecute we him?* So the Prophet (*Mal.* 1. 6.) *A ſon honoureth his father*; the meaning is, a ſon ought to honour his father: There are many ſons who diſhonour their fathers; but it becomes every ſon to honour and obey, or by obeying to honour his father. Thus here, *For you ſay*; that is, you ſhould ſay, or you ought to ſay,

בו תאמרו *Potentiale eſt dicere debueratis, vel veſtrum erat dicere.* Merc.

Why [**perſecute**] **we him?**] We had this word (*ver.* 22.) *Why do ye perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?* Here he puts it to them again, *Ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him?*

The word which we tranſlate to perſecute, is a Metaphor taken from wild beaſts, or ravenous birds, whoſe hunger or cruelty makes them ſwift and fierce to overtake, and ſo to ſatiate themſelves with their prey. The Greek Tranſlators of the old Teſtament uſually render it by that word which is uſed in the Greek of the new Teſtament, to expreſs the vexation of the Saints or Goſpel-profeſſors by the World, for the Faith of Chriſt, and the teſtimony of a good Conſcience. And becauſe this word bears in it the ſence of a moſt earneſt and vehement purſuit, therefore when the Spirit of God would put Saints upon the ſtrongeſt, and moſt vehement purſuit of any grace, or duty, he uſeth this word, and exhorts them even to perſecute it (1 *Cor.* 14. 1.) *Follow after charity*; *Perſecute charity*; that is, be

רדף *Inſecutus, proſecutus, perſecutus*; διώκω.

be as eager after charity as a cruel man is eager to perſecute him that is innocent and godly (*Heb.* 12. 14.) *Follow peace with all men, and holineſs:* It is this word: As it is the ſtrongeſt evidence of the ſinfulneſs of any man to perſecute thoſe perſons who have received grace; ſo it is an evidence of pureſt holineſs to perſecute or earneſtly to purſue the higheſt attainments of grace. There is nothing of freer gift then Grace, and the Kingdom of Heaven; yet the Kingdom of God delights to ſuffer violence, and then 'tis beſt when the violent take it by force. The Grace of God to man is free; yet man ſhould be fierce in following the Grace of God. The love of good hath made as hot perſecutions as ever wrath hath made againſt it. But to the Text.

Why perſecute we him?] This word may be conſidered two wayes. There is a perſecution in a ſtrict ſence; and a perſecution in a large ſence. I conceive that we are not here to take perſecution in a ſtrict ſence, as if *Job* did imagine his Friends were (as we may ſay) bloody *Bonner*'s, or *Nero*'s, or *Diocleſian*'s, that they did oppoſe and vex him directly (or *eo nomine*) for truth and righteouſneſs ſake, or that in oppoſing him, they oppoſed or ſuppreſſed their own light: But here perſecution is taken in a large ſence, for unfriendly dealing, or for ſuch unkind carriages as are very wide from and unſuitable to thoſe who profeſs love. There is a threefold perſecution, Firſt, A mental perſecution, when the ſpirit of a man riſeth up, and oppoſeth another. Secondly, There is a verbal perſecution, when men give hard words, and uncharitable cenſures. Thirdly, There is a real perſecution (there is real perſecution in both the former, as real is oppoſed to imaginary) or a perſecution by the hand; ſuch as is the dragging of innocent perſons before the Tribunal of the Magiſtrates: As Chriſt foretells his Diſciples, *Ye ſhall be brought before Governours and Kings for my Names ſake* (*Matth.* 10. 18.) Here we are to take perſecution in the ſecond ſignification. *Job*'s Friends did not hate him, they thought indeed that he had done very wickedly, and that he was very wicked, they concluded that he was leavened with hypocriſie; but I cannot conceive that they were leavened with malice againſt him, nor was theirs perſecution in the third ſence; they did not hale him before the Magiſtrate, nor bring him to judgment and tryal. But it was perſecution of the middle rank, hard language, and unfriendly cenſures. *Job* was under the perſecution of the tongue, he complained of that (*Chap.* 12. 4.) *I am as one mocked of his neighbour.* And again (*Chap.* 17. 2.) *Are there not mockers with me?* Mocking is called perſecution (*Gal.* 4. 29.) *He that was born after the fleſh, perſecuted him that was born after the ſpirit. Iſhmael* perſecuted *Iſaac* with ſcornful language, he mocked him (*Gen.* 21. 9.) Such was *Job*'s perſecution, and he bids his Friends give him any reaſon if they could, why they perſecuted him thus. *But ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him?* There are three or four readings of the words as joyned together.

First, Some thus, *Becauſe you will ſay, who perſecutes him?* As if he had ſaid, *You put it off from your ſelves, you think you do not perſecute me at all, ye ſay it is the hand of God on me, not yours; we do not touch you, God hath, and Satan hath by his permiſſion. You will ſay, who perſecutes him?* Is it we that have done it? Is not the hand of God on you? Doth not that lead us to ſpeak thus concerning you, and to judge thus of you? Why do you ſay that we perſecute you? It is God who knows very well what you deſerve, and now renders to you according to your deſervings? It is he (not we) that perſecuteth you.

Quia dicetis, quis perſecutus eſt eum? i. e. quis perſecutus eſt eum niſi Deus qui omnia merita novit? Cajet.

Secondly, Thus, *For I truſt you will ſay, why perſecute we him?* As if he had ſaid, I have therefore made this profeſſion; becauſe, I hope, that when you have once heard it, you will deal more gently, favourably, and friendly with me, then hitherto you have done; you will ſay, why perſecute we this man? You will begin to queſtion your ſelves for what you have done, and take up better counſels and reſolves for the future. This is a proper ſence of the words, and comes near that intended in our tranſlation.

Nam confido *dicetis, quid perſequimur illum?* Coc.

Thirdly, The vulgar Latine renders, *Wherefore do ye now ſay, let us perſecute him?* This tranſlation makes it a reproof of their purpoſe to oppoſe him, or a deſcription of his Friends, ſtill conſpiring to perſecute him. As if *Job* had heard them combining together, and encouraging one another againſt him; as ſome are expreſſed, againſt whom *David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 64.) *Hide me from the ſecret counſel of the wicked* (ver. 2.) *Who whet their tongue lik*[illegible] *ſword,* &c. (ver. 3.) *They encourage themſelves in an evil matter; they commune of laying ſnares privily* (Ver. 5.) *They ſearch out iniquities, they accompliſh a diligent ſearch: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep* (v. 6.) *Solomon* warns his ſon not to hearken when ſuch ſollicite (*Prov.* 1. 10.) *If ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not; if they ſay, Come, let us lay wait for blood. Job* according to this tranſlation is here conceived reproving and chiding his Friends for ſuch a combination, *Wherefore do ye ſay, let us perſecute him?*

Quare ergo nunc dicitis, perſequamur eũ. Vulg.

Fourthly, Our Tranſlation gives the words the ſence of an Exhortation, either to conſider why they had already oppoſed him, or to repent of that oppoſition, *Ye ſhould ſay*; that is, it is your duty, I exhort or adviſe you to ſay, *Why do we perſecute him?* It is but time that you ſhould now recollect your ſelves, and be in a better mind, that your hearts ſhould ſmite you for what you have done, and that you ſhould put this queſtion home to your own ſouls, Why have we thus far troubled him? Or why ſhould we trouble him any further?

Æquũ jam eſſet ut in cordibus veſtris compungeremini, dicentes, quare perſequimur virum probũ, & rectè de deo, deque divinis ſentientem? Rab. Lev.

Some joyn this verſe with the former, thus, *My grief and ſorrow are ſo great, my pain is ſo painful, that my very reins are conſumed within me; ſo that unleſs you had put off all humanity, unleſs your compaſſions were totally conſumed in you, you would have ſaid before this time, Why do we perſecute a dry leaf? Why do we perſecute a carkaſs, a dead man, a man whoſe reins are conſumed within him.* From the third of thoſe readings, which reproveth their perſevering or reſolvedneſs to perſevere in the way they were in.

Obſerve, *To adviſe and reſolve upon any ſinful way, is a high aggravation of ſin.*

It is bad enough to ſin for want of advice; but to ſin adviſedly is far worſe. To fail or ſin is common to men, yea, even to the beſt of men; but to reſolve to ſin, or to be reſolute in ſinning, is proper to the Devil, and the character of the worſt of men. I have elſewhere in this Book had occaſion to raiſe Obſervations of near aſſinity with this, and therefore I only touch it here.

From our reading, *But you ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him? Job* ſeems to tax his Friends with raſhneſs and inconſiderateneſs; *You ſhould ſay*; but you have not, you have not yet examined your own hearts, nor my condition as you ought.

Hence Obſerve, *That as ſome ſpeak they know not what, ſo others do they know not why; their actions out-run their reaſon, and they are more buſie then wiſe.*

Chriſt was perſecuted to the higheſt, he was perſecuted to death: But had his enemies ſaid, *Why do we perſecute him?* had they looked to their ground? Chriſt (*Luke* 23. 34.) makes their inadvertency the ground of his prayer for them; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* They have not ſaid, *Why perſecute we him? They were reſolved, but not adviſed; Crucifie him, crucifie him*; down with him, down with him: It muſt be ſo; but no true cauſe was ſhewed why it ſhould be ſo. Many may ſay of their ſinful wayes according to the letter of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 7. 15.) *What we do we know not. Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf as over-powered by corruption, *What I do I know not*; we tranſlate, *That which I do I allow not. Paul* ſpeaketh not of his ſins of ignorance, or that he had done what was indeed ſinful, not knowing, or not being convinced that it was a ſin; and therefore we do not tranſlate, *I know not*, as if *Paul* had been in the dark about his own doings; but, *That I do I allow not*; though I cannot but know that I have done ſinfully, yet I do not favour or take part with any ſin that I have done. When a godly man ſins, he alwayes doth the evil which he allows not: but when ignorant men ſin, they do the evil which they know not; and wicked men do the evil which they have no mind to know, they cannot endure to conſider (as to ſinfulneſs) either what they are doing, or what they have done. The fool offers a ſacrifice, and *Solomon* would not have true worſhippers like him; *Keep thy foot when thou goeſt into the Houſe of God, and be more ready to hear then to offer the ſacrifice* *of fools, for they conſider not that they do evil* (Eccleſ. 5.1.). Some by the ſupplement of an adverſative particle, render the Text thus, *They know not but to do evil.* They do evil while they do good, even while they worſhip God, and they cannot do otherwiſe. Our rendring is clearer, when they do evil they conſider it not, they care not to be acquainted with the evil which they have done, or they act at a venture, whether good or whether evil, fall back or fall edge, never troubles them. Ignorant perſons are ſuch fools, that they know not when they do evil; wicked men are ſuch fools, that they never conſider or regard it when they have done evil.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Before we do any thing we ſhould take account of our ſelves why we do it.*

There are two things we ſhould take account of our ſelves about before we ſet upon any action. Firſt, For what end we do it? Secondly, By what rule we do it? Theſe two Queſtions we ſhould put before all our actings: What is my deſign? What is my warrant? For according to the deſign, the heart and hand too are ordered in every undertaking. Singleneſs of eye, makes all our wayes ſingle. Yet we muſt look as well to our warrant, as to our deſign; to our rule, as well as well as to our end. The Apoſtle bids us *walk circumſpectly* (Epheſ. 5. 15.) No man can walk circumſpectly, unleſs he take notice of his ground, and ſee where he treads. To walk circumſpectly, is to walk looking round about us. And unleſs we do ſo, we ſhall ſoon looſe our way, and miſs our end. We have a proverbial ſpeech, *Look before you leap*; that is, conſider before you act; *A fools bolt is ſoon ſhot*; he ſhoots before he ſees his mark, and before he takes his aim; he neither obſerves the art of ſhooting, nor the mark at which he ſhoots. And becauſe his bolt is ſoon ſhot, therefore his mark is never hit. To queſtion our ſelves about what we do, is a great means to preſerve our ſelves from doing amiſs: And they moſt uſually do well, who fear they may do ill. The Prophet gives this as the reaſon why many went on ſo groſly and fearleſly in idolatrous wayes (*Iſa.* 44. 19,20.) *None conſidereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor underſtanding to ſay, I have burnt part of it in the fire,* &c. therefore it is, that *he feedeth of aſhes; a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lye in my right hand?* He is not able to put this thing to himſelf, or to queſtion his heart whether he be right or wrong; he had never fed upon aſhes had he but conſidered, that he had burnt part of his Idol in the fire. That man may do any thing ſooner then that which is right and lawful, who never enquireth whether that be right or wrong, lawful or unlawful, which he doth: He cannot deliver his ſoul from the groſſeſt Idolatry, from worſhipping wood and ſtone, the works of his own hands, while he cannot queſtion, *Is there not a lye in my right hand*? Am I not out of the way? Am I not deceived? If this man would but have asked himſelf the queſtion, it is probable he might have ſeen or diſcovered the lye in his right hand: But he had not a heart to ſay this, and ſo his heart was deceived. An unconſidering perſon may ſoon be deceived: And the reaſon why he is not alwayes deceived (if he be not) is only this, becauſe he is not alwayes tempted by deceivers. And hence it is that they, who love errors in opinion, or ſinful wayes in practice, do not love to make doubts, or to raiſe queſtions concerning either their practices or opinions. As the way to faſten our ſelves upon duty, is to take up a reſolution to do it, yea, to perſevere in doing it; and where there is no reſolving about what we do, there is nothing but unſetledneſs in doing it; as the Prophet toucheth (*Jer.* 5. 24.). *This people hath a revolting back-ſliding heart:* They are altogether unfixed, you know not where to have them, or what they will be at. What is the reaſon? *Neither ſay they in their hearts, let us now fear the Lord our God, that gives us rain, the former, and the latter rain in ſeaſon.* This was the reaſon why they revolted; they did not ſo much as ſay in their hearts, or pitch upon this thing, *Let us fear the Lord.* Now as men are unſetled in good, becauſe they do not reſolve to do this or that which is good; ſo they fall into evil, becauſe they do not queſtion, *Why do I do this? Or is this which I do good or evil*? They do not ſo much as ſay, *Is there not a lye in my right hand*? They ask no queſtion for Conſcience ſake (as in ſome caſes the Apoſtle adviſeth we ſhould not) and therefore they act ſo much againſt Conſcience.

Thirdly, The words may have reference as well to what had been done, as to what they intended ſtill to do, *Ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him?* That is, Why have we perſecuted him? He may ſpeak of an acted or antecedent, as well as of a ſubſequent or intended perſecution.

Hence Note, *To queſtion our ſelves for what we have done, is an excellent means to bring us to repentance, and to break our hearts for the evil we have done.*

What have I done? Is the queſtion of repentance. The Prophet *Jeremy* (*Chap.* 8. 6.) brings in the Lord taxing that people for their impenitency, and layes all upon this, *I hearkened, and heard, but they ſpake not aright, no man repented of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done? Every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel:* They ſinned reſolutely, becauſe they never queſtioned themſelves about their ſin. We can never return, till we ſtop; nor recover out of an evil way, till we check in it. This Queſtion is as it were the ſtop, the check, or arreſt of the ſoul, *What have I done?* We cannot ſay to the Lord as *Paul* (*Acts* 9. 6.) *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Till we have firſt ſaid to our ſelves, *What have we done*? This ſhews us the very genius of repentance, or of a repenting perſon, he is a man queſtioning what, or calling himſelf to a reckoning for *what he hath done.* Repentance is the review of our lives, and makes the ſoul anſwer to every particular, *What haſt thou done?*

Further, If we look to this queſtioning in reference to the particular act of perſecution; you ſhould ſay, *Why perſecute we him?*

Hence Note, Fourthly, *We ſhould be ſure of a good ground before we oppoſe or perſecute others.*

We ſhould queſtion our ſelves in any ordinary thing we do, even in what we do for a friend we ſhould queſtion, Do I well in helping him? Much more when we oppoſe any man, ſhould we ſay, *Why perſecute we him*? What! perſecute a man hand over head, oppoſe him without ground? It is hard to reprove a brother duly, much more to oppoſe him duly. We ſhould examine our love, much more our anger. *Be angry, and ſin not*, is the Apoſtles rule (*Eph.* 4. 26.) which implyes that it is no eaſie matter to be angry and not to ſin. If we had a hundred eyes, and as many tongues, 'tis but need we ſhould imploy them all to look about us, and enquire whether we are right or wrong, when we oppoſe or perſecute a Brother. Where it is ſo eaſie for us to do wrong, we ſhould conſider and conſider, whether what we do be right.

Fifthly, Note, *To perſecute or oppoſe another without juſt cauſe, is very ſinful.*

'Tis ſinful not to ſhew kindneſs, and expreſs love to thoſe who deſerve it; how ſinful then is it to expreſs unkindneſs and wrath towards thoſe who deſerve it not? It is a great ſin to hold an error, or not to do good; then how great a ſin is it to oppoſe another for doing good, or for holding the truth. To perſecute him that walketh in holineſs, or holds the truth, is to perſecute Chriſt himſelf, who is *The Holy One and the True.* Perſecution oppoſeth him whom all ſhould adore, even Jeſus Chriſt. *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me*? Chriſt was perſecuted in perſon while he was on earth, and he is perſecuted in his members and ſervants now he is in Heaven. As to ſuffer perſecution for righteouſneſs ſake, is one of the higheſt acts of grace: So to perſecute the righteous, is one of the higheſt acts of wickedneſs, ſeeing this oppoſeth not only the Saints, but him, who is infinitely better and more excellent, then all the Saints.

The Apoſtle (*Rom.* 1. 32.) deſcribing the extream ſinfulneſs of the *Gentiles*, gives it thus, *They knowing the judgment of God, that they that commit ſuch things are worthy of death, not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do it.* He makes it the blackeſt part of their ſinfulneſs, that they had pleaſure in thoſe that did evil. On the other ſide, we may ſay it is the blackeſt part of ſin to oppoſe thoſe that do good? not only not to have pleaſure in them that do good, but to be vexed at and vex them that do it, is the

fulleſt

do it, is the fulleſt diſcovery of an evil heart. Moſt wicked men take pleaſure in thoſe that do wickedly, but they are moſt wicked who reſiſt thoſe that do good. As to love truth and goodneſs is better then to know them; ſo to hate truth or goodneſs is far worſe, then to be ignorant of, or to neglect them.

Sixthly, *Job's* Friends thought they were upon their duty; or that they were employed in a great ſervice for God, while they dealt thus rigidly with this diſtreſſed man.

Hence Note, *Some perſecute others, and yet think they do God and man good ſervice.*

There are two ſorts of perſecutors. Firſt, Such as oppoſe Conſcience; or perſecute others for their Conſcience ſake. Secondly, Such as perſecute others for their own Conſcience ſake; they do (in their own opinion) conſcientiouſly: They think that a duty, which upon tryal will be found their ſin. They do not perſecute, as the bloody Heathens did, to ſatisfie their cruel luſts; or as ſome bloody Chriſtians (in name) have done, and do, oppoſing the Truth againſt their light: But they do it according to their light. There are very few, but as they perſecute the Conſciences of others; ſo they perſecute upon the dictate of their own Conſcience; and think they have done a work acceptable to God, while they thus reject and reprobate their Brethren; yea, they glory in it, and put it among their moſt meritorious acts, as having deſigned the glory of God, and being carried on with zeal (ſuch as it is) for his glory. Theſe are deſcribed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 66. 5.) *Your brethren that caſt you out for my Name ſake* (as there are many perſecuting enemies, ſo there are ſome brethren-perſecuters) *Your brethren that caſt you out for my Name ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified.* This was their aim, they did it to glorifie God: Thus they licked themſelves whole, when they wounded their brethren; they did no offence, but ſervice. So (*Jer.* 50. 7.) *All they that found them have devoured them, and their adverſaries ſay, we offend not, becauſe they have ſinn'd againſt the Lord, the habitation of Juſtice, even the Lord the hope of their fathers.* Chriſt is expreſs in this point (*John* 16. 2.) *The time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you will think that he doth God ſervice.* This was once *Paul's* caſe (*Acts* 26. 9.) *I verily thought that I ought to do many things againſt the Name of Jeſus*; I was bound in Conſcience, I could not ſuffer theſe men, and theſe wayes in peace, unleſs I would break my own peace. He ſpeaks as if his own Conſcience would have troubled him, unleſs he had troubled others for that which was, indeed, their Conſcience. *Job's* Friends were far enough from owning the name or title of perſecuters, and yet they did the thing, and ſpake the words which were very ſwords. Many love to perſecute; but all hate to be called perſecuters. As many hate vertue and goodneſs, who yet are proud to be called good and vertuous: So many love evil acts, which they diſdain to be denominated by. *Job* adviſeth his Friends, who eſteemed themſelves nothing leſs then perſecuters, to beſpeak their own ſouls, and ſay, *Why perſecute we him,*

Seeing the root of the matter is found in me?

Job was aſſured (it ſeems) that the root of the matter was found in him; but it is not eaſie to find what this root of the matter was in *Job.* In general, by *root* we are to underſtand the bottom, baſis, or foundation, that which gave him eſtabliſhment, as the root doth to the tree. The Hebrew is, *The root of the word.* It is ordinary in Scripture to put word for thing, or matter. The root of the *word* is the root of the thing in controverſie between *Job* and his Friends (*Eccleſ.* 12. 13.) *Hear the concluſion of the whole matter*, or, *the end of the word, Fear God, and keep his Commandments. There is nothing impoſſible to God*; the Text is, *There is no word impoſſible to God*; that is, he can do whatſoever pleaſeth him. This root of the matter, or root of the word, is (as ſome ſay) the bottom of the buſineſs, the ſtate of the cauſe, or the cauſe ſtated. The Civil Lawyers call, the *cauſe, the thing.* And the Orator uſeth an expreſſion very near this of *Job*, where he titles the main matter in queſtion, *the root of the queſtion*, upon which all dependeth. What root he intendeth, we ſhall conſider further.

שרש דבר *Radix verbi, verbum pro re ſenſu quo apud Juriſconſultos cauſa dicitur res.* Bold. *Radix verbi nihil aliud eſt quam fundamentū cauſæ ſeu rei*; Cicero *vocat ſtirpem queſtionis. Diſſero etiam (inquit) partem quæ eſt quaſi ſtirps quæſtionis.* Cic. lib 4. de Finibus.

The Vulgar renders the whole Verſe thus; *Wherefore do ye now ſay, let us perſecute him,* and, *we ſhall find the root of the matter againſt him?* The root of the matter, according to that tranſlation, is taken two wayes.

Radicem verbi inveniamus contra eum. Vulg.

Firſt, For ſome word which *Job* might unwarily let fall, upon which they would ground a further accuſation, or charge upon him, or juſtifie the charge and accuſation already brought againſt him. As if they had ſaid, Let us follow him cloſe, and he will quickly ſpeak ſomewhat to the diſadvantage of his own cauſe. It is indeed the uſual policy of perſecutors to ſeek matter againſt another, when none appears: And to provoke a man to ſpeak, till he ſpeak awry, or give them an occaſion to enſnare him in his ſpeech. Uſually in the multitude of words there is no want of error; and he that ſpeaks a multitude of words (as 'tis poſſible) without error, may ſoon have ſome of them erroneouſly interpreted. Perſecutors are greedy to hunt for and find out faults; they will rake in every channel, and never give over interrogating and ſifting, till ſomewhat drop, or fall, that at leaſt may bear ſome colour of offence. *They make a man an offender for a word*, ſaith the Prophet (*Iſa.* 29. 21.) A good man may quickly offend in a word; but it is the ſign and the work of an evil man, to make a man an offender for a word; eſpecially for a right, though a ſharp word; of ſuch the Prophet ſpeaks, as appears in the next clauſe; *They lay a ſnare for him that reproveth in the gate*: They get a word from him, and make that matter of offence. That is alſo the meaning of the Prophet when he ſaith, *All my familiars watched for my halting.* They would be glad to ſee him halt, that they might accuſe him for his halting. It is a duty to reprove him that halteth, that is, him that ſinneth; and it is a greater duty to watch over another to keep him from halting. But it is a wickedneſs to watch for a mans halting, in hope that he will halt, and that we may have an occaſion or ground to reprove him; ſuch reproofs proceed not from a ſpirit of love, but of revenge, as the Prophet diſcovers them; *Peradventure he will be inticed* (into ſome ſin or ſnare) *and we ſhall prevail againſt him, and we ſhall take revenge on him.* They were glad to ſee him halt, that they might ſay ſomewhat againſt him for halting. This was the diſpoſition of the perſecuting Phariſees (*Matth.* 22. 16.) *They ſent ſome to entangle Chriſt in his talk.* They had no matter ready, but they ſought it. Another Goſpel ſaith (*Mark* 12. 13.) *They ſent certain Phariſees to catch him in his words:* Chriſt ſpake the word, that he might catch men to ſave them: Theſe men laboured to catch Chriſt in his words, that they might accuſe and deſtroy him. This ſome would faſten upon *Job's* Friends, but I forbear them.

Qui malo ſtudio benè prolata audiunt, quid aliud quam contra aliquem radicē verbi quærunt ex qua loquendi originem ſumant & ramos pravæ loquacitatis in accuſatione dilatent. Greg.

Secondly, The root of the matter according to that reading is, *Some ſecret ſin*; let us follow him hard, let us but continue with him in diſpute, and we ſhall make him diſcover his boſom and heart at laſt; we ſhall find that hidden under ground evil, which is the root of the matter; even of all his diſtempered ſpeeches and paſſions againſt us, and of all the judgments and rods of God that have been upon him. Some one ſecret ſin is indeed often the root of many open ones; and though we may conclude, that any ſin may be the root of miſery and affliction, yet uſually it is ſome ſpecial ſin, that gives ſuck and ſap to the ſpecial troubles that either afflict the godly, or render the lives of wicked men miſerable. For though God might make every ſinful failing bear gall and wormwood, yet he doth not, but ſpares his people after many failings. And though death (which contains all penal evils) be the wages of every ſin, yet in this World God rarely payes it to wicked men, till their ſins become very full of ſinful evil: This *Job's* Friends are likewiſe here conceived to call the *root of the matter*, a diſcovery of which they ſuppoſed he would ſoon make (according to this expoſition) were he but a little put to it, and preſſed. Let us perſecute him, and we ſhall find the root of the matter againſt him.

But though this reading may yield ſome profitable meditation, yet I ſhall not inſiſt upon it, becauſe the words plainly appear as ſpoken by *Job*, and not by his Friends.

Ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of the matter is found in me?

Secondly, Some have given this ſence of the words, *Ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him, ſeeing* (ye ought to ſay each one of you judging himſelf) *the rcot of the matter is in me?* That is, The fault is in me, or I am the cauſe of this contention; I by my prejudices and unfriendly jealouſies have been an occaſion to ſtir the paſſion of this afflicted perſon, and to draw out this troubleſome debate between us. Thus the latter words are made that form of acknowledgment, which *Job*'s Friends ſhould make, in charging the blame and fault, the root and riſe of all upon themſelves. But

Radix παῤῥησίας *& fiduciæ alloquendi deū eſt fides in ſervatore in quo habemus acceſſū.* Co. *Cum pia fide in deum radicatus ſim, qua perrexi adhuc in mea integritate & nunc verba veritatis coram eo profero, ut fidei radicatæ in ipſo fructus, non autem folia aut fallaces verborum flores quales vos effunditis, &c.* Jun.

Thirdly, *Rather ſay*, Theſe words have the form and force of a reaſon, upon which *Job* would perſwade his Friends to forbear perſecuting him, or why they ſhould reflect upon and conſider themſelves as having perſecuted him; *The root of the matter is found in me.*

The *root of the word or matter*, according to this interpretation is, firſt, grace and faith in his heart: As Believers are ſaid to be *rooted in grace, in love,* &c. (*Eph.* 3. 17.) ſo grace of any kind is as a root in Believers. Faith in the heart is the root of the word in every mans mouth who believeth; and it is the root of the work in every mans hand that believeth. And ſo *Job*'s ſcope in this ſpeech may be thus repreſented: As if he had ſaid, *O my friends, ye wonder that I have ſpoken and done thus, I tell you the root of the word and work is in me; Faith makes me ſpeak and do (faith is the root of our holy liberty and boldneſs in ſpeaking and doing both towards God and man)* (Pſal. 116. 10.) *I believed* (ſaith *David*) *therefore have I ſpoken: We alſo believe* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 13.) *and therefore ſpeak. When once with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, then* (preſently) *with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation* (Rom. 10. 10.) So that *Job* having made ſuch an excellent confeſſion with his mouth in the former words, here he would have his Friends know, that he did not ſpeak by rote, but by the root of the matter which was in him: He believed with his heart, and therefore they ſhould take heed, how they did oppoſe or perſecute him, he being a true Believer. As if he had further ſaid, *This profeſſion of my faith, ſhould move you to bethink your ſelves better then to perſecute me; for though you may find me a ſinner, yet you may find that in me alſo, which doth intereſt me in the Redeemers love, who takes away ſin. I am rooted in the Redeemer by faith, and through his ſtrength I have walked in mine integrity, I have not ſpoken theſe things, in a vain flouriſh or oſtentation of my ſelf, but as an evidence of the grace of God in me, from whence as from a root, I bring forth not leaves and bloſſoms only, but I have my fruit in holineſs, waiting for the end, Everlaſting life.*

Job *nihil aliud vult dicere quā veritatem à parte ſua ſtare, illam autem eleganti periphraſi vocat* radicem verbi. *Mendacium enim cum nihil ſit, illud vere verbum dici debet, quod in veritate fundatur.* Bold.

ἐπερώτημα.

Secondly, By the root of the matter, we may underſtand his ſincerity, or the uprightneſs of his heart. The teſtimony which God gave of him was, *A man perfect and upright*; and his own heart gave him that teſtimony alſo: As he profeſſed faith in the Redeemer, ſo he loved him in ſincerity. He had, as the Apoſtle *Peter* phraſeth it (1 *Ep.* 3. 21.) *The anſwer of a good conſcience* in himſelf, as well as a good anſwer in his mouth to them. He whoſe conſcience makes a good anſwer to himſelf, can anſwer any man. As if *Job* had ſaid, *When my conſcience asks me the queſtion, What I am, and what I hope for? I can give it a good anſwer; and therefore I can eaſily anſwer you, and you ſhould not eaſily trouble me.* And indeed when once *a man can anſwer himſelf honeſtly, he may anſwer all the world boldly.* Sincerity is the root of the matter in every godly man. And he who is upright in what he ſaith and doth, needs not trouble himſelf what others ſay of him, or do againſt him. Men may (as we ſpeak proverbially) caſt their caps at him that is upright, they cannot much hurt him; *Ye ſhould ſay, why do we perſecute him* (what can ye gain by it, or what can I looſe by it) *ſeeing the root of the matter is in me?*

Our Annotators gloſs it thus; *Gods promiſes are rooted in my heart, and true piety is found there* (both parts fall in with, or fill up the expoſitions given) *therefore I ſhould not be condemned by you.* Now for as much as *Job* urgeth one of, or all theſe Conſiderations, namely, that he had the grace of faith, that he had made a right confeſſion of his faith, that he was ſincere, and right-hearted towards God, In all, Seeing (I ſay) he urgeth theſe conſiderations as a reaſon to ſtop, or give check to his Friends oppoſing, and perſecuting of him. We may obſerve; Firſt, from the expreſſion; and then from the connexion. From the expreſſion, that

Grace and truth are the root of a godly man.

They are as a root under a twofold notion.

Firſt, For eſtabliſhment: The root is to the tree as the foundation to the building, the ſtrength and ſtay of it; ſo are grace and truth, faith and ſincerity to a godly man: By theſe (for in theſe the ſtrength of Chriſt is) he ſtands (*Heb.* 13. 9.) *Be not carried away with divers and ſtrange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be eſtabliſhed with grace, not with meats.* The Apoſtle means the doctrine of grace, in oppoſition to the doctrine of meats. The ceremonial Law about meats doth not eſtabliſh the heart; but the doctrine of grace doth: now as the doctrine of grace, ſo grace much more eſtabliſheth the heart, and will not ſuffer us to be carried away as the waves of the Sea, or as the clouds of the Air by contrary winds, to contrary points and practices, now forward, and then backward. *They who are come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt, thenceforth are no more children, toſſed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſleight* (*or cogging*) *of men and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lye in wait to deceive. But ſpeaking the truth in love, they grow up into him in all things who is the head, even Chriſt* (Eph. 4. 13, 14, 15.)

Secondly, Grace in the heart is a root, becauſe it ſends out juice or ſap, and is the next cauſe of our fruitfulneſs in life: Grace in the heart, buddeth and bloſſometh at the hand, and tongue, in good actions, and ſavoury ſpeeches. The whole man is filled with good fruit, where grace is a root in the heart. There is a root of this root, Jeſus Chriſt is the root of our graces: But as Chriſt is the root of our graces; ſo the Grace of Chriſt in us is the root of all our holy actions. Chriſt is (*Origo originans*) the original and the originating root of our graces. Grace is (*Origo originata*) the originative root, or that root which Jeſus Chriſt planteth in us, that by the continual ſupplies and moiſtenings of the Spirit, we may bring forth fruit in him and to him. As Original corruption is the natural root of the matter in us, as to the production of ſin, and our unhappy fruitfulneſs in evil; ſo Grace infuſed or wrought in us, is the Supernatural root of the matter in us, as to our germination in holineſs, and our happy fructification in goodneſs.

Secondly, From the connection, or argument couched in theſe words; *Ye ſhould ſay, why do we perſecute him, ſeeing the root of the matter,* Grace and Truth, *are in me?*

Obſerve, *He that hath Grace and holds Truth, root-truths, ſhould not be perſecuted.*

The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 14.) exhorts *to follow* (or as the propriety of the word is, to perſecute) *holineſs*, that we our ſelves may reach and attain the higheſt degree of it: But we muſt take heed of following thoſe with perſecution (though it be but in hard words) who have (through mercy) attained, the leaſt or loweſt degree of it. For

Dam arbor radicem habet, ſperari poteſt eam repullulaturam & plus fructuum progenituram; ita homines inter vitia & nævos ſuos ſanitatem præcipui capitis fidei retinentes, nemo temere debet rejicere.

Firſt, They ſhould not be perſecuted by men, who are imbraced by Chriſt, nor be caſt out by us, who are received by him. Them that hold the fundamentals of faith and holineſs, Chriſt owns, therefore we ſhould own them too. *Job* poſſibly had failings and errors; but he had the root of the matter: What though you my Friends and I do not agree in all things, yea, what though we differ in many things, and cannot reconcile theſe differences, yet I have told you the root of the matter. Why do you perſecute me? Such a profeſſion of faith as *Job* made contains the ſum of the Goſpel, or of the myſtery of Chriſt; therefore they who hold it are not to be ſlighted, much leſs vexed, though they hold not all the truth, or are deceived into ſome things which are erroneous.

Secondly, They that hold out the ſame fundamental truths, have the ſame Spirit of truth at leaſt to enlighten them.

Thirdly, They who make ſuch an outward profeſſion of faith from a root of faith within, ſhall certainly be ſaved; Heaven ſhall receive them, and ſhall not we receive them? Heaven will open its gates to entertain them, and ſhall we thruſt them out of the World? *Why perſecute ye me, ſeeing the root of the matter is in me?*

And if they be not to be perſecuted, who hold the fundamentals or chief doctrines neceſſary to ſalvation, what ſhall we think then of their perſecution, who oppoſe thoſe that do not only hold fundamental, but moſt ſuperſtructive truths too, which belong to faith and a good life. Many ſuch have fallen under perſecution upon their diſſenting about ſome outward forms of order or worſhip.

Further, *Job* ſeems to be here his own witneſs, he doth not ſtay to receive teſtimony from his brethren, that *the root of the matter was in him*; but himſelf ſaith, *the root of the matter is found in me*; which may teach us,

Firſt, *They who have the root of the matter in them, may know they have it.*

Grace comes from Light, and is Light. Grace carrieth Light to diſcover it ſelf by, unleſs God hide it from us, and put our light into darkneſs, our candle under a bed, or under a Buſhel. He that hath Grace, doth not alwayes know it; this root may lie ſo deep under ground, that he in whom it is, cannot ſee it, or ſay it is in me: Yet this root how deep ſoever, is diſcernable in it ſelf, and is often clearly diſcerned by thoſe in whom it is.

Secondly, *It is lawful, and a duty in ſome caſes, for a man to give teſtimony to himſelf.*

Job's Friends thought there was nothing in him but a root of wickedneſs and hypocriſie; but he ſaith, *the root of the matter is in me. Let another praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth* (ſaith *Solomon.*) That's moſt comly, and ſo it ſhould be; yet ſometimes a man muſt, and may ſpeak for himſelf, to maintain his own innocence, and advance the Glory of God, which may be darkned by the ſilence of man.

Thus far I have opened the firſt part of *Job*'s Concluſion; namely, the direction and counſel which he gives his Friends to take them off from their bitter oppoſition, and to ſweeten or meeken their ſpirits towards him; *Ye ſhould ſay, Why perſecute we him? ſeeing the root of the matter is found in me.* He proceeds to a Commination, threatning them into this duty, if he could not perſwade them to it; *Be ye afraid of the ſword*, &c.

VERS. 29.

Be ye afraid of the ſword; for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword; that ye may know that there is a judgment.

IN the former Verſe *Job* counſelled and directed his Friends; here he warns and threatneth them.

Be ye [afraid] of the ſword.

גור *Timere aut expaveſcere in alicujus præſentia aut conſpectu terribili. Fugite ergo à facie gladii.* Vulg.

The word notes ſtrong fear; ſuch a fear as makes us flee or run from it: So ſome tranſlate the word here; whereas we ſay, *Be afraid of*, they ſay, *flee from the face of the ſword*: Fear puts many to their feet.

Flee from the ſword; or be afraid of the ſword.

The ſword is an inſtrument of death. The ſword may be looked upon in a twofold hand.

Firſt, In the hand of the Souldier; and ſo it is the ſword of war.

Secondly, In the hand of the Magiſtrate; and ſo it is the ſword of peace. Both ought to be the ſword of Juſtice? yet the latter is more properly called ſo. *He* (that is, the Magiſtrate) *beareth not the ſword in vain*: He beareth it to do juſtice, and to maintain peace. The ſword is one of the chief Emblemes of Magiſtracy and Power. We may take the ſword here as in either of theſe hands; *Be ye afraid of the ſword*; the ſword of the Souldier, and the ſword of the Judge or Magiſtrate.

Gladii nomine vindicta ſignificatur per Metonymiam inſtrumentalis cauſæ pro effectu.

Again, By ſword in Scripture, all manner of evils, puniſhments and revenges are underſtood; becauſe the ſword brings ſo many evils, and is ſo great a puniſhment, therefore any kind of evil, puniſhment or rovenge comes under this title, *the ſword*. The Children of *Iſrael* cry out upon *Moſes*, that when he came to deliver them, he did but more enthral them; and therefore tell him (*Exod.* 5. 21.) *Thou haſt put a ſword into the hand of* Pharaoh *to ſlay us*, that is, thou haſt been ſo far from mollifying the heart of *Pharaoh* towards us, that thou haſt provoked *Pharaoh* to lay new troubles, and lay heavier burdens upon us, not only to our further ſorrow and affliction, but to our ruine and utter undoing. So the Lord ſpeaketh (*Deut.* 32.41.) *If I whet my glittering ſword, and my hand take hold of vengeance*, that is, if I prepare my judgments of what ſort ſoever, *then I will render vengeance*, &c. The whetting of the ſword notes the fitting and preparation of thoſe judgments, by which the hand of God taketh hold of vengeance.

Improbus vocatur gladius Dei, quia Deus eo utitur tanquam gladio ad puniendum quos vult. Druſ.

And hence in Scripture, wicked men and oppreſſors, who bring the greateſt troubles, whether upon perſons or Nations, are called the *ſword of God.* (Pſal. 17. 13.) *David* prayes, *Deliver my ſoul from the wicked, which is thy ſword.* He calls them the ſword of God, becauſe they are often uſed by God as inſtruments to puniſh whom he pleaſeth, or rather thoſe (whoſoever they be) that have diſpleaſed him.

Cum dicitur à facie gladii, præſentem & jam conſtitutam & paratam ultionem ſignificat. Pined.

Further, *Job* doth not only ſay, *Be afraid of the ſword*; but *be afraid of the face of the ſword*: Yea, the Original is plural; *Be afraid of the faces of the ſword.* The ſword hath and makes many faces, and they are all ill and ſad ones. In Scripture, ordinarily the face of a thing, notes that very thing whoſe face it is, or the preſence of it; ſo, *the face of the ſword is the ſword* preſent. *Be afraid of the face of the ſword*, that is, of the ſword when it appears. The ſword ſometimes wraps up its face in the ſheath, its face is hid; but when the ſword is drawn, then we behold the face of the ſword. So that to be afraid of the face of the ſword, is to be afraid of the ſwords appearance, of the ſword looking out of its ſcabbard, of the ſword drawn and brandiſhed. Some are very buſie and curious about the *Phyſiognomy of the ſword*, to tell us what the face is. The ſword hath its face. The two flats of it are as the cheeks of the face; and the glitterings of the ſword are as the eyes of the face which ray from it; and the edge of the ſword is the mouth of the face; and the point of the ſword is the tongue of the mouth. Thus they allegorize. I will not ſtay upon ſuch niceties. The face of the ſword is the inſtant preſence of the ſword; and ſo the phraſe is uſed in reference to other things (*Pſal.* 38. 5.) *My wounds ſtink and are corrupt, becauſe of my fooliſhneſs.* The Hebrew is, *Becauſe of the face of my fooliſhneſs*; or, *before the face of my fooliſhneſs*, that is, at the preſence of my ſin, or when I ſee the face of my ſins. Some have abundance of ſins, yet their wounds ſtink not, nor are corrupt, that is, they are never troubled for their ſins; Why? becauſe they do not ſee the face of their ſins: but at the face of my ſins, or the faces of my ſins, my wounds ſtink and are corrupt, that is my ſoul is troubled, and my conſcience is in a ſad condition. The Prophet uſeth this ſtrain in that famous promiſe of deliverance from the *Babyloniſh* yoke (*Iſa.* 10. 27.) *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that his burden ſhall be taken from off thy ſhoulder, and the yoke ſhall be deſtroyed, becauſe of the anointing*: So we render it. The Hebrew is, *His yoke ſhall be deſtroyed before the face of the anointing. Grammarians* tell us, that *before the face*, in the Hebrew, ſupplies the place of the Prepoſition *becauſe*; which is the reaſon why we render, *becauſe of*, or *for the anointing.* But ſtrictly, *the yoke ſhall be broken at the face of the anointing*, or (as the word is) *at the face of the oyl*; that is, *at the face of him who is anointed with oyl.* Literally, *Hezekiah*, but ſpiritually and typically, *Jeſus Chriſt, the Meſſias, the anointed of God.* At the face of Chriſt, at his appearing, the *Babyloniſh* yoke is broken off from the neck of his people. When Chriſt appears, his enemies diſappear, and his people are freed from the yoke of Bondage. But to the point; as we read of *the face of ſin*, and *the face of oyl* (in thoſe Scriptures) ſo here, *of the face of the ſword.* It may well be ſaid, *Be afraid of the face of the ſword*; becauſe the ſword, of all things, hath the moſt dreadful face. Some men have terror ſtampt in their faces, they ſcare others with their looks. The ſword hath a terrible aſpect. The face of the ſword is as the face of *Goliah* was to the Army of the *Iſraelites* (1 Sam. 17. 24.) *All the men of* Iſrael (like women or children) *when they ſaw the man, fled from him* (we put in the Margin, *they fled from his face*) *and were ſore afraid. Goliah* was a monſter among men. A whole Army gave ground at his approach: The face of the man was dreadful, much more was the face of his ſword.

A facie inſipientiæ meæ, Heb. i. e. *quam ſemper habeo ante oculos meos.*

A facie, ſumitur apud Hebræos loco Præpoſitionis propter.

Peculiare eſt gladio & univerſo armorum generi ut faciem habere videantur, cum vel ſola facit & primo aſpectu terrorem injiciant.

ſword. 'Tis ſaid (*Iſa.* 21. 15.) That as ſoon as the ſword appeared and ſhewed its face, they feared, and fled; *They fled from the ſwords, from the drawn ſword, from the bent bow, and from the grievouſneſs of war.* Now foraſmuch as the ſword in kind is ſo great an evil to man, and ſo terrible, therefore when that is threatned, we may expect any kind of evil. This one threatning comprehends all threatnings. Where the ſword comes, fear will not ſtay behind (*Jer.* 6. 25.) *Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the ſword of the enemy, and fear is on every ſide.* When the ſword is abroad, all keep at home. So, *Ezek.* 21. 12. *Cry and howl Son of man, for it ſhall be upon my people, it ſhall be upon all the Princes of* Iſrael; *terrors by reaſon of the ſword ſhall be upon my people, ſmite therefore upon thy thigh*, that is, uſe the moſt ſignificant geſtures and expreſſions of grief and ſorrow. Hence obſerve,

First, *The ſword is a very dreadful evil.*

That which is put for all evils, muſt needs be a very great one; we may ſpell and read any judgment in the ſword. As it ſhews that peace is a great good, an exceeding great good, becauſe peace is put for all good. When it is ſaid, *Peace be to you*, all good is wiſhed to you, every mercy is included in peace. So when 'tis ſaid, *The ſword be to you*, you may write any evil under that menace. While the ſword is threatned, all miſeries are threatned in one. The ſword is a great evil, conſidered barely in it ſelf; and it is a greater, conſidered in the conſequents and effects of it. It hath it ſelf a very dreadful face, but it leaves a more dreadful face of things behind it. That Land which before it, is as the Garden of God, behind it, is as a deſolate Wilderneſs.

Secondly, In that *Job* thus threatens his friends, and warns them, *Be ye afraid of the ſword*; take heed leſt ſome ſudden judgment fall upon you; obſerve,

We may uſe arguments from fear of judgments, both to diſſwade from ſin, and to perſwade to duty.

Job was a preacher to his friends, and here he is upon a vehement dehortation, to take them off from that perſecuting ſpirit ſpoken of in the former verſe; here we have his argument or motive, the fear of the ſword: you may run upon the ſwords point, while you run this courſe. The Apoſtle *Jude* (*v.* 23. of his Epiſtle) gives direction; *Of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference; others ſave with fear*, that is, *make them afraid*, terrifie and threaten them, that they may be ſaved. Some ſpirits muſt be dealt with gently, others roughly; therefore (ſaith he) *make a difference*; but rather then let any periſh, *ſave them with fear*, skare them to heaven. Some muſt be led to heaven by the way of hell, and be caſt into the fire, that they may be delivered from it: *Save them with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* 'Tis a deſireable fear which is a means to pull a ſoul out of the fire. We are ſaved by faith, as that receiveth and taketh hold of Chriſt; we are ſaved by fear, as that takes hold of us, and driveth us to Chriſt. By faith we ſee and apply our help in Chriſt, and by fear we are brought to ſee our need of his help. Chriſt (*Luke* 12. 4, 5.) uſeth the argument of the fear of hell, to cure his friends of the fear of man, and to diſſwade them from deſerting him and the truth of the Goſpel. *I ſay to you my friends, be not afraid of them that can kill the body, and after that, there is no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye ſhall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into hell; yea, I ſay to you, fear him.* See how he doubles upon that point of fear; *fear him, yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.* We may parallel it with that expreſſion of *Paul* to the *Philippians*, *Rejoyce in the Lord, yea, I ſay again, rejoyce.* I eat not my word, but I aver it, and ſtand to it; as I bid you rejoyce, ſo I again bid you rejoyce. So ſaith Chriſt to his friends, *fear.* Some might object, Is this ſuitable counſel to a friend, to bid him be afraid? ſhould they be kept in heaven-way for fear of hell? Enemies have cauſe of fear, but ſhould friends? *Yea*, ſaith Chriſt, *I ſay again to you my friends, fear him.* 'Tis good to bid a friend fear, when that fear tendeth to his good. *Paul* (Rom. 8. 13.) writing to Saints, and applying the doctrine of free grace to the believing *Romans*, yet tells them, *If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die*, even die eternally; he threatens them with hell, who were candidates of heaven, and points them to death, who were paſſed from death to life, that he might keep them out of the wayes of death.

Some ſay, this is baſe to be kept from evil by fear; they take ſcandal at thoſe who preach fear, calling it legal preaching.

I anſwer, It is indeed moſt noble to obey out of love, *To fear the Lord and his goodneſs* (Hoſ. 3. 5.) But yet it is good to fear the Lord and his wrath. It is moſt excellent to ſay, we fear the Lord, becauſe there is mercy with him; but it is our duty to fear the Lord, becauſe there is juſtice and judgment with him. A good heart will improve the judgments of God as well as his mercies, and the wrath of God as well as his love: A good heart is bettered by all the diſpenſations of God, both in his word, and in his works; if God ſpeak death, it is an advantage to his ſpiritual life; and he mends upon threatnings as well as upon promiſes. Every word of God is good, and hath a ſavour of life unto life in it, by the working of the Spirit: It is beſt and moſt Goſpel-like, when we can ſay as the Apoſtle directs (2 *Cor.* 7. 1.) *Having theſe promiſes, we cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord*; but it is well, when we can ſay, *Having theſe threatnings, let us cleanſe our ſelves, and perfect holineſs in the fear of the Lord.* It is a choice frame to ſay, as the Author to the *Hebrews* calleth us (*Heb.* 12. 28.) *Seeing we have a Kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace to ſerve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.* Yet it is our duty to ſay, and a mercy when we can ſay it, Seeing we live in a Kingdom or in a State that is moved and ſhaken with judgments and troubles, therefore *let us have grace to ſerve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.* Fear, either of trouble threatned, or of trouble felt, may be improved to purer actings of Grace, and a more acceptable ſerving of God.

I ſhall only add three things to ſhew what this fear rightly improved, will do upon the heart.

Firſt, It doth not ſtraighten, but enlarge the heart towards God. Thus the Prophet ſpeaks of that holy fear which ſhould follow, or be an effect of that glory of the Church, in the abundant acceſs of the Gentiles to the Goſpel (*Iſa.* 60. 5.) *Then thou ſhalt ſee and flow together, and thy heart ſhall fear, and be enlarged.* Fear and enlargement go together. Fear, under a natural conſideration, ſhuts and ſtraightens the heart. A man ſurprized with fear, is leſs then he was in all his abilities, and ſeldom hath the uſe of any but thoſe which diſcover his weakneſs. But ſpiritual fear, or fear ſpiritualiz'd, maketh a man more then he was, and better then he was; he is enlarged to God, and only ſtraightned towards evil.

Secondly, This fear of threatnings and judgments will not cauſe us to run from God, whoſe the word of threatning or the works of judgment are; but it brings and keeps us nearer to God. As holy fear is a bridle to reſtrain us from ſin, ſo it is a bond to hold us to duty (*Jer.* 32. 40.) *I will put my fear in your hearts, and* (what will this fear do? will it cauſe you to withdraw from me? No;) *you ſhall never depart from me*; the more you fear me, you ſhall keep the cloſer to me: None live ſo near God as they that fear him; as the fearing of God and the eſchewing of evil are joyned together in Scripture, ſo are our fearing of God and ſtricteſt obedience to him.

Thirdly, It is ſuch a fear as proceeds from high thoughts of God, not from hard thoughts of God. Some when they hear of judgment or of the ſword of God, they have hard thoughts of God, he is ſevere (ſay they) wrathful, terrible, and therefore they tremble and are afraid of him. But the fear intended hath a better ſpring, it flows from pure reverential thoughts of God in his greatneſs and unparallell'd excellency (*Jer.* 10. 6, 7.) *Foraſmuch as there is none like thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy Name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? for to thee doth it appertain* (or, *it liketh thee*) *foraſmuch as among all the wiſe men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms, there is none like unto thee.* Here are high thoughts of God indeed; *There is none like thee, thou art great, and thy Name is great, and among all the Nations there is none like thee:* The wiſeſt are not like thee in wiſdom; the greateſt are not like thee in greatneſs; the holieſt are not like thee in holineſs; therefore, *Who would not fear thee?* To be afraid of the judgments of God from high thoughts of his juſtice, righteouſneſs, holineſs and purity, moving him to do ſuch things, is not a ſlaviſh argument, as ſome have ſaid, but that which may work upon the moſt ingenious and gracious ſpirit; and not only ſo, but (which may be a third Note from theſe words, *Be afraid of the ſword.*)

It is our duty to fear the judgments of God.

We ſhould fear the judgments of God while threatned, and only heard of; What though we ſee them not? What though we feel them not? What though we are not the perſons intended in them, or to be ſmitten by them? yet the report of them, as directed againſt others, ſhould make us tremble. When God threatned the old world with the floud, *Noah* was excepted; yet ſuch was the temper of his ſpirit, that though he were the only favourite of God in all that age, yet his very hearing of that judgment (which he was aſſured not to feel) had this effect upon him (*Heb.* 11. 7.) *By faith* Noah *being warned of God, of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe.* He heard, and was afraid of the judgment, therefore he applied himſelf to thoſe means which God had directed him to for the ſaving of himſelf and family. We read (*Rev.* 14. 7.) of a Viſion which *John* had: *I ſaw an Angel fly in the midſt of heaven, having the everlaſting Goſpel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every Nation, and Kindred, and Tongue, and People, ſaying, fear God, and give glory to him.* Why? *for the hour of his judgment is come.* When God ſends the everlaſting Goſpel to be preached, he calls it *the hour of his judgment.* The preaching of the Goſpel is the hour of mercy to ſome, but it is the hour of wrath to others, even to all refuſers and contemners. Upon this denunciation or threatning of judgment, which ſhould overtake the ſlighters and neglecters of the Goſpel, all are warned to fear God and give glory to him.

Now, if we are to fear God for his judgments threatned, then we are to fear him more for his judgments inflicted. (*Rev.* 15. 3, 4.) *Who would not fear thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name?* &c. *for thy judgments are made manifeſt.* In the old Law when judgments were executed, 'tis ſaid, *They ſhall hear and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly* (*Deut.* 17. 13.) They ſhall hear what hath been already executed upon offenders, and fear to offend. *Moſes* there ſheweth what all ought to do, not what all did, upon the appearances of judgment, and the executions of divine wrath upon high tranſgreſſors.

Fourthly, Obſerve how *Job* was dealt with by his friends when he thus beſpake them, and warned them of the ſword. Their words were as a ſword in his bowels, they were very ſowr and bitter againſt him; yet foreſeeing their danger, and what evils their ill uſage of him might bring upon themſelves, he forgets both their former unkindneſſes, and his own preſent pains, and minds them of thoſe evils which were like to overtake them, if they perſiſted in the ſame mind. Hence note,

A good man will warn others of dangers, and labour to prevent their ſorrow, though they have cauſed his.

Vir ſanctus cum à pravis talia ſuſtinet, non contra eos, ſed magis pro ipſis dolet, ac mala eis quæ fugiant oſtendit. Merc.

While they are doing him hurt, he will be keeping them from hurt; while they trouble him, he diſcovers much tenderneſs towards them. He doth not rejoyce, and ſay, their day is coming, let it come, let it overtake them: No (ſaith he, as *Job*) *I ſee a black day coming, even the face of the ſword; therefore be ye afraid of it, and labour to get out of the reach of it.* The Prophet ſpeaks much this ſence to that hardned generation, who cauſleſly contrived and called for his death (*Jer.* 26. 15.) *I am in your hands, do as it ſeems good and meet,* (I do not ſo much ſtand on it, what you do with me, it ſhall be well with me; but I warn you to look to your ſelves, and to take heed of your own ſouls) *but know for certain, if you put me to death, you will ſurely bring innocent bloud upon your ſelves, and upon this City, and the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth the Lord hath ſent me to you to ſpeak all theſe words in your ears.* He doth not plead to be freed from their hands, but only lets them know their danger if they laid violent hands on him. He was not afraid of their ſword, but he would have them afraid of the ſword of God; *Be ye afraid of the ſword.*

For wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword.

Quia ira iniquitates gladii Heb.

The Hebrew is, *For wrath the iniquity of the ſword.* It is a ſhort, and (as to words) an imperfect ſentence in the Original. Hence the ſence is ſupplied by Interpreters, with ſome variety of conjecture; *Wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword.* We ſupply the word *bringeth*; and render that word which properly ſignifieth *iniquity, puniſhment* (as it is alſo uſed in other places) by a Metonymie of the effect for the cauſe; puniſhment being cauſed by, or being the effect of iniquity; *Wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword.* There are divers other readings; I will briefly touch them, but inſiſt only upon this.

Trunca & conciſa oratio. Merc.

First, thus; *For, or becauſe the ſword is the revenger of iniquities.* When the revenger of iniquity comes, it is high time to look to our ſelves, that we do no iniquity, or repent ſpeedily of that which we have done. The ſword (take it literally) is uſually the great inſtrument in the hand of God to revenge his quarrel upon men of iniquity.

Quoniã ultor iniquitatum gladius eſt. Vulg.

A ſecond thus; *Be afraid of the ſword; for wrath* (namely, the wrath of God) *is the deſolation of iniquity.* As if he had ſaid, *Go not on in this iniquity; for the wrath of God will be the deſtruction of iniquity and of you too, if you perſiſt in this iniquity.* The reaſon why it is rendred *deſolation,* or *deſtruction,* is from a different rendring of the Hebrew; in which Language, a word of the ſame ſound written with a different Letter, ſignifies both the *ſword* and *deſolation*: And as they are near in ſound, ſo nearer in ſence; where the ſword comes, deſolation ſeldom ſtayeth behind. How many Cities and Nations have been made deſolate by the ſword?

Quia ira (ſupple dei) iniquitatis deſolatio eſt.

חרב *Gladium.*

כרב *Deſolationẽ ſignificat.*

Thirdly, *Wrath to the iniquities of the ſword,* that is, *wrath hangeth over the iniquities of the ſword.* But what doth this tranſlation mean *by the iniquity of the ſword?* By the *iniquities of the ſword* (ſome ſay) thoſe iniquities are meant which are worthy to be puniſhed by the ſword. *Wrath hangs over the iniquity of the ſword,* that is, *Over great iniquities*; or, as another, *For bloody iniquities ſtir up the heat of anger; the iniquity of the ſword is bloody iniquity,* becauſe great and bloody iniquities call for revenge by blood, and where revenge acts its part, anger is boiled up. Again, *the iniquities of the ſword,* may be taken more ſtrictly for thoſe iniquities, of which he ſpake in the former verſe, the iniquities of perſecution, and undue vexation of our innocent brethren; theſe are *ſword-iniquities,* and theſe provoke the wrath of God to take vengeance on perſecuters by the ſword. Hence another tranſlates, *For the ſins of the ſword are wraths.* And ſo 'tis a direct predication, like that (*Iſa.* 65. 5.) Where the Prophet brings in the Lord ſpeaking of thoſe hypocrites, that ſay, *Stand by thy ſelf, come not near us; Theſe are a ſmoke in my noſe, a fire that burneth all the day*: That is, theſe are ſuch as ſtir up a ſmoke in my noſe, they make me angry, and theſe kindle a fire that burns in my breaſt all the day long, that is, theſe make me extream angry with them. So here, *the iniquities of the ſword* (that is, the vexations of brethren) *are wrath,* that is, they kindle up the wrath of God, and make that wrath flame out to the conſumption and deſtruction of thoſe who have ſo provoked him. Thoſe are the iniquities of the ſword. From this laſt reading, and theſe two ſences given upon it, take two brief Notes thus,

Ira iniquitatibus gladij. Reg. i. e. *ira imminet iniquitatibus gladii.* Cajet.

Vel ira & divina ultio manet & ulciſcitur iniquitates gladii, i. e. *iniquitates gladio dignas. Nam æſtum iræ (excitant) iniquitates cruentæ.* Jun.

Nam delicta gladii, i. e *innocentium & fidelium perſecutio eſt ardor,* i. e. *excitat ardorem dei, qui ipſum impellat, ut gladio vindicet in perſequentes.* Coc.

First, *Harſh judgment, or rigid cenſuring of others, is a provoking ſin.*

It is the iniquity of the ſword, it is a ſin which hath blood in it. Hence ſome put the Text into this Paraphraſe; *In as much as, you provoke me thus to anger, it is ſuch a ſin as very well deſerves to be revenged by the ſword, or by the ſevereſt judgment.* Another thus; *Your harſh and bitter words againſt me, are no leſs wickedneſs, then if you ſtabbed me, or thruſt me through with a ſword, and it deſerveth the puniſhment of the ſword.* *David's* complaint reacheth that interpretation (*Pſal.* 42. 10.) *As with a ſword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me.*

Nam æſtus ſunt delicta gladii. i. e. *excitant fumum & incendium in naribus meis faciunt me ardere ira. Quia iraſci facitis me, eſt ex iniquitatibus, quæ dignæ ſunt ut gladio ulciſcantur.* Pag.

Hæc veſtra tam acerba adverſũ me commotio, non minus eſt ſcelus quam ſi gladio me transfoderetis. Bez.

Secondly note, *Harſh judgment upon others, calls for ſevere judgments upon our ſelves.*

This alſo takes up the ſence of our reading.

Wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword.

The word tranſlated **wrath**, ſignifies *burning*. All *wrath* is hot. Some *wrath* is ſo hot, that there is no abiding it. *Job* having before threatned the ſword, here tells us whence the ſword cometh, what ſendeth the puniſhment of the ſword; *wrath doth it*. What wrath? There is a twofold wrath, with either of which this Text may comply.

אף *Iram*, חרה *excandeſcentiam*, קצף *efferveſcentiam ſubitam, quandoque ſpumam bullamve ſignificat*. חמה *calorem iræ denotat.*

Firſt, The wrath of God, who is provoked and ſtirred up by the iniquity of man; as if he had ſaid; you have provoked God to wrath by your unkind dealing with me, that wrath will bring the puniſhment of the ſword, that is, all manner of evils upon you.

Secondly, The wrath of man againſt man, that alſo ſtirreth up and bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword. *Whence are wars?* &c. is the Apoſtles queſtion (*James* 4. 1.) He anſwers, *Are they not from your luſts that ſtrive in your members?* And is not wrath among thoſe luſts? So that in reference to both, it is a truth, *Wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword*: The wrath of God againſt man, brings it, and the wrath of man againſt man, brings it. Hence obſerve,

First, *If the wrath of God be kindled, terrible judgments may be expected.*

What puniſhments, what conſuming judgments doth wrath bring forth? The wrath of God may be ſpecificated into any judgment, it produceth every evil. As the love of God carries in it any good, any mercy or bleſſing to his people, ſo doth his wrath every evil (*Pſal.* 2. 12.) *If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, bleſſed are they that put their truſt in him.* When he ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that put their truſt in him*, he means, wo to thoſe that do not put their truſt in him. If his wrath be kindled but a little, if it be but as a ſpark, it will quickly grow up to a flame, and conſume all (*Numb.* 16. 46.) *Moſes* bids *Aaron* haſte to make the atonement; *for* (ſaith he) *wrath is gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.* As ſoon as wrath goes abroad, it brings forth a plague. What that particular plague was, (intended by *Moſes*) is not clear. Some take it literally for the ſword; *The plague is begun*, that is, the ſtroak of the ſword is among us. However, any plague or ſtroak may ſoon riſe, when wrath is once riſen.

Secondly, As wrath is put here for the wrath of man againſt man; Note,

The wrath of man brings a ſword.

The wrath of man againſt man, brings the ſword two wayes.

Firſt, It brings the ſword as it ſtirs up man to revenge; when men are angry, and give bitter words, they ſhortly after give blows: moſt of the wars that have been in the world, have riſen from wrath. What the Apoſtle *James* (*chap.* 1. 15.) affirms of ſin, the ſame we may affirm of wrath, though it be not ſinful. *When wrath is finiſhed* (or is come to its height and heat, *it bringeth forth death.* Dying *Jacob* giveth this as the effect of his two ſons anger and wrath (*Gen.* 49. 6, 7.) *In their anger they ſlew a man, and in their ſelf-will they digged down a wall; curſed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.* It is good to appeaſe wrath, to heal breaches, to quiet ſpirits; for if wrath begin its work, who knows where it may end?

Secondly, The wrath of man bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword, as it ſtirs up God to puniſh man; the wrath of man againſt man, is a ſin which God will puniſh with further wrath. God often powreth out wrath, and he ſuffers men to powr out more of their wrath upon wrathful men. The Apoſtle ſpeaks as much to the Church of *Galatia* (Gal. 5. 15.) *If ye bite and devour one another*; What was this biting and devouring? Did they like dogs gnaw one another? or like *Canibals* eat one anothers fleſh? No; ſee (*verſ.* 14.) what he means; *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf; but if ye bite and devour one another.* Every act oppoſite to that love which God commands us to exerciſe towards our neighbour, is a biting and devouring of our neighbour. They that are civil and well bred, yet in this ſence may be found men-eaters, and devourers of their brethren. We bite and devour one another, when we are unkind, wrathful and vexatious one towards another. What then? *Take heed ye be not conſumed one of another.* Take heed leſt by walking ſo unlike Chriſtians, and ſo unanſwerably to the Law of Goſpel-love, you provoke God to kindle ſuch a fire among you and in you, as may prove an utter conſumption, When Chriſtians are not careful and ready to walk in love, as Chriſt hath loved us, God ſometimes gives them up to a ſpirit of contention, and their breaches are like the Sea, which cannot be healed. *Paul* ſpake this to a Church, a very faulty Church, and this was one of their faults, want of love. What he ſpake to them, we may ſpeak to any, whether brethren or others. *Take heed that you do not bite and devour one another, leſt you may be conſumed one of another.* Your unjuſt and unrighteous walkings, your cruel and harſh dealings, which are yet but to the vexing and heating one of anothers ſpirits, or to the devouring and eating one of anothers credit, may provoke ſuch judgments, as ſhall deſtroy your perſons, families and eſtates, till nothing be left; thus the wrath of man brings the puniſhment of the ſword: As wrath works man to revenge himſelf, ſo it provokes God to execute revenges. When men are fierce towards each other, God is angry with them all, and will not ſuffer them to live in peace, who loved diſſention. This judgment of God upon men is both the fore-runner and demonſtration of a further, and that the *Final Judgment*. *Job* concludes and cloſeth his Diſcourſe with a ſerious premonition of it.

That ye may know there is a judgment.

That ye may know.] That is, that you may be made to underſtand what ye have taken ſo little notice of, or do not at all remember.

Secondly, Take it for the event; then, *That you may know*, is, that you may feel what you will not be perſwaded of. *I tell you theſe things* that you may know them, that is, that you may be convinced and perſwaded that there is a judgment; or if you will not be perſwaded of it, you ſhall feel it by your ſad experience. Thus *David* prayeth againſt his enemies (*Pſal.* 9. 20.) *Put them in fear, O Lord, that they may know themſelves to be but men*; that is, that they may be convinced and perſwaded of it. He ſpeaks not of ſuch as had either ſo high an opinion of themſelves, that they were Gods; or ſo low an opinion of themſelves, that they were Beaſts or Devils; only they acted as if they had been more then men, and were not ſenſible of their own mortality. They who thus know themſelves be to men, will not (in the Apoſtles ſence, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3.) walk as men; that is, proudly or contentiouſly. And as there are but few who thus know themſelves to be men; ſo there are as few, who know that God is the Lord. (*Exod.* 7. 8.) *The* Egyptians *ſhall know that I am the Lord*; that is, when I bring my judgments on them, then they will be conſtrained to acknowledge me in my almighty power and greatneſs, confeſſing *that I am God alone, and that beſides me there is none other.* When men will not know God in his Word, nor in his Works of Creation and common Providence, he will make them know him in his Rod, and his works of Judgment and extraordinary Providence. So here, *Wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword. That you may know*, is, that you may be convinced by the Logick of the ſword, by pains and puniſhment.

Hoc dico ut eum ad quem provoco juſtum judicẽ prius cogitetis quam id reipſa experiamini. Bez.

Ut cognoſcatis quod ex jure eſt. Jun. *i. e. ut ſaltem metu & horrore judiciorum ejus ad officium perfungendum erga afflictũ revocemini.* Jun.

That there is a judgment.] The Hebrew word is infinitive, *that to judge.* The meaning is, that there ſhall be a time of judgment, or ſuch a proceeding as we call judgment. Judgment is of two ſorts. Firſt, There is a Judgment of abſolution Secondly, A Judgment of condemnation. We may take in both here; God will make you know there is a Judgment.

שרון *pro* אשר רון *Quod judicare, i. e. judicatio Infinitivus, pro nomine verbali.*

Firſt, A Judgment of abſolution on my part; God will determine for me according to the innocency of my cauſe in that day; he will ſet me right before all the world.

Secondly, A Judgment of condemnation on your part; you will be found faulty, and receive ſentence according to your fault. But when ſhould this Judgment be given? There are two times of Divine Judgment.

First, In this world.

Secondly, In the world to come.

We may underſtand it of both; *That ye may know that there is a Judgment*; that is,

Firſt, That God doth moderate, order and guide things according to his infinite wiſdom in this world: The world is not left to chance or hap-hazard; there is a providence of God, and he will bring a ſword upon you, that you may know that there is a judgment, or an unerring wiſdom that orders all things. *To every purpoſe* (ſaith *Solomon,* Eccl. 8. 6.) *there is time and judgment.* That is, a proper ſeaſon and a ſpecial manner of acting, upon the due obſervation whereof, the good ſucceſs of every action doth depend: Now as there is a skill or judgment of man requiſite to eve- your ſelves in the wrong judgment you give of me, yet ry purpoſe, to effect it; ſo there is a wiſdom and a judgment of God to every purpoſe, to order and diſpoſe of it, to reward or puniſh it.

Again ſecondly, *That ye may know there is a Judgment,* is, as if he had ſaid, That ye may know a day is coming, wherein God will judge the world in righteouſneſs,though now you judge unrighteouſly; though now you pleaſe your ſelves in the wrong judgment you give of me, yet know there ſhall be a right judgment given of me and you too.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Man is not eaſily perſwaded that God will judge him, that Judgments are coming, or that Chriſt will come to Judgment.*

Though *Job*'s friends were (in the main) holy and good men, yet he ſpeaks of them as very inſenſible of their liableneſs to this judgment. The wicked (*Iſa.* 28. 15.) *make a covenant with death, and with hell they are at an agreement*: There is no perſwading of them that judgment ſhall overtake them; though all the world be overflowed with a deluge, yet they hope to ſtand dry; *When the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſs through, it ſhall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falſhood have we hid our ſelves.* But will any man knowingly make lies his refuge, and ſecure himſelf by falſhood? I anſwer,

Firſt, Some will. The lies and falſhood, the ſubtilty and guile which they have uſed or reſolve to uſe, is that which they truſt to; they live by their wits and ſhifts, and ſo they hope to make an eſcape from death and danger.

But ſecondly, I conceive the Prophet repreſents theſe men ſcoffingly ſpeaking the opinion which others, eſpecially the holy Prophets had of all the plots and projects, of all the helps and means which they had prepared for their ſhelter in that rainy day fore-threatned; as if they had ſaid, we know very well that you call all theſe (our outward ſtrengths and ſecret policies,yea, our gods, whom you blaſpheme for Idols, all theſe you call) lies and falſhood; well, let them be ſo, yet we will venture our ſelves upon their fidelity, not doubting but that the overflowing ſcourge will have nothing to do with us, though others are nndone by it. A man that pleaſeth himſelf in doing evil, cannot eaſily believe that he ſhall ſuffer evil for doing it. And though the heart cannot put off the terror of preſent judgments, yet it will of future judgment, We are unwilling to know that which checks us in that which we are willing to do.

Secondly obſerve, *They who do not act according to common principles, may be ſaid not to know them.*

Job ſpeaks to his friends, who were not ignorant that there ſhould be a judgment; but they judged him as if they had never looked to have been judged themſelves, their actions did not ſpeak what they knew; therefore he charges them with ignorance (1 *Sam.* 2. 12.) *The ſons of* Eli *were children of* Belial,, *they did not know the Lord.* Did not they know him, and yet Prieſts! not know him, and yet bred up under *Eli* the High Prieſt, a godly man! Could it be ſaid of them, they did not know the Lord? Though they had a form of the knowledge of God in the letter of the Law, yet becauſe their lives were unſuitable, and they acted as they who know not God, therefore 'tis ſaid expreſly, *they knew not God.* They threw off the yoke of obedience, they were *ſons of Belial,* they walked not in the power of their knowledge, and therefore they are ſaid not to know. When *Manaſſes* being carried away to *Babylon* in chains, began to come to himſelf (the Lord having thus humbled him by his affliction) the Text ſaith, *Then* Manaſſes *knew that the Lord he was God* (2 *Chron.* 33. 13.) *Manaſſes* being ſon to *Hezekiah,* a godly King, no doubt was tutored, and inſtructed to know that *God was the Lord*; yet *Manaſſes* never knew God to purpoſe, till he was taught by the Rod. Whatſoever truth we do not hold forth in life, we may be ſaid not to know it, how much knowledge ſoever we have about it.

Thirdly, From hence note alſo, *There ſhall certainly be a Judgment.*

This point was handled before (*verſ.* 25.) conſult that verſe about it.

Fourthly, From the connexion, when he ſaith, *Wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword, that ye may know,* &c. From the Connexion we may learn,

That, *The preſent judgments of God are arguments of a future judgment.*

When we ſee the face of the ſword, ſome viſible judgment, that teacheth us to believe a judgment as yet unſeen. The dayes of judgment in this world, are intimations of that great day of judgment at the end of the world: *Thoſe are leſſer dayes of judgment.* And, as when God doth not bring judgments on ſinners in this life, it hardens many in this opinion, ſurely there will never be a day of judgment. Atheiſts are extreamly ſtrengthened in that miſ-belief, they flatter themſelves that there ſhall be no judgment, becauſe they ſee none, and that ſinners ſhall eſcape puniſhment alwayes, becauſe they are not alwayes puniſhed. Now as ſome are ſtrengthened in their unbelief, that there ſhall be no judgment at all, becauſe they do not ſee a preſent judgment; ſo when God doth viſibly bring forth judgments here, it is a confirmation of faith to others, that God will reckon with all men, and bring every work and ſecret thing to judgment.

Again, Why doth *Job* ſay, *That ye may know that there is a judgment?* Was there no judgment then? *Job* found Judges, and judgment too: True, he complained often of his friends for judging him, but he looked on theirs as wrong judgment, and ſo as no judgment. Intimating that another kind of judgment ſhould paſs upon him, then what had yet paſſed. They ſhould know that there is a judgment.

Hence obſerve, *The judgment of God is an exact and perfect judgment.*

In the day of mans Judgment, ſome receive good for evil, and others receive evil for good. But when we ſhall appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, then *every one ſhall receive according to what he hath done in his body, whether it be good or evil,* Some men are blind and cannot judge aright, others are brib'd or byaſſed, and ſo will not judge aright. But Chriſt knoweth all things and perſons, and nothing can turn him aſide againſt his knowledge. His judgment will be ſtraight and equal judgment.

Sixthly, In reference to the perſons upon whom he preſſeth this, *That ye may know.* You my friends, have judged me harſhly and ſeverely; he particularly applies his ſpeech to them; which gives us this Note further.

They who judge others harſhly, have cauſe to fear judgment.

Chriſt ſpeaks as if judgment ſhould paſs upon none but ſuch (*Matth.* 7. 1.) *Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye mete, it ſhall be meted to you again.* Judge not, doth not prohibit the judgment of man on man; not the judgment of the Magiſtrate, no nor all private judgment; but wrong, harſh, haſty, groundleſs judgment: with ſuch judgment judge not; why? *that ye be not judged:* As if Chriſt had ſaid, ye ſhall certainly be iudged if ye do ſo. But ſhall only ſuch be judged, ſhall not all be judged? Yes all ſhall be judged; but all ſhall not be judged as this ſort of Judges ſhall, with a judgment of condemnation. In that ſpeech of Chriſt, to be judged, is to be condemned. Again, 'tis true, this argument is applicable to all ſorts of ſins and ſinners; *Swear not, lie not, ſteal not, that ye be not judged.* But though it be true of all, yet it is more ſpecially applicable to wrong judgment, and injurious Judges. *Judge not, that ye be not judged.* Such ſhall ſurely be condemned. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) is ſtrict upon that point; *Judge nothing before the time till the Lord come, that will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs.* As the former, ſo this Scripture doth not take all judgment from man, as (if in all caſes) we ſhould only appeal to God, or refer every cauſe to the laſt Judgment. But when he ſaith, *Judge nothing before the time,* his meaning is, judge nothing unſeaſonably, judge no perſon in reference to his ſpiritual ſtate peremptorily or *finally*. We may judge the facts of men but take heed of judging their hearts. We may judge perſons as they are, but we cannot conclude what they may be. We may judge what appeareth, but we muſt not judge by gueſs or by conjecture concerning thoſe things which are hidden and appear not. The Lord (at laſt) *will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the counſels of the hearts*: The Judgment of hidden things and of hearts, are reſerved to him to whom nothing is hidden, and who knoweth the heart (*James* 4. 11, 12.) *Speak not evil one of another (Brethren) he that ſpeaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, ſpeaketh evil of the Law, and judgeth the Law; but if thou judge the Law, thou art not a doer of the Law, but a Judge. There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy. Who art thou that judgeſt another?* Our Law-giver is our Judge, and he who is the Judge of all, is as able to deſtroy by a ſentence of condemnation, as to ſave by a ſentence of abſolution.

Laſtly obſerve, *The remembrance of the righteous judgment to come, ſhould keep us in a holy fear, leſt we judge our brethren unrighteouſly.*

The remembrance of that judgment, ſhould keep us in a holy fear of falling into any ſin, but eſpecially of falling into this ſin of unrighteous judgment. The Apoſtle *Paul* (*Rom.* 14.) takes brethren off from judging and vexing one another about either the obſervation or forbearance of meats and dayes, which once had a plain and direct inſtitution from God, and were then indeed aboliſhed and laid aſide; yet ſome judging their brethren for the uſe, and others for the diſuſe of them, being unſatisfied about their abolition, In this quarrel the Apoſtle interpoſeth (*verſ.* 10.) *Why judgeſt thou thy brother? Why doſt thou ſet at naught thy brother?* (Thus he rebukes and chides them) *we ſhall all ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; for it is written, as I live, ſaith the Lord, every knee ſhall bow to me, and every tongue ſhall confeſs to God.* This thought that we muſt all bow to God in the day of Judgment, may abate our keenneſs, and cool our heats. This will cauſe us either in a loving compliance to bow one to another, or to take heed of wrathful violence, whether in word or action, to cauſe others to bow to us. Whereas they who have blotted the notion of that laſt Judgment out of their hearts and conſcisciences, will not ſtand upon thoſe acts which are greateſt blots in their lives and converſations. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe gloſſing upon the Hiſtory of the murder of *Abel* by *Cain* (*Gen.* 4.) aſſignes this as the occaſion of it; *Cain* and *Abel* went out into the field, where diſcourſing ſome points of Religion, *Cain* ſaid there was no day of Judgment, no account to be given of what is done here, no reward after this life; ſuch were the Tenents of *Cain*: *Abel* held the contrary, and ſaid there was a Judgment, and an eſtate after this life, a reward for the righteous, and puniſhment for the wicked. *Cain* having drunk in thoſe falſe principles, not only judged, but roſe up and murdered his Brother preſently. Whether *Cain* and *Abel* had ſuch a Dialogue or no, is queſtionable; but it is clear, as to the point in hand, that when a man hath once reſolved, that there is no judgment, or hath not the notion freſh upon his ſpirit, he is apt to judge his brethren harſhly, and then to act cruelly againſt them. No man knows whether either his hand or his tongue will ſtop in ſinning, when once he hath thrown away this Bar, or laid aſide the holy Bridle of this principle, *That there is a Judgment*.

Thus far *Job*'s anſwer to the ſecond ſpeech of his ſecond friend *Bildad* hath been opened; wherein he hath laboured to take all his three friends off from the fierceneſs of their oppoſition againſt him, and the harſhneſs of their opinion of him, by the confeſſion of his own faith, in the former context, and by remembring them in this of the account which they were to give to God of all their words and works, in the Judgment of the great Day. His third Friend *Zophar* takes up the Cauſe, and perſecutes *Job* again upon the old quarrel, that ſurely he was a wicked man, a man of an evil life, becauſe his life was ſo full of evils.

CHAP. XX. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Then anſwered Zophar *the* Naamathite *and ſaid;*

Therefore do my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer, and for this I make haſte.

I have heard the check of my reproach, and the ſpirit of my underſtanding cauſeth me to anſwer.

Knoweſt thou not this of old, ſince man was placed upon earth,

That the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.

ZOPHAR no whit moved with the miſeries, nor with the cries of *Job*, not at all ſatisfied with the ſerious confeſſion which he made of his own faith, nor terrified with the ſevere threats of the ſword of God againſt them, proceeds in his turn and time, to charge *Job* afreſh with ungodlineſs, and that by an elegant deſcription of the ſudden and dreadful downfal of ungodly men.

For the clearing of the whole Chapter, we may conſider,

First, The ſum of what he here delivers, or his Argument.

Secondly, His ſcope.

Thirdly, The parts into which we may divide his Anſwer.

The ſum or argument which he handleth is this, and he is only in this to teach and inform us, that wicked men enjoy but a very uncertain eſtate, how high and glorious ſoever they appear in this world. And that after a ſhort time of pleaſure, they are caſt down and periſh for ever.

His ſcope or aim in holding out this Doctrine, is to convince *Job*, that he was juſtly cenſured and dealt with by them as a wicked man, becauſe God dealt with him as with a wicked man. The high proſperity in which he formerly lived, being vaniſhed as a dream, his light turned to darkneſs, and all his joy wrapt up in ſorrow: As if he had ſaid, *The change which thou haſt had in thy outward ſtate, ſaith to us that thy heart is not changed. If thy converſation had not continued bad, thy condition had continued good.*

The parts of his Anſwer are three.

Firſt, A ſhort *Exordium*, in *verſ.* 2, 3.

Secondly, A long Narration, from *verſ.* 3. to the end of *verſ.* 28.

Thirdly, We have a quick and cutting Concluſion in the cloſe of the Chapter: *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.*

VERS. 1, 2.

Then anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid;

Therefore do my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer, and for this do I make haſte.

THeſe words are a part of his Preface, wherein he moveth for attention; and he doth it from a kind of neceſſity that lay upon him to ſpeak; from whence he would infer, that it was ſurely a duty in *Job* to hear: When *Paul* ſaid, *A neceſſity is laid upon me to preach the Goſpel*, he implied a neceſſity in others to hear the Goſpel preached. *Therefore now, and for this*, &c.

What doth this refer to? We may give it three wayes.

Firſt, Upon the whole matter; as if he had ſaid, *I having well weighed and conſidered the tenor of thy diſcourſe upon this great point of Gods dealing with man, and ſeeing how erroneous thou art in thy apprehenſions about it, therefore my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer.*

Secondly, And more principally, *therefore*, that is, becauſe of what thou ſpakeſt at the cloſe of thy laſt diſcourſe, threatning us with the ſword; *Be ye afraid of the ſword, for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword; Therefore do my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer*: As if *Zophar* had ſaid, *You ſpeak terribly to us, you have threatned us with the ſword, and have brandiſhed or waved it before our eyes, like that flaming ſword, which turning every way, was ſet to keep the way of the Tree of Life in Paradiſe, leſt* Adam *ſhould meddle with it. So*, ſaith he, *thou terrifieſt us with the ſword, as if it were drawn againſt us in caſe we ſhould attempt further againſt thee; but I am ſo far from being terrified by thy threats, that for this very reaſon do my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer, and for this do I make haſte. Perceiving how wrongfully you apply the judgments of God, it is time for me to rectifie and reduce you; conſidering alſo that the terror you powr out upon us, is fallen upon your ſelf, and that you are wounded with the ſword you ſpeak of. Have you not felt the ſmart of it? doth not this argue that you are the man, and that you have hit your ſelf while you aimed at us?*

Thirdly, It may be referred to thoſe reproaches (as he interprets them) and ſevere cenſures of their dealing with him. And then the reaſon is plain in the third verſe, where the account of that *therefore*, is thus given; *I have heard the check of my reproach, therefore do my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer, and for this do I make haſte*; we may put both theſe together, as if he had thus more plainly expreſſed himſelf, *Thou haſt not only threatned, but reproached; not only terrified, but checked and cenſured me; for this my thoughts cauſe me to anſwer, and for this do I make haſte.*

חעפי

Therefore do my thoughts.] Thoughts are the firſt-born of the ſoul, our inward motions. The word which is here uſed in the Hebrew for a thought, is very elegant, properly ſignifying the boughs of a tree, becauſe our thoughts ſhoot out from our minds, as branches do from a tree, the force of which word was opened, *chap.* 4. 13. *Therefore do my thoughts*

שוב *Convertere, redire, eſt in* Hiphil, *ubi propriè ſignificat redire facere, & quando de verbis agitur, reſpondere ſignificat.* Bold. *Studium eloquendi ſtimulat, urget ac accelerat me.* Jun.

Cauſe me to anſwer.] The expreſſion notes an active putting forward, or a thruſting him on to anſwer, as if he had not been maſter of his own ſpirit, or could not withſtand the impulſes which were upon him. His thoughts did not only contain the matter which he had to anſwer; but they provoked, and (as we render) *cauſed him to anſwer*; or (according to the Letter) *to return*; *my thoughts cauſed me to return*; *my thoughts* preſs me: As if he had ſaid, *It was my purpoſe to have given thee over, and to have medled no more with thee; but thy carriage hath been ſuch, that I am compelled to anſwer*; I muſt anſwer whether I will or no. The old Prophets when they received impreſſions from the Spirit of God, were no more in their own power, or they had not the command of their own words, they muſt ſpeak what the Spirit dictated to them, they could not forbear. They could not ſay as the wicked are deſcribed (*Pſal.* 12. 4.) *Our lips are our own*; no, their lips moved as the Spirit of God moved them. Thus the Apoſtle *Peter* deſcribes them (2 *Pet.* 1. 21.) *The Propheſie came not in old time (or at any time) by the will of man; but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.* Such a force there is in the word of the Text. Some interpret, as if *Zophar* would have *Job* underſtand ſo much, that he was moved with the Spirit of God, or that God inſpired him to ſpeak, and he could not be ſilent. *David* was under ſuch a conſtraint (*Pſal.* 39. 3.) *My heart was hot within me, while I was muſing, the fire burned, then ſpake I with my tongue. His thoughts cauſed him to anſwer.* And in that *Zophar* ſaith, *My thoughts cauſe me*, &c. he ſeems to intimate, that though he ſpake zealouſly, yet he did not ſpeak raſhly, but had ſeriouſly premeditated or thought of the whole matter before hand.

Hence obſerve, *Thoughts preſs us to words.*

They force their way out; it is a hard thing to keep in our thoughts: our thoughts are as conceptions, and our anſwerings are as the birth. Where the firſt is, the ſecond muſt follow. Where there is a conception, there alwayes ſucceedeth either timely production, or abortion. Thoughts once conceived and formed, ſtrive and ſtruggle to come to the birth and ſee the light. The Apoſtle *Paul* uſeth ſuch an an expreſſion (*Acts* 18. 5.) Where the Text ſaith, that when *Silas* and *Timotheus* were come from *Macedonia*, Paul *was preſſed in ſpirit. Paul* ſpake before; *he reaſoned in the Synagogue every Sabbath* (verſ. 4.) But after they came from *Macedonia*, Paul *was preſſed in ſpirit*, or conſtrained; ſo preſſed in ſpirit, that he could not hold; therefore it follows, *I teſtified to the Jews that Jeſus was Chriſt*; he had a new gale, a freſh breathing from Chriſt upon him; or as ſome render, a Spring-tide came in upon him, his ſpirit ſwell'd high, and overflowed the banks. The ſame word is uſed (2 *Cor.* 5. 14.) *The love of Chriſt conſtraineth me*, that is, the love wherewith Chriſt loveth me ('tis true alſo of the love wherewith we love Chriſt) this love conſtraineth me. *Paul* was not conſtrained by an outward violence, but by an internal virtue, to do, to ſuffer, to ſpeak, to act whatſoever was his duty in the ſervice of Jeſus Chriſt.

Συνείχετο, *Intus apud ſe æſtuabat.*

Again, Whereas he ſaith, *My thoughts cauſe me to anſwer*; obſerve,

That, *Before we anſwer, we ſhould conſider.*

We ſhould not ſpeak till we think; nor utter a matter till we have beaten it out plain in our own ſpirits: *Thoughts muſt form our words, and words ſhould bear the form of our thoughts.* He that ſpeaks what he thinks not, ſpeaks hypocritically; and he that thinks not of what he ſpeaks, ſpeaks inconſiderately. *Unleſs the heart work before the tongue, the tongue will make but ill-favoured work.* As we ſhould deliberate long before we determine to do any thing, ſo we ſhould uſe ſome deliberation before every thing we ſay. When Chriſt ſaith to his Diſciples in that caſe of their being brought before Governors and Kings for his Names ſake (*Matth.* 10. 19, 20.) *Take no thought how or what ye ſhall ſpeak, for it ſhall be given you in that ſame hour, what ye ſhall ſpeak; for it is not ye that ſpeak, but the ſpirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you.* In this Chriſt doth not (as I conceive) forbid all care and fore-thought what to ſay (no more then he forbids all care and fore-thought about the things of this life) when he ſaith (*Matth.* 6. 25.) *Take no thought for your life*: He only forbids anxious diſtruſtful cares and thoughts what to ſay; or that they ſhould not like Orators or Advocates, ſtrive to make ſtudied Rhetorical Pleas and Apologies for themſelves; foraſmuch as in the due improvement and management of their talents, the Spirit would aſſiſt and ſupply them, yea, and if need were, give them immediate ſupplies, and be with their mouths (as he promiſed *Moſes*, Exod. 4. 12.) to *teach them what they ſhould ſay.* If their own thoughts could not, he would teach and move them to anſwer.

And for this I make haſte.] The Hebrew is, *Therefore haſte is in me*; I find a motion in me, and that motion forbids all delayes; ſome expound this *haſte* by a kind of delight; *for this I delight in anſwering, it is pleaſant to me*; we uſually make haſte to do thoſe things we delight to do. That's a good ſence; as it was propheſied of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 40. 7, 8.) *Lo I come, I delight to do thy will*; there was haſte and delight both together in Chriſt: It was written in the volume of Gods Book that he ſhould do the will of God; and Chriſt came with haſte and delight to do it: *Zophar* ſpeaks near the ſame; *It is my delight to anſwer*: we render, *for this I make haſte*, or, *for this my haſte is in me*: There is a twofold haſte; firſt, a fooliſh; ſecondly, a wiſe haſte; a haſte of indiſcretion, and a haſte of diligence; a haſte that precedes deliberation, and a haſte that follows deliberation; *Zophar* would be underſtood of the beſt haſte, when he ſaith, *I make haſte*; his meaning is, he made the haſte of a diligent man, who having wiſely deliberated what to anſwer, makes haſte to anſwer; he would be underſtood to make the haſte of an induſtrious man, not of a paſſionate man. Hence note,

חוש *Et deliciis affluere & feſtinare ſignificat.*

That, *In a good work it is good to make haſte.*

The Apoſtles rule (*Rom.* 12. 11.) is, *Not ſlothful in buſineſs. Some haſte makes waſte; and many make waſte, becauſe they make no haſte*; ſome make more haſte then good ſpeed; others have good ſpeed, while they make haſte. *David* (*Pſal.* 31. 22.) ſpake in too much haſte, he ſpake before he had well thought of it; *I ſaid in my haſte, I am cut off from before thine eyes.* And again (*Pſal.* 116. 11.) *I ſaid in my haſte all men are liars*; take heed of ſuch haſty ſayings as theſe: He tells us alſo of a commendable haſte which he uſed (*Pſal.* 119. 60.) *I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy teſtimonies*; this was the haſte of diligence, the other was the haſte of unbelief; *he that believeth, will not make haſte*; either to do or ſpeak what he hath not conſidered, or finds no warrant for, when he hath conſidered. To run on in a wrong way, is from our unbelief, or from our ignorance; but he that believeth and knoweth, will run in a right way; nothing provokes ſo much to a holy haſte, as Faith doth. Faith moveth us to do the will of God, and not to delay: The Motto of one of the Ancients was, *Make haſte ſlowly*: Another gives it as a rule, in the obſervation whereof, he obtained all his ſucceſſes, *Making no delay.* The right ſtating of our haſte and delay, gives a good iſſue to all our actions; ſometimes haſte is beſt, ſometimes ſtay is beſt; ſometimes we cannot be too haſty, ſometimes we can hardly be too ſlow. *Paul* was reſolute (*Gal.* 1. 16.) he made no ſtop, he would not ſtay for a conference; *When it pleaſed God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen, immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood*: He went not to counſel, either with his own heart, or with the wiſeſt heads, when once the mind of God was cleared up to him, and his conſcience was attached with it. We cannot do that too ſoon which is alwayes to be done. Yet about many things we may ſay (as one was wont) *Let us not make much haſte, that ſo we may have done the ſooner.*

Again, *Zophar* looking upon *Job* as a man miſtaken, and in a wrong way, ſaith, *For this I make haſte.* Hence note,

> *It is our duty to haſten the recalling and reducing of thoſe that are engaged in any errour, or departed from the way of truth and holineſ.*

Zophar's ſuppoſition is a rule for us to walk by, though his practice be not; he was miſtaken in the object of his haſte, not in the ground or riſe of it. He that ſeeth his neighbours houſe on fire, ſhould make haſte to quench it; he that ſeeth him fallen into a pit, ſhould make haſte to pull him out; in a deſperate diſeaſe, we make haſte to the Phyſitian; ſuch were *Zophar*'s apprehenſions concerning *Job*: He ſuppoſed his ſoul diſeaſed, and ready to gangrene with erroneous opinions or ſinful practices; *and for this he made haſte.* As *Paul* ſpeaks (*Gal.* 2. 5.) about falſe brethren in the things of the Goſpel, *to whom he gave not place, no not for an hour. Paul* made haſt to reduce them, he did not delay, no not an hour; ſo ſhould we. As the Sun ſhould not go down upon our wrath (we muſt make haſte to be reconciled to an offended brother) ſo the Sun ſhould not go down upon our zeal, we muſt make haſte to recover a lapſed brother. He that maketh the former delay, *giveth place to the Devil* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) to take an advantage againſt and prevail upon himſelf; and he that maketh the latter delay, *giveth place to the Devil*, to take advantage againſt, and prevail upon his brother.

Verſe 3. **I have heard the check of my reproach, and the ſpirit of my underſtanding cauſeth me to anſwer.**

Some conceive that as theſe words hold forth what *Zophar* had heard from *Job*, ſo with what frame of ſpirit he heard it; as if he had ſaid, *I have heard it, and let it go*; *I will neither trouble my ſelf nor thee about it, but take it patiently*: *I will not check or reproach* thee, *though I have heard the check of my reproach*; that is, ſuch a check or reproof as tends to my reproach and diſgrace.

יכלם *Ad confuſionem & erubeſcentiam pertinet.*

The word ſignifies to make one *bluſh*; you have ſpoken ſuch things (ſaith *Zophar*) as might make we *bluſh* if I were guilty; poſſibly he aims particularly at thoſe words of *chap.* 19. 22. *Why do you perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?* Where *Job* chargeth his friends with higheſt cruelty; ye have (upon the matter) eaten my fleſh, and will ye deſtroy my ſpirit too? Now, ſaith *Zophar*, *I have heard the check of my reproach.* What! do we perſecute you, who are come to comfort you? have we eaten your fleſh, who mourn over your ſoul? why do you ſhame and diſhonour us with this reproach?

Yet I conceive that which *Zophar* calleth the check of his reproach, was *Job*'s ſtiffneſs and perſiſtance in his opinion, ſtill diſſenting from his friends, and refuſing to be brought over to their judgments. Hence note,

> *Man is apt to account it a reproach to be diſſented from and gainſayed in what he affirms as truth.*

Every diſſent carrieth a reproof, yea, a reproach in it; he muſt have a patient ear that can hear himſelf reproved: *Zophar*'s patience was ſo much moved with it, that he preſently adds,

The ſpirit of my underſtanding cauſeth me to anſwer.

Theſe words are near in ſence with the cloſe of the forformer verſe; there he ſaid, *My thoughts cauſe me to anſwer*; here, *the ſpirit of my underſtanding cauſeth me to anſwer.* Firſt, Some interpret it of God, who is the ſpirit giving underſtanding: As if he had ſaid, God hath cauſed me to anſwer. But rather, Secondly, *The ſpirit of the underſtanding* is the higheſt, chiefeſt and moſt ſublimate faculty of the underſtanding; as if he had ſaid, *Not only doth my underſtanding in general, but the moſt refined part of it, that which is moſt free from the dregs of paſſion, the very ſpirit of my underſtanding moves me to anſwer.* The Apoſtle uſeth ſuch an expreſs (*Eph.* 4. 23.) *Be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind*; not only be renewed in the outward man, in practice and converſation, but be renewed in your mind; yea, in the ſpirit of it. Holineſs is not only the renewing of the outward man, but of the mind, and not only of the mind, but of the ſpirit of the mind, that is, of whatſoever riſeth up neareſt to God, as the ſpirit of the underſtanding doth; our minds need renewing, and ſo doth the very ſpirit of them, both becauſe corruption is got into the higheſt powers of the mind, and becauſe we muſt ſerve God and anſwer one another with thoſe higheſt powers, even with the ſpirit of our underſtanding.

Thirdly, *The ſpirit of the underſtanding* may be expounded by the force and power of the underſtanding. The ſpirit of every thing is the beſt and the ſtrongeſt of it. And thus he ſeems to ſpeak in oppoſition to the manner of *Job's* ſpeech, which was ſuch as made it (in his conſtruction) a check rather then a counſel, and a reproach rather then a reproof. A check and a reproach proceed from paſſion, or from ſpleen; whereas counſel what to do, and reproof for what hath been done amiſs, proceed from compaſſion, or from love. Thou haſt ſpoken my reproach, and therefore thou haſt ſpoken from thy own paſſion; but I will not imitate thee, I intend not to anſwer thee with my paſſion, but with my reaſon and with my ſpirit, the force and beſt of my underſtanding.

Laſtly, When he ſaith, *The ſpirit of my underſtanding cauſeth me*, &c. He (poſſibly) would intimate, that he had underſtanding or knowledge enough to anſwer for himſelf, to retort *Job*'s reproach, and make good his own aſſertion.

From this laſt clauſe of the Verſe, obſerve,

> *We ſhould not anſwer paſſionate ſpeeches with paſſion.*

The more we ſee others diſturbed and heated with paſſion, the more cool and compoſed we ſhould be; we ſhould diſpoſe our ſelves to the higheſt degree of patience, when we ſee others impatient; what others ſpeak or write in anger, we ſhould anſwer in love, and fall to work with our reaſon, yea, with (that, which hath more of the ſpirit of our underſtanding in it) our Graces. When we perceive thoſe we have to deal with, over-wrought with their own diſtempers and corruptions, when we ſee plainly that the ſpirit of pride and contentiouſneſs cauſeth them to ſpeak to us, then we ſhould ſtrive to ſpeak with them in the ſpirit of meekneſs, and the ſpirit of underſtanding ſhould cauſe us to anſwer. Man hath this priviledge above beaſts, that he hath an underſtanding; and not only ſo, but in this he is like to Angels, yea, to God himſelf; but unleſs he exerciſeth his underſtanding, he acts as a beaſt: So the *Pſalmiſt* concludes (*Pſal.* 49. 20.) *Man that is in honour, and underſtandeth not* (that is, doth not exerciſe his underſtanding, or act ſuitably to it, but is led meerly by ſenſe, or hurried by paſſion, this man) *is like the beaſts that periſh.* It is good to be full of affection; but it is beſt to work in the *full aſſurance of underſtanding*; affections without underſtanding, are blind, and quickly run us upon a thouſand inconveniences. That duty which calls up all our affections, yet calls for a work of the underſtanding (*Pſal.* 47.7.) *Sing praiſes with underſtanding.* And if we ought not to perform any publick duty in the Church (thoſe in particular of praying and ſinging) ſo, as that others cannot ſet their underſtandings on work, then much leſs are we to perform any duty without the work of our own underſtanding (1 *Cor.* 14.14,15.) *If I pray in an unknown tongue* (that is, in a tongue which others who joyn with me, know not, though I do) *my ſpirit prayeth, but my underſtanding is unfruitful,* that is, to them with whom I pray; my underſtanding in prayer is no benefit to them, unleſs they alſo underſtand what I pray. *What is it then? I will pray with the ſpirit, and will pray with the underſtanding alſo; I will ſing with the ſpirit, I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo;* that is, I will ſing and pray in an unknown tongue by that extraordinary gift of the Spirit, or as the Spirit dictates unto me; yet *I will ſing and pray with the underſtanding alſo,* that is, I will ſo explain or interpret my *Pſalm* or *Prayer,* that others may underſtand it. He is a *Barbarian* to others, who either ſpeaketh or prayeth what they underſtand not; and he is worſe then a *Barbarian* to himſelf, who ſpeaketh what himſelf underſtandeth not. An ignorant perſon wants underſtanding, and a paſſionate perſon cannot uſe his underſtanding; both are unfit to object or anſwer. When we anſwer like men, the ſpirit of our underſtanding cauſeth us to anſwer.

From the Preface thus briefly opened, *Zophar* deſcends to the matter of his anſwer, which he layeth down first, more generally, at *verſ.* 4, 5.

Verſ. 4. **Knoweſt not thou this of old, ſince man was placed upon earth?**

Theſe words charge *Job* either with groſs ignorance, or a reſolved oppoſition of the truth againſt his own knowledge: As if he had ſaid, *Job, thou wouldeſt perſwade us that thou art a knowing man; haſt thou not this among thy experiences? Is not this laid up among thy treaſures of knowledge? Knoweſt thou not this?* Thus the words are a check of his ignorance or inadvertency. *What haſt thou not known this?* Knoweſt thou not that which every one knoweth? children can ſpeak of this; this hath been the courſe of God of old. As if he had ſaid, *I am not ſpeaking paradoxes to thee and novelties, or things which fall out only now and then,* but of the fixt and conſtant tenor of Gods dealings and adminiſtrations even from the firſt, or of old, long ago, from all ages and generations it hath been thus.

Fixa hæc & conſtituta divinæ providentiæ ratio omnibus nota eſt. Pined.

מני־עד *Ex eo quod olim à ſæculo, à ſemper ab æterno, quod frequenter ſumitur pro magna duratione.*

The word ſignifies ſometimes *Eternity* ſtrictly taken (*Iſa.* 57.17.) *Thus ſaith the high and holy one that inhabiteth Eternity,* that is, who hath neither beginning nor ending. Chriſt (*Iſa.* 9.5.) is called *the everlaſting Father,* or, *the Father of Eternity;* not only in regard of the eternity of his being, but as he is the author of eternal life (here begun, hereafter to be perfected) unto all thoſe that believe on him, or have intereſt in him; as alſo becauſe of the everlaſtingneſs of his fatherly care of, and tenderneſs towards them. In other places the word ſignifies only a long time or a diuturnity (*Pſal.* 132.14.) *There will I dwell for ever;* that is, for many ages. So here, *Haſt thou not known of old?* Which is explained in the next words, *ſince man was placed upon the earth?* That is, ever ſince or from the creation of the world; for then man was firſt placed upon the earth. We may read the word *Man,* not as an *Appellative,* but as the *Proper Name* of the firſt man; *Haſt not thou known this of old ſince* Adam *was placed upon the earth?* The ſame word was the proper name of the firſt man, and is the common name of all men. Thus it hath been ever ſince *Adam* was formed and faſhioned out of the earth by divine art, and made up into that goodly fabrick, and then diſpoſed by a divine order to dreſs the Garden. The original word ſignifies to ſettle or place a man in his buſineſs or calling, as *Adam* was preſently after his Creation (*Gen.* 2.15.) *And the Lord took the man* (or *Adam*) *and put him into the Garden of* Eden *to dreſs it and to keep it. Knoweſt thou not this, or that it hath been thus of old ſince man was* (*thus*) *placed upon the earth?* Hence obſerve,

שים *Poſitus arte & induſtria fabricatus, diſpoſitus certo loco, non caſu.*

> Firſt, That, *We ſhould acquaint our ſelves with the hiſtory of Gods dealing in all ages.*

Doſt thou not know?] He ſpeaks it as a reproach to him, that he waa not acquainted with what God had done in former times; there are ſome extraordinary caſes, that fall not out in every age: the providence of God hath ſome excentrical motions; but we may draw a line, and ſee the footſteps of many of his diſpenſations in all ages. Many works of divine providence are uniform, and run parallel in all times: Or if their face and appearance be not one and the ſame, yet it is not divers or contrary. Now, as it is a ſhame not to know common principles, ſo not to know common experiences. That which any man may know, every man ought to know, if it be that which is uſeful, and a duty for us to know.

Secondly, From the particular here intended, obſerve,

> That, *In all ages God hath declared himſelf againſt wicked men.*

God never ſhewed himſelf a friend to ſinners, or a lover of iniquity; he declared himſelf againſt *Adam* when he ſinned, though he receiveth him into favour again. He declared himſelf againſt wicked *Cain,* he excommunicated him, and caſt him out; he declared himſelf againſt the old world by water: When they were grown ſo vile, that all the imaginations of the thoughts of their hearts were evil, he ſent a deluge, not to waſh, but drown them. He declared himſelf againſt the wickedneſs of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* by fire, not to purifie, but conſume them. God never ſhewed good will to wicked men (he is alwayes conſtant to himſelf) as he never ſhewed ill will to any of the godly; there is not one teſtimony of either upon record in any age of the world.

Thirdly, From thoſe words, *Since man was placed upon the earth;* he doth not ſay, *Since man was upon the earth;* but placed.

> Note, *There is a divine ordination that ſets every man in his place upon the earth.* Or, *Man is placed and diſpoſed of by a divine ordination.*

God hath appointed to every man where he ſhall be, and how he ſhall be employed. Time and place are ſet down by God; *And as he hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation* (Acts 17.26.) So the buſineſs of every man in that place of his habitation. When the Lord made man, he took and *put him into the Garden of Eden;* there was the bound of his habitation: And being brought thither, he ſhewed him his work, *to dreſs it, and to keep it* (Gen. 2.15.) He left him not at large to the whole world for a place, but ſingled him his place; nor did he leave him at large for an employment; but ſhewed him his work. *Adam* did not thruſt himſelf into the Garden, but the Lord took him by the hand, led him to, and placed him in it, directing him what to do. Here was the divine ordination to a Calling. It is our happineſs when we are able to ſay, whereſoever we are, God hath placed us there, we have not thruſt our ſelves in. This is a great ſupport in any ſervice or buſineſs, when we can ſee that God hath called, and his hand conducted us to it; that we have not taken, but received it; that we are not come, but ſent unto it.

Zophar proceeds to expreſs or name that common truth, to which all ages have born, or may bring in their witneſs.

Verſe 5. **That the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, and the joy of the hypocrite for a moment.**

Job having gained thus much upon his Friends, at leaſt, upon *Zophar,* that wicked men may enjoy outward proſperity in this world, is yet oppoſed upon the ſame account, becauſe, though they do proſper, yet it is but for a little time, ſo little, that they can hardly be known to have been at all in proſperity. For (ſaith *Zophar*) to this Aſſertion all ages give their ſuffrage; *The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort,* &c. We have in the two parts of the Verſe three pair of parallel terms. Firſt, *Triumphing and Joy.* Secondly, *The wicked man and the hypocrite.* Thirdly, *Short and a moment,* Theſe in ſubſtance are the ſame.

The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort.

The word which we tranſlate *triumphing,* ſignifies not only joy, but joy proclaimed, that all may know it: Such is

רננת: *Ovatio, triumphus, læta*

is that of triumphers after victory obtained in battel. It is applied both to honeſt and to ſinful joy; yea, the word is alſo ſometimes applied to ſorrow, when ſorrow is loud, and maketh an out-cry or lamentation: From this root the Hebrews derive that word whereby they expreſs a *Peacock*; and they give the reaſon, both from the ſhrill cry of the *Peacock*, as alſo from the cauſe of that cry; the *Peacock* ſhouts (ſay Naturaliſts) looks upon his painted wings and goodly feathers, then he triumpheth; and ſo do wicked men, when they reflect upon their painted and ſpreading plumes, when they look upon their worldly ſplendor and greatneſs, then they triumph and ſing. Some read, *the praiſe*; others, *the ſong of the hypocrite*. All rendrings laid together, do but reach the fulneſs of the Text, in ſetting out the hypocrites vanity, who aſcending (as it were) his Chariot of pride and ſelf-confidence, rides in triumph, and bleſſeth himſelf, as the only happy man. But,

proclamatio ob fœlicitatem & verā ſucceſſū; hinc Pavones dicti Rananna, à clamore, vel quia quaſi gaudent de pulchritudine alarum ſuarum. Laus impiorum brevis eſt. Vulg, *Cantum improborum à propinquo.* Jun.

The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort.] Or according to the Hebrew, *It is of near*: This nearneſs may be taken two wayes; Firſt, In reference to its beginning; it is not long ſince the triumph of ſuch began. Secondly, In reference to its ending; the triumph of ſuch ſhall not long continue; 'tis but a while ſince it roſe, and within a while it will fall. We read of *new Gods* (*Deut.* 32. 17. It is this word in the Hebrew, *Gods of near new Gods*) *which your fathers knew not*; ye have a certain race of Gods that were never heard of but of late, Gods of a late Date or Edition, and it will not be long but they will be out of date again; ſuch is the triumphing of the wicked, it is not long ſince he began to triumph; a child may number the years which his proſperity hath lived, and the oldeſt man may out-live it. I find ſome Interpreters expreſſing the word by a local diſtance, rather then a diſtance of time. *The triumph of the wicked is near*, that is, it is not come from far: its pedigree and original is not from heaven, the far Countrey; but from the earth, to which it is a neighbour; and therefore (as all earthly things) it is fading, tranſitory, and quickly paſſeth away.

מקרוב *De propinquo.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Wicked men may flouriſh in great proſperity.*

Triumph is the height of proſperity: If ever Heathen *Rome* were ſeen in her glory, it was when her *Cæſars* having gotten ſome great victory, rode in triumph: To ſuch a ſtate may a wicked man aſcend. *I have ſeen the wicked in great proſperity* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 37.) *flouriſhing like a green Bay-tree*; yea, they may flouriſh like the Cedars of *Lebanon*, or like the Oaks of *Baſhan*. Let not their proſperity ſcandalize the Saints, or make them to ſtumble. Some know not what interpretation to put upon it, or how to bear it. *Wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he?* (Hab. 1. 13.) This Point I have met with before; therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it. But (which may eaſily take off this ſcandal) obſerve,

Secondly, That, *A wicked mans proſperity is of no continuance.*

It is but like a Statue of Snow before the Sun, ſoon defaced and melted down. It is but like ſome goodly Characters drawn upon the ſand, which the next puff of wind blots out. He may have the pleaſure of ſin, but it is but for a ſeaſon; his pleaſures are ſcarce ſweet at all; his pleaſures are at beſt but a bitter-ſweet, and that ſweetneſs which is in them, doth not hold long: *The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort*, both becauſe lately begun, and becauſe it ſhall ſoon end: yea, ſhort, if we conſider the utmoſt poſſibility of its continuance. How many caſualties, decayes, changings and declinings are ready to invade and ſeize upon it every moment?

Further, The ſhortneſs of their triumph may be conſidered three wayes.

Firſt, In reference to the conſtitution or nature of the things about which they triumph, or in which they rejoyce. Thus 'tis ſhort.

Secondly, Short in reference to the general curſe which God hath laid upon the creature; the creature at the beſt, is but a ciſtern, not a fountain; there is no water in it, but what is put into it: And ſince the fall of man, the creature is a broken, a crackt ciſtern, and cannot hold the comforts that are put into it; they quickly leak out and paſs away like water ſpilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.

Thirdly, That which makes the triumphing of a wicked man yet ſhorter, is, a particular curſe upon him for his perſonal ſins and crooked wayes wherein he walketh. All his enjoyments are in themſelves vaniſhing, and he by his own folly makes them more vain to him then they are in themſelves.

From all it follows, That, *A wicked man is a very miſerable man.*

His triumphing is ſhort, but his declining is for ever; his proſperity is but for a while, but his miſery is everlaſting; all his good things will ſoon be gone, but his evils ſhall never end; his light is quickly put out, but when once it is dark with him, he ſhall ſee the light no more. The affliction which a Believer meets with in this life, is conſiſtent with his happineſs; or, he is not unhappy, though afflicted, becauſe his afflictions are ſhort, and his comforts everlaſting (1 *Cor.* 4. 17.) *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment*, &c. This makes the life of a Saint happy while he is in affliction, his afflictions are light when heavieſt, and ſhort when longeſt, compared with that *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*: This alſo makes the life of a wicked man miſerable while he is in proſperity, becauſe his proſperity is but light and for a moment; and we may carry the latter part to the contrary ſence, that light, ſhort proſperity worketh for him an eternal weight of miſery: For as earthly things are temporary in their nature and uſe to all, ſo being ill uſed and enjoyed without God in Chriſt, and a good Conſcience, they prove eternal in their puniſhment; for the puniſhments and miſeries that follow them, are eternal, and ſo they may be ſaid to work an eternal weight of puniſhment; whereas the afflictions of the Saints are ſhort in their burdenſomneſs, yet eternal in their fruitfulneſs; for they work (not by the way of price, but of preparation) *an eternal weight of Glory.*

And the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.

Leſt the Title of a wicked man ſhould be too broad, and *Job* ſhould not take himſelf as concerned in this concluſion, becauſe all knew him to be a worſhipper of God, and one that made profeſſion of Religion, therefore *Zophar* in this latter clauſe, adds the word *hypocrite*; which is moſt proper to thoſe who are higheſt in profeſſion. *The joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.*

Triumphing, in the former clauſe, ſignifies a more open deportment: There's no diſſembling nor concealing of a Triumph. Joy may be more ſecret and retired; ſo ſome conceive *Zophar* ſpeaking properly in reference to the uſual diſtinct temper of the wicked and the hypocrite. A wicked prophane man triumphs and rants it, he makes all ring with his jollity. The hypocrite and falſe profeſſor takes ſome ſtiller delights, and more moderate contentments; now (ſaith *Zophar*) this joy, though it be more reſerved and cloſe, is yet but for a moment, 'tis but like a *punctum* or point, which in the *Mathematicks* is ſo ſmall a thing, that it hath no dimenſions, unleſs imaginable; a point is leſs then the leaſt line, or only the beginning of a line, it is but putting down his pen, and 'tis done; there needs no drawing, as in making lines. The worldly felicity of an hypocrite toucheth him only as a Globe doth a Table (*in puncto*) in a point; he hath but a touch of it, and then 'tis gone. A point is to a place, as a moment is to time, the leaſt and laſt diviſion of it: A point is indiviſible in place, as a moment is in time. Thus the joy of the hypocrite is brought down to the loweſt that words or thoughts can make of it. A hypocrite (againſt his will) toucheth worldly joy in regard of the time of his enjoying of it, as a Godly man willingly and deſignedly toucheth it, in regard of that frame or ſpirit with which he enjoyeth it, only in a point. He hath as little to do with worldly things as he can, he doth not lay the whole dimenſion of his ſoul upon them. He rejoyceth in the world as if he rejoyced not. Now this which is at once the duty and happineſs of the Saints, ſhall be the puniſhment of hypocrite. Theſe whether they will or no, ſhall have but a point or moment of worldly Felicity; whereas the other reckon

Improbis in mundo tribuitur Jubilum, quia non diſſimulant quo gaudent, Hypocritis lætitia animo magis abſcondita, quam verbis ſignificata. Coc.

עדי רגע *Ad inſtar puncti, ad momentum.*

Licet vitam integram hominis duret humana fœlicitas, momentum durat.

reckon upon, and chearfully make account of it, as of no more. Though true joy in worldly things be theirs, yet they lightly eſteem that joy. As for ſpiritual joy, that belongs to them alone. The Apoſtle (*Phil.* 4.4.) exhorts all ſuch, and only ſuch, when he ſaith, *Rejoyce in the Lord; I ſay again, rejoyce.* The hypocrite hath no right to any joy (ſorrow is his portion) yet he can as hardly be kept from rejoycing in the world, as the godly are hardly got to rejoyce in the Lord. Now though the hypocrites joy is moſt in outward things (he rejoyceth in *Corn, Wine and Oyl*) yet the joy of the hypocrite may go further, he may have joy in ſpirituals; for the hypocrite doth not rejoyce meerly as a wicked man, in the things of the world, he ſometimes rejoyceth in the things of heaven (*Mat.* 13.20.) *The ſtony ground received the word with joy.* The hypocrite may get a ſmatch or ſome *taſtes of the powers of the world to come,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Heb.* 6.5.) For ſeeing hypocrites are not only enlightened about the things of this world, but alſo about the things of the world to come; they may have ſome joy in them; yet this ſtrictly taken, is but a ſenſitive joy, or at the moſt, a rational, not a truly ſpiritual joy: A man may have a joy in and about ſpiritual things, yet have no ſpiritual joy; as a man may rejoyce in and about many worldly things, and yet his not a worldly joy; or as a man may have much knowledge about ſpiritual things, yet no ſpiritual knowledge of them; thus an hypocrite hath flaſhes of joy about ſpiritual things, but no ſpiritual joy: When a hypocrite hears a well ordered quick diſcourſe and diſcovery of the joyes and happineſs of heaven, of the grace and goodneſs of God, this from rational grounds may affect his heart, and ſo cauſe joy; but this joy of the hypocrite about ſpirituals, though it be better then his worldly joy, in regard of its object, yet it is no better in regard of its duration; for of this we may alſo conclude, 'tis but for a moment. As the hypocrite himſelf, ſo his joy is not built upon the rock, but upon the ſands; it is not a Maſter-joy, a joy that can carry him out when ſorrow cometh: A hypocrite cannot be as ſorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing; he cannot (as *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 5.3.) *rejoyce in tribulation,* becauſe he is not indeed united unto Chriſt, the true *Iſaac,* or laughter of his people, the fountain of their joy. The hypocrites ſorrow will laſt for ever, but all his joyes are only for a moment.

Laſtly, Conſider the oppoſite ſtate which *Zophar* would have *Job* take notice of.

The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment.

Hence it follows that there are ſome whoſe triumphing, and whoſe joyes are permanent and ſtable: The triumphing of the godly is for ever, and the joy of the ſincere ſhall continue to everlaſting. The joy of the Saints here is everlaſting in the nature of it, though not in the actings of it; 'tis everlaſting, as everlaſting is oppoſed to a period, though not as to a pauſe. Their joy dieth not in this world, though ſometimes it be ſick, and languiſh. Some Saints have had their joy abiding in ſtrength, when themſelves were weak, and their joy not only alive, but lively as long as they lived; they have been carried to the grave in the embraces of Chriſt, and in the ſmiles of divine love. And as the moment of this life hath been a kind of eternity of joy to them, ſo eternity ſhall be to them but as a moment of joy; and yet every moment ſhall have (as it were) an eternity in it. Saints ſhall rejoyce for ever, yet their joy ſhall be alwayes as freſh and green as if new begun; as there ſhall be no removing of this joy, ſo no abatement of their ſweetneſs in the enjoyment of it.

VERS. 6,7,8,9.

Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach up to the clouds.
Yet he ſhall periſh for ever, like his own dung; they which have ſeen him, ſhall ſay, Where is he?
He ſhall flee away as a dream, and ſhall not be found; yea, he ſhall be chaſed away as a viſion of the night.
The eye alſo which ſaw him, ſhall ſee him no more; neither ſhall his place any more behold him.

ZOphar having given his opinion about the vaniſhing proſperity of a wicked man, proceeds to amplifie and confirm it. He amplifies it,

Firſt, By an hyperbolical ſuppoſition, *verſ.* 6. *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens,* &c. The *Antitheſis* whereof is laid down, *verſ.* 7. *Yet he ſhall periſh for ever, like his own dung,* &c.

Secondly, He amplifies it by elegant ſimilitudes; Firſt, Of a dream. Secondly, Of a night viſion, *verſ.* 8. Both which are proſecuted, *verſ.* 9. *The eye alſo which ſaw him, ſhall ſee him no more,* &c.

Verſe 6. Though his excellency mount up to the heavens.

It is a ſtrong way of arguing, when we put the worſt of our caſe, and yet conclude it good. We ſhew our ſelves able to hold out in the worſt that is or can be, when we profeſs a ſtedfaſtneſs in that which is worſe then is or indeed can be.

It is alſo a ſtrong way of arguing, when we put the beſt of another mans caſe, and yet conclude it bad. He is not able to hold out in the beſt that is or may be, who cannot continue in that eſtate, which is better then any is, or indeed can be. Such is the intended ſtrength of *Zophar's* argument in this place.

Though his excellency mount up to the heavens.

The Vulgar renders, *If his pride aſcend even up to heaven.* The word in the original which we tranſlate *Excellency,* he tranſlates *Pride.* Properly it ſignifies that *which is lifted up.* There is an eaſie cognation between theſe two. For that which is high, or he who lifts up himſelf high, may be ſaid to be proud. The Etymologie of the Latine word, *to be proud,* is to go over another, or to go above him. And uſually they who are exalted above others, in high places of worldly honour and excellency, are alſo lifted up with pride. A lowly ſpirit in a high place, is very rarely found. The Hebrew word for a Prince, is derived from this Root, both becauſe all Princes are exalted above the ordinary ſort of men, and becauſe moſt Princes are proud in the exalting of themſelves. The word is uſed often in a good ſence, as *Pſal.* 62.4. *They only conſult to caſt him down from his excellency:* That is, to caſt *David* from that Royal Throne to which God had exalted him.

Si aſcenderit uſq; ad cœlum ſuperbia ejus. Vulg.

Superbire eſt ſuper ire.

Princeps dicitur נשא *quaſi elevatus aut ſublimis.*

The *Septuagint* tranſlate, *If his gifts aſcend up to heaven.* Gifts may be expreſſed by this word, becauſe they do indeed lift him up in honour who is endued with them; as alſo becauſe we are very apt to be lifted up with gifts; as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, 1 *Cor.* 8.1. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* This ſence is very ſuitable to *Zophar's* diſcourſe of a hypocrite, who, though he hath not ſo much as one talent of true Grace, yet he may have five, yea ten talents of gifts; the gift of Prayer, the gift of Propheſie, the gift of utterance, *&c.* And with theſe gifts of heaven he is exalted and impregnated with thoſe worſt fumes of hell, Pride and Self-conceit.

Si aſcenderint in cœlū dona ejus. Sept.

This form of ſpeaking, *to mount up to heaven,* implies a gradation of four ſteps.

Firſt, Heaven is high. Therefore to mount up to heaven, is to be in a high ſtate of honour and excellency.

Secondly, Heaven is higheſt, and therefore *to mount up to heaven,* notes the higheſt aſcent and elevation which man is capable of, or is attainable here on earth. When thoſe Builders (*Gen.* 11.4.) conſulted and reſolved, *Go to, let us build a City and a Tower, whoſe top may reach to heaven,* their purpoſe and plot was to build a Tower as high as it could poſſibly be builded. When *Bibulus* was extolled by the higheſt praiſes and acclamations of the people, *Cicero* the Orator ſpeaks it thus, *Bibulus is in heaven.* The Poet ſpeaks the ſame language, *With my exalted head I will touch the Stars.* As to be caſt down to hell, ſignifies in Scripture-phraſe the loweſt dejection or depreſſion; ſo to be lifted up to heaven, the higheſt exaltation. We find theſe two ſet in oppoſition (*Iſa.* 14.13,14.) *Thou* (meaning the proud *Aſſyrian*) *haſt ſaid in thy heart, I will aſcend into heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will aſcend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the moſt high. But thou ſhalt be brought down to hell, to the ſides of the pit,* that is, thou ſhalt be caſt into the loweſt condition, as thou haſt aſpired to the higheſt. And thus Chriſt himſelf threatens that city

Bibulus in cœlo eſt. Cic. *ad* Attic.

Sublimi feriam ſidera vertice. Hor.

which did not repent at the ſight of his mighty works(*Mat.* 11.23.) *And thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted to heaven, ſhalt be brought down to hell. Capernaum* was lifted up both in her own opinion, and by thoſe real priviledges, the perſonal preſence of Chriſt there, his frequent preaching and Miracles; the contempt or non-improvement of theſe ripened her for ruine, bringing her to deſtruction, which looked like a hell upon earth, and ſweeping her at laſt from the face of the earth into that utter deſtruction in hell. Hell notes the loweſt degree of temporal as well as eternal miſery. And heaven notes the higheſt degree of temporal as well as of eternal happineſs.

Thirdly (which is more) *to mount up to heaven,* implies a kind of rivality with God in happineſs, or man preſuming to ſomewhat more then a man, a kind of Divinity among men. They who can patiently receive ſuch flattery as the *Tyrians* and *Zidonians* with the reſt of that throng beſtowed upon *Herod*, crying out, *The voyce of God and not of man* (Acts12.22.)and they eſpecially who affect or require to be adored as God, as m any Princes and very many of thoſe *Luciferian* Popes have done, theſe indeed may be ſaid to *mount their excellency unto heaven,* though in ſo doing, they have had but a phanſie of exaltation unto heaven, and have really debaſed themſelves below the earth; yea (as it follows in the next verſe) they have become in the eſteem of God and of Godly men, baſer then their own dung. For as that honour which is due and but commenſurate unto man, exalts and ennobles him that receives it, ſo every exceſs, eſpecially this ſpoken of (which is the moſt irregular and exorbitant exceſs) ſhames and depreſſeth him.

Fourthly,*To mount up to heaven,*carrieth in it not only the ſignification of a high, or of the higheſt eſtate on earth, but alſo of that, which is more then the earth can produce or advance any man unto, a certain, yea, an unchangeable and an unremoveable eſtate. There are no changes in heaven, and only there (except in hell) there are none. This earthly world paſſeth away,and the faſhion of it; therefore to have an excellency mounted up to heaven, is a preſumption to be (what God can make, and hath promiſed to make his *Jacob* or choſen people to be) an eternal excellency.

Take in theſe four aſcents, and then conceive how comprehenſive a ſuppoſition *Zophar* makes of the wicked mans worldly felicity, in theſe words, *Though his excellency mount up to heaven.* The next and laſt clauſe of the verſe is alſo of the ſame largeneſs and comprehenſion.

And his head reach unto the clouds.

The word properly ſignifies thick and dark clouds. As if, ſay ſome, *Zophar* would intimate thus much; *Though the wicked man lift up his head above all ſtorms and darkneſs, and ſeemeth to himſelf a ſuperiour to all dangers and diſaſters, yet he ſhall periſh.* The head of a wicked man is above the clouds of heaven in aſpiring projects, while his heart is among or below the clods of the earth in covetous and curſed practices. Yea, he kicks at the God of heaven with his heel, while his head reacheth unto the clouds of heaven. While he *ſaith in his heart, I will aſcend above the clouds of heaven, I will be like the moſt High* (Iſa. 14. 14.) He ſets himſelf as an enemy, and is moſt unlike to the moſt High. Heathens have often perſonated proud men in ſuch a ſtile as *Zophar* expreſſeth them in, walking like the ſtars, and reaching the poles of heaven with their head. As when the Pſalmiſt would ſhew the ſuper-eminency of the mercy and faithfulneſs of God, he ſaith (*Pſal.* 36. 5.) *Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulneſs reacheth unto the clouds.* So to ſhew the ſuper-eminency of the pride and folly of man, he is deſcribed mounting to the heavens, and reaching out his head unto the clouds.

עב *Nubes obſcurior & craſſior; nubes etiam à ſuperiori radice dicuntur* Neſhim, *quaſi elevationes.*

Æqualis aſtris gradior, & cunctos ſuper, altum ſuperbo vertice attingens polum. Sen. *in* Theiſt.

This whole alluſion may be unto a Tree, full and highgrown, like an Oak, or a Cedar of *Lebanon.* To which the flouriſhing condition of the *Amorite* is compared (*Amos* 2.9.) *I* (ſaith the Lord) *deſtroyed the* Amorite *before them, whoſe height was like the height of the Cedars, and he was ſtrong as the Oaks. Nebuchadnezzar*, the greateſt Monarch then living, was repreſented to himſelf in a dream under this ſimilitude of a Tree, the *height whereof was great, and whoſe height reached unto heaven* (Dan. 4. 10, 11.) Thus *Daniel* interprets it (*verſ.* 22.) *It is thou, O King, that art grown and become ſtrong, for thy greatneſs is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.* When a mans dominion reacheth to the end of the earth, he in the ſtricteſt ſence of this alluſive language, may be ſaid (as to a worldly felicity) to reach his greatneſs, or that his greatneſs reacheth unto heaven. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, *A wicked man may get to the higheſt of worldly heights, to the greateſt of a worldly greatneſs.*

There is nothing of this world ſo good, but an evil man may enjoy it. No power or honour on earth ſo high, but he may reach after and attain it, whoſe portion is in the loweſt hell. He may have any thing of, or all things upon the earth, about him, who hath nothing of heaven in him. His excellency may mount up to heaven, who hath not the leaſt ſhare in the leaſt heavenly excellency. Though *Zophar*'s ſuppoſition be of impoſſibilities in the letter, yet according to the figure and tendency of them, they are very poſſible, yea, and have been often reduced to act by many Inſtances, both of prophane perſons and of hypocrites. advanced as high as the world could ſet them, or ſet upon the higheſt places and pinacles of power on the earth; and what is that but, in *Zophar*'s ſtile, to be lifted up to heaven, and reach the clouds. Obſerve,

> Secondly, *The higheſt worldly height and greatneſs cannot ſecure a wicked man againſt the hand of God.*

The Lord by his Prophet (*Iſa.* 14. 15.) ſpeaks thus to that proud Prince, who would aſcend above *the heights of the clouds, yet thou ſhalt be brought down.* Climbing high hath been the cauſe of many a mans fall, it never protected any man from falling. *Edom* is threatned in the ſame Language by the Prophet *Obadiah* (verſ. 3,4.) *The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rocks, whoſe habitation is high, who ſaith in his heart, who ſhall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thy ſelf as the Eagle, and though thou ſet thy neſt above the Stars, thence will I bring thee down, ſaith the Lord.* Poſſibly there was no man on earth that durſt accept *Edom*'s challenge, when he thus threw down his Gauntlet, and bid defiance in his heart to all the powers of the world; *Who ſhall bring me down to the ground?* But preſently the Lord accepted (or rather diſdained) the challenge, and undertook that vain boaſter upon higher terms then himſelf propoſed; not only though thou *dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock*, but, *though thou ſet thy neſt* (where no man ever ſet his neſt) *above the ſtars, yet thence will I bring thee down. God is the high and lofty one* (Iſa. 57. 15.) *And therefore the loftineſs of man ſhall be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be made low* (Iſa. 2. 17.) God is the high one, *and he inhabiteth Eternity*, that is, he is eternally high, his happineſs is as ſteady as it is lofty. But the higheſt of men (when they inhabit their higheſt longeſt) do but inhabit time; and moſt that are high, inhabit but a little time; yea, commonly they who are higheſt, inhabit the leaſt time. The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort. Men are high, but their time is in his hand who is higher then the higheſt; who is not only high as the heavens (which is the utmoſt ſtretch of mans ambition) but higher then the heavens; and not only higher then the heavens, but the maker of the heavens. And as it is the honour of God to exalt them who are low, ſo to abaſe thoſe who are exalted. He caſteth down the mighty from their ſeats, but exalteth the humble and meek. Many have ſtood faſter by caſting themſelves down before them; but none have ſtood by lifting up themſelves againſt him. As a godly man needeth not to fear, *though he walk in the very valley of the ſhadow of death* (Pſal. 23.4.) So a wicked man hath cauſe enough to fear, and then to fear moſt, when he walketh upon the tops of the mountains, and ſets his foot upon the hills. This *Zophar* aſſures us in the next verſe.

Verſe 7. Yet ſhall he periſh for ever like his own dung.

The *Septuagint* renders theſe words paraphraſtically; *For when he ſeemeth to be eſtabliſhed, then he ſhall periſh to the end:* The word carrieth total periſhing, as well as the adjunct of time, *for ever*, ſpeaks it final. The word comes from a root ſignifying to overcome. *For ever* overcomes all. That which periſheth for ever, can never be recovered from periſhing. All ſhall be loſt, and it ſhall be alwayes loſt; his

Ὅταν γὰρ δοκῇ ἤδη κατεσχηκέναι, τότε εἰς τέλος ἀπολεῖται. Sept.

wound ſhall know of no healing, *He ſhall periſh*, not to a not-being, but from being what once he was. He ſhall neither be, nor be any more accounted, happy.

And as he ſhall periſh utterly, ſo he ſhall periſh baſely, not only ſhall miſery be upon him, but contempt; *He ſhall periſh*

גלל *Stercus à convolutione.*

Like his own dung.] And becauſe the word which we render *dung*, ſignifies to *turn or roll together*, in its original. Therefore ſome tranſlate here, *He ſhall periſh, as ſoon as turned about.* Mr. *Broughton* gives that ſence, rendering thus; *Turning a little he falls for ever.* But our reading hath a fuller, though that alſo hath a true ſence in it. *He ſhall periſh like his own dung.* What is more baſe then dung? Becauſe Idols or falſe Gods, are the baſeſt and moſt abominable things in the world, they are therefore expreſſed by this word in the Hebrew; As if we ſhould call them, *Dung-gods*, or ſtinking dunghil-gods, fit only to be thrown away, and ſhovell'd out of the world. For nothing makes a thing indeed ſo bad as an ambition that it ſhould be accounted that which is beſt, when it hath not the leaſt good in it. An Idol is accounted God, who is the higheſt and infinitely the moſt perfect being, when as in truth, it hath no being at all, or is as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *nothing in the world.* And hence alſo hypocriſie is juſtly called the worſt of ſins, becauſe it would be taken for grace, or reckoned for that which is the gathering together of all Graces, *Holineſs*. Now as the Scripture calleth Idols dung, compared with God, or as being honoured (to whom they are ſo unlike) with the like priviledges of worſhip and dependence, as God is: ſo, all our real inherent righteouſneſs, yea all things compared with Chriſt and our union with him upon Goſpel Termes, are alſo called *dung* (*Phil.* 3.8,9.) When the Apoſtle would teſtifie with what holy indignation he rejected thoſe things which were good in themſelves, when joyned with, and taken in as a ſupplement to the pure worthineſs of Chriſt, for our acceptance and Juſtification before God; he ſaith, *I count them but dung, that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs.* Thus any thing which either is in it ſelf, or comparatively to ſomewhat elſe, moſt vile, is wrapt up in this Title, *Dung.* The Lord threatens *the Houſe of* Jeroboam *to bring evil upon it, and* (ſaith the Lord) *I will take away the remnant of the houſe of* Jeroboam, *as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone* (1 *King.* 14. 10.) Dung is filthy and noyſom, and becauſe (as in homogeneal bodies) the leaſt part of dung hath in it the nature of the whole, therefore when we take it away, we take it all away. A little of it offends and ſtinks, and therefore we ceaſe not ſweeping and removing it *till it be all gone.* The leaſt of that which is naught is too much and too bad, unleſs it be all gone, we have the trouble of its all. The Lord hath a beſom very fit for this dung (*Iſa.* 14.23.) *I will ſweep it with the beſom of deſtruction, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* And when the Lord would teſtifie with how much loathing he rejected the ſacrifices and ſolemn ſervices of the *Jews*, becauſe of their hypocriſie and formality; he tells them by the Prophet (*Mal.* 3. 2.) *I will ſpread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your ſolemn feaſts, and one ſhall take you away with it.* The beſt things corrupted or corruptly uſed, are worſt. The ordinances of God are pure, but to the unbelieving all things are impure. God becomes droſs, and holy things but dung to them who are ſo. Their ſervices are reputed ſo, and their perſons ſhall periſh ſo, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of the *Midianites, of Siſera and of Jabin, who periſhed at Endor, and became as Dung for the earth* (*Pſal.* 83. 10.) Thus *Zophar* concludes of the wicked, ſpecially including *Job* (whom ſome perſonate as ſitting upon a dunghil) that he ſhould periſh for ever as dung, the vileſt excrement, and which holds out yet more abhorrency in it.

Stercus hominis extremæ abjectionis & contemptus ſymbolum.

As his own dung.] The dung of ſome creatures is a perfume, and gives a delightful ſmell; the dung of many creatures is Medicinable and Phyſical; the dung of almoſt all creatures is ſome way or other profitable and uſeful; but the dung of man, or a mans own dung, is both uſeleſs and contemptible, loathſom and noyſom. When railing *Rabſhakeh* would expreſs the utmoſt extremity of famine, to which *Jeruſalem* ſhould be reduced; he ſaith (2 *Kings* 18. 27.) *Hath my Maſter ſent me to thy Maſter, and to thee, hath he not ſent me to the men which ſit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piſs with you?* Implying, that if they preſently ſubmitted not, they ſhould quickly feel the utmoſt miſeries of hunger and thirſt, and be forced (which is an utter abomination to the apprehenſion of man) to take in what they had caſt out, and be glad to ſtop the cry of their appetite with that, at which formerly they were wont to ſtop their noſes. *Ezekiel* (to typifie a dreadful judgment) was commanded (among other things concurring in that woful ſcene) *to bake his bread with dung that cometh out of man in their ſight.* And becauſe this was very grievous to the Prophet, therefore though his uſing dung to bake bread with, could not be diſpenced with, yet (by way of favour) the Lord condeſcended to a commutation of the dung (*Ezek.* 4. 15.) *Then he ſaid unto me, lo, I have given thee cows dung for mans dung, and thou ſhalt prepare thy bread therewith.* Now if it were ſo loathſom to prepare or bake bread with mans dung, how loathſom is it to eat mans dung in ſtead of bread? All dung is vile, mans dung is vileſt. To periſh as dung, notes a very contemptible condition; but for a man *to periſh as his own dung*, is to be caſt into the loweſt imaginable degree of contempt. *He ſhall periſh for ever as his own dung.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Wicked men ſhall periſh.*

They ſhall not only be troubled, but ruin'd. *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle of himſelf and fellow-Saints in ſuffering, 2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9.) *are troubled on every ſide, but not deſtroyed.* Trouble ſo far as tryal and correction is the portion of the godly, but trouble to deſtruction and perdition, is the lot of the wicked.

Secondly note, *Wicked men periſh finally.*

They periſh for ever, yea they ſhall be for ever periſhing. They ſeldom recover when they are down, or riſe when they fall in this life; but none of them ſhall riſe or recover in the next. The Church ſaith, *Rejoyce not againſt me, O mine enemy, when I fall I ſhall riſe; when I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me* (Mich. 7. 8.) But the wicked have cauſe to mourn when they fall, not only becauſe they are fallen, but becauſe they ſhall riſe no more, and being once in that darkneſs, they ſhall never ſee light. Some have ſaid (how uncomfortably and erroneouſly is no place here to diſcuſs) that a godly man may fall from grace totally and finally; but that wicked men perſevering in ſin, ſhall fall ſo, both from their hopes and comforts, is aſſured us by the truth of God.

Thirdly obſerve, *Wicked men ſhall periſh diſgracefully, as dung, as their own dung.*

Their memory ſhall rot, and nothing ſhall remain of them but a ſtink or an unpleaſing ſavour. It is recorded of King *Jehoram* (2 Chron. 21. 20.) that *he died undeſired.* Many wicked men die not only undeſired, but abhorred: As the Prophet *Iſaiah* concludes (*Chap.* 66. 24.) *They ſhall go forth and look upon the carkaſſes of the men that have tranſgreſſed againſt me: for their worm ſhall not die, neither ſhall their fire be quenched, and they ſhall be an abhorring to all fleſh.* It is ſome abatement of miſery to find pity, but to be at once deſtroyed and abhorred, or which is more, to be an abhorring, eſpecially an abhorring to all fleſh, is perfect miſery. There are few men ſo bad but now they are eſteemed by ſome; but ere long they ſhall be abhorred of all. And though all who ſee their miſery ſhall abhor them, yet the perfection of their miſery ſhall not be ſeen; as *Zophar* implieth in the latter part of this verſe.

They which have ſeen him, ſhall ſay, Where is he?

To be ſeen may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Largely or vulgarly, for the bare beholding or view which we have of any thing or perſon.

Secondly, Strictly or ſpecially, to ſee with reverence and reſpect, with much intention and obſervation; or to be ſeen as a wonder, with much aſtoniſhment and admiration. What is it that either ambition or hypocriſie deſires ſo much as to be ſeen, and pointed at, *there's the man?* The Phariſees (who were hypocrites of the higheſt form) did all to be ſeen of men (*Mat.* 6. 5.) If the ambitious proud man act not in an open ſcene, and have not ſtore of ſpectators, all his coſt and projects miſcarry and are loſt. Who

Pulchrum eſt ſpectari & digito monſtrarier hic eſt.

Irritamentum eſt omnium in qua inſanimus Admirator & Conſcius, Ambitio ſcenam deſiderat. Sen. Epiſt. 94. *Ne concupiſcamus efficies ſi ne oſtendamus effeceris.* Id.

puts on his beſt cloaths, or makes himſelf very fine to ſtay at home, and ſit in a corner? It ſatisfieth not a proud man, that he ſeeth himſelf (for though many a man is proud in his own eyes, yet he never thinks his own eyes enow to ſee him) nor is he pleaſed to ſtand in the view of a few, eſpecially of his friends and daily familiars, he muſt ſet himſelf in the Sun or in the ſight of all. He is never feaſted, till he conceives *the many* feaſting their eyes with ſeeing him. He would alwayes ſtand upon the ſtage, and be in pride (what the holy Apoſtles were made in ſcorn) *a ſpectacle to the world, to Angels, and men.* Some ſinners are all for ſecrecy, ſuch *Job* deſcribeth (*Chap.* 24. 13, 17.) *They are of thoſe* (the murderer, the theif, and the adulterer he means) *that rebell againſt the light. The morning is to them as the ſhadow of death, if one know them, they are in the ſhadow of the terror of death.* But there are another ſort of ſinners (the vain-glorious, the ambitious, the hypocrite I mean) who deſire nothing more then worldly light. To lie in obſcurity, is to them as the ſhadow of death, if one know them not (as to their appearances) if no man ſee them, they are in the ſhadow of the terror of death: Popularity is the Element in which this ſort of men live; take them out of it, you take them out of the world. A hypocrite dies, unleſs (as *Jehu* deſired) *you come and ſee his zeal for the Lord of hoaſts.* A proud man is quite defunct and diſpirited, unleſs you take notice of his port, and come ſee how large a ſail his veſſel beareth in the world, how he is attended, how ſued and ſought unto. In reference to ſuch a ſight as this, I ſuppoſe *Zophar* chiefly ſpeaks here, *They who have ſeen him*, that is, who have ſeen and admired his ſplendor and greatneſs, even theſe *ſhall ſay,*

Where is he?] He who was lately a mark of honour in every mans eye, he who was lately ſo great and ſpreading, that he over-ſhadowed all, and you could ſcarce ſee any man for him; is now diminiſhed into an Atom, which no man can ſee; he is now to be numbred (though not in his nature, yet as to his former ſtate) among inviſibles: The man is not to be ſeen, they who have ſeen him ſhall ſay, *Where is he?* And they ſhall ſay this firſt in ſcorn; as thoſe prophane enemies reproached holy *David* with his God, *Saying daily* (Pſal. 42. 10.) *where is now thy God?* Thou didſt not only promiſe but aſſure thy ſelf of help from him, haſt thou not boaſted of him, *as thy ſtrength, thy buckler, thy high tower, and thy deliverer?* Thus thou didſt phanſie thy god, and pleaſe thy ſelf in theſe high Elogium's of him, and delightful dreams of deliverance by him; but where is he? As theſe (I ſay) ſpake prophanely and blaſphemouſly of the great and faithful God, ſo we may ſpeak truly and ſoberly of the greateſt among faithleſs men, where are they? Or where is he? Where is that rich oppreſſor? Where is that ambitious Prince? Where is t'other cunning Polititian, what's become of them and their wealth, of them and their honour, of them and their wit and wiſdom?

They ſhall ſay this, ſecondly, in wonder and aſtoniſhment, at the ſtrangeneſs of his fall, and the totality of his deſtruction. Men ſhall be amazed to ſee him at ſuch an ebb, at ſuch a dead low water, who lately ſwell'd over all banks with ſuch a ſpring-tide of proſperity. Men ſhall be amazed to ſee him groveling in a valley, who ſo lately walked upon the hills, and neſted among the Stars. This ſhall make them ſay, *Where is he? What, is he there?* O the vanity of man! O the uncertainty of all worldy happineſs! We find ſuch queries, filled with this double mixture of ſcorn and wonder, propheſied concerning *Babylon* (Iſa. 14. 4, 12, 16.) *Thou ſhalt take up this proverb againſt the King of* Babylon, *and ſay, How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed? The golden City ceaſed? How art thou fallen from heaven,* O Lucifer, *ſon of the morning? How art thou cut down to the ground, which didſt weaken the Nations? They that ſee thee ſhall narrowly look upon thee, and conſider thee, ſaying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did ſhake Kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderneſs, and deſtroyed the Cities thereof.* Is this the man that did theſe things? Is this he? How like a wilderneſs he looks himſelf? Behold how he ſhakes and trembles? Behold in how ſordid and low a condition he now lies proſtrate? He is now ſo little, that no man can tell what to make of him, or in what place he is to be found; he is now not only like a river running under ground, but quite exhaled and dried up, in ſo much that all may ſay, *Where is he?*

Hence obſerve, *The ſin of many men is viſible, and may be read in the ſpecial judgments which are brought upon them.*

The Lord is righteous in all his judgments, and he is (as we may ſay with reverence) even curious in ſome of them. What more exact and ſutable, then to ſee vain-glory puniſhed with obſcurity; and that they ſhould be *No-body's* in the world, who had an itch not only to be *Some-body's* (which hath a ſpice of ambition in it) but the *Only-body's* in the world? What more ſutable then that they whoſe greateſt deſire was to be ſeen and taken notice of every where and by every one, ſhould be reduced to ſuch a little, to ſuch a nothing, that no man can ſee where they are? Hypocrites do all to be ſeen, and anon themſelves are not to be ſeen. Honour me before the people, ſay the ſons of pride and ambition; and anon all the people ſee and ſcorn them, or ſcorn at them becauſe they cannot be ſeen. They love the uppermoſt ſeats at the Table, and greetings in the Market-place, and anon themſelves have not a Table to ſit at, and are the cheapeſt ware, yea the traſh and refuſe of all the Market.

Licet arma vacent ceſſentque doli, ſidant ipſo pondere magna, ceditq; oneri fortuna ſuo. Sen. in Agamem.

Now, beſides the nature of worldly things and ſtates in themſelves (which are all ſubject to change, and the greater any worldly thing is, the more ſubject to change and to oppreſs it ſelf with its own weight, as the very Heathens have often told us; I ſay, beſides what is intrinſecal to the nature of worldly things) we muſt chiefly aſcribe theſe eminent changes to the ſpecial providence of God, who being moſt high himſelf, and though inviſible, yet only to be ſeen and adored in all we have or are, cannot bear it to ſee the creature ſet up himſelf to be ſeen. God would draw, (and it is his due) all eyes and hearts to himſelf, and therefore he will not long endure thoſe who affect the drawing of mens eyes upon themſelves. The eye of God will not ſpare thoſe who either think highly of themſelves, or love to be highly thought of by others. The Lord is pleaſed to ſet ſome of his ſervants not only high among men, but high in the hearts and thoughts of men; yet he is highly diſpleaſed when they or any in a vain oſtentation make it their buſineſs to be ſo. And they who would thus be ſeen and exalted, ſhall ſee a day wherein (through their fall) God alone will be exalted. When any are deſigning to build high and reach Heaven with their Towers, (as they did, *Gen.* 11.) Then the Lord ſaith, *Go to, let us go down and confound their language.* Wo to high ſpirits and their high Towers when God ſaith, *I will go down*, for then both they and their Towers ſhall aſſuredly *go down.* No creature can ſtand when once God goes thus down. If God appear thus where is man? How and whether is he gone? *Zophar* ſeems to anſwer theſe queſtions in the next words.

Verſ. 8. **He ſhall fly away as a dream, and ſhall not be found, yea he ſhall be chaſed away as a viſion of the night.**

This verſe contains two ſimilitudes, both which illuſtrate that one poſition which *Zophar* laid down in the two former verſes, That wicked men ſhall periſh for ever, and be ſeen no more.

He ſhall fly away.] To run is more then to go, and to fly is more then to run. Wings are too nimble for legs, and therefore in Scripture thoſe things which move or paſs from us with greateſt celerity (though they have no wings, yet) are ſaid to fly away. *As for* Ephraim (ſaith the Lord by the Prophet *Hoſ.* 9. 11.) *their glory ſhall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*; that is, whatſoever *Ephraim* moſt gloried in, and that was the multitude of their people (according to the Propheſie of *Jacob* (Gen. 48. 19.) and the Etymology of their name (*Gen.* 41. 52.) This glory ſhall depart ſuddenly, their numbers ſhall ſoon be leſſened, either by the death of their coildren as ſoon as they are born, or by abortion in the womb as ſoon as they are formed, yea as ſoon as they are conceived. They who make ſuch haſt out of the world, that they die as ſoon as they began to live, may well be ſaid to fly from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception. Thus ſaith

Zophar of the wicked man, *He ſhall flie away.* And how ſhall he fly? As a bird? That's very ſwiftly; and the original word implies the flying of a bird, but the ſimilitude leads to that which will out-fly a bird, *A dream or viſion of the night.* A bird, even the King of birds an Eagle is but a ſlug or as a ſlow-worm to a dream. *This wicked man ſhall fly away,*

As a dream.] We may expound it two wayes; Firſt, Of the dream it ſelf. Secondly, Of the thing dreamed. Though ſometime both the dream and thing dreamed are fixed, the dream in the phanſie, and the thing dreamed in its fulfilling; yet many times the dream it ſelf is ſpeedily gone (as 'twas from *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 2.5, 8, 10.) and the thing dreamed rarely comes. Yet Interpreters carry it rather to the matter or ſubject of the dream, then to the dream it ſelf. Many can retain the memory of a dream, but the matter dreamt of (which poſſibly pleaſed them much while they ſlept) is fled, or proves no ſuch thing when they awake. The Prophet deſcribes this elegantly and fully (*Iſa.* 29.7,8.) *And the multitude of all the Nations that fight againſt* Arial, *even all of them that fight againſt her and her mountains, and that diſtreſs her, ſhall be as a dream of a night viſion. It ſhall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his ſoul is empty; or as when a thirſty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh, but he awaketh and he is faint, and his ſoul hath appetite,* &c. I may add, a beggar dreameth of Gold, but he awaketh, and his purſe is empty: The priſoner dreameth of liberty, but he awaketh and findeth himſelf in irons. Such is the wicked man in his proſperity; his joy is but the joy of a dreamer, which quickly vaniſheth. Hence the Ancients phanſied that a dream had wings like a bird of the Air. The Pſalmiſt having learned in the Sanctuary, that the wicked are ſet in ſlippery places, and that as in a moment they are utterly conſumed with terrors, concludes in anſwer to *Zophars* alluſion (*Pſa.* 73.20.) *As a dream when one awaketh, ſo O Lord when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their image.* When the Lord puts forth his power to the deſtruction of wicked men, then he is ſaid frequently in Scripture to awake. Now when the Lord is pleaſed thus to awake, he quickly awaketh wicked men out of their pleaſant waking dreams, and maketh them ſee that their felicity was but ſuppoſed and imaginary; for he *ſhall deſpiſe their image*, that is, he ſhall utterly ſpoil and make deſpicable, the painted pageant of their outward pomp. Which is elegantly called an *Image*, becauſe as an image it is a thing only to be looked upon, or for a ſhew. Though an image be made to the life, yet it hath no life in it; and ſo is valuable only for its appearance, not for its uſe. Such a dumb ſhew is the glitter and greatneſs of the world, and therefore rightly called, not only by the Holy Ghoſt, but by thoſe common Writers (who had any true judgment of the things of the world) an Image or an Idol; which alſo complies fully with the ſimilitude of a dream, in which the mind frames within it ſelf many images and repreſentations of things, which yet like Characters fairly drawn upon the ſand, are diſcompoſed and ſcattered by the next puff of wind. And becauſe an ordinary dream hath in it the leaſt, the ſhorteſt, and moſt uncertain enjoyment; therefore when we would ſhew that we never had the leaſt thought, or the leaſt to do about ſuch a thing we ſay proverbially, *I did not ſo much as dream of it, or I had not ſo much as to do with it in a dream.*

Antiqui ſomniū Deū fingebant volatilem & alitem. Bold.

Ne in ſomnio quidem, proverbialiter dicitur pro nulla ratione nullo tempore aliquid eſſe.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The proſperity of a wicked man hath no real comfort in it.*

There is no true ſatisfaction in a dream. And that which hath only a ſhadow or appearance of good in it, leaveth, when 'tis paſt and (as the Text ſpeaks) fled away, real impreſſions of evil. True ſorrows ſucceed imaginary joyes; and every man is made by ſo much the more unhappy, by how much he thought he had attained happineſs when indeed he had not. For, as thoſe things which have only an appearance of terror, are more terrible afar off then at hand; ſo thoſe things which have only an appearance of comfort, afflict more when they are afar off, then ever they comforted us when near at hand, and in a conceited poſſeſſion. As they who have been in a real poſſeſſion of good, ſo they who have had but an imagination of it, are more troubled when it is gone, then ever they ſhould have been, if they had never had it; diſappointments and failings of expectation about thoſe things which we hope to have, are as grievous, if not more grievous then the loſs of what we once really enjoyed. Now though a wicked man hath many good things while he proſpers, yet that which we properly call the dream of his proſperity, he never hath. For ſo much as he imagineth more in what he hath then is or can be in it (and ſo he alwayes doth) ſo much he dreameth.

Secondly note, *The proſperity of a wicked man hath no tack or conſiſtence in it.*

As a dream is not real, ſo it is not laſting. Many things which are real ſtay with us but a while, but thoſe things which are not real, cannot be ſaid to ſtay with us at all. I have from other Texts in this Book met with this point before, and therefore I ſhall not here ſtay upon it; yet there remains one clauſe more of this ſimilitude, which I ſhall only touch to heighten the intendment of it; *He ſhall fly away as a dream,*

And ſhall not be found.] When the Lord would ſhew how fully and clearly he pardoneth ſin, he ſaith (*Jer.* 50. 20.) *In thoſe dayes, the iniquity of* Judah *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reſerve.* Now as when a ſin is ſo pardoned that it cannot be found, it is an argument of the fulleſt pardon; ſo when a man or his proſperity is ſo fled and deſtroyed that neither can be fonnd, it is an argument of the fulleſt deſtruction. We may apply theſe words to both; the wicked man, his wealth and greatneſs ſhall ſo fly away, that neither of them ſhall be found. We may enquire as was ſaid in the former verſe; Where is he? And where is his? and find neither him nor his. What *Peter* ſaid to *Simon Magus* (*Act.* 8.20.) is verified of him, his money, his honour is periſhed with him; or as another Scripture ſpeaketh, his *memorial is periſhed with him.* And as if *Zophar* thought it too little to give but one illuſtration of this truth, he confirms it by a ſecond, which is yet of near cognation with that already opened, and therefore I ſhall but name it.

Yea he ſhall be chaſed away as a viſion of the night.

He ſhall fly as a bird (ſaid *Zophar* before) here he ſhall be chaſed as a beaſt; the former word implieth a voluntary motion, this a violent. *He ſhall be chaſed away,*

As a viſion of the night.] There are two ſorts of viſions, as to the time of their appearance. Firſt, Viſions of the day; Secondly, Of the night. Viſions of the day fix more ſtrongly upon us, and are more permanent, viſions of the night paſs ſooner out of our memory, and are more tranſient. Therefore to ſhew the vaniſhing ſtate of the wicked man more fully he compares him *to a viſion of the night.* A viſion hath ſomewhat in it beyond ordinary dreams. All viſions are accompanied with the repreſentation of ſome outward ſhape to the eye or phanſie which many dreams have not; as was further ſhewed, *Chap.* 4. 13. to which place I refer the Reader, and ſhall proceed to the next verſe which bring up the concluſion of both theſe Alluſions.

Verſ. 9. **The eye which ſaw him ſhall ſee him no more, neither ſhall his place any more behold him.**

Theſe words *Zophar* takes out of *Job's* mouth (who ſpake the ſame thing in his own caſe, *Chap.* 7. 8, 10.) as if he would caſt him for a wicked man by his own confeſſion, and turn what he had ſaid upon himſelf. For the ſence of the Text the Reader may conſult that Chapter, there being nothing in theſe words of any ſpecial obſervation, beyond what was there offer'd.

The letter of the Hebrew may be thus rendred, *The eye hath ſeen, and ſhall not add.* 'Tis uſual in Scripture-phraſe, to ſay that he adds to do a thing, which doth that again which he hath done once or often before. And becauſe the Original leaves out the object of this ſight; therefore ſome refer it to the *night viſion*; tranſlating thus, *The eye alſo which ſaw it* (*ſc.* the viſion) *ſhall ſee it no more.* As if he had ſaid, the wicked man is like a night viſion, which being once ſeen diſappears and is ſeen no more. We fix it upon the wicked man himſelf. *The eye which hath ſeen him ſhall ſee him no more.* They who ſaw him

Oculus vidit & non addit. Heb.

Ut ſit Apodoſis praecedentis ſimilitudinis.

flouriſhing ſhall ſee him fading, till he fade quite out of ſight.

Neither ſhall his place any more behold him.

Which words may be expounded by a double figure, both frequently uſed in the holy Scriptures. Firſt, By an *Enallage, His place ſhall not ſee him*; that is, he ſhall not ſee his place, or he ſhall not be ſeen in his place: Secondly, By a *Proſopopeia*, by which thoſe acts which are proper to living creatures, or the perſon of a man, are aſcribed to things without life. The ſum and ſence of all returns to that which hath been already obſerved, the total ruine and extirpation of the wicked man, whether hypocrite or prophane.

VERS. 10, 11.

His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor, and his hands ſhall reſtore their goods.
His bones are full of the ſin of his youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt.

IN the former words *Zophar* expreſſed the fleeting proſperity, the uncertain happineſs of hypocrites and wicked men; here he goeth on to enumerate ſome of thoſe evils which overwhelm wicked men, when once their worldly ſtate begins to totter, and the tide of their outward proſperity to turn: The firſt evil which he reckoneth up falls upon the children of the wicked man.

Verſ. 10. His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor.

Theſe words, in the face and letter of them, ſeem to ſpeak the ingenuity and piety of the wicked mans children; is it not a vertue to be courteous, civil and charitable to the poor, eſpecially to be ſo courteous and charitable, as not only to relieve, but even to ſeek to pleaſe the poor? Induſtriouſly applying themſelves to their ſupport and help, who were unable to help themſelves. This ſounds like a rare virtue; but if we examine the matter further, we ſhall ſee a very great curſe wrapt up as the portion of the children of the wicked man, in that they are here ſaid, *To ſeek to pleaſe the poor.*

They ſhall ſeek to pleaſe.] It is but one word in the Hebrew, and the root of it ſignifies *to favour, to comply with, to pleaſe, or to be pleaſed with*; it is often uſed in reference to the ſacrifices which were offered to God when he either did, or did not accept of them (*Pſal.* 51.19.) *Then ſhalt thou be pleaſed with the ſacrifices of righteouſneſs:* and in the negative (*Mal.* 1.8.) *Offer them to your Governor, will he accept them, will he be pleaſed?* Read, *Levit.* 19.7. & 22.25. The word is uſed in the ſame ſence (*Job* 33.26.) *He ſhall pray to God, and he will be favourable to him*; he will ſhew him favour by deliverance from his affliction. The old Counſellers ſpake this language to *Rehoboam* (2 Chron. 10.7.) when he asked their advice how he ſhould anſwer the people that came to have the burden of their Taxes lightened, and their grievances redreſſed; they tell him, *If thou ſpeakeſt favourably to this people* (if thou be kind and pleaſe them as becomes a noble and gracious Prince) *then they will be thy ſervants for ever.* That Prince who hath got the love of his people, ſhall not want their ſervice: they will act obediently and ſerviceably unto thee, if thou doeſt but ſpeak favourably unto them; if thou doeſt but pleaſe them with good words, thou mayſt have thy pleaſure of them: So here, *His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor*; that is, they ſhall ambitiouſly, as it were, deſire the favour and friendſhip, the good will, and good word of the pooreſt; but how comes it to paſs, that theſe deſire to pleaſe the poor, and to have their favour? I anſwer, We are not to take it as if this ſprung from their charity or good nature, from the openneſs of their hearts, or compaſſion to the poor. Thus to pleaſe the poor is an act of Grace, at leaſt a very commendable work in us (as was intimated before) as well as it is a mercy to them. But when he ſaith, *His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor*, his meaning is, they ſhall be forced whether they will or no; they ſhall be neceſſitated to ſubmit to thoſe who are moſt neceſſitous.

רצה *Favit, placuit, complacuit: propriè ſignificat gratum habere benevolentia proſequi.*

The word which we render *Poor*, ſignifies thoſe that are ſpent and drawn dry; and it is ſometimes referred to the weakning of a man in his ſtrength, ſometimes to the weakning of his eſtate, when his purſe is drawn dry. Poor perſons are exhauſted perſons, ſuch whoſe veſſels are run down to the very lees; *his children* ſhall *ſeek* to pleaſe ſuch poor, the meaneſt of the poor.

דלים à דלל *Hauſtus, exhauſtus fuit, viribus aut facultatibus.*

The Vulgar reads theſe words thus, *his children ſhall be waſted with poverty*; prodigality waſteth the eſtate, and poverty waſteth the perſon. The reaſon of this reading is becauſe that tranſlator derives the word which we render *to pleaſe*, from a root which ſignifies *to break, to ſpoil, to daſh one againſt another*; ſo it is uſed (*Gen.*25.22.) *The children ſtrugled in the womb*, or daſhed one againſt another, as if they had been contending for place before they had a place in the open world. Thus here (ſaith he) his children ſhall be daſhed or waſted with poverty, or by the poor. When the poor riſe and rage, the rich cannot ſtand before them. The poor ſhall impoveriſh his children; the Septuagint renders it, *The leſſer ones, the minors, perſons of the inferior and lower rank ſhall deſtroy his children.* This tranſlation carrieth a clear ſence as to the mind of *Zophar*, and the ſcope of the place; it ſheweth the miſery of a wicked man to the full, to ſay, *The poor ſhall deſtroy his children; the needy, the hungry ſhall devour and eat them up.* There is a ſpecial finger of God in that, 'tis more then to ſay his children ſhall be deſtroyed by the mighty and ſtrong; as when a poor word pulleth down the ſtrength of ſin, and Satan, this advanceth the name of God. And the Apoſtle tells us, that the deſign of God, in ſending out his word in ſo mean a dreſs, and by ſuch powerleſs inſtruments, is, that his own power may be the more ſeen, and magnified. Thus when poor men ſubdue the mighty, the might and revenging power of God is in it. And as this ſpeaks the juſtice and power of God, ſo the miſery of thoſe men. To be oppreſſed by the poor is the foreſt oppreſſion (*Prov.* 2.3.) *A poor man that oppreſſeth the poor, is like a ſweeping rain that leaveth no food.*

Filii ejus atterentur egeſtate Vulg.

à רצץ *Quod eſt conterere, confringere, quaſſare.*

Abſtractum pro concreto; egeſtate, i. e. *per egenos,* q. d. *viliſſimi in illos ſævient & dominentur.* Pined.

Filios ejus diſperdant minores. Sept.

There is a ſecond reading which differs ſomewhat from ours; whereas we tranſlate, *His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor*, this ſaith, *His children being poor ſhall pleaſe*; that is, *all ſhall be pleaſed to ſee his children poor*; this hath a clear ſence, ſhewing the portion and puniſhment of a wicked man; every one ſhall like it well to ſee his children go a begging. The evil which befals them will be a kind of good to the beholders, and they will ſay, *'Tis well beſtowed.* Yea, as ſome give the intendment of this rendring; *The poor ſhall think themſelves well paid for all the wrong they have received, and the miſeries they have undergone, when they ſee his children in miſery.* That curſe is threatned (*Pſal.* 109.12.) *Let there be none to extend mercy to him, neither let there be any to pity his fatherleſs children*; while all is pulled from him, and they left not worth a groat, none ſhall think them worthy of compaſſion, or beſtow a tear upon them. *It is a great miſery when none grieve to ſee us in miſery.* If ſympathy be no eaſe to the afflicted, yet it is an honour to them.

Filii ejus placebunt egeni.

But I ſhall pitch upon our own reading; *The children of wicked men ſhall be brought ſo low, that they ſhall be glad to ſeek the favour and good will of thoſe who are poor*; or thus, *His children ſhall ſeek to appeaſe the poor, even thoſe poor whom their father wronged and oppreſſed.* They ſhall be conſtrained to flatter and fawn upon thoſe, over whom their father inſulted, and upon whom he trampled. Which ſuites well with the next clauſe; *And his hands ſhall reſtore their goods.* The ſum of all is this, *His children ſhall be poorer then the pooreſt, and more miſerable then the moſt miſerable.*

Filii ejus placabunt mendicos vel pauperes. Reg. Pag. Mont.

Adeo miſeri erunt ut cogantur placare iratos, tenuis fortunæ homines. Vatabl.

Erunt pauperiores pauperibus & miſerrimis miſeriores.

Hence obſerve, That *Children of evil parents fare ill, and are ſcourged as a ſcourge to their parents.*

This point hath riſen from former paſſages, I ſhall only take notice of one dreadful example out of Scripture to verifie and illuſtrate it. We read (2 *Kings* 2.23, 24.) that more then forty children were deſtroyed by two ſhee-bears for mocking the Prophet *Eliſha. Juſtine Martyr* queries upon it; why did the Prophet call for revenge upon children, who hardly underſtand what they do, much leſs do any thing upon deſign? He anſwers, though we ſhould ſuppoſe they were children ſo young that they could not underſtand the evil of this action, yet having learned this from their parents, God ſent this judgment at once to puniſh

Voces ipſas pueri à parentibus edocti erant, quare puerorum clade parentes flagellavit. Illud enim aſcende calve, *proſcindendi per detractionem* Eliæ *aſſumptionis gratia proferebant.* q.d. *abripiat te quoq; ſpiritus ut itidem à te liberemur.* Juſt. Mart. *queſt.* 8.

the children and the parents; that they might be ſmitten in this deſtruction, which fell upon their children, becauſe they had given their children no better inſtruction, or rather becauſe they received ſuch bad inſtruction from them. For doubtleſs they had learned that ſcoffing language from their Elders, at leaſt by hearing them ſpeak ſo, if not by teaching them to ſpeak ſo; *Go up thou bald head, go up thou bald head.* Which ſcoff and reproach they caſt upon *Eliſha* in alluſion to the rapture or carrying up of *Eliah*; as if they had ſaid, *Go thou up alſo to Heaven, even as* Eliah *did, that we may be rid of thee as well as we are of him.* Children are apt to imitate their parents in every thing, but they are beſt at imitating thoſe things which are worſt. They quickly write after ill Copies. And they who imitate the moral evils of their Fathers, ſhall be ſure to inherit their penal evils, and have new ones prepared for them.

> Secondly obſerve, *It is a great puniſhment upon parents, either to ſee their children come to miſery in the world, or if miſery come upon their children after themſelves are gone out of the world.*

Though *Zophar* here deſcribes the miſery of the wicked mans children, yet his ſcope is to ſet forth the miſery of their parents, who are ſmitten upon their childrens backs. When *Noah* awoke from his Wine, and knew what his younger ſon had done unto him, as alſo how *Cham* ſaw his nakedneſs, and mocked, he (not out of a vain paſſion as ſome parents will when their children diſpleaſe them, but) by divine inſpiration, or being fill'd with a prophetick ſpirit, pronounceth a curſe upon him; yet he put his ſons name into the curſe, not his: *And he ſaid, Curſed be* Canaan (*Gen.* 9. 24, 25.) why *Canaan?* It was *Cham* the father of *Canaan* that ſinned, yet when *Noah* comes to curſe, he doth not ſay, curſed be *Cham*, but *Canaan*; not that *Canaan* ſhould be curſed, and his father eſcape, but it was to ſhew that *Cham* ſhould certainly be under a curſe; for ſeeing his poſterity ſhould be under a curſe, then much more he; for as much as beſides what fell upon him perſonally, the curſe falling upon his poſterity, was alſo his. When a curſe falls upon children the father is curſed, as in the bleſſing of the children the father is bleſſed (*Gen.* 48. 15, 16.) *Joſeph* brought his two ſons *Manaſſeth* and *Ephraim* to his aged father *Jacob*, that they might receive his bleſſing, who laying his hands upon their heads, *Bleſſed* Joſeph, *and ſaid, God before whom my fathers* Abraham *and* Iſaac *did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bleſs the lads.* Now as *Jacob* in bleſſing the children of *Joſeph*, bleſſed *Joſeph* himſelf; ſo *Noah* in curſing the children of *Cham*, curſed *Cham* himſelf. A very Heathen hath obſerved concerning the Tyrant *Dyoniſius*, that though he eſcaped free and untoucht in perſon from the vengeance which his ſacrilegious wickedneſs deſerved; yet his ſons were involved in ſo much miſery, that in them he being paſt feeling ſuffered, and being dead paid dearly enough for his ſtoln dainties. The light of nature, as well as Scripture, tells us that evils falling on poſterity are reckoned upon the parents ſcore.

Valerius, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 2.

> Thirdly obſerve, *It is an eminent piece of divine juſtice when either they or the children of ſuch as have afflicted others, and made them poor, are forced to ſue, and ſubmit to them, though poor, and to ſeek their favour.*

This piece of divine retaliation the Prophet doth at once threaten, and promiſe; he threatens the enemy with it, and makes a promiſe of it to the children of God. (*Iſa.* 60. 14.) *The ſons alſo of them that afflicted thee ſhall come bending unto thee, and they that deſpiſed thee ſhall bow themſelves down at the ſoles of thy feet, and they ſhall call thee the City of the Lord, the Zion of the holy one of* Iſrael. This is the honour that ſhall be done to *Zion*, and the ſhame that ſhall fall on *Zions* enemies. The poſterity of thoſe that afflicted *Zion* ſhall come bending to her. We have a promiſe near that (*Rev.* 3. 9.) *Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan* (who are they? Such as oppoſe the Church of God, bitter yet ſecret enemies to Chriſt) *which ſay they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; Behold, I will make them to come and worſhip at thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.* Some will never know nor acknowledge, that God loveth his people, till themſelves are put under their feet, and ſubdued to their power. 'Tis propheſied (*Pſal.* 45. 15.) *The rich among the people ſhall intreat thy favour.* That Pſalm holds out the effect of grace; but when the Lord ſaith in this propheſie, *I will make them come, and worſhip at thy feet*; it implies only an act of Juſtice. They who have ſcorned and trampled thee under their impure feet, ſhall fall down at thy feet and give thee reverence.

> Fourthly obſerve, *That man is brought to the loweſt ſtate of affliction who is put to ſeek the favour of thoſe who are low; how poor are they who ſeek to pleaſe the poor?*

It was the curſe of *Cham*, *A ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be*; that is, he ſhall ſeek and ſubmit to thoſe who are meaneſt; to be a ſervant is to be in a mean low condition, and therefore Chriſt is ſaid to humble himſelf when he took upon him *the form of a ſervant*. *To be a ſervant of Rulers and great ones is to be leſſened; but to be a ſervant of ſervants is to be as low as low can be.* And therefore *Abigail* ſpake of her ſelf at the loweſt rate when *David* ſent for her to be his wife and companion (1 *Sam.* 25. 41.) *Behold let thy handmaid be a ſervant to waſh the feet of the ſervants of my Lord.* *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 29. 26.) *That all men ſeek the Rulers favour.* When men are in great place and power, no wonder to ſee all ſeek to them; but to ſee a great throng, at the door of a poor man, to ſee many wait and attend at his gates, putting up petitions to him, doth it not conclude that theſe ſuiters are brought to a very low conditon? yet God will make thoſe who have been proud and lifted up, ſtoop thus low. I find *Job* aggravating his ſorrow in a ſtrain near this; for having ſaid at the cloſe of *Chap.* 29. *I choſe out their way, and ſate chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army; but now* (as he begins *Chap.* 30.) *they that are younger then I have me in deriſion, whoſe fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the dogs of my flock.* As to be derided and deſpiſed by thoſe that are our inferiors, is an affliction in a high condition; ſo much more to be forced to ſubmit to them and ſeek their favour. And this not only becauſe it is a diſparagement to condeſcend to the pleaſing of thoſe who are poor, and inferior, but becauſe it is ſo hard to pleaſe them. Uſually the lower ſort of people are people of a low ſpirit. And commonly they who are Maſters of no eſtate, are Maſters but of little reaſon or ingenuity; how rude a thing is the ragged multitude? How hard a task hath he, who muſt make it his buſineſs to pleaſe them? 'Tis no ſmall skill and toil to pleaſe ſome Princes and rich ones; wiſe men have their humors ſometimes, which will neither ſuffer them to be eaſily pacified towards thoſe who have offended them, nor pleaſed with thoſe that ſerve them. But how ſhall we pleaſe them at any time who ſeldom if at all know what will pleaſe themſelves; and who through their want of breeding and diſcretion inſult over and grow upon thoſe moſt who ſeek moſt to pleaſe. Any man of a lowly mind may eaſily be pleaſed. But men of low eſtates are for the moſt part, hardeſt to be pleaſed. To pleaſe ſome is a pleaſure; but he ſhall never want work or trouble, who is forced (as theſe in the Text) *to pleaſe the poor.*

And his hands ſhall reſtore their goods.

Some render, *For his hands*, &c. making this clauſe the reaſon of the former, why the wicked mans children ſhould be in ſo low a condition as to pleaſe the poor, even becauſe their father before his death reſtored all his ill gotten goods to the right owners, and ſo had nothing left in ſtock, wherewith to make proviſion for them his children.

To reſtore is a good work; ſhall the wicked man be in this good mind, to reſtore the goods which he hath taken from the poor? This were an act of Juſtice (*à parte poſt*) and an argument of his repentance for all his injuſtice which he had acted (*a parte ante.*) Reſtitution flowing from true repentance and godly ſorrow is a work of Grace; but here is reſtitution without either repentance or ſorrow, except becauſe he could hold what he had gotten no longer. For

There is a twofold reſtitution.

Firſt, Willing, upon the touch of conſcience, that we have done wrong to others. So *Zacheus* (Luke 19.8.) *Behold half my goods I give to the poor, and if I wronged any man by forged cavilation, behold I reſtore four-fold.*

Secondly, There is a forced reſtitution, when the providence of God, not any motion of repentance, maketh a man reſtore: when either juſtice or violence compels him to reſtore; that's the reſtoring here meant; he ſhall reſtore not what he would, but whether he would or no. He ſhall not reſtore from any trouble of his own mind at what he hath done, but becauſe troubled and queſtioned for what he hath done, or as (*verſ.* 20. of this Chapter ſpeaks) *he ſhall vomit it up again.* God will give him that, which will make him diſgorge himſelf of his ſweet morſels. Thus we muſt underſtand it of a violent act upon him, and not of any intendment by him. He hath no mind to do thoſe right whom he hath wronged, but they whom he hath wronged, call upon him for, and demand their right.

There are different readings. Some thus, *His hands ſhall reſtore his iniquity*; that is, the things which he hath gotten by iniquity; others thus, *his hands ſhall reſtore his violence, or that which he hath gotten by violence.* The ſin by which any thing is gotten is ſet as a mark upon it; that is elegantly and juſtly called *violence*, which hath been gotten violently. As that (with like elegancy and juſtice) may be called *fraud*, which was fraudulently gotten. A third ſaith, *His hands ſhall reſtore his ſtrength*; which may run in the ſame channel of interpretation; his ſtrength, that is, that which he by his ſtrength hath forcibly taken away from others. Laſtly, the Text is read, *His hand ſhall reſtore his ſorrow*; which may be explained thus, his hand, or his act (our hands being the chief inſtruments of action, are put for action) ſhall bring ſorrow upon him. He by his ſin ſhall bring upon himſelf that miſchief, or thoſe evils which he hath brought upon others; and this (not unfitly) may be called, the reſtoring of them. A wicked man draweth down miſery upon himſelf, and is the contriver of his own troubles. For as he that doth good to others, doth good to himſelf; ſo (by the rule of contraries) he that doth evil to another, doth worſe to himſelf; therefore their own hand may well be ſaid to reſtore or bring ſorrow and miſery upon themſelves, even that ſorrow and miſery, which themſelves had brought upon their brethren. Thus the Pſalmiſt concludes of ſuch a man (*Pſal.* 7. 16.) *His miſchief ſhall come down upon his own head*; His miſchief is the miſchief which he hath loved and acted. Sin is like a ſtone caſt againſt the wall, which bounds back; or rather like a ſtone caſt up to heaven, which falls on his head who caſt it up. One of the Ancients giveth this ſence of the words, *He ſhall burn his fingers with what he hath done, or ſorrows ſhall burn his hands:* he put out his hand to take away what belonged to others, but he burnt his fingers by it. Theſe various readings are occaſioned by going to a different root for the pedigree of this word; yet all fall into that general ſence which our tranſlation holds forth; *His hands ſhall reſtore their goods which he hath taken by violence and ſtrength of hand, or by any ſecret evil and unlawful way.* So Mr. *Broughton, and his hands recompence his wrongs.*

Manus ejus reddent dolorem ſuum, ſc. quem aliis intulit

70. ὀδύνας.

Manus ejus urant dolores. Ambr.

אונו *ex* הון *vel ex* אנן

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That as he who repents truly doth willingly reſtore what he hath unlawfully gotten, ſo God will force the impenitent oppreſſor to reſtore what he hath gotten whether he will or no.*

As his oppreſſion was an act of violence upon others, ſo his reſtitution ſhall be an act of violence upon himſelf. One Lion makes another Lion give back his prey; all ſhall be reſtored, if not into that particular purſe from whence it was taken, yet into ſome common purſe.

Secondly, Note further, *It is a vexation to a wicked man, to part with, and reſtore that which he hath unjuſtly gotten.*

He doth it not as a duty, but as of neceſſity, as a thing which he cannot avoid. It is his puniſhment not to continue in his ſin; though indeed it is his greateſt puniſhment to continue in the love of his ſin, while he parts with, or rather is ſeparated from the matter of it. I ſhall not here further inſiſt upon the nature of this great duty, the reſtoring of what hath been unduly gotten. That will fall in more properly at *verſ.* 18. of this Chapter.

Only take notice of this one thing from the Text; which ſaith, *His hands ſhall reſtore*; as implying a puniſhment upon the wicked man, not only in this, that they who had been wronged by him ſhould recover their goods again from him, but that he ſhould be forced to return them *with his own hands.* As a godly man rejoyceth to do good with his own hand, ſo 'tis a pain to a wicked man to do it; he would willingly do every duty by proxy, or by his Deputy, eſpecially thoſe (and ſuch is reſtoring) which charge ſhame upon him for his former doings.

Verſ. 11. **His bones are full of the ſin of his youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt.**

Zophar ſeems to retain the ſame order in ſetting down the puniſhment of a wicked man, which God did in the affliction of *Job*; God ſpoiled the outward eſtate of *Job*, firſt, deſtroying his Cattel and his Children, and then filled his body with diſeaſes. Thus the proſperous eſtate of a wicked man, is firſt broken; ſecondly, his Children ſhall be poorer then the poor; thirdly, his body, or *bones are full of the ſins of his youth*: The miſery of the wicked man is here ſet forth from the cauſe of it, *The ſins of his youth.* The alluſion ſtands thus, That look as a deboiſt young man by his wanton and riotous courſes gets bodily diſeaſes which ſoak into his bones, and ſuck out his marrow; ſo the judgments of God of any kind conſume and waſte all the comforts of a wicked man, which together with his wickedneſs, follow or rather drive him out of the world.

The original runs thus, *His bones are full of his youth*, or *of his youths.* The word is plural, and in propriety ſignifies to hide, or to lie hid. For youth or young men come not abroad to action, but are kept cloſe in their Fathers houſes, or in Schools of learning and education. When he ſaith, *His bones are full of his youth*, the meaning is, they are full of thoſe miſeries and ſorrows, which the ſins of his youth have deſerved and acquired. Upon this account ſome render the Text thus, *His bones are full of his ſecrets*, that is, of his ſecret ſins: Man commits many ſins in ſecret, the world takes no notice of them; and his ſin may lie long in ſecret, as ſecretly as the marrow lieth in his bones, though indeed it be not marrow but rottenneſs and poyſon in his bones. The word is uſed (*Pſal.* 90. 8.) where *Moſes* thus complaineth, *Thou haſt ſet our iniquity before thee, and our ſecret ſins* (or ſins of youth) *in the light of thy countenance*; that is, thou ſeemeſt to call us to an account for the ſins of our youth, or for our ſecret ſins; thoſe ſins which have lain in the dark, are not only brought to light, but ſet in the light, and that not only in the light of mans knowledge, but in the light of the knowledge of God. As it is our higheſt mercy when God lifts *up the light of his countenance* upon our perſons, ſo it is our ſaddeſt affliction, or a fore-runner of very ſad afflictions when God ſets our ſecret ſins, or the ſins of our youth in the light of his countenance; ſo that in either reading the meaning is the ſame.

Oſſa ejus replebuntur ipſius adoleſcentia, i.e. pœnis quas ſibi ſceleribus adoleſcentiæ acquiſivit.

Oſſa ejus repleta ſunt occultis. Mont.

There is a twofold expoſition of theſe words, ſome referring them to the puniſhment of this wicked man, others to a further deſcription of his ſin; we may take in both: Mr. *Broughton's* tranſlation gives this as a deſcription of the puniſhment of this wicked man; *His bones ſhall feel full pay for his youths pranks*; that is, he ſhall be fully puniſhed, being an old impenitent. Sin is often put in Scripture for puniſhment. But what are we to underſtand by *theſe bones? His bones are full*; bones in a ſtrict ſence are (as it were) the timbers and rafters of the body which maintain and keep up the whole fabrick. Here by *bones* we may underſtand, firſt, any thing that is ſtrong or firm. So, *His bones are full of the ſins of his youth*, is, his greateſt ſtrength hath fill of puniſhment; for the bones are the ſtrongeſt part of the body.

Secondly, By bones we may underſtand the whole outward man (*Pſal.* 141. 7.) *Our bones lie ſcattered at the graves mouth*, that is, our whole body is ready to drop into the grave; again, *All my bones ſhall ſay*, &c. (*Pſal.* 35. 10.) that is, my whole man, body and ſoul ſhall ſay. Sometimes the bones are put ſpecially for the ſoul (*Pſal.* 51. 8.) *David* prayeth, that *God would reſtore to him the joy of his ſalvation, and that the bones which he had broken might rejoyce.*

Where *by bones*, he means the ſpirit, the inward part; for though the mind of a man be an immaterial ſubſtance, and hath no corporiety in it, yet the ſtrength of a man is in his ſpirit; as the bones are the ſtrength of the body, ſo the mind is the ſtrength of the whole man. When a mans ſpirit is broken, we may well ſay, *His bones are broken*. In this ſence we may underſtand that of *David* (Pſal. 6. 2, 3.) *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed*; that is, my ſpirit: ſo (*Pſal.* 38. 3.) *There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger, neither is there any reſt in my bones*; that is, the outward, the inward man, my fleſh and ſpirit, are unſound and reſtleſs, *by reaſon of my ſin*; ſo that we are not to interpret *bones*, as oppoſed to *fleſh*, but as they denote the beſt and ſtrongeſt of man, body and ſoul; and then, to ſay, *His bones are full of the ſins of his youth*, is as much as to ſay, his youthful ſins draw trouble quite through him, they leave nothing of him untoucht or untainted. Thus we may expound the words, as implying the univerſality and extenſion of the wicked mans puniſhment, it ſhall ſoak into his very bones and marrow. When Satan deſired leave of God to touch the ſkin and bones of *Job*, his meaning was, let me have liberty and commiſſion to ſtrike him quite through, without and within to afflict both ſoul and body. So that, this phraſe, *His bones are full of the ſin of his youth*, intimates him both ſinſul and miſerable all over.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That youth is very ſubject to, and uſually very full of ſin.*

Every young man commits ſin enough to fill his bones when he is old; young men are ſo prone to ſin, that *Solomon* tells us (*Eccleſ.* 10. 11.) *Childhood and youth are vanity*, and ſurely youth is more vain then childhood. Children are vain, becauſe little and ſo unable to do good; youth is vain, becauſe ſo able and active to do evil. The ancient Poet ſaid of youth, it is like wax to evil, you may work it into the ſhape of any monſter, and put what ſtamp you will upon it, as upon wax; yet this Text and the point now iſſued from it are ſpecially intended of thoſe young men, whoſe wayes have been fouleſt, and whoſe lives moſt vitious; ſuch as act not only vainly, but reproachfully, or ſo as deſerves reproach. What *Ephraim* (*Jer.* 31. 19.) being upon his repentance, ſpake of himſelf nationally taken, many have cauſe to ſay of themſelves perſonally, *I am aſhamed becauſe I have born the reproach of my youth*; that is, now I feel, and am ſenſible of thoſe ſins of my youth, which expoſe me to reproach: 'Tis our duty to repent of our old-age ſins, but repentance inſiſteth uſually moſt upon the ſins of youth; which argueth that thoſe ſins preſs moſt. *David* in ſpecial prayeth (*Pſalm* 25. 7.) *Remember not againſt me the ſins of my youth*, thereby implying the ſinfulneſs and ſlipperineſs of that age. The Apoſtles exhortation to *Timothy* and *Titus*, (1 *Tim.* 4. 12. *Tit.* 2. 15.) both young men, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*, warned them and teacheth us, that as unconverted young men uſually run ſuch courſes, ſo converted young men are apt to fall into ſuch acts of ſin, as render them deſpicable; and the ſame Apoſtle faſtens ſome ſins in ſpecial upon *youth*, as haunting that age and ſtate (2 *Tim.* 2. 22.) *Fly youthful luſts*; old age hath its proper luſts, and ſo hath youth.

Cereus in vitia flecti, monitoribus aſper. Horat. in Arte Poet.
Habet pueritia innocentiam, ſenectus prudentiam, Adoleſcentia ſola eſt invalida viribus, infirma conſiliis, vitio calens, &c. Ambroſ.

There are ſeven ſorts of ſpecial ſins: Firſt, Such as appertain to, and moſt commonly ſhew themſelves in this or that age of mans life. Secondly, There are ſins more proper to ſome Countries and places. Thirdly, To the ſeaſon or times wherein we live. Fourthly, There are ſpecial ſins of mens ſpecial callings, dealings and tradings in the world. Fifthly, Of their conditions, whether poor or rich, great or ſmall. Sixthly, There are ſpecial ſins following the conſtitution of the body, whether Sanguine, Chollerick, Flegmatick, or Melancholly. And ſeventhly, There are ſpecial ſins hanging about our relations. The bones of ſome are full of the ſins of their relations and conſtitutions; the bones of others are full of the ſins of their conditions and callings; the bones of not a few are full of the ſins of the place, time, or age wherein they live; the bones of many are (as the bones of *Job* were ſuppoſed to be) full of that ſpecial age of their lives, their youth. The ſins of their youth-age, are viſible in their old-age, and the ſins of their firſt age prove the ſorrows of their laſt.

Secondly obſerve, *Till ſin be repented of, and pardoned, the puniſhment of it remains.*

It is impoſſible to remove the puniſhment of ſin from the guilt of it; and it is impoſſible to remove the guilt of it by any means, but the pardon of it. Bones full of ſin, ſhall not want pain: caſt out ſin by repentance, take hold of pardon by believing, and then puniſhment is caſt out, and muſt let go its hold.

Thirdly, As bones are taken extenſively for the whole man;

Obſerve, *That the puniſhment of ſin reacheth as far as ſin reacheth.*

If ſin get into your bones, puniſhment will follow; as there are ſins of the fleſh, and ſins of the ſpirit, ſo puniſhments of the fleſh, and puniſhments of the ſpirit; there is nothing ſo ſtrong, ſo deep, or retired, but puniſhment will find it out: not only the ſkin and fleſh, but the very bones ſhall ſmart, yea and the ſoul too. *Wo to them* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 29. 15.) *that ſeek deep to hide their counſel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark*; for though their counſel be deep and their works in the dark, yet wrath will ſee its way to overtake them, and fill their hearts with wo. An impenitent perſon ſhall have puniſhment enough, he ſhall have his fill of it, till he vomit, yet he cannot vomit it up, or diſburden his pained conſcience. As he filleth up his meaſure of ſin, ſo he ſhall have his meaſure of ſorrow full; the time will come when all the ungodly ſhall be filled with the wrath and righteous judgments of God, as now they are filled with wrath and unrighteouſneſs one againſt another. Saints have their fulneſs of grace in Chriſt, and having received grace, they fill up their meaſure, *Till they come to the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*; and when once they have attained and are arrived to a fulneſs of Grace, they ſhall receive fulneſs of joy in glory. *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy; all their bones ſhall then ſay, Who is a God like to thee?* (Pſal. 35. 10.) Not a bone but ſhall have its fill of joy; every mans bones ſhall be full at laſt, *Good meaſure, preſſed down and ſhaken together, and running over ſhall God give into their boſoms.* The bones of the Godly ſhall be filled with the goodneſs of God, and the bones of the wicked ſhall be filled with that wrath of God which their own ſins have deſerved. *His bones are full of the ſins of his youth.*

Again, Theſe words may be expounded as a deſcription of a wicked mans perſeverance in ſin. The ſins which he had in his youth, he hath them ſtill, he hath not loſt nor put off one of them. Thoſe filthy luſts which like ſo many running ſores corrupted the forepart of his life, corrupt the latter, running ſtill upon him, and ceaſing not.

Hence note, *All the ſins of youth remain in and upon the oldeſt of impenitent perſons.*

Old impenitents keep a ſtock or treaſure of their youth-ſins, laid up not only in their bones, but in their hearts; as God maketh them to poſſeſs the ſins of their youth in puniſhments; ſo they poſſeſs the ſins of their youth, if not in practice, yet in affection and pleaſing contemplation. Suppoſe a wicked man grown old and unable by weakneſs to act ſin, yet the habit of ſin is not weakned; his ſin remains as it were young and green, though he be a ſinner of a hundred years old; though he be ſpent and dry, yet his ſins are vivid, warm, vigorous and youthful; *Time weakens ſinners, but it cannot weaken ſin*; though the marrow be ſpent out of his bones, yet his ſpirit is as full of ſin as ever his bones were of marrow. Man is a veſſel ſtrongly ſented and ſeaſoned with ſin by nature, and till the grace of God cleanſe, and regenerate him, the taſte of the cask never goeth out. And as this is true in reference to the pollution and filthineſs of ſin, ſo alſo in reference to the guilt of it. A wicked mans bones are full of that alſo. Sin unpardoned and unmortified, carries death and wrath in it continually. He is ſaid, *To treaſure up wrath againſt the day of wrath* (Rom. 2. 5.) Why ſo? becauſe he treaſureth up guilt; every ſin bringeth in ſome further guilt, and the guilt of them all, as well as the filth of them all, as alſo that wrath which is due to them all, is treaſured up with them; no guilt can be got off from any ſin, but by the blood of Chriſt, and that through the free mercy of God; now this man hath nothing to do with the blood of Chriſt, and therefore he hath nothing to do with mercy.

Further obſerve, *It is the greateſt miſery to perſevere in ſin.*

As ſin brings all miſery with it, ſo it ſelf is all miſery. No evil can be added to a ſinner ſo bad as his ſin is. As grace and holineſs conſidered abſtractly are a greater good, then all outward, yea then many inward bleſſings and rewards. So ſin conſidered abſtractly, is a greater evil then all outward, yea then all thoſe inward curſes which are only puniſhments (*Rev.*22.11.) *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill*; that is, let him ſin *his bones full and his belly full.* (Ezek.24.13.) *Becauſe I have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged*; that is, I have given thee means to *purge thee, but thou waſt not purged*; thou ſhalt not *be purged from thy filthineſs any more*; as if he had ſaid, thy remaining ſin ſhall be thy puniſhment, and that ſhall draw down puniſhments in kind, as the Prophet adds, *Till I have cauſed my fury to reſt upon thee. Sin is a bad bed-fellow*, the company of it for a night is burdenſom and dangerous, then how *bad a grave-fellow is ſin*; yet ſo it will be to all impenitents, as *Zophar* further expreſſeth himſelf at the cloſe of the verſe.

Which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt.

Hac dicendi formula ſignificat non prius ceſſare peccare quam vivere impium.

Or, *ſleep with him when he lieth down*; that is, when he dieth, and goeth to the duſt, his ſin ſhall live and go with him. It is an Hyperbolical ſtrain, noting that ſin will never leave the wicked man neither alive nor dead, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. It filled his bones while he lived, and it will fill his grave when he dieth: unleſs a man die to ſin before he dieth, his ſin will live with him when he is dead. The damned in Hell have all their ſins about them; when they ſhall have been in Hell millions of years, yet then their bones will be full of ſin; that which was the cauſe of their being caſt to Hell, ſhall be their everlaſting companion there. For as (*Rev.*14.13.) *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them.* When a believer dieth, his righteouſneſs and holineſs die not: the good works which he hath done, die not, but lie down in the duſt with him; they perfume his memory on earth, and they go up with him into Heaven. So we may ſay, *Wo to thoſe that die out of the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever, for they ſhall not reſt from their labours, and all their ſins, their works of wickedneſs ſhall follow them:* How glad would ſinners be if they might go to the duſt of the grave, yea to the flames of Hell, and ſin not go with them. Hell is as full of ſin as it is of miſery; and if it were not full of ſin, the miſery would be but little in compariſon of what it is; there is weeping in Hell, but neither repenting, nor pardoning; man cannot repent there, and God will not pardon there. And hence it is, that though there be continual weeping in Hell, yet there can be no removing of ſin out of Hell; repentance and pardon remove ſin, but weeping alone will not do it; therefore Hell is full of ſin, though full of tears. So we may apply that of *Moſes* (*Deut.*29.20.) *The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this book ſhall lie upon him.* The curſe ſhall lie upon him as long as ſin lieth upon him. When Chriſt ſpake the utmoſt evil of the ſins of the *Jewes*, and the utmoſt of their miſery in their refuſal of himſelf who came to take away ſin; he tells them, *I go my way and ye ſhall ſeek me, and ſhall die in your ſins* (John 8.21.) Ye ſhall ſeek me, but it will be too late; it is a miſery to live in ſin, but O what a miſery is it to die in ſin? They that die in ſin ſhall riſe in ſin, and ſtand before Chriſt in ſin, and how ſhall they be able to ſtand before him? The Prophet (*Ezek.*24.6.) compareth the people of the *Jews*, *to a pot whoſe ſcum is in it*; we may ſay of all impenitent unbelievers, *their ſcum boils in*; ſometimes the ſcum appears to them, and they may be thinking to take it off, but the ſcum boils in again, and there it remains for ever. This is the Hell of Hell, ſin goeth down to the duſt with ſinners. We may ſay (in alluſion to that of *Peter*, Act. 12.) that every wicked man ſleeps in the grave, as he in the priſon, bound not only with two, but with a thouſand chains. The ſins of believers go to the grave before them. Sin dieth while they live, and they have a life which ſhall never die. The ſins of unbelievers go to the grave with them; while they live they are dead in ſin, and by ſin they fall into that death from which there is no recovery unto life. Some ſinners are long lived in the body, and they have a hope of dying to ſin, when they are ready to die in nature; as if they carried repentance in their ſleeves, and could command it when they pleaſed: No man hath repentance in his power; and the longer any man lives in ſin, the more power ſin gets to hinder repentance. And they ſeldom receive this power of repentance from God, who have long abuſed his patience; therefore die they ſhall in their ſins. When they ceaſe to live here, ſin ſhall not, nor ſhall they ever want a will to ſin, when they are in that ſtate, wherein (properly) they cannot ſin.

VERS. 12, 13, 14.

Though wickedneſs be ſweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue:
Though he ſpare it, and forſake it not, but keep it ſtill within his mouth:
Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aſps within him.

Introducit impium tanquam guloſū atq; voracē, & quæ ſumma aviditate voravit, paulo poſt fœdiſſimè vomentem. Pined.

J*OB* proceeds to deſcribe the miſeries of a wicked man, moſt of all of an Hypocrite, by an elegant metaphor or ſimilitude taken from meats, which are ſweet in the taſte, but deadly in the effect; and however the paſſages of this ſimilitude are ſomewhat obſcure and dark, yet the ſence and meaning of it is plain and eaſie; in which we may take notice in general, that a wicked man is compared to a glutton, eating greedily and vomiting filthily. More diſtinctly,

First, That ſin is compared to meat.

Secondly, That the actings of ſin are compared to the eating, chewing, and digeſting of meat.

Thirdly, The delight that goeth with ſin, is compared to the ſweetneſs, and well taſtedneſs of meat.

Fourthly, Continuance in ſin, to the holding of meat under the tongue, and keeping it in the mouth.

Fifthly, The puniſhment of ſin is compared to poyſon mingled with meat, or to poyſonous meat.

Sixthly, The effects which follow this puniſhment are compared to torments vexing the bowels, and to vomiting.

Seventhly, The iſſue of all is compared to death; *He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſpes; The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.*

Though wickedneſs be ſweet in his mouth.

The word which we tranſlate *Wickedneſs*, ſignifies any kind of ſin, yet ſome reſtrain it here to that particular ſin of the mouth, or tongue, evil ſpeaking, oaths, and blaſphemy; theſe are ſweet and pleaſant to prophane mouths, as the praiſe of God is to the mouths of the righteous. There is a ſecond reſtriction of this *wickedneſs* (which is more proper) to the ſins of oppreſſion and fraudulent gain (*Gen.*6.7.) *God ſaw the wickedneſs of man that it was great in the earth*; but what was the ſpecial wickedneſs of that age? The holy Story tells us it was an age of violence, there were *mighty men*, who were mighty oppreſſors of men: They are called, *men of renown*, at *verſ.*4. whoſe *chief was Nimrod, A mighty hunter before the Lord.* We may take wickedneſs in the Text both wayes; firſt, in the General; ſecondly, in Particular; for the ſin of violence, and wrongfully obtaining the things of this life, which is ſpecified at *verſ.*15. *He hath ſwallowed down riches.*

Though wickedneſs be ſweet in his mouth.] Sweetneſs is the ſuitableneſs of the humour which is in meat and drink, to the ſalival humour in the mouth or palate; ſweetneſs to the taſte is nothing but this ſuitableneſs; wickedneſs is ſuitable to corrupt nature, therefore *wickedneſs is ſweet*, and hath a pleaſant taſte, as thoſe meats which are moſt congruous to appetite; *Though it be ſweet in his mouth*; the *mouth* is added, becauſe ſenſation is made there; for when the meat is paſſed from the mouth to the ſtomach, there's no more taſte of it, unleſs it ſend back fumes to the mouth, which are uſually unpleaſant and diſtaſtful. The ſenſitive part of the ſoul which is affected with the pleaſure of ſin, is here compared to the mouth; ſo that, whatſoever internal delight a man takes in the committing of any iniquity, or in any iniquity committed, that is the ſweetneſs of it in his mouth; while the inferior faculties of the ſoul are pleaſed and take contentment in ſin, they may be ſaid to taſte it.

Optimè per os ſignificatur voluntas inferior & appetitus ſenſitivus. Tunc peccator verſat malum in ore ſuo dum in concupiſcentia & voluntate inferiori illo delectatur. Bold.

From the ſimilitude in general,

Obſerve, *That, ſin is as food to the ſoul of a natural or carnal man.*

Yea it is as food to the natural part of a regenerate man; ſin is the food of luſt. The firſt ſin was committed by eating the forbidden fruit, and now every ſin is the eating of ſome forbidden fruit. Sin is meat and drink to the ſinner, not only in reference to the effect, becauſe it brings in the bread which ſome men eat: as *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 4. 17.) *They eat the bread of wickedneſs, and drink the wine of violence*; that is, they eat and drink that bread and wine, which hath been gotten by wickedneſs and violence; now (I ſay) ſin is food not only in the effect and conſequence of it, but alſo (as obedience and doing the will of God is to godly men) in the very act; the adopted ſons of God ſay (in their proportion) as Chriſt ſaid, *John* 4. *This is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father which is in Heaven:* Wicked men ſay alſo 'tis their meat and drink to do the will of Satan, who is indeed their Father: Nature is as hungry and thirſty after wickedneſs, as grace is after righteouſneſs. As there is a hunger and thirſt after ſpirituals, ſo after carnals: The natural man is not content, till he have his fill of them. The reaſon why there is ſo much *labouring pains* taken to commit ſin, is, becauſe there is *a hungring pain* provoking to it; we ſay of natural hunger, *It breaks through ſtone walls*; that is, it ſtirs us to overcome all difficulties, and labour hard for the ſupply of nature. Many have ſo much bread at home, that it is a trouble to them becauſe they are no more hungry, who yet are ſo hungry after ſin, that it puts them to a continual trouble of breaking through ſtone walls, the greateſt difficulties to come at it. The Philoſopher calls thoſe who are given up to pleaſure, who (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the wanton widdow, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5.) *Live in pleaſure,* as if that were their only element, or who account it their bleſſedneſs to do ſo; he (I ſay) calls ſuch, *The moſt importunate men*; I conceive he meaneth that ſuch are moſt eager in purſuing all thoſe means which may ſatisfie them with pleaſures, and are reſtleſs till they have attained them. A poor man pinched with want is an importunate man, you cannot get him from your doors; he is hungry, hunger putteth him on; ſo it is with every man whoſe heart is ſet upon ſin, he is an importunate man, nothing can ſtop him; though he meet with denials, yet he reneweth his motion; though he meet with rebukes, yet he is not anſwered; yea though he meet with blows, yet he will on again. *Hunger muſt get ſomewhat, or looſe all; and many of theſe hungry ones for the getting of a poor ſomewhat* (a dry cruſt, a bare bone, indeed a very nothing) *have loſt all.*

Qui beatitudinem in voluptate collocant ſunt homines importuniſſimi. Ariſt. l. 1. Eth. cap. 5.

Secondly obſerve, *There is a preſent ſweetneſs in ſin.*

Sin is not only meat, but ſweet meat; not only bread, but pleaſant bread to an evil heart. *Daniel* for ſome weeks *eat no pleaſant bread*; he eat bread to keep life and ſoul together, but he forbare feaſting or good chear. Sin is a feaſt to a carnal man, it is his good chear, yea it is dainties to him. We have that word (*Pſal.* 141. 4.) where *David* ſpeaks of wicked men, *Incline not my heart to any evil thing with them that practiſe wicked works, and let me not eat of their dainties.* Theſe dainties may be expounded (as was ſaid before) either for the proſperity that comes in by wicked practices (ſome by wicked wayes get not onely ordinary food but dainties) or thoſe dainties are ſin it ſelf, they feaſted themſelves in doing evil; *Lord let me not eat of their dainties,* if that be their food I had rather ſtarve then eat with them (*Prov.*9.17.) *Stolen waters are ſweet, and bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant: Stollen water and ſecret bread* are ſinful practices, which are ſo much the more ſweet, by how much they are more ſecret. This bread of ſecreſies is pleaſant bread and ſweet meats to a wanton ſpirit; as the Word of God and holy actings are pleaſant bread to a gracious heart. *David* ſaith of the Commandments of God, *They are ſweeter to me then honey, and the honey comb* (Pſal.119.103.) What was thus ſweet to him? Not the bare word of the commandment only, but obedience to the Commandment, or theſe Commandments requiring his obedience; the word of the Commandment is ſweet to none but ſuch as do and obey it; the word is gall and wormwood to a diſobedient ſpirit, but to a *David* it is ſweeter then the honey, *yea then the ſweeteſt part of honey*; if there be any part of the honey that is more honey then other, thy Commandments are that part; therefore he adds, *They are ſweeter then the honey, or the honey comb.* But what ſweetneſs is there in the honey comb? We are not to take the comb alone without the honey; but when he ſaith, *ſweeter then the honey comb,* the meaning is, ſweeter then the honey that cometh immediately out of the comb: That honey which drops from the comb without preſſing is counted pureſt and ſweeteſt. There is not only meat and drink to believers in obedience, but honey and ſweetneſs; and ſuch likewiſe for a while is wickedneſs to the wicked.

Thirdly, From the intendment or ſcope of the ſimilitude, which is to ſhew what putteth carnal men upon the purſuit of ſin, what it is that provokes them to it; no man acts but he ſeeth ſome reaſon for it: a beaſt is provoked with ſomewhat proportionable to a reaſon, though he hath no reaſon. *Zophar* giveth us *this ſweetneſs* as a reaſon why a wicked man purſues and is ſo greedy of his ſin.

Hence obſerve, *It is ſome expected ſweetneſs in ſin, which provokes to the acting of it.*

When Satan tempts to ſin, he playes the Orator, and preſents ſome conſideration of profit, or pleaſure, or credit. In the Parable of the Sower it is ſaid the Word of God was choaked (*Luke* 8. 14.) The thorny ground received the Word, but it was choaked; by what? There are three choakers mentioned in that place; firſt, *The cares of the world*; ſecondly, *The deceitfulneſs of riches*; thirdly, *Pleaſure*: Theſe choak the Word; that is, they will not ſuffer a man to practice, and ſubmit to the Word. Pleaſure is one of the three choakers, if not the firſt and chiefeſt of the three; pleaſure quickens the principles of ſin, and hightens deſire after it. When the woman was tempted to eat the forbidden fruit, the Text ſaith (*Gen.* 3. 6.) *The woman ſaw that the tree was good for food, and pleaſant to the eye, a tree to be deſired to make one wiſe,* and then ſhe did eat; here were all ſorts of motives, external, internal, ſenſitive, and intellective, to draw her to that ſin. And thus the Lord deals with his people, to draw them on in the wayes of holineſs; he tells them of the ſweetneſs, pleaſantneſs, peaceableneſs of his wayes (*Prov.* 3. 17.) *The wayes of wiſdom are peace, all her paths are pleaſantneſs:* Thus he allures the ſoul to walk in his wayes. The wayes of wiſdom conſidered abſtractly, are not only the beſt, and moſt honourable wayes, but 'tis ſweeteſt alſo to walk in them; yet becauſe the Lord knows we are fleſh as well as ſpirit, therefore he tells us of ſweetneſs and pleaſantneſs, of peace and profit, of gold and ſilver to be had in his wayes; and indeed he infinitely out-bids ſin and Satan for our ſervice. *Godlineſs is profitable for all things. Firſt ſeek the Kingdom of Heaven and the righteouſneſs thereof, and all other things ſhall be added to you.* What can we deſire more then that by which we may obtain all our deſires. As God himſelf is not any particular, but an univerſal good; ſo godlineſs is not profitable only for this or that particular good thing, but for all good things. Thus God is pleaſed to invite us to himſelf, and into his wayes by the ſweet bait of benefits; and thus Satan provokes into the ways of ſin, he perſwades, and many find by experience, that wickedneſs is ſweet in the mouth. The carnal man is led by ſenſe, and liveth like a beaſt; Satan handles and fits him accordingly. He feeds him with ſweet meats; *But though wickedneſs be ſweet in his mouth,*

Voluptatum blanditiis deliniti; ad ea gerenda omnia quæ prava ſunt impellimur. Ariſt. l. 2. Eth. cap.3.

Voluptas bonum pecoris eſt. Sen. Epiſt. 92.

Though he hide it under his tongue.

Theſe words carry on the former alluſion to eating. For as a glutton that gets a ſweet morſel between his teeth, is loath to looſe the delightſom taſte of it, and therefore doth not haſtily chew and ſwallow it down, but eats it by degrees; ſuch men of appetite and palat-pleaſures will ſay to others when they are eating, *Think what you are doing*, taſte pleaſure. Thus doth the carnal man deal with his ſin, he chews it long, he keepeth it cloſe, and hideth it under his tongue.

The word in the Hebrew which we tranſlate to hide, is more proper to the work of the tongue in ſpeaking then in eating; and may imply thus much, that as a man who hath got a ſweet morſel, hides it under his tongue in eating, ſo a carnal heart that lives and delights in ſin, uſeth his tongue to hide or keep it from revealing. The word ſignifies hiding with the Tongue. The heart is the ſhop wherein, and the tongue the inſtrument whereby thoſe artificial coverings and vails are made, by which the wicked man hideth his ſin. The tongue hideth both what we are, and what we have done, as *Rachel* hid her fathers images, or as *Rahab* hid the *ſpies* who came to *Jericho*, leſt the ſearchers ſhould have found them. Thus the carnal man covers his ſin with his tongue. And this is the right character or property of a falſe hearted hypocrite; ſo that *Zophar* ſtruck at *Job* ſecretly, as a hypocrite, while he ſpake of hiding ſin under the tongue.

כחד *Eſt negare, negando celare diſſimulare.*

הכחיד *Eſt plerumq; de medio tollere* ἀφανίζειν *abolere, ut dicere poſſis non fuiſſe. Teget peccatum ſermone ficto & fraudis pleno. His verbis figurat hypocritam & obliquè* Jobum *perſtringit.* Jun.

Hence obſerve, *The wicked mans tongue is the cover of his ſin.*

The tongue of a ſincere heart is the diſcoverer of his ſin. *For as with the heart man believeth, ſo with the tongue or mouth confeſſion is made* (of our faith in God) *unto Salvation* (Rom. 10. 10.) as alſo of our ſins againſt God unto pardon and remiſſion. *I ſaid I will confeſs my ſin unto the Lord* (ſaith repenting *David*, *Pſal.* 32. 5.) *and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin.* Now as the tongue of a good man diſcovers his ſin, ſo the tongue of a wicked man hides it; and that three wayes.

Firſt, By plain denying that he hath done it.

Secondly, By diſſembling or concealing what he hath done.

Thirdly, And moſt ordinarily by excuſing it; though he cannot conceal the evil done, much leſs deny it, yet he hath ſomewhat to ſay, to render the doing of it leſs culpable then others conceive it. To which purpoſe the heart promps the tongue with a thouſand excuſes; the hypocrite is elegantly ſaid to hide his ſin under his tongue, becauſe by carnal reaſonings and fair words he makes ſo many excuſes for it; he guilds over the rotten poſt, and paints the filthy ſepulchre of his heart and life with oyly words, dropt from a diſſembling tongue. A deceitful heart and a diſſembling tongue cannot live aſunder. *As it is the glory of God to conceal a thing*, that is, a ſinful thing (*Prov.* 25. 2.) *So it is the glory of God for man to declare his ſin.* Thus *Joſhua* exhorts *Achan*, *My ſon give glory to God, and make confeſſion* (Joſh. 7. 19.) But it is the ſhame of a man, and a diſhonour to God for a man to hide his ſin. Many hide their ſins for ſhame, but that hiding will produce greater ſhame. *He that covers his ſin ſhall not proſper*, (*Prov.* 28. 13.) If we do not cover our ſins God will. Our covering of our own ſins by excuſing them, brings the curſe, (few ſins hurt except we cover them) but if God cover them by forgiving them, we are bleſſed (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is he whoſe ſin is covered.* God covers the ſin of a believing and repenting ſoul; but the impenitent unbeliever covers his own. *He hideth it under his tongue.*

Again, We find the word uſed to another ſence in Scripture, which may further clear up this point; to hide under the tongue, is ſometimes to meditate, or revolve a thing in the mind; for when once a word is ſpoken, it is out of the tongues keeping, but while we meditate we keep it under the tongue (*Cant.* 4. 11.) *Thy lips, O my Spouſe, drop as the honey comb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; honey and milk*, that is, *honey words*, ſweet pleaſant words are under thy tongue; my Spouſe is now meditating and conſidering how to ſpeak ſweat and pleaſant words to her beloved, theſe words are not yet upon but under her tongue. That of *David* (*Pſal.* 66. 17.) reacheth this ſence; we tranſlate, *I cried to him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue*: The Text may be rendred thus, *I cryed to him with my mouth, and his exaltation was under my tongue*; that is, I was conſidering and meditating how I might liſt up and exalt the name of God, and make his praiſe glorious; holy thoughts are ſaid to be under the tongue when we are in a preparation to bring them forth; and ſo are unholy thoughts (*Pſal.* 10. 7.) *His mouth is full of curſing, and deceit, and fraud; under his tongue is miſchief and vanity*; that is, he ſpeaketh evil and is deviſing how to ſpeak worſe; his words are wicked, and his deviſings are more wicked. Thus as in reference both to good and evil, there is a hiding under the tongue to prepare for ſpeaking; ſo there is a hiding under the tongue that the thing may be concealed, and not at all ſpoken; that's the hypocrites art; for as prophane perſons care not to proclaim their ſins, they make their tongues the trumpet of their vanity, they declare their ſins as *Sodom*; ſo the hypocrite is buſie to make ſhadows for his ſin, and to gloſs it over with fair pretences, leſt it come to light.

Again, We may expound this latter banch as an effect of the former, which alſo comes up clearly to the point in hand. *Becauſe wickedneſs was ſweet in his mouth, he will therefore hide it under his tongue*: To which ſence the Chaldee Paraphraſt ſpeaketh, *If wickedneſs was ſweet in his mouth, he did bely it, or hide it by a lye, under his tongue.* As lying is it ſelf a great ſin, and every ſin hath ſomewhat in it of a lye, ſo many ſins are concealed by lying. That ſweetneſs which cauſeth a wicked man to commit it, cauſeth him alſo to retain and hold it, or as the Text ſpeaks, *To hide it under his tongue.* We read of an antient Glutton who wiſhed his neck were as long as a Cranes, that ſo he might keep the taſte of his meat; there is ſuch ſweetneſs upon the taſte of a natural man in ſinning, that he wiſheth he might retain it long upon his ſpirit, and is troubled if he quickly part with the pleaſure of his dainty morſels.

Cum enim dulce fuerit in ore ejus malum abſcondet illud ſub lingua ſua. Vulg. *Si dulceſcebat in ore ejus malitia mentiebatur eam ſub lingua ſua*, i.e. *mentiendo tegebat.* Tharg. *Philoxenus.*

Zophar hath not yet done with theſe ſuppoſitions, we have had two of his *Thoughts* already; *Though wickedneſs be ſweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue*, he is not ſatisfied in theſe two; but gives us two more in the next verſe, one expreſly, the other by implication.

Verſ. 13. **Though he ſpare it, and forſake it not, but keep it ſtill within his mouth.**

This verſe is of the ſame tendency with the former, which hath been already opened. In *verſ.* 14. we have the application of the ſimilitude, whereof this is but a further illuſtration; *Though he ſpare it, and forſake it not, but keep it ſtill*, &c. This expreſſion for the manner of it, ſuits that which we read (*Joh.* 1. 20.) where *John* being asked whether he was the Chriſt, *he confeſſed and denied not, but confeſſed I am not the Chriſt*; ſo 'tis here ſaid of a wicked man, he ſpares his ſin, and forſakes it not, but keeps it, to ſhew the intentneſs of his ſpirit upon his ſin, he will by no means let it go.

The words ſtill purſue the metaphor of eating, for a gluttenous perſon (as was intimated before) eats for eating ſake, or for pleaſure; not for ſtrength to glorifie God, which ſhould be the end of our eating. Now though this moral glutton be not ſparing at all in the eating of his meat, that is, in the committing of his ſin; he eats, that is, ſins heartily, yet he ſpares his meat while he is eating it, he will not eat it haſtily, but with a kind of deliberation; as ſome eat their meat ſo greedily that they ſcarce taſte what they eat, ſo others eat it ſo ſlowly, as if they thought they could never taſte it enough, or have enough of it. 'Tis thus alſo in ſinning; ſome ſin in a kind of hurry or ſuddain paſſion, they ſcarce know what they do, while they are doing evil; or they are to any ſinful occaſion what a carnal heart is to any good occaſion or to any occaſion of doing good, glad when they are rid of it; but others ſin lingringly, and think they never ſtay long enough upon it; they ſin feelingly and deſire (as that Roman Tyrant deſired men ſhould die) *to feel themſelves ſin.* Such as theſe (I conceive, according to *Zophar's* ſcope and mind) may be ſaid to ſpare their ſin. They do not ſpare to commit it, but they commit it ſparingly, as being loath it ſhould ſpend off their hands too faſt. The Original word here uſed, ſignifies to *ſpare*, as we ought out of pity and compaſſion; hence not ſparing and not pitying are put together, *Ezek.* 5. 11. it ſignifies alſo to ſpare what ſhould not be ſpared; to ſpare not only that which is in our

Parcius agitũ peccato non ſtatim tranſmittens aut deglutiens elabi ſinens. Pined.

חמל *Dimittere relinquere intactum. Propitius eſſe.*

our power, but which is our duty to deſtroy. Some ſpare being moved with a fooliſh pity, and others with covetouſneſs. We may find a mixture of both in *Saul's* ſparing the *Amalekites*. His Commiſſion ran ſtrictly, thus (1 *Sam.* 15. 3.) *Go and ſmite* Amaleck *and utterly deſtroy all that they have, ſpare them not*; but *verſ.* 15. *Saul* being queſtioned by *Samuel*, anſwers, *The people ſpared the beſt of the ſheep*, &c. they would ſpare *Amaleck*, when God had ſaid, *ſpare them not*. *Saul* pretends devotion, *it was for ſacrifice*; but indeed 'twas pride or covetouſneſs, or at the beſt a groundleſs pity which prevailed with him. In this ſence we are to take it here: Though he be very tender towards ſin, as if he were afraid the winds ſhould blow upon it; though he deal gently with it, as *David* gave inſtructions to his Army concerning *Abſalom*; though (according to the Alluſion in the Text) he ſpare it as a pleaſant morſel, which he would be alwayes eating and never eat up, yet it will be bitter to him, *&c.*

Hence obſerve, *A carnal man is merciful to his ſin, and favourable to his luſts.*

The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *God ſpared not his Son*; that is, he did not deal with him in a way of pity when he was in the place of ſinners, *but delivered him up* (namely to death) *for us all*; but ſinful hearts are kind and pitiful to their ſins; though they hear that ſin will damn them, yet they will not give their ſins an ill word, much leſs a wound; they ſpare them, as *Saul* ſpared *Agag* and the fat cattle. Sin is ſpared three wayes,

Firſt, When not confeſſed; we bring ſin forth to tryal and arraignment by confeſſion.

Secondly, When we do not paſs ſentence upon it, nor judge our ſelves for it; ſo the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord.* We ſhould ſay this ſin deſerves death, and we deſerve to die for it, elſe we ſpare it.

Thirdly, We ſpare ſin when it is not actually put to death, though we condemn it; ſome confeſs the iniquity of their ſin, who yet will not part with it. And ſin like a malefactor caſt by the ſentence of the Judge crieth for mercy, or as a priſoner of war for quarter, when the life of it is in danger; ſin ſaith as thoſe ten men to *Iſhmael*, (*Jerem.* 41. 8.) *Slay us not*; Why? What hath ſin to ſay for it ſelf why it ſhould not dye? Uſually it ſaith as thoſe men in the Prophet did, *We have treaſures hid in the field.* Spare us ſay covetouſneſs and oppreſſion, deceit and fraud, *We have treaſures and riches for you*; ſpare me ſaith uncleanneſs, I have pleaſures and delights for you; ſpare me ſaith another, I am but a little one; ſpare me, this is the firſt time, I have been committed but once, or twice; ſpare us cry they all, we are your kindred, fleſh of your fleſh, and bone of your bone. Thus ſin cryeth for ſparing, and the Hypocrite is very willing to hear this cry, and ſpare his ſin, though he thereby wound and be cruel to his own ſoul. Therefore what *Solomon* ſaith concerning the chaſtning of a child, I ſay, concerning the deſtroying of thy ſin, *ſpare not for its crying.* Fooliſh pity deſtroyeth that which is more worth then a City, yea then a world, *the pretious ſoul*; we may ſay (as it was to *Ahab* in that caſe when he ſpared *Benadab* and let him go (1 *King.* 20. 40.) *Becauſe thou haſt let a luſt go which God hath appointed to deſtruction, therefore thy life ſhall go for its life*; take heed of ſparing, and pitying your ſins, as you bear any pity to your own ſouls, or deſire that God ſhould ſpare and pity them; if we ſpare our ſins, God will not ſpare us, *Deut.* 29. 20. Remember God hath appointed every luſt to death, if it hath not a death of mortification here, you ſhall have a death of miſery hereafter; if you ſpare what God hath appointed to death, your lives ſhall go for its life. *There is a ſparing cruelty as well as a puniſhing mercy*; it is mercy to puniſh ſome perſons, and cruelty to ſpare others; but it is mercy to puniſh all ſins, and cruelty to ſpare ſo much as any one; we may call every ſin as Chriſt doth *Judas* the traytor, *A ſon of perdition*, either actively or paſſively; if it be not deſtroyed, it will deſtroy. Sin is actively a deſtroyer, therefore let it be deſtroyed; if you deal not with it as a ſon of perdition, it will be your perdition.

Crudelitas parcens miſericordia puniens.

Further, The Septuagint read it with a negation, *Though he ſpare it not*; their negative hath the ſame ſence with our affirmative. *Though he ſpare it not*; that is (in alluſion to meats) though he eats freely of it; we ordinarily ſay when friends are at Table with us, *Pray do not ſpare*; ſo when a wicked man gets ſin under his tongue, he eats like a glutton, greedily, ſo the Apoſtle deſcribes ſuch, *Being paſt feeling they commit iniquity with greedineſs*; They eat and ſpare not, they do not ſin with moderation or temperately, but are like Epicures in ſinning, they ſin inſatiably. But becauſe the negative is not in the Hebrew reading I ſhall not ſtay upon it; yet (I ſay) the general ſcope and intendment of both readings is the ſame. For if he ſpareth it, it is becauſe he loves it, and if he ſpare it not, it is becauſe he liketh it. *Though he ſpare it,*

Quamvis non parcet ei. Sept. i.e. *non parcè & moderatè aget cum iniquitate, ſed ardenter & inſatiabiliter.*

And forſake it not.] In purſuance of the ſimilitude of eating, the ſenſe is made out thus; Though he ſpare it, as loath to let it go down into his ſtomach, for when once the meat is down, 'tis loſt to the pallate, therefore he parts with it by leiſure. But more properly *to forſake*, notes theſe two things; Firſt, To withdraw outward communion; Secondly, To withdraw inward affection; the withdrawing of communion is the effect of withdrawing affection; for if once a man withdraw his heart from another, he quickly withdraws his preſence. Every where in Scripture carnal men are ſaid to forſake God both wayes (*Jer.* 2. 13.) *This people hath committed two great evils, they have forſaken me the fountain of living waters*; that is, I have no more of their company, they do not love me, therefore they deſire not communion with me. The word is uſed by *David* the figure of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 22. 2.) as alſo by Chriſt himſelf when he hung upon the Croſs, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* The Lord at that time did interclude or ſtop his preſence from his Son, he did not manifeſt himſelf to him; there was as it were, for that preſent, a kind of intermiſſion of the ſencible actings of the love of God towards him: Chriſt being thus denied that communion which he had alwayes enjoyed with the Father, cryed out, *Why haſt thou forſaken me?* But as the wicked man ſpares his ſin, and will not hurt it, ſo he would never be out of its company, much leſs forſake it utterly.

עזב *Dereliquit*

Hence note, That, *a wicked man is very faithful and conſtant to his ſin.*

Solomon gives that rule of love, *Thy friend and thy fathers friend forſake not* (Prov. 27. 10.) a man ſhould not forſake his own friend, much leſs ſhould he forſake his fathers friend, or a friend to the family: Thus ſaith a carnal heart, this ſin is my friend, and he looks upon it as his fathers friend; his ſin poſſibly is as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (1 *Pet.* 1. 20.) *A vain converſation received by tradition from his fathers*; ſin deſcends as well as land. Many inherit vanity, and hold it (as it were) by their fathers copy. And if at any time a Hypocrite forſakes the practice of ſin, yet he doth not forſake his reſpect to it; he may leave off the exerciſe, yet not withdraw his love. Many conſiderations may break off his actions, but nothing breaks off his affections. A wicked man ſaith to his ſin, as God to *Joſhua*, *I will not leave thee nor forſake thee.*

The laſt clauſe of this verſe, is but the affirmative of this negative.

But keep it ſtill within his mouth. Never confeſſing it.

Solomon puts thoſe two together, *He that confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſin ſhall have mercy.* He that hath no mind to forſake his ſin, hath no deſire to confeſs it. He that would keep it in his hands, would alſo keep it within his mouth. But what gets he by this concealment? Let the next verſe enform us, which contains the Application of the whole ſimilitude.

Nulli manifeſtabit, & propter hoc nullus ei peccatum occultum diſſuadebit nec aliquid remedium adhibebit, quod adhibetur peccata ſua confitentibus. Aquin.

Verſ. 14. **Yet his meat in his bowels is turned.**

Though wickedneſs be ſweet, though he hide it under his tongue; though he ſpare it, &c. Suppoſe all this, that a wicked man hath been very tender of his ſin, and nouriſhed it long, what's the benefit? Where's the fruit? *Yet his meat in his bowels is turned*; that is, the many diſhes and courſes that he hath had in this banquet of ſin, all this *meat in his bowels is turned*; how turned? Every thing that is eaten, if there be a digeſtion made of it, if the ſtomach can do its work, is turned. Naturaliſts call it *Aſſimilation*, when the meat eaten is changed or turned into the ſubſtance of the body. But here the meaning is, It is turned into another thing then what it was when it was in his mouth; that is, he finds the effect of it in his ſtomack to be ſuch as if the meat were not that which he had eaten, it doth not turn to nouriſhment, but to poyſon, as the next clauſe expreſſeth; *His meat in his bowels is turned.*

It is the gall of Aſps within him.

So Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *His meat in his bowels turneth into the gall of Aſps within him*; We ſay, *His meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aſps within him*; The ſence is the ſame; For this turning of his meat in his bowels (as our tranſlation expreſſeth it) is not the turning of it into nouriſhment, but into poyſon.

The gall of ſome creatures is poyſon, yea the moſt deadly poyſon; *Ariſtotle, Pliny*, and others that write the Hiſtory of Animals, tell us that the gall of Serpents is full of poyſon, and they have exceeding copious galls; yet there is a further elegancy in the words, ſuiting a ſecret in nature: it was *ſweet in the mouth, now it is gall.* Thoſe meats which are ſweeteſt to the taſt turnes moſt to bitterneſs and choller in the ſtomack. So there is a gradual continuance of the metaphor, ſweetneſs turns to bitterneſs, and not only to bitterneſs, but to gall; and not onely to gall, but to the gall of Aſps, which is not onely bitter, but poyſonous. There is a bitterneſs that hath wholeſomeneſs in it, and is medicinable, there is alſo a poyſonous bitterneſs. The wild bitter Gourd put into the pot was deadly; but of all poyſonous bitterneſſes, the bitterneſs and poyſon of Aſps is moſt deadly. There are many remedies or antidotes againſt Poyſon. And there may be remedies found againſt the poyſonous bitings of all Serpents, except that of the Aſp, which as the ancients affirm, *killeth in four hours*, notwithſtanding the uſe and application of the moſt ſoveraign remedies; inſomuch, that the biting of the Aſp is gone into a proverb, for *An immedicable evil.*

Fel ſerpentū portione maximè copioſum. Plin.

Quæ dulcia ſunt facilè in bilem & amaritudinem convertuntur. Gal.

Adverſus viperarum omniumq; ſerpentum morſus remedium invenitur, aſpide una excepta. Ælian.

Morſus aſpidis proverbio dicitur de malo immedicabili.

There is another conſideration in the gall of Aſps, that carrieth the point more fully; for though that gall be death, and death without remedy, yet it cauſeth a kinde of a pleaſant death. The biting of the Aſp ſtupifies, and then kills. The perſon bitten falls preſently into a ſleep, which is a ſhort death, and then dies, which is a long ſleep. Though the perſon bitten be in preſent danger of death, yet the pains of death are not felt. It is ſtoried of *Cleopatra*, Queen of *Egypt*, that when ſhe ſaw her Husband *Mark Anthony* ruined and dead, having laid violent hands upon himſelf; when ſhe ſaw all loſt, the City of *Alexandria* (where ſhe thought to ſecure her ſelf) taken, and her power utterly broken; ſhe ſo much diſdained to be a captive, and to be brought in triumph to *Rome*, that out of the greatneſs of her ſpirit, ſhe choſe to put Aſps to her breaſts and die; which ſhe did upon this natural conſideration, not onely becauſe ſhe knew they were preſent death, but becauſe they would put her to 'leaſt pain, or make her altogether ſenſeleſs of pain in dying.

Aſpidis veneno afflicti ſomno in mortem ſolvuntur.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, That *how pleaſant ſoever ſin is in the acting, it is bitter in the end.*

Holineſs is ſweet in the way and end too: wickedneſs is ſometimes ſweet in the way, but alwayes bitter in the end. *Solomon* gives this in plain aſſertions (*Prov.* 20.17.) *The bread of deceit is ſweet to a man, but afterward his mouth ſhall be filled with gravel.* And again (*Prov.* 23.31, 32.) *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it gives its colour in the cup*; that is, take heed leſt the ſight of it enſnare thee to intemperance and drunkenneſs. Some love to ſee their wine ſparkle and brisk in a clear chriſtal glaſs, it pleaſeth them to look upon it, and ſee it as well as to taſte and drink it. But look not on it, ſo as to luſt after it; why? *At the laſt it bites like a Serpent.* The bread of deceit is gravel *afterwards*, and the ſweet wine bites at laſt; 'tis pleaſant to look to in the cup, and pleaſant to the taſte, but if you be overtaken with it, your bowels will find it turned to the gall of Aſps. The Prophet (*Jer.* 2.19.) ſaith to ſuch, *Thine own wickedneſs ſhall correct thee, and thy backſlidings ſhall reprove thee.* But is ſin it ſelf a correcter and a reprover of ſinners? The acts of ſin do neither correct nor reprove, but the effects of it do both; ſo the Prophet ſeemeth to expound himſelf in the latter part of the ſame verſe, *Know therefore and ſee* (namely, by the event) *that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God*; that is, thy forſaking of God (ſuch is every turning aſide to, and embracing of ſin) will procure thee much evil, and provoke God to make thy life bitter unto thee. We may ſay to every one who delights in ſin, as the charge is given againſt *Babylon* (Rev. 18 7.) *How much thou haſt glorified thy ſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow ſhall be given to thee*; how much of the one, ſo much of the other. Thy ſin was ſweet in thy mouth, but it will be turned to the gall of Aſps in thy bowels.

Secondly note, *Sin hath not only bitterneſs in it, but there is death in it.*

All gall is bitter, but the gall of Aſps is deadly. Sin is a deadly poyſon; for though it be pleaſing a while, yet 'tis killing in the end. The bitterneſs that floweth from ſin, is the bitterneſs of death: If after it hath yielded us a little unſatisfying pleaſure, it ſhould only conclude in pain, this might not only diſcredit it in our opinion, but provoke us to caſt it for ever both out of our affection and practice; how then ſhould our hearts be turned from it, and riſe againſt it, when we are aſſured that this pain is as a poyſon, and that this poyſon is unto death?

Thirdly note, *Though ſin be deadly, yet it leaves the ſinner ſenſeleſs of death.*

Sin deſtroyes, and the man knows not what hurts him. Every Evil is by ſo much the worſe, by how much it leaves us leſs apprehenſive of the evil it doth us. Thoſe wounds may be moſt mortal, of which at preſent we feel leaſt pain.

Laſtly obſerve, *It is a dangerous thing to keep ſins counſel, or to conceal it.*

The wages of ſin (committed) *is death.* But the wages of ſin concealed, is the worſt of that death. Every ſin acted, hath in it the ſeed of death, but ſin hidden under the tongue, and kept in the mouth, by denying, diſſembling, or excuſing it, is a deadly poyſon. The Goſpel hath a remedy againſt that death which is deſerved by the acting of ſin; but it hath no Antidote againſt the poyſon of a ſtudied and continued concealment of ſin; *'Tis the gall of Aſps within him.*

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

He hath ſwallowed down riches, and he ſhall vomit them up again. God ſhall caſt them out of his belly.
He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſps, the Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.
He ſhall not ſee the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.

THE ſimilitude between ſin in general, and pleaſant, though poyſonous meat, which *Zophar* purſued in the three former verſes, is here contracted to a particular ſin, the unjuſt obtaining of riches, the root of which is covetouſneſs, or *the love of money, and that the root of all evil* (1 Tim. 6. 10. 'Tis the root of all moral evil or ſin, and ſo the root of all penal evil or trouble, whether to our ſelves or others, as appears in this context.

He hath ſwallowed down riches.

The word implieth eating with inſatiable appetite; every man that eateth muſt alſo ſwallow, but a glutton is rather a ſwallower then an eater. He throws his meat whole down his throat, and eats (as we ſay) without chewing. The rod of *Moſes* (turned into a Serpent) *ſwallowed up* the rods of the *Egyptian*-ſorcerers. The word is often applied to expreſs oppreſſion (*Pſal.* 35.25.) *Let them not ſay in their hearts, ah, ſo would we have it, let them not ſay we have ſwallowed him up*; that is, we have made clear riddance of him, he is now a gone man for ever. The ravenous rage of the adverſary is deſcribed in this language (*Pſal.* 124.3.) *If it had not been the Lord who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us* (that is, if we had one leſs then God, though the greateſt of creatures on our ſide) *then they had ſwallowed us up quick.* The Church is comforted

(*Iſa.* 49. 19.) with an aſſurance of freedom from ſuch ſwallowers; *They that ſwallowed thee up are far away*; thou hadſt thoſe by thee that were ready to devour thee (as it is ſaid *Revel.* 12. 4. *The Dragon ſtood before the woman for to devour her child as ſoon as it was born*) But thy oppreſſors ſhall be ſent packing; they who heretofore ſwallowed thee, ſhall not ſtay within ſight of thee. Thy ſwallowers are ſwallowed up. The metaphor is taken from wild beaſts which greedily devour their prey; *He hath ſwallowed down riches.*

Eſt Metaphora ducta ab immanibus beſtiis, quæ alias feras uno rictu degluttiunt.

Hence obſerve, *Riches are a ſweet morſel to a worldly minded man.*

And he is uſually moſt pleaſed with thoſe riches which he gets by unrighteouſneſs. What he tears from the backs, and pulls out of the bellies of others, delight his back and belly moſt. Some care not ſo much for the riches they get, as for the ſinful wayes by which they get them; It contents them more to over-reach another, then to enrich themſelves. *Auguſtine* confeſſeth of himſelf, that in his youth he would ſteal fruit, not becauſe he cared for the fruit, but becauſe he delighted to ſteal; ſo we may ſay of theſe, it is the wrong, not the gain which pleaſeth them: *Stollen waters are ſweet*, and this makes them ſweeteſt to ſome, that they are ſtollen. 'Tis rare, if he that ſwalloweth down riches, be not a ſwallower of the poor, if his particular riſing and filling, be not the falling and emptying of many.

Appoſitè ſignificatur per verbum devorare, quod eſt ſine delectu quicquid objicitur, ſive ſalubre ſit, ſive nocivū carpere.

Again, When a man ſwallows and devours greedily, he doth not well diſcern what he eats, he takes little notice whether his meat be wholſome and fit for nouriſhment or no, he eats without due reſpect either of quantity or quality. This ſets forth the temper of worldly men, and gives us a ſecond Obſervation.

Greedy covetous perſons care not what it is they have, ſo they may have it.

A juſt man conſiders every penny he gets, and asks his own heart, how he came by it; A righteous man is as careful what money he puts in his purſe, as a temperate man is what meat he puts into his ſtomach: He examines his title and enquires whether it be his right or no. He would not enjoy any thing without the good will of God, or with the wrong of his brother. The way in which he gains is more conſiderable to him, then the gain; and whence he hath it, then what he hath. But all is fiſh that comes to a wicked mans net, though it prove a Serpent not a fiſh; as appears by the iſſue of his greedy getting, or ſwallowing, laid down in the latter part of the verſe; *He hath ſwallowed down riches*, *and*,

He ſhall vomit them up again.

קיא *Vomuit, evomuit, propriè de cibis.*

קאה *Pelicanus à vomitu, conchas enim à calore ventris coctas rurſus evomit ut teſtis rejectis eſculenta ſeligat.* Plin. lib. 10. cap. 30.

What we eat moderately, we digeſt, concoct, and turn to good bloud for the ſupport of nature; but if a man eats intemperately, his ſtomach turns and he falls a vomiting; A glutton gets more meat down then others, but he gets leſs ſtrength by it. The Pelican hath his name in Hebrew from this root, becauſe having eaten Shell-fiſhes he vomiteth them out again as ſoon as they are a little boiled in his craw, that he may pick out the fiſh and leave the ſhell. The Prophet (*Jer.* 25. 27.) tells us of a vomit which the wrath of God gives a ſinful people; *Therefore thou ſhalt ſay to them, thus ſaith the Lord of hoaſts the God of Iſrael, drink ye, and be drunken, and ſpue and fall, and riſe no more.* What was it they ſhould drink? it was a cup of judgment, they had been drinking liberally the cup of ſin before, now God puts a cup of ſorrow and bloud to their mouths, and they muſt drink till they ſpued, and ſtagger till they fell, and ſo fall as not to riſe any more. And as wicked men ſhall drink the cup of wrath till they ſpue, ſo themſelves ſhall at laſt be ſpued out. They are to a Land as unwholſome meat is to the ſtomach, the burden of it. Hear that ſevere warning to the people of *Iſrael* (*Lev.* 18. 26, 28.) *Ye ſhall therefore keep my Statutes and my Judgements, and ſhall not commit any of theſe abominations, neither any of your own Nation, nor any ſtranger that ſojourneth among you, that the Land ſpue not you out alſo, when ye defile it, as it ſpued out the nations that were before you.*

But whence is it that the wicked man vomiteth up what he hath devoured? To clear that, conſider there are four ſorts of vomiting.

Firſt, From the fulneſs of the ſtomach, by exceſſive eating and drinking.

Secondly, From the filthineſs or foulneſs of the ſtomach, by eating and drinking thoſe things which are unwholeſome and unclean.

Thirdly, From the weakneſs of the ſtomach; Some are not able to retain, no not a little, and that good food, becauſe their ſtomachs are ill.

Fourthly, From a ſecret antipathy, or averſeneſs to that which is eaten. The vomit in the Text is not cauſed any of theſe wayes. A wicked man doth not vomit from the averſeneſs of his ſpirit to his ſin, he liketh it well enough; nor from the weakneſs of his ſpirit to ſin, he is mighty to act and digeſt the worſt of ſins; nor doth he vomit becauſe of the foulneſs of his ſpirit, that never troubles him; the fouler any mans ſpirit is, the more retentive it is of ſin: nor doth it proceed from his fulneſs of ſin; for how full ſoever he is, yet he is hungry ſtill, and ſaith not, it is enough.

Whence is it then that he vomiteth?

I anſwer, By diſtinguiſhing again of a two-fold vomiting.

Firſt, Free and natural: Secondly, Forced or artificial.

Some vomit alone, others have vomits given them; ſome vomit by the ſtrength of medicines, others vomit by the ſtrength of nature. The wicked man doth not vomit up his ill-gotten goods naturally, but violently; not freely but forcedly. The gain of fraud and oppreſſion may be ſaid to be vomited up two wayes.

Firſt, By repentance; Secondly, by expence.

Repentance in general is called by the ancients, *The vomit of the ſoul*, and that is applicable to any ſpecial repentance. And repentance upon this ſpecial account of unlawful gain (as alſo repentance upon what account ſoever may be) is two-fold.

Firſt, There is a repentance riſing from godly ſorrow; thus repenting *Zacheus* vomited up his ill-gotten goods. For when Chriſt was come to his houſe, *Zacheus ſtood and ſaid unto the Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by falſe accuſation, I reſtore him fourfold* (*Luk.* 19. 8.) This gracious vomit his ſoul received by the power of the Spirit of God, provoking him to repentance; and happy it is for them that have ſwallowed down riches unduly, if the Lord give them this repentance of godly ſorrow to vomit them back again.

Secondly, There is a vomiting of riches by a repentance which ariſeth only from worldly ſorrow and gripes of conſcience, not from any change of the mind; ſo *Judas* having ſwallowed down the thirty pieces of ſilver (the price of bloud) for betraying Chriſt, vomited them up by repentance, ſuch as it was, a repentance proceeding from worldly not from Godly ſorrow (*Matth.* 27. 4.) *Then Judas when he ſaw that he was condemned, repented himſelf, and brought the thirty pieces of ſilver to the chief Prieſts, and Elders, and caſt them down, and departed, and went and hanged himſelf.* The Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 7.) ſaith that *worldly ſorrow cauſeth death.* Sin cauſeth eternal death, and this kind of ſorrow for ſin cauſeth temporal death; ſome pine and languiſh to death in worldly ſorrow, and others (like *Judas*) by the violence of it thruſt themſelves violently out of the world, and die. Meer vexation enforceth ſome wicked men to be honeſt, and to caſt up what they have unjuſtly gotten; 'Tis not the tenderneſs of their conſciences, but the ſickneſs and pain of them, which puts them upon this. As ſome men ſay the reaſon why they refuſe or abſtain from eating ſuch or ſuch meat, is not becauſe they do not love it, but becauſe it doth not love them; it makes them ſick if they eat it: So the reaſon why ſome vomit up the unrighteous mammon which they have ſwallowed, is not becauſe they do not love it, but becauſe it doth not love them, but hath made them ſick. The Whale that ſwallowed up *Jonah*, found him hard meat, his ſtomack could not digeſt that morſel, he muſt vomit him up for his own eaſe. Riches in the belly of many an oppreſſor is like *Jonah* in the Whales belly, a trouble to his ſtomach, and he muſt vomit them up again, not out of love to righteouſneſs, or hatred of ſin, not out of pity to the oppreſſed, or charity to the poor, but for his own preſent eaſe, and yet, if go no further, how poor an eaſe will that prove? Such as this deſcribed is all the vomiting here meant. And in this *Zophar* doth not ſet forth the duty, but the puniſhment of a wicked man; For though it be better to reſtore any way, then to retain that which is ill gotten, yet a man is not made better who reſtoreth only thus. And we may ſay of ſuch a repentance, it is to be repented of.

Again, As there is a vomiting of riches by repentance, ſo ſecondly, by expence. And this alſo is twofold.

Firſt, By a willing expence; ſome men ſwallow down riches for prodigality; they ſpend profuſely, what they get ſinfully. What one luſt brings in, another luſt carrieth out. One luſt is as a rake to gather, and another as a fork to ſcatter. A conjunction of both theſe may be found in the ſame man. For there are two ſorts of covetous men. Some get meerly to hoard and lay up, their neſt is full of eggs, and yet they can ſcarce afford themſelves one, but ſit brooding upon them to hatch more. A ſecond ſort of covetous perſons extort and get meerly to ſpend; By covetous practices, they make proviſion for wanton and luxurious practices. Theſe vomit what they have ſwallowed, by a willing expence.

Secondly, Others vomit what they have ſwallowed by forced expence; ſuch troubles and Law-ſuits are brought upon them, that what they have violently or fraudulently gotten from others, they are compelled to refund, and pay back again; as appears yet more clearly in the next clauſe.

God ſhall caſt them out of his belly.] Theſe words ſhew what kind of vomit his is. The word in the Hebrew ſignifies both God and an Angel. The Septuagint render, *An Angel ſhall caſt them out of his belly*; And their Interpreters expound it of an evil Angel, who is the tormenter of this evil man; we refer it to God, as being a part of his divine juſtice, thus to repay unjuſt men; *God ſhall caſt them out of his belly.* An oppreſſour having gotten riches into his poſſeſſion hopes to hold them; But God ſends out his writ of ejectment, and turneth him out of their poſſeſſion, or them out of his. The word which we render *caſt out*, carrieth a double, and that a contrary ſignification; it ſignifies both *to poſſeſs, and to diſpoſſeſs,* to put in, and to thruſt out of an inheritance. So the word is uſed (*Joſh.* 23. 5.) in reference to the *Canaanites*, whom God diſpoſſeſſed; *And the Lord your God, he ſhall drive them out of your ſight, and ye ſhall poſſeſs their Land.* In both parts of which verſe we find the ſame word. As God caſt the *Canaanites* out of their Land to place his own people there, according to his promiſe; ſo God will caſt all ill-gotten riches, thoſe riches eſpecially, out of the belly of wicked men, which they have gotten from his people, contrary to his command. (*Zach.* 9. 4.) *Behold the Lord will caſt her out* (that is, *Tyrus*) why will the Lord caſt out *Tyrus? Tyre* was a merchandizing City, an oppreſſing City; *Tyrus heaped up ſilver as the duſt, and fine gold as the mire of the ſtreets*, verſ. 3. yet the Lord will make her poor, and naked, he will level her heaps of gold and ſilver, *and ſmite her power in the Sea.* The lot of proud oppreſſing *Tyrus* and her riches ſhall be the lot of every oppreſſour and his riches, *God ſhall caſt them*

ירש Hæreditavit poſſedit etiam hæreditate & poſſeſſione ejecit.

Out of his belly.] That is, out of his barns and gardners, out of his cheſts and ſtore-houſes; whereſoever he hath hoarded his riches, that's his belly, and from thence they ſhall be caſt.

> Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The worldly man is unwilling to part with his worldly portion.*

Here's an act of violence, God caſts them out of his belly, and pulls them from him by an act of juſtice, as he had unjuſtly pulled them from others. He can let his bloud go as eaſily as his wealth.

> Secondly, Note, *Man may get, but he cannot hold what he hath got unjuſtly.*

What God giveth he will maintain, what is ſinfully ſwallowed down ſhall be vomitted up with ſhame. *I will puniſh Bell in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth what he hath ſwallowed up* (*Jer.* 51. 44.) What was that? he had ſwallowed the riches of the Nations round about him. Thus the Prophet *Iſaiah* repreſents him boaſting (*Chap.* 10. 13, 14.) *I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures, my hand hath found as a neſt the riches of the people.* But as ſome Princes politickly connive at their Subjects oppreſſions, till they get great eſtates, and then ſqueeſe all into their own coffers, and leave them naked; ſo the great God permits ſome to fill themſelves like ſpunges, by ſucking in the ſubſtance of others unrighteouſly, and then makes them return and render it back by his righteous judgments, *Whatſoever is gotten by ſin, is not given by God*; and whatſoever is not given by God, he threatens to take away: they who are rich, but not by the bleſſing of God, ſhall be made poor by the curſe of God; therefore the Pſalmiſt concludes, *A little that the righteous man hath, is better then the great riches of the ungodly*; This betterneſs, ariſeth two wayes: Firſt, From the excellency of the conveyance, and that in three reſpects; Firſt, the little which the righteous man hath, comes to him by the purchaſe of Chriſt. Secondly, He hath it by the promiſe. Thirdly, by the ſpecial providence and fatherly goodneſs of God to him. A little thus conveyed to the righteous man is better then the greateſt riches of many ungodly. Secondly, It is better in reference to the ſureneſs of it: there is a flaw in the title of wicked men, and therefore God will one time or other queſtion their poſſeſſion. The righteous hold their temporals as well as their ſpirituals (*in capite*) by Chriſt their head: and hence it is that they have a ſure eſtate in and hold of both.

This ſhould admoniſh all to conſider what riches they ſwallow down; He that hath got much honeſtly, may ſpoil all by mingling a little with it diſhoneſtly gotten. For as he that hath eaten divers wholeſome meats, may yet loſe the comfort and nouriſhment of them, by feeding upon ſome one unwholeſome diſh; and by this means undergoes a double evil; Firſt, in eating that which is bad, and then in vomiting up good and bad together; ſo 'tis in this caſe. Chriſt uſeth an argument (warning men to take heed of unjuſt gain) much higher then this (*Mat.* 16. 26.) *What ſhall it profit a man if he gets the whole world, and loſeth his own ſoul?* Put all unjuſt gain into the ballance with your ſoul, and ſee what you get by that, while you loſe this? The argument in the Text is alſo very preſſing; What ſhall it profit a man to get a maſs of worldly riches unjuſtly, and by that gain loſe all that he hath juſtly gotten. If injurious dealing did indammage our eſtates only, what advantage is there in dealing injuriouſly? But *Zophar* urgeth yet further in the next verſe.

Verſ. 16. **He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſps.**

Theſe words may be taken either as a diſtinct ſimilitude, or as the concluſion of the former. There is a double reading; ſome thus; *He ſhall ſuck the head of the Aſp.* The ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies the head and poyſon, becauſe the head in thoſe venomous Serpents holds the poyſon. We tranſlate this word (*Roſh*) Gall. (*Deut.* 29. 18.) *Leſt there be among you a root that beareth Gall* (or a *head*) *and Wormwood*, That is, leſt any perſon among you ſhould commit this wickedneſs (namely, Idolatry, or the worſhip of ſtrange gods) which will be as diſtaſtful to God as Gall is to man, and which will be bitter as Gall to the man who commits it, whether we conſider the bitterneſs of repentance if it be pardoned, or the bitterneſs of pain, if he (perſiſting in it impenitently) be puniſhed. And hence this very word is uſed again to ſignifie *Gall*, in that Prophetick Pſalm of the paſſion and pains of Chriſt for our ſins (*Pſal.* 69. 21.) *They gave me alſo gall for my meat.* Any Gall is ſo bitter and unſavoury to the taſte, ſo offenſive and troubleſome to the ſtomack, that 'tis a kind of poyſon, and ſome venomous creatures carry their poyſon in their Gall.

ראש Significat tum caput tum venenũ, quod capite aut dentibus ſerpentis venenum ineſt. Caput aſpidis ſuget. Vulg.

He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſps.] That is, He ſhall find that moſt bitter and deadly to him, wherein he thought to find much ſweetneſs and delight. As if he had ſaid; *Thou who hungerſt after the eſtates of the poor, I tell thee, when thou art ſucking them as at a honey-comb, thou art but ſucking the poyſon of Aſps.* While the covetous oppreſſour is in the act of ſin, he ſaith, it is ſweet and good, he little thinks he is ſucking poyſon, the deadly poyſon of the Aſp: It is miſery enough to ſuck poyſon at any time, but to ſuck poyſon while we think we are ſucking milk or honey is a greater miſery. There are none ſo miſtaken as they who take wrongfully from others. As there is a ſinful ſparing, ſo a ſinful getting which tends to poverty; and he who thus

Perinde cedet ei maleficium ac ſi venenũ hauſiſſet potentiſſimum, aut à vipera fuiſſet morſus. Jun.

thus gathers, do worſe then ſcatter; For, *He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſps*, and (which ſpeaks the ſame or a worſe fate to him)

The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.] That is he ſhall ſurely die, the iſſue ſhall be his ruine. The poyſon of Aſps is deadly, and that the Vipers tongue is preſent death, we have clear evidence (beſides what is aſſerted by natural Hiſtorians) from Scripture record. When *Paul* had eſcaped from Ship-wrack, and was come on ſhoar at *Malta*, the *Barbarians* ſhewed him kindneſs, and made him a fire, out of which when a Viper came and faſtned upon his hand, they looked when he ſhould fall down dead, concluding he was a murtherer, whom, though he eſcaped the Sea, yet, vengeance followed him to land, or (as that Text gives it) *would not ſuffer him to live* (Acts 28. 4.) So that, when *Zophar* ſaith, *The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him*; The meaning is, he ſhall be as certainly and ſuddenly ſlain, as if a Viper had bitten him. The Vipers tongue is worſe then the Lyons tooth, and gives ſo mortal a wound that every touch is death. When *John the Baptiſt*, as alſo Chriſt would ſhew how hurtful and dangerous the Scribes and Phariſees (among the *Jewes*) were, they call them, *A Generation of Vipers* (*Matth.* 3. 7. *Matth.* 12. 34.) Theſe Vipers never gave over till they had ſlain Chriſt. There's no eſcaping if a Viper bite; and of them Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.* 23. 33.) *O Generation of Vipers, how ſhall ye eſcape the damnation of hell?* It ſhews that the moral Viper is as dangerous as the natural, when we read that the former ſhall not eſcape the wrath of God, as man cannot eſcape, being ſtung, by the latter. The Vipers tongue is the Embleme of any remidileſs evil. And ſuch ſhall befal the covetous oppreſſour, *The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.*

Nullum animal tanta celeritate linguam movet ut ſerpens, adeo ut triplicem linguam habere videatur, cum unam ſit. Plin. l. 6. c. 37. Iſid. lib. 12.

Hence note, *The miſchief that a wicked man doth to others, ſhall return upon his own head.*

While he impoveriſheth his neighbour, he undoeth himſelf; while he is ſucking others, he is ſlaying himſelf. *Solomon* deſcribes a combination of evil-doers, *whoſe feet run to evil, they make haſt to ſhed bloud*; But he concludes (*Prov.* 1. 18.) *They lie in wait for their own blood, and lurk privily for their own lives; ſo are the wayes of every one that is greedy of gain, which taketh away the life of the owners thereof:* They made haſt to ſhed the blood of others, but the event proved that they laid wait for their own bloud. Sin is the great Deceiver; The harm-doer is always the greateſt harm-receiver. He that layeth ſnares, layeth them for others, but he catcheth himſelf. And therefore *Solomon* reſolves it directly (which yet we are to underſtand of the event, not at all (which makes their caſe more miſerable) of their intention) *They lurk privily for their own lives.* All their lurking and plotting recoyles upon themſelves; *Their own iniquities ſhall take them, and they ſhall be holden with the cords of their ſin*, as the ſame *Solomon* expreſſeth it, (*Prov.* 5. 22.) As, *He that is wiſe* (that is, holy and righteous) *ſhall be wiſe for himſelf* (*Prov.* 9. 12.) That is, though he only intended the Glory of God, and the good of others, wholly denying and leaving out himſelf, yet himſelf ſhall be the chief gainer by it in the end; ſo he that is fooliſh (that is, wicked and unrighteous) ſhall be fooliſh to himſelf. Though he only intended the hurt of others, yet he ſhall be the chief, poſſibly, the only hurt-receiver in the end, as it follows in the latter part or croſs part of the ſame Proverb, *If thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear it.* The greateſt hurt which any man can do his brother by any wrong done to him, is ſo little comparatively to what he doth to himſelf, that the Scripture caſts the whole upon himſelf; *He alone ſhall bear it.* While he gives his brother a bitter portion to drink, himſelf drinks the poyſon of Aſps; While he wounds his brother with hand or tongue, *the Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.*

Further, By *the Vipers tongue*, we may underſtand any oppoſer, who riſeth up againſt and accuſeth this fraudulent or violent oppreſſour. An accuſing tongue, eſpecially a falſely and maliciouſly accuſing tongue, may well be called *a Vipers tongue.* In which ſence, principally, the Scribes and Phariſees are called *a Generation of Vipers.* Detraction wounds deeply, and a wound in the reputation is hardly healed. When the *Ægytians* would deſcribe a man ſmitten with a detracting tongue, they were wont to paint a Baſilisk, who kills ſuch as come near to him with his breath. And the Vipers tongue hath alſo been (among the Ancients) an Emblem of the ſame ſignification.

Per linguam viperæ ſignificari poteſt alius impius contraria loquens. Pined. *Viperæ lingua ſymbolū eſt linguæ detractatoriæ.*

Hence note, *Oppreſſours ſhall not want accuſers, and they who have ſmitten others in their eſtates, ſhall be ſmitten in their names.*

Such get riches to themſelves, a name, and they (ambitiouſly, as the Pſalmiſt hath it) call their Lands after their own name, hoping thereby to immortalize their memories. But their project fails them, and as they never deſerved nor had *a good name*, ſo they ſhall not long have *a Great one.* If good men do not cry them down, ſome or other as bad as themſelves ſhall. *The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay them.*

Deus quibuſdam malis tanquam carnificibus uſus eſt ad ſumendas de aliis malis pœnas. Plut. de ſer. Num. vindicta.

Verſ. 17. **He ſhall not ſee the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.**

Theſe words continue the miſery befalling a wicked man; He hath gained unjuſtly, but he ſhall not poſſeſs what he hath gained. *He ſhall not ſee*; that is, he ſhall not enjoy. *Seeing* is not taken here for a naked hungry ſight of theſe things. He may ſee the floods, rivers, and brooks of honey and butter with his eye, but he ſhall not have a comfortable uſe of them. Sight is ſo noble a ſenſe, that it is put for all the ſenſes; eſpecially for that which is the deſire of all the ſenſes, enjoyment. We render that of the Preacher (*Eccl.* 2. 1.) *Enjoy pleaſure*; the Text is, *See pleaſure.* Pleaſure is the object of every ſenſe, and that which every ſenſe naturally looks for, is the enjoyment of pleaſure. The ſight of the beſt things without enjoyment, doth rather afflict us then pleaſe us. Thus here, *they ſhall not ſee*, that is, they ſhall not have a comfortable or pleaſurable enjoyment, of the *rivers, floods, and brooks*; here is an elegant heap of words, all being of a near ſignification, and concurring to make an Hyperbolical ſpeech, ſignifying greateſt abundance of good things; *honey and butter* are put ſynecdochically for all good things. *Rivers, brooks, floods*, denote the fulleſt ſtore and plenty of them. Or theſe words may note theſe three things to us diſtinctly.

Non ſumitur pro jejuno viſu ſed pro delectabili, qualis cum poſſeſſione & uſu rerum ſocietur; inde videre *pro* uti *& experiri; viſus ad actiones reliquorum ſenſuū transfertur.* Aug. lib. 10. Confeſſ. c. 35. & Epiſt. 112. ad Paulin.

Firſt, Plenty in the word *flood*; we may have water in a pond or ciſtern, but floods are the exceſſes and over-flowings of water.

Secondly, Perpetuity in the word *river*; floods fall quickly; Torrents riſe with the fall of rain, or the diſſolving of ſnow, and when this hath been a while diſſolved and that fallen, they fall again. But rivers keep a conſtant ſtream, being fed by conſtant ſprings. When the Lord ſaith (*Iſa.* 48. 18.) *Then had thy peace been as a river*; The meaning is, that in caſe of their obedience, their peace had been continued. And when the Lord promiſeth (*Iſa.* 66. 12.) *I will extend peace to thee as a river*; He aſſures them that their peace ſhall continue for ever.

Thirdly, The joyning of theſe three together, *floods, rivers, brooks*, may imply variety of kinds, or the confluence of all ſorts of good things, both little and great together. Brooks are little rivers, and rivers are great Brooks. Floods are the inundations or ſwellings of both beyond their banks.

He ſhall not ſee theſe rivers, floods, and brooks, of honey and butter.

And who ever did ſee them? Rivers and brooks of water, as they are uſeful and delectable, ſo every where ſeen. But where ſhall we ſee rivers or brooks of honey and butter? This is a high ſtrain of Rhetorick, noting only (as was toucht before) greateſt abundance; yet in ſome Countries there is ſuch abundance of honey and butter, that, they may be ſaid to have (almoſt) in the letter, rivers and brooks of them. It is ſaid (1 *Sam.* 14. 25.) that *when the people of the Land* (in purſuit of the *Philiſtims*) *came to a wood, there was honey upon the ground*, and (*verſ.* 26.) *the honey dropped.* Here were rivers of honey, flowing honey. The land of *Canaan* is often deſcribed by this Periphraſis, *A Land flowing with milk and honey* (*Exod.* 3. 8, 17, &c.) *Job* ſpeaking of his former flouriſhing eſtate, gives it in this language (*Chap.* 29. 6.) *I waſhed my ſteps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oyl.* They who eat butter and honey are ſuppoſed by ſome to have more then neceſſaries (though others expound it for plain Country food) even dainties to feed upon (*Iſa.* 7. 22.) *Butter and honey ſhall every one eat that is left in the Land.* And this is the food which the

the Virgins ſon our Immanuel was propheſied to eat at the 15th verſe of the ſame Chapter; *Butter and honey ſhall he eat, that he may know how to refuſe the evil and chooſe the good.* That is, that he may grow up to years of diſcretion, and ſo be able to diſtinguiſh between that which is morally good and morally evil.

Further, Some underſtand butter and honey allegorically, for ſpiritual good things; The butter and honey of the Land of promiſe were indeed ſhadows of heavenly things. And this amounts to a ſorer judgment upon the wicked man, whoſe portion, how great ſoever it is in temporals, ſhall be nothing in eternals; His whole lot falls on this ſide heaven, and the things of heaven. But I rather keep to the literal ſence, which ſuits clearly with the words foregoing; *He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſps, the Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him:* there's an end of him; he ſhall not ſee the rivers, &c. of honey and butter which he looked for.

Laſtly, Some give the meaning as if the ſordid diſpoſition of a covetous worldling were here deſcribed; who though he doth abound with the things of this life, yet he doth not ſee them; that is, he hath not a heart to make uſe of them, but keeps all in priſon; His rivers and brooks when in their higheſt flood, are as dried up to himſelf; This (I grant) is a judgement viſible upon many covetous wicked men, who as much want what they have, as what they have not. But I paſs this alſo, and ſhall inſiſt only upon our firſt interpretation, *He ſhall not ſee the rivers, &c.* Then he had hopes to ſee, that is, to poſſeſs and enjoy them; He made ſure of them, but they paſſed away, and proved not ſure to him.

Hic deſcribitur ſordidum avari hominis ingenium, qui quamvis bonorum omnium copia abundet nihil ſibi ex bonis aſſumit. Cajet.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *A worldly man hath great expectations, he promiſeth himſelf huge things in the world, whole rivers, brooks and floods of honey and butter.*

Small matters will not ſerve his turn, he dreams not only of Gold, but of golden mountains, and golden ſhowers; he dreams of rivers and floods of gold; What pleaſant dreams of eſteem, honour, and riches hath he; He phancieth that all ſhall not only honour, but humour and adore him; He promiſeth himſelf, that he ſhall be able to do what he will, and make whom he pleaſeth ſtoop to him, that none ſhall dare to ſpeak a word, or riſe up againſt him: What fine imaginations have many about this world, but they reckon (as we ſay) without their Hoaſt. For,

Secondly, Obſerve, *God often cuts wicked men ſhort of their expectations.*

He ſhall not ſee the rivers, &c. of honey and butter; He looks for them, but he ſhall not ſee them; He hopes, but he ſhall be aſhamed of his hope. What the Poets phancied of *Tantalus*, is true and accompliſht in him. He is Tantaliz'd, ſtanding up to the chin in thoſe floods and rivers, of which he cannot drink; he hath pleaſant apples touching and playing upon his lips, which yet he cannot taſte. He thought himſelf happy in getting great things, but, his miſery is, he cannot enjoy what he hath gotten. *Solomon* ſaith of a ſloathful man (*Prov.* 12.27.) *He roaſteth not what he hath gotten in hunting*; his meaning is, he will not hunt for his meat, he will take no pains for his living; if he have any roſt-meat, it is not what himſelf, but what his friends or forefathers have hunted and caught for him. We may ſay the ſame of many covetous men, who though they take pains enough in hunting for their living, who though they riſe early, go to bed late, and compaſs Sea and Land in the purſuit of riches, yet they roſt not what they have got; though they have gotten much in this hunting, yet God denieth them the comfortable enjoyment of it: And he doth it two wayes; Firſt, God ſometimes taketh the man away from his gettings, as is inſtanced (*Luke* 12.) in the rich man, who ſaid to his ſoul, *Thou haſt goods laid up for many years*; He had rivers and brooks, which would never fail, nor be dried up, as he dreamed, but he ſaw them not; for God ſaid to him, *Thou fool, this night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee; then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?*

Secondly, God takes away what he was poſſeſſed of, he pulls all out of his hands, or from between his teeth. When he hath good things about him, and is reſolving to take his fill of them, then God ſends a flood of wrath, and ſweeps away his floods of riches; ſo that he cannot ſo much as behold them any longer with his eye. Thus the Lord threatned his ancient people in caſe of diſobedience (*Deut.* 28.31.) *Thine oxe ſhall be ſlain before thy eye, and thou ſhalt not eat thereof; thine Aſs ſhall be violently taken away before thy face, and ſhall not be reſtored to thee.* That which he hath laboured for, ſhall be taken away, and not reſtored; his loſs ſhall be irrecoverable. Or himſelf ſhall be compelled to reſtore what he hath laboured for, he ſhall not ſwallow it down, as *Zophar* ſhews in the next verſe, where he gives us in plain words, without a figure, a further account of the wicked mans non-enjoyment of what he had wrongfully ſpoiled and ſtript others of, in hope to make himſelf a happy man.

VERS. 18, 19.

That which he laboured for ſhall he reſtore, and ſhall not ſwallow it down; according to his ſubſtance ſhall the reſtitution be, and he ſhall not rejoyce therein.

Becauſe he hath oppreſſed, and hath forſaken the poor, becauſe he hath violently taken away a houſe, which he builded not.

IN the former verſe *Zophar* aſſures *Job* that the wicked man ſhall not *ſee the rivers, the floods, and brooks of honey and butter*; that is, he ſhall not enjoy the golden abundance he dreamed of. Here *Zophar* tells him why or whence this comes to paſs.

What he laboured for he ſhall reſtore, and ſhall not ſwallow it down.

The Hebrew is, *He ſhall reſtore his labour*; The original is conciſe; What we render by eight words in our language, is but two there. But how can labour be reſtored? We may clear it three wayes.

מֵשִׁיב יְגָע *Reddet laborem.*

Firſt, Taking labour for the miſery and trouble which the wicked man brought on others. Then to *reſtore labour*, is to be puniſhed and troubled in proportion to the trouble which he put others to. *Troublers of others ſhall not want trouble themſelves.* Trouble ſhall be reſtored or paid back again into their own boſomes.

Dabit pœnas pro labore & moleſtia quam aliis inflixit. Pined.

Secondly, *He ſhall reſtore labour*; That is, the profit and fruit of their labours, whom he had wickedly oppreſſed or defrauded.

Thirdly, By *labour*, we may underſtand any fruit or profit of his own labour as well right as wrong; our Tranſlation holds forth that ſence; *That which he laboured for* (or the profit which came in by his labour) *ſhall he reſtore.* The word which ſignifies *labour*, is extendable to all kind of labour, but properly to that which bringeth in profit, and advantage, ſuch as men take in trading and commerce, (*Hoſ.* 12.8.) where the Prophet ſpeaks of *Ephraim* under the Title of a Merchant; *And Ephraim ſaid, yet I am become rich, and have found out ſubſtance; in all my labours* (which I have taken for my profit) *they ſhall find none iniquity in me.* (*Prov.* 23.4.) *Labour not to be rich*; and it notes ſuch a labour for riches as is accompanied with much toyl of body, eſpecially with reſtleſneſs of mind: it implyeth not only (as is commanded *Gen.* 3.) *Eating bread in the ſweat of the face*, but in the vexation of the heart.

Græco κοπιάω reſpondet, & notat laborem cum moleſtia & laſſitudine.

Zophar doth not ſay, *He ſhall reſtore his goods or eſtate, but what he laboured for*; teaching us that the things of this world are ſuch as men toylingly yet willingly labour for; riches are ſo much laboured for, that the ſame word ſignifies both labour and riches.

Hence obſerve, *Man is very ready to take pains for worldly things, for the things of this life.*

We can freely beſtow many thoughts upon, *What ſhall we eat? what ſhall we drink? and wherewith ſhall we be cloathed?* Chriſt ſeeing the thoughts of men run ſo much to the world, pull'd them quite out of the world; *Take no thought* (*Matth.* 6.26.) not that it is ſinful to think what we ſhall eat, only we muſt not be thoughtful or full of thoughts about it; or Chriſt ſpeaks comparatively, take no thought for this world in ballance with the next. Beſtow your thoughts upon better queſtions then, *What ſhall we eat? what ſhall we drink? how ſhall we be cloathed?* Labour an anſwer to theſe queſtions, How ſhall we be ſaved? how ſhall we make our calling and election ſure? how ſhall we honour God? how ſhall we ſerve our generation? Man is ſo apt to over-act his labour for the world, that Chriſt in another place ſeemeth to put a total prohibition upon that labour (*Joh.* 6. 27.) *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that which indures to everlaſting life*; though a man labour very hard for the things of the world, yet all the way is down-hill to his nature, and the wheels of his ſpirit move ſo faſt, that (as the Ancient Moraliſt ſaid in another caſe) *He hath need of trigging.* In all theſe worldly labours man needeth not a ſpurr, but a bridle. Our ſpirits are ſo fleet in this purſuit, that we muſt have weight laid on us. *Labour not for the meat that periſheth.* The Prophet (*Iſa.* 55. 1.) calls aloud to buy ſpirituals; *Come and buy wine and milk without money, or without price*: But men had rather beſtow their pains and labour for the world, then take heavenly things at the loweſt rates, upon the eaſieſt price, yea without price; as the Prophets rebuke intimates in the next words, *Wherefore do ye ſpend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for what ſatisfieth not.* Bread in Scripture comprehends every good thing, and that which is not bread is good for nothing. Bread ſatisfies the hunger of man and renews his ſtrength, but that which is not bread cannot ſatisfie. All the things of this life (which are our bread) are no bread in compariſon of the things of Chriſt, eſpecially of Chriſt himſelf, who is living bread, the bread of life, and that an eternal life; yet Chriſt who is the beſt bread, better then bread, is little laboured for; and that which hath ſo little of bread in it, that it is not bread, is every mans labour, and the only labour of moſt men.

Etiamſi labore ſuo, lacunam damni à Deo illati expleturus ſibi videatur, fructum tamen non percipiet. Jun.

Again, *Labour* ſignifieth that which a man hath gotten by honeſt endeavours, and in righteous wayes. That which is unduly gotten, is not (properly) ſaid to be gotten by labour, though a man hath laboured much in getting it. Thus labour is oppoſed to ſtealing (*Epheſ.* 4. 28.) *Let him that ſtole ſteal no more* (what ſhall he do then?) *but rather let him labour working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* So we may take it here, this man hath gotten much wickedly, and he hath gotten ſomewhat honeſtly, he ſhall ſuffer damage in his honeſt gains, becauſe he hath gained diſhoneſtly. He ſhall reſtore his labour, or what he hath laboured for. *A little ill gotten poyſons that which is well gotten*; as was touched before.

And ſhall not ſwallow it down.] The word was opened at the 15th verſe; where it is ſaid, *he hath ſwallowed down riches*; It may be enquired, how *Zophar* ſaith here, *He ſhall not ſwallow it down?* To clear that you may conſider of a two-fold ſwallowing.

Firſt, There is a ſwallowing by rapine, and violence; thus the wicked man ſwallowed down riches at verſe 15.

Secondly, There is a ſwallowing for nouriſhment, and ſuſtenance, for ſtrength and ſupport; Thus 'tis ſaid here, *He ſhall not ſwallow it down.* A man may be ſaid to ſwallow down what he hath gotten, and to digeſt it, when his eſtate thrives, as the body doth with meat well digeſted. This is the ſence of the place here, *What he hath laboured for he ſhall reſtore, he ſhall not ſwallow it down*; That is, it ſhall not be converted either to his perſonal benefit, or to the benefit of his family. As before, *He ſhall not ſee*, is, *he ſhall not enjoy*, ſo now, *he ſhall not ſwallow*, is, he ſhall not thrive or wax ſtrong in ſtate by all his gettings.

Illis non fruetur diu. Merc. *Cum mox vomit perinde eſt ac ſi non abſorbiſſet.*

Yet we are not to underſtand the Text, as if this were plainly the lot of every wicked man, but thus it is with many, and thus in ſome ſence it is with every wicked man. For, Either God doth not ſuffer him to hold that long, which he hath gotten unjuſtly, or it doth him ſo little good while he hath it, that he may be ſaid not to have had it; The longeſt contents of this life, are of ſo ſhort a being, that they may be ſaid not to be at all.

> Hence obſerve, *A wicked man hath no true profit by all his labours.*

The promiſe to the Godly is (*Pſal.* 128. 2.) *Bleſſed is the man that feareth, he ſhall eat of the labour of his hands*: He that feareth God, ſtands under the influence of that ſweet promiſe; *He ſhall eat the labour of his hands.* It is ſaid of Chriſt in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 53. 11.) *He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied.* Chriſt laboured hard and he did eat the fruit of his labour; He ſaw and daily ſeeth *of the travail of his ſoul*; many believe and are ſaved; The ſaving of ſouls is the fruit of the travail of Chriſts ſoul. Thus in proportion a Godly man ſeeth of the travail of his ſoul, and is ſatisfied, he labours, he takes much pains, in his place and calling, he hath many weary dayes, and ſome waking nights, but by the bleſſing of God, his labours are fruitfull; He eats his labour to the refreſhing of himſelf and family, and to the bearing up of his credit in the world. The ungodly ſhall not find it ſo at all, or ſhall not long find it ſo; he muſt reſtore his labour, and not ſwallow it down.

According to his ſubſtance ſhall his reſtitution be.

תמורתו *Reſtitutio dicitur permutatio, quia ſemper fit per aliquod cambium, nam pro alienis inique raptis ſua dantur. Tantum reſtituet, quantum ex alieno didatus eſt.* q. d. *juxta menſuram opum quas rapuit vice rerum jam mutatâ reſtituet.* Merc.

The word which we tranſlate *reſtitution*, ſignifies any kind of change. It is rendred by recompence (*Job* 15. 31.) *Vanity ſhall be his recompence*, or the change that he ſhall have is from bad to worſe, even into vanity: ſo the word is uſed, *Ruth* 4. 7. *Levit.* 17. 10, 23. Some give the ſence thus, *He ſhall be as poor as ever he was rich*; *His change ſhall be according to his ſubſtance.* Our Tranſlation ſuppoſeth *Zophar* giving the rule of reſtitution, *According to his ſubſtance ſhall his reſtitution be.*

> Hence obſerve; *If that which is ill gotten be not reſtored, it ſhall.*

If men will not reſtore willingly, God will make them reſtore whether they will or no; though man hath no mind to it, yet he muſt. It is a duty to reſtore what we borrow, much more what any man hath violently taken away! *Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another* (*Rom.* 13. 8.) Love is a debt which is alwayes owing, and ſhould be alwayes paying; *There can be no diſcharge of that bond.* When we have paid much love, we ſtill owe more. But other debts muſt not only be paid, but may be diſcharged. If a man muſt not alwayes owe what he hath borrowed, then much leſs where he hath defrauded. Oppreſſion whether ſecret or open is a crying ſin; and until reſtitution be offered or really made where the party offending is able, or really deſired where he is unable, the mouth of it cannot be ſtopped. This being ſo neceſſary a duty, I ſhall for the clearing of it briefly touch theſe five things, And ſhew

Firſt, What reſtitution is; Secondly, what muſt be reſtored; Thirdly, who muſt reſtore; Fourthly, to whom we muſt reſtore; Fifthly, the proportion of it.

To the firſt queſtion, What is this reſtitution? I anſwer, *It is an act of communicative juſtice, whereby the wrong which we have done to another is recompenced, and he again re-eſtated in his own.* To give to the poor is a duty, yet an act of charity. But to reſtore (though to the rich) is not only a duty, but an act of Juſtice.

Secondly, What muſt be reſtored? That which hath been unjuſtly gotten; yet the meaning is not that a man muſt alwayes reſtore what he hath taken away in *ſpecie*, or the thing it ſelf in kind. If the value and worth of it be reſtored, that ſufficeth; yet it doth not ſuffice to reſtore the bare value of that which hath been taken away. For (as Caſuiſts ſpeak) there are two things to be conſidered in reſtitution.

Damnum emergens lucrum ceſſans.

Firſt, The damage done to the perſon wronged, by detaining his goods.

Secondly, The hindrance of that profit or benefit, which probably he might have made by their continued enjoyment and poſſeſſion. In ſtrictneſs the wrong doer muſt account to the wrong ſufferer in both theſe, elſe the wrong done is not repaired according to the nature of reſtitution.

Thirdly, 'Tis queſtioned, *Who muſt reſtore?* Some may be concern'd in making reſtitution who were not the immediate actors of the wrong. There are ſeven ſorts of perſons who may be involved under the duty of reſtitution.

Firſt and principally, they who perſonally did the wrong.

Secondly, If they have not made reſtitution, their heirs who poſſeſs their eſtate are bound in conſcience to do it.

Thirdly, They are engaged to reſtore who have given aſſiſtance to the damage of others, either by force, command, or counſel.

Fourthly, They, who though antecedently they had no hand in doing it, neither as principals nor abetters, yet gave their after-conſent or approbation to it.

Fifthly, They, who having power in their hands to prevent the damage or wrong of others, having knowingly neglected to put it forth for them.

Sixthly, They, who having lawfull power in their hand to relieve the wronged, have yet ſuffered them to lie under thoſe wrongs unrelieved.

Seventhly, They, who willingly conceal the wrong which they know hath been done to another, or being called refuſe to give teſtimony, or bear witneſs according to their knowledg, that ſo he might be righted. All theſe are under an obligation to reſtore, becauſe they are all partakers in and ſo guilty of the wrong.

Fourthly, To whom muſt we reſtore? I anſwer; Firſt, Reſtitution muſt be made to the perſon wronged; For to wrong one man and reſtore to another, will not make up a reſtitution. This diſcovers their error and miſtake, who having by their extorſions ground the faces of the poor, yea to enrich themſelves, have impoveriſht many rich, yet think it a ſufficient amends, if they build an Hoſpital for thoſe poor whom they never ſaw, much leſs wronged in perſon; Whereas the Laws of reſtitution ſay, The perſon wronged muſt be repayed. To give to the poor at large is charity, but no reſtitution; yet to give to the poor what is not juſtly ours, is no charity. No man can indeed do an act of charity, but he that hath done or is ready to do all acts of Juſtice. God doth as much hate robbery for charity to the poor now, as he did of old for ſacrifice or burnt offerings to himſelf. So that till a man hath reſtored and done all men right, he is not in a capacity to give to the poor; and to how many poor ſoever he gives, he makes no reſtitution, unleſs he gives to thoſe individual perſons (if they may be found and will receive it) whom he hath perſonally wronged. Secondly, If ſuch be not living, then reſtitution muſt be made to their heirs or Executors, to whom the right and diſpoſition of their eſtate doth belong. Thirdly, If neither the man himſelf, nor his heirs are to be found, then the perſon offending muſt reſtore to God; he muſt put his ill gotten goods into Gods Treaſury. The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs of it; he gives to all, and yet he looks to receive from many. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance* (*Prov.* 3. 9.) God hath a double treaſure, to which we are to bring our ſubſtance, that we may honour him. Firſt, All the godly are Gods treaſury; ſuppoſe they are not in extreme want, and ſo need not the gifts of charity, yet God takes it well, and as done to himſelf, when we beſtow upon ſuch the gifts of bounty, for their encouragement and more comfortable ſubſiſtance in this world. Secondly, The poor, chiefly the godly poor are Gods treaſury; I do not ſay we muſt examine every poor man to know whether he be godly or no before we give; but ſuch as we know to be godly we ſhould not fail to give to before others. That's the rule of the Apoſtle; *Do good to All, eſpecially to thoſe who are of the Houſhold of faith* (*Gal.* 6. 10.) Thus there will never want perſons to whom reſtitution may be made; if the man cannot be had, nor any of his who was wrong'd, then reſtore to God. Any godly man, eſpecially a godly poor man is Gods Treaſury.

The fifth thing queſtioned is the proportion, or how much muſt be reſtored. The Text Anſwers and reſolves it, thus; *He ſhall reſtore all his ſubſtance*, or, all that he hath in the world ſhall go to make good the wrong which he hath done; yet more clearly to the rule of reſtitution, *according to his ſubſtance* is this. Suppoſe he be not able to make full reſtitution, yet according to his ſubſtance, that is, ſo far as he is able, ſo far as his eſtate will reach he ſhall reſtore; *Half a loaf is better then no bread,* in reference both to the receiver and the reſtorer. When we cannot do what we ſhould, yet we muſt do what we can. Further, divers Scriptures reſolve the proportion of reſtitution. The Law given the *Jewes* ſaid (*Exod.* 22. 1.) *If a man ſhall ſteal an oxe or a ſheep and kill it or ſell it, he ſhall reſtore five oxen for an oxe, and four ſheep for a ſheep.* The reaſon of this difference why the Law made the proportion fivefold in oxen, and but fourfold in ſheep, might be this; becauſe the owner loſt the labour of his oxe, and the profit of that was to be valued in reſtitution; but ſheep are not for labour. *Solomon* makes the proportion higher (*Prov.* 6. 34.) *If he* (that is, the thief) *be found, he ſhall reſtore ſevenfold.* But ſuppoſe the man were not worth ſo much as he had ſtoln, how could he reſtore *ſevenfold?* The next clauſe anſwers that caſe; *He ſhall give all the ſubſtance of his houſe*; That is, if he be poor, yet let him not be ſpared, but take all. But ſeeing the Law of *Moſes* made the proportion fivefold, why is it there ſaid, *He ſhall reſtore ſevenfold.* To ſalve this, *Junius* tranſlates (*Septies*) *ſeven times.* And gives the meaning thus; Let him reſtore often, even as often as he is found ſtealing; or this phraſe of reſtoring ſevenfold, imports not any addition in thoſe times to the penalty of the Law, becauſe of the encreaſe of that ſin, and the proneneſs of men to it, as ſome (I conceive unwarrantably) expound the place; but only that the thief ſhould make full ſatisfaction. So the word is uſed *Pſal.* 12. 6. In the 22. of *Exodus* v. 4. it is ſaid; *If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be oxe or aſſe or ſheep, he ſhall reſtore donble.* At the firſt verſe the ſtoln oxe was to be reſtored fivefold, and the ſheep fourfold; how doth this conſiſt with the 4th verſe, He ſhall reſtore the oxe and ſheep *double.* The reaſon is, becauſe the firſt verſe ſpeaks of the oxe and ſheep either kild or ſold; This 4th verſe ſpeaks of the thief taken (as we ſay) in the manner, or preſently apprehended with thoſe goods in his hand; The owner being by this ſpeedy diſcovery and recovery of his goods, put to leſs dammage, the penalty of reſtitution was leſſened. Another Scripture ſpeaks of reſtitution in an example (*Luk.* 19. 8.) *Zacheus ſtood, and ſaid to the Lord, behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by falſe accuſation I reſtore him fourfold.* *Zacheus* makes a double diſpoſition of his eſtate; firſt, to thoſe who were poor; Secondly, to thoſe whom he had impoveriſht whether poor or rich; *Zacheus* was ſure his eſtate would hold out to reſtore fourfold to thoſe that he wronged, elſe he could not have given half his eſtate to the poor.

Now though we cannot in theſe times enforce theſe rules of proportion taken from the Judicials of *Moſes*, ſtrictly upon the conſciences of men; yet we may draw down theſe two concluſions for our direction in this thing.

First, *That in Reſtitution the Dammage of the perſon wronged ſhould be fully repaired.*

Secondly, *That if the wrong-doer be not able to give ſo much as will fully repair the dammage, then according to his ſubſtance, or to the utmoſt of what he hath he is bound to reſtore.*

Reſtitution muſt be made according to the ſubſtance unjuſtly gotten, or according to the ſubſtance of the unjuſt getter. They who reſtore willingly as true Repentants do, will always give back (if they have it) according to the ſubſtance unjuſtly gotten. But they whom divine vengeance forceth to reſtore, ſhall give back, ſore againſt their wills, according to their own ſubſtance, how much ſoever it is, yea though it be much more then they have unjuſtly gotten: *God will take all from him who hath no will to reſtore any thing.* That's *Zophars* meaning when he ſaith here; *According to his ſubſtance ſhall his reſtitution be.*

And he ſhall not rejoyce therein.

Wherein ſhall he not rejoyce? It may be taken two ways.

Firſt, In this reſtitution, it pleaſed him well enough to oppreſs and do wrong, but he ſhall take no pleaſure in reſtoring and doing right; he ſhall not do it willingly as *Zacheus,* who rejoyced more in reſtitution then ever he had done in oppreſſion; but the wicked man here ſpoken of is forced to reſtore, and therefore cannot rejoyce therein.

Secondly, It refers rather to the eſtate which he had gotten by oppreſſion: He ſhall reſtore it, *and ſhall not rejoyce therein*; that is, his ill gotten goods ſhall adminiſter no content to his mind. Beſides, there is more meant by this expreſſion then is expreſſed, when *Zophar* ſaith, *He ſhall not rejoyce in it*; the ſence is, he ſhall have ſorrow with it, or it ſhall be a vexation to him. The word which we render *rejoyce,* is emphatical, it ſignifies *to rejoyce with boaſting,* yea with inſulting, a proud rejoycing. The word is applied unto the Peacock; *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the Peacock, or wings and feathers unto the Oſtrich?* (*Job* 39. 13.)

Solent hujuſmodi extenuationes frequentèr inveniri in ſacris.

13.) Gaveſt thou the rejoycing wings to the Peacocks; the Peacock is brag of his feathers, and ſpreads his plumes, and then cryeth out, and ſtrutteth as it were exulting and boaſting in his beauty. This word is alſo uſed (*Prov.* 7. 18.) Where the Adultereſs ſaith, *Come let us take our fill of love until the morning, let us ſolace our ſelves with loves.* Such is the joy of wicked men in worldly enjoyments, they ſpread their plumes, they look upon their eſtates, houſes, and lands, upon their gold and ſilver, as a Peacock on his tail, or as filthy lovers forethink their unclean embraces, and then boaſt and pride themſelves. So did *Nebuchadnezzar* walking in his palace and diſcourſing with his own vain heart, *Is not this great Babel, which I have built,&c.* Thus the worldly man always would, but his joy is often ſtopt. *He ſhall not rejoyce therein.*

Hence note, Firſt, *The things of this world are the matter of a carnal mans rejoycing.*

When a godly man hath the world at will, he hath no will thus to rejoyce in it: he rejoyceth in theſe things (as the Apoſtle directs 1 *Cor.* 7. 30.) *As though he rejoyced not;* His joyes indeed are in God. *Many ſay, who will ſhew us any good? David* anſwers (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *Lord lift thou the light of thy countenance upon us, thou ſhalt put gladneſs in my heart more then in the time when their corn and wine increaſed. Job* (Chap. 31. 25.) gives us this proteſtation of his own integrity, and uprightneſs, that he lived not in worldly joyes, though he had much of the world; *If I rejoyced becauſe my hand hath gotten much,&c.* It is a duty to bleſs God for what we have, and to take comfort in the uſe of it; but to rejoyce in the creature, is to put it into the place of the Creator, and to commit Idolatry with it. As it is the higheſt act of Grace to make our boaſt of God all the day long; ſo it is the higheſt and vaineſt acting of corruption to make our boaſt of the world, though but a moment. *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdome, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, &c.* (*Jer.* 9. 23, 24.) Theſe checks given to humane gloryings, ſhew in what man delights to glory. And when man is moſt ſet and bent upon theſe gloryings, God delights to check him moſt, and to ſay, *He ſhall not rejoyce therein.* We are never ſo near the loſs of theſe rejoycings, as when we make ſureſt of them.

Again, We may take this rejoycing in a lower ſence, for thoſe common contents and refreſhings which by the ordinary providence and bleſſing of God are received in the uſe of the creature. Thus God is ſaid to fill the hearts of men *with food and Gladneſs* (*Acts* 14. 17.) He gives not only meat but mirth, and a kind of natural muſick with it. And indeed when he ſpreads a Table for us, he likes it well to ſee us *eat our meat with gladneſs, as well as with ſingleneſs of heart* (*Acts* 2. 46.) If we take *rejoycing* in this ſence; Then the words, *He ſhall not rejoyce,* yield us this Obſervation.

God can ſeparate joy from the injoyment of the creature.

Many enjoy that which they cannot rejoyce in; there is a vaſt difference between the having of outward things, and taking comfort in them; theſe are diſtinct gifts of God (*Eccleſ.* 5. 19, 20.) *Every man alſo to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoyce in his labour, this is the gift of God.* Whoſoever lives hath a natural power to eat, yet many live in the abundance of riches and wealth, who have not a hearty power to eat; They have a portion, but they cannot take it, or rejoyce in it; They have meat, but no muſick. God can make muſick at a poor mans Table; Though he hath but a cruſt of bread, and a cup of water, yet he ſhall have muſick with it, he ſhall rejoyce in it; whereas though the rich man hath muſick at his Table, yet he ſhall have none in his ſpirit. (*Eccleſ.* 5. 17.) *All his dayes he eateth in darkneſs, he hath much ſorrow: this alſo is a ſore evil.* But how is it ſaid, that *All his dayes he eateth in darkneſs?* What hath he not a candle to eat by? yes he may eat by Sun-light and Candle-light too, he may have outward light enough, yet he eats in darkneſs, that is, with diſcontent, and trouble of mind; he hath no joy in what he hath, his ſweeteſt morſels are eaten with four ſawce. He poſſeſſeth much, yet is as having nothing. For this word is gone out againſt him; *He ſhall not rejoyce therein.*

Zophar having thus deſcribed the puniſhment, returns to the ſin of this wicked man.

Verſ. 19. **Becauſe he hath oppreſſed and forſaken the poor, becauſe he hath violently taken away a houſe which he builded not.**

This verſe, as it ſtands between, ſo it gives the reaſon both of the 18th and 20th verſes. Here's the reaſon why he ſhall reſtore what he hath laboured for, *ver.* 18. *Becauſe he hath oppreſſed the poor;* this alſo is the reaſon *why he ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly* (*ver.* 20.) The word which we tranſlate *to oppreſs,* ſignifies oppreſſion joyned not only (as all oppreſſion is) with injuſtice, but with extremity, tyrannical oppreſſion, without mercy, or moderation, without hoe or hold. Some give full ſcope to their rage, and wrath, they put neither bond nor bridle upon their covetouſneſs and cruelty; ſuch are characteris'd by this word, which moſt properly notes, *breaking in pieces;* we ſay uſually when men fail in their eſtates, *ſuch are broken;* ſome break through their own neglect and careleſneſs, many are broken by the harſhneſs and ſeverity of others. And as the wrath of man breaks many, ſo the juſtice of God breaks not a few (*Iſa.* 24. 19.) *The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean diſſolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.* Wicked men break and oppreſs the poor, God breaketh the richeſt Nations for their wickedneſs. We read in Scripture, firſt, of breaking the head; ſecondly, the teeth; thirdly, the horns; fourthly, the bones; fifthly, the armes of the wicked: All ſhew the breaking of their power, till there be no healing. And thus (to the utmoſt of his power) doth the oppreſſour break the poor. And for this God puniſheth the oppreſſour. *Becauſe he hath oppreſſed, &c.*

רצץ *confregit, contrivit, ad ſummam inopiam reduxit.*

Hence note, *Oppreſſion is a vengeance-bringing-ſin.*

The Lord tells the *Jewes* that it was but a vain thing for them to think of freeing themſelves from feared judgments by prayer and faſting, unleſs they did *let the oppreſſed* or broken *go free, and break every yoke* (*Iſa.* 58. 6.) The Scripture every where thunders againſt this ſin. *They ſhall have judgment without mercy who have ſhewed no mercy* (*Jam.* 2. 13.) With what face can they ask or expect mercy from God, who ſhew none to man?

Secondly, Note; *The poor are moſt ſubject to oppreſſion.*

They meet with moſt oppoſition, who are leaſt able to make defence. We may be deceived and cozened by the weak, but all oppreſſion is from a greater power. And they uſually are oppreſſed, who have very little, or no power at all, *The poor.* And this diſcovers not only the ſinfulneſs, but

Firſt, The diſingenuouſneſs of that ſort of men. They are low-ſpirited and cowardly, they dare not meddle with their match, but oppreſs the poor who are not able to deal with them.

Secondly, It diſcovers their inhumanity and incompaſſionateneſs; they oppreſs the poor, whom they ſhould pity and relieve; they take away from thoſe to whom they ſhould rather give. The Prophet ſpeaks of ſuch (*Mic.* 3. 2.) *Who hate the good, and love the evil, who pluck off their skin from off them, and their fleſh from off their bones;* That is, they take from thoſe who have leaſt, and they take all from them; to take away a mans cloaths is an act of extream oppreſſion, but to pull off a mans skin, that's inhumane, yet there is a degree further, they take not only skin but fleſh too; they who are very poor, may be ſaid to have nothing but skin upon them, yet the oppreſſour will have that. *Zophar* proceeds yet further

Becauſe he hath oppreſſed and forſaken the poor.

Or according to the letter of the Hebrew, *left men poor;* that is, having ſpoiled and peeled them, he left them in a poor condition. Some read it as a puniſhment, not as a ſin; *Therefore he ſhall leave them poor,* that is, his own children. But I rather take our ſence, as a diſcovery of his ſin; *He hath forſaken the poor.* To forſake is to withdraw help, aſſiſtance, counſel, protection, any thing which might do another good. Theſe words may be expounded as an aggravation

עזב *deſerere, derelinquere, negligere.*

gravation of the former ſin, oppreſſion; As if *Zophar* had ſaid, becauſe he hath not only oppreſſed but forſaken the poor, denying them all help, when he hath made them unable to help themſelves, *Therefore evil ſhall be upon him, &c.*

Hence note, *That as it is ſinful to forſake the poor, though we have never oppreſſed them, ſo to oppreſs and then forſake them is far more ſinfull.*

Though we have not taken from them, yet if we have not given them; though we have not made them naked, yet if we have not cloathed them, this will be charged in that Great day (*Math.* 25. 35, 36.) we find the poor complaining (*Act.* 6. 1.) *In thoſe dayes when the number of the Diſciples was multiplied, there aroſe a murmuring of the Grecians againſt the Hebrews, becauſe their widdows were neglected in the daily miniſtration.* Neglect of the poor, eſpecially of the Godly poor, is a ſin in all, eſpecially in the Churches. How great then is their ſin, who make many poor, and then neglect them; let them ſink or ſwim, 'tis all one to them. For a man to take ſome care of, or beſtow ſome Almes upon the poor whom he hath oppreſſed, is no ſatiſfaction for his ſin, but not to take care of the poor whom he hath oppreſſed, is a great aggravation of his ſin.

Becauſe he hath violently taken away the houſe which he builded not.

גזל *rapuit, aperte abſtulit res aut perſonas.*

Theſe words are (upon the matter) the ſame with the former; *He hath violently taken away*; 'tis but one word in the Hebrew, He hath not taken away by ſtealth, by tricks, and deceits, but in open view. Some take away houſes which they builded not, craftily, and upon pretenſions or colours of Law and right; others take them away violently without any colour of right. The former is as unjuſt a way of taking as the latter. But the latter hath not only injuſtice in it, but impudence. Theſe are ſo far gone in ſin, that they are paſt ſhame; *They declare their ſin as Sodome, they hid it not.* Theſe are the Nimrods of the earth, mighty hunters. *They violently take away, &c.* There is a twofold interpretation of the words; ſome make the latter part of this clauſe as the puniſhment of the ſin ſpoken of in the former part: *He hath violently taken away a houſe, and he ſhall not build it*; That is, he ſhall not have ability or opportunity to build. He took away a houſe, intending to fit it for himſelf, but before he could do it, God took him away. He took away a houſe, therefore he ſhall not build it. His oppreſſion of others ſhall be puniſhed with his own diſappointment. Again, Others read thus; *He pulls down mens houſes, but he never thinks of repairing them:* He is ſo far from reſtoring four-fold, that he would not reſtore a fourth, no nor a farthing. But rather, as we render, the whole clauſe is a deſcription of his ſin; *He hath violently taken away a houſe which he builded not*; That is, he hath by force invaded and ſeiz'd upon that which he had no title to, upon that on which he never beſtowed either pains or coſt: *Houſe*, is here expreſſed by a Synecdoche for any thing, whether lands, or goods, or money, which belong properly to another man.

Domum rapuit & non ædificavit.

Hence note, *It is a crying ſin to take that which others have laboured for.*

The idle ſervant (*Math.* 25. 24.) layed this aſperſion upon his Maſter, *I know thee that thou art a hard Maſter*; how proved he that? *Thou reapeſt where thou haſt not ſown*; if a man ſow he ought to reap, and he that hath ſtrawed ſhould alſo gather. What the idle ſervant charged God with, is indeed the temper of many earthly minded men; let whoſo will build the houſe, they will take it if they can; if power ſtand not between them and their neighbours houſe, between them and their neighbours eſtate, their own conſcience doth not. As to do this to any man is a great ſin, ſo for a man to have this done to him is a great affliction. God threatens it as a ſore judgement upon his own people (*Deut.* 28. 30.) *Thou ſhalt build an houſe, and thou ſhalt not dwell therein.* Then who ſhall? An enemy ſhall, He ſhall take away the houſe which thou haſt builded, and turn thee out of houſe and home. Many rich men gather in the labours of the poor; ſuch ſeem to act by that rule (which will be no rule for them) *to him that hath ſhall be given, but he that hath not from him ſhall be taken away even what he hath.* Some becauſe they have much think they muſt have all; as for thoſe who have not, that is, who have but little, they think they muſt have nothing at all. As there are many Idle poor who will not labour for bread to eat; ſo there are ſome covetous rich, who eat the bread which the poor have laboured for. The Apoſtles command to the *Theſſalonians* was, *That if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat* (2 *Theſ.* 3. 10.) Drones deſerve no honey. All the bread which is eaten and not (where ability is) in ſome way or other laboured for, is ſtollen. Idle perſons ſhall be judged as Thieves, though they eat that which is freely given them, yea though they have bought it with their money. How then ſhall they be judged, who will not ſuffer thoſe who work to eat; nor them to have a houſe to dwell in, who have been at the pains and charge of building one, who violently take away what they never brought together, nor laboured for; This is the oppreſſours practice, and his ſin, ſet down in this verſe; his puniſhment hath been ſpoken of before, and is again expreſſed in another kind and form with the additions of a ſtrong aſſeveration to ſeal it faſt upon him in the next verſe.

VERS. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Surely he ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly, he ſhall not ſave of that which he deſired.
There ſhall none of his meat be left, therefore ſhall no man look for his goods.
In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits: every hand of the wicked ſhall come upon him.
When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath on him, and ſhall rain it on him while he is eating.

Z*ophar* purſues his former purpoſe, ſtill drawing out the ſad eſtate of a wicked man: he ſhew'd us his ſin in the former verſe, *Becauſe he hath oppreſſed and forſaken the poor, &c.* Now follows his puniſhment, *Surely he ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly.* He that hath diſquieted ſo many ſhall have little quiet himſelf; and he that would not ſuffer others to reſt in their houſes, ſhall have no reſt in his own heart. *Surely he ſhall not feel quietneſs.* This verſe may contain both a deſcription of the ſin, and of the puniſhment of this wicked covetous man. Some interpret it as a deſcription of his ſin; of the fury of that ſin of covetouſneſs which is never quiet; *He ſhall not feel quiet in his belly*; That is, his mind ſhall never be ſatisfied. Others interpret it as a deſcription of his miſery. I conceive we may take in both; This is his ſin, and this is his puniſhment; not only becauſe his ſin is his puniſhment, but becauſe this puniſhment falls upon him for his ſin; his ſin was unquiet unſatiſfiable deſires, and now he is puniſhed with an addition of freſh deſires, which will not be ſatisfied; As he gave up himſelf ſinfully, ſo God gives him up judicially to vile and earthly affections. The Lord hath many external puniſhments for ſin, and he leaves many under internal puniſhments, or penal ſins. When ſin is made a puniſhment, it is the moſt dreadfull puniſhment. But to the words.

Surely he ſhall not feel quietneſs.

The Hebrew is, *He ſhall not know peace or quietneſs*, he ſhall not find his craving appetite, his hunger and thirſt after the world appeaſed, how much ſoever of the world he hath devoured; no, though he ſhould have devoured the whole world. He ſhall not (as it were) know the meaſure of his own belly; nor how to proportionate his deſire to a comfortable enjoyment, being meerly led by unſatiſfiable and boundleſs luſts. Thus he feels no quietneſs in his belly. *Zophars* language continues in the former alluſion to a gluttonous eater, who eats till his belly akes, and crammes himſelf till his ſtomach is rather ſick then ſatiſfied.

Non novit pacem, i.e. *Non ſentiet ſedatam ſitim aut famem etiamſi nulla voraverit.*

By *the belly*, we are to underſtand the *appetite*, thoſe powers of deſire which take in, and concoct faſter then the ſtomach can, and hold infinitely more then the belly can. When the natural belly is full, this is empty and hungry. This *Zophar* might intend while he ſaith, *He ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly.* For as when there is a convenient portion received into the body; this fulneſs is the quieting of the ſtomach, and of thoſe natural powers, that draw and ſuck in the food, and pray for it: ſo there is a filling of the mind to the ſtaying, appeaſing, and quieting of its appetite, which uſually exceeds the bodily appetite. There is a moral appetite as well as a natural appetite, and that is moſt hardly ſatisfied, and filled. It is ſo hard to be filled that all the good things in the world cannot fill up the room and ſtowage of it; and therefore the covetous wretch cannot feel, or know quietneſs in his belly. This is his puniſhment, after all that he hath ſcraped, and hoarded together, yet the man ſaith not, it is enough. *David* (*Pſal.* 17. v. 14.) deſcribes the men of the world, who *have their portion in this life, whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid treaſure: they are full of Children, and leave the reſt of their ſubſtance for their babes.* That is, thou giveſt them enough to ſatisfie nature, thou filleſt their bellies; thou openeſt they treaſures, thy ſtore-houſe, thy granery, thy wardrobe; thou openeſt all that wherein any good thing is laid up, either for back, or belly: (ſo by a ſynecdoche we are to underſtand it) thou filleſt them with thy hid treaſures, with treaſures hidden in the bowels of the earth; but when they are at the fulleſt, when they are ſtuffed till their bellies are ready to break, and enough remains of outward enjoyments for their children after them, yet (as *Zophar* here ſpeaks) *They feel no quietneſs in their belly.* So the *Tygurine* tranſlation renders it excellently; *The man ſcrapes together a huge heap of wealth, but yet he ſhall not find that he is wealthy.* He ſhall not at all feel his wealth when he hath all this.

Non ſentiet in ventre ſuo quòd opulentus ſit. Tygur.

Hence obſerve, *The deſire of a wicked man is never full, how full ſoever his eſtate is.*

He hath a moral belly which nothing can fill, though his natural belly be filled (*Prov.* 13. 25.) *The righteous eateth to the ſatisfying of his ſoul.* 'Tis poſſible a righteous man may not have enough to eat for the ſatisfying of his body, he may riſe a hungry from his dinner, he may riſe with an appetite, becauſe he hath not enough; yet if he hath but a little, a morſel of bread, a ſallet of green herbs, when ever he eats, he eats to the ſatisfying of his ſoul, that is, he bleſſeth God though he have but a little, and is content: though his hunger be hardly ſatisfied, yet his ſoul is plentifully ſatisfied. But, as for the wicked man (ſaith *Solomon* there) *The belly of the wicked ſhall want.* I conceive, *belly* in that place of the *Proverbs* is to be underſtood as here in *Job.* The puniſhment which is ordinarily inflicted upon wicked men, is not want in their purſes, but want in their ſpirits; their hearts are in want, while their houſes abound. As it is better, ſo far eaſier for a man to fill his belly then his eye. Here in the Text the covetous mans belly is his eye, nothing of this world can fill that, and yet he neither deſires nor endeavours to have it filled with any thing but the world. Hence, when he is at his higheſt food and feaſting (ſeeing he hath nothing to feed his ſpirit with, not a diſh for his ſoul) he doth but increaſe, not appeaſe his ſouls appetite; creatures can no more quench that thirſt than wood can quench and extinguiſh fire. For as the Moraliſt telleth us, The thirſt of covetous men is not from want, but from a diſeaſe. And that deſire which proceeds from a diſeaſe, and not from want, is not ſtopped but provoked by what it receives; ſo that whatſoever you beſtow upon ſuch a man, is not the end of his former longings, but a ſtep to new and freſh ones. What can appeaſe deſire, when deſire is a diſeaſe? Labour to get the diſeaſe, the diſtemper that is in your deſires cured, and the wants which your deſires move about will ſoon be ſupplied, or not complained of.

'Avarorum ſitis non eſt vera aliqua naturæ indigentia ſed morbus. Quod non ex inopia ſed vitio naſcitur, quicquid illi congujjeris non ſinis erit cupiditatis ſed gradus. Sen. de Conſol.

The *Dog-Appetite*, or hunger of which Phyſitians ſpeak, is like the covetous mans appetite. Some men have ſuch a bodily appetite, they eat, and eat, and yet are hungry; the more they eat, the more they may; they eat, and cannot be ſatisfied: ſuch is the ſoul appetite of a covetous worldling; he feels no quiet in his belly, he ſtill calls for more, and when he hath it he would have more, and the more he hath, the more he would have. The horſe-leach hath two daughters, *Crying, give, give. There are three things that are never ſatisfied, yea four things ſay not it is enough* (*Prov.* 30. 15.) This Horſe-leach *is deſire*, by the two daughters of the Horſe-leach may well be meant *covetouſneſs and prodigality*; both theſe cry, *give, give*; The former cries give, *To keep*; the latter cries give, *To ſpend*; neither of them ſaith, *it is enough:* The one would ever have more to keep, and the other would have more to ſpend: They feel no quietneſs in their bellies. Their preſent havings kindle freſh deſirings; and in ſtead of ſtaying, do but whet their appetite.

The Naturaliſt obſerves, that the Horſe-leach hath no thorough paſſage, he takes much in, but he lets nothing out, and therefore breaks, and kills himſelf with ſucking. The covetous man is like the Horſe-leach in this, he is all for taking in, he would not have any paſſage out; he would let nothing go by way of expence, but never thinks enough comes in by way of revenue. Nothing can ſatisfie deſire but God, not riches, not greatneſs, nor power; The bleſſing and favour of God with what we have ſatisfieth, and that will ſatisfie with a little. Therefore if you would feel quiet in your belly, if you would have deſire ſatisfied; Say not, If I had ſo much I ſhould be quiet, if I had ſo much I ſhould be well; if I had ſuch a proportion of eſtate I ſhould be content. That which gives quiet in any portion, is, firſt the favour and preſence of God; ſecondly, that it is received from the hand of a father; thirdly, that it comes to us in the Covenant of grace; fourthly, that it is the purchaſe of the bloud of Chriſt; fifthly, that it is an anſwer of prayer, and a bleſſing from above upon honeſt endeavours. Such conſiderations as theſe, whether it be much or little which you have, will make you feel quietneſs in your belly with what you have. Elſe the greater your portion is, the greater is your unquietneſs.

Plinius lib. 11. *Nat. Hiſt cap.*34.

Secondly, Note further, That *as this non-ſatisfaction is the puniſhment of a wicked man, ſo it is his ſin*; It is a ſin not to be ſatisfied, as well as it is a miſery not to be ſatisfied. The Apoſtles rule is, *Be content with the things that you have*; that is, be quiet, ſit down; we ought to feel quiet in our belly with our portion, and bleſs God for our allowance in every condition. *Contentation is a liberal portion*; contentation hath been highly honoured as a vertue, by Heathens, It is a grace among Chriſtians. Contentation, is the reſt of the ſoul, or to uſe *Zophars* language, *The quietneſs of the belly.* We may further expound this Negative, *He ſhall not feel quiet in his belly*, as Negatives often are in Scripture, by an Affirmative of the contrary; And ſo, *He ſhall not feel quiet*, is, he ſhall feel much vexation, trouble, and diſtreſs; his belly ſhall be pained, that is, his mind ſhall be in perpetual turmoyle. There are many Scriptures of the like form with this, which carry more in the interpretation then in the expreſſion, (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* The Apoſtles meaning is, your labour in the Lord ſhall have abundant reward. Again, *Iſa.* 57. 21. *There is no peace* (*ſaith my God*) *to the wicked*; the ſence is, Trouble is their portion. Thus here, he ſhall not feel quietneſs, is, he ſhall be much diſquieted. There is no middle of participation between theſe two.

He ſhall not ſave of that which he deſired.

This clauſe contains another part of the covetous mans puniſhment: He is much for getting, and more for ſaving. But

He ſhall not ſave.] The Hebrew word ſignifies ſometimes *to ſave by flight* (1 *Sam.* 22. 1.) *David eſcaped to the cave of Adullam.* He ſaved himſelf by flight. It is uſed alſo to ſignifie *bringing forth*, or *deliverance in Childbirth* (*Iſa.* 66. 7.) *Before ſhe travailed ſhe brought forth, before her pain came ſhe was delivered of a manchild.* We tranſlate it to another ſence, *He ſhall not ſave*; that is, keep, preſerve, or maintain that which he hath deſired.

מלט *Liberatus fuit, evaſit; peperit, in lucem emiſit.*

That which he deſired.] The letter runs thus; *He ſhall not ſave in or of his deſire:* The word in the original ſignifies an earneſt deſire, a thing earneſtly deſired, or extreamly coveted. (*Joſh.* 7. 21.) *Achan* makes this confeſſion of ſin; *When I ſaw among the ſpoils a goodly Babyloniſh garment, and two hundred ſhekels of ſilver, and a wedge of gold, of fifty ſhekles of weight, then I coveted them and took them.* It is the word here uſed; *He ſhall not ſave of that which he deſired*; that is, of that which he coveted to have with ſtrong deſire. *Achan* got a goodly garment and a golden wedge, but he was ſo far from ſaving them that he loſt his own life. The Prophet *Daniel* is called *a man of deſires* (Chap. 9. 23.) that is, a man *greatly deſired*, or *beloved*; God was (as it were) in love

with

חמד *Summè deſiderare. Ad verbum, in* (i.e. *de*) *optato ſuo non ſervabit.* q. d. *non fruetur optatis aut iis, quæ ei in deliciis erant.* Druſ. *De deſiderabili ſuo non ſervabit.* Merc.

with him. So (*Cant.* 2. 3.) *As the apple trees among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons: I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight.* Or delighted, and ſate down, or I deſired to ſit down with great delight. *Chriſt is the Deſire of Nations*, that is, he whom all Nations (to whom his beauty is revealed) greatly deſire. Here is the puniſhment of this wicked man, he ſhall not ſave that wherein his chief pleaſure lay, his *Benjamin*, the ſon of his right hand, the child of his deſire; The deſire of his eyes ſhall be taken, yea pulled from him. Now according to the two-fold interpretation of the verb before, given, we may here give a double expoſition of the whole ſentence.

Firſt thus, *By that which he deſired he ſhall not be ſafe, or eſcape, he ſhall not deliver himſelf.* So divers render it. And the Seventy alſo expreſs the former clauſe in the abſtract, rendring it thus, *He ſhall not be ſaved in his deſire*; that is, he ſhall not ſave nor deliver himſelf by it. So Mr. *Broughton*, *By that which he deſired he ſhall not be ſafe.*

Ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ αὐτοῦ οὐ σωθήσεται. Sept. *Cum re deſiderabili ſua non proripiet ſe.* Jun.

Hence note, *When a wicked man hath gotten what he would, he is never the near, or not the nearer to ſafety.*

He is not ſafe by that which he deſired. He ſaith, if I could get ſuch an eſtate, and make ſure ſuch an intereſt, and engage ſuch friends, I ſhould be ſafe. But by that which he moſt deſired, he ſhall not be ſafe, be it riches, or friends, or correſpondency with the beſt and greateſt in the world, none of theſe ſhall be his ſafety. There is ſuch a threatning upon men of the world (*Iſa.* 44. 9.) *They that make a graven image are all of them vanity, and their delectable things ſhall not profit.* It is this word, *their deſirable things.* Which you may underſtand, either by their gold, or by their Gods; either by their riches, or their Idols: Which were their deſire, and as they ſuppoſed, their ſafety. *Michah* in the book of *Judges*, when he had got an Idol to worſhip, and a Levite to his Prieſt, concluded; *Now know I that the Lord will do me good* (*Judg.* 17. 13.) But their delectable things ſhould not profit them, or be their ſafety, whether they be things deſired ſuperſtitiouſly or covetouſly, whether they be things of the world, or an Idol, *which is nothing in the world*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 8. 4.) that is, it is of no worth or value, it hath no power or vertue to do good or deliver from evil. Theſe delectable things ſhall not ſave them, when God will deſtroy them. Though a wicked man had his choice of all that he deſires for his protection, yet he cannot be ſafe. His deſires riſe not above the creature, which cannot ſave it ſelf, much leſs be ſafety to others. There is no ſafety but under the ſhadow of the Almighty; we are never hid till we hide our ſelves in his pavilion. The wicked come not under that ſhadow, nor ſhall they ever enter that pavilion. Their deſires never carry them indeed that way, and therefore *they ſhall not be ſafe by that which they deſire.*

Secondly, As his deſireable things cannot ſave him (according to the former reading) ſo (according to ours) he ſhall not ſave of that which he deſired; that is, he ſhall ſave nothing of it. All ſhall be waſted and vaniſh away upon which he built his felicity; Though he have it, yet he ſhall not be able to hold or keep it; not ſo much as a bit or a ſhread of it, not ſo much as the gleanings or parings of it. That's the meaning of, *He ſhall not ſave of that which he deſired.* All will eſcape, get out, and break priſon. He thought he had laid up his goods, his gold and ſilver, ſafe enough, even as priſoners within Iron grates, under lock, and key, yet theſe will eſcape and be gone. Thus Mr. *Calvin* renders, *He ſhall not keep his deſire*, or *that which he hath ſo much deſired.*

Hence obſerve, *When a wicked worldling hath gotten all that he deſires, yet he cannot hold it.*

When he hath what he would, he cannot keep what he hath. There are two uſual expreſſions in Law Conveyances about Lands or houſes; *To have, and to hold.* Many come to the *habendum*, but not to the *tenendum*; they *have*, but cannot *hold*: Their goods and gains ſlip away between their fingers.

The deſirable things of the Saints are ſafe to them; As they *have*, ſo they ſhall *hold* them; they ſhall ſave the things they deſire; and the things they deſire ſhall ſave them: their great deſire is after ſpirituals, and theſe will ſtick by them: *O how great is the goodneſs that thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee,* (*Pſal.* 31. 19.) The goodneſs of God is great, and God hath laid it up: it is in the treaſury of God, and his is a ſafe treaſury. When he hath laid up goodneſs and mercy for us, we need not fear, nor go to any Enſurance Office for ſecurity. *The moth cannot corrupt, nor can thieves break through and ſteal theſe treaſures.* But as for the ungodly man it is not ſo with him, for he and his, he and his golden mountains ſhall be as the chaffe which the wind driveth away; *He ſhall not ſave of that which he deſired.*

Zophar yet enlargeth this dolefull Narrative.

Verſ. 21. **There ſhall none of his meat be left, therefore ſhall no man look for his goods.**

Zophar had ſaid immediately before, *He ſhall not ſave of that he deſired*, there ſhall not be a ſcrap left; Here he ſaith, *None of his meat ſhall be left.* It being of the ſame ſence with the former, I will only open the words and note the different reading.

Firſt, Some for, *None of his meat ſhall be left, or remain*, render it by a perſon; *There ſhall none be left*; The word is uſed moſt frequently for a remainder of men, not of things; none ſhall be left for his meat. If he ſave any of his worldly eſtate, if ſome of his meat be left, yet no heir ſhall be left to enjoy it after him.

Non deſunt qui שריד *in maſculino accipiunt; non erit reſiduus ei, ſc. ſuperſtes hæres qui ejus bona fruatur.* Merc.

Some of the Rabbins interpret it as a further aggravation of the greedineſs and cruelty of this man; *There ſhall none of his meat be left.* He will eat up all at once; he is reſolved to oppreſs and ravine for more againſt the next meal; he cares not though all be ſpent to day, he will oppreſs afreſh to morrow. He is reſolved not to want as long as any about him have any thing. Such Nimrods (as Chriſt ſpeaks, but in a quite other ſence then Chriſt ſpake it, *Matth.* 6. 34.) *Take no thought for the morrow*; Chriſt would have us do ſo with dependance upon his proviſion, they do ſo upon preſumption of their own. Greedy Lyons have no ſtore-houſes, but make an end as ſoon as they can of what is gotten, and then out to get more.

Nihil fecit *reſiduū cibo ejus*, i. e. *nihil reliquit ex iis quæ manibus habebat quod in poſterum comederet, confidens ſe ſtatim rapturum unde viveret.* Rab. Lev.

None of his meat ſhall be left.] The Hebrew ſtrictly thus; *Nothing ſhall be left to eat.* Though he may leave many eaters behind him, yet *nothing ſhall be left to eat*, or, *none of his meat ſhall be left.*

There is a threefold apprehenſion about theſe words.

Firſt, Some expound them as intimating the baſeneſs of this mans ſpirit. He keeps ſo poor a houſe (as we ſay) though he be a rich man, that when dinner is done, there's none of his meat left, there's not a ſcrap nor a cruſt, not a bit of broken bread left to give to a beggar waiting and craving at his door. His proviſion is but juſt enough to ſerve for himſelf and his family.

Tam parcus eſt in victu quotidiano, ut cum vix ſibi ſatis ſumat, nullæ remaneant reliquiæ ſibi. Cajet.

Secondly, Others expound it not of the baſe narrowneſs and niggardlineſs of this mans ſpirit, but of his luxury, and laviſhneſs. He is profuſe in his own expences; he cares not what he layes out upon his own back and belly; but as for the poor, they may ſtarve at his door, he hath nothing left for them. The rich man (*Luk.* 16.) fared deliciouſly every day, but had not a crum for *Lazarus*, all was waſted in gluttony and drunkenneſs. When *David* in diſtreſs (1 *Sam.* 25. 11.) ſent for ſome relief to *Nabal*, the Text ſaith, *Nabal kept a feaſt at his houſe like a King*, yet he had nothing for *David*; *Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my fleſh, which I have killed for my ſhearers, and ſend it to men whom I know not whence they are?* Some feaſt like Kings at home, and all their bounty keeps at home. 'Tis truly ſaid of theſe, *None of their meat is left.*

Deſcribitur guloſitas impii qui de abundantia menſæ ſuæ nulli peregrino refectionem præbet.

But thirdly, I rather underſtand this Text as a deſcription, not of his expenſiveneſs, or penuriouſneſs to himſelf, or others, but of his extream poverty, ſent upon him as a puniſhment by the hand of God.

None of his meat ſhall be left. That is, he ſhall ſcarce have enough for himſelf. The wicked are oft reduced to a morſel of bread: God never leaves taking from them till all be gone. As *David* profeſſing his own experience, ſaith, *I have been young and now am old, yet I never ſaw the righteous forſaken, nor their ſeed begging bread*; they had alwayes ſome of their meat left. So *Zophar* (it ſeems) had obſerved in his experience, many wicked men forſaken and themſelves begging bread. They who have nothing left of their own, muſt of neceſſity ask or ſteal from others; *None of his meat ſhall be left.* And this interpretation ſuits beſt with that which followeth:

Ita omnibus ſpoliabitur bonis ut nihil reliquum ei erit, quo veſci poſſit.

Thereſore

Vocem Hebræam deducunt à חול *parturire, & legunt, non parturiet, vel non multiplicabitur bonum ejus.* Pagn. Vatabl. Peg.

Therefore no man ſhall look for his goods.] There is a threefold expoſition of this paſſage alſo: Some derive the word which we render *to look*, from a root that ſignifies *to bring forth, or to multiply.* And ſo the ſence is given thus; *None of his meat*, that is, of his eſtate or goods, *ſhall bring forth for his good, or multiply to his profit.* If a man do not encreaſe, he comes to nothing; if he ſpend, ſpend, ſpend, if he be always giving out, and never bring in, though his eſtate be great, 'twill ſoon be gone; Unleſs a mans eſtate be growing and multiplying, he cannot (as we ſay) *hold his own.* In a ſhort time there will be none of his meat left. As vegitables grow properly, ſo alſo inanimates have a kind of growth. A mans eſtate groweth; gold and ſilver grow by addition and multiplication, though not by augmentation. Thus riches bring forth. Now I ſay, if there be continual ſpending, and carrying out, and no coming in, no growing, or increaſe, ſuch a man muſt needs come to poverty. What God ſaid at firſt to the cattle, and beaſts of the earth; he ſaith to all that a man hath, *Encreaſe and multiply*; And when he ſaith, *Multiply not*, all muſt needs decreaſe, and the owner muſt lie under the curſe of want, when what he hath is under the curſe of Barrenneſs.

A חיל *quod ſignificat robur. Non roborabitur bonum ejus.* Rab. Abra. *Propterea non manebit proſperitas ejus. A* יחל *quod eſt expectare.*

Secondly, Others derive the word from a root that ſignifies to *be ſtrong, or ſtrength*; rendring thus; *His meat or eſtate ſhall not be ſtrengthened*; that is, *his proſperity ſhall not continue.* Mr. *Broughton* renders it ſo; *therefore his goods continue not*; there ſhall be no tack in them.

Beſides theſe two rendrings we take a third, and all three meet in the general puniſhment of the wicked man; *Let no man look for his goods.* We derive the word from a root ſignifying to expect and wait for a thing; *therefore no looking for his goods*; we put in thoſe words (*no man*) *Therefore no man ſhall look for his goods.* Which is as much as to ſay, he ſhall have nothing left; for if a man hath any thing, ſome or other will be looking for it, and making title to it. He that hath abundance ſhall not want heirs. So that, when *Zophar* ſaith, *No man ſhall look for his goods*; The plain meaning is, He ſhall die a beggar, and leave no eſtate worth the looking after, or ſuing for. He ſhall not need to make his Will, or appoint Executors; The wrath and juſtice of God ſhall diſpoſe of all before he dieth, there is no man needs to gape for his death. When a rich man is ſick, many gape for his death, hoping that ſomewhat will fall into their mouths. Sometimes children are poring upon the day of their fathers death, and looking for his goods before he leaves them. But this man ſhall have nothing to leave, and therefore none ſhall look for what he hath.

Filius ante diem patris inquirit in annos.

Laſtly, They who render the former part of the verſe by a perſon, *There ſhall none be left for his meat*, give the ſence of this latter part thus; Seeing none of his children, family, or kindred are left, *Therefore there ſhall be none to look for his goods.*

Verſ. 22. **In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, he ſhall be in ſtraits, &c.**

The ſcope of this verſe and the next, is to ſet forth the ſeaſon or nick of time in which the Lord will reckon with this ſinful oppreſſour (*verſ.* 22.) *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency,* (*verſ.* 23.) *When he is about to fill his belly.* Theſe are the times, or the advantages that God picks out to deal with this man in.

כמלאוח טפקן *Cum replebitur ſufficientia ejus.*

In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *When his ſufficiency ſhall be filled.* The word ſignifies to ſuffice, or ſatisfie, and fill up. So (1 *King.* 20. 10.) In that threatning raging Letter ſent by *Zenacherib*; *The duſt of Samaria ſhould not be enough for handfuls for the men that follow me.* It ſhall not ſuffice for handfulls. The word alſo ſignifies to clap the hands together, or to ſmite the hand upon another part of the body, and this under a threefold notion.

Firſt, To clap the hands in anger, and vexation, (*Numb.* 24. 10.) *Balak* clapt his hands *together* (his anger being kindled againſt *Balaam*) when he could not have his will.

Secondly, In ſorrow; *Jer.* 31. 19. *After I was turned, I repented, and after I was inſtructed I ſmote upon my thigh.*

Thirdly, It notes clapping the hands for joy; and that two wayes.

Firſt, For joy at the hurt of others: (there is ſuch a wickedneſs in the heart of man to rejoyce at the fall of his neighbour) (*Lament.* 2. 15.) *All they that go by clap their hands and hiſs*, ſeeing *Jeruſalem* in ſorrow.

Secondly, For joy at our own good; or when our ſelves receive good; ſo in the Text; *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency*, or when he hath ſo much that he claps his hands for joy, when he is in the higheſt plauditie of his own happineſs, then he ſhall be in ſtraits.

In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency.] Here is a gradual elegancy: for a man to have a ſufficiency, is a very comfortable eſtate; *enough*, (as we ſay, for meat, and cloathing) *is all. Give me neither poverty, nor riches, feed me with food convenient*, was *Agurs* prayer. Sufficiency is, at leaſt, a competency; but the fulneſs of ſufficiency is more. Such ſufficiency is abundance, if not ſuperfluity, or *ſuperabundance.* There is an abundant grace of God (*where ſin abounds, grace abounds.*) But beſides *abounding grace*, there is *ſuperabounding grace*, or (as it were) an exceſs of grace, an hyperbole of grace (*Rom.* 6. 20.) So ſome in this life have an hyperbolical eſtate, an exceſſive vaſt eſtate in riches and creature-comforts. They have enough, and more then enough; ſuch is the importance of this expreſſion; *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency,*

Cumputabit ſibi abundè, ſatis ſuperq; ſuppetere & ſufficere omnia ad fæliciter & lautè vivendum neceſſaria, tum, &c. Merc.

He ſhall be in ſtraits.] There is nothing more oppoſite to *ſufficiency* then *ſtraits*, eſpecially to fulneſs of ſufficiency. *He ſhall be in ſtraits*; in outward ſtraits, and inward ſtraits, in ſtraits on the right hand, and in ſtraits on the left. In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, he ſhall be full of ſtraits. The word is applicable to any kind of trouble, becauſe what trouble ſoever a man is in, it ſtraitens him; it ſtraitens his ſpirits, it ſtraitens his deſigns, every way he is ſtraitned. To be in ſtraits is to be in ſuch affliction, that a man knows not which way to turn himſelf, or what to do next. Every affliction is a kind of priſon; great afflictions, ſtraiten greatly, and ſhuts us up faſt in priſon.

> Hence obſerve, *When it is beſt with wicked men in their own opinion, or according to their preſent poſſeſſion, then their worſt is approaching.*

I will not ſtay upon the general diſcourſe of this common theam, but only ſhew four wayes diſtinctly in which a carnal man may be ſaid to be in ſtraits in the midſt of his ſufficiency, or in the fulneſs of it.

Firſt, Carnal men are in ſtraits in the time of their ſufficiency, as being troubled what to do with their abundance. That's the caſe of ſome. I need give no other proof of it then that repreſented (*Luk.* 12. 19.) which at leaſt ſuppoſeth, that ſuch a thing may be. There was a certain rich man, whoſe ground brought forth abundance, and he ſaid, *What ſhall I do with all this?* The man was troubled what to do with it; he was hard put to it for ſtowage, or where to beſtow it: He muſt pull down his barns, and make bigger. This is a ſtrait that carnal men are in, in the midſt of their ſufficiency: but I queſtion whether that be here intended.

In anxietate erit ſollicitus quomodo eam conſervat. Druſ.

Magna navis magna cura.

Secondly, A real ſtrait is upon him, how to keep his abundance, how to protect what he hath gotten. He is in many ſtraits about this point, how to protect his ſtore that it be not loſt, and taken from him. What ſhall I do to keep this treaſure? how ſhall I hold it? I am afraid it will get away from me. It is a common ſpeech; *A great ſhip, is a great care*; a great deal of the things of the world are a great worldly burthen; they that are in the fulleſt ſufficiency of outward things, their eſtates and poſſeſſions bring them in as great an increaſe of troubles as of revenues. As they have plenty of riches, ſo they cannot avoid plenty of buſineſs and labour about them. Some old rich men have ſaid, they were then as hard put to it to keep their riches, as they were in their younger dayes to gather and heap up riches.

There is a third ſtrait, which is worſe then the former; as he is ſtraitned to keep what he hath; ſo God in judgement gives him this ſtrait in his fulneſs, that he fears his fulneſs is not full enough, and that his ſufficiency is unſufficient for him; in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, he is thus in ſtraits. There is an inward ſtrait in his outward enlargements; when, indeed, he is rich, he is, in conceit, poor. For as it is with hypocrites in reference to ſpirituals, they think they have a fulneſs of ſufficiency in them, when indeed they are in ſtraits, in poverty and want: as Chriſt tells the Church of *Laodicea* (*Revel.* 3.) *Thou ſaiſt I am rich,* *and full, and need nothing, and knoweſt not that thou art poor, and empty, and naked, and blind, and wanteſt all things.* Now I ſay, as in ſpirituals hypocrites oft conceit themſelves full, when they are really empty: ſo in temporals, a worldly man often conceits himſelf empty, when he is really full. He ſaith, I have nothing, I am a poor man, I have ſcarce enough to ſerve another year, when indeed he is rich, and hath gold and ſilver, lands and goods enough for many years. This ſtrait God brings wicked men into, in the midſt of their ſufficiency. This is a grievous curſe, that while a man is laying field to field, land to land, bag to bag, and heap to heap, yet withal his mind and ſpirit is troubled and ſtraitned, as if he had nothing, or were worſe then nothing. One of the Ancients deſcribes this ſtrait of a covetous man, with abundance of lively Eloquence; *Give me* (ſaith he) *a covetous man, daily eeking and ſtretching out the bounds of his habitation, as if he meant to live alone, and exclude all neighbourhood. Tell me now, doth this man (whom the whole earth cannot hold) ſeem to thee to be enlarged or ſtraitned? Surely how far ſoever he extends the line of his poſſeſſion (while that which he hath is not enough to him) he is locked up within the narrow compaſs of his own opinion.*

Conſtitue mihi avarū villarū quotidie terminos proferentem excludentem vicinos: utrū is tibi dilatari an coarctari videtur, quem tellus ipſa non capit? quantacunq; ſpatia domus ſuæ porrexerit, clauditur anguſtis opinionis ſuæ finibus, cui quod habet non eſt ſatis. Ambroſ. ſer. 6. in Pſal. 128.

Fourthly, Beſides this internal and metaphorical ſtrait, there is a plain literal ſtrait into which God caſts the wicked man, when he ſuppoſeth himſelf ſetled in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency. That's the time God takes to bring him to it, when he ſtands upon the higheſt pinacle of worldly proſperity, then down he goes. In the Propheſie of *Daniel* (Chap. 4. 4.) we read what the Golden head *Nebuchadnezzar* ſpeaks of his fulneſs. *I Nebuchadnezzar was at reſt in my houſe, and flouriſhing in my palace* (here was a fulneſs of ſufficiency) (*ver.* 29, 30.) *At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace, and ſaid, Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the houſe of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty?* Here he boaſts of the fulneſs of his ſufficiency; now (*verſ.* 31.) *While the word was in the Kings mouth, there fell a voyce from heaven, and ſaid, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is ſpoken, The Kingdom is departed from thee, &c.* Thus he was brought to ſtraits in the midſt of his fulneſs. Again, *Chap.* 6. While *Belteſhazzer* was in his height with his Nobles, in his chear and wine, he ſaw a hand-writing upon the wall, which made him tremble, and that very night *Babylon* was taken, and himſelf taken away in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency. So in the Propheſie of myſtical *Babylon*, in the fulneſs of her ſufficiency ſhe ſhall be in ſtraits, (*Rev.* 18. 7, 8.) She ſhall be glorifying her ſelf, the very moment before her ruine (they who glorifie themſelves, judge themſelves in a fulneſs of ſufficiency) *By how much ſhe glorified her ſelf, ſo much torment give her: for ſhe ſaith in her heart, I ſit as a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow: therefore ſhall her plagues come in one day.* When ſhe ſaith, *I ſit as a Queen,* not only free from plagues, but full of majeſty; then her plague comes. When the Apoſtle ſaid to the *Corinthians, Ye have reigned as Kings without us* (1 *Cor.* 4. 8.) he checks their conceit of their own ſpiritual ſufficiency, or ſufficiency in ſpirituals, without the contribution of his aid and help, as the former words of that verſe expound his meaning; *Now ye are full, now ye are rich.* And when *Babylon* ſaith, *I ſit as a Queen,* her meaning is, that ſhe hath a fulneſs of ſufficiency, both in ſpirituals and in temporals, and then, even then, her plague comes. (*Pſal.* 92. 7.) *When the wicked ſpring as graſs, and all the workers of iniquity flouriſh, it is that they may be deſtroyed for ever.* And (to give but one inſtance more, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 3.) *When they ſhall ſay, peace and ſafety,* (not only peace, but ſafety, all is quiet, and all will be quiet,) *then ſudden deſtruction ſhall come on them as travail on a woman with child, and they ſhall not eſcape.* The ſtraits of a woman in travail, and her ſorrows, how terrible are they? and as theſe are alwayes unavoidable to her that is with child, ſo they are often ſudden, when immediately before ſhe was eating or ſleeping, at eaſe and quiet: This is the wicked mans doom, he is not only puniſhed but ſurpriſed; *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, he ſhall be in ſtraits.*

Every hand of the wicked ſhall come upon him.] Then there will be many hands upon him, for there are many wicked; yet there is a difference about that word which we render *wicked*; It hath two other ſignifications beſides that in the Text.

First, It ſignifies *a labouring man,* and in the verb *to labour*; ſo the rendring is made in theſe termes; *Every hand of the labourer ſhall be upon him.* There are two wayes in which that may be underſtood. Firſt, ſay ſome, The hand of the labourer is, the hand of thoſe who labour to help him. The ſence which is intended by theſe Interpreters ſeems to be that of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 11. 21.) *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked ſhall not be unpuniſhed*; That is, though many with united forces labour to uphold and defend him, yet the curſe of God ſhall break through and conſume him; his helpers ſhall help in vain, and they who labour for him, ſhall labour in vain; for the decree is gone out againſt him, down he muſt; All the world cannot ſave him. In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, he ſhall be in ſtraits, *even while many are labouring to keep him out of them.* This is a truth, but I paſs it, as ſuppoſing it not intended here.

עמל *Significat* 1 *impium.* 2 *calamitoſum.* 3 *laborioſum.* *Omnis manus laborantis veniet ſuper eum. Etiamſi acceſſerit ei omnis manus laborãs. i. e. etiamſi omnes homines laborent in ejus commodum.* Rab. Abra. & Iſid. clar.

Again, The *hand of the labourer* may rather be the hand of ſuch poor as he ſet to work. *Every hand of the labourer ſhall be on him.* He found many poor labourers work, but he did not find them bread, he pinched them, and uſed them hardly, he oppreſſed and deceived them in their wages; as the Apoſtle *James* complains, (*Chap.* 5. 1, 4.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep, and howl, for the miſery that ſhall come upon you; behold the hire of thoſe labourers which have reaped down your harveſt cryes.* Theſe poor men who ſweat at his work, and were ſent home ſad with tears in their eyes, not with money in their purſes; every hand of theſe labourers ſhall be upon him: So Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *Each hand of the injured and grieved ſhall come upon him*; he injured and grieved the labourers, they laboured in body for him, and his cruel uſage was worſe then labour to their ſpirits. But as he took from the labourer, ſo the labourer ſhall take from him. *Every hand of the labourer upon him.*

Manus laborãtis, i. e. *pauperum & mercenariorum, quos impius ſua mercede & labore fraudavit.* Rab. Lev.

Secondly, The word ſignifies, a man any way diſtreſſed or brought to miſery. And then the meaning may be this; not only as before, that the hand of the poor who had laboured for him, but the hand of the rich whom he had impoveriſht, the hands of all thoſe whom he had unjuſtly vexed, ſhall come upon him and vex him.

Thirdly, The word as it ſignifies a labourer, and a man in miſery; ſo a wicked man, as we tranſlate it here, and frequently in other places of Scripture. The ſame word ſignifies labour, miſery, and wickedneſs; becauſe there is ſo much labour, and miſery, ſo much trouble and vexation in wickedneſs; every hand of the wicked ſhall come upon him; God will let out the ſpirits of evil doers to take vengeance on him for his evil deeds.

In vadent eum omnes iniqui parati ad injuriam inferendam. Vatabl.

Hence note, *God often makes one wicked man ſcourge another.*

As God uſually makes wicked men the ſcourge to his own people, ſo ſometimes to one another. One Lyon deſtroys another, and a ravenous wolf ſucks the bloud of a ravenous wolf. This point hath been formerly hinted, and therefore I inſiſt not upon it; but proceed to the next verſe, which inſiſts ſtill upon the reaſon of the wicked mans deſtruction.

Verſ. 23. **When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath on him.**

This verſe, as was ſaid before, is of the ſame ſence with the former, ſetting forth the ſpecial time of Gods wrath upon the wicked man.

When he is about to fill his belly.] The Vulgar renders the words thus; *O that he had filled his belly, that God might pour on him the fury of his wrath!* As if he had wiſhed for the filling up of the meaſure of the ſin of this man, that he might come to his puniſhment; becauſe till ſin hath finiſhed its work, the work of Judgment ſeldom begins. But the words ſound threatning, not wiſhing, and are rather a propheſie then a prayer; *When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall do this.*

Utinam impleatur venter ejus ut emittat in eum iram furoris ſui. Vulg.

Non votum eſt ſed prophetia. Merc.

A ſecond renders thus; *Let it be that he fill his belly, yet God will pour upon him the fury of his wrath.* As if he had ſaid, all his riches and fulneſs ſhall be no fence againſt the wrath of God. The wicked call riches, *their ſtrong Tower,* but the ſtrong Tower that riches can make, is no defence, it is but as a paper-wall againſt the wrath of God. His full belly makes but the fairer mark for the arrows of the Almighty.

Eſto ut impleat ventrem ſuum, Deus tamen emittet ei furorē iræ. Tygur.

We render it as reſpecting his action; *When he is about to fill his belly*, when the man thinks to take the fruit of his labours, he having been buſie in projecting, and acting, intendeth to ſit down in quiet, and feed upon what he had gotten; but when he is about to fill his belly, even in the very act, God ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath upon him.

God ſhall caſt,] Or ſend it out. The wrath of God is ſometimes (upon the matter) reſtrained, and kept in; as the Prophet ſpeaks of the compaſſions of God, what is become of them? *are they reſtrained?* (*Iſa.* 63.15.) The compaſſions of God uſed to come forth, but then they were reſtrained, or did not ſhew themſelves. God was pleaſed to deal with them as if he had laid aſide or put off all bowels of compaſſion. So the wrath of God is reſtrained, or held in ſometimes. Men ſin and wrath ſtirs not; God deals as if he had forgotten to be angry; But anon wrath lets flie. God ſhall caſt fury and wrath, or the fury of his wrath upon him; he ſhall caſt, and ſend it, as a dart, or an arrow out of a bow, or as a ſtone out of a ſling, or as a thunderbolt from the clouds: *God ſhall caſt it* upon him; the Text doth not expreſs who, but the ſcope clears who it is; He, that is, *God ſhall caſt*, either immediately, or mediately by ſome hand, commiſſion'd by him for that work of judgment. God ſhall unpriſon, and let looſe *the fury of wrath*, that is, his furious wrath, or hot fuming ſmoaking wrath upon him. Thus he ſpeaks to ſhew how extreamly the Lord is heated and heightened againſt wicked men. Thus Mr. *Broughton* renders; *God will ſend his hot anger upon him.* The anger of his noſtrils. A phraſe often uſed to ſignifie Anger, becauſe of the appearance and tokens of Anger there, *Exod.* 11.32. *Iſa.* 5.25. And in divers other places which the reader may conſult. This anger in the noſtrils is oppoſed to the anger in the heart; for when the Scripture ſpeaks of the anger of the noſtrils, it notes anger acted, and put forth in execution. The Lord hath treaſured wrath, he hath wrath in his heart when he ſeems to favour wicked men, and to ſhine upon them: wrath is not alwayes in his noſtrils breathed and poured upon them.

Dimittet iram, non cohibebit neq; continebit indignationem ſuam, ſed faciet liberam poteſtatam ſuæ juſtitiæ ſæviendi in impium.

Iram naſi. Heb.

God ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath upon him, or upon it.

It is taken both wayes. If we ſay upon it; The meaning is, upon his goods, or upon what he hath; *When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall pour his anger upon his Table, or upon his meat.* We take it perſonally, *upon him*, upon the wicked man himſelf, who when he thinks to receive the greateſt pleaſure, ſhall feel the greateſt ſmart, God ſhall pour fury upon him. The obſervation which this paſſage offers, is the ſame with what was obſerved in the cloſe of the former verſe, therefore I ſhall but name it.

בו *Utroq; modo poteſt accipi. 1. In ipſum impium. 2. In id quod paravit ad ventrem explendum. Maſculine tamen potius accipiendum videtur ex eo quod ſequitur.* Merc.

When wicked men are full of hopes to take their fill of worldly joy, then God fills them with worldly ſorrow.

This was ſaid before, *In the fulneſs of their ſufficiency they ſhall be in ſtraits.* So that when we ſee wicked men at the fulleſt, or in their fulneſs ſitting down to reſt, to eat, drink, and be merry with what they have gotten, we may look on it as the preſage of their approaching ruine. The Angel Intelligencer, who was ſent abroad to ſee what was done in the world (*Zech.* 1.11.) brought back this report, that he had gone to and fro, and Behold all the earth ſate ſtill, and was at reſt; All were about to fill their bellies. By *earth*, he means *Babylon*, or the *Babylonians*, the temporal power of that State, in oppoſition to the Church of God, they were all at reſt, and ſaid in their hearts, ſurely the world will never change, yet preſently after they felt the greateſt change, ruine fell on that Empire. This may comfort the people of God, when they ſee the real enemies of truth and righteouſneſs in higheſt ſecurity; for then the day of their calamity is near, even at the doors. There is a twofold fulneſs, which wicked men uſually have before their ruine. Firſt, a fulneſs of ſin. Secondly, a fulneſs of proſperity; they come to their fulneſs in both, and then comes their end. (*Gen.* 15.16.) *The ſins of the Amorites are not yet full*; therefore the *Amorites* cannot be deſtroyed yet; and the Church of God cannot be delivered yet, but when the ſin of the *Amorites* is full, God will deſtroy them, and deliver his Church. God leaves them as Chriſt ſpeaks to the Phariſees (*Mat.* 23.32.) to *fill up the meaſure of the iniquity of their fathers*, and then he will deal with them. Now as there is a fulneſs of iniquity, ſo there is alſo a fulneſs of worldly proſperity; when the wicked have had their portion, their reward in the world, when as beaſts they are fed and fatted with good things, or are about to fat themſelves, then they are for the ſlaughter. So the Lord concludes concerning thoſe oppreſſours (*Amos* 4.1.) *Hear this word ye Kine of Baſhan that are in the mountains of Samaria, which oppreſs the poor, which cruſh the needy, &c. The Lord God hath ſworn by his holineſs, that lo the day ſhall come on you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your poſterity with fiſh-hooks*; when the fulneſs of your worldly proſperity and fatneſs is come, then God ſhall take you away, or ſend leanneſs among your fat ones. And again (*Chap.* 6.1.) *Wo to them that are at eaſe in Zion, and truſt in the mountains of Samaria, which are named chief of the Nations, to whom the houſe of Iſrael came. Theſe* (*verſ.* 3.) *put far away the evil day, and cauſed the ſeat of violence to come near; They lay upon beds of Ivory, and did eat the Lambs out of the flock, &c.* While they were thus diſſolved into mirth and muſick, a woful voice ſounded in their ears (*verſ.* 7.) *Therefore now ſhall they go captive with the firſt that go captive, and the banquet of them that ſtretched themſelves ſhall be removed.* The very *now* of their freeſt joy, was the *now* of their captivation and ſorrow. *Zophar*, as if this were hardly believed at all, or could never be enough believed, preſſeth and repeateth it again, in the laſt word of the verſe in hand.

And ſhall rain it upon him while he is eating.

This is but an explication or repetition of the former words; *When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath, and rain it on him while he is eating.* There are two words to be conſidered in this clauſe.

Firſt, Raining.

Secondly, While he is eating.

He ſhall rain it.] Here is a terrible ſhower, a ſhower of fury, of wrath, God ſhall rain it. God is ſaid to rain wrath.

Firſt, To note the ſuddenneſs of it; rain (many times) comes very unexpectedly.

Secondly, To note the unavoidableneſs of it: there is no ſtopping of the rain, who can ſtop the bottles of the clouds but God himſelf? he can ſtop them up when he pleaſeth; but all the power on earth cannot. This rain is ſuch that there is no avoiding of it; we may get out of the ordinary rain into our houſes, or under covert; but the rain of Gods wrath ſoaks through every houſe, how ſtrongly ſoever leaded or covered; There is no ſhelter (but Chriſt) againſt the ſtorms of divine wrath. *He is a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt* (*Iſa.* 32.2.) but beſides him nothing is.

Ideo pluviendi verbo utitur, quia ut pluviæ vehementi è cœlo decidenti nemo poteſt reſiſtere, ita, &c. Merc.

Thirdly, He is ſaid to rain wrath, to ſhew the quantity of it, there ſhall be abundance, he will pour it down on you. Rain is oppoſed to dew: it ſhall not only come as the dew, or as a few heat drops, but as a ſoaking ſweeping rain. The Prophet exhorts (*Hoſ.* 10.12.) *Sow to your ſelves in righteouſneſs, reap in mercy, break up your fallow ground: for it is time to ſeek the Lord till he rain righteouſneſs*, that is, till he ſend Chriſt, who is made to us of God righteouſneſs in abundance; or till he pour out his Spirit upon you, who will cauſe you to bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs abundantly. As the raining of righteouſneſs, ſo the raining of wrath, notes abundant wrath. *It ſhall rain upon him*

While he is eating.] There is a threefold rendring of that. For the word which we tranſlate *eating*, ſignifies *fleſh*, either that which is eaten, or that which doth eat; living or eating fleſh moſt properly, though it alſo ſignifie dead fleſh, or that which is eaten. So Mr. *Broughton, He will rain upon him into his fleſh*; That is, upon his body; and the body by a ſynechdoche is put for the whole man, body, and ſoul. As if he had ſaid, God hath not a quarrel only with this mans eſtate and his goods, but with his fleſh, and bones, yea, and with his ſoul, too; he will vex him ſoul and body: So that as before he ſhewed what God would do upon his eſtate, that ſhould be conſumed; ſo now what upon his perſon; wrath falls upon his body, upon his very back; *He ſhall rain it upon him, into his fleſh.*

לחם *Caro pluet ſuper eum, etiam in carnem ſive corpus ejus.*

Secondly, The word ſignifies as the fleſh of a man, or living fleſh, ſo, any fleſh, dead fleſh prepared to be eaten, or any thing which is eatable. Hence the name of the place where Chriſt was born was called *Bethelem*, that is, *the houſe of bread.* And thus it is rendered here, he ſhall rain it upon him, even upon his bread, or upon his meat. As God, when his own people are eating, and their table ſpread, he not only rains a bleſſing upon them, but upon their meat alſo, that is, he commands their meat to ſtrengthen and refreſh them. So when the wicked man is about to fill his belly, the curſe falls not only upon him, but upon his meat; *God ſhall rain on him, even upon his meat.*

לחם *Cibus omnis eſca hinc* בית־לחם *Bethlechem dicta quaſi regio frumenti ferax, domus panis.* Merc.

Our tranſlation refers to the perſon in the act of eating, not to the meat which he eateth. The general meaning of either tranſlation meets in one; For though wrath may fall upon a mans perſon, and not upon his meat; he may thrive with what he eats, grow luſty and ſtrong, while he is under wrath; yet whenſoever wrath falls upon the wicked mans meat, it is in order to his perſon or himſelf. *He ſhall rain it upon him while he is eating.* How exact is the wrath of God? For at the inſtant when a man is eating, he of all other times would lay aſide fear, be chearful, and rejoyce; Then he unbends himſelf, though he have been buſie all the day; If any come to him he ſaith, I pray let me alone at meal, that I may be merry with my wife and children, with my friends or neighbours; when I am at my meat, let me be quiet. But when he is eating, wrath is dropping; God picks out that time on purpoſe to put a ſting into his puniſhment, and to make his miſery more remarkable. Such (*Mat.* 24. 38.) is the deſcription of the judgment that came upon the world, it rained upon them indeed, when they were eating; *As it was in the dayes before the flood, they did eat and drink, and were marrying, and giving in marriage, till the day that Noah went into the Ark.* Chriſt expreſſeth thoſe things eſpecially wherein men take moſt worldly contentment, *eating, and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage.* To theſe that age let themſelves looſe, or ſet themſelves upon; theſe are not ſinful in themſelves, but they uſed them ſinfully, that is, ſenſually, to ſatisfie their luſts, and pleaſe their ſenſes; therefore the Spirit of God fixeth the judgment upon that ſeaſon, they were eating, and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, and then God rained upon them the fury of his wrath. The children of *Iſrael* luſted after fleſh (*Pſal.* 78.) and the Lord gave it them; *He rained fleſh upon them as duſt, and feathered fowls like as the ſand of the Sea* (*verſ.* 27.) But he rained wrath upon them with it (*verſ.* 30, 31.) *While their meat was yet in their mouths,* (while they were eating) *the wrath of God came upon them, and ſlew the fatteſt of them, and ſmote down the choſen men of Iſrael.*

All theſe inſtances concenter fully in *Zophars* Text; That *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency,* and while he is taking his ſweeteſt content in his ſufficiency, God rains down wrath.

Pluet ſuper eum bellum ſuum. Vulg. מלחמה *Bellum à* לחם *veſci, edere, quia in bello homines ſe invicem cædendo devorant & abſumunt.*

Further, The old Latine Tranſlator gives the words thus; *And he ſhall rain his war upon him.* This difference ariſeth from the copiouſneſs of the Original word, *Lechem,* which as it ſignifies eating, or any thing eaten; ſo alſo war and battel. The reaſon is, becauſe the ſword is a devourer, and in war men eat up one another; Nation eats up Nation; as men eat other fleſh, ſo war is an eater, and devourer of men: therefore the ſame word may well ſignifie, to eat, and to make war. And this Tranſlation, though the Grammatical form of the Hebrew is wreſted by it (and therefore I lay it by) yet renders the ſcope of the Text fully, and anſwers that of the eleventh *Pſalm* (*verſ.* 5, 6.) *The Lord tryeth the righteous, but him that loveth violence his ſoul hateth; upon the wicked he ſhall rain ſnares, fire, and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt, this ſhall be the portion of their cup.* Which (I conceive) may (in purſuance of *Zophars* ſimilitude) be thus illuſtrated, as if he had ſaid, when he is drinking, when he hath a cup of ſweet wine in his hand, or ſome delicious liquor at his lips, God ſhall rain fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt into or upon his cup; the wrath of God ſhall fill his cup, and ſo be (as it were) the portion of it. While the wicked man is drinking, wrath is the portion of his diſh. *God ſhall rain it on him while he is eating.*

Zophar having thus far carried on this point, ſhewing what God will do with the wicked man in all his enjoyments, ſhews yet other wayes and inſtruments, which God prepareth and armeth to vex and ruine him.

VERS. 24, 25, 26.

He ſhall flee from the iron-weapon, and the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through.

It is drawn, and cometh out of the body, yea the glittering ſword cometh out of his gall: terrors are upon him.

All darkneſs ſhall be hid in his ſecret places: a fire not blown ſhall conſume him: it ſhall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle.

ZOphar having ſaid (*verſ.* 22, 23.) That God pours the fury of his wrath upon the wicked man when he thinks himſelf ſafeſt and furtheſt removed from it, *even in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency, and when he is about to fill his belly* (then God deals with him, and rains upon him while he is eating, mingling his blood with his bread, his tears with his wine) He proceeds in this context to ſhew,

First, The inſtruments.
Secondly, The effects of that wrath or judgment.

The inſtruments are four,

First, The iron-weapon.
Secondly, The bow of ſteel.
Thirdly, The glittering ſword.
Fourthly, A fire not blown.

Here are ſtore of arms to make war upon the wicked man. We have here alſo the effects of this dreadful war, and theſe are of two ſorts.

First, Upon himſelf.
Secondly, Upon others.

The effects which appear upon himſelf, are of two ſorts.

First, Outward.
Secondly, Inward.

The outward effects, Firſt, he ſhall be ſtricken through with them. Secondly, he ſhall be conſumed with them. The inward effects are fears or terrours; which are teſtified by that conſequent, his flight, *He runs from the iron-weapon, and the bow of ſteel.*

The effect which is upon others is laid down in the cloſe of *verſ.* 26. *It ſhall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle:* not only ſhall wrath overtake him, but it ſhall overtake thoſe that appertain to him. Thus of the analyſis or parts conſiderable in this context.

Verſ. 24. **He ſhall flee from the iron-weapon.**

He ſhall flee.] Flight is the pace of a coward. So the word is uſed all the Scripture over; *The wicked man hath no heart for good, and he hath as little againſt evil.* His ſpirit is gone, and at the approach of danger his body is going or rather running; his ſpirit is fallen from his heart into his heels; and he defends himſelf by his feet, not by his hands: when the iron-weapon comes, the righteous will rather die, then run, if duty bids them ſtay: but the wicked

Shall flee from the iron-weapon.

The word which we tranſlate *iron-weapon*, ſignifies all ſorts of hand weapons, or weapons with which we ſtrike at hand, ſuch as are the ſword, and ſpear. The word properly ſignifies to ſalute, or kiſs: And the reaſon why theſe kind of arms and weapons, are expreſt by that word, is, becauſe a man fights with them face to face: and comes near to an adverſary, even as if he came to ſalute or to kiſs him. There are weapons with which we may fight at a diſtance, and never come near our enemy.

נשק *Denotat omne genus armorũ quæ manu agitantur; radix ſignificat oſculari eò quod hujuſmodi armis non niſi cominus à à parte anteriori vultûs cui oſcula intigi ſolent, feriunt.* Bold.

He ſhall flee from the iron-weapon.] That is, from all ſorts of hand-weapons, with which we oppoſe and ſmite our aſſailants, or defend our ſelves.

Some interpret this iron-weapon, not literally, but tropically for the plague, or peſtilence, or ſome deadly diſeaſe, which according to the language of Scripture, is compared to that iron-weapon the ſword, or to an arrow (1 *Chron.* 21. 27.) when the Angel was ſent to deſtroy the People of *Jeruſalem* with the peſtilence, after *David* had numbred them, the Text ſaith, *The Lord commanded the Angel, and he put up his ſword again into the ſheath thereof.* The peſtilence is the ſword, and the ſtroak of it is like ſmiting with the ſword. In the ninety firſt *Pſalm*, that other inſtrument of death, the Arrow, ſignifies the plague (*verſ.* 5.) *Thou ſhalt not be afraid of the terrour by night, nor of the arrow that flieth by day*; That is, of the peſtilence. And even in prophane Authors, terrible diſeaſes, ſuch as the peſtilence, are called the weapons of their Gods, with which they contended, and made roar with mortal men. This metaphorical ſword, and arrow of the peſtilence, is a weapon from which many flee as faſt as from the ſword of the fierceſt enemy. Yet I conceive, that is not intended in this Text; the iron weapon here, including all manner of outward inſtruments of divine wrath which wound the wicked man. *He ſhall flee from the iron weapon.* We tranſlate it as a direct aſſertion; *He ſhall flee.* Some render it as a ſuppoſition; *If he flee from the iron weapon*; Or as Mr. *Broughton*, *When he flees from the iron armour.* And then the other part of the verſe joyns with it thus; *When he fleeth, or if he flee from the iron weapon, the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through.* And though there be not that particle of ſuppoſition expreſt in the Hebrew, yet it is uſually underſtood in Texts of this ſignificancy. *Mal.* 1.4. *They ſhall build, and I will pull down*; That is, *if they build, I will pull down*; or *whenſoever they begin to build, I will begin to pull down.* So here, *He ſhall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through*; That is, if he flee from the iron-weapon, or whenſoever he thinks to make an eſcape by flying from the iron-weapon, then the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through. According to this reading the whole verſe is a proverbial ſpeech, implying thus much; *That while a wicked man flies, or ſeeks to avoid one evil, he ſhall fall into another*; When he flees from the iron-weapon, the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through. Like that of the Latines; *He fell upon the rock, while he thought to eſcape the gulph.*

Βέλη ἑκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος. Homer.

Fugientū ab armis ferreis, tranſverberat eū arcus chalibeus. Merl.

Ubi ſe putarit leviora pericula effugiſſe, in graviora incidet. Merc.

Incidit in Scyllā cupiens vitare charybden.

The bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through.

The bow, that is, the arrow of the bow, or the bullet put into the bow: for from the bow of ſteel ſometimes arrows, ſometimes bullets are diſcharged; the arrow, or the bullet with which this ſteel bow is charged ſhall ſtrike him through. The word rendered *to ſtrike through*, ſignifies exciſion or cutting off; and hence the Hebrew phraſe, *A Son of Exciſion*, anſwering that of the Greek, which we expreſs, *a ſon of perdition*, that is, a man devoted to total deſtruction. The bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through, cut him off, or, quite deſtroy him. *A bow of ſteel* is the ſtrongeſt bow. *David*, to ſhew the extraordinary ſtrength which he expected to receive from God, ſaith, *A bow of ſteel ſhall be broken by mine arms* (*Pſal.* 18.34.) To draw a bow of ſteel, ſhews ſtrength, and to break it ſhews more ſtrength. A bow of ſteel gives a deadly blow, and ſmites home.

חלף *excindo unde* בני חלוף *filii exciſionis.* Druſ.

Again, This word, which we tranſlate, *to ſtrike through*, others render, *to change. The bow of ſteel ſhall change him*, that is, kill him; death is our great change. Further, The word is rendred *to paſs by.* The arrow often miſſeth the mark, ſometime it glides by the mark, or doth but graze upon it. Taking this Tranſlation, the ſence of the whole verſe riſeth thus; *Suppoſe the wicked man flee, and make his eſcape from the iron weapon*; *ſuppoſe alſo that the ſteel bow be diſcharged at him, and the arrow paſs by, and not hit him*; *ſuppoſe, that he eſcape the firſt weapon, and the ſecond, yet* (ſaith he in the next words) *The glittering ſword ſhall come out of his gall*; *another weapon is ready to do it.*

חלף *Pertranſire; pertranſibit eum arcus, q.d. eia, ita ſit quod impius fugerit ab armis ferreis, ſed & pertranſierit eum arcus, numquid ideo immunis erit.* Bold.

According to this expoſition, theſe two verſes are connected as they connect the two parts of this verſe, who give it (as was lately touched) thus, *If he flee from the iron-weapon, the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through.* Now the ſuppoſition is carried one ſtep further. *If he flee from the iron-weapon, and the bow of ſteel miſs him, or glance away, yet the glittering ſword ſhall come out of his gall.* But rather take it according to our reading: *He ſhall flee from the iron-weapon, and the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through.* Here are many terms, and variety of warlike inſtruments; The Text being (as it were) the Inventory of a little Magazine, or Armory of weapons.

Whence Obſerve, *God hath inſtruments of all ſorts at command, with which to puniſh wicked men.*

We have here the Iron-weapon, and the bow, here is ſword, and fire. God cannot want means to take revenge upon thoſe who rebel againſt him. As the Lord hath various inſtruments of mercy for the protection and defence of his cauſe and people. (*Cant.* 4.) *In the Tower of David there hang a thouſand ſhields*, that is, ſhields enow. God hath many and manifold inſtruments of defence to protect and ſafegard thoſe that truſt upon him; he hath a thouſand ſhields for them. Now as the Lord hath a thouſand ſhields, or defenſive weapons, for the protection of his own people, ſo he hath a thouſand bows and arrows, and ſpears, and ſwords, to wound and deſtroy his or their enemies. How can God want weapons, who can make any thing a weapon? For as the Baptiſt told the *Jews* who gloried in their fleſhly deſcent from *Abraham*, as if God were tied to *Abraham's* line, or as if they being out of the way, God knew not how to be ſupplied with a people; *I tell you* (ſaith *John*) *God is able of theſe ſtones to raiſe up Children to Abraham*, (*Mat.* 3.9.) As if he had ſaid; Think not that God will be ſtraitned for a people, if he remove you, for he can raiſe another people to himſelf out of thoſe who are as unlikely, and in humane reaſon as much indiſpoſed to ſhew forth his praiſe as theſe ſtones are. Even thus, if all weapons and viſible means for the deſtruction of wicked men were removed, God can make any thing a weapon, he can make an iron weapon out of a ſtraw, or the graſs of the field. As God can eaſily ſupply himſelf with inſtruments to ſerve his providence for the good of thoſe who are veſſels of mercy and heirs of ſalvation, ſo he can quickly have a ſupply of inſtruments to annoy thoſe who are veſſels of wrath and children of perdition.

Secondly, We may take notice how theſe weapons are deſcribed in their Effectualneſs, *Striking through, &c.*

Whence Obſerve, *The weapons and means which God uſeth for the puniſhing of wicked men, ſhall be effectual, they ſhall do their work.*

What ever weapon God ſends on his errand ſhall do it to purpoſe, the bow of ſteel ſtrikes through. It doth not give a light wound, and ſkare the fleſh a little, but goes to the heart, and cleaves the bones. God hath a mighty arm, and according to the might of his own arm, is the might of his inſtruments. As they act not by their own will, ſo not by their own might. What the Apoſtle ſpeaks about the weapons of our ſpiritual warfare (2 *Cor.* 10.4.) *They are not carnal, but mighty through God.* What to do? *To pull down ſtrong holds*, to lay all level, to ſubdue all ſinful powers, or the power of ſin within us. What, I ſay, is ſpoken of thoſe ſpiritual weapons, is true alſo of theſe corporal and viſible weapons, the ſword, the bow, and the arrow; when God ſends them forth to execute his will, and fulfil his counſels, *they are not carnal, but mighty through God.* Though they are weapons of fleſh, yet they are not, like fleſh, frail and powerleſs; though they are weapons of fleſh, as to matter and form, yet they will declare themſelves weapons of ſpirit, as to the effect and ſucceſs; they ſhall prevail over the ſtrongeſt enemies, and ſtrike through the thickeſt of their defences. The Lord can weaken the ſtrongeſt weapons of the enemies, and ſo blunt their ſharpeſt edge, that they ſhall do no hurt, but be as a wooden dagger in the hand of him that wields them, of how well tempered metal ſoever they are made, and how well ſoever their edge be ſet. This is it which the Prophet aſſures the Church of in the name of the Lord (*Iſa.* 54. 17.) For having made a promiſe of ſalvation and ſafety to the Church, it might be objected, how can we be ſafe, who have ſo many enemies, ſo many weapons formed againſt us? how can we be ſafe when ſo many Smiths are at work, making ſwords, and forging inſtruments of death againſt us? The Lord anſwers (*verſ.* 17.) *No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper.* I grant there are many forming weapons, whetting and preparing their ſwords againſt thee; but *no weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper.* Now (I ſay) as the Lord gives check to all weapons that are formed againſt his people, and ſaith, they ſhall not proſper, they ſhall not hurt the leaſt of my children, the meaneſt of my ſervants. So, if himſelf form a weapon againſt the higheſt and mightieſt of his enemies, it ſhall proſper to their deſtruction; the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike them through, and the fire ſhall conſume them to the very ſtumps. That is a ſecond note from the effectualneſs of theſe weapons here deſcribed.

Thirdly, When God is about to rain down judgment and war upon the wicked man; what doth he? The Text ſaith, *He flees from the iron weapon*; that is, he endeavours to flee from it, he doth what he can to eſcape.

> Obſerve this from it, *The ſtudy of a wicked man, when trouble is upon him, is not how to improve, or make good uſe of it, how to get his heart humbled under it, and his life bettered by it; but only how to get it off, or how to get away from it.*

Here is not a word in the Text of humbling himſelf when he ſees the iron weapon, here is no mention of ſuing to God, and ſeeking to make his peace with him, here is no acknowledgment of his ſin, that he deſerved to be wounded and deſtroyed; but all the matter is how to eſcape, how to get out of the reach of danger. He never labours to make his peace with God, but only ſtrives how to avoid the war of God. There is another frame of ſpirit in believers, they do not make it their work to run from the judgments of God, but to make a right uſe and improvement of them; when the ſword comes, or the arrow comes, they enquire how to give God the glory of his ſmitings and woundings, they flee from thoſe weapons only by fleeing to God. Whereas wicked men flee theſe weapons, by fleeing from God; godly men flee them, by flying to God, that is, they make God their refuge, their hiding-place; If they hide themſelves from the iron weapon, they hide themſelves in God; If they run from the iron weapon, they run to God. God is a godly mans Tower, and Fort, and hiding place; he flies unto, and into God, that he may be ſafe.

Fourthly, As this ſhifting and fleeing, when the iron weapon comes, notes the impenitency of wicked men, who never think of turning to but only of running from God: ſo it notes alſo the cowardiſe and baſeneſs of their ſpirits.

> Hence Obſerve, *A wicked man hath no courage in an evil day.*

When troubles riſe, his ſpirit falls; though he may make a buſtle, yet he hath no heart, no true fortitude; he either flees, or is meditating a flight. And 'tis no wonder that a wicked man ſhould flee being purſued; when *Solomon* tells us that he fleeth, when none purſues him. It is no marvel if he flee at the ſight of the iron weapon, when he flees meerly from a fanſied weapon. How can he but flee from the ſtroak of the ſword; when another Text tells us, that he flees at the very ſhaking of a leaf. *They who are fearleſs of doing moral evil, are moſt fearful at the appearance of pœnal evils.*

Fifthly, He flees, but what doth he get by it? *When he fleeth from the iron weapon, the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through.* What gets he now by his flight?

> The point is this, *The ſhifts and evaſions of a wicked man ſhall not profit him.*

That is, when he fleeth, he ſhall not flee, or he ſhall not eſcape. If he get out of the ſtroak of one weapon, another weapon ſhall ſtrike him; or according to the ſecond interpretation of the words, ſuppoſe he flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of ſteel miſs him alſo, yet the ſword ſhall come out of his gall. So that by all his evaſions, he ſhall not evade the face of danger. As a carnal heart hath a thouſand deviſes and ſhifts to excuſe his ſin; but his deviſes and excuſes do but faſten ſin more upon him: his conſcience gets no eaſe at all by his wit; yea his conſcience is more wounded by the excuſes and pleas that he makes for his ſin. Such alſo is the fruit of all the evaſions and deviſes of a wicked man to get out of danger; they bring him and danger nearer together, or they entangle him in worſer dangers. We have a clear Text for that, (*Iſa.* 24. 18.) *And it ſhall come to paſs, that he who fleeth from the noiſe of fear ſhall fall into the pit, and he that cometh up out of the midſt of the pit ſhall be taken in a ſnare.* He is remedileſs after all his remedies. There was but *a noiſe of fear*, when he fled, danger was at a diſtance; but while he is fleeing from the noiſe of fear, he falls into the mouth of danger, a pit: And being in the pit, he ſtrives and ſtruggles to get out, hoping yet to find his deſired ſafety and enlargement, but then he falls into a ſnare, a worſe evil then the pit: He that falls into a pit, is at liberty to get out; but he that is in a ſnare is bound faſt, he can get no further, ſtill his caſe is worſe and worſe. We find the ſame ſucceſs in the Propheſie of *Amos*, (9. 1.) *I ſaw the Lord ſtanding upon the Altar, and he ſaid, ſmite the lintel of the door that the poſts may ſhake, and cut them in the head, all of them, and I will ſlay the laſt of them with the ſword.* As if he had ſaid, there ſhall be an utter ſlaughter; for the firſt two or three men may be ſlain, yea hundreds may be ſlain, yet the laſt may eſcape: but when he ſaith, *The laſt ſhall be ſlain*, the meaning is, I will ſlay them all, or all of them ſhall be ſlain. But will theſe men ſtand till the ſword come to them, will the laſt man ſtand when he ſees the ſword deſtroy thoſe ſo faſt that were before him? No, it may be he will flee, yet ſaith God, *I will ſlay the laſt*: for, *He that fleeth ſhall not flee away*, that is, he ſhall not deliver himſelf, nor eſcape by flight. The ſame Prophet ſpake as much before (*Amos* 5. 18, 19.) *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkneſs, and not light; As if a man did flee from a Lyon, and a Bear met him; or went into the houſe, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a Serpent bit him.* It will not be either unprofitable or beſides the point, to open this Text a little. *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord.* Why doth the Prophet thunder out wo againſt them that deſired the day of the Lord? Was there ſin in that deſire? was it a fault to wiſh for the day of the Lord? The day of the Lord, of which he there ſpeaks, is a day of judgment, or a day of tryal; why ſhould the Prophet denounce a wo againſt thoſe who deſire that day? It is a part of the character of the Saints in the New Teſtament, *To love the appearing of Chriſt* (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) Saints long for the day of the Lord, they pray for it, and O that the day of the Lord would come; why then doth *Amos* ſay, *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord?*

I anſwer, The Prophet may be underſtood,

Firſt, Of thoſe, who in a kind of prophane boldneſs deſired the day of the Lord, as ſome will do, calling God to judge them, or wiſhing that God would come to judgment; not that they have ground of confidence in the day of judgment, but only to clear themſelves in the judgment, and from the cenſure of men. The Prophet might well ſay, Wo to you who thus deſire the day of the Lord; you think you are hardly dealt with now by man; But it will be worſe with you in the day of the Lord.

Secondly, As there are ſome who in a bold prophaneneſs of ſpirit ſeem to deſire the day of the Lord, ſo there are others who call for and invite it impudently in ſcorn and mockery. Such are deſcribed by the Prophet (*Iſaiah* 5. 19.) *Wo to them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with a Cart-rope. That ſay, let him make ſpeed, and haſten his work that we may ſee it, and let the counſel of the holy One of Iſrael draw nigh and come, that we may know it.* They who draw iniquity with cords of vanity; that is, who make haſt to ſin, ſaid, let him make ſpeed, and haſten. What ſhould he haſten? The day of judgment, or thoſe judgments which the Prophet had often threatned. As if they had ſaid to the Prophet, You have often told us of the day of the Lord, and that he would reckon with us ſhortly; let him make ſpeed, and haſten the work that we may ſee it, and let the counſel of the holy one of *Iſrael* draw nigh; you have long ſpoken of it, as near, even as at the doors, but as we feel, ſo we believe no ſuch thing. The Apoſtle *Peter* Propheſieth of ſuch (2 *Pet.* 3. 3.) *In the laſt dayes there ſhall come ſcoffers, walking after their own luſts, and ſaying, Where is the promiſe of his coming? for ſince the fathers fell aſleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation. Where is the promiſe of his coming?* Pray, let us ſee the performance of it. Wo to you that ſcoffingly deſire the day of the Lord, you will find it no jeſting matter when once it comes, it will be a ſad a black day to you, who now make your ſelves merry with it.

Thirdly, Thus, *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord*, being conceited of your own innocency, as ſure (in your own ſence) that God will acquit and pronounce you innocent. For the Prophet ſpeaks of thoſe who had fallen under and were vext with the reproofs of the word; theſe deſired the day of the Lord, ſuppoſing he would deal more gently with them then thoſe Prophets had done, he would not be ſo ſevere, or not judge them ſo bad as the Prophets reported them to be; ſaith he, *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord*, becauſe you think his Prophets and Miniſters handle you too roughly; you know not what you ſay; if our day be ſo terrible, how terrible will the day of the Lord be? It will be as if a man ſhould flee from a Lyon, and a Bear ſhould meet him: you think we are Lyons, if you flee from our day, the day of the Lord will be as a Bear, it will tear you worſe. When (in this caſe) you appeal from us to the tribunal of God; it is as if a man leaning on a wall, and a Serpent ſhould bite him; ſuch you will find the day of the Lord when 'tis too late. What's our day to the day of the Lord? The day of the Word is a terrible day of judgment upon the conſciences of wicked men. But the day of the Lords Judgment is far more terrible. Some have had a hope that the hell of the damned beyond this life, is not ſo bad as the hell of conſcience, when a man is condemned of himſelf in this life, and have therefore even wiſht for that hell, that they might be eaſed of this; yea ſome have ventured upon hell, thruſting themſelves by a violent hand out of this world, that they might eſcape the hell of a perplexed conſcience, which they felt in it. Whereas alas, it is but fleeing from a Lyon to meet with a Bear, or going from the heat of the Sun into the heat of the fire. Thus the Text in *Amos* (taken in either of theſe ſences) is a proof of the point in hand, that wicked men who would avoid this or that judgment of God in this life, do but run themſelves upon ſome worſer judgment here; even as they who would avoid the judgment of God in his word ſhall find a ſorer judgment at the end of the world. *Moſes* uſeth that phraſe *of fleeing ſeven wayes*, twice in one Chapter (*Deut.* 28.7.25.) At the ſeventh verſe, it is threatned againſt the enemies of the people of *Iſrael*, in caſe they did obey; and in the twenty fifth verſe 'tis threatned againſt *Iſrael*, in caſe they diſobeyed, that *they ſhould flee ſeven wayes*. The meaning is not that they ſhould have ſeven or many wayes of eſcaping, or that in any of theſe wayes they ſhould be ſafe; for the intent of *Moſes* is to ſhew that they ſhould no way or no where be ſafe: For they ſhould be aſſaulted and compaſſed about with ſo many dangers, that they ſhould flee ſeven wayes, that is, all manner of wayes, endeavouring to eſcape, but they ſhould eſcape in never a one of them: though they fled ſeven or ſeven hundred wayes, yet God would ſend a ſword, as many wayes after them, or if they miſt and eſcaped one ſort of evil, another ſhould be ready at their ſide; As *Zophar* hath it, *He ſhall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him thorow.*

Verſ. 25. **It is drawn, and cometh out of his body.**

גוה & גו proprie corpus metaphoricè vagina. Egrediens de vagina ſua. Vulg.

What is drawn? We may refer it to the arrow of the bow before ſpoken of; *The bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through; it is drawn, and cometh out of his body.* Out of what body? Some by the Original word which we tranſlate *body*, underſtand the *Quiver* in which the arrow was; for the quiver is to the arrow as the body is to the ſoul, *The ſheath of it.* Now ſaith he, *it is drawn, and cometh out of his body*; that is, it is pulled out of his quiver, and put into the bow ready to be ſhot: Thus Mr. *Broughton, The Arrow ſhall be drawn and come out of the quiver:* Others conceive, that by *body*, we are to underſtand the body of him that ſhoots, becauſe the Archer hangs his quiver by his ſide, and when he pulls out an arrow, it is as if he pulled it out of his body.

Exiit è corpore i. e. *evagina, quæ eſt velut corpus gladio intra quam continetur, vel ſi ad ſagittam referas eſt pharetra.* Merc.

Laſtly, Take it properly, *it is drawn, and cometh out of his body*, that is, out of the body of the wicked man, againſt whom it was ſhot, it ſtrikes him through, and cometh out of his body beyond him. And ſo it is a circumlocution to expreſs a deep and deadly wound. *It is* (that is, the bow is) *drawn, and cometh out of his body*; That is, the ſhot hits the man and comes out of his body. So the next clauſe ſuits it.

Yea the glittering ſword cometh out of his gall.] As if he had ſaid; As ſoon as he is ſtricken through with the arrow, he ſhall be run through with the ſword too. The word which we tranſlate *glittering ſword*, properly ſignifies *lightning*, and in that language the *blade of a ſword*, becauſe when a man brandiſheth a well furbiſhed ſword, it glitters and flaſhes in the eye like lightning. So the Prophet *Ezekiel* deſcribes the ſword, (*Chap.* 21.9, 10.) *A ſword, a ſword is ſharpned, and alſo furbiſhed; It is ſharpned to make a ſore ſlaughter, it is furbiſhed that it may glitter.* And as it ſignifies *a ſword*, ſo alſo (upon the ſame ground) *the head of an arrow*; For if the head of an arrow, of ſteel, or braſs, be made very bright, it glitters in the air like lightning, as a ſword doth; And we read in Scripture of making arrows bright as well as ſwords; as the ſame Prophet ſpeaks in the ſame Chapter (*verſ.* 21.) *The King of Babylon ſtood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two wayes to uſe divination: he made his arrows bright.* And (*Zech.* 9.14.) *His arrows ſhall go forth as lightning.* Thus we may render it here, keeping ſtill to the alluſion *of lightning*; *The bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through, it is drawn, and cometh out of the body, and glittering it comes out of his gall.* So, Mr. *Broughton*; *The arrows ſhall be drawn and come out of the quiver, the head ſhall be in his gall*; That is, the head of the arrow. But whether we expound the word (*Barak*) of the ſword or of the arrow-head, it makes no difference as to *Zophars* ſcope, which is only to ſhew that the wicked man ſhall certainly receive a deadly blow.

Acies vel lamina gladii appellatur Hebraicè ברק *fulgur, quod fulgoris more ſplendeat.*

There is yet another tranſlation, which draws up the Text into the form of a ſimilitude, taking the word (*Barak*) in its proper ſenſe, for *lightning*, thus; *The bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through, it is drawn, and cometh out of his body, and ſhall paſs through his gall like lightning*; As if he had ſaid, it ſhall paſs ſpeedily and ſwiftly; an arrow or a bullet from a ſtrong bow paſſeth like lightning. What makes ſuch ſpeed as lightning? Indeed the motion of an arrow is ſlow and ſluggiſh in compariſon of lightning; and therefore in Scripture the coming of a thing or perſon like lightning, notes the moſt ſudden coming. When Chriſt would ſet forth the quickneſs and unexpectedneſs of his appearance, he ſaith, *As the lightning cometh out of the Eaſt and ſhineth even unto the Weſt, ſo ſhall the coming of the Son of man be* (Mat. 24.27. And thus to ſay, a ſword or an arrow ſhall paſs through the gall as lightning, carrieth this ſenſe, it ſhall paſs ſuddenly. The vulgar tranſlation keeping it to that literal conſtruction of the Hebrew, uſeth the participle, and *lightning in the bitterneſs of it*; that is, in the bitterneſs of that death which follows the wound inflicted: Death is bitter, and thoſe things which death in them, may well be ſaid to have bitterneſs in them. Theſe words being thus an enforcement of the ſame thing more lively to deſcribe the unavoidable deſtruction and ſudden death of this wicked man, by ſome killing weapon, ſword or bow, or any of like uſe and nature, I will only give this Note from it;

Et fulgurans in amaritudine ſua. Vulg.

The wound which God gives his enemies, is an incurable wound.

He that is ſtricken through the gall, is paſt cure; we had that word (*Job* 16.) Where complaining, he ſaith; *He hath poured my gall upon the ground*; that is, he hath given me *a deadly wound.* When a beaſt is kill'd for food, the gall is poured out, leſt that ſhould imbitter the parts about it: And if once the gall be wounded through, there's no remedy againſt death. The Lord can ſend a Judgment, which ſhall be like an arrow paſſing through the gall, which all the Phyſitians in the world cannot heal. When the people of *Iſrael* ſaw their wound, they went to this King, and to that King, to the *Aſſyrian*, and to King *Jareb*, yet they could not heal them, nor cure their wound, (*Hoſ.* 5.13.) They were as a people ſtricken through the gall. God can give wounds which no Balſom of mans deviſing or compounding can cure.

Terrors are upon him.] Theſe words ſhew the inward effects of the judgments of God upon a wicked man; *Terrors are upon him.* The word is *Emims*, which in Scripture is ſometimes uſed, to note a ſort of terrible people (*Deut.* 2.10.) *The Emims dwelt there in times paſt, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims.* The *Emims* were a great and tall people, a race of Giants; and they had their name *Emams* from a root ſignifying *fear*, becauſe their great ſtature, and vaſt limbs raiſed the paſſion of fear in their beholders. *Emims are terrible ones.* So, ſome render it here, *The Emims ſhall fall upon him*, that is, men of fierce and cruel ſpirits, men of mighty power, and implacable malice.

But we take the word properly, as noting inward terrour: fear, and anguiſh take hold of a man, worſe then any *Emims* or Giants in the world; A man were better to have all the ſons of *Anak* take hold of him then the fear of which the Text ſpeaks. This argueth the compleatneſs of a wicked mans miſery, he ſhall not only feel the iron weapon, and the bow of ſteel, and the glittering ſword, outward terrours, but he ſhall be fill'd with inward terrours. His ſoul is wounded worſe then his body. Some interpret it near this ſenſe, of evil ſpirits and furies that vex the minds of wicked men, as if legions of theſe ſhould be alwayes about him. The vulgar Latine ſaith, *The horrible ones ſhall fall upon him.* This point hath been ſpoken to at large (*Chap.* 15.24. & *Chap.* 18.21.) and therefore I ſhall not proſecute it in this place, but refer the Reader to thoſe former diſcuſſions of it. Only take this Obſervation:

Venient ſuper eum horribiles. Vul.

God can wound within, as well as without.

He hath weapons to ſmite the ſpirit, as well as the fleſh; when the arrow and the ſword are in the fleſh, fears and terrours ſhall beſet the ſpirit of his enemies. Man can both ſpeak and act terrible, but God only can ſend out Terrours. *Terrours are upon him.*

Verſ. 26. **All darkneſs ſhall be hid in his ſecret place.**

All darkneſs] Imports darkneſs of all ſorts, and of all degrees. All darkneſs, is whatſoever can be called darkneſs. Or all darkneſs, is perfect darkneſs, pure darkneſs, darkneſs without the leaſt mixture of any light; Darkneſs which hath nothing but darkneſs in it. God is all light; Therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *He is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.* There is not the leaſt tincture of darkneſs in him. The portion of this man is all darkneſs, and no light, no comfort at all, wholly darkneſs. So the word (*Col*) is uſed (*Eccleſ.* 12.13.) *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is* (*Col ha Adam*) *All man*, that is, the whole duty of man. Thus here, *All darkneſs ſhall be upon him.* We may diſtinguiſh this darkneſs, into outward, or inward darkneſs; ſpiritual or corporal darkneſs. I have upon other paſſages ſpoken of both: therefore I forbear here. *All darkneſs ſhall*

Be hid in his ſecret place.] Trouble ſhall lie cloſe like a thief to ſurpriſe him; As men hide themſelves in darkneſs, ſo this mans darkneſs ſhall be hid. Both words ſignifie to hide, or to lay a thing up. We may interpret it firſt of trouble upon the ſpirit of the wicked man. The mind and conſcience are ſecret places; Now as the mind and conſcience of the wicked man is defiled (*Tit.* 1.15.) as well as his hand and tongue, ſo his mind and conſcience ſhall be darkned, there ſhall be nothing but darkneſs there.

Quaſcunque quæſierit latebras, ubi ſe tutū fore putat & immunem à dei Judicio, id nihil ei proderit, ubiq; ei abditæ erunt tenebræ calamitatū. Merc.

Secondly, Whereas he ſaid before, *The wicked man ſhall flee*; and he that flees, betakes himſelf to ſome ſecret place (hiding places are ſecret places.) Some therefore interpret it thus; He ſhall flee to ſome hole, or thicket in his retirement; but when he comes thither, all darkneſs ſhall be hid there, that is, he ſhall find no ſafety in thoſe places to which he flees for refuge. When he flees from affliction, he ſhall find affliction. The place whither he goeth for refreſhing, ſhall be filled with ſorrows. And the houſe of his expected freedom from trouble, will be but a ſtorehouſe of trouble, or his houſe of bondage. He that is himſelf unholy and prophane in all places, ſhall never find any place a Sanctuary to him.

All darkneſs ſhall be hid in his ſecret place.

Another renders it thus; *All darkneſs ſhall be hid becauſe of his ſecret*, that is, his ſecret ſins; As if he had ſaid, would you know why this wicked man is followed with ſword and arrow without, and with terrours within; all this pœnal darkneſs is upon him, becauſe ſinful darkneſs is hid in his ſecret place, or becauſe he keeps his ſin ſecret. *He* (as was ſhewed in the former part of the Chapter) *hides it under his tongue, and keepes it cloſe.* All darkneſs ſhall be upon him, becauſe of this beloved darkneſs remaining in him. Mr. *Broughtons* tranſlation ſeems to hold out this meaning, *All darkneſs ſhall be hid up for his ſtore*; and he puts in the margine, *for his ſtore of ſin*; he hath ſecretly laid up a ſtock and ſtore of ſin; which ſtock and ſtore of ſin is anſwered with all manner of darkneſs, with a ſtock and ſtore of puniſhment. This ſenſe hath occurred in divers paſſages, therefore I will only name the Obſervation,

The darkneſs of ſin bringeth darkneſs of ſorrow.

They who lay up ſtore of iniquity in ſecret, ſhall one time or other find a ſtore of miſery laid up for them. If we hide ſin and provide ſecret places for it, God will hide darkneſs for us in our moſt ſecret places. They who (when light comes towards them) love darkneſs more then light, ſhall be ſure to meet with darkneſs, where they moſt expected light.

A fire not blown ſhall conſume him.

What is this fire not blown? This circumlocution ſpeaks more then ordinary fire; we ordinarily make fires by blowing; but this is *A fire not blown.*

There are divers apprehenſions about this fire.

Firſt, A fire not blown, is expounded by ſome, metaphorically, of a fire in the conſcience; Many a wicked man finds fire in his boſome; an evil conſcience is like a flaming furnace, much worſe then *Nebuchadnezzars* furnace of fire when heated ſeven times more then ordinary. None have been ſo tormented and ſcorched, as they who have been caſt into theſe burnings; but I paſs that.

Secondly, Others by *this fire not blown*, underſtand corporal diſtempers; As if *Zophar* in this touched upon *Job's* diſeaſed body; *A fire not blown, ſhall conſume him.* The Text may very well bear that notion; for there are many hot and fiery diſeaſes. Such fires are threatned (*Deut.* 28.22.) *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee with the conſumption, and the feaver, and with an inflammation, and an extream burning.* Here are three bodily diſeaſes, which (without ſtraining) may be called, *A fire not blown*; *A feaver, and an extream burning, and an inflammation.* God conſumes ſome men by ſuch fires. *Job* had much and very ſad experience of them.

Thirdly, Many of the Greeks interpret this fire not blown, of hell. There needs no bellows to kindle that fire. *The breath of the Lord as a river of brimſtone ſhall kindle it, Iſa.* 30. *ult.* *Tophet is prepared of old.* It needs no blowing to make it burn. But though the fire of hell may be called a fire not blown, yet I conceive this Scripture hath no relation to it.

Ignis Gehennæ cum ſit incorporeus, neque ſtudio humano ſuccenditur, neque lignis nutritur, ſed creatus durat inextinguibilis, & ſuccenſione non indiget, & ardore non caret. Greg.

Fourthly, Others expound this fire not blown, of thoſe extraordinary fires which God ſends from heaven, to deſtroy enormiouſly wicked men. Thus he rained fire upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, which conſumed thoſe Cities (*Gen.* 19.24.) We read alſo of ſuch fires in the firſt Chapter of this Book, where it is ſaid, *The fire of God deſtroyed Job's ſheep*; poſſibly his friends would mind him of that here, as in many other paſſages, they cloſely hint to him the manner of Gods dealing with him.

Fifthly, A fire not blown, may be taken for the extream heats and ſcorchings of the Sun; Theſe in Scripture are called burnings, yea they are called fire, and we may truly call them, *A fire not blown.* (*Joel* 1.20.) *The beaſts of the field cry unto thee: for the rivers of water are dried up, and fire hath devoured the paſtures of the Wilderneſs.* What fire? only the heat of the Sun. God ſent heat and drought which burnt up the paſtures of the wilderneſs; and this the Prophet calls a fire. And beſides the heat of the Sun by day, the very cold of the night is a fire not blown; In the ſpring of the year, while the fruits and corn of the earth are young and tender, God many times ſends a Blaſting, which by a ſtrange kind of cold burns and ſcorches the budding fruits. The Latines call this *uredo*, which properly ſignifies a *burning*, we call it *Blaſting*.

חסיל *à rad.* חסל *Conſumere; aptiſſimè illa frugum uredo ignis non ſuccenſus dicitur quia non ab homine ſed à deo ſuccenditur.*

Sixthly, A fire not blown may be interpreted of that which is the kindler of all penal fires, namely, the anger and wrath of God. The wrath of God is often in Scripture compared to fire, *Pſal.* 78.21. *Pſal.* 18.4. *Deut.* 4.24. And ſo the ſenſe is, *A fire not blown ſhall conſume him*, that is, the anger of God ſhall conſume him. There is no ſtanding before the wrath of God: when that burns, it burns to conſumption. Hence the Apoſtle exhorts the Saints to beware of this fire (*Heb.* 12. *ult.*) *Let us have grace to ſerve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear*, (take heed of provoking God to anger) *for our God is a conſuming fire.*

Seventhly, *A fire not blown*, is any great or terrible judgment. War is ſuch a fire (*Ezek.* 20.47.) *Behold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it ſhall devour every green-tree in thee, and every dry-tree*; That is, all ſorts of people, rich and poor, ſtrong and weak, young and old, ſhall be conſumed; *The flaming fire ſhall not be quenched.* Great fires need no blowing, the buſineſs is to quench, not to kindle them. Fires made of green fewel will not kindle without much puffing and blowing; but dry light fewel is ſo conceptive of fire, that the very ſmell of fire puts it into a flame. The Judgments of God take oftentimes as ſuddenly as fire doth in ſtubble fully dry, as ſuddenly as a ſpark in tinder or Gun-powder; yea the green-tree, is as combuſtible in this fire as the ſear and dry. And as this fire is eaſily kindled, ſo it is as hardly quenched. That which the Church ſpeaks of her love to Chriſt (*Cant.* 8. 6,7.) is as true of the wrath of Chriſt againſt the wicked; *The coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a moſt vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench this wrath, neither can the floods drown it.* Mr. *Broughton* renders the Text, thus; *An unquenchable fire ſhall eat him up.* That fire needs no blowing to kindle it, which cannot be quenched.

Eightly, *A fire not blown*, may be a ſoft gentle fire; as if he had ſaid, he ſhall conſume ſecretly, and without noiſe.

Laſtly, That which I rather pitch upon, is, *by the fire not blown*, underſtand thoſe judgments which come no man knows how, ſudden unexpected judgments. We have two ſorts of fires; ſome fires are intentional, that is, we purpoſe to make them; ſuch fires are for our uſe and ſervice; nor is any thing more ſerviceable to us then fire; this intentional fire, is a fire blown. But Secondly, there are caſual fires, accidental fires; A fire takes in a houſe, we ſee all on a flame, no man knows how. Thoſe Judgments of God, whoſe beginnings and inſtruments we ſee not, are to us, as a caſual fire, a fire not blown. I conceive, this is it which *Zophar* chiefly aims at, *A fire not blown ſhall conſume him.* He is conſumed, but he can give no account who or what kindled the fire.

Hence Obſerve, *God can raiſe up troubles, conſuming troubles, immediately, or without any appearances from the creature.*

He cauſeth ſome fires without mans blowing; God needs not the help of the creature, either to do good or to do evil; As he *himſelf forms the light, ſo he creates darkneſs*, (*Iſa.* 45.7.) What the Apoſtle ſaith of our glorious eſtate hereafter (2 *Cor.* 5.1.) *If the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands*; that is, a houſe not made by the hand of man, but built by the immediate power of God; the ſame may be ſaid of the calamitous ſtate of many here, Their houſe is unmade or pull'd down, not with hands; They are ruin'd, but they cannot ſay which way; they are conſumed, but they cannot ſay by whom the fire was kindled. There are many fires in the world, that is, troubles and evils which we may eaſily ſee how they come, and by whom they were blown up; there are bellows which blow up fires, the fires of diſcord and contention among brethren. Theſe fires conſume, Cities, and Countries, and Nations. The Prophet (*Amos Chap.* 7.4,5.) ſpeaks of God contending by fire, which as we may interpret of war and drought, ſo of diſcords and jealouſies in the bowels of that nation. Theſe fires are too much blown in many places, to the conſumption of many, and the hazard of all. And 'tis no hard matter to find out the bellows: We commonly call men of ſtrife *Incendiaries*; they blow up and foment unnatural fires, by bitter ſpeeches and provoking language. 'Tis the ſtudy of ſome men to kindle fires between party and party, between State and State, yea to make them of the ſame ſtate and party ſuſpitious of one another, till all be in a flame. How hath this fire been blown in theſe dayes? and we have ſometimes ſeen the bellows themſelves (as they well deſerved) burnt in it. *By the bleſſing of the righteous* (ſaith *Solomon, Prov.* 11.11.) *the City is exalted; But it is overthrown by the mouth* (that is, by the contentious words, and dividing counſels) *of the wicked.* Theſe ſtir the coals, and blow up the fire. (*Prov.* 29.8.) *Scornful men bring a City into a ſnare*, or, *ſet a City on fire*, as the Margin expreſſeth it. But though ſuch men, and their enflaming practices are often diſcernable by all, yet ſometimes the fire of trouble and contention kindles, while every one ſtands wondring who blowed it, or which way it was kindled: both Nations and perſons have been ruined by an inviſible hand; they are conſumed and undone, that they know; but how it came about, they know not: as to them it was by a fire not blown. Some have complained, that it was more then all their miſery to be under miſery whoſe original they knew not. The Heathens have taken notice of this, as a great aggravation of ſufferings. Not ſo much as this eaſe is given to the miſerable, *to know whence their miſery came, or by what hand they were undone.*

Nec hoc levamen denique ærumnis datum eſt, Videre ſaltē & noſſe quo pereant malo. Sen. in Agam. Act. 3.

The Lord hath infinite wayes to kindle fires upon us, and we ſhall not ſee who are the bellows that do it. That which is ſaid of the fire in hell, *It hath heat in it, but no light in it*, is verified of many Judiciary fires here on earth; They have heat in them, but no light in them; Not only hath the afflicted no light of comfort in them, but no light of knowledge about them. 'Tis a ſmothering fire, and in this ſenſe it may alſo be called a fire not blown; for the breath of the bellows in blowing draws the more ſubtile vapour out of the fuel, and cauſeth the flame: where there is no blowing, there is little flame: Such fires like the fire of hell, have heat, but no light. This ſhould make us afraid to blow up the fire of divine diſpleaſure againſt us, either by open or ſecret ſins; ſeeing the Lord can conſume ſinners by ſecret fires, and kindle a flame upon them without blowing. It may be terrible to the Monarchs and Powers of the world to remember, what is propheſied by *Daniel*, That they ſhall be deſtroyed *by a ſtone cut out without hands* (*Dan.* 2.34.) that is, without any viſible means, or humane preparations. It ſhould make all Nations tremble before God, and take heed how they lift up their hands againſt him who can break in pieces the iron, the braſs, the clay, the ſilver, the Gold, that is, all their power, even their moſt ſolid and beſt compacted power, by a power they never ſuſpected, and whoſe original and riſing they are not acquainted with. *A ſtone cut out without hands*, and *a fire kindled without blowing*, are expreſſions of the ſame general tendency; teaching us what great things God can do without noiſe, by unobſerved yea unſuſpected wayes.

Secondly, Note, *If God ſend a fire, it will take.*

A fire not blown ſhall conſume him. Though it may ſeem a fire that lies dead, as that commonly doth which is not blown, though it look like a fire that hath no force, no flame in it, yet God will make it a conſuming fire. There is no ſtanding before the leaſt of Gods judgments: when he commands them, execution ſhall be done. As was further ſhewed in opening the effects of the Iron-weapon, and of the bow of ſteel, which ſtrike and paſs through the gall of thoſe who are the marks of Gods provoked indignation. Neither ſhall theſe arrows ſmite, and this fire not blown conſume the wicked man in perſon only, but they ſhall reach all that relate and appertain unto him, as appears in the laſt clauſe or cloſe of this verſe.

It ſhall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle.

The word which we tranſlate *to go ill*, ſignifies in the root of it, moral evil, as much as penal evil. Theſe two are ſo near that they may well be expreſſed by one word: where moral evil goes before, penal evil will follow after. It ſhall go ill with them that do ill, unleſs their evil deeds be pardoned. It went ill with Chriſt while he was procuring pardon for evil-doers; and therefore it muſt needs go ill with them who are unpardoned. *It ſhall (ſurely) go ill with him*, or *he ſhall be wringed*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*,

ירע *aut à* רעע *contero, aut à* ירע *male habuit.* Druſ.

That is left in his Tabernacle.

This is expounded two wayes.

Some thus, *A fire not blown ſhall conſume him*, and though he be *left in his Tabernacle*, yet he ſhall be afflicted. So 'tis meant of the wicked man himſelf, who if he eſcape the danger abroad, yet ſhall not be ſafe in his own houſe. They who give this ſenſe relate it to *Job*; For when the fire of affliction had conſumed his eſtate, yet *Job* was left in his Tabernacle, and ſupervived thoſe calamities. Now ſaith

Zophar, ſuppoſe he be left in his Tabernacle, yet it ſhall be ill with him: As if he had ſaid, *Thy children, and thy ſubſtance are conſumed, and thou art left in thy Tabernacle; but doth it not go ill with thee? Thou art full of diſeaſes without, and haſt a troubled mind within.* There is a truth in that.

But I rather conceive that this latter clauſe reſpects thoſe who belong to the wicked man, then the wicked man himſelf. This renders the judgment more compleat and extenſive. The Original word which we tranſlate *left*, is applicable to things and perſons. Some reſtrain it here in the firſt ſignification to his eſtate and goods. As if he had ſaid, Fire ſhall conſume him abroad, and if there be any thing left in his Tabernacle, any goods, fire ſhall deſtroy them too. It ſhall go ill with that which remains, if there be a poor pittance left, he ſhall be wringed in that, or that ſhall be wrung from him.

שריד *Tum ad perſonas, tum ad res referri poteſt.* Merc.

Secondly, We refer it to a perſon, to his children, and relations. As he himſelf ſhall fare ill, ſo they that are his ſhall fare no better. That the ſins of wicked men redound to, and draw judgments upon their poſterity, or thoſe who are left in their Tabernacle, hath been obſerved from other Texts of this Book, and therefore I forbear to draw out or enlarge upon that point here.

VERS. 27, 28, 29.

The heaven ſhall reveal his iniquity: and the earth ſhall riſe up againſt him.

The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, and his goods ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath.

This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.

ZOphar having in the former paſſages of this Chapter ſet forth the miſerable eſtate of a wicked man; in theſe three verſes he winds up all, and concludes his diſcourſe with a re-inforcement of his miſery, by the joynt ſuffrage of heaven and earth againſt him, and by the determinate counſel and purpoſe of God concerning him.

The heaven ſhall reveal his iniquity, &c.

In the ſixteenth Chapter, *verſe* the eighteenth and nineteenth, *Job* had appealed to heaven, and earth, and as it were provoked both, to declare and ſpeak what they could againſt him; *O earth, cover not thou my blood, my witneſs is in heaven.* Here *Zophar* tells him he ſhall have his wiſh, heaven and earth ſhall unite to diſcover his blood, that is, the bloody ſins which he had committed, they ſhall bring in their teſtimony, and condemn him; *The heaven ſhall reveal his iniquity, and the earth ſhall riſe up againſt him.*

The heaven ſhall reveal.

There is a twofold revelation.
Firſt, Formal and expreſs.
Secondly, Virtual and equivalent.

In proportion to this twofold revelation, there is a twofold notion of heaven.

Latini per Metonymiā cœlum pro incolis cœleſtibus terram pro terrigenis accipiunt.

Firſt, Some by *heaven*, underſtand the inhabitants of heaven, or they whoſe place and ſeat, is chiefly in heaven; *The heavenly dwellers ſhall reveal his iniquity.* Who are they? Firſt, God himſelf, whoſe throne is heaven, as the earth is his footſtool. Secondly, The Angels. Thirdly, The Saints; who though they dwell upon the earth while they are in the body, yet even then their converſation is in heaven; and when they go out of the body, their ſpirits go to heaven, or return to God who gave them; and therefore they may well be reckoned among the dwellers in heaven. If we expound *heaven* in the Text of theſe, and theſe revealing the iniquity of this wicked man, then the revelation is formal and expreſs: God himſelf, the good Angels, and good men, ſhall in their ſeveral degrees and capacities *reveal his iniquity.*

Secondly, Take the *heavens* properly and literally, and ſo they may be ſaid to reveal his iniquity virtually, or equivalently, while they by the powerful diſpoſe of God, hold out that which carrieth a ſignification of it. *As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work* (*Pſal.*19.1.) ſo (in a ſence) the heavens declare the ſin of man, and the firmament ſheweth what his hand hath wrought. Thoſe judgments which fall from heaven cry out of and reveal the iniquity of wicked men on earth; ſin troubles not only our own houſes, but the powers of heaven. Some interpret the preſent place, as if *Zophar* did here intimate the fire which fell from heaven upon *Job's* flocks of ſheep, and devoured them; as alſo the wind which ſmote the houſe where his children were feaſting, and deſtroyed them. 'Tis proper enough for us to ſay, and very profitable for us to confeſs, that the heavens reveal or declare the wickedneſs of men, as often as extraordinary fires from heaven, or impreſſion from the air by winds and ſtorms ſcorch and ſmite them in perſon, or ſpoil their poſſeſſions.

Further, The heavens declare, when the heavens are ſhut up, when their influences are ſtopt, when they withhold the rain. As God threatens in the old Law (*Deut.*28.23.) *The heaven that is over thy head ſhall be braſs*; That is, It ſhall yield thee no more moiſture then braſs doth. When the heavens are as hard braſs, they declare the hard-heartedneſs of men, or that their hearts are like braſs; as the Prophet concludes of the ſtubborn and unreformed *Jews* (*Jer.*6.28.) *Thus the heaven ſhall declare his iniquity.*

Hence Note, *The iniquity of man ſhall be revealed.*

There is nothing hid, but it ſhall be made known; and rather then it ſhall not, ſenſleſs creatures ſhall make it known; and that which hath not a mouth ſhall utter it. *The heaven ſhall reveal, &c.* Yea if nothing elſe will reveal the iniquity of man, mans iniquity will reveal it ſelf. Sin will prove like the ointment of the right hand of which *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.*27.16.) that *it bewrayeth it ſelf.* There is no way for us to get our ſin covered, but by revealing it, nor hid, but by confeſſing it, *Pſal.*32.1. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered.* Covered, how? Not with any covering of our own. The Prophet complains of ſuch coverings, and ſhews the uſeleſneſs of them. (*Iſa.*31.1.) *They cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit.* There are ſome that cover their ſins, but it is with a cover of their own making, not with that covering which the Spirit of God hath made. The covering which the Spirit makes is only the free-grace and love of God in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; this is a covering of the Spirits making. Now they who cover with a covering which is not of this making, do indeed diſcover their ſinfulneſs inſtead of covering their ſin. For as the Prophet there adds, *Theſe coverings are narrower then that a man can be wrapped in them.* And with whatſoever of our own we hide our ſin, we do but ſhew our nakedneſs. Mercy covereth thoſe iniquities which we confeſs, and thoſe which we conceal, ſhall be diſcovered by Juſtice. *The heavens ſhall declare his iniquity.*

Cœlum & terra tanquam teſtes in ipſam judicis ſententiam exequuntur, negando benedictionem & vim ſuam. Coc.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The extraordinary motions or ſuppreſſions of the heavenly powers, reveal the ſins of men.*

Unuſual apparitions in the heavens, fiery meteors and lightning, ſtormy winds and tempeſtuous confuſions in the air, mind us of thoſe confuſions which rage in the lives and hearts of men. When the clouds of heaven are not diſſolved into refreſhing ſhowers, when they do not give out their vertue to cheriſh and quicken the earth, theſe ſtops and checks are witneſſes of mans iniquity; *The heaven ſhall declare his iniquity*;

And the earth ſhall riſe up againſt him.

That is, all earthly things ſhall appear his enemies, and proclaim war againſt him. *Inanimates*, the very ſtones of the field, *Vegetables*, the trees of the wood, *Senſitives*, the beaſts of the earth ſhall riſe up againſt him. As when 'tis promiſed (*Chap.*5.23.) that *the ſtones ſhall be in league with the godly man, and the beaſts at peace with him* (that is, he ſhall have benefit by them, and no hurt) this reveals his integrity and innocency. So when the Lord cauſeth the ſtones to fall out with a wicked man, and the beaſts to turn upon him and rent him, this reveales his iniquity; yea not only theſe creatures, which are upon the earth, but the whole body or bulk of the earth declares it ſelf his enemy; when God ſtrikes the earth with barrenneſs, that it doth not bear nor yield its ſtrength, when he denies the wicked man bread to eat, wine to drink, with other common conveniences for this life, then the earth may be ſaid to riſe up againſt him. When man looks to the earth for corn, wine, and oyl, and findeth none, but it is as iron under him; when the graſs withers, and the fruits of the earth are burnt up, this reveals his iniquity, and convinceth him of his barrenneſs in doing good, and fruitfulneſs in doing evil. Thus *the earth riſeth up* (as an enemy, or as a witneſs) *againſt him.*

Hence Note, *All creatures arm againſt the wicked.*

The wicked are Gods enemies, the creatures will take part with their Lord. He is the Lord of Hoſts, he can muſter an hoſt of worms, of lice, of flies, of any thing, of the moſt contemptible things upon the earth againſt the wicked of the earth; *The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof.* As the earth and the fulneſs of it is at the Lords command and diſpoſe, ſo alſo is the earth and the emptineſs of it, the earth and the barrenneſs of it, at his command and diſpoſe. *The earth ſhall riſe up againſt him.*

Verſ. 28. **The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, his goods ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath.**

The increaſe of his houſe.] The word which we render *increaſe*, ſignifies properly, *a bud, a bloom, or bloſſom.* And it is interpreted two wayes.

Firſt, For the children of the wicked man; and though I find not the word applied in Scripture to children, yet indeed they are the chief increaſe of a mans houſe, they are his buds and bloſſoms. *This increaſe of his houſe*

Shall depart.] Or as the Original may be tranſlated, *go into captivity.* So ſome take it here, *His children ſhall go into captivity, they ſhall be made bond-men and bond-women in a ſtrange Land, or unto ſtrangers.*

Secondly, As the word is applied to their children, in a metaphor, ſo properly to their riches or profits; Theſe alſo are the increaſe of a mans houſe, his buds and bloſſoms: many wicked men bloſom, bud, and grow green in outward proſperity, as *David* ſpeaks, *I ſaw the wicked like a green bay-tree.* Theſe buds and bloſſoms, or (as we render) *this increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart.* His treaſure ſhall be led captive, taken and ſpoiled, or become the portion of ſtrangers.

גלה *Revolare migrare.*

Again, As the verb ſignifies *to depart and be led captive*, ſo likewiſe *to reveal, or to make a thing appear.* Thus 'tis tranſlated in the former verſe; *The heaven ſhall reveal his iniquity.* Some give it that ſence here; *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall be revealed, or made to appear:* which may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Thus, He hath ſecret riches, or riches in ſecret, he hath hidden treaſures (treaſure is expreſſed by a word in the Hebrew, which imports *hiding*, becauſe men are apt to hide and lay up their treaſures) treaſures do not lie abroad, they are cloſely lodged. But ſaith *Zophar*, *his treaſures that were hid ſhall appear, or be brought forth.* Thoſe treaſures which have not ſeen the Sun for many years, ſhall be ſeen in the open light. So the words are a predictive threat upon the increaſe of the wicked mans houſe; he hoarded and ſhut all up, he kept his gold and ſilver priſoners under lock and key, under irons and bolts, but a time ſhall come, when God will reveal the increaſe of his houſe, and bring all to light, the locks ſhall flee open, and the priſoners ſhall come forth. God will take away their converings, and preſent thoſe concealed treaſures to the view of ſpoilers. *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall be revealed.* That's one way.

Secondly, The revealing of his increaſe may be expounded thus; God will make it appear at laſt how this man came by his increaſe, how he got his eſtate; he hath gotten much, and hath gone long for an honeſt man in common reputation; but God will make it appear, that he compaſſed this increaſe by indirect courſes, by fraud, oppreſſion, by deceit, and guile, by grinding the faces of the poor, or by wronging the rich; God will make it appear, that his ſin, not his diligence, much leſs a bleſſing from above, gave him that great increaſe. This is a good ſence; *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall be revealed*, the man ſhall be laid open, and it ſhall be maniſeſt that his goods were ill gathered.

We render according to the ſignification of the word, not by revealing, or maniſeſting, but by *departing. The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart*, or go into captivity; his treaſures ſhall be taken, and tranſmitted into other hands. Thus the Lord threatned *Hezekiah*, a good King, (yet God threatned him) that the increaſe of his houſe ſhould depart, and depart in this ſence, that it ſhould be carried captive (2 *Kin.* 20.17.) *Behold the dayes come that all that is in thy houſe, and that which thy fathers have laid up in ſtore unto this day, ſhall be carried into Babylon, nothing ſhall be left, ſaith the Lord. Hezekiah* fell under that temptation of pride and vain-glory; He was ambitious to have it known in *Babylon*, what a rich Prince he was; therefore the Lord laid this judgment on him; *The increaſe of thy houſe ſhall depart and be carried captive.* Thou haſt been forward to ſhew thy riches to ſtrangers, therefore ſtrangers ſhall ſpoil thy houſe, and tranſport thy riches into a far Countrey. Our glorying in riches, or in any thing but God, provokes God to ſtain our Glory. Thus *Zophar* threatens the wicked man; *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart.*

And his goods ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath.

The Hebrew is, *Flowing away in the day of wrath;* we ſupply thoſe words, *his goods*, yet the ſence is full in the Original without them; *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, and flow away in the day of his wrath.* We ſay, *And his goods ſhall flow away in the day of his Wrath.*

Flow away.] It is a metaphor taken from waters; and that two wayes; Either from water ſpilt upon the ground, of which the wiſe Woman of *Tekoa* ſaid, *There is no gathering it up again.* Or from the ordinary flowing of water; there is an ebbing of water, and a flowing in of water. Here *flowing away* is ebbing. The flowing in of water is the flood; but the flowing away of water is the ebb. His goods ſhall ebb, they ſhall decreaſe, and flow away. The motion of ſome waters flowing away is ſwift, and with a kind of violence. Thus the increaſe of his houſe ſhall flow away, there ſhall be no ſtopping, no ſtaying of it. What the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of perſons, is true alſo of things, (*Pſal.* 90.5.) *Thou carrieſt them away as with a flood.* Floods are carried with a mighty force; ſo the goods of a wicked man flow away, or are carried as with a flood.

Again, The alluſion may be to thoſe waters which flow away inſenſibly. The decreaſe of ſome waters is not to be ſeen, yet they flow away and decreaſe. Such alſo is the decreaſe of ſome wicked men in their worldly enjoyments, they do not flow away violently, but ſlowly, and are long in decaying. In deep ſtill Rivers you can hardly perceive the water move, and yet it moves; or that it ebbs, but yet it doth, till it comes to a dead low water. As it is with all trees and plants, we may perceive they have grown, but we cannot ſee them grow; ſo it is with many waters, we may perceive they have fallen, but we cannot ſee them fall. Thus inſenſibly at leaſt the wicked mans Higheſt-flown eſtate, and *the increaſe of his houſe ſhall flee away.*

Thirdly, We may apply the alluſion to waters which are carried or divided into many ſtreams or rivolets. Thus the wicked mans increaſe flows away; God makes many cuts and ſluces, to draw out his eſtate this way, and that way; this part runs into ſuch a channel, and that into another; fire ſhall conſume ſome, and water ſome, violent enemies ſhall take ſome, ſecret thieves, and unfaithful ſervants ſhall take the reſt. Thus it ſhall be divided into ſeveral channels, till the flood be made dry. *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall flow away.*

And when?

In the day of his wrath.

Of whoſe Wrath? In the day of the wrath of God. That is, when God appears angry, and maniſeſts his wrath. There is no change in God; As he is not at all moved by any paſſion, ſo that which for our underſtanding is expreſſed of him by a paſſion, doth never move. His love and his wrath, his favour and his diſpleaſure, are fixed from everlaſting to everlaſting. The Scripture calls that a day of Gods wrath, when he puts forth his wrath in the viſible tokens and evidences of it; as that alſo is called in Scripture a day of his mercy, and grace, of his patience and long-ſufferance, when he declares himſelf in grace and mercy to his people: ſo then, the *day of wrath* is that ſeaſon, whenſoever it is, wherein nothing but wrath and viſions of amazement appear to wicked men. There is a twofold day of wrath, a leſſer, and a greater. The leſſer day of wrath is here in this world; when judgment breaks forth, and divine anger is ſtampt upon every former enjoyment. The great day of wrath is in the world to come. Then wrath ſhall be poured out to the utmoſt. That will be a day, as of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God to all, ſo a day of the revelation of the dreadful wrath of God to moſt. *Zophar* here intends the former, the leſſer day of wrath. *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath.*

Hence Note, *When judgment goes forth, wrath goes forth.*

There are dayes of great affliction to the godly, which are not dayes of wrath, but of love, *Whom I love I chaſten.* There may be a time, when the increaſe of a believers houſe departs, and all his goods flow away like a ſtream, and yet that no day of wrath, but only a day of trial. Floods of temptation do not drown, but waſh the furniture of grace, that increaſe of the ſoul never flows away. But judgment is ever mingled with the wrath of God, in the cup of ungodly men: perſonal Judgments are ſo, and ſo are publick judgments: Wo to a provoking people when judgment appears, for that is the appearance of wrath, and bears in its face the image of a fiery indignation to conſume the Adverſary. *Moſes* ſaw wrath in that plague with which God ſmote the people of *Iſrael* (*Num.* 16.46.) *There is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.* And therefore he haſtens *Aaron* to the duty of his place. *Take* (ſaith he) *a Cenſer and put fire therein from off the Altar, and put on incenſe, and go quickly to the Congregation, and make an Atonement for them.* Thoſe ceremonial atonements, typified the Atonement of Chriſt, who alone delivers us both from preſent wrath, and from that wrath which is to come.

Secondly, From the effect of this day of wrath; *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, and his goods ſhall flow away in the day of wrath.*

Obſerve, *If the wrath of God go forth againſt a man, no good thing will ſtay with him.*

His increaſe will be gone, riches will ſay, we muſt depart and flow away; credit will depart, health will depart, friends will depart, if once wrath come in preſence. God is wroth with thouſands of wicked men, whoſe increaſe doth not depart, nor do their goods flow away, they rather flow in abundantly; but if once God declare and let out his wrath, their fulneſs turns to emptineſs, and their increaſe haſtens to be gone. *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* And if God be againſt us, what can be for us? As the love of God eſtabliſheth the creature to us, and makes that which (like quick-ſilver) can hardly be fixed, as firm to us as a rock of Adamant; ſo the wrath of God ſhakes our hold of the creature, and makes thoſe things which we looked upon as a rock of Adamant, our lands, our friends, our comforts and relations, diſſolve like ſnow before the Sun, and flow away like water. There are three wayes, in which the increaſe of a mans houſe departs and flows away in the day of Gods wrath.

Firſt, By prodigality, and that ſometimes his own; God gives up ſome to ſcatter and ſpend that vainly, which they got here unjuſtly; but moſt uſually it flows away, and the houſe of the wicked man with the whole increaſe of it, is (as we ſay) thrown out at the windows, by the prodigality of a ſpend-thrift heir.

Secondly, His increaſe departs by the oppreſſion of others. As he took violently or fraudulently from others; ſo God gives him up to ſons of violence and fraud, who take all from him. Thus the Prophet threatens (*Iſa.*33.1.) *When thou ſhalt ceaſe to ſpoil*, (A wicked man may ceaſe from ſome ſin, not becauſe he repents of it, but becauſe he is glutted with it, or barred from it; now when thou ſhalt thus ceaſe to ſpoil) *thou ſhalt be ſpoiled, and when thou ſhalt* (upon theſe terms) *make an end to deal treacherouſly, they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee.*

Thirdly, His increaſe flows away by a ſecret curſe. A man ſees the increaſe of his houſe departing he knows not how, he perceives his goods flowing away, but he can give no reaſon of it. For as ſome men increaſe, and goods flow in unto them they ſcarce know how themſelves, their care and labour hath not been more then other mens, yet they grow rich beyond other men. As the Lilly attains her beauty (as Chriſt ſaith, *Mat.* 6.) without labour or ſpinning, ſo it is with ſome, they get the beauty of the world, though (comparatively) they neither labour nor ſpin for it; wealth drops into their boſoms, and golden ſhowers fall into their laps. Now, (I ſay) as ſome grow rich they know not how; ſo others grow poor they know not how. When they are called to an account, they cannot ſay how their eſtate waſted: Ask them, have you had bad debts? No: Have you had loſſes at Sea? No: They are undone, but ſee not what hath done it. What the Prophet (*Hag.*1.6) ſpeaks of wages earned, is true of all their wealth gained, it is as put *into a bag with holes*, or *pierced through.* While a man takes his mony out at the mouth of the bag, he knows how it goes away, and what becomes of it; but if his bag have holes in it, and his mony ſlip out there, he cannot ſay what's become of it; Holes in the bag are nothing elſe but a ſecret curſe. That alſo is meant by the ſame Prophet (*verſ.*9.) *When ye brought it* (that is, your goods) *home, I did blow upon it, or blow it away.* If God do but blow or breath upon our good things in anger, they are blaſted and preſently blown away, or they melt and flow away. The Prophet (*Iſa.*64.1.) ſpeaks of the flowing down of the Mountians; *O that thou wouldeſt rent the heavens, that thou wouldeſt come down, that the mountains might flow at thy preſence.* Mountains are firm and abide for ever in their place; Rivers flow, but who ever ſaw mountains flow? What mountains doth he mean? not natural, but metaphorical mountains; the mountains of humane ſtrength, riches and greatneſs: theſe, ſome pile up as ſo many mountains, to ſecure themſelves by; they call riches their mountain, and worldly power their mountain. (Holy *David* looked upon his power and riches as a mountain, *Pſal.* 30.7. *Lord in thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong.*) But if the Lord rent the heavens, and come down in a day of wrath, theſe mountains flow away; and what was ſuppoſed as ſtedfaſt as a rock, proves as unſtable as water.

Zophar in the laſt verſe of this Chapter, winds up all in a rhetorical acclamation.

Verſ. 29. **This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God.**

As if he had ſaid, Review what I have ſpoken, conſider my words again, I cannot abate you one ſyllable, this, and all this that I have ſaid is true, I will not recal a tittle of it; *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God.* Both parts of this verſe carry the ſame mind and meaning.

This is the portion of a wicked man from God.] The word which we render *portion*, ſignifies *ſweetneſs*, as alſo *flattery*, becauſe many are delighted with flattery; flattering words are ſweet words. So 'tis rendred *Chap.* 17.5. Some taking that ſence of the Original, conceive *Zophar* ſpeaking ironically, or in a kind of ſcorn to *Job.* As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt expected good from God, or that he ſhould ſpeak kindly to thee; thou haſt waited when ſweet ſuggered words ſhould drop from heaven into thine ear: here are the flatteries, theſe the ſoothings which God will give thee; remember what I have at large diſcourſed; that's thy portion; Thy glory ſhall be made as dung; thy Children ſhall beg; the enemy ſhall devour thy ſubſtance; the ſteel bow and the ſword ſhall ſtrike thee through; wrath ſhall rain upon thee when thou art eating; Theſe are delicates prepared for thee, theſe the pleaſant morſels thou art like to have.* We render, *This is thy portion, or thy part.* And ſo it is an alluſion to the manner of feaſting, and banquetting, where the meat is divided into ſeveral diſhes and meſſes, every one hath his part, or portion, or ſo many have their meſs: Now ſaith *Zophar*, this is the meſs of meat that God hath provided for a wicked man, here are the diſhes, and the courſes which ſhall be ſerved up to his Table, in ſorrowful feaſt; *This is the portion* (or proviſion) *of a wicked man.*

Pars, portio tralatio à conviviis, ubi cuiq; ſua portio etiam calix dabatur. Druſ.

From God.] The word is *Elohim*, which is applied to God as a Judge; As if he had ſaid, God the moſt wiſe juſt and impartial Judge, hath ſet this out for his portion. He hath not ſaid this in haſt, or given it out in paſſion, but as a Judge upon mature deliberation, and the ſerious weighing of his caſe. God loveth judgment, and this is the award, the Judgment, which he hath paſſed concerning ſuch a wicked man.

And this is the heritage appointed him by God.

נחלת אמרו *Hæreditas dicti ejus. Hæreditas verborum ejus.* Vulg. *Hæc eſt portio quā ipſe ſibi comparat ſermonibus ſuis & maledicentia ſua.* Jun. *Portio ſermonis ejus,* i.e. *ejus quod adverſus eum dictum eſt & decretum à domino.* Merc. Rab. Sol. מאל *à deo forti & potenti ad exequendum decreta & judicia ſua in impiū* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *This is the heritage of his word from God:* ſo ſome render it; we put in the margine, *This is his decree from God.* The Original may be taken, either for the word of the wicked man, or the word of God himſelf. Some interpret in the firſt ſence; *This is the heritage of his word, by, or from God*; that is, God hath ſet out this heritage as due to him for his word, or words; all this ſhall come upon him for his ill words, or blaſphemies. *This is the heritage of his word*; this he hath got by his ungoverned tongue, and unſavory language; *Words coſt many a man dear.*

But underſtand it rather of the word ſpoken againſt him by God; And ſo *word* is put for *decree* or *appointment*; as we tranſlate, *The heritage appointed him by God:* That is, God hath determined thus concerning him by an irrevocable decree. As mercies are under an appointment, ſo alſo are Judgments. Every heritage of man is laid out by God.

We have God in both parts of the verſe, but under two different titles in the Original. In the former part, *Elohim*, here *El*. *This is the portion of the wicked man from Elohim the Judge, and the heritage appointed him by El, the ſtrong God, or the puiſſant.* As if he had ſaid, *Let not the wicked man think (though it be a hard ſentence) to avoid the execution of it; for as the Judge is juſt to determine that which is his due, ſo he is ſtrong to ſee the execution done. This is the heritage appointed him by the ſtrong, the mighty, the powerful God; who will not abate any thing in the execution of what he hath ſpoken, and declared againſt him.*

παρὰ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου. Sep. *ab epiſcopo à viſitatore dei haud dubio providentiā & pervigilē oculū in impios qui ſe eum latere putant ſignificare voluerunt. Deus eſt πανεπίσκοπος.* Dionyſ.

The Septuagint render this word ſomewhat differently; *This is the heritage appointed him by the Biſhop or Overſeer*, which is a periphraſis of God, who hath the view and inſpection of all, who is the viſitor General and ſuperintendent of mankind. Hereby intimating the provident and watchful eye of God over all the wayes of men, to protect and reward the righteous, to puniſh and take revenge upon the wicked.

Obſerve Hence, Firſt, *The portion of a wicked man is decreed, and appointed by God.*

The portion and heritage of the Saints is of Gods appointment. And as he doth it, ſo they are willing he ſhould do it, yea, it is their comfort that he doth, and will do it. They would not be their own carvers, nor have the ſetting out of their own portion, either in temporals or eternals; It pleaſeth them beſt that all ſhould be of Gods appointment. Thus it is with wicked men too, whether they will or no. They would fain be their own carvers, they would have another portion, either for matter or meaſure in this world then God aſſigns them. If he aſſign their portion in good things (as he doth ſometimes) yet they would have it larger then he gives, they would have more then he appoints, they are not ſatisfied with his proviſion. But when their portion is aſſigned in wrath and judgments, they cannot at all ſubmit to that, yet they muſt, for it is appointed them by God. The portion of a wicked man may be conſidered under a double notion. Sometime it is called *wages*, ſometimes, *an inheritance*. Wages, is due to a ſervant, an inheritance is due to Children, or to a Son; under both theſe notions the portion of a wicked man is ſet out in Scripture. It is wages for his ſin-work; He is the ſervant of ſin; and, *The wages of ſin is death*, all manner of deaths; ſin payes all its ſervants in Black-money. And as the wages, ſo the inheritance of ſin is death, the portion which wicked men receive as children of wrath, as children of the Devil (ſo Chriſt calls them, *Joh.* 8.44.) is nothing elſe but death, their whole eſtate lies in the valley of the ſhadow of death. The troubles of this life are at leaſt the ſhadows of death, or a kind of death, and they are their portion; The diſunion of ſoul and body at the end of this life, is death in kind, and that is their portion. The everlaſting ſeparation of ſoul and body from the face or favourable preſence of God, is the moſt deadly death. This alſo is *the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him of God.*

That this is their portion, ſtands in a double oppoſition.

Firſt, To the opinion which others have of them. The men of the world account them very happy, and think they have a good portion. But this is the portion appointed them by God; though many flatter, and applaud, admire and adore their felicity, as if they were the only men in the world, yet in oppoſition to this, ſaith God, *miſery is their portion*, they are the moſt unhappy men in the world.

Secondly, This portion appointed by God ſtands in oppoſition to what their own hearts appoint them, or at leaſt point them to; their own hearts ſpeak peace, and aſſure them all is well, and ſhall end well; For as flatterers and fawners never deal plainly with them, nor tell them of their miſerable end, ſo neither do their own hearts. (*Pſal.* 36. 2.) *The wicked man flatters himſelf in his own eyes, till his iniquity be found hateful.* He thinks his way is good, and that his end ſhall be better; he hears of, and delights in nothing but flattery; others flatter him, which is bad and dangerous enough; and he flatters himſelf, which is worſt and moſt dangerous of all. In oppoſition to both theſe flatteries, 'tis ſaid, *This is the portion of the wicked man from God.* God tells him it will be thus, and he doth not flatter. (*Pſal.* 11. 5.) *The Lord tryeth the righteous*; he layes many afflictions upon his own people, *but upon the wicked he will rain an horrible tempeſt, this ſhall be the portion of their cup.* And again (*Pſal.* 75. 8.) *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, the wine is red*; (red with wrath, in the day of Gods wrath) *It is full of mixture* (it hath no mixture of good, no ſweetneſs at all in it, but all ſorts of evil are mingled in that cup) *and he powres out of the ſame* (upon many occaſions he powres it out in the world) *but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring out and drink.* They have not only the cup, but the dregs of the cup, that is, the worſt of the cup; For as in a good cup, the deeper the ſweeter, ſo in an evil cup, the deeper the worſer: the dregs are the worſt, the bottom is the bittereſt of a bitter cup. Therefore God puts this word into the Prophets mouth (*Iſa.* 3.) *Say to the righteous it ſhall be well with him: ſay to the wicked it ſhall be ill with him*; tell him, evil ſhall be his portion, tell him from me it ſhall be ſo. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven, againſt all unrighteouſneſs; Tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil*; That is, on every ſoul that lives and dies doing that which is evil.

But here a Queſtion ariſeth; *Is it thus with all wicked men?* How are we to underſtand this propoſition; *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God?* Do not wicked men divide the good, the beſt things of this world among them? Is not pleaſure their portion, and riches their heritage? Do not the tabernacles of robbers proſper? as *Job* ſaid, *Chapter* the twelfth, Have not they the fatteſt ſhare, and the faireſt lot in this life? How then doth *Zophar* (ſpeaking of temporal judgments and troubles) ſay, *This is the portion of a wicked man from God?* when we daily ſee wicked men, not a few, enjoying a pleaſant portion. Do not the diſpenſations of God vary from his threatnings and and comminations? or how ſhall we reconcile this propoſition with our experiences?

I anſwer, Though God gives wicked men, many portions of outward good things in this world, yet that doth not abate, much leſs croſs and contradict this commination. God gives ſome wicked men a great portion in the good things of this life upon many accounts, yet the event is not good to them upon any account.

Firſt, God gives them a portion as they are his creatures, how ſhould they live, and ſubſiſt elſe? God maintains all that he hath made, he is the houſholder. Under that relation of creatures they have alwayes ſomewhat in the world, and under another relation they may have very much. For

Secondly, Some wicked men are in the relation of his ſervants. And we may call the good which they have in the world, their wages, or a reward for ſome good ſervice they have done in the world. The purpoſes of God are fulfilled, and his providences ſerved, even by wicked men, and ſome wicked men do him eminent ſervice. They who are evil, may do that which is good, for the matter, in the eyes of God. For though it be not poſſible to pleaſe God without faith (*Heb.* 11.7.) yet it is poſſible to ſerve him without faith; or though God be never pleaſed with the perſon doing a work without faith, yet he may be pleaſed with that work which is done without faith. A wicked man may do what God would have done, that pleaſeth him, and he throws him in ſomewhat as wages for his work; ſometimes, very great wages. *Jehu*, a wicked man, a man of a naughty heart, yet he did the work that was in Gods heart, in deſtroying *Ahabs* houſe. *Now*, ſaith God, *take the Throne for four generations*, a great reward, a whole Kingdom, and for four Generations to a wicked man (2 *Kings* 10.30.) God will not be behind-hand with any. They that have been inſtrumental for him, ſhall have ſo much as their work comes too; they who do it for a temporal reward (many will be very zealous for an outwardly real reformation, both in matters of Religion and civil adminiſtration, while not only their hearts are unchanged, but their lives unreformed, and all this they do to ſet themſelves up in a worldly intereſt; now, even theſe) ſhall have their peny, they ſhall not looſe their reward.

Thirdly, There is a kind of neceſſity that ſome wicked men ſhould riſe high, and be great, that they may be fitted to do the works which God hath appointed; as thoſe others (of whom I ſpake laſt) are raiſed high, to reward and pay them for the work which they have done. As

Firſt, For the ſcourging of other wicked men. God ſuffers one wicked man to proſper to vex another. Sometimes he ſcourgeth a whole Nation, by one wicked man; therefore he muſt proſper much. Uſually there is a proportion between the work and the inſtrument. Great ſcourges are made of Great men.

Secondly, For the trying of his own people; if wicked men were not high, powerful, and proſperous, they could not perſecute the righteous. *They who will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution.* And there are ſome kinds of perſecution which ungodly men (though they never want will, yet) cannot act till they have gotten power. Weak ones can mock and ſcoff; but they who kill and deſtroy muſt be ſtrong.

Fourthly, Wicked men proſper that they may have opportunity to ſhew what is in their hearts, how vile they are. Half the wickedneſs of man appears not, if his portion be alwayes ſhort in the world. Many wickedneſſes in the heart of man cannot diſcover themſelves and appear above-board, till they themſelves are above and aloft in the world. For as afflictions upon the people of God, diſcover many corruptions in them which they did not think of, as murmuring, unbelief, and diſcontent, &c. They thought in their proſperity, that they could have born ſuch a croſs patiently, and quietly, and have taken it well at Gods hands; but when it comes upon them, they find corruptions ſtir, which till then ſtirred not. Therefore (*Deut.* 8.2.) God cauſed the people of *Iſrael* to wander forty years in the wilderneſs, to prove and try what was in their hearts. God knew, intuitively, what was in their hearts, but they did not know it, they did not conceive that there was ſo much vanity, and unbelief there, till God led them about and about to try them. So, wicked men, though their corruptions flow out faſt enough, yet if they ſhould be alwayes kept to hard meat and want, their luſts would be ſtifled and ſtarved, though not at all mortified. As the wit and parts of ſome are kept down by their poverty, ſo alſo are the luſts and wickedneſſes of many. But worldly affluence and warmth draw out corruption, as well as affliction doth: riches and power let the luſts and wickedneſſes of men looſe as well as their wits and learning. *Hazael* was a cruel man, but he did not believe that there was ſo much cruelty in his heart as indeed there was (2 *King.* 8.13.) When the Prophet told him what he would do; *Doeſt thou think I am a dog* (ſaith he) *that I ſhould do ſuch things as theſe?* The Prophet replied; *The Lord hath ſhewed me that thou ſhalt be King of Syria.* As if he had ſaid, thou ſhalt have a great portion, and much power put into thy hands, and then the wickedneſs of thy heart will appear fully; thou doſt not know how nought thou art now, thy luſt lies cloſe in thy own ſpirit; But when thou art King of *Syria*, thou wilt have ſcope for thy cruelty, and then it will appear that I am a true Prophet in foretelling thee what bloody, what cruel work thou wilt make. *It would never be known how bad ſome are, if they ſhould not enjoy much worldly good.*

Fifthly, The Lord gives ſome wicked men a rich portion in temporals, to take off the loves and to dull the deſires of the godly to them. For when they ſee the beſt things of the world in their hands who are evil, they cannot but remember that God hath provided better things for them. And if God beſtow ſo much upon thoſe who rebel againſt him, and are his enemies, what hath God in ſtore for them who love him, and are loved of him?

Sixthly, Hereby God commends his own patience, long-ſufferance, and goodneſs. Theſe Attributes are highly honoured and advanced by it. We alſo by this pattern are inſtructed to patience, long-ſufferance and goodneſs towards others, though evil men and our enemies. Chriſt preſſeth love to enemies, by the example of God himſelf, (*Matth.* 5.45.) *He makes his Sun to ſhine upon the good, and upon the evil, and the rain to fall upon the juſt and unjuſt.* The Lord gives wicked men a portion here for our inſtruction; That we might learn to do good to our enemies; to feed them when they hunger, and when they thirſt, to give them drink.

Seventhly, The good which evil men receive from God, leaves them without excuſe, this ſtops their mouthes for ever; What can they ſay, when God pours out the vials of his wrath upon them who kickt againſt him, while he fed them and fill'd their veſſels with abundance of outward bleſſings. As they who deſpiſe this riches of his goodneſs treaſure up to themſelves wrath againſt the day of wrath; ſo, they ſhall have nothing to plead for themſelves in the day of wrath. Theſe are ſome of thoſe accounts upon which wicked men, to whom God hath appointed miſery as their portion, do yet at preſent receive a portion of outward proſperity.

But though upon theſe, and other conſiderations which might be added, the Lord puts exceptions to this general rule, *That miſery is the portion of a wicked man*; yet the truth ſtands firm. For in that ſome wicked men are priviledged from it, it is a confirmation that all are lyable to it; *Exceptions ratifie the rule*: that ſome wicked men are exempted and excuſed from trouble, ſhews that is the proper portion of them all.

Again, I anſwer, Firſt, This is fulfilled in the letter upon very many wicked men: look upon their lives, their portion is miſery; though they ſcrape and heap much together, though they bud and bloſſom, yet their encreaſe goes into captivity, and their goods flow away: Their pompe is brought down, and their beauty is ſtained. 'Tis rare to find a wicked man flouriſhing to the end of his dayes, or his hoary head going to the grave in peace. As *David* obſerved of the Godly (*Pſal.* 37.25.) *I have been young and now am old, yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread.* So they who have been young and now are old, have often ſeen the wicked who proſpered a while, yet at laſt forſaken, and their ſeed begging bread.

Secondly, The Propoſition ſtands firm upon this ground; becauſe miſery is the deſert of wicked men; 'tis their heritage as they are children of diſobedience, and their wages as they are workers of iniquity. Wrath is the portion appointed for them, though they have it not preſently in their hands. We ſay of a child who is heir to a great eſtate, ſuch lands are his heritage, his portion, though he hath nothing in poſſeſſion, but the bread he eats, and the cloathes which he puts on. We ſay of a condemned maleſactor, death is his portion, becauſe he deſerves death, and the ſentence is gone out againſt him, though he be reprieved for many years after.

Thirdly, Though ſome wicked men are not actually in a miſerable outward condition, yet they are ſubject to it every moment. The cloud hangs over them, and who can tell how ſoon it may break? The word is out, the decree is paſt, and who can tell how ſoon God may ſeal the Writ for execution, or command the judgment written to take hold of them, or be done upon them. They have no fence for it, no plea, nothing to keep it off, or avoid it with. *He that may juſtly expect evil at any time, is at no time free from it.*

Fourthly, The very preſent proſperity of wicked men is a puniſhment to them; their Table is their ſnare, and that which (according to the nature and uſe of it) ſhould have been for their *welfare*, becomes (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 69. 22.) *a trap.* Their good is evil to them, and it had been better for them if they had never had ſo much good. For as it had been better for a man not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, then after he hath known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered to him, (2 *Pet.* 2. 21.) ſo it had been better for a man not to have enjoyed worldly happineſs, then while he hath it, to be found out of the way of the holy commandment; ſeeing as the knowledge of truth, ſo the fruition of good, encreaſe the ſin, and ſo the miſery of thoſe who abuſe and walk unworthy of them. And becauſe evil men alwayes abuſe the good which they enjoy, therefore the enjoyment of good is worſe to them then the ſuffering of evil. And as God chaſtens and ſmites his own children in love, ſo he forbears to ſmite the wicked in anger; not to be puniſhed is their puniſhment. The ſoareſt ſtroak which revolting *Iſrael* felt, was expreſſed in theſe words, *Why ſhould ye be ſtriken any more?* (Iſa. 1. 5.) When wicked men proſper, it is a fore-runner of their perdition. So that if they have not miſery their portion in kind or in the letter at all times, yet they have it in truth and reality. There is a threefold evil ſpringing to a wicked man out of his preſent proſperity.

Firſt, Proſperity hardens his heart; that's a ſpiritual judgment in temporal enjoyments.

Secondly, Proſperity is but fuel to his luſts, it draws out and multiplies the acts of ſin. Now that which makes the heap of ſin greater, makes the heap of wrath greater. Our ſuffering of evil is not only deſerved, but proportioned by our doing of evil.

Thirdly, Preſent proſperity hath this evil conſequent in it to him that is and continues evil, that, evil, when it comes it is the more grievous to him, by how much he hath been the more a ſtranger to and unacquainted with it. When God actually powers miſery in kind upon a wicked man, who hath had a long time of worldly contentments, this makes him more miſerable, becauſe he was in a ſeeming ſtate of happineſs. It will increaſe his ſorrow, when God comes to reckon with him (as poſſibly he will, in this life, and 'tis certain he will in the life to come) that he hath had a few years of joy. His ſhort joyes will lengthen his ſorrows, and he will be for ever the more ſorrowful, becauſe he hath had theſe taſtes and glaunces of joy. For as the afflictions of a godly man are a bleſſing to him many wayes, and eſpecially this way; becauſe as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) *Our light afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us* (not by way of merit, but of preparation) *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory:* ſo we may ſay, the preſent proſperity of a wicked man is his curſe, becauſe it works for him, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of miſery.

Laſtly, (to ſhut up the point) As we may ſay of believers, that outward proſperity is their portion, and the heritage appointed to them by God, becauſe they alwayes ſtand under thoſe promiſes of outward proſperity (*Matth.* 6. 33.) *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs thereof, and all other things ſhall be miniſtred unto you.* (1 Tim. 4. 8.) *Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſes of this life, and of that which is to come.* Upon theſe and the like Scripture-promiſes (I ſay) we may conclude that proſperity in this life is the portion of every godly man (becauſe they are the heirs of thoſe promiſes which concern the good things of this life, as well as of thoſe which concern eternal life) though it pleaſe God in his wiſdom to exerciſe them under outward wants, and to keep them in heavineſs through manifold temptations all their dayes. So it is a truth, that in this life miſery is the portion of wicked men, becauſe they alwayes ſtand under all the threatnings which are written in the book of God. Though it pleaſeth God for the reaſons before remembred, or for any other reaſon lockt up in his own boſom, to give them a rich portion in outward bleſſings, and to cauſe their cup to overflow with the fading dying comforts of this preſent life.

Thus far *Zophar* hath ſpoken, and he ſpeaks no more. *Job* gives anſwer in the next Chapter, with which poſſibly he was ſatisfied, and ſo joyned in opinion with him; or gravell'd, and ſo had no more to ſay againſt him; or ſo deeply offended, that he either would not, or ſaw it bootleſs to ſay any more.

CHAP. XXI. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

But Job *anſwered, and ſaid,*

Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolation.

Suffer me that I may ſpeak; and after that I have ſpoken, mock on.

As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?

Mark me, and be aſtonied, and lay your hand upon your mouth.

Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my fleſh.

JOB having received this ſecond charge from his three friends; all three concluding, as in the firſt, that they are the worſt of men, whoſe ſufferings are worſt. Having (I ſay) heard out his friends in their ſecond charge, he now deſires that they would hear him, *verſ.* 1. **But Job anſwered, and ſaid,**

Verſ. 2. **Hear diligently my ſpeech.**

In which ſpeech, *Job* anſwers their Arguments, and refutes them more clearly and convincingly, then he had done in his former anſwers; affirming contrary to what *Zophar* had laſt, and his other friends before him, aſſerted, *That the beſt men are not priviledged from the ſoareſt evils, and that the vileſt are ſometimes not viſited with any evil.*

The ſcope and ſum of his whole diſcourſe may be drawn out into theſe three propoſitions.

Firſt, *That all wicked men are not alwayes afflicted with great evils in this life.*

Secondly, *That only wicked men are not afflicted with evils in this life.*

Thirdly, *That many wicked men enjoy much good in this life, and have all things to their hearts content, even unto their laſt breath; and not only ſo, but their children inherit and ſucceed them in the poſſeſſion of thoſe outward bleſſings which themſelves enjoyed.* Which three aſſertions being confirm'd, the whole building of *Zophar*, and of his two other friends, muſt needs ſhake and fall to the ground.

And as in theſe three aſſertions, we have the ſum of *Job's* argumentative part: ſo the whole Chapter may be conſidered in three parts.

Firſt, An Exordium, or Preface.

Secondly, A refutation of their arguments, or his anſwer to their propoſals.

Thirdly, The concluſion, or pre-oration of the whole.

The Exordium or Preface is contained in the ſix former verſes of the Chapter.

His anſwer to their arguments extends from *verſ.* 27. incluſively to the end of *verſ.* 33.

The concluſion is *verſ.* 34. *How then comfort ye me*, &c.

The context under preſent diſcuſſion, contains the Preface; *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolation.* This Preface hath two things chiefly in it.

Firſt, It tends to the gaining of attention, to what *Job* had further to ſay.

Secondly, It carries in it a reprehenſion of what his friends had already done.

Firſt, It carries in it a deſire of attention to what he had to ſay; and that by a fourfold argument, or he moves for attention upon four grounds.

Firſt, Becauſe if they did hear him diligently, it would be matter of conſolation.

Secondly, He moves for it from the common duty of man, who ſhould not judge, much leſs condemn another, before he hath heard him; and this he layes down, *verſ.* 3. *Suffer me that I may ſpeak, and after that I have ſpoken, mock on:* As if he had ſaid, *It is a duty which all men owe their brethren, to hear them ſpeak before they judge them, eſpecially before they mock them: therefore ſuffer me to ſpeak, and then mock on if you pleaſe.*

The third argument, by which he craves attention, is from the principal object, whom his diſcourſe and complaint concerned, *verſ.* 4. *As for me, is my complaint to man*, &c. As if he had ſaid, *I complain to more then man, I complain to God, and God hear's me, therefore ſurely ye ought; if God be intereſſed in what I have to ſay, ye ought not to take your ſelves diſingaged.*

The fourth argument is from the greatneſs of his preſent ſorrows; great enough they were to work aſtoniſhment, therefore ſurely great enough to deſerve attention (*verſ.* 5.) *Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed, and lay your hands upon your mouth.* And (*verſ.* 6.) he tells them, that the very remembrance of them did terrifie him, and that his fleſh did tremble, while he thought of the diſpenſations of God to him; therefore the matter was not light, or unworthy of a hearing.

Further, As in the Preface he challengeth attention to what he had to ſay, upon theſe four grounds, ſo likewiſe he cloſely reprehends what his friends had already done, and that in three things.

Firſt, He reprehends them for not having given him a due liberty of ſpeech (*verſ.* 3.) *Suffer me that I may ſpeak*; as if he had ſaid, *Ye have cut me off heretofore, and interrupted me, now ſuffer me to ſpeak.* While he begs this at their hands, he intimates, that as yet he had been denied it, or that it had not been granted him with ſuch freedom as his caſe and ſtate called for.

Secondly, He reprehends them as having mocked him when he ſpake, or as having ſlighted him when he anſwered; that is implied in the cloſe of *verſ.* 3. *After that I have ſpoken, mock on.* While he ſaith, *mock on*; he chargeth them that they had mocked already: no man can proceed or continue to do that he had not done before. To ſay, *mock on*, is to reprove them for mocking.

Thirdly, He reproves or reprehends them, as not having been duly affected, nor touched with what had touched him, with what he had both ſpoken, and felt: they were inſenſible of his condition, and regardleſs of his diſcourſe. He implieth that (*verſ.* 5.) when he ſaith, *Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed*; as if he had ſaid, Ye would have been grieved, yea, even aſtoniſhed with my condition, had ye markt me, but to this day ye are not; therefore *mark me, and be aſtoniſhed.* You ſhould have trembled in ſilence to hear how God hath dealt with me, whereas you have rather inſulted over me; *Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed, lay your hand upon your mouth.* Thus I have opened the ſcope, and parts of the whole Chapter; as alſo the tendency of theſe ſix verſes, which I have laid together as making up the Preface of his anſwer. Wherein we may note, Firſt, His expectation of attention upon four grounds, and their reprehenſion upon three.

Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolation.

Thus he begins, this is his firſt Argument to move attention, and it may be framed thus;

Ye ought to hear him, whom your very hearing will be a conſolation to:

But if ye give me a diligent hearing, it will be a conſolation to me.

Therefore ye ought to hear me diligently. There are two things upon which this Argument may be enforced.

Firſt, From the common duty of that relation in which they ſtood to him; they told him they were his friends; now the common duty of a friend, coming to his friend in trouble, is, to comfort and counſel him. Ye ſay ye are my friends: now if your diligent attention will be my conſolation, ye ought to hear me, conſidering your relation, and that ye bear your ſelves in profeſſion as my friends.

Secondly, There is another argument which lies cloſely preſt in this, from the deſign of their coming to him; your relation as friends obligeth you to comfort me. But do ye not remember your own errand to me? Do ye not know why ye came this long journey to viſit me? Did ye not ſet this down in your propoſals (*Chap.* 2. 11.) *That ye would come to mourn with me, and to comfort me?* Now for as much as your ſpecial aim was to comfort me, and ſeeing I ſhall take it as a ſpecial comfort to be heard, ye ought to give me the hearing, for that reacheth your own deſign, and anſwers your intendment in viſiting me.

Hear diligently my ſpeech.] The Original ſpeaks double, *hearing hear*, a frequent Hebraiſm. The Septuagint render it, *Hear ye, hear ye*; ſo that here is *Job's O yes, O yes*, as a Cryer ſpeaks when he calls for ſilence and attention in a Court; *Hear ye, hear ye*; *hearken, hearken.* And we render it well to the ſence of that Hebraiſm, *hear diligently.* To hear, and hear, or hearing to hear, is diligent hearing. The doubling of that word hath theſe two things in it.

Ακουσατε ακουσατε. Sept. *Non leviter ſed ſolicitè audite & date operam ſedulam ut intelligiatis.* Merc.

Firſt, It hath an excitation of them to attend his ſpeech.

Secondly, It ſhews the confidence of his own ſpirit about what he was to ſpeak. I ſpeak that which I care not if it be twice heard, yea, a hundred times heard. Some ſpeak ſo, that they are content if they have but half a hearing; they who ſpeak ſlightly, care not to be heard ſlightly; but they that ſpeak confidently and weightily, care not if they be heard over and over. *Hearing hear*, or diligently hear, carries as a motive to hear, ſo the boldneſs and aſſurance of his ſpirit about what he was to ſpeak, he cared not who heard him, or how oft it was heard.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *Hearing hear, or hear diligently*, he ſeemeth to require another manner of hearing then he had before: When he openly calls upon them to hear diligently, he ſecretly taxeth them for their indiligence in hearing; as if he had ſaid, *Ye heard me before, but it was as if ye did not hear; let me have a hearing indeed, now hear diligently.* Which may more diſtinctly be conceived in theſe two things.

Firſt, Hear me with more calmneſs and quietneſs, then as yet ye have done. Meekneſs is more then one thing neceſſary, 'tis almoſt *The one thing* neceſſary toward diligent hearing. If the ſpirit be wild, if a mans mind be unfixed and uncompoſed, he will never hear diligently. Hear diligently, be not moved with paſſion or prejudice againſt the ſpeaker, be not moved with impertinent thoughts while I am ſpeaking: Make it your work, to hear what I have now to ſay.

Secondly, It hath this in it alſo, hear with a patient ſpirit. In ſome ſence a patient hearer is the ſame with a quiet hearer, but in a peculiar ſence, a patient hearer is he who not only hears himſelf reproved, or told of his faults, and takes it well; but a patient hearer is he that will hear all out, or continues hearing to the length or end of what is ſaid. A patient hearer is content the ſpeaker ſhould make out his matter, he doth not ſnap him off with replies, before he hath fully opened and unburdened his mind. Such patient hearing is diligent hearing. *Job* now calls his friends to the higheſt exerciſe of the duty of hearing; he would not have them hear him any more with troubled ſpirits, and impatient ears, but deſires they would ſet themſelves to it, and make a buſineſs of it. And there is ſomewhat of argument for this in the word *ſpeech*; *Hear diligently my ſpeech.* The Hebrew ſignifies,

Firſt, A plain ſpeech; as if he had ſaid, *I do not intend to flouriſh it over, and catch your ears with ſtudied oratory, or eloquence: I will ſpeak plainly, therefore hear me.*

Secondly, It notes allſo conciſeneſs of ſpeech; as if he had ſaid, *Do not think, becauſe I call you to hear me diligently, that I intend to ſpeak tediouſly: I have but a word or two to ſay, I purpoſe to contract my ſelf, and to ſpeak much in a little. Do not fear that I will burden and tire you out in hearing me, I intend brevity:* Therefore *hear diligently my ſpeech.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *It is no eaſie work to hear well.*

'Tis no hard matter to hear, but 'tis hard to hear well: we may hear eaſily, but it put's a man to it to hear diligently. Hearing may be conſidered as a threefold work.

Verbum ait, quod brevitatem pro mittendo audientiam exambiret.

Firſt, As a natural work, and ſo it is an eaſie thing to hear; no man ſtudies, nor is any man taught to hear; we do it naturally and freely. Thus we uſe to deſcribe the ſpiritual actings of believers, when we ſay, they perform duties naturally; that is, they do them with a kind of eaſe, even as the ear hears, or the eye ſees; the natural work of the eye is an eaſie work, and ſo is the natural work of the ear, there's no labour in it.

Secondly, We may conſider hearing as it is a moral work; or as it tends to the receiving of inſtruction in any point of knowledge or learning; if a man do but receive inſtruction about a worldly buſineſs or truſt, it requires ſome pains, to take his errand right: and hence when we ſpeak to a ſervant to do ſuch a thing, and we perceive he hears but ſlightly, we uſe to ſay, *You are gone without your errand*; there's need of diligent hearing to receive any direction in civil matters, or inſtruction about morals.

Thirdly, Hearing may be conſidered as a ſpiritual work; and ſo it is hardeſt of all, and requires double diligence, hear diligently, hearing hear. Let every word that is ſpoken once, be twice heard. Spiritual hearing hath a fourfold work in it.

Firſt, A work of the ear to take in the impreſſion of words.

Secondly, It hath a work of the underſtanding, which (as it were) garbleth the words which are ſpoken, conſiders, and makes choice of them, trying their truth, their goodneſs, their fitneſs, and their profitableneſs.

Thirdly, There is a work of the affections in ſpiritual hearing; a work of love, a work of joy and delight; many receive the truth, who do not receive the love of it, nor rejoyce in it. Hearing is a work of the internal powers as well as of the external organs, and this requires diligence.

Fourthly, In ſpiritual hearing, there is a work of our graces: there may be a work of the underſtanding, and a work of the affections, without a work of grace. The ſtony ground underſtood the Word, and received it with joy; the underſtanding acted, and the affections acted, but the work went no further. In ſpiritual hearing, there is a work of our graces; Firſt, A work of faith to believe what is ſpoken. Secondly, A work of meekneſs to ſubmit to what is ſpoken. Thirdly, A work of new obedience to practice and follow what is ſpoken. The work of all theſe graces, attendeth ſpiritual hearing. Here is diligence, and we have not heard double, or hearing heard, till we have had this fourfold work in hearing the Word of God, though ſpoken by man: *Hear diligently my ſpeech.*

Secondly obſerve, *Double, or diligent hearing is our duty in all weighty matters.*

That which is ſinful and vain, ſhould not be heard at all; 'tis our duty to ſtop the ear from hearing vanity; ordinary matters, the affairs of the world, the buſineſſes, and concernments of our callings, call only for ſingle hearing; ordinary attention will ſerve the turn for ordinary things. But we cannot be too diligent (we are ſeldom, if at all, diligent enough) in hearing the Word of eternal life. Some words are loaded with the concernments of eternity; there is a ſound, yea a ſavour in them of life, or death, of heaven, or hell, of ſalvation or damnation for ever. Words of this worth, of theſe concernments, call for double hearing: Diligent hearing is more then due in matters thus weighty; we have reaſon to hear that Word judiciouſly, by which we muſt be judged; to hear as for our lives, when we are hearing the Word of life. The ſpeaker hath then reaſon to cry aloud, *hear diligently my ſpeech*; and the hearer hath reaſon to anſwer, I will attend with diligence.

Thirdly, *Job* had before (and he doth it here again) called his friends to diligent hearing. I do not find in all his diſcourſe that he called upon them to anſwer, or provoked them to ſpeak, but ſtill to hear, he is frequent upon that; he thought them forward enough with their tongues, but too ſlow with their ears.

Hence note, *Man is more ready to ſpeak, yea to judge and cenſure others, then he is to hear.*

Job's friends came quick upon him with their cenſures and replies, they were ready with their tongues to cenſure, and reprove him; but he ſuppoſed them dull of hearing, or ſlight in weighing what they heard. The Apoſtles exhortation intimates that moſt men are readier to ſpeak then to hear; or that they who are readieſt to ſpeak, are often indiligent in hearing (*Jam.* 1. 19.) *My beloved brethren, let every man be ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak, ſlow to wrath*; he puts a bridle upon the tongue, but (as it were) ſpurs the ear, *Be ſwift to hear.*

I have from other paſſages (*Chap.* 11. 2. & 18. 2.) noted this before, and therefore I only touch it. *Hear diligently my ſpeech,*

And let this be your conſolation.

Let this, what's that? Your attention to me; let that be your Conſolation. The word which we render *Conſolation*, ſignifies three things in the Verb.

נחם 1 *Doluit ſuis vel alterius rebus.* 2 *Pœnituit vel ſententiam mutavit.* 3 *Per antiphraſin dolere deſiit conſolationē invenit.*

Firſt, To grieve, or to be ſorrowful, whether upon our own account, or upon the account of others: to be ſorrowful becauſe of our own ſins or ſufferings, which is the ſorrow of paſſion; or to be ſorrowful, becauſe of the ſins and ſufferings of others, which is the ſorrow of compaſſion; both are comprehended in this word.

Secondly, It ſignifies to Repent, ſo it is applied to God himſelf (*Gen.* 6. 6.) *It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth.* As alſo (1 *Sam.* 15. 11.) *The Lord repented that he had made* Saul *King.* Some take this ſignification of the word here, and render the Text thus, *Hear diligently my words, and repent, or it will be repentance to you*; that is, you who have ſtood ſo ſtifly all this while in your own opinion, and have maintained thoſe poſitions which are ſo unſutable to the common diſpenſations of God; if you would but hear me out, and hear me diligently, you would repent of this your opinion, and change your minds. That rendering is uſeful, there is only this againſt it, that howſoever the Verb ſignifieth to repent, yet Grammarians tell us that the Noun is never found to ſignifie repentance; and therefore I paſs it.

Thirdly, By a contrary kind of ſpeaking (which is very frequent in the Hebrew) as it ſignifies to grieve and repent, ſo to take comfort. And the reaſon why the ſame word notes both repentance and comfort, is, becauſe true repentance, wrought by godly ſorrow, is the way to and concludes in the trueſt conſolation: the neareſt way to peace is by humble confeſſion of, and converſion from our ſins. The word is uſed in this ſence (*Gen.* 24. ult.) *Iſaac was comforted concerning his Mother.* So (2 *Sam.* 13. 39.) *The ſoul of King* David *longed to go forth unto* Abſalom; that is, he extreamly deſired to ſee him again, and rather then not, even to fetch him home himſelf, or at leaſt (could he do it with a ſaving to his Honour and Juſtice) to meet him (upon his return) half way; *for he was comforted concerning* Ammon, *ſeeing he was dead.* Mourning could not recover him from the grave, why then ſhould he continue mourning? The Prophet uſeth the word of the Text, while he deſcribes that woful time wherein many ſhould be mourners, but there ſhould be no comforters, (*Jer.* 16. 7.) *Neither ſhall men tear themſelves for them in mourning to comfort them for the dead; neither ſhall men give them the cup of conſolation to drink for their father, or for their mother*; that is, none ſhall be ſo courteous or ſenſible of the ſorrows of others, as to uſe any means of comforting them, when they are in the ſaddeſt condition, even mourning for the death of father or mother. That expreſſion (note it by the way) *The cup of conſolation*, is an alluſion to an ancient cuſtom, when in great ſorrows ſome cordial or comfortable drink was given to mourners. *Solomon* intimates that uſage (*Prov.* 31. 6.) *Give ſtrong drink to him that is ready to periſh, and wine to thoſe that be of heavy hearts*; that is, give them a cup of conſolation, or a conſolatory cup. *Job* being in heavineſs and ſorrow, doth but deſire to be diligently heard, and this ſhould be to him, as if his friends in tendereſt compaſſion of his condition, had given him a cup of conſolation. As I ſhall now (paſſing from the ſignification and uſe of the word) further ſhew in opening the matter.

For here 'tis queſtioned, whoſe conſolation *Job* means it ſhould be, when he ſaith, *Hear me, and let this be your conſolation.*

Firſt, Some underſtand it thus, *It ſhall be your conſolation*; that is, it ſhall be a comfort to you: if ye will hear me ſpeak, my ſpeech ſhall be your conſolation, I ſhall ſpeak ſuch things, and in ſuch a manner, that ye ſhall have reaſon to ſay, it hath been good for ye to hear, or that ye have received benefit by what ye have heard. This is a fair ſence, and carrieth a general truth in it: to hear another ſpeak, *may be our great conſolation*: And not only to hear a doctrine of conſolation may be conſolatory, but to hear a doctrine of reproof. Sowre and bitter words often prove ſweet to the hearer. A doctrine ſteeped in vinegar, words of gall and wormwood, may be honey and ſugar (in their effects) to the ſoul. Any word of truth and ſoberneſs diligently heard, may turn to conſolation. As the ſweet words of flattery and falſhood being received are bitterneſs in the end, ſo the bittereſt words of ſobriety and truth being received, are ſweetneſs in the end. *Paul* gives that charge to *Titus* concerning the *Cretians* (Tit. 1. 13.) *Rebuke them ſharply, that they may be ſound in the faith.* Cutting words have done great cures. Many a diſeaſed feſtred ſoul hath been made ſound, both in faith and manners, by ſevereſt reprehenſions. Thus *Job* might ſay to his friends, *Hear diligently my ſpeech*, and though I ſhould ſpeak nothing but rebukes, yet make uſe of it; *Let that be your conſolation.*

Talia taliq; modo loquuturus ſum ut maximā ex meis verbis relaturi eſtis conſolationem. Bold.

But ſecondly, and more generally, 'tis conceived that *Job* intends here his own conſolation, or conſolation to himſelf, *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolation*; that is, let this be inſtead of thoſe conſolations which you as friends, ſhould adminiſter to me, and which I have long waited to receive from you: As if he had ſaid, *You came purpoſely to comfort me, but I find very little comfort by your coming; all that you have ſaid to me doth not comfort me, now therefore I deſire you to hear what I have to ſay to you, and I will take that for the comfort which you intended me: hear me ſpeak, and that ſhall go for the conſolation which you promiſed, and I expected at your coming. Job* puts the word in the plural number, he ſaith not, *this ſhall be your conſolation, or I will take this in part of payment for the conſolation you promiſed me*: but, as if this were the whole ſum or the full payment, he expreſſes it in the plural number, *This ſhall be your conſolations.* I will give you an acquittance and diſcharge for all the conſolations you owe me, if I may now at laſt have a more reſpectful and friendly hearing. *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and this ſhall be your conſolations.*

Si me patienter audieritis, id mihi veſtrarum conſolationum loco erit. Merc.

> Hence note, Firſt, *'Tis a comfort to any man, eſpecially to a man in affliction, to be diligently and patiently heard.*

The afflicted ſhould hear words of comfort, and 'tis a comfort to the afflicted when their words are heard.

Firſt, When their words of petition, or their prayer-ſpeech is heard by God, that's conſolation indeed. And 'tis no ſmall comfort, when their prayer-ſpeech or petitions are heard by man. If a poor diſtreſſed creature puts up his petition to a man in power, and can but get it received, and heard, he rejoyceth; *my petition is heard* (ſaith he) ſomewhat will be done upon it.

Secondly, The afflicted take comfort when their counſel and advice, when their opinion in any caſe, or their pleadings in their own, are heard. As it is a multitude of conſolations to the afflicted when God hears them (all conſolations are wrapped up in that one) ſo many and very great conſolations, yea poſſibly all the conſolations which a man deſireth of man, may be found in this, if he will but hear what he hath to ſay for himſelf. When the afflicted ſpeak, they give vent to their ſorrows, and when they are heard, 'tis an income of joy: Though to be heard, be not comfort formally, or directly, yet effectively and virtually there is much comfort in it; yea, God ſpeaks as if he were comforted when he is but heard, or as if we comforted him when we hear him. God beſeecheth us, and ſpeaks intreaties to us, that his counſels and commands may be heard (*Pſal.* 81. 13.) *O that my people had hearkned unto me.* The Lord tells them indeed it would have proved their conſolation (*verſ.* 14.) *I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries.* Yet while he ſpeaks ſo pathetically, he ſeems to include his own conſolation in it as well as theirs. *O that my people had hearkned unto me!* It would have been good for them, and it would have given high content to my ſelf. And on the contrary we find the Lord ſpeaking of it as a trouble, and a burthen to him, yea as the breaking of his heart when his people ſtop their ears, and will not hear him. *I am broken* (ſaith the Lord) *with their whoriſh heart which hath departed from me, and with their eyes which go a whoring after their Idols* (Ezek. 6. 19.) Now, when or how doth the heart depart from God? Is it not by refuſing to hear his voice, or the voice of thoſe who ſpeak in his Name. This is a grief to God whoſe the Word is, and a grief to thoſe who are the Meſſengers of his Word. The faithful Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt can ſay this from their ſouls to thoſe that hear them, *Hear our ſpeech diligently, and this ſhall be your conſolation.* This ſhall comfort us more then all the good things you can beſtow on us; do but receive this gift, the truth, the Word of truth ſpoken to you, and this ſhall comfort us more then all that you can give. As all the ſorrows and miſeries which the wicked feel, and ſhall be compaſſed about with for ever, ariſe from this, becauſe they have not diligently heard that which hath been ſpoken; ſo, much ſorrow ariſeth to many who are godly, becauſe what they ſpeak is not diligently heard. How often do they ſay to ſtubborn children, to evil ſervants, to ſcandalous and looſe-walking friends, What joy would it be to our ſouls, if you would but attend and follow the counſel which we give you? We ſhould look upon this as a great mercy to us as well as to you. Why did *Paul* call the *Philippians his joy and crown*? (Phil. 4. 1.) Why ſaith he the ſame of the *Theſſalonians*, and more, *Yea are our glory and joy*? (1 Epiſt. 2. 19.) Was it upon any other account then this, becauſe they had received the Goſpel at his mouth and diligently heard his ſpeech? *Paul* received ſo much conſolation and joy when his ſpeech was heard, that he calls his hearers *his joy*, yea *his joy and his crown*; that is, his chief, his principal joy, or that which he rejoyced in more then he could in any earthly crown; it would not have pleaſed him ſo much to have been Emperor of the world, as to ſee ſouls brought off from the world, by his miniſtry, to the obedience of the Word. This made them his crown and joy, his glory and joy at preſent, and this gave him hope (in which ſence he calls the *Theſſalonians his hope*, verſ. 19.) that he ſhould rejoyce and glory on their behalf for ever, yea, that through Free Grace he ſhould receive *the crown of righteouſneſs*, as himſelf calls it (2 *Tim.* 4. 8.) or as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaking to the ſame point, calls it (1 *Pet.* 5. 4.) *A crown of glory that fadeth not away.* How can it be but a conſolation to be heard, when ſuch are the conſequences of being heard in ſome things; and in what things ſoever we are heard, we judge it to be of ſome conſequence to us, if we get nothing but a hearing. We ſometimes hear a poor man thus beſpeaking the rich; Sir, if you will but hear me open my caſe to you, though you do nothing for me, I will take it as a favour, and thank you for it: though you give me no relief, yet if you do but lend me your ear a little, that will be an Almes to me. Thus poor *Job*, *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolation.*

Verſ. 3. **Suffer me that I may ſpeak, and after I have ſpoken, mock on.**

We have here the ſecond argument whereby *Job* beſpeaks attention, *Let me ſpeak, and after that mock on*; do not judge before you hear. As approving, ſo mocking or diſapproving ſhould follow judgment, and judgment ſhould follow hearing; no man ſhould judge till he hath heard the matter, nor ſhould he either approve it till he hath judged it ſound and good; nor mock at it, till he hath judged it vain and worthleſs. *Suffer me that I may ſpeak, and after I have ſpoken, mock on.*

נשׂה *Ad pondus referri ſolet. Indicat ſuā orationem oneroſam & gravem viſam fuiſſe amicis.*

Suffer me that I may ſpeak.] The word which we render *to ſuffer*, ſignifies to bear a thing as a burthen, and ſo ſome underſtand it here. Bear me though I am burdenſom to you, and though my ſpeech be as a preſſure upon you. Some words are preſſing burthens, and require ſtrong ſhoulders to bear them. Some men are never ſo burdenſom as when they are ſpeaking, it were eaſier to bear any part of them then their tongues; vain words burden the wiſe, and the words of the wiſe are alwayes burdenſom to fools. The Sermons of the Prophets are called *burthens*; *The burthen of* Babylon; *The burthen of* Moab; *The burthen of* Judah, was the word which the Prophet ſpake concerning *Babylon*, &c. Theſe Propheſies were called burdens, becauſe they foreſhewed the heavy judgments of God, which ſhould fall upon thoſe places. And not only is that word burdenſom, which carrieth wrath and judgment in it; but that alſo is burdenſom to many, which carrieth any thing of holineſs or truth in it. And becauſe no man is very willing to bear a burthen, therefore *Job* begs, *Suffer me to ſpeak*; that is, bear with me that I may ſpeak, or bear me while I am ſpeaking.

Further, the words imply that as it was a burden to *Job's* friends to hear him ſpeak, ſo likewiſe to *Job*, that he was not ſuffered to ſpeak, *Suffer me to ſpeak*; his ſpirit was troubled becauſe he had not freedom to ſpeak, *Give me leave, let me have a fair hearing*; ſuch ſpeeches proceed from a troubled ſpirit, from a ſpirit troubled with ſome ſtop, or meeting with ſome impediment in doing that which it hath a great mind to do.

Hence note, Firſt, *Interruptions are troubleſom.*

When a man cannot be permitted to ſpeak his mind, he is moved to ſpeak his paſſion. *'Tis as grievous to be hindred in doing ſome things, as to be enjoyned to do ſome others.*

Secondly note, *Words which do not pleaſe our ſpirits, nor hit our opinions, are very burthenſom.*

Job ſpake the apprehenſion of his friends about himſelf. He ſuppoſed his ſpeech would be burdenſom to his friends, becauſe he knew it would croſs their judgment. Men hear that pleaſantly which ſuits their humour, and complies with their opinions or corruptions. They can hear ſuch diſcourſes all day long with delight; but if that be ſpoken which oppoſeth their judgment, or their intereſt, they are weary to bear it: A few ſuch words are as heavy as a mountain of lead. The falſe Prophet cenſured the words of *Amos* ſo heavy, that they were enough to ſink the earth out of its place; *The land is not able to bear all his words* (Amos 7. 10, 11.) *for thus* Amos *ſaith,* Jeroboam *ſhall die by the ſword, and* Iſrael *ſhall ſurely be led away captive out of their own land.* This was a burdenſom word indeed, and ſo is every unpleaſing word. The Apoſtle ſpeaks this ſence (2 *Cor.* 11. 1.) *Would to God you could bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me.* Folly is alwayes burdenſom, and a fool is uſually moſt burthenſom when he ſpeaks. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 27. 3.) that the wrath of a fool is heavier then a ſtone, or then the ſand. His wrath is extream heavy, and his breath is not much lighter; he is not to be born when he is angry, and 'tis hard enough to bear him if he do but utter a word; and if nothing elſe be burdenſom in his ſpeech, yet the lightneſs of it is. Therefore *Paul*, as *Job* in the Text, ſpeaks according to the opinion or ſence that ſome, at leaſt, among the *Corinthians* had of him, You judge me but a babler, or that I do but diſcover my own folly when I ſpeak; and I know that cannot but be burthenſom to wiſe men, yet *I would to God you would bear with me in my folly*; if you call it folly, bear it a while, though it be a troubleſom burden. For (as he grows further upon them in that Chapter *verſ.* 19.) *Ye ſuffer fools gladly, ſeeing ye are wiſe*; therefore for once ſuffer me too. 'Tis a ſuffering to hear fools ſpeak, yet you ſometimes ſuffer this, knowing that your ſelves are wiſe, and able to judge what is ſpoken, *Ye ſuffer fools gladly*; ſuffer me patiently while I do that which may incur a ſuſpition of folly, *commend my ſelf.* For a man to commend himſelf, though truly, hath in it a ſavour of vain-glory, and that is folly. Therefore *Paul* with a rhetorical inſinuation begs their pardon, and their patience, while he doth that for their benefit, and the vindication of his Apoſtleſhip, which had a ſhew of vanity in it. Now as all fooliſh ſpeaking is grievous to the wiſe, ſo alſo may that which is wiſely ſpoken, if it croſs the grain of their ſpirits, as was toucht before. Therefore ſaith *Job*, *Suffer me that I may ſpeak.*

Thirdly, *Job* might thus crave their patience, becauſe he had been taxed by his friends with too much ſpeaking; *Should not the multitude of words be anſwered?* (ſaid *Zophar*, Chap. 11. 1.) *Should a wiſe man utter vain knowlidge, and fill his belly with the Eaſt-wind?* ſaid *Eliphaz*, Chap. 15. 2. As if they had both ſaid, *This man will never have done, he talkes everlaſtingly.* Now *Job* as to this alſo anſwers their ſence of him; for as they diſtaſted what he ſpake, ſo, as they thought, he ſpake too much; therefore he now adds, Be it that I have ſpoken too much, yet give me leave to ſpeak a little more, *Suffer me to ſpeak*, I have yet ſomewhat to ſay. From this ſuppoſition,

Obſerve, *That a man of many words is very burthenſom.*

This hath been noted from other paſſages, whither I refer the Reader; talkativeneſs hath been diſtaſtful in all times: One of the Ancients in his Character of much ſpeaking, puts this Odium and ſcoff upon it; *If a man* (ſaith he) *would avoid an Ague, or a fit of a Fever, let him keep out of the company of men given to talk.* It is enough to make a man ſick, or to turn his ſtomach to hear ſome ſpeak; and 'tis not eaſie to hear any man ſpeak very much; ſome knowing this, run into a further error, burdening their hearers with many words to excuſe their many words; and (which makes the matter worſe) make long Apologies for their long and much ſpeaking. *Job* ſeems to make an Apology for his, but 'tis a very ſhort one; *Suffer me that I may ſpeak.*

Id genus hominis fugiat oportet quiſquis febre carere voluit. Theoph. l. de Char. c. de Garuli.

And after I have ſpoken, mock on.] The Hebrew is in the ſingular, *After I have ſpoken, mock thou on*; and hence ſome conceive that *Job* applies himſelf, eſpecially to *Zophar*, having obſerved him, more then the reſt, contemptuous, and ſcornful, *mock thou on* Zophar; yet under the ſingular number, all may be comprehended, and what he ſpeaks to one he means of the whole three, *mock on.*

Rogat ut priuſquam habenas laxent ad ridendum, audiant quæ ſit dicturus; fore fortè quod conſiliū mutent, vel ſi non ſe non curaturum. Merc.

In ſaying ſo, *Job* doth not encourage them to mock, or counſel them to ſcorn him or his words; he had checkt and reproved them for mocking more then once before. But we may underſtand him,

Firſt, That he ſpeaks *permiſſively*, or by way of grant; *Do but hear me, and then I give you leave to mock. Or when I have ſpoken again, if I do not ſpeak to purpoſe, if I do not anſwer your arguments, and offer that which may ſatisfie any reaſonable man, I am content to be laught at, mock on.* As if he had ſaid, *Before you give your ſelves full ſcope in mocking me, before you let your ſelves looſe to contempt, and ſcorn, let me adviſe you to hear me once more, and I deſire it for your own ſakes as much as for mine own, that it be not ſaid that you condemn me, much leſs, ſlight and mock me unheard: therefore hear me firſt, and then mock on; you will have time enough, and more occaſion, if I ſpeak beſides the point, or not home to it, to mock when I have done ſpeaking.* From this firſt interpretation we may obſerve,

That, *He who hath ſpoken his conſcience, and hath ſpoken it conſcientiouſly, is at a point (ſo far as concerns himſelf) how his ſpeech is entertained.*

Poſtquam quod ſui muneris eſt præſtant ſancti doctores, ſi rideantur ab auditoribus, ſuſtinent patienter. Greg.

Let me ſpeak my mind, and then come on't what will. The Prophet *Ezekiel* received his Commiſſion in this ſtile, *Thou ſhalt ſpeak to them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear* (Ezek. 2. 7.) Do you your duty; if they hear it, well and good, if they forbear, yet you are accepted. He that faithfully delivers the truth and mind of God (as *Job* was about to do) whether his ſpeech be received or rejected, he is ſatisfied. If it be received he rejoyceth, and he is not diſcouraged if it be rejected: whether they conſent or diſſent, whether they return approbation or ſcorn, whether they imbrace or mock, as to himſelf the care is taken, though (as *Jeremy* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 13.) *his eye ſhall weep in ſecret* for the pride of thoſe who reject and mock, as alſo for the miſery that is coming upon them, except they repent. 'Tis ſinful, and ſo, dangerous enough when the Word of God is not received, much more when it is ſcorned and mocked; yet the faithful Miniſters and Servants of Jeſus Chriſt may take comfort in that diſpenſation, which the hearers receive with ſcorn; they have done their Maſters will, and are, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Cor.* 2. 15.) *unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that periſh*; in them that entertain the Word, and in them that mock at it.

Secondly note, *Some are readier to mock thoſe who oppoſe them, then either to anſwer their arguments, or to recover them from their ſuppoſed errors.*

Surely *Job* took notice of ſuch a ſpirit moving in his friends, elſe he had not ſuggeſted this unto them. A man of judgment and underſtanding falls upon the Arguments of his opponent with reaſon, not upon his perſon with ſpleen. A tender heart pities thoſe that are miſlead, and mourns over them whom he conceiveth in an error, he doth not mock or triumph over them. Yet 'tis often ſeen that when men of contrary perſwaſions ingage upon a diſpute, whether about matters of Providence (as *Job* and his friends did) or of Faith; they who judge themſelves victors, deride the weakneſs and hiſs at the miſtakes of their brethren; and they who are overcome and have nothing more to ſay, will yet wrangle and revile, rather then ſay nothing.

And thus 'tis not only in ſpeaking, but in writing; pens as well as tongues drop ſcorn, when they think they have their adverſaries at an under, or are not indeed able to deal with their adverſaries. We may ſay to ſuch (though they are, not only in their own conceits, but in common eſteem, as ſtrong as Oaks in judgment, and as tall Cedars in knowledge) as the Lord doth in the Prophet to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of her ſpiritual adulterers (*Ezek.* 16. 30.) *How weak are your hearts, ſeeing ye do all theſe things, the work of an imperious whoriſh woman.* To mock and ſcorn any man upon ſuch terms as theſe, is below a man, yea below any humble-minded modeſt woman; How much then do they degrade themſelves, below man, below reaſon, and good manners, who fall to mocking the perſon, inſtead of anſwering his arguments, or who mock thoſe who may poſſibly fail either in arguing or anſwering? He is weak who indeed fails thus, but he is weaker who mocks thus.

Secondly, *After I have ſpoken, mock on,* carrieth in it the ſence of an ironical conceſſion; as if he had ſaid, *Let me ſpeak out, and then mock if you can. I doubt not but I ſhall take you off from mocking, or I believe you will have little mind to mock by that time I have done with you.* Hence the Septuagint render by a direct Negative, *Let me ſpeak; and when I have ſpoken, you will not mock me.* One of the Greek interpreters gives it in this Affirmative, *When I have done my ſpeech you will be quiet*; I ſhall make you as quiet as Lambs, you will give over mocking, by that time I give over ſpeaking.

Deinde non ridebitis me. Sept. *Poſt ſermones meos quieſcetis,* i. e. *ceſſabitis a ludibriis & irriſione.* Sym.

Hence obſerve, *When truth is put home, it will put the wittieſt beſides their jeſting, and the proudeſt beſides their ſcorning.*

Truth is ſtrong and will prevail. The wit of man is no match for the Word of God. Some have come purpoſely to mock at a Sermon, who before they have gone away have had little mind to mock; they who have come to laugh at the Preacher, or his Doctrine, have found it no laughing matter, they have been ſent weeping and crying home; they who have come to catch at the Word, rather then to hear it, the Word heard hath caught them; the Word hath arreſted and laid hold upon them with irreſiſtible, unanſwerable convictions, and ſo (which proves the nobleſt freedom) they and their wits have been led captive to the obedience of Chriſt. *Auſtin*, ſome where, confeſſeth of himſelf, that he came to hear *Ambroſe* (a man of an excellent ſpirit) rather to pick quarrels, then to receive inſtruction; but before he went away his heart was toucht, and then he had little leiſure and leſs deſire to play the critick with what was ſpoken. The word of God ſubdues the ſoul, it makes a man ſtoop, and take in his flag, it makes the ſcorner ſerious, and the lofty lowly. They who were moſt quarrelſom, have not had a word more to ſay againſt the Word, much leſs to ſcorn it.

Laſtly, Theſe words, *After I have ſpoken, mock on,* may very well bear the ſence of a dreadful threatning.

Hence obſerve, *The greateſt threatning of evil againſt ſinners, is to bid them ſin, or go on in doing evil.*

There are many terrible threatnings in the Word of God againſt thoſe who continue in ſin; but to be bid continue in ſin, is the moſt terrible threatning in all the Word of God. That ſeemingly favourable permiſſion or diſpenſation granted to wicked men, is a moſt fearful commination or threat againſt them (*Rev.* 22. 11.) *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill*; you that are mockers, mock on ſtill; and you that are deſpiſers, deſpiſe ſtill; to be given up to vile affections, and to be given up to wicked actions, is an argument of wrath given out to the utmoſt. And as it is unſpeakably ſad to be given up to do evil, ſo it is unſpeakably worſe to be given up to mock at that which is good. Let mockers fear and tremble, leaſt God give them up to a ſpirit of mocking. How ſhall they eſcape or be delivered from evil, who mock at that which is for their good? *Now therefore be ye not mockers, leſt your bands be made ſtrong* (Iſa. 28. 22.) 'Tis ſinful enough not to obey the Word, but it is the height of ſin to mock at it: They ſhall have ſtrong bands that obey not the Word, how ſtrong then ſhall theirs be that mock at it? The bands that are upon the moſt ſober ſinners (ſo we may call ſome ſinners comparatively to others) are ſtronger then they ſhall ever be able to break, but God will make bands for mockers ſevenfold ſtronger. Their danger is great, who walk in the counſel of the ungodly, theirs is greater who ſtand in the way of ſinners; but their caſe ſeems deſperate, paſt help or hope, paſt cure or recovery, who ſit down in the ſeat of the ſcornful.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?

Mark me, and be aſtonied, and lay your hand upon your mouth.

Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my fleſh.

THe firſt ſix Verſes of this Chapter (as hath been ſhewed already) are a preface to the whole. In which, upon many preſſing conſiderations, *Job* beſpake his friends attention. Two of them were diſcovered in *verſ.* 2, 3. He comes now to a third in *verſ.* 4.

Verſ. 4. **As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?**

The word which we render *Complaint*, ſignifies either a complaint formed out in words, or a complaint onely wrought and retained in the heart; here we may underſtand it both wayes; *Job* was much in meditation, and he was much alſo in diſcourſe; he was anſwering his friends, and he enquired of them, *Is my complaint, my open complaint, the bill of complaint which I bring in, is it to man?* *Job* was both Plaintiff and Defendant; while he defended himſelf againſt man, he was forced to complain of men to God. But to whom was *Job* ſpeaking? Was he not before his friends? Had *Job* a Congregation of Angels to ſpeak to, or was he admitted immediate acceſs to God? Or why, ſaith he, *Is my complaint to man?* Some render the word, *Le Adam, againſt man,* or, *of man*; *Is my complaint againſt man?* As if he had ſaid, *Had I no greater trouble to complain of then man is able to give me; though I might have, and upon that ground have juſt cauſe of complaining; yet I ſhould have leſs cauſe to complain: but the truth is, I have greater cauſe of grief then that, for the hand of God hath touched me, and the terrors of the Almighty encamp againſt me.*

שיח *Meditatio conqueſtio.*

לאדם *Contra hominem vel ad hominem? Numquid contra hominem diſputatio mea?* Vulg.

Ad hominē, i. e. ſuper ulla re humana, de qua apud hominem conqueri poſſim, nihil malorū meorum illatū eſt humana induſtria ſed divina providentia res omnes moderante.

קצר *Abbreviatus, decurtatus, denotat contriſtationem animi, quod afflictis ſpiratio fit brevior ob anguſtiā ſpiritus.*

me. But rather as we, *Is my complaint to man?* Is he the object of my complaint? Or do I make my moan to him? Others interpret, *to man*, by, about, or concerning the things or dealings of men; as if he had ſaid, *Do I complain of the wrongs received from men, or do I complain becauſe I receive no help from man, my wound is from the hand of God, and from him my help muſt alſo come. Is my complaint to man?*

And if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?

And if (*it were*) we ſupply thoſe words: The Original is only, *And if*; *If it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit,* (*my breath* ſay ſome) *be troubled?* The words which we render *to trouble*, ſignifies to *abbreviate* or *ſhorten. Why ſhould not my breath be ſhortned*; and then the ſence is made up in this manner; *Did I ſpeak to men only, why ſhould I not quickly make an end, and ſhorten my ſpeech, why ſhould I ſpend ſo much breath upon them?* Others by the word *ruarkh*, underſtand *the mind*, or, *the whole inward man*; *Why ſhould not my mind be troubled, or ſhortned?* Shortning of the mind, or ſhortneſs of mind is applied in divers Scriptures to men under grief and trouble of mind, (*Exod.* 6. 9.) Moſes *ſpake to the Children of* Iſrael, *but they hearkened not to* Moſes, *for the anguiſh of their ſpirit*, or, *for ſhortneſs of ſpirit.* Again (*Numb.* 21. 4.) *And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to compaſs the Land of* Edom, *and the ſoul or ſpirit of the people was much diſcouraged* (we put in the margine, *ſhortned*) *becauſe of the way:* Either becauſe of the troubleſomneſs and danger of the way, or becauſe of the length of the way, their ſpirit was diſcouraged; there was a Lion (danger) in the way: or, the way was long, and this ſhortned their ſpirits, that is, they thought they ſhould never get thorough that vaſt wilderneſs. The ſoul of the people was diſcouraged or ſhortned, becauſe of the way.

We find this Negatively expreſſed concerning the ſpirit of God (*Mic.* 2. 6, 7.) while ſome were about (as it were) to ſilence and ſuſpend the ſpirit it ſelf; *Propheſie not, ſay they, to them that propheſie. They ſhall not propheſie to them, that they ſhall not take ſhame. O thou that art named of the houſe of* Jacob, *Is the ſpirit of the Lord ſtraitned?* ſo we render, and put *ſhortned* in the margine: As if the Prophet had ſaid, *You may ſhorten or ſtraiten the ſpirit of man, but you cannot ſtraiten the ſpirit of God, you cannot ſhorten his ſpirit. Is the ſpirit of God ſhortned? Cannot he inlarge himſelf, and ſpeak out by the meaneſt of his meſſengers, notwithſtanding all your oppoſitions and contradictions?* Or, *Is the ſpirit of the Lord ſtraitned?* that is, *Is the ſpirit of the Lord ſo weakened that he cannot make his word effectual?* ſo it follows in the cloſe of the ſame verſe; *Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?* As if he had ſaid, *Is the ſpirit of the Lord ſtraitned from doing good to thoſe that receive the word?* And if the word threaten you with evil, you may thank your ſelves for it: you ſhould not hear of evil from my word were it not for ſin, nor ſhould you feel it, did you not continue and perſiſt impenitently in your ſins; therefore know that the Spirit of the Lord is not ſtraitned, either in doing good to thoſe who accept and obey the Word, nor in bringing evil upon thoſe who reject and diſobey it.

In *Job's* Text the word is applied to grief or ſorrow, this ſhortneth the ſpirit every way. Sorrow ſhortneth the ſpirit of man, as ſpirit is taken for life: ſorrow cuts aſunder or breaks the thread of life. *The ſorrow of the world cauſeth death*, (ſaith the Apoſtle 2 *Cor.* 7. 10.) 'Tis a killing ſorrow. 'Tis a ſhortner of the Spirit alſo, becauſe we cannot do that good we might; ſorrow over-acted, weakens the whole man, and leaves him unable to put himſelf forth in action. Joy is the dilatation or widening of the heart; a heart full of joy, is enlarged, much joy makes the ſpirit free to act. Therefore the Sun is ſaid *to rejoyce as a ſtrong man to run a race* (Pſal. 19. 5.) A ſtrong man rejoyceth, and joy makes him run ſtrongly, and put himſelf forth mightily. Now as joy enlargeth and openeth the heart, ſo ſorrow is a ſtraitner of it, it makes a man narrow-hearted, and narrow-handed, it ſtops him in his actings, or ſtayes him from acting. Therefore when the *Jews* were overpreſſed with ſorrow, away with it ſaith *Nehemiah* (Neh. 8. 10.) *The joy of the Lord is your ſtrength*; and I may ſay, the ſorrow of man is his weakneſs, and the ſhortneſs of his ſpirit.

Why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled, and ſhortned?

Job ſpeaks paſſionately and appeals to their judgment. Can ye ſhew me any reaſon why I ſhould not be troubled under my afflictions, yea though they were but ſuch as men uſually inflict, whereas mine ſpeak the arm of God. Being thus preſſed you will confeſs, that it is as hard for me not to complain, as it is to keep due bounds in complaining.

Having given theſe touches from the ſingle tearms, I ſhall offer three or four interpretations upon the whole.

As for me, is my complaint to man?

The queſtion denies, my complaint is not to man. Though *Job* ſpake to man, yet man did not determine, or bound his ſpeech, he ſpake beyond man. Taking the queſtion in this negative ſence, the latter branch of the verſe may be underſtood as a proof that he did not ſpeak to, or that his ſpeech was not bounded in man. As if he had ſaid, *If I were to deal, or had to do with men alone in proving this point, or in approving my perſon; if I had not an outlet to God, if my thoughts did not work towards him, my ſpirit muſt needs be troubled; it could not be otherwiſe, but my ſpirit muſt be ſhortned, or ſtraitned, I muſt fail and ſink under the burthen you have laid upon me; but I ſubſiſt, and my ſpirit bears up, I maintain and ſtand my ground ſtill, yea my heart is enlarged, therefore this is an argument I have not to deal with man only but with God, who ſupplies me with freſh ſpirits, and renews my ſtrength.*

Secondly, Theſe words (as hath been toucht before) are an argument to move attention; *As for me, is my complaint to man?* As if he had ſaid, *My work is not with you, not with you alone; my ſoul aſcends to heaven, and there I have liberty of ſpeech, God admits me, and I have acceſs to him: therefore why ſhould I not have audience and acceptance with you alſo?*

Others upon that account interpret thus, *Let me have your attention, for I ſpeak not of earthly mundane matters, but of the weightieſt heavenly truths; I ſtand up to maintain the honour and juſtice of God in his diſpenſations to the children of men, therefore hear me*; theſe things require much ſeriouſneſs from me in ſpeaking, and no leſs diligence from you in hearing.

Hæc attentum auditorem & ſerium poſtulant oratorem.

Thirdly, The words may be expounded disjunctively, and ſo like a bell that rings out, they ſtrike on both ſides; *As for me, is my complaint to man? And if it were ſo,* &c. As if he had ſaid, *Which ſoever of theſe you take, whether you ſay my ſpeech and complaint is to man; or whether you ſay it is not to man but to God; which of theſe ſoever you take, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled? If you ſay my complaint is to man, have I not reaſon to be troubled at his hard dealings, and unkind cenſures? When my words find ſuch ill conſtruction, and my perſon ſuch ill entertainment, have I not reaſon to be troubled? Or be it that my complaint is to God, have I not reaſon to be troubled? For doth he not deny me preſent deliverance, doth he not hold me yet in darkneſs? Is he not pleaſed to hide himſelf and all thoſe comforts from me, which I am waiting for? So, that whether my complaint be to man, or to God, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled, conſidering the preſent poſture of my condition; ſeeing things go thus with me. As for me, is my complaint to man?*

First obſerve, *Great and painful ſufferings put the beſt to complaints.*

Job denied not that he complained, he only denied that man was the ſole object of his complaint. What man in pain, eſpecially in ſuch pain as *Job's* was, can forbear complaining? An eminent Martyr in the Marian perſecution, ſaid thus to the Smith that was faſtning the chain with which he was to be bound to the ſtake; *Be ſure you make it faſt, for the fleſh will have its courſe:* Though the inordinate courſes of ſinful fleſh are ſtopt and mortified, yet ſenſitive fleſh, being pinched and pained will have its courſe, even in thoſe that are ſpiritual. The title of *Pſal.* 102. is *A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint.* And again (*Pſal.* 55. 2.) *I mourn in my complaint, and make a noiſe.* Such confuſion was upon his ſpirit, that he rather made a noiſe then ſpake; to utter a voice is an act of reaſon; inanimate and irrational creatures make a ſound, or a noiſe. *David* was ſo diſturbed in his complaint, that he rather made a noiſe, like the winds, or like a beaſt, then formed an articulate voice like a man, *I make a noiſe in my complaint.* So when he made his prayer in the cave (*Pſal.* 142. 2.) *I poured out my complaint before him.* *David* was ſhut up in the cave, and though it were a willing impriſonment (for he went thither to ſecure himſelf, he was glad to go to the cave for ſhelter) yet he complained and begged of God that he might not have occaſion of going to the cave for ſhelter. We find *Aſaph* in ſuch complaints (*Pſal.*77.) and *Heman* (Pſal. 88.) and *Hezekiah* (Iſa. 38. 14.) He complained and chattered like a Crane or a ſwallow. Indeed that queſtion put by the Prophet hath a negative ſence in it, (*Lam.*3.39.) *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins?* As if he had ſaid, *What reaſon hath a man to vex himſelf or murmur againſt God, as if he dealt rigorouſly and roughly with him, when all his ſufferings are procured by his own ſins?* And hence an ancient Verſion renders the Text thus, *Why doth the living man complain? Let each man complain for his own ſin.*

There is a twofold complaint.

The firſt ariſeth meerly from the ſence of affliction, or the feeling of what we ſuffer; this is natural, this even Chriſt himſelf was under, while he was on earth in a ſuffering condition.

Secondly, There is a complaint which ariſeth from diſcontent and murmuring at our afflictions, vexing our ſelves at the things we ſuffer. This is ſinful, ſuch complaining becomes not the people of God; though they complain under the feeling of affliction, yet they muſt not murmur at affliction, but bewail their own tranſgreſſion; the beſt of Saints under affliction have cauſe to complain of their own ſin, and the ſin of many is the cauſe of all their afflictions. Every complaint which hath murmuring in it, is evil, and all the complaints of evil men are murmurings. The Apoſtle puts ſuch murmurers and complainers together (*Jude* 16.) *Theſe are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own luſts.* Complaining, which comes from, or is accompanied with murmuring, hath its original in luſt, and is their work who walk after their own luſts. We may complain, but we muſt not murmur; God doth not deny us to bemoan our ſelves, when he is pleaſed to lay his hand upon us, but he will not bear it if we murmur at his hand.

Secondly, From the object of *Job's* complaint, *As for me, is my complaint to man?*

Obſerve, *A good man eyes God chiefly even while he is complaining to man.*

Job was before men, but his complaint was to God. There is little gotten by complaining barely to man; and as there are but few who can give any eaſe to our complaint, ſo there are not a few, who encreaſe and add to it. To tell them that it is ill with us, makes our caſe worſe. For,

Firſt, Many are inſenſible of the ſufferings of others, they lay them not to heart, they are to the complaints which come before them about matters of affliction, as *Gallio* was to thoſe who complained about matters of religion; *he cared for none of thoſe things*, he regarded them not; you were as good ſpeak to a wall, or a rock, as to ſome men, they are inſenſible of what others feel, therefore why ſhould they be complained to?

A ſecond ſort are over-ſenſible, and account it a great burthen to receive complaints from the poor and diſtreſſed; 'tis indeed a burthen, yet ſuch a burthen as we ought to bear; and we may number it among thoſe which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of (*Gal.* 6. 2.) *Bear ye one anothers burthens, ſo fulfilling the law of Chriſt.* That we have our ears open, to receive the complaints, and our hearts ready to grieve for the miſeries of our brethren, is a burthen which the law of Chriſt hath laid upon us; and the bearing of that burthen is therefore called *the fulfilling of the law of Chriſt*, becauſe much love (which is the fulfilling of the law) goes out and is acted in bearing it.

Thirdly, There are others, who though they give the hearing contentedly, and will haply tell you they are ſorry to ſee your afflictions, yet they ſay little and do leſs to eaſe your ſorrow: at moſt they give you but a mouth-full of good words, a breath of charity, or charity only upon the breath. Of ſuch the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 2. 15, 16.) *If a brother or ſiſter be naked and deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſay to them, depart in peace, be ye warmed, and filled; notwithſtanding you give them not thoſe things that are needful for the body, what doth it profit?* Such kind of cheap relief, a wiſh it were otherwiſe with you, be you warmed, and filled, and cloathed, is all that many give; they give nothing that is real ſuccour, either for ſoul or body; and who would complain to ſuch a generation as this?

Fourthly, There are a ſort who anſwer complainings with deſpiſings, who mock at miſery, and take advantage to inſult over others in their neceſſities; they will not give ſo much as a parcel of goods words, nor be at the charge of a good wiſh to thoſe who are compaſſed about with evil. Such entertainment *David's* complaint had when he ſent to *Nabal* (1 Sam. 25. 10.) *And* Nabal *anſwered and ſaid, who is* David, *and who is the ſon of* Jeſſe? *There be many ſervants now adayes that break every man from his Maſter:* as if he had ſaid, *what is he but a fugitive?* Thus he reviled him, *Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my fleſh that I have killed for my ſhearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?* A company of runagates and wanderers, do you think I will have to do with ſuch as he and his, or give them relief? How common is it to ſnap up complainers, with, *What are you? whence come you? what's that to me? what can I do for you? or why ſhould I though I can? upon what acquaintance, pray?* An ingenuous ſpirit can eaſier die under his burthen, then aſk help at the hands of ſuch.

Fifthly, Complain to ſome, and they will tell you, they have it not for you, they cannot relieve you, when yet it is in the power of their hand to do it. Some who never want money for a good bargain, or a profitable purchaſe, will alwayes be in want when they ſhould do a good work, or give to thoſe who have nothing. They who have enough to buy out two or three rich men, have not enough to relieve one poor man; they will rather make themſelves poor then help the poor, and be accounted weak rather then ſupport thoſe who are ready to ſink under their burdens; who would complain to men of ſuch a temper as this?

Sixthly, There want not ſome to whom if you complain, they will tell you plainly they will not relieve your wants, they make no excuſes, but refuſe down-right.

In the ſeventh and laſt place, very many are indeed unable to help thoſe who complain to them; though they are free enough, and have cordial deſires to do what is deſired, yet they cannot. They cannot reach ſuch relief as the complainers caſe calls for; they are not able to do it though they would. The line of the creature when it is longeſt and ſtretched to the utmoſt, may yet be too ſhort for our help. A great King had not wherewith to ſtop the cry of a poor woman (2 *King.* 6. 26.) *And as the King of* Iſrael *was paſſing by upon the wall, there cryed a woman unto him, ſaying, help my Lord O King. And he ſaid if the Lord do not help thee, whence ſhall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-preſs?* There was nothing in the barn-floor, nothing in the wine-preſs; therefore he turns her over to God: the Lord muſt help thee, I cannot. As in that caſe ſo in many the creature is ſhort-handed, it hath no help. The Prophet gives an elegant deſcription of this, (*Iſa.*3.6,7.) *When a man ſhall take hold of his brother of the houſe of his father, ſaying, thou haſt cloathing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruine be under thy hand.* In proſperous times men are ambitious of preferment, they bribe and beg for places of truſt and power, but in calamitous and confuſed times preferments and great places go a begging, and are refuſed. *In that day ſhall he ſwear, ſaying, I will not be a healer: for in my houſe is neither bread, nor cloathing, make me not a ruler of the people*; as if he had ſaid, *What do you mean to make me a ruler? I have nothing ſuitable to ſuch a ſtate; your ruine cannot be under mine hand; your ruine is too ruinous, and your trouble is too troubleſom for me to engage in.* As 'tis ſaid of ſome diſeaſes, *they are the Phyſitians reproach*, they cannot cure them; ſo the wounds and breaches of a State may be ſuch as no man dares undertake their cure and healing. And as publick, ſo private and perſonal evils are ſometimes ſo deſperate, that every man ſtands off, and ſaith, I will not, I cannot be a healer, I have neither bread nor cloathing enough for it; this ruine cannot be under my hand.

All theſe conſiderations tell us aloud, that as 'tis ſometimes in vain to complain to man, ſo 'tis alwayes beſt complaining to God, either immediately, or whenſoever we complain to man, to have God in our eye.

For the contrary of thoſe ſeven diſcouragements, in reference to our complaint to man, may be affirmed of God,

Firſt, He is ſenſible of our ſorrows.

Secondly, To hear our complaint is no burthen to him.

Thirdly, He doth not uſe to ſend any away with good words only.

Fourthly, He doth not deſpiſe thoſe who complain to him.

Fifthly, He doth not deny himſelf able to help.

Sixthly, 'Tis rare that he gives any a flat denial.

Seventhly, He never denies help to any becauſe their condition is paſt his help; he needs not to anſwer in my houſe is no bread nor cloathing, no help, nor healing, for with him is all power at all times: therefore let us complain to him. And beſides all this, we have not only a command from God to complain to him, but his promiſe to hear and help when we complain; and which is yet more, we honour God in complaining to him. We do a great honour to man, when we complain to him, yea it puts a piece of divinity upon him; and upon this account Magiſtrates to whom complaints are both moſt commonly and moſt properly made, are called in Scripture language, *Gods*. This is originally the Honour of God; for this ſpeaks our faith, that all power is in him, and that he is able to ſupport and relieve us in all our complaints. A beggar doth not make his complaint to a beggar who hath not a penny in his purſe, or is as poor as himſelf: but he complains to thoſe of whom he hath an opinion that they are able to help him. This perſwaſion of faith, that God is able to help, is not only a motive, but the ground of our complaining to him. *He that cometh to God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him,* (Heb. 11.6.) As it is our duty to believe this when we come to God with our prayers and complaints, ſo unleſs we believe this, we have neither any true foundation nor hope when we come. He that conſiders the Allſufficiency of God, and Inſufficiency of man, will ſee reaſon enough in all his troubles to ſay with *Job*, *As for me, is my complaint to man?* In this *Job* did well, and ſpake both wiſely and holily; But,

When he ſaith in the latter part of the verſe, *And if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?* Was this a becoming ſpeech? Should not *Job* rather have laboured to ſtop the trouble of his ſpirit, then thus encourage it? Should he not rather have checkt then backt his own unquiet heart? We may learn this from it,

> That *Good men ſometimes are ready to give too much way to their own grief and unquietneß of ſpirit.*

Why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?] Is the language of many in their troubles. Many reaſons may be given why we ought to ſit down in the midſt of our troubles with quiet ſpirits. 'Tis dangerous to perſwade our ſelves that we have reaſon to be troubled at any thing but ſin. Our ſpirits are rarely troubled enough with the evil of ſin, and uſually too much with outward evils. *Rachel weeps, and refuſeth to be comforted*; ſome faſten upon ſorrow, and are greedy of grief; that which we tranſlate (*Job* 10. 20.) *Let me alone that I may take comfort a little*, is by ſome rendred, *Let me alone that I may mourn a little*; let me have my ſcope in mourning. In *Pſal.* 77. *Aſaph* ſpeaks out the trouble of his ſpirit, *My ſore ran in the night, and ceaſed not; my ſoul refuſed to be comforted.* They give too much way to their troubles, who argue againſt their comforts, and put by the offer of them. When the Lord reproved *Jonah* for his paſſion (*Chap.* 4. 9. *Doeſt thou well to be angry?*) He replied, *I do well to be angry to the death.* What he ſaid of his paſſion of anger, others ſay of their paſſion of ſorrow; *We do well to be ſorrowful; why ſhould not our ſpirit be troubled?* They think they have reaſon for it, though their reaſons have no more reaſon in them, then that of *Micah* had (*Judg.* 18. 23.) who when the children of *Dan* asked him, *What ayleth thee? Anſwered, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the Prieſt, and what is this that ye ſay, What ayleth thee?* Have I not reaſon to complain, and be troubled when you have robbed me of my gods? Thus when they have loſt but an Idol (as he had) ſomewhat that they over-prized and put in the place of God, yet being queſtioned, why are ye thus troubled? They anſwer, why ſhould we not be troubled?

Chriſtians ſhould rather remember *David's* queſtion, then imitate *Job's* (*Pſal.* 42. 5.) *Why art thou diſquieted O my ſoul? why art thou caſt down?* He put his ſoul to anſwer for it, why art thou diſquieted? He ſaith not with *Job*, *Why ſhould not my ſpirit be diſquieted?* But, *Why art thou?* Give an account of it. When we find ſuch gueſts bluſtering upon our ſpirits, we may do much towards the quieting of them, by asking why they are ſo diſquieted? And 'tis both our wiſdom and our duty, if that will not do, to uſe all holy means to quiet them. When Chriſt (*John* 14. 1.) foreſaw a ſtorm, a black day, a day of trouble coming upon his Diſciple, he prevents and way-layes the trouble of their hearts, by forbidding it, *Let not your hearts be troubled*; be not diſturbed in your minds with cares and ſorrows concerning the iſſue of my abſence from you; ſay not, Our Lord and Maſter is gone, O what will become of us? *For I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you to my ſelf, that where I am there ye may be alſo.* Chriſt tells them he went to prepare a place for them, that he might thereby prepare their hearts patiently to bear his going away? Chriſt knew well, that if once trouble of heart did gather and grow upon them, it would work ſtrange effects, and either carry them beyond or leave them ſhort of the bounds of duty. Our danger is great when ſorrow is in power. I will ſhew you a twofold danger of it.

Firſt, Satan makes great uſe of any over-powerful paſſion. As he tempts ſome with joy, ſo others with ſorrow: ſome are drowned while they intend only to ſwim, and bath themſelves in pleaſures: Others are drowned while they ſwim and bath in ſorrows. Satan takes advantage of all extreams. Hence the Apoſtle adviſeth about the inceſtuous perſon, who was much grieved and afflicted, that the *Corinthians* ſhould comfort him (2 *Cor.* 2. 7.) He would not have him lye too long under thoſe troubles of ſpirit, *Leſt he ſhould have been ſwallowed up of too much ſorrow.* And (*verſ.* 11.) *Leſt Satan ſhall get advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.* Now as Satan would get an advantage againſt the whole Church by blemiſhing their diſcipline (which ſhould alwayes be tempered with love, and tend only to the ſalvation of the offender) as rigorous and immoderate; ſo he would be buſie to work his advantage upon the poor man himſelf, and ſwallow him up with too much ſorrow. We know what black work ſome have made by the over-workings of ſorrow. Satan doth his work in us, or tempts us to do his work in darkneſs; and that in a twofold darkneſs; Firſt, in the darkneſs of Ignorance; Secondly, in the darkneſs of Sorrow, or of a troubled mind. And as he *who lets the Sun go down upon his wrath* (that is, who continues long in, and cheriſheth his wrath) *gives place to the Devil* (Eph. 4. 26, 27.) ſo alſo do they who let the Sun go down upon ſuch ſorrow.

Secondly, Such ſorrow or trouble of ſpirit, unfits the ſoul for duty, ſuch can neither pray nor hear as they ought. As ſome trouble of ſpirit is an occaſion of quickning us to duty, ſo there is a trouble which dulls and deadens us. And as it unfits for ſpiritual, ſo for civil duties and employments: it makes a man careleſs, and ready to throw up all: take heed of ſuch ſorrows; ſay not, *Why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?*

Job having by this third Argument provoked his friends to attention, brings forth a fourth.

Verſ. 5. **Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed, and lay your hand upon your mouth.**

Mark me.] The word ſignifies properly to turn the eye or face upon ſome remarkable object. And as it ſignifies an attentive view of the eye, ſo likewiſe the ſerious attention of the mind. When *Job* ſaith, *Mark ye me*, he doth not ſo much call for their eyes, as for their underſtandings. Nor was it his perſon which he would draw them to look at, but his cauſe. He was in no ſuch comly caſe to invite beholders, his ſores and ſickneſs rendred him little pleaſing to the eye.

Mark me, that is, Firſt, *Mark* what I ſpeak, or attend my ſpeech.

Secondly, *Mark* what I ſuffer, mark what is fallen on me. As if he had ſaid, *Surely my friends, though ye have been a great while with me, yet ye have not heeded me.* 'Tis poſſible to be long in the preſence of a man, and not ſee him; that is, not conſider his ſtate and condition. Therefore after all this diſcourſe *Job* admoniſheth his friends to take better notice of him. *Mark me*,

And be aſtonied.] The word imports ſuch aſtoniſhment as is cauſed by ſtanding upon a high place, or beholding things from on high. He that ſtands upon a high cliff or tower, is aſtoniſhed to look down. Look down upon me, ſaith *Job*, mark the huge deep of ſorrow, which I am in, *and be aſtonied.* Aſtoniſhment is the conqueſt of ſenſe, and and of reaſon too; we are never aſtonied while either ſenſe or reaſon can act orderly, but when they are in a kind of huddle, this is our aſtoniſhment. Strange events, things ſeldom heard of, or rarely ſeen, breed aſtoniſhment. Aſtoniſhment is a degree beyond admiration; a man may wonder at that whereat he is not aſtoniſhed. Thus the Prophet repreſents the poſture of the neighbouring Nations at the fall of *Tyrus* (Ezek. 28. 19.) *And all they that know thee among the people ſhall be aſtoniſhed at thee; thou ſhalt be a terror, and never ſhalt thou be any more.* The fall of mighty Princes is matter of amazement and terror to all who hear of or behold it. Thus 'tis ſaid of the *Babylonian* (Iſa. 14. 16.) *They that ſee thee ſhall narrowly look upon thee, and conſider thee, ſaying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did ſhake kingdoms?* And (*verſ.* 10.) *Art thou alſo become weak as we, art thou become like us?* Who could have believed this? Who ever expected to ſee ſuch a change? And the Lord himſelf calls the heavens to aſtoniſhment at the ſtrangeneſs of his peoples dealing with him, (*Jer.* 2. 12.) *Be aſtoniſhed O ye heavens at this, and be horribly afraid; be ye very deſolate ſaith the Lord; for my people have committed two evils,* &c. And thoſe evils were ſuch and ſo great, as few if any had ever committed before them; they had ſinned without and beyond example, as is plain by the former verſe, *Hath a Nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods?* Where can you find a Nation changing their gods? The moſt barbarous Nations are tenacious of and zealous for their gods? They ſtick to their gods, though they be but Idols; *Hath a Nation changed their god?* Can you give me an inſtance of a people that have changed their gods, and turned them out of doors, though they are yet no gods: *But my people have changed their glory,* that is, their God (God is the glory of a people, his preſence is at once our honour and our ſafety.) Now when ſuch a thing as this was done, which was never done before, of which no example could be given for any records, then *be aſtoniſhed O heavens.* Now, as the ſin of *Jeruſalem* was an unparalleld ſin, ſo alſo was her puniſhment; and therefore ſhe calls all to behold and be aſtoniſhed, *Lam.* 1. 12. *Is it nothing to you all ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee, if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.* Thus *Job* ſeems to beſpeak his friends, was there ever any mans ſorrow like mine? Mine is a rare caſe, and may therefore juſtly breed aſtoniſhment. *Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed.*

בהל *Vehementis ſignificationis verbum, quod vix uſurpatur niſi ob aliquod inopinatum eventum, aut ob aliquam rem ineffabilem & admiratione digniſſimam.* Bold.

Hence note, Firſt, *A man, eſpecially a man in affliction, loves to have his caſe and diſcourſe throughly weighed.*

Unleſs you mark his affliction, you encreaſe it; and unleſs you mark his words, you diminiſh his perſon. Slight attention is diſpleaſing to man, much more to God; yet how oft doth God ſpeak, and we ſcarce mark? He hath reaſon to call upon us, *mark me*, both in what he ſaith, and in what he doth. We neither mark the words, nor the works of God as we ought. If men take it ill when they are not marked, how ill may the great God of Heaven take it?

Secondly, *Job's* friends had cenſured and judged him, but they had not markt him.

Hence note, *Some are more forward to cenſure then to conſider.*

They give judgment before they hear, and paſs ſentence before they mark; common reaſon bids us mark before we judge, and conſider before we give our opinion either about the actions of others or their doctrines. The Apoſtles rule and counſel leads us to this (1 *Theſ.* 5. 21.) *Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good.* The rule holds alſo, *Prove all things,* and then reject that which is evil. 'Tis not praiſe-worthy to hold that which is good, till we have proved it ſo; nor can we be excuſed in rejecting that as evil which is evil, till we have proved it to be ſo.

Thirdly, While *Job* ſaith, *Mark me, and be aſtonied,* He ſeems to intimate thus much to his friends; hitherto ye have neglected me and my ſufferings, but did ye *mark me*, ye would be aſtonied: He ſpeaks not imparatively, as commanding their attention; but optatively, deſiring them to mark him, and ſheweth what would follow, *Mark me*, and (certainly) *ye will be aſtonied.*

Hence note, *The reaſon why we are little affected with great things, is becauſe we do not enough conſider and mark them.*

That which ſcarcely moveth us, would aſtoniſh us; that which is ſmall in our eyes and eſtimations, would be great, if we did but weigh it. Did we throughly conſider what ſin is, many would tremble, who now make a ſport of it. The mercy of God, the unſpeakable love of Jeſus Chriſt, are little valued and prized by many, becauſe they enter not into a due conſideration of them, they take no pains to know what Redemption, Juſtification, and Salvation mean, and therefore (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 2. 3.) *they neglect ſo great ſalvation.* The Apoſtle *Peter* writing of the things of the Goſpel (1 *Pet.* 1. 10.) ſhews how induſtrious ſome of old time were about them, *Of which ſalvation the Prophets have enquired and ſearched diligently.* And (*ver.* 12.) *Which things the Angels deſire to look into them.* Angels pry into the ſecrets of the Goſpel, they (as the word uſed by the Apoſtle implieth) do, as it were, ſtretch out their necks to ſee the glory of thoſe myſteries. Were we but thus buſie and intent upon them, how ſhould we be ſwallowed up and tranſported with the riches of that Grace, with the freeneſs of that love which is manifeſted to the ſons of men! The works of providence, whether works of mercy, or of judgment, are full of myſtery, *they are great, and ſought out of all that have pleaſure in them* (Pſal. 111. 2.) If we would ſeek them out, and ſcan their circumſtances, we ſhould ſtand amazed, both at the wiſdom and power of God diſcovered in them. At this time it would be ſaid, *What hath God wrought? How unſearchable are thy judgments, and thy wayes paſt finding out; who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders?*

Fourthly obſerve, That *the dealings of God with ſome godly men are full of aſtoniſhment.*

David himſelf ſaid (*Pſal.* 119. 120.) *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* Thoſe Judgments which cauſe trembling before they come, being come cauſe aſtoniſhment. As the mercy which God ſometimes beſtows upon his ſervants, is beyond their faith, ſo many of his chaſtnings are beyond their fear; and as themſelves are aſtoniſhed at what God hath laid upon them, ſo others alſo ought to be. The Judgments of God upon *Jeruſalem* were ſo ſtrange, that the Kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed them; where faith ends, wonder muſt needs begin. What God did to *Jeruſalem* for the puniſhment of her ſin, he did to *Job* for the tryal of his graces; even ſuch things as no man who knew his integrity would have believed, though it had been told him before he ſaw it; and therefore he had reaſon to ſay, *Mark me, and be aſtonied,*

And lay your hand upon your mouth.] This action follows aſtoniſhment before ſpoken of (*Mich.* 6. 16.) *The Nations ſhall ſee and be confounded at all their might* (that is, to ſee their own might confounded and weakned) *and ſhall lay their hand upon their mouth.* The Image of *Harpocrates* (whom the antient Idolatrous *Egyptians* adored as the God

of

Harpocratis ſimulachrum qui Deus putabatur ſilentii, ſic exprimebatur ab Ægyptiis ut digitum apprimebat labris. Car. Steph. Lex.

Cum veniet contra digito compeſce labellum. Juv. Sat.

of ſilence) was formed and ſet up in the Temple of *Iſys*, with his hand laid upon his mouth. And this hath long obtained the honour and authority of a proverbial ſpeech, ſignifying thus much, that we will ſay no more, or that we have no more to ſay. This phraſe is often uſed in Scripture; for, beſides that it is uſed twice more in this book (*Chap.* 29. 9. & 40. 4.) we alſo read, how the *Danites* ſaid to *Michah's* Prieſt, who began to make a buſtle againſt them, and to demand, *What do ye?* (Judg. 18. 19.) *hold thy peace, lay thy hand upon thy mouth. Solomon* gives advice, (*Prov.* 30. 32.) *If thou haſt done fooliſhly in lifting up thy ſelf, or if thou haſt thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth*; that is, if thou haſt done evil, do not defend it, but repent of it; or if thou haſt framed evil thoughts in thy heart, yet let not thy mouth ſpeak them out in evil words; ſmother thoſe ſinful conceptions, let them never ſee the Sun, for 'twil encreaſe thy ſin, and procure thee ſhame. Among the ſeveral ſtations which the *Iſraelites* made through the wilderneſs, one was in *Punon*, or *Phinon* (*Numb.* 33. 42.) which as one of the Ancients obſerveth, ſignifieth, *ſilence* or *ſparingneſs of ſpeech*; upon which he maketh this uſeful application, *Let us be careful to take up our ſtation here ſometimes, while we are travailing through the wilderneſs of this world.* It may be our wiſdom to pitch in ſilence. The hand is well imployed while we ſtop the mouth with it from broaching and maintaining that which is evil, or from oppoſing that which is good. As to open the mouth, importeth readineſs to ſpeak, and boldneſs of ſpeech; ſo to lay the hand upon the mouth, notes ſilence, and properly ſilence upon conviction; that is, when a man hath heard ſuch reaſons as he cannot oppoſe or contradict. We uſe an expreſſion near this, *Lay your hand upon your heart*; that is, take the thing deeply to heart, apply it home. As to lay the hand upon the heart, notes internal ſpeech; ſo to lay the hand upon the mouth, notes the ſtopping of external ſpeech. *Lay your hand upon your mouth*, is as if *Job* had ſaid, *Mark me, and you will have little reaſon and leſs forwardneſs to ſpeak any more*; or, *My counſel to you my friends, is, That ye would hear more and ſpeak leſs; yea, that in this caſe ye would now be ſilent and ſpeak no more.*

Ambros *de* 42. *filiorum* Iſraelis *manſionibus.*

There are two things which ſhould ſtop the mouth, and impoſe ſilence.

Firſt, The plainneſs and evidence either of reaſon or of proof (*Rom.* 3. 19.) *What the law ſpeaks, it is to thoſe that are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may be guilty*; that is, the law brings ſuch plain evidence and conviction, that no man ſhall have a word to ſpeak againſt it. If God ſhould ſpread before men their lives, and his law in the purity and ſpiritualneſs of it, every man muſt ſit down ſilent, and lay his hand upon his mouth.

Secondly, The mouth is ſtopped by the depth and darkneſs, by the inevidence and obſcurity of that which is before us; when things are ſo vailed and clouded that we cannot ſee into them, what can we ſay to them? 'Tis then high time to lay our hand upon our mouthes, and inſtead of ſpeaking to admire. We may conceive *Job* intending both theſe *ſtop-mouthes* to his friends. Firſt, That the reaſon of Gods dealing with him was ſecret and dark. Secondly, That he intended to anſwer their objections with ſo much plainneſs of ſpeech, and evidence of reaſon, that either they ſhould not be able to reſiſt him, or it would be very dangerous for them if they did; and therefore (ſaith he) *lay your hand upon your mouth.* Which he preſſeth upon them yet further in the words following.

Verſ. 6. **Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my fleſh.**

This verſe contains *Job's* laſt Argument, moving his friends to attention. The reaſon ſtands thus; the very remembrance of that which I am about to ſpeak to you makes me afraid and tremble, therefore you have reaſon to attend and mark what I ſpeak; ſurely I ſpeak not of ſlight matters, nor do I tell you ſtories of I know not what, I am ſerious, be you ſo.

When I remember, I am afraid.] When I remember, what? Firſt, ſay ſome, The trouble and affliction, the pains and ſorrows which I am in. Secondly, ſay others, When I remember *what proſperity God gives the wicked*; as in the next verſe, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?* When I remember theſe diſpenſations of God, it ſtrikes me with terror.

Doctis quibuſdam placet hic ſenſus Jobum *partim doloris ſui recordatione, partim mira Dei adminiſtratione de qua mox dicturus eſt, ſic conturbari ut totus horreat.* Merl.

Trembling taketh hold of my fleſh.] This clauſe hightens the former, I am altogether afraid, I do not only tremble, *but trembling taketh hold of me. Moſes* ſpeaks in this form (*Exod.* 15. 13.) *Thou in thy mercy haſt led forth the people which thou haſt redeemed,* &c. God had but juſt put them over the Sea, and yet, by the ſpirit, *Moſes* ſaw them put into the poſſeſſion of *Canaan*, and his faith propheſied what poſture other Nations ſhould be in when God ſhould do theſe things, *The people ſhall hear and be afraid, ſorrow ſhall take hold of the inhabitants of* Paleſtina. He ſaith not that they ſhall be full of ſorrow, but *ſorrow ſhall take hold of them*, as a Sergeant takes hold of a man to arreſt and carry him away: So it follows, *Sorrow ſhall take hold of the Dukes of* Edom, *the mighty men of* Moab, *trembling ſhall take hold of them.* In this the Scripture ſets forth the exceſſiveneſs of their troubles, that fear ſhould not only fall upon them, but take hold of them. Thus ſaith *Job*, I am not only afraid, *but trembling hath taken hold of my fleſh.* And if the remembrance of theſe things makes me afraid and tremble, how can you who are preſent but be troubled and deeply affected with the ſight of them?

Si tanta calamitatis ſola recordatio me conſternaret quanto magis vos præſentes ſi animum advertetis neceſſarium eſt obſtupeſcere ob calamitatem meam. Jun.

I need not draw out particular Obſervations here, having ſhewed upon other places how dreadful the judgments of God are, and what effects they have produced upon the ſpirits of good men. *Habakkuk* who had only a prophetical viſion of them, expreſſeth his ſence in the higheſt language of amazement (*Chap.* 3. 16.) *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entred into my bones, I trembled in my ſelf, that I might reſt in the day of trouble.*

Only here obſerve a double difference.

Firſt, Between the godly and the wicked at all times.

Secondly, Between the godly of thoſe times under the law, and the godly who live in theſe Goſpel times.

To the firſt, A godly man trembles at the judgments of God, a wicked man is little moved at them: The foreſight or remembrance of Judgments makes a godly man fear, but a wicked man is hardned in the ſight and under the feeling of them.

To the ſecond, The people of God under the Law, being dealt with more by viſible diſpenſations of mercy and judgment in the times of the Law (as is evident, eſpecially throughout the twenty-ſixth Chapter of *Leviticus*, and the twenty-eighth of *Deuteronomy*) they were more ſubject to fear and deſpondings of ſpirit, upon ſad providences and appearances, then now believers are under the Goſpel. The grace of God appearing more eminently in theſe Goſpel times by Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God being more abundantly ſhed abroad in the hearts of believers by the Holy Ghoſt, they are delivered from that ſpirit of bondage, and the preſſures of ſervile fear, under which formerly they were extreamly held in ſubjection; and have therefore clearer cauſe of rejoycing and glorying in tribulation then they had; and of ſaying with *Paul, We are only as ſorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing, as having nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things:* For as perfect love caſteth fear (that fear which hath torment) quite out, (1 *Joh.* 4. 18.) ſo the more love is perfected, the more is fear caſt out.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

Their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight with them, and their off-ſpring before their eyes.

Their houſes are ſafe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.

Their bull gendreth and faileth not, their cow calveth, and caſteth not her calf.

JOB having finiſhed his Preface, proceeds to refutation, which he grounds not only upon reaſon, but (and that chiefly in this place) upon experience, teaching his friends by their ſenſe, and bidding them ask their own eyes, whether he did not ſpeak truth, and themſelves an error?

Verſ. 7. Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?

As if he had ſaid, *Do yon ſee all or many wicked men in an afflicted eſtate? Why then have you thus concluded againſt me that I am wicked, becauſe afflicted?* The whole context of the ſeven verſes next enſuing, are a continued deſcription of the wicked mans proſperity.

His proſperity is deſcribed;

Firſt, What it is in life, or while he liveth.

Secondly, What it is when he is dying, or in the manner of his death.

The proſperity of his life may be conſidered, either, as to his perſon, or as to his relations. His perſonal proſperity is deſcribed (*verſ.* 7.) His proſperity in relations, is deſcribed, Firſt, In his children (*verſ.* 8.) Secondly, In his whole family, or in all within doors (*verſ.* 9.) Thirdly, In his cattel or ſubſtance without doors (*verſ.* 10.) And all this outward proſperity is hightned by the joy, mirth, and gladneſs with which he and his abound, while he aboundeth in theſe outward enjoyments, *They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ* (verſ. 11, 12.) Thus we have the reſolution of this context in the deſcription of the wicked mans proſperity, while he lives. His proſperity in death is ſet down, *verſ.* 13.

Verſ. 7. Wherefore do the wicked live?

This verſe contains the perſonal proſperity of the wicked man, and therein we have a gradation of three ſteps; or his proſperity riſeth by three ſteps.

First, *He lives.*

Secondly, *He becometh old.*

Thirdly, *He is mighty in power.*

To all this *Job* prefixeth *a wherefore*, and why all this? Or how comes it to paſs, that the wicked man liveth, and not only liveth, but becometh old, and not only becometh old, but waxeth mighty in power; *Wherefore is all this?* He ſpeaks either admiringly, or chidingly; give me an account of it. If (as you my friends have often told me) wicked men are alwayes puniſhed in this life for their ſins, I wonder whence it comes to paſs, that ſo many wicked men live, and not only live, but proſper? And whence is it that I ſuffer all theſe miſeries (as you ſay) for my ſins, if the wicked, as your eyes may teach you, enjoy ſo much proſperity? Unriddle theſe queries, reſolve theſe doubts.

Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, and mighty in power?

This *wherefore* may have a double reference; Firſt, To the opinion of his friends, who held that God diſtributeth evil to wicked men, and good to good men in this life. Now, ſaith he, for as much as this is your principle and your opinion, reconcile your principle, and this experience together, *Wherefore do the wicked proſper?* For as much as you have ſaid, God gives out allowances, and lots to men, as men are good or bad; to the good he gives good things (ſay you) and to the evil, evil. As the *wherefore* is thus applied, take this note from it.

No reaſon could be given why wicked men ſhould proſper in this life, if God dealt with all men in this life according to their deſervings.

If deſert were the rule, we were not able to give a reaſon why wicked men proſper, who indeed deſerve not to live in the world; nor why godly men, whom the world doth not deſerve, ſuffer ſo much while they live. As the world is not worthy that it ſhould have godly men to live in it, ſo ungodly men are not worthy to live in the world; how then ſhall we anſwer if ſelf-worthineſs carry it, when commonly 'tis worſt with the beſt, and beſt with the worſt?

Again, The word *wherefore* may have reference to *Job's* own doubt; wicked men proſper, why do they proſper? *Wherefore do the wicked live?* And this is a quere which hath all along troubled the ſpirits of the Saints, eſpecially in thoſe times, nor are they alwayes or eaſily ſatisfied in theſe about it; many were then puzzled, and ſo they are now when they ſee wicked men proſper, and godly men afflicted. That a wicked man is vexed or afflicted, no man wonders at it; every one can tell *why*, and give you a *wherefore:* but that he ſhould live, and proſper, this is hard to reſolve. Again, that a godly man is bleſt, and thrives, and lives comfortably, no man wonders at this; for he hath the promiſes of this life as well as of that which is to come. But to ſee godly men afflicted, trod under foot, and ſtript of all; theſe diſpenſations put many to a ſtand, *Wherefore is it that the wicked proſper?* And, *Wherefore is it that the godly are afflicted?* That God is juſt, a godly man knoweth, and ſaith as *Abraham* (Gen. 18. 25.) *Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* God is juſt, and therefore doth juſtly. The people of God have it alwayes upon their ſpirits, to honour God thus. And they give him glory in that other principle which *David* aſſerts (*Pſal.* 5. 5.) *That the fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in his ſight, and he hates all workers of iniquity.* Theſe things are unqueſtionable with them, and therefore they are often ſcanning upon, queſtioning and enquiring about this point, *Why do the wicked proſper?*

Hence obſerve, *It is ſome trouble to good men to ſee evil men flouriſh and live free from trouble.*

It hath been ſo, and 'tis ſo to this day; many a good man hath had much ado to digeſt this morſel, and to get above this temptation. While *David* admoniſheth (*Pſal.* 37. 1.) *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of the wicked man, and be not envious at the evil doer;* he more then intimates that the beſt of men are ready to envy and fret when they proſper. And either he or *Aſaph* tells us how he found it working upon his own heart (*Pſal.* 73. 3.) *I was envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked.* And he ſtaid not here, but was over-born by the ſtrength of this temptation, to make a very unbecoming and dangerous concluſion (*verſ.* 13.) *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued and chaſtned every morning.* He indeed corrects himſelf, *verſ.* 14. *If I ſay I will ſpeak thus, behold I ſhould offend againſt the generation of thy children;* and when *he thought to know this* (that is, to ſee the reaſon of it) *it was too painful for him, till he went into the ſanctuary of God,* (that is, till he conſulted with God) *then he underſtood the end of thoſe men.* Till we look to that reckoning which lyeth beyond this life, we get no reſolution of this doubt.

We may anſwer this quere further (*Why the wicked proſper in this life?*) two wayes.

First, Negatively.

Secondly, Affirmatively.

If you ask, Wherefore do the wicked proſper?

I anſwer, Firſt, Negatively; and I ſhall give you a fivefold negation.

Firſt, It is not becauſe God loves their perſons, or bears them (as ſuch) any good will.

Secondly, It is not becauſe God approves their wayes, or likes their doings.

Thirdly, It is not becauſe God intends them good, or hath a purpoſe to beſtow further bleſſings upon them.

Fourthly, It is not becauſe God cannot pull them down, lay them low, and cut them off: he can weaken the ſtrongeſt, and cauſe the greateſt to fall before him; he can cruſh them as the moth.

Fifthly, It is not becauſe he dares not deal with them, or is affraid to provoke their power. Some Princes of the world have been forced to let ſome wicked men alone, to live long and grow mighty in power; they durſt not provoke them, they knew not what fires they might ſtir againſt themſelves. The ſons of *Zerviah* were too hard for *David*, but there are none too hard for God. For none of theſe reaſons doth the Lord ſuffer wicked men to live, become old, and mighty in power.

We may anſwer the queſtion Affirmatively three wayes.

Firſt, In reference to God.

Secondly, In reference unto the godly, and

Thirdly, In reference to the wicked themſelves.

Firſt, Wherefore do the wicked live, and proſper? They are ſuffered to do ſo in reference to God himſelf.

Firſt, To glorifie his patience, and long-ſuffering. Theſe attributes would not ſhine forth with ſuch luſtre in the world, did not wicked men live and thrive in the world;

If God ſhould immediately deſtroy every one that doth wickedly, he ſhould be very juſt, and his holineſs would appear in this; but thoſe Attributes of patience and long-ſuffering would not appear: but when God ſuffers the wicked to continue, and thoſe whom he is able every moment to deſtroy, to ſurvive many years, how doth this lift up his glory, and tell us, that he is *ſlow to wrath, though he be great in power.*

Secondly, In reference to God. The Apoſtle gives us an account why (*Rom.* 9. 22.) *What if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction?* What hath any man to ſay, if God reſpecting the further manifeſtation of his own wrath, ſeem to favour wicked men? If it be thus (ſaith the Apoſtle) what hath any man to ſay to it? If as God ſuffers them, to ſhew forth his own patience and long-ſuffering here, ſo to have the fuller blow at them hereafter, and to take (as it were) the more advantage in making his power known, even the power of his wrath: For this reaſon he endureth with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath, *fitted to deſtruction*; they are fitted to deſtruction already: and they are veſſels of wrath, ſuch as deſerve to be filled with wrath, brim-full with wrath every day; yet they are full of comforts, and continue ſafe a long time, that their periſhing at laſt may make God more known in the greatneſs and irreſiſtibility of his power. The power of God is the more known when once it acteth, by how much it ſtayeth the longer before it acteth upon wicked men.

Thirdly, It is, becauſe *the Lord hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by Jeſus Chriſt in righteouſneſs.* A day is coming which is the day of the revelation of his righteous judgment (*Rom.* 2. 5.) Therefore he lets things go thus at preſent. He will at laſt render to every man according to his work; but now he doth not: And becauſe he hath this in his heart, he ſpares wicked men a while, gives them a reprieve, and doth not ſeal the Writ for their execution.

Secondly, We may anſwer this Queſtion (*Wherefore do the wicked live?*) affirmatively, in reference to the godly.

Firſt, To teach them patience towards all men, to love their enemies, to do good to thoſe that hate them, as was further ſhewed, *chap.* 20. *v.* 29.

Secondly, God ſuffers the wicked to proſper in ſin for trial of the Graces of his ſervants. There are many Graces which would come to little trial, if wicked men ſhould not thrive in their ſins. The grace of Patience is tried by this means; becauſe wicked men proſpering, get power to vex and perſecute them; yea, their patience is alwayes tried by the proſperity of the wicked, though they hurt them not with their power; though they are not thorns and briars to tear and trouble them, yet to ſee them proſper, is an exerciſe of patience under, and ſubmiſſion to the will of God.

This alſo trieth the ſoundneſs and ſteddineſs of their judgment, whether they will alter their opinion, either concerning themſelves or wicked men, becauſe of outward diſpenſations. Then a godly man is eſtabliſhed indeed, when he neither thinks the worſe of himſelf becauſe he is afflicted, nor the better of wicked men, becauſe they thrive and proſper.

Laſtly, We may anſwer this Query (*Why do the wicked proſper?*) affirmatively alſo, in reference to the wicked themſelves, in two things.

Firſt, It renders them more inexcuſable in the day of wrath.

Secondly, This gives them opportunity to ſhew what they are, both which points were inſiſted upon, *chap.* 20. *v.* 29. Whither I refer the Reader.

Thus we may anſwer *Job's* Queſtion, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?*

I ſhall now ſpeak more diſtinctly to theſe words, as they lie in this gradation.

Wherefore do the wicked live?

Some read in the time paſt, *Wherefore have the wicked lived?* Others in the time to come, *Wherefore ſhould the wicked live?* We tranſlate in the preſent time, *Wherefore do they live?* To live, in Scripture is taken two wayes.

Firſt, For a bare ſubſiſtence in the world, or for the holding (as we ſay) of life and ſoul together, to be kept out of the grave, or to be above ground; this is to live: So ſome reſtrain it here; *Wherefore do the wicked live?* That is, wherefore have they ſo much as a breathing-time in the world? that's too much for them. Wherefore are not their filthy and unclean ſouls preſſed by death out of their bodies? why are they not tumbled into the grave? why are they not tumbled down into hell? why do they cumber, ſtill cumber the world? A wicked man is not worthy to live, much leſs is he worthy of the comforts of this life. If a wicked man had his deſert, he ſhould have nothing but wrath. *The wrath of God is revealed againſt all unrighteouſneſs. The wages of ſin is death*; that's all he earns, why then doth he live?

Secondly, To live, ſignifies not barely to live, but to live comfortably, to have content with our life; to live is to proſper. Thus the word is often uſed in Scripture (*Pſal.* 118. 17.) *I ſhall not die, but live.* *David* did not look upon himſelf as immortal, or that he ſhould never die; he knew he was ſubject to the ſtatute of death: but his meaning is, I ſhall not die now, I ſhall not die by the hands of theſe men, I ſhall not die the death which they have deſigned me to; or when he ſaith, *I ſhall not die, but live*; his meaning is, I ſhall live comfortably and proſperouſly, I ſhall live as a King. That which we tranſlate (1 *Sam.* 10. 24.) *God ſave the King*, is, *Let the King live*, that is, let him proſper and have good dayes; let him have peace with all, or victory over his enemies. 'Tis ſaid in that Propheſie of Jeſus Chriſt (*Pſal.* 72. 15.) *He ſhall live.* Chriſt hath not only a being, but a glorious being. Though Jeſus Chriſt had no outward pomp, while he was in the world, yet they who knew him, honoured him; and all power was committed to him. *He ſhall live, and to him ſhall be brought of the Gold of* Sheba; *prayers ſhall dayly be made to him, and dayly ſhall he be praiſed.* Chriſt lives and reigns, all his foes ſhall be made his footſtool. When *Paul* ſaith (1 *Theſ.* 3. 8.) *Now I live, if ye ſtand faſt in the faith*; he would have the *Theſſalonians* know, that his life would be a continual death, if he ſaw them go back in Grace, and decline in Faith; and that it would add joy, yea, a Crown to his life, if they ſtood faſt in the faith, and keep cloſe to the profeſſion of the Goſpel. The two witneſſes (*Rev.* 11. 8.) are ſaid to be ſlain; which is underſtood, not of a corporal, but of a civil death. While the witneſſes of Chriſt live in the body, they are ſaid to be ſlain and dead, becauſe they live in affliction and trouble; and as that Text ſpeaks, propheſie in ſackcloath, that is, are poor and low in the world. To be ſtript of the comforts and contentments of this life, is in Scripture-language, to be ſtript of life it ſelf. As there is a life of Grace, and a livelineſs of Grace; a living hope, and a lively hope (1 *Pet.* 1. 4.) ſo there is a life of Nature, and the livelineſs of Nature. We may underſtand this Text of both, ſpecially of the latter; 'tis more then a wicked man can expect, that he ſhould live; but that he ſhould be lively and ſtrong, that he ſhould live richly, comfortably, joyfully, this offends and ſtumbles many, and they cannot but put *Job's* Queſtion, *Wherefore do the wicked live?* yet that which follows, offends more; they do not only live, but *become old.*

Non eſt vivere ſed valere vita.

The ſecond ſtep of their proſperity is the length of life. *Zophar* (*chap.* 20.) grants that a wicked man may triumph, he may have his fill of joy; *but* (ſaith he) *the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment.* Here *Job* oppoſeth *Zophar*, affirming not only that wicked men live, but live long; they do not only proſper, but proſper many years; they become old in proſperity. The word which we render *to become old*, ſignifies ſo to become old, as to continue ſtrong in old age, and to have, as a renewing of years, ſo, of abilities. The old age of ſome men is nothing but weakneſs, infirmities ann diſeaſes overtake them, and make their lives a burden, both to themſelves and their friends; but others are ſtrong and luſty, they have a good old age. The word is uſed to expreſs the antiquity of God himſelf (*Dan.* 7. 9.) Where he is called *The ancient of dayes.* Now though the Lord be the ancient of dayes, yet there is no decay upon the Lord; he is as ſtrong and powerful now, as he ever was, and ſo he ſhall be to everlaſting. As his years fail not, or have no end (*Pſal.* 102. 22.) So his ſtrength

עתק *Veteraſcere, ſeneſcere.*

עתיק יומין *Durabilis cujus dies non deficiunt, qui ſemper idem eſt.*

ſtrength faileth not, nor hath any end, his power is not abated, his hand is not ſhortned by time, no, nor by eternity. Thus (in proportion) we are to underſtand it here; *Job* ſaw wicked men, having an old age like youth, a winter with a ſpring in it, natural vigour flouriſhing, when (as *Solomon* deſcribes old age, *Eccleſ.* 12. 5.) *The Almond tree flouriſhed.* There is yet a third ſtep; *Job* obſerved wicked men not only to live and grow old, but,

חיל *Pollent opibus. Nam in opibus potentia hominis conſiſtit. Confortavi divitiis.* **Vulg.** *Etiam comparant divitias.* **Tharg.**

To be **Mighty in power.**] In the two former words, *to live and become old*, we had their natural power; in this, their civil. *They are mighty*, or, *ſtrengthened in power*. The word which we tranſlate *power*, ſignifies alſo *riches*. Thus ſome render it here; *They are mighty in riches*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*. Riches are ſo expreſt, becauſe there is a power in them; and moſt rich men are powerful men. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe gives this reading, *yea, they gather riches*. Some grow old and poor, they loſe their wealth, while they heap up dayes; *Theſe grow old, and gather riches*. So that now we are at the height of the wicked mans proſperity; he lives many dayes, and with many dayes, he hath abundance of riches; and with his riches, power and authority; for that is a ſecond ſignification of the word, which our Tranſlation rather enclines to. He is not only a rich, but a powerful man; he is cloathed with authority and command; he is advanced to Magiſtracy, and all ſubmit to him: He is the Head, and doth what he pleaſeth; he ſpeaks, and all obey him; *He is mighty in power*. This is the higheſt ſtep of the wicked mans proſperſty. The Orator long ago ſpake with indignation concerning *Cataline* the Conſpirator, *The man lives*; he adds, *and comes into the Senate*: As if he had ſaid, It is too much for this man to live, yet behold he lives in power and authority. So, *Job*, to ſet forth the glory of wicked men, ſaith, *They live, and become old, and are mighty in power.* They are placed upon the very pinacle of honour, and are lifted up above their brethren. From the perſonal proſperity of wicked men, *Job* proceeds to that of their Relations.

Vivit, imo in Senatum venit. Cic. *de* Catal.

Verſe 8. **Their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight with them, and their off-ſpring before their eyes.**

Not only are they, but their children alſo are eſtabliſhed. This is a great addition to their worldly happineſs. *Abraham* was a man poſſeſſed of great riches and power, and (which was more then all his poſſeſſions) God told him (Gen. 15. 1.) *I am thy Shield and thy exceeding great reward*; yet *Abraham* ſaid, *Lord God, what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* verſ. 2. This want ſowred all his enjoyments; though he were the beloved of God, yet he was pinched with this, *I go childleſs*: A child was more to him then all other worldly gifts; yet, I grant, it was not a meer natural child which he waited for, but a child of promiſe. So that his fear was not (indeed) ſo much that he ſhould have no children, but leſt the promiſe of the bleſſed Seed ſhould not be accompliſhed in him: Such a child was moſt in his eye, nevertheleſs, a child was much in his eye, as that bleſſing, without which all his outward bleſſings would come ſhort of his deſires, and be imperfect. Therefore *Job* deſcribes the proſperity of wicked men, not only by their riches and abundance, but by their children. *Their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight.*

Their ſeed.] That is, by an ordinary Metonymie, their children are **eſtabliſhed.**]

The word ſignifies to ſtabliſh, firſt, Firmly. Secondly, To eſtabliſh orderly and rightly, or an exactneſs of eſtabliſhment. *David* uſeth this word in his prayer to God about the ſettlement of his own houſe (2 *Sam.* 7. 26.) *Let thy name be magnified for ever, ſaying the Lord of Hoſts is the God over* Iſrael, *and let the houſe of thy ſervant* David *be eſtabliſhed before thee*, that is, let the poſterity of *David* be orderly ſtabliſhed. And it is applied to the ſettlement of all the Saints in their generations (*Pſal.* 102. 28.) *The Children of thy ſervants ſhall continue, their ſeed ſhall be ſtabliſhed before thee.* They ſhall continue, and not only continue, but be ſtrong; they ſhall have an orderly and a firm eſtabliſhment. Thus (ſaith *Job*) *The ſeed of the wicked is eſtabliſhed.* And which is more, they are eſtabliſhed *in their ſight*. It is a bleſſing to have them eſtabliſhed; but 'tis a greater bleſſing to have them eſtabliſhed *in their ſight*. It adds to the bleſſing, that their children ſhould not only proſper, but that they ſhould ſee it. The Hebrew is, *before their face*; it is a great aggravation of our ſorrow when our children come to miſery before our face. As it is ſaid, Jer. 39. 6. *The King of* Babylon *ſlew the ſons of* Zedekiah *before his eyes.* He not only ſlew his ſons, but made him witneſs of it; *Zedekiah*'s own eyes were put out ſhortly after (his ſorrow had been leſs if they had been put out before he had beheld that doleful ſpectacle) the cruel death of his own children. The glory of the children of God ſhall afflict the wicked, becauſe they ſhall ſee it. Chriſt puts that in expreſly (*Luke* 13. 28.) *When you ſhall ſee* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob *ſit down in the Kingdom of heaven, and ye your-ſelves ſhall be thruſt out.* They ſhall enter heaven before your eyes, or in your ſight, you ſhall ſee them. If they ſhould not ſee them there, it would not trouble them ſo much; but to ſee them happy, will be their miſery. Now, as it is an affliction for any man to ſee his children ſlain before his eyes, or to ſee the proſperity of others before his eyes, in which he cannot partake; ſo to have our children proſper before our eyes, and our ſeed exalted in our ſight, is a great advancement of our happineſs. If a father hath only a promiſe that when he is dead, his children ſhall proſper, this comforts him; but when himſelf lives to ſee it, this is much more comfortable. This mercy *Job* took notice of as the portion of the wicked; *Their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight.*

Ad facies eorum. Heb.

Further, The word in the Original, which we tranſlate *in their ſight*, is uſed ſometimes comparatively, or by way of ſimilitude (*chap.* 4. 19.) *They ſhall be cruſhed before, or as ſoon as the moth.* The Hebrew is, *They ſhall be cruſhed before the face of the moth*, that is, as ſoon as you can cruſh a moth, ſo are the proudeſt cruſhed by the hand of God. Thus ſome expound here, *Their ſeed is ſtabliſhed in their ſight*, that is, *as much as they*; as they live long, ſo do their children, as they become old, ſo do their children. They and theirs proſper together, or theirs proſper as well as they.

Ad facies eorum, i. e. ſicut vel quantum ipſi.

And their off-ſpring before their eyes.] This clauſe is of the ſame meaning with the former; the word *off-ſpring*, ſignifies the ſhoot of a tree, or a ſprig that grows out of the earth; children are as plants and ſprigs. In both parts he anſwers what *Zophar* ſpake (*chap.* 20. 10.) Where he told *Job*, *That his children ſhould ſeek to pleaſe the poor*, that is, his children ſhould be brought to ſuch a low and mean condition, that they muſt ſubmit to the loweſt, and ambitiouſly purſue the favour of the meaneſt, even ſeek to pleaſe the poor. Now, ſaith *Job*, my obſervation (and ſo may yours) hath taught me otherwiſe; I have often ſeen the ſeed of wicked men eſtabliſhed in their ſight, and their off-ſpring before their eyes. He anſwers alſo that of *Eliphaz* (chap. 15. 33.) *He ſhall ſhake off his unripe grapes as the Vine, and ſhall caſt off his flower as the Olive*; that is, his children ſhall come to an immature end, they ſhall die in their youth, yea, *in their infancy*. But (ſaith *Job*) I have ſeen the ſeed of the wicked eſtabliſhed, they have lived long, and taken root, and come to maturity; they have not been ſhaken off as unripe grapes, and as the flower of the Olive.

צאצאים *Germina, appellantur ab exeundo, quaſi ἐκπεφυκότα dicas.* Druſ.

The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſeems to oppoſe *Job*'s experience, and to ſubſcribe to the opinion of his friends (*Iſa.* 14. 20, 21.) *The ſeed of evil doers ſhall never be renowned: Prepare ſlaughter for his children, for the iniquity of their fathers.*

I anſwer, The original Text may be thus rendred in the Letter; *The ſeed of evil doers ſhall not be called* (or renowned) *for ever*; as if he had ſaid, ſuppoſe they have a name for a while, or be eſtabliſhed in the ſight of their fathers, that is, while they live; yet this ſhall not laſt alwayes, ere long they ſhall be cut off: we tranſlate, *not for ever*, by *never*, or, *not at all*; which muſt be underſtood of the continuance of their ſeed in renown. Nor doth that which *Job* aſſerts, the proſperity of ſome one or more of the ſeed of a wicked man, ſtand in the light of the Prophets poſition; *That the ſeed of evil doers are not renowned for ever*; or, *that they ſhall never be renowned.* For the Prophet ſpeaks according to the general rule and law of Gods proceedings with wicked men, by which, as themſelves are uſually cut off, ſo alſo are their ſeed and poſterity too; yet as moſt other general rules have their exceptions, ſo alſo hath this. Grammarians give general rules about the government of words, yet they have Heteroclites and Anamolies, which vary from the ordinary conſtruction; ſo the Wiſdom and Juſtice of God propoſe general rules of adminiſtration towards men; and this amongſt the reſt, is a ſure and noble one, that *The ſeed of evil doers ſhall never be renowned*; yet the Lord hath ſome except caſes, wherein he ſheweth his own liberty and ſoveraignty in permitting the ſeed of evil doers to proſper for a time; but he will make it good in the cloſe, that *the ſeed of evil doers ſhall never be renowned*.

Verſe 9. **Their houſes are ſafe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.**

This temporal flouriſhing eſtate of a wicked man is here further deſcribed: We heard before, Firſt, Of his perſonal proſperity. Secondly, Of the proſperity of his Children. This verſe extends it to his whole Family.

First, Affirmatively.
Secondly, Negatively.

We have the affirmative part in the beginning of the verſe, *Their houſes are ſafe from fear*; that is, they have peace in their houſes. Underſtand by their houſes, not only the dwelling place it ſelf, their ſeat, but all they have in and about their houſes, all are ſafe from fear. The Hebrew is, *Their houſes are peace from fear*, that is, their houſes are ſo far from fear, that there is nothing in their houſes but peace; a houſe full of peace, is a houſe full of good things. This may be expounded two wayes; *Their houſes are full of peace*, that is,

שלם *Domus eorum pax à timore*, i. e. *ſumma quædam tranquilitas omnis timoris expers. Benevola conſenſio domeſticorum.*

Firſt, Their houſhold, their ſervants, their children, all that belong to them are at peace one with another, there is no contention, no bitterneſs of ſpirit, no breach among them. The conſent of domeſticks is a great mercy. Diſſentions endanger Families as well as Nations, and hinder the proſperity of them; where ſome go one way, and ſome another; uſually (as to common good) they all go wrong. *A houſe* (ſaith Chriſt) *divided againſt it ſelf, cannot ſtand.*

Secura poſſeſſio bonorum.

Secondly, As it notes harmony and good agreement among the perſons, ſo the quiet poſſeſſion of the goods of the houſe: All that he hath laid up in his houſe is at peace from fear; thieves do not break through and ſteal, nor any of the ſons of violence come openly upon him to make him afraid. And as they are free from preſent danger, ſo from the very fear of it; *Their houſes are ſafe or peace from fear*. This word was uſed ordinarily by the *Jews* in their ſalutations, as containing the wiſh of all welfare to a perſon or family (1 *Sam* 25. 5.) *Thus ſhall you ſay to him that lives in proſperity* (that is, to *Nabal*) *Peace be to thee, and to thy houſe, and to all that thou haſt.* Here is a threefold diſtribution of peace; firſt, *Peace to him*. Secondly, *To his Family*. And thirdly, *To all that he had*. Thus here, they have peace from fear, or are ſafe from fear; they, their families and their goods, they have no breach, no diſſention among themſelves, no invaſion, no violence from abroad. What can be deſired more to the compleating of outward proſperity?

Neither is the rod of God upon them.

These words contain the negative part of their proſperity. The rod of God may be oppoſed unto the rod of men. *Their houſes are ſafe from fear*, that is, from any violence uſed by men; *Neither is the rod of God upon them*. There are ſome houſes that are not viſited with any evil from the creature; the thief doth not break through nor ſteal their treaſures, yet their treaſure is deſtroyed by the rod of God. There are ſome whoſe cattel are ſafe from the violence of men, *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* do not invade them, yet the rod of God diſſipates their flocks, and his curſe eats them up; therefore *Job* to ſet out the perfect happineſs of a wicked man in temporals, tells us, that as he hath no trouble either from neighbours or ſtrangers, ſo neither is the rod of God upon him. Immediate evils are properly called the rod of God; when we ſee no hand that ſmites us, then (in ſtrict ſence) the rod of God ſmites us.

Μάστιξ δὲ παρὰ κυρίου οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. Sept.
Plaga divinitus inflicta eſt virga Dei. Druſ.

Secondly, By the rod of God we may alſo underſtand thoſe afflictions which we receive mediately by the hand of man. Cruel men are expreſly (in Scripture) called the rod of God (*Iſa.* 10. 5.) *O Aſſyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the ſtaff in their hand is mine indignation.* God made that Prince his rod, to ſcourge and vex his own people. And ſome of the great troublers of the world, and ſpoilers of the Nations with fire and ſword, have with a kind of ambition, taken that ſtile upon them, and would be known by this name, *The Scourge of God*.

Flagellum Dei ſe vocavit Attilas.

Further, The *Rod of God* may be conſidered in oppoſition to the rod of man, not only as to the difference of the hand that ſmites, but alſo as to the difference of the degree or meaſure in which we are ſmitten. So ſome expound this Text, *The rod of God is not upon them*; that is, there is no heavy, no ſore rod upon them. Thus, as by a known Scripture-Hebraiſm, *The river of God* notes any very pleaſant and commodious river; and the *mountain* or *hill of God*, a very high and ſtrong hill or mountain; ſo the rod of God (by the ſame Hebraiſm) is a heavy rod, or any extreamly preſſing or painful affliction. We have this oppoſition intimated (2 *Sam.* 7. 14.) *I will be his father, and he ſhall be my ſon; if he commit iniquity, I will chaſten him with the rod of men, and with the ſtripes of the children of men.* As if he had ſaid (in compliance with this expoſition) If thy ſon ſin, he ſhall not eſcape the rod, only I will correct him gently; I will chaſtiſe him with the rod of men, that is, with ſuch a rod as men chaſtiſe with, or are chaſtiſed with. I will chaſtiſe him with ſuch rods as the weak arm of man uſeth; I will not bring heavy and breaking judgments upon him, I will not put out my power to cruſh him, I will not chaſten him with the rod of God; but I will chaſtiſe him with ſuch a rod as a man may wield. What are the ſtripes and ſtroaks which men give, in compariſon of thoſe which God can give?

1. *Virga Anaſchim ferte, Nobilium qui mitius aliis caſtigari ſolent.* 2. *Virga filiorum Adam*, i. e. *fragilium utpote ex terra conſtantium.* Bold.

Again, Take the rod of men for ſuch rods as men uſe to be corrected and chaſtiſed with; ſo we may take notice of two words uſed in that Text of *Samuel*; firſt, *The rod of men* (*Anaſchim*) that is, ſay ſome, ſuch a rod as is laid on the children of honourable men, who are not corrected as ſlaves and inferior perſons uſually are. The children of great men are chaſtened with a leſſer rod, or they are not ſo ſeverely dealt with as others. Secondly, *The ſtripes of the children of men*, or *of Adam*, that is, of weak and frail ones; whoſe original is from the duſt: As if the Lord had ſaid, If thy ſon ſin, and ſo provoke me to puniſh him, yet I will remember that he is but earth and clay, and ſhall accordingly moderate my hand; his ſhall be but ſuch *ſtripes* as one of the children of men, duſt and aſhes may well bear. Beſides the Hebrew word which we tranſlate *ſtripes*, ſignifies rather *touches*; I will chaſten him with the touches of the children of men, he ſhall have but a touch. Now as that affirmative promiſe in *Samuel*, *I will chaſten him with the rod of men*; ſo this negative experience of *Job*, *The rod of God is not upon them*, may import only ſome eaſier and more gentle affliction. As if *Job* had ſaid, I ſee the houſes of the wicked ſafe from fear, and if trouble come upon them, 'tis not alwayes to ruine and preſent deſtruction. The rod of God is not upon them, as you my friends, affirm.

Job having thus diſcovered the happineſs of wicked men in the ſettlement of their ſeed, and in the ſafety of their family; ſhews it alſo in the increaſe of their flocks and cattel. *Job*'s proſperity was deſcribed by Oxen and Sheep, by Aſſes and Camels (*chap.* 1.) And he alſo had obſerved the worſt of men abounding in this peice of proſperity.

Verſe 10. **Their Bull gendereth, and faileth not; their Cow calveth, and caſteth not her Calf.**

Of theſe words I ſhall only ſay, that they are an expreſſion of the fruitful breeding of Cattel, and that a very full one. *Job* ſpeaks of the fruitfulneſs both of the male and female Cattel, of the Bull and of the Cow diſtinctly; and of both (to aſſure the truth more) he ſpeaks two wayes. Firſt, Affirmatively. And ſecondly, Negatively. *Their Bull gendreth, their Cow calveth*; there's the affirmative part. *Their Bull faileth not, their Cow caſteth not her Calf.* There's the negative part of this outward bleſſing. When cattel have conſtant conception, and no abortion, they muſt multiply exceedingly. *Jacob* uſeth this argument to convince his ungrateful uncle *Laban*, of the great bleſſing which his ſtock had under his care (*Gen.* 31. 38.) *Theſe twenty years have I been with thee, thy Ewes and thy Shee-goats have not caſt their young.* The Lord puts this into the form of a promiſe to the Nation of the *Jews* (Exod. 23. 26.) *There ſhall* *nothing caſt their young, or be barren in the Land.* And again (*Deut.* 7. 14.) *Thou ſhalt be bleſſed above all people, there ſhall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattel.* The Pſalmiſt numbers this among the bleſſings which render a people happy; *Happy* (ſaith he, *Pſal.* 144. 13, 14, 15.) *is that people that is in ſuch a caſe, having their oxen ſtrong to labour, and their ſheep bringing forth thouſands and ten thouſands in their ſtreets:* But moſt *happy* (as he there concludes) *is that people whoſe God is the Lord.* The men of this world receive thoſe bleſſings from the general providence of God, which his own people receive by ſpecial providence. And though many wicked men have Corn and Cattel from the Lord, yet none of them have the Lord for their God. Thus far *Job* hath ſhewed us the wicked full of dayes, and full of riches: In the next place, he ſhews them and their children rejoycing in this fulneſs, and ſaying to their ſouls, Let us eat, drink and be merry till we die. How many are there who have goods laid up for many years, who yet never had one ſerious thought of laying up any thing for eternity?

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ.

They ſpend their dayes in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

JOB hath already deſcribed the outward felicity of many wicked men; Firſt, By long life. Secondly, By their riches. Thirdly, By their power. Fourthly, By the flouriſhing of their children. Fifthly, By the ſecurity of their eſtate; they are ſafe from the violence of men, and free from the rod of God. Sixthly, By the abundance of their Cattel. He proceeds in theſe three verſes to deſcribe their felicity, by the pleaſure and worldly pomp in which they live, and by the eaſineſs of their death. Some men live and encreaſe in riches, they have much Corn, many Children, a full and ſecure eſtate, no conſiderable croſs upon them, yet they take no pleaſure, no contentment in all this. *Solomon* deſcribes ſuch a man (*Eccleſ.* 6. 2.) *to whom God hath given riches, wealth and honour, ſo that he wanteth nothing for his ſoul of all that he deſireth; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a ſtranger eateth it; this is vanity, and it is an evil diſeaſe.* Therefore to compleat the outward felicity of wicked men, *Job* adds,

Verſe 11. **They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.** Thus they live in pleaſure.

To which he ſuperadds the ſweetneſs, peaceableneſs and quietneſs of their death, *verſ.* 13. *They ſpend their dayes in wealth, and go down to their grave in a moment.*

They ſend forth their little ones like a flock.

They ſend them forth under Guardians and Guides, ſo a flock is ſent forth; Children are not ſcattered, but ſent in an orderly way. The Original which we tranſlate *little ones,* ſignifies any ſort of children, who are yet under government and tuition. The word hath a double derivation; Firſt, From a root which ſignifies *a yoke or labour,* importing ſuch young ones as are fit to be ſent forth to ſeek employment, or to labour in the world. Secondly, From a root which ſignifies *evil* or *wickedneſs, unrighteouſneſs, naughtineſs;* intimating what our little ones are, both by nature and in their lives, till converted, even corrupt and depraved; for though children are ſo called from their purity (ſay ſome) in the Latine, yet it is only comparatively, not abſolutely. Children may be called white paper, compared with thoſe who have lived long, and blotted their lives with many abominations; yet children have impurity in them, our little ones are conceived in ſin, and brought forth in iniquity. The Spirit of God uſually gives names or denominations proper to the ſtate of things and perſons. Children are polluted in nature, polluted alſo in life and converſation; they are ſinful, and what they do, they do ſinfully: If children did not carry corruption in their natures, they ſhould not bear it in their names. And if little ones are corrupt, how corrupt are they who have perfected their corruption, having heightened and improved the ſtock of ſin which they brought into the world?

עוילים *forte à* עלך *ut ſit ea ætas qua homo agendi ſimilitudinē exhibet; vel potius à* עול *quia in pueris nihil niſi injuſtitia eſt, & quia dum agunt pravè agūt omnia.* Coc. *Puer ſic dictus, quaſi purus.* Becn. de orig. Ling. Lat.

Theſe little ones *they ſend forth like a flock,* that is, like a flock of ſheep; which implieth three things.

Firſt, That they had many children, a flock of them; flocks conſiſt of many; *to ſend forth a flock* is a proverbial ſpeech, noting a multitude ſent forth: So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 107. 41.) *Yet ſetteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock,* that is, he maketh him to have a numerous family, a great houſe: *Abraham,* who had an army in his family (he armed two hundred men, all of his own houſe) he had his family like a flock, that is, many in his family; ſo, *Ezek.* 36. 38. When the Lord would ſhew what a multitude his people ſhould encreaſe to, he ſaith, *As the flocks of* Jeruſalem *in her ſolemn feaſts, ſo ſhall the waſte Cities be filled with flocks of men. Jeruſalem* was filled with flocks of Cattel three times in the year, or at their three ſolemn feaſts; the Lord promiſed that the waſte Cities which had no Inhabitants, ſhould be filled with flocks of men, that is, they ſhould have abundance of Inhabitants, or be very populous.

Secondly, As the ſending forth of *little ones like a flock,* imports their number great, ſo, that they are under an order, that they are governed; for a flock is ever under inſpection: Savage and wild beaſts have none to take care of them, or to overſee them; but flocks of ſheep have their overſeers.

Thirdly, Some interpret theſe words, *They ſend forth their Children as a flock,* to note the union and love which was amongſt them, they lived together like a flock. The union of the Church of Chriſt is ſignified under that notion, the Church is called a *flock; Fear not little flock* (ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 12. 32.) The Church is a little flock, in oppoſition to the huge herds and droves of the men of the world; Saints are but few. Firſt, It is called a flock, becauſe of the care and government of Jeſus Chriſt over it. Secondly, It is called a flock, becauſe it is at unity within it ſelf. Though the Church be ſcattered over the world, yet it hath a holy combination of the members; every breach there is a departure from their Duty and Order.

They ſend forth their little ones as a flock.] Thus he deſcribes their felicity in the education and diſcipline of their little ones.

And their children dance.] He ſtill proſecutes the alluſion of a flock; for the word which we render *to dance,* is applied to Calves (*Pſal.* 29. 6.) Where the Prophet thus deſcribes the glorious power of God, *He maketh them alſo to skip like a Calf;* Lebanon *and* Syria *like a young Unicorn.* The word is applied alſo to Rams and Lambs, *Pſal.* 114. 4. *The mountains skipped like Rams, and the little hills like Lambs.* Thus they ſend forth their little children like flocks; they dance and skip; which argues the proſperity of their family.

Dancing may be taken two wayes; either, firſt, Strictly, for the exact motion of the body in meaſure, which is artificial dancing; or ſecondly, Dancing is taken more largely, for any kind of joyful moving of the body, for any bodily exerciſe in ſport or play; this in a common ſence is called dancing. We may take it here four wayes; *their children dance,* that is, they are inſtructed and taught the art of Muſick and dancing; or, there is rejoycing among them; this is proper to the age and ſtate of children. Some derive the Greek word for *children,* from a root which ſignifies to play or ſport, as if playing were the work of children, and ſporting all their labour. Chriſt himſelf ſpeaks as if this were the trade of children (*Matth.* 11. 16.) *Whereunto ſhall I liken this generation? They are like children ſitting in the market-place* (what do they there? are they buying or ſelling? are they bargaining or trading? No, that's the buſineſs of men; what do the children there?) *They call to their fellows, and ſay, we have piped to you, and you have not danced; we have mourned to you, and you have not lamented.* Piping and dancing is the delight and buſineſs of children. We find it given as a promiſe of bleſſing upon the Church of God, that their children ſhould be ſo employed (*Zech.* 8. 4, 5.) *Thus ſaith the*

Lufus ita naturalis eſt pueris, ut à ludo puer Græcè vocetur.

Lord of Hoſts, there ſhall yet old men and old women dwell in the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and every man with his ſtaff in his hand for very age, and the ſtreets of the City ſhall be full of boyes and girles (what ſhall they do?) *playing in the ſtreets thereof.* To ſhew the felicity of the people of God in *Jeruſalem* after their return from *Babylon*, 'tis promiſed, that as they ſhould have old men leaning upon ſtaves, ſo boyes and girles playing in the ſtreets. And thus *Job* expreſſeth the external felicity of wicked men in family-bleſſings; *Their children dance.* And they have muſick to their dance, as it followeth.

Verſ. 12. **They take the Timbrel and the Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ.**

They take the Timbrel.] They, who? Who is the antecedent to *they?* doth he mean the parents or their children, or both? I conceive we may beſt expound it collectively, *they*, that is, they and their children, old and young, they take the Timbrel and the Harp, yea they are taken with the Timbrel and the Harp; thus they delight and ſport themſelves in the abundance of all things. *They take the Timbrel*, &c. We have here a ſpecification of thoſe muſical Inſtruments which were then chiefly uſed. There is a threefold reading of theſe words; *They take the Timbrel and the Harp.*

Firſt, They lift up their voyces with the Timbrel and Harp, that is, they play and ſing, which ſheweth the compleatneſs of their muſick, it was both by Voyces and Inſtruments; or they lift up their voyces like muſical Inſtruments. 'Tis ſaid of *Balaam* (Num. 23. 7.) *He took up a Parable*, that is, he ſpake, or he pronounced a parable.

'*Attollunt*, ſc. *vocem ſicut tympanum, perſonant velut tympano.* Merc. *In Hebræo eſt* נשא *cũ* ב *quod alias ſignificat ferre partem rei, ferre cum alio.* &c. Coc.

Secondly, They take or lift up their bodies in dancing with the Timbrel and the Harp. When the Muſick ſounded, they followed or anſwered it with the motion of their bodies.

Thirdly, *They take the Timbrel*, may be rendred, *They play upon the Timbrel and the Harp*, they touch them artificially. 'Tis ſaid, *Gen.* 4. 21. (where the original of muſical Inſtruments is reported) *His brothers name was* Jubal, *he was the father of all ſuch as handled* (or touched) *the Harp and the Organ.* Thus we have their mirth and muſick: *They take* (or touch) *the Timbrel and the Harp*, they live in pleaſure. Hence obſerve,

Worldly men breed their children vainly.

Here is a deſcription of their education; they are ſent forth as a flock in a Dance, playing upon the *Timbrel*, &c. Here's all the knowledg and literature they are brought up to; here is all their Religion, all the Catechiſm that they are taught. The Lord giveth this report of *Abraham*, who had a numerous Family; *I know him that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord* (Gen. 18. 19.) (*Abraham* did not teach his to dance, *but to keep the way of the Lord*) *to do juſtice and judgment; that the Lord might bring upon* Abraham *what he had ſpoken.* Here was education in the fear of the Lord. *Abraham* gave his children ſuch breeding as became the father of the faithful. This doth not condemn the inſtruction and teaching of children in Muſick, that skill is commendable, and the gift of God: To learn a due poiſe and compoſure of the body, is not unlawful; only we forbid the exceſs, when it takes up the whole time, and is made a buſineſs; or when 'tis uſed as a provocation to luſt, or a nurſe of pride and vanity. When much time is ſpent in this, time is miſpent; when this which ſhould be as Sauce, is made the whole Diſh; when this which is but an unneceſſary circumſtance, is inſiſted upon, as if it were all man, then it is ſinful.

'*Muſicam & honeſtam voluptatem non damnat Scriptura, ſed eorum damnat ſecuritatem, qui his velut inebrietati Deum contemnunt & ejus opera negligunt*, Merc.

Again, Conſider the trade of carnal men and their children; *They dance and ſing, they and their Families.*

Hence obſerve, *Senſitive joyes and contentments are all that carnal men are taken up with.*

They rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ.] Here's not a word of rejoycing in the goodneſs of God; here's not a word of thankfulneſs and praiſe to God, who gave them good things, and enricht them with thoſe outward bleſſings; they only ſeek to make themſelves merry, they never ſought to make the Name of God glorious. The holy Patriarchs had riches and children, cattel and great ſubſtance, ſo we read of *Abraham, Iſaac* and *Jacob*; yet how different a character doth the Holy Ghoſt give of them (*Heb.* 11. 13.) They accounted themſelves pilgrims, they had no mind to their countrey; *but they ſought a City whoſe builder and maker was God.* This was their frame in their greateſt worldly enjoyments; they had riches, but they did not rejoyce in them; they had them, but they did not give up themſelves unto them. Worldlings cry (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *Who will ſhew us any good?* What ſaith *David? Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me; that will cauſe joy in my heart, more then when corn and wine encreaſe*; as if he had ſaid, worldly men take the Timbrel when corn and wine and oil encreaſe; but if the Lord lifteth up the light of his countenance upon me, this ſhall be my muſick and my ſong. And though in the good providences of God to him, he called for the Timbrel, and awakened his muſical Inſtruments, yet he adds, *I my ſelf will awake right early*; his was not bare rejoycing in the creature, but in God. A godly man can rejoyce when he hath none of theſe creature-comforts, he can then rejoyce in the Lord; then the Lord is to him more then an Organ, Tabret or Harp, infinitely more then in all theſe; he can rejoyce in the Lord more then in all manner of muſick, even then when he wants not only muſick, but meat (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the labour of the Olive ſhall fail*, &c. *yet will I joy in the Lord, and rejoyce in the God of my ſalvation; and the Lord is my ſtrength, and he is my ſong.* Thus he rejoyceth when ſtript of all thoſe things which alone occaſion the worldly mans joy. God is a feaſt to him in famine; and when there is not any thing of the world to be had, he hath all in God; and how much ſoever a godly man hath of the world, he rejoyceth not in that, but in God, the creator, diſpoſer and giver of it. He rejoyceth when he hath the creature, but he rejoyceth not in the creature; his joy is in the Lord. He rejoyceth to ſee the good hand of God with him, but he rejoyceth not becauſe his hand hath gotten good. We find this holy man *Job* profeſſing, that he had not, and uſing a ſtrong imprecation upon himſelf if he had done ſo (*chap.* 31. 24, 25.) *If I have made Gold my hope, if I have rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great, and becauſe mine hand had gotten much, then*, &c. *Job* was not a man of a dark ſpirit, he knew how to rejoyce when the Candle of God ſhone upon him; but, ſaith he, whatſoever my worldly eſtate was, my rejoycing was in God, it was not in my worldly eſtate: But the carnal man rejoyceth in the world it ſelf, and indeed he hath nothing more to rejoyce in; he hath not a God or a Chriſt to rejoyce in, he hath not pardon of ſin, or the Grace of God to rejoyce in.

Before I paſs this point, I ſhall add ſomewhat more diſtinctly, concerning our rejoycing in and about the things of this life. We do not cenſure all joy, or think that they muſt needs be wicked who rejoyce and live comfortably in a proſperous outward condition. There is a threefold joy ſpoken of in Scripture; Firſt, A ſpiritual: Secondly, A ſenſitive or natural: Thirdly, A ſenſual joy.

Spiritual joy is either purely in ſpiritual things, when we rejoyce in God, in the grace and favour of God, in the light of his countenance, and in the pardon of our ſins. Or when we rejoyce ſpiritually about worldly things, and the good providences of God to us, either publick or private. There may be ſpiritual joy about that which is not ſpiritual; we may rejoyce ſpiritually, though the things be temporal in which we rejoyce; and it is one of the higheſt actings of Grace, to rejoyce ſpiritually about temporal things.

Secondly, There is a natural ſenſitive rejoycing, which in it ſelf, is neither good nor evil; it belongs to man as man; and *Job* ſpeaks of this at the twenty fifth verſe of this Chapter; *Another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eateth with pleaſure*; he meaneth not ſinful pleaſure; but thus, he hath no natural contentment, no reliſh of, or joy with his meat; we ſay, a mans meat rejoyceth him, when it ſuits with his ſtomack, and pleaſeth his palat. As there is natural ſorrow and fear, which are ſpecificated good or evil, as we act and put them forth; ſo there is alſo natural joy or pleaſure. In this ſence the word *Pleaſure* is uſed (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) Where *Solomon* gives advice to the young man *to remember his Creator in the dayes of his youth, before the evil dayes come, and the time wherein he ſhall ſay,* *I have no pleaſure in them*; he meaneth not ſinful pleaſure, but natural pleaſure, ſuch as a man takes in what he eats and drinks. When *David* called *Barzillai* to Court, *What ſhall I do there?* (ſaith he) *Can I taſte what I eat?* &c. As if he had ſaid, thoſe dayes are come upon me in which I have no pleaſure.

Thirdly, There is ſenſual pleaſure, when the heart is as it were ſteeped, drenched and drunken with delights (*Jam.* 5. 5.) *Ye have lived in pleaſure on the earth, and been wanton, ye have nouriſhed your hearts as in a day of ſlaughter.* Which ſome render, unto a day of ſlaughter, as beaſts are fatted to be killed; or as in a time of feaſting, which is a day of ſlaughter to beaſts and fowls, for the feeding of man. Therefore he threatens them (*verſ.* 1.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl*; pleaſure hath been your element, ye have lived in that: now ſorrow ſhall be your element, and your employment weeping (1 *Tim.* 5. 6.) *She that liveth in pleaſure*, that is, who giveth her ſelf up to delicacy, wantonneſs, laſciviouſneſs; he doth not ſay, ſhe that takes pleaſure in her life; there is no hurt in that: but, *She that lives in pleaſure, is dead while ſhe liveth*: And if ſhe be dead while ſhe liveth, how dead will ſhe be when ſhe dieth?

Further, We may conſider theſe ſenſual pleaſures or joyes in their ſinfulneſs, two wayes.

Firſt, There are ſome joyes ſinful in their very nature, others in reference to circumſtance, in both ſences we are to underſtand this Text, *They rejoyce*, that is, they rejoyce with ſuch a kind of joy as is ſinful in it ſelf; and though there be no ſin in the Harp, Timbrel and Organ, yet there may be a ſinful way of rejoycing in theſe (*Heb.* 11. 21.) Moſes *choſe afflictions with the people of God, rather then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon:* Whether thoſe pleaſures were ſinful in their nature, or ſinful in their circumſtances, *Moſes* refuſed them. He did not refuſe pleaſure and comfort in his life, but the pleaſures of ſin; any evil that was in the pleaſure of this life, he refuſed, that pleaſure was a pain to him, and he choſe affliction rather.

But when are our rejoycings ſinful in their circumſtances? or what makes them ſinful to us when they are lawful in themſelves.

I anſwer, Joy may be lawful in it ſelf, yet ſinful; firſt, In the meaſure of it, if exceſſive. Which the Prophet gives us (*Iſa.* 41. 8.) *Therefore hear now this thou that art given to pleaſures, that dwelleſt careleſly.* When a man is given to pleaſure, he will ſoon be exceſſive in it; for this ſhews that pleaſure overſwayes his ſpirit, and hath gotten his heart. The Apoſtle would have Believers given to *hoſpitality*, that is, he would have them given to hoſpitality, but not given to pleaſure. Some are given to hoſpitality meerly becauſe they are given to pleaſure; they love not ſo much to feed others, as to glut themſelves.

Secondly, There is a ſinfulneſs in rejoycing, when unſeaſonable; *There is a time to rejoyce, and a time to mourn.* To rejoyce in ſome times is matter of great mourning; yet ſome will rejoyce let the time be what it will, the ſeaſons and dayes what they will; ſuch rejoycing is not good. Our rejoycing may be ſinful upon this account of unſeaſonableneſs, three wayes.

Firſt, When much of any time is ſpent in it. The time we ſpend in rejoycing, ſhould be but ſo much as may fit us for our ſerious and working times. When the Apoſtle exhorts Saints *to rejoyce evermore* (1 Theſ. 5. 16.) he means it of ſpiritual, not of worldly rejoycing.

Secondly, It is ſinful in regard of the ſeaſon, to be taken up with worldly rejoycings in any time ſet apart for the holy duties of faſting and humbling the ſoul before the Lord. The Prophet complains of this (*Iſa.* 58. 3.) *They find their own pleaſure upon a day of faſt.* To give the leaſt portion of time to worldly pleaſure upon a ſolemn day of Faſt or holy reſt, is ſinful.

Thirdly, Joy may be ſinful, as ſpecially in a day of faſt, ſo when ſad, troublous, calamitous ſeaſons continue many dayes (*Iſa.* 22. 13.) *In that day the Lord called for weeping,* &c. *but behold mirth and rejoycing, ſlaying oxen and killing ſheep.* So, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. *They ſit upon beds of Ivory, and ſtretch themſelves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midſt of the ſtall; they chaunt to the ſound of the Viol, and invent to themſelves inſtruments of Muſick like* David; *but they are not grieved for the affliction of* Joſeph. They had muſick like *David*, but they were far from ſuch a heart as *David* had. Many pattern themſelves by holy men in the things they do, who will not imitate their pattern in doing them. 'Tis our duty to ſympathize with the ſeaſons, and to forbear our perſonal comforts, when the publick ſits in ſorrow. They who rejoyce when the people of God mourn, ſhall mourn in their rejoycings. They ſhall not rejoyce in the joy of Gods people, nor be glad with his inheritance, who have been at all glad at their mournings, or have not refrained gladneſs in the dayes of their mourning.

They rejoyce at the ſound of the organ.] And, which is a further deſcription both of their worldly proſperity, and of their ſin.

Verſe 13. **They ſpend their dayes in wealth.**

They ſpend.] There is a double reading of the word, but the ſence of both is the ſame. Some thus; *They grow old*, or they conſume all their dayes; the indefinite is univerſal; *They ſpend their dayes*, that is, their whole life, *in wealth*; ſo we render. The Hebrew is, *in good*: What good? There are three ſorts of good. Firſt, Spiritual. Secondly, Civil. Thirdly, Corporal good; when he ſaith, *they ſpend their dayes in good*, he means not the firſt; they are far enough from ſpending their dayes in what is ſpiritually good; they deal but little in that which is morally or civilly good; their time and ſtrength are laid out chiefly in thoſe things which are but corporally good, or good only for the body; and, as they uſe them, ſcarce good for, yea, moſtly hurtful unto that; therefore we tranſlate well, *they ſpend their dayes in wealth*; wealth is but our bodily good. In common ſpeech a mans poſſeſſions and riches are called *his goods*, becauſe theſe are a good to the outward man; ſo the Vulgar tranſlates the Text, *They ſpend out their dayes in good*, or in good things, in the good things of this life. The word is uſed (*Luke* 16. 25.) *Abraham* in the Parable ſpeaking to the rich man, tells him, *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things, and likewiſe* Lazarus *his evil things*, that is, ſores and ſorrows, his pain and poverty. When *David* (1 Sam. 25. 8.) ſent his meſſenger to *Nabal*, deſiring ſome recruits of victual for his Army, which had been a good neighbour to him; *Send thy bleſſing to thy ſon, for we are come to thee in a good day*; what day was that? a day of feaſting; when there was a plentiful proviſion made of good things: It was ſheep-ſhearing day, and then they had ſtore. The things of the world are expreſſed under this title, *good*, (and they are all the good which ſome look after) in a threefold conſideration.

In Scriptura eſt יבלו *vetuſtate conſumant in Lectione.*
יכלו
Conſumunt ſimpliciter ſcriptum Beth, *lectu* Caph, *ſenſus in idem recidit.* Dr.
Ducunt in bonis dies ſuos. Vulg.

Firſt, In reference to the judgment of the world, or the vulgar opinion. They are good things, and many account them very good, yea ſome account them the chief good, placing felicity in them. The Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks the hearts of worldly men, *They ſpend their dayes in good.*

Secondly, Riches and the things of the world, are good as they are the creatures of God; theſe he made, and he made all things good.

Thirdly, They have not only a goodneſs of entity, but a goodneſs of uſe in them; the Lord hath made them very ſuitable to the needs and neceſſities, to the relations, affairs and buſineſſes of this life. And in theſe good things, worldly men ſpend all the dayes of their lives. They ſpend their dayes in ſpending it, or in beſtowing it upon their luſts. The Text intends the latter; having gotten enough to ſpend, they give themſelves to the ſpending of it all their dayes.

They ſpend their dayes in wealth.

Hence obſerve, That, *The chief buſineſs of a worldly man is about his wealth.*

He mindeth little or nothing but his wealth; he ſpends his dayes in a threefold care about it.

Firſt, In getting.

Secondly, In keeping.

Thirdly, In taking out thoſe pleaſures which wealth brings in.

Some get wealth, but have no heart to uſe it; others get wealth, and over-uſe or abuſe it; they ſpend their dayes in ſpending it, in feeding their luſts, in pleaſing their appetite with it. The rich Glutton would have his ſhare of what he had; he would not leave all to his Children, or to Executors. How poor an account is this of the expence of a mans dayes, that he hath ſpent them in wealth? Yet 'tis hard for thoſe who have much wealth, not to do it. A godly man who hath much wealth, is hard put to it, to keep himſelf from ſpending his dayes in it. Riches have more of the ſnare in them, then of comfort in them. Some have periſhed with want, but more have periſhed with abundance. Hypocrites make a gain of godlineſs; and when they have gained their ends, they lay by their godlineſs, and ſpend thoſe dayes in wealth, which they once profeſſed they would ſpend in walking with God. Many really godly, loſe much in ſpirituals, having gained much in temporals; they have been impoveriſhed by their riches; their beſt part hath decreaſed, while their worſer hath encreaſed. Now if it be ſo hard for thoſe who have a good ſtock of Grace, and a ſeed of eternal life in them, to mind heaven, while they have a great ſtock on the earth; how is it poſſible but that a hypocrite ſhould quite loſe thoſe ſpirituals which he ſeemed to have, when he hath gotten much in temporals? and that prophane men ſhould not be quite drowned and ſwallowed up in temporals, who did never ſo much as ſeem to have any thing in ſpirituals. Therefore (ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.* 19. 24.) *It is eaſier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. Mammon* calls for the whole man, and ſtands in the way both of Grace and Glory. *The poor have the Goſpel preached to them* (Matth. 11. 5.) But is not the Goſpel preached alſo to the rich? Yes, the rich hear the Goſpel, but the poor receive it, or, as the word imports, are *Goſpelized*; they receive the love of it, and impreſſions from it; they receive the ſtamp of the Goſpel, and feel the power of it: Whereas uſually the rich hear only a ſound of words, and have only a form of knowledge, but have no knowledge of the power. Riches fill with cares; a multitude of riches with a multitude of cares: And they who have many cares about thoſe things which are but acceſſories, take little care about that one thing neceſſary, the due hearing of, and believing application of the Goſpel. They who are very diligent either about aſſuring or employing worldly wealth, about laying up or laying out the treaſures of the earth, ſeldom give any diligence about making their calling and election ſure, or about laying up treaſure in heaven. They are indeed rich in grace, whoſe graces are not hindred by riches, whoſe ſouls proſper when their bodies proſper; as the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks in his third Epiſtle. Or, who (as 'tis propheſied, *Pſal.* 45. 12.) being full of worldly bleſſings, are yet hungry and eager in their purſuit after Chriſt. *The daughter of* Tyre *ſhall be there with a gift* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *the rich among the people ſhall intreat thy favour*, that is, either the favour of Chriſt himſelf, or the favour of the Church, by reaſon of that ſpiritual excellency and inward glory which ſhe hath received from Chriſt. Now to ſee the rich bring their gifts, and which is the thing chiefly aimed at there, giving up themſelves to Chriſt, this is a rare ſight, and a remarkable work of Grace.

And becauſe there is ſo much danger that they who have wealth, ſhould ſpend their dayes in it, or give themſelves up to it, and not to Chriſt, take two or three Rules of caution or admonition about this thing.

Firſt, When God puts wealth into your hand, ſuſpect your own hearts, and pray that ye may put it under your feet. The woman (*Rev.* 12. 1.) *cloathed with the Sun, had the Moon* (that is, all earthly things) *under her feet*; ſhe kept them under, and had them only for her uſe, her heart was above them.

Secondly, Labour to get a right value of wealth, if you would not ſpend your dayes in it. We ſeldom err in our affections, till we err in our judgment; if we did not over-value wealth, we ſhould not beſtow our all upon it; no man will lay out his time and ſtrength about that which he thinks meanly of. Know then, Firſt, That though riches are good things, yet they are an inferior good. Secondly, Though they are good, yet but a mutable good. Thirdly, They are to us as we uſe them; ſome things are ſo good, that he who hath them, cannot but be good. The Grace of God to us, and the Graces of his Spirit in us, find us evil, but make us good. But no man was ever made good by riches and worldly wealth; theſe have found ſome really good, and made them leſs good then they were; and they have found many ſeemingly good, whom they have made ſtark naught.

Thirdly, Uſe the Creature, but do not enjoy it; what we uſe, is uſed for ſome other end; what we enjoy, is enjoyed for it ſelf. The creature muſt only be uſed, becauſe it ſhould alwayes be directed to ſome further end; God ought to be loved for himſelf, and therefore he only is to be enjoyed. They who underſtand this diſtinction, will not ſpend their dayes in ſatisfying their luſts with wealth, but in ſerving the living God. *Job's* character of theſe men, may ſerve all men, who having wealth, have no faith in God; *They ſpend their dayes in wealth.*

And in a moment go down to the grave.

There is a double interpretation of this laſt clauſe; ſome expound it of the miſerable end of wicked men; others of their comfortable end.

Firſt, The words may hold out the miſerable end of a wicked man, who, though he hath all outward good things, though he be mighty in power, and his houſe be eſtabliſhed, yet *in a moment he goeth down to the grave*; he ſuddenly vaniſheth out of this world; and whither then? We read, *he goeth down to the grave*: others read, *He goeth down to hell*. The Hebrew word ſignifies both, and the doctrine of the Text is true both wayes; his body goeth down preſently to the grave, and his ſoul to hell; that's his place, and thither is his downfal, there's the end of his wealth and voluptuous life. Thus he is concluded in the Parable (*Luke* 16. 22, 23.) *The rich man died and was buried, and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment*, &c. This rich man *was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciouſly every day* (verſ. 19.) He is deſcribed fully, ſpending his dayes in wealth, and ending his dayes in wo; he in a moment went down to hell. But,

Et in puncto ad inferna deſcendit Vulg.

Secondly, I rather interpret this clauſe in a ſuitableneſs to what went before, as a deſcription of the comfortable death of a wicked man; who, as he flouriſhed all the dayes of his life, ſo (to compleat his bodily comforts) he hath a very kind and peaceable death. The word which we render *moment* (implying the ſuddenneſs of his change) ſignifying alſo *quietneſs* or *peaceableneſs*, and to be *quiet and reſt* (Iſa. 51. 4.) *Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my Nation; for a Law ſhall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment* (that is, the doctrine of holineſs) *to reſt* (that is, I will quietly ſettle it) *for a light to the people*, that is, to enlighten their minds with the clear and ſaving knowledg of the truth. In this ſence (for *reſt*) the word is again uſed (*Jer.* 50. 34.) It may bear both ſences in this place; They ſpend their dayes in wealth, and go to the grave in a moment and ſuddenly, or in quiet and in peace, they have no trouble in death. This their reſt or quietneſs in death, may be underſtood two wayes.

ורגע *Significat punctum, momentum & placidā quietem, vel quievit, per antiphraſin.*

In quiete deſcendunt in infernos

Firſt, They have no inward trouble of Conſcience, no gnawing of the worm though the worm of Conſcience be hungry, and hath matter enough in them to feed upon, yet it is not permitted to feed upon them, that is, to vex and torment them. A wicked man may die quietly, without any the leaſt queſtion upon his ſpirit about his ſpiritual condition, as if all were well, and would be well with him for ever; Whereas indeed, the quietneſs that he hath, is not from any knowledge of his good eſtate, but from ignorance of his ill eſtate; he knoweth not that the wrath of God hangs over him, and that the juſtice of God is bent againſt him, and therefore he goeth quietly to the grave. A godly man dieth in peace, becauſe he knoweth his eſtate is good; but if a wicked man die in peace, it is becauſe he knoweth not his eſtate is evil.

Multi cum hac ſpe ad æternos cruciatus deſcendunt.

Secondly, They have no outward trouble, no pain in the body, or diſturbance in their outward affairs; thus wicked men may die a peaceable, yea, a pleaſant death; they are not tired with long ſickneſſes, they are not put upon the rack of tormenting diſeaſes before they die; they are not afflicted with nauſeous medicines and tedious courſes of phyſick, which to many are more grievous then ſickneſs or death it ſelf. Many who have eſcaped the ſorrows of eternal death, meet with much ſorrow in their temporal death. They whoſe peace is made by the death of Chriſt, find much pain and trouble when they come to die; whereas many wicked men die (as it were) in health, and go not only quickly, but quietly to the grave, having reſt, ſuch as it is, both in body and mind, when their bodies are laid down to reſt, even their dying may look like ſleeping.

Morte placidiſſima & quæ diuturnitate non affligit de medio tollitur, quaſi ſponte naturæ concedēs Pin.

And as this word ſhews the eaſineſs of their death, ſo the ſpeed and ſuddenneſs of it. Thus we tranſlate expreſly; *In a moment they go down to the grave.* He dieth without ſtop or ſtay, his is not a lingring death; if a man have not much pain in ſickneſs, yet if he lie long ſick, his living is a kind of dying. *David* or *Aſaph* (*Pſal.* 73. 4.) deſcribes the proſperity of wicked men both in life and death; *I was envious when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked*, &c. *There are no bands in their death, their ſtrength is firm*, that is, when they die they are not bound by diſeaſes, nor held down by chronical or laſting and grinding pains; they die, and it can hardly be diſcerned that they were ever ſick; they fall off as fruit from the tree fully ripe, with the leaſt touch, and this is their proſperity in death. The Prophet *Jeremy* aggravates the miſery of the *Jews* in their captivity upon this conſideration (*Lam.* 4. 6.) *The puniſhment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater then the puniſhment of the ſin of* Sodom, *that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands ſtayed on her. Sodom* was deſtroyed in a moment, but *Jeruſalems* deſtruction was long a working, ſhe maintained a war, which procured many miſeries, eſpecially that of Famine; which as it is the moſt painful, ſo the moſt dilatory or lingring way of dying. *Job* to ſhew the happineſs of wicked men in death, tells us, they die in a moment, they ſlip out of the world they know not how, or before they are aware of it.

Mors eo crudelior quo ſegnior.

Mors jucunda cujus nulla præceſſit expectatio aut metus.

Sudden death is alwayes evil, but ſpeedy death is good. The ſloweſt death is the moſt cruel. Tyrants kill men by piece-meal, they will have them take notice that they are dying, they will not diſpatch them at a blow, but let them die limb by limb. *Dyoniſius* the Tyrant is ſaid to have envied a Beaſt whoſe throat he ſaw cut, becauſe he died ſo ſoon. *Cæſar* reading in *Zenophon*, what care *Cyrus* took in his life for his Funeral, ſcorned him for it, wiſhing he might die ſpeedily. That's a good death to Nature, which is neither feared nor expected; yet that is the beſt death which hath been longeſt expected and prepared for. And hence,

Some may ſay, It were better wicked men ſhould have ſome delayes in death, for then poſſibly they might repent.

I anſwer; Firſt, *Job* ſpeaks not to the ſpiritual or eternal ſtate of wicked men; and as to their temporal ſtate, a ſpeedy death is better then a lingring death. I may anſwer,

Secondly, *Sick-bed repentance is uſually a very ſick repentance.* We ſet no limits to the mercy and grace of God, but we ſpeak what is uſual among men.

Thirdly, They that neglect repentance in health, ſeldom mind it in ſickneſs; ſome have made ſad complaints of the miſery of their friends, becauſe ſo ſuddenly taken away by one ſtroak without any time to repent. But they might remember that many have been ſhut up cloſe priſoners in their chambers, and chained down to their beds, for divers moneths, who never thought of repenting and turning to God. Death is never ſudden to them who live well; and they who live ill, ſeldom mend when they die, though they are long a dying. Thus *Job* hath oppoſed the experience of many to the opinion of his friends, about the preſent ſtate of wicked men, and Gods dealing with them both in life and death. In the following words he ſhews us how their proſperity wrought with them, how they took occaſion from theſe outward bleſſings in which they abounded, to arm and encourage themſelves in their rebellion againſt the Lord, who poured out thoſe benefits and earthly bleſſings upon them in abundance, and exerciſed long-ſufferance and patience towards them, till they had ſpent their dayes in pleaſing themſelves and provoking him.

VERS. 14, 15.

Therefore they ſay unto God, depart from us; for we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes.

What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him?

IN theſe two verſes we have the picture of a wicked man drawn to the life (or rather to the death) of his ſtate and diſpoſition. For leſt it ſhould be thought that while *Job* ſpake of the proſperity of the wicked, he meant it of ſuch only as uſed a kind of moderation in ſinning, or had ſome mixture and appearances, at leaſt, of ſome eminent virtues among their enormous vices, he therefore by a Rhetorical imitation of their blaſphemous ſpeeches and opinions concerning the moſt holy God and his wayes, aſſured his friends that his experiences had taught him, that even they who have not in them the leaſt imaginable ſpark or ray of goodneſs, are yet filled with abundance, and yet enjoy an affluence of worldly goods: As if he had ſaid, My friend *Zophar*, according to the tenour of thy Doctrine, they muſt be reckoned for very holy and good men, as the Darlings, ſpecial Favourites and boſom-friends of God, who enjoy ſuch earthly proſperity as I have ſpoken of; but behold theſe men, and tell me what goodneſs thou findeſt in them, *Who ſay unto God, depart from us*, &c.

Theſe men are perſonated by *Job*, as offering a fourfold indignity unto God.

Firſt, They tell God (as we do thoſe whom we hate, or at leaſt, deeply diſreſpect) that they had rather have his room then his company; *They ſay unto God, depart from us.*

Secondly, They ſlight his doctrine and his inſtitutions; *We deſire not the knowledge of his wayes.*

Thirdly, They eſteem him unworthy of any attendance or worſhip; *What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him?*

Fourthly, They conclude his worſhip and ſervice as vain and fruitleſs; *What profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him?*

Verſe 14. **Therefore they ſay unto God depart from us.**

The Hebrew is, *and they ſay:* It is uſual in Scripture to give that conjunctive particle the efficacy of a cauſal. So we render it here; Therefore, or for this reaſon, namely, becauſe they flouriſh and are full, therefore they grow weary of, and are burdened with the thought of God; *They ſay unto God*, &c. How do they ſay it? They ſay thus three wayes.

Firſt, Some are ſo bold and impudent, as to ſay it with their mouths, they ſay it explicitly and in plain terms; they ſpeak it out to God, *Depart from us.*

Secondly, All wicked men ſay this in their hearts and minds; they ſpeak it internally, this is the daily language of their ſpirits to God, *Depart from us*, They who love not God with their hearts, would be rid of God with all their hearts. So the Apoſtle deſcribeth the Gentiles (*Rom.* 1. 28.) *They did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, or (as we put in the Margin) *to acknowledge God.* They caſt the notions of God out of their minds or underſtandings, as a worthleſs piece of knowledge.

Thirdly, Wicked men (the fairer ſort of hypocrites only excepted) ſay this with their works (*Tit.* 1. 11.) *They profeſs that they know God, but in works they deny him; being abominable, diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* Prophane perſons are aſhamed to profeſs the knowledge of God; groſs hypocrites boaſt in a profeſſion of God, but their practice is a denial of God. *The tranſgreſſion of the wicked* (ſaith holy *David*, Pſal. 36. 1, 2.) *ſaith within my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes.* The profeſſion of ſome wicked men ſaith they fear God; but their tranſgreſſion or trade of ſin ſaith, there's no ſuch matter. We may interpret this Text of the wicked man ſaying thus, all theſe three wayes. Some ſay it with their their mouths; all, even the moſt modeſt of them, ſay it in their hearts; very many ſay it in their lives, their doings being a daily defiance againſt God, and a kind of command upon him to depart.

Again, *To ſay*, hath in it more then a bare word, or *ſay-ſo*, it implyeth a decree or ſtatute, a full purpoſe or reſolution about the thing. When *David* (*Pſal.* 32. 5.) expreſſeth himſelf thus, *I ſaid I will confeſs my ſin*, &c. And *Pſal.* 39. 1. *I ſaid, I will take heed to my wayes*, he intends a fixed and immoveable reſolve upon godly repentance in the one, and of Godly watchfulneſs in the other. And though this Text is not ſo full for it in the letter, as the two alledged, yet without breach of charity, or wreſting Scripture, we may expound this as high. *They ſay* (as reſolved and ſet upon the thing) *to God, depart.*

Nomen El *fortitudinē denotat.*

The word *El*, by which God is here ſet forth, ſpeaks his ſtrength and power, *The ſtrong God*; which we may note to argue both the folly and the impudence of the creature in ſpeaking thus: The weakneſs of God is ſtronger then man, and yet weak man lifts up himſelf againſt the ſtrong God; and while he thus tells him, that he cares not for his preſence, doth indeed dare him in the utmoſt of his power.

There are four words by which God is expreſſed in Scripture, upon a diſtinct conſideration of four eminent excellencies in him.

Firſt, When the ſelf-being and unchangeable nature of God are chiefly intended, He is called by his Name *Jehovah.*

Secondly, When the efficiency and governing power of God in the adminiſtration of all things both in heaven and earth are ſignified, he is called by the Name *Elohim.*

Thirdly, When his goodneſs, bounty and munificence are exalted, he is called *Shaddai.*

Fourthly, When the irreſiſtible ſtrength and force of God to accompliſh his own decrees and counſels, both of mercy and juſtice, are deſcribed, he is called by the Name in the Text, *El.*

Nor will it be unuſeful here to add, that in Scripture, man is expreſſed by four different Names, to hold out a fourfold condition or ſtate of man.

Firſt, When the virtues and beſt perfections of man are ſpoken of, he is properly repreſented under this title of *Job.*

Secondly, When his ſtrength, honour and greatneſs are aimed at, he is called *Geber.*

Thirdly, To note his original of earth, and his natural weakneſs, he is termed *Adam.*

Fourthly, His accidental miſery, poverty, ſorrows and infirmities, denominate him *Enos.*

Now take man, not only as his name *Adam* imports, which is common to all; or as his name *Enos* ſpeaks him, which is the lot of moſt; but alſo as he is *Iſh* or *Geber*, which names are competible but to very few; yet for man at the higheſt pitch attainable of his ſtrength or perfections, to ſpeak proudly to God, to ſay unto *El*, the ſtrong, mighty, the almighty God, depart from me, how abominable! Yet thus the wicked ſay to God.

Depart from us.] The word ſignifies properly to divert or recede from a place, or to give and make room, that the way may be clear and un-obſtructed for the paſſage of another. As if wicked men ſhould ſay to God, *Room for us*; as if one houſe, one place, yea one world could not hold God and them. Indeed God filleth heaven and earth, yea the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, yet God ſtraightens no man by his preſence, though wicked men think they can never have room enough where God is preſent. Hence it is that wicked men are called, *Men far from God*, Pſal. 73. 27. *Lo, they that be far from thee ſhall periſh.* And who theſe are, *David* telleth us in the latter part of the verſe; *Thou haſt deſtroyed all them that go a whoring from thee*: As a man who cares not for his wife, would willingly put her away from him, and goeth himſelf to an adulterous bed; ſo the wicked man, having no love in his heart to God, bids him be gone, and goeth himſelf a whoring from him, that is, he embraceth the creatures, and giveth his heart up into the hands of the world; therefore he is called, *A man far off.* In oppoſition to which, the people of God are called, *his Nigh Ones*, or thoſe *who draw nigh unto him* (Lev. 10. 3.) And *David* in the next verſe of the Pſalm laſt cited, concludeth, *But it is good for me to draw nigh unto God.*

רחוקי אל *Longinqui Dei.*

קרובי אל *Propinqui Dei.*

Further, This phraſe, *depart from us*, may imply the rejection and diſtaſte of thoſe tenders and offers of good things, which God makes to wicked men, inviting them home to himſelf. As we uſe to ſay to thoſe, who over-officiouſly proffer us their wares or commodities as we paſs in the ſtreets of ſome City, why do you thus preſs upon us, and trouble us? be gone, we have no mind or no leiſure to buy. Thus *they ſay to God, depart from us.* Hence obſerve;

Firſt, *Riches and worldly proſperity provoke or occaſion wicked men to have contemptuous thoughts of God.*

The cauſal particle leads us to this Obſervation; *Therefore they ſay*, &c. *David* having confeſſed his own ſin (Pſal. 73. 3.) *I was envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked*; ſheweth (*verſ.* 6.) what ſin proſperity bred up in them. *Therefore pride compaſſeth them about as a chain, violence covereth them as a garment.* (verſ. 8.) *They are corrupt and ſpeak wickedly.* (ver. 9.) *They ſet their mouth againſt the heavens*, that is, they ſpake blaſphemouſly againſt the God of heaven. They charged their mouths with inſolent words, and then (their tongues being ſet on fire by hell) they diſcharged them like a thundering Canon againſt heaven. *Moſes* warns the *Iſraelites* (Deut. 8. 10, 11, 12.) *When thou haſt eaten and art full, then thou ſhalt bleſs the Lord thy God for the good Land which he hath given thee; then beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, leſt when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God.* How jealous was *Moſes*, or rather the Spirit of God by *Moſes*, over that ancient people, leſt they ſhould forget God when he had remembred them? leſt they ſhould then make void the Commandments of God, when he had made good his Covenant? leſt their hearts ſhould be lifted up againſt God, after his hand had been ſo often lifted up for them? And what *Moſes* here by way of propheſie (foreſeeing the naughtineſs of their hearts, cautions them not to do) the ſame *Moſes*, in the ſame Book (*chap.* 32. 15.) by way of hiſtory, reproves them that they had done. *But Jeſurun waxed fat and kicked, thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatneſs, then he forſook God that made him, and lightly eſteemed the Rock of his ſalvation.* Even *Iſrael* being grown fat as a beaſt in the green paſtures of a worldly proſperity, played the beaſt and kicked with the heel; but againſt whom did he kick? he kicked againſt God, and againſt him in a twofold relation: Firſt, As his Creator; *He forſook the God that made him.* Secondly, As a Preſerver or Saviour; *He lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation*: No wonder *if their rock ſold them* (as it followeth, *ver.* 30.) when they valued their rock at ſo low a price. God made his people of great value (yea, he called them his *peculiar treaſure*) and then they grew to ſuch high thoughts of themſelves, and were ſo great in their own eyes, that preſently God was undervalued and little in their eyes. Thus the Lord complained of them long after by his Prophet (*Hoſ.* 13. 6.) *According to their paſture, ſo were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted* (not in thankfulneſs and in praiſe, but in pride) *therefore they have forgotten me.* As to remember God (in Scripture-language) is to obey, ſerve and honour him; ſo to forget God, is to rebel and riſe up againſt him. This moved the Apoſtle *Paul* to give *Timothy* his leſſon for rich men (1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things to enjoy.* They who are rich in this world, are uſually moſt poor for the world to come; and while their eſtates are high, their minds are higher. Low things make the mind high, but with ſuch a highneſs, as is indeed not only the lowneſs, but the baſeneſs of the mind. While the mind is heightned by the uſe and poſſeſſion of low things (ſuch comparatively are the higheſt of earthly things) it is it ſelf made lower then the loweſt, and leſs (not in humility, but in vanity) then the leaſt of things. Then both mind and man are loweſt of all, when they neglect or lightly eſteem the high God. To this departure from God, the preſence and abundance of the world endangers every man, and wicked men are ever enſnared with the danger; *Therefore they ſay to God, depart from us.*

Secondly obſerve, *Wicked men have no mind to God, they cannot abide his preſence.*

There is in them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God (Heb. 3. 12.) and in ſaying to God, *depart from us.* God ſaith to his people, *Hoſ.* 9. 12. *Wo unto you when I depart*; they think it beſt for them when God departeth. Saints know not how to live a comfortable day, much leſs to be happy without him; wicked men know not how to live a comfortable hour, much leſs to be ever happy with him. The Church ſaith to God, *Leave us not* (Jer. 14.)

The world ſaith, *O that God would leave us.* When ſhall we be eaſed and unburdened of his preſence? *There is nothing ſo joyous to the righteous, nor ſo grievous to the wicked, as to have God near them.*

But it may be ſaid, Is God near the wicked? or have they any need to deſire the Lord to depart from them? Is he not already departed and gone far from them?

I anſwer; Wicked men are far from the favour and love of God, but they are not far from his eye and knowledge. God is already departed from wicked men, or rather was never near them, in regard of his ſpecial preſence; but he is near even to them in regard of his general and common preſence. Yea, wicked men find and feel God often in their Conſciences, though they never found him in their Affections. God makes offers to wicked men, and though God be not actively in all their thoughts (as the Scripture ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 10. 4.) that is, they do not willingly meditate or think of God, they maintain no correſpondence or communion with him in their inner man; yet God doth (like an unbidden and unwelcome Gueſt) put himſelf into their thoughts, and moves in their minds; this proves their trouble, and becomes a pain unto them. *As God is not far from every one of us* (good and bad) becauſe (as the Apoſtle argueth with thoſe at *Athens*, Acts 17. 27, 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*; ſo we may ſay, that he is not far from many wicked men, becauſe he moveth and ſtirs in them, he preſents to their minds ſome maniſeſtations of himſelf in his Juſtice and Holineſs; yea, of his Truth, Long-ſuffering and Goodneſs, in none of which they either deſire or accept acquaintance with him; and therefore ſay to God, depart from us, trouble us not; and when once they can baniſh theſe thoughts, and live thus without God in the world, then they think they live indeed; and till then, they reckon their lives a kind of death: And hence it is, that (as we have ſeen by ſad examples) ſome have thruſt themſelves out of the world with their own hands, becauſe they could not thruſt theſe thoughts of God out of their hearts and conſciences. Their ſouls have ſometimes proved a burden to their bodies, to whoſe ſouls the thought of God was a burden. And they, who upon theſe terms, part ſoul and body, have indeed ſaid to God, *Depart from us.* Hence note,

Thirdly, *To be weary of the preſence of God, is the ſtrongeſt argument that a man is wicked.*

Purely to love and pray for the preſence of God, is the ſureſt ſign of a gracious heart; therefore purely to deſire and wiſh the abſence or departure of God, muſt needs conclude that heart ungracious. *One thing* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 27. 4.) *have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after*, that is, I will earneſtly purſue, and unweariedly proſecute the grant of this deſire) *that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple.* And again he breathes the ſame ſpirit of holy impatience, till he might enjoy that favour (*Pſal.* 42. 1, 2.) *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God; my ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God, when ſhall I come and appear before God?* In theſe ſtrains of divineſt Rhetorick was the ſoul of *David* carried out after God. He was the One thing, He was the Only thing he longed for; without God all was nothing with him; in Him he had all: His preſence was enough for him. All company, multitudes and throngs of men, yea, of Saints, or good men, was but ſolitarineſs and widowhood to him, without the preſence of God. This was the higheſt aſcent of his holineſs. Is it not then the loweſt deſcent of unholineſs, to be troubled at the preſence of God? Is it not a full conviction of a carnal man, and of a wicked man, to think it long till God be gone, or to deprecate his preſence, and urge his departure? This frame of heart is the very blackneſs of helliſh darkneſs, and the expreſs the Image of the Devils perſon. Such are (though not poſſeſſed with, yet) under the poſſeſſion of the evil Spirit: The Goſpel (*Matth.* 8. 28, 29.) makes report of *two men poſſeſſed with Devils, coming out of the Tombes, exceeding fierce, ſo that no man could paſs by that way; and behold they cried out, ſaying, what have we to do with thee, thou Jeſus the ſon of the living God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* It is the Devils torment to be near Chriſt, or to have any appearance of God; are not they then neareſt the Devil to whom God is a torment? Or who (like theſe in *Job*) do as thoſe *Gadarens* to Chriſt in the laſt verſe of that Chapter, come and beſeech him, that he will depart out of their Coaſts, that ſo if it were poſſible, they might never more hear of him, nor from him. Which is plainly imported in the next clauſe of the Verſe.

For we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes.

Though God, in himſelf conſidered, be the firſt and chiefeſt object of a wicked mans enmity, yet this quarrel uſually breaks out at the diſcoveries of his will and wayes. Thus in the Text, they reject God becauſe of his wayes. The wayes of a wicked man (as the Pſalmiſt hath it) are alwayes grievous to God as well as man; and ſo are the wayes of God grievous to wicked men, and therefore they deſire no acquaintance with, no knowledge of them. As if *Job* had thus ſpoken in their perſon. *If the caſe ſtand thus, O God, that we cannot have thee and the good things which thou haſt promiſed, unleſs we alſo learn and ſubmit to thy wayes, then be gone; for thy wayes are a loathing to our ſouls, thy wayes are rough, ſharp, ſad and unſuitable to our ſpirits and genius. If we ſhould faſhion our ſelves, and ſhape our courſe according to the rules which thou preſcribeſt, ſhould we not be expoſed to the laughter, if not to the danger of all the world? Should we not bury our ſelves alive, and be deprived of all the comforts of our lives? muſt we not ſpend our time in ſorrow or ſilence, and never ſee good day more? As for us, we know ſo much of thy wayes already, that we have no deſire to the knowledge of them; we are provided of better wayes, of wayes more eaſie, ſmooth, plain and pleaſant; and therefore what deſire can we have to thine?*

For we deſire not,] The word ſignifieth to take pleaſure or delight in, as well as to deſire; becauſe thoſe things which we delight in, are moſt deſired by us; ſo we read it, *Pſal.* 1. 2. *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord.* And (Pſal. 4.) *Thou art not a God that takeſt pleaſure in* (or, *a deſire unto*) *wickedneſs.* So here, *We deſire not* (*or we have no pleaſure in*) *the knowledge of thy wayes.* And when they ſay, *we deſire not*, &c. more is intended then the bare Negative of their deſire; we may reſolve this Negative into an Affirmative, we diſlike, yea, we hate the knowledge of thy wayes. *He that is not with me* (ſaith Chriſt) *is againſt me*: We alſo may ſay, He that is not a well-wiſher to, and deſirous of the wayes of God, oppoſeth and rejects them. So that in this we have a deſcription of affected ignorance. He that doth not know the wayes of God, is ignorant; for it is every mans duty to know them: but he that hath no deſire to that knowledge, is in love with his own ignorance, and is pleaſed with it.

חפץ *Non tam velle ſignificat quam delectari re aliqua.*

But what are *theſe wayes of God*, which find ſo little acceptance with wicked men?

I anſwer firſt in general, that by the wayes of God, he doth not here intend thoſe wayes in which God walketh, but thoſe which God hath made for man to walk in. More diſtinctly, the wayes of God are threefold.

Firſt, The wayes of his counſel and decrees: To endeavour or deſire the knowledge of theſe wayes, is not our duty, but our curioſity; as theſe ought not to be ſearched, ſo they are paſt finding out, *Rom.* 11. 33.

Secondly, The wayes of his providence and outward adminiſtration, of which the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh (*Pſal.* 145. 17.) *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works.* And though ſome of theſe wayes are not knowable, for (*Pſal.* 77. 19.) *His way is in the Sea, and his paths in the great waters, and his footſteps are not known*, that is, his footſteps many times in his wayes upon the Land, are no more ſeen then a way is to be ſeen in the Sea, or a path in the great waters. Frequent paſſage makes a track or beaten path upon the Land; but how frequently ſoever paſſages are made upon the face of the Sea, no print nor path remains. Thus it is with many of the wayes of God, we cannot ſee where he hath gone, yet it is our duty to ſee his goings, and to deſire the knowledge of theſe wayes.

Thirdly, The wayes of God are his Commandments, or thoſe Rules of life, in and by which we ought to walk, and regulate our whole courſe: and theſe are of two ſorts.

Firſt, The wayes of worſhip. Secondly, the wayes of practice, or of manners. Theſe are called the wayes of God, becauſe they lead unto God, and land us (through Chriſt) ſafe in heaven. Here in the Text, the wayes of God, the knowledge whereof wicked men do not deſire, are the ſecond and third; as for the firſt, it is a part of ſome mens wickedneſs over-boldly to preſs and pry into them. And while they neglect the revealed will of God, which they ought both to know and do, they are very buſie about his ſecret will, which they cannot know, but may be (though intentionally on their part it never be) done by them, and ſhall (judicially on Gods part) be done upon them. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *Wicked men bear no love to, nor have any delight in the knowledge of the Commandments and Ordinances of God.*

Thus *Solomon* reproves them (*Prov.* 1. 22, 25, 29, 30.) *How long ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity?* (He means it not of that ſimplicity which is oppoſed to craftineſs and double-mindedneſs, but of that which is oppoſed to wiſdom and ſpiritual-mindedneſs, as the next words expound it) *and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning?* (ſc. at the wayes of God) *and fools hate knowledge?* He means not the ſimple fool (for though ſuch have no knowledge, yet they cannot be ſaid to hate it) but the filthy fool, or the wicked man in the Text, theſe hate knowledge; and to theſe he ſpeaks (*verſe* 25.) *Ye have ſet at naught all my counſel, and would none of my reproof.* And again of theſe (verſ. 29, 30.) *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counſel; they deſpiſed all my reproof.* We are not to underſtand *Solomon* in theſe paſſages, as giving the character of ſome ſpecial wicked men; for though ſome are more exceſſive then others in their love to the wayes of ſin, yet they all (even the moſt temperate) meet in this, that they deſire not the knowledge of the wayes of Holineſs.

Here it may be queſtioned, Why doth the knowledge of the wayes of God trouble them ſo much? Indeed the practice of and obedience to them, may be burdenſome to natural men, but what can their knowledge hurt or grieve them?

I anſwer, Firſt, It is not eaſie to fleſh and blood to ſtudy for, or make application to the means of any knowledge, much leſs of the wayes of God; Knowledge will coſt ſome pains; knowledge, eſpecially divine knowledge, is the gift of God; yet it calls for our induſtry, not only to do what we know, but alſo to know what to do (Prov. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4.) *My ſon, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my Commandments with thee, ſo that thou encline thine thine ear unto wiſdom, and apply thy heart to underſtanding.* To the receiving of the Word and Commandment of God, which hold forth the knowledge of his wayes, there muſt be an *inclining of the ear*, that is, frequent hearing; and *applying of the heart*, that is, frequent meditation. The two next verſes import yet a ſtronger diligence, even *a crying after knowledge, and a lifting up the voyce for underſtanding; a ſeeking her as ſilver, and a ſearching for her as for hid treaſure.* Hence the concluſion of the Preacher (*Eccl.* 1. 18.) is in ſome ſence extendible to all ſorts of knowledge; *He that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow*: for though to know be a delight, yet the means of increaſing knowledge, hath ſomewhat of pains and trouble in it.

Secondly, The knowledge ſpoken of in this Scripture, is not a meer aery, notional, ſpeculative knowledge, but an experimental and a practical knowledge; if it were only a knowledge of the wayes of God, that we might be able to talk and diſcourſe of them, that would ſuffice, many wicked men might be deſirous of that knowledge; but becauſe this knowledge obligeth to obedience, and they are called upon to know the Commandments of God, to do them, and to know the wayes of God, to walk in them, therefore they deſire not that knowledge.

Thirdly, They deſire not to know the wayes of God, leſt they ſhould be troubled for not walking in them. Their ignorance of them, they conceive to be ſome excuſe or extenuation of their ſin in not doing them (though indeed their ignorance being affected, is one of the higheſt aggravations of their ſin) for it is far eaſier to ſin without light, then againſt it; and to err by not receiving the truth, *then by holding it in unrighteouſneſs* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 1. 18.) Light and knowledge where they are, will be urging duty upon the Conſcience. It is no little trouble to put by theſe motions, and keep down this light, and it is far more troubleſome to go contrary to them.

Knowledge hath three things attending upon it.

Firſt, An obligation to duty: A man is not free from his own bands (though he be from others) to forbear the doing of what he knoweth.

Secondly, As knowledge is an obligation, ſo it is a provocation to duty; it will put a man on, and urge him, it will be as a ſpur in his ſide to make him go, yea, run the wayes of God.

Thirdly, Knowledge hath a ſting, a vexation in it when we neglect duty. The Conſcience of a wicked man doth often break in upon him, and ſmite him, when he knowingly breaks out of the wayes of God. Now leſt the knowledge of the wayes of God ſhould be troubleſome to wicked men in any of theſe three things, therefore to way-lay and prevent their own trouble, they have no deſire to the knowledge of thoſe wayes. Beſides, their deſires after the knowledge of thoſe wayes is ſtopt and quencht by a multitude of prejudices and hard thoughts which they have of thoſe wayes; as firſt, That they are unequal and rigorous; therefore the Lord taxeth his ancient people for that apprehenſion (*Mal.* 1. 13.) *Ye ſaid alſo, behold what a wearineſs is it?* And he calls them by the Prophet *Micah*, to give an account in what (*Micah* 6. 3.) *O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee, teſtifie againſt me.* Secondly, As diſhonourable and contumelious; they think the wayes of God too low and ſimple for their ſpirits, and are aſhamed to be found in the practice of them. The word of God is in that ſence, a reproach to them. Thirdly, As fruitleſs and unprofitable; they ſee not what they can get by them; and then why ſhould they go in them? Which prejudice is expreſly held out in the latter clauſe of the following verſe.

Secondly obſerve, *Not to deſire to know the wayes of God, is more ſinful and dangerous then the ignorance of them.*

There are three ſorts of ignorance. Firſt, A groſs or invincible ignorance, which proceeds either from the total abſence of all means of knowledge, or from a total inability to manage and improve thoſe means. Secondly, There is an unwilling ignorance in the midſt of means and abilities to know; a man may be ignorant of ſome things which he is willing enough to know, and this ignorance may run him upon that evil which he had not (premeditately and purpoſely) a will to do. Thirdly, There is a willing ignorance; when a man hath no will to know, yea, reſiſts all the means of knowledge. When he not only doth not know the evil which he doth, but therefore refuſeth knowledge, that he may more freely do evil, and may have this to ſay for himſelf when he doth evil, that *he knew not how to refuſe the evil, and chuſe the good.* As that is a high wickedneſs ſpoken of by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 20.) knowingly to call evil good, and good evil, to put light for darkneſs, and darkneſs for light; ſo it is not a wickedneſs of a lower ſtature, willingly to refuſe knowledge, that ſo we may not be able in our actings to diſtinguiſh light from darkneſs, good from evil, but may run blind-fold upon any thing which our own luſts and advantages prompt us to do. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 58. 2.) ſpeaketh of ſome, who *delighted to know the wayes of God, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the Ordinance of their God.* Such are hypocrites. But there are a ſort who delight not to know the wayes of God, that ſo they may do unrighteouſneſs, and never be engaged to live up to the Ordinances of God; ſuch are prophane. Both fall into the ſame condemnation; the one for not doing what they pretend they have a delight to know, the other for not delighting in the knowledge of that which they ought to do. The prophaneneſs of this latter ſort is perſonated in this verſe, and is yet ſet in a more open light in the verſe which followeth.

Verſe 15. **What is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit ſhall we have if we pray unto him?**

This verſe aſſignes the reaſon (ſuch as it is) which lieth in the bottom of the hearts of wicked men alwayes, and ſometimes appeareth at their lips, as the reaſon why they *ſay to God, depart from us,* &c. They who bid God be gone from them, have ſaid in their hearts, and are ready enough to ſay it with their mouths,

What is the Almighty ? &c.] Some read it in the Maſculine Gender, *Who is the Almighty?* We in the Neuter; the ſence of both is one, and that as bad a one as is imaginable or utterable: As if they had ſaid, What is there in God more then in another? we ſee nothing in him extraordinary, why he ſhould expect, or why we ſhould give him any extraordinary ſervice. Such queryings, whether concerning things or perſons, God or man, ſignifie the higheſt contempt and diſeſteem of either. When *Moſes* ſaid to God concerning himſelf (*Exod.* 3. 11.) *Who am I that I ſhould go to Pharaoh?* He laid himſelf quite below that important ſervice. When *David* ſaid to God concerning himſelf (2 *Sam.* 7. 18.) *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* He laid himſelf quite below that eminent mercy. When *Nabal* ſaid to *David*'s Meſſengers requeſting a ſupply of victual for his Army (1 *Sam.* 25. 16.) *Who is David? and who is the Son of Jeſſe?* He laid him quite below that deſired courteſie. When *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 8. 4. *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* He layeth him quite below the leaſt mindings or thought of God. So when *Pharaoh* ſaid to *Moſes* concerning God (with theſe in the Text) (*Exod.* 5. 2.) *Who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey his voice to let* Iſrael *go?* He laid the Lord (as they did here) quite below that required duty. Such Queſtions as theſe, do not ſo much imply a doubt, who or what God is, whom they are commanded to obey and ſerve, as a reſolvedneſs that he is unworthy their ſervice and obedience; or that they judge him ſuch a one as they have no cauſe either to fear or love. Which we may further evidence from the peculiarity of that Name with which God is cloathed in the Text; *Almighty: What is the Almighty?* The word *Shaddai* here and elſewhere rendred *The Almighty*, hath a double derivation: Firſt, From a root (*Sadad*) which ſignifieth to waſte or to deſtroy, implying the almighty power of God to ſubdue and ſubjugate the greateſt powers to himſelf. According to this meaning of the word, the queſtion of theſe wicked men intimates thus much, that they fear no hurt from God; though he be reported for Almighty, yet they look upon him as weak and impotent, and therefore as ſlighting his ſtrength; and daring him to do his worſt, they ſay, *What is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him?*

Secondly, The word may be deduced from a root (*Dai*, to which the Letter *Sin* is added as ſubſervient) which ſignifieth ſufficiency, plenty and abundance. According to this interpretation of the word, their Queſtion holds out thus much, That they being in ſo flouriſhing and full a condition themſelves, neither needed nor hoped for any thing from his fulneſs; they could ſubſiſt well enough without him, or any ſupply from him; why ſhould they ſerve or wait upon him in hope of more, when they had enough in their own hand and poſſeſſion already? Nor had they faith to believe it would be better with them, or that they ſhould receive any good from him, how much, how long, or how well ſoever they ſhould ſerve him. What is the Almighty, or what hath he in ſtore for us, that we ſhould ſerve him? If we knit and conjoin both theſe conſiderations of the word together, we may parallel or exemplifie the whole compaſs of their queſtion with that lewd and Atheiſtical ſpeech recorded from the mouths of ſome ſons of *Belial* in his time, by the Prophet *Zephany* (chap. 1. 12.) *It ſhall come to paſs at that time, that I will ſearch* Jeruſalem *with candles, and I will puniſh the men that are ſetled on their lees, that ſay in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.* Whereas the Lord by his holy Prophet *Iſaiah* (chap. 41. 23.) challengeth the falſe gods or Idols, to give teſtimony and proof of their divine power, or that they are gods, by ſhewing things to come, and by doing good or evil, theſe conclude that God cannot give proof of his divine power, by doing either good or evil; which is as much as to ſay, that he can do nothing at all; for ſeeing all things that are done, are either good or evil, he that can do neither, cannot do any thing. Thus they wickedly imagined the Lord to be what Idols indeed are, who have eyes, and ſee not; ears, and hear not; feet, but walk not; and hands, but cannot act or execute. And that's the ſum of this blaſphemy, which *Job* aſcribeth here to the wicked, *What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him?* We neither regard the benefit nor the dammage that he can do us; we are neither troubled at his omnipotency, as if he could deſtroy us in his wrath when he is diſpleaſed at us; nor are we hungry after his All-ſufficiency, as if he could ſuſtain us in his love, were he every way pleaſed by us. *What is the Almighty?*

That we ſhould ſerve him.] Why ſhould we take upon us his Livery, and become his ſervants? What wages ſhall we have, or what preferment can he give us? as it followeth by and by. To ſerve God, or to be a ſervant to God, is a comprehenſive term, taking in all the duties of man in holineſs. *I and my houſe* (ſaith *Joſhua*, chap. 24. 15.) *will ſerve the Lord*: And ſuch is the reſolution of every godly man; but againſt this the wicked are reſolved, while we hear them putting the Queſtion, *What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him?* As if they had ſaid, he is ſuch a Maſter (or let him be what he will) that we will not ſerve him. To ſerve God is to give him all the duties both of natural and of inſtituted worſhip: We ſerve God while we love him, while we fear him, while we believe in him, while we truſt upon him; yet all theſe have diſtinct and proper reſpects to God. We truſt God as he is faithful, we believe on him as he is true, we fear him as he is great, we love him as he is good, we ſerve him as he is Soveraign and Lord of all. *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve* (Deut. 6. 13.) There is a ſervice due from man to man; but comparatively to our ſervice of God, we muſt not *be the ſervants of men* (1 Cor. 7. 23.) We ought to ſerve men heartily; but we muſt ſerve none but God with all our hearts. And if God be not ſerved with all, he counts himſelf not at all ſerved. A wicked man may poſſibly ſerve God with his tongue and hands, with words and outward works, but he never ſerveth him with his heart; and moſt uſually they caſt off the ſervice of hand and tongue, uſing both to his diſſervice. In this largeſt ſence of obſerving, we may expound this Text, and apply it to the greateſt number of wicked men, and in that ſtricter ſence 'tis true of them all; They ſay, *What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him?*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Wicked men have low and ſlight thoughts of God:*

Their wiſdom (the beſt that is in them) *is but the wiſdom of the fleſh*; and that, at the beſt, *is enmity againſt God* (*Rom.* 8. 7.) And can they do otherwiſe then lightly eſteem him with whom they are at enmity? They who know not the worth and excellency of a perſon, cannot have high thoughts of him. Wicked men, one and other, know not God (that's the definition which *Bildad* giveth of them, *chap.* 18. 21.) How then can they duly prize him whom thy do not know? As we do not deſire, ſo we cannot honour that which is unknown. All the ſervices, ſuch as they are, which a wicked man tenders to God, may bear the ſame inſcription which the Altar obſerved by *Paul* among the *Athenians* did (*Acts* 17. 23.) *To the unknown God.* *If thou hadſt known the gift of God* (ſaith Chriſt to the woman, *John* 4. 10.) *and who it is that ſaith unto thee, give me to drink, thou wouldeſt have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.* Did wicked men know the living God, they would ask after him, and reckon their lives, with all that they have, nothing worth without him. Believers having attained ſome good knowledge of God (though it be little to what they might attain in Grace, and leſs, yea, as nothing to what they ſhall receive in Glory) are lifted up with holy gloryings in and of God. Thus *Moſes* in his triumphant Song after the overthrow of *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* Hoſt in the Red Sea (*Exod.* 15. 11.) *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongſt the gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders?* Thus the Pſalmiſt crieth him up in his excellencies, *This God is our God for ever and ever* (*Pſal.* 48. 14.) So the Church is brought in by the Prophet admiring God (*Iſa.* 25. 9.) *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will ſave us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him,* &c. The words have a ſound of victory and triumph in them, intimating that ſome had in ſcorn (as they did *David*) asked, *Where is now your God?* Or as in the Text, *What is the Almighty?* Therefore his people, upon ſome gracious and ſtrange appearance of God for them, do, as it were, hold him up at once to the view and aſtoniſhment of all the World, eſpecially of their enemies; *Lo this is our God, this is the Lord.* Behold and conſider, who is a God like unto him? Your rock is not as our rock, even your ſelves being Judges. *Who have I in Heaven but thee?* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 73. 25.) *and there is none upon earth I deſire beſides thee.* We ſee how the opinion and eſtimation which the Saints have of God, is as different from that of wicked men, as their ſtate is different. They make their boaſt of God all the day long; theſe are aſhamed of him, and ſay, *What is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him?* The Daughters of *Jeruſalem* enquire of the Church (*Cant.* 5. 9.) *What is thy Beloved more then anothers beloved, O thou faireſt among women? What is thy Beloved more then anothers beloved, that thou doeſt thus charge us?* They demand what, and what is thy Beloved, out of an earneſt deſire of further information. But wicked men ask, *What is the Almighty?* Not out of a deſire to know what he is, but in ſcorn and deriſion of what they vainly and ignorantly conceive him to be, even too mean to be ſerved by them.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A wicked man thinks ſcorn to ſerve God.*

No man can ſerve two Maſters (ſaith our Great Maſter, *Math.* 6. 24.) That is, two Maſters of contrary intereſts, and who iſſue out contrary commands. Every wicked man ſerveth more Maſters then two; but he ſerveth not that one who is infinitely better, and more deſerving our ſervice then all. He is a ſervant to luſt, yea, *He ſerves divers luſts and pleaſures* (Tit. 3. 3.) He ſerves at the pleaſure of every luſt, and therefore he can have no pleaſure in ſerving the Lord: And unleſs we make it our pleaſure as well as our work to ſerve the Lord, he hath no pleaſure neither in us nor in our ſervices. We cannot ſerve God unleſs we deny our ſelves, and reſolve our will into his. But every wicked man is a ſelf-ſeeker, therefore he cannot ſerve God. And as in that ſtate he cannot, ſo he hath no will, no mind to ſerve the Lord. He looks upon his ſervice as ſlavery, and calls the Commandments of God cords and bonds, and ſubmiſſion to them bondage; therefore he ſaith, *I will break thoſe bonds aſunder, and caſt away thoſe cords from me* (Pſal. 2. 3.) Till we are made free from ſin, we are never free to ſerve the Lord. The Apoſtle joyns thoſe two in conſequence, *Rom.* 6. 20, 21. *When ye were the ſervants of ſin, ye were free from righteouſneſs* (not free by any liberty given, but by a liberty taken, which is licentiouſneſs) *but now being made free from ſin* (Chriſt manumitteth all whom he redeemeth) *and become ſervants to God:* There is a bleſſed tranſition from that freedom which is indeed ſlavery, into a ſervice which is indeed freedom. He is incomparably more free that ſerveth the Lord, then he who, not ſerving him, ruleth the World. *I ſerve* (God being my Maſter) may be the Motto, and is the Honour of all the Saints. The Yoak of Chriſt, yea, the Croſs of Chriſt, are ſweet, eaſie, and honourable to the Saints. They who have taſted how gracious the Lord is in his Promiſes, will rejoyce in his Commandments. And it is as much their deſire to ſerve him, as it is their happineſs to be ſaved by him. The wicked are ſtrangers from the Covenant of his Promiſe, and therefore they are eſtranged from his Precepts, and in ſtead of receiving his Law into their hearts, caſt it behind their backs. *What is the Almighty* (ſay they) *that we ſhould ſerve him?*

And what profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him?

We uſe to look to the end of our actions before we begin; and we may juſtly think it is not good for us to do that which will do us no good when we have done it. Did a godly man ſee no benefit, no good coming in by prayer, he would not pray. And becauſe a wicked man ſeeth no benefit in prayer, therefore he doth not pray. His reaſon were good if it were true. We cannot profit God by prayer; but we may profit our ſelves. We may turn the Argument and ſay, What profit ſhall we have if we do not pray? Though God giveth ſometime before we ask, yet we have no ground to expect till we have asked. Wicked men receive many good things from God, for which they never prayed; but becauſe they do not own him as the Author and Fountain of their good, therefore they will not pray. They aſcribe their profits to themſelves; What profit then can they conceive in prayer? *What profit ſhall we have*

If we pray unto him?] The Hebrew is, *If we meet him.* 'Tis a Metaphor taken from thoſe, who riſe up when grave and great men come towards them, and in honour to their perſons go forth and meet them. This elegancy of the word heightens the impiety of wicked men, who are ſo far from following God with their prayers and ſupplications, when he departeth far from them, that they will not ſo much as ſtir a foot to go out and meet God when he cometh towards them, either in judgment, to divert and turn him back, or in mercy, to invite him forwards, and give him thanks; as if they did not at all, either fear his anger, or regard his love. Prayer is our meeting with God; and this word is ſpecially applyed to our meeting God in prayer, when he appeareth angry and diſpleaſed. Thus the word is uſed (*Jer.* 7. 16.) *Therefore pray not thou for this people,* do not thou (ſaith the Lord to his Prophet) meet me when I come out againſt them, do not thou ſtrike in between me and them (as *Moſes* ſometimes did) to intercede and mediate for them, for I am reſolved to deſtroy them. That Scripture (*Iſa.* 47. 3.) which we render, *I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man* (that is, weak in power, or with compaſſion, ſuch as men ſometimes ſhew; but in full power, and with unmoveable purpoſes, as God; that Scripture, I ſay) is thus rendred by others, *Man ſhall not reſiſt me;* that is, he ſhall not hinder me of my purpoſe by prayer; or as ſome of the Rabbins tranſlate, or rather paraphraſe that Text, *I will not admit of any interceſſion for thee.* Whereas in another place of the ſame Prophet (*Chap.* 59. 16.) *The Lord wondred that there was no Interceſſor;* none to meet him with a good word for that people. In which ſence we find the word, *Jer.* 27. 18. & 36. 25. *Abigail* went out to meet *David,* and by her mediation to ſtop him from ſhedding blood (2 *Sam.* 25. 23.) The Lord calls his people to meet him (*Amos* 4. 12.) *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O* Iſrael; *and becauſe I will do this, therefore prepare to meet thy God, O* Iſrael. How to meet him? What with Armes or Armies, with the preparation of outward force? No: What can the ſtrongeſt Hoſts of men do againſt or with the Lord of Hoſts? This meeting then muſt be by repentance and humiliation, by weeping and invocation. God meeteth him (with bleſſings) in his way, that rejoyceth and worketh righteouſneſs: And he loves, yea, expects that we ſhould meet him in his way, mourning and praying, when he is about the works of his Judgment. Many godly men have met God with theſe weapons, and have prevailed, But the wicked man, either hath no hopes, or thinks he hath no need either to prevent evil or obtain good by ſuch a meeting. And therefore he ſaith, *What profit ſhall I have if I pray unto* (or meet) *him?*

פגע *Significat occurrere, obviare, ſæpe autem deprecari vel inſtanter orare.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Wicked men are led by their worldly profit in all they do.*

They are ready to do any evil which they ſuppoſe may profit them; and they will not do (which is all they can do) ſo much as the outſide of any good, by which they can get no viſible profit. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of ſuch *who ſuppoſed that gain was Godlineſs;* but they were far from ſuppoſing *that Godlineſs* (as indeed it is, even bare Godlineſs) *is great gain* (1 *Tim.* 6. 5, 6.) While wicked men have a hope to gain by a profeſſion of Godlineſs (becauſe gain is ſavory to them, though it proceed from that which to them is moſt unſavory) they will be profeſſors, and condeſcend to that which they eſteem no more in it ſelf, then the dirt under their feet, the thing called *Godlineſs*. But when once they ſee they cannot gain by it, or think they have gained enough by it, then they meddle with it no more; off goes their viſor, and they ſhew you (having made a ſhew of what they were not) what they are. Many now receive the Goſpel upon the ſame Argument, by which the *Sichemites* were perſwaded to receive Circumciſion (*Gen.* 34. 23.) *Shall not their cattel, and their ſubſtance, and every beaſt of theirs be ours?* They are zealous for Chriſt, upon the ſame terms that *Demetrius* was zealous for the worſhip of *Diana* among the *Epheſians* (*Acts* 19. 24.) they make or gain *Silver ſhrines*, and by this they get their living. As *Judas* betrayed Chriſt, ſo they will pretend to adore him, if their queſtion be well anſwered, What will you give us? Or what ſhall we get by it? The Needle of the Compaſs never reſts nor is quiet, till it pointeth to the North, nor are they till they point at profit, and have carnal advantages in their eye. What profit ſhall we have if we hear him, or pray unto him?

Secondly, Obſerve, *Wicked men have an opinion that prayer and attendance upon God in holy duties are unprofitable.*

While they ask, What profit ſhall we have if we pray? Their meaning is, that prayer yields no profit, and that ſerving God is a very poor trade. Such the Prophet *Malachy* at once diſcovers and reproves (*Chap.* 3. 14.) *Ye have ſaid, It is in vain to ſerve God; And what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hoſts. And now ye call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedneſs are ſet up, yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.* As if they had ſaid, We get nothing by the ſervice of God; and not only ſo, but they who rebel againſt him, the proud, they who make wickedneſs their work, their buſineſs, they who do not only neglect God, but tempt him, ſinning preſumptuouſly, daringly, theſe get all, theſe are happy, theſe are built up high in good things, honour and riches, and theſe are delivered and protected from evil, dangers, and diſtreſſes. A prophane Souldier at the ſiege of a Town paſſing a place of danger was heard ſwearing, and when one that ſtood by warned him, ſaying, *Fellow-ſouldier, do not ſwear, the bullets fly*; he anſwered, *They that ſwear come off as well as they who pray*; ſoon after a ſhot hit him, and down he fell. This is the judgment both of poor, ignorant, and knowingly wicked men, *What profit is there if we pray?* Whereas indeed they ſhould rather ſay, What profit is there in any thing without prayer? Or what profit is there not in prayer? *Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſe of this life, as well as of that which is to come* (1 Tim. 4. 8.)

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Wicked men throw up or give over the duties of holineſs, when they find no preſent profit or outward advancement coming in by them.*

They ſerve God no longer then he ſerveth their turns. They who follow Chriſt for the loaves, leave him when the loaves are done. Surely many old Formaliſts were wont to pray meerly for filthy lucre, which gave occaſion for that common Proverb, *No penny, no pater-noſter*; which we may tranſlate into the ſtile of the Text, *No profit, no prayer*. Saints find reward in their work; but Hypocrites muſt be rewarded and paid in hand for their work, elſe they will work no more. A godly man will pray and perſevere in prayer, becauſe God commandeth him to pray alwayes; not becauſe he alwayes finds the grant of the thing prayed for. He knows his prayers can never turn to loſs, though he pray long and feels no profit, not only not in temporals, but not in ſpirituals, and inward comforts. He conſiders, what God requires of him, not what he receiveth from God, is the ground of every duty. And whereas that wicked King ſaid (2 *Kings* 6. 33.) *This evil is from the Lord, why then ſhould I wait upon the Lord any longer?* He ſaith, I will yet, yea, for ever wait upon the Lord, though he defer to do me good.

VERS. 16, 17, 18.

Lo, their good is not in their hand, the counſel of the wicked is far from me.

How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? And how oft cometh their deſtruction upon them? God diſtributeth ſorrows in his anger.

They are as ſtubble before the wind, and as chaff that the ſtorm carrieth away.

IN the former words, *Job* having deſcribed both the proſperity and the blaſphemy of wicked men, whom he repreſents thruſting the Lord from them, and diſcharging him their company, *Depart from us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes,* &c. (Having thus, I ſay, deſcribed their proſperity, and their blaſphemy; leſt he ſhould ſeem to attribute more happineſs to them, then indeed they have, or at all to have approved of their courſe and counſel, which at all he had not) he ſubjoyns by way of prevention, his opinion of both in this ſixteenth Verſe.

Lo, their good is not in their hand, the counſel of the wicked is far from me.

As if he had ſaid, *I have not aſſerted the great ſucceſs of wicked men, as if God neglected the affairs of the world, or cared not into what hands they were diſtributed; as if he had left wicked men in their own power, to be the founders and contrivers of their own greatneſs; or as if I my ſelf were taken with, or envied at any of their felicity: for I am well aſſured that God diſpoſeth of all theſe things in much wiſdom, but in no love at all, or good will to them: Lo, their good is not in their hand, the counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

In theſe words *Job* gives his opinion about the ſtate of wicked men, in the midſt of all their outward pomp and worldly ſplendor; *Lo, their good is not in their hand.* The Septuagint read this firſt part of the Verſe without a negative particle; whereas we (from the Hebrew) read, *Their good is not in their hand*, they ſay, *Their goods were in their hands.* Which ſome explain, As if *Job* in theſe words aſſigned the reaſon whence it comes to paſs, that wicked men ſpake with ſo much boldneſs and impudency in the Verſe before, *What is the Almighty? And what profit is it that we pray to him?* Why are they thus bold with God? Why do they ſlight the Almighty? *O* (ſaith *Job*) *their good is in their hand*; that is, they have enough already, they are full of the world, and they care not how empty they are of God; they have as much as they deſire, they are ſatisfied with the creature, therefore they have no deſire to the Almighty, the Creator; they have their portion, and ſuch will not pray for more who think they have all in poſſeſſion. What need they beg any good thing at the hand of God, when they have all good in their own hand? *Their good is in their hand, therefore they ſay, What profit is it that we pray to the Almighty?* This is a truth, but I will not proſecute this reading, becauſe it is not clear from the original Text.

Ἐν χερσὶ γὰρ ἦν αὐτῶν τὰ ἀγαθά. Sept.

We render according to the letter of the Hebrew, *Their good is not in their hand.* That is, ſay ſome, They have many worldly good things, yet they uſe none of them. They have good in their houſes, good in their cheſts, but they have none in their hand. The righteous man hath outward good things in his hand, he is ready to uſe and imploy them, he is maſter of them, he makes them ſerve him; but meer carnal men ſerve their goods, or are ſlaves to them; their goods have them in their hand; their good is not in their hand, they are ruled by what they have; they do not rule what they have. *Lo, their good is not in their hand.* They are not maſter of their own. There is a truth in this expoſition; and therefore *Solomon* in *Eccleſiaſtes* diſtinguiſheth the poſſeſſion of the things of the world from the uſe of them. It is one gift of God to put the things of the world into our hand, and another to give us a heart to uſe them (*Eccleſ.* 5. 19.) *Every man to whom God hath given riches and wealth* (there is one gift) *and given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and rejoyce in his labour, this is the gift of God,* there is another gift. Many receive the firſt gift from the hand of God, who are denyed the latter. But neither will I give this as the ſcope of *Job*'s Text.

Again, *Their good is not in their hand.* By *good* here, we are to underſtand all that which is before ſet down, as the portion of wicked men: We had an Inventory of their goods, a very large and fair one. *Lo, Their good.* Why the things of the world are called good, ſee before (*ver.* 13.) *They ſpend their dayes in wealth*, or, *in good.* And though they did, yet here he ſaith, *Their good is not in their hand.* But how can a man ſpend his dayes in that which is not in his hand? Many have that in their hand or poſſeſſion, in which they do not ſpend their dayes. But it ſounds hard to ſay, A man ſpends his dayes in that which is not in his hand.

Lo, their good is not in their hand.

I anſwer; The being of a thing in our hand imports,

Firſt, That it is attainable by our own induſtry, or that it is within our reach and power. So, when *Job* ſaith, *Their good is not in their hand*; his meaning is, their riches and worldly abundance was not attained by any ſelf-ſufficiency. Not only is it true in ſpirituals, but alſo in temporals (though in theſe we can do no more) that we can do nothing effectively of our ſelves, or by our own ſtrength and wiſdom, our ſufficiency is of God. Whatſoever we have in this world comes from another hand, not from our own. Maſter *Broughton* renders fully up to this ſence; *Lo, their wealth cometh not by their own power.*

Secondly, *Their good is not in their hand*; that is, they have not a power to hold the good which they have received; this I have ſeen (ſaith *Job*) in the ſtate of wicked men, that neither the good they have was purely in their power to attain it, nor in their power to retain and hold it. This latter ſence ſome conclude, as ſpecially intended by this phraſe all the Scripture over. As if to be in the hand, did rather imply an ability in keeping, then induſtry in acquiring the things of this life; yet I conceive the former ſence as fair and pertinent as the latter, and therefore from thence note,

Cum ſcripturæ dicit aliquid eſſe in manu; potius poteſtatem in conſervando quum diligentiam in acquirendo ſignificat. Bold.

First, *Men get not their greatneſs, whether in wealth, or rule, by their own power.*

What *Job* affirms of evil men, is true of good men too, it is a general truth, *Their good is not in their hand to get it*; every good gift comes from above. Even the things of the world (which are good gifts, though they be a lower ſort of good gifts) are ſent by a higher hand. Earth is dropt down to us out of Heaven. Outward comforts are not from the hand of man, either meritoriouſly, or efficiently. They are not from his hand meritoriouſly, he deſerves not a bit of bread; he is ſo far from deſerving Heaven, and Glory, and the Favour of God, that he deſerves not a piece of this earth to ſtand or lye down upon. No nor efficiently: Proud man hath ſuch an opinion of himſelf, he is full of theſe thoughts, that at leaſt the things of the world are within his compaſs, that he can reach and attain them by his own power, activity, and policy. *Iſa.* 10. 13. The *Aſſyrian* is brought in glorying thus; *For he ſaith, by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent, and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures, and I have put down the inhabitants of the earth like a valiant man.* Here is the language of a proud mans heart, he ſaith, by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it. And the Lord was very jealous of his own people, that they would be attributing their good to their own hand, and he could not bear it that they ſhould. (*Deut.* 8. 16, 17.) Therefore he admoniſheth them, that when they came to *Canaan*, and had got great eſtates, and had eaten, and were full, to take heed leaſt their hearts ſhould be lifted up (*Verſ.* 17.) *And thou ſay in thy heart* (ſuppoſe it do not break forth into words) *my might and my power hath gotten this wealth* (take heed thou do not ſpeak ſuch language in thy heart) *but thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that gives thee power to get wealth, that he may eſtabliſh his Covenant which he ſware to thy fathers.* See here, the things of the world are not in our hand, God gives us power to get our bread. And conſider, if the Lord be ſo jealous in this point, that he will not indure men to aſcribe to their own ſtrength or hand, the getting of the treaſures of the world: How will he take it at their hands, that ſay Heaven it ſelf is in their hand, the good of eternal life is in their hand, or that they can fetch it in by their own earnings; that they are not beholden to Chriſt only, or alone for it, but they can merit for it? There is a touch of this in all our hearts, though we come not to the groſneſs of the Papiſts; we would have ſomewhat of our own gaining and fetching in, for life and glory. But if the things of the World be not in our hand, then much leſs are the things of Heaven: If not temporals, then ſurely not ſpirituals and eternals. (*Pſal.* 76. 6, 7.) *Promotion is not from the Eaſt, or Weſt, or South, but it is of God, who pulleth down one, and ſetteth up another.* It is a piece of our ſpiritualneſs to confeſs God the giver of our temporals. It is an act of grace to ſay, *Lo, our good is not in our hand.* That principle of policy, *Every man is the contriver of his own condition*, is falſe in Divinity. Man may be conſidered in a threefold capacity or ſtate, and God the Author of them all. In his natural ſtate, *as a living man*: In his ſpiritual ſtate, *as a holy man*: In his civil ſtate, *as a rich or great man*: All that he is in any of, or all theſe, is all from God.

Quiſq; fortunæ ſuæ faber.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is not in the power of man to hold or perpetuate his own proſperity.*

As our good is not got by our hand, ſo not held, it will run or ſlip out between our fingers, if we only hold it; we put our earnings into a purſe with holes (*Hag.* 1. 6.) if God do but blow upon it. As the Lord gives, ſo he can take away, let us hold as faſt as we will; unleſs the Lord hold what we have for us, we cannot hold it. The creature is a flitting thing; unleſs God eſtabliſh it to us it may be gone every moment. Our ſpirituals are not in our own keeping; we cannot bring grace into our own hearts, and we cannot keep grace in our own hearts; our good of grace is in the hand of Jeſus Chriſt, it is he that preſerves his own graces beſtowed upon us. Were it not for the hand of Chriſt holding our hearts, we ſhould let out all the grace we have quickly; our faith and love, with all thoſe ſpiritual treaſures, would ſoon be ſcattered, were not we kept by the power of God; *Lo, their good is not in their hand.*

Thirdly, When *Job* ſaith, *Their good is not in their hand*, he ſeems to intend, that though theſe men had a great deal in their hands; yet *their good*, or that which indeed will do them good, was not in their hand. The men of the world have their portion in this life; and that is not a portion: They have goods in their hand; but that which is indeed their good is not in their hand.

Hence Note, *That which is truly good, or will really do any man good, is not in the hand of a wicked man.*

Let him have what he will in his hand, his good is not in his hand; yea, it had been better for him not to have had this good in his hand, unleſs he had ſomewhat that is better. (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) The men of the World cry out, *Who will ſhew us any good?* What is their good? *David* tells us, *Corn, and wine, and oyl, gold and ſilver*, the riches and greatneſs of the World; theſe are a very low ſort of good, and comparatively theſe are no good at all. *Give me the light of thy countenance* (ſaith he) this good they have not in their hand: They have not the grace or favour of God in their hands; they have not a portion of ſpirituals in their hands; their good is not in their hand, becauſe that is not there which indeed would make them happy. *Job* did not look on wicked men as truly happy, though he ſpake ſo much of this outward happineſs; *Their good is not in their hand.*

The counſel of the wicked is far from me.

In theſe words *Job* makes a modeſt compariſon between his own and the condition of the wicked; *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.* *Counſel* is not to be taken here ſtrictly for that which is the preparation to action, after inquiſition and debate; for the iſſue of both is counſel. But here *counſel* is to be underſtood in a larger ſence; *The counſel of the wicked*, is, their courſe, their opinion, their way, their purpoſe, whatſoever is decreed and reſolved by them, that is their counſel. Now, ſaith he, *This counſel* (or courſe) *of the wicked, is far from me.*

Conſilium ponitur pro tota agendi ratione.

But how was their counſel far from *Job?* Every good man cannot keep evil counſel far from him. Evil men may give good men bad counſel; yea, a good man cannot keep himſelf from the evil counſel of the Devil; Why then doth he ſay, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me?* Satan will be inſtilling helliſh counſel into the hearts of the beſt; How then is he thus confident, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me?*

The meaning is, *I am far from the counſel of the wicked*: For though we cannot keep the counſel of wicked men, or the counſel of Satan, his ſuggeſtions, and motions, far from us (for theſe will be buzzing about us) yet we may keep our ſelves far from them; that is, we may keep our hearts at a diſtance from them. Now that is the meaning of *Job*, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me:* That is, I am of another opinion, and mind, I do not fall in with them, I do not ſay as they, I do not affirm what they affirm, or deny what they deny. *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.* It ſhews that he had a quite different judgment of things from the wicked; nor did he like their way, notwithſtanding their proſperity and ſucceſs. As if he had ſaid, *I am not in love with their good and greatneſs, much good do it them; it is far from me to wiſh it in their way, and upon their terms; for I never trod in their path, nor walked in their counſel.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The counſel or courſe of a wicked man is fooliſh and prepoſterous in the opinion of the godly.*

As himſelf is, ſo is his counſel, both nought, therefore a good man abhors them. What is the counſel of a wicked man? What is his courſe? His counſel is to follow the world, to heap up riches, to engroſs earth, neglecting Heaven, to be very eager after the things that are ſeen, not regarding the things that are not ſeen. This is fooliſh counſel: *For* (ſaith *Paul*, 2 Cor. 4. *ult.*) *we look not at things that are ſeen.* How can a man look at things that he doth not ſee? How can he aim at a mark that he doth not reach with his eye? Indeed Believers look at nothing but what they ſee, though they do not look at the things which are ſeen. Here is the excellency of Believers, they aim at things that are not ſeen by the corporal eye, but they have a ſight of them by the eye of faith, they ſee them with a ſpiritual eye, or elſe they could not aim at them. Now, *We look not* (ſaith *Paul*) *at things that are ſeen* (which is the counſel of the wicked) *but at things which are not ſeen; for the things that are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal.* The things which are moſt ſeen now, will not be ſeen long, no, nor be long. As it is ſaid of *Tyre* (Ezek. 27. 36.) *The Merchants among the people ſhall hiſs at thee, thou ſhalt be a terror, and never ſhalt be any more, or ſhalt not be for ever.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *Godly men are not at all pleaſed with the way of the wicked, how much ſoever they thrive in it.*

Job had ſaid much of the greatneſs, riches, and glory of the wicked; but, ſaith he, how ever, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.* The wayes of the godly and the wicked differ, as much as their ends; and their counſels are as diſtant as their concluſions will be. Every good man ſaith of the counſels and wayes of the wicked, how proſperous ſoever, as *Jacob* ſaid of his ſons, *Simeon* and *Levi* (Gen. 49. 6.) *O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly mine honour be not thou united.* Let me be far from their ſecret; that is, *from their ſecret counſel, from their cabinet counſel, and cloſe committees: O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret.* The further we keep from their counſel, the nearer we are to bleſſedneſs. (*Pſal.* 1. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly.* And as the godly are far from the counſel of the wicked, ſo the wicked are as far from the counſels of the godly; they alſo ſay, *The counſel of ſuch is far from us*, we cannot abide their counſel (*Pſal.* 14. 6.) *Ye have ſhamed the counſel of the poor*; that is, ye are aſhamed of his counſel. What poor doth he mean? He means it not of any poor; though it be a truth, that a poor mans counſel is ſeldom heard (great men are uſually aſhamed of poor mens counſel, as *Solomon* ſpeaketh in his *Eccleſiaſtes*, (Chap. 9. 16.) *The poor mans wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard.*) But here by *poor*, he means the godly poor, men fearing God, as it is plain in the latter end of the Verſe: You are aſhamed of the counſel of the poor, Why? *Becauſe the Lord is his refuge.* His counſel doth *depend on the Lord: Truſt in the Lord, walk in his wayes,* ſhelter your ſelves under his protection, this counſel the poor man gives; and he muſt needs be a godly man that gives this counſel. This counſel you have ſhamed; that is, deſpiſed. What have we to do with this counſel, to make the Lord our refuge? No, we will take our own courſe, and work it out by our own wit. Thus wicked men are far from the counſel of the godly; and godly men are as far from the counſel of the wicked.

Job proceeds.

Verſe 17. **How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?**

Here begins the ſecond part of the Chapter. As in the former he proved by clear experiences, the proſperity of the wicked, ſo now he proves that the wicked are not alwayes proſperous, but meet with checks and contrary blaſts as well as others. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* There are two opinions concerning the general tendency of this latter part of the Chapter. Some think (as hath been toucht) that *Job* having before declared the outward happineſs of wicked men, doth here, as it were, turn the Tables, and deſcribe their miſery by way of admiration. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Or if they eſcape, their children pay for it, as it follows *ver.* 21. This may ſeem to contradict what he ſpake before of the flouriſhing ſtate of wicked men, preſently to add, *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* But indeed it only contradicts what his Friends ſpake before, whoſe opinion was, That God ſorteth out the things of this life ſo diſtinctly, that to the wicked he gives nothing but miſery and ſorrow; and to the righteous nothing but mercy and comfort. Now *Job* takes this off; he affirms that wicked men are uſually filled with worldly abundance, which is againſt their opinion; yet he affirms alſo, that wicked men are often plunged into outward miſery, that they alſo are brought into ſtraits and darkneſs. Thus he renders the opinion of his Friends altogether inconſiſtent with his experiences; they ſaid, that evil men receive only evil; no, ſaith he, evil men receive abundance of good in this World; yet I do aſſert that evil men alſo receive evil too; ſo that there can be no diſtinguiſhing of mens ſpiritual eſtates by their temporal ſufferings or enjoyments, ſeeing wicked men ſometimes are not puniſhed here, and ſometimes are.

Concludit contra amicos ſuos bona & mala in hac vita æquè a Deo bonis ac malis dari. Refutatur amicorum ſententia impios ſemper hic puniri, quum utrumque æquè accidat & eos punire & non puniri. Merc.

Secondly, Others underſtand the whole context thus, as if *Job* were ſtill deſcribing the proſperous ſtate of the wicked, and continued the ſame diſcourſe to *ver.* 21. And then the queſtions here are to be expounded negatively; *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Can you give many inſtances of it? Is this very oft? Are wicked men commonly found in darkneſs, or in trouble? So he meets with both the aſſertions of his Friends. *Bildad* ſaid (*Chap.* 18. 5, 6.) *The light of the wicked is put out, and the ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine; the light ſhall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle ſhall be put out with him.* Well, ſaith *Job*, this is your opinion, I pray, tell me, *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Have you ſeen this frequently, that you make ſuch a direct concluſion of it? Again, *Zophar* in the cloſe of the twentieth Chapter, when he had drawn out the judgments of God in many particulars, concludes (*ver.* 29.) *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God.* Now *Job* anſwers, whereas you, O *Zophar*, conclude your ennumeration of evils, with, *This is the portion of a wicked man from God.* I pray, how oft doth God diſtribute ſuch evils to them in anger? Doth he it ſo often, as gives you a ſufficient ground to make ſo peremptory a concluſion? *This is the portion of a wicked man from God.*

Take the words either of theſe wayes, there is a fair correſpondency with the ſcope of the place, and with *Job's* purpoſe; nor do either of theſe interpretations give any ſtrain or offer violence to the original Text. For the firſt word that we render *how oft*, is expounded ſometimes by way of *increaſe*, ſometimes by way of *diminution*. In the former ſence, *how oft*, ſounds a thing done very frequently: In the latter, *how oft*, ſounds a thing ſeldom, or rarely done: How oft have you had ſuch experiments? That is, You have rarely had them. How oft is ſuch a thing done? That is, It is ſeldom done. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates clearly to this expoſition, *Not ſo often is the candle of the wicked put out*, &c.

Quoties poteſt exponi in defectu, q.d. Etſi id fiat aliquãdo, raro tamen fit; ac ſæpius florent impii contra quã vos dixiſtis. Merc.

How oft is the Candle of the wicked put out?

By the *candle of the wicked*, ſome underſtand their lives, that is, How oft do wicked men come to a ſudden and unexpected death? *Job* ſaid before, *They grow old*: His Friends had ſaid, *They are cut off*. Here, according to the latter expoſition, he queries, Can you give many inſtances that the candle of the wicked hath been put out? That their lives have been extinguiſhed? The life of man may well be called his candle; and the life of man goes out after the manner of a candle. A candle goes out three wayes, and ſo doth the life of man: Firſt, For want of moiſture to feed it: Thus the life of man goes out when the moiſture of the body is ſpent, and conſumed; when it is drunk and dryed up by old age, or hot diſtempers, then out goes the life of man like a candle. Secondly, A candle goes out, through the redundancy of moiſture; the oyl ſometimes drowns the lamp, as well as feeds it. Thus alſo moiſture overflowing the body of man, puts out or quencheth life. Thirdly, A candle is extinguiſht by a vehement wind that blows it out: And the lives of many men are put out by violence, their candle doth not burn out, but is blown out. And thus eſpecially the lives of wicked men are put out: They are cut off by a hand of Juſtice before they have lived out half their dayes; or if they attain to fulneſs of dayes, their hoary head deſcends not to the grave in peace.

Secondly, Others underſtand by *Candle*, their *Children*: A mans children are as ſo many lights in his houſe; as they dye, his candles are put out; and if they all dye, his candle is quite put out.

Thirdly, and more generally, the word is uſed to ſignifie any, or all ſorts of worldly proſperity. The light of the wicked can be nothing but outward proſperity, in all the ſorts of it. So the word is frequently uſed (*Prov.* 13. 9.) *The light of the righteous rejoyceth; but the lamp of the wicked ſhall be put out*; that is, their proſperity ſhall ceaſe; read 2 *Sam.* 27. 11. 2 *Kings* 8. 19. *Pſal.* 132. 17. in all which places, light, lamp, and candle, expreſs outward ſplendor and proſperity. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Taking the words in the firſt ſence, How oft? That is, very oft.

Obſerve, *The worldly glory and outward pomp of wicked men is many times put out in darkneſs.*

Taking the words in the ſecond ſence, How oft? That is, not often: You cannot give frequent experiments of this.

Note, *Moſt wicked men continue their candle, and the light of their proſperity a long time.*

As we have ſeen the one, ſo the other; there are experiments on both ſides. Therefore we can make no diſtinction of men, either by the ſhining and burning, or by the putting out of their candle. The former point hath been given from other paſſages of the Book, and the latter being one general ſcope of the whole Book, it may ſuffice only to collect and ſpecifie them.

And how oft cometh deſtruction upon them?

The ſence is the ſame with the former, only the words are varied.

Their deſtruction.] The word which we render **deſtruction**, carrieth in it utter ruine, or an undoing calamity; properly it ſignifies a cloud; and becauſe ſtorms are wrapped up in clouds, and from them hail and ſnow, thunder and lightening, break forth, not only to the terror of hearers and beholders, but even to their deſtruction; therefore the ſame word ſignifies both a cloud, and alſo deſtruction. And hence the Vulgar reads, *How oft is there an inundation upon the wicked?* When clouds diſſolve, an inundation, a deluge follows, which ſweeps all away. In which ſence the Prophet (*Iſa.* 28. 15.) calls it an *overflowing ſcourge*, that is, a judgment which breaks all the banks and fences which the wit and power of man ſet up againſt it.

איד *Extremam denotat ruinam vel calamitatem nubis & pluviæ more ſupervenientem.*

Note, *Wicked men ſhall not only be afflicted, but deſtroyed.*

Deſtruction is their portion. The hand of God upon a wicked man is for ruine; but upon his own people for correction. The Apoſtle ſpeaks this ſence clearly (2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9.) where he tells us that himſelf and other holy men were in a very ſad condition, but it came not to deſtruction; *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* As for wicked men, *How oft cometh deſtruction upon them?* They are not only troubled, but diſtreſſed; not only perplexed, perſecuted, and caſt down, but in deſpair, forſaken and deſtroyed.

From the manner of their deſtruction; it comes like a tempeſt, or a ſhower.

Note, *The deſtruction of wicked men is irreſiſtible.*

Who can avoid the ſhower, or the ſtorm? Yes, you will ſay, we may run to covert; but there is no covert which the Lord cannot rain quite through; though ſinners hide themſelves under rocks and mountains, he can ſend a rain which ſhall ſoak unto them. There is no ſhelter againſt the wrath of God; he can pierce all the coverings of the creature; his wrath ſmites down to the very bottom of hell. When ſtorms and tempeſts are up in the World, Saints have a covering; But what is it? Not any worldly covering, or creature refuge; theſe cannot protect them from the ſtorm; but the Prophet tells us what or who will (*Iſa.* 32. 2.) *A King ſhall reign in righteouſneſs, Princes ſhall rule in judgment. And a man* (that is, Jeſus Chriſt) *ſhall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land.* Chriſt is a covert from the tempeſt, as a hiding place from the wind; but wicked men have no help by him, he is no covert, no hiding place to them; therefore their deſtruction comes unreſiſtably, and unavoidably. Such was the ſhower of fire and brimſtone upon *Sodom*; the *Sodomites* expected not an enemy that way, their deſtruction came as a ſhower from a cloud; The Lord rained fire and brimſtone upon them from the Lord out of Heaven. The cloud which hangs over and lowres black upon wicked men, is not a little cloud that ſoon paſſeth away, but a cloud that ſhall make the wicked paſs away; when that breaks, they ſhall be broken, and fall, and periſh.

Nubecula eſt cito tranſibit.

God diſtributeth ſorrows in his anger.

The word implyeth the dividing of a thing among many; to divide by lot; to apportion out an inheritance or ſhare; a mans ſhare is called his lot; this is my lot, and that is yours; every one hath his lot. Thus land in a common field is divided; and thus *Joſhua* divided *Canaan* among the twelve Tribes, he divided it to them by lot; ſuch a diſtribution the word ſignifies; *God ſhall diſtribute ſorrows to them by lot.*

חלק *Diviſionem denotat inter plures. Trãſlatio ab iis qui funiculis agros dimetiebantur, quos deinde dividunt inter ſe miſſis ſortibus.* Druſ.

He diſtributeth ſorrows.] That word ſignifieth a cord, or a line, that line with which an inheritance is divided, a meaſuring line, a line to meaſure land by. So (*Pſal.* 16. 6.) *The line is fallen to me in a fair place*; that is, my inheritance is divided, or ſhared out to me in a fair place, I have a fair lot. The elegancy is remarkable. God diſtributeth ſorrows by a line, as the portion and inheritance which wicked men ſhall receive (*Luke* 12. 46.) *The Lord of that ſervant will come in a day when he looked not for him*, &c. *and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. God diſtributeth ſorrows.* To ſay God diſtributeth a portion in anger were ſad enough; for every portion that God diſtributeth in anger can be nothing but ſorrow. But to diſtribute ſorrows in anger, imports the moſt ſorrowful diſtribution. And beſides, the word ſignifies not only ſorrows, but the greateſt ſorrows, thoſe ſorrows that ſtraiten as a cord, which binds the part ſo hard, that it cauſeth pain, or ſuch ſorrows as a woman hath in travel. The Greek Tranſlators expreſs it by a word

חבלים *Dolores, funes, partiuntur, funiculis hæreditates dividibantur.*

noting the pangs and throws of a travelling Woman. *God diſtributes theſe ſorrows*

In his anger.] That is, God being angry, or when he is angry he diſtributes theſe ſorrows. In what ſence anger or any other paſſions are ſaid to be in God, hath been ſhewed from other Texts of this Book. And when it is ſaid, that *God doth a thing in anger*, the meaning is not, that he doth ſome things in a quiet temper, and other things in a diſtemper, as men often do; but that he doth ſome things for the good and benefit, other things for the hurt and vexation of man; yet as the one in mercy, and the other in judgment, ſo both according to the higheſt rules of reaſon and righteouſneſs.

Thus the woful condition of a wicked man is deſcribed, under the diſpleaſure and angry diſpenſations of God.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Sorrow is the portion, or inheritance of the wicked.*

The lot of the wicked falls in the land of ſorrow and darkneſs, of mourning and lamentation, this is their proper lot: Though at preſent they live in the light of outward joy, yet their portion is darkneſs and ſorrow. What elſe can be their inheritance but ſorrow, who abide under the anger of God? Believers are Heirs of the Promiſe, and therefore peace and joy are their portion. The wicked are Heirs of the Curſe, they are as ſurely Heirs of the Curſe, as the Saints are of the Promiſe, and therefore ſorrow is their portion. The Anger and Curſe of God have nothing but evil in them, as his Favour and the Promiſe have nothing but good in them.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The ſorrows of wicked men are divided to them by the hand of God.*

His hand is in the work; God diſtributes to every man his portion. All our lots are ſet out by his hand. The word (*God*) is not expreſt in the Hebrew, but he is in it; Who is the diſtributer, but the Lord? He diſtributes evil as well as good. The Prophet challengeth all falſe Gods; *Let them do good or evil, that we may know that they are Gods* (Iſa. 41. 23.) The diſtribution of evil ſpeaks God as much as the diſtribution of good: It is the honour of God to be the diſtributer of both. And ſince it is in the hand of God to diſtribute, and apportion out to wicked men their due, they ſhall be ſure to have it; for he is a juſt God, and he ſeeth all the wickedneſs of their hearts, and he will not be taken off by intreaties, or blinded by gifts; they can plead nothing to take him off from this diſtribution; 'tis their due, and they ſhall have it. *God diſtributeth ſorrows in his anger.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *It is very dangerous to provoke God to anger.*

To do ſo may quickly be to our ſorrow, for he diſtributes ſorrows in his anger. Therefore the Pſalmiſt exhorts (*Pſal.* 2. 12.) *Kiſs the Son* (that is, with a kiſs of homage and ſubmiſſion) *leaſt he be angry.* Why, what's the danger of that? The next words ſhew it, *And ye periſh from the way* (of your purpoſes, and never reach your ends) *when his wrath is kindled but a little, bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* The Pſalmiſt leaves us to imagine how curſed and miſerable their eſtate will be who provoke God, while he thus elegantly goes off from it (the file of his ſpeech calling him rather to ſpeak that) and concludes, *Bleſſed are all they that truſt in him.*

Fourthly, Obſerve, *The ſorrows of wicked men flow from the wrath and anger of God.*

God diſtributeth ſorrows to many of his own people, he gives them ſometimes a very uncomfortable portion; but he doth not diſtribute ſorrows to them (purely) in anger. All the ſorrows he diſtributes to his own people, have a mixture of love and mercy. To be under the anger of God is more grievous, then to be under ſorrows from God. The anger of God is worſe then ſorrow. Therefore *David* deprecates it (*Pſal.* 6. 1.) *Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure.* He doth not deprecate rebuking, or chaſtening, he doth not pray againſt theſe; but he prayes againſt *rebuking in anger, and chaſtening in hot diſpleaſure.* Gods anger is more terrible then his rebuking; and his diſpleaſure then his chaſtening. Therefore (ſaith he) Lord, whatſoever thou doeſt to me, do nothing in anger; yet ſo the Lord rebukes wicked men, he gives them ſorrow and anger together (*Pſal.* 11. 5.) *The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loves violence his ſoul hateth*; (From this hatred what follows?) *Upon the wicked God ſhall rain fire, and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt; this ſhall be the portion of their cup.* Their cup hath not only fire, and brimſtone, and tempeſt in it, but hatred in it; this makes their cup ſo bitter; this is the very dregs of it. The enemies of the Kingdom of Chriſt are thus threatened (*Pſal.* 2. 5.) *He ſhall ſpeak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his ſore diſpleaſure:* He ſaith not with it, but in it. When he is in his higheſt diſpleaſure, and wrath, then he ſhall ſpeak. God ſpeaks terrible words when he ſpeaks in wrath; and he vexeth man to purpoſe when he vexeth him in his ſore diſpleaſure. Thus he ſpeaks to the Kings of the earth, and the Princes, and to all the inraged multitude, who combine to break his bands, and to caſt his cords from them, who would hinder the great deſign of the Father in advancing the Scepter of his Son over the World. And when God deals thus with any ſort of ſinners, he takes a kind of comfort in it (*Ezek.* 5. 13. *Thus my anger ſhall be accompliſhed, and I will cauſe my fury to reſt upon them.* If the fury of the Lord do but touch a man, wo unto him: But when a man is made as the reſting place of the fury of the Lord, how can he abide it? How reſtleſs muſt he be? Yet thus ſaith the Lord, *I will cauſe my fury to reſt upon them*) *and I will be comforted, and they ſhall know that I the Lord have ſpoken in my zeal, when I have accompliſhed my fury in them.* As (in reference to his own people) when the Lord accompliſheth his love in them, and cauſeth his favour to reſt upon them, then he is as it were comforted, it pleaſeth him very much. So, when he pours out judgments and evils upon wicked men in fury and wrath, in the height and heat of wrath, this comforteth him, and pleaſeth him. God ſometimes diſtributeth ſorrow with ſorrow, and he ſpeaks of himſelf as grieved when he puts men to grief; but when God doth not only diſtribute ſorrow in anger, but in comfort; that is, when he doth not only expreſs himſelf as angry, but as comforted, while he dealeth out ſorrows to the ſons of men; as their courſe before was out of meaſure ſinful, ſo their preſent caſe is out of meaſure ſorrowful. Which *Job* ſhews more fully in the next Verſe.

Verſe 18. **They are as ſtubble before the wind, and as chaff that the ſtorm carries away.**

Thus is it with wicked men, according to our reading; and according to the ſecond interpretation of, *How oft is their candle put out?* We may add, *How oft are they as ſtubble.* 'Tis uſual in Scripture to compare wicked men to ſtubble and chaff; we have them both here, ſtubble is the ſtalk, ſtubble is that which is left after the Corn is reaped, and the chaff is that in which the Corn is wrapped in the ear, till it be threſhed and winnowed. The ſtubble is nothing to the ear, and the chaff in the floor is nothing to the Corn in the floor; the wicked are but theſe, *ſtubble and chaff.*

They are as ſtubble before the wind.

That is, They are as eaſily diſſipated, and quickly carried away. Stubble makes little oppoſition againſt the wind; the war is not great between the wind and the ſtraw, between the chaff and the ſtorm: Stubble and chaff are as much a match for winds and ſtorms, as the wicked are for the wrath of God. Holy *David* (*Pſal.* 1.) having ſpoken of the ſtability of the godly, ſubjoyns, *The ungodly are not ſo, but as the chaff which the wind driveth away.* And when *David* ſaw his enemies deſerted of God, notwithſtanding their ſeeming devotions and earneſtneſs in calling to him for help; he preſently adds (*Pſal.* 18. 42.) *Then did I beat them ſmall as the duſt or chaffe before the wind.* It is an eaſie matter to deſtroy thoſe whom God refuſeth to help, and to make them as chaff, whoſe rock the Lord refuſeth to be. The holy Prophets are frequent in this ſimilitudinary language, *Iſa.* 17. 13. *Hoſ.* 13. 3, *&c.* Every man is but as duſt and chaff (eaſily carried away) in regard of his natural conſtitution: Wicked men are ſo, much more, before the indignation of God, in regard both of their natural and actual corruption. Some by the wind in the Text, underſtand evil ſpirits, who are called alſo the fury of the Lord, and by whoſe miniſtry God ſometimes executes his vengeance upon the wicked (*Pſal.* 35. 5.) *Let them be as chaff before the wind, and the Angel of the Lord ſcattering them.* Angels are mighty in power: And not only good, but evil Angels receiving permiſſion or commiſſion from God, can ſcatter the wicked as ſtubble before the wind.

Or as the chaff that the ſtorm carrieth away.

Here he ſets the ſtorm againſt the chaff, as before the wind againſt the ſtubble. The word ſignifies an extraordinary ſtorm, a violent ſtorm, a kind of *hurricane*, which is able to throw down trees and houſes, yea, even to ſhake rocks and mountains; what work then will it make with chaff? Thus the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 17. 13.) *The Nations ſhall ruſh, like the ruſhing of many waters; but God ſhall rebuke them, and they ſhall flee far off, and ſhall be chaſed as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.* We put in the margin, *As the thiſtle-down*, or, *the down of the thiſtle*; when the thiſtle ſheds its down, we ſee how it rolls before the wind. Now, ſaith he, as the chaff before the wind, or as a rolling thing before the whirlwind, ſo ſhall the Nations be. The day of vengeance that comes upon hardened and impenitent ſinners ſhall make them like chaffe (*Zeph.* 2. 1, 2.) *Gather your ſelves together, yea, gather together O Nation not deſired, before the decree bring forth, before the day paſs as the chaff. Gather your ſelves together.* Some read, *Fan your ſelves*, in alluſion to the chaff, fan or winnow your ſelves, get out all the chaff from your ſelves, by a work of ſerious repentance, then we winnow or fan our ſelves. Why doth the Prophet ſtir them up to this duty? Elſe (ſaith he) the decree will bring forth; that is, God having decreed judgment, the decree will bring forth judgment. The decree is big, it hath judgment in it, and it will bring forth ſhortly: There will come a ſtorm, a tempeſt, a whirlwind, when the decree brings forth. I would have you get the chaff out of you, *before the day paſs as the chaff*; that is, before that day come that ſhall make the chaff paſs away. When he ſaith, *Before the day paſs*, he doth not mean, as if the time ſhould paſs as the chaff; but the meaning is, before the time come that wicked men ſhall paſs as the chaff before the wind. Therefore I adviſe you to fan, and winnow your ſelves, get out the chaff; for if you be chaff, the day will come, and make you paſs as the chaff, and carry you away.

Further, *As chaff which the wind carries away.* The word ſignifies, to *ſteal away* as a thief, ſuddenly and ſecretly. The coming of Chriſt to Judgment is compared to the coming of a thief (1 *Theſ.* 5. 2.) Wind and ſtorms ſcatter the chaff no man knows where; nor doth any man know how to gather it up. Wicked men are compared to ſtubble, and chaff, in three things.

Firſt, They are (if duly conſidered) but chaff in their underſtandings, they have no ſolidity there: for they follow things that are but vain, and cannot profit. Now that man, how high ſoever, is but chaff in his underſtanding, who purſues vain in ſtead of ſolid things. Though ſuch a man be reputed deep in policy, and well ballanced in judgment, yet indeed he is but light in the ballance, and is juſtly counted a chaffie man.

Secondly, They are as chaff; that is, *little worth.* The wicked man is of little value or worth in the eyes of God and good men. Every Believer is precious in the eyes of God. (*Iſa.* 43. 4.) *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable.* The godly are as wheat; the wicked are as chaff. (*Jer.* 32. 28.) *What is the chaff to the wheat?* If we ſet a buſhel of chaff by a buſhel of wheat, what is the chaff to the wheat? Of no value or price in compariſon. Wicked men are of no more value in compariſon of them that have true Grace, then the chaff is to the wheat, or the ſtraw to the corn. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 10. 20.) *The tongue of the juſt is as choice ſilver; but the heart of the wicked is little worth. Solomon* makes not the compariſon upon even terms, between the tongue of the juſt and the tongue of the wicked; but he preferrs the tongue of the juſt (an inferiour member) before the heart of the wicked; which (though in a moral conſideration it be his worſt part, yet) in a natural conſideration is his beſt and nobleſt part. Now *if the tongue of the juſt* (that is, his ability and manner of ſpeaking) *be as choice ſilver*, then ſurely his heart (that is, his ability and manner of thinking and reaſoning) muſt needs be as the fineſt gold. And if the heart of the wicked be little worth, his tongue cannot be worth any thing at all. Who would give any thing for thoughts of droſs, and words of chaff? Yet theſe are all that the heart and tongue of a wicked man can produce.

Thirdly, They are ſtubble and chaff, becauſe though alone they are worthleſs, yet they have a kind of uſefulneſs even to godly men in outward ſociety. The ſtraw or ſtubble hath uſefulneſs to the ear, it bears up the ear; and the chaff hath uſefulneſs to the wheat, it covers the wheat, it keeps and preſerves the wheat. The Lord in this ſence often makes wicked men ſtubble and chaff to his people; that is, they are uſeful to them. I need not ſtrain the ſimilitude, but take it up only in general. The providence of God hath ſo ordered it to view, that many wicked men are a protection to the peace, and very ſubſervient to the comfort and preſent welfare of his people in this World; though they be chaff, yet they cover the wheat; though they be ſtraw or ſtubble, yet they ſhall bear up the ear, and miniſter ſome way or other to their help. Though wicked men are in themſelves as that chaff threſhed out of the ear, which the ſtorm carrieth away, yet they often are to the people of God, as the chaff in the ear, which binds and holds in the corn, ſo that the ſtorm cannot carry it away.

From the proper ſcope of the ſimilitude as here applyed,

First, Obſerve, *It is an eaſie thing with God at any time to deſtroy wicked men.*

Secondly, That, *All the preparations and powers of wicked men to reſiſt the wrath of God, or to ſave themſelves from it, is to no purpoſe.*

All their power is no more then the chaff to the ſtorm, and the ſtubble to the wind. Though the wicked flatter themſelves in their power and greatneſs, as if they were out of danger, yet they are but ſtubble and chaff, God can quickly blow them away. How many experiences have we ſeen of wicked men, who thought their mountain ſo ſtrong that it ſhould never be removed, which yet hath appeared but as chaff before the wind, and the ſtorm hath carried them away. And if God joyn with the weakeſt, they are too ſtrong for the mightieſt (*Iſa.* 41. 15.) *Behold, I will make thee a new ſharp threſhing inſtrument having teeth.* Who was this? The former Verſe anſwers, it was *the worm Jacob*: God did not make an inſtrument for *the worm Jacob*; but he made *the worm Jacob* his inſtrument; *Behold I will make thee* (not for thee) *a new ſharp threſhing inſtrument.* All men are worms compared with God; and no man is ſo fit an inſtrument, for God to do great things by, as he who looks upon himſelf (ſo Jeſus Chriſt did, by whom God did the greateſt work that ever was done) *as a worm and no man.* But what ſhall this worm *Jacob* do? The words following anſwer, *He ſhall threſh the mountains, and break them ſmall, and ſhall make the hills as chaff.* The mountains and hills to be threſhed and fann'd, are the mighty ones of the earth, even all earthly might riſing up againſt the wayes and deſigns of the God of Heaven, theſe the *worm Jacob* ſhall threſh, and fan, and make as chaff, *and the wind ſhall carry them away, and the whirlwind ſhall ſcatter them.* Therefore let not the mighty man glory in his might. The Lords anger is as a ſtorm, or a wind; and the meaneſt worm that he uſeth, as a new ſharp threſhing inſtrument, to break them into chaff. And this he doth, in his anger, not only to ſingle perſons in power, but to the moſt powerful States and Nations of the World, as is repreſented in that moſt illuſtrious Prophetical viſion of the four Monarchies ruin'd by a fifth (*Dan.* 2. 35.) *Then was the iron, the clay, the braſs, the ſilver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threſhing-floor, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them, and the ſtone that ſmote the Image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.* We ſee how it is not only with wicked perſons, but wicked powers (this great Image, the iron, and clay, and braſs, and ſilver, and gold, typed all the Powers of the World oppoſing the Kingdom of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, openly, or ſecretly, directly, or indirectly) *they are as ſtubble before the wind, and as chaff that the ſtorm carrieth away.*

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he ſhall know it.

His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction, and he ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

For what pleaſure hath he in his houſe after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midſt?

IN the former words *Job* ſpake in the plural number, *They are as ſtubble, and as chaff before the wind.* Here in the ſingular, *God layeth up his iniquity for his Children.* And yet he ſtill ſpeaks to the ſame point, and of the ſame perſons. Such varyings of the number are not unuſual in Scripture. Read *Hoſea* 2. 17, 18, *&c.*

The words are a continuation of the former Argument, as was opened before.

Verſe 19. **God layeth up his iniquity for his Children.**

The wicked mans iniquity is laid up by God as a treaſure; for ſo the propriety of the word beareth. God layeth up his iniquity ſafe; for ſo we deſire our treaſure ſhould be. When men lay up their treaſures, they will have them (as we ſay) forth coming. The wicked ſcatter their iniquities, but God gathereth them together, and will have them forth coming in due time.

He layeth up his iniquity, *or pain, or ſorrow.*

און *Nunc dolorē nunc iniquitatem ſignificat; quia ſi quis aliquid iniqui commiſit dolor & perturbatio ſequitur.*

One word ſignifies iniquity, pain, and ſorrow, becauſe they who do iniquity, ſuffer pain and ſorrow for it; iniquity is indeed ſuch droſs, that it is not worth the treaſuring, *Yet the Lord layeth it up*: Or, *He layeth up his iniquity*; that is, the puniſhment of his iniquity. We lay up ſin, and God layeth up judgment; he layeth up the rewards and recompences of iniquity.

Deus reſervabit filii ejus robur ſuum. Mon. q. d. *adhuc majorem iræ ſuæ procelloſæ vim ei reſervabit in futurum, nempe cum filios ſuos penitus abolebit.* Bold.

Some render, *He layeth up ſtrength.* And then it is expounded, not for the ſtrength of the wicked man, but for the ſtrength of God: As if he had ſaid, *Though God hath ſcattered the wicked man himſelf as with the wind, and as the chaff before the whirlwind; yet he layeth up his ſtrength for his Children; that is, God hath yet greater judgments, ſoarer evils to bring upon his family, and poſterity, then ever yet fell upon himſelf: He hath laid up ſtrength for his Children.* As if God did afflict him but with his weakneſs, with his little finger, and reſerved his arm to ſtrike his Children with; as if he would make his little finger heavier upon his Children, then his loins had been upon their Fathers; or as if having chaſtized the Fathers with Whips, he meant to chaſtize the Children with Scorpions. Either of theſe interpretations the ſingle terms will bear; yet the difficulty remains in making out the ſcope and tendency of the whole Text. There is a fourfold explication given of it.

First thus, Some expound the whole by repeating the foregoing Interrogation negatively, as I ſhewed upon the former Verſes; *How oft* (ſaith he) *is the candle of the wicked put out?* That is, Their candle is not often put out, or it is ſeldom put out. Thus here, *How oft doth God lay up his iniquity for his Children?* Not often: For as himſelf proſpered in perſon, ſo many times his Family and Children proſper. 'Tis but rare that God layeth up iniquity for his Children. And ſo, according to this expoſition he carrieth on the flouriſhing ſtate of the wicked man, who as he lived himſelf in all proſperity, ſo do his Children after him. 'Tis an experienced truth, that God hath ſuffered both wicked men and their children to flouriſh, and grow great in the world; he doth not preſently reckon with the children, as he did not with their fathers.

q. d. *raro hoc fieri video & frequentius tū ipſos impios, tum eorum liberos impunè abire & ſecurè vivere calamitatum expertes.* Merc.

Secondly, ſome of the Rabbins expound *Job* in theſe words, taking off the affliction from the children, and faſtening it upon the father. As if he had ſaid, What! *Shall this wicked man live, and proſper all his dayes? Shall he who hath done ſo much evil feel none? Shall he carry it without any the leaſt touch from the hand of God, and ſhall the load and burthen of the judgment light only upon his children? What? will God lay up all the puniſhment of his iniquity for his poſterity? Is this juſtice? Doth this look like the doings of God, that the father thrive, and his children only be undone?* Which ſence they conceive continued in the latter part of the verſe, which commendeth the juſtice of God, and exalteth his righteouſneſs in this determination; God will repay him into his own boſom as he hath deſerved. *God will reward him, and he ſhall know it, his eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction, and he ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.* God will not lay up iniquity for his Children, and let him eſcape. No, himſelf ſhall be puniſhed, and ſmart for his folly; he ſhall taſte how evil and how bitter a thing ſin is. This alſo hath been verified by frequent examples. The judgment of many wicked men doth not ſleep, nor their deſtruction ſlumber; God preſently cuts off ſuch parents in the light and heat of their iniquities.

An iſte impius tota vita impunè feret & punitio in filios uſque differetur? hoccine patietur dominus. Rab. Sel.

Thirdly, (near this ſence) The words are read, as an anſwer to an Objection. This having been affirmed by *Job*, that the Lord doth not often put out the lamp of the wicked, that he doth not make them as chaff and ſtubble, but that they proſper, and grow great in the world. *Zophar* (whoſe opinion is here oppoſed) is ſuppoſed to reply, *What though God do not afflict the wicked man himſelf, and put out his lamp, yet he layeth up his iniquities for his children.* Thus Mr. *Beza* ſeems to interpret this Text; *But you will ſay to me, though the wicked man himſelf be not puniſhed, yet God layeth up his iniquity for his children; the fathers ſin, ſhall be the childrens portion.* To which Objection *Job* is conceived making anſwer in the next words: No (if what you affirm were the law and conſtant rule of his proceeding) God would rather *repay the wicked man himſelf, and make him know what it is to ſin againſt him, his eyes ſhould rather behold his deſtruction, and he himſelf deſerves much more to drink of the wrath of the Almighty then his children. Beſides, what cares he for his houſe, or what becomes of his family, when the number of his months is accompliſhed, and cut off in the midſt? He being dead feels neither the ſmart nor the comfort of his children; whatever the Providence of God diſpenceth or allotteth them, concerns him little, and will not then touch or trouble him at all.* As if *Job* had ſaid to *Zophar*, *Though I deny not the thing, that God doth lay up the iniquity of the parents for the children, yet, according to your principle and poſition, it ſeems more conſonant that the wicked man ſhould be puniſhed in his own perſon, then in his poſterity.*

Deus (inquietis) reponet filiis ejus violentiam ipſius. Redderet illi & (hoc) ſciret, & viderent oculi ejus exitium ſuū, &c. Bez.

Fourthly, Moſt, both of the Latine and Greek Interpreters, agree in this expoſition, that *Job* here deſcribes the miſery of a wicked man, and the judgment of God upon him, as in reference to his own perſonal ſorrows, ſo in reference to thoſe which afterwards befal his children and family; *How oft is the candle of the wicked man put out? How oft doth God drive him as chaff before the wind? Yea, and not only ſo, but God layes up his iniquity for his children*; that is (as elſewhere frequently in Scripture) the puniſhment of his iniquity. They ſhall ſmart as well as he himſelf did, and be wrapt up in thoſe calamities which were bred in their fathers ſins, and perfected in their own.

Cum deſcribit extremū impii ſupplicium, affirmat etiā redundaturem ad filios.

Hence Obſerve, *The ſins of parents are juſtly puniſhable in their poſterity.*

As many parents, by wickedneſs, ſtore up riches for their children; ſo, becauſe of their wickedneſs, God ſtores up wrath for their children. Nor may it ſeem unreaſonable, or unjuſt, that he doth ſo; for the ſon ſucceeds into all the rights of his deceaſed father, and this is one of them: He hath but his right in whatſoever he is puniſhed. As God may juſtly puniſh the ſin of a man in his cattel and eſtate, ſo alſo in his children; becauſe they not only belong to him, but are a part of him. But it may be objected, How then doth the Prophet *Ezekiel* affirm from the Lords mouth, that *The ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father; and the ſoul that ſinneth ſhall dye* (Ezek. 18. 20.) And how ſhall we reconcile this of the Prophet with that which God himſelf ſpake in the Law, threatning the children of the wicked, and their childrens children, for their iniquity (*Exod.* 5. 20.) *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, viſiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth*

Naturalis conſecutio eſt, ut hæres ſuccedat in omne jus defuncti. Nihil incommodi eſt, ſi illorū cum ſint habeant quæ illorum ſunt. Coc.

fourth generation of them that hate me. One Scripture ſaith, *The ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father*; and another ſaith, *That the ſon ſhall bear the iniquity of the father*; or, *That God will viſit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation.*

I anſwer, for the clearing of thoſe Scriptures, that when the Prophet ſaith, *The ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father*, it may be underſtood either of theſe two wayes. Firſt thus, He ſhall not bear it, in reference to eternal puniſhment, God will not damn a ſon for the ſin of his father; but he may bring many chaſtiſements and ſorrows upon a ſon, for the ſins of the father. Secondly, We may underſtand the Prophet thus, *The ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father*; that is, if the ſon depart from the iniquity of the father, if the ſon do not imitate the fathers iniquity, then the iniquity of the father ſhall not redound to the ſon; but if the ſon tread in his ſteps, and write by his copy, then the ſon ſhall not only bear his own iniquity, but the iniquity of his father ſhall redound to him, for he makes his fathers ſin his own by imitation, as much as his own is his by commiſſion. (*Math.* 23.32.) Chriſt ſaith to the *Jews*, *Fill ye up the meaſure of your fathers.* Their fathers had ſlain the Prophets, and though themſelves adorned their Sepulchres, profeſſing (*ver.* 30.) *If we had lived in the dayes of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets*; yet Chriſt tells them plainly (*Luke* 11.48.) *Ye bear witneſs that ye allow the deeds of your fathers*, becauſe he ſaw in them not only a ſpirit, but the practice of perſecution againſt the living Saints, while they ſeemed thus compaſſionate toward the dead Saints ('tis common for the worſt of men to pretend love and honour to good men when they are dead (the dead bite not) who cannot abide goodneſs, nor any good man while he liveth, but perſecute him to the death; now, I ſay, Chriſt ſeeing this in the Phariſees) gave them up to the fulfilling of their luſts. And becauſe they were reſolved to do that which the righteouſneſs of God had forbidden, he in wrath bids them do it. *Fill up the meaſure of your fathers.* As if he had ſaid, *Your fathers ſtored up much wrath by killing the Prophets, but the meaſure is not yet full; do ye fill it, for I perceive ye will, by killing him who is greater then the Prophets. They ſlew the ſervants, ye will ſlay the Heir.* Children fill the meaſure of their fathers in ſin; and then God fills the meaſure of the children in puniſhment. So Chriſt infers in that place of *Luke* (*Ch.* 11.50.) *That the blood of all the Prophets which was ſhed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of* Abel *unto the blood of* Zacharias, *which periſhed between the Altar and the Temple. Verily, I ſay unto you, it ſhall be required of this generation.* The blood of former generations had not been required of that, if they had not been as bloody as the former generations: But where old ſins are continued and approved by being newly acted, there the old ſins as well as the new are juſtly puniſhed.

Thus we may anſwer that Scripture, *The ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father*, unleſs he do it. 'Tis childrens imitation of their fathers iniquity, which brings the iniquity of their fathers upon them. We may ſay of ſome children, that they are of their fathers, not only naturally, but morally; they carry the moral likeneſs of their fathers more then the natural, and appear not only in their bodily image, but in their ſoul-image too, together with the image of their actions or courſe of life. Childrens imitation of their parents in life, is the image of their parents actions, as the corruption of their nature is the image of their natural condition. So that while they imitate their parents ſin, they are their children formally as well as lineally. And thus one of the Ancients ſpeaks excellently of that fatherhood, or paternity, which the Devil hath in relation to wicked men (*John* 8.44.) *Ye are of your father the Devil*: The Devil bears the relation of a father to all wicked men, and this fatherhood doth not proceed from the act of the father, but of the children; for the Devil doth not make wicked men his children by begetting them; but wicked men make the Devil their father by imitating him; here is the way of that paternity. Now as all wicked men have the Devil for their father, not as being begotten of him, but as imitating him; ſo ſome children may call men their father, not only becauſe they have begotten them, but alſo becauſe they imitate him; and when they do ſo, they muſt look to ſuffer for the ſins of their fathers as well as they take delight and pleaſure in their ſins. For as we may grant that ſome children ſuffer in outward things for their parents ſins, who do not imitate them, ſo we muſt conclude, that they who do imitate their ſins, ſhall ſurely ſuffer.

Hæc eſt quædam paternitatis ratio, quam non tam pater ipſe conſtituit quam filii; Nos enim illum imitando patrem facimus, non ille nos creando filios. Auguſt. in Pſal. 64.

And therefore parents are hence admoniſhed to take heed of ſinning againſt God, leſt they be found unmerciful, unnatural, and hard-hearted to their children. Wicked parents do what they can to make their children miſerable, even while they are projecting to make them great and happy. They intend to raiſe them, yet the way they take to do it, proves their ruine and undoing. *Tertullian* (a learned Writer (treating of this point, ſuppoſeth that God aimed at this in giving the Law, when he threatened to puniſh the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation: This (ſaith he) God ſpake in reference to the hardneſs of their hearts, that if no other argument would move them to keep cloſe to the rule of the Law, to take heed of idolatry, and falſe worſhip, yet meer compaſſion to their own children might do it. All parents have a natural love to their children. So that they who have not a ſpiritual principle moving them to forbear thoſe ſins, becauſe they love God, and delight in his Law, may yet be moved by a principle of natural love, to avoid thoſe ſins for which (by name) God tells them, he will ſurely afflict and puniſh their children. *He layoth up his iniquity for his children.*

Etſi patrum delicta ex filiis exigebat, durilia populi, talia remedia cõpulerat, ut vel poſteritatibus ſuis proſpicientes legi divinæ obedirent. Tertul. adverſus Mar. c. 14.

Laſtly, *Job* is here deſcribing the puniſhment of a wicked man; in confirmation whereof he ſubjoyns, that God *layeth up his iniquity for his children.*

Hence Note, That, *The evils which fall upon children, are the puniſhments of their parents.*

Yea, in this their parents puniſhment is compleated; for as the ſin which began in the parents, is perfected by their children; ſo the puniſhment which began in the parents, is perfected in their children. There is not only a nearneſs and ſtrictneſs of relation, between parents and children, but a kind of ſameneſs: The child is not like an artificial piece of work made by the parent, but he is made out of his parent, and ſo is a part of him, or himſelf multiplyed into another individual: And this muſt needs make a community between them in their good and evil, in their joyes and ſorrows, in their ſufferings and enjoyments. This hath been further ſpoken to, *Chap.* 20. *ver.* 10. and therefore I deſiſt.

Quod genitum eſt, non item ut opus artis, ſtatim atque effectum eſt à gignente diſcedit. Nam ex illo, non ab illo factum eſt. Quare habet & retinet aliquam illius in ſeſe partem quâ convenienter & honore & pæna afficitur. Plutarch.

He rewardeth him, and he ſhall know it.

The word ſignifies the paying of a debt, and properly to be at peace: The reaſon is, becauſe when debts are paid, a man is at quiet, no more can be demanded. And there is a twofold paying; either in kind, or in that which is equivalent; that is, of the ſame worth, though of another matter; which difference is more plainly expreſſed by two different words in the Hebrew. The word here uſed doth not ſtrictly imply a paying back in (*ſpecie*, or) in the ſame thing; as put caſe a man borrow money, to pay money; but any return to the ſame worth and value. *He rewardeth or payeth him.* Now in what coyn or matter doth the Lord repay him? Or with what is he rewarded? The Text is ſilent about that; but we may eaſily conceive what it is. There are two ſorts of rewards: Firſt, Rewards of puniſhment: Secondly, Rewards of favour. The rewards of puniſhment are deſerved; the rewards of favour are promiſed. When 'tis ſaid, *He ſhall reward him*, we are not to underſtand it of the reward of favour, but of puniſhment; ſuch a reward as a wicked man deſerves, he ſhall have. And whereas the particular matter of the reward is not expreſt, this imports the greatneſs of it; when the Lord doth not tell us what the puniſhment is, he intimates it ſuch a puniſhment as can ſcarcely be told what it is. *He rewardeth him.* This concealment ſpeaks much in the aggravation of it. Conceive the worſt you can, that ſhall be the wicked mans reward.

שלם *eſt reddere pretium aut æquivalens rei debitæ ad differentiam verbi* השיב *quod rem in natura (quod aiũt) reddere ſignificat.*

Hence Obſerve, *All the evils that fall upon a wicked man are deſerved.*

They are rewards; the rewards of puniſhments are deſerved. The rewards of puniſhment may be conſidered, either in reference to this life, or the life to come. The rewards of puniſhment in this life are all deſerved; yet they are leſs then ſin deſerves. Take the greateſt puniſhment that befals any wicked man on this ſide Hell, it is leſs then his ſin deſerves. *Ezra* concludes thus of all the calamities with which the Jewiſh Nation was rewarded (*Chap.* 9.13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſſes, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve*, &c. And yet theirs was no little puniſhment: For the Prophet *Jeremy* (*Lam.* 1.12.) perſonating *Jeruſalem*, calleth all to behold and ſee, *If there were any ſorrow like unto her ſorrow, which was done unto her, wherewith the Lord afflicted her in the day of his fierce anger.* As if he had ſaid, You cannot make a parallel of the ſorrows and ſufferings of this people, with the ſufferings of any people that ever were in the world: So then, theirs was no ſmall puniſhment; and yet he ſaith, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.* Let puniſhment go as high as it can in this life, it is leſs and lower then iniquity.

But in the life to come God hath a reward for iniquity ſutable to it: Sinners ſhall then receive as much as they deſerve; and becauſe they cannot bear ſo much as they deſerve at once, therefore they ſhall be for ever bearing it. Their reward ſhall be no more, nor at all leſs then ſin deſerves. God will not put ſo much as the leaſt dram of ſorrow into their ballance more then iniquity hath put into it, and of that he will abate them nothing. *He rewardeth him.*

And he ſhall know it.] There is a twofold knowledge: Firſt, By teaching and inſtruction: Secondly, By ſence or experience. The latter is here meant, he ſhall have an experimental knowledge. But what ſhall he know? He ſhall know or be convinced of theſe two things, which he would not learn before. Firſt, That there is a wiſe and a powerful providence of God, over-ruling, ordering, and diſpoſing all the affairs and motions of this life. Secondly, That God hath decreed and appointed wrath, for the portion of all impenitent ſinners; *He ſhall know theſe things to his coſt.*

Experientia Magiſtra diſcet malos divinitus puniri. Druſ.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Wicked men will not know the evil of ſin, till they feel it.*

The wicked might know this by inſtruction, they have been told as much again and again, but they would not believe it. *Paul* ſaith (2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men.* How did he know it? *Paul* knew that terror of the Lord, not by experience (for he ſpake of the terror of the great day, which day was not then come) but he had received inſtruction about it, and he believed it would be a black day to many. A godly man knows the terror of the Lord by the teachings of the Spirit in the Word. But a carnal man will not know the terror of the Lords Judgment, till he be ſummoned to Judgment. When the Prophets in the Name of the Lord threatened the *Jews* with a day of evil, 'tis uſually added, then *They ſhall know that I am the Lord.* As if the Lord had ſaid, They have been told this often and often; they have had line upon line, and threat upon threat, yet they would not know it, but they ſhall know it, I will teach it them another way: Seeing they will not believe the judgment which is both ſpoken and written in my Book, I will write my judgments upon their own backs, and with their own blood; I will write them in red letters, that he who runs may read: *And then they ſhall know that I am the Lord.* So (*Pſal.* 83. 18.) *David* calls down the wrath of God upon publick enemies; *Let them be confounded, and troubled for ever, yea, put to ſhame, and periſh* (*Why?*) *That men may know that thou whoſe name alone is* Jehovah, *art moſt high over all the earth.* Carnal men will not know the Soveraignty of God, or they are aſhamed to acknowledge it, till they ſee ſuch as themſelves utterly confounded and put to ſhame: They never exalt God, till they ſee men caſt down. There is a tranſlation of that Text (*Iſa.* 28. 19.) which adds much clearneſs to the Obſervation in hand; *From the time that it goeth forth it ſhall take you: for morning by morning ſhall it paſs over; by day, and by night, it ſhall be a vexation only to underſtand the report.* Some evils are ſo great, that the hearing of them is vexation enough, it is a vexation only to underſtand the report. The blow, the wound, which they give the ear, goes to the heart, and is a pain to the ſpirit. Others render the Prophet thus, *It ſhall go forth, it ſhall take you morning by morning, it ſhall paſs over by day, and by night:* That is, continually, it ſhall make haſte; judgment being ſent on this journey ſhall never bait or reſt by the way, it ſhall travel night and day. But why is all this? The next words anſwer; *And only vexation will cauſe you to underſtand*, or, *give you an underſtanding of theſe things, or doctrines* (ſo we put in the margin, *When he ſhall make you underſtand doctrine.*) What ſhall make them underſtand doctrine? Only vexation; God will command an over-flowing ſcourge to come, it ſhall come by night, and by day; for he ſees that vexation will make you underſtand doctrine, and that you will know the Lord in his Judgments, who would not know him in his Commandments. This is a good ſence of the Place, and comes clearly to the truth in hand. Vexation gives underſtanding of doctrine. Many muſt be taught as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth*, *With bryars and thorns*, (Judg. 8. 16.) A word and a blow, teaching and ſtriking muſt go together; and they who will not learn by words, ſhall be taught by blows. Let ſinners conſider which is the eaſieſt way of attaining knowledge; or in which of theſe two wayes they may attain knowledge with greateſt eaſe. The Lord would teach us by his Word, let us take heed we put him not to blows; he would do it by inſtruction, let us take heed we put him not to do it by correction, yea, by deſtruction. God will be known by all the World, the Heathens ſhall know at laſt that he is the moſt High over all the earth. *He rewardeth them, and they ſhall know it.*

Tantũmodo ſola vexatio dabit intellectum auditui. Vulg.

Verſe 20. **His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction, and he ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.**

His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction.] Were it not enough to ſay he ſhall ſee his deſtruction, but *His eyes ſhall ſee it?* Or how can he ſee without his eyes? To ſay a man ſees, impleyth that he ſees with his eyes. This Hebraiſm is uſual in Scripture language to make the ſence more full; as to ſay, *He hears with his ears*, ſo, *He ſees with his eyes*, is, he fully and plainly hears and ſees. What ſhall he ſee? *He ſhall ſee his deſtruction*; *His death*, ſay ſome; *His ruine*, ſay others; we may ſay, *His damage*, *his breaking*. Deſtruction is, and hath all theſe evils in it. *His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction.*

Note this from it, That, *The ſight of evil is a grief to us, as well as the feeling of it is a pain.*

Job had ſpoken much before of the miſery of the wicked man; now he adds, *His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction.* The ſight of deſtruction doubles the torment of it. Sorrow comes in at every ſenſe as well as joy; joy comes in at the ear, ſo doth ſorrow; joy comes in at the eye, ſo doth ſorrow. As the good which is unſeen affects little, ſo the evil which is unſeen afflicts little in compariſon of that we ſee. And hence uſually in great ſufferings, eſpecially the ſuffering of death, *men cover their eyes*, as being better able to endure death, then to behold the preparations to, or manner of it. The Apoſtle uſeth an expreſſion, which (in the letter of it) carries this point clearly (*Heb.* 11. 5.) *By faith* Henoch *was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death:* As if the greatneſs of the favour lay not ſo much in his not dying, as in his not ſeeing of death, or as if that which troubles more then death is the ſight of death. For though I conceive the ſeeing of death (in that place) is not ſtrictly tyed up to that ſence, but one ſence is put for another, and ſo we may expound *Enoch*'s not ſeeing of death, by not feeling it, or by not coming to any nearneſs, or at all under the power and into the poſſeſſion of it; yet 'tis a truth, the terror of death is extreamly aggravated, when to our feeling of it, our ſight of it is ſuperadded: Whether it be our own deſtruction, or the deſtruction of thoſe we love, our ſorrow is much abated when our eye ſeeth it not. That's compleat deſtruction, which is not only felt but ſeen. Salvation and Glory believed, take much upon the heart; But what will the ſight of theſe things be? Old *Simeon* deſired no more, when he had attained but the ſight of Chriſt, whom he had long believed and embraced by faith (*Luke* 2. 29, 30.) *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy*

Duplex tormentum eſt videre pœnas quas ſuſtineas.

thy Salvation. And while the Apoſtle *Peter* affirms that the Saints then living did love and rejoyce in Chriſt unſeen (1 *Pet.* 1.8. *Whom having not ſeen ye love, in whom, though now ye ſee him not, ye rejoyce*) he therein intimates that Saints ſhall love and rejoyce in him much more when once they ſee him. To ſee good hath ſo much of joy in it, that the joyes of Heaven are called, *ſight or viſion.* Now as the ſight of good is to joy, ſo the ſight of evil is to ſorrow, the advance and heightning of it. *His eye ſhall ſee his deſtruction,*

And he ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

חמת *Excandeſcentia à* יחם *incaluit, quando, ſcilicet, ſanguis incaleſcit circa cor.*

To drink, notes the taking in of a quantity, *He ſhall drink*, is, he ſhall be filled with the *wrath of the Almighty.* The word ſignifieth heat of wrath, or ſuch wrath as hath much heat in it. We commonly ſay when we ſee any one very angry, *The man is in a heat.* Wrath heats the heart; as the holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of the Avenger (*Deut.* 19. 6.) *Leſt he purſue the ſlayer while his heart is hot*; that is, in the height of his anger. God will purſue the wicked man while his heart is hot. He ſhall drink not only the wrath, but the heated ſcalding hot wrath,

Of the Almighty.] *Shaddai,* who is able to make good his word in the ſaddeſt effects of it. In the former Verſe the ſenſe of ſeeing was afflicted, *His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction:* Here the ſenſe of taſting; drink affects the taſte. And he that drinks wrath, hath not only ſtore of it, but all that he hath, he hath it in him. Wrath is to ſome as the clothes upon their back, 'tis to others as meat or drink in their bowels. Again, this drinking wrath may be conſidered two wayes. Firſt, That pure wrath, or wrath alone, ſhall be put into the cup of a wicked man: Or ſecondly, That whatſoever he drinks, or how pleaſant ſoever his cup is, yet wrath ſhall be mingled with it. *He ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God hath abundance of wrath ready for wicked men.*

He will make them drink it; he hath not only drops, but whole cups, flagons full, and whole veſſels full of wrath, yea, he hath not only flaggons and veſſels, but rivers full, even a ſea full of wrath. As there is a ſea of mercy, ſo there is a ſea of wrath in God. The one as well as the other hath neither bank nor bottom. The wrath of God as well as the love of God is infinite. Wicked men ſhall drink, and have enough of it. What can be ſaid more ſadly of the ſtate of a wicked man then this, that he ſhall drink wrath. As drinking the love and favour of God in Scripture, ſhews the happineſs of the Saints in their fulleſt and freeſt enjoyments of him; ſo the drinking of wrath, ſhews the miſery of the wicked under the higheſt and fulleſt tokens of his diſpleaſure. *He brought me* (ſaith the Church) *into the wine cellar*, or, *houſe of wine: ſtay me with flagons* (Cant. 2. 4, 5.) *with what flagons?* What, with empty flagons? No, empty flagons will not ſtay the Church, though they be flagons of gold: They muſt be full flagons; but of what? Of the love, mercy, and kindneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. Theſe are the wine of his cellar. *Stay me with flagons of love,* ſaith the Church; you cannot ſtay and bear me up, unleſs you give me theſe flagons. Now as the Lord hath theſe cellars and flagons of wine, that is, of joy and favour for his people, ſo he hath flagons and cellars of wrath for ſinners. This drinking of wrath is expreſſed in Scripture not only in reference to paſt and preſent, but future evils (*Iſa.* 51. 17.) The paſt afflictions of *Jeruſalem* are elegantly ſhadowed under this notion, *Awake, awake, and ſtand up*, *O* Jeruſalem, *which hath drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou haſt drunken the dregs of the cup of fury, and wrung them out. There is none to guide her among all the ſons whom ſhe hath brought forth, neither is there any that taketh her by the hand.* He ſpeaks to *Jeruſalem* as made drunk with the cup of trembling: A little draught, or the drinking of a little, doth not cauſe drunkenneſs; *Jeruſalem* drunk wrath to drunkenneſs, ſhe drank deep. Now when a man is drunk (though it be a ſhame to own ſuch, yet) ſome friend or other will lead and guide him home, when he cannot guide himſelf. But *Jeruſalem* was drunk with the cup of the Lords wrath, and there was not a man to guide her among all the ſons whom ſhe had brought forth, neither was there any to take her by the hand. *Jeruſalem* could not ſtand alone, ſhe was ſo drunk with the wrath of God, and there was none to take her by the hand to lead her; that is, ſhe had neither King, Prieſt, nor Prophet, to comfort and ſupport her in her affliction, or to counſel and direct her what courſe to take that ſhe might be delivered out of it. And thus the Prophet *Jeremy* ſets forth the future calamities of the Nations round about. (*Jer.* 25. 15.) *Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cauſe all the Nations to whom I ſend thee to drink it; and they ſhall drink and be moved, and be mad, becauſe of the ſword that I will ſend among them.* What was the wine cup, or the wine in the cup? It was a cup of blood; *I will ſend a ſword, and they ſhall drink.* The wine which the ſword makes is not the blood of grapes, but the blood of our veins. And though the ſword draw not a drop of blood from us, yet it fills many cups of ſorrow for us to drink. All who partake with *Babylon* in her ſin, and receive her mark, *Shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, that is poured out without mixture in the cup of his indignation* (Rev. 14. 10.) And as the puniſhing of thoſe who ſecretly or openly yield obedience to *Babylon*, is expreſſed by drinking the wine of Gods indignation, ſo their communion with *Babylon* is expreſſed by drinking the wine of her fornication. For as old literal *Babylon* (*Jer.* 5. 7.) was *a golden cup in the Lords hand, which made all the earth drunken. The Nations have drunkem of her wine* (ſaith the Prophet) *therefore the Nations are mad.* How did *Babylon* make the Nations drunken? Becauſe the Babyloniſh Empire was an Inſtrument which God uſed to execute his judgments upon others, and to cauſe them to drink deep of the wine of his wrath. So myſtical *Babylon* hath a golden cup in her hand, and ſhe makes the Nations drunk with the wine of her ſpiritual fornication; that is, of her Idolatry, error, and ſuperſtition. Now the Nations having made themſelves drunk with this ſinful wine of *Babylon*, ſhall be made drunk with the wrathful wine of God. The ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt, who taſted and took down all thoſe evils which the ſin of man deſerved, are expreſt by a cup (*Matth.* 26. 49.) *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs.* He ſaw what was in the cup, and prayed thrice to be excuſed the drinking of it, or that it might paſs away, yet with ſubmiſſion to his Fathers will: *Not my will, but thy will be done.* Chriſt took up and drunk the ſuffering cup, that we might take up and drink the cup of Salvation. Our ſins and ſorrows were the portion of Chriſts cup, that the favour and love of God might be the portion of our cup. *The Lord* (that is, the favour of the Lord, ſaith holy *David,* Pſal. 16. 5.) *is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup.* My drink is the Lords love, his favour is mingled with my drink: Divine goodneſs ſweeteneth and ſpiceth my cup; *The Lord is the portion of my cup.* And hence the ſame *David* crieth out (*Pſal.* 36. 7, 8.) *How excellent is thy loving kindneſs, O God, therefore the children of men put their truſt under the ſhadow of thy wings. They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe; thou ſhalt make them to drink of the rivers of thy pleaſure.* Saints drink at rivers, and not only at pleaſant rivers, but at rivers of pleaſure; they ſhall have that which is ſweet, and enough of it. Thus as the Lord gives his own people cups and rivers, abundance of pleaſures; ſo his enemies ſhall drink cups and rivers (that is abundance) of wrath.

Secondly, Obſerve, *There is no avoiding of the wrath of God.*

He ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty. How few, indeed none, would drink of this cup if they might be ſpared. Who thirſts for a cup of wrath? Who would ſo much as taſte or touch it with his lips? But the wicked ſhall; though they have no mind to it, they muſt; though it be nauſeous, and their ſtomack turn at the ſight of it, yet they muſt drink it: They cannot be excuſed or diſpenced with; this cup muſt go round them all. As drunkards ſay to their companions, you ſhall drink, you muſt pledge us, we will pour it down your throat elſe: So the Lord ſaith to his enemies, you ſhall drink, I will pour it down your throat elſe. If Jeſus Chriſt, when he ſtood in the place of ſinners, could not be ſpared, ſhall any, who ſtand in their own place as ſinners, preſume to be ſpared? What can they plead before God to excuſe themſelves, when Chriſt himſelf was not excuſed when he prayed ſo earneſtly that he might. Every ſoul that hath not part in Chriſt, who drank the cup of his Fathers wrath, ſhall himſelf and for himſelf drink a cup of wrath.

Note again, *All the evils that befal wicked men, proceed from, or are iſſues of the wrath of God.*

This was noted before upon thoſe words of the ſeventeenth Verſe, *He diſtributeth ſorrows in his anger*; therefore I only name it here.

Verſe 21. **For what pleaſure hath he in his houſe after him, when the number of his months are cut off in the midſt?**

There is ſome difficulty in fitting theſe words to the former. There are three interpretations given.

Firſt, The words are interpreted as a reaſon why God ſends out judgment both againſt a wicked man and his family, why he and his ſhall drink the wrath of the Almighty; Why is all this? 'Tis becauſe *God hath no pleaſure in his houſe after him*: *He*, that is, *God*, cares not what becomes of this man, or of his children: What pleaſure, what delight hath God in him or his? They are (as it were) out of the care of God, being out of his Covenant, and therefore let what will come of them, let him and his ſink or ſwim, let all go at ſix and ſevens, God regards it not. This carries a truth in it: As all they who are in a ſtate of mercy and ſalvation take pleaſure in God; ſo they and theirs ſhall ſurely periſh, in whom God taketh no pleaſure: Yet I conceive this expoſition improper to this place; which rather deſcribes the ſtate and ſpirit of a wicked man when he dyeth towards his houſe, then the heart of God towards him and his houſe while they live.

Secondly, The words are expounded as holding out an Argument, that a wicked man (ſo living and dying) ſhall be puniſhed everlaſtingly. What do you tell him that God will lay up iniquity for his children? If himſelf may eſcape the ſtorm, and live all his dayes in pleaſure, what cares he: For what pleaſure or pain hath he in his houſe after him? (There is the ſame reaſon of both) If his houſe proſper, what pleaſure hath he in it? Or if his houſe periſh, what is that to him when he is not? Therefore unleſs there remain an eſtate of miſery for himſelf in perſon after this life, the miſeries threatened his poſterity when he dyes, will work little on him.

Thirdly, And rather theſe words give an account why God not only layeth up iniquity for the children of the wicked man, but doth alſo perſonally afflict him in this life, cauſing his own eyes to ſee his deſtruction, and himſelf to drink the wrath of him the Almighty. And this account, or the reaſon of this may be twofold. Firſt, Becauſe (as was laſt ſaid) his childrens afflictions cannot reach him when he is gone: *For what pleaſure hath he in his houſe after him?* That is, no pleaſure. And as his joy, ſo his ſorrow; as his comforts, ſo his troubles end in reference to all worldly things, whether they concern his family or himſelf, at the grave. A dead man is not in a capacity to be affected or afflicted with what is done or ſuffered in the world, as was ſhewed, *Chap.* 14. 21. Secondly, Becauſe wicked men do not uſually trouble themſelves about the next Age; if they can but rub out their own time, let them that come after ſhift for themſelves. They do not ſtudy how to procure the good of poſterity, nor do they lay to heart the evils which threaten them; as no evil threatened their own perſons, ſo much leſs that which is threatened upon their children doth preſs their ſpirits, Many profeſſed wicked men, yea, ſome who go under the name of Chriſtians, and make ſome outward profeſſion of the Goſpel, are yet of the ſame temper with that Heathen Emperor, who having made havock of all, and ſtirred ſuch trouble in his dayes, that it might be thought the World would end with him, yet pleaſed himſelf with this apprehenſion, that he then ſhould be out of the danger, *If I dye, let Heaven and Earth mingle: If the World hold my time, let it break when I am gone.* Such baſeneſs and narrowneſs is in the hearts of ſome men, that they care not what the next Age inherits. If God do not trouble them while they live, they will not trouble themſelves with what ſhall befal their families when they are dead.

ἐμοῦ θανόντος γαῖα μιχθήτω πυρί. Suet. de Tiber.

Thus a learned Tranſlator renders, *What is his ſtudy or care about his houſe after him.*

Quodnam eſt ſtudium illius de familia ſua poſt ſe. i. e. *ut Deus ipſum viventem non excitat malis, ſic non excitat ipſum animus ejus ut ſit ſolicitus de rebus familiæ ſuæ eventuris poſt mortem.* Jun.

When the number of his months ſhall be cut off in the midſt.

That is, when he ſhall dye: The words are a periphaſis of death; which we may ſignificantly enough call, *The cutting off the number of our months.* And as in general 'tis a deſcription of death, ſo we may take it more ſpecially as a deſcription of early death. An immature death is moſt properly, *The cutting off the number of our months in the midſt.* Thus the Pſalmiſt prayed, *Take me not away in the midſt of my dayes* (Pſal. 102. 24.) And another Pſalm ſaith, *The wicked ſhall not live out half their dayes*; that is, the number of their months ſhall be cut off in the midſt. Yet here I rather conceive it intended as a deſcription of death in general, *What pleaſure hath he in his houſe, when the number of his months are cut off in the midſt?* That is, when he dyes.

Mortis periphraſis, dimidiari vitam annos dies, idem eſt quod reſcindi, ſecari, dividi.

Hence Note, *When a wicked man dyes he thinks all dyes with him, he hath no care beyond himſelf.*

Nor is it any wonder that ſuch take little care of others *for hereafter*, ſeeing indeed they take no care what ſhall be for themſelves hereafter; if they may but have things preſent to ſerve their luſts, and ſatiſfie their deſires in this World, they will (as the ſaying of ſome of them is, though they do nothing leſs) truſt God for the next. In reſpect of temporals Chriſt gives this counſel (*Math.* 6. 34.) *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow ſhall take thought for the things of it ſelf:* That is, to morrow, or the time to come will bring thoughts enough upon you when it comes; ye need not foreſtal it, or take up the thoughts and cares of it beforehand. Or, to morrow will bring meat in its mouth; as it calls to new expence, ſo it will offer new proviſion, do not trouble your ſelves what ſhall be next; ſufficient unto the day is the evil thereof; and ſufficient unto the day will be the good thereof, you ſhall have daily bread. This counſel of Chriſt is far from the wicked; they take overmuch and over many thoughts for to morrow in reſpect of temporals; but they take no thought for to morrow in reſpect of eternals; or if they do 'tis about eternals of their own imagination, not of Gods inſtitution. Some wicked men are much upon that thought, or, *Their inward thoughts are that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and they call their lands after their own name* (Pſal. 49. 11.) they hope for a ſucceſſion in their name for ever, this is their project, and the higheſt pitch of their expectation. They would ſeem to have much pleaſure in their houſe after them, and to deſire nothing more then the advancement of their children; yet their courſes proclaim to all good men, that as when they are dead they can take no pleaſure, nor feel any pain in reference to their houſe, or thoſe that are left behind them (which I take to be the moſt proper ſcope of this Text) ſo, that, while they live, they have no due regard to their children, nor any pleaſure in their houſe to provide for the real proſperity of it, when the number of their own months ſhall be cut off in the midſt. Wicked men are either altogether careleſs of the good of their houſe after them, or all the care they take is an evil to their houſe.

Further, From this circumlocution of death,

Obſerve, Firſt, *Man hath his months appointed or numbred out to him.*

Though the moſt that any man can have are ſcarce a number, yet whatſoever any man hath, or ſhall have, are exactly numbred. Our times are in Gods hand, as in regard of the iſſues and events of them; ſo alſo in regard of the length or continuance of them; God teacheth man the ſpiritual number of his dayes, or the art of numbring his dayes *ſpiritually*; but he himſelf hath numbred them (and that number he reſerves to himſelf) *Arithmetically.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *Death is the cutting off of our months.*

The months actually paſt, are cut off from the months which poſſibly were to come. Take the meaning of it yet more fully in the next point.

Thirdly obſerve, *God oftens ſhortens the lives of wicked men, and cuts the number of their moneths off in the midſt.*

Though every man, even the vileſt and moſt wicked man that ever lived in the world lives out the full number of thoſe moneths which the counſel of God hath appointed him perſonally; yet many wicked (and ſome good) men are cut off in the midſt of thoſe moneths which God hath appointed to mankind generally. The dayes of the years generally appointed to mankind, *are threeſcore years and ten* (Pſal. 90. 10.) yet half mankind doth not live out half the number of theſe years; ſome have the number of theſe years or moneths cut off in mercy, very many have them cut off in wrath and judgment; God takes ſome away from the evil which is to come, and God takes others away becauſe of the evil which they have already done, or leſt they ſhould do more evil. Theſe obſervations have occurred in other parts of this book, eſpecially in *Chap.* 14. and therefore I only mention them here, referring back the Reader to a larger diſcuſſion of them in thoſe places.

VERS. 22.

Shall any teach God knowledge, ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high.

JOB having given his experiences of the dealing of God with wicked men; now gives his approbation of it. He chalengeth all the wiſdom of the world to direct a more convenient courſe, or method, then the divine wiſdom proceeds in for the diſpoſal both of things and perſons here below. *Shall any teach God knowledge?* The queſtion is a negation; yea the queſtion is full of indignation, when he ſaith, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* He means that none can; and when he ſaith, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* His meaning is, that 'tis higheſt preſumption for any to think he can.

Shall any teach God knowledge?

The words are either the concluſion of what was before diſputed, or they are as a Preface to that which follows; ſome take them reſpecting as well the diſcourſe that comes next, as that which went before.

Hæc ſententia in medio poſita ſuam vim ad utramq; partem exerit tam adea quæ dicta ſunt, quàm ad ea quæ ſequuntur de divina providentia. Bold

לאל

Pro Deo. Quis veſtrũ hujus rei rationem pro Deo reddere poteſt. Rab. Sel.

Jewiſh Writers read the words thus, *Shall any teach knowledge for God?* As if *Job's* meaning were this; Doth God need any to apologize for him, or to take his part? Needs he an advocate to plead his cauſe, and to aſſiſt him in the juſtification of his own way, in giving out either good or evil? *Shall any teach knowledge for God?* And ſet out more plainly and clearly then he hath done; why ſome good men mourn all their dayes, and in the end of their dayes dye mourning? Why ſome wicked men flouriſh all their dayes, and in the end of their dayes dye flouriſhing? Can any unriddle theſe diſpenſations, and render a more ſatisfying anſwer about them?

But I rather conceive the words according to our reading, not as a forbidding of that office, that any ſhould undertake to plead for, or vindicate the juſtice and righteouſneſs of God in what he hath done; but as a reproof of mans preſumption in directing God what to do. *Shall any teach God knowledge?* As if *Job* had ſaid, *doth God need any tutor, or maſter, to teach him his leſſon? Needeth he any to point him how to order the affairs of the world, what to do to the wicked, and what to the godly? Surely he needs none to teach, nor to inſtruct him.* So the words are a reproof, a vehement reproof upon *Job's* friends, whom he perſtringeth as over-daring about, and intruding into, thoſe things which were above them.

Theſe words, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* imply five things, which I ſhall draw forth into ſo many Obſervations, and proſecute them in order as they riſe.

Firſt, Take the queſtion, *Shall any man teach God knowledge?* As a down-right negation, and then it gives us this inſtruction.

God cannot be taught.

Some men are ſo fooliſh that they cannot be taught, they are not capable; ſuch a one (we ſay) is not capable to be a Scholler, he is of ſuch weak parts, of ſo ſhallow an underſtanding, that he cannot be taught. But God is ſo wiſe that he cannot be taught, he is infinitely beyond the School (*Iſa.* 40. 13, 14.) *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his Counſellor hath taught him?* The wiſeſt Kings and States of the earth have their Counſel Tables, and 'tis but needful they ſhould. *In the multitude of Counſellors there is ſafety* (ſaid the wiſeſt of Kings) many eyes ſee more then one. But God who is *only wiſe* and *all eyes*, ſeeth more then many or then all the ſons of men. *Who hath been his Counſellor?* (bring forth the man, bring forth the Angel with whom God took counſel) *who inſtructed him, and taught him in the paths of Judgment, and taught him knowledge, and ſhewed him the way of underſtanding?* This Prophet ſpeaks fully to the ſence of *Job*; and his Text may be a Comment upon this before us, and tell us what *Job* means when he ſaith, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* He needs none to make him underſtand, none to direct him the courſe of Judgment; how to mannage his affairs with diſcretion, or duly to put his purpoſes and reſolves in execution. The Apoſtle *Paul* takes up the ſame language (*Rom.* 11. 34.) *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counſellor? O the depth of the riches both of his wiſdom and knowledge! How unſearchable are his judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord?* Hath no man known the mind of the Lord? Yes, there is a mind of the Lord which is known to man; there is a revealed mind of the Lord, a mind of the Lord which he hath made known: but beſides that revealed mind of the Lord, the Lord hath a ſecret mind (as we may call it) or a ſecret will; he hath a cabinet, and cloſe counſel lockt up in his own breaſt, which was never opened to the creature: Of that the Apoſtle ſaith, *Who hath known the mind of the Lord?* We know his mind, what he would have us do; what to believe, what the way to life and ſalvation is we know. He hath told us how we ſhould honour him, and work out our own ſalvation with fear and trembling. The Prophet reports ſome making that queſtion, *Wherewithall ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the moſt high God?* (Mich. 6. 6.) They enquired, as if God had left them in the dark about the way of his worſhip, and ſervice. No, ſaith the Prophet (*verſ.* 8.) *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee.* Thus far we know the mind of the Lord, what he would have us do; but we do not know the mind of the Lord, what he himſelf will do, that's a ſecret; *Who hath known this mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Councellor?* Thus again (1 *Cor.* 2. 16.) *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may inſtruct him? But we have the mind of Chriſt.* We know the mind of the Lord for our own inſtruction; but we know not the mind of the Lord for his inſtruction, or that we might inſtruct him. When man inſtructs man, he doth but make his own mind known to him; but when God inſtructs man, he not only makes his own mind known to him, but knoweth his; and ſo alſo muſt that man who takes upon him to inſtruct God.

Secondly, When it is ſaid, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* it plainly teacheth us. *That God knoweth all things, or, that he is infinitely and perfectly wiſe and knowing.* He for whom no teacher can be found, or he to whoſe treaſure of knowledge no knowledge, not the leaſt mite of knowledge can be added, muſt needs be infinitely wiſe and knowing: for *that is infinite to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away.* Now thus wiſe is God, thus knowing is God, he cannot admit more wiſdom, therefore he is infinitely wiſe. God is the firſt rule, the ſupream rule of knowledge, and wiſdom; yea his knowledge and wiſdom is himſelf. The wiſdom of God is the wiſe God, and the knowledge of God is the knowing God: ſo that, as nothing can be added to God himſelf, ſo, nothing can be added to the wiſdom of God: for the wiſdom of God is God, therefore he is perfect in wiſdom and in knowledge. *Job's* argument that God needeth no teaching, is a clear demonſtration of it. For among men, they that are paſt teaching how wiſe are they? How wiſe are they in their own thoughts (though indeed it be ignorance and fooliſhneſs enough that they think ſo) who think they are paſt teaching, or too wiſe to be taught. There are ſome men that think they need no teaching, and there are none who need more then they; uſually they are under a dearth and ſcarcity of knowledge, who ſuppoſe they have ſuch abundance, that they are beyond the ſchool, beyond the Church, beyond teaching, and counſel, beyond helps and ordinances; ſuch as have theſe apprehenſions of themſelves, do leaſt apprehend themſelves. For as they who think they need not be better, draw a juſt ſuſpition that they were never good: ſo they who think they know enough, may be concluded to know nothing yet as they ought to know. When any ſay they are ſo rich in knowledge that they need know no more, I may ſay they need at leaſt this piece of knowledge, *To know how poor they are in knowledge.* But if any one had ſo much knowledge indeed that no man could teach him further, he were abundantly knowing. Now thus it is with God, *ſhall any man teach God knowledge?* they cannot; therefore his knowledge is infinite, and perfect. And ſo it is, Firſt, About things; he knows all things, what they are, and for what they ſerve, what their nature is, and what their uſefulneſs is. Secondly, About perſons, *He knoweth all men, and needeth not that any ſhould teſtifie of man, for he knoweth what is in man* (Joh. 2. 24, 25.) He knows every man fully, he knows him within and without. He knows all our outward actions, yea the very internal motions of the heart; he knoweth not only what men do, but all their aims and ſecret intendments in doing it.

Thirdly, This queſtion, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* intimates, That,

> *Some men, do even attempt, and take upon them the boldneſs to teach God.*

What need this chiding queſtion elſe? Why ſhould *Job* ſpeak thus to his friends, unleſs he had diſcovered, or at leaſt ſuſpected, ſuch a ſpirit in them; that they had ſpoken or done ſuch things as did amount to, or might be interpreted a teaching of God.

You will ſay, ſurely, no man ever attempted to teach God, we indeed are taught of God; and that we ſhall be ſo is the promiſe of the covenant of grace, *Heb.* 8. But did ever any man go about to teach God? He hath his chair in Heaven (as the ancient ſpeaks) that teacheth the heart of man; but where have they their chair, and where is their School, who undertake to teach the God of Heaven?

I anſwer, the teaching of God, may be conſidered two wayes.

Firſt, Directly, and formally.

Secondly, Implicitly, or by way of interpretation.

'Tis I grant exceeding rare that any riſe to ſuch a height of boldneſs, as avowedly, directly, explicitly, and formally, to ſay we can, or we will teach God: but there are many who ſay as much implicitly, and by way of interpretation, that is, they ſpeak, hold or do that which plainly implies a teaching of the Almighty, or a taking upon them to direct his counſels. For the juſtifying of this charge, we may caſt ſuch into two ſorts.

Firſt, In reference to his Word, ſome would teach the Lord how to ſpeak.

Secondly, In reference to his Works, others would teach the Lord what to do.

For the former, there are thoſe who would teach God how to ſpeak, by adding to, and diminiſhing from the Word which he hath ſpoken. That there is ſuch a proud principle in the heart of man, is plainly proved by thoſe cautions given both in the Law and in the Goſpel (*Deut.* 4. 2.) *Ye ſhall not add to the Word which I command you, neither ſhall you diminiſh ought from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you:* and (*Prov.* 30. 6.) *Add thou not unto his Word, leſt he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.* Though we may add a Comment to explain the Word of God where it is hard, yet we muſt not add a ſupplement to the Word of God, as if it were defective. One of the firſt things to be believed unto ſalvation is, that the Word of God is ſufficient, or contains all things needful to ſalvation. The whole book of God concludes thus (*Rev.* 22. 18.) *If any man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man ſhall take away from the Words of the book of this Propheſie, God ſhall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.* What fearful additions and ſubſtractions will God make concerning thoſe who add to or ſubſtract from his Word. The Lord foreſaw a ſpirit in man to be medling with his Word, elſe he had never made this Law againſt medlers with it. Now as he that reads any mans Work and takes upon him to add a line, or to daſh a line out of it, he undertakes to teach the Author knowledge; much more do they who add or diminiſh a line or word of the Word of God. Yet many ſuch there are who practiſe upon the Word of God both by way of addition and ſubſtraction. Some have done this openly, and others cloſely. Every carnal man doth this cloſely; for he that would ſet up his luſts for a Law, would ſurely blot out the Law of God; he would make the commandments of God void, and reſcind the ſtatutes of Heaven, who hath no mind to obey and ſubmit unto them.

The Papiſts eſpecially (beſides ſome others) do this openly. For they ſay, firſt, The Scriptures are obſcure; therefore they would teach God to ſpeak more clearly. Secondly, They ſay, the Scriptures are inſufficient without their patchments of Tradition; therefore they would teach God to ſpeak more fully. Others have complained that the language of the Scripture is homely and bare, theſe would teach God to ſpeak more eloquently. Nay, ſome have ſaid, there are contradictions in Scripture, theſe would teach God to ſpeak more truly; others complain, there are dangerous expreſſions in Scripture; and theſe would teach God to ſpeak more warily. All theſe take upon them to teach God knowledge, about his Word.

Secondly, There is alſo a generation who would teach God knowledge about his Works. They forbear not that firſt eternal work of God, *Election.* We have their arguings ſet down (*Rom.* 9. 11, 12, 14, 15.) *For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was ſaid unto her, The elder ſhall ſerve the younger; as it is written,* Jacob *have I loved, but* Eſau *have I hated.* The heart of man riſeth here; is this work of God right? If God proceed thus in his election of men, *Is there not unrighteouſneſs with God?* The wiſdom and reaſon of man ſaith, Surely God ſhould rather elect upon foreſeen works, or faith, or perſeverance in both. But God ſaith otherwiſe, What then? *Is there unrighteouſneſs with God?* God forbid: for he ſaith to *Moſes, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compaſſion on whom I will have compaſſion.* What do you tell me (ſaith God) of your will, my will ſhall be the rule of election; *Yea, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy.* Thus the Apoſtle aſſerts the abſolute election of God. But ſtill the heart of man is unſatisfied, as the Apoſtle ſheweth in the next words; *Thou wilt ſay then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? for who hath reſiſted his will?* If it be thus, may we not lay all the ſin of man at Gods door, and caſt dirt at Heaven: why doth God complain, if all be from his own will? Thus man would teach God knowledge; *Nay but O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?* Shall the clay teach the potter how to make it, or in what form to caſt it?

Secondly, Others have found fault with God, and would teach him knowledge about the work of Creation. The Naturaliſt complained, that man was ſent forth naked and helpleſs into the world, that other creatures had the advantage of man, having natural armor and defences which man wants. Such would teach God how to create.

Thirdly, How often do men take the chair, and like great Doctors offer God knowledge about his works of Providence. How many are there who think themſelves wiſer then God, or that they could direct him a better way for the Government of the world, then he is in. If they had the power, things ſhould be in a fairer ſtate then they are. They inſinuate againſt the Government of God much like *Abſalom* againſt his father *David's* Government, *O that I were judge in the Land,* you ſhould ſee what I would do, what a world would I make? I would ſet all right. Such vain thoughts lodge in the ſpirits of vain men about the providences of God.

And not only they who in this open manner conteſt with God about his providence; but ſuch alſo may be charged as taking upon them to teach God knowledge, who do but murmur through diſcontent, and are unſatisfied with his doings. When a man is diſpleaſed with what another doth, he thinks he could do it better. All they who are diſpleaſed with or murmur at what God doth, ſay plainly in their hearts they could do things better then God, they could teach him knowledge.

Fourthly, From *Job's* queſtion, as it carrieth not only a Negation of the thing, but indignation at it.

Obſerve, *It is moſt ſinful to go about to teach God.*

The height of pride, preſumption is in it (preſumption is the pinacle of pride) therefore the height of ſin is in it. As it is a great condeſcention in God to teach man knowledge, and to turn tutor to the poor creature; ſo it is higheſt preſumption in man to teach God knowledge, and to turn tutor to his Creator. And as an attempt to teach God in or about any thing is ſinful and preſumptuous, ſo eſpecially (which the ſubject here handled by *Job* leads us to) to teach him about his diſtributions of rewards and puniſhments: and that in any of theſe five particulars.

Firſt, To teach God whom he ſhall reward or puniſh.

Secondly, To teach God when he ſhall reward or puniſh.

Thirdly, To teach God how or in what manner he ſhall reward or puniſh.

Fourthly, To teach God the meaſure, or how much he ſhall reward or puniſh.

Fifthly, To teach God the time, how long he ſhall reward or puniſh.

There is an intruding upon the prerogative of God in all theſe. And the ſinfulneſs of this intruſion may appear upon a fourfold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe it is an abaſing of God, and a heightning of man. This ſets ignorance above knowledge, and folly above wiſdom: This ſets the Dial above the Sun, yea darkneſs above the light. Man is not only in the dark, in the darkneſs of ignorance, but he is darkneſs. God hath not only light in him, but *he is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.* Now what an affront, what an indignity is it for darkneſs to go about to teach light? For ignorance to teach knowledge? For a fool to teach the oracle of wiſdom? The greateſt oracle, the wiſeſt among men is a fool to God, whoſe very fooliſhneſs (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) is wiſer then men. And are not men now, the wiſeſt of men, trim teachers of God?

Secondly, What knowledge or light ſoever any man hath, he receives it from God, and ſhall man teach God with his own knowledge? Man hath no knowledge of his own to teach God? *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received?* What gift, or grace, what skill, what endowment haſt thou that thou haſt not received; and thou haſt received it from God; and ſhall he who receives all his knowledge from God, teach God knowledge? *He is the father of lights, from whom is every good and perfect gift;* and ſhall we be giving light to him from whom we receive it? *David* ſaith, *In thy light we ſee light* (Pſal. 36. 9.) And ſhall we think that God needs our light to ſee by? The common light of the world is the Sun; will any man offer light, or hold up a candle to the Sun? Water comes from the fountain, and from that great feeder of all fountains, the Sea; will any man carry water to the fountain, or make a Conduit to ſupply the Sea?

Thirdly, When man hath conceived as much light of knowledge from God as he is capable of, ſo that his veſſel is brim full; when like *Paul* (who by his abundance, or great meaſures of revelation was in danger to be exalted above meaſure) he hath as much as he can bear; what is all that abundance but ſcarcity, what is all that fullneſs but emptineſs, compared with that aboundance and fullneſs which is in God? There is no ſhadow of a compariſon between that light of knowledge which ſhines out from God unto the moſt comprehenſive man or Angel, to that which is in God, or rather to that which God is, and ſhall any teach him knowledge? The Apoſtle ſaid of all our knowledge on this ſide glory (1 *Cor.* 13.) *We know but in part;* and ſhall we who know but in part, teach him that knows all? What we know of God and his wayes, is far leſs then that which we know not. The moſt of God and of his wayes is (*Terra incognita*) not yet diſcovered to us, and ſhall they teach God knowledge, who know ſo little of God? Again, that part which we ſee, or know, we know and *ſee darkly, and through a glaſs;* that is, we ſee it only reflexively, or by ſome other medium; and ſhall we teach him that ſees all things immediately, directly and intuitively in their own nature? When *Job* had ſpoken much of God, he concludes (*Chap.* 26. 12.) *Lo theſe are part of his wayes, but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can underſtand?* So that, when we have received the utmoſt knowledge of God, it is but in part, and but a little part; *How little a portion is heard of him?* So little that it is ſcarce diſcernable; ſo little that the Apoſtle ſaith, *Knowledge* (that is this kind and degree of knowledge) *ſhall vaniſh away* (1 Cor. 13.) The knowledge we have here ſhall be ſwallowed up in the knowledge that we ſhall have in Heaven, like a drop of water in the Ocean; yet that knowledge which glorified Saints ſhall have in Heaven, will be but as a drop to the vaſt Ocean of the knowledge of God. The knowledge we have here is little to that we ſhall have above; what a nothing then is it to the knowledge of God who is above?

Fourthly, 'Tis ſinful to teach God knowledge about his wayes, becauſe his wayes cannot be known. Shall they direct God which way to go, who cannot find out the wayes which he hath gone (*Rom.* 11. 33.) *How unſearchable are his judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out?* If the wayes of the Lord be paſt finding out, then we muſt not find fault with his wayes. If we cannot find out their perfection, we muſt not ſay there is imperfection in them. *O the depth and riches of the wiſdom and knowledge of God?* The well is deep, and we have nothing to draw; we have not line enough to let down our bucket into the deeps of divine wiſdom and knowledge. The Judgments of God are a great deep (*Pſal.* 36. 6.) and the Judgment of man is but a ſhallow. We may quickly looſe our ſelves while we labour to find theſe wayes and Judgments of God. 'Tis ſafeſt in every point of wiſdom (but chiefly in ſuch as theſe) *To be wiſe,* as the Scripture ſaith, *unto ſobriety* (Rom. 12. 3.) and wiſdom to ſobriety is this (1 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *to be wiſe according to that which is written.* If wiſdom to ſobriety, be wiſdom according to what is written, how ſinful is it to teach God knowledge, which is not only beſides, but againſt that which is written. That wiſdom comes not from above which provokes us to teach rather then to obey him that is above. Beware of this dry drunkenneſs. 'Tis an excellent vertue to eat and drink to ſobriety, yet that excels it, *To be wiſe unto ſobriety. Feſtus* ſaid to *Paul, Thou art beſides thy ſelf, much learning hath made thee mad.* They who are wiſe ſo much beyond ſobriety, as any way to offer at the teaching of God, are indeed beſides themſelves, and much ignorance of their duty hath made them thus mad.

The fifth and laſt propoſition which riſeth from this queſtion (*Shall any teach God knowledge?*) is this,

> *It is impoſſible that any better way ſhould be directed then that which the Lord uſeth in governing the affairs of mankind, or in the diſpoſing of all things here below.*

For, Firſt, *All the works of God are done in truth* (Pſal. 111. 8.) As the Word of God is a word of truth, ſo all his works are works of truth: for his works are nothing elſe but the making good of his Word, or his works are the image of his Word. The truth of works is their anſwerableneſs to words. The works of God are anſwerable to a threefold word.

Firſt, To his Word of Propheſie. Whatſoever changes God makes in the world, they hit ſome Word of Propheſie; all is done that what he hath ſpoken or written may be fulfilled.

Secondly, The works of God are anſwerable to his word of threatning. God threatens before he ſmites, and he never ſmote any man with rod or ſword, with judgments or corrections, but according to his threatning.

Thirdly, The works of God are anſwerable to his Word of promiſe. All mercies are promiſed, and every work of mercy is the fulfilling of ſome promiſe. Now ſeeing all the works of God are reduceable either to propheſies, threatnings, or promiſes, they are done in truth, and what can be better done then that which is done in truth?

Secondly, All the works of God are done in Juſtice as well as in truth (*Pſal.* 145. 17.) *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works.* The rebellious *Jews* charged God with injuſtice, as if becauſe *the fathers had eaten ſowre grapes, therefore the childrens teeth were ſet on edge.* And hence they inferred that blaſphemous concluſion (*Ezek.* 18.25.) *The way of the Lord is not equal.* But ſaith the Lord, *Hear O houſe of* Iſrael, *Is not my way equal? Are not your wayes unequal?* Though they complained, yet upon a due ſearch they muſt needs acquit the Lord and condemn themſelves. And though now many quarrel with the wayes of God as unequal, unjuſt, and unrighteous, yet the conſcience of every man ſhall give teſtimony to God in the day of the revelation of his righteous Judgment, that all his wayes are righteous; and what can be better done then that which is done in righteouſneſs?

But it may be ſaid, Is it juſt and righteous that unrighteous and unjuſt men ſhould proſper and be exalted in the world, and that the righteous and godly ſhould ſuffer and be afflicted?

Were it not better that the wicked ſhould be alwayes ſuppreſſed, and the godly alwayes flouriſh?

I anſwer, The proſperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous, are no arguments of unrighteouſneſs in God, but only of his ſoveraignty and wiſdom. For,

Firſt, If God ſhould arreſt and puniſh all wicked men preſently with viſible judgments, mankind would be confounded, and the ligaments of humane ſociety diſſolved; for the greateſt part of the world are wicked; therefore the wiſdom of God doth ſo attemper and moderate his Juſtice, that he puniſheth the parts in ſuch a method as may conſiſt with the preſervation of the whole.

Secondly, If preſent vengeance were taken upon all wicked men, we ſhould walk by ſight rather then by faith, and be terrified rather then perſwaded to obedience.

Thirdly, If the Lord ſhould be quick in his judgments upon all wicked men, it would not appear how wicked ſome men are. Theſe conſiderations with many more which have been already offered and enlarged upon, *Chap.* 20. *verſ.* 29. of this book, beſides what hath occurred in other places about the ſame argument, may ſatisfie any man who is but rational, that the Lord doth only act up to his ſoveraignty, and according to the dictates of his infinite wiſdom, not at all contrary to the rules of Juſtice, while he lets wicked men thrive, grow great and high in the world.

Again, As to the manifold troubles and afflictions of many righteous, neither do theſe charge unrighteouſneſs upon God. For,

Firſt, Themſelves acknowledge that it is good for them that they are afflicted; why then ſhould ſtanders by ſay it is evil. They find the mercy of God in their afflictions, why then ſhould any think God is unjuſt in afflicting them?

Secondly, Their afflictions diſingage them from the world, and cauſe them to live nearer to God, there is no hurt in this; trouble on earth occaſions them to have their converſation more in heaven. What dammage is there in that?

Thirdly, The troubles which they meet with in this life, cauſe them to groan earneſtly for the next life; preſent wants ſtir them up to look at future enjoyment; a ſight of which by faith, and the expectation of which by faith, is better then the poſſeſſion of any outward preſent enjoyment. This can be no wrong to them.

Fourthly, Though they be ſtraitned with outward afflictions, yet God makes it up to them in ſpiritual conſolations, there is no loſs in that. So then, none have reaſon to murmur or complain either about the proſperity of wicked men, or the preſſures of the godly. All is done in wiſdom to the one, in mercy to the other, and according to the unqueſtionable prerogative of God in both.

Take this Corollary from the whole,

Shall any teach God knowledge?

Then ſubmit quietly to the will of God, let us impriſon our own reaſon, that the will and power of God may have their liberty: while we give reaſon too much liberty, we (upon the matter) impriſon the will and power of God. Meer humane reaſon is no competent Surveyor of the wayes of God. Not that any of the wayes of God are againſt reaſon, but many of them are above our reaſon. The wayes of God are ordered by the quinteſſence of reaſon, and that is not to be found under every mans (I may ſay not naturally under any mans) cap: and when we meaſure the wayes of God by the ſtandard and ſcantlings of our common reaſon, what a diſguiſe do we put upon them? Yea, how do we diſguiſe God himſelf? God is our maker, yet ſuch make and form a juſtice for him like their own, a holineſs like their own, a mercy like their own; and then what a God will he be? *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my wayes your wayes ſaid the Lord* (Iſa. 55. 8.) And ſhall any reduce and ſhrink up the thoughts and wayes of God to their narrow and ſtraitned model? The Lord ſaid of *Adam* in ſcorn when he attempted a likeneſs to God; *Behold the man is become as one of us* (Gen. 3.22.) How doth God ſcorn them who would make his wayes and thoughts as their own. Therefore let man diſpute the wayes of God no more, but ſubmit quietly to his will.

Firſt, In what he hath ſaid, or to the rule of his Word.

Secondly, In what he hath done, or to the righteouſneſs of his Works. *Aaron held his peace*, he ſubmitted when God had ſlain his two ſons (*Lev.*10.3.) And when that ſad meſſage was brought to old *Eli*, that God would do ſuch things to his houſe as ſhould make the ears of them that heard the report to tingle, he only ſaid, *Good is the Word of the Lord* (1 Sam. 3. 18.) So, when the Prophet told *Hezekiah* from the Lord, *Behold the dayes come, that all that is in thine houſe, and that which thy fathers have laid up in ſtore until this day ſhall be carried to* Babylon, *nothing ſhall be left, and of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, they ſhall take away,* &c. When (I ſay) he heard all this, what ſaid he? Even this, *Good is the Word of the Lord* (Iſa. 39. 8.) He doth not repine, nor diſpute the caſe with God; What! give up *Jeruſalem* the holy City into the hand of *Babylon?* Shall my ſons deſcended from *David*, and of the ſeed of *Abraham*, fall into the hands of the uncircumciſed? We hear of no word from him, but that which breaths humble ſubmiſſion, *Good is the Word of the Lord. David* was dumb with ſilence, when God ſpake rebukes to him (*Pſal.* 39.9.) There is no conteſting with God; 'tis fit our wills ſhould be ſwallowed into the will of God, and 'tis our duty to ſay (as Chriſt did) *Not our will be done, but thine.* The Pſalmiſt invites all to a very ſad ſpectacle (*Pſal.* 46. 8, 10.) *Come, behold,* What is the ſight? What's to be ſeen? *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what deſolations he hath made in the earth.* How are we to behold theſe deſolations? We may and ought with ſorrowful hearts, but we muſt not with diſcontented hearts (*verſ.* 10.) *Be ſtill, and know that I am God?* As if he had ſaid, I know you will be ready to query, why are the Nations ſhaken, and people made deſolate? Why are theſe changes in the earth? The Lord in ſtead of anſwering their queſtions, commands their ſilence; *Be ſtill, and know that I am God?* That's enough to quiet the thoughts of man. Some paraſites have ſacrilegiouſly flattred the Pope into this divine priviledge; *No man muſt queſtion him, do what he will, if he carry thouſands to hell, who ſhall ſay, why do you ſo?* 'Tis as dangerous to aſcribe this to man, as it is to deny it unto God. If he ſhake the frame of heaven and earth, we muſt be ſtill. *For he doth in heaven and in earth whatſoever pleaſeth him,* and no man muſt ſay (diſpleaſedly) What doſt thou? Or why doſt thou ſo? He that upon thoſe terms would know what God doth, or why he doth ſo, goes about to teach God knowledge. But *Shall any teach God knowledge,*

Seeing he judgeth thoſe that are high?

Some read thus, *Shall any man teach God knowledge, wherewith to judge thoſe that are high?* As if he had ſaid, Shall they teach God how to diſpoſe of, or deal with thoſe that are high? So Mr. *Broughton*, *Can a man teach the Omnipotent knowledge, how he ſhall judge thoſe that are high?* As if this were the ſpecial caſe in which no man muſt meddle to direct God

Quâ ipſe excelſos Judices. Jun.

God, how to handle, and take a courſe with the great ones of the world. Indeed, God knows well enough how to deal with the great ones, the high ones of the world, he knows how to pull down the mighty from their ſeats and to break their power, he knows how to ſcatter their forces and infatuate their counſels without receiving counſel from us. *Shall any teach God knowledge, how to judge thoſe that are high?* He hath wayes and means at command (when he purpoſeth it) to effect that purpoſe. That is a good interpretation.

Yet we render it (and I conceive more clearly to the mind of the Text) as a reaſon of the former queſtion, why no man ſhould preſume, or why it is high preſumption in any to teach God knowledge? The reaſon is grounded upon his prerogative and ſupremacy. He is the moſt high, and therefore muſt not be taught: he is the judge of thoſe that are high, and therefore he is moſt high, and therefore he muſt not be taught by any that are here below. He that knows how to judge them that are high, is himſelf too high to be taught knowledge. Again theſe words, *He that judgeth thoſe that are high*, are a periphraſis, or a deſcriptive circumlocution of God. To judge thoſe that are high, is to be God.

He judgeth.] What is here meant by Judging?

Firſt, To judge, is to diſcern, to look to, yea to look through the ſtate and condition of a perſon or a thing. Thus the Lord judgeth thoſe that are high, he diſcerns, he knows them and their wayes perfectly.

Secondly, To judge, is to give ſentence or judgment upon trial or due proceſs of Law: when matters are alledged and proved, the Judge gives ſentence.

Thirdly, To judge, is to puniſh. So the word is uſed, (1 Cor. 31.) *If we would judge our ſelves.* There judgment may be taken for the judgment of diſcerning, trying, and examining (as well as of ſentencing) as the Apoſtle ſaid before, *Let a man examine himſelf. If we would judge,* that is, try and examin our ſelves, *we ſhould not be judged,* that is, not afflicted, not puniſhed, as it is ſaid there; *For this cauſe ſome are ſick and weak among you, and ſome are fallen aſleep.* Which ſence the Apoſtle explains further, (*verſ.* 32.) *But when we are judged, we are chaſtened of the Lord.* To judge, is to chaſten, or to puniſh. So here, *ſeeing he judgeth,* that is, puniſheth, and layes his revenging hand upon thoſe that are high.

But who are the *high ones*, that come under the judgment of God?

Firſt, Some by the *high ones* underſtand the Angels, who are the higheſt or firſt claſſis of creatures. God did judge the Angels, he diſcerned, and paſſed ſentence upon them, and, *They are held in chains of darkneſs to the judgment of the great day* (*Jude* 5.) Hence ſome conceive that *Job* gathers his argument, Shall any teach God knowledge, how to judge poor creatures on earth, how to throw down, or exalt man, ſince he judgeth the Angels? The Apoſtle uſeth an argument near this in reference unto the people of God, to ſhew that the Saints are fit to judge things of their own concernment and intereſt: *Do you not know that the Saints ſhall judge the world? And if the world be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the ſmalleſt matters?* (1 Cor. 2. 3.) And he carrieth the argument yet cloſer to the point in the next verſe; *Know ye not that we ſhall judge Angels, how much more things that pertain to this life? Job* might ſay alſo, Know ye not that God hath judged Angels, thoſe that are high, the higheſt part of the whole creation? And ſhall any teach him knowledge, how to judge the inhabitants of this inferior, this lower world?

Secondly, Others underſtand it of thoſe who are high in wiſdom; the higheſt Graduates in Schools, and Univerſities; the moſt learned Rabbies, and Doctors, the Sophies, the Philoſophers of the world; ſo the ſence runs thus, *Shall any man teach God knowledge, by whom the wiſeſt, the moſt knowing are taught, who eſpieth faults in the wiſdom of the wiſeſt?* God is able to inſtruct all the maſters of knowledge, therefore he is not a learner. *Shall any teach God knowledge,* ſeeing he judgeth or correcteth thoſe who are high, the higheſt in knowledge?

Thirdly, Rather by *the high* are meant ſuch as are in high place and power, the Judges and Princes of the earth, who are ſo high, that God gives them his own ſtile, *I have ſaid ye are gods.* Though they be thus high, the Lord judgeth them: therefore ſeeing it is the right of his ſoveraignty to judge the higheſt, even the Kings and Rulers of the world, *Shall any teach him knowledge?*

Per excelſos intellige potentiſſimos atq; opulen-

tiſſimos homines, de quorum judicio atq; ſupplicio, fere univerſum hoc caput eſt. Pined.

Hence note, Firſt, *God judgeth the high ones.*

The *higheſt on earth are below God.* Let all high ones remember, that, *There is one higher then the higheſt* (Eccl. 5. 8.) *One higher then the Kings of the earth* (Pſal. 89. 16.) *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*

Secondly, *God diſcerns and throughly looks into the eſtates and actions of the higheſt in the world.*

The high ones of the world, may put a ſkreen of ſecrecy between them and inferiors, they may draw a curtain between themſelves and mean men, but they cannot put a ſkreen or draw a curtain between themſelves and God; he judgeth thoſe that are high, therefore he knoweth them. No man can give a righteous judgment either of things or perſons till he knows them. And though he that judgeth before he knoweth, may poſſibly ſometimes give a righteous judgment, yet he is alwayes an unrighteous Judge. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right, and be righteous?*

Thirdly, *No man is ſo high but God can puniſh and chaſtiſe him, yea ruine and pull him down.*

He can make his ſword reach the higheſt, and his judgments take hold of thoſe that are ſtrongeſt (*Iſa.* 2. 11, 12, 13.) *The Cedars and Oaks, the high walls or mountains,* are men on high; yet the day of the Lord, that is, the day of his vengeance is againſt them all, and, *The loftineſs of man ſhall be brought down, and they ſhall run into the holes and clifts of the rock, to hide them from the preſence of the Lord when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* The Lord tells *Job* out of the Whirlwind, *That the high arm* (that is, the ſtrongeſt arm, or the arm lifted up to ſtrike) *ſhall be broken.* The Lord inſults over *Lucifer* in his heights, *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, thou ſon of the morning,* &c. (*Iſa.* 14.) *Thy terribleneſs hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, that holdeſt the height of the hill; though thou ſhouldeſt make thy neſt as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence ſaith the Lord* (Jer. 49. 16.) The highneſs of man is ſo far from ſecuring wicked men, that it rather makes them the fairer mark for the wrath of God.

Yet let not the low ones think they ſhall eſcape, God judgeth the high ones (ſay ſome) ſurely then he will not trouble himſelf with thoſe that are low, with poor and mean men; he will have nothing to do with them, they ſhall not be taken notice of in the croud. As if it were either unſutable or below the Majeſty of God to puniſh mean ones, or as if their meanneſs might plead their impunity. It is indeed an humbling of God to behold the higheſt; *He humbleth himſelf* (ſaith the Scripture, *Pſal.* 113. 6.) *to behold the things that are in heaven*; yet he is pleaſed to humble himſelf (ſaith the ſame Scripture) *to behold the things in earth,* even the loweſt things which are done, and the loweſt perſons which are here below. And as it is the prerogative of God to judge thoſe who are high, ſo it is both his purpoſe and his praiſe not to let the loweſt paſs unjudged. The pooreſt believing Saint ſhall be accepted and rewarded, as well and as much as any believing Prince, who is not more believing nor more a Saint then he; and ſo there is not the meaneſt unbelieving ſon or daughter of *Adam*, not the pooreſt man or woman continuing in ſin, but ſhall be judged as well as the higheſt. We find bondmen as well as freemen, Kings and Captains trembling before and running from the Lamb ſitting upon his throne (*Rev.* 6. 15, 16.) As it is the glory of God that he can make the mightieſt Kings ſtoop, ſo it is the glory of God, that the eye and hand of his juſtice ſtoopeth to the pooreſt captive. God will not favour the wicked, becauſe they are great, nor ſpare them becauſe they are little either in this world, or in that to come. He that dwells in a corner or in a cottage, ſhall no more eſcape, then the greateſt Prince that dwelleth in a Pallace-Royal, and ſitteth upon a Throne.

VERS. 23, 24, 25, 26.

One dieth in his full ſtrength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet.
His breaſts are full of milk, and his bones are moiſtned with marrow.
And another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eateth with pleaſure.
They ſhall lye down alike in the duſt, and the worms ſhall cover them.

IN the former verſe *Job* exalted the Lord above mans teaching and controling, *Shall any teach God knowledge, ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high?* God is ſo wiſe that no man can teach him, ſo free and abſolute in his power, that none may dare to controle him. And as this appeareth from what *Job* hath formerly aſſerted, ſo alſo by that which followeth; he ſpares whom he will, and ſmites whom he will, for what continuance of time he will, and in what meaſure he will; he ſummons one to the grave, even then, when he is moſt likely to live, and when he hath leaſt fear of death, when there is not the leaſt ſymptom or appearance of the approach of that King of terrors, not any decay in nature to proclaim the return of the fleſh to duſt, the man is in his ſpring and prime, yet then he is cut off and dies. Mean while another (no man knows why) pines and lingers out all his dayes in pain of body and trouble of mind, he lives and dyes under woful preſſures of ſoul and body, of eſtate and relations, never injoying any good, nor ſeeing good day to the end of his dayes. Thus *Job* exemplifieth his general aſſertion concerning the ſoveraignty of God, and his various diſpenſations toward men.

There are three opinions as to the common ſcope of theſe words; I ſhall touch at them, and then come to a more particular explication.

Moſt of the Greek Writers underſtand theſe words as diſtinguiſhing the ſtate of the wicked and the godly in this life. *One dieth in his full ſtrength*, that is, wicked men have no trouble in their lives, no ſickneſſes when they dye, they go gently out of the world, or as it is ſaid in *verſ.* 13. of this Chapter, *In a moment they go down to the grave.* Whereas godly men uſually live in trouble, and are tired out of the world with tedious and painful diſeaſes when they dye. Thus the words deſcribe the difference of the godly and wicked in regard of their natural death: Whereupon they infer, that they muſt neceſſarily have a different eſtate after death. Wicked men (ſay theſe Interpreters) have more happineſs in their death then the godly, therefore the godly ſhall have a happineſs which the wicked ſhall not have after death.

Græci accipiunt de improborum fælicitate & juſtorum ærumnis, quorum diſſimiles vitæ ſortes neceſſe ſit, diſſimiles quoq; poſt mortem judicii & æternitatis conditiones ſequi.

Mors juvenes & ſanos æquè facilè rapit, ac ſenes debiles, decrepitos, & eos qui ſemper infirma valetudine laborant.

Secondly, Others take this to be *Job's* intendment, who having ſhewed before that poverty and riches are alike given to good and bad while they live: here aſſerts that death doth alike overtake weak and ſtrong, ſound and ſick, young and old, ſuch as are in a proſperous and ſuch as are in a ſad and in an afflicted eſtate; death catcheth away the one as well as the other: death carrieth an impartial hand, and hath a powerful hand, the ſtrong can no more ſtand in the hands of death then the weak, nor can the young or rich make any better reſiſtance when death aſſaults them, then the old and poor. *One dieth in his full ſtrength,* &c. *Another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul.* Death pitties not the one, nor doth it flatter the other; there is a truth and an uſefulneſs in this interpretation.

Thirdly, Rather underſtand the words, as teaching us, that God according to the freedom of his own will and pleaſure, and the uſual tenor of his providence in outward things, handles neither the godly nor the wicked alwayes in the ſame manner. One man, let him be good or bad, believer or unbeliever, dies in his full ſtrength, and in the height of his proſperity; another, whether wicked or godly, dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul; ſome wicked men live and die in trouble, it is ſo alſo with ſome who are godly. This ſcope of the place makes good the aſſertion of the Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 9. 2.) *All things come alike to all*, that is, all worldly things. There is ſuch a mixture of events, that no man can determine what any perſon is, either by what he injoyes, or by what he ſuffers. As the perſons of good and evil men are mingled in the world, ſo alſo are their conditions. Good men ſuffer evil, and evil men injoy good: and again, good men receive good, and evil men endure evil. Thus *Job* holds forth the liberty which God uſeth as to the diſtribution of temporal good and evil, both to the evil and the good: So that he will not let us know *love or hatred by any thing that is before us.*

Hujus vitæ ſive bona ſive mala communia eſſe omnibus ſive bonis ſive malis.

One dieth in his full ſtrength.

He dieth not only *ſtrong*, but *in the ſtrength of his perfection*, ſo we read in the margin. The perfection of every thing is the ſtrength of it; and he is ſtrong indeed who is in the ſtrength of his perfection. The glory of young men is their ſtrength. One dieth at the height and top of this glory. The Septuagint render the Original word which ſignifieth *perfection*, by *ſimplicity*; that which is ſimple is perfect, God who is moſt ſimple is moſt perfect, the ſimplicity of God is the glory of his perfection. *One dieth in the ſtrength of his ſimplicity*; that is, when the health of his body or his conſtitution is (as it were) unmixed, or not mixed with any diſeaſe, as alſo when his outward ſtate is not mixed with any trouble; he dieth in the ſtrength of this double ſimplicity, when as it were nothing unlike ſtrength, nothing unlike proſperity hath ſo much as ſet its foot within his borders; when his light ſhines ſo clear, that there is no appearance of darkneſs in it; and when his comforts are ſo pure, that he hath no acquaintance with that thing called *ſorrow*; when he hath not a cloud in his day, nor any taſte of bitterneſs in his cup, then, even then in that ſtrength of his ſimplicity he dieth. Some of the Greeks (I confeſs) take the word *ſimplicity* in the worſt ſence, rendring thus, *He ſhall die in the ſtrength of his folly*; but I leave that under the cenſure of at leaſt an unwary tranſlation; and waving that alſo which I mentioned laſt before, ſhall inſiſt only upon our own. *One dieth in his full ſtrength*; which we may expound in the latitude of a threefold ſtrength.

בעצם תמו
In robore perfectionis aut integritatis ſuæ. *Moritur robuſtus.* Vulg. ἐν κράτει ἁπλοσύνης αὐτοῦ. Sept.

ἐν κράτει ἀφροσύνης.

Firſt, *In the ſtrength of his body*, when he hath perfect health, and not only health, but much ſtrength with it; ſome have health, who yet have but little ſtrength.

Secondly, In the ſtrength of his outward eſtate, of riches and relations; theſe are a mans ſtrength, therefore the ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies both riches and ſtrength. Rich men are apt to idolize riches as their ſtrength or ſtrong tower, and ſo turn away from God, who is indeed our ſtrength and our tower.

Thirdly, To compleat the fulneſs of his ſtrength, we may add, In the ſtrength of his ſpirit, when his mind is not troubled, when he hath no diſquietments there: a man may have much ſtrength of body, and a ſtrength of eſtate, and yet be in perplexity of ſpirit; and then he is ſo far from being in his full ſtrength, that he is in much weakneſs. *The ſpirit of a man* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 14.) (that is his mind and conſcience being ſound and whole) *will ſuſtain his infirmity*; that is, it will cauſe him to bear up againſt all the ſickneſſes of his body, and afflictions in his ſtate; but all the fulneſs of a mans eſtate and the exacteſt health of his body cannot bear up the infirmities of his ſpirit, or his wounded ſpirit. When *Job* ſaith, *One dieth in the fulneſs of his ſtrength*, we may underſtand the concurrence or complication of all theſe ſtrengths. That man who hath a ſtrong body, a ſtrong purſe, with peace and tranquility of mind, is in full ſtrength indeed; yet ſaith *Job*, twiſt all theſe ſtrengths, this threefold ſtrength together, and though (as *Solomon* ſpeaks in his book of the Preacher) *a threefold coard is not eaſily broken*; yet death will as eaſily break this threefold coard of life, *as a threed of tow is broken, when it toucheth (or ſmelleth) the fire.*

One dieth in his full ſtrength. This expoſition is more fully given in the next words of the Text.

Being wholly at eaſe and quiet.

That is, at *eaſe* in body and *quiet* in mind; or at eaſe and quiet both in mind and body, yea in whatſoever elſe a man may be ſaid to be at eaſe and quiet. *He dieth rich and happy*, ſaith the Vulgar Tranſlation; *Wholly well ſetled*, ſay the Septuagint; *Rejoycing and abounding*, ſaith a third; the

Totus ipſe quietus & pacificus.

Hebrew is, *whole, he being at eaſe and quiet,* or as we render, *being wholly at eaſe and quiet.* All theſe readings center into one common ſence, that he dieth when he is in as good a caſe to live as any outward advantage or intereſt can make him. Which is particularly exemplified in the words which follow.

Verſ. 24. **His breaſts are full of milk, &c.**

עטינים *Vbera mãmæ.* Targ. Rab. Mard. *Mulchratia.* Rab. Dav.

The word which we render *Breaſt,* is uſed but this once in all the book of God. I find ſome variety among the Learned in expreſſing it.

Firſt, Divers of the Rabbins, as alſo other Writers tranſlate it, *Milk pails, His milk pails are full,* or, *His pailes are full of milk.* So the words are a deſcription of his outward plenty. The Land of *Canaan* is called, *A Land flowing with milk and honey;* that is, a very fruitful Land. To ſay a mans milk pails are full, is to ſay that he hath abundance.

Apud Talmudicos denotat vaſa in quibus congregabatur pinguedo olivis expreſſa. Ego vaſa magna putarim, quibus ut nunc in Gallia Narbonenſi oleum aſſervabatur. Merc. *Viſcera ejus plena ſunt adipe.* Vulg. Sept. *Hæc verba jocoſam & adagioſam continent loquendi formam, quæ de robuſtiſſimo fæcundiſſimoq; viro diceretur. Medulla humidis annumeranda eſt, propterea conceptaculis quibuſdā tanquam vaſculis continetur.* Ariſt. l. 4. de Hiſt. Animal. c. 20. μυελὸς τροφὴ ὀστέων. Hip. lib. de Alim. Plato in Timæo.

Others conceive the word ſignifieth thoſe veſſels, wherein either wine, oyl, or any uſeful liquor was preſerved. This rendring meets the former in ſetting forth an over-flowing proſperity in worldly things. That man who dieth with his veſſels full of milk, wine, and oyl, hath enough of the creature about him to keep him alive.

A third ſort tranſlate thus, *His bowels or entrails are full of fatneſs.* He is encloſed with his own fat (*Pſal.* 17. 10.) and he hath much fat encloſed, his bowels are well lined, and his back is well larded. His ſtomach hath ſerved him to eat his meat, and the meat which he hath eaten hath ſerved his ſtomach. The man dieth when he is in this good caſe to live. As the two former rendrings appertain to the plenty of a mans eſtate, ſo this laſt, *His bowels are full of fat,* and ours, *His breaſts are full of milk,* appertain to the ſtrength, health, and conſtitution of the body. Which ſoever of theſe we take, it complies well enough with *Job's* ſcope, yet our tranſlation complieth beſt with it, as alſo with the words which follow.

And his bones are moiſtened with marrow.

Which is only an amplification of what he ſaid before, ſhewing a good habit and ſtate of body. Marrow is moiſt and fluid; blood flows in the veins, and marrow is kept in the bones. Naturaliſts tell us, that, what blood is to the fleſh, that marrow is to the bones; blood moiſtens the fleſh, and marrow moiſtens the bones. The learned Phyſitian, calls *marrow the meat or food of the bones*: The bones live upon it. So that when *Job* ſaith, *His bones are full of marrow,* He ſpeaks the exacteſt ſtate of nature. 'Tis the opinion of a Prince in Philoſophy, That the marrow is not only the ſourſe and ſeminary of generation, but the very ſeat of life. So that, the body is then in its full ſtrength when it hath ſtore of marrow to moiſten, ſupple, and feed the bones. And thus the Scripture elſewhere expreſſeth a ſtrong and healthy conſtitution of body (*Prov.* 3. 8.) *Be not wiſe in thine own eyes, fear the Lord and depart from evil, it ſhall be marrow to thy bones;* that is, it ſhall be that to thee which marrow is to thy bones. In oppoſition to which *Solomon* ſpeaks of drying the bones (*Prov.* 17. 22.) *A merry heart doth good like a medicine, but a broken ſpirit dryeth the bones.* The mind hath a powerful influence upon the body. A chearful ſpirit is as good as meat or medicine. The body thrives and recovers by it, the body gathers ſtrength and health by it: *but a broken ſpirit* (he means, not a ſpirit broken with godly ſorrow, but broken with worldly ſorrow and diſtracting care, a ſpirit thus broken) breaks the heart, and dries the bones. In a holy faſt, the heart ought to be broken with godly ſorrow; yet to thoſe who keep ſuch a faſt, the Prophet makes this promiſe from the Lord; *He ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfie thy ſoul in drought, and make fat thy bones* (Iſa. 53. 11.) There is a breaking of the ſpirit which drieth the bones, and there is a breaking of the ſpirit that fattens and moiſtens the bones. We read of a ſweet viſion which the people of God ſhall have (*Iſa.* 66. 14.) *When ye ſee this, your hearts ſhall rejoyce.* As the viſion which Saints have in heaven makes their hearts rejoyce, ſo God will give ſuch viſions as ſhall make their hearts rejoyce on earth; and what follows, *and your bones ſhall flouriſh like an hearb;* that is, you ſhall have comforts both inward and outward, both for ſoul and body; not only *ſhall your hearts rejoyce, but your bones ſhall flouriſh like an hearb.* Hearbs flouriſh when they have ſutable moyſtnings, and ſo do bones. And as ſhowers moyſten the hearbs, ſo marrow moyſtneth the bones. Thus *Job* tells whom he means, by the man who *dieth in his full ſtrength,* even the man who is *wholly at eaſe and quiet, with his breaſts full of milk, and his bones moyſtned with marrow.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That bodily health and ſtrength are no defence at all againſt death.*

Do you think you muſt needs live long, becauſe you are healthy and ſtrong; let not death be a ſtranger to you, becauſe you are not acquainted with ſickneſs; for, *One dieth in his full ſtrength.* The abundance of riches is no defence againſt poverty, as *Zophar* ſpake (*Chap.* 24. 22.) *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtreights.* Now as a man who is very rich, hath no ground to ſay in his heart I ſhall never be poor, becauſe in the fulneſs of ſufficiency a man may be in ſtreights; ſo a man who is very ſtrong, hath no reaſon to flatter himſelf in the hopes of long life, or to ſay in his heart, I ſhall not dye till I am old and weak; for *in the fulneſs of your ſtrength you may be in death. One dieth in his full ſtrength,* and ſo may you; nothing is any ſtop to, or can lay a bar in the way of death, but only grace and holineſs. For though they who are holy and gracious, dye as well as others, yea though many who have much grace dye before they have attained to many years, even in the fullneſs of their ſtrength; yet the Lord hath made a promiſe of long life unto thoſe who are gracious and holy, but he never made a promiſe of long life to the healthy or ſtrong. The Lord hath not ſaid any where in Scripture, that, *The ſtrong man ſhall live long;* but he hath promiſed long life to thoſe who are of a gracious ſpirit and holy life (*Exod.* 20. 12.) And the Apoſtle urging that duty upon children from the Commandment, calls it the *Firſt Commandment with promiſe* (Epheſ. 6. 2.) that is, with an explicite promiſe, for every Commandment hath both a threatning and a promiſe implied in it, and annexed to it; but this is the firſt Commandment with a promiſe expreſſed, and that is a promiſe of long life. *Honour thy father and mother, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayeſt live long on the earth.* So that if any thing be a bar in the way of death, 'tis holineſs; and if man had continued in perfect holineſs, that had been an everlaſting preſervative againſt death. Death had never broken in upon us, if we had not broken the Commandment of God. And now by how much any man doth more wickedly break the Commandments, by ſo much he is the more liable to the breaking in of death. As for the ſtrength of any man, though a *Sampſon,* this great *Leviathan Death,* counts it but as ſtraw; and the ſoundeſt pureſt health, but as rotten wood. There are no ſons of *Zerviah* too hard for death; nor doth death ſtay to take men at an advantage, when they are weakned with age and ſickneſs, or (as *Simeon* and *Levi* did the *Shechemites,* Gen. 34. 25.) *when they are ſore.* Death can do its work eaſily and as ſpeedily in health, as it can in ſickneſs; in ſtrength, as well as in weakneſs; when we handle the ſword, as well as when we lean upon a ſtaff; in the prime and ſummer, as well as in the fall and winter of our lives. Nor can any man plead with God to forbid the approach and arreſt of death, becauſe he is healthy, young or ſtrong; theſe pleas bear no weight with God, becauſe God hath made no promiſe to them. We can plead nothing but our integrity, uprightneſs, and holy walking with God: So *Hezekiah* did, when he received a meſſage with the ſentence of death from the Lord (*Iſa.* 38. 2, 3.) *He turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and ſaid, Remember now, O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, & with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy ſight.* Upon this plea his dayes were lengthned, and a prohibition was iſſued out from the high Court of Heaven to ſtay the proceedings of death. Thus the promiſe of wiſdom runs (*Prov.* 3. 2.) *My ſon, forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my Commandments; for length of dayes, and long life, and peace, ſhall they add to thee:* The Hebrew is, *years of life,* which may be underſtood either as an addition, to note the certainty of the promiſe, or as an explication of the promiſe; *Thou ſhalt have length of dayes,* that is, *many dayes, and years of life,* that is, *comfortable years;* for ſome have long dayes, and yet but ſhort lives; a man liveth no more years indeed, then he liveth comfortably. So that when wiſdom ſaith, *Long life, or years of life ſhall they add to thee*; the meaning is, thou ſhalt have a life not only long but pleaſant, or a life as full of peace as of dayes and years. What the Moraliſt ſaid of an idle life, *That it is the burial of a man alive*, an idle man is a living man buried: that I may ſay of a troubleſom miſerable life, *It is the burial of a man alive*. A miſerable man is a living man buried. And how many are there who prefer death before a miſerable life. Therefore ſaith wiſdom, *My ſon, forget not my law, but let thy heart keep my Commandments, and they ſhall add to thee* (that is, thou ſo doing, God will add to thee) *long life and peace*. Only grace and holineſs have the promiſe of long life, they are a defence againſt death; but as for ſtrength and health, breaſts full of milk, and bones full of marrow, they have no promiſe of life, nor are they any ſtop to the power of death; but rather render a man the fairer mark, and the ſweeter morſel for that King of terrors to hit and feed upon. And from this general truth, we may draw down theſe two deductions.

Firſt, *Then prepare for death, though you have no appearance of death upon you.*

When you ſurveigh your bodies from head to foot, and cannot ſee the leaſt ſhadow of death, nothing looking like death upon them; yet, I ſay, *prepare for death*; for, *one dieth in his full ſtrength*, when there is no ſymptom of death to be ſeen upon him. When we look upon ſome men we may ſee (as he ſaid of a ſad time) many images or repreſentations of death; we may ſee death in their dim eyes, in their palſied hands, in their trembling knees, and withered faces; we may ſee death looking in at their windows, and out at their windows. Look upon others, they have no ſign of death, nothing that looks like death; yet let ſuch prepare, *for one dieth in his full ſtrength*. The Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) exhorts *young men to remember their creator in the dayes of their youth*. And he giveth a forcible reaſon for it there; but I ſhall give another from this Text. The reaſon which he gives, why young men ſhould remember their Creator is, *Becauſe their evil day is coming* (he meaneth not dayes of ſinful evil, but of painful evil, as the next words expound him) *the years draw nigh in which you ſhall ſay, we have no pleaſure in them*; bethink your ſelves of a ſpiritually better eſtate now in your youth, for a naturally evil eſtate is coming; old age with its train and retinue of weakneſſes and infirmities is coming, yea it is haſtning upon you; therefore make haſte, up, and be doing in all holy duties. This is a good argument why we ſhould remember our Creator in the dayes of our youth, becauſe evil dayes are coming. Yet take here another, if not a more preſſing argument, *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your youth*, becauſe thoſe evil dayes may never come; you may be taken off in your good, yea in your beſt dayes: you may be taken off when neither the Sun, nor the Moon, nor the Stars are darkened; as he ſpeaks there, when the clouds do not return after rain, when the keepers of the houſe ſtand faſt, *&c.* So then as they that are young and ſtrong have reaſon to prepare for death, becauſe evil dayes are coming; ſo they are to prepare for death, becauſe it is very queſtionable whether ever thoſe evil dayes ſhall come, or whether they ſhall ever come to thoſe evil dayes; they may die in their good dayes, in their beſt dayes, in thoſe dayes wherein they ſay, we have pleaſure, all manner of pleaſures in them. For as *Job* here affirmeth, *One dieth in his full ſtrength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet.*

Plurima mortis imago.

A ſecond deduction is this,

Death doth not obſerve the laws of nature, but the appointments of God.

The law of nature ſaith not that a man is likely to die in his full ſtrength; the law of nature ſets death at the greateſt diſtance from thoſe men whoſe breaſts are full of milk, and their bones moiſtned with marrow; the law of nature ſaith to death, go to the wrinkled face, to the dry bones, to the dry breaſts, meddle not with this young man, touch not this beautiful woman, he or ſhe is now in the flower, in the prime and pride of nature; go to yonder old man, go to that withered woman, let theſe alone. Oh, but death will not receive theſe commands, death will not obſerve the laws of nature, but the appointments of God, who is the Lord of nature. *It is appointed for all men once to dye*; and as God hath appointed all to dye, ſo he appoints the ſeaſons of death; and the ſeaſons which he appoints, are as various as the kinds, occaſions, and wayes of death are. And therefore, death knocks as often at the young mans door, as at the door of the old man; death attacheth and carrieth away the ſtrong, the healthy man, priſoner to the grave as often as the weak and ſickly. *One dieth in his full ſtrength.*

Secondly, As theſe two verſes are a deſcription of the outward proſperity of man,

Obſerve, That, *As bodily health and ſtrength are no defence againſt death, ſo riches are not.*

Your pails full of milk, your veſſels full of wine and oyl, your ſhops full of wares and goods, your purſes full of gold and ſilver, your lands ſtockt with corn and cattel, and your ſelves wholly at eaſe and quiet in the poſſeſſion of them, cannot ſtave off death one minute, one moment. The rich mans barns were full, yet the Word came, *Thou fool, this night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee* (Luke 12. 20.) *and then whoſe ſhall all theſe things be, that thou haſt provided?* they can be no longer *thine*, nor thou *theirs*. Whoſe ſhall they be? Though thou haſt not made thy Will, nor haſt any will to make it; yet they can be no longer thine; thou canſt not bribe death to depart; riches avail not in a day of wrath. *One dieth in his full wealth, when his pails are full of milk, and his veſſels running over with wine and oyl.*

Verſ. 25. **And another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eateth in pleaſure.**

This verſe ſtands in oppoſition to the former; the Text in ſtrictneſs of Grammar may be read thus, *Another dieth in a bitter mind, or in a mind of bitterneſs*. And this may be underſtood both of good and evil men; ſome godly men dye thus, many wicked men dye thus, both or either may dye in the bitterneſs of his ſoul. What's that? Or when is the ſoul in bitterneſs? The bitterneſs of the ſoul, is the carefulneſs, ſadneſs, and uncomfortableneſs of it. Soul-bitterneſs is ſoul-miſery and ſorrow. Afflictions are compared to wormwood and gall (*Lam.* 3. 15.) *He hath filled me with bitterneſs, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.* What he means by both is clear (*verſ.* 19.) *Remembring mine affliction and my miſery, the wormwood and the gall.* Godly ſorrow is alſo expreſſed by bitterneſs, (*Zach.* 12. 10.) *In that day the Lord will cauſe them to mourn, and they ſhall be in bitterneſs as one that mourneth for his firſt born.* To be in bitterneſs is to be in ſorrow; not only in worldly ſorrow, but in godly ſorrow, in that ſorrow which worketh repentance not to be repented of. Sorrow is a bitter cup; worldly ſorrow is a bitter and a deadly cup; godly ſorrow is a bitter, though a wholſom and a medicinable cup. Spiritual, natural, and worldly ſorrows are as bitterneſs to the ſoul. Death hath its peculiar ſorrows (*The ſorrows of death hath compaſſed me about*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 116. 3.) and ſo hath life. Many dye not only in the ſorrows of death, but in the ſorrows of life; that's the intendment of *Job* in this place, while he ſaith, *Another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul*,

בנפש מרה *In animo amaro.*

Morbi & dolores vitam efficiunt acerbam.

And never eateth in pleaſure.] Or nearer the letter, *He eateth not in good*. In eating there are two things conſiderable; firſt, the meat; and ſecondly, the ſauce. Some have meat to eat, but they have no ſauce with it. Good or pleaſure is the ſauce of our meat. A dinner of ſowre herbs is ſweet with this ſauce; and a ſtalled ox without it, is not. And this ſauce is in the eaters heart, not in his diſh. He that hath not ſauce there, though he have both meat and ſauce in his diſh, yea though he have a ſong and muſick at his Table, yet never eateth in pleaſure. There is a threefold pleaſure; firſt, ſenſual; ſecondly, ſpiritual; thirdly, ſenſitive. All ſenſual is ſinful pleaſure. *Job* ſpeaks not here of ſuch a man as dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eats as a glutton or an Epicure (whoſe buſineſs, yea whoſe religion it is to ſerve his belly and pleaſe his pallate, whoſe only care it is to keep his ſkin fair and body fat, I ſay he ſpeaks not of ſuch a one who never eats)

בטובה *In bone*, i.e. *in jucunditate eſt lætitia.*

in ſinful ſenſual pleaſure. Again, all ſpiritual pleaſure is holy pleaſure: As the former is too low, ſo this is too high for *Job's* ſcope in this aſſertion. He ſpeaks not here of a man who dieth and never eats in the pleaſure of divine love and heavenly enjoyments. To eat in this pleaſure, is the peculiar portion of Saints: So then, the pleaſure here meant is the third, meer *ſenſitive pleaſure.* Some die, and never eat in this pleaſure; that is, they eat but taſte no ſweetneſs in what they eat: Their palates are ſo diſtempered with ſickneſs, or their ſpirits are ſo diſtempered with ſorrow while they are in health, that they find no ſavour, no reliſh in what they eat. The beſt prepared meats are to them but as a dry ſtick, or the white of an egg; I cannot (ſaith one) taſte my meat, I eat this, and I eat that, but I taſte neither; or if I taſte what I eat, and find it ſweet to my palate, yet I have ſuch ſowre ſauce with it, ſo many afflictions preſs my ſpirit, that pleaſant bread is as gall and wormwood to me; I never eat in pleaſure. We are (I conceive) to underſtand the Text of this natural ſenſitive pleaſure which man takes by the ordinary bleſſing of God in the uſe of creatures. This is denied to many, they eat not in good, and it may therefore be ſaid, as the Septuagint render here, *They eat no good.* How good ſoever the meat is, it is not good to them that have no content in eating it. Yet further, as they never eat in pleaſure, though they ſit every day at full and well furniſhed Tables, whoſe bodies are ill affected by ſickneſs, or their minds with ſorrow; ſo there are many of whom it may be ſaid, that they never eat in pleaſure, becauſe they have but little of any thing, and nothing of that which is pleaſant to eat. A rich mans bread may ſometimes be called the bread of adverſity, and his water the water of affliction, but an extream poor mans bread and water are alwayes ſo. What pleaſure have they in their lives, who can hardly be ſaid to live; or what pleaſure have they in eating, who are only preſerved from ſtarving. Such pitiful poor ones are literally in *Job's* Text, *They die in the bitterneſs of their ſoul, and never eat in pleaſure.*

Hence obſerve, *The difference which God makes among men, even in outward things, is very great.*

One lives and dies in his full ſtrength, wholly at eaſe and quiet; another never eats in quiet, nor knoweth what it is to be at eaſe; one hath pleaſant bread prepared for him every day, and he daily eats in pleaſure; another doth not only eat the bread of ſorrow (*Pſal.* 127.2.) that is, bread gotten with the ſweat of his face, with hard labour and care, but he eateth his bread with ſorrow. As the ſleep of a labouring man (*Eccleſ.* 5. 12.) ſo the bread of a labouring man is uſually ſweet to him, whether he eat little or much, yet even to ſome labouring men their bread is not ſweet.

We may draw up theſe four Concluſions, about the ſtate of man in this life.

Firſt, *There is no man who hath all pleaſure, or nothing but pleaſure in his life.*

For though it be ſaid in the former verſe of one man, *he is wholly at eaſe and quiet*, yet we muſt not underſtand that ſtrictly and preciſely, as if any man ever lived who met not with ſome trouble or pain, at one time or other before he died. No man ever arrived at ſuch a degree of worldly happineſs, as never to feel any croſs in this world. The life of man here, is not perfect in any capacity. As the lives of good men are not perfect in ſpirituals, ſo neither is the life of any man, whether good or bad, abſolutely perfect in temporals. In the next life, there will be no mixture in any mans condition; they who are miſerable ſhall know nothing but ſorrow, and they who are happy ſhall know nothing but pleaſure; but in this each ſtate hath a taſte of both, though (as the elements in the mixture of bodies) ſome one be predominant.

Secondly, *Moſt men have leſs pleaſure then pain, more ill dayes then good dayes in this world.*

The life of man here is at beſt but like checquer work, which hath a black and a white, or like a bitter-ſweet, or like twilight when 'tis neither dark nor light; but uſually our lives have more of the black then of the white in them, more of the bitter then of the ſweet, of the dark then of the light. The part predominant is moſt commonly the worſt. Hence the third concluſion.

Thirdly, *Moſt have little pleaſure, but trouble and ſorrow very much.*

Their evil dayes out-number their good, and their ſorrows out-weigh their comforts. They have doubled ſorrows, or ſorrow upon ſorrow; they have but ſingle comforts, here a little, and there a little; now a little, and then a little.

Fourthly, We may conclude with the Text,

That ſome have no pleaſure at all.

Yet this concluſion, as the Text whence it riſeth, is not to be underſtood ſtrictly. No man (I believe) was ever ſo miſerable, whether in regard of his body or eſtate, as never to enjoy the leaſt pleaſure; for as there is no perfect happineſs in this life, ſo there is no perfect miſery in this life; the perfection of both is reſerved for the next. Such a ſtate of miſery as hath not the leaſt mixture of good in it, is the portion of wicked men in Hell: And ſuch a ſtate of pleaſure as hath not the leaſt mixture of evil in it, is the portion of the Saints in Heaven. Yet ſome there are who have ſo little pleaſure and joy in their lives, that we may according to common underſtanding conclude of them, *That they never eat in pleaſure.* That which is very rarely done or enjoyed, is ſaid (in Scripture language) never to be done or enjoyed. Hence take this twofold Admonition.

Firſt, Let ſuch ſee the mercy, and the gracious dealing of God with them, who eat every day or very often in pleaſure. How often do we ſit down at our Tables, and our morſels are ſweet to us? God fills our hearts not only with food but gladneſs. Whereas not a few of our brethren, of the ſame mould with our ſelves, and poſſibly of better deſert then we, eat aſhes for bread, and mingle their drink with weeping, or as *Job* ſpeaketh, *Never eat in pleaſure.*

Secondly, If this be the lot of ſome, that *they never eat in pleaſure*; let them be admoniſht who complain, if they eat not alwayes in pleaſure; who if they have but now and then a hard day of it, a ſhort meal of it; if their pallate be but ſometimes out of taſte, and their ſtomachs ſick; if they are only now and then in pain, preſently murmur and are diſcontent. Shall any repine at pains which come but ſeldom, when we hear of others that never eat in pleaſure?

God doth us no wrong if he giveth us nothing but ſorrow; he doth us no wrong, if he lets us linger, and pine, and die in the bitterneſs of our ſouls. Wicked men do nothing but ſin, and then, what is their due but ſorrow? And as the wicked do nothing but ſin, ſo the godly ſin in all they do, therefore God is not unjuſt if he mingle ſorrow with all they have. While there is ſo much ſin in the beſt, 'tis mercy that it is no worſe with them; and while ſo much evil is done, what reaſon have we to complain that ſo much evil is felt. If there were no other account to be given of Gods ſevereſt diſpenſations, this is enough to acquit God and quiet our own ſpirits. 'Tis an evil and a bitter thing, in the nature of it, to ſin againſt God; no wonder then if it be ſo in the effects of it. The bitterneſs of ſin will cauſe bitterneſs of ſoul, and while we do ſo much of that wherein God taketh no pleaſure, we have cauſe to expect but little, and to juſtifie him though we ſhould *never eat in pleaſure.*

Verſ. 26. **They ſhall lie down alike in the duſt, and the worms ſhall cover them.**

There is difference among men while they live, and in in the manner of their death; *One dieth in his full ſtrength*; another *dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul*; *but they ſhall lie down alike in the duſt.* When we are removed by death, theſe differences will be removed. *To lie down in the duſt,* is to dye; and we read of the *duſt of death,* Pſal. 22.15.

They ſhall lie down alike.] The *Verb* ſignifieth to *unite or joyn together.* The *Adverb* which is here uſed, hath four ſignifications in Scripture.

יחד *Verbum univit, unum fecit, in adverbio, ſimul pariter*

Firſt, 'Tis rendred *alone, or without company* (Job 34. 29.) *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble? and when he hides his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done againſt a Nation, or a man only*; a man alone, that is, a ſingle perſon.

Secondly, Uſually it is tranſlated *together*, or with company: So (*Ezra* 4. 3.) The *Jews* refuſing the help of

Tobias and *Sanballat* ſaid, *We will build together*. Their meaning is not, we and you will build together; but we *Jews* will build together by our ſelves, we will not mingle and incorporate with you in this work.

Thirdly, The word is expreſſed, by *wholly, or every whit* (Job 10.8.) We tranſlate, *Thy hand hath made me, and faſhioned me together round about*; that is, *thou haſt made me wholly, or every whit*, one part as well as another; my hand as well as my head, my little finger as well as my foot is of thy making.

Fourthly, It ſignifies *alike*, or one as well as another, (*Pſal.*33.15.) *The Lord from Heaven beholdeth all the children of men, he faſhions their hearts alike*; not that all mens hearts are alike, or of one form and faſhion, for if they were, their way, their courſe, and their end would be alike; but *the Lord faſhioneth their hearts alike*; that is, as he faſhions the heart of one man, ſo the heart of another; 'tis as eaſie with God to faſhion the heart of the greateſt Prince, as of the meaneſt Plebeian. The Lord is the faſhioner of all mens hearts, and he alone can faſhion the heart.

We render the word here in the fourth or laſt ſence, *They ſhall lye down alike in the duſt*; that is, they ſhall all lye down in the duſt, and in the duſt they ſhall be as one. Yet ſome render it in the third ſence, *They ſhall lye down every whit, or wholly in the duſt*; that is, all their pride, and pomp, their beauty and ſtrength ſhall lye down every whit and wholly in the duſt, they ſhall not ſave nor deliver the leaſt piece of themſelves from the duſt of death. Again, others read it in the ſecond ſence, *They ſhall lye down together in the duſt*; that is, good and bad, high and low, rich and poor, weak and ſtrong, beautiful and deformed, ſhall be tumbled and mixed together in the grave. Death and the duſt make no diſtinctions of men; and they unmake (as to corporals and externals) thoſe that were. Though every man ſhould have (as many have) a diſtinct grave when they dye, as they had diſtinct houſes and dwelling places while they lived, yet the grave quickly blots out all diſtinctions. So that they who were far enough aſunder in ſtate and manners and affections while they lived, may yet be ſaid when they dye, *to lye down alike or together in the duſt*.

And the worms ſhall cover them.] We have here only a further deſcription of the dead. Thus the Prophet ſpeaks of the proud *Babylonian* (Iſa.14.11.) *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, the worm is ſpread under thee, and the worms cover thee.* Thoſe words are a holy ſcorn caſt upon the funeral pomps, in which Kings, Emperors, and mighty men were wont to be buried. Their carkaſſes had curious Carpets and fine linnen ſpread under them, and laid upon them; they were embalmed, ſpiced and perfumed; yet ſaith the Prophet of a chief one, *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave*, the worms are a Carpet under thee, and the worms are a covering over thee. Thus here, *The worms ſhall cover them*: Duſt ſhall be their *down-bed*, and worms ſhall be their *bed-cloaths*. The body alive is but living duſt, and when a man dieth his body firſt returns to, and then turns, or is reſolved into duſt. Living man is but a worm, and when he dieth worms come about him, and come of him; *The worms ſhall cover them.*

From the whole verſe obſerve,

Death makes no difference among men.

While men walk upon this duſt their diſtances are many, but when they lye down in the duſt they are all alike, or they lye down alike. *Death is the great Leveller.* And they who, indeed, are ſo, ſeem like death, to act more for the diſſolution of the world, then the reformation of it. Men will not be fit to live in an equality, till they have been firſt made equal by death (*Eccleſ.* 2. 16.) *How dieth the wiſe man, as the fool?* Moral wiſe men dye as fools, yea ſpiritual wiſe men dye as fools, as to their ſtate in death, though there be the greateſt unlikeneſs between them as to their ſtate beyond death. As godly wiſe men and fools, are not, as to ſpirituals, alike in their lives, ſo after death they are everlaſtingly divided as to eternals; yet the fool and the wiſe, good and bad are alike, as to their preſent entertainment in and under the Dominion of natural death. To clear this a little further, Man may be conſidered in a threefold ſtate.

Firſt, In the ſtate of this life; here they are both alike, and unlike. We ſee ſome good men proſper, and ſo do many wicked; we ſee unjuſt men ſometimes troubled, and ſo are the righteous often. Thus they are alike, and run parallel in their outward condition. Again, here we ſee a godly man afflicted, and the ungodly proſper. Your next proſpect may be an ungodly man mourning, and the godly rejoycing. Thus they are unlike, and run croſs in their outward condition, as to this life.

Secondly, Conſider them in reference to the death of the body, of which this Text ſpeaks; as to that, good and bad, one and other, are all as one; you cannot diſtinguiſh between the duſt of holy, and unholy men; you cannot read the difference of ſin and grace upon their graves. In this they are alike.

Thirdly, Men may be conſidered in reference to the ſtate of the next life, there they are unlike, and there they ſhall be utterly unlike for ever; there they part, and ſhall never meet in any nearneſs or likeneſs of ſtate any more. In what condition death finds men, Judgment ſhall deal with them. There is no work nor device in the grave for the bettering or altering of any mans condition. As men fall, ſo they ſhall riſe, and then all men ſhall be dealt with by the open rule of Juſtice, even *according to what they have done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be evil.* The Lord hath ſometimes made the difference between his people and the wicked very diſcernable in temporals; he hath diſtinguiſhing mercies for his even in this life (*Mal.* 3.18.) *Then ſhall ye return, and diſcern between the righteous and the wicked.* The Prophet (I conceive) doth not refer only (if at all) to the ſtate of the wicked and righteous in the world to come; but to ſome eminent turn or change which the Lord would make in this world, by viſible judgments upon the wicked, and ſalvations wrought for the righteous. Thus the Lord made a difference to the eye between his people and the *Egyptians* by the death of their firſt-born, and by drowning their huge Army in the Sea. As in that, ſo in all diſpenſations wrought with an high and open hand, 'tis eaſie *to return, and diſcern between the righteous and the wicked.* The difference between the righteous and wicked in their ſoul-ſtate is alwayes great, but it is not alwayes plain, the natural eye cannot ſee it: the character is too ſpiritual for ſuch a ſight. Yet a time will come, when a carnal eye ſhall ſee the difference and eaſily diſcern that there is a reward for the righteous, and that the wicked were but reſerved to a day of wrath. And that, though all lye down in the duſt alike, yet when men are raiſed up out of the duſt, a vaſt unlikeneſs will appear among them. They will appear as unlike, as goats and ſheep, chaff and wheat, as gold and droſs, as light and darkneſs; nor ſhall any be like another in the face of his enjoyments, who is not like him in his heart and ſpirit.

VERS. 27, 28, 29.

Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine againſt me.
For ye ſay, where is the houſe of the Prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?
Have ye not asked of them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?

JOB now prepares and buckles himſelf to draw up his Concluſion, not only to what *Zophar* had lately ſpoken, but generally to all that had been ſpoken by any of his friends from the beginning of the diſputation.

Behold, I know your thoughts.

Job ſeems to deal with their thoughts as well as with their words, with their intentions as well as with their arguments. *Behold!* He might well put a *Behold* before this; for 'tis a wonder. *Come ſee a man* (ſaid that woman with admiration, *Joh.* 4. 29.) *which told me all things that ever I did.* And we may ſay with no leſs admiration, *Come, Behold a man, that can tell us what we think*; A man who not only heareth what men are ſpeaking, but ſeeth what they are thinking.

Behold (ſaith *Job*) **I know your thoughts.**] The Hebrew word which we render *Thoughts*, is not meant of any ordinary מחשבות

ordinary tranſient thoughts, which ſlip in and out unregarded; but of ſetled thoughts, well wrought thoughts, thoughts made up and curiouſly formed into concluſions or reſolutions. It notes a kind of Art in thinking; though to think be a natural work, yet there is nothing wherein man acteth the Artiſt more then he doth in thinking; in this much of the helliſh and black Art, and in this much of the heavenly and holy Art is exerciſed, though in neither of them it be ſhewed. Thoughts are cloſe, ſecret work; and yet there is much art in hiding this art of thinking, or at leaſt in hiding what we have thought, till the ſeaſons of diſcovery. *Job* ſpeaks as if he had prevented his friends diſcovery, and without their telling, could tell what they had been thinking.

Scio vos. Sept.

Behold, I know your thoughts.] The Seventy tranſlate, *Behold, I know you*; as we uſe to ſay to a man whoſe intentions and deſigns we ſuppoſe are known to us, *We know you well enough.* And that's as much as to ſay, *I know your thoughts.*

But is it not the ſole Priviledge of God to know the thoughts? Is not the heart his peculiar, a Cabinet which none can unlock or look into but the moſt High? Is not this his ſtile? *I ſearch the heart.* And what is the heart which God ſearcheth? or what doth God ſearch for in the heart? The heart is nothing elſe but the treaſury of our thoughts; and God ſearches for nothing elſe there but our thoughts; either ſimple, as they are in our meditations, or compounded as they are in our affections. *David* aſcribes this glory to the Lord (*Pſal.* 139. 1, 2, 3.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſearcht me, and known me; Thou knoweſt my down ſitting and mine up riſing*; that is, all my outward motions; but is that all? No (ſaith he) *Thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off.* Our thoughts are evident to God, *even before they are*; our thoughts are ſaid to be afar off, when they are not thought; yet then they are as nigh to God as they are to us when we are thinking them, even actually preſent; our thoughts are as audible to God as our words are to men; he hears the language of our ſpirits, what our hearts ſay, when our tongues are ſilent. When our tongues ſpeak *plain Engliſh* to men, yet, as to our thoughts, we may be *Barbarians* to them. As the Apoſtle ſaith of him that ſpeaketh in an unknown language, he is a *Barbarian* to the moſt learned man in the world, in regard of his thoughts. Man knows not the meaning of mans thoughts while he is ſpeaking, unleſs he ſpeak (which ſome do not) his thoughts. But let the tongues of men be never ſo croſs to their hearts, and what they ſpeak, not a light to diſcover, but a ſhadow to darken their thoughts; yet God knoweth them, and by this we know that he is God. 'Tis ſaid of Chriſt in the Goſpel, *That he knew their thoughts* (Matth. 9. 4. & 12. 25. Luke 5. 22.) And this was an unanſwerable argument of his divinity, or that he was God. Only God, or (as Chriſt was) *God-man*, can reach the thoughts of man. That's an eminent Text (*Joh.* 2. 24, 25.) *Jeſus came to* Jeruſalem, *and many believed in his Name, when they ſaw the miracles which he did, but Jeſus did not commit himſelf to them*; that is, he did not truſt himſelf with them, or (according to the letter) *he could not believe himſelf into the hands of thoſe believers.* But why did not Chriſt commit himſelf to believers? Sure if Chriſt might be ſafe in the hands of any men, he might be ſo in the hand of believers. The Text gives the reaſon, *Becauſe he knew all men, and needed not that any ſhould teſtifie of man, for he knew what was in man.* Chriſt would not believe theſe believers, for though they had a fair outward appearance, and made profeſſion, yet he knew what was within as well as what was without; and he knew that all was not right within: he knew that many of their hearts were nought and rotten, and therefore could not truſt himſelf with them. And he needed none to witneſs this concerning them, for he knew what was in man; he ſaw the falſneſs of their hearts through the covers and viſards of their faireſt profeſſions. And to do ſo is the priviledge of God alone.

Doth not *Job* then uſurp and intrude upon it, while he ſaith, *Behold, I know your thoughts!*

I anſwer, *Job* doth not here take upon him, or aſſume to himſelf a power to unlock their hearts, and ſee immediately what thoughts lay there; he was more holy, and more humble, then to boaſt thus beyond his line. His meaning is only this, *I know your thoughts*; that is, *I do eaſily collect what is in your hearts, what is in your breaſt*: though you do not ſpeak the thing directly, yet I perceive your meaning well enough; I know what you would have me underſtand and take to my ſelf by your ſo often repeating and inſiſting upon the deſtruction of wicked men, and the overthrow of the ungodly; I know that in all this you mean me; you think that I have been overthrown as a wicked man, and that I have been deſtroyed as an ungodly one; your diſcourſe hath ſo often fallen and inſiſted upon that point, that now 'tis eaſie to conjecture what you think of me and my condition; though you hover in generals, and ſpeak in a third Perſon, though you do not bring it home to me and ſay, *Thou art the man*, yet I perceive clearly what and whom you drive at. And thus wiſe men can ſomewhat more then gueſs at random what the ſpecial thoughts of other men are, by thoſe things which are ſpoken generally and afar off. So then while *Job* makes this peremptory concluſion, *I know your thoughts*; 'tis as if he had ſaid, *I clearly apprehend without any further explication or comment, whither all this tends which you have been ſpeaking; what you aim at, what you drive at, what lyes at the bottom of all this, is plain to me; I have not been ſleeping while you have been arguing; I have not onely conſider'd the letter of your diſcourſe, but the tendencies of it; and I underſtand the inſide as well as the outſide of all.*

Cogitationes eorum ſe noſſe dicit non quaſi divinaret, aut ſivi eorũ animos ſcrutandi vim tribuerit, ſed quia ipſi ſacile fuit videre quid illi ſibi vellent illa toties repelita commemoratione exitiĩ improborum: Merl.

Hence obſerve, That, *'tis poſſible for man to know the thoughts of man.*

We are taught this by *Solomon* (*Prov.* 20. 5.) *Councel in the heart of man is like deep waters.* The heart of man is deep, as deep and wide as the Ocean, wherein (to allude to the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 104. 25.) *There are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts.* There are light and eaſie imaginations, which float on the top, and there are weighty and ſad meditations which keep at the bottom. Such are the counſels of mans heart; Counſels are thoughts contrived and wrought in the heart; Counſels are thoughts ſhaped and formed up between Imagination and Judgment; theſe Counſels in the heart are *like deep waters*; 'tis hard to draw or pump them up. Few can reach ſo deep as the Counſels which are in the heart of man; yet ſome men can: And *Solomon* tells us who can, *A man of underſtanding will do it.* But is not every man (except meer fools and mad-men) *a man of underſtanding?* Not ſo; for though every man hath an underſtanding, yet there are not many *men of underſtanding*; *A man of underſtanding*, is a man of great or much underſtanding. As by a like Hebraiſm, *A man of deſires*, is a man much or greatly deſired; and *a man of bloods*, is a very bloody and cruel man; ſo *a man of underſtanding*, is a very underſtanding man; or a man who ſeems nothing elſe but underſtanding. Such a man will draw the counſel of other men out of their hearts. A man of the greateſt underſtanding, and moſt reaching head, cannot go down into theſe deep waters of the heart; all that he can do by all his wit and skill, by the ſtrongeſt engines of his brain, is only this, to draw it out. This gives light to the Text of *Job*, and to the point in hand, ſhewing us how man may be ſaid to know the thoughts of man; and that the difference is great between the manner of Gods knowing the thoughts of man, and mans knowing of them. Which I ſhall yet more diſtinctly open. We may conceive it thus; Man knows the thoughts of man by ſome argumentation or inference; ſo that his knowledge of the thoughts of man is but conjectural at the beſt. Man cannot determine unerringly what the thoughts of another are. And therefore it is not lawful to make the thoughts of any man the matter of his accuſation; becauſe we cannot infallibly know the thoughts of any man, unleſs himſelf will make them known to us. So that, to ſay ſuch a man thought ſo, is not a legal teſtimony againſt any man. Conjectures amount not to proofs. And becauſe God knows the thoughts of man intuitively, directly, and infallibly (he is as certain what our thoughts are, as what our actions are) therefore God may judge men for their thoughts as much as for their words, or works, and ſo he will.

Further, Man may attain this conjectural knowledge of thoughts divers wayes.

Firſt, By words, I mean not words which are the expreſs image of a mans thoughts, and were ſpoken purpoſely to diſcover them; as ſometimes we ſay to a friend, I will tell you my thoughts, or what I think; for any fool may know the thoughts of a man if he will tell them; but a wiſe man will collect what lodges in the thoughts unuttered, by that which is uttered in words darkly and indirectly; he will ſail in thoſe deep waters of the heart (as *Solomon* calls them) by a ſide-wind, by a half-wind, yea ſometimes by a contrary wind. He will collect meanings by remote intimations; as *Benhadad's* ſervants did when *Ahab* did but ſay, *he is my Brother* (1 *Kings* 20. 33, 34.) hence they inferred, that *Ahab* had thoughts of peace in his heart to *Benhadad.*

Secondly, A man may attain the thoughts of another by his ſilence. As he that ſaith nothing thinks the more; ſo much of a mans thoughts may be known, concerning a buſineſs by his ſaying nothing. Not to anſwer hath much of an anſwer in it, and to be ſpeechleſs is to ſpeak.

Thirdly, The thoughts of the heart are oftentimes known by the Countenance, and the heart is Printed upon the face (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *The ſhew of their Countenance doth witneſs againſt them.* 'Tis likely enough that the people of whom the Prophet ſpake, ſhewed their ſin more wayes, then by *the ſhew of their Countenance.* They were ſo impudent that *they declared ther ſin as* Sodom, *and did not hide it:* yet the countenance will ſhew ſin, though it be otherwiſe hid. The face doth often betray the heart, and ſpeaks that which the tongue conceals. They who are critical and curious in ſtudying men whom they converſed with, obſerve the caſt of their eyes, and the changes of their countenance, as much as their diſcourſe; and in theſe they read a diſcovery of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The *Italians* have a Proverb, *That a man with his words cloſe, and his countenance looſe, may travel undiſcovered, what he is, or goeth about, all the world over.*

Fourthly, The thoughts of the heart may be known by the geſtures of the body. Some have no other way to make known their thoughts but by ſigns. They literally ſpeak with their feet, and teach with their fingers, as *Solomon* ſaith, many do in a figure (*Prov.* 6. 13.) Thus the dumb ſpeak; and thus the reſerv'd thoughts of thoſe who can ſpeak freely enough are ſometimes known. A nod with the head, a ſhrug with the ſhoulders, the folding or ſtretching out of the hands, the pointing of a finger, all or any of theſe tell the thoughts of the heart.

Fifthly, Thoughts are often known by events. A ſuddain accident opens the cloſet of the heart. So we may underſtand that ſpeech of old *Simeon* to the *Bleſſed Virgin* (Luke 2. 35.) *Yea a ſword ſhall paſs through thine own ſoul alſo, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.* That ſword was the heart-ſorrow which *Mary* conceived when her Son and Saviour ſuffered. This ſad event occaſion'd the revealing of many a mans heart, and the bringing forth of thoſe thoughts in the various tempers of men about it, which elſe, poſſibly, had never ſeen the Sun. The providences of God whether proſperous or afflictive, turn the inſide of many men outward, and make them appear as they are. And this two wayes, Firſt, The thoughts of a man are ſo revealed to himſelf; many would not believe that their own hearts had ſuch lodgers in them, ſuch proud, ſuch envious, ſuch timerous, ſuch revengeful, ſuch covetous, ſuch diſcontented thoughts, did not ſome providence draw them out. Secondly, Thus alſo the thoughts of other mens hears are revealed to us. 'Tis ſaid (*Deut.* 8. 2.) that the Lord led the children of *Iſrael* fourty years in the Wilderneſs, to prove them, and *to know what was in their hearts*; not that God needed to go ſo far about, or to fetch ſuch a compaſs to know what was in their hearts; but he ſpeaks there either after the manner of men, who by various turning and ſuddain events come to know the minds of others; or when 'tis ſaid, he did this *to know what was in their hearts*; the meaning is, he did it to make their hearts known (which elſe had been a ſecret) both to others and themſelves.

Sixthly, We may know the thoughts of another, by comparing his actions and the occaſions of them together; that which leads a man into any work, ſhews the bent of his heart. *Pilate* appear'd very unwilling to condemn and crucifie Chriſt, he ſtood long upon it, and contended with the *Jews* about it; but at the laſt, when the *Jews* cryed out (*John* 19. 12.) *If thou let this man go, thou art not* Cæſar's *friend.* When *Pilate* heard that ſaying, he brough Jeſus forth. His delivering up Chriſt, upon the occaſion of this ſpeech, plainly diſcovered the ſtrain of his thoughts, that they were covetous, ambitious, and cowardly thoughts; he was afraid to do juſtice, leſt he ſhould diſpleaſe *Cæſar*; he was afraid to deliver an innocent man, leaſt he himſelf ſhould be dealt with as a guilty man; he ſaw no rule why he ſhould condemn Chriſt, but when once they told him that he was not a friend to *Cæſar* if he did not, that word over-rul'd him. Thus his heart came out, and he appear'd thus thoughted, that rather then he would part with his Authority, he would part with a good Conſcience.

Yet be cautious in tampering about the thoughts of others; it is Gods Royalty to know thoughts, and therefore we ſhould not be over-buſie with them. It may quickly be our own ſin, and our brothers wrong, to be gueſſing at thoughts. And this hath cauſed many a breach, not only of the rules of love and charity, but of juſtice and righteouſneſs. 'Tis too bold an adventure to conclude peremptorily the meaning and thoughts of others, without clear conſequential proof, either in words or actions. If *Job* had not had more then bare preſumptions, his preſumption had been very blameable; while he ſaid, *Behold, I know your thoughts,*

And the devices which you wrongfully imagine againſt me.

This part of the verſe is of near affinity to the former. Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *And your injurious imaginations againſt me.* And another thus, *I know your endeavours to affright me.* The word which we tranſlate *devices,* is, as the learned in that Language tells us, of an ambiguous ſignification; ſometimes it is taken in a good, and often in an evil ſence. Which variety is uſually diſtinguiſhed and determined by ſome adjunct, antecedent or conſequent. The ſcope of this Text carrieth the worſer ſence, and the following adjunct (*wrongfully*) explains it ſo, *The devices which you wrongfully imagine againſt me.* This word is uſed (*Gen.* 11. 6.) when God complains of the builders of *Babell, This people are one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be reſtrained from them which they have imagined* (or deviced) *to do.* Let the device be never ſo fooliſh and vain, never ſo proud and mad, while they are thus one, they will on, nothing ſhall reſtrain them. 'Twas an evil device which *Job* meant, when he ſaid, *I know the devices which you*

מזמה *Vocabulum medium eſt, in bonam partem ſumitur & in malam.*

Wrongfully imagine againſt me.] The word which we render, *wrongfully imagine,* ſignifies to ſnatch a thing by force, or to offer violence. The Vulture, that bird of prey, is expreſſed in the Hebrew by this word, according to which propriety of the word, the Text may more ſtrictly be rendered thus, *I know your thoughts, and the devices which you violently catch up againſt me*; you act as if ye came rather to catch me, then to comfort me; ye hook in matters againſt me, and even ſtrain your ſelves to make me guilty. *Job* looks upon his friends, as if they had not conſidered his caſe in the ſimplicity of their ſpirits, or with ſincere intentions; but came as engaged men, to ſtudy arguments how they might oppoſe him, rather then reſolve and ſettle him: or as if they had ſet their wits awork, like them who contend for victory, rather then for truth, and deſire rather to pleaſe a party, then to maintain that which is right; *I know the devices which you wrongfully imagine againſt me.*

חמס *Eſt rapere & injuſtè facere.*

Note hence, Firſt, *Wrong doing begins at wrong deviſing.*

Thus wicked men combined againſt the Prophet (*Jerem.* 18. 18.) *Come, let us deviſe devices againſt him.* They did not find him guilty, but they reſolved to make him ſo; and becauſe they knew of no evil he had done, he muſt be as evil as they could deviſe or think him. Thoughts are the moulds of our actions, whether good or bad. And they who intend no good to a man, can eaſily think evil enough of him.

Note Secondly, *Some rather than they will not wrong others, force a way to do it.*

So much the word Imports, you force devices againſt me; you put your ſelves hard to it, that you may deal hardly with me. As *Saul* ſaid to *Samuel* (1 *Sam.*13.2.) *When I ſaw thou cameſt not within the dayes appointed, I forced my ſelf therefore, and offered a Burnt-offering.* As if he had done a kind of violence to himſelf, before he could bring his heart to do that ſervice. Thus many a man forces himſelf to vex another, not becauſe he wants a mind to do it, but becauſe he wants matter to do it; becauſe nothing appears naturally, he forceth every thing. And if no fault can be forced and faſtned upon him, his very innocency ſhall be his fault, and his not-guiltineſs his accuſation. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome (2 *Pet.* 3. 16.) who offer violence to the word of God; *Unlearned and unſtable men wreſt the Scriptures*; they put the Scriptures upon the rack and torture them, to make them confeſs that ſence or meaning which they have not at all in them, they ſtudiedly draw forth interpretations which the Spirit of God never put into them. And thus ſome who are uncharitable and cenſorious, wreſt the ſpeeches and actions of men, or the dealings of God with them, and draw unnatural concluſions from them. *Job* apprehended himſelf under ſuch an unfriendly force, as gave him juſt occaſion to ſay, *I know the devices which ye wrongfully imagine againſt me.*

The next verſe holds out the intendment of this yet more clearly.

Verſ. 28. **For ye ſay, Where is the houſe of the Prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?**

As in the former words *Job* aſſerts that he knew the thoughts of his friends, ſo in theſe he ſeems to tell us their thoughts. 'Tis a ſpeech of like form with that (*Luk.*4.22, 23.) Where Chriſt prevents the thoughts of the *Nazarens*; *Ye will ſurely ſay unto me this Proverb, Phyſitian heal thy ſelf*; I know what you will be ſaying, or objecting; *Phyſitian heal thy ſelf; Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do alſo here in thy Countrey.* Heal thy ſelf, do miracles for thy ſelf, that is, for thy own fleſh and blood, for thy kindred and Country-men as well as for or among ſtrangers. Thus here, I know your thoughts; for ye ſay, or this ye are about to ſay, *Where is the houſe of the Prince?* The Septuagint read, *Ye will ſay this*; as noting their perſeverance, or perſiſtance rather in that opinion, as if they had reſolved to abide by it; I know, what ye have ſaid, you will ſay; what ye have thought of me, ye will think of me ſtill; ye will ſay, *Where is the houſe of the Prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* Theſe words are uppermoſt in your thoughts now, and theſe thoughts ye are ready and reſolved to form into theſe or the like words; *Where is the houſe of the Prince? &c.* Theſe things had been ſaid in effect before, while his friends ſo often minded him of the falls of Great Ones, and their dwellings. *Eliphaz* ſaid it (*Chap.*15.34.) *The Congregation of hypocrites ſhall be deſolate, and fire ſhall conſume the Tabernacles of bribery. Bildad* ſaid it (*Chap.*18.21.) *Surely ſuch are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God. Zophar* alſo ſaid it (*Chap.* 20. 28, 29.) *The encreaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, and his goods ſhall flow away in the day of wrath. This is the Portion of a wicked man from God; and the heritage appointed to him by God.* Theſe things ye have ſaid, and I know your thoughts, ye will continue to ſay theſe things ſtill,

Where is the houſe of the Prince? &c.

As if he had ſaid, *Ye have indeed laid down this only in a general Theſis, but I am the Hypotheſis*; I am underſtood, and the man aimed at in all your diſcourſes concerning the overthrow of wicked men: ye might as well have ſpoken it out, *Where is the houſe of the Prince?* that is, of *Job*? *And where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* That is, *of my children, for 'tis I and mine whom ye mean.* Thus by a general diſcourſe of the devaſtation of the dwellings of wicked men, they put *Job* into the ſame number; and concluded, becauſe the ſame things, or the like, happened to him as to them, that therefore both they and he were alike.

Where is the houſe of the Prince?] Firſt, Some interpret theſe words, as relating only to wicked men in general. As if *Job* had ſaid, ye ſuppoſe that ye have ſufficiently diſproved my opinion, and proved me an hypocrite, by pointing me to the ruined houſes of wicked Princes, and bidding me behold their deſolations. As the Lord ſaid to the hypocritical *Jewes*, (*Jer.*7.12.) *Go ye now to my place which was in Shiloe, where I ſet my name at the firſt, and ſee what I did to it for the wickedneſs of my people Iſrael.* So (according to this expoſition) *Job* repreſents his friends, ſaying to him, Go to the houſe of the Prince, of this and that and t'other Prince, and ſee what work God hath made among them, and therein ſee what God hath already done to you, and what he will further do unto you, unleſs you humble your ſelf and repent. As their houſes are no where, ſo where is yours? But

Secondly, We may alſo expound it particularly of *Job's* houſe, and of the houſes of his children. *Where is the houſe of the Prince?* That is, where is the houſe in which thou as a Prince didſt formerly live and flouriſh? doth it not lie waſt? where formerly there was a great concourſe of men, there now Owls and Bats inhabit, there nettles and brambles grow. The Prince of the Land of *Uz* lived in much ſplendor and magnificence, but where's his houſe now? As much as to ſay, his houſe is no where, 'tis gone. When the wicked ſaid to *David* (*Pſal.*42.) *Where is now thy God?* Their meaning was, *Thy God is no where for thee*; he is not to be found for thy help; So here, *Where is the houſe of the Prince?* That is, 'tis down, 'tis in the duſt. Thus he conceives them reproaching him with his former Glory.

Again, (ſay others) this upbraiding queſtion may have reſpect to the houſe wherein he then remained as a leperous and diſeaſed perſon. This man lived in a Palace, where is his houſe now? He dwells among the Leapers, his houſe is but a Peſt-houſe, or an Hoſpital, he dwells among the diſeaſed. See what a goodly Palace the Prince hath, *Where is the houſe of the Prince?* But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this; as conceiving the word *houſe* not to be reſtrained here to the place or Palace where he either formerly or then lived, but to be extended to his whole outward ſtate and condition. As *David* ſaith (2 *Sam.*23.5.) *Although my houſe* (that is, ſtate and family) *be not ſo with God, &c.* And the ſame *David* reporting the vain dreams of worldly men, ſaith (*Pſal.*49. 11.) *Their inward thoughts is that their houſes* (that is, their great port and ſplendour) *ſhall continue for ever.* So here, *Where is the houſe* (that is, the riches, the relations, the train and retinue) *of the Prince?*

The word rendred *Prince*, ſignifies one that is liberal or free, a perſon open-handed and open-hearted, a man of a royal and bountiful ſpirit; So all Princes are expreſſed, becauſe they ought to be ſo, and 'tis their honour to be ſo. Cloſe-handedneſs or cloſe-heartedneſs is moſt uncomely for a Prince; the Spirit of God hath the addition of this word (*Pſal.* 51. 12.) *Uphold me with thy free* (or Princely) *ſpirit.* The Spirit of God is infinitely free and liberal, ready to do good to all. As if *David* had ſaid, *O Lord, let me not have ſuch a low ſpirit as formerly or lately I had when I yielded to the temptation of that baſe luſt, to defile the wife, and murther the husband; O how narrow, how unprincely a ſpirit was this? Now Lord, uphold me with thy free Spirit, that I may never do any ſuch unworthy act again. Let me alwayes have a ſpirit touched with thy Spirit, the ſpirit of a Saint, that's a Princely ſpirit indeed.* The name of Princes tells us that they are, and themſelves, that they ſhould be of a free and large, of a noble and liberal Spirit.

נרך *Liberalem, magnificum denotat; ubi eſt domus illius, qui in omnes munificus eſſe ſolebat? ironicè dictum.*

The word uſed in the Greek for *Great Ones*, comes up to this ſence (*Luke* 22. 25.) *The Kings of the Gentiles exerciſe Lordſhip over them; and they that exerciſe Authority upon them are called gracious Lords*; or as we render *Benefactors.* As if all that Kings, as Kings, are to do, or their whole buſineſs, were to do good, or acts of Grace, they are called *Benefactors*, or, *Gracious Lords. Where is the houſe of the Prince?*

And where are the dwelling places of the wicked?

Here's a ſecond Query, but 'tis of the ſame ſcope with the firſt. Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *Where is the Tent and*

Pavilion of the wicked? Another, *Where is the Tent of the dwellings of the wicked?* A third, *Where is the Tabernacle of the Tabernacles of the wicked?* That is, their chiefeſt Tabernacle, or their moſt glorious dwelling place. As if they had ſaid; We do not ask where are the Cottages of poor wicked men, but where are the ſtatelieſt Pallaces of the wicked, their Tabernacle of Tabernacles. Thus it anſwers that Hebraiſm which we have often in Scripture, to note any Superlative excellency; as, *A Song of Songs*, that is, the chiefeſt Song; and, *The holy of holies*, that is, the moſt holy place. So here, *Where are the Tabernacle of Tabernacles?* That is, the choice, the chief, the moſt beautiful Buildings that ever the wicked had? What's become of them? And here, as was ſaid before of the houſe of the Prince, we muſt not underſtand the bare dwellings of the wicked, but all the port and greatneſs belonging to them.

אהל משכנות *Ubi tentoriorum habitationũ impiorum.* Jun. i.e. *Magnificum ex multis habitationibus cõſtans.* Jun. *Tabernaculũ tabernaculorum,* i e. *præcipuum habitaculũ.* Lavat. *Quaſi illarũ ruinæ veſtrã adverſum me ſententiam confirment.* Bez.

Further, Some diſtinguiſh this part of the Verſe from the former, by conceiving the Tabernacle here ſpoken of to be *a place for worſhip*, not an ordinary dwelling place; As if he had ſaid, *Where are the ſtately Temples which hypocrites frequented? Job* was accounted hypocritically wicked by his friends, not prophanely wicked. Now (ſay they) his houſe is down, and his Chappel is down; his ſtate is gone, and his Religion is gone, all is gone.

And whereas the former part of the verſe ſpeaks of a *Prince*, and the latter of the *wicked*; Some underſtand them of a diſtinct, and others of the ſame perſon, implying that Princes are commonly wicked; and that they who carry *Greatneſs* in their titles, ſeldom carry *goodneſs* in their hearts. Princes have the ſame corruptions in them, and more temptations round about them then other men; and therefore 'tis harder for a Prince then for a poor man not to be wicked. But I paſs theſe things, though truths in themſelves, becauſe I cannot offer them with any confidence as the intendment of the Holy Ghoſt in this Text.

And having ſpoken before, oftener then once, of theſe devaſtations and ruines which God brings upon wicked men and their houſes, I ſhall not inſiſt upon any ſuch obſervation here,

Only Note, Firſt, That, *the eſtates and houſes of Princes, though ſtrong and ſumptuous, yet come to ruine and vaniſh as well as the meaneſt Cottages or the eſtates of meaneſt men.*

Where is the houſe of the Prince?] He doth not ſay, where is the houſe of the poor man? we can ſcarce ſee their houſes above ground at the beſt. As bodily death breaks open the door of the Prince, as ſoon as of the poor man; ſo civil death or deſtruction takes hold upon the eſtate and houſe of the Prince, as ſoon and ſooner, then upon the houſe or eſtate of a poor plebeian. Theſe diſpenſations have a voice, and their voice like that in the Prophet ſaith, cry; *All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field. The graſs withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of God endureth for ever.* It will never be ſaid, *Where is the word of the Lord? What is become of the Promiſes?* Some in the prophaneneſs of their hearts ſay, *Where is the promiſe of his coming? Where is the word of the Lord?* Yea ſome in the pride and blaſphemy of their hearts ſay ſo of God himſelf, *Where is he?* But it can never be truly ſaid, *Where is the word of God? Where is his Promiſe?* Theſe ſhall abide, theſe have no ſeed of death or decay in them; *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but one Iota, one title of the word of God ſhall in no wiſe paſs away till all be fulfilled.* But of all the things of the world, the goodlineſs of man, the Pallaces of Princes, the dwelling places of the wicked, it will ſhortly be ſaid, and of many of them it hath been ſaid already, Where are they? what's become of them? they are even like withering flowers; as the graſs withers, and the flower fades, ſo have thoſe dwellings and eſtates which ſeemed to challenge all changes, and bid time do its worſt. Secondly, Note,

Wickedneſs is the ruine of the houſes and eſtates of Princes.

'Tis ſin that rots the timber; yea ſin will rot the very ſtones, and cauſe the marble pillars to moulder away like dirt; ſin hath brought a rot upon all worldly things, and blaſted the beauty of the creature. The houſes of Princes, with all their goodly array and furniture, will ſoon corrupt through the wickedneſs of Princes; *Where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* If any deſire the reſolution of this and the former query, or are yet doubtful and unſatiſfied about them, The next verſe puts them another queſtion, which ſhews how and by whom they may be ſatiſfied and receive a reſolution of their doubts. Or taking the queries of the former verſe, as put to *Job* by his friends, here *Job* puts queries to them. As if he had ſaid, I know ye will enquire of me, *Where is the houſe of the Prince? &c.* But ye might ſpare my pains, for any one will anſwer your queſtion if you will but ask him.

Verſ. 29. Have ye not asked of them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?

Ye ask, *Where is the houſe of the Prince? Ask of them that go by the way?* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Can't you ask them that go by the way?* You ſay where's the houſe of the Prince? what need you ask me? Can't you ask them that go by the way? The Vulgar reads it thus, *Ask any man that goes by the way, and you ſhall know that he underſtands theſe things*; ask the next man you meet, and he will inform you, *that the houſes of many Princes proſper, and that the dwelling places of many wicked men flouriſh unto this day. Have ye not asked of them that go by the way?*

Interrogate quemlibet de viatoribus, & hæc eadem illum intelligere cognoſcetis. Vulg.

Two things are here to be enquir'd into, for the clearing of theſe words.

Firſt, About what they ſhould enquire, or what's the thing to be asked.

Secondly, Who are theſe travellers or goers by the way, to whom the queſtion is to be put, or who are to be asked?

Firſt, What's the matter to be asked? Some conceive that *Job* bids them enquire about his dealings, with men, whether juſt or unjuſt, whether he had been an oppreſſour, or covetous, or proud? ask of them that go by the way and ſee if they can joyn in the report that you give of me? Surely you have made no enquiry of me, otherwiſe you would not make this judgment of me. Thus *Job* ſeems to ſpeak, in his integrity, as *Samuel* did (1 *Sam.* 12. 3.) *Behold, here I am, witneſs againſt me before the Lord, whoſe ox have I taken? or whoſe aſs have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppreſſed, or of whoſe hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith, and I will reſtore it to you.* Can they who go by the way teſtifie any ſuch thing of me; if they can, let them; if they cannot, why do you my friends judge thus of me?

Non interrogaſtis de me viatores & ſigna eorum quæ dixerũt vobis de juſtitia mea non poteſtis negare. Vatabl.

Secondly, Ask about the doctrine which I have held forth concerning the dealings of God with wicked men. You think I am departed from the truth becauſe I maintain, that God uſeth much liberty in diſpoſing the things of this life. But ask them that go by the way? hear their Judgment, they'le tell you, that wicked men ſometimes proſper, and that Godly men are often afflicted in this world. Have ye asked this or that other queſtion, or any queſtion which tends to the clearing up of my innocency, or the reſolving of this controverſie between us? Have ye asked ſuch queſtions *of them that go by the way*? But who are they? that's the ſecond queſtion.

Firſt, Some underſtand the Text of thoſe who are at the end of their way; who are no longer as paſſengers in this world, but are paſſed out of it. So the words are conditional, or ſpoken upon ſuppoſition; as if *Job* had ſaid, *O that you could but ask ſome of thoſe that have travelled through this world, and have ended the journey of this life, concerning the ſtate of wicked men: if you had their teſtimony the whole controverſie were at an end. We ſhould not need to ſtand troubling our ſelves about their proſperity in this life, ſeeing they are ſhut out of all the comforts of the next life.* If we could lay our ears to the gates of hell, and hear what *Cain* ſaith, and what *Judas* ſaith, and what other damned wretches ſay, who have lived and died in ſin and unbelief; they would ſatisfie us, that we need not fear wicked men ſhall not be puniſhed enough, becauſe they are not alwayes puniſhed here.

Utinam liceret quemliber de viatoribus, qui confecto hujus vitæ itinere ex hac vita demigrarũt, convenire atq; teſtem proferre. Pined.

Secondly, Others underſtand the words Anologically; *Aſk thoſe that go by the way*; that is, aſk the faithful? aſk believers who are in the preſent ſtate of travellers, pilgrims, and ſtrangers in this world. As if *Job* had ſaid, *If ye would be reſolved about this thing, do not enquire of men that are worldly and carnal, who have their portion in this life; who have no Country but this below, who make this their end and their all. But I would have you aſk thoſe who make this world but their way, and do not take up their felicity here.* Theſe are the only men that are likely to anſwer the ſcruple, and decide the queſtion between us. But I wave this alſo, though it be a truth, that men who make this world their paſſage only, not their home, are beſt able to give an account about the diſpenſations of God in the world.

Qui nō conſtituunt finē in bonis tēporalibus, ſed per viam hujus vitæ tranſeunt ad terminū fœlicitatis futuræ, hi non habent mentē obſcuratā pravis affectibus, & ideo rectè poſſunt judicare. Greg. Aquin.

Thirdly, *By thoſe that go by the way*, ſay others, are meant *the Jews*; whoſe life was in a ſpecial manner a life of travel, from their going out of *Egypt* to their entrance into *Canaan*; As if he had ſaid; *Enquire of that people who have the Oracles of God, to whom God hath communicated himſelf more then to any people in the world; go, aſk them, enquire of them; they will tell you, they will give you tokens, and reſolve this doubt. We dwellers in the land of* Uz, *have the mind of God ſomewhat obſcurely revealed to us, but aſk the wiſe men among the Jews, to whom the Oracles of God are committed, and among whom his Name is eſpecially known by ſigns and wonders and tokens wrought among them; They will reſolve you about this truth.* But I paſs this alſo.

Viatores intelligit Iſraelitas qui exeuntes ab Egypto verā legē atq; revelationem myſteriorum ſuſceperunt ſignis & prodigiis confirmatas, quos facilè adire & cōſulere potuiſſent amici Job. Burg.

Fourthly, Some of the Rabbins interpret yet higher of the old Patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, aſk their judgment in this thing; aſk what *Abraham*, what *Iſaac*, what *Jacob*, thought of theſe things; aſk thoſe ancient *Hebrews*. The word *Hebrew*, ſignifies *A paſſenger*, or a goer by the way; and they (as ſome tell us) were ſo called from their uncertain motions. They going out of their own Land, and being for many ages but ſtrangers and pilgrims in every Land. Yet others rather conceive that the Hebrews had their name from *Heber*, *Gen.*10.11. I leave this alſo, and conclude.

Hebræus à עבר *tranſire, quaſi tranſiens, quod nomen impoſitum fuiſſe Abrahamo à Chananeis, contendit* Rab. Sal. *Ex quo dictus fuit Tranſitor, vel Trāseuphratæus ſicut tranſelpinos vocamus.* Pined.

Fifthly, That when he ſaith, *Have ye not asked them that go by the way*? The meaning is either this, Have ye conſulted with men of experience, who by long travel in divers Countries have made obſervation of the various providences of God? Or the words are proverbial, *Denoting men of ordinary capacity, men unlearned, or the vulgar*; As if he had ſaid, *I need not refer this to ſome ſpecial men, to hear their award, I need not chuſe the moſt wiſe, ſolid, grave, learned and judicious men to anſwer and reſolve this doubt; but I dare refer my ſelf, and my cauſe, to the next man I meet, to a meer ſtranger, be he what he will, learned or unlearned, if he be but a man that underſtands common ſence, or is not a ſtranger to the reaſon of a man.* Thus the Latines, when they would expreſs a thing that is commonly known, ſay, *Every blind man, every handy-crafts man knows this.* Thus here, to ſay, Every man that goes by the high way knows this, is as much as to ſay, 'tis a thing eaſily and univerſally known. So that *Job* by referring the umpirage and determination of this buſineſs to men that go by the way, aſſerts it a plain caſe, and ſuch as might be determined (if his friends had been peaceable) with little ſtudy or trouble. *Job* ſpake this more roundly (*Chap.*12.7.) where he upbraids his friends with the ſame thing, and doth (as it were) refer the buſineſs to the Beaſts. *Aſk the Beaſts and they ſhall teach thee, and the fowls of the air, and they ſhall tell thee, &c.* This is ſo plain a caſe that the beaſts of the Earth, and the fowls of the air may give a reſolution in it, therefore, ſurely, they who go by the way may. *Aſk them that go by the way.* I need not draw out a ſelect Committee, the next traveller will ſerve the turn; *Have ye not asked them that go by the way?*

Quaſi proverbiali loqutione, viatores dicuntur imperiti, ignari vel obvii quique. Quod Latinis Lippis & tonſoribus notum, id Idumæis forſan, viatoribus notum.

And do you not know their tokens?

The words may be read, *Certainly you will be able to know their tokens.* Some give the ſence thus, *If the men you meet with, prove unable to expreſs their minds, they will make ſigns ſignificant enough to ſpeak this; if they cannot debate and argue the caſe, yet they will hold up their hands and give a token of their conſent with me in this point of difference between you and me.*

Secondly, Theſe tokens or ſigns are rather Examples, of which travellers have ſtore in their books or memories. As if he had ſaid, *There is no traveller of note, but hath examples in his note book, yea ſcarce a common goer by the high-way-ſide, but can produce ſome preſident out of Hiſtory or Experience to confirm what I have all along affirmed; Have ye never heard travellers tell ſtories of the greatneſs, power, and magnificence of wicked men?* And whereas we tranſlate, *Do you not know their tokens?* the Hebrew may be thus rendred; *And their tokens you ſhall not be eſtranged (or alienated) from.* Though travellers and they that go by the way be ſtrangers to you, yet they will give you plain tokens, ſuch as you cannot be ſtrangers to. Mr. *Broughton's* Tranſlation conſents to this. So *ye would not make their ſigns ſtrange.* There will be ſo much clearneſs in what they ſay, that you will not be able to gainſay it.

Per ſigna intelliguntur exempla quæ quum eis eveniunt aliis ſunt documento, hæc autem explicantur verſibus ſequentibus. Jun.

לא תנכרו *Signa eorum non alienabitis; vel, non aliena ducetis.*

Laſtly, When he ſaith, *Do you not know their tokens?* we may underſtand *Job* perſiſting in the metaphor of travellers, who to help their memory, have certain tokens to obſerve their way by, or what is remarkable in the way: If you enquire of them which is the way to ſuch a place, they will give certain tokens: Such a tree, or ſuch a houſe, ſuch a Caſtle, or ſuch a pillar. They will give you a token for every turning of the way, and do ye think they have made no obſervations about this thing? cannot they (think you) give ſuch ſigns and tokens as may warrant your aſſent to what I have aſſerted. As if *Job* had thus more plainly formed his ſpeech; *You ſeem much offended with my tenets about the afflictions of good men, and the proſperity of the wicked. But why are you ignorant of that, which they that go by the way can inform you in, and give you many pregnant examples and tokens of, which the unlearned know, or which you may learn of every Paſſenger you meet, that God deals variouſly with men; that ſometimes the wicked proſper, and that only ſometimes they are deſtroyed; that judgment comes ſuddenly upon ſome of them, and that others are reſerved to the day of Judgment; This is ſuch a known truth, that every Paſſenger is able to reſolve you in it, and therefore 'tis very diſhonourable for you to be ignorant of it.* Thus *Job* rebukes their negligence about, or their neſcience of the point in queſtion. *Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?*

Nunquamne illos (ſc. viatores) magnificorū illorū potentiæ indicia commemorantes audiviſtis? Bez.

Signa dicit perſiſtens in metaphora, quod viatores ſigna viarum obſervare ſoleant memoriæ cauſa.

Reprehendit Job *tam ſupinam in amicis ignorantiam qui quæ vel à viatoribus ipſis diſcere poterant ultrā ignorarunt.* Merl.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Some doctrines and dealings of God are ſo plain, that any man may know them.*

There are wayes of God paſt finding out; you cannot know them, not only of the next man you meet by the way, but not of the wiſeſt in the world, no nor in the meetings of all the wiſe men in the world. Theſe met together, cannot ſhew you the hidden wayes of God. And as ſome Providences and works of God are dark, ſo alſo are ſome doctrines of faith: ſome truths are ſo myſterious, that they amaze the underſtanding of the wiſeſt, and the more they are lookt into, the leſs they are ſeen. But there are both words and works of God very plain, ſo plain, that he who goes by the way may know them, the meaneſt capacity may reach them; they are milk for babes. As there are ſeveral degrees and meaſures of ſpiritual underſtanding, ſo ſpiritual things of ſeveral degrees and meaſures are preſented to the underſtanding. And though there are ſome ſpiritual things which the higheſt underſtanding cannot fully reach, yet there are ſpiritual things enow both for the attaining of ſalvation hereafter, and the due ordering of our converſation here, which the loweſt ſpiritual underſtanding may ſavingly reach unto, and they that go by the way reſolve you in.

Secondly, Note, *What we know not our ſelves, we ſhould be willing to learn of any, though (in many things) inferiour to us.*

It is a ſin not to know what is our duty, but it is more ſinful not to enquire after it, though it be of them that go by the way. We ſhould be aſhamed of our ignorance; but let no man be aſham'd to have his ignorance cur'd by the meaneſt helps. The holy Ghoſt ſends the ſluggard to learn his duty of the Piſmire, *To conſider her wayes, and be wiſe.* The Lord by his Prophet (*Iſa.*1.) ſends the *Jews* to the Ox, and to the Aſs; *The Ox knows his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Crib; but Iſrael hath not known;*

my people doth not conſider. Unreaſonable creatures may in ſome things act nearer reaſon, then ſome men, and may therefore teach ſuch men reaſon; how much more may the meaneſt of men, ordinary way-goers, or carriers do it, who being endued with reaſon, are alſo furniſhed and adorned with Grace.

Thirdly, Note, *The Examples of former ages, are for our Inſtruction.*

As what was written aforetime was written for our Inſtruction; So what was done aforetime was done for our Inſtruction. All the former Examples of Gods dealing with good and bad, with the godly and with the wicked, are ſignifications of his mind to us. What God hath done, ſhews us not only what he hath alwayes power to do, and may juſtly do, but what ('tis probable) he will do.

Laſtly, Whereas *Job* ſends his friends who were learned and wiſe men to common paſſengers for reſolution, or aſſures them that even ſuch might reſolve them.

Obſerve, *The wiſe and prudent are ſometimes ignorant of thoſe truths which mean men have attained to.*

Wiſe men are not alwayes wiſe, much leſs are they alwayes wiſe in all things. They who know moſt, know but in part; and many know much, who know little or nothing of the better part. The eyes of ſome are darkned, and ſhut up by God. (*Mat.* 11.25.) *Thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes*; that is, to mean men, to the poor and weak, to thoſe that are but infants and children in knowledge. Not a few ſhut their own eyes, and their hearts are prepoſſeſſed with prejudices. They are hindred from receiving truth in the love of it, by the love of themſelves and of the world. The Scribes and Phariſees were knowing and learned men; yet the men that went by the way, underſtood more of the Goſpel then they: yea *Publicans and harlots* (who were the worſt ſort of people that went by the way) *entred into the kingdom of God* (that is, received the Goſpel) *before them* (*Mat.*21.31.) The opinion which ſome have of their wiſdom, keeps them on this ſide many points of wiſdom. The Apoſtle ſaith, (1 *Cor.*1.21.) that, *The world by wiſdom knew not God*; that is, not by their own wiſdom. God is only known by wiſdom (as it is our only wiſdom to God) but he can be known by no wiſdom but his own; that is, by no wiſdom but that which himſelf gives. But it ſhould ſeem by the Apoſtle, that a man cannot know God by that wiſdom neither, for he ſaith in the ſame place, that *the world by wiſdom knew not God* (*no not*) *in the wiſdom of God.* And if God be not to be known in that wiſdom, in what or by what can he be known? I anſwer, The wiſdom of God there intended, is not the wiſdom which God works in us by his Spirit; but the wiſdom which man may ſee in the things which God hath wrought. So that when the Apoſtle ſaith, *In the wiſdom of God the world by wiſdom knew not God*, His meaning is, that the wiſeſt of men did not arrive at a ſaving knowledge of God (though they did arrive at a knowledge of God which left them without excuſe, *Rom.* 1.) by beholding the frame of the creature, upon which very much of the wiſdom of God is engraven. Yea not only do they fall ſhort of the ſaving knowledge of God in that wiſdom of God which may be read in the book of the creature, but in that wiſdom of God alſo which is revealed in the book of Scripture. One of the Ancients compares the School-men, who were men of the largeſt parts and ſubtleſt wits, to ſuch as having good bread before them, did yet alwayes grate their teeth upon ſtones; or to ſuch as having excellent wine before them, yet continually ſuck'd in the wind. For though they had the beſt Goſpel doctrines and truths of God before them, yet they ſpent their time and talents about unprofitable queſtions and aiery notions, which puff up, but do neither edifie nor nouriſh. So that whilſt many ſimple honeſt ſouls (having truth of grace) found bread and wine in the word of God for the ſtrengthening and refreſhing of their hearts: Theſe learned Rabbins did but whet their teeth upon ſtones, and fill their ſtomachs with the wind. And this cauſed one, more Ancient by much then the whole race of School-men, to cry out, *The unlearned and ignorant* (*the men that go by the way*) *riſe up and take heaven, when many that grow old in the Schools and Chairs of the Learned, moulder away in Vanities and Niceties.* 'Tis not natural wiſdom, nor acquired knowledge, that can give us a pure diſcerning of the things of God; 'tis poſſible for men that go by the way, for common ordinary men to underſtand the matters of faith and worſhip, as alſo the works of God, more ſolidly and ſoundly then they who bear the name of learned and knowing men. I am far from numbring *Job's* friends among formaliſts in knowledge; yet (which may give ground enough for this obſervation) *Job* ſeems to reckon their knowledge (as to the point in Queſtion) below what might be both expected and found among men in degree and profeſſion far below them.

Surgunt indocti & cœlum rapiunt.

VERS. 30, 31.

That the wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction; they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

Who ſhall declare his way to his face? and who ſhall repay him what he hath done?

THeſe two Verſes make up the report, which they *who go by the way*, were ſuppoſed ready to make, had they been asked the Queſtion; *Where is the houſe of the Prince?* or, *Where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* Their anſwer would have been to this effect.

Hoc eſt illud quod viatores vos docebunt, ſæpe cum calamitates orbi à domino immituntur impios illas evadere. Merc.

Verſ. 30. **That the wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction; they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath.**

That the wicked is reſerved.] The word which we render *reſerved*, ſignifies to ſtop, hinder, reſtrain, or keep back. *David* ſpeaketh thus upon the news of *Nabals* death, (1 *Sam.*25.39.) *Bleſſed be the Lord that hath pleaded the cauſe of my reproach, from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his ſervant from avenging himſelf.* As God kept or ſtopt *David* from acting revenge for himſelf unduly, ſo the wicked man is kept or ſtopped by God from falling under the vengeance which is every way due unto him. Yet this ſtop hath a revenge in it; for, *he is reſerved*, not ſo much from (though it be from) as to a day of deſtruction; as appears more fully in the words which follow.

They ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath.] The former clauſe is in the ſingular number, this in the plural, 'tis uſual in the ſacred language, (as hath been toucht formerly) to change numbers, while the ſame perſons and things are intended: yet the change of the number in this place, may have this ſpecial intimation; that though, now, here and there, a wicked man, this or that ſingle perſon may eſcape preſent judgement, yet they ſhall all be, as it were, chained together at laſt, and brought forth to a day of wrath.

In die calamitatis ſubtrahitur malus. Jun.

The Hebrew is, *To the day of wraths*; that is, to the day of extream fierce wrath, when many wraths ſhall be wrapt up in one. The root ſignifies *to paſs away*, and in *Hithpael* to *be angry and enraged*; becauſe ſuch anger paſſeth the bounds of reaſon ſometimes, and alwayes paſſeth the bounds of ordinary moderation. And though the wrath of the Lord doth never paſs the bounds of his own juſtice and righteouſneſs, yet many times it paſſeth the bounds of mercy, or is wrath without mercy. To a day of ſuch wraths, the wicked is reſerved.

Dies furorũ i. e. vehementiſſimi furoris.

עברות a
עבר

In conjugatione Hithpael ſignificat vehemẽtèr & cum exceſſu quodam iraſci.

So then (according to this interpretation) the *day of deſtruction* ſpoken of in the firſt part of the verſe, is to be underſtood of leſſer judgments; and *the day of wrath* in the latter part of the verſe, of the moſt terrible and dreadful judgments; implying, that howſoever the wicked man may eſcape many black dayes, yea though he ſhould eſcape all black dayes in this world, and die (as we ſay) in a whole skin, yet there is a day of wraths to which he ſhall be brought forth, and deſtroyed for ever.

Further, Some render, or rather paraphraſe the whole verſe, thus; *In the day of deſtruction the wicked ſhall be kept leaſt evil touch him, and in a day of wrath to which others are brought forth he is ſpared and paſſed by.* As if the whole verſe were of one tenour, and did expreſs in both parts of it the frequent impunity of wicked men; but I rather adhere to and reſt in the ſence of our own tranſlation. In purſuance whereof the whole verſe is by others read

In die contritionis prohibebitur malus ne attingat eum, contritio in die irarum ad quem ducuntur alii ipſe prohibetur. Pagn.

read thus; *That in the day of calamity the wicked are kept back, and are carried out in the day of wrath.* For that tranſlation in which both parts of the verſe ſpeak the ſparing of wicked men from puniſhment, is yet expounded only of a temporal ſparing. And the difference between our rendring and that, is only in the time, not in the thing. Or that ſpeaks only of their being ſpared, yet ſuppoſeth they ſhall be puniſhed at laſt; ours expreſſeth both their ſparing and their puniſhment. That is, they are ſpared or exempted from lighter afflictions or troubles; but a day of wrath is coming in which they ſhall be produced by the righteous judgment of God, and dearly pay for all. But whether we take the words according to this and our reading, or that other before remembred and inſtanced in, the ſcope and general tendency is one and the ſame, as will appear in theſe three following obſervations, grounded upon and riſing from them,

Impius prohibetur ne parva afflictione attingatur, ideo in die irarū ſubiturus erit ingentes pœnas. Caje.

Pravis parcitur ad diē perniciei & ad diem irarū adducuntur. Tygur.

Firſt, *Some wicked men are reſerved from preſent judgments, are hid in the ſtorms of common calamity.*

That's the point upon which *Job* inſiſts in anſwer to his friends, who not only took it for granted, that if ever any ſtorm aroſe it would certainly ſweep away the wicked, but that all ſtorms were prepared and ſent out on purpoſe for them alone. *Job* oppoſeth them in this, all the Chapter over, ſhewing that many wicked men flouriſh, they and their children, and that, though they are reſerved to a day of wrath, yet they are preſerved in many dayes of wrath; and that though they are under a ſentence of condemnation, yet they are reprieved from execution. The Lord to comfort his people in *Babylon*, tells them by the Prophet, (*Ezek.*11.16.) *I will be a little Sanctuary to them in the Countries where they ſhall come;* that is, I will protect them; God is ſomewhat like this to wicked men for a ſeaſon; though he be not a ſanctuary, yet he is a ſhelter to them, he hideth them for a time. But where doth he hide them? and what's their ſhelter? He hideth them in his patience, and long-ſufferance. When God hideth his own people from evil, they are hid not only in his patience, but in his love; God hides them in his heart, he layes them in his boſom, the love, the good will of God is their Sanctuary. But God never hides or ſhelters the wicked in his boſom, or in his love; they are not hidden in his heart. The ſouls of ſuch lodge not (as the margine of *Pſal.*25.13. tells us the ſouls of them who fear him do) *in goodneſs.* Their ſanctuary is only in the patience, and long-ſufferance of God. The patience and long-ſufferance of God, is the ſheath in which he hideth his ſword that it deſtroy not the wicked, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Ezek.*21.3,4,5.) *Say to the land of Iſrael, thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I am againſt you, and will draw forth my ſword out of his ſheath; Therefore ſhall my ſword go forth out of his ſheath againſt all fleſh, from the South, to the North, that all fleſh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my ſword out of his ſheath, and it ſhall not return any more.* As if he had ſaid, *I will call in my ſword no more, it ſhall never find its way back again into my ſheath.* One of the Ancients puts the Queſtion, What is this ſheath to which the Lord ſaith his ſword ſhould not return? He anſwers, *The ſheath is the patience of God.* Now as the patience of God is a ſheath which hideth the ſword till it be drawn and receiveth Commiſſion to deſtroy the wicked of the earth, ſo the patience of God is a ſhelter to ſome wicked men, and hides them from deſtruction when the ſword is drawn. Thus they are reſerved in a day of deſtruction. And though they continue long in their ſins, yet the long-ſufferance of God may be a ſhelter to them. While the Preacher ſaith (*Eccl.*8.11.) *Becauſe ſentence is not ſpeedily executed againſt an evil work,* &c. He doth more then intimate that ſentence againſt an evil work is not alwayes ſpeedily executed: he doth not ſay, that ſentence againſt an evil work is not ſpeedily given or pronounced, for indeed the Lord never forbears an hour to give ſentence againſt an evil work, yet ſentence againſt an evil work is not alwayes preſently executed. The execution may be ſtay'd, though the ſentence be given. For as there is not any prayer that comes up with acceptation before the Lord, but an anſwer is given to it preſently, yet the anſwer is not performed preſently; a believer may wait long for the fulfilling of his requeſt, though his requeſt be preſently granted; ſo againſt every evil work of a wicked man, the ſentence is given preſently, but every ſentence is not preſently executed. The ſame *Solomon* in the next verſe of the ſame Chapter makes another ſuppoſition, which alſo implies this poſition; *Though a ſinner doth evil an hundred times, and his dayes be prolonged.* Which ſuppoſition (though many ſuppoſitions in Scripture cannot) may be reſolved into this poſition, *That a ſinner doing evil an hundred times,* that is, *very many times,* (that great certain number is put for a great if not a greater uncertain number) *may yet, through the patience of God, paſs unpuniſhed, his dayes may be prolonged, and be reſerved from the touch of any affliction.*

Rogas ergo quæ ſit vagina in qua reconditur gladius? Reſp. eſſe longanimitatem dei. Theodor.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A day of wrath is coming in which wicked men ſhall be brought forth to puniſhment.*

Though they eſcape many dayes of judgment, yet they ſhall not eſcape all dayes of judgment. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaith, (*Chap.* 57.1.) *The righteous periſh, and no man layeth it to heart, merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* Now as the righteous periſh, that is, die, and merciful men are taken away by death, few or none conſidering the deſign of God in it; that they are only taken out of harms way, or from the evil to come. So unrighteous men are preſerved from preſent periſhing, and are not taken away by a ſudden deſtruction, few or none conſidering the deſign of God in it, that they are only reſerved to the evil which is to come, and that their puniſhment is deferred to a day of greater puniſhment. We have a very remarkable paſſage to that purpoſe (*Jer.*12.3.) *Thou O Lord knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me, and tried my heart towards thee,* (he ſaid before of the wicked, that God planted them, and they took root, they were vigorous and flouriſhing, in fruitfulneſs, yet preſently he adds) *pull them out like ſheep for the ſlaughter,* (when are ſheep pulled out for the ſlaughter, is it not after they have been fatted in the green fields and pleaſant paſtures? then prayeth he, pull them out for the ſlaughter) *and prepare them for the day of ſlaughter.* Which ſome render (according to the ſtrictneſs of the letter) *Sanctifie them for the day of ſlaughter.* The Original word ſignifies *to ſanctifie.* But what meaneth the Prophet when he prayeth to ſanctifie them for the ſlaughter? if they had been ſanctified, that might have kept them from the day of ſlaughter; how then doth he ſay, *Sanctifie them for the ſlaughter?* I anſwer, *To ſanctifie them,* doth not imply the making of them holy, or the infuſion of grace, but only the ſetting of them apart, as perſons deſtinated to deſtruction. 'Tis a borrowed ſpeech taken from thoſe ceremonial rites which were uſed either about the preparing of beaſts for ſacrifice, or of perſons to partake of a ſacrifice, the Law commanding both to be ſpecially prepared and ſet apart for that purpoſe, (*Exod.* 12.3,4. 1 *Sam.* 16.5.) So that, it is as if the Prophet had ſaid, *Set them out, appoint them unto the day of deſtruction, let them be untouched of other evils, let no judgment meddle or have to do with them, as with ſacred things, till the great day of ſlaughter come upon them.* The Vulgar gives that reading (*Amos* 6.3.) which I approve not as conſonant to the Original; we read it better actively deſcribing the evil frame of voluptuous and ſenſual men, whoſe belly is their God, and who are ſwallowed up in pleaſure, *They ſing to the ſound of the Viol, they lie upon beds of Ivory, and put far from them the evil day.* Their work all the day long is to do evil, and yet they *put the evil day afar off from them.* This is the ſence of our tranſlation. But the tranſlation lately mentioned renders the Text paſſively; not as if they had ſeparated or put far from them the evil day, but as being by the juſtice of God put upon, or ſeparated and ſet apart to the evil day. *Ye are ſeparated unto, or for the evil day.* As if it had been ſaid, *Ye have all this while lived at the higheſt rate of voluptuouſneſs and ſenſuality; and ſeem removed at furtheſt diſtance from an evil day, yet ye are only marked out, and ſeparated for the evil day.* All the evil dayes which ye have hitherto eſcaped do but lead you to an evil day, from which there will be no eſcaping. *Solomon* aſſerts as much (*Prov.*16.4.) *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf,* ('tis the priviledge and happineſs of God to be his own end in all that he doth; whereas nothing doth more aggravate the unholineſs of man in what he doth, then to make himſelf the

Sanctificâ eos in die occiſionis ſc. ſerva intactos uſq; ad diem occiſionis cui deſtinati ſunt.

Separati eſtis in diem malum, i.e. *longe ſemoti à præſentibus malis. Separati eſtis in diem malū.* Vulg.

end of doing it, but, *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf*) *yea even the wicked for the day of evil*; That is, he hath deſtinated them for that ſpecial day, in which he will call them to an account, and manifeſt the glory of his juſtice upon them. A Learned Hebrician gives his opinion, that this Text in the *Proverbs*, may be thus tranſlated more ſutably to the Original; *God hath made every thing for that which ſhall be anſwerable to it, even the wicked for the day of evil.* Now what is more anſwerable to a wicked or an evil man, then an evil day; ſin and ſorrow will meet at laſt, and do alwayes beſt match together. *The wicked may often eſcape trouble, but they are never delivered from it:* all their preſervations from evil, are but reſervations to further evil. *The Lord* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Peter*, 2 *Epiſt*.2.9.) *Knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reſerve the unjuſt to the day of judgment to be puniſhed.* The knowledge of the Lord extends to both, he knoweth wayes enow, he hath many wayes in ſtore to deliver the Godly; but (conſidering the tenour of his revealed will) he knoweth no way to deliver the wicked, they having refuſed all wayes of his appointment for their own deliverance. Therefore as to them he knoweth only (and for that he knoweth many wayes) how to reſerve them to the day of judgment to be puniſhed.

Tremelius.

Thirdly, By way of deduction or corollary from the whole verſe, take this Obſervation,

Wicked men are not ſpared in mercy, but in wrath.

Their ſparing is to ſmiting, and the ſalvations which they have (if they may be called ſalvations) are to deſtruction. When ever they are reſerved from judgment, 'tis only that they may (in fitteſt ſeaſon) be brought to a greater judgment; there is no mercy in ſuch ſparing. The long-ſuffring of God hath a tender of and a tendency to mercy in it; but wicked men who go on in their ſins get nothing but more blows, while the patience of God doth (as it were) hold his hand from ſmiting them. As the Apoſtle is expreſs (*Rom.*2.4, 5.) *But thou after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up to thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance.* A wicked man makes a very ill market of the long day of patience. The treaſure that he gets is all *black money*, his earnings are wrath, and that againſt the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. And ſo, that patience, which, in it ſelf, is an act of grace, proves, in the event, an aggravation of his ſin. 'Tis better not to be ſpared, then not to be bettered by it. The ſtroak is the heavier, and wounds the deeper when it comes, by how much it is the longer before it cometh. Which ſome note from the Hebrew word here tranſlated *wrath*, which in the Verb ſignifies both to be angry, and to defer, protract, or put off. From the Analogy of which two ſignifications, we may infer, That when God doth only forbear to ſhew his anger he is indeed moſt angry, and that the ſlowneſs of puniſhment ſhall be recompenced in the weight of it. In the time that wicked men are ſpared they ſow more ſeed of ſin, and ſo they muſt reap the greater harveſt of wrath. For, as a river which is ſtopped up by ſome Lock, when that is removed, poureth it ſelf forth with greater violence; or as an arrow the further it is drawn back from the mark by a ſtrong arm, flies the more ſwiftly to the mark when it is diſcharged, and makes the deeper impreſſion in it; ſo all the ſtops, defers, and draw-backs of divine wrath, do but procure and draw out the fierceneſs and violence of it againſt all abuſers of divine patience.

Job having thus declared the report of the travellers concerning wicked men (*That they are reſerved to or in a day of deſtruction, and brought forth to a day of wrath*) gives us alſo a report of the frame of their ſpirits; and as he had intimated, that God ſpares them long, ſo he tells us plainly why men do.

Verſ. 31. **Who ſhall declare his way to his face? who ſhall repay him what he hath done?**

Ego de deo hæc verba dici mihi facile perſuadeo. q. d.

Some interpret this verſe in application to God; *Who ſhall declare the way of God to his face?* And ſo 'tis the anſwer of a ſecret objection, which he poſſibly might make to whom that report ſhould be made. *The wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction, &c. Why ſhould not a wicked man have preſent puniſhment? Why ſhould he live in pleaſure, who is unworthy to live? Why ſhould God exerciſe ſo much patience, and not cut him off from cumbring the ground?* To theſe bold interrogatories, the Text anſwers (according to this interpretation) by two more.

Quis ſtare audebit ante faciem dei, ad annunciandum ei quomodo in hoc procedere debeat. Bold.

Who ſhall declare his way to his face? Who ſhall repay him? &c.

That is, *Who ſhall take upon him to argue this with God? or find fault with the way of his dealings with the moſt faulty men? Who ſhall do this? Let me ſee the man that dares.* So it ſuits well with that (*Chap.*9.12.) *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? Who ſhall ſay to him, what doſt thou?* And 'tis of the ſame ſence with that of *Job* again (*Chap.*23.13.) *But he is in one mind, who can turn him? what his ſoul deſireth, that he doth.* We may parallel it alſo with the two and twentieth verſe of this Chapter, *Shall any teach God knowledge? ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high.* What if God reſerve the wicked man to the day of deſtruction, who ſhall ſay, why doth he ſo? Who ſhall challenge him for ſo doing? The latter branch is likewiſe rendred in compliance with this interpretation; *He hath done it* (or diſpoſed of it) *who ſhall reply upon him for what he hath done?* The word (as this Author tell us) ſignifies not only to *repay* or *return by action*, but by word. To reply or retort a thing upon another, is a kind of repayment of it. This is a fair ſenſe, and a great truth. The Lords actions are unqueſtionable, both in ſmiting the Godly, and in ſparing the wicked; as hath been ſhewed upon divers overtures given in this Book. Yet

Et hoc diſpoſuit, quis replicabit ei? Bold.

Secondly, I rather conceive the wicked man to be the ſubject, and perſon intended in this verſe.

Who ſhall declare his way to his face? As if he had ſaid; *This wicked man is ſo ſturdy and ſullen, ſo big and boiſterous, that no man dares ſpeak to him, or declare that to his face which he is ready enough to do in the face of every man.* As if he had ſaid; *This man is not only not ſmitten with the ſword of God, but not with the word of man; he goes on without check or controul; as God doth not, ſo man dares not meddle with him, either by way of puniſhment or reproof. Who ſhall declare his way to his face?* The word (I grant) here uſed to *declare*, ſignifieth only a bare *declaration*, as to tell a ſtory, or make a narrative, and ſo, *to declare*, put alone, is no more then to ſpeak. But *to declare to the face*, implies both boldneſs and ſmartneſs in ſpeaking. So the Vulgar renders it, *Who ſhall rebuke his way to his face, or before him?* who ſhall reprove the ſinful way, the wicked courſe he liveth in. The conſtant and uſual practice of a man, whether good or evil, is commonly called *his way* in Scripture.

Quamvis verbum originale ſimplex ſit & lene, tamen ex eo quod ſequitur (in facie ejus) videtur vim accipere & ad ſceleratæ vitæ reprehenſionem pertinere. Pined.

Quis arguet coram eo? &c. Vulg.

Who ſhall declare his way to his face?] Poſſibly ſome will ſpeak afar off, or behind his back, but who will tell him his own plainly, and to his face? In which ſenſe the word is uſed (*Gal.*2.11.) *When Peter was come to Antioch, I* (ſaith *Paul*) *withſtood him to his face*; That is, I did not go to the Diſciples and brethren, and tell them that *Peter* had done amiſs, but I came to *Peter* himſelf, and dealt roundly with him. Many will ſpeak truth enough of the wicked at a diſtance, and tell ſtories of their wayes in corners, but 'tis not every mans work to declare their way to their face, or to ſhew it as a glaſs ſhews a man the ſpots of his face; which is the emphaſis of the word here uſed.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Many wicked men are not convinced of their wickedneſs, nor is it an eaſie matter to convince them.*

And as there is alwayes difficulty in it, ſo ſometimes there is danger in it; to do ſo is like taking a Bear by the tooth, or a Lyon by the beard. They act blindly, and therefore boldly; and he had need be bold who declares againſt their actings. Some ſin againſt light, many ſin for want of light. Some do evil againſt their knowledge, many are not perſwaded that they have done evil. Of ſuch the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Jer.*2.34, 35.) *Alſo in thy skirts is found the blood of the ſouls of the poor innocent; yet thou ſayeſt becauſe I am innocent, ſurely his anger ſhall turn from me*;

(they were polluted with blood, and yet clean in their own opinion) *Behold, I will plead with thee, becauſe thou ſayeſt I have not ſinned.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will declare thy ſin to thy face*, becauſe thou ſayeſt *thou haſt not ſinned*; Thou ſayeſt who can charge me, who can ſay black is my eye; *Behold, I will plead with thee, and ſhew thee how black thou art.* 'Tis hard to declare ſin to their faces, who ſay in their hearts *they have not ſinned.* The Prophet is commanded (*Iſa.*58.1.) *Lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, cry aloud, ſpare not, ſhew my people their tranſgreſſions, and the houſe of Jacob their ſins.* They ſee not their ſins, therefore ſhew them their ſin, they call their evil wayes good, and their tranſgreſſion obedience; ſuch muſt have a voice lifted up like a Trumpet to make them hear. All who are dead corporally, ſhall at laſt hear the voice of the Angels Trumpet; but they who are dead ſpiritually, will not hear that voice which ſounds like a Trumpet, unleſs the Spirit of God be in the voice of man.

Secondly, Note, *It is a duty to declare the wayes of wicked men to their faces.*

Though every man be not called to be a reprover, and though no man be called to be every mans reprover; yet every ſin calls for reproof, and ſome or other are called to reprove it; ſome ſhould ſpeak plain Engliſh, and home to ſinners, and rebuke them not only in a parable, or in the clouds, by remote intimations, but directly and to their faces. *Them that ſin* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.*5.20. that is, who ſin openly and ſcandalouſly) *rebuke before all*, rebuke them to the faces of others. And how ſecretly or privately ſoever any man ſins, he ſhould be rebuked to his own face, freely, and clearly. Some commit their abominations as the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſhewed in viſion (*Chap.* 8. *verſ.* 8,9.) behind a wall. *And he ſaid unto me, Son of man dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door, and he ſaid unto me, go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.* Though men ſin out of ſight, and uſe a kind of modeſty in committing their abominations, yet the wall muſt be digged, and the door muſt be opened, and they who poſſibly were aſhamed to do evil, unleſs behind the backs of others, muſt be told of it to their faces.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That there are not many to be found who dare declare the wayes of wicked men to their faces.*

When the Lord ſaid (*Iſa.*6.8.) *Whom ſhall I ſend; or who will go for us ?* That inquiry intimated that there were not many to be had fit for ſuch a ſervice as was there charged upon the Prophet (*verſ.*9,10.) So when *Job* ſaith here, *Who ſhall declare their way to their face?* It argues that there are not many fit, much leſs forward to do it. To reprove any for ſin is a hard ſervice, eſpecially ſuch as are rich and Great. The flattering Prophet *Amaziah* would not endure, that down right *Amos* ſhould propheſie at *Bethel*, (*Amos* 7.12,13.) *And Amaziah ſaid unto Amos, O thou Seer, go flee to the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and propheſie there, but propheſie not again any more at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chappel, and it is the Kings Court.* As if he had ſaid, go into the Villages and reprove the Countrey people as much as thou wilt, but take heed of medling with Princes. It is no wonder, that *Amaziah* could not bear *Amos* preaching reproofs at Court, but it is a great wonder that *Amos* had the holy boldneſs to do ſo. 'Tis rare to have the wayes of wicked Princes pleaded to their faces; Kings have clouds in their brows, as well as Crowns upon their heads, and are terrible to their reprovers; They command ſilence with a look, and would be adored as Gods, not reproved as men. The Prophet *Jeremiah* being ſent to reprove high and low to their faces, complaineth (*Chap.* 15. 10.) *Wo is me, my mother, that thou haſt born me a man of ſtriſe, and a man of contention to the whole earth.* Why was *Jeremy* a man of ſtrife and contention? What! becauſe of his proneneſs to contention, or becauſe he was of a quarrelſome ſpirit, and loved to fiſh in troubled waters? No, his contentiouſneſs was not from his diſpoſition, but from his Commiſſion; not from the temper of his ſpirit, but from his calling. He was a quiet and peaceable Prophet, but he was commiſſion'd to propheſie terrours and troubles; he was ſent forth to declare the way of that people to their faces, and he was faithful in doing it, he ſpared none; and therefore though he medled not *in buying, or ſelling, in giving upon uſury, or taking upon uſury,* though he had no worldly negotiations among them, nor mingled himſelf with thoſe affairs which uſually cauſe ſtrife and contention among men, yet *he was a man of contention.* The Egyptian Lawes made it a capital crime for any to call the Idol *Serapis* a man, or to number him among mortals, and therefore ('tis ſaid) they placed the Emblem of ſilence in all thoſe Temples where his image ſtood, and he was worſhipped; implying that all muſt be huſht, and not a word ſpoken in derogation of him. Thus wicked men would impoſe ſilence upon all (but ſuch as flatter them) leaſt their wayes ſhould be diſcovered. Their wayes and their tongues are their own, who is Lord over them; yet they would Lord it over all mens tongues, that none may dare to declare their wayes. And as few dare, ſo there are not many fit to declare their ways to their faces. To do ſo, requires; Firſt, a man of knowledg and underſtanding, and, which is more, Secondly, a man of prudence and diſcretion; and which is yet more, it requires, Thirdly, a man of uprightneſs and integrity; yea which is more rare, Fourthly, a man of ſelf-denial and contempt of the world. A conjunction of all theſe qualifications in one man is not to be found under every hedge, no nor in many well built houſes. Where ſhall we find a man of all theſe ingredients? A man of knowledg, prudence, integrity, ſelf-denial, and contempt of the world, is a kind of wonder in the world, and therefore who ſhall declare the wicked mans way to his face? When the Lord ſent forth his Prophets to declare the wayes of wicked men to their faces, how doth he prepare and arm them for the work, leſt they ſhould be diſcouraged and withdraw from it. The Prophet *Jeremy* is not only cheared up, but threatned to it (*Chap.* 1. 17.) *Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and ariſe, ſpeak to them all that I command thee, be not diſmayed at their faces, leſt I confound thee before them.* Leaſt danger ſhould deter him from ſpeaking to their faces, God ſets a greater danger before his face if he did not ſpeak. So again (*Ezek.* 2. 3, 4.) *And he ſaid unto me, Son of man, I ſend thee to the children of Iſrael, to a rebellious Nation, &c. For they are impudent children* (or hard of face) *and ſtiff-hearted: I do ſend thee unto them, and thou ſhalt ſay unto them, thus ſaith the Lord God: and they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, for they are a rebellious houſe, yet ſhall know that there hath been a Prophet among them.* *Ezekiel* being to do this Meſſage, the Lord cautions him, (*verſ.* 6.) *And thou ſon of Man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou doeſt dwell among Scorpions, be not afraid of their words, nor be diſmayed at their looks.* When they, their words, their looks were all dreadful, when in dealing with them the Prophet was to deal with briars, thorns, Scorpions, had he not need to be well backt and ſupported? When the Prophet *Michah* was to declare the wayes of wicked men to faces, ſee how he was empowered; *Truly* (ſaith he, *Chap.* 3. 8.) *I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his tranſgreſſion, and to Iſrael his ſin.* Who but an *Eliah* could have declared the ſin of *Ahab* to his face? and who but the Baptiſt, (who came in the power and ſpirit of *Elias*) could have declared the ſin of *Herod* to his face, not only to the peril, but loſs of his own head?

Conſtitutum eſt ut quiſquis illum hominẽ fuiſſe dixiſſet capitalẽ pẽderet pœnam & quoniam in omnibus templis ubi colebatur Iſis & Serapis erat etiam ſimulachrum, quod digito labiis impreſſo admonere videretur ut ſilentium fieret, hoc ſignificare Varro exiſtimabat ut homines eos fuiſſe faceretur. Auguſt. l. 18 de Civitat. dei. c. 5.

Fourthly, By way of Corollary, Obſerve, *That ſome wicked men are uſually flattered.*

They are flattered to their faces, and reproached behind their backs; and they who will not be reproved to their faces, ſhall be ſure to have ſtore of reproaches behind their backs.

Laſtly, Obſerve alſo by way of Corollary, *It is a part of the miſery of wicked men not to be reproved.*

As it is their ſin that they will not be reproved, ſo their miſery that they are not; they indeed look upon it as their priviledge that they are above reproof, that they can ſin and no man ſay, why do ye ſo? That though (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.*49.13.) *their way be their folly,* yet not only (as it follows there) *their poſterity,* but their contemporaries, or they who are preſent with them, *approve both their ſayings and their doings,* ſaying yea, to their yea, and nay to their nay, chiming in with all their opinions and actions. Thus they pleaſe themſelves in being alwayes pleaſed by others, which yet is at once their miſery and their curſe; for by this means they hear any thing rather then the truth of their own wayes and practices, and are deprived of the greateſt benefit of friendſhip and humane ſociety, faithful admonition. What ſhould a man deſire more of a friend then to be made better by him, or to be admoniſhed in what he doth amiſs. The Lord (*Hoſ.* 4.4.) threatens it as one of the ſoareſt judgments, *Let no man ſtrive*; He doth not mean it of corporal ſtrife, or of ſtriving with blowes and weapons, but of a ſtrife by convictions or arguments: ſo 'tis expounded in the next words; *Let no man ſtrive or reprove another.* To reprove another is to ſtrive with him for his good; And 'tis one of the ſaddeſt reproofs and greateſt evils that can fall upon man, when God ſaith, *Let no man reprove another.* When once God ſaith of a ſinner, *he ſhall not be reproved*, *'tis more then probable that he hath ſaid of his ſin, it ſhall not be pardoned.* The Lord parallels their ſins, of whom he ſaid, *Let no man reprove another*, with the greateſt ſin; *For thy people are as they who ſtrive with the Prieſt.* They who then ſtrove with the Prieſt, ſtrove with God himſelf, in whoſe name the Prieſts adminiſtred holy things. When any ſo ſtrive with men that they ſtrive with God alſo, no marvel if God forbid men to ſtrive with them any longer. To be reproved hath ſo much good in it, that to be reproved is better then to be loved. *Solomon* aſſures us (*Prov.* 27. 5,6.) That *open rebuke is better then ſecret love; faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kiſſes of an enemy are deceitful.* By the wounds of a friend, he means not ſword-wounds, but word-wounds, or thoſe blows which a friend gives by rebuking; *Faithful are theſe wounds of a friend*; That is, by theſe a friend gives teſtimony of his faithfulneſs. *But the kiſſes of an enemy*; That is, his flatteries and ſoothings are deceitful; that is, they teſtifie his deceitfulneſs. Many betray their friends with theſe metaphorical kiſſes, as *Judas* did Chriſt with a literal kiſs. Theſe are killing kiſſes, bloody kiſſes. *David* prayeth for ſmitings, in oppoſition to theſe kiſſings, (*Pſal.* 141. 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me*, how? with his hand or ſword? No, yet ſuch ſmiting is far more eligible then that kind of kiſſing, but let the righteous ſmite me with his word, with his tongue, as the next words explain his meaning) *Let him reprove me, and it ſhall be as an excellent oyl that ſhall not break my head.* This Law was given the *Jewes*, that they ſhould exerciſe their love in rebukes, (*Lev.* 19. 17.) *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* To hate a brother and not to rebuke him are equivalent expreſſions in that Law; and we may thence alſo infer, that as it is a ſin to hate our neighbour, and an affliction to be hated by our neighbour, ſo it is a ſin not to rebuke our neighbour, and an affliction (when there is cauſe) not to be rebuked by him. And he who wiſely declares a mans ſin to him, declares his love to him; and beſtowes as many kindneſſes upon him, as he doth deſerved reproofs. *Who ſhall declare his ſin to his face?*

Yet further, when *Job* ſaith, *Who ſhall declare*, &c. We may expound it not only of declaring by reproof, as one friend declares the ſin of another to him, or as the ſins of men are declared by the Miniſters of the Goſpel. But we may take it for a judiciary declaring, and that two wayes; Firſt, by way of evidence; Secondly, by way of ſentence. A witneſs declares the way of a wicked man to his face (for the witneſs and he that is witneſſed againſt, ought to come face to face) by giving evidence. A Judge declares the way of a wicked man to his face by giving ſentence. Thus 'tis as if *Job* had ſaid; Who dares either be a witneſs to accuſe, or a Judge to condemn this wicked man. Which ſence doth ariſe more fully from the laſt words of the Text,

And who ſhall repay him what he hath done?

That is, who ſhall puniſh him according, or up to the deſert of his deeds. This fo'lows clearly from what was ſaid before; if no man can be found to declare his way to him, or to tell him what he hath done, then ſurely none will be found to repay him what he hath done. And therefore no marvel if the wicked man paſs untoucht through the world; God oftentimes ſpares him in wrath, and men ſpare him oftener for fear. Men dare not puniſh, and God will not puniſh him here, therefore this man muſt needs eſcape unpuniſhed.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Puniſhment is payment, juſtice is the giving of every man his due.*

The Original word here tranſlated *repay*, notes the ordinary paying of a debt, and in its firſt ſignification to make peace. And the reaſon is, becauſe both when any man payeth his private debt, he procures his own peace by it; as alſo when Magiſtrates pay wicked men their due judicially, the publick hath peace by it; and that not only from the promiſe of God, but alſo from the very nature of the thing. When juſtice payeth every man his due, both reward and puniſhment, who can complain? or be adhered to, if he do? When Juſtice runs down (as it ought) *like a ſtream*, (that is, freely and indifferently to all) *Then peace ſhall be* (as 'tis promiſed) *like a river*; that is, comfortable, and continued unto all. When the juſtice of man is like the juſtice of God (which now awards to every man according to his deeds, and will at laſt render to every man according to what he hath done, whether it be good or whether it be evil) when (I ſay) the juſtice of man is thus (in proportion) like the juſtice of God) then the peace of man ſhall be (in his proportion) like the peace of God, a great and a laſting peace. It breeds as much trouble to States and Nations, when offenders are not paid according to what they have committed; as it doth to private perſons when their creditors are not paid according to what they have borrowed. Again, when *Job* ſaith, *Who ſhall repay him what he hath done?*

He implies this ſecond Obſervation,

That, *Some wicked men do even out-grow the reach of mans juſtice.*

They are ſo fortified with power, with riches and relations, that there's no coming at them; Where ſhall we have a witneſs to declare the truth againſt them according to his knowledge of the fact? Where ſhall we have a Judge that will declare the truth againſt them according to his knowledge of the Law? or having given ſentence, will ſee it executed? no man ever out-grew the juſtice of God, but many have out-grown the juſtice of man; not that the greateſt of men are at any time priviledged from the juſtice of man, but becauſe many times juſtice is over-born by great men. For as ſome men are ſo low, weak, and miſerable, that only God hath power enough to raiſe and heal them, they are ſo far gone (as we ſay) that the creature cannot cure or recover them, and therefore we uſe to ſay of ſuch, that *we leave them to the mercy and power of God, we can do no more, the Lord muſt help you, for we cannot*; Now as ſome men are ſo weak and low, that we muſt leave them to the help of God, ſo there are others ſo high and great, ſo ſtrong and powerful, that we muſt leave them to the juſtice of God. And (to be ſure) as the day of divine juſtice hath been, ſo it will be upon thoſe that are lifted up, as well as upon thoſe that are low, upon the ſtrong Oaks and tall Cedars, as well as upon the muſhrooms and the ſhrubs. God will repay every man what he hath done, though man neither doth nor can.

VERS. 32, 33, 34.

Yet ſhall he be brought to the grave, and ſhall remain in the tomb.

The clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet unto him, and every man ſhall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him.

How then comfort ye me in vain, ſeeing in your anſwers there remaineth falſhood?

IN the former verſe the wicked man was repreſented ſo ſtout and daring, that no man durſt check him, or ſhew him the ugly viſage of his wayes in the glaſs of truth. But (as our tranſlation ſeems to carry it) this verſe checks him to purpoſe; and whereas none durſt declare his way to his face, this declares his end to his face. Though (as *Nabals* ſervant ſaid of him, 1 *Sam.* 25. 17.) *he were ſuch a ſon of Belial, that a man could not ſpeak to him*, yet death ſpeaks with him.

Verſ. 32. **He ſhall be brought to the grave, and remain in the tomb.**

Let men be as ſtout as they will againſt God or man, yet to the grave they muſt. This may be a cooler to wicked men when they are in their greateſt heats, and a block in their way, when they are moſt forward to purſue *the way of their own hearts*, that is, *their luſts.* Do or ſay what they can, they muſt return to the duſt, their ſtiff-necks muſt ſtoop, and look into the grave, into the dark and ſilent grave. *Solomon* hath an excellent expreſſion of this (*Eccl.* 8.8.) *There is no man hath power over the ſpirit to retain the ſpirit*; that is, as the word *Spirit* is often uſed (*Gen.* 6. 19. *Job* 7. 7. *Iſa.* 42. 5.) no man hath power over his breath or life to retain it. The ſtrength, authority, wiſdom, and induſtry of man, cannot hold his life when once death, by commiſſion from God, calls for it: *And* (as it follows in the ſame verſe) *there is no diſcharge in that war.* The Original word tranſlated *diſcharge*, ſignifies, *miſſion* or *ſending forth.* When death aſſaults and makes war upon us, 'tis in vain either to ſend out forces to make reſiſtance againſt it; or to ſend out Ambaſſadours to make peace with it. Some have made a covenant with death (*Iſa.* 28. 15.) but none could ever make peace with it; as no force, ſo no treaty nor entreaty can ſtay it, when 'tis reſolved to come. And as there is no miſſion, ſo (according to our reading) there is no diſcharge or diſmiſſion in that war. No man can have leave to depart the field and go home, when he is ſummon'd to depart the world, and go to his long home. And therefore the ſame *Solomon* while he ſeems to give the young man liberty, bidding him take his full ſwing, (*Eccl.* 11. 4.) *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the ſight of thy eyes*, yet gives him a check at parting, *But know thou that for all theſe things God will bring thee unto judgment.* In this Text *death* is the ſtop, and in that *judgment.* Though a man wallow in pleaſure, and live in ſin all his dayes, yet God will bring him firſt to death, and after that to judgment; *Yet he ſhall be brought to the grave, &c.*

Occupatio objectionis. Jun.

Secondly, Theſe words are conceived as the prevention of an objection againſt the whole matter before ſpoken. For *Job* having aſſerted the outward proſperity of wicked men, in oppoſition to his friends; ſome might ſay, what do you ſpeak ſo much of, and cry up their proſperity, they die, they are brought to the grave, they rot and conſume there as well as other men. To this *Job* is ſuppoſed anſwering three things.

Firſt, That he had done enough, as to the eſtabliſhment of his own tenet, when he proved that many wicked men live a peaceable and flouriſhing life; he never undertook to prove that they were exempted from death, or priviledged from the grave.

Secondly, Let it be, that they die, that's no argument againſt their proſperity; for their very death is a kind of proſperity; *verſe* the thirty third, *The clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him.*

Thirdly, That there is no reaſon why this ſhould be objected to ſtain the preſent proſperity of the wicked man; for as much as this is the lot of every man; in the latter part of the thirty third verſe; *Every man ſhall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him.*

Perſtat adhuc Job *in ſuo illo propoſito confirmando ſc. ſæpe impios vivere fælices nec non ſupremum etiã funeris honorem conferri illis ampliſſimè.* Pined.

Thirdly, For the underſtanding of theſe words, *Yet he ſhall be brought to the grave*, I conceive that *Job* here continues his own diſcourſe, and confirms that opinion which he had before laid down, concerning the proſperity of wicked men, rather then anſwers objections againſt it. As if he had ſaid, *Such live happily, yea and they die happily too, or they have a kind of happineſs in their death, as much happineſs as the natural man is capable of in death.* So that, whereas ye my friends have affirmed, that if God do at any time ſpare a wicked man while he lives, or ſuffers him to live comfortably, yet God will ſurely brand him with ſome remarkable judgment at his death. I affirm, That many wicked men live in plenty, die in peace, and are brought to their graves with honour.

Yet, or as ſome render, *yea, he ſhall be brought to the grave*; As if he had ſaid, beſides all that I have ſpoken of the outward felicity of the wicked man, I add this further, *He ſhall be brought to the grave.* But what is there of ſingularity or priviledge in this? a man that lives in miſery and dies a beggar is yet uſually brought to a grave when he is dead: And he that hath been a meer attendant or a ſlave all his dayes, ſhall yet have ſome to attend his body to the burial. I anſwer, The Hebrew word ſignifies not only the common action of bringing to the grave; in which ſenſe 'tis uſed (*Job* 10. 9.) *Remember I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into duſt again?* That is, ſhall I die preſently and return to the duſt out of which man was moulded at the firſt. But beſides this ordinary ſenſe of the word, there is a higher, which denotes a ſtudied preparation, or a kind of pompous celebrity in bringing man to his grave. And the ſtate and pomp of men while they live, is uſually ſuited with a funeral pomp when they die. In ſtrictneſs the word implies a bringing to the grave with ſound of Trumpets, which inſtruments render a doleful tone as well as a pleaſant, and can make ſorrowful as well as joyful muſick. Trumpets were ſo much uſed in the year of Jubilie, that the Jubilie is ſo called from a Trumpet. Death is to ſome in every reſpect a day of Jubilie, they attain freedom from all evils; and it is a day of Jubilie to all in ſome reſpects, every man receives freedom by death from many evils.

יבל *Denotat pompã quãdam & apparatum deducendi cũ cantu & muſicis inſtrumentis, hinc Jobel Buccina cujus in Jobeleo uſus erat.*

Hinc tuba candelæ tãdemq; beatulus alto cõpoſitus lecto craſſiſq; lutatus amomis. In portã rigidos calces extendit. Perſ.

Thus the wicked man *is brought to the grave*; that is, he hath an honourable and a ſolemn burial; His dead carkaſs is not thrown into a ditch, he hath not (as *Jehoiakim* was threatned, *Jer.* 22. 19.) the burial of an Aſs, to be drawn and caſt forth beyond the gates of the City, (as the burial of an Aſs is there deſcribed by the Prophet) but he hath even a whole City to accompany and carry forth his corps to the place of burial. He hath mourners at his funeral, and he hath his funeral muſick, to heighten the affection of ſorrow. Such uſages are reported by Heathen Poets at the more pompous interments of their dead. And we find the footſteps of that cuſtom in the Goſpel, (*Matth.* 9. 23.) Chriſt being ſent for to cure the daughter of the Ruler of the Synagogue, when he came into the houſe, *He ſaw the Minſtrils and the people making a noiſe.* They knowing that ſhe was dead, and ſuppoſing her paſt recovery, were addreſſing themſelves for her burial; or as *Job's* Text ſpeaks, to bring her to the grave.

Further, The firſt particle of the verſe is that common conjunction copulative *and*, we render it (as elſewhere often) *yet*, which carrieth in it a ſound of admiration. Thus *Amos* 4. 6. *I alſo have given you cleanneſs of teeth in all your Cities, and want of bread in all your places, yet have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord*; As if he had ſaid, What a wonderful thing is it that ye being thus afflicted ſhould not return. Thus here, Though it may ſeem ſtrange to you, *Yet he ſhall be brought to the grave; though the man were ſo wicked that no man would adventure to tell him of his wickedneſs, yet he ſhall be brought to the grave*; and when he ſaith, *He ſhall be brought to the grave*, it may have a twofold oppoſition.

Firſt, To another kind of death, even a violent death. As if he had ſaid, *This man living ſo lewdly, deſerved indeed to be brought either to the block, and have his head cut off, or to the Gibbet, and be hanged up before all the people; yet though he was ſo vile as to deſerve a violent death from the ſtroke of juſtice, he ſhall die a natural death, and be brought to the grave with honour.* It was anciently ſaid, *That few Tyrants died a dry death*, they were uſually drencht in their own blood when they died, either by ſome ſudden aſſaſſination, or by ſome judiciary ſentence. Yet ſome Tyrants who have thruſt others violently and unjuſtly out of the world, go out themſelves naturally, and are brought to the grave pompouſly. For

Secondly, *To be brought to the grave*, according to the true ſence of the word, and the interpretation given, ſtands in oppoſition to an obſcure and vulgar way of burial. He lived in ſtate, and he ſhall be brought in ſtate to the grave.

> Hence Obſerve, *Men inglorious by their wicked lives, may have glorious funerals when they die.*

And it hath been no ſmall part of ſome ſuch mens care to leave order for a funeral. They who never had a truly ſerious thought how to diſpoſe of their ſouls when they were to die, yet have taken care very ſeriouſly how to have their bodies diſpoſed of, and have ſet down in what place, in what tomb, and at what rate they would be buried. Some order a Sermon at their burials, who never regarded Sermons in their lives, though (like enough) they heard many. Their friends ſhall eat the ſweet, and drink wine in bowls at the bringing of their bodies to the grave, while their ſeparated ſouls, ſeparated for ever from God, as well as from their bodies for a ſeaſon, are feeding upon gall and wormwood, and drinking the wine of Gods fierce indignation, poured out without mixture. Such pomp (if that be poſſible) makes mirth in hell, and ſets the Devil a laughing. Such funerals have a number of viſible mourners, and they have innumerable inviſible rejoycers: The God of this world, and the powers of darkneſs, deride thoſe ſolemnities, which give ſo much honour to a body, whoſe ſoul is not only departed, but condemned to eternal anguiſh and infamy. A Heathen could ſay, *The loſs of a funeral, or of a Sepulcher, is an eaſie loſs*; but Chriſtians know, that *the loſs of a ſoul, the loſs of heaven, the loſs of glory*, are not only ſad but unvaluable; and not only unvaluable, but irreparable loſſes. A Believer careth not much, where his body finds a grave, ſo his ſoul find Chriſt. What Glory ſoever the bodies of wicked men have when they are buried, only the bodies of the Saints ſhall have glory, when they are raiſed again. *He ſhall be brought to the grave,*

Facilis jactura ſepulchri.

And ſhall remain in the tomb.] Theſe words are a continuation of what was ſaid laſt. There is ſome variety in the reading of them. The Hebrew is, *He ſhall watch in the Heap*; ſo we put in the margin of our Bibles; *He ſhall be brought to the grave, and watch in the heap.* The Original word ſignifies *both to watch, and to remain*; becauſe a watchman keepeth his place, and ſtayeth by it; he is not as we ſay, up and down, here and there, but fixed where he is appointed. And the word ſignifies not only a bare watching, (as when a man keeps his eyes open, and doth not ſleep) a watching meerly oppoſed to ſleeping; but it notes watching with an intentive ſpirit as well as with an open eye. The word is uſed fully to that ſence, (*Prov.*8.34.) *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me* (ſaith wiſdom) *watching daily at my gates.* What do we, when we watch at wiſdoms gates, if we do as we ought? is it only the placing of our bodies there, and the keeping of our eyes open there? 'Tis much more then both theſe. *Watching at wiſdom's gate* is the work of our ſpirits, 'tis the ſetting of the heart to receive what wiſdom utters; This is watching indeed. But you will ſay, This ſence ſeems very incongruous to and remote from a dead mans caſe; how can he watch at all whoſe eyes are cloſed in darkneſs? I conceive, The dead mans *watching in the heap or tomb* (which tranſlation divers learned Interpreters adhere to) may have a double reference; either, firſt, to the cuſtome of preſerving the bodies of great men from putrefaction. To which end their bodies were ſo ſpiced and imbalmed, that they were kept, as it were, alive, and being ſet in vaults, they looked as if they were keeping continual watch.

Super acervo vigilabit. Mont. i.e. *acſi vigil vivuſq; exiſteret.*

שקד *Significat non ſolum vigilare ſed intentũ eſſe & aſſiduum in opere aliquo.* Merc.

Forte alludit ad conditūram medicatam cadaveris, cujus beneficio ſervatur à putrefactione per multa ſæcula atq; vigilare, duraſſe & vivere videtur. Pined.

Secondly, I may refer, if not to the embalmed bodies of the dead, yet to their repreſentations or ſtatues, which (as we ſee) in our dayes are placed upon their tombs or ſet upright in preſſes. Theſe Statues were made as neer as art could reach to the life, and ſo might be ſaid to watch there as if they lived; yea, upon the ſame account they might be ſaid not only to watch, but to pray there; for ſuch Statues are uſually (among us) ſet up in praying poſtures, kneeling, and lifting up both hands and eyes (ſuch as they are) to heaven; you ſhall ſee the figure of a man, who hath (poſſibly) been a neglecter of prayer all his dayes, yet fixed to his tomb not only in a watching, but in a praying poſture; Many being dead ſeem to pray alwayes, who only ſeemed to pray when they were alive; They made dead prayers, or they prayed without watching while they lived, and being dead, they would be looked upon both watching and praying. To either of theſe cuſtoms the Text may allude fairly; and ſo carry on *Job's* diſcourſe concerning the wicked mans proſperity in death.

Again, Some read (not, he ſhall watch, but) *he ſhall be watched, or others ſhall watch him in the heap.* They ſhall watch there, either as conſtant mourners for his death, or they ſhall watch there as protector of his duſt; leſt any offer violence to his grave, or diſturb his bones. Both theſe may ſuite with the ſcope of the Text as ſignifications of honour and reſpect to the deceaſed. *He ſhall be watched in the*

Tomb or heap.] That Original word is uſed but four times in the whole Scripture, and in this place only it is tranſlated *a tomb*; properly it ſignifies a heap of corn. (*Job* 5.26.) *He ſhall be brought like a ſhock of corn in full age.* A ſhock of corn, is a heap of corn, that is, many ſheaves laid or built up together by the art of the huſbandman. And hence ſome interpret this Text as if the wicked man ſhould be buried abroad in the fields among the heaps of corn; but there is no neceſſity to carry it ſo ſtrictly. A tomb or grave, any where made, is an heap or aggregation of earth, as a ſhock of corn is an heap or aggregation of ſheaves. And the tomb is ſo called in a double conſideration.

גדיש *Significat propriè acervum frugum qui in area in modum pyramidis in ſublime attollitur.* Merc.

Firſt, Becauſe the dead bodies of men are brought and heaped together in the tomb. That periphraſis of death ſo often uſed in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, *He or they were gathered to their fathers*, is by ſome expounded in compliance with the point in hand, as noting the gathering of the bodies of the dead into one common heap. And though I rather conceive it intending the gathering of their ſpirits unto the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; yet the Text ſpeaks in the caſe of *Joſiah* (2 *Chron.* 34.28.) concerning his being gathered to the grave, as well as to his Fathers; which neceſſarily infers the gathering of his body to theirs, and of his duſt to theirs, all making but one heap of duſt. The grave or tomb are as a floor wherein corn is heaped up until the great threſhing and winnowing day cometh, when the bodies of men ſhall be raiſed and purged from the chaff of their natural condition; for then, *this corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and this mortal muſt put on immortality* (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.)

Secondly, As the tomb is called a heap, becauſe the bodies of men are heaped there together; ſo becauſe a tomb or a grave, though but one body be laid there, ſwells up like a heap. The body being put into the earth, riſeth by ſo much as the ſpace is which the body filleth. And hence Criticks tell us, that the Latine word for any tomb or grave, notes the ſwelling of the earth. But eſpecially the ſtately tombs of Princes and Great men, ſwell high, and are raiſed upon Arches and Pillars. Nor have men left in any thing plainer marks of the ſwelling of their minds with pride and vain-glory, then in appointing ſuch towring and ſwelling Monuments of their frailty. Yea ſome ſeem to have had an ambition to immortalize the memory of themſelves and of their greatneſs by theſe memorials of their mortality. They for whom ſuch vaſt and ſtupendious heaps have been raiſed, may well be ſaid in anſwer to this tranſlation of *Job's* Text, *To watch in the heap.*

Significantèr latinè tumulũ vertas à tumendo.

Laſtly, We (as others alſo) render plainly, *He ſhall remain in the tomb*; His dead body being brought to the grave, remains in the tomb, and moves no more, till God calleth it forth, and by his Almighty power reſtoreth it to life again. *The Grave is a priſon, and death is a ſure keeper. Death will hold its own, till the Lord of life gives command to let go.* Living men are of ſo little permanency, that they can ſcarce be ſaid to remain any where. Only the dead know nothing of removing.

In tumulo manebit fugitèr. Pagn.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *He ſhall remain in the tomb*, he ſpeaks this (in purſuance of what he had ſaid before) as a priviledge which a wicked man may have; he ſhall not only be brought to the grave with honour, but ſhall remain there in ſafety.

Hence Note, *It is a favour (yet ſuch a favour as wicked men are often partakers of) when our bones reſt and remain quietly in the grave.*

Many have been brought to their graves with much ſolemnity, who have not remained there. The *Aſſyrian* is threatned (*Iſa.*14.18,19.) that he ſhall not have the honour of burial in the Graves of his Predeceſſors, or in the Grave which he had appointed for himſelf, *All the Kings of the Nations, even all of them lie in Glory, every one in his own houſe*; that is, in his own grave, (the grave is called the houſe of all living) or in the grave which each one prepared for himſelf near his own houſe. Thus all the Kings of the Nations lie in their ſtately tombs, *but thou art caſt out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of thoſe that are ſlain thruſt thorough with the ſword, that go down to the ſtones of the pit, as a carkaſs trodden under feet, thou ſhalt not be joyned with them in burial*; that is, thou ſhalt not have the honour of ſuch a burial as they. *Thou art caſt out*, (that is, kept out) *of thy grave*. Now if it be a ſore judgment, upon a wicked man eſpecially, all whoſe portion conſiſts in outward reſpects and priviledges, not to be admitted to a grave, but as the Pſalmiſt bewails the ſad affliction of the Saints and ſervants of God, (*Pſal.* 79. 2.) to have their dead bodies given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven, and their fleſh to the beaſts of the earth; Then how great an evil is it to have the dead body torn and pulled out of the grave, and thoſe bones diſquieted which were at reſt. Yet the Lord threatens *Jeruſalem* with an enemy, who provoked either with covetouſneſs, or with malice, ſhall rifle their very graves. The wrath of God doth not only purſue ſinners while they live, but in death, it purſueth them to the grave, and in the grave. (*Jer.* 8. 1.) *At that time, ſaith the Lord, they* (that is, the cruel enemy) *ſhall bring out the bones of the Kings of Judah, and the bones of the Princes* (in whoſe Sepulchers, they might hope to find rich ornaments, Jewels, and treaſure.) *And the bones of the Prieſts, and the bones of the Prophets* (that is, of the corrupt Prieſts and Prophets eſpecially, who had flattered the Princes, and perverted the people, this doom is paſſed upon them alſo who had been either perverted by the falſe Prophets, or had oppoſed the faithful Prophets) *and the bones of the inhabitants of Jeruſalem out of their graves, and they ſhall ſpread them before the Sun, the Moon, and all the hoaſt of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have ſerved, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have ſought, and whom they have worſhipped.* How exact is the Juſtice of God, and how terrible? Their bones muſt be ſpread before thoſe creatures of Gods making, whom they (by ſpreading their hands before them, and worſhipping them) had made their Gods: and as they were threatned to have their bones unburied, ſo that they ſhould not be reburied; for thus it follows, *They ſhall not be gathered, nor buried, they ſhall be as dung upon the face of the earth*; that is, they ſhould lie above-ground, as Monuments of their wickedneſs and of divine vengeance, till they be utterly conſumed, and mouldred into duſt. That God will raiſe our bodies out of the grave is a matter of faith, and of great conſolation to the Godly; but to have the body pulled out of the grave by men, is matter of fear and terrour to the wicked. Yet many of the wicked eſcape this Judgment, they are fairly brought to their graves, and abide unmoleſted there. *Job* is here expounded, as deſcribing this piece of proſperity incident to a wicked man, while he ſaith, *He ſhall remain in the Tomb*, which interpretation ſeems to have the free conſent of the next verſe, as continuing a deſcription of the ſame thing.

Verſ. 33. **The clods of the Valley ſhall be ſweet unto him.**

רגבים *Glubæ lapides, glarea.*

The word which we render *clods*, undergoes variety of tranſlations; ſome ſay, *the ſtones of the brook or valley*; ſome, *the gravel*; others, *the duſt or ſand of the vallies*. But as here, ſo again in the thirty eighth Chapter of this book, and the thirty eighth verſe, we tranſlate it *clods*. *When the duſt groweth into hardneſs, and the clods cleave faſt together.*

The clods of the valley are ſweet unto him.] As this word, ſo likewiſe the whole clauſe is diverſly rendred. The Vulgar alluding to an old Poetical fable, gives it thus; *He ſhall be ſweet to the ſand of Cocytus*, which was phancied by Heathens for one of the rivers of hell, or an infernal lake, ſo called from the lamentations there made; as if *Job* here intended a deſcription of the wicked mans puniſhment in hell. A late learned Expoſitor upon this Book juſtly perſtringeth that tranſlation as affecting the accommodation of the holy Scripture to ſuch a fiction, in deſcribing the region of death, or the ſtate of wicked men when they are dead. Yet 'tis (in it ſelf) a truth, that the wicked are a ſweet morſel to helliſh tormenters; And they who in their life time have ſwallowed down ſo many ſins, not only gnats but camels, being dead, are in a moment ſwallowed up in hell. We may ſay of ſuch men (as the Prophet doth of the *Aſſyrian* Prince, (*Iſa.* 14. 9.) *Hell from beneath is moved for them to meet them at their coming.* The more wicked a man is, the more is hell delighted to receive him; as the more holy a man is, the more is heaven delighted to embrace him. When he who was a hell upon earth, drops to hell, he is pleaſant fewel to thoſe devouring flames.

Dulcis fuit glaruus Cocyti. Vul. *Tanti ſc. erat lectionē poetarum oſtentare ut eorum mendacio, in verſione Authentica regio mortis deſcriberetur.* Coc.

Secondly, This verſe is better expounded as a continued diſcourſe of the happineſs of the wicked man in regard of his natural ſtate in death. He ſhall not only continue in the tomb, but have (as it were) a contentful being there. Earth is (as to matter) the common parent of us all; from the earth we came, and thither we return; and when the wicked man returns, the earth will not hurt him. The grave will not entertain him with a frown, but he ſhall be as wellcome and as kindly uſed there by the clods of the valley as any other man. The bodily being of the righteous and of the wicked in the bowels of the earth knows no difference. And as no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him (as to his body) on earth, ſo not as to the ſtate of the body while it remaineth under the earth. The ſuperſtitious Heathen (which may ſomewhat anſwer the phraſe of this Scripture, though far from the ſcope of it) were wont to pray for a dying friend in this form; *Let the earth be favourable and eaſie to thee, let it not preſs thee hard.* They had a conceit that if the earth laid too great a load upon the dead, they could not get up to the higher regions, therefore they prayed, that the clods of the valley, or the earth where their friends were buried, might be ſweet and favourable to them. *Tertullian* mentions this Heatheniſh cuſtome, and *Pliny* a Philoſopher of their own laughs at them for it; *Becauſe they prayed for the favour and good will of that to them, which could not be angry with them, nor do them any hurt.* Such were the vain imaginations and fears of the dark-minded Heathens, dreading the unkindneſs or cruelty of the earth to dead bodies, but little dreading the miſery of their blinded ſouls. How vain is it to fear, that either a ſenſleſs body ſhould be pained, or that things without ſenſe ſhould be offended and put it to pain. The clods of the valley are alike ſweet to all.

Mollitèr ſuavitèr tractatur à terra, quam fœlicitatem priſci precabuntur ſuis defunctis his verbis, Sit tibi terra levis. *Terrã gravẽ imprecaris,* &c. Tertul. de Teſtim. Anima. c. 4. *Tanquam neſciamus hanc eſſe ſolam, quæ nunquam iraſcatur homini.* Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. 11. cap. 63. de terra.

Thirdly, Some give the ſenſe of theſe words, as deſcribing the ſad concluſion of the wicked man, who though he ſpend moſt of his dayes in pleaſure, yet a little before his death, he ſhall meet with ſuch ſorrows, that *the clods of the valley will be ſweet unto him*; that is, he will even deſire death, as the only means (which he knows of) to give him a releaſe from them. 'Tis truth, that though death be bitter to a carnal man who is at eaſe in his poſſeſſion, yet death is eaſie and ſweet to any man that is in bitterneſs; and 'tis poſſible for a man to taſt ſo much bitterneſs while he treads upon the clods of the earth, that the clods under the earth may be reckoned ſweet to him.

Oſſa quieta precor, tuta requiſcete in urna. Et ſit humus cineri non oneroſa tuo. Ovid. 3. Amor. Eleg. 8.

Laſtly, This is plain, that *Job* ſpeaks here in figures, and wrappeth up a *proſopopeia* and an *hyperbole* together, while he aſcribes ſenſe and the affections of a living man to a dead body. The ſumme of all may be this, *The clods ſhall be ſweet to him*; that is, he ſhall have the utmoſt conveniency and happineſs, that any man (as to his bodily capacity) can have in death. He ſhall feel no more trouble nor pain there, he ſhall be free from care and fear, when once he is gotten thither. *The clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him.*

Hyperbolæ per proſopopeiam ſenſum & humanas actiones mortuis tribuentes. Jun. *Sepulchro ſuavitèr habet nec quæ hic aguntur curat.* Merc.

Hence Note, *The bodies of wicked men are as free from pain or evil in the grave, as the bodies of the Saints.*

Death is the concluſion of and gives ſtop to all the worldly ſufferings of all men. (*Revel.* 14. 14.) *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, for from henceforth they reſt from their labours.* And whether men die in the Lord, or out of the Lord, they reſt from their outward labours. This bodily reſt, or reſt from bodily labour and trouble is a favour to Saints, and 'tis much more then any wicked man hath right to, that his body ſhould reſt from trouble and labour all that time which runs out between death and judgment. We may call that reſt, the negative happineſs of wicked men. And as it is, in ſome ſence, a favour that they live ſo many years on earth, their ſouls being kept all that while out of hell; ſo that they lie and continue for ſo long a time after death in the earth, or (as *Job* ſpeakes) among the clods of the vallies, their bodies being kept all that while out of hell; For as the perfection of the glory and bleſſedneſs of Saints will be after the re-union and marriage of ſoul and body; ſo the perfection of the miſery and torment of the wicked will be at the like re-union. Therefore it may well be ſaid of a wicked man, not only in reference to the pains of this life, which he is quite freed from, but alſo in reference to the pains of the next life, from which for a while the grave detains him, that, *The clods of the valley are ſweet to him.*

And every man ſhall draw after him.

Mr. *Broughton* reads, *He draweth all earthly after him*; as if the dead man were active in pulling the living after him into the grave; we render it as if living men were active in haſtning after the dead unto their graves; *Every man ſhall draw after him.* Some taking the former tranſlation, underſtand it of *a moral drawing*; his wickedneſs attracts many to the imitation of him. Multitudes follow his ill example. But though it be true that ill examples (as ſome diſeaſes) are very catching, or, like a Load-ſtone, very drawing and leading, yet I conceive that is not the intendment here. The Latine Tranſlator expreſſeth it ſo, but expounds it, in purſuance of the pomp of his burial, *He ſhall draw all men after him*; That is, when he dieth his funeral will draw the whole City and Country together to attend, or gaze upon it: ſome will come out of reſpect to honour him, and many in curioſity to pleaſe themſelves in beholding the magnificence and ſtatelineſs of his interment. But I paſs this alſo, as much below the Text.

Poſt ſe omnē hominē trahit. Vulg.

And conclude, that theſe words, *All men ſhall draw after him*; do only remove an objection, which ſome man might make againſt *Job's* poſition, about the proſperity of wicked men. What tell ye me (might ſuch a man ſay) of a pompous funeral, which the wicked man ſhall have when he dieth, and that the clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him; When the man is dead, what's all this to him? *Job* anſwers, What though the wicked man die? there is nothing of weight in that objection againſt the proſperity of the wicked; For death is common to all, both good and bad. Death is not peculiar to wicked men, for righteous men die too; *All men ſhall draw after him*, ſo that there is no difference in this between the godly and the ungodly, the holy, and prophane; for all die, or as the Scripture of the New Teſtament affirms, *It is appointed unto all men once to die.*

Si dicas illi eſſe pœnam quod moriatur; reſpondeo omnibus hoc accidere, Vatab.

That all men ſhall die, is a common theme; I ſhall only touch a little upon this way of phraſing or expreſſing it. *All men ſhall draw after him.* Every man is daily drawing to the grave; dying is (as it were) a continued act. What *Paul* ſpake in a ſenſe proper to his own caſe, we may take in a common ſence, *I die daily*; and 'tis appliable to all men, *they die daily*; while one man dieth, *all men draw after him.* When a man is very ſick and dying, or ſick to death, when he ſtands (as it were) upon the borders of death, or (though I know that Scripture-ſpeech hath another meaning then here I uſe it for) *between the living and the dead*, as if it were hard to determine to which of them he doth belong, when his breath ſits upon his lips ready to take its flight and be gone, then we ſay, *the man is drawing on*; but we may ſay it alſo of thoſe who are not only alive, but lively; not only ſtrong, but *in their full ſtrength* (as *Job* ſpake before) *their breaſts full of milk, and their bones moiſtned with marrow*, we may ſay it of thoſe that are walking, riding, running, travelling in the hotteſt purſuit of their buſineſſes, or pleaſures, *they are drawing on.* Every living man is drawing on to death, and all men alive ſhall draw after him that is already dead. Nor ſhould it ſeem ſtrange, that all men who are, ſhould be drawing after in that way, which all men that ever were (the excepted perſons are not conſiderable for number) have gone before, which *Job* gives us more fully in the next words.

As there are innumerable before him.

The Text word for word is thus rendred; *Before his face no number*; that is, as all men are following, or drawing after him that dieth, ſo thoſe are innumerable that are already dead. This manner of ſpeaking (*no number*) in the Hebrew, is ſometimes the denial of any number, ſometimes of all number or numerability. To ſay of ſuch a thing, *There is no number of it*, is either to ſay there is no ſuch thing, or but one of it, *which indeed makes no number*, or at moſt but very few, which in common account are no number. Some applying theſe words to the burial of the poor, give the meaning thus; rich men draw many after them, or have great numbers attending them to their graves, but the poor man hath no number, or but a very ſmall number of followers to his grave. But I conceive, the plain ſcope of *Job* puts this expoſition of *no number* quite out of the number of thoſe expoſitions which are ſuitable to this place. And that therefore *no number* doth not ſignifie thoſe who are ſo few, that they ſcarce make a number; but thoſe who are ſo many that they can hardly be numbred. His buſineſs being to ſhew the innumerableneſs of thoſe, whether rich or poor, who are already dead, not the fewneſs of thoſe who follow the poor to the grave when they are dead. S. *John* (*Rev.* 3.9.) having ſpoken Arithmetically of the ſealed ones of the twelve Tribes, aſcribing to each of them twelve thouſand, (which though it ſheweth that the number of the elect *Jewes* is certain, yet it doth not infer, that the number there ſpecified is the certain number, but S. *John* having heard this number) ſhuts up with, *After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude which no man could number, &c.* So here (when *Job* ſaith) *Before him no number*; his meaning is, A great multitude are gone before him, which no man can number. Or as we render it clearly; *There are innumerable gone before him.*

Et ante ipſum nec numerus. Heb.

Ut, non numerus *negaret numerū, nō numerabilitatem, intelligens hanc partem verſus, de ſepultura pauperum.* Bold.

Hence take two Deductions, Firſt, *That the dead are more then the living.*

This hath been a truth ever ſince the firſt Ages of the world. When the world was young, or in its non-age, the living were more then the dead; but the dead of many ages muſt needs be more then the living in any one. Hence the dead are called, *The more*, and *to go to the more, or to thoſe who are moſt in number*, ſounds (among the learned) *as much as to die.* As among thoſe who yet enjoy a natural life, there are more ſpiritually dead, then ſpiritually living; ſo they who are naturally dead, are more then they who live the life of nature. Every one that dieth encreaſeth the number of the dead, yet there are innumerable before him.

Ut Arena numero caret, ſic defuncti, Quocirca plures *vocantur: unde* ad plures migrare, *nam plures ſunt quam viventes,* Druſ.

Secondly, *'Tis no new thing to die.*

Moſt are as unwilling to die, and as unwonted to death, as if none had gone before them, as if they were to break the Ice for all mankind. Where we ſee one going before, we uſually take courage to follow after. There have innumerable gone before to the grave, yet few take courage in following after. And I confeſs, it is but a poor encouragement to die, becauſe other men like us have died before us. That which makes a man die with true courage, and ſtep with holy boldneſs into the grave, is believingly to remember that Jeſus Chriſt died and lay in the grave not only before us, but for us; that he hath conquered and worſted that King of terrours upon his own ground, the grave; 'Tis enough not only to make us chearful, but alive in death, to know ſavingly that *This One* is gone before us. 'Tis at moſt but a moral argument to perſwade men to be chearful in dying, becauſe men innumerable are gone before them; but Chriſt's going thither before us is a ſpiritual and prevailing argument. They who lived before Chriſt died in the fleſh, might comfort themſelves againſt the fear of death, by believing the holy Prophecy that he ſhould die for them, much more may we by believing the holy Hiſtory of his death. That he hath gone before us in dying and died for us who is alive and liveth for us, is ten thouſand times more conſolation to us when we are going out of this world, then that innumerable (ſuch as our ſelves) are gone before us, or though any one of us ſhould have the priviledge to abide in the fleſh, till all were gone before him.

Job having thus far ſifted, weighed, and replied to the anſwers of his friends, gives his judgement upon them as unfit to adminiſter any ſolid comfort to him; and therefore concludes roundly with them in the laſt verſe of this Chapter.

Verſe 34. How then comfort ye me in vain, ſeeing in your anſwers there remaineth falſhood?

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *And what do ye comfort me with vanity?* We ſay, *In vain,* or with vain words. A thing is done in vain three wayes.

Firſt, It is ſomewhat in vain when the end for which it is done is but imperfectly attained.

Secondly, It is much in vain when the end is not at all attained.

Thirdly, It is then done moſt in vain when the iſſue is quite contrary to the end for which it was done.

Job's Friends *comforted him in vain* all theſe wayes; for they did not only not attain their end perfectly, but not at all; yea, in ſtead of comforting they troubled him; ſo that as *Balac* ſaid to *Balaam* (Numb. 23. 11.) *What haſt thou done unto me? I took thee to curſe mine enemies, and behold, thou haſt bleſſed them altogether.* Thus *Job* ſeemeth to ſay to his Friends, What have ye done unto me? Ye came to comfort me, and ye have grieved me altogether, as hath been ſhewed from other paſſages of this Book, eſpecially from thoſe, where he titles his Friends not only *Phyſicians of no value,* but *Miſerable Comforters.* And he gives a further and a full account, whence it came to paſs that he got no comfort by all the diſcourſe which they had with him, in the laſt clauſe of this Verſe and cloſe of his ſpeech.

Seeing in your anſwers there remaineth falſhood.

Maſter *Broughton* renders thus; *Great offence remaineth in your diſputation.* The word rendred *Anſwers,* ſignifieth a debate between two or more, when Arguments being given are returned, which we commonly call anſwering.

In your anſwers there remaineth falſhood.

מעל *Eſt prævaricatio, tranſgreſſio cum contemptu, repugnando illi cui quis debet ſe ſubmittere, tanquam inferior.*

מעל *Notat violationem officii diſſimulatam, ſub jactatione officii à* מעיל *tunica.* Coc.

The word carries not only falſhood upon miſtake, ignorance, or miſunderſtanding, but falſhood by art or prevarication, when like a Sophiſter a man would foyl his Adverſary by fallacies. It imports alſo ſomewhat of contempt, when he that is inferiour doth not (as he ought) ſubmit to the judgment and reaſon of his ſuperiour. Thus ſome expound *Job* complaining, that he was not only unkindly, but fallaciouſly and unreverently dealt with by thoſe who ought not only to be faithful to him, but to give him reſpect and honour. And (which is yet worſe) that they did him (as the meaning of the word is further carried) a real unkindneſs under the cloak or colour of fair and friendly pretences. A Prevaricator dealeth falſly with his Client, while he profeſſeth to plead his cauſe, or undertakes to ſupport his perſon. The unfaithfulneſs and falſhood of man to man, walks alwayes under the cloak of profeſſed courteſie. But I would not ſuppoſe *Job* ſo much as ſuſpecting his Friends of any ſuch ſtudied unkindneſs towards him; eſpecially conſidering, that this word which ſome ſtrain ſo hard, is alſo uſed by the holy Ghoſt in a more gentle ſignification (*Levit.* 5. 15.) where it is applyed to a ſin of ignorance: And that notion of ſinning under a cloak may hold in ſins of ignorance, as well as in thoſe which are committed againſt knowledge; only with this difference, malice and hypocriſie uſe a cloak to hide the evil from others; Ignorance is a cloak which hides the evil from our ſelves. Thus in the preſent caſe, the falſhood which *Job* chargeth the anſwers of his Friends with, proceeded not, ſurely, from any cunning purpoſe in them to vex and trouble him, but from their unskilfulneſs in comforting him. *How then comfort ye me in vain, ſeeing in your anſwers there remaineth falſhood?* He doth not ſay, that all their anſwers were falſe, or that they had knowingly falſifyed with him in their anſwers. All he chargeth them with, is, that there was falſhood in their anſwers: That is, that their anſwers contained falſe or unſound aſſertions. Such as theſe,

Firſt, *That godly men are rarely afflicted in this life.*

Secondly, *That the godly ſhall in this life be ſpeedily delivered when ever they are afflicted.*

Thirdly, *That wicked men ſeldom or never proſper in this life.*

Fourthly, *That if they do, yet their proſperity ſhall ſoon be blaſted.*

Thus while his Friends went about by theſe affirmations to vindicate the Juſtice and Holineſs of God from any the leaſt complyance with wicked men, they unawares ſet limits to his Soveraignty, and his Power. As if God were not at liberty to diſpoſe of theſe outward things, when and to whom himſelf pleaſed. Theſe Poſitions (ſaith *Job*) I have proved falſe; and ye have not yet taken off my Arguments by any of your anſwers; therefore in your Anſwers there ſtill remaineth falſhood, and your labour in comforting me, hath been but labour in vain.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Falſe and unſound principles, can never produce ſound and true comforts.*

Solid comfort cannot riſe from any ground, nor reſt upon any bottom but truth. As truth only works true grace in the heart, and ſanctifieth (*John* 17. 17.) *Sanctifie them through thy truth* (was the prayer of Chriſt) *thy word is truth;* ſo truth only worketh true joy in the heart and comforteth: If you would comfort a poor dejected ſoul, you muſt comfort him with the truth, the word is truth. Error can neither kill our ſins, nor remove our ſorrows. And there is the ſame reaſon of both. For it is the office of the holy Spirit both to ſanctifie and to comfort; now, the holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and therefore he will not work by a falſhood, or cloath an error with his Divine power, either for ſanctification or conſolation. The Prophet *Hoſea* (*Chap.* 7. 3.) reproves thoſe *who made the King glad with their wickedneſs, and the Princes with their lyes.* 'Tis poſſible, that a doctrinal lye (or a falſe doctrine) as well as an hiſtorical lye, may make a man glad for a while; but it is impoſſible that it ſhould adminiſter laſting comfort, or comfort at laſt to any man. If they who are in darkneſs will as the Prophet ſpeaketh (*Iſa.* 50. 11.) *Kindle ſuch falſe fires, and compaſs themſelves about with ſuch ſparks; let them* (as the Prophet in holy ſcorn bids them) *walk in the light of their fire, and in the ſparks that they have kindled, yet, This they ſhall have of mine hand* (ſaith he) *they ſhall lye down in ſorrow.* When ſuch lye down upon their beds to reſt, they ſhall find little; and when they lye down in the grave (except a while for their bodies) they ſhall find leſs.

Secondly, *Good men may be miſtaken, and err in judgment.*

As the wills and affections of the Saints on earth, have ſome corruption remaining in them, ſo alſo have their underſtandings. And therefore as their practice, ſo their opinion, may be ſoyled and faulty. 'Tis no wonder, if falſhood be found in their anſwers, who are themſelves ſo full of failings.

Thirdly, Note, *Good men may continue long under ſome miſtakes and errors of judgment.*

Job found his Friends in theſe errors at their firſt diſpute, and he found them ſo in the ſecond; they did not mend their anſwers, though they multiplied them; *In your anſwers there remaineth falſhood.* As 'tis hard to part with an evil in practice, ſo with an error in opinion. That man is come to a great pitch of humility that confeſſeth he is out. Moſt will anſwer, and anſwer, come thick and threefold, with replications and triplications, and yet ſtill in their anſwers there remaineth falſhood. *When any man maintains an error, the more he anſwers, the more he errs.*

Thus by the good hand of God with me, I have finiſhed the Expoſition of this Chapter, and of the whole ſecond diſpute, between *Job* and his three Friends. There yet remains a third diſpute, but that's between *Job* and two. The third gives out, and quits the next field. What was done there by thoſe who ſtill held out, may, if God, in whoſe hand our breath is and all our wayes, continue help and life, be reported at another time.

CHAP. XXII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Then Eliphaz *the* Temanite *anſwered and ſaid,*

Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe is profitable unto himſelf?

Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to him that thou makeſt thy wayes perfect?

Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? Or will he enter with thee into judgment?

Eliphaz now enters his third and laſt conteſt with *Job*; in which ſome tell us, that he behaveth himſelf like a man who ſeeks Victory rather then Truth; who though he hath been ſufficiently anſwered, yet will not ſeem to be overcome; yea, that he takes up the ſame weapons to maintain this third, with which he maintain'd his two former Encounters: The firſt in the fourth and fifth *Chapters*, and the ſecond in the fifteenth, as if he were reſolved to contradict though he could not confute the reaſons wherewith *Job* had made his defence.

But as ſuch a carriage as this in Diſputation is altogether vain in it ſelf, ſo it is moſt uncomely in a wiſe and godly man; who ought not to refuſe truth and reaſon, though ſpoken by an Adverſary, but rather modeſtly to ſit down and confeſs his own error and miſtaking: And therefore though *Eliphaz* in this anſwer or triplication doth but roll the ſame ſtone, and move upon the ſame hinge in general; ſtill adjudging *Job* to ſuffer for his ſin, and to be puniſht as an evil doer; yet he puts all into a new method, and varies the ſcene or the manner of his argumentation, which may be reduced to this form: As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, O Job! *if thou ſuffereſt all theſe evils for ſome cauſe (as certainly thou doſt, for theſe things could not come by chance, but by the wiſe diſpoſure and providence of God) then that cauſe or reaſon for which thou ſuffereſt, muſt either be found in God or in thy ſelf: If thou ſayeſt the reaſon is in God, and that he doth it by his prerogative, thou doſt raſhly intrude thy ſelf into his ſecrets, and art over-bold or curious in ſearching into his hidden counſels; and when thou haſt made out thy conjectures, we may as eaſily deny as thou doſt affirm; but if thou haſt recourſe to, and reflecteſt upon thy own ſelf for the cauſe of thy ſorrows and ſufferings, ſurely thou canſt find out or pitch upon nothing elſe but thy ſinfulneſs and abounding tranſgreſſions, which while thou refuſeſt to acknowledge, thou doſt but harden thy heart againſt God, and groweſt impatient under the rebukes of his afflicting hand. Therefore I admoniſh thee to repent*, &c. This ſeems to be the ſum of that whole diſcourſe which *Eliphaz* gives in this Chapter, as will further appear in the explication of the parts.

Again, we may contract his ſcope and give it in this brief; Job *having conſtantly affirmed againſt his Friends, that God equally afflicts the righteous and the wicked; and having ſaid (which might have gained reſpect to what he was about to ſay) that he pleaded for God* (Chap. 21.4. *As for me, is my complaint to man, or for man? No, it is to God, or in Gods behalf.*) *Hereupon* Eliphaz *taxes him with this preſumption, as if he would needs undertake to be a Patron for God, and ſo to bring him in ſome advantage, or to ſtand him in ſtead, for the maintaining of his cauſe; therefore he begins his ſpeech with this chiding expoſtulation, Can man be profitable unto God? Or (ſuppoſe thou wert (which I ſhall preſently diſprove) as thou haſt often boaſted, righteous, yet) is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?*

This ſeems to be the intent of the whole Chapter, in which we may further take notice of two diſtinct parts. The firſt is reprehenſory, *Eliphaz* reproves and rebukes *Job* ſorely, to the end of the twentieth Verſe.

The ſecond is hortatory, *Eliphaz* moveth *Job* earneſtly to repentance, in which he coucheth many promiſes, and gives aſſurance that it ſhall not be in vain, from the twentieth verſe to the end of the Chapter; *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace, thereby good ſhall come unto thee*, &c.

The firſt part, his reprehenſion, begins at the ſecond Verſe.

Verſe 2. **Can a man be profitable unto God?**

There are three readings of theſe words.

Firſt thus, *Can a man be compared to God?* Some labour much in the defence of this reading, but I ſhall not ſtay upon it. For though it be a truth that man cannot be compared to God, how wiſe or how good ſoever he is. What's the wiſdom or goodneſs of man to God? Yet the Original Text doth not freely yield it ſelf up to that tranſlation which bears this truth.

Numquid Deo comparari poteſt homo etiam cum perfectæ fuerit ſcientiæ. Vulg.

Secondly, Maſter *Broughton* renders thus, *Can the humane wight teach the Omnipotent?* That word which we render *to be profitable*, he, to *Teach*: The Chaldee Paraphraſe favours this tranſlation, and ſome render it ſo in both parts of the verſe; *Can a man teach God, as he that is wiſe may teach himſelf?* If a man ſhould be ſo bold to take upon him to teach God, would God regard his teachings? But I ſhall paſs by this alſo, eſpecially conſidering that *Eliphaz* had no reaſon to tax *Job* with ſuch a preſumption, as if he had taken upon him to direct God how to order his affairs; when as *Job himſelf* (*Chap. 21. ver. 22.*) had ſtrongly repreſſed and condemned ſuch a boldneſs. *Shall any teach God knowledge? Job* having ſo lately exalted God above mans teaching (as was ſhewed in opening that verſe) it is not probable that *Eliphaz* ſhould reprove him, as conceiting himſelf wiſe enough to teach God: Or that he thought *Job* either had done, or was about to do that which with his laſt breath almoſt, he confeſſed no man could do.

Quidam verbum יסבוג *pro docere exponunt in utroque hamiſtichio.* Merc.

The third is our reading, *Can a man be profitable unto God?* Can a man? He doth not mean an ordinary, weak, ſickly, frail man; but a man, yea, any man at his beſt: The word here uſed notes a man in his health, ſtrength, and glory; a man in the flower and perfection not only of his natural abilities, but in the richeſt furniture and array of his acquired, yea, inſpired abilities. Take this man, a man of theſe attainments, a man thus accompliſht, and *Can he be profitable to God*: For as when the Pſalmiſt ſaith (*Pſal.* 33.17.) *A Horſe is a vain thing to ſave a man.* By the Horſe there, we are not to underſtand a lean, poor, weak, ſlow-pac'd Horſe, or a ſtrong, ſwift Horſe unman'd; ſuch a Horſe is indeed a very vain thing to ſave a man by; ſuch a Horſe may do a man more hurt then help, when he comes into danger; but the Pſalmiſt means a Horſe of the greateſt ſtrength, courage, and ſwiftneſs: A Horſe exactly man'd, and taught all his poſtures, even ſuch a Horſe is a vain thing to ſave a man. Again, when the Scripture ſaith, *Chriſt came to ſave ſinners*, we muſt not underſtand it of leſſer, lower, or of the ordinary ſort of ſinners only, but even of the higheſt and the greateſt, for ſuch Jeſus Chriſt came to ſave as well as the leaſt of ſinners. So here when 'tis ſaid, *Can a man be profitable to God?* We muſt expound it of the higheſt of the learnedſt, of the holieſt, of the beſt of men; *Can a man be profitable unto God?* The word is *El, The ſtrong God*: Can the ſtrongeſt man be profitable unto the ſtrong, the Mighty, Omnipotent, the Almighty God? *Can he be profitable?* Can he bring any advantage, gain, or profit to God? *Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk?* (ſaith *Eliphaz*, Chap. 15.3.) Or with words that bring in no profit? A word of the ſame root, ſignifies a *Treaſurer*, who is a keeper of publick profits (*Iſa.* 22. 15.) *Go, get thee unto this Treaſurer, even unto* Shebna. *Can a man be profitable?* Thus *Eliphaz* reproves *Job* for inſiſting ſo often upon his own innocency, as if that were an advantage to God. As if he had ſaid, How holy or righteous ſoever any man is, the Lord receives no advantage by him. So that *Eliphaz* (it ſeems) apprehended *Job* truſting or boaſting of ſomewhat in himſelf, as if he had thought God his debtor, or that he had done ſomewhat for which God was beholding to him. And upon this ground, that God is debtor, or beholding to no man, *Eliphaz* undertakes *Job*: And though his ſuppoſition was falſe, yet his poſition was true, and gives us this profitable Obſervation,

That the beſt of men cannot oblige God, or merit any thing at his hand.

That which is our duty to do, cannot merit when we have done it. We cannot oblige either God or man by performing our own obligation. Thus Chriſt argues, *Luke* 17. 7. *Which of you having a ſervant ploughing or feeding Cattel, will ſay unto him by and by when he is come from the field, go and ſit down to meat? And will not ſay unto him, make ready wherewith I may ſup, and gird thy ſelf, and ſerve me, till I have eaten and drunken, and afterward thou ſhalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that ſervant becauſe he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewiſe ye, when ye have done all theſe things which are commanded you, ſay, we are unprofitable ſervants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* Where Chriſt proves, that becauſe the ſervant had done no more then was his duty to do, therefore he did not merit in doing it. *When you have done all that is commanded you, ſay, ye are unprofitable ſervants.* He that doth all thoſe things that are commanded him, is *a man indeed, a man of worth, a man of men*, yet (let that be granted that he reacheth to the utmoſt line of the Command) he is an unprofitable ſervant, he hath but done his duty.

There is another parable in this Goſpel of *Luke* that ſeems to be ſomewhat oppoſite to this (*Chap.* 12. *v.* 36, 37.) *And ye your ſelves be like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants, whom, when the Lord cometh, he ſhall find ſo watching*; that is, at their work. Watching is not meant here of a bare waking, or not being aſleep, for a man may watch, in that ſence, and yet be as bad as a ſleeper: To be found awake, and yet idle, to be found awake yet doing nothing, is as blameable as to be found aſleep: So that to be found watching is to be found intent upon, and labouring in the work of the Lord. *Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants whom their Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo watching*: What will he do? *Verily I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them to ſit down to meat, and will come forth to ſerve them.* In the ſeventeenth Chapter Chriſt ſaith, if a ſervant have been hard at work in the ſervice of his Lord, even as a man that is come from Plough, or from feeding his Cattel, yet his Maſter doth not ſay to him, ſit down to meat, but firſt bids him gird himſelf and ſerve him, and afterward go to meat. But here 'tis ſaid, the Lord preſently girds himſelf, and makes his ſervants ſit down to meat, and will come and ſerve them: So that here he ſpeaks, as if the Lord were much beholden to theſe ſervants, whereas before he ſpeaks of them as unprofitable ſervants, to whom he was not at all beholding.

For the clearing of theſe two Parables, we are to diſtinguiſh them by their ſcopes. The ſcope of the Parable in the twelfth Chapter is to ſhew, that the diligent ſervant ſhall receive much from the hands of the Lord, or that the labour of the diligent ſervant ſhall not be in vain, or unprofitable to him.

But the ſcope of the Parable in the ſeventeenth Chapter, is to ſhew, that the moſt diligent ſervant cannot do any thing that is profitable unto his Lord: He may do that which may be profitable to himſelf, but he can do nothing that can be profitable to his Lord; that's the ſcope of the ſeventeenth Chapter, which falls in fully with the Text, and Obſervations that I am now upon. There is a wide difference between theſe two Parables. To ſhew what a diligent ſervant may expect is one thing, and what the moſt diligent ſervant can challenge or require is another. For indeed thoſe ſervants in the twelfth Chapter, to whom the Lord adminiſters the Supper, or to whom he miniſters at Supper, muſt ſay, that they are unprofitable ſervants to the Lord; though they are to acknowledge (to the praiſe of their Lord) that his ſervice hath not been unprofitable unto them, and they muſt ſay ſo upon theſe conſiderations.

Firſt, He is their Lord, they his ſervants, not their own (1 *Cor.* 6. 20.) *Ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own, therefore glorifie God in your bodies, and in your ſpirits, which are Gods.* God is the owner of our bodies and ſpirits, our ſelves are the Lords. Now if we our ſelves, our bodies, and our ſpirits are the Lords, then much more are our ſervices his. If the perſon be anothers, all the work done by him muſt be his too.

Secondly, The houſe wherein theſe ſervants are feaſted is the Lords. The whole fabrick of Heaven and Earth is his Houſe; He hath ſet it up to entertain and feaſt his people in.

Thirdly, All the chear and good things with which the Lord feaſteth his ſervants (all the comforts which Grace holds out in this life, or glory in the next life) are of his own proviſion; the whole furniture of the Table is of his coſt and charge, therefore they are obliged to their Lord, not their Lord to them; he is indeed profitable unto them, but they are not profitable unto him: They by their ſloath and idleneſs might deſerve to be ſent ſupperleſs and hungry to bed, but by all their pains and diligence they could not deſerve their Supper; *Can a man be profitable unto God?*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That God is abſolutely Independent and perfect in himſelf.*

If there be any impoſſibility that man ſhould be profitable unto God, then he is Self-ſufficient, and altogether Independent, in reference to man: He that cannot receive any addition is perfect in himſelf, and he that is ſelf-ſufficient needs not: to receive any addition from another, is an argument of imperfection. And ſeeing God neither receives, nor can receive any thing from another, he muſt needs be perfect in himſelf. *David* (*Pſal.* 16. 2.) ſpeaking of himſelf (as the type of Chriſt) ſaith, *O my ſoul, thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, thou art my Lord* (that is, thou art my Portion and my All) but *my goodneſs extendeth not to thee*, I am not able to do any good which reacheth to thy benefit, or increaſeth thy happineſs, for thou art mine. In the fiftieth *Pſalm* the Lord aſſerts this his own independency, *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulneſs thereof.* If I had any hunger (that is, any defect upon me) I need not go to the creature to ask a ſupply, I could ſupply my ſelf if there were any need; but there's none: The Lord he is infinitely above all hunger, above all wants and defects whatſoever. He indeed threatens Idolaters, that he *will famiſh all their gods* (Zeph. 2. 11.) Idols ſhall be hungry, they ſhall be famiſht, and have none to adminiſter any thing to them. This the Lord doth, when he withdraws their reſpect and worſhip, that name and reputation which once they had in the world from them; worſhip is the food of Idols, that keeps liveleſs Idols (as it were) alive, and therefore falſe gods are famiſhed, when their falſe worſhip is caſt down: But who can famiſh the Lord? If I were hungry, *&c.* I would not tell you: *Can man be profitable unto God?*

But it may be objected, Cannot a man be profitable to God? Is man no advantage, no help to him? Why then (*Judg.* 5. 23.) ſings *Deborah, Curſe ye* Meroz, *ſaid the Angel of the Lord, curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty?* It ſhould ſeem then that the Lord had need of the help of theſe Inhabitants of *Meroz*, and if they had come forth, it had been an advantage to him, why elſe were they curſed for not coming forth to the help of the Lord?

I anſwer, Man is ſaid to help the Lord, when he helps in the Lords cauſe. Perſonally the Lord needeth not any help; but the Lord may be helped relatively, in his cauſe, and in his people. Thus we help the Lord, when we help man, when we help the Church, and people of God: It is our honour as well as our duty, to help his people, and give aſſiſtance in his Cauſe: This the Lord takes ſo well at our hands, that he reckons it as help given to himſelf.

Again, if we conſider the help as given to the Lords people, we are not to conceive that the Lord needed the help of theſe men of *Meroz*, as if he could not help them himſelf without the aſſiſtance or aid of man. For when he ſeeth *that there is no man, then his own arm brings ſalvation*, Iſa. 59. 16. 'Tis the duty of man to come forth and draw his Sword in the Lords quarrel againſt the mighty, but the Lord needeth not the ſword of man to ſubdue the mightieſt.

Secondly, It may be objected, *Cannot man be profitable unto God?* He ſpeaks of the Church of the *Jews*, in ſuch language as implyes them a profit to him. *Exod.* 19. 5. *Now if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ſhall you be a peculiar treaſure unto me above all people.* And is there no profit in a treaſure? Again, *Deut.* 32. 9. *The Lords portion is his people,* Jacob *is the lot of his inheritance.* Hath a man no profit by his portion? No advantage by his Inheritance? Now if the Lords people be his Portion, his Inheritance, his Treaſure, his peculiar ſpecial Treaſure, how then can it be ſaid, they are no profit, no advantage to him?

I anſwer, The Lords people are his treaſure, not becauſe they inrich him, but becauſe he hath a high eſteem of them. The Lords People are his treaſure, not becauſe they profit him, but becauſe he protects them: If I ſay to a man, you ſhall be a treaſure to me; I may do it, not becauſe I expect any profit from him, but becauſe I have a high eſteem of him, and reſolve to protect and defend him, as I do my own portion and treaſure: In this ſence doth the Lord ſay of his people, *Ye are my treaſure.* We eſteem treaſure, and treaſures are under protection, leſt any take them from us. Thus the Lord ſpeaks of his people, not that he hath any profit or gain by them, as men who ordinarily have Portions and Inheritances in Fields or Houſes which are their ſtock and livelihood. Indeed there is a Revenue which the Lord hath by his people as they are his portion; that is, a Revenue of glory and honour, not a Revenue of profit. But if you ſay glory and honour is profit, and an advantage to man, is it not then an advantage to God to be glorified by man?

I anſwer, It is no advantage to God when he is glorified by man. Our glorifying of God doth not add any glory to him that he had not, but it is only the ſetting forth of that glory which he had: There is no encreaſe of his fulneſs by all the honour and glory that the creature gives him. We are commanded to glorifie God (*Matth.* 5.16.) *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* But God doth not receive any additional glory by us, how much or how clearly ſoever our light ſhineth before men. A candle adds more light to the Sun, then all the creatures in the world can add to the glory of God, when they have ſtudied his glory, and laboured to glorifie him to the utmoſt all their dayes.

Thirdly, That of *David* may be yet objected, *Pſal.* 4. 3. *The Lord hath ſet apart for himſelf the man that is godly.* And if ſo, then it ſeems he intends to make ſome profit of him. It is an alluſion unto thoſe that vend wares: A Merchant looks upon this and that commodity, and then ſaith, this is for my turn, this I like, *ſet it apart for me.* Seeing then the Lord ſets the godly apart for himſelf, it ſounds as if he meant to make ſome gain or advantage by him.

I anſwer, The meaning of that Scripture is not, that God ſets a godly man apart as one that he gets profit by, but as one that he intends to beſtow mercy upon; or he ſets him apart for ſervice, not for gain: The Lord ſerves his own ends by the ſervice of man every day, and ſets apart the godly man for his ſpecial ſervice.

Yet a little further, I ſhall demonſtrate that a man cannot be profitable to God.

Firſt, God had all perfection before man was, therefore man cannot profit God. *Pſal.* 90. 2. *From Everlaſting, and to everlaſting thou art God,* that is, thou art infinite in glory and excellency from everlaſting. God was God as much before there was a creature, as he hath been ever ſince the creatures were; therefore creatures add nothing at all to him.

Secondly, All the goodneſs and profitableneſs of man comes from God, therefore no profit goes unto God from man; that's the Apoſtles Argument, *Acts* 17. 25. where he ſhews that man cannot advantage God, no not by worſhip. *He is not worſhipped with mens hands as though he needed any thing.* What, do you think God calleth for your worſhip, becauſe he needs your worſhip? or as if he could not tell how to be without your worſhip? Nothing leſs; *Seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things.* He that gives all things to all men, needs nothing of any man; here's the Apoſtles Argument, the Lord giveth out all things, life, breath, and all comforts whatſoever to all men, therefore he needs nothing of any man, no not the worſhip of any man. 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. The Apoſtle aſſigns that reaſon againſt boaſting, *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received, wherefore then doſt thou boaſt?* When do men boaſt? Even when they think they have done God a good turn. *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received? Therefore why doſt thou boaſt as if thou hadſt not received it?* What can he receive of us from whom we receive our all? And *though we muſt return all to him in a way of thankfulneſs and duty, yet God needs not that we ſhould return any thing to him in a way of largeneſs or ſupply.*

Thirdly, Take this demonſtration of it; they who live much in God, even they (upon the matter) need little or nothing of the creature; they (upon the matter) are Independent as to the creature who depend fully upon the Creator. The good or evil of this world is not much to them, who are much with God. They have but little to do with the creature, and can do well enough without the creature. (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the Vines; the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat; the Flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no Herd in the ſtalls; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* As if he had ſaid, What if all creature-comforts are taken away from me, I can live upon God alone. The life of a Believer is much above the creature; How much more is the life of the Creator? The Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) ſpeaking of himſelf, ſaith, *As having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things.* If *Paul* by the high actings of his faith and dependencies upon God could ſay he poſſeſſed all things, while he was as having nothing in the creature. Surely God hath all, when he hath nothing of or from the creature: He may ſay in the ſtricteſt ſence, *Having nothing (of theſe things) and yet poſſeſſing all things.* Lay theſe two Obſervations together.

Firſt, *That the Creature cannot oblige God.*

Secondly, *That God is Independent, abſolute, perfect without the creature.*

The reſult of both will riſe up in theſe eight Concluſions.

Firſt, This will follow, *That we ſhould not murmur, nor be diſcontented with our Eſtate,* whatſoever it is: Why? We are not profitable unto God, we have deſerved nothing at his hand. Diſcontent ariſeth from Pride, from an opinion that we are not anſwered according to our worth; we ſhould never be diſcontented, were we convinced that we are altogether worthleſs. Do but ſit down in this thought, that man cannot be profitable unto God in any ſtate, and then be diſcontented with your ſtate if you can.

Secondly, If the Creature cannot be profitable unto God. Then, *All that God doth for man, yea, for Angels, proceedeth from his free grace.* We give him nothing aforehand, nor any thing afterward, therefore it is grace before, and grace after grace in all. We receive grace when we have no grace, and we receive more grace when we have it; yet by the grace we have we do not deſerve to receive more: As we received the firſt grace meerly of grace, ſo we do the ſecond. No man is aforehand with God; if any think they are, let them ſhew their Bills, what they have brought in, and it ſhall be acknowledged. *Rom.* 11. 35, 36. *Who hath firſt given, and it ſhall be recompenced to him again?* For *of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.*

Thirdly, If man cannot be profitable unto God, then as none ſhould dare to come to God in their own worthineſs; ſo none ſhould fear to come to God becauſe of their unworthineſs. We ſhould not be diſcouraged, though as yet dead and fruitleſs, though vain and unbelieving: The worſt of men ſhould not keep off from God. becauſe they are unprofitable, ſeeing the beſt cannot profit him. *If we have done much, it is nothing to the Lord; and if we have done nothing, it is no bar to the Lords doing much for us.* God will not turn us back becauſe we bring him nothing, nay, he invites us to come without any thing (*Iſa.* 55. 1.) *Ho every one that thirſteth, come to the Waters, buy,* &c. Here is buying, but for what? for profit? No, but *come buy Wine and Milk without money and without price.* God doth not expect any profit; there is a kind of buying, but its not for money, nor for money-worth. As the Lord ſometimes ſells his people, ſo he alwayes ſells his graces and comforts, *for nought* (Pſal. 44. 12.) *Thou ſelleſt thy people for nought, and doeſt not increaſe thy wealth by their price:* That is, Thou leaveſt thy people under miſeries and afflictions, by which it doth not appear that thou getteſt any honour. Now as the Lord doth ſometimes ſell his people, ſo he alſo ſells his mercy and grace to his people (as to any deſert of theirs) *for nought*; he ſells without money and without price, therefore be not diſcourag'd if you have nothing of your own of any worth to preſent unto him. Say not, *Wherewith ſhall we come before the Lord?* The poorer you come in your own thoughts, the richer you ſhall return; For *He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich he ſendeth empty away.*

Fourthly, If man cannot be profitable unto God, then our gifts and parts, yea, our holineſs and graces do not make us neceſſary unto God. God may ſay unto the great Ones of the Earth, I have no need of you; and to the rich, I have no need of you; and to the wiſe, I have no need of you; yea, he may ſay unto the godly, and to the holy, I have no need of you neither. There is no creature neceſſary to God, ſeeing he cannot only (as we ſay) live, but live in the heights of happineſs without the creature.

Fifthly, *If no man can be profitable unto God,* then whatſoever God requires of us, he aims at our profit, and not at his own; all is for us, or for our good, which will appear more fully in the opening the next clauſe; *He that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf.* The Lord hath deſigned all our wiſdom and obedience to our own benefit: ſo *Moſes* ſpake to the people of *Iſrael* (Deut. 6. 24.) *The Lord commanded us to do all theſe Statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good alwayes, that he might preſerve us alive, as it is at this day.* It is not for the Lords good, but it is for our good that he commands, and we obey. And as the Lord commanded all things in the Law for our good, not for his own; ſo he commands us to believe the Goſpel not for his good, but for our own; he is not to be ſaved by it, it is we that are to be ſaved by it. He doth not call us to work as men do their ſervants, that he might play the good husband, and get ſome profit by keeping us hard at labour. Indeed the Lord keepeth his Servants hard at labour night and day, they muſt be continually upon duty: But he doth it not (as I may ſay) to play the good husband, to increaſe his ſtock by it, but it is for our profit. That which Chriſt ſpeaks (*Mark* 2. 27.) about the Sabbath, is true of all other the Commands of God; we are apt to think, that God requires a ſeventh day, becauſe it is for his profit and advantage; No, ſaith Chriſt, the Lord hath not an eye to himſelf, but to man; *The Sabbath was made for man*; that is, for mans advantage, that he might look Heaven-ward, that he might work in the things which concern his own bleſſedneſs, therefore hath the Lord appointed him a reſting day. *The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.*

Sixthly, Then our diſobedience cannot hurt God, our ſins cannot diſadvantage him, impair his bleſſedneſs, or diminiſh his glory. As mans obedience is no profit; ſo his diſobedience is no diſprofit to God. Sinners ſhall be puniſhed, as they who have wronged and diſhonoured God, they ſhall be dealt with as ſuch: But really, all the ſins of the world do not bring any dammage or diſadvantage to God: *Elihu* is expreſs to this point, in the thirty-fifth Chapter of this Book, *verſ.* 6, 7. *If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him?* (Every ſin is againſt the mind of God; but no ſin is againſt the happineſs of God.) *Or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?* Is God impair'd by it? Surely no, God doth not loſe a pin from his ſleeve (as I may ſay) by all the ſins committed in the world: He hath no dependance at all upon our obedience for his bleſſedneſs; our ſins cannot hurt him, as our obedience cannot help him, which *Elihu* ſhews in the next verſe; *If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand?*

Seventhly, Hence ſee the honour of God, that hath made ſo many creatures, and man eſpecially, of whom himſelf hath no need, that hath ſo many to ſerve him, and yet needs none of their ſervices. Give God this glory: We think thoſe men are very glorious and honourable who have but as much of the Creature as will ſerve their turn, all creatures are the Lords, yet he is not neceſſitated to ſerve his turn by any of them.

Eighthly, Then ſee what an obligation lyeth upon us continually to bleſs God, to be thankful to him, to walk humbly with him, who gives us ſo many profits, when as we do not profit him at all. God prizeth that highly by which himſelf hath no benefit; he prizes the actings of faith and holineſs highly, but he hath no advantage by them: God gives us profit by theſe, though himſelf be not profited; though he is not the better by any thing we do, yet we are the better: The Lord binds himſelf by promiſe, that the leaſt good we do in ſincerity ſhall have a good reward; *He that gives but a cup of cold water to a Diſciple in the name of a Diſciple, ſhall not loſe his reward.* But if we give thouſands of Gold and Silver to poor Diſciples, what profit hath God by it? And yet though none of the profit comes to his hand, yet he reckons it as if all were put into his hand. All the charity and compaſſion ſhewed to his people, Chriſt taketh to himſelf (*Matth.* 25.) *In that ye have done it unto theſe, ye have done it unto me.* Chriſt had no need of alms, of viſiting, or cloathing, yet he counts it as done to himſelf, when we do it to any of his.

Can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf?

Some give the meaning of the words thus: Doth it follow, that a man can be profitable unto God, becauſe a wiſe man may be profitable to himſelf? Our reading reaches the ſame ſence; *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf?* It doth not follow, becauſe *A man may profit another man, or profit himſelf, that therefore he may profit God.* That's the ſum of the Argument.

As he that is wiſe.] The word in the root of it ſignifies to underſtand, to be prudent; and by a Metonymie to be happy, or to proſper; becauſe uſually affairs ſucceed well and proſper in the hands of wiſe men, and happineſs uſually follows wiſdom; therefore to be wiſe, and to be profitable, are ſignified by one and the ſame word in the Hebrew. So in this Text, *He that is wiſe is profitable to himſelf*; that is, his affairs ſhall proſper. We find this Title prefixt to divers Pſalms, *Maſchil*, which is as much as *A teaching Pſalm, a Pſalm making wiſe, a Pſalm for Inſtruction.* This Title is given thoſe Pſalms, which as they have ſome extraordinary matter, ſo uſually they are Pſalms of complaint under affliction; and the reaſon of that is, becauſe there is much inſtruction in correction; much light of holy knowledge is to be had in the School of the Croſs; therefore uſually thoſe Pſalms that deſcribe the afflictions of the Church are called *Maſchil, Pſalms of Inſtruction.*

שׂכל *Intellexit. prudens fuit, per Metonymiam fœlix, proſper fuit, quod prudẽtibus omnia fœliciter cedant; prudentiam fœlicitas ſere ſequitur.* Maſchil, *intelligens prudẽs, carmen erudiẽs ode didaſcalita. In titulis Pſalmorum ter & decies legitur. Schola crucis, Schola lucis.* Luth.

He that is wiſe, and inſtructs; or he that is wiſe as having received inſtruction may be profitable to himſelf. All wiſdom is not profitable to man; for there is a wiſdom of which the Scripture ſaith, that *God will deſtroy it*; a man cannot profit himſelf by that; and there is a wiſdom which is *earthly, ſenſual and deviliſh* (James 3. 15.) A man (be he never ſo wiſe according to this wiſdom) ſhall not profit himſelf by it. There are a ſort of wiſe men *whom the Lord will take in their craftineſs* (1 Cor. 3. 19.) And how can ſuch profit themſelves by their wiſdom? There are wiſe men whoſe thoughts *the Lord knoweth to be but vain*; that is, unprofitable; therefore theſe cannot profit themſelves: Then what is that wiſdom which *Eliphaz* means when he ſaith, *He that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf?*

I anſwer, The wiſe man here intended is not the man that is politickly wiſe, worldly wiſe, carnally or craftily wiſe; but the man ſpiritually wiſe, his wiſdom will bring him in profit. He that is guided by holy and godly wiſdom, ſhall reap the benefit and eat the fruit of it. We have ſuch wiſdom deſcribed (*Pſal.* 111. 10.) *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom; a good underſtanding have all they that keep his Commandments:* He doth not ſay, a good underſtanding have all they that know his Commandments, for many may know the Commandments, and yet not have a good underſtanding; but they have a good underſtanding indeed that do his Commandments. And when the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom,* the word *Beginning* ſignifies not only the firſt ſtep or entrance into a thing, but the *head* or height of it; ſo that *Beginning* is as much as *chief*, or *principal*; the beſt wiſdom, the chief, the top wiſdom, the head-wiſdom, or the head of wiſdom, is the fear of the Lord. *Job* gives the ſame deſcription of wiſdom, in the laſt words of the twenty-eighth Chapter, *Behold, the fear of the Lord that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil, that is underſtanding.* Would you know what is true wiſdom? 'Tis the fear of the Lord. Would you know who is wiſe? The godly man is the truly wiſe man, yea, he is the only wiſe man.

But then it may be queſtioned, *May a wiſe man be profitable to himſelf?* Doth not the Apoſtle ſay (*Rom.* 14. 7.) *None of us liveth to himſelf*, &c. Then how can a man be wiſe to himſelf? And doth not the Apoſtle give the rule (2 *Cor.* 5. 15.) *Chriſt dyed for all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves?* If we may not live to our ſelves, how then doth he ſay here, that the wiſe man is profitable to himſelf? He that is profitable to himſelf, lives to himſelf, doth he not?

I anſwer, Firſt, The wiſe man muſt not make his own profit the end or the deſign of his wiſdom, but he may look upon his own profit as that which will be the iſſue, fruit and conſequent of his wiſdom. A carnal man looks to and loves his work for the rewards ſake: A godly man may look to and love his reward for the work ſake. (*Prov.* 9. 12.) *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf*; that is, the fruit or the good of thy wiſdom will drop into thy own boſom. *A wiſe man may look for his advantage in the end of his work, though he is not to make his own advantage the end of his work.* We are not to make either temporal or eternal advantages the end of our wiſdom; but we may look upon them as fruits and effects that God leads us to by the exerciſe of wiſdom.

Secondly, I anſwer, A wiſe man cannot be profitable to himſelf, as the founder of his own happineſs, or as having a ſufficiency in himſelf to make himſelf happy; but a wiſe man may be a means or an inſtrument of his own happineſs; and walking in the way of wiſdom, he walks in the way to his own happineſs. Thus he that is godly wiſe, or that feareth God, may be profitable to himſelf.

Hence Obſerve, *He that is truly wiſe, godly and holy, ſhall find fruit and benefit by it.*

The Apoſtle (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) aſſureth us that *Godlineſs is profitable for all things.* The greateſt gain in the world is Godlineſs; *It hath the promiſes of this life and of that which is to come.* Whatſoever drops out of any promiſe of the Goſpel, falls into the lap of a godly man; the promiſes are his, and therefore the good of the promiſe is his. When the promiſes open at any time, and give forth their vertue, they muſt needs give it forth to him that is wiſe, to him that is godly, for godlineſs hath the promiſes. When the Apoſtle had rebuk'd a ſort of men that made godlineſs only a ſtalking-horſe to get gain, he preſently adds, *But godlineſs is great gain, if a man be content with what he hath.* Godlineſs it ſelf is great gain, if we have no more; but Godlineſs brings in gain, abundance of gain, beſides it ſelf. (*Matth.* 6, 35.) *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs thereof, and all theſe things ſhall be added* (or caſt in as an advantage) *to you.* The Apoſtle (*Rom.* 6. 21.) puts a kind of holy ſcorn upon ſinners, come, tell me, *What fruit had you of thoſe things whereof you are now aſhamed?* What fruit have you by your folly, pride, worldlineſs, envy, what fruit have you found in theſe things? Bring me in an account of your gain by trading in any ſin. *The end of theſe things is death*; there is no great profit in that. *But now being made free from ſin, and become ſervants to God, ye have your fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life.* Here are fruits good ſtore, and all good fruits both for here and hereafter. We can never want fruit our ſelves, while we are bringing forth fruit unto God: All obedience is attended with a bleſſing, and though, as was toucht before, we cannot be the founders of our own bleſſedneſs, nor muſt we meerly deſign our own happineſs, or aim at our own profit (for that is mercinary ſervice) yet we may look at our own happineſs and profit, yea, and *Lay up for our ſelves a good foundation*, as *Paul* adviſeth rich men (1 *Tim.* 6. 19.) We then make the beſt of our riches, when we lay up for our ſelves a good foundation. But can a man lay a foundation of his happineſs in his riches? What a rotten foundation will that be? What Hay and Stubble (in this ſence) will Gold and Silver be? What's the meaning of it then when the Apoſtle ſaith, *Laying up for your ſelves a good foundation?*

I anſwer, We do it by the right improvement of riches (for he ſpeaks there to rich men) not that we can lay any foundation to build upon beſide Jeſus Chriſt; for other foundation can no man lay then that which is laid, even *Jeſus Chriſt*; but when our hearts are not glued to the creature, but we uſe them in a holy manner, here's our laying up a good foundation. A godly wiſe man may look upon his right improvement of worldly riches, as an effect of the grace and love of Chriſt dwelling in his heart; and thus he may be ſaid to lay up for himſelf a good foundation. And further, a Believer may look upon his worldly profits as a fruit of the ſame grace, the Lord having promiſed, that he will bleſs and provide for him; ſo that every way a wiſe man may be profitable to himſelf. Thus *Eliphaz* hath at once aſſerted a poſſibility for a man to be profitable to himſelf, and denyed any poſſibility that a man can be profitable unto God; which he further explains in the next words.

Verſe 3. **Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it any gain to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?**

In the former Verſe *Eliphaz* denyed in general, that God receiveth any benefit from man: In this third Verſe he ſpeaks the ſame thing, but ſomewhat more diſtinctly, denying, firſt, that he receives any pleaſure which might add to his bleſſedneſs; or ſecondly, any gain which might add to his abundance. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Is it any gain to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?* As if he had ſaid, *Is the bleſſedneſs of God increaſed by thy righteouſneſs? Or doth the perfection of thy wayes augment his Treaſure? Is he either the happier or the richer by any thing thou art or canſt do?* That's the ſcope and ſence of the words in general.

Is it any pleaſure?] The word which we tranſlate **Pleaſure**, ſignifies the *will*, and becauſe it is ſo great a pleaſure unto man to have his will, therefore the ſame word ſignifieth both pleaſure and the will. So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 1. 2.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe delight is in the Law of God*; that is, whoſe will is there, or who takes pleaſure in the Law of God, his will being reſolved into the will of God. Then we take pleaſure and delight in a thing when we conforme to it, or cloſe with it. The Judgment of God is ſo expreſſed upon *Coniah* (Jer. 22. 28.) *Is this man* Coniah *a deſpiſed broken Idol? Is he a veſſel wherein there is no pleaſure?* A veſſel for the loweſt uſe, as 'tis interpreted, *ver.* 21. A veſſel in which there is no complacency, it is only for neceſſity. So the word is taken alſo (*Prov.* 3. 15.) *He is more precious then Rubies, all the things thou canſt deſire* (or have pleaſure in) *are not to be compared to him.* And again (*Iſa.* 58. 13.) *If thou forbear to do thy pleaſure upon mine holy day.* What is the pleaſure of a carnal man upon the Sabbath, upon the holy day of God? It is to do his own will, and not the will of God. *If thou forbear to do thine own pleaſure*; that is, thine own will upon my holy day. Thus here, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* The Septuagint tranſlate ſomewhat differently, *What cares the Almighty if thou art unblamable in thy wayes?* Thus a man uſually ſpeaks of that wherein he hath no pleaſure, *What care I for it? Is it any pleaſure?* &c.

חפץ
Notat voluntatem cum complacentia, vel acquieſcentia.

Vas in quõ non eſt voluntas.

Τὶ γὰρ μέλει τῷ κυρίῳ, &c. Sept.

That thou art righteous?] Righteouſneſs is two-fold: Firſt, Of Juſtification (ſo ſome underſtand it here) *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art juſtified?* Or ſecondly, There is a righteouſneſs in Converſation, ſo moſt underſtand it here, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that* *thou art holy*? Which is the ſame with the latter clauſe of the Text, *That thou makeſt thy way perfect*?

Further, the word ſignifies to plead our own juſtice, as well as to have a juſtice or righteouſneſs of our own: And thus it may be expounded in this place, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* that is, that *Thou doſt juſtifie thy ſelf*? Or (as Mr. *Broughton*) *Pleadeſt juſtice*? Doſt thou juſtifie thy ſelf, or ſtand upon thine own integrity, and then think to pleaſe God, or to carry the day againſt man, upon thoſe terms? *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty*? That word fully hits the deſign of *Eliphaz*, it ſignifies both *Almighty* and *All-ſufficient*; one that hath all in his own compaſs, that needs not go out of himſelf to fetch in any ſupplies or aid from abroad. He is Self-ſufficient, and he hath a ſufficiency for all others. *Is it any pleaſure to this Almighty One, that thou doſt juſtifie thy ſelf*?

An oblectationi eſt omnipotenti quod juſtificas te? Jun.
Se juſtificare non tam eſt juſtum eſſe quam contendere & conari adverſus calumnias & ſcelera ſibi objecta & ex ratione coram judice reſpondere.

Or is it any gain to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?

As it is *no pleaſure*, ſo *no gain*. The ſecond Verſe before opened, clears the mind of this clauſe. What there he calleth *profit*, is here called *gain*, in different words: And the word here uſed is rendred indifferently both gain and profit. (*Gen.* 37. 26.) When *Joſeph* was caſt into the pit, *Judah* ſaid, *What profit is it to ſlay our Brother*? *Let us ſell him*; let us make gain of him that way; ſlaying him will be no profit to us. And as it ſignifies gain, ſo covetouſneſs; and the reaſon is, becauſe covetouſneſs hath gain for its object; covetouſneſs provokes men to ſeek gain. *Jethro* (*Exod.* 18. 21.) gives counſel that Magiſtrates ſhould be *Men fearing God, and hating Covetouſneſs*, or hating *gain*; that is, not only all covetous practices, but inordinate deſires of gain, for theſe lead into unlawful wayes of gain, even to the perverting of Juſtice.

Is it any gain to him that thou makeſt [thy way] perfect? That is, Thy life, thy converſation, thy courſe. What though thou ſtriveſt after the higheſt attainments of grace, the pureſt purity of life, is this any gain to the Lord? The Septuagint render, *That thou makeſt thy way ſimple*? The ſimple ſincere, plain way is the perfect way. The perfection of our way is the ſimplicity, ſincerity, and uprightneſs of it.

Another reads, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thy way is undefiled*, or clean? that thou doſt ſweep and waſh thy way, ſo that there is no ſpot to be ſeen upon it? (*Pſal.* 119. 1.) *Bleſſed are the undefiled or perfect in the way.* The ſeveral parts of this Pſalm begin with a new Letter, according to the order of the Hebrew Alphabet, intimating that it ought to be learned even of Children, as one of the Ancients infers from it. The undefiled in the way are ſuch (properly) as have been holy or pure from their youth, ſuch as did never corrupt their wayes. *Timothy* is ſaid *from a Child to learn the Scriptures.* Suppoſe thy way thus perfect, that none could tax thee with any groſs ſin even from thy Childhood, could this be any gain to the Almighty?

Alphabetarius eſt hic Pſalmus, oſtendens parvulos ab ipſis ſtatim elementis & pueritia informandos eſſe ad pietatem. Hilar,

There is yet another Tranſlation, which implyeth not only the ſtudy of holineſs, but a boaſting in holineſs, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou doſt juſtifie thy ſelf? Or is it any gain to him that thou doſt affirm thy wayes are perfect*? So it falls in with the third rendring of the former clauſe.

Aut an lucro quod integras aſſeris vias tuas. Jun.

For the underſtanding and further clearing of theſe words, I ſhall draw them forth into diſtinct propoſitions, which will be as ſo many Obſervations from the Text. It may ſeem a very Paradox to aſſert, that it is no pleaſure to the Almighty that a man makes his way perfect, therefore take the ſence firſt in three affirmative Propoſitions, and then in three that are Negative.

First, *The Lord hath pleaſure in us as we are righteous in Chriſt.*

Yea, he loves to hear us boaſt of this righteouſneſs, and glory in it; and the more we do ſo, the more pleaſure he taketh in it (*Iſa.* 45. 25.) *Surely ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs, even to him ſhall men come,* &c. *In the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of* Iſrael *be juſtified, and ſhall glory.* The ſeed of *Iſrael* are righteous in the Lord, and glory in that righteouſneſs; yea, the Lord is pleaſed to hear them glorying in that righteouſneſs, for that's the righteouſneſs of his Son, *In whom he is well pleaſed* (*Matth.* 3. 17.) And becauſe the Church is cloathed with this righteouſneſs, therefore ſhe is called, *The Lord's delight* (*Iſa.* 62. 4.) *Thou ſhalt no more be called forſaken, neither ſhall thy Land any more be termed deſolate, but thou ſhalt be called* Hephzibah, *and thy Land* Beulah, *for the Lord delighteth in thee.* Thou ſhalt be called *my delight*, *or my pleaſure is in her.* The word of the Text, the Lords pleaſure is in the Church, and therefore the Lords pleaſure is in the Church, becauſe the Church is adorned and beautified with the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt; this is it which cauſeth the Lord to call his Church *Hephzibah*, *My pleaſure is in her.* When *Eliphaz* enquireth, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous*? We may anſwer, The Lord hath pleaſure in this righteouſneſs, and as he tells the Church, ſo every particular Believer, his delight and pleaſure is in him.

Secondly, *God takes pleaſure alſo in us as we are righteous in Converſation.*

David (*Pſal.* 147. 10, 11.) gives a clear proof of it both in the Negative and in the Affirmative. *The Lord delighteth not in the ſtrength of a horſe, he taketh not pleaſure in the legs of a man.* The Lords delight is neither in horſes, nor in men; neither in their ſtrength, nor in their beauty: Wherein is the Lords pleaſure then? The next words ſhew us where, *He takes pleaſure in them that fear him and hope in his mercy.* This Scripture ſeems to ſpeak directly contrary to *Eliphaz* in *Job*, he ſaith, *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous*? But *David* ſaith, *The Lord takes pleaſure in thoſe that fear him*: Therefore we muſt not underſtand *Eliphaz* in this ſence, as if the Lord had no delight or contentment at all in the holineſs of his people, as if it were all one to him whether they are holy or unholy: There is a Generation who ſay, That all actions are alike, and that it is all one before God, whether men be righteous or unrighteous, whether they do good or evil: Woe to them that underſtand this Scripture in ſuch a corrupt ſence, for the Lord doth not only hate iniquity, but he is *of purer eyes then to behold any iniquity.* He hath no pleaſure either in unrighteouſneſs, or in the unrighteous; but both righteouſneſs and the righteous are his pleaſure. There are three things which I ſhall touch for the confirmation of it.

Firſt, The Lord cannot but take pleaſure in his own Image: Now that righteouſneſs which is implanted in us, and put forth by us, the righteouſneſs of our natures and of our actions, as we are regenerate, is nothing elſe but the Image of God renewed upon us. Seeing then God cannot but take pleaſure in his own Image, therefore it is a wickedneſs to think that God takes no pleaſure in a righteous man, or in his righteouſneſs.

Secondly, As this righteouſneſs is the Image of God in us; ſo it is the very workmanſhip of God upon us (*Epheſ.* 2. 10.) *For we are his workmanſhip*: We are ſo not only firſt in our natural capacity, as we are men; and ſecondly, in our civil capacity as ſuch or ſuch men, high or low, rich or poor; but alſo (which is the thing intended by the Apoſtle) in our ſpiritual capacity as Saints. Thus we are *the workmanſhip of God, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we ſhould walk in them.* The ſame Apoſtle ſaith again, *He that hath wrought us for this ſelf ſame thing is God* (2 Cor. 5. 5.) Is it poſſible that God ſhould have no pleaſure in his own works? We read in the firſt of *Geneſis*, that when he had made the world, the Lord *ſaw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* God hath an All-ſeeing eye, he alwayes beholdeth all things; but when 'tis ſaid, he ſaw all that he had made, this imports a ſpecial act of God, after the manner of men, who ſtrictly view and behold what they have done, delighting in it: Thus the Lord ſaw all that he had made; he (as it were) came to view his own work, he ſaw and behold it was very good, he took pleaſure in it. Now if God took pleaſure in that ſtructure and fabrick of the world, the firſt creation, how much more pleaſure doth he take in that holineſs which he hath wrought in the hearts of his people, which is a ſecond creation? And that's a more curious and noble ſtructure then this viſible world is. *The new Creation is more excellent then the Old.* Therefore the Lord cannot but delight in a righteous perſon, for he is his workmanſhip. What *Job* (*Chap.* 14. 15.) aſſures himſelf of, is moſt true in this reſpect, *Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thine hands. Job* ſpeaks there of his outward man: My body (he means) was made by thee, 'tis the work of thy hands, and thou wilt fetch it back again, thou wilt redeem it from the duſt. Whatſoever hath the workmanſhip of God upon it, he hath pleaſure in it as it is his work, and a ſpecial pleaſure in that, which (as any work of Grace is) is his ſpecial work.

Thirdly, This Conſideration ſhews that the Lord muſt take pleaſure in a righteous perſon, becauſe he bears the form of his will revealed in his word. Holineſs is our conformity to the will of God: Now the Lord cannot but take pleaſure in thoſe who conform to his will. *Samuel* tells *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 15. 22. and there he uſeth this word in the Text) *Hath the Lord as great delight in Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?* God gave thee a Word, a Command, to which he expected thy conformity, but thou haſt thought to pleaſe the Lord with Sacrifices, which he commanded thee not; this was thy miſtake and thy folly. We honour God when we do his will; ſurely then we muſt needs take pleaſure in thoſe that do it. Man takes pleaſure when he can have his will (though it be a corrupt and ſinful will) fulfilled: It cannot but be a pleaſure to God when his holy will is fulfilled, or done on earth as it is in Heaven. Thus we ſee the ſecond Propoſition cleared, for the underſtanding of theſe words, That as the Lord takes pleaſure in thoſe who are righteous by the imputed righteouſneſs of his Son, ſo even in thoſe alſo who are righteous by the implanted righteouſneſs or holineſs of his Spirit.

Thirdly, *God takes pleaſure to ſee a ſincere and upright perſon juſtifie himſelf, or plead his own juſtice againſt all the falſe accuſations and ſuſpicions of men.*

The Lord likes it well to hear a man who is falſly accuſed, to ſtand up and maintain his own innocency; yea, it is our duty, and we are bound in conſcience to maintain our own innocency. So *David* in the ſeventh Pſalm, and in the eighteenth Pſalm, juſtified himſelf againſt *Saul*. And thus *Job* all along in this Book juſtified himſelf againſt the opinion of his Friends; in this ſence God takes pleaſure, when we are ſo righteous in all our dealings, and perfect in all our wayes, that we dare encounter whoſoever ſpeaks the contrary, and can waſh off all the aſperſions which either miſguided and miſtaken friends, or profeſſed enemies caſt upon us. You have now had thoſe three affirmative Propoſitions for the underſtanding of the Text. Take three more in the Negative.

Firſt, *God hath no pleaſure to ſee us juſtifie our ſelves before him, or to plead our own righteouſneſs with him, yea, he is extreamly diſpleaſed at it.*

This ſome conceive the chief thing which *Eliphaz* aimed at. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou doſt juſtifie thy ſelf?* No, thou doſt highly provoke him in doing ſo; to plead with or to juſtifie our ſelves before God that we are righteous, is worſe then all our unrighteouſneſs, for this overthrows the whole deſign of the Goſpel, which is (1 *Cor.* 1. 29.) *That no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence, but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* And (*Rom.* 3. 19, 20.) The Law convinceth all, *That all the world may become guilty before God, therefore by the deeds of the Law there ſhall be no fleſh juſtified in his ſight.* God will have every mouth ſtopped, or cry guilty; and therefore for any one to open his mouth and juſtifie himſelf before God, is to overthrow the Goſpel. They are *ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God, who go about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs* (*Rom.* 10. 3.) And as God hath no pleaſure in them who boaſt of their righteouſneſs to juſtifie themſelves before him, ſo,

Secondly, *God hath no pleaſure in them who boaſt of their own righteouſneſs, and contemn others.*

Though a man may aſſert the righteouſneſs of his Converſation againſt all them who queſtion it; yet God reſents it highly when any proclaim their own righteouſneſs to the deſpiſing of others. Chriſt ſpeaks a Parable againſt thoſe (in *Luke* 18. *v.* 9, 10, 11.) who *truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others. Two men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Phariſee, the other a Publican: The Phariſee ſtood and prayed thus with himſelf, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Adulterers, Unjuſt, or even as this Publican.* Here was one that advanced his own active righteouſneſs, and he did it with the contempt of another. *I am not as this Publican.* The Lord takes no pleaſure in this; yea, the Lord is highly diſpleaſed with this. And (*Iſa.* 65. 5.) the Prophet repreſents the Lords indignation againſt this Phariſaical ſpirit in dreadful eloquence, *Stand by thy ſelf, come not near to me, for I am holier then thou.* Thus they pleaded their righteouſneſs in contempt of others. *Theſe* (ſaith the Lord) *are a ſmoak in my noſe* (that is, grievous, and diſpleaſing) *a fire that burneth all the day.*

Thirdly, *God hath no pleaſure at all in any of our righteouſneſs, either in the righteouſneſs of our juſtification, or the righteouſneſs of our ſanctification, as the leaſt addition to his own happineſs.*

The reaſon of it is, becauſe (as was ſhewed from the former Verſe) God is Self-ſufficient, and hath no dependance at all upon the Creature: So that what pleaſure ſoever the Lord hath in the righteouſneſs of our Juſtification, or of our Sanctification, we cannot put it to this account that we add any thing to his happineſs.

All the pleaſure which God taketh is in himſelf, or in the fulfilling of his own good pleaſure in Chriſt.

And therefore the work which Jeſus was to do on Earth, is called, *The pleaſure of God* (Iſa. 53. 10.) *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him, he hath put him to grief; when thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his dayes, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.* That pleaſure of the Lord was the work which the Lord put into his hand, or which he gave him to do, even the bringing about his eternal purpoſe, for the recovery of loſt man; that's a work in which the Lord takes pleaſure, ſo much pleaſure, that the Prophet calleth it *His pleaſure.* And thus the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Eph.* 1. 5, 6.) *Having predeſtinated us to the adoption of Children, by Jeſus Chriſt, according to the good pleaſure of his own will,* &c. The good pleaſure of God is only in his own will, that's his pleaſure. The Lord delights to ſee his will accompliſht in the ſaving of ſinners, as well as in the obedience of Saints; that's a part of the good will of God: Why doth he take pleaſure in the obedience of Saints, even becauſe his own will is done? It's not any thing in us that doth it. So when he ſaves us, the pleaſure which he takes, is in the fulfilling of his own will, rather then in our ſalvation. *Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?*

Deus nullis rebus quæ extra ipſum ſunt, tangitur aut mutatur.

Verſe 4. **Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? Or will he enter with thee into judgment?**

The Queſtion is to be reſolved into this Negative, *He will not reprove thee for fear of thee,* &c.

Will he reprove thee?] The word ſignifies firſt, to argue or diſpute, and ſo to convince by the authority of reaſon.

יכח *Arguit, redarguit, corripuit, judicavit,*

Secondly, To plead, ſo as to convince by evidence of the Law and fact (*Mich.* 6. 2.) *Hear ye, O Mountains, the Lords controverſie, and ye ſtrong foundations of the Earth, for the Lord hath a controverſie with his People, and he will plead with* Iſrael. The Mountains and the ſtrong foundations of the Earth, are the Great men of the Earth, or Magiſtratical powers, with theſe the Lord threatens a Controverſie, and that he will plead or argue his cauſe with them.

Thirdly, It ſignifies to argue or plead not with words only, but with blows, to reprove with correction, *Job* 5. 17. *Happy is the man whom thou correcteſt.* The word which here we render *reprove*, is there rendred to *correct*, which is reproving by blows.

Fourthly, Some tranſlate it to evidence, *to evince*, and determine: Thus it is ſaid (*Gen.* 25. 16.) That *Abimelech reproved Sarah*; that is, gave evidence that ſhe had a Husband: And *Abraham*'s Servant ſaid (*Gen.* 24. 44.) She that ſaith to me, *Both drink thou, and I will alſo draw for thy Camels, let her be the Woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my Maſters Son:* That is, Let this token be an evidence to me, that it is ſhe whom thou haſt appointed for his Wife. Some here take it ſo, *Will God evidence*, or determine, *concerning thee, by thy fear, or the worſhip which thou giveſt him, That thou art righteous?* We expreſs it fully enough, *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?*

Or will he enter with thee into judgment?

Both theſe expreſſions are of the ſame ſence; and theſe words [**For fear of thee**] may be read in the cloſe of the Verſe, *Will he reprove thee, or will he enter with thee into judgment for fear of thee?*

Fear may be taken here two wayes: Either firſt Actively; or ſecondly, Paſſively.

Take it Actively, and ſo it notes the fear of *Job*, *Will he reprove thee becauſe of thy fear?* And then by his fear we are to underſtand his Religiouſneſs or Holineſs: So Maſter *Broughton*, *Would he reprove thee for thy Religion?*

Putaſne te plecti ob religionē tuā?

Take this Fear Paſſively, and then it implyeth a Fear which God himſelf might be thought to have of him: As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *God is not afraid of thee.* The Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 51. 12.) *Who art thou that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of a man?* &c. Much more may we ſay, who or what is man that God ſhould be afraid of him? One of the Ancients following this Interpretation, profeſſeth, that no fit or comely ſence can be given of theſe words, but concludes, that *Eliphaz* ſpake very fooliſhly and groſly, or as a man forſaken and left of God: *For* (ſaith he) *can any one imagine ſuch a thing as this, that* Job *ſhould have a thought that God was afraid of him?* But we may very well accommodate the ſence in either of theſe conſiderations of Fear, whether Actively, or Paſſively, and judicious Interpreters carry it both wayes. Let us weigh it a little in both.

An de religione tua argueret te? Jun.

Quis vel hoc deſipiens ſentiat, quod Dominus ex timore nos arguat & ex metu judicium juñ contra nos proponat. Greg.

Firſt Actively, As fear is taken for the fear which *Job* feared; that is, for his religion and worſhip, or the exerciſe of it, then the meaning is this, *Doſt thou think that God doth puniſh thee for thy goodneſs, or becauſe thou art righteous? No, it is becauſe thou art irreligious: Is not thine iniquity great, and thy ſin infinite?* As he ſpeaks out in the next words, *Doſt thou think that God puniſhes thee for thy holineſs?* No, he can find ſins enough to do it for. And *Eliphaz* might ſpeak to ſuch a ſence (I conceive) becauſe *Job* pleaded his integrity ſo much, as if he ſhould ſay, *Never think that God afflicts thee for thy holineſs, or righteouſneſs, but rather acknowledge thy ſins and thy wickedneſs to be the cauſe of thy afflictions: Are not thine iniquities maniſeſt?*

Putaſne quod ille te affligat quia religioſus ſis & Dei timens ac integer ut de te ipſe predicas? minime vero, quin potius quod ſis irreligioſus. Merc.

There is a truth in this, *God doth correct many who fear him; but he doth not correct any one for fearing of him: Many holy perſons are afflicted; but no man was ever afflicted for his holineſs.* God hath made many promiſes to the godly man, that he will reward him, and do him good; *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him. Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſes of this life, and of that which is to come.* Therefore no man needs fear that God will hurt him for his holineſs: Though a holy man may receive many rods and ſcourges from God, yet holineſs never received the leaſt ſcourge from God.

Again, as Fear is taken Actively for Religion, or for Holineſs, the ſence may be given thus, in purſuance of the fourth ſignification of the word *Reprove*, before explained. When God comes to judge thee, or when he declares what thou art, he will not look to thy fear only, to thy profeſſion of Religion and Holineſs, and over-look or wink at thy ſins; and therefore he preſently ſubjoyns, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?* Hereby arguing, that no mans piety is ſo perfect, that thereby he can be accounted juſt or righteous in the ſight of God, or that a mans profeſſion, yea, and practice of Religion is of no value, either to eſcape the puniſhment of his ſin, or to deſerve a reward at the hands of God. Some expound that (*Pſal.* 50. 8.) in a parallel ſence to this, the word being the ſame. *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices* (which is the ſame with *Fear* in the Text, according to this Interpretation, being put for all outward worſhip or religiouſneſs) *or for thy burnt-offerings continually before me.* For thoſe words, *To have been*, which our Tranſlators ſupply, may be left out, and the ſence remain perfect: Or if thoſe words be continued, then the negative Particle *not*, is (as in many Scriptures it is) to be reaſſumed out of the firſt part of the verſe, and the whole read thus, *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, or for thy Burnt-offerings not to have been continually before me:* That is, I will not charge thee with a neglect of outward duty or worſhip, the inward and ſpiritual (of which he ſpeaks, *ver.* 14.) being that which is moſt pleaſing unto me. Now as to the paralleling of this place in the Pſalms, with the ſence of *Job*'s Text now under hand, we muſt read them thus, *I will not judge thee for thy Sacrifices*; that is, when I determine concerning thy righteouſneſs, I will not do it by having an eye to, or reſpecting thy Sacrifices, thy religious courſe and exerciſe of holineſs, though thou haſt been much, yea, even continually converſant in them; I ſhall only argue and declare thee righteous as thou truſteſt in me, and by faith takeſt hold of my Covenant. Thus as the Lord is conceived ſaying in the Pſalm, I will not judge or declare thee righteous for thy Sacrifices, ſo here *Eliphaz*, *Will he* (that is, certainly he will not) *judge or declare thee righteous for thy fear?* And ſo the latter part of the verſe may receive the ſame Expoſition, *Will he enter with thee into judgment*, namely, *for thy fear?* Will God deal with thee upon the account of thy piety? And when he comes to juſtifie thee, will he impute that to thee? Or when God enters into judgment with thee, will he ſuffer thee to preſent thy fear, thy piety, or goodneſs to him, and ſo thereby anſwer his plea, or take away the action which he brings againſt thee? When God enters with us into judgment, we may boldly plead our intereſt or Faith in the Mediator, but we muſt not plead our fear, the Grace or Holineſs either of our perſons, or of our ſervices.

Numquid ex timore tuo judicabit te? Deus quando te judicabit, non reſpiciet ad timorē tuum tantum & connivebit ad mala quæ feceris. Hoc fine ſubjicit, nonne malum tuum amplum eſt? *Oſtendit autem nullam pietatem hominis eſſe perfectam, ut inde juſtus judicari deo poſſit.* Coc.

Eliphaz *propoſitum eſt oſtendere quod religio hominis non proſit ad demerendum deum, vel peccati pœnam evadēdam.* Coc.

Thus we ſee the Doctrine of the Text according to this Expoſition, and the active ſignification of the word *Fear*, carrieth in it the very life and ſpirit of the Goſpel. All the worth and merit of our works, as to Righteouſneſs, is null'd and laid proſtrate, and we taught to glory in nothing but the free gift and grace of God by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, As *Fear* is taken Paſſively, *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* That is, Is God afraid of thee? Doth he pick quarrels with thee for fear of thee? Or ſeek occaſions againſt thee when there is none, only leſt thou ſhouldſt ſtand in his way, or be a detriment to him? This appears plainly to be the ſence of our Tranſlators.

Whence Obſerve, *God is above the fear of the Creature.*

As in the former verſe God is above any advantages or hopes that the Creature can give him; ſo he is above the fear of any hurt that the Creature can do him. As the goodneſs or righteouſneſs of man cannot benefit the Lord; ſo the wickedneſs and ſinfulneſs of man cannot at all impair the eternal glory and happineſs of the Lord. Though the wickedneſs of man be a darkening to the manifeſtations of his glory (and for that wicked men ſhall be judged) yet as to his eſſential glory all the wickedneſs in the world cannot darken that, nor be the leaſt abatement to it. *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* No, man cannot hurt the Lord by all his wickedneſs, and therefore

The puniſhment which God layeth upon wicked men is not after the manner of men. God doth not puniſh as man puniſheth.

Eliphaz here ſpeaks of that which is often indeed a true ground among men why they reprove or puniſh other men. Some reprove others upon a vain fear of them, and ſome upon a juſt fear of them. Why did the *Jews* accuſe and reprove Chriſt? Was it not for fear of him? At leaſt they pretended a fear, why elſe were they ſo haſty to have Jeſus Chriſt brought to judgment? (*John* 12. 47, 48.) *Then gathered the Chief Prieſts and Phariſees a Council, and ſaid, What do we? For this man doth many Miracles: if we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the* Romans *ſhall come and take away both our place and Nation.* They crucified Chriſt for fear (though it was but a vain fear) that he would be the ruine of their ſtate; the *Romans* muſt needs come and deſtroy them, if they let him alone. *Fear makes men cruel*; and they are moſt ready to hurt others, who continually ſuſpect hurt from others. It hath been an ancient Obſervation, That *Cowards are murderous and re-*

vengeful: While a man fears that ſuch a man will be his ruine, he ruines him if he can, and removes that out of his way which he ſuppoſeth ſtanding in the way of his own ſafety. Why did *Pharaoh* give command to ſlay the Male-children of the *Jews*, and oppreſs that people? It was upon a vain or cowardly fear, *Come let us deal wiſely with them, leaſt they multiply, and it come to paſs that when there falleth out any war, they joyn alſo with our enemies, and fight againſt us, and ſo get them up out of the Land* (Exod. 1. 10.) It is ſaid at the ſeventeenth verſe of that Chapter, that *The Children of* Iſrael *were fruitful and* (God fulfilling herein his Promiſe made to *Abraham*) *increaſed abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, and the Land was filled with them.* When God thus caſt a gracious eye upon them, *Pharaoh* and his Councellors caſt a jealous eye upon them; began to ſuſpect their multiplying might at laſt diminiſh him, that their riſing might prove his ruine. Therefore upon *reaſon of State* he muſt find out a way to ſuppreſs and keep them under as ſlaves and bondmen, whom his Anceſtors received as welcome gueſts, and had to that day enjoyed as faithful friends. *Pharaoh* being captivated with this fear, ſaw no way to free himſelf, but by taking away the freedom of that whole people. As ſome, through the prevalency of their own fears dare not do juſtice; ſo others through the prevalency of fear do that which is unjuſt. Take one Inſtance more, Why did *Herod* (*Matth.* 2.) ſend out to ſlay all the Children? It was for fear of the King of the *Jews*; he was afraid of Chriſt, and therefore that he might murder him, he gave that horrible ſentence to ſlay all the Infants. Again, ſome reprove and judge upon a due fear; for as Tyrants and wicked men are full of fear becauſe full of cruelty, and have ſuſpitious thoughts that others will wrong them, becauſe they have a mind to wrong every man; ſo juſt and righteous Magiſtrates when they ſee evil working, they muſt reprove and puniſh it, leſt it ſpread to the endangering of the publick Peace. This is a juſt fear, and ſuch as becomes a man, even a man of courage and integrity; ſuch may fear, that if ſeditious ſpirits be let alone, they will undermine a whole Nation, and deſtroy thouſands. A Magiſtrate reproves and judges Thieves and Murderers out of fear that if they increaſe no man ſhall live quietly. Such as either openly or ſecretly contrive evil againſt a Nation, the Magiſtrate from a juſt ground of fear deals with them and reproves, leſt they ſhould diſturb or infect the whole.

Veriſſimum eſt illud, quod inter argumentandum aſſumit Eliphaz, *ex timore frequenter naſci aut vehementius accendi ſolere ſeveritatem in irrogando ſupplicio.* Pined.

But the Lord doth not reprove any man for fear of him, he is of ſuch infinite ſtrength and ſtability, ſo far out of the reach of all the plots and contrivances of the wicked, that he needs not call them to account, leſt they ſhould hurt his State, pull him out of his Throne, ſpoil his Kingdom, or get his Dominion from him; the Lord is not afraid of any of theſe things; but the true reaſon why the Lord reproves wicked men, is, becauſe he hates their iniquities, and is a God of truth and judgment. Though Magiſtrates may puniſh not only out of the love of Righteouſneſs and Judgmen, but becauſe they fear a State may be ruin'd if they do it not; yet the Lord hath none of this fear, in regard of his State, but he doth it meerly out of love to Juſtice, and as a hater of wickedneſs.

He reproves man becauſe he hath ſinned againſt him, not becauſe he is afraid of him, as *Eliphaz* ſhews in the words which follow.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquity infinite?

For thou haſt taken a pledge of thy Brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their cloathing.

Thou haſt not given water to the weary to drink, and thou haſt with-holden bread from the hungry.

But as for the mighty man he had the earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it.

Thou haſt ſent widdows away empty, and the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken.

IN this Context *Eliphaz* intends to ſhew the true reaſon why God reproved *Job*, and entred into judgment with him, it was not (as was ſaid at the fourth Verſe) either becauſe God was afraid of him, or becauſe he feared God, but it was for his wickedneſs, as *Eliphaz* (though miſtaken) concluded againſt him: As if he had ſaid, *God doth not puniſh thee becauſe he is afraid of thee, but becauſe he loveth juſtice, and hateth iniquity: Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquity infinite?* That's the ſcope of theſe words, which we may fitly call *Job's Indictment*, and this Indictment is laid down firſt in general words. *Verſ.* 5. *Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquity infinite?* And here *Job* is not charged with wickedneſs and iniquity barely, but under a two-fold aggravation.

1. *Great.*
2. *Infinite.*

Secondly, We have his Indictment drawn out into particular Charges, or a ſpecification of ſome notorious ſins given againſt him the Verſes following.

This particular Charge conſiſts of two heads.

Firſt, Sins againſt man: Secondly, Sins againſt God: His ſuppoſed ſins againſt man, contained in the words now read, are of two ſorts: Firſt, Sins of commiſſion, or of the evil which he had done: Secondly, Sins of omiſſion, or of the good that he had not done. The evil which he chargeth him to have done, is two-fold: Firſt, An act of injuſtice, *Taking a pledge*, in the ſixth verſe. Secondly, An act of uncharitableneſs, *Stripping the naked*, in the ſame verſe.

Both which evils, or miſcarriages towards the honeſt poor are aggravated (*ver.* 8.) by his undue connivence at the wicked rich; as he was too ſevere againſt the poor, ſo he was over-favourable towards the great and mighty; *But as for the mighty man he had the earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it:* As if he had ſaid, *Thou didſt never ſet thy ſelf to do juſtice upon the great ones, be they and do they what they will, they have the earth; thou didſt never put forth or exerciſe thy power to ſuppreſs and oppoſe their inſolencies; thy edge was turned only againſt inferiour ones: Thou tookeſt a pledge from the poor, and haſt ſtripped the naked of their cloathing.*

His ſins of omiſſion are expreſſed in the ſeventh verſe; *Thou haſt not given water to the weary; thou haſt withholden bread from the hungry:* And in the ninth verſe, *Thou haſt ſent widows away empty, and the armes of the fatherleſs have been broken:* Which may be either taken thus, Thou haſt broken their armes, or thou haſt not given thy help and aſſiſtance to reſtore and relieve them when broken. Thus we have a light into the meaning of theſe five Verſes, as they are a Charge of ſin upon *Job*.

Verſe 5. **Is not thy wickedneſs great?**

The Queſtion may be taken two wayes; either conjecturally and doubtingly, or aſſertively and affirmingly. Uſually in Scripture ſuch Queſtions are reſolved into Aſſertions, and ſo divers interpreters reſolve this here; *Is not thy wickedneſs great?* That is, I conclude againſt thee, *That thy wickedneſs is great, and that thy iniquities are infinite:* So Maſter *Broughton* renders, *Doubleſs thy evil is great.* Others conceive it more clear to the mind of the Text, that this Queſtion ſhould be interpreted conjecturally, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?* That is, May we not ſuppoſe, that thy wickedneſs is great? May we not from (at leaſt) probable grounds think thus of thee? And that, firſt, from the general ſtate of man by nature; mans heart being ſinful, he may ſin, and ſin (as it were) without bounds, greatly. *There is no man* (ſaith *Solomon*, 1 Kings 8. 46.) *that liveth and ſinneth not: Solomon* puts it as a parentheſis in his prayer, but it is ſuch a parentheſis, as hooks in all mankind, it takes all in, *Who is there that ſinneth not?* So (*Prov.* 20. 9.) *Who can ſay I am clean from my ſin?* Now upon this general ground *Eliphaz* might ſuppoſe, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?* All men have this in their nature, and haſt not thou made improvement of it in thy life? All men being ſinful by nature, art not thou extreamly ſinful in practice?

Non tam hac ei ex profeſſo objice, quam cogitandum ei relinquit, num hac fecerit. Merc.

Again, He might make the ſuppoſition upon this ground, his preſent condition, or his affliction: Thou art greatly afflicted, thy afflictions are not of an ordinary ſize, or meaſure, therefore is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquity beyond the ordinary meaſure? Upon this common rule he might ſuppoſe his ſin very great; for uſually God doth proportion and meaſure out puniſhments by our ſins. Thy ſufferings are very great, therefore are not thy ſins great too? Thus he might ſpeak conjecturally upon both theſe conſiderations: And yet if we conſider how poſitively he ſpeaks of particulars at the ſixth and ſeventh verſes, &c. *Thou haſt taken a pledge of thy brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their cloathing,* &c: He gives us but too much ground to think, that he did more then barely conjecture, while he ſaid,

Is not thy wickedneſs great?

רעתך *Malum tuũ vox Hebræa pertinet ad improbitatẽ quandã & impudentiã, contra jus & æquum omnia conculcantem.*

The word which we render wickedneſs, is by ſome ſpecially expounded of that wickedneſs which hath a kind of impudence in it, and which doth not only break, tranſgreſs, or ſtep over the Law, but ſpurns againſt it; every man that ſinneth ſteppeth over the Law, over the line, but there are ſome that kick at it, ſome who trample upon it, yea, they would deſtroy it; ſo ſome heighten the emphaſis of the word.

Malitia in ſacris interdum eſt afflictio, ærũna vexatio, pro malo pœnæ non culpæ accipit. Rab. Lev.

Again, the word is rendred by others as ſignifying the evil of puniſhment in this part of the verſe, and not the evil of ſin; *Is not thy affliction great? Therefore thy iniquity is infinite.* The Greek word (*Matth.* 6. 34.) anſwers this, *Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof*; that is, the trouble and the ſorrow of it: (*Amos* 3. 6.) *Is there any evil in the City which the Lord hath not done?* So here, *Is not thy evil great?* Thy evil of puniſhment? Therefore thy iniquity is infinite. But I rather fix it upon the former; though the word ſometimes ſignifies the evil of affliction, yet here I ſhall take it for the evil of ſin, or as we tranſlate, *wickedneſs*, which denotes not ordinary but great ſin; for though every wicked man be a ſinner, yet every ſinner is not properly a wicked man.

Malitiam dicit plurimam, ſed iniquitates infinitas, quia in pluribus peccat homo omittendo quam committendo. Aquin.

Further, wickedneſs in the former, and iniquity in the latter part of the verſe, may be thus diſtinguiſhed; *wickedneſs* ſpecially reſpects thoſe acts by which we hurt and wrong others; *iniquity* thoſe in which we paſs by or neglect the duty which we owe to others; and therefore *Eliphaz* calls his wickedneſs *great*, but his iniquities *infinite*; becauſe ſins of omiſſion are more in number then ſins of commiſſion: Man fails oftner by not doing the good required, then by doing the evil forbidden. Nature can eaſier forbear that which it likes, or pleaſeth it, then be converſant in that which it likes not, or with which it is diſpleaſed.

Is not thy wickedneſs great?

The word ſignifies both magnitude and multitude, and it may be taken both wayes here, for great in bulk, and great in number.

But it may be ſaid, Whoſe wickedneſs is not great? Or is any ſin little? Why then doth *Eliphaz* faſten this upon *Job*, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?*

I anſwer, Firſt, That it is unbecoming any man, to ſay his ſins are little; we ſhould not little, or leſſen our ſins, or have low thoughts of them: As we ought not to have low thoughts of any of the mercies of God, but to think them all great to us, yea, too great for us; ſo we ſhould not have light thoughts of any of our ſins, but judge the leaſt of them great, and the lighteſt of them heavy, yea, even too great and to heavy for us to bear. Nor doth any thing more greaten a mans ſin, then his opinion that it is little.

Secondly, I anſwer, That indeed no ſin is little: In the leaſt ſin that ever was committed, there is a greatneſs, as committed againſt the great God, as it is a breach of the Law, and an abuſe of the love of the Great God. Nevertheleſs, though every ſin, thus conſidered, is great, yet comparatively ſome ſins are but little; and ſins being weighed one with the other, we may give this diſtinction of them into little and great, light and heavy. And as ſome godly men are faithful, and fear God above many; ſo ſome wicked men are ſinful and diſhonour God above many. *Is not thy wickedneſs great?*

Hence Note, *'Tis our duty not only to take notice of our ſins, but of the greatneſs and degree of our ſins.*

Eliphaz doth well to put *Job* upon that inquiry, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?* Though he did ill ſo groundleſly to ſuſpect, much more to conclude that it was ſo. When *Moſes* (*Exod.* 32. 31.) interceded for the people, after they had made the golden Calf, he makes report of their ſin to God in the fulleſt aggravation of it; *Oh, this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them Gods of Gold:* He doth not only confeſs in their behalf, that they had ſinned; but they had ſinned greatly, *They have* (ſaith he) *ſinned a ſin*; that's more then to do a thing that is ſinful, and which is yet more, *They have ſinned a great ſin*; and which is moſt of all, *They* (though they have been taught, and have profeſſed that God made them) *have made them Gods of Gold. David* makes this the ground why he did beg pardon of his ſin (*Pſal.* 25. 11.) *Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* As we are to look upon the greatneſs of ſin, to humble our ſouls with godly ſorrow; ſo we are to look upon the greatneſs of ſin when we ſue to the Lord for pardon; pardon my ſin for it is great: our very ſenſibleneſs that our ſin is great, is a prevailing Argument with God to pardon it; and our inſenſibleneſs that our ſins are great, gives the greateſt ſtop to the pardon of them. And as every ſin hath the more need of pardon, by how much the greater it is; ſo God will have the more glory in pardoning it, by how much the greater it is. The great wounds and ſickneſſes of the Patient have the more need of curing; and if a Phyſitian cure a great wound or ſickneſs, he hath the more honour by the cure. Now that we may take the trueſt meaſure of our ſins, we muſt look upon them, firſt in their nature and kind, of what ſort they are, and to what they relate in their commiſſion; ſecondly, in their circumſtances, when, how, and in what manner they have been committed. That ſin which is but little in the nature of it, may be a very great one in the circumſtances of it. As there are ſome mercies which we receive from God, little in their kind, yet great in their circumſtances, and very obliging; ſo are our ſins. Some ſins are very horrid in their own nature, they lay the Conſcience waſte, and eat out the very principles of Godlineſs, ſuch are Atheiſm, Blaſphemy, and Idolatry. The ſin of the people of *Iſrael* in making Gods of Gold, how deteſtable was it? A golden God, what an ugly ſight is that? And indeed there are many ſins which by how much they have the more external beauty and glory upon them, the more ugly and filthy they are. Other ſins are ſmall in their kind, yet by additional conſiderations they ſwell into an immenſe vaſtneſs, and become out of meaſure ſinful.

For inſtance, Firſt, To ſin againſt light, that is, not only to commit a known ſin, but to commit it knowingly ('Tis poſſible, that while we know ſuch a thing to be a ſin, yet to do it unknowingly, or not to know that we have done it: He that knoweth it is a ſin to tell any untruth, may yet tell one, and not know it: But) when we do that which is a known ſin, and likewiſe know that we do it, then we have no cloak for our ſin.

Secondly, To ſin againſt many received mercies, greatens it exceedingly: Thus the Lord aggravates the ſin of *David*, I have done thus and thus for thee, and if this had been too little, I would moreover have given thee ſuch and ſuch things; *Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his ſight*, 2 Sam. 12. 8, 9.

Thirdly, It greatens ſin when continued in after warnings, and renewed admonitions; *He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy* (Prov. 29. 1.) The greatneſs of his puniſhment (he ſhall be (not afflicted, but) *deſtroyed*) the quickneſs of it (he ſhall *ſuddenly be deſtroyed*) the irrecoverableneſs of it (and that without remedy) all theſe with one conſent vote the greatneſs of that ſin, whatſoever it be in its kind, which is perſiſted in after perſwaſion to deſiſt and depart from it. The Church is commanded to paſs her extreameſt cenſure upon that offending brother, who having been told his fault; firſt, by that brother alone whom he hath offended; ſecondly, by him and two more aſſociated as witneſſes; thirdly, then, by the Church gathered in the Name of Chriſt (*Matth.* 18. 16, 17.) *But if he will not hear thee, then take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word may be eſtabliſhed; and if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a Publican. It is dangerous enough to ſin againſt a rule; but 'tis more dangerous to* *ſin againſt a reproof, eſpecially againſt the reproof of a whole Church.*

Fourthly, When we ſin in the ſight of judgments upon our ſelves, or others, whether for the ſame, or other ſins: This is as if a thief ſhould ſteal before the Judge, or under the gibbet, while he ſeeth others arraigned or executed for ſtealing. It is very evil to ſin againſt Judgments threatened; but it is far worſe to ſin againſt Judgments executed. That wrath which is revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs to the ear in the Word of God, ſhould ſtop us from ſin; much more that which is revealed to the eye in the works of God.

Fifthly, When we ſin againſt our own promiſes not to ſin, when our own words condemn us, as well as the Word of God, this ſtains every ſin with a double guilt.

Sixthly, The greatning of a ſin is from the repeating of it after it hath been repented of. To fall into any ſin out of which we have riſen, makes our fall the more grievous; when a ſinner licks up his own vomit, when he builds again the things which he had deſtroyed, he makes himſelf a tranſgreſſor indeed. They who repent not cannot expect mercy; what remains then for them but a certain fearful expectation of Judgment, who repent of their repentings?

Seventhly, Sin is greatly increaſed when acted with deliberation; to be hurried into a ſin though great, is not ſo great as to do a leſs evil conſultively, or to adviſe upon it and do it; ſome ſin for want of advice, many ſin againſt advice, and not a few ſin with advice, that is adviſedly. *'Tis hard to find out a way to give them comfort, who ſin with counſel.* They who are wiſe to do evil, or who do evil as a piece of their wiſdom (ſuch every deliberate action is eſteemed to be) will be found the greateſt fools. *All ſin is folly, but thoſe ſins have moſt of the fool in them, which we think we do wiſely.* In all theſe caſes we may well ſay to any man, as *Eliphaz* here to *Job*, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?*

And thine iniquity infinite?

ערד *Perverſitas & non finis iniquitatibus tuis.* Heb. ἀναρίθμητοι. 70. *Rebellio æterna.* Vatabl.

The word which we tranſlate *iniquity*, implyeth perverſeneſs, or frowardneſs in ſinning; *Is not thine iniquity infinite*? The Hebrew is, *There is no end to thy iniquity*; or thou doſt commit iniquity without end. The Septuagint render it thus, *Are not thy iniquities ſo many that they cannot be numbred? Are they not innumerable*? Another thus, *Is not thy rebellion eternal*? And ſo the ſence reacheth either the multiplication of acts, or the continuation of time. Our reading is comprehenſive of both; *Is not thine iniquity infinite*?

But how could *Eliphaz* make ſuch a ſuppoſition as this? Seeing there is nothing infinite but God, and it is altogether impoſſible that there ſhould be *two infinites. The Heavens cannot hold two Suns, much leſs can the world hold two Infinites.* God is the only Infinite; therefore ſin is not infinite as God is infinite: Firſt, That is infinite which is without end: Secondly, That is infinite which is without bound; in both God is infinite: As he had no beginning, ſo he ſhall have no end or period of his being; He is infinite in reference to duration or time; and he is infinite in reference to place or extent: He fills Heaven and Earth, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him. The Hebrew phraſe in the Text, *without end*, anſwers our tranſlation, *infinite*; for infinite is that which hath no bounds or end. So then in a ſtrict and proper ſence, there is nothing infinite but God. And infinity runneth through all the titles of God; he is infinite in power, infinite in wiſdom, juſtice, righteouſneſs, and mercy: It remains then to be further conſidered, how we may underſtand this queſtion, *Is not thine iniquity infinite?*

I anſwer, Sin is not infinite properly, yet in a vulgar ſence ſin may be called infinite; for according to common acception, we call that infinite which is very great, or which exceeds all ordinary bounds, though not all bounds; only that is properly infinite which exceeds all bounds; but we uſually ſay, that is infinite which exceeds ordinary bounds. Thus ſome mens ſins only are infinite. For though every ſin be a breaking of the bounds which God hath ſet us, either in exceſs or in defect; yet they who ſin after a common rate or proportion of ſinning, may be ſaid to keep their bounds in ſinning. For what the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome tryals and temptations (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) the ſame may be ſaid of ſome ſins and tranſgreſſions, that *they are common to man.* But they who ſin (as the Prophet ſpeaks) with a high hand, or with both hands greedily, they who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with cart-roaps, theſe do not only break the everlaſting bounds of the Law, but the ordinary bounds of ſin. Their ſins are not common (in the act, though the principle be) to man. They ſin as few men ever ſinned, they ſin like Devils rather then like men, and therefore (under this notion) their ſin is deſervedly called infinite.

Secondly, We may ſay, that ſin hath an infiniteneſs in it in reference to the object, God; and ſo not only a great ſin, and many ſins, but ſmall ſins, or any one ſin may be ſaid to have an infiniteneſs in it, becauſe it is committed againſt an infinite God. And hence it is that nothing can expiate ſin but what hath an infiniteneſs in it; the leaſt ſin calls for the blood of Chriſt to take it away, which blood hath a kind of infinity in it; for though the ſufferings and blood of Chriſt were not properly infinite, becauſe they were the ſufferings of the humane nature; yet the Divine nature ſhed forth an infinite worth and value upon his ſufferings; and therefore we are ſaid to be *redeemed* (or purchaſed) *by the blood of God* (Acts 20. 28.) That is, by the blood of that perſon who is God, though the humane nature only was capable of having blood ſhed. Thus we may ſay, that the leaſt ſin, with reſpect to the object, is infinite, God himſelf being offended and wronged by every ſin.

Thirdly, As this infiniteneſs may be conſidered in reference to the extent of any one ſin (that reaching as high as God) ſo to the number, or rather to the innumerableneſs of our ſins. There is an Arithmetical as well as a Geometrical infinity in ſin. Thus the Septuagint (as was ſaid before) render the Text, *Are not thine iniquities innumerable?* That hath a kind of infinity which cannot be numbred: But cannot our ſins be numbred? Are they infinite in number?

I anſwer, Sins may be conſidered two wayes: Firſt, In their ſpecies and kinds: Secondly, In their acts: If we conſider ſins in their ſpecies and kinds, ſo they are not innumerable, for it is poſſible to number up all the ſeveral heads, diviſions, and kinds of ſin; but if we conſider ſin in reference to acts, ſo every mans ſins are innumerable; yet this innumerableneſs of ſins, in reference to acts, may be conſidered either abſolutely, or as to us. The acts of ſin are not abſolutely, or in themſelves innumerable, but as to us they are innumerable; they are more then any man can number. *John* ſaith (*Revel.* 7. 9.) *After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number* (beſides thoſe that were ſealed of every Tribe) *of all Nations, and Kindreds,* &c. This great multitude was not in it ſelf without number, but as to mans Arithmetick it was, no man could number it. The hairs of our head, and the ſands of the Sea, are numerable to God, but to us innumerable. *David* (*Pſal.* 40. 12.) ſpeaks firſt of *innumerable evils*, and then of *innumerable ſins*; *Innumerable evils compaſs me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up; they are more then the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me*: When he ſaith, *They are more then the hairs of my head*, his meaning is, they are innumerable; I can no more tell the ſum of my ſins, then the ſum of my hairs. Chriſt to aſſure his Diſciples in time of their afflictions and ſufferings, that he will take care of them, tells them, *The very hairs of your head are all numbred* (*Math.* 10. 30.) As if he had ſaid, Seeing God taketh care of thoſe inconſiderable (not parts, but) excrements of the body, ſurely then he will take care of thoſe more noble parts of your body, and moſt of all of that moſt noble part of you (which is your all) your ſouls. The hairs of our heads are innumerable to us, but God numbers them. The ſins of our hearts and lives are all numbred by God. *Thou telleſt my wandrings* (ſaith holy *David*, Pſal. 56. 8.) He means it of his wandrings by perſecution, and 'tis as true of his wandrings by tranſgreſſion. But what man knows the errors or wandrings either of his heart or life? (*Pſal.* 19. 12.) He that hath feweſt ſins, hath more then he can number; and therefore every mans ſins are to him in number infinite.

Fourthly, Iniquities may be called infinite in reference to the will, or the ſpirit of him that committeth thoſe iniquities: Thoſe ſins are without bounds, to which man would never ſet a bound. The natural man would never end ſinning, therefore his ſins are without end, or infinite. The Prophet (*Jer.* 13: 27.) ſpeaks reprovingly to that people in the name of the Lord; *I have ſeen thy adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdneſs of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields; wo unto thee, O Jeruſalem, wilt thou not be made clean? when ſhall it once be?* As if he had ſaid, *O Jeruſalem*, thou haſt no will to be made clean; or, thou wouldſt never be clean, if thou mighteſt have thy will; *When ſhall it once be?* The time is yet to come when thou wouldeſt have it to be ſo; thou haſt a mind to pollute thy ſelf ſtill, but no mind to waſh thy ſelf from thy pollution. The ſins of a perſon or people are then infinite, or without end, when they diſcover that they have no mind to leave ſinning. A godly mans deſires to do good, are infinite, and ſo are the deſires of a wicked man to do evil. This Prophet had ſpoken to *Jeruſalem* in the ſame Language (*chap.* 4. 14.) *How long ſhall vain thoughts in thee?* When wilt thou be weary of theſe Lodgers? when wilt thou bid theſe Gueſts be gone, which thou haſt thus long bid welcome? The Church of God doth ſometimes ſuffer evil to lodge very long in her, even in the midſt of her, as it were, at her very heart; but the *world* lodgeth or *lieth* (continually *in evil* (1 John 5. 19.) and there (as it is the world) it will lie for ever, ſoak'd and ſteep'd in evil. Some give this as one reaſon to juſtifie the infiniteneſs or everlaſtingneſs of the puniſhment that is laid upon impenitent ſinners in hell. The damned are under endleſs ſufferings, becauſe they would have ſinned without end: A wicked man would live long, yea, he would have no end of his life here, he would live ever, that he might ſin for ever; therefore the Lord giveth him a life, not ſuch a one as he would have, but ſuch a one as he deſerves to have; which is a death for ever. They die eternally for ſin, who would have lived eternally in ſin. Take a Scripture or two more to illuſtrate this way of the infinity of mans ſin (*Jer.* 8. 5.) *Why is this people of* Jeruſalem *ſlidden back by a perpetual backſliding? they hold faſt deceit, they refuſe to return*: Here are three phraſes noting this one thing. Firſt, *They hold faſt deceit.* Secondly, *They refuſed to return.* Thirdly, *Theirs was a perpetual backſliding*; or, as ſome read it, *an eternal rebellion, an obſtinate rebellion, a ſtrong and mighty rebellion*; the *Seventy* call it *an impudent, ſhameleſs rebellion*: All theſe are proper Epithetes of that obſtinacy and ſetledneſs of reſolution which is in the heart of man by nature to continue in ſin; yet there is a further rendring of the words, which as the Original will bear, ſo it hath an elegancy in it: *Why is this people of* Jeruſalem *ſlidden back by a conquering, or a prevailing backſliding?* A perpetual Backſliding hath conqueſt or triumph attributed to it upon a twofold conſideration; firſt, In reference to others ſins. Final obſtinacy or impenitency lifts up its head above all other ſins, and ſits as King among them; impenitency under any ſin committed, is greater then the ſin committed; not to repent of the evil we have done, is worſe then the evil which we do. Impenitency ſeals the ſoul under condemnation. Repentance conquers ſin, but impenitency is the conquering ſin. Secondly, 'Tis called triumphing or conquering ſin, becauſe it ſeems (as it were) to carry the day againſt the mercy and goodneſs of God; that's a ſad conqueſt indeed: not that any ſin, no, nor impenitency for ſin, exceeds the mercy and goodneſs of God; for his thoughts of mercy are as high above our acts of ſin, as they are above our thoughts of his mercy, and that is as high as the heaven is in compariſon of the earth (*Iſa.* 55. 9.) But the mercy of the Lord is ſaid to be overcome by perpetual backſlidings, becauſe the Lord will not be merciful to ſuch; thus final impenitency may be called a triumphing or conquering ſin, ſeeing the mercy of God ſeems to yield unto it. They will not humble themſelves to ſeek mercy, yea, they ſlight and deſpiſe mercy, therefore they ſhall not find mercy. The Prophet *Jeremy* repreſents the Lord thus expoſtulating again with the Jewiſh Nation (*ch.* 5. 22, 23.) *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my preſence, which have placed the Sand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot paſs it, and though the waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevail; and though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it; but this people hath a revolting and rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone.* The words, as I conceive, have theſe two things in them; Firſt, That the Lord is to be feared, who doth ſuch things, who ſet bounds to the Sea, *&c.* Secondly, That the wickedneſs of mans heart is admirable, or rather, that we are to be aſtoniſhed at the wickedneſs of mans heart, which is more boiſterous and diſobedient then the raging waves of the Sea. The Lord ſets bounds to the waves of the Sea; which waves in their own nature are altogether boundleſs; liquid waves have no bounds of their own, yet the Lord having put bounds to them, they are kept in bounds. *The Sand bounds the Sea, ſo that though the waves thereof toſs, they cannot prevail; though they roar, they cannot paſs over; but this people have revolted and are gone*; as if he had ſaid, I the Lord have put a bound to the Sea, I have alſo ſet a bound to the wickedneſs of mans heart; what is that? My Word, my Law. The Law of God is a moral bound to ſtop and keep in compaſs the raging waves of mans corruption. God doth not alwayes put an external bound by ſword and judgment to ſtop men whether they will or no from ſin, but he alwayes ſets a moral bound to ſtop them; this is ſuppoſed in the Text, I put a bound to the Sea, to the Sea alſo of mans heart, to the wickedneſs that is there; but this people are revolted and gone, they have broken all my bounds, even that perpetual decree of my righteous Law. Now as when the Sea breaks its bounds, the waters flow infinitely, there is no ſtopping them; ſo when the heart of man breaks bounds, revolts and is gone, he ſins infinitely, he makes no end of ſinning. By theſe Scriptures we may underſtand in what ſence the iniquities of wicked men may be ſaid to be infinite; though nothing is infinite in a ſtrict and proper ſence, but God himſelf.

Vellet ſine fine vivere, ut poſſet ſine fine peccare. Greg.

Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquity infinite?

But hath *Job* given *Eliphaz* any juſt occaſion of this ſurmiſe, that his ſin was in this ſence infinite? Did he ever obſerve either wickedneſs in general, or thoſe particular wickedneſſes which he preſently enumerates; taking a pledge, denying relief of the poor, ſtripping the naked, *&c*? Had he ſeen any of theſe evils acted by *Job*? Certainly he had not. *Job* was a man of another frame of life then theſe things import; theſe black lines and colours would never make the picture of *Job*'s heart or life; this is as ill a draught of a man as could be made; yet *Eliphaz* puts all this upon *Job*, at leaſt, by ſuppoſition; Is it not thus? But what reaſon had he for this ſuppoſition? None but this, the greatneſs of his affliction, the infinite troubles that were upon him. God ſet no bounds to *Job*'s ſorrows; therefore he thought *Job* had ſinned beyond all bounds. Hence obſerve,

> *We are ready to judge their ſins great, who are the greateſt ſufferers.*

Though we know nothing by them, though we can charge nothing upon them, yet this thought riſeth naturally in us, when we ſee any under great and extraordinary ſufferings, ſurely they are great and extraordinary ſinners. The worſt of ſinners never ſuffered more in this world, then the beſt of Saints: Witneſs thoſe Jewiſh Worthies, whoſe torments are reported by the Author to the *Hebrews* (chap. 11. 37.) And as theſe were adjudged to ſuffer, becauſe they were thought the worſt of ſinners, ſo, doubtleſs, many who ſaw them ſuffer, thought them ſuch, though they knew nothing done by them to make them ſuch. Read alſo this Spirit (*Luke* 13. 2. *Acts* 28. 4.) This hath been formerly obſerved from other paſſages in this Book, and therefore I only touch it, and paſs away.

Again *Eliphaz* ſeems to take *Job* off from the wrong ground of his ſufferings, and tells him, though he looked to other reaſons, yet the true reaſon was the greatneſs of his wickedneſs, and the numberleſneſs of his iniquities. Hence obſerve,

> That, *Few think of, or hit upon any other cauſe of ſuffering, but ſin.*

Sin is ſo much and ſo often the cauſe of ſuffering, that we do it no wrong to ſuſpect it as the cauſe of all ſufferings; and it is indeed one kind of cauſe (*cauſa ſine qua non*) of all our ſufferings, ſo that we can hardly wrong ſin by this ſuſpition, but we may eaſily wrong both God and man by it. When the blind man came before Chriſt, his Diſciples asked him, ſaying, *Maſter, who did ſin, this man or his Parents, that he was born blind?* They could hit upon nothing but ſin, why the man was born blind (*John* 9. 2.) But at the third verſe, Chriſt anſwered, *Neither hath this man ſinned nor his Parents*; he vindicates both from this ſuſpition. What man was this? and who were his parents, that they ſinned not? Were they clean from ſin? Not ſo neither; but the meaning of Chriſt is this, neither hath this man ſinned, nor his parents, ſo, as that either his ſin or theirs ſhould be reckoned the ſpecial cauſe why he was born blind. There was ſomewhat elſe in it, which the Diſciples took no notice of, nor did they underſtand. Chriſt doth not deny but that a mans own ſin, and the ſin of his parents may be a cauſe of blindneſs; but neither the one nor the other was the cauſe in that mans caſe: as if Chriſt had ſaid, Can you think of nothing elſe why a man is afflicted, but only his ſin? There are many other cauſes of ſuffering beſides that. The cauſe why ſome ſome ſuffer, is the trial of their Graces. The cauſe why many ſuffer, is to bear witneſs to the Truth, and to encourage others both in the profeſſion of it, and in perſecutions for it. And Chriſt particularly aſſignes another cauſe of the ſufferings of the blind man, *That the work of God might be made manifeſt in him*: That the work of God in his power and mercy might be ſeen in reſtoring this man to his ſight, therefore was he born without the power of ſeeing. The blindneſs of that man was an occaſion to make a very glorious diſcovery of God. Much of God had not been ſo eminently ſeen at that time, if that man had alwayes ſeen. Many are caſt down upon beds of ſickneſs, or into a ſtate of poverty, that the work of God in raiſing them up to health and plenty, may be made manifeſt. The deſign of God looks beyond the ſin of man in the afflictions of moſt men, yet man ſeldom looks beyond it. Note from the whole verſe,

Thirdly, That, *We are more ready to judge the ſins of others great, then our own.*

Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquities infinite?] *Eliphaz* might have ſaid as much of himſelf and his own ſin; and it had been but a duty to have done ſo; we ſhou'd not aggravate the ſins of others, nor extenuate or leſſen our own; we ſhould not ſet the ſins of others in open light, nor provide coverings for our own, yet moſt commonly we run the contrary courſe; we have a favourable opinion, and excuſes ready for what we have done, while we have hard thoughts of, and give harſh cenſures upon what others do; our own ſins we can call moats, and the ſin of others beams. The better any man is, the better he judges others, and the worſe of himſelf. *Paul* ſpake no complement, while he ſaid, that *he was leſs then the leaſt of all Saints, and the chief of ſinners*; uſually they who are the ſevereſt obſervers and cenſurers of others, either flatter, or have not well obſerved themſelves.

Fourthly, Foraſmuch as *Eliphaz* ſeeing *Job* under great ſufferings, ſaith to him, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?* The counſel in it ſelf was ſeaſonable. Hence obſerve,

That, *In time of ſuffering, it is good both to put our ſelves and others upon enquiry about our ſins.*

So the Prophet (*Lam.* 3. 39, 40.) *Why doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins? Let us ſearch and try our wayes, and turn again to the Lord*: Times of afflictions ſhould be times of inquiſition; when the Lord is ſmiting, we ſhould be ſearching; when we have received many wounds, it is time for us to be ſuſpecting our ſelves of many ſins; and the counſel of others is not to be rejected, when ſeeing us in ſorrow, they adviſe us to conſider what our ſins are, how great and how many. For though we ſhould be tender in preſſing thoſe who are under the load and burden of affliction, with the burden of their ſins, yet they who are ſo, ſhall do well and wiſely, to preſs it upon themſelves.

Fiſthly, Whereas *Eliphaz* ſaith, *Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquity infinite?* And in the next verſe, concludes upon it; *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought*, &c. All which were but conjectures and ſuſpitions; obſerve,

That, *Suppoſitions and conjectures are no fit grounds, upon which to build a judgment concerning the faultineſs of others.*

We muſt not cenſure upon *I hear ſo, I ſuppoſe ſo, I think ſo*; but upon *I know it is ſo*: Many have run into great ſin by judging the ſins of others great. *Judge not* (ſaith our Saviour, *Matth.* 7. 1.) *that ye be not judged.* He ſpeaks not againſt all judgment; but either, Firſt, Againſt ſevere and harſh judging; or, Secondly, Againſt falſe judging; or, Thirdly, Againſt inconſiderate or raſh judging. When we judge without due ground, *not knowing the why or wherefore* of our judgment, take heed of ſuch judging, *that ye be not judged*, that is, leſt having judged others unduly, ye receive your due in judgment. *Eliphaz* had nothing upon knowledge to charge *Job* for, yet while he queſtions, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?* He doth more then ſeemingly conclude that his ſin was very great, and his iniquities infinite. And in the next verſe, in ſtead of querying, he comes to peremptory concluding.

Verſe 6. **For thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their cloathing.**

Now begins the ſpecial Charge or Indictment; now he enumerates ſeveral ſins: As if he had ſaid, *What doſt thou ſtand looking for matter or reaſons why thou art thus afflicted? Here are the reaſons, I will name them to thee; Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.* Thus *Eliphaz* poureth upon him, and diſchargeth whole vollies of ſhot, but all at random, and beſides the mark. Before, he ſpake in the third perſon; he ſpeaks now in the ſecond: *Thou, thou art the man, thou haſt taken a pledge.* Again, *Eliphaz* had formerly dealt with *Job* as an hypocrite: he then granted that he had ſome ſhews of holineſs, and ſome appearance or counterfeit of goodneſs at leaſt; now he denieth that: now he pulls off his vizor or mask, and objects againſt him bare-faced. Before he charged him with falſeneſs of heart, while he profeſſed and practiſed Religion; but now he objects ſuch practices againſt him, as no man doth, who hath but a profeſſion of Religion. He objects thoſe crimes againſt him which are proper to prophane open ſinners, to common oppreſſors, who raiſe themſelves upon the ruines, and enrich themſelves by the ſpoiles of their weaker brethren: Theſe are ſinners not only againſt the Law of God, but light of Nature; theſe are acts not only of impiety, but of cruelty, inhumanity and tyranny.

Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.

Job was a Magiſtrate, and this would have aggravated his ſin exceedingly, if it had been true; for any man to oppreſs another, is very wickedneſs; but for a Magiſtrate, who is ſet up to be a protector, a reliever of others, a helper of the friendleſs, and a Judge of the widow, for him to carry himſelf thus, for him to oppreſs and grind the faces of the poor, is moſt tyrannical. Thus *Ariſtotle* defines a Tyrant; *He is one that rules ſo as to turn all to his own private benefit or profit*: He that governs ſo, governs for himſelf; whereas true government ſeeks and reſpects the good of others. Juſt Governors are a general bleſſing, and their aim is the *common*, not their *private wealth*. Thus *Eliphaz* renders *Job* a very Tyrant, who, when he ſhould be a nurſing-father to his Countrey, proves a devourer of it; and when he ſhould provide bread for thoſe about him, he takes their bread, yea, their blood from them, and gives them a ſtone. *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.*

Tyrannus eſt, qui ita dominatur, ut ad proprium commodum & utilitatem omnia conferat. Ar. *l.* 4. Polit. & 1. Eth.

There are three aggravations of his ſin ſuppoſed in theſe words.

First, That he took a pledge.
Secondly, That he took it of a brother.
Thirdly, That he took it for nought.

Thou haſt taken a pledge.] The Hebrew is no more then this, *Thou haſt pledged.* The word ſignifies alſo to bind or faſten a thing as with a cord; and the reaſon is, becauſe a pledge given is an obligation, a tie or bond to perform the promiſe made, or pay the debt contracted. A promiſe is an audible bond, but a pledge is a viſible bond. It is no ſin, in it ſelf, to take a pledge, no more then it is a ſin to buy, ſell, or to engage a man any other way, to perform a bargain, or repay a debt. The Law of God publiſhed by *Moſes*, allowed the taking of a pledge; what is it then which *Eliphaz* chargeth upon *Job* as ſinful in taking a pledge? I conceive there are two things which ſhew ſinfulneſs in taking a pledge, and that both are implied here.

In Hebræo ſimplex eſt verbum חבל *quod eſt pignorare, aut pignus accipere, idem eſt obligare.*

Firſt, He intimates that *Job* did not wait to receive a pledge at the hand of his brother, but he did, as it were, ruſh in upon him, and took the pledge; for ſo tender was the Lord in reference to the poor of his people, or to thoſe that ſhould be in need to borrow of their brethren, and ſo give a pledge for ſecurity, that he giveth this ſpecial order (Deut. 24. 10.) *When thou doſt lend thy brother any thing, thou ſhalt not go into his houſe to fetch his pledge* (It was not unlawful to receive a pledge from his brother, but to go into his houſe, was againſt the Law) *but thou ſhalt ſtand abroad, and the man ſhall bring it out to thee.* Some conceive that this was the ſin charged upon *Job*; *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother, thou haſt not according to this expreſs Law of God, tarried for it*; and ſuppoſing that *Eliphaz* and *Job* lived before the giving of that Law, yet the Light of Nature teacheth, that we ſhould not preſs a man, or pull his pledge from him, but that the borrower ſhould go into his houſe, and bringing his pledge, deliver it up freely with his own hand into the hand of the lender. It is an affliction to have need to borrow, and therefore the borrower ſhould be ſo tenderly dealt with by the lender, as not to add affliction to him. It is a courteſie to lend to him that is in need, but as ſome in giving, ſo moſt in lending, ſpoil all the courteſie of it; while they lend their money, they ſnatch or gripe at their ſecurity; whereas the old Law ſaid (the equity whereof, though not the formality, remaines to this day) *Thou ſhalt not go into thy brothers houſe to fetch his pledge, but thou ſhalt ſtand abroad, and the man ſhall bring it out to thee.* Some Criticks tell us, that this is ſignified in the Etymology of the Latine word, which ſignifies a *pledge*: Namely, that the Lender ſhould not take, but receive it from the hand of the Borrower. It is the duty of borrowers to pay: *The wicked borroweth and payeth not again* (*Pſal.* 37. 21.) The Apoſtles rule to the godly is, *Ow no man any thing but to love one another* (Rom. 13. 8.) Now, as it is the duty of the borrower to pay, ſo of the lender to be moderate, and not to exact or impoſe heavily upon him, for the aſſuring of his payments. As he that buyeth, ſhould be as if he bought not, ſo he that lends, ſhould be (in this reſpect) as if he lent not; he ſhould lend with ſo much mildneſs and meekneſs of ſpirit, as if he gave rather then lent; or as if (the contrary whereof *Solomon* found in his experience, *Prov.* 22. 7.) himſelf the lender, were ſervant to the borrower. *Job* is charged firſt with failing in this; as if he had over-eagerly preſſed upon his brother for a pledge; *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother.*

Ipſa pignoris Etymologia, docere hominem videtur pignus non tam propria manu auferendum ab invito & miſero debitore, quam accipiendum nonniſi ipſius debitoris manu oblatum: pignus enim appellatum eſt à pugno, *quia res quæ pignori dantur, manu traduntur.* Caj.

Secondly, The taking of a pledge from a brother, may be expounded of with-holding a pledge when it is called for, or of the not reſtoring it, when the Covenants are performed. This is not only to take it, but to take it away; ſuppoſe the pledge hath been given into a mans hand, yet if he will not reſtore it, or give it back out of his hand when called for, but make excuſes or delayes, *This is to take away the pledge.* And thus ſome make out the ſin of the Text, *Thou haſt taken a pledge*, that is, thou haſt ſwept it quite away, thou haſt refuſed to reſtore the pledge, when that which was borrowed upon it, hath been in due time tendered to be payed or reſtored. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (*chap.* 18. 14, 15, 16.) numbers the contrary practices among thoſe Negatives for which the Lord declares himſelf much pleaſed with the ſon of a wicked father; *A ſon that ſeeth all his fathers ſins that he hath done, and doth not ſuch like, that hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lift up his eyes to the Idols of the houſe of* Iſrael, *that hath not defiled his neighbours wife, neither hath oppreſſed any; that hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath ſpoiled by violence,* &c. *He ſhall not die for the iniquity of his father, he ſhall ſurely live.* Here ſinning in the matter of a pledge, is pitcht upon with-holding it, not upon taking it: For though a man have a pledge fairly delivered up to him, though he doth not ruſh into the borrowers houſe, and there be his own carver, taking what himſelf liſteth, to ſecure that which he hath lent, yet if he with-hold the pledge when it is required and deſired to be returned upon promiſed ſatisfaction made, this very ſinful and oppreſſive. Some, when they get a good thing in their hands, they are loth to part with it, and will have a device to prove it forfeited by the Borrower, when indeed 'tis only coveted by the Lender. Hence note,

> That, *Violently to take, or unjuſtly to detain the pledge committed to us, is to act the part of the oppreſſor.*

That Law which ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*, doth as much forbid the detaining in our hands, as the laying of our hands upon that which is our neighbours. And he that with-holds the pledge when the debtor is ready, and offers to redeem it, is like him that with-holds the debt when the lender deſires him, and he is able to repay it. Thou haſt taken or with-holden *a pledge*; that's thy ſin.

Secondly, There is a further aggravation of ſin in the words reſpecting the perſon from which the pledge was taken; *a Brother*: *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy Brother.* This addeth to the ſin; we ſhould be kind to all, but eſpecially to a brother. A brother may be taken either ſtrictly, for one next or near by birth or blood, a brother by conſanguinity; ſuch are in the moſt proper ſence, our brethren and our own fleſh. Or the word *Brother* may be taken in a large ſence, for any that are near to us, as being either of the ſame profeſſion of Religion with us, or living in the ſame City, Society, or under the ſame Government with us. Theſe are our brethren and our own fleſh too. And ſo the Prophet calleth them, even when pinched with hunger and nakedneſs, the more to move the bowels of our compaſſion towards them (*Iſa.* 58. 7.) *When thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy ſelf from thy own fleſh*: As richly cloathed as thou art, and as naked as they are, thine own fleſh they are. When *Eliphaz* ſaith, *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother*, he takes in brethren under all diſtinctions. This he adds to heighten *Job*'s ſin; *Thou tookeſt a pledge from thy brother.* Hence note,

> That, *As it is uujuſt and uncharitable to wrong any man, ſo moſt of all, thoſe that are near to us.*

To wrong a brother of any latitude or degree is ſinful, and ſtill the nearer the brother is, the more ſinful it is to wrong him; the ſin which a man commits againſt himſelf, is therefore greateſt of all, becauſe a man is neareſt to himſelf; ſo in proportion the nearer any one is to us in any relation, the more we ſin in wronging him. The Apoſtle puts it under that notion; *If a brother or a ſiſter be naked and deſtitute of dayly food,* &c. *Jam.* 2. 15. And again, 1 *John* 3. 17. *Whoſoever hath this worlds good, and ſeeth his brother have need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* That is, the love of God doth not at all dwell in him, or at beſt it dwelleth very poorly and undiſcernably in him. To ſee ſtrangers, yea enemies, deſtitute, and not relieve them, is uncharitable; but to ſee a brother or a ſiſter, and chiefly a brother or a ſiſter in ſpiritual relation (for of ſuch I conceive the Apoſtle ſpeaks particularly in thoſe places) I ſay, to ſee ſuch deſtitute, and not to relieve them, this is higheſt uncharitableneſs.

Again, Some render thus (not, *Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother*, but) *Thou haſt taken thy brother for a pledge.* This ſpeaks yet louder, and is a ſin of a blacker colour then the former; thou haſt not only taken thy brothers pledge, but himſelf, his very perſon for ſecurity or for paiment. But what is it to take a mans brother for a pledge? or how was that done? Theſe two things may be in it; Either firſt, More generally; Thou haſt impriſoned him: As (*Matth.* 18. 28.) 'Tis ſaid of the cruel Creditor, that he took his brother, *and caſt him into priſon till he ſhould pay the utmoſt farthing*: Now though all kind of impriſonment be not ſinful, not only as to the Law of Nations, but as to the Law of God; yet cruel impriſonment is very ſinful; *Thou haſt taken thy brother for a pledge*: Thou haſt not ſpared his perſon when he had not a purſe to pay thee; *Thou haſt* (as it hath been ſaid among us) *made Dice of his bones.* Some would never pay, were it not for fear of a priſon, but to put and detain a poor man in priſon when he hath nothing to pay, is not only unchriſtian, but barbarous and inhumane. Or ſecondly (which was uſed in ancient times) *Thou haſt taken thy brother for a pledge*, that is, thou haſt made him thy ſlave: To be caſt into priſon, is a ſlavery, and a man may be made a ſlave, yet not impriſoned. And though it may be a duty (when we have nothing elſe to ſatisfie it with) to work out a debt; yet it is a very high ſeverity for to force a debtor to pay with his work. We read how the poor Widow came to *Eliſha*

In pignus accepiſti fratres tuos Sept.

the Prophet, and bemoaned her caſe to him (2 *King*.4. 1.) *Thy ſervant my husband is dead, and thou knoweſt that thy ſervant did fear the Lord, and the Creditor is come to take unto him my two ſons to be bondmen.* This is to take a brother for a pledge: The Prophet ſeems to aim at this, while he deſcribes thoſe hypocritical Faſts among the Jews (*Iſa*.58. 6.) *Is not this the Faſt that I have choſen, to looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppreſſed go free, and that ye break every yoke?* To faſt, and not to reform, is to mock God rather then to humble our ſelves. Here are the true fruits of faſting; and they all run into the point in hand, the avoiding and turning from all injurious and vexatious dealings with our brethren. Firſt, *The bands of wickedneſs*, that is, of oppreſſing Laws or pinching Contracts. Secondly, *Heavy burdens*, either of ſervices or taxes: From theſe the oppreſſed ſhould be freed, and every yoke impoſed by theſe or any other way of grievance, broken off from the necks of our brethren.

There is yet one word more very conſiderable in the Text, for the heightning of this ſin.

Thou haſt taken a pledge of thy brother for nought, or without cauſe. This word was opened (*chap*. 1. 9.) Where Satan ſuggeſts againſt *Job*'s ſincerity; *Doth* Job *ſerve God for nought?* And again (*chap*. 2. 3.) Where the Lord aſſerts and vindicates the ſincerity of *Job* againſt Satans calumniations; *Thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe*; that is, thou hadſt no cauſe to move me ſo againſt him; he is no ſuch mercenary ſervant as thou haſt maliciouſly pretended: Thus here; *Thou haſt taken a pledge of thy brother for nought*, or, *without cauſe*, that is, without any neceſſary cauſe; there was no reaſon thou ſhouldeſt take a pledge from thy brother when thou tookeſt it; thou mighteſt have truſted him, but thou wouldeſt not any further then thou hadſt full ſecurity put into thy hand, or rather, then thou didſt take it into thy hand whether he would or no. As if he had ſaid, Thou wouldeſt not relieve thy brothers poverty, upon the promiſes which God makes to thoſe who charitably relieve the poor; thou wouldeſt neither take Gods word, nor truſt thy brother in any caſe, further then thou didſt ſee him; unleſs he would put into thy hand, thou wouldeſt not put into his. True charity muſt and will make ſome ventures; *Caſt thy bread upon the waters* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. 11. 1.) A good man is a Merchant, and will truſt his bread where he hath no more aſſurance of a ſafe return, then the Merchant hath of his Ship and Lading from the winds and waters.

Thou haſt taken a pledge from thy brother.] Again, *Without cauſe, or for nought*, may have this meaning, thou didſt oblige thy brother to reſtore that which really and indeed he never received from thee; thou didſt put a debt to thy brothers account which he never made by borrowing. *David* complains of ſuch kind of unkind uſage (*Pſal*. 69. 4.) *They that hate me without cauſe, are moe then the hairs of my head: They that would deſtroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I reſtored that which I took not away*, that is, which I took not away, either as borrowed of them, or as ſtoln from them. I was neither debtor nor a thief, I had nothing of theirs in my hands, yet I was forced to reſtore. This is the worſt ſort of *taking a pledge for nought*.

Solent divites fingere ſe creditores & alios debitores.

Thirdly, *For nought*, that is, when there was no reaſon to take ſo great a pledge of thy brother; the thing which thou didſt lend him, was but ſome trifle, yet thou wouldſt have a pledge of thy brother for it; thou wouldeſt have great ſecurity for an inconſiderable debt; that's the courſe of many oppreſſors, by lending a little, they will have much to ſecure it. And this is to take a pledge of a brother for nought; there ſhould be ſome equality between the debt and the ſecurity; he that lends a trifle, a ſmall matter, and requires great aſſurance, takes a pledge of his brother for nought: So that all unreaſonable and unequal demands for ſecurity, either taking it (wherein charity bids us truſt) from the poor, or taking (where in juſtice we ſhould not take any thing) when nothing was lent, or when there is no reaſon we ſhould take ſo much; any of theſe harſh and injurious practices, is the *taking a pledge of our brother for nought*. Hence obſerve,

That, *The leſs cauſe we have to do any evil, the greater is the evil which we do.*

But hath any man a cauſe to do any evil? he hath not; by cauſe, I mean a provocation; there is no cauſe for which we ſhould do any evil, but there may be many provocations or temptations to do evil. *Peninah* provoked *Hannah* ſore to make her fret (1 *Sam*. 1. 6.) It was not for nought or without cauſe that *Moſes* his paſſion was ſtirr'd, and that he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips; the murmurings and complainings of that unſteady people *provoked his Spirit* (*Pſ*.106.33.) Now the leſs provocation, the greater alwayes is the ſin; as to ſin againſt admonition, or againſt any of thoſe means that might keep us from ſin, makes the ſin the greater, ſo, when there is no occaſion leading us unto ſin. This was one reaſon of greatning the ſin of our firſt Parents, in eating the forbidden fruit: Why did they eat? were they ready to ſtarve? were they in any ſtreights? had they not the whole Garden before them? did they not *eat the forbidden fruit without cauſe*, or *for nought?* *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov*. 6. 30.) *Men do not deſpiſe a thief if he ſteal to ſatisfie his ſoul when he is hungry*; for though to ſteal for meer hunger, doth not take away the ſinfulneſs of the fact, yet it doth much abate it; becauſe the man is provoked to do it for the ſupply of his preſent and preſſing need; but for a rich man (who hath no need) to ſteal, for a man to ſteal who is not hungry, how ſinful is it! Our greateſt neceſſities cannot wholly excuſe our ſin; but to ſin where there is no neceſſity, doth greatly increaſe our ſin. *Saul* thought he ſhould come off without blame when he had ſo much to ſay for his raſh Sacrifice (1 *Sam*. 13. 12.) *I ſaid the* Philiſtims *will come down upon me to* Gilgal, *and I have not made ſupplication unto the Lord; I forced my ſelf therefore, and offered a burnt offering.* But doth *Samuel* approve this Plea? We have his reſolution in the next verſe; *Thou haſt done fooliſhly, thou haſt not kept the Commandment of the Lord thy God.* Though *Saul* found himſelf under a moral force to do what he did, yet that did not free him either from guilt or puniſhment when he ventured to do it. *David* ſmarted for numbring *Iſrael*, though *Satan ſtood up againſt* Iſrael, *and provoked* David *to number them* (1 Chron. 21. 1.) What ſhall we ſay then of thoſe who do more then *David*, altogether unprovoked by Satan? who rather tempt themſelves, then are tempted unto evil? As the good we do is ſo much the better, ſo the evil we do is by ſo much the worſe, by how much we do it the more freely and unconſtrained. Thus *Eliphaz* aggravates the firſt inſtance of *Job*'s ſuppoſed wickedneſs. To take a pledge from a man in the manner expounded, is not only illiberal, but ſinful; To take a pledge from a brother in diſtreſs, is more ſinful; but to take a pledge from a brother for nought, is a degree of ſin which hath many degrees of ſinfulneſs beyond both the former. *Eliphaz* had yet but begun *Job*'s indictment, this is the firſt Crime objected: A ſecond, and a third, and more are following. *Thou haſt taken a pledge of thy brother for nought*,

And ſtript the naked of their cloathing.

It may be queſtioned, If they were naked, how could they be ſtript of their cloathing? He that is naked, hath no cloaths to be ſtript of. 'Tis gone in a Proverb, *A naked man cannot be ſtript by a hundred men*; he that hath nothing, can loſe nothing; how then is it ſaid here, *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their cloathing?*

Nudus nec à centum viris ſpoliatur.

I anſwer, *The naked* are not here to be taken ſtrictly for ſuch as have no cloaths at all; but for thoſe who have but few cloaths, or for ſuch as are but meanly and thinly cloathed; any that are poor and low, any who are in want, may be numbred among the naked. 'Tis frequent, as in Scripture, ſo in common ſpeech, to expreſs thoſe as being quite without that of which they have but little. We ſay of a man that hath but a little knowledge, he is an ignorant man; and of a man who hath but a little learning, that he is an illiterate or an unlearned man. Thus we may ſay of a man that hath but little ſtore of cloaths, little ſtore of the world about him, that he is naked, that he hath nothing. The Apoſtle uſeth this Language (1 *Cor*. 4. 11.) *Even to this preſent hour, we both hunger, and thirſt, and are naked*, &c. Not that the Apoſtles went about without cloaths, but they were but mean in their apparel, poor in their appearances, and that he calls nakedneſs. So the Apoſtle *James*, in the ſecond Chapter of that Epiſtle, *ver*. 15. *If a Brother or a Siſter be naked*, &c. He doth not mean it only

Quædam etiamſi vera non ſint propter ſimilitudinē eodem vocabulo comprehenſa ſunt; ſic que malè veſtitum & pannoſum videt, nudum ſe vidiſſe dicit. Sen. *l*. 5. Ben. *c*. 13.

of ſuch as have never a rag to cover their nakedneſs, but of ſuch as are ill furniſhed with cloaths. . The Lord threatens his own people (*Deut.* 28. from *verſ.* 4 to 48.) in caſe of diſobedience, with this affliction; *Becauſe thou ſervedſt not the Lord with gladneſs of heart in the abundance of all things, therefore thou ſhalt ſerve thine enemies in hunger, and in thirſt, and in nakedneſs*, &c. That is, thou ſhalt not have thy Wardrobes ſtored and filled with change of rayment, but thou ſhalt feel and be pincht with want and poverty. So here; *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their cloathing*; that is, thoſe that were evil cloathed, thou haſt uncloathed, and inſtead of relieving their wants, thou haſt encreaſed them.

And thus the words may allude to the taking of a pledge, about which *Eliphaz* ſpake before; *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their cloathing*, that is, thou haſt taken a pledge from thy neighbour, and ſtript him quite of it. Therefore the Law provided againſt this oppreſſion (*Exod.* 22. 26.) *If thou at all take thy neighbours rayment to pledge, thou ſhalt deliver it to him before the Sun go down, for it is his covering.* The breach of which Law is diſcovered and reproved (Amos 2. 8.) *And they lay themſelves down upon cloaths laid to pledge*, that is, they detained them all night, whereas they ſhould have delivered them before the going down of the Sun. And thus their ſin is aggravated, in that it is ſaid in the next words, that they did this by *every Altar*. It was their ſin to make many Altars; and this encreaſed their ſin, that they durſt do acts of wrong to men, where they pretended to worſhip God. The like Law is given about the pledge, *Deut.* 24. 6. *No man ſhall take the upper or the nether milſtone to pledge, for he taketh a mans life to pledge*; that is, he takes the thing away without which he cannot live; if his milſtone be taken away from the Mill, how ſhall he grind his Corn to make Bread, which is the Staff of life? And again, at *verſ* 13. of the ſame Chapter, the Law is renewed in reference to rayment; *In any caſe thou ſhalt deliver the pledge again before the Sun goeth down, that he may ſleep in his own rayment and bleſs thee; and it ſhall be righteouſneſs unto thee before the Lord thy God.* Thus we may conceive *Eliphaz* ſpeaking here, though not eying that expreſs Law, yet from the common light of Nature, which teacheth that the poor and naked ſhould not be ſtript of that little proviſion and ſmall pittance which ſerves only to protect them from cold and ſtarving.

Chaldeus legit lectulos oppigneratos. Vel certe pro illo ipſo veſtimento quo & ſe operit interdiu atque noctu etiam jacens ſe contegit.

Further, By theſe words, *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their cloathing*, we may underſtand not cloathing only, but all the neceſſaries of this life, any thing which is of ſuch concernment to our lives as our cloaths are; for as bread in Scripture is put for all the neceſſaries of this life, ſo is cloathing, *Iſa.* 3. 6. *When a man ſhall take hold of his Brother, ſaying, Thou haſt cloathing, be thou ruler over us*, &c. Thou haſt cloathing, that is, thou haſt Goods, thou haſt an Eſtate, thou canſt make proviſion for us; there *Cloathing* is put for all outward conveniences, as in other Scriptures, *Bread* is. So that according to the extent of this interpreta- *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their cloathing*, takes in all ſorts of bodily grievances put upon the poor.

Hence obſerve, That, *To oppreſs the poor, is the higheſt and greateſt oppreſſion.*

It is our duty to cloath the naked, how great then is their ſin who ſtrip the naked of their cloathing? It is ſinful and unjuſt violently to take cloaths from him that hath greateſt variety of cloathing; we may not rob the rich, what is it then to take from them who have not? or (as we ſay) *to rob the Hoſpital?* *Solomon* (Prov. 28. 3.) tell[illegible]s of an oppreſſion which is very grievous, and that is the oppreſſion of a poor man; which is true both actively and paſſively, when the poor man is the oppreſſor, 'tis ſo; 'tis ſo alſo when the poor man is the oppreſſed. *Solomon* intends both; for he makes the poor to be the oppreſſed, and a poor man the oppreſſor. *The poor man that oppreſſeth the poor, is as a ſweeping rain, which leaveth no food.* 'Tis worſe with the poor when the poor oppreſs them, then when the rich oppreſs them; the rich may oppreſs them much, but they come not ſo near, as when a poor man oppreſſeth; for as the imbecility of the oppreſſed poor man can give him no help, ſo the neceſſity of the oppreſſing poor man will ſhew him no mercy. Nothing doth more harden the heart of a man, then his own want; and he hath little feeling of anothers miſery, who is under the feeling of his own; he that hath nothing takes what he can get, and his own hunger devoureth all. The rich man oppreſſing the poor, is a *daſhing rain*; the great man oppreſſing the poor, is a *thundering rain*; but the poor man oppreſſing the poor, is a *ſweeping rain.* As they who never knew poverty, ſo they who know it moſt, have the leaſt ſtock of pity for the poor. Such are a ſweeping rain indeed. There is a refreſhing, a fatning, a filling rain, which the Lord ſends upon the thirſty earth, this produceth ſtore of food. It rains corn and wine, milk and butter: There is alſo a ſweeping rain that takes away food, and deſtroyes the fruits of the earth. Such a rain is a poor man oppreſſing the poor. *Want is the greateſt ſpoiler.*

Secondly, We may expound the Text thus; *And ſtript the naked of their cloathing*, that is, Thou haſt ſtript them till they are naked; for in Scripture we find the denomination to be taken from the end of the action, or that which the action tends to: As to illuſtrate it a little (*Iſa.* 47. 2.) *Take the milſtones, and grind meal.* Now we do not grind meal, but whole corn, to make meal. So *Iſa.* 44. 15 *He baketh bread*: Now we do not bake bread, but dough, that it may come to be bread; when it is bread once, it needs no more baking. So (*Dan.* 2. 21.) *He giveth wiſdom to the wiſe*, that is, he giveth wiſdom to thoſe who before were rude, and ſo makes them wiſe. Thus here, the denomination of the act is given from that to which the act hath a tendency, *Thou haſt ſtript the naked*; not that they who are naked indeed, can be ſtript; but thou haſt ſtript them, and ſo made them naked. This very phraſe is uſed (Hoſ. 2. 3.) *Leſt I ſtrip thee naked*, ſaith the Lord to the Church, that is, leſt in ſtripping thee, I leave thee naked; leſt I take away all the good things with which thou art encompaſſed. So here, *Thou haſt ſtript the naked of their cloathing*, that is, thou haſt ſtript them till thou haſt made them naked.

From this learn, That, *There is ſuch a Principle of unnaturalneſs in the nature of man, as to take away all, and leave nothing.*

We find more then cloaths taken away by ſome, they go cloſer then to the cloathing (as the Lord complains, *Mic.* 3. 3.) *Who eat the fleſh of a people, and flay their skin from off their backs*: There's oppreſſion and cruelty in their blackeſt colours; they will not leave them ſo much as their skin upon their backs. Skin is natural cloathing, as Garments are artificial cloathing. Theſe took away not only the cloathing which art, but that which nature had provided and put upon them, they flayed their skins from off their backs; yet we are not to conceive that they were ſo cruel to pull off their skin, but becauſe they would have all to their very skin, therefore they are ſaid to take skin and all. They who are ſo unmerciful, that they will not leave a rag to cover their skin, are juſtly charged with that unmercifulneſs, which will not leave ſo much as their skin to cover their fleſh; yea (as it follows in the ſame place) *that they would gnaw their bones*; they will have all, cloaths, skin and bones from another, rather then not have enough for themſelves. *Cruelty joyned with Covetouſneſs, knows no bounds.*

Eliphaz having ſhewed ſome of thoſe particular evils, which he ſuppoſed *Job* had done, proceeds to ſhew what good he had not done. *Sins of omiſſion render men as foul and vile as ſins of commiſſion do.* He that doth not the good which he ought and can, doth evil.

Verſe 7. **Thou haſt not given water to the weary to drink, thou haſt with-held bread from the hungry.**

Thou haſt not given water to the weary.

Water is a very common thing, and the word which is here uſed, takes in all natural waters, the whole Element of water. Seeing then water is not under lock and key, but lies open to all comers, how comes it to be any mans gift? I anſwer, Firſt, If we underſtand the words literally and ſtrictly, yet ſometimes, and eſpecially in ſome places, to give a cup of water to drink, or a bucket of water to waſh in, is no ſmall charity to a wearied traveller. But ſecondly (I conceive) *Job* is taxed with *not giving water*, to ſhew his refuſing to do the ſmalleſt charity. So we find it expreſſed

Non inania in eos etiam levia quæ ſub frigidæ aquæ nomine deſignat officia eſſe decerint. Hilar.

(*Matth.* 10. 42.) When Jeſus Chriſt would aſſure us that the leaſt office of love or reſpect which we do to a diſtreſſed Saint or a Believer, upon that account as he is a Believer, ſhall be rewarded; he gives it in this language, *Whoſoever ſhall give to drink to one of theſe little ones a cup of cold water, only in the name of a Diſciple, verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall not loſe his reward.* As by one of theſe *little ones*, he means any, the leaſt of Believers or righteous perſons; ſo by the gift that he ſpeaks of, *water*, or *cold water, a cup of cold water*, he means the leaſt of favours. Cold water is a cheap commodity, and a little cold water, only a cup of it, cannot (as ſome things cannot, becauſe they are worth ſo much) be prized, becauſe it is worth ſo little; yet he that gives but this little thing, this (almoſt) nothing in the name of a Diſciple, *he ſhall not loſe his reward.* So here, to ſet forth the hardneſs of *Job*'s heart (as *Eliphaz* conceived) he puts it in theſe terms, *Thou haſt not given water* (no not cold water) *to thoſe that are weary*; as if he had ſaid, thou haſt not only denied a feaſt or a banquet of wine, which might put thee to ſome coſt and charges, but thou haſt denied them water, cold water, which is not chargeable at all, which doth not ſo much as put thee to the coſt of a little fire to heat it, or of any ingredient to mix with it; thou haſt denied them this cheapeſt charity. An old Poet (ſpeaking of a place where water was ſold) ſaith, *That which is loweſt prized, a thing of no price, Water, is ſold here.* Thus far haſt thou, O *Job* (ſaith *Eliphaz*) fallen below the Law of Love, *Thou haſt not given water*: And to whom did he not give it? The next word anſwers that Query.

——*venit viliſſima rerum hic, Aqua.* Hor. Sat. 1.

To the weary.] That is, thou haſt not given water to whom it doth moſt properly belong, or who had perfect need of it, *the weary, the thirſty.* There are ſome to whom we may very well refuſe to give water, or any other refreſhment of nature; they have enough, if not too much already, not only in poſſeſſion, as the rich; but in uſe or abuſe rather, as the intemperate and the drunken: To give water to ſuch, is to powre water into the Sea; but thou haſt not given it to the weary, nor to thoſe who are like the dry and parched ground.

In that the matter of charity is placed in water, obſerve,

That, *Charity is accepted, and uncharitableneſs condemned in the ſmalleſt matter.*

It is not the quantity of the gift, but the affection of the giver; it is not the quantity of that which is denied to be given, but the heart of him that denies it, which the Lord takes notice of; be it much, or be it little that is given, if it be given with an honeſt and willing mind, the Lord accepts it; and be it much or be it little that is denied, if it be denied with a churliſh and uncharitable ſpirit, the Lord is diſpleaſed with it; and the leſs that is which is denied, the more ſinful is the denial, and the more is the Lord diſpleaſed with it. When cruſts or crums of bread, which fall from our Table, are denied, when a cup of cold water is denied, how cold is charity? And is it not crumbled into a leſſer nothing then thoſe crums? We ſhould honour the Lord with our ſubſtance, and our charity ſhould not only have coſt in it, but liberality in it; how do they honour the Lord with their ſubſtance, who will hardly give to him (that is, to his poor) the ſhadow of their ſubſtance? If the Lord ſhould command us to give ſome great thing to teſtifie our charity, ſhould we not do it? how much more when he ſaith, give but water to the weary for my ſake, and I account you charitable?

Secondly note, That, *Churliſh and hard-hearted perſons ſtick at ſmall matters as well as at great.*

It is ſuppoſed (*Acts* 5. 15.) that the very ſhadow of *Peter* was healing to the ſick. There are ſome ſo hard-hearted, that they would hardly beſtow their ſhadow upon the poor to do them good. It troubles them to part with the leaſt imaginable benefit, or do the leaſt imaginable courteſie, not only great things, but ſmall things, even the ſmalleſt things, the chipping of their Loaf, the parings of their Apple, yea, the very huskes which their ſwine eat (as the Letter of the Parable concerning the prodigal intimates, *Luke* 15. 16.) are ſtuck at as too much for them who have nothing. And thus the heart of a wicked man is ſtated to the whole buſineſs of obedience; his heart is much againſt obedience in a ſmall matter, as in a great; he is ſo far from ſwallowing the Camel of holy duty, that he ſtrains at the very gnats of it; and if a mans ſpirit be againſt obedience it ſelf in its own nature, if his ſpirit be unſuitable to it, let it be a duty of the leaſt or loweſt degree, he cannot but ſtick at it. The ſervants of *Naaman* the *Aſſyrian*, ſaid to him, *Had the Prophet bid thee do ſome great matter, wouldeſt thou not have done it? how much more when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh in* Jordan *and be clean?* There is a reaſon why we ſhould rather do ſmall things then great, as to the outward act; but, I ſay, if the Spirit of a man be croſs-grain'd, and lie againſt the duty, he is as unfit and as backward to do a little, as to do a great deal; he will not ſo much as give water to God or man; or if he do give it, he doth not give it with a heart let out in love to God, or in compaſſion to the moſt needy man. It is a hard matter with him to give or do at all; but it is an impoſſible matter for him to give or do with a ready or chearful mind. Thus the covetous man, the hard-hearted worldling cannot give ſo much as water; a worldly man never thinks that himſelf hath enough of the world, and he never thinks that others have too little; when he is full, he thinks all others are full enough too. Such narrow-hearted creatures the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes (*c.*32.6,7.) Who, as they *practice hypocriſie, and utter error againſt the Lord*, ſo they practiſe oppreſſion and utter cruelty againſt man; *to make empty the ſoul of the hungry, and to cauſe the drink of the thirſty to fail. The inſtruments of the Churl are evil.* What inſtruments doth he mean? Some ſay, the inſtruments of his commerce, his weights and meaſures, he pincheth the poor there; that's true, thoſe inſtruments of the churliſh Merchant or Tradeſman are evil: Yet we may rather expound it more largely for all the means, whether perſons or things, whether Agents and under-officers, or courſes and devices, which the churliſh man uſeth as inſtruments to compaſs and bring about his purpoſes; all theſe ſavour of himſelf, they are evil, that is, falſe, treacherous, and lying in wait to deceive. For (as it follows) *He deviſeth wicked devices to deſtroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy ſpeaketh right*; or (as we put in the margin) *when he ſpeaketh againſt the poor in Judgment.*

Thirdly note, That, *A little is much reckoned upon by thoſe that are in need, or have nothing.*

Water is a welcome mercy to the thirſty, to the weary, to thoſe who are ready to die with heat and travel. The rich man in hell, would have been glad of a drop of water to cool his tongue. *Siſera* the General of *Jabin*'s Army, begs of *Jael*, to give him a little water; for (ſaith he) *I am thirſty* (Judg. 4. 19.) The full ſoul loaths the honey-comb, that which is ſweet and delicious, the full ſtomach loaths it; but they that are weary, hungry and thirſty, a piece of bread, a cup of water, how pleaſant! how ſweet! Such are glad of any thing, who are in want of all things. Much is little to them who have much, a little is much to them who have but little. The weary will thank you more for water, then the wanton will for wine. The weary asked but water to drink, and could not get it, thou wouldeſt not give it.

Fourthly, *Eliphaz* deſcribing a wicked man, fixes moſt upon this ſin, his unmercifulneſs to the poor. And there is a general truth in it.

That, *To be without compaſſion to the poor, is the mark of a wicked man.*

Th[illegible] who have found the compaſſion of God to their own ſouls (as every godly man hath) cannot ſhut up the bowels of their compaſſion towards the pined body of man. The Apoſtle *John* puts the queſtion (1 *John* 3. 17.) *How dwelleth the love of God in him*, that do ſo? The love of God, either as taken for the love of God to us, or for our love to God, dwelleth not in him in whom there is no love to man. Now if the love of God dwell not in a man, God dwelleth not in him; and if God dwelleth not in him, Satan doth: And what can he be called but *wicked*, in whom *the wicked* or *the evil one* dwelleth? Thus the wicked *Edomites* dealt with the people of God when they were wearied in their March through the Wilderneſs. We read the children of *Iſrael* thus beſpeaking the *Edomites* (Num. 20. 17, 18, 19.) *Let us paſs I pray thee, through thy Countrey, we* *will not paſs through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells*, &c. We will put you to no trouble, no charge, we will be content with the common waters which we find abroad; this is all which we deſire when we ſhall be weary and thirſty in our travels. And *Edom* ſaid unto him, *Thou ſhalt not paſs by me, leſt I cut thee off with the ſword: And the Children of* Iſrael *ſaid unto him, we will go by the high way, and if I and my Cattel drink of thy water, I will pay thee for it; I will only* (without doing any thing elſe) *go through on my feet.* See what a ſpirit *Edom* was of; when *Iſrael* put it to the loweſt, we will drink none of the water of your wells, or if we do, we will pay for it: No, *Edom* was ſo hard-hearted, that he would neither give, nor ſell them water; they ſhall not have it either of free-coſt or for money; thus uncompaſſionate was he towards a people that were travelling, that were weary and thirſty. The Inhabitants of *Teman* are commended for their tenderneſs to men in diſtreſs (*Iſa.* 21.14.) *They brought water to him that was thirſty, they prevented with their bread him that fled*: They gave water and bread unasked; the wants of the diſtreſſed moved them, though they made no motion for the ſupply of their wants. They act moſt like God, who prevent us with their favours. Even the light of Nature leads to it. How unnatural then are they who deny water to them, who being weary and thirſty, beg for it? The mercy of God by Jeſus Chriſt is highly commended to us upon this conſideration, that he gives it not only in bounty, but in compaſſion; there is not only liberality, but there is a pity in it; therefore he ſaith (*Matth.* 11.28.) *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* To give eaſe and refreſhment to thoſe that are weary and heavy laden, hath not only bounty and liberality, but pity and compaſſion in it (*Pſal.* 136.23.) *Thanks to God who hath remembred us in our low eſtate.* It is an act of Grace for God to remember us in our higheſt eſtate, in our moſt flouriſhing eſtate; but to remember us in our low eſtate, then to give us in refreſhings and comforts, this is a clearer act of Grace. As it is ſaid (*Pſal.* 68.9.) *Thou, O God, didſt ſend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.* As the goodneſs of God is moſt ſeen in giving water to the weary, ſo is the wickedneſs of man in denying it. *Eliphaz* urgeth *Job* further with this uncharitableneſs.

And thou haſt with-holden bread from the hungry.

Verbum מנע *ſignificat abſcondere, negare, fraudare. Subtrahebas ei ſi habebat & prohibebas ſi non habebat*, i.e, *nolebas ei panem dare.* Deus. *Eſurientium ſubtraxiſti fruſtum panis.* Ambr.

He gave no water, and he *with-held bread.* The word is ſometimes rendred, *to hide, to deny*; and ſometimes, to *deceive* a man of that which is due to him. Our Tranſlation (*Thou haſt with-holden*) carries that ſence in it: Properly we are ſaid to with-hold only that from a man which he hath a right to; *Thou haſt with-holden bread from the hungry.* As hunger and thirſt are put for all manner of extremity, ſo bread and water are put for all manner of ſupplies generally. The Greeks and ſome Latines interpret this ſtrictly of a morſel of bread; *Thou haſt with-holden a morſel of bread*; as the rich man in the Goſpel did: *Lazarus* deſired but the crumbs that fell from his Table, but could not get them. So here, thou haſt with-holden not only a full Table, but a morſel of Bread; This latter clauſe and the former, are of the ſame ſence; yet from that word *with-holden*, which implieth a wrong done to the poor, note,

First, That, *The poor have a right in what rich men have.*

And if they with-hold all from them, they ſhall be condemned not only as uncharitable and illiberal, but as oppreſſors and unjuſt; not only as not having given them relief, but as not having done them right (*Prov.* 3.27.) *With-hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* A thing is due upon a double account; firſt, By the Law of Juſtice; ſecondly, By the Law of Love: I conceive here that the Proverb is to be underſtood of a dueneſs, not by the Laws of common Juſtice (as if a man have his brothers eſtate in his hand, he cannot with-hold it from him without tranſgreſſing the Law of Juſtice) but of a dueneſs by the Law of Love, or more ſtrictly, by the Law of Charity; thus it is a duty to do good to thoſe that are in want; 'tis not only a favour that we ſhew to them when we relieve them; but there is a duty in it, which we owe to God, who hath commanded that their poverty ſhould be ſupplied by the plenty and abundance which he hath given to others. If therefore it be demanded, who are they to whom this doing of good is due? I anſwer, not only they to whom thou art indebted in Juſtice, *witneſs thy Hand and Seal*; but even they to whom thou art indebted in Charity, *witneſs their Want and Need.* The poor have a right to what we are able to give, and can conveniently ſpare; yea, ſometimes their right may lie ſomewhat beyond the line of our conveniency. So then there is a point of Juſtice in it, as well as of charity, in relieving the poor; and if (as the next words in *Solomon* imply) it be ſinful to delay them till to morrow, it muſt needs be a wickedneſs to deny them for ever. Therefore the ſame *Solomon* (*Prov.* 22.2.) Speaking of the poor and the rich, puts them together; *The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.* Now the Lord is the maker of the poor and of the rich, not only in their natural conſtitution, as they are men conſiſting of body and ſoul (ſo indeed he hath made the poor as well as the rich, and they are both alike the work of his hands) but the Lord is the maker of them in that capacity or ſtate wherein they are; he makes the rich man and the poor man, that is, he makes the one rich, and the other poor; he is the maker of them both: And *Solomon* (I conceive) puts that in, to ſhew firſt, that poor men ſhould not envy the rich man; why? For the Lord hath made him rich: Why ſhould thy eye be evil becauſe the Lords eye is good?

And again, that the rich man ſhould not deſpiſe the poor, or withdraw the bowels of his compaſſion from them: the Lord could have made thee poor too if he had pleaſed; therefore be compaſſionate towards them, for the Lord is the maker of you both. And this anſwers that Objection commonly given by ſome, Why, are not my goods my own? may I not do with them as I pleaſe? I have not ſtoln them, I have wronged no man in the obtaining them; It is well when men can ſay thus, that they have done no wrong in getting riches: but this is no argument (how juſtly ſoever any man hath got his Eſtate) that he ſhould keep it all to himſelf, and not give a portion to thoſe that are in want. The rich man with-holds what is due to the poor, when he with-holds relief from them. It is true, your eſtate is your own, it is yours, no man can challenge or claim it from you; I but God can claim it from you; you are poſſeſſors and maſters of your eſtate in reference unto men; but you are but ſtewards and ſervants of your eſtate, in reference unto God. Now a Stewards buſineſs (you know) is not only to receive and lay up the eſtate of his Maſter, but it is his buſineſs alſo to pay or lay out according as he receives command or order from his Lord; thus it is in this caſe: Rich men are but Stewards to the Lord in reference to all that they have; therefore as they receive from him, and receive of the fulneſs of the earth, which is his (for the earth is the Lords and the fulneſs thereof) ſo they muſt iſſue it according to his order and command: Now he hath left a ſtanding order for all times, that the rich ſhould diſtribute to the neceſſities of the poor and hungry. Rich men muſt not think themſelves Stewards only to receive in, but alſo to pay out what their Lord calls for; and therefore as they would give a good account of their Stewardſhip at the great *Audit-day*, let them take heed how they *with-hold bread from the hungry.* I might ſhew further, that the rich are not only obliged to give, or that it is their duty to give, but that they ought to give chearfully and readily, not upon conſtraint (2 *Cor.* 9.7.) That they ought to give liberally and bountifully, not with reſtraint; and that they ought to give ſincerely, not thinking thereby either to merit at the hand of God, or to get the praiſe of men.

Secondly, From the matter of this Charge, *Thou haſt with-holden bread from the hungry,* we may obſerve,

That, *Not to do good, or the omiſſion of doing good to the poor, renders us culpable, as well as the doing or commiſſion of that which is evil or injurious to them.*

Not to relieve the poor, is a ſin, as well as to injure or oppreſs the poor; yea, not to relieve, hath injury and oppreſſion in it. The reaſon of it is clear from the former point, becauſe the poor have a right to ſo much of a rich mans eſtate, as is a relief of their preſſing neceſſities, to preſerve them from periſhing. And every man muſt acknowledge that to deny any man his right (by what title ſoever the right ariſeth) is

to

is to oppreſs him? Nor is it enough to give them good words (which is yet more then ſome will give) unleſs we do them good (*Jam.* 2. 15, 16.) *If a brother or a ſiſter be naked, and deſtitute of dayly food, and one of you ſay unto them, depart in peace, be warmed and filled; yet notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?* Though you give them good words, yet if you give them no ſupply, what doth it profit? We may underſtand it two wayes.

Firſt, What doth it profit the poor? Can they feed upon your good words? or will your good words cloath them? What doth it profit them, if ye ſay, be fed, and be cloathed, if you give them neither food nor rayment?

Secondly, What profit is it to you who ſay ſo? Will God take it well at your hands, that you have ſpoken kindly to the poor, when you did them no kindneſs? Therefore with-hold not thy hand, *&c.* And if it be ſo great a ſin to with-hold our bread from the hungry, what is it to take their bread from them? *Eliphaz* having thus taxed *Job* with neglect of the poor, he proceeds in the next verſe to tax him with an undue and partial reſpect to the rich. As he was rigid to them who had nothing, ſo he was indulgent to thoſe who had enough, if not more then enough before.

Verſe 8. **But as for the mighty man, he had the earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it.**

There is a twofold interpretation of theſe words; Some underſtand them ſo, as if *this mighty man here meant, had been* Job *himſelf*; and then the ſence is thus rendred, *All theſe evils were done by thee, and theſe good things not done, when thou waſt a man in power, and ſo hadſt no need to do any ſuch evil, and hadſt power enough in thy hand to do good.* The Vulgar Tranſlation reads it (according to this expoſition) perſonally of *Job*; *In thy might thou didſt poſſeſs the earth, and being moſt powerful, thou didſt dwell in it*: That is, thou waſt a man in power, thou hadſt all in thy hand, thou hadſt water and bread enough when the poor wanted it; thou canſt not ſay that thou waſt neceſſitated to keep the pledge, or ſtrip the naked; but thou in thy greatneſs and might didſt oppreſs them: this interpretation (though I aſſent not to it) aggravates his ſin exceedingly; for *the more power any one hath in his hand, the greater is his ſin, as in the evil which he doth, ſo in the good which he doth not, or leaves undone*; yea, it may be ſaid that we do evil more then they who do it, when we have power in our hand to hinder them from doing it, and do not.

In fortitudine brachii tui poſſidebas terram, & potentiſſimus obtinebas eam. Vulg.

But Secondly, Take the words as they import the partiality of *Job*; *The mighty man had the earth*; thou haſt been over-kind and favourable to him, how hard or churliſh ſoever thou haſt been to others.

The mighty man.] The Hebrew is, *The man of arm*; and it is uſual in Scripture to call a ſtrong man a mighty man, or a man in authority, *a man of arm* (Ezek. 22. 6.) *Behold the Princes of* Iſrael, *every one of them were in thee to their power to ſhed blood.* The Hebrew is, *They were to their arm*, that is, as far as they could reach forth their arm, or to the utmoſt of their power to ſhed blood, that is, to do miſchief and wrong, to afflict and vex others even unto death, or the ſhedding of their blood. They who are evil, know not how to bound themſelves in doing evil; if they want not power, they ſeldom want will to do it more and more, Thus the Prophet reproves that perverſe generation; *Behold thou haſt ſpoken and done evil as thou couldeſt* (Jer 3. 5.) That is, to the utmoſt extention of thy ability and opportunity. As thoſe Princes *ſhed bloud to their arm*, or as far as they could reach out their power; ſo did this people. And as the power of man, ſo the power of God is expreſt by this arm (*Job* 40. 9.) *Haſt thou an arm like God? Canſt thou thunder like him?* That is, Haſt thou power like God? (Iſa. 30. 30.) *The Lord ſhall cauſe his glorious voyce to be heard, and ſhall ſhew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire.* The revenging power of God, like a Bird of prey, hovers over the heads of wicked men, but at laſt it lights down, and (as the word rather ſignifies) reſts upon them.

Vir brachii eſt vir dignitate, opibus, authoritate potens. Bold.

Again, Some underſtand here by the *arm* of the wicked man, thoſe who are his inſtruments, thoſe who ſerve him, or whom he uſes to ſupplant or ſuppreſs others, and reach his own ends by; ſuch may well be called the arms of mighty men, the arms of the men of the earth. Evil men have their Seconds or Inſtruments to do evil. Upon this conſideration it was ſaid anciently, *Do you not know that Princes have long arms?* The meaning is, they have Agents and Servants in the ſeveral parts of their Dominions, who are their hands or arms, both for protection of thoſe who are peaceable, and to take revenge upon the rebellious. We commonly ſay of a Servant that is diſcreeet and faithful, he is his *Maſters right hand.* The mighty have many helpers, many arms and hands to carry on their deſignes, and to do their wills.

An neſcis longas regibus eſſe manus?

As for the mighty man, or the man of arm, he had the earth.

This ſtands in oppoſition to what was ſpoken before, the poor man could not get a drop of water, nor a cruſt of bread, but the mighty man he had the earth: As if he had ſaid, O Job, *thou being in power, didſt paſs away great poſſeſſions to the mighty, thou gaveſt both thy ſentence and aſſiſtance, that they ſhould have the earth, but thou wouldeſt not help the poor ſo much as to a piece of bread or a cup of water*; *The mighty man had the earth*: He ſpeaks indefinitely, as if all the earth were his. Wicked men are called *men of the earth* (Pſal. 10. 18.) *To judge the fatherleſs and the oppreſſed; that the men of the earth may no more oppreſs.*

But it may be objected, Is not every man a man of the earth? As *Adam the firſt man was of the earth, earthy*; ſo all men are of the earth, earthy: why is it then ſaid of a wicked man, that he is a man of the earth, as if any man were of another pedigree or extraction?

I anſwer, A man of the earth is put in oppoſition to a man of heaven, to a man that hath his eſtate, or hope, or portion in heaven; the Saints have their converſation in heaven, and though they live upon the earth, yet they are not men of the earth: Carnal men are earthly-minded, they mind the earth, and that's both their hope and buſineſs; they are not only earth in their conſtitution, but earth in their affections; therefore they are called men of the earth; theſe men had much of the earth in their poſſeſſion, as well as they had all of it in their affections and deſires. *The mighty man he had the earth.* Hence obſerve,

> That, *Evil Magiſtrates in power, are more ready to favour great men, then to relieve poor men.*

Eliphaz knew that *Job* was a Magiſtrate, a man in power, and he ſuppoſeth that under his government, the poor got no bread, but the mighty men had the earth; they had favour to have and do what they liſt. It is very common with the men of the world to be very free to thoſe that are of the world; they are like thoſe clouds which we may obſerve ſometimes blown over the dry land, and emptying themſelves into the Sea. The mighty that had ſtore before, have more, and the poor, who had nothing, have nothing at all: Men love to beſtow kindneſſes upon them only to whom they are like, or whom they love. A good man helps thoſe that are good, and wicked men care for none but ſuch as themſelves. Wicked men are called *Oaks* (Zech. 11. 2.) *Howl ye fir-trees, for the Cedar is fallen* (that is, the great man is fallen) *becauſe all the mighty are ſpoiled; howl O ye Oaks of* Baſhan, *for the foreſt of the vintage is come down.* The Chaldee Paraphraſe ſaith, *Howl ye Governers of Provinces*: And he calls theſe Governors Oaks; firſt, Becauſe of their ſtrength; and ſecondly, Becauſe of their fruit. What fruit do Oaks bear? Only Acorns; and who are fed with Acorns? only ſwine; Acorns are but hogs-meat: he gives the alluſion thus, wicked men in power, bear fruit, but it is only for ſwine, that is, for wicked men; they beſtow the tokens of their bounty, the overplus of their plenty upon hogs and ſwine, that is, upon carnal and ſenſual men; they have nothing for the people of God, for thoſe that are the true objects of charity; they make their horſes fat, their dogs fat, none are lean but Gods poor. Thus one of the Ancients reprehends thoſe great ones of his time, *Ye cloath the walls of your houſes with Gold, with Arras hangings, and ye let the poor go naked; the poor ask bread, and give it them not; it may be your horſe chews a golden Bit, and the poor man hath not a bit of bread.* The ſpirits of carnal men are carried out from that which is their duty, they care not how profuſe and laviſh they are to thoſe who

Parietes veſtitis auro, homines veſte nudatis? panem poſtulat homo, & equus tuus aurum ſub dentibus mandit. Ambroſ.

ſuit

ſuits with their own hearts; the poor having nothing, while the mighty man hath the earth. Thus *Eliphaz* reproved *Job*, though indeed it was otherwiſe with him; as appears in the defence which he afterwards made for himſelf againſt theſe groſs inſinuations. And as to this particular, he anſwers (*chap.* 29. 17.) *I brake the jaws of the wicked, and pluckt the ſpoyl from between his teeth*; he indeed pull'd the earth from the mighty, or the mighty from the earth; though *Eliphaz* here ſaid, *The mighty had the earth*, and,

Acceptus vel elevatus facie habitabat in ea. Heb.

The honourable man dwelt in it.] The Hebrew is, *The man whoſe face is lifted up*; which phraſe is interpreted two wayes.

First, Paſſively. Secondly, Actively. Paſſively thus; the man who is lifted up by others, that is, who is reſpected, who is reverenced according to his place or worth: All which agree with our rendring, *the honourable man*. And in the Hebrew, Princes and great ones are expreſt by that word which ſignifies to *lift up the face*; becauſe ſuch are lifted up above others, and are much reſpected by others. So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 19. 21.) *See* (ſaith the Angel to *Lot*) *I have accepted thee*: The Hebrew is, *I have lifted up thy face*, that is, I have reſpected and honoured thee by granting thy requeſt.

Hebræi principes vocāt Naſi, *quaſi elevatum facie & ab aliis acceptum.*

Secondly, It may be taken actively, *The man that lifts up the face dwells in the earth.* What is it to lift up the face? It is to accept perſons in Judgment, to accept him that hath the worſt Cauſe, and to reject him that hath the beſt Cauſe, for private ends. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *He that reſpects perſons, that is, who perverts juſtice, he hath the Earth*; and ſo here ſeems to be a deſcription of all ſorts of wicked men flouriſhing in *Job*'s time, and under his wing. Some oppreſs openly, the mighty man, the man of Arms, comes by main force, and obtains the earth, or the riches and fatneſs of the earth. Others oppreſs ſecretly and cunningly, they accept perſons, and are byaſſed in Judgment by their own Intereſt and Advantages: The man of this ſtrain *dwelt in it.*

Acceptor perſonarum habitabat in ea. Pagn.

προσωποληψία *eſt habere reſpectum perſonarum,* ſc. *quod pauper ſit aut dives, aut nobilis, aut honoratus,*

The word notes two things. Firſt, *To continue*; he dwelt there, thou let'ſt him abide; whereas if he had come into the Land, thou ſhouldeſt quickly have rooted him out. Secondly, The word ſignifies not only to dwell, but to ſit; and to ſit, in Scripture-Language, notes authority or dominion; he *dwelt or ſate in it*, that is, he was the man in authority; he had the power, and the great places of government were entruſted in his hand. From both theſe, obſerve,

ישב *Habitare, ſedere.*

> Firſt, That, *Evil Magiſtrates are apt to pervert Juſtice, in favour of thoſe who are great in power.*

Favour ſhould be ſhewed according to the juſtneſs of mens Cauſes, and not according to the greatneſs of their perſons. But uſually the mighty men have the earth, all goes on their ſide; and the honourable man dwells there, he ſits ſafe and quiet, well and warm. This is ſo commonly ſeen, that 'tis become a Proverb, *The mighty man hath the whole Earth for his houſe to dwell in; the poor man lies every where, but ſeldom dwells any where.* The wicked are ſaid to have their portion in this life, they would have the Earth to themſelves, and they ſhall have nothing but Earth. So the Prophet deſcribes them (*Iſa.* 5. 8.) *Wo unto them that joyn houſe to houſe, that lay field to field, that there may be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midſt of the Earth.* Man is naturally a ſociable Creature, and it may ſeem ſtrange that he ſhould deſire to be alone in the midſt of the Earth; therefore by his deſire to be alone, we muſt not underſtand a ſtrict loneneſs or ſolitarineſs; as if rich men had a mind to live alone, ſo as to have none about them or with them; but the meaning is, they would have none in power but themſelves, none in poſſeſſion but themſelves; they are unwilling that any ſhould have an Eſtate but themſelves; they would have all others to be their Underlings and Tenants, their Servants and Villains, to till their ground, and gather in their revenues; they only would be Freeholders, all others muſt hold by their Copy, and do them homage. If the greateſt man in the world were turned alone into the world, he would have but an ill being of it; therefore the meaning of the Prophet is, that they would be placed alone in the midſt of the Earth to command and rule; all others muſt ſerve them. And they whoſe pride, ambition, or covetouſneſs provokes them to dwell thus alone in the earth, ſhall find nothing beyond this earth, but to dwell in fire.

Potentis eſt terra; pauper ubique jacet.

> Secondly obſerve, That, *For a Magiſtrate to favour men becauſe of their greatneſs and power, is an utter departure from his duty.*

The poor man ſhould have the Earth, that belongs to him as well as the rich. The mean mans right to his little, is as good, as the mighty mans to his great deal. Juſtice gives every man his own, without reſpect to the Owner.

Thirdly, Conſider the words as a Charge brought againſt *Job*, he being a man in authority, and in place. Hence note,

> *He that lets wicked men oppreſs or wrong others, when he is inveſted and intruſted with power to hinder them, betrayeth his truſt, and loſeth the ends of his inveſtiture.*

The Lord chargeth *Eli* (1 Sam. 3. 13.) becauſe of the great iniquity which his Sons committed; but it might be ſaid, What was their ſin to him? Yes, it lay in his power to hinder them; for *Eli* was the chief Magiſtrate in *Iſrael*, and therefore the Lord concluded, *I will Judge his houſe for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth, becauſe his Sons made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not*: But did not *Eli* reſtrain them? There is a reſtraining,

Firſt, By way of counſel and advice; and in this ſence *Eli* did reſtrain them (*chap.* 9. 23, 24.) *He ſaid unto them, why do ye ſuch things? for I hear of your evil dealings with all the people; nay, my Sons; for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lords people to tranſgreſs.* Thus he puts a moral ſtop in their way, ſhewing the hainouſneſs of their ſin, and dehorting them from it; but *Eli* being a man in power and authority, might have gone another way to work with them, he might have puniſhed them for their ſin: And becauſe he did not, here was *Eli*'s ſin; and this is ſuggeſted as *Job*'s ſin. He was a man in power, yet he winked at thoſe violent ones, and let them carry all the Earth, whenas he might have mended the matter, by checking their inſolencies, and doing the poor right. This is charged on *Thiatira*, in reference to the neglect of uſing their Church-power (*Rev.* 2. 20.) *Notwithſtanding I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman* Jezebel, *that calls her ſelf a Propheteſs, to teach, and to ſeduce my Servants to commit fornication*, &c. That Angel ſuffered her; how did he ſuffer her? He did not uſe that power that Chriſt had committed to the Church, to admoniſh, to reprove, to caſt out, he did not ſtop that ſeducing Propheteſs by a due exerciſe of ſpiritual power, but ſuffered her to ſeduce uncontrouled. The more power we have to prevent or remove either ſpiritual or civil evils, the greater is our ſin when it is not done; if *Eliphaz* had not ſuppoſed *Job* a Magiſtrate, he could not have laid this burden upon him, or have repreſented him in fault, becauſe the mighty man had the Earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it, oppreſſing the weak, and vexing thoſe of low degree.

Eliphaz goes yet one ſtep further in the proſecution of this Charge, and arraignes him for another Crime, and that a very great one; *The mighty man had the Earth, the honourable man dwells in it*: But,

Verſe 9. **The widow thou haſt ſent empty away, and the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken.**

As if he had ſaid, Thou didſt fill the full with good things, but the hungry thou haſt ſent empty away; the honourable have been provided for, but they who were deſtitute of all friends, found no friendſhip at thy hands, unleſs the breaking of their arms.

Thou haſt ſent widows away empty.

שלח *Verbum dimittendi violentiam quandam affert, ut ſit idem quod ejicere, extrudere, expellere.*

There is ſomewhat conſiderable in the nature of the word which we render *ſent*; for it implies a putting away with a kind of violence; thou haſt caſt them out, or bid them be packing; thou haſt put them off with rigor and diſtaſte. As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt not only let them go from thy houſe unrelieved, but thou haſt reviled them and thruſt them away, becauſe they asked relief.* So we may expound it by that (*Gen.* 3. 23, 24.) *And the Lord God ſent him* (that is, *Adam*) *forth from the garden of* Eden, *to till the ground from whence he was taken.* What this ſending forth was, is expreſſed in the next verſe; *So he drove out the man.* Such a ſending away is here intended, thou haſt ſent widows away (as we ſpeak) with a witneſs; thou haſt chid or rated them out of thy preſence. As it is ſaid of *Gallio* (*Acts* 18. 16, 17.) *That he cared for none of thoſe things, and he drave them from the Judgment-ſeat.* Thus thou haſt ſent widows away.

Compluten-ſes.

Further, In the Chaldee Language, the word ſignifies to ſtrip, or to pluck off the very ſkin. This is yet more tyrannical, Thou haſt ſent them away ſpoiled and ſtript, or, as it followeth in the Text, *empty. Thou haſt ſent widows away,* &c. It was not the *mighty man*, nor the *great ones* of the earth that he is charged to deal thus unkindly, or rather cruelly with, but the *widow*; that heightens the ſinfulneſs of his tyranny. This very word by which a widow is expreſſed in the Hebrew, as well as her condition, calls for help and pity: It comes from a root that ſignifies, either to *bind*, or to be *ſilent*; taking it in the firſt ſignification, to *bind*, the widow may be ſo called for two reaſons: Firſt, Becauſe the widow is (as it were) bound about with afflictions and ſorrows; ſhe hath many troubles about her, as ſo many bonds from which ſhe cannot free her ſelf without running into many other troubles. Secondly, The widow is ſo called, by the rule of contrary ſpeaking; *bound*, that is, *not at all bound*, but free or looſed from her husband. Thus the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 7. 1, 2, 3. 1 *Cor.* 7. 39.) Her marriage-knot is untied by death; *If her husband be dead, ſhe is looſed from the Law of her husband.* ſhe is left to her ſelf, and her own diſpoſe alone. Take the word in the ſecond ſignification, *to be ſilent*: A widow is ſo called, becauſe ſhe ſeldom hath that natural, and never hath that civil liberty or freedom of ſpeech her husband had, and therefore ſhe needs others to ſpeak for her, or muſt ſpeak her mind by others, her ſelf being either unable, or diſabled to ſpeak in her own caſe, or to ſpeak for her ſelf. This being the widows ſtate, he hath the greater ſin who deals unkindly with her. What? Thruſt away the widow, whoſe heart is bound about, yea, and thruſt through with many ſorrows! What? thruſt away the widow, who is unable to manage her own cauſe, and defend her ſelf in her right! yet this thou haſt done; *Thou haſt ſent widows away*

אלמנה *à verbo* אלם *Quod eſt colligare, ergo ligata dicitur per contrarium intellectum, quia jam ſoluta viro. Significat etiam habere linguâ colligatam, i.e. obmuteſcere aut mutum eſſe, quòd mortuo viro non valeat loqui & litigare, quamvis contra æquum & jus rapinam bonorum ſuorum patiatur.* Rab. Mor.

Empty.] That is, without any help or comfort. The word is uſed to ſignifie the emptineſs of a veſſel (2 *Kings* 4. 4.) It is uſed alſo concerning the Dreamer, who thinks that he hath eaten, but when he awakes, *his ſoul* (that is, his ſtomach) *is empty* (Iſa. 29. 8.) So we may expound the word *Racha* (Mat. 5. 22.) *He that ſaith to his Brother Racha*; which ſome underſtand, not of a man that wants wit or honeſty only, but wealth or plenty. And then to call a man *Racha*, is to upbraid him both with poverty and ſimplicity: As if it ſhould (in diſgrace) be ſaid to him, *Thou poor ſnake, thou ſilly fellow, what doſt thou talk? thou who haſt ſo little wit, thou who art not worth a groat?* In the Story of *Jephthah* (*Judg.* 11. 3.) Such a ſort of men are ſpoken of as his aiders and aſſiſtants; *Then* Jephthah *fled from his brethren, and there were gathered together vain men to* Jephthah, *and went out with him.* Some tranſlate, *poor men were gathered together, and went out with him. Vain men* are uſually idle fellows and vagabonds, and we may conceive his company or followers to have conſiſted of poor men rather then of vain men: And in that ſence the word is uſed (*Neh.* 5. 13.) *Even thus be he ſhaken out and emptied*; that is, impoveriſhed and reduced to nothing. And thus alſo the low eſtate of Jeſus Chriſt is expreſſed (*Phil.* 2.) *He emptied himſelf,* namely, of his divine glory and ſplendor; that is, he ſhewed not his Majeſty whileſt he was in the fleſh, but covered and vailed it, and was in appearance as a poor empty man, having voluntarily made himſelf of no reputation, though he were Lord over all. Such was the emptineſs in which theſe widows were ſent away by *Job*, as *Eliphaz* accuſeth him. And this act may have a threefold interpretation. Firſt, They were ſent away *empty*, that is, not filled or relieved by thy charity; thou didſt not open either thy heart or thy hand to ſupply their neceſſities, or to make them up in what they wanted and humbly deſired.

A radice ריק *quod eſt effundere vel evacuare.*

Erat ergo contumelioſum verbum dicere fratri Raka, *i.e. vocare pauperculum & bonis omnibus exhauſtū*

Heb. Vacui, *non ut putat* Vatablus, *Otioſi, ſed ut alii inopes & bonis exhauſti.*

Secondly, *Thou haſt ſent widows empty away*, that is, thou haſt given them no relief by thy Juſtice; ſome widows beg meerly for alms; others bring their caſe and cauſe to the Magiſtrate or man in Authority, for help againſt their oppreſſing Adverſaries. In *Luke* 18. The importunate Widow ſaith to the Judge, *Relieve me againſt my adverſary*; I beg not your Charity, but your Juſtice; The widow is ſent away empty, when her Suit is not heard. We may underſtand *Eliphaz* either way, that when the widow ſued for her right, ſhe found no Juſtice, and when ſhe came for an Alms, ſhe found no Charity.

Thirdly, We may interpret it yet higher; *Thou haſt ſent widows away empty,* that is, widows came to thee full, or in a good condition, but thou haſt emptied them by oppreſſion, and taken away what they had. Covetous Magiſtrates care not how or of whom they get it, ſo they can get it; they empty the widows purſe, yea, widows houſes to fill their own. Chriſt reproved the *Phariſees* for this (*Matth.* 23. 14.) *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, for ye devour widows houſes*; ye eat them out of houſe and home, either by living upon, or by taking away their livings. We may underſtand *Eliphaz* in this ſence alſo; *Thou haſt ſent widows away empty,* that is, widows came to thee for protection, and thou didſt promiſe it; but then to make thy own market upon them, and ſerve thy ſelf, thou haſt oppreſſed them; they came to thee to do them right, and thou haſt undone them by unrighteouſneſs. It is ill enough to deny widows Charity, it is worſe to deny them Juſtice; but it is worſt of all to undo them by unjuſtice: yet thoſe two Horſe-leeches, Pride and Covetouſneſs will not forbear to draw from the widow. Some rich men undertake the widows cauſe, only to enrich themſelves by the ſpoils of the widow; and for this reaſon they promiſe help to thoſe who are in miſery, that they may make them more miſerable, inſtead of helping them; *Thou haſt ſent widows away empty.* Thus *Job* was ſuppoſed to have dealt with widows.

Tradant ſe ad tuendum majoribus, dedititias ſe divitum faciunt. Illud grave eſt, quod hac lege tueri pauperes videntur ut ſpoliant; hac lege defendunt miſeros ut miſeriores faciant defendendo. Salv. *lib.* 5. De Provid.

See next how *Eliphaz* chargeth him for his dealings with the fatherleſs.

And the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken.

Theſe two deſolate names are alwayes found alone, but often as one in Scripture; the widow who is disjoyned from her husband, and the fatherleſs, who are bereaved of their parents, are commonly joyned together. And theſe two Names are taken in Scripture, either ſtrictly, or more largely; ſtrictly, to ſignifie only ſuch perſons as have either loſt their husbands or parents; largely, and ſo the widow and fatherleſs ſignifie any that are in diſtreſs, or need our charity; becauſe the widow and the fatherleſs ſtand often in need of charity, therefore theſe names in Scripture, ſignifie any that need our charity. While the Prophet ſaith (*Hoſ.* 14. 3.) *With thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy*; we are not to ſtraighten his ſence only to Orphans, but to any that are in diſtreſs; he that is a father may be called fatherleſs, and the child that hath a father, may be called fatherleſs, when extreamly needing the help either of God or man. And ſo the word *widow* muſt be underſtood (*Rev.* 18. 7.) Where *Babylon* boaſteth, *I ſit as a Queen, and am no widow,* that is, I am neither friendleſs nor helpleſs; or as the next words ſeem to expound it, *I ſhall ſee no ſorrow*; which is uſually the widows portion. Thus in the Text, by the *widow* and the *fatherleſs*, we muſt underſtand not only thoſe who are formally ſo, but all in affliction, who are equivalently ſo.

Duo iſta nomina in quantum deſpectui humano, in tantum miſericordiæ divinæ expoſita, Tert. *l.* 1. ad uxor. *c.* 8. *Per viduam & pupillum omne genus miſeriorum hominum ſignificatur.* Pined.

The arms of the fatherleſs have been broken.] In the former part of the verſe, he ſaith, *Thou haſt ſent the widow away empty*; charging the ſin perſonally upon *Job*: here he only ſaith, *The arms of the fatherleſs have been broken*; as if he did not place the fault directly upon him: yet ſome tranſlate it ſo; *Thou haſt broken the arms of the fatherleſs*; making it *Job*'s act: However our rendring layes fault enough upon him, and leaves him in particular without excuſe, while it ſpeaks only in general, *The arms of the fatherleſs have been broken*: For it is as if he had ſaid, thou haſt permitted their arms to be broken. And if he ſhould object, What if the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken? what is that to me? Yes, you being in place and power, and having ſtrength in your own hands to preſerve the fatherleſs, if the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken, the ſin muſt lie at your door. *Every man is guilty of all the evil which he hath power and a call to hinder, and doth not hinder.*

The arms of the fatherleſs.] Arms may be taken either properly or figuratively. The arm properly is a noble and moſt uſeful Limb of the body; we are not to underſtand it ſo here, as if he had broken the natural arms of their bodies: A mans arm is broken, when his power is broken, though his skin be not ſo much as toucht. So then,

Per brachia robur, divitiæ, facultates quæ orphano pro brachiis & manibus eſſe poſſunt, intelliguntur.

By the arms of the fatherleſs, we are to underſtand whatſoever is the ſtrength, or makes for the defence of the fatherleſs. *The arm* (as we toucht in the former verſe) is put for ſtrength, becauſe the arm hath much ſtrength and activity in it for the defence and uſe of the whole body. The eſtate, the friends, the kindred, all the means, helps and aids which are ſubſervient to the good and protection of the fatherleſs, are by a Figure called the *Arms of the fatherleſs.* Theſe arms, ſaith *Eliphaz,*

דכא *Confringere, contundere.* 1. *Non ſubveniendo.* 2. *Detinendo ſubſtantiam ipſis à parentibus relictam.*

Have been broken.] The word notes an utter breaking, a breaking to pieces; to break as a thing is broken in a Mortar with a Peſtle. This breaking may be alſo conſidered two wayes; either as done by a poſitive act, or by a negative act, that is, by with-holding that help which might preſerve them from breaking. The arms of the fatherleſs are broken by denying them protection, as well as by exerciſing oppreſſion by them. Thus we ſee what a Bill of Indictment is here drawn up againſt *Job*, how he is charged with crimes which are not only againſt the light of Scripture, but even againſt the very light of Nature; even with thoſe crimes which his hand was far from, and his heart further from, with thoſe crimes which he did not only forbear to practiſe, but which his ſoul did abhor. Hence obſerve,

That, *The moſt innocent perſons are often charged with the fouleſt and ſinfulleſt crimes.*

Job was ſo clear in his own Conſcience from this accuſation, that he not only profeſſeth openly that he never did, but imprecates a like vengeance upon himſelf if ever he had done it (*chap.* 31.21.) *If I have lift up my hands againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the Gate* (that is, when by reaſon of my great power and authority in the place of judgment, I could eaſily enough have done it, no man daring to oppoſe or hinder me, but all rather being ready to countenance or aſſiſt me in it; if (I ſay) when [illegible] had theſe advantages over the fatherleſs, I did ever break their arms) *then let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone:* As if he had ſaid, If I have done this thing, let a divine and viſible retaliation point me out for the man; let all the world ſee and read my ſin in my puniſhment, and my injuſtice againſt man in the moſt diſcernable judgments of God upon my ſelf. Thus free and innocent was *Job*, and yet thus accuſed. And indeed, if to accuſe were enough, there is no man in the world could be innocent or free. Who is there of ſo unſpotted a converſation, that may not be ſpotted with accuſation? who, while his Conſcience is pure, may not have much dirt caſt in his face?

Secondly, *Eliphaz* accuſes *Job* of all this, not becauſe he knew it to be ſo, but becauſe he thought it was ſo. Whence note (which hath formerly been toucht at)

That, *To charge any man upon ſurmiſe, with things that we cannot prove, is a high breach not only of Charity, but of Juſtice.*

The *Lord* reproves *Job*'s three Friends in the laſt Chapter of this Book, becauſe they *had not ſpoken of him the thing that was right*; and as they had not ſpoken the thing that was right of God, ſo not of *Job*. They pitcht upon no reaſon why they condemned him ſo much, but only becauſe he endured ſo much. They concluded him a man of ſin, becauſe he was a man of ſorrow. The Apoſtle gives us the true *Genius* of Charity (1 *Cor.* 13.3,4.) *Charity believeth all things*; not that Charity is ſo credulous as to take up every thing for truth which is ſcattered by any common and ungrounded report; thats no commendation in any man, much leſs is it the commendation of a godly man; therefore when the Apoſtle ſaith, *Charity believeth all things*, the meaning is, Charity interprets every thing in the beſt ſence which it will bear, and makes the faireſt conſtruction which every mans caſe and condition will admit. And again, at *v.* 5. *Charity thinks no evil*; that is, it thinks no evil of others; as a godly man will not maintain evil thoughts, or ſuffer them to lodge within him, in reference to any ſin, which himſelf is tempted to commit, ſo, a charitable man will not maintain or lodge evil thoughts of others, in reference to any ſin which he can only ſuppoſe that they have committed. Again, as Charity *thinks no evil*, that is, it doth not plot evil againſt others; ſo thinks no evil by a raſh ſurmiſing it of others. Thus, *Charity believes all's well, and thinks no evil.* How uncharitable then are they, yea, how unjuſt who believe all's ill, where they know of none; and think the worſt of them in whom they never ſaw any thing but what was good? It is not enough for a man to ſay he doth not judge his brother maliciouſly; he ought not to judge him ignorantly. Though to ſpeak or judge ill of another, becauſe we wiſh him ill, be the greater ſin, yet barely to ſpeak or judge ill of another, by whom we know no ill, is very ſinful: And then 'tis moſt ſinful, when we do it not only as not knowing any evil they have done, but becauſe we know, hear or ſee the evils which they ſuffer. 'Tis dangerous as well as improper to make the hardeſt and harſheſt dealings of God with any man, the ground of our hard and harſh thoughts of him.

Thirdly conſider who they were whom *Job* is ſuppoſed to have oppreſſed; they were not the great ones, not the mighty men of the earth, but the fatherleſs and the widow. Hence note,

That, *The poor are uſually the ſubject of oppreſſion.*

The greater fiſh in the ſea of this world devour and live upon the leſſer; the ſtrong ſhould ſupport the weak, and they who are uppermoſt, ſhould uphold thoſe who are under them. But becauſe the weak and the underlings may moſt eaſily be oppreſt, therefore they are moſt uſually oppreſt. As covetouſneſs is cruel, ſo 'tis cowardly, and dares not meddle with its match. God in reference to ſpirituals, *filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich he ſendeth empty away* (Luke 1. 23.) Ungodly men in reference to temporals, would ſend the rich empty away if they could; but they are ſo far from filling the hungry with good things, that they take away all the good things they can from the hungry; they care not if they ſtarve the hungry, if they make the poor poorer, and take all from them who have but little,

Fourthly, *Job* having been a Magiſtrate, and ſo (by his place) a Miniſter of Juſtice, is ſtrongly preſſed with the doing of injuſtice. Hence note,

Firſt, That, *They who have power, may eaſily, though not alwayes juſtly, be ſuſpected for the abuſe of it.*

To have a power in our hands whereby we may do good, is a temptation to do evil. 'Tis hard to keep power within its bounds, and to rule that by which others are ruled, The Prophet (*Iſa.* 1. 10.) calls the rulers of *Sion, rulers of Sodom*, becauſe they ruled like them, or rather worſe then they, eating up the people under their charge, rather then feeding them, and vexing thoſe whom they undertook to govern, and to be a Shield unto againſt the vexations of others.

Secondly note, That, *As oppreſſion is a ſin in any man, ſo it is moſt ſinful in thoſe who have power in their hands to relieve the oppreſſed.*

Such act not only contrary to a common rule, but contrary to their ſpecial duty; by how much we have the more obligation not to do a thing, by ſo much we ſin the more if we do it.

Thirdly note, That, *As it is very ſinful in Magiſtrates to wrong any man, ſo it is moſt ſinful to wrong them, or deny them right, who have moſt need of it, the widow and the fatherleſs.*

Magiſtrates are called Gods; and God who hath honoured them by putting his name upon them, expects that they ſhould honour him, by imitating or acting like unto him. What a Magiſtrate doth, he ſhould do like God; he ſhould do it ſo, that every one may be convinced that God is in in him and with him of a truth. As God takes care of the widow and of the fatherleſs, ſo ſhould he. God is known by this Title, *A father of the fatherleſs, and a Judge of the widow, is God in his holy habitation* (Pſal.68.5.) That is, in in Heaven; for that's the habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory; there he dwells, *judging for the widow and the fatherleſs.* And as that is the ſpecial buſineſs (as it were) of God in heaven, ſo they who are Gods on earth, ought to make it their ſpecial buſineſs to judge for the widow and the fatherleſs. Hence we find the widow and the fatherleſs commended by name to the care of the Magiſtrate. The fatherleſs have no natural parents living, or none near of kin remaining to maintain and defend them; therefore the Magiſtrate, who is (*pater patriæ*) the common father of his Countrey, ſhould be their Foſter-father. They who want power are the charge, and ſhould be the ſpecial care of thoſe in power. Thus they are commanded (*Pſal.* 82. 3, 4.) *Defend the poor and fatherleſs, do juſtice to the afflicted and needy; rid them out of the hand of the wicked.* Here's their work; and the neglect of this work (how buſie ſoever Magiſtrates are about other work) is often complained of aloud in Scripture, as a crying ſin, as a ſin that ruines Nations, and draws down publick Judgments upon a people. (Iſa. 1. 17.) *Ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well; ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed; judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow.* And at verſe 23. *They judge not the fatherleſs, neither doth the cauſe of the widow come unto them.* Again (*Jer.* 5. 28.) *They judge not the cauſe of the fatherleſs.* It is a ſin not to judge any mans Cauſe, not to judge the Cauſe of the richeſt, of the greateſt; yet it is more ſinful not to judge the Cauſe of the widow and the fatherleſs. And when he ſaith, *They judge not the Cauſe,* &c. The meaning is, they judge not the Cauſe of the fatherleſs impartially and righteouſly. And indeed, he that doth not judge righteouſly, doth not judge at all: And when the Prophet ſaith, *They judge not the Cauſe of the fatherleſs,* it is as if he had ſaid, *Among all the Cauſes that lie unjudged, this is the Cauſe that God takes moſt notice of, and is moſt diſpleaſed with the neglect of it, even when the Cauſe of the fatherleſs is not pleaded, or judged.* All are forward enough to plead the Cauſe of the rich; but when the Client is poor, and appears (*in forma pauperis*) his Cauſe ſeldom finds any but a poor and formal pleading. We read (*Acts* 6. 1.) That *there was a great murmuring of the* Grecians *againſt the* Hebrews, *becauſe their widows were neglected in the dayly adminiſtration.* Church-Officers (in their capacity) as well as State-Officers (in theirs) ought to have a careful eye upon widows that are in want. And the Apoſtle *James* (*chap.* 1. 27.) ſums up (as it were) all Religion into this one duty; *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow.* Not as if this were indeed all Religion, or the *all* of Religion; but as when the Spirit, in Scripture, hath to do with prophane perſons, or meer moral honeſt men, who place all religion in civil righteouſneſs and works of charity, then he calls them to firſt-Table duties, or to the ſincere worſhip of God; ſo, when the Spirit is ſpeaking to thoſe who place all their religion in worſhip, or in firſt-Table duties, neglecting the duties of charity and righteouſneſs, then we find all religion placed in ſecond-Table work, in giving every man his due, in compaſſion to the poor, in helping the helpleſs, in feeding the hungry, in cloathing the naked, in comforting the ſorrowful, and, by name, the fatherleſs and widow. *This is pure religion, to viſit the fatherleſs and widow;* that is, this is the practical part, or the true practice of Religion, without which all Religion is vain. Therefore when the Apoſtle had ſaid (*v.* 21.) *Receive with meekneſs the engraffed word*: Leſt any one ſhould ſtay there, and think he had done enough, when he had been a hearer, he adds, *Be doers of the word,* that is, look to the practical part of Religion; be diligent in the duties of love to men, as well as in thoſe of the worſhip of God.

Take theſe two Inferences from the whole Verſe.

Firſt, Seeing God taketh ſo much care of the widow and the fatherleſs, *Let the widow, let the fatherleſs truſt in God.* They who receive peculiar promiſes from God, ſhould put forth ſuitable acts of faith towards God. Faith cannot work without a word, and where it hath a word, it ought to work. We have both put together in the preſent caſe (*Jer.* 49. 11.) *Leave the fatherleſs children, I will preſerve them alive; and let the widows truſt in me*: As if God had ſaid, if none will take care of them, I will; I will take care of them, I will be a father of the fatherleſs, a husband to the widow, leave that care to me. Therefore let the widow and fatherleſs truſt in God: A word from God, is a better and a bigger portion then all the wealth of this world.

Secondly, Seeing the Lord is ſo jealous over them, and ſo ready to take their part againſt all their adverſaries, this ſhould provoke them to be full of zeal for God. God ſtands up for their protection, therefore they ſhould ſtand up for God their Protector and Patron. How careful ſhould they be to pleaſe him who is ſo watchful to preſerve them? Special promiſes call for ſpecial obedience, as well as for ſpecial faith: The more God engageth himſelf to do for us, the more ſhould we engage our ſelves (in his ſtrength) to do for him. *None have more reaſon to be rich in faith and love to God, then the poor and fatherleſs.*

Thus far we have examined the Indictment or Charge which *Eliphaz* brought againſt *Job*; now ſee what he infers upon it, here's thy ſin, and there's thy puniſhment.

VERS. 10, 11.

Therefore ſnares are round about thee, and ſudden fear troubleth thee;
Or darkneſs that thou canſt not ſee, and abundance of waters cover thee.

THeſe two verſes have variety of expreſſions, but the intendment of all is one and the ſame; *Snares and fears, and darkneſs, and abundance of waters,* ſignifie all manner of evils: All theſe are upon thee, becauſe thou haſt ſent widows away empty, and haſt ſuffered the Arms of the fatherleſs to be broken; becauſe thou haſt done theſe things, therefore

Snares are about thee.

Some render the Original Text to another ſence, not as bearing an effect of the former words, not as if he had been puniſhed with theſe evils for thoſe ſins; but as if theſe evils had cauſed him to ſin; and ſo the words are expounded as a kind of ſcorn; as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *When thou didſt thoſe things, no doubt ſnares, or fears, or darkneſs, or waters came upon thee, thou waſt forc'd by ſuffering theſe evils, to do all this evil, waſt thou not? was it not becauſe thou waſt preſt with ſnares, and fears, and darkneſs, and waters, that thou didſt oppreſs the widow and the fatherleſs?* All which Queſtions are reducible to theſe plain Negations: *Thou waſt not preſſed with any of theſe perplexities upon thy ſelf, to oppreſs the poor; there was no ſnare, no nor any fear near thee, darkneſs did not hinder thy ſight, nor did the waters of affliction cover thee: Thou haſt not been thruſt upon ſin by theſe temptations, nor conſtrained by the moral violence of any incumbent neceſſity, but thou haſt done it freely; to ſin even in this manner, and at this height, hath not been thy refuge, but thy choice: Thou haſt not acted theſe iniquities by any inſtigation, either from Perſons or Providences, but upon thine own election.* This is a fair ſence, and a mighty reproof; ſeeing (as was lately noted) every evil we do is by ſo much the worſe, by how much we have had the leſs provocation or ſolicitation to do it.

על בן *Non ſignificat illationem aut convenientiam conſequentis ad antecedens, ſed convenientiam aptitudinemq; antecedentis ad conſequens.* Coc.

But I rather take the words as we render them, to expreſs the ſad effect and fruits of his ſin; as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Becauſe thou haſt taken a pledge of thy brother for nought,* &c. *becauſe thou haſt ſent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken,* therefore *ſnares are round about thee,* &c. The words may have a threefold alluſion.

First, To the beſieging of a City; ſnares are round about thee, thou art now hemm'd in on every ſide with troubles; as Chriſt threatens *Jeruſalem, thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench abaut thee,* &c. A trench is but a great ſnare to catch men, as men catch birds or vermine in ſnares. Or,

Hoſtile aliquid & obſidionale ſignificat.

Secondly, The alluſion may be to impriſonment; thou art compaſſed with ſtrong walls, and ſhut in with gates, thou art ſhackled with iron ſnares.

Thirdly, The words may allude to hunting and fowling; in ſuch diſports Nets and Snares are ſet to take the intended Game. Snares are often ſpoken of in Scripture, to intimate or ſet forth the afflictions and ſorrows that intrap and hold the ſons of men. So that to ſay, *Snares are round about thee,* is no more but thus, troubles are round about thee; and theſe ſnares are ſometimes ſet by the hand of man, ſometimes by the immediate hand of God. Good things are often made a ſnare to the undoing of evil men, and evil things are often made a ſnare to the troubling, though not to the undoing of good men. But I ſhall not proſecute this Alluſion, having ſpoken of it *Chap.* 18. *verſ.* 6, 7. 8.

where *Job* complains that God had taken him in his ſnare; as alſo in *Chap.* 19. 5.

And ſudden fear troubleth thee.

We may underſtand this fear; Firſt, For the paſſion of fear, or for fear within: Secondly, For the occaſion of fear, which is fear without. *Sudden fear troubleth thee*, that is, the appearance or apprehenſion of ſome terrible thing cauſeth thee to fear. Fear is often put in Scripture for the thing feared, for the object of fear, or for that which cauſeth fear. Thus alſo hope is put for the thing hoped for, and *viſion* for the thing ſeen, or the object of the viſion.

Paſſio pro objecto & materia ſunt in omni idiomate familiare. Sanct.

Thirdly, Some expound fear in the Text, for that ſpecial fear which riſeth from guilt, or for terror of conſcience. *Sudden fear troubleth thee*; that is, thy conſcience flyes in thy face and affrights thee; thy fear flows not from any outward troubles that threaten thee, or from wants that afflict thee, but from thoſe wickedneſſes which have been committed by thee; thy conſcience vexeth and tormenteth thee, not only with fear, but with ſuddain fear; fear ruſheth upon thee unexpectedly, violently, like an armed man. *Sudden fear troubleth thee.* Taking fear in all or any one of theſe interpretations.

Note, *Sudden fear ſurprizeth ſecureſt ſinners.*

When they ſhall ſay peace and quietneſs, then ſorrow and anguiſh come upon them as pain upon a woman in travel, and they ſhall not eſcape. The Prophet in a viſion (*Zech.* 5. 1.) *Saw a flying roll*; that flying roll was the Curſe: And it was called a *flying roll*, to note the ſpeedy and ſudden coming of thoſe judgments that were written in it; they came not only upon the ſpur, but upon the wing; they came flying; flying is a ſwift motion, and that motion is applied to judgement, when once God giveth it a Commiſſion to come. Hence alſo (*Deut.* 32. 41.) the ſword is called a lightning ſword, or a ſword that hath lightning in it; *If I* (ſaith the Lord) *whet my glittering* (or lightning) *ſword.* The ſword of the Lord is as lightning; it hath burning and ſwifneſs in it; divine vengeance cometh as lightning. It is called alſo the overflowing ſcourge (*Iſa.* 28. 15.) 'Tis a ſcourge becauſe the laſhes of it cauſe much ſmart and pain, and 'tis *an overflowing ſcourge*, to note the ſuddenneſs of it; the ſcourge comes in like a mighty flood.

Again, This ſuddenneſs of fear, or of things feared, may have reference unto the ſecurity of wicked men, who though they have often heard of dangers, and judgments have been threatned upon them, yet they alwayes come ſuddenly upon them, becauſe they never prepare for them. To ſuch as are unprepared, evils are alwayes ſudden, how often ſoever they have been warned of them. As to him that is prepared, death is never ſudden, though he dye (as we Vulgarly phraſe it) a ſudden death. So he that is unprepared for death, dieth ſuddenly, though he die that which we commonly call a lingring death. Thus death and judgment ſhall come ſuddenly upon all ungodly men. *It ſhall be* (ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 24. 37.) *as in the dayes of* Noah, *they were eating and drinking, they were marrying, and giving in marriage, till the day that* Noah *entred into the Ark, and knew not till the floud came, and took them all away.* But did they not know of the floud, till the floud came; aſſuredly they did, for *Noah* foretold them of and preached the coming of the floud, a hundred and twenty years before it came (*Gen.* 6. 3.) *My ſpirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive* (*I will not alwayes be contending*) *yet his dayes ſhall be an hundred and twenty years*; that is, he ſhall have an hundred and twenty years warning; all that time the old world had warning of the floud, and *Noah* preached upon that Text all that time; yet the floud came upon them (ſaith the Text) and *they knew it not*; that is, they regarded not what *Noah* ſaid, they took no thought neither to prevent the floud, nor to prepare for it. The Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, that *Noah by faith being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe, by which he condemned the world* (that is, the then world of unbelief and hardneſs of heart) *and became heir of the righteouſneſs which is by faith* (Heb. 11. 7.) He had a holy fear in him, and a faith alſo; a faith that the thing ſhould be done, and a fear of God who threatned to do that thing. *Thus by faith being moved with fear, he prepared an Ark for the ſafety of himſelf and of his houſhold.* Why did not the reſt alſo make preparation? They did not believe, nor did they fear. Chriſt rebuked his Diſciples in the ſtorm at Sea (*Matth.* 8.) with, *why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith*; the old world might have been rebuked, with, why are ye fearleſs, even becauſe ye are of little, or rather of no faith at all. *Unleſs dangers threatned be believed, they are never feared; and unleſs they be both believed and feared, they are never avoided. Whenſoever the Lord of ſuch ſervants ſhall come, he cometh in a day, when they look not for him, and in an hour that they are not aware of* (Matth. 24. 50.) that is, he cometh ſuddenly. What can come more ſuddenly upon any man, then that which he looked not for, nor was at all aware of. Thus he ſhall come *to cut them aſunder, and to appoint them their portion with hypocrites; there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. Sudden fear troubleth thee*;

Verſ. 11. **Or darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee, and abundance of waters cover thee.**

Aut an tu ſolus tenebras non videres & tanta ſcelera impunè ferres?

Some render this verſe by way of interrogation; *Shalt thou not ſee darkneſs? And ſhall not the abundance of waters cover thee?* Shalt thou only not ſee darkneſs, and paſs unpuniſhed for ſuch monſtrous wickedneſſes? As if he had ſaid, thou ſeemeſt to wonder, that darkneſs is upon thee, thou makeſt ſtrange of it, that flouds or abundance of waters cover thee. But haſt thou not deſerved and called forth theſe Judgments, by many ſinful provocations?

Others render this Text, not as a Queſtion, but as a direct Aſſertion; *Thou thoughteſt, that thou ſhouldeſt, or thou hadſt a conceit, that thou ſhouldeſt never ſee darkneſs, nor any trouble coming upon thee, thy heart was lift up in hope of impunity; thou didſt perſwade thy ſelf, that God had as high an opinion of thee, as thou hadſt of thy ſelf, or thou haſt flattered thy ſelf in thy ſinful way, and thou thoughteſt that God would have flattered thee alſo.*

But I ſhall rather (as we) connect it with the former verſe, carrying on the ſame intention;

Or darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee.] Darkneſs may be taken either properly, or improperly; darkneſs properly taken is that of the Air by the withdrawing of the Sun: This is not here intended. Darkneſs improperly taken is that of our ſtate, and it is twofold. Firſt, Internal, which is indeed ignorance, or the darkneſs of the mind; as if he had ſaid, darkneſs veils the eye of thy underſtanding, that thou canſt not ſee, either the hand of God upon thee for thy ſins, or thoſe thy ſins which have cauſed God to lay his heavy hand upon thee. Thy underſtanding is darkned, that thou canſt not ſee; this intellectual or internal darkneſs is twofold.

Firſt, Natural or inbred, every man hath naturally ſo much darkneſs in him, that as he cannot ſee the truths that are in the Word of God, ſo he cannot ſee the intendment of the Works of God.

Stupidus es planè niſi tua ſcelera harum tuarum calamitatum aquæ more inundantium & obruentium cauſam eſſe vides. Merc.

Secondly, Judiciary, or inflicted (*Iſa.* 6. 9.) *Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but underſtand not: and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes.* What were theſe eyes and ears that were to be made heavy and ſhut? Surely, they are to be underſtood; not of Organical, but of Intellectual ears and eyes. But who was to ſhut theſe eyes? A holy Prophet. And how was he to ſhut them? By propheſying or ſpeaking to them in the Name of the Lord. The proper work of the Word is to open the eyes, and enlighten the mind. But when a people have long ſhut their own eyes againſt, or only dallyed with (that tranſcendent mercy) the light, then God (which is the ſevereſt judgment) ſhuts their eyes, and darkens them with light. Of this Judiciary darkneſs, ſome interpret the preſent Text, as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, there is a worſe plague upon thee, then all thoſe ſpoken of, even blindneſs and confuſion of mind, ſo that thou canſt neither ſee what brought thee into them, nor how to find thy way out, but art as a man under water, or in the dark, amuzed in theſe thy afflictions, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn thy ſelf.

Secondly, Darkneſs taken improperly is External, ſo a ſtate of ſorrow and affliction, is a ſtate of darkneſs. As before *ſnares*, ſo here *darkneſs*, notes any troubleſom condition, or the trouble of any mans condition. And when to darkneſs, this is added, *Darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee*, it may import the greateſt degree of darkneſs, even darkneſs in perfection, or as the Scripture ſpeaks, *thick darkneſs*, yea, *outer darkneſs*. There is a darkneſs in which we may ſee, a darkneſs which hath ſome kind of light in it; but when darkneſs is ſo thick that we cannot ſee, that is, that we cannot ſee any thing in it (as we commonly ſay of extream darkneſs, 'tis ſo dark that we cannot ſee his hand) then 'tis perfect darkneſs. Light is not (properly) ſeen, but 'tis the medium or means by which we ſee; much leſs is darkneſs ſeen, it being properly that which intercepts and hinders ſight; yet 'tis rare to meet with darkneſs which hath not ſome mixture or tinctures of light, or with ſuch darkneſs as in which nothing at all can be ſeen: yet ſuch was this metaphorical darkneſs, with which he ſuppoſed *Job* was muffled up. I have more then once in other paſſages of this Book, met with and explained this term, ſhewing how and why afflictions and troubles are expreſſed by it, and therefore I ſhall not now ſtay upon it. Only here take notice, that the old Heathens had ſuch conceptions of darkneſs, and therefore being in a proſperous ſtate they had recourſe to the *Sun*, to *Jupiter*, *Minerva*, *Mercury*, their Idol-Deities, as the diſpenſers of light and comfort; but being under ſufferings and ſorrows, they made their aplications to the *Earth*, to *Neptune*, and others, whom they vainly believed, were Rulers of the night and Lords of darkneſs, as if theſe could command and chaſe away all evils from them. Scripture Language is full of ſuch deſcriptions about men in ſorrow. *Darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee*;

Gentiles idẽ ſentire gestiebant diũ, non eoſdum in proſperis, quos in adverſis adibant Deos. In proſperis quidem ſolẽ, Jovem opulentum Minervam, Mercuriũ, Apollinẽ, hos omnes quaſi lucis & ſecundarum rerum largitores: at in adverſis tellurem, Neptunum & alios malorum depulſores, nocte multũ potentes, quaſi tenebrarum ipſi domini eſſent. Bold.

And abundance of waters cover thee.

* The word rendred *Abundance*, ſignifies a company or troop of waters, which meet and march together, even as horſes prepared for battel, and ready to give the charge. So the word is tranſlated (2 *King*. 9. 17.) *a watchman from the Tower ſaid, I ſee a company*. And that was *Jehu* with his troops, who came marching furiouſly with the revenge of God in his hand upon the houſe of *Ahab*. And ſo *Ezek*. 26. 10. *By reaſon of the abundance of their horſes, their duſt ſhall cover thee; thy walls ſhall ſhake at the noyſe of the horſemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots*. Read the ſame uſe of the word (*Iſa*. 60. 6.) *The multitude* (ſome read the inundation) *of Camels ſhall cover thee*; They ſhall come in ſuch abundance, that they ſhall come like a floud, and ſhall be as the gathering of many waters. Troops of Horſes and Camels ruſh together as many waters; and waters ruſh and throng together, even as many Horſes. Thus, here abundance, or an Army of waters come in upon thee and cover thee. Waters in Scripture frequently ſignifie afflictions (*Iſa*. 43. 2.) *When thou paſſeſt thorough the waters* (that is, through great afflictions) *I will be with thee* (Pſal. 18. 16.) *He drew me out of many waters*; that is, out of many afflictions (*Pſal*. 66. 12.) *We went through fire and water, but thou broughteſt us forth into a wealthy place*. Fire and water, note all ſorts of afflictions, hot and cold, moiſt and dry. And ſome conceive that water in a metaphorical ſence is ſo often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie affliction; becauſe water in a proper ſence did once afflict the whole world. As the general Judgment upon the world at the laſt day ſhall be by fire, ſo the firſt general Judgment upon the world, was by water; it was a floud of waters, by which the Lord deſtroyed the whole world. Likewiſe *Pharoah* and his Hoſt of *Egyptians* (which was the ſecond moſt Eminent judgment, that ever was in the world) were overwhelmed by the waters of the red Sea. Thus *Moſes* ſang, (*Exod*. 15. 4, 5.) *Pharoah's Chariot and his hoſt hath he caſt into the Sea, his choſen Captains alſo are drowned in the red Sea; The depths have covered them, they ſank into the bottom as a ſtone*. And again (*verſ*. 10.) *The Sea covered them, they ſank as Lead in the mighty waters*. Water being the Element and the Inſtrument, which God hath ſo often uſed in his angry diſpenſations towards ſinful men, it may emphatically expreſs any diſpenſation of his anger. Yet if we conſider the very nature of the thing it ſelf, it carrieth ſignificancy enough to be the Emblem of ſaddeſt and ſoareſt affliction.

* שמע *Quamvis multitudinem aut inundationem ſignificat cum celeritate quadã & ſtrepitu.*

Firſt, There is in water a ſwallowing power; as water is eaſily ſwallowed, ſo it ſwallows all up. Man cannot ſubſiſt in it when it is moſt peaceable, and he can hardly eſcape out of it when 'tis enraged. Sorrow and affliction are ſwallowers alſo, unleſs mercy appear and moderate them, they drown and overthrow all. The Apoſtle uſeth that expreſſion when he adviſeth the *Corinthians* (2 *Epiſt*. 2. 7.) *To forgive and comfort the inceſtuous perſon*, whom, according to his advice, they had formerly Excommunicated or caſt out from fellowſhip in the Church; *Leſt* (ſaith he) *ſuch a one ſhould be ſwallowed up with over-much ſorrow*. Sorrow of any ſort, even ſorrow for ſin may poſſibly have an exceſs, or an over-muchneſs in it; and when ever it hath ſo (beyond the end for which it ſerves, for ſorrow is not of any worth in it ſelf, but as it ſerves to a ſpiritual end; when (I ſay) ſorrow hath ſuch an exceſs, then) not only the comforts, but the gifts and uſefulneſs of the perſon ſorrowing, are in danger to be ſwallowed up by it.

Secondly, Water doth not only ſwallow up, but enter in; while it covereth the body, it fills the bowels. Thus affliction like water, fills within as well as covers without. *David* complains that his afflictions did ſo (*Pſal*. 69. 1.) *Save me O God, for the waters are come in unto my ſoul*. Not only have theſe waters ſweld over me, but they are ſoakt into me. Inward or ſoul-afflictions, as well as outward, and bodily afflictions, are ſet forth by waters (*Pſal*. 109. 18.) *As he cloathed himſelf with curſing, like as with his garment, ſo let it come into his bowels* (*or within him*) *like water, and like oyl into his bones*. Liquids penetrate, ſo do afflictions.

Thirdly, As the water is not mans proper Element, he lives and breaths in the Air, not in the Water; ſo affliction is not our proper Element, though it be due to our ſin, yet it is not proper to our nature. Man was not made to live in affliction, as the fiſh was made to live in the water; and therefore as it is ſaid, *The Lord doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men* (Lam. 3. 33.) 'Tis (as it were) beſides the nature of God, when he afflicts the children of men. So it is ſaid (*Heb*. 12. 11.) *No chaſtning for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous*. Man is out of his Element when he is under chaſtnings. He was made at firſt to live in the light of Gods countenance, in the ſmiles and embraces of divine love. As man is out of his way when he ſins, ſo he is off from his end when he ſuffers; he was not deſigned for the overwhelming choaking waters of ſorrow and judgment, but for the ſweet refreſhing air of joy and mercy. It often proves a mercy in the event to be covered with theſe waters; to be covered with them, that we may be waſhed by them is a mercy; but only to be covered with them, eſpecially (as *Eliphaz* here ſaith of *Job* was) to be deeply covered with them is a deep and ſoar affliction. *Abundance of waters cover thee.*

Hence note, *That as God hath treaſures of mercy, and abounds in goodneſs, ſo he hath treaſures of affliction, and abundance of wrath.*

As God hath abundance of waters ſealed up in the clouds, as in a treaſury, and he can unlock his treaſury and let them out whenſoever he pleaſeth, either to refreſh or overflow the Earth; ſo he hath abundance of afflictions, and he can let them forth, as out of a treaſury, when he pleaſeth. And as we read (*Ezek*. 47.) that the waters of the Sanctuary, thoſe holy waters were of ſeveral degrees; firſt, to the ankles; ſecondly, to the knees, then to the loins; and then a river that could not be paſſed over, abundance of waters. Thus alſo the bitter waters, the waters of affliction are of ſeveral degrees: ſome waters of afflictions are but ancle deep, they only make us a little wet ſhod, there are other waters up to the knees; and others to the loins, and others we may rightly call abundance of waters, a Sea of waters; *I am come into deep waters* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 69. 2.) or *into the depth of waters, where the flouds overflow me*. And having ſaid (*Pſal*. 42. 6.) *O my God, my ſoul is caſt down within me*. He adds in the next words (*verſ*. 7.) *Deep calleth unto deep at the noiſe of thy water-ſpouts: All thy waves and thy billowes are gone over me.* Where, by deep to deep, by water-ſpouts, by waves and billows, he elegantly ſets forth his diſtreſs, in alluſion to a Ship at Sea in a vehement ſtorm and ſtreſs of weather;

when the ſame wave upon whoſe back the veſſel rides out of one deep, plungeth it down into another; thus the afflicted are toſſed and overwhelmed in a Sea of trouble, till they are at their wits end, if not at their faiths end.

Take two or three Deductions from all theſe words laid together. We ſee, by how many metaphors, the ſorrows of this life are ſet forth, even by *ſnares, and fears, and darkneſs, and waters.*

Hence note, Firſt, *That as God hath abundance of afflictions in his power, ſo he hath variety of wayes and means to afflict the ſons of men; either for the puniſhment of their ſin, or for the trial of their graces.*

If one will not do it, another ſhall; if the ſnare will not, fear ſhall; if fear will not, darkneſs ſhall; and if darkneſs will not, the waters ſhall; and if waters of one hight will not do it, he will have waters deep enough to do it, abundance of waters ſhall do it; he hath variety of wayes to deal both with ſinners and with Saints.

Secondly, Conſider the inference which *Eliphaz* makes, *Therefore ſnares,* &c. *are upon thee*; that is, becauſe thou haſt done wickedly in not relieving and in oppreſſing the poor, *therefore* ſnares have entangled thee. This (though falſe in *Job's* particular caſe, yet) is a truth in general; and it teacheth us, That, *there is an unavoidable ſequel between ſin and ſorrow.* Look upon ſin in its own nature, and ſo the ſequel is unavoidable, ſin is big with ſorrow; as affliction burdens the ſinner, ſo ſin is burdened with affliction. Sin hath all ſorts of affliction in its bowels; and we may ſay of all the evils that afflict us, *they are our ſins.* Sin is formally the tranſgreſſion of the Law, and ſin is virtually the puniſhment of tranſgreſſors. Many (I grant) are afflicted for trial of their graces (as hath been ſhewed before) but grace had never been thus tryed if man had not ſinned. Sin is the remote cauſe of all afflictions, and it is the next or immediate procuring cauſe of moſt afflictions. Would any man avoid the ſnare, let him fear to ſin; would he avoid fear, let him fear to do evil; would he keep out of darkneſs, and not be covered with abundance of waters, let him take heed he drink not iniquity like water, let him have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs. God tells the ſinner plainly what portion he is to expect, *Say, wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him* (Iſa. 33. 11.) We may as well hope to avoid burning when we run into the fire, or dirtying when we run into the mire, as to eſcape ſmarting when we run into ſin.

Yet more diſtinctly, we may conſider all thoſe evils comprehended under thoſe words in the Text, *Snares, darkneſs,* &c. either in reference to wicked men, or to the Saints. Snares and darkneſs upon the wicked, are the iſſues of divine wrath. While theſe ſad diſpenſations are ſent out and meet with Saints, they are the iſſues of divine love. For though a godly man may provoke God to anger, and find by many evidences that God (as to his actings) is angry with him, yet as to his perſon he alwayes loves him. And therefore (as a wicked mans Table is made his ſnare, ſo) he is aſſured that his ſnare ſhall be made to him a Table, that his darkneſs ſhall work light, his evils good to him. He is alſo aſſured that the Lord will deliver him out of theſe ſnares, and cut the cords of the wicked (*Pſal.* 129. 4.) That he will deliver him from fear, from darkneſs, and bring him up out of the abundance of waters which cover him, as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 36. 2.) *For this* (that is, becauſe thou art ſo gracious) *ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayſt be found* (the Hebrew is, *in a finding time*) which according to our tranſlation, notes the ſeaſon when God may be found, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 55. 6) Yet it may be well expounded for the time when trouble finds, that is, takes hold of the godly man: And ſo the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 116. 3.) *The pains of Hell gat hold of me* (we put in the Margin) *found me.* In which ſence the word is uſed alſo (*Pſal.* 21. 8.) *Thine hand ſhall find out* (that is, take hold of, and apprehend) *all thine enemies, thy right hand ſhall find out thoſe that hate thee.* Now in *this finding time,* either when God may be found, or when trouble finds a godly man, he (ſetting himſelf to pray) hath this promiſe, *ſurely in the floods of great waters, they* (that is, the floods of great waters, by which are meant, great dangers) *ſhall not come nigh him* (that is, the godly man) to hurt or drown him. Sometimes prayer keeps the flood off, and alwayes prayer delivers the godly man out of the flood. Wicked men have no mind to come nigh God with their hearts (and ſo ſome interpret the latter part of this verſe in the Pſalm) nor will God admit them nigh unto himſelf, in the floods of great waters. And the floods of great waters ſhall not (which is the ſcope of our reading) come nigh the godly man for his hurt, when he draws nigh to God in prayer with his heart.

Thus we have ſeen the ſins of *Job* drawn out into a charge, and the Judgment of *Eliphaz* upon it, what the event, the ſequel, or iſſue of thoſe ſins was, *ſnares, and fears, and waters, and darkneſs.*

There is yet one thing further, that I ſhall here take notice of from the conſtant courſe of *Job's* friends in dealing with him. We ſee that ſtill they charge him with ſin, and ſtill inſiſt upon it, that all his afflictions and miſeries were the fruits of his ſin. *Job* (as hath appeared in opening ſeveral paſſages of this Book) hath as often diſproved their inference, and denied that his ſufferings were cauſed by his ſin, at leaſt not by any ſuch way of ſinning, as they charged him with. Labouring alſo much to enform them, that God hath many other reaſons why he afflicts his people; and that God might take liberty to afflict him, though he were no ſuch kind of creature as they rendred him; yet notwithſtanding all he could ſay, either to purge himſelf or better conform them, they perſevered in the ſame opinion, both concerning his perſon, and the cauſe of his afflictions.

Whence note, *It is hard to convince thoſe who are under a miſtake, whether about perſons or doctrines.*

Error is as binding upon the conſcience, and as ſtrongly embraced by the affections, as truth is; for it binds and is embraced, not in the name of an error, but in the name of truth. And men are therefore wedded to, and in love with their own conceptions, becauſe (how monſtrous and hard favoured ſoever in themſelves, yet) nothing is more beautiful in their eye then they, *No man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *ever hated his own fleſh, but loved and cheriſhed it.* The fleſh of our minds (ſuch are all falſe principles and poſitions) is more loved and cheriſhed by us, then the fleſh of our bodies. Beſides, when men have once taken up an opinion, they think it a diſhonour to lay it down again. 'Tis rare to find a man that will yield up his Judgment, though it be a miſguided one, or acknowledge that he is in an error, though he begins to take ſome knowledge, or at leaſt ſome ſuſpition of it. A light intimation or only the appearance of a probability will amount to a proof againſt either perſons or doctrines which we like not; but the cleareſt demonſtrations will hardly raiſe a jealouſie againſt what we like. Let *Job* ſay what he will in his own caſe, he cannot be believed by his friends; and his friends will ſay again what once they had ſaid, though it had been more then once before fully anſwered. The preſent age hath given us ſad experiences of the thing. For, as many have been unſtable, and toſſed to and fro with every wind of (falſe) doctrine, ſo others have been ſtubborn and unmoved from their errors, though the ſtrongeſt winds of truth have breathed, yea blown hard upon them. And thoſe prejudices which have (with ſo much ſeverity) been taken up by brethren againſt brethren; how do they remain, in many minds, as mountains unmoved to this very day?

I know not which is worſe, unſetledneſs in the truth, and an eaſineſs to let it go, or tenaciouſneſs in an error, and a hardneſs to let it go. Nor do I well know which is worſe, a readineſs to take up hard thoughts of our brethren, or an unreadineſs to lay them down. Were the laws of love to man, and zeal for God obſerved, theſe extreams would alwayes be avoided. Pure zeal for God would fix us in the truth, and make us more eaſie to be brought off from our moſt applauded errors. True love to man, would cauſe us to examin every ground of ſuſpicion againſt a brother twice, before we do indeed ſuſpect him once; and it would cauſe us to rejoyce in any appearance of his innocence, whereby we might diſcharge our own ſpirits of all ſuſpicions concerning him. Our *love* (as the Apoſtle prayes

prayes, *Phil.* 1. 9.) *ought to abound in knowledge and in all Judgment*; that is, we ought to love judiciouſly as well as affectionately or ſincerely. So that, true love will not over-look the faults of another, nor will it approve againſt light. Yet true love is ready to entertain any light offered, that grounds of ſuſpition may be removed, and we reſtored to a right underſtanding of our brethren.

VERS. 12, 13, 14.

Is not God in the height of Heaven? and beholds the height of the Stars how high they are.

And thou ſayeſt, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of Heaven.

IN the former part of this Chapter, we have found *Eliphaz* charging *Job* with thoſe hainous crimes, injuſtice and uncharitableneſs towards man; in theſe three verſes he proceeds to charge him with a higher crime, even irreligiouſneſs and impiety againſt God; as if (at leaſt) *Job* doubted, if not denied the providence of God about what is done here below, or affirmed that he neither rewarded the righteous according to their good, nor puniſheth the wicked according to the evil which they have done. That's the ſcope of this context, in which we may obſerve,

First, A twofold truth held forth.

Secondly, A wrong ſuggeſtion of two errors, as ariſing from thoſe truths.

Thirdly, An indeavour to prove and make good what he had wrongfully ſuggeſted.

Theſe two truths are contained in *verſ.* 22. firſt, *God is in the height of Heaven*; ſecondly, *The Stars are very high*; theſe are clear truths; from theſe *Eliphaz* makes a wrong ſuggeſtion, as if *Job* upon thoſe grounds of Gods being in the height of Heaven, *&c.* had pleaſed himſelf with this conceit, that God could not (at ſuch a diſtance) take notice of what paſſeth among, or is acted by men in this inferior world.

(Verſ. 13.) *And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?* As if he had ſaid, God being in the height of Heaven, cannot know, much leſs judge concerning the ſtate of things here below; why what ſhould hinder? He tells us what in *verſ.* 14. where (which was the third thing) he endeavours to prove his ſuggeſtion; *Thick clouds are a covering to him that he ſeeth not*, that's the firſt proof: and then we have a ſecond, in the latter end of that verſe, God hath other things to do then to mind what is done here; he hath higher buſineſs and imployments then to look upon us, who are creeping upon mole-hills, and engaged about a heap of earth; for, *he walketh in the circuit of Heaven*; that is, there lieth his great work, he hath enough in a nobler Sphear to imploy himſelf in; and therefore ſurely, thou thinkeſt, that God takes no care at all, or not ſuch ſpecial care about the affairs and wayes of men. This is the ſum and ſcope of theſe three Verſes. They are a new charge of impiety upon *Job*, as ſhutting up or reſtraining the providence of God to the things of Heaven alone; and we ſeek how *Eliphaz* frames arguments and proofs of the point for *Job*, which (as will appear afterwards) never came into his heart.

Now though *Eliphaz* miſapplied all this to *Job*, yet herein he fully characters, and clearly paints out the ſpirit of carnal men; for ſuch ſecure themſelves in their evil wayes upon this preſumption, that God takes no notice of them, or that he hath ſomething elſe to do then to trouble himſelf with what they are doing.

Verſ. 12. Is not God in the height of Heaven?

Nonne Deus ſublimior eſt cœlo? Pagni.
Nonne Deus cœlum altũ tenet? Tygur.
Nonne Deus in ſublimate cœlorum? Mont.

There are divers readings of theſe words; firſt thus, *Is not God higher then the Heavens?* A ſecond thus, *Doth not God poſſeſs the high Heaven?* The Original may ſtrictly be rendred, *God the height of Heaven*; that is, *God is above all heavens*: we render well, *God is in the height* or *ſublimity of Heaven.*

This Queſtion, *Is not God in the height of Heaven?* is taken three wayes.

Firſt, Some read it as an Exhortation given by *Eliphaz* to *Job*, to draw off the motion of his thoughts, and moſt of all the ſetled bent of his heart from thoſe inferior things, his loſſes and troubles, his ſorrows, pains, and ſickneſſes; he would divert his mind from theſe worldly ſorrows, and raiſe it up to heavenly enjoyments, *Is not God in Heaven?* As if he had ſaid, *Why ſtandeſt thou poring upon things below? Why dwelleſt thou ſo much upon thy dunghill, and thy preſent poverty; God is in the height of Heaven, conſider him there.* This is both a ſafe and a very ſpiritual way to eaſe our minds of all the troubles and ſorrows which we meet with in this world; could we but aſcend in Spirit to the height where God is, could we by an eye of faith look to him, live upon him, and in him, all burdens would be light, and preſſures eaſie to us.

Deus ſublimitas cœlorum. Hebr.

Secondly, This queſtion may be taken as a plain aſſertion or affirmation, and it is of the ſame value and ſignification with this; *God is in the height of Heaven, there he is, and from thence he beholds all the children of men, their wayes and works.*

Thirdly, *Is not God in the height of Heaven?* May be underſtood not as the queſtion of *Eliphaz*, and ſo his affirmation; but as the queſtion of *Job*, and ſo his ſuppoſition. As if *Eliphaz* apprehended *Job* thus ſpeaking in his heart, *Is not God* (ſayeſt thou) *in the height of Heaven?* Or, doeſt not thou, O *Job*, ſay thus, *God is in the height of Heaven?* I grant that he is there; but I deny that he is there, in thy ſence, or according to thy opinion. He is not concluded, or ſhut up there, he is not ſo in the height of Heaven, but that he mindeth what is done upon the Earth, yea in the very depths of Hell. As if he had ſaid, *Thy thoughts and conceptions of God are too ſtrait and narrow; thou ſpeakeſt much below God, while thou ſayeſt he is in the height of Heaven. While thou confineſt God to Heaven, thou makeſt him like thy ſelf on Earth.*

Annon Deus eſt (inquis) in altitudine cœli? Jun.

From theſe words in the two former Expoſitions,

Obſerve, *That the height of Heaven, or Heaven above, is the place of Gods ſpecial reſidence.*

Heaven is my throne (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 66. 1.) The throne is the ſeat of a Prince, there he declares his power, and his ſtate; his glory ſhines from his throne. A Prince looks like a common man when he is abroad in the world, but when upon his throne, then the rayes of Majeſty break forth, and he appears as he is. Thus the holy Prophet begs a gracious look of the Lord from Heaven (*Iſa.* 63. 15.) *Look down from Heaven, the habitation of thy holineſs, and of thy glory.* Heaven is called the habitation of Gods holineſs, and of his glory; becauſe his holineſs and glory ſhine forth more in Heaven, then upon the Earth; little of the holineſs of God is diſcovered to us here, though ſo much of it breaks forth here as cauſeth the heart of carnal men to quarrel with it continually. Nor are any able with theſe eyes, or rather with theſe hearts to bear the glory of God, or endure his holineſs. When but ſome extraordinary glimpſes of theſe appeared to *Iſaiah*, he cryed out, *Wo is me, I am undone* (or *cut off*) *becauſe I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of Hoſts* (Iſa. 6. 5.) As God is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, ſo man is of impurer eyes then to behold the glory and holineſs of God in clear manifeſtations of it, and therefore Heaven is the ſeat, the habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory. Hence we may take two further inferences.

Firſt, That *our hearts and our eyes ſhould be lifted upwards.* The whole current of Scripture ſpeaks of God as above in Heaven: And that's the reaſon why the Apoſtle (*Col.* 3. 1.) exhorts, *Set your affections on things above, and not on things here below*; and as on things above, ſo moſt of all upon God who is above. The old word was, *Lift up your hearts*; and *David* ſaith in prayer (*Pſal.* 25. 1.) *I lift up my ſoul to thee.* And again (*Pſal.* 123. 1.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the Heavens.* Yea our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf when he prayed (*Joh.* 17. 1.) *Lift up his eyes to Heaven, and ſaid, Father the hour is come, glorifie thy Son*, &c. The eye lift up to Heaven is a ſign of the heart lift up to Heaven; and that corporeal viſible action, ſerves to fix our moſt ſpiritual affections upon the inviſible God. 'Tis indeed an eaſie thing to lift the eyes up to Heaven, but it is very hard yea impoſſible, without a divine aſſiſtance, to lift up the heart to Heaven; the heart of a prophane worldling muds

Surſum corda.

ſo much in the Earth, that he ſeldom lifts up ſo much as his eyes to Heaven; and how much or how often ſoever a hypocrite lifts up his eyes to Heaven, yet ſtill his heart muds in the earth. The eye looks upward naturally, but if ever the heart look upward, 'tis a work of Grace.

Secondly, Then *ſerve the Lord with reverence and holy fear, in all your addreſſes to him and appearings before him.* We reverence thoſe who are high on earth, and ſhall we not reverence him who is higher then the higheſt, him who is in the height of Heaven? While Chriſt bids us ſay, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, he teaches us, as to pray with confidence, becauſe God is our Father; ſo to pray with reverence, becauſe he is a Father in Heaven (*Math.* 6. 9.) The Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 5. 2.) makes this an argument why we ſhould be taken up in high thoughts of God, why we ſhould ſpeak in a reverential manner both of him, and to him? *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God.* He puts (as it were) a double bridle upon man in his drawing near to God; firſt, upon his mouth, *Let not thy mouth be raſh*; and ſecondly, upon his heart (for the heart will talk at random as well as the mouth, yea the heart will talk more at random then the mouth can; and there is praying with the heart alone, as well as with the heart and mouth together; therefore ſaith he) *Let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God*; Why? *for God is in Heaven, and thou art upon the earth, therefore let thy words be few.* Here are indeed two arguments to enforce this compoſure of ſpirit; firſt, the highneſs and greatneſs of God; ſecondly, the lowneſs and vileneſs of man. Conſider God is above, and thou art below, not only in regard of place, but of ſtate and dignity, of power and majeſty. The being of God in Heaven, notes not only a power of ſoveraignty to command us, but a power or ability both to puniſh and to provide for us; to puniſh our raſhneſs, and to ſupply all our wants wherewith we acquaint him, and humbly mention before him; therefore *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty*, &c. The ſame *Solomon* in the ſame book, allegorically deſcribing the declined decrepid condition of man, ſaith of the old man, that he is *afraid of that which is high* (Eccleſ. 12. 5.) Young men will be clambering and aſcending, but old men are *afraid of that which is high*; they dare not go up a high ſteep place, leaſt their ſtrength or breath ſhould fail, or leaſt their brain ſhould turn, and they through giddineſs tumble down. Old men love to keep upon level or even ground, and are afraid of that which is high. Surely both young and old, have reaſon to be afraid of *him that is high*, to have reverential thoughts of God, who is in the height of Heaven, higher then the Heavens. The diſtance of man from God, as God is in Heaven and man on earth, is great; and the diſſimilitude of man to God, as God is holy and man corrupt, is far greater; either of theſe Conſiderations ſingle is enough, but both theſe laid together, is abundantly enough to keep the heart in an humble ſelf-abaſing frame before the Lord.

Secondly, Taking theſe words, *Is not God in the height of Heaven?* As the ſuppoſed ſpeech of *Job*: thou ſayeſt God is in the height of Heaven, that is, confined to Heaven, ſo, that he looks no further; but thou art deceived, God is not lockt up in Heaven, he looks to all things here on Earth. As the Earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs of it, as to right and propriety; ſo the Earth is the Lords, with all the fulneſs of it, as to care and providence. Though there be a diſtinctneſs in the manner or manifeſtation of his being in Heaven and on Earth; yet he is as truly and as much on Earth as he is in Heaven.

Hence note, *God is omnipreſent, or every where.*

Though we are to adore and worſhip God as in Heaven, yet we muſt not ſhut up God in Heaven; as he is in Heaven, ſo he is upon the Earth alſo; he is with us, yea he is in us; he is in all places, not circumſcribed by any, nor limited to any place. God is preſent in all places, and fills all places with his preſence, only he doth not declare his preſence alike in all places. The Lord appears where and as he pleaſeth, but he cannot be otherwiſe or otherwhere then he is, and that is every where. While the Pſalmiſt queried, *Whether ſhall I go from thy preſence?* He was ſo far from imagining that any ſuch place could be found, that in the very next words he concludeth God to be every where, by an enumeration of all places (*Pſal.* 139. 7, 8.) *If I aſcend up to Heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there* (Hell ſtandeth in utmoſt oppoſition to Heaven; as Heaven in Scripture-language is the higheſt, ſo Hell is the loweſt place; now ſaith *David*, *If I make my bed in Hell, thou art there*) *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmoſt parts of the Sea, even there ſhall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me*; that is, there I ſhall find thee efficaciouſly preſent with me. The Lord having ſaid (*Iſa.* 66. 1.) *Heaven is my throne*, preſently adds, *and the earth is my footſtool*; ſo the earth is called, becauſe its ſcituation in nature is below the Heavens; his throne is there, his footſtool is here, (*Jer.* 23. 23, 24.) *Am I a God at hand, ſaith the Lord, and not afar off? Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places, that I ſhall not ſee him, ſaith the Lord? Do not I fill Heaven and Earth, ſaith the Lord?* All theſe expoſtulating queſtions, are reſolved into this one poſition. God is every where; and though ſome read the firſt, not as a Queſtion, but as an Aſſertion, thus, *I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off*, yet the ſence is the ſame; God therein affirming, that he is ever near us, and never afar off from us, whereſoever we are. Though God be in thoſe places which are furtheſt off from us, as well as in thoſe that are near at hand; yet God himſelf is never afar off from us, but alwayes at hand. When *Solomon* had ſet up the Temple (1 *King.* 8. 27.) he was ſure of the preſence of God in it; and therefore did not ſpeak doubtingly, but admiringly, when he asked, *But, will God indeed dwell on Earth?* (that is, will God manifeſt himſelf gloriouſly on the Earth?) *Behold the Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much leſs this houſe that I have builded?* *Solomon* knew that Heaven could not contain, that is, limit God, much leſs could the houſe which he had builded. Yet the Lord made the Temple another Heaven to himſelf, it was as his ſecond Heaven; there the Lord had a kind of glorious reſidence, beyond what he had in any other part of the world. Now the Aſſemblies and Congregations of the Saints are in a ſpecial manner the dwelling place of God, and his ſecond Heaven; he dwells ſo much in the Churches that he ſeems not to dwell at all in any part of the world beſide (2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17.) *I will dwell in them, and walk in them. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeperate ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* God who is in all the world, dwells only in and with his people. They who ſeparate from whatſoever is unholy, have him neareſt them who is altogether Holy. To conclude this point, we may make uſe of that diſtinction of the Schools to clear the difference, how a corporal ſubſtance, and a ſpiritual, as alſo how a ſpiritual created and uncreated ſubſtance, may be ſaid to be in a place. All bodies are in place *circumſcriptively*, ſpiritual ſubſtances created, Angels and ſouls of men are in place *definitively*: We cannot draw a line about an Angel, as about the body of a man; yet the Angel is ſo in this place, as not in another: but God who is a ſpirit and uncreated, is in place *repletively*, that is, he filleth all places where he is, but is not limited by any place where he is: He is (as ſome have not unfitly ſpoken) *a Sphear whoſe center is every where, and whoſe circumference is no where.* This is a myſtery which indeed we are not able to comprehend by reaſon, but we muſt take it down by faith. The Lord is in the height of Heaven, yet ſo there, as he is not ſhut up there.

But if any ſhall yet query, *How is the Lord every where?* How is he in Heaven, and in Earth? Is it ſo as the Sun may be ſaid to be every where? The Sun is ſeated in Heaven, yet is by way of communication on Earth; the Sun by light, heat, or influence, is all the world over, in ſome degree or other, yet the Sun moves only in his Orb. Or is God ſo every where, as a Soveraign Prince, who though in perſon he reſide here or there, yet in power and authority he is every where within his own Dominion? I anſwer, No, theſe alluſions are far below this truth. God is every where, not only as the Sun by light, heat, and influence; not only as a Prince, by his power and authority, but (as we ſpeak) in perſon, and in his Eſſence. Further, the Lords preſence in all places is not as that of the Air, which is more every where then the Sun; the Air is every where filling all places;

and ſo encompaſſing all bodies, as if it made them all but one great body; yet that part of the Air that is in one place is not in another, for the Air is diviſible. But we muſt not take up any ſuch apprehenſions of God, for as he is every where, ſo he is wholly every where; God cannot be divided or parted as the Air is and may. *The divine Eſſence* (as one of the Ancients hath expreſſed this aſtoniſhing myſtery) *is whole within all things, and whole without all things; no where included, no where excluded; containing all things, contained of nothing; yet not at all mingled with the nature of theſe things, nor defiled with their pollutions.* That which the Philoſopher ſpeaks of the ſoul of man (*That it is all in the whole body, and whole in every part of the body*) comes neareſt this myſtery. Some quarrel at that expreſſion about the ſoul, yet there is a truth in it. The ſoul is indiviſible, much more God; whereſoever he is, he is all and altogether; he is every where, and every where all. So he is in the height of heaven, and ſo he is on earth below.

Divina eſſentia eſt tota intra omnia & tota, extra omnia nuſquam incluſa aut excluſa, omnia continens, à nullo contenta, nec propterea immiſtu rebus aut rerum ſordibus inquinata. Auguſt. Epiſt. 55. ad Dard.

But if God be every where, why doth Chriſt teach us to pray, *Our Father which art in Heaven* (Matth. 6. 13.) And when the Heathen made that ſcoffing demand, *Where is now their God?* Why did *David* anſwer, *Our God is in Heaven* (Pſal. 115. 2, 3.) To theſe and all other Texts of like import, we may anſwer, Heaven is not there ſpoken of as bounding the preſence of God, but as guiding the faith and hope of man. *In the morning* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 5. 3.) *will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* When the eye hath no ſight of any help on earth, then faith may have the cleareſt viſions of it in Heaven. And while God appears ſo little in any gracious diſpenſation for his people on earth, that the enemy begins to ſcoff, *Where is now your God?* Then his people have recourſe by faith to Heaven, where the Lord not only, is, but is glorious in his appearings. From whence as he ſeeth how it is with us, ſo he ſeems to have a kind of advantage to relieve us.

But as ſome Scriptures ſeem to confine God to Heaven, ſo other Scriptures ſeem to deny that he is every where on earth. Thus *Moſes* ſaid to the people of *Iſrael* (Numb. 14. 42.) *Go not up for the Lord is not among you.* And again (*Deut.* 7. 21.) *Thou ſhalt not be affrighted at them, for the Lord thy God is among you*; with ſome the Lord is, with others the Lord is not; and he is with the ſame perſons at one time, not at another; how then can it be ſaid, that the Lord is every where preſent? I anſwer, when *Moſes* ſaith (and many other Texts which ſpeak in the ſame form) that God was ſometimes with his people, and ſometimes not; we are not to underſtand it at all of a local preſence, or abſence, but of a favourable preſence or abſence. Thus God is with ſome perſons, and not with others; thus he is ſometime preſent with, ſometime abſent from the ſame perſon. It was this favourable preſence for which *Moſes* did ſo earneſtly entreat the Lord, (*Exod.* 33. 15.) *If thy preſence go not with us, carry us no further*; that is, unleſs thou pleaſe to be with us, to proſper our way, and protect us in it, let us ſtay where we are. This preſence of God is a high favour indeed, and God is thus preſent but in few places (comparatively) of the whole earth.

Once more, thoſe Scriptures may ſeem to imply that God is ſo in Heaven, that he is not alſo upon the Earth; which ſpeak of his coming down from Heaven to Earth, (*Gen.* 11. 5.) *And the Lord came down to ſee the City and the Tower which the Children of men builded.* Whence ſome may infer, if he came down to ſee the City, then he was not there before, and if ſo, then he is not univerſally preſent in all places. Again (*Gen.* 18. 20, 21.) *And the Lord ſaid, becauſe the cry of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *is great; and becauſe their ſin is very grievous, I will go down now, and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me, and if not, I will know.* This paſſage yields the ſame difficulty and objection; to both which we may add that of *David* (Pſal. 14. 2.) *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand*; he doth not ſay, God was among the children of men here below, but being in Heaven (as a man ſtanding upon a high place or Tower) he looked down.

I anſwer, Theſe Texts ſpeak of God after the manner of men, or they ſpeak thus, not to teach us, how God knows what is done on earth; but to confirm, and aſſure us that the Lord doth clearly and certainly know whatſoever is done by, or among men on Earth; even as clearly and certainly as a man knoweth any thing by his view upon the place. God knoweth all things preſently, without ſearching, though never ſo ſecret; and all things certainly without enquiring, though never ſo doubtful. God neither aſcends, nor deſcends; he doth not come down by any motion, but he comes down to our apprehenſion; he ſhews us after our way, that he knoweth, becauſe we cannot conceive his way of knowledge. If I would aſſure another man that I certainly know ſuch a thing, I tell him, I came from the place, I ſaw it, or I beheld it with my own eyes; now that's all that is intended, when 'tis ſaid, the Lord came down from Heaven to behold, and ſee the Tower of *Babell*, and the condition of *Sodom*; or it is, to admoniſh all Magiſtrates and Judges, that they paſs no ſentence of puniſhment, either upon places or perſons, upon bare here-ſay and reports; but that they firſt enform themſelves fully of the matter of fact, as *Job* profeſſed his courſe was in all legal proceedings (*Chap.* 29. 16.) *The cauſe which I knew not I ſearched out.* Thus we ſee notwithſtanding all theſe appearances from Texts of Scripture to the contrary, that this Scripture truth ſtandeth firm. The Lord is ſo in the height of Heaven, that he is every where alſo here upon the Earth.

From which take theſe two Deductions,

First, *Seeing the Lord is every where preſent, we ſhould be every where holy.*

For whereſoever he is, he is the holy Lord. That was the charge which God gave to *Abraham*, *Walk before me, and be upright*; as if he had ſaid, Whereſoever thou walkeſt, walk as having me preſent with thee, and be upright in my preſence. *I* (ſaith *David*, a type of Chriſt, *Pſal.* 16. 8.) *have ſet the Lord alwayes before me; he is at my right hand, I ſhall not be moved.* He that by faith eyes God continually as his protector in trouble, ſhall not be moved with any evil that he ſuffers; and he that eyes God by faith as his pattern in holineſs, ſhall not be moved from doing that which is good. This thought, *The Lord is at our right hand*, keeps us from turning either to the right hand or to the left. It is ſaid of *Enoch*, that he *walked with God* (Gen. 5. 22.) and though the Hiſtory of his life be very ſhort, yet 'tis ſaid of him a ſecond time (*verſ.* 24.) that he *walked with God.* He walked ſo much with God, that he walked as God, he did not walk (which kind of walking the Apoſtle reproves, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3.) *as men.* He walked ſo little like the world, that his ſtay was little in the world. *He was not* (ſaith the Text) *for God took him*; he took him from the world to himſelf, or (as the Author to the *Hebrews* reports it) *he was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death; for he received this teſtimony that he pleaſed God.*

Secondly, It followeth, if God be every where preſent,

That the godly are never out of the reach of God to help them, and that the wicked are never out of the reach of God to puniſh them.

(Iſa. 43. 2.) *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee, and when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt.* The preſence of God is the protection of Saints in the evil which they ſuffer; and they who do evil cannot be hid from his puniſhing preſence. There is no running from God. It is ſaid of *Jonah* (Chap. 1. 3.) *That he fled from the preſence of God.* Whether fled he? The Text ſaith he fled to Sea, but did not God find him there? He fled from the commanding preſence of God, but he fell into the angry preſence of God. We have a large deſcription in *Amos* 9. how carnal men hope to ſhift out of the hand of God. *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will ſlay the laſt of them with the ſword, though they dig to Hell, thence ſhall my hand take them.* We read what wiſe counſel the ſervants of the King of *Benhadad* gave him after he had been defeated by the King of *Iſrael* (1 King. 20. 23, 24, 25.) *Their Gods are Gods of the hills, therefore they were ſtronger then we, but let us fight againſt them in the plains, and ſurely we ſhall be ſtronger then they. Make thee an Army like the Army that thou haſt loſt, horſe for horſe, and* *chariot for chariot, and we will fight againſt them in the plain, and ſurely we ſhall be ſtronger then they, and he hearkened to their voice and did ſo.* Why did they deſire to fight them upon the plain? They thought God was a God of the hills and not of the valleys; but (*ver.*28.) *A man of God ſaid to the King of* Iſrael, *thus ſaith the Lord, becauſe the* Aſſyrians *have ſaid, the Lord is God of the hills, and not of the valleys, therefore will I deliver this great multitude into thy hand.* As if he had ſaid, however you deſerve not in the leaſt that I ſhould own you, or aſſiſt your cauſe; yet that I may confute the blaſphemous and derogatory principles of theſe *Syrians*, I will give you a ſecond victory againſt them, even in the valleys, where they ſuppoſe they have you at an advantage, and ſhall deal with you beyond the extent of my power and Territory. Though God had no cauſe to reſpect the honour of the *Iſraelites*, yet he could not forget the honour of his own Name, which was obſcured by thoſe ſuperſtitious *Syrians*. The moſt received Doctrine and Divinity of the Heathens confined their gods to certain places, ſome to this City, and ſome to that; ſome to the hills, and ſome to the plains; ſome to the Sea, others to the Land. 'Tis ſaid that the ſame night in which *Alexander* the Great (of whoſe Conqueſts *Daniel* Propheſied) was born, that the Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus* was burnt to the ground. And the Heathens gave this as the reaſon of it, becauſe *Diana* was abſent from her Temple, being gone to aſſiſt at the birth of *Alexander*; implying that their Goddeſs was ſo in one place, as ſhe could not attend what was done elſewhere. Such were the groſs conceits which they had of their gods, and they imagined the God of *Iſrael* to be ſuch a one, as their own. The verieſt Idolater in the world preſumes his god as good as any is. But *Jehova* the living God hath taught us to ſay, *Who is a God like unto thee?* And our experiences have ſealed to it, that *there is none like the God of* Jeſurun, *who rideth on the Heavens for thy help, and in his excellency on the Skyes* (Deut. 33. 26.) And we have learned to comfort our ſelves in all places and ſtreights, in this aſſurance, that he is *the God of the hills, as well as of the valleys; of the Sea, as well as the dry Land; and that he is as truly preſent in the loweſt depths, as in the higheſt Heavens. Is not God in the height of Heaven?*

And behold the height of the Stars how high they are.

The Hebrew is, *Behold the head of the Stars*; The head of a man is the higheſt part of him, and the head of any thing is the top of it. *Behold the head or height of the Stars how high they are*; Stars are high, but God is higher; many creatures are high, but God is high above all creatures. The creature is ſtrong, but God is ſtronger; the creature is wiſe, but God is wiſer; the creature is glorious, but God is infinitely more glorious: The glory, wiſdom, ſtrength, and higheſt height of the creature, is but a glimpſe of what God is. *The Stars are high.* I ſhall not enter into an Aſtronomical diſcourſe about the Stars, or the height of Stars. I ſhall not meddle with a *Jacob's ſtaff*, to take the elevation of the Stars, no need of ſuch diſcourſe here; all that is intended by *Eliphaz*, is a proof that God is infinitely exalted in his highneſs and majeſty above the Stars.

Behold the height of the Stars how high they are.] This word *Behold* in Scripture is often applied to things of *wonder*; to ſay, *behold*, is not a calling for the bare act of the eye to ſee the height of the Stars; but it calls for a work of the mind, duly to conſider of, and to wonder at their height. Some creatures, eſpecially the heavenly, are not only uſeful, but wonderful; and 'tis as hard to underſtand them, as it is comfortable to enjoy them. The Hebrew word for *Heaven* cometh from a root which ſignifies to amaze and aſtoniſh; and indeed there are natural wonders and myſteries enough in the Heavens to aſtoniſh any conſidering man. And the true reaſon why we are no more aſtoniſht at them, or do no more admire them, is becauſe we do ſo little conſider them. We often *ſee* or *look* upon the Stars, but we ſeldom *behold* them: And therefore *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 8. 3.) *When I conſider the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him?* As the beholding and conſideration of our own works will make us aſhamed, becauſe they appear ſo bad; ſo the conſideration and beholding of the works of God will make us aſtoniſht, becauſe they appear both ſo good and great. *Behold* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *John* 3. 1.) *what manner of love the father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God*; even this tranſcendent Love of God in our Adoption is paſſed by as a ſmall matter, by thoſe who will not take the pains (or rather the pleaſure) and leiſure to behold and conſider the manner of it. No mervail if the power of God in making the higheſt Stars, be paſſed by as a low thing, by thoſe who do not behold, that is, diligently conſider them *Behold the height of the Stars how high they are.*

We are called to conſider this,

Hence note, *That it is our duty to contemplate the excellency of the creature.*

God hath not only given us the book of the Scripture, but of the Creature, and we muſt attend to the reading of this as well as of that, even to the reading of every leaf and line of it. There are four great leaves of this book. Firſt, The Heavens; Secondly, The Earth; Thirdly, The Sea; Fourthly, The Air. Theſe are the four great leaves of this book of the creature; in every one of which we ſhould labour to be expert Scholars, and ſpell out the name and mind of God in them. For though (as I ſaid before) beholding notes wondering, yet we muſt not behold them to wonder at them, like children; but we muſt behold them to learn ſomewhat from them, or to be inſtructed by them as men.

Behold the Stars.] Firſt, In their number; as God ſaid to *Abraham* (Gen. 15. 5.) *Look now towards Heaven, and tell the Stars if thou be able to number them; and he ſaid unto him, ſo ſhall thy ſeed be.* 'Tis matter of wonder that God ſhould make ſo many of thoſe eminent Lights, that he ſhould ſet up ſo many flaming torches in Heaven for man to ſee his way, and work by on Earth. That God who hath ſpread this Canopy over our heads, ſhould alſo embroyder it with ſuch a multitude of golden ſpangles, which render it as much our delight, as it is our duty, to behold them.

Secondly, Behold the Stars in their order, they move by rule, they keep their ranks, none of them go out of their place, or forſake their ſtation. They who are skilled in the motion of the Stars, know where to have them a hundred years hence. In *Judges* 5. it is ſaid, *The Stars in their courſes fought againſt* Siſſera.

Thirdly, We ſhould conſider the Stars in their magnitude, what vaſt bodies they are; ſome of them are bigger then the whole body of the Earth (as Philoſophy teacheth us) though, to apearance not bigger then the blaſe of a candle, nor broader then the palm of a hand.

Fourthly, Conſider alſo the difference of the Stars in their greatneſs, and magnitude; they are all great, but not all of a greatneſs, not all of one ſize. Aſtronomers divide the Stars into ſix magnitudes. We ſhould likewiſe obſerve, and wonder at their light, which is their glory: the light of the Stars is the glory of the Stars, and ſo the more light any Star hath, the more glory it hath. Thus *one Star differreth from another Star in glory* (1 Cor. 15. 41.) But I ſhall not ſtay upon theſe things, having inſiſted ſomewhat largely upon them at *Chap.* 9. *verſ.* 9. Whether I refer the Reader. Only note here, that as the Stars of Heaven are of ſeveral degrees; God hath not levell'd them, either in light or magnitude: ſo he hath diverſly diſtributed the light of parts, and gifts; of underſtanding and knowledge; of eſtate and power, to and among the children of men here on Earth. 'Tis good for all, that all are not alike; the univerſe could not be either ſo beautiful, or ſo orderly, if every particular had the ſame beauty, or were of the ſame order. And he that cannot be content to have leſs, and to be leſſer then another, is altogether unfit; not only to be as great, or to have as much as another, but to be or have any thing at all. Nor is any man more fit to be more then he is, then he that can rejoyce while another is more then he.

Secondly note, *The creature leads us to God.*

That's the tendency and ſcope of all that is here aſſerted. *Eliphaz* calls not *Job* to the meditation, or contemplation of the Stars to leave him there. Some ſtudy the Heavens much, but their lives are earthly; they ſtudy the Stars, yet there is nothing but dirt in their hearts; and the reaſon is, becauſe they ſtudy the Stars for the Stars ſake, and not for Gods ſake; and make the Stars their end, not their way, or as Stars, to lead them to God. This is the reaſon why many Aſtronomers and Philoſophers, who buſie their heads and minds much in ſpeculation about the nature of the Heavenly bodies, know not at all what it is to have their converſations in Heaven, or to mind the things that are above. We ſhould ſo behold the glory of the Stars, as from thence to infer, that God is much more glorious; yea, that theſe things which were made glorious, have no glory in compariſon of that Glory which made them. *Plato* taught his Schollers to ſay, *The Earth is beautiful, the Heavens are more beautiful; but God who made the Earth, and the Heavens, is more beautiful then both.* The viſible creature ſhews the inviſible God (*Pſal.* 19. 1, 2.) *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his handy work.* But O how glorious is the inviſible God, who hath made ſuch viſible creatures? And what a work-Maſter is he who hath ſet up ſuch a work? (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and god-head.* The things that are made, carry us to the maker of them; and they tell us, that none but he who hath an eternal power and god-head, could poſſibly make them. The Heathen thought the Sun, Moon, and Stars to be gods, therefore certainly there is much of God to be ſeen in them. And *Job* ſaith (which doth plainly ſhew that in nature it is ſo, *Chap.* 31. 26.) *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs, and my heart hath been ſecretly inticed, or my mouth hath kiſſed my hand; this alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judge, for I ſhould have denyed the God that is above*; that is, if I have been inticed to worſhip the Sun, or Moon, as raviſht with their beauty (for 'tis ſo far from being a ſin, that 'tis a duty to behold the Sun when it ſhineth, and the Moon walking in brightneſs; but ſo to behold them, as to adore them, or do obeyſance to them (which was the cuſtom of the Heathen, expreſſed it ſeems among them by kiſſing their hand, as we do at this day in token of reſpect and reverence to men above us) this is an iniquity, even that groſs iniquity of Idolatry, or *worſhipping the creature inſtead of, or more then the Creator, who is bleſſed for evermore.* Now (I ſay) inaſmuch as theſe creatures have ſo much of God in them, that many Heathens have miſtaken them for God; how will it condemn us of dulneſs and ſtupidity, if we be not led to God in the knowledge and beholding of them? For as to make theſe creatures gods, ſo not to ſee God in theſe creatures, is to deny the God that is above.

Thirdly, While we behold the Stars of Heaven, it ſhould exceedingly both humble us and make us thankful, for whoſe uſe, comfort, and accommodation in this life, God ſet up thoſe Glorious Lights. God did not make them for his own uſe, he had no need of them, he was from everlaſting without any of theſe creatures. The Stars are nothing to him; the Sun is nothing to him; yea in that ſtate of glory we ſhall injoy God for ever, we ſhall have light without Sun; ſo that theſe lights were made for our uſe, and for ours only, while we are walking in the dark vale of this preſent world. Now, while we *behold the height of the Stars how high they are*, and conſider for whom as well as by whom they were made; even for us, for poor us, who are but duſt and aſhes: This ſhould at once lay us low in humbleneſs (looking upon them as an honour too great for us) and raiſe us up in thankfulneſs, becauſe the benefit and comfort of them is ſo great to us. Thus *David* ſpeaks in that excellent propheſie of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 8. 3.) *When I conſider the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him?* As if he had ſaid, thou haſt made all theſe creatures for man; ſee what a Heaven, what Stars God hath framed, and ſet up for man. *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* Thus *behold the height of the Stars, how high they are*; as to lead thee unto God, and to admire his highneſs, ſo to be humbled at thy own baſeneſs, and to be thankful for his benefits.

Eliphaz having laid down theſe two Propoſitions, *God is on high, and the Stars are high*; proceeds to make an inference from both, which he formeth up (by way of ſuppoſition) from *Job's* own mouth.

Verſ. 13. **And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?**

As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, thou art ſo far from making that right improvement which thou oughteſt of theſe truths; that the Lord is in the height of Heaven, and that he hath made thoſe high and glorious lights in Heaven, that indeed thou doeſt quite pervert his meaning in making them; *Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* Inſtead of honouring God who formed theſe lights, thou art darkning his honour, and eclipſing the light of his omniſcience. For whereas thou ſhouldeſt have ſaid, ſeeing God is on high, and hath made the Stars, which are ſo high, ſurely nothing can be hid from his knowledge. Thou ſayeſt, *How doth God know?* And there is a twofold ſaying of this; firſt, a ſaying with the tongue; ſecondly, with the heart: The vain heart of man hath many ſayings, and this among the reſt, *How doth God know?* (Pſal. 14. 1.) *The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God.* And he that ſaith in his heart, *How doth God know?* ſpeaks as fooliſhly as that fool doth, who ſaith, *There is no God.* To deny that or doubt whether God knoweth all things, is not only to doubt, but to deny that God is at all; he is not God who knoweth not all things.

Dicis, 1 *verbis prolatis,* 2 *mentis cogitatione & falſa perſuaſione.*

And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?] The conjunctive particle *And,* is here put as a cauſal, *And thou ſayeſt*; that is, *therefore thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* So the ſence is more clear, *Is not God in the height of heaven?* &c. He is. And what then? The uſe thou makeſt of it is this, *Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* So the particle is uſed (*Gen.* 49. 15.) *He ſaw that reſt was good, and he gave his ſhoulders to the burthen,* &c. that is, *therefore he gave his ſhoulders to the burthen.*

Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?] We may anſwer, firſt, Negatively, Not by ſenſe, as we; eyes and ears are aſcribed to God improperly in Scripture; nor doth God know by diſcourſe, drawing one thing from another; but in the Affirmative, he knows intuitively, he knows every thing nakedly in it ſelf.

Again, Some read, *What doth God know?* How far doth his eye extend? What are the objects of his knowledge? To this we may anſwer, God knoweth all things, even the hearts of all the children of men, there are no ſecrets to God. But whether we expound it of the manner or matter of divine knowledge, the ſence is the ſame; either an affirmation that God did not know all things, or at leaſt a doubt whether he did or no. *Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* But where, and when did *Job* ſay this? *Job* might challenge *Eliphaz*; bring your proofs and witneſſes againſt me; why do you impute ſuch thoughts to me, and frame ſuch imaginations in my breaſt? certainly *Job* never ſpake this, and as ſurely *Job* never thought this, yet *Eliphaz* puts it directly upon him. What was his ground? Only as the former crimes of uncharitableneſs and injuſtice, his breaking the arms of the fatherleſs, *&c.* were faſtned upon him, becauſe of the fears, ſnares, and darkneſs in which he was; as if he muſt needs have done thoſe evils, becauſe he endured ſo much evil. *Job's* ſufferings were great, and therefore according to the Logick of *Eliphaz*, his ſins muſt needs be very great. So here, he hath only this to prove his ſuppoſition, that *Job* ſaid, *How doth God know?* Becauſe *Job* had ſaid, that God doth ſometime proſper wicked men, and afflicts the righteous. As if he who ſaith, that God ſuffers wicked men to proſper in this life, muſt needs alſo ſay, that God regards not the things of this life; ſo that *Eliphaz* ſeems to ſpeak thus, *We have heard thee ſaying, that the wicked proſper, and that the godly are afflicted*; what need we any further witneſs, that thy opinion is, *God neither takes notice nor care of the things here below.* Out of thine own mouth we condemn thee as guilty of this blaſphemy, that, *Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?*

Exiſtimabit hæc conſequi ex Jobi *dictis, quaſi neceſſe ſit eum qui dicat improbos proſperè agere, exiſtimare etiam Deum res humanas non curare.* Merl.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That good men are ſometimes charged with ſaying and doing the worſt and vileſt things.*

Thus (1 *King.* 21. 13.) *Naboth* was accuſed of *blaſpheming God and the King.* Chriſt himſelf was taxed with blaſphemy more then once (*Matth.* 9. 3.) *And behold certain of the Scribes ſaid within themſelves, this man blaſphemes.* There they did not only aver it, but they ſaid it within themſelves. At other times they ſpake it openly, (*Joh.* 10. 33.) *The Jews anſwered and ſaid, for a good deed we ſtone thee not, but for blaſphemy; becauſe thou being a man makeſt thy ſelf God.* And again (*Matth.* 26. 65.) *He hath ſpoken blaſphemy, ye have heard his blaſphemy.* To ſpeak or do well and hear ill was the portion of Chriſt, and may be the portion of the holieſt of thoſe who are Chriſts.

Secondly note, *That when men are heated in diſpute, they are apt to make falſe inferences from the tenets and ſayings of their oppoſers.*

Eliphaz ſaith, *Job* denied providence, whereas *Job* adored it; that he denied Gods knowledge of the good and evil done in the world, becauſe he maintained, that good men receive evil, and evil men good in the world. When we deny Tranſubſtantiation, or that the bread is changed into the very ſubſtance of the body of Chriſt; Papiſts infer, that we deny, that Chriſt ſpake truly, when at his Laſt Supper he ſaid, *This is my body*; and they will hence force it upon us, that we ſay, *God is not omnipotent*, becauſe we affirm that it is inconſiſtent with the nature of a true humane body (ſuch as Chriſt hath now in Heaven, though glorified and ſpiritual) to be in many places at once. For as ſome deny the omnipreſence of the Divine Nature, ſo Papiſts affirm the omnipreſence of the Humane Nature; and (ſay they) while we deny this, we deny the omnipotency of God. Others charge us that we make God the author of ſin, and that, according to our tenet, all the impiety and wickedneſs that is in the world lieth at his door; becauſe we affirm, that God hath paſſed an Eternal abſolute and unchangeable decree concerning all the ſons of men. When all other arguments fail, how uſual is it to make the divineſt truths guilty of the moſt uncomly and ugly conſequences that are imaginable.

Further, Thou ſayeſt, *How doth God know?* Take it either of the inward or of the outward ſaying, either of the tongue or of the heart, ſaying ſo; *Eliphaz* would prove from it, that certainly *Job* was a wicked man. And his inference had been true, if he could have proved it true, that *Job* had ſo.

Hence obſerve, *That to have evil thoughts, or to ſpeak evil of God, is the character of a wicked man.*

He that is good, muſt needs both think, and ſpeak good of God. *David* doth often aggravate the wickedneſs of his enemies, from the language of their hearts and tongues, (Pſal. 10. 11.) *He hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hides his face, he will never ſee.* And again (*Pſal.* 144. 7, 8, 11.) *Send thy hand from above, rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hands of ſtrange children, whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.* If the mouth ſpeaketh vanity, the hand is full of falſhood; we may even feel deceit in their hands, whoſe mouths ſpeak any kind of vanity; but eſpecially this, which is the vaineſt vanity of all, *How doth God know?* or ſurely God doth not know. Such the Pſalmiſt rebukes (*Pſal.* 94. 4, 5, 7.) *How long ſhall they utter and ſpeak hard things?* What things were thoſe? The next words ſhew us, *They brake in pieces thy people*, &c. *yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee*, &c. *underſtand ye brutiſh, among the people, he that formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee?* There is no greater argument of brutiſhneſs and ignorance, then to queſtion the knowledge of God, or to ſay, *How doth God know?*

And (which is the ſame in other words) *can he judge through the darke cloud.*

As if *Job* had further argued thus, I am ſafe enough from the knowledge of God, for as he is high above me, ſo there are dark clouds between him and me; *Can he judge through the dark cloud?* My opinion is he cannot. For knowledge goeth before judgment; he that knoweth not certainly, can never judge rightly. Juſtice is pictured blind, in reference to perſons, but not in reference to things or cauſes; Juſtice muſt take no notice of this or that man, whether he be great or little, high or low, a near friend or a ſtranger; Juſtice is blind as to all theſe conſiderations, and knoweth no man; but Juſtice muſt know every mans caſe and cauſe; unleſs man know that, how can he judge? And if God know not that, how can he judge? He muſt have light to ſee what is done, before he paſs ſentence upon what is done; therefore, *Can he judge through the dark cloud?* Surely he cannot. Thus the Atheiſt concludes indeed, and thus *Eliphaz* repreſents *Job* concluding in his own heart; there is not only a great diſtance between God and me, not only is he in the height of Heaven, and I below on Earth, but there are many gloomy clouds between him and me; as he is high above me, ſo there are ſuch impediments in the way that he cannot ſee me. The Vulgar reads, *He judgeth as through darkneſs.* Now the beſt of Saints *ſee God through a glaſs darkly, or in a riddle* (1 Cor. 13. 12.) And ſecure ſinners think that God ſeeth them only through a cloud darkly, or (as *Eliphaz* ſpeaketh) *through a dark cloud*, he knoweth not clearly but dimly. To judge through a cloud, is to judge of things confuſedly, not diſtinctly; by gueſs or conjecturally, not exactly or face to face. This is all the ſight which an evil heart alloweth God (if he allow him any) concerning his wayes and actions. They who do things which cannot abide the light, are willing to believe that all they do is in the dark. Theirs are works of moral darkneſs, and therefore they pleaſe themſelves with thinking that their works are hid either in natural or artificial darkneſs. It is ſaid of the Lord in Scripture (*Pſal.* 97. 2.) *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him, while judgment and righteouſneſs are the habitation of his throne*; but theſe imagine that God cannot proceed in judgment and righteouſneſs, becauſe clouds and darkneſs are round about him. It is ſaid (1 *King.* 8. 10, 11, 12.) *The cloud filled the houſe of the Lord, ſo that the Prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter becauſe of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the houſe of the Lord. Then ſpake* Solomon, *the Lord ſaid that he will dwell in the thick darkneſs.* Read, *Exod.* 20. 21. *Deut.* 5. 22. *Pſal.* 18. 11. *God is light* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *John* 1.) *and he dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto* (1 Tim. 6. 16.) How then can he be ſaid to dwell in thick darkneſs? I anſwer, thoſe Scriptures which ſay that God dwells in darkneſs, that clouds and darkneſs are round about him, teach us, that God and his wayes are much hid from us; we are not able to look up to him, or ſee clearly what he doth, much leſs can we ſee what his counſels are. The clouds and darkneſs which are about him, do not hinder his ſight of us, but our ſight of him. Our darkneſs is no darkneſs to him; but his darkneſs, yea his light is darkneſs to us. Again, God is ſaid to dwell in a cloud, to reprove our boldneſs and curioſity, who are too apt to pry into what is not to be known, and to neglect our duty in what we know, or to neglect the knowledge of our duty. God hath ſome reſerves in counſels; ſome of his providences are wrapt up in clouds. He will be truſted and honoured in what he is not ſeen or known. Not to know theſe things is indeed our neſcience, but not our ignorance; and not to ſeek after the knowledge of theſe things, is our duty, not our ſloath. Thus God who dwells in light, dwells alſo in a cloud; for he *dwells in light that no man can* (no nor ought to) *approach unto.* We may come near his light by faith, but we cannot come near his light by knowledge. There is ſuch an infinite, ſuch an overcoming light in God, that it is a darkneſs to us; the moſt Eagle-like eye of a humane underſtanding are not only dazzel'd, but quite blinded with his brightneſs. Now as no man can judge through this light of God, ſo ſome men are ready to ſay (and thus *Eliphaz* brings in *Job* ſaying) that God cannot judge through dark clouds, through clouds and darkneſs. Nor doth *Eliphaz* bring in *Job* ſaying thus only by way of doubt or queſtion, but by way of averment and reſolution in the next verſe.

Sit non novit ergo nec judicare poteſt, ad rectum enim judicium requiritur cognitio cauſæ.

Et quaſi per caliginum judicat. Vulg.

Verſ. 14. **Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he ſeeth it not.**

This verſe is but an explication of the thirteenth, *Can he ſee through the dark cloud?* There he puts the queſtion, here he gives a peremptory anſwer, he cannot certainly; for, *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he cannot ſee.* The Hebrew for *thick clouds* is but one word, which in the root, ſignifies *Thickneſs*, or, *to be thick.* Some clouds have a kind of thinneſs in them, and are as it were tranſparent.

עבים *Nubes dictæ ſunt à denſitate, à radice* עבה *denſum eſſe. q.d. ſicut nos latet Deus, ita Deum latent noſtra cœleſtia, illi tantum patent.*

parent. Others are more groſs and opacous, quite hindering and intercepting our ſight of all that is beyond them; with theſe (ſaith *Eliphaz*) thou O *Job*, vainly conceiteſt, that the ſight of God alſo is intercepted, ſo that, as we cannot ſee God, ſo God cannot ſee us; a vail of thick clouds ſeclude his ſight. Nor is this the only reaſon why thou art overcom with this ignorant perſwaſion. Thou haſt a ſecond, which though poſſibly thou wouldeſt conceal, yet will not I; and this is it, Thou alſo ſayeſt,

Hoc verbo videtur connotari ſtudium inquirendi. Piſc.

He walketh in the circuit of Heaven.] As if thou hadſt ſaid, ſuppoſe God can ſee through the thick cloud, and ſo my former reaſon ſhould fail; yet I know well enough that the great God of Heaven hath other matters to meddle with, other affairs to buſie himſelf about, then to trouble himſelf with me. *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven*; we are not to take *walking* as a meer motion, but as *walking* notes imployment; *He walks in the circuit of Heaven*, that is, he is wholly taken up there. When the Lord asked of Satan, *Whence comeſt thou?* he anſwered, *From going to and fro in the Earth, and from walking up and down in it.* Now what doth Satan when he walks up and down the world, doth he walk like an idle vagrant that hath nothing to do? Doth he walk with his hands in his pockets, as having no buſineſs? Doth he walk meerly to take the Air, or to take his pleaſure, to ſee, and be ſeen? No, when Satan walks about the world, *his walking is working*, he goeth about to tempt, to try, to lay ſnares and baits, to catch and captivate the ſouls of men. So here when it is ſaid, *God walketh in the circuit of Heaven*, the meaning is, his buſineſs, yea even his whole buſineſs lies there; he hath enough to do in Heaven, and therefore hath no leiſure to attend what is done on Earth. That's the ſcope and tendency of theſe words which *Eliphaz* faſtens upon *Job*; *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven.* We are ſure enough of him. The words carry the ſame ſence, with that ſpeech of the whoriſh woman (*Prov.* 7. 18, 19, 20.) *Come* (ſaith ſhe) *let us take our fill of love till the morning, let us ſolace our ſelves with loves.* But the young man might poſſibly object, your husband will come home, and that will ſpoil all. No (ſaith ſhe) never fear it, he is far enough out of the way; *The good man is not at home, he is gone a long journey; He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed*; that is, he will not come home till the day appointed, he hath great buſineſs abroad, and he hath carried money enough with him to bear his charges till he [illegible] done his buſineſs. He is riding and running in a far Country, and minds not home, nor hath he the leaſt ſuſpition of what we do at home. Thus when the ſinner is about to depart far from his duty, he puts or conceives God far from him. *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven.* From the general ſcope of *Eliphaz* in the thirteenth and fourteenth Verſes,

First obſerve, *Carnal men frame conceptions of God like themſelves.*

Thus the hypocrite is deſcribed (*Pſal.* 50. 21.) *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf.* Not that he thought God was a man, but that God had ſuch thoughts of good and evil, as man hath. As if what is right in mans eyes, were ſo in the eyes of God alſo; or as if what did not diſpleaſe man, were pleaſing, or not much diſpleaſing unto God. When the Lord ſaith (*Iſa.* 55. 8.) *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your wayes my wayes*; he doth plainly intimate, that they did begin to frame thoughts of God like their own; but ſaith God, *As the Heavens are higher then the Earth, ſo are my thoughts then your thoughts, and my wayes then your wayes*; that is, as my thoughts have a vaſtneſs in them to all things beyond yours, ſo eſpecially in this thing, the performance of my promiſe for the pardon of ſin. O how unlike is God to man in this? God is not more unlike man in his abſolute freedom from the leaſt inclination to commit any, the leaſt ſin, then he is in the admirable freeneſs of his inclination to pardon any, even the greateſt ſin. Men are commonly not only unmerciful to thoſe who wrong them, but revengeful, and when once offended are hardly drawn to a reconcilement; and ſeldom ſo fully reconciled, but that ſomewhat of offence ſtayeth behind. But the thoughts of God are not ſo. He is ſlow to wrath, and ready to forgive. He quickly pardons the offence, and receives the offender into favour; no more retaining the memory of his offence (as to his hurt) then if he had never offended. Thus the Lord would aſſure ſinners, that his thoughts in pardoning ſin are not as theirs. And it is but need he ſhould do ſo; for when ſinners begin to be awakened, they frame ſuch thoughts of God, as to pardon of ſin, as they have in themſelves: when they look upon their ſins as too big to be pardoned by man, they conclude preſently the Lord cannot or will not pardon them. And as many under temptation, frame thoughts of God like their own about the pardon of ſin; ſo it is the conſtant courſe of wicked men (which is indeed the worſt of their ſins) to frame thoughts of God like unto themſelves, while they commit and continue in ſin. Man ſhould not dare to imagine any thing of God in reference either to his juſtice or mercy, either about the puniſhing or pardoning of ſin, but what he hath declared of himſelf; all that we imagine beſide that, is the making of another God. There are many falſe gods made with mens hands, but the hearts of men make many more. The heart of man makes thouſands of falſe or ſtrange gods. Every undue, every wrong imagination of God, is the forming up of a ſtrange, of a new god. When we aſcribe to God ſuch a kind of power, ſuch a kind of knowledge, ſuch a kind of holineſs, ſuch a kind of juſtice, ſuch a kind of mercy, as is common to the creature, in all this we frame up a new god to our ſelves. And thus thoſe Gentiles of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 1. 21, & 25.) *Became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkned*; in what was their fooliſh heart darkned? in falſe notions of God; therefore they are ſaid (*Verſ.* 29.) *To change the glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, four footed beaſts, and creeping things.* Now as there is the changing of the glory of the incorruptible God into the Image of a corruptible man, that is, into the external Image of a corruptible man (for ſome ſet up falſe gods in the likeneſs of men;) ſo there is a changing of the glory of the incorruptible God, into the internal Image of a corruptible man, that is, into ſuch thoughts and conceptions as are ordinarily in men. Let ſuch conſider, that, if to make a worſhip of our own for the true God, be indeed to ſet up a falſe god; (all they worſhip falſe gods who ſet up a ſtrange worſhip for the true God; now, I ſay, if they who do but ſet up a new worſhip for the true God make a ſtrange god) what then do they who in their hearts ſet up a new god, that is, who frame conceptions of God which himſelf never gave ground for in his Word? Such was the conceit which *Eliphaz* had of *Job*, when he preſumes him ſaying, *How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud?*

Secondly, From the particular miſapprehenſion of God impoſed by *Eliphaz* upon *Job*; *And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know?* &c.

Obſerve, *Sinful men fancy to themſelves that God either doth not or cannot take notice of them in their ſinful wayes.*

Thus they reaſon, *Can he ſee through the dark cloud?* and conclude, *Thick clouds are a covering to him that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of Heaven?* What *Eliphaz* layes to *Job's* charge falſly, is often charged by the Holy Ghoſt upon wicked men truly (*Pſal.* 10. 11.) *He hath ſaid in his heart God hath forgotten, he hides his face, he will never ſee it.* Who this *He* is, whoſe heart ſpeaks this language, appears clearly in the former part of the *Pſalm*, where he is more then once called *The wicked* (*ver.* 2, 3.) and where more then one of his wickedneſſes are deſcribed (*ver.* 7, 8, 9, 10.) *His mouth is full of curſing and deceit, and fraud; under his tongue is miſchief and vanity: he ſitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the ſecret places doth he murther the innocent*, &c. After all this, he *ſaith in his heart God hath forgotten*; that is, he hath forgotten the poor whom I have under my power, therefore I may ſafely oppreſs them. *He hideth his face, he will never ſee it*; that is, God will never take any knowledge, either of my doings or of their ſufferings. We have a ſample of the ſame impiety (*Pſal.* 73. 11.) *And they ſay, how doth God know? and is there knowledge in the moſt high? behold, theſe are the ungodly in the world*, &c. And again (*Pſal.* 94. 6.) *They ſlay the widdow, and ſtranger, and murther the fatherleſs* (here are their works of darkneſs) *yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of* Jacob *regard.* Not only did they preſume that the Lord did not ſee, but that he ſhould not; *The Lord ſhall not ſee!* As if they could ſtop or blind the eyes of God as eaſily as they had blinded their own Conſciences. Take one inſtance further (*Ezek.* 8. 12.) *Then ſaid he unto me, Son of man, Seeſt thou what they do? haſt thou ſeen what the ancients of the houſe of* Iſrael *do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they ſay, The Lord ſeeth us not, he hath forſaken the Earth.* Much like the language here, *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven*; he hath other buſineſs to do then to mind us. As God is ſometimes ſaid to forſake the Earth in wrath, to puniſh the ſin of Man; ſo wicked men ſay, he alwayes forſakes the Earth in neglect both of their ſin and puniſhment. And as Idolaters who have a mind to other gods, are willing to believe that God hath forſaken the Earth, as to the protection of them; we (ſay they) are in danger, God takes no care of us, therefore blame us not if we betake our ſelves to other gods for protection; *If he had not forſaken us, we had not forſaken him*: So all ſorts of reſolved tranſgreſſors, who have a mind to any ſinful way, are willing to believe that God hath forſaken the Earth, as to any obſervation of them. We may do what we liſt, for God doth not mind or regard what we are doing. If we thought he did indeed ſee us, we durſt not thus ſin againſt him: But ſeeing he doth not trouble himſelf with any care about us, why ſhould we trouble our ſelves with any fear about him? Now, this *Preſumption that God doth not ſee us in what we are doing, opens a door to the doing of all evil.* Security from danger is the great encouragement unto ſin. Though wicked men would not be leſs ſinful, yet they would not ſin ſo much, or be ſo full of ſin, did they not vainly flatter themſelves out of the ſight of God. Every man would fain believe that God doth not ſee him when he is doing that which he would not have ſeen or be ſeen in doing it. And how do men pleaſe themſelves in this falſe hope that God doth not ſee them, when they do that which is diſpleaſing unto God!

From the intendment of *Eliphaz* to convince *Job*, that the clouds are no covering to God, and that the circuit of Heaven doth not confine him.

Thirdly obſerve, *God is omniſcient, he knows all things.*

Thou ſayeſt thus, *How doth God know?* I tell thee God doth know; and thou haſt an argument upon thy back, if thou haſt none in thy heart to prove it; thy ſence or feeling may teach thee, if thy reaſon or underſtanding do not, and by thy ſuffering thou mayſt ſee that God ſeeth what thou haſt been doing. This great truth, *That God is omniſcient, or knows all*, may eaſily be known, and ought to be believed by all. When the Lord had made the world in ſix dayes (*Gen.* 1. 31.) *He ſaw all that he had made*; all was in view at once, he had a proſpect of the whole creation in his eye. And as all his own creatures, ſo all our creatures are ſeen by God; he ſeeth all that himſelf hath made, and he ſeeth all that we have made, or are making day by day (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great in the Earth, and that every thought of the imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, or every day. The Lord ſaw*, that is, the Lord knew fully (infinitely more fully then we know thoſe things which we ſee) every imagination or figment of the thoughts of mans heart. The figment of our thoughts, is what the mind faſhioneth or maketh up within it ſelf by thinking: corrupt nature keeps a conſtant mint of evil imaginations in the head, as it hath a ſink of filthy affections in the heart. The mind of man hath a formative faculty in it: And the ſame word which the Holy Ghoſt uſeth to ſignifie the work of God in making man (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *The Lord God formeth man out of the duſt of the Earth, or duſt out of the Earth* (the ſame word, I ſay) is uſed in the Noun (*Gen.* 6. 5.) to ſignifie, *the imagination of man*, becauſe that is alwayes ſhaping moulding or forming one ſort of thoughts or other, and, naturally, none but ugly evil thoughts. Theſe are the creatures which man (as fallen) is the maker of; and he maketh (as I may ſay) infinite creatures, he is forming them continually in his imagination; that's the ſhop wherein there's a dayly Creation (ſuch as it is) of monſtrous wickedneſſes, till God by his new Creation changeth the frame and nature of it. Now (I ſay) as God ſeeth his own creatures, ſo he ſeeth all our creatures, though we make them in the ſhop of our darkeſt imaginations. And much more doth he ſee all the creatures which we make without, that is, all our bodily and external actions (*Jer.* 17. 10.) *I the Lord ſearch the heart, I try the reins*; if he ſearch our hearts, then ſurely he ſearcheth all our wayes; if he ſeeth our thinkings, then ſurely he ſeeth our walkings. Therefore 'tis ſaid (*1 Sam.* 2. 3.) *The Lord is a God of knowledge*; the Hebrew is, *The Lord is a God of knowledges*; that is, all things fall under his knowledge; he is perfect in all knowledges there is nothing knowable, but the Lord knows it, *and by him actions are weighed*: now the weighing of actions is more then the ſeeing of actions; many ſee that which they cannot weigh. *He weigheth actions*, that is, he takes not only the action it ſelf, but every circumſtance of it into conſideration; he takes his ballances, and tries fully, how much each ingredient weighs, and what it comes to. He weighs whole States, Kingdoms, and Nations. So it was ſaid to the Babylonian Monarch *Belteſhazzar* (*Dan.* 5. 26, 27.) Mene, *God hath numbred thy Kingdom and finiſhed it*; Tekel, *Thou art weighed in the ballances, and art found wanting.* Thy councels, thy policies, thy undertakings, the whole compaſs, all the contrivance of thy Government are weighed and found too light. And as God weigheth the actions of Princes, ſo of private perſons (*Prov.* 5. 21.) *The wayes of a man* (that is, of every man, even of the meaneſt man) *are before the Lord, and he pondereth all his paths*; he puts them into a Ballance, and doth not only ſee them, but ponder or weigh them. *David* ſaith of ſome wicked men that they weigh the violence of their hands in the Earth (*Pſal.* 58. 2.) though they do violence, yet they do it not violently, but with a kind of skill and deliberation. They do wrong and oppreſs with a ſhew of Juſtice, whereof weights are the common Emblem. Now as ſome men do evil, not haſtily, raſhly, or all at once, but give it out by weight, and with a ſeeming gravity and zeal for Juſtice. So the Lord doth never look over the wayes of men raſhly or haſtily, but weighs them out even to a grain, yea to the duſt of the ballance he pondereth all their paths; that is, he knows them throughout. Therefore *David* (*Pſal.* 139.) having ſpoken much to this point of the exactneſs of Gods knowledge, concludes at *verſ.* 6. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high I cannot attain unto it.* Some expound this Text, not of the knowledge of God concerning us, but of our knowledge concerning God. *Thy knowledge or the knowledge of thee is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it.* Others thus, *This thy knowledge* (namely that which he had before deſcribed) *is more wonderful* (or more exact) *then that I ſhould be able to deceive it.* We may impoſe upon and deceive the moſt knowing man, but we cannot impoſe upon or deceive God. I conceive our reading to be moſt ſutable both to the Text and Context. *Such knowledge*, that is, ſuch knowledge as thou haſt of me, of the leaſt and greateſt things, even of all things that I or any man doth, is too wonderful for me. For though we may know ſome actions of men, yet we cannot know them all, and we can hardly weigh any of them to the utmoſt. And in this acknowledgment we may take notice of the Pſalmiſt modeſty, who though he had the immediate aſſiſtance of a prophetical Spirit; yet confeſſed, that he was not only not able to know God, but not to know himſelf, his thoughts, words, and wayes, as God knew them. Such knowledge of my ſelf as thou O Lord haſt of me, is *too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it.*

Deus ſcientiarum, plurale, perfectā ſcientiam & rerum omniū cognoſcibiliū cognitionem indicat.

Some perhaps may query upon this, if the Lord knoweth all the wayes of men, and pondereth all their actions, is not this a trouble to God? Is not this a diſturbance of his peace, and a diſtraction to him?

I anſwer (as I ſaid before) this is to frame a God like our ſelves, for to him that is omniſcient, it is all one to know all, and to know but one thing: it is no more diſtraction, no more trouble to God to know all that we do ſpeak, or think, then to know any thing. If two or three ſpeak to a man together, he is not able to take in their ſence; the variety of their diſcourſe makes ſuch a hurry and trouble in his ſpirits, that he looſeth all that is ſpoken. But the application of Thouſands or of Millions at the ſame time in ſpeaking to the ear of God, is no more trouble, then if but one did ſpeak; an infinite ears hears all, and an infinite eye ſees all, without any the leaſt diſtraction; the infinite knowledge of God takes in all the actions of all men, as eaſily as the ſingle action of any one man.

Again, Others may ſay, ſurely the Lord will not take ſuch exact knowledge of all the actions of men, eſpecially of mean men, or ſurely not of the mean actions of meaneſt men; poſſibly of ſome perſons in great place, and of ſome great things done by thoſe perſons he may take notice; but to ſtoop to ſmall things, if it be not a trouble, yet it cannot but be a diſhonour to, and too great a condeſcention for the great God. The Heathens ſaid their *Jupiter* had no leaſure to deal in ſmall matters; and may not we Chriſtians ſay, Is it not honourable enough for our God, to have to do with ſmall matters.

Non vacat exiguis rebus, &c.

I anſwer, This alſo is to frame a God like our ſelves; as it doth not weary God to behold, to try and ponder all the wayes of all men (which was the fear concerning *Moſes* that he ſhould be tired out with the various caſes and affairs of that great people; and was therefore adviſed by *Jethro* to make more Judges, that ſo the weightier matters only might be brought before and judged by him) So it is no diſhonour at all to God, no, it is his honour that he takes cogniſance of the ſmalleſt matters as well as of the greateſt, of the loweſt as well as of the higheſt concernments of the children of men (*Pſal.* 113. 5, 6.) *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high? who humbleth himſelf to behold the things which are in Heaven, and in the Earth.* Who is like to God in this? This is the honour of the high God that he will humble himſelf to behold the loweſt things, the things which are in the Earth, as well as things in Heaven; and the leſſer, the leaſt things in Earth, as well as the greater or the greateſt. *Though the Lord be high yet he humbleth himſelf unto the lowly* (Pſal. 138. 6.) and as to *lowly perſons*, ſo to the *loweſt things.* Indeed the Lord doth humble himſelf to behold the things which are in Heaven, it is a condeſcention in him to take notice of any Creature; yet he doth not only humble himſelf to behold things in Heaven, but things in the Earth, and in this who is like unto the Lord our God? This is his glory, and for this he is to be glorified, yea to be cryed up with this admiring Elogium, *Who is like unto the Lord our God?* None among the ſons of men are like him in this, yea there is no God like unto the Lord our God in this. We have cauſe to ſay (conſidering our vileneſs) *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt take notice of him?* 'Tis too great an honour for man, but it is no diſhonour to God to take notice of the meaneſt man. The greatneſs of God appears as in the making, ſo in the governing and diſpoſing of the ſmalleſt things. The power of God is ſeen in making a fly or a worm, as well as in making an Elephant or the vaſt Leviathan; ſo alſo is his wiſdom and providence ſeen in the obſerving and ordering of thoſe buſineſſes and motions of the creature, which compared to others are but as a fly to an Elephant, or but as a worm to Leviathan. There is nothing doth more detract from the greatneſs of God, then the denyal or diſ-belief of his cogniſance of and care about little things. And as it ſhews the exacteſt perfection of holineſs attainable by man in this life, when he taketh an account of and reproves himſelf for the leaſt ſins, whether they be omiſſions of that good which he is commanded to do, or comiſſions of that evil which he is forbidden to do. So it is an undeniable argument of the exactly and abſolutely perfect holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs and faithfulneſs of God, that he taketh an account of, and will certainly reward or puniſh every man for the leaſt good or evil which he hath done. This is the glory of him who walketh in the circuit of Heaven, that he ſees all to the center of the Earth. *Eliphaz* having thus detected and reproved (as he thought) thoſe thoughts and aſſertions of *Job* which detracted ſo much from God, as if he did not mark the wayes of men; proceeds to put the queſtion to him, whether himſelf had well marked the wayes of wicked men.

VERS. 15, 16.

Haſt thou marked the old way which wicked men have troden.

Which were cut down out of time, whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood?

שמר

THE word tranſlated *to Mark*, notes a diligent obſervation; ſo it is uſed (*Chap.* 10. 14.) *If I ſin then thou markeſt me* (that is, thou takeſt exact or ſtrict notice of me) *and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity* (Pſal. 37. 37.) *mark the perfect man, and behold the upright*, that is, take ſpecial knowledge of him, *for the end of that man is peace* (Pſal. 107. 43.) *Who ſo is wiſe will obſerve*, or mark, *theſe things, he ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.* ' So here, *Haſt thou marked?* Haſt thou with diligence and ſeriouſneſs of ſpirit obſerved, *the old way which wicked men have troden.* The Hebrew is, *The way of age, the way of ages*, or as ſome read, *the Eternal way, the way of Eternity. David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 139. 23, 24.) *Lead me in the way everlaſting*; that is, Lead me in the way of holineſs and righteouſneſs, which leads to eternity. Which yet one of the Rabbins expounds, as a periphraſis of death; for death is called, *The way of all the earth* (1 King. 2. 2.) *The way of all fleſh* (Joſh. 23. 14.) As if *David* had ſaid, Lord, if upon ſearch thou findeſt that I walk in any way of wickedneſs, that is, of wilful ſinning, then deſtroy me, lead me to my grave, yea caſt me with the wicked to Hell, or to everlaſting condemnation. Maſter *Broughton* thus, *Haſt thou marked the way of the old world?*

Obſervare Dei actiones imprimis ipſius judicia magna pars ſcientiæ eſt.

Semitam ſæculorum vel ſeculi; æternam aut æternitatis, nam ea omnia denotat vox עלם Rab. Kimchi.

But what was this way of the old world, about which *Eliphaz* queſtions *Job*, whether he had taken notice of it yea or no? The way of the world may be taken two wayes.

First, For the way of their ſins.

Secondly, For the way of their puniſhment.

Firſt, *Haſt thou marked the old way* of their ſin? And the old way of their ſin may be conſidered under a twofold notion.

Firſt, As it was the way of their opinion. Secondly, As it was the way of their practice: Some reſtrain it here to the way of their opinion, and interpret *Eliphaz* as chiefly intending that, *Haſt thou obſerved the old way*, that is, the old Erroneous opinions which were in the firſt ages of the world? In thoſe times there were not a few like thy ſelf, who either flatly denyed or belied the providence of God, who ſaid (as thou doeſt) *How doth God know?* Surely he hath forſaken the Earth, and intermedles not with what is done here below. Thus a Learned Interpreter expounds the Text, with reference to their ungodly opinion, *They* (ſaith he) *who lived in the time of the flood denyed providence*; haſt thou (O *Job*) marked their opinion and conſidered it? And that this wicked Error did prevail in thoſe times, may be Collected from what is reported by *Beroſus* of the Giants (of whom we read in *Geneſis.* 6. *v.* 4. *There were Giants in the Earth in thoſe dayes*) Among other of their abominations, this (ſaith he) was one, or this was a Chief one, the root, or ſource of them all; they blaſphemed God, and contemned Religion, they thought there was no ſupreme Power, none to whom man was accountable for any of his actions. *Haſt thou marked this old way* of Error?

Ad eos opinio hæc referenda eſt, qui vixerunt tempore diluvii cenſebantq; tollendam providentiam. Vatabl.

Gigantes religionis contemptores. Beroſ.

In purſuance of which Interpretation, the words which we render, *Haſt thou marked*, may be expounded thus, *Haſt thou taken up the old way?* Art thou a follower of that Sect, of that Tribe who have gone in that wicked way? Doeſt thou alſo maintain their blaſphemy, that God takes no notice of man? This notion holds fair with what he had ſaid before.

Cuſtodiendi verbum proſequi exponitur. Merc.

Secondly, As it may be referred to thoſe abominable, Atheiſtical opinions which reigned in thoſe times, ſo to the wicked Practices, to the old Cuſtoms and ſinful Courſes which were followed in thoſe times; for where a wicked opinion is lodged in the heart, what kind of wickedneſs is there that they may not break forth in the life? And ſo here *the old way* is the way of ſin, the corrupt courſe and practices of that debauched generation, eſpecially the way of pride and ambition, which appeared much in the titles given them, *Mighty men, men of name*, or as we render, *Men of renoun.* They were men of honour and name with men, but we read not of any honour they did to or received from God. It is the higheſt diſgrace, to be memorable for actings againſt grace, or for ungracious actings.

Again,

Num obſervas perpetuum ordinem, quem in puniendis talibus impiis tennit Deus, poſt natos homines, Merc. *Putat hunc eſſe perpetuũ ordinem domini ut impios hic puniat, ſed fallitur.* Merc.

Again, The old way may be taken for the way of puniſhment, or for that courſe of divine Juſtice which was executed upon wicked men in thoſe elder times. There is a way of Judgment which God takes, as there is a way of Sin which man takes. Sinful wayes lead into troubleſom wayes, and end in death. Haſt thou conſidered the way of juſtice which the Lord went in towards thoſe old ſinners, pouring out his wrath, and emptying the vials of his indignation upon them, till he had conſumed and ſwept them off as rubbiſh from the face of the earth? *Haſt thou marked the old way*, which either the luſts of wicked men have led them into, or which the juſtice of the Lord hath brought them into? *Haſt thou obſerved the old way?*

Which wicked men have trodden?

The Hebrew is, *Men of Iniquity*; Which phraſe plainly imports, that he doth not ſpeak of the ordinary race, or rank of ſinners; but of the extreameſt ſinners, men ſo full of Iniquity, that they deſerved this black Title, *men of Iniquity*. Antichriſt is called not only a *man of ſin*, or *the man of ſin*, but (which implyeth a ſinner of a higher form, then both the former) *That man of ſin* (2 Theſ. 2. 3.) He being indeed not only amongſt the chiefeſt ſinners, but the chief of ſinners. The phraſe in the Text is a degree lower then that, yet it notes a very great degree. And therefore when the Prophet would aſſure the greateſt ſinners repenting and returning to God, of the readineſs of God to pardon, he expreſſeth them in this ſtile (*Iſa.* 55. 7.) *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man*, or (as the Original Text hath it) *the man of iniquity, his thoughts, and* &c. As *a man of Bloods*, notes a very bloody man, a man given up to that particular ſin of cruelty: So *a man of iniquity*, is one given up to ſin in general. Haſt thou marked the old way which wicked men, men of iniquity, have

Trodden.] This word, *Trodden*, referred both to a ſinful and a ſuffering way, notes the frequency of their going or being in thoſe wayes. And as it is referred to their ſinful way alone, it notes firſt, their boldneſs in ſinning; ſecondly, their reſolvedneſs to ſin: A trodden way, is ſuch a way as a man hath often gone, and in which he is not afraid to go. *Haſt thou marked the old way.*

Hence note, Firſt, *The way of ſin and Error is an old way.*

The Devil ſinned from the beginning, and men have ſinned from their beginning; not only have there been ſinnings, but great ſinnings from the beginning; the old way is the way of ſin, though the oldeſt way be not. There was holineſs before there was ſin, and truth before there was error; ſo that the way of ſin is the old way, but not the oldeſt way. God, all whoſe wayes are holy, was from everlaſting. The Angels who have been holy as long as they have been, were from the beginning. And the firſt beginning of man in his converſation, was, no doubt, like his conſtitution, holy. He quickly went out of the way, but ſurely his firſt ſtep was not out of the way, he went right before he went wrong, and ſtood before he fell. Again, if you take the way for the way of puniſhment,

Note, *That God in all ages hath puniſhed ſinners in their ſinful wayes.*

God hath every where, and every when, left the tract and print of his anger and diſpleaſure upon ſinners; though ſome particular ſinners have gone unpuniſhed in ſome age, yet there was never any age wherein ſin was not puniſhed in ſome. The Lord gives a moral ſtop to ſin perpetually, that is, by his Laws he declares againſt it; his Word is expreſs againſt all ungodlineſs, both the Word of his Command, and the Word of his threatning. Now as the Lord doth alwayes put this moral ſtop in the way of ſin, ſo, he often puts a Judiciary ſtop, or a ſtop by way of Judgment. And as in *Geneſis* 3. he ſets a flaming Sword in the way of the Tree of Life; ſo he continually ſets a flaming Word, that is, a threatning to keep the way of the Tree of Death, that is, of ſin. Thus he alwayes meets ſinful men in the way of their luſts (as the Angel met *Balaam* when he went to curſe the *Iſrael* of God) with a drawn Sword to ſtop them in their way; the Lord hath ſet many drawn Swords in the way of every ſin; and he hath left the prints of his wrath upon the backs of many ſinners, that we ſhould take heed of ſinning. The Lord hath left many ſad examples upon record againſt ſin, nor hath he at any time favoured it, or done any thing which might indeed encourage ſinners; for though ſometimes wicked men have proſper'd, yet, ſhould we look into all times, we cannot find that wicked men were ever bleſſed; Judgment hath overtaken them ſooner or later. And if it hath at any time come too late to overtake them in this world, yet it will come ſoon enough to overtake theirs in this, or themſelves in the world which is to come. No man is bleſſed, at any time, who comes at laſt to be miſerable.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *Haſt thou marked the old way?*

Note, *It is our duty to obſerve and mark, as the way of ſinful men, ſo the way in which God puniſheth their ſin.*

All the wayes of God are to be marked; as we are to obſerve what the Lord ſpeaks, ſo what he doth; his Works as well as his Word are remarkable. *Whoſo is wiſe* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 107. 43.) *and will obſerve theſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.* I may ſay alſo, that they ſhall underſtand the judgments of the Lord. And again, the Prophet confirms it (*Hoſ.* 14. 9.) *Who is wiſe, and he ſhall underſtand theſe things; prudent, and he ſhall know them: for the wayes of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them, but the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein.* The wicked fall in the way of his commandments, and therefore ſurely they ſhall fall in the way of his judgment. And as the Lord hath given us Examples of this, ſo he hath given this as the uſe of thoſe Examples, that we ſhould mark and obſerve them. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 10.) ſhews that all the dealings of God with that his ancient people the *Jews*, are written and recorded as our Examples (*Verſ.* 5, 6, 7.) *With many of them God was not well pleaſed, but they were overthrown in the wilderneſs. Now theſe things were our examples, to the intent that we ſhould not luſt after evil things as they luſted, neither be Idolaters, as ſome of them were, nor fornicators, nor tempt Chriſt, nor murmur*, &c. He ſhuts up all with the ſame doctrine (*verſ.* 11.) *Now all theſe things happened unto them for enſamples, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the earth are come; therefore let him that ſtandeth take heed leaſt he fall.* The Apoſtle *Peter* alſo (2 *Pet.* 2.) brings in; firſt, The inſtance of the Angels that fell; ſecondly, Of the old world; thirdly, Of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah, Whom God condemned with an overthrow, making them an enſample unto thoſe that after ſhould live ungodly.* The Scripture ſpeaks of two ſorts of Enſamples. Firſt, for Imitation; ſecondly, for Caution; the lapſed Angels, the old world, theſe Cities *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, are all left as Enſamples for caution, that all after ages marking the old way of their ſin and puniſhment, might fear to ſin and ſuffer as they have done.

Fourthly, From the manner of this expreſſion (*which wicked men have trodden*) taking the way conjectively, for the way both of ſin and puniſhment, this troddenneſs of it notes the frequent paſſage which many have made through it. They have not gone it once only, but often.

Hence obſerve, *As wicked men offend often, ſo the Lord hath puniſhed often; as they have made paths in ſin, ſo God hath made paths in judgement.*

It is eaſie to follow ſinners (as it were) by the print and tract of thoſe evils which have overtaken them. But I paſs it here, becauſe *Eliphaz* proceeds more directly to deſcribe the puniſhment of wicked men in the next words.

Verſ. 16. **Which were cut down out of time, and whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.**

חצין הספר

At this verſe the Original hath a very conſpicuous note of diſtinction. The Jews are very exact in obſerving the letters and the verſes of every book in the Bible, and between theſe two verſes is the middle of the book: there being exactly the ſame number of verſes behind as we have had before in this whole book of *Job* (taking *verſ.* 16. Incluſively) So that now we are half the book over according to the number of verſes. The whole containing One thouſand and ſeventy. The former part hath had Five hundred and thirty five, and as many remain for the latter part. This I touch only by the way.

קמט *Pleriq; reddunt ſucciſi ſunt; ſed verbum hoc nunquam occurrit in ea ſignificatione in ſacris literis, ſed tantum apud doctores Hebræorum idq; per metatheſin literarum à verbo* קמם *Cum enim tantum occurrat in libro* Job, *ibi vertitur rugare aut corrugare aut rugas contrahere.*

לא עת *Sine tempore, vel non tempus,* i. e. *antequam explerent vitæ annos, ſecundam communem naturæ legem.*

Which were cut down.] The words carry an alluſion to the felling of trees; as if he had ſaid, theſe men were like great Oaks and tall Cedars, but the Lord cut them down. The word is conceived more properly ſignifying to wrinkle, or to make furrows in the face; for this word is uſed but once more in all the Bible, and it is in *Chap.* 16. of this Book, *verſ.* 8. and there we tranſlate, *wrinkles*; *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, which is againſt me.* So ſome render it here, *Who were wrinkled out of time.* Now what are wrinkles? They are the marks of old age, and they ſhew that weakneſs is coming upon us, or that we are in our declining condition; ſo that it is a very Elegant expreſſion to ſay, *They were wrinkled out of time*, that is, *they were old afore they were old*; before they were old according to the nature of man, they were made old by the Judgements of God; they lookt as if they were worn, ſpent, and eaten out by time, whereas indeed they were ſpent, eaten and worn out with the wrath and indignation of God which fell upon them. Thus *they were wrinkled out of time*, or *before their time.*

They were cut down, and no time, as ſome render: but it may be ſaid, as *Solomon* did (*Eccleſ.* 3.1.) *There is a time for every thing*; how then could they be cut down in no time? There may be a twofold interpretation given of this Hebraiſm.

First, This, to ſhew that they died a violent not a natural death, that either God by his immediate Judgments did cut them off, or that he gave them up to the Juſtice of man, who cut them off before their time. Man hath a ſet time, an ordinary time of dying (the dayes of man are threeſcore years and ten, this is the ordinary time of dying) they that dye before, are in Scripture ſence, *Cut down out of time*, or *not in time*, that is, not in that time at which men uſually dye according to the courſe and cuſtom of nature.

לא עת *Sine tempore verti poteſt, ſine mora.*

Secondly, When 'tis ſaid, *They were cut down without time*, the meaning is, they were cut down very ſuddenly, as if it were done without any time at all; God was ſo far from lingring or taking up long time to deſtroy theſe men, that he cut them down (as it were) without any time at all, even in a moment, in an inſtant, as ſpeedily as a man can think it, far more ſpeedily then any man can do it. He did it without delay: As uſually the grace of God, ſo often the wrath of God makes no demurs.

Obſerve from the manner of Expreſſion, *Cut down*,

That, *God brings ruining judgments on the ſtouteſt of ſinners.*

He doth not only pull off ſome of their fruit, and leaves, or lop off their branches; but he cuts them down, yea he ſtubs them up by the roots, till there is nothing left, they are cut down *root and branch.* Thus the Lord threatned the houſe of *Jeroboam* (1 *King.* 14. 10.) *Behold I will bring evil upon the houſe of* Jeroboam, *and will cut off from* Jeroboam, *him that piſſeth againſt the wall* (that is, every man of his houſe) *and him that is ſhut up and left in* Iſrael (that is, him that is moſt eſteemed, as things ſhut up are; and him that is leaſt eſteemed, as things left abroad are; or thoſe who are ſecured or have ſecured themſelves in ſtrongeſt holds, as men ſhut up are, as well as thoſe who are left naked and expoſed to the eaſieſt dangers, as men left at large are) *and will take away the remnant of the houſe of* Jeroboam (that is, all who have eſcaped or ſurvived the former troubles) *as a man taketh away dung till it be all gone*; that is, till his houſe be utterly exterminated: for dung being a filthy and noyſom thing, men never leave taking it away, from places where it is an annoyance, till they have taken it all away. *That which is offenſive in the whole nature of it, is offenſive in the leaſt degree of it.*

Again, When 'tis ſaid, *He cuts them down without time, or before their time*, We may Obſerve,

Wicked men are often ripe for Judgment, before they are ripe in years.

Cum potuiſſent diutive perſiſtere. Tygur. *Capti ſunt immaturi.* Sept.

It is ſaid in *Geneſis* 15. *The iniquity of the* Amorites *is not yet full*, their ſin is not come to a full ſtature; for as there is a fulneſs of ſtature in holineſs unto which Saints at laſt arrive in Chriſt, ſo there is a fulneſs of ſtature in wickedneſs to which the Lord ſuffers ſinners to arrive; and as when Saints have attained their full ſtature in holineſs, they are received into glory; ſo when wicked men have attained a full ſtature in wickedneſs, they are cut off and turned down to deſtruction. Though the Lord ſuffer long, yet he will not alwayes ſuffer. And as ſome are but young men, yet old Saints, and have had much experience of God, and of the wayes of grace, though but little of the world (that diſtinction which the Apoſtle gives of Saints into little children, young men, and fathers (1 *Joh.* 2. 13, 14.) is not to be underſtood in reference to natural years, but to ſtanding in grace, or to a growth and progreſs in holineſs) ſo ſome wicked men, are but of few years, or but young in reference to their natural age, who yet are old in ſin, aged in wickedneſs, they are fathers in abomination, while but children in time, and ſo are cut down before time. *Wicked men are never cut down till they are ripe in ſin, but they are often cut down before they are ripe in nature.*

Thirdly, *Which were cut down out of time*; namely, in little time, or without delay.

Hence note, That, *God can quickly make an end of wicked men.*

He needs not take any long time to do it. He took but very little time to make the world, it was made in ſix dayes, which in reference to the greatneſs of the work is no time: when a great thing is done in a little time, we may ſay it was done without any time at all. Now if the Lord could frame a world without time, ſurely he can cut down the world, or the inhabitants of it in a little time? *Ruining work is eaſier then building work.* He that built (in this ſence) without time, can pull down without time; we need not trouble our ſelves with ſuch thoughts as theſe, when we ſee wicked men, enemies of God and his people in their height and ſtrength; O what a length of time will it require? O how many years muſt be ſpent in cutting down theſe ſtrong Oaks, thoſe tall Cedars? The Lord can cut them down in a moment. Our late experiences have ſhewed us wicked men cut down without time; before they thought they could be ſhaken, yea toucht, they have been cut down; when they concluded they could not be reached, they have been ruined. The Jeſuites and other Machavillian politicians have a received Maxim of State among them; *Take time, and ye may do any thing.* If you are diſappointed in a project this year, wait a few years longer (ſay they) and you ſhall either find or make a way to accompliſh it. But the Lord can do any thing he hath a mind to at any time, or without taking time. The Apoſtle propheſying of the Antichriſt ſaith (2 *Theſ.* 2. 6, 7.) *Now ye know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time; for the myſtery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let, till he be taken out of the way.* The power and ſplendor of the *Roman* Empire ſtood in Antichriſts way, and he could not cut it down without time; he was hacking and hewing, heaving and thruſting many years, yea ſome ages before he could remove that block out of his way, and ſo make a way for his own greatneſs. The wiſeſt of men muſt have time to bring about their ends. Only God, the only wiſe God, can cut down and remove whatſoever ſtands in his way (though it ſtand like a great mountain) without time or without taking time, if once his time be come in which he would have it removed. The wicked of thoſe elder times were cut down ſuddenly, without time. *Eliphaz* confirms it further in the next words,

Whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.

In this latter clauſe *Eliphaz* ſeems more clearly to hint at ſome particular wicked men, or to ſhew who thoſe wicked men were that he intends as the object of his obſervation, namely, thoſe *whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.* It is uſual in Scripture, by ſome one word to allude to great actions and changes paſt. Take two or three inſtances for illuſtration of this (*Pſal.* 55. 15.) *David* imprecates vengeance upon his enemies in this language; *Let them go down quick into Hell.* Which expreſſion carrieth a plain alluſion unto that dreadful judgment (*Numb.* 16. 31, 32.) *It came to paſs as he* (that is, *Moſes*) *had made an end of ſpeaking all theſe words, the ground clave aſunder that was under them; and the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed them up and their houſes, and all the men which ap-*

pertained unto Corah, *and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit*, &c. This hiſtorical Narration the Pſalmiſt hints at in his imprecation, as is plain by that word *quick* or *alive*; *Let them go down quick* (or alive) *into Hell*; that is, let ſuch wrath ſieze upon them, as ſiezed upon *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, on whom *the Earth cloſed, and they periſhed from among the Congregation*. Again, when the Apoſtle makes promiſe to Saints in the behalf of Chriſt, what aſſiſtance they might expect from him in time of temptation, and what iſſue from it, he thus aſſures them; *The God of peace ſhall tread Satan under your feet ſhortly* (Rom. 16. 20.) Which plainly bears upon that firſt grand Promiſe, that (*Chriſt*) *the ſeed of the Woman ſhould break the Serpents head* (Gen. 3. 15.) for it is by virtue of that act of Jeſus Chriſt bruiſing the head of Satan, that Satan is trodden under our feet. As Chriſt bruiſed him under his own feet, ſo he will bruiſe, or tread him under our feet; the ſeed of the woman in perſon, as well as in their repreſentative, ſhall break the Serpents head. Laſtly, thoſe words (*Rom.* 9. 16) hold a clear correſpondence with that ſtory (*Gen.* 27.) concerning *Jacob* and *Eſau*; *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy.* He had ſaid before that *God loved* Jacob *and hated* Eſau; and concludes upon it, *So then, it is not of him that willeth*, &c. We may take notice in that famous piece of divine Hiſtory, that much means was uſed that *Jacob* might obtain the bleſſing; *Rebecca* her heart was ſet upon it, ſhe did what ſhe could to procure the bleſſing for her younger Son, her will was wholly in it; and *Jacob*, he run for it too; for as ſoon as ever his mother had given him counſel, he ran preſently to the flock and brought in a Kid to make the ſavoury meat for *Iſaac*; now the Apoſtle *Paul* to advance the freeneſs of grace, doth not only inſtance in thoſe two perſons; but uſeth a phraſe of ſpeech which ſavours ſo much of that paſſage, that though he had not named the men, yet every man who knew the Scriptures muſt needs underſtand both of whom and of what he meant it; *It is not of him that willeth*, &c. that is, it was neither *Rebecka's* will to have it ſo, nor *Jacob's* haſt (which appear'd in his running to the flock) to have it ſo, that gave him the bleſſing, but it was of God that ſhewed mercy. And as it was then, ſo it is now, though a man be as willing as *Rebeckah*, or though he make as much ſpeed as *Jacob* for his bleſſing, yet all comes freely by the grace of God. Thus the frequent uſage of Scripture ſhews us how much the Spirit of God delights to lead our thoughts (by the light of ſome one word) a great way back into the conſideration of what had been done and written of old for our inſtruction. The words of the Text now under diſcuſſion (*Whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood*) are ſurely an alluſion to ſome particular perſons or action in the dayes of old, and they may be applied three wayes.

Firſt, To the drowning of the whole world in the time of *Noah* by a flood, when the Lord opened the windows of Heaven, and overwhelmed both man and beaſt in thoſe mighty waters, which univerſal judgment is (by way of eminence) called, *The Deluge*, or, *The Flood*, unto this very day.

Secondly, They may have reſpect to the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, which Cities, though they were deſtroyed by fire, yet it was with a flood of fire. The Text ſaith expreſly (*Gen.* 19. 24.) *Then the Lord rained upon* Sodom *and upon* Gomorrah *brimſtone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven, and he overthrew the Cities and all the plain*, &c. They were overflown with a flood of fire.

Thirdly, The alluſion may be carried to the deſtruction of *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* in the red Sea; they alſo *were overflown with a flood*. The waters of the red Sea which ſtood up as a wall for *Iſrael* to paſs thorough, at the Command of God returning upon the *Ægyptians*, ſwallowed them up, them and their Chariots and their Horſes. *The enemy ſaid* (thus *Moſes* deſcribes that fatal overthrow, *Exod.* 15. 9, 10.) *I will purſue, I will overtake, I will divide the ſpoil: my luſt ſhall be ſatisfied upon them; I will draw my ſword, my hand ſhall deſtroy them.* Thus the enemy raged and foamed with revenge, like a tempeſtuous Sea, and had opened all the ſluces of his will to overflow them. And when the enemy had thus breathed out his wrath in a four times repeated, *I will*; then the *Lord did blow with his wind, the Sea covered them; They ſank as lead in the mighty waters.* So then the words may relate to any of thoſe three ſignal Judgments, to the drowning of the old world with a flood of water, to the deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with a flood of fire, or to the overthrow of *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* hoſt in the red Sea.

Hunc locum à v. 15. ad v. 20. omnino reſpicere ad dimerſionem Pharaones & Egyptiorum *non levibus ſuadeor conjecturis.* Pined.

But more particularly, for the explication of theſe words, *whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.*

Whoſe foundation.] This word *Foundation* taken in a proper ſence, refers to a material building. And the foundation of any building is the ſtability and ſtrength of it; by *Foundation*, in a metaphorical ſence, we are to underſtand all thoſe things by which the ſtate of perſons or things is upheld; and here whatſoever wicked men ſupport and bear up themſelves by, as a building is born up by the foundation, is to be underſtood as their foundation. So their Power, their Riches, their Councel, their Wiſdom, their Friends and Confederates; whatſoever, I ſay, is the ſupport of their worldly State, that's their foundation. And thus it is here ſaid, *their foundation was overflown*,

Ea omnia quæ illis velut fundamenti loco erant, in quibus ſpē & præſidium ponebant, &c. Mere.

With a flood.] In two of the former inſtances, to which the alluſion was made, their foundation was overflown by a flood properly taken. If we take it more generally for all wicked men, who at any time have been overthrown, we may ſay, that they have all been overflown by a flood metaphorically. For ſo

Firſt, The diſpleaſure of God, by what means or inſtrument ſoever put forth is called a flood; whether it be by Sword, or by Famine, or by Peſtilence, it is a flood (*Iſa.* 8. 7.) We read War compared to a flood, *Now therefore behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, ſtrong and many* (what were theſe waters? *Even the King of* Aſſyria, *and all his glory*; the King of *Aſſyria* with his Armies, in which he gloried, or which he counted his glory, were the waters of the river, ſtrong and many) *and he ſhall come up over all his channels, and go up over all his bands* (that is, the former limits of his Dominion) *And he ſhall paſs thorough* Judah, *he ſhall overflow and go over*. There the Sword is compared to a flood, or to a mighty river, which bears down all before it. The ſame Prophet ſpeaks again in the ſame language (*Iſa.* 59. 19.) *When the enemy ſhall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord ſhall lift up a Standard againſt him*; as if it had been ſaid, *The enemy ſhall come ruſhing in like a mighty torrent; but the Spirit of God, like a more mighty wind, ſhall blow and ruſh upon him*, cauſing him to recoile and give back, or (as our Margent hath it) *put him to flight*. Again (*Ezek.* 13.) The Prophet foreſhews the approaching calamity upon thoſe who had ſeduced the *Jews* into a vain ſecurity; which is there called, *the building of a wall with untempered morter.* A wall he calls that propheſie, becauſe it promiſed ſafety, and defence; but he calls it alſo a wall built with untempered morter, becauſe that falſe propheſie was a weak propheſie, and ſhould ſhortly fall. The manner how, he gives us in the motion of the Text (*verſ.* 13.) *Wherefore thus ſaith the Lord God, I will even rent it with a ſtormy wind in my fury, and there ſhall be an overflowing ſhower in mine anger*, &c. that is, wrath ſhall be upon it (the Babylonian Army was the ſpecial judgment in which that wrath was expreſſed) and that *ſhall be an overflowing ſhower.* Great and continual ſhowers will try the ſtrongeſt buildings, and quickly overthrow the weak. A wall of untempered morter is no match for a ſtorm. As our Saviour alſo aſſures us in the cloſe of his Sermon on the Mount (*Mat.* 7. 27.) where all thoſe evils, troubles, afflictions, ſorrows, and perſecutions, whether ſent upon ſuch as are really godly, or only in name and outward profeſſion, are called *rain, floods, winds*. So ſaith the Text, *The rain deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon the houſe, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.* While it ſtood, it ſtood to no purpoſe but for a ſhew; but when it fell, it fell to purpoſe, *The fall thereof was great.* Thus it is more then evident from Scripture phraſe, that rains and floods ſignifie all ſorts of afflicting evils; and therefore we need not reſtrain the word *flood* in the Text to a deluge of Elementary water, or of water in a proper ſence, but we may enlarge it to any kind of afflicting evil or trouble whatſoever that falls upon man. And the Scripture is (I conceive) ſo frequent in the uſe of this metaphor of a flood, and of waters, where great calamities are ſet forth, for theſe two reaſons.

Firſt. To note the ſwiftneſs and ſuddenneſs of the judgements of God. Floods come often very ſuddenly, and riſe not only beyond expectation, but before there is any the leaſt expectation of them. *Noah's* flood was long foretold before it came; but when the time came, wherein it ſhould come, it came at once. Though God give long warning of his judgments, yet moſt men are ſurprized with them, they come like a flood.

Secondly, To note the irreſiſtibleneſs of the Judgments of God. Who or what can ſtand before mighty waters? Great floods do not only waſh and over-flow all, but ruine and overthrow all, there's no reſiſting. Such are the Judgements of God, they are a flood both for their ſuddain riſing and breaking in upon ſinners, and likewiſe for their irreſiſtible violence in breaking and ruining them.

Further, It is not to be paſſed by, that *Eliphaz* doth not only ſay, They were *overflown*, but, *Their foundation was overflown with a flood.* He calls it the overflowing of their foundation, to note, that they were totally or utterly ruined and overthrown: for when the foundation is deſtroyed, all is deſtroyed; deſtruction to the foundation is the worſt of deſtructions. The cruel enemies of the *Jews* cryed, *Raſe it, raſe it even to the foundation thereof* (Pſal. 137.7.) but to raſe the foundation it ſelf is more cruel then raſing to the foundation. When the Lord threatned a full and final deſtruction of thoſe fooliſh Prophets who had ſeen vain viſions for his people, he ſaid (*Ezek.* 13. 14.) *I will break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered morter, and bring it down to the ground, ſo that the foundation thereof ſhall be diſcovered*, &c. that is, I will deſtroy it as far as deſtruction it ſelf can go. There ſhall not only not a ſtone be left upon a ſtone of this building above ground, but even the under-ground ſtones ſhall not be left: The very foundation ſhall be opened and diſcovered. That which lyeth at the bottom, or the bottom it ſelf of thoſe flattering propheſies, all the wiles and ſecret wayes of them ſhall be revealed. *David* complains of thoſe irreparable breaches made upon the civil ſtate in this ſtile (*Pſal.* 11.3.) *If the foundations be deſtroyed, what can the righteous do?* The civil foundation of a Nation or People, is their Laws, and Conſtitutions, the order and power that is among them, that's the foundation of a People; and when once this foundation is deſtroyed, *what can the righteous do?* What can the beſt, the wiſeſt in the world do in ſuch a caſe? What can any man do, if there be not a foundation of Government left among men? There is no help nor anſwer in ſuch a caſe, but that which follows in *verſ.* 4. of the ſame Pſalm; *The Lord is in his holy Temple, the Lords throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eye lids try the children of men.* As if he had ſaid, in the midſt of theſe confuſions, when as it is ſaid (*Pſal* 8. 5.) *All the foundations of the earth are out of courſe*; yet God keeps his courſe ſtill, he is where he was and as he was, without variableneſs or ſhadow of turning. We read in the viſion of the four Monarchies (*Dan.* 2. 34.) That *the ſtone cut out without hands ſmote the Image upon his feet that were of Iron and Clay, and break them to pieces.* The ſtone did not ſtrike the Image upon the head, or upon the breaſt, the golden head, the ſilver breaſt, &c. but upon the feet that were of Iron and Clay. Now the feet are to a natural body, as the foundation is to an Artificial body; a mans feet are the foundation of his body; if the feet be ſmitten and broken to pieces, the body muſt needs fall. And therefore as ſoon as ever it was ſaid, That *the ſtone break the feet to pieces*, the ruine of the whole Image is deſcribed in the immediately following words of the viſion (*verſ.* 35.) *Then was the Iron, the Clay, the Braſs, the Silver, and the Gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threſhing floor, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.* The breaking of the feet, was the breaking up of the foundation, and ſo the *breaking down of all. Whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.* Hence note,

> Firſt, *Wicked men think themſelves very ſure, they have foundations, they lay foundations.*

The people of God are ſometimes over-conceited about the ſtrength and ſtability of their worldly foundations. Holy *David* ſaid, In his proſperity, *I ſhall never be moved: Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong* (Pſal. 30. 6, 7.) And if a godly man may, by the ſtrength of temptation, thus over-reckon the ſtrength of an Earthly ſtate; what may they do whoſe ſtate, yea whoſe minds are altogether earthly? How often do they judge themſelves wiſe and politick enough to lay for themſelves an everlaſting foundation in things which cannot laſt? And that they are ſo ſurely bottom'd in the favour of men, that they *ſhall never be removed*? *Babylon* thinks her ſelf ſetled at this day upon ſuch everlaſting mountains, upon ſuch perpetual hills of power and policy, that certainly her foundation ſhall never be overflown. Thus ſhe ſpake her heart out, while *ſhe ſaid in her heart* (Rev. 18. 7.) *I ſit a Queen, and am no widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* Babylon is bottom'd and foundation'd upon ſo many hills, that is, upon ſo many intereſts and advantages of ſtrength, as render her (to her ſelf) impregnable and unremoveable. And as this vain confidence bears up the Spirit of that Man of ſin, ſo of very many ſinful men, who preſume they are upon a ſure foundation, when indeed none but the godly mans foundation is ſure (*Prov.* 10. 25.) *As the whirlwind paſſeth, ſo is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlaſting foundation.* The wicked man ſuppoſeth himſelf founded as on a Rock of ages, an everlaſting ſtrength, ſuch as the righteous man hath in God, or ſuch as God is to a righteous man (*Iſa.* 26. 3.) *Yet as the whirlwind he paſſeth away, but the righteous is an everlaſting foundation.* We find not the Copulative word, *is*, expreſſed in the Hebrew, there 'tis only, *but the righteous an everlaſting foundation*; ſo that I ſhould rather read it thus, *But the righteous have an everlaſting foundation*: wicked men ſeem to have, but the righteous man indeed *hath an everlaſting foundation.* There is no earthly foundation everlaſting; for all earthly things paſs away, and are ſo far from laſting for ever, that they laſt but (as it were) for a little, for a moment. What then is this everlaſting foundation? It is a foundation laid in heavenly things; the foundation which is laid in things above ſhall abide; the things which are not ſeen, and they only, are eternal (2 *Cor.* 4.18.) but the ſtrongeſt foundation laid in things below, endures but for a *ſeaſon*; *The things which are ſeen, are temporal*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in the ſame place. Such foundations are ſoon overflown with a flood. As will appear yet further in the next Obſervation; which take thus,

> *The flood and ſtorm of Gods anger will overflow all the foundations, the ſtrongeſt foundations of wicked men.*

Their Riches, their Power, their Wiſdom, their Councels, whatſoever they have imagined, laid and made for a foundation to themſelves, either of honour or ſafety, ſhall be overflown and ſwept quite away; yea all their refuges laid together will prove *but a refuge of lies* (Iſa. 28. 17.) *Judgment alſo will I* (ſaith the Lord) *lay to the line, and righteouſneſs to the plummet; and the hail ſhall ſweep away the refuge of lyes, and the waters ſhall overflow the hiding place*; that is, thoſe places wherein they thought to hide and ſecure themſelves againſt the overflowing ſcourge. A wicked man is in greateſt danger when he thinks himſelf in greateſt ſafety, and then moſt ready to fall when he ſaith in his own heart, or boaſteth it out to others, that he is upon a ſure foundation; for whatſoever opinion he hath of it, yet the truth is, his foundation is but ſand; and (which makes his caſe more miſerable) though he be told ſo, and others have found it ſo, yet he will not believe it. While (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 44. 20.) *He feedeth of aſhes, a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, is there not a lye*, or (as the former Scripture hath it) *a refuge of lies in my right hand.* Only *the righteous is, or hath* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks) *an everlaſting foundation.* A righteous man hath two foundations which ſhall never be ſhaken, much leſs overthrown; whoſo are ſetled on thoſe foundations may be as confident as confidence it ſelf.

The firſt of theſe two foundations is Gods eternal Decree, his Decree of Election, that's an unmoveable foundation, and that is the foundation upon which believers build their hopes. The Apoſtle (2 *Tim.* 2. 19, 20.) is proving that even in the houſe of God, that is, among the outward profeſſors of the name of God, there are of all ſorts, veſſels of Gold and Silver, veſſels alſo of Wood and of Earth; *Some to honour, and ſome to diſhonour*; and when he had ſaid of *Himeneus* and *Philetus*, *that they had erred concerning the truth, ſaying that the reſurrection is paſt already,*

ready, and ſo had overthrown the faith of ſome, verſ. 18. He preſently adds, What though it be thus, what though ſome men have fallen from their foundation, *Yet the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth who are his*, verſ. 19. Where we have, firſt, the foundation of God, namely, his decree of Election: Secondly, the Seal or aſſurance of it, as to him, even his own certain knowledge of the Elect, *The Lord knoweth who are his.* So that while hypocrites or meer verbal formal profeſſors back-ſlide and Apoſtatize from the faith, yet the Elect are ſafe and ſtand faſt in the purpoſe of God; and while many diſcover themſelves to be veſſels of diſhonour in the houſe of God, Wood and Earth, of baſe and brittle materials; yet Saints, indeed, who are veſſels of honour made of pureſt metal, of Gold and Silver, theſe ſhall abide for ever. He that is once a veſſel of honour, ſhall alwayes be ſo, *For the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

Secondly, As there is this more hidden foundation, upon which Saints are ſure, and which no flood can overflow; ſo there is another ſure foundation, and that is *Jeſus Chriſt*, upon which Saints are built; and therefore the holy Prophet having diſcovered that refuge of lies which he threatens ſhould be ſwept away by the overflowing ſcourge, ſubjoyns by way of Oppoſition in the next verſe (*Iſa.* 28.16.) *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in* Sion *for a foundation, a ſtone, a tryed ſtone, a precious corner ſtone, a ſure foundation, and he that believeth ſhall not make haſt.* Whom the Prophet means by this ſure foundation, the Apoſtle tells us expreſly and by name (1 *Cor.* 3.11.) *Other foundation can no man lay then that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*; and they that are built on him the living Rock (as all Believers are) have eternal life, and ſhall never periſh. This Chriſt himſelf teacheth us (*Matth.* 7. 24, 25.) *Whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings (of mine) and doth them, I will liken him to a wiſe man that built his houſe upon a Rock.* And what's the Rock that theſe wiſe men build upon? This Rock is Jeſus Chriſt, he is the Rock of Ages; he fails not, nor can they fail who are in him; as it followeth, *Then the rain deſcended, the floods came, the winds blew and beat upon the houſe, and it fell not, for it was founded on a Rock.* Saints are *lively ſtones*, and they *coming to Chriſt* (by faith) *who is a living ſtone, diſallowed indeed of men, but choſen of God and precious, are built up a ſpiritual houſe* (1 Pet. 2. 4, 5.) If this houſe ſhould fall, Chriſt muſt fall too, for though Chriſt and his houſe are diſtinguiſhed, yet they are not divided; Chriſt and his houſe are one: So then, though the flood of angry men, and of enraged Devils beat upon it, yet they ſhall return foaming out their own ſhame; and when they have done their worſt, they ſhall but waſh this houſe, leaving it ſomewhat more clean, but no whit unſetled. This is the glory and priviledge of Believers, that while the ſtrongeſt foundations of the earth are overflown with a flood, they have a twofold foundation; that of Election in the Love of God, and that of Redemption in the Blood of Chriſt, which cannot be overflown by any the moſt violent and impetuous flood.

So then, ungodly men are miſerable, when they appear moſt happy, and at their beſt eſtate are altogether vanity; for either their eſtate hath no foundation, or but ſuch a foundation as cannot ſtand, and that is as bad or rather worſe then none at all; it is better to have no appearance of ſtrength, then to have nothing but an appearance of it.

Further, may we not from the oppoſite ſtate of godly men (at leaſt intimated in this, and toucht before) conclude, that they are happy when they appear moſt miſerable? And that at their worſt eſtate, they are altogether above uncertainty? For as they have a foundation, ſo ſuch a foundation as will ſtand all ſtorms and weathers; what can be added to their felicity, who are in an eſtate ſo good (in the nature of it) that they need not deſire a change; and ſo ſure in the foundation of it, that they need not fear a change, much leſs an overflowing flood?

Eliphaz proceeds to deſcribe the particular wickedneſs of thoſe men, or how they did expreſs their wickedneſs; *Whoſe foundation was thus overflown; They ſay unto God depart from us,* &c.

VERS. 17, 18.

Which ſaid unto God, Depart from us, and what can the Almighty do for them?

Yet he filled their houſes with good things: but the counſel of the wicked is far from me.

IN the former context *Eliphaz* had charged *Job* with impiety againſt God, and called him to conſider the diſpenſations of God in former times towards impious men; here he ſhews us what their impiety was, it was impiety hightned into blaſphemy; the ſeveral abominations which were in their hearts, brake out at their lips, and were vomited out of their mouths in black coller, in coller as black as Hell.

Verſ. 17. **Which ſaid unto God, Depart from us,** &c.

Theſe words are filled with the very ſpirit of malice againſt God himſelf; and we have the ſame breathed out in the ſame language in the former Chapter at the fourteenth verſe: there the Reader may find them explicated, and I ſhall add ſomewhat for a further explication here.

Which ſaid to God, Depart from us.

To this height of madneſs do ſome wicked men ariſe; their ſpirits being big with ſin, they bring ſorth or belch out this monſter of words; *They ſay to God, Depart from us.* They (as it were) ſend God a Writ of Ejectment, they do not pray or entreat God to depart from them; but with as much rudeneſs and incivility, as unholineſs and prophaneneſs, *Say unto God, Depart from us.* 'Tis a word of command, from man, but ſuch a one as breaks all the commandments of God. *Moſes* (Numb. 16. 26.) beſeeches the people, ſaying, *Depart I pray you from the tents of theſe wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs*; but here we have wicked men not praying God to depart, but bidding him, *they ſay, Depart from us. David* ſpeaks to the wicked (*Pſal.* 119. 115.) *Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*; he bids them begone, he would not give them the leaſt welcom or entertainment. And ſo Jeſus Chriſt is deſcribed ſpeaking to the wicked in the day of Judgment (*Matth.* 7. 23.) *Depart from me*, away, get you out of my preſence, I will not have to do with you, I will do nothing for you; *Depart.* His is a word of command, indeed, which though they have no will to obey, yet they ſhall obey it whether they will or no. Thus in the preſent Text wicked men preſume to ſay to God himſelf, *Depart from us*, &c.

Hence note, Firſt, *That wicked or meer carnal men, have ſome appearances and impreſſes of the preſence of God upon their ſpirits.*

They could not ſay to God, *Depart from us*, had they not ſome impreſſions and notions of God, of the will and Law of God, of the truth and power of God upon them. They who are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, do yet feel a preſence of God with them (*Act.* 17. 27.) *That they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.* Take mankind in general, good and bad, believers and infidels, there is a nearneſs of God unto them, unto them all: and that not only a nearneſs of God in what the Apoſtle there ſpeaks of, common preſervation (*verſ.* 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*; or of natural communications, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks there alſo, *From him we receive life, and breath, and all things* (*verſ.* 25.) But further, God is with them, by a twofold light; firſt, by a light of Direction; ſecondly, by a light of Conviction. All have a light of Direction, firſt, by the Law written in their hearts; the Apoſtle is expreſs for this (*Rom.* 2. 14.) *For when the Gentiles* (he means it of Gentiles unconverted) *which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law; theſe having not the Law* (that is formally publiſhed and preached to them) *are a Law unto themſelves. Which ſhew the work of the*

Law written in their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, &c. And as all have a light of direction from the Law written in their hearts, or in the book of Conſcience; ſo alſo, ſecondly, they have a light of direction from the Law of the creation, or from that which is written of God in the Book of the creature. The ſame Apoſtle makes this the ground of the righteouſneſs of God in that dreadful *Revelation of his wrath againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men* (be they who they will) *who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs, becauſe that which may be known of God is manifeſted in them* (or to them) *for God hath ſhewed it to them.* But how or where hath God ſhewed them this? The Apoſtle anſwers in the next verſe (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, ſo that they are without excuſe.* So that though all men have not a light of direction from God ſo powerful as to change them and make them holy, yet they have a light ſo clear and full as is enough to make them guilty. And when they refuſe to follow this light of direction in doing what is right, then follows that other light of conviction, their conſciences troubling them (or as the Apoſtles phraſe is, *Rom.* 2. 15.) their thoughts accuſing them, becauſe they have done that which is not right. This preſence of God is common to all men, to the worſt of men, and this is it which provokes them to *ſay to God, Depart from us.* And this is argument enough to ſtop the mouth of the Atheiſt, who ſaith in his heart, *there is no God*; when as yet he cannot ſtop the mouth of his own conſcience from ſaying *there is a God*, while he ſaith (and this he alwayes ſaith, either in plain terms, or in that which is equivalent) *to God, Depart from me.* And from hence we may obſerve,

Secondly, *That the preſence, and manifeſtations of God to wicked men, are a trouble to them.*

None are troubled with the nearneſs of God to them, but they who are far from him; all natural men are far from God in ſtate and in heart, and God is near all natural men, either in his word or in his works, either ſpeaking his mind to their ears, or ſending it in to their conſciences. This light of God is not only not pleaſing but vexing. They who love darkneſs cannot abide the light of direction, much leſs the light of conviction; ſo that if ever God be *near in their mouth*, near in their ear, or near in their conſcience, yet as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Jer.* 12. 2.) *He is far from the reins*; that is, though they ſpeak, hear or think of God, yet they delight not in him, they have no deſirings, no breathings after him; yea the more he offers himſelf to them, the more weary are they of him. What *David* ſpake in a temptation, they ſpeak from their diſpoſition (*Pſal.* 73. 3.) *I remembered God and was troubled.* It troubles them when they are put in mind of God, it troubles them when God comes into their mind. God is holy, and they are unholy. The holy God muſt needs be a burden to an unholy heart. The Prophet puts the Queſtion (*Amos* 3. 3.) *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* they cannot. That company is alwayes unpleaſant to us, which is unſuitable to us; they who are not at one, are beſt pleaſed when they are furtheſt aſunder. *The wayes of God are grievous to wicked men, much more is God himſelf*; they ſay what a weariſomneſs is it to ſerve the Lord, they ſay his yoak is heavy, and his burden inſupportable; the very outſide of heavenly and ſpiritual work is burdenſom to them; how then can they maintain communion with God (in truth of ſpirit) *who is a Spirit, and will be worſhipped in Spirit and in truth?*

Thirdly note, *Natural men are blind and fooliſh, they know not wherein their own happineſs doth conſiſt, they forſake and throw away the mercies offered them, for lying vanities.*

They who are not taught of God are full of miſtaken and falſe principles, among which this is a principal one; *They ſuppoſe they can do well enough without God, whereas indeed there is nothing can do us good without him, who is the chief good.* Now, that the natural man believes he can do well enough without God, is plain from this abominable and hateful motion which ſuch make to God in the Text, *Depart from us.* No man would deſire God to depart from him, if this perſwaſion did abide upon his heart, *That he could not ſubſiſt without him, or that he depended upon God for his ſubſiſtence.* Therefore this is their opinion (though poſſibly they are as far from acknowledging it, as they are from the true knowledge and love of God.) *That they can do well enough alone, that they can ſtand upon their own bottom without God, yea that they are ſelf-ſufficient, as God is*; for whoſoever doth not ſee an emptineſs and inſufficiency in himſelf, and ſo place his All in God, makes himſelf a God. This is the way of wicked men, and this their way is *their folly* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 49. 13.) *Though their poſterity approve their ſayings.* Who but they? They can maintain their being, yea their well-being without God; they can live and live happily whether he will or no. Surely if they thought they were beholding to him, either for being or well-being, either for life, or a happy life, they had never been heard *ſaying to God, Depart from us.* And if this be a truth that they have ſaid ſo, and ſay ſo ſtill every day; we need not ſtay to prove this a truth, that they ſhew their blindneſs and fooliſhneſs in ſaying ſo. Is not he fooliſh who would have the Sun depart from him, which enlightens him? Or who would have the Shield depart from him, which protects him? Or who bids the fountain be gone which gives him drink? God is all this to all men in ſome degree or other, and he promiſeth himſelf ſuch in the higheſt and beſt degree to all ſuch as walk uprightly, even to be their Sun, their Shield, their Fountain, their Spring. Then, can folly it ſelf utter more fooliſhneſs then this, *To ſay to God, Depart from us?* Further, how fooliſh are they to refuſe that, as if it were a hurt to them, which Saints who have the true wiſdom, have prayed for; and ſtill do pray for, as the greateſt bleſſing and priviledge, The preſence of God with them? How fooliſh are they who ask and deſire that as a bleſſing, which God the only wiſe God threatens as the ſoreſt curſe? (*Jer.* 6. 8.) *Be inſtructed, O* Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee, leſt I make thee a Land deſolate, not inhabited.* Utter deſolation is the conſequent, yea the effect of the Lords departure from a Land; and when he ceaſeth in regard of his favourable preſence to inhabit a Land, either none ſhall inhabit it, or none ſhall have a comfortable habitation in it. The Lord threatens this departure as the laſt and ſoreſt, or as the ſum of all his judgements; and wicked men deſire this, as if to be without God, were the chief or ſum of their enjoyments. See another inſtance of this folly, among all the threatnings of God againſt ſinful men, this is one of the greateſt, that he will take away his Goſpel, and the light of his Word from them; yet this a wicked man deſireth, let the Goſpel go, let the light of the Word go; he wiſheth it gone, 'tis but a trouble to him, he is ſick of it, it is a death to him. The beſt of good things is refuſed, and the worſt of evils choſen by thoſe that are evil. As their underſtanding is ſo blinded and diſtempered, *that they call evil good, and good evil; that they put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; that they put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter* (*Iſa.* 5. 20.) So their will and affections are ſo perverted, that they chooſe and embrace darkneſs for light, evil for good, and that which is moſt bitter, for that which is ſweeter then the honey and the honey comb.

Fourthly obſerve, *Wicked men are not only fooliſh, but wild and furious.*

See at what a rate they ſpeak, even as if they had God at their command; *They ſay to God, Depart*; as if God could not be where he pleaſed, as if God were at their limitting, and diſpoſing. Here's madneſs, like madneſs it ſelf. As there is madneſs in the heart of man in the enjoyment of the creature (*I ſaid of laughter it is madneſs*, ſaith *Solomon*) Some are ſo over-acted with joy and laughter, in their creature-enjoyments, that whereas laughter is the proper paſſion of a rational creature, there is nothing more irrational then their laughter; 'tis plain down-right madneſs. Now (I ſay) as ſome carnal men are mad in their manner of enjoying the creature, ſo they are more mad, in refuſing the enjoyments of God the Creator. Who can tell how mad they are who deſire God to depart from them? *They are mad to purpoſe who would put God from them, yet they more, who think they can.*

Fifthly note, *That the godly and the wicked have quite contrary both deſires and fears.*

What are the deſires and fears of a wicked man? he deſires to have God depart, he is afraid of the preſence of God: what are the deſires of a godly man? he deſires nothing more then the preſence of God; he ſayes as *Moſes* (Exod. 33. 15.) *If thy preſence go not with me, carry me no further*; I deſire to be no where, but where God manifeſts himſelf to be; let me ſee the day of my departure out of the world, rather then the day of Gods departure from me in the world; let riches go, let liberty go, let friends and relations go, ſo God ſtay with me. All company is ſolitarineſs to me, all fulneſs is emptineſs to me, and the moſt populous City worſe then a deſolate wilderneſs to me, where I find not the preſence of God with me. I fear nothing like this, the departure of God from me. I read indeed (*Luke* 5. 8.) that *Peter* once ſaid to Chriſt, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord.* But the reaſon was not becauſe he was weary of the preſence of Chriſt, but becauſe he thought himſelf altogether unworthy of the preſence of Chriſt. And therefore at another time *when many of Chriſts Diſciples went back and walked no more with him*; and hereupon *Chriſt ſaid to the twelve, Will ye alſo go away? Then* Simon Peter *anſwered him, Lord to whom ſhall we go? thou haſt the words of Eternal Life* (Joh.6.68.) He who would not go from Chriſt, could not indeed deſire that Chriſt ſhould go or depart from him. They who have taſted how gracious the Lord is, can never totally depart from God, nor can they at all bear it, that God ſhould depart from them. Thus the Church complains (*Jer.*14.9.) *Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a ſtranger in the Land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aſide to tarry for a night? Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a man aſtoniſhed, as a mighty man that cannot ſave? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midſt of us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not*: Whatſoever thou doeſt to us, do not leave us; let any evil come, but do not thou go; let ſword come, let famine come, let plague come, but do not thou depart; *leave us not.* Thus the Saints cling about a departing God, while wicked men are willing he ſhould depart. And conſidering the opinion which theſe wicked men had of God, 'tis no wonder though they preſs him to depart; for what ſhould God do with them, if he can do nothing for them, or do them no good: Such was their apprehenſion of God, as appears in the next clauſe.

And what can the Almighty do for them?

They ſhould rather have ſaid, *What cannot the Almighty do for them?* If the queſtion be put, what the Almighty can do? The anſwer is at hand, he that is Almighty, can do any thing; yet theſe wretches ſay, *What can the Almighty do for them?* Almightineſs it ſelf is queſtioned as weakneſs, and omnipotency as impotency by unbelievers.

Et quid operabitur omnipotens? Heb.

From the general ſence of this Infidels queſtion.

First obſerve, *That worldly wicked men have low, and ſlight thoughts of God.*

It is ſaid of a wicked man (*Pſal.*10.4.) *God is not in all his thoughts*; that is, he is in none of his thoughts, or God is not at all in all his thoughts. But is any man ſo void of God, that God is not in all his thoughts? Can any man utterly extinguiſh or blot the thoughts of God out of his heart? Is not the notion of a God written with indelible Characters upon the heart of man by nature? If not, how is the Law written there by nature? I anſwer, wicked men have thoughts, and cannot but have thoughts of God. But, firſt, *They like not to retain God in their thoughts*, or (which is the ſame) *in their knowledge* (Rom. 1. 28.) Secondly, The thoughts which they have of God, are unworthy of God; while they think of God, they think below God, and ſo indeed their thoughts are not at all the thoughts of God. While we think of God otherwiſe then he is, and hath revealed himſelf to be, we do not think of the God that made us, but we make an Idol-god in our own thoughts. Now wicked men think either that God hath no ſtrength, power, goodneſs and wiſdom, or can do little with what he hath; *What can the Almighty do for them?* They who are afar off from God by unbelief, are not able to diſcern his power, his goodneſs, his wiſdom, his faithfulneſs, his All-ſufficiency: They neither underſtand what God affirms of himſelf, nor give credit to what he hath promiſed unto us. We ſay of thoſe things, *which appear more then they are, that they affect more afar off then near at hand; but thoſe things which are more then they appear, affect more when they are nigh, then when they are afar off.* God is infinitely more, then he appears; and he being near to thoſe who believe, affects them wonderfully: But God is far from unbelievers, and they are far off or in a ſtate of fartheſt diſtance from God, therefore they are not affected with him; but ſay, who is God? What is Gods power? What is his Almightineſs? We have heard much of him, but we ſee little in him. They look upon God, as if he were like the Idols (deſcribed, *Pſal.* 115. 4, 5, 6, 7.) *Who have eyes, and ſee not; ears, and hear not; hands, and handle not*, &c. All the attributes of God, that he is Almighty, Unchangeable, *&c.* are but a ſound of words or empty titles in their ears. A believer can make a living out of any attribute of God; for when the Scripture ſaith, he lives by faith, the meaning is, he lives upon the goodneſs, mercy and power of God, revealed in the promiſe, and laid hold on by faith. Thus the juſt live by faith upon God, but the wicked and unbelievers cannot live upon thoſe terms; they ſee little or nothing in God to make a living of, and therefore they ſay, *What can the Almighty do for them?*

Secondly note, *That carnal men count the ſervice of God unprofitable.*

What can God do for them? If they ſerve him, what profit is it? His is a lean ſervice, they ſhall but ſtarve themſelves by attending upon him, and undo themſelves by doing his work. Thus they ſaid in the former Chapter, and ſo they ſay again in this. The carnal man accounts nothing good, but that which is outwardly good: *Who will ſhew us any good?* (Pſal. 4. 6.) they know that all good cometh through the hand of God, that it cometh in at the door of the promiſe; they can look no further then they ſee, and therefore becauſe they ſee no profit, they look for none; they do not ſee that God doth any thing for them, and therefore they conclude he cannot: *What can the Almighty do for them?*

Thirdly note, That, *The ſpirits of worldly men are meerly mercenary.*

If they do any thing for God, or at the command of God, they do it only upon hopes of reward, they never obey commandments for the holineſs that is in them, but for the benefit that comes by them. *What can the Almighty do for them?* As when *Judas* betrayed Jeſus Chriſt, he went out with a mercenary ſpirit to do that wickedneſs; *What will you give me, and I will betray him?* So when a carnal man ſerves Jeſus Chriſt, he ſaith, What will he give me? What can he do for me? He cannot *ſerve God for nought*, that is, freely, as Satan charged *Job* in the beginning of this book; *Job* ſerveth thee, ſaid Satan, becauſe thou haſt done ſo much for him, becauſe thou haſt ſerved his turn, and made a hedge about him; this was Satans ſlander upon that good man; but 'tis no ſlander to ſay ſo of carnal men, *Do they ſerve God for nought?* They do not, they cannot; if they may gain by godlineſs, they will do ſomewhat, which ſhall have a ſhew of godlineſs; profit will make any thing paſs with, and pleaſing to a carnal mind, though in it ſelf it be never ſo diſpleaſing. Such is the nobleneſs of the people of God, that though there be a reward in ſerving of him; yet they are ready to ſerve him without reward, they can ſerve him upon a bare command, abſtract from promiſes and profit; they can obey God as a Creator, though he ſhould not be a rewarder. Godlineſs is profitable for all things, and hath the promiſe both of this life, and of that which is to come; yet a gracious heart loves godlineſs more then profitableneſs, and eyes the work of God more then his reward.

Further, for the opening of theſe words; ſome read thus, *What can the Almighty do againſt them?* The Hebrew particle ſtands indifferently to both, and may be tranſlated *for*, or *againſt*; in which ſence we find it in the thirty fifth of this Book, *verſ.* 6, 7. *If thou ſinneſt what doſt thou againſt him?* that is, what hurt doſt thou to God? Thy ſin cannot reach, or wound him, what doſt thou againſt him? Thus here, *They ſay to the Almighty, depart from us, and what can the Almighty do againſt them?* Surely the Almighty

Si peccaveris quid ei nocebis? proprie, quid ei facies?

mighty is not able to hurt us; from him we expect no good, and from him we fear no evil. Were not theſe mighty men think you, who thought the Almighty could not match them? Theſe were mighty men indeed, Giants, ſons of *Anak* no doubt they were, but Giants in wickedneſs. And ſo this reading gives us a further character or diſcovery of a wicked mans Spirit.

Hence obſerve, *Some wicked men have this preſumption, that let God do his worſt, he cannot hurt them.*

I find in Scripture a threefold falſe and preſumptuous apprehenſion, which evil men have of God while they are doing evil.

Firſt, Some preſume that God will protect them from evil while they do evil (*Mich.* 3. 11.) *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.* Theſe were ſuch as made it their buſineſs to break the Law of God, yet they thought God would not ſuffer any trouble to break in upon them.

Secondly, Others preſume that, at leaſt, God will not be ſo ſevere as to inflict thoſe evils which he hath threatned. The old world was threatned with a Deluge, but they could not believe that God would make good his Word, they even mockt at the credulity and ſimplicity of *Noah*, to ſee him build that great Ship or Ark upon the dry Land, as if he meant to ſail his veſſel without water: As for them, they neither believed nor feared a flood. So they (*Iſa.* 5. 19.) will put the Lord to a trial, *Let him haſten his work that we may ſee it*; let us ſee what he will do. As if they had ſaid to the Prophet, you told us what he would do, how ſevere he would be, what meaneth all your talk, we would ſee ſomething done. What will the Almighty do againſt us? Surely nothing, he is not ſo ſtrict as you make him. The Prophet deſcribes the worſt of men, the *men ſetled on their lees*, ſpeaking thus (*Zeph.* 1. 12.) *They ſay in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil*; that is, he will neither reward nor puniſh, he will neither help nor hurt. To ſay either of theſe is alike diſhonourable unto God; to ſay either, much more both (though indeed to ſay either is to ſay both) is to ſay, not only that God is neither to be loved nor feared, but that he is not at all. It is the glory of God to do the one as well as to do the other, and unleſs he could do both, he could do neither (*Iſa.* 45. 7.) *I form the light, and create darkneſs* (the darkneſs of trouble is of God as much as the light of comfort) *I make peace and create evil*; the evil of puniſhment is as much the creature of God as peace is, and God doth as much appear a Creator in the one as in the other; the doing of this kind of evil doth as much ſhew the power, and providence of God, as the doing of good; yet thoſe in the Prophet ſaid the Lord will do neither; *He will neither do good, neither will he do evil.*

Thirdly, Thoſe in the Text were raiſed to a higher pitch of preſumption then both the former; for they ſaid, what can the Almighty do againſt us? As if they had ſaid, let him do his worſt, we fear him not; to think that God will ſhield us from the evil which others threaten, or that he will not bring that evil upon us which himſelf hath threatned when we do evil, are very high actings of preſumption: But to think that God can do nothing againſt us, to think that the Arm of God is ſhorter then that it can reach us, or weaker then that it can over power us; to think that we have out-grown Divine Juſtice, and are too big or too ſtrong to be dealt with by the Almighty, is preſumption to madneſs; wo to thoſe ſinners who ſecure themſelves in the goodneſs of God to them; more wo to thoſe who ſecure themſelves in Gods neglect of them; but above all, wo is their portion who ſecure themſelves as it were in the weakneſs of God, even while in words they acknowledge his power, ſaying, *What can the Almighty do againſt us?*

Thirdly, Others read the words thus; *They ſay to the Almighty, Depart from us, and what hath the Almighty done againſt them?* That is, what hurt hath God done them? They are troubled at the preſence of God; but what cauſe hath God given them to be troubled at his preſence? And then we may connect theſe words with the words of *verſ.* 18. *What hath God done againſt them? yea he filled their houſes with good things*; that's all the dammage he did them? This is a fair ſence, and conſiſtent with the Original Text: leaving the Reader to his choice, I ſhall only give the obſervation which riſeth clearly from this.

God never giveth wicked men any juſt cauſe to be weary of him.

He never doth them any wrong, and he often gives them many a bleſſing, and have they any reaſon to bid him depart? He is uſually very patient towards them, and doth never bring any evil upon them till they have doubly deſerved it; and have they any reaſon to be diſpleaſed at that? Yea whenſoever he puniſheth them in this world, he puniſheth them leſs then their ſins deſerve; indeed there is a puniſhment behind adæquate and commenſurate to their ſin, but they ſhall never be puniſhed beyond what or more then their ſin deſerves. Seeing then their puniſhment in the next life, though it will be great beyond imagining, yet ſhall not be great beyond deſerving; and all their puniſhments in this life are leſs then the demerit of their ſin (As was penitentially confeſſed by *Ezra* in the name of the *Jews* after they had been broken by the ſword, and brought into captivity for their ſin, *Chap.* 9. 13. Seeing (I ſay) 'tis but thus with them when 'tis worſt with them) What hath the Almighty done againſt them? Is not all their deſtruction (meritoriouſly) from themſelves?

Again, How much ſoever God puniſheth them in this life, they have no reaſon to complain, or *ſay to God, Depart from us:* for even thoſe puniſhments are meſſages from God to awaken them out of their ſins, and ſo to prevent worſer puniſhments; therefore when God perceived that ſtubborn people going on in their ſins, he telleth them he will ſmite them no more, as implying that it was his favour to ſmite them (*Iſa.* 1. 5.) *Why ſhould ye be ſmitten any more, ye will revolt more and more.* Surely then ſuch have no reaſon to *ſay to God, Depart from us*, when he ſmites them, as if he did them either hurt or wrong, ſeeing he ſmites them, that they might return unto him; thoſe judgments of God are a mercy, which are ſent to teach man his duty. Now if the judgments of God have ſometime mercy in them, and never have any injury in them, what hurt or injury can there be to man in the ſervice of God? Hath the Almighty done any thing againſt them, whom he lovingly invites to the doing of his will? And yet ſome complain of wrong when they are only called to do what is right, and cry out as if God hurt them, when he doth but govern them. The Lord calls his murmuring people to account about this thing (*Mich.* 6. 3.) *O my people, what have I done to thee* (that is, what hurt, what wrong have I done unto thee) *and wherein have I wearied thee, teſtifie againſt me*; as if he had ſaid, thou haſt nothing to bring againſt me in evidence, unleſs it be my kindneſs, as it follows (*verſ.* 4.) *For I brought thee up out of the Land of* Egypt, *and redeemed thee out of the houſe of ſervants, and I ſent before thee*, Moſes, Aaron, *and* Miriam. *O my people, remember*, &c. Conſider all my dealings with thee, all the deliverances I have wrought for thee, all the Statutes and Ordinances, all the Laws and Commandments which I have given thee, and then let thy Conſcience ſpeak; what have I done unto thee, which is an evil to thee? Or wherein have I wearied thee, in the things which I have required thee to do? I have done many good works for thee, and I have commanded thee to do many works, ſuch works as are not only good in themſelves, but good for them who do them; for which of theſe is it that thou art weary of me? *There is not that wicked man in the world but God may ſay to him, what have I done to thee, or what have I called thee to do, that thou ſhouldeſt be weary of me?* That thou ſhouldeſt deſire me to depart from thee? Thus if we read the words in this latter ſence; *What hath the Almighty done againſt them?* They carry a reproof of their ingratitude againſt God, who had not hurt them, yea who had done them good. If we read the words in the ſecond ſence, *What can the Almighty do againſt them?* They carry a high contempt and ſlight of his power, as if God could do them no hurt. If we read the words in the firſt ſence according to our tranſlation (which I rather pitch upon) they carry (upon contrary terms) a like contempt of the power of God, as if he could do them no good; *What can the Almighty do for them?*

Verſ. 18. **Yet he filled their houſes with good things.**

The Hebrew is, *And he filled their houſes with good things*; we tranſlate *yet*, which better clears the meaning and ſcope of the Text, according to our reading of the former verſe; *They ſay to God, depart from us, and what can the Almighty do for them? Yet he filled their houſes with good things*; as if he had ſaid, they thought God could do nothing for them, whereas indeed he did all for them; all the good they had, they had it from God, *He filled their houſes*; that is, he gave them abundance; he did not only put ſome good things into their houſes, but he filled their houſes with good things, they had a plentiful eſtate; God gave them a rich portion in the good things of this world, his Corn, his Wine, his Oyl, his Flax. his Gold, his Silver, were their portion. He filled them, and they rebelled againſt him; he beſtowed many benefits upon them, which they abuſed to ſerve their luſts, and vainly triumphed in what he freely gave them, as if they had been ſpoils forcibly taken from him.

Horum quidem domos ipſe impleverat bonis. Jun. q. d. *Dei benificiis abuſi ſunt turpiter & tanquam de ſpoliis Dei ipſius triumphaverunt.* Jun.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That God doth them good that are evil.*

Chriſt perſwaded his hearers (and us in them) upon this account to love their enemies, *That they and we might be the children of our father which is in Heaven; For he maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt* (Matth. 5. 45.) As God hath ſome peculiar people, ſo he hath ſome peculiar bleſſings, and good things, which the world in common ſhares not in; but he hath a ſort of bleſſings, and good things, which are the common ſhare of the world; Rain and Sun, Fat and Sweet, Gold and Silver are ſuch good things as their hearts and houſes are often filled with, whoſe hearts and houſes are empty of goodneſs. Theſe good things God gives them, who know no more why he gives them, then they did, why he did not ſuddenly bring evil upon them; of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 2. 4.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* when God doth good to thoſe that are evil, whether it be by beſtowing good upon them, or by withholding evil, he doth it uſually for one of, or both theſe reaſons.

Firſt, That they might repent and live; knoweſt thou not what Meſſage the goodneſs of God brings? Speaks it not thus, *Repent, repent?* yea doth not divine goodneſs (taking thee by the hand) lead thee to repentance?

Secondly, The Lord doth them good who continue in the evil of ſin, that they might be left inexcuſable when the evil of wrath and puniſhment falls upon them; every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, and all the world of wicked ones become guilty before God, when they remember that they ſinned, and went on to ſin againſt the God that fed them, againſt the God that cloathed them, againſt the God *that filled their houſes with good things*, and protected them in the uſe and injoyment of thoſe good things, with which he had filled their houſes.

Secondly, In that he doth not only give them good things, but filled their houſes with good,

Obſerve, *God giveth great portions of good things to wicked men.*

They have not only enough to live upon, but they have enough to live comfortably upon; they have not only enough to live upon themſelves, but they have enough to lay up for their children after them; the Lord is not only good, but he is liberal and bountiful (in its kind) to the worſt of men: they whoſe hearts are ſhut to him, his hand is open to them; he is inlarged towards them who are ſtreightned towards him: And this is added not only to render the goodneſs of God more glorious, but the ſin of man more ſinful and odious in our eyes. Whence obſerve,

Thirdly, *Sin hath by ſo much the greater evil in it, by how much it is committed againſt the greater goodneſs.*

It is a horrible wickedneſs to *ſay to God depart from us*, though he empty our houſes of all good things; but it is much more horrible wickedneſs, to ſay ſo when he filleth our houſes with good things. What? When God hath filled our houſes, ſhall we kick him out of doors? This was the ſin of *Jeſurun, that when he waxed fat kicked*, as *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 32. 15.) *Thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatneſs; Then he forſook God that made him, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation.* Their ſin is great who lightly eſteem God while he makes them lean; but how ſinful is their ſin, who ſlight God that hath made them fat? As good things received, bind us ſtronger unto duty; ſo good things abuſed, bind us ſtronger under guilt.

Fourthly, As we connect theſe words with the latter branch of the former verſe; *What can the Almighty do for them? Yet he filled their houſes with good things.* We may take this Obſervation,

Though carnal men receive many good things from God, yet they know him not as the fountain of them.

They who are evil cannot own God purely, either in good or evil. It is but ſeldom that they ſay, with that wicked King, *This evil is of the Lord* (2 Kings 6. 33.) And it is ſeldomer that they ſay, This good is of the Lord. They ſay, what good doth God for us? Even while he filleth their houſes with good things. Indeed the beſt of Saints receive many good things from God which they know not of; they receive many ſecret mercies, ſecret I mean not only to others, but to themſelves; and ſo they are not able to give God the glory of them diſtinctly, becauſe they have not a diſtinct knowledge of them. But all the good things which the wicked have are to them of an unknown original. Though they know what they have, yet they know not from whence or from whom they have what they have; they know not who feeds them, who cloaths them, who provides for them: yea though they make many formal acknowledgments of this, and will tell you of Gods goodneſs to them; yet really they know it not, nor do they cordially acknowledge it. The Lord complains of his people about this (*Iſa.* 1. 3.) *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib* (he upbraids them not only as below other men, but as below the beaſts, as if the reaſonleſs creature had acted more rationally then they) *but* Iſrael *doth not know, my people do not conſider:* What was it they did not know, nor conſider? They knew not nor conſidered what the Ox and the Aſſe knew and conſidered; *The Ox knoweth his owner*, he knoweth that his Maſter feeds him, as well as works him. Thus alſo *the Aſs knoweth his Maſters crib*; as he knoweth that his Maſter imployeth him, ſo he knoweth that his Maſter provideth for him. The dull Aſs takes notice of the crib, and knows where and by whom he receiveth good; but ye my people know not me, ye do not conſider him that feeds you; For I *have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me*, they never honoured me as the fountain and founder of their felicity. The Prophet *Hoſea* reproves the ſame ſottiſhneſs and blindneſs in that people (*Chap.* 2. 8, 9.) *For ſhe did not know that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and multiplied her Silver and Gold, which they prepared for* Baal. *Therefore I will return and take away her corn in the time thereof.* As if the Lord had ſaid, I will make them know that I can take theſe things away, ſeeing they would not know, or at leaſt not acknowledge that I am he who gave them. Carnal men attribute their good things, and the filling of their houſes with them to any thing rather then to God: they thank their friends or their good fortune; they thank themſelves, their policy, their induſtry, for what they have; they aſcend not up to God in thankfulneſs for what they have: they who ſay, *What can the Almighty do for them?* How ſhould they acknowledge, that the Almighty hath done any thing for them? The Prophet (*Hab.* 1. 16.) ſpeaks of men *whoſe portion was fat, and their meat plenteous*; but to whom did they refer all this? Whom did they acknowledge for their benefactor, or as the cauſe of thoſe great ſucceſſes? The Prophet tells us, *They ſacrificed to their nets, and burnt incenſe to their drags.* The words carry an alluſion to fiſhing, in which Work or Art, nets and drags are the inſtruments of the fiſher-man; ſo that to ſacrifice to the net or to the drag, is to give the honour and thanks of all our attainments to ſecond cauſes, and creature helps, to our own wit, power, and induſtry, *&c.* To theſe ſaith the Prophet *they ſacrificed*, that is, they honoured them in the place or ſtead of God: *Sacrifice is proper and peculiar to God*, and therefore he that offers ſacrifice to any thing, makes it his god, or puts it in the place of God; they who thank themſelves for the good they have, are a god to themſelves. And thus we find the *Aſſyrian* aſcribing all to his own power (*Iſa.* 10. 14.) *By the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures, and I have put down the Inhabitants like a valiant man*; he did not think that the Lord did it by his hand, *but* (ſaith he) *by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it: my right hand is my God, my wiſdom is my god.* Theſe, theſe, *have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures.* See how the Lord checks this inſolency (*verſ.* 15.) *Shall the ax boaſt it ſelf againſt him that heweth therewith? Or ſhall the ſaw magnifie it ſelf againſt him that ſhaketh it?* Men (I grant) are living inſtruments, yet they can do no more then inſtruments without life (the ax and the ſaw) unleſs God act them, or act by them. An ax or a ſaw can do as much without man, as man can do without God; yet vain proud man is as full of boaſting as if he could do, or had done all alone.

Dextera mihi Deus. Virg. l. 10. Sanct.

Fifthly obſerve, *That the portion of wicked men lyeth all on this ſide Heaven, and heavenly things.*

God filleth their houſes with good things, but they are the good things of this life; they have nothing that reacheth to eternal life. They have nothing that concerns pardon of ſin, or grace, much leſs have they glory for their portion (*Act.* 14. 16, 17.) *God did not leave himſelf without witneſs* (among the Heathen Nations) *in that he did good, and gave rain from Heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling their hearts with food and gladneſs*; ſo much they received from God, as filled them with food for their bodies, and made their lives comfortable; but no more, that was all they had. As *Abraham* in the parable tells the rich man in Hell (*Luke* 16.25.) *Son, remember that thou in thy life time haſt had thy good things.* And what were the good things which he formerly had? We have an anſwer at *verſ.* 19. *He was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciouſly every day.* As the Pſalmiſt is expreſs (*Pſal.* 17. 14.) that *the men of this world have their portion in this life*, ſo, his purpoſe is to ſhew, that they have their portion in the things of this life; for he adds, *Whoſe bellies thou filleſt with thy hid treaſures,* that is, with thoſe treaſures of corn, wine, and oyl, which are virtually hidden in the Earth, and brought forth by the Earth. God fills the bellies of the wicked, but he fills the Spirits of the godly; he fills the former with the hidden treaſures of the Earth, he fills none but the latter with the hidden treaſures of Heaven.

Laſtly note, *That the gifts of God even in temporal things are free and undeſerved.*

Not only are ſpiritual gifts and graces, together with eternal life undeſerved, but even temporals, and the things of this life. The Lord gives them unto his enemies, to thoſe that ſay to him, *depart from us*; and what do theſe deſerve at his hands, but ſtripes and death? He gave Chriſt to us while we were moſt unworthy of him; when we were yet enemies Chriſt died for us; ſinners do no more deſerve bread then they deſerve Chriſt; we no more deſerve the comforts of this life then eternal life; the one is of free grace to the elect, and the other is of bounty and goodneſs to the wicked. The old *Egyptians* (as ſome writers report them) were careful to confeſs the undeſervedneſs of thoſe outward favours, the plenty and abundance of corn and cattel, with which *Egypt* was ſtored; in teſtification whereof they every year brought into the Temple of their Idol *Serapis,* a meaſure ſhewing how high the river *Nilus* roſe and overflowed its banks (for *Egypt* being a flat Country, is watred by the overflowings of *Nilus*) and by the riſing of thoſe waters they could (very probably) prognoſticate the plenty or ſcarcity of the year enſuing. And they therefore took an exact account how many cubits high the river ſwell'd, leaving it in the Temple of *Serapis*, thereby acknowledging (as ſome conceive) that their Idol god was the beſtower of all that plenty, or (as *Eliphaz* here ſpeaks) that he *had filled their houſes with good things.*

Quoniam moris erat in Egypto, *ut menſura aſcendentis Nili fluminis ad templum Serapidis deferretur, velut ad incrementi aquarum & inundationis auctorē ſubverſo ejus ſimulachro, ulna ipſa id eſt aquæ menſura, ad aquarum dominū cœpta eſt in Eccleſias deferri.* Caſſiod. l. 2. ad Euſeb. Hiſt.

But the Counſel of the wicked is far from me.

We had theſe words before (*Chap.* 21. 16.) *Job* made uſe of them there, and here *Eliphaz*, therefore I ſhall add but little for explication in this place. In general know, they are a *proverbial ſpeech,* by which the abhorrence of our ſpirits concerning either things or perſons is ſet forth to the utmoſt; as when we ſay to any man, *be gone, depart from me*, or as Chriſt to Satan, *Get thee behind me,* we ſhew our vehement deteſtation of his perſon. So when a man ſaith, ſuch or ſuch a thing *is far from me*, his meaning is, he utterly deteſts it, or that the thing is the very abomination of his ſoul. Therefore while *Eliphaz* ſaith, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me,* it is, as if he had ſaid, *I cannot indure to have any thing to do either with the wicked, or with their counſel; O my ſoul come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly; O mine honour be not thou united* (as dying *Jacob* beſpake his ſons *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. 49. 6.)

Puto Vulgarem eſſe dicendi modum, quo homines aliquid execrantur & à ſe arceri longiſſime jubent; Qualia ſunt, apage, avertat Deus. Pined.

But what is the counſel of the wicked? Their counſel may be taken, firſt, for that diſhonourable opinion which they held of God, that he could do nothing either for them or againſt them. I (ſaith *Eliphaz*) am of another mind, of another faith and perſwaſion. Their counſel is far from me who either deny the providence of God, or think they can hide themſelves from the eye of his providence; I believe that his eye beholdeth all, and that his hand worketh whatſoever pleaſeth him.

Secondly, Others by *Counſel* underſtand the ſcope of wicked men; ſo *Calvin* reads, *the intent of the wicked is far from me*; I have other purpoſes and deſigns then they have; *The plowing of the wicked* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 4.) *is ſin*; that is, the ſtirring and plotting of his mind to get his deſires ſatisfied is ſinful; I deſire not (ſaith *Eliphaz*) to put my hand to their plow. *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

Thirdly, As the deſign and plot, ſo the courſe and way of the wicked *is far from me.* The counſel of a man is put for the means by which he acteth his deſigns, as well as for the method in which he layeth them. We ſhall not wrong the drift of the Text in which ſoever of theſe three ſences we underſtand this proteſtation, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

Again, There is a threefold difference about the reading and relation of theſe words, which put together will give us yet a further light and underſtanding about them.

Firſt, The Septuagint read thus, *The counſel of the wicked is far from him*; and the antecedent, *to him* (according to their ſence) is God himſelf. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, the counſels and reſolutions which the wicked take up, God cannot abide, *they are far from him. His are holy, theirs are unholy counſels.*

Quæ conſilia illi ineunt longe ſunt à Deo.

Secondly, Others apprehend, that *Eliphaz* ſpake thus in the perſon of *Job*, and only reaſſumed what he had ſaid (*Chap.* 21. 16.) *O this is the man that ſaid even now the counſel of the wicked is far from me: Pray conſider, this is the man that profeſſed he would not ſo much as come near a wicked man, he would have nothing to do with their counſels, not he; he would be taken for a man of another ſpirit, of another frame then they; but ſee what he is, ſee how he joyns with them, how he walks in their wayes, how he follows their counſels; though he denies them with his lips, and makes ſtrange as if he knew them not, yet indeed he is of the ſame piece and ſpirit with them: and while he ſaith, the counſel of the wicked is far from me* (*behold his hypocriſie*) *the counſel of the wicked lieth in his boſom, and is embraced by him.*

Quaſi Job *ore tenus non reipſa impiorum conſilium improbaret.* q.d. *Num poteris dicere, te non ſentire cum improbis, cū tu, ut ipſi providentiā Dei tollas.*

Thirdly, Which is more plain and clear, we may expound theſe words not only as ſpoken by *Eliphaz*, but as therein ſpeaking of himſelf; *The counſel of the wicked is far from me*; that is, I am a man of another ſtrain, of another grain then they, I am a man of another mould and make then they. Therefore O *Job*, what you ſpake before I ſpeak again, and I ſpeak it upon better grounds, with a better heart then you; you ſpake with your lips, or from the teeth outward, that *the counſel of the wicked is far from you*; but I have proved that you approach too near them both in courſe and counſel; I ſay, what you ſaid, but I ſay it (which you did not) in ſincerity; I profeſs, and what I profeſs is true, that *the counſel of the wicked is far from me. The ſame truth may be profeſſed by different perſons, upon different grounds, and to different ends:* the ſame premiſes

Hæc ſunt ipſius Eliphaſi *verba, quibus ſeipſum commendat; ut qui potiori jure quam* Job, *& multo verius poſſit aſſerere ſe toto cœlo ab impiorum ſententia diſcedere.* Jun. Piſc.

do

Eliphaz *vult ex uno cum* Jobo *principio iiſdemq; præmiſſis contrariam elicere concluſionem.* Bold.

do not alwayes yield the ſame concluſions in the minds of men, though in themſelves they do. *Eliphaz* thought his counſel as far from *Job's*, as *Job* had profeſſed himſelf to be from the counſel of the wicked. When *Job* ſaid, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me*; his purpoſe was to ſhew, that though he was afflicted while many wicked men were proſpered, that yet he was not at all ſpirited or principl'd like wicked men: And that therefore his friends aſſertion muſt needs be falſe, who numbred him with the wicked becauſe he was afflicted. *Eliphaz* ſeems to retort this upon *Job*, and to ſay, if this be ſo, as thou affirmeſt, ſurely then God hath laid aſide the care of this world, and let all things run at ſix and ſevens; for ſurely if he took notice of men, either what they were, or what they were doing; he would never ſuffer the wicked to proſper, no nor to eſcape unpuniſhed. And ſeeing thou continueſt ſo ſtiff in thy opinion, that thou doſt not ſuffer theſe grievous calamities for thy ſin, thou ſeemeſt to me plainly to comply with their blaſphemy, who query, *How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud?* This counſel of the wicked is far from me. And ſeeing as *Job* before, ſo *Eliphaz* here aſcribes counſel (which is the moſt deliberate act) to the wicked,

We may Obſerve, Firſt, *That wicked men ſin adviſedly; or, that many of their ſinful wayes, are ſtudied wayes.*

And as the more ſtudied they are, the more ſinful they are; ſo they ſtudy moſt for thoſe which are moſt ſinful. They are not hurried into ſin by paſſions, or thruſt on upon ſin meerly by the violence of temptation: They ſit down and go to counſel how they may compaſs their ungodly purpoſes. A godly man doth not conſent unto ſin, much leſs doth he conſult about it; *The evil which I do I allow not: I* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *conſent to the law of God that it is good* (Rom. 7.) A godly man ſins dayly, but ſin hath not his conſent or allowance when he hath done it, much leſs doth he conſult or adviſe how to do it. Sin doth not pleaſe him conſequently, much leſs doth he project it antecedently. 'Tis the character of a wicked man, that his ſin is his counſel, and that his art is in it as much as his nature: *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

Secondly, *Eliphaz* doth not ſay how far the counſel of the wicked was from him, but that it was far from him, and *by far*, he means *furtheſt*; as if he had ſaid, it is as far from me as far may be, I have no compliance with their counſels.

Hence obſerve, *That the ſpirit and way of the godly and the wicked are as different as their end and concluſion ſhall be.*

They are at furtheſt diſtance; they are like two parallel lines, which how far ſoever they run together, they never meet together, nor touch in a point. The concluſion of a wicked man or his end is far from that of the upright: the end of the one is light, the end of the other is darkneſs; the one ends in ſorrow, the other in joy; the end of the one is peace, of the other trouble. And ſo the way of the one is ſin, the way of the other is holineſs; the way of the one is oppreſſion and covetouſneſs, the way of the other is juſtice and righteouſneſs; the way of the one is faith, the way of the other is unbelief. Now as darkneſs and light, joy and ſorrow, peace and trouble, can never comply or be united; ſo neither can ſin and holineſs, oppreſſion and juſtice, faith and unbelief. There's no communion between theſe contraries, between theſe wayes and ends, counſels and concluſions. And unleſs we keep far from the counſels of the wicked, we cannot go far from their concluſion; nor can we avoid their end, but by avoiding their way. The ſame way brings the ſame end, whether we reſpect good or evil. And hence it is that the Spirit of God by *Solomon* gives ſuch a vehement admonition, to beware of the way of wicked men (*Prov.* 4. 14, 15.) *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away.* As in the former context, *he as a careful Father*, had preſſed his Son to the cloſeſt purſuit of wiſdoms way; ſo here, he as earneſtly preſſeth him to depart from the path of wickedneſs; he would have his Son not only not go into it; but not ſo much *as paſs by it*, that is, not go near it; as the next words intimate, *turn from it*, as if he had ſaid, keep at a diſtance, keep aloof off, do not ſtay ſo long within ſight of it as to look upon it; that's his laſt counſel, *paſs away*, not to return or come near it any more. And while we conſider whither that way leads, we ſhall eaſily grant that when all is ſaid, little enough is ſaid to lead us away from it. Where the way is ſin, the wages is death. Therefore let him who deſires to avoid the concluſion of the wicked, ſay, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

VERS. 19, 20.

The righteous ſee it, and are glad, and the innocent laugh them to ſcorn.

Whereas our ſubſtance is not cut down; but the remnant of them the fire conſumeth.

Eliphaz ſtill purſues the ruine and extirpation of wicked men; he ſhewed us before the ſinfulneſs of their practices towards man, and the folly of their opinion, *in ſaying to God depart from us*; who had never hurt them, nor given them any cauſe to be weary of his preſence, unleſs this diſpleaſed them, that *he filled their houſes with good things.* And becauſe they declared themſelves thus vain, therefore *Eliphaz* rejected both them and their way, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.* Now, in this verſe he acquaints us with the event or iſſue of their counſels, and how the righteous carry themſelves, when God calls the wicked to an account, and reckons with them for their prophaneneſs and irreligion.

Verſ. 19. **The righteous ſee it, and are glad.**

Who the righteous man is, and what denominates a man righteous, hath been ſhewed before. *The righteous ſee it*, what do they ſee? That which they believed and looked for; the fall of wicked men. The act of ſeeing may be referr'd either to the *perſon ſeeing*, or to the *object ſeen*: as 'tis referr'd to the perſon of the righteous, ſo *ſeeing* notes both their priviledge and their pleaſure. They are admitted to ſee this ſpectacle of divine Juſtice, and it is their happineſs to ſee it. This *David* intimates (*Pſal.* 37. 34.) *Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he ſhall exalt thee to inherit the Land: when the wicked are cut off thou ſhalt ſee it.* The righteous ſhall be honoured with this ſight, yea and pleaſed with it, the cutting off of wicked men by the hand of God. The righteous man hath a promiſe to ſee this (and promiſes are the conveyances of mercies (*Pſal.* 91. 8.) *A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee, only with thine eyes ſhalt thou behold and ſee the reward of the wicked.* Thou ſhalt be a ſpectator, not a partaker in that calamity. Wicked men ſometimes glut their eyes with beholding the troubles of the Saints, and they account it a happy day, when they can have ſuch a ſight. They ſign that day with a white ſtone, when the black ſtone of the moſt unjuſt and cruel condemnation proves the preſent lot of the righteous. *David* diſcovered ſuch a ſpirit in his enemies (*Pſal.* 35. 21.) *They opened their mouth wide againſt me, and ſaid, aha, aha, our eyes have ſeen it.* What had they ſeen? The former verſe tells us, *They ſpeak not peace, but they deviſe deceitful matters againſt them that are quiet in the Land.* When theſe deviſes took, and had ſucceſs, then they were pleaſed, then they had what they would, and ſaw what they deſired. And thus the enemies of the Church are deſcribed (*Mich.* 4. 11.) *Now alſo many Nations are gathered againſt thee, and ſay, let her be defiled,* (there is a twofold defiling, a defiling with ſin, and a defiling with blood and miſery, the latter is meant by the Prophet, *let her be defiled*) *and let our eyes look upon Sion.* They counted it a bleſſed ſight to ſee *Sion* bleed; the wicked would have ſuch ſights often, though uſually their eyes fail with waiting, and their hope is as the giving up of the ghoſt; but righteous men ſhall ſee (the righteous God hath ſaid it) vengeance poured upon the wicked.

Voluptatem importat hujuſmodi aſpectus.

Again, we may expound this act of ſeeing with reference to the object ſeen: and ſo it imports two things, firſt, the certainty of their fall: wicked men ſhall undoubtedly be deſtroyed, and there ſhall be eye witneſſes, honeſt and faithful witneſſes, teſtifying their deſtruction; *The righteous ſhall ſee it*, and report it to after generations.

Secondly, As ſeeing notes the certainty of their fall, or the evidence and clearneſs of it, ſo the publickneſs of it; that which is done to the eye, is done openly. What the juſtice of God doth againſt the wicked ſhall not be done in a corner, but as upon the houſe top. The reading of the *Septuagint* is full to this ſence; *They ſhall be made publick examples.* It is the care of juſt and wiſe Magiſtrates, not only to puniſh malefactors, but to puniſh them openly, that ſo all may ſee and fear and do no more preſumptuouſly. There are three ſpecial reaſons why offences are puniſhed; and the Greeks expreſs each puniſhment by ſuch a word as carrieth a diſtinct ſignification of thoſe reaſons. First, Some are puniſhed, that themſelves may amend and better their manners; this they called νουθέτησις. Secondly, Others are puniſhed, to repair the honour or maintain the dignity of thoſe againſt whom they have offended, leſt if ſuch ſhould eſcape without condigne puniſhment, authority ſhould be contemned, grow cheap, or be lightly valued; this they called τιμωρία. A third ſort were puniſhed for example, that others might be deterred from doing the ſame things, leſt they alſo incur the ſame ſufferings; this was called παράδειγμα. As much as to ſay, the holding of a man forth in his ſufferings to the open view, that he may be ſeen of all men, and that all may be warned to avoid his error. And thus the Lord who is the righteous Judge of all the world puniſheth wicked men. The ſame word is uſed by the Evangeliſt *Matthew* (Chap. 1. 19.) *Joſeph* being troubled that *Mary* was with child (for he knew not the myſtery of her over-ſhadowing by the Holy Ghoſt, *was minded to put her away ſecretly, and would not make her a publick example*; he was unwilling to bring her to juſtice, or that others ſhould ſee either her (ſuppoſed) ſin or puniſhment. But as God doth work many glorious ſalvations for his people, that the wicked may ſee it, and be aſhamed; ſo he brings many viſible deſtructions upon the wicked, not only that the righteous may ſee it and *rejoyce*, or be glad (which act follows next to be opened) but that the wicked may ſee it, and tremble to do wickedly.

παραδειγμάτισον. *Denotat rem omnibus conſpicuam & in publicum exemplum propoſitam.* Sept.

1 νουθέτησις 2 τιμωρία. 3 παράδειγμα. *Acerbitas ulciſcendi maleficii, bene atq; caute vivendi diſciplina eſt.* Cæcilius apud Gel. l. 2. c. 1.

Hence obſerve, First, *That the Lord ſets up wicked men many times as examples of his wrathful juſtice.*

Not only do they feel wrath upon themſelves, but others ſee it; the Lord ſometimes chaſtens his own people in the view of the world, and ſets them up as examples of his fatherly diſpleaſure. Thus *Nathan* ſpeaks in the name of the Lord to *David* (2 Sam. 12. 12.) *Thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this thing* (what thing? I will afflict and chaſten thee for this great offence) *before all* Iſrael, *and before the Sun*; that is, in plain and clear light: Though thou haſt done this evil in the darkneſs of many cloſe contrivances, yet I will draw the curtain, and make the penal effects of thy ſin as conſpicuous as the actings of thy ſin have been cloſe and covert. Again (*Numb.* 25. 4.) when the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of *Moab*, and *Iſrael* had joyned himſelf unto *Baal-peor*, ſo that the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt *Iſrael*; *Then the Lord ſaid to* Moſes, *take all the heads of the people* (that is, the capital offenders, or chief rulers, who gave way, or at beſt gave no ſtop to ſuch wickedneſs) *and hang them up before the Lord againſt the Sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from* Iſrael. To hang them up before the Sun, is a phraſe of ſpeech importing the publickneſs of their puniſhment (as it is ſaid of the ſeven Sons of *Saul*, that they were *hanged on the hill before the Lord*, 2 Sam. 21. 9.) for caution unto all; whatſoever is done in the ſight of all, or ſo that all may ſee, is ſaid (in the Language of the *Jews*) to be done before the Sun. To which ſence alſo we may interpret that viſion of the Prophet *Zechariah* (Chap. 5. 6, 9, 10, 11.) at *verſ.* 6. we read of an *Ephah*, and this *lift up* (verſ. 9.) *between Earth and Heaven*; the *Ephah* was a meaſure of dry things among the *Jews*: and in that viſion it ſignified that the ſin and puniſhment of the *Jews* were meaſured and proportioned; this *Ephah* being lifted up and carried, *I* (ſaith the Prophet) *ſaid, whither do theſe bear the Ephah?* (verſ. 10.) *And he ſaid unto me, to build it an houſe in the land of* Shinar, *and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed and ſet there upon her own baſe.* The building it an houſe in the land of *Shinar* (that is, in *Babylon*) ſignified the laſtingneſs or continuance of their ſin in the ſad conſequents of it, their puniſhment and baniſhment in ſtrange lands, not for the ſpace of ſeventy years only, as by the *Babylonians*, but (as ſome of the Learned expound the viſion) for many ſeventies by the *Romans*: and as this *Ephah* had a houſe built for it, noting the ſetledneſs and duration of the Judgment which ſhould come upon them for their ſin; ſo alſo it was ſet upon its own baſe, to ſignifie the notoriouſneſs or conſpicuouſneſs of the Judgment, it being as a houſe ſet upon pillars for all to behold and take notice of; as we ſee fulfilled to this day, ſince the firſt overthrow of their eſtate by *Titus Veſpatianus*, and their final diſperſion by *Ælius Adrianus*. There are I grant other conceptions about that viſion, but as this ſuits well with the point in hand, ſo with the calamitous ſtate of that people to this day.

And thus the Lord threatned the King of *Tyrus* (Ezek. 28. 17.) *Whoſe heart was lifted up becauſe of his beauty, and who had corrupted his wiſdom by reaſon of his brightneſs.* Now what will the Lord do? What courſe will he take with him? The next words enform us; *I will caſt thee to the ground, and I will lay thee before Kings, that they may behold thee*; he doth not ſay, *I will caſt thee into the ground*, but *to the ground, and lay thee before Kings*; that is, thou ſhalt be a ſpectacle for all the Kings of the Earth, that they may behold as what thy pride and ſelf-confidence have brought thee to, ſo what their own (if they tread thy path) either will or juſtly may bring them unto. Thus alſo in *verſ.* 7. of *Judes* Epiſtle, the Apoſtle ſaith, *That* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *and the Cities about them in like manner, giving themſelves over to fornication, and going after ſtrange fleſh, are ſet forth for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of Eternal fire.* The Judgments of God are not only puniſhments to them who went before, but premonitions to them who come after.

The righteous ſee it, and are glad.] Here is the effect which that ſight wrought upon the righteous: *The eye affects the heart*, and the heart is affected ſutably to the object, either with joy or with ſorrow. The deſtruction of men is a ſorrowful object, and therefore we might rather expect that the righteous beholding it ſhould be affected with ſorrow; but the Text affirms a direct contrary effect of this ſight; *The righteous ſee it, and are glad.*

Hence obſerve, *The judgments of God upon the wicked are matters of joy to the righteous.*

It is the duty of Saints *to mourn with them that mourn, and to rejoyce with them that rejoyce* (Rom. 12. 15.) But then we muſt underſtand theſe mourners and rejoycers to be ſuch as themſelves are. Saints muſt mourn with mourning Saints, and rejoyce with rejoycing Saints. The godly are not bound either to joy the joys, or ſorrow the ſorrows of the wicked. The judgments of God upon the wicked have a twofold effect eminently noted in Scripture. First, They cauſe fear: And ſecondly, They cauſe joy. When exemplary juſtice was to be done (according to the Law of *Moſes*) upon preſumptuous tranſgreſſors, it is ſaid (*Deut.* 13. 11.) *All* Iſrael *ſhall hear, and fear, and ſhall do no more any ſuch wickedneſs.* *David* (Pſal. 64.) having complained to God in prayer of the cruelty of his enemies, and begged protection from their malicious practices, grows up to much aſſurance, that down they muſt (*verſ.* 7, 8.) *But God ſhall ſhoot at them with an arrow, ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded*; and then (*verſ.* 9.) *All men ſhall fear, and ſhall declare the work of God, for they ſhall wiſely conſider of his doings.* Thus fear is the iſſue of divine judgement; and yet joy is the iſſue of them at the tenth verſe of the ſame Pſalm; *The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord, and truſt in him, and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.* Fear is a common effect; *All men ſhall fear*: Gladneſs, faith and glorying (which is faith triumphant) are peculiar to the upright, when the arrow of God wounds the wicked. We have this double effect again expreſt upon the ſame occaſion (*Pſal.* 107. 42.) *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and cauſeth them to wander in the wilderneſs where there is no way, but he ſets the poor on high: The righteous ſhall ſee it and rejoyce.* What ſhall they ſee? Not only the godly poor ſet on high, but ungodly Princes filled with contempt, that's part of the ſpectacle which the righteous ſhall behold, and beholding rejoyce: yet this is not all, for it follows; *And all iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth*; The abſtract is put for the concrete, iniquity for men of iniquity: And ſo the meaning is men of iniquity, or wicked men ſhall ſtop their mouths: their mouths ſhall be ſtopt with ſhame and fear, they ſhall have nothing to ſay when the Lord doth this; They ſhall not mutter a word againſt the works of God: but as *Hannah* ſpeaks in her Song (1 *Sam.*2.9.) *ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs.* A like report raiſeth the hearts of the people of God into a holy merriment (*Pſal.*97.8.) *Sion heard, and was glad, the daughters of Judah rejoyced.* What was the matter? what good news came to *Judah?* what to *Sion?* the Text reſolves us; *Becauſe of thy judgments O Lord:* The anſwer is not, *becauſe of thy mercies*, or becauſe of thy goodneſs O Lord, but becauſe of thy judgments, and thoſe were dreadful ones (v.3.) *A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. Confounded be all they that ſerve graven Images,* &c. v.7. *Sion heard of it, and was glad.* Once more (*Pſa.*58.10.) *The righteous ſhall rejoyce when he ſeeth the vengeance, he ſhall waſh his feet in the blood of the ungodly.* Not that the righteous delight in blood, or proudly inſult over the worſt of enemies; the Pſalmiſt doth only in hyperbolical ſtrains of Eloquence, borrowed from the language of triumphant conquerers, expreſs a compleat and glorious victory. The ſtile is of the ſame ſignification with that (*Pſal.*68.23.) *That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of the dogs in the ſame.* When ſo much bloud is ſhed that the foot may be dipt and waſhed in it, that dogs may lay it up like water, this argues a great deſtruction; and when the wicked are thus deſtroyed, the righteous ſhall rejoyce.

But here it may be queried, What matter of joy is this? why ſhould the righteous rejoyce in the ſorrows of the wicked? is it not alike ſinful to be troubled at the joys, and to rejoyce at the troubles of our brethren? The light of nature condemns rejoycing over thoſe who are in miſery; and we have an expreſs Scripture againſt it (*Prov.* 24.17.) *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, let not thy heart be glad when he ſtumbleth.* And *David* puts it among the ſins of his enemies (*Pſal.* 35. 15.) *In my adverſity they rejoyced.* And he profeſſed (*verſ.*13.) *that when they were ſick his cloathing was ſackcloath, and that he humbled his ſoul with faſting.* *David* was ſo far from rejoycing when his enemies were ruined, or dead, that he mourned when they were but ſick, and would not eat, when they could not. And as *Davids* holy practice denied it, ſo doth *Solomons* divine precept; *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth.* How then ſhall we reconcile theſe Texts?

I anſwer, there may be a rejoycing at the afflictions and troubles of others, which is not only unbecoming and unſeemly for the righteous, but very ſinful. As

Firſt, To rejoyce, and be glad, meerly becauſe an enemy is fallen into miſery, is both unſeemly and ſinful. And ſo we are to underſtand *Solomons* Proverb; *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth.* Some underſtand this of falling into ſin. He makes himſelf a ſinner indeed, who rejoyceth becauſe another hath ſinned. He that rejoyceth becauſe another hath ſinned, rejoyceth upon the matter becauſe God is diſhonoured. Such joy is a kind of thankſgiving for Satans victory. But as to rejoyce becauſe another falls into ſin, is the worſt fall into ſin; ſo to rejoyce meerly becauſe an enemy falls into miſery, is worſe then our own falling in miſery. He ſhews that he hath not the heart of a man in him, who is glad at the miſery of any man. And he who rejoyceth thus when his enemy falleth, doth himſelf fall much worſe. The ruine and down-fall of an enemy (ſuppoſe him the vileſt enemy) conſidered in it ſelf, is meat and drink to none but revengeful and envious ſpirits. *David* was much troubled and chargeth it as an extream piece of folly upon himſelf, *Becauſe he was envious at the fooliſh when he ſaw the proſperity of the wicked* (*Pſal.*73.3.) Now it is an iſſue flowing from the ſame principle, purely to envy the proſperity, and purely to rejoyce in the adverſity of the wicked. *Nero* was juſtly reckoned a monſter among men, who could ſing when himſelf had ſet *Rome* a fire: And they have ſome-what of a Neronian ſpirit in them, who can ſing when they ſee their enemies conſuming in the fire. God delights not in the miſery of man (as it is miſery upon man) nor do they, who are taught of God.

Secondly, As to rejoyce or be glad at the deſtruction of enemies, meerly becauſe they are deſtroyed; ſo to rejoyce upon private ends or reſpects, becauſe they being taken out of the way and removed out of the world we hope to have more ſcope and room in the world for our ſelves; or becauſe we hope to ſtep into their places, to ſit down in their ſeats, to poſſeſs our ſelves of their lands and riches, to fill our ſelves with their ſpoils; upon this account to rejoyce when wicked men fall, when the Lord pours out contempt upon Princes (becauſe (I ſay) we hope to be gainers by it) is altogether uncomely for the righteous. Let the righteous take heed to themſelves, that they be not found thus rejoyceing in the calamities of the wicked. They who do ſo are either but pretenders to godlineſs, men who are only of the faction of the righteous (for though they who are righteous indeed are far from a faction, yet there are a ſort of men, who profeſs righteouſneſs as if it were nothing but a faction, now (I ſay) they who thus rejoyce are but either of the faction of the righteous) while they are really of the number of the wicked; or if they are really righteous who do ſo (and I confeſs that a righteous man may do ſo, *David* (which was acting the counter-part) envied their proſperity, and by the ſame reaſon any godly man may be acted out in joy at their adverſity; but now, (I ſay) if they who are really righteous do ſo) we muſt conclude them under a ſore temptation, and they will at laſt conclude of themſelves as *David* did in the counter-caſe, (*Pſal.*73.22.) *So fooliſh have we been and ignorant, even as a beaſt before thee.*

You will ſay then, how may or do the righteous rejoyce when the ungodly fall, and not fall into ſin themſelves?

I anſwer, Firſt, The righteous rejoyce at the fall of the wicked, as bleſſing God who hath kept their feet from thoſe wayes in which the wicked have fallen. As 'tis a great mercy to be kept out of thoſe ill-wayes, to be kept from ſiding with thoſe corrupt intereſts, in the purſuit of which we ſee many broken; ſo 'tis a duty to rejoyce that we have not walked in their way whoſe end we ſee to be nothing elſe but deſtruction.

Secondly, The righteous have cauſe to rejoyce and bleſs God when they ſee the wicked fall, becauſe themſelves are ſaved, and keep their ſtanding; becauſe themſelves have eſcaped the danger, and the Lord hath been a banner of protection over them in the day when the wicked fell. *Moſes* after the deſtruction of *Amaleck built an Altar, and called the name of it Jehova-Niſſi* (*Exod.*17.15.) that is to ſay, *The Lord is my banner.* And in like caſes the joy of the Saints is not properly in the deſtruction of the wicked, but in their own deliverance, through the mighty power and good hand of God with them. It is the preſence of God with them, the appearance of God for them, which is the gladneſs of their hearts.

Thirdly, The righteous then rejoyce, becauſe the Church and people of God are in a fair way to peace; when the Lions are deſtroyed, the ſheep are in ſafety; when the Wolves and the Bears are cut off, the flock reſts quietly: ſo in this caſe when men of devouring cruel ſpirits, wicked and ungodly ones, are removed, the flock of God the ſheep of his paſture feed quietly, none making them afraid. The fall of the enemies of *Sion*, is the eſtabliſhment of *Sion*, yea in a great meaſure of mankind. As the Prophet moſt elegantly ſets it forth (*Iſa.* 14.6,7,8.) *He who ſmote the people in wrath with a continual ſtroke, he that ruled the Nations in anger, is perſecuted and none hindereth. The whole earth is at reſt, and is quiet: they break forth into ſinging, yea the fir-trees rejoyce at thee, and the Cedars of Lebanon, ſaying, ſince thou art laid down no feller is come up againſt us.* How often have wicked men in power felled not only the Fir-trees and Cedars of the world, but the goodly trees of righteouſneſs in the Lords plantations; have they not therefore reaſon to ſing when ſuch fall, ſeeing the Fellers themſelves are then felled and fallen?

Fouthly, Joy ariſeth to the righteous, becauſe God is honoured in the fall of wicked men; And that's their chiefeſt joy: That God is honoured is more joy to the righteous, then that themſelves are ſaved, how much more then, that the wicked are deſtroyed? There is a threefold honour ariſing to God when the wicked fall.

First, God is honoured in his juſtice; ſuch a day *is the day of the declaration of the righteous judgment of God*; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the great day of Judgment (*Rom.* 2.5.) *Thou after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart,* *treaſureſt up to thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* Some do even queſtion the juſtice of God when wicked men proſper, but he is vindicated in his juſtice when wicked men fall. It cannot but pleaſe righteous men, to ſee the righteous God exalted, or God exalted in his righteouſneſs. They know and believe that God is righteous, when the wicked proſper (*Jer.* 12.1.) But when the wicked are puniſhed, they proclaim his righteouſneſs. Then *they ſing the ſong of Moſes the ſervant of God, and the ſong of the Lamb, ſaying, Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are thy wayes thou King of Saints. Who ſhall not fear thee O Lord, and glorifie thy Name, &c. for thy judgments are made manifeſt,* (*Rev.*15. 3,4.) The Lord is alwayes alike juſt, but it doth not alwayes alike appear how juſt he is. And as, that God is juſt is the faith and ſtay of the Saints, ſo the appearances of his juſtice are their joy and triumph.

Secondly, God is honoured much in the attribute of his truth; in the truth of his word, in the truth of his threatnings, when the wicked are puniſhed. God hath ſpoken bloody words concerning wicked men; not only in reference to their future eſtate in the next life, but to their preſent eſtate in this. *Say to the wicked it ſhall be ill with him, the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* But what is this reward? There are two ſorts of rewards; Firſt, Rewards of love and favor according to the good which we have done; Secondly, Rewards of wrath and anger, pœnal rewards, according to the evil which we have done. Now when the Lord puts theſe pœnal rewards into the hands of the wicked, or pours them upon their heads, he is honoured in his truth as well as his juſtice, for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it. As *the promiſes are yea and Amen* (2 *Cor.* 1.20.) So alſo are the threatnings, *unto the glory of God by us.* But as when *David* ſaw his life in danger every day, he began to queſtion the truth of God, in the promiſe, that he ſhould live to reign and ſit upon the throne of *Iſrael*; for ſaith he (*Pſal.* 116.11. when things went thus with him) *I ſaid in my haſt all men are liars,* even *Samuel* among the reſt, who aſſured me of the Kingdom by expreſs meſſage from God, but ſurely he alſo is deceived, and hath fed me with vain hopes. Now as theſe words of *David,* according to our tranſlation of them, and the truth of the thing in frequent experiences, ſhew, that Godly men are apt to queſtion the truth of the promiſe, when themſelves are by ſeemingly contradicting providences much afflicted; ſo they are apt to queſtion the truth of the threatnings when they ſee outward providences proſpering the wicked; Therefore when the threatnings have their actual *yea and Amen,* that is, when they are executed upon the ungodly, this alſo is *to the glory of God by us,* that is, God is glorified by all his people, who hear of it in the truth of what he hath ſpoken. Again, as God is magnified in the truth of his threatnings, when any particular wicked man is puniſhed; ſo when common calamities come upon the wicked, the truth of God, or God in his truth, is magnified two wayes. Firſt, As ſuch calamities are a fulfilling of many Propheſies; Secondly, As they are the anſwer or return of many prayers. The vengeance which falls upon the Enemies of the Church of God is drawn out by prayer, *Luk.* 18.7,8. And there is nothing wherein God is more honoured, then when prayer is anſwered; For as therein he fulfils our wants, ſo his own word; *Who hath not ſaid to the ſeed of Jacob, ſeek ye me in vain.*

Thirdly, When the wicked fall, the Lord is honoured in the attribute of his power; How great is his power, who pulls down great power? It argues the Almightineſs of God, when he puts the mighty from their ſeats: when the Oaks and the Cedars, when the high walls and mountains are ſhaken and removed by his blows and batteries. When *Pharaoh* and his Egyptian hoſt were drowned in the red Sea; Then *Moſes* magnified God in his power (*Exod.*15.2.) *The Lord is my ſtrength and ſong* (that is, I will ſing of the ſtrength of the Lord, not of the ſtrength of man) *he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my fathers God, and I will exalt him.*

In theſe three attributes, juſtice, truth, and power, God is honoured, when the wicked are deſtroyed; and therefore it cannot be uncomely for the Saints to rejoyce when they are deſtroyed. The Lord by his Prophet aſſures the Church his *Jacob,* that all the enemies thereof ſhall be ſcattered (*Iſa.* 41.15.) *Behold, I will make thee a new ſharp threſhing inſtrument, having teeth, thou ſhalt threſh the Nations and beat them ſmall, and ſhalt make the hills as chaff, &c.* The mountains and the hills to be threſhed, were the mighty ones of the earth, ſetting themſelves againſt the wayes and deſigns of heaven. The Inſtrument or flayl wherewith they were to be threſhed was the *worm Jacob* (*verſ.*14.) God did not ſo much make an Inſtrument for the *worm Jacob,* as he made the *worm Jacob* his Inſtrument. *Behold, I will make thee,* (not for thee) *a new threſhing Inſtrument*; But when the worm hath done this great work, when he hath threſhed the mountains, and made the hills as chaff; What muſt he do then? The ſixteenth verſe tells, *Thou ſhalt rejoyce in the Lord, and ſhalt glory in the holy one of Iſrael.* Glorying is more then rejoycing: Glorying is a kind of rapture or extaſie of the ſoul. As there is an extaſie of infatuation, ſo there is an extaſie of Gracious admiration. Fools and mad men are beſides themſelves for want of reaſon; the wiſeſt and beſt of men, are beſides themſelves through the abundance of the Grace of God in them, and the abundance of the goodneſs of God towards them. When the goodneſs of God acted mightily towards us, meets with the Grace of God acting mightily in us, we are lifted up ſo far out of our ſelves, that we can ſee nothing in our ſelves, and then in whom or in what can our rejoycing be, *but in the Lord the holy one of Iſrael*?

Gaudebunt de eorũ exitio, non vindictæ cupiditate, ſed zelo dei accenſi qui hoc modo declarabit ſibi cura eſſe res humanas. Druſ.

This joy is not, Firſt, the joy of the Epicure; A ſenſual joy, in wine and belly chear, in eating the fat, and drinking the ſweet, in carnal merriments and muſick. Nor is this, Secondly, a cruel joy in the ruine and deſtruction of men, which the Prophet rebukes (*Obad. v.* 12.) *Thou ſhouldeſt not have rejoyced over the children of Judah in the day of their deſtruction.* Nor is this, Thirdly, a proud joy, or a joy of oſtentation, when men ſpread their plumes, and publiſh their own wiſdom, greatneſs and power. Nor is it, Fourthly, a covetous joy, ſuch as theirs is who are glad becauſe they have fill'd their purſes, enriched their families, and their hand hath gotten much. Nor is it Laſtly, a ſecure joy, becauſe when evil men are caſt down we hope to ſit warm and well, ſafe and quiet upon their ruines. But this joy conſiſts, Firſt, in high thoughts and valuations of God; *Whom have I in heaven but thee, &c.* (*Pſal.*73.25.) *Who is like unto thee O Lord among the Gods* (*Exod.*15.11.) It conſiſts, Secondly, in a ſweet reſt of complacency in God. *Return unto thy reſt O my ſoul*: that is, turn in to God, live nearer him, ſaith a Godly man (to his ſoul) in ſuch a caſe (*Pſal.*116.7.) This joy is the reſt of the ſoul in God; He who is reſt to himſelf (as God is) may be ſo infinitely more to us. Thus, *The righteous ſee it, and are glad.*

And the innocent laugh them to ſcorn.] This heightens the ſence of the former part of the verſe; not only are the righteous glad when the wicked are deſtroyed, but they *laugh them to ſcorn. The righteous,* in the former part of the verſe are the ſame *with the innocent* here: yet we may diſtinguiſh them. The innocent are taken two wayes in Scripture; Firſt, the innocent are they who are pure from ſin; Secondly, the innocent are they who are pure or free from puniſhment, or from trouble; freedom from ſin, and freedom from trouble are ſo dependant upon one another, that one word may well expreſs both. Thus the word is uſed (2 *Sam.*14.9.) *The woman of Tekoah ſaid to the King; My Lord O King, the iniquity be on me, and my fathers houſe, and the King and his throne be guiltleſs or innocent,* that is, free from all evil and trouble. While ſhe ſaith, *The iniquity be upon me,* her meaning is, *let the puniſhment of the iniquity be upon me, let the King and his throne be guiltleſs*; let no puniſhment of iniquity fall either upon the King in perſon, or, upon his government. In the ſame ſence the word is read (*Exod.*19.21.) *If he* (that hath been ſmitten) *riſe again and walk abroad upon a ſtaff, then he that ſmote him ſhall be quiet*; the Hebrew is, *then ſhall he be innocent,* that is free from puniſhment, he ſhall not have any cenſure, or judgment for it. We have the like uſe of the word (*Numb.*5.19.) in the caſe of the woman ſuſpected by her huſband for diſloyalty in breaking her marriage vow; ſhe being for her purgation to drink the *bitter water,* the Prieſt was to beſpeak her in this manner: *If no man hath lien with thee, and if thou haſt not gone aſide to uncleanneſs with another in ſtead of thy huſband, be thou free* (or innocent) *from this bitter water that cauſeth the*

Innocens in Scriptura ſumitur, non ſolùm activè, pro eo, qui nemini nocet, ſed etiã paſſivè, pro eo cui nemo noces.

Innocens eris ab aquis iſtis amariſſimis. Heb.

curſe, that is, let the water do thee no harm; as if he had ſaid, *thou ſhalt feel no evil of pain by it, if thou art not guilty of the evil of ſin.* Thus ſome expound the word here. *The innocent ſhall laugh them to ſcorn*, that is, they who are free from thoſe troubles with which the wicked are over-taken and undone, thoſe particular righteous men who eſcape the ſtorm untouched, *laugh the wicked to ſcorn.* Many of the Hebrew writers fix upon a ſpecial perſon; and by the *Innocent*, underſtand *Noah*, as if it were a report of what was done upon the old world; Then *the righteous*, that is (as the Chaldee Paraphraſe explains it) the ſons of righteous *Noah ſaw* (the flood) *and were glad*, and innocent *Noah* laught the prophane old world to ſcorn. When *Noah*, and his ſons were building the Ark, the old world in ſtead of believing and fearing the report or prophecy of a deluge, laught them to ſcorn, and in deriſion, doubtleſs, ask't them what voyage they intended, and whether they meant to ſail their Ship over the dry Land; as for them they never dreamt of a Sea hanging in the clouds, and ready to drop down upon their heads. Now as the ungodly world derided *Noah* and his Sons for their credulity before the flood came, ſo 'tis probable enough that when the flood came upon that world of the ungodly, *Noah* and his Sons laught and derided their incredulity. *They who laugh at divine threatnings, deſerve to be laughed at under divine ſufferings.*

Videbant filii Noë juſti & lætabuntur, & Noë innocens ſubſannabit eos. Targ.

Others apply this particularly to the Tragedy of *Pharoah* and his Egyptians overwhelmed and drowned in the red Sea, of which it is ſaid, (*Exod.* 14.30,31.) *Thus the Lord ſaved Iſrael that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Iſrael ſaw the Egyptians dead upon the ſhoar; and Iſrael ſaw that Great work, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians.* The effect of this ſight is two wayes deſcribed in that holy Hiſtory: Firſt, By the acting of fear and faith: *And the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his ſervant Moſes.* Secondly, by the acting of their joy in the Lord, and their holy inſultation over the drowned Egyptians (*Chap.* 15. *verſ.* 1.) *Then ſang Moſes and the children of Iſrael this Song unto the Lord, and ſpake ſaying, I will ſing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed glorioſly, the horſe and his rider hath he thrown into the Sea.* Thus alſo that innocent people ſaw the ruine of their wicked enemies, *and laughed them to ſcorn.*

Yet I conceive *Eliphaz* ſpeaking here rather upon a generally experienced and poſitive truth, then ſtrictly and particularly aiming at thoſe ancient Examples. *The Innocent*, that is, any innocent perſon, whether innocent in reference to the doing of evil, or having eſcaped the ſufferance of evil, *laugh them to ſcorn.*

Before, he ſaid, *the righteous ſee it, and are glad*; now he ſaith, *the innocent laugh them to ſcorn*: it is one thing for a man to be glad in himſelf, and another thing to laugh other men to ſcorn: for though to *be innocent* carries in it ſomewhat leſs, or at the moſt but ſo much as to be righteous, yet to laugh the unrighteous and wicked to ſcorn when they fall, carries in it much more then to be glad when they fall. And beſides, the word in the Hebrew ſignifies the moſt ſcornful laughter, ſuch a laughter as is expreſſed, by a diſtortion of the mouth, and lips, or by a kind of fained liſping with the tongue, and artificial faultring in ſpeech; For as they that liſp and faulter in ſpeech are uſually derided and laught at, ſo they that deride and laugh at others will purpoſely liſp, or faulter in ſpeech. Stammerers are contemptible, and many ſtammer at others in contempt; *This imitation of a defect in nature ſhews the exceſs of malice.* Such is the force of this expreſſion, *The innocent laugh them to ſcorn.*

לעג *Denotat geſtum qui fit ore, labiis, & ficta balbutie, ſive quod balbutientes irrideri ſoleant, ſive quod irriſores balbutiant, per contemptum & malignam imitationē.*

Here it may be queſtioned, how a good man, an innocent perſon can do ſuch a thing; can he thus laugh the wicked to ſcorn? it is difficult enough to ſalve it as conſiſtent with Grace, for a righteous man to rejoyce at the fall of the wicked, but it is far more difficult to ſalve it, how a righteous man may laugh them to ſcorn: ſcorning and deriding are the practices of lewd perſons, of ſons of *Belial*; ſuch indeed are uſually ſcorners and jeerers. The enemies of Jeſus Chriſt are ſo deſcribed (*Pſa.* 22.7.) *All they that ſee me* (that is, all the wicked that ſee me; for many Diſciples ſaw Chriſt in his ſufferings, and did not only pity him, but honour and believe on him, but (ſaith he) *all they* (who are mine enemies) *that ſee me) laugh me to ſcorn, they ſhoot out the lip, and ſhake the head.* And *David* tells us (*Pſal.* 1.1.) that to *ſit in the ſeat of the ſcornful*, is the concluſion of thoſe who have firſt *walked in the way of the ungodly*; and Secondly, *ſtood in the way of ſinners.* The common Latine tranſlater renders that in the *Pſalm*, not the ſeat of ſcorners, but the ſeat of the peſtilence. And indeed they have ſpiritual plague-ſpots upon them, and the ſureſt tokens of eternal death, who are given up to be ſcorners. Therefore queſtion it again, how are the Innocent ſcorners?

I anſwer, That as when humane affections, which are below the divine nature, are attributed to God, (ſuch are *to repent, to be grieved at the wickedneſs, and to laugh at the calamity of the wicked*) we ſay theſe note only an effect upon the creature, not a change of affection in God (for, in him there is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of change) ſo when thoſe actions, which are below or unſutable to a renewed regenerate nature in man, are attributed to the Saints (ſuch as theſe, *to waſh their feet in the blood of the ungodly, to laugh them to ſcorn in their ſaddeſt miſeries*) we muſt ſay, that theſe note rather what the wicked deſerve, then what the godly do. The godly are no ſcorners, but there is that in wicked men which is worthy to be laughed to ſcorn; or wicked men do that, for which they deſerve to be laughed at; whatſoever is evil in ſuch like actions, is far from the heart and ſpirit of the godly. And therefore as Scriptures of ſuch a tenour are to be interpreted and underſtood in ſuch a manner as becomes and is conſiſtent with the holineſs of God, ſo alſo (in their proportion) to the holineſs of the Saints. The laughter of the Saints in theſe diſpenſations is ſerious; and their ſcorning, the acting of their graces, not of their corruptions. And thus it is ſaid of God himſelf (*Pſal.* 2.4.) *He that ſitteth in heaven ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.* And (*Prov.* 1.26.) *I will mock at your calamity, and laugh when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind, &c.* that is, I will carry my ſelf ſo towards you, I will pity you (who have been ſcorners of my word, *and have ſet at nought my counſel*) no more then men pity thoſe, whom they laugh to ſcorn; ſuch is the laughter of the Saints at the calamity of the wicked. And thus *Eliah* derided *Baals* Prieſts, while they wearied themſelves in their fooliſh ſuperſtition (1 *King.* 18.27.) *And it came to paſs at noon that Eliah mocked them, and ſaid, cry aloud, for he is a God; either he is talking, &c.* Thus *Hieruſalem* is expreſſed (*Iſa.* 37.22.) when *Sennacherib* ſent up that proud threatning meſſage, the Lord ſent a comfortable meſſage to his people by *Iſaiah* the Prophet; *Thus ſaith the Lord God of Iſrael, whereas thou haſt prayed to me againſt Sennacherib the King of Aſſyria, this is the word which the Lord hath ſpoken concerning him; the virgin the daughter of Zion hath deſpiſed thee, and laughed thee to ſcorn, the daughter of Jeruſalem hath ſhaken her head at thee.* The daughter of *Zion*, and the daughter of *Jeruſalem* are but one and the ſame; ſhe was called a virgin, not (as ſome have conceived) becauſe ſhe was never taken or forced by any enemy, nor was ſhe ſo called, becauſe ſhe had preſerved her ſelf pure and chaſte in the worſhip of the true God (for ſhe had her failings and Idolatrous dalliances before that day) but ſhe was ſo called becauſe of that ſpecial care which God had of her to protect and ſave her againſt the inſultations of the enemy then ready to aſſault her, even as a virgin is protected from violence in her fathers houſe. And the Prophet to aſſure them that it ſhould be ſo, ſpeaks of the ruine of *Sennacheribs* Army, and *Jeruſalems* laughter, as accompliſht and come to paſs already; *The virgin daughter, &c. hath deſpiſed thee, and laughed thee to ſcorn, and ſhaken her head at thee.* What God ſaith ſhall be done, is as good as done already. The *Aſſyrians* were yet in their Jollity, laughing at *Jeruſalem*, and promiſing themſelves the ſpoil of the people of God, yet (ſaith the Lord) *Jeruſalem hath laughed thee to ſcorn*; that is, aſſuredly ſhe ſhall. And as the people of God do ſometimes formally and explicitly laugh at the downfal and witherings of the wicked, ſo they alwayes virtually and ſecretly laugh them to ſcorn, even when they ſtand and flouriſh in their greenneſs and proſperity: For while the Godly are not daunted with the power and ſplendour, while they are not terrified with the threats and high looks of the wicked, but in the ſingleneſs and ſimplicity of their hearts, keep cloſe to God, his wayes and truths; even this, though they uſe the dueſt reſpect to them in regard of their authority, both in word and geſture, is a laughing them to ſcorn: For this is as a thorn in the ſides of evil men, and as a prick in their eyes; when they ſee they will not ſtoop to their

Irriſio, & ἐπιχαιρεκακία, & ſimilia quæ affectum humanũ ſignificant, uti à deo longe abſunt, ita quæ mali moris ſunt ab eccleſia. Coc. *Ut hæc de deo θεοπρεπῶς ita de ſanctis ἁγιοπρεπῶς ſunt intelligenda.*

greatneſs in any ſinful compliance with their commands. This is a truth, but the former is the truth intended in this Text.

Hence Note, *That wicked men are not only miſerable but ridiculous.*

They are the laughter of the innocent, upon more accounts then one.

Firſt, Becauſe they do ſuch childiſh and ridiculous things, ſuch things as can never reach the ends they deſire and purpoſe: they are juſtly laughed at, whoſe counſel and courſes are unſuitable, much more, when contrary to their deſigns.

Secondly, Wicked men become ridiculous, while the Lord fruſtrates their wiſeſt counſels, and blaſts thoſe hopes which were bottom'd upon the moſt probable principles and foundations, while he takes them in their own craft, and entraps them in the ſnare which they laid for others.

Thirdly, While he over-rules all that they plot or act to ſerve his own ends, and fulfil his own holy counſels. Hence the enemies of God are ſaid *to pine away*; *this ſhall be the plague wherewith the Lord will ſmite all the people, that have fought againſt Jeruſalem, their fleſh ſhall conſume away while they ſtand upon their feet* (he doth not ſay, that they ſhall be ſlain, but their fleſh ſhall conſume away while they ſtand upon their feet) *and their eyes ſhall conſume away in their holes, and their tongue ſhall conſume away in their mouth* (*Zech.*14.12.) which as ſome interpret of their bodily languiſhment, that they ſhall live dying continually, or that their life ſhall be a continual death, ſo all interpret the cauſe of *this conſumption* to ariſe from vexation of ſpirit, becauſe they ſhall ſee themſelves ſcorn'd and laughed at, or that they are become ridiculous to all the world, but chiefly to *Jeruſalem*, the Church and people of God, whom they ſhall behold in good condition, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition which they have made againſt them; which *Eliphaz* alſo clearly expreſſeth in the next words.

Verſ. 20. **Whereas our ſubſtance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire conſumes.**

There are divers readings and rendrings of this verſe: Firſt, Some with an affirmative interrogation; *is not their ſubſtance cut down?* that is, it is cut down; And then this verſe is a continuation of the former diſcourſe concerning the utter extirpation of the wicked; *The righteous are glad, they laugh them to ſcorn; is not their ſubſtance cut down? and doth not the fire conſume the remnant of them?* As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, Whatſoever they had of any ſubſtance or moment is cut down, and if poſſibly there be any ſmall inconſiderable remainder of them, fire (that is, ſome devouring Judgement) will meet with it, and make an utter end of it.

Secondly, Another underſtands this twentieth verſe as a reaſon of the former; *the righteous are glad* (when the wicked fall) *the innocent ſhall laugh them to ſcorn, becauſe our ſubſtance was not cut down*; as if he had ſaid, our ſafety will be matter as of praiſe to God who hath preſerved us, ſo of holy ſcorn and inſultation over ungodly men, who longed to ſee our deſtruction, and ſaid in their hearts, that ſurely our day was not only coming, but haſtning; whereas indeed we ſee the day come upon them which burneth as an oven, and themſelves as ſtubble. Wicked men are for the moſt part doubly diſappointed; Firſt, By their own fall, when they looked to ſtand: Secondly, By the ſtanding of the righteous when they look, yea, and long for their fall; This double diſappointment doth at once double their ſorrow, and the joy of the Innocent, who laugh them to ſcorn, becauſe *their own ſubſtance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire conſumeth.*

Innocens ſubſannabit eos, quia nō fuit ſucciſa ſubſtantia noſtra,&c. q. d. *ut qui ſe & res ſuas ſalvas, illos autem penitùs igne illo divino videant jure abſumptos.* Bez.

Innocens ſubſannabit eos dicens, etſi non eſt ſucciſa ſubſtantia noſtra, tamen excellentiā illorum conſumpſit ignis. Piſc.

Cū nondum abſcinditur ſubſtantia noſtra & reſiduū illorū abſumit ignis, aſſueſce quæſo cum illo. Jun.

There is a third tranſlation which makes theſe words the form in which the innocent expreſs their laughter at the wicked. When *the innocent laugh them to ſcorn*, they will thus beſpeak them: *Whereas* or *Although our ſubſtance is not cut down, yet the remnant of them, or the beſt the excellency of them the fire hath conſumed.*

There is a fourth reading, which makes the ſecond part of the Chapter begin with this verſe. For hitherto *Eliphaz* hath been deſcribing the ſinfulneſs of wicked men, and the wrath of God upon them for their wickedneſs. But here he is ſuppoſed entring upon a very ſerious exhortation to repentance, after this manner, or to this effect; *O Job, now while our ſubſtance is not quite cut down, and the fire conſumeth the reſidue or the remnant of the wicked, acquaint thy ſelf with God*, or apply thy ſelf to God; as if he ſhould ſay, *before thou art clean cut down, before thou art utterly ruined, as many wicked men have been heretofore, and now are, humble thy ſelf and ſeek to God, that thy ſin may be forgiven, and thy wound healed.* Some parallel this in ſenſe with that of the Preacher, *Eccl.* 12.1. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh wherein thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.* Thus *Eliphaz* is conceived exhorting *Job*, *While our ſubſtance is not cut down, while we are not totally undone, while the fire of Gods wrath is conſuming the remainder of wicked men, do thou acquaint thy ſelf with God, and repent.* And though our tranſlation makes not this connection, yet it joyns fully in the ſenſe of the Original.

Quum ſubſiſtentia noſtra non ſit exciſa, reliquias autem iſtorum ignis aſſumpſerit. Tygur.

Ita bene ut nihil melius. Bold.

Whereas our ſubſtance is not cut down.

So this verſe is an elegant concluſion of the whole matter hitherto inſiſted upon by *Eliphaz*, and he ſhuts it up in two parts: Firſt, ſhewing the ſtate of the innocent, who are brought in ſpeaking thus, *Our ſubſtance is not cut down*; ſtrictly, that by which we ſtand or ſubſiſt, our ſubſtance or ſubſiſtence, which ſome expound not by goods, but by life; we may take it both wayes, our life, and that by which our life is maintained, or by which we and our families ſubſiſt, *is not cut down.*

קימה ἡ ὕπαρξις, *exiſtantia vel potius* τὸ ἑστηκὸς ἡμῶν *quo ſubſiſtimus duramus, vel ſubſiſtantia,* i. e. *vita qua ſubſiſtimus, nam ſtarè valet interdum ſuperſtitem eſſe.* Druſ.

There is yet a difficulty in regard of the Grammatical ſenſe of theſe words. For *Eliphaz* having ſpoken before in the third perſon plural, *The righteous are glad, and the innocent laugh them to ſcorn,* ſhould (as it may be thought) rather have continued his ſpeech in the ſame form, and have ſaid, *Whereas their ſubſtance is cut down*, but he puts it in the firſt perſon plural, *Whereas our ſubſtance is not cut down, &c.*

We may anſwer two wayes; Firſt, that it is uſual in Scripture to vary the number, while the ſame perſon or perſons is or are ſpoken of, take only one Inſtance, *Hoſ.*12. 4. *He* (that is, the Angel of the Covenant) *found him in Bethel*, that is, *Jacob*: *And there he ſpake with us.* It ſhould according to Grammar be read thus; *And there he ſpake with him.* Having found *Jacob* in *Bethel*, he ſpake with him in *Bethel*. But we ſee both the perſon and number are varied, the former words running in the third perſon ſingular (being meant particularly of *Jacob*) the latter in the firſt perſon plural, *There he ſpake with us*; The Spirit of God thereby ſignifying, that, what God ſpake at that time to *Jacob* perſonally, he ſpake to all the ſpiritual ſeed of *Jacob*, whether of the Circumciſion or Uncircumciſion, virtually. He ſo ſpake to *Jacob* as that the ſubſtance and effect of his ſpeech reacheth down to and hath an influence upon *us*, believers, who are his poſterity according to the Spirit. Beſides this, other Scriptures hold out the like variation of the number, as in the Text, which is the firſt anſwer.

Secondly, *Eliphaz* might purpoſely vary the number, that himſelf might put in for a ſhare, and be numbred among thoſe, who had obtained that ſparing mercy, not to be cut down while others were conſumed. And ſo this reaſon of the change is purely ſpiritual, much like that laſt opened out of *Hoſea*.

Whence Note, *That the righteous are often preſerved in common calamities.*

(*Pſal.*20.8.) *They are brought down, and are fallen, but we are riſen and ſtand upright, our ſubſtance is not cut down.* God takes ſpecial care of his own people; they are under a promiſe; there can be no greater ſafety, no better ſecurity then to be under a promiſe: the promiſe is the beſt ſhelter in a ſtorm, and the beſt ſhield againſt the dart. The Apoſtle *Peter* gives us two famous examples of this, (2 *Pet.*2.5,6.) *God ſpared not the old world, but ſaved Noah,* &c. *bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. And having turned the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into aſhes, condemned them with an overthrow,* &c. *and delivered juſt Lot,* &c. From both which examples he concludeth (*verſ.*9.) *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation, and to reſerve the unjuſt unto the day of Judgment to be puniſhed. When judgment begins at the houſe of God, what ſhall the end of them be that obey not the Goſpel of God?* as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Pet.*4.17.) It is a ſure argument to the wicked that they ſhall be judged, when they ſee God bringing judgements upon his own houſe and people; but the wicked are many times judged while the houſe and people of God are preſerved and untoucht; and when both good and bad, both the innocent and the wicked are wrapt up in the ſame calamity, when they are (as it were) thruſt together into the ſame furnace, the Lord makes a difference, they are not cut down as the wicked are cut down, not conſumed as they are conſumed. When the righteous are caſt into the fire, they are purged, but not conſumed; but (as it follows in the ſecond part of this concluſion, ſhewing the ſtate of the wicked)

The remnant of them the fire conſumeth.

Fire in this place is not taken ſtrictly, as oppoſed to water; God indeed hath often made fire in kind his ſcourge. And the Apoſtle *Jude* ſaith of *Sodom*, That it ſuffered the vengeance of eternal fire: But all the judgments of God are in Scripture compared to fire (*Mal.* 4. 1.) *Behold the day cometh that ſhall burn like an Oven, and all the proud, yea all that do wickedly ſhall be ſtubble, and the day that cometh ſhall burn them up, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, that it ſhall leave them neither fruit nor branch.* There is a burning, and not by fire; There is ſo great a judgment and terror in fire let looſe and breaking its bounds, that it may well ſignifie all judgments, or any thing that is terrible. (*Iſa.* 52. 4.) *As the fire devoureth the ſtubble, and the flame conſumeth the chaffe, ſo their root ſhall be rottenneſs, and their bloſſom ſhall go up as duſt.* Thus here, *the remnant of them the fire conſumeth*; that is, the wrath of God appearing in ſome viſible judgment, conſumeth the remnant.

But what is this *remnant* which the fire conſumeth?

I anſwer, Firſt, we may expound it of perſons. The remnant of perſons, all that are left of their family, their children and poſterity, their kindred and relations are taken away and conſumed from off the face of the earth.

Secondly, We may expound it of things, the remnant of goods, whatſoever remains of their eſtate, the odd ends, the very gleanings and leavings of their great riches and worldly ſubſtance, are all eaten up and brought to an end, ſo that nothing of them or theirs remaineth.

Thirdly, The remnant of them may be *the remembrance* of them. A fire ſhall conſume their name and memorial, they ſhall never be thought of, nor ſpoken of any more with honour.

Fourthly, The word *remnant*, as it ſignifieth in the Original any thing which remaineth, ſo eſpecially that which remaineth in way of excellency, or eminency; not as we ſay the fagg-end of a thing, but even the uppermoſt and beſt of it. So that (after this tranſlation) *the remnant of them* is *the excellency of them*, that which they thought moſt durable, and honourable, that which they looked upon as moſt ſubſtantial and intrinſecal to their greatneſs, that very thing *the fire ſhall conſume*. So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 17. 14.) *Deliver my ſoul from men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world*, &c. *whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid treaſures, they are full of children, and leave the reſt* (or as we ſupply, *the reſt of their ſubſtance*) *to their babes*; the reſt, that is, *the beſt*; their bellies are full of hid treaſures while they live, that is, they have and uſe abundance of the things of this life themſelves; and they *leave the reſt*, he doth not mean the ſcraps or parings after they had filled their own bellies, but *by the reſt* or the *remnant*, ('tis the word of the text) he meaneth the choiceſt of what they had; even that they leave to their babes or children, when themſelves muſt be gone and leave the world. Thus we may underſtand the word *remnant* in this place, not for a poor pittance, but for the beſt, the choiceſt things, for the flower and cream of all they had, even theſe things *the fire ſhall conſume*, vengeance ſhall purſue and follow, till all be turned into ſmoak and aſhes.

יתר *Significat illud quo quis alium excellit, ideo reliquiarum nomine impiorum excellentem & ſupra cũctos mortales ingentem fœlicitatem intelligo.* Pined.

I have in divers other paſſages of this book met with Texts ſhewing the utter conſumption of wicked men, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here; only take this brief note;

> *That the Lord hath a different fire for the righteous and the wicked.*

He hath a fire for his own people, but it is *a purging fire, a cleanſing, a refining fire.* Like that (*Mal.* 3. 3.) *He ſhall ſit as a refiner and purifier of ſilver.* The Lord alſo hath a fire for the wicked, but it is a conſuming fire. He kindles many fires upon them, and himſelf is a conſuming fire to them. But it may be ſaid, that God is a conſuming fire alſo to his own people; for the Apoſtle ſpeaking of himſelf and other believers, ſaith (*Heb.* 12. 29.) *Our God is a conſuming fire.* I anſwer; Firſt, Tis true, the God of Believers is a conſuming fire, but he is not a conſuming fire to believers; even the hearts of believers ought to be over-awed with a holy fear of that in God, which they ſhall never feel from God. Secondly, God is ſometimes a conſuming fire to believers; but it is only to conſume their corruptions, or their corruptible comforts: He will never conſume either their Graces or ſpiritual intereſts. Theſe he will not conſume, whatſoever he conſumes. But the whole of a wicked man is as combuſtible matter before him. *There went up a ſmoak out of his noſtrils, fire out of his mouth devoured* (*Pſal.* 18. 8.) That is, God poured out wrath, which devoured them like a fire. Fire (I mean natural fire) is a great devourer, it hath a ſtrong ſtomach, there's nothing but pure Gold too hard for its digeſtion; but myſtical fire, the fire of divine wrath is infinitely a greater devourer. Wrath kindles many devouring fires, but wrath it ſelf is the moſt devouring fire; who can ſtand before it? who can abide the heat and flames of it? This is the *Tophet* prepared of old for the wicked; This fire is able to conſume branch and ruſh, the root and top of the wicked in one day, and yet it will continue conſuming them to eternity. *The remnant of them the fire conſumeth.*

Eliphaz having thus far proſecuted a deſcription both of the unrighteouſneſs and of the ruine, both of the ſin and puniſhment of wicked men, cloſely inſinuating that *Job* was the man concern'd in all this large Diſcourſe, he, in the latter part of this Chapter, turns his ſpeech into a ſerious Exhortation to move *Job* to repent, and ſeek God, giving him many aſſurances and promiſes, that (in caſe he did ſo) it ſhould not be in vain.

VERS. 21, 22, 23.

Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace: thereby good ſhall come unto thee.
Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.
If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity from thy Tabernacles.

ELiphaz having reproved *Job* for ſin, and preſt him with the remembrance of the Judgments of God againſt ſinners: now turns his ſpeech into a ſerious Exhortation moving him to ſeek the favour of God, and humble himſelf, *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace.* From this courſe and method in which *Eliphaz* deals with *Job*, take this note:

> *That in dealing with ſinners we are not only to threaten, but to perſwade and propoſe the promiſes of peace to them.*

Daniel dealt ſo with *Nebuchadnezzar*; yea, though he had told him of a decree in heaven paſt againſt him (*Dan.* 4. 22. 27.) yet he gives him faithful counſel, and exhorts him *to break off his ſins by righteouſneſs, and his iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor, if it might be a lengthning of his tranquility*, or (as we put in the Margin) *a healing of his error.* Hopes of mercy prevail with many, more then fear of wrath, and they are ſooner led then driven unto Chriſt. Thus *Eliphaz*; *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace.*

This verſe 21. contains two general Propoſitions. Firſt, a Propoſition concerning duty, in the former part of the verſe; *Acquaint now thy ſelf*, &c. Secondly, Concerning mercy in the latter, *thereby good ſhall come unto thee.* This duty of acquainting himſelf with God, and being at peace with him, is explained in verſ. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.* That's a good Comment upon, *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace.* The Propoſition of mercy, or the promiſes laid down in the cloſe of that verſe, are drawn out in all the following part of this Chapter, in which *Eliphaz* by moſt ample propoſals of good things, doth provoke *Job* to turn from thoſe ſins of which he ſuppoſed him guilty, and to return to God.

Promiſſionibus invitat ampliſſimis, quæ & in ſe veræ ſunt & cum lege cõſentiunt, non tamen perpetua ut Eliphaz putat. Merc.

Acquaint now thy ſelf with God.

The Original word which we render *to acquaint*, hath ſome variety of ſignifications: As firſt to be familiar with another. And ſo it is uſed by *David* (Pſal. 139. 3.) to ſhew the Intimacy which God hath with all our wayes, works, and thoughts; *O Lord* (ſaith *David*) *thou haſt ſearched me and known me*, &c. *thou art acquainted with all my wayes*; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou knoweſt my wayes infinitely more clearly and diſtinctly, then any of my neereſt acquaintance, who converſe with me every day.* It is uſed, ſecondly, to expreſs the cuſtomary doing of a thing (*Numb.* 22. 30.) *Balaams* Aſs ſpake thus by a miracle, *Was I ever wont to do thus unto thee?* Hath it been my cuſtom, or have I familiarly ſerved thee thus, ſaid the Aſs, when he thruſt *Balaam* againſt the wall.

שכן *Profuit, commodus, aptus fuit. Profice cum deo.* Rab. Moſ.

Thirdly, *To profit*; one of the Rabbins tranſlates the Text thus, *Profit with God*; as who ſhould ſay, thou haſt been an unprofitable ſervant to God all this while; be thou now profitable unto him, ſerve him and his Providences, advance his name and glory; or thus rather, Thou haſt but played the Truant hitherto, be thou now a good proficient in the School of Divine doctrine and diſcipline under the holy precepts and various providences of God. We find it applied to that ſenſe at the ſecond verſe of this Chapter; *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf?* Man cannot be profitable unto God, or add any advantage to him by what he doth, but man may be profitable unto himſelf, or do himſelf good in doing the good will of God; yea God reckons it, and rewards man for it, as if he had been profitable to him, when he acts as becomes a faithful ſervant to him. So ſome expound it here, *be profitable unto God*, be a faithful and induſtrious ſervant unto him: having received his talents, do not lay them up in a napkin, hide them not in the earth.

Redi cum ipſo in gratiam. Bez. *Accommoda te illi.* Tygur.

Thirdly, Maſter *Broughton* reads thus, *Reconcile thee now unto him.* That's Goſpel language, like that of *Paul* (2 Cor. 5. 20.) *Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* So he conceives *Eliphaz* ſpeaking here, *I pray thee now reconcile thy ſelf unto God.* Maſter *Beza* reaches that ſence fully, *Return into his favour*, get into his heart again; God hath as it were lockt thee out of his heart, and ſhut the door upon thee, now get in again; and the Tygurine reads very aptly, *Accommodate thy ſelf to him*, that is, every way ſuit thy ſelf to him; thou haſt heretofore been humorous, or haſt followed thine own ſpirit, and haſt labour'd to pleaſe thy ſelf, now accommodate thy ſelf to him, or comply with him in every thing, be no more at thine own but at his diſpoſe. All theſe rendrings comply well both with the words and the general ſcope of *Eliphaz* in this part of his diſcourſe. Our tranſlation fully joyns with the firſt of them.

Aſſueſce cum eo. Pagn. Reg. Vatabl.

Acquaint now thy ſelf with him.] Get into a familiarity with God. The word implieth a likeneſs, or a ſuitableneſs between two in their wills and affections, in their wayes and counſels; for from likeneſs in theſe familiarity or acquaintance doth ariſe. So that *Eliphaz* here ſpeaketh to *Job* as one that had eſtranged himſelf and departed from God, as one who had broken off Communion with God, and ſo he muſt needs have done, had he run ſuch a courſe of wickedneſs as *Eliphaz* charged him with, in the former part of this Chapter. Therefore upon that ſuppoſition he gives *Job* wholeſome advice, *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That as man by nature is a ſtranger from God, ſo every act of ſin, eſpecially great and continued actings of ſin, breed a further eſtrangement from God.*

We act the part of nature every time we ſin, and that in a proportion brings us back in ſome degree to what we were by nature, *ſtrangers unto God.* A godly man (who hath had acquaintance with God) ſinning puts back his acquaintance, and a diſtance grows between God and him. Believers after great ſins and follies committed, are not forward to come into the preſence of God, they have a kind of liſtleſneſs to duty, a liſtleſneſs to prayer, and to all acts of communion with God. And God himſelf appears as if he did not much care for them when they come, they have not thoſe Communications from God which he uſually vouchſafeth his, God doth not give them the meeting as formerly; they do not find the Lord preſently, though they ſeek him earneſtly. So that both wayes there is an Eſtrangement; ſin ſeparates between God and the ſoul, not onely judicially but naturally. If God ſhould not depart from ſinners, or command them to depart from him, yet they would of themſelves depart from him. It is not poſſible for one, who willingly lives in ſin, to live willingly in the preſence of God: For as to be caſt out of the preſence of God, is the extreameſt puniſhment of wicked men, ſo alſo is their being in his preſence. The ſame thing is both their deſire and their puniſhment. They are puniſhed with a departure from God, and they deſire nothing more then to be out of his preſence.

Acquaint thy ſelf now with God.] Secondly, Whereas *Eliphaz* exhorting *Job* to repentance, counſels him to acquaint himſelf with God,

Obſerve, *That Repentance is the renewing of our Communion or acquaintance with God.*

As ſin is a turning from God, ſo repentance is a returning to God; 'tis a change firſt of our mind, and then of our way. Impenitency brings the ſoul into an acquaintance and unholy familiarity with Satan; Repentance brings back the ſoul into its former acquaintance, and holy familiarity with God. As the firſt converſion (which is from a ſtate of ſin) ſo the ſecond and every renewed converſion (which is from our falls into ſin) renews our converſe with the moſt high.

Thirdly, take this general obſervation;

A godly man is (as we may ſay) one of Gods acquaintance or familiars.

God calleth *Abraham* his friend; friendſhip cannot be without familiarity, there muſt be acquaintance before there can be love; if therefore there be friendſhip and love between God and man, there muſt be Acquaintance; we cannot love either perſons or things, while unknown.

But it may be ſaid, how can we, who are at ſuch a diſtance, acquaint our ſelves with God?

I anſwer, we (who of our ſelves are afar off) are made nigh by the bloud of Jeſus Chriſt, and being thus made nigh in our ſtate, we draw nigh or acquaint our ſelves with him by ſeveral Acts. As firſt, To think or meditate of God, is to acquaint our ſelves with and draw nigh to God; meditation is an inward diſcourſe and converſe with God, it is a Soliloquie between God and the ſoul. Acquaintance is got by Conference: when friends meet and confer, that doth not only begin, but confirm, ſtrengthen, and heighten their acquaintance. Saints have many thoughts of God, and that's their acquaintance with God. *How precious are thy thoughts to me, O God!* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 139. 17.) *how great is the ſum of them! when I awake I am ſtill with thee.* How was *David* ſtill or ever with God? He was ſo in his thoughts, and meditations, in the actings and goings forth of his ſoul to him. Now he that is ſtill or ever with a perſon, muſt needs be acquainted with him, *I am ſtill with thee*, alwayes meditating upon thee. We find him again in the ſame holy frame (*Pſal.* 63. 5, 6.) *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips; while I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* As the Lord is ever thinking upon his people, they are written upon his heart, and graven upon the palms of his hand; and when his outward actings towards them are ſuch, as may ſeem to intimate that his heart is withdrawn from all intimacy with them, yet even then he thinks moſt of them. This he acknowledgeth concerning *Ephraim* (Jer. 31. 20.) *Since I ſpake againſt him I do earneſtly remember him ſtill.* Since I ſpake againſt him, that is, ſince I ſpake againſt him by words of rebuke and correction, ſince I ſpake againſt him by rods of chaſtiſement and correction, (as *Ephraim* found and confeſſed he had; *Thou didſt chaſtiſe me, and I was chaſtiſed*) ſince I ſpake thus againſt him, *I do earneſtly remember him ſtill.* I remember him, and I remember him ſtrongly, my heart is much upon him. And when the Lord ſaith thus, we are not to underſtand it as a man will remember an Enemy, when he ſpeaks againſt him; hee'l remember him indeed, and that earneſtly to plot miſchief againſt him, and to execute his revenge; but the meaning is, I remember him in mercy, my affections go out to him, my bowels are moved towards him. Such is the remembrance which God had of *Ephraim*, even when he was ſpeaking againſt him and ſmiting him. Now as the Lord doth remember his people at all times, and earneſtly remember them at ſometimes. So his people in their proportion do earneſtly remember the Lord, they mind him often, they would mind him alwayes, they like to retain God (which the natural man liketh not, *Rom.* 1. 28.) in their knowledg, or to acknowledg God; They have not ſome flitting tranſient thoughts and acknowledgments of God (as a carnal man may have) but they fix and retain God in their thoughts and acknowledgments; they think of God, what he is in his nature, they think what God is in all his perfections, they meditate of all his glory, of his juſtice, of his mercy, of his faithfulneſs, of his power, of his truth, of his unchangeableneſs, of his all-ſufficiency, they acquaint themſelves with God in all theſe; for indeed we are never acquainted with God, till we come to a diſtinct knowledg of him in all theſe parts of his glory, which yet are all but one and the ſame glorious God. To know only in general that there is a God, is not to acquaint our ſelves with God; our acquaintance with him conſiſts in a ſpiritual and fiducial knowledg of all his revealed perfections, ſo far as it is poſſible or lawful for man to ſearch and know. To be acquainted with any man, notes more then a general knowledg of him, how much more to be acquainted with God.

Secondly, We acquaint our ſelves with God, not only when we ſtudy his nature, or what he is, but when we ſtudy his works, or what he hath done. God is viſible in his works. *That his name is near, his wondrous works declare* (Pſal. 75. 1.) We may acquaint our ſelves much with God in the works of Creation, but more in the works of Providence, in thoſe we may moſt legibly read his name, that is, his greatneſs and power, as alſo his goodneſs and mercy.

Thirdly, We acquaint our ſelves with God in the ſtudy of his Word; there he hath made a full diſcovery of himſelf and of his Will; *O how I love thy Law* (ſaith *David*) *my meditation is in it night and day.* The word of God is the demonſtration of the holineſs of God. There he hath ſet forth himſelf, how juſt, how pure, and how gracious he is. The Word is a glaſs in which God is ſeen, therefore acquaint thy ſelf with the word of God, and thou ſhalt be acquainted with God: reading and hearing the word of God is our going to God for Counſel. As we acquaint our ſelves with a man when we go to him, and ask his advice and counſel in any matter, or conſult his books; ſo every time we either read or hear the word of God in faith, we are asking counſel of God, and ſo acquainting our ſelves with him.

Fourthly, We eſpecially acquaint our ſelves with God in Prayer. That is nothing elſe but the opening of our hearts to God, a declaring of our wants to him. *Prayer is the aſcending, the lifting up of the ſoul to God,* therefore in prayer we acquaint our ſelves with God.

Fifthly, Our daily holy walking, is a daily acquainting our ſelves with God, every ſtep of a holy life is both towards and with God. The life of *Enoch* (who was too holy for a life here on earth, and therefore he *was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death,* his life I ſay) is deſcribed thus, *Enoch walked with God* (Gen. 5. 24.) God and *Enoch* were like two familiars or intimate friends walking together; And becauſe he took ſo much delight in Gods acquaintance, God took him from all acquaintance with men; ſo ſaith that text, *Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him.* He was ſo taken with God, that God took him; or as the Author to the *Hebrews* ſaith, *tranſlated him* (Chap. 11. 5.) He was before tranſlated from nature to Grace, and he proved ſo great a proficient in that ſchool, that he was tranſlated from Grace to Glory (as it were *per ſaltem,*) by a leap over the grave; for he ſaw not death; From which ſad viſion, but one more (that I read of in all the Scripture, *Elias* by name) was excuſed before he was admitted to the beatifical viſion. *Holy walking is the ſum of all our acquaintance with God, and our fulleſt acquaintance with God is but the iſſue of our holy walkings.*

To draw towards a cloſe of this point, we may take notice, That there is a twofold acquaintance with God: Firſt, from neceſſity, when we come to him, and deſire to have to do with him, preſt with our own wants, fears, or afflictions; of this the Prophet ſpeaketh (*Iſa.* 26. 16.) *Lord, in trouble have they viſited thee, they have poured out a prayer when thy chaſtning was upon them.* And of this the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 78. 34.) *When he ſlew them they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: nevertheleſs, they did but flatter him with their mouth,* &c. Theſe make God their refuge, not their choice. They, I grant, who have made God their choice in good times, may comfortably make him their refuge in evil times. But to neglect God while it is well with us, and only to run to him while it is ill with us, or to have our evils and burdens removed, is to acquaint our ſelves with God, becauſe we cannot chooſe, or becauſe we cannot be without him, not becauſe we have choſen him, or deſire to be with him. As there is a patience, ſo there is an acquaintance perforce. Though God doth not refuſe acquaintance with many poor ſouls, when their neceſſities drive them to him, yet it is beſt to acquaint our ſelves with him for the love we bear to him, or the deſire we have to enjoy him, rather then (though we all have need of him, and are bound to come to him becauſe we have) for the need we have of him. And therefore, ſecondly, there is an acquaintance with God from pure love. As when we come to a friend, having nothing to do but to ſee him, and to renew or ſtrengthen our acquaintance with him. We do not come to load him with our cares, or adviſe with him about our buſineſſes, or deſire a courteſie of him, but, meerly and purely to ſhew our love to him. Thus to come to God when we are not preſt with fears, nor pincht with wants, nor clouded with doubts, nor vexed with troubles, is the moſt noble and ingenuous way of acquainting our ſelves with him. When we (as it were) make a journey to God, having nothing to do with him, but to viſit him and to deſire further communion with him; nothing to do with him, but to behold his excellency and his glory; nothing to do with him, but to tell him what our hearts are towards him; how we love him, how we depend upon him, how we deſire to pleaſe him, and to commit our wayes to him, to acquaint God with thoſe things which only concern our holy walking with him; this is to ſeek pure acquaintance with him. The Lord ſaith of *Abraham* his acquaintant or friend (*Gen.* 18. 17.) *Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I am to do?* I ſhould not deal with him as with my friend, if I did ſo. A friend who is as our own ſoul (*Deut.* 13. 6.) ſhould know all that is in our ſouls. Now as God (whether we will or no) is acquainted with all that is in our ſouls; ſo a ſoul acquainted with God, will let him know all: Shall I hide from God the thing that I am about to do? ſhall I not tell him how it is with me? To acquaint our ſelves thus with God is a ſweet and precious duty. Much might be ſaid about it, I ſhall only adde theſe two things; Firſt, That all our acquaintance with God muſt be had through the mediator; There is no getting neer the Father but by the Son. Secondly, That the more we are acquainted with God, the more we are transformed into his likeneſs. Some have altered the habit of their bodies, yea the diſpoſitions of their minds by long acquaintance with others, and have looked or appeared like them, by often looking upon or being with them. When *Moſes* had been forty dayes in the Mount talking with God, his face ſhone, ſome rayes of a divine glory darted out from him, ſo that *Aaron and the children of Iſrael were afraid to come nigh him* (Exod. 34. 30.) And thus every one who gets up into the Mount by faith, and acquaints himſelf with God, gets ſomewhat of God, which will draw a reverence upon him among men. As when Chriſt ſhall appear hereafter to us in glory, *we ſhall be like him* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John* 1 Ep. 3. 2.) for we ſhall ſee him as he is; ſo according to the ſight which we have of and our acquaintance with Chriſt in the wayes of grace here, will our likeneſs be unto him. *The more we are with God, the more we have of God. Acquaint now thy ſelf with him,*

And be at peace.

There is a threefold Interpretation of this clauſe.

Firſt, it may be taken as an Effect of what was ſaid before, *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and be at peace*; that is, *If thou acquaint thy ſelf with God, thou ſhalt have peace.* So in the Hebrew often the Imperative mood is put for the future tenſe, as, *Do this, and live,* (according to the tenure of the Covenant of works) that is, *Do this, and thou ſhalt live.* So *acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace*; that is, thou ſhalt have peace. Peace comprehends all good; good of the mind, good of the body, good of the eſtate. When the Hebrews ſay, *Peace be unto you,* they ſay as much in that one word, as the Greeks ſay in three; whereof the firſt reſpects the welfare of the mind; the ſecond, the welfare or health of the body; and the third the ſucceſs of all our affairs and undertakings. So that while *Eliphaz* ſaith to *Job* according to this reading, *Thou ſhalt be at peace,* it is a promiſe of all manner of good flowing in upon the renewing of his acquaintance with,

Imperativū pro futuro paſſim in hac lingua. Merc.

Quando Hebræi dicunt pax tibi, ſignificant id quod Græci tribus verbis enunciant, χαίρειν, ὑγιαίνειν & εὐπραγεῖν quorū primū ad animum refertur, ſecundum ad corpus, tertium ad actiones externas. Druſ.

with, and his returning to a reverential converſe with God. But becauſe this promiſe follows in the next words, *thereby good ſhall come unto thee*, therefore I underſtand this clauſe as a duty, and not as a promiſe. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace.* To be *at peace* is a diſtinct duty from that of acquainting our ſelves with God, yet neceſſarily following upon it; The words may have theſe two things in them.

Sedatiore animo eſto. Bez. *Acquieſce in caſtigationibus Dei, ſatis repugnâſti; ſatis protervè reluctatus es, ergo miteſce.*

Firſt, *Be at peace*, that is, be quiet and content under the chaſtening hand of God, do not murmur, do not repine. Thou haſt ſtrugled enough already, now lay aſide all impatiency and paſſion, all diſcontents and animoſities; as, do not rage and rave, do not diſtemper and diſcompoſe thy ſelf as thou haſt done; There is a ſtorm upon thee, but be thou of a calm and quiet ſpirit, kiſs the rod, be not angry with it; we may expreſs this frame by that which the Apoſtle *Peter* makes the chief adorning, or ornament of a woman, that ſhe be of *a meek and a quiet ſpirit, which with God is of great price*; As meekneſs is a Jewel of the greateſt price that women can wear; ſo it is a moſt rich and precious Jewel for a man to wear: and as at all times, ſo then eſpecially meekneſs and peaceableneſs of ſpirit becomes man, when God ſeems to come in anger and to be at war with him. *Bildad* ſaid of *Job* (*Chap.* 18. *v.* 4.) *He teareth himſelf in his anger*; As if he had ſaid, the man's mad or diſtracted: now *Eliphaz* adviſeth him, Be at peace, be quiet; This is a good interpretation, and we may note from it,

> *That it is our Duty to ſit down quiet and ſatisfied under the ſaddeſt diſpenſations of God.*

A ſubmitting ſpirit under an afflicting hand, how comely is it? To be at peace in our ſelves, when all is unquiet about us, how bleſſed a ſight is it? There are ſome who trouble themſelves a great deal more then all the troubles that are upon them can. Man is naturally a very unquiet creature, *an angry piece of fleſh*, when God is angry, he is apt to ſtorm: *till his heart is ſubdued to God, he cannot bear the hand of God.* Wicked men naturally (as the Prophet *Eſay* found them, Chap. 51. 20.) *are like a wild bull in a net, full of the fury of God*; and not only ſo, but full of fury againſt God, throwing up the duſt, and moyling themſelves when the net of God hath caught them, or when God hath caught them in his net. God catcheth his own people in his net many times as well as the wicked. His own people are like a dove in a net, but the wicked are like a wild Bull in a net. I grant, the Doves will flutter a while when the net hath caught them. Impatiency doth often break out in the beſt of Saints: it is a hard thing to keep the heart quiet within while our eſtate is unquiet without, and to be at peace in our ſelves, when God ſeems to be at war with us. It is hard for us to hold our peace, much more to be at peace in an afflicted condition; yet this leſſon, though very hard, Saints have learned. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 39. 9.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.* His was not a ſullen ſilence, but a patient ſilence. He had not a word to ſay againſt God, when God ſpake hard words againſt him, yea, when God was at blows at ſharps with him. *Paul* alſo had learned in every eſtate to be content (*Phil.* 4. 11.) However the world went with him, *he was at peace.*

Cum eo pacem habe, in gratiam redi qui nunc alienatus es, & velut hoſtis.

Secondly, *Be at peace*, may refer unto God, and ſo it is but the heightning of our acquaintance with him; for, firſt there muſt be an acquainting, and then a making up of peace; when friends fall out, they muſt firſt ſpeak with one another, before the breach can be healed; if they do not treat, there can be no reconciliation. After treating comes peace; As peace is *the fruit of the lips* (Iſa. 57. 19.) when God treats with man by man, ſo when man treats with man, and when man treats with God. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him*, call for a treaty, and therein make thy peace. *Be at peace with him*, do not any longer continue thy unholy war with God. *Eliphaz* ſuppoſing *Job* as a man ſetting himſelf againſt God, had reaſon to beſpeak him thus.

> Hence note, *That till we do acquaint our ſelves with God, we can have no peace with him.*

The wicked are like the troubled Sea, whoſe waves caſt up mire and dirt; there is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God (*Iſa.* 57. 21.) Why no peace to the wicked? The wicked have no acquaintance with God, they are ſtrangers, they are afar off from God, and God beholds them afar off, therefore there is no peace to them: if they have any peace, it is a falſe peace, a deceitful peace, or it is but a ſhort peace, which will quickly break out into a war again: when once Conſcience is awakened, when that ſleeping Lyon is rouzed, what will become of all their peace? they will then find, indeed, that their ſoul is among Lyons; and that they have been only ſecure, not ſafe; or that theirs hath been at beſt, a truce only, not a peace; no peace till acquainted with God, and no acquaintance with God can produce peace, but that which is by Jeſus Chriſt: He is the Peace-maker, who is alſo the Mediator; ſinners cannot have peace by any immediate acquaintance with God, for he is a conſuming fire, and ſinners ſtanding alone, are but as dry ſtubble before him. When we are made nigh to, or acquainted with God by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt (and not till then) are we at peace with him. *Acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace*: no peace without acquaintance with God, no acquaintance with God but by Chriſt; therefore no peace but by Chriſt.

> Secondly, Obſerve, *That God is ready to give peace to, or to be at peace with thoſe that acquaint themſelves with him.*

Acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace; as if he ſhould ſay, thou ſhalt certainly be at peace with him, if thou doeſt but acquaint thy ſelf with him; for the Lord will not *always chide*; his love is everlaſting, but his anger towards his, continues but for a moment; As the wiſdom of God in man, ſo much more, the moſt wiſe God, is *gentle, and eaſie to be entreated. The Lord is found of thoſe who ſeek him not* (Iſa. 65. 1.) Surely then he will be found of thoſe that ſeek him; he is not implacable, no, nor inexorable. The Lord hath declared himſelf full of Compaſſion to returning ſinners, ſo full of compaſſion that he ſeeks the acquaintance of ſinners, and beſeeches them to be reconciled to him; much more will he be acquainted with them who beſeech him that they may be reconciled to him. *Fury is not in me* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 27. 4, 5.) *who would ſet the bryars and thorns in battel againſt me?* that is, who would be ſo fooliſh as to encourage ſinful men to be ſo fool-hardy as to ſtand out againſt me, or contend with me, for alas, (as it follows in the text) *I would go through them, I would burn them together.* There's no dealing with me upon thoſe terms; but I will tell you upon what terms a ſinner may deal with me; *Let him lay hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me*; that is, he ſhall not loſe his labour, he ſhall find peace, if he take hold of my ſtrength. One would think he ſhould rather have ſaid, let him take hold of my mercy and goodneſs, but he ſaith, *Let him take hold of my ſtrength.* To oppoſe the ſtrength of God is moſt dangerous, but by faith to take hold of it, that's both the duty and the priviledge of an humbled ſinner. Proud ſinners oppoſe the ſtrength of God, humbled ſinners take hold of it, as their ſtrength. As a man ſeeing another whom he hath offended, but is unable to reſiſt, or make his party good with him, with much ſubmiſſion takes hold of his arm or weapon, endeavouring by earneſt ſuit to ſtay him from ſmiting. And indeed to take hold of the ſtrength of God, is to take hold on his mercy: The ſtrength of God to ſave ſinners, lies in his mercy, and that mercy is in his Son, who is his ſtrength to ſave ſinners; if a ſinner lay hold of this ſtrength, the mercy of God in his Son, *that he may make peace* with God, if this be his deſign, *he ſhall make peace*; there ſhall not be a treaty with God in Chriſt for peace in vain; if a ſinner ſhould take hold of the ſtrength of his own righteouſneſs and performances, if he ſhould take hold of the ſtrength of all the Angels in heaven, he could not make peace with God, nor would God agree with him upon thoſe terms. Such a ſoul muſt return (*re infecta*) without his errand. God is ready to be at peace with us, but we muſt have our peace in his way, not in our own. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace.* And this peace, whether in our ſelves or with God, is no light or unprofitable thing, as *Eliphaz* to provoke *Job* to purſue and ſeek after it, tells him in the laſt words of this verſe,

Thereby good ſhall come unto thee.

Thereby; whereby? or by what? what is it that ſhall procure, or produce this good? The anſwer is at hand; Thy acquaintance with God, thy being at peace will procure all good things for thee. *Acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at* *peace:* be at peace to thy own ſpirit, be quiet; be at peace with God, be reconciled, every way *good ſhall come unto thee.* M. *Broughton* renders, *Proſperity ſhall come unto thee*: the ſence is the ſame. Others read, in ſtead of *good ſhall come unto thee, thy comings in ſhall be good:* thou ſhalt have a good revenue, a good in-come: whereas before evil came upon thee, now thy comings in ſhall be good. This is of the ſame meaning with our tranſlation. I ſhall not need to ſtay upon the opening of the words, there is no difficulty in them.

Proventus tuus erit bonus. Druſ.

From their dependance, in that he ſaith, *Acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace, ſo ſhall good come unto thee,* Theſe words are brought in by way of inference upon the former, whence

> Obſerve, *That when we are eſtranged from God, good is ſtranged from us.*

God can ſtop the Influences of all our mercies from us, he can lay an embargo upon all Creatures from bringing any good to us; though there be ſtore of treaſure and rich Commodity in the place, yet he can bar up all, that no good can come unto us; yea, the Lord in ſuch caſes doth often lay a ſtop upon the ſpirit of prayer in his own people, and when the heart is ſtopt that we cannot pray, then uſually good is ſtopt and kept back from coming to us; Prayer is that which fetches in mercy and good things through the love of God in Jeſus Chriſt. Prayer may have a twofold ſtop. Firſt, Prayer may have a ſtop in the heart; Secondly, Prayer which comes forth of the heart may have a ſtop in heaven; the Lord doth even ſhut out prayer ſometimes, and when prayer is ſhut out, no good can get out to us. Prayer is ſent upon a meſſage to heaven; and if our meſſenger be ſhut out of doors and not admitted in, what anſwer can we expect by his meſſage? And the Lord as he doth ſtop ſuch from the receiving of further good, ſo from receiving of good by what they have already. We may have that which in the nature of it is good, and yet have no good by it; God can ſtop the creature in our hands, that it ſhall not at all give us any Comfort, as well as he can ſtop any creature comfort from coming into our hands. Unleſs the Lord (in one ſence) ſtop the creature, it quickly leaks out all the Comfort which he hath put into it, and proves to us indeed, what ſin hath made it, *a broken Ciſtern:* And unleſs the Lord open the creature, the creature cannot give forth that good which it hath; It will be to us as a Ciſtern without a vent to paſs out the water for our uſe. There's many a one who hath enough in his hand (take it in any kind) but he enjoys nothing of it, becauſe the Lord locks up the conduit, or the ciſtern, and then how much good ſoever there is in it, there's none for him. It is all one to us, whether we have only a broken Ciſtern for our portion, or a Ciſtern always lock't up; for as the one lets all the water run out, ſo the other holds all the water in; we are as far from good, if our Ciſtern hold all, as if it held nothing at all. It is then not only our duty and our holineſs to acquaint our ſelves and be at peace with God, but our wiſdom and our intereſt; For it is as he pleaſeth, always, and uſually as we pleaſe him, that either we have any thing that is good coming to us, or that any good cometh to us by that which we have.

Secondly, Note (which is a Corollary from the former Obſervation,)

> *That the renewing of our Communion with God, and making peace with him, is followed with all manner of mercies and good things.*

So ſhall good come unto thee.] There was never any man a looſer by acquaintance with God: Gods acquaintance is a gainful acquaintance: Our acquaintance with God, ſhould we conſider it abſtractly and ſeparate from all benefit but his very acquaintance, yet that is benefit enough; God is the chiefeſt good, and therefore when we enjoy him, we enjoy all good. The enjoyment of God himſelf is infinitely more then the enjoyment of all created good things that come from God. Friends are ſometimes in thoſe heights of friendſhip and nobleneſs of ſpirit one to another, that they count the enjoyment of one another to be more then all the benefits they can heap upon or reap by one another; it is your good Company, ſaith ſuch a friend, and your acquaintance that delights me more then all the good you can beſtow upon me. And is not God much more ſo to us? Thus (I ſay) acquaintance with God alone is all good; but beſides (as the point leads us to conſider) God gives out good things from himſelf, to all his holy acquaintants; temporal or bodily good comes to us by his acquaintance, and ſo alſo (and that chiefly) doth ſpiritual or ſoul good. Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and the dews of grace, ſhowers of the Spirit ſhall fall into thy boſom. Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and ſpiritual comfort ſhall flow in unto thee, ſpiritual ſtrength ſhall flow in unto thee, thy ſoul ſhall be filled as with marrow and fatneſs. And as good ſhall come to thee in perſon, ſo to thine; to thy family and poſterity good ſhall come. And as God will cauſe good to come to ſuch, ſo to ſtay and abide with them. As good comes, ſo good continues according to the command and commiſſion which it hath from God. Thus he promiſed in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 48. 18.) in caſe his people had harkned to his commandments; *Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy poſterity as the waves of the Sea.* Thy peace and proſperity had not been as a Land flood or brooks of water which fail in ſummer when we have moſt need of them (all worldly things are apt to do ſo) but they ſhould have flowed perpetually as a river doth, which is fed by a conſtant Spring, or as the Sea doth which is the feeder of all Springs. A godly man gets not only a large portion of good things, but a laſting portion, yea a portion of thoſe good things which are everlaſting, by acquainting himſelf with God. And becauſe by acquaintance with God ſo much good comes to us; therefore *Eliphaz* preſſeth *Job* further to it in the next verſe.

Verſ. 22. **Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.**

Receive,] That is, learn from his mouth; he that teaches gives, and he that learns receives; and the Hebrew word which we render here to *Receive*, ſignifies not ordinary receiving, but receiving with an earneſt deſire; yea, it implyeth a kind of violence in deſire, ſuch as they have who take ſpoils in war. They flie upon the ſpoil, and catch it with as much eagerneſs as they won it with courage. So *Receive the Law from his mouth. David* ſaith, *I have rejoyced in thy word, more then they that find great ſpoils* (*Pſal.* 119. 162.) O how ſtrongly did his heart run out to the word? and there is an Elegancy alſo in it, that this word which ſignifies to receive the Law, doth alſo ſignifie the Law or doctrine to be received (*Prov.* 4. 2.) *I give you good doctrine, forſake you not my Law.* The word which is there uſed for doctrine is the ſame that is here rendred *to receive*, the reaſon is, becauſe wholſome doctrine is worthy to be received, and ought to be received willingly, chearfully and gladly, and therefore the Goſpel which is the higheſt and moſt precious doctrine is called an Acceptable doctrine: *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all Acceptation* (1 *Tim.* 1. 11.) The Goſpel is worthy not only of Acceptation, or of great, but of all Acceptation, and that from all men, even from the Greateſt; And ſo alſo is the Law, for, as ſhall be opened further afterwards, the Law in this place comprehends the Goſpel alſo. *Receive the Law at his mouth.*

Dat Magiſter quando docet, capit diſcipulus quando diſcit. Druſ.

לקח *Verbum hoc ad prædam quæ cum violentia tollitur referri poteſt. Ex hac radice dicitur doctrina.*

לקח *quaſi accepta vel accipienda, quia ſc. lex debet accipi grato & lubenti animo.*

Further, The word which we expreſs *Receive*, is rendred by ſome to *buy*; we may connect both ſences here. Receive the Law as a thing bought, and carry it home with thee. That of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 23. 23.) Suits it well; *Buy the truth, and ſell it not.* Truth is a Commodity the trade whereof goes but one way; all Civil Trades and Merchandizes are continued by buying and ſelling, but this ſpiritual trade is continued by buying only, without ſelling; it will be our profit to have this Commodity always upon our hands, or rather always in our hands. Thus here, *Receive the Law* at a price, buy it, and keep it; not that the Lord doth expect any price from us, or that we can bring any thing to him valuable for it. We buy it, when we take pains for it, when we do our utmoſt endeavour to receive the truth, when we receive the truth, not only as it is offered and brought home to us, but when we go out for it, and ſeek after it in all the means which God hath appointed as conveyances of it, that's buying the Law of truth.

Receive the Law.] Again, We may profitably conſider a double derivation of that word which we tranſlate, *Law.* Some ſay it is from a root that ſignifies *to behold or Contemplate, to Conſider, to look about*; and the Law is well expreſt by a word of that ſence, becauſe the whole Law is diligently to be obſerved and conſidered, looked into, and meditated upon, we are alwayes to behold it, and that in every part. For the whole Law is copulative, and he that offends in one part offends in all. *David* ſpeaking of the righteous man,

תורת *a radice* תור *Explorare aut circumquaq; luſtrare quia lex univerſa eſt diligenter obſervanda, ne quis in uno offendat.*

man, (*Pſal.* 1.2.) ſaith, *he meditates in the law of the Lord day and night.* What's meditation? but the Inward view of a thing, or the beholding it with an Intellectual eye; meditation is the continual turning of things over in the mind, to behold the excellencies and perfections that are in them.

A radice ירה *Quod eſt pluere irrigare; quare commune & fere idem eſt nomen,* pluviæ Doctoris & legiſlatoris.

Non elongabit arte pluviam.

Sanctè colludit propheta nominibus doctoris ſeu legiſlatoris & pluviæ, ſeu imbris matutini & ſerotini.

Secondly, Say others, it proceeds from another radical word, that ſignifies *to rain*, and that not only ſome ſmall driſling dewing rain, but full ſhowers, or as we ſay to pour down; and in the Hebrew, the ſame word ſignifies, *to rain, and to teach*, becauſe teaching by the word is like raining, or the ſending down of rain. The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 6.7.) alludes to it. *For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it*, &c. by the earth he means thoſe who hear the word or doctrine, which comes down upon them like rain to ſoften their hearts, and make them fruitful. There are two other Texts of Scripture very ſuitable to this Expoſition (*Iſa.* 30. 20.) *Though the Lord give you the bread of adverſity, and the water of affliction, yet ſhall not thy teachers be removed into Corners any more, but thine eye ſhall ſee thy teachers. Thy teachers ſhall not be removed*, ſo we render: but ſtrictly from the letter of the Hebrew we may read it thus: *Though the Lord give thee the bread of adverſity*, &c. *yet ſhall not thy rain be removed from thee.* It may ſeem ſtrange that they ſhould have the bread of adverſity, and the water of Affliction, and yet have alſo rain which naturally cauſeth the earth to bring forth bread, and fills the pools with water. But the Prophet who ſpeaks of corporal bread and water in the former part of the verſe, ſpeaks of ſpiritual rain in the latter, making this ſo full a compenſation to the people of God, for the want of the other two, that they ſhould have no cauſe to complain of it. As if the Prophet had ſaid, *Though you are cut ſhort in outward things, yet you ſhall not be ſhortned in ſpirituals, the rain of holy doctrine ſhall not be removed from you*, or as we tranſlate, *thy teachers ſhall not be removed*, &c. Some amongſt us would have the teachers of holy doctrine removed, leſt by feeding them the bread and water of the Land ſhould fail; as if the charge of publick preaching the riches of the Grace of Chriſt would be an undoing, or at leaſt an impoveriſhing of the Nation. Whereas (I touch it only by the way) the Prophet comforts the people of God in the midſt of all their wants and outward afflictions, that they ſhould not want the preſence of their teachers, nor the ſhowers of holy inſtruction by them. Again (*Joel* 2.23.) *Be glad O Zion, and rejoyce in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cauſe to come down the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the firſt month.* That which we render, (*The former rain moderately*) others tranſlate, *a Teacher of righteouſneſs*, or *according to righteouſneſs*; ſo you may find in the Margin of your larger Bibles. And that's the great mercy which *Zion* is to rejoyce in; for can we think that *Zion*, the children of *Zion* ſhould be called ſo earneſtly to rejoyce meerly in natural rain, or the effects of it; becauſe of the abundance of Corn and Wine and Oyl, which the earth well watered uſually produceth? This is too poor a thing (conſidered alone) for *Zion*, to rejoyce in! *Zion* or the people of God do and muſt confeſs themſelves unworthy of the leaſt outward mercy, even of a ſhower of rain, or of a ſheaf of corn, and they ought to praiſe God, and be very thankful for theſe; But theſe are not properly, the matter of *Zions* gladneſs and rejoycing. In theſe the world rejoyceth, *Who will ſhew us any good?* (*Pſal.* 4.7.) They are for Corn, and Wine, and Oyl; but *Lord* (ſaith *David*) *lift up the light of thy Countenance upon me. Thou haſt put gladneſs in mine heart, more then in the time that their corn and their wine encreaſed:* As if he had ſaid, Worldly men rejoyce in Corn and Wine; but I rejoyce more in the light of thy countenance. The light of the favour of God, and the light of the knowledge of God, are the chief matters of a believers joy. And this light of holy joy comes in uſually with and by the rain of that doctrine, which falls upon us from the mouth of God in the teachings of his Divine Law. *Receive the Law from his mouth.*

But you will ſay, What is this Law which comes down like rain from heaven, and which we are to receive from the mouth of God?

I anſwer, The Law may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Strictly for the ten Commandments, or the five Books of *Moſes*, which are called the Law.

Secondly, More largely, and ſo the whole word of God is the Law. Chriſt himſelf calls the Book of *Pſalms* the Law two or three times in the New Teſtament (*John* 10.34.) *Jeſus anſwered them, is it not written in your Law, I have ſaid ye are Gods?* where was that written? in the 82 *Pſal. verſ.* 6. And ſo again, (*John* 15.25.) *But this cometh to paſs, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, they hated me without a cauſe.* What Law doth he mean? thoſe words we find (*Pſal.* 35.19.) Take one text further? (1 *Cor.* 14. 21.) *In the Law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I ſpeak unto this People.* Where is that written? (*Iſa.* 28.11.) So that the *Law* in a large ſenſe, is taken for the whole body of the word of God, or for the general Revelation of the myſtery of his will, in which ſenſe we may ſay the Goſpel is the Law: And the Goſpel is expreſly called the *Law* (or rule) *of faith* (*Rom.* 3.27.) So that by *Law* here we may underſtand whatſoever the Lord hath given us, either as a rule of life, or as a rule of faith. The Seventy tranſlate *Eliphaz* ſpeaking in that latitude, *Receive whatſoever God delivers, declares, or puts forth. Receive, I pray thee, the Law*

'Εξηγορίαν.

From his mouth.] From whoſe mouth? from the mouth of God; how can that be? Indeed *Moſes* went up into the Mount, and was with God fourty dayes, and there received the Law from his mouth; but could *Job* receive the Law from his mouth as *Moſes* did? I anſwer, If God had called him to it, as he did *Moſes*, he might. But that's not the purpoſe of *Eliphaz*. Neither are we (I conceive) to underſtand him of ſuch a *Receiving from the mouth of God*, as the old Prophets had who received the mind of God by Immediate Inſpiration, and dictates from God himſelf: for though they were not called up ſolemnly into a Mount (as *Moſes*) to receive the Law, yet the Spirit was ſent to make known the mind of God to them. And in that ſence the Prophet *Jeremiah* is ſaid to warn King *Zedekiah from the mouth of the Lord* (2 *Chron.* 36.12.) *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himſelf before Jeremiah the Prophet ſpeaking from the mouth of the Lord*, that is, he received a word from God by an Extraordinary Revelation to carry unto the King who yet humbled not himſelf. And ſo (*Iſa.* 30.2.) the Lord complains of his people *that walked to go down into Egypt to ſtrengthen themſelves with the ſtrength of Pharaoh, &c. and yet had not asked at his mouth*, that is, had not asked direction in the thing according to the wayes of Revelation then in uſe, by enquiring of the Prophets, or of the high Prieſt. And the Lord tells the Prophet *Jeremy* (*Chap.* 15.19.) *That he ſhould be as his mouth if he would take forth the precious from the vile*; as if he had ſaid, if thou art faithful in my work, I will reveal my ſelf to thee, and thou ſhalt ſpeak even as I my ſelf ſpoke, thou ſhalt be as my mouth. Now, I conceive, *Eliphaz* doth not go thus high when he bids *Job receive the Law from the mouth of God*, as if he were to expect immediate direction and advice from him. For then, we may be ſaid to receive a rule or a law from the mouth of God, when we receive that which God hath manifeſted at any time as a rule and law for us with the reſt of his people to walk by: they who receive that law once delivered from the mouth of God, may be ſaid to receive the law from his mouth, though they are not the immediate receivers of it, yea, though it were publiſhed ſome thouſands of years before they were born. Some from theſe words, collect that the books of *Moſes* were written before this time, and that *Eliphaz* did refer *Job* to thoſe, bidding him receive that law which the mouth of God had ſpoken to *Moſes*; but though whether the law were then formally ſpoken or no is a diſpute, yet it is without all diſpute, that the mouth of God had then given a law or rule of life to his people; and ſo *Eliphaz* might ſafely and truly ſay, *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth*, there having been a Revelation of the mind of God among the faithful in all ages and times. God never left his people to their own will, nor them to be their own Guide and Counſeller. For when the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 2. 14.) that *the Gentiles having not a law are a law unto themſelves*; his meaning is not that they had no law, but one of their own deviſing. They indeed had not the law of God formally ſpoken to their ears, and preſerved in tables of ſtone, but they had the ſubſtance of the law of God naturally written in their hearts. So then, there hath alwayes been a law from his mouth formally in the Church, and naturally in the world.

Prophetæ ſunt quaſi os dei quia per ipſos loquutus eſt.

Therefore ſaith *Eliphaz*, *Receive the law from his mouth*; and when he ſaith, *Receive the Law from his mouth*, it may have a double Oppoſition.

Firſt, To the will and wiſdom of *Job*; As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Thou haſt been hitherto a law to thy ſelf*, that is, thou haſt followed thy own advice, run on upon thy own head, now receive the law from his mouth. Man naturally hath high thoughts of himſelf; and would be a law to himſelf. Not as (*Rom.*2.14. which place was touched before) *The Gentiles having not a law, were a law to themſelves*; that is, they had the law of God written in their hearts by nature: but beſides that, there is a law which man would be to himſelf againſt that law of nature written in his heart, and againſt the light of nature ſhining in his conſcience, he would ſet up a law, even his own Luſt, in oppoſition to the law of God. Thus he would be a law to himſelf, and not *Receive a law from the mouth of God*. Therefore ſaith *Eliphaz*; Now *receive the law from his mouth*.

Ex ore ejus notanter dicit, i.e. *non ex ore aut arbitrio tuo*. Merc.

Secondly, (from his mouth) may be oppoſed to the mouthes of others; as if he ſhould ſay, if thou wilt not truſt us, nor take our word, then truſt God, we would not have thee depend upon us, nor upon any man living, not on the judgment or Authority of any Creature, but receive the law from his mouth; there is a law and a truth come from God, let thy faith be guided, and thy life ordered by that.

Hence Note, *It is our duty to receive the rule from God.*

The Lord hath power to give us the law, and we muſt receive the law from him. None have power to impoſe a law upon us but God himſelf, nor may we deviſe a law for our ſelves: *God is the only Maſter of the Conſcience*, he alone can ſay, *Receive the law at my mouth*. If you ask, what is it to receive the law? I anſwer, it is more then to give it the hearing. To receive, is, Firſt, to believe the law; Secondly, to receive, is to honour and reverence the law; Thirdly, to receive the law, is to yield up our ſelves to the obedience of it, to be caſt into the mould of it, to ſubject our ſelves wholly to the mind of God in it; Then we receive the law when we take the Impreſſions of it, and have as it were the Image and ſtamp of it upon our ſpirits, and in our lives. Fourthly, then we receive it when, as it follows in the Text, *we lay up his word in our hearts*: barely to receive it is not enough, you muſt lay it up, treaſure it up.

And lay up his word in thy heart.

This is oppoſed,

Firſt, To forgetfulneſs of the word, receive the law and let it not ſlip out of thy memory.

Secondly, It is oppos'd to negligence in the practice of the law, lay it up that it may be forth coming to direct thee in every duty. In Converſion the law is written in the heart; every godly man hath a Copy of the law in his heart: That's the deſcription of a godly man, (*Pſal.*37.31.) *The law of God is in his heart, none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide*; which is not an univerſal excluſion of all failing and ſlipping, as if every godly man were as much paſt ſinning, as he is paſt periſhing: but when 'tis ſaid, *none of his ſteps*, the meaning is, few of his ſteps ſhall ſlide, or he ſhall never ſlide ſo in any of his ſteps as not to recover his feet and get up again. He ſhall walk very holily, ſo holily as if all his walkings were but one continued act of holineſs. But, to the text, None of his ſteps ſhall ſlide quite and for ever out of the way, becauſe the law of God is in his heart. What *David* ſpeaks in that prophetical Pſalm of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 40. 8. *Thy law is within my heart*) is true in its degree of every Chriſtian, all the laws of God are in his heart. That Character is again given of them (*Pſal.*84. 5.) *In whoſe heart are thy ways*; there is a ſuiting of the mind of God and the heart of man together in regeneration. But now the duty ſpoken of in the Text is another thing; for a man that hath the law written in his heart, may yet poſſibly forget to lay up the word and law of God in his heart, he may (under temptation and the preſſures of corruption) be negligent in that; it is the work of a godly man, who hath the law of God in his heart already, continually to lay up the law in his heart; and ſo we are to underſtand ſuch Scriptures as theſe (*Prov.*7.3.) *Keep my Commandments and live, and my law as the apple of thine eye, bind them on thy fingers, write them on the table of thine heart, &c.* The firſt writing of the law in the heart is by the finger of the Spirit, by Gods own finger. As it was God that firſt wrote the law in tables of ſtone with his own finger, ſo it is he that writes the law in theſe fleſhly Tables of the heart by the finger of the Spirit: yet *Solomon* perſwades his ſon to write the law upon the Table of his heart: when grace is received, and the law once written in our hearts, we do as it were put in ſeveral freſh Copies of the law, we are continually writing divine notions and Inſtructions upon our hearts; this renewed act is aſcribed to us, becauſe we through grace joyn in it. We have an Expreſſion of like import (*Prov.*4.21.) *My ſon attend to my words, encline thine ear to my ſayings: let them not depart from thine eyes, keep them in the midſt of thine heart.* The heart is ſaid to be the midſt or Center of the body; now, ſaith he, *keep the law in the very midſt of thine heart*, in the ſafeſt place; as the heart is the ſafeſt place, the middle of the body, ſo the middle of the heart is the ſafeſt place of the heart. So we may underſtand that of *David*, *I have hid thy Commandments in my heart* (*Pſal.*119.11.) And (*Deut.*6.6.) *Theſe words which I command thee this day, ſhall be in thine heart*, that is, *thou ſhalt lay them up there.* Of this laying up the law in the heart we are to underſtand *Eliphaz* here; as if he had ſaid, *O Job, thou haſt often heard of the law, but thou haſt been a forgetful hearer, now hear it, and hold it now* (as the Apoſtle exhorts the *Hebrews*, *Heb.*2.1.) *Give the more earneſt heed to the things, which thou haſt heard, or ſhalt hereafter hear, leſt at any time thou ſhouldeſt let them ſlip, or thou ſhouldeſt run out* (as we there put in the margine) *as a leaking veſſel.*

Præcedentis partis expoſitio & amplificatio Ita legē ſuſcipe ut ponas *proprie*, diſponas *arte cura ſollicitudine obſervandi.*

Further, This laying up the word in the heart, is oppos'd unto a bare barren knowledge; it is not enough to have the word of God in our heads, that is, to know it: it is not enough to have the word of God upon our tongues, that is, to ſpeak of it, but we muſt lay it up in the heart; For though the heart in Scripture takes in the underſtanding, and the whole ſoul, yet chiefly it reſpects the affections: *lay up the word in thine heart*, that is, let thy affections be warm'd with it, while thy memory retains and keeps it, and thy underſtanding is enlightned with a true notion of it.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The word of God is a precious thing.*

We do not lay up trifles and traſh, but precious things, and treaſure; we lay up our Plate and Jewels, our Gold and Silver; the word of God ſhould be more to us then thouſands of Gold and Silver, it is the moſt precious Jewel, 'tis treaſure, and therefore it muſt be laid up.

Secondly, *The heart is the Ark or Cabinet, in which the word muſt be laid up.*

There was an Ark or Cheſt provided for the law (*Exod.* 25.21.) and that Ark was Chriſt, he was typified by it; and indeed the law would be too hot for our hearts, too hot to lie there, if it had not firſt lain in the heart of Chriſt; we (ſince fallen) could never have been an Ark for it, if he had not been. The tables of the law were laid in the Ark, and the Ark (in which the law was put) had a mercy-ſeat which did cover it all over. (The dimenſions of the Ark and of the mercy-ſeat were exactly the ſame, two cubits and a half in length, and a cubit and a half in breadth, (*Exod.*25.10,17.) So that nothing of the law could appear or riſe up in Judgment againſt poor ſinners. The propitiatory or mercy-ſeat covered all. Now as Chriſt hath been the Ark of the law to protect and cover us from the condemning power of it; ſo the hearts of believers muſt be the Ark of the law, where it muſt be laid up with a readineſs of mind to yield our ſelves up to the commanding power of it. *David* propheceying of Chriſt ſaith (*Pſal.*40.10.) *I have not hid thy righteouſneſs within my heart*; yet he had ſaid before, *I delight to do thy will, thy law is within my heart.* To clear which Scripture take notice that there is a twofold hiding of the righteouſneſs or word of God in the heart. Firſt, So as to obſcure or conceal it from others; in that ſence *David* ſaith, *I have not hid thy righteouſneſs in mine heart, I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation, and not concealed thy loving kindneſs and truth from the great Congregation.* And thus no man ought to lay up the truths, the law, the promiſes of God in his heart to conceal and ſtifle them there. Secondly, There is a hiding of the law in our hearts, Firſt, That it may be ſafe, leſt Satan or the world ſhould ſnatch it from us. Secondly, That we may further conſider of it; when a man hath got an excellent truth, or Scripture, he ſhould lay it up in his heart to ponder and meditate more upon it, to draw out the ſweetneſs, and to experience the power of it. Thirdly, That we may have it ready at hand for our uſe; and ſo the Scribe inſtructed for the kingdom of heaven is deſcribed by bringing forth out of his treaſury things both new and old. How ſad is the condition of many that have heard much, but laid up little or nothing at all of all that word which they have heard. Some having laid it up in their note books, are ſatisfied with that; 'tis good and uſeful to do ſo; but do not let it lie there, get a Copy of it in your hearts; a few truths in your hearts are better to you then many truths in your books; no man was ever ſaved by the word in his book, unleſs that word were alſo written in his heart. God commanded the *Jewes* (*Deut.* 6. 8, 9.) to write the law upon the *poſt of their houſes, and on their gates, to bind them as a ſign upon their hand, and as frontlets between their eyes.* They were commanded alſo to put fringes upon the borders of their garments (*Numb.* 15.38.) which our Saviour calls *Phylacteries* (*Mat.* 23.5.) theſe were ribands of blue ſilk, or as ſome ſay, ſcroles of parchment upon which the law being firſt wrought or written, and then bound upon their garments, *they were to look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord* (*Num.* 15.39.) *Now,* ſaith Chriſt, *they make broad their Philacteries, and enlarge the borders of their Garments,* as much of the law as you will upon their Cloaths, but none of it in their hearts. Thus the proud Scribes and Phariſees went about as it were Cloathed with the word of God, but his word was far from their hearts, nor did it appear in their lives; it is a meer vanity to have much of the law in our books, while we neglect to keep it in our hearts, and act it in our wayes. The former is good, but it doth no good without the latter. The want of this, the laying up the word in the heart, cauſeth the great want of Saints in the things of God; and as many looſe that grace which they ſeemed to have, ſo many are at a loſs in the uſe of that grace which they have, becauſe they have not laid up the word of God in their hearts ſo carefully as they ought. We ſay proverbially, *Sure bind and ſure find; They who would ſurely find the comfort of the word of God when they need it, had need to bind it ſure, when they receive it.*

Vaniſſimi profecto Phariſæi illi, qui cum ipſi non ſervarent in corde mandata, at membranulas decalogi cōplicantes & quaſi coronam capiti facientes. Phylacteriū ex ſua proprietate, Cuſtoditdorium eſt. Bold.

VERS. 23, 24, 25.

If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacles.

Then ſhalt thou lay up gold as duſt, and the gold of Ophir as the ſtones of the brooks.

Yea, the Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver.

ELiphaz having invited *Job* (at the one and twentieth verſe) to renew his acquaintance with God, and now again preſſing him to return to God, he reckons up thoſe advantages which might move, and incourage him to it; he tells *Job* what will follow his return to, and acquaintance with God, and theſe advantages are of two ſorts.

Firſt, Temporal, and outward; Secondly, Spiritual, and inward; the temporal good things which he aſſures him of in caſe he repent, and turn to God, are ſet down, Firſt, more generally in the three and twentieth verſe, *Thou ſhalt be built up.* Secondly, They are ſet down particularly; Firſt, He ſhould then have riches, gold and ſilver, in the four and twentieth verſe; Secondly, protection, *The Almighty ſhall be thy defence,* (in the five and twentieth verſe) as he will fill thy houſe, ſo he will guard thy houſe and keep all ſafe.

In the following parts of the Chapter, *Eliphaz* aſſures him of eight bleſſings ſpiritual.

Firſt, Joy in God, in the ſix and twentieth verſe, *Thou ſhalt have thy delight in the Almighty.*

Secondly, Confidence, or holy boldneſs before God; *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face unto God*; thou ſhalt not hide thy head, and run into corners, but *lift up thy face.*

Thirdly, (which is an effect or part of the former) freedom in prayer; *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer to him,* (in the ſeven and twentieth verſe.)

Fourthly, He aſſures him of audience, or of an anſwer to his prayer in the ſame verſe; *He ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy vows*; that is, thou in thy prayer having made vows to God, God ſhall hear thy prayer, and ſo give thee occaſion to pay thy vows.

Fifthly, He promiſeth him not only that his prayer ſhall be heard, but that his very purpoſes and deſigns ſhall be fulfilled; *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed to thee,* in the eight and twentieth verſe. When thou reſolveſt upon ſuch a way or courſe in thy affairs, thou ſhalt have this priviledge, *thy decree ſhall ſtand.*

Sixthly, He promiſeth him direction and counſel, what way he ſhould take, what courſe to run, in the cloſe of the ſame verſe; *And the light ſhall ſhine upon thy wayes,* that is, thou ſhalt ſee what to do, the Lord will give thee counſel.

Seventhly, He gives him hope of riſing out of any trouble, or that when others are overtaken with calamities, he ſhould be preſerved, at the nine and twentieth verſe; *When men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay, there is a lifting up, for God will ſave the humble perſon.*

Eightly, He promiſeth, that he ſhall not only have bleſſings perſonal, and family bleſſings, but he ſhall be a publick bleſſing, (in the thirtieth verſe,) *He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the innocent, and it is delivered by the pureneſs of thy hand.* Thus you have both the general ſcope of this latter part of the Chapter; which is to ſtir up *Job* to return to God, and likewiſe the particular bleſſings and mercies which are held forth as arguments moving him to return.

Verſ. 23. If thou return unto the Almighty.

To Return is uſed frequently in Scripture in a metaphorical ſenſe, and ſignifies as much as to repent; ſin is a going away from God, great ſinning is a going far from God, a going, as it were, into a far Country, ſuch ſinners would go out of Gods ſight, and fall out of his memory. *Eliphaz* had charged *Job* deeply with ſuch departures; and now he ſpeaks to him of returning.

And here we may conſider the condition or ſtate of *Job*, and the ſeaſon in which *Eliphaz* preſſeth him to this duty, he was in an afflicted condition, the hand of God was upon him. Now *Eliphaz* adviſeth him to return; intimating at leſt, that the preſent diſpenſation of God towards him, was a ſpecial opportunity for the duty he moved him unto.

Hence Note, *When God afflicts us, when his hand is upon us, he ſpeaks to us, repent, or beſpeaks our repentance.*

How often in Scripture doth the Lord complain as if he were wholly fruſtrated of his deſign, when either nations or perſons being ſmitten by his judgments did not return unto him, or repented not? (*Iſa.* 9. 13.) *They turn not to him that ſmiteth them*: that is, they turn not to me the Lord: I have ſmitten them, and I alone can heal them, *yet they turn not to me*; as if the Lord had ſaid, I therefore ſmote them that they might bethink themſelves of returning, but they turned not to me. As they turned not at my word, or to me ſpeaking, ſo they turned not at my ſword, or to me ſmiting. I ſee they are not only *Sermon proof,* my Prophets ſpake to them in vain, but they are *judgment-proof* alſo, my hand is upon them in vain, they return not. And as it was then, ſo at this day; for may we not obſerve, ſome mouldering in their eſtates, cruſhed in their hopes, croſſed in their children, blotted and blaſted in their credit, weak and ſick in their bodies, even tired and worn out under ſeveral afflictions, yet no thought of returning to the Lord, or of making their way perfect before him. So that the Lord may ſay to them, as he once did to his ancient people the *Jewes* (*Iſa.* 1. 6.) *Why ſhould ye be ſmitten any more, ye will revolt more and more.* The returning of many is like that which *Solomon* ſpeaks of (*Prov.* 26. 11.) *As a dog returneth to his vomit, ſo a fool returneth to his folly*; *As Jeſurun waxed fat, and kicked,* ſo ſome will be kicking while they wax lean.

Further, *Eliphaz* doth not ſpeak barely to *Job* of returning, but he directs him to the object; *If thou return*

To the Almighty] And that is expreſſed in ſome tranſlations very emphatically, *Return home to the Almighty,* return till thou comeſt to or reacheſt God, *be thou ſure to repent home*; ſo the word is uſed (*Hoſ.* 14.2. *Joel* 2.12. *Amos* 4.6.) return home to God, ſtay not ſhort of him in your repentance, that is, repent fully, ſeriouſly; And the intendment of *Eliphaz* in ſpeaking thus, might be to reprove *Job* for his former (by him ſuppoſed) hypocriſie: thou haſt returned before, but not to the Almighty, ſurely thou didſt repent only as an hypocrite in former times when thou madeſt the greateſt ſhews of

עד שדי *Revertere uſq; ad dominum, videtur idem eſſe cum* אל שדי *Si plane & ſerio, toto corde, non ut ante hypocrita fuiſti, &c.* Merc.

of repentance. Therefore now repent is a ſincere Convert. Thy former repentance was to thee a fruitleſs repentance, and therefore doubtleſs but a fained and falſe repentance. Thou couldſt never after it recover out of thine afflicted, thy ruinous condition, and therefore ſurely thou didſt never by it recover out of thy ſinful condition, or from thy ſins. But now, I promiſe thee, *If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built.*

Hence Note, That, *True repentance is a full, a home returning to God.*

Much of the progreſs of a Chriſtian is to go backward, backward (I mean) from thoſe ſins and evils to which he hath (by temptation) been carried forth; nor (having ſinned) can any man go forward till he return to God. We read in Scripture, of God returning to us, as well as of our returning unto God, in both there is repentance; when God returns to us, he repents of the evil of puniſhment, that he hath brought upon us; and when we return to God, we repent of the evil of ſin which we have committed againſt him; only be ſure (as the point directs) that ye return home to God. The Prophet found *Iſraels* repentance defective in this (*Hoſ.* 7. 16.) *They return* (that is, they make a ſhew of repentance) *but not to the moſt High.* There is a repentance which brings the ſoul never the nearer unto God: And that's a repentance (as we ſpeak) *never the near,* or to no purpoſe. Thus another Prophet taxeth their faſting (*Zach.* 7. 5.) *When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth and ſeventh month, even thoſe ſeventy years, did ye at all faſt unto me, even to me?* Obſerve how he doubles it upon that point, as if the whole emphaſis of repentance lay upon that point, *To me, even to me.* As *David* in confeſſing of his ſin (*Pſal.* 51. 4.) *Againſt thee, thee, thee only have I ſinned,* &c. Many faſt, but not at all to God, they return, but not at all to God. They faſt to themſelves, and return to themſelves; that is, their own intereſt, not the honour of God, is the motive and end of their faſting and repenting. And hence the Prophet is plain and downright with *Iſrael* in this caſe (*Jer.* 4. 1.) *If thou wilt return, O* Iſrael, *ſaith the Lord, return unto me*; as if *Iſrael* had uſed to return, but alwayes ſhort of God, or not to God; *Iſrael* made ſome ſtop in the work of repentance before he came at God. Now then (ſaith the Lord by his Prophet) O Iſrael, *if thou wilt return, return to me.* If thou haſt any further purpoſe to return, be perſwaded to return to ſome purpoſe. Let not thy repentance be any longer, ſuch as is to be repented of. All our returnings are but wanderings, unleſs we return to God.

But when may we be ſaid to return to God?

I anſwer: Firſt, When we return out of a ſence of ſin againſt God, as well as of ſmart upon our ſelves; for when we return only becauſe of ſmart, we return to our ſelves rather then to God; as when it is ſaid in *Hoſea* (Chap. 7. 16.) *They returned, but not to the moſt High:* We may ſee the reaſon of this charge at the fourteenth verſe, *They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they aſſemble themſelves for corn and for wine, and they rebel againſt me:* As if he had ſaid, All their crying and howling is not becauſe they have ſinned againſt me, but becauſe their ſins have pincht them; they do not mourn becauſe of their wickedneſs, but becauſe of their wants. 'Tis famine that moveth them, not my fear. They would fain be at their full tables again; they are all for corn and wine, nothing for grace and holineſs. We may ſay of ſome perſons repenting, as *Job* (Chap. 6. 6.) of the wild Aſs braying, *Doth the wild Aſs bray when he hath graſs, or loweth the Ox over his fodder?* He applyed it to his own caſe, that he did not cry out without cauſe, nor complain when he felt no pain; but (I ſay) we may apply it to ſome perſons repenting. *They would never bray if they had but graſs enough, nor low if they had fodder enough:* That is, if they had but outward comfort enough, corn and wine, health and ſtrength enough, did they but abound in theſe, you ſhould never hear them complain, nor ſhed a tear, how much ſoever they abound in ſin: All the world cannot ſatisfie the ſoul of a godly man, till (after ſinning) he be reconciled to God: His ſoul is hungry and thirſty, notwithſtanding all his corn and wine, till he be filled with the favour of God. And this is indeed *to return to the Almighty.*

Secondly, Then alſo we return to the Almighty, when we turn eſpecially from and mourn for that ſin whereby we have moſt provoked the Almighty; when that which hath moſt offended God, is moſt offenſive and burdenſom unto us. For though in repentance, every ſin is to be repented of, yet ſome more: As *Samuel* ſaid to the houſe of *Iſrael* (1 Sam. 7. 3.) *If you do return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the ſtrange Gods and* Aſtaroth. But why doth he exhort them to put away that ſtrange God *Aſtaroth,* by name, more then any other of their ſtrange Gods? I anſwer, It was becauſe they had moſt provoked the true God by worſhipping that ſtrange God, and therefore he counſels them as ever they would approve themſelves to have returned to God in their repentance, to look to it, that they turned from *that Idol.* If every ſtrange God muſt be put away when we return to God; How can we return to God, if we put not away *our Aſtaroth.* Thus the rule was given by the King of *Nineveh,* in proclaiming a faſt (*Jon.* 3. 8.) *Let them turn every one from his evil way* (that is, from his beloved ſin) *and from the violence that is in their hands*; that is, from the ſin of oppreſſion, by which they got much into their hands. But why doth he inſtance in that ſin? Surely becauſe that was the common ſin of that City; they were an oppreſſing people, and loved the gain of oppreſſion, or to get by violence: They lived more by the blood of others, then by their own ſweat, more by the violence, then the labour of their hands, therefore they muſt particularly repent of that ſin. If the covetous man return to God, he muſt turn from every ſin, and from his covetouſneſs. If the proud man return to God, he muſt turn from every ſin, and from his pride; this is the nature of returning to the Almighty. Yet,

Thirdly, Unleſs we do all this with the whole heart, we do not return to the Almighty (2 *Chron.* 6. 38. *Jer.* 3. 10. and 24. 7.) The wicked are ſerious and cordial in ſinning, they muſt be ſo in repenting. But ſome ſinner poſſibly may ſay, I have gone away too far to return: No (*Jer.* 3. 1.) *Thou haſt played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, ſaith the Lord.* Another will ſay, I have ſlidden back and relapſed, I have, as it were, repented of my repentance. The Prophet anſwers this doubt (*Jer.* 3. 12.) *Return thou back-ſliding* Iſrael, *ſaith the Lord.* And again (*ver.* 14.) *Turn, O back-ſliding children, ſaith the Lord, for I am married unto you,* &c.

If thou return, &c.] *Eliphaz* having thus ſhewed him that it is his duty to *return to the Almighty,* now proceeds to ſhew that it will be his happineſs; and this he doth by an enumeration of thoſe manifold bleſſings which follow our returning to him. Whereof the firſt is,

Thou ſhalt be built up.] Affliction and trouble, which are the fruit of ſin, pull down, and lay us waſte; godly ſorrow and repentance, which are our turning from ſin, have a promiſe of this good fruit, *That we ſhall be built up again.*

This building up may be taken two wayes: Firſt, More generally for an encreaſe in all good things: Secondly, More ſpecially for an encreaſe in Children. In the Hebrew the ſame word, which ſignifies *a ſon,* ſignifies *to build,* becauſe Children build up their Fathers houſe, or are their Fathers building; in that ſence the word is often uſed (*Gen.* 16. 2. *Gen.* 30. 3. *Ruth* 4. 11.) It is ſaid (*Exod.* 1. 21.) that *God built the Midwives houſes*; which ſome interpret, he gave them Children, or made them more fruitful in child bearing. We read in the Law how that man was to be dealt with, who refuſed to take his Brothers Wife, according to the commandment of God in thoſe times; and the concluſion of all is (*Deut.* 25. 9.) *So it ſhall be done to the man that ſhall not build up his Brothers houſe*; that is, who refuſeth to marry his Brothers Widow, and (through the bleſſing of God) to have Children by her, which would be as the building up of his houſe, or the continuance of his name and family. Thus ſome underſtand the phraſe here; *Thou ſhalt be built up*; that is, thou, who haſt loſt all thy Children; thou, whoſe houſe hath been pull'd down by the fall of a houſe, (*Chap.* 1. 19.) ſhalt have more Children and ſo thy houſe built up again. But I rather take the phraſe here in that larger ſence, and ſo *to be built up,* implyeth all kind of proſperity in outward things. (*Mal.* 3. 15.) *Now ye call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedneſs are ſet up,* we put in the Margin, *are built up*; that is, they are very proſperous, they may have what they will in this world, or (as we ſay) *the world at will.* And (note that by the way) 'tis the worſt character of

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Filius inde dictus, quod ædificium ſit & ſtructura parentum. Merc. *Prolem dedit.* Merc.

an Age, *When they that work wickedneſs* (which ruines the beſt built State) *are built up.* The Lord makes a Promiſe in the language of this Metaphor to the Church (*Jer.* 31.4.) *I will build thee ,and thou ſhalt be built, O Virgin of* Iſrael: As if he had ſaid plainly, I will bleſs thee, and raiſe thee up out of the duſt of thy preſent deſolate condition, into a glorious fabrick of proſperity and honour; ſo it follows in the ſame Text, *Thou ſhalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and go forth in the dance of them that make merry.* This ſence of the word is clear in that oppoſition uſed in the Pſalm (*Pſal.* 28.5.) *Therefore, ſaith the Lord, I will deſtroy thee, and not build thee up*; that is, thou ſhalt be deſtroyed for ever; I will never repair any of thy ruines, thine ſhall be as *Aſaph* ſpeaks (*Pſal.*74.3.) *Perpetual deſolations.* So that, when *Eliphaz* promiſeth *Job*, *Thou ſhalt be built up*, his meaning is, thy ruin'd ſtate ſhall be repaired, and thou ſhalt have not only a beautiful, but a well foundation'd felicity.

Hence Note, *It is no vain nor unprofitable thing to repent and turn to the Almighty.*

If we by repentance pull down the ſtrong holds of ſin, if we forſake and lay waſte our luſts, the Lord will build us up, he will build us up with all manner of bleſſings; repentance is fruitful: There are many who profeſs they repent, but they do not bring forth fruits meet for repentance; but as true repentance is accompanied with our fruits of holineſs and obedience towards God, ſo with Gods fruits, the fruits of his love and mercy towards us. There is a kind of repentance in Hell, there's weeping, wailing and gnaſhing of teeth; but that's a fruitleſs repentance, as well as a faithleſs repentance; the damned are under chains of everlaſting darkneſs. Unſound repentance, or the repentance of Hypocrites in this life, is like the repentance of the damned in the next life; but true repentance is fruitful. If we as the *Baptiſt* exhorted the *Jews* (Matth. 3.) *Bring forth fruit meet for repentance*, our repentance will bring forth fruit meet for us; we ſhall have good things of all ſorts, if we ſorrow (as the Apoſtle ſaith the *Corinthians* did) after a godly ſort; godly ſorrow is rewarded with joy; if we humble our ſelves, God will lift us up. The ſorrows of Goſpel-repentance are like the ſorrows of a woman in travail, who (as Chriſt ſpeaks, *John* 16.21.) *ſtraightway forgets her pain, for joy that a man is born into the world.* The pangs and throws of godly ſorrow are therefore ſaid by the Apoſtle to cauſe repentance not to be repented of, becauſe that repentance brings forth joy to be rejoyced in, a maſculine joy, joy that a Man-child of Grace to build up our ſpiritual houſe is brought into the world. *If thou return to the Almighty thou ſhalt be built up.* And

Thou ſhalt put iniquity far from thy Tabernacles.

The word imports, Firſt, Putting away with indignation: Secondly, Putting away to the utmoſt diſtance: Therefore we tranſlate, *Put away far*; 'tis but two words in the Original: *Thou ſhalt put iniquity far*, &c. Iniquity may be taken either for ſin, or for the effects of ſin, that is, puniſhment: if we take it in the firſt ſence for ſin it ſelf, then this latter clauſe muſt be underſtood as a duty; *If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thee*; that is, it is thy duty to *put away iniquity far from thee*; as if *Eliphaz* here did ſet forth more fully what repentance is; *Thou ſhalt be built up, if thou return to the Almighty*; that is, if thou return ſo as to put thy iniquity far from thee. If we take iniquity in the ſecond ſence, for the puniſhment of iniquity, then the words are a promiſe: As if he had ſaid, *If thou return*, &c. then thou ſhalt rid and diſcharge thy ſelf and thy houſe of all the troubleſome effects of ſin; Thou ſhalt put iniquity, or all the ſad iſſues and conſequents of iniquity far from thee, none of them ſhall touch thee to annoy thee.

Maſter *Broughton* pitcheth upon the former ſence in his tranſlation, *If thou caſt far off unrighteouſneſs from thy tents.* That gives a perfect ſence to the whole ſentence.

Hence Obſerve, That, *In true repentance ſin muſt be utterly caſt off and put away.*

We return not at all to the Almighty, till we wholly turn from ſin; nor will the Almighty build up our houſe, till we put iniquity quite out of our houſe; till we turn it out of houſe and home; out of the houſe of our family, out of the home of our hearts; nor is it enough to put ſin away a little, or a little way, but it is muſt be put far away. There are ſeveral degrees of putting away ſin: Firſt, there is a putting it away out of our practice, or converſation, ſo that it hath no viſible being or abode in us or with us. This is a putting of ſin away; but this is not a putting of ſin far away. Secondly, There is a putting of it out of our affections, or out of our hearts; not as if we could keep it (while we are in the body) from having a place or dwelling there; but as keeping it from having a throne or reigning there. This is to put ſin very far away from us; it is no great thing to put ſin out of our hands; but it is hard to get it out of our hearts; Hypocrites will (poſſibly) lay down the practice of it, but ſtill their ſpirits cleave to it; they are not at all alienated from the love of it, but only reſtrained from the acting of it; ſuch are oftentimes kept from doing iniquity; but they do not at all put away their iniquity, much leſs put it far away. As it is with a natural man in reference to his doing of good, ſo to his not doing of evil: If good be at any time in his practice, yet it is far from his ſpirit, he hath no mind to it, he cannot ſay the Law of God is in his heart, or that he delights to do it; ſo if evil be at any time put out of his practice, yet it is ſtill in his ſpirit, his mind is toward it, he cannot ſay that his heart is withdrawn from it, or that he hates it. No, but as the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeaks of the ſtubborn *Jews* (Ezek. 11.21.) *Their heart walketh after the heart of their deteſtable things.* As every godly man is (in the main) like *David*, A man after Gods own heart, and walketh after the heart of God; ſo every ungodly man is a man after the heart of the Devil; and every Idolater or worſhipper of falſe Gods (who is one of the worſt of ungodly men) is after the heart of his falſe Gods, and he walketh after the heart of his falſe Gods, which the Prophet calls *deteſtable things.* Whatſoever is moſt after the heart, or according to the deſires and commands of an Idol, that the idolatrous heart walketh after, that is, he loves it, he delights in it; and thus doth every natural mans heart walk after the heart of his luſt, though ſometime his feet walk not after it, or he may ſeem to lay it out of his hand. But he that turns indeed from ſin, deals with it, when he is repenting of it, as the Lord doth when he is pardoning it. How is that? The Lord in pardoning ſin, puts it far from us (*Pſal.* 103.12.) *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us*: That is, He hath removed them from us to the utmoſt imaginable diſtance; for ſuch is that of the Eaſt from the Weſt: They and we ſhall no more meet together again, then the Eaſt and Weſt ſhall or can meet at all. And thus in repenting a godly man deſires to put his ſin as far from him as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, that he and they may never meet together in the practice of them, as he is aſſured that God hath ſo pardoned them that they and he ſhall never meet together in the puniſhment of them. *Thou ſhalt put iniquity far*

From thy Tabernacles.] In which words he includes more then his own perſonal repentance; for by the *Tabernacles*, we are to underſtand the whole family or houſhold; the Tabernacle containing, is put for the perſons contained; in this *Eliphaz* ſeems to ſtrike at *Job* for his former courſe: As if he had ſaid, *Wickedneſs hath lodged not only in thy heart, but in thy houſe, in thy family, children, and ſervants. And this ſurely was it which provoked the Lord to cruſh thy family of children and their ſervants with the fall of a houſe; now therefore I counſel thee to put away iniquity from thy Tabernacle, that is, from all that belong to thee, from all that are under thy ſhadow, and are committed to thy truſt and charge.*

Innuit ante hac nec Jobum *nec ejus filios culpa vacaſſe, ideo eum everſum & filios extinctos.* Merc.

Hence Obſerve, *That they who repent truly ſhould indeavour to purge ſin, not only from themſelves, but from all that belong to them.*

They ſhould cleanſe not their perſons only, but their families, they ſhould ſweep their houſes, as well as their hearts from ſin. (*Gen.* 35.2.) *Then* Jacob *ſaid to his houſhold, and to all that were with him, put away the ſtrange Gods* (or, the *eſtranging Gods* (ſuch are Idols, they are not only *ſtrange*, becauſe new Gods; and *ſtrange*, becauſe 'tis a ſtrange or wonderful thing that man ſhould be ſo beſotted as to worſhip ſuch things for Gods; but they are eſtranging Gods) becauſe they withdraw or ſteal away the heart from the true God; therefore ſaid *Jacob, put away the ſtrange Gods*) *that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments.* This outward changing of their garments ſignified the changing or cleanſing of their ſouls. God principally looks at that, and the outward ceremony hath no acceptance at all without the inward ſincerity: In compariſon of which, as the Lord ſaid in *Joel, Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; ſo he would ſay here, *Change your hearts, and not your garments.* Now *Jacob* was very careful that this bleſſed *change of garments*, betokening the change and cleanſing both of heart and life, ſhould be the livery of all his family and houſhold Family ſins bring family judgments as well as perſonal: and they that have the charge of a family, have (in a great degree) a charge of ſouls as well as of bodies; every Maſter of a family hath *cure of ſouls*: And he is to ſee ſo far as lyeth in him, that no ſin nor wickedneſs remain or be harboured in his family, that his children and ſervants live not in ignorance, nor in any evil. In *Numb. 6. Moſes* gives charge to the Congregation, *That they ſhould depart from the tents of thoſe wicked men*, Corah, Dathan, *and* Abiram. It is dangerous to be near the families of the wicked, but it is more dangerous to have wickedneſs remaining in our family, in our ſervants, or in our children. And if Maſters endeavour not by all due means to remove ſin out of their family, that in a little time may remove them out of their family, or (as we ſay) eat them out of houſe and home. *Thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacle.* Thus much of this part of the verſe, in the firſt ſence, as *iniquity* is taken for ſin; yet,

Further, As the word *iniquity* is taken for *puniſhment*, *Thou ſhalt put away iniquity* (or the effects of iniquity) *far from thy Tabernacle*; and then the words are both a new Promiſe, and a further explication of what is meant by being *built up*, which was the former Promiſe, *Thou ſhalt be built up, and all evil ſhall depart away from thy Tabernacle. Iniquity*, which properly ſignifies the evil of ſin, is often put in Scripture, for the evils of trouble and ſuffering; and as all acknowledge this to be a truth, ſo ſome judge it the truth ſpecially intended in this place. I ſhall therefore briefly note from it,

> That, *When we truly return to God from ſin, then ſuffering evils depart from us and ours.*

For though the Lord be pleaſed to diſpence variouſly for trial of his people, and often ſuffers the evil of affliction to hang about their Tabernacles, who deſire ſincerely, and endeavour faithfully to *put all iniquity far from their Tabernacles*; yet this is the Promiſe of God, and this hath been often experienced by Godly men, That God hath turned trouble out of their doors, when they have humbly and zealouſly laboured to turn ſin out of their hearts.

Eliphaz having incouraged *Job* by this general Promiſe, he draweth it forth into particulars. And that, firſt, in reference to outward things.

Verſe 24. **Then ſhalt thou lay up gold as duſt, and the gold of** Ophir **as the ſtones of the brooks.**

בצב *Munire. Aurum lectiſſimum quaſi ab igne munitum, aut quod ſit homini munimentum.*

Then] That is, when thou haſt acquainted thy ſelf with God; then, when thou haſt laid up his Law in thy heart; then, when thou haſt returned to the Almighty thy ſelf, and put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacle, *Then thou ſhalt lay up gold as duſt*, &c. The word which we render *Gold*, ſignifies to fortifie, or to defend, and it is tranſlated *a defence* at *ver.25. Solomon* ſaith (*Eccleſ.7.12.*) not only, that wiſdom is a defence, but that *money is a defence* (that is, it procures defence) and Gold is the chief of money. Though Gold be not a defence *formally*, yet *virtually* it is; Gold defends it ſelf againſt all the forces of fire; and it is a principal means of defending us againſt the fire and fury of the greateſt dangers. *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as duſt*, &c. But Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.6.19.*) *Lay not up treaſures for your ſelves on earth.* And it was a Rule given concerning the King of *Iſrael* in the Levitical Law, long before *Iſrael* had a King (*Deut.17.17.*) *He ſhall not greatly multiply to himſelf ſilver and gold.* How then doth *Eliphaz* ſay, that he who repents *ſhall lay up gold as the duſt?* Is that fit work for him? I anſwer, The words are not to be underſtood as an exhortation to bend his endeavours to the gathering of riches; but as a promiſe from God that he ſhall, by a bleſſing from above, gather ſtore of riches here below. *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as the duſt.* By gold here, and ſilver in the next verſe, we are to underſtand all manner of riches; becauſe gold and ſilver are the chief riches, therefore all is contained under them. And when he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as the duſt*, the words receive variety of rendrings: Some thus, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold above the duſt*; as if he ſhould ſay, thou ſhalt have more gold then duſt, which is a ſtrain of Rhetorick, expreſſing abundance: Others read, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold upon the duſt*: As (*Pſal. 24.2.*) *He hath founded it upon the Seas*: A third renders, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold by the duſt.* Like that (*Pſal.* 1. 3.) *A tree planted by the river ſide*: A fourth thus, by way of counſel, *And lay gold in the duſt.* Which two latter readings are expounded as a direction given to *Job*, how he ſhould lay up gold; he muſt not lay up gold in his heart and ſpirit, but in the duſt, or by the duſt. As if he had ſaid, *Put that purer duſt, that better concocted and refined duſt, in the common duſt; put the duſt to duſt; put thy gold in its proper place, where God and Nature put it. 'Tis but duſt, and ſo a fit companion for the duſt*: Yea (ſay ſome) 'tis as if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Do not ſo much as make room for it in thy houſe, provide not cheſts for it, let it lye where it had its original: It came from the duſt, there leave it, return it back to its own Country, to the place of its nativity.* A Heathen hath this notion concerning gold and ſilver, *&c.* And he labours much to ſhew, that the ſite and poſition of theſe things in Nature holds forth how we ought to receive and eſtimate them; *Even Nature* (by which he means the ordinary courſe ſet in Nature) *draws us off from coveting gold and ſilver; there is nothing which may provoke or ſtir up covetouſneſs, which God hath advanced or ſet up high in the order of Nature: Gold and ſilver are the chief objects of covetouſneſs; now both theſe, as alſo whatſoever elſe man is preſſed about, and as it were trodden under foot in the dirt for, by burdenſom or covetous cares, God hath thruſt or trodden under our feet. Gold doth not fall out of the Clouds of Heaven, but lyeth under the Clods of the Earth*: There God hath put them to be trampled and trodden under our feet, that we might ſcorn to have our affections trampled upon and trodden under foot by them, or ſuch things as they. So then, all that this interpretation or tranſlation aims at in ſaying, *Gold muſt be put in the duſt*, is only to ſhew us, that our eſtimations ſhould be taken off from it, or that we ſhould place it as low in our thoughts, as God hath placed it in the order of Nature. And this is a ſpiritual ſence, ſuiting that of our Saviour, *Lay not up for your ſelves treaſures on earth*; make not great preparations to keep your earthly treaſures, eſpecially let them not be kept in your heart, or lye there where Chriſt only and the treaſures of Heaven ought to be laid up. Put your gold in the duſt, or let it be eſteemed as duſt, ſeeing at beſt it is but well concocted duſt. So gold and ſilver are called (*Amos 2.7.*) *That pant after the duſt of the earth upon the head of the poor.* So the Prophet deſcribes their extream covetouſneſs, who will be rich though it be by impoveriſhing thoſe who are pooreſt.

Et pone in pulvere Aurum. Coc.

Noli animū auro apponere, nimiſq; illud diligere, ſed nihili æſtima; dejice in terram unde ortum eſt, æſtima ut terram & lapides petræ. Scult.

Pone ubi deus & Natura poſuit. Coc.

Nulli nos vitio natura conciliat, nihil quidē quod avaritiam noſtrā irritaret poſuit in aperto: pedibus aurum & argentum ſubjecit, calcandum ac premendum dedit, & quicquid eſt propter quod calcamur & premimur. Sen. ep. 94.

Yet, I conceive, in this place *Eliphaz* hath another aim: And that where he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as the duſt*, his meaning only is, *Thou ſhalt lay up plenty of gold*, or thou ſhalt gather much riches; for the duſt of the earth, or ſand of the ſea, are uſed frequently to ſignifie abundance, or the exceeding numerouſneſs of things, or perſons; *Who can count the duſt of* Jacob? *and the number of the fourth part of Iſrael?* (Numb. 23. 10.) That is, they are as the duſt that cannot be counted, or numbred. That was the Promiſe made to *Abraham* (Gen. 13. 16.) *I will make thy ſeed as the duſt of the earth.* So here, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as the duſt*; that is, gold more then thou canſt tell, or caſt up: Thou ſhalt have not only enough, but even more then enough. *Job* was very rich before; now ſaith *Eliphaz*, *Thou ſhalt have gold as the duſt*; thy riches ſhall be increaſed, thou ſhalt have a greater ſtore and ſtock then ever, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as the duſt. And*, as it followeth,

The Gold of Ophir **as the ſtones of the brook.**

'Tis the ſame thing in another tenour of words; the Hebrew is, *Thou ſhalt lay up* Ophir *as the ſtones of the brook.* The word *gold* is not expreſſed in the Original; yet it may well be underſtood; *Ophir* is put for the Gold of *Ophir*, becauſe *Ophir* was the place of Gold, yea, of the richeſt Gold (1 *Kings* 9. 27,28.) *They came to* Ophir, *and fet from thence gold four hundred and twenty tallents, and brought it to King*

Ophir *nomen Inſulæ unde aurum primæ notæ adferebatur; quod inde* Ophir *appellatum, hoc eſt, ut quidam opinantur* Obryſum *quaſi* Ophiriſum. Druſ.

Solomon. *Ophir* was a noted place in thoſe times for Gold, both in reference to the plenty and purity of it. 'Tis a queſtion much controverted, where *Ophir is*; ſome making it to be an Iſland in *Africa*; others place it in *India*; ſince the diſcovery of *America*, or the *Weſt-Indies*, many contend, that *Ophir* is now called *Peru*; And they have (as they conceive) a probable ground for this opinion from that place in the holy Story (*2 Chron.* 3.6.) Where 'tis ſaid, *He* (that is, *Solomon*) *garniſhed the houſe with precious ſtones for beauty, and the gold was gold of* Paruaim, which is near in ſound to the name of that Gold-abounding Countrey in *America* called *Peru*. I ſhall not undertake to decide this Geographical Controverſie about *Ophir*: That which is agreed on all hands is enough for my purpoſe, and the explication of this Text, that *Ophir* was a Countrey famous in ancient times, both for the plenty and excellency of the Gold found there, and brought from thence. Therefore ſaid *Eliphaz*, *Thou ſhalt lay up* Ophir, that is, *the Gold of* Ophir, pure and precious Gold.

Vide Bold. *in hunc locum* Jobi.

As the ſtones of the brook.] That is thou ſhalt have abundance of gold; to lay up gold *as the duſt*, and to lay it up *as the ſtones of the brook*, or as the ſtones of the valley, are parallel expreſſions for plenty of Gold, ſutable to thoſe Hyperboles (*2 Chron.* 1.15.) *The King made gold and ſilver at* Jeruſalem *as plenteous as ſtones*, &c. And *Ch.* 9. of the ſame book (*v.* 27.) *The King made ſilver in* Jeruſalem *as ſtones, and Cedar trees made he as the Sicamore trees that are in the low plain in abundance*. Thus in the Text *Job* is promiſed to lay up the Gold of *Ophir*, *as the ſtones of the brook*.

The Vulgar tranſlation reads differently, *He ſhall give thee for earth a Rock, and for a Rock ſtreams of Gold*; which is a proverbial ſpeech, implying a change for the better: As if he had ſaid, Thou before who hadſt a ſandy foundation, ſhall now build upon a Rock, as (*Matth.* 7.27.) And we find ſuch language in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 60.7.) where the Lord promiſeth, *For braſs I will bring gold, for iron ſilver, for wood braſs*, &c. So here, *For earth I will give thee ſtone, and for ſtone golden brooks, or brooks of gold*; that is, *thoſe brooks where gold is*; or, *I will give thee much gold out of thoſe brooks*.

Dabit pro terra ſilicē & pro ſilice torrentes aureos. Vulg.

Junius ſeems to favour this tranſlation moſt of all, rendring the whole verſe thus, connecting it with the former; *Thou ſhalt be built up*, &c. *and that by giving thee for the duſt the choiceſt gold, and for the rock the river gold of* Ophir. By all aſſuring *Job* of a happineſs in his civil ſtate in caſe he did change or mend in his ſpiritual ſtate. Then he who had ſo great a change in his worldly ſtate for the worſe, ſhou'd have a greater change in his worldly ſtate for the better. The next verſe is a continuation of the Promiſe, much to the ſame intent, and almoſt in the ſame words, and therefore I ſhall open that alſo before I give any Obſervations.

Idq; ponendo pro pulvere lectiſſimum aurum & pro rupe Ophirinū *fluviatile.* Jun.

Verſe 25. Yea, the Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver.

There is ſome difference in the reading of this Verſe, for the word which we tranſlate *defence*, is the ſame which we tranſlate *gold* in the former Verſe. And hence ſome tranſlate thus, *Thy gold ſhall be mighty*. Making the word *Shaddai* (which is one of the names of God, and uſually rendred Almighty) to be as an Epithite to the word *Gold*. *Thy Gold ſhall be ſtrong or mighty*. And thus ſome Tranſlations render the word *Shaddai* (Ezek. 1.24.) where the Prophet ſaith, *I heard the noiſe of their wings like the noiſe of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty*; ſo we render; but others thus, *As a mighty voice*: So in the preſent Text, whereas we ſay, *The Almighty ſhall be thy defence*, or according to the ſtrictneſs of the word, *The Almighty ſhall be thy gold*: Others give it thus, *Thy gold ſhall be mighty*. And this anſwers the latter clauſe of the verſe, where we read, *Thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver*; yet put in the Margin, *Thou ſhalt have ſilver of ſtrength*, or *ſtrong ſilver*. Theſe readings have an elegancy in them.

But I ſhall keep to our own, which is profitable to us, and ſuitable to the Text; *Yea, the Almighty ſhall be thy defence*; the Particle (*Yea*) ſheweth, that this is a higher ſtep of mercy then the former: As if he had ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not only have gold, which is a defence, but better then gold, even the Almighty for thy defence*; or, *God, who is better then gold, will be thy defence, and the defence of thy gold.* The Hebrew word is plural, *Defences*, which intimates; Firſt, All ſorts of defence: Secondly, Strong defence; *The Almighty ſhall be thy defences*: All manner of defence, and a ſtrong defence unto thee.

> Hence Note, *God himſelf is pleaſed to be the Lord Protector of his people (who repent and turn to him) both in their perſons and eſtates.*

There are many in the world who have gold; but there are few who have this defence for it. The Prophet *Haggai* ſpeaks of thoſe who earned money, but put it *into a bag with holes*; that is, they could not hold or keep what they had gotten. It is the Lord that eſtabliſheth the creature to us, and defends it for us. The beſt things in the world take wings and are gone, unleſs the Lord ſtay them with us; and unleſs the Lord defend and keep them for us, they would ſoon be pull'd out of our poſſeſſion. Some mens eſtates waſt away they know not how, there is a hole in the bottom of the bag they thought not of. Others have their eſtates violently taken away from them, becauſe the Lord is not their defence. The Lord is the Protector of his people, the Lord is a Caſtle, a ſtrong Tower, all manner of fortifications about his people, to defend their eſtates and perſons, much more their ſouls. And *Eliphaz* ſeems to mind *Job* that he once had, but now had loſt this defence; God once made a hedge about him, or rather was a hedge about him, but he opened a gap or withdrew, and then in came the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* and ſpoiled all. Now then (ſaith he) return to the Lord, and he will once again be thy defence. *How ſafe are they that have God for their defence, who live under the ſhadow and covert of the Almighty! How ſafe are they* (I ſay) *and all that they have.*

The vulgar Latine is ſo full of this ſence, that he leaves out the word *defence*, and only ſaith, *The Almighty ſhall be (or ſhall ſtand up for thee) againſt thine enemies*; and in this perfect outward happineſs conſiſteth. For to have much, and that ſecured, is all we can deſire for the things of this world. Many have gold, and riches ſtore, but the thing that troubles them is this, how to make all ſure; *Return to the Lord, and he ſhall be thy defence*; he ſhall be an *Aſſurance Office to thee*, he ſhall protect thee againſt all winds and weathers, againſt all enemies and pirates: The Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and the defence of thy gold.

Eritque omnipotens contra hoſtes tuos. Vulg.

Further, Becauſe the word which we render *defence*, ſignifieth gold alſo, as was ſhewed; therefore ſome keep to that reading, and thus tranſlate this twenty-fifth verſe, *And the Almighty ſhall be thy choice gold, and ſilver, and ſtrength unto thee.* Which reading is likewiſe followed by Mr. *Broughton*, *And the Almighty will be thy plentiful gold, and ſilver of ſtrength to thee.* This ſence of the word is comfortable indeed: for to have told *Job* only this, *Thou ſhalt lay up gold as the duſt, and gold of* Ophir *as the ſtones of the brook*; this had been (though a great mercy, yet but a common mercy) ſuch as the men of the world have and enjoy. *Many that know not God lay up gold as the duſt; and they who ſerve him not have often ſtore of ſilver.* But when God himſelf ſaith, *I will be your gold and ſilver*, this is not only the richeſt of temporal, but the riches of all ſpiritual mercies. For when 'tis ſaid, *The Lord ſhall be thy choice gold and ſilver of ſtrength to thee*, the meaning is, he will be better to thee then the choiceſt gold, and a greater ſtrength then ſilver unto thee. This is a rare and a diſtinguiſhing mercy. *Wicked men may have gold from God; but no wicked man hath God for his gold.*

Eritque omnipotens lectiſſimum aurum tuum & argentū vireſque tibi. Jun.

> Hence Note, *That God himſelf is the riches, and fulneſs, the gold and ſilver of his people.*

The Lord is my portion, ſaith my ſoul: Whoſe ſoul ſaid this? It was the ſoul of a mourning *Jeremy*. And when ſaid he this? Even then, when their lands and houſes were poſſeſſed by the enemy; even then, when their gold and ſilver with all their goodly things were carried captive into *Babylon*; then *Jeremy* ſaid, *The Lord is my portion* (Lam. 3.24.) the gold and ſilver which I had in my houſe are gone, but my gold and ſilver in Heaven is not gone into captivity, he is my portion ſtill and for ever. *They who have God for their gold and ſilver, are happier and richer then gold and ſilver can make them: What can be ſaid more to draw our hearts to God, then this promiſe, that God will not only give us riches, but that himſelf will be our riches?* What can be ſaid more to take a covetous mans heart off from the love of his gold then this? Take thy heart off from thy gold, and God will be thy gold. And ſo what can be ſpoken more prevailingly to the voluptuous man, who delights to ſwim in rivers of ſenſual pleaſures: O take off thy heart from theſe pleaſures of ſin, which are but for a ſeaſon, and God will be thy pleaſure for evermore? What ſtronger Argument to take down the ambition of man, who hunts after high places and dignities in the World, then to tell him, withdraw from this purſuit, and *God will be thy honour, and thy high place*? We may ſay to the ambitious, to the covetous, to the voluptuous, and in a word, to all ſorts of ſinners, Ye ſhall find all that your ſins can offer you, and infinitely more in God; your honours, and pleaſures, your gold and ſilver, you ſhall have altogether in him. One of the Ancients ſpeaks well and truly to the point; *That man is too too covetous whom God doth not ſuffice*; or, *who is not ſatisfied with God*. The only true reaſon why any man is not ſatisfied with God, is, becauſe he *knoweth not God*: He that can ſay knowingly, *The Lord is my God*, cannot but ſay, *I am ſatisfied. When God is ours, all is ours*. And the pooreſt who are rich in faith, have as great a ſhare in this riches, as the richeſt. *God is the poor mans gold*; they that have neither gold nor ſilver in their purſe (as *Peter* ſaid to the impotent m[illegible]) may have gold in their hearts. The Almighty is their gold and ſilver too, as it followeth in the Text.

Nimis eſt avarus cui deus non ſufficit. Bern. *Deus meus & omnia.*

And thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver.

Some render, *Thou ſhalt have ſilver of wearineſs*: He means it not of ſilver, as it wearies a man in getting of it; but he means it of ſo great a quantity or ſum of ſilver, as ſhall weary a man to tell it, or trouble him to weigh it. The manner of accounting ſilver was anciently by weight, hence that is paid in money is called a *Penſion*. We tranſlate fully to that ſence, *Thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver*; for they that have ſo much as tires and wearies them to tell or weigh, have ſtore enough. We put *ſilver of ſtrength* in the Margin. Silver is a ſtrong metal, and it is ſtrength, great ſtrength to man. This rendring ſuits beſt with the beginning of the verſe, *The Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have ſilver of ſtrength, or ſilver to ſtrengthen thee*. As for plenty, that was fully ſet forth in the former verſe, where he is promiſed *Gold as the duſt, and the Gold of* Ophir *as the ſtones of the Brook*. Beſides, the word is divers times applyed to expreſs ſtrength by; but rarely, if at all in Scripture, to expreſs plenty by; and here our Tranſlators render it ſo, not properly, but tropically, as appears before; for properly it expreſſeth the greateſt ſtrength: As firſt, *The ſtrength of the Unicorn* (Num. 23. 22.) *God brought him out of* Egypt, *he hath as it were the ſtrength of an Unicorn*. Secondly, *The ſtrength of Mountains* (Pſal. 95. 4.) therefore I conceive it is beſt rendred *ſilver of ſtrength*; as gold is cloathed with a word which ſignifies *defence*, ſo ſilver is joyned with a word that ſignifies *ſtrength*, becauſe there is much ſtrength and defence in both, money being the ſinews or ſtrength of war: So that to ſay, *Thou ſhalt have ſilver of ſtrength*, is as if he had ſaid, *Thy ſilver ſhall be a ſtrength, or a bleſſing to thee*. Some have ſilver, and it is no ſtrength to them; or he calleth it, *Silver of ſtrength*, becauſe it ſhould be confirmed and eſtabliſhed for his uſe, and in his poſſeſſion. He ſhould find, by experience, that there was tack in it, that it was ſolid ſilver, or ſilver that had ſtrength in it. So then, theſe are but ſeveral expreſſions of the ſame thing, all which gathered together heighten up the promiſe of this outward mercy; he ſhould have gold, and God would be his defence, yea, his gold, and he ſhould have ſilver plenty, enough of it to make a man weary to tell it; or he ſhould have ſilver of ſtrength, his ſilver ſhould be a ſtrength to him, and all this is aſſured him upon his repentance and return to the Almighty.

תועפות *à radice* יעף *laſſus ſatigatus fuit. Argentum laſſitudinū; quod præ copia laſſos reddit homines numerando illud vel certè appendendo. Nam olim appendebant argentum, unde* Penſionis *vocabulum in ſermone latino.* Druſ.

Nihil tam ſanctum quod violati, nihil tam munitum quod non expugnari pecunia poſſit. Cic.

בסף תועפות

Hence Note, Firſt, *That Godlineſs is the beſt and neareſt way, even to worldly gain.*

Godlineſs is gainful, though a godly man ſhould dye a beggar; but beſides there is worldly gain in it, theſe promiſes are not made in vain. Chriſt ſpeaks as much (*Matth.* 6. 33.) *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs thereof, and all other things* (even gold and ſilver) *ſhall be added to you.* And the Apoſtle is full for it (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) *Godlineſs is profitable for all things*; 'tis good to make men rich, it will bring in worldly profits; Godlineſs hath the promiſe of gold as well as of grace; of ſilver, as well as of pardon and peace; do not think that godlineſs is barren of outward bleſſings, or that we muſt needs loſe all gain in this world, by getting that which fits us for the Glory of the next world. Know, that as the Lord makes his wayes ſweet to his people by inward communications of himſelf, revealing his love and grace to them, yea, in them, ſo he makes his wayes ſweet to his people, by giving them outward good things, bleſſing their basket and their ſtore, filling their hearts with food and gladneſs.

Secondly Note, That, *The godly man may lawfully poſſeſs earthly riches, gold and ſilver.*

It is no ſin to be rich, but when riches are got by ſin: Poor *Lazarus* lay in the boſom of rich *Abraham*: As many poor men may be called the Devils poor; ſo ſome that are rich may be called Gods rich men. Again, if godlineſs have a promiſe (as it hath) of riches, then the godly may lawfully poſſeſs riches; which alſo may be inſtruments in their hands of glorifying God, and doing good among men. Nor can it be denyed that they know beſt how to uſe the things of the world and how to be the beſt Stewards of earthly treaſures, who are inſtructed for the Kingdom of Heaven, and are (as the Apoſtle *Peter* exhorts Saints to be (1 *Pet.* 4. 10.) *Good Stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Thirdly, Note, *That riches, gold and ſilver, are at Gods diſpoſe.*

He beſtows them where, and upon whom he pleaſeth. This promiſe of plenty of gold, upon repentance and returning to the Almighty, muſt needs procede from this ſuppoſition, that the Almighty hath gold and ſilver in his power. *The world is the Lords, and the fulneſs of it* (Pſal. 50. 12.) *God is the beſt* Indies *for gold.* If any would trade for gold proſperouſly, let them trade heaven-ward; for God is every where Lord of the ſoyl, and he ſaith of all the precious *mines* hidden in the bowels of the earth, *They are mine*. See how the Lord ſpeaks as the great Proprietor of all the gold and ſilver, of all the good things of this world (*Hoſ.* 2. 8, 9.) *She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplied her ſilver and gold, which they prepared for* Baal: *therefore I will return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the ſeaſon thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax*, &c. *All's mine.* Thus the Lord voucheth himſelf the great owner of all theſe things; all the gold and ſilver, all the wool and the flax, all the corn and wine are his. When the people and Princes of *Iſrael*, with *David* their King, offered ſo willingly and ſo liberally gold and ſilver, *&c.* for the building of the Temple, *David* makes this confeſſion for them all (1 *Chron.* 29. 14.) *All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* And may he not do what he will with his own? Men think they may, ſurely God both may and will.

Fourthly Obſerve, That, *the plenty and ſtability of the creature, is from God, as well as the poſſeſſion of it.*

Eliphaz promiſeth *Job* from the Lord, *Gold as the duſt, and as the ſtones of the brook, with ſilver of ſtrength.* That we have it in ſuch or ſuch a proportion is from the Lord, as much as that we have any thing at all; he can give much as well as little; and that our proportion hath a defence and ſtrength in it, is from the Lord; therefore we ſhould honour the Almighty for every portion and proportion of worldly riches, and for the eſtabliſhment of our portion whatſoever it is. Silver and gold have no ſtrength in them unleſs the Lord who giveth theſe give them ſtrength, and bid them ſtay with us to do us good.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *We may lawfully poſſeſs abundance of outward things.*

'Tis ſinful to make abundance our aim, or to contend for much in temporals; to do ſo in and about ſpirituals is our duty, and our contention for the higheſt degree, our commendation. We ſhould deſign it, to lay up the Gold of Grace, as the duſt, and the Silver of Sanctification, as the ſtones of the brook: We ſhould forget all that we have, that we might get what we have not. Our deſirings while pitcht upon an eternal object cannot be immoderate, but in temporals they quickly may: and therefore as to them, our moderation ſhould be known to all men. Yet if God give in abundance of temporals in the lawful exerciſe of our callings, we may warrantably enjoy it as a bleſſing from him. The providence of God doth often bound us to a little, and we ought to be contented with the leaſt portion of outward things, with bare food and raiment; but the Word of God doth not bound us to a little, nor doth it ſay, it is unlawful to have much. And as it is not unlawful to have much of the world; ſo it is a great exerciſe and tryal of our Graces to have much: As there are ſome Graces of a Chriſtian which come not to tryal till we are in want; ſo there are other Graces which come not to tryal unleſs we have abundance. Want tryeth our patience, and our dependance upon God for a ſupply of what we have not; and abundance tryeth our temperance, our humility, our liberality, yea, and our dependance upon, and faith in God, for the ſanctifying, bleſſing, and making of that comfortable to us which we have. When a rich man ſeeth an emptineſs in his abundance without the enjoyments of God in it, he exerciſeth as high a grace, and ſheweth as heavenly a frame of mind, as that poor man doth who ſeeth and enjoyeth a fulneſs in God, in the midſt of all his emptineſs. And therefore *Paul* puts both theſe alike upon a divine teaching (*Phil.* 4. 12.) *In all things I am inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to ſuffer need.* And had it been unlawful to enjoy plenty, *Eliphaz* had never preſſed *Job* to repentance by this motive, *The Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver.*

VERS. 26, 27.

For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God.

Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy Vows.

IT hath been ſhewed from the former Context, how *Eliphaz* encouraged, yea, provoked *Job* to repentance, and returning to God, by the propoſal of many promiſes, by promiſes of outward and temporal mercies, gold, ſilver, and protection. He might have what he pleaſed of God for the comforts of this life, if his life were once pleaſing unto God. In this latter part of the Chapter he riſeth higher and propoſeth ſpiritual promiſes: And he begins with the beſt of ſpiritual promiſes, *The free enjoyment of God himſelf.*

Verſe 26. **For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty**, &c.

As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *If thou doſt indeed repent and turn from ſin, thy conſcience which now troubles, yea, torments thee, ſhall have ſweet peace in God, and thou who now groveleſt with thy eyes down to the ground, by reaſon of thy preſſing guilt and miſery, ſhalt then with confidence lift up thy face unto God in prayer, and thou ſhalt find God ſo ready at hand with an anſwer, that thou ſhalt ſee cauſe chearfully to perform thy Vows, which thou madeſt to him in the day of trouble:* That's the general ſcope of this latter part of the Chapter. I ſhall now proceed to explicate the particulars.

For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.

The firſt word implyeth a reaſon of what he had ſaid before. Having ſpoken of temporal promiſes, he confirms his intereſt in them by aſſuring him of ſpiritual; *For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.* As if he had ſaid, *God will not deny thee outward comforts in the creature, ſeeing he intends to give thee the higheſt comforts, even delight in himſelf.* 'Tis an Argument like that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* Thus *Eliphaz* ſeems to argue, Seeing God will give thee himſelf to rejoyce in, or to rejoyce in himſelf, how can he deny thee gold and ſilver with thoſe other conveniencies which concern this life? Theſe being indeed as *nothing* in compariſon of *himſelf*.

Then ſhalt thou delight, &c.] **Then**, that is, when thou returneſt to God, and not till then, then thou mayeſt expect to receive much ſweetneſs from him, ſuch ſweetneſs as thy ſoul never taſted or experienced to this day.

Then ſhalt thou have thy delight.] The word ſignifies to delight, or take contentment, whether it be outward contentment, or inward contentment, the delight of the body, or the delight of the mind; and ſo an univerſal delight, thy whole delight ſhall be in the Lord. *Moſes* (*Deut.* 28. 56.) deſcribes thoſe women by this word, who were made up of delight, *Thy tender and delicate woman*; that is, ſuch as are ſo delicate, that they are the delight of all who behold them, or who are themſelves altogether devoted to their delights, who (as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of the wanton widow (1 *Tim.* 5.) *live in pleaſure*; theſe are threatened with ſuch calamities as ſhould render their very lives a pain to them. The word is uſed again (*Iſa.* 58. 13, 14.) Where the Prophet ſpeaks of keeping the Sabbath; *If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleaſure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight*; What then? *Then ſhalt thou delight thy ſelf in the Lord*, thou ſhalt have curious delight, all manner of delight in the Lord, *If thou call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable and ſhalt honour him*; if thou haſt a delight in duty, thou ſhalt have the delight of reward.

ענג *Delectatus fuit corpore vel animo. Sonat etiam aliquid delicatum & molle.*

Thus *Eliphaz*, *Then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.* And 'tis conſiderable that he doth not ſay, thou ſhalt have thy delight in the merciful, or gracious God, but in the Almighty; in him thou ſhalt have thy delight, whoſe power is over all, and who is able to do whatſoever pleaſeth him. Even the power and all-mightineſs of the Lord ſhall be as pleaſant to thee as his mercy and loving kindneſs.

Further, *delight*, in the general nature of it, conſiſts in theſe two things.

Firſt, In the ſuitableneſs and conveniency of the object, and the faculty, whether ſenſitive or intellective.

Secondly, It conſiſts in the reflection and application of the faculty upon the object. So that to delight our ſelves in the Almighty, hath theſe two things in it.

Firſt, A ſuitableneſs in our ſouls to the Lord.

Secondly, The ſouls reflecting upon the Lord as good and gracious unto us. This reflect-act breeds and brings in delight, and works the heart to an unſpeakable joy in God. By this laſt and higheſt act of faith, we take in the ſweetneſs of the Almighty, and delight our ſelves in him mightily. This Faith doth not only ſuck the Promiſes, wherein the love of God is evidenced to us, but is it ſelf an evidence of the love of God to us. *We ſuck and are ſatisfied with the breaſts of conſolation* by believing (*Iſa.* 66. 11.) that is, we believing draw forth that ſweetneſs of the promiſe which the Word declares to be the portion of Believers. Thus ſpiritual delight is made up; and therefore Saints are ſaid *to rejoyce in believing, with joy unſpeakable and full of glory* (1 Pet. 1. 3.) That is, having as much and as clear a manifeſtation, yea, participation and taſt of that Glory in believing, which is prepared and reſerved for them againſt the next life, as they are capable to receive, and more then they are able to expreſs, in this life. *Then ſhalt thou delight thy ſelf in the Almighty.* We may look upon the words firſt as a Command; and then obſerve,

That, *It is our duty to delight our ſelves in God.*

Delight in God, is both a priviledge and a duty, it is commanded in the Law, and it is promiſed in the Goſpel. God is pleaſed to give us many things in the world, not only for neceſſity, but for delight. A Heathen looking upon the various proviſions which the Great Creator hath made, not only for the maintenance of man in his being, but for his comfortable and pleaſurable being; ſome of which affect the ſenſes, the eye, the ear, the taſte, *&c.* others are ſweetly contentful to the underſtanding, with all the faculties of the ſoul, He (I ſay) concludes this from it, *The bountiful Creator hath provided for more then our neceſſity, or he hath provided more then will barely ſerve our turns to live upon, we are loved even up to our delights.* Now I ſay, though the Lord hath provided delights for us in the creature, yet it is our duty, our greateſt, our higheſt duty to delight chiefly in the Lord, to delight in him firſt, and to delight in nothing but in reference unto him; nothing ſhould be pleaſing to us, but as there is an impreſs or ſtamp of the love of God upon it, or as it taſtes of his goodneſs. And indeed what can delight us long but *this thought*; That God

Neq; enim neceſſitatibus, tantum noſtris proviſum eſt, uſque in deliciis amamur. Sen. l. 4. de Benefic. 5.

God delighteth in us, or that we are a delight to God; that God is good, and that God is good to us? having taſted his goodneſs, we ſhould love and delight in him, above all our delights. The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 137. 6.) preferred *Jeruſalem* above his chiefeſt joy; How much more ſhould we prefer the God of *Jeruſalem* above our chiefeſt joy. God delighteth in man whom he hath made, and who is his Son by Grace, next to Jeſus Chriſt, who is his Son by Nature; and Jeſus Chriſt delighteth in man whom he hath redeemed; And ſhould not man delight in his Maker, in his Father, in his Redeemer? We have a moſt divine deſcription of the delight which the Father takes in Chriſt his Son, and which Chriſt taketh in his redeemed ones (*Prov.* 8. 30, 31.) *Then was I by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight* (Chriſt was the delight of his Father; and he delighted in his Father) *rejoycing alwayes before him; rejoycing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delight was with the ſons of men.* Jeſus Chriſt himſelf takes up many of his delights with the ſons of men, whom he calls *the habitable parts of the earth*, even thoſe of the ſons of men that are a habitation of God through the Spirit. Now (I ſay) as the delight of the Father is in the Son, and the delight of the Son in the Father, and the delight both of Father and Son in the Saints, *in the habitable parts of the earth*, or *with the ſons of men*; ſo the delight of the ſons of men ſhould be in the Father, and in the Son; there ſhould our delight be, there ſhould we take our higheſt contentment.

Hæ ſunt piorum deliciæ & ſuaviſſimæ voluptates, deo placato frui, cujus etiam deliciæ ſunt habitare inter eos qui ipſum animo reverentur & colunt.

Secondly, The words are rather to be taken for a Promiſe; *Then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Lord: Then*, that is, when thou turneſt from ſinful delights, or delighteſt not in ſin, I aſſure thee of ſpiritual delight.

Whence Obſerve, *That they who mourn for, and turn from ſin, ſhall have delights in the Lord.*

When once ſin is bitter to us, the Lord will be ſweet to us; and until ſin be bitter to us, the Lord is not ſweet to us; ſin hinders our delightful enjoyment of the creature, it puts gall and wormwood into our diſh and cup, it is that which makes all relations grievous and burthenſome to us; yet this is but a ſmall matter, that it hinders us from the contentment and ſweetneſſes which are to be had in the creature; ſin takes us off from delighting in God. That ſoul cannot delight in the Almighty, who loveth and continueth in the love of ſin. If ſuch profeſs delight in God, it is but a falſe boaſt, and a high preſumption; it is impoſſible for ſuch to delight in the Lord indeed. *Job* (*Chap.* 27. 10.) ſaith of the Hypocrite, *Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? Will he alwayes call upon God?* He may pretend to a delight in the Almighty, he may have ſome flaſhes, ſome raptures, but his joyes and delights are not in the Almighty; what joyes ſoever he hath they are in ſomewhat below God; the Hypocrite may delight himſelf in ſomewhat received from the Almighty, in ſome preſent benefit, or future expectation that he hath from the Almighty; he cannot delight in the Almighty himſelf, or in God as God.

As it is impoſſible in the nature of the thing, for a man to delight in ſin, and in God too; ſo God hath ſaid, that he who hath a delight in ſin, ſhall not find any delight in him. God hath ſaid, *Delight thy ſelf in me, and I will give thee the deſires of thy heart* (Pſal. 37. 4.) But if any man will follow the deſires of his own heart, he ſhall not delight himſelf in God. *Sin ſeparateth between God and us* (Iſa. 59. 2.) That is, it ſeparates between the comforts and mercies which are in God, and us; ſin doth not, cannot ſeparate us from the power, or preſence, from the eye, or juſtice of God; ſo ſin doth not ſeparate (for God is nigh to ſinners both to ſee what they are doing, and to puniſh them for what they have done ſinfully) but ſin ſeparates from all thoſe delights that flow from God, from thoſe joyes which his people take in him; yea, ſin breeds a ſtrangeneſs between God and the ſoul, ſo that the ſoul that loveth ſin, cannot have any holy familiarity or converſe with God. The Lord ſaith to thoſe who repent (*Iſa.* 1. 18.) *Come let us reaſon together*, &c. As if he had ſaid, I am now ready to debate the matter with you that repent, and how great ſoever your ſins have been, they ſhall be blotted out. Whereas before, the Lord tells them that he was weary of them, and that they were a burthen to him in all their ſervices: Now when we are a burthen to God, God is never pleaſant to us; if the Lord ſay he is weary of us, we cannot ſay we delight our ſelves in him. Our delight and pleaſure in God is the fruit of his delight in, and well-pleaſedneſs with us.

Thirdly, *Eliphaz* propoſeth this delight in the Lord, as the moſt winning promiſe.

Hence Note, *Delight in the Lord is the higheſt and choiceſt mercy.*

There is nothing better, nothing ſweeter then to delight in the Lord; delight in the Lord hath all true delights in it. *David* ſpeaks this out fully in that place lately quoted to another occaſion (*Pſal.* 37. 4.) *Delight thy ſelf in the Lord, and he ſhall give thee the deſires of thy heart*; that is, thou ſhalt have all thy deſires fulfilled in this thing; delight in the Lord will be the fulfilling of all thy deſires; not only ſhall they who delight themſelves in the Lord, have all their deſires filled up; but their very delight in the Lord is the fulfilling of all their deſires. What is the glory of Heaven, but delighting in the Lord? And he who delights in the Lord, feels not the want or abſence of any earthly Good. *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore* (Pſal. 16. 11.) Heavenly glory is nothing but delight in God; and all earthly good is nothing without delight in God. We may affirm four things of this delight, in oppoſition to all worldly delights.

Firſt, This is a real delight; worldly delights are but ſhadows, or pageant like ſhews of delight. The joyes of a hypocrite, are like his holineſs, meer appearances of joy; he hath no real, no true joy, as he hath no true, no real holineſs. That man doth but fain a taſte of joy, whoſoever he is, that doth but fain the practice of holineſs. Thus who wickedly hold out a holineſs which they feel not, ſhall talk of joyes which they find not.

Secondly, Delight in the Lord is a ſtrong delight; yea, it is a ſtrengthening delight: That muſt needs be ſtrong joy, which is ſtrengthening joy; ſuch is the joy of the Lord, as *Nehemiah* told that people (*Nehem.* 8. 10.) *The joy of the Lord, is the ſtrength of the ſoul, the ſtrength of the inward man, it makes us mighty, it makes us Giants to run our race, the race of holineſs.* The Giant rejoyceth to run his race, becauſe he is ſtrong, and knows he can do it. The joy of the Lord is our ſtrength, and is both an evidence that we are ſtrong, and a means to make us ſo. Worldly delights are weak, and they weaken us; Delight in the Lord is ſtrong, and it ſtrengthens.

Thirdly, It is a laſting delight; not like the *crackling of thorns under a pot* (to which *Solomon* elegantly compares the *laughter of the fool*, Eccleſ. 7. 6.) that make a noiſe, and a blaze for a while, but are preſently extinct. Now *Solomon*'s fool may be either, firſt, the prophane man in the World; or, ſecondly, the Hypocrite in the Church. All the joyes of this pair of fools, the prophane worldling, and the formal hypocrite, are ſoon in, and ſoon out, like crackling thorns. But joy or delight in the Almighty is a laſting delight; it is not for a fit, or a pang, but for a continuance; yea, it continueth in the midſt of all worldly ſorrows, for it overcomes and conquers them. There is a laughter in which (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 14. 13.) the heart is ſorrowful, and there is a ſorrow in which the heart laughs; *As ſorrowful, yet alwayes rejoycing*, ſaith the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) Spiritual joy, or joy in the Lord is not extinguiſhed, though ſurrounded with worldly ſorrows, *Many waters cannot quench this vehement flame, thus flame of God* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks of love, *Cant.* 8.) *neither can the floods drown it.*

Fourthly, Delight in the Almighty is a holy delight, a delight which makes us more holy; the delights of the world are impure, and they defile us; we ſeldom take in worldly pleaſures, but they leave ſome ſpot and taint upon our ſpirits or converſations; but the delights we have in the Lord are all pure, yea, purifying delights, they make the ſoul more clear, more holy, more heavenly; they make us like unto the Almighty, in whom our delight is. For what the object is in which we delight, ſuch is the ſpirit of him that takes that delight; now the Lord in whom this delight is, being altogether holy, they that take delight in him, muſt needs be made or kept holy by it. As delight in worldly things makes the heart worldly, baſe and dreggiſh, ſo this refines and purifies it. The more we drink of the rivers of this pleaſure, the more ſober we are; *To be an Epicure* (as it were) *in theſe delights*, is the higheſt temperance. Our feeding cannot be too full, nor our draughts too large upon theſe delights. *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* 2. 2.) who had run a courſe through all worldly delights, and tryed them to the utmoſt, ſaid *of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth what doth it?* There is a madneſs in the mirth of the world, what doth it? That is, What good doth it to any man? Many things it doth, it makes men vain, fooliſh, diſſolute, dis-ſpirited for any goodneſs; But what good doth it? Doth it make any man better, more holy, more wiſe or fit for duty? No, it can do none of theſe things. But delight in the Lord, is all this, and can do all this, it is true, ſtrong, ſtrengthening, laſting, holy, a delight that makes us more holy. This is the portion of Saints at all times, though paid them in more or ſpecially at ſome times; and that either, firſt, reſpecting the ſtate and diſpoſition of their own ſouls, as in the reſt; or ſecondly, the ſtate of and promiſed diſpenſations of God to the Church. (*Iſa.* 65. 14, 18. *Iſa.* 66. 11.) *Then* (alſo in a ſpecial manner) *ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Lord.* And becauſe every man doth freely or willingly look to that in which he is delighted, therefore *Eliphaz* addeth,

Quum unuſquiſq; licenter reſpicit id in quo delectatur, ſubdit, ver. ſeq. Aquin.

And ſhalt lift up thy face to God.

Os homini ſublime dedit. Ovid.

But ſome may ſay, Is that ſuch a great matter: Is it any ſpecial favour to lift up the face to God, ſeeing to do ſo is common to mankind? The Naturaliſt ſaith, *That whereas other creatures look groveling downward, God gave man an erect countenance, and bid him look heavenwards.* How then doth *Eliphaz* promiſe, *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face to God?* We had the like expreſſion (*Chap.* 10. 15.) *If I be righteous, yet I will not lift up my head.* And (*Chap.* 11. 15.) *Then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot.* The lifting up of the head, and the lifting up of the face, are the ſame; implying confidence, or well-grounded boldneſs in him that doth ſo: For all theſe phraſes of ſpeech imply a lifting up of the mind or ſpirit to God. As *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 25. 1.) *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my ſoul. Eliphaz* means not the lifting up of a heartleſs face or head, ſuch as the Hypocrite or Formaliſt lifts up to God in worſhip; nor the lifting up of a meer living head or face, ſuch as all men lift up to God according to the form or frame of their natural conſtitution, but the courage and confidence of the ſoul, and that a holy courage and confidence is here intended. And there are not many, who can thus lift up their face to God, as is promiſed here to *Job* by way of priviledge.

Equiparantia ſunt caput vel oculos vel faciē vel animam ad deum levare. Bold.

Fiduciam habebis recurrendi ad deū. Aquin:

And ſhalt lift up thy face to God.

Faciei elevatio orantis habitus eſt. Pined.

Vultum attollit qui ſibi bene conſcius eſt animo confidenti. Druſ.

To lift up the face, is taken under a twofold notion in Scripture: Firſt, As a geſture or bodily poſition in prayer: He that prayeth doth uſually lift up his face to God; and ſo to lift up the face to God, is to pray unto God. A corporal poſture being put often in Scripture to ſignifie a ſpiritual duty. Thus ſome underſtand it here, *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face to God*; that is, thou ſhalt pray: Secondly, (which further complyes with the duty of prayer) To lift up the face, notes (as was touched before) confidence of ſpirit, and boldneſs, courage, and aſſurance towards him, before whom the face is lifted up, whether God or man.

Παῤῥησιασθήσῃ ἐναντίον κυρίου. Sept.

The Septuagint, who rather paraphraſe then tranſlate this Text, give this ſence fully, *Thou ſhalt be confident before the Lord* (*or thou ſhalt act fiducially and boldly before him*) *and behold Heaven chearfully.* This lifting up the face is oppoſed to caſting down the face, and that is a phraſe uſed in Scripture to ſignifie ſhame and failing of ſpirit. When courage is down, the countenance is down too; as we ſay, ſuch a man *hath a down look*; that is, there is an appearance of guilt upon him. The face is caſt down three wayes: Firſt, By fear: Secondly, By ſorrow: Thirdly, By ſhame. (*Ezra* 9. 6.) *O my God, I am aſhamed and bluſh, to lift up my face unto thee; for our iniquities are increaſed over our heads.* So (*Luke* 18. 13.) the *Publican durſt not lift up his eyes to Heaven*: and poſſibly there was a complication of all theſe three cauſes why he durſt not, fear, ſorrow, ſhame; he was ſo much terrified, ſo much grieved, ſo much aſhamed of himſelf, that he durſt not lift up his eyes to Heaven. It was the ſpeech of *Abner* to *Aſahel* (2 Sam. 2. 22.) *Turn thee aſide from following me; Why ſhould I ſmite thee to the ground? How then ſhould I hold up my face to* Joab *thy Brother?* That is, If I ſlay thee I ſhall be afraid to look him in the face, nor can I have any confidence of his favour; and it is well conceived, that he ſpake thus (for it is indeed a very unuſual thing for the General of an Army, in the very heat of war, to look after the favour of the General of the oppoſite Army; but (I ſay) 'tis conceived he ſpake thus) as being convinced that he had undertaken a bad cauſe in upholding the houſe of *Saul* againſt *David*, and therefore had miſgivings that he might ſhortly fall into the hands of *Joab*, *David*'s General, and was therefore unwilling to provoke him by killing his Brother. This made him ſay, *How ſhall I hold up my face to thy Brother* Joab? As if he had ſaid, I ſhall obſtruct the way of my own reconciliation to thy Brother (in caſe the turn of things in this war caſt me into his hand) by killing thee. Again, we may look back to *Gen.* 4. 5. where it is reported of *Cain*, That he *was wroth, and his countenance fell*; anger, and ſorrow, and ſhame, falling at once upon him (becauſe the Lord had reſpect to *Abel* and his offering, but had no reſpect to him or his) cauſed his countenance to fall; which phraſe ſtands in direct oppoſition to lifting up the face in all the three occaſions of it. For it implyeth, firſt, fear, which is oppoſed to boldneſs; ſecondly, ſorrow or anger, which are oppoſed to content and joy; thirdly, ſhame, which is oppoſed both to freedom of appproach, and liberty of ſpeech. We have an expreſſion which parallels much with this, in that Prophecy of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 110. 7.) *He ſhall drink of the brook in the way, therefore ſhall he lift up his head*; that is, he ſhall riſe and appear like a mighty Conqueror, with boldneſs, honour, and triumph. So Chriſt himſelf prophecying of the troubles which ſhall be in the latter dayes, comforts the ſurviving Saints in this language; *When theſe things begin to come to paſs, then look up and lift up your heads* (that is, then take heart and boldneſs) *for the day of your redemption draweth nigh* (*Luke* 21. 28.) That is, the day is at hand, wherein you ſhall be freed from all fears and ſorrows.

Quod legitur Exod. 14. 8. *egreſſos filios* Iſrael *in manu excelſa, Chaldaicè dicitur, capite diſcooperto,* i. e. *palam, confidentèr, ſine metu.*

Hence Obſerve, *Holineſs hath boldneſs and freedom of ſpirit with God.*

Then ſhalt thou lift up thy face unto God. As ſoon as *Adam* ſinned, he hid himſelf from the preſence of the Lord amongſt the Trees of the Garden (*Gen.* 3. 8.) He ran into the thickets for ſhelter, he durſt not appear or ſhew his face. But when once we are reconciled to God, and ſin is taken off, when we are freed from the bonds of guilt, then we have boldneſs; reconciliation is accompanied with the Spirit of adoption, *Whereby we cry Abba, Father*; we can then ſpeak to God as a Child to his Father; the Child dares lift up his face to his Father, and ſpeaks freely to him. *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17.) And that's a threefold liberty. Firſt, A liberty from ſin: Secondly, A liberty unto righteouſneſs, or a freeneſs and readineſs of ſpirit to do good: Thirdly, Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is a liberty of ſpeech, or acceſs, with boldneſs in all our holy Addreſſes unto God. As the Apoſtle clearly ſheweth at the twelfth Verſe of the ſame Chapter; *Seeing then that we have ſuch hope, we uſe great plainneſs* (*or boldneſs*) *of ſpeech*, as we put in the Margin of our Bibles to expreſs the ſignificancy of the Greek word in the full compaſs of it. For as becauſe we have ſuch hope we ought to uſe great plainneſs of ſpeech towards men in preaching and diſpenſing the Goſpel to them; ſo great boldneſs towards God in receiving the offers and promiſes of the Goſpel, for our ſelves. *Eliphaz* having thus ſhewed what freedom *Job*, truly repenting, might have with God in prayer, proceeds in the next Verſe to ſhew what ſucceſs with God, or what fruit he ſhould have in prayer.

Verſe 27. **Thou ſhalt make thy prayer to him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy Vows.**

In theſe words we have a further promiſe, leading to a further duty; as before the duty of returning to the Almighty,

mighty, had a promiſe annexed to it of liſting up the face to God, or boldneſs in prayer. So now the promiſe of being heard in prayer, is followed with a duty, The payment of Vowes.

Thou ſhalt make thy prayer to him, &c.

עתר *Multiplicavit, propriè verba fortia fudit in Oratione.*

The word notes the pouring out of many prayers, or of a multitude of words in prayer; yet not of bare words, but of words cloathed with power, ſtrong prayers as well as many prayers. For as the Goſpel comes from God to us, *not in words only, but in power, and in the holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance* (1 Theſ. 1. 5.) ſo prayer ſhould go from us to God, not in word only, but in power, and in the holy Ghoſt, *&c.* Thus ſaith *Eliphaz*, *Thou ſhalt make many, and mighty prayers, ſtrong prayers, prevailing, conquering prayers*; ſo the word is uſed, (*Gen.* 25. 21.) *Then* Iſaac *intreated the Lord for his Wife, becauſe ſhe was barren*; that is, he made many prayers to God; he made a buſineſs of praying that he might have a Son. Though there was a ſure promiſe made to *Abraham*, that he ſhould have a Son, and that in him, and from him ſhould come the promiſed ſeed; yet *Iſaac* was long without a Son, and he leaves it not careleſly in the decree of God, reſolving idly, *God hath ſaid I ſhall have a Son at leaſt, if not many Sons, why ſhould I trouble my ſelf in the thing?* No, *Iſaac* had not ſo learned the mind of God, he was better skill'd in Divinity then ſo, to ſeparate the means from the end, or to conclude that we need not pray for that which God hath purpoſed and promiſed. He, I ſay, was better inſtructed then ſo, and therefore though he (doubtleſs) did fully believe that God would fulfil the promiſe made to *Abraham* in giving him a Son, yet *he intreated the Lord for his Wife, becauſe ſhe was barren*; and *he intreated the Lord earneſtly*, he made plenty, abundance of prayers; for it cannot be ſuppoſed but that he had prayed for that mercy long before (for it was near twenty years ſince his marriage to *Rebeccah*, as appears plainly by comparing the twentieth Verſe of that Chapter with the twenty-ſixth, the former telling us, that he was forty years old when he married *Rebeccah*; and the latter, that he was threeſcore when *Rebeccah* bare *Jacob* and *Eſau*. So that I ſay, we cannot ſuppoſe but ſo holy a man as *Iſaac* had been ſuing out the good of the promiſe before) but when he perceived it ſticking ſo long in the birth, then his ſoul fell in travel about it, then he was very fervent in prayer, and would give the Lord no reſt; *Then he entreated the Lord*, &c. The ſame is ſaid of *Manoah* (Judges 13. 8.) *Then* Manoah *intreated the Lord, and ſaid, Oh my Lord, let the man of God which thou didſt ſend come again unto us, and teach us what we ſhould do unto the Child that ſhall be born:* He prayed then with much earneſtneſs, or made prayers for direction in that thing. The word is often uſed to ſignifie abundance (*Iſa.* 35. 2.) *It ſhall bloſſom abundantly*, (Jer. 33. 6.) *Behold, I will bring in health, and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace, and truth.* Not only ſhall they have peace, and truth, but abundance of them. So here, thou ſhalt not only pray, but a ſpirit of prayer ſhall be poured out upon thee abundantly. *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Prayer is a duty.*

We owe prayer to God as his creatures, or in regard of our natural dependance upon him, much more as new creatures, or in regard of our ſpiritual dependance upon him.

Secondly, Note, *It is our duty not only to pray, but to pray much, or to pray with much fervency.*

The emphaſis of the Original word here uſed, leads us to this as well as many Scripture Authorities. Cold asking invites a denyal; 'tis effectual or working fervent prayer that prevails much (*Jam.* 5. 16.)

Thirdly, Note, *Prayer is due only to God.*

Prayer is a part of holy worſhip, and all ſuch worſhip is proper to God alone, *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him.* Saints and Angels worſhip God with us; we muſt not worſhip either Saint or Angel with God, no nor God, by the help and mediation of Saints or Angels. We know no Mediator of interceſſion, but he who is the Mediator of redemption, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, Taking in the conſideration of the time, as before in the former part; *Then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Lord, then ſhalt thou make thy prayer to him.*

Obſerve, That, *We are never in a fit frame for prayer, till we turn from every ſin by repentance.*

As the Lord will not hear us when we pray, *if we regard iniquity in our heart* (Pſal. 68. 18.) ſo neither are we in a fitneſs to ſpeak to God in prayer, if we regard any iniquity in our hearts. Repenting and praying muſt be of the ſame length; unleſs we repent continually, we cannot pray continually, becauſe we ſin continually. *The more holy we are, the more free we are to pray.* Sin clogs and checks the ſpirit in this great duty; caſt off that weight, and *then ſhalt thou make thy prayer to him,*

And he ſhall hear thee.] To hear prayer, is more then to take notice of the matter or words ſpoken; to hear prayer, is to grant what we pray for. As our hearing the Word of God is more then to take in the ſound or the ſence of what is ſpoken; it is to ſubmit to and obey what is ſpoken: Now as we hear no more of the Word of God, then we believe and practice; ſo the Lord heareth no more of what we pray (in a Scripture ſence) then what he granteth. There are two expreſſions in Scripture which note this.

Reſpicere eſt audire.

Firſt, To have regard to a perſon, or to a prayer (1 *Kings* 8. 28, 29.) when *Solomon* prayed at the dedication of the Temple, the Lords hearing of prayer, which he then begged, is thus deſcribed, *Have thou reſpect unto the prayer of thy ſervant, and to his ſupplication,* &c. *that thine eyes may be open toward this houſe night and day.* So it is ſaid of *Abel* (Gen. 4. 4.) *That the Lord had reſpect to his Offering*, the Lord looked towards him, and accepted of him; to accept a prayer, is to hear a prayer.

Adeſſe eſt audire.

Secondly, The hearing of prayer is deſcribed by the preſence of God with thoſe that pray (*Iſa.* 58. 9.) *Then ſhalt thou call, and the Lord ſhall anſwer; thou ſhalt cry, and he ſhall ſay, here I am.* This is a wonderful condeſcenſion, 'tis even as when a Maſter calling to his ſervant, he anſwereth, *Here, Sir, here I am*; and that is as much as to ſay, *I am ready to your command, I am ready to do what you will have me, here I am:* So ſaith that Promiſe in the Prophet, *Thou ſhalt cry, and the Lord ſhall ſay, here I am*; that is, *I am ready to what you ask, I am even ready* (O unſpeakable Goodneſs) *at your command* (as our tranſlation of the eleventh verſe of the forty-fifth Chapter of *Iſaiah* ſpeaks out in plain terms) or, *I am willing to do what you will have me to do.* All which is in effect and vertually contained in the word of the Text. *He ſhall hear thee.* This teacheth us,

Firſt, *That God is the hearer of prayer.*

It is the Lords Title, *O thou that heareſt prayer, unto thee ſhall all fleſh come* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 65. 2.) God is not only *A hearer of prayer*, but he is *The hearer of prayer*; to hear prayer is his peculiar prerogative and priviledge as well as his goodneſs and mercy; none in Heaven or Earth have a will to hear prayer as God doth, nor have any a power to do it. No creatures ear is long enough to reach the complaints, nor his ſtock large enough to ſupply the wants of all his fellow creatures. The Crown of this honour fits none but God himſelf. *He ſhall hear thee.*

Secondly, Note, *It is a great mercy, a mercy comprehending all mercy, to be heard in prayer.*

He ſhall hear thee.] *Man cannot deſire a richer favour then to be heard of God.* To have audience in the Court of Princes, and among the great men of the earth, is a great favour. What greater worldly priviledge can a man have then this, that he hath the ear of thoſe who are greateſt in the world? When a man ſaith, I have the Princes ear, I can be heard when I ſpeak, we think he hath ſpoken enough to make him a man. How great a mercy is it then to have the ear of God? To have ready audience in the Court of Heaven? That as ſoon as we call the Lord is ready to anſwer, *Here I am; What's the matter? What would you have? It ſhall be done; your requeſt is granted.* And to ſhew that to be heard by God is the ſum of all mercies, or all our mercies wrapt up in one, the Scripture teſtifies that not to be heard of God is the ſum of all judgments, or all judgments wrapt up in one. When the Lord refuſeth to hear, or ſaith he will not hear thoſe that pray, then wrath is coming upon them to the uttermoſt. Thus the Lord threatened the *Jews* (Iſa. 1. 15.) *When ye ſpread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you, yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of blood:* As it is an argument of the greateſt ſinfulneſs of man againſt God, not to pray; *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy Name* (Jer. 10. 25.) So it is an argument of the greateſt wrath of God upon man not to be heard in prayer. He that is not heard receives nothing; and he that is heard receives all. And this is the Saints priviledge by Jeſus Chriſt, their prayers are heard, they have welcome audience at the Throne of Grace continually. And hence by way of Corollary from the former Obſervation, we learn, that

Holy prayers are fruitful and gainful prayers.

God hath not ſaid to the ſeed of Jacob, *ſeek ye me in vain; He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious fruit* (this precious fruit, faith and prayer, or the prayer of faith) *ſhall doubtleſs* (there's no hazard nor peradventure in the caſe) *come again rejoycing, bringing his ſheaves with him.* His ſhowry ſeed-time ſhall be bleſſed with a fruitful and plentiful harveſt. The wicked make many adventures, many voyages by prayer, ſuch as it is, Heaven-wards, yet come home without lading, without any fraight at all. Their prayers are all loſt, and turn to no profit; and indeed theirs are not prayers but words, or babling rather. But holy prayer, the prayer of the holy, is prevailing: Thoſe ſhowers of prayers and tears which Believers ſend up to Heaven, are like *the rain* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 55. 10.) *which cometh down, and the ſnow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater.* Even thus the word of prayer which goeth out of the mouths, or hearts rather of Believers, returns not to them void, but proſpers in the thing whereto they ſend it. As appears yet more fully in the next words of this verſe ſpoken by *Eliphaz*, *He ſhall hear thee*: What then?

At quibuſcunque tandem modis peccator oret, verum etiam eſt nunquam exaudiri peccatorem ex dignitate ſuæ perſonæ aut meriti ſed ex dei gratia & miſericordia. Bold.

And thou ſhalt pay thy Vows.

That is, God will give thee the mercies which thou didſt pray for, and thereby give thee occaſion to pay the Vows which thou didſt make to him in caſe he performed thy deſire in prayer. *Eliphaz* is not exhorting *Job* (directly) to pay Vows; but he is aſſuring him that his prayer ſhall be heard, and ſo fully anſwered, that he ſhall ſee reaſon and have abundant cauſe to pay them, and to pay them both fully and chearfully.

Thou ſhalt pay thy Vows.] The word ſignifies *free votive promiſes made to God, yet obligatory upon man*; for howſoever, as the word implyeth, there ought to be the greateſt freedom and voluntarineſs in making a Vow; yet a Vow being made, there is an obligation, a bond or tye upon him that made it to perform or pay it: He that voweth binds himſelf, but he cannot unbind or abſolve himſelf from his Vow, nor can he retract or call in his lawful Vow.

נדרים *Significat votivis promiſſiones deo factas, quæ obligat, nec retractari nec ſolvi propria authoritate poſſunt.* Bold.

Eliphaz, I ſuppoſe, here mentions the payment of Vows, becauſe the godly in thoſe times did often make Vows. When *Jacob* (*Gen.* 28. 20.) fled from his Brother *Eſau*, he in caſe of his ſafe return, *vowed a vow, ſaying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and rayment to put on, ſo that I come to my Fathers houſe again in peace, then ſhall the Lord be my God* (that is, I will own and honour him, love and depend upon him more then ever) *And this ſtone which I have ſet up ſhall be Gods houſe, and of all that thou ſhalt give me I ſhall ſurely give the tenth to thee.* Here's the tenour and form of the moſt ancient and famous Vow that ever was made. Likewiſe *Hanna* (1 Sam. 1. 11.) *vowed a vow, and ſaid, O Lord of hoaſts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid, but wilt give to thy handmaid a man-child, then will I give him unto the Lord.* We read often in the Pſalms of paying of Vows, *Pſal.* 61. 13, 14. and 50. 14. and 76. 11. and 116. 14. And we have the command for it (*Eccleſ.* 5. 4.) *Pay that which thou haſt vowed.*

Further, To explicate this Text, It may be inquired what a Vow is?

I anſwer, *A Vow is a ſolemn, free and voluntary promiſe made to God, of things lawful, weighty, and poſſible, to further and help us to glorifie God in our obedience.* In which deſcription we have, Firſt, The nature of a Vow, *It is a ſolemn promiſe, not a bare promiſe.* Secondly, The object, *It muſt be made to God.* Thirdly, The manner of it, *It is a free and a voluntary promiſe*; for though a lawful Vow layeth a neceſſity upon us to keep it, when once we have made it, yet there is not an antecedent neceſſity of compulſion upon us to make it; ſo that a Vow ought to be a moſt free and voluntary act. Fourthly, In this deſcription of a Vow we have the general matter of it. As firſt, It muſt be of things lawful, we may not vow that which we may not do, either expreſly, as they did (*Acts* 23. 12, 13.) who vowed to kill *Paul*; or implicitly, as *Herod* did, who promiſed to give the Daughter of *Herodias* whatſoever ſhe ſhould ask, limiting her only as to the quantity of her demand, ſhe muſt not ask above half the Kingdom, but leaving her without limits, as to the quality of her demand, whether good or evil, lawful or unlawful made no matter. And thus many conceive *Jephtah* failed, implicitly vowing to do that, which was unlawful for him to do (*Judg.* 11. 30, 31.) Secondly, A Vow muſt be of things weighty and ſerious, we muſt not vow about trifles. Thirdly, It muſt be of things poſſible, through grace; though we muſt vow weighty things, yet we muſt not vow things impoſſible, either in their own nature, or without extraordinary aſſiſtance and ſtrength from God. Fifthly, We have here the ends of a Vow: Firſt, To glorifie God: Secondly, To oblige us more ſtrictly to obedience.

Hence Note, Firſt, *It is lawful to make a Vow.*

All the Scripture teſtimonies before alledged confirm that Propoſition.

Secondly, *Vows lawfully made ought to be kept.*

Thou ſhalt pay thy Vows, hath in it the nature both of a Promiſe and of a Command: Vows are bonds, we muſt take heed of breaking them; if we break our Vows, God will break our peace. The word which we tranſlate *to pay a Vow*, ſignifies alſo to give peace and quietneſs, implying that till the Vow be paid we cannot have peace. A man that is in bond to men hath no peace till he diſchargeth, or hath prepared to diſcharge his debt; and therefore an acquittance or a diſcharge for a debt, is commonly called, *A quietus eſt*, implying, that till a man hath got a diſcharge, he is not at quiet. We are at our liberty whether we will vow or no; but we are not at our liberty whether we will pay our Vows or no. And therefore *Solomon* doth not only exhort to the payment of Vows, but to the ſpeedy payment of them (*Eccleſ.* 5. 4.) *When thou voweſt a Vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he hath no pleaſure in fools:* That is, He is greatly diſpleaſed with fools; he means it not of ſuch as are called fools for the want of a natural underſtanding, but for the want of a good conſcience, and ſuch are all they, who flatter God with their haſtineſs in making Vows, and then mock him by their ſlowneſs in, or neglect of paying them. And therefore take four Cautions about Vows.

Firſt, Be not frequent in making Vows; vowing muſt not be like praying, *an every dayes work*; we may not vow as we muſt pray, alwayes, and without ceaſing. Many have brought themſelves into great ſnares, by multiplying Vows, and we have need to be caution'd in this thing, becauſe the nature of man is carried much to it. The Heathens made many Vows, eſpecially when they were in any diſtreſs; and ſo meer carnal men will do to this day, vow great things, what they will be, and what they will do, if trouble be upon them. It is ſaid, that thoſe Heathen Marriners made Vows when the ſtorm was over and the danger paſt (*Jon.* 1. 16.) Many make Vows in a ſtorm, whether at Sea or Land, which they little mind when the ſtorm is done. But thoſe Heathens (which may be a rebuke to ſome Chriſtians) made Vows of praiſe and thankfulneſs when they had eſcaped the ſtorm. And this is a further proof of that naturalneſs which is in man to make Vows. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe this ſatisfieth a natural man, and fills him with confidence that he ſhall receive good from God, becauſe he hath vowed duty to him. Man loves to be upon his own bottom, and thinks he ſhall ſurely engage God to be merciful, while himſelf promiſeth to be dutiful and thankful. Now (I ſay) though there be ſtill a lawfulneſs of Vows in theſe Goſpel times, yet take heed of making many Vows, eſpecially of conceiting to oblige God by any of them. As the former may prove a ſnare, and an entanglement to us; ſo the latter is a diſhonour to God, who never ſhews us mercy more freely, then when we bind our ſelves moſt to duty.

Secondly, *When ever you vow, be ſure you do it in the ſtrength of Chriſt.* None diſcover more weakneſs in keeping Vows, then they who make Vows in their own ſtrength, or not wholly in the ſtrength of Chriſt. Some have vowed never to commit ſuch a ſin more; and they never committed it ſo much as after they had vowed. Some have thought to get cure and remedy againſt ſuch a corruption or luſt by a Vow; and yet that luſt or corruption hath prevailed more upon them after their Vow. The reaſon of all is, becauſe they have either put their Vow in the room of Chriſt, as if that could help them alone, or elſe they have made their Vows alone, without relyance upon the power of Chriſt. That rule of the Apoſtle which obtains in all caſes of duty, doth moſt in this; *Whatſoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him* (Col. 3.17.)

Thirdly, In things which are directly commanded, or directly forbidden in the Law of God; we are not to vow the doing or not doing of the thing in it ſelf, but only a greater care and ſtricter watch over our ſelves, either for the doing of the one, or not to do the other. As for example, We ſhould not vow abſolutely, that we will not worſhip Idols, that we will not ſwear, that we will keep the Sabbath, that we will honour our Parents, that we will do no murder, for all theſe duties are expreſly commanded by God, and are therefore paſt being vowed by us. Only thus, we (obſerving the treachery of our own hearts) may vow more care and diligence in and about all theſe things. And thus we are to underſtand that of *Jacob* (*Gen.* 28.21.) vowing *That the Lord ſhould be his God*; as alſo that of *David* (*Pſal.* 119.106.) *I have ſworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments. David* kept them before; but now he would be more ſtrict then before in keeping them. So then, when we vow things already commanded or forbidden, we muſt pitch and place our Vow, not upon the matter of the Commandment, but upon the manner and intenſeneſs of our ſpirits in keeping it.

Fourthly, Let not Vows about indifferent things be perpetual. All Vows about things expreſſed in the Law of God muſt be perpetual, becauſe the things themſelves are alwayes a duty. For the affirmative Precepts of the Law are at all times binding; and the negative bind at all times. But as for things which are not preciſely under a Law: As for example, In the affirmative to pray ſo many times in a day, to read ſo many Chapters of the holy Scriptures in a day, to hear ſo many Sermons in a week: and in the negative, not to drink any wine or ſtrong drink, not to wear ſilk or lace for or upon our apparel, not to take ſuch or ſuch a recreation, in it ſelf lawful; I ſay, in theſe caſes, let not Vows be perpetual, but limited to a ſeaſon, leſt thereby we entangle our own ſouls, and caſt our ſelves into temptation, while (through a zeal, not according to knowledge) we uſe ſuch means to avoid it. Make no Vows to bind your ſelves at all times in things which are not neceſſary at all times, either to be done, or not to be done.

From the whole Verſe obſerve, That, *The anſwer of prayer received from the Lord, doth call us to pay and perform all the duties that we have promiſed or vowed to the Lord in prayer.*

Though we do not alwayes make ſtrict and formal Vows when we pray, yet every prayer hath ſomewhat of a Vow in it; ſo that having prayed at any time, we may ſay, *The Vows of God are upon us*; for when we pray we promiſe, and then eſpecially we do ſo, when we pray under any preſſure of trouble, or when we have any extraordinary requeſt to make; then, I ſay, we engage our ſelves in a more ſolemn manner to ſerve and walk with God: And ſo the return or anſwer of ſuch prayers ingageth us more ſtrongly to duty. For whereſoever the Lord ſoweth, there he looks to reap; and where he hath ſowed much, he looks to reap much; but then and there chiefly, when we promiſe him fruits of duty for our receipt of favour and mercy. Did we take notice of this, we ſhould not be found as we are ſo much in arrear to the Lord, either for our private or publick mercies. What promiſes have we made in the day of our diſtreſs? That we would be holy, that we would ſtrive againſt and mortifie our ſins, or the deeds of the body, through the Spirit and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Now let Conſcience ſpeak; have we performed our promiſes? Have we paid our Vows? We can hardly ſay that we have put up a prayer which hath not had an anſwer by bleſſing and ſucceſſes; God hath been to us a *prayer-hearing God*; Have we been to him a *vow-paying people?* Who amongſt us is now more active for God? Or more careful to pleaſe him then before? Who amongſt us is more watchful over his heart, or more circumſpect in his walking then he was before? Who is more careful over his family, that it may be holy? Or more zealous for the publick, that it may be reformed, then he was before? What manner of men ſhould we be in all holy converſation and godlineſs, did we but pay thoſe Vows and make good thoſe Engagements which have gone out of our lips, and we have laid upon our ſelves before the Lord, in the day of our trouble? How juſt, how pure, how righteous a Nation ſhould we be, were we what we promiſed our outmoſt endeavours to be? The Lord hath done much for us; let us up and be doing for him; let us make good what we have ſpoken to the Lord in vowing and promiſing, ſeeing the Lord hath performed what we have ſpoken to him in praying and calling upon his Name. God hath anſwered us at the firſt call, yea, ſometimes before we called; let us not put God to call a ſecond and a third time, much leſs often and often for the payment of our Vows. For though the Lord in patience wait many dayes for the payment of Vows, yet according to righteouſneſs we ſhould not let him wait one day for it. *All theſe ſpiritual debt-bills are payable at ſight or upon demand*; God ſhews us our own bills and bonds wherein we ſtand engaged to his Majeſty every day, and every day (by ſome or other of his Attorneys; that is, by ſome means or other) he makes his demand: therefore pay to day, pay every day, for we can never come wholly out of theſe debts to God, or ſay, we owe him nothing, how much ſoever, we have paid him. And know, that if when God hath heard us, we be ſloathful in paying our Vows, either God will hear us no more, or we ſhall hear of him (and that, as we ſay, with both ears) till he make our ears tingle, and our hearts ake for not paying them. Swift Judgments have often followed theſe ſlow payments. And though they have not been ſwift in coming preſently upon the neglect, yet when they have come, they have come ſwiftly upon the neglecters. And as we may alwayes ſay of the evils and judgments which come upon any of the people of God, as the Prophet in a like caſe doth to the people of *Iſrael* (Jer. 4. 18.) *Thy way and thy doings have procured theſe things unto thee, this is thy wickedneſs.* So in moſt caſes, when evils and judgments fall upon and afflict the people of God, we may ſay, *Your not doing what you have promiſed, hath procured theſe things unto you, This is your vow-breaking or your neglect of paying your Vows.* And how juſt is it that their troubles ſhould not only be renewed, but even doubled and trebled, yea, ſeven times more encreaſed upon them, who ſlight and throw off thoſe very duties which they took upon them in the day of their trouble, in expectation to have their troubles removed. Every mans mouth will be ſtopt, when he ſuffers for not doing that good which the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken: How much more will his mouth be ſtopt, and he have nothing to ſay for himſelf, who ſuffers for not doing that good, or for not forbearing that evil, which his own mouth hath ſpoken, and ſolemnly charged upon himſelf as a duty in the preſence of the Lord. They will have leaſt to ſay for themſelves who go againſt or come not up to what themſelves have ſaid. Then *pay your Vows*.

VERS. 28, 29, 30.

Thou ſhalt alſo decrée a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thée; and the light ſhall ſhine upon thy wayes.
When men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay, There is lifting up; and he ſhall ſave the humble perſon.
He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent; and it is delivered by the pureneſs of thine hand.

IT hath appeared in opening the whole Context (of which this is a part) how *Eliphaz* preſſeth *Job* with Promiſes, aſſuring him, that not only good, but great good ſhould accrue to him by his returning to God, and acquainting himſelf with the Almighty. And in the foregoing verſe, *That* great benefit was ſhewed, The Lords hearing the prayer of ſuch as do ſo; *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer to him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy vows:* Here *Eliphaz* gives in another excellent Promiſe, *Thou ſhalt alſo*, &c. that is, moreover and beſide what I have ſaid, I add this,

Verſe 28 **Thou ſhalt alſo decrée a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thée.**

גזר *Scidit, abſcidit, ſecuit diviſit. Metalepticè ſecuit lites, definivit, decrevit. Importat hoc verbum decretum cum quadã ſeparatione unius rei ab alia.* Bold.

Thou ſhalt decrée.] The word here tranſlated *to decree*, ſignifies properly to divide, to cut aſunder. So it is uſed (1 *Kings* 3. 25.) when *Solomon* gave ſentence between the *two women that were Harlots* concerning the *living Child*, he ſaith, *Divide the Child*; my decree is that the Child ſhall be divided. Now hence, by a Trope, the word ſignifies alſo to *decree*, to decide, or to determine a matter, becauſe in all decrees about or determinations of a Controverſie, there is (as it were) a cutting off the buſineſs, a laying aſide of one thing, and a ſticking to another. When the whole matter is debated and weighed in Council, then the reſult and iſſue of all is drawn up and given out in a decree. So that to decree is to divide, or ſeparate one thing from another, reſolving upon that, which we conceive moſt juſt and reaſonable.

Verbum pro re frequenter per Metonymiam adjuncti.

Thou ſhalt decrée a thing.] The Hebrew is, *Thou ſhalt decree a word:* It is uſual in that language to put *word* for *thing*. And when he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing*, we are not to underſtand it at large, as if whatſoever were decreed ſhould be eſtabliſhed; but the meaning is, thou ſhalt decree that which is right and good in it ſelf, and good for thee. For the decree being made by a godly man, we cannot ſuppoſe that he ſhould decree any thing but that which is juſt and good; and ſo the ſignification of the former word is well applyed to this, *Thou ſhalt decree*; that is, thou having by deliberation and ſerious diſcuſſion conſidered what is right, and having cut off all evil from thy ſentence, thou decreeing ſuch a thing, *It ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.*

Poterit eſſe præcedentis partis expoſitio. Decernes offerre vota & deus illa rata efficies, vel rata ſemper fundes verba. Pined.

There are yet two Opinions concerning this decree, as it is an expoſition of the former promiſes, *Thou ſhalt be heard*, and, *Thou ſhalt pay thy Vows*; that is, what thou ſueſt for by prayer on earth, ſhall be decreed for thee in Heaven. That is, thy prayer ſhall certainly be performed, thy prayers ſhall not be loſt, no, they ſhall be as the Statutes and decrees of Heaven. It is ſaid of *Eliah* (1 *Kings* 17. 1.) what he decreed was done: And what was his decree? His decree was his prayer: See how he ſpeaks, as if he had the command of Heaven and Earth; as if he had carried the Keyes of the Clouds at his girdle; *As the Lord God of* Iſrael *liveth, before whom I ſtand, there ſhall not be dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word.* But what was this word of *Elijah?* The Apoſtle *James* expounds that for us, he telleth us what this word was, when *Eliah* ſaid, *It ſhall be according to my word* (James 5. 17.) Elias *was a man ſubject to the like paſſions as we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth, for the ſpace of three years and ſix months: And he prayed again, and the Heavens gave rain, and the Earth brought forth her fruit.* The Apoſtle explains, what the word of *Eliah* was, even a prayer-word, he prayed and ſought the Lord in that thing, and his prayer was as certainly performed to him, as if he had the whole power of decreeing what he would have. Thus here, thou ſhalt pour out a prayer, and thy prayer ſhall be as a decree eſtabliſhed with God. So we read (*Gen.* 32. 24.) in the report of *Jacob*'s wreſtling with the Angel, that the word of *Jacob* was as a decree, *I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me*; I will have a bleſſing; and it is ſaid, *As a Prince haſt thou power with God, and with men, and haſt prevailed. Jacob* had what he would in prayer, he decreed a thing, and it was eſtabliſhed to him. *The prayers of Saints are decrees with God:* And 'tis but reaſon they ſhould be ſo; becauſe their prayers anſwer the decrees of God, or they pray for that which God hath decreed; and indeed there is no Saint or godly man would pray any other prayer, or ask any thing of God, but what God hath determined and decreed before to give: *As a godly man would do nothing but what God hath commanded, ſo he would ask nothing but what God hath decreed.* This is a comfortable truth; yet I rather conceive the ſence of this place more general, and not tyed up to that of prayer: And therefore,

Ordinabis per tuam providentiã facturum aliquid, & quaſi rem non futuram & incertã, ſed quaſi divina jam voluntate conſtitutam illam habebis. Aquin.

Secondly, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing:* That is, thou ſhalt take up a reſolve, or a purpoſe; thou in thy wiſdom and prudence ſhalt ſay in thy heart, I will do ſuch a thing, or I would bring ſuch a thing to paſs, and it ſhall come to paſs or be eſtabliſhed. For as many men met together in Council, make Decrees; ſo any man in himſelf may make a decree; and we alwayes make decrees in our own minds before we joyn in any decree with others: Firſt, We ſpeak in our minds, then we ſpeak out our minds; *Thou ſhalt decree a thing*; that is, thou ſhalt reſolve to go ſuch a way, or to do ſuch a thing, and it ſhall be done. Now, this caſe of decreeing muſt be underſtood with a caution; ſuppoſe the thing it ſelf be juſt and lawful (as we touched before) yet a man muſt not make abſolute decrees (that's the priviledge of God, he only can make peremptory decrees, who hath all things in his power) we muſt decree ſubmiſſively to the will of God, and ſay, *If the Lord will, if the Lord pleaſe* we will do ſuch a thing. The Apoſtle (*James* 4. 12, 13, 14.) reproves thoſe that would make peremptory decrees of what they would do in reference to outward affairs, *Go to now ye that ſay to day or to morrow we will go into ſuch a City*, here is a decree, *we will go to ſuch a place, or do ſuch a thing, we will continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get gain.* It is lawful for men to take up a purpoſe to go to ſuch a place, and follow their trade to buy and ſell, and get gain in an honeſt way; but no man muſt be peremptory in this, becauſe we know not what ſhall be on the morrow; therefore, the Apoſtle directs, *Ye ought to ſay, if the Lord will we ſhall live, and do this or that.* Such decrees muſt be made with the Lords good leave, or with a reference to his pleaſure who alone doth whatſoever pleaſeth him. As the perſons ſo the works of all men are in the hand of God (*Eccleſ.* 9. 1.) And there they are: Firſt, As to the performance of them: Secondly, As to the ſucceſs of them. They take themſelves for more then men, who decree the doing of lawful things without the leave of God. We muſt not only ſee what we do is according to the will of God; but we muſt have his good will for the doing of it: That is, as we muſt have a Law from God for what we do, ſo leave from God. Thus *Paul* teacheth us to ſpeak by his own example (1 *Cor.* 4. 19.) *I will come unto you ſhortly, if the Lord will.* And again (*Chap.* 16. 7.) *I muſt tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.* Once more (*Phil.* 2. 19.) *I truſt in the Lord to ſend* Timothy *to you ſhortly.* And even Heathens themſelves, by the light of Nature, have acknowledged ſuch a ſubmiſſion as due unto their ſuperiour Powers, *their gods*; therefore they uſed to expreſs their reſolutions thus, *If the gods will*; much more muſt Chriſtians ſpeak thus in all they undertake to do, we will do it, *if God will. Thou ſhalt decree a thing,*

Ethnicis illud in ore frequens erat, ſi dii volunt.

And it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thée.

יקם *Surget tibi; ſurgere pro exiſtere vel effectũ dare.*

That is, Thou ſhalt have ſucceſs in it, it ſhall be confirm'd. The word in the Original ſignifies to riſe up, as alſo to ſtand. So ſome render it here, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall riſe up to thee.* When a thing that we are determined upon, proſpers and comes well on, we ſay, it riſeth up to us; whereas a buſineſs that fails, falls off from us, or goeth backward. But ſaith *Eliphaz* to *Job*, *The thing which thou decreeſt ſhall riſe or come up to thy mind, to thy deſire*; or as ſome read, *It ſhall come to thee*; we ſay, *It ſhall be eſtabliſhed.* So the word is uſed frequently in Scripture (*Iſa.* 40. 8.) *The word of the Lord ſhall ſtand.*

Veniet tibi. Vulg.

Now as the Word of the Lord ſhall ſtand, ſo ſhall the word of man while it is according to the Word of God. So the word is uſed in the Caſe of a virgins making a vow (*Numb.* 30.4.) *If the father hear it and ſay nothing, it ſhall ſtand, or be confirm'd*; otherwiſe if he diſlike, it is a void vow, a null vow. So that here, to riſe up, or to be eſtabliſhed, notes only the effectiveneſs and ſucceſs of thoſe decrees which this godly man ſhould make; theſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto him for his good, he ſhall have the comfort and benefit of them, while he aims at the glory of God in them.

Hence note, Firſt, *The ſucceſs of our Councels and Decrees is a great mercy.*

Eliphaz brings it in by way of promiſe, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.* Succeſs in any of our right actions is to be acknowledged as a mercy; and therefore the Lord doth ſo diſtinctly ſpecifie the ſucceſleſneſs of the *Jews* after their return from *Babylon*, in their rural and houſhold buſineſſes, for neglecting to build his houſe (*Hag.* 1.6.) to ſhew that he had a controverſie with them; *Ye have ſown much, and brought in little* (no ſucceſs) *ye eat, but have not enough*; *ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink* (that is, ye are not ſatisfied) *ye cloath you, but there is no warmth* (which is the effect of cloathing) *and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.* Which is a proverbial ſpeech, implying that nothing ſticks, nothing ſtayes by a man, no more then mony doth in a bag that hath holes in it, or water in a ſieve, or in a leaking veſſel. Succeſleſneſs attended them in all they did, and that was their affliction. So when our Councels proſper, when what we adviſe to be done thrives in the doing; when the directing word of a man proves like the Creating word of God (*Gen.* 1.) who did but ſay, *Let there be light, and there was light*; *let there be a firmament, and there was a firmament*, &c. Thus when a man ſhall ſay, let ſuch a thing be done, and it is done; when every thing comes forth at a word, like a new Creation, how great both a mercy and honour is this? When he ſaith, let there be deliverance, and there is deliverance; let there be victory, and there is victory; let there be peace, and there is peace; when in caſes of greateſt difficulty and utter impoſſibility to fleſh and blood, he ſpeaks like magnanimous *Joſhua* (*Joſh.* 10.13.) in a commanding language to the creature, while with ſtrongeſt confidence in and humbleſt dependance upon God, *Sun ſtand thou ſtill upon* Gibeah, *and thou Moon in the valley of* Ajalon; *and the Sun ſtood ſtill, and the Moon ſtayed until the people had avenged themſelves upon their enemies.* Who of the ſons of men (who were not alſo the ſons of God) were ever crowned with ſuch an honour?

Secondly, He doth not ſay, he ſhall decree a thing and eſtabliſh it; for man may decree a thing, but man cannot eſtabliſh it; the decree is from one, the eſtabliſhment is from another; and who is that other? *Eliphaz* doth not expreſs who by name, but we may eaſily underſtand who it is, even God himſelf. For as it is God alone who hath given a being to all things, ſo he alone gives all things their eſtabliſhment, whether they be things wrought by him, or wrought by us; *God ſhall eſtabliſh it*, or *it ſhall be eſtabliſhed by the fiat, and conſent of God.*

Hence obſerve, *The ſucceſs of our Councels and decrees is from God.*

There are many who take wiſe, yea honeſt Councels, which yet are not eſtabliſhed, becauſe the Lord is not pleaſed to eſtabliſh them; and the Lord doth often overthrow evil and malicious Counſels. We read (*Iſa.* 7.5, 6, 7.) of Councels and Decrees made, *Syria, Ephraim, and the ſon of Remaliah, have taken evil Councel againſt thee, ſaying* (they decree a thing, what was it?) *let us go up againſt Judah to vex it* (there was the decree) *let us make a breach therein for us, and ſet a King in the midſt of it, even the Son of Tabeal.* Here was their decree, we will vex this people, we will ſet a King among them, the Son of *Tabeal.* But what ſaith the Lord to this? *Thus ſaith the Lord God* (*verſ* 7.) *it ſhall not ſtand, neither ſhall it come to paſs.* It is this word in the Text, *it ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.* You have made a decree, but you have not my conſent for the eſtabliſhment of it, and therefore it ſhall not ſtand, it ſhall not come to paſs. Take another Scripture (*Iſa.* 8.10.) the Lord doth as it were give them leave to make decrees: make as many decrees as you will, and ſit together in Councel, lay your Councels as deep as you can, *take Councel together, and it ſhall come to nought* (you may take Councel, but it is in my power whether it ſhall ſucceed or no, and I have decreed concerning your decree, that it ſhall come to nought) *ſpeak the word, and it ſhall not ſtand.* The ſtanding or not ſtanding, the fruſtrating or the fulfilling of our Decrees and Councels, it is from the Lord.

Thirdly, When he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.*

We may Obſerve, *The Councels of the godly are under a promiſe of good ſucceſs.*

They have a kind of aſſurance that what they ſay ſhall come to paſs; though they have not an abſolute aſſurance, yet they have much aſſurance; though we cannot ſay in every particular caſe, that their decree ſhall be eſtabliſhed to them, yet their decrees in general are under a promiſe of eſtabliſhment. Chriſt ſpeaketh concerning the decrees of a Church-Aſſembly (*Matth.* 18.18.) *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven*; that is, I will eſtabliſh your decrees. If when you meet together in my name, you decree concerning a perſon to bind ſin upon him, he ſhall be bound; if to looſe or pronounce him pardon'd, he ſhall be looſened; your decree on Earth, ſhall be a decree in Heaven; I will bind what you bind, and looſe what you looſe. Now in proportion, the Lord ſpeaks the ſame concerning the decrees of any godly man; what he binds on Earth, the Lord doth bind in Heaven, and what he looſeth on Earth, God looſeth in Heaven; that is, there is an eſtabliſhment of his decrees: and as the Church there hath a promiſe that the Lord will joyn with her in her decrees; ſo a godly man hath a promiſe here that the Lord will joyn with him in his decrees. We have alſo an excellent confirmation of it (*Iſa.* 44.25, 26.) The Lord is many wayes deſcribed in Scripture, but here he is deſcribed by diſappointing and eſtabliſhing the Councels of men. *He it is that fruſtrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledge fooliſhneſs.* Here is a deſcription of God in reference to the diſappointments which he puts upon his enemies, in fruſtrating their Councels and Decrees; they boaſt of theſe and theſe tokens that aſſure them of good ſucceſs, but the Lord fruſtrates their tokens. The Diviners ſay, O the Stars promiſe good luck, and tell us we ſhall have good fortune; thus diviners boaſt, but the Lord *maketh the diviners mad*; how doth he make them mad? By making them ſee things fall out quite croſs to what they have foretold or propheſied. Again, *he turns wiſe men backward*; that is, he turns the Councels of wiſe men backward, when they have reſolved ſuch a thing, the Lord ſets it quite another way: this is the glory of God that he can give check to the Councels of the greateſt Politicians, and deepeſt Machiavels, he turns them backward. Thus the Lord is ſet forth overthrowing the decrees of the wicked; but at *verſ.* 26. He is ſet forth eſtabliſhing the decrees of the godly. He it is *that confirmeth the word of his ſervant, and performeth the Councel of his meſſengers; that ſaith to* Jeruſalem, *thou ſhalt be inhabited; and to the Cities of* Judah, *ye ſhall be built*, &c. God *confirmeth the word of his ſervant*; which may be underſtood not only of the word of Propheſie (though that be the ſcope of that place; as if it had been ſaid, when the Lord ſendeth forth his Prophets and holy Diviners, 'tis not with them as with falſe Prophets and heatheniſh Diviners, who making promiſes from the Stars of Heaven, not from the God of Heaven, are fruſtrated and diſappointed; 'tis not thus with the *Lords holy Diviners*, for *he confirmeth the word of his ſervants.* Now, I ſay, we may underſtand that Text not only of that word of propheſie which the Lord puts into the mouths of his ſervants by an immediate inſpiration) but alſo of that word of propheſie, or decree, which any one of his faithful ſervants ſpeaketh or maketh according to his already revealed will. This word of his ſervants the Lord confirmeth alſo, and *performeth the Councel of his* *meſſengers.* And the reaſon is (as was touched before about prayer) becauſe there is a ſuitableneſs between ſuch words and decrees of his ſervants, and his own decrees; for the deſigns of his ſervants falling in with his own deſignes, and ſo their decrees with his decrees; he in eſtabliſhing their decrees, doth indeed but eſtabliſh his own. For the ſervants of God deſiring that their decrees may be ſuitable to the written or revealed will of God, they ſeldom miſs of a ſuitableneſs to the decrees of his hidden and ſecret will. So that their decrees are (as it were) the *Duplicate* or *Counterpanes of the Decrees of God*; and therefore no wonder if they be under ſuch a promiſe of ſucceſs and eſtabliſhment. The Lord ſaith concerning his own decrees or thoughts, *Surely as I have thought, ſo ſhall it come to paſs* (*Iſa.* 14. 24.) Now if we think as God thinketh, then what we think ſhall come to paſs too) *and as I have purpoſed ſo ſhall it ſtand*; if we purpoſe as God purpoſeth, then our purpoſes ſhall ſtand too. Again (*Iſa.* 46. 10.) *I am the Lord, and there is none elſe; I am God, and there is none like me: Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, ſaying, My councel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure.* If then the councels of the Saints be the councels of God, he will do all their pleaſure. That's the ſum of this promiſe to *Job*, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.* Which appears further from the laſt clauſe.

And the light ſhall ſhine upon thy wayes.

Eliphaz in this promiſe might poſſibly have reſpect to *Job's* former complaint (*Chap.* 19. 8.) *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot paſs; and he hath ſet darkneſs in my paths*; as if *Eliphaz* had here ſaid, thou didſt complain a while ago that God ſet darkneſs in thy paths, do thou return unto the Lord, *and the light ſhall ſhine upon thy wayes*, or there ſhall be light in ſtead of darkneſs in thy paths. This light may be taken three wayes.

Firſt, A light of direction, thou ſhalt ſee what to do; ſo it anſwers the former promiſe, *Thou ſhalt decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee.* Thou ſhalt not make blind decrees, or decrees in the dark; thou ſhalt not decree at a venture, or at random; the light ſhall ſhine upon thy wayes; thou ſhalt have the light of the Word, and the light of the Spirit to direct thee in making thy decrees, and for the ordering of thy whole converſation.

Secondly, Light ſhining upon his wayes, is the proſperity of his wayes; as if he had ſaid, ſucceſs ſhall attend thy undertakings, the favour of God and his bleſſing ſhall be upon what thou takeſt in hand; as the Sun ſhining upon the earth ripens the fruits thereof, ſo the light, heat, and influence of divine favour ſhall ripen thy undertakings and bring them to a deſired perfection. Light, in Scripture, is often put for proſperity, as hath been ſhewed from other paſſages of this book.

Thirdly, *The light ſhall ſhine upon thy wayes*; that is, thou ſhalt have perſonal comfort and contentment in thy wayes; that's a different bleſſing from the former; 'tis poſſible for a man to be in a proſperous way, and yet himſelf to take no comfort nor contentment in it. When theſe three lights ſhine upon any man in his way, or upon the wayes of any man, when the Lord ſhews him what he ſhould do, when he proſpereth and ſucceeds what he doth, and when he hath comfort and joy in what he is doing or hath done, then the bleſſing is full. As the Lord *meets him that rejoyceth in his way and worketh righteouſneſs*, ſo the Lord doth often meet thoſe that work righteouſneſs in their way, cauſing them to rejoyce; and then the light ſhines upon their way indeed. This is a further addition unto the promiſe of ſucceſs before given.

From the firſt notion of light,

> Firſt obſerve, *The righteous are under a promiſe of direction and guidance by God; they ſhall ſee their way, and know what to do, by a divine light.*

The ſteps of a good man are ordered by the Lord (Pſal. 73. 23.) that is, the Lord gives him light to ſee how to order his ſteps. He hath not only an outward natural light ſhining in the Air, and an outward ſpiritual light ſhining in the rule; but he hath an inward ſpiritual light ſhining in his heart, or that outward rule planted within, as it follows at *verſ.* 31. of the ſame *Pſalm*, *The law of his God is in his heart, and none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide:* The law in the heart is a rule within, which directs the good man what to do, and gives him ſuch good direction, that *none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide.* He ſhall not walk like a man upon glaſs or ice, all whoſe ſteps are ſlips, or in danger of ſliding; but he ſhall walk like a man upon plain firm ground, whoſe very ſteps are as ſure as ſtandings. As Saints who were darkneſs are made light in the Lord, in reference to their ſtate; ſo they have light from the Lord, in reference to their walkings; and as they receive a light from God whereby they know all things, that is, thoſe great things which concern eternal life (1 *Joh.* 2. 20.) *Ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things.* Now as they have a light promiſed them, that they may know all things, that is, all neceſſary ſaving truths, or doctrines of ſalvation for attaining the next life; ſo a light is promiſed them whereby they may do all things, that is, all their neceſſary works, buſineſſes, and affairs, which concern their duty in this life.

From the ſecond notion of light,

> Obſerve, *Righteous men, ſuch as turn unto the Lord, ſhall have a bleſſing in their way, their way ſhall proſper.*

As they ſhall have a light ſhining to ſhew them their way, ſo to proſper them in their way: God is a Sun, and he is a Shield (*Pſal.* 84. 11.) And as he is a Sun to give light, and a Shield to protect, ſo, *no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*; that is, he will not hinder or ſtop thoſe good things from them which their ſouls deſire, or move after; they ſhall proſper in their way: yea, when 'tis ſaid, *He will not withhold*, &c. there is more intended then expreſſed; for the meaning is, he will plentifully give forth or pour out all good things to and upon them, *who walk uprightly.*

From the third notion of light, Learn,

> *That the Lord gives godly men joy and comfort in their way.*

Though their way be a way of much labour, yea and a way of much danger too, though it prove a way full of ſweat and trouble; yet the Lord will cauſe a light to ſhine upon them, and refreſh them in their way; *To the righteous there riſeth up light in darkneſs.* The light of joy in the darkneſs of ſorrow, the light of comfort in the darkneſs of trouble; they who walk in the light of truth and holineſs, uſually find the light of joy and comfort in their way, and are ſure to find it in their end. *The way of wiſdom* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 3. 17.) *are wayes of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace*; and if at any time her wayes and paths are not peace and pleaſantneſs (as to the outward man they often are not) while we are travelling in them, yet they are alwayes ſo in the cloſe of our travels (*Pſal.* 37. 37.) *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* Yea when others find moſt trouble in their way, then God is neareſt to him for ſupport, as it follows in the next words.

Verſ. 29. When men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up, and he ſhall ſave the humble perſon.

In this and the following verſe, *Eliphaz* gives a firm aſſurance to *Job* by way of promiſe, that he ſhould not only be delivered, but ſhould have two further priviledges.

Firſt, That himſelf ſhould be exalted when others were caſt down, or that he ſhould be ſaved in times of common calamity, *verſ.* 29.

Secondly, That he ſhould be a means of ſafety to others, and ſhould prevail with God for their deliverance: *he ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent*, &c. *verſ.* 30. That's the general ſcope of theſe two verſes, according to our tranſlation; as will further appear in the explication of them.

When men are caſt down.

When they are preſt, or oppreſt with mountains of affliction and trouble. So the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 2. 17.) *The loftineſs of man ſhall be bowed down*; that is, the lofty man ſhall be bowed down, as a man with a heavy burden upon his back. We ſay, *when men are caſt down:* the word, *men*,

שפל *Depreſſus proſtratus.*

Cum humiliatæ fuerint viæ tuæ dices, elatio illis eſt, i. e. *mox ſenties conditionem tuam ex ima factam optimam. Contextus mirè conciſus eſt, ideo variè intelligitur.* Merc.

men, is not expreſſed in the Hebrew Text, 'tis there only, *when caſt down*; and becauſe that word is not expreſt, therefore ſome ſupply out of the former clauſe, the word, *way*, *The light ſhall ſhine upon thy way when it*, that is, *when thy way is caſt down*; though thou be now in a low condition, and though thou ſhouldeſt hereafter be caſt into a low condition again, yet *thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*, or, thou ſhalt be lifted up. If at any time thy wayes be caſt down in darkneſs, the light ſhall ſhine upon them, thou ſhalt ſay in faith, *there is a lifting up*. The Apoſtle ſpeaks (in a language like this) of himſelf and of his fellow Apoſtles (2 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* Thus here, *when there is a caſting down*, or, *when thy wayes are caſt down, yet thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*; thou mayeſt be caſt down, but not deſtroyed. Yet, I conceive, that Supplement of the word, *men*, which we put into the Text, is more ſuitable to the ſcope of it, and then the ſence is this, *When men are caſt down*, that is, when ſinners or ungodly men are caſt down, when God comes to ruine his enemies, and make them deſolate, *then thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*; A lifting up for me, and for ſuch as I am.

Thou ſhalt ſay.] This ſaying may be taken two wayes, and in both 'tis the voice of faith.

Dices, ſc. *in tuis ad Deū precibus exaltatio ſit*, ſc. *illi depreſſo*, i. e. *ex alta illū O deus.* Piſc.

Firſt, *Thou ſhalt ſay* in prayer, or thou ſhalt pray, *O Lord, let there be a lifting up*. Thus it is expounded as a promiſe to *Job*, that when others were caſt down, he ſhould help them up again by prayer; thou ſhalt ſay, *There is a lifting up, or, O Lord, let there be a lifting up, namely, of him who is caſt down; lift him up, O Lord.* As prayer is in its own nature a lifting up of the ſoul to God (*Pſal.* 25. 1.) ſo prayer in the effect of it hath a mighty power and prevalency with God for the lifting up both of our own bodies and outward eſtates, as alſo the bodies and outward eſtates of others out of the deeps of miſery and trouble. Many a godly man hath lifted himſelf and others out of the mire by prayer, while ſeeing a caſting down, he hath ſaid, *There is a lifting up, or, O Lord, let there be a lifting up.* This ſence carrieth a high priviledge; but I rather conceive that intended in the next verſe. And therefore

Pollicetur Jobo, Eliphaz *eximiā fœlicitatem, impiis aliis atque etiam hoſtibus ſuis ad extremū infœlicitatis gradum præcipitatis*

Secondly, I ſhall take theſe words of *Eliphaz* as a promiſe, *When men are caſt down, thou ſhalt ſay* (or confidently affirm this thing) *there is a lifting up*; that is, I promiſe or aſſure thee, O *Job*, that when thou ſhalt ſee the Lord bringing vengeance upon the wicked, when thou ſeeſt them fall on this ſide, and on that, when nothing is viſible but the ruine and deſtruction of men and families, yea of Nations; that even then thou ſhalt ſay, *there is a lifting up*; that is, thou ſhalt have faith for thy ſelf, that both thou and thine ſhall be lifted up, or ſaved and delivered in a time when many wicked men or thine enemies fall and periſh, and ſhall never (as to any worldly enjoyment) riſe any more.

> Hence obſerve, *That a godly man may have much aſſurance when others are caſt down, that yet he and others ſhall be preſerved and lifted up.*

When men were caſt down in *Sodome*, when *Sodome* was overthrown, *Lot* was lifted up, and aſſured of his preſervation. When all the men in the world were overwhelm'd and ſwept off the face of the earth with a Deluge, there was a lifting up for *Noah* and his family; he and his were ſafely houſed in the Ark floating upon the Waters. Thus the Lord had made proviſion for the preſervation of his people, when thouſands have been undone, and caſt down on the right hand and on the left by common calamities; yea when they have been caſt down, his people have been not only preſerved, but exalted and lifted up. *Thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*,

And he ſhall ſave the humble perſon.

ὅτι ἐταπείνωσας σεαυτόν. Sept.

That is, the Lord ſhall ſave him; the Vulgar reads thus, *He that is humble ſhall be in glory*; the Seventy thus, *Becauſe thou haſt humbled thy ſelf thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

Interior animi faſtus & tumor per oculos & per omnes externos geſtus ſe prodit. Non enim is ſuperbiæ mos eſt, qui latere aut diſſimulari poſſit. Pined.

But I ſhall keep to our reading, *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon* (or according to the ſtrictneſs of the Hebrew) *He ſhall ſave him that is low of eyes*; 'tis frequent in Scripture to expreſs an humble perſon in this form, *A man that hath low eyes*; as *high looks and lofty eyes*, are every where in Scripture the periphraſis of pride. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 101. 5.) *him that hath an high look and a proud heart will I not ſuffer*; for you may ſee pride in the eye, pride ſits upon the eye; therefore *David* puts a high look and a proud heart both together there. And again (*Pſal.* 131. 1.) *Lord, mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty.* So that, I ſay, an humble perſon, and a perſon of low eyes is the ſame; as a proud perſon, and a perſon of lofty eyes is the ſame in Scripture ſence, and both are very ſignificant expreſſions; *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon*, this humble perſon may be taken two wayes, either Paſſively, or Actively.

Non tam modeſtum qui ſeſe ſubmittit (ut virtutem ſignificet) intelligo, quam afflictum etſi illud etiam ſententiæ non repugnat, imo utrumq; recte intellexeris? Merc.

Paſſively, ſo 'tis he that is caſt down and laid low by affliction. Thus the humble perſon is the ſame with the humbled perſon; affliction is an humiliation, however the afflicted take it or carry it; and uſually it makes men humble, at leaſt in appearance, and lowly in their looks; whereas in proſperity men lift up their eyes uſually, and look loftily, as if they would reach Heaven with their heads, while their hearts are far from it. But affliction makes men ſtoop. We may underſtand the Text of a perſon who is humble, when humbled, who ſtoops down quietly to take up and bear his croſs; and doth not in ſtoutneſs ſlight it, or in wantonneſs play with it, but is ſerious under the rebukes of God; *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon.*

Dimiſſis oculis eſt, qui ſuo judicio & exiſtimatione ſibi ipſi vileſcit.

Secondly, It may be taken Actively, *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon*; that is, the perſon who is low in his own eyes, while in the greateſt worldly heights, the perſon that humbles himſelf and walks humbly with God and men when moſt exalted. Thus the Apoſtle *James* exhorts the brother of high degree, or the rich brother, *to rejoyce in that he is made low* (Jam. 1. 10.) But if he be rich, how is he made low? He means it not of a lowneſs in ſtate, but of a lowneſs or rather lowlineſs of ſpirit. The brother of high degree hath no cauſe to rejoyce in his highneſs, but when he is low in his own eyes. Lowneſs of eyes is more then a vertue or common modeſty, 'tis a grace; that's in a ſpiritual ſence the moſt graceful look, which is the moſt humble look. *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon*; but with what ſalvation? I anſwer, Salvation is either temporal and bodily, or eternal, uſually called the ſalvation of the ſoul. We may expound this Text of both, the Lord ſaveth the humble perſon both body and ſoul, both temporally and eternally.

> Where note, *That the Lord takes ſpecial care of humble ones.*

The Lord ſeems to take ſo much care to ſave the humble, as if there were none elſe that he took care to ſave, or regard what became of them, whether ſaved or no. And the Lord ſpeaks of proud perſons, as if he contemn'd none but under that name and notion (*Jam.* 4. 6.) *He reſiſteth the proud*; he that is proud of his perſon, or parts, or eſtate, or wit, or power, the Lord reſiſteth him. And he ſpeaks of the humble as if none were ſaved but under that name and notion, *He ſaves the humble perſon*; or as that Text in *James* hath it, *He giveth grace to the humble.* What grace? There is a twofold grace, and both are given to the humble; firſt, he gives them the grace of favour or good will, he is kind to and reſpecteth the humble, or (as this Text in *Job* hath it) *He ſaves the humble perſon.* Secondly, He gives much grace to the humble, as grace is taken for that gracious work of the Spirit in us, forming up faith, love, &c. in our ſouls. The Lord gives more of this grace alſo to the humble, that is, he addeth unto the graces which they have, and makes them more humble, more gracious; a man cannot be (in that ſence) an humble perſon without grace; humility it ſelf is a great grace, and the greater our humility is, the greater acceſſion we have of other graces. Thus, I ſay, we may underſtand the Text in *James* both wayes; *He giveth grace to the humble*, that is, he favours and reſpects them, becauſe they are gracious, and he addeth to or increaſeth their graces. We have a promiſe very parallel to theſe of *Eliphaz* and *James* (Pſal. 18. 27.) *Thou wilt ſave the afflicted people, but wilt bring down high looks.* The word which we tranſlate *afflicted*, ſignifies alſo one humbled, and humble, and ſo we might render the *Pſalm*; *Thou ſhalt ſave the humbled or the humble people*; and that the humble are to be taken in to partake of the priviledge of that promiſe, is plain from the oppoſite Term in the latter clauſe of the verſe, *High looks*; that is, *high lookers God will bring down, but he will ſave the humble perſon.* Men of low and mean eſtates are uſually wrapt up with great ones in the ſame judgment, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 5. 15.) *The mean man ſhall be brought down, and the mighty man ſhall be humbled*; *the eyes of the lofty ſhall be humbled*; there we have the mean man and the mighty man under the ſame wrathful diſpenſations of God. The wicked whether high or low, are far from ſalvation; but God knows how to make a diſtinction between the humble and the proud, when his wrath makes the greateſt confuſions in the world. *Humility it is not only a ſweet, but a ſafe, yea a ſaving grace*; *we never go under the covert of God ſo much as when we walk humbly with God*; *He will ſave the humble perſon.*

Verſ. 30. **He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent, and it is deliver'd by the pureneſs of thine hands.**

The promiſe is continued to the man that returns to God, *He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent*; or as ſome tranſlate, *the Innocent ſhall deliver the Iſland.* The ſence is the ſame, *He ſhall deliver the Iſland*, that is, the Inhabitants of the Iſland; all ſhall be ſafe, the Iſland and they that dwell in it. There is another reading of the Text, which yet falls in fully and clearly with this; whereas we read, *He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent*, it may be read, *He ſhall deliver him that is not Innocent.* Now becauſe this may ſeem a very wide difference in the tranſlation, we are to conſider the ground of it, how this can be made out, that the ſame Text ſhould be rendred, *the Innocent, and him that is not innocent?* The reaſon is becauſe the word which we tranſlate, *Iſland*, is taken by many of the Hebrew Doctors, as alſo by other tranſlators, only for a negative particle, ſignifying *not*, or that which is *not.* So the word is rendred (1 *Sam.* 4. 21.) when *Phineas* his wife dying in travel gave the name to her Child, ſhe ſaid, *He ſhall be called Ichabod, There is no glory*, or, *not glory.* And again (*Prov.* 31. 4.) The word is uſed in the ſame ſence, *It is not for Kings*, O Lemuel, *to drink wine*; *ſtrong drink is not for Princes.* So here, *Thou ſhalt deliver the nocent, or the not Innocent.* And ſo the whole verſe is thus tranſlated, *God, becauſe of or for the pureneſs of thy hands, will deliver the nocent, or thoſe who are not Innocent.* Whereas we ſay, *Thou ſhalt deliver the Iſland of the Innocent*, or *the Innocent ſhall deliver the Iſland.*

Liberabit noxium. Piſ.

Vocula אי *quæ hic redditur inſula, idem valet quod* לא *non.* Piſc. *Ego cum veteribus* אי *pro negatione exponerem. Eritq; facilis ſenſus, ſc. Deus puritate manuum tuarū etiam nocentem, vel non innocentem liberabit.* Merc.

And it is delivered by the pureneſs of thine hands.

Eliphaz ſpake before in the third perſon, here in the ſecond; 'tis probable he did ſo purpoſely to make *Job* underſtand that he meant him. *It is delivered*, &c. that is, the Iſland is deliver'd; according to our tranſlation, how is it delivered? *By the pureneſs of thine hands.* The word notes the moſt exact purity and cleanneſs, like that of gold when it is refined in the fire, or of garments that are waſhed with Soap or Nitre; *By this pureneſs it, or the Iſland, ſhall be delivered:* and by the *pureneſs of his hands*, he means the pureneſs of his actions or adminiſtrations. The hand is the inſtrument of action, and pure or clean hands in Scripture are put for the purity or cleanneſs of our actions or converſations. While our doings are holy, our works righteous, juſt, and good, it may be ſaid our hands are pure. And we may refer this eſpecially to prayer, *Thou ſhalt deliver the Iſland of the Innocent, and it is delivered by the pureneſs of thine hands*; that is, thou praying in the purity of thy hands, or with pure hands, ſhalt deliver the Iſland of the Innocent, or (according to that other reading) thoſe that are not Innocent. And then, pureneſs of hands, or *pure hands*, are put as a ſign for the thing ſignified; the geſture, for that which is done in that geſture. The lifting up of pure hands is a geſture in prayer, and the lifting up of pure hands, notes the purity of prayer (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy or pure hands.* Now becauſe 'tis uſual in prayer to lift up the hands; and in prayer no hands but morrally pure or holy hands ſhould be lifted up (and ſo theirs are in Scripture ſence whoſe lives are holy) therefore we may well conceive, that when he ſaith, *It ſhall be deliver'd by the pureneſs of thy hands*; his meaning is this, it ſhall be delivered by holy prayer, or when thou prayeſt holily, it ſhall be delivered. Thus *Eliphaz* doth not only promiſe *Job*, that himſelf in perſon ſhould be lifted up and ſaved when others are caſt down; but that he ſhould be a means of ſaving and delivering others, and thoſe not ſome few, or all his own family, but that the whole Nation or Iſland in general ſhould eſcape and fare the better for him. *It ſhall be delivered by the pureneſs of thy hands.* Learn hence, this great and famous truth;

Manus puræ ſunt opera inculpata & quæ crimine vacant Druſ.

That, a godly perſon is a Common good.

He doth good not only within his own walls, or to his own perſonal relations; but he is a Common good, a publick mercy, a general bleſſing; whether we conſider general bleſſings either Negatively, or Affirmatively, that is, either as delivering from evil, or as bringing in of good; every way the godly man is a general bleſſing, he ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent, yea thoſe that are not Innocent; the Lord will accept his prayer, and hear his requeſt for the deliverance of a place, though there be many wicked ones in it. *Abraham* (Gen. 18. 32.) had that priviledge granted him, that for his ſake and at his ſuite the Lord would have ſpared the wicked, the not Innocent, thoſe who were moſt abominably polluted: if there had been but ten righteous perſons there, *Sodome* had been ſaved from burning at the ſuit of *Abraham.* Much more will the Lord ſpare the Iſland of the Innocent; that is, where there is a great many Innocent ones, at the prayer and requeſt of an *Abraham*, a man eminent in faith and holineſs. How often did *Moſes* turn away the wrath of God, when it was breaking forth againſt the people of *Iſrael* (Pſal. 106. 23.) *He ſaid, he would deſtroy them* (that is, the Lord ſaid it) *had not* Moſes *his choſen ſtood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath leſt he ſhould deſtroy them.* The Lord had as it were made a decree that he would deſtroy that people; but *Moſes* comes and interpoſeth for them, and the Lord ſpared them. We read (*Exod.* 32. 9, 10.) that how the Lord ſaid to *Moſes*, *I have ſeen this people, and behold it is a ſtiff-necked people*; *Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, and that I may conſume them, and I will make of thee a great people.* But did *Moſes* accept this offer of advancement upon the ruines of that people? No, he deprecates his own honour, as it follows (*verſ.* 11.) *And* Moſes *beſought the Lord his God, and ſaid, Lord why doth thy wrath wax hot againſt this people?* &c. Then at *verſ.* 14. *The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.* Thus *Moſes* by the pureneſs of his hands, holy prayer, delivered a Nation that was not Innocent, from conſumption in the flames of the Lords provoked jealouſie. Again (*Jerem.* 5. 1.) the Prophet is commanded *to run to and fro through the ſtreets of* Jeruſalem, *to ſee and know in the broad places thereof, if he could find a man, if there were any that executed judgment, that ſought the truth, and I will pardon it, ſaith the Lord.* One man ſhould deliver the City that was not Innocent by the pureneſs of his hands. We ſee the Lord puts the whole iſſue upon this, *if thou canſt find a man.* But were there not multitudes and throngs of men in *Jeruſalem?* Why then was it propoſed as a matter of difficulty to find a man there? Doubtleſs *Jeruſalem* was a populous City and was filled with men, but a man ſo qualified, a man of Juſtice, a man that ſought the truth was hardly to be found there, and therefore *if thou canſt find* (ſuch) *a man, I will pardon it, ſaith the Lord.* How pardon it? There is a twofold pardon; firſt, a pardon of the guilt of ſin; ſecondly a pardon of the puniſhment of ſin. The Lord, upon the finding out of ſuch a man, would not pardon the guilt of all that were there, nor give them an everlaſting pardon; but pardoned they ſhould be as to preſent puniſhment and ruine, they ſhould be pardoned or ſaved from deſtruction for that time, if ſuch a godly man could be found among them. Godly men ſave the wicked three wayes.

Firſt, They ſave them, when by their good Councel and Inſtruction they turn them from their ſins, and bring them to repentance; this is a happy way of ſaving them. And thus a godly man may ſave the wicked: every godly Miniſter of the Goſpel is ſaid to ſave not himſelf only (but in this ſence) thoſe that hear him; becauſe he offers and urgeth upon them the means of ſalvation (1 *Tim.* 4. 16.)

Secondly, As they may ſave them thus by being a means of their Converſion, ſo they may ſave them by being a means of their Direction; one godly man may ſave a whole Land by his directing Counſel, as well as he ſaveth many by his converting Counſel. Of this *Solomon* ſpeaks clearly (*Eccleſ.* 9. 14, 15.) *There was a little City, and few men in it, and there came a great King againſt it,* &c. *Now there was found a poor wiſe man in it, and he by his wiſdom delivered the City*; that is, he gave wiſe and wholſom Counſel, which being followed, proved an effectual means for the deliverance of the City.

Thirdly, A godly man may be a publick good to ſave and deliver others by his Prayers and Interceſſion, by ſeeking the Lord that they may be deliver'd, as the latter branch was opened; he ſaves them by the pureneſs of his hands, lifted up in prayer. Yet we muſt take this with a caution, for we cannot affirm it univerſally, that the righteous have alwayes this priviledge (in the event) to deliver the Iſland or Nation wherein they are. But we may ſay, that this is a priviledge which Saints have often been honoured with, and which none but Saints have been honoured with at any time, to be the Saviours and Deliverers of a people among whom they dwell; for we know the Lord himſelf hath given expreſs Exceptions to this rule (*Jer.* 15. 1.) where he tells the ſtubborn *Jews* by his Prophet, *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people; Caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth; and it ſhall come to paſs if they ſay unto thee, whither ſhall we go forth, thou ſhalt tell them, thus ſaith the Lord, ſuch as are for death, to death; and ſuch as are for the ſword, to the ſword; and ſuch as are for famine, to famine.* When he ſaith, *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me*; ſome may ask, what to do? I anſwer, we are not to take it for a mute ſtanding before the Lord; but a ſtanding before the Lord with earneſt Prayers, Interceſſions, and Supplications, for the ſparing of that people: now ſaith the Lord, though *Moſes* and *Samuel* (who in their generations were eminent godly men, and eminent favourites of God) though theſe ſhould ſtand before me, earneſtly praying for this people, yet *my mind could not be toward them*; that is, I would not ſpare them, nor ſave them from death, ſword, famine, or captivity, no not at their entreaty. And we have a like Inſtance (*Ezek.* 14. 14.) *Though theſe three men,* Noah, Daniel, *and* Job *were in it* (there were but two named in *Jeremy*, but here three, though theſe three men, *Noah, Daniel,* and *Job* were in it) *they ſhould but deliver their own ſouls by their righteouſneſs, ſaith the Lord God.* They might have the priviledge mentioned by *Eliphaz* in the former verſe, *When men were caſt down, they might ſay, there is a lifting up*, or there is preſervation for us; God will take care of us; but God would not be perſwaded, no, not by *Noah, Daniel,* and *Job*, to ſave the reſt. So that there are caſes wherein the Lord will not hear the Interceſſions of the beſt of men for a ſinful people. The Iſland of the wicked, or of the not Innocent ſhall not be delivered, no, not by the pureneſs of their hands; yet 'tis an experienced truth, that God hath ſpared a people for the ſake of ſome godly found among them; yea the reaſon why the Lord doth not deſtroy the world which lies in wickedneſs, is much, in reſpect of them who walk in holineſs. For were it not (as *Eliſha* told *Jehoram* to his face in reference to good King *Jehoſaphat*, 2 Kings 3. 14.) that God hath regard to their preſence in the world, God would not ſo much as look towards the ungodly, nor ſee them for good. This honour have all the Saints, and how great an honour is it to be a publick good, to be a Saviour to an Iſland, to a Nation? Some indeed are of ſuch narrow ſpirits, that if they may ſave themſelves, and keep their own ſtakes, they care not what becomes of the publick. But as it is a great honour to be active for the ſaving and delivering of a Nation, ſo it is a greater honour to have the ſafety and deliverance of a Nation attributed or given in to us by God himſelf (though not at all by way of deſert, yet) in a way of favour. *Paul* was at Sea with no good company, yet when all looked to be ſwallowed up, *An Angel of God appeared to him, ſaying, Fear not* Paul, *Thou muſt be brought before* Cæſar, *and lo, God hath given thee all them that ſail with thee* (Acts 27. 23, 24.) that is, for thy ſake, or becauſe they are now in thy company, they alſo ſhall eſcape the rage of this tempeſt. They all ow their lives to thee henceforth as well as to me, for *to thee have I given them.* The men of this world might hence take notice of their own folly, who can hardly afford them a good word, or room to live in the world, for whoſe ſake it is that they live. How often do they wiſh and ſeek their deſtruction, for whoſe ſake it is, that themſelves are not deſtroyed? How often do they accuſe the godly, as the troublers of a Nation, as the hinderers of publick good? Whereas they *are indeed a common good, the Chariots and Horſemen*, the Protection and Defence, the Salvation and Deliverance of thoſe States and Nations where they are. The breaches which wicked men make by ſinning, they make up by praying, to turn away the Lords wrath, that they be not conſumed. We read how the Lord complains, that there was *none found to make up the hedge*, to ſtand in the gap when he was coming to deſtroy them (*Ezek.* 22. 30.) And it is ſaid of *Moſes* (*Pſal.* 106. 23.) that *he ſtood before the Lord in the breach, that he ſhould not deſtroy the Iſraelites.* Which phraſe of *ſtanding in the breach* ſeems to bear an alluſion to an Army beſieging a City, who firſt plant their Canon, and make a breach, and then come to the ſtorm. Thus the Lord deals many times with a people, he encamps againſt them, and batters them; he makes ſome breach upon them by troubles and diviſions, and then expects that ſome ſhould ſtand in the breach, and beſeech him not to ſtorm them with the whole Army of his Judgments. And the Lord takes it well when any of the Valiant ones, when any of the Worthies of his *Iſrael* preſent themſelves in the breach, praying with utmoſt importunity, that the Lord would withdraw thoſe evils which threaten to come in at the breach like armed men and lay waſt a Nation.

Haud tamen Deus id ſemper facit, neq; eſt quod quiſquam in hac re certã ei legem imponat, fallitur ergo Eliphaz ſi hoc perpetuũ eſſe putavit. Merc.

And foraſmuch as men *of pure hands*, or godly men have this priviledge to be a *common good*, by being the deliverers of Nations from *common evils and calamities*; I ſhall hint ſome few things from it more diſtinctly.

Firſt, We ſee wherein (under God) the ſtrength and ſafety of Kingdoms and Common-wealths doth conſiſt. It is not, ſo much, in the wiſdom of the Counſeller, or in the courage of the Souldier; it is not, ſo much, in Armies at Land, or Navies at Sea; it is not, ſo much, in walled Cities and fortified Caſtles; it is not, ſo much, in union at home, or in Leagues and Confederacies abroad, as it is in the *purity of mens hands*, or in the holineſs of their lives. *Godlineſs is the* Sampſons *lock, wherein the ſtrength of a Nation lyes.* A Heathen could ſay, that *A people were never ſafe by the ſtanding of their walls, while themſelves were falling in their virtues.* It is therefore (if there were nothing better in it) good policy to encourage piety, and to endeavour the encreaſe of a holy Seed in any Nation. For as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 6. 13.) *As a Teil tree and as an Oak whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves, ſo the holy Seed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof.*

Secondly, In this we ſee the honour which God puts upon godly men. What can be greater then this, to be really (though perhaps far from being accounted ſo) the Deliverers and Saviours of their Country? What an honour was it to *Abraham* when God told a King, that he was beholding to *Abraham* for his life, or that favour muſt be granted to him at the ſuit and as it were ſent him by the hand of *Abraham* (Gen. 20. 7.) *He ſhall pray for thee, and thou ſhalt live.* An honour much like this God put upon *Job* alſo, at the latter end of this Book (*Chap.* 42. 8.) *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you, for him will I accept, leſt I deal with you after your folly.* Such an honour (in ſome degree) have all the Saints.

Thirdly, Let men honour thoſe whom God honours thus; and let the Princes and powers of the world be glad when they hear that they have many ſuch in their Dominions; when ſuch are ſubject to them, as rule with God. It is ſaid of *Xerxes* (the greateſt Monarch in the world in his time) that when *Themiſtocles* came over to him (who was a man Eminent for Wiſdom and Eloquence) that being over-joyed at ſuch a treaſure, he cryed out in his ſleep, *I have got* Themiſtocles *the* Athenian. Spiritual wiſdom renders men a greater treaſure to States, then moral wiſdom can. Surely then they who are ſpiritually wiſe deſerve to be rejoyced in. I am ſure it is not ſafe to let them be diſcouraged by whom our ſafety is eſtabliſhed; much leſſe is it ſafe to let them fall by whom in their capacity Kingdoms ſtand; leaſt of all, it is ſafe to caſt them down, who (by the rule of divine politicks) *are State-upholders*. Therefore let me ſay this to all *the powers of this world*, do not deſtroy thoſe who have the priviledge to be *Saviours and Deliverers*: Yea, Take heed of deading and ſtraitning their ſpirits in prayer for you; above all, take heed of turning their prayers againſt you. Do not provoke your own Horſemen to fight againſt you, and your own Chariot-wheels to run over you. As theſe are the beſt friends to a Nation, ſo the worſt enemies. Better have many outwardly oppoſing you, then one (upon juſt ground) ſecretly praying, or but complaining to God againſt you. They who have no power at all in their hands, no not ſo much as to help or ſave themſelves, may yet deſtroy many by the *pureneſs of their hands*; that is, they holding up pure hands in prayer, may bring down deſtruction upon many who are wicked, and the adverſaries of Chriſt becauſe their adverſaries. But that which they moſtly do, and that which they moſt of all deſire to do, is, *That Lands and Iſlands may be delivered by the pureneſs of their hands*.

To ſhut up this Point and Chapter, we ſee, *that as the Saints are killed all the day long*, by the wicked world, *for the Lords ſake* (Rom. 8. 36.) that is, becauſe they own the Lord and his wayes: ſo the wicked of the world are ſpared even all the day long, or as often as they are ſpared by the Lord, for the ſake of the Saints; that is, becauſe the Lord owns and approves them and their wayes, and doth therefore give peace to the world, that ſo in their peace they alſo may have peace.

A

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	19	59
	22	266
	23, 24	2168
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	7	1570
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	5	2195
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	21	1329
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	4	175
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	13	313
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	12	464
	14	404
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	25	326
	27	345
	30	265
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	18	208
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	12	936
	14	1133
	17	499
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	8	911
	12	99
	16	495
24	16	312
25	8	212
	8	1312
	21	2263
	22	249
	22	1942
	23	833
	25	397
	27	6
	32	964
	32	126
26	14	17
	11, 19	63
27	33	856
28	19	745
	21	2267
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	31	209
	31	747
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	23	1785
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	7	1771
	24	779
	24	887
	29	134
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	47	1572
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	24	196
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	5	505
	11	448
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38	21	33
	24	1784
	29	58
39	7, 8	68
40	30	660
41	13	1085
	51	1086
42	7	1776
	11, 19	898
	13	227
	18	10
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46	32	18
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	14	578
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	16	1861
	17	403
	19	1861
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6	12	1019
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	19	1844
	22, 23	457
	29	1598
9	10	137
10	13, 19	87
	28	764
12	13, 14	661
	15	1586

41

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	13	1089
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	24	295
	24, 25	1471
15	8	293
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	10	664
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	11	405
	11	884
	13	2028
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	21	2139
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	20	22
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	5	270
	6	689
	7	1056
	12	1334
	16	160
	20	277
21	11	51
22	1, 4	1969
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	20, 21	1861
	22	763
	28	1729
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	38	112
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	6	381
	31	2148
	32	665
33	2	653
	11	2205
	12	47
	15	2185
	15	2211
	16	405
	19	688
	20	800
	23	71
34	7	635
	7	663
	7	872
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35	5	1179
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LEVITIC.

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	17	2117
	27	95
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	27	173
21	5	95
26	26	457
	26	1772
	41	656
	41	1655
	44	739

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	42	2185
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	17, 18	2162
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	8	319
22	6	176
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	21	288
24	17	785
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	19	790
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11	8, 11	412
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	14	487
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16	19	1175
17	8	404
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	13	1915
	17	223
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	17	1738
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23	3	1772
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	10	2155
	15	589
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	7, 25	1991
	12	209
	15	177
	22	1994
	24	170
	24	1371
	25	250
	31, 34	212
	35	137
	48	2159
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	18	1962
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	6, 21	152
	9	2133
	13	474
	13	785
	15	1122
	17	1651
	17	1929
	20	1293
	21	380
	24	457
	30	1054
	31	625
	34	1365
	35	1117
	36	1053
	41	1912
	41	2175
	42	80
33	9	841
	26	1235
34	7	484
	8	169

JOSHUA.

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6	5	746
	26	1144
7	7, 8	806
	19	645
	21	1976
8	26	1450
10	12	777
	22	1744
21	45	330
23	13	282
	14	330
24	12	1729

JUDGES.

1	6, 7	1167
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	20	792
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	22	313
7	31	745
8	21	654
9	15	190
	15	380
	54	380
10	10, 11	455
	12, 13	456
	13	408
11	3	2169
12	3	1248
	7	1808
14	12	987
15	16	1545
	19	510
16	29	547
20	16	480

RUTH.

1	21	15
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I. SAM.

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	19	951
	27	435
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	5	1443
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	12	1919
	23	1228
	30	175
	30	1098
3	1	309
	7	1820
	12	398
	13	2168
	13	1228
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	20	45
7	3	1892
	3	2248
	6	251
	12	157
	12	474
9	9	309
	9	1425
	20	45
10	27	1022
12	20	277
13	8	1355
14	6	400
	29	1098
15	22	2141
	29	807
	29	882
	32	240
	32	1303
16	5	22
	14	69
	14	505
17	24	1912
	33	881
18	1	1844
	21	144
19	5	1248
20	8	155
	19	472
21	4	25
22	18	833
24	14	126
	14	432
	14	686
25	5	2035
	10	2022
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	25	45
	25	152
	27	254
	30	1215
	36	1744
	41	630
	41	1829
27	12	350
28	15	217
	15	442
	19	706
	21	271
	21	1248
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II. SAM.

1	9	519
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	12	173
	21	177
	26	1838
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	22	1079
	22	2262
3	31	92
5	8	948
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	14	2036
	15, 25	666
9	8	630
10	4	94
11	25	80
12	7, 8	53
	9	24
	12	683
	12	728
	12	2221
13	4	1520
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14	2	201
	9	2226
	14	1088
	22	32
	31	91
15	25, 26	394
16	10	110
	10	1052
	10, 11	544
	15	174
	21	268
18	3	634
	18	31
	18	222
	23	1243
	33	229
19	3	1024
	24	95
	24	793
	25	351
	35	408
21	1	916
22	19	723
23	4	1148
	5	1899
	9	287
24	4	118
	14	62
	14	453
	14	604
	14	1733
	14	1850

I. KINGS.

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3	7	1836
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	32, 33	713
5	4	38
	4	654
6	19	265
7	21	727
8	10, 11	2192
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	29	631
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11	14	38
14	10	1935
	10	2201
	12, 13	483
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	34	1144
17	1	411
	1	2269
18	17	230
	21	307
	41	1434
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19	4	155
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	23, 24	2186
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	25	120
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II. KINGS.

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	6	1435
8	10	1250
	11	164

13

	13	2005
9	25	500
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	9	1456
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	20, 21	1256
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	4	210
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	28	616
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	5	1333
	9, 10	779
	17	2000
21	13	997
22	20	1377
23	5	192
	25	49

I. CHRON.

17	16	630
21	1	78
23	25	350
29	16	1071

II. CHRON.

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32	25	1829
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EZRA.

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NEHEM.

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ESTHER.

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PSALM.

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79	11	232
	12	291
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82	2	17
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87	3	1801
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	36	1047
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	45	1334
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	9	597
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91	1	57
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	5,6,7	2191
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95	6	97
	8	219
	10	720
	11	294
97	8	2223
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101	8	26
102	23	487
	27	797
103	2	57
	8	294
	12	1076
	12	2250
	14	953
	16	351
104	3	82
	32	768
105	15	63
	15	780
	18	232
	18	238
	25	1819
	32	82
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	8	1883
	15	1520
	23	804
	23	2278
	32,33	1502
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	40	250
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	41	2038
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	7	281
	10	2137
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113	5,6	2197
115	2,3	2185
	17	215
116	3	614
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	7	157
	11	2225
	15	57
118	2,3,4	1827
	17	2032
	22	445
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	59	417
	75	156
	96	1040
	103	564
	104	1196
	106	2267

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	116	748
	121	678
	121	1605
	176	1473
120	5,7	1502
121	3	1117
	4	692
	5	967
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123	1	1832
	3	72
124	3	1958
125	1	279
	2	454
126	1	75
	1	1087
	3	1530
	4	545
	5	288
127	2	513
	2	618
	2	1087
	4	12
130	3	972
	5	531
131	1	406
133	1	543
136	4,5,6	405
	23	2163
137	7	600
	7,12	1761
139	1,2	642
	2	234
	2	1790
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ISAIAH.

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DANIEL.

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HOSEA.

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OBADIAH.

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JONAH.

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MICAH.

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NAHUM.

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HABAK.

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ZEPHAN.

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HAGGAI.

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	9	1471
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	14	132
	14	1326

ZECHAR.

1	8	335
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	10	565
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	12	1588
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	15	371
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	13	695
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	7	767
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	10	700
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	7	1533
	13	292
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	23	734
	23	1772

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	15	362
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	17	1209
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	10	85
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	12	2229
	21	89

MALAC.

1	4	697
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	4	1987
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MATTH.

1	19	1619
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	9	1988
	17	40
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	9	852
	16	186
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	8	1268
	19	1612
	22	152
	22	1060
	22	1701
	22	2169
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	22	717
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	26	785
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	37	1393
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	26	969
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	22, 23	149
	25	127
	26	318
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	18	2272
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	28	1351
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	21	769
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	5	2245
	8, 9	1701
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	22	1317
	24	1475
	25	253
	30	1892
	37	2175
	38	1985
	40, 41	457
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	36	162
	36	232
26	24	220
	33, 35	1638
	38	238
	39	444
	49	2076
	56, 58	1777
27	19	620
	25	1569
	38, 46	181
	45	777
	46	666

MARK.

2	27	2135
4	38	785
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	8	893
	4	1510
	16	413
8	38	1775
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14	65	854
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LUKE.

1	6	1557
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	25	1785
	35	1440
	46	627
	51	414
	68	635
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	34, 35	1537
	35	2101
	37	168
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	20	1408
	22, 23	2103
	23, 24	1510
	24	1590
5	8	2211
6	25	467
	25	747
	38	468
7	15	1904
8	14	1952
9	3	893
10	4	821
	9	995
	19	1744
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	30	160
11	20,46	1845
	31	1876
	48	2071
12	4, 5	1913
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	20	367
	32	2038
	36, 37	2131
	50	1713
13	1	88
	9	665
	26	602
	28	1893
	28	2034
14	12, 13	30
	31	1456
15	7	167
	17	576
	17	1642
	32	553
16	3	1095
	9	995
	15	145
	15	885
	15	1261
	29	710
17	4	1773
	4	663
	27	31
18	5	1096
	8	416
	14	322
	31	216
19	41	211
	41, 42	1610
	42	75
21	19	1655
	28	1879
	28	2262
	34	89
	34	906
22	28	162
	28	1822
	29, 30	1876
	44	121
	61, 62	1523
23	24	53
	30	1348
	31	1349
	31	1483
24	37	315
	38	1647
	39, 40	1884
	53	168

JOHN.

1	5	430
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	16	125
	20	190
2	4	74
	19	1897
	23, 24	334
	24, 25	2099
3	6	954
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	16	189
	16	282
	19, 20	200
	21	195
	24	1542
	30	1120
	35	68
4	42	1272
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	22, 27	1875
	25, 28	1870
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	35	1120
	35	1620
6	26	54
	67	1111
7	24	873
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	38	549
	39	116
8	5	1784
	13, 16	837
	14	1026
	15	1875
	21	1949
	44	79
9	2	123
	2, 3	2153
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	27	488
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11	23	1901
	25	1871
	25	1882
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12	19	421
	24	1340
	24	1747
	28	40
	35	1720
13	2	78
	7	331
	7	1039
	33, 36	1578
14	1	2024
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	18	433
	21	1274
16	2	1221
	21	1085
	23, 24	1561
	30	927
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	3	1765
18	6	1461
	11	444
	37	1824
19	12	2102
	13	1238
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	23	663
	25	689
21	18	656

ACTS.

1	15	110
2	2, 3	676
	21	1794
	24	1866
	25	1032
	27	1882
	31	168
	42	1517
3	19, 20	1877
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	28	62
	28	945
	30	61
5	3	78
	10	213
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8	21	1069
	23	663
	23	1302
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12	23	136
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	10	418
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	22	528
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14	13	93
	16	684
	17	412
	17	1729
15	9	1069
16	25	232
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	18	1017
	25, 27	2208
	26	851
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	30	684
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23	1, 2	1526
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27	23, 24	2279
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	17	724
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	23, 24	566
3	4	105
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	22	2031
	23	550
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I. COR.

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	8	556
	8	1449
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	13	1761
	21	1785
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6	2	1876
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	20	586
	23	2054
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	30	1534
	31	256
	31	479
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	13	249
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	12	211
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II. COR.

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	17	2262
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	21	478
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GALAT.

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	3	755
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EPHES.

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	13	1083
	18	902
	23	1926
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	15	417
	18	1150
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	12	57
	12	507
	19	174
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PHILIP.

1	9	2181
	23	241
	23	908
	23	1714
	28	556
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	7	2169
	9, 10	1876
	12	1070
	15	1080
	16	524
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	27	962
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	8, 9	1935
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	19	1462
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	20	1898
	21	1886
	21	597
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COLLOS.

	15, 18	1739
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	17	708
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I. THES.

2	5	1573
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	8	2032
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	18	111
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	23	66

II. THES.

1	10	1761
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	3	282
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3	10, 12	585
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I. TIM.

1	9	469
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	16	338
	17	107
	17	76
	19	2138

II. TIM.

1	10	1592
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	15	398
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	19, 20	2206
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	9	1156
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	17	297
	17	1790

TITUS.

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HEBR.

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	11	573
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	13	393
	19	219
	19	1462
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	12	1139
	14	429
	14	1109
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	7, 8	558
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	27	16
	27	234
	27	1313
	28	1888
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	9	1607
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	22	1563
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	26	1453
	26, 31	892
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	31	62
	32, 33	1771
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	7	253
	7	2175
	8	1196
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	17, 19	1883
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	24	800
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	36	233
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	2	360
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	5	96
	5	446
	6	268
	10	442
	14	529
	14	1910
	15	1301
	16	126
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	29	2232
13	2, 3	1846
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	8	706
	9	1082
	9	1910
	12	2232
	13	1528

JAMES.

1	2	469
	3	1131
	4	1655
	6, 7	824
	10	2276
	17	105
	17	542
	17	624
	17	708
	19	1018
	19	1699
	27	163
	27	636
	27	2173
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	10	1558
	14, 15	539
	15	258
	15, 16	2022
	15, 16	2165
	18	278
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3	1	1131
	3, 4, 5	1508
4	1	615
	1	1807
	3	1561
	6	2276
	9, 10	142
	12, 13	2270
	14	127
	16	691
5	1, 2	1309
	13, 14	130
	17	411

I. *PET.*

1	6	445
	6, 7	1707
	7, 8	1888
	8	2258
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	11	1454
	22	660
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	7	1889
	19	1146
	21	1909
4	3	674
	12, 13	1630
	14	111
	14	468
	19	70
	19	395
	19	1249
5	4	1803

II. *PET.*

1	4	48
	4	527
	4	754
2	9	2113
	12	393
	12	1726
	18	568
	20	1183
3	3	1990
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	8	755
	9	931
	16	402

I. *JOHN.*

1	1	1425
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	1	112
	1	1557
	3, 13	1272
	4, 5	1023
	11, 12	1139
	12	664
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	16	363
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	21	1208
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3	2	211
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	9	1387
	9	1505
	18	1822
	20	1260
4	5	1413
	18	10
	18	252
	18	1084
	18	1273
5	8	800
	8	940
	13	1273

JUDE.

6	42
10	1763
12	552
13	786
15	233
16	568
17	1237
22	516
22, 23	559
22, 23	1499

REVEL.

1	7	1868
	7	1892
	18	1865
	14	923
2	9	1027
	10	79
	10	134
	10	1772
	20	2168
	24	1050
3	2	9
	3	1145
	9	100
	9	1097
	9	1943
	14	1739
4	6	1117
	6	670
5	8, 9	470
6	9, 10	218
	10	70
7	9	407
	9	2150
9	11	132
	11	1737
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	11	1236
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	1	2043
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13	8	1588
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	13	1949
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	21	664
	22	195
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21	19	346
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22	8	99
	11	685
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	17	1878
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FINIS.